

# CROSS-CURRENTS



## EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

### ***Guozhuang* Trading Houses and Tibetan Middlemen in Dartsedo, the “Shanghai of Tibet”**

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#### **Abstract**

Within the field of Sino-Tibetan frontier studies, there is very little in-depth scholarly discussion about commerce, trade, and the people who facilitated these activities across the Sino-Tibetan border; studies in English are particularly sparse. This article aims to contribute to a wider and deeper understanding of the nature of trade on the Sino-Tibetan frontier and the role of women as facilitators by looking at some of the actual “dealmakers.” In the border town of Dartsedo—the “Shanghai of Tibet”—*guozhuang* (trading houses, Tib. *achak khapa*) not only evolved into convenient spaces for travelers to come to rest, but also were spaces of flux. It was in these trading houses that traditional notions of gender, class, and hierarchy were called into question and played out in unexpected ways. Women came to dominate the *guozhuang* because the work was likened to managing a household and therefore viewed as a lower-status occupation. This notion was reinforced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Chinese values and customs were introduced into the local society through frequent intermarriages between Han and Tibetan inhabitants in Dartsedo.

**Keywords:** *achak khapa*, *guozhuang*, trading house, Dartsedo, tea-horse trade, middlemen, brokers, Tibet, Sino-Tibetan trade, gender

In the late seventeenth century, the Sino-Tibetan frontier town of Dartsedo (Ch. Ta-chien-lu or Kangding)—the “Shanghai of Tibet”<sup>1</sup>—became a major center for Sino-Tibetan commerce, where Han Chinese, Tibetan, and Hui (Chinese Muslim) traders gathered to engage in vibrant trade. A unique setup emerged, known in Tibetan as *kortso* (literally meaning “circle” and denoting a tribe or assembly) (Ch. *guozhuang*).<sup>2</sup> *Kortso* was originally a political institution established by the Chakla “king” (Ch. Mingzheng *tusi*), the indigenous ruler of the region (Qian

Zhongkang 2012).<sup>3</sup> Initially, the main functions of most aristocratic families in charge of *guozhuang* under the king were to draft official documents and to receive Chinese and Tibetan officials traveling through the town; some performed duties such as guarding the town and managing the land, livestock, tea, clothes, and other affairs for the king.

The convergence of traders in Dartsedo provided an opportunity for *guozhuang* owners (Tib. *achak khapa*) to be actively involved in facilitating trade and to become brokers for Han Chinese and Tibetan traders. As trade and commerce in the town became increasingly vigorous, *guozhuang* transformed from primarily bureaucratic organizations into commercial organizations. *Guozhuang* served as warehouses and packing establishments; their owners acted as intermediaries, innkeepers, and guarantors of loans. Nevertheless, aristocratic families in charge of *guozhuang* were still obliged to perform the aforementioned duties for the Chakla king.

Sino-Tibetan history is not just a history of confrontations and struggles for hegemony over Kham, although scholarly works tend to focus mostly on military conflict and contention over control of the region. Another side of the story concerns the role of trade and mutual accommodation. This article aims to fill a lacuna in the field of Sino-Tibetan frontier studies, as there is still very little in-depth scholarly discussion about commerce and trade across the Sino-Tibetan frontier, particularly in English.<sup>4</sup> Given the paucity of archival sources and Tibetan sources, the study of *guozhuang* and their owners is arduous, and has to rely on mostly Chinese and oral sources. During the early twentieth century, a number of Chinese scholars made initial forays into the subject, and there has recently been an increase in scholarly interest in the cultural aspects, economic functions, and business dealings of *guozhuang*.<sup>5</sup> This article supplements those efforts and provides new insights into *guozhuang*. Exceptionally, Thubten Püntsock's article (2010) in Tibetan provides a complete list of names of these trading houses based on his interviews. The interviews I conducted during the period from 2010 to 2014 further support his findings. My discussion of the politics of gender in the economy of *guozhuang* in this article sets it apart from earlier studies of *guozhuang*.

This article examines and portrays *guozhuang* as “places of deal making.” In her study of traders in Montpellier in medieval France, Kathryn Reyerson similarly describes the innkeepers as deal makers who “cultivated their contacts, kept their ears to the ground, and watched the trends of supply and demand” (2001, 8). While innkeepers in Reyerson’s work were of ill repute and low status and were considered crafty, the heads of *guozhuang* were nobles. Looking at the historical background and the emergence of trading houses as middlemen and brokers in Sino-Tibetan trade in Dartsedo sheds light on the role their owners played in brokering deals and acting as key trading facilitators. I will address the following questions: How did *guozhuang*, originally political agencies, later become mainly economic organizations? What were the environmental conditions and motivations behind this transformation? In particular, I will look into the politics of gender in the economy of *guozhuang*. Though it is generally assumed that trade is a male-dominated activity, some well-known and prominent *guozhuang* owners were women; this was especially the case during the Republican period (1912–1949). I will show that we cannot argue that traditional Tibetan society exhibited total gender equality. Rather, women began to dominate the *guozhuang* sector because it was likened to managing a household and therefore viewed as lower-status work. Furthermore, this idea of *guozhuang* involving domestic work was later reinforced by the acculturation of the region when Chinese values and customs were introduced into the local society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### **The “Shanghai of Tibet”: The Frontier Town of Dartsedo**

To understand why *guozhuang* appeared in large numbers only in the frontier town of Dartsedo, we need to trace back to their origin and recall the commercial topography of Dartsedo itself. As Dartsedo rose to become the entrepôt and distribution center for Sino-Tibetan trade in the early eighteenth century, there was a need for a commercial infrastructure to facilitate trade. Dartsedo is synonymous with the Sino-Tibetan frontier; its history goes back to the early and mid-fourteenth century (Zhang T. 1974, 8591; Zhang Y. 1985, 69). Being situated in a valley with a good water supply, protection on the lee side of the mountains, and grassy fields gave

Dartsedo an exceptional position that evolved into the junction of the ancient tea-horse trade route connecting Tibetan regions in the west with inland Chinese regions in the east. Because it was built at an altitude of 2,800 meters (9,000 feet), it was found suitable not only by Tibetan caravans<sup>6</sup> but also by traders and tea porters from inland China, who generally could not bear the climate and lack of oxygen on the plateau.<sup>7</sup> Lin Hsiao-ting notes Dartsedo's strategic importance with regard to trade, transport, and politics and describes it as "an important contact zone for all ethnic groups in the region" (2006, 58–59). Numerous trading routes converged here from Yunnan, Liangshan, Batang, Tibet, Kardzé, Ngawa, and Sichuan.<sup>8</sup>

By the mid-thirteenth century, Dartsedo had become an unofficial market for Tibetan traders to exchange tea and other goods (Ren N. [1934] 2000, 428–431).<sup>9</sup> In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, after the Ming court stipulated that "all tributes from Ü-Tsang (Central Tibet) and Dokham must travel via the Sichuan Road" (Cao 2003b, 336), the number of traders and merchants traveling through Dartsedo increased considerably. In the mid-seventeenth century, as a consequence of the Qing government relaxing its monopoly (Cao 2003a, 271–272), the private tea trade moved to Dartsedo, which led to its emergence as the new center for Sino-Tibetan trade.<sup>10</sup> Its position as the center of Sino-Tibetan trade and commerce was consolidated in 1696. At that time, Dartsedo was formally set up as a trading site by the Qing court, and a commissioner (*garpön*, Ch. *yingguan*) was dispatched to supervise trade and administration there (Gu, Wang, and Qiong 1982, 109–111; Dorjé Tseten 1995, 239–243).<sup>11</sup> By 1699, 800,000 packs of tea (8 million kilograms) were sold each year in Dartsedo (Gu, Wang, and Qiong 1982, 170).<sup>12</sup> In 1702, to promote trade, the Qing court dispatched two officials to set up the Dartsedo customs office (Dajianlu *chaguan*) to supervise trade (Gu, Wang, and Qiong 1982, 177–178). They also built the Chakzamkha Bridge (Luding *qiao*) over Gyarong Gyelmo Ngülchu River (Ch. Dadu he) in 1706 (Gu, Wang, and Qiong 1982, 183) and established a direct route to Dartsedo via Wesegap Gorge (Ch. Wasigou) (Feng 1994, 1:8). The transformation of Dartsedo into a major distribution center for both Chinese and Tibetan goods is evidenced by this description by a Chinese officer in the early eighteenth century: "At present there were [*sic*]

soldiers garrisoning [in Dajianlu], where Han Chinese and Tibetans gathered to engage in business. It can indeed be called a busy trade center” (Jiao [1716–1721] 1985, 15).

In 1729 the Qing court set up Dajianlu (Dartsedo) Sub-prefecture in Dartsedo.<sup>13</sup> The town had become the most important political and economic center on the Sichuan-Kham borderland and the most important town on the Sichuan-Tibet trading route. Qing civil and military institutions cohabited with the indigenous institutions of the Chakla king. By 1730, Dartsedo had become the theater for vibrant and burgeoning interactions among the Tibetan, Chinese, and Hui traders who converged there.<sup>14</sup>

During the mid-seventeenth century, the social structure of the town gradually transformed. Predominated by traders, the population included the Chakla king, the king’s headmen and Tibetan subjects, Tibetan monks, Qing officials and soldiers, Chinese porters, and Hui civilians (Sichuan sheng 1995, 417).<sup>15</sup> A gradual influx of foreign residents augmented this mix. As early as 1860, French missionaries started to build a Catholic church and an abbey in Dartsedo (Wu J. 1994, 31; Sichuan sheng 1995, 452–453). In the 1900s British and American missionaries established a presence in the town (Sichuan sheng 1995, 454). During this period, Dartsedo expanded its reach to include international trade networks (Coales 1919, 242–247). The circulation of foreign currencies confirms the international scope of trade and commerce there. As Scott Relyea examines in his contribution to this issue, in the 1880s Indian rupees were plentiful and were a recognized currency in Dartsedo, and Russian rubles were also found in increasing numbers (Pratt 1892, 141; Wang C. 1985, 70).

The goods transported to Dartsedo by Chinese merchants included tea and other daily necessities, silk, satin, and non-staple foodstuffs; tea and silk made up the bulk of imports. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Western travelers noted that firearms and Japanese matches were among goods brought to Dartsedo by Chinese (Grenard 1904, 295). Local products brought to Dartsedo by Tibetan traders consisted mainly of musk (Tib. *latsi*), skins, and various medicinal herbs. In addition, traders from Dergé, Chamdo, and Central Tibet also brought gold and silver from India (Ren H. [1936] 1990, 259; Yang G. [1988] 2009, 4).<sup>16</sup> As the British consul in

Dartsedo, Oliver Coales, pointed out, musk was the main product for export (1919, 242–247).<sup>17</sup> The prosperity of trade and commerce in Dartsedo in the 1930s seems to justify the British naturalist Paul Huston Stevenson’s (1932, 599) description of Dartsedo as the “Shanghai of Tibet.”

### **The Emergence, Development, and Decline of *Guozhuang* in Dartsedo**

Dartsedo’s high economic status and volume of trade led to the emergence of *guozhuang* as facilitators of business deals. The *guozhuang* also controlled and oversaw the practicalities of day-to-day commerce in the town. As Patrick Booz rightly points out, *guozhuang* were much more than mere “hinges” to transfer goods; they stood at the heart of Khampa society as loci of economic, religious, and political activities (2011, 265). The Chinese term *guozhuang* first appeared in an entry concerning the submission of the Chakla king to the Qing court in 1666 in *Dajianlu zhilüe*, compiled during the reign of the Qianlong emperor (r. 1735–1796): “The Chakla king Tendzin Drakpa led the chiefs of the thirteen *guozhuang* originally subordinating to him to submit [to the Qing court]” (*Dajianlu zhilüe* 2003, 19). Here the term seems to refer to a political organization or institution under the Chakla king. The prominent Chinese scholar Guo Changping has speculated that this organization was probably similar to a company, platoon, or squad of the present-day Chinese army (2006, 74–76). *Yazhou fuzhi*, compiled in 1735, recounts that “there were thirteen *guozhuang*, with thirteen headmen and with a total of 465 households under the jurisdiction of the Mingzheng *tusi* (the Chakla king)” (Cao 2003a, 271). *Guozhuang* were initially the residences of noble headmen under the authority of the Chakla king. After the Chakla king moved to Dartsedo in the mid-seventeenth century, the king built four houses to make it convenient for his subordinate headmen to have an audience with the king, provide corvée labor and services, and pay tribute. When the king had his four chamberlains (Tib. *nyerchen zhi*, Ch. *sida guanxia*) moved to Dartsedo, continuing to use the old appellation, the houses were still called *kortso* (Ch. *guozhuang*). These four are understood as the four earliest *guozhuang* in Dartsedo. Following the example of these chamberlains, various original *kortso*

built similar houses in Dartsedo. Eventually, all thirteen headmen moved to Dartsedo and built thirteen *guozhuang*. To summarize, initially an administrative organization, *guozhuang* evolved into trading houses in Dartsedo (Guo 2006, 74–76).

Often a single house with its own entrance and courtyard, these homes had two floors: residents lived upstairs and kept their belongings downstairs. The houses featured spacious courtyards and had exteriors paved with flagstones. Their capacious backyards included areas for horses and for storing firewood and fodder. Smaller *guozhuang* had only a single courtyard; major ones had two or three courtyards. Due to a paucity of records, it is impossible to trace the development of these houses over time. We can gain some insight into the complexity of running such enterprises based on available information about the Wesekyap trading house, the largest and wealthiest among the forty-eight trading houses still operating in 1939.

The Wesekyap trading house occupied an area of 4,000 square meters and had a floor space of over 2,000 square meters. It had as many as eighty rooms and three courtyards for traders' horses and yaks (Liu S. 1988, 20; interview with the Butruk Rinpoché, August 2, 2013).<sup>18</sup> Another major trading house, Gyarongsé (Mujia *guozhuang*), had two courtyards, one storehouse, two two-story guest houses in the front, and one main building for the family, with a garden and a shrine in the back (interview with Pema of Gyarongsé *achak khapa*, June 25, 2014).<sup>19</sup> Smaller trading houses like Yakdruptsang (Yangjia *guozhuang*) and Janyer Tokma (Wangjia *guozhuang*) had only about ten rooms (Yang G. [1988] 2009, 3). It was against this backdrop that *guozhuang* owners emerged as facilitators of business deals by acting as middlemen between Hui or Han traders and Tibetan traders.

A vivid account by the British naturalist A. E. Pratt captures the actual physical layout and daily life of a *guozhuang* (which functioned as an inn):

The inn in which I had my quarters was fairly comfortable. In front was a yard and stabling for a few horses, and a pole was erected in it from which strings of paper prayers [hung] fluttering in the wind. Round the walls also bits of stick were inserted here and there and similarly ornamented. The roof of the kitchen was flat, and on it there was a small dome-shaped erection of clay, in which every

day, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, the branches of a sort of coniferous plant were burnt with religious ceremony.... Caravans used to stop here, and on their arrival the beasts of burden were unloaded in the yard and then driven along a passage running through the house to an enclosure at the back, where they were left for the night. (1892, 136–137)

### The Origin and Etymology of the Term *Guozhuang* in Chinese

These trading houses came to be known more commonly by the Chinese term *guozhuang*. Each *guozhuang* had its own Tibetan name, which all the Tibetan traders and local residents used. Collectively, the trading houses were known in Tibetan as *achak khapa* (meaning “the eloquent, respectable host”).<sup>20</sup> According to oral tradition, there were forty-eight *achak khapas*.<sup>21</sup> By 1942–1943, when the famous Chinese historian Tan Yinghua did his fieldwork in Dartsedo, he found that only thirty-two original *guozhuang* still survived. According to him, eight out of those thirty-two *guozhuang* had females as their heads, and nine out of the thirty-two were jointly managed by daughters of *guozhuang* and their Han or half-Chinese and half-Tibetan husbands, with the latter serving as heads (Tan [1942–1943] 2003, 646, 649). *Achak khapa* is not a common term in the Kham dialect; in the Lhasa dialect, it refers primarily to hostesses of these *guozhuang*. *Achak* is an honorific term used by Central Tibetans to respectfully refer to any women older than themselves, and *khapa* literally means “the eloquent one.” After the mid-eighteenth century, the *guozhuang* business in Dartsedo entered a period of great prosperity; at this time, the clients of these *guozhuang* were mostly from Central Tibet. It would have been natural for them to use this honorific term to refer to hostesses of *guozhuang*, who were capable and renowned for their diplomacy. Later, the term *achak khapa* became the collective name both for *guozhuang*—meaning “the place where the eloquent one lives”—and for hosts and hostesses of *guozhuang* (interview with Dorjé, July 2014; Zeng and Yang 1989, 14).<sup>22</sup>

There are various explanations for the possible etymology of the term *guozhuang* in Chinese. Some trace it to Tibetan terms such as *kutsap* (representative or envoy), *kudra* (noble), *gosal/gora* (courtyard), *dokyi* (courtyard paved with slate), or *gordro* (circle dance) (Zeng and Yang 1989, 14–15; Thubten Püntsock (2010, 12). Others argue that *guozhuang* was originally a

Chinese term meaning “pot posts” (referring to a temporary stove) because houses were built where Tibetan traders set up tents and made “pot posts” to provide lodging for traders; houses built on such sites continued to be called *guozhuang* (Liu S. 1988, 5; Gao and Lai 1985, 131).

### **The Emergence of *Guozhuang* in Dartsedo**

Clearly, *guozhuang* in Dartsedo emerged among the nobility under the Chakla king. The heads of *guozhuang*, who performed the function of innkeeper, served as subordinates and ministers for the Chakla king; originally a bureaucratic and political class, *guozhuang* evolved into a commercial organization. What were the reasons for this transformation?

During the Qing period, the Chakla king ruled over the Kham region as one of the four *tusi* (Ch. *si da tusi*).<sup>23</sup> As shown above, when the Chakla court moved to Dartsedo in the mid-seventeenth century, *guozhuang* moved to Dartsedo as a political agency under the king. *Guozhuang* played a limited role in commercial activities because Sino-Tibetan trade had yet to flourish.

In addition to the local administrative system of the Chakla king,<sup>24</sup> there was a *guozhuang* system made up of officials of different ranks who were selected from among the heads of local aristocratic families. In other words, the heads of *guozhuang* also had court duties and obligations to the Chakla king. A popular saying in Dartsedo attests to the fact that the Chakla king was the supreme ruler of Dartsedo, the Weseikyap *achak khapa* was in charge of the civil administration, and Dorjedrak Monastery was in charge of religious affairs: “The master is the Chakla Gyelpo (king), the official administering people is Weseikyap (Ch. Wasidiao), and the lama is Dorjedrak Monastery (Ch. Jingang si)” (Anzhu 1991, 103; Gao and Lai 1985, 131). According to oral tradition, there were five *achak khapas*: Weseikyap, Zhabpetsang, Gyarongsé, Gonjowa, and Saké Gangpa (see appendix), who were popularly known as the five trustworthy aides (Tib. *nangmi nga*). The first four were families who served as the king’s four chamberlains; the fifth was considered the “inner minister,” the king’s close follower. According to tradition, the four original *guozhuang* provided corvée labor and services to the Chakla king. As the

Chakla king's authority and prestige grew, especially after he had taken on the responsibility of supervising various chieftains beyond Dartsedo and urging them to pay taxes and tribute to the Qing court, tribute-paying missions undertaken by these chieftains dramatically increased the demand for transportation corvée (Tib. *ulak*). The king ordered the establishment of eight more *guozhuang* to meet the additional demands. In 1666, the Chakla king's *guozhuang* system was still rather small, comprising only thirteen trading houses (*Dajianlu zhilüe* 2003, 19). In 1696, the Qing Colonial Affairs Office (*lifanyuan*) issued a directive to establish Dartsedo as a trading market (Gu, Wang, and Qiong 1982, 144; Dorjé Tseten 1997, 239–243). Consequently, the primary function of *guozhuang* became the reception of Tibetan traders who stayed in Dartsedo to engage in trade. Importantly, this practice set in motion the process of transforming *guozhuang* into an organization that combined political and economic functions. Also around this time, the term *guozhuang* was used to refer to residences of aristocrats under the Chakla king.

With the expansion of the king's territory and the trade boom in the mid-seventeenth century, the number of *guozhuang* increased even more. By the eighteenth century, there were forty-eight *guozhuang*, located mainly at the northern and southern gates of Dartsedo. Among them, there were four chamberlains, four junior ministers (Tib. *nyerchung zhi*; Ch. *Sixiao nieba*), four treasurers (Tib. *chakdzö zhi*; Ch. *si guanxia*), and four secretaries (Tib. *drungyik zhi*; Ch. *si zhongyi*) (Anzhu 1991, 104), who were from sixteen aristocratic families, known as *guozhuang* owners, that made up the first rank of officials in the Chakla court (see Appendix). The first rank of officials also included those from the family of the "Inner Minister" (Tib. *nanglön*) and of Saké Gangpa. These individuals enjoyed power and status equal to the high-ranking ministers. The second rank of officials, holding miscellaneous positions, came from the remaining aristocratic families; they were respectively in charge of livestock, hides and furs, corvée labor and taxes, music and dance, and so on (Kangding minzu 1994, 59).

The primary responsibility of the *guozhuang* initially included managing all of the king's internal and external affairs. In return for their services at the Chakla court, *guozhuang* were granted land in perpetuity; revenue from taxes on this land constituted their main source of

wealth. Even during the Republican period, all of the old *guozhuang* still owned a certain amount of land (Liu S. 1988, 3).<sup>25</sup> The limited income from land rent might have contributed to the evolution of *guozhuang* owners as actively involved in commercial activities. However, in the 1880s, W. W. Rockhill interpreted *guozhuang* obligations as primarily military in character: officers (Tib. *dingpön, zhelngo*) looked after small units of soldiers for security reasons and in order to carry out the king's orders (1891, 220).

*Guozhuang* supported the Chakla king's obligation to provide logistical support to Qing troops and to receive officials traveling through Dartsedo: they supplied provisions, dispatched men to engage in fighting, and provided corvée labor to carry provisions for the troops (Liu S. 1988, 3). At this time, there were forty-eight *guozhuang*. The amount of corvée labor each *guozhuang* was required to provide had decreased; consequently, *guozhuang* owners could afford to receive itinerant traders and solicit business for them (Li Y. 1941, 350).

In addition to serving as officials at the Chakla court, from the eighteenth century onward, *guozhuang* owners began to be actively involved in trade in Dartsedo. Their status as ministers or minor officials under the Chakla king gave them an eminent social position, a large social network, and strong political influence. Taking advantage of their status, *guozhuang* owners served as brokers between Tibetan traders and other traders, mainly Han and Hui. The increased involvement of *guozhuang* owners in trade coincided with the gradual decline of the Chakla king's position and authority in the eighteenth century. From 1699 until 1745, a crisis over the absence of a legitimate heir for nearly fifty years was a major factor in the decline of the Chakla ruling family (*Sichuan sheng* 1995, 418–419). As pointed out above, the stronger Chinese presence in Dartsedo forced the Chakla king to reckon with the power and authority of the Qing (Tsomu 2009, 73). While the Dajianlu subprefect was in charge of Han subjects in the region, the Chakla king continued to rule the indigenous population. In Dartsedo, the coexistence of dual administrative structures—the civil and military institutions of the Qing as well as the indigenous institutions under the Chakla king—had considerable impact not only on the scale of Han immigration but also on the cultural, social, and economic lives of Dartsedo inhabitants (Tsomu

2009, 82). The sizable number of Han immigrants in Dartsedo resulted in a mixed community with Han and Tibetan inhabitants. Hence, to a certain degree, the significant influx of Han immigrants in Dartsedo diluted the power and authority of the Chakla king.

By 1911 the Chakla king was stripped of his official title; his office was abolished during the reform known as *gaitu guiliu* (the reform of replacing indigenous leaders with government-appointed officials). Although *guozhuang* were no longer an administrative system under the Chakla king, their former position gave them a commercial advantage in engaging in economic activities (Yang J. 1993, 94). As the economic status of the *guozhuang* grew, a new relationship formed with the Chakla royal family, and a new status was acquired through marriage alliances. Kinship ties between the *guozhuang* were close (Liu S. 1988, 27). As shown in the chart below, many *guozhuang* trading families were related to the Chakla king's family via direct or indirect marriage alliances. There were also marriage alliances between *guozhuang* trading families.

In the Tibetan borderlands of Qinghai and Gansu Provinces, there were institutions similar to the *guozhuang*. Gansu and Qinghai had *xiejia* (house of repose; hostel; innkeeper) and *yangke* (itinerant sheep traders).<sup>26</sup> However, owners of hostels were mostly Hui, sometimes Han, who were fluent in Tibetan and Mongolian. In addition, the *xiejia* system in the Tibetan borderlands of Gansu and Qinghai was viewed as a special type within the *xiejia* system. The *xiejia* system initially emerged in inland Chinese regions during the Ming and Qing periods and facilitated trade, collecting taxes, handling lawsuits, and dealing with affairs concerning Mongols and Tibetans on behalf of the local government (Yang H. 2015, 108–110).<sup>27</sup> The *guozhuang* in Dartsedo were not charged with the duties of collecting taxes or dealing with Tibetans on behalf of the local Qing government.

Yet another regional example is similar to *guozhuang*. These are the functions of what Yang Hongwei refers to as *zhurenjia* (the host), who served as a middleman between Han and Hui traders and Tibetans in nomadic regions in Amdo. While the owners of the *guozhuang* hosted Tibetan traders and formed long-term relationships with the latter in Dartsedo, *zhurenjia*

received Han or Hui traders (Yang H. 2015, 109; Wang S. 1988, 182–183). Another similarity is that the majority of *zhurenjia* were also indigenous officials.

### **The Development and Prosperity of *Guozhuang* in Dartsedo**

As discussed above, the transformation of *guozhuang* into institutions that promoted trade was closely linked to the evolution of Dartsedo as the main center of Sino-Tibetan trade; more importantly, this transformation was closely linked to Qing identification of the town as an administrative and military center. The cohabitation of Qing administrative and military institutions with the indigenous institutions of the Chakla king made these changes possible. The influx of traders from various regions resulted in a high demand for local products; with burgeoning trade, the town grew and became a vibrant commercial center. *Guozhuang* served as brokers for Han, Hui, and Tibetan traders who gathered in Dartsedo. As the *guozhuang* prospered, they engaged a special group of men and women called *jadruwa* (Ch. *fengchagong*)—or “tea stitchers”—to perform the task of repackaging packs of tea delivered to Dartsedo on the backs of Han tea porters (Ch. *beifu*) into units suitable for transport by animals to Tibetan areas. Since the early nineteenth century, *jadruwa* had been closely linked to Dartsedo’s burgeoning skin and tanning industry (Ch. *pifangye*) (Wu J. 1994, 33–35; Booz 2011, 292–295).

The increase in the Qing dynasty’s power over the Sino-Tibetan frontier marked the decline of the Chakla king’s rule. Furthermore, from the mid-seventeenth century until the Republican period, the Chakla king’s family had been in close contact with local Chinese officials in Dartsedo and had been praised as being “loyal and obedient” to the Qing court and to Republican authorities (Sichuan sheng 995, 418–419; Tsomu 2014, 51).

Over the years, the king’s family had studied Chinese culture in order to strengthen Dartsedo’s ties with the Qing and later with Republican China. With the growing Chinese population and the developing role and presence of Chinese traders, there was a shift in the cultural milieu in Dartsedo. To survive and prosper, *guozhuang* owners had to take good care of Tibetan traders; more importantly, they had to be alert to the performance and trading activities

of Han and Hui traders and had to learn about their customs, habits, and taboos. The Republican-period historian Tan Yinghua ([1942–1943] 2003, 648–649) rightly points out that in the late Qing and Republican period *guozhuang* owners were mostly influenced by Chinese culture. He further claims that the strong influence of Chinese culture “reflects the trend of the present ethnic culture and the result of the expansion of the scope of intermarriage, and it has been induced to have the tendency to be Sinicized” (Tan [1942–1943] 2003, 649). The Chakla royal family manifested aspects of this acculturation trend. During the Republican period, the Chakla king’s family employed private Chinese tutors; they also sent their children to modern schools in Dartsedo and Chengdu. The royal family began to use the Chinese surname “Jia.” Similarly, *guozhuang* began to use Chinese surnames.<sup>28</sup>

### **Growth of the *Guozhuang* Clientele**

When the *guozhuang* began their commercial activities, their clientele was mostly made up of traders from Central Tibet and other Tibetan areas. These traders were reluctant to venture into the Chinese lowlands, as they needed not only lodging but also cultural and commercial brokers who would provide the logistical support and resources required to help with commercial transactions in an alien environment. As I discuss below, bilingual *guozhuang* owners initially served as brokers between Tibetan and Chinese traders. Their role was similar to that of brokers or middlemen in markets in inland China, and their clientele included Tibetan and Han Chinese traders. Key Tibetan traders from the main monasteries, indigenous leaders, and headmen in Kham played prominent roles in Sino-Tibetan trade, and their business interests extended to all of the Tibetan regions and as far away as India. At the end of the Qing period and the beginning of the Republican period, key traders serving as agents for the main monasteries and high-ranking reincarnated lamas also brought trade goods from British India to Dartsedo (Gao 1985, 127).

Han Chinese traders represented another important group of clients for the *guozhuang*. Since the middle of the fourteenth century, a growing number of Shaanxi merchants had been

trading at Dartsedo. At first they mainly relied on *guozhuang* owners to sell tea and other bulk goods to Tibetan traders. They gradually established their own branch shops in various places in Kham (Shi and Zou 2011, 5–11). During the Republican period, there were over eighty stores owned by Shaanxi traders along Shaanxi Street. Major stores had branches in Jyekhundo (Yushu), Kardzé (Ganzi), Shanghai, and Chongqing (Sichuan sheng 1995, 168).<sup>29</sup> As Kham came under Sichuan’s jurisdiction during the Qing period, traders from Sichuan followed the traders from Shaanxi. In the 1900s, when the Qing government carried out the “reform of replacing indigenous leaders with government appointed officials” (*gaitu guiliu*) in Kham, it implemented a policy of encouraging Han Chinese to migrate to Kham. At the beginning of the twentieth century, “no less than 200,000 Chinese traders visited Dartsedo” (Sichuan sheng dang’an guan 1990, 221). While Sichuan traders could be divided into several groups according to their place of origin, they could also be classified by the type of goods they traded—that is, cloth, tobacco, paper, china, tea from Ya’an, and so on. A small number of traders were from Yunnan and Beijing. A large number of Chinese and Tibetan traders gathered in Dartsedo, where their goods had to be distributed; they relied on owners of *guozhuang* to act as middlemen, thus providing a sufficient number of clients for the *guozhuang*.

By the late nineteenth century, increasing numbers of foreign missionaries, scholars, and naturalists became clients of *guozhuang*. For instance, British explorer William Gill, British representative at Chongqing Edward Colborne Baber;<sup>30</sup> American explorer and diplomat William Woodville Rockhill; British naturalist A. E. Pratt; and the great explorer Prince Henri of Orleans stayed at the *guozhuang* owned by a former Tibetan official under the Chakla king (Pratt 1892, 133, 134, 198). Pratt reports that the landlady of the *guozhuang* was a Tibetan who was very well off (Pratt 1892, 138). Annie Taylor, an English explorer and evangelical missionary to China, wrote about her stay at an inn run by a Tibetan woman whose husband was a businessman (Carey 1901, 285), and Francis H. Nichols (1905, 339–356) mentions that he took two rooms at a Tibetan inn. Along with the increase in the number of Chinese and Tibetan traders in Dartsedo, the scope of trade for *guozhuang* steadily expanded. The traditional “tea-horse trade” was

gradually replaced by the “borderland tea” trade. As discussed above, the goods traded via *guozhuang* included imported goods and exported goods. Imported goods included goods from India via Central Tibet and goods from Central Asia via southern Xinjiang and Central Tibet. The expanding scope of trade greatly enhanced the economic power of the *guozhuang*. However, by the end of the nineteenth century, *guozhuang* in Dartsedo gradually began to decline. As links were forged between different ethnic groups from various regions, cultural and language barriers began to fall. The pivotal role of *guozhuang* as translators also petered out. Increasing numbers of Tibetans spoke Chinese, and Chinese traders began to make an effort to learn Tibetan through their daily contacts. There is no evidence that Hui served as intermediaries between Tibetan and Chinese traders, as did the Hui owners of *xiejia* (hostels) in other frontier regions, such as Qinghai and Gansu, mentioned above. Though the number of Hui inhabitants in Dartsedo reached as many as two thousand by the Republican period, most were poor and lacked the economic resources to serve as intermediaries. They mainly opened restaurants, engaged in petty business, or became butchers (Ma L. 2007, 484; Kangding minzu 1994, 261; Sichuan sheng 1995, 438). In addition, owners of Tibetan *guozhuang* had already filled the niche to serve as middlemen between Tibetan and Han traders in Dartsedo; Hui inhabitants in Dartsedo did not have abilities and skills to compete with *guozhuang* owners.

The decline of the original *guozhuang* is described by Ren Hanguang, who once served as the magistrate of Nyakchukha County (Yajiang *xian*), and the secretary of the Xikang Provincial Nationalist Party headquarters, as follows:

[In 1936,] no more than thirty-seven *guozhuang* out of the original forty-eight still existed. Since the Republican period, there were ten *guozhuang*, which were either bought by new owners or were built anew. Among them, only twenty-two still exclusively received Tibetan traders and could be said to have kept the traditions of the original *guozhuang*. While seven more had muleteers as their clients, the rest of them merely bore the name *guozhuang* but were no longer involved in business. Even among the twenty-two *guozhuang* that continued to receive only Tibetan traders, only ten had good business. One can clearly see the wretched economic conditions of *guozhuang*. (Ren H. [1936] 1990, 259)

Since the number of traders staying at some of the smaller *guozhuang* was declining, the trading houses were forced to accommodate other guests, including muleteers and casual laborers (Yang G. [1988] 2009, 9). The perception by many that the *guozhuang* catered to lower-status clients did not enhance their reputation. Some found new uses for the buildings. For instance, Chu-nyi Barpa *achak khapa* (Ch. Qiujiia *guozhuang*) rented half of his *guozhuang* to the Kuomintang branch school in Dartsedo and the other half to government employees in Dartsedo (Yang G. [1988] 2009, 9) (see figure 1).<sup>31</sup> The final blow came after the “Democratic Reform,” the anti-feudal land reform carried out by the Chinese government, was enforced in Dartsedo. In 1956, *guozhuang* in Dartsedo had completely died out.



Figure 1. Photograph of Chu-nyi Barpa *achak khapa* (Ch. Qiujiia *guozhuang*) taken by Sun Mingjing, 1944. Source: [Kamba Media Network website](http://www.kamba.com.cn/).

One reason for their decline was the waning of the borderland tea trade and the supplantation of Sichuan tea by cheaper Yunnan tea in the 1930s and 1940s; at this time, Yunnan merchants and south Kham traders were bypassing Dartsedo altogether (Cheng 1941, 258; Booz 2011, 314). As clearly shown above, the fortunes of Dartsedo and its *guozhuang* flourished thanks to the borderland tea trade. By the Republican period, the trading routes were frequently blocked due to the unstable political situation and constant civil wars; consequently, trade and commerce in Dartsedo began to wane, intensifying the decline of the *guozhuang*. The influx of cheaper Yunnan tea also caused a sharp drop in demand for Sichuan tea, contributing to some original *guozhuang* in Dartsedo closing down and being sold (Sichuan sheng 1995, 164). Some Chinese scholars (Tan [1942–1943] 2003, 650–651; Yang [1988] 2009, 10) argue that the impact of the influx of tea from India and the drop in trade in the Indo-Tibetan border region was a factor in the decline of *guozhuang*. As Patrick Booz (2011, 159, 163, 174) correctly points out, the influx of tea from India never greatly affected the borderland tea trade in Kham.<sup>32</sup> Although tea exports from Sichuan declined accordingly, there were other avenues of trade from which traders could profit. In the period from the 1930s to the early 1940, goods from India became the main commodity exchanged in Dartsedo, and once again it was traders from Central Tibet and large trading families, such as Pangdatsang and Sandutsang, who were the main importers of goods from India.<sup>33</sup> During this time, E. D. Sasson & Co. also engaged in entrepôt trade in Dartsedo, and its business dealings extended as far as Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Calcutta (*Fuxing Kangding* 2014, 37–38). The importation of Indian goods was lucrative; Dartsedo once again became the main distribution center, which gave the town and *guozhuang* temporary renewed importance and prosperity (Sichuan sheng 1995, 164).

The improvement of roads and transportation facilities in the 1950s also contributed to the decline of *guozhuang*. As Dartsedo became the distribution center for the Sino-Tibetan trade, it suffered from bumpy and uneven road conditions and primitive transportation facilities. In 1954 the Sichuan-Tibet motor road was completed and, consequently, Dartsedo lost its role as an entrepôt and the *guozhuang* were subsequently destroyed by Communist social reforms.



negotiation of the sale price were done by these girls. They were no different from brokers. (Huang and Zhang [1733] 1984, 74–75, cited in Chun Y. 2008)

Another Chinese source, the *Longshu Jiuwen*, describes an interesting phenomenon regarding the role of women in borderland trade: “The customs of Ta-chien-lu... is that women do not marry into their husband’s families, and they have often had Han Chinese merchants marry into their families... They are in charge of all Chinese merchants’ business deals with barbarians [Ch. *fanyi*, referring to Tibetans]” (Wang S. [17th–18th c.] 1991, 167).

For Chinese merchants and traders raised in the Chinese Confucian tradition, in which gender divisions prevented women from playing a part in trade, this leading role occupied by local Tibetan women was totally new and unheard of.<sup>34</sup> The Chinese fascination with local women innkeepers is manifested in many forms—for example, in 1944 the well-known Chinese painter Wu Zuoren did a portrait of Chöying Drölma (Mu Qiuyun), the famous female head of Gyarongsé *achak khapa* (see figure 2).<sup>35</sup> In 2004 and 2005, these women and *guozhuang* became the subject of a popular television soap opera, *The Ballad of Kangding (Kangding qingge)*, and were featured in a novel entitled *Lovers of Kangding (Kangding qingren)*.

It is interesting to note how this transition came about and why women became prominent figures in running and managing *guozhuang* by the early twentieth century. In Tibetan society, especially in Kham, the status of women in households and local society had always been very different from their status in Chinese society. Thus, in many accounts written by Chinese officials and historians, Tibetan women are portrayed as having near-equal status to men. Wang Yehong, the head of the Xikang Provincial Police Station (*Xikang sheng jingchaju juzhang*) and commander-in-chief of Xikang Garrison Headquarters (*Kangding jingbei silingbu siling*), observed that

Chinese households are male-dominated. Men are the ones who run businesses or do hard labor, and it is rare that women alone can make a living for their family. But it is not the case for people from Kham. There, the family organization is purely dominated by women and the situation is, more or less, such that a family would not be a family if there were no women.... (1938, 26–27)

This account shows that Tibetan women at the time played a prominent role not only in family life but also in social and economic life, and were active in both domestic and outside affairs. Wang further reports that a family would surely go bankrupt without the help of a woman, since Tibetan men “usually spent most of their time wandering about except during periods of harvest” (1938, 127). Tibetan women perceived their roles at home and in society quite differently from Chinese women. Historically, the ideal pattern of labor division within a Han Chinese family was represented by the saying “the man plows and the woman spins and weaves”—that is to say, men took charge of external affairs, and women were responsible for household affairs. The Chinese noted that Tibetans, in particular Khampas, tended to do exactly the opposite: “Trade in Tibet was mainly conducted by women, but sewing and needlework was done by men alone” (Zhou [1804] 2006, 94). Chinese sources (Hu P. 2013, 756; Wu [18th c.] 2003, 84) often mention examples of Tibetan women being active participants in agricultural work and trade. The comparatively higher status of women in Tibetan society is noted by the famous Chinese historian Ren Naiqiang: “Tibetan (Ch. *xifan*) women manage property and are the heads of families. Women can inherit family property and official positions. [They] allow men to marry into their families. There are usually more women chieftains and indigenous leaders than men” ([1934] 2000, 341). The last statement seems to grossly exaggerate the reality in Kham; nevertheless, it still suggests that Tibetan women seemed to have played a prominent role in local politics, at least when compared with their counterparts in inland China.<sup>36</sup>

Some Chinese writers (Zhang Q. 2005, 118; Zhou X. 2003, 47) tend to attribute the prominence of women in social and commercial activities to Tibetan men’s greater religious involvement; however, this has to be understood in terms of the perception of labor, not the absence of men. It cannot be said that traditional Tibetan society exhibited total gender equality. Women came to dominate the *guozhuang* sector because it was mostly likened to managing a household and therefore viewed as lower-status work. Since men as heads of *guozhuang* were originally seen as officials under the Chakla kings in the mid-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, when *guozhuang* functioned primarily as an administrative system, they mainly dealt

with the affairs of the state and politics, including receiving tribute-bearing Tibetan dignitaries and Chinese officials.

This idea of *guozhuang* involving domestic work was later reinforced by the acculturation of the region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and it was during this period that women came to dominate the management of *guozhuang*. Through frequent intermarriages between Han and Tibetan inhabitants in Dartsedo,<sup>37</sup> Chinese values and customs were gradually introduced into the local society and started to take root in Tibetan families. Male family members would often engage in long-distance trade or concurrently serve as government officials during the Republican period; thus, the task of dealing with all the affairs associated with *guozhuang* fell to women.

In addition, the social capabilities of female *guozhuang* owners, such as their language proficiency and diplomacy in the highly interactive social setting of trade, probably equipped them to perform the many functions linked to the *guozhuang*. As reflected in the discussion above about the Tibetan name *achkla khapa* for *guozhuang* owners, women owners' proficiency in various Tibetan dialects and Chinese provided them with the eloquence required to serve as brokers and to facilitate and successfully seal business deals by prevailing on buyers and sellers in business transactions. Because women owners were aristocratic, they were positioned to be well informed and sophisticated, to know the necessary etiquette, and to develop the ability to socialize and negotiate with ease. Their aristocratic backgrounds also offered them the possibility, at the turn of the twentieth century, of receiving an education in Chinese schools in addition to a traditional Tibetan schooling.

Women also came to dominate in the management of *guozhuang* because of the changing role and function of these institutions that ended up being managed like a household. And in local Tibetan practice, "when Tibetan men grew up, they were usually taught to keep accounts or a particular skill; but Tibetan women were taught to weigh... and to trade, or they were taught to weave" (Zhou 1804 [2006], 71).

## **Guozhuang Owners as Deal Makers**

### *The Function of Guozhuang as Inns and Warehouses*

Since *guozhuang* provided lodging and storage services for Tibetan traders, they served a dual purpose as inns and warehouses. However, *guozhuang* were different from regular inns, which offered only accommodation, in that they took approximately 2 to 4 percent in commission according to the volume of goods traded by the Tibetan clients staying at the *guozhuang* (*Kangding guozhuang xianzhuang* 1933, 740; Baobao 1988, 31). In addition, with regard to the clientele, regular inns were generally open to all guests, so they might never be the same from one week or month to the next. However, all guests in the *guozhuang* were Tibetan traders, and each *guozhuang* usually had a long tradition of putting up the same Tibetan traders, who were associated with particular regions or monasteries.

According to Popo Döndrup Rinchen (Bao Wenguang),<sup>38</sup> the owner of Wesekyap *achak khapa*, each *guozhuang* had a fixed clientele because the Chakla king assigned Tibetan traders from various regions to stay at certain *guozhuang*. These assignments were meant to avoid any rivalry and to minimize the risk of disputes. This eighteenth-century practice lasted until the Republican period (Liu S. 1988, 19). In addition, Tibetan traders came to rely on the owners of particular *guozhuang* to trade information and ensure business deals, and they formed special bonds with certain *guozhuang*. For instance, when the Gyarongsé *achak khapa* was completely destroyed by fire, probably during the Anti-Japanese War (1937–1945), the family could not afford to rebuild the *guozhuang*. Traders from Dargyé Monastery who regularly stayed at the *guozhuang* are said to have donated a great amount of money and to have rebuilt the entire *guozhuang*, without payment. The owner of Gyarongsé spontaneously exempted these traders from any commission for three years (interview with Pema, June 25, 2014).

The loyalty between *guozhuang* owners and Tibetan traders is also reflected in how traders behaved when innkeepers had to mortgage their *guozhuang* to take out personal loans. Under these circumstances, some long-term clients would temporarily stay at other *guozhuang* until the mortgage term had expired and the owners had recovered their *guozhuang*; these traders

would then go back to live in the original *guozhuang* (Tan ([1942–1943] 2003, 640). Other traders would not look for a new *guozhuang*; instead they would stay in the same *guozhuang* with the old owner, but the new owner would secure business deals for them and any subsequent commission would be paid to the new owner (Yang G. [1988] 2009, 2). The strength of this relationship between *guozhuang* owners and Tibetan traders is also evidenced by a special mortgage practice: under exceptional circumstances, a *guozhuang* owner could mortgage Tibetan traders who regularly stayed at the *guozhuang*, just as they would mortgage property. Once the mortgage term had expired, the owner could reclaim the traders. The close relationship between *guozhuang* owners and the Tibetan traders who stayed at their *guozhuang* was clearly more complex than a standard business relationship and was founded on moral values and mutual solidarity.

Chinese traders also established stable business relations with various heads of *guozhuang*, and some even became related to them through marriage. For instance, the Gyarongsé *achak khapa* was once related by marriage to the Yu family, who owned the large wealthy Fuhe tea factory in Yingjing and the Fuhe tea shop in Dartsedo. Chöying Drölma (Ch. Mu Qiuyun), the female owner of Gyarongsé *achak khapa*, married Yu Mohou, the fifth son of the Yu family. Since Yu Mohou's mother came from the Jiang family, who owned the famous Gongxing tea factory and was renowned among Tibetans for its best-quality tea brand called Rikdzin Dorjé (*renzhen duoji*), the Gyarongsé *achak khapa* was related to the Jiang family, too.<sup>39</sup>

### *The Function of Guozhuang Owners as Brokers and Deal Makers*

While *guozhuang* owners, as aristocrats and subordinates of the Chakla king, enjoyed great popularity and prestige among the people, they also frequently received tribute-bearing envoys dispatched by eminent lamas and indigenous leaders from Tibetan areas and important Qing officials traveling through Dartsedo. They were generally well informed and were familiar with the situation in both inland China and in Tibetan regions. For Tibetan traders, *guozhuang* owners were natural trading allies because of their common faith and language. But equally

importantly, *guozhuang* were sources of business information and news. A language barrier prevented Chinese traders from dealing directly with Tibetan traders; both parties needed people who were fluent in various Tibetan dialects and Chinese, familiar with market conditions, well informed, and well connected, and who enjoyed a certain degree of popularity and prestige in local society to act as go-betweens in order to facilitate business deals. At the time, no one was worthy of such a role except aristocrats under the Chakla king. Though Shaanxi traders made great efforts to learn “pidgin” Tibetan while doing business in Dartsedo (Ren N. [1934] 2000, 418), owing to the strong influence of the old practice known as “Han Chinese not traveling to the ‘barbarian’ (referring to Tibetan) territory and barbarians not venturing into Han land” (*Ch. han buru fan, fan buru han*), trade in the early and mid-Qing period continued to be carried out mainly through the owners of *guozhuang*, who acted as brokers (Zhao and Qing 2003, 110). Indeed, there were mutual obligations and rights between innkeepers and Tibetan traders once they had established a stable business relationship; the key to such a relationship was a culture of honesty and credibility (Baobao 1988, 28–32).

As for Tibetan traders, in addition to the traditional practice of staying at the same *guozhuang*, they were also obliged to limit their activities to within the space the owners allocated to them. In the *guozhuang*, each trader would be allotted his room, warehouse, place to keep livestock, and some space to sew the tea packs and to dry tea. No trader would be allowed to encroach on anybody else’s designated space. If a trader needed to use another person’s space on a temporary basis, he had to ask permission from the other party; otherwise, he would be punished (Baobao 1988, 31).

*Guozhuang* owners had to fulfill a few obligations in order to act as middlemen for traders. Owners had to provide not only free food and lodging for the traders but also storage space for their goods. They were required to tend to horses, yaks, and mules. The innkeepers also usually helped traders find workers to sew tea packages for them in the courtyard (Baobao 1988, 30–31). Innkeepers were responsible for selling the goods brought by the Tibetan traders and purchasing goods for their return journey. It would seem that Tibetan and Chinese traders first

bartered for goods via the innkeepers. In doing so, the business procedure was much simpler than later on, when Tibetan traders had to first sell their goods and then purchase the things they needed with the money they had received. In other words, the use of currency seemed to influence the way trade (bartering) was conducted (Lin 2005, 10–14). In the latter situation, after the trader's goods had arrived at the *guozhuang*, it was the innkeeper's responsibility to look for buyers and negotiate prices. If the goods brought by a Tibetan trader were in great demand, the innkeeper would invite Chinese merchants to examine the goods and negotiate the price. However, if the goods were not in great demand, the innkeeper would have to accompany the trader to visit Chinese merchants to try to sell the goods (Baobao 1988, 31–32). Similarly, after the goods Tibetan traders brought had been sold, the innkeeper would accompany the trader to purchase tea from businesses managed by Chinese merchants. Since the asking price and the offer for each business deal would have differed enormously, a few rounds of negotiations were usually necessary before either of the two parties would make any concessions. Only then would it have been possible to conclude a deal. When they were engaged in repeated negotiations, the Tibetan traders and the innkeeper would decide the price either by using a code word or by feeling each other's fingers through their sleeves. When neither party was willing to make any concessions, or when it seemed that the deal would fall through, the *guozhuang* owner would mediate between the two parties. The *guozhuang* owner had to play fair when dealing with traders; the deal would have to be satisfactory for Chinese and Tibetan merchants alike. In sum, no matter whether the *guozhuang* owner helped to sell or buy goods, they would oversee the whole process until the money was paid and the goods delivered.

The role of innkeepers as mediators and facilitators of trade was demonstrated most acutely during business negotiations. It was customary for all business transactions to be conducted in secret by three parties: the buyer, the seller, and the innkeeper, who acted as mediator. No other third party could be present during the negotiations. If negotiations for the business deal proved successful, the buyer did not need to give a down payment, as his purchase

was guaranteed by the *guozhuang*; similarly, the seller could not renege on the sale. In fact, the *guozhuang* was a place for trading goods, and in this sense, it functioned like a marketplace.

The transactions were never simple, and traders did not usually have recourse to wholesale or retail practices. It was common for a Tibetan trader to distribute goods to various Chinese buyers for them to sell and to only receive money or goods after the sale. This could only take place when a *guozhuang* acted as guarantor for the Chinese buyers. Similarly, if a Tibetan trader required goods but was unable to pay for them, Chinese sellers would provide the goods on the basis that the *guozhuang* served as a guarantor (Baobao 1988, 28–32). Selling goods on credit was a long-standing practice between Tibetan and Chinese traders, and the *guozhuang* owner always had to shoulder certain risks by acting as a guarantor for them (Liu S. 1988, 22).<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusion

*Guozhuang* were a unique historical and cultural phenomenon in the border town of Dartsedo. Initially, *guozhuang* emerged as a political institution with a military function under the Chakla king. By the mid-seventeenth century, when the Chakla king moved to Dartsedo, they had evolved into a bureaucratic or administrative system. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *guozhuang* functioned mainly as inns, warehouses, brokerage houses, guarantors, and arbitrators. They played a crucial role in Sino-Tibetan trade at the start of the seventeenth century. Their fortune rose and fell according to developments in trade—particularly in relation to the tea trade.

Three successive transformations in the nature and functions of *guozhuang* took place. During the period of Chakla kings' hegemony, *guozhuang* emerged as houses of nobility and played a bureaucratic role in the Chakla kingdom. This was also a period of limited trade, before Dartsedo had become the main stopping place on the Sino-Tibetan trade route. The second transformation took place after the Chakla king moved to Dartsedo. With this move, Dartsedo became not only the center of power for the Chakla king but also the hub of Sino-Tibetan trade.

As Dartsedo emerged as the distribution center and entrepôt for trade, the Chakla king's power and authority slowly declined and Chakla nobility subsequently saw its role gradually dwindle. By the eighteenth century, the *guozhuang* nobility had to diversify its role in local society in Dartsedo in particular and in the Sino-Tibetan frontier more generally. Flourishing trade along the Dartsedo route provided *guozhuang* with new opportunities and transformed their role into one of brokerage houses, inns, warehouses, guarantors, and arbitrators in commercial transactions. The third transformation concerns the growing prominence of women; by the beginning of the twentieth century, *guozhuang* had become synonymous with women owners.

As the town of Dartsedo that Western travelers referred to as the “Shanghai of Tibet” developed, *guozhuang* owners became leading middlemen in every aspect of economic life in the frontier region. They served not only a commercial role as brokers for traders and officials but also a role as cultural brokers and translators between the Buddhist Tibetan world and the Confucian world of China.

As Bianca Horlemann (2013) rightly points out, Tibetans actively traded within their own society and also participated in long-distance trade with neighboring countries. Nevertheless, we repeatedly come across statements made by Westerners, Chinese, and even Tibetans themselves that Tibetans were—and still are—not very adept at professional trading; moreover, there is a sentiment that the general population resents—respectively resents—the trading profession for religious reasons (Grenard 1904, 284–285; Liu C. 2002, 94; Mian 2005, 236–237; Fischer 2008, 24). While it is beyond the scope of this article to explore cultural and religious aversions to commercial trading, trading and deal making proved to be—in places like Dartsedo—essential to economic and political dynamics, as well as important skills in themselves. There is ample evidence that Tibetans were actively engaged in trade and commerce, and the absence and presence of trading has much more to do with capital and resources than with cultural traits.

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### **Appendix: List of Guozhuang in Dartsedo during the Late Qing and Republican Periods**

Name of Achak Khapa		Name of the Family Head		Client Regions, Clients, Monasteries	Notes and Duties for the Chakla Gyelpo (Mingzheng tusi)
Tibetan Name	Chinese Name	Tibetan Name	Chinese Name		
Dbal gsas skyabs (Wesekyap); Wa bser skyabs thog ma (Waserkyap Tokma)	Baojia guozhuang (Wasidiao)	Don grub rin chen (Döndrup Rinchen)	Bao Wenguang	Central Tibet, Bhutan, Kardzé, Drango, Litang, Dergé, Pelyül, Tongkör Monastery	1 of 4 chamberlains; 1 of 5 trusted aides; in-laws of the Chakla king (the wife of Döndrup Rinchen was the daughter of the last Chakla king Püntso Namgyel, also known as Jia Liansheng in Chinese); related to Gyarongsé.
Zhabs pad tshang (Zhabpetsang), Zhabs pad thog ma (Zhabpé Tokma)	Wangjia guozhuang (Tiemenkan)		Wang Shenzhong, Li Zhengguang	Kardzé, Chamdo, Pomé, Dergé	1 of 4 chamberlains; 1 of 5 trusted aides; said to be the descendants of a minister (Zhabs pad) dispatched to serve as an official in Dartsedo during the mid-14th and early 17th c.

Sa skas sgang pa (Saké gangpa); Sa skas mgo (Sakego), Sa kun 'go (Saküngo)	Luoja guozhuang (Dayuanba)	G.yang 'dzoms (Yangdzom)	Luo Zonghua	Kardzé, Drango, Rongpa-tsa, Cham-do, Dargyé Monastery, Yunnan	The "Inner Minister"; 1 of 5 trusted aides; said to be the original indigenous leader of Dartsedo before the Chakla king's family moved there.
Rgyal rong sras (Gyarongsé)	Mujia guozhuang	A skya chos dbyings sgröl ma (Akya Chöying Drölma)	Mu Qiuyun	Chamdo, Kardzé, Dargyé monastery Drango, Beri monastery, Qinghai	1 of 4 chamberlains; 1 of 5 trusted aides; In-laws of the Chakla king (the mother of Akya Chöying Drölma was the second daughter of the Chakla king Gyeltsen Chömpel, also known as Jia Yizhai); Related to Wesekyap.
Go 'jo ba (Gonjowa), Sgang gshogs ba (Gangshokwa)	Baojia guozhuang, Baitukan Baojia guozhuang	Blo bzang (Lobzang)	Bao Lianxiao	Dergé, Pelyül	1 of 4 chamberlains; 1 of 5 trusted aides; manager, land.
Drung yig tshang (Drungyiktsang)	Anjia guozhuang, Zi-er-po Anjia guozhuang	Don grub (Döndrup)	An Keqin	Tawu	Secretary; An Suitang, the owner of Drungyiktsang served as the translator for Chinese officials in late Qing and the Republican period.
Tshangs po tshang (Tsangpotsang)	Chongjia guozhuang, Dayuanba Chongjia guozhuang		Chong Xijia Chong Jianyou	Kardzé, Central Tibet, Tawu	1 of 4 minor ministers; manager, clothing; in-laws of the Chakla king. The owner Chong Baolin served as the commander of the militia regiment during the Republican period.

Khrom tshang (Tromtsang), Khrims tshang (Trimtsang)	Qiuqia guozhuang, Zi-er-po Qiuqia guozhuang	Chos mtsho (Chöntso)	Qiu Wenbin	Kardzé, Chamdo, Qinghai, Dargyé Monastery	1 of 4 minor ministers; in-laws of the Chakla king; manger, markets and prisoners.
Chu gnyis bar pa tshang (Chu-nyi Barpatsang)	Qiuqia guozhuang, Jiangjunqiao Baijia guozhuang		Qiu Bingzhong	Dergé, Jagö Topden (a minister of Dergé), Chamdo, Gönchen Monastery	1 of 4 minor ministers; manager, grain and food; in-laws of the Chakla king
Kha ba rgya mtsho Tshang (Khawa Gyatsotsang)	Jiangjia guozhuang, Nanmen Jiangjia guozhuang	Kun dga' (Künga)	Jiang Chunpu	Yunnan, Litang, Chamdo, Dergé, Sandutsang	1 of 4 minor ministers; manager, music and dance; in-laws of the Chakla king (the wife of the owner was the oldest daughter of the last Chakla king).
Ja nyer thog ma (Janyer Tokma)	Wangjia guo-zhuang, Ming-zhengjie Jiali guozhuang		Wang Chunhua	Minyak	1 of 4 treasurers; manager, tea and holding parasols for the king.
Ja nyer zhabs ma (Janyer Zhapma)	Luojia guozhuang	A kya pad chos (Akya Pechö)	Luowangshi	Yunnan	Derived from Ja nyer thog ma (Janyer Tokma)
Nang dpod rwa (Nangpowa); Nang dpon rwa (Nangpönra) Gnam 'bel thog ma (Nambel Tokma)	Lijia guozhuang; Bao Fengying guozhuang	Ye shes 'od zer (Yeshé Özer), Bskal bzang (Kelzang)	Bao Fengying Li Haitin (the maternal uncle of the last owner of Kazhi Tokma Achak khapa).	Drango, Tawu	1 of 4 treasurers; manager, internal affairs. It was said that Bao Fengying was either the daughter or concubine of the last Chakla king and she later she Li Haitin.

Yul kha ba (Yulkhawa); Yid kha ba (Yikhawa)	Dashibao Baojia guozhuang, Zi-er-po Baojia guozhuang	A kya bkra shis (Akyā T <sub>r</sub> ashi)			1 of 4 treasurers; 1 of 4 minor ministers.
Gnam 'bel zhabs ma (Nambel Zhapma)	Lengbai xياما				This trading house went bankrupt in the Qing and was sold to the tanning industry.
Yid skyong ba (Yikyongwa)	Gongjia guozhuang	Rta mgrin lha rgyal (Tadrin Lhagyel)	Gong Dasan		1 of 4 treasurers.
Ltag sgo rgyab pa (Takgo Gyabpa), Stag sgo rgyab pa (Takgo Gyabpa)	Zajia guo- Zhuang, Nanmen Zhajia guozhuang		Za Yiqing, Za Jisheng	Minyak, Litang, Nyachukha	Guarding the city gate.
Skyur po pa tshang (Kyurpopatsang), Skyur po ba tshang (Kyurpowatsang)	Jibowa (Jibuwa) guozhuang				Declined in the end of the Qing period and without an heir.
Thang dmar drung 'khor (Tangmar Drungkhör)	Tangma zhongke				Manager, corvée labor and <i>ulag</i> transportation services.
Te'u rtsis zhabs ma (Tewutsi Zhapma); Rti'u rdzi zhabs ma (Tiwudzi Zhapma), Bcib rdzi zhabs ma (Cipdzi Zhapma)	Pengjia guozhuang	A kya bstan 'dzin (Akyā Tendzin)	Peng Nantian or Peng Lantian	The site of a medicine shop during the Repub- lican period	Manager, grazing. When the original owner A kya bstan 'dzin died, he sold it to Peng Nantian.
Te'u rtsis thog ma (Tewutsi Tokma); Rti'u rdzi thog ma (Tiwudzi Tokma), Bcib rdzi thog ma (Cipdzi Tokma)	Pengjia guozhuang, Bei-erxiang Peng Yongnian guozhuang		Peng Yong- nian	Kardzé, Tawu	Manager, grazing.

Gzi ri phug zhabs ma (Ziripuk Zhapma), Gzi nor phug'og ma (Zinörpuk Okma)	Yangjia guozhuang, Zi-er-po Yangjia guozhuang	A kya mu seng (Akya Museng)	Yang Zexing, Yang Yide	Muleteers from Tawu	
Gzi ri phug thog ma (Ziripuk Tokma), Gzi nor phug thog ma (Zinörpuk Tokma), Gser thogs (Sertok)	Wangjia guozhuang, Zi-er-po Wangjia guozhuang	A kya 'jam dbyangs (Akya Jamyang)	Wang Chengxian	Nyarong, Dergé (Gönchen)	
Rdo skas mgo ma (Doké Goma); Rdo skas sgang pa (Doké Gangpa)	Jiajia guozhuang, Bei Yixiang Jiajia guozhuang		Jia Mingde; Jia Maosen	Drango	It was said that the family served as the trusted aide for the Saké gangpa when the latter was the indigenous leader.
Chu kha ba (Chukhawa)	Qinjia guozhuang, Shengxiangzi Qinjia guozhuang		Qin Qizong		Also known as Gongjia guozhuang.
Bu rje ba tshang (Bujewatsang), Bu rdzi ba (Budziwa)	Yangjia guozhuang, Erdao-qiao Yangjia guozhuang				In Er-daoqiao, the suburb of Dartsedo (Kangding).
Spro ra zhabs ma (Drora Zhapma); Spret rwa zhabs ma (Drelra Zhapma)	Suoluoba Wangjia guozhuang, Wang Dounan guozhuang		Wangzhang shi	Tawu, Drango	In-laws of the Chakla king.
Spro ra thog ma (Drora Tokma); Spret rwa thog ma (Drelra Tokma)	Suoluoba Zhangjia guozhuang	Dge bshes Bkra shis (Geshé Trashi)	Sun Ying-guang, Zhang Gexi	Tawu, Yülshül	In-laws of the Chakla king.
Dbal gsas skyabs 'og ma (Wesekyap Okma)	Xiaqiao Pengjia guozhuang, Xia Wasidiao		Peng Xiansheng, Peng Xiuzhen		Manager, land of Serdo yamen (government office) and 3 temples of the king; derived from Dbal gsas skyabs.

Bla ma'i ba Tshang (Lamawatsang), Bla med ba (Lamewa)	Gongjia guozhuang, Gongbu jia, Sandaoqiao Namiwa guozhuang, Xiaqiao Hugangji cangku		Gongwangshi (later, Huang Yulin)	Gonjo, Drayap	Responsible for ensuring travelers dismount in Sandaoqiao to show respect to the temple on Mt. Dentok. It was sold to the Han merchant Huang Yulin to be warehouse, ca. 1918.
Bka' bzhi thog ma (Kazhi Tokma), Bka' bzhi rwa (Kazhira)	Gaori guozhuang, Jiari guozhuang, Xiaqiao Gaori guozhuang	Bskal bzang tshul khrims (Kelzang Tsultrim)	Gaorishi	Tawu, Drango, Nyarong,	Owned land near Kazhi Monastery; relatives living near the monastery.
Gnyer pa Tshang (Nyerpatsang), Yul Ljongs ba (Yüljongwa)	Yigongwa, Sheng Xiangzi Yigongwa guozhuang				Regular chamberlain.
A nyag pa pha tshang (A-nyak Papatsang)	Wangjia guozhuang	A kya Blo bzang (Akyal Lobzang)	Jiang Zhiqing (Later Zhang Zhengrong)		Served as <i>baozheng</i> of the middle district of Dartsedo County during the Republican period. It is said that this family was not one of the 48 <i>achak khapa</i> enjoying the status of nobility under the king.
Phag phrug tshang (Paktruktsang)	Baijia guozhuang, Yangjia guozhuang, Shenxiangzi Baijia guozhuang	Bkra shis (Tashi)	Yang Haitin, Bai Xiuhua	Kardzé, Dargyé Monastery, Chamdo, Dergé	Manager, pigs; Its name in Chinese was changed to Yangjia <i>guozhuang</i> because Yang Haitin, a half-Tibetan and half-Chinese, became its son-in-law during the Republican period.
Drung yig blo Bzang (Drungyik Lobzang)	Anjia guozhuang				Secretary.

Yag 'grub tshang (Yakdrupt sang), G-yang phrug tshang (Yangtruktsang)	Yangjia guozhuang, Dayunba Yachucuo		Yang Gaoru, Yang Gaoxue	Minyak	Manager, herding goats and sheep.
Drung yig sha kya tshang (Drungyik Shakyatsang)	Gong Dashan guozhuang		Gong Dashan		Gong Dashan bought it in 1931.
Bsam yal ra ba Tshang (Samyel Rawatsang), Bsam yid tshang (Samyitsang)	Gongjiasi Sanyuan guozhuang		San Yuan		In the late Qing, rebuilt to be Dartsedo's <i>fuyin tang</i> (gospel church).
Rnga pa'i gra pa (Ngapé Drapa)	Sangyin jia				Rebuilt to be a Catholic church (Ch. <i>zhenyuan tang</i> ), late Qing.
Bsam kha tshang (Samkhatsang), So mkhar tshang (Sokartsang)	Zhangjia guozhuang (later, Bai Xiuhua)		Zhang Xide or Zhang Xitai (Chong Er-jie)	Rongpatsa, Kardzé	Security. Zhang Xide (Xitai), a Han Chinese trader from Qionglai in Sichuan Province, became the son-in-law of the <i>guozhuang</i> ; thus, it is known as Zhangjia <i>guozhuang</i> in Chinese.
Sgam thog thog ma (Gamtok Tokma)	Luoja guozhuang, Baitukan Luoja guozhuang			Litang, Yunnan	
Ja bkag Tshang (Jakatsang), Lcang kha tshang (Jangkatsang)	Linjia guozhuang		Lin Peifeng	Minyak	It is said that this family was not one of the 48 <i>achak khapa</i> enjoying the status of nobility under the king.
A bsam zhabs ma (Asam Zhapma)	Chen Wenming guozhuang, Baitukan Chenjia guozhuang	A kya rin chen sgrol ma (Akya Rinchen Drölma)	Chen Wenming, An Jingkun (the female owner)	Litang, Rongpatsa	Derived from A bsam thog ma (Asam Tokma).

A bsam thog ma (Asam Tokma)	Pengjia guozhuang			Litang, Chamdo	Owned land in the Asam village of the Minyak region; relatives living there.
Sgam thog zhabs ma (Gamtok Zhapma)	Wangjia guozhuang		Wang Zepu		Also known as Baitukan Shijia guozhuang
Sgam rgyab ba tshang (Gamgyabwatsang)	Baojia guozhuang (Baitukan)			Dergé, Pelyül	
Khang bdag ba tshang (Khangdakwatsang)	Chongjia guozhuang, Jiangjunqiao Chongjia guozhuang		Chong Jianyou		In-laws of the Chakla king. Tsangpotsang took over it as the family was without an heir.
Wa rdzi ba (Wadziwa) Wa ti ba tshang (Watiwatsang)	Waji Xiama, Jiangjunqiao Wadiwa guozhuang				Secretary; manager, fur and animal skin. No inheritor, late Qing.
skyar po ba tshang (Kypowatsang), Skyur po ba tshang (Kyurpowatsang)	Jibuwa				Manager, vegetable and making pickles. No inheritor, late Qing.
Shes rab nang ba zhabs ma (Sherap Nangba Zhapma)	Xirao Longba xiama				Sold; became the Yichangrong Photo Studio, late Qing.
Zhabs dpal zhabs ma (Zhabpel Zhapma)	Yueba xiama				Declined at the end of the Qing period; became the site of the Institute of Encouraging Learning.

Khrom po Tshang (Trompotsang), 'Tshe po tshang (Tsepotsang), Tshong dpon tshang (Tsongpöntsang), Khro bo tshang (Trowotsang)	Chongjia guozhuang, Dayuanba Chongjia guozhuang			Tawu, Kardzé, Central Tibet	Manager, clothing or serving as traders for the king; 1 of 4 minor ministers; in-laws of the Chakla king.
Shes rab nang ba thog ma (Sherap Nangba Tokma), Shing rwa nang pa (Shingra Nangpa)	Yang Matai guozhuang, Dashibao Yang- jia guozhuang		Yang Matai, Dashibao Yang Matai	Yunnan, Tsawarong.	Ancestor, Dedruk Sherap Wangchuk, served as the preceptor for the 12th Dalai Lama and the regent for the Tibetan government.
Dpal mgon tshang (Pelgöntsang)	Huangjia guozhuang, Suoluoba Huangjia guozhuang		Huang Dehua, Huang Yinhua		It is said that this family was not one of the 48 <i>achak khapa</i> enjoying the status of nobility under the king.
Gsol lo rwa (Sölora)	Yuejia guozhuang		Yue Weibo		
Po po rin chen tshang (Popo Rinchentsang)	Baobao Renqin guozhuang	Dbang ren chen (Wangren- chen)	Baobao Renqin, Wang Renqin		In-laws of the Chakla king. Popo Rinchen was the younger brother of the Chakla king Gyeltsen Chömpel.
Gling kha tshe bkra (Lingkha Tsetra)	Liuja guozhuang, Peng Kaiyuan	Pad ma lha mo (Pema Lhamo)			It is said that this family was not one of the 48 <i>achak khapa</i> enjoying the status of nobility under the king.
Spen pa 'phrin las (Penpa Trinlé)	Dingjia guozhuang		Ding Boheng		It is said that this family was not one of the 48 <i>achak khapa</i> enjoying the status of nobility under the king.

**Glossary**

<b>In-Text Vocabulary</b>	<b>Chinese Characters</b>	<b>Tibetan Transliteration</b>
<i>achak</i>	阿佳	A lcags
<i>achak khapa</i>	锅庄 [锅庄主][阿佳卡巴]	A lcags kha pa
Amdo	安多	A mdo
Batang	巴塘	'Ba' thang
Bao Wenguang	包文光	Po po don grub rin chen
Baobao	包保	Po po
<i>beifu</i>	背伙	
<i>Biancha gufen youxian gongsi</i>	边茶股份有限公司	
Butruk Rinpoché	布楚仁波齐	Bu phrug rin po che
<i>chakdzö zhi</i>	四管家	Phyag mdzod bzhi
Chakla	明正 (土司)	Lcags la (tshang)
Chakla Gyeltsen	嘉拉·降泽	Lcags la rgyal mtshan
Chakzamkha	泸定	Lcags zam kha
Chamdo	昌都	Chab mdo
Chengdu	成都	
Chongqing	重庆	
Chöying Drölma	木秋云	Chos dbyings sgrol ma
<i>Chuandian bianwu dachen</i>	川滇边务大臣	
Chu-nyi Barpa achak khapa	邱家锅庄	Chu gnyis bar pa a lcags kha pa
Dadu he	大渡河	Rgyal rong rgyal mo rngul chu
Dajianlu	打箭炉	Dar rtse mdo
Dajianlu <i>chaguan</i>	打箭炉茶关	
<i>Dajianlu shaonü</i>	《打箭炉少女》	
<i>Dajianlu zhilüe</i>	《打箭炉志略》	
Dan'gaer	丹噶尔	Stong 'khor
Dargyé (monastery)	大金 (寺)	Dar rgyas (dgon)
Dartsedo	打箭炉[康定]	Dar rtse mdo
Dechen Wangmo	德钦汪姆	Bde chen dbang mo
Dergé	德格	Sde dge
Diaomen	碉门	
<i>ding pön</i>	定本	Lding dpon
Dokham	多康	Mdo kham
<i>dokyi</i>	独吉	Rdo gcal
Dorjé	多吉	Rdo rje
Dorjedrak	金刚寺 [多吉扎]	Rdo rje brag
Drayap	察雅 [乍丫]	Brag g . yab
<i>drungyik zhi</i>	四仲依	Drung yig bzhi
<i>düinkör</i>		Mdun skor
<i>fanyi</i>	番夷	
<i>fengchagong</i>	缝茶工	Ja drub ba
Fuhe	孚和	
<i>gaitu guiliu</i>	改土归流	

Ganzi <i>garpön</i>	甘孜 营官	Dkar mdzes Sgar dpon
Gongxing	公兴	
Gonjo	贡觉	Go 'jo
Gonjowa <i>gora</i>	包家锅庄 [白土坎包家锅庄]	Go 'jo ba
Gordro <i>gosa</i>	锅庄 (舞)	Sgo rwa Sgor bro Sgo sa
Guo Changping <i>guozhuang</i>	郭昌平 锅庄	A lcags kha pa
<i>Guozhuang yiyun</i>	《锅庄疑云》	
Gyarong Gyelmo Ngülchu	大渡河	Rgyal rong rgyal mo rngul chu
Gyarongsé <i>gyelpo</i>	木家锅庄	Rgyal rong sras Rgyal po
han <i>han buru fan, fan buru han</i>	汉 汉不入番, 番不入汉	
Hanyuan	汉源	
He Juefei	贺觉非	
Huangyuan	湟源	
Hui <i>jadruwa</i>	回 缝茶工	Ja drub ba
Jamyang Pelmo	降央伯姆	'Jam dbyangs dpal mo
Janyer Tokma	王家锅庄 [明正街贾力锅庄]	Ja gnyer thog ma
Jia	甲	
Jiang(jia)	姜(家)	
Jingang si	金刚寺	Rdo rje brag
Jyekhundo	玉树	Skye dgu mdo
Kangding	康定	Dar rtse mdo
<i>Kangding jingbei silingbu siling</i>	康定警备司令部司令	
<i>Kangding qingge</i>	康定情歌	
<i>Kangding qingren</i>	康定情人	
<i>Kangding xianzhi</i>	《康定县志》	
Kardzé	甘孜	Dkar mdzes
Kham	康(区)	Khams
Khampa	康巴	Khams pa
Khangsar <i>kortso</i>	孔萨(康萨)	Khang gsar
<i>kudra</i>	戈措	Skor tsho Sku drag
Künga <i>kutsap</i>	工喀	Kun dga'
<i>latsi</i>	麝香	Sku tshab Gla rtshi
Liangshan <i>lifanyuan</i>	凉山 理藩院	
Lijiang	丽江	
Litang	理塘	Li thang
Liu Wenhui	刘文辉	
Lizhou	黎州	
<i>Longshu Jiuwen</i>	《陇蜀旧闻》	

Luding <i>qiao</i>	泸定桥	
<i>madian</i>	马店	
Markham	芒康	Smar khams
Ming	明	
Mingzheng <i>tusi</i>	明正土司	Lcags la rgyal po
Minyak	木雅	Mi nyag
Mipam Tongdé (rgyal po)	穆坪 (土司)	Mi pham stong sde (rgyal po)
Mu Qiuyun	木秋云	Chos dbying sgrol ma
Mujia <i>guozhuang</i>	木家锅庄	Rgyal rong sras
Muya	木雅	Mi nyak
<i>nangmi nga</i>		Nang mi lnga
<i>nanglön</i>		Nang blon
Ngawa	阿坝	Rnga ba
Nyakchukha	雅江 (县)	Nyag chu kha
nyerchen zhi	四大管家	Gnyer chen bzhi
<i>nyerchung zhi</i>	四小涅巴	Gnyer chung bzhi
Pangdatsang	邦达仓	Spang mda' tshang
Pelyül	白玉	Dpal yul
Pema	白马	Pad ma
<i>Pifangye</i>	皮房业	
Popo	包保	Po po
Popo Döndrup Rinchen	包保·顿珠仁青 [包文光]	Po po don grub rin chen
Qianlong	乾隆	
Qing	清	
Qiuja <i>guozhuang</i>	邱家锅庄	Chu gnyis bar pa a lcags kha pa
Ren Hanguang	任汉光	
Ren Naiqiang	任乃强	
<i>Riben shiguan xuexiao</i>	日本仕官学校	
Rikdzin Dorjé	仁增多吉	Rig 'dzin rdo rje
Saké Gangpa	罗家锅庄 [大院坝罗家锅庄]	Sa skas sgang pa
Sandutsang	桑都仓	Sa 'du tshang
Sanggyé	桑结	Sangs rgyas
Sa-nyen	三岩	Sa ngan
Shaanxi	陕西	
<i>shabao</i>	沙鸫	Shag po (?)
Shanghai	上海	
<i>si guanjia</i>	四管家	Phyag mdzod bzhi
<i>si zhongyi</i>	四仲衣	Drung yig bzhi
Sichuan	四川	
<i>Sichuan Tongzhi</i>	《四川通志》	
<i>sida guanjia</i>	四大管家	Gnyer chen bzhi
<i>sida tusi</i>	四大土司	
<i>sixiao nieba</i>	四小聂巴	Gnyer chung bzhi
Sun Mingjing	孙明经	
Ta-chien-lu	打箭炉	Dar rtse mdo
Tan Yinghua	谭英华	
Tendzin Drakpa	丹怎扎巴 [丹忠扎克巴]	Bstan 'dzin grags pa

Thubten Püntso		Thub bstan phun tshogs
Tianquan	天全	
Tongkhor	丹噶尔	Stong 'khor
tusi	土司	
ulak	乌拉	U lag
Ü-Tsang	卫藏	Dbus gtsang
Wangjia guozhuang	汪家锅庄	Ja nyer thog ma
Wang Yehong	王业鸿	
Wang Zhaxi	王扎西	
Wasidiao	瓦斯碉	Dbal gsas skyabs
Wasigou	瓦斯沟	Dbal gsas 'gag ['Gag zur]
Wu Zuoren	吴作人	
Wuhan	武汉	
Wesegak	瓦斯沟	Dbal gsas 'gag ['Gag zur]
Wesekyap	瓦斯碉 [包家锅庄]	Dbal gsas skyabs
xiejia	歇家	
xifan	西番	
Xikang	西康	
Xikang sheng jingchaju juzhang	西康省警察局局长	
Xining	西宁	
Xinjiang	新疆	
Ya'an	雅安	
Yajiang xian	雅江县	Nyang chu kha (rdzong)
Yakdruptsang	杨家锅庄	G·yang phrug tshang
Yang Hongwei	杨红伟	
Yangjia guozhuang	杨家锅庄	G·yang phrug tshang
yangke	羊客	
Yazhou fuzhi	《雅州府志》	
Yingguan	营官	Sgar dpon
Yingjing	荣经	
Yu (jia)	余(家)	
Yu Mohou	余默侯	
Yunnan	云南	
Yushu	玉树	Yul shul
Zang-Yi zoulang	藏彝走廊	
Zhabpetsang	铁门坎汪家锅庄	Zhabs pad tshang
Zhang Nima	张尼玛	
Zhao Erfeng	赵尔丰	
zhel ngo		Zhal ngo
zhurenjia	主人家	

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## Notes

- 1 In 1928, the Nationalist government promulgated *Regulations for the National Chamber of Commerce*, which designated Shanghai, Wuhan, and Dartsedo (Kangding) as general

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- chambers of commerce and as the three major trading centers in China. See Sichuan sheng (1995, 168).
- 2 The term *skor* is equivalent to 'khor in 'khor bcas, meaning relatives related by blood or by marriage. In over twenty townships in present-day Gonjo, Markham, and Drayap Counties in Chamdo Prefecture, there was a distinctive social organization known as *skor pa*, referring to the traditional tribal group or clan. In addition, in over ten townships of Sa-nyen area of Gonjo and Markham Counties as well as parts of Batang and Pelyül, there was another unique social organization called *pha tsho*, meaning patriarchal clan. While members of a *skor pa* were related to each other either by blood or by marriage, members of a *pha tsho* were related to each other by blood only, namely by patrilineal descent. Based on our interpretation of the term *skor tsho*, the social organization in Dartsedo most likely refers to tribes or clans related to each other by blood or by marriage. See Li, Yang, and Ge Le (2000, 223–235) and Xizang changdu (2005, 1098–1104).
  - 3 In Tibetan, the indigenous ruler of the Dartsedo region is referred to as *gyelpo* (king). Some historians find this term problematic because Chinese records use the term *tusi* (indigenous leader) to refer to these *gyelpo*. However, the term *tusi* tends to be applied too generally, with no distinction between these indigenous leaders.
  - 4 In English literature, the notable exceptions are van Spengen (1995), Giersch (2006), and Booz (2011).
  - 5 Recent studies are often conducted in the framework of studies on the “Tibeto-Yi corridor” (*Zang-Yi zoulang*) and have so far mainly been produced by MA students. One recurrent problem concerns mistakes in the list of Tibetan names of *guozhuang* in the *Gazetteer of Kangding (Kangding xianzhi)*, which most studies adopt uncritically. See Chen Y. (2008), Pengcuo Zhuoma (2010), and Ren F. (2012).
  - 6 Yaks for caravans could not endure the extreme heat in the lowlands. Thus, they usually could not travel eastward beyond Dartsedo, which was also the end of the line for porters carrying tea and other goods.
  - 7 Shaanxi merchants were an exception to this pattern. They penetrated deep into the Kham heartlands and were able to bear hard work. Their business acumen, strict organization, and reliability set them apart from any competitors. See *Yingjing wenshi* (1989, 19) and Tsomu (forthcoming).
  - 8 For a map and discussion of the main trade routes to and from Dartsedo, see Booz (2011, 268 and his article in this issue).
  - 9 In 1277, official licensed border markets were established at Diaomen (present-day Tianquan County) and Lizhou (present-day Hanyuan County). See Franke (1994, 302) and Wu J. (1994, 69).
  - 10 For details about border trade during the late Ming period (1368–1644) and the Qing period (1644–1911), see Booz (2011, 135).
  - 11 As early as 1639, a commissioner from Lhasa was stationed in Minyak (Ch. Muya) under

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- the Chakla *gyelpo* (*mingzheng tusi*) to levy taxes. For details about the Dalai Lama's request to establish Dartsedo as an official market, see Tsomu (2009, 67–70).
- 12 According to Liu S. (1988, 1), at that time each pack weighed about 10 kilograms.
- 13 Note that Dajianlu (Ta chien lu) is the old Chinese name for Dartsedo. For the origin of the place name Dartsedo, refer to Chen Q. (1982, 8) and Ma Y. (1987, 100).
- 14 In Tibetan long-distance trade, Dartsedo competed with Tongkhor (Ch. Dan'gaer, modern Huangyuan) near Xining in Qinghai and with Lijiang in Yunnan; the other two trade agents (*tshong spyi*) of the Dalai Lama on the Sino-Tibetan frontier were settled in these two locations.
- 15 Pinning down the number of people in each particular group is difficult. Sichuan Sheng (1995, 73) claims that Dartsedo was 40 percent Han, 40 percent Tibetan, and 20 percent Hui Muslim in the 1930s.
- 16 For details about goods sold in Dartsedo, see Grenard (1904, 295) and Rockhill (1891, 282).
- 17 According to Coales, about a half-dozen firms specialized in the trade, which amounted in 1915 to GBP160,000. Gold came next in importance to musk, and most of the gold was brought from India via Lhasa to pay for tea and silk (1919, 244).
- 18 Also refer to the TV documentary entitled *Guozhuang yiyun* broadcast by Sichuan TV Station on December 21, 2006. For details about this trading house, refer to Patrick Booz's interview with Minyak Tulku in Gangtok, October 2, 2008 (Booz 2011, 281).
- 19 Pema is the oldest son of Chöying Drölma (Ch. Mu Qiuyun), the well-known head of Gyarongsé trading houses.
- 20 The term *achak* (sister, older woman, respectable host; Ch. *zhurenjia*, owner, host) referred to the heads of *guozhuang*, who were most always women.
- 21 According to the last Chakla king, Chakla Gyeltsen, *achak khapa* referred to ministers (Tib. *blon chen*) under the Chakla king. In his view, claiming that there were forty-eight *achak khapas* by the beginning of the twentieth century would be inaccurate, as only important families enjoyed the status of *achak khapa*. See Thubten Püntsock's interview with Chakla Gyeltsen in the summer of 2008 (Thubten Püntsock 2010, 12).
- 22 Dorjé is the vice magistrate of Dartsedo (Kangding) County in charge of nationality and religious affairs.
- 23 *Sida tusi* referred to the polities of Dergé, Chakla, Batang, and Litang.
- 24 For details about local administration under the Chakla king, see Tsomu (2009, 74).
- 25 For details about the amount of land owned by prominent Tibetan *achak khapa*, refer to Liu S. (1988, 3).
- 26 Bianca Horlemann (2013, 118) claims that the institution similar to the *xiejia* and *guozhuang* seems to have been called *madian* (caravansary) in Yunnan Province, yet the main function of the *madian* was to receive caravans by providing food, lodging, and storage space, as well as sometimes taking responsibility for transporting goods on behalf of caravans. Owners of the *madian* did not act as middlemen or interpreters.

- 27 For details about different types of *xiejia*, see Yang H. (2015, 108–110).
- 28 For details about the sources of Han Chinese surnames used for various *guozhuang*, refer to Tan Yinghua ([1942–1943] 2003, 649).
- 29 For details about the activities and roles played by Shaanxi traders in the interactions and cultural exchanges between Han Chinese and Tibetans in Kham, see Shi and Zou (2011, 5–11).
- 30 Baber later became the Chinese secretary to the British Legation at Beijing, and he went to Dartsedo in 1879. Rockhill and Pratt went there in 1889.
- 31 When the volume of business of Chu-nyi Barpa *achak khapa* was less than 10,000 silver dollars, the *guozhuang* could not make ends meet from the amount of commission it received.
- 32 For details, also see Booz (2008) and Scott Relyea’s article in this special issue of *Cross-Currents*.
- 33 While Fernand Grenard specifically points out that Indian goods were among those brought to be traded in Dartsedo by the Tibetan traders, William Rockhill also lists such goods as saffron (from Kashmir), soap (from India), and a variety of coarse unbleached silk fabric (from Assam) among goods sent to Dartsedo from Central Tibet. For details, see Grenard (1904, 295) and Rockhill (1891, 282).
- 34 For a comparable study of women traders among Yunnanese Chinese migrants in Burma, see Chang (2014, 176–206).
- 35 The painting is called *Dajianlu shaonü* [The maid of Ta-chien-lu (Dartsedo)] by the famous painter Wu Zuoren. Chöying Drölma’s fame spread further thanks to the poem written by He Juefei, who stayed at her *guozhuang*. He Juefei, an officer in No. 24 army under the famous Chinese warlord Liu Wenhui, went to Kham with the army and served as the magistrate of Litang County in the 1940s. For the poem, see He (1998, 139–141).
- 36 A few noteworthy examples of female rulers include, among others: Künga, who ruled the Chakla kingdom after the king was killed by the Tibetan commissioner in 1699; her daughter, Sanggyé, who concurrently ruled the Chakla kingdom and Mipam Tongdé kingdom in the early eighteenth century; the Khangsar chief Dechen Wangmo; and the Dergé ruler Jamyang Pelmo during the Republican period.
- 37 Many families in Dartsedo include intermarriages between Han and Tibetans; most of them use Chinese surnames and Tibetan first names, such as Wang Zhaxi (Tib. *bkra shis*) and Zhang Nima (Tib. *nyi ma*). In 1929, over ten thousand people were children of intermarried Han-Tibetan families, accounting for 20 percent of the entire population of Dartsedo County. See Ren N. (1930, 8), Zhao and He (2008, 10), and *Ganzi zangzu* (1994, 213).
- 38 For a discussion about the title Baobao (Popo), used to refer to the heads of five leading *guozhuang*, refer to Booz (2011, 278n43).
- 39 Interview with Pema on June 25, 2014. Pema is the eldest son of Chöying Drölma and Yu Mohou, who graduated from the Imperial Japanese Army Academy (*Riben shiguan*

*xuexiao*).

- 40 In 1908, to ensure coordination with the commissioner of Sichuan and the Yunnan Borderlands (*Chuandian bianwu dachen*) regarding Zhao Erfeng's plan to set up a Border Tea Co. Ltd. (*Biancha gufen youxian gongsi*), officials in Dajianlu Prefecture (Dajianlu *ting*) openly appealed to Sichuan tea traders not to sell tea to Tibetan traders on credit. See "Dajianlu tongzhi" (2003, 37–38).

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