

A Lifetime Portrait of the Fifth Dalai Lama
终身肖像第五世达赖喇嘛








ABSTRACT

This monumental masterpiece - one of the largest extant thangkas painted on silk - is a lifetime portrait of the most important figure in Tibetan history: the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617 - 1682). The painting was commissioned for a ceremony in which the Great Fifth blessed a large audience with an important Sakya lineage (the Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala) that the Great Fifth learned and assimilated into the Gelug tradition. The composition, style, and the exquisitely individualized portraiture are not only a rare 17th century example of the New Menri style, but also indicate that the painting may be the work of master artist Choying Gyatso.

The write-up below presents the research for identification of the center figure, understanding the historical and symbolic context, and for the artist attribution.

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INSCRIPTION

Salutation to the Guru !

This image of the Nirmanakaya Master of uninterrupted kindness
glowing with cognizable likeness
is offered as support for the eyes of the Dakinis assembled.

Implanted by intensive practice of the Nine Deity Mandala of Amitayus In the tradition of (the Mahasiddha) Dzetari

May by the virtue of this the Master Guru remain on earth for hundred Kalpas.

Throughout all our lives may we not be separated and be held by him.

May we have the strength to apprehend his entire secret mind treasure!

In the meantime also ourselves and our next in kin

May have long lives free from ailment and

May happiness and joy like a summer lake increase!

And having appeased harmful obstruction and spirits

May good luck joy and happiness be enjoyed in fearlessness!

Blessed with the hands of the Master Guru himself!

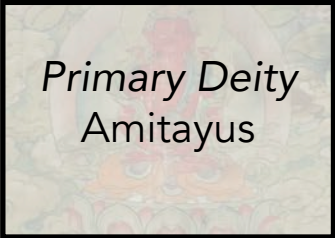
Translated by Prof. Dr. Andrea Loseries,

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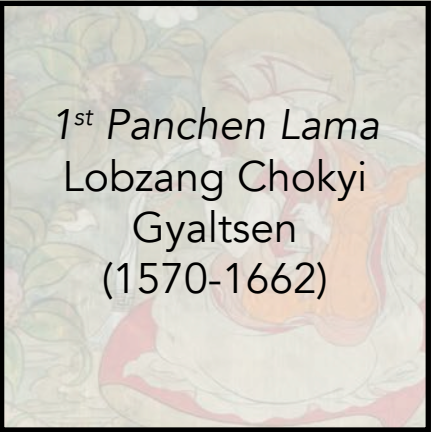
Lifetime portrait of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617 - 1685)
Central Tibet, 1638 - 1662, possibly painted by Choying Gyatso
Mineral pigment on silk
63 x 48 in (160 x 122 cm)



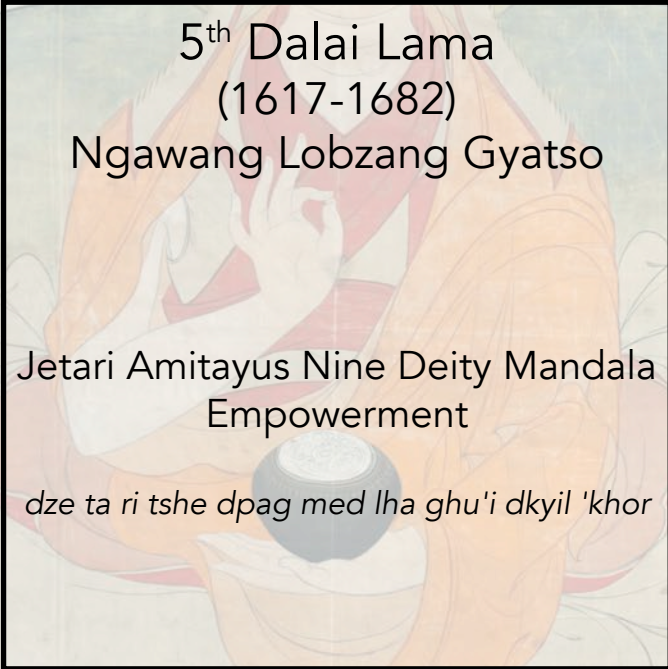
Gelugpa Founder
Tsongkhapa
(1357-1419)



Primary Deity
Amitayus



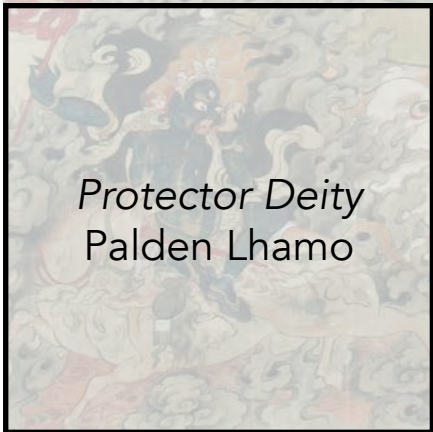
1st Panchen Lama
Lobzang Chokyi
Gyaltsen
(1570-1662)



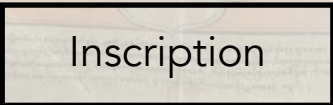
5th Dalai Lama
(1617-1682)
Ngawang Lobzang Gyatso

Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala
Empowerment

dze ta ri tshe dpag med lha ghu'i dkyil 'khor



Protector Deity
Palden Lhamo



Inscription



possibly
4th Demo Rinpoche
Lhawang Gelek Gyatsen
(1631 - 1668)

With a mandala offering

The inscription, historical accounts, and iconography corroborate identification of the central figure as the 5th Dalai Lama, and help to unravel the painting's symbolic and ceremonial purpose

As one of the largest extant Tibetan works on silk, this painting would have been commissioned by an extremely wealthy patron in honor of a high-ranking lama for an important occasion. In this article, the identity of the lama sitting in the center and the motives for commissioning of the work are determined through the use of multiple interpretive tools, including inscriptions, historical accounts and iconographic analysis. Furthermore, a hypothesis is put forth regarding the identity of the artist on the basis of similarities in style and composition.

A long inscription at the bottom of the painting provides an invaluable primary source of information that can be directly used or interpreted through an appropriate historical context. A reading of the inscription confirms that the painting was made during the lifetime of the central figure, made in his likeness, and blessed by his hands^{1,2}. The central figure is also a disciple of the 1st Panchen Lama (b.1570, d. 1662) whose distinctive profile (Figure 1) is on the upper right hand seated on a cushion. By iconographic convention³ - the 1st Panchen Lama is sitting on a cushion - the painting was painted prior to 1662, the year in which he passed away.

The inscription also explicitly states the relevant lineage practice - the Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala, and the means of its acquisition by the central figure (intensive *sadhana*)⁴. Given that many lineage practices are well

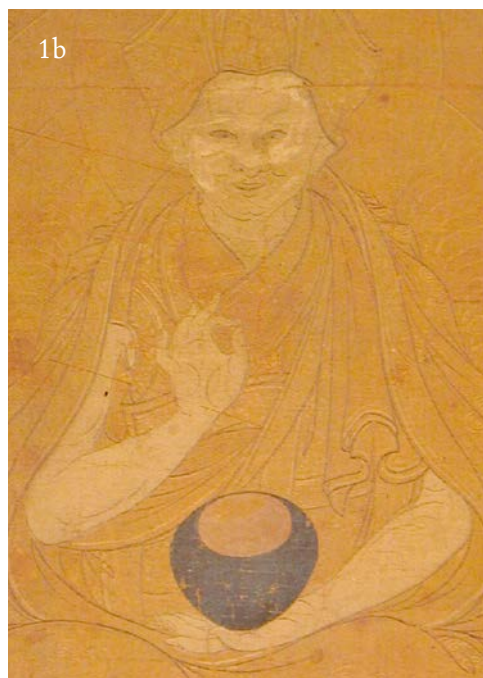
documented, mention of the lineage is invaluable for identifying historically relevant people, textual sources, and for interpreting iconography. The Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala practice was an important Sakya lineage teaching, and is known to have been practiced by Sachen Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158) and Sakya Pandita (1182-1251). One extant Sino-Tibetan Tapestry attests to knowledge of this Mandala in the Yuan courts as well¹⁰.

The painting, however, belongs to a Gelug lineage, and the most informative Gelug source is a passage from the 5th Dalai Lama's (Ngagwang Lobzang Gyatso, b. 1617, d. 1682) autobiography. In it, the 5th Dalai Lama explains how he brought the Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala practice into the Gelug lineage⁵ when he learned it from the Sakya lama and Zhalu abbot (1662-1671), Rinchen Sonam Chogdrub (b. 1602 d. 1681). As a point of convergence for multiple threads of the Sakya Jetari Amitayus lineage⁶, Rinchen Sonam Chogdrub was an important practitioner of the lineage. Though no date is provided for the transmission of the teaching from Rinchen Chogdrub to the 5th Dalai Lama, some circumstantial evidence suggests that this might have occurred in the 1650's⁷. Following this transmission, the Great Fifth was in his own right a point of convergence for the lineage, having later received the "innermost essence" from a different source⁸. As the painting must have been made prior to 1662, the central figure is without doubt either the 5th Dalai Lama, or one of his high-ranking disciples.

The subject of the inscription changes halfway through from the central figure to the audience⁹, elaborating on the audience's hopes for longevity, prosperous and happiness. The



Tibet, 18th Century
Collection of the Rubin Museum of Art



Tibet, 1662 - 1685
Collection of Tashilhunpo Monastery



Tibet, 1638 - 1662
This work

Figure 1. *Depictions of the 1st Panchen Lama in works attributed to Choying Gyatso.* **a.** Closeup of the 1st Panchen Lama from the Nartreng set of the previous lives of the 1st Panchen¹⁹. Based on primary textual sources, the Nartreng set was either designed by, or based on a thangka set by, Choying Gyatso¹⁷. **b.** Closeup of the 1st Panchen Lama from a gold thangka on silk signed by Choying Gyatso¹⁸. The figures surrounding the center figure are depictions of previous lives of the 1st Panchen Lama. **c.** Closeup of the 1st Panchen Lama from the present thangka on silk. **Discussion:** Both 1a and 1b are well researched works, and constitute highly credible material for comparing 1c to. All three depictions have distinctive wrinkles on both the face and neck, a dimple in a protruded chin, puckered lips, and the same ritual hat. Both portraits in the 3/4 perspective, 1a and 1b have a protruding eye, and virtually identical hair-lines. The painting signed by Choying Gyatso, 1b, includes wrinkles in the arms as well - an extremely rare feature in Tibetan works, but one that is also found in the portrait of 1c. All three depictions have different iconography.

Figure 2. *Comparing depictions of the Fifth Dalai Lama.* **a.** Closeup of the 5th Dalai Lama in the present work (1638 - 1662). **b.** Closeup of the 5th Dalai Lama in an 18th century life-story in the Rubin Museum of Art **c.** Closeup of the 5th Dalai Lama in an 18th century life-story. **Discussion:** All three depictions have extremely similar proportions of the face, nose, eyes, lips, and ears. All have the Fifth Dalai lama with the Vitarka mudra and none have a dharma wheel in his lap (begging bowl in 2a, vajra bell in 2b and 2c). As an earlier work with individualized portraiture this work, 2a, could have been used as a template for later depictions such as 2b and 2c.



Central Tibet, 1638 - 1662
This work



Tibet, 18th Century
Rubin Museum of Art
HAR 65275



Tibet, 18th Century
Collection Private
HAR 99077

Figure 3. *Comparing depictions of the Gelugpa founder, Tsongkhapa.* **a.** Closeup of Tsongkhapa in the present work (1638 - 1662). **b.** Closeup of Tsongkhapa in a 15th century (1420 - 1460) work in the Rubin Museum of Art **c.** Closeup of Tsongkhapa in a 15th century (1420 - 1460) work in the present work. **Discussion:** The depiction of Tsongkhapa in the present work has a broad nose (3a) with wide lips, a subtle dimple on the chin, and red highlights in the eyes characteristic of earlier in the 15th century. This similarity indicates the emphasis that the artist placed on capturing the individual's identity in his portraiture.



Central Tibet, 1638 - 1662
This work



Tibet, 1420 - 1460
Rubin Museum of Art
HAR 595



Tibet, 15th Century
Rubin Museum of Art
HAR 410

inscription concludes by observing that the sitter has conferred blessings with their own hands. A clear image of the historical context thus emerges. The sitter - as a revered incarnate lama - presided over large gathering, and blessed a large audience with teachings from the Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala practice. This thangka could have been presented either during the ceremony or as an offering of gratitude afterwards, and till this day serves as a historical record of the occasion.

With respect to iconography of the painting, interpretive clues are presented in the 5th Dalai Lama's biography. In it, he directly refers to the begging bowl of the central figure in his writing on the Jetari Amitayus practice¹⁰. Similarly, it is likely that the iconography of the 1st Panchen - the Drum and Vajra Bell - are intended to evoke reminders of sounds or mantras in the Jetari Amitayus empowerment ritual¹².

All of the evidence - namely that the central figure was a student of the 1st Panchen Lama, belongs to a Gelug incarnation lineage prior to 1662, is closely associated with Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala lineage, was likely to

hold a public ceremony to bless large audiences, is associated with the Dharma Wheel iconography in the offering bowl for the sitter, and has Palden Lhamo as their protector deity - points towards the 5th Dalai Lama as the identify of the central figure. Any other historical figure must be being significantly less probable^{13, 14, 16}. Though the displacement of the Dharma Wheel from the Fifth Dalai Lama's lap is conspicuous, it can systematically be discounted as a counter-argument¹⁵.

That the painting celebrates the assimilation of an important Sakya tradition into the Gelug lineage corroborates the identification of the central figure as the 5th Dalai Lama. Both the 1st Panchen Lama and the 5th Dalai Lama appropriated Sakya monks as previous lives - Sakya Pandita and Chogyal Phagpa respectively - to add legitimacy and age to their own re-incarnation lineage. In a way, the history of the Jetari Amitayus lineage, from Chogyal Phagpa in the 13th century comes full circle with the 5th Dalai Lama - Chogyal Phagpa's reincarnation - learning the lineage teaching four centuries later. It is also curious to note that the central figure

is portrayed with a *third-eye*, which is commonly added in portrayals of Sakya Pandita and other Sakya lamas. It is hard to imagine a Gelug lama – most of whom had a distaste for the teachings of other schools – other than the 5th Dalai Lama who would be so compelled to emphasize a Sakya connection with this painting.

Stylistically, all of the figures in the thangka have highly expressive and individualized depictions. The top register is undoubtedly composed of Tsongkhapa on the upper left, and the 1st Panchen on the upper right. Some later depictions of the Great Fifth bear a very strong resemblance to the central figure, from the depiction of the eyes, nose, lips, mudra, and facial structure. As a lifetime portrait, this thangka depicts the 5th Dalai Lama as he appeared on the day of the ceremony, and the painter would not have been compelled to add a moustache or purbha as might be automatically done for works where the sitter was depicted iconically rather than from real life.

The monk on the bottom right with the Mandala offering also bears unique portraiture, and his large curved nose is particularly reminiscent of another historically important portrait of the 4th Demo Rinpoche, Lhawang Gelek Gyatsen, (b. 1631 d. 1668) in the Collection of the Rubin Museum of Art (dated by inscription to 1667). It is interesting to speculate whether the lama offering the mandala could in fact be the 4th Demo Rinpoche (Figure 2a, 2b)? As would be required for a portrayal of a high-ranking lama, the monk offering the mandala is portrayed with a halo (by comparison, no halo is seen in a similar composition in Figure 3b). Though this appealing proposition is unlikely to ever be more than speculation, there are several important iconographic clues



Figure 4. Demo Rinpoche. a. Closeup of the lama presenting the Great Fifth with an architectural mandala. His nose is large and curved, with a tip that protrudes below the nostrils. The green halo indicates that the lama is a high-ranking one. b. Closeup of Demo Rinpoche in a large portrait (Collection RMA). The realistic portraiture proves that Demo Rinpoche had a large, curved nose with a tip protruding below the nostrils. He is depicted with a drum and bell – like the Panchen lama in this work – and has a painting of the Great Fifth at his heart center.

in, and similarities between, the works that underscore the significance of the Jetari Amitayus practice. Note that the 4th Demo Rinpoche holds in his hands the same iconographic elements as the 1st Panchen Lama in this portrait – the drum and the vajra bell. Furthermore, the inscription in the Demo Rinpoche portrait mentions both Amitayus and refers to his



Central Tibet, 1662 – 1685
Collection of Tashilhunpo Monastery
Signed by Choying Gyatso



Central Tibet, 1638 – 1662
This work



From the Portrait of Demo Rinpoche
Tibet, 18th Century
Collection of the Rubin Museum of Art

Figure 5. Comparing works with detailed architectural rendering of the offering mandalas a. Monk with moustache presenting a three-dimensional mandala to the central figure. Three monks in dynamic poses assisting to the left. b. From the portrait of the 1st Panchen Lama: Monk presenting a three dimensional mandala with two onlookers with moustaches also paying respects. c. Mandala offering in a large portrait of the Demo Lama in the RMA.

personal mandala assembly, though the exact Amitayus lineage is not mentioned. Furthermore, below the Demo Rinpoche's throne is also a highly architectural rendering of a mandala. To my knowledge, the Demo portrait, the signed Choying Gyatso work of the 1st Panchen, and the present portrait of the 5th Dalai Lama are the only works with such a finely rendered architecture within the mandala offering. The structure of the mandala in the Demo Rinpoche painting is quite different from the other two, as it more closely resembles a court (fourth side open with a courtyard in the middle).

Given the dates for the thangka, striking similarities in style and composition implicate the hand of artist Choying Gyatso or his atelier

Combining the known period for the painting as mid-17th with appropriate stylistic comparisons results in a reasonable hypothesis concerning the artist. In the style, composition, and portraiture, the painting is most closely related to the specific New Menri sub-school originating from the artist Choying Gyatso (b. 1615 d. 1685). Choying Gyatso worked primarily as a court artist for the 1st Panchen Lama, is known for painting murals at Tashilhunpo monastery, in Lhasa, and is recorded to have a set of 10 paintings on the previous lives of the 10th Dalai Lama¹⁷. The only known thangkas attributed to him are a portrait of the 1st Panchen¹⁸ and either designed himself - or was the inspiration for - the Narthang set of thangkas on the previous lives of the 1st Panchen^{17,19}.

The similarities of the present work to the style developed by Choying Gyatso include a remarkably consistent depiction of the 1st Panchen Lama (Figure 1)²⁰, a monk presenting a three-dimensional mandala to the central figure (Figure 5), virtually identical portrayal between 5th Dalai Lama in the present work and the 1st Panchen Lama in Choying Gyatso's signed work (Figure 2), and the relative proportions of the central figure to the remainder of the painting.



Figure 6. *Expressive depictions of figures.* **a** Detail of snow lions with bulging eyes, and a tongue waving like a flag in wind. **b** Detail of the guardian deity Palden Lhamo. Palden Lhamo is most commonly known as the guardian of the Dalai Lama lineage. Notice the heavy rotation of the horse's face,

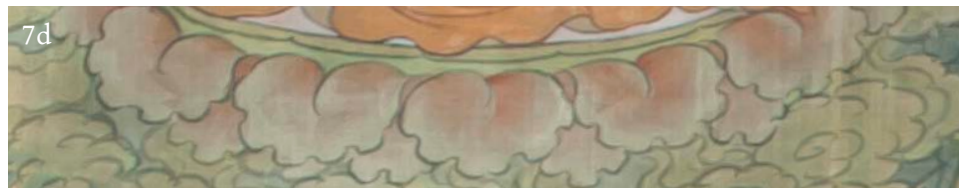
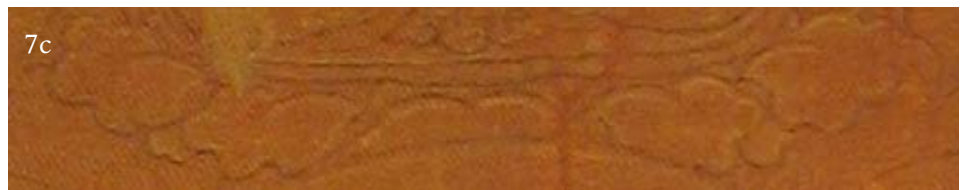


Figure 7. *Comparison of the Two Lotus Types and Proportions* **a.** Lotus Type I in signed Choying Gyatso work. **b.** Lotus Type I in this work. **c.** Lotus Type II in signed Choying Gyatso work. **d.** Lotus Type II in this work. **e.** Lotus Type II in Narthang Block set (ref). **f.** Peony fruit in signed Choying Gyatso work. The leaves have three petals. **Discussion:** Both types of lotus in this work are found in works ascribed to Choying Gyatso with identical proportions.

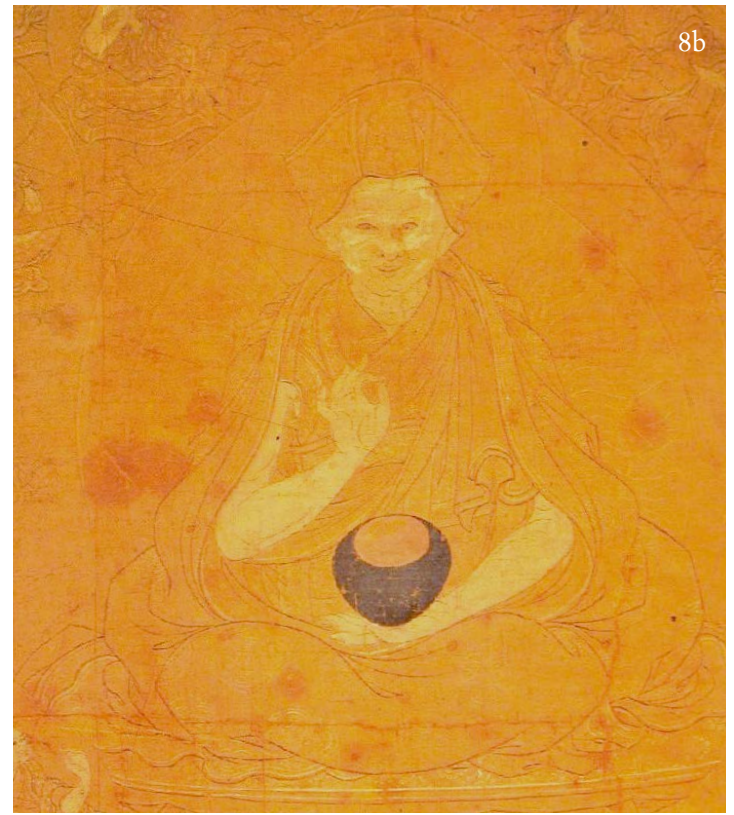


Figure 8. *Composition and iconography of central figure.* **a** In both the present work **b** and the signed work by Choying Gyatso. **Discussion:** the central figure is depicted in full frontal profile, wearing a meditational cloak, making the vitarka mudra with their right hand, holding a begging bowl. The body proportions, as well as the sizes of the body and head halos, are nearly identical.

Stylistically, the draftmanship not only shares soft-lines and delicate handling, but also the proportion and structure of elements, the protruding eye in the 3/4 profile (for example, Figure 1a, 1c), an emphasis on dynamic portraiture (Figure 6), and Lotus types (Figure 5), and rendering of the fruit from the peony. In fact, there is not a single stylistic feature in this painting that is not found in either the Narthang set or the 1st Panchen portrait²¹.

In light of these similarities, it is interesting to note that the painting was made during the time that Choying Gyatso was active. In fact, as this portrait was painted during the lifetime of the 1st Panchen Lama (d. 1662), it pre-dates both the signed Choying Gyatso portrait (where he is seated on a lotus) and the Demo Rinpoche portrait (dated 1667). Therefore, this painting could not have been a stylistic copy of Choying Gyatso's style, and any similarities necessarily imply that either Choying Gyatso or someone in his atelier created this work. This is further supported by the textual evidence found by David Jackson suggesting that Choying Gyatso's New Menri style only became influential beyond his own atelier in the 18th century¹⁷.

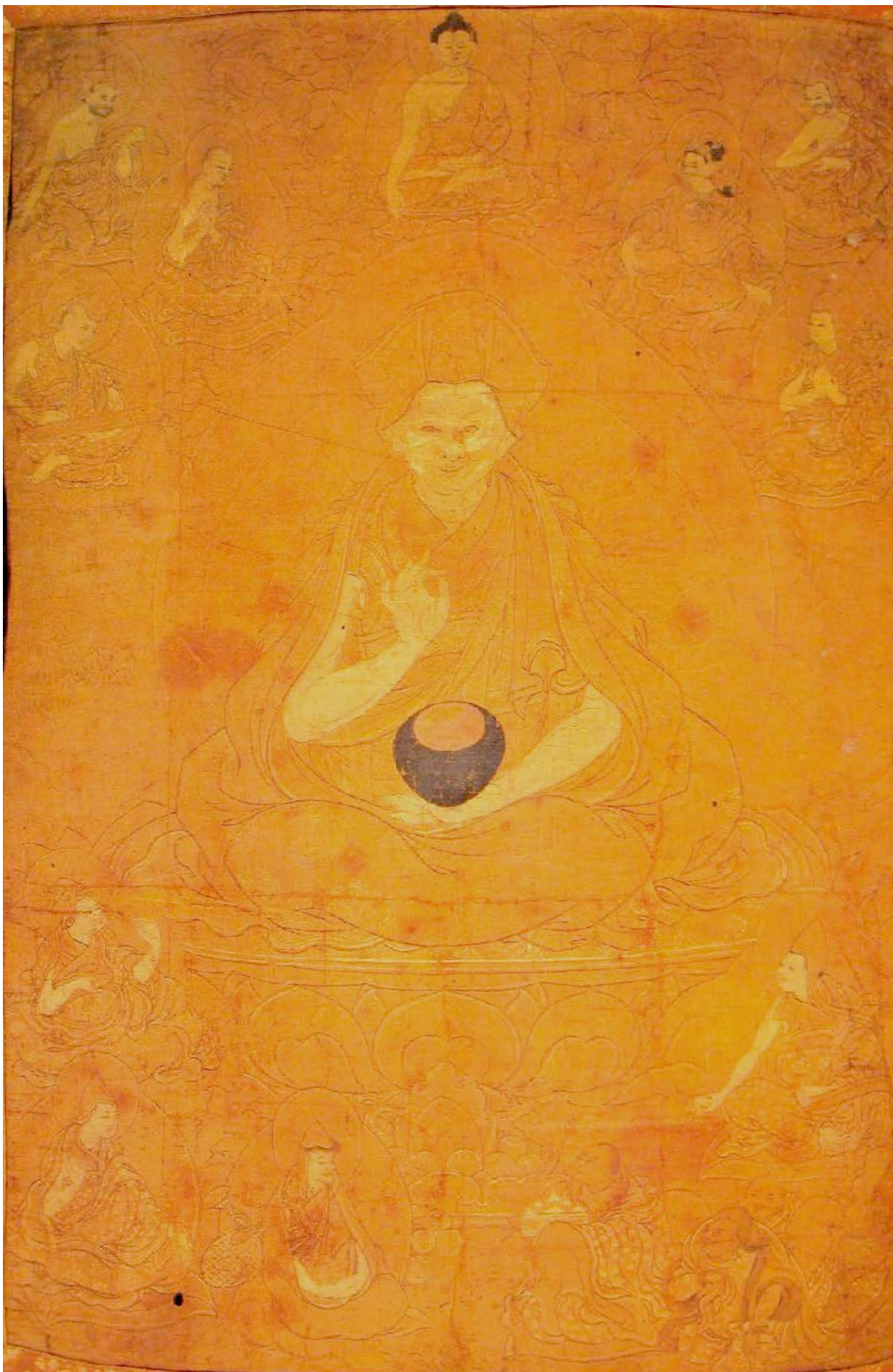
Notes

1. The inscription mentions that the lama is a re-incarnate lama (*sprul pa'i sku*), and that the image has been made in the sitter's likeness: *bka' drin 'khor med rje btsun sprul pa'i sku'i snang brnyan gzi 'bar mngon sum byon 'dra 'di*. The inscription mentions that the sitter has blessed the painting with his own hands, which necessarily means that the sitter was alive when the painting was made: *rje btsun bla ma nyid kyid phyag nas ma byin rlabs can no*.
2. The inscription stops short of either naming the sitter or providing a date - as if such this information was too obvious to warrant explicitly

mentioning at the time of the object's creation. Any proposed identity for the central figure should be consistent with the iconographic clues: that the central figure has Palden Lhamo as their protective deity (at the bottom left), is associated with the Dharma Wheel in the offering bowl, and has a begging bowl in their lap. Though the begging bowl, vitarka mudra, and Palden Lhamo suggest an identification of the 1st Dalai Lama, this attribution is impossible based on the presence of the 1st Panchen Lama and more importantly, the information in the inscription.

3. The general convention in Tibetan thangkas is that people who are alive when a painting is made are seated on a cushion, whereas people who have passed away are seated on a lotus. The major exception to this rule of thumb is when *all* figures are seated on a cushion or rug, as sometimes seen in lineage paintings. In this work, Tsongkhapa in the top left is seated on a lotus, and the central figure - whom we know from inscription is alive at the time - is seated on a cushion. From this, we infer that it is possible to determine whether figures in this painting are alive or dead based on whether they are sitting on a lotus or a cushion. Thus, the 1st Panchen, who is also seated on a cushion, must have been alive when the painting was made (i.e. prior to his death in 1662).
4. The phrase *sgrub mchod* refers to intensive sadhana. The relevant part of the inscription are: *dze ta' ri yi ba zhed srol tse dpag med lha dgu'i dkyil 'khor sgrub mchod legs btsun dges*. This has been translated by Andrea Loseries as "...implanted by intensive practice".
5. Refer to: ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho. "dze ta ri'i lugs kyi tshes dpag med lha dgu'i dbang sogs kyi lung brgyud" In *gsung 'bum/_ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*. TBRC W1PD107937. 1: 122 - 127. pe cin/: *krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang*, 2009. [http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O8LS6083|O8LS6083LS6145\\$W1PD107937](http://tbrc.org/link?RID=O8LS6083|O8LS6083LS6145$W1PD107937). Though the section header does not explicitly mention the mandala (*dkyil 'khor*) it is clear in the text that this section does refer to the mandala assembly.
6. From the autobiography of note 5. The 5th Dalai Lama describes the Sakya transmission lineage. He describes many branching points in the lineage. A branching point reflects the fact that a teacher in the lineage passed on teachings to more than one disciple. Nearly all of the branches form loops - wherein a subsequent lineage master receives teachings from more than one master, thereby providing closure to a branch. When multiple loops end with the same lineage master, it indicates

- that the specific master was a convergence point for multiple threads or variants of the lineage, and is of central importance to the teachings. This is the case with the Sakya lama Sonam Rinchen Chogdrub - and the 22nd Zhalu abbot - who transmitted the Jetari Amitayus teachings to the 5th Dalai Lama (the 5th Dalai Lama refers to himself in two ways, one is *des bdag la'o* and the other is one of his Tantric aliases, *za hor bande*). Of the approximately twenty branching points mentioned in the 5th Dalai Lama's writing, around ten terminate before his time at random points in the tree, and seven converge at Sonam Rinchen Chogdrub. The main branch of the described Sakya lineages can be found on TBRC at: *tshe dpag med lha dgu'i ras bris kyi dkyil 'khor du dbang nos pa'i brgyud pa/*. TBRC L8LS13758. 28 vols. <http://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=L8LS13758>.
7. A painting of Virupa in the collection of the Rubin Museum was blessed by both the 5th Dalai Lama and Rinchen Sonam Chogdrub in 1665 (Jeff Watt. *Indian Adept - Virupa*. <http://www.himalayanart.org/items/65340>. Written 6-2006, accessed 11-2015), suggesting that the two were already close by then. One would imagine that any lineage transmission between the two would have happened not much more than a decade prior to this date, on which account their encounter is estimated to be in the 1650's. Based on this painting, we know that the transmission must have happened before 1662.
 8. The 5th Dalai Lama also mentions that he learned the "innermost essence" (*zab mo yang snying*) of the Jetari Amitayus from Drigung Kagyu origins with the Nyingma lama Lodro Chokyi Dorje passing on this part of the teaching (P2668 on TBRC). The implicit claim of the Great Fifth therefore is that he has completed the Jetari Amitayus lineage practice, going beyond the accomplishments of Sonam Rinchen Chogdrub, who consolidated the Sakya branches of the lineage.
 9. The shift in subject from the sitter to the audience being blessed occurs with the (translated) sentences: "Throughout all our lives may we not be separated and be held by him. May we have the strength to apprehend his entire secret mind treasure! In the meantime also ourselves and our next in kin"
 10. Reference of note 5. The Fifth Dalai Lama uses a phrase, *lhung bzed bsnam* (translated to "take up/carry the begging bowl") in describing the Jetari Amitayus practice. The begging bowl was clearly important to the practice, and is likely the reason the central figure is holding a begging bowl instead of whatever iconographic element they are traditionally depicted with.
 11. See plate 19 with the corresponding catalog entry on p. 114 by Prof. Marilyn Rhie in the *The Perfect Circle* catalog published by the Rubin Museum of Art in 2009.
 12. In the reference of note 5. Another phrase in the Great Fifth's writing alludes to iconographic elements in this painting. The 5th Dalai lama mentions the sound of drums (*rnga sgra*) as important to the practice. Accordingly, the 1st Panchen in the top right corner is holding a drum and a bell. In another sentence, the 5th Dalai Lama mentions Dharani mantras (*gzungs sngags*), suggesting the importance of auditory resonances in this kriya tantra. The slightly turned form of the 1st Panchen adds just enough momentum for the viewer to visualize him ringing the vajra bell and shaking the drum, thus producing sounds essential to a performance of the Jetari Amitayus ritual empowerment. Sentences: (1) *thugs sras sems dpa' chen pos mdzad pa'i dkyil chog tshe dpal ye shes bsam grub kyi steng nas mgon po tshe dang ye shes dpag tu med pa 'che med rnga sgra lha dgu'i ras bris kyi dkyil 'khor du dbang 'che blu dang bcas pa zha lu pa'i phyag len ltar legs par nos pa'i brgyud pa ni* (2) *bya ba'i rgyud kyi bcangs pa tsam gyis skye ba dran pa'i gzungs sngags yig 'bru lnga bcu rtse bdun pa byang sgra mi snyan pa'i tsho'i rang gzugs su grags pa thams cad mkhyen pa zha lu lo tsA ba chen pos bslab pa kun las btus pa'i lus bsrung ba'i sngags su bshad pa nyid*).
 13. If the sitter is not in fact, the 5th Dalai Lama, he must at the very least have been one of his students, as the 5th Dalai Lama was the point of introduction of the Jetari Amitayus practice into the Gelug lineage.
 14. A common mistake in identification is a form of "selection bias" whereby one selects the most famous or well-known figure. In many cases, a person's fame centuries later can have little correlation with the historical motives surrounding the a work's production. In this particular case, the inscription - with its effusive display of gratitude for the sitter and the mention of a specific transmission lineage - provides a basis for believing that the sitter was the most able and well-known Gelug practitioner of the Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala in the period between 1638 and 1662. The person who fits this description best is the 5th Dalai Lama. Further, it is concluded that selection bias is not a valid argument against identification of the 5th Dalai Lama.
 15. The absence of a Dharma Chakra from the lap of the central figure is an untenable argument against the 5th Dalai Lama as the identity of the central figure. First, as mentioned in note 10, displacement of the Dharma Wheel with the Begging Bowl is acceptable as it is the iconographic convention specified by the Great Fifth in his autobiography. Second, the Dharma Wheel is not completely absent, and in fact, can be found in the offering bowl below the sitter. Third, it is possible that the Vitarka mudra made with the sitter's right hand compensates for the displacement of the Dharma Wheel from his lap. Fourth, there are other confirmed examples of paintings of the Great Fifth that do not confirm to this requirement - two examples are provided, Figure 2b, 2c).
 16. The inscription *rje btsun sprul pa'i sku* once and *rje btsun sprul bla ma* twice. *rje btsun* is an honorific, synonymous with Exalted or Great. Based on one's reading, one interpretation could be that it is a short hand for the Jebtsundampa lama (*rje btsun dam pa bla ma*), whose first incarnation was blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (P5779) was recognized as an incarnation of Taranatha (a Jonang scholar), more famously known as Zanabazar. If the central figure is indeed Zanabazar, then the painting would most likely date to around 1648, when he visited Tibet from Mongolia. Though he made other trips during his lifetime, this was the only one where the 1st Panchen was still alive.
 17. Jackson, David. *History of Tibetan Paintings*. Austrian Academy of Sciences Press. December, 1996.
 18. 1st Panchen Lama with previous lives. *Choying Gyatso*. Collection of the Tashilhunpo Monastery. Himalayan Art Resources Item 99075. <http://www.himalayanart.org/items/99075>. Accessed Nov. 4, 2015.
 19. 1st Panchen Lama. Nartang Set. Shelley and Donald Rubin Collection. Himalayan Art Resources Item 1073. <http://www.himalayanart.org/items/1073>. Accessed Nov. 4, 2015
 20. Though the ritual hat can be worn by others, the 1st Panchen Lama is consistently depicted only wearing this particular hat. That there is remarkable similarity in the actual portraiture - in addition to a probable iconographic identification - not only confirms the identity, but also implicates the hand of the artist or his/her disciples.
 21. One of the hallmarks of the Nartang set is the dynamic portraiture. The portrayal of figures is not static, but subtly communicates a sense of activity and motion captured in the moment. This dynamicism is represented, for example, in the 1st Panchen's form in the top right (see note 12), and in Palden Lhamo (Figure 6).



Previous Lives of the 1st Panchen Lama, Lobzang Chokyi Gyatso
Signed by the artist Choying Gyatso
Collection Tashilhunpo Monastery
Mineral Pigment on Silk



Previous Lives of the 1st Panchen Lama, Lobzang Chokyi Gyatso
Collection of the Rubin Museum of Art
Mineral Pigment on Cloth
68.5x39.5cm (27x15.50in)



Demo Lama, Lhwang Gelek Gyaltzen (1631 - 1668)

Dated 1667 by inscription

Collection of the Rubin Museum of Art

Former Collection of Navin Kumar

Size: 99 x 62in (251 x 157 cm)

Mineral Pigment on Cloth



Jetari Amitayus Nine Deity Mandala
Tibeto-Chinese; Yuan dynasty, probably 2nd half of the 13th century
Tapestry; silk and silk brocade with embroidery
73.875 x 55.375 in. (187.5 x 140.5 cm)
Collection of Navin Kumar, New York