

## The Mgar Family and Tibetan rule over Tuyuhun

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This article focuses attention on the Mgar Family, which during the late 7th century monopolized power within the Tibetan Empire (吐蕃) after it rose up on the Tibetan Plateau and embarked on the conquest of the kingdom of Tuyuhun 吐谷渾, which was accomplished in 670. Specifically, the author analyzes 1) how the Mgars were involved in ruling Tuyuhun, 2) what policies the Tufan Empire enacted after its invasion of Tuyuhun and 3) how the purge of the Mgars in 698 influenced the way in which Tuyuhun would be ruled.

With respect to objective 1), Mgar Stong rtsan acted as commander-in-chief of the Tuyuhun expedition between 659 and 666; and after his death in 667, military activities in the occupied areas of Tuyuhun were commanded by his sons Mgar Khri 'bring and \*Mgar Btsan ba. Next, regarding objective 2), after the conquest, the Tibetan Empire enthroned its own king of Tuyuhun, while at the same time embarking on a proactive agenda aiming at taking full advantage of Tuyuhun as a base of operations for the invasion of Tang China. The author argues that in the Mgars played a leading role, similar to their military command, in the implementation of this agenda. Finally, concerning objective 3), as the result of the 698 purge, the Mgar Family, which had taken charge of the Tibetan agenda for Tuyuhun, was for all intents and purposes completely removed from power, and the incident also provided the Tuyuhun people with the opportunity for a large scale estrangement from the Tibetan Empire. Consequently, the author argues that a major crisis in Tibetan rule over Tuyuhun followed from the 698 purge.

After the fall of the Mgar Family, the 'Bro, Dba's and Cog ro Families took control of the Tibetan Empire's central government; and during almost every year between 706 and 714 dispatched ministers appointed from among their family members to Tuyuhun, in addition to arranging the marriage of a Cog ro woman to the king. The author argues that through these diplomatic moves,

the Tibetan Empire was able to reestablish relations of trust with Tuyuhun. Consequently, around 714 the Tibetan Empire was once again able to reopen its invasion of Tang China with Tuyuhun as its front line base of operations.