

Kurt Tropper

THE INSCRIPTION IN  
THE 'DU KHANG OF DGUNG  
'PHUR MONASTERY,  
SPU RANG (MNGA' RIS)



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ÖSTERREICHISCHEN  
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WISSENSCHAFTEN

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# The Inscription in the 'Du khang of Dgung 'phur Monastery, Spu rang (Mnga' ris)

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**TO THE MEMORY OF TSHE RING RGYAL PO (1961–2015)**  
**A BUILDER OF MANY BRIDGES**



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## PREFACE

The present study had a long gestation period and the following lines are intended both to describe briefly its somewhat convoluted genesis and express my gratitude to the various people and institutes who contributed to its completion.

I first saw the Dgung 'phur inscription in the autumn of 1993 during a privately funded study trip. At that time, I had just finished my second year as a student in Tibetan and Buddhist Studies at the University of Vienna and so took a semester off to travel around India and Tibet. The trip had been motivated by general curiosity and a search for "adventure" rather than the desire to trace epigraphic sources, but on visiting the cave monastery of Dgung 'phur the inscription in its 'Du khang immediately caught my attention. Although it was far beyond my abilities to understand the partly illegible and in many places cryptic epigraph in all its particulars, recognizing names like Ye shes 'od and Rin chen bzang po led me to believe that this could be a document of historical value. Suzette Cooke, who shared the hardships and joys of hitchhiking around Mnga' ris with me back then, kindly sacrificed several exposures of the few film rolls she had brought along and took some general photos of the inscription. As it was clear that these photos would not be detailed enough to allow the text to be read, I also tried to prepare a handwritten copy. However, after working on it for two or three hours I had to realize that without access to reference works my attempts to decipher the epigraph then and there were bound to be futile and that my transcription would be of little use.

Nonetheless, when I came to prepare the present edition and annotated translation on the basis of a detailed video recording of the inscription, it turned out that my earlier handwritten copy of the first four lines (of a total of 23) was not completely worthless because some passages that could still be read in 1993 had become illegible in the meantime. The aforesaid video recording was done by Christian Jahoda, who carried out anthropological research in Spu rang in February/March 2007 and generously agreed to document the in-

scription on that occasion. Based on his footage, I was able to complete an edition of the epigraph's initial section, and subsequently Jürgen Schörflinger, at the time working as a research assistant for the Austrian Science Fund project "Tibetan Inscriptions" (S 9804–G08 and S 9811–G21), prepared a first transcription of the better preserved sections of the remaining text for me.

In the framework of the same project, I was able to visit Dgung 'phur again during two field trips to Mnga' ris in January 2009 and September 2010, which allowed me to check a number of readings *in situ* and to video-record the entire inscription again. Both trips were made possible through a co-operation between the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences (TASS) in Lhasa. I am particularly pleased to acknowledge the support I received from various members of TASS in organizing and conducting these trips. Tshe ring rgyal po, Pad ma rgya mtsho and Mtsho mo were instrumental in the planning stages, while Bstan 'dzin acted as a co-researcher on both occasions and later made some of his own photos of the Dgung 'phur inscription available to me. On the 2010 trip, I also had the great pleasure to be accompanied by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub; not only during this joint journey have I profited from her profound knowledge in many different areas of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies.

Due to other commitments, my work on the inscription mostly lay dormant in the years that followed. It was only in 2014 that I could take it up again in an uninterrupted manner within the scope of the Austrian Science Fund project "Historical and Religious Inscriptions in Mnga' ris" (P 25479–G19). In December of that year, after finishing a first version of the edition and annotated translation, I had the privilege of being hosted as a short term guest at the *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin*. This was made possible through an invitation of its 2014/2015 fellows Guntram Hazod and Tshe ring rgyal po, who kindly agreed to discuss a number of unclear passages and obscure toponyms with me. Tshe ring rgyal po, himself a native of Mnga' ris, also took the trouble of making several phone calls to draw on the geographical knowledge of 'Jam dpal, the former abbot of 'Khor chags monastery, which is located about 15 km linear distance to the southeast of Dgung 'phur. As a matter of course, the

contributions of my Austrian colleague and the two learned Tibetans are duly mentioned at the respective places. I deeply regret that Tshering rgyal po did not live to see the publication of this study and I can only hope that it would have found favour in his eyes.

The photos reproduced as figs. 1–3 were kindly made available to me by Christiane Kalantari, Bstan 'dzin, and Christian Jahoda. I would also like to express my thanks to Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek for correcting my English, and, once again, to Jürgen Schörflinger for his help with the indices. Naturally, I am responsible for all remaining errors and shortcomings.

Vienna, August 2015



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The cave monastery of Dgung 'phur is located at the north-western edge of Skyid rang,<sup>1</sup> the present-day administrative centre of Spu rang county (*spu rang rdzong*).<sup>2</sup> According to Tshe ring rgyal po (2006: 112), the name Dgung 'phur (lit. 'sky take-off') derives from the local oral tradition identifying the site of the monastery with the place from which Yid 'phrog lha mo, wife of the legendary *dharm*a king Nor bu bzang po, took off into the sky.<sup>3</sup> He also reports on the variant name Rgod khung (lit. 'vulture hole'), found in Dkon mchog bstan 'dzin's *Ti se lo rgyus*,<sup>4</sup> and infers from it that the site must have originally been a vulture nest or den.<sup>5</sup>

In keeping with this proposition, the monastery is situated on a steep sandstone cliff rising high above the banks of the Karnali river

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<sup>1</sup> In this introduction, the spelling of Tibetan toponyms largely follows Tshe ring rgyal po 2006. For the conventions adopted in the annotated translation of the inscription, see p. 20, below.

<sup>2</sup> Chin. 普兰县 *pǔlán xiàn*. On Chinese maps, Skyid rang is usually referred to as 普兰 *pǔlán*, the town thus bearing the same name as the county. At any rate, most of the present-day town was built during the last fifty years and pre-communist Skyid rang only constitutes a small part of it.

<sup>3</sup> *rjod srol la sngon chos rgyal nor bu bzang po'i btsun mo yid 'phrog lha mo dgung la 'phur sa yin pas ming de ltar thogs* (for a similar statement, see Chos ngag 2004: 9). The story of Nor bu bzang po and Yid 'phrog lha mo is known in various versions and has also been adapted for a Tibetan opera play, which is generally referred to as *Chos rgyal nor bzang*. For more detailed information on the original Indian sources of the story and its later treatment in Tibetan literature, see Sørensen 1990: 167–173.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. Don grub 1992: 58, Vitali 1996a: 404, n. 662; the text in de Rossi Fili-beck 1988: 37 (*rgod khu ba*) seems to be corrupt at this point.

<sup>5</sup> *dkon mchog bstan pas* [i.e., *dkon mchog bstan 'dzin gyis*; K.T.] *mdzad pa'i gang mtsho'i dkar chag nang / pu rang rgod khung dgon pa zhes bris 'dug pa ltar na thog ma bya rgod kyi tshang ngam khung yin nges te ...* (Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 112); *rgod gung* and *rg<o>d phungs*, found in verse-lines 147 and 215 of the inscription edited and translated below, appear to be other variants (for the editorial signs, see p. 21).



↑ Fig. 1: Dgung 'phur  
monastery (2010)  
(courtesy of Chris-  
tiane Kalantari)

← Fig. 2: Inscription  
below the painting  
of 'Bri gung mthil  
(2009)  
(courtesy of Bstan  
'dzin, Tibetan Acad-  
emy of Social Sci-  
ences)



Fig. 3: Left side of the inscription (2010) (courtesy of Christian Jahoda)

(Tib. *Rma bya kha 'bab*) and consists of several caves that can be reached via a steep tunnel cut into the cliff. Some of the caves are only connected by a balcony, while others are also accessible through internal doorways (fig. 1).

Housing about four monks, *Dgung 'phur* is a branch of *Rgyang grags* monastery<sup>6</sup> and belongs to the *'Bri gung* school. Consonant with this, the west wall of its *'Du khang* has a large mural painting of *'Bri gung mthil*, i.e., the first *'Bri gung* monastery, which was established in 1179 and still serves as the school's main seat today.<sup>7</sup> The extensive historical inscription that forms the object of the present study is found immediately below this painting (figs 2 and 3).

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<sup>6</sup> *Rgyang grags* is located on the southern slopes of Mt. Kailāsa and was founded by *Ghu ya sgang pa* (spelled *Mgu ya sgang pa* in verse-line 117 of the *Dgung 'phur* inscription) in the early 13th century (see Petech 1978: 317). It was badly destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and has now been almost entirely rebuilt. For photos of the monastery taken in 1935, see Tucci 1937 (between p. 84 and 85).

<sup>7</sup> For a succinct description of *'Bri gung mthil* and its history, see Muldowney 2011: 87–97.

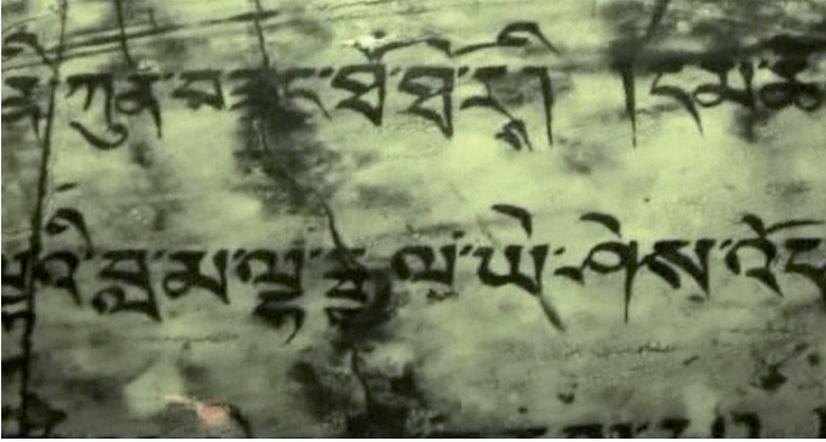


Fig. 4: Detail of the inscription showing a short section of lines 3 and 4 (2009) (video-still, nightshot mode)

Some of the better preserved passages of the text (amounting to about twenty per cent) have been rendered by Tshe ring rgyal po (2006: 113–115), who notes that the epigraph is difficult to understand (“*go don rtogs dka’ po yod mod*” [*ibid.*: 113]) but does not provide any further discussion, interpretation or translation. Apart from that, no other studies on the inscription are known to me.

#### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSCRIPTION

The inscriptional panel measures ca. 27 x 118 cm (height/width), with its lower edge situated some 40 cm above the ground. The text is written in regular *dbu can* letters (fig. 4) and comprises 23 lines. While most of it is executed in black ink, all but one of the letters in the introductory benediction “*om s\_-sidd-am //*”,<sup>8</sup> the verse-line “*// e ma gangs dkar sti se’i phyogs bzhir yang //*” (line 12), the name ’Jam

<sup>8</sup> For details, see n. 57. The most likely conjecture for the passage is *om swaha siddham*.

dbyangs rgya mtsho (lines 13, 15) and the phrase “=jam dbyangs rgya mtsho rgyal l” (line 13) are in red.

The panel is heavily damaged in many places, but it can be established with a reasonable degree of certainty that except for the incipient “om s- sidd-am” (see above) and the concluding “shu-m”<sup>9</sup> the text is entirely of a metrical structure and breaks down into 329 verse-lines. In order to meet the metrical requirements, genitive formations like *lha'i* or *de'i* sometimes have to be read as two syllables (i.e., as *lha yi* or *de yi*), a peculiarity that is also found in other epigraphic sources.<sup>10</sup>

While the number of syllables per verse-line cannot always be fully determined, it is clearly not consistent throughout the text. Thus verse-lines 1–131, 133–194, 197–281, 302–329 appear to have contained nine syllables, 282–284 twenty-one, and 286–301 seven. Verse-line 132 has eleven syllables and 285 was probably made up of twenty-five, but both of these singularities seem to be just blunders on the part of the inscription’s author. Of the remaining two verse-lines, 196 has seven syllables and 195 is partly damaged but in all likelihood concurred with the verse-line it precedes; hence the short section may or may not have been the result of a deliberate metrical change. Putting all this into tabular form, the following two likely alternatives for the *intended* metrical structure of the inscription may be offered.

A	verse-lines	syllables	B	verse-lines	syllables
	1–281	9		1–194	9
	282–285	21		195–196	7
	286–301	7		197–281	9
	302–329	9		282–285	21
				286–301	7
				302–329	9

<sup>9</sup> Here, one probably has to assume an erstwhile *shubham*.

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Steinkellner & Luczanits 1999: 14, verse-lines 58 (*de'i*), 103 (*pha'i*), 104 (*ma'i*) of the inscription in the Lo tsa ba lha khang of Kanji (Tropper 2015: 155, 160), and verse-lines 5 (*lho'i*), 15 (*bzhi'i*), 68 (*lha'i*) of the inscription in the Gsum brtsegs temple of Wanla (Tropper 2007a: 114, 117).

As the figures in the left columns already indicate, the entire inscription cannot be structured into regular stanzas with an even number of verse-lines, a situation that is also known to apply to other Tibetan epigraphs in the western Himalayas.<sup>11</sup> To be sure, there are many passages in the Dgung 'phur inscription that naturally subdivide into groups of two, four, six, or eight verse-lines; but others do not, and it is unclear whether this is the result of mistakes (e.g., the scribe skipping one or more verse-lines) or if it was fully intended by the author.<sup>12</sup>

#### SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The inscription opens with several invocations (*mchod brjod*). These are partly damaged and thus not entirely clear, but those to whom obeisance is paid include Vajradhara (i.e., the primordial Buddha of the various Bka' brgyud schools), the *dharmā*, the *saṃgha* and the 'Bri gung protectress A phyi Chos kyi sgrol ma (verse-lines 1–24).

The historical portion of the text begins with a short description of the history of Buddhism in India, including references to some of its outstanding proponents up to Nāropa (25–39). Next, we are informed about the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet during the reign of King Tho tho ri (cf. fig. 4), its subsequent spread there, Glang dar ma's short rule, Ye shes 'od's sponsorship of Rin chen bzang po, and their solid establishment of Buddhism in Mnga' ris (40–58). The inscription then provides some information about early Tibetan Bka' brgyud masters, i.e., Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, Sgam po pa, Phag mo gru pa (59–75), and, in particular, 'Jig rten gsum mgon, the founder of the 'Bri gung school (76–116). Following this, we are told about the deeds of various religious masters and political rulers

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<sup>11</sup> E.g., the two inscriptions in Kanji and Wanla, mentioned in n. 10, above.

<sup>12</sup> While the Dgung 'phur inscription does not contain any evidence on whether the scribe and the author were different persons, other epigraphic sources are more explicit in this respect (cf. Tropper 2005: 92f., 2015: 147, 171 [n. 278]). It is also well known that there is a long tradition of Tibetan authors dictating their works to their disciples. For an instructive modern-day account, see Midal 2004: 282.

who were instrumental in the Buddhist history of Mnga' ris from the early 13th century onwards (117–176). The former include Mgu ya sgang pa,<sup>13</sup> Nyi ma gung pa, 'Bri gung gling pa, Lha nang pa, Seng ge ye shes, Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (all late 12th to 13th c.), 'Jam dpal ye shes, Mgon po ye shes, Kun dga' bkra shis, Kun dga' grags pa, Kun dga' rgya mtsho, Bsod nams dpal 'byor, (the) Sher bcu (monk?), Kun dga' dpal, Rin chen dpal bzang, Gram rgyal bstan 'dzin (all late 15th to late 16th / early 17th c.) and Rin chen skyabs (dates unknown, but probably late 16th / early 17th c.); the mentioned rulers are Khri Bkra shis pa, Gnam lde mgon po, Khri Dbang phyug pa, Dpal mgon lde, A tig (pa/sman), Stag rtsa, Khri Grags pa lde, his wife Lha lcam Bsam grub (all late 12th to 13th c.), Blo bzang rab bstan, Bkra shis mgon, Kun bsam (all 15th c.), 'Jig rten dbang phyug, and, slightly uncertain, (the Spu rang governor) Bsod nams rab brtan (both 16<sup>th</sup> c.).

As mentioned above, verse-line 177 is written in red, which seems to indicate the beginning of a new section. The first part of this section focusses on some “protectors of the land” (*sa skyong*) who were born on the banks of the peacock stream (i.e., the Karnali) in Spu rang (177–189). Many of the names are severely damaged, but the ones that can be read with some degree of certainty include Rgya mtsho dpal bzang (15th c.), the already mentioned Kun bsam (see the preceding paragraph), Shākya seng ge, Shākya 'od and Smon lam rgya mtsho (dates of all three uncertain, but probably 15th to 16th c.). Next, the inscription states that “nowadays” (*dīng sang*) the “Indra of the earth” (*sa yi brgya byin*) 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho governs in accordance with the *dharma* and that he may (always) be victorious (190–194). This and the following passage (195–203), which tells us indirectly that “at this point” (*skabs 'dir*) 3734 years have passed since the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, provide the first important clues for dating the inscription. More information in this respect is found in the next fifty-eight verse-lines (204–261), which describe the various people involved in the sponsoring, equipment and conse-

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<sup>13</sup> For the spelling of this and the following names, see p. 20f., below. For the identities and dates of their bearers, see the respective annotations to the translation.

creation of “this present [great] Gtsug lag [khang]” (*da lta'i gtsug lag <khang >che<n> 'di*), mostly notably its “founder” Mgon po skyabs.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, this whole segment is the one that is most damaged and thus much of it remains unclear.

The inscription’s final section does not contain any historical information and is mostly of a religious nature. Its first twenty verse-lines express the wish that the various donors may gradually attain the ten *bhūmis*, with all of the latter either being mentioned by name or alluded to by a play on words (262–281). After a brief reference to a painted image of Vajradhara (282–285) the author of the inscription then provides a critical appraisal of his own work and alludes to the difficulties of writing and understanding subtle poetry (286–301). Finally, there are invocations referring to Buddha Śākyamuni (302–312) and Amitāyus (313–316), four largely damaged verse-lines that end in “may the [descendant(s) benefit from] the fortunate [forefather(s)]!” (317–320), and some religious appeals, extolling, among other things, the six *pāramitās*,<sup>15</sup> the understanding that space and awareness are indivisible, and the clearing away of karmic residues (321–329).

#### DATE OF THE INSCRIPTION

Before delving into the various questions connected with the date of the inscription and the people involved in the “founding”<sup>16</sup> of Dgung

<sup>14</sup> Discussed in the sub-chapter “The ‘founder’ Mgon po skyabs”, below.

<sup>15</sup> Note that this is somewhat at variance with the ten *bhūmis* on which the inscription’s author elaborates in verse-lines 262–281.

<sup>16</sup> In the inscription itself, we find *bzhengs* (verse-line 206) and the irregular *gzhengs* (verse-line 230). With cave temples or monasteries, the term of course has a more restricted meaning than in the case of their built counterparts, as the caves typically were created by natural forces and only needed to be adapted and/or furnished. This also seems to apply to Dgung 'phur, even though the prismatic form of most of its caves is clearly the result of some major human intervention. For the cliff on which the monastery is located has numerous other natural caves of different forms and sizes, and the variant name *rgod khung* (cf. p. 1, above), is also suggestive in this regard. As will be discussed in the following sub-chapter (“The ‘founder’ Mgon po skyabs”),

'phur, a few words of caution do not seem to be out of place. As has already been stressed elsewhere, attributing literary documents and religious structures to a particular year, decade or even century can sometimes be a hazardous affair, and especially for smaller temples it is not uncommon to find widely differing proposals.<sup>17</sup> The situation is aggravated by the fact that 1) the structures themselves were frequently restored, reconstructed, or even entirely rebuilt over the course of time, and 2) similar modifications and replacements are known to have been carried out with inscriptions.<sup>18</sup> Often we also have very little background knowledge about the local history of the place where the temples and inscriptions are found. On this note, the following considerations should be seen as being of a more or less tentative nature.

Nevertheless, the Dgung 'phur inscription offers some very precise pieces of chronological evidence. First and foremost, there are the two passages already briefly mentioned in the summary of the inscription's contents, viz., verse-lines 190–194 and 195–203. For easier reference, I first present my translation of these two passages:

(190) Nowadays, the supreme one, provided with the banner of glory, [the gentle (one) ('*jam*)] governing in accordance with the *dharma* and thus of a pleasant dominion – (he) addresses all in an affectionate way with various kinds of [melodies (*dbyangs*)] (and) knows the answer to(?) (what to) take [(and) reject], [like] the wave(s) of the ocean (*rgya mtsho*); may the Indra of the earth, (that is,) ['Jam] *dbyangs rgya mtsho*, be victorious!

(195) At this point, from the duration [of the Jina's teaching] for ten times five hundred (years) – in counting (them) [as] the

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there is also some evidence that one or even all of the caves of the present monastery already served some religious purpose, most likely as a hermitage or retreat, long before the inscription was written.

<sup>17</sup> Cf., e.g., Tropper 2008: 8–13, discussing the various dates proposed for the Lalung temple in Spiti, or Schuh & Ajaz Hussain Munshi 2014: 58–61, where the Wanla temple in Ladakh, dated to the 10th/11th and 13th/14th centuries by others, is attributed to “the 16th century at the earliest” (*ibid.*: 61).

<sup>18</sup> See now especially Tropper & Scherrer-Schaub 2015, presenting and discussing clear examples of epigraphic palimpsests and other forms of “renewed” or touched up inscriptions in the Tibetan cultural realm.

time [of fruition], [the time of accomplishment], the time [of scripture], [all three], and the (time of) holding [mere] signs – [the first, (that is,) the time of fruition,] and the time of accomplishment have passed. Also, [in the three] (five hundred year periods of the time of) scripture, the time of [the *abhidharma*] has passed[;] now, in the five hundred (years) pertaining to the *sūtra* section, two hundred and thirty-four have come to pass. The rest, [two] hundred and [sixty-]six, remain.

While the identity of 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho is unfortunately unclear,<sup>19</sup> the terms “nowadays” (*ding sang*) and “at this point” (*skabs 'dir*) indicate that according to the author’s calculations the inscription was written 3734 years after the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*. The mentioned “ten times five hundred (years)” are usually grouped into 1500 years of fruition (*'bras [bu'i] dus*), 1500 years of accomplishment (*[s]grub [pa'i] dus*), 1500 years of scripture (*lung [gi] dus*), and 500 years of “holding mere signs” (*rtags tsam 'dzin pa'i dus*), with each of the first three again dividing into 3 x 500 years.<sup>20</sup> As the 1500 years of scripture break down into 500 years of the *abhidharma* (*[chos] mngon pa*), 500 years of the *sūtras* (*mdo sde*), and 500 years of the *vinaya* (*'dul ba*) (in this order), the specifications of the inscription thus lead to the following calculation: 1500 + 1500 + 500 + 234 = 3734.

The obvious question, then, is which of the various Tibetan chronological attributions of the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa* the author of the inscription embraced. The most well-known of these attributions are discussed in Seyfort Ruegg 1992, Zabel 1992, Champa Thupten Zongtse 1992 and Vogel 1991, the latter article also providing a useful overview of the different datings mentioned in Bu ston’s *Chos 'byung* (Vogel 1991: 414). If we try to align the various alter-

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<sup>19</sup> Perhaps the most likely identification is with the Ladakhi king 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal (ruled “c. 1595–1616” according to Petech 1977: 37); for details, see n. 614, below.

<sup>20</sup> As already explained in Csoma de Kőrös 1834: 194f. (n. 10). For primary sources and more recent literature, see *ibid.* and Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2002: 769f., s.v. *lnga brgya tha ma* (2); also cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1992: 265 (n. 5), 284f., and Vogel 1991: 405f.

natives with the reckonings of the inscription, only the dates resulting from the calculations made by Nel pa Paṅḍita Grags pa smon lam blo gros (i.e., *parinirvāṇa* in c. 2206/5 or 2146/5 BCE),<sup>21</sup> Atiśa (c. 2137/6 BCE),<sup>22</sup> Bu ston Rin chen grub and the Sa skya pas Bsod nams rtse mo, Sa paṅ Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (2134/3 BCE),<sup>23</sup> and Ras chung pa (c. 1982 BCE)<sup>24</sup> are to be considered. Adding 3734 years to any of the more common alternatives (e.g., *parinirvāṇa* in c. 544/3 BCE [according to Śākya-śrībhadrā])<sup>25</sup> would yield a date in the future.

Another very specific piece of chronological information is provided in verse-lines 249–254. The beginning of this passage clearly mentions a water-tiger year, and although much of what follows is considerably damaged, the date very likely refers to the monastery's consecration. As can be conveniently gleaned from Dieter Schuh's online encyclopaedia,<sup>26</sup> the most recent water-tiger year corresponded roughly to 1962, and the previous ones accordingly to 1902, 1842, 1782, 1722, 1662, 1602, 1542, etc.<sup>27</sup>

Now, if we follow Seyfort Ruegg (1992: 275, n. 61)<sup>28</sup> in equating both Bu ston's and the Sa skya pas' attribution of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* to the year 2133 BCE rather than 2134 BCE, the water-tiger year of 1602 provides a perfect match. As was pointed out by Yamaguchi (1984), with such calculations many mistakes and/or variants are found in the primary as well as in the secondary literature, and the exact reckonings of the inscription's author are naturally unknown. But if we adhere to Yamaguchi's explanations and caveats regarding a pertinent passage in the *Pad dkar zhal lung*,<sup>29</sup> ac-

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<sup>21</sup> For details, see Seyfort Ruegg 1992: 274.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*: 265f.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*: 272f. and 275.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*: 272.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: 266.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.tibet-encyclopaedia.de/sechzigjahreszyklen.html>

<sup>27</sup> For the precise dates on which these years began and ended (typically in February), see the tables in Schuh 1973: \*1\*–\*239\*.

<sup>28</sup> Also cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1992: 272 and 273, n. 49.

<sup>29</sup> “[R]egardless of the day and month of the Buddha's death, the period between his death and the end of that year is counted as one year, as is the period

ording to Bu ston and the Sa skya pas the 3734th year after the *parinirvāṇa* would have ended on 21 February 1602, (i.e., on New Year's Eve before the water-tiger year)<sup>30</sup> and the water-tiger year itself would not be included in the 3734 years mentioned in the inscription because it was not yet over when the calculation was made.<sup>31</sup> These deliberations are corroborated by the fact that the Sa skya pas' reckoning of the *parinirvāṇa* was, and still is, among the best known and most frequently quoted chronological calculations in Tibet.<sup>32</sup> Lastly, dating the inscription to the water-tiger year 1602 would also be in line with the fact that all the rulers and religious masters who are mentioned in the text and can be identified with a reasonable degree of certainty lived at the beginning of the 17th century or earlier (cf. the summary of contents above).

An argument that might be put forward against this dating is that – despite the inscription's poor state of preservation and its many damaged passages – the colours of both the script and the background against which it appears still look rather fresh, giving the impression that the inscription is relatively young. Moreover, as has been pointed out above, one always has to reckon with the possibility that an inscription has been rewritten or “renewed” at some point in time. Yet the state of the colours could also be due to the cave temple's limited exposure to natural light, and the general appearance of an inscription must be considered rather soft evidence anyway. In this connection it may also be mentioned that both Tshe ring rgyal po and myself were independently told by various local in-

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until the end of each successive year thereafter” (Yamaguchi 1984: 421), and: “It should be mentioned that when calculating the date of the Buddha's death according to the Western calendar, one should not forget the fact that the years 1 A.D. and 1 B.C. are back to back” (*ibid.*). Perhaps it also bears mention that the Tibetan year that roughly corresponds to 2133 BCE would have ended in early 2132 BCE.

<sup>30</sup> See Schuh 1973: \*146\*.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. the analogous explanation of Yamaguchi (1984: 421) regarding Śākyaśrībhadrā's calculations of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1992: 272, Zabel 1992: 293, and in particular Vostrikov 1994: 104f. The latter also provides a list of Tibetan authors who referred to the Sa skya pas' chronology.

formants that the inscription is “old” – in my own case already on the occasion of my first visit to Dgung ’phur in 1993. While “old”, again, is a fairly relative term, the fact that nobody could say when the inscription was written indicates that it must have happened at least two or three generations ago. Thus, if the inscription is really a more or less faithful copy of an earlier version, the rewriting most likely was done before the middle of the 20th century.

#### THE “FOUNDER” MGON PO SKYABS

Verse-lines 206–230 provide some very specific information about the “founder” of Dgung ’phur, but much of it remains unclear – not least because of extensive damage to this section. Again, I will first present my translation of the most pertinent passage (221–230):

The magistrate (*mdun na ’don*) of the glorious ’Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho<sup>33</sup> (and) expert in painting ... various kinds ...<sup>34</sup> was the *nang blon* (and) *nang so*<sup>35</sup> called Mgon po [skyabs]; being very devoted to [the Buddha’s teaching], he easily [erected] Gtsug lag khangs in towns and at the borders of the plains in order that the sentient beings of the three realms attain enlightenment, but in the end (there/it was) a/the cause for misdeeds. Because of that, in the nurturing nest of a high (and) secure rock,<sup>36</sup> (he) erected this very Gtsug lag khang, which has embellishments of jewels and gold and where all sorts of marvels are seen.

Despite the various questions that the passage raises, the name of the “founder” is thus fairly clear. If we are to trust Vitali’s rendering and interpretation of an *dbu med* manuscript of Wa gindra karma’s *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag*, it also seems to be corrobo-

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<sup>33</sup> The name ’Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho is written in red. Cf. the sub-chapter “General characteristics of the inscription”, above.

<sup>34</sup> Read: “(and) expert in painting every celestial being with various kinds of embellishments”? Cf. n. 641, below.

<sup>35</sup> On the various meanings of these two titles, see n. 642, below.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. the introduction, fig. 1, and n. 645, below.

rated by a short remark in this text. In a long footnote, Vitali (1996a: 404, n. 661) states the following:

“The foundation of rGod.khung lha.khang is attributed to nang.so mGon.po and his brother in *Jo.bo dngul.sku mched.gsum dkar.chag* (f.11b line 1: ‘Nang.so mGon.por sku.mched.kyi dGod.khung<sup>37</sup> lha.khang sogs btab’, where the locative attached to the name mGon.po is doubtful and the genitive *kyi* rather than an instrumental *kyis* definitely wrong. This passage in the original *dbu.med* manuscript of the *dkar.chag* could also read: ‘Thang.po mGon.por sku.mched.kyi dGog.khung [*sic*; K.T.] lha.khang sogs btab’ ...”).

In the edition of the *dkar chag* by the Tho gling gtsug lag khang lo geig stong 'khor ba'i rjes dran mdzad sgo'i go sgrig tshogs chung (1996: 25), the passage actually reads “*thang po mgon por sku mched kyis dgod khung lha khang sogs btab*”, but in the light of the inscriptional text *nang so* (instead of *thang po*) is certainly to be preferred. Before trying to establish the identity and dates of Mgon po (skyabs), it seems expedient to look at the continuation of Vitali's footnote:

“In the following passage, the *dkar.chag* records a large scale renovation of Kha.char (f.11a line 1–f.12a line 1), which took place at the same time as nang.so mGon.po's foundation of dGod.khung (*sic* for rGod.khung) lha.khang. Among the many statues and murals added at Kha.char, a portrait of Ngor.chen Kun.dga' bzung.po was painted. Thus the restoration at Kha.char and nang.so mGon.po's building enterprises could not have taken place earlier than the second quarter of the 15th century (Ngor.chen was in sTod for the first time in 1427). This reveals that the undated alleged foundation of rGod.khung by nang.so mGon.po took place not earlier than the 15th century, and was thus a renovation. The kingdom nang.so mGon.po served as minister remains obscure, since control of Pu.hrang passed through various hands during the 15th century.”

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<sup>37</sup> I.e., a variant spelling of *rgod khung* (as explained by Vitali further on in his footnote).

In his next to last sentence, Vitali refers to the fact that both *Ti se lo rgyus* and *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* show that Rgod khung (/ Dgung 'phur), in some form or other, existed already in the 13th century. Thus, according to *Ti se lo rgyus*, the Spu rang king(s) Stag tsha and his son A tig gave “*rgod khung dgon pa*” to the 'Bri gung pa Seng ge ye shes;<sup>38</sup> *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* (ed. Vitali 1996a: 70) has the following somewhat obscure passage: “(*rnam ldes ...*) *dgod khung gi chos skor ldeng pa nyi shu rtsa bzhi btsugs*”, which Vitali (*ibid.*: 122) renders as “[h]e [i.e., Rnam lde (mgon) (ruler of Spu rang in the first half of the 13th century); K.T.] established twenty-four ldeng.pa<sup>39</sup> for dGod.khung chos.skor (sic for rGod.khung).” As has already been indicated above (n. 16), the term *bzhengs/gzhengs* found in the inscription thus remains somewhat unclear and in this connection the respective use of *dgon pa*, *chos skor*, *lha khang* and *gtsug lag khang* in *Ti se lo rgyus*, *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs*, *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag* and the inscription is of interest. While it is hard to tell in which sense the terms were used by the authors of these four texts, *gtsug lag khang* often refers to some major center of learning or the main hall of a monastery, and its use in the inscription thus could perhaps indicate an upgrading and/or extension of the place rather than a mere “renovation” as suggested by Vitali.

If we now try to establish the identity and dates of the “founder” of the Dgung 'phur Gtsug lag khang (adopting the diction of the inscription here), we face some problems because various pieces of the available evidence appear incompatible with one another. Vitali's last sentence in the long footnote quoted above seems to suggest that he places Mgon po (skyabs) in the 15th or early 16th century. At any rate, there is reason to assume that *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag* was written around the middle of the 16th century,<sup>40</sup> which would make it impossible to attribute Mgon po (skyabs) and his “founding” of the Dgung 'phur Gtsug lag khang to the water-

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<sup>38</sup> According to Vitali (1996a: 404) this must have happened around 1215. Cf. n. 568, below.

<sup>39</sup> In a footnote, Vitali adds: “I am unable to decipher the meaning of ldeng.pa”.

<sup>40</sup> See Vitali 1996b: IX.

tiger year of 1602.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, a passage in *Gtsang smyon rnam thar* states that Gtsang smyon He ru ka “while staying for a few days in Mkhun tsho Gad rdzong dkar po of Sman khab stod, accepted *nang so* Mgon po skyab pa as his disciple.”<sup>42</sup> A little later, the same text reports that when Gtsang smyon He ru ka “was staying to the south of Ti se, in Rgyang grags, the mistress of Sman khab stod pa, Kun dga' rgyal mo, said: ‘(I) ask to grant a spiritual song that is beneficial to the mind.’”<sup>43</sup> As proposed by Everding (2000: 411, n. 1040), the Sman khab stod pa mentioned in this latter passage is probably the *nang so* Mgon po skyab pa mentioned in the former, and while this would certainly establish a connection between him and the 'Bri gung pas in Spu rang, the dates of this disciple of Gtsang smyon He ru ka (1452–1507), again, cannot be reconciled with the water-tiger year of 1602.

How, then, can the information provided in the inscription, *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag* and *Gtsang smyon rnam thar* be brought into agreement? Regarding *Gtsang smyon rnam thar*, the chronological discrepancy could be remedied by positing that the “*nang so* Mgon po skyab pa” it mentions and the inscription’s “*nang blon* (and) *nang so* called Mgon po [skyabs]” (*nang blon nang so mgon po skya=s zhes pa*) are two different persons – the latter perhaps being a descendant and hereditary successor of the former. As to *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag*, it is noteworthy that in

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<sup>41</sup> I.e., the date suggested for the inscription and thus also for the *floruit* of the ruler 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, whom Mgon po (skyabs) served as a magistrate (*mdun na 'don*) (cf. above).

<sup>42</sup> *smān khab stod kyi mkhun tsho gad rdzong dkar por zhag shas gzhugs* [read *bzhugs*; K.T.] *pa'i bar la ... nang so mgon po skyab pa rjes su bzung* (facsimile ed. Lokesh Chandra 1969: 176, l. 4–5). Everding (2000: 411, n. 1040) gives the name as “mGon po skyabs”, which seems to be an emendation rather than a different reading – the block print almost certainly reads *mgon po skyab pa*. For the location of Mkhun/Khun tsho Gad rdzong dkar po and Sman khab stod (about 500 km linear distance to the east-southeast of Dgung 'phur), see Everding 2000: 411, n. 1040, “Tafel 5”, and also cf. Verhufen 1995: 178.

<sup>43</sup> *ti se'i lho phyogs rgyang grags su gzhugs* [read *bzhugs*; K.T.] *pa'i dus su / smān khab stod pa'i dpon mo kun dga' rgyal mos / sems la phan pa'i gsung mgur cig snang pa* [read *gnang ba*; K.T.] *zhu zhes* (facsimile ed. Lokesh Chandra 1969: 183, l. 5).

the edition of the Tho gling gtsug lag khang lo gcig stong 'khor ba'i rjes dran mdzad sgo'i go sgrig tshogs chung (1996: 25) the sentence potentially referring to “*nang so* Mgon po” and his “founding” of “*dgod khung lha khang*” concludes a passage of about four and a half lines which is printed in a smaller type size than the rest of the text. It thus appears that in the original *dbu med* manuscript on which the edition is based, this passage was an interlinear or marginal note, and while the information it provides may be essentially correct, the person who added the note could have misplaced it chronologically.<sup>44</sup>

Admittedly, these deliberations may seem somewhat contrived, but I cannot offer a more cogent explanation. Attributing the inscription’s “*nang blon* (and) *nang so* called Mgon po [skyabs]” and the text itself to the mid-16th century or earlier would not only be in contradiction to the chronological evidence discussed in the preceding sub-chapter; it would also be incompatible with the fact that some of the religious masters mentioned in the inscription clearly must be attributed to the late 16th and early 17th centuries.<sup>45</sup>

For the time being, I thus maintain that the text of the inscription was composed in 1602 and that the founding of the Gtsug lag khang it mentions occurred in the same year or only slightly earlier. Hopefully, this study will contribute to an increasing interest in the inscription, and others – as the case may be – will be able to corroborate my ideas or come up with a better interpretation of the present-ed evidence.

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<sup>44</sup> The edition of the Tho gling gtsug lag khang lo gcig stong 'khor ba'i rjes dran mdzad sgo'i go sgrig tshogs chung does not contain any explanation for the use of the different type sizes and my efforts to obtain some information from the editors in this matter or to get access to the *dbu med* manuscript were unsuccessful. Yet, because in printed Tibetan texts a smaller type size is typically used to indicate annotations, interpolations or glosses in the original manuscript (cf., e.g., Everding 2000: 31ff. and Duff 2001: 34), it seems likely that this is also true for the edition of the *Jo bo dngul sku mched gsum dkar chag*.

<sup>45</sup> For details, see n. 592 and 594, below.



## 2. NOTES ON THE EDITION AND THE TRANSLATION

### GENERAL REMARKS

The edition is mainly based on the video-documentation that was prepared by Christian Jahoda in early 2007 (cf. the preface) and presents the text as it appeared at that time.<sup>46</sup> All conjectures<sup>47</sup> and emendations<sup>48</sup> have been relegated to the *apparatus criticus*. There, the reading of the inscription is first repeated and then the respective conjecture or emendation is given after a colon;<sup>49</sup> slightly doubtful cases are followed by a question mark in brackets<sup>50</sup> and in more speculative instances the brackets are omitted. My earlier (1993) *in situ* transcription of the first four lines and the partial rendering of Tshe ring rgyal po (2006: 113ff.) have been adduced where they provide text for passages that had become obliterated by 2007; the respective readings are marked “KT 1993” and “Tsh”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> From the video-sequences, some 800 single exposures were extracted. They can now be viewed at [www.univie.ac.at/Tibetan-inscriptions](http://www.univie.ac.at/Tibetan-inscriptions); links: Ngari → Gungphur → 'Du khang → Inscription 01. There, the pictures are arranged line by line with varying degrees of overlapping. In cases of doubtful readings it might thus be helpful to look at the pictures of the lines above and below the passage in question as well.

<sup>47</sup> I.e., proposed readings where text had become illegible by 2007.

<sup>48</sup> I.e., proposed changes for text still legible in 2007; mainly corrections of obvious scribal mistakes and adjustments of irregular spellings to “classical norms” (here, for the sake of convenience, spellings that are not attested in Das 1985 [1902], Jäschke 1992 [1881], or Zhang *et al.* 1993 [1985] are considered irregular). No emendations are provided for irregular *sandhi*-forms like “*ba : pa*”, etc.

<sup>49</sup> E.g., “*rna= : rnam*” and “*gyi : gyis*”.

<sup>50</sup> E.g., “*== : dam(?)*”

<sup>51</sup> E.g., “*gyu== : gyur ba (gyur ba KT 1993, Tsh)*” and “*dg-=dun : dge 'dun (dge 'dun KT 1993, bdag 'dun Tsh)*”. Also note that in some places my video-recordings of 2009 and 2010 were more in focus than those of 2007 and thus allowed an easier reading of the inscriptional text. These cases are not specifically marked, however, because the condition of the inscription itself obviously must have been at least as good in 2007 as in 2009 or 2010.

Due to the situation described above (p. 6), I have refrained from structuring the edited text into stanzas, but the translation is divided into what I consider text-semantically to be more or less self-contained units. While they often correspond to sections of two, four, six or eight verse-lines, it should be kept in mind that this grouping is based on (my understanding of) the contents of the respective passages rather than on the formal structure of the Tibetan text.

In both the edition and the translation, the spelling of Tibetan toponyms and personal names has not been standardized, but where I considered it appropriate I have provided the more common alternative(s) in the footnotes. All of these cases are also included in the list of “irregular spellings” found at the end of this study.

In the translation, conjectures are given in square brackets within the running text. As in the edition, the text of slightly doubtful cases is followed by a question mark in (round) brackets.<sup>52</sup> In more speculative cases (i.e., conjectures that are followed by a question mark without brackets in the edition) the translation of the suggested text is provided in a footnote (with question mark)<sup>53</sup> and the running text shows an ellipsis (...). While this system certainly impairs readability, it also conveys the fragmented nature of the inscriptional text still extant and clearly shows which parts of the translation are (more or less speculative) complements on my part. In this vein, it helps to prevent a false impression of certainty, especially with non-philologists (e.g., art-historians), and I thus feel that the advantages of this bracketing system outweigh its drawbacks.

The manifold limitations in editing and translating such fragmentary inscriptions have already been described in previous publications.<sup>54</sup> Here it may just be added that these epigraphs were certainly not written for Westerners of the 21st century, who usually have little or no background knowledge of the local situation to which the texts refer. Moreover, the Dgung 'phur inscription touches on many

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<sup>52</sup> E.g., “[beings(?)]”.

<sup>53</sup> E.g., “Read: ‘rivaled’?”.

<sup>54</sup> See, e.g., Denwood 1980: 119, Tropper 2007a: 112f., 2008: 16f., 2010: 149f., and Wood 2013: 108f.

different aspects of Tibetan history and Buddhism, which makes it a particularly challenging document. In the annotations to my translation I have therefore provided brief explanations of what I consider less obvious points as well as references for further reading, even if specialists in the respective fields might deem these leads superfluous. After all, research is always done from one's own, subjective perspective and thus also aims at making things clearer to oneself. Nevertheless, I hope that others will profit from this as well and that I did not miss the mark in too many places.

#### EDITORIAL SIGNS

{ 1}, { 2}, { 3}, etc.	beginning of a line
*	<i>dbu</i>
/	<i>shad</i>
#	ornamental sign
<u>d</u>	uncertain reading (underlined) <sup>55</sup>
-	illegible letter
=	illegible 'letter' <sup>56</sup>
<i>ṁ</i>	<i>bindu</i>
xxx <sub>pa</sub> xxx / xxx <sup>pa</sup> xxx	insertion below/above the line
✂	deletion in the inscription with text still legible

In the annotations to the translation the following signs are used for quotations from the inscription:

{ }	emendations
<< >>	deletions
< >	conjectures

<sup>55</sup> Following Tauscher 1999: 50, a letter is marked in this way even in those cases where it is “‘partly damaged’, but the reading is obvious and quite certain from the context.”

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Steinkellner & Luczanits 1999: 15 (n. 12), where ‘letter’ is defined as “any combination of letters in the Tibetan alphabet that occupy in vertical arrangement of the letter sequence the space of a single grapheme”, while *letter* “refers to the single signs for consonants or vowel modification only.” Thus a ‘letter’ can be composed of up to four *letters*. E.g., =ng *chub sems dpa*’ (partly damaged *byang chub sems dpa*) or *bsod na=s* (partly damaged *bsod nam*s).



### 3. EDITION

- { 1 } \*\*\* // # // om s-sidd-am<sup>57</sup> //
- 1 dpa=-dan<sup>58</sup> tshogs<sub>gnyis</sub><sup>59</sup> bzang po'i skyed tshal du //
- 2 'phrin las rnam bzhi'i le 'd- =char ==s<sup>60</sup> //
- 3 sku gsum b-a=<sup>61</sup> rgyal ba rdo -je<sup>62</sup> 'chang //
- 4 lhag=-i=mchog<sup>63</sup> yid ==<sup>64</sup> lha tshogs 'dud //
- 5 chos sku rna=<sup>65</sup> dag lha lam chu gter cher<sup>66</sup> //
- 6 long sku'i dkyil 'khor rin chen vai durya //
- 7 sprul sku'i 'od 'gyed phun tshogs re bkong<sup>67</sup> ba //
- 8 rgyal ba nyin byed nor bu rtsug<sup>68</sup> na rgyal //
- 9 dug lnga'-<sup>69</sup> gcod gyur 'khor ba'i nad rnam kun //
- 10 'jig rten sman gyi<sup>70</sup> zhi bar ma nus tshe //
- 11 dam chos bdud rtsi'i thigs pa la rag pas //
- 12 bde bar 'tsho byed sman mchog de la 'dud //

<sup>57</sup> The *d* is placed below *si* and probably a correction by the original scribe, who had already switched to the black ink that he used for the following text. The most likely conjecture for the entire passage is *om swaha siddham*, with the two *has* placed below *swa* and *d*, respectively.

<sup>58</sup> dpa=-dan : *dpal ldan* (*dpal ldan* KT 1993, Tsh).

<sup>59</sup> The inserted syllable is metrically not indispensable, but it makes for a much smoother text. Otherwise *po'i* would have to be read as two syllables, with the stress falling on the (usually unstressed) nominal particle *po* (*tshogs*<sub>gnyis</sub> : *tshogs*<sub>gnyis</sub> KT 1993, *tshogs* Tsh).

<sup>60</sup> The vowel sign above the *l* could also be a partly damaged *na ro* as there is a faint diagonal upward stroke that might constitute the remains of the grapheme's right part. Read *le 'di 'char ba las* or *lo 'di 'char ba las*?

<sup>61</sup> *b-a=* : *bla ma*.

<sup>62</sup> *-je* : *rje*.

<sup>63</sup> *lhag=-i=mchog* : *lhag pa'i lha mchog*(?)

<sup>64</sup> *==* : *dam*(?)

<sup>65</sup> *rna=* : *rnam*.

<sup>66</sup> *cher* : *chen*.

<sup>67</sup> *bkong* : *skong*.

<sup>68</sup> *rtsug* : *gtsug*.

<sup>69</sup> *dug lnga'-* : *dug lnga'i* (*dug lnga'i* KT 1993, *drug sle'i* Tsh).

<sup>70</sup> *gyi* : *gyis*.

13 'jig tshogs dang ni tshul khrims rtul shugs gnyis //  
 14 gcig car spangs {2} nas 'phags=-i==n=thong===<sup>71</sup>  
 15 ===<sup>72</sup> par rgyal ba=sras<sup>73</sup> su gyu===<sup>74</sup> gang //  
 16 dg-=dun<sup>75</sup> rin chen 'di dag gus pas mchod //  
 17 thu st-=====<sup>76</sup> rdo rje'i ga=gyangs<sup>77</sup> kyis //  
 18 log 'gren<sup>78</sup> ra dang ri dags 'jigs byed pa //  
 19 dpal ldan ==s<sup>79</sup> mgon po phyag bzhi pa //  
 20 'khor bcas rnames kyi<sup>80</sup> rtag tu dge legs bstsol<sup>81</sup> //  
 21 'jig rten 'das dang ma 'das thams cad kyis<sup>82</sup> //  
 22 a sphyir<sup>83</sup> gyur kyang bcwo<sup>84</sup> lnga'i lang 'tsho<sup>85</sup> ma //  
 23 bstan la gnod byed dgegs<sup>86</sup> rnames thar<sup>87</sup> byed cing //  
 24 bka' srungs<sup>88</sup> chos kyi sgron<sup>89</sup> mas dge legs bstsol<sup>90</sup> //  
 25 stong gsum mi 'jed<sup>91</sup> shākya'i zhing khams 'dir //  
 26 bsod nams ye shes tshogs las grub pa yi //  
 27 rgyal bu don kun grub pas byang chub brnyes //  
 28 rigs can gsum la chos 'khor gsum du bskor //

<sup>71</sup> 'phags=-i==n=thong=== : 'phags pa'i bden mthong ba // ('phags pa'i bden mthong ba // KT 1993, 'phebs pa'i bden mthong ba / Tsh).

<sup>72</sup> == : rnges (rnges KT 1993, bsu Tsh).

<sup>73</sup> ba=sras : ba'i sras (ba'i sras Tsh).

<sup>74</sup> gyu=== : gyur ba (gyur ba KT 1993, Tsh).

<sup>75</sup> dg-=dun : dge 'dun (dge 'dun KT 1993, bdag 'dun Tsh).

<sup>76</sup> thu st-=====: thu stobs bdag po (i.e., irregular for mthu stobs bdag po)?

<sup>77</sup> ga=gyangs : gad gyangs (i.e., irregular for gad rgyangs).

<sup>78</sup> I.e., irregular for log 'dren.

<sup>79</sup> ==s : ye shes (ye shes KT 1993).

<sup>80</sup> kyi : kyis.

<sup>81</sup> bstsol : stsol.

<sup>82</sup> kyis : kyi.

<sup>83</sup> sphyir : phyir.

<sup>84</sup> I.e., early/irregular spelling of *bco*. For further attested examples, see, e.g., Ehrhard 2010: 145 (n. 28) and 152.

<sup>85</sup> 'tsho : tsho.

<sup>86</sup> dgegs : 'gegs.

<sup>87</sup> thar : mthar.

<sup>88</sup> srungs : srung.

<sup>89</sup> sgron : sgrol.

<sup>90</sup> bstsol : stsol.

<sup>91</sup> 'jed : mjed.

- 29 {3} dang po bden bzhi gnyis pa= ma<sup>92</sup> med /=<sup>93</sup>  
 30 th-m-<sup>94</sup> don dam=m<sup>95</sup> pa gnyis su =====<sup>96</sup>  
 31 yid==<sup>97</sup> -nams<sup>98</sup> kyi bsam pa dge ba====<sup>99</sup> //  
 32 de -i=mi<sup>100</sup> gnas mya ngan 'das====<sup>101</sup> //  
 33 ch-s ky- s-n -dan<sup>102</sup> dgra bcom rnam kyi<sup>103</sup> ni //  
 34 bka' s-u<sup>104</sup> rim pa gnyis=m<sup>105</sup> gsum du mdzad //  
 35 'dzam -i== -e= b=-<sup>106</sup> rgyan drug mchog gnyis dang //  
 36 klu grub yab sras lung gi bstan pa spel //  
 37 sa ra ha dang dpal ldan lu hi pa //  
 38 sha ba ri dang te<sup>107</sup> lo na ro pas //  
 39 sgrub rgyud<sup>108</sup> bstan pa chu bo'i gzhung bzhin byas //  
 40 gangs can 'dir ni kun bzang tho tho ri<sub>s</sub> //  
 41 dam chos dbu snyengs<sup>109</sup> chos kyi srol bstod<sup>110</sup> pa //  
 42 spyen ras gzigs mgon chos kyi rgyal por byon //  
 43 rgya bod lo pan mang po snyen<sup>111</sup> bkur nas //  
 44 sangs rgyas bstan pa nyi<sup>112</sup> mor byed pa gra=<sup>113</sup> //

<sup>92</sup> *pa= ma* : *pa dri ma*? One would rather expect the last three syllables of the verse-line to read *mtshan nyid med*, but the remaining traces and the available space definitely do not allow for this conjecture.

<sup>93</sup> /= : //.

<sup>94</sup> *th-m-* : *tha ma* (*tha ma* KT 1993).

<sup>95</sup> *dam=m* : *dam rnam* (*dam rnam* KT 1993).

<sup>96</sup> ===== : *bskor* // (*bskor* // KT 1993).

<sup>97</sup> *yid==* : *yid can*(?) (*yid =n* KT 1993).

<sup>98</sup> *-nams* : *rnams* (*rnams* KT 1993).

<sup>99</sup> *dge ba====* : *dge bar gyur* (*dge bar gyur* KT 1993).

<sup>100</sup> *-i=mi* : *nyid mi*.

<sup>101</sup> Probably something like *pa thob* or *pa yin*.

<sup>102</sup> *ch-s ky- s-n -dan* : *chos kyi spyen ldan*.

<sup>103</sup> *kyi* : *kyis*.

<sup>104</sup> *s-u* : *sdu* (i.e., irregular for *bsdu*) (*sdu* KT 1993).

<sup>105</sup> *gnyis=m* : *gnyis sam* (*gnyis sam* KT 1993).

<sup>106</sup> *'dzam -i== -e= b=-* : *'dzam gling mdzes byed* ('*dzam gling mdzes b=-* KT 1993).

<sup>107</sup> *te* : *ti*.

<sup>108</sup> *rgyud* : *brgyud*.

<sup>109</sup> *snyengs* : *brnyes*.

<sup>110</sup> *bstod* : *btod*.

<sup>111</sup> *snyen* : *bsnyen*.

- 45 {4} mgon po 'jam d-yangs<sup>114</sup> -u=gyi==l du<sup>115</sup>===/'<sup>116</sup>  
 46 dge 'dun khri la ral pa-i<sup>117</sup> gcod =n<sup>118</sup> 'phul //  
 47 dbus s-er<sup>119</sup> mtshan gs-l<sup>120</sup> dge 'dun dbu spangs<sup>121</sup> stod<sup>122</sup> //  
 48 rgyal ba'i bsta=<sup>123</sup> pa -in mo=<sup>124</sup> rab byed pa //  
 49 gsang ba'i bdag po phyag na rdo rj-<sup>125</sup> st-<sup>126</sup> //  
 50 gd-ng l-'-<sup>127</sup>==== yi\_-u=-u can<sup>128</sup> //  
 51 glang dar mig sman 'dog<sup>129</sup> can de yi<sup>130</sup> ni //  
 52 thub bstan nyi ma re zhig bzung ba na //  
 53 brgya byin ram 'da'<sup>131</sup> bzhin du lha lung dpal //  
 54 stobs kyi dbang phyug de yis de nyid sgral<sup>132</sup> //  
 55 mnga' ris stod kyi gu ge zhang zhung yul //  
 56 lha'i bla ma lha rgyal ye shes 'od //

<sup>112</sup> *nyi* : *nyin*.

<sup>113</sup> The remaining traces suggest *gran* (irregular for 'gran?), but the syllable could perhaps also have read *grag*.

<sup>114</sup> *d-yangs* : *dbyangs* (*dbyangs* KT 1993).

<sup>115</sup> *-u=gyi*==l du : *sprul gyi dpal du* (==*gyi dpal du* KT 1993).

<sup>116</sup> ===/ : *gyur* //?

<sup>117</sup> *pa-i* : *pa'i* (*pa'i* KT 1993).

<sup>118</sup> *gcod* =n : *gcod pan* (i.e., irregular for *cod pan*) (*gcod pan* KT 1993).

<sup>119</sup> *dbus s-er* : *dbu sder*(?)

<sup>120</sup> *gs-l* : *gsol* (*gsol* KT 1993).

<sup>121</sup> *spangs* : *dpangs* or 'phang.

<sup>122</sup> *stod* : *bstod*.

<sup>123</sup> *bsta*= : *bstan* (*bstan* KT (1993)).

<sup>124</sup> *-in mo*= : *nyin mor* (*nyin mor* KT 1993).

<sup>125</sup> *rj-* : *rje* (*rje* KT 1993).

<sup>126</sup> *st-* : *ste* (*ste* KT 1993).

<sup>127</sup> *gd-ng l-'-* : *gdong lnga'i* (*gdong lnga'i* KT 1993)? In 2007, the space above the *d* had become slightly damaged, but since the damaged space is small the erstwhile existence of a *na ro* now seems unlikely to me. Similarly, to the right of the space below the *d*, there is a sketchy mark that could be the result of an unsuccessful attempt to add a *zhabs kyu* to the syllable's root letter, but to me this rather seems to be a smear.

<sup>128</sup> The verse-line may have ended in *phur bu can*, but overall its last seven(?) syllables are too damaged to allow for reasonably certain conjectures.

<sup>129</sup> 'dog : *mdog*.

<sup>130</sup> *yi* : *yis*.

<sup>131</sup> *ram 'da'* : *ra mda'*.

<sup>132</sup> *sgral* : *bsgral*.

- 57 'gren<sup>133</sup> mchog rin chen bzang po snyen<sup>134</sup> bkur nas //  
 58 dam pa'i chos rnam bod du ma lus bsgyur //  
 59 lho brag gro bo lung gi dgon pa ru //  
 60 sgrub rgyud<sup>135</sup> chu bo'i 'byung gnas gangs ri po<sup>136</sup>  
 61 {5} =r pa<sup>137</sup> chos kyi blo gros zhi==='\_<sup>138</sup> //  
 62 g.ye=<sup>139</sup> med yang dag '\_og<sup>140</sup> la brtso=<sup>141</sup> gyur pa //  
 63 chos brgya=<sup>142</sup> ri bo 'joms pa'i gnam lcags can //  
 64 dbang phyug gzhad<sup>143</sup> pa rdo=s<sup>144</sup> bsgrub rgyud<sup>145</sup> spel //  
 65 rgyal bas mdo rgyud du mar lung bstan pa //  
 66 zla 'od gzhon nu gangs ri'i khrod du byon //  
 67 mkhan po bram ze 'od bsrungs nas 'ongs pa'i //  
 68 phal chen sde la rab byung d=<sup>146</sup> slong mchog /  
 69 bsod nams rin chen lung rtogs kun gyi bdag /  
 70 rang 'byung sdod<sup>147</sup> nas mngon par sangs rgyas kyang //  
 71 da lta chos sprin sa la legs gnas pa //  
 72 rdo rje rgyal po 'gro ba'i ded dpon yi=<sup>148</sup> //  
 73 chu gter dbus na ngang pa'i ded dpon de //  
 74 gcig pur smra bcaad mdzes<sup>149</sup> par<sup>150</sup> ma mthong nas //

<sup>133</sup> 'gren : 'dren.

<sup>134</sup> snyen : bsnyen.

<sup>135</sup> rgyud : brgyud.

<sup>136</sup> po : po // (i.e., irregular for bo //).

<sup>137</sup> =r pa : mar pa.

<sup>138</sup> Above the ' there is a diagonal stroke that most likely constitutes the remains of a *gi gu* or a *na ro*. In combination with the other remaining traces of the passage, this allows for the rather speculative conjectures *zhi bde ba'i* and *zhi bde ba'o*.

<sup>139</sup> g.ye- : g.yel.

<sup>140</sup> '\_og : 'jog.

<sup>141</sup> brtso= : brtson.

<sup>142</sup> chos brgya= : chos brgyad.

<sup>143</sup> gzhad : bzhad.

<sup>144</sup> rdo=s : rdo rjes.

<sup>145</sup> bsgrub rgyud : sgrub brgyud.

<sup>146</sup> d= : dge.

<sup>147</sup> sdod : gdod.

<sup>148</sup> yi= : yin.

<sup>149</sup> mdzes : 'dzes, 'dzed (cf. Tropper 2005: 163 and 292f.) or mdzad(?)

75 tshogs kyi dbus su mgrin pa thor<sup>151</sup> steg nas //  
 76 {6} ==dbang<sup>152</sup> s-u<sup>153</sup> ba d-al l-=<sup>154</sup> 'bri\_gung pa=l<sup>155</sup>  
 77 =ni<sup>156</sup> ng-s<sup>157</sup> pa<sub>r</sub> rgyal ba'i lung b=n<sup>158</sup> pa //  
 78 ded dpon dpal byin zhus pa'i mdo las ni //  
 79 ma 'ongs\_dus su nga yi chos 'dzin pa //  
 80 ratna<sup>159</sup> shri 'gro ba 'dul mkhas pa //  
 81 zhwa yi mtshan ma 'di bzhin gyon pa yis //  
 82 gsung ste<sup>160</sup> bstod cing sngags<sup>161</sup> pa chen po brjod //  
 83 bskal bzangs las kyang rin chen dpal zhes pa //  
 84 de bzhin gshegs pa ma 'ongs dus su 'byung //  
 85 klu grub mal gyi tha na ==ṣ<sup>162</sup> gnas pa'i tshe //  
 86 deng nas bzung ste lo grangs lnga brgya nas //  
 87 byang phyogs kha ba can gyi ljongs su ni //  
 88 nga nyid rin chen dpal zh-s<sup>163</sup> bya bar 'gyur //  
 89 des<sup>164</sup> ding sang chos kyi dbang phyug khyod //  
 90 dge 'dun 'bum 'phrag mang po'i spyod<sup>165</sup> pan yin //  
 91 bod yul 'dir ni thub pa'i {7} ===br-ng<sup>166</sup> l<sup>167</sup>

<sup>150</sup> The remaining parts support the reading *pa<sub>r</sub>* rather than *ma<sub>r</sub>*, but the latter cannot be ruled out completely.

<sup>151</sup> *thor* : *mthor*.

<sup>152</sup> ==*dbang* : *yid dbang* or *rang dbang*?

<sup>153</sup> *s-u* : *sdu* (i.e., irregular transitive form of 'du)?

<sup>154</sup> *d-al l- =* : *dpal ldan*.

<sup>155</sup> *pa=l* : *pa* //.

<sup>156</sup> =*ni* : *de ni*(?)

<sup>157</sup> *ng-s* : *nges*(?)

<sup>158</sup> *b=n* : *bstan*.

<sup>159</sup> *ratna* : *ratna*. In order to get a metrically correct verse-line this must be read as if comprised by three syllables (i.e., *ratana*).

<sup>160</sup> *gsung ste* : *gsungs te*.

<sup>161</sup> *sngags* : *bsngags*(?)

<sup>162</sup> *tha na* == *ṣ* : *tha mar*. The now mostly illegible insertion below the line probably read *mar*; the passage gives the impression of containing repeated makeshift corrections.

<sup>163</sup> *zh-s* : *zhes*.

<sup>164</sup> *des* = : *des na* or *des ni*.

<sup>165</sup> *spyod* : *cod*.

<sup>166</sup> The remaining traces allow for the highly speculative conjecture *chos 'bri gung*.

- 92 ===d<sup>168</sup> -am<sup>169</sup> mkha' 'gog 'dra yod na 'a=<sup>170</sup> //  
 93 -og ge'i s=pas<sup>171</sup> sna tshogs grub tha<sup>172</sup> can //  
 94 ma rig srad bus rang sems dam bcings la //  
 95 khyod kyi thugs r-e<sup>173</sup> sen -ings ch-==kar==<sup>174</sup> //  
 96 legs par dkrol te gzhed<sup>175</sup> don grangs mang yang //  
 97 rdo rje'i gsung nyid brgya dang lnga bcu po=l<sup>176</sup>  
 98 rang gzhan grub mtha' so sos 'dzed par byas //  
 99 khyo==d<sup>177</sup> 'khor gyi dbus su chos ston tshe //  
 100 tshangs dang brgya byin zhi bas mchod gyur na //  
 101 'gro ba mi yis mchod la ya mtshan ci //  
 102 sa gzhi kun khyab thub pa'i rtags 'chang ba<sub>s</sub> //  
 103 dpal gyi 'bri gung dam par mi shong na //  
 104 stong gsum yungs==r-ud pa'i<sup>178</sup> rdzu 'phrul de //  
 105 khyod kyi<sup>179</sup> goms par byas te ngal bar zad //  
 106 sti se gangs dang la ci tsa ri ta //  
 107 gnas gsum dag tū rdo rje {8} ==n<sup>180</sup> pa ni /=<sup>181</sup>  
 108 =gu=s-ang pa<sup>182</sup> g.yag ru dpal grag==ng<sup>183</sup> //

<sup>167</sup> /=l : //.

<sup>168</sup> ===d : chos nyid?

<sup>169</sup> -am : nam.

<sup>170</sup> 'a= : 'ang.

<sup>171</sup> -og ge'i s=pas : rtog ge'i spyod pas.

<sup>172</sup> tha : mtha'.

<sup>173</sup> r-e : rje.

<sup>174</sup> sen-ings ch-==kar== : *sen rings ches dkar gyis, sen rings tshems kar gyis, or sen ring so ches dkar (rings and kar being ancient/irregular spellings of ring and dkar)?* The last alternative is perhaps the one least supported by the remaining traces.

<sup>175</sup> gzhed : *bzhed*.

<sup>176</sup> po=l : po //.

<sup>177</sup> khyo==d : *khyod nyid(?)*

<sup>178</sup> The space between the *d* and *pa'i* is damaged but relatively wide and thus most likely contained a *tsheg*. The remaining traces allow for the conjectures *yungs 'brur chud pa'i* and *yungs 'brur tshud pa'i*, but both are rather uncertain.

<sup>179</sup> kyi : *kyis*.

<sup>180</sup> ==n : 'dzin.

<sup>181</sup> /= : //.

- 109 mgo ==ste<sup>184</sup> re re'i 'khor la yang //
- 110 lnga khri lnga stong lnga brgya nye lnga =====<sup>185</sup>
- 111 ===yang<sup>186</sup> =\_yan<sup>187</sup> \_dza lan dhe ra dang //
- 112 rdo rje gdan dang ghan dha bal yul dang //
- 113 = ch\_me=g<sup>188</sup> hor gyi yul du yang //
- 114 khyod kyi rjes 'brang dag gi<sup>189</sup> gang bar byas //
- 115 mdor na bod yul kha ba can 'di ru //
- 116 thub bstan dar rgyas mdzad nas chos dbyings gshegs<sup>190</sup> //
- 117 sti ser rdor 'dzin mgu<sup>191</sup> ya sgang pa la //
- 118 chos skyong rgyal po khri ni<sup>192</sup> bkra shis pa //
- 119 gnam lde mgon p-s<sup>193</sup> gang de'i<sup>194</sup> sbyin bdag mdzad //

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<sup>182</sup> =*gu=s-ang pa* : *mgu ya sgang pa* (cf. verse-line 117). In *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 34, Don grub 1992: 50f.) the name is spelled *ghu ya sgang pa*.

<sup>183</sup> *grag==ng* : *grags dang*.

<sup>184</sup> The remaining traces suggest that the passage most likely read *mgo bo che ste*. Ricard *et al.* (1994: 343, n. 10) also report the spelling *mgo bo che* for the *rdo 'dzin*'s name. De Rossi Filibeck's (1988: 34) and Don grub's (1992: 51) editions of *Ti se lo rgyus* have *mgon po che* and *mgon po che ba*, respectively.

<sup>185</sup> ===== : *brdzangs(?)* //. Cf. de Rossi Filibeck's (1988: 34) and Don grub's (1992: 51) editions of *Ti se lo rgyus*, which read *rdzongs gnang ste* and *brdzangs pa gnang*, respectively.

<sup>186</sup> ===yang : *gzhan yang?*

<sup>187</sup> =\_yan : *o rgyan* or *u rgyan*. Cf. *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 704): *slob ma mang po u rgyan dang dza lan dha ra tshun chod dang ri bo rtse lnga yan chod kyi lung sul dang ri khrod thams cad du khyab par mdzad*. Also see n. 535.

<sup>188</sup> = ch\_me=g : *kha che me nyag* or *kha che mi nyag*. Cf. the toponyms listed in the chapter *Phyogs bzhi mtshams brgyad du slob ma khyab tshul* of Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 48: *stod na li dang o dan rgyal po gnyis // kha che tri li mar yul gu ge dang // ya rtse spu rangs stod hor smad hor gnyis // smad na ji ger khang dang mi nyag 'ga' // bran du 'khol zhing bka' yi bsgo bar nyan //*. For the spelling variants *mi nyag* / *me nyag*, see *ibid.*: 47; cf. also Sperling 1987: 32.

<sup>189</sup> gi : *gis*.

<sup>190</sup> The *g* prefix appears to have been written over another letter, possibly '.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. n. 182.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. verse-line 123.

<sup>193</sup> p-s : *pos*.

- 120 mnga' ris bsk-=<sup>195</sup> gsum g-ul bya'-<sup>196</sup> zh-ng<sup>197</sup> du gyur //
- 121 lo chen nyre<sup>198</sup> lnga'i bar du gdan sa mdzad //
- 122 de 'og chos rje nyi ma gung pa byon //
- 123 ya tse'i rgyal po khri ni dbang phyug pa //
- 124 {9} =pal=====<sup>199</sup> gnyis kyis ni /=<sup>200</sup>
- 125 =s- gangs=ng<sup>201</sup> ma gros<sup>202</sup> mtsho mchod du //
- 126 phu na g.yu phug ba=<sup>203</sup> na dpal -ug<sup>204</sup> da====<sup>205</sup>
- 127 =da'=<sup>206</sup>====<sup>207</sup> phug=<sup>208</sup> lang stod smad sogs //
- 128 thub bstan nam gnas == d-ph-=bar<sup>209</sup> gyur //
- 129 der rjes s-n mnga<sup>210</sup> 'bri gung -ling<sup>211</sup> pa byon //

<sup>194</sup> *de'i* : *bde'i*?

<sup>195</sup> *bsk*- : *bskor*.

<sup>196</sup> *g-ul bya'* : *gdul bya'i*.

<sup>197</sup> *zh-ng* : *zhing*.

<sup>198</sup> I.e., the *r* is added in the form of a *ra btags* – probably a makeshift correction. Read *nyer*.

<sup>199</sup> =*pal*===== : *dpal mgon lde yab sras de* (or similar). Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59, Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 675): *de'i rjes su* (*su* om. DG) *rdo rje 'dzin pa nyi ma gung pa byon zhing* / ( / : // RF) *rje 'di la gu ge rgyal po khri bkra shis dbang phyug dang* / *dpal mgon lde* (*lde* : *sde* DG) *yab* (*yab* : *yam* DG) *sras kyis* (*kyis* : *kyi* DG) *chos zhus*.

<sup>200</sup> /= : //.

<sup>201</sup> =s- *gangs*=*ng* : *sti se gangs dang*.

<sup>202</sup> *gros* : *dros*.

<sup>203</sup> *ba*= : *bar*.

<sup>204</sup> -*ug* : *phug*.

<sup>205</sup> *da*==== : *dang* //.

<sup>206</sup> =*da*'= : *mda' la*(?) – cf. the following note.

<sup>207</sup> *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59, Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 675) reads: *pu* (*pu* : *spu* DG) *rang dkar sdum gyi phu g.yu* (*g.yu* : *ga yu* DG) *phug* / ( / om. DG) *bar phad* (*phad* : *pad* DG, V) *phug* / ( / om. DG) *mda' chos phug bcas dang za* (*za* : *tha* RF) *lang stod smad rnams* (*stod smad rnams* : *smad rnams kyang* DG) *rgyang grags kyi chos gzhis su* (*su* om. V) *phul bar grags*. Thus one would expect the third syllable of verse-line 127 to read *chos*, but it is not easy to reconcile this conjecture with the size of the damaged space and the remaining traces.

<sup>208</sup> One could be inclined to read the remains of the syllable as *bla*, but the passage in *Ti se lo rgyus* cited in the previous note and the information provided in Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 118 (for which see n. 556) rather suggests *za*.

<sup>209</sup> == *d*-*ph*-=*bar* : *bar du phul bar*(?)

- 130 mgon de'i<sup>212</sup> lung bstan bzhin du =\_r<sup>213</sup> ni //
- 131 rgyal po jo bo a tig pa<sup>214</sup> zhes pa'i //
- 132 ral pa'i spyod<sup>215</sup> pan dag tu gser gyi bum bzangs<sup>216</sup> ni //
- 133 mngon par bzhag ste dbang bskur s-m<sup>217</sup> pa'i yon //
- 134 =\_ kha tshad dpal l-an<sup>218</sup> dam pa rdzong //
- 135 lag 'phrad<sup>219</sup> thod dkar mgon pa ro ma dang //
- 136 'om lo shing phug mchod gzhi'i<sup>220</sup> don du 'phul //
- 137 de nas smyos zhes rgyal ba lha nang la //
- 138 sa skyong a==sman<sup>221</sup> gyi<sup>222</sup> gdus<sup>223</sup> ===<sup>224</sup> //
- 139 {10} =====sum cha 'phu=<sup>225</sup> //

<sup>210</sup> *s-n mnga'* : *spyān mnga'* (i.e., irregular for *spyān snga*).

<sup>211</sup> *-ling* : *gling*.

<sup>212</sup> *de'i* : *des*.

<sup>213</sup> The remaining traces allow for various conjectures, including *ya tser* and *kho car* (for the many variant spellings of 'Khor chags / Kho char, etc., see Vitali 1996a: 631f.); in combination with the latter, one would rather expect the following syllable to read *na* instead of *ni*, however.

<sup>214</sup> In *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 36, Don grub 1992: 54, Vitali 1996a: 381, n. 610), this ruler is referred to as *pu rang* (*pu rang* : *pur DG*) *rgyal po jo bo a tig* (*tig* : *ti DG*) *sman*, but the inscription's partly damaged syllable definitely cannot have read *sman*. *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 712) has *mnga' bdag a di ga* (wrongly for *mnga' bdag a dig*? Cf. Roerich 1949: 605).

<sup>215</sup> *spyod* : *cod*.

<sup>216</sup> *bzangs* : *bzang*.

<sup>217</sup> There are faint blotches and lines above and below the *s*, but it is unclear if these are the remains of erstwhile letters. Read *sgom*? Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 36, Don grub 1992: 54, Vitali 1996a: 381, n. 610): *a tig* (*tig* : *ti DG*) *sman la bde mchog gi dbang mo che dang* (*dang* : *dang / DG*) *rdo rje theg pa'i bskyed* (*bskyed* : *bskyang RF*) *rdzogs kyi sgom* (*sgom* : *bsgom DG*) *btab pa'i yon du ...*

<sup>218</sup> *l-an* : *ldan*.

<sup>219</sup> The space above the syllable is slightly damaged, but it does not seem to have contained a vowel sign.

<sup>220</sup> *mchod gzhi'i* : *mchod gzhis* (i.e.; metrically short for *mchod gzhis kyi*)(?)

<sup>221</sup> *a==sman* : *a tig sman*.

<sup>222</sup> *gyi* : *gyis*(?)

<sup>223</sup> The syllable might also be read as *gangs* or *gdas*.

<sup>224</sup> The first letter most likely read *l* or *'*.

<sup>225</sup> *'phu=* : *'phul*.

- 140 d-<sup>226</sup> 'og chos rje se=<sup>227</sup> ge ye shes la //
- 141 gong gi rgyal po a -ig<sup>228</sup> sman gyi<sup>229</sup> ni l=<sup>230</sup>
- 142 =====u====i'<sup>231</sup> yon du yang //
- 143 brag la bsam gtan gling dgon lasogs phul //
- 144 slar yang lha chen stag rtsa zhes pa yis //
- 145 dbang rgyud man ngag zhus pa'i 'bul ba la //
- 146 rin chen rgyas-pr-s<sup>232</sup> gser gyi man dal<sup>233</sup> dang //
- 147 dben gnas rgod gung rten mchod bcas te phul //
- 148 'jig rten gsum mgon nang rten gser 'bum<sup>234</sup> ni //
- 149 kham s gsum rnam rgyal zhes pa'i sbyin bdag mdzad //
- 150 dkar ma'i th-s<sup>235</sup> s-<sup>236</sup> yang dkar yul yang 'phul //
- 151 lha khang dmar po'i zhig sos<sup>237</sup> legs par mdzad //
- 152 der-jēs<sup>238</sup> chos rje kun dga' rgyal mtshan byon //
- 153 {11} ===== l-es<sup>239</sup> //

<sup>226</sup> d- : de.

<sup>227</sup> se : seng.

<sup>228</sup> -ig : tig.

<sup>229</sup> gyi : gyis.

<sup>230</sup> l : //.

<sup>231</sup> The last two syllables probably read *zhus pa'i*, and *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 58) has *byang chub sems bskyed kyi sdom pa* (*gnang ba'i yon du*). Adapting this to the metrical requirements of the inscription, *byang chub sems bskyed* and *byang sems bskyed sdom* are possible but rather uncertain conjectures for the verse-line's first four syllables.

<sup>232</sup> rgyas-pr-s : rgyas spros.

<sup>233</sup> man dal : man dal.

<sup>234</sup> 'bum : bum.

<sup>235</sup> While the right side of the space above the *th* is damaged, the left side is covered by a thin layer of soot; the diagonal downstroke that can still be made out there suggests that the syllable read *thos*, *thes*, or *this*.

<sup>236</sup> The space below the *s* is damaged; thus the syllable could have read *sa* or *su*.

<sup>237</sup> sos : gsos.

<sup>238</sup> der-jēs : der rjes – cf. verse-line 129.

<sup>239</sup> The verse-line probably read *gu ge('i) rgyal po khri ni grags pa ldes* or similar. Cf. verse-lines 118, 123, and *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59, Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 676): *de'i rjes su rdo rje 'dzin pa kun dga' rgyal mtshan pa byon // (// : / DG, V) rje 'di ('di : 'dir DG) gu ge rgyal po khri grags pa lde (lde : sde DG) dang / lha lcam bsam grub*

- 154 lha lcam bsam grub rgyal mo zhes pa yis //  
 155 spu hrangs ==d-r<sup>240</sup> bzhugs pa==ngs<sup>241</sup> dar<sup>242</sup> yong //  
 156 db====s=san<sup>243</sup> pa'i yon du ni //  
 157 gong du rgyal srid sum cha phul ba ltar //  
 158 gcen -i-us<sup>244</sup> mchod thang zhabs sdod<sup>245</sup> s-ad<sup>246</sup> phul //  
 159 de nas r-<sup>247</sup> zhig lon tshe 'bri gung du //  
 160 bde gshegs kun dga' rin chen zhes grags pa //  
 161 snyigs dus rgyal ba gnyis pa de'i<sup>248</sup> yang //  
 162 sti ser rdor 'dzin 'jam dpal ye shes dang //  
 163 mgon po ye shes kun bkra zhes sogs rdzangs<sup>249</sup> //  
 164 gu ge'i rgyal po blo bzang rab bstan dang //  
 165 bkra shis mgon dang spu hrang sde pa ni //  
 166 kun bsam sogs kyi<sup>250</sup> sby-bdag<sup>251</sup> mdzad nas su =/<sup>252</sup>  
 167 s-r<sup>253</sup> gyi mchod rkyen {12} =====

*rgyal mo yab yum gyis spu (spu : pu RF, V) rang rgyal di (di : ti V) mkhar du gdan drangs.*

<sup>240</sup> ==d-r : rgyal dir(?) – see n. 239.

<sup>241</sup> pa==ngs : par drangs(?) – see n. 239.

<sup>242</sup> dar : der(?) – the space above the d does not seem to be damaged, but a 'greng bu may have flaked off here.

<sup>243</sup> The last syllable may have read *gsan*, but the preceding passage is too damaged to allow for a reasonably certain conjecture.

<sup>244</sup> -i-us : gyi dus.

<sup>245</sup> The root letter is slightly damaged, but the syllable appears to have read *sdod*. Based on the evidence of *Ti se lo rgyus (thang yab stod smad la sogs phul [ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59, Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 676])*, this most likely should be emended to *stod*.

<sup>246</sup> s-ad : smad – cf. n. 245.

<sup>247</sup> r- : re.

<sup>248</sup> de'i : de yis.

<sup>249</sup> rdzangs : brdzangs.

<sup>250</sup> kyi : kyis. Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62, Vitali 1996a: 530, n. 902): *gu ge rgyal po bsod nams lhun grub dang (dang : dang / DG) gu ge chos rgyal blo bzang rab brtan / gu ge rgyal po bkra shis mgon / spu (spu : pu RF, V) rang sde pa kun bsam rnams kyis 'tsho rten sogs zhabs tog sgrub (sgrub : sgrubs V).*

<sup>251</sup> sby-bdag : sbyin bdag.

<sup>252</sup> =/ : //.

<sup>253</sup> s-r : sngar(?)

- 168 =====n d==g-ags pa<sup>254</sup> byon //  
 169 gu ge'i rgyal po 'g rt-n<sup>255</sup> dbang phyug dang //  
 170 spu hra==== pa=====d rab====gyis<sup>256</sup> //  
 171 mchod gzhi<sup>257</sup> phan tshun shor ba thams cad 'phul //  
 172 kun dga' rgya mtsho bsod nams dpal 'byor dang //  
 173 sh-r bcu g- pa<sup>258</sup> kun dga' dpal zhes dang //  
 174 rin chen dpal bzang gram<sup>259</sup> rgyal bstan 'dzin dang //  
 175 rin chen skyabs sogs sti ser byon pa yis<sup>260</sup> //  
 176 rdo rje 'dzin pa rnams la phyag 'tshal lo //  
 177 // e<sup>261</sup> ma gangs dkar sti se'i phyogs bzhir yang //  
 178 seng ge glang chen rta dang rma bya yis<sup>262</sup> //  
 179 kha nas chu chen dal gyi<sup>263</sup> 'bab pa las //

<sup>254</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture *de nas* (or *de['i] rjes*) *rdor 'dzin kun dga' grags pa*. Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62): *de'i rjes su (de'i rjes su : de rjes DG) rgyal dbang ratna'i (ratna'i : ranta'i DG) dus rdo rje 'dzin pa na ro'i rnam 'phrul ('phrul : sprul DG) ldan ma (ma : pa DG) kun dga' grags pa byon*.

<sup>255</sup> 'g rt-n : 'jig rten.

<sup>256</sup> The most likely conjecture (*cum emendation*) for the verse-line is *spu hrangs sde pa bsod nams rab brtan gyis*. Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62): *sbyin bdag gu ge rgyal po 'jig rten dbang phyug dang / spu (spu : pu RF) rang sde pa bsod nams rab brtan sogs kyis (... sngar 'bri gung pa'i chos gzhis dang sa cha shor ba thams cad [thams cad : rnams DG] legs par phul)*. For the spelling *spu hrangs*, cf. verse-lines 155, 164 and 178.

<sup>257</sup> *mchod gzhi* : *mchod gzhis*.

<sup>258</sup> *sh-r bcu g- pa* : *sher bcu gr(w)a pa(?)* – cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62): *sher bcu pa*.

<sup>259</sup> *gram* : *rnam?* But cf. de Rossi Filibeck's (1988: 39f.) edition of *Ti se lo rgyus*: *rdor 'dzin rin chen dpal bzang / rdor 'dzin gram rgyal bstan 'dzin /* (the text in the edition of Don grub [1992: 63] seems to be corrupt here, reading: *rdor 'dzin rin chen dpal bzang bas rgyal bstan 'dzin /*). Also cf. 'Bri gung Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2004: 464: *rdor 'dzin rin chen dpal bzang dang / rdor 'dzin gram rgyal bstan 'dzin /*.

<sup>260</sup> *yis* : *yi?*

<sup>261</sup> The space above the root letter is damaged and the reading of the 'greng *bu* rather uncertain. The syllable could also have read *a* (e : *a* Tsh).

<sup>262</sup> *yis* : *yi*.

<sup>263</sup> *gyi* : *gyis*.

- 180 rma bya'i rgyun ngogs spus<sup>264</sup> rgyal spu hrangs 'dir =/<sup>265</sup>  
 181 sa skyong d-m<sup>266</sup> ra'i {13} =gs khongs-u<sup>267</sup>  
 182 ===r ci yang s-ng<sup>268</sup> ba mang -u<sup>269</sup> 'khrungs //  
 183 dar<sup>270</sup> por che =<sup>271</sup> ch-ch-n<sup>272</sup> yab sras g-i<sup>273</sup> //  
 184 bar du che ba stag l-e<sup>274</sup> -n<sup>275</sup> ==<sup>276</sup> ni //  
 185 -yi<sup>277</sup> r-<sup>278</sup> ===pa dpal dang lha rgyal dang //  
 186 rgya mtsho dpal bzang sa skyong kun bsam dang //  
 187 tha mar che ba shākya seng ge dang //  
 188 shākya 'od dang smon lam rgya mtsho sogs //  
 189 =g<sup>279</sup> rdor gdung 'dzin rnams la phyag 'tshal lo //

<sup>264</sup> For the spelling *spus rgyal*, cf. Haahr 1969: 245f.; *spu rgyal*, *spur rgyal* and *pur rgyal* are much more common variants.

<sup>265</sup> =/ : //.

<sup>266</sup> The inscription is somewhat damaged above and below the d, but the syllable most likely read *dam* (irregular spelling of 'dam?).

<sup>267</sup> A highly speculative conjecture that would be more or less in keeping with the remaining traces is *stegs khongs nang du ni* //.

<sup>268</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture *ngo mtshar ci yang snang* (cf. verse-line 229), but again this is rather speculative.

<sup>269</sup> -u : *du*.

<sup>270</sup> dar : *dang* (cf. *bar du* and *tha mar* at the beginning of verse-lines 184 and 187). The mistake is most likely due to the *ra rjes 'jug* of the following syllable.

<sup>271</sup> = : *ba* (cf. verse-lines 184, 187 and 191).

<sup>272</sup> In both syllables the root letter also may have read *tsh*. Possible conjectures include *che chen*, *cho chen*, *cha chen*, and *che tshan* (irregular spelling of *che btsan*?).

<sup>273</sup> g-i : *gnyis*.

<sup>274</sup> l-e : *lde*?

<sup>275</sup> The root letter of the syllable most likely read *p*, *ph* or *b*. Possible conjectures include *pon* (irregular spelling of *dpon*?), *phan*, *phon*, *phun*, *phyan*, *blon* and *ban* (note that according to *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* [ed. and transl. of Vitali 1996a: 69, 121], Stag tsha is the name that Khri 'Bar btsan was given when he became a "great *bla ma*": *bla chen mdzad pa'i <m>tshan bla chen stag tshar grags* /).

<sup>276</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture *dang*.

<sup>277</sup> The syllable most likely read *kyi*, *gyi* or *byi*.

<sup>278</sup> There are more or less indistinct traces both above and below the *r*. Possible conjectures include *ri*, *re*, *ro* and *ru*.

- 190 ding sang che ba grags pa'i ba dan can dang //  
 191 chos bzhin skyong bas chab srid bde ba'i =jam<sup>280</sup> //  
 192 sna tshogs dbyang=<sup>281</sup> gyi<sup>282</sup> kun la snyan par smra //  
 193 rgya mtsho<sup>283</sup> 'i rlabs bzh-n blang d-r<sup>284</sup> lan<sup>285</sup> mkhas pa //  
 194 sa yi brgya byin =jam<sup>286</sup> dbyangs rgya mtsho rgyal //  
 195 skabs 'dir===bs-n<sup>287</sup> pa ni //  
 196 lnga brgya phrag bcur gnas pa las //  
 197 { 14 } =bras<sup>288</sup> dus sgru=-us=ng<sup>289</sup> dus gsu=po<sup>290</sup> dang //  
 198 rtags\_-am<sup>291</sup> ' dzin pa dag t-<sup>292</sup> grangs pa la //  
 199 dang\_-o<sup>293</sup> =bras<sup>294</sup> bu=-us<sup>295</sup> dang sgrub\_dus 'das //  
 200 lung g-u==<sup>296</sup> 'ang m-on<sup>297</sup> pa'i dus 'das sh-ng<sup>298</sup> //  
 201 da lta mdo sde'i stengs kyi<sup>299</sup> lnga brgya la //

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<sup>279</sup> =g : *phyag* or *lag* (the former conjecture perhaps matching the remaining traces a little better than the latter).

<sup>280</sup> =jam : 'jam.

<sup>281</sup> dbyang= : *dbyangs*.

<sup>282</sup> gyi : *gyis* (i.e., irregular for *kyis*).

<sup>283</sup> *bzh-n* : *bzhin*.

<sup>284</sup> *d-r* : *dor*.

<sup>285</sup> The space above the *l* is slightly damaged and could have featured a '*g*reng bu. But while the phrase *blang d<o>r lan mkhas pa* admittedly seems a little contrived, *blang d<o>r len mkhas pa* results in a semi-tautology (blending *blang dor* and *dor len* into one expression) and could probably only be explained as a mistake of the scribe and/or author of the inscriptional text.

<sup>286</sup> =jam : 'jam.

<sup>287</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture (*skabs 'dir rgyal ba'i bstan*). Note that the following verse-line also has only seven syllables.

<sup>288</sup> =bras : 'bras.

<sup>289</sup> sgru=-us=ng : *sgrub dus lung*.

<sup>290</sup> gsu=po : *gsum po*.

<sup>291</sup> -am : *tsam*.

<sup>292</sup> t- : *tu*.

<sup>293</sup> -o : *po*.

<sup>294</sup> =bras : 'bras.

<sup>295</sup> bu=-us : *bu'i dus*.

<sup>296</sup> g-u==<sup>296</sup> 'ang : *gsum na'ang* or *la'ang*.

<sup>297</sup> m-on : *mngon*.

<sup>298</sup> sh-ng : *shing*.

<sup>299</sup> *stengs kyi* : *steng gi*.

- 202 nyis brgya gsum bcu so bzhi 'das par gyur //  
 203 lhag ma ny-s<sup>300</sup> brgya drug b-u<sup>301</sup> re drug lus //  
 204 'dul ba'i dus dang rtags tsam 'dzin pa'i dus //  
 205 stong phrag gcig ni ma 'ongs gnas dus 'dir //  
 206 da lta'i gtsug lag ==che=<sup>302</sup> 'di bzhengs pa'i //  
 207 yon gyi bdag p-'i<sup>303</sup> rigs rus 'cho brang<sup>304</sup> ni //  
 208 rus n-<sup>305</sup> stong<sup>306</sup> s-<sup>307</sup> lha chen dkar po'-<sup>308</sup> rgyud //  
 209 rigs ni brang -o<sup>309</sup> zhes pa kun du grags //  
 210 brang -o=go ne<sup>310</sup> bre<sup>311</sup> dkar khro=<sup>312</sup> ni //  
 211 {15} ==l bz-ng<sup>313</sup> zhes dang rn-m p-<sup>314</sup> gsum du byung //  
 212 mnga' ris bro sh-d<sup>315</sup> -ung<sup>316</sup> pa'i sde dpon byas //  
 213 sangs rgyas bstan la rab gus rgyal ba'i yum //  
 214 rgyas pa rin chen gser las gzhengs<sup>317</sup> pa de //

<sup>300</sup> *ny-s* : *nyis*.

<sup>301</sup> *b-u* : *bcu*.

<sup>302</sup> ==che= : *khang chen*.

<sup>303</sup> *p-'i* : *po'i*.

<sup>304</sup> I.e., irregular spelling of *cho 'brang*.

<sup>305</sup> *n-* : *ni*.

<sup>306</sup> The syllable could also be read as *stod*.

<sup>307</sup> The inscription is damaged above and below the *s*. A possible but quite speculative conjecture is *ste*.

<sup>308</sup> *po'* - : *po'i*.

<sup>309</sup> The remaining traces suggest the conjecture *so*, but *bo*, *po* and *mo* could also be justified. Cf. verse-lines 210, 219 and 253.

<sup>310</sup> *brang -o=go ne* : *brang so mgo ne* (i.e., with *mgo ne* as an irregular spelling of *mgon ne*)? Cf. verse-lines 209, 216 and 219. On the first page of an *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript kept in the Dpal 'khor chos sde in Rgyal rtse, the name of the sponsor is given as *mgo ne*, probably also an irregular spelling of *mgon ne*. For a transcription, German translation and photo of this donor inscription, see Verhufen & Eimer 2006: 229 and 597, n. 82; for the 15th century dating of the manuscript, see *ibid.*: 597, n. 80.

<sup>311</sup> Here and in verse-line 218, the syllable could perhaps also be read as *bro*, but in both places *bre* seems preferable.

<sup>312</sup> *khro=* : *khro bo*?

<sup>313</sup> ==l bz-ng : *dpal bzang*?

<sup>314</sup> *rn-m p-* : *rnām pa*.

<sup>315</sup> *bro sh-d* : *bro shod* (i.e., irregular spelling of *gro shod*).

<sup>316</sup> -ung : *lung*.

- 215 da lta rg-d<sup>318</sup> phungs dgon par bzhugs zhes thos //  
 216 mgon ne rgyud 'dzin chos skyabs kun dga' sogs //  
 217 gu ge'i phyogs su sde 'khor bcas te brug<sup>319</sup> /  
 218 bre<sup>320</sup> dkar rgyud 'dzin spu hrangs lung pa 'dir //  
 219 bra so<sup>321</sup> =pun<sup>322</sup> bt<sup>u</sup>sun k-n d=<sup>323</sup> rnam rgya=<sup>324</sup> -o==<sup>325</sup> //  
 220 lugs gnyis skyong mkhas de'i rigs 'dzin pa //  
 221 dpal ldan 'jam dbyangs rgya mtsho'i mdun na 'don //  
 222 sna tshogs bros<sup>326</sup> kyi<sup>327</sup> bla<sup>328</sup> re<sup>329</sup> 'bri mkhas pa //  
 223 nang blon nang so mgon po skya=s<sup>330</sup> zhes pas //  
 224 {16} sangs rg=<sup>331</sup> bst-n<sup>332</sup> la rab tu gus pa dang //  
 225 khams gsum sems can byang chub thob phyr du //  
 226 grong dang thang 'tshams<sup>333</sup> dag du gtsug lag khang //  
 227 gzh=<sup>334</sup> pa sla ru<sub>ng</sub> tha ma sdig pa'i rgyu //  
 228 de phyr tho<sup>335</sup> btsan brag gi skyed 'tshang<sup>336</sup> du //

<sup>317</sup> *gzhengs* : *bzhengs*.

<sup>318</sup> *rg-d* : *rgod*.

<sup>319</sup> The *zhabs kyu* is rather uncertain. Yet *brag* does not seem to make much sense either – unless it is taken as an irregular spelling of *grag(s)*. In this case, however, the preceding *phyogs su* would be somewhat awkward. Also cf. verse-line 209, which has the regular spelling *grags*.

<sup>320</sup> Cf. verse-line 210.

<sup>321</sup> Cf. verse-lines 209, 210 and 253.

<sup>322</sup> =pun : *dpon(?)* (cf. verse-line 253). The confusion of *u* and *o* could have been caused by the occurrence of a *u* in the following syllable (*bt<sup>u</sup>sun*).

<sup>323</sup> *k-n d=* : *kun dga'*.

<sup>324</sup> *rgya=* : *rgyal*.

<sup>325</sup> -o== : *sogs(?)* – another possible conjecture is *lo*; yet in this case the empty space between the last syllable of the verse-line and the following double *shad* would have to have been exceptionally wide.

<sup>326</sup> *bros* : *spros* or *'phros?*

<sup>327</sup> *kyi* : *kyis?*

<sup>328</sup> *bla* : *lha?*

<sup>329</sup> *re* : *ri* or *ris?*

<sup>330</sup> *skya=s* : *skyabs*.

<sup>331</sup> *rg=* : *rgyas*.

<sup>332</sup> *bst-n* : *bstan*.

<sup>333</sup> *'tshams* : *mtshams*.

<sup>334</sup> *gzh=s* : *gzhengs* (i.e., irregular spelling of *bzhengs*; cf. verse-line 230).

<sup>335</sup> *tho* : *mtho*.

- 229 rin chen gser gyi spras pa'i gtsug lag khang //  
 230 ngo mtshar ci yang snang ba 'di nyid gzhangs<sup>337</sup> //  
 231 de'i lhaq bsam phun tshogs rang gi rje //  
 232 sa dbang phun tshogs 'jam dbyangs rgya mtsho yis //  
 233 chab srid phun tshogs y-n<sup>338</sup> du gnas phyir du //  
 234 snang gsal phun tshogs dag gis<sup>339</sup> rgyu rkyen du //  
 235 sku mkhar stod du -un<sup>340</sup> tshogs zhing b=ngs<sup>341</sup> phul //  
 236 rgya zhing mda' nas =<sup>342</sup> khal gsum yang ni //  
 237 rang bre {17} =====bs re<sup>343</sup> 'ph-l<sup>344</sup> //  
 238 de la yon gyi bdaq mo lhaq bsam can //  
 239 dad pa'i ngang tshul gtong phod sen mo yi<sup>345</sup> //  
 240 ser sna'i srad bus 'dud<sup>346</sup> pa 'grol mkhas ma //  
 241 gang gis <sub>rab dkar</sub> bsod nams bsog rten du //  
 242 gsung rab sku gzugs <sub>ri mo</sub> dpag -ed<sup>347</sup> gzhangs<sup>348</sup> //  
 243 yon gyi bdaq mo u -u<sup>349</sup> zhes pa lags //  
 244 phongs pa nams la dpag bsam shing lta bu //  
 245 gnyis pa phra 'dzom<sup>350</sup> srid 'dzin bu nor can //  
 246 bkra shis mgon dang bkra shis rgyal po dang //  
 247 'dzom pa 'dzo me<sup>351</sup> lcam sring bzhi po yang //

<sup>336</sup> 'tshang : tshang.

<sup>337</sup> gzhangs : bzhangs.

<sup>338</sup> y-n : yun.

<sup>339</sup> gis : gi.

<sup>340</sup> -un : phun.

<sup>341</sup> b=ngs : bzangs (i.e., irregular spelling of bzang).

<sup>342</sup> The remaining traces suggest that the root letter of the syllable was *c* or *ts*. Read *rts(w)a*, *tsa* (irregular spelling of *tsh(w)a*?), or *ca* (irregular spelling of *ja*?)?

<sup>343</sup> The verse-line's third- and second-to-last syllables may have read *skabs re*, but this conjecture is very speculative.

<sup>344</sup> 'ph-l : 'phul.

<sup>345</sup> yi : yis.

<sup>346</sup> 'dud : mdud.

<sup>347</sup> -ed : med.

<sup>348</sup> gzhangs : bzhangs.

<sup>349</sup> The remaining traces allow for the rather uncertain conjecture *ru*.

<sup>350</sup> phra 'dzom : phra tshom(s)?

<sup>351</sup> 'dzom pa 'dzo me : 'dzoms pa 'dzoms med?

- 248 tshe rings nad med bde skyid ldan par sh-g<sup>352</sup> / # //
- 249 dge byed chu stag yar ngo'i 'grub sbyor la //
- 250 bkra shis rab tu gnas {18} pa=<sup>353</sup> mkhan po=<sup>354</sup> //
- 251 ===== dbang rin chen skyabs dang ni //
- 252 nyid kyi rten la ny-d -yi<sup>355</sup> rab g=s<sup>356</sup> pa //
- 253 br=-o<sup>357</sup> dp-n<sup>358</sup> btsun chos rgyal =====
- 254 == mig<sup>359</sup> 'dzin pa de'i<sup>360</sup> lha bkod mdzad //
- 255 byi sho dkar mo'i gnas la 'gran bzod pa'i //
- 256 ri mo mkhan =sle<sup>361</sup> mi gzhon nu sogs //
- 257 mkhas la 'gyogs<sup>362</sup> pa dpon slob lnga yi<sup>363</sup> -ris<sup>364</sup> //
- 258 dge ba 'di dang sngan chad bgyis pa dang //
- 259 physis nas bgyid par 'gyur ba'i dge ba des<sup>365</sup> //
- 260 bdag gis<sup>366</sup> lus bskyed mar gyur u chung sogs //
- 261 mkha' mnyam sems can byang chub<sup>367</sup> thob phyir bsngo'o // //
- 262 sbyin pa las byung dge ba'i shing rta yis //
- 263 == =ga'i<sup>368</sup> sa ru mngon par sgrid gyur te //
- 264 {19} tshul khrim s gtsang ma'i go cha rab dgos<sup>369</sup> nas //
- 265 dri ma med pa'i sa de thob =r<sup>370</sup> sho==<sup>371</sup>

<sup>352</sup> sh-g : shog.

<sup>353</sup> pa= : par?

<sup>354</sup> = : ni?

<sup>355</sup> ny-d -yi : nyid kyi, i.e., wrongly for nyid kyi?

<sup>356</sup> rab g=s : rab gnas(?)

<sup>357</sup> br=-o : brang so?

<sup>358</sup> dp-n : dpon.

<sup>359</sup> == mig : ngur mig (i.e., irregular spelling of ngur smig).

<sup>360</sup> de'i : de yis? Note that the emendation des would result in a verse-line that is metrically deficient.

<sup>361</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture ni sle.

<sup>362</sup> 'gyogs : mgyogs.

<sup>363</sup> yi : yis(?)

<sup>364</sup> -ris : bris(?)

<sup>365</sup> des : de.

<sup>366</sup> gis : gi.

<sup>367</sup> chub<sub>o</sub> : chub.

<sup>368</sup> == =ga'i : rab dga'i.

<sup>369</sup> dgos : bgos.

<sup>370</sup> =r : par.

<sup>371</sup> sho== : shog / (cf. verse-lines 269, 273, 277, 281).

- 266 ==<sup>372</sup> spangs pa bzod bsgom<sup>373</sup> ri bong ca===<sup>374</sup>  
 267 =====gs la 'od byed cing //  
 268 brtson '=<sup>375</sup> yar ngo'i cha shas ma nyams pas //  
 269 'od 'phro'i sa de rab tu gn<sup>on</sup> par shog /  
 270 bsam=<sup>376</sup>tan las byung dri med bum bzang=<sup>377</sup> chus //  
 271 nyon mongs sbyang dka'i dri ma dag pa dang //  
 272 shes rab me lces mngos<sup>378</sup> 'dzin kun sregs<sup>379</sup> nas //  
 273 mngon 'gyur sa de rab tu sgro<sup>d</sup> par shog /  
 274 thabs mkhas glang chen khri la lcibs<sup>380</sup> gyur te //  
 275 'khor ba'<sup>381</sup> dam 'dzab<sup>382</sup> 'di las ring song ste //  
 276 rnam dag smon lam bzang pos 'tshams<sup>383</sup> sbyar nas //  
 277 mtshan med bsgom la g.yo ba m-d<sup>384</sup> {20} par shog /  
 278 sna tsho===<sup>385</sup> -obs<sup>386</sup> las byung ba'i dge b=ng<sup>387</sup> pos //  
 279 legs pa'i blo gro shin du yangs pa dang //  
 280 sangs rgyas =sh-=====es<sup>388</sup> shing //  
 281 chos sprin sa =====gnas<sup>389</sup> par sh-g<sup>390</sup> / //  
 282 ji ltar mkha' la rta bdun brjid pa'i 'od kyis g=ing<sup>391</sup> bzhi'i mun  
 pa 'jig rten dag gis<sup>392</sup> s-yon<sup>393</sup> 'jom<sup>394</sup> ltar //

<sup>372</sup> == : *khro ba*.

<sup>373</sup> *bsgom* : *sgom*.

<sup>374</sup> ca=== : can //.

<sup>375</sup> '=<sup>s</sup> : 'grus.

<sup>376</sup> =tan : *gtan*.

<sup>377</sup> *bzang*= : *bzangs* (i.e., irregular spelling of *bzang*).

<sup>378</sup> *mngos* : *dnogs*.

<sup>379</sup> *sregs* : *bsregs*.

<sup>380</sup> *lcibs* : *bcibs*.

<sup>381</sup> *ba'* : *ba'i*.

<sup>382</sup> 'dzab : *rdzab*.

<sup>383</sup> 'tshams : *mtshams*.

<sup>384</sup> *m-d* : *med*.

<sup>385</sup> *sna tsho*=== : *sna tshogs*.

<sup>386</sup> *-obs* : *stobs* (Skt. *bala*, i.e., the ninth *pāramitā*)

<sup>387</sup> *b=ng* : *bzang*.

<sup>388</sup> The two syllables following *sangs rgyas* most likely read *ye shes* (Skt. *jñāna*, i.e., the tenth *pāramitā*), and the one preceding *shing* may have read *brnyes*.

<sup>389</sup> =====gnas : *la rtag tu gnas*?

<sup>390</sup> *sh-g* : *shog*.

- 283 bde stong ye shes 'o=<sup>395</sup> kyis lhan skyes 'dab stong ci dgar  
gzhad<sup>396</sup> cing rigs kun bdag po rdo rje 'chang //
- 284 gang gi sku gzugs rnam bkra mtshon<sup>397</sup> gyi ri mor rab mdzes  
rgyal ba rgyal sras rnams kyi<sup>398</sup> bs-or<sup>399</sup> ba gang //
- 285 bris pa'i dge des 'gro rnams thub chen chos kyi rgyal po rgyal  
ba'i bstan pa rab 'jam<sup>400</sup> phyogs bcu'i<sup>401</sup> {21} zhing 'dir rgyas  
gyu=====<sup>402</sup>
- 286 =====o=====n spyod<sup>403</sup> dang //

<sup>391</sup> *g-ing* : *gling*.

<sup>392</sup> *gis* : *gi*.

<sup>393</sup> *s-yon* : *skyon*.

<sup>394</sup> 'jom : 'joms.

<sup>395</sup> 'o= : 'od.

<sup>396</sup> *gzhad* : *bzhad*.

<sup>397</sup> *mtshon* : *tshon*.

<sup>398</sup> *kyi* : *kyis*? Cf. the following note.

<sup>399</sup> The remaining traces suggest that the syllable read *bsdor*, *bsngor* or *bsnor*. While *bsdor* and *bsngor* do not make much sense and probably would have to be considered scribal mistakes, *bsnor* (pf. of *snor* 'to confound', 'to get wrong', 'to [inter]mingle', 'to mix [up]') generally has a negative connotation and therefore does not fit the context. By contrast, the conjecture/emendation (*kyis*) *bskor* is contextually very apposite (cf. n. 678) and thus should perhaps be adopted.

<sup>400</sup> 'jam : 'byams.

<sup>401</sup> *bcu'i* extends to the rightmost side of the inscriptional panel. In the painting immediately to the right of it, there are some indistinct lines and blotches that could be the remains of an erstwhile double *shad* (in which case *bcu'i* would have to be read as two syllables). However, I consider it much more likely that the verse-line ended after the first five syllables of line 21 (probably reading *zhing 'dir rgyas gyur shog* [/]; cf. the following note) and thus – whether by mistake or intended by the author – consisted of 25 syllables (instead of 21 as in verse-lines 282–284). This is because the space taken up by the damaged passage at the beginning of line 21 starting with *zhing* and ending in “*spyod dang* //” is too short for 21 syllables and too long for 7 (as in the verse-lines that follow).

<sup>402</sup> The remaining traces allow for the conjecture *gyur shog* / (cf. verse-lines 269, 273, 277, 281, and the previous note).

<sup>403</sup> The third-to-last syllable may have read *mngon*; taken together with the following *spyod* this could have been an irregular spelling of *mngon brjod*.

- 287 =b-i=bcu drang ng-s<sup>404</sup> sogs dang //  
 288 bai dha ba dang go ḍa'i lugs //  
 289 sgra'i rgyan sogs med=<sup>405</sup> yang //  
 290 'di na tshi=s=====s pa<sup>406</sup> //  
 291 ma 'ongs dus kyi na ra kun //  
 292 rig gnas ngal bar ma byas pas l=<sup>407</sup>  
 293 'os pa tsam zhig bris gyur to //  
 294 mkhas pa dga' byed sdeb sbyor la //  
 295 bklog<sup>408</sup> par gyur kyang don de ni //  
 296 yongs 'du'i tsha gyi khri shing la //  
 297 b-ng<sup>409</sup> ba gzhas kyi<sup>410</sup> lon<sup>411</sup> nam ci //  
 298 rab 'jam dar gyi 'dud<sup>412</sup> pa de //  
 299 l-g<sup>413</sup> 'gro'i<sup>414</sup> 'grol bar mi nus te //  
 300 'o ma chu yi<sup>415</sup> 'bres pa<sup>416</sup> de //  
 301 ngang pa'i bu mos 'jed<sup>417</sup> la ltos // //  
 302 <sup>418</sup>na mo dbu la bkra shis gdugs ltar s-yob<sup>419</sup> ==<sup>420</sup>

Moreover, the remaining traces allow for the conjecture *dang* for the fourth-to-last syllable. All this is rather speculative, however.

<sup>404</sup> *drang ng-s* : *drang nges*?

<sup>405</sup> = : *na*.

<sup>406</sup> The grounding of the panel is completely gone between “*ḡ*” and “*s pa*”, but the two syllables following *'di na* in all likelihood read *tshigs bcad*; this could have been followed by *du byas pa*, *du bsgrigs pa*, *du brtsams pa* or some similar phrase.

<sup>407</sup> *l* = : //.

<sup>408</sup> *bklog* : *klog*, *bklag* or *bklags*.

<sup>409</sup> *b-ng* : *bung*.

<sup>410</sup> *kyi* : *kyis*.

<sup>411</sup> Below the *l*, there are faint traces resembling a *d*; thus the syllable could also be read as *lḍon*.

<sup>412</sup> *'dud* : *mdud*.

<sup>413</sup> *l-g* : *log* or *lag*?

<sup>414</sup> *'gro'i* : *'gros* (metrically short for *'gro bas*)?

<sup>415</sup> *yi* : *yis*.

<sup>416</sup> 'bres pa : *'dres pa* or *'brel ba*.

<sup>417</sup> 'jed : *'byed*.

<sup>418</sup> The following passage, up to verse-line 312, is also found in *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo*. There, the order of some of the verse-lines is different, though, and one also meets with some minor and major variants regarding the text's

- 303 spyan la bkra shis rin chen {22} gser gyi nya =/<sup>421</sup>  
 304 =====dkar<sup>422</sup> g.yas su 'khyi<sub>i</sub>====<sup>423</sup>  
 305 =====k-<sup>424</sup> shis =='i<sup>425</sup> lo====s<sup>426</sup> //  
 306 mgur la=kra<sup>427</sup> shis rin chen bum ==-i<sub>i</sub>==/<sup>428</sup>  
 307 thugs la =====l<sup>429</sup> gy-<sup>430</sup> be'u mnga' //  
 308 sku=<sup>431</sup> bkra shis mi nub rgyal mtshan mchog / //<sup>432</sup>

wording (note, in particular, that the passage in *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo* has the extra verse-line “*phyag la bkra shis yon tan nor bu mchog l'*”, resulting in nine auspicious symbols, but that there is a reference to “eight auspicious things” [*bkra shis rdzas brgyad*] in the fourth-to-last verse-line). In Loden Sherap Daggyab Rinpoche 1995: 116, n. 25, the passage is rendered as follows (based on a microfilm of “*gZungs-bsdus*”, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Fonds tibétain 492, ff. 874a–880b”; a modern edition of *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo* as part of *Snga 'gyur bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, published by “Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa / Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang” in Chengdu in 2009, is available at [tbrc.org/#library\\_work\\_ViewByOutline-O1PD100944C2O0737|W1PD100944](http://tbrc.org/#library_work_ViewByOutline-O1PD100944C2O0737|W1PD100944); according to [www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/xml3/xml/verif2.php?id=1359](http://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/xml3/xml/verif2.php?id=1359), the *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo* is not included in any of the Tshal pa and Them spangs ma Kanjurs but – with slightly varying titles – in the collections of Egoo, Stagrimo, Stongde, and Bardan):

*na mo dbu la bkra shis gdugs ltar skyob // spyan la bkra shis rin chen gser gyi nya // mgul la bkra shis rin chen bum pa 'khyil // ljags la bkra shis padmo lo 'dab rgyas // gsung la bkra shis chos dung g.yas su 'khyil // thugs la bkra shis dpal gyi be'u gsal // phyag la bkra shis yon tan nor bu mchog // sku la bkra shis mi nub rgyal mtshan mchog // zhabs la bkra shis 'phrin las 'khor lo lnga [mnga'] // bkra shis rdzas brgyad dngos grub dam pa'i mchog // rdzas mchog brgyad kyi bkra shis gang yin pa // deng 'dir bdag cag rnam la bkra shis phob / bkra shis des kyang rtag tu bde legs shog /.*

<sup>419</sup> s-yob : skyob (cf. n. 418).

<sup>420</sup> == : //.

<sup>421</sup> =/ : //.

<sup>422</sup> =====dkar : gsung la bkra shis dung dkar (cf. n. 418).

<sup>423</sup> 'khyi<sub>i</sub>==== : 'khyil // (cf. n. 418).

<sup>424</sup> =====k- : ljags la bkra (cf. n. 418).

<sup>425</sup> =='i : padma'i (cf. n. 418).

<sup>426</sup> lo====s : lo 'dab rgyas (cf. n. 418).

<sup>427</sup> la=kra : la bkra (cf. n. 418).

<sup>428</sup> ==-i==/ : pa 'khyil // (cf. n. 418).

<sup>429</sup> =====l : bkra shis dpal (cf. n. 418).

<sup>430</sup> gy- : gyi (cf. n. 418).

<sup>431</sup> sku= : sku la (cf. n. 418).

- 309 zhabs la bkra shis gser gyi 'khor lo mnga' //
- 310 bkra shis rdzas brgyad dngos grub dam ='i<sup>433</sup> mchog /
- 311 rdzas mchog brgyad kyidngos grub gang lags pa //
- 312 bkra shis dam=e= kyang<sup>434</sup> d-ng<sup>435</sup> 'dir bde legs shog ///
- 313 <sup>436</sup>jig rten 'gren<sup>437</sup> pa'i gtso bo tshe dpag -ed<sup>438</sup> //
- 314 dus min 'chi ==<sup>439</sup> lus 'joms pa'i dpal //
- 315 mgon med sdug bsngal gyur pa rnams kyid skyabs //
- 316 sangs rgyas tshe =pa=<sup>440</sup> med kyid bkra=s-o====<sup>441</sup>
- 317 {23} == le=====od /=<sup>442</sup>
- 318 ====i yon tan=====s //
- 319 ngag==d-d====<sup>443</sup> -i====<sup>444</sup> nor bu'i g-er<sup>445</sup> //
- 320 rgy-d<sup>446</sup> pa mes p-<sup>447</sup> skal ldan longs sp-od<sup>448</sup> shog /
- 321 dge legs kun 'byung yon tan gter gyid mdzod //
- 322 sde gsum rim dgu chos kyid<sup>449</sup> rab dgrad<sup>450</sup> nas //

<sup>432</sup> *mchog / //* : *mchog /*.

<sup>433</sup> ='i : *pa'i* (cf. n. 418).

<sup>434</sup> There are several small dots above and in front of the *d*, which seem to indicate the scribe's deletion of *dam=e=*. In any case, the beginning of the verse-line should read *bkra shis des kyang* (cf. n. 418).

<sup>435</sup> *d-ng* : *deng* or *ding* (cf. n. 418).

<sup>436</sup> The following stanza is also found – with some minor variation at the end of the concluding verse-line – in *Blo sbyong dmar khrid shar rtse chos rje la gnang ba* (2r5–v1): *'jig rten 'dren pa'i gtso bo tshe dpag med // dus min 'chi ba ma lus 'joms pa'i dpal // mgon med sdug bsngal gyur pa rnams kyid skyabs // sangs rgyas tshe dpag med la phyag 'tshal lo //*

<sup>437</sup> 'gren : 'dren.

<sup>438</sup> -ed : med.

<sup>439</sup> == : *ba ma*.

<sup>440</sup> =pa= : *dpag*.

<sup>441</sup> *bkra=s-o====* : *bkra shis shog /*(?)

<sup>442</sup> The remaining traces at the end of the verse-line support the conjecture *mdzod //*. Cf. v.-1. 321.

<sup>443</sup> *ngag==d-d====* : *ngag gi 'dod bskangs?*

<sup>444</sup> -i==== : *yid bzhin*(?)

<sup>445</sup> *g-er* : *gter*.

<sup>446</sup> *rgy-d* : *rgyud*.

<sup>447</sup> *p-* : *po*.

<sup>448</sup> *sp-od* : *spyod*.

<sup>449</sup> *kyid* : *kyis*(?)

- 323 pha rol phyin drug chos la spyod pa da<sup>451</sup> //
- 324 dbyings rig 'du 'bral med ==rtogs<sup>452</sup> par shog /
- 325 bde =gs<sup>453</sup> kun 'byung nam mkha'i cha=che=po<sup>454</sup> //
- 326 bs<sup>455</sup>==== mor 'das pa'<sup>456</sup> sangs rgyas kyis<sup>457</sup> //
- 327 thugs rje'i char rgyun skal ldan rnams babs nas //
- 328 d-n-=ul<sup>458</sup> pa'i =g<sup>459</sup> chags dag par sho<sup>460</sup> / //
- 329 bkra shis dpal 'bar<sup>461</sup> 'dzam gling rgyan gyur cig // //
- shu-m<sup>462</sup> //

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<sup>450</sup> The syllable's *rjes 'jug* could read *d* or *ng* and the root letter *g* or *k*. Moreover, it is difficult to say whether the short curved line below the root letter is a subscribed *r* or a smear. Thus various alternative readings are possible, including *dkang* (irregular for *bkang*?), *dgang* and *dgrang* (irregular for *bgrang* or *bgrangs*?).

<sup>451</sup> da = : *dang*.

<sup>452</sup> ==rtogs : *par rtogs*.

<sup>453</sup> =gs : *legs*.

<sup>454</sup> As *nam mkha'i chu bo* is a frequent epithet of the Ganges (see, e.g., Zhang *et al.* 1993, s.v.), *chu bo chen po* would be a fitting conjecture for the damaged passage, but it is not supported by the remaining traces and neither is *chab chen po*. The most likely but still rather uncertain reading/conjecture seems to be *char chen po*.

<sup>455</sup> bs<sup>455</sup>==== : *bskal bzang snga*?

<sup>456</sup> pa'- : *pa'i*.

<sup>457</sup> kyis : *kyi*.

<sup>458</sup> While the conjecture '*khru*l for the verse-line's third syllable is hardly disputable, *da ni* for the first two syllables is a little more uncertain.

<sup>459</sup> =g : *bag*.

<sup>460</sup> sho = : *shog*.

<sup>461</sup> The inscription is slightly damaged above and below the *b* and thus the syllable also may have read '*byor*. Yet the limited extent of the damage makes it especially difficult to argue for an erstwhile *o*.

<sup>462</sup> shu-m : *shubham*(?)



#### 4. ANNOTATED TRANSLATION

*om* [svāhā *siddham*]<sup>463</sup>

- 1 In the [glorious] grove which is excellent with regard to the two accumulations (of merit and wisdom), ... of/for<sup>464</sup> the four kinds of activity, (I) bow to [the *guru* (of)] the three bodies, the Jina [Vajradhara], the supreme [and exalted deities(?)], the divine assembly [(of) tutelary deities(?)].<sup>465</sup>
- 5 The [completely] pure *dharmakāya*, great (like the) ocean and sky, the *maṇḍala* of the *sambhogakāya*,<sup>466</sup> (which is like) a valuable gem, the sun of the *nirmāṇakāya*,<sup>467</sup> (which is) perfect and fulfilling (all) wishes – may the Jina, the precious creator of the day(light), be supremely victorious!
- 9 When the time has come to have the [five] poisons severed (and) all the ills of *saṃsāra* cannot be cured by worldly medi-

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<sup>463</sup> I.e., “Om! [Hail! Success!]”. Cf. Tropper 2007a: 122, n. 208.

<sup>464</sup> The meaning of the verse-line’s damaged second half is highly uncertain and it is particularly difficult to find a convincing interpretation for *le*. I could not establish any connection of the inscription’s *'phrin las rnam bzhi'i le* with the following chapters in the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum*: *'Phrin las rnam bzhi'i le'u* (11th chapter of the *Rdo rje srin po bse yi skyes bu can / gnod sbyin dmar po'i rgyud* [Gting skyes ed., vol. *za*, fol. 30v3–31r3]), *'Phrin las rnam bzhi'i le'u* (8th chapter of the *'Jam dpal mched bzhi'i sngags rgyud* [Gting skyes ed., vol. *za*, fol. 140v4–141r6]), and *'Phrin las rnam bzhi'i phur pa'i le'u* (9th chapter of the *Rdo rje phur pa gsang ba gdam ngag can gyi rgyud* [Gting skyes ed., vol. *sha*, fol. 165r1–6]). Read: “at the dawn of this branch (of)” (referring to the monastery’s or Gtsug lag khang’s “foundation”, which would be a very uncommon use of *le*, though) or “at the dawn of this year (of)”? Contextually, taking (the conjecture) *lo* as an irregular spelling of *blo* (cf. Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche Sherpa 2004: 19f.) is perhaps more apposite (i.e., “with the arising of this wish (for)”, but also highly speculative.

<sup>465</sup> Or: “the supreme [and exalted deity] (referring to Vajradhara) (and) the divine assembly [(of) tutelary deities]”?

<sup>466</sup> Here, *long sku'i dkyil 'khor* is taken as an explicative genitive, which is often used for abbreviated comparisons in poetry (cf. Hahn 1996: 81).

<sup>467</sup> On the genitive, see the preceding note.

- cine – having tasted a drop of the elixir of the holy *dharma*,  
 (I) bow to that creator of a healthy life, the supreme medicine.
- 13 (I) respectfully worship these jewels [(of) the *saṃgha*], which  
 [have become] the sons [of the all-]victorious one, [seeing the]  
 noble [truth] after having given up both the (belief in the) per-  
 ishable aggregates and the (attachment to) practices and ob-  
 servances<sup>468</sup> at the same time.
- 17 ...<sup>469</sup> who, with (his) far-reaching *vajra*[-laughter], frightens  
 the misguiders, the goats(?) and deer,<sup>470</sup> (and) the glorious  
 four-armed protector [(of) primordial wisdom],<sup>471</sup> along with  
 their retinues – may they always bestow well-being!
- 21 The maiden of fifteen – although she has become the *a phyi*  
 (grandmother) of all the mundane and supra-mundane ones –

<sup>468</sup> I.e., *satkāyadr̥ṣṭi* and *śīlavrataparāmarśa*.

<sup>469</sup> Read: “The strong and powerful lord,” (a common epithet of Vajrapāni)?

<sup>470</sup> The meaning of verse-line 18 is uncertain, but *log\_’{d}ren* may have to be understood as the equivalent of *(ku)ūrthya/(ku)ūrthika* here and the following *ra dang ri dags* as a qualifying apposition. Cf., e.g., the following expression in verse 54 of Nāgārjuna’s *Acintyastava*, its Tibetan translation, and the English rendering in Lindtner 1990: 158–159: *kutīrthyamṛgabhīkaraḥ / mu stegs ri dvags ’jigs bgyid pa*, “terrifies the deer, viz. the mean heretics”. Also cf. Steinkellner’s (1973: 46, 48) and Hahn’s (2012: 15) editions and translations of the following passage in *Sangs rgyas yongs su mya ngan las ’das pa la bstod pa*, attributed to one Dharmakīrti: *mu stegs ri dags ’joms*, “Du hast das Wild der ... Häretiker ausgerottet”, “he has defeated the beats [*sic*; K.T.] of prey, the heretics” (where Hahn’s “bea{s}ts of prey” should probably rather be “deer” or “game”). Olivelle (2006: 91–100) provides a number of examples in which ascetics are likened to various animals, including deer, cows, pythons, dogs, birds, and fish, but this does not always seem to have a negative connotation. MW explains *mṛgaśṛṅgavratin* as “[N]ame of a Buddhist sect” [my emphasis; K.T.], whereas BHSD defines it as “having adopted the style of life of a deer, and wearing a horn like a deer, said of a sort of ascetics” and equates it with *mṛgacarya*; the latter, in turn, is explained as “applied to some non-Buddhist ascetics who behave like deer”. While the rendering *sha ru’i brtol zhugs can* for *mṛgaśṛṅgavratin* as attested in *Mvy* supports taking *mṛgaśṛṅga* as a *tatpuruṣa* compound, the inscription’s *ra dang ri dags* may well go back to an alternative *dvandva* interpretation and/or a slightly different Sanskrit expression (*mṛgaśṛṅgin*).

<sup>471</sup> I.e., Mahākāla.

- who guards the (Buddha-)word and destroys those who hinder and cause harm to the teaching – may (A phyi) Chos kyi sgrol ma<sup>472</sup> bestow well-being!
- 25 In this three-thousandfold *sahā(loka)*,<sup>473</sup> the realm of Śākya(-mu-ni), prince Sarvārthasiddha,<sup>474</sup> accomplished through the (two) accumulations of merit and wisdom, gained enlightenment and turned the wheel of the *dharma* threefold for the three line-ages.<sup>475</sup>
- 29 First, the four truths; second, ...<sup>476</sup>; [finally,] the ultimate reality – [he turned (the wheel of the *dharma*)] in two [ways].<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>472</sup> A statue of this protective deity of the 'Bri gung school is found at the front wall of the 'Du khang. An extensive study of A phyi Chos kyi sgrol ma has recently been provided by Muldowney (2011). The inscription's *bc«w»o lnga'i lang «'»tsho ma* 'maiden of fifteen' is not entirely clear, but in combination with the preceding *a «s»phyir gyur kyang* the intention seems to be to portray A phyi Chos kyi sgrol ma, who was the great-grandmother of 'Jig rten gsum mgon, founder of the 'Bri gung school, as a pure young woman. Indeed, the various statues and paintings typically show her at a young age (cf. Muldowney 2011: 38). Alternatively, but much less likely, *bc«w»o lnga'i* could refer to A phyi Chos kyi sgrol ma's statement that she would "act [as] a protector until the fifteenth generation" (*ibid.*: 28). In this case, however, *bc«w»o lnga'i lang «'»tsho ma* would be a rather terse expression.

<sup>473</sup> On *mī mjed* ('jig rten) / *sahā(loka)*, cf. Tropper 2015: 165 (n. 240).

<sup>474</sup> This variant of the more common epithet Siddhārtha also occurs in the epigraphical Buddha-vita in the *skor lam chen mo* at Zha lu monastery (ed. Tropper 2007b: 963).

<sup>475</sup> I.e., Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas. A similar passage is found in "inscription 2" in the 'Du khang of Alchi (ed. Denwood 1980: 127).

<sup>476</sup> Read: "the *Vimala(kīrtinirdeśa)*"? Belonging to the early Mahāyāna texts, this *sūtra* contains a lengthy discussion about *sūnyatā/alakṣaṇa(tā)* (*stong pa nyid / mtshan nyid med pa*). Yet in combination with *bden bzhi* and *don dam* (respectively denoting the central contents of the first and third turnings of the wheel), the reference to the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* would seem a little odd.

<sup>477</sup> I.e., the one of "provisional meaning" (*neyārtha / drang don*) and the one of "definitive meaning" (*nītārtha / nges don*). On the three turnings of the wheel and their distinction into *neyārtha / drang don* and *nītārtha / nges don*, see, e.g., Snellgrove 1987: 79–116 and Powers 1993: 101–160.

- The thoughts of [the sentient beings(?)] [became] virtuous; he [himself attained] *apraṭiṣṭhitanirvāṇa*.<sup>478</sup>
- 33 The Arhats[, provided with religious insight,] made [the compilation of] the word (of the Buddha) in two [or] three stages.<sup>479</sup> The six ornaments together with the two supreme ones, [beautifying Jambudvīpa], (that is) Nāgārjuna, the father, (and his spiritual) sons,<sup>480</sup> spread the teachings of the scriptures.
- 37 Saraha and the glorious Lūipa, Śavarī(pa) and Tilo(pa), Nāropa<sup>481</sup> – they made the teachings of the *sādhana* lineage resemble a river course.<sup>482</sup> Here in the snowland, Samantabhadra (in the form of) Tho tho ri<sup>483</sup> started the noble *dharmā*; the one

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<sup>478</sup> Variously rendered as “non-abiding *nirvāṇa*”, “non-dwelling *nirvāṇa*”, “unstable *nirvāṇa*”, “altruistic *nirvāṇa*”, etc. For an in-depth study of the term, see Nagao 1991.

<sup>479</sup> Referring, of course, to the councils held after the Buddha’s death. For a brief summary of the Tibetan traditions concerning these councils, see Khangkar 1992.

<sup>480</sup> There are numerous sets of *thang kas* showing these eight Indian masters; see, e.g., *Rgyan drug mchog gnyis* 1962, which also contains a useful bibliography of relevant primary and secondary sources (*ibid.*: 52f.). According to the most common tradition, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are designated as the “six ornaments”, and the two Vinaya-masters Guṇaprabha and Śākyaprabha as “the two supreme ones” (cf., e.g., Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2002: 649). Yet sometimes *mchog gnyis* also refers to Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga (cf. Dilgo Khyentse 2010: 399f. [n. 110]).

<sup>481</sup> For the Mahāsiddhas Saraha, Lūipa (variously spelled Lūyipa, Loyipa, Lūhipa, Lohipa, etc.), Śavarīpa, Tilopa and Nāropa, see Dowman 1985: 33–38, 60–65, 66–72, 141–147 and 151–155, respectively. For Saraha (whose disciple Śavarīpa was the teacher of Lūipa), see also the monograph of Schaeffer (2005).

<sup>482</sup> The expression *chu bo'i gzhung bzhin* is probably a play on words, based on the double meaning of *gzhung* (1. course [of a river], 2. text, scripture), and alludes to the swift or captivating nature of the teachings of the mentioned masters.

<sup>483</sup> For a description of Tho tho ri as an emanation of Samantabhadra, see, e.g., *Deb ther dmar po* (ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004a: 32f.): *lha tho tho re* [a common variant spelling of *tho tho ri*; K.T.] *gnyan btsan te ... dam pa'i chos kyi dbu brnyes te / 'phags pa kun tu bzang po'i sprul par grags so*, and *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (ed. Rgyal sras Ngag dbang rgyal mtshan & Mgon po rgyal mtshan 1993: 54): *'phags pa kun tu bzang po'i sprul pa lha tho*

- who established the *dharma* tradition, Avalokiteśvara, the protector, appeared as *dharma* king (i.e., Srong btsan sgam po).<sup>484</sup>
- 43 Many translators and *paṇḍitas* of India and Tibet were supported, and then the teaching of the Buddha ...<sup>485</sup> the sun. ...<sup>486</sup> to [the glory of the emanation (of)] the protector [Mañjuḥṣa/Mañjuśrī].<sup>487</sup> [Head ornaments of] long hair were bestowed to/for the seat(s)(?) of the *saṃgha*.<sup>488</sup>

*tho ri snyan shal byon te / sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa dbu brnyes pa yin no. In Lde'u chos 'byung rgyas pa* (ed. Chab spel Tshe ldan phun tshogs & Nor brang O rgyan 1987: 183), however, he is presented as an emanation of the Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha: *lha tho tho ri gnyan btsan byang chub sems dpa' sa'i snying po'i sprul pa*.

<sup>484</sup> Cf., e.g., *Deb ther dmar po* (ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004a: 33f.): *rgyal po srong btsan sgam po ... dam pa'i chos kyi srol gtod cing ... 'phags pa spyan ras gzigs kyi sprul pa yin te, Lde'u chos 'byung rgyas pa* (ed. Chab spel Tshe ldan phun tshogs & Nor brang O rgyan 1987: 183): *srong btsan sgam po thugs rje chen po'i sprul pa*, and *Me tog phreng ba* (ed. Uebach 1987: 58): *de'i* [referring to Gnam ri srong btsan; K.T.] *sras spyan ras gzigs kyi sprul pa srong btsan sgam po byon te*.

<sup>485</sup> Read: “rivaled”? Accepting the conjecture *grag*, an alternative reading of verse-line 44 could be: “the teaching of the Buddha (was like) the sun, thus it is said.”

<sup>486</sup> Read: “(This) happened”?

<sup>487</sup> Khri Srong lde btsan, who supported many translators and *paṇḍitas* and helped the flourishing of Buddhism in Tibet, is generally considered to be an emanation of Mañjuḥṣa/Mañjuśrī. Cf., e.g., *Deb ther dmar po* (ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004a: 35f.): *rgyal po khri srong lde btsan ... dam pa'i chos dar zhing rgyas par mdzad / ... 'jam dbyangs kyi sprul pa yin te*, and *Lde'u chos 'byung rgyas pa* (ed. Chab spel Tshe ldan phun tshogs & Nor brang O rgyan 1987: 183): *khri srong lde btsan 'jam dpal gyi sprul pa*.

<sup>488</sup> The intended meaning of verse-line 46 is somewhat uncertain, but probably the passage relates to information about King Ral pa can that is provided, *inter alia*, in *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (ed. Rgyal sras Ngag dbang rgyal mtshan & Mgon po rgyal mtshan 1993: 227; transl. Sørensen 1994: 413): *rgyal po gung la bzhugs pa la / dbu'i ral pa g.yas g.yon gyi sne la dar yug btags / dge 'dun bzhugs pa'i gral g.yas g.yon la bting / de'i steng tu dge 'dun bzhugs par mos la dge 'dun dbu sde gnyis zhes grags*, “The king took up [his] seat in the centre, and he fastened a silk ribbon (*dar yug*) to the end of the left and right [pigtail of] his [long] mane on [his] head. Distributed to the left and right were rows of seated [members of his] congregation (*dge 'dun, saṃgha*). [He thus

- 47 The *saṃgha* [referred to] [as the (two) head-group(s)(?)]<sup>489</sup> was (thus) exalted. The [teaching] of the Jina (was like) [the sun] at its zenith(?),<sup>490</sup> the lord of secrets, [Vajrapāṇi],<sup>491</sup> ... [of five(?)] ...<sup>492</sup>

used to] revere [his congregation of monks] sitting upon these [strips of silk attached to his hairlocks] (*de'i steng du dge 'dun bzhugs par mos la*) [as if they were sitting on his head], and these two [seated groups] were known as the 'Head-communities' (*dbu sde*) of the Congregation." Quite similar accounts are found in other historical works; see, e.g., *La dwags rgyal rabs* (ed. Francke 1926: 33–34), *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (facsimile reproduction in Tucci 1971, fol. 30r4–5), and *Sba bzhed* (ed. Stein 1961: 73f.). Interestingly, *Chos byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 2006: 219) contains a somewhat augmented version, according to which Ral pa can first prepared *fine seating* (*stan bzang po*; i.e., a synonym of the inscription's *khri*) for the *saṃgha* to his left and right, then arranged the silk ornaments of his long hair on the seating and had the monks sit on them. Interpreting the inscriptional text in this vein stands to reason especially in combination with verse-line 47, and also because *khri la ral pa <'>i* arguably looks like a play on words alluding to Khri Ral pa can.

<sup>489</sup> Cf. the preceding footnote.

<sup>490</sup> Here *<ny>in mo<r> rab byed pa* is understood as a variant of *nyin mor byed pa* 'sun' (cf. verse-line 44); *rab* may have been added to indicate that the status of Buddhism during the time of Khri Ral pa can was even higher than during the rule of Khri Srong lde btsan.

<sup>491</sup> Ral pa can is generally considered to be an emanation of Phyang na rdo rje. Cf., e.g., *Deb ther dmar po* (ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004a: 36f.): *ral pa can ... phyag na rdo rje' sprul par grags* and *Lde'u chos 'byung rgyas pa* (ed. Chab spel Tshe ldan phun tshogs & Nor brang O rgyan 1987: 183): *mnga' bdag ral pa can phyag rdor gyi sprul pa*.

<sup>492</sup> If the partly damaged first two syllables read *gdung lnga'i*, verse-line 50 may have alluded to Vajrapāṇi's subjugation of Mahādeva / Maheśvara, who is often referred to as "the five-faced one" (*pañcamukha / gdung lnga [pa]*); for an extensive discussion of this myth and the various source texts in which it is found, see Davidson 1991. Assuming that the first two syllables read *gdung lnga'i*, the verse-lines could have referred to a common classification scheme, according to which Ral pa can was the last representative of the "five very happy generations of (the early Tibetan kings)"; cf., e.g., *Chos byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 2006: 220): *mes ag tshoms nas 'di'i bar la shin tu skyid pa'i gdung rabs lnga zhes snga rabs grags so*, "from Mes ag tshoms up to him [i.e., Ral pa can; K.T.], the earlier generations (of kings) are known as 'the five very happy generations'." Also cf. *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me*

- 51 After the black<sup>493</sup> Glang dar (ma) had held on to the sun of the Buddha's teaching a little while,<sup>494</sup> with Śakra's assistance,<sup>495</sup> Lha lung Dpal (gyi rdo rje), that powerful lord,<sup>496</sup> liberated (i.e., killed)<sup>497</sup> that very one.

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*long* (ed. Rgyal sras Ngag dbang rgyal mtshan & Mgon po rgyal mtshan 1993: 234; transl. Sørensen 1994: 426), and note 1503 in Sørensen 1994: 426.

<sup>493</sup> The inscription's *mig sman* {*m*}*dog can* (lit. 'having the colour of eye medicine'; cf., e.g., Zhang *et al.* 1993, s.v. *mig sman*) may simply refer to the usual portrayal of Glang dar ma as a negative and gloomy character. In *Lde'u chos 'byung* (ed. Chos 'dzoms 1987: 137) and *Lde'u chos 'byung rgyas pa* (ed. Chab spel Tshe ldan phun tshogs & Nor brang O rgyan 1987: 346) he is referred to as *nag po* ('i) *phyogs can* ('having a black/dark side?'). In *Sba bzhed* (ed. Stein 1961: 81) and Bu ston's *Chos 'byung* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 1988: 192) he is reported to have called himself *bdud ya bzher nag po* ('black demon Ya bzher'). Shwa sgab pa (1976, vol. I: 233) reports of oral traditions according to which Glang dar ma had a black tongue: *lce yang nag po red zer*.

<sup>494</sup> Cf. verse-lines 44, 48, and *Deb ther dmar po* (ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004a: 37), where Glang dar ma is also reported to have ruled "a little while" in accord with (Buddhist) customs before he was diverted by his evil-minded ministers: *re shig rgyal po tshul bzhin du byas kyang blon po sdig pa dga' ba rnams kyis bsgyur*. Alternatively, *nyi ma* could, perhaps, be taken together with the following *re zhig* (i.e., "... had held on to the Buddha's teaching for some days"). According to Schlieter (2006: 138) "[t]here is broad consensus in textual sources that he began his opposition to the institutionalized Buddhist doctrine after about six months in power". This statement tallies with, e.g., *Me tog phreng ba* (ed. Uebach 1987: 118): *zla ba drug tu khrims rnying pa bzhas*.

<sup>495</sup> I am not aware of any sources mentioning Śakra in connection with Dpal gyi rdo rje's killing of Glang dar ma. Since in most texts this is reported to have been done by means of bow and arrow (cf. Sørensen 1994: 433, n. 1539), the inscription's *brgya byin ra<m>* {*m*}*da' bzhin du* perhaps alludes to "Shakra's bow" (*brgya byin gzhu*).

<sup>496</sup> *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (facsimile reproduction in Tucci 1971, fol. 33r4–5) recounts a prophecy in which Dpal gyi rdo rje is said to be an emanation of Vajrapāni (*phyag na rdo rje'i sprul pa*), who is frequently referred to as *mthu stobs bdag po*. The inscription's *stobs kyi dbang phyug* may have been used as a variant of this epithet.

<sup>497</sup> On the portrayal of Glang dar ma's killing as "liberation", see Schlieter 2006.

- 55 (In) Gu ge of Upper Mnga' ris,<sup>498</sup> (in) the land of Zhang zhung, the divine *guru* and divine king Ye shes 'od supported the foremost guide Rin chen bzang po, and then the noble teachings were entirely translated into Tibet(an).<sup>499</sup>
- 59 In the retreat of Lho brag's Gro bo Valley,<sup>500</sup> the snowy mountain (constituting) the source of the river(s) of the *sādhana* lineage(s), (that is) [Mar] pa Chos kyi blo gros,<sup>501</sup> ... [assiduously engaging] in [his(?) undistracted meditation],<sup>502</sup> provided with the thunderbolt destroying the mountain of the [eight] conditions (of the world) (*aṣṭalokadharmā*),<sup>503</sup> lord

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<sup>498</sup> For a brief discussion of the division into Upper Mnga' ris (*mnga' ris stod*) and Lower Mnga' ris (*mnga' ris smad*), see Pasang Wangdu 2007.

<sup>499</sup> For the expression *bod du bsgyur* (with *bod* for *bod skad*), see Jäschke 1992, s.v. *bod* – 3.

<sup>500</sup> Located in the central part of Lho brag, Gro bo lung was home to Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros. Cf., e.g., *Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur* (ed. Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1981: 53): *lho brag gro bo lung zhes bya ba'i dgon pa na / rgya gar gyi grub chen nā ro pa'i dngos slob / skyes mchog sgra sgyur gyi rgyal po mar pa lo tsā zhes bya ba sngags gsar ma'i grub thob / sa gsum na 'gran zla dang bral ba zhiḡ bzhugs /*.

<sup>501</sup> Cf. the following passage in *Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur* (ed. Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1981: 111), where Mar pa explains that he himself is the snowy mountain his disciple Mi la ras pa has seen in a dream and that the four rivers flowing forth from this mountain in the four directions are the instructions of the “four empowerments that ripen and liberate” (*smin grol dbang bzhi*): ... *gangs ri chags pa de // pha rgan mar pa lo tsā dang // ... // phyogs bzhir chu rgyun 'bab pa de // smin grol dbang bzhi'i gdams ngag yin //*. The inscription's *sgrub {b}rgyud chu bo'i 'byung gnas* may, however, simply portray Mar pa as the Tibetan fountainhead of the Bka' bryud pas.

<sup>502</sup> Due to the damage at the end of verse-line 61, the syntactical structure and meaning of verse-lines 59–64 remain somewhat unclear. Read: “was peaceful and happy. The one assiduously engaging in undistracted meditation,” or “was peaceful and happy. The one assiduously engaging in his (i.e., Mar pa's) undistracted meditation,”?

<sup>503</sup> Mentioned in, e.g., Nāgārjuna's *Suḥr̥llekha*, v. 29 (ed. of the Tib. text and Engl. transl. by Padmakara Translation Group [2005: 38f.], German transl. by Hahn & Dietz [2008: 16]) they consist of: gain and loss (*rnyed pa, mi rnyed pa*), bliss and pain (*bde ba, mi bde ba*), glory and disgrace (*snyan pa, mi snyan pa*), praise and blame (*bstod pa, smad pa*). The Sanskrit equivalents are given

Bzhad pa rdo [rje] (i.e., Mi la ras pa) spread the lineage of the *siddhas*.

- 65 Predicted by the Jina in many *sūtras* and *tantras*,<sup>504</sup> the youthful Candraprabha<sup>505</sup> arrived in the midst of the snowy mountain(s); (being) an excellent [*bhikṣu*] ordained in the Mahāsaṃghika(-tradition)<sup>506</sup> going back to the preceptor and *brāhmaṇa* (Mahā-)Kāśyapa,<sup>507</sup> Bsod nams rin chen<sup>508</sup> (was) the master of everything told and experienced.

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in BHSD (s.v. *lokadharmā* and referring to *Dharmasaṃgraha*, section 61 [ed. Müller 1885]) as: *lābha*, *alābha*; *sukha*, *duḥka*; *yaśa*, *ayaśa*; *nindā*, *praśamsā*.

<sup>504</sup> Cf. the table in Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche Sherpa 2004: 299.

<sup>505</sup> For the tradition identifying Sgam po pa as an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Candraprabhakumāra, see Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche Sherpa 2004: 34–36, and cf. *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 538; transl. Roerich 1949: 451f.): *rje btsun mi la'i bu slob rnams kyi mchog tu grags pa'i rje sgam po ba ... rgyal po'i khab kyi grong khyer du khyim bdag chen po phyug cing rigs mtho ba'i sras zla 'od gzhon nur gyur pa'i tshe / bya rgod phung po'i ri la thub pa'i dbang po la mdo ting nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po zhus shing ... byang chub sems dpa' zla 'od gzhon nu de ni rje sgam po ba*, “The Master sGam-po-pa, who was known to have been the best among the disciples of the Venerable Mid-la [i.e., Mi la (ras pa); K.T.] ... after he had been born as Candraprabhakumāra, the noble son of a rich householder in Rājagṛha, had requested the Munīndra, residing on the Vulture Peak, to recite the Samādhirāja-sūtra ... This Bodhisattva Candraprabhakumāra was the Master sGam po pa.”

<sup>506</sup> For a discussion of the somewhat differing sources on Sgam po pa's novitiate, final monastic ordination and early studies with various Bka' gdams pa masters belonging to Atiśa's Mahāsaṃghika-tradition, see Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche Sherpa 2004: 45–49.

<sup>507</sup> For the Tibetan tradition that traces the Mahāsaṃghikas back to Mahākāśyapa, see, e.g. Bu ston's *Chos 'byung* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 1988: 133; transl. Obermiller 1986: 100): *dge 'dun phal chen po ni / dge 'dun yang yin la de nyid phal che ba yang yin pas dge 'dun phal chen pa / mkhan po bram ze sbyangs pa'i yon tan gyi mchog 'od srungs chen po /*, “The Mahāsaṃghikas were called so, since they were the clergy (Saṃgha), the greater part of which (mahā) was constituted by them. Their teacher was Mahākāśyapa, a Brāhmaṇa great in his practice of the 12 virtues of an ascetic.” On the various conflicting traditions regarding the schism into Sthaviras and Mahāsaṃghikas, see Lamotte 1988: 286–292.

- 70 Although self-realized (and) fully awakened from beginning-less time, now steadfast on the *dharmameghabhūmi*<sup>509</sup> – Rdo rje rgyal po<sup>510</sup> [is/was]<sup>511</sup> the steersman of sentient beings. In

<sup>508</sup> According to *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i chos 'byung* (reproduced in Sørensen & Sonam Dolma 2007: 67), Sgam po pa received this religious name from the *kalyāṇamitra* Shal ba lung pa: *dge' ba'i bshes gnyen shal ba lung pa las rab tu byung ba'i mtshan bsod nams rin chen du btags. Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 541; transl. Roerich 1979: 453) gives the name of the *kalyāṇamitra* as Shab pa gling pa, but it does not mention that Sgam po pa received his religious name from him: *nyi shu rtsa drug pa la dge ba'i bshes gnyen shab pa gling pa la tshig rdzogs mdzad*, “At the age of 26, he received simultaneously the noviciate and the final monastic ordination in the presence of the *kalyāṇamitra* Śab-pa glin-pa.”

<sup>509</sup> I.e., the tenth *bodhisattvabhūmi*, as expounded in the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra* (ed. Rahder 1926: 82–99, transl. Honda 1968: 256–276).

<sup>510</sup> I.e., the name Sgam po pa's disciple Phag mo gru pa was given when he became a novice. See, e.g., *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 654; transl. Roerich 1979: 554): *bya khyi lha khang bya bar mkhan po lhing de* [read *nge?* K.T.] *yan thub bu tshul khriṃs bya ba dang / slob dpon lhing de* [read *nge?* K.T.] *'od zer rgyal mtshan las dgung lo dgu bzhes pa'i tshe rab tu byung / mtshan rdo rje rgyal por gsol*, “[he] took up ordination at the age of 9, at the temple Bya-khyi lha-khañ, in the presence of the upādhyāya Lhiñ-ñe-yan Thub-bu Tshul-khriṃs and the ācārya Lhiñ-ñe 'Od-zer rgyal-mtshan, and was given the name rDo-rje rgyal-po.” Also cf. *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i chos 'byung* (reproduced in Sørensen & Sonam Dolma 2007: 68): *slob dpon lhing nge 'od zer rgyal mtshan las dge tshul bzhes pa'i mtshan rdo rje rgyal por brtags*.

<sup>511</sup> *'gro ba'i ded dpon yi<n>* can be understood as referring either to his incarnation as Rdo rje rgyal po or, in a more general sense, to his previous and subsequent/future lives. Cf., e.g., the following passage in the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra* referring to a *bodhisattva* on the tenth *bhūmi* (ed. Rahder 1926: 91, transl. Honda 1968: 271): *apramāṇakāyatām ca tryadhvatāyām adhiṭṭṣṭati*, “He sustains immeasurable (numbers of) bodies in three (kinds of) time.” In any case, verse-lines 70–72 seem to echo, with some variations, the following passages in *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 651f. and 659; transl. Roerich 1979: 552 and 559): (1) *dbang po rab tu gyur pa la sangs rgyas nyid dang / 'bring du gyur pa la grub pa'i skyes bu nyid du brgyud par gyur pa dang / dbang po tha ma la ni skal pa dang ldan pa'i so so'i skye bo rim gyis sbyangs pa las sa la gnas pa'i sems dpa' chen po gyur pa'i tshul lo / de la dbang por ba* [read *dbang po rab*; K.T.] *kyi dbang du mdzad nas de nyid 'das pa dang ma 'ongs pa'i sangs rgyas kyang yin la / da ltar gyi shākya'i dbang po*

the middle of the ocean, that steersman of the swans, not seen while keeping solitarily silent(?),<sup>512</sup> raised his neck in the

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*nyid kyang kho bo yin no zhes gsang mthon pos gsungs*, “I shall relate here the manner in which he had become a Buddha to those possessed of excellent understanding, a siddha-puruṣa to those possessed of medium understanding, and a fortunate human being (pṛthag-jana), who through gradual spiritual practice had reached the stage of a Great Being (Mahāsattva), established on the path of Bodhisattvas, to those possessed of inferior understanding. Now to those possessed of excellent understanding, he openly proclaimed that he was the Buddha of the Past and Future, as well as the Śākyendra of the Present Age”; (2) *kho bo sa bcu pa’i byang chub sems dpa’ yin par gsol bya ba yang gsung*, “(Phag-mo-gru-pa) used to say: “I was named (by him [i.e., Sgam po pa; K.T.]) a Bodhisattva of the 10th stage.”

<sup>512</sup> The intended meaning of the verse-line is somewhat uncertain and various alternative interpretations seem possible. Here, *mdzes* is taken as an irregular spelling of *'dzes* or *'dzed*, and the (from a phonological point of view perhaps somewhat less likely) emendation *mdzad* (with the resulting *smra bcad mdzad* constituting the honorific form of *smra bcad byed / smra bcad byas*) would yield a similar meaning, i.e., “not seen while solitarily practicing silence”. In combination with the following verse-line, this could refer to Phag mo gru pa’s habit of alternately staying in seclusion and teaching, as described in *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 661f.; transl. Roerich 1979: 561f.): *mar ngo la mtshams mdzad / yar ngo la yang snga dro mtshams mdzad cing phyi dro khrid dang tshogs chos gsungs*, “[H]e observed seclusion during the waning moon. When the moon was on the increase, he used to stay in seclusion during the morning hours, and to lecture in the afternoon to the congregation.” Taking the inscription’s *mdzes pa(r)* to mean ‘beautiful’, ‘elegant’, parts of the verse-line would have to be understood differently (“solitarily silent, he did not look beautiful/elegant” or “solitarily silent, he was not attached to beauty/elegance”?), and in this case *mdzes par ma mthong (nas)* could refer to Phag mo gru pa’s neglect for his outward appearance, as reported in *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 661; transl. Roerich 1979: 561): *stag lung thang pas zhabs drung du sleb ma thag nas nye gnas mdzad / na bza’ yang ’di bas bzang pa re bzhes par zhu byas pas / khyod kyis kho bo la ci ’dug par mthong / kho bo dge ’dun skyong dgos pa lags mod gsung*, “Soon after sTag-luñ-thañ-pa’s coming, he became Phag-mo-gru-pa’s attendant. sTag-luñ-thañ-pa told him that he should wear a better garment, than the one (he was wearing), and Phag-mo-gru-pa replied: ‘You, what sort of (wealth) did you find in me? I have to maintain the congregation!’” This latter reading/interpretation of the inscription seems a little contrived, however.

middle of the flock, and then ...<sup>513</sup>, [the glorious] 'Bri gung pa – [he(?)] (is/was) [the one predicted] by the [truly] victorious one.

- 78 In the \**Śrīdattasārthavāhapariṛcchāsūtra*<sup>514</sup> (he) is mentioned by (the words) “the one holding on to my *dharma* in the future, Ratnaśrī,<sup>515</sup> the one skilled in training beings, likewise wearing the distinguishing sign of the hat”,<sup>516</sup> extolled and greatly praised.<sup>517</sup>
- 83 In the *Bhadrakalp(ik)a(sūtra)*,<sup>518</sup> too (it is said): “One called Rin chen dpal,<sup>519</sup> a *tathāgata*, will appear in the future.”

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<sup>513</sup> Read: “the one conquering the mental power” or “the self-controlled one”?

<sup>514</sup> The various Kanjur collections do not contain a *sūtra* that can be identified with the inscription’s *Ded dpon dpal byin zhus pa’i mdo*. The closest candidate is perhaps the *Vīradattagrhapatipariṛcchāsūtra* / *Khyim bdag dpas byin gyis zhus pa’i mdo*, but reading through its versions in the Kanjur collections of Derge (D: *Dkon brtsegs, ca*, 194r1–204v1) and Beijing (Q: *Dkon brtsegs, zi*, 200r1–211v8), I could not find any passages that correspond to the inscription’s purported quote.

<sup>515</sup> Tib. Rin chen dpal. This is one of the various names 'Jig rten mgon po received from his teacher Phag mo gru pa. See, e.g., *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i chos 'byung* (ed. Sørensen & Sonam Dolma 2007: 71): '*bri gung chos rje ni ... 'gro mgon rin po che'i drung du byon / mtshan rin chen dpal du btags so*, and Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 28: *der* [referring to Phag mo gru pa; K.T.] *thog mar byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa bstsal nas mtshan byang chub sems dpa' rin chen dpal du gsol*.

<sup>516</sup> The alleged quote is also found, in an extended non-metrical version, in Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 15. There, the phrase corresponding to verse-line 81 reads: *des zhwa 'di lta bu gyon par 'gyur ro*. In either case, the meaning is somewhat obscure, especially the expressions '*di bzhin* and '*di lta bu*. As we do not know the context in which the quoted prediction is made (presumably by the Buddha), it is difficult to decide if '*di bzhin* / '*di lta bu* refers to something narrated in the frame story of the *sūtra*'s prophecy or to something predicted for the time of 'Bri gung pa.

<sup>517</sup> Or: “extolled and proclaimed a great tantric.”? More likely, though, *bstod* and {*b*}*sngags pa chen po brjod* form a hendiadys here.

<sup>518</sup> Cf. p. 1844 and 1872 of the appendix in *The Fortunate Aeon* 1986, where Ratnaśrī / Rin po che yi dpal is listed as the 706th of the ca. 1000 Buddhas of our present *kalpa*. In the corresponding passage of the Tibetan text provided in *The Fortunate Aeon* 1986, p. 504, and in the Kanjur collections of

- 85 When Nāgārjuna was [on his death] bed (he said): “After five hundred years from now, in the snowy region of the north, I myself will become [the one called] Rin chen dpal.”<sup>520</sup>
- 89 [Hence,] nowadays, you, lord of the *dharmā*,<sup>521</sup> are the head ornament of many hundreds of thousands of monks.
- 91 [Even] if there are – here, in the land of Tibet – (people) who obstruct, as it were, ... of the *muni* ... [the sky] ...<sup>522</sup> – [practicing intellectual arguments,] (these people) have various tenet systems (and) their own minds are tightly bound up with the thread of ignorance; (they) shall be thoroughly untied ...<sup>523</sup> fingernails (of) your [compassion]; for, although the posited

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Derge (D) and Beijing (Q) the name is also spelled *rin po che yi dpal* (D: *Mdo sde, ka*, 100r2; Q: *Mdo sna tshogs, i*, 109r8).

<sup>519</sup> Cf. n. 515 and 518.

<sup>520</sup> On the identification of 'Bri gung pa as an incarnation of Nāgārjuna, see, e.g., *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 705; transl. Roerich 1979: 599): *sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa can de ni | dang por dus gsum mkhyen pa 'bri khung du byon te | khyed ni slob dpon chen po klu sgrub yin no zhes zhus*, “At first Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, who had come to 'Bri khuñ, told him, who possessed the deeds of a Buddha, that ‘you are the great ācārya Nāgārjuna.’” I could not identify the inscription’s purported quote, however.

<sup>521</sup> As a form of literary address, the following passage up to verse-line 116 refers to 'Bri gung pa alias Rin chen dpal, who is frequently also called *chos (kyi) rje*. See, e.g., *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i chos 'byung* (ed. Sørensen & Sonam Dolma 2007: 71) and Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007:14f.

<sup>522</sup> Read: “the *dharmā* of the *muni*, the 'Bri gung (school), the sky of the *dharmatā* (i.e., the *dharmatā* which is like the [all-embracing sky])”?

<sup>523</sup> Read: “by the pure white, long”, “by the white teeth and long”, or “(by) the pure white teeth (and) long”? In each case the passage would have to be understood as a simile, in which 'Bri gung pa’s compassion is likened to long fingernails (and teeth) by which the minds bound up with the thread of ignorance are untied. This would also tally with verse-line 102, where 'Bri gung pa is said to have the marks of the Buddha (which include upturned fingernails and pure white teeth; see, e.g., Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2002: 1288 [no. 3] and 1725 [no. 27], or Ehrhard & Fischer-Schreiber 1995: 90). For a eulogistic description of the combination of pure white teeth and finger nails, also cf. Causemann’s (1993: 58f.) edition and German translation of the following line in a song from southwestern Tibet: *so sen mo gnyis po dung las dkar*, “Deine Zähne und Fingernägel sind weißer als Muscheln.”

- ideas<sup>524</sup> are numerous, (you) made the various tenet systems of our own and of others embrace the hundred and fifty *vajra* statements in their entirety.<sup>525</sup>
- 99 When [you yourself(?)], amidst attendants, taught the *dharmā*, it happened that Brahmā and Indra quietly<sup>526</sup> paid reverence; so how could it be a surprise that human beings paid reverence?
- 102 Bearing the marks of the *muni* who embraces the entire earth,<sup>527</sup> and thus lacking (enough) room in glorious, sacred 'Bri gung, you practiced that miraculous power of ... the three-thousandfold world system ... mustard ...<sup>528</sup> and completely exhausted yourself.

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<sup>524</sup> This could either refer to the ideas held by the various tenet systems or to those expressed in the 150 *vajra* statements mentioned below.

<sup>525</sup> These statements were composed by 'Bri gung pa and put into writing by Spyan snga Shes rab 'byung gnas. The Tibetan text and an English translation are provided in Viehbeck 2009.

<sup>526</sup> Or: "Brahmā, Indra and Śiva"? However, as the first two names are not phonetically transcribed in the inscription and as Śiva is usually referred to as *lha chen* in Tibetan sources, this alternative seems rather unlikely to me. Moreover, while descriptions of Brahmā and Indra paying reference to the Buddha or some Buddhist teacher are found quite frequently in Buddhist texts, Śiva is rarely mentioned in such a context. Finally, also cf. the following passage in Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 38: *dge 'dun sum brgya tsam 'tshogs shing lha tshangs pa gdong bzhi pa dang brgya byin gyis zhabs la gtugs nas chos zhus*, "some three hundred monks were gathered and god Brahmā, the four-faced one, and Indra touched the feet (of 'Bri gung pa) and asked for the *dharmā*." Thus the inscription's *zhi ba(s)* may also be the result of some corrupt transmission.

<sup>527</sup> I.e., the Buddha. Cf. n. 520 and also see the *stotra* in Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 143, where 'Bri gung pa is referred to as "second Buddha" (*sangs rgyas gnyis pa*) – an epithet that is also frequently attributed to Nāgārjuna.

<sup>528</sup> Read: "of putting the three-thousandfold world system into a mustard seed" or "of having the three-thousandfold world system put into a mustard seed"? Partly due to the damage in verse-line 104, the exact meaning of the passage is unclear, but in various texts sublime beings or *buddhas* are said to possess the ability to enclose the three-thousandfold world system into a mustard seed (see, e.g., Gyurme Dorje 1987: 386, 825 and 1122f.). Referring to this notion, the passage of the inscription in one way or other also seems to

- 106 Also, as respective attendants of the *vajra* [holders]<sup>529</sup> [Mgu ya sgang] pa, G.yag ru dpal [grags and] Mgo [bo che] [(you) sent(?)] fifty-five thousand and five hundred and twenty-five (practitioners)<sup>530</sup> to Sti se Gangs,<sup>531</sup> La ci<sup>532</sup> and Tsa ri ʈa,<sup>533</sup> the three (sacred) places.
- 111 ...<sup>534</sup> at [Oḍḍīyāna,] Jālandhara,<sup>535</sup> the *vajrāsana*,<sup>536</sup> Ghan dha,<sup>537</sup> Nepāl,<sup>538</sup> [Kaśmīr, Me nyag,]<sup>539</sup> and in the land of Hor,<sup>540</sup> too, your followers were made to abound.<sup>541</sup>

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likened the contrast between the great 'Bri gung pa and the small place of 'Bri gung to that of the three-thousandfold world system and a mustard seed.

<sup>529</sup> On the title *rdo 'dzin* (also *rdor 'dzin* and *rdo rje 'dzin pa*), see Quintman 2012: 25, n. 55: “*Rdor 'dzin* is a term referring to religious administrators in both Kailāsa and La phyi/Chu bar affiliated with the 'Bri gung institution.” A similar explanation is provided in Petech 1978: 317.

<sup>530</sup> On Mgu ya sgang pa's, G.yag ru dpal grags' and Mgo bo che's respective deployment with 55,525 practitioners to Ti se, La phyi and Tsa ri ʈa, cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 34, Don grub 1992: 51).

<sup>531</sup> I.e., irregular for Ti se Gangs. For this latter variant of the much more common Gangs Ti se, see, e.g., Bellezza 2008: 248, *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 30, Don grub 1992: 42), and also cf. verse-line 125.

<sup>532</sup> I.e., irregular for La phyi.

<sup>533</sup> For this variant of the more common Tsa ri, cf., e.g., *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i chos 'byung* (ed. Sørensen & Sonam Dolma 2007: 72).

<sup>534</sup> Read: “Moreover,?”

<sup>535</sup> Cf. the following passage from '*Jig rten mgon po rnam thar* (cited and translated in Vitali 1996a: 373, n. 595): *ri khrod pas ni sa chen po khyab ste / u rgyan nam / dznya lan dha ra 'am / gan dha la / ti se 'am / rdo rje gdan nam / bal yul lam / a su ra 'am / la phyi 'am / chu bar ram / tsa ri lag pa gnas khyad par can rnam su*, “The hermits were scattered to the great places of U.rygan, Dznya.lan.dha.ra (sic for Dza.lan.dha.ra), Gan.dha.la, Ti.se, rDo.rje.gdan, Bal.yul, A.su.ra, La.phyi, Chu.bar, Tsa.ri, to all these extraordinarily holy places.” For a discussion of Jālandhara as an important early Tibetan pilgrimage site, see Lobsang Shastri 2009, where one also finds a brief summary and an update on the relevant sources regarding the disputed location of Oḍḍīyāna.

<sup>536</sup> Cf. n. 535, and also see Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 44: *dgung lo nga dgu pa lcags bya lor ... sprul pa gcig rgya gar rdo rje gdan du byon zhing gar log gi dmag zlog pa'i rten 'brel mdzad do / slob ma dang yang slob grangs las 'das pa 'dus pa la zab rgyas kyi bka' lung mang du bstsal*, i.e., “at the age of fifty nine, in the iron-bird year (i.e., 1201/1202; K.T), ... an emanation (of 'Bri gung pa) appeared at the *vajrāsana* in India and created the fa-

- 115 In short: In this snowland of Tibet you made the teaching of the Buddha spread and flourish and then proceeded to the *dharmadhātu*.<sup>542</sup>
- 117 At Sti se, for the *vajra* holder Mgu ya sgang pa, the *dharmā* protector(s) King(s) Khri(!)(?)<sup>543</sup> Bkra shis pa (and) Gnam lde

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avourable circumstances for driving back the Gar log army. Countless disciples and disciples of disciples gathered, and profound and extensive instructions were bestowed in great abundance.”

<sup>537</sup> Variant spellings of this early Tibetan pilgrimage site in Lahoul / Gar sha include *gan dha*, *ghan dha la*, *gan dha la*, and *gan da la* (see, e.g., Tauscher 2007: 82 and Vitali 1996a: 623). For the importance of the place, see Tucci 1940: 18 (n. 25), Huber 2008: 102, 392 (n. 43), Vitali 1996a: 373 (n. 595), 423f. (n. 706 and 707), and the sources cited there.

<sup>538</sup> Cf. n. 535.

<sup>539</sup> Cf. n. 188. On the links between Me nyag / Mi nyag (i.e., the Tanguts) and various Bka' bryud pas, including 'Bri gung pa 'Jig rten mgon po, also see Sperling 1987 and the sources cited there.

<sup>540</sup> Cf. n. 188. On the different meanings of *hor*, see the brief explanation provided in Zhang *et al.* 1993: 3071: *t<sub>a</sub> dben rgyal rabs yan chad la phal cher yu gur rigs la zer zhing / t<sub>a</sub> dben gyi dus su mong gol rigs la zer / de tshun chad du skabs 'gar 'a zha ste thu yu hun rigs la zer / deng sang bod byang thang du sdod pa'i 'brog pa dang / mtsho sngon zhing chen gyi byang shar khul du sdod pa'i hor rigs la'ang zer*, i.e. “up to the great (Chin. *da*) Yuan dynasty [1206/1271–1368; K.T.] it generally referred to the Uyghur people, and during the great Yuan period it referred to the Mongol people. After that, it sometimes referred to the 'A zha, that is the Tuyuhun people. Nowadays it refers to the nomads living in Tibet's Byang thang, and also to the Hor people living in the northeastern region of Qinghai province”; (Chin.): *tang, song shi zhi huiqi* [read *huihe*; K.T.) *yuandai zhi mengguren, yuan ming zhijian zhi tuyuhunren, xiandai zhi zangbei mumin he qinghai tuzu*, i.e., “at the time of the Tang (and) Song (dynasties) it denoted the Uyghur people, (during) the Yuan dynasty it denoted the Mongol people, between the Yuan and Ming (dynasties) it denoted the Tuyuhun people, nowadays it denotes the nomads in the north of Tibet and the Tu ethnic group of Qinghai.”

<sup>541</sup> Lit.: “(there) was a filling with your followers”.

<sup>542</sup> I.e., passed away. Cf. Ehrhard 2008: 39, 64, and Quintman 2012: 13.

<sup>543</sup> The particle *ni* may have been used to emphasise the high status of the king(s), but it could equally well simply be a metrical expletive. Also cf. verse-line 123.

mgon [po]<sup>544</sup> acted as his(?) donors,<sup>545</sup> (and) Mnga' ris [bskor] gsum turned into [a field of disciples].

- 121 (He)<sup>546</sup> held the seat to an old age,<sup>547</sup> for twenty-five (years).<sup>548</sup>  
Afterwards, the *dharma* master Nyi ma gung pa arrived.<sup>549</sup>

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<sup>544</sup> For the two (and other) rulers' support of Mgu ya sgang pa, cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 34, Don grub 1992: 52) and *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* (ed. Vitali 1996a: 70). According to Vitali 1996a: 380–384, Gnam lde mgon (spelled *rnam lde mgon* in *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* [ed. Vitali 1996a: 69]) had already succeeded his brother Dngos grub mgon as king of Spu rang by the time of Mgu ya sgang pa's arrival in Western Tibet in 1215 and ruled until “the second quarter of the 13th century” (*ibid.*: 383f.). For his contemporary, the Gu ge king Bkra shis pa, aka Bkra shis sde/lde (*Kho char dkar chag* [ed. Jackson 1988: 49, Vitali 1996a: 406, n. 667]) and Bkra shis lde btsan (*Ti se lo rgyus* [ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 34, Don grub 1992: 52]), see Vitali 1996a: 406–410 and the sources cited there.

<sup>545</sup> The intended meaning of the inscription's *gang de'i* is not entirely clear to me. Here, it is taken in the sense of *de'i* (cf. Zhang *et al.* 1993, s.v. *gang de*), but in combination with *la* at the end of verse-line 117 this makes for a somewhat incongruent syntax. Alternatively, *gang de'i* could perhaps be understood as a contraction of *gang yin pa de'i*, i.e., “acted as donors of whoever it was”, and thus as referring to the donors' unrestrained support of Mgu ya sgang pa's large number of followers. If one accepts the emendation *gang bde'i*, the passage could also be taken to mean “acted as the most pleasant donors” or “acted as donors of whatever delight(ed him)”.

<sup>546</sup> I.e., Mgu ya sgang pa. See n. 548.

<sup>547</sup> Syntactically, *lo chen* could also be taken in the sense of ‘great translator’ (i.e.: “The great translator held the seat for twenty-five years”), but I am not aware of any texts translated by Mgu ya sgang pa, nor could I find any other sources in which he is referred to as a (great) translator.

<sup>548</sup> That Mgu ya sgang pa led the practitioners in the Kailāsa area for twenty-five years is also mentioned in *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 35, Don grub 1992: 54): *rdo rje 'dzin pa 'dis ti ser lo nyi shu rtsa lnga ri pa bskyangs*.

<sup>549</sup> The order in which the arrival of the various early 'Bri gung pas in Mnga' ris is reported and the titles they are attributed differ between *Ti se lo rgyus* and the inscription. In the former source one finds the following sequence and titles: *rdo (rje) 'dzin (pa) paṅ chen* Ghu ya sgang pa (aka *chos rje* Phun tshogs rgya mtsho / *chos rje* Phun tshogs rgyal mtshan), *rgyal ba* Gnyos Lha nang pa, *chos kyi rgyal po* 'Bri gung Sphyan snga Shes rab 'byung gnas (aka 'Bri gung gling pa), *grub thob chen po* Seng ge ye shes, *rdo rje 'dzin pa* Nyi ma gung pa, *rdo rje 'dzin pa* Kun dga' rgyal mtshan pa, *rdo rje 'dzin pa*

The king(s) of Ya tse,<sup>550</sup> Khri(!)(?)<sup>551</sup> Dbang phyug pa [(and) Dpal mgon lde,<sup>552</sup> father and son, those(?)] two, in order to honour [Sti se Gangs<sup>553</sup> and] Lake Anavatapta,<sup>554</sup> came to

Dar ma rgyal mtshan pa. By contrast, the inscription has: *rdo 'dzin* Mgu ya sgang pa, *chos rje* Nyi ma gung pa, *S<pya>n\_{s}nga<'>* » 'Bri gung <g>ling pa, Smyos (*zhes*) rgyal ba Lha nang, *chos rje* *Se<ng>\_ge ye\_shes*, *chos rje* Kun dga' rgyal mtshan. Therefore it is clear that the narrative in at least one of these two sources does not follow a chronological order, and the comparatively late mention of Lha nang (pa) in the inscription is especially conspicuous. According to a passage in *Gnyos Lha nang pa nam thar*, cited, translated and discussed by Vitali (1996a: 408, n. 670), his second visit (of two) to Ti se / Mnga' ris must have taken place before 1217 (the first one is dated to 1208 by Vitali), and according to *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 34, Don grub 1992: 50) Mgu/Ghu ya sgang pa was only sent to Mnga' ris when 'Jig rten mgon po was seventy-three (*dgung lo don gsum bzhes [bzhes : pa zhes RF] pa'i tshe*), i.e., two years before the latter's death at the age of seventy-five in 1217/1218 (*lo bdun cu rtsa lnga bzhes pa me mo glang gi lo la [Deb ther sngon po; ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 707]*). Moreover, according to *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 708) Lha nang (pa) already died in 1224/1225 (*shing pho spre'u'i lo la*). Provided that Vitali's (1996a: 411) attribution of Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (pa)'s and Dar ma rgyal mtshan (pa)'s *floruit* to the 1260s and 1270s is correct it thus seems that the narrative found in *Ti se lo rgyus* is more likely in agreement with the actual chronological order of the events.

<sup>550</sup> For a general study of the history of the former kingdom of Ya tse (variant spellings include *ya tshe* and *ya rtse*), located in what is now Northwest Nepal, see Petech 2003.

<sup>551</sup> Cf. n. 543.

<sup>552</sup> Most naturally, both the inscription's *ya tse'i rgyal po khri ni dbang phyug pa* (*|| <d>pal< mgon lde>*) and *gu ge rgyal po khri bkra shis dbang phyug* (*dang | dpal mgon lde/sde*) in *Ti se lo rgyus* (cf. n. 199) are taken as an appositional construction, and assuming that neither of the two sources is mistaken here, this would imply that (Bkra shis) Dbang phyug (pa) (and his son Dpal mgon lde/sde) ruled over both Gu ge and Ya tse. Note that this is at variance with the statements of Vitali (1996a: 410) and Petech (2003: 40), who both hold (it seems merely based on *Ti se lo rgyus*) that (Bkra shis) Dbang phyug (pa) (and his son Dpal mgon lde/sde) ruled only over Gu ge (Iho stod).

<sup>553</sup> Cf. n. 531.

<sup>554</sup> I.e., Mānasarovar / Ma pham g.yu mtsho. For an explanation of the epithet Anavatapta / Ma dros (lit. 'not warm'), see *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 54, Don grub 1992: 93f.). A summary of this passage is provided

[give (to him), for as long as(?)] the Buddha's teaching exists, in the upper part G.yu phug (turquoise cave), in [the middle part] Dpal [phug (glorious cave), and] [in the lower part Chos(?)] phug (*dharma*(?) cave),<sup>555</sup> Upper and Lower [Za(?)] lang, etc.<sup>556</sup>

- 129 Then, [Spyan snga]<sup>557</sup> 'Bri gung [gling] pa arrived.<sup>558</sup> ...<sup>559</sup> that protector, in accordance with the predictions, openly placed

in de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 85 and a translation in Huber & Tsepa Rigzin 1999: 140. Also cf. Tucci 1937: 60.

<sup>555</sup> Cf. Vitali's translation of the passage in *Ti se lo rgyus* quoted in n. 207, above: "It is well known that they awarded [him] g.Yu.phug, Bar.pad.phug and mDa'.chos.phug in upper dKar.sdum of Pu.rang, and Za.lang stod.smad which was a religious estate of rGyang.grags" (Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 675). Yet, *phu*, *bar* and *mda'* typically refer to the upper, middle and lower part of a valley and thus *phu* in *Ti se lo rgyus* should rather be taken together with *g.yu phug*, which is corroborated by the inscription's *phu na*, *ba<r> na* and *<m>da'< la>*. In any case – the spelling variants notwithstanding – the combined evidence of *Ti se lo rgyus* and the inscription strongly suggests that the three caves are located in the upper, middle and lower part of the valley accommodating the present-day village of Dkar dung (spelled "Kardam" by Tucci [1937: 52–54], who also reports of the variants *mkhar gdong* and *dkar sdum* in Tibetan sources [*ibid.*: 52, n. 1]). This was confirmed by Tshe ring rgyal po (oral communication, 3 Dec. 2014), who also let me know that all three caves are located on the southern side of the Rma bya kha 'bab. He gave me the following approximate bearings and linear distances from Dkar dung: G.yu phug, ca. 4–5 km to the west; Dpal/Pad phug, ca. 2 km to the south-southwest; Chos phug, ca. 3–4 km to the south. Brief descriptions of the three caves are found in Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 117f. (there, the name of the middle cave is given as Pad ma phug).

<sup>556</sup> Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 118 mentions ruins in various places near Dkar dung, including Gdong dmar, 'Ar sgang, Za lang and Rdo za lang. In another article (Tshe ring rgyal po 2012: 9) he refers to a *za lang gzim phug lha khang* (translated as "Zim cave temple in Zalang" by Christian Jahoda in the English version of the trilingual publication). The site is located some 5 km to the south of Dkar dung (cf. the map in Tshe ring rgyal po 2012: 11). At any rate, verse-lines 123–128 imply that this part of Spu rang in some way or another belonged to the area of influence of (Bkra shis) Dbang phyug (pa) and his son Dpal mgon lde/sde.

<sup>557</sup> As Martin (2001: 150, n. 8) points out, *spyang snga* "is a respectful way to refer to one's teacher in early 'Bri-gung tradition" but "has come to form a permanent part of some proper names."

the excellent vase of gold on the head-ornaments of long hair of the king and lord called A tig pa,<sup>560</sup> and, (as) gift for the empowerment ...<sup>561</sup>, ... Kha tshad, [glorious] Dam pa rdzong, Lag 'phrad, Thod dkar(?), Mgon pa ro ma(?), and 'Om lo shing phug<sup>562</sup> were given (to him) for monastic property(?).<sup>563</sup>

<sup>558</sup> Cf. n. 549.

<sup>559</sup> Read: “In Ya tse,” or “In Kho ca(r),”?

<sup>560</sup> Vitali (1996a: 381f.) states that according to “*dGong.gcig yig.cha* by 'Jig.rten mgon.po” this ruler “is considered senior to the Ya.rtse king Grags.pa.lde” (the relevant passage and its translation is found in n. 779 on p. 463 of Vitali’s book) and concludes that A tig (sman) was identical with Gnam/Rnam lde mgon (po) (for whom, see verse-line 119).

<sup>561</sup> Read: “(and) the meditation/training”?

<sup>562</sup> Cf. Vitali’s (1996a: 381, n. 610) edition and translation of the corresponding passage in *Ti se lo rgyus* (the variant readings of de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 36 are given only selectively here, since her text is obviously garbled in this passage; those of Don grub 1992: 54 are given in their entirety): *pu (pu : spu DG) rang kho char lha khang dang / dam pa rdzong / lag phreng (phreng : phreng / DG, RF) thod dkar mgon pa (pa : po DG) ro ma / 'um lo (lo : lam DG) shing phug, (phug, : phug DG, phug / RF) / ri bo rtse brgyad / li dur bcas rgyang grags pa'i lha 'bangs su phul*, “he was awarded the religious and secular properties of the rGyang.grags.pas-s including Pu.rang Kho.char lha.khang and Dam.pa.rdzong, Lag.phreng thod.kar, mGon.pa Ro.ma, 'Um.lo shing.phug, Ri.bo rtse.brgyad and Li.dur.” Probably *rgyang grags pa'i lha 'bangs su* should rather be translated as “for/to religious servants of the Rgyang grags pa(s) (i.e., the person[s] of Rgyang grags monastery at Mount Kailāsa)”, but in any case the location of some of these places is unclear to me.

Going by the evidence of *Ti se lo rgyus*, the inscription’s *kha tshad* (note that the last letter clearly reads *d*) could be a highly corrupt spelling of Kha char (a well-known variant name of 'Khor chags; cf. e.g. Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 119). It might also refer to Khwa/Kha (r)tse (for its location to the north of Pu ling in Gu ge, see, e.g., Vitali 1996a: 358, n. 567), but this place is more than 150 km linear distance from Rgyang grags monastery. Another possible (and perhaps somewhat more likely) candidate is present-day Rkang rtse, located only about 7 km to the south of Skyid rang (cf. the map in Tshe ring rgyal po 2012: 11, which also shows a temple called *rkang rtse rtsa phu lha khang* right next to the village of Rkang rtse).

Making enquiries about the location of Dam pa rdzong for me, Tshe ring rgyal po was informed by 'Jam dpal, the former abbot of 'Khor chags monastery, that its ruins are found on the left side of the road from Skyid rang to 'Khor chags, ca. 2 km before Rkang rtse (oral communication, 4 Dec. 2014).

- 137 Then, the one called Smyos<sup>564</sup> Jina Lha nang (pa), [was given] a third ... by(?)<sup>565</sup> the protector of the land, A [tig] sman ...<sup>566</sup>
- 140 [Subsequently,] the *dharmā* master [Seng] ge ye shes was given – also as a gift [for requesting ...<sup>567</sup>] – Brag la bsam gtan

According to the same informant the inscription's *thod dkar* probably refers to a place in the Dkar dung area, but he could not provide any details. As the case may be, *lag 'phraqd* and *thod dkar* would have to be understood as designating *two* places (as opposed to Vitali's "Lag.phreng thod.kar", cited above). This is corroborated by de Rossi Filibeck's and Don grub's editions of *Ti se lo rgyus*, which read "*lag phreng / thod dkar*". *Bod rang skyong ljongs srid 'dzin sa khul gyi sa bkra* 1994 shows a small place called Lag 'phrang about 150 km to the west of Skyid rang (linear distance), but as with Khwa/Kha (r)tse, discussed above, its remoteness makes a connection with the inscription's *lag 'phraqd* appear rather questionable.

Whether *mgon pa ro ma* refers to one or two places remains unclear, but *'om lo* certainly stands for Humla in Northwest Nepal, which is known for a number of caves, most notably the famous Rin chen bzang po cave located about two km to the southwest of Til in the Sle mi valley (and thus just about 25 km to the east of Skyid rang).

<sup>563</sup> Or: "as bases for offerings.?"

<sup>564</sup> Cf. n. 549. Smyos (lit. 'mad') appears to be an irregular spelling of the clan name Gnyos. According to *Deb ther sngon po* (ed. Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang 1984: 708) this disciple of 'Jig rten mgon po was known as Lha nang pa because he practiced in Ti se's Lha nang: *ti se'i lha nang du sgrub pa mdzad pas rgyal ba lha nang par grags*. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 35, Don grub 1992: 54) reports that he stayed in Lha nang and Rdzu 'phrul (phug): *bzhugs yul lha nang dang rdzu 'phrul phug (phug om. RF) tu mdzad*. Also cf. the information provided by Vitali (1996a: 373–375, n. 595–598, and especially 407f., n. 670), according to which Smyos/Gnyos Lha nang (pa) was supported by the Spu rang lord (*jo bo*) Stag tsha aka Khri 'Bar (btsan). *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 58) clearly states that the latter and A tig (sman) were father and son (*stag tsha dang / a tig yab sras*) while *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* (ed. and transl. of Vitali 1996a: 69f. and 121) reports that Stag tsha was the father of Bkra shis dngos grub mgon and Rnam lde mgon. As already pointed out in n. 560 above, Vitali takes Rnam lde mgon to be identical with A tig sman.

<sup>565</sup> Or: "of"?

<sup>566</sup> The passage is too damaged to allow a reasonably certain reconstruction, but it seems to report some kind of material support given to the Jina by A tig sman. For *sum cha* 'a third', cf. verse-line 157.

<sup>567</sup> Read: "(the vow for) the generation of *bodhicitta*"?

- gling monastery,<sup>568</sup> etc., by the king of above,<sup>569</sup> A [tig] sman.<sup>570</sup>
- 144 Furthermore, the one called divine great Stag rtša,<sup>571</sup> as a present for requesting the stream of empowerment and oral instructions, gave a precious [elaborate] *maṅḍala* of gold and the Rgod gung<sup>572</sup> hermitage, together with shrine offerings.
- 148 (He) acted as a donor of 'Jig rten gsum mgon's inner shrine, a golden urn, called "Complete victory over the three realms".<sup>573</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 58) reports that Seng ge ye shes was given Brag la bsam gtan gling, Spu rang's Rgod khung (/ Dgung 'phur monastery; cf. the introduction) monastery, together with paraphernalia and objects of worship, and – as endowment for the livelihood of Ti se's practitioners – a place called *rong yang sgar/dkar (yul): brag la bsam gtan gling dang / spu (spu : pu RF) rang rgod khung (khung : khu pa RF) dgon pa (pa om. RF) rten (rten : brten RF) mchod cha dang bcas pa dang / ti se'i ri pa rnam kyī 'tsho thebs su rong yang sgar (sgar : dkar yul RF) zhes bya ba phul*. Moreover, a little later in the same text it is related (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 59f.) that during the time of the *dharma* master Dar ma rgyal mtshan pa (who followed Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, mentioned in verse-line 152), the Rgyang grags pa(s) had several branch monasteries (*dgon lag*), including *spu (spu : pu RF) rang rgod khung* and *khu nu bsam gtan gling (gling : chos gling RF)*. Thus one might be inclined to assume that *brag la bsam gtan gling* is identical with *khu nu bsam gtan (chos) gling* and accordingly located in Kinnaur (Tib. *khu nu*). Yet, according to the former abbot of 'Khor chags monastery (cf. n. 562, above), there is also a cave called Bsam gtan gling phug in the Dkar dung area (oral communication Tshe ring rgyal po, 4 Dec. 2014). Indeed, *brag la* would seem a very fitting specification for a cave.

<sup>569</sup> This can either be understood in the sense of "above-mentioned" (cf. verse-line 131) or as referring to the "upper castle" (*mkhar gong*) in which Rnam lde mgon / A tig sman stayed according to *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* (ed. and transl. of Vitali 1996a: 69, 121). For a discussion of this *mkhar gong*, see Vitali 1996a: 392.

<sup>570</sup> Cf. n. 549.

<sup>571</sup> For Stag tsha Khri 'Bar (btsan), cf. n. 564. The inscription's Stag rtša simply appears to be a variant spelling.

<sup>572</sup> Cf. the introduction.

<sup>573</sup> Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 58): *skyob pa rin po che'i gser 'bum khams gsum rnam rgyal zhes pa bzhangs (bzhangs : bzhang RF) pa'i sbyin bdag mdzad*. Because in the preceding passage of *Ti se lo rgyus* Stag tsha/rtsa Khri 'Bar (btsan) and his son A tig (sman)

(He) gave ... of Dkar ma,<sup>574</sup> Yang dkar yul,<sup>575</sup> too, (and) properly conducted the renovation of the Red Temple.<sup>576</sup>

- 152 [Then,] the *dharma* master Kun dga' rgyal mtshan arrived. [The king of Gu ge, Khri(!)(?) Grags pa lde(?)] (and) the one called Queen Lha lcam Bsam grub [invited (him) to(?)] stay [in Rgyal di<sup>577</sup> (in)] Spu hrangs (and) (he) went [there(?)]. As

are said to have donated Brag la bsam gtan gling, etc., to Seng ge ye shes (cf. n. 568, above), there both are most naturally also taken as the logical subject of *sbyin bdag mdzad*. On the “inner shrine” (*nang rten*) holding 'Jig rten mgon po's mortal remains, also see Ra se Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2007: 67, where it is called “Resplendent suppression of the three realms” (*kham s gum zil gnon*).

<sup>574</sup> This probably refers to a place or an area in or near present-day Mugu, located to the southeast of Humla in Northwest Nepal. According to Mathes (2003: 95), Dkar ma'i rong (lit. ‘the valley[s] of Dkar ma’) include(s) the “entire southern and eastern parts” of Mugu and thus “mainly the area of the Mugu Karnali valley east of Gamgadhi (the district capital of present-day Mugu) up to Dolpo, including smaller side valleys to the north and south.” The inscription's *dkar ma'i th-s* (s-) might contrast with *dkar ma'i rong* (and thus refer to a different area of Dkar ma), but it could also designate a specific place in Dkar ma. Also see Chos dbyings rdo rje 1996: 92, where it is stated that Dkar ma belonged to the domain of Ya (rtse): *khul der* [i.e., *ya rtser*; K.T.] *sle mi tsho gsum dang / om lo rong / mu gum / dkar ma / ti chu rong dang dol po glo bo ma thang bcas*.

<sup>575</sup> About 40 km linear distance to the southeast of Skyid rang and located on the northern banks of the Rma bya kha 'bab (Karnali) in Humla (Northwest Nepal), there is a small village called Yangar (spelled *yang sgar* [cf. n. 568, above] in an as yet unpublished recent donor inscription found in the courtyard of the nearby Yalbang monastery). It is unclear how old the village is and on my two short visits to Yangar in 2009 and 2010 I could not see any evidence attesting to its importance in former times.

<sup>576</sup> The location of this temple is unclear. Perhaps it is/was located in Yang dkar yul.

<sup>577</sup> Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59). According to Petech (1997: 240f.) the fortress of Rgyal di “was the political centre of Purang from the 13th to the 15th century” but “[i]ts location remains obscure.” Vitali (1996a: 476) states that it was “located a little to the south of the two lakes” (most likely referring to Ma pham g.yu mtsho and Lag ngar mtsho). Yet Tshe ring rgyal po informed me that the ruins of Rgyal di are found on the same hill to the east-northeast of Skyid rang which until recently accommodated a military camp and was thus a highly restricted area (oral

- a gift for [receiving/listening to(?) ...<sup>578</sup>] – like the previous present of a third of the kingdom<sup>579</sup> – upper [and lower] Thang zhabs<sup>580</sup> were given (to Kun dga' rgyal mtshan) (for/during?) [the prescribed (memorial) service] for the elder brother.<sup>581</sup>
- 159 Then, when [some time] had passed, in 'Bri gung, the one well-known as *sugata* Kun dga' rin chen,<sup>582</sup> that second Jina<sup>583</sup> (of this) degenerate age, also sent the *vajra* holders called 'Jam dpal ye shes, Mgon po ye shes, Kun (dga') bkra (shis) and others<sup>584</sup> to Sti se.
- 164 The king(s) of Gu ge, Blo bzang rab bstan<sup>585</sup>(,) and Bkra shis mgon,<sup>586</sup> and the Spu hrangs governor, Kun bsam,<sup>587</sup> etc., act-

communication, 4 Dec. 2014). Thus Rgyal di would be located to the east of Dgung 'phur, right across the Rma bya kha 'bab.

<sup>578</sup> The damaged four(?) syllables perhaps provided the name of a particular teaching or text to which the king and the queen were introduced by Kun dga' rgyal mtshan. The corresponding passage in *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 38, Don grub 1992: 59, Vitali 1996a: 410, n. 676) just has *chos zhus pa'i yon du*, i.e., “as a gift for requesting the *dharmā*”.

<sup>579</sup> Cf. verse-line 139.

<sup>580</sup> *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 37, Don grub 1992: 59) has *spu (pu RF) rang thang yab stod smad*. Located about 4 km (linear distance) to the southeast of Skyid rang, the present-day village of Thang zhabs/yab consists of only about ten houses.

<sup>581</sup> There is no corresponding information on such a (memorial) service for an elder brother (of Grags pa lde?) in *Ti se lo rgyus* and *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs*. Perhaps Kun dga' rgyal mtshan recited a particular text for the elder brother and was then rewarded by the king and the queen, who gave him upper and lower Thang zhabs/yab.

<sup>582</sup> For Kun dga' rin chen (1475–1527), 16th/(17th) 'Bri gung throne holder, see 'Bri gung Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2004: 416–428.

<sup>583</sup> Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 61): *sangs rgyas gnyis pa*, and 'Bri gung Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2004: 416: *skyob pa'i zhing 'dir skyob pa gnyis pa*.

<sup>584</sup> Cf. *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62) *rdo rje 'dzin pa 'jam dpal ye shes / rdor (rdor : rdo DG) 'dzin mgon po ye shes / rdor 'dzin kun dga' bkra shis / rdo rje (rdo rje : rdor DG) 'dzin pa kun dga' bzang po nmams rim par phebs*.

<sup>585</sup> I.e., irregular spelling of Blo bzang rab brtan (pa); cf. n. 250 and *Vai-dūrya ser po* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 1989: 274). According to the calculations of Vitali (1996a: 511–513), he was born in 1458.

ed [as patrons], and then the conditions for the honouring (of the 'Bri gung pas) of [former times(?)]<sup>588</sup> ...<sup>589</sup> .

- 168 [Then, the *vajra* holder Kun dga' grags] pa arrived. The king of Gu ge, ['Jig rten] dbang phyug,<sup>590</sup> and the Spu [hrangs governor, Bsod nams] rab[ brtan,] gave all the monastic estates that had been lost hither and thither (to him).<sup>591</sup>

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<sup>586</sup> Cf. the passage quoted from *Ti se lo rgyus* in n. 250. According to Petech (1978: 320; 2003: 42) and Vitali (1996a: 530, n. 902), *Ti se lo rgyus*' identification of Bsod nams lhun grub and Bkra shis mgon "as rulers of Gu.ge is a mistake, for they were well known members of the Glo.pa royal family" (Vitali 1996a: 530, n. 902). Moreover, Petech (*ibid.*) reckons that Bkra shis mgon ruled from ca. 1465 to 1480/89. Note, however, that in verse-lines 164–165 *gu ge'i rgyal po* does not necessarily have to refer to *bkra shis mgon*.

<sup>587</sup> According to Vitali 1996a: 520, he "governed Pu.hrang in the third quarter of the 15th century".

<sup>588</sup> Here, the inscription probably refers to the early glorious period of the Bri gung pas in Western Tibet, starting with the arrival of Mgu ya sgang pa and ending in the late 13th century when Mnga' ris largely was taken over by the Sa skya pas (see, e.g., Vitali 1996a: 560 and *passim*). Also cf. the inscription's "*de nas r<e> zhig lon tshé*" in verse-line 159.

<sup>589</sup> Read: "were established again" or similar.

<sup>590</sup> On this king and his various activities, see Vitali 1996a: 528ff., n. 60, and Petech 1997: 245f. Earlier, Petech (1978: 321) had stated – without providing any sources – that 'Jig rten dbang phyug "is known to have been on the throne between 1540 and 1555". At any rate, the above-mentioned evidence provided in Vitali 1996a and Petech 1997 proves that his *floruit* fell into this period. In particular, two passages from *Vaidūrya ser po* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 1989: 198, 274) show that in 1541 he supported the foundation of Mnga' ris grwa tshang (near Rtse thang in Lho kha) "with presents of many jewels" (for the text of these two passages and their English translation, see Vitali 1996a: 528ff., n. 601 and Tropper 2013: 50f.).

<sup>591</sup> This obviously refers to the 'Bri gung pas' loss of various estates to the Sa skya pas (and later also to the Dge lugs pas) during the preceding centuries. Cf. Petech 1978: 321, 1997: 246, and *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62): *sngar 'bri gung pa'i chos gzhis dang sa cha shor ba thams cad* (*thams cad* : *rnams DG*) *legs par phul*, i.e., "( 'Jig rten dbang phyug and Bsod nams rab brtan) duly gave all of the 'Bri gung pas' monastic estates and places that had been lost earlier."

172 The ones called Kun dga' rgya mtsho, Bsod nams dpal 'byor, (the) [Sher] bcu [monk(?)], Kun dga' dpal,<sup>592</sup> as well as Rin chen dpal bzang, Gram<sup>593</sup> rgyal bstan 'dzin,<sup>594</sup> Rin chen

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<sup>592</sup> They are all called *vajra* holders in *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39, Don grub 1992: 62f.), which also specifies that they (and *vajra* holder Rnam rgyal 'phrin las) arrived during the time of the 18th/(19th) 'Bri gung throne holder, Rin chen rnam rgyal (1519–1576, according to 'Bri gung Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2004: 442, 446), and were sponsored by the king of Mang/Mar yul (i.e., Ladakh), 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal, and his son (i.e., Seng ge rnam rgyal): *gdan rabs bco brgyad pa rje rin chen rnam rgyal sku mched kyi skabs / ( / om. DG) rdo rje 'dzin pa kun dga' rgya mtsho / rdo rje 'dzin pa bsod nams dpal 'byor / rdor 'dzin rnam rgyal 'phrin las / rdor 'dzin kun dga' dpal / ( / om. DG) rdor 'dzin sher bcu pa rnams byon zhing sbyin bdag mang (mang : mar DG) yul rgyal po 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal yab sras kyi mdzad*. According to Francke (1926: 106), 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal ruled ca. 1560–1590, while Petech (1977: 37) states that “we may determine his regnal years as c. 1595–1616.” If the latter dates are correct, this would either mean that 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal's support of the *vajra* holders started already before he acceded to the throne or that at least about twenty years must have passed between their arrival and the beginning of his sponsorship. The dates of Seng ge rnam rgyal's rule are given as “c. 1590–1635” by Francke (1926: 108), whereas Petech (1977: 37) argues for 1616–1642.

<sup>593</sup> Read: Rnam?

<sup>594</sup> According to *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 39f., Don grub 1992: 63), the *vajra* holders Rin chen dpal bzang and Gram(?) rgyal bstan 'dzin (as well as *vajra* holder Ngag dbang rnam rgyal) arrived during the time of the 21st/(22nd) 'Bri gung throne holder, Chos rgyal phun tshogs (1547–1602; on the see since 1583, according to Petech 1978: 322; also cf. 'Bri gung Dkon mchog rgya mtsho 2004: 457, 462), and were sponsored by – amongst others – the Gu ge king(s) Bkra shis mgon and Khri Grags pa bkra shis: *gdan rabs (rabs : rab RF) nyer gcig pa rje chos rgyal phun tshogs kyi skabs / ( / om. DG) rdor 'dzin rin chen dpal bzang / ( / om. DG) rdor 'dzin gram (rdor 'dzin gram : bas DG) rgyal bstan 'dzin / rdor 'dzin nag dbang rnam rgyal rnams kyi (rnams kyi : kyi skabs DG) sbyin bdag gu ge rgyal po bkra shis mgon dang (dang : dang / DG) khri grags pa bkra shis sogs kyi mdzad*. As Petech (*ibid.*) points out, Bkra shis mgon “is unknown to all [other; K.T.] sources”, whereas Khri Grags pa bkra shis “looks like an inversion of the name of the last king of Gu-ge, K'ri bKra-śis-grags-pa-lde, the protector of Andrade's Jesuit mission, dethroned by the king of Ladakh in 1630” (also cf. Petech 1997: 247, 255, n. 104). Again, as with 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal (cf. n. 592), if both Petech's identification of Khri Grags pa bkra shis with Khri Bkra shis grags pa lde and

- skyabs<sup>595</sup> and others came to Sti se; therefore homage is paid to the *vajra* holders.<sup>596</sup>
- 177 Ah! And on the four sides of the snowy white Sti se,<sup>597</sup> from the mouths of a lion, an elephant, a horse and a peacock, (four) great rivers<sup>598</sup> flow leisurely down – among them the peacock stream, on whose banks, here in Spus rgyal<sup>599</sup> Spu hrangs, ...<sup>600</sup> protector(s) of the land ... all kinds ...<sup>601</sup> were born [in great number].
- 183 First, [the supreme one(s), ...<sup>602</sup>], father and son[, the two],<sup>603</sup> in the middle, the supreme one(s), Stag ...<sup>604</sup> ... pa dpal,<sup>605</sup>

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his statement that the latter “ascended the throne after 1618” (Petech 1978: 322) are correct, this would either mean that the ruler’s support of the *vajra* holders started already before he was enthroned or that his sponsorship only started more than fifteen years after their arrival in Western Tibet.

<sup>595</sup> He is not mentioned in *Ti se lo rgyus*, but because the inscription lists him together with Rin chen dpal bzang and Gram rgyal bstan ’dzin, the latter two and Rin chen skyabs were probably contemporaries.

<sup>596</sup> Or: “Homage is paid to the *vajra* holders who came to Sti se, (namely) the ones called Kun dga’ rgya mtsho, ..., and others.”?

<sup>597</sup> Or, accepting the reading *a (ma)*: “And on the four sides of the mother, (that is,) the (goddess of the) snowy white Sti se”? Yet, while some Tibetan mountains are identified with mother goddesses and accordingly called *a ma* (cf., e.g., A ma Jo mo G.yang ri in Yol mo / Helambu; discussed in Mathes 2013), I could not find any other sources referring to Sti/Ti se as “mother”. Instead, in a Buddhist context it is usually considered to be the abode of ’Khor lo sdom pa / Cakrasaṃvara; see, e.g., *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 12, Don grub 1992: 2).

<sup>598</sup> I.e., Seng ge kha ’bab (Indus), Glang chen kha ’bab (Sutlej), Rta mchog kha ’bab (Brahmaputra) and Rma bya kha ’bab (Karnali) (with several variant spellings). For a description of the springs of the four rivers, see, e.g., *Ti se lo rgyus* (ed. de Rossi Filibeck 1988: 23, Don grub 1992: 27f.).

<sup>599</sup> For various propounded explanations of the meaning and etymology of Spus/Spur/Spu/Pu rgyal, see Tropper 2007a: 123, n. 212.

<sup>600</sup> Read: “in the midst of the flat marsh gardens,” or “in the midst of the sacred flatlands,”?

<sup>601</sup> Read: “with all kinds of evident marvels”?

<sup>602</sup> Read: “the Che chen(s)” (on the Che chen clan, see Vitali 1996a: 123, 342f., and 358f.), “the very worthy one(s)”, “the great pair”, “the elder and the descendant” or “the great and powerful one(s)”?

Lha rgyal,<sup>606</sup> Rgya mtsho dpal bzang,<sup>607</sup> and the protector of the land Kun bsam;<sup>608</sup> finally, the supreme one(s), Shākya seng ge,<sup>609</sup> Shākya 'od,<sup>610</sup> and Smon lam rgya mtsho,<sup>611</sup> etc.; homage is paid to the (spiritual) descendants [of Vajrapāṇi].<sup>612</sup>

<sup>603</sup> The inscription's *yab sras g<ny>i<s>* could, e.g., refer to Rtse lde (whose mother belonged to the Che chen clan; see *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* [ed. and transl. of Vitali 1996a: 72 and 123]) and one of his four sons (on which, see *ibid.*: 74 and 125), but I am not aware of any sources providing information on the birthplace of these five rulers. It may also refer to Ye shes 'od and one of his sons. For an extensive discussion of the many conflicting traditions concerning Ye shes 'od and the various places connected with him, see Vitali 1996a: 171–185. Again, I do not know of any sources mentioning his or his offspring's exact place of birth, but according to most texts Ye shed 'od's father Bkra shis mgon was given Spu rang when Skyid lde Nyi ma mgon (who had migrated from Central to Western Tibet in the first half of the 10th century) distributed *Mnga' ris* among his three sons (cf., e.g., Petech 1997: 232). Furthermore, Dkar dung (for which see n. 555, 556) is generally considered to be the place where Skyid lde Nyi ma mgon erected his castle called Sku mkhar Nyi bzungs (with many variant spellings) (see, e.g., Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 116).

<sup>604</sup> The meaning of the verse-line's damaged second half is largely unclear. It may have referred to Stag rtsa/tsha (Khri 'Bar btsan) (cf. verse-line 144, n. 564) and one or more of his successors (whose names often contained or ended in the syllable *lde*).

<sup>605</sup> *-yi r-* could refer to Skyid rang (on whose outskirts the Dgung 'phur monastery is located) and thus specify the place of origin of the bearer of the following name (... pa dpal), but this is of course rather speculative.

<sup>606</sup> While this is a common epithet of Ye shes 'od (cf. verse-line 56), here it probably refers to some later ruler of Spu rang.

<sup>607</sup> According to Vitali (1996a: 489, 521, 530), this Spu rang ruler was active around 1450.

<sup>608</sup> Cf. verse-line 166 and n. 587.

<sup>609</sup> See the following note.

<sup>610</sup> For geographical and chronological reasons (cf. n. 587 and 607), this is probably not the ruler who, according to *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs*, was born in 1409 in Lho stod (i.e., not in Spu rang) and known as Phun tshogs lde before he became a monk (probably in 1449; see Vitali 1996a: 508f.), but rather the Shākya 'od who was the progeny of Blo bzang rab brtan/bstan and lived “in the late 15th–early 16th century” (Vitali 1996a: 618; also see Vitali 1996a: 513, n. 869, for a discussion of whether he was the son or the grandson of Blo bzang rab brtan/bstan). Interestingly, *Vaidūrya ser po* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po

- 190 Nowadays, the supreme one, provided with the banner of glory, [the gentle (one) (*'jam*)] governing in accordance with the *dharmā* and thus of a pleasant dominion – (he) addresses all in an affectionate way with various kinds of [melodies (*dbyangs*)] (and) knows the answer to(?)<sup>613</sup> (what to) take [(and) reject], [like] the wave(s) of the ocean (*rgya mtsho*); may the Indra of the earth, (that is,) [*'Jam*] *dbyangs rgya mtsho*,<sup>614</sup> be victorious!<sup>615</sup>

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1989: 274) reports that this latter Shākya 'od had a brother called Shākya rin chen, which might be an alias of the inscription's Shākya seng ge. However, I am not aware of any sources specifying the birthplace of these two brothers.

<sup>611</sup> I could not find any references to a person of this name that would fit the context of this passage.

<sup>612</sup> Partly in connection with the uncertainty regarding the identity of some of the rulers mentioned in verse-lines 183–188, this reference to Vajrapāṇi is somewhat unclear. It may allude to the fact that they ultimately descended from the emperors of Central Tibet, whose last staunch supporter of Buddhism, Ral pa can, was considered to be an emanation of Vajrapāṇi (cf. n. 491). Similarly, some sources hold that Tho tho ri, during whose rule Tibet is said to have come into contact with Buddhism for the first time (cf. verse-line 40), was an incarnation/emanation of Vajrapāṇi (see Sørensen 1994: 137f., n. 356). In the form of Vajradhara, to whom all Bka' brgyud lineages ultimately go back, Vajrapāṇi of course also has a special status in the various Bka' brgyud schools. Thus the rulers who supported the 'Bri gung pas, asking for their teachings and in some cases even becoming monks themselves (cf. n. 275), in a rather loose sense may also be called descendants of Vajrapāṇi due to their religious orientation and activities.

<sup>613</sup> Cf. n. 285.

<sup>614</sup> No ruler of that name who was active in Spu rang in the 16th or early 17th century is mentioned in the sources available to me. Possible candidates known under similar names are the La stod lho ruler (Ti/Tā'i) 'Jam dbyangs pa, Shākya rin chen's (on whom, see n. 610) son 'Jam dbyangs pa, and the Ladakhi king 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal.

Regarding (Ti/Tā'i) 'Jam dbyangs pa, *Gung thang rgyal rabs* (ed. and transl. of Everding 2000: 164f.) reports that he was appointed ruler of La stod lho in 1555 or some time thereafter, and as Everding (*ibid.*: n. 328) points out, he is referred to as a son of Kun dga' rnam (par) rgyal (ba rab tu brtan pa'i rdo rje dpal bzang po) in *Shel dkar chos 'byung* (facsimile ed. Pasang Wangdu & Diemberger 1996, fol. 7v1–2; ed. Everding & Dawa Dargyay Dzongphugpa 2006, 153; also cf. Everding & Dawa Dargyay Dzongphugpa 2006: 110). The

latter piece of information could, perhaps, be taken as support for the identification of (Ti/Tā'i) 'Jam dbyangs pa with the inscription's 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, because a possible (although in my opinion not the most proximate) interpretation of verse-lines 219–221 is that the latter was “(up)holding the rigs” (*rigs 'dzin pa*; on the term *rigs*, see n. 617 and 621) of one [Kun dga'] rnam [rgyal] (*k-n d=' rnam rgya=*) (for details, see n. 640). Yet apart from the two short references in *Gung thang rgyal rabs* and *Shel dkar chos 'byung* I could not find any further information on (Ti/Tā'i) 'Jam dbyangs pa, in particular anything about the year of his death or possible connections with Skyid rang (located some 500 km to the west-northwest of La stod lho). His identification with the inscription's 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho thus remains rather doubtful.

The same is true for Shākya rin chen's son 'Jam dbyangs pa, who belonged to the royal family of Gu ge (which seems to have ruled over Spu rang during much of the 16th and early 17th century; see, e.g., Petech 2003: 45). According to *Vaidūrya ser po* (ed. Rdo rje rgyal po 1989: 274), he and his two brothers “gave the resources for the founding of the Mnga' ris gr(w)a tshang” (*mnga' ris gra tshang 'dzugs pa'i mthun rkyen phul*), a founding that can be dated to the year 1541 (see Tropper 2013: 51). If we assume that 'Jam dbyangs pa was in his late teens or early twenties at that time, he could, arguably, still have been alive and active in 1602 (i.e., the date proposed for the inscription), but this seems more like fitting him into a Procrustean bed. For, in addition to the chronological issue, he does not appear to have been a major political figure (unlike his older brother 'Jig rten dbang phyug pad dkar lde or some of the latter's successors), and apart from the short reference in the *Vaidūrya ser po* not much else is known about him.

Perhaps the most likely candidate is the Ladakhi king 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal. As pointed out in n. 592, *Ti se lo rgyus* reports that he and his son Seng ge rnam rgyal sponsored various 'Bri gung pas who had been sent to Western Tibet in the late 16th century. According to *La dwags rgyal rabs* (ed. and transl. of Francke 1926: 38f., 106f.), he took Tshe ring rgyal mo, daughter of the Gu ge king 'Jig rten dbang phyug (pad dkar lde), as his (first) wife. The latter source also stresses his deliberate turn towards Buddhism and his numerous gifts to different monasteries. Moreover, although Ladakh's complete subordination of Gu ge only occurred in 1630 under 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal's son Seng ge rnam rgyal, the former's brother Tshe dbang rnam rgyal had already made inroads into Gu ge and the regions to the southwest of it in the late 16th century, making Gu ge a tributary of Ladakh for some time (see, e.g., Petech 1977: 31f., 1997: 246f., and the sources cited there). All this certainly supports the identification of the inscription's 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho with 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal, but I could not find any other sources in

- 195 <sup>616</sup>At this point, from the duration [of the Jina’s teaching] for ten times five hundred (years) – in counting (them) [as] the time [of fruition], [the time of accomplishment], the time [of scripture], [all three], and the (time of) holding [mere] signs – [the first, (that is,) the time of fruition,] and the time of accomplishment have passed. Also, [in the three] (five hundred year periods of the time of) scripture, the time of [the *abhidharma*] has passed[;] now, in the five hundred (years) pertaining to the *sūtra* section, two hundred and thirty-four have come to pass. The rest, [two] hundred and [sixty-]six, remain.
- 204 As to the kinship affiliation<sup>617</sup> of the donor who erected this present [great] Gtsug lag [khang] in this situation and time, when the time of the *vinaya* and the time of holding mere sign(s), (together accounting for) a thousand (years), have not come:
- 208 (his) *rus*[:]<sup>618</sup> ... Stong(?) ...<sup>619</sup> descends [from] the *lha chen dkar po*;<sup>620</sup> (his) *rigs*:<sup>621</sup> called Brang ...<sup>622</sup>, it is famous every-

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which the last two syllables of the latter’s name read *rgya mtsho* instead of *rnam rgyal*.

Thus the identity of ’Jam dbyangs *rgya mtsho* remains uncertain and it cannot even be ruled out that he was some minor local potentate, despite the glorifying terms in which he is described in the inscription. Its diction may simply conform to the typical panegyric exaggerations of such texts.

<sup>615</sup> The verse-line obviously likens the ruler to Indra. On *sa yi (b)rgya byin* as an epithet of a ruler, also see Schuh 2008: 37, 429.

<sup>616</sup> For a discussion of verse-lines 195–203, see the introduction’s subchapter “Date of the inscription”.

<sup>617</sup> Jackson (1984: 25) translates *rigs rus cho ’brang* as “‘lineage’ (*rigs*), ‘clan’ (*rus*), and line of maternal descent (*cho ’brang*)”, but as Guntram Hazod pointed out to me, the usage of *rigs*, *rus* and *cho ’brang* is not entirely consistent in the sources, and various translations are also found in the dictionaries and secondary sources. Moreover, in the following verse-lines only the *rigs* and the *rus* of the donor seem to be specified, and thus – taking up a suggestion of Guntram Hazod – I prefer to render *rigs rus* <’>cho { ’ }*brang* rather loosely as “kinship affiliation”.

<sup>618</sup> Cf. n. 617. For a discussion of the term and further literature, see Levine 1988: 37–40. Quintessentially, *rus* (lit. ‘bone’) refers to one’s patrilineal affiliation.

where; as to Brang ...<sup>623</sup>(,) Bre(?) dkar<sup>624</sup> (and?) Khro ...<sup>625</sup>: called ...<sup>626</sup> appeared as three [divisions],<sup>627</sup> acted as chief-tain(s) of [the region] Bro [shod]<sup>628</sup> (in) Mnga' ris.

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<sup>619</sup> Read: “it is the Stong (*rus*) and“? On the Stong in Western Tibet, see Everding & Dawa Dargay Dzongphugpa 2006: 60–64 as well as Vitali's (2012: 14f., n. 17) edition and translation of a passage in the *Blo bo chos rgyal rim byon rgyal rabs mu thi li 'phreng mdzes*, where the Stong are described as one of “the eight great clans, which originated in Zhang zhung”.

<sup>620</sup> *lha chen dkar po* (lit. ‘white great deity’) may stand for *lha chen tshangs pa dkar po* (‘great deity Sita Brahmā’) but in any case seems to stress the celestial descent of the donor (on *lha chen tshangs pa dkar po* and his strong connections with the Ti se area, see, in particular, Sørensen & Hazod 2005: 275–278; see also Forgues 2011: 148 [n. 77], 272, and Hermanns 1970, vol. 2: 115).

<sup>621</sup> Cf. n. 617. In contrast to *rus*, *rigs* has a wider range of possible meanings. According to Guntram Hazod (e-mail, 31 Oct. 2014), “in the classification of kinship groups it usually embraces different sub-groups of lineages or clans (*rus*)” [my translation; K.T.], and a similar explanation is provided by Childs (1997: 23, n. 4): “An important terminological distinction between *rus* (‘bone, patrilineage’) and *rig* [read *rigs*; K.T.] (‘family, clan’) is that the latter is more inclusive. There can be many related patrilineages (*rus*) within a single clan (*rigs*).”

<sup>622</sup> The inscription's *brang* and *bra* (verse-line 219) could be alternative spellings of *sbrang* and *sbra*. As pointed out in Sørensen & Hazod 2005: 226, n. 14, the Sbrang/Sbra were “originally from Zhang-zhung-stod” and “later involved in the founding of the eastern Nü-kuo” (discussed in more detail in Yamaguchi 1992: 68–72 and Nagano 1994: 111f.). The meaning of the syllable (*so?*) that follows *brang* remains unclear, though.

<sup>623</sup> Read: “Brang so Mgo ne”? Cf. n. 622 and 631.

<sup>624</sup> Or, less likely: “Bro dkar”. Both the 'Bre and the 'Bro (with several different spellings) were important protagonists in the history of Western Tibet (see, e.g., Vitali 1996a: 171, 178, 197, Jahoda & Papa-Kalantari 2009: 370f. and *passim*, Yonten Dargye, Sørensen & Gyönpö Tshering 2008: 20, n. 16), and thus *bre/bro dkar* could refer to a particular sub-group of one of these two *rus*. It could also be an irregular/alternative spelling of a toponym like Bye dkar (in Rtsa mda'; see, e.g., Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 334–337) or 'Phred dkar/mkhar (in Glo; see, e.g., Jackson 1976: 54, n. 39, Vitali 2012: 144ff. and *passim*). However, verse-lines 216–218 rather suggest that Bre/Bro dkar is the name of a person, who – like Mgo(n) ne and Khro <bo?> – belonged to the *rigs* called Brang <so?>.

<sup>625</sup> Read: “bo”?

<sup>626</sup> Read: “glorious and excellent, (they)”?

- 213 That precious extensive *Prajñāpāramitā*<sup>629</sup> (which he/they had) written with gold(-ink), fully devoted to the teaching of the Buddha, now resides in the [Rgod] phungs<sup>630</sup> monastery – so one hears.
- 216 The holders of the Mgon ne<sup>631</sup> lineage, Chos skyabs kun dga',<sup>632</sup> etc., gushed(?)<sup>633</sup> – together with the retinue of (their) community – towards Gu ge. The holder(s) of the Bre(?)<sup>634</sup> dkar lineage, in this region of Spu hrangs, (was/were) the venerable Bra so<sup>635</sup> [master(?)] [Kun dga'] rnam [rgyal<sup>636</sup>][,

<sup>627</sup> I.e., of the Brang <so?>?

<sup>628</sup> Usually spelled *gro shod*, this region is located to the east of Spu rang, with Bar yangs at its center. See, e.g., Vitali 1997: 1027, n. 13, and 1035.

<sup>629</sup> I.e., the *Śatasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* – as opposed to the *Prajñāpāramitā* of middle length ([Rgyal ba'i] *Yum 'bring ba* / [Pañca-]Viṃśatisāhasrikā *Prajñāpāramitā*) and the concise *Prajñāpāramitā* ([Rgyal ba'i] *Yum bsdus pa* / *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*). Cf. Dkon mchog pa sangs (n.d., chapter 6), where it is reported that the religious objects kept in the Dgung 'phur monastery include “'bum rgyas 'bring bsdus” (here, as is often the case, 'bum refers to *Prajñāpāramitā* texts in general). During my visits to the monastery I was not given permission to see any of these texts; Tshe ring rgyal po informed me that the manuscripts and block prints of Dgung 'phur have been inaccessible even to him so far. If the *Rgyal ba'i yum rgyas pa* mentioned in the inscription someday becomes available, its colophon might shed some light on the identity of the donor mentioned in verse-lines 207–212.

<sup>630</sup> This is very likely a variant name of Rgod khung, i.e., one of the names under which Dgung 'phur is known; cf. n. 5.

<sup>631</sup> The name Mgo/Mgon ne is not very common. In addition to the sponsor of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* manuscript already referred to in n. 310, a carver called *dpon po* Mgon ne is mentioned in the printing colophon of a xylograph of *Sprul sku nam mkha' rgyal mtshan mgur bum*, which was produced in Mang yul Gung thang in 1545 (edition of Ehrhard 2000: 143; also see *ibid.*: 76). For the Yum brtan descendant Mgon ne (late 10th / early 11th century), who resided in Phying ba stag rtse, see Tsering Gyalbo, Hazod & Sørensen 2000: 180f., 183, 189, 193f. However, it is rather doubtful if there is any connection between one of these individuals and the Mgon ne mentioned in verse-line 216 (and possibly also in verse-line 210).

<sup>632</sup> Or: “Chos skyabs (and) Kun dga,”?

<sup>633</sup> Or: “were famous”?

<sup>634</sup> Or, less likely: “Bro”?

<sup>635</sup> Cf. n. 622.

etc.(?)]<sup>637</sup> The holder of the *rigs*<sup>638</sup> of that expert in taking care of both systems,<sup>639</sup> the magistrate of the glorious 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho<sup>640</sup> (and) expert in painting ... various kinds ...<sup>641</sup> was the *nang blon* (and) *nang so*<sup>642</sup> Mgon po [skyabs],<sup>643</sup>

<sup>636</sup> There are various rulers with this name who were active in the 15th/16th century in Western Tibet. On *lha btsun* Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1473–1558), *gong ma* Kun dga' rnam rgyal lde (died before 1536), and his brother in law, La stod lho *bdag po* Kun dga' rnam rgyal, see Everding 2000: “Tafel 1” (“Stammtafel des Königshauses von Mañ yul Guñ than”). For more detailed information on these rulers, see *ibid.*: 142f., 548f.; 146–163, 550–574; 154f., 542. Also cf. Everding 2004: 269f., 280–284, Everding & Dawa Dargyay Dzongphugpa 2006: 110f., and n. 614, above. While I could not establish a definite connection between any of these rulers and the inscription's =*pun btsun k-n d=*' rnam rgya=, such a connection cannot be categorically ruled out either. The rather shadowy Ladakhi king Kun dga' rnam rgyal was discussed by Petech (1977: 27f., 30), who tentatively attributed his reign to “c. 1535–1555”. Again, I could not find any evidence linking him to Spu rang (cf. verse-line 218) or the inscription's “venerable Bra so [master(?)][Kun dga'] rnam [rgyal]”.

<sup>637</sup> Or: “... [was] the venerable Bra so [master(?)][Kun dga'] rnam [rgyal.]”?

<sup>638</sup> Cf. n. 617 and 621.

<sup>639</sup> I.e., religious and temporal. While mostly associated with the government and writings of the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682), the term *lugs gnyis* itself and the concepts behind it are certainly much older. See, e.g., Seyfort Ruegg 1995, Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las 2004b, Jackson 1984: 61, 72, and particularly Sagaster 1976 (*passim*).

<sup>640</sup> Or: “The magistrate of the upholder of the *rigs* of that expert in taking care of both systems, the glorious 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, ...”? Yet, it seems more natural to take the entire verse-line 221 (rather than just *dpal ldan 'jam dbyangs rgya mtsho*) as an apposition to the one preceding it (also cf. the structure of verse-lines 222–223). On 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, see n. 614.

<sup>641</sup> The intended meaning of *bros kyi bla re* remains unclear. Taking *bla re* in the sense of ‘canopy’ does not make much sense here, and thus it either has to be understood to mean “each/every *bla ma*” or it needs to be emended, e.g., *bla ri* ‘picture(s) of preceptor(s)’, *lha re* ‘each/every celestial being’, *lha ri* ‘picture(s) of celestial being(s)’, or *lha ris* ‘realm(s) of the celestial being(s)’ (note that *lha* is often pronounced as *bla* in Western Tibet, as was kindly pointed out to me by Tshe ring rgyal po). Similarly, *bros* cannot be interpreted in a meaningful way as the perfect or imperative stem of 'bros ‘to flee’, ‘to escape’ and thus probably must be taken as an irregular spelling of, e.g., *spros* ‘elaboration(s)’, ‘embellishment(s)’ or 'phros ‘emanation(s)’. In combination with

being very devoted to [the Buddha's teaching], he easily [erected] Gtsug lag khangs in towns and at the borders of the plains in order that the sentient beings of the three realms attain enlightenment, but in the end (there/it was) a/the cause for misdeeds.<sup>644</sup> Because of that, in the nurturing nest of a high (and) secure rock,<sup>645</sup> (he) erected this very Gtsug lag khang, which

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the suggested emendation of *kyi* to *kyis*, this results in numerous more or less reasonable alternative interpretations, of which the following is given only by way of example: “(and) expert in painting every celestial being with various kinds of embellishments”.

<sup>642</sup> Zhang *et al.* (1993: 1511) explain *nang so* as “(1) *sa mtshams su so lta mel tshe mkhan*” (border sentinel) and “(2) *phyag mdzod*” (treasurer). Tucci (1949: 35) states that according to an edict contained in the Chronicles of Gyantse, the *nang so* was the highest official of the state and that “this dignity, in its administrative organization, was certainly modelled on the Sa skya pa's organization of the state”. Adding that the office was also found in other states and continued ancient traditions, he explicates (*ibid.*): “The *Nan so* presided over the administration of justice (*Gyantse genealogies*, p. 34) and was a sort of Prime Minister; the King's or the abbot's orders, were made executive by this official, who was naturally also their first counsellor”, and: “Round the sovereigns, whether they were the Sa skya pa abbots, or the P'ag mo gru pas or the lords of Gyantse (and, in a lesser measure, round all the families with any territorial jurisdiction), a petty court was gathered, headed by these *Nan c'en* or *Nan so* or *Nan blon* or, generally, *Blon po* or *bKa' blon*.” Finally, he also reports on a different meaning of the term during the time of the third Dalai Lama, Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543–1588): “[E]ach district [of (Central) Tibet; K.T.] had its chief, enjoying complete autonomy ... . These chiefs had various titles, they were called now *rgyal po*, now *sde pa*, or *sa skyon*, *nan so*, *sku žan*, sometimes simply *žabs drun*” (Tucci 1949: 43). Since the meaning of both *nang blon* and *nang so* in the inscription is unclear, the terms are left untranslated here.

<sup>643</sup> See the introduction's sub-chapter “The ‘founder’ Mgon po skyabs”.

<sup>644</sup> The entire passage is somewhat ambiguous, perhaps on purpose. Tsering rgyal po suggested to me that in connection with founding these “Gtsug lag khangs in towns and at the borders of the plains”, Mgon po skyabs may have committed some illegal or immoral acts (for which he then wanted to atone by his work in Dgung 'phur, as described in the following three verse-lines).

<sup>645</sup> Obviously, this refers to the location of Dgung 'phur, which consists of several adjoining caves in a high sandstone cliff and can only be reached via a steep tunnel. Thus *skyed <'>tshang* constitutes a fitting variant of *skyed tshal*, which is a frequent epithet of monasteries.

- has embellishments of jewels and gold and where all sorts of marvels are seen.
- 231 Perfect in (his) superior aspiration for it, our lord, the perfect ruler 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, in order that the perfect dominion should last for [a long time], gave – as cause and condition for brilliant perfections – a [perfect], [excellent] field in Sku mkhar stod.<sup>646</sup> Also, from lower Rgya zhing,<sup>647</sup> three *khals* (of) ...<sup>648</sup> [were given] ...<sup>649</sup> ...self/selves ...<sup>650</sup>.
- 238 Thence, the patroness, provided with superior aspiration, of a faithful disposition, knowing how what is tied together with the thread of stinginess is untied with the nail of generosity – she created [countless] sacred writings, images and paintings, as a basis by means of which one is to accumulate completely pure merit.

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<sup>646</sup> According to Levine (1976: 60, 63, n. 5), Sku mkhar stod is a “hilltop village in the Purang valley which is said to still exist today.” Most likely it is a synonym of Sku mkhar gong and refers to the premises of the “upper castle” in either Dkar dung or Rgyal di (cf. Vitali 1996a: 393, Tshe ring rgyal po 2006: 116, and verse-line 155).

<sup>647</sup> The small settlement is spelled *sgye shing* by Dkon mchog pa sangs (n.d., chapter 7) and located about 3 km to the south of Skyid rang, immediately past Sug rtse. According to Tshe ring rgyal po (oral communication, 3 Dec. 2014), there are still people from Sgye shing / Rgya zhing who sponsor Dgung 'phur monastery.

<sup>648</sup> Read: “grass/hay”, “salt”, or “tea”? However, none of the suggested conjectures is really convincing. Indeed, three *khals* of grass/hay seem a paltry gift to a monastery, and the (mis)spelling of the common words *tsh(w)a* as *tsa* and *ja* as *ca* would be rather unusual. Reading the preceding *nas* in the sense of ‘barley’ is not a feasible alternative either, because in this case the damaged syllable would have to form a compound with *nas* or *khal* (e.g., *nas phye* ‘barley flour’, *nas (r)tsam* ‘barley (r)tsam pa’, *ra khal* ‘goat load’) and it is difficult to come up with suggestions that fit the remaining traces.

<sup>649</sup> Read: “at times”?

<sup>650</sup> Due to the extensive damage at the beginning of line 17, the meaning of *bre*, and to a certain extent also that of *rang*, remains uncertain. The preceding *khal gsum* suggests that *bre* might have to be taken as a unit of measurement (20 *bre* equaling one *khal*), but it could also be the first syllable of *bre dkar* (cf. verse-lines 210 and 218) and thus refer to one or more members of that kinship group.

- 243 The honourable patroness called U ...<sup>651</sup>, similar to a wish-fulfilling tree for the poor ones, secondly, the *phra 'dzom*<sup>652</sup> leader(s), provided with children and wealth(?),<sup>653</sup> Bkra shis mgon(),<sup>654</sup> and Bkra shis rgyal po,<sup>655</sup> 'Dzom pa 'dzo me(?),<sup>656</sup> (that is,) all four brothers and sisters,<sup>657</sup> too – [may (they)] have a long life, freedom from disease (and) well-being[!]
- 249 In the *dge byed (śubhakarī)*, (that is,) the water-tiger year,<sup>658</sup> at the favorable juncture of the waxing moon, ...<sup>659</sup> the blessing

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<sup>651</sup> Read: “*ru*”? According to Tshe ring rgyal po (oral communication, 4 Dec. 2014) U ru might be an early West Tibetan name. She may have been the wife (or one of the wives) of Mgon po skyabs or 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho. But it is also possible that she was an independent local sponsor. Cf. verse-line 260, where a woman called U chung is mentioned.

<sup>652</sup> The meaning of *phra 'dzom/tshom(s)* is unclear. It could be a(n irregular spelling of a) toponym or qualify the following *srid 'dzin*, i.e., “the jewel(s) of (a) leader(s)”.

<sup>653</sup> Or: “(that is,) (her) son(s) Nor can,”?

<sup>654</sup> For chronological reasons this cannot be the Glo bo ruler referred to in n. 586. More likely, he is to be identified with the Gu ge king Bkra shis mgon, mentioned in *Ti se lo rgyus* together with Khri Grags pa bkra shis as a sponsor of the *vajra* holders Rin chen dpal bzang, Gram rgyal bstan 'dzin and Ngag dbang mnam rgyal (cf. n. 594). However, as Bkra shis mgon is not a particularly uncommon name, he also may have been some other, local, sponsor.

<sup>655</sup> Perhaps to be identified with the Gu ge king Khri Grags pa bkra shis / Khri Bkra shis grags pa lde (cf. n. 654). Yet again, Bkra shis rgyal po is a fairly common name.

<sup>656</sup> Or: “'Dzom pa (and) 'Dzo me,” or: “assembled and absent,”? At any rate, 'Dzom pa 'dzo me, 'Dzom pa and 'Dzo me would be rather unusual names.

<sup>657</sup> As is evident from the preceding footnotes, it is somewhat unclear how verse-lines 243–248 can be resolved and who is meant by “all four brothers and sisters”. Possible alternatives include: (1) U <ru?>, Bkra shis mgon, Bkra shis rgyal po, 'Dzom pa 'dzo me, (2) Bkra shis mgon, Bkra shis rgyal po, 'Dzom pa, 'Dzo me, (3) U <ru?>, Nor can, Bkra shis mgon, Bkra shis rgyal po, (4) Nor can, Bkra shis mgon, Bkra shis rgyal po, 'Dzom pa 'dzo me.

<sup>658</sup> See the introduction's sub-chapter “Date of the inscription”.

<sup>659</sup> Read: “for”?

- (and) the consecration,<sup>660</sup> the preceptor ... Rin chen skyabs<sup>661</sup> and [the one performing the consecration(?)] for his(?) own site ...<sup>662</sup> ...<sup>663</sup> venerable [master]<sup>664</sup> Chos rgyal ... arranged the deities of that/those [saffron]-robed (monk(s)).<sup>665</sup>
- 255 [As to] the painters vying for the status of Viśvakarman,<sup>666</sup> the Sle mi<sup>667</sup> youth(s), etc., skilled and fast, master and students, the five, [did the painting(?)].

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<sup>660</sup> For the expression *bkra shis rab tu gnas pa*, cf. *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (ed. Rgyal sras Ngag dbang rgyal mtshan & Mgon po rgyal mtshan 1993: 193) and the translation in Sørensen 1994: 346.

<sup>661</sup> This is probably the same Rin chen skyabs who is mentioned in verse-line 175. Cf. n. 594 and 595. Here, the name seems to have been preceded by an epithet or religious title ending in *dbang* (i.e., “the lord of ... , Rin chen skyabs”).

<sup>662</sup> Read: “himself, (that is,)”?

<sup>663</sup> Read: “Brang so's”?

<sup>664</sup> The term *dpon btsun* is probably a title for a monk artist or artisan. It also occurs in several printing colophons of block prints from Mang yul Gung thang (ed. in Ehrhard 2000: 97, 126, 132, 133, 139, 143, 152, 156, 167). Interestingly, this includes a reference to one *dpon btsun* Padma (p. 143), who is given as a co-worker of the *dpon po* Mgon ne already mentioned in n. 631, above.

<sup>665</sup> For the term *lha bkod*, cf. Ehrhard 2004: 189, 207, and Kapstein 2006: 21, where it is translated as “Anordnung der Gottheiten” and “arranging the divinities”, respectively. In any case, it obviously refers to the arrangement of some paintings or statues, but – partly in connection with the damage to the preceding verse-lines – *<ngur> {s}mig 'dzin pa de('i)* is somewhat unclear. It might refer to the Buddha (and thus verse-line 254 would have to be understood in the sense of “... arranged the Buddhist deities”), to the monks of Dgung 'phur monastery, or to the person(s) mentioned in the previous verse-line(s). If one accepts the emendation *de yis* (for *de'i*), *<ngur> {s}mig 'dzin pa* could also be an attribute or apposition referring to “Chos rgyal ...” (and possibly also to “... Rin chen skyabs”), i.e.: “the preceptor ... Rin chen skyabs and [the one performing the consecration(?)] for his(?) own site ... ... venerable [master] Chos rgyal ... – that/those [saffron]-robed (monk(s)) arranged the deities.”

<sup>666</sup> A similar reference to the divine artisan and architect is found in verse-line 85 of the historical inscription in the Gsum brtsegs temple at Wanla, Ladakh (ed. and transl. in Tropper 2007a: 118, 140).

- 258 These virtuous deeds as well as those virtuous deeds that have been done in the past and will come to be done in the future shall be dedicated in order that U chung,<sup>668</sup> who became the mother giving birth to my body, and (all) the other sentient beings, who are equal (in extent) to space, attain enlightenment.
- 262 Having come to actually proceed to the [*pramuditā*]*bhūmi* with the vehicle of the merit that arose from (their) liberality, [may] (they) attain that *vimalābhūmi*, after (they) have thoroughly donned the armour of immaculate discipline[!]
- 266 (With) the abandonment [of anger], (that is,) [the moon] of forbearance, creating light for<sup>669</sup> ..., may (they) entirely conquer that *arciṣmatībhūmi* with the unimpaired waxing part [of (their) perseverance]!
- 270 When the afflictions, (that is,) the defilements that are difficult to overcome,<sup>670</sup> have been cleaned (away) with the water of the [excellent] stainless vase that came about due to [meditative concentration], may (they) fully proceed to that *abhimukhībhūmi*, after (they) have entirely burnt the grasping at entities with the flame of sublime knowledge (*prajñā*)!
- 274 Skilled in means (and) mounted on an elephant throne, having gone far from<sup>671</sup> this mire [of] *saṃsāra*, may (they) meditate nonconceptually and come to the [*acalā*(*bhūmi*)],<sup>672</sup> after (they) have taken the resolution with completely pure (and) excellent aspirations!

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<sup>667</sup> I.e., the valley branching of the Rma bya kha 'bab in a northeasterly direction about 35 km downstream from Skyid rang. Containing only three small villages, the Sle mi valley is now on Nepalese territory.

<sup>668</sup> Perhaps the same woman referred to as patroness in verse-line 243.

<sup>669</sup> Obviously, this is a play on words alluding to the third *bodhisattvabhūmi* called 'od byed pa('i sa) / *prabhākarī*(*bhūmi*).

<sup>670</sup> Alluding to the fifth *bodhisattvabhūmi* called (*shin tu*) *sbyang dka' ba*('i sa) / (*su*)*durjayā*(*bhūmi*).

<sup>671</sup> Alluding to the seventh *bodhisattvabhūmi* called *ring du song ba*('i sa) / *dūraṅgamā*(*bhūmi*).

<sup>672</sup> Or: "... and be(come) unwavering".

- 278 May (their) good understanding<sup>673</sup> be very broad because of the [excellent] merit(s) that arose from [(their) various powers],<sup>674</sup> and [the primordial awareness of] the awakened (one) ... [having been gained(?)], [may (they)] stay ...<sup>675</sup> *dhar-mameghabhūmi* [!]
- 282 Similar to how<sup>676</sup> the light of the shining sun in the sky overcomes the darkness of the four [continents], (that is,) [the blemish] of the world systems, the spontaneously-born lotus blossoms freely because of [the light] of the primordial awareness of blissful emptiness; and the lord of all families, Vajradhara, whose body is most beautiful in the painting of splendid colours,<sup>677</sup> is a Jina ...<sup>678</sup> *jinaputras*; due to the merit of having painted him, ...<sup>679</sup> the teaching of the *mahāsiddha* of the beings, the *dharma* king, the Jina, is spread in this vast field of the ten directions.
- 286 Even [if] ...<sup>680</sup> and the ten(?) ... (,) ...<sup>681</sup>, etc., and the phonetic ornaments, etc., (of) the *vaidarbha*- and *gaud(iy)a*-style<sup>682</sup> are

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<sup>673</sup> Alluding to the ninth *bodhisattvabhūmi* called *legs pa'i blo gros (kyi sa) / sādhumatī(bhūmi)*.

<sup>674</sup> For the ten powers of a Bodhisattva, see *Mvy* (Ishihama & Fukuda 1989: 40).

<sup>675</sup> Read: “forever on the”?

<sup>676</sup> The combination of *ji ltar* and *ltar* at the beginning and the end of the verse-line is stylistically somewhat awkward. One would rather expect *pa* instead of *ltar*.

<sup>677</sup> This seems to refer to a painted image of Vajradhara on the front wall of the 'Du khang.

<sup>678</sup> Read: “surrounded by”? The image of Vajradhara mentioned in the previous note is surrounded by paintings of Tilopa, Nāropa, Mi la ras pa and several 'Bri gung bla mas.

<sup>679</sup> Read: “may it come to pass that”?

<sup>680</sup> Read: “(...) and synonym(ic)s”?

<sup>681</sup> Read: “(the distinction between) suggestive (and) explicit (meaning)?”

<sup>682</sup> These two literary styles are discussed extensively in the first chapter of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*, starting from verse 40. For an edition of the Sanskrit and Tibetan text, see Dimitrov 2002: 172–207; for a German translation of the passage, see *ibid.*: 220–228.

- absent, ... [verses] here ... <sup>683</sup> (for) all the people(?)<sup>684</sup> of future times something a little worthy came to be written by one who has not been made tired of the fields of knowledge.
- 294 Though having come to (have) read about/in poetry that pleases scholars – did/does/will the [bee] with its song get(?)<sup>685</sup> that meaning at the vine of the grove of the wish-fulfilling tree?<sup>686</sup>
- 298 That cord of exceedingly soft silk cannot be untied ... <sup>687</sup>; look at how that milk mixed with water is separated (only) by the *haṃsa* maiden!<sup>688</sup>
- 302 <sup>689</sup>Homage! For the head, [protection] like<sup>690</sup> the auspicious umbrella; for the eye(s), the auspicious, precious fish of gold;

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<sup>683</sup> Read: “regarding what has been produced/arranged/composed in(to) verses here:”?

<sup>684</sup> *na ra* appears to have been used for Skt. *nara* here. Cf. Zhang *et al.* 1993: 1495, s.v. “*na ra*”: (*legs*) *mi* / 人.

<sup>685</sup> Or: “give back”, “render”?

<sup>686</sup> The intended meaning of verse-lines 294–297 is somewhat unclear. The author of the inscription may be questioning the quality of his own work. Alternatively – and in combination with the following four verse-lines perhaps somewhat more likely – he may be expressing his doubts as to whether the general reader will be able to understand the meaning of his composition.

<sup>687</sup> Read: “by (one) going in a wrong/reverse direction” or “by a snake”?

<sup>688</sup> Verse-lines 300–301 obviously refer to the well-known topos of the *haṃsa* being able to separate milk from water. This is combined with an allusion to Sarasvatī, goddess of eloquence and learning, whose mount is a *haṃsa* and who is referred to as *haṃsavadhū* / *ngang pa'i bu mo* in the opening verse of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa* (ed. and transl. in Dimitrov 2002: 154f., 215). Thus the stanza seems to state in rather metaphorical terms that the intricacies of poetry (likened to a cord of exceedingly soft silk) cannot be unravelled by all.

<sup>689</sup> For my rendering of verse-lines 302–312, cf. the translation of *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo*'s corresponding passage in Loden Sherap Daggyab Rinpoche 1995: 32, where it is also pointed out that “[i]n the canonical texts, there are some passages in which the body, speech, and mind of the Buddha are compared to the Eight Symbols of Good Fortune.” For a general discussion of the eight auspicious symbols, see, e.g., *ibid.*: 16–38 and Beer 2003: 1–15. The latter source also points out that “[i]n the Buddhist tradition these eight symbols of good fortune represent the offerings presented by the great Vedic gods to Shakyamuni Buddha upon his attainment of enlightenment” (Beer 2003: 1). The text of the inscription and the corresponding passage in *Bkra shis brtsegs*

- [for the speech, the auspicious,] right[-turning] white [conch]; [for the tongue, the auspicious, flourishing lotus leaf]; for the neck, [the auspicious,] precious [round vase]; for the mind, there is the [auspicious, glorious] knot; [for] the body, the auspicious, excellent victory banner that does not go down; for the feet, there is the auspicious wheel of gold – excellent one [with] the sublime accomplishment of the eight things!<sup>691</sup> And [on account of that] auspicious one with the accomplishment of the eight excellent things: May bliss and happiness come here [today]!<sup>692</sup>
- 313 The foremost of the guides in the world, the one of [infinite] life, the glorious one who [entirely] overcomes untimely death, the refuge for those who came to suffer and are without protection, Buddha [Amitāyus] – his [prosperity may come! (?)]
- 317 [The treasury (?)] ... good qualities ... [the wealth] of [(a) wish-fulfilling (?)] jewel(s) ...<sup>693</sup>, may [the descendant(s) benefit from] the fortunate [forefather(s)]!
- 321 After the treasury of the wealth of good qualities (constituting) the source of all virtues has been completely opened

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*pa'i mdo* are ambiguous with regard to these two explanations. In my rather literal translation I have tried to preserve this ambiguity.

<sup>690</sup> *ltar* is a little odd here and might be a corruption of *dkar*; also note that none of the corresponding terms in the following verse-lines are followed by *ltar*. Yet, as in both Loden Sherap Daggyab Rinpoche 1995: 116 and the modern Chengdu edition (fol. 6v4; cf. note 418) the corresponding passage of *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo* reads *gdugs ltar*, it has not been emended here.

<sup>691</sup> One would rather expect *bkra shis rtags brgyad* instead of *bkra shis rdzas brgyad*, because the latter expression usually refers to a different set of objects than the ones mentioned in verse-lines 302–309 (see, e.g., Loden Sherap Daggyab Rinpoche 1995: 40–63 and Beer 2003: 16–26). Again, however, in both Loden Sherap Daggyab Rinpoche 1995: 116 and the modern Chengdu edition (fol. 7r1) the corresponding passage of *Bkra shis brtsegs pa'i mdo* reads *bkra shis rdzas brgyad* and thus it has not been emended here.

<sup>692</sup> For similar supplications in inscriptions, see Tropper 2012 (inscription A: lines 5–7, 13–14, 19; inscription B: lines 3–4; inscription C: lines 4–5; inscription G, line 5).

<sup>693</sup> Read: “satisfying the yearning for words”?

- with(?)<sup>694</sup> the *dharmā* of the three divisions and nine stages,<sup>695</sup> may one practice the *dharmā* of the six *pāramitās* [and understand that] space and awareness are indivisible!
- 325 After the source of all [well-being], ...<sup>696</sup> of the sky, (and) the fortunate shower streams of compassion of the Buddha(s) [that] passed ...<sup>697</sup> have come down, [may the karmic residues] of [delusion] be cleared away [now(?)]!
- 329 Let the blazing splendour of auspiciousness<sup>698</sup> become an ornament of Jambudvīpa!
- [*śubham(?)*]<sup>699</sup>

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<sup>694</sup> Read: “filled with” or “numbered with”? Not emending *kyi* to *kyis*, one could perhaps also take the stanza’s first two verse-lines to mean: “After the treasury of the wealth of good qualities (constituting) the source of all virtues, the three divisions and nine stages, the culminating point of the *dharmā*, has been opened, (...)”. However, when preceding a verbal stem *rab* is more naturally taken in the sense of *rab tu*.

<sup>695</sup> See, e.g., Dung dkar Blo bzang ’phrin las 2002: 1053, s.v. *theg pa rim dgu* under (*gnyis pa*) *gsang sngags rnying ma’i gzhung las gsungs pa’i theg pa rim dgu*, with the following division of the ‘nine successive vehicles’ (*theg pa rim dgu*) into three groups: 1) Śrāvākayāna, 2) Pratyekabuddhayāna, 3) Mahāyāna (three vehicles taught by *nirmāṇakāya* Buddha Śākyamuni); 4) Kriyā, 5) Caryā, 6) Yoga (three vehicles taught by *sambhogakāya* Vajradhara); 7) Mahāyoga, 8) Anuyoga, 9) Atiyoga (three vehicles taught by *dharmakāya* Samantabhadra). For further references, see *ibid.*: 1054.

<sup>696</sup> Read: “the great shower”? It is unclear if *nam mkha’i cha<r>che<n>po* is a (poetic) variant of *nam mkha’i chu chen po* (i.e., ‘the great Ganges’) or if it should be taken in a literal sense.

<sup>697</sup> Read: “(into *nirvāṇa*) earlier in the Fortunate Aeon”? If the conjecture *bskal bzang snga* is correct, the verse-line refers to Krakucchanda (’Khor ba ’jig), Kanakamuni (Gser thub) and Kāśyapa (’Od srung), that is, the Buddhas mentioned as predecessors of Śākyamuni in the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* (D: 96v1, Q: 105v4; cf. also *The Fortunate Aeon* 1986, vol. 2: 488f.).

<sup>698</sup> Or: “Let the splendour and riches of auspiciousness (...)”? Moreover, both *bkra shis dpal ’bar* and *bkra shis dpal ’byor* can be read as personal names – perhaps the name of the author and/or scribe of the inscription, who wanted to immortalize himself by adding a final verse-line with a double entendre.

<sup>699</sup> I.e., “[Good fortune!(?)]”.



## 5. ABBREVIATIONS AND REFERENCES

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## IRREGULAR SPELLINGS<sup>1</sup>

- bka' s<d>u* : *bka' bsdu* 34  
*bka' srungs* : *bka' srung* 24  
*bkong* : *skong* 7  
*bklog* : *klog*, *bklag* or *bklags* (*da lta ba*, *ma 'ongs pa* or *'das pa of klog*) 295  
*ga<d>gyangs* : *gad rgyangs* 17  
*gyangs*: see s.v. *ga<d>gyangs*  
*grub tha* : *grub mtha'* 93  
*gros*: see s.v. *ma gros mtsho*  
*dgegs* : *'gegs* 23  
*dgos* : *bgos* (*'das pa of bgo*) 264  
*mgu ya sgang pa* : *ghu ya sgang pa* 117  
*'gyogs* : *mgyogs* 257  
*'gren* : *'dren* 57, 313 (see also s.v. *log 'gren*)  
*rgyud*: see s.v. *sgrub rgyud*  
*sgral* : *bsgral* (*'das pa of sgral*) 54  
*sgrub rgyud* : *sgrub brgyud* 39, 60  
*sgron*: see s.v. *chos kyi sgron ma*  
*bsgom*: see s.v. *bzod bsgom*  
*bsgrub rgyud* : *sgrub brgyud* 64  
*<ngur> mig* : *ngur smig* 254  
*mnga'*: see s.v. *s<pya>n\_mnga'*  
*mngos* : *dngos* 272  
*gcod <pa>n* : *cod pan* 46  
*bcwo lnga('i)* : *bco lnga('i)* 22  
*lcibs* : *bcibs* (*'das pa of 'chib*) 274  
*chos kyi sgron ma* : *chos kyi sgral ma* 24  
*mchod gzhi* : *mchod gzhis* 171  
*'cho brang* : *cho 'brang* 207  
*'jam*: see s.v. *rab 'jam*  
*'jed* : *'byed* 301 (see also s.v. *mi 'jed*)  
*'jom* : *'joms* 282  
*nyi mo(r)* : *nyin mo(r)* 44  
*snyengs*: see s.v. *dbu snyengs*  
*snyen bkur* : *bsnyen bkur* 43, 57  
*te lo* : *ti lo* (pa) 38  
*sti se* : *ti se* 106, 117, 162, 175, 177  
*stengs* : *steng* 201  
*stod* : *bstod* (*'das pa of bstod*) 47  
*bstod*: see s.v. *srol bstod*  
*tha*: see s.v. *grub tha*  
*thar byed* : *mtar byed* 23  
*tho* : *mtso* 228  
*thor* : *mtso* 75  
*'dam 'dzab* : *'dam rdzab* 275  
*'dud pa* : *mdud pa* 240, 298  
*'dog* : *mdog* 51  
*s<d>u*: see s.v. *bka' s<d>u*  
*sdod nas* : *gdod nas* 70  
*spangs*: see s.v. *dbu\_spangs*  
*spus rgyal* : *spu(r) rgyal* or *pur rgyal* 180  
*s<pya>n\_mnga'* : *spyan snga* 129  
*spyi(r)*: see s.v. *a spyi(r)*  
*spyod pan* : *cod pan* 90, 132  
*bro sh<o>d* : *gro shod* 212  
*blo bzang rab bstan* : *blo bzang rab brtan* 164  
*dbu snyengs* : *dbu brnyes* 41  
*dbu\_spangs* : *dbu dpangs* or *dbu 'phang* 47  
*'bum* : *bum* 148  
*'bres pa* : *'dres pa* or *'brel ba* 300

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<sup>1</sup> I.e., spellings not to be found in Das 1985 [1902], Jäschke 1992 [1881], or Zhang 1993 [1985]; not included are irregular “sandhi”-forms like “*ri po* : *ri bo*”. The numbers refer to verse-lines.

- ma gros mtsho* : *ma dros mtsho* 125  
*mi 'jed* : *mi mjed* 25  
*mig*: see s.v. <*ngur*> *mig*  
*rtsug* : *gtsug* 8  
*bstsol* : *stsol* (*skul tshig* of *stsol*)  
 20, 24  
*mtshon* : *tshon* 284  
*'tshang* : *tshang* 228  
*'tshams* : *mtshams* 226, 276  
*'tsho*: see s.v. *lang 'tsho ma*  
*'dzab*: see s.v. *'dam 'dzab*  
*rdzangs* : *brdzangs* 163  
*zhig so(s)* : *zhig gso(s)* 151  
*gzhad* : *bzhad* 64, 283  
*gzhengs* : *bzhengs* 214, 230, 242  
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*gzhed don* : *bzhed don* 96  
*bzangs* : *bzang* 132 (see also 235,  
 270)  
*bzod bsgom* : *bzod sgom* 266  
*rab 'jam* : *rab 'byams* 285  
*ram 'da'* : *ra mda'* 53  
*lang 'tsho ma* : *lang tsho ma* 22  
*log 'gren* : *log 'dren* 18  
*so(s)*: see s.v. *zhig sos*  
*srungs*: see s.v. *bka' srungs*  
*sregs* : *bsregs* ('*das pa* of *sreg*) 272  
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This study provides the edition and annotated translation of a historical inscription in the assembly hall of Dgung 'phur Monastery in Spu rang (Mnga' ris, Western Tibet). The inscription deals with religious and political events in the history of Western Tibet up to the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The introductory part of the study includes a description of the inscription's general characteristics, a summary of its contents, an enquiry into its date and a discussion of the magistrate Mgon po skyabs, whom the inscription identifies as the "founder" of Dgung 'phur.

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