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Proceedings of the First International Conference on Spiti, Wolfson
College, Oxford, 6th-7th May 2016

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Introduction

Yannick Laurent and David Pritzker

The First International Conference on Spiti was held in Oxford under the auspices of the Tibetan and Himalayan Studies Cluster at Wolfson College on the 6th and 7th of May, 2016. Dedicated entirely to the Indo-Tibetan border valley of Spiti, the conference, entitled *Recovering the Past and Exploring the Present*, welcomed scholars and researchers from the fields of archaeology, history, linguistics, architecture, art conservation, anthropology, and art history (fig.1). At the end of two intensive and rewarding days, it was decided to produce a volume of the conference proceedings that would best illustrate Spiti's past and present cultural heritage. In the following, a selection of fifteen papers introduces the latest research findings presented during the conference.



Fig. 1 — Delegates of the First International Conference on Spiti, Wolfson College, Oxford, 7th May, 2016. Photo: Louise Gordon, 2016.

The sometimes raw or limited data discussed in this volume reflect local trends and experience. The new data sets address various topical subdivisions and chronological boundaries, allowing authors to interpret them vis-à-vis the formation and decline of regional powers, social structures, and artistic trends, as well as patterns of mobility, including long-distance trade and pilgrimage. While no general overview can be offered at this stage, this represents an opportunity for future scholarship. More research is needed in order to better define cultural and political patterns of continuity and change, thereby avoiding excessive generalisation.

Several reasons may be offered to explain the current state of the art and the difficulties entailed in making sense of the Spitian past as a whole. The first teams of researchers and academics arrived in Spiti in the late 80s and early 90s, with the official opening of the district to tourism in 1992. From the start, research focused on the site of Tabo. Established in 996, the monastic complex and translation centre at Tabo has come to represent a paragon of early Buddhist art and architecture as well as a repository for some of the earliest canonical literature preserved in the Tibetan world. During the following decade, fieldwork conducted in Spiti concentrated almost exclusively on the art of the later spread of Buddhism (*bstan pa phyi dar*) and on the philological and epigraphic analyses of manuscripts and inscriptions found at Tabo. The arrival of the first anthropologists and linguists eventually made it possible to enhance our understanding of the socio-economic conditions and dialects of the valley. Yet again, Tabo was selected as a reference point from which data were collected and conclusions drawn. Recalling her earlier observations, linguist Veronika Hein underlines in the present volume that the 'Tabo Tibetan', a term coined by her a decade ago, is in effect not different from the Tibetic language spoken throughout the valley. If there is no question that Tabo assumed a preeminent position within the cultural and religious history of the Indo-Tibetan border regions up until the seventeenth century, it is also certain that the lay and monastic community of Tabo dwindled to near non-existence in later times. In fact, the village of Tabo was composed of only four households and a handful of monks by the turn of the eighteenth century. By contrast, the former capital of Spiti, Dangkhar, comprised seventeen households between 1790 and 1850, while the large village of Kyibar at the foot of the Parang Pass had twenty (Schuh 2016).

Early research on the history of Spiti necessarily reflected the position of the border valley within the Indian subcontinent (fig.2).

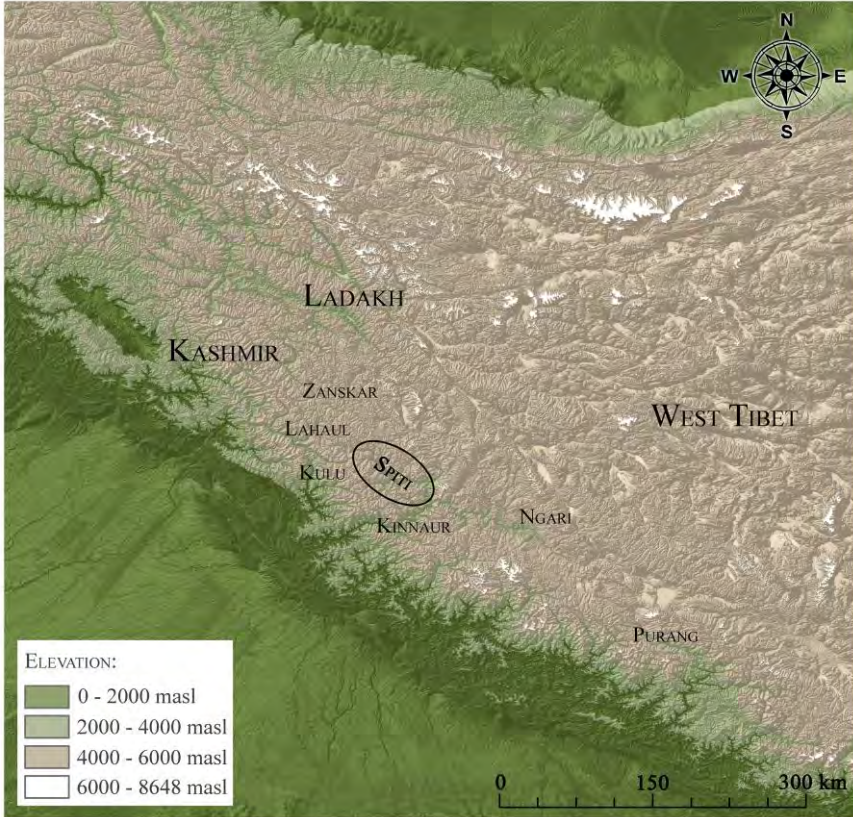


Fig. 2 — Map of North-Western India and location of Spiti within the Western Himalayan region. Map: Yannick Laurent, 2017.

Located in the western margins of the Tibetan plateau, Spiti assumed marginal status relative to its most powerful and ambitious neighbours such as Ladakh, Bashahr-Kinnaur, Kashmir, and British India. As such, historical sources until recently have rarely focused on Spiti *per se*. When primary sources written in Tibetan are examined, the view they offer is often from the periphery. In this regard, Luciano Petech's contribution to the study of the Western Himalayas provided a broad historical outline of region. In his monumental monograph – now in need of revision – on *The Kingdom of Ladakh* (1977), *Ya -Ts'e, Gu-ge, Pu-rañ: A New Study*

(1980), and *Western Tibet: Historical Introduction* (1997), Spiti was relegated to a district of lesser importance the control of which was an object of dispute within a larger geopolitical context. New historical documents and epigraphic evidence retrieved from Spiti now make it possible to fill in some of the blanks left by globalizing historical narratives. Our knowledge of the history of Spiti, however, remains incomplete, with whole periods glossed over or simply unreported upon in extant historical sources.

No discipline is an island entire to itself. In this respect, Tibetan and Himalayan studies ought to be at the forefront of cross-cultural and interdisciplinary undertakings. The contributions presented in this volume give an exciting overview of the rich historical, material, and visual cultures of Spiti. Beyond providing us with new ways to think about Spiti, the perspectives offered should be of interest to all students and scholars from the sub-disciplines involved within the field of Tibetology. For the sake of clarity, the fifteen papers of these proceedings have been arranged chronologically and thematically insofar as possible.

The earliest documentation of the region in the west went hand in hand with the activities of the East India Company and the annexation of Spiti by British India in 1846. Early travellers, British officials, natural scientists, and Christian missionaries started to put down in writing their observations about the valley and its inhabitants. An impressive body of accounts and reports eventually paved the way for the pioneering works of A.H. Francke (1914), H.L. Shuttleworth, and G. Tucci (1935). Of these three, Shuttleworth's research received the least attention, and with good reason, as most of his unpublished papers have been confined in the India Office Records and Private Papers kept at the British Library in London. After a close examination of Shuttleworth's archives, Yannick Laurent (pp. 1-55) returns to the life and work of the Indian Civil Servant who in the mid-1930s was working on writing the first ever *History of Spiti*.

In the absence of archaeological investigations, the history of Spiti prior to its Buddhist inception is largely unknown. The study of rock art in the form of petroglyphs and pictographs has helped to define the contours of an early cultural history of the region, bridging both pre-Buddhist and Buddhist eras. Towards this end, John Bellezza and his team (pp. 56-85) documented a large number of sites throughout the valley; as a result, they are able to offer introductory remarks on

the visual and symbolic aspects of early rock art. Their analysis is complemented by field research conducted by a team of social anthropologists and archaeologists from India. In light of the recent improvement of infrastructure and ongoing civil works in the region, Ekta Singh and her colleagues (pp. 86-102) raise concerns about the preservation of rock art sites, several of which are currently under threat due to hydroelectric development projects.

It may be useful to recall that the border valley known today as Spiti is in fact pronounced by its inhabitants as Piti. Different Tibetan spellings and Tibetic languages spoken in the Western Himalayas help to explain this trend. A decade after Lobsang Shastri's review of this term (2007), Nyenthar's paper in this volume (pp. 103-110) returns to the different spellings and compounds adopted in literary sources and epigraphic material throughout the centuries. The language spoken in Spiti is further discussed by Veronika Hein (pp. 111-127) whose linguistic research on phonology and morphology is complemented by a study of the oral tradition.

After several years spent studying the socio-economic conditions and taxation system of Spiti, social anthropologist Christian Jahoda (pp. 128-159) now tackles the important issue of clans and social stratification based on Francke and Gergan's earlier observations. Kinship groups and patrilineal lineages, while traceable to the late tenth and eleventh centuries, prove more difficult to identify in later periods. The reasons as to why clans lost their relevance over time remain conjectural at this stage; they might be explained with reference to the evolution of a territorial organisation and taxation system more tightly centred on the household allotment. In this volume, Dorje Rinchen reviews the traditional landholding system of Spiti (pp. 160-180). The social-economic distinction between large households (*khang chen*) and small households (*khang chung*) is further discussed in light of the political control exerted by the Kingdom of Ladakh after the mid-seventeenth century.

Research projects on Buddhist architecture in the Western Himalayas have been carried out with a deft hand by the Graz University of Technology over the last fifteen years. Herein, Carmen Auer's paper (pp. 181-201) in this collection discusses the monastic centres and temples at Tabo, Dangkhari, and Lhalung. According to the international Venice Charter of 1964, a comprehensive architectural documentation constitutes a mandatory step towards the conservation and restoration of historic buildings. Moreover, it is

an indispensable prerequisite for the art historical and religious historical analysis of Buddhist edifices. The benefits of attending to this necessity are amply apparent in the three following papers, in which architectural documentation, conservation work, and art historical analysis converge, offering a more detailed representation of the monuments in specific cultural and historical contexts.

In an effort to help document the present state of the mural paintings and statues of the entire Tabo monastic complex, Amy Heller (pp. 202-225) draws specific attention to the 'Maṇḍala Temple' -- one of the most enigmatic edifices within the monastic complex. With a fresh eye towards understanding its history and successive iconographic programs, Heller presents new findings spurred by the use of infrared photography. Her project presents evidence for the mid-eleventh century dating of the structure, while also explaining successive phases of embellishment during the Gelugpa revival in the mid-fifteenth century.

Trekking high above the upper Spiti Valley to the hamlet of Tashigang, Gerald Kozicz (pp. 226-248) delves into a visual reconstruction of a large fifteenth century 'gateway' *stūpa* and chapel, providing a possible explanation for the spatial interaction between the structure's iconographic program and the sacred geography of its landscape.

Mélodie Bonnat (pp. 249-270) brings to the fore issues of conservation and restoration as experienced in her work on a set of seventeenth-century murals found at Kungri village in the Pin Valley. In concert with Namgyal Henry's own religious history of the site, Bonnat's paper offers a detailed report of the site's present condition. It provides as well a discussion of the methods and successes made in revealing paintings that had been covered by soot in the wake of a fire that occurred more than a century and half ago. Following on the conservation report, Namgyal Henry's paper (pp. 271-290) investigates a highly unusual yet historically critical transmission of Pema Lingpa's (*padma gling pa*) tradition in the far Western Himalayan region. As this treasure tradition is typically found in Bhutan and Southern Tibet, the discovery of it in Western Tibet raises many questions as to its particular history, which is so far removed from more common sites and sources. Henry's investigation follows both textual as well as oral histories found in Kungri to help explain how such a tradition arose so far away from its point of origin.

Shifting gears slightly, we encounter in papers by Patrick

Sutherland and Pascale Dollfus the tradition of itinerant Buchen performers well known by locals and tourist alike. The Buchen are ritual and religious practitioners, actors and storytellers from the Pin Valley. Widely known for performing the Ceremony of the Breaking of the Stone the itinerant performers work as ritualist, exorcists, and healers who travel the villages of Spiti, Upper Kinnaur, and parts of Ladakh to spread the message and teachings of the Buddha through the medium of entertainment. As a reportage photographer, Patrick Sutherland (pp. 291-322) documents the material culture of the Buchen performers, with special attention to their narrative and ritual texts, painted thangkhas, musical instruments, statues, costumes, masks, and ritual objects that Buchen utilise. Beyond this archival work, Sutherland records his conversations pertaining to the history and ownership of these objects, relating family memories which give further insight into the social history of both the objects and their connections to the Buchen themselves.

Among their many performative religious trades, the Buchen are professional storytellers whose repertoire not only contains the famous mantra of Avalokiteśvara (*Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*), but also dozens of biographies that belong to the Tibetan Buddhist repertoire. Following Sutherland's work, Pascale Dollfus (pp. 323-348) contextualizes the Buchen in greater detail and looks specifically at their narratives in the context of a shifting social landscape brought on by modern realities where entertainment is more readily valued over religious efficacy.

Finally, returning to a larger perspective of the region, the paper by Diana Lange (349-371) examines part of a set of mid-nineteenth century maps commissioned by the British official William Edmund Hay. The maps show various routes into the Spiti Valley from Western Tibet. Only part of a larger whole, the maps are filled with notations and imagery which are not always discernible. Lange suggests how we might "decode" and better "read" these documents in the context of the larger set from which they come, drawing upon the perceptions and representations put forth by the original monastic map maker who travelled across the Tibetan plateau.

In closing, it is with great pleasure that we make available this volume of proceedings as free PDF downloads thanks to the generous and leading *Revue d'Études Tibétaines*. We very much look forward to the research on Spiti that will likely be sparked through this online publication. In the meantime, we would like to thank

Ulrike Roesler and Tashi Tsering for their invaluable assistance in organising the First International Conference on Spiti. Likewise, we would like to express our gratitude to the Tibetan and Himalayan Studies Cluster at Wolfson College, the Save Dangkhar Initiative, The Tibet Foundation UK, and the Ti se Foundation for their institutional help and financial support. Furthermore, it is our great pleasure to acknowledge the colleagues without whom neither the conference nor the proceedings would have been realised:

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Last but in no way least, we would like to thank Lucia Galli for her unflinching help during and after the conference. Her meticulous assistance in the editing process has not only been essential but immensely appreciated.

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Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) and the History of Spiti

Yannick Laurent
(Wolfson College, Oxford)

To Anna Shuttleworth-Sellen

“The humblest of men, he did what he did because he believed it to be right, and not in order to be seen and applauded of men”¹

Lining up against a drystone wall, ten Buddhist monks look intensely – perhaps even worryingly – into the lens of the camera (fig.1). Behind them, the towering walls of Tengyu Monastery (*steng rgyud*) stand out from the barren landscape and snow-capped mountains. Taken in 1917/8, this iconic image is a testimony to the local heritage and regional history of Spiti. About half a century later, the impressive Sakya monastery was reduced to rubble by a terrible earthquake that hit the region in 1975. The site was soon abandoned and the monastery was rebuilt further up in the hinterland. Very little remains now of the imposing Sakya stronghold with its propitiatory tricolour walls.

The black and white print (below) was first published in India in 1920. Although uncredited, the photographer responsible for this image was Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960).² Between 1917 and

¹ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 4).

² *The Times of India Illustrated Weekly*, April 14, 1920, p.19. The black and white photograph was accompanied by the following caption: “A group of Sakya lamas before their isolated monastery at Tanggyud in Spiti. The present monastery was founded in its almost inaccessible position some two centuries ago after the more exposed older building had been burnt down by the Tso-po, the Mongol followers of King Galdan Tsiang, who was dreaded for his bravery and cruelty throughout Tibet, and the sight of whose body is even now considered to inspire the beholder with some of his valour. The name of the builder of the present foundation is recorded as Lobsan Chekep of Gongmig village in an old Tibetan book kept by the Head of the Establishment and shown to few outsiders. To the west the monastery looks down on the Spiti valley. To the north-east it faces the

1925, the British officer and orientalist spent most of his time documenting the Western Himalayas on behalf of the Indian Civil Service (ICS). Little is known, however, about Shuttleworth's scholarly contribution to the history of Spiti. In fact, modern scholarship has often overlooked the long and meandering history of this remote Buddhist valley, taking very little notice of Shuttleworth's legacy.



*Fig. 1 — Sakyapa monks in front of Tengyu Monastery, Spiti.
Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0006 © British Library Board.*

This article thus attempts to present some of the most important discoveries made by the British polymath during his tenure as Assistant Commissioner of Kulu. It draws from a variety of sources, including the autobiography of his daughter Anna Shuttleworth, private correspondence, old book reviews and articles. Most importantly, I shall reproduce for the first time unpublished

sacred snowclad twin peaked mountain of Cho Cho Gang Milta, over 23,000 feet high".

documents written by or sent to Shuttleworth during his career or after his retirement from the ICS. Last but not least, the present study attempts to do justice to the great man's many accomplishments by offering an overview of Shuttleworth's life and ultimate journey to the East.

Henry Lee Shuttleworth's Life and Account

Setting the Scene

The Spiti Valley is a high mountain desert located in the Indian Himalayas. It lies in the north-eastern part of the State of Himachal Pradesh. The valley is flanked by the districts of Kinnaur in the south, Kulu in the west, and Ladakh in the north. In the east, Spiti shares a sensitive geo-political border with the Ngari Prefecture of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in the People's Republic of China.

The Spiti Valley has a long and sparsely documented history. There is evidence that the region was incorporated into the expanding Tibetan Empire in the seventh and eighth century, leading to a gradual Tibetanization of its native inhabitants. Today, the people of Spiti speak a tonal Tibetan dialect related to the Western Tibetan group (i.e. Western Innovative Tibetan).³ It has yet preserved a few lexemes indicating that the Spiti Valley had once been within the influence of Shangshung (*zhang zhung*) culture. From the first millennium onwards, Spiti belonged to larger political entities and its socio-political and religious conditions have often been conflated with those of powerful states exerting control over the region (e.g. the kingdoms of Guge and Ladakh).

In his introduction to the history of Western Tibet, historian Luciano Petech expressed reservations about the historical analysis of border Himalayan polities recalling that "the smaller the unit, the less known is its history".⁴ Nowhere is that more evident than in Spiti, where a dearth of textual information and local evidence often militate against the identification of coherent periodic divisions; a difficulty already experienced by Shuttleworth in his endeavour to make sense of the Spitian past.

³ See Hein 2017 in the present volume.

⁴ Petech (1997: 229).

Following the annexation of Spiti and Lahul by British India in 1846, the ICS began to appoint officials to exercise control over their new Western Himalayan districts. In the settlement literature produced between 1840s and 1920s, Assistant Commissioners stationed in the valley of Kulu, in today's Himachal Pradesh, dutifully recorded every possible aspects of Spitian society during an annual visit to the remote Buddhist enclave. Their reports included a geographical description of the valley with general information about the local flora and fauna. They were often complemented by accounts written by other British officers, travellers, and natural scientists. Likewise, they detailed the social and religious lives of the people and their livelihood in the best manner possible. But most importantly, an increased knowledge of the traditional land tenure system facilitated the exploitation of local resources and the levying of taxes.

Members of the Indian Civil Service belonged to an intellectual elite, a ruling class produced by a conservative and often proselytistic Victorian society. They tended to embody conflicting ideologies; the civilizing imperialist on the one hand and the orientalist humanist on the other.⁵ Shuttleworth was certainly of the latter kind and his appointment as Assistant Commissioner in 1917 represents a turning point in the documentation of the Spiti Valley.



*Fig. 2 — Shuttleworth's party on the Kunzom Pass between Lahul and Spiti.
Photo: MssEur D722/30 photo 1119/5 0012 © British Library Board.*

Early Life and Career

Henry Lee Shuttleworth was born in Scotforth, Lancashire, City of Lancaster, England, on 14th May, 1882.⁶ He was the only son of

⁵ Dewey (1993).

⁶ For the main events and timeline of Shuttleworth's life; see Appendix 1.

George Edward Shuttleworth (1842–1928) and Edith Mary Hadwen (1857–1947). His father was a Fellow of King’s College London, a physician, and a pioneering child psychiatrist at the Royal Albert Asylum in Lancaster. His mother reputedly was a strong and independent woman whose eccentric character and leaning for billiard games were reportedly described in the local press.⁷

In the summer of 1896, the young Shuttleworth entered Shrewsbury School, a private and prestigious institution founded under King Edward VI in 1552. There, he received a formal and rigorous education in classics; rowed in the school 1st VIII crew; and acted as a House Scholar and a Praepostor. In his last year at Shrewsbury Shuttleworth already belonged to a young intellectual elite, reading in Classics Upper 6th under the headmaster and English scholar Henry Whitehead Moss (1841–1917).⁸

In 1901, Shuttleworth was accepted to the University of Oxford on an open exhibition, a scholarship awarded to the best and the brightest applicants. The matriculation photograph taken at Pembroke College in the Michaelmas Term of that year shows a calm, confident, and serious young man wearing rimless glasses (fig.3). He initially occupied a ground floor room in the Old Quad of Pembroke at a termly rent of £5.5s and, for his second and third years, a third floor room in Chapel Quad at a rent of £4.18s. During his time at Oxford, Shuttleworth deepened his knowledge of Greek and Latin literature, history and philosophy, and eventually obtained a second class degree in *Litterae Humaniores* on 21st October, 1905.⁹

While his future career at the ICS would lead him to the discovery of new cultural horizons, his fondness for the Ancient World accompanied him throughout his life, in particular his fascination with Alexander the Great. In the summer of 1958 Shuttleworth was still walking on the footsteps of the Macedonian prince. At the age of seventy-six the relentless classicist addressed the following lines to his wife from the Museum Library of Lahore:¹⁰

⁷ <http://www.thekingscandlesticks.com/webs/pedigrees/2401.html>. The author of this blog is a distant relative of the Shuttleworth family. He describes Edith as “an extroverted woman who was not happy in her marriage”.

⁸ I would like to express my gratitude to Robin Brooks-Smith, Taylor Librarian and Archivist at Shrewsbury School, for the above pieces of information.

⁹ I wish to thank Amanda Ingram, archivist at Pembroke College, for sharing this information along with the 1901 fresher’s photograph.

¹⁰ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009:142-144).

“My researches of Alexander the Great are going well ahead. [...] I am finding Tarn’s book on Alexandre’s travel full of minor mistakes [...] I can’t conceive how a Graeco-Macedonian army of some 35-40,000 men, mostly heavily armed infantry and only 500 cavalry marched from Taxila to the Beas in late May over rising rivers. [...] I think I’ve cleared up all the problems of the march which bothered Vincent Smith, Aurel Stein and many others. [...] I have, since I came here, been reliving those times of the Baktro-Greek Kingdoms.”



Fig. 3 — Shuttleworth’s Pembroke College fresher’s photograph, 1901 (2nd row, 2nd from right). Photo © by kind permission of the Master, Fellows and Scholars of Pembroke College, Oxford.

In 1905, however, and after several years of classical studies at Shrewsbury School and Pembroke College, the Oxonian eventually decided to join the ranks of the ‘Civilians’.

Upon his graduation Shuttleworth immediately entered the Indian

Civil Service at the London School of Oriental Studies.¹¹ For the following five years he studied the law, institutions, and revenue system of India. He read Indian history and learned the languages of the regions where he was to be assigned. As a result he rapidly became conversant in many languages and over his career come to know Modern Greek, Arabic, Urdu, Hindavi, as well as several Tibetan and Himalayan dialects. On 16th June, 1910, the freshly graduated Civilian was ready to go into the field. The new member of the ICS, however, wanted to become an archaeologist. With this intention in mind Shuttleworth asked to be transferred to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), a request that was denied.¹² Instead, Shuttleworth was appointed Settlement Officer in Lower Kangra and set off for India in 1911.¹³ Unfortunately, information about his first encounter with the people of the Himalayan piedmont is hard to come by.

On leave Shuttleworth sailed back to England in 1915. On 14th April he attended his sister's wedding at St Peter Belize Park in London where he met Inez Esther Dorothea MacGillycuddy (1890–1977). The couple married shortly after, in August of the same year, and Mrs Shuttleworth accompanied her husband back to India (fig.4). It appears that Shuttleworth's wife quickly made a name for herself, both locally and back at home.

In 1917, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer (1864–1940), the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, appointed Shuttleworth Assistant Commissioner of Kulu, the gateway to Spiti. An anecdote recounts that one of the reasons for his appointment was the fact that the maiden name of Mrs Shuttleworth was MacGillycuddy. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab reportedly declared, "I thought a young lady who at home was in the habit of running up MacGillycuddy's Reeks would equally be at home at 18,000 feet in

¹¹ In 1905 the study of Oriental languages and culture was split between University College London (UCL) and King's College London. The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) was established in 1916, receiving an annual grant of £1,250 from the Government of India in recognition of the School's work training Indian Civil Service Probationers. My thanks are due to David Ogden, Corporate Records Manager and Archivist at SOAS, for the above information.

¹² Chetwode (1970: 123).

¹³ Shuttleworth first held the position of Assistant Settlement Officer in the city of Hoshiarpur in Punjab before being appointed Settlement Officer in Lower Kangra in 1912; see Dewey (1987: 102).

the Himalayas".¹⁴ Be it as it may, O'Dwyer was not proven wrong. From that time onwards Mrs Shuttleworth was to accompany her husband everywhere.



Fig. 4 — Shuttleworth's wedding photograph, St. Swithun's Church, Bournemouth, England, 1915. Photo: Edward Liveing Fenn © The King's Candlestick Family Tree.

A series of photographs indeed show Mrs Shuttleworth taking on the Himalayan range; riding her 'Terrifying' Tibetan horse named Jigjay (*jigs byed*); crossing glaciers on foot; or posing in front of a high altitude camp with porters and servants (fig.5-6). In 1922 *The Sunday Post* published an exclusive interview of her 'Adventures on the Roof of the World'.¹⁵ In it, Mrs Shuttleworth recalled their Biblical ascension across the mountains from the paradisiacal valley of Kulu to the forsaken land of Spiti:

"I sailed with my husband for India, where he held the position of District Officer in Kulu, one of the most beautiful provinces of British India. In Kulu you can grow any fruit you choose and every flower, and it seems to be a natural paradise. But my husband's duty took him to

¹⁴ Chetwode (1970: 2).

¹⁵ *The Sunday Post*, July 9, 1922, p.6.

the country across the mountains, where famine had caused an enormous amount of suffering and distress, and naturally I was anxious to accompany him. Quite apart from my desire to help in the work of relief, I was keen to go to Tibet the secret country so few white people have visited. [...] I felt just like someone out of the Bible", laughed Mrs Shuttleworth," for there we were, marching along with our sheep and goats, and horses, our servants, and baggage. [...] "Then we had a perfectly horrible time," said Mrs Shuttleworth. "We were overtaken by a terrible snowstorm, which almost blinded us. We fought on as long as we could, but at last were reduced to exhaustion, and had to call a halt. Here we waited till the storm ceased [...] at last we came to the real pass, the Pinla. This is 17,500 feet high. At this height the great Himalayas looked like little hills peeping out of the snow [...] we came to Muth, our first village in Tibet [...] I found that I was the first white woman that the villagers had seen". The travellers, however, could not linger in Muth, and three days further marching brought them to Dankbar, which is the capital of Spiti. Here they lived in a house for the first time since they left Kulu. It was a disused room in the old fort of Spiti, and it was on the roof of this fort that Mr Shuttleworth held his court, and distributed the fund allocated by the British Government for the alleviation of the distress caused by famine. Their journeyings were not at an end, however. Leaving Dankbar, they went to Rupshu, by way of the redoubtable Prang-la, 18,000 feet high, a pass never before traversed by a white woman, and by few white men [...]"



*Fig. 5 — Inez Esther Dorothea Shuttleworth crossing a glacier between Kulu and Spiti.
Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0044 © British Library Board*



*Fig. 6 — Mrs Shuttleworth in front of her tent with porters and attendants, Western Himalayas.
Photo: MssEur D799/29 photo 1119/4 0016 © British Library Board.*

Exploration of the Western Himalayas (1917–1924)

Shuttleworth's first tenure as Assistant Commissioner lasted three years. He was then appointed again and resumed his functions at

Nagar in Kulu from 1923 to 1924. During these periods the classicist turned full orientalist developing a life-long passion for the local architecture of wood temples, various Himalayan dialects, and the *nāga* cult of Kulu. In a letter sent to his daughter Anna of 30th April, 1959, Shuttleworth aged seventy-six explained:¹⁶

“Perhaps you don’t know what I’m working on so here goes. All started long ago: Twenty-nine villages north of Sutlej River and south of Kashmir where there were Serpent Deities Naga – Devatas. Only four to five were known before I found them and the stories about one family of Nagas in north Kulu, the children of a Naga Raja and a Kulu girl; So far, in Kulu, the seven wood temples. I discovered three of the oldest form. I hope to do a monograph on these [...]; Three hill languages one not done in Linguistic survey of India. Two other languages had been wrongly placed.”



*Fig. 7 — Village of Kyibar and Shuttleworth’s camp pitched in the fields below, Spiti.
Photo: MssEur D722/30 photo 1119/5 0006 © British Library Board.*

Shuttleworth’s exploration of the Western Himalayas was further complemented by an intensive photographic documentation of the regions he visited. The travel writer Penelope Chetwode (1910–1986) recalled that, “Mr. Lee Shuttleworth always toured with his camera [...] at a time when the sketching phase was nearing its end and was being replaced by photography with those enormous plate cameras, each of which needed two porters”.¹⁷ Shuttleworth’s photographic work constitutes today one of the most important collections of images for the study of Ladakh, Zaskar, Lahaul, Kulu, and Spiti. These invaluable visual archives are nowadays divided between the British

¹⁶ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 155-156).

¹⁷ Chetwode (1970: 2).

Library and the Royal Geographical Society in London, the National Media Museum in Bradford, and other European institutions.¹⁸ They include stunning panoramic views of these regions (fig.2, 7, 8, 12, 13), photographs of Buddhist monuments and works of art (fig.9), images of local architecture and stone carvings, as well as many portraits of villagers, nomads, aristocrats, and religious figures (fig.10).



*Fig. 8 — Gelugpa monks and villagers assembled in front of Tabo Monastery, Spiti.
Photo: MssEur D722/30 photo 1119/5 0007 © British Library Board.*

It is also during those years that the Assistant Commissioner of Kulu undertook three different trips to Spiti in the summers of 1917, 1918, and 1924. His exploration of the border region followed up on a four-month archaeological survey conducted by August Hermann Francke (1870–1930) on behalf of the ASI in 1909. During his visits, Shuttleworth meticulously sorted out the masses of information recorded en route, or found in official reports and literature available at the time, often complementing Francke's contribution on the subject.¹⁹ Unlike the German missionary who mainly focused on

¹⁸ Dollfus (1999: 103-106). Some of his prints can also be found amongst the collections of The Ancient India and Iran Trust in Cambridge; see Salisbury (2004: 8); and at the Kern Institute in Leiden.

¹⁹ Shuttleworth noted how "Francke's archaeological and epigraphical finds were amazingly rich, especially at and near Tabo, but they were not extensive owing to his limited time, and ill health". In fact, the German scholar did not spend more than a fortnight in the Spiti Valley, from 25th July till 7th August; see Francke (1914: vi). Shuttleworth thus explained that he "made further archaeological or literary finds in this area at Lha-luñ, Drangkhar, Tabo, Mā-ñi etc., as well as in the other areas not visited by Francke, i.e. north-west of Khyibar and in Pin", specifying that "This was during the course of official tours between 1917-24, while leisure was limited, but when an endeavour was made to examine all temples or monuments, which might prove to be of archaeological interest. The results have been included in the Spiti village archaeological historical list together with previous material amounting to perhaps a quarter of the whole.

Ladakh, the British officer was determined to write a historical account of the Spiti Valley. His ambitious work was never completed and Shuttleworth's unfinished manuscript is currently in the national library of the United Kingdom.

Today, the British Library houses approximately thirty sets of documents relating to Shuttleworth's scholarly activities in the Western Himalayas. Their collection comprises of unpublished manuscripts and miscellaneous notes, original and translation of Tibetan inscriptions, private correspondence, reprints and proofs of reviews, as well as hundreds of black and white prints. Amongst these documents Shuttleworth's handwritten notes on the history of Spiti (MssEur722/25) have received scant attention. Christian Jahoda, however, has taken a pioneering interest in these notes. More specifically, the social anthropologist investigated the collaborative enterprise between Shuttleworth and Francke concerning volume four of *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*.²⁰ An exchange of correspondence between Shuttleworth and Harold Hargreaves (b. 1876), the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, is particularly informative in this regard (see Appendix 3).²¹ In a letter dated 23rd July, 1930, Hargreaves gave a progress report on the state of publication:

“Touching the printing of the Part IV of the *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* I note that you have completed your sections dealing with (1) Purig, (2) Zangs-kar, (3) Lahul, (4) Spiti, (5) Central Ladakh and that you have received the late Dr. Francke's material dealing with Nubra, Baltistan, Lower Ladakh, Kunawar and Guge but that Dr. Francke's material is scanty and will have to be worked up. [...] This will not be Part III of the *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* but Part IV, No. I being the Personal narratives, II – Chronicles, III – Inscriptions.”

While the first two volumes by Francke were published in 1914 and 1926 respectively, a corpus of inscriptions was omitted. Only in 2003 was a manuscript subsequently published, containing eighty-nine inscriptions collected by the Moravian scholar in 1905 and resurfaced

These lists and the present history are complementary to each other”; see Shuttleworth (MssEur.D722/25).

²⁰ Jahoda (2007).

²¹ Harold Hargreaves served as Director General from 1928 to 1931.

in the 1980s.²²



*Fig. 9 — Interior view of Gumrang Temple, Lahul.
Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0055 © British Library Board.*

But after Francke's death in 1930, and for reasons that partly elude us today,²³ volume four of *Antiquity of Indian Tibet* never appeared and Shuttleworth's embryonic manuscript sank into oblivion. As for

²² Francke and Jina (2003). Photographic facsimiles of Francke's first and second 'Collection of Tibetan Historical Inscriptions on Rock and Stone from West Tibet' were also reproduced by Tobdan and Dorje (2008).

²³ Jahoda (2007: 381).

the section about Spiti, Jahoda concludes that, "Whether H.L. Shuttleworth's unpublished manuscript entitled 'History of Spiti' was planned as an integral part of *Antiquities*, Vol IV, or as a separate but complementary publication [...] is not clear. On the evidence of references found in the text it seems reasonable to conclude that he was working on this manuscript around 1932, and that he may have begun this work in the late 1920s".²⁴

Throughout their respective careers, Shuttleworth and Francke cultivated a sincere friendship and a reciprocal appreciation of their work. In 1929 Francke penned the preface to Shuttleworth's pioneering report on the temples of Lhalung (*lha lung*). Private correspondence also indicates that the two men were still in contact after Shuttleworth's retirement from the ICS (see Appendix 3). In 1939, the British orientalist participated in a collective work on the archaeological past of India. Reviewing Francke's contribution to the study of the Western Himalayas the author noted:²⁵

"The success of this tour in 1909 suggest the regret that the countries of Gu-ge, Lahul, Zangskar, Nubra and Baltistan also were not similarly surveyed and described in another book. But, as it is, Dr. Francke's two volumes, his *Personal Narrative* and *Chronicles*, published by the Archaeological Survey of India, together constitute the most important contribution that has yet appeared on the archaeology of Indian Tibet."

The History of Spiti

As we have seen above, Shuttleworth was determined to write a *History of Spiti* and his findings were substantial at the time.²⁶ Notwithstanding the incomplete state of the manuscript, his handwritten notes are still weighty for us today, particularly in light of other documents and letters from the British Library. Incidentally, his handwriting is "not always clear" and appears to have deterred

²⁴ Jahoda (2007: 368-369).

²⁵ Shuttleworth (1939: 192).

²⁶ In 1922, Hutchison and Vogel published a three-page long article under a similar title in which Shuttleworth's assistance was acknowledged; Hutchison and Vogel (1922a, 1922b: 162).

the few scholars who took in interest in them.²⁷ Their content, however, not only reveals the depth of Shuttleworth's erudition but also attest to his versatility as historian, linguist, and epigraphist.



Fig. 10 — Portrait of the 5th Kyabgon Taksang Rinpoche (c. 1884–1939), Hemis Monastery, Ladakh. Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0031 © British Library Board.

The British explorer, among other things, was the first to investigate the etymology of 'Spiti'. In a public speech given at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society in London on 22nd of May, 1922, the speaker declared, "The name Spiti, pronounced there and in

²⁷ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 115). There are many instances in his handwritten notes when the order of letters in words is mixed up suggesting that Shuttleworth was perhaps subject to mild dyslexic dysgraphia.

Tibet as Piti, means the 'Middle Country' perhaps from its situation between Greater Tibet and Little or Western Tibet. The language is that of Central Tibet, but it has a few resemblances to the Tibetan of Lahul".²⁸ The reason why Shuttleworth came to the conclusion that Spiti meant 'Middle Country' is obscure. Regrettably, his early interpretation gradually forced its way into more popular publications of little scholarly significance up to the present days.²⁹ The origin of the word 'Spiti' was, however, further discussed in his handwritten notes, presumably at a later date. This time the author recorded the most common spellings found in Tibetan sources and concluded that the term was spelt "*Spyi-ti*, also *Spi-ti*, or *Pi-ti*, meaning *spyi* common or main, and *ti* water".³⁰ If the question about the meaning of the word 'Spiti' remains to be settled, there is reason to believe that the earliest nomenclature may well have designated the main water resource of the valley, the Spiti River itself.³¹

Early scholars did not focus on Spiti exclusively. They often included the small river valley into the broader historical context of West Tibet and Ladakh. For his part, Shuttleworth was the first to attempt a periodization of Spitian history. In his notes he organised the historical account into seven chapters, suggesting new periodizing criteria and chronological boundaries:

- ❖ Chapter One: General description and prehistory
- ❖ Chapter Two: Early history and contacts with Kulu
- ❖ Chapter Three: Spiti and Guge in the eleventh century
- ❖ Chapter Four: Spiti under Guge rule during the Ladakh Empire: religious changes
- ❖ Chapter Five: Spiti now separated from Guge is attached to Zangskar. After a short interval of Central Tibetan rule, it is restored to Ladakh
- ❖ Chapter Six: Spiti, now the south frontier province of Ladakh, becomes the prey of its Indian neighbours
- ❖ Chapter Seven: The last period of Ladakh rule after 1772

²⁸ Shuttleworth (1922).

²⁹ Kapadia (1989) and again (1999: 209). Also 'Middle Land'; see van Ham (2015: 18).

³⁰ For a review of the occurrences of the term 'Spiti' in Tibetan literary sources; see Shastri (2007) and Nyan Thar (2017) in the present volume. Environmentalist and historian Tashi Tsering notes the persistence of the syllable *ti* in the Spiti dialect with regard to terms pertaining to water, river, and irrigation system; see Tashi Tsering (2013: 526-527).

³¹ Laurent *forthcoming*.

The content and quality of each chapter is at variance and show different stages of completion. It generally transpires that his chronological command over the history of Spiti was limited. The British historian was nonetheless cognizant of some of the difficulties encountered during his research, which he summarized as follows:³²

“In the absence of any local annals, many gaps in the history of the valley still remain to be filled, despite the fact that within the last twenty-five years, A.H. Francke and two or three local officials or missionaries have brought to light much new material, literacy and otherwise, dating back to the eleventh century.”

³² Detailed bibliographical references were given by Shuttleworth in an appendix meant to accompany his section on Spiti, showing the rigor with which the orientalist conducted his research:

“The standard recent book of reference for general information on Spiti is the Punjab District Gazetteer vol. XXXA, Kangra District, Parts II, III and IV, 1917, Lahore, The Punjab Government Press 1918. We call it Kulu Gazetteer 1919 in the notes. Part IV deals with Spiti. It contains many facts reliable as regards the condition of Spiti at present and during British rule, in that it is based on official records, especially the land revenue assessment and settlement reports of Barnes, J. Lyall, Diack and Coldstream, checked and supplemented by the local knowledge and research of local officials, especially of its compiler, Mr. H. Tysan, Assistant Commissioner of Kulu 1914 to April 1919. The 1891 Settlement report of Sir James Lyall, who first brought to notice the exogamous ‘rus-pa’ system of Spiti, is a classic, as is Cunningham’s Ladak, which deals with Spiti as appended to Ladak till 1846. Other English accounts of visitors e.g. Trebeck and Gerard, and of officials e.g. Hay, Egerton and Harcourt will be noticed in later chapters. [...] Many Europeans have visited it since annexation, and its striking geological features, in the main Trias Cambrian, Silurian, Permian and Carboniferous, Jurassic and Cretaceous, with rich fossil beds, have been examined by several scientists, Stoliczka, Griesbach and notably H.H. Hayden. In Memoir of the Geological Survey of India, XXXVI, Part I, Calcutta, 1904, Hayden fully deals with the geology. In Burrard’s and Hayden’s ‘Sketch of the Geography of the Himalaya mountains and Tibet’ in four parts, (Calcutta 1907), mention of Spiti is also to be found. It is ornithology has been treated incidentally by Stoliczka and more fully by H. Whistler in the Ibis, Oct. 1923 pp. 611-629 [...]”.



Fig. 11 — House of a village headman, Mani, Spiti. This image was first published in *The Times of India Illustrated Weekly*, April 14, 1920, with the following caption: “This photo depicts a large house in Mani in the lower part of the Spiti Valley. It belongs to the Gatpo Chenmo, or ‘Great Headman’ of a group of villages. Above all the windows and below the roof is an ornamentation of red and yellow paint. Brushwood is used for supporting the earth roof, also decoratively above the doors, where its ends are cut off flush. Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0004 © British Library Board.

Leaving no stone unturned the methodical civilian also conducted an ‘epigraphical survey’ during his second visit of the valley in July 1918. Shuttleworth stopped in many villages looking at ornate slates engraved with mantras and depictions of Buddhist deities forming long votive walls. In doing so, three stone inscriptions were notably recorded in Lower Mani (*mani ’og ma*) and in Dangkhar (*brag mkhar*) (fig.11).³³ These epigraphic documents of historic value were captured on paper and have been discussed in greater detail by the author elsewhere.³⁴ They are of significant interest as they provide the names of local donors and members of the nobility. Moreover, they refer to governors who administered Spiti on behalf of the kings of Guge and Ladakh, whose names make it possible to date the engraving of these votive slates.

³³ Shuttleworth (MssEur D722/8).

³⁴ Laurent (2017).



Fig. 12 — View of Dangkhar settlement, the ancient capital of Spiti.
Photo: D722/30 photo 1119/5 0009 © British Library Board.

On each of his visits Shuttleworth sojourned in Dangkhar where he held office on behalf of the British Raj. The old capital of the valley was established on a prominent spur overlooking the confluence of the Spiti and Pin rivers (fig. 12-13). The settlement consisted of a monastic complex, a village, and the district fort (*mkhar rdzong*) located on top of the ridge. As the seat of the local government and administrative centre of the valley, the study of the old capital is a key component for the understanding of Spitian history.³⁵ Within this context, the monastery at Dangkhar was an integral part of the historical, social, economic, and religious dynamics at work. Here again, Shuttleworth's documentation is particularly relevant:

"Lha-bla-ma Źi-ba-hod's name is inscribed on an old bronze image of Śākya-muni, also found by the writer in 1924 in the Lha-hod-pahi monastery at Drangkhar (Graṅmkhar). This name of the monastery – for it has others, such as La-sgo – as also that given above of the ruined temple at Skyibar, connects it with the Gu-ge royal line, if not with the lama-prince himself. A.H. Francke's conjectured connection with a later lama Zla-hod is scarcely reliable, as zla is locally pronounced as Da, never La."

An initial point to make about this passage is that it established the correct name of the monastery located in the capital Dangkhar. Shuttleworth's remark is far from being irrelevant since Francke's erroneous designation has often been repeated in later publications and even accepted by the current monastic community of Lago

³⁵ Laurent *forthcoming*.

Monastery. In fact, the name of the Gelupga monastery is recorded, with some spelling variants, in several diplomatic and legal documents from Spiti. For example, the monastic complex of the capital is once referred to as Lagope Monastery of Tharpa Ling (*la sgo dpe mgon thar pa gling*).³⁶ It is also worth noting that in the same document dated 1740 a passage echoes information found in the *Vaidūrya ser po* composed by Desi Sangyé Gyatso (*sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho*) (1653–1705). Both sources specify the Buddhist master Sangyé Özer from Rangrik (*rang rig pa sangs rgyas 'od zer*) in Spiti was responsible for setting up, or renovating perhaps, the monastery of Dangkhar at a date yet to be determined.³⁷

Whilst the founding history of Lago Monastery remains to be explained, the mysterious image discovered by Shuttleworth at Dangkhar in 1924 had a vastly different story. This spectacular bronze not only played hide and seek for almost a century, but its enigmatic inscription filled the mind of Shuttleworth for many years (fig.14). The earliest known photograph of this image was taken in 1993 when the statue was recorded under the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act of India due to its immense value and antiquity. In 2006, art historian Robert Linrothe took a glimpse at the metal sculpture but was not authorized to reproduce it.³⁸ It is only in 2010 that the present author was entrusted by the monks from Dangkhar with the study of their sacred image, a request completed two years later.³⁹



Fig. 13 — View of the junction between the Spiti and Pin rivers from the top of the district fort at Dangkhar, Spiti. Photo: D722/30 photo 1119/5 0009 © British Library Board.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ According to an oral tradition, Sangyé Özer from the village of Rangrik in Spiti also founded the temple of Kungri in the lateral valley of Pin. He is believed to have lived in the 14th century; see Bonnat 2017 in the present volume.

³⁸ Linrothe (2015: 4-5).

³⁹ Laurent (2013).

The Buddha from Dangkhar is in many ways one of the finest discoveries made in the field of Buddhist art and epigraphy for the cultural areas of Western Tibet and Greater Kashmir. We now know that the two inscriptions engraved on the lower part of the pedestal attest to the incredible journey of this image; produced in Gilgit in northern Pakistan in the eighth century, the statue was bestowed upon the royal monk from Guge, Lha lama Zhiwa Ö (*lha bla ma zhi ba 'od*) (1016–1111), about three hundred and fifty years later. Things were quite different then when Shuttleworth worked on the manuscript of his *History of Spiti* in the early 1930s. If the name of the Tibetan translator of royal descent had been easily identified, the main dedicatory inscription resisted easy decipherment.



Fig. 14 — Buddha from Dangkhar, 8th century, Gilgit, h.26cm.
Photo: the author, 2010. Retouching: Matt Lindén, 2012.

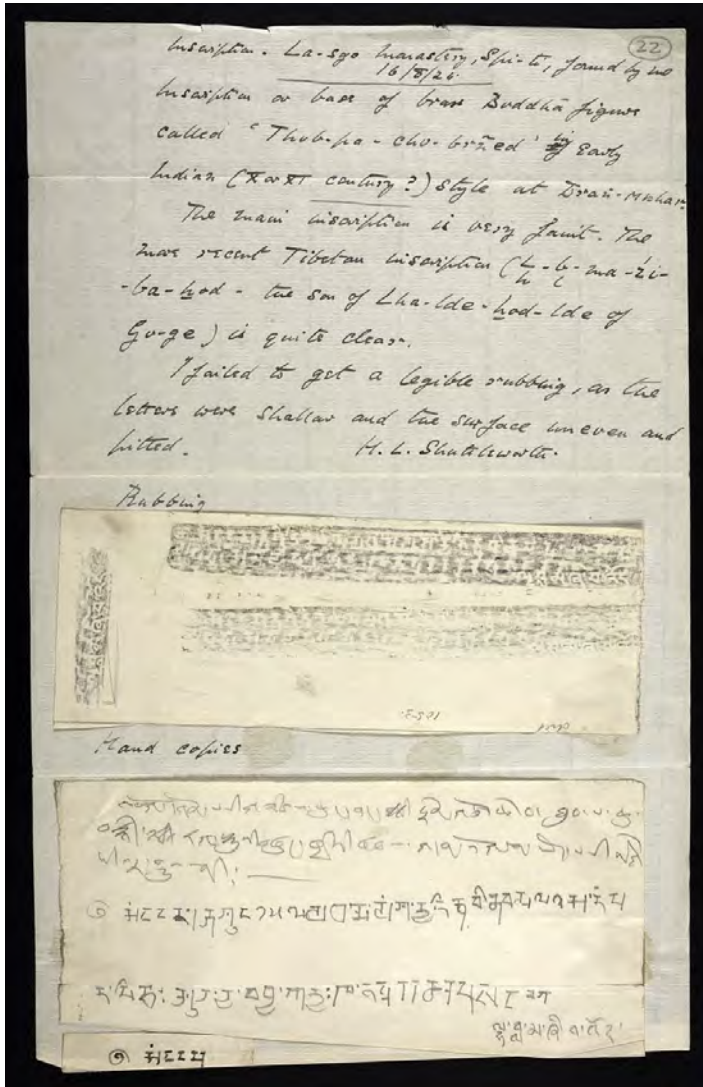


Fig. 15 — Rubbing of the inscription addressed to Prof W.F. Thomas in 1930.
Photo: MssEur D722/3 f22r © British Library Board.

In the summer of 1930 Shuttleworth sought assistance from Frederik William Thomas (1867–1956), an English Indologist and Tibetologist who occupied the position of Boden Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Oxford between 1927 and 1937. Forwarding him a rubbing made in 1924 with a sketchy copy of the inscription (fig.15), Thomas wrote back on 6th August, 1930 (see Appendix 3):

"My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

I am giving overleaf my reading of the inscription on the La-sgo monastery image. The rubbing is, as you say, too faint to allow more than a partial and in places not certain decipherment, and it seems hardly worthwhile to puzzle longer over the problem, which might perhaps be settled by a better imprint of the original. The inscription begins, as you will see, with a date (in an era not stated), and goes on to name the donor and perhaps to devise the merit of the gift and ask for blessing. I attached a query to every akṣara concerning which I am in doubt.

I also transliterate, as well as I can, the note in modern cursive Tibetan script, given, I suppose, by the person who made the unintelligible reading for you. But here also I am in doubt at some points.

Although incomplete Thomas's reading was beyond all expectations:
(Year sg?) Mārgaśīrṣa month, Bright fortnight, 15th lunar day. This donation of the Śākya monk Viṭhu (?) varman was set up (May it be well with all the world ??)

The Deva Blama (Lama)
Īi-ba-hod (Śāntiprabha)"

It has since been possible to translate the whole inscription and to establish the date of donation thanks to Professor Oskar von Hinüber.⁴⁰ Despite Thomas' scholarly intervention the inscription was not published and Shuttleworth never made more than a brief reference to the name of Zhiwa Ö being engraved "on an old brass Buddha image at Drañ-rtse monastery, Spiti", in an edited volume.⁴¹

Published in 1929, Shuttleworth's general account of the temples of Lhalung is the only written contribution to the local history of Spiti that we have for this period. The Assistant Commissioner visited the place for the first and only time a few days prior to making over charges to his successor in Kulu, and imminent return to England. On 18th August, 1924, accompanied by his wife and Joseph Gergan (1878–1946), the small expedition team walked the ten kilometres separating Dangkhar to the secluded village of Lhalung in the Lingti

⁴⁰ The inscription in proto-śāradā script reads as follows: "In the Year 88 [i.e. 712], on the 15th day of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa. This is the pious gift by the Śākyabhikṣu Vikavarman together with his parents, the teachers and instructors. Together with the (Rādāhu)-Burusho Paphaṭona"; see Laurent (2013: 202).

⁴¹ Shuttleworth (1939: 189).

Valley. The time required to document the site was limited and the weather that day worked against it. The author of the report remembers the circumstances under which he carried out his work, almost apologetically.⁴²

“I did what I could in the few hours at my disposal to note down the main features, to take rough measurements, to sketch a ground plan and to use to the best advantages the only six quarter plate films that I had with me. [...] In these dimly lit old temples the identification of the numerous images and paintings is always difficult and uncertain. One’s time is often short and usually the local lamas and laymen can afford little help. [...] Unfortunately, early darkness owing to a storm in the afternoon and the exhaustion of my candles did not at my visit permit even a cursory examination of the subject-matter of these inscriptions.”

Notwithstanding these difficulties, Shuttleworth’s description covered the most essential aspects of the Serkhang (*gser khang*), providing his readers with a plan and additional photographs of the interior.⁴³ His analysis of architectural and architectonic features, wall-paintings and clay sculptures decorating the walls of the temple, led the orientalist to conclude that the edifice dated back to the eleventh century, in accordance with the local tradition that asserts the founding of the Serkhang to the Tibetan translator Rinchen Zangpo (*rin chen bzang po*) (958–1055). Nowadays, it is generally believed that the temple was erected sometime between the eleventh and mid-thirteenth century based on stylistic elements and palaeographical features observed in the founding inscription.⁴⁴ Located on the western wall next to the entrance door, the inscription was regrettably never fully studied by Shuttleworth. After his unsuccessful and “cursory examination”, the orientalist continued to urge Gergan by letters for a translation of the founding inscription (see Appendix 3).

Private correspondence exchanged between Shuttleworth and

⁴² Shuttleworth (1929).

⁴³ For a visual and architectural documentation of the Serkhang; see Auer 2017 in the present volume; and Neuwirth (2013: 284-299). For a high-resolution digital elevation model of its artistic decorations (LiDAR); see Applied Geosciences TU-Graz : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXvF9H895O8>.

⁴⁴ Tropper (2008: 8-13).

Gergan sheds light on the period following the officer's retirement from the ICS (fig.16). Nine letters reproduced hereafter (see Appendix 3) are informative with regard to Gergan's work and collaboration. In them, the Ladakhi scholar appears as a dedicated friend and committed informant, collecting Tibetan manuscripts and books on behalf of Shuttleworth. As a Christian convert, the member of the Moravian Church repeatedly discussed his translation of the Bible with great zeal. His translation activity also included Tibetan historical and religious works such as, for instance, the biography (*rnam thar*) of Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo and the *Khache Phalu* (*kha che pha lu*), a short aphoristic text containing practical advice on living.⁴⁵ As we shall see the material, information, and issues discussed between the two men were soon to play an important role in Shuttleworth's employment at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.



Fig. 16 — Members of the Moravian Mission with Joseph Gergan and his wife seated in the middle, Kyelong, Lahul. Photo: MssEur D722/29 photo 1119/4 0050 © British Library Board.

Likewise, these letters offer a vivid picture of Himalayan life and turmoil. Some passages, for example, speak of flooding and washed away bridges, road accident, frostbite, and human casualty in the most dramatic cases. Among various types of information and

⁴⁵ Bommarito (2017).

anecdotes, Gergan described the arrival in Leh of one thousand five hundred hajjis (*hājji*) from Khotan on their way to Mecca, creating a temporary shortage in basic food in the capital of Ladakh in the winter of 1926. A recurrent topic of discussion was also the wellbeing of Galdan (*dga' ldan*), Shuttleworth's horse left under the care of his Ladakhi friend. Giving free rein to idle gossip, Gergan eventually vented his feelings about the famous Hungarian scholar Sándor Csoma de Körös (1784–1842). In a letter written in July, 1926, the Moravian Ladakhi reported the use of a Turkish pseudonym by Csoma to obtain treaties from a Buddhist scholar and thus preserve his reputation. The righteous missionary explained:⁴⁶

“Instead of his real name there is Skandhar Bheg or Bheg. As far as I can think this scholar Csoma was afraid to tell the Lama his own name and home, and he pretended to be a Turk [...] Csoma was a clever and learned man, but he did not feared to tell a lie to his kind teacher. It is a black spot above all his works.”

Retirement, Academic Career, and Last Journey to the East (1925–60)

Members of the Indian Civil Service were said to be heaven-born for the perks and advantages that came with the position in British Imperial India, and which somehow persisted once an ICS officer had retired. Yet, upon his return to England and retirement from the ICS in 1925, Shuttleworth continued to live simply, mostly dedicated to academic pursuits, and somewhat oblivious to family responsibilities. His daughter, Anna, born in 1927, remembers these days in her autobiography:⁴⁷

“When I was young, my mother and I lived in a variety of places, rooms and hotels in Hampstead, while my father stayed with his mother, who did not like my mother [...] Then we somehow got a third floor flat at 70B Belsize Park Gardens. My mother ruled the roost; my father camped in one large room and cooked for himself. I used to enjoy visiting him in his room, often fighting with him. He always won, of course! He left me presents in

⁴⁶ In 1824, Csoma requested the Zanskari abbot of Dzongkhul (*rdzong khul*), Künga Chölek (*kun dga' chos legs*), to compose treaties on Buddhism. For Csoma's use of a pseudonym and encounter with Künga Chölek; see Marczell (2011: 212-213).

⁴⁷ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 206, 208).

illuminated masks from Tibet. [...] My father did not communicate much with me, and always came too late to give me my Latin lessons and to discuss his life in India with me. He did not join us for more than a small part of our holidays in France [...] So when we moved to the Red House, Cavendish, my mother dominated the home, social life and garden, while my father, who had nothing to live for himself, retreated mostly to bed (or occasionally making bonfires). It was more or less impossible for me to talk to him except if Mama was away. So we did not discuss Noël or my marriage".⁴⁸

On a lighter note, she also recalls with some amusement the day her father became angry over the fate of old underwear:⁴⁹

"My father liked his very old clothes, and he had a chest of drawers full of ancient underwear, grey and full of holes. My mother and I decided all this was only fit for the dustbin. My father was furious when he came home because he had lost all his pants!"

We know only a little about what kept Shuttleworth busy and away from family life. Between 1936 and 1948 Shuttleworth became Additional Lecturer in Tibetan at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.⁵⁰ Due to his status and tenure no specific personal file was permanently retained. One can assume, however, that in addition to class preparation he continued working on historical and linguistic research. Among the different Himalayan dialects learnt in India, Shuttleworth was particularly interested in the study of the Tinan language – also known as Gondhla or Lahouli – benefitting from material sent by Gergan and others. Moreover, his language skills were appreciated at the highest possible level and the ex-officer is said to have "censored letters in many dialects and languages during the Second World War", presumably on behalf of the

⁴⁸ It would be ill-advised to draw a posteriori conclusions and to comment on Mrs Shuttleworth-Sellen's recollections. In a chapter dedicated to her relation with her parents, the acclaimed cellist aptly concludes, "I was lucky to have such great characters as my parents"; see Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 210).

⁴⁹ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 40).

⁵⁰ The main lecturers in Tibetan during Shuttleworth's tenure were Sir Edward Denison Ross (1871–1940) from 1936 to 1937; Ernest Julius Walter Simon (1893–1981) for the following academic year; and Yu Daoquan (1901–1992) from 1938 to 1948. I am indebted to David Ogden, Corporate Records Manager and Archivist at SOAS, for this clarification.

government.⁵¹

Shuttleworth, as we noted above, did not publish much during his life (see Appendix 2). In the relevant period of his employment at SOAS, however, the lecturer would seem to have become one of England's best specialists on the topics of Tibet, the Himalayas, and Buddhism. In a private letter sent to his wife at the end of his life, the scholar declared, "nobody has learned in Buddhism as myself! This, in all humility".⁵² Possible evidence of this is a series of ten book reviews published in various academic journals, in which Shuttleworth commented upon such works as W.Y. Evans-Wentz' *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, A. David-Neel's *My Journey to Lhasa*, C. Bell's *The Religion of Tibet*, or even Jäschke's *Tibetan-English Dictionary*, to name just a few (see Appendix 2). Altogether, and with respect to his writing activity, Chetwode already lamented in 1972:⁵³

"As it is he only had the time to write the occasional article and his fund of knowledge must now be dug out of the learned periodicals of his time. He also wrote in a more popular vein in the *Times of India Illustrated Weekly*."

We know nothing of Shuttleworth's activities in the decade following his retirement from SOAS in 1948. Having spent a few years as a recluse, mainly in bed, Shuttleworth eventually decided to set off again in 1958. At the age of seventy-six, he embarked on his last journey, a solo trip to India. Resembling a premonitory vision, his daughter describes the moment of his departure at the train station:⁵⁴

"My father had just got his hat out of a box, and when I left the train at Manningtree he had a spider on his hat.

This was the last time I saw him."

From England Shuttleworth travelled to Greece and reached Lebanon in February 1958. Postcards and letters sent to his family throughout the trip allow us to get a sense of his impressions and travel experience. The exhilaration of the journey quickly sparked his enthusiasm. In Beirut, Shuttleworth met an international crowd composed of officials, expats, and old acquaintances. His gift for

⁵¹ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 117).

⁵² Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 161).

⁵³ Chetwode (1972: 123).

⁵⁴ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 118).

foreign languages immediately came in handy:⁵⁵

“My Arabic is coming back but I still tend to think in Greek. I am quite fluent again in Urdu and Indian, whom I talk with, won't believe I left India so long ago!”

From Beirut the experienced traveller continued to Iraq. At Basra, Shuttleworth boarded a ship and sailed down the Persian Gulf towards the port city of Karachi in Pakistan. By the end of May the British gentleman arrived in Lahore where he resumed his research on Alexander the Great. At the same time he could not help noticing the changes that had affected the Indian subcontinent since he left some thirty years earlier:⁵⁶

“The Museum Library is where I work, when it is not too hot to go the one and a half miles or so to get there. [...] I also use the British Council [...] How raw and ignorant these British Council officials are of local conditions. The USA experts, with a few exceptions, are outrageously arrogant and useless. The hotel won't have the USA Americans as they are noisy, drunken and offensive to other residents. [...] There is extreme bitterness here in every class against Pandit Nehru's methods in Kashmir and about the waters of Pakistani canals. [...] Dacoities and murders are reported daily. [...] The police seem ineffective or corrupt or probably both.”

Shuttleworth arrived in Delhi in October, 1958. Eagerly awaiting his pension payment, he was forced to borrow money with interest from the newly merged National Overseas and Grindlays Bank, thus blaming the inefficiency of the Government of India 'in all matters'. The ex-member of the Civil Service appears to have been torn between the fast changing and independent country and fond memories of his time in the British colony. As his daughter commented:⁵⁷

“Although he met old friends in India and Pakistan he was disappointed with the way local governments then worked, compared to his earlier time in India and Pakistan when the British ruled.”

Heading for the Himalayas, the British pensioner settled in Katrain, a

⁵⁵ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 130).

⁵⁶ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 140-141).

⁵⁷ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 139).

hill and trout fishing station in the forested valley of Kulu. Rekindling his passion for the hill people, their culture and history, he sojourned in Katrain intermittently from November 1958 to January 1959 and again from June to November. Travelling further north, Shuttleworth also reached Lahaul where he continued his work on the Tinan language for a few weeks. Likewise, the septuagenarian made short trips to cities like Delhi, Dehradun, and Hyderabad, visiting museums, local libraries, and archaeological services for his research, as well as meeting with old friends and colleagues. Of these visits he wrote to his wife:⁵⁸

“I have, both in Delhi, Lahore and Kangra, a great reputation as an archaeologist and linguist. But I think I have enough humility not to be proud!”

From February 1959 onwards, alarming news from Tibet reached the Indian subcontinent. In Delhi, Shuttleworth took note of divided political sympathies and ideological trends:⁵⁹

“The Delhi municipality is about two third reds. Pandit Nehru has played a dangerous game, the Russians and Chinese have got him on strings. So over Tibet, [Nehru] won’t offend China? The sympathy felt in India for Tibet and the Dalai Lama has been unexpectedly strong and meetings are being held everywhere (Hands off Tibet!).”

Shuttleworth’s concern quickly grew over the tragic events unfolding in Tibet. Following the uprising in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, on 10th March, 1959, and the flight of the 14th Dalai Lama to India, political unrest erupted throughout the Tibetan plateau and the Himalayas. From Kulu Shuttleworth addressed a heartfelt plea to his wife in a letter of 28th September, 1959:⁶⁰

“Chinese troops now occupy three blocks of Ladakh: South of Pang-Gong Lake, some thirty miles deep from Khur-Nakole Fort; East of Hanle around Demchhok; An isolated Ladakhi island village about ten or fifteen miles in west Tibet (Nari-Khorsam) – Gartok and Rudok are full of Chinese troops, motors and metalled roads even in Ladakh, a short way, and made by forced labour. Please make this known to anyone of standing, MP’s, journalists

⁵⁸ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 155).

⁵⁹ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 152-153).

⁶⁰ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 161-162).

or orientalists. I have at least three independent and reliable sources of information – first hand. The above is authentic. Unless confronted by force, the Chinese won't budge for despite all Nehru's blah! The Chinese are also over the Indian frontier in Almora – Garwal, North East of Assam tribal tracts have cut off Bhutan's access to Sikkim, and old right of way through Tibetan territory. West Tibet wool still comes here, as I have seen. I talked to many traders on the road from western Tibet, but, Indian trade by Sikkim is at a standstill. Tibetans are still fighting in desperation as Chinese labour camps are like the Japanese and German [camps]. The central Congress government party has lost face over their Tibetan 'shilly-shallying'."

Shuttleworth's last message to his family is dated 8th February, 1960. In it, we learn of his aborted trip to Northeast India. With the intention to visit the Tibetan refugee camp at Tezpur and some tea estates near Kaziranga National Park in Assam, the seventy-eight year old traveller was stopped at Shillong in Meghalaya due to 'bad diarrhoea'. Abandoning his plans, Shuttleworth turned round and travelled back to Delhi. Shuttleworth never recovered and eventually passed away from complications on 28th February, 1960. Like many "distinguished servants of the old Indian Empire" Shuttleworth was buried in General Nicholson's cemetery in Old Delhi.⁶¹

Throughout his life and career the British gentleman shunned public honour and recognition, including a possible British knighthood. Mentioned in the dispatches of 1917 for "valuable services in India in connection with the war", his daughter believes that her father was offered the opportunity to be knighted but refused the honour.⁶² Art historian and archaeologist Charles Louis Fabri (1899–1968) probably offered the most vibrant portrait of the orientalist (fig.17). Accompanying him in his last days, Fabri had the difficult task of informing the family of Shuttleworth's passing. In a moving letter to Mrs Shuttleworth of 29th February, 1960, the long-time friend sorely concluded:⁶³

"I think I must add here a word, beyond mere

⁶¹ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 198).

⁶² Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 13).

⁶³ Shuttleworth and Sterner (2009: 199).

protestations of conventional sympathy. I felt very close to Lee, and look upon him as quite a remarkable person, with a flashingly brilliant brain. He was eccentric, odd, original, full of knowledge, precise and scholarly, and kept his wits about him even in this old age. I was extremely fond of him, and there is a great, sorry gap in me now that he is gone."

Henry Lee Shuttleworth's first visit to Spiti took place a century ago. For many years his contribution to the study of the river valley of Western Tibet has been somewhat forgotten, depriving modern scholarship from important information about the history of Spiti. In the rubble of European imperialism, recovering the past of distant countries and civilizations often starts at home, in the dusty archives of our forefathers. The British officer of the Indian Civil Service does not only deserve to be recognised for his efforts to write the first ever *History of Spiti* but also for the multifaceted figure that he was: a pioneering scholar, archaeologist, historian, linguist, Tibetan supporter, and talented photographer.



Fig. 17 — H.L. Shuttleworth (1882–1960) during his tenure as Assistant Commissioner of Kulu.
Photo: Betjamen collection © Ancient Iran and India Trust, Cambridge.

Acknowledgement

This paper is dedicated to Anna Shuttleworth-Sellen without whom much of the present research would not have been possible. I am immensely grateful to Mrs Shuttleworth-Sellen for granting me permission to study and publish her father's archives and photographs. I have done it with considerable care and dedication, realising that particular bonds transcended time and space. My gratitude also goes to Edward Fenn, the digital torchbearer of an illustrious family, for his assistance and patience. Many thanks to John Falconer and John O'Brian for their help and support during my time at the British Library. My gratitude to Samuel Cowan and Robert Sherman for their wise comments and suggestions. Thanks also to John Bray, Robin Brooks-Smith, Pascale Dollfus, Jonathan Guyon Le Bouffy, Amanda Ingram, David Ogden, and Christophe Roustan Delatour for their timely assistance.

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APPENDIX ONE
Timeline

- 1882 Born in Scotforth, Lancaster on 14th May
- 1882 Baptised at St Thomas' Church, Lancaster, on 11th July
- 1896 Attended Shrewsbury School
- 1901 Registered at Pembroke College, University of Oxford
- 1905 Graduated from Oxford with a degree in *Litterae Humaniores*
- 1905 Enrolled at the London School of Oriental Studies
- 1910 Graduated from the Indian Civil Service on 16th June
- 1911 Posted in Hoshiarpur, Punjab
- 1912 Appointed Settlement Officer in Lower Kangra until 1915
- 1915 On leave. Married Inez Esther Dorothea MacGillycuddy in London
- 1917 Appointed Assistant Commissioner of Kulu until 1919
- 1917 First trip to the Spiti Valley
- 1918 Second trip to Spiti
- 1923 Second appointment as Assistant Commissioner of Kulu
- 1924 Last trip to Spiti
- 1925 Retired from the Indian Civil Service
- 1927 Birth of his daughter Anna
- 1936 Part-time lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London
- 1948 Retired from SOAS
- 1958 Travelled to India via Greece, Lebanon, Iraq, and Pakistan
- 1960 Died in Delhi on 28th February



APPENDIX TWO
Shuttleworth's List of Publications

- 1922 "Border Countries of the Punjab Himalaya" in *The Geographical Journal*, vol. LX, no. 4, 241-268.

— “An Inscribed Mask discovered on the Occasion of the Bhunda Ceremony at Nirmand” in *Acta Orientalia*, vol.1, 224-229.

1923 “A Wool mart of the Indo-Tibetan borderland” in *The Geographical Review*, vol. XIII, 552-558.

1928 “The Tibetan Book of the Dead by W. Y. Evans-Wentz (review)” in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 4, no. 4, 845-852.

— “My Journey to Lhasa by Alexandra David-Neel (review)” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol.60, no. 1, 160-163.

1929 “Lha-luñ Temple, Spyi-ti” in *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, no.37, 1-7.

— “Tibet’s Great Yogī Milarepa W. Y. Evans-Wentz (review)” in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 5, no. 3, 656-659.

— “The People of Tibet by Charles Bell (review)” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 61, no.3, 644-648.

1931 “The Religion of Tibet by Charles Bell (review)” in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 6, no. 4, 1072-1074.

— “Trails to Inmost Asia by George N. Roerich (review)” in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 6, no. 4, 1074-1079.

1932 “Outlines of Tibeto-Burman Linguistic Morphology by Stuart F. Wolfenden (review)” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 64, no. 2, 438-444.

— “The Religion of Tibet by Charles Bell (review)” in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol.64, no. 4, 1029-1031.

1934 “People of the Panjab Himalaya” in *Man*, vol. 34, 58-59.

— “Kumbum Dschamba Ling by Wilhelm Filchner (review)” in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, University of London, vol. 7, no. 2, 474-476.

1935 “Note on a Tibetan-English Dictionary” in *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, vol. XXII, 285-287.

1938 “Minya Gongkar: Forschungsreise ins Hochgebirge von Chinesisch Tibet by Arnold Heim (review) in *Journal of Royal Central Asian Society*, vol. XXV, 317-319.

1939 “Indian Tibet” in Cumming, J. (ed.) *Revealing India's Past: A Co-operative Record of Archaeological Conservation and Exploration in India and Beyond by Twenty-two Authorities*, British, Indian and Continental, The India Society, London, 182-192.

1945 “Foreword” in *Exhibition of the Art of Tibet and Neighbouring Countries*, Berkeley Galleries, William F. C. Ohly, 20 Davis Street, W.I, London (December 1945 to January 1946).



APPENDIX THREE
Private Correspondence

Letter from J. P. Vogel (MssEur. D722/3, no.3)⁶⁴

Leiden, Sept. 12th, 1924
Noordeindsplein 4a

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

Please accept my best thanks for your two very welcome letters from Kulu, dated 4th June and 14th July. I ought to have acknowledged the before, but I was so busy writing my book on the Nāgas that I had little leisure for anything besides. The book is ready now (except the introduction) and I am taking it to London next week to hand it over to the publisher.

I am particularly grateful for the post of Kulu Nāgas which you kindly sent me. I have been able to utilize it for my book, namely for the concluding chapter which deals with modern Nāg worship in India. Of course I have not used by for all the material it contains. What strikes me as very peculiar, is that the annual mela of the various Nāg temples hardly ever coincides with the Nāga-panchamī of the plains the date of which is 5th bright Sāvan. But the melas are indicated by such names as phaglī (in Thāqun), birshu ([or] bishu), śagarī (or sairi) and kāhikā (or kaika). I have not been able to find much about these festivals, which would require a special study. Mr. Emerson speaks about them in the Kandī [sic.] Gazetteer, which contains some excellent accounts of local cults. I wonder whether he is going to publish a book on Himalayan religions.

I am very interested to hear that you have collected legends about the Kulu Nāgas.

I had typed copies made of your losts [sic.] of Kulu Nāgas and shall be very glad to send you one. But as you will be leaving India very soon and possibly it would not reach you there in time. I'll better address it to England as soon as I hear from you.

As to the Kulu masks inscription please don't send the copies to Leiden, but rather leave them with Dr. Hutchinson or with some officer of the Archl. Survey. I am afraid I shall not be able to deal with them; now do I know any one close. The truth is that these inscriptions are rather disappointing when I engaged a local man to

⁶⁴ Jean Philippe Vogel (1871–1958) worked for the Archaeological Survey of India between 1901 and 1914 and later became professor of Sanskrit at the University of Leiden.

copy them (if I remember rightly, he was a pandit from Kandi). I expected that those masks might be very ancient and possibly might throw light on the early rulers of Kulu before the Singh dynasty. But they turned out to be comparatively modern. To study them carefully would require much time and labour and I am somewhat doubtful whether the results to be gleaned would repay the trouble.

Wishing you both "bon voyage" with our kind regards to you and Mrs. Shuttleworth.

Yours Sincerely

Jean Vogel

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.13)

Kyelang, 31st July 1925

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

In last autumn Gapel told me about the inscription of Kanika and I sent 2 letters to the Yeshernamrgyal in the early of last spring for the inscription. In the end of last month I left Kyelang for Zangskar, but at that time he was gone at Kargil for same case, so I gave a letter for him to his son Namrgyal for the same purpose.

I arrived back at Kyelang on the 28th instt. and I found that your letter was waiting for my arrival and by seeing your need of the inscription of Kanika I commenced to copy them first after my arrival and today I am sending it to Sir John Marshall, and I asked him to send it soon to you. I hope he will do so. There are 3 inscriptions in it two from kanika and from Moune [sic.] Gonpa. There were 108 lines on the wall of Kanika and 5 lines on the outer wall of it. There were 30 lines written on cloth on the wall of Mune Gonpa.

I think you will get soon your Spiti Thangkas from Munshi Chet Ram.

I did not translate the inscription of the Serkhang temple of Spiti.

I will come to meet you at Zangskar gladly in next year, if you can visit there. Please let me know in time about it. I am glad to hear your kind thought to help our Mission work in Ladakh.

I will keep Galdan gladly until your arrival in Western Tibet.

I have not got yet the saddle bags, which you kindly gave me with saddle.

I received your letters from Port-Said and answered them in last spring.

Mr. Peter leaving Kyelang for Leh on 21st Aug. Mr. and Mrs. Asboe are coming to fill his place from Ladakh.

I hope to be able to visit-Spiti in next Sept. via Baralatse, perhaps with Gapel. Mr. and Mrs. Aeber are going England to work there, I am really sorry for this departure from us.

I will send you copies of the Rgyalpo Yeshe Rnamrgyal to you at once when I get it from him. My wife and children send their salaams to you and Mrs. Shuttle.

With king regards.

Prinlas sends salaams to you. V. sincerely. J. Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.2)

Kyelang, 26th November 1925

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

Many thanks are due to your very welcome letters of 16, 21, and 29th October 1925.

I am much thankful for your great kindness to take part in our time of difficulties, I will write to Chimed to tell you all about his case in detail, because I do not like to remember that matter again at this time, as the subject of your letter I noticed that you wrote us after getting a letter from one of our staff. That blow was so hard to me, that still I am unable to relate that story to any one of my dearest friend and even I did not wr[i]te to my own son Skyabsldan yet. I hope in future you will not remind me that horrible fact, though the best pon[y] also stumble, and the fall of Chimed is not an unusual fact, and I hope that terrible heart will make him better and stronger for his future life.

My wife thank to Mrs. Shuttleworth for her letter.

Today I am sending on your address the Linguistic Survey and other ordered Tibetan books. I could not spare more than 8 copies of Tibetan English Dictionary to you at this time, there is no copy of Jas' gramm[a]r lithographed at Kyelang. Please acknowledge by receipt of them.

At Kyelang I could procure the Khachhe-Phalu MS., but I hope to find it in Leh when I get there in next year.

The Rtsabrang Treaty of between Ladags and Khunu was written by an unlearned secretary, and therefor[e] it will be very difficult to translate into English to anyone, but I will try my best to translate it

in this month for published through you. I think it will take much of your time to translate it into a good English.

Commonly all write rdzong-khul [that is] the innermost-fort, but the scholar KundGa-Chhos-Legs writes rdzong-khul-naroi-phugmochhe in his book of replies to Alex. Csoma de Körös.

Many thanks for your kindness to send me the 2 photo (White devil & Mrs. Shuttleworth & me) both are very nice and clear. Today I got a letter from Chimed from Jammu of 19th instt. Soon he will be at Srinagar.

Still I use all my strength to translate the O.T. and today I got in the 34 chapter of Jerem[i]ah. After completing it I will rest some days and soon will commence to translate Ezekiel and so on till I can finish all the books of O.T. after that then I can use my time in other things in ease.

The inscriptions of Kanika and Serkhang are rather very difficult to translate. Therefore I could not promise yet with you whether I can [...] or not. As its sentences are so long as the train road.

With all good wishes ... yours sincerely. J. Gergan

Letter from Thakur Mangalchand (MssEur. D722/2, no.4-6)⁶⁵

Kyelang dated 19th December 1925

To H. L. Shuttleworth Esq., I.C.S

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of 15th October and 10th December. Many thanks for our photo which reached me in good condition. I was out of Lahoul I went down to Lahore in November and reach back in the beginning of this month. Thakur Abhai Chand went to join territorial force, till his arrival 2 posted as in charge.

If the Gartok post is vacant, then it is very kindness of yours to recommend me for that post. I never forget your kindness in my life. It is open to you that I know very well about Tibet [and] especially western Tibet. I was anxious for that post but I could not write to you before.

This year the postal communication is still continue being a dry season since long time.

⁶⁵ Thakur Mangalchand was the Wazir of Lahaul from 1921 until 1947. I would like to express my gratitude to Jonathan Guyon Le Bouffy for this information.

You asked about Chhimed Gergan the headmaster of Kyelang school, he went to join mashir-i-mals' office in Kashmir for he discharged his headmaster ship on his application. Rev. Peters transferred to Leh mission in his place Rev. Esbo appointed. Gergan Joseph is doing well.

I shall prepare a copy during this winter (the Tibetan gods' painters' book, with their measurements [*thig dpe*] so called thigpai) with the measurement book I will send Dechhog Khorlodoma's kilkhor.

You asked me how to prepare the painting paper the Jal thang [*zhal thang*] or [*thang sku*] made with Lattha cloth not with paper. First stretch (as Fig below) a required size of Lattha cloth with a needle. Latha cloth stretch in the centre of a four sided (square) thin window like pan, provided with rope.

Then apply pure glue (glue made by leather) the glue should be very thin, apply gently with a sable brush both side of the Lattha cloth. Before it is dry in the same time gently rub all over the both surfaces of the Lattha with glass ball or stone amber or can do with a smooth conch shell, when it is half dry. Now apply white clay (white painting colour prepared in Lahoul with hard white stone. There is deference with lime stone. The name of the stone called in Tibetan [and] Lahouli [*tsha dkar*] tsakar. Tsakar is found in Paralacha pass [and] in Spiti. The raw tsakar burnt in charcoal fire for a period of two hours, then become a very soft [and] white colour, now it is ready for painting. If it is not available you can get burnt lead ash it is as white as Tsakar.

Some copies of Geographical magazine for me [and] Th. Abhai Chand received with thanks in October last, for which I offered my thanks in that letter. I have done a mistake in your address except c/o Llyods' bank written c/o Kingking [and] co.

Hope the letter may reach you in good condition. Please let me know about that letter.

With my best wishes to Mam Sahiba,

Yours sincerely

Th. Mangalchand

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.3)

Kyelang, 8th February 1926

My dear Mr Shuttleworth,

We had this year an unusual warm and snowless winter so now we arranged to send a special coolies to fetch our letters from Manali with them we sending our letters at there to be posted. The Kyelang post line was opened up to 31st Decr. 1925, still all the grounds are dry wit[h]out snow.

In my Christmas holidays I was able to translate the writing of Kanika, and herewith I am forwarding it to your address with the original transcriptions of them, and also the original letter of Yeshesnamrgyal with translation as his request. Yet I have not read any book about the king Kanika or Kaniska. Anyhow this stupa may be from his time; if I arrive in Zangskar then I like to enquire about this king and his information, if can be available there. I expect that you will please to receive the inscriptions of Mune, therefore also forwarding the translation of it with the copy of it. I have no[t] enough time to copy it therefore Gaphel helped me to copy it for you. I translated the biography of the celebrated Lotsawa Rinchen-bZangpo, with the inscription of Rtabo (Tabo) (parentheses his), Lhalung, and Alchi of Ladak, and I also added my own notes according them. Today I am also writing a letter at Lhasa to procure a detailed Biography of Rinchenzangpo, if possible to attain it.

Now the book of Jeremiah is completed and I commenced the Lamentation of Jeremiah in poetical (arrangement) (parenthesis his) Tibetan. In the middle of this month I will begin the book of Job, and after completing it I will revise it and Jeremiah and the Lamentation. By thus I shall be able to send them all to Dr. Francke in next summer. Before some few days I got a short manuscript with the title "Angyig-bDunchuoa" (Seventy Stanzas), which was imparted to the famous dGe-Shes-Potopa by dGeshes Kharagpa. We know that Potopa was a disciple of aBrom-Stonpa. In these days I am also translating it into English in order to learn the English language, in the evening instead of reading other books now I translate such books. By studying the "70 Stanzas" I noticed that the Kharagpa was really a learned and experienced in Buddhism and about the state of human spirit and hypocri[sy]. After accomplishing it I will try to begin some other Buddhists' philosophical books, as the "Dhoha mDzod", or the "Contracted pith according the path of Mahayana etc.", the Dhohas are rather difficult to translate or to express the actual meaning of it, all the Dhohas are not from one recluse, but several persons, as Saraha, Birwa, Tilli, Slob-dpon Nagpo, and Naropa etc. The later one composed at Domkar of Ladak, before King

Sengernamgyal.

I expect to get permi[ss]ion to go Ladak in this year, as I dwelled in Lahul six years instead of three. I could not get here books which I need, but in Ladak it is easier to get them.

Probably Revd. Cecil Biscoe may be on his way to Kashmir.

Please acknowledge by the receipt of the translation and inscriptions of Zangskar. Please let me know your idea about the "Sun Beauty".

We often remembering you and Mrs Shuttl. With Jus to you both.

Yours Sincerely

Joseph Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan reproduced by August H. Francke (MssEur. D722/2, no.8)

Joseph Gergan, Tibetan Pastor at Kyelang, writes under the 3rd April 1926:

In last summer I tried to find the Manuscript of Kunga-chos-legs of Rdzongskul, which was written in the reply of Csoma. I have a copy of it which I copied from the transcription of the Rirdzon Skushuk.

I can spare a copy of it to you, if you wanted. Csoma asked first how the world was created? How it stands now? How it shall be wasted? In these questions grouped all the Buddhism. At any rate Kungachoslegs was an able man. If I can get in Zangskar in this spring before my removal from Kyelang, then I will try to find out the original Manuscript in Rdonzskul. I have seen the biography of K. on my last visit there.

I have not yet heard from Mr. Shuttleworth. I desire to depart from Kyelang about the end of July or in the middle of August, according to the weather, sometimes in July the monsoon has not finished.

2nd July 1926

My Dear Shuttleworth,

I think the above lines taken from Joseph's letter, will be of the greatest interest to you. There are apparently two Mss. containing references to Csoma, 1) the questions of Csoma 2) the biography of his Tibetan friend [*kun dga' chos legs*]. Have you received my wife's postcard regarding the Kesar saga?

Yours sincerely

A.H. Francke

*Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.7)*Kyelang, 8th April 1926

My Dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

I hope you have got my Feb. letter and other documents. Now I am waiting to hear about them.

Will you kindly introduce me with Mr. John Norman [sic.]? First I thought not to write you at this time and I asked to introduce me with the above in the letter of Dr. Francke afterward I got a letter from Chimed, so I am writing you few lines for the present. My son Chimed desire very much to have a good post on Ladak side and if possible then in govt. not in the state. I hope you and Mr. Biscoe both will help him if he ask for such post. Without a strong recommendation he could not get a good post on Ladak side or in a cool country. Up to this time Galdan kept well. We are all well. Up to this time beside the O. Test. I translated the following pamphlets into English, (1) The Biography of Lotsawa Rinchen zangpo, (2) The abridged teaching on Mahayana, (3) The 70 stanzas, (4) I now commence to translate the 1000 proverbs of W. Himalaya. Today I am forwarding the 70 Stanzas to the office of archaeology of India, I hear that Sir John Marshall has left India for 7 months. I know he may be in the ship on the way of England.

The Eulogy of Kanika by now may be ready for print, yet I have not got the English trans. of Drimedkunldan. I got a letter from Mr Biscoe from the Red Sea, now he may be at Srinagar in his playing ground.

Chimed desire to have the post of Charar [sic.] Officer; if the President and Brit. J. Com. [sic.] be consented to offer it then it is not difficult. I hear that the present President Sir John Wood intend to take a tour in Ladak in next June.

If I can then I like to take a tour in Zangskar again as soon as the Shingkun pass open well enough. I am surprising for the name of Kanika, recently I found that a field possess also the name of Kaniska in the upper Kyelang. Have you the book of King Kaniska or Kanika? I commenced to collect and record all the customs of Bunan and Lahul, in that I found that Kaniska.

I hope you have got the parcel of books from Kyelang. Please let me know about your Galdan, whether to take at Leh or not. My wife and Sunkil [sic.] send their salams to you and Mrs Shuttleworth.

With kind regards.

Yours very sincerely,
J. Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.10)

Kyelang, 5th June 1926

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

I am eagerly waiting for your answer for my former letters, and copies of inscriptions. As I have not got any letter after last December. Though you and Mrs. Shuttleworth both in sound health. I desire to leave Kyelang about in the beginning of next Aug. if the weather be convenient for my family.

I like to hear from you as soon as possible according Galdan, whether he [has] to go to Ladakh with me or some other place. Please let me know definitely soon.

In last April your former coo[k] Tondrup went Zangskar and unfortunately both his feet and hands were frozen on the pass of Singkun, probably now he may be at Spadum with his wife. I am really sorry for him, to be so impotent in his youth.

In next sept. Mr. Peter going on furlough and coming back again at Leh in next spring. P.W.D. and Th. Mangalchand both will commence to build up the new Tehsil and School of Kyelang.

In these days I am working day and night in the book of Job, and intend to accomplish the revising in next week, out I have to look again through all of it in order to make it in a better language and meter.

According the order of the Bible I revised it first and will revise the Jer. Afterwards. Perhaps at Leh. Now there are only 99 chapters in the Bible which are not translated yet in Tibetan. From last spring to this time I translated 99 chapters from the O.T. so I hope to accomplish the remaining 99 chap. Until 1928. I already got many information according the custom, feasts, New Year and Gregs (Sacred songs of Bunan) etc. etc. Perhaps I shall be able to accom – [sic.] it into the form of a book at Leh.

I am very glad to have Mr. Biscoe at Srin. With many jus to you and Mrs. Shuttle.

Yours very sincerely,
J. Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.9)

Kyelang, [...]th June 1926

My Dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

Many thanks for your letter of 12th ultimo, which I got just now, and I like to answer at once. I am really very glad to hear your good news after a long time. It is also more wonderful that a field at upper Kyelang got the name KANISKA, it is annually in the time of New Year of Bunna they keep it as a holy place, and no one is allowed to go on it until the Thars (admission). Henceforth I will search his name in other places, in order to get more information to give light on his life, time, and works. I like to see your article on it. Kanika is the name of the STUPA and NOT the name of that monastery. I intend to leave for Zangskar as soon as I get coolies. Today I already sent the original copy of the "One Thousand Proverbs" with a rough English translation. In it contain 50 of Manchad and 34 of Bunand the rest of Tibetans. Altogether there are 1013 sayings in it. In this week I was able to complete the translation of JOB in metrical, there are 28600 syllables in it. Today I also posted it to Dr. Francke with the above one. I commenced to translate the proverbs of Solomon. I do not like to accept any remuneration from you, so why did you troubled to send Rs. 100/0/0. What shall I do with this amount?

Csoma asked these questions to Lama Kunga-Choslegs:

According the Buddhism how the world was created?

[According the Buddhism how the world] stand now?

[According the Buddhism how the world] will end? etc.

In them also have to mention according the teaching of Buddhism. So Kunga replied him written. In it instead of his real name there is Skandar-beg or Bheg. As far as I can think this scholar Csoma was afraid to tell the Lama his own name and home, and he pretended to be a Turk, and given a name which may seem as a Turk name. I think you know that the Turk use and add the Beg after their name, 2nd reason in that reply Kunga says thus: "who came from the land of Rum". Rum is same as to say western Turkistan. Csoma was a clever and learned man, but he did not feared to tell a lie to his kind Teacher. It is black spot above all his works. In last year I investigated about the original copy and handwriting of Kungachhoslegs, but any Lama of Rdongkhul was not able to tell anything about that MS. Probably that the original MS. was lost by lending some other Lama

of other place. So do not hope to get a copy or the original one from Zangskar. I have a copy of it, which I copied from the transcription of Rirdzong Skushog before many years. Still I have the copy of it, I can send you a copy of it, if you desire to have one.

At present Chimed accepted a post in the forest department for a time. And now he is on the way of Zangskar, and he intend to come and meet us at Kyelang. I desire to leave Kyelang about in the beginning of August but I have not decided definitely as yet. So please address letters at Leh, Ladakh, Kashmir.

I wrote a letter before few days to you in order to hear your good news.

The "Sun Beauty" is writ[t]en in Prayig and not in printing character so I will copy it when I get at Leh. Kyelang was a good place to work but at Leh I could not find much time as here, as I have there many friends.

My wife and daughter both remember you both often, and they send many jus to you and Mrs. Shuttleworth.

With salaams and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Thanks I have got the bags from Leh. Gapel sends his salams to you.

J. Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.12)

Leh-Ladakh, 10th September] 1926

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

On 29th ultimo I safely arrived here in Leh, my wife and daughter came here after two days. On the 4th inst. Mr. Peter left Leh for his furlough, and on 9th Mr. Kunick went to climb Saser and other mountains with an English gentleman. He will be back here again before the end of this month. Now Galdan is quite strong and fat, grass is very expensive here at Leh, therefore I have sent it in a village to feed it there, and I desire to send it in Nubra before the end of Next October. By doing thus the feeding shall be cheaper. Just after my arrival I got one incomplete copy of Khache-Phalu, and I am searching to find another complete copy of it, in order to make it complete. It will be a good thing if you send me a copy of it, which is translated by Dr. John Vanman, then I compare it with these copies before sending it to you. I like to improve my English, but without

your help I can't do well, to learn more metaphysical terms. I must study such books in English, but I can't get a good book in our library, but I hope to study in such book when you be here.

In next week I will start to translate the remaining three books of the Bible. In the meanwhile I will copy the detail of Khache Phalu for you.

My son Skyabsldan intend to train in medical after his F.A.C. exam. but without Europe I do not see any other suitable place for him, there is a medical college in Lahore, but a Ladakhi could not bear the heat of it. So I do not know what to do, Lahore is too hot for him, and I have no money to send him to England. Still I do not wr[i]te to Mr. Biscoe about it, but I wrote concerning it to our Bishop Ward in a private letter before three months, yet I have not got any answer of it. Before a week I got a letter from Chimed, in which he mentions, that he did not got yet your registered letter. Because he is in Zangskar from last June. Now I am thinking to build a house in Leh in next spring, but everything is so dear here than before, so can't build a nice house. Whenever you come here I like to consult with you according several things.

We often remembering you both. Spaltrash and Prinlas are here at Leh, and they send salaams to you and Mrs. Shuttleworth.

With many salaams to you both from us.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Gergan

Letter from Joseph Gergan (MssEur. D722/2, no.11)

Leh, 11th December 1926

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

From July I have not got any letter from you, by this reason I am thinking you both than ever, please inform about the welfare of you both. I became more busy here than in Kyelang, because at present there is no other missionary except Mr and Mrs Kunick, Mr. Peter went for his furlough in last autumn, and Mr. and Mrs Burroughs also went home in last October according the order of Drs. So now Mr. Kunick have to do the work of them also. And above them he have to look after the hospital business. I am not quite sure that Mr. Peter be able to come back here in next spring, or not.

Chimed got your letters only at the end of last month, which you has

been sent through Revd. Biscoe; and Chimed posted all the letters at once. I also wrote a letter to Mr. Bisco to inform us his idea, but I have not heard yet from him. On 21st October (1926) the flood of Khomdan destro[yed] the suspension bridge, 13 men, fields, and several cattle of Nubra. And I hear that this flood damaged more in Balistan, and washed away the pal[a]ce of Keres (of Baltistan). The ex-king of Stog intend to make a big feast on 13th insst., in order to celebrate a Bangri (a fest for a new child).

I am trying my best to accomplish the translation of the whole Bible, and I think that in next year I shall be able to complete it, then I shall be free. I collected sufficient materials to write down a book regarding the Lahulis. Yet I was not able to find out a complete copy of Khache Phalu, but hope to find later on, as some friend of me wrote letters at Lhasa to seek and to send here a complete copy of it. Which begin with the story of Adam and Eve.

Galdan is quite well here, but he feel colder in Ladak, so I bought a felt coat for him. More than 1500 hajjis arrived here from Yark[a]nd in this autumn, and went to Mec[c]a, and still coming more. So the food stuff became dearer than before. I am learning to play chess.

Still we have a mild winter, and I like Ladak.

Please write me only a short note according your welfares.

With Jus from us all.

Yours sincerely,

J. Gergan

Letter from F. W. Thomas (MssEur. D722/3, no.6)

July 30. 1930

161, Woodstock Road, Oxford.

Just a line to say that I have found your letter and the rubbing and will try to do what I can with the aid of a glass. The Tibetan writing which you give seems to begin with [*'phog*] (or is this your *la sgo?*) [*dgon pa'i g.yims chung dbang rten gtsho*] (sic) [*che ba thub pa chu brnyed rag sku'i bzhur*] ([*bzhugs*]?) [*phyi'i*]. It mentions [*yi ge*] 'letters'. I hope to complete this. This Indian character seems to contain a date – I will try it with a glass.

Yours sincerely,

F.W. Thomas

Letter from F. W. Thomas (MssEur. D722/3, no.7)

August 6. 1930

161, Woodstock Road, Oxford

My dear Mr. Shuttleworth,

I am giving overleaf my reading of the inscription on the La-sgo monastery image. The rubbing is, as you say, too faint to allow more than a partial and in places not certain decipherment, and it seems hardly worthwhile to puzzle longer over the problem, which might perhaps be settled by a better imprint of the original. The inscription begins, as you will see, with a date (in an era not stated), and goes on to name the donor and perhaps to devise the merit of the gift and ask for blessing. I attached a query to every akṣara concerning which I am in doubt.

I also transliterate, as well as I can, the note in modern cursive Tibetan script, given, I suppose, by the person who made the unintelligible reading for you. But here also I am in doubt at some points.

Yours sincerely,

F.W. Thomas

P.S. I enclose the rubbing etc. with your note.

Tibetan note

[- sgo dgon pa'i g.zims chung dbang rten gtsho che ba thub pa chu brnyer rag] (brass) [sku'i bzhung phyi'i zhabs gnas 'og n yod pa'i yi ge 'dra ba]

(Sanskrit inscription)

(Year sg?) Mārگاśīrṣa month, Bright fortnight, 15th lunar day. This donation of the Śākya monk Viṭhu (?) varman was set up (May it be well with all the world ??)

The Deva Blama (Lama)

Ži-ba-hod (Śāntiprabha)

*Letter from H. G. Beasley (MssEur. D722/3, no.9)*⁶⁶

Cranmore Ethnographical Museum,
Walden Road, Chislehurst, Kent.
September 25th 1937

Dear Mr Shuttleworth,

You will perhaps recall that you visited here a couple of years ago when you kindly assisted on your photos. Since then the drawings have been loaned to the University Museum, Leiden, and the National Museum, Copenhagen, the British Museum also borrowed them but in the end found they did not have the necessary space for an altar. Since your visit I have added a few more images of good quality and withdrawn those which were not quite so good.

This year we have commenced the issue of a journal dealing with the outstanding specimens in this museum. This journal is issued free to some 250 Museums and Institutions and the 1st copy has been very well received. The second issue is in progress of publication and will appear this year. These issues each contain one article contributed by an expert on each of the localities in which this museum is interested – Tibet of course being one of these – I should therefore be very grateful if you could find time to write a short account of the wooden figure that you discovered near Kyelang and which has come here. I possess your original photo and could of course send you a good print of the one we have here. Since you were the discoverer of these two figures I do feel that the article should be written by you and I hope that you will find the time to do this for me.

Please convey my very kind regards to Mrs Shuttleworth.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely.

Harry G. Beasley

*Letter from W. R. Lamb (MssEur. D722/3, no.10)*⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Harry Geoffrey Beasley (1881–1939) was a British anthropologist, private collector, and museum curator. With his wife, he set up the Cranmore Ethnographical Museum in Chislehurst, Kent, in 1928.

⁶⁷ Sir Walter R. M. Lamb was appointed Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1913. He is the author of *The Royal Academy: A short History of its Foundation and Development* published in 1951.

Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London, W.1.
22nd June, 1939

Dear Sir,

The Royal Academy, with the assistance of a number of connoisseurs of Indian Art, is preparing for January – March, 1940, an Exhibition of the Art of the Indian Empire, French Indo-China, Netherlands India, Burma, Malaya, Siam, Afghanistan, Tibet and Nepal. The Chairman of the Executive Committee is Sir Edwin L. Lutyens, K.C.I.E., P.R.A., and Sir John Marshall, C.I.E., and Sir Richard Winstedt, K.B.E., C.M.G., are Vice-Chairmen.

The Committee will be much obliged if you will kindly consent to join the Selection Committee, as your knowledge and advice would be of great value for certain sections of the Exhibition.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

W. R. Lamb


Secretary



The Rock Art of Spiti A General Introduction¹

John Vincent Bellezza

(Tibet Center, University of Virginia, USA)

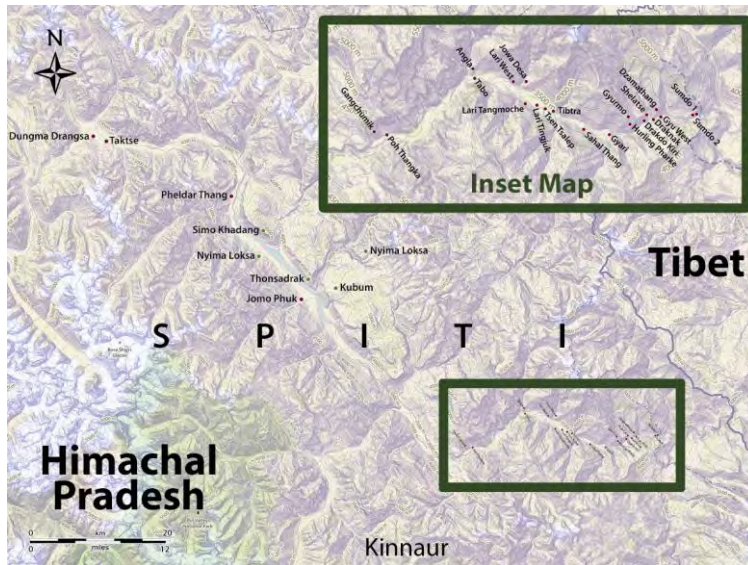
 The present article reviews the rock art of Spiti as a tool for understanding its early cultural history. Spiti (*Spi ti / Spyi ti*) is a valley system situated on the western edge of the Tibetan plateau, in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. Until recently, very little had been written about Spiti's cultural history prior to the Buddhist renaissance of the late 10th and 11th centuries CE.

Spiti is sandwiched between the Great Western Himalaya range and Transhimalayan ranges bounded by the Pare Chu River on the north, south and east. Spiti is centered around 32° 30' North Latitude, some 2500 km from the eastern extremity of the Tibetan plateau. The climate of Spiti is arid and continental, with cold snowy winters and dry warm summers.² The villages of Spiti are situated between 3,140 meters and 4430 meters in elevation.

The people of Spiti enjoy an ancient culture and language closely related to those of Western Tibet. The population of Spiti is relatively homogenous and of a Bodic ethnic makeup (there are, however, several caste distinctions). It is this shared heritage that has drawn Spiti and Western Tibet into the same circle of kindred relations.

¹ The writing of this article and my other publications on Spiti were supported by a recurring grant from the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation (New York). Funding for travel and field operations in Spiti in 2015 was provided by Joseph Optiker of Switzerland. I went to Spiti at the invitation of the Spiti Rock Art and Historical Society, an organization constituted to preserve rock art, ancient monuments and historical records. Eli Bellezza, Olivia Rix, Adam Rogerson and Mihael Kavanaugh helped document the rock art. Natives of Spiti who helped me in the field wish to remain anonymous.

² On the physical and political geography of Spiti, see Kapadia 1999: 25–32.



Map of the rock art sites of Spiti in Himachal Pradesh, India.
Map by Brian Sebastian and John Vincent Bellezza.

One of the earliest known references to Spiti in Tibetan literature appears in a 13th century CE historical text, *lDe'u chos 'byung*, where it is listed as part of Zhang Zhung, a sovereign kingdom until the mid-7th century CE.³ However, there is also a much earlier rock inscription located in the northwestern Tibet region of Ruthok (*Ru thog*) that mentions the 'District of Spiti' (*Spyi ti sde*) in conjunction with the personal name of its maker.⁴

³ On the early cultural history of Spiti as derived from Tibetan literature and ethnographic study, see Bellezza 2015b.

⁴ On this inscription see Bellezza 2008, pp. 186, 187; 2016a, fig. 58. The inscription is preceded by a clockwise swastika, which serves to emphasize the momentousness of what is written and illustrates that it was composed under the auspices of Buddhism. It reads: *spyi ti sde myang rmang la snang* (ln. 2) *gis bris khyung po* (ln. 3) {*tha*} *chun* (= *chung*) *gyis brgyis* (mod. = *bgyis*) *pa'o* ("Written by Myang rmang la snang of the *Spyi ti* district. Done by the youngest Khyung po"). The accomplishment referred to in the third line appears to be the carving of two ritual thunderbolts (not visible in the image), heralding a Buddhist occupation, at least in an abstract or legalistic sense. The inscription includes reference to the Spiti (*Spyi ti*) district (*sde*), one of five districts constituting Lower (Smad) Zhang Zhung, a crucial part of the territorial holdings of the Tibetan empire (for details, see Bellezza 2015b). This epigraphic reference to Spiti is by far the earliest one known, preceding by roughly 400 or even 500 years mention in the well-known 13th century CE historical text, *lDe'u chos 'byung*.



Fig. 1 — A rock face chronicling Buddhist influences in northwestern Tibet during the Imperial period. It is situated on an ancient east-west route between agricultural regions of the far west (Stod) and the pastoral Changthang. Carved in a conspicuous location, this inscription contains the earliest known reference to the region of Spiti.

On the Spiti Antiquities Expedition (May and June, 2015) my team and I attempted to document every single ancient rock carving and painting in the region (see Bellezza 2015a). While falling short of this ambitious goal, we documented approximately 1400 boulders with 6000 individual petroglyphs in lower Spiti.

Additionally, four parietal sites with some 180 red ochre pictographs were surveyed. Uniform sets of rock art data were collected in Spiti including GPS location, size, technique of production, orientation, and inclination of rock surface of individual carvings and paintings.

This is borne out by the 'square style' of the Ruthok inscription, a paleographic tradition associated with pillar edicts and official correspondence of the Tibetan Imperial period (circa 650–850 CE). The inscription also notes the Khyung po/pho clan. This large and highly influential clan had a dominant political function in western Tibet in the Imperial period, as demonstrated by both epigraphic and textual sources. The inscription establishes that the Khyung po clan was probably indigenous to Spiti during the Imperial period; several other early epigraphs in Ruthok appear to extend its distribution to this region as well.



Fig. 2 — Searching for boulders with rock art on the Spiti Antiquities Expedition, Drakdo Kiri.

Previous studies

The first report of petroglyphs in Spiti was made more than a century ago by Francke (1914: 37-8), who stated that below the village of Lari and in Tabo there are many rock carvings, particularly those of ibex and swastikas that may be pre-Buddhist. A couple decades later, Tucci (1936: 48) reported that prehistoric figures of humans and ibexes were engraved on big rock faces on the side of the trail below Kunzam La. Tucci (*ibid.*) remarked that these petroglyphs were of the same type as those studied by Francke in Ladakh (*La dwags*). The rock art described by Tucci appears to have been destroyed by modern road construction. More recently, Thakur (2001; 2008), Handa (2001), Chauhan *et al.* (2014) have conducted preliminary studies of rock carvings in Spiti.

Locational characteristics

Lower Spiti boasts one of the densest concentrations of petroglyphs (rock carvings) in the entire Tibetan cultural sphere, but now suffering massive destruction (see below). There are also petroglyphs, pictographs and bas relief carvings of ancient *stūpas* in Upper Spiti. In July 2015, two additional rock art sites were discovered in the region by the Spiti Rock Art and Historical Association, which made copies of photographs of them available to me.

The petroglyphic sites of lower Spiti contain more than 95% of all rock art in the region. These sites are located in close proximity to the Spiti River. With just two exceptions, the rock carvings of Spiti occur on individual boulders ranging in size from 50 centimeters to over 4 meters in length. According to Thakur (2008: 28), these boulders are of granite, gneiss, schist, *etc.* The boulders are strewn across benches, terraces and flats suspended above the Spiti River.

All rock carving sites in the main Spiti valley straddle long-established pathways. Thus, ancient rock art and lines of communication went hand in hand. While some of these locations may have been the focus of hunting expeditions, especially in the winter, it appears they were chosen primarily for their visibility and frequency of usage. These locations are similar to those of Ladakh, of which the largest concentrations are along the Indus River. Rock art sites in Upper Tibet (*Stod* and *Byang-thang*) are not located in major river valleys, but rather in smaller valleys and near lakeshores.⁵

Two of the 24 sites of petroglyphs associated with Lower Spiti (*Spi ti gsham*) are actually seated in the district of Kinnaur, on the right side of the Spiti valley, but rock art there is closely related to that in Spiti proper. There are just two petroglyphic sites in Upper Spiti (*Spi ti stod*) consisting of a lone boulder each. Two sites of bas relief carvings of *chortens* (*mchod rten* / Sanskrit: *stūpa*) have also been discovered in Upper Spiti. Additionally, there are four sites with significant red ochre rock art in the upper portion of Spiti.

Three of these pictographic sites are located in high, out-of-the-way places, therefore, contrasting with the locational characteristics of petroglyphs in Lower Spiti.

⁵ Major works on rock art in Upper Tibet include Chayet 1994; Chen Zhao Fu 2006; Francfort *et al.* 1992; Li Yongxian 2004; Suolang Wangdui (Bsod-nams dbang-'dus) 1994; Bellezza 1997; 2000; 2001; 2002a; 2002b; 2008; Bruneau and Bellezza 2013. On the rock art of Ladakh, see some of the above as well as Francke 1902; 1903; 1914; De Terra 1940; Mani 1998; Vernier 2007; Bruneau 2013; 2011; 2010; Bruneau *et al.* 2011; Bruneau and Vernier 2010; Aas 2009; Thsangspa 2014.



Fig. 3 — Anthropomorph and swastika, Nyima Loksa Phuk. Protohistoric period.

The rock art sites of Spiti (from lowermost to uppermost) are listed below.

Petroglyphs

| Name of Site | Location |
|--|--|
| Sumdo (<i>Sum mdo</i>) 1 | Cliffs immediately above the main road |
| Sumdo 2 | Giant boulder above the river |
| Dzamathang (<i>Rdza ma thang</i>) | Shelf above the Gya River |
| Shelatse (<i>Shel la rtse</i>) | Old trail between Hurling and Sumdo |
| Hurling Pharke (<i>Hur gling phar ke</i>) | Slopes west of the Karti Naullah |
| Gyurmo (<i>Gyur mo</i>) | Inside the Karti Naullah above Hurling |
| Gyu West (<i>Rgyu</i>) | Bench below main road west of Gyu confluence |
| Draknak (<i>Brag nag</i>) | Slopes east of Hurling |
| Drakdo Kiri (<i>Brag rdo ki ri</i> ; spelling?) | Benches east of Hurling |

| | |
|--|--|
| Gyari (<i>Rgya ri</i>) | Sloping flat on east side of Sumra River |
| Sahal Thang (<i>Sa skal thang</i>) | Benches on west side of Sumra River |
| Tibtra | Bench near flood damaged bridge east of Lari |
| Tsen Tsalep (<i>Rtsan rtsa leb</i> ; spelling?) | Flats near Lari stud farm |
| Lari Tingjuk (<i>La ri ting mjug</i>) | Flats east of Lari |
| Lari Tangmoche (<i>La ri thang mo che</i>) | Fields and orchards around Lari |
| Jowa Desa (<i>Jo ba sdad sa</i>) | Inside side valley at Lhari |
| Lari West | Benches west of Lari |
| Tabo (<i>Ta po</i>) | Tabo and environs |
| Angla (<i>Dbang la?</i>) | On slopes and ridge north of Tabo |
| Poh Thangka (<i>Spo thang kha</i>) | Benches upstream of Poh |
| Gangchumik (<i>Sgang chu mig</i>) | Slopes upstream of Poh on old trail to Dankhar |
| Jomo Phuk (<i>Jo mo phug</i>) | Cliff and boulders near Jomo Phuk |
| Pheldar Thang (<i>'Phel dar thang</i>) | Boulder shrine in eponymous flat |
| Dungma Drangsa (<i>Mdung ma brang sa</i>) | A boulder at the foot of Kunzam La |
| Taktse (<i>Stag rtse?</i>) | A boulder at the foot of Kunzam La. |

Pictographs

| Name of Site | Location |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Kubum (<i>Sku bum</i>) | Old Tengyü monastery |
| Thonsadrak (<i>Mthon sa brag</i>) | Across Spiti River from Rangrik |
| Nyima Loksa (<i>Nyi ma log sa phug</i>) | Cave above Sumling |
| Simo Khadang (<i>Srin mo kha gdang</i>) | Cave above Chichim |

The contents and frequencies of occurrence

The rock art of Spiti boasts a wide spectrum of both figurative and non-figurative compositions, consisting of various zoomorphic, anthropomorphic, geometric and symbolic subjects. Animals make up around 70% of the approximately 6000 petroglyphs, anthropomorphs (figures in human form) constitute about 15% of the total, geometric forms 10%, and symbolic subjects and shrines 5%.

The most common animals depicted in the petroglyphs of Spiti are wild caprids, which constitute approximately 90% of zoomorphic subjects.



Fig. 4 — Ibex, blue sheep and wild yak carvings, Draknak. Protohistoric period.

The most prevalent caprid portrayed is the blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), followed by the ibex (*Capra sibirica*).⁶ Blue sheep and ibex are found as part of hunting and non-hunting compositions.

⁶ The ibex is probably the most widespread animal species in the rock art of Eurasia. On ibex in the rock art of Ladakh, see Thsangspa 2014; Thsangspa n.d.; Bruneau 2010; Vernier 2007. For ibex rock art in Wakhan: Mock 2011. For ibex in Mongolia: Jacobson and Meacham 2009.



Fig. 5 — Hunters on foot with bows and arrows attacking ibex, Draknak. Protohistoric period.

The ratio of blue sheep to ibex in rock art appears to be more than two to one. In the rock art of Spiti, blue sheep are identified by shorter horns that curve in opposite directions on either side of the head while the horns of the ibex overarch the body of animals. There are however permutations in the style of horns creating a good deal of ambiguity in certain depictions of these two species of wild caprids. Still, today, the blue sheep is the most common wild ungulate in Spiti while the ibex is second, so their prevalence in the zoomorphic rock art of the region reflects current ecological conditions. The remaining 10% of zoomorphs in Spiti rock art in descending order of frequency are wild carnivores (tigers, snow leopards and wolves), equids (mostly horses), wild yak, deer, argali sheep and birds.



Fig. 6 — Horned eagle, icon of Greater Western Tibetan culture, Sumdo 2. Iron Age.

The standard anthropomorphic depiction in the rock art of Spiti of all periods consists of figures with long, straight, narrow bodies and thin legs and arms.



Fig. 7 — Stick figures brandishing bows and other anthropomorphic and animal figures, Sahal Thang.



Fig. 8 — Dancing figures with Tibetan inscription of same timeframe, Tabo. Early Historic period.

Many of these anthropomorphs are not much more than 'stick figures' and their heads are usually round. There are two basic types of emblematic figures, one with curved appendages and one with

angular appendages. Many anthropomorphs have arms extending downward.



Fig. 9 — Ibex, Blue sheep and anthropomorphs in a non-hunting context, Gyurmo. Iron Age and Protohistoric period.

This is in contrast to Upper Tibet and Ladakh where the majority of anthropomorphic figures have outstretched or uplifted arms.⁷

In contrast to Upper Tibet and Ladakh, martial contests and battle scenes in the rock art of Spiti are rare. Horse riders constitute another category, albeit a small one, of anthropomorphic rock art in Spiti.

In Upper Tibet and Ladakh the equestrian arts are much better represented. Spiti is a precipitous mountain region, with far fewer level areas than Ladakh or Upper Tibet. Furthermore, the hunting of blue sheep and ibex is usually carried out in rugged mountain terrain unsuitable for horses. These factors may help to account for the paucity of horse-rider rock art in the region.

⁷ It is not clear why arm positions in Spiti contrast with those in Upper Tibet and Ladakh. As one possibility, it may be that early Spitian culture was more strongly oriented toward telluric phenomena and points of reference.



Fig. 10 — Figure on horseback, Dzamathang. Protohistoric or Early Historic period.

Large composite scenes are typical of Spitian rock art; they consist of many animals and anthropomorphs with each figure touching the other or nearly so.



Fig. 11— A large mass of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures, Sahal Thang. Protohistoric period.

Lines and more complex geometric subjects are often interspersed among the figurative rock art. These types of complex scenes are full of activity and exuberance, a symphony of figures in movement. In Upper Tibet, however, large composite scenes are less common, and groups of interconnected subjects unusual.

Elementary tiered shrines and more complex *stūpas* comprise another major category of figurative rock carvings in Spiti.



Fig. 12 — A rudimentary chorten or some other type of tiered shrine, Gyurmo. Early Historic period.

These types of ceremonial structures have a strong resonance with those in Upper Tibet and Ladakh.⁸

Complex geometric subjects in Spiti are much more prevalent than in Upper Tibet or Ladakh.

Non-figurative subjects make up around 12% of the total rock art in Ladakh (Bruneau and Bellezza 2013: 31) and considerably less in Upper Tibet, and are largely comprised of simply designed compositions. In Spiti intricate rectilinear and curvilinear designs are quite common.

⁸ For a comparison of tiered shrines in the rock art of Spiti and Upper Tibet, see Bellezza In press; 2015a (August *Flight of the Khyung*, figs. 41–73).



Fig. 13 — Simple geometric subjects consisting of a square partitioned into twelve sections and a sun with seven rays, Tabo. Protohistoric period.



Fig. 14 — A more complex geometric subject consisting of curvilinear and rectilinear motifs, Sahal Thang. Iron Age or Protohistoric period.

The repertoire of symbolic representations includes: swastikas, sunbursts, crescent moons, trees, circles and dots (fig. 15). As in Upper Tibet and Ladakh, swastikas face in both directions in the rock art of the pre-10th century CE. Some rock art in this category may have had a dual function as actual facsimiles of the things shown as well as encapsulating mythological, ideological, mystical and other forms of abstract cultural information.



Fig. 15 — Sun, swastika, cervid and other wild ungulates taken in direct sunshine, Drakdo Kiri. Protohistoric or Early Historic period

Like Upper Tibet and Ladakh, there is no irrefutable evidence for the portrayal of domestic animals, pastoralism, encampments and houses, topographical features, or the sky and earth in the rock art of Spiti. We might assume that the rock surface itself was perceived of as simulating the physical environment and that figures created on these surfaces are an implicit acknowledgement of the surroundings.

Unlike the rock engravings, no hunting and almost no animals are represented in the assemblages of pictographs. Instead, anthropomorphs and symbolic compositions predominate. Human figures are shown in what appear to be provocative or highly demonstrative poses. Pictographs include symbols, mainly the swastika but also sun, crescent moon, circle and tree.

Chronology

An absolute chronology of rock art in Spiti is not yet feasible due to well-known limitations in the scientific techniques used to directly date it.⁹ We are therefore forced to rely on a relative chronology based on collateral forms of evidence. These include:

⁹ On dating rock art on the western portion of the Tibetan Plateau, see Bellezza 2008, pp. 162, 163; Bruneau and Bellezza 2013, pp. 6–9; Suolang Wangdui 1994, pp. 33, 34; Chayet 1994, pp. 55, 56.

cultural/historical analysis, stylistic and thematic categorization, associative archaeological data, gauging environmental changes, examination of techniques of production, placement of superimpositions, and assessment of erosion, re-patination of petroglyphs and browning and ablation of pictographs. As most of these types of evidence are not currently verifiable using scientific methods, the relative chronology I have devised for Spitian rock art is expressed in broad and somewhat fluid terms.

A provisional chronology for the rock art of Spiti is as follows:

I. Prehistoric epoch

- Late Bronze Age (circa 1500–800 BCE): Mascoids (anthropomorphic visages in emblematic form).
- Early Iron Age (circa 800–500 BCE): Anthropomorphs with angular appendages and prominent displays of male genitalia, with and without wild ungulates. Deeply carved and very heavily re-patinated petroglyphs restricted in style.
- Iron Age (circa 500–100 BCE): Tigers and horned eagles exhibiting Upper Tibetan and Ladakhi influences; anthropomorphs with angular and rounded appendages and male genitalia, with and without wild ungulates; spirals and other geometrics. Deeply carved and heavily or moderately re-patinated petroglyphs somewhat restricted in style.
- Protohistoric period (100 BCE to 650 CE): Archers on foot and horseback hunting wild ungulates; complex curvilinear and rectilinear designs; elementary tiered shrines. Mostly, less deeply carved and moderately re-patinated petroglyphs of diverse styles and techniques. Pictographs of analogous styles and themes.

II. Historic Epoch

- Early Historic period (650–1000 CE): Portraits of horse riders and standing anthropomorphs; complex tiered shrines (*stūpas*); conjoined sun and moon; geometrics based on earlier phases of rock art. Most carvings shallow; modeling of figures crude. Pictographs of analogous styles and themes. A degenerate era in the production of traditional rock art.
- Vestigial period (1000–1300 CE): Buddhist artistic influences and themes as well as art imitative of earlier phases. The terminal period in the production of traditional rock art.

- Later Historic period (post-1300 CE): Copycat art contrived in style and presentation.

General cultural and historical observations

Ethnographic research I have carried out in Upper Tibet indicates that hunting was not merely an economic activity, but one closely connected to religious beliefs concerning the pantheon of local spirits and the manner in which they are propitiated.¹⁰ A sacred dimension is incorporated in the hunting traditions of many different peoples worldwide.¹¹ Similarly, hunting may have had mythic, ritual and ceremonial overtones for ancient Spitians. The high elevation parietal locations and contents of the pictographic sites indicates that they had cult functions. Stylistic and thematic parallels with rock art in Upper Tibet and Ladakh strongly suggest allied mytho-ritual functions.¹² Thus, for the rock art of Spiti utilitarian, social as well as religious functions are indicated.

Aside from their role in hunting, blue sheep and ibex have cultic, mythic, ritual and symbolic status in the Tibetan cultural world, as illustrated by archaeological, textual and ethnographic sources. In Spitian rock art blue sheep and ibex are often presented alone in portraits as well as in large composite scenes as companions of human figures. The diverse roles blue sheep and ibex play in the rock art of Spiti from the Iron Age until the Early Historic period are reflected in these various configurations. This ancient presence is still embodied in the sacred roles of blue sheep and ibex in contemporary Greater Western Tibet.

¹⁰ In traditional hunting rituals of propitiation carried out in the Changthang (Byang thang), the flesh of a large male blue sheep (in the venatic idiom: *rgya 'dan*) has good fortune-bestowing properties (Bellezza 2008: 462 [n. 345]). There is also a term for the hunting of deer and blue sheep in the Old Tibetan language (*sha dang rngas shor / shord / bshor*). For a review of historical, economic and technical aspects of hunting antelope in the Changthang, see Huber 2005. On the terminology of hunting in Old Tibetan documents and its historical and cross-cultural context, see Dotson 2013.

¹¹ For example, Jettmar (1988: 87) reports that among the Kalash of Chitral hunting ibex and markhor is considered a sacred activity. According to Olivieri (2011: 43 [n. 15]), in the rock art of Swat the ibex is an iconic figure, which may include the manifestation of a mountain deity, and its hunting was a ritualized activity. On sacred aspects of ibex hunting among the Dards of Ladakh, see Vohra 1989.

¹² On parallels in artistic and ideological aspects of culture in Upper Tibet and Spiti, see Bellezza 2015a (August *Flight of the Khyung*).

In Tibetan ritual literature, blue sheep and ibex and their body parts have a wide range of religious functions. The brief review that follows furnishes an incomplete but telling survey of these functions. One Yungdrung Bon ritual text of significant age describes the archetypal tools given to the great mountain god Nyenchen Thanglha (*Gnyan chen thang lha*) by his divine grandfather, which includes a bomb (*tso*) in the form of a blue sheep horn (Bellezza 2005: 179). In Yungdrung Bon ritual literature, the blue sheep horn (*rna ru*) is one of the weapons wielded by the chief god of Zhang Zhung, Gekhö (*Ge khod*), and the Zhang Zhung sage Tonggyung Thuchen (*Tong rgyung mthu chen*) is customarily depicted holding a blue sheep horn with an issuing flame. Yungdrung Bon texts describing the ritual constructs for Gekhö state that his body receptacle is a pair of golden horns of the blue sheep (Bellezza 2008: 256, 258, 322). In another ritual text for the god Gekhö, one of nine divine brothers, Thocho Yampa Thuwoche (*Tho yam pa mthu bo che*), rides on a crystal blue sheep (*ibid.*, 317, 318).

The Yungdrung Bon history of the oral transmission of an esoteric mind training tradition (*Bon ma nub pa'i gtan tshigs*) records that the Zhang Zhung saint Nangzher Löpo (*Snang bzher lod po*) manifested on an island in Lake Darok Tsho (*Da rog mtsho*) from a blue sheep horn of white crystal (Bellezza 1999: 80). In the Old Tibetan ritual text *Rnel drñ 'dul ba'i thabs sogs*, a sacrificial blue sheep lamb (*rne'u*) assists the dead in reaching the celestial afterlife (Bellezza 2013: 158). In this same text, the skin of a blue sheep is used as an apotropaic instrument to free souls enthralled by infernal demons (*ibid.*, 152).

In the Old Tibetan funerary ritual document designated Pt 1134, an ibex named Lord Male Ibex Surmounting Horns (*Skyin po ru thog rje*) acts as an emissary to bring a sacred vulture needed to complete the funeral of a suicide victim (Bellezza 2008: 529; 2010: 41). In a rare illuminated manuscript, written circa the 11th century CE, ibexes aid the dead in reaching the ancestral paradise (Bellezza 2013: 49, 50). A comparable psychopomp function is ascribed to the ibex in the Old Tibetan text *Rnel drñ 'dul ba'i thabs sogs* (*ibid.*, 122).

According to Francke (1914: 105), the ibex was a symbol of fertility in pre-Buddhist Ladakh, occupying a role comparable to the ram in Lahul. In Spiti and other regions of Greater Western Tibet, ibex and blue sheep horns are customarily installed on shrines for local protective deities known as lhatho (*lha tho*) and lhatsuk (*lha gtsug*).



Fig. 16 — Modern shrine of the lhatho class belonging to the territorial god (*yul lha*), Drabla Shaktse (*Dgra bla shag rtse*), Hansa.

The horns function as offerings (*mchod 'bul*) to and receptacles (*rten*) for these territorial and ancestral spirits. To celebrate births in Ladakh, ibexes are fashioned from dough (*ibid.*). Similarly, Francke believed that ibex carvings in Ladakh represented thanksgiving offerings for the birth of children (*ibid.*). Pirie (2008: 178) describes a Ladakh ritual commemorating the dead held at the end of the lunar year, in which ibexes made of dough are offered on a rocky outcrop. The carving of ibexes on rocks continues to the present day for the Brokpa (*'Brog pa, sic. Minaro*) of lower Ladakh made in gratitude for a successful hunt and in exchange for the animal's life (Peissel 1984: 85–87). During fertility rites (*Gotsi*) and sowing rites (*Chogtsi khis*) in Lahul, images of ibex are sculpted from butter (Bellezza 1997: 70 [n. 28]). In the Changthang, woman's sashes are woven with blue sheep and other animals as apotropaic and good luck symbols (Bellezza 2001: 197).

Human figures that can be positively identified as female in the rock art of Spiti are rare. This seems to indicate that the creation of petroglyphs in the region was largely the domain of males. The same observation can be made for Upper Tibetan rock art: it mostly revolves around activities typically conducted by males (i.e., hunting, combat, ithyphallic displays, etc.). The standard anthropomorphs of Spiti, arms pointing towards the ground, may possibly allude to a chthonic component in the symbolic or ideological information intended to be conveyed by this rock art. In 2016, members of the Spiti Rock Art and Historical Society discovered three mascoids on a boulder near Hurling.¹³

Mascoids are representations of anthropomorphic faces found in the rock art of many areas of Inner Asia, including Ladakh and Upper Tibet. These symbolic or emblematic visages are commonly dated by rock art specialists to the Bronze Age, and the style, heavy wear and re-patination of the Spiti examples seems to support this chronological attribution.

The identification and significance of geometric rock art in Spiti is enigmatic. In the absence of strong cultural indications, the large variety of geometric subjects encourages an inclusive view of their possible functions as both ideograms and pictograms. The lexicon of geometric subjects potentially includes: magical diagrams; cosmographs; emblems or signatures of individuals, clans or bands; sacred mental and visionary processes; and perhaps even figurative functions such as the depiction of encampments, labyrinths, or pathways and trajectories in the natural world.

The nature of Spitian pictographs combined with their remote locations indicates that this rock art was produced within a cult setting. There is nothing patently economic about them. The *khyung* and another bird and anthropomorphs in close association with one another enhance the cultic dimension of the pictographs. The repertoire of symbols (swastika, sun, moon, tree, etc.) selected for the pictographic art of Spiti mirrors ritual and mythological constructs described in Yungdrung Bon religious literature. It also draws this pictographic art into close cultural and religious correspondence with the rock art of Upper Tibet and Ladakh.

¹³ See Bellezza 2016b; on mascoid rock art in Upper Tibet and Ladakh and its north Inner Asian affinities, see Bruneau and Bellezza 2013, pp. 40–44.

Conservation issues

Some years ago, Laxman Thakur (2008: 28) warned that boulders bearing rock art in Spiti were being blown up to construct new houses and walls and to clear ground for tree planting.



Fig. 17 — A plain that had many rock art boulders recently cleared for development of orchards, Sumra.



Fig. 18 — A rock art boulder damaged by installation in the wall of an orchard, Tabo.

Thirty years ago the primary cause of rock art loss in Spiti was government-sponsored road construction and the building of various types of facilities for education, administration and economic

development. Today the major cause of destruction is the expansion of apple orchards in Lower Spiti.

I estimate that about 50% of all rock art in Lower Spiti, possibly some 1500 boulders and 6000 individual petroglyphs, has been destroyed in recent years.



Fig. 19 — A large area with rock art eliminated for development projects, Poh.



Fig. 20 — Fields with much rock art destroyed to make way for an apple orchard, Tabo.



Fig. 21 — A broken boulder with ancient rock art, Poh.



Fig. 22 — Ancient rock art marked for destruction, Hurling.

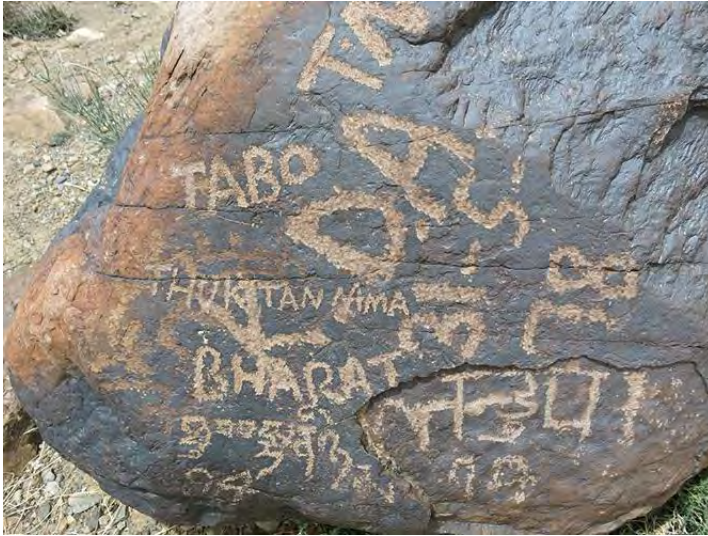


Fig. 23 — Ancient rock art recently defaced by graffiti, Tabo.

Conclusion

The survey of the rock art of Spiti demonstrates that it is an extremely important resource for the study of the cultural history of the region. Rock art resonates with a host of mythological and ritual themes found in the Tibetan literary record. Tibetan texts containing archaic ritual and mythological materials often purport to be of prehistoric antiquity (pre-7th century CE) and in some instances rock art serves to verify the antiquity of these accounts. The rock art of Spiti is also crucial in placing local ethnographic phenomena in a deeper historical context by highlighting the pre-Buddhist (pre-10th CE) origins of certain customs and traditions.

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Contesting Antiquity and Development: A Report on the Rock Art Preservation in Spiti Valley, Himachal Pradesh

Ekta Singh,ⁱ Vijay K. Bodh,ⁱⁱ P.M. Saklaniⁱⁱⁱ

Introduction

ew overcomes the old - Complex over-ruled the simple Social, Economic and Cultural practices evolve through time and space - meanwhile, a consistent effort has been put towards the preservation of archaic and ruined. Each year a remarkable sum of government money is channelled for research and conservation, with specialized agencies devoted for locating and identifying ancient sites and monuments throughout India. In direct conflict, however, projects of 'national importance' have posed consistent and accelerating threat to the overall existence of these historical sites. In the Spiti Valley, recent economic development has led to the construction of new roads, bridges and dams, all of which affect the territories heritage especially the rock art sites of the region.

The present paper is an output of a ten-day field work to the various rock art sites of the Spiti Valley in October 2015. Two of the authors conducted the survey on behalf of the I.G.N.C.A. (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts), New Delhi.

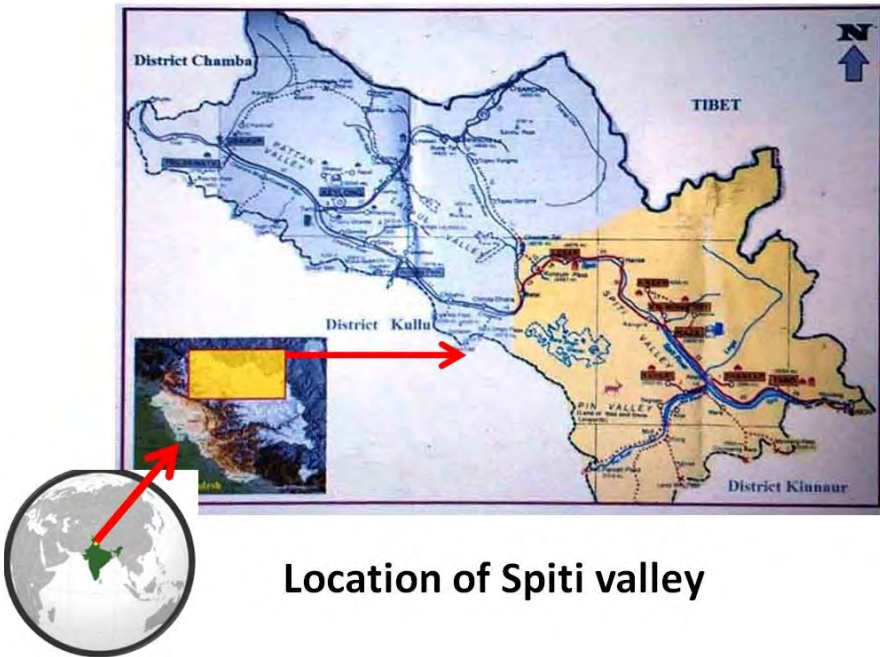
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Fig. 1 — View of the Spiti Valley. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Location of Spiti valley

Fig. 2 — Location of Spiti Valley. Map Edited by Nagender Rawat (2016).

Rock Art Sites in the Spiti Valley

In the Western Himalayas of India, the regions of Ladakh and Spiti have been the centres of many significant rock art findings, however despite the important presence of Rock Art in Spiti, these finds have not been investigated thoroughly from an archaeological perspective.¹ The term 'petroglyph' refers to an image created by removing part of a surface by incising, pecking, carving, or abrading. Scholars often use terms such as 'carving' or 'engraving'. Pictographs, however, refers to paintings of early time usually found in caves or rock shelters. The recent documentation by IGNCA in Spiti reveals rock shelter sites along with pictographs. Petroglyphs, on the other hand, are rather found in open air galleries located along the banks of the Spiti River or hilltops. That said some of the local historians have also reported numerous high altitude and inaccessible sites rich with petroglyphs and rock paintings (pictographs). Francke was the first scholar who reported rock carvings from the south slopes of the Kunzum Pass. Later, Tucci, Handa, and Laxman Thakur also reported many petroglyphs from the lower Spiti Valley. Recently some pictograph sites have been identified from the rock shelter near Kibber by John Bellezza. Beyond these fleeting notes and general surveys, as far as Spiti rock art is concerned, the valley remains mostly unexplored lacking detailed studies; subsequently, personal attempts have been made by two scholars namely Dr. Tsering Norbu and Mr. Michael Dowad to locate and to identify the petroglyphic and pictographic sites in Spiti Valley from Kunzum Pass to Sumdo. They located petroglyphic sites near the Kunzum pass, at Tak Tse, Dhungma Dhansi, Phaldhar Thang, Yidse Phuk, Ngangmarang, Pohlingthang, Nynmadonmo, Tapo (Tabo), Ang la, Lari Dokpo, Lari, Tip-ta, Xahal Thang, Gyar-tse, Dakto-kiri, Hurling, Kyurmo, Shel-La tse, Xama Thang and Sumdo. They have also indentified pictographic sites at places that are locally known as Sringmo-Khadang, Nimaloksa, Tashigang, mondasa phuk Srag-Phuk and Sumdo-Phuk. These archaeologically important caves are located near the villages of Chichim, Sumling, Rangrik, Mondasa, Hikkim and Sumdo, respectively.

¹ See Bellezza 2017 in the present volume.

Petroglyph and Pictograph Sites of the Spiti River Watershed

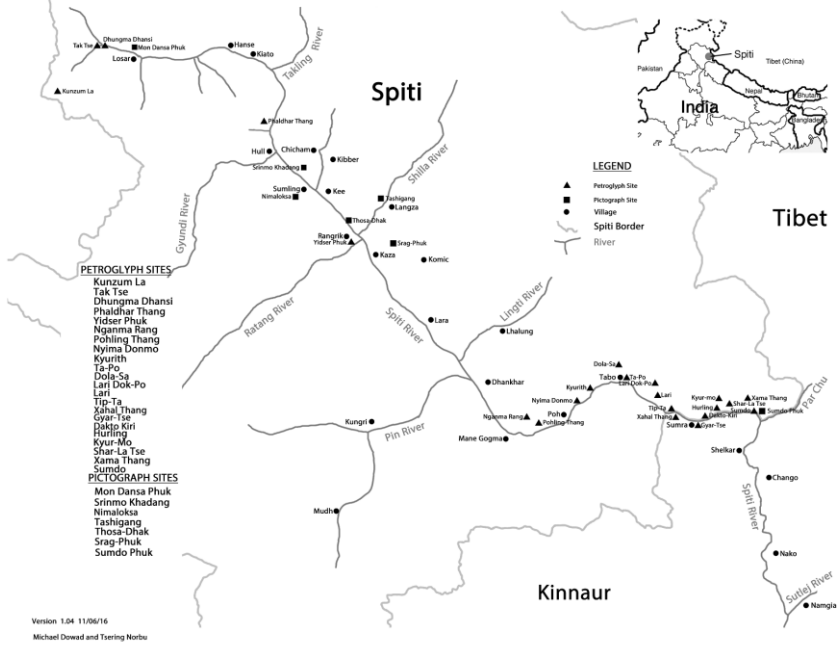


Fig. 3 — Map of Spiti Rock Art Sites sourced from Michael Dowad and Tsering Norbu (2016).

Most of the Petroglyphs documented are engraved on stone boulders and blocks fallen from the adjacent hills. The boulders chosen for carvings are much larger in size and are embedded in-to the ground at varied depths. The figures depicted on the boulders are human and animal figurines, abstracts and geometrical figures (circles, squares, triangles and rectangles), human with weapons holding rope, horse-riders, ibexes, deer, dogs, tortoise, swamp deer, scorpions, a horse, cup marks, Sun, stupas, decorative and geometric motifs, double spirals, yaks, tigers and dancing figurines, etc. Also spotted a few miscellaneous figures such as dots forming triangles, arrows, trees, swastikas, cross motifs, concentric circles, and circles with dots in the centre etc. Tibetan inscriptions in few boulders, some modern graffiti and super-impositions can also be traced. In one of

the stone blocks on cliff of hill, locally known as Do lhatse contain inscriptions in Tibetan script mentioning Ta-po.²

On stylistic grounds, these engravings can be classified into three groups. The first group includes subjects engraved deep into the rock surface with the help of sharp pointed tools as evidenced by fine lines of varying thickness. The carvings depict hunting scenes showing individual or a group of hunters holding bows, arrows or spears targeting animals. The animals shown can be identified as blue sheep with bulky body and short legs, while dogs are seen in smaller sizes. Second group comprises human figures with triangular heads and bodies, and stretched hands and legs. The third group consists of crude representations carved superficially into the rock surface. The team also visited rock-shelters at Sringmo khadang, which is 3-kilometer hike from Chichim village, Nimaloksa, 2.5 km straight climb from Sumling, Srag Phuk near Hikkim and Tashigang. The depictions found in these rock-shelters include human and animal figurines, hunting scenes with spears, bows and arrows, wild yaks, blue sheep, leopards, deer, birds, swastikas, sun motifs, spiked disc trees. The colour used in the paintings is red ochre, while dark red was also observed at one site. As far as the dating of these engravings and rock paintings is concerned, it is too premature to state anything conclusive without comparative studies with the neighbouring regions, particularly Ladakh, Tibet, and Zanskar.

Threats on the rock art of Spiti

The rock art of Spiti is currently threatened by both natural and manmade hazards. Natural threats are due to weathering process, exposure to sunlight, precipitation, and dust. As such signs of flaking, cracking, blasting, and accumulation of microbiological growths can be seen on the surfaces of these boulders. Manmade threats are basically desecration, graffiti making, and destruction of boulders for construction purposes. In the last few years, numerous sites have been partially or completely destroyed. Vandalism and new construction technique using stones rather than mud-bricks are additional threats.

² The inscription at Do lha tse mentions Tabo as Ta-po, confirmed by Tsering Norbu.



Fig. 4 — Destroyed boulder in an apple orchard. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 5 — A petroglyph boulder with graffiti. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 7 — A petroglyph bearing boulder broken for construction purpose. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 8 — Some biological growth on petroglyph boulder. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 9 — Boulder cut down into pieces which have petroglyphs on it. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 10 — Wall built on a boulder which contains petroglyph. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).



Fig. 11 — A petroglyph boulder on the verge of breakdown naturally. Photograph by Ekta Singh (2016).

Recently, a hydroelectric power project in the state of Himachal Pradesh has been extended and threatens to encroach on the lower part of the Spiti Valley. This project poses a set of new problems and has given birth to social protest groups. It is contested that the projects might pose serious threat to the fragile ecology and terrain, thereby affecting the collective economy and livelihood. Within all the contestations, a firm and rational call for the conservation of the ancient rock art sites has thrown strong impressions. A hydro project is an advanced form of all the pre-assessed threat perceptions put together, involving new roads, broadening of existing roads, as well as new residential and commercial constructions. Additionally, there would be transmission lines, influx of work force, traffic increase, pollution, blasting, tunnelling, drilling, and destruction of rock boulders at larger scale. This is the estimated damage to be put down by a single hydro project venture. At present a proposal for 6 hydraulic power stations in the Spiti basin was put forward, with an installed capacity of 274 MW. This series of bumper to bumper project has been planned at Kulling-Lara (40 MW), Lara- Sumta (104 MW), Sumta-Kathang(130 MW), Mane-Nadang (70 MW), Chango-Yangthang (140 MW) and Yangthang-Khab (261 MW). The Lara, Sumte and Kathang projects have been awarded to Reliance Power

limited. The constellation of hydro projects would allow a negligible part of free flowing Spiti to keep flowing on its natural course, while a majority of the river would be diverted into tunnels. Another source claims that a total of 14 hydro projects to be constructed from Losar to Sumdo are under consideration. However, in the present paper we have come up with the minimalist assumption that 6 hydro projects might turn out to take shape in the near future, as confirmed by multiple sources (www.sandrp.in). A representative plan illustrates the distributive capacity of the hydro projects in the Sutlej basin. Those marked in yellow represent the Spiti River basin. As discussed earlier the Spiti River basin houses the mostly unexplored ancient rock art sites. Hence, a large scale destruction of early settlements and rock art sites is on the cards.

A hydro project in the Western Himalayas seizes tremendous potential for energy generation, but on the other hand may also cause havoc onto the socio-economic lives of the people inhabiting these hill regions (Asher 2015, Himdhara 2015). Safeguarding the community from incessant threats and abrupt challenges, the hill people interpret the socio-economic changes as a consequence of 'modernization'. The nearest available antonym for 'modern' being 'tradition', 'culture', 'ancient'. Hence, a popular narrative has emerged delving the mountain community towards culture, ecological and site specific *andolan* (revolution).

Speaking on the approach of these *andolans*, most of the slogans stress on 'Save'; be it the river valley or the community. Rather than sending SOS petitions to outer agencies it is recommended to raise slogans of 'preservation' and 'conservation' within the community circles. Ancient art and architecture along with the ancient means of sustenance shall compose a culture worth striving for. It is a fundamental obligation of the citizenry to check and oppose malpractice in relation to ecological biodiversity. However, challenging modern projects for the sake of saving one's convenient lifestyle is not a progressive strategy. It is hence recommended that a due consideration be diverted towards the deteriorating status of the ancient art and heritage in the rural ecologies.

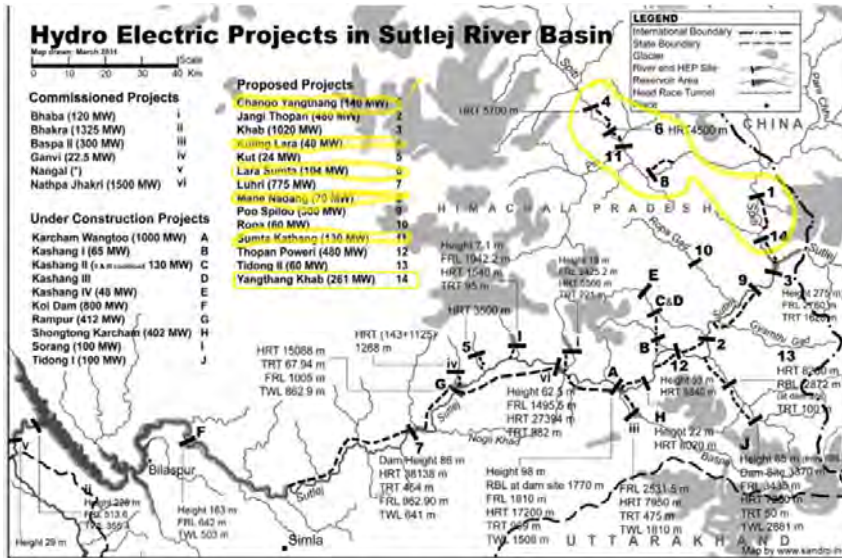


Fig. 12 — Map sourced from www.sandrp.in. Edited by Vijay Bodh (2016).

The construction of hydro projects in the valley would also pose threat to the existing rock art distribution in the valley. A recent survey reveals newer sites having petroglyphs and cave art in the valley. There is a great possibility of locating more findings in the valley. A majority of the rock art boulders are situated near the State highway while others are distributed in remote locations. The rock art boulders have been facing the challenges of expanding economic growth, broadening of roads, graffiti, weathering, defacement and destruction. The local administration along with nodal agencies is working on preservation and conservation works. Paradoxically, the allotment of hydroelectric projects in the fragile and culture rich valley poses serious threat to the existing and unidentified artefacts.

Other than a reservoir for water storage a hydroelectric project also requires a complex network of head race tunnel, end race tunnel, powerhouse, dams, transmission towers and network, power house, bridges and residential complex. It would also involve heavy construction and logistics. In case a hydro project overlaps a rock art site, it could lead to the immediate damage of the site. The heavy construction work and additional anthropogenic movements would amplify the negative consequences. These are often built in the surroundings of raw material; as a result of which virgin rocks or

those bearing images are equally smashed to be used as building material.

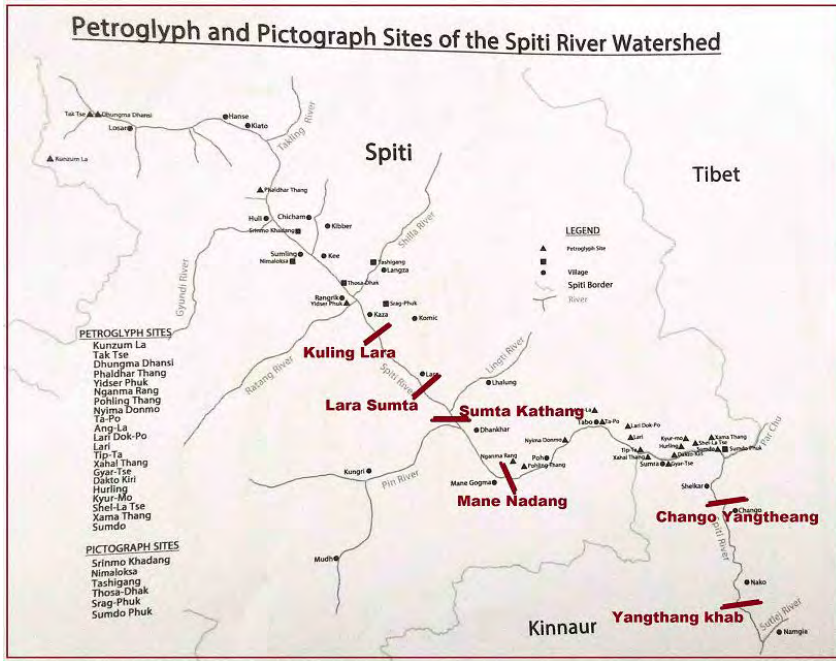


Fig. 13 — Map Sourced from Michael Dowad and Tsering Norbu. Edited by Ekta Singh (2016).

There is a possibility of locating more new sites and boulders. At this stage, when Spiti is on the verge of reclaiming its antiquity back to more than one thousand years, a loss of one or two boulders could prevent us from a better understanding of the social and cultural settings of the past. The Shukla committee report (2009), has strictly warned against constructing hydro projects in altitude higher to 7000 feet (2133m). It is even more critical in Spiti where the average altitude is around 3000m.

A Thought on Preservation

Rock art faces survival threats due to expanding modernity and with time it can be seen on the verge of disappearance. Lack of proper preservation of ancient rock art can be seen in many Afro-Asian countries. European Countries like France and Spain has closed

original site of their rock art to prevent further damage on the site, only research scholars are allowed to visit these sites with special reference (Joshi, 1999). In the Western Himalayas, limited rock art sites are subject to conservation programmes. Consequently, leaving them exposed will result in damage to those rock art boulders and shelters, with the risk of loss of features, and, in some cases, the complete disappearance due to climatic or anthropogenic agents. Alarmingly, it is difficult to even identify the lost petroglyphs sites today. There is little knowledge amongst the people about the richness of the contents or subject of rock art and its surviving traditions in rural India. Adequate attempts on preservation and documentation, developing conservation methodology, and environmental preservation is obligatory. Also, a proper identification and safeguarding the rock art sites for future references shall require systematic compilation, a detailed and illustrated inventory of the rock art sites. Barricading and fencing such exposed sites should be executed on urgent basis. Information boards and 'no trespassing' signs should be placed adequately for petroglyph and pictograph sites. It is mandatory for the State authorities to take appropriate actions for declaring these sites as heritage sites. The rock boulders should be systematically numbered and recorded in official database. Owners of private orchards ought to be made aware regarding the importance and conservation of the rock carvings. Ideally, petroglyphs should be preserved in their original setting. But when the destruction of a site is inevitable, the most important images should be moved to a dedicated location, after a careful recording of their original position. A rock art sanctuary can be a good place to store and display them. If the rock images cannot be protected *in situ*, or moved to a safe place because of their size or inaccessible location, the only answer is to reproduce them, using photography, plastic sheet reproduction, or laser and 3D Scanning. Due to its quantity and quality, rock art is nowadays the most important archaeological material that will enable us to form an idea of Spiti's early past.

Many rock art associations, most notably in the New World and Australia, have played and continue to play an invaluable role in this crusade. And the passionate enthusiasm of the local school children of Portugal's Coa Valley in 1995 for the cause of saving 'their' engravings from the dam project was a remarkable and inspiring sign of hope for the future (Bahn, 1998).

Programs on awareness and database maintenance are to be undertaken by different organization like government bodies, universities, state department and various local bodies. There is a dire need for more documentation and publications on the available data and the sites in Spiti. Overhanging mass of rock on the upper part which can collapse any time due to adverse natural factor, it can be considered most dangerous; it also includes human vandalism particularly blasting of boulders in the vicinity of site for their constructional requirements. Attempt of filling of the cracks make the cavern watertight by using cement or something else depending on the nature of the boulder. Periodic removal of undesirable vegetation is advisable. Structures could be raised over the boulders to arrest decay. For chemical treatment proper scientific investigations of the boulders are necessary, proper test should be done in relation to its applicability to see its positive or negative reaction there on. To maintain natural conditions and environment of the rock art sites, vehicular movements ought to be controlled. In region like Spiti where there is no museum, a museum should be developed or an idea of establishing a rock art sanctuary in the area, following the example of Domkhar rock art sanctuary in Ladakh.



Fig. 14 — Dhomkar rock art sanctuary. Photograph by Rahul Dobhal (2016).

People should be encouraged to study the diverse heritage of rock art in those museums. This can create awareness among the natives of the area as well as among the travellers visiting the area.

Exhibition could be organized in nearby cities like in Manali, Reckong peo and Shimla as well as in Delhi to spread awareness. This will inspire the locals, especially the school children to learn about rock art and the cultural heritage of their area. Management duties should be awarded to members of local agencies such as Zila Parishad, Municipal boards, Panchayat, NGOs or local volunteers. In some cases there is no choice other than carrying out rescue archaeology but whenever possible rock art sites need to be preserved. Rock art is a common heritage and everyone should be concerned about its preservation, i.e. competent authorities, villagers and tourists. It is the responsibility of everyone to preserve the precious and irreplaceable heritage of Spiti.

Recommendations

- Identification of rock art sites in Spiti Valley followed by an official inventory of the same.
- Scientific numbering and naming of the sites and rock boulders, invite intervention by Archaeological Survey of India.
- Ensure minimal transport and removal of rock art boulders from the original site; *in situ* art forms carry more research value than the transported ones.
- Scrap Hydro-electric developments in the vicinity of art sites, if possible
- Earmark no trespassing zones, in case hydro projects are to be commissioned somehow.
- Include participatory rural appraisals methods to ensure local participation in preservation.
- A formulation of a 'Rock Art Sanctuary' in Spiti shall be the last resort.

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སྩེ་ཏི་(Spiti) ཞེས་པའི་མིང་ལ་དབྱེད་པ།

Nyenthar
(Banaras Hindu University)

གཅིག་གི་སྩེ་ཏི་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་འདྲུག་ཡུལ་གྱི་ཡུལ་ངེས་བཟུང་བ།

སྩེ་ཏི་འམ་སྩེ་ཏི་(Spiti)ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་འདྲུག་སའི་ཡུལ་ལམ་ས་ཆ་ནི་དང་དུས་
རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་ཏི་མ་ཅལ་(Himachal)མངའ་སྡེའི་ཁོངས་རི་བོ་ཏི་མ་ལ་ཡའི་རུབ་
རྒྱུད་སྤོང་མངའ་རིས་ཀྱི་གངས་ཏི་སའི་མདུན་ནམ་ལྗོ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་རི་རྒྱུད་ནས་ཐོན་པའི་
གཙང་བོ་སྐང་ཆེན་ཁ་འབབ་(Sutlej River)ཀྱི་གཡས་དང་།གངས་ཏི་སའི་རུབ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་
རི་རྒྱུད་ནས་ཐོན་པའི་གཙང་བོ་སེལ་ཁ་འབབ་(Indus River) ཀྱི་གཡོན་ཏེ་ཁ་འབབ་
འདི་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བར་དུ་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་ངོས་ལས་མཐོ་ཚད་མི་ཏར་༤༥༧༠ནས་ ༥༠༥༠(Hright
3050-4590 m.a.s.l.)འོག་གནས་ཆགས་པའི་བོད་རྒྱུད་ནང་བསྟན་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་སྐད་ཡིག་
རིག་གཞུང་དར་རྒྱས་ཆེ་བའི་ས་ཁུལ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ལ། གར་ལྷ་དང་སྩེ་ཏི་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ས་ཆ་སྩེའི་
རྒྱ་ཚོན་ལ་༧༥༥ཅུ་ཡོད་ཅིང་། ཡུལ་འདིའི་རུབ་བྱང་མཚམས་སུ་གར་ལྷ་དང་། ལ་
དུགས། ལྷལ་ཏི་བཅས་ཡོད་པ་དང་། ཤར་སྩེའི་མཚམས་སུ་ལུ་ལུ་དང་རྒྱ་མོ་གར་འོ་མགོ་
ཁོངས་སུ་ཡོད་པའི་སྐར་བྱང་དང་ནང་སྤོང་སོགས་ཡོད། དེ་བཞིན་བྱང་ཤར་གྱི་ཕྱོགས་ནི་
བོད་ཀྱི་སྤོང་མངའ་རིའི་སྐར་རྫོང་དང་། སྐང་ཆེན་ཁ་འབབ་ཀྱི་འགམ་རྒྱུད་དུ་ཆགས་པའི་
མཐོ་སྤོང་དགོན་པ་དང་གུ་གའམ་རྩ་མངའ་རྫོང་གི་མངའ་ཁོངས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་སྩེ་ཁག་དང་ལ་
མོའི་ཕར་རྒྱབ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱབ་ཡིན་ཞིང་། ལྗོ་རུབ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ལ་མོའི་ཕར་རྒྱབ་ན་ལུང་ཏི་འམ་ཀུ་ལུ་
དང་མ་རྩ་ལི་སོགས་ཡོད་འདུག ཡུལ་འདིའི་སྤོང་ཕྱོགས་སུ་ཡོད་པའི་ཀུན་འཛོམས་ལ་
ཞེས་པ་དེ་ནས་བཞུགས་པའི་རྒྱ་སྐར་བཅོ་ལྔ་སྟག་གིས་གྲུབ་པའི་སྩེ་ཏི་གཙང་བོ་ཞེས་པ་
དེ་ནི་སྩེ་ཏིའི་ཡུལ་འདིའི་ལུང་གཞུང་བརྒྱུད་ལུ་ལུ་སྤོང་ནས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཁ་འབབ་གཙང་བོ་
བཞིའི་ནང་ཚོན་སྐང་ཆེན་ཁ་འབབ་དུ་འདྲས་འདུག་ལ། ཏི་ཡུལ་གྲོང་དག་ནི་སྩེ་ཏི་གཙང་
བོའི་གཡས་གཡོན་གྱི་རྒྱ་རྒྱུད་དུ་ཆགས་འདུག ༢༠༠༧ ལོའི་མི་གངས་ཀྱི་བཅོམས་ལྟར་ན་ལོ་

དྲེར་མྱེ་ཉི་ལ་མི་གངས་༡༠༩༧༧ལོ་ཡོད་འདུག།¹

དུས་རབས་བདུན་པའི་ཡར་ཚོན་ལ་ཡུལ་འདྲིའི་གནས་སྤངས་ཇི་བཞིན་ཤེས་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་
 དཀའ་ན་ཡང་། ཉ་པོ་དགོན་པའི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་སུ་གསལ་བའི་མི་མེད་དང་རིགས་རུས་ཀྱི་
 མིང་ལ་བརྟགས་ནས་གནའ་བོའི་ཞང་ལྷང་གི་རིག་གཞུང་ལྷུབ་ཁོངས་ཡིན་པར་མཁས་པ་
 ཁ་ཅིག་བཞེད།² ས་རབས་བརྒྱད་པ་ནས་བརྒྱ་པ་བར་དུ་བོད་བཅོན་པའི་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཀྱིས་
 བོད་ཁམས་ཡོངས་སྤོང་ལྷེ་དུག་རུ་རེ་གཅིག་ལ་དབྱེ་ནས་ཡུལ་ལ་དབང་བྱེད་པའི་དུས་སུ་
 ཞང་ལྷང་སྤོང་གི་སྤོང་ལྷེ་ལྷེའི་³ རང་ཚན་དུ་གཏོགས་པ་གསལ། བོད་སིལ་བུའི་⁴ དུས་སྐབས་
 སུ་བོད་རྒྱལ་དར་མ་འུ་དུམ་བཅོན་པའི་སྲས་མངའ་བདག་འོད་སྲུང་གི་རྒྱུད་པས་སྤོང་
 མངའ་རིས་སྐོར་གསུམ་ལ་དབང་མཛད་པའི་སྐབས་སྤོང་གི་མགོན་གསུམ་དུ་གྲགས་པའི་
 རྒྱུད་བ་ལྷེ་གཙུག་མགོན་གི་མངའ་རིས་སུ་གཏོགས་པ་གསལ།⁵ བ་དང་། ལྷེ་གཙུག་
 མགོན་འདས་རྗེས་སུ་བུ་ཉང་གི་འོག་དུ་རྒྱུད་པ་དང་དུས་རབས་བརྒྱ་པའི་དུས་མཚུག་ལ་སྟ་
 ལྷ་མ་ཡེས་ཤེས་འོད་གི་མངའ་རིས་སུ་གཏོགས། དེ་རྗེས་ས་སྐྱའི་སྲིད་གཞུང་གིས་བོད་ཁྲི་
 སྐོར་བརྒྱ་གསུམ་ལ་དབང་བྱེད་པའི་སྐབས་ས་སྐྱའི་དབང་འོག་དུ་རྒྱུད་དང་མ་རྒྱུད་ལ་
 གསལ་ཁ་མི་འདུག དེ་ནས་རིམ་བཞིན་གྲུ་གའི་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཉམས་གུང་དུ་སོང་བ་དང་ལ་
 དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཀྱི་སྟོབས་ཤུགས་རྒྱས་ནས་དུས་རབས་བརྒྱ་བདུན་པའི་མཚུག་ཅམ་ནས་
 དུས་རབས་བརྒྱ་དགུ་པའི་དཀྱིལ་བར་དུ་མངའ་རིའི་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཀྱི་དར་གུང་
 འོག་དབང་ལུང་བསྐྱར་བ་ཞིག་དང་། ༡༧༤༧ལོར་རྒྱ་གར་རང་བཅོན་ཐོབ་ནས་“ཕྱི་ལོ་
 ༡༧༥༥ཕྱི་ཟླ་ ༡་པའི་ཚེས་ ༢༥་ལ་ཉི་མ་ལ་ཡའི་རི་རྒྱུད་ས་མཚམས་མཐོན་པོ་རྣམས་

1 ཉ་པོ་དུས་རབས་བརྒྱ་པ་ནས་ཉི་ཤུ་པའི་བར་གྱི་ལྷེ་མའི་རྒྱ་གར་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་དང་ཡི་གེ་
 རུབ་ཉི་མ་ལ་ཡའི་གནའ་བོའི་དགོན་གོང་ཞིག་ཚོམ་པ་པོ། རྩ་ལ་དགོ་འདུན་བསོད་ནམས། ཉ་པོ་དགོན་གྱི་
 དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་ནས་དཔར་བསྐྱོན་ཞུས། ཤོག་གངས། ༩

2 Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, 1000 years of Tabo Monastery, p. 9, 1996.

3 དབང་བོ་གཙུག་ལག་སྤོང་བས་མཛད་པའི་ཚེས་འབྱུང་མཁས་པའི་དགའ་སྟོན་སྟོང་ཆ། ལྷར་ཆ་བཟོ་བྱེད་
 དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༩ཤོག་གངས། ༡༤༤༤“གུག་གི་ཚོག་ལ་གཉིས། ལྷུ་གཙང་ཡར་གཙང་གཉིས། ཅི་ཉི་
 སྟོང་བུ་རྒྱུད་སྟེ་ཞང་ལྷང་སྤོང་གི་སྤོང་ལྷེ་ལྷེ”ཞེས་གསལ་བ་འདྲིར་ལྷུ་ཚོས་འབྱུང་རྒྱས་བ་དང་དག་ཆ་རྒྱུང་མི་
 འཕུན་པས་དབྱེད།

4 དུས་རབས་དགུ་པའི་ནང་དུ་གཙན་པོ་འུ་དུམ་བཅོན་བཀོངས་བ་ནས་དུས་རབས་དུས་རབས་གཙུག་གསུམ་པའི་
 དཀྱིལ་དུ་ས་སྐྱའི་སྲིད་གཞུང་གིས་བོད་ལ་དབང་བསྐྱར་མ་བྱས་པའི་བར་ལ་གོ་དགོས།

5 ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་བོད་ལྷོངས་མི་དམངས་དཔེ་སྐྱོན་ཁང་༡༧༤༧“རྒྱུད་བ་ལྷེ་གཙུག་མགོན་ལ་ཟུང་དགར་
 སྟོ་གསུམ། ལྷེ་ཉི་ལྷེ་ལྷེ་གསུམ་དང་བཅས་པ་ལ་མངའ་མཛད་”ཞེས་གསལ།

ཉི་མཱ་ཅལ་མངའ་ཕྱེད་ཁོངས་སུ”⁶ མ་གྲུར་བར་དུ་པཌ་རྒྱལ་མངའ་ཕྱེད་ཁོངས་སུ་གཏོགས་
པ་བཅས་སོ། །

གཉེས། “ཅོག”དང་“སེལ་ཚོག”“མྱི་ཏི”སོགས་མིང་གི་འདེལ་རིམ་ལ་དབྱེད་པ།

ད་ལྟ་ལག་སོན་བྱུང་བའི་རྒྱ་ཆ་ཁག་ལ་གཞིག་ན། “མྱི་ཏི”འམ་“མི་ཏི”ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་
འབྲི་ཚུལ་ཐང་མིང་གི་ལོ་རིམ་མི་འདྲ་བ། ཚོག་དོན་གྱི་འཇུག་ཡུལ་མི་འདྲ་བའདྲེ་བཞིན་
ཡི་གེའི་རྩུར་ཉམས་པའམ་ཡིག་འོར་རམ་པར་སྐྱོན་གྱི་རིགས་བཅས་ཡོད་པར་སྣང་སྟེ་
གཤམ་གསལ་སྟར།

“མི་ཏི”ཞེས་པའི་ཐ་སྣང་འདི་བོད་ཡིག་གི་རྒྱ་ཆའི་ཐོག་ཐོན་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་རིང་ཤོས་
སམ་ལྟ་ཤོས་ནི་པལ་ཆེར་མྱི་ལོའི་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཅིག་ཡས་མས་ཅོམ་ལ་གཞིངས་པའི་མི་
ཏི་སྣ་ལུང་གསེར་ཁང་གི་སྒྲོའི་གཡོན་གྱི་ལྗེབས་རིས་⁷ ལུ་“མྱི་ཏི”དང་“ཚོག”⁸ ཅས་གསལ་
བ་དེ་རེད།

“མི་ཏི”ཞེས་པའི་ཐ་སྣང་འདི་དེབ་ཐོག་ཏུ་འཁོད་ལྟ་ཤོས་ནི་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཉིས་
པའི་ནང་མཁས་པ་ལྗེའུ་མཛད་པའི་ལྗེའུ་རྒྱ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་ཞེས་པ་དེ་ཡིན་པ་དང་།
དེར་“མྱི་ཏི”⁹ ཞེས་འཁོད་འདུག

6 གཏམ་ཚོགས། བོད་འབྲེལ་ཤེས་ཡོན་གོ་རྟོགས་གོང་སྤེལ་ཆེད། བོད་ཀྱི་དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་། ༡༩༥༧ ལོ། ༧ ཡང་། ༢
མྱི་ཏི་ཡུལ་དགོན་གྱི་ཐོན་བྱུང་གི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་རྣམས། དཀྱིལ་དགོན་རྫོང་ཆོ་རྟེན། ཤོག ༢༧

7 ཏུ་སྟོ། དུས་རབས་བཅུ་པ་ནས་ཉི་ཤུ་པའི་བར་གྱི་ལྟ་མོའི་རྒྱ་གར་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་ལྗེབས་རིས་དང་ཡི་གེ་རྩལ་
ཉི་མཱ་ལ་ཡའི་གནད་བོའི་དགོན་གོང་ཞིག་ཚོམ་པ་སྟེ། རྩ་ཏུ་ལ་དགོ་འདུན་བསོད་ནམས་ཏུ་བོ་དགོན་གྱི་
དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་ནས་དབར་བསྐྱར་ཞུས། ཤོག་གངས། ༢༩

8 “Laxman S. Thakur, Tibetan Historical Inscriptions from Kinnaur and Lahual-
Spiti: A survey of Recent Discoveris In PIAT, Graz, vol.II, p. 976- 1997 ལྟ་ལུང་གསེར་
སྣ་ཁང་ནི་ ༡༩༤༢་ནས་༡༩༥༠ ལོར་བཞེངས་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་མཁས་དབང་ Laxman Thakur གྱི་ཚོམ་སོག་
ནང་དུ་བཤད། ལྗེབས་རིས་ཡིག་བསྐྱོས་འདིའི་ཐོག་མྱི་ལོ་༡༩༤༤ལོར་ H.L. Shuttleworth ལས་ཐུགས་སྣང་
བྱུང་བ་དང་འབྲེལ་གོ་སེབ་གེར་གན་ནས་ཁོང་གི་ཆེད་བཤུས་གནད་། བས་རིས་ཡིག་བསྐྱོས་སྟོར་
ཤ་ཏལ་མོར་ཐ་ཡིས་མྱི་ལོ་༡༩༢༩ ལོར་ཚོམ་བྲིས་སྤེལ་ཡོད། མཁས་དབང་ཏུ་ཅི་ཡིས་མྱི་ལོ་༡༩༣༩ ལོར་ལྗེབས་
རིས་ལ་བསྐྱར་ཞིབ་གནད་འདུག་ཅུང་ད་བར་ལྗེབས་རིས་ཡིག་བསྐྱོས་པར་དུ་འཁོད་མེད།”གོང་འཁོད་མཚན་
རྟགས་ཡང་རིམ་བརྒྱུད་པ་འདི་བཞིན་གཏམ་ཚོགས། བོད་འབྲེལ་ཤེས་ཡོན་གོ་རྟོགས་གོང་སྤེལ་ཆེད། བོད་ཀྱི་
དཔེ་མཛོད་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༧ ལོ། ༢༧ ཡང་། ༢ རྫོ་བཟང་ཤུ་ལྷོ། ལས་ཇི་བཞིན་དངས་ཡོད།

9 ལྗེའུ་ཚོས་འབྱུང་རྒྱས་པ། ཤོག ༢༥༩ རྫོང་ཕྱེད་སྟོར་བཤད་སྐབས་སུ་བོད་དང་སུམ་པའི་སོ་མཚམས་ན། ཞང་ཞུང་
སྣང་གྱི་རྫོང་ལྟ་ལོད་དེ། ལུག་གི་ལུ་ཅོག་གཉེས། མྱིར་ཚང་ཡར་ཚང་གཉེས། མྱི་ཏི་རྫོང་བུ་རྒྱུད་དང་ལྗེའི།

དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་མཁས་པ་ཉང་ཉི་མ་འོད་ཟེར་(༡༡༢༩-༡༡༧༢) ། གྲིས་
 མཛད་པའི་ཚོས་འབྲུང་མེ་རྟོག་སྤོང་པོ་སྤང་ཚིའི་བཅུད་དུ་“སེལ་ཚོག”¹⁰ ཞེས་འཁོད་འདུག
 དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་སྤང་དང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤོང་གྲི་མཁས་པ་སྐྱུ་པ་རྗེ་ཏ་
 ཀུན་དགའ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་(༡༡༤༢-༡༢༥༧) གྲིས་མཛད་པའི་རྗེ་བཅུན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གྲགས་པ
 རྒྱལ་མཚན་(༡༡༩༧-༡༢༡༩) གྲི་རྣམས་ཐར་དུ་“སྤྲོག་མ་ཡུལ”¹¹ ཞེས་འཁོད་འདུག དུས་
 རབས་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་སྤང་དང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤོང་གྲི་མཁས་པ་སྐྱུ་པ་རྗེ་ཏ་ཀུན་དགའ་
 རྒྱལ་མཚན་(༡༡༤༢-༡༢༥༧) གྲིས་མཛད་པའི་རྗེ་བཅུན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གྲགས་པ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་
 (༡༡༩༧-༡༢༡༩) གྲི་རྣམས་ཐར་དུ་“སྤྲོག་མ་ཡུལ”¹² ཞེས་དང་། དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གསུམ་
 པའི་མཁས་པ་རྗེ་ཚོང་ཚང་པ་མགོན་པོ་དེ་རྗེའི་(༡༡༤༧-༡༢༥༧) རྣམ་ཐར་དུ་“པི་ཏེ་པི་
 སྤྲོག”¹³ ཅེས་འཁོད་འདུག ཡང་རྒྱ་གར་གྱི་མཁན་པོ་ཀུ་ལྷ་ར་བཟླ་དང་ལོ་རྒྱ་བ་དགེ་སྤོང་
 ཉི་མ་དེ་རྗེའི་མཉམ་“སྤྲིལ་ཚོག” གི་ཐོག་ར་དགེ་མཛོས་ཀྱིས་དཔལ་འཁོར་ལོ་སྤོང་པའི་
 དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོག་གཏེ་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བྲུ་བ་བསྐྱར་བྱུང་གཏེ་ལ་པལ་¹⁴
 ཞེས་གསལ་བའི་“སྤྲིལ་ཚོག” རི་སྤི་ཏེ་ལ་གོ་དགོས་པ་དང་། རྒྱ་བོད་ཡིག་ཚང་དུ་
 “ཅེ་ཚོག” དང་བོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་གསེར་ཤང་¹⁵ དུ་“སྤི་ཏེ་སྤི་ཚོག” ཅེས་གསལ་འདུག
 དུས་རབས་བཅུ་ལྔ་པའི་མཁས་པ་གྲུ་གོ་མཁན་ཚེ་དག་དབང་གྲགས་པས་མཛད་པའི་
 གྲུ་གོ་ཚོས་འབྲུང་དུ་“པི་ཏེ”¹⁶ ཞེས་དང་། དུས་རབས་བཅུ་དྲུག་པའི་ནང་ལྷ་གི་རྒྱ་གཞུང་
 མཛད་པའི་རྗེ་པོ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དུལ་སྐྱེ་མཚེད་གསུམ་རྟེན་དང་བརྟེན་པ་བཅས་པའི་དཀར་
 ཚག་རབ་དགའི་སྐྱ་དབྱངས་ན་“པི་ཏེ་པི་སྤྲོགས” ཞེས་དང་། ཡང་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་བདུན་
 པའི་ནང་ཕྱེ་སྤོང་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱ་མཚོས་(༡༥༥༣-༡༦༠༥) མཛད་པའི་དགོ་ཐུན་
 ཚོས་འབྲུང་བེཏུ་ལེར་པོ་¹⁷ དང་རྒྱལ་དབང་ལྷ་བེཏུ་ལེར་པོ་རང་རྣམ་དུ་གྲུ་ལའི་
 ལ་སྤོང་¹⁸ བཅས་ཀྱི་ནང་དུ་“སྤི་ཏེ” དང་“པི་ཏེ” ཞེས་གསལ་བ་དང་འདྲི་ལོ་པལ་ཆེར་

10 ཉང་ཉི་མ་འོད་ཟེར། ཚོས་འབྲུང་མེ་རྟོག་སྤོང་པོ་སྤང་ཚིའི་བཅུད། བོད་ཚུངས་མི་དམངས་དཔེ་སྐྱུར་ཁང་། ༡༩༤༤
 11 ས་སྐྱུ་བཀའ་འབྲུམ། དེབ ༢་པ། ས་སྐྱུ་བོད་ནམས་ཚེ་མའི་བཀའ་འབྲུམ། Tokyo ༡༩༥༤
 12 གསུང་དག་ལམ་འབྲས་སྤོང་བཤའ་བོད་ཀ་པ།
 13 བཀའ་རྒྱུད་གསེར་ཤང་ཚོན་མོ། སྤྲོགས་བམ་ཀ་པ།
 14 སྤོང་གོ་རྒྱུད་འགྲེལ་པོད་ལ་པ། རྟོག ༢༡༩
 15 ཀ་ཐོག་རིག་འཛིན་ཚོ་དབང་ལོ་ལྷ། བོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་གསེར་གྱི་ཤང་བར་གྲགས་པ་ལས་མངའ་རིས་སྤོང་
 མར་ཡུལ་བདག་པོའི་དཔེ་ཐེར་བཞུགས་སོ།
 16 གྲུ་གོ་མཁན་ཚེ་དག་དབང་གྲགས་པས་མཛད་པའི་མངའ་རིའི་རྒྱལ་རབས། ༡༩༩༩
 17 སྤོང་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱ་མཚོས་མཛད་པའི་བེ་ལེར།
 18 སྤོང་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱ་མཚོས་མཛད་པའི་རྒྱལ་དབང་ལྷ་བེཏུ་ལེར་པོ་རང་རྣམ་དུ་གྲུ་ལའི་ལ་སྤོང་།

མི་ཉི་པོ་དགོན་པའི་ཆགས་རབས་དང་གདན་རབས་ཡིག་ཐོག་ཏུ་འཁོད་པ་སྐྱེ་ཤོས་
དེ་ཡིན་པར་བཤད། ཡང་དུས་རབས་བཅོ་ལྔ་པའི་ནང་གི་མཁས་པ་སུམ་པ་ཡེ་ཤེས་
དཔལ་འབྱོར་(༡༧༠༩-༡༧༤༥)གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་དཔག་བསམ་ཚོན་བཟང་¹⁹
དང་། ལྷུང་སྐྱེ་རོལ་བའི་དོ་རྗེས་(༡༧༡༧-༡༧༤༥)དགེ་ལྡན་ཁྲི་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཨ་ཆེ་ཐུ་ལོ་མེན་
ཉན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་མཁའ་སྤྱོད་གྲུབ་པའི་གཏམ་སྟན་ལྟའི་རྩ་བོ་ཆེར་²⁰ཡང་“པི་ཉི”
ཞེས་འཁོད་འདུག

ཡང་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་དགུ་པའི་ནང་དུ་རྩོམ་ཁང་གསར་མཁན་པོ་དག་དབང་བསོད་
ནམས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་(༡༨༣༥-༡༨༥༥)གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་སྣར་བཅས་འགྲོ་བའི་མཚན་སྣང་
རྩོ་བོ་སྐྱེ་མཚེད་གསུམ་སྟོན་བྱུང་གི་གཏམ་རབས་བརྗོད་པ་བཞུགས་སྟོན་པོའི་པི་མང་²¹
ཞེས་པར་“མི་ཉི”ཞེས་དང་། ཡང་དུས་རབས་ཉི་ཤུ་པའི་སྟོད་ལ་ཐོན་པའི་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་
རབས་²²སུ་“མི་ཉི”དང་“མི་སྟོགས”ཞེས་གསལ་བ་དང་། ཡང་དགའ་ཚེན་སྟོ་བཟང་
བསོད་པས་མཛད་པའི་རྣམ་ཐར་དང་པའི་རྒྱན་མཚན་²³ཅེས་པའི་ནང་དུ་“མི་ཉི”
ཞེས་དང་། དཔོན་སྟོབ་བསྟན་འཛིན་རྣམ་དག་གིས་མཛད་པའི་འབེལ་གཏམ་ལུང་གི་སྟོང་
པོའི་²⁴ནང་དུ་ཡང་“མི་ཉི”ཞེས་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་སྟོ་མང་གི་མཁན་ཁྲི་བསྟན་པ་བསྟན་
འཛིན་གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་འཇམ་མགོན་རྒྱལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་ཚབ་གསེར་ཁྲི་རིམ་བྱོན་གྱི་ཁྲི་རབས་
ཡོངས་འདུས་སྟོན་བཟང་²⁵དུ་“མི་ཉི”དང་“མི་ཉི”ཞེས་གསལ་བ་བཅས་དང་།
དུ་“མི་ཉི”དང་“མི་ཉི”ཞེས་གསལ་བ་བཅས་དང་།

19 སུམ་པ་ཡེ་ཤེས་དཔལ་འབྱོར་གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་དཔག་བསམ་ཚོན་བཟང་། སྐ་རཏ་ཤ། ༡༧༥༥
20 དགེ་ལྡན་ཁྲི་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཨ་ཆེ་ཐུ་ལོ་མེན་ཉན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་མཁའ་སྤྱོད་གྲུབ་པའི་གཏམ་སྟན་ལྟའི་རྩ་བོ་ཆེ། ལྷུང་སྐྱེ་
རོལ་བའི་དོ་རྗེས་མཛད།
21 རྩོམ་ཁང་གསར་མ་མཁན་པོ་དག་དབང་བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་སྣར་བཅས་འགྲོ་བའི་
མཚན་སྣང་རྩོ་བོ་སྐྱེ་མཚེད་གསུམ་སྟོན་བྱུང་གི་གཏམ་རབས་བརྗོད་པ་བཞུགས་སྟོན་པོའི་པི་མང་། ད་སྟོངས་མངའ་
རིའི་རིག་གཞུང་གཅེས་སྟོང་ཁང་། རྩ་རམ་ས་ལ། ༡༩༤༤
22 ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས། Antiquities of Indian Tibet, Vol.II, Calcutta 1926
23 དགའ་ཚེན་སྟོ་བཟང་བསོད་པས་མཛད་པའི་ཁྲི་ཚོགས་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་སྤིང་གི་མཁན་རྒྱུད་
རྣམ་ཐར་དང་པའི་རྒྱན་མཚན།
24 དཔོན་སྟོབ་བསྟན་འཛིན་རྣམ་དག་གིས་མཛད་པའི་འབེལ་གཏམ་ལུང་གི་སྟོང་པོ།
25 སྟོ་མང་གི་མཁན་ཁྲི་བསྟན་པ་བསྟན་འཛིན་གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་འཇམ་མགོན་རྒྱལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་ཚབ་གསེར་ཁྲི་རིམ་བྱོན་
གྱི་ཁྲི་རབས་ཡོངས་འདུས་སྟོན་བཟང་།

| | | |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | ལྷི་ཏི། | ལྷ་ལྷུང་གསེར་ལྷ་ཁང་གི་ལྷེབས་རིས། ལྷེའུ། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས། |
| 2 | ཙོག | མཁས་པ་ལྷེའུ། |
| 3 | སིལ་ཚོག | ཉང་རལ་ཉི་མ་འོད་ཟེར། |
| 4 | ཙོག་ལ་ཡུལ། | བསོད་ནམས་ཚེ་མོ། |
| 5 | ལྷོག་ལ་ཡུལ། ལྷོག་མ་ཡུལ། | ས་སྐྱ་བན་ཚེན། |
| 6 | བི་ཏི། | མངའ་རིའི་རྒྱལ་རབས། བེ་སེར། |
| 7 | ལྷི་ཏི། | བེ་སེར། རོར་ཁང་གསལ། ལུམ་གླ། དཔལ་ཚུལ། |
| 8 | བི་ཏི་བི་ལྷོགས། | དཱུལ་སྐྱ་མཚེད་གསུམ། |
| 9 | ལྷི་ཏི་ལྷི་ལྷོགས། | ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས། |
| 10 | ལྷིལ་ཙོག | བདེ་མཚོག་གི་དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་མཚན་བྱང་། |
| 11 | ལྷི་ཏི་ལྷི་ཚོག | རྒྱལ་རབས་གསེར་སྤོང་། |
| 12 | ཙི་ཙོག | རྒྱ་བོད་ཡིག་ཚང་། |

གསུམ། “ལྷི་ཏི” (Spiti)ཞེས་ཐོགས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་དང་ཚོག་དོན།

གོང་དུ་ས་བཅད་གཉེས་ཀྱི་ནང་དུ་བཤད་ཟེན་པ་སྟར་རྒྱ་གར་དང་བོད་ཀྱི་ས་མཚམས་སུ་
 ཡོད་པའི་ལྷི་ཏི་ཞེས་པའི་ཡུལ་འདི་ལ་མིང་འབྲི་ཚུལ་མི་མཐུན་པ་བརྒྱ་ལྷག་ཅིག་ཡོད་པ་
 ཡིག་ལམ་ཁག་ནས་གསལ་ན་ཡང་། དེ་དག་རེ་རེ་ལ་ནང་དོན་རེ་རེ་ཡོད་པའི་ངེས་པ་མེད་
 ལ་རེ་བྱང་ནི་དཔེ་དང་ཡི་གེའི་དག་ཆ་ནོར་བ་ཡིན་པ་ཡང་ར་འཕྲོད་ཐུབ་པ་ཞིག་རེད། དེ་
 ཡང་གོང་དུ་འཁོད་པའི་རྒྱ་ཆ་ཁག་ལ་དབྱེ་ཞིབ་ཅིག་བྱས་ན། “ལྷི་ཏི”ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་
 ཡིག་ཐོག་ཏུ་གསལ་པའི་རྒྱ་ཆ་སྟེ་ཤོས་སྟེ་ལྷུང་གསེར་ལྷ་ཁང་གི་ལྷེབས་རིས་སུ་“ལྷི་ཏི”དང་
 “ལྷོག”ཅེས་གསལ་བ་འདི་ནས་ང་ཚོས་ཤོས་ཐུབ་པ་ནི་རྗེས་སོར་རིམ་པར་བྱུང་བའི་མིང་
 གི་འབྲི་ཚུལ་མི་འདྲ་བ་ནམས་སྐྱ་བྱར་ཙོག་གི་ཁྱད་པར་ལས་དེ་གཉེས་དང་ཡོངས་སུ་ཁ་

བྲལ་མེད་པ་དེ་རེད། ལྷོག་ཅེས་པའི་དོན་ནི་སྐབས་དེར་འདི་དང་འདི་ལ་འཇུག་ཅེས་
 ཤོད་དཀའ་ན་ཡང་གཙོ་ཆེ་བ་རེ་བའི་ལྷོག་ལྷ་བྱ་དང་ལྷོད་དང་ཐོག་ཁེབ་སོགས་མཐོ་ས་ལ་
 འཇུག་ལྷ་ལྷང་གསེར་ཁང་གི་ཕྱེབས་རིས་ལས་ཅུང་འབྲི་བར་བྱུང་བའི་ཕྱེའུ་ཚོས་འབྱུང་
 དང་ཉང་རལ་གྱི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་སོགས་སུ་“ཙོག”དང་“སེལ་ཚོག”ཞེས་གསལ་བ་དེ་ནི་སེལ་”
 ཞེས་པ་དེ་ནི་“མྱུ་ཉི”ཞེས་པའི་མྱུའི་མིང་གཞིའི་མགོ་ཅན་སའི་སྐྱ་གསལ་བོར་ཐོན་པར་
 བྱས་པ་ཞིག་དང་། “ཚོག”ནི་“ཙོག”གི་འབྲི་ཚུལ་གཞན་པ་སྟེ་“ཙོག”དང་“ཚོག”དང་
 “ལྷོག”“ལྷོགས”རྣམས་དོན་གཅིག་ལ་འབྲི་ཚུལ་མི་མཐུན་པར་ཡོད་པ་ནི་གང་སར་མཐོང་
 སྲུབ་པ་ཞིག་རེད། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་སུ་“མྱུ་ཉི་མྱུ་ལྷོགས་གྱི་དོན་ནི་གྲོག་དང་འདྲ་སྟེ”
 ཞེས་དང་། “མྱུ་ཉི་ནི་ལྷང་པ་གྲོག་གྲོག་ཚང་མ་ཟེར་བའི་དོན་ལོ། མྱུ་ཙོག་ནི་ཚང་མའི་
 དོན་ལོ།”²⁶ཞེས་གསལ་བ་འདི་ནས་མྱུར་“མྱུ་ཉི”ཡོངས་དང་སྐོས་སུ་“ལྷོག”གི་གོ་བ་ལ་
 དམིགས་གྲིས་གསལ་ཡོད་པར་མཐོང་། མི་ལོ་སྟོང་གི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ལྷན་པའི་ཕྱེབས་རིས་དེར་
 གསལ་བའི་“མྱུ་ཉི”དང་“ལྷོག”ཅེས་པ་གཉིས་ལས་“མྱུ་ཉི”ལ་གོ་བ་དང་བྲུབ་ཚུལ་མ་
 འདྲ་བ་ག་རེ་ཡོད་ཟེར་ན། རྣམ་རྒྱུན་གྱི་གོ་བ་རྣམ་ན་“མྱུ”ནི་ཐུན་མོང་དང་མང་བོ་སོགས་
 འབྲུག་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་དོན་སྟོན་པའི་མིང་ཞིག་ཡིན་ལ་“ཉི”ནི་བརྟེན་གྱི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ན་“ཉི་
 སེ”ལྷ་བྱ་གངས་རི་ལ་གོ་བ་དང་ཞང་ཞུང་སྐད་དུ་ཚུལ་ཡང་གོ་བར་བཤད། སྲུབ་ཚུལ་གྱི་
 ཆ་ནས་“མྱུ”ལ་“མྱུ”ཞེས་བྲིས་པ་ནི་ནམ་རྒྱུན་ཁ་སྐད་ལ་ཡ་བཏགས་གྱི་སྐྱ་གསལ་བོར་མ་
 ཐོན་པ་དེ་བཞིན་ཡིག་ཐོག་ཏུ་པབ་པ་དང་“པི”ཞེས་བྲིས་པ་ནི་མགོ་འདོགས་གཉིས་གྱི་སྐྱ་
 གསལ་བོར་མ་ཐོན་པར་མིང་གཞི་གཅིག་པོ་གསལ་བར་ཐོན་པ་དེ་བཞིན་ཡིག་ཐོག་ཏུ་པབ་
 པ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ལ། འདི་ཚོ་དང་ཅུང་མི་འདྲ་བ་ཞིག་ནི་རྒྱ་བོད་ཡིག་ཚང་དུ་“ཅེ་ཙོག”ཞེས་
 གསལ་བ་དེ་ཡིན་མོད། དེ་ནི་“མྱུ”ཞེས་པའི་སྐྱ་དང་ཐག་ཉེ་བའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་གྱིས་དེ་རྣམ་
 འབྱུང་སྲིད་པ་ཞིག་དང་། རང་ཅག་ལ་མགོ་འདོགས་སོགས་བཀའ་ནས་སྐོག་སོལ་དེ་
 ས་ཆ་ཁ་ཤས་ན་དུས་ད་རྣམས་མངོན་སུམ་མཐོང་ཐོས་སུ་ཡོད་པ་དེ་བཞིན་ཡིན་པར་སྐྱམ།
 མདོར་ན་“མྱུ་ཉི”ནི་སྐད་དང་གཤམ་དང་རྒྱ་བོ་སོགས་ལ་གོ་བ་དང་། “ལྷོག”ནི་རི་
 དང་རྟོད་དང་མཐོ་ས་ལ་གོ་བ་ཞིག་དུ་སྐད་བས་ཐོག་མར་“མྱུ་ཉི”དང་“ལྷོག་ལ”ཞེས་པ་
 ས་ཁུལ་བྱེ་བྲག་པ་གཉིས་གྱི་མིང་ཡིན་པ་དེ་ལ། ཡང་མིང་གི་ཐོགས་སྐངས་སམ་འཇུག་ཡུལ་
 གྱི་ཆ་ནས་“ལྷོག་ལ”ཞེས་པ་རི་རྒྱུད་དང་“མྱུ་ཉི”ཞེས་པ་ནི་གཙང་བོ་དང་ལྷང་གཤོང་ལ་
 གོ་ན་“མྱུ་ལ་ཙོག”དང་ཡང་ན་“མྱུ་ལྷོགས”ནི་“མྱུ་ཉི”དང་“ལྷོག”གཉིས་གྱི་བསྐྱུས་མིང་
 དང་། དེ་ནས་རིམ་གྱིས་ལོ་རྒྱུས་གྱི་འགྱུར་བའི་ཁྲིད་ནས་“ལྷོག”དེ་མི་སྐད་བར་གྱུར་ནས།

26 ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཆི་མེད་གཉེར། ཐོག་གངས། 149

“སྤྱི་ཉི”་ལམ་“སྤི་ཉི”་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདིས་“སྤྱི་ཉི”་དང་“སྤྱོག”་གཉེས་ཀྱི་མིང་གི་འཇུག་
 ཡུལ་དེ་སྤྱི་ཉི་གཙང་བོ་འབབ་ཡུལ་གྱི་སྤོད་བརྩུང་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་དོན་གོ་རུས་པ་ལམ་ཉོན་རུས་
 པ་ཞིག་དུ་གྱུར་པ་ཡིན་ནམ་སྟམ།


བཞི། སྤི་ཉི་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ཡིག་ལམ་ནས་གསལ་བའི་དུས་ཚོག

སྤྱིར་བོད་ཡིག་གི་ལམ་ནས་སྤི་ཉི་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་གསལ་ལ་སྤོ་ཤོས་ནི་སྤི་ཉིའི་ཡུལ་དུ་དུས་
 རབས་བརྩུ་གཅིག་པའི་ནང་བཞིངས་པའི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ལྷ་ལྷང་གསེར་ཁང་གི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཞེས་
 གསལ་བ་དེ་ཡིན་ལ། ད་ཡིག་གི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དང་ཚོས་འབྱུང་སོགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ཚའི་ཁྲོད་ནས་སྤི་ཉི་
 ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་ཡིག་ཐོག་དུ་འཁོད་སྤོ་ཤོས་ནི་དུས་རབས་བརྩུ་གཉེས་པའི་ནང་གི་
 མཁའས་པ་སྤྱི་ཉི་མཛད་པའི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་དང་དེ་ནས་རིམ་གྱིས་ཉང་རལ་ཚོས་འབྱུང་
 སོགས་སུ་ཡིག་ཐོབ་དང་འབྱི་ཚུལ་མི་འདྲ་བ་ཅི་རིགས་ཅིག་གི་ལམ་ནས་བྲིས་པ་གསལ་ན་
 ཡང་། དུས་རབས་བརྩུ་གསུམ་ནས་དུས་རབས་བརྩུ་དགུ་བའི་བར་དུ་སྤི་ཉི་དང་སྤོག་གིས་
 མཚོན་པའི་མིང་གི་འབྱི་ཚུལ་མི་འདྲ་བ་འདི་དག་གི་ཚོག་དོན་དང་འཇུག་ཡུལ་ལ་དབྱུང་
 པ་བྱས་ཡོད་པ་དེ་འདྲ་ད་སྤོ་ལག་སོན་མ་བྱུང་། དུས་རབས་བརྩུ་དགུ་བའི་རྗེས་ནས་ལ་
 དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་སུ་གཞི་ནས་སྤི་ཉི་དང་སྤོ་སྤོགས་ཞེས་པའི་ཚོག་ཟེན་དང་འཇུག་ཡུལ་
 འོས་བཟུང་ནས་དབྱུང་པ་བྱས་འདུག་ལ། དེ་ནས་རིམ་གྱིས་ཕྱི་སྤྱི་ལ་རེ་བྱུང་གིས་ཕྱི་སྤྱི་
 ཡིག་གི་ལམ་ནས་དེང་དུས་ཀྱི་དབྱུང་ཐབས་བཀོལ་ནས་ཞིབ་འཇུག་བྱས་པ་དང་། རེ་བྱུང་
 གིས་རང་རིགས་གངས་ཅན་པའི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡིག་གི་ལམ་ནས་རྒྱ་ཆ་ལག་འཚོལ་བསྐྱུང་དང་དབྱེ་
 ཞིབ་ཀྱིས་ཆེད་ཚོམ་ཁ་ཤས་ཐོན་བཞིན་པ་འདིས་སྤི་ཉི་ཞིབ་འཇུག་གི་བྱ་བ་ལ་མཐུན་ཉེན་
 ལྷན་གྱི་སྤྱི་ཉི་འདུག་པ་བཅས་སོ།



Some Remarks on Tabo Tibetan – A Variety of the Tibetic Language of Spiti

Veronika Hein
(Solothurn)

 My research on the language of Spiti began with a contribution to the Comparative Dictionary of Tibetan Dialects (CDTD), which was compiled by Roland Bielmeier and his team of linguists at Berne University. The CDTD is now in print but this impressive work will come out only after the sad demise of our respected teacher, who died in December 2013. This paper is dedicated to Roland, who encouraged me to venture out into Himachal Pradesh and who made it possible for me to discover a new world in Spiti.

This article presents data collected for the CDTD on three levels: In the first part, some examples from Volume 2: Nouns illustrate the geographical situation of Spiti Tibetan on the level of phonology. The second part presents verbs, verbal expressions and sentences in order to show some salient morphological features of the language of Spiti. Some remarks on case marking, especially the Spiti use of the Ergative, conclude part two. In the third part, the beginning of a coherent text is presented and some aspects of a text transmitted orally are worked out.

Before proceeding to the three main parts of this paper, I wish to clarify a terminological issue: How to refer to the language spoken in the given area. It is the Tibetan language spoken mostly in the Tehsil of Spiti, and it should therefore be called Spiti Tibetan. The reason why in all my previous publications it is called Tabo Tibetan is simply because my linguistic research is mainly based on data collected in Tabo; as such it also appears under Tabo in the CDTD. The name Tabo Tibetan (TT) does not therefore imply a different language from Spiti Tibetan, and I will also use the former in this paper in connection with data collected in Tabo.

Part One: Phonology and Language Geography

The area in which Spiti Tibetan is spoken is practically identical with the administrative unit of Tehsil Spiti in the district of Lahaul-Spiti. There is only a single village in Tehsil Lahaul in which Spiti Tibetan is spoken. It is

the uppermost Lahauli village of Khoksar, which is situated on the right bank of the River Chandra, on the way to the Kunzum Pass and Spiti. Following the Spiti River downstream into the district of Kinnaur, there are also a number of Tibetan speaking villages. At the district border with Kinnaur, however, some phonological differences occur. I will come back to them hereafter.

Before turning to the phonological differences between Spiti Tibetan and Kinnauri Tibetan (Khunnu)¹ let's see how the languages in question are grouped in Bielmeier's CDTD. I have selected the Written Tibetan² lemma of *sran ma* (*peas*) from Volume 2: Nouns,³ as an illustration:

- 8917005172 sran ma ~ srad ma**
BTC sran ma 'bru'i bye brag cig'
 (2971a), srad ma 'ri skyes 'bru rigs sig'
 (2970a), srad ma 'ri skyes 'bru rigs sig ri
 la skye ba'i sño gañ bu can...' (2970a).
Jk '1. pease, beans, lentils...' (580a).
Ja '1. Erbsen, Bohnen, Linsen, als Korn,
 Pflanze u. Gericht' (605a).
Gs sran ma 'the general name for beans,
 lentils, peas' (1138b). srad ma 'wild beans,
 peas' (1138b).
WAT Bal *stranma* 'peas' (only Khaplu); Har,
 Kar, Tsha, Par, Thuw, Dar, Hanu *stranma* 'peas';
 KarMZ *stranma* ~ *stanma* 'peas'; Chik *stanma*
 'peas'; Sapi, Shar, Mul, Lam, Wan, Khal, Nur, Nim,
 Nub *sanma* 'peas'; Leh *sanma* 'peas' (gen.)'.

Table 1 — *sren ma* in the CDTD, part 1.

The entries that are listed first are taken from 4 important dictionaries of Written Tibetan and define as well as translate the headword: BTC by Zhang Yisun et al., (The Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary), Beijing 1985; Jäschke English and German editions,⁴ Goldstein's New Tibetan-English Dictionary of Modern Tibetan, 2001.

And then the different dialect entries follow, grouped according to

¹ The term Khunnu (*khu nu*) for the Tibetan language spoken in Kinnaur was first suggested by N. Tournadre. (Personal communication 2015).

² The term Written Tibetan (WT) is used in the CDTD and related publications in the sense of a written standard language, as opposed to any regional variations, and therefore comes close to the term Classical Literary Tibetan used in Tournadre 2014.

³ PDF-Version exported on 07/07/2014.

⁴ Jäschke, H. (Gnadau 1871, London 1881).

geographical distribution:

| | |
|-----|--|
| WAT | Western Archaic Tibetan |
| WIT | Western Innovative Tibetan (cf. Table 2 below) |
| CT | Central Tibetan |
| ST | Southern Tibetan |
| AT | Amdo Tibetan |

WIT Trang, Tabo *ṣānmā* ‘peas’; Nako *ṭṣēnmā* ‘peas’; Nam *tōnmā*, ‘peas’ < ?; Nes *tōnmā* ‘peas’ (local); Thol *ṣēnmā* ‘beans, peas’ (717).

CT Ru, Gar *ṣālmā* ‘beans, peas’ (717) < ?; Gerg *ṣēnmā* ‘beans, peas’ (717, 718); Gerg *ṭṣēnmā* ‘pod’ (718); Pur *ṭṣēnmā* ‘beans, peas’ (717); SMu *ṣēma* ‘Erbse; peas’; WDro *ṣēma* ‘Bohne; beans’; Tsho *ṣēlmā* ‘beans, peas’ (717) < ?; Kyir *sēm mā* ‘peas’; Yol *sēma* ‘peas’; Jir *ṣēm mā* ‘variety of lentil with reddish skin’ (JNE); Shi *ṣiēmā*: ‘legume’; LhaQT *ṭṣē:mā* ‘beans, peas’ (717).

ST Dzo *sēm* ‘lentils, pulse’ (67, 114; D1991, 65); Dzo *sēm* ‘lentils, beans, dried beans, small beans’ (MM1988, 119, 134).

AT The, Mkha, Rka, Chab, La, Mdzo *ṣanma* ‘legume’; TheHua *ṣanma* ‘pea, bean, broad bean’ (513, 515); ArTBL *ṣanma karday* ‘broad beans’ (432) < ?; BayHua *ṣama* ‘pea, bean, soya bean, soybean’ (513, 514, 516); BayHua *ṣama dzese* ‘broad bean’ (515); Rnga *ṣanmae* ‘legume’; Ndzo *ṣenmae* ‘peas’ (238); Rma *ṣenma* ‘legume’.

Table 2 — *sren ma* in the CDTD, part 2.

Tabo Tibetan, as identical to Spiti Tibetan, is listed under Western Innovative Tibetan (WIT). It is followed by the languages spoken in Nako, Namgya and Nesang; the three villages of Upper Kinnaur included in the CDTD, yet, with a much smaller set of entries than the one from Tabo.

But what does *innovative* mean in the term WIT? There are several phonological features that can be distinguished. In our example, one of them is register tone. It suddenly appears as we proceed from west to east; that is from the margins towards the centre of the Tibetan speaking area. Historically, the development of register tone is connected with old initial consonant clusters that have merged, or with a preradical that was dropped.

- 1) WT: *gnam* – *sky* > Balti: χ nam/hnam
 > Ladakhi: nam
 > Tabo: nām
- 2) WT: *nam* – *when?* > WAT: nam
 > Tabo: ṅam

Example 1 shows more data from the CDTD. Under the Written Tibetan lemma for *sky* the WAT entries of 2 Balti varieties/dialects, the Ladakhi, then finally the Spiti forms can be found. Example 2 WT *nam* English *when?* in contrast shows the unprefix nasal initial, after which the syllable is realised in a low register tone in Spiti.

Let's now turn to the south-eastern border of Spiti Tibetan, and look at the villages of Upper Kinnaur which appear in the CDTD. There is one prominent difference on the level of the phonetic realisation of the syllable initial consonant cluster *sr-*, as can be seen in 3) the example of WT *sren ma*. This is a completely regular realisation and just incidentally coincides with the border of the districts of Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur.

- 3) WT: *sran ma* – *peas*
- | | |
|-------------------|--------|
| > Tabo: | ṣānmā |
| > Nako: | ṭṣēnmā |
| > Namgya, Nesang: | ṭōnmā |

Ex. 4 and 5 show more examples of the same phenomenon.

- 4) WT: *srog* – *life*
- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| > Tabo: | ṣōk |
| > Namgya: | ṭōq |
- 5) WT: *sruñ ma* – *female protector*
- | | |
|------------|-------|
| > Tabo: | ṣūṅmā |
| > Kinnaur: | ṭūṅmā |

To conclude the first part let me just mention an ongoing discussion: The concept of Tibetan dialects used in the CDTD has recently been questioned, especially by Nicolas Tournadre (Tournadre 2014), who suggests using the term Tibetic languages instead. For Spiti, I think it makes good sense to call it a Tibetan or Tibetic language and not a mere dialect. As for Tabo, as no distinctive features have been identified, I cannot see any reason for keeping the term “dialect of Tabo”. The Tibetan language spoken in the villages of

Upper Kinnaur between, Pooh and Sumra, on the other hand, shows only minor phonological differences, so the term “dialect” might still be useful there.

A final remark should be added here concerning the issue of how to refer to the local varieties of Tibetan of Himachal Pradesh. It has been agreed upon by some leaders of Spiti that the least controversial term in the Indian context is the term *Bhoti*, the Hindi word for Tibetan.⁵

Part Two: Morphology

Some remarks on the Spiti verbal system

The first volume of the CDTD ready to be published is Volume 1: Verbs. This part of the CDTD is organised in a similar way to Volume 2: Nouns, but as headwords the 1 to 4 Written Tibetan verb stems are given, followed by the relevant translations in the 4 WT dictionaries before the main part, which again consists of the dialect entries grouped into linguistic areas from west to east.

Quoted below are entries 347, 1002, and 1142 with their respective translations following Jaschke (English), Goldstein, and Tabo.

347 gcog, bcag, gcag, chog

Jk: vt, ‘to break, to break off’

Gs: va, ‘to break’

Tabo: teā (k), imp. teōk, cEA ‘to break’

The dialect entry also consists of the verb stems as far as they can be distinguished, followed by the verb type and the translation into English. In entry 347 the verb type is cEA; c referring to the category of “controllable” as contrasted to “non-controllable”.⁶ The capital letters indicate obligatory arguments of the given verb.

Not included in Volume 1: Verbs of the CDTD are examples that illustrate the use of each dialect listed. For 347 in Tabo there are examples 6 and 7.⁷

⁵ Lochen Tulku, personal communication 2016.

⁶ Huber 2005: 84 defines “controllable” as follows: “If the action expressed by a verb is usually carried out intentionally, that is, if the person doing it can control the action, then the verb is considered controllable.”

⁷ The sentences given here to illustrate the usage of some verbs were recorded together with the verbs in field sessions in Tabo with my local assistants Pema Dorje and Sonam

- 6) *kʰō* *glas* *teāk-soŋ*
 He(ABS) glass(ABS) break(PFV).AOR.VIS
 ‘He broke the glass.’
- 7) *kʰō-su* *goŋā* *teāk-taŋ*
 He.ERG egg(ABS) break(PFV).INTENT.PF
 ‘Oh, he has broken the egg!’ (intentionally)

In Ex. 6 there is a 3rd person pronoun as an agent and an object, and both are in the absolutive case, which means there is no case marker.

The verb stem is formally the same for imperfective and perfective and the auxiliary morpheme designates the verb as in the past tense. VIS stands for visual perception. It means that the speaker has seen the action, i.e. the breaking of the glass. Ex. 7 on the other hand has an agent in the ergative case (always *-su* in Spiti Tibetan).⁸ The object is again in the absolutive case and the verb stem is again the perfective stem followed this time by *-taŋ* that expresses clear intention of the agent. This is a good illustration of the fact that ergative case is only used for emphasis in Spiti.

Two more verbs from the CDTD may illustrate different verbal endings. Only this time they are non-controllable verbs and therefore take different auxiliary morphemes:

- 1002 tshag; Tabo: *tsʰā(k)* ncA ‘to feel a stinging pain’
 1141 bzod; Tabo: *zøt* ncAA ‘to bear, to endure’

I will again present the usage of the verb with two examples, 8 and 9.

- 8) *ŋūi* *ŋgo* *minm* *tsʰā:rak*
 My head(ABS) a.lot feel.pain(IPFV):IPFV.NVIS
 ‘My head is stinging with pain.’
- 9) *tirŋ* *tū:-ja* *jukpā* *zøt-εuŋ*
 Today boy.PL(ABS) stick(ABS) endure(PFV).AOR.NVIS
 ‘Today the boys endured the stick, I feel.’

Ex. 8 means that the speaker is feeling pain in his head. And in (9) the speaker feels that somebody else had to suffer.

Especially when I was collecting non-control verbs, it became clear that

Tsering. The sentences were later transcribed, interlinearised and glossed and were originally meant to be published in a separate volume of the CDTD entirely dedicated to the syntax of the major dialects collected in the CDTD.

⁸ Cf. Section 2 on Ergative below.

in Spiti Tibetan there are auxiliary morphemes that are not distinguished in central Tibet and I could establish the following verbal endings for Spiti:

| <i>Categories of evidentiality</i> | <i>I</i> <i>Focus on speaker's involvement</i> | <i>II</i> <i>Focus on speaker's unspecified knowledge</i> | <i>III</i> <i>Focus on speaker's perception</i> <i>a) visual</i> <i>b) auditory</i> | <i>IV</i> <i>Focus on speaker's inferred knowledge</i> |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| <i>Tense/aspect</i> | | | | |
| <i>Present/imperfective</i> | -et | -kak/-ak | a) tuk/-uk b) -arak | -ken j̄inkak -ken j̄inuk -ken j̄indarak |
| <i>Future/imperfective</i> | -in -kajin > -ken | -kak/-ak | | -tee j̄inkak -na j̄inkak |
| <i>Present/perfective</i> | -deret -peret | -dekak -pekak | a) -deruk -peruk b) -derak -perak | |
| <i>Past/perfective</i> | -wajin > -wen | -wa ak > -wak | a) -soŋ b) (?) -təuŋ | -wa j̄inkak > -anak .wa j̄inuk > -anuk |

Table 3 — *Categories of Evidentiality in Spiti Tibetan (Hein 2007).*

The system is organised according to how the speaker has come to know about the action or state expressed through the verb in question. In the first category, the focus is on the speaker's direct involvement, it is also called egophoric. The second category are the default forms, which do not specify in any way how the speaker has come to know of the verbal action or state. Category III is the most interesting one, as it contains a subdivision that is only found in Western Tibetic languages. The morpheme -tuk/-uk, -deruk, -peruk and -soŋ always express visual perception, e.g. the speaker sees or has seen the action or state. There is a different set of auxiliary morphemes expressing all the other sensory perceptions, i.e. auditory and others like feeling or touching: -arak, -derak/-perak and -təuŋ.

The basic verbal system that I have presented here fits in well with other linguistic descriptions of Tibetic languages. But with its great variety of forms, especially in the verbal category of evidentiality, it makes an important contribution to the linguistic research on Tibetan.

Some remarks on Ergative constructions in Spiti Tibetan

The ergative case and ergative constructions in Tibetan have been widely discussed in modern linguistics.⁹ As shown above, in the CDTD the verbs are subsumed under different verb types according to the categories of “control” on the one hand, and “arguments” or “case” on the other hand.

For a majority of the dialects included in the CDTD, the presence or absence of an ergative case as a core argument can be used as a defining criterion for the verb type.

But in some WAT and WIT dialects, as well as in Tabo (Spiti) Tibetan, the use of the ergative case is not quite as straightforward as it seems from the way it is applied in the definition of the verb types and therefore a more precise description of the Tabo/Spiti ergative is given here.

In Ex. 6 and 7 above, we have seen that the Tabo verb *teāk* can be used with the agent either in the absolutive case (no case marker) or in the ergative case (with the case marker *-sū*).

A unique feature is the form of the ergative marker. So far I have not come across *-su* in this function anywhere else but in Spiti. Regarding its etymology, the only likely origin I can think of is the WT interrogative pronoun *sū* (English *who*), which exists as a free morpheme in TT, too.

The second point about the TT ergative that is worth mentioning is its usage. As illustrated above in ex. 7, it is only used to put emphasis on the fact that the agent in an utterance executed a certain action, in other words, the ergative stresses the fact that a certain person did something and not somebody else. This use is purely pragmatic, i.e. depending on the situation and what the speaker wants to emphasise. That means to say that there is no verbal construction that triggers off a compulsory ergative as is the case with other Tibetic languages.

A third point about the morpheme *-su* in TT is the fact that in its emphatic function it also occurs in combination with other case morphemes, e.g. as part of the ablative case. An example of this can be found in the text presented in Part Three below (cf. sentence 11 of the story of Lingsing Gyalwo).

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 10) | <i>tēnē:</i> | <i>wə wə</i> | <i>ŋa</i> | <i>līŋpā</i> | <i>īzūk</i> | <i>mī</i> | <i>maŋpō-i</i> |
| | Then | EXCL | I | Ling man | like that | people | many.GEN |
| | <i>kʰā-naisukun</i> | | | <i>dynmā</i> | <i>teō:-je</i> | <i>īzūk</i> | <i>ŋa</i> |
| | mouth.ABL.EMPH | | | meeting | call-NOM | like this | I |
| | | | | | | | <i>ḍa-la</i> |
| | | | | | | | enemy.DIR |

⁹ Cf. Tournadre 1996.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <i>mandg-na</i> | <i>ŋo</i> | <i>ts^hā-je</i> | <i>jīnuk</i> |
| NEG.go. if | shame | take-NOM | COP |

‘Then, lo! I, like that, from so many Ling people speaking at a meeting, like this, if I don’t go to the enemy, it will be shameful.’

mi maŋpōi k^hānaisukun literally means “from so many people’s mouth”, as the source of the words “mouth” is marked with the ablative morpheme -naisukun or, probably more accurately, -nai as ablative marker followed by -sukun for emphasis.

For ablative marking the following morphemes have been identified in TT:

-nai /-naki, naisu/-nakisu, -naisulo/-nakisulo, -naisukun/-nakisukun, -nailo/-nakilo

As -nai can also have a clearly instrumental function in TT, let me add some more examples from my own collection of sentences to illustrate the point.

- 11) *k^hō* *kāŋpā-nai* *ŋō-la* *ɛy:-joŋ*
 He(ABS) foot.INST I.DAT hit.PAST
 ‘He kicked me with his foot.’

- 12) *ŋō* *t^hōā-naisu* *zīrū-la* *ɛy:-wen*
 I(ABS) hammer.INST nail.DAT hit.PAST
 ‘I hit the nail with a hammer.’

- 13) *ŋō* *t^hōā-nai* *zīrū-la* *ɛy:-wen*
 I(ABS) hammer.INST nail.DAT hit.PAST
 ‘I hit the nail with a hammer.’

The complete set of instrumental morphemes in TT is identical with the set marking for ablative.

That is why I consider -su to express ergative only, as in:

- 14) *sōnām-su* *ī* *pētēā* *tēt-cuŋ*
 Sonam.ERG this book(ABS) give.PAST.NVIS
 ‘It was Sonam who gave me this book.’

As a rather surprising conclusion from examples 7 and 10 to 14, it can be stated that in Spiti Tibetan the ergative morpheme -su is only used as an emphasising marker, whereas the instrumental and the ablative case take the same set of complex morphemes, which are clearly distinct from the ergative.

This is another difference with other Tibetic languages, where we find the same morphemes for ergative and instrumental,¹⁰ and different ones for ablative. The split in the set of case morphemes is drawn differently in Spiti Tibetan.

Part Three

As I have also done some work on oral tradition,¹¹ in order to show more features of the spoken language of Spiti, I would like to present a text that has been passed down to the present day purely orally.¹² It is the beginning of the story of Ling Singing Gyalwo, the Spiti version of the Gesar epic. Although written versions of the Gesar epic exist, the women storytellers of Spiti do not normally read Tibetan but retell from memory the stories they once heard.

The text transcribed here below is rendered without a morpheme analysis, using only simplified glosses. They are meant to facilitate reading a coherent text without providing the basis for a detailed linguistic analysis.

The story of Lingsing Gyalwo

- 1) *ta* *l̄ŋ s̄ŋs̄ŋ ʃalwō* *ʃɲuk* *ŋgo* *h̄osē*
 Now King Ling Singing COP beginning EXCL
 Now this is King Ling Singing, the beginning, ok?
- 2) *t̄enē:* *l̄ŋ s̄ŋs̄ŋ ʃalwō* *t̄enē:* *l̄ŋ k̄ars̄āŋ* *n̄aks̄āŋ*
 Then King Ling Singing then Ling Karsang Naksang
s̄ūmp̄ō *d̄ynmā* *t̄eō:wak*
 the three meeting called.PAST
 Then King Ling Singing, Ling Karsang and Naksang, the three,
 convened a meeting.
- 3) *t̄enē:* *l̄ŋ k̄ars̄āŋ* *n̄aks̄āŋ* *s̄ūmp̄ō* *d̄ynmā*
 Then Ling Karsang Naksang the three meeting.DIR
t̄eō:je *d̄im̄t̄ūk* *p̄uts̄ā* *t̄eīkp̄ō* *d̄ynmāla*
 call.NOM Dimtuk boy only meeting
m̄aj̄oŋwak
 NEG.come.PAST
 Then, when Ling, Karsang and Naksang, the three of them had

¹⁰ Haller 2000, Huber 2005.

¹¹ Cf. Hein 2007, 2011.

¹² The text presented here was audio-recorded during fieldwork in July 2003 as part of a project on oral tradition run by the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. Sonam Tsering from Tabo introduced me to Tsering Palzom from Lari who narrated two episodes of the story. Later I worked on the audio recording with Sonam Tsering and together we transcribed the text and then translated it into English.

called a meeting, only the boy Dimtruk did not come to the meeting.

- 4) *tēnē:* *ḍynmāla* *majōŋwa* *l̄iŋpi*
 Then meeting.DIR NEG.come.NOM Ling.GEN
m̄ija *ḍum* *kʰō* *tēīkpō* *tēī* *ḡōtpō* *j̄inani*
 People EXCL he only what powerful be.QUEST.EMPH
 Then (as) he did not come to the meeting, the people of Ling all
 (said) how powerful he is!

- 5) *wōā* *t̄akpō* *ḍynmāla* *l̄ēpteken* *tēākla*
 We all meeting.DIR came.PER.NOM as

ḍimṭūk *puṣā* *tēīkpō* *tēīla* *majōŋwani*
 Dimtruk boy only why NEG.come.QUEST.EMPH
 We have all come to the meeting, why has only boy Dimtruk not
 arrived?

- 6) *waja* *tēnē:* *ḍemōla* *midet* *naŋmō*
 We.PL then properly NEG.stay tomorrow
ŋātōk *tēʰātpāla* *ḍala* *nḍo* *ḡueyin*
 morning punishment.DAT enemy.DIR go need.FUT
s̄a:k *tēī* *s̄e*
 say.PAST tell!.IMP like this
 We are all not going to stay like this, it was said, tomorrow morning,
 as a punishment he needs to go to the enemy, tell him!

- 7) *tēnē:* *ḍa* *t̄uldu* *sōŋ* *tēī*
 Then enemy destroy.TERM go !.IMP tell !.IMP
t̄e:wak
 said.PAST
 Then go to destroy the enemy, tell him! It was said.

- 8) *tēnē:* *ḍa* *t̄uldu* *sōŋ* *t̄e:je* *tēnē:*
 Then enemy destroy.TERM go !.IMP said.NOM then
m̄ija *ḍzu:raŋ* *s̄eken* *majōŋwak*
 people many.EMPH say.NOM NEG.come.PAST
kʰōla *ḍzi:je* *kʰō* *ḡōtpō* *j̄okae*
 he.DAT be afraid.NOM he powerful COP
 Then having said, go to destroy the enemy! Then there were not
 many people who said (like this) as they were frightened of him, he
 was powerful (you know).

- 9) *tēnē:* *naŋmō* *ŋātōk* *s̄ersena* *ḍimṭūk*
 Then tomorrow morning say.when Dimtruk

pṡtsā jñōtla dḗtna met
 boy you.EMPH stay.NOM NEG.COP

Then, when speaking about tomorrow morning, boy Dimtruk, you can't stay!

10) *ndḡḡ dynmāla majoḡwa jñōtla*
 Yesterday meeting.DIR NEG.come.NOM you

ḡḡala ndḡ gṡeyin setuk
 enemy.DIR go need.FUT say.IMP

Not having come to the meeting yesterday, you have to go to the enemy, it was said.

11) *tenē: wḡ wḡ na lṡḡpā īzūk mṡ maḡḡpōi*
 Then EXCL I Ling man like that people many.EMPH
k^hānaisukun dynmā tḗō:je īzūk ḡḡ ḡḡala
 mouth.ABL meeting call.NOM like this I enemy.DIR
mandḡ na ḡḡ ts^hā-je jṡnuk
 NEG.go if shame take.NOM COP

Then, lo! I, like that, from so many Ling people speaking at a meeting, like this, if I don't go to the enemy, it will be shameful.

12) *tenē: tsūk jṡna k^hāḡpi zimēt takpō ṡṡmdze*
 Then how be.NOM house.GEN family all leave.NOM
ḡḡ ḡḡala ndḡ gṡcuk sāmde
 I enemy.DIR go need.IMPERF think.NOM
k^hōmpā tenē: k^hōmpī tḗōk^hāḡdu mōnlām
 he then this prayer room.LOC prayer

tāptu putak
 do.TERM went.PAST

Then, anyway, leaving all the family members, thinking I have to go to the enemy, he then went to his prayer room to pray.

13) *tenē: tḗūkḡpō mṡnāḡ jḡkak tenē: k^hōmpā*
 Then rich very COP then he
tḗōk^hāḡdu mōnlām tāptū putak
 prayer room.DIR prayer do.TERM went.PAST
 He was very rich. He then went to his prayer room to pray.

14) *tenē: k^hōmpā jḡtsenani k^hōmpī tḗōk^hāḡ*
 Then he be.when.EMPH his prayer room
kḡmāna sḗr sḗrwōik ḡḡala jḗ:kōr
 upper.LOC gold golden.INDEF stone.DIR right.round

jepkak *sēna* *tenē:* *naṅmō* *kʰōmpā*
 go.IMPERF but then tomorrow he
pundōje *sena* *jōnkōr* *jepkak*
 went.PROG.NOM. when left.round go.IMPERF

Then, when he was there, in his upper prayer room, a yellow golden bell (?) went round the stone to the right side, but then, when he was going the next day, it went round to the left side.

15) *tenē:* *kʰōmpī* *tɕʰōkʰāṅ* *baṅmāna* *mūl*
 Then his prayer room middle.LOC silver
kʰāmpāik *dola* *jē:wōr* *jepkak*
 light.INDEF stone right.round go.IMPERF

Then, in his middle prayer room, a light silver (bell?) went round the stone to the right side.

16) *tenē:* *kʰōmpā* *dala* *ndosena* *hotēkā* *kʰōmpā*
 Then he enemy.DIR go.when that.also he
naṅdu *detsena* *jē:kōr* *jepkak* *dala*
 home.LOC stay.when right.round go.IMPERF enemy.DIR
putndoet *setsena* *jōnkōr* *jepkak*
 went.PROG.SP say.when left.round go.IMPERF

Then, when he was going to the enemy, the same (happened), when staying at home, it went round to the right, when he said he was going to the enemy, it went round to the left.

17) *hotē* *sena* *manē* *kōrna* *jokak* *kʰōmpī*
 That say.if mane turn.NOM COP his
tɕʰōkʰāṅ *rɕrɕru* *manē* *kōrna* *jokae*
 prayer room each.LOC mane turn.NOM COP

That means there are mane (prayer wheels) to turn, in each of his prayer rooms he has mane to turn, as you know.

18) *kʰōmpā* *tāndu* *dɕcajala* *jē:wōr* *jepkak*
 he always stay.if right.turn go.IMPERF
 If he always stays on and on, it turns to the right.

19) *mijala* *ṅy:* *mɛkak* *kʰōmpī* *naṅki*
 People.DAT knowledge NEG.COP his inside.GEN
tsʰāmōla *ṅy:* *mɛkak*
 wife.DAT knowledge NEG.COP

The people have no knowledge, his 'house-' wife (also) does not know.

20) *kō* *tɕūkteē:*
 Melody put.QUEST(?)

I shall put a melody:

- 21) *ε̄ōlala lāmōi lūre*
(Beginning of) Goddess' song !

ts^hūr *ŋōla* *ŋōndaŋ* *ts^hāmō* *ŋōt*
To.this.side I.DIR listen.REQUE wife you
To this side, to me, please listen, wife, you!

jaŋ *ŋala* *ŋōndaŋ* *ts^hāmō* *ŋōt*
Again I.DIR listen.REQUE wife you
Again, listen to me, you, wife!

- 22) *puṭūkwi* *te^hōk^hāŋ* *būkeōna*
Boy.GEN prayer room upper.SUP.LOC
In the uppermost of the boy's prayer rooms

sēr *sērwōi* *dola* *jē:wōr* *jōt*
gold golden.INDEF stone.DIR right.turn COP
A yellow golden (bell) has a right turn around the stone.

tekun *jōnkōr* *jeṣena*
That.EMPH left.turn go.when
That, when it goes to the left

puṭūk *qala* *ŋqona jin*
boy enemy.DIR go.FUT
I, the boy, will go to the enemy

dimṭūk *qala* *ŋqona jin*
Dimtruk enemy.DIR go.FUT
I, Dimtruk, will go to the enemy.

- 23) *puṭūkwi* *te^hōk^hāŋ* *baŋmāna*
Boy.GEN prayer room middle.LOC
In the boy's middle prayer room

mūl *k^hāmpī* *dola* *jē:wōr* *jōt*
silver light.INDEF stone.DIR right.turn COP
The light silver (bell) turns to the right side around the stone.

tekun *jōnkōr* *jeṣena*
That.EMPH left.round go.when

That, when it goes round to the left

puṭūk *q̄ala* *εōrcū j̄in*
 boy enemy.DIR run away.FUT
 I, the boy, will run to the enemy

ḍimṭūk *q̄ala* *εōrcū j̄in*
 Dimtruk enemy.DIR run away.FUT
 I, Dimtruk, will run to the enemy.

24) *puṭūkwi* *te^hōk^hāṅ* *j̄okεōna*
 Boy.GEN prayer room low.SUP.LOC
 In the boy's lowest prayer room

tuṅ *k^hāmpī* *d̄ola* *j̄ē:wōr* *j̄ot*
 Conch light.INDEF stone.DIR right.turn COP
 A light conch (bell) turns right round the stone.

te_ukun *j̄ōnkōr* *j̄epsena*
 That.EMPH left.turn go.when
 That, when it goes round to the left

puṭūk *q̄ala* *εōrcū j̄in*
 boy enemy.DIR run away.FUT
 I, the boy, will run to the enemy

ḍimṭūk *q̄ala* *εōrcū j̄in*
 Dimtruk enemy.DIR run away.FUT
 I, Dimtruk, will run to the enemy.

Some comments on the transcribed text

The given text consists of the beginning of a story and includes the first of a series of songs. The songs render important direct speech in the course of the story. In this way the storyteller switches between her speaking voice and her singing voice without any pause. The text shows some specific characteristics of oral tradition such as repetitions of lines with small variations, e.g. the last two lines of each stanza of the song. Other instances are the precious substances that occur in three forms: gold, silver, and conch shell/mother-of-pearl; each of these substances is often used in religious songs and stories for their symbolic meaning.

Linguistically the text illustrates the use of a number of saying verbs and provides a lot of examples of direct speech (cf. sentences 11, 12 and 22 to

24) and reported speech (sentences 6 to 10). The storyteller also makes frequent use of subordinate clauses in order to link the main clauses. The story thus provides a lot of material for an analysis of the syntactic level, which I have not yet touched upon in this article.

Conclusion

The stories I have collected and worked on are an invaluable source of information for linguists. The collection of texts has provided me with a corpus of spoken language that forms the basis of my linguistic description of Spiti Tibetan. In the process of my research I have been allowed to get a glimpse of the rich oral tradition still alive in Spiti. But old songs and stories are getting lost quickly under the pressure of the dominating influence from the plains of India.

That is why I also see my involvement in Spiti as a contribution to create awareness among the local population about the particular aspects of Spiti Tibetan and its expressions in the oral tradition of stories and songs.

Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| A, ABS | absolutive case |
| AOR | aorist |
| c | controllable |
| COP | copula |
| DAT | dative |
| DIR | direction |
| E, ERG | ergative case |
| EMPH | emphasis |
| EXCL | exclamation |
| FUT | future |
| GEN | genitive |
| IMP | imperative |
| IMPF | imperfective |
| INDEF | indefinite article |
| INTENT | intentional modality |
| LOC | locative |
| nc | non-controllable |
| NEG | negative |
| NOM | nominaliser |
| NVIS | non-visual perception |
| PAST | past tense |
| PF | present perfect tense |

| | |
|-------|-------------------|
| PFV | perfective stem |
| PROG | progressive |
| QUEST | question |
| SUP | superlative |
| TERM | terminative |
| VIS | visual perception |

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Towards a History of Spiti: Some Comments on the Question of Clans from the Perspective of Social Anthropology

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he state of research on clans in the Spiti Valley is far from developed. This is evident from the fact that so far no published work exists that deals specifically with this topic. Only in a small amount of older and a few recent works clans are mentioned, however, with various different usages of the term clan and usually not by taking into account the local Tibetan language context, that is, the terminology used in Spiti in oral and written forms. The issue of clans is a research question which is relevant for the understanding of local communities in Spiti at different historical periods, in particular from the perspective of social anthropology. It is the aim of this paper to discuss preliminary results of ongoing research on this topic and to draw attention to hitherto little used, unknown, or unavailable research materials. The present paper therefore has the character of an interim report but does not represent a systematic study.¹

Due to the limited space and with respect to relevant but so far little used sources, as well as new material that became recently available, the chronological focus in this contribution is on two historical periods, the mid-19th to late 20th century period and the period around and before the late 10th century. Wherever it is relevant comparative information from adjacent areas is included. This reflects the fact that Spiti was part of the West Tibetan kingdom

¹ See also Jonathan Samuels' (2017) article "Are we legend? Reconsidering clan in Tibet" for a recent discussion of the state of research on the theme of clan and related concepts in Tibetan Studies and for advocacy of "a more anthropologically-informed interrogation of Tibetan historical literature" (*ibid.*: 310).

from the late 10th century onward and in later periods belonged to the kingdoms of Guge, Ladakh, and Purig respectively,² and that to the best of our knowledge the Tibetan-speaking populations of the Spiti Valley had throughout most of their history considerable and extensive interrelationships with communities in neighbouring areas, such as Upper Kinnaur in the south, the Rongchung valley in the south-east, Zanskar and Ladakh in the northwest, and Chumurti and further areas along the Indus valley in the north-east, across and also despite political and administrative borders.

Clans in Spiti: Mid-19th to Late 20th century

From the 1840s onward, British officials such as Captain W. C. Hay, James Lyall and others, started to collect information on local administrative and taxation systems and to some degree also showed interest in the social organization of Spiti.³ Probably the earliest reference to clans in the area is contained in the *Gazetteer of the Kangra District* (1883–1884b; see below). This information was gathered during the time when Spiti belonged to British India, a period which lasted from 1846–1947.⁴

Sometime between July 1899 and 1904, in the course of investigations on Tibetan dialects, August Hermann Francke recorded some information on this research topic in the Indus valley in Ladakh where he collected, for example, the names of *pha spun* or “father-brother-ships” in Khalatse.⁵ During a research trip through Spiti in July–August 1909—in the course of an expedition to Kinnaur, Spiti, and areas of Ladakh in order to document and investigate the archaeological and artistic remains of the ancient Buddhist culture of these territories for which he was employed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), he “made enquiries into the Tibetan system of clans, as it is represented in Spiti.”⁶

Around twenty years after Francke, and most probably initiated

² See Petech 1977: 49ff, Jahoda 2009, Schuh 2016a: 15, Schuh 2016b: 1.

³ See, for example, Hay 1851, Harcourt 1871, Lyall 1874.

⁴ See, for example, Jahoda 2015: 111ff.

⁵ See Francke 1907: 364–365. Francke was stationed at the mission of the Moravian Church (*Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*) at Khalatse from July 1, 1899, until 1904 and again from June 20, 1905 until 1906. See Chapter “A. Biographisches zu A. H. Francke und Theodora Francke” in Walravens and Taube (1992: 17).

⁶ Francke 1914: 47.

by him, Joseph Gergan,⁷ whose family was of Central Tibetan descendant,⁸ and who was a Moravian missionary like Francke, started to collect respective names of 'clans' in Spiti and other areas of historical Western Tibet, such as Lahaul, Zanskar, etc. There is a long list of such names (referred to as *pha spad*) from Spiti (*sPyi ti*) as well as of *pha tshan* from Lahaul (*Gar zha*), *pha spun* from Lower Ladakh (*Bla dwags gsham*) and Zanskar (*Zangs dkar*) which is kept in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Department, among Francke's papers. The existence of this list is not mentioned in the comprehensive bibliographic work by Walravens and Taube (1992) among the textual materials collected by Francke—a huge number of manuscripts, wood-prints, documents etc. kept among his papers in libraries and archives in Berlin, Herrnhut, Leipzig and London.⁹ The list was 'discovered' by the present author during archival research in Berlin in 2005. The author of this list is clearly and without any doubt Joseph Gergan as is evident from the following note accompanying the list (see also below, Fig. 1 and 2):

From my book of bLadags.

ལྷ་མ་སྐད་དམ། མ་སྐུན་ནམ། མ་ཚན་སྐྱ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ཐོ་འདི་
བཞིན་ཡང་བདག་གི་སྐྱ་དུཌ་བྱ་བའི་དཔེ་ཚའི་ནང་འཇུག་པའི་
བཀའ་དྲིན་བསྐྱེད་བ་མཁུན་བཞུན་གྱུ།

J.G. [Joseph Gergan] 25.3.1925

Further, we know that Gergan went to Spiti at least two times, in 1921 and again in 1924 together with H. Lee Shuttleworth, at that time Assistant Commissioner in Kulu. Shuttleworth's *History of Spiti*, an unpublished manuscript which is kept in the British Library,¹⁰ contains some notes on Francke's—less on Gergan's—earlier findings (see below).¹¹

⁷ Joseph Gergan corresponds to the Tibetan Yo seb dGe rgan. His personal name was bSod nams Tshe brtan. His full name in written Tibetan was bSod nams Tshe brtan Yo seb dGe rgan (see dGe rgan 1976: title page).

⁸ Cf. Guyon Le Bouffy 2012: 18f. See also the account of a meeting of the Moravian missionary August Wilhelm Heyde with Gergan's father in 1875 in Hundar in Ladakh (quoted in Walravens and Taube 1992: 225).

⁹ See Walravens and Taube 1992: 93–108, 109–131, 141–155.

¹⁰ Based on letters by H. Hargreaves (Officiating Director General of Archaeology in India, Shimla) to Shuttleworth in July and October 1930 (see BL, OIOC, MssEur.D722/25) as well as internal evidence in Shuttleworth's manuscript (*ibid.*), Shuttleworth may have been working on this manuscript since the late

For my book of Ladags.

ཨ་ཕྱི་དང་ཨ་ཕྱི་བཟུང་ཨ་ཕྱི་སྐྱོ་མཁའ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་
 བཞིམ་ཡེལ་བཟུང་གི་སྐད་ཀྱི་ལོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་
 བཟུང་གི་བཟུང་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་ 1/4 25.3.1925

Fig. 1 — Note by Joseph Gergan accompanying the list of pha spad and pha spun in Spiti, Lower Ladakh, Lahaul and Zanskar (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Department, Francke papers)

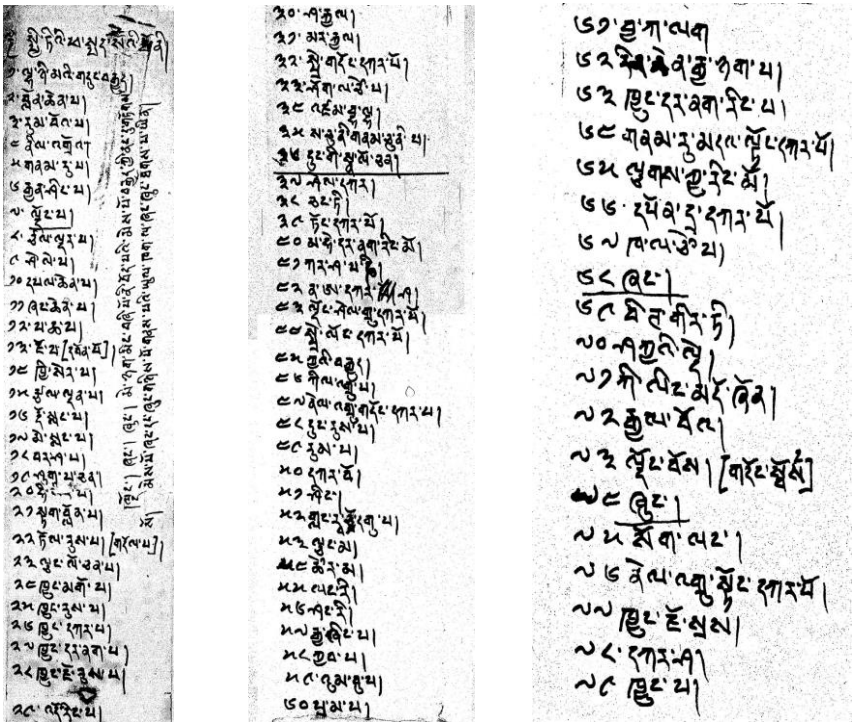


Fig. 2 — List of 79 pha spad in Spiti collected by Gergan (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Department, Francke papers)

1920s and was still working on it around 1932. On Shuttleworth’s *History of Spiti* and his collaboration with Gergan, see Laurent 2017 in the present volume.
 11 See also Jahoda 2007 for additional information on the ‘collaborative network’ constituted by Francke, Gergan, and Shuttleworth.

The information contained in Gergan's posthumously published work *Bla dwags rgyal rabs 'chi med gter* [*Eternal Treasure of Royal Genealogies of Ladakh*],¹² for which the list mentioned above seems to have been collected, constitutes a good point of departure for a discussion of clans in Spiti as well as of the Tibetan term *rigs rus* and the local variant names, such as *pha spad* etc., from a comparative, regional, and historical perspective.¹³

Gergan uses the expression *rigs rus* for kinship groups which are defined as tracing their descent patrilineally from a common ancestor.¹⁴ He correlates the terminology commonly used in Spiti with that used in Ladakh at the beginning of the 20th century. According to Gergan, *rigs rus pa* (members of this type of kinship group) were called *pha spun* by the people in Ladakh, *rus pa* by people in Rong and sTod, and *pha spad* or *pha rus* by the population in Spiti. The lineages (*rgyud pa*) of five particular *rus* were most numerous represented in Spiti. Their names are given as *Blon chen pa*, *Tum bō ba pa*, *Nil 'gro ba pa*, *gNam ru pa*, and *rGyan shing pa*.¹⁵

Gergan cites a list from *lHa nyi ma gdung brgyud*, a historical source, with names of other patrilineal descent groups (*rus*) in Spiti and concludes that there were more than 36 *rus*—at an unspecified time one should add. It is unclear which historical period this text—unavailable to me—refers to. According to the list (compiled by Gergan on a long strip of paper), however, the number of *pha spad* in Spiti was 79, the number of *pha tshan* in Lahaul was 15, the number of *pha spun* in Lower Ladakh 8 and in Zanskar 39, in total 141. The names include the five before-mentioned and many others (see Fig. 2 and Appendix).

What else is known about these *rus* apart from the fact that they are patrilineal descent groups? According to the information to be found in gazetteers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries where *rus* was mostly translated as 'clan' but interestingly also as 'tribe', these groups are invariably described as exogamous and non-local units: "A Cháh Zhang will marry a Cháh Zhang, but having regard to relationship; this is, they will not intermarry within the same clan

¹² See dGe rgan 1976: 324–325.

¹³ See also De Rossi Filibeck's (2002) study of Gergan's chapter on *rigs rus* which is useful but not entirely clear in the terminology related to *rus* or clan.

¹⁴ dGe rgan 1976: 324.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*: 325.2–3.

(*rus* or *haddi*)."¹⁶

The 1899 edition of this work also includes names of *rus* (*pa*) ("*rú-wa*") which partly accord with those given by Gergan:

"Though caste is almost unknown in Spiti there are tribal divisions or clans, a few of the more important of which are the following: (1) Nandu, (2) Gyazhingpa, (3) Khyungpo, (4) Lonchhenpa, (5) Henir, and (6) Nyekpa. Marriage is forbidden within the tribe, but one tribe inter-marries freely with another. A woman on marrying is considered to belong to her husband's tribe, and the children of both sexes are of the tribe of the father. The tribes (*rú-wa*) are not local: members of each may be found in any village."¹⁷

This quotation clearly demonstrates that membership of the *rus* is exclusively inherited through the father, for sons as well as daughters.¹⁸ This corresponds to the concept underlying the Tibetan reckoning of kinship according to which the quality transmitted by the man is expressed by the idea of bone (*rus*) and that by the woman with the ideas of flesh (*sha*) or blood (*khrag*).¹⁹

Patrilocal residence usually means that after marriage the woman moves into the house of her husband or his father, i.e. of the head of the household in his family. The concomitant change in 'clan membership' cannot, however, refer to *rus*, since this quality is immutable but to membership of a group that is defined also by criteria of residence rather than only descent. This is evidenced by comparable material of more recent date from Zanskar, where it is expressed terminologically by the differentiation between *rus* (*pa*) and *pha spun*. There *rus* denotes descent from a single male ancestor. All children, sons and daughters, belong through birth to the *rus pa* of their father. A daughter who gets married to a man (who belongs—necessarily—to another *rus pa*) and who moves to the

¹⁶ *Gazetteer of the Kangra District* 1883–1884b: 120.

¹⁷ *Gazetteer of the Kangra District* 1899: 93.

¹⁸ To this extent, from the point of view of transmitting the quality of *rus*, the woman does not have to belong to the same social stratum since the children's membership of the *rus* is in any case transmitted by the man.

¹⁹ Cf. the characterisation of the Tibetan descent groups by Rolf Stein: "The patrilineal stock (*brgyud*) constituting the clan (*rus*) descended from a common ancestor, is exogamous: a clan member cannot marry within his own clan. This kind of relationship is called 'bone' (*rus*), whereas that through women, by marriage, is called 'flesh' (*sha*)." (Stein 1972: 94).

bridegroom's parents after the wedding keeps her *rus pa* but loses membership to the *pha spun* group of her father²⁰ (which means that she joins the *pha spun*-group of her husband).

According to this system the *pha spun* in Zanskar are "patrilineal clans" or "a cluster of families whose male members believe themselves to be the progeny of a single male ancestor and which worships a special clan god (*pha-lha*)."²¹ So we have to differentiate between *rus* or *rus pa* and *pha spun* or *pha spad* as in Spiti.

By applying ethno-sociological concepts as defined, for example, by George Peter Murdock in *Social Structure* (1949), to quote one of the classic works of the social anthropological discipline, the groups in Zanskar described by the term *pha spun* may be characterised as clans, while *rus* corresponds to the concept of sib. Murdock defined a clan as a kind of "compromise kin group" insofar as it "is based upon both a rule of residence and a rule of descent". It combines "a unilocal rule of residence with a consistent unilinear rule of descent" and effects "a compromise whereby some affinal relatives are

²⁰ Cf. Dargay and Dargay 1980: 93.

²¹ *Ibid.*: 113. In a later publication, Eva K. Dargay summarizes her findings in this form: "The people of Zanskar are organized in lineages which they call *rus pa* ('bones'). [...] The term *rus pa* identifies a number of families which are related by male kinship. In other words, only those families that can trace back their origin to a common male ancestor belong to the same *rus pa*. The mother's kinship is in this context insignificant. Children obtain by birth their father's *rus pa* for the rest of their lives. [...] Besides the *rus pa*, another category exists for defining kinship known as *pha spun*, which can be translated as 'father-brotherhood.' The *pha spun* is used to identify the male members of one *rus pa* plus their wives [my emphasis; CJ], who by virtue of the rules of exogamy belong to a different *rus pa*. These rules imply that a woman when married will become a member of her husband's *pha spun* but will remain a member of her father's *rus pa*." (Dargay 1988: 127).

Dargay's ethnographic account (based on research in the late 1970s) as well as related social anthropological terminology is confirmed by Kim Gutschow's fieldwork in Zanskar between 1991 and 2001: "Those individuals who share the same bone [*rus*] share a common patrilineal ancestor, real or fictive. A subset of those who share the same bone are those who also share a guardian deity [*pha'i lha*], known as the "father's relatives" (*pha'i spun*). This group or patriclan provides its members with a shared status and offers assistance at times of death and birth, when the household members are polluted. When women marry, they sever their ties to their natal household by giving up their affiliation to their father's guardian deity and patriclan, but retain their father's bone." (Gutschow 2004: 70).

included and some consanguinal kinsmen excluded.”²² According to this definition *pha spun / pha spad* correspond to clans. A sib, on the other hand, is defined as “Two or more lineages related by a common, mythical ancestor.”²³ Murdock defined this kin group as opposed to the clan as being based purely on descent: A sib consists of all descendants tracing their descent patrilineally from a common ancestor. Membership does not change through marriage. According to this definition *rus* correspond to sibs.

In addition there is the question of subunits of sibs (or *rus*). Sibs usually include several lineages. Lineages are characterized by Murdock through their accurate and reliable genealogy,²⁴ whereas that of sibs would be often inaccurate or inconsistent.²⁵ In this sense, in our context the term (*b*)*rgyud pa* (from *brgyud*) can be seen as a subcategory of (*rigs*) *rus*, in that it denotes *local* lineages and their members tracing their descent patrilineally from a common ancestor (*rus / rigs rus / pha rus* in Gergan’s usage).

When describing present-day circumstances relating to these matters in Tabo in Spiti, local informants make exclusive use of the term *brgyud* to refer to local patrilineages of limited genealogical range. Patrilineages or patri-sibs that extend further back or are more comprehensive in the sense of *rus*, or clans in the sense of *pha spun / pha rus* etc. are, at least in Tabo, accordingly no longer represented or hardly even known of. One informant differentiates between six family groups of this kind, each of which constitutes a separate descent group or *brgyud*. According to the semantic range of this term a number of very different concepts—for example, of blood relationship or residence—can be associated with *brgyud*, for example “those who have parted from the main house” or “group of

²² Murdock 1949: 66. He notes that in contrast to his definition British anthropologists used ‘clan’ for “any unilinear consanguineal kin group of the type which we [...] have termed the ‘sib’” (*ibid.*: 67).

²³ Schusky 1965: 79; cf. also Murdock 1949: 67.

²⁴ “A consanguineal kin group produced by either rule of unilinear descent is technically known as a *lineage* when it includes only persons who can actually trace their common relationship through a specific series of remembered genealogical links in the prevailing line of descent” (Murdock 1949: 46; my emphasis).

²⁵ “When the members of a consanguineal kin group acknowledge a traditional bond of common descent in the paternal or maternal line, but are unable always to trace the actual genealogical connections between individuals, the group is called a *sib*” (Murdock 1949: 47).

nearest relatives."²⁶ Marital relationships between members of this patrilineal *brgyud* are completely out of the question. Of the *brgyud* distinguished in Tabo there is only one whose name can be possibly associated with historical data (*ser brgyud*, identical with *khyi ser pa?*).

Research by Martin Brauen conducted in the 1970s in Ladakh showed that the function and increasingly also the composition of the *pha spun* groups or clans has changed in many respects. He arrived at the assessment that the *pha spun* groups he found there should be understood as "cultic corporations" and as members of households that are more or less near each other and who form a group on account of certain rights and duties, on account of the cult of a common ancestral protective deity (*pha lha*) and on account of the ownership of a joint hearth for cremation (*spur khang*).²⁷

The conditions obtaining in various regions of Tibetan culture described by several authors thus allow the conclusion that the groups known as *pha spun* or *pha spad* in areas of *mNga' ris skor gsum*, that is, 'Historical Western Tibet' (including Ladakh, Zanskar and Spiti) were based historically on exogamous, patrilineal lineages (*brgyud*) tracing their descent from a common ancestor, and which were additionally linked by common residence, a common ancestral deity (*pha lha*) and a cult of the dead.²⁸

²⁶ Jahoda 2015: 177.

²⁷ See Brauen 1980: 23. Cf. also Gutschow's observation regarding Ladakh where according to her view "the idiom of bone [*rus*] has become defunct and the *pha spun* is an assembly of households who join or leave at will" (Gutschow 2004: 70). See also Dargyay and Dargyay (1980: 93) who made a similar observation already in 1978–79.

²⁸ The latter is in agreement with Francke's observation in Spiti that "every *pha-spun*-ship has to look after the cremation of their dead, and monuments in commemoration of the dead, *mchod-rten* or *maṅi* walls, are generally erected by the whole *pha-spun*-ship of a certain village, and the name of the particular *pha-spun*-ship is found on the votive tablets of such monuments" (Francke 1914: 48). I wish to thank Yannick Laurent for drawing my attention to this statement by Francke.

In a contribution to *Drogpa Namgyal, ein Tibeterleben* (1940), a book on the fictitious life of a native male Ladakhi, by the Moravian missionary Samuel Heinrich Ribbach, Josef (Joseph) Gergan, based on his own observations and on interviews with local experts (among others monks and astrologers), describes in some detail the cult of the dead and funeral rites in Ladakh. The Tibetan version of his essay (which is not available to me) seems to date from the 1930s while the information contained therein may at least partly relate to the 1920s and perhaps even before. Gergan stresses in particular the social function and importance of

Clan Names and History

On the relationship between clan names, history and locality, Francke expresses the view that “The historical interest of these clan names lies in the fact that they are often local names, *viz.*, they indicate the locality from which a certain clan has immigrated into Western Tibet.”²⁹ He was able, however, to substantiate this hypothesis only for a few individual cases in Ladakh.³⁰ According to this, two “*pha spun*-ships” of Khalatse comprising 16 families were found to be of Gilgit origin. This hypothesis does not seem to work for most *pha spun* in Ladakh nor the majority of *pha spad* in Spiti. (The name does not indicate per se their place of origin.)

Francke hypothesized that in some cases the Tibetan names of *pha spad* in Spiti testified “to the presence of Tibetans in Spiti in early times, while they also suggest the presence of settlers from Kulū. The following four names are decidedly Tibetan: (1) *rGya-zhing-pa*, large field owners, (2) *Khyung-po*, ‘Garuda-men,’ a name which was very common during the pre-Buddhist times of Tibet, (3) *bLon-chen-pa*, ‘great ministers,’ the men of this clan are doubtless the descendants of some early Tibetan official of Spiti, (4) *sNyegs-pa*, this is a word which is found in the names of the earliest Tibetan records.”³¹ Two of

the *pha spun*: “Wenn eine erwachsene [...] Person stirbt, werden erstens die Paspun (Sippenglieder [members of the *sib*; my emphasis]), zweitens die Lamas, dritten die Onpos (*dbon-po*, Wahrsager) auf alle Fälle benötigt. Obgleich man ursprünglich nur die Glieder des väterlichen Geschlechtes Paspun nannte, so nennt man in Ladak jetzt alle diejenigen Glieder der Sippe Paspun, die einen gemeinsamen Schutzgott (*p’a-lha*) verehren. Außer den Paspun darf keine Person die Leiche berühren (und selbst die Paspun nur dann, wenn es die magischen Zeichen gestatten; das Berühren der Leiche macht unrein).” (Gergan 1940: 213). Additional information on the *pha spun* is given by Ribbach (seemingly based on his observations as missionary in Lahaul and Ladakh between 1892 and 1913): “Bei allen wichtigen Ereignissen innerhalb der Familie und Sippe, wie Geburt, Heirat, Todesfall, treten die P’aspun zusammen zu gemeinsamem Handeln und gegenseitiger Hilfeleistung; sie sind verpflichtet, sich untereinander in jeder Weise zu unterstützen. Ihre Beziehungen sind durch strenges Gesetz und Ritual geregelt.” (Ribbach 1940: 237). According to Gutschow, in Zanskar “women are [...] excluded from the central rites of death. Only men of the clan (*pha spun*)” and monks are in charge of these rites (Gutschow 2004: 210).

²⁹ Francke 1914: 48.

³⁰ See Francke 1907: 362–367.

³¹ By “earliest Tibetan records” Francke (1914: 48) seems to refer to “The Chronicles of Ladakh” (*La dwags rgyal rabs*) and his translation thereof (Francke 1910;

the names, given in the *Gazetteer*, do not appear to be Tibetan: *Henir* and *Nandu*. *Henir* signifies probably the Hensi caste of Kulū; *Nandu* I cannot explain."³²

Speculations of this kind appear also in Shuttleworth's *History of Spiti*. In this work, he tried to explain some names as originating from a certain religious or 'racial' aspect. For example, he related the name of one *rus pa*, "sa-chu-nyi-pa [underlined in original], earth-water-sun one", to their original Bon worship and "sna-che-pa [underlined in original], large nose one", "to the preeminent [or: prominent; reading unclear] nose, which one may still observe in the Malāna people in Kūlu and which is typically non-Mongoloid."³³

It is also stated by Shuttleworth that these two names were the names of Bedas' *rus pa*. This would imply that not only the majority population in Spiti and other areas of historical Western Tibet was organised in this or in a similar way but also minority and caste groups. Francke's findings in Khalatse where Mon, Bheda and others did not belong to any "*pha spun-ship*" do not support this. More research is necessary to clarify these issues.³⁴

Of relevance for the history of Spiti and research in this regard is the fact that, as Francke put it, "The individuality of a Tibetan is fixed by three names: (1) by his personal name, (2) by his house name, (3) by his clan name. The latter is the name of the *pha-spun-ship* ('father brotherhood') to which he belongs."³⁵

Through which system of names do the people in Spiti identify themselves nowadays? I am concerned here only with the way this is done within the local Tibetan-speaking society (and not vis-à-vis other members of the wider Indian society—which is another interesting topic but would lead too far in this context).

First, individuals often have more than one personal name. They have a Tibetan name that is given to them by a monk, for example,

reference to sNyegs *ibid.* on page 411). The name sNyegs (variant spellings sNyags, gNyags, rNgegs) appears also in the *IDe'u* chronicles and other sources (see Hazod 2013: 102) and even earlier in the *Old Tibetan Annals* (see Dotson 2009: 95, *passim*).

³² Francke 1914: 47–48.

³³ BL, OIOC, Papers of Henry Shuttleworth, shelfmark MssEur.D722/25.

³⁴ According to Gutschow (2004: 272), at least Zanskar provides good opportunities for research on the historicity of clan and other names: "The clan names, place names, and names of village deities offer tantalizing historical evidence which has been ignored by most scholars until now."

³⁵ Francke 1914: 47.

Blo bzang Nyi ma. In addition, at least in the late 20th century, children received personal names by their school teachers when they went to school. So Blo bzang Nyima, for example, became Rajinder Bodh.

Second, house names, as stated by Francke, are also used in order to identify individuals—in fact quite a lot, both in oral and written contexts. It occurs not seldom that the head of a household is referred to only by a house name which might be preceded by the village name, for example, Mane Gongma (Upper House in Mane village) or Sumra Yogma (Lower House in Sumra village), where two incarnations of the Great Translator Rin chen bzang po were found in the first half of the 20th century.

These findings are also confirmed by a number of written sources from the second half of the 20th century some of which I studied in my dissertation on the socio-economic organization of Tabo in lower Spiti valley.³⁶

In one source, *Dus mchod kyi yig tho* or *ITa po mgon gyi bon tho bskod pa* [Register of Dues of ITa po (Tabo) Monastery] from the second half of the 20th century, many people, usually the household heads, are often identified by the name of their village, house name and personal name (Fig. 3), sometimes only by the name of the village and house name, sometimes by village name and their personal names (Fig. 4).

There do not seem to appear any clan names in these records which speaks for itself. As mentioned before, for example, people in Tabo are aware of local lineages (*brgyud*) some of which may historically be related to *rus* or *pha spad* but they do not seem to be of any relevance in the context of tax registers or other documents I came across.

Most recent examples of donors as they are identified in inscriptions on prayer wheels outside the monastic compound also show that only village and personal names appear, sometimes in addition also the household (*nang tshang*) as reference unit. There is no trace of a clan name (see Figs. 5a, 5b, 6 and 7).

If we look at local Tibetan sources in Tabo from the 19th century, for example, inscriptions in the monastery, we find that people are referred to and refer to themselves in terms of rank. There were a number of *no no* families. Under the dominion of the kingdom of

³⁶ See Jahoda 2015 for a revised and shortened English version.

Ladakh the *no no* even possessed royal rank (*rgyal rigs*).

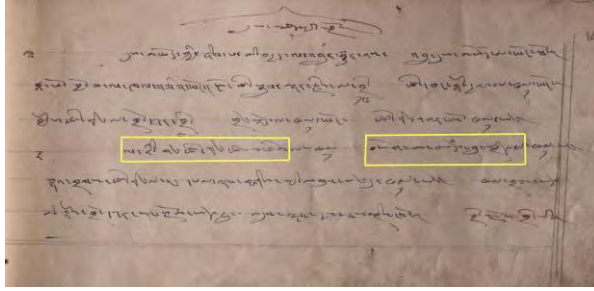


Fig. 3 — 'System of names' (village / house / personal name): *La ri Gang* (Gong [ma]) *Tshe ring chos 'phel* (left) and *[La ri] Yog ('Og) ma bSod nam bu khrid* (right), in *Dus mchod kyig yig tho* or *lTa po mgon gyi bon tho bskod pa* [*Register of Dues of lTa po (Tabo) Monastery*], second half 20th century (photo: Christian Jahoda, 2000)

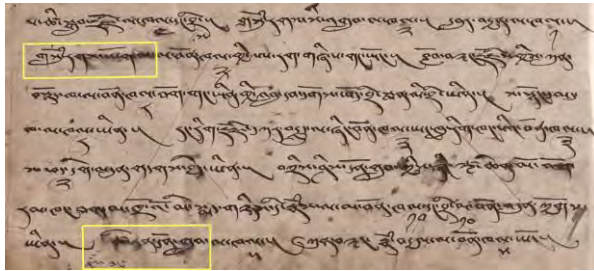


Fig. 4 — 'System of names' (village / house / personal name): *gSum rags* (Sumra) *Yog ('Og) ma* (top) and *Na'a thang Tshe tan* (brtan) *Don grub* (bottom), in *Dus mchod kyig yig tho* or *lTa po mgon gyi bon tho bskod pa* [*Register of Dues of lTa po (Tabo) Monastery*], second half 20th century (photo: Christian Jahoda, 2000)



Fig. 5a — Prayer wheels with names of donors, *Tabo* (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)



Fig. 5b — Name of donor (village / personal name) on prayer wheel (La ri [Lari] Kun bzang chos sgron) (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)



Fig. 6 — Name of donors (village / personal names / household) on prayer wheel (rTa pho [Tabo] rab brtan dang sGrol ma tshe ring nang tshang) (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)



Fig. 7 — Name of donor (village / personal name) on prayer wheel (Ka dza [Kaza] Tshe ring sTobs rgyas) (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)

'Paper Inscription 1' lists the representatives of the most distinguished families according to rank: after the *no no* of "Kyid-gling" comes a "rGyu-pa'i *no-no*" (*no no* of rGyu) and a "Tshu-rub *no-no*" (*no no* of Tshu rub).³⁷

'Paper Inscription 2' announces the donation to the monastery at Tabo of an annual yield from fields by a certain Ngag dbang blo gros from Li pa (today: Lippa) village in Upper Kinnaur. Again only village and personal name are given, no clan name appears or was considered important in this context to be recorded.³⁸

Clans in Spiti: Before the Late 10th Century

If we look at earlier inscriptions in Tabo monastery, from the late 10th and early 11th century (that is, in the Entry Hall [*sgo khang*]), we find that monks were identified by a combination of three names or

³⁷ See Christian Luczanits' photo 1994_93/14 in the Western Himalaya Archive Vienna; see also De Rossi Filibeck 1999: 192–193 and *ibid.*: pls. 21–24.

³⁸ See Christian Luczanits' photo 1994_88/32 in the Western Himalaya Archive Vienna; see also De Rossi Filibeck 1999: 199–201 and *ibid.*: pl. 25.

designations: first clan name, second religious function or title and third personal religious name. Lay persons were identified by clan name or royal descent and personal name (see, for example, Fig. 8 and 9). There are more than 10 names that seem to refer to clans (see below for my reasons to characterize them in this way): for example, sNel wer/'or, rHugs wer/'or, Mo lo / Mol wer, Mang wer/'er/'or, Rum (wer), Mag pi tsa; in addition: Nyi ma, Grang la?, Mu drung yar, gZi ma(l), sNyam wer, and some more that are difficult to read. It is not clear in all cases that the first part really is a clan name. For example, we find also a Bod dge slong Tshul khrim blo gros, Bod for Tibet (differentiated from mNga' ris).³⁹



Fig. 8 — ‘System of names’ in the case of Buddhist monks (clan name / religious function or title / personal religious name): sNyel 'or dge slong Grags pa bshes gnyen (inscription panel, top right), late 10th century inscriptions, Tabo monastery (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)

³⁹ Yannick Laurent (personal communication, July 2017) refers to donors portrayed by the entrance door on the northeast wall of the Assembly Hall (‘*du khang*) at Tabo. In these paintings which date from the Renovation Phase in the late 1030s (finished in 1042) the monk Möpa Sonam Drak (*mos pa bsod nams grags*) is identified as a native of the district of *ICog la* (*lcog la'i sde*), whilst a physician (*sman pa*) sitting to his right, whose name is partly illegible, is said to come from the district of Guge (*gu ge'i sde*). For the texts of these captions, see Luczanits 1999: 122. The reason for this different (territorial instead of clan-wise) reference system may be the existence of five “Thousand-districts” (*stong sde*) in Lower Zhang chung already during the time of the Yar lung dynasty and therefore the continued and/or revived predominance of a territorial over a clan-based reference system at least in certain areas of the West Tibetan kingdom. *Gug ge* and *Gu cog / Cog la* are named as two of these five “Thousand-districts” in Tibetan sources (see Vitali 1996: 433, Dotson 2006: 189f., Dotson 2012: 184).



Fig. 9 — ‘System of names’ in the case of lay persons (clan name or royal descent / personal name): *lha sras ’Jig rten mgon* (inscription panel, top centre), *lha lcam ’Od phro* (inscription panel, top right), late 10th century inscriptions, Tabo monastery (photo: Christiane Kalantari, 2009)

Christian Luczanits was among the first to study these inscriptions and he published a fine edition of them (see Luczanits 1999). Luczanits suggested that the first part of the persons’ name related to clan or place of origin. Some of the names, for example, *Hrugs wer*, the clan to which the great translator *Rin chen bzang po* belonged, also appear in other written sources. In the biography of *Rin chen bzang po* it is stated that he was a *Hrugs wer ba*, a member of the *Hrugs wer* clan from *Khwa tse* in *Gu ge*. In terms of *rigs* (which stands for *rigs rus*, that is, patrilineal descent) it is said he belonged to the *gshen* lineage of *g.Yu sgra* in *Khā tse* [*mKhar rtse*, etc.]: *rigs ni khā tse g.yu sgra’i gshen rgyud* (*Rin chen bzang po rnam thar ’bring po* 56.4). The forefathers of this lineage belonged to one of the 13 patrilineal ancestral groups (*pha sgo bcu gsum*) who resided there. Members of some of the clans mentioned in Tabo also appear in paintings in Tholing⁴⁰ and in colophons of texts produced in the area around the same time in the early 11th century.

In 2011 Paṇḍita Grags pa rgyal mtshan’s *Nyi ma’i rigs kyī rgyal rabs* [“Royal Genealogy of the Solar Lineage”] was published which contains a chapter on the history of *mNga’ ris* including an account

⁴⁰ See Heller 2010.

of Zhang zhung.⁴¹ This text helps to shed new light on the early history of Western Tibet including Spiti before the foundation of the West Tibetan kingdom in the early 10th century, in particular also on some of these clans mentioned in the inscriptions at Tabo.⁴² According to this account Gu ge was dominated at one time (which refers perhaps to the 8th/9th century) by descendants of the 'Five Zhang zhung Siblings' (*Zhang zhung mched lnga*), that is to say, five populations groups referred to by him as *rus* who are named as *Mang wer*, *Mol wer*, *sKyin wer*, *Hrugs wer* and *Rum wer*. They are said to have descended from prominent ancestors whose lineages (*rigs*) go back to the time of a king Ru pi ni⁴³ in India.⁴⁴

Graggs pa rgyal mtshan also reports that the country or territory (that is, residence area) of the Mang wer ba was Phyi dbang, Gle los sgyung and Sang mkhar, that of the sKyin wer ba was Sribts kyi lha rtse, that of the Hrugs wer ba were mKhar, bDu and Khyung rtse.⁴⁵ These are areas and localities to the north and south of the upper Sutlej River, perhaps also including Upper Kinnaur and Spiti. So we see that there is a connection between these descent groups and certain localities.

The gods (named or categorised as *gye ged*) worshipped by these population groups can be described as ancestral clan gods.

At one time the leaders of these clans (*rus*) acted as ministers under the sNya shur king, the name of the Zhang zhung dynasty,⁴⁶

⁴¹ See Gu ge Paṅ chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan 2011; see also Utruk Tsering and Jahoda, forthcoming.

⁴² It must be mentioned that Grags pa rgyal mtshan wrote his account in the second half of the 15th century. Being a native of Western Tibet we can assume that it was based on material available to him reaching back to earlier times. According to his biography (see Gu ge Tshe ring rGyal po, forthcoming; see also Heimbel 2014: 64–71), he was born in the female Wood Sheep year 1415 in the area of sGyu in present-day Spiti. His family line was sKyi nor (identical with sKyin wer?), belonging to one of the five Zhang zhung *rus*. His paternal ancestors were even venerated as being related to the Sun lineage (*nyi ma'i* [...] *gdung rgyud*).

⁴³ The king Ru pi ni mentioned by Grags pa rgyal mtshan seems to be identical with king Rūpati (Ru la skyes, etc.) or Ru pi ti who appears as progenitor of the Tibetan royal line in various post-11th century historiographical Tibetan sources all of which seem to be based on the *Vīṣeṣastavaṅkā* (*Khyad par du 'phags pa'i bstod pa'i rgya cher shad pa*) by Prajñāvarman (Shes rab go cha). This text was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan by the Great Translator Rin chen bzang po (958–1055).

⁴⁴ See Gu ge Paṅ chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan 2011: 429.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 429–430.

⁴⁶ Perhaps also the clan name of the royal family (see Dotson 2009: 89, n. 156).

and subjugated areas like Pu hrangs. It is the seeming conjunction of these three aspects—joint residence, joint cult of ancestral gods, and joint political function—which leads me to consider these population groups (*rus*) as clans rather than kinship groups tracing their descent patrilineally from a common ancestor without much further relationships.⁴⁷

Brief Conclusion

With regard to the question of clans, one can find kinship groups designated as *rus* and patrilineal lineages or *brgyud* existing in the late 10th and early 11th century. Grags pa rgyal mtshan's account gives an idea of the origin and earlier history of some of these groups. We see that in this early phase in West Tibetan and Spiti history, at least in the understanding of a 15th-century author, *rus* designated groups who were regarded as having descended from common ancestors and who were related to certain residence areas. We can also assume that they were exogamous. They shared common ancestral gods. On the basis of the information currently available and the general state of research, the origins of these population groups are difficult to assess.

From at least the 10th century onward not all the clans present in the wider area around Spiti were of local origin. From this time onward we also find members of the 'Bro, Pa tshab and Cog ro clans who were of Tibetan origin and seem to have migrated to mNga' ris in the 10th century. Vitali expressed the view that the gZim mal (referred to by him somewhat vaguely as community) "whose name seems to document a non-Tibetan origin" migrated to Spiti during the early rule of Byang chub 'od, that is, around 1040.⁴⁸

Based on the very limited amount of comparative material, I tend to assume that the 'concept of clans' as represented by respective Tibetan terminologies as such does not seem to have changed fundamentally in Spiti and other areas of historical Western Tibet over a long period of time if we take patrilineal descent from a common ancestor, unilocal rule of residence and cult of a common

⁴⁷ Following Murdock (1949: 69), "it should be emphasized that a clan does not result automatically from the coexistence of compatible rules of residence and descent. [...] The ethnographer must observe evidences of organization, collective activities, or group functions before he can characterize them as a clan."

⁴⁸ Vitali 1996: 308–309.

ancestral protective deity (*pha lha*) as essential criteria. In addition this includes that *brgyud* refers to local patrilineal lineages of limited genealogical range within the kinship groups referred to as *rus* or *pha spun*. The problem remains of course that, with the exception of the Hrugs wer clan, we do not have much information on the later developments of the 'clans' recorded for the late 10th/early 11th century, and that we have nearly no information on the 79 names of *pha spad* in Spiti compiled by Gergan.⁴⁹ Also the documents photographed by Dieter Schuh recently in Spiti do not seem to shed light on these names.⁵⁰

What did change in fact over the course of centuries, most probably starting with the foundation of Buddhist monasteries, is the general system of organization of the local societies and more generally the socio-economic realities which increasingly appeared to be of the kind in which the household represented the fundamental unit of reference in the social sphere and the fundamental unit of taxation in the economic sphere. As a result, the patrilineal kinship groups' real significance must have declined so that it became relatively small in the present (in varying degrees in different areas). In the case of newly-established households, in which monogamy and neo-local nuclear families constitute the determinant pattern, their significance seems to be nearly non-existent. A lot more research in particular on the full socio-political realities and not just the 'contexts' of the respective terminologies and accounts relating to different areas and periods is necessary to confirm the validity of this

⁴⁹ Recent research by Yannick Laurent (2017) revealed that a *mani* stone inscription from Dangkhar in Spiti (copied in 1918 by Henry Lee Shuttleworth on paper, preserved among his collection of unpublished works at the British Library) names one Ga ga Tshe ring bkra shis whose noble ancestry is of the lineage of the Par ca ministers (*yab mes khung tsun par ca blon gyi rgyud*) (see *ibid.*: Fig. 2, p. 240). It may well be that this lineage is the same as Gergan's no. 12 (*pa cha pa*) and/or 18 (*bar sha pa*) in his list of Spiti *pha spad*. This inscription is dated through internal evidence by Yannick Laurent (reference to King Seng ge rnam rgyal, c. 1590–1642) to the last decade of this king's life. The reference to the noble forefathers in connection with the lineage of the Par ca ministers indicates a certain chronological distance of at least two or three generations between the time of the production of the *mani* stone inscription and the noble ancestry of the lineage of the Par ca ministers. This would bring this lineage—together with historical information on the lineage of the donatrix (*ibid.*: 241)—in terms of its chronological horizon into the 15th century (if not even earlier). I wish to thank Yannick Laurent for drawing my attention to this archival document.

⁵⁰ See Schuh 2016b.

view and also to significantly improve our state of knowledge and understanding of 'clans' in Tibet.

Abbreviations

BL, OIOC British Library, Oriental and India Office Collection

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APPENDIX

Joseph Gergan's list of 79 *pha spad* in Spiti (*sPyi ti*), 15 *pha tshan* in Lahaul (*Gar zha*), 8 *pha spun* in Lower Ladakh (*Bla dwags gsham*) and 39 *pha spun* in Zanskar (*Zangs dkar*)⁵¹

། ལྷོ་ཏི་འཇམ་ལྷན་སྲི་ཐོ་ལྷོ།

⁵¹ I wish to thank Julia DiFranco (formerly Schastok) for the original typescript of the complete list in Tibetan and Utruk Tsering for checking the spelling.

- १ ལྷ་ཉི་མའི་གདུང་བརྒྱད།
 २ རྫོན་ཆེན་པ།
 ३ ཅུམ་པོའ་པ།
 ༤ བེལ་འགྲོལ།
 ༥ གནམ་ཅུ་པ།
 ༦ རྒྱན་ཤིང་པ།
 ༧ རྫོང་པ།⁵²
 ༨ ཅལ་ལྷན་པ།⁵³
 ༩ ཤེ་ལེ་པ།
 ༡༠ དཔལ་ཆེན་པ།
 ༡༡ ཞང་ཆེན་པ།
 ༡༢ པ་ཆ་པ།
 ༡༣ རྩོ་པ་[དཔོན་པོ།]
 ༡༤ བྱི་ལེར་པ།
 ༡༥ རྩལ་ལྷན་པ།
 ༡༦ རྩོ་སྤང་པ།
 ༡༧ མེ་སྤང་པ།
 ༡༨ བར་ཤ་པ།
 ༡༩ རྒྱག་པ་ཅན།
 ༢༠ རྩོ་xxx་པ།⁵⁴
 ༢༡ ལྷག་རྫོན་པ།

To the right of *pha spad* no. 1 to 21 is added vertically the following note:

རྫོང་། ཞང་། རྒྱང་། མེ་ཉག་མིང་བཞི་པོ་ནི་བོད་པའི་མེས་པོ་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་ནང་དུ་གཏོགས་
 སོ། མེས་པོ་ཞང་དང་རྒྱང་གཉིས་པོ་གནས་པའི་ཡུལ་ཁག་ལ་ཞང་རྒྱང་ཐོགས་པ་ཡིན།
 ༢༢ རྩོ་ལྷན་པ། [གདོལ་པ་]།

⁵² Underlined in original.

⁵³ Also the reading *tsal ldar pa* seems possible.

⁵⁴ xxx = unreadable/erased letters. The first seems to have a *gi gu* on top, therefore the reading *hi rib pa* may be possible. In the present, *Hirrip* is the politically correct form of addressing and referring to professional and lower caste musicians who are also found in Ladakh, Lahaul and Kinnaur.

- 23 ལྷང་ལོ་ཅན་པ།⁵⁵
 24 ལྷང་མགོ་པ།
 25 ལྷང་རུས་པ།
 26 ལྷང་དཀར་པ།
 27 ལྷང་དར་ནག་པ།
 28 ལྷང་ཇོ་རུས་པ།
 29 འདོ་རིང་པ།
 30 ཤ་རྒྱལ།
 31 མར་རྒྱལ།
 32 རྩེ་གདོང་དཀར་པོ།
 33 ཤོག་ལ་ཙེ་པ།
 34 འཇམ་རྩ་རྩ།
 35 བ་རྩ་ཞི་གནམ་རྩ་ཞི་པ།
 36 དུང་གི་རྩ་ལོ་ཅན།⁵⁶
 37 ཤེལ་དཀར།
 38 ཅང་རྟ།
 39 རྟོང་དཀར་པོ།
 40 མ་ཉེ་དར་ནག་རིང་མོ།
 41 ཀར་ཤ་བ་ཞི།
 42 བ་ཨ་དཀར་པོ། ཤ།
 43 རྩོང་ཤེལ་གྱ་དཀར་པོ།
 44 རྩེ་ལོང་དཀར་པོ།
 45 གུའི་བརྒྱུད།
 46 ཀེལ་འགྲུ་པ།
 47 བེལ་འགྲུ་གདོང་དཀར་པ།
 48 དུང་རུས་པ།
 49 རུས་པ།

⁵⁵ ICang lo can is the name of one cave site in Khartse valley (see Tshe ring rgyal po and Papa-Kalantari 2009).

⁵⁶ Underlined in original.

- 40 དཀར་པོ།
 41 ཤིང་།
 42 རྒྱང་རྩ་ཚོ་⁵⁷དུག་པ།
 43 རྩུང་མ།
 44 ཚོར་མ།
 45 ལང་རྩ།
 46 ཤང་རྩ།
 47 རྩུ་ཞིང་པ།
 48 རྩུ་པ།
 49 རྩུ་མ་བུ་པ།
 50 རྩ་⁵⁸མ་པ།
 51 རྩུ་ཀ་ལག།
 52 རིམ་ཚེན་རྩུ་ཉག་པ།
 53 རྩུང་དར་ནག་རིང་པ།
 54 ཤམ་མ་རྩ་མདའ་རྩུང་དཀར་པོ།
 55 རྩུགས་རྩུ་རིང་མོ།
 56 དཔོན་དྲ་དཀར་པོ།
 57 ལ་ལ་ཚོ་པ།
 58 རང་།⁵⁹
 59 བི་ར་⁶⁰གིར་ཉ།
 60 ཤུའི་ལྷ།
 61 ཀེ་ལིང་མདོ་ལོན།
 62 རྩུ་པོ།
 63 རྩུང་པོས། [གདོང་རྩུས་^x]61
 64 རྩུང་།⁶²

57 Also the reading *tso* seems possible.

58 Reading of *pra* uncertain (also *pa* seems possible).

59 Underlined in original.

60 Beda?

61 Unclear superscript/sign above *sa*.

62 Underlined in original.

- ༧༥ སོག་ལང་།
 ༧༦ བེལ་འགྲུ་སྟོང་དཀར་པོ།
 ༧༧ ལྷུང་རྫོ་སྤམ།
 ༧༨ དཀར་ཤ།
 ༧༩ ལྷུང་པ།

- གར་ལ་ན་པ་ཚོ།
 ༨༠ འོད་གསལ་སྒྲིའི་གདུང་བརྒྱད།
 ༨༡ ལྷ་རམ་ཤིང་པ།
 ༨༢ ཉི་ཤར་ཨ་པ།
 ༨༣ རྫོན་ཚེན་པ།
 ༨༤ མི་རུ་པ།
 ༨༥ ཡི་གེ་པ།
 ༨༦ རྒྱ་ཤིང་པ [རྒྱན་ཤིང་པ]།
 ༨༧ ཡང་རྒྱར་པ།
 ༨༨ ལྷུང་མགོ་པ།
 ༨༩ དར་བ་པ།
 ༩༠ ཉི་སིར་པ།
 ༩༡ གཞུམ་པོ་པ [རུས་ན་འདྲེས་པ]།
 ༩༢ རྫང་ཚི་རུས།
 ༩༣ དར་བ་སྤང་འཇོག།
 ༩༤ འཇམ་ཤར་པ།⁶³

- རྫོང་དུགས་གཤི་ལྷི་པ་སྤྲོན།
 ༩༥ རབ་རྫོན་པ།
 ༩༦ རྒྱན་ཤིང་པ།
 ༩༧ རྫོ་འཁོར་པ།
 ༩༨ རམ་འཕོར་པ།

⁶³ Underlined in original.

- 199 གསུམ་བོར་བ [ཟུས་ན་འབྲེས་བ།]
 700 ཉེལ་བེ་བ།⁶⁴
 707 ག་ཤོ་བ།
 708 མེ་ཉག་བ།

ཟངས་དཀར་ན།

- 703 མདོག་གཡུང་བ [གཡག་ཟུས]
 704 དར་བ་བ།
 705 བུ་རམ་ཤིང་བ།
 706 ལྷུང་མགོ་བ།
 707 ཤ་ལེ་བ།
 708 ཡི་གེ་བ།
 709 སྒང་དར་བ།
 710 ཤང་ཀྲ་བ། [སྒྲུང་ཀྲ་བ།]
 711 སྒང་རྟོ་བ།
 712 ལུལ་འབྲུ་བ།⁶⁵
 713 ལུག་ལིང་བ།
 714 རྒྱན་ཤིང་བ།
 715 རྫོན་ཆེན་བ།
 716 ལྷག་ལུང་བ [ལུག་ཟུས]
 717 ལུ་ནི་བ [མགར་བའི་ཟུས]
 718 མེ་ཉག་བ།
 719 ལྷ་བ།⁶⁶
 720 ལ་བདག་བ།
 721 ལྷག་བ་བ།
 722 ལྷུང་ཡིག་བ [ཀོང་ཚོའི]
 723 བྲོ་བྱ་བ།⁶⁷

⁶⁴ This name could refer to Hirrip.

⁶⁵ Perhaps identical with Nil 'gro'a in Spiti (no. 4)?

⁶⁶ Perhaps identical with the lHa pa mentioned by Schuh (1983: 231–233)?

- ༡༢༤ རྩེའ་པ་ [རྩུ་པ།]⁶⁸
 ༡༢༥ མདོ་མང་པ།
 ༡༢༦ ལྷ་གུ་པ།
 ༡༢༧ རྩེ་རི་ད་པ་⁶⁹ [ཉི་རི་ད་པ།]⁷⁰
 ༡༢༨ ལྷ་གདུང་གཡས་པ།
 ༡༢༩ རལ་ཚག་པ་ [རལ་སྐྱག་པ།]
 ༡༣༠ ཉིལ་བི་པ།⁷¹
 ༡༣༡ ཨ་ཅ་རི་པ།
 ༡༣༢ ཀ་མ་པ། རུས་
 ༡༣༣ རྩོང་པོ་པ། གཅིགོ།⁷²
 ༡༣༤ ཡོན་བདག་པ།
 ༡༣༥ རྩོ་པ།
 ༡༣༦ རབ་སྐྱོན་པ།
 ༡༣༧ མངའ་བདག་པ།
 ༡༣༨ པ་ཀོ་ར་པ།
 ༡༣༩ ཞང་རུང་པ།⁷³
 ༡༤༠ ཤེ་རེ་པ།
 ༡༤༡ ལ་པོ་པ།



⁶⁷ Reading of *bra* uncertain; *bwa* seems also possible.

⁶⁸ Perhaps identical with the sKya pa mentioned by Francke 1926: 153 (see also Vitali 1996: 192)?

⁶⁹ This name appears also in an account by Eva K. Dargyay (1988: 130) as sGyi ri mda' pa (variant spellings sKyi ri mda' pa and Ha ri ni da').

⁷⁰ Related to present-day Hirrip in Spiti?

⁷¹ Related to present-day Hirrip in Spiti?

⁷² The remark *rus gcig go* refers to *ka ma pa* and *ldong po pa*.

⁷³ Possibly the Gu ge *blon po* Zhang rung was a member of this clan as suggested by Vitali (1996: 52, 108, 192).

གནའ་བོའི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་ཞིང་ཁང་གི་ཐོབ་ དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ལ་དབྱེད་པ།

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དེ་ཡང་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་སྤོལ་ལ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ཞུ་བ་ཞི་ལོ་འཁྲིམ་རྒྱུ་འཛིན་མཁན་ཡིན་པ་དང་།
དེར་བརྟེན་གྱི་ཞིང་ཁང་ལ་དང་རྒྱ་ལོར་སོགས་ཀྱི་བདག་དབང་ཡོངས་རྒྱུ་ལ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་
བར་ཡོད། དེ་ཡང་གྲིམ་གཅིག་ལ་བྱ་ལ་ཤས་ཡོད་ན། ཆེ་ཤོས་དེ་ལ་གཞིས་འཛིན་མཁན་དང་
གཞན་རྣམས་ལ་བ་བཟོ་དགོས། སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་དམངས་ཁྲོད་དུ་འདྲ་ “ལྷག་བོའི་བྱ་བར་ལ་སྤྱི་ཉི་
ཅིག” ཅེས་ཤོད་སྤོལ་ཞིག་ཡོད། དེ་ཡིས་གྲིམ་གཅིག་ལ་བྱ་གསུམ་ནས་བཞི་ཅུ་ཡོད་ན། ལྷ་
བར་བ་དེས་པར་གྲ་བ་བཟོ་དགོས་པ་དེའང་རྟོགས་ཐུག།

ཉེ་བའི་ཐད་ཀྱི་དབུ་མཚོན་གསལ་ཤོས་ཤིག་ནི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་གོང་ཚོ་ནང་གྲིམ་བདག་ཚོ་
རིང་དངོས་གྲུབ་ལ་བྱ་གསུམ་དང་བྱ་མོ་ལྡོ་ཡོད། ལྷ་གསུམ་ལས་ཆེ་ཤོས་བཟུན་འཛིན་ནི་ལ་
ཡི་འཁྲིམ་རྒྱུ་འཛིན་མཁན་དང་། བར་བ་ཚོ་རིང་རྣམས་ཤོལ་དང་། སྤོ་བཟང་དོན་འགྲུབ་
གཞིས་གྲ་བ་བཟོས་ཉེ་དཀྱིལ་དགོན་ལོར་བྱ་དགེ་འཕེལ་སྤོང་དུ་བཞུགས་ཡོད། རྒྱ་སྤོལ་
རྣམས་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་དགོན་ཁག་ལྡོ་ཡི་དགོན་པ་སོ་སོའི་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བྱ་ཆེ་བ་རྣམས་ནི་ལ་
གཞིས་འཛིན་མཁན་དང་། འོག་མ་རྣམས་གྲ་བ་བཟོས་ནས་ཐོབ་ཁོངས་དགོན་ཁག་སོ་སོར་
འཇུག་ཞུགས་བྱེད་པའི་ལམ་སྤོལ་དེ་དུང་ཡང་མང་དུ་མཇུག་རྒྱུ་ཡོད།

དེས་ན་དེ་རྣམས་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་མི་དམངས་ཀྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་དངོས་དེ་ཅི་འདྲ་
ཞིག་ཡིན་ནམ་ཞེ་ན། གྲིམ་གཅིག་ལ་ཁང་ཆེན་དང་ཁང་རྒྱུང་གཞིས་རེ་ཡོད། དེ་རྣམས་གྲིམ་
གཅིག་ལ་ཁང་ཆེན་དང་ཁང་རྒྱུང་གཞིས་རེ་འཇུགས་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་དགོན་དོན་ཡང་། སྤྱི་ཉི་
ཡུལ་གྱི་མི་མང་གི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་བྱུང་བ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་དང་། དེ་དེས་
བར་འབྲུང་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་ཀྱང་རེད། དེ་ཡང་གོང་བཞིན་རྣམས་གྲིམ་གཅིག་ལ་བྱ་དང་བྱ་མོ་

1 ཀྱི་ཅམ་ལུལ་གྱི་རྩོ་ཚོ་རིང་དབང་མོས་གསུངས། ཞིང་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་རྒྱ་གསོ་ཁང་དུ་བཞུགས་ཡོད།
2 སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་རྩོ་ཚོའི་དགོན་ཁག་ལྡོ་ཞེ་ན། རྩོ་མོ་དགོན་དཔལ་ལྡན་བཟུ་ཤིས་བདེ་གནས་གཙུག་ལག་ཁང་།
རྩོ་དགོན་གསལ་ལྡན་ཆོས་སྤོང་། དཀྱིལ་དགོན་ལོར་བྱ་དགེ་འཕེལ། རྒྱང་མཁར་དགོན་བཟུ་ཤིས་ཆོས་སྤོང་།
རྩོང་རྒྱུད་རྩུན་གྲུབ་ཚེ་བཅས་ཡིན།

ཅི་ཙམ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་པ་གཞིས་འཛོལ་མཁན་ནི་བྱ་ཆེ་ཤོས་ཡིན་པ་ལྟར། བྱ་ཆེ་ཤོས་ལ་མནའ་མ་
བསུས་རྗེས། སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་བཞིན། པ་མ་གཞིས་
ཀྱིས་པ་མེས་ཡང་མེས་ནས་གསོག་ཉར་བྱས་པའི་ཁྲིམ་རྒྱུད་དེའི་རྒྱ་ལོར་དང་། དེ་ཡོད་
གནས་མལ་བྱེད་བཞིན་པའི་སྤོང་ཁང་། ས་ཁོང་བཅས་ཡོངས་སུ་རྗོགས་པ་རང་གི་བྱ་ཆར་
པར་རྗེས་སྤྱད་དེ། པ་མ་གཞིས་དང་གཞུང་བོ་དང་གཞུང་མོ་རྣམས་ཁང་ཆེན་དེའི་ཡན་ལག་
ཁང་རྒྱུད་དུ་རྩུར་འདུག་བྱེད་དགོས། ཁང་ཆེན་དེའི་ཡན་ལག་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ནི་དེས་པར་གྲོང་སྤེ་
གཅིག་པར་གཞིས་ཆགས་དགོས་པའི་དེས་པ་མེད། ཁང་རྒྱུད་རེ་འགའ་གྲོང་སྤེ་གཞན་དུ་
གཞིས་ཆགས་པ་དེ་འདྲའང་ཡོད།

འདྲིར་གསལ་བོར་རྟོགས་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་ལ། སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་ཁང་ཆེན་དང་ཁང་རྒྱུད་གི་
ཐ་སྤྱོད་དེ་ནི། ཁང་བ་དེ་གཞིས་གཞི་རྒྱ་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་དང་། བཟོ་བཞུགས་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་
ཀྱི་ཁྱད་པར་འབྱེད་པ་གཏན་ནས་མིན། ཁང་བ་དེ་གཞིས་ཕྱི་ལོ་རྣམས་པའི་ཐོག་ནས་ཁྱད་པར་
མེད། དེ་གཞིས་ཀྱི་ཁྱད་པར་རམ་ཤན་འབྱེད་བྱེད་གཙོ་བོ་ནི། ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་
ལུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུན་སྲོལ་ལྟར། རང་གི་རྒྱ་ལོར་ལོངས་སྤོང་དང་། ཕྱི་ཡི་ས་ཁོང་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་དབང་
གིས་པ་ལུལ་འཛོལ་མཁན་གྱི་བྱ་ཆར་པའི་ཁྲིམ་རྒྱུད་ལ་ཁང་ཆེན་ཞེས་འབོད་པ་དང་། དེ་
མིན་པ་མ་གཞིས་དང་གཞུང་བོ་དང་གཞུང་མོ་བཅས་རྩུར་འདུག་བྱེད་ལུལ་གྱི་ཁང་བ་དེར་
ཁང་རྒྱུད་ཞེས་འབོད་ཀྱི་ཡོད།

གཞིས། ཁང་རྒྱུད་གི་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་ལམ་ལུགས།

ཁང་རྒྱུད་གི་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་རི་ལྟར་ཡིན་ནམ་ཞེ་ན། པ་མ་གཞིས་དང་གཞུང་བོ་
གཞུང་མོ་ཚོར་ཁོང་ཁང་གི་སྤོང་ཁང་། རེའི་ཐོབ་སྐྱེལ་ཡོད་ཅིང་། དེའི་ཁར་གཞུང་བོ་དང་གཞུང་མོ་
རྣམས་གྲ་བ་དང་བཅུན་མ་བྱེད་པའམ། ཡང་ན་མནའ་མ་དང་མག་པར་མ་བྱེན་པའི་བར་

3 སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་དུ་ཁང་ཆེན་དང་ཁང་རྒྱུད་གང་ཡིན་ཡང་། ཁང་བ་པལ་ཆེ་བ་ཐོག་སོ་ཞེས་ཅན་ཡིན། ཁང་རྗེས་གསུམ་
ཅན་ཡོད་པ་ཡང་ཡོད། ཁང་བའི་བཟོ་བཞུགས་ནི་བོད་མངའ་སྲིད་དང་དབུས་གཙང་གི་སྤོང་གི་སྤོང་གི་ཁང་བའི་བཟོ་
བཞུགས་རྣམས་དང་ཁྱད་པར་མེད།
4 ཁང་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་དུ་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ཞེས་བརྗོད་པ་མང་ནའང་། ལ་དུགས་ཕྱོགས་ནས་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ལ་ཁང་བ་
ཞེས་བརྗོད་ཆེ། དོན་ལ་གཅིག་སྟེ་ཁང་རྒྱུད་དང་ཁང་བ་དོན་གཅིག་མིང་གི་རྣམ་གྲངས་ཙམ་ཡིན། འོན་ཀྱང་
ཟངས་དུགས་ཕྱོགས་སུ་ཁང་ཆེན་ལ་ཁང་བ་སྟེ་ཁང་བ་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ཞེས་འབོད་སྲོལ་ཡང་ཡོད་སྟེ།
5 ཁང་བ་སྤོང་ཞེས་པའི་དོན་ནི་དཔེ་མཚན་བྱེད་ཅིག་སྟེ་སྤོང་ནི་འདྲུ་རིགས་ཚད་འཇལ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་སྤོང་རྒྱུད་ཞིག་གི་
མིང་ཡིན། དོན་ལ་འདྲུ་རིགས་ལུང་ལུང་ཞིག་གི་ས་ཁོང་ཐོབ་དབང་ཡོད་པ་མཚན་བྱེད་ཙམ་ལས། དངོས་ནས་
ཁོང་ཁང་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་ཅམ་དང་། འདྲུ་རིགས་ཐོབ་ཐང་སྤོང་ཙམ་ཞེས་པར་ཐད་ཀར་གོ་བ་ལེན་པ་མིན།

ཕ་མ་དང་སྐྱེན་དུ་ཁང་རྒྱུད་དུ་ཟུར་འདུག་བྱེད་ཤིང་། ཁོང་ཚོར་འཚོ་བའི་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་གནས་འཛིན་པ་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་བྱེད་ཀྱིས། ལུ་གུ་གཟུང་བོ་བྱ་གཉིས་ཚམས་ལྷན་བཟོས་ཀྱིས་ལྷན་པ་ལ་ཞིང་རྒྱུད་ཤིང་ཐོབ་སྐྱེལ་ཡོང་། དེ་བཞིན་བྱིས་དེ་ནས་གཟུང་མོ་ཞིག་རྩོམ་ (བཅུན་མ།) ལྷན་ཀྱང་ས་ཞིང་གི་ཐོབ་དབང་གོང་སྟར་ཡིན། འོན་ཀྱང་སྤྱི་ཉིད་དམངས་ཁྲིའི་དུ་ “རྩོམ་བྱིས་གཡོག་མོ་ཡིན་” ཞེས་བཤད། དེའི་དོན་ནི་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཉིད་ཡུལ་དུ་བཅུན་དགོན་མེད་པ་དང་། དེར་བརྟེན་རྩོམ་བྱིས་དུ་བསྐྱེད་ནས་ལས་ཀ་བྱ་དགོས་ལྷན་བའི་རྒྱུ་གྱིས་ཤོད་སྲོལ་དེ་སྟར་བྱུང་བ་ཞིག་ཤིང་། གང་སྟར་ཁང་ཆེན་ནས་བྱ་དང་བྱ་མོ་སྤྱི་ཞིག་གྱི་བ་དང་རྩོམ་བྱས་ཀྱང་། ཞིང་རྒྱུད་ཞིག་གི་ཐོབ་སྐྱེལ་ཡོང་ལ། ཞིང་རྒྱུད་གི་མིང་ལ་ཡང་གྱུ་ཞིང་ཞེས་བཏགས་ཡོང་། ལྷན་བའི་མཚོན་གནས་ཡིན་པ་སྟར་ཞིང་ཁ་ཚོ་བ་དང་རྩ་བ་སོགས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་ཐོག་མར་གྱུ་ཞིང་ཚོ་བ་དང་རྩ་བར་བྱེད། དེ་ནས་ཁང་ཆེན་མཐའ་མ་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ལ་བྱེད། འོན་ཀྱང་གྱུ་ཞིང་ནི་ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་གྱུ་བ་དང་རྩོམ་གང་ཡིན་པ་དེ་ཉིད། ཚོ་ཡི་འདུ་བྱེད་མ་སྟོང་བར་འཚོ་རྟེན་དུ་སྦྱོར་འཇགས་ཡིན་ནའང་། ལྷན་བའི་ཉིད་སྐྱེ་གཤེགས་ཚོ་སྐར་ཡང་གྱུ་ཞིང་དེ་ས་གཞིས་འཛིན་མཐའ་གྱི་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་བཤད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་ཚམས་དུ་མ་ཟད། ཁང་རྒྱུད་གི་བདག་དབང་ཡང་ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་ལས། ཕ་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་གཙོས་ཁང་རྒྱུད་ནང་འདུག་མཐའ་གྱི་གཟུང་བོ་གཟུང་མོ་སྤྱི་ཞིག་ལའང་མེད། རྩོམ་སོར་ས་མ་གཉིས་སྐྱེ་གཤེགས་པ་དང་། གཟུང་བོ་དང་གཟུང་མོ་སོགས་བཅུན་པ་དང་བཅུན་མ་བྱེད་པ། ཡང་ན་མཐའ་མ་དང་མག་པར་བྱིན་པའི་རྩོམ་སྤྱི་ཁང་རྒྱུད་དེ་ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་པས་དོ་དམ་བྱེད་ཅིང་། དེ་ཡང་རྩོམ་སོར་རང་ཉིད་གྱི་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་བག་མར་བསྐྱེས་པ་ན། ཕ་མས་རང་ཉིད་ལ་རྩོམ་བསྐྱེས་པ་བཞིན། བྱིས་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ལོར་དང་། ཁང་པ། ས་ཞིང་བཅས་ཡོངས་སྤྱོད་ཀྱིས་བྱ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་སྤྱོད་ནས་རང་ཉིད་དང་བུའི་ཨ་མ། ལྷན་བའི་འོག་གི་བྱིས་པ་བཅས་སྤྱོད་སོར་རང་གི་ཕ་མ་གཉིས་བཞུགས་པའི་ཁང་རྒྱུད་དེར་མཉམ་དུ་ཟུར་འདུག་བྱ་དགོས་པ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

6 སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཉིད་རྩོམ་སྤྱོད་བཅུན་མའི་དགོན་པ་མེད་པ་དང་། དེར་བརྟེན་བྱུང་མེད་པའི་འགྲེལ་མགོ་རིལ་བྱས། གྱོན་ཆས་དམར་བོ་ཞིག་གྱོན་ནས་ཚོས་པའི་ཚུལ་དུ་སྟོན་པ་ལས་རབ་བྱུང་སོགས་བསྐྱབ་རྒྱ་མེད་ཅིང་། ཕལ་ཆེ་བ་བྱིས་དུ་སྟོན་བཞིན་ཡོད་ལྟ་བུར། རྩོམ་ནང་གི་གཡོག་མོ་ཡིན་ཞེས་པའི་ཁ་དབེ་དེ་སྟར་བྱུང་བ་ཡིན་པར་བཤད།

7 སྤྱི་ཉི་ལྟོད་ཀྱི་སའི་ཆ་རང་རིག་ཡུལ་སྤེལ་མཚོན་ན། ཁང་ཆེན་བཙུན་ཡོད་ཅིང་། ཁང་ཆེན་བཙུན་གྱི་ཞིང་ཁ་སྤེལ་ཞིང་རྒྱུས་རང་རིག་གོང་ཚོའི་མདུན་ལ་མཆིས། དེ་མིན་རྒྱུས་རང་རིག་གོང་ཚོའི་རྒྱབ་ཏུ་ཡོད། ས་ཞིང་དེ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ལྷན་བའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཡང་གོང་ཚོའི་མདུན་དུ་ཡོད་པའི་ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་ས་ཞིང་རྒྱུས་ས་གཞི་སྐྱེས་ཞིང་ཆེ་གཅིག་ཤོས་རྒྱུས་དེ་ལས་སྤོག། ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་ས་ཞིང་དང་ཁང་པ་ལ་ལྷན་མིང་ཡོད་པ་དེ་འདྲའང་ཡོད། ཁང་ཆེན་ནང་ཚན་ལའང་རིགས་འདྲ་མིན་གསུམ་དུ་དབྱེ་སྲོལ་འདུག།

8 སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་དུ་ཞིང་ཁ་ལའང་གཡུ་ལོ་ཅན་དང་། གུར་གུམ་ཅན། བསྐྱེད་སོགས་མིང་འདོགས་འདྲ་མིན་མང་དུ་མཆིས།

གསུམ། ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་སྲོལ་གཞན།

ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་སྲོལ་གཞན་ཞིག་ནི། ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་པ་རྒྱུད་འཛིན་མཁན་བྱིམ་
 བདག་ལ་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པ་ལས་བྱ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མ་བྱུང་ཚེ། བ་ཡི་བྱིམ་རྒྱུད་གྱི་རྒྱ་ལོ་དང་། ས་
 ཞིང་། ཁང་བའི་ཐོབ་དབང་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པ་དེ་གོང་དུ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་པར་ཡོད་ཚུལ་བརྗོད་པ་
 ལྟར། བྱིམ་དེའི་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པར་མག་པ་བསྟུན་རྗེས་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པ་ལ་རྗེས་སྤྱོད་དགོས་པ་ཡིན།
 འོན་ཀྱང་ཁང་ཆེན་ཞིག་ལ་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པ་དང་བྱ་གཞོན་ཤོས་སུ་སྤྱོད་པའི་གོ་རིམ་བྱུང་ཚེ།
 དེ་ཡང་པ་རྒྱུད་གྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུད་དང་། ཁང་བ། ས་ཞིང་བཅས་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པའི་ཐོབ་དབང་
 དེ་བྱིམ་རྒྱུད་དེའི་བྱ་མོ་ཡོད་པ་ལས་བྱ་མོར་གཏུན་ནས་མེད། ཡིན་ནའང་ཁྱུང་པར་གཞན་
 ཞིག་ནི། བྱིམ་རྒྱུད་དེའི་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པ་མནའ་མར་འགོ་བའི་སྐབས། མ་ཡི་རྒྱུ་ཆ་གང་ཡོད་
 རྣམས་རང་གི་བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པར་ཐོབ་པ་ལས་གཞན་དག་ལ་མི་ཐོབ། བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་ཤོས་མནའ་
 མར་འགོ་ས་དེའང་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་ལྟར། ཁང་ཆེན་གཞན་ཞིག་གི་བྱ་རྒྱུད་ཤོས་ལ་མནའ་མར་འགོ་
 དགོས་པའོ།

མདོར་ན་སྤྱི་ཉི་ལུ་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་སྲོལ་ནང་པ་ཡི་ཤུལ་འཛིན་མཁན་དེ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་
 པ་དང་། བྱ་མོ་རྒྱུད་པ། ཡང་ན་གཅེན་མོའི་གཙུང་བོ་གསུམ་གང་ཞིག་བྱུང་ཡང་དེ་ནི་ཁང་
 ཆེན་གྱི་བདག་པོ་ལོ་མ་དེ་ཡིན་ལ། དེར་མ་ཟད་ཁང་རྒྱུང་གི་བདག་པོ་ལོ་མ་དེའང་ཡིན། དེ་
 ཡང་པ་མ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་མཉམ་ཁང་རྒྱུང་དུ་བཞུགས་མཁན་གཙུང་བོ་དང་གཙུང་མོ་དག་གིས་
 ཁང་རྒྱུང་དེར་སྤྱོད་པའི་རིང་དུ། གཙུང་བོས་མནའ་མ་བསྟུ་བ་དང་། གཙུང་མོས་མག་པ་
 ཡིན་པའི་རིགས་གཏུན་ནས་བྱེད་མི་རུང་། གལ་སྲིད་སྤྱི་སྲོལ་དེ་དང་འགལ་བར་གྱུར་
 ཚེ། གོང་གསལ་ལྟར་ཞིང་ཁ་བཟུ་རེའི་ལོ་རྒྱུ་ཚམ་ལས། ཁང་རྒྱུང་དེར་འདུག་པའི་ཐོབ་
 ཐང་མེད། དེར་བརྟེན་འཚོ་རྟེན་ས་ཞིང་དང་གནས་མལ་ཁང་བ་བཅས་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་
 ཐབས་འཚོལ་བྱེད་པ་ལས། ཁང་ཆེན་གྱི་གཅེན་པོ་དང་ཁང་རྒྱུང་དུ་བཞུགས་པའི་པ་མ་
 བཅས་སུ་ལའང་རེ་བཅོལ་བྱེད་ས་མེད་པ་ནི། གནའ་བོའི་སྤྱི་ཉི་ལུ་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་
 དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ཀྱི་སྲོལ་ དའོ།

9 སྤྱི་སྲོལ་འདི་དག་རྒྱལ་དུས་གང་ཞིག་གི་སྐབས་བྱུང་བ་ལའང་བསམ་གཞིགས་བྱ་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་རེད། སྤྱིར་ལ་
 དུགས་སུ་སྤོན་སྲོལ་ཁག་ཅིག་གི་བཅོས་བསྐྱར་དེ་རྒྱལ་པོ་སོལ་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་བྱུང་ཡོད་པ་འདྲ། དེ་ཚུལ་ཞིག་
 ནི་ “སོལ་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་ལྷ་གཅིག་གི་སྲོལ་བཏོད། དེ་ལ་སོལ་རྣམས་ཚན་ཅན་ཟེར་ཞིང་། རྒྱལ་པོས་ལྷ་དེ་
 བསྐྱབས་ནས་བསྐྱབས་པ་དང་། མི་མང་ཚང་མས་བསྐྱབས་ཏེ་གྲོན་པ་ཡིན་ལོ།” ཞེས་མར་ཡུལ་ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་
 རྒྱན་རབས་གསལ་བའི་མེ་ལོང་དུ་འབྱུང་བ་དང་། ཡང་ “ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་གོས་ལ་རྒྱལ་པོ་སོལ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྐབས་
 སུ་བཅོས་བསྐྱར་ཐབས་ཤིང་” ཞེས་པར་གཞིགས་ཚེ། ལྷ་ལས་གཞན་པའི་གྲོན་ཆས་ལའང་བཅོས་བསྐྱར་བྱེད་པ་

བཞི། ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་འདི་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ལ་འབྲེལ་བ་ཡོད་ཚུལ།

སྤྱི་ཉིད་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ཉིད་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་ཙམ་དུ་མ་ཟད། ལ་དྲུགས་སྟོང་གཤམ་སོགས་
 ལ་དྲུགས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་རྣམས་སུའང་ལམ་སྲོལ་དེ་གཅིག་མཚུངས་སུ་ཡོད། དེ་ཡང་ལ་དྲུགས་ཀྱི་
 མཁས་དབང་བཟུ་ཤེས་རབ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་ “ཡུལ་གང་དུ་སོང་ཡང་སྟོན་སྲོལ་མང་པོ་ཞིག་ཡོད་
 པ་ཡིན། དེ་ནང་བཞིན་ལ་དྲུགས་སུ་ཡང་སྟོན་སྲོལ་མང་པོ་ཞིག་ཡོད་དོ། །སྟོན་སྲོལ་འདི་
 ཀུན་ལ་སྟོན་དུས་སུ་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་དང་ཡུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་གོ་གནས་ཐོབ་ཡོད།”¹⁰ ཅེས་
 དང་། “འདིར་ལ་དྲུགས་པའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་བྱ་བའི་སྐོར་གྱི་སྟོན་སྲོལ་ཁ་ཤས་བརྗོད་ན། དང་པོ་
 ལ་དྲུགས་འདིར་པ་མའི་རྒྱ་ལོར། ཞིང་། ཁང་པ། ཉ་གཡག་སྐོ་ཕྱགས། རྒྱ་ཅ་ལག་རྣམས་སུ་ཆེ་
 ཤོས་དེ་ལ་ཐོབ་པའི་སྲོལ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། སྲོལ་འདི་བཞིན་པ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་སུ་མེད་ན་སུ་མོ་ཆེ་
 ཤོས་ལ་ཞིང་ཁང་ཐོབ་པ་ཡིན།”¹¹ ཞེས་བསུ་བའི་ལ་དྲུགས་སྟོངས་ཀྱི་ས་ཁང་
 ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ཇི་ལྟར་ཡིན་པ་དེ་གསལ་བཤད་བྱས་ཡོད། དེ་བཞིན་ཟངས་དཀར་¹²
 ཡུལ་དུའང་ས་ཁང་བདག་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་གོང་གསལ་སྤྱི་ཉི་དང་། ལ་དྲུགས་ཡུལ་
 ལྟར་ཡོད་པ་ནི། ཟངས་དཀར་ཆེ་རིང་བཟུ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས་ “ཅི་ཙམ་གྱིས་སྲོལ་བཟང་ལུས་ཡོད་པ་
 ལྟར། སྲོལ་ངན་ཁ་ཤས་ཀྱང་འགོག་མ་ཐུབ་པར་ཡོད། དཔེར་ན། ད་དུང་ཡང་བརྒྱ་ཆ་དུག་
 ཅུ་རེ་ལྔ་ཙམ་སྟོན་ལྟར། སུ་དང་སུ་མོ་ཀན་བསུ་པས་པ་མེས་ཀྱི་ས་ཞིང་ལ་བདག་བཟུང་བྱས་ནས་

ཤེས། དེ་མཚུངས་ “སྟོན་བྱང་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་རྣ་སྐོན་འདོགས་སྲོལ་མེད་ཀྱང་སྐབས་ཤིག་རྒྱལ་མོ་ཞིག་གི་སྟན་
 ལ་སྟན་ཟུག་བྱུང་། དེ་ཕྱིར་རྣ་སྐོན་ཚུང་བྱ་ཞིག་མཛད་ནས་བསྐྱམས། ཇེས་སུ་དམངས་ཁྲིད་ཀྱི་བྱང་མེད་རྣམས་
 ཀྱིས་མཛེས་པར་མཛོང་ནས་རྣ་སྐོན་གྱིན། དེ་ནས་རིམ་བཞིན་ཆེ་བྱ་བྱས་ནས་ད་ལྟའི་རྣ་སྐོན་འདི་ལ་གྱུར་པ་ཡིན།
 ”ཞེས་བ་སོགས་ལ་བརྟག་ཆེ་ལ་དྲུགས་རྒྱལ་སྟོན་སྐབས་ལམ་སྲོལ་ཇི་སྟེད་ཅིག་རྒྱལ་པོས་རང་གིས་བསམ་བཞིན་
 དམངས་ཁྲིད་དུ་སྤེལ་ནས་བྱུང་བ་དང་། ཁ་ཅིག་དམངས་ཁྲིད་ནས་ཡར་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཅི་མཛད་ལ་དཔེ་བཞག་ནས་
 བྱུང་བའི་རིགས་ཀྱང་ཡོད་པ་འདྲ། གོང་གསལ་ལུང་ལུངས་རྣམས་ནི་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༧༥༥ ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་ཤོག་
 གངས་ ༤༠ དང་། ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༡༧༧༥ ལོའི་ལོ་འཁོར་དཔེ་དབུ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༥༧ ཤོག་གསལ་བས་ཞིབ་ཏུ་ཤེས་འདོད་
 པ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་དེར་གཟིགས་པར་འཚལ།

10 ཇམ་ལྷ་གཤམ་མིར་གྱི་བཟོ། ༡༧༧༧ ལོའི་ལོ་འཁོར་གྱི་དཔེ་དབུ་ཤོག་ ༧༥ ཤོག་གསལ།
 11 གོང་གསལ་དཔེ་དབུ་དེ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༧༥-༧༧ བར་གསལ།
 12 དེང་སྐབས་ཟངས་དཀར་ལའང་ལ་དྲུགས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་འབྲོད་སྲོལ་ཞིག་འདུག་ཀྱང་། འདི་ལ་ནི་ཟངས་དཀར་བཟུ་
 ཤེས་ཆེ་རིང་གིས་ “དེ་ཡང་རི་བོ་གངས་ཅན་གྱི་ལུ་ལུ་ཕྱགས་མངའ་རིས་སྐོར་གསུམ་དུ་གྲགས་པའི་ནང་
 བས། མར་ཡུལ་ལ་དྲུགས་སྤྱི་ཉི་གར་ལྷ། ཟངས་དཀར་གསུམ་སྐོར་ཆོ་གཅིག་ཏུ་བཞག་པ་”ཞེས་པའི་དོན་
 ལྟར། ལ་དྲུགས་དང་ཟངས་དཀར་གྱི་མིང་སོ་སོར་བྲིས་པའང་དེ་ལྟར་རོ།

ཚུང་བ་ཀུན་ལ་མ་བཞོས་པར་བཞག་འདུག”¹³ ཅེས་ཁོང་གི་ཚཱམ་ཡིག་ཟངས་དཀར་གྱི་སྐྱེ་
ཚོགས་ནང་དུ་འགྱུར་བྱ་ཞེས་པ་ཅུ་གསལ།

འོན་ཀྱང་སྐྱེ་ཏིའི་ཡུལ་གྱི་ས་ཁང་བདག་དབང་ལམ་སོལ་དེ་ཉིད་སྟོན་དུས་ཁང་ཁྲུང་¹⁴
ཁྲི་སྡེ་སྟོན་སྡེད་བར་གསུམ་དུ་འབོད་པའི་ཡུལ་ཁག་གསུམ་སྟེ། གར་ལྷ་དང་། སྐྱེ་ཏི། ལྷ་རུ་
གསུམ་གྱི་ཁོད་ཁྲི་སྡེ་བར་བ་སྟེ་སྐྱེ་ཏིའི་ཡུལ་ཁོ་ནར་མ་གཏོགས། གར་ལྷ་དང་། ལྷ་རུའི་ཡུལ་
ཁག་གཉིས་སུ་མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་སོལ་དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་བྱུང་མེད་པ་དེས། ས་
ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ནི་དེའི་སྐབས་ཀྱི་ཆབ་སྲིད་དབང་སྐྱུར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ལམ་ལུགས་ལ་
འབྲེལ་བ་དམ་ཟབ་ཡོད་པ་གསལ་བོར་རྟོགས་ཐུབ་པ་ཞིག་རེད།

གཞན་དུ་ན་འབངས་མི་ཁྲིམ་ཁོད་དུ་བར་བ་ལྷ་བ་བྱེད་དགོས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལུགས་
ཤིག་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ཀྱིས་ཡུན་རིང་དབང་བསྐྱུར་པའི་ཡུལ་སྡེ་སྐྱེ་ལ་ཐུན་མོང་དུ་དར་
སྟོལ་གྱུར་པ་དེའང་། རྒྱལ་པོ་གང་ཞིག་གི་སྐབས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་བྱུང་ཡོད་
མེད་ལ་བརྟག་དགོས། ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སེལ་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ “ལ་དྲགས་གང་པོ་ནས་
བཅུན་ཁྲལ་བསྐྱུ་རྒྱུའི་བཀའ་སྲེལ། དེར་བརྟེན་ལ་དྲགས་སྟོན། གཤམ། བྱང་ཐང་། ལུམ་ར།
ཟངས་དཀར། སྐལ་ཡུལ་བཅས་ནས་བཅུན་པ་བསྐྱུས་པས་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ་ལྷ་བརྒྱ་ལོངས།”¹⁵
ཞེས་གསལ་ཞིང་། བཅུན་པ་འདི་དག་སྐབས་དེར་རྒྱལ་པོའི་དབུ་མ་འབྲུག་པ་དཀར་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་
སྟག་ཚང་རས་པས་ཉེ་མི་བྱང་རྒྱབ་བསམ་སྲིད་དགོན་ཆགས་བཏབ་¹⁶ རྗེས་བསྐྱུས་པ་ཞིག་
ཡིན། དེ་ཚུལ་རྣམ་ཐར་དུ་ “དེའི་ཞབས་འབྲིང་དུ་མངའ་འོག་ནས་བཅུན་ཁྲལ་ཅི་དགོས་བསྐྱུ་
བ་སའི་བདག་པོའི་ལུགས་སོལ་དུ་སྐྱང་ཡང་། ས་ཐག་རིང་བ་རྣམས་སྲིད་ལས་སུ་གྱུར་
དྲགས་ལ་ཐགས་སྟོན་གཤམ་ནས་ལྷ་ཁྲལ་ཆེ་ལོང་ཅམ་བསྐྱུས་པ་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ་ལྷ་བརྒྱར་
ལོངས་པའི་སྟོབ་དཔོན་དུ་དཔོན་པོ་ཐར་པའི་ལམ་སྟོན་བསྟོས།”¹⁷ ཞེས་པ་ལྟར། བཅུན་ཁྲལ་
ཞིག་རྒྱལ་པོ་སེལ་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ལ་དྲགས་སྟོན་གཤམ་སོགས་ནས་བསྐྱུས་ཡོད་པ་དང་།
དེའི་སྟོབ་བཞིན་ཚོས་རྒྱུད་གཞན་དག་གིས་ཀྱང་རང་ཁོངས་མངའ་ཞབས་ནས་བཅུན་ཁྲལ་

13 ཇམ་མུ་ཀུའམ་མིར་གྱི་བཟོ། 1914 ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཟོམ་གྱི་དཔེ་དེབ་ཤོག་གངས་ 70 ཤོག་གསལ།
14 ཇམ་མུ་ཀུའམ་མིར་གྱི་བཟོ། 1914 ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཟོམ་གྱི་དཔེ་དེབ་ཤོག་གངས་ 70 ཤོག་ “ཁྲི་སྡེ་སྟོན་སྡེད་གར་
ལ། ལྷ་རུ་སྐྱེ་ཏི་” ཞེས་བསོད་ནམས་ཐུན་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ཚཱམ་ཡིག་ལ་དྲགས་ཀྱི་ས་གཞི་ཆགས་ཚུལ་ཞེས་པར་གསལ།
15 དགོན་རབས་ཀུན་གསལ་ཉི་སྐྱང་ཤོག་བྱ་ 127 ཤོག་གསལ།
16 དགོན་པ་འདི་ཉིད་ལྷ་མ་སྟག་ཚང་ (1477-1487) རས་པས་བྱི་ལོ་ 1430 རང་ལྷག་བཏབ། རྣམ་ཐར་དུ་
“ དགྲང་ལོང་བདུན་པ་རབ་སྐྱུས་ཉེ་སྟོན་རའི་ཚོས་དགོ་བའི་ཉེན་རྗེ་ཚོད་ཚང་པའི་སྐབས་གནས་ཉེ་མིར་གཅུག་
ལག་ཁང་སྐྱབ་སྡེ་དང་བཅས་པ་བཏབ།” ཅེས་འབྲུང་།
17 ལོ་རྒྱུན་པ་སྟག་ཚང་རས་པ་དག་དབང་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་རྣམ་ཐར། མཁུར་འབྲུག། ལམ་ལུགས་བཅས་བཞུགས་པའི་དཔེ་
དེབ་ཤོག་གངས་ 27-28 བར་གསལ།

བཟུམ་པའི་ལམ་ལུགས་ཤིག་རིམ་བཞིན་དར་སྲོལ་བྱུང་བའི་ཉེར་ལེན་ལ་བརྟེན། མི་སྲིམ་རེ་
 བུ་བྱ་གྲོ་བ་ལས་གཞན་རྣམས་ལྷན་པ་བཟོ་དགོས་ཀྱི་མཚན་དཔྱད། གང་ལྟར་བན་ལྷོ་
 བཟུ་དགོས་ཀྱི་གནས་སྤངས་ཤིག རྒྱ་སོར་རྒྱལ་དུས་སྐབས་སུ་བྱུང་ཡོད་པ་དེས་ཤུགས་རྒྱུན་
 ཡན་བྱ་ཐབས་ཡོད་པར་སྟེ།

༥། དུས་རབས་བཅུ་བདུན་སྐབས་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་ཉིད་ཆབ་སྲིད་དབང་རྒྱུ།

ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སངས་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་ཉིད་ལོ་ ༡༥༤༠ ལོར་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་མཛད།
 རྒྱལ་པོ་འདིས་བྱ་ཉེངས། གྲུ་གོ། ཟངས་དཀར། ལུ་རིགས་ (བོད་རིགས་) སོགས་དབང་དུ་
 བཟུམ་ཏེ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་རྒྱ་བསྐྱེད་པ་དེ་ནས་སྤྱི་ཉིད་ལྷོ་ལྷང་འདི་ཉིད་ལ་དུགས་ཆབ་སྲིད་ཀྱི་
 མངའ་ཁོངས་ཤིག་ཏུ་གྱུར། སྤྱི་ཉི་རྟ་སོའི་ཤོག་ཟུར་གྱི་མཚན་ཐང་ཞིག་གི་ཁར། “སངས་ལོ་
 ལ་འབབ་སྐབས་པའི་གནས་ནས། སོ་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་དཔལ་ལའར་རྩེར་ཚས་རྒྱལ་ཆེན་པོ་སངས་ལོ་
 རྒྱལ་པོ་དེ་མི་མཐུན་སྲིད་ལས་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་ཅེག”¹⁸ ཅེས་བྲིས་ཡོད། འདིས་སྐབས་དེ་ཙམ་ན་
 སྤྱི་ཉི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སངས་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་འོག་ཡོད་པ་གསལ་བོར་
 མཚོན་ཐུབ།

དེ་རྗེས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ལྷན་ཆེ་བ་བདེ་ཐུན་རྒྱལ་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཤིང་། ལྷན་བར་བ་རབ་ཏུ་
 བྱུང་། རྒྱུང་བ་བདེ་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་ཉི་དང་། ཟངས་དཀར་གཏུ་ནས་མངའ་
 མཛད། སྐབས་དེ་ན་བདེ་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་ཟངས་དཀར་དཔལ་གཏུ་མ་ དུ་བཞུགས་

18 རྒྱལ་པོ་འདིའི་སྲིད་ལོ་ཐང་ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་སྐབས་ཆོད་བར་བཞེད་ཚུལ་མི་མཐུན་པ་མང་། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་
 རབས་འཆེ་མེད་གཏེར་ན། སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༥༤༧ ལ་འབྱུངས་ཤིང་། སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༥༤༩ བར་ཆབ་སྲིད་མཛད་དེ་མི་ལོ་ཉེར་
 བདུན་ཙམ་ལ་སྲིད་བསྐྱེད་པར་བཤམ། ལ་དུགས་དེབ་ཐེར་དུ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༥༧༥ ལ་ཁྲིར་འཁོད་པ་
 དང་ ༡༥༩༢ ལོར་གཤམས་པར་བཤམ། ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཀུན་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་སྐྱོང་བའི་དཀར་ཆག་ཅེས་པ་
 ལས་ ༡༥༤༠ ཁྲིར་འཁོད་དེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༥༩༠ བར་སྲིད་བསྐྱེད་པར་བཤམ། ལོ་ཚོགས་ཕྱི་མ་འདི་དག་པར་
 སྟེ། འཇར་མན་གྱི་མཁས་དབང་ལེ་རེང་གོ་དང་། ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་མཁས་དབང་བཟླ་ཤིས་རབ་རྒྱལ་སོགས་ཀྱིས་
 ཀྱང་ལོ་ཚོགས་འདི་ལ་དོས་འཛིན་མཛད་འདུག།

19 ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཆེ་མེད་གཏེར་ཤོག་གངས་ ༡༧༡-༡༧༢ བར་བཞོད་ཡོད།

20 དཔལ་གཏུ་ལ་འབྲི་ཚུལ་མི་འདྲ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་། རྒྱལ་ས་འདི་ཉིད་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུང་ཚས་ཀྱང་བཞུགས་གནས་སུ་
 མཛད་ཡོད་པ་ནི། ཟངས་དཀར་ཚས་འབྱུང་གསལ་བའི་མི་ལོང་དུ་ “འབར་གདན་དགོན་གྲུབ་ཆེན་བདེ་བ་རྒྱ་
 མཚོའི་སྐུ་དུས་སུ་ཚས་རྒྱལ་བདེ་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་སྐུ་དུས་ནས་བརྒྱུད་གྲུའི་སྐུ་རིམ་མཛད་པར་མངོན། དཔལ་
 བདུན་རྒྱལ་པོ་བདེ་མཚོག་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་སུ་ཚས་རྗེ་དག་དབང་རྒྱལ་མཚོན་ཡང་དགོན་འདིར་སེབས་ནས་རྒྱལ་
 རྩོན་འཁུར་བཅས་ལ་བཀའ་ཚས་བཀའ་དབང་གིས་སྤྱིན་པར་མཛད།” ཅེས་པས་རྟོགས།

ཉེ་ཟངས་དཀར་གྱི་ཡུལ་དང་། སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་དབང་སྐྱེ་བའི་མོ་མོ་མར་ཡུལ་ལ་དུགས་
གྱི་སྤོང་རབས་གསལ་བའི་མེ་ལོང་དུ་འཁོད་འདུག། ཀྱང་། རྒྱལ་རབས་འཆི་མེད་གཏེར་ན།
“ཚུང་བ་བདེ་མཚོག་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་སྐྱེ་བའི་གནའ་བོ་”²² ཞེས་པ་ལས་ཟངས་དཀར་
སྐོར་མེ་གསལ། གང་ལྟར་སྐབས་དེ་ཙམ་ན། སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་ཉིང་ལ་དུགས་སྐྱེ་ཆེན་དཔལ་མཁར་
གྱི་རྒྱལ་སྤོང་འོག་རྒྱལ་ཕྱན་གྱི་ཚུལ་དུ་གནས་པ་ཤེས་བྱེད།

ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཉེར་དུག་པ་ཉི་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་(1680-1720)བཅུན་མོ་ཆེན་
མའི་ལྷོ་བདེ་སྐོར་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་སྐྱེ་ཆེན་དཔལ་མཁར་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྤོང་གཏེར་པ་དང་།
བཅུན་མོ་ཆུན་མ་ལྷེ་བོད་རིགས་ནས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཟེ་ཟེ་ཁ་རྩུ་གྱི་སྤོང་བཟུ་ཤེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་
ལ་བོད་རིགས་²³ དང་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཆི་མེད་གཏེར་དུ་རྒྱལ་བོ་
ཉི་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་བོད་རིགས་དང་། ཟངས་དཀར་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་ལྷན་གསལ་པོ་བཅུན་མོ་
ཆུན་མའི་ལྷོ་བདེ་བཟུ་ཤེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གསལ་ཡང་། ལྷོ་མེ་²⁴ ཆེད་ལོག་ལྷན་བྱས་
ན། བོད་རིགས་དང་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གཉེས་མ་གཏོགས་ཟངས་དཀར་གསལ་མེད་པས་བཏུག

གང་ལྟར་བཟུ་ཤེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་བོད་རིགས་དང་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གཉེས་སྐྱེ་ཆེན་དཔལ་
མཁར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་སྤོང་འོག་རྒྱལ་ཕྱན་ཚུལ་དུ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༧༥༥ བར་ཉེ་སྐྱེ་མ་གཉེགས་བར་དབང་
བསྐྱེད། ལུལ་བོ་²⁵ རྒྱལ་བོ་བཟུ་ཤེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་དབང་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཤེས་བྱེད་

21 མར་ཡུལ་ལ་དུགས་གྱི་སྤོང་རབས་ཀུན་གསལ་མེ་ལོང་ཤོག་གངས་ ༢༢༢ ཤོག་གསལ།
22 ལ་དུགས་གྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཆི་མེད་གཏེར་ཤོག་གངས་ ༥༥༧ ཤོག་ཏུ་གསལ།
23 ལྷོ་མེ་ལོག་ཆུ་རྒྱུ་ནས་དུ་ཞི་ལ་བྱུག་དང་། རང་ལྷོ་མེ་ནས་ལུ་ཆུ་དང་སེལ་ཁ་འབབ་འདྲེས་མཚམས་གྱི་ཡུལ་
མིང་ལ་བོད་རིགས་ (ལུ་རིག་) ཟེར་མི་གངས་ ༡༧༥༠༠༠ ཡོད་ཅིང་། ཡུལ་མི་ཆེད་མས་བོད་རྒྱུད་རྒྱུ་བ་
བཤད། ལྷོ་མེ་ ༡༥༤༠ ཙམ་དུ་དཀར་ཅེ་དུང་པ་རྒྱལ་བོ་བོད་དུ་ལེབས་ནས་ནང་ཆོས་སྤོང་གཏེར་གནང་སྟེ་ལྷོ་
བོད་རིགས་ལ་ལོག་རྒྱུ་ལ། ལྷོ་མེ་དང་། ལུལ་བོ་ཤར་སྤོང་ལོག་པ་བཞེད་ལ། ལྷོ་མེ་ ༡༥༤༠ ཙམ་རྒྱལ་བ་
ཐམས་ཅད་མཁུན་པ་སྐྱེ་ལེན་བཅུ་བའི་བ་མཚོག་ཡུལ་དེར་ལེབས་པ་སོགས་གྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་ཞིབ་ཤེས་འདོད་པ་
རྣམས་ཀྱིས། ལ་དུགས་བསོད་ནམས་ཕྱན་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས་ཤིས་པའི་ཚོམ་ཡིག་བོད་རིགས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་འབྱུང་དང་ཤེས་
རིག་ཅེས་པ་ལྷོ་མེ་ ༢༠༠༤ ཙམི་ལ་དུགས་གྱི་ལོ་འཁོར་དཔེ་དེབ་ ༤༡ - ༤༥ བར་གཟིགས་པར་འཚལ།
24 ལྷོ་མེ་ཞེས་པ་ནི་ལ་དུགས་གྱི་ཤར་བྱོགས་ན་ཡོད་པའི་བྱང་ཐང་ལ་ཟེར། ཡུལ་འདྲིར་ཤིང་ལྷོ་མེ་ཆུ་དང་སྤོང་
མང་བོ་ཡོད་པས་དེ་ལྟར་མིང་ཐོགས་སྐད། བཟུ་ཕྱག་བཅུ་བའི་ནང་ལྷོ་མེ་འཚོ་མཁར་རེ་རྒྱུང་མ་གཏོགས་མེད་
པ་འདྲ། བཟུ་ཕྱག་བཅུ་ལོ་ནང་སྐྱེ་མ་སྐྱེ་ཆེད་རས་པས་ཕྱགས་བཏོད་ལྟར། ལྷོ་མེ་ལ་རུ་དཀོན་པ་བཞེད་ལ། ལ་
དུགས་རྒྱལ་བོ་སེང་གོ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྤོང་སྐབས། རྒྱལ་བོ་སྐྱེ་དགུན་ས་དང་། ལྷོ་མེ་ལ་དབྱེད་ས་མཚོད་
ནས་བཞུགས་སྐབས་དཀོན་པ་རྒྱལ་བོ་སྐྱེ་མཁར་ལྷ་བུ་ཞིག་ཀྱང་ཆགས། རྒྱལ་བོས་མི་ཁྲིམ་སྐོར་ཞིག་ལྷོ་མེ་ལོར་སྐོ་
ལྷོ་མེ་འཚོ་སྐྱེད་ལྷོ་མེ་བཅུགས་པས་འཕེལ། བཟུ་ཕྱག་བཅུ་བའི་ནང་ལ་དུགས་སྤོང་གཏེར་སོགས་གྱི་རྒྱལ་
སྤོང་རྣམས་གནས་དེར་འཚོ་མས་ནས་ལ་དུགས་ནང་འགྲིག་གི་ཚོགས་འདུ་ཆེན་བོ་ཞིག་བསྐྱེད། དེར་ཡིག་ཆ་
ལག་ཏུ་ལྷོ་མེ་ལོ་ཚོགས་འདུ་ཆེན་མོ་དང་ལྷོ་མེ་ལོ་ཆེད་ལོག་ཅེས་ཀྱང་འབྱུང།

གཞན་ཞིག་ནི། ལྷོ་ཏིའི་སྤྱི་དབྱེད་མོ་མོ་བསོད་ནམས་དབང་འདུས་གཟིམ་ཤག་གི་ཚོས་དཔེ་
 ལག་བྲིས་མ་ཞིག་གི་མཚན་གྱི་དབྱེད་ལྟར། “པོ་བྲང་ཚེན་པོ་རྣམས་ལྟ་བུ་ལོ་ཚེར། ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཚེན་
 པོ་བཟུ་ཤིས་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དབྱེད་ཚོགས་མཐོ་ཞིང་ཆབ་སྲིད་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་ཅིག་ཁོང་གི་ཆབ་སྲིད་
 བཟང་པོའི་སྤྱི་ཏི་འདྲིས། རྒྱུ་མཐོ་ལ་བཅོན་པ་བྲག་མཁར་ཚེར། མཁར་དཔོན་ཚེན་པོ་མོ་
 མོ་བསྟན་སྤོང་གི་སྤྱི་ཚོ་བཏུན་གྱིས་ཅིག”²⁶ ཅས་པས་གཞུགས་ལུགས་

དེ་རྗེས་སྤྱི་ཏི་དང་བོད་རིགས་གཉིས་སྤྱི་ཡང་སྤོང་ཚེན་དཔལ་མཁར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཚོ་
 དབང་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་དབང་བསྐྱར་འོག་ཚུད་པ་ནི། ལྷོ་ཏིའི་མཚུ་མང་ཞིག་ཏུ་རྒྱལ་ས་ཚེན་
 པོ་ “སྤོང་ཚེན་དཔལ་མཁར་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཚེན་པོ་ཚོ་དབང་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དབྱེད་ཚོགས་མཐོ་ཞིང་ཆབ་
 སྲིད་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་ཅིག”²⁷ ཅས་བྲིས་ཡོད། དེ་ནས་རིམ་བཞིན་ཉུང་ཏི་དང་། ལུ་ལུ་རམ་ལུར། རྩོ་
 ར་མར། སིག་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་གྱིས་གཅིག་རྗེས་གཅིག་འཕྲོད། ལྷོ་ཏིའི་ནང་བཅོམ་འཕྲོག་
 སོགས་གྱི་དབང་ཤུགས་སྐྱོབས་ཡོད་ཀྱང་། དོན་ལ་སྤྱི་ཏི་མི་དམངས་རྣམས་ནས་ལ་དུགས་གྱི་
 རྒྱུ་མཐོ་ལས་ལམ་སྐོབ་ལ་བཅི་སྤྱད་བྱས་ཡོད་ཚུལ་ཡིག་ཆ་ཁག་དུ་མར་གསལ།

མདོར་ན་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་མང་གི་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་(1590)ནས། ལྷོ་མོ་ ༡༥༩༩ ལ་དབྱིན་
 གཞུང་གིས་སྤྱི་ཏི་གར་ལྷ་གཉིས་ཀྱང་ར་རྒྱུང་ཁོངས་སུ་མ་བཏང་བར་མི་ལོ་ཉིས་བརྒྱ་ལྷག་
 ཅིག་རིང་། ལྷོ་ཏིའི་ཡུལ་འདྲི་ཉེད་ལ་དུགས་སྤོང་ཚེན་དཔལ་མཁར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་སྤྱི་དོག་ཐངས་
 གཉིས་ལ་བཟང་པོ་དང་། དེ་བཞིན་སྤོང་ཚེན་དཔལ་མཁར་གྱི་མཁར་ལུའི་རྒྱལ་སྤྱི་དོག་
 ཏུ་འང་ལམ་གཉིས་ལ་བཟང་། ལྷོ་ཏིའི་འདྲི་ཉེད་དབྱིན་ཇིའི་དབང་སྐྱར་འོག་ཚུད་
 ཀྱང་། རྒྱུ་མཐོ་གྱི་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་སོགས་ལ་དམིགས་བསལ་འགྱུར་བ་མ་བཏང་བར་
 བཞག་ཡོད་པ་ནི། “སྤོང་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་དུས་སུ་སྤྱི་ཏིའི་དབྱེད་ཀྱིས་བྲང་མཁར་ཁབ་ཏུ་སྤོང་
 པའི་མཁར་དཔོན་གྱི་འོག་ཏུ་ཡོད་པའི་སྤོང་པོའི་གས་གྱི་སྤྱི་ཏི་མོ་མོ་བྱ་བ་ཡོད་པ་
 ཡིན། དབྱིན་ཇིའི་ཆབ་འོག་ཏུ་ལྷགས་ནས་ཀྱང་ཐོབ་ཐང་པལ་ཚེར་སྤྱི་ཏི་བཞིན་
 མཚེས”²⁸ ཞེས་དུས་རབས་ཉི་ཤུའི་ལོ་རབས་ཉི་ཤུའི་ནང་ལ་དུགས་པ་བསོད་ནམས་

25 ལྷོ་ཏིའི་འདྲི་ཉེད་ཤོད་གསལ་བོད་རིགས་(ལུ་རིག) ཞེས་པའི་ཡུལ་ཁོངས་སུ་ཡོད་པ་དང་། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་
 ཚེན་ཉི་མ་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་སུ་ལྷོ་ཏིའི་འདྲི་ཉེད་ལ་ཕྱི་ལོ་འདྲི་ཉེད་ལ་ཕྱི་ལོ་འདྲི་ཉེད་ལ་ཕྱི་ལོ་འདྲི་ཉེད་ལ་ཕྱི་ལོ་འདྲི་ཉེད་
 པའི་སྤོང་པོ་བཟུ་ཤིས་རྣམས་རྒྱལ་པོ་མཁར་དེ་གཏང་ནས་བོད་རིགས་དང་སྤྱི་ཏི་གཉིས་ལ་དབང་བསྐྱར་དུ་
 བཅུག་མཁར་དེའི་མིང་ལ་སྤོང་པོ་མཁར་དང་། དེ་དུས་མདོར་གྱི་མཁར་ཡང་བྲེད།

26 ལྷོ་ཏིའི་མཁར་དཔོན་གྱི་མི་རྒྱུད་སྤྱི་དབྱེད་མོ་མོ་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ཁང་དུ་བཞགས་པའི་ཚོས་དཔེ་
 ཞིག་གི་མཚན་གྱི་དབྱེད་ལྟར་དུ་བྲིས་ཡོད།

27 ལྷོ་ཏི་ཡུལ་གྱི་མཚུ་མང་ཞིག་ཏུ་རིང་ཚད་མི་གཉིས་ཚམ་ཡོད་པའི་དོ་ལེབ་ནར་མོ་ཞིག་གི་ཐོག་བྲིས་ཡོད།

28 ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་མང་འཛིན་གཏེར་ཤོག་གྲངས་ 327 ཐོག་ཏུ་གསལ།

ཚོ་བརྟན་གྱིས་སྤྱི་ཉི་མེད་དུ་རྟོག་ཞིབ་བཞུགས་ཏེ་བྲིས་ཡོད།

དེས་ན་གོང་གསལ་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ཉིད་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ལ་འབྲེལ་བ་ཅི་ཞིག་ཡོད་དམ། དེ་ཡང་ལ་དུགས་པ་བཟུང་བྱེད་ཀྱིས་དོ་རྒྱུ་ལྟར་ལ་དུགས་ནང་པ་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་པ་མའི་ས་གནས་དང་རྒྱ་མོག་ཅི་ཡོད་ཨ་ཇོ་ཚེན་མོར་ཐོབ་པའི་ཚོར་ཡོད་པས། གཞུན་ལུ་བོ་མོ་(ལུ་མོ)སོགས་ལ་རྒྱ་མོག་ས་གནས་སྤྱི་ལུ་ཟུང་བུ་ཀྱང་ཐོབ་ཀྱི་མེད། གལ་སྲིད་ཨ་པས་མནའ་མ་གཉིས་ཁྱོད་(ལྷངས་)ན། དེ་སྐབས་ཨ་པའི་རྒྱ་མོག་སོགས་མནའ་མ་སྤོན་མའི་བུ་ལ་ཐོབ། མནའ་མ་རྒྱུ་མའི་བུ་ལ་ས་གནས་རྒྱ་མོག་ཅི་ཡང་མི་ཐོབ།”²⁹ ཅེས་པས་ཤེས།

འདི་སྐབས་ཀྱི་ཚོར་ཞེས་པ་ནི་ལ་དུགས་སྐད་ཀྱི་ཁྲིམས་ཞེས་པའི་དོན་³⁰ ཡིན་ཞིང་། ཁྲིམས་དེ་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་འདི་འང་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འོག་ལོ་ཉིས་བརྒྱ་ལྷག་ཅིག་གནས་པའི་རིང་། རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་དེ་བཞིན་ལག་བསྟར་བྱས་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན། དེ་ཡང་ཁུངས་བཅོན་ཤོས་ཤིག་ནི་ལ་དུགས་པ་བསོད་ནམས་ཚོ་བརྟན་གྱིས་“ལ་དུགས་” རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་བཞིན་དེར་ཡང་བུ་ཚེ་བར་ཞིང་ཁང་རྟེན་ཅིང་། ཞིང་ཁང་བཅེགས་ནས་ཟ་མི་ཚོག”³² ཅེས་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གྱི་ས་ཁང་གི་གནས་བབ་སྐོར་གསལ་བཤད་བྱས་ཡོད་དོ།

དུགས་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ནང་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་རི་རྩར་དབྱེད་ཚུགས་སྐོར།

མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་སྲོལ་དེ་ནི་སྐོར་ཀུན་ནས་བལྟས་ཀྱང་། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་ལམ་ལུགས་དང་འབྲེལ་བ་དམ་ཟབ་ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་རེད། དེ་ཡང་ལ་དུགས་མཁས་དབང་བཟུང་བྱེད་ཀྱིས་ས་ཁང་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་མཚོག་གིས་ “སྤོན་སྲོལ་³³ ལྟར་སྲས་ཚེ་བ་ལ་རྒྱལ་

29 ཇམ་མཉམ་ལྷན་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་བཟོ་ ༡༧༥ ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་གྱི་དཔེ་དེབ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༡༤ - ༡༥ བར་གསལ།
30 སྤྱི་ཚོར་ཞེས་པའི་ཡིག་འབྲུ་འདི་དབྱིན་སྐད་དང་། ཉིན་རྒྱུ་སྐད་དང་། ཨ་རུ་ལྷོ་སྐད་དང་། འོད་ཀྱི་ཚོག་མཛོད་རྣམས་ལུང་མེད་པར་ལ་དུགས་རང་གི་ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པའི་སྐད་དམིགས་བསལ་ཞིག་ཡིན་སྐོར་ལྟེ་ལོ་ ༢༠༠༢ ལོའི་ལོ་འཁོར་དཔེ་དེབ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༡ - ༢ བར་གསལ། ལྟེ་ལོ་ ༡༧༥ ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་གྱི་ཚོམ་བྱང་ཞིག་ཏུ་ “ ལ་དུགས་ནང་དུ་རང་དབང་སྤོན་དུ་མངའ་བཤག་གཞུང་གི་ལས་ཚོར་དང་ཡུལ་གྱི་ལུགས་སྲོལ་ ” ཞེས་པ་ནས་ཀྱང་ཚོར་གྱི་དོན་ལ་ངེས་པ་འདྲོངས་རྟོགས་སོ། །
31 ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་འདིར་ཡིག་ཆ་ལ་ལར་ལ་དུགས་ཞེས་འབྲུང་བ་དང་། ཡང་ཁ་ཅིག་ཏུ་ལ་དུགས་དང་། ལྷག་ཚང་རས་པའི་རྣམ་ཐར་དུ་ལ་ཐགས་ཞེས་ཀྱང་འབྲུང་བས་འབྲི་སྲོལ་ཚང་མར་རྒྱན་མཚན་རེ་ཡོད་ངེས་ཀྱང་། དེར་སྐབས་ཡོངས་གྲགས་སུ་ལ་དུགས་ཞེས་འབྲི་བ་མང་དོ། །
32 ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཛིན་གཏོར་ཤོག་གངས་ ༣༢༢ ཤོག་གསལ།
33 སྤོན་དུས་འདི་ཕྱོགས་གཉིས་ལ་དབྱེ་ཚོག་དང་པོ་ནི་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གདུང་རྒྱུད་ཁྲི་ལྷེ་སོང་བཅོན་ནམ་སང་ན་ལེགས་ཀྱི་སྲས་བཞེས་པ་ཁྲི་གཞུག་ལྷེ་གཞུག་བཅོན་རལ་པ་ཅན་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་བཟུང་ཞིང་། སྲས་བར་བ་ལྷ་སྲས་གཙང་

མིང་ཐོབ་ཅིང་། རྒྱུང་བ་ཀྱུན་ཉེ་མིས་དང་ཁྱིམ་ཚེ་སོགས་དགོན་པ་སོ་སོར་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་ནས་
 ལྷ་ཚོས་མཛད་པ་ཡིན་ནོ།”³⁴ ཞེས་པ་ལྟར། ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུང་ནང་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཉེར་གཉིས་
 པ་རྒྱལ་པོ་སེའུ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་སྲས་ཆེ་བ་བདེ་ལྷན་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་གཏང་ཅིང་། བར་
 པ་ཨིན་རྩོ་རྩི་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་། དེའི་རྗེས་བདེ་ལེགས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་སྲས་བཞི་བྱུང་སྟེ་སྲས་བགྲེས་
 པ་ཉེ་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་བཟུང་། སྲས་བར་བ་དག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་
 བས་ཁྱིམ་ཚེ་དགོན་དང་། དབང་ལྷུག་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་དང་། དགའ་ལྷན་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གཉིས་རབ་ཏུ་
 བྱུང་ནས་ཉེ་མི་དགོན་ཏུ་བཞུགས། དེས་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུང་གྱི་ཁྱི་འཛོན་ལམ་སོལ་
 བ་དང་། སྲས་བགྲེས་པས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་བཟུང་ཞིང་སྲས་བར་བ་གཙོ་བོར་གྲུར། གཞན་དག་རབ་
 བྱུང་མཛད་པའི་ལམ་སོལ་རྒྱན་རྒྱུང་བྱས་པ་མཚོན་ཐུབ།

འོན་ཀྱང་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཉེ་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་རྗེས་ལོ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡས་མས་སུ་ལ་དྲགས་
 རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ཐང་ཚོང་རྟོག་ལྷུགས་ཆེར་བྱུང་། ཚོང་རྟོག་ཡོང་གཞི་³⁵ གཙོ་བོ་ཞིག་ལྟེ། རྒྱལ་
 རབས་ཉེར་དྲུག་པ་བདེ་རྒྱུང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་བཅུན་མོ་ཉེ་ཟླ་དབང་མོ་བསུས་ནས་སྲས་ས་རྒྱུང་
 བལྟམས་ཀྱང་། རྒྱལ་ཡུམ་མ་མཐུན་པར་ཡུམ་རྩོ་མོན་ཏུ་ལོག་ཅིང་། སྲས་ཉེ་མི་ཏུ་རབ་ཏུ་
 བྱུང་། དེ་རྗེས་བཅུན་མོ་ཉེ་ཟླ་ཀྱུན་མཛེས་ལ་སྲས་ཆེ་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་དང་། དེ་རྗེས་བྱ་བྱིད་
 དབང་མོར་སྲས་ལུན་ཚོགས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་བལྟམས། རར་སོན་པ་ན་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ལ་སྲས་བགྲེས་
 གཞན་མ་མཐུན་པ་ལྟེ། “ཆོ་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་དང་ལུན་ཚོགས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གཉིས་པོ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་
 ལ་མ་ཆམས་(འཆམས་)པར་”³⁶ ། དེ་དུས་བོད་ནས་བཀའ་(ཀམ་ཐོག་རིག་འཛོན་ཆེན་པོ་

མ་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་ཡོད། དེའི་རྗེས་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་སེའུ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྲས་ཆེ་བ་བདེ་ལྷན་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་
 བཟུང་ཞིང་། སྲས་བར་བ་ཨིན་རྩོ་རྩི་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ་སོགས་ལ་གོ་རིགས་པ་ཞིག་གོ།

34 ཇམ་སུ་ཀུའམིར་གྱི་བཟོ། ཤེས་རབ་ཟོམ་ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༡༧༥༩ ལོ་ ༥ དེབ་གངས་ ༧༩ - ༧༯ བར་གསལ།

35 ཚོང་རྟོག་དེའི་ཕྱོགས་གཅིག་ནི་མེས་ཉེ་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་བཅུན་མོ་ཆེ་བའི་སྲས་བདེ་རྒྱུང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་རྒྱལ་
 སྲིད་གཏང་ཀྱང་། བཅུན་མོ་རྒྱུང་བའི་སྲས་བགྲེས་ལྟེ་ཉེ་དང་མཐུན་སུ་ཉེ་དང་མཐུན་སུ་སོགས་ལུལ་ལག་ཅིག་
 གཏང་པར། བདེ་རྒྱུང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་སྐབས་ཚོང་རྟོག་མ་བྱུང་ཡང་། བདེ་རྒྱུང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྲས་ལུན་ཚོགས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་
 སྐབས་ཚོང་རྟོག་བྱུང་། འོན་ཀྱང་ཀམ་ཐོག་རིག་འཛོན་པ་ཆེན་པོས་ཚོང་རྟོག་དེ་ཉིད་འདུམ་འགྲིག་མཛད་ཡོད་དོ།

36 མཁས་དབང་བགྲེས་རབ་རྒྱལ་མཚོག་གིས་ “དེ་ལོ་རྗེས་སུ་རིན་ཆེན་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ལ་སྲས་ཆེ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་རྣམ་
 རྒྱལ་དང་། རྒྱུང་བ་བགྲེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གཉིས་དང་། རྒྱུང་བ་བགྲེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་རང་ཉིད་ཁྱིམ་དབང་
 ཕྱིར། གཙོ་བོ་ལྟ་བུར་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་སྲས་བཏོན་ནས་ལིང་ཤེད་ཏུ་བཅོན་ལ་བཞག་ དེ་གཉིས་ཙམ་མ་
 གཏོགས་རྒྱལ་བུ་སྐྱེ་མཚེད་གྱི་བར་སྲིད་དབང་ཕྱིར་འཐབ་འཛོང་དང་དན་གཡོ་ནམ་ཡང་མ་བྱས་ཤིང་། རྩོན་
 མོན་ལྟར་སྲས་ཆེ་བ་ལ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ཐོབ་ཅིང་། རྒྱུང་བ་ཀྱུན་ཉེ་མི་དང་ཁྱིམ་ཚེ་སོགས་དགོན་པ་སོ་སོར་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་
 བས་ལྷ་ཚོས་མཛད་པ་ཡིན། ” ཞེས་པ་འདིས་ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛོན་པར་སྲས་བགྲེས་གཞན་བར་འཐབ་ཚོང་
 དེ་ལྟར་ནས་ཡོད་པ་ཤེས་ཐུབ།

ཕེབས་ནས། སྡོན་མ་མེན་པ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་མི་འོས་བཀའ་མཛད།”³⁷ ཅེས་ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་
 སྡོད་མན་རྒྱ་བའི་དགའ་སྡོན་དུ་གསལ། དེ་སྐོར་གྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་གསལ་ཚམ་ཞིག་ནི། “དེ་
 བས་ལ་དུགས་སྡོད་སྡོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྡོན་སོ་སོ་དང་སྐྱེ་དག་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་སྡོན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་
 ལུགས་སྲོལ། དེ་དུས་ཀྱི་གནས་ཚུལ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ཀྱི་ཐབས་རྒྱལ་སོགས་ཞིབ་གསལ་རིག་འཛིན་
 ཚེན་པོར་ལྷས་སྐབས་མགོན་རིག་འཛིན་ཚོ་དབང་ལོར་བུས་ཀྱང་སྤྱིད་སྲུག་ལེགས་ཉེས་
 ཚང་མ་ཞིབ་པར་གསལ། དབྱེད་བརྗེས་ལེགས་པར་མཛད་ནས། ལ་དུགས་མར་ལུལ་གྱི་
 བརྟན་དོན་ལ་རྒྱུ་ཚེད་དུ་སྡོན་དུས་ལྟར་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་གཅེན་གྱིས་སྤྱོད་བ་དང་། རྒྱལ་སྲས་
 གཞོན་པ་རྣམས་ཉེ་མི་དང་ཁྲིག་ཚེ་སོགས་སུ་རབ་བྱུང་མཛད་དགོས་པ་ཐག་བཅད། དེ་ལ་
 དུགས་སྡོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་བོ་³⁸ དང་བོད་རིགས་ཀྱི་ཚོ་བོ་ཨ་ཁུ་བཟུ་ཤེས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་དང་བཀའ་སྡོན་
 ཚང་མས་དང་ལེན་ལྷས། དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ཚོ་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ལ་དབང་
 བསྐྱར།”³⁹ ཞེས་གསལ་ཡོད། ཐག་གཅོད་དེ་ནི་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་པར་སྲས་གཅེན་
 གཅུང་བར་འཐབ་རྩོད་བྱུང་ཞིང་། སྤང་ནས་འཐབ་རྩོད་དེ་ལྟར་མི་འབྱུང་བྱིས། རྒྱལ་སྲིད་
 སྲས་བགེས་པས་སྤྱོད་བ་དང་། གཞོན་པ་རྣམས་རབ་བྱུང་མཛད་དགོས་པའི་སྡོན་སྲོལ་ཞིག་
 ལ་གལ་བོ་ཚར་ནན་ཏར་བྱས་པ་ཤེས་བྱུ། ཡིན་ནའང་འདིར་རྟོགས་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་ལ། ལ་
 དུགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ནང་བུ་ཤུན་པས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་སྤྱོད་ཞིང་གཞོན་པ་རྣམས་གྲུ་བ་མཛད་དགོས་
 ཀྱི་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་སྡོན་སྲོལ་ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་ལ། ཀུལ་ཤེས་རིག་འཛིན་ཚེན་པོས་མེ་ལ་བུད་ཤིང་གི་
 ཚུད་དུ་རྗེས་གཤོན་མཛད་པ་ཞིག་ལས་གསར་བཅོས་གནང་བ་ཞིག་མ་ལགས།

དེ་ཡང་ “ལ་དུགས་སྡོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་མཁར་སྟེ། དེ་ནི་ལ་དུགས་ལུལ་སྲོལ་བཞིན་བུ་ཤུན་
 པས་འཛིན་པ་ལས། གཞོན་པས་མི་ཐོབ་སྟེ། དོན་དེས་རྒྱལ་བ་ཚོ་བོ་མི་རབས་ཅི་རླེད་མང་དུ་
 བྱུང་བ་ཡང་། བུ་རྒྱུང་ཚོས་སྐོར་ལྷགས་གཤེས། ཐེམས་རྒྱུང་གཅིག་ལས་མ་འཕེལ་ལ། རེད་ཀྱི་
 མེས་ཉེ་མའི་སྐབས། མཁར་གྱི་ས་རིས་སྡོན་པོས་ཅི་བདེར་སྤྱོད་ཚོག་བ་བྱུང་གཤེས། སྡོན་
 བསོད་རང་གི་བུ་སྐྱེན་ཚོས་སྐོར་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མ་བརྟུག་ནས། མཁར་གྱི་ས་གཞིས་འཕོང་
 མེད་ (ཕངས་མེད་) དུ་བགོ་བཤའ་བྱས།”⁴⁰ ཞེས་པ་འདིས། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཉེར་དུག་
 པ་རྒྱལ་བོ་ཉེ་མ་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་སྡོན་ནས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སྤྱོད་དེ་བུ་ཤུན་པས་བྱེད་ཅིང་། གཞོན་
 རྣམས་གྲུ་བ་བྱེད་དགོས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལུགས་ཤིག་རྒྱུན་འཇགས་སུ་ཡོད་པ་དང་། ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་

37 ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་སྡོད་མན་རྒྱ་བའི་དགའ་སྡོན་ཤོག་གངས་ 34 ཐོག་གསལ།
 38 སྡོན་དུས་ལ་དུགས་སྡོད་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འོག་རྒྱ་བ་ཚོ་བོ་ལ་སྡོད་རྒྱལ་བོ་དང་། ལུལ་བོ་རྒྱལ་བོ་ལ་སྡོད་རྒྱལ་བོ་ཞེས་འབོད་
 སྲོལ་བྱུང་བ་དེ་ལ་བློར།
 39 མར་ལུལ་ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་སྡོན་རབས་ཀུན་གསལ་མེ་ལོང་ཤོག་གངས་ 322-323 བར་གསལ།
 40 Francke (1999: 225).

དབྱ་རྒྱལ་པོ་ནས་སྒོན་པོ་བར་གཅིག་མཚུངས་སུ་ཡོད་པར་གསལ་བ་འདི་དང་། མི་སེར་
 ཁྱོད་དུ་འང་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ཡི་ཕྱི་མ་གཞི་འཛིན་མཁན་དང་། གཞན་རྣམས་རབ་བྱུང་མཛད་
 དགོས་པ། པ་ཡིས་མནའ་མ་གཉིས་བསུས་ཚོ། མནའ་མ་ལྷ་མའི་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ཤོས་པ་ཡི་ཕྱི་མ་གཞི་
 འཛིན་མཁན་ཡིན་པའི་སྲོལ་ལུགས་གཉིས་སྒོ་ཀུན་ནས་འདྲ་ཞིང་། ལར་ལམ་སྲོལ་འདི་ཉིད་
 རྩོན་དུས་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱིས་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་ཡུན་རིང་གནང་ཡུལ་མངའ་ཁོངས་ཁོ་ནའི་
 མི་སེར་ཁྱོད་དར་བྱུང་ཚེ་པོ་ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་ལས། དེ་མིན་གྱི་ཉེ་འབྲེལ་ཡུལ་ཁག་གཞན་དུ་
 ལམ་ལུགས་འདི་ལྟར་མེད་པ་དེས། གོང་གསལ་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ནི་ངེས་པར་ལ་
 དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་ལམ་ལུགས་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་བྱུང་བར་ཐེ་ཚོམ་མི་
 དགོས་པ་ཞིག་གོ།

བདུན། རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ནང་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ལྟ་བུ་
 ཞིག་འཛིན་དགོས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན།

རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ནང་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་འཛིན་དགོས་པའི་ཐད། རྒྱུགས་གཅིག་ཁོ་
 བ་ནས་ལྷ་མི་ཅུང་ཞིང་དེ་ལའང་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་མང་པོ་ཞིག་རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་ཡོད་པར་
 འདོད། གནང་དོན་གཞན་ཞིག་གོང་བཙོད་ལྟར། ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཁྱོད་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་
 པར་གྲས་བཤེས་གཞན་བར་འཐབ་རྩོད་ཡོད་པ་ལྟར། མི་སེར་ཁྱོད་ཀྱང་རང་བྱིས་དོན་མའི་
 བྱིས་གཞི་འཛིན་པར་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་གཞན་བར་རྫོག་འཛིན་ཡོད་པ་དེ་ཤོད་མི་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་
 རེད། དེར་བརྟེན་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་འདས་པའི་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ནང་སྲིད་དབང་
 འཐབ་རྩོད་བྱུང་རིམ་ཁག་ལ་ཐག་གཅོད་ཅི་མཛད་ཀྱི་ཉམས་སྲུང་སྤྱད་ནས། རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་
 རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་སྲིད་པའི་ལམ་སྲོལ་ལྟར། འབངས་མི་སེར་གྱི་བྱིས་གཞི་
 རྩོད་རྒྱངས་ཀྱང་གཅིག་མཚུངས་ཤིག་ལག་བཟུར་བྱ་དགོས་ཀྱིས་པ་ནི་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་གཅིག་ཡིན་
 པར་འདོད། རྒྱ་མཚན་གཞན་ཞིག་ནི་ལ་དུགས་པ་ཚོ་རིང་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱིས་ “སྲོན་མ་ལ་
 དུགས་རྒྱལ་པོའི་དབང་ཡོད་དུས་ཡུལ་གྱི་དཔལ་འབྱོར་དང་བསྐྱེད་ཉེ་མི་གངས་ཉུང་ཅུར་
 འཛིན་པའི་སྲོལ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ནམ་སྟེ།”⁴¹ ཞེས་པ་ལྟར། ལྷོ་ལ་དུགས་དང་སྤྱི་ཉེ་སོགས་
 མི་འབོར་ལ་དབའགས་ན་ས་རྒྱ་ཉ་ཅང་རྒྱང་ཞིག་མིན་ནའང་། ས་ཞིང་འདེབས་ལས་
 དང་སྲོད་ཁང་། རྒྱ་ཡི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་སོགས་འཚོ་བའི་དགོས་མཁོ་ཡོངས་སུ་སྐྱབ་བྱུང་བའི་རང་

41 ཇམ་སྐུ་ཀུན་མེད་ཀྱི་བཟོ། 1994 ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་དབེ་དེབ་ཤོག་ ༤༩ ཐོག་གསལ།

བྱུང་གི་ས་བབ་ལུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པ་ཞིག་མེད་⁴² པ་དང། དེར་བརྟེན་རྒྱལ་དུས་སྐབས་ས་བབ་
 གྱི་ཐོན་ཁུངས་དང་བསྟན་མི་གངས་ཉུང་དུར་འཛོག་སྒྲོད། ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་
 ལག་བཟུར་བྱས་ཡོད་ཀྱང་སྲིད། དེའི་ཤེས་བྱེད་ཅིག་མཁས་དབང་བཟླ་ཤིས་རབ་རྒྱས་
 མཚོག་གིས་ “དེ་ཡི་རྒྱ་མཚན་ཆེ་ཤོས་ནི་ས་ཞིང་དུམ་བུར་ལུང་ནས་སུ་ལ་ཡང་ཡན་མི་
 ཐོགས་པ་ཞིག་འགྲུར་མ་བཅུག་པ་ཡིན།”⁴³ ཞེས་གསུངས་ཤིང། དེས་ལྷ་མོ་མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཞིང་
 ཐོན་སྐྱེད་དེ་འདད་དེས་ཞིག་མེད་པ་བསྟན་ཡོད། དེ་ལྟ་ན་མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེ་
 ལྟ་བུ་ཞིག་རྒྱལ་དུས་སྐབས་ཐག་གཅོད་མི་བྱེད་ཐབས་མེད་ཆགས་ལྟོབས། རྒྱལ་སློན་ནམས་
 གྱུས་ཡབ་མེས་གོང་མ་ཚོའི་སྐབས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་བྱ་ཆེ་བའི་སློང་ལུགས་ཡོད་པའི་སྤྱི་སོལ་
 ལྟར། མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ཐོབ་དབང་ལམ་ལུགས་ཀྱང་བྱ་ཆེ་བར་ཐོབ་པའི་ཁྲིམས་སོལ་ཞིག་
 ལག་བཟུར་བྱས་ཤིང། ཁྲིམས་སོལ་དེ་དག་ལུལ་ཁག་ཚང་མར་དྲང་བདེན་དང་སྤྱི་སྟོམས་
 ཤིག་ཡོད་སྟེ། ལུལ་ཁག་རེ་རེ་ནས་རྒྱ་པོ་རེ་བསྐོ་བཞག་བྱས་ཡོད་པ་ཡང་། “རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་
 རྣམས་ཀྱང་རང་སློ་གང་ཤར་གྱིས་མཛད་པ་ཡི་ནས་མི་གནང་ཞིང། སྤྱི་དག་སོགས་བཀའ་
 གྲོས་(བཞོས།) ལུལ་ལུལ་ནས། སློ་གྲོས་ལུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པ་རྒྱ་པོར་བཞག་ནས། ཞིང་ཁང་
 གི་བཀའ་ཤོག་སོགས་གནང་དགོས་རྣམས་ཀྱང་ལྷོ་དང་། རྩུགས་འཁྲུང་བའི་དབང་དུ་མ་
 བཏང་བར། སྤྱི་དག་རྒྱ་ལྟོས་ཀྱིས་ཤིན་ཏུ་བཞག་སྤྱི་དག་ལྟོས་ཀྱི་ཁུངས་རྒྱས་
 བཅད། བྱིས་སུ་བཅོད་བྱ་འབྲུང་རྒྱའི་ཚ་བ་ལུང་ནས།”⁴⁴ ཞེས་འབྲུང་བས་གཞུང་ལུགས་སོ། །

བརྒྱུད། རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སློང་དེ་ཐོན་སོལ་དང་འབྲེལ་བ།

འདིར་མ་སྐྱོང་ཐབས་མེད་ཅིག་ལ། རུབ་ཉི་ལྷ་ལ་ཡི་སྤྱི་ཉིའི་མི་སེར་གྱི་ས་ཁང་ལམ་ལུགས་
 དེ་ནི་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་སྲིད་དབང་འཛིན་སློང་ལམ་ལུགས་ལ་འབྲེལ་ཞིང། ལ་དུགས་
 རྒྱལ་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་སྲིད་དབང་འཛིན་སློང་ལམ་ལུགས་དེའང་། རྒྱ་མགོ་གངས་ཀྱི་དབེ་ལྟར་ཐོན་གྱི་
 ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཡབ་མེས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སློང་ལམ་ལུགས་ཤིག་ལ་འབྲེལ་⁴⁵ ཡོད་པར་

42 དེ་ཡི་རྒྱལ་ཞིག་ནི་ “རི་མང་པོ་དང་འཕྲང་འཕྲང་གཟར་པོ་ཐང་སྐམ་མང་བས། རྒྱ་འདྲན་བདེ་བའི་ས་གཞི་ཉུང་
 ཤས་ཤིག་ལ་མིན་པ་ས་ཞིང་དང་སྐོ་སྐོང་སོགས་འབད་ (འདེབས།) མི་ཐུབ། ལྷར་གྱི་མི་ཀུན་གྱིས་ལུར་གངས་རི་
 ཡོད་པའི་མདོ་ཀུན་ལ་ལུལ་བཅུགས་ཡོད། ” ཅེས་བྱི་ལོ་ 2003 ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་ཤོག་གངས་ 7 རྟོག་གསལ།
 43 ཇམ་སུ་ཀཤེ་མེར་གྱི་བཟོ། 1717 ལོའི་ལོ་འཁོར་གྱི་དབེ་དབེ་ཤོག་ 25 རྟོག་གསལ།
 44 ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་རབས། བོད་རྫོངས་མི་དམངས་དབེ་སྐྱོན་ཁང་གི་དཔར་མ་ཤོག་གངས་ 63 རྟོག་གསལ།
 45 ལ་དུགས་ཀྱི་མཁས་དབང་བཟླ་ཤིས་རབ་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་ “རྒྱལ་དུས་ལའང་སྲིད་བྱས། མི་ཚོ་སློང་སྟངས། ཚོང་དང་ས་
 ཞིང་འབད་སྟངས་སོགས་ཤེས་རིག་གང་པོའི་ནང་ལ་ཐོན་ལུགས་ཤིག་ཡོད་འདུག ” ཅེས་པ་འདིའང་གནད་དོན་

འདོད། དེ་ཡང་“ལ་དཀའ་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་བོད་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་གཏུང་རྒྱུད་ཡིན་པས། ལ་
 དཀའ་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བོད་ཀྱི་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཚོར་རྣམས་ཀྱང་མཛད་ཡོད་ཚོད།”⁴⁶ ཅེས་པ་
 ལྟར། དགོ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དེབ་དཀར་དུ་ “ཤོག་རྡིལ་ཀ་པའི་དབུ་ཤོག་རལ་བ་དེའི་ཐང་ན། རྩོད་
 བཅོམ་གྱི་གཏུང་བཅོམ་སྤང་དང་སྐྱ་མཚེད་མ་འཆམ་པའི་མཐར། བཅོམ་རྩོད་གཉལ་གྱི་
 ཡུལ་དུ་བཞུགས་སུ་བཅུག་ཅེས་བྲིས་འདུག་པས། གཏུང་བཅོམ་རྩོད་བྱ་བ་ཞིག་ཀྱང་འདུག་
 པ། དེ་དག་གི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱང་རྩོད་གཅད་པར་བྱའོ། །”⁴⁷ ཞེས་པ་འདིས་མེས་རྩོད་བཅོམ་ལ་
 གཏུང་བཅོམ་རྩོད་ཞེས་པ་ཞིག་ཡོད་པ་ཏུང་ཉོད་ཤོག་རྡིལ་དུ་གསལ་ཞིང་། གཅེན་གཏུང་
 གཉེས་མ་འཆམ་སྟབས། གཏུང་བཅོམ་རྩོད་གཉལ་གྱི་ཡུལ་དུ་བཞུགས་སུ་བཅུག་སྟེ། རྒྱལ་
 རྩོད་ལ་གཅེན་རྩོད་བཅོམ་གྱིས་མངའ་བསྐྱར་པ་ཤེས་ཐུབ། འདི་ནི་བོད་བཅོམ་པོའི་རྒྱལ་
 རབས་ནང་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་སྲས་བགེས་པས་འཛིན་དགོས་པའི་ལམ་ལུགས་ཡིག་ཆ་ཏུ་གསལ་བ་
 ཐོག་མ་དེའང་ཡིན་པར་སྟེ།

དེའི་རྗེས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་རྩོད་བཅོམ་ནམ་མཁུ་ན་ལེགས་ལ་སྲས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་གཅུག་བཅོམ་རལ་བ་ཅན་
 དང་། ལྷ་སྲས་གཙང་མ། དར་མ་འུ་དུམ་བཅོམ་བཅས་སྐྱ་མཚེད་སུམ་བྱང་ཞིང་། སྲས་དེ་
 གསུམ་བགེས་གཞོན་ཐང་ཡིག་ཆ་སོ་སོ་མི་མཐུན་ཡང་། བོད་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་རགས་རིམ་གཡུ་ཡི་
 སྲིད་བར། “སྐྱ་མཚེད་བགེས་གཞོན་གྱི་གོ་རིམ་ཐང་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གཉེས་པའི་ཡས་མས་
 སུ་བརྩམས་པའི་རྒྱ་བོད་ཚོས་འབྱུང་རྒྱས་པ་དང་། ཉིང་ཉི་མ་འོད་ཟེར་གྱིས་མཛད་པའི་
 ཚོས་འབྱུང་མེ་དྲོག་སྣེད་པོ། ལྷ་རྩོད་སྲས་ཀྱིས་མཛད་པའི་ཚོས་འབྱུང་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱལ་
 མཚན་རྣམས་གཅིག་མཐུན་དུ་གསལ་བའི་གོ་རིམ་ལྟར། ལྷ་སྲས་བགེས་པ་བཅོམ་པོ་རལ་བ་
 ཅན་དང་། འབྲིང་བ་གཙང་མ། རྒྱང་བ་འུ་དུམ་བཅོམ་བཅས་ཡིན་པ་གཞི་བཟུང་བ་
 དང་།”⁴⁸ ཞེས་པ་འདིས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་སྣ་སྲས་བགེས་པ་རལ་བ་ཅན་གྱིས་བསྐྱབས་ཤིང་། འབྲིང་
 བ་ལྷ་སྲས་གཙང་མ་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བ་ཤེས་ཐུབ་པ་མ་ཟད། བོད་བཅོམ་པོའི་གཏུང་རབས་
 ལྷང་། སྲས་བགེས་པས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་སྣོད་བ་དང་། རྒྱང་བ་རབ་བྱུང་མཛད་དགོས་ཀྱི་ལམ་སོལ་
 ཐོག་མ་དེའང་འདི་ནས་དབུ་རྒྱུགས་ཡོད་པར་འདོད། ཡིན་ནའང་། འུ་དུམ་བཅོམ་པོས་
 གཅེན་པོ་རལ་བ་ཅན་དགོངས་པ་དང་། རིང་མིན་བོད་སིལ་བུ་འཐོར་ཞིང་བོད་བཅོམ་པོས་
 གཏུང་རབས་ཀྱིས་སྤྱི་ལ་མངའ་དབང་བསྐྱར་བའི་དུས་སྐབས་དེ་རྗེས་པར་བརྟེན། ལམ་

དེའི་ཐང་གི་ཤེས་བྱེད་ཅིག་རེད་འདོད། ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༢༠༠༣ ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༡༥ ཐོག་གསལ། རམ་མུ་
 ཀུའམིར་གྱི་བཟོ།

46 རམ་མུ་ཀུའམིར་གྱི་བཟོ། ༢༠༠༣ ལོའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཚོམ་དེབ་དེབ་ཤོག་ ༡༩ ཐོག་གསལ།

47 དགོ་འདུན་ཚོས་འཕེལ་གྱི་གསུང་རྩོམ་བོད་གསུམ་པ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༢༧༤ ཐོག་གསལ།

48 བོད་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་རགས་རིམ་གཡུ་ཡི་སྲིད་བ་ཤོག་གངས་ ༩༤༩ - ༩༥༩ བར་གསལ།

སྲོལ་དེ་ཉིད་ཀྱང་དེ་མཁོ་མས་ཆད་དགོས་ཀྱིས་ཡོད། འོན་ཀྱང་ཕྱིས་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གདུང་
རབས་སྟོད་ནས་ཚུགས་སྐབས་སྐར་ཡང་ཡབ་མེས་དུས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་འཛིན་སྐྱོང་ལམ་ལུགས་
དེ་བཞིན་ལ་དུགས་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ནང་ལག་བསྟར་བྱས་ཡོད་པར་མངོན་ལོ།།

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Images



Fig. 1 — ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གྲོང་བཙན་སྐམ་པོ། མཚོ་ཕྱོག་པོ་བོད་ཡིག་ཟེན་བྲིས་ཀྱི་པར་རིས།



Fig. 2 — ལང་ཚན། ལང་བདག་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་གྲོང་ཚོའི་བསྐྱན་འཛིན་ལགས་ཡིན།



Fig. 3 — ཁང་ཆེན་གེ་ཁོང་ལ། ཁང་བདག་སྤྱི་ཉི་ཡུལ་གོང་ཚའི་བསྟན་འཛིན་ལགས་ཡིན།



Fig. 4 — ཁང་རྩུང་། ཁང་བདག་སྤྱི་ཉི་འོད་མེག་ཡུལ་གྱི་སྐྱོ་བདེ་ཆེན་ལགས་ཡིན།



Fig. 5 — སྤྱི་ཉི་མཁར་དངོན་གྱི་བཞུགས་གནས་བྱང་མཁར། ༡༠༠༠ ལོར་སྤྱི་ཉི་ལྷན་གསལ་སློབ་སྦྱང་གི་དགོ་ཆེན་བྱམས་བཟང་གིས་གནང་།
Lithograph by Louis Haghe published in 1841 based on a drawing made in situ by George Trebeck in 1822.



Fig. 6 — ལྷི་ཏི་ཏེ་ཤོང་ཚོའི་གྲུ་ཚོ་རིང་དོ་རྩེ་ཚང་གི་སྲེལ། ལྷི་ལོ་ ༡༩༩༧ ལོར་པར་བརྒྱབས།



Fig. 7 — ལྷི་ཏི་ཏེ་ཤོང་ཚོའི་བྱང་མེད་ཅིག་ ལྷི་ལོ་ ༡༩༧༠ ལོར་ལྷི་ཤོང་ཚོའི་སྐལ་བཟང་བཙུན་འགྲུས་ཀྱིས་གནང་།



Fig. 8 — ལྷི་ཏི་ཏེ་ཡུལ་གྱི་བྱང་མེད་གཞན་ཅུ་མ་གཉིས། ལྷི་ལོ་ ༡༩༧༠ ལོར་གསུམ་སྤིང་ཤོང་ཚོ་ཚོ་རིང་དབང་ལྷུག་ཚང་གི་པར་ཞིག་ལ་
བརྒྱུར་པར་བརྒྱབས།



Fig. 9 — ལ་དགས་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་འདྲ་རིས། ཕྱི་ལོ་ 1771 ལོའི་ཤེས་རིག་དང་རྒྱུ་སྤོབ་ལྗེ་ལས་བསྐྱུས།



Fig. 10 — ལྱི་ཏིའི་མཚམས་ལོག་ཏུ་རིང་ཚད་ཁྲི་གཉིས་ཙམ་ཡོད་པའི་དོ་ལོ་ནར་མོ་ཞེས་ཀྱི་ཐོག་སྟེ་ཆེན་དཔལ་མཁར་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་
ཆེན་པོ་ཚོ་དབང་ནམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་དབྱེད་སྤོབ་མཐོ་ཞིང་ཚབ་སྤྱིད་རྒྱས་ཅིག་ཅེས་སོགས་བྲིས་ཡོད། ཕྱི་ལོ་ 2007 ལོར་པར་བསྐྱུབས།

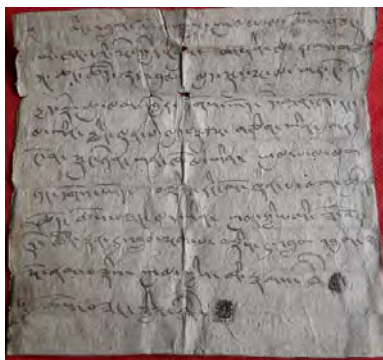


Fig. 11 — ཤེང་འབྲུག་ལོར་ལྱི་ཏིའི་ཏུ་གོང་ཚོའི་ཚོས་བཟང་གིས་སའི་རྩེད་ལྷ་བའི་ཡིག་ཆ། ཕྱི་ལོ་2003 ལོར་པར་བསྐྱུབས།

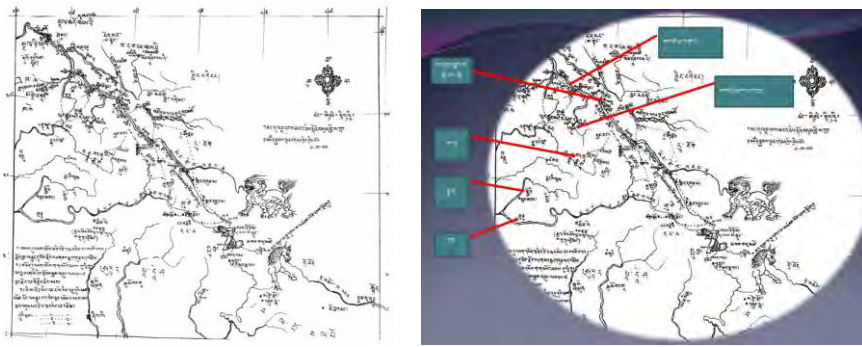


Fig. 12 — ལ་དྲགས་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཚོས་དབང་བརྒྱུན་ཡུལ་གྱི་ས་གནས་ལག་ཅིག་གསལ་བའི་སྟེ། ལ་དྲགས་རྒྱལ་རབས་འཛེ་མེད་གཏེར་ལས་བཤུས།



Fig. 13 — ལྷི་ཏི་རང་རིག་གྲོང་ཚོ་མདུན་གྱི་ཁང་ཆེན་དག་གི་ཞིང་ས། ལྷི་ལོ་ ༡༠༧༠ ལོར་པར་བརྒྱབས།




Fig. 14 — ལྷི་ཏི་རི་གྱི་གྲོང་ཚོའི་ཚུན་ཁང་གཉིས། ལྷི་ལོ་ ༡༠༧༠ ལོར་པར་བརྒྱབས།

Measure for Measure: Researching and Documenting Early Buddhist Architecture in Spiti

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Introduction

 The architectural research presented in this article offers insights for other scientific disciplines such as Art History and Buddhist Studies. Since literary descriptions and visual documentation are often rare, the buildings themselves remain the most reliable sources of information. Edifices dating to the early stage of Buddhist architecture are, however, increasingly exposed to alterations, or, in the worst case, are under threat from factors such as tourism, social changes, improper restoration work, natural disasters, and climate change. Due to these pressing forces, the architectural study of sacred buildings must take place in situ during extensive fieldwork. Once in the field, it is crucial to collect sufficient empirical data about different types of buildings. Developing a typology of Buddhist monuments requires taking into account the greatest number of examples, using the most accurate measuring methods and techniques. Ultimately, an exhaustive documentation allows an analysis of these edifices as well as their evolution over time.

For the last 15 years, Holger Neuwirth has conducted several research projects on the Buddhist Architecture of the Western Himalayas with different teams from the Graz University of Technology, thanks to the financial support of the Austrian Science Fund. These projects focused on edifices belonging to the Kingdom of Purang-Guge, which once extended over much of West Tibet, Ladakh, and parts of today's Himachal Pradesh, between the tenth and seventeenth centuries. The number of buildings that have so far been documented exceeds fifty-seven at eighteen different locations. The documentation collected includes detailed photographs,

sketches, architectural drawings, as well as 3D digital models.¹

A successful field research presupposes the three following stages. The first stage consists in recording the various buildings in their entirety by means of sketches and drawings, which will be essential for later measurements. Geographical and topographical particularities, such as landscape and village structures, are an essential part of the survey. Measurement is the second step. Using a laser tachymeter allows to secure a high level of precision in the digital measurements of distances; particularly in very rugged terrains and spacious areas. Measures taken by hand make it possible to complement the former; especially for the measurements of architectural details and areas out of reach. The third stage aims to take stock of the interior spaces of these buildings. It consists in detailing and locating the geometry of the sculptures, wall paintings, and inscriptions within the architectural context. A large number of photographs completes this last stage.

The collected data are put together and processed to generate the detailed plans of the site, floors, ceilings, sections, and elevations. Two-dimensional plans are retained for further analysis and spatial representations. In turn, it makes it possible to evaluate the stability of the building, and to identify potential tensile forces and deformation. This aspect is crucial in order to develop custom-made methods and solutions in view of maintenance and restoration work.

Finally, a holistic documentation is achieved by combining the plans with scaled representations of artistic features located inside and outside the edifice. This final assembly is important as Buddhist artwork is often the only means we can use to date these buildings and reflect upon their historical context.

What building technologies were employed? What construction materials were used? Answering these questions is crucial for assessing the state of any historical monument. The architectural style found in the Western Himalayas is determined by climatic conditions and locally available materials; essentially stone, rammed earth, mud bricks, and wood. All bearing walls are built solidly using stones, rammed earth or mud bricks. The wall plaster is made of different layers of clay and mortar made of clay and straw. Wood is used mostly for beams, pillars, corbels, capitals, as well as for framework, and flooring. In view of the climate, roofs are flat and a

¹ <http://www.archresearch.tugraz.at>

thick layer of clay protects them against occasional showers. Since there is no need for slanted roofs, the construction pattern of these buildings was based on simple cubic shapes. It was thus easy to transfer these shapes into the geometry of sacred architecture, a process inspired by the philosophy of Tibetan Buddhism.²

In Spiti, we documented significant and unique buildings, *i.e.* the temple complex of Tabo, the ancient monastery of Dangkhar, and the temple of Lhalung. They are characteristics of architectural concepts initiated in the Kingdom of Guge, which were developed and implemented in the Western Himalayas over several centuries.

Geographically, the villages of Tabo, Dangkhar, and Lhalung are quite close to each other. The linear distance from Tabo to Dangkhar is merely 16 kilometres, while it is about 6.6 kilometres from Dangkhar to Lhalung. Nevertheless, the three sites display quite diverse architectural concepts, both in terms of size and topographical setting, and belonged to different periods.

The Temple Complex of Tabo

The village of Tabo is located on the northern bank of the Spiti River. The area lies in a wide plain partly cultivated, and flanked by mountain ranges. The extensive temple complex is situated in the south-west of the village. To this day, the monastic complex comprises nine chapels and several stupas built between the tenth and the nineteenth century as part of the sacred compound. They are surrounded by a high enclosing wall determining an almost rectangular area of about 6700 square meters. Tabo is the oldest Buddhist monastery in India still in use. Established during the later diffusion of Buddhism, the Main temple at Tabo, which was founded in 996 and renovated in 1042, is uniquely the most prestigious monument still preserved in the western Himalaya.³

Due to geo political circumstances, the Spiti Valley became part of British India after 1846. As a result, Western travellers and British civil servants managed to travel to Spiti and collected the first descriptions of its landscape, its people and its cultural heritage as early as the second half of the nineteenth century. In the course of that traveling activities, Tabo was one of the first monastery in the

² See Neuwirth and Auer 2015: 9-13, 125-147.

³ See Klimburg-Salter 1997: 45-63.

Western Himalayas to catch the attention of extensive scholarly research. In the 19th century Tabo had already been visited and its artwork described by both Hutton and Jacquemont.⁴ The latter also produced drawings of some of the clay statues. August Hermann Franke visited Tabo in 1909. His contribution included sketches of the architectural arrangement.⁵ The photographs taken by Eugenio Ghersi, who accompanied Giuseppe Tucci in 1933 and 1935, show the whole compound as well as single buildings.⁶ Romi Khosla was the first to publish detailed plans corresponding to the state of site in the 1970s.⁷ Fortunately for us, Laxman S. Thakur documented the temple complex in 1988, before the 1991 restoration. This restoration was executed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and altered the outer walls of most temples.⁸ In recent years, it has become possible again for international scientific teams to conduct research in that area. In 1997, Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter published a study of the Main Temple at Tabo that discusses the artistic significance as the result of a trans-Himalayan cultural meeting between the rulers of West Tibet and Indian Buddhism.⁹ All these publications help understanding the monastic complex and the changes some of the edifices underwent. In this respect, early documentation is particularly helpful for replicating the structural changes that affected the monastic complex over the last century.

However, previous architectural drawings were basically schematic in nature, giving the impression that the buildings possess clear orthogonal shapes. To get a more detailed documentation of the site, our fieldwork at Tabo was completed within seven weeks from April 28 to June 21, 2002.¹⁰ It covered all temples and twenty-three stupas within the monastery, as well as the cave temples located on the mountain slope to the north of the site. Due to the progress made in metrology, it was possible to obtain digitalized results by means of a laser tachymeter. We collected approximately 40,000 digital points, which we supplemented by manual measurements, and additional

⁴ See Hutton 1840: 494 and Jacquemont 1841, 2: 346-50.

⁵ See Franke 1914: 37-42 and Fig. 2 on page 39.

⁶ See Tucci 1988: 21-115. Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale "G. Tucci", Roma.

⁷ See Khosla, 1979: 37-48.

⁸ See Thakur 2001.

⁹ See Klimburg-Salter 1997..

¹⁰ Researchers involved were Holger Neuwirth, Marianne Pecnik, and Anton Reithofer.

2,000 colour slides.

In the following years, we evaluated the collected data during ongoing projects that were funded by the Austrian Science Fund. The field research provided us with a set of architectural plans of all temples, including ground plans, longitudinal and cross sections, elevations, wall projections, and ceiling plans. Based on this material we generated three-dimensional models of all buildings alongside photomontages of the murals and painted ceilings.¹¹ We were able to present the results of our work to the Venerable Geshe Sonam Wangdue, the then abbot of the monastery, in 2010. During the interim years, more visits to Tabo allowed us to witness the development of the site. In a short period of time, the construction of new buildings and restoration work had considerably changed the face of its architectural layout.

When comparing our general plan of Tabo with earlier site maps, it becomes strikingly apparent how much the buildings deviate from a hypothetical grid determined by the enclosing wall of the compound, which turned out to be more of a parallelogram than a rectangle (Fig. 1).

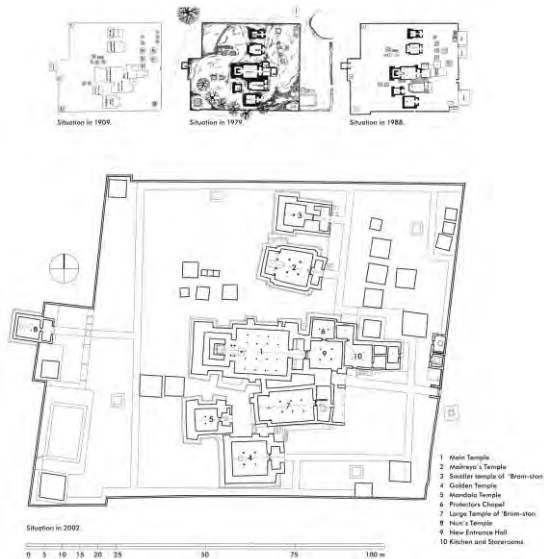


Fig. 1 — Site plan of Tabo's monastic complex. TU Graz 2010.

¹¹ Unfortunately, we were not able to obtain full permission for taking photographs of all of the paintings.

Regarding the orientation of each temple, the site plan shows that their alignment is not parallel as their longitudinal axis differs from one another.

The Main Temple (#1) located in the centre of the complex is the earliest building. The main axis and the original entrance are almost precisely oriented east-west. They deviate southward by 3° only. The central axis of the Maitreya Temple (#2) deviates considerably from the orientation of the Main Temple by 7° to the south, as does the axis of the White Temple (#8). The axis of the Small 'Brom-ston Temple (#3) deviates a mere 5° from the orientation of the Main Temple. The axis of the Golden Temple (#4) and the Mandala Temple (#5) diverge by 6° to the north. Finally, the Large 'Brom-ston Temple shows a deviation of 8° to the north. The reasons for these deviations have yet to be explained. It is important to report these observations as the alignment of religious edifices in the Buddhist Himalayas are often strictly regulated. The orientation of the buildings within a particular site, especially for those containing mandalic representations, follow prescriptions, which play a vital role during the foundation ceremony of sacred buildings.¹² This is all the more important as the Main Temple at Tabo was never meant to be a three-dimensional representation of a mandala before its renovation in 1042. Thus, the initial orientation of the sacred compound and the Main Temple could have followed a general Buddhist conception, rather than being dictated by a specific praxis (*i.e.* Sarvavid Vairocana mandala).

Plans enable us to represent the significant aspects of monuments, such as their spatial organisation, size, and construction phases. For example, what does the ground plan of the central edifice tell us? It shows that the Main Temple (#1) used to be isolated, whereas nowadays it is connected with the Protector's Chapel (#6), the New Entrance Hall (#9), the ad-joining rooms in the east (#10), and with the Large 'Brom-ston Temple (#7) in the south. Apart from the room layout, plans also reveal how much the thickness of the walls differs from one another. The walls of the oldest parts of the building, for instance, are 115 centimetres thick, while later structures, like the walls of the Protector's Chapel and the Large 'Brom-ston, range from 50 to 80 centimetres. Likewise, the renovation work conducted by the ASI in 1991 consisted in reinforcing parts of the outer walls like, for

¹² See Gyatsho and Jackson (trs.) 1979, specifically, the chapters on 'establishing temples' and 'construction festivals' pp. 29-53.

example, that of the corners of the western wall of the Main Temple. Furthermore, the longitudinal and cross section views of the Main Temple show the complexity of the rooms with their different heights, ranging from 4.40 metres to 5.10 metres. The sections also depict how the different sectors of the Main Temple are top-lit through lanterns in the ceilings. The Main Temple is a one storey-edifice. The rooms that were added to the east later on developed in two levels instead: the Protector's Chapel (#6), the New Entrance Hall (#9), and the ad-joining rooms in the East (#10), with heights between 2.10 and 2.40 meters. Briefly summarized, plans constitute an essential and effective documentation to understand the construction phases, enlargements, and alterations underwent by religious edifices.

Another important issue in the context of the religious architecture of Spiti is the integration of murals into the architectural documentation. Thanks to scaled reproductions of the wall paintings, it is easier to assign iconographic details and to study them within their context without having to travel to the site. In Tabo, we were able to generate scaled reproductions for the murals of the Mandala Temple,¹³ the Small 'Brom-ston Temple, the New Entrance Hall, and for the Golden Temple (Fig. 2). The visual reconstruction of decorative wall paintings is an essential prerequisite for future restoration work, particularly in view of a comprehensive damage assessment of the interior walls. Similarly, and following the same method, we also generated scaled reproductions of the ceilings for three of the buildings; namely, the Mandala Temple, the Golden Temple, and the Large 'Brom-ston Temple (Fig. 3).

Based on two-dimensional plans we were able to generate 3D models that further our understanding of these edifices. For example, views of spatial elevations and sections clearly show the different configurations and proportions of the buildings. Returning to the Main Temple, internal views of a 3D model make it possible for specialists and amateurs alike to appreciate the complexity of the layout and the volume of the rooms of this edifice (Fig. 4).

¹³ For a discussion and review of these murals; see Heller 2017 in the present volume.



Fig. 2 — Scaled photomontages of the wall paintings on the Western side of the Mandala Temple, the New Entrance Hall, the Golden Temple, and the Smaller Temple of 'Brom-ston (clockwise). TU Graz 2010.



Fig. 3 — Scaled photomontages of the painted ceilings in the Mandala Temple, the Golden Temple and the Large Temple of 'Brom-ston (clockwise). TU Graz 2010.

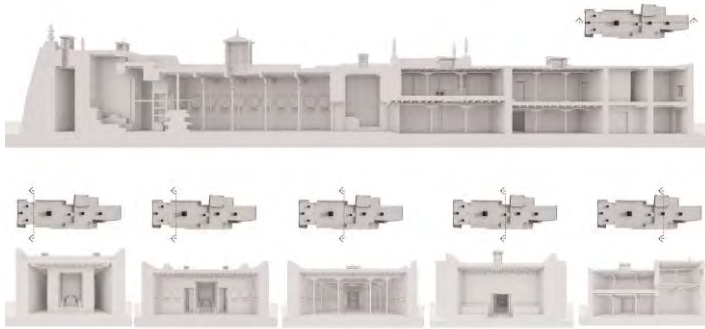


Fig. 4 — Longitudinal and cross sections of Tabo's Main Temple, the New Entrance Hall, and the store rooms next to it. TU Graz 2010.

Spatial models like those generated for the buildings at Tabo improve scientific exchange with fellow researchers who may not be able to visit the original site.

Eventually, 3D representations of the monastic compound at Tabo put the finishing touches to a holistic understanding of the site (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 — Spatial model of Tabo's monastic complex in the 1930s and in its state in 2002, seen from the North-West. TU Graz 2010.

They illustrate how the various buildings interact and relate within the space. Judging from Gherisi's 1933 photographs, it is plainly visible that the surroundings of the monastery have changed dramatically. But thanks to digital visualisation of architectural heritage, it is possible to remove modern features from spatial representations; or, as in this case, to ignore the changes caused by the ASI restoration work.

The Golden Temple of Lhalung

The village of Lhalung is located in the side valley of Lingti, about 14 kilometres off the main road that runs along the banks of the Spiti River. Lhalung used to be a small monastery with monks quarters, located in the south of the village on the crest of a hill. It was also a branch monastery of Dangkhar (*i.e.* Lag sgo dpe Monastery). The only remaining buildings of the original ensemble are the Golden Temple, also known as Serkhang, and the so-called Vairocana chapel or White Temple (*lha khang dkar po*). The complex also included a number of residential buildings, which are now partly in ruins. The whole monastic complex had a size of about 2600 square metres.

The original Serkhang had only one room with a small annex, and an ambulatory corridor running around it. The Serkhang ranks among the earliest buildings from "the time of the religious and artistic activities inspired by Rin-chen bzang-po".¹⁴ According to the founding inscription recorded inside the temple, and based on stylistic criteria, the Serkhang has been dated to the 11th-12th century.¹⁵

Our team conducted a first architectural survey of the Serkhang and the Vairocana chapel in 2002. The documentation was complemented by a 3D laser scanning (LiDAR) of the Serkhang's interior in 2011.¹⁶ All in all, the documentation includes a site map, ground plans, and sections of both the Serkhang and the Vairocana chapel, as well as scaled reproductions of the elaborate artistic interior of the Serkhang, comprising of murals, statues, painted ceiling, and clay sculptures on the walls (Fig. 6). The ground plan makes it possible to trace the development of the edifice over the last

¹⁴ See Snellgrove and Skorupski 1980: 41.

¹⁵ See Luczanits 2004: 89-106 and Tropper 2008.

¹⁶ See animation of the 3D laser scanning at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXvF9H895O8>

centuries. Previous studies were conducted by Shuttleworth and Khosla.¹⁷ Shuttleworth's 1924 sketch shows the main shrine of the Serkhang, a narrow storeroom, and the room of the so-called New Temple room in the left front corner, next to a veranda.¹⁸ The ambulatory runs around these three rooms from the north-western corner to the south-western corner. Khosla's 1969 ground plan, however, shows that a spacious entrance hall was added in front of the main room in place of the veranda. Judging from the 2002 documentation, it becomes apparent that the entrance hall was enlarged and a small corridor was built into the hall after 1969.

The ground plan (Fig. 6) shows that the main axis of the temple is orientated east-west with the entrance facing west. At Present the temple consists of four rooms, with a new veranda built on the western side. Although the old ambulatory still exists, only fragments of its impressing murals can be admired today. A small room on the north-western corner was obviously used as a stable. The Serkhang was originally flat-roofed, yet, between 2008 and 2010, the old roof was covered with a sloping corrugated roofing.

The main room of the Serkhang is slightly trapeze in shape. The western wall is 5.0 metres wide, the northern wall is 5.6 metres, the eastern wall with the altar is 5.5 metres wide, and the southern wall is 5.6 metres. The ceiling is 4.6 metres high. A column in the centre of the room was not part of the original layout. It was added later in order to support the ceiling. Based on our plan and detailed pictures, we generated a complete and scaled overview of the panelled ceiling (Fig. 6). The wooden blanks and crossed beams divide the ceiling into 36 squares. All these panels show multi-coloured geometrical designs with foliage. The beams are painted green and red, with some floral elements. Each of the 20 consoles displays a slightly different design, with multi-coloured stripes underneath.

The artistic programme of the Serkhang is well preserved. Rich groups of sculptures cover three of the interior walls. Two gatekeepers flank the entrance on the western wall. The surrounding walls are covered with murals. Due to the lack of natural lighting and space in this room, it was initially impossible to satisfactorily document the artwork in its entirety with regular cameras. The 3D

¹⁷ See Shuttleworth 1929: 1-7 and Khosla 1979: 48-53.

¹⁸ On Shuttleworth's description of his visit to the Serkhang in 1924; see Laurent 2017 in the present volume.

scan (LiDAR), however, enabled us to create a scaled drawing of the room, thereby reproducing the complete artistic decoration (Fig. 6).¹⁹

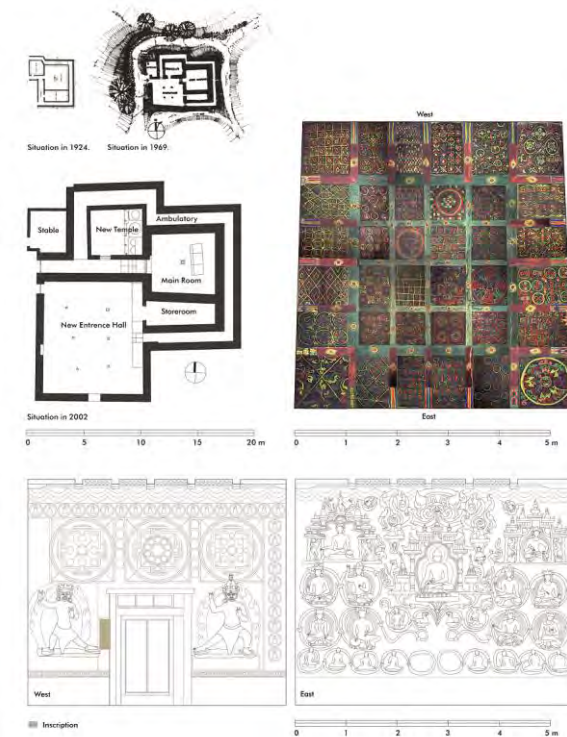


Fig. 6 — Ground plan, photomontage of the ceiling, and scaled drawings of the Western and Eastern wall in the main room of Lhalung's Serkhang. TU Graz 2013.

The Ancient Monastery of Dangkhar

Dangkhar is situated to the east of the Spiti River between Tabo and Kaza. This ancient monastery is a multi-storey building, standing on a 300-metre high spur, overlooking the confluence of the Spiti River and the Pin River. The religious buildings around the ancient monastery includes a gateway stupa at the foot of the cliff, the monastery building on the western side of the old village, the tower above the monasteries roof, and the Upper Temple on the terrace above. The whole area has a size of about 680 square metres.

¹⁹ See Neuwirth and Auer 2013: 294-297.

Nineteenth-century drawings, lithographs, watercolour, and photographs show how the whole site has dramatically changed over the last two hundred years due to seismic activity and erosion.²⁰ In 2009, art historian and Tibetologist Christian Luczanits invited our team of architects from the Graz University of Technology to come up with a proposal. The project officially started in 2010 after Markus Weisskopf, a Swiss entrepreneur and philanthropist from Basel, had secured funding. Drawing from experience and techniques developed for other sites, the main objective was to produce a comprehensive documentation of the monastery for future restoration.

After a relatively short but intensive planning phase, a first fieldwork took place in the summer 2010.²¹ Between July 17 and August 2, we used a laser tachymeter to gather the digital measurements of the whole complex. Due to the dramatically topography of the site this was a possibility to secure a high precision of the measurements for the different levels and distances. Again, we completed these digital data with manual measurements, in particular for small-scale indoor structures. At the same time, we established a list of damage for each room in order to create a precise catalogue for future repair intervention. Back in Graz, we evaluated the collected data. The second fieldwork took place in the following year from June 21 to July 31. It involved different teams of experts in the field of geology, archaeology and Tibetology, painting restoration, and architecture.²² The results of this interdisciplinary work were published in an edited volume in 2013.²³

The main building consists of various rooms whose structure has changed over time. A tower situated above the roof of the main building possesses a staircase leading upwards thereby granting access to the Upper Temple at the terrace above the monastery. An access road made of concrete has been laid out to reach the temple from the north in recent times.

²⁰ See Photographs by Francis Frith and Samuel Bourne, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

²¹ The participating scientists of the first field research were Dieter Bauer, Yannick Laurent, Holger Neuwirth, and the present author.

²² The participating scientists of the second fieldwork were Maria Gruber, Scott Kieffer, Yannick Laurent, Holger Neuwirth, Kathrin Schmidt, Christoph Steinbauer, Jitender Yadav, and the author.

²³ Neuwirth and Auer 2013.

The documentation includes all necessary ground plans, sections, and elevations as well as spatial models of the complex room structures. Additionally to the site plan, we also generated a map of the settlement (Fig. 7). The ground plans and sections show how strongly the surrounding topography determines the architecture of the buildings (Fig. 8). The main building consists of a cluster of 31 rooms on four different levels, including an inner courtyard on the upper floor. The assembly hall is located on the first floor, at the rear of the building. Three chapels are located in the southeast of the building. We find another sacred room on the north of the third floor while the so-called meditation cave lying in the northwest of the third floor.

The complexity of the building led us to consider different construction phases along with different planning methods. The plans eventually prove that the main building was built in different phases (Fig. 9).

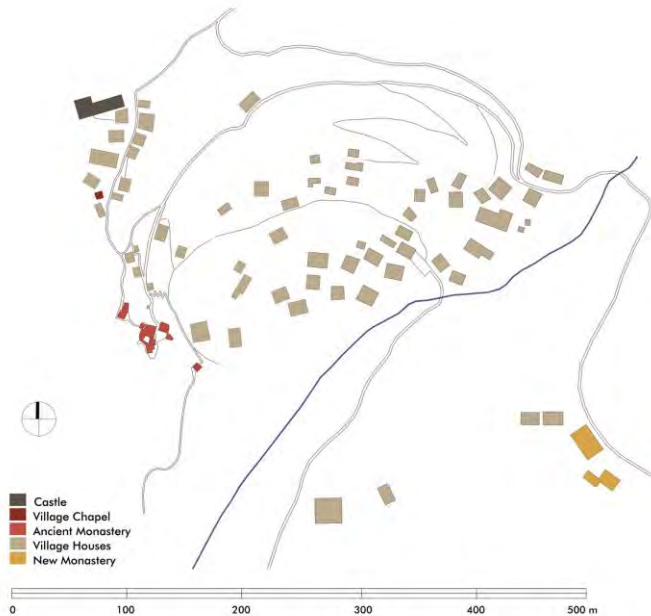


Fig. 7 — Map of Dangkhar village. TU Graz 2013.

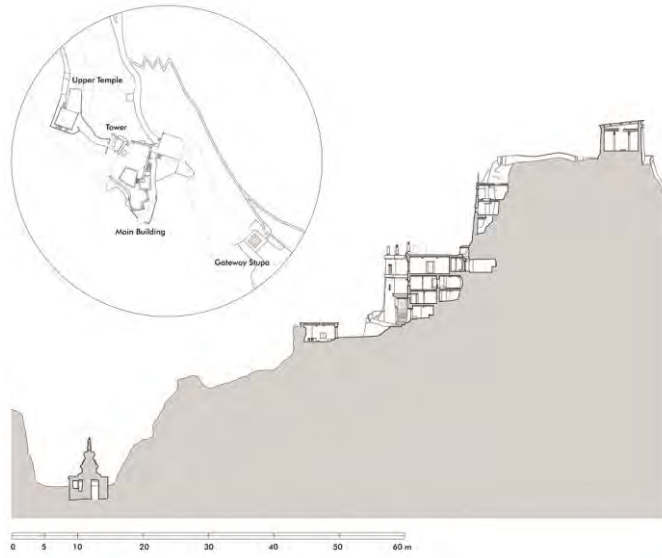


Fig. 8 — Site plan and cross section of Dangkhar's ancient monastery. TU Graz 2013.



Fig. 9 — Building phases of Dangkhar's main building. TU Graz 2013.

On the basis of these plans, we can observe that the entire complex consists of three buildings that were originally separated. In the centre, we find a single-storey assembly hall, with its typical skylight, plus a group of stupas leaning against the rock on top the roof. This configuration was maintained and incorporated in later phases up until today. The fact that the building was not erected all at once is also responsible for the several structural problems with respect to stability. Largely ignoring load transfer, the addition of rooms and storeys created extra weight, presumably in the absence of technical know-how (Fig. 10). These observations, combined with a detailed analysis of all damage, are fundamental for an effective and encompassing restoration work.

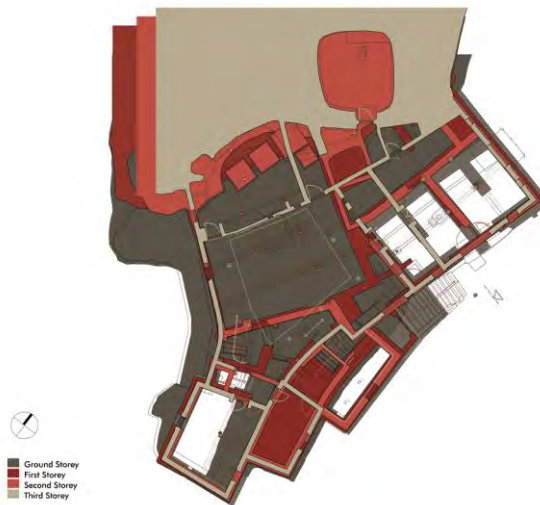


Fig. 10 — The four storeys of Dangkhar's main building, illustrating the statically problems. TU Graz 2013.

Views of 3D models make it a lot easier to understand the complexity of the building. In particular, the numerous spatial sections give us a deeper insight into the structures (Fig. 11).

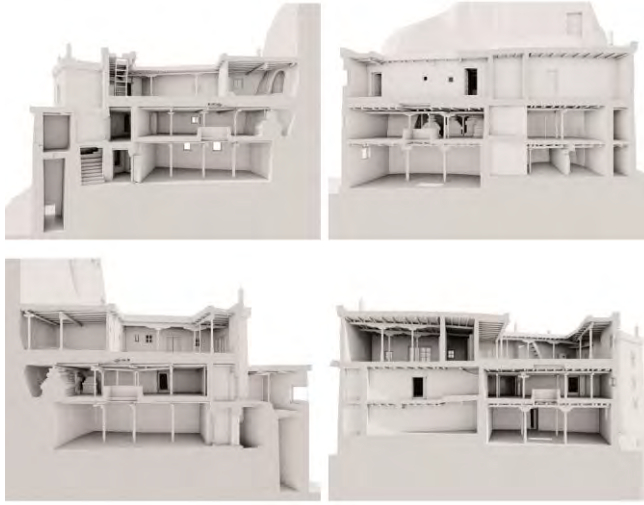


Fig. 11 — Spatial sections of Dangkhar's main building. TU Graz 2013.

These models also allow us to create a digital animation that illustrates the different construction phases over the centuries. In order to complete the documentation, we again compiled scaled representations of the interior wall paintings by using photomontages and drawings (Fig. 12).

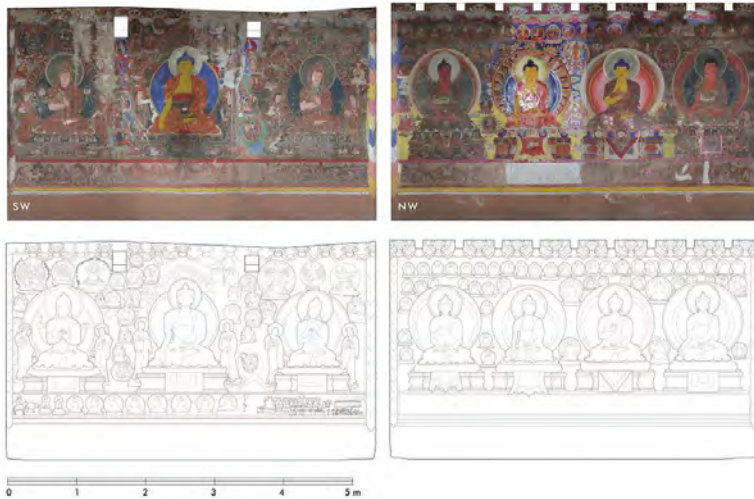


Fig. 12 — Scaled photomontages and drawings of the wall paintings in Dangkhar's Upper Temple. TU Graz 2013.

This proved effective in terms of both iconographic research and painting restoration. In terms of iconographic research, scaled reproductions and outlines of the murals allowed fellow researcher Yannick Laurent to precisely assign the iconographic programme of the Upper Temple, and to locate the construction of this edifice within the religious and historical context of Spiti in the eighteenth century.²⁴ For conservators Kathrin Schmidt and Maria Gruber from the Vienna University of Applied Arts, these montages were a prerequisite for their analyses and preparation work in view of a possible renovation.²⁵

It is crucial and fruitful to co-operate in an interdisciplinary way, when it comes to restorations. The report by the Institute of Applied Geosciences at Graz University defines the actions necessary concerning the foundation and soil conditions, which are both in a critical state. With their special geological equipment, Scott Kiefer and his team documented not only the surrounding topography, but also the current state of the facades and of some rooms. This information enriches our analyses of deformations and displacements.²⁶

Conclusion

The study a religious sites and buildings rests on a comprehensive topographical and architectural documentation. A temple or monastery is not a complete unit itself. It is part of a conception of religious space demarked by votive structures. Therefore, it is important how the sacred buildings are integrated in the natural environment and in the village structures. In this respect it is also necessary following the historical development of the sites in form of historical-layer-plans since the surrounding and the buildings may have changed considerably over time.

An extensive architectural documentation is the first step to addressing open questions like the choice of the site, the orientation, the typology, the proportional principles and last but not least the

²⁴ See Laurent 2014.

²⁵ See Neuwirth and Auer 2013: 247-271.

²⁶ Animations based on the 3D laser scanning of Dangkhar village and monastery at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54wMOWWRVAI>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhsIOkLQLI> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIUcsjaBnmM>.

chronology. A further aspect concerns the question of whether there is any proportional concordance between the architecture of a temple and its decoration, in particular the dimensions of the images, and the spatial division of the paintings (showing a general or special Buddhist conception of space?).

Based on solid data, the architectural documentation allows the planning of consolidation or restoration work. Therefore, we have to focus on examining the present condition of the respective buildings. Based on the assessment, various methods of historic preservation can be discussed which also have to take into account regional, social, and cultural circumstances.

The architectural documentation about the temple complex of Tabo, the ancient monastery of Dangkhar, and the temple of Lhalung display quite diverse architectural concepts regarding form, size, orientation and artistic equipment. The used material and construction technique are more or less the same, they just differs regarding their quality of execution and workmanship, and therefore reflects the economic potentials and (changing) religious importance of the buildings/sites.

The setting of Tabo, which lies on a plain and open terrace, is not determinate by the topography. So here it was easy to extend the compound with further free standing buildings around to the Main Temple through the centuries, which show the typical cubic shape and room organisation on ground level due to their function (as assembly halls or chapels). The main axis of the earliest temple is orientated east-west with the entrance facing east.

The site of Lhalung lies on a slope and is therefore more determinate by its topography. The original Serkhang that consists of only one room with a small annex, and an ambulatory corridor running around it, had been enlarged through three rooms, which were directly attached to the original structure. The main axis of the temple is also orientated east-west, but the entrance facing west, towards the river valley.

Finally the setting of Dangkhar demonstrates how strongly the building concept can be dominated by the topography and the conception of space between the old settlement and the sacred buildings. The originally complex consists of three buildings that were separated with a single-storey assembly hall in the centre. The only possibility to get more space on this narrow spur was, to close every gap and build on top of each other. Today the building consists

of a cluster of 31 rooms on four different levels, including an inner courtyard on the upper floor. The assembly hall is now located on the first floor, at the rear of the building. The entrance of the multi-storied building and also of the former free standing assembly hall facing southeast towards the open valley, while the entrance of the Upper Temple above the monasteries building facing northeast towards the old village.

There are still a lot of open questions. Due to the imminent threat to these monuments, the architectural research has to continue with the fieldwork and the analysis. The elaborated material will allow the analysis of various aspects of the buildings, and hopefully will show how different kinds of building types have evolved in that region.

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The *Maṅḍala* Temple of Tabo: A Reassessment of the Chronology based on Tibetan Historic Inscriptions and the Iconography of the Mural Paintings

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n 2010, the late Venerable Geshe Sonam Wangdu, Abbot of Tabo and Venerable Lama Zangpo, Head Administrator of Tabo, requested my help to document the present state of the mural paintings and statues of the entire monastic complex in view of long-term conservation. Accompanied by Luigi Fieni, painting conservator and professional photographer, duly authorized by the Archaeological Survey of India, we attempted to fulfil their request. This documentation was intended to shed light on the continuous deterioration of the unique mural paintings and clay sculptures due to water damage and seismic tremors. As of 1997, the main sanctuaries were meticulously photographed and studied thanks to the multidisciplinary publication of *Tabo a Lamp for the Kingdom* by Deborah Klimburg-Salter, with contributions by Christian Luczanits, Luciano Petech, Ernst Steinkellner and Erna Wandl.¹ However, the monks were aware of subsequent deterioration needing architectural and painting conservation. Also, among the temples of Tabo, very few photographs of the paintings and none of the historic inscriptions of the *Maṅḍala* Temple (*dkyil khang*, *dkyil 'khor lha khang*) had previously been published. Although the murals are indeed damaged, technological advances in photography yielded good results. In the hope of contributing towards a better understanding of the history and successive iconographic programs at Tabo, particularly in the *dkyil khang*, this study will present photographic data of murals and inscriptions as well as observations on the iconographic analysis of the mandalas by considering their iconography within the historic context of murals in Guge Puhrang and Ladakh. This gives a more nuanced chronological framework for

¹ Klimburg-Salter, D.E. 1997. *Tabo a Lamp for the Kingdom*. Milano: Skira Editore.

the *dkyil khang* and its murals.

It is salient to review the most significant previous research on the *dkyil khang* in historic progression in order to situate our hypothesis of the foundation and iconographic program of the *dkyil khang*. In 1909, Francke succinctly stated, "The *dkyil khang* is a picture hall behind the preceding (i.e. the *gser khang*). As the roof is not watertight, the pictures have suffered much through leakage. The principal picture shows Rnam par snang mdzad, but I could discover no inscriptions in it".² Genuine historical documentation began in 1933 when Tucci discovered a few historic inscriptions which he first published in 1935 in *Indo-Tibetica*.³ Like Francke, he started his brief description by deploring the state of conservation, "The *dkyil khang* is one of the smallest chapels, one of the remotest and worst preserved. The paintings which cover it are not very ancient, maybe they belong to the XVIIth century, when, probably by the work of the kings of Ladakh, the whole of the monastery of Tabo was rebuilt or modernized". He further discussed the initiation function of the *maṇḍalas* in the *dkyil khang*, a function complementary to the assembly hall. Inside the temple Tucci identified a group of three portraits of monks as members of the Guge royal family: *pho brang gtsug pa byang chu 'od*, *bla ma zhi ba 'od*, and *lha ma yi shes 'od*, i.e. Byang chub 'od, responsible for the renovation of Tabo 1041-2, his younger brother the illustrious translator Zhi ba 'od, and their uncle, the scion of the Guge dynasty, the sovereign Ye shes 'od.⁴ Tucci discussed a painting representing buildings where he recorded the few historic inscriptions he could read, notably on the north wall, *tho gling gser khang gi dkod pa* (bkod pa), "plan of the Gser khang of Tholing" and *ta bo rgyan gtsug lag khang gi dkod pa*, "ground plan of the temple, ornament of Tabo". Tucci concurred with Francke's analysis of a mural devoted to Vairocana, he additionally identified a *maṇḍala* devoted to Akṣobhya, stating that the third *maṇḍala* cannot be deciphered, although he did publish a photograph of it.⁵ In

² Francke, A.H. 1914 [1972]. *Antiquities of Indian Tibet, Part I: Personal Narrative*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, New Imperial Series, vol. XXXVIII, p.42.

³ Tucci, G. 1935. *Indo-Tibetica III. I Templi del Tibet occidentale e il loro simbolismo artistico, Parte I. Spiti e Kunavar*. Roma: Reale Accademia d'Italia, pp.109-113. (translation Vesci, U.M. 1988. *The Temples of Western Tibet and their Artistic Symbolism*, New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan).

⁴ Tucci, G. *ibid.* plate LVIII.

⁵ Tucci, G. *ibid.* p p.109-113.

subsequent decades, relatively scant additional research has concentrated on the iconographic program of this chapel due to the poor state of conservation of the murals;⁶ instead, the temple was investigated in terms of architectural context and textual documentation. Romi Khosla (1979) gave detailed architectural data and quoted Tucci's chronological assessment of the murals.⁷ Roberto Vitali (1996) historically identified two large important portraits of Dge lugs pa monks: on the south wall, Tsong kha pa (1357-1419),⁸ the founder of the Dge lugs pa monastic order and on the north wall, Lha dbang blo gros (1388–1462),⁹ "glorified ... as founder of temples at Tabo"¹⁰ (Fig. 1a: portrait of Lha dbang blo gros and Fig. 1b: wall of Lha dbang blo gros portrait). Vitali also reviewed the historical inscriptions under the buildings on the north wall; his reading and translation differ considerably from Tucci's assessment.¹¹

⁶ Handa, O.C. 1994. *Tabo Monastery and Buddhism in the Trans-Himalaya: A Thousand Years of Existence of the Tabo chos khor*. New Delhi: Indus Publishing, p.161; Klimburg-Salter, *op.cit.* p.66, and illustration fig.58, the protectress rdo rje chen mo, *Maṇḍala* temple, East wall, above entrance. P.van Ham, *The Forgotten Gods of Tibet*, 1997: 98-99.

⁷ Khosla, R. 1979. *Buddhist Monasteries in the Western Himalaya*. Kahmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.

⁸ Vitali, R. 1996. *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang*, Dharamsala: Tho.ling gtsug.lag.khang lo.gcig stong 'khor.ba'i rjes.dran.mdzad sgo'i go. sgrig tshogs.chung, fn. 896, p.525, inscription beneath Tsong kha pa: *rje btsun chos kyi rgyal po thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang (grags pa)*.

⁹ Lha dbang blo gros is known to have flourished in the mid-15th century. These dates for his lifetime are given by Francke, *op.cit.* p.35, while Vitali (*ibid.* p.527) states that Lha dbang blo gros was active in Ladakh, Kinnaur and Spiti during the period 1461-1474.

¹⁰ Vitali, *op.cit.* fn. 896, p.525, inscription beneath Lha dbang blo gros: *gro ba mams kyi rgyal po gtsug gi rgyan du gyur...[three letters defaced] ...rje lha dbang tshan (sic mtshan) can la'*, "The one bearing the name rje lha dbang,who became the ornament of the crown, the lord of sentient beings".

¹¹ Vitali, *ibid.*, reads: *ta po rgyan gyi gtsug lag khang bkod pa*, "He (Lha dbang blo gros) founded the *gtsug lag khang* ornament of Ta po" (Ta po is called Cog la rgyan, i.e. "ornament of Cog la" in the *Mnga' ris rgyal rabs* p.54 lines 9-10). Yannick Laurent, comparing the readings by Tucci and Vitali, considered Vitali's translation to be in error, notably because the verb "to construct/to found (temples)" is more usually *bzhengs pa*, rather than *bkod pa* (personal communication, April 2016). Also, Luigi Fieni's photograph (2010) of the inscription clearly shows the genitive *gi*, i.e. *ta po rgyan gyi gtsug lag khang gi 'kod (sic) pa*, as read by Tucci (*op.cit.* p.112-113). The presence of *gi* implies that *bkod pa* is a noun form, a ground-plan, a depiction of a building; hence the translation *bkod pa* as a verb "to construct" is invalid. Vitali reads the second historic inscription nearby as: *tho gling gser khang gi bkod pa*, "He (Lha dbang

Vitali interpreted the inscriptions to attribute to Lha dbang blo gros both the construction of the Tholing Gser khang and the foundation of temples at Tabo as part of a vast period of Dge lugs pa activity and patronage in mid-15th century Guge¹² (Fig. 2: Inscription on Tabo).¹³



Fig. 1a — Portrait of Lha dbang blo gros, mural painting, h. 120 cm. Tabo dkyil khang,

blo gros) founded Tholing gser khang". Again, the genitive particle *gi* nominalizes the word *bkod pa*. Tucci, *ibid.*, translated: "plan of the Gser khang of Tholing" and "ground plan of the temple, ornament of Tabo", with which we concur. I thank Roberto Vitali and Yannick Laurent for several discussions of this inscription.

¹² Vitali, R. 2012. *The Dge lugs pa in Gu gce and the Western Himalaya (early 15th-late-17th century)*, Dharamsala, Amnye Machen Institute, p. 221-222.

¹³ My thanks to Verena Widorn of West Himalayan Archive Vienna for her help and to Christian Jahoda for permission to illustrate his photograph taken in 2000.

photography by Luigi Fieni, 2010.



Fig. 1b — Portion of North wall murals with portrait of Lha dbang blo gros, Tabo dkyil khang, photography by Luigi Fieni, 2010.



Fig. 2 — Historic Inscriptions about Tabo and Tholing, mural painting, Tabo dkyil khang,

photography by Christian Jahoda, 2000, Western Himalaya Archive Vienna.

In 1999, Petech analysed differently the same inscriptions in the *dkyil khang*; he proposed to credit Lha dbang blo gros with "renovations (?) at Tholing" (*tho gling gser khang gi dkod pa*) rather than the foundation of the *gser khang* as per Vitali.¹⁴

In 1997, Deborah Klimburg-Salter's succinct description of the *dkyil khang* roughly coincided with the remarks by Tucci. She evoked the main iconographic context of this chapel and ventured a historical perspective for the function of the *dkyil khang*:¹⁵

"On functional grounds, the small *maṇḍala* temple may also be considered a product of a relatively early period. It was not unusual to have a smaller *Maṇḍala* temple near the larger Assembly Hall. The former was used for tantric initiations and teachings, one example is the *gsum brtsegs* in Alchi. Today there are 3 large *maṇḍalas* in a very ruined condition. The main *maṇḍala* is again dedicated to Vairocana but the textual source is different from the *maṇḍala* in the main temple. There are also extremely important historical paintings where many scenes and persons are identified, often badly misspelt and poorly preserved."

In subsequent research, Laxman Thakur (2001) emphasized the importance of the paintings of the Tabo temple structures in the *dkyil khang*, considering them to be "extremely important for establishing a reliable chronology of temples in the complex".¹⁶ He attributed the construction of the Tabo *gser khang* to ca. 1450 and *dkyil khang* slightly later during the 15th century under the aegis of Lha dbang blo gros. For Thakur, because the *gser khang* temple is painted under Lha dbang blo gros and named (by inscription), it shows that the *gser khang* existed when the mural of the *dkyil khang* was painted. Thakur concurred with Tucci in regard to the portraits of the royal monks of the Guge family; he also described a "totally mutilated" 8-line inscription beneath the three monks¹⁷ (see Fig. 3 Tucci archive,

¹⁴ Petech, L. Historical Introduction. In L. Petech and C. Luczanits (eds.), *Inscriptions from the Tabo Main Temple, Text and Translation*. Roma: ISIAO, p. 6.

¹⁵ Klimburg-Salter, *op.cit.*, p.66.

¹⁶ Thakur, L. 2001. *Buddhism in the Western Himalaya. A Study of the Tabo Monastery*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p.83.

¹⁷ Thakur, L. *ibid*, p.85.

the 3 royal monks).¹⁸



Fig. 3 — Portraits of the Three lamas: *Byang chub 'od*, *Zhi ba 'od*, *Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od*, mural painting, Tabo *dkyil khang* (MNAO photographic archive, Giuseppe Tucci's collection, N. 6024-17, photography by Eugenio Ghersi, 1933; courtesy National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome).

Thakur also concurred with Tucci's analysis of a Vairocana mural at centre, a *maṇḍala* of Akṣobhya on the north wall; on the south wall, Thakur identified a *maṇḍala* centred on Śākyamuni for the south wall. He concluded his remarks by stating that the problem of dating the *dkyil khang* remains unsolved, however due to his observations of aesthetic similarities of the Tabo *gser khang* and the *dkyil khang*, he proposed a date of late 15th for construction of the temple and its paintings.¹⁹

In 2013, the Tibetan historian Rahula, former resident at Tabo, published a detailed history of the monastery from the 10th to 20th century in which he studied the iconography of the murals, the Tibetan historic inscriptions, and the chronology of the *dkyil khang*.²⁰

¹⁸ I am tremendously indebted to Oscar Nalesini of the Tucci photographic archive for his efforts to clarify the original photographs and kind authorization to publish.

¹⁹ Thakur, L. *ibid*, p.86.

²⁰ Ra hu la. 2013. *Ta po. dus rabs bcu pa nas nyi shu pa'i bar gyi snga mo'i rgya gar dans bod kyi ldebs ris dang yi ge nub hi ma' la ya'i gna' bo'i dgon grong zhig. An Ancient Western Himalayan Repository of age old Indian and Tibetan mural*

His reading of the historic inscriptions concurs with the readings by Tucci. Similar to the analysis of Klimburg-Salter, he considered that the *dkyil khang* was in all likelihood constructed roughly the same time as the *gtsug lag khang*, but restored many, many times, which situation also applied to the Maitreya temple and the small *'brom ston* temple. Rahula identified the mural of the three royal monks as part of the original iconographic program, along with the murals for Akṣobhya on the south, Vairocana at centre, and another aspect of Akṣobhya on the north wall, with the 15th century additions of the large monk portraits.²¹ Likewise, Peter van Ham (2014) stated that the *dkyil khang* was presumably part of the original layout of the monastery complex or added slightly later, assessing the Dge lugs pa monk portraits to be later additions of 16th to 17th century.²² In addition to the central wall's Sarvavid Vairocana mural, on the north wall, he identified a *maṇḍala* from the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* cycle with Mahavairocana as Śakyasiṃha in the centre of the *maṇḍala*.²³

This review of the previous research allows an appreciation of the different identifications in terms of iconographic program for the temple and the contradictory interpretations of the Tibetan inscriptions. When requested to fully document the state of the paintings in 2010 it was possible to photograph all the walls and inscriptions despite the damaged condition. Thanks in part to technological advances in photography, and some conservation work in intervening years under the auspices of the Archaeological Survey of India, underpainting is now evident in some cases. Several distinct and not necessarily successive phases of restoration over the centuries are apparent in the juxtaposition of certain sections within the same *maṇḍala*. The inscriptions remain problematic to read and

paintings and scripts dating from the tenth to the twentieth century. Tabo: Library of Tabo monastery, p.476: "lha khang 'di dpal ldan bkra shis bde legs gtsug lag khang dang dus mnyam du bzhengs par ngos 'dzin" This temple and the glorious auspicious gtsug lag khang are clearly constructed at the same time..."

²¹ Rahula, *ibid.*, p.476-477: On the south, Akṣobhya (*mi 'khrugs pa*) with the later addition of scenes from the biography of Tsong kha pa, at centre Vairocana (*kun rig*, Sarvavid Vairocana) and on the north, Akṣobhya (*bcom ldan mi bskyod pa*), with the later addition of the portrait of Lha dbang blo gros and the buildings of Tabo and Tholing.

²² van Ham, P.2014. *Tabo - Gods of Light. The Indo-Tibetan Masterpiece*. Munich: Hirmer Verlag, p.292.

²³ van Ham, *ibid.*, p.292.

interpret due to their fragmentary nature. Further infra-red photography of additional panels of inscriptions may yield additional data and insights. Yet, already, let us now consider evidence gleaned from the new photographic documentation of 2010 and from research on iconographic parallels in murals and *maṅḍalas* in the ancient temples of Guge and cave temples of Ladakh.

The iconographic program of the dkyil khang

1. Maṅḍala of Sarvavid Vairocana, west wall, centre

When Tucci observed the mural representing the Sarvavid Vairocana he correctly observed that the cycle was not the same as the statues of the *gtsug lag khang*. He was misled, however, by a series of six figures at the top that, "[does] not seem to have any connection with the *maṅḍala* itself, as they are there to represent different Buddha in ascetic robes".²⁴ This confused his assessment of the whole wall. The subsequent cleaning of the murals has removed soot near the ceiling; consequently, all across the entire temple similar seated Buddha in monastic garments are now visible. The multitude of this assembly, their body proportions, shading, and drapery of the cowl neck robes with flowing pleats, strongly recall the assembly of Buddha of the Bhadrakalpa painted in the exterior wall of the cella in the *gtsug lag khang*. (Fig. 4 Bhadrakalpa Buddha of the cella and Fig. 5 detail of *dkyil khang* Bhadrakalpa Buddha).

The Buddha of the cella are identical in respect to their *mudrā* but vary in the colour of their bodies and their robes; the Bhadrakalpa Buddha in the *dkyil khang* vary in their *mudrā* as well. In the late 11th century murals at Phyi dbang, the Bhadrakalpa Buddha are very similar in robes, body proportions and *mudrā* to those of the Tabo *dkyil khang* (Fig. 6: Bhadrakalpa Buddha of Phyi dbang).²⁵

²⁴ Tucci, *o.p.cit.*, p.110.

²⁵ Neumann, H. and Neumann, H. 2014. Wall paintings of the Dungkar Caves Three and Four: Iconography and Style. *Orientalia* 45 (5), figs. 4 and 25.



Fig. 4 — Detail of Tabo gtsug lag khang cella ambulatory Bhadrakalpa Buddha, mural painting, photography by Luigi Fieni, 2010.



Fig. 5 — Detail of Tabo dkyil khang Bhadrakalpa Buddha assembly and preta segment outer ring Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni maṇḍala mural painting, photography by Luigi Fieni, 2010.



Fig. 6 — Detail of *Phyi dbang Bhadrakalpa Buddha assembly*, photography by Helmut and Heidi Neumann, 1997.

Due to underpainting of similar Buddha figures which remained visible in the lower edge of the cella wall of Tabo, attributed to the 996 C.E. foundation, the series of Buddha of the Bhadrakalpa as now represented have been attributed to the renovation phase, of 1041-42 C.E. and the second half of the 11th century.²⁶ The 1933 photograph of the central section of the *dkyil khang* Sarvavid Vairocana mural did not allow Tucci to understand that in fact, Sarvavid Vairocana was seated in the midst of a cross-arrangement, horizontal and vertical intersection with the four Tathāgatas as well as 16 Bodhisattvas surrounding Vairocana as may be observed in the modern photograph (Fig. 7. Tucci archive photo and Fig. 8. 2010 photo of Vairocana).

In terms of the configuration of this Vairocana *maṇḍala*, it is a very similar arrangement to the *Dharmadhātu Vāgīśvara maṇḍala* on the upper portion of the *gtsug lag khang*.²⁷ In Tabo where the memory of Rin chen bzang po is so present, it is pertinent to recall that Rin chen bzang po and Śraddhākaravarman were the translators of the

²⁶ Klimburg-Salter, *op.cit.*, p.46 and Fig.15 discuss the original layer of painting and the subsequent renovation phase.

²⁷ Klimburg-Salter, *ibid.*, p.127 Diagram 10, and Fig.113.

Dharmadhātu Vāgīśvara maṇḍala cycle (Peking no. 3416).²⁸

As for the identification of this *maṇḍala* of Sarvavid Vairocana, it is surely related to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, 'The Elimination of all Evil Destinies', where the earliest description of Vairocana designates him as Sarvavid (*kun rig*), the Omniscient aspect of Vairocana, white in body colour, with four faces, and the mudrā of meditative concentration (*ting nge 'dzin phyag rgya*) as he is represented here.²⁹ This aspect of Vairocana is to be differentiated from the Sarvavid Vairocana in the principal *maṇḍala* of Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha, where the central figure is also named Sarvavid Vairocana, also white with four faces, but his hands perform the bodhiyagri mudrā, (*byang chub sems kyi phyag rgya*), where the index finger of the right hand is clasped by the left hand, closed in a fist.³⁰ In the *dkyil khang*, it is difficult to pinpoint precisely which *maṇḍala* is depicted due to the state of conservation which renders the subsidiary figures difficult to discern. Vairocana in this aspect is sovereign of a *maṇḍala* which was often represented in eleventh-century monasteries in western Tibet, because the great monk Rin chen bzang po (958–1055) translated and performed rituals belonging to this liturgical cycle.³¹

²⁸ I thank Professor Mori Masahide for the information that though there is no translator mentioned in its colophon, the Tibetan index attached to the Peking edition clarifies that the translators were Śraddhākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po, as per *A Comparative Analytical Catalogue of the Tanjur Division of the Tibetan Tripitaka I. 3*, Otani University, 1977. (Personal communication 27.09.2007).

²⁹ Skorupski, T. 1983. *The Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra, Elimination of All Evil Destinies*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

³⁰ For discussion of several different Vairocana liturgies in Guge during the 11th century; see Heller, A. 2010. Preliminary remarks on the donor inscriptions and iconography of an 11th-century *mchod rten* at Tholing. In E. Lo Bue and C. Luczanits (eds.), *Tibetan Art and Architecture in Context (Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the IATS, Königswinter 2006)*. Halle, Saale: International Institute for Tibetan Studies, 43–74.

³¹ Skorupski, T. *ibid.*, p.xvii. The *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana maṇḍala* was so significant for Rin chen bzang po that he performed it for the funerary ceremonies for his father (see Heller, A. *ibid.*, p.67-69).



Fig. 7— Vairocana, mural painting, Tabo dkyil khang (MNAO photographic archive, Giuseppe Tucci's collection, N.6024-13, photograph by Eugenio Ghersi, 1933; courtesy National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome).



Fig. 8 — Vairocana maṇḍala, mural painting, Tabo dkyil khang photograph by Luigi Fieni, 2010.

2. *Maṇḍala of Akṣobhya, left wall, north wall*

Tucci formulated the hypothesis of a *maṇḍala* devoted to Akṣobhya and recognized the characteristic circular configuration (Fig. 9 Tucci archive photo of Akṣobhya): "On the left wall... we have a real *maṇḍala* with its 'mura', its doors, its arches (*torana*) and its 'custodians' set up to defend the four doors. The arrangement of the deities symbolized is on a cross formation, that is the deity from which the *maṇḍala* takes its name, is in the centre and the others are arranged in the direction of the four cardinal points and of the intermediate points. The identification of the *maṇḍala* offers serious difficulties, in view of the very poor state of preservation of the fresco. But the central painting represents a deity with the right hand in *bhūmisparśa mudrā*; this would enable us to suppose that the deity represented is Akṣobhya".³²

The specific configuration of the centre of this *maṇḍala* represents the white Buddha Akṣobhya, wearing a dhoti and scarves, his *uṣṇīṣa* very prominent, seated on a lotus supported by two elephants, his requisite vehicle (Fig. 10 2010 photo of Akṣobhya).

He is inside a circle divided into 9 compartments in a horizontal-vertical alignment. Akṣobhya is at the central compartment surrounded by the four Tathāgatas at the four cardinal points and four of the eight goddesses of offering in the intermediary sectors. The additional four goddesses are in the far corners of the *maṇḍala*, while the 16 Bodhisattvas are aligned inside the square. The precise textual basis for the *dkyil khang maṇḍala* remains to be determined. It may possibly be related to rituals composed by Atīṣa, the renowned Indian *paṇḍita* who, at royal behest, taught and translated in the Guge kingdom from 1042-1045. A 9-deity Akṣobhya *maṇḍala* was composed by Atīṣa, then translated by himself and Rin chen bzang po, as part of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* rituals. This ritual describes the Buddha Akṣobhya seated inside a lotus circle with 8 petals, on which are seated the 8 goddesses of offering.³³ In this

³² Tucci, G. *op.cit.*, p.111.

³³ Bsod nams rgya mtsho. 1991. *The Ngor Maṇḍalas of Tibet, Listing of the Maṇḍala deities*. Tokyo: The Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, p.18. 9-deity Akṣobhya *maṇḍala* transmitted by Atīṣa. *Jo bo rje 'i lugs mi 'khrugs pa lha dgu'i dkyil 'khor* (Toh. 743). In the canonical version of this ritual, it is specified that the Buddha is blue and in *sambhogakāya* aspect. This is an indication that the *maṇḍala* has been re-interpreted over the centuries. In the ritual text composed by

ritual, neither the body colour nor the garments of Akṣobhya are specified.³⁴ In a second ritual by Atīśa, similar to the *dkyil khang* example, Akṣobhya is seated on a lotus, his right hand in *bhūmiśarṣa mudrā* and he is surrounded by the four Tathāgatas, however in this text his body colour is blue.



Fig. 9 — Akṣobhya maṇḍala, mural painting Tabo dkyil khang (MNAO photographic archive, Giuseppe Tucci's collection, N -6024-15, photography by Eugenio Ghersi, 1933; courtesy National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome).

Atīśa, the body colour is not given. The colophon concludes with the statement that this ritual is part of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* rituals and it was translated by Atīśa himself and Rin chen bzang po ('*di bris pa yi dge ba yis/ ngan song nam sbyang thar lam sgrub/ kun gyis bzang po mthong bar shog/ slob dpon mar me mdzad kyis mdzad pa'i dkyil 'khor gi cho ga rdzogs so// Paṇḍita de nyid dang lo tsa ba rin chen bzang pos bsgyur ba'o/*).

³⁴ See Himalayan Art Resource, <http://www.himalayanart.org/items/296> for a 16th century *thangka* of this *maṇḍala*, where Akṣobhya's body is light blue in colour however this is not specified in Atīśa ritual text for this *maṇḍala*.



Fig. 10 — Akṣobhya maṇḍala, mural painting, Tabo dkyil khang, photography by Luigi Fieni, 2010.

The representation of Akṣobhya in the Tabo *maṇḍala* is distinctive insofar as his body colour is white, he is represented in Indian royal garments, his right hand in *bhumīśparśa mudrā*, and he is seated on lotus pedestal supported by two large elephants. In the context of the Five Tathāgatas, usually Akṣobhya is blue in colour, but in the depiction of Akṣobhya in his paradise as described in the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, he is white.³⁵ The elephant *vāhana* is exclusively his, thus the identification of Akṣobhya is certain. In the context of the iconographic program of the whole chapel, where the Sarvavid Vairocana is derived from the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, the white body colour of Akṣobhya in this *maṇḍala* may perhaps indicate that this *sādhana* of Akṣobhya was also related to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*.³⁶

3. The 37-deity Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni maṇḍala from the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana cycle, right wall, south wall

³⁵ Skorupski, T. *o.p.cit.*, p.45, n.28 for a white Akṣobhya. See discussion by Goepper, R. 1999. Akshobhya and His Paradise: Murals in the Dukhang of Alchi. *Orientalia* 30 (1), 16–21.

³⁶ For discussion of the *maṇḍalas* of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* cycle, see Fickle, Dorothy H. 1994. The Bodhisattva with a Mask. *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. 54, No. 3/4, p.347-375.

Although Tucci considered the *maṇḍala* on the south wall to be indecipherable, he did publish a photograph of the centre of the *maṇḍala* (Fig.11 Tucci archive photo Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni).



Fig. 11 — Navoṣṇīṣaś ākyamuni maṇḍala, mural painting (MNAO photographic archive, Giuseppe Tucci's collection, N - 6024-14, photography by Eugenio Ghersi, 1933; courtesy National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome).

This allowed a certainty that the focus of the *maṇḍala* was a Buddha performing the *dharmacakra* gesture, wearing monastic garments, seated on a lotus, inside a distinctive ring with small circles, each with an auspicious symbol, then 8 deities in a second ring surrounding the central Buddha. This very distinctive configuration is also linked to a *maṇḍala* of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*. In the canonical version of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, this *maṇḍala* is known as the 37 deity Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala*.³⁷ Although at present it remains

³⁷ Skorupski, T. *op.cit.*, p p.22 -25 *passim* describes the group of Śākyamuni/Śākyasiṃha and the 8 Uṣṇīṣa deities.

difficult to see well, the central Buddha has traces of gold on his body. (Fig. 11a 1994 centre of Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala* and Fig. 12 Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala*).³⁸



Fig. 11a — Center of Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni maṇḍala Tabo dkyil khang, mural painting, photograph by Peter van Ham 1994.



Fig. 12 — Deity Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni maṇḍala Tabo dkyil khang, mural painting, photograph by Peter van Ham 1994.

³⁸ I thank Peter van Ham for his photographs.

This gold-colour Buddha is to be identified as Śākyasiṃha, closely related in appearance to the teaching Buddha Śākyamuni; in this aspect he is an emanation of the Buddha Vairocana in one of the principal rituals of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*. The eight figures surrounding him are the Eight Uṣṇīṣa deities, representative of the virtues and actions of the Buddha, thus the Sanskrit name is Navoṣṇīṣa,³⁹ which refers to the central Buddha and the group of eight, all with the *uṣṇīṣa* indicative of their supernatural qualities.⁴⁰

In the Guge kingdom, this *maṇḍala* is also found as a ceiling *maṇḍala* in Dungkar, cave 3,⁴¹ in proximity to the residence of two sovereigns of the Guge royal family in the late 11th century.⁴² In the Dungkar cave, beside the circular *maṇḍala* on the ceiling, there is a representation of the *Dharmadhātu Vāgīśvara maṇḍala* in very similar arrangement to horizontal and vertical configuration of the Sarvavid Vairocana *maṇḍala* on the centre wall of the *dkyil khang*. In Ladakh, the earliest representation of this *maṇḍala* is found as a wall *maṇḍala* in a cave temple near the monastery of Spithuk, originally founded by 'Od lde (r. 1024–1037), a scion of the royal family of Guge. We must also take note of close religious patronage which increasingly linked the royal lineage of Guge and Ladakh during the second half of the 11th century.⁴³ Although quite damaged, it is clearly the same configuration as the south wall *maṇḍala* of *dkyil khang* of Tabo.⁴⁴ The 37-deity Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala* is also represented in the Alchi Dukhang on the north wall, in a slight variant that the southernmost petal of the 8 symbols instead has a small figure of Prajñāpāramitā in a six-arm aspect (Fig. 13 Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni Alchi Dukhang).⁴⁵

³⁹ *nāva* is Sanskrit for nine, which combined with *uṣṇīṣa* produces the term *navoṣṇīṣa*, 9 *uṣṇīṣa* deities.

⁴⁰ Tohoku 485. Bsod nams rgya mtsho 1991, *op. cit. maṇḍala* 39, p p.72-73.

⁴¹ Neumann, H. and Neumann, H. 2014. Wall paintings of the Dungkar Caves Three and Four: Iconography and Style. *Orientalia* 45 (5), 63-67.

⁴² Vitali, R. 1996. *op.cit.*, 126-127.

⁴³ Vitali 1996, *op.cit.*, 301, n. 466 for phases of temple foundations in Ladakh during the 11th century.

⁴⁴ van Ham, P. Ladakh's Missing Link? The Murals of Tragkhung Kowache. *Orientalia* 45 (5), 50-57. I thank Peter van Ham for discussion of this iconography and his help for photographs. Van Ham's study was the first research to propose the identification of Tabo *dkyil khang's* Śākyamuni *maṇḍala* as stemming from the cycle of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*.

⁴⁵ Lionel Fournier photographed the Alchi temple complex in 1978. The initial results of his research were published in 1982 by Pratapaditya Pal, however



Fig. 13 — *Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni maṇḍala*, Alchi Dukhang, mural painting, photograph by Lionel Fournier, 1978.

Close examination of Tucci's original photograph of the Tabo Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala* shows that the lowest petal is also distinctive in its content in regard to the other petals and may in fact correspond to the version of the iconography in the Alchi Dukhang's Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni *maṇḍala*.

Conclusion

The present research has concentrated on the *dkyil khang* of Tabo, a temple which has been an enigmatic element within the monastic complex, both for its chronology and for its iconographic program. Past research has well established that the main sanctuary of the Tabo *gtsug lag khang* was the most ancient construction founded in 996 C.E. The renovation of the *gtsug lag khang* ca. 1041-2, under the aegis of the kings of Guge, occurred during a phase of great activity in religious fervour in the Guge Kingdom, which persisted throughout the second half of the 11th century. It is in this period which has been situated the construction of the Maitreya Temple

hundreds of unpublished photographs were digitised as an archive by Lionel Fournier in subsequent years. I am most grateful to Lionel Fournier for authorization to study the totality of his archive and publish this photograph.

(*byams khang*), and the small *'brom ston lha khang*.

Simultaneously in Tholing, under the King Rtse lde and with the presence of royal monk-translator Zhi ba 'od, there were great activities of translations of Buddhist texts and teachings, as well as temple construction, embellishment and creation of manuscripts leading to the 1076 Great Buddhist Council, bringing together *paṇḍitas*, translators and artists of several lands. It behooves us not to neglect the potential significance of the three royal portraits in the *dkyil khang*, including Zhi ba 'od, which may portend involvement or patronage of the Guge royal lineage in the *dkyil khang* itself at this time. Subsequently, after the assassination of Rtse lde in 1083, the capital of the kingdom moved to Dungkhar, where we find the last evidence of the *maṇḍala* in horizontal-vertical alignment in cave temples and already the circular *maṇḍala* of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* 37-deity Navoṣṇīṣa Śākyamuni, as also represented in the *dkyil khang* of Tabo.

In the light of the close relations linking Tabo and Tholing during this period, as well as what has been termed a period of "Guge paramountcy in Ladakh",⁴⁶ we have examined the contemporaneous iconography of mid to late 11th century with *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana maṇḍala* parallels in cave temples of Guge and Ladakh as well Alchi monastery. These findings, in comparison to the construction materials, architectural proportions and techniques of construction of the Maitreya temple and the small *'brom ston* temple, which correspond to those of the *dkyil khang*, and in consideration of the new research presented here on the interpretation of the historic inscriptions, the context of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* iconographic program for the *dkyil khang*, may be considered salient elements for the dating of the Tabo *dkyil khang*. In the Tabo *dkyil khang*, pending further confirmation by future infra-red photography of additional inscriptions and sections of the murals, we formulate the hypothesis that the *Maṇḍala* hall *dkyil khang* may also be considered as an ancient construction dating from the second half of the 11th century, roughly contemporary with the Maitreya and small *'brom ston* temples, all three structures of which were embellished with mural paintings in successive phases prior to the Dge lugs pa revival of the mid-15th century, at which time the Tabo *dkyil khang* was partially renovated thanks to Dge lugs pa

⁴⁶ Petech, L. 1977. *The Kingdom of Ladakh*, Roma: IsIAO, p.18.

patronage.⁴⁷

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⁴⁷ For the architectural chronology of the temples at Tabo, I am gratefully indebted to Carmen Auer and Holger Neuwirth. See the recent study by H. Neuwirth and C. Auer (<http://www.archresearch.tugraz.at/results/Tabo/3D/tabostage2.html> respectively by Neuwirth and Auer). See Auer and Neuwirth 2017 in present volume.

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One *Stūpa* and Three *Lha thos* The Monuments of Tashigang

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Among the various surnames used among the Buddhist communities—for both male and female individuals—in the Western Himalayas ‘Tashi’ (*bkra shis*), or ‘Good Luck’, is encountered frequently. For villages, the name of Tashigang (*bkra shis sgang*) apparently enjoyed similar popularity; at least three places by that name located in relatively close vicinity are known to me. One is in Kinnaur, south-east of Nako, another is in the Indus Valley in the Tibetan Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China, while the third is located north of Ki Monastery in Upper Spiti. It is the latter site that this article focusses on.

Of the three sites listed above, Tashigang near Ki is the smallest and most remotely situated. It is located literally at the end of a small road behind a pass and above a gorge. Only two families live at Tashigang. One can enjoy a tremendous view across the ravine towards the Sakya (*sa skya*) Monastery of Kormik (*gog mig*) and the mountain ranges beyond. Several *stūpas* and a set of three *lha thos* immediately attract the attention of anyone approaching the site. While the *stūpas* and the houses form a small cluster on a slight slope declining towards the south-east. The three *lha thos* claim a position on a cliff above the hamlet and overlook both the settlement and the landscape beyond. The dominant feature that visually links the *lha thos* with the largest—and therefore outstanding—*stūpa* is their three-colour-scheme of White-Red-Blue. While the *stūpa* is decorated with vertical stripes of those colours, the three *lha thos* are painted in different colours, again creating a notion of verticality through colours due to their elongated shapes.



Fig. 1— Tashigang. (Kozicz 2015)

The *stūpa* is the central object around which the site appears to have been built. The monument is characterised by two significant features. First, its architecture conforms to the so-called gateway *stūpa* type. This type was developed upon the model of the Lo tsa va *stūpa* type that had been most popular in the Indus Valley near Shey and Nyarma. This type basically consisted of a broad cubic base upon which the actual *stūpa* was placed.¹ Those *stūpas* were accessible and a chamber was built into the central turret, decorated with murals and covered by a wooden lantern ceiling, this had also been the case at Tashigang, but the passage, which had been built in accordance with the direction of the slope, was at some point walled up on the north-western hillside face. Thereby the gateway *stūpa* was turned into a *stūpa* shrine or chapel. The second significant feature of the *stūpa* is a set of four turrets at the corners of the broad base. These turrets also display the colour scheme noted above, but here the stripes were applied in a horizontal manner emphasising their pedestal-like character. Greyish-blue painted skulls of blue sheep were placed on top of each turret. Unfortunately, the architectural details of the central *stūpa* have faded away over the past centuries. However, the silhouette of the remains allows for the conclusion that the compositional system conformed to the Tibetan system of *stūpa*

¹ For a description of the typology of the Lo tsa va *stūpa* see Howard 1995: 62–64.

architecture as it became a standard from the fourteenth century onwards.



Fig. 2 — Front with lha thos in the background. (Kozicz 2015)



Fig. 3 — Rear façade. (Kozicz 2012)

Compared to other specimens of gateway *stūpas*, the Tashigang *stūpa* displays a so far new variant. Instead of a simple passage its superstructure consisted of two major lateral walls and two short wall segments flanking each of the openings or, in other words, a chamber with two openings plus porches. Unlike other gateway *stūpas*, where the passage seems to cut through a massive block, the floor plan of the Tashigang *stūpa* rather reminds of a small chapel open to two directions. As the over-all plan was based on a square measuring 4.60 meters across, the passage appeared like a chamber right from the beginning rather than the usual tunnel-like corridor. Since the 'side walls' were of a constant thickness of approx. 75 centimetres throughout their whole length, that chamber was of rectangular shape measuring approx. 1.60 x 3.00 meters. The chamber that was built into the central *stūpa* body above was square in shape and therefore only covered the central portion of the ground floor chamber. When the north-western entrance was closed, the width of the south-eastern opening was reduced too, by adding another short wall section to the right wall. The reason for only adding one wall portion was probably of a structural nature. If the builders had added two portions (i.e. one vertical stripe on each side), the small portions would hardly have provided sufficient weight to ensure the stability of the wooden door frame. It is a widely documented phenomenon in the Western Himalayan region, that new wall portions added to existing walls were never properly structurally connected to earlier masonry, resulting in instability and severe cracks. Building only one larger portion improved the stability of that new masonry, however, this resulted in an off-centric position of the opening that was then furnished with a wooden portal and door. Thereby the once open passage was turned into an actual chapel.

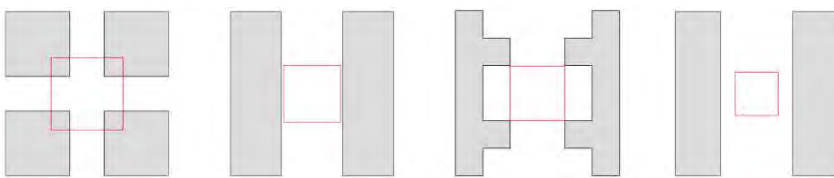


Fig. 4 — Floor plan diagrams of various gateway *stūpas* (f.l.t.r.: Alchi Great Entrance *stūpa*, Alchi Shangrong *stūpa*, Tashigang *stūpa* and Hunder *stūpa*): corridors in relation to chambers (in red). (Drawing Kozicz)

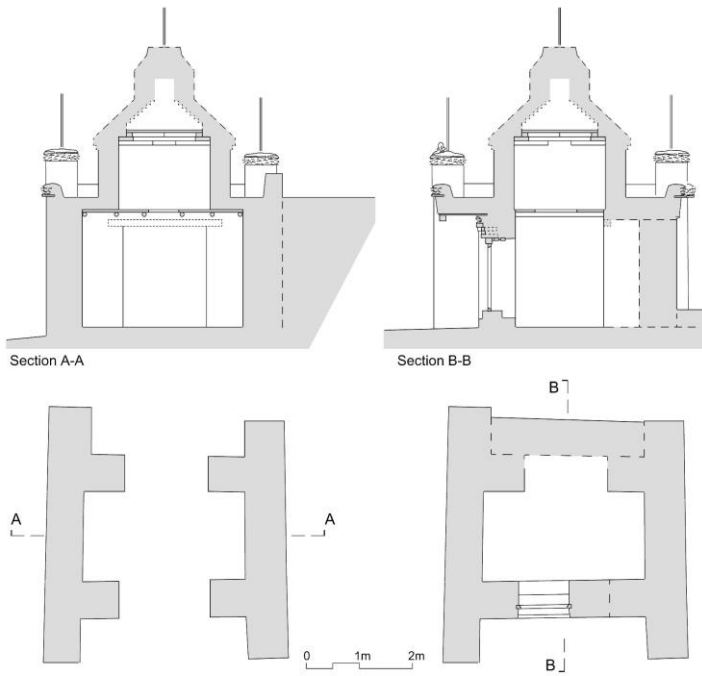


Fig. 5 — Floor plans (original plan left, new plan with blocked passage right) of Tashigang stūpa with related section. (Drawing Kozicz)

When the closure of the hill-facing opening actually happened cannot be determined with confidence. Traditionally, the walls of the corridors of a gateway *stūpas* were not decorated with murals. Only elevated chambers were painted. At Tashigang, however, the ground floor chamber displays deities mainly associated with the Gelugpa (*dge lugs pa*) order, such as Vajrabhairava and Hayagrīva, today. The affiliation to the yellow sect is further sustained by the depiction of several lamas wearing hats of that colour. Opposite the new entrance an altar was installed. Behind the altar, a painted wooden board blocks the view into the niche, which bears witness to the former rear entrance. In turn, this board almost completely disappears behind bundles of white and yellow offering scarves (*kha btags*). In the front, several ritual objects, photographs of Ki Monastery and Buddhist dignitaries of the Gelugpa sect, most prominently of the 14th Dalai Lama, as well as a wooden mask of a guardian are hung on strings. All these elements produce a dense atmosphere within this small space. On the small wooden box placed in front of the board, and

under the *kha btags*, new bronzes of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as well as offering bowls are arranged. The box itself serves as a shrine for a fine collection of offering cakes (*gtor ma*). The *gtor mas* are stored together with small twigs of juniper tree (*shug pa*) to secure their purity for the ritual. This chamber reflects the daily rituals practiced and a living Buddhist tradition in general.



Fig. 6 — Murals of the ground floor (left hand side from visitor's perspective). (Kozicz 2012)



Fig. 7 — Altar, *kha btags*, ritual instruments and *gtor ma*. (Kozicz 2012)



Fig. 8 — Right hand side lateral wall. (Kozicz 2012)



Fig. 9 — View towards the ceiling and the upper chamber. (Kozicz 2012)

The use of bright colours and the dense arrangement of offerings and sacred images all the new interior of the ground floor chamber distracts the attention from the upper chamber. The upper chamber literally dwells in darkness. It not only lacks any sort of opening and natural light, but the actual opening was also reduced in size when the lower compartment was created. The upper chamber was practically removed from the field of perception to anyone entering the chapel. The only element that draws attention is a long spear; the shaft of the spear is placed on the altar and its spearhead is directly pointing towards the central field of a lantern ceiling at close range. Once noted, the ceiling becomes perceivable only slowly while the eyes adapt to the diffuse darkness of the interior. The ceiling has four levels, with the upper levels framing squares, while the lowest creates, as usual, an octagonal figure. The central upper-most square is dedicated to a depiction of Amitāyus, the 'Eternal Life', at the centre of his maṇḍala. All his eight emanations are placed inside the pedals of the maṇḍala and aligned towards Amitāyus. The four intermediate sectors between the maṇḍala circle and the square are occupied by a flower-vase motif. Of all the other eight triangular segments of the ceiling only one segment of the third level has survived with the paintings intact. It shows two figures, probably female, but it is difficult to ascertain. If the assumption concerning their gender is correct, these figures may well represent two of the eight offering goddesses (*mchod pa'i lha mo*) of the maṇḍala. All the surviving figures of the ceiling are depicted in saṃbhogakāya attire, wearing dhoṭī and royal jewellery.



Fig. 10 — View into the upper chamber. (Bertsch 2012)

All four walls reflect the same iconographic pattern. Another depiction of Amitāyus in a seated position is at the centre of each wall. In each of these paintings, Amitāyus is flanked by two other standing Bodhisattvas.² All are in saṃbhogakāya attire again, and perform the appropriate mudrā of meditation, holding the vase with ambrosia and a branch of the Aśoka tree in their palms. The four forms of Amitāyus are of different body colours reflecting their directional order: white in the East, yellow in the South, red in the West, and green in the North. The orientation is confirmed by a pair of creatures or mounts (*vāhana*) depicted on the pedestal of each Bodhisattva: lions in the East, horses in the South, peacocks in the West, and garuḍas in the North. Obviously, the white colour usually associated with Vairocana, the central cosmic Buddha of the Vajradhātumaṇḍala, was placed in the East. This form may therefore be identified as Vairocana-Amitāyus. Respectively, the deities in the centres of the southern and the northern walls may be identified as Ratnasambhava-Amitāyus and Amoghasiddhi-Amitāyus.

Gateway *stūpas* with identical iconographic arrangements were also built in several places all over Ladakh. Remarkably, all those *stūpas* have Akṣobhya in the central field of the ceiling but not Amitāyus. Vairocana is commonly placed in central position on the eastern wall. It is a classical five-fold system as fundamentally displayed in the Vajradhātu *maṇḍala* but with Akṣobhya and Vairocana exchanging positions. These monuments are generally dated to the 13th-14th centuries.

At Tashigang, the red colour of the western Bodhisattva deserves a special mention. At first sight the body colour appears whitish, but a close examination reveals that the red colour has faded away and turned into a light pink for an unknown reason. In fact, one would expect the red Amitāyus in the centre (i.e. the centre of the ceiling), and a white form occupying the western wall. Instead, his white form was chosen for the East, while the red manifestation remained in the original western position. Vairocana-Amitāyus therefore replaced Akṣobhya-Amitāyus, and Amitāyus was depicted twice within this mandalic system (i.e. in the centre of the ceiling and again on the Western wall where the Akṣobhya form was deleted).

As already noted by Lokesh Chandra, Amitāyus represents the

² For examples see Luczanits 1998:156–159 and Devers, Bruneau and Vernier 2014: 130–133.

“apotheosised healing aspect of Amitābha”, the cosmic Buddha of the West.³ Since Amitābha is the head of the family (*kula*) of Amitāyus, the overall background of the four walls was dedicated to a symbolic 1000-fold depiction of that directional Buddha. Unlike the larger images noted above, Amitābha is shown in *nirmāṇakāya* attire (i.e. in monk robe). An interesting feature, not observed anywhere else, concerns the colour, or rather colours, of the background. The walls were in effect horizontally structured into violet-burgundy, and blue stripes.



Fig. 11 — *Amoghasiddhi-Amitāyus with Bodhisattvas.* (Kozicz 2015)



Fig. 12 — *Eastern wall of the chamber.* (Bertsch 2012)

³ See Lokesh Chandra 1999: 224.



Fig. 13 — Figures wearing local Tibetan dresses in the lower register of the eastern wall.
(Kozicz 2015)

While the 1000-Amitābha motif represents a stereotypical pattern, the lowest horizontal register of the murals of the chamber depict groups of individual deities of different ranks within the Buddhist pantheon as well as figures whose representations obviously reflect a western Tibetan visual vocabulary. The register situated below Vairocana-Amitāyus centres on Tārā, Avalokiteśvara, and Paṃśābarī. Towards the corners, figures dressed in traditional western Himalayan clothes are shown. They wear heavy coats and thick hats. Some of them hold weapons (e.g. noose, spears) in their hands. One of them is riding a horse. The horse is not crouching but standing, which clearly indicates that it does not show a symbolic *vāhana* but an actual mount. These figures display striking stylistic similarities with the wall paintings from the assembly hall (*'du khang*) of Khojar Monastery in Purang which were discussed and published in detail by Heidi and Helmut Neumann in an article about the Bhaiṣajyaguru maṇḍala of that temple.⁴ If compared with the depiction of the minister of the group of the Seven Jewels of the King of Kings (*cakravartin*) of that maṇḍala, it seems as if the two drawings were made in the same workshop; if not by same hand.⁵ At Tashigang, their number amounts to six altogether, but their individual identification or even the exact nature of their social rank is impossible to determine at this stage of the study. In this regard, the adjoining southern register poses comparatively little challenges,

⁴ See Neumann and Neumann 2010: 124-129.

⁵ Ibidem: 136, Figure 23.

as it is dedicated to the deities of the ten directions. At the centre, beneath Ratnasambhava-Amitāyus, Indra on his elephant and four-headed Brahma on a goose clearly highlight the iconographic topic of this wall. To Brahma's right, we find Varuṇa on the makara followed by Yama, Agni on a goat, and finally Nairṛti brandishing a corpse with his sword. To Indra's left, we see two figures on horses. The first one appears to be Pṛthivī, the only female deity within the set. Pṛthivī's *vāhana* is actually a boar, but in this picture she sits atop a horse or mule. The second deity on horseback should then be Kubera. Then follows Vāyu on an antelope or deer, and finally Iśāna holding a trident and riding a bull. An additional figure in wrathful posture was added to the group next to the corner. The western wall is comparatively difficult to decipher. This is mainly due to the degree of dilapidation as several of the deities are practically illegible. The central positions were once held by blue-coloured wrathful deities. Unfortunately, these are the ones most affected by decay. The best preserved figures are those near the corners. The clearest among those is the elephant-headed Gaṇapati close to the north-western corner. Finally, the panel of the Amoghasiddhi-Amitāyus wall was dedicated to a set of Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa with his entourage of yakṣa generals. Interestingly, Vaiśravaṇa is only surrounded by six of his generals instead of eight. This is particularly noteworthy as there would have been enough space for another general. Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa is shown in Indian attire and seated on his appropriate *vāhana*, the lion. The yakṣa generals too, were depicted wearing loin cloths and riding horses. The choice of the northern wall for the placement of this set is in accordance with the position of Kubera/Vaiśravaṇa within the Buddhist pantheon. He is both the guardian king of the North and the sovereign of the yakṣa. To briefly summarise, the two walls above the two original gates were dedicated to deities from the tantric section of the pantheon and to historical figures, while the 'lateral' registers focused on topics related to an earlier stratum of Buddhist ideology. It may also be noted that the sets of the 'lateral walls' (i.e. North and South), focus on the image situated in the middle (i.e. Vaiśravaṇa and Brahma), as all other figures are directed towards them. By contrast, the figures of the sets above the two gates (i.e. East and West) are all shown frontally.

Similarities in terms of style, composition and iconography sustain a dating of the monument to the 13th and 14th century.



Fig. 14 — *Southern wall with the deities of the ten directions.* (Kozicz 2015)



Fig. 15 — *Kubera on his lion and one of his yaksha generals.* (Kozicz 2015)

I would like to return again to the *Bhaiṣajyaguru maṇḍala* of Khojar. The two *maṇḍalas* not only share stylistic features and the depictions of the deities of the ten directions. At Khojar, the yakṣa generals too, are prominently included in the *maṇḍala*.⁶ Both Amitāyus and Bhaiṣajyaguru are among the eminent deities whose cults were – and still are – related to the prolongation of the life span. Therefore, and in addition to stylistic evidence, the wider iconographic system applied at Tashigang provides a further hint

⁶ For detailed descriptions of the directional deities and the yakṣa generals at Khojar; see Neumann and Neumann 2010: 128–135, Figures 8–22.

whereby the Amitāyus *maṇḍala* is linked to *maṇḍala* of the Medicine Buddha at Khojar.

While the positions of all the deities along the walls were well chosen, the orientation of the very central Amitāyus appears to be surprising at first sight. The *maṇḍala* is not placed in accordance with the main axis of the *stūpa*. Instead, the axis of the main figure points towards the corner between the southern and the western walls. Again, this was no deliberate choice or even incidental feature. Since the building was not exactly built according to the actual directions of the compass, but roughly facing south-east, the original passage was oriented south-east to north-east. Accordingly, the actual orientation of what is the internal south-west corner is in fact west. I conclude that the person in charge of the development of the overall program aimed at connecting the internal realm with both the actual topographic and directional context.

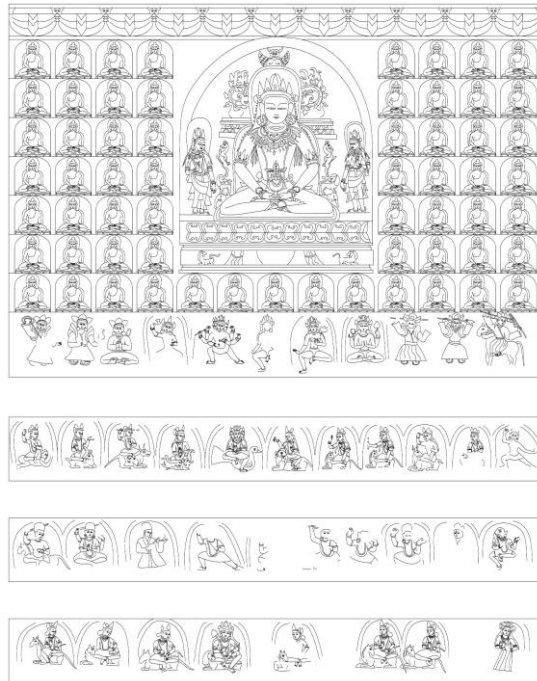


Fig. 16 — Drawing of the complete eastern wall plus the three lower registers of the other walls in clockwise order (S,W,N). (Drawing Kozicz)

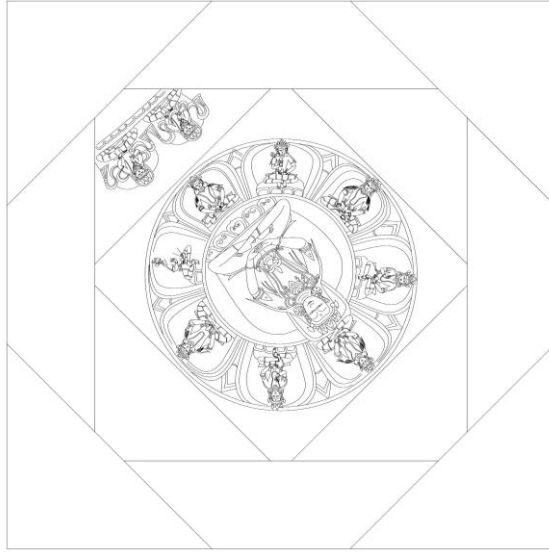


Fig. 17 — Drawing of the ceiling *maṇḍala*. (Drawing Kozicz)

The *maṇḍala* was not only a subject related to the composition of the ceiling and the composition of the upper chamber. The compositional aspects of the *maṇḍala*, based on the division of a spatial plan into a regular grid, can also be traced in the floor plan. Taking into account the natural deviations from the exact plan, it becomes obvious from the geometric pattern of the plans of both levels that the whole *stūpa* was composed upon a grid of 6 × 6 fields. The upper chamber covers exactly the four central fields of the grid, while the sideward extensions of the lower chamber measure two fields each. The dimensions of the walls too, fit into this pattern. The building as a whole may therefore be understood as a *maṇḍala* originally dedicated to Amitāyus and the prolongation of life.

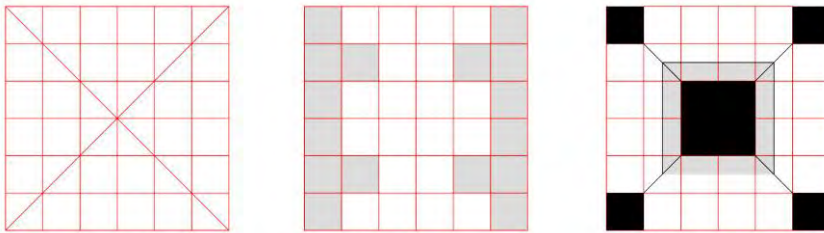


Fig. 18 — Floor plan and *maṇḍala* grid. (Drawing Kozicz)

The overall setting of the monuments of Tashigang is certainly dominated by the interaction between a set of three *lha thos* and the *Amitāyus stūpa*. The three colours of the *stūpa* are actually mirrored by the design of the *lha thos*.

Viewed from the village, which was of course the perspective intended by the builders, the three *lha thos* appear on the horizon. This significant choice underlines the function and the meaning of these structures as a *lha tho* is both a representation of the seat of a deity as well as a symbolic representation of the essence of the respective divinity.⁷ The elongated form and placement of the *lha thos* highlight their anthropomorphic deification. The fact that three *lha thos* form a group not only enhances their visual impact. It is also very uncommon to find such sets in the Western Himalaya; apart from smaller specimens composed of stones just piled upon each other like pyramids, I have not come across a comparable set in Ladakh or Spiti. In addition, there are also other features not commonly found elsewhere and therefore unexpected. First of all, the horns of ibex and blue sheep usually placed on *lha thos* are not part of their compositions. Instead, another small altar-like *lha tho* was erected beneath the rock upon which the group was placed. A close inspection of the *lha thos* reveals further significant aspects. First, each of the *lha thos* has a small platform attached to its hill-facing side. Accordingly, the *lha thos* have a stream-lined shape. Second, two different kinds of branches were used for the upper 'decorative' part. Commonly, juniper has always been the first choice for that part of a *lha tho*. When juniper is not available, some local 'substitute' can be chosen. But in the present case, two different layers were carefully made using branches of trees locally known as 'tama' and 'perma'.

⁷ The symbolic value of *lha thos* is highlighted by a number of monuments which display the faces of the enshrined guardian deities on their cubes. The most prominent example is probably the blue *lha tho* of the protector of the field at the entrance to the valley of Hemis Monastery in Ladakh.



Fig. 19 — Tashigang *lha tho* group plus additional *lha tho* altar. (Kozicz 2015)

Similar configurations of *lha tho*-like stele have been documented by Charles Ramble and Nils Gutschow in Mustang. There, they represent the *rigs gsum mgon po*, the Three Protectors of the Faith; namely Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Vajrapāṇi. Built as *stūpas* their architectural manifestations are among the most popular architectural topic across the Buddhist Himalayas.⁸ However, their order and the respective colour scheme follow a strict pattern which places white Avalokiteśvara in the centre and red, or sometimes orange, Mañjuśrī to his right. This is not the case at Tashigang where the colour scheme is White-Red-Blue. Again, this was not the result of a misinterpretation of the general rule but a deliberate choice as this set does not relate to the Three Protectors of the Faith at all. Instead, interviews with local residents and lamas native to the site produced a different, albeit not homogenous picture of the *lha thos* and their background. According to interviews taken among members of the family of the astrologer (*dbon po*) of Tashigang in November 2015, the set represents the Three Protectors of the Gelugpa, the yellow sect. The deities enshrined should be the red Hayagrīva in the centre flanked by white Nezer Gyalpo (*nezer rgyal po*) to his right and blue Palden Lhamo (*dpal ldan lha mo*) to his left.

⁸ The stele form type of *rigs gsum mgon po* documented by Gutschow and Ramble (2003: 162–165) naturally lack the horns and *kha btags*, too, since edifices dedicated to the Buddhist *rigs gsum mgon po* are essentially not *lha tho*.

Hayagrīva is one of the earliest tutelary deities of Buddhism whose original pre-Tantric form is that of a yakṣa.⁹ Nezer Gyalpo is not that old but his service to the Gelugpa is well ascertained as a group of seven *lha thos* dedicated to him was installed around Leh in the Indus Valley.¹⁰ These seven *lha thos*—also referred to as seven brothers (*spun*)—create a sort of protective network for the Gelugpa foundations of that area as they ‘cover’ a significant stretch of the valley from Parka to Arzu and Gompa (north of Leh). Palden Lhamo is best known as the tutelary deity of Tibet and the Dalai Lamas. There is another single *lha tho* dedicated to her next to the main road between Lossar and Hansa in the very upper Spiti Valley. The visual significance of that *lha tho* is the dominance of blue textiles while the colour red is not represented. This *lha tho* is considered as one of the most powerful in the valley. It is among the few *lha thos* where not only the annual *pūjā* related to the renewal at New Year is performed. Locals offer barley beer (*chang*) and recite prayers to Palden Lhamo whenever they pass by.¹¹

⁹ For the history of Hayagrīva see Rob Linrothe’s discussion in *Ruthless Compassion* (1999: 95–140).

¹⁰ A similar set of seven *lha thos* centring on the Sakya Monastery of Matho in Ladakh is discussed by Pascal Dollfus in her article on the seven Rongtsen *lha thos* of Ladakh (2006: 373–406). The major difference between the Rongtsen (*srong btsan*) *lha thos* and the Nezer Gyalpo *lha thos* is that there are actually seven Rongtsen Brothers associated with that set while in the case of the Nezer Gyalpo *lha thos* one entity is considered as moving freely between the single monuments that constitute the group.

¹¹ According to local informants interviewed in October 2015, the current Dalai Lama visited this *lha tho* and performed a *pūjā* on the occasion of a Kālacakra Ceremony held at Ki. It was not specified by the informants whether this *pūjā* took place during the Kālacakra ceremony 1983 or 1996, or at both events.



Fig. 20 — Nezer Gyalpo, Parka village temple. (Kozicz 2014)



Fig. 21 — Palden Lhamo lha tho near Lossar.



Fig. 22 — *The Three Protectors of the Gelugpa watching over Tashigang.*

Another interview conducted by Yannick Laurent at Tashigang in summer 2016, brought to light a completely different story.¹² According to information received from Grags pa bsam gtan, a Gelugpa monk and native of the village, the main territorial deity of Tashigang is Pehar (*rgyal po dpe har*). In the interview he was referred to as Pehkar Gyalpo (*pde kar/dkar rgyal po*). Pehar's *lha tho* seems to be situated on a mountain behind the village nearby the pass. By contrast to the previously collected notes, the three cairns on the ridge are affiliated with the tripartite conception of the world found in Tibet and in the Himalayas. White is representative of the royal (*rgyal po*) and divine plane, the red colour stands for the mountain warrior spirits (*brtsan*), and blue refers to the subterranean spirits (*klu*).

These two versions do not necessarily pose a contradiction as such. It is a widely acknowledged phenomenon that in the Himalayan and Tibetan cultural sphere the same object might have completely different meanings and function depending on the affiliation and ideological background of the respective practitioner. Especially among the countless territorial deities this is not an

¹² This interview was brought to my attention at a very late point during the process of adaption of the text to the editorial comments in June 2017 and it was not possible to conduct another field trip prior to the completion of the essay in order to re-evaluate and clarify the two different versions.

unexpected feature. The perhaps most significant example for such switch of background or double interpretation is the case of Tsi'u Marpo, the protector of Samye Monastery in Central Tibet. His body colour is red and his three characteristic iconographic elements are the hat with three flags, a heart in his left hand and the spear in his right hand to pierce down a demon. At the same time, this is also the exact visual form of Jagpa Melen, the protector of Thimphu Valley in Bhutan. Accordingly, a Drukpa follower would understand a depiction of this deity completely different to a Nyingmapa practitioner.

We actually do not have any clue about the actual age of the three *lha thos* of Tashigang Village. The significant three-colour-pattern would certainly point at some connection to the gateway *stūpa* and favour some hypothesis on a Sakyapa context, but the oral tradition referring to the tripartite model of the cosmos may certainly be understood as hint to a tradition rooted in a pre-Buddhist cultural stratum. I assume the *lha thos* have accumulated several layers of meaning over the centuries and that the Gelugpa finally superimposed their protective triad over an earlier tradition without erasing it completely—perhaps not even attempting to erase it.

The *stūpa* was probably a part of the religious landscape created by the Sakya order before it was taken over by the Gelugpa after they established their regional centre at Ki.¹³ With the incorporation of the *lha thos* into their ideological system by positioning their own protective triad, the Gelugpa nevertheless made a clear statement. Through their protectors they proclaimed superiority over the site and made it clearly visible across the gorge. Through a deliberate choice of colours, they also incorporated the existing *stūpa* into their system and brought it under their sovereignty. In a similar manner, the incorporation of the *lha thos* may therefore not be understood as a measure only to guard or protect a certain territory but also as a method to exercise control and power over the territory.

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My participation in the Oxford Conference as well as the fieldtrips

¹³ The Sakya monastery of sTeng rgyud at Gog mig is considered the only Sakya complex in the Spiti Valley. dKyid monastery is traditionally attributed to the Gelugpa monks sTod Shes rab bzang po and his disciple Shes rab blo gros (Vitali 2000 : 82-84).

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Kungri Tsuglakhang Murals Conservation-Restoration Project

Mélodie Bonnat
(Paris)

Introduction

he Kungri Tsuglakhang Conservation Project is an undertaking of the Padma Sambawa Cultural Memorial Society directed by Yomed Rinpoche, also known as the Spiti Tulku, head of the Ugyen Sang Ngag Chö Ling Monastery. Kungri is located in the Pin valley, at a two-hour distance by car from Kaza, the capital of the Tehsil Spiti of the Lahul-Spiti District. With an altitude of 3600 meters above sea level, the organisation of a conservation project in the region is no small task. The principal aims of the project are to conserve and restore the Tsuglakhang (*gtsug lag khang*) which is the oldest Buddhist Nyingma shrine of the Pin Valley.

The project began in 2013 when Tibetologist Namgyal Henry invited the present author, in the capacity as painting conservator, to visit the Kungri Monastery in order to assess the conditions of its murals. The wall paintings were then examined and a detailed condition report was prepared. Following this first survey, I organized a fieldwork with voluntary conservators to carry out the necessary preliminary tests in 2015. Thanks to Yomed Rinpoche's interest in the preservation of the monastery's heritage, the conservation work continued up to 2017, and is now in need of further action.

The Tsuglakhang was founded in the 14th century by *Rang rig pa Sang rgyas 'od zer*, a Nyingma lama from Central Tibet.¹ The paintings were realised later when the temple was modified to welcome another ritual practice brought from Bhutan, namely the

¹ Henry 2016: 186.

tradition of Pema Lingpa.² Since the beginning of our work, and as soon as we started cleaning the paintings, a stylistic and iconographical study suggested that they were probably painted at the end of the 17th century.

In 1841 the temple was severely damaged by fire caused by a Sikh raid. As a consequence the murals were covered with a thick layer of black soot that rendered them nearly invisible.³ Thereafter, the painted interior has also been affected by further deposits of soot due to the practice of lighting butter lamps for religious purposes.

The priority of the project, therefore, was to clean the surface of the murals so as to study their iconography. The work, however, immediately met with new developments due to technical problems due to the difficulty of cleaning of the murals. Restoration required a delicate methodology and the participation of skilled conservators. Research is a large component of the conservation project. It could not take place without the scientific collaboration of N. Henry for the study of iconography and the participation of the Epitopos laboratory in Strasbourg, France, for technological analysis. The scientific research has been supported by the Khyentse Foundation who sponsored the stratigraphic analysis of one sample of painting, which was carried out by Emilie Checroun, Luc Rosenbaum, and Fabrice Surma. The Khyentse Foundation has also provided funds for the acquisition of conservation-restoration material acquired in France and in India.

During the last two interventions (of three weeks each), a good deal of work has been accomplished, though a good deal still remains to be done in order to complete the restoration of the Tsuglakhang and its treasures. The monastery and the conservation team are both actively searching for more funds to resume the conservation work of this important edifice of Spiti.

Description of Ugyen Sang Ngag Chö Ling Monastery

Today, the Ugyen Sang Ngag Chö Ling is composed of a large monastic complex surrounding the main modern temple, which was erected with its courtyard in the 1980s. The complex also comprises the ancient Guru Lhakhang; an edifice built in mud brick and which

² *Ibid.*: 188.

³ *Ibid.*: 189

was extended in 2015 with an additional stone wall and surmounted by a tin sheet roof. The ancient Tsuglakhang, which is the focus of the present study, was constructed in stone and mud brick with a flat roof. Another shrine was built directly against the Tsuglakhang at the beginning of the 20th century, and is dedicated to the practice of the red *sPyan ras gzigs* of the *gter ma* of *Padma gling pa*.⁴ In 2004, a concrete guesthouse was also built to welcome the Dalai Lama; unfortunately the building obstructs the view of half of the Tsuglakhang.

The architectural layout of the monastery, as witnessed by a photograph published by Romi Khosla in 1979,⁵ was quite different not so long ago. These photographs are probably the oldest views of the monastery. One of the images shows the access to the Tsuglakhang surrounded by buildings built in stone and mud brick. Another image shows a large scroll painting (*thangka*) displayed outside the Tsuglakhang during a ceremony.⁶ This *thangka* is still preserved inside the temple. As a result of the significant alterations made to the site in modern times, the surroundings of the temple have seen drastic changes, however, the access to the Tsuglakhang has retained its original configuration. Visitors enter through a small door and step into a corridor one and a half meter wide; they then turn left passing by the entrance to the red *sPyan ras gzigs* shrine, before arriving into the ancient Tsuglakhang, which is now the second shrine on the right.

The exterior of the Tsuglakhang is in perpetual state of renovation. In 2015, the monastery's head decided to dismantle a concrete terrace built in 2004, as well as the additional rooms surrounding the two shrines. The monks, advised by our team, wanted to set up a small garden to valorise a natural water source, which springs in summer time. The channelling of the watercourse would also have protected the building from eventual dampness damage. However, the results visible in 2016 were different from the proposal given by us. Instead, a concrete flight of steps is now leaning against the temple and the garden is unlikely to be set up (Fig. 1).

⁴ *Ibid.*: 190.

⁵ Khosla 1979: Figure 147.

⁶ *Ibid.*: Figure 146.



Fig. 1 — The Tsuglakhang in 2016.

Another view published in Khosla's book shows the temple from the back flanked by additional rooms. These rooms no longer exist and were probably used for meditation or storage.⁷ In the picture, the original architectural design is still visible, characterized by stones, mud plaster, a flat roof ornamented with different levels, a low surrounding parapet composed by dry twigs painted in red included in the wall with mud and, underneath the parapet, a thirty-centimetre large band painted in plain red which is still visible today. Yomed Rinpoche confirms that these red and white layers were made with natural colours still produced nowadays in the valley. These colours can still be seen as having been used on old and new houses in the village, although the technical know-how might have been lost. Today the roof of the temple looks slightly different from the one photographed by Khosla; as lanterns with glass windows were added on top of the two shrines, while the external design remains similar.

Description of the Tsuglakhang

Despite the altered aspect of the temple outside, embedded in modern constructions, its interior can still be considered as authentic. The Tsuglakhang is a small forty-two square meter room with four wooden pillars (Fig. 2). A low traditional wooden ceiling is three

⁷ Id. Figure 148.

meters high from the wooden floor, which is fifty centimetres higher than the level of the access corridor. The original height of the ceiling is unknown and it might have been modified after the Sikh plunder, or in more recent times after Khosla's visit.⁸ After parts of the paintings were cleaned in summer 2016, however, the conservators discovered that the position of the painted curtains (*sham bu*), which are traditionally visible on the murals just underneath the ceiling, matched the height of the ceiling. It is therefore believed that the original height of the room must have been preserved. The framework of the ceiling is made of undecorated timbers. Pillars and capitals present simple shapes. Columns simple and uncarved in contrast to those inside the red *sPyan ras gzigs* shrine and the Guru Lakhang. The walls are made of stones in their lower part, while mud bricks and mud plaster are used for the upper portion. Walls are approximately ninety centimetres thick. Natural light enters through a modern one meter high lantern set in the centre of the room. The opening light up a platform where ritual butter lamps are disposed by the monks. The rest of the room remains usually quite dark; an impression accentuated by deposits of black soot on the wall paintings.



Fig. 2 — The Tsuglakhang in 2016, after the conservation intervention.

Most of the walls are painted, even behind the more recently painted wooden altar. The total surface of the paintings reaches

⁸ Henry: 189.

almost sixty square meters. While various *thangkas* used to be hung in front of the murals they were removed in 2013 to allow for a preliminary assessment of the wall paintings. The small wooden altar contains numerous statues, and its one meter high coarsely painted platform made of mud supports a series of clay statues likely dating to the 19th century, as well as various ornamented metal reliquaries (i.e. chörtens). Some of the statues are clad with textiles and are only shown during peculiar rituals. The mud platform is a later addition, as an interruption of the painted patterns on the wall paintings behind it indicates.

The temple is still in use today for daily rituals performed by a monk appointed to this position every second year. The room is also used by other monks of the monastery on special occasions. Pilgrims and worshippers from the valley or elsewhere visit the temple, and as such constitutes the living heritage of a vivid and ancient religious tradition. For that reason, the conservation-restoration project of this edifice presents specific human challenges in addition to the classic technical and scientific problems that usually concern conservation professionals.

Conservation project

The project started in 2013 when N. Henry, who was studying the history of the valley for his doctorate at the time, noticed that the monks of the monastery were facing difficulties trying to clean the wall paintings. They were indeed trying to remove a thick layer of soot with traditional white scarves and water, hence causing important damage.

The author of this paper, who has matured experience in the field with similar projects in Tibet and Sikkim,⁹ went to Spiti for the first time to meet Yomed Rinpoche in September 2013. As for every conservation project, the first step consisted in determining the condition of the paintings by assessing the extent of damage and material used. All the data collected were presented in a report, along with a full analysis, a restoration proposal, and recommendations for future interventions concerning the type of conservation material required. At that time, small painting samples were collected to carry out a technical analysis in a laboratory. The study of the artistic

⁹ Bonnat 2012. Id. 2015.

programme of these murals was essentially impossible due to a thick layer of soot covering them. Henry's research on the iconography was therefore put on hold and could resume only after a first cleaning phase.

Condition report

Original materials

The original materials used in the making of these paintings present peculiar features. The support is a classic mud plaster containing a large amount of straw. The plaster is between three to five centimetres thick. It is quite cohesive and presents cracks probably due to the way the plaster was applied. The local clay has relevant shrinking characteristics, proving that it has a high content in swellings clays. Therefore, it is necessary to use sufficient material like straw and sand to counterbalance the shrinkage and to press the plaster surface repeatedly after the application for several days. This procedure was probably not respected by the artisans, resulting in the natural formation of numerous one-centimetre deep cracks due to the evaporation of water. This type of mud plaster requires to be treated with a proper method, such as correct preparation of the mud plaster and appropriate application of the restoration mud mortars on the wall.

The original technology of the paint layer is complex and it could have not been fully characterized without a technological analysis. Few studies about wall paintings technology analysis have been published in Spiti so far. The research made by Bayerova and al. on the wall paintings of Dangkhar in Spiti, and the one conducted by Stephanie Bogin on 12th-century wall paintings at Nako Monastery in Kinnaur, are the most relevant for the case under review.¹⁰ Further studies published regarding murals conservation in Ladakh,¹¹ in Tibet,¹² and in Central Asia,¹³ which may be useful to establish comparisons with the present study. Publications about material analysis of *thangkas* paintings could also be considered as possible

¹⁰ Bayerova et al. 2013. Bogin 2005.

¹¹ Nicolaescu 2008.

¹² Simonsen et al. 2015.

¹³ Yamauchi et al. 2007.

references as far as paint layer technology is concerned.¹⁴

Due to budget restrictions, we could analyse only a single sample of paint from the Tsuglakhang, which nevertheless yielded numerous results. The sample was taken from the blue body of the third standing deity located in the middle of the south wall called *Che mchog he ru ka yab yum* (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 — *Che Mok Heruka* after 2016 intervention.

A micro stratigraphy was conducted by the laboratory Epitopos in Strasbourg, thanks to the Ashoka Grant from the Khyentse Foundation. The cross section obtained under microscope shows a multilayer stratigraphy of the painting, from the structure of the wall to its surface (Fig. 4). First, in the lower portion of the sample lies the superficial part of the mud plaster (layer 1 in the picture). Secondly, the preparatory layer applied on the plaster is a thick and intense orange layer made of red ochre, which can be seen with the naked eye observing the paint layer losses (layer 2). This orange layer is surprising as preparatory layers usually identified on Himalayan wall paintings and thangkas are made of white substance such as calcium carbonate or kaolin. No reference is made to an orange preparatory layer. The third layer, which overlies the orange preparation, is a black under-layer made of charcoal (layer 3). The fourth layer, i.e. the visible paint layer, is made of ground azurite, a precious stone and blue mineral (Fig.5) (layer 4).

¹⁴ Jackson 1984. Boyer 2010.

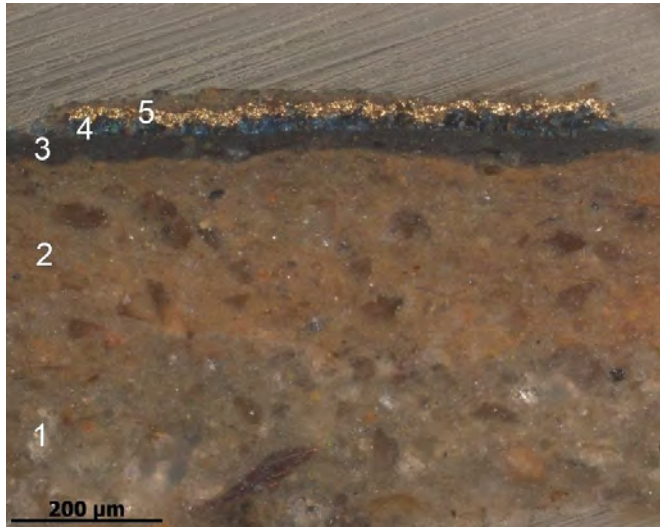


Fig. 4 — Cross-section of a sample analyzed by Epi-topos.

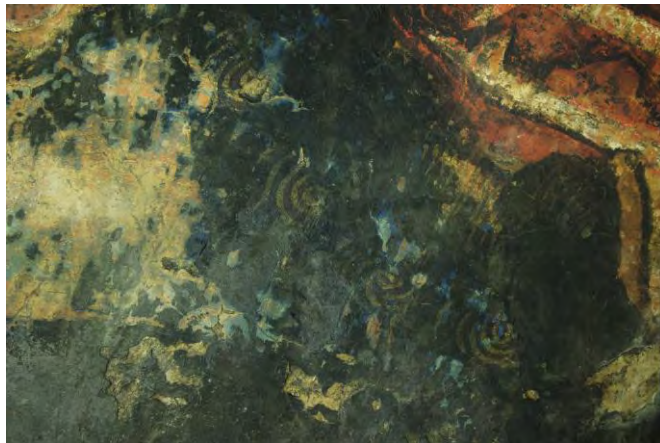


Fig. 5 — Detail of the deity Che mchog he ru ka yab yum whose skin is painted with azurite on the south wall.

It is a well-known technique used in Europe and in Asia. A black under-layer made of a cheaper material is used in order to enhance the hue of the expensive azurite blue. This technique is also attested in Nako (Kinnaur, H.P.),¹⁵ in Ladakh (J&K),¹⁶ and in Bamiyan

¹⁵ Bogin 2005.

¹⁶ Nicolaescu et al. 2008: 67.

(Afghanistan) where lapis lazuli was used instead of azurite.¹⁷ The traditional binding media has not been analysed but we expect an animal glue widely used all over the Himalayan regions.¹⁸ Glue paintings present specific properties such as high water solubility, brightness of colours, and natural lack of glossiness. These characteristics need to be taken into account during restoration work; the presence of the thick soot deposit, however, modifies entirely these properties.

Returning to the micro stratigraphy, a fifth layer made of gold was thinly applied on top of the blue (layer 5). It was used to depict and enhance the jewellery, eyebrows, and eyelashes of the deities (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6 — Detail of gShin rje whose eyebrows are painted with gold powder on the south wall.

Eventually, the analysis of the sample did not bring to light the presence of any layer of varnish. The presence of varnish, however, is easily ascertainable by a simple visual observation with or without the aid of an ultraviolet lamp. On the south wall, for example, it is possible to observe a very irregular varnish with blue-green fluorescence under ultraviolet light, which indicates the use of a natural resin. The varnish was roughly applied. It seems likely that the resin was originally meant for furniture rather than for murals.

The technological study, although limited to a small sample, has been very important to understand the uncommon stratigraphy of

¹⁷ Tanigushi 2007: 147.

¹⁸ Jackson 1984. Boyer 2010. Simonsen 2015.

the murals; especially regarding the presence of the orange under layer. All the information obtained are essential to help choose the best conservation treatments. Moreover, the use of gold and azurite blue confirms the antiquity and precious nature of these wall paintings.

Alteration and damage

A great variety of alteration and damage has been observed on the murals. Regarding the plaster, we noted the presence of old fillings made of cement, mud, or even mud mixed with PVA glue and wood powder.¹⁹ These fillings overlay the original paintings and were physically and chemically incompatible with the original plaster. Some deep and superficial plaster losses, due to the desiccation and contraction of the original mud, were also observed. Notwithstanding these problems, the support was in a relatively good state of conservation in view of the age. It is worth noting the absence of plaster detachment and a general good adherence of the plaster onto the mud bricks of the wall, despite the shrinking properties of this material.

On the other hand, the paint layer presents numerous alteration and damage of different kinds and types. The main problem is a noticeable soot deposit incrusting in the painting surface. Moreover, roof leakage resulted in additional deposits of mud on top of the soot, taking the shape of vertical lines. These traces impregnate the paint layer and hide large portions of the paintings. Traces of abrasion are attested on both varnished and unvarnished areas of the walls. Varnished surfaces were probably cleaned manually and inadequately before the application of the resin, while unvarnished areas suffered from paint losses due to roof leakage. In several places, especially under the ceiling, the paint layer presents a low adhesion level and numerous flakes are visible. These flakes are likely to fall off and cause further paint loss, as is already noticeable in some areas.

The varnish presents various problems. It is quite irregular, yellowed, and thick in some places. It was applied above layers of soot and mud leakage, which accidentally contributed to consolidating them. In varnished areas, old mud deposits are

¹⁹ PVA, polyvinyl acetate is a common white emulsion glue used for furniture.

impregnated with resin as a result of which they stick strongly onto the paint layer. Old renovation work, particularly nearby the door, has caused further damage. A grey and white paint was applied on the edges of the door, partly covering the original paintings around it.

The conclusion of this condition report indicated that the preservation of the Tsuglakhang paintings require a huge amount of conservation-restoration work. Efforts should be made to find appropriate cleaning methods to separate and remove all exogenous substances from the original paint layer, such as mud leakage, varnish, and soot.

Conservation Work

Prior to the cleaning phase, paint flakes were treated with a mix of water and alcohol before being consolidated with sturgeon glue diluted at 2% in water using small syringes. For thicker flakes, the sturgeon glue was mixed with methylcellulose to get a more viscous glue. These types of glue are very effective. They leave no halos on the paint layer and show a good level of compatibility with both mud plaster and paint layers. Moreover, it is important to exclude the use of synthetic adhesive to guarantee material compatibility, and to keep the circulation of air and humidity through the wall.

Cleaning

The cleaning of the east wall was carried out using a cotton swab, water and saliva. The process was sufficient to remove the mud and the soot deposits entirely, which were rather thin in this area. The cleaning revealed some painted images more clearly, allowing for a first study of their iconography. Unfortunately, the murals on the east wall are not sufficiently preserved and all the figures could not be identified.

On the south wall, we tested several cleaning agents; including dry methods, such as erasers and solvents, or water based methods, such as solutions or hydrogels; these methods were used with different types and time of application (e.g. compresses and cotton swabs).

The first step consists of cleaning the varnished surface with a water based cleaning agents (e.g. tri ammonium citrate solution).

This step was relatively quick as the varnish layer protects the original paintings against alterations. It resulted in an immediate change in the appearance of the room.

Next we proceeded to numerous varnish removal tests. The best result was obtained with the use of isopropanol compresses made with facial tissue applied on the varnish for two minutes, before being cleaned with cotton swab and isopropanol. The result was satisfying and homogenous, preserving the original colours underneath. It eliminated the shining effect of the varnish, providing a better view of the paintings (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8).



Fig. 7 — Detail of the south wall before cleaning; the blue square localize the next detail.



Fig. 8 — Detail of the south wall after cleaning; one of the followers of Padmasambava.

A third phase consisted in removing a first layer of soot deposit using dry methods such as latex smoke sponge, vulcanized latex eraser, and standard white vinyl eraser. Dry cleaning methods are commonly used for removing soot,²⁰ especially from matte paints and *thangkas*.²¹ Dry cleaning had a discrete effect that should not be neglected before starting further cleaning: the reactivity of the surface to liquids is facilitated and the vertical mud deposits are more visible after dry cleaning, and therefore easier to remove.

Afterwards, the mud deposits caused by roof leakage were removed from both varnished and unvarnished areas. In both instances the mud was strongly incrustated into the paint layer making its removal tricky and time consuming. The cleaning was carried out with the aid of magnifying glasses, scalpels, thin hard brushes, and various pointy thin tools in order to gently scratch the mud after having humidified it with small quantities of water. The intervention was not completely successful, however, as the removal of mud caused the dispersion of a thin white powder, which created halos leaving, even after hours of work, tiny remains on the surface. Nonetheless, the general aspect of all cleaned areas was considerably improved.

The fifth phase consisted in removing soot deposits. Soot deposit is a common problem for mural conservators in the Himalayas and Central Asia where butter lamps are traditionally offered by worshippers, causing dramatic effects on tempera techniques. While the conservation treatment of *thangka* paintings has been more thoroughly documented,²² few scientific articles address the issue of soot.²³ The methods used for cleaning *thangkas* can be adapted to wall paintings. Only few cases of Himalayan murals conservation projects with a similar soot-related problem have been published. There are more reports concerning the technological study and the peculiarities of working in a Buddhist context than about the conservative technicalities relative to soot cleaning.²⁴ The use of laser has been explored by Schmidt, in particular to remove soot from the surface of glue-based paintings.²⁵ This method, however, has proven

²⁰ Spafford-Ricci et al. 2000.

²¹ Rieuf 2011. Boyer 2010.

²² Boyer 2010; Rieuf 2011.

²³ Spafford-Ricci et al. 2000.

²⁴ Oeter et al. 2010; Pfund 2015.

²⁵ Schmidt 2011.

to be effective only on certain pigments, and was generally considered too expansive for the present project.

The religious use of butter lamps in Himalayan temples suggests that soot deposits are composed of numerous inorganic dust mixed with protein decomposition substances, the latter of which are rather organic, acidic, and polar. We have thus followed progressive testing methods using an array of material, from non-polar to polar solvents and water based products, with the use of different types of application like cotton swabs, absorbing compresses, and gels, as suggested by Cremonesi and Wolbers.²⁶ Eventually, the best results were obtained with three different products. In the first place, and for sensitive areas, we used saliva cleared with water or a solvent mix (water/isopropanol 50/50) applied gently with cotton swab for a short period of time to avoid the dissolution of the paint layer. Secondly, and for less sensitive areas, we gently applied with cotton swab water alkaline (pH between 8 and 9) soap solutions prepared with triethanolamine, or different kinds of Ethomeen[®], which are surface-active lipophilic amines, for a short period of time and cleared with water.

Finally, and for more resistant areas, lipophilic neutral or slightly alkaline hydrogels prepared with Pemulen[®]TR2,²⁷ and various alkaline salts such as ammonium hydroxide and bis-tris methane.²⁸ These methods would seem quite extreme on this type of paintings but they are admittedly the only way to produce a chemical reaction with the polar and oxidized soot deposit, and thus diminish its opacity without altering the appearance of the original colours. In view of the satisfying results obtained, it was decided not to test other and more aggressive methods that could cause abrasion or deterioration of the paint layer (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8). In the future, the methods developed for the south wall could also be used on the other walls of the room. On the north wall for example, tests have been carried out revealing a gold pigment used for the skin of deities (Fig. 9) where cleaning methods were effective.

²⁶ Cremonesi 2011; Wolbers 2010.

²⁷ Pemulen TR2 is a poly acrylic acid that produces translucent hydrogels under certain pH conditions.

²⁸ Different alkaline salts have been tested by Hennen for her Master Degree at La Cambre in Brussels. Hennen 2016.

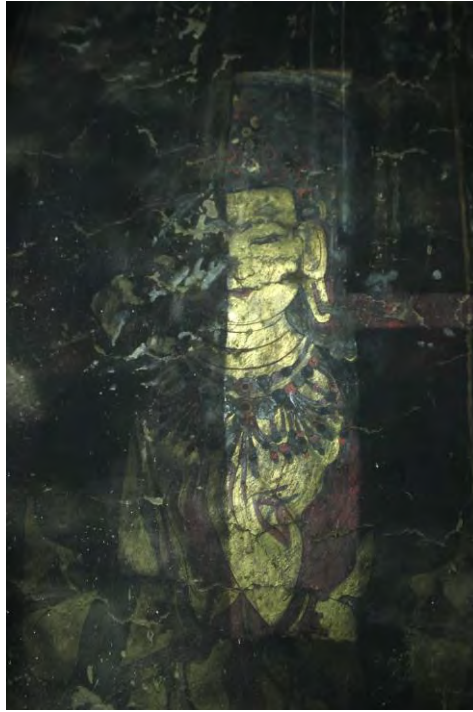


Fig. 9 — Detail of the north wall during cleaning (Credit E. Aubert).

Mud plastering

Before filling plaster losses, tests were carried out to select adequate mud composition; local mud was dried up and sifted to get appropriate grain size; various types of mortar were made using different percentages of sand to obtain the right hardness and avoid shrinkage. The mortar was tested on site and proved to be fit for conservation requirements. It was used not only to fill large plaster losses but also smaller ones with the help of a small spatula. The same treatment was used again in 2016 when coarse and thin plaster layers were made on the south, east, and north walls.

Recovering the iconography

After the cleaning of the south wall in 2016, we discovered a series of very fine and delicate figures painted right underneath the ceiling. It was not easy to get a clear view of the twelve-centimetre high figures

located three meters above the floor. We thus decided to trace the outline of each figure by using transparent plastic sheets and permanent markers. Each drawing was then scanned and processed through a graphic software.

In this way, we could identify on the east wall, just on the right side of the door, two of the Four Guardian Kings (*rGyal chen bzhi*); *Phag skyes po* holding a sword, and the *Yul 'khor srung* playing a music instrument. The two other Guardian Kings are visible under the soot on the left side of the door. On the left part of the south wall, Henry identified three large deities, namely *gShin rje*, *rTa mgrin yab yum*, *Che mchog he ru ka yab yum*, who are all *Yidam* related to the Pema Lingpa tradition (Fig. 3 and Fig. 10).



Fig. 10 — Detail of *rTa mgrin yab yum*'s head during cleaning.

Unidentified religious figures wearing lotus hats or a turban were painted between these *Yidams*. Similar religious figures are also represented on the west wall but could not be identified (Fig. 11).

On the right side of the south wall is a series of small scenes representing episodes of the Buddha's past lives, such as, for instance, the Tigress *Namo* feeding on the Buddha's flesh. Other animals such as rabbits, a bear, a buffalo are also depicted. Next to these scenes, Guru Rinpoche's pure field known as *Zangs mdog dpal ri* is represented. Padmasambhava is shown seated in the centre of the palace. His skin tone painted with gold pigment. Underneath, just above a recent mud pedestal, are visible two small little architectural representations, which have not been identified yet.



Fig. 11 — Detail of rTa mgrin yab yum's belt of heads.

On the upper part of the wall, thirteen of the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava, followed on the right by some of the hundred wrathful and peaceful deities (Fig. 12) are disposed all along the wall underneath the ceiling, and continuing the west wall and behind the altar. It is necessary to resume the cleaning of the paintings to complete the iconographical study of the figures painted in the temple, thus understanding its religious lineage and history.



Fig. 12 — One of the hundred peaceful and wrathful deities, photography and tracing.

Conclusion

The three conservation interventions carried out at the Kungri Tsuglakhang since 2013 have already shown tremendous progress with respect to the consolidation and cleaning of its wall paintings. Every year, an international team of specialists resumes restoration work, bringing in new ideas and methods. The understanding of the artwork technology and the conservation methodology are getting more detailed and accurate. Team members were pleased to be able to implement efficient methods in order to remove mud traces and soot deposits from the wall paintings but are still looking for alternative solutions to obtain more positive results. The cleaning methods are time consuming, requiring a high degree of precision, and should imperatively be conducted by trained conservators.

The twofold aspect of this research project, both technological and artistic, sheds more light on the characteristics of the wall paintings. Sample analysis has already shown that the wall painting presents a unique red ochre under layer, rather than more conventional white preparation. The use of high quality gold and azurite pigments attest to the quality of the wall paintings.

The Tsuglakhang Temple is a very important site for the history of the Spiti Valley and for the local living Buddhist culture. In such a remote area where neither expert nor funds are available, communication with the local community about heritage conservation-restoration is essential. We deem very important for the local people to understand our work, the slow pace necessary for the conservation effort, the kind of results they can expect with the delicate training that is required for the task. The local community must participate in the decision making process, and we feel the need to explain our objectives in the most accessible manner. Some of the monks have already expressed their interest to get involved and learn simple conservation methods and techniques. We are currently offering basic trainings to some of them. They are asked to perform simple conservation tasks on sculptures as interventions on murals would require more training. We are conscious that this strategy needs to be developed carefully to get the best conservation result possible. Meanwhile we hope to create a sense of ownership and awareness of cultural heritage. Not only a service for the local community, it is also an intense experience for the foreign

participants who experience working in a living religious heritage site.

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The Origins of the Padma gling pa Tradition in the Cloud Valley of Spiti

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During the lifetime of *rig 'dzin* Padma gling pa (1450–1521), his tradition was mainly spread throughout the Himalayan regions corresponding to present-day Bhutan and Southern Tibet. After his death, the tradition continued to spread and develop, mainly thanks to three lineages of incarnations, *viz.*, the *Pad gling gsung sprul*, incarnations of Padma gling pa himself; the *Pad gling thugs sras*, incarnations stemming from Zla ba rgyal mtshan (1499–1586),¹ one of his sons and heart disciples; and the *sGang steng sprul sku*, incarnations of Padma gling pa's grandson, *rgyal sras* Padma phrin las (1564–1642).² The first two lineages of incarnations were based in Lha lung theg mchog rab rgyas gling in Southern Tibet (*Lho brag*),³ and gTam gzhing lhun grub chos gling in Bum thang,⁴ Bhutan. The sGang steng lineage was associated with the sGang steng monastery in Wangdi Potrang in Bhutan. These three mother monasteries and their branches were the main sites where the tradition was studied and practised.⁵

¹ Zla ba rgyal mtshan passed away in 1586, on the 17th day of the 9th month of the Metal Dog year of the 10th cycle. Henry 2016, Annex 3: 51-53.

² Even if these three lineages of incarnations had been clearly distinct for centuries, it appears that people in Bhutan have been speaking of Body (*sku*), Speech (*gsung*) and Mind (*thugs*) incarnations of Padma gling pa for a few decades. This type of classification, though very common, has nothing to do with Padma gling pa's tradition and is never found in older biographical sources such as the short biography of Padma gling pa and his subsequent incarnations, the *Pad gling 'khrungs rabs kyi rtogs brjod nyung gsal dad pa'i me tog* (ZTCDR1 vol. 14: 511-600) written by Kun bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma (1843–1891), the 8th *Pad gling gsung sprul*, and the complement to this work, the *Pad gling 'khrungs rabs rtogs brjod dad pa'i me tog gi kha skong mos pa'i ze'u 'bru* (ZTCDR1 vol. 14: 601-629), written by bDud 'joms rin po che, 'Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje (1903–1987). A brief discussion on this lineage classification issue can be found in my thesis (Henry 2016: 149-151).

³ Regarding this monastery and its branch (Ka tog si tu 1999: 241-253; Chos 'phel 2002: 135-137) and the relations between Bum thang and Southern Tibet, and this monastery and gTam gzhing in Bum thang *vide* Pommaret 2003.

⁴ Regarding this monastery *vide* Pommaret and Imaeda 1987.

⁵ Regarding the spread of Padma gling pa's *gter ma-s* *vide* Gayley 2007.

In 2003–2004, while I was studying at the sNga 'gyur bshad sgrub 'dod 'jo gling in Sundarjal, Nepal, some *sprul sku*-s and monks from Spiti and Kinnaur told me there were many Padma gling pa practitioners, including relatives of theirs, in certain villages in Kinnaur and in the Pin (*sPrin*) Valley of Spiti.⁶ I wondered where these lineages came from, who the teachers of the people who introduced the tradition in these valleys were, how much they had received of the Padma gling pa tradition, and when the tradition had been established in these places?

Even if he travelled a lot during his lifetime and went to Tibet twenty-four times, according to his autobiography, Padma gling pa never went to the Western Himalayas. He mainly transmitted his tradition in Bum thang and in Southern Tibet, gathering disciples from different areas there. The names of his main disciples are found at the end of his autobiography. Apart from a few disciples from mNga' ris,⁷ there were none who could have introduced this tradition in Spiti and Kinnaur. If Padma gling pa did not transmit his *gter ma* tradition in Spiti during his lifetime, perhaps one of his disciples or a later follower, a *sprul sku* or lineage holder, may have visited these areas and transmitted the tradition, however, there are few examples of dissemination of his *gter ma*-s in the Western Himalayas. A few decades after Padma gling pa's death, some of his *gter ma*-s, mainly the cycle(s) of Gu ru drag po,⁸ were spread in Dolpo. A few centuries later, some *gter ma*-s, chiefly the *Bla ma nor bu rgya mtsho*, were transmitted to 'Khrul zhig rin po che Ngag dbang tshe ring (1717–1794),⁹ a famous bKa' brgyud pa *bla ma* from Zangs dkar. There was no connection with Spiti in any of these sources.

A few months later, in 2004, I asked the present incarnation of *rgyal sras* Padma phrin las, the 9th *sGangs steng sprul sku* Kun bzang padma nam rgyal (b. 1955), if he had any information regarding the

⁶ I rarely came across the written form of the name of this valley in the Spiti manuscripts I found there. When it did occur, there were different spellings, but, since the spelling of many other Tibetan words was flawed or corrupted, rather than base myself on these for 'Pin', I would rather suggest the spelling *sPrin* as found in bDud 'joms rin po che's colophon of his arrangement of the *las byang* of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus* (DJSB vol. 6: 143–283). Local oral tradition has a few stories confirming that the name of the valley is Valley of Clouds.

⁷ PLRN: 497–498; 503–504. He also mentioned disciples from mNga' ris at the end of his life, in 1517 in op. cit.: 386; 391; 392; 394 and after his death op. cit.: 480–481; 492.

⁸ Among the *gter ma*-s discovered by Padma gling pa there are three cycles of Gu ru drag po and, in the four biographies, it's not always easy to identify which cycle(s) are being discussed. Snellgrove 2011: 97–99; 103–106; 112; 131; 140; 154; 199; 203; 210; 219; 222; 225–227; 250; 259; 261; 268; 270.

⁹ Ngag dbang tshe ring 1978; Henry 215–216. Special thanks to F. K. Ehrhard who kindly provided me with references for this religious figure and his biography.

dissemination of Padma gling pa's tradition in Spiti and Kinnaur. He mentioned that he was about to visit the families of some of his students in Kinnaur who are currently studying in his school (*bshad grwa*) in sGang steng.¹⁰ According to him the lineages of transmission in Kinnaur and Spiti were not linked to sGang steng but stemmed from Southern Tibet rather than from Bhutan.

The following year, in 2005, *Spyi ti sprul sku* g.Yo med rin po che (b. 1962),¹¹ confirmed to me the presence of a great number of Padma gling pa practitioners in the Pin Valley as well as the existence of some old Padma gling pa tradition manuscripts. In his opinion, the lineage could have come from Lha lung monastery in Southern Tibet. He recommended that I come to Spiti but I was not able to go for several years.

Eventually, in the summer of 2010, I went to Pin Valley. I searched for the manuscripts mentioned by *Spyi ti sprul sku*, but for few weeks I could not find them. In the meantime, I met with some *sprul sku-s*, monks and yogis (including the famous *bu chen-s*)¹² practising the tradition of the Bhutanese *gter ston*. Thanks to them, I was able to gather different elements of the oral tradition.

The Oral Tradition in the Valley

Three families in the Pin Valley hold collections of manuscripts and printed texts.¹³ The biggest and oldest collection belongs to the royal family of Pin Valley, the *No no-s* of Guling. Some of the oldest monks of the valley state that a predecessor of the *No no* family bought an entire shrine including the religious objects and texts from another family and that this collection would also include some of the original texts brought from Tibet by the yogis who established the Padma gling pa tradition in Spiti. Unfortunately, almost 70 percent of

¹⁰ Regarding Padma gling pa's tradition in Kinnaur *vide* Henry 281-312.

¹¹ *Spyi ti sprul sku*, g.Yo med rin po che, was recognized by bDud 'joms rin po che, 'Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje (1903–1987) as the incarnation of dGe slong rin po che, a disciple of Ye shes dpal ldan (dGe 'dun bsod nams 2013: 140-145; Henry 2016 Annex 3: 87-89). The latter was a disciple of Padma bde rgyal (a.k.a. Etaradza) a famous disciple of bDud 'joms gling pa, who, following a prophecy, set up in the Kailash area and spread the practice of the bDud 'joms khros ma (Henry 2016: 242-246).

¹² On the *bu chen-s* and their ritual, *vide* Roerich 1932; Dolfuss 2004; Sutherland 2011; Henry 2016: 198-212.

¹³ Although some families do have old manuscript, the biggest collections are found in the family of the *No no* of the village of Guling, the family of Thogs med phrin las (19th-20th century), the famous reformer of the ritual tradition in Tangti Ogma (*sTeng bsti 'og ma*), and the family of the great throne holder *me me* O rgyan tshe ring in the village of mKhar.

this collection has disappeared.¹⁴ Many of the texts were borrowed but never returned. Furthermore, a red box, the *yig sgam dmar po*, was stolen a few decades ago. According to the oldest monks, the box contained not only the family's official correspondence but also notes on family lineages and historical information regarding the religious history of the valley. The oldest documents on the religious history of the Pin Valley are thus now missing.

A few elements of oral tradition regarding the introduction of the Padma gling pa tradition into the Valley have survived this loss. Some are found in a *mol la (mol ba)*,¹⁵ the *Mol la rin chen phreng ba*,¹⁶ pronounced at the end of certain rituals. Others are only in the memory of the oldest monks. Most of this oral tradition has been recorded in a short text,¹⁷ written by *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin,¹⁸ and in a later one by *mkhan sprul* mTha' bral.¹⁹ Unfortunately, no one can say precisely when the tradition was established.

According to oral accounts, Byang chub bzang po, a religious figure from the village of Bar,²⁰ and already an accomplished practitioner,²¹ went to Tibet where he received the tradition. When he returned, he settled and established the gSer gling bde chen phug which is still visible near gSer gling village and not far from his

¹⁴ At first the collection filled three big boxes and a small red one. Now it fills only one large box.

¹⁵ In Spiti, the term used is *mol la* which would correspond to the Tibetan term *mol ba*. Regarding the usage of the *mol la-s* vide Jackson 1984; Tshe ring rgyal po 2012: 186-197; and particularly Jahoda (forthcoming) who has carried out a lot of research on *mol ba-s* in Spiti. (Jahoda, C. (forthcoming). "Imparting and (Re)Confirming Order to the World: Authoritative Speech Traditions and Socio-political Assemblies in Spiti, Upper Kinnaur, and Purang in the Past and Present", in *Authoritative Speech in the Himalayas*. Special issue of "Oral Traditions," vol. 30, edited by M. Lecomte-Tilouine and A. de Sales, pp. 319-344.

¹⁶ A few months after my first field research I had the opportunity to attend a presentation on the *mol la* given by Christian Jahoda in Paris. Thanks to him, I learnt that at least one other Spiti *mol la* goes by the same name. Here again, I would like to thank Jahoda for pointing out that *mol la* in Spiti mainly corresponded to the one reproduced in Tshe ring rgyal po 2012 and for providing me with the *mol la* section for my studies. I had witnessed only a few recitations of this *mol la* in the Cloud Valley and had never seen it in written form. I read the text carefully but could find no element of the history of the valley which led me to suspect that other local historical elements had been added in the valley itself. This was later confirmed by *Spyi ti sprul sku*.

¹⁷ Tshe dbang rig 'dzin n.d. reproduced in Henry 2016 Annex 1: 103-112.

¹⁸ He is the main teacher at the *bshad grwa* of the Kungri monastery.

¹⁹ 'Jigs med nram rgyal rdo rje 2014. His work is reproduced in Henry 2016 Annex 1: 114-119.

²⁰ The village this yogi originated from is known to the some of the oldest monks of the valley and to the present day *No no* family of Cloud Valley.

²¹ Henry 2016: 165.

birthplace.²² Tradition has it that, including himself, there was a group of thirteen happy *sngags pa-s* living there, practising and doing retreats. The hermitage remained in use by monks and *sngags pa-s* till the middle of the second half of the 20th century.²³

This group of practitioners was later given management of the *gtsug lag khang*,²⁴ the oldest temple in the Valley, which, as its name indicates, was the main temple there until the end of the 1980s.²⁵ Although most books on Spiti claim this old temple was founded by Padmasambhava, recent studies led by *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin and *Spyi ti sprul sku* place its foundation in the middle of the 14th century.²⁶

Again, according to oral tradition, when Byang chub bzang po and his fellow *sngags pa-s* obtained the control of this temple, they transformed it and installed statues, sacred texts and religious artefacts that they had brought from Tibet. It would have been around this time, in the 17th century, that the wall paintings were done. Around 1841, a Sikh force plundered the temple and set it on fire, damaging the murals to the point that they became virtually impossible to identify.²⁷ Now, thanks to French conservator Mélodie Bonnat, these paintings are slowly starting to be revealed. Their identification, which has been ongoing since 2010, will open up a part of the religious history of this small valley.²⁸

The List of Received Teachings

One day, *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin mentioned he had heard about the existence of the list of teachings received (*thob yig*) by Byang chub bzang po but had never found it.²⁹ Finding such a list would help to find who the teachers of this yogi were and what practices he received from them.

²² The hermitage is close to gSer gling village but also not far from Bar.

²³ The gSer gling hermitages are still visible on the left bank of the river near gSer gling village.

²⁴ On this temple, *vide* Henry 2016: 186-197.

²⁵ A map and views of this temple in the late 1970s can be seen in Khosla 1979: 96 map 23; 146; 147 and 148.

²⁶ These points will be explained in a further article on this temple.

²⁷ After the conquest of the Ladakh, the Sikhs annexed Kulu, and then, they sent a force to Spiti; *vide* Hutchison and Vogel 1933, vol. 2: 487.

²⁸ For more on the conservation work see Mélodie Bonnat's article in the present volume.

²⁹ Lists of received transmissions (hon.: *gsan yig*). On the different kinds of *thob yig-s* *vide* Henry 2016: 157, n. 507.

With the help of Ngag dbang tshe ring (b. 1982),³⁰ second son of the *No no* family of Guling, we tried to find the remnants of his family collection but, after a few days without any luck, his elder brother Padma rig 'dzin 'gya mtsho, the present *No no* of the valley, told us they could be in the Thugs rje chen po *lha khang*. After the destruction of the family building near the *gtsug lag khang*, it seems the remaining manuscripts were put in an iron box. We found the box under some statues in this temple dedicated to Padma gling pa's *gter ma*, *Thugs rje chen po mun sel sgron me*.³¹

The box, representing 30 percent of the family's original collection, contained many texts, mostly religious manuscripts. An enormous part of them were connected to the Padma gling pa tradition. I soon found a few texts that helped reveal a part of the origins of the tradition in the Pin Valley. I also found two volumes containing lists of received teachings, one belonging to Byang chub bzang po and another to someone called Padma bsam gtan. There was also a short text illustrating the yoga postures of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus* and a great number of the writings of the 3rd *Pad gling gsung sprul, kun mkhyen* Tshul khriims rdo rje (1598–1669). The manuscripts kept by the *No no* family of Guling offered clues to understanding the introduction of the tradition into the valley. With the help of *Spyi ti sprul sku* and *mkhan sprul mTha' bral* (b. 1970),³² I immediately started classifying the texts found in the iron box and making a catalogue of the different manuscripts. Other scholars such as *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin and monks such as *bla ma* Byams pa dpal ldan, who were also interested in these manuscripts, sometimes helped.³³

Who Were Their Teachers?

The *thob yig* volumes of Byang chub bzang po and Padma bsam gtan contain many different *thob yig*-s. Both practitioners received transmissions from the 3rd Padma gling pa, Tshul khriims rdo rje, who

³⁰ *No no btsun pa*, Ngag dbang tshe ring, entered Kungri monastery and studied at the *bshad grwa*. In 2012, he was enthroned by *Spyi ti sprul sku* as vajra master (*rdo rje slob dpon*) of the Monastery.

³¹ Ngag dbang tshe ring and I along with Padma rnam rgyal from the village of Bar and rNam rgyal from the village of rMud.

³² 'Jigs med rnam rgyal rdo rje also known as *mkhan sprul mTha' bral* was born in the village of rTsud (a.k.a. Upper Guling). Recognized by bDud 'joms rin po che as the incarnation of *bla ma mTha' bral* in 1974, he studied in Nepal and is now the main teacher at the *bshad grwa*, the sNga 'gyur bshad sgrub 'dod 'jo gling, founded in Sundarijal by mKhas btsun bzang po rin po che (1920–2009). He is one of the major *sprul sku*-s in the Pin Valley where he plays an important role when he is there. A short biography can be found in Henry 2016 Annex 3: 89-96.

³³ I would like to thank them all for their kind help.

was their main teacher. Byang chub bzang po, however, also received teachings from the grandson of Padma gling pa, *rgyal sras* Padma phrin las (1564–1642), the founder of sGang steng dgon pa, as well as from the 4th *Pad gling thugs sras*, bsTan 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje (1641–c.1702).³⁴ All this contributes to establishing that our Spiti yogi lived in the 17th century.

Then, while working on the *thob yig*, and hoping to find further information, we decided to look carefully at the writings of the 3rd Padma gling pa. Specifically, in his autobiography *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin found mention of ascetics (*bya bral ba-s*) from Gar zha to whom he granted the Padma gling pa transmissions. Even if Gar zha refers to the Lahaul area, according to *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin this quote must be linked to our yogi from Spiti. I consequently based my further research on his theory. My further researches showed that *mkhan po* Tshe dbang rig 'dzin's intuition was accurate. I found other mentions of these ascetics from Gar zha in the manuscripts and compared the teachings received in the different *thob yig-s* and a few other manuscripts written by the 3rd Padma gling pa.

During the 17th century, some ascetics, such as the famous Rang rig ras pa and other religious figures, visited sacred places like Dril bu ri in the Gar zha area.³⁵ I suspected that Byang chub bzang po might have joined a group of ascetics from Gar zha and travelled to Southern Tibet where he met these great *sprul sku-s* of the Padma gling pa tradition. If he was one or the only ascetic from Spiti in a group of yogis from Gar zha, it might explain why there is no mention of Spiti in the 3rd Padma gling pa's autobiography. If Byang chub bzang po was the only one of these ascetics from the valley or, at any rate, the outstanding one in the group of ascetics who established gSer gling hermitage, this might explain why only his name has lasted down to the present.

What Byang chub bzang po and His Fellow Yogis Received from the Holders of the Padma gling pa's Tradition?

The Relationship with the First sGang steng sprul sku

Before receiving teachings from the 3rd Padma gling pa, Byang chub bzang po seems to have received some transmissions from Padma gling pa's grandson, Padma 'phrin las (1564–1642). In the latter's biography, written by the 3rd Padma gling pa, he says that in 1609,

³⁴ Regarding this date and the 5th *Pad gling thugs sras'* birthdate issue, *vide* Henry 2016, Annex 3 : 53-55.

³⁵ Ngawang Jinpa 2011.

"We and some zealous practitioners from Gar zha extensively received the heart drops of Padma gling pa and his previous [incarnations, Padma las 'brel rtsal and Klong chen pa]".³⁶

Three manuscripts may be linked to that transmission. (1) The second manuscript in Byang chub bzang po's volume is a short *thob yig* of the cycle of Rāhula (*Gza' bdud kyi sgrub skor*) discovered by Padma las 'brel rtsal.³⁷ In this *thob yig*, the receiver's name is not Byang chub bzang po but bKra shis tshe ring. Even though I first considered that the list belonged to someone else, further research in the *thob yig* concerning the Padma gling pa *gter ma*-s he received showed that in the very first transmission lineages he used the name bKra shis tshe ring but, in the lineages that followed, he used Byang chub bzang po. I thus conceived of the possibility that bKra shis tshe ring was a name he used as a youth while Byang chub bzang po was probably the religious name he used later.

Two other manuscripts in the collection suggest that, in his youth and perhaps along with his ascetic fellows, Byang chub bzang po was practicing *rtsa lung* and *rdzogs chen* according to the *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus*, one of the three *snying thig*-s revealed by Padma gling pa.³⁸ (2) The first manuscript is a *rtsa lung dpe'u ris* illustrating the 'khrul 'khor of this cycle. The manuscript's colophon asserts that it was corrected by Padma 'phrin las himself.³⁹ (3) The second is a *khrid yig*

³⁶ *bdag cag dang gar zha'i sgrub pa ba sogs don gnyer 'ga' la / pad gling snying tig gong 'og sogs kyi dbang lung mang po'i thang ma brdal / PL3NT: 12b* (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 167).

³⁷ PLRN: 26; Gu ru bkra shis 1990: 401.

³⁸ On this cycle *vide* Henry 2008: 49-110; Henry 2016: 136-141; ZTCDR1 vol. 4 and 15.

³⁹ This small manuscript in four folios offers a series of representations of each of the twenty-three chapters of the 'khrul 'khor of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus* cycle. In a later composition by the 5th *Pad gling thugs sras*, mChog grub dpal 'bar (1700/1701-1750) (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 54-58) and completed by the 6th *Pad gling gsung sprul*, Kun bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1763-1817) (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 33-36) six further chapters from another *tantra* are added to these twenty-three. Cf. Kun bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus kyi gtum mo bde chen lam mchog gi gsal byed khrid yig zag med bde ba'i dga' ston*, in ZTCDR2 vol. 2 (*Wam*): 313-335. Even if there are manuscripts of this kind in Bhutan nowadays, this manuscript is the oldest representation I have ever seen. It is older than the representations of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus* cycle in the Klu khang which were painted few years later during the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682) Cf. BAKER 2000: 92-93. The palaeography of the manuscript is very close to that seen in the *thob yig*-s of Byang chub bzang po, but I am not able to certify that he is the manuscript's scribe of this *dpe'u ris*. *Vide* Anon., *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus las brtsa* (i.e. *rtsa*) *rlung gsang ba'i lde mi gi* (= *lde mig gi*) 'khrul 'khor gyi pe rigs (= *dpe'u ris*) *rnams*, fol. 4a, in Henry 2016, Annex 2: 201. Regarding the identification of the Klu khang wall paintings as illustrations of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus*'s cycle, Cf. Winkler Jacob 2002, "The *rdzogs chen* murals of the Klu khang in Lhasa", in *Religion and Secular Culture in Tibet*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 321-335.

concerning the *rdzogs chen* practices of the *Kun bzang dgongs 'dus* cycle,⁴⁰ composed by sNa tshog rang grol (15th–c. 1570),⁴¹ a direct disciple of Padma gling pa. This commentary is in Padma gling pa's collected works,⁴² but practitioners nowadays use another *khrid yig* written by gTer bdag gling pa 'Gyur med rdo rje (1646–1714),⁴³ grandson of sNa tshogs rang grol's following incarnation, mDo sngags bstan 'dzin (1576–1628).⁴⁴ This text was composed at the request of the 4th Padma gling pa, Ngag dbang kun bzang rol pa'i rdo rje (1680–1723).⁴⁵ This *khrid yig* did therefore not exist at the time of Byang chub bzang po.

Links with the 3rd Padma gling pa

We lose track of Byang chub bzang po between 1609 and 1630. According to his lists it seems that, over a period starting from 1630 till the start of the 1660s and probably even as late as 1663,⁴⁶ Tshul khrim rdo rje granted him most of the transmissions he himself had received during his lifetime.⁴⁷ During this period Padma bsam gtan received various common transmissions along with him, particularly the complete tradition of Padma gling pa, Klong chen pa's writings and the *Seventeen Tantras* (*rgyud bcu bdun*).⁴⁸

⁴⁰ This manuscript was used along with those in the three collections mentioned earlier, by bDud 'joms rin po che during his compilation of the ZTCDR. One can still see orthographical corrections on them.

⁴¹ sNa tshogs rang grol's further incarnation, mDo snags bstan 'dzin, was twelve years old in 1582/1583 when he was enthroned by the second Padma gling pa, bsTan 'dzin grags pa (1536–1597) (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 7).

⁴² sNa tshogs rang grol, *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus kyi snying po don khrid gsal ba'i sgron me zhes man ngag nyams len snying po bsdus pa mkha' 'gro gsang tshig*, in ZTCDR1 vol. 15: 527–667.

⁴³ *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus kyi khrid yig snying po rab gsal*, in 'Gyur med rdo rje 1998, vol. 6: 274–308.

⁴⁴ *Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus kyi khrid yig snying po rab gsal*, in 'Gyur med rdo rje 1998, vol. 6: 274–308.

⁴⁵ Henry 2016 Annex 3: 7.

⁴⁶ Henry 2016 Annex 3: 28–30.

⁴⁷ Byang chub bzang po received the *Byang gter* tradition from Tshul khrim rdo rje. According to his autobiography, this event took place in 1663. Another element suggests that he might have left in the years that followed since the manuscript of his autobiography kept in Spiti suddenly ends in the middle of the 1660's whereas the version found in Bhutan that Dorji Gyaltsen, who is working on Padma gling pa's tradition with Karma Phuntsho, communicated to me, is complete.

⁴⁸ It seems that they did not receive it all since, for example, there is no mention of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* and various other transmissions Tshul khrim rdo rje gave during his lifetime in their lists.

⁴⁹ An interesting version of the *Seventeen Tantras* kept in the *No no* collection was reproduced in Urgyan Dorji 1977.

The Padma gling pa Tradition

Tshul khirms rdo rje seems to have a great consideration for these ascetics from Gar zha to the extent that, in Padma phrin las's biography, Tshul khirms rdo rje speaks of them as "zealous" (*don gnyer ba*). In his autobiography in 1630, he says: "Again, back in Lho brag, like pouring the content of one vase into another," I gave the empowerments (*dbang*) and reading authorisations (*lung*) of my own tradition⁴⁹ to some ascetics from Gar zha and so on".⁵¹ After a comparison with *gsan yig*-s of gTer bdag gling pa,⁵² and the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682),⁵³ it was clear that they did not receive less than these great religious figures of their time.⁵⁴

Byang chub bzang po and Padma bsam gtan kept a detailed list of the Padma gling pa tradition they received from him.⁵⁵ Their lists are so alike that not only the title⁵⁶ but also the spelling mistakes and abbreviations are similar. For a while I considered they had either copied their *thob yig*-s from a third person or that one of them might have served as a mother copy for the other, but my critical study of them has not clarified this point.⁵⁷

An examination of their *thob yig*-s reveals not only certain details of the various lineages converging on the 3rd Padma gling pa not found in later lists, but also offers an interesting glimpse of the Padma gling pa *gter ma* transmission at the time. It would appear that, at that stage, the lineage transmission of the two Tshe dpag med *gter ma*-s discovered by Padma gling pa kown as *Tshe khrid nor bu lam khyer* was not yet interrupted. The lineage of this cycle seems to have broken later on and the *gter ma* was then rediscovered by 'Jam dbyang mkhyen rtse dbang po (1820–1892) as 'close lineage' (*nye*

⁴⁹ In his autobiography Tshul khirms rdo rje uses this expression only for important religious figures.

⁵⁰ This refers to the Padma gling pa tradition.

⁵¹ *slar lho brag tu / gar zhag* [i.e. Gar zha] *gi bya bral ba sogs la rang lugs kyi bum pa gang byo'i dbang lung byas* / PL3NT: 13a (Henry 2016: Annex 3: 207).

⁵² *Thob yig rin chen 'byung gnas* in gTer bdag gling pa 1998, vol. 1: 1a-350a; vol. 2: 1a-321; vol. 3: 1a-42b.

⁵³ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgyal mtsho 1970–1971 and Ehrhard 2012.

⁵⁴ I first found mention of a *be'u bum* (regarding this type of text, Cuevas 2010) in the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, which does not appear in the *thob yig*-s of the two ascetics. I would like to thank Dorji Gyaltsen who informed me that they had found a text by the same name in Bhutan, but also, according to him, that it contains mostly minor *gter ma*-s (*gter phran*). As the two yogis also received these teachings, it confirms the idea that they received the entire collection of Padma gling pa's *gter ma* or, at any rate, no less than what the Great Fifth had received.

⁵⁵ Some pages are missing from the Padma bsam gtan *thob yig*.

⁵⁶ *Rig 'dzin padma gling pa'i gter chos kyi thob yig smin grol rgya mtsho*.

⁵⁷ Henry 2016 Annex 4: 64-130.

brgyud).⁵⁸ At that time the transmission lineage of the reading authorizations (*lung*) of Padma gling pa's writings (*Pad gling bka' 'bum*) also still existed. In his own *gsan yig*, 'Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje mentions that by his time the lineage transmission had disappeared.⁵⁹

More interesting is that, many manuscripts in Padma bsam gtan's volume show that he was used to read and write the eleven types of *dākinī* letters (*mkha' 'gro brda yig*) used in the Padma gling pa tradition and that he was especially an expert of the *ze chung* alphabet.⁶⁰

The Other Transmissions Received by Byang chub bzang po and Padma bsam gtan

Byang chub bzang po and Padma bsam gtan seem to have been in contact with Tshul khrims rdo rje disciples such as Bon lung chos rje (17th c.).⁶¹ A third mention of the ascetics from Gar zha is in the first manuscript in Byang chub bzang po's volume, which contains a chant of realization⁶² that Tshul khrims rdo rje composed for them and Bon lung chos rje at Zab bu lung,⁶³ probably when he went there in 1631.⁶⁴

Together the yogis received the *Seventeen Tantras* (*rgyud bcu bdun*) as well as most of Klong chen pa's compilations and works including the *Mkha' 'gro snying thig*, the *Seven Treasuries* (*Mdzod bdun*), some of his commentaries gathered in the *Snying thig ya bzhi* such as the *Zab mo yang tig* and *Bla ma yang tig*. Since Tshul khrims rdo rje transmitted these texts a few times throughout his life, it's not easy to ascertain when he granted them—especially the *Mkha' 'gro snying thig* and *Seventeen Tantras*—to the two ascetics. Tshul khrims rdo rje's autobiography informs us that he received some of them such as the *Mdzod bdun* from Padma phrin las between 1618 and 1623.⁶⁵ Even if, in

⁵⁸ 'Jam dbyang mkhyen rtse dbang po passed that transmission to a disciple of the 8th Padma gling pa Nges don bstan pa'i nyi ma (1843–1891): the 8th rBa kha *sprul sku*, Rig 'dzin khams gsum yong grol (19th–20th c.) who later conferred it to other Padma gling pa's lineage holders (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 77–81).

⁵⁹ DJSB vol. 18: 136.

⁶⁰ Henry 2016: 167–170.

⁶¹ This religious figure seems to be Bon lung pa gar dbang tshul khrims rgyal mtshan, one of Tshul khrims rdo rje's disciples.

⁶² The three folios manuscript was the first in Byang chub bzang po's volume of *thob yig*. PL3NT: 3b (Henry 2016 Annex 3: 226–228).

⁶³ Zab bu lung is a rNying ma pa monastery in the rNam gling district, founded by *bla ma* Shākya bzang po (15th c.), a close disciple of Padma gling pa, who's name appears many times in PLRN, mainly when he travelled to Tibet.

⁶⁴ PL3NT: 14a (Henry 2016, Annex 3: 207).

⁶⁵ In his autobiography, he records receiving the transmission of the *Seventeen Tantras* from Padma 'phrin las in 1613 at sGang steng dgon pa but never mentions transmitting them.

1636, Tshul khrim rdo rje transmitted many *gter ma* cycles of the Padma gling pa tradition as well as other texts like the *Bla ma yang tig* in Southern Tibet,⁶⁶ the two ascetics could also have received these transmissions between 1636 and 1641 when he was invited by Phrin las lhun grub (1611–1662) to Byang chub gling on his way back from a pilgrimage to Lha sa and bSam yas.⁶⁷

Transmissions Received by Byang chub bzang po Alone

Byang chub bzang po's volume contains a few more lists, though some are damaged and incomplete. Due to their bad shape, I have not been able to explore and utilize them totally for the moment⁶⁸ and so will present just a few elements here.

Byang chub bzang po received many other *rdzogs chen* teachings, the *Dri med bzhags rgyud* and the means of achievement (*sgrub thabs*) for Vimalamitra. Since Tshul khrim rdo rje was practicing it for three months in 1631,⁶⁹ this transmission would have taken place only after that retreat.

In the longest *thob yig*, it is mentioned that Byang chub bzang po received a large part of the cycle of the Northern *gter ma*-s (*Byang gter*).⁷⁰ I first supposed he may have received it between 1631 and 1635 while Tshul khrim rdo rje was giving a large series of Southern and Northern *gter ma*-s (*Lho gter*; *Byang gter*) to his master and disciple gZhan phan rdo rje (1594–1654).⁷¹ This is chronologically feasible, but since this *thob yig* seems to follow a kind of chronology and also includes certain transmissions given by the 4th Pad gling thugs sras, bTan 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje (1641–c. 1702), as well as various other transmissions mentioned in both the autobiography and the list, for the moment I would rather place this transmission in 1663.⁷²

A short section of this *thob yig*, also reproduced in another folio, indicates that Tshul khrim rdo rje transmitted the *Bka' thang gser phreng*, the biography of Padmasambhava revealed by Sangs rgyas gling pa (1340–1396), and the *Five Dharmas of Maitreya* (*Byams chos sde lnga*) to Byang chub bzang po. According to Tshul khrim rdo rje's autobiography, this event might have taken place during the winter

⁶⁶ PL3NT: 17b.

⁶⁷ PL3NT: 18a.

⁶⁸ My ongoing research on these damaged documents will offer more information regarding Byang chub bzang po's religious training. It will probably help discover further dates of transmission.

⁶⁹ PL3NT: 13a.

⁷⁰ Some manuscript volumes of the *Byang gter* are still in the *No no* family collection.

⁷¹ PL3NT: 16a.

⁷² PL3NT: 25b.

of 1653–1654.⁷³

His Relation with the 4th Pad gling thugs sras

According to his *thob yig*-s, Byang chub bzang po received several transmissions from the 4th Pad gling thugs sras bsTan 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje. As we lack biographical information regarding the transmission he gave, it's not possible to date them.⁷⁴ To Byang chub bzang po he transmitted the biography of Vairocana: *Bai ro'i 'dra 'bag*.⁷⁵ Gu ru chos dbang's *Eight Transmitted Precepts (Bka' brgyad gsang ba yongs rdzogs)*, the *Guhyagarbatantra (Rgyud gsang ba snying po)* and two biographies of Gu ru rin po che, the *Padma bka' thang* revealed by O rgyan gling pa and the *O rgyan padma 'byung gnas kyi 'khrungs rabs sangs rgyas bstan pa'i chos 'byung mun sel sgron me* revealed by Padma gling pa.⁷⁶

Conclusion

Thanks to the manuscripts of the *No no* family of Guling, the oral tradition and this preliminary study, we know that the tradition of Padma gling pa was established in the Pin Valley by a certain bkra shis tshe ring, born at the end of the 16th century, and who later became known by his religious name Byang chub bzang po. We also now know the identity of one of his fellow ascetics, Padma bsam gtan, who set up with him in the hermitage of gSer gling. Although both received the entire tradition of Padma gling pa, the *Mkha' 'gro snying thig* as well as Klong chen pa's writings from Tshul khriims rdo rje, Byang chub bzang po received many more transmissions from Padma 'phrin las from at least 1609. From 1630 to 1663, or even slightly later, he received most of what Tshul khriims rdo rje himself had received during his lifetime, mainly Southern (*Lho gter*) but also

⁷³ PL3NT: 25b.

⁷⁴ Even if Tshul khriims rdo rje does provide some information in his autobiography, there is no mention of the transmission given by bsTan 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje. Some biographical information is also available *vide* Gu ru bkra shis 1990: 657-658; Henry 2016 Annex 3: 53-54.

⁷⁵ There are different versions of Vairocana's biography. A manuscript copy held by the *No no* family is currently being studied and compared with others by *bla ma* bsTan 'dzin bsam 'phel (b. 1961).

⁷⁶ This *bka' thang* raised some criticism from the dGe lugs pa-s because of certain prophecies it contains. On the polemic surrounding this *bka' thang* *vide* Blondeau 1987. The lineage of reading authorizations is very different from those for all other Padma gling pa *gter ma*-s. An interesting manuscript copy of this *bka' thang* is held by the *No no* family of Guling. The text was borrowed from the village of gSum rwa (in Upper Kinnaur) and reproduced by U rgyan rdo rje *in facsimile* together with the biography of Zla ba rgyal mtshan (Urgyan Dorji 1978).

various northern *gter ma-s* (*Byang gter*). During Byang chub bzang po's later years he also received a few transmissions from the 4th Padma gling thugs sras.

As it is not possible for the moment to date all these transmissions, it is also not easy to identify periods when he was in retreat and when he was in Spiti. Therefore, we cannot, precisely date the foundation of the gSer gling hermitage or the conversion of the *gtsug lag khang* but we can at least estimate that these events might have taken place between 1609 and 1663.

The wall paintings of the *gtsug lag khang* represent not only the *yi dam-s* of the Padma gling pa tradition but also many religious figures. Thanks to French conservator Mélodie Bonnat who has been leading the conservation program in this temple since 2012, these figures will soon be readable and, hopefully, we will be able us to identify them and learn more about this temple and the establishment of the Padma gling pa tradition in the Valley.

Abbreviations

DJSB: Collected works of bDud 'joms rin po che

PLRN: Padma gling pa's autobiography

PL3NT: biography of the 3rd Padma gling pa

ZTCDR1: Padma gling pa's collected works: *Zab gter chos mdzod rin po che*

ZTCDR2: Two additional volumes for the three-year retreat.

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Endangered Archives Documenting Buchen Performance Materials

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his article describes recent fieldwork undertaken in Spiti with funding from the British Library Endangered Archives Programme:¹ a project to photograph Buchen texts (Tib. *dpe cha*), *thangkas* (Tib. *thang ka*) and other performance-related materials.² The Buchen are ritual and religious practitioners, actors and storytellers from Pin Valley, widely known for performing the Ceremony of the Breaking of the Stone.³ John Coldstream's one hundred year old photographs are perhaps the earliest images of a Buchen stone-breaking, a tantric exorcism ritual once more widely staged across Western Tibet.⁴ One Coldstream image depicts the dramatic climax of the exorcism, the moment just before a stone is cracked and its entrapped demon vanquished.

¹ Pilot project EAP 548 (2012) and major project EAP 749 (2014): "*The narrative and ritual texts, narrative paintings and other performance-related materials belonging to the Buchen of Pin Valley, India*". The research was undertaken with the assistance of two fieldworkers: Dechen Lhundup, an ex-monk from Tabo, and Thakpa Tanzin, a monk from Key monastery. Fieldwork materials, consisting of digital photographs and notes, are deposited with the British Library and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala and are viewable on the Endangered Archives Programme website.

² I have been photographing in Spiti since 1993 but first became interested in the Buchen in 1998 when I photographed Mémé Rigzin performing a stone-breaking ceremony and subsequently recorded Mémé Tsering Tobgye singing with his brother.

³ The ritual was thoroughly described by Roerich (1932) and substantially contextualised by Dollfus (2004).

⁴ John Falconer, Lead Curator of Prints, Drawings and Photographs at the British Library first drew my attention to the Coldstream photographs of Spiti, which were donated to the library by the Coldstream family. John Coldstream was a British colonial settlement officer based in Kullu 1910–13. Settlement officers had a responsibility to map out and document settled land in order to identify ownership and facilitate the raising of taxes.



Fig. 1 — Photograph of the Ceremony of Breaking the Stone, by John Coldstream, 1910-13. Neg 1191/4, Courtesy of the British Library.

A Mémé (Tib. *mes mes*, lit. grandfather) Buchen is lifting a large boulder high above his head prior to smashing it down on a slab of rock lying across a man's chest.⁵ In the background are examples of the type of material we were investigating. On a stone wall, covered in a cloth, hang two thangkas.⁶ A wooden box stands before the paintings, supporting a statue of Thangtong Gyalpo (Tib. *thang stong rgyal po*),⁷ butter lamps, offering bowls of water and barley, and a bell. At its base is a pair of cymbals. Partially obscured to the left of the box is a musical instrument, a kokpo (Tib. *ko phongs*). Both Mémé Buchen sport complex headdresses.⁸ They wear long robes, Tibetan boots, necklaces and other adornments, and have daggers tucked into their waistbands.

⁵ Mémé is the common local descriptor for head Buchen.

⁶ In previous fieldwork, I attempted and failed to locate these paintings, but the left hand image is clearly the painting of the story of Nangsa Öbum (Tib. *snang sa 'od 'bum*) we found in Gungri (Tib. *dgung ri*) monastery. Gungri is the principal monastery in Pin Valley, belonging to the Nyingma (Tib. *nying ma*) school of Tibetan Buddhism.

⁷ For an exhaustive description of the extraordinary life of Thangtong Gyalpo; see Stearns (2007).

⁸ The headgear (Tib. *thod*), consisting of a simple woollen cap adorned with numerous detachable multicoloured silk streamers, is a familiar identifier of Mémé Buchen.

Buchen also perform simple folk plays, which parallel the principal stories of the Tibetan Opera (Tib. *a lce lha mo*). These include Indian *Jātaka* tales of previous lives of the Buddha and biographies of Buddhist saints (Tib. *rnam thar*). The performance of these tales is undertaken for the edification of the audience, communicating fundamental Buddhist concepts of karma and impermanence, albeit through the medium of entertainment. Buchen performances could be considered a marginal or peripheral form of the Tibetan Opera. Like Lhamo, they involve acting, narration, dance, social commentary, comedy and slapstick, occasional songs and music.⁹ But unlike Lhamo, most Buchen performances are primarily spoken, regular actors are exclusively male and there is no orchestration.¹⁰ Buchen theatre is significantly less polished than contemporary Lhamo performances in Dharamsala or Lhasa. The makeshift, non-professional quality of these plays, staged in animal pens in the depths of winter by villagers using minimal props, is part of its appeal. However, it is my impression that these Buchen theatrical performances are threatened and perhaps disappearing.¹¹

As a reportage photographer primarily interested in photographing people, the actual process of copying objects excited me little. But the quest to discover these objects and interview their owners presented opportunities to elicit memories and place the material into a wider social and historical context. We contacted the ten active Buchen households and asked them each to suggest where else to find other Buchen-related materials. The inactive or dormant households we were seeking were mainly an unknown territory to

⁹ The relationship between the texts used by Buchen as the basis for their plays and the texts used for Tibetan Opera performances of the same stories requires further investigation.

¹⁰ Female characters, in identifiably female clothing, are primarily performed by the male Buchen, adding to the comedic quality of many enactments. Minor and non-speaking female roles in larger plays are sometimes undertaken by women from the host village.

¹¹ The number of Mémé Buchen and potential Buchen troupes in Pin has increased significantly in recent years. There were five groups in 1998 but this had grown to ten groups by 2016. But the winter tours of Buchen theatre, during which the troupes travel through Pin, Spiti and Upper Kinnaur, are becoming uncommon as the audience for their particular theatre decreases. In contrast, performances of the stone-breaking ritual are regularly staged for tourists and for cultural programmes: Buchen troupes have recently performed for such events in Delhi and Dehra Dun.

us.¹² Most individuals we interviewed were happy to discuss their family histories, lineage and beliefs, and to let us digitise their material, but some dormant households were extremely vague about their distant Buchen connection.¹³

The concept of ownership of Buchen material seems fluid. There is a well-established culture of borrowing and sharing material and many households talk of items lent out and never returned.¹⁴ It is clear that there are fewer thankgas than one might expect, given that Buchen ideally display a thankga related to every story being performed. There are also few original texts. A small amount of material has been sold, and some informants recalled being offered cash for objects like daggers and statues. We were also informed that some damaged, incomplete texts have been burned and some very old, damaged thankgas have been interred in stupas.¹⁵

Buchen Objects

We attempted to document every Buchen performance-related material object. Conches (Tib. *chos dung* or *dung dkar*) are common.¹⁶ They are used to summon audiences or announce the arrival of a touring Buchen group at the outskirts of a village. There they will be met and treated with honour and respect by village women who will offer beer (Tib. *chang*) and yoghurt (Tib. *zho*).

¹² These are households with an inactive Buchen lineage, several of which hold Buchen materials. Two dormant households with thankgas were already known to me from undertaking fieldwork for the AHRC funded project *Disciples of a Crazy Saint*.

¹³ Three households refused to let us photograph materials. Another household requested an exorbitant fee of one million rupees for copying work.

¹⁴ Borrowing and sharing is clearly essential to enable many Buchen troupes in Pin to perform. There is a shortage of material, a limited number of texts, thankgas and key performance objects. However modern Western style texts (Tib. *deb*) of most Buchen stories can now be found in many Buchen households and newer objects are also appearing.

¹⁵ These are the most fragile of Buchen materials and possessing incomplete and unused texts or thankgas is locally regarded as causing bad karma; it is thus preferable to burn them or give them away.

¹⁶ Conches are locally understood to be powerful instruments linked to the realm of the nagas.



Fig. 2 — (left) Charm box containing an image of the wrathful tantric deity Tamdrin. (right) Pema Namgyal and Mémé Chettan Dorje performing a comic interlude during a stone-breaking ceremony. Lara 2004.

Mémé Buchen wear charm boxes (Tib. *ga'u*) in performance. Most larger boxes contain an image of the wrathful tantric deity Tamdrin (Tib. *rta mgrin*, Sk. *Hayagrīva*), who protects the wearer and is the deity visualised by the Mémé Buchen during the stone-breaking ceremony. These rituals are still occasionally commissioned by villagers or monasteries in Pin and Spiti when constructing a new building.¹⁷ Historically, they were commissioned to combat outbreaks of disease.¹⁸ The sword dance is a dramatic section of the ceremony, culminating in the head Buchen leaping on to the tips of the swords, placed under his belly, in his armpits, his cheek or even an eye socket.

We discovered numerous pairs of these swords (Tib. *ral gri*). Daggers (Tib. *rdo rje phur pa*) are also very common. Some informants suggest that Thangtong Gyalpo broke stones with a dagger when exorcising demons¹⁹ and the dagger is used to make a series of circular and stabbing movements during stone-breaking ceremonies. In tantric rituals they are associated with the curing of disease, exorcism and the vanquishing of demons.²⁰

¹⁷ When on tour the Buchen will always undertake the exorcism in the host village. It is seen as beneficial not only for the household which has commissioned the performance but generally for the whole community.

¹⁸ Roerich (1932: p.28).

¹⁹ Roerich, in contrast, states that Thangtong Gyalpo used "another stone similar to a magic dagger" (1932: p.29).

²⁰ Müller-Ebeling et al (2002: p.55) .



Fig. 3 — The late Mémé Tsewang Rigzin preparing to dance with swords during a stone-breaking ceremony. Sangnam 1998.



Fig. 4 — A pair of swords complete with scabbards (Tib gri shubs).



Fig. 5 — A brass dagger. Unusual as most daggers we located are iron, adorned with faces of a wrathful deity.

Tongkas (Tib. *thong ga*, lit. chest) are ornamentations consisting of four carved pieces of conch shell, held together with strips of cloth and string, often decorated with brass buttons or silver coins. They are worn on the chest of performing Mémé Buchen.²¹

²¹ Interestingly, early historical photographs of Buchen stone-breaking ceremonies show Buchen performing without tongkas. Neither of the two Mémé Buchen captured in Coldstream's photographs from Pin Valley are wearing them. The photographs accompanying Georges de Roerich's 1932 article document two separate stone-breaking ceremonies, but again neither of the Mémé Buchen is wearing a tongka.



Fig. 6 — Tongkas.



Fig. 7 — Mémé Gatuk Sonam invoking demons during a stone-breaking ceremony. Lalung 2006.



Fig. 8 — Metal and clay statues of the crazy saint Thangtong Gyalpo.

We discovered a substantial variety of metal or clay statues (Tib. *sku 'dra*) of the crazy saint Thangtong Gyalpo, sometimes painted, sometimes clothed.²² A common depiction holding links of chain in his right hand, references his iron-bridge building activities.²³ There are numerous local stories about the power of these statues and their embodiment of the presence of Thangtong Gyalpo. One informant asserted that the face of the statue in his possession would darken with displeasure and lighten with happiness during recitations. One non-Buchen householder narrated the tale of his large red sandalwood statue of Thangtong Gyalpo. It apparently flew from Tibet, landed in a field in Spiti and spoke to a passing farmer who took it in. Buchen talk about borrowing this statue, but when they try to leave the village it becomes too heavy to carry. Another elderly Buchen recollected seeing a ghostly emanation of Thangtong Gyalpo emerging from his statue in Tibet.²⁴

An informant from Mud remembers travelling with his father to Chung Riwoche (Tib. *gcung ri bo che*) to visit the Thangtong Gyalpo statue.²⁵ At Mount Kailash they met the reincarnation of Thangtong Gyalpo who he remembers as a very dark-skinned bearded man,

²² Thangtong Gyalpo, the 14/15th century Tibetan Mahāsiddha, is widely regarded as the founder of the Lama Mani and Buchen tradition, along with his student Ranapatta (Tib. *ratna bha dra* Skt. Ratnabhadra). Buchen see themselves as having a spiritual lineage connection back to Thangtong Gyalpo, and through him to Chenrezig (Tib. *spyen ras gzigs* Skt. Avalokiteśvara) the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Thangtong Gyalpo is viewed by the Buchen as a manifestation of Chenrezig. All Buchen performances, whether plays or stone-breakings, present a statue of Thangtong Gyalpo placed on a wooden box 'altar'. As audiences gather for a performance, women will bring bowls of barley grains as an offering to Thangtong Gyalpo, offerings which also function as a payment to the Buchen. Buchen mix the role of spreading the Dharma through the medium of entertainment with the economic necessity of making a living. Larger plays bring larger audiences and more generous donations of barley, which is cashed in before leaving the village.

²³ Thangtong Gyalpo is widely referred to by the epithet Iron-Bridge Man (Tib. *lcags zam pa*). See Stearns (2007).

²⁴ On the other hand, when I asked Mémé Chettan (Tsetan) Dorje about his relationship with Thangtong Gyalpo he laughed and told me he was a living human being and Thangtong Gyalpo merely a lump of metal.

²⁵ Chung Riwoche monastery is situated by the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) river near Ngamring in the Tibetan province of Ü-Tsang. It is well over 500 miles from Spiti.

with his long hair tied in a topknot.²⁶ Another informant recalls his father meeting the reincarnation of Thangtong Gyalpo who was encamped outside Lhasa.

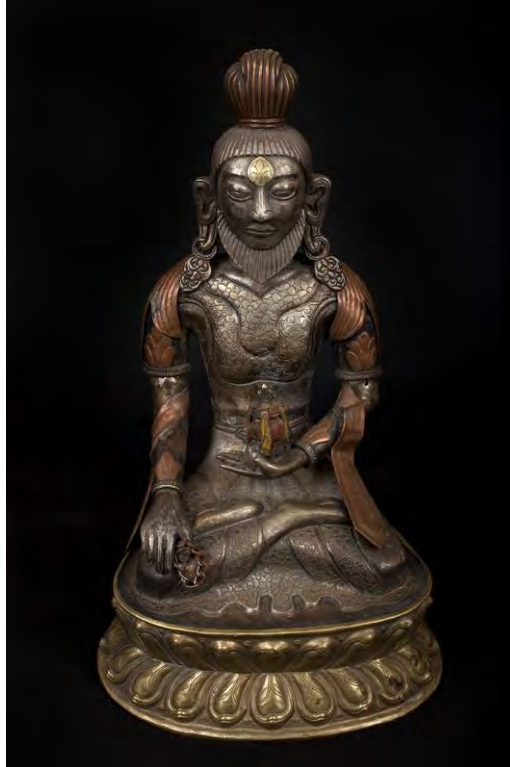


Fig. 9 — Statue of Thangtong Gyalpo holding links of iron chain in his right hand.

Tengam (Tib. *rten sgam*) are double-doored wooden boxes with rectangular vertical corner uprights that form feet at the bottom and turrets at the top of the box. Some are plain, some ornately carved and a few painted.

²⁶ All the statues of Thangtong Gyalpo in Pin depict him with hair drawn up into a topknot. Mémé Buchen used to wear their hair uncut in long dreadlocks, as can be seen in the Coldstream photographs, but this has become uncommon. The spiritual head of Gungri monastery, Yomed Tulku (Tib. *g.yo med sprul sku*), is encouraging Pin's Mémé Buchen to wear their hair long again. He regards the vow to refrain from cutting their hair once they have first entered retreat as an essential element of their tantric initiation.

The upper corners are sometimes decorated with white, red, yellow and blue flags (Tib. *dar lcog*) just like a real Spiti house.²⁷ Buchen carry the reliquary box, containing a statue of Thangtong Gyalpo, on their backs, as they walk from village to village.²⁸ Women who flock to greet the arriving troupe used to compete for the honour of carrying Thangtong Gyalpo into the village.

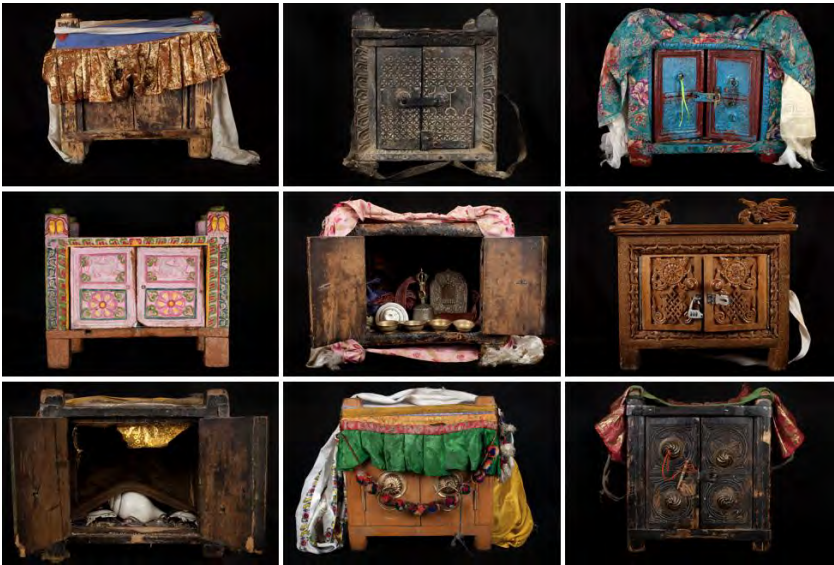


Fig. 10 — Tengam, double-doored wooden boxes.

The kokpo is a horse-headed musical instrument with three pairs of strings, a regional form of the Tibetan dranyen (Tib. *sgra snyan*). Strummed with a plectrum, it provides a soft, low rhythmical accompaniment to songs and the basis for Buchen-led dances, to which the shuffling or stamping of feet adds an extra sonic and percussive dimension. One beautifully preserved older example that we located is carved from a single piece of wood and still has the original wooden pegs for tensioning the strings.

²⁷ Some informants spoke of their Tengam as Thangtong Gyalpo's home. These boxes also function as portable altars.

²⁸ Perhaps echoing the Charles Bell photographs of Lama Mani carrying a Tashi Gomang Chorten (Tib. *bkra shis sgo mang mchod rten*); see Sutherland, P. and Tsering, T. (2011: p.90).



*Fig. 11 — (left) A kokpo, a horse-headed musical instrument with three pairs of strings, which is strummed with a plectrum.
(right) A piang, a wooden, triple-stringed, horse-headed instrument which is held in a vertical position and bowed like a fiddle.*

Modern instruments are made by locally-based Nepali woodworkers or purchased outside the valley. Mémé Buchen lead the dancing that follows many theatrical performances and at the nightly parties that punctuate their winter tours.²⁹ Playing the kokpo is regarded as an essential Buchen skill. One informant, who spent two or three periods in retreat in a cave and also memorised key texts, never managed to complete his training as a Mémé Buchen.³⁰ Critically he failed to master the kokpo and consequently could not lead the community in dance.

Piang (Tib. *pi wang*) are widespread across the Tibetan world but uncommon in Spiti; few younger Buchen own or can play the instrument. This wooden, triple-stringed, horse-headed instrument is held in a vertical position and bowed like a fiddle to accompany singing and sung prayers. Its plaintive, scratchy sound commonly echoes the melody as Buchen and villagers sing together, calling out and responding.

One villager in Mud recalled a Lhamo-like troupe of seven men and women who performed a simple play in the village over fifty years ago. Musical accompaniment was provided by a single instrument, a solitary piang. They came from Tibet, spoke in a language the villagers could not understand, and wore long, wide-sleeved costumes. They were treated respectfully, given money and barley. Wandering Tibetan theatre groups would occasionally reach Spiti and Buchen would also tour into Western Tibet.

Prior to the Chinese occupation of Tibet, Buchen would travel on foot as far as Purang where, as recently as 2010, monks at Khorchags monastery remembered visiting troupes from Pin Valley performing the stone-breaking ritual and sword dance. Now they mainly tour around Pin and Spiti, Kinnaur and occasionally Ladakh. Their audience is changing and their theatre performed less frequently, but they are seeking new audiences. The Chinese occupation curtailed

²⁹ Many plays end with the audience, led by the head Buchen, dancing to the rhythm of the kokpo and chanting *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*, the six syllable mantra of Avalokiteśvara.

³⁰ Mémé Buchen go through a process of training, including substantial time in retreat, under the guidance of senior lamas from Gungri monastery as well as being mentored by experienced senior Buchen. Trainees are expected to perform in all the villages of Pin before they are accepted by the local community and allowed to tour further afield. However, the late Mémé Rigzin failed to observe these rulings but was still regarded highly in Pin as an impressive and potent performer.

Buchen travelling to Kailash, Chung Riwoche, and Lhasa as well as Western Tibetan groups entering Pin. What has been lost is not just the potential income and material benefits but the wider cultural connections with distant populations and communities, opportunities for pilgrimage and gaining merit, and a concomitant loss of Buchen experience, influence, and status. Such tours could last several months. One informant from a dormant household revealed how the necessity of spending long periods away from home precluded him from becoming a Buchen; he was the sole breadwinner for a small family.³¹



Fig. 12 — Mémé Tsering Tobgye holding a kokpo. Par 1998.

³¹ Several informants mentioned how arduous the life of Buchen could be, travelling away from their families for months at a time, often remunerated for their performances in barley and old clothing.

Buchen tour their theatre in winter when roads may be snow-blocked and passable only on foot.³² Consequently, they travel light.³³ All troupes perform the popular story of Drimet Künden (Tib. *dri med kun ldan*), particularly a scene with a dancing elephant, and some carry a painted cloth which is pinned to the forehead of the animal.



Fig. 13 — A painted cloth which is pinned to the forehead of an elephant, its image of the wish fulfilling gem illustrating a key element of the story of Drimet Künden.

Its image of the wish fulfilling gem (Tib. *yid bzhin nor bu*) illustrates a crucial element in the story of the compassionate prince who gives away his father's kingdom's wealth to the needy, his children to a childless couple and eventually even his eyes to a blind man. The rest of the elephant body, fashioned from cloth and osiers is constructed in situ. Parrots and horses, key props for danced episodes of the same story, are also assembled locally.

³² Though Buchen now commonly travel by vehicle to Ladakh, Upper Kinnaur and throughout Spiti, material to be carried is still kept to a minimum.

³³ Even the complex headgear, emblematic of the Mémé Buchen, folds away, its multi-coloured silk streamers bundled together tightly.

A few troupes have masks, made from animal skin or cloth, including one mask of the crazy saint Drukpa Kunley (Tib. *'brug pa Kun legs*). But there is an established tradition of improvisation and many facial disguises are created from barley flour or dough, marked with soot or oil. Touring troupes also rely on community support. Costumes for male and female characters including hats, jewellery and other props denoting monks, brides, grooms, old men and women, princes and merchants are sometimes found locally within the host village. Such borrowing establishes a closer connection with the participating community, some of whom are drawn into the larger plays and performances as extras or as the butt of humour.



Fig. 14 — Palden Dorje dressed as the elephant keeper in a scene from the story of Drimet Künden, Lara 2004.

Much Buchen performance is comedic. Dolls appear as props in Buchen birth scenes, emerging to the groans, grimaces and pains of a man in labour.



Fig. 15 — (left) A cloth mask of Drukpa Kunley.
 (right) A Teletubby used in comedic Buchen birth scenes. This doll did not fit the British Library Endangered Archives Programme criteria for being endangered and the image is not in their digitised archive.

Five-lobed crowns depicting the five Buddha families (Tib. *rgyal ba rigs lnga*) are worn in the stone-breaking ceremony. The older, painted hats are made from cloth, primed and stiffened with wheat paste. The project was interested primarily in the old and endangered, the focus of all Endangered Archive Programme funding. I personally embraced the modern and improvised, copying all items with equal care, including five-lobed crowns constructed from cardboard boxes.

One dormant household owns a wooden printing block (Tib. *shing par*) carved with male and female demon figures, each with their feet chained together.³⁴ This unique item is used to make paper or cloth prints for attaching to the stone in stone-breaking rituals.

³⁴ The current owner's grandfather also carved printing blocks for Gungri monastery.



Fig. 16 — An old, painted five-section cloth crown depicting the five Buddha families.



Fig. 17 — A modern cardboard five-section crown.



Fig. 18 — A wooden printing block carved with male and female demon figures, each with their feet chained together, used to make paper or cloth prints for attaching to the stone in stone-breaking rituals.

The stone-breaking ceremony involves the invoking of and entrapment of demons. Some Buchen use photocopies derived from prints from this block or draw demon figures directly on to the stone surface. Drawn images often explicitly depict the sex of the two demons.

Buchen Thangkas

Buchen thangkas are primarily narrative paintings. They are a visual version of the storytelling texts, used as an illustrational aid, perhaps aimed originally at non-literate village audiences.³⁵ It is revealing to compare the Buchen narrative thangkas en masse. Of the two dozen or so paintings we located and documented, eight portray the story of Drowa Zangmo (Tib. *'gro ba bzang mo*), four show scenes of hell, probably depicting the tale of Delok Lingza Chökyit (Tib. *gling bza' chos skyid*),³⁶ three the story of Pema Öbar (Tib. *padma 'od 'bar*), three the story of Nangsa Öbum and two the story of Drimet Künden. Additionally there is one painting representing the story of Guru Chöwang (Tib. *gu ru chos dbang*).³⁷ We also discovered two thangkas of the wrathful protector deity Tamdrin.

In contrast to the densely symbolic thangkas found within Spiti's monasteries and prayer rooms, these visual stories are direct and relatively simple in their expression. They present innumerable illustrative and instructive scenes, fragmentary narrative extracts enmeshed within a complex and imaginative topography of environmental forms, architectural spaces and sky, arranged around a central deity. The earlier and later elements of the written story overlap in a format that compresses the narrative chronology within a restricted two-dimensional graphic space.

The commonest thangkas, those of Drowa Zangmo, can be divided up into three groups of related paintings. The first group

³⁵ Buchen use of an iron pointer (Tib. *lcags mda'*) to pick out key scenes depicted on a narrative thangka whilst describing a story prior to a performance, closely echoes the wider Tibetan tradition of Lama Mani storytelling.

³⁶ Delok (Tib. *'das log*, lit. returnee from the death realm).

³⁷ The thangkas parallel the story described in the written text, operating as both illustration and visual interpretation. The stories of all of the narrative thangkas listed here also exist within Spiti in the form of an old handwritten texts. Each story also forms part of the repertoire of simple 'plays' performed by Buchen. There are other plays within the Buchen repertoire for which no known old text or thangka exists locally.

consists of three almost identical versions of the same *thangka*.³⁸ The visual interpretation of the written narrative and its manifestation in terms of the placement of key pictorial scenes within the vertical space of the painting are the same.



Fig. 19 — Details from two narrative thangkas illustrating the story of Drowa Zangmo.

The style and quality of the drawing, the scale of figures and quantity of detail within the scenes, the depiction of human and animal forms in terms of gesture and posture, as well as the

³⁸ Such copying is clearly the customary process for replacing worn and faded *thangkas*. However, Sonam Angdui, a *thangka* painter living in Kaza, the administrative centre of Spiti, told me that he prefers to work directly from the original text for such paintings. Perhaps the earliest of these three versions, all of which he painted, is a completely original work composed purely as a response to the written narrative. Buchen *thangka* paintings are delicate objects and subject to damage as they are rolled up and carried in bags on long journeys. They are exposed to sunlight, dust, wind and precipitation during performances. Many *thangkas* in Pin show signs of heavy use, i.e. loss of pigment, holes and tears in fabric, and staining. In another example of copying, Blondeau (1986), refers to two Lama Mani *thangkas* in the Musée Guimet in Paris. They are from the collection of Jacques Bacot gathered in Eastern Tibet around 1910, one a 'garish' copy of the much faded older painting.

depictions of specific details of landscape, match each other precisely. Actual disparities between the three scrolls are partly to do with age and consequent loss of pigmentation in the oldest image but also to do with variations in the pigments chosen for details of clothing, skin colour and elements of the landscape. The position of the explanatory written texts that accompanies each scene varies somewhat more.

Clearly decipherable are several key elements of this well-known tale, including the birth of Drowa Zangmo; the King searching for his lost dog during a hunting trip; the furious and evil demoness Queen; Drowa Zangmo's flight to the realm of the five *dākinī* (Tib. *mkha' 'gro ma*); the presentation of animal hearts to the demoness Queen who is feigning illness and has demanded the hearts of Drowa Zangmo's children as the only possible cure; the children's abandonment in a forest with fruit trees and a poisonous snake; their abduction and attempted murder by being thrown from a cliff; Drowa Zangmo's manifestations as a parrot and as a pair of fish; and the killing of the Queen by an arrow fired by Drowa Zangmo's son.

The second group is of two paintings that are equally clearly connected, one evidently copied from the other.



Fig. 20 — Details from two narrative thangkas illustrating the story of Drowa Zangmo.

But one is more richly detailed, presenting a more complex visual narrative, the other a very significantly simplified version of the story; some key scenes have been carefully copied and others left out. The overall graphic structures are the same, with nearly identical visual interpretations and placement of key narrative scenes, depictions of landscape, and buildings. One painting, the simpler form, has a small number of explanatory written captions, the other has none.³⁹

The final group of three are, perhaps, less obviously connected. They reveal their similarities only when examined in some detail.



Fig. 21 — Details from two narrative thangkas illustrating the story of Drowa Zangmo.

They are older, well used and consequently stained and creased. One has a central figure of a blue wrathful deity, one a red wrathful deity (both are Tamdrin) and one a Buddha figure. The overall structural arrangements of shapes, scenes, figures, and architectural details in two is definitely comparable, with variations in detail but with great overall similarity of form, grouping and gestures. The third thangka has very similar structure in the bottom right and left of the painting but is different in the top half. It is badly faded and accordingly trickier to read.

³⁹ The simpler reproduction may have been constrained by financial issues. The commissioning of a thangka is expensive in Spiti and the amount of detail requested is reflected in the final cost. It is noticeable that some modern thangkas are unmounted, again substantially reducing the cost of production.

Like this last group, the two thangkas of Drimet Künden bear comparison in the overall structure and in many of the individual scenes but many of the characters are located in slightly different positions on the painting. Colours are changed and some scenes are quite different. Overall one seems to be a simplified version of the other. Some scenes show obvious and very direct copying but with substantial space for individual interpretation. Others seem to show an overall similarity of structure and shape but vary substantially in the placement of key figures.

In contrast, the four depictions of Hell, the story of Delok Lingza Chökyit, seem very different. The depiction of the Lord of Death (Tib. *gzhin rje*), the process of the judgement of the dead, the depictions of torture by the servants of the Lord of Death, of boiling, impaling and freezing are all treated differently. There are some broad structural similarities but no real evidence of a clear process of copying. Some of the paintings are quite beautifully drawn, rich in detail and subtle in their depiction of story details. Others are quite crude in comparison. It is clear that there is an established tradition of employing trained thangka painters to produce or copy narrative paintings, but I wonder whether some of these thangkas may have been produced by the Buchen themselves.

We also located three thangkas of Nangsa Öbum. One, brought back from Purang in Western Tibet by Mémé Gatuk, is very beautifully drawn and has been unused for decades.

Nangsa Öbum is one of the most widely known and popular stories in Tibet, illustrating the difficulties of living within the material world whilst trying to follow the Dharma. It tells of Nangsa's struggle against expectations, social conventions, secular power and material wealth. She was a beautiful and extraordinary *dākinī*, born as a human into a simple country household to a childless and elderly village couple. She dreamed of devoting her life to the Dharma. A powerful regional Lord, a widower, spots Nangsa at a festival and cajoles her to into marrying his son. Nangsa's sister-in-law turns out to be jealous, cruel and resentful, and spreads malicious rumours about her. Nangsa works hard and dedicates herself to her husband and child but is berated for giving alms to lamas. She is overheard talking to a beggar – actually a lama – in her rooms and accused of being unfaithful to her husband. Beaten to death, her body is wrapped in a white shroud and taken to the mountains. Nangsa subsequently appears before the Lord of Death

where she witnesses the realms of hell and graphic scenes of suffering and torture. However, she is judged to be pure and blameless and instructed to return to the world of the living and to continue to practice the Dharma. The visual representation of these details from the written texts can be easily located within the narrative thangka.



Fig. 22 — Narrative thangka illustrating the story of Nangsa Öbum.

Buchen Texts

Buchen read the complete texts of such stories to winter gatherings. Occasionally they read sections during theatrical performances.

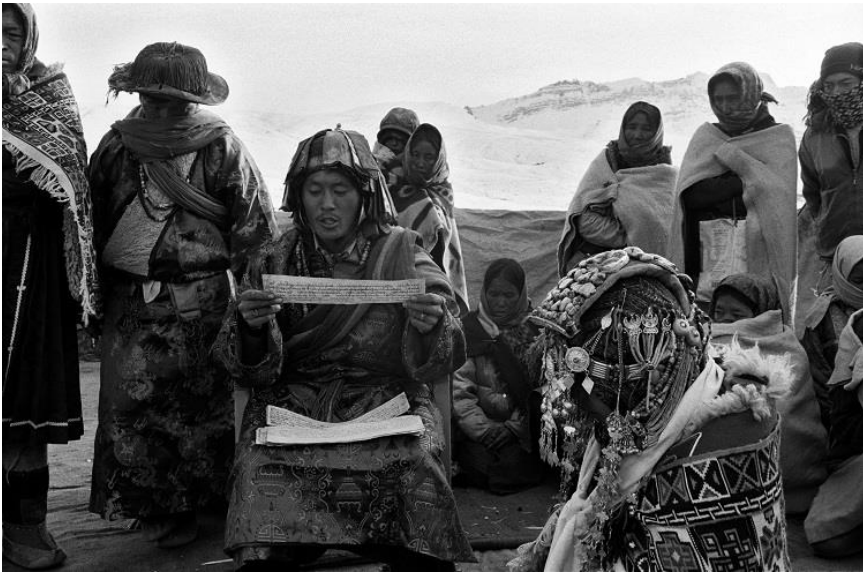


Fig. 23 — Mémé Gatuk Sonam reading from a text in a performance of the play about the marriage of King Songtsen Gampo (Tib. srong btsan sgam po). Langsa 2007.

A narration of the story of Nangsa Öbum which I attended had the audience weeping loudly at the harrowing description of Nangsa's suffering. Yet the same story, performed as a play, included an obscene and uproarious comedic interlude in which a long-tailed monkey, covered in rough sacking, appears on all fours and starts to dance to the music of a kokpo, eventually rising up to reveal its substantial red genitalia, much to the amusement of the audience.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ A phallus also appears as a prop in performances of the story of Drukpa Künley. The phallus we photographed was carved from wood but other phalluses are made from stuffed animal intestines. The 'obscene' elements of Buchen performance might well have other associations apart from the comedic. For a Bhutanese parallel; see Chhoki (1994).



Fig. 24 — A wooden phallus that is used as a prop in some performances of the story of Nangsa Öbum.

Performances creatively reimagine the written texts, dramatising and frequently embellishing very minor and peripheral elements of the story. Many comic scenes are shared by different troupes and form part of the Buchen intangible performance tradition.

We documented many texts, hand written or woodblock printed unbound pages on handmade paper, which are often incomplete or have replacement pages. Photocopies are also in common use and modern story books are now widespread. There are few original texts but these include a short biography of Ranapatta, a Tamdrin text, the stories of Drowa Zangmo, Nangsa Öbum, Karma Wangzin (Tib. *Karma dbang 'dzin*), Guru Choswang, Pema Öbar, Drimed Künden, Zhuki Nyima (Tib. *gZugs kyi nyi ma*), Gelongma Palmo (Tib. *dGe slong ma dpal mo*), Lingza Chökyit, Gyalsa Belzey (Tib. *rGya bza' bal bza*), and the advice given to Gyalsa Belzey by her mother before her marriage (Tib. *'dzangs yig*).

The commonest original text we found is the story of Delok Lingza Chökyit, which exists in several old copies.⁴¹ The story illustrates karmic principles. It describes her descent into hell where she witnesses the judgement of the dead before returning to inform the world of the living about what potentially awaits them at the end of their lives.

⁴¹ For an excellent analysis and description of several delok texts; see Cuevas (2008).



Fig. 25 — A text of the story of Lingza Chökyit (Tib. *Gling bza' chos skyid*).

In a thangka image that illustrates this narrative, a line of people await judgement. Above them the Lord of Death weighs out their good and bad deeds on a scale as one of his servants observes their lives in a karmic mirror. Several people have black ropes attached to them, indicating that the judgement will be negative because they have a surfeit of negative deeds in their life. They will be dragged down into the monstrous realms of hell to be boiled, frozen, impaled or tortured in myriad ways.



Fig. 26 — Detail from a narrative thangka illustrating the realms of hell in the story of Lingza Chökyit.



Fig. 27 — Mémé Gatuk Sonam performs as Yama, the Lord of Death, in a play describing the judgement of the dead, based on the story of Lingza Chökyit, Langsa 2007.

Buchen theatrical performances parallel that depiction. In the village of Langsa, two servants of the Lord of Death have captured a man with their black ropes and dragged him in front of the judgement tribunal. A set of scales holding black and white pebbles measures out good and bad actions and a karmic mirror reflects his life. Villagers witness the proceedings and have brought offerings of bowls of barley grains placed in front of the altar. Audiences sometimes give clothes to the Buchen during Lingza Chökyit performances. Such gifts are believed to help the deceased, trapped and suffering naked in the freezing waters of cold hell realms. The clothes are an offering to Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

Conclusion

It is their tantric training during their long periods in retreat that gives Mémé Buchen their power to perform the stone-breaking ritual, to summon, entrap and banish demons.⁴² This power gives them

⁴² Mémé Buchen are required to spend significant time in retreat under the tutelage of senior monks from Gungri monastery. During these periods of isolation, they are trained in yogic techniques, the memorising of texts and the visualisation of deities. It is not until they have undertaken extensive retreat that they are allowed to perform. (see Dollfus 2004).

status and respect. The stone-breaking is associated with the banishment of disease and Buchen more generally with healing. On tour, Buchen perform apotropaic prayers against 'slander and gossips' (Tib. *mi kha*), culminating in loud clapping to drive away evil spirits. They occasionally offer healing by blowing a mantra over the face of a sick person. In Kinnaur, clippings of Buchen hair taken from visiting performers was once used for its magical healing properties. It would be burned if the goats and sheep stopped giving milk or the smoke would be blown over the face of a woman who had become possessed. One dormant household remembered a relative whose cremation ashes contained auspicious egg-like relics. Another talked of a relative they called Delok Mémé, i.e. a grandfather who apparently died then came back to life for a month.



Fig. 28 — Detail from a narrative thangka illustrating the realms of hell and the judgement of the dead in the story of Lingza Chökyit. At the top right is a depiction of a Buchen like figure turning a prayer wheel.

Buchen are seen to have instrumental power in their relationship with the netherworld, having the potential to intervene in the afterlife. Consequently, they are given small payments by relatives of

the recently deceased to mention them in prayers. There is a local belief that the Buchen can guide the dead out of the realms of hell.



Fig. 29 — Detail from a narrative thangka of the story of Lingza Chökyit. A figure with prayer wheel is leading people out of the realms of hell.

Buchen trace their lineage through Ranapatta to Thangtong Gyalpo, and through Thangtong Gyalpo to Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. One Mémé Buchen explained that local villagers believe that the Buchen can protect people in the afterlife, to reduce their suffering in hell. But, as he elucidated, it is in reality Chenrezig who can protect them, and who can lead them out of hell. Therefore, he suggested, people have to visualise the Buchen as Chenrezig.

It is locally understood that those in hell who chant the sacred six syllable mantra of Avalokiteśvara can hear the sound of a Buchen prayer wheel being turned and by following this sound, can find a path out of hell and escape.

Similarly, the story of Guru Chöwang describes how chanting the sacred mantra in hell released his mother, until that point a non-

believer. Prayer wheels, the sound they produce, and the chanting of the mantra are key ingredients in these beliefs. Several of the Buchen prayer wheels we discovered are equipped with a small hook on which to catch an individual at risk of disappearing into hell. A hook that “draws the faithful to the Dharma” as expressed in the biography of Ranapatta:

“This white conch I carry in my hand
 Is a sign I’m a son of the Great Compassionate One.
 The undiminished lineage is Ratna Bhadra’s lineage
 The undiminished teaching is the teaching of the six-
 syllables
 The undiminished Dharma is the lotus in bloom
 And I am a bee on my rounds around the kingdom.
 I am the Lochen who lectures on karmic cause and effect,
 The hook who draws the faithful to the Dharma,
 And the guide who leads the sinful to the path of repentance.
 I am the source from which the Lochen-s spring.”⁴³



Fig. 30 — Buchen prayer wheel (Tib. mani chos 'khor) equipped with a hook.

⁴³ From the biography of Lochen Ranapatta quoted in Sutherland, P. and Tsering, T. (2011:86).

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Buchen as Storytellers Reading, Telling and Acting out Edifying Stories

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“Their performances take the form of miracle-plays, which are acted in front of an image of their patron saint, which is scenery in the shape of a long screen, covered with quaintly painted pictures to illustrate the legends connected with their beliefs. Music is provided by means of conch shells, cymbals, and guitars; offerings of barley are thrown in the air and the crowd at intervals join with the performers in chanting the prayer Om Mani Padme Hung.” (Buck, 1917)

Lying south-westwards, the Pin Valley, described in Buddhist texts as “the Clouds Valley” is one of four units that make up Spiti today.¹ Hemmed in by high mountains, except where the stream forces its way through a rocky gorge several kilometres long to join the Spiti River, the Pin Valley forms a secluded small world endowed with a very strong identity.² The valley comprises a dozen settlements, which are anything from three to ten kilometres

¹ The present research is a part of a French project known as “Narrativité: paroles, textes, images” and has received funding from Sorbonne Paris Cité, a grouping of higher education and research institutions. I would like to thank Bernadette Sellers (UPR 299, CNRS) for correcting my English with care and efficiency.

¹ Pin (Tib. *sprin*): “clouds”.

² The insulation of the Pin Valley conferred upon it a *de facto* independence, which allowed local chiefs to manage it as they pleased. They insisted on keeping their independence following the annexation of Spiti and the nomination of the Nono of Spiti as governor (*wazir*) of this new province of the British Empire. See Egerton (1864, 28-32).

apart, and houses the only monastery affiliated to the Nyingma 'Old [tantras]' order in Spiti where the Geluk, the 'System of Virtue', prevails (Fig. 1).³

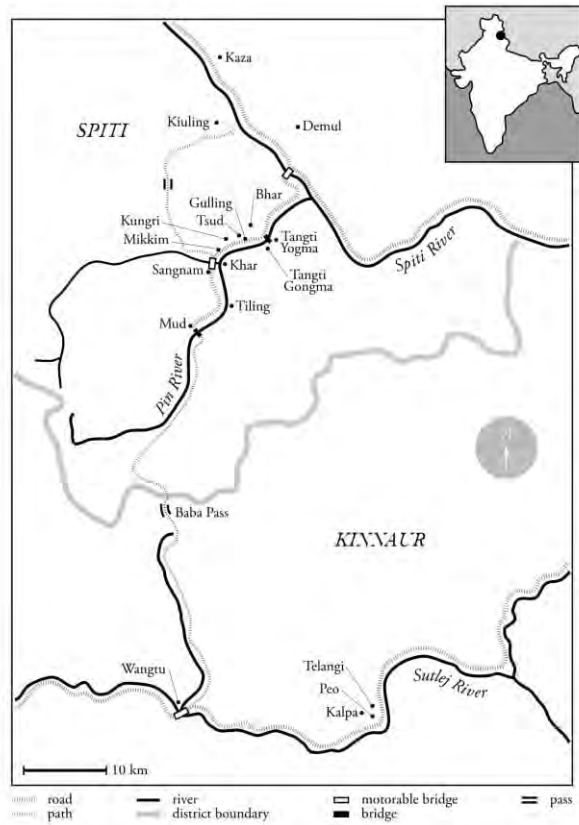


Fig. 1 — Sketch map of the Pin Valley

While until recently the inhabitants had almost no contact with other parts of Spiti, they maintained close ties with the people of Upper Kinnaur, and in particular of the valleys of Wangtu and Peo situated on the right bank of the Sutlej River. Every summer,

³ The Nyingma (Tib. *rNying ma*) order is the least centralised of the Tibetan Buddhism's orders and the most oriented towards Tantric ritual practices. Apart from Geluk (Tib. *dGe lugs*) and Nyingma schools, Spiti also includes a Sakya (Tib. *Sa skya*) monastery.

Kinnauri shepherds lead their flocks of sheep and goats to graze on the upper reaches of the Pin Valley, which is renowned for its lush pastures, and in the opposite direction Pin inhabitants go over the Baba Pass to make provisions of buckwheat and dried fruits and to fetch wood required for building houses or making tools. These moves are not only for economic but also for religious purposes. Indeed, a few priests, native of the Valley, are appointed as caretakers of Buddhist temples and every winter, on the invitation of local Buddhist families, religious practitioners join them to chant religious scriptures and to perform rituals. Among them are the Buchen (Tib. *bu chen*) described in early literature as "magicians [...], whose performances consist of a medley of prayer, song, miracle play, and stone-breaking feats" (Shuttleworth 1922: 254).

1. *Strolling Masters of the Six Syllables*

Origin narratives concerning the Buchen tradition refer to the great Thangtong Gyalpo (Tib. *Thang stong rgyal po*) who was born in Tibet during the last decades of the fourteenth century.⁴ This accomplished yogin and Buddhist master is famous in Tibet and the Himalayan regions for building *stūpas* in order to tame the hostile forces of a given area, and even more so for building iron-chain suspension bridges all over the Tibetan plateau to facilitate communication. In addition, he is said to have organised the first drama group in Tibet to prompt people to turn to religion. It is said that Thangtong Gyalpo felt that if the Buddhist doctrine was merely preached, people would not always listen. On the other hand, religion presented through the medium of play and music would teach in a way that could reach people.⁵ The Buchen perceive Thangtong Gyalpo as their founding preceptor whose teachings were handed down orally from generation to generation and they conceive themselves as his 'great sons' (Tib. *bu chen*), i.e. his main disciples and so like sons. They always pay homage to him by placing a statue

⁴ About Thangtong Gyalpo (1361?–1485), the 'King of the Empty Plain', also known as the 'Iron Bridge Man' (*lcags zam pa*); see C. Stearn, 2007. As the father of the drama tradition; see J. Gyatso 1986.

⁵ This is what people told me in Spiti, but there are many other popular stories about Thangtong Gyalpo and the creation of Tibetan drama. However, none of Thangtong Gyalpo's biographies has ever mentioned his involvement with *A lce lha mo*.

of him on the stage's shrine and by singing a prayer to him during the first part of their performances.

The Buchen masterpiece, *pho bar rdo gcog* (or *rdo gshag*), 'breaking a stone [placed] on the stomach', which is performed to ward off unpleasant circumstances and to prevent hindrances and, more generally to ensure prosperity and fertility, has already been discussed in detail,⁶ I will therefore limit myself here to one of their other skills, that of storytelling.⁷ In fact, Buchen are also renowned raconteurs. Despite the latter being referred to outside Spiti by the epithet *manipa* (Tib. *ma ŋi pa*),⁸ 'the one [who recites] *mañi*', their repertoire not only contains the great compassion mantra dedicated to Avalokiteśvara but also dozens of *namthar* (Tib. *rnam thar*, full liberation [story]),⁹ which imply liberation in the Buddhist sense of the word and which praise the victory of Dharma over heretics (Fig. 2a & 2b).

⁶ The ceremony was described in great detail by George de Roerich who attended it twice in Lahaul in the 1930s (Roerich 1932). Further information is supplied by Hebers (1978, 209-210) who saw it in Ladakh in the 1920s and Prince Pierre de Grèce (1958 and 1962) who attended it in July 1938 at Patseo (Lahaul). Although Tibetologists R. A. Stein (1959) and S. Hümmel (1968) did not attend the ceremony, they analysed it using second-hand data. More recently, in 1988, W. Kahlen claimed to have "discovered" the breaking of the stone, and recorded it in full on 16-mm film, on video, in photographs and with sound equipment. For a contemporary description; see Dollfus 2004.

⁷ The material presented here is based on my own data. I have visited the Pin Valley almost every year since 1999 and I met the Buchen during their tour through Kinnaur and Ladakh, and more recently at Rewalsar Lake or Tso Pema (Tib. *mTsho padma*) near Mandi.

⁸ Buchen were given the name *ma ŋi pa* because of their great dedication to the repetition of Avalokiteśvara's mantra: *ōm mañi padme hūm*. As C. Stearns emphasizes, "this connection is significant because of the traditional ties between the wandering mani devotees, who put on shows of mime and dance to illustrate the teachings of Avalokiteshvara, and the popular opera traditions of dance and theatrical performance known as the Aché Lhamo, believed to be Tangtong's creation."; (Stearns 2007, 23). According to R. A. Stein (1981: 152) the *manipa* tradition goes back to the 12th century, however, H. Havnevik (1998: 103) proposes a later date, suggesting that Khedrup Norzang Gyatso (b. 1478) might be the founder of this tradition in the 15th century.

⁹ Conveniently translated into English as "biography" *rnam thar* is the abbreviation for *rnam par thar pa*, 'to be completely released or delivered', often used to mean release from any further transmigration.



Fig. 2a — Mémé Tsetan from Sangnam village reading a handwritten copy of the story of Lingza Chökyit ©P. Dollfus



Fig. 2b — Mémé Tsering Tobgye from Bhar village reading the story of Drime Künden from a book in a Western format published in Dharamsala. ©P. Dollfus

2. The repertoire

Half of these stories are *délok* narratives. Generally speaking, *délok* (Tib. 'das log, lit., 'those who have returned from the dead') are simple, ordinary people, mostly women, who 'die' and then travel in the netherworld; hells, and less often paradises. After being judged, they are sent back home by the Lord of the Dead to tell people what

they have witnessed, to bring messages from the dead to the living, and to exhort them to perform virtuous actions.¹⁰ The vast majority of *délok* come from the Nyingmapa and Kagyupa milieus, and they see themselves as incarnations of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva who saves beings.

In this *délok* category one finds the narratives of Lingza Chökyit (Tib. *gLing bza' chos skyid*), a housewife, mother of three children, and animal herder in an eastern Tibetan nomadic community, who lived during the sixteenth century; of Karma Wangzin (Tib. *Karma dbang 'dzin*) born in the seventeenth century in southern Tibet, who wanted to devote her life to religion but was sent at a young age to be married to a man chosen by her parents for his social status; of Sangye Chözom (Tib. *Sangs rgyas chos 'dzom*) from Tashigang in eastern Bhutan, who was recognized as an incarnation of Karma Wangzin (Tib. *Karma dbang 'dzin*); of Gelongma Palmo (Tib. *dGe slong ma dpal mo*), a beautiful Kashmiri princess, who became a devout practitioner of Buddhism and, when she contracted leprosy, had to live in isolation and stay miserably alone in a wooden hut built in the middle of the forest; and of Nangsa Öbum (*Snang sa 'od 'bum*), a young Tibetan girl married against her will to a local Lord and who is believed to have lived during the twelfth century in south-western Tibet.¹¹

The narratives follow the same pattern. They all recount stories about women who are native of Tibet, Bhutan, or India (Kashmir), who wanted to devote themselves wholly to religion from a young age, but were not free to fulfil their religious wishes. Lingza Chökyit thus says: "When I was a little girl, I had thought of becoming a nun but my parents and my brothers did not allow it." (ibid.: 503). The same holds true for Nangsa Öbum, 'The Brilliant above a Hundred Thousand Lights'. This beautiful girl was forced to marry the son of a local lord. Soon after she started to be ill-treated and beaten by her in-laws until she collapsed and died. She then travelled to the realm of the dead, but when she met the Lord of the Dead, who knew that she was capable of doing a lot of good if allowed to live longer in the human world, he sent her back home and she became a nun.¹²

¹⁰ On *délok*; see F. Pommaret, 1989, 1997 and 2012.

¹¹ For more information about these *délok*; see Pommaret (1997: 185-193).

¹² For more details of this story; see Bacot 1921, Duncan 1955, Waddell 1974, Wao 1986. As F. Pommaret points out, the Nangsa Öbum story is the only *délok* account that was and continues to be performed to this day as a theatrical play.

To this list that describes a journey to the realm of Hells and *bardo* ('intermediate state' between two lives on earth) can be added the story of Guru Chöwang (Tib. *Gu ru Chos dbang*, 1212–1273), a great Nyingmapa 'treasure-discoverer' (Tib. *gter ston*), who went to the netherworld to free his mother. While the narrative describes the experience of *bardo* and recounts at length the cold and the hot hells, and the torture endured by people who had committed sins and the reasons for their punishment, it is not really a *délok* story because, as F. Pommaret (1997: 499) clearly argues, "the saint does not 'die' but, through his magical power, goes to hell with a definite purpose: to save a person who is close to him."¹³

Other *namthar* celebrate Tibetan Buddhist heroes and, contrary to *délok* narratives, focus on miraculous events, superhuman actions, or accounts of superior virtues. One can quote the story of Chögyel Norzang (Tib. *Chos rgyal nor bzang*) which retells how a Khadoma (Tib. *mkha' 'gro ma*, 'female sky goer'), caught by a hunter with a magic lasso, becomes the wife of King Norzang; the story of Prince Drime Künden (Tib. *Dri med kun ldan*) that describes how he sacrificed his own life to give alms to others and finally became a Buddha;¹⁴ the tale of Pema Öbar (Tib. *Padma 'od 'bar*),¹⁵ which recounts one of Padmasambhava's former lives and takes place a thousand years ago in India under the reign of a 'heretic' king who was opposed to Buddhism; the story of Zugi Nyima (Tib. *gZugs kyi nyi ma*),¹⁶ about a beautiful, kind-hearted queen who suffered because of the jealousy of another queen; and the tale of Drowa Zangmo (Tib. *'Gro ba bzang mo*),¹⁷ which recounts the adventures of her two children fleeing a jealous She-demon whom their father King Kalawangpo (Tib. *Ka la dbang po*) had married earlier and who had decided to kill them.¹⁸

¹³ For a summary of this narrative; see Pommaret 1989 and 1997.

¹⁴ For a translation into French of the eponymous play; see Bacot 1921, Waddell 1974, Duncan 1967.

¹⁵ See Blondeau 1986.

¹⁶ See Bacot 1957.

¹⁷ See the translation in English of the play by Josayma (s.d) and by Duncan 1955; in French by Bacot 1921.

¹⁸ Strangely enough, this repertoire includes neither the life of *Ma gcig lab gyi sgron ma* nor, more importantly, the life of Milarepa (Tib. *Mi la ras pa*), one of the most famous accounts in the Tibetan cultural area, especially in the high Tibetan valleys of Nepal and for which there exist numerous sets of narrative paintings.

| | | | délok | thangk a | drama | AL |
|----|-----------------------------|---|-------|-------------|-------|----|
| 1 | Chögyel Norsang | <i>Chos rgyal nor bzang</i> | | | X | X |
| 2 | Drime Künden | <i>Dri med kun ldan</i> | | 2 | X | X |
| 3 | Sukyi Nyima | <i>gZugs kyi nyi ma</i> | | | | X |
| 4 | Nangsa Öbum | <i>Snang sa 'od 'bum</i> | X | 3 | X | X |
| 5 | Drowa Zangmo | <i>'Gro ba bzang mo</i> | | 7 | | X |
| 6 | Pema Öbar | <i>Padma 'od 'bar</i> | | 3 | | X |
| 7 | Chungpo Dönyö Döndup | <i>Gcung po don yod don grub</i> | | | | X |
| 8 | Gyasa Besa /Gyemo gonjor | <i>rGyal bza' bal bza / rGyal mo gong 'byor</i> | | | X | X |
| 9 | Gelongma Palmo | <i>Dge slong ma dpal mo</i> | X | | | |
| 10 | Guru Chöwang | <i>Gu ru Chos dbang</i> | Xa | 1 | | |
| 11 | Karma Wangzin | <i>Kar ma dbang 'dzin</i> | X | | | |
| 12 | Lingza Chökit | <i>gLing bza' chos skyid</i> | X | 3 | X | |
| 13 | Sangye Chözom | <i>Sangs rgyas chos 'dzom</i> | X | | | |
| 14 | Dukpa Kunley | <i>'Brug pa dkaun legs</i> | | | X | |
| 15 | Lochen Ratnabhadra | <i>Lo chen ratna bha dra</i> | | | | |

Xa : Strictly speaking, Guru Chöwang is not a délok, but a « saviour saint » : he went to hell to liberate his mother.

AL : belonging to Tibetan theater (Lhamo) repertoire

Fig. 3 — Buchen's repertoire

In Tibet *namthar* used to be the basis for very popular dramas known as *A lce lha mo* or, for short, *lha mo*,¹⁹ which were performed by lay actors and actresses, some of them wearing masks. The plot is traditionally presented in the form of a chanted narrative in the course of which the few leading characters come forth and speak. While one actor sings, others backstage sing in chorus. Between the different acts, satire or comic improvisations are performed by buffoons and are greeted by the audience with much laughter. For unknown reasons, this dramatic tradition, which has spread through Bhutan and among Monpa and Sherdukpen communities in Arunachal Pradesh in north-east India, has never flourished in the Western Himalayas despite several attempts to introduce it both in

¹⁹ The name *lha mo* or *A lce lha mo* is not usually explained by Tibetans as having originated from the actors' portrayal of the female roles of goddesses or *lha mo* that are found in the plays. *A lce* literally means elder sister; it is a polite term used to address any female elder.

Ladakh and Spiti in the 1940-50s.²⁰ The same holds true for Tibetan Buddhist regions of northern Nepal, except in Humla district. In Dolpo for example, C. Jest (1973: 376) notes:

“Never in man's memory has there been in the valley performances of religious theatrical plays as is the case in Tibet. Lastly, Dolpo is not on the circuit of actors such as the *A Ice lha mo* groups whose actors, generally from central Tibet or Kham, make a pilgrimage to Mount Kailas.”²¹

This *namthar* repertoire can be read, told or played by the Buchen, but whatever the case, they always open their performance by blowing the conch and reciting the following prayer to Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and their master, the great *Mahāsiddha* Thangtong Gyalpo:

Let us salute the Teachers!
Bow to the feet of the venerable Lord of Living Beings!
Abide in the spiritual essence of Avalokiteśvara!
Abide in the spiritual essence of the All-Merciful One!
Abide in the spiritual essence of Thangtong Gyalpo!
Abide in the spiritual essence of the sublime Pandita
You, people, recite the six-syllable mantra!
Om maṇi padme hūm!

3. Reading stories

In the Pin Valley, the Buchen act as storytellers during the fasting ritual, Nyungné (Tib. *smyung gnas*), which revolves around the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion Avalokiteśvara in his eleven-face and thousand-arm form. Staged in winter on dates that vary depending on villages, it lasts four to six days and involves the eight Mahāyana precepts (i.e. do not kill, do not steal, do not have sexual intercourse, do not tell lies, do not take intoxicants, do not take high seats, do not sing, dance or wear ornaments and do not eat after

²⁰ Mipham Otsal (director of Ladakh Theatre Organisation), personal communication.

²¹ My translation. "Jamais, de mémoire d'homme, il n'y a eu dans la vallée de représentations de pièces de théâtre religieux, comme c'est le cas au Tibet. Enfin, Dolpo n'est pas sur le circuit d'acteurs tels les groupes de *a-ice lha-mo*, dont les membres, venant en général du Tibet central ou du Khams font le pèlerinage du Mont Kailas" (Jest 1973: 376).

midday) on the second day, and taking additional vows of abstaining from eating, drinking and talking for twenty-four hours on the third day.²²

On this day, prostrations and prayers start at dawn. The invited Buchen arrives around eight o'clock at the house where the ritual is held. He is not clad in special dress, nor does he wear any particular headgear. After prostrating himself in front of the shrine, and then in front of the lama presiding the ceremony, he sits opposite him. After drinking a few cups of tea and a thick noodle soup for breakfast, both men go next door to the village temple where the lama carries out a libation ritual. Once the ritual is over, the Buchen, holding his prayer wheel and chanting a long vow prayer addressed to Avalokiteśvara, leads a circumambulation of the village, followed by practitioners, mainly women and middle-aged people. Back at the host's house, he sits on a mat among the devotees, takes out one of the *délok* biographies he has brought with him, and begins to read aloud.²³

At the end of every chapter, and some times more often, he chants an invocation to Avalokiteśvara, to which the audience answers by singing in chorus *Om maṇi padme hūm (hrī)*,²⁴ the mantra in six or seven syllables, which is associated with the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion, and which is believed to save sentient beings from the realms of reincarnation. The recitation lasts about four hours and takes place between three separate meditation and practice sessions, which include praises, prostrations, and mantra recitation.

In April 2001, when I attended the Changka ritual in Mud,²⁵

²² On the fasting ritual, see Jackson 1997.

²³ Hand-written copy using *umê* (Tib. *dbu med*), the cursive script, or *uchen* (Tib. *dbu chan*), a block print style used for printing and formal manuscripts, and in the form of traditional Tibetan loose-leaf books or of a booklet in a European format recently printed in Dharamsala. (Himachal Pradesh, India).

²⁴ Since the nineteenth century Western writers on Buddhism have frequently rendered the six-syllable *mantra* as "Hail to the jewel in the lotus!" in English. But, as M. Kapstein (1997: 71) clearly states, this popular Western interpretation is not backed by any known Indian or Tibetan sources. "The Indian interpretation, known also to Tibetan scholars trained in the study of Sanskrit grammar, understands *Manipadme* to be a term of address for Avalokiteśvara, meaning '[possessor of] jewel and lotus', for these indeed are the objects most frequently held by the bodhisattva in his iconographic representation. *Om* and *hum* are purely symbolic expressions, not capable of translation, but commonly used in the formation of mantras."

²⁵ The name Changka is said to be related to the beer (Tib. *chang*) drunk by the men attending the ritual.

Mémé Dorje Phuntsog first read out the life of Gelongma Palmo,²⁶ who is said to have introduced this special fasting practice of purification and merit based on the Buddha of Great Compassion. When she contracted leprosy, her body became covered in swellings that discharged such enormous quantities of pus and blood that she was not allowed to keep company with other people. After building a wooden hut in a forest, she stayed there all alone, totally miserable. One day a yogi came and bestowed upon her the empowerment and blessing of Avalokiteśvara. After he had left, she practised intensively and one night she dreamt of a person clad in white carrying a vase of water, which she used to bathe. As a result, she had the impression that she was totally cleansed of her sickness and suffering. Upon awakening, she found that her disease had in fact completely fallen away like the skin shed by a snake. Delighted, she offered a prayer of profound faith and devotion to Avalokiteśvara who appeared and blessed her.

The next day, a day of silence and strict fasting, Mémé Dorje Phuntsog read the narrative of the venerable Sangye Chözon, a Bhutanese woman who ‘died’ and then went down to hells and up to paradises over a period of seven days:²⁷

“At dawn on the seventh day of the seventh month, all the villagers assembled and they said: ‘The girl is back from the country of the Dead.’ They came to see me and everybody was talking at the same time. My parents and my family gave me all kinds of food and drinks. But, as my body and my mind had been separated for seven days, my throat had dried up and I could not even drink water. [...] Many women, full of faith, looked at me and cried. Some people were jealous and became angry. [...]. But all the people assembled around me begged me to relate to them what happens in the *bardo*.“

During both readings, Mémé Buchen chanted the text as if it were a prayer. He did not use a different voice for each character in the story (i.e. Sangye Chözon, Chögyal Shinjé and his attendants). From time to time, he interrupted his reading to explain some passages in

²⁶ Mémé (Tib. *mes mes*): grandfather; term of address and reference for any elderly men, given as a title of honour for monks and religious specialists, even young ones.

²⁷ *Sangs rgyas chos ‘dzom rnam thar*, Thimphu, 190-192. Quoted by Pommaret (2012: 62).

the colloquial language. The vocabulary in *délok* accounts is simple; stock phrases are often used, making the narrative easy to understand by ordinary people. But all these stories are narrated in the 'Tibetan language' (Tib. *bod skad*), not in the Spiti language and are therefore difficult to understand for the local audience.

"In the past", people told me, the Buchen used to hang on the wall a painting, which corresponded to the story that was being read, to show the different episodes as the story unfolded. Such a practice was attested to in the 1960s by Corneille Jest at Tarap in Dolpo (Nepal), during the fasting ritual, which began there on the fifth day of the first lunar month and ended on the 13th day:²⁸

Premier mois, cinquième jour (19-2-1961)

Religieux et laïcs récitent des prières puis au début de l'après-midi, ils se rendent dans l'enclos de tissage de Tsering Puntsog pour écouter le récit de la vie de Milarepa. [...] Tout le monde prend place autour de la peinture, les uns font tourner leur moulin à prière, les autres égrènent un chapelet; Tsering Puntsog, le lecteur appelé *ma-ṅi-pa*, commence par une invocation à *spyang ras gzigs*, demande sa protection [...] puis entreprend la lecture de la biographie; lorsqu'il convient d'en expliquer un épisode, Tsering Puntsog montre la peinture avec une baguette de fer à pommeau en forme de vajra. A la fin de chaque partie, tout le monde chante en chœur le mantra *ōm maṅi padme hūm*. [...]

[Le lendemain, "jour de silence" (*smyung gnas lkugs pa*)]

[...] Dans l'après-midi, Tsering Puntsog continue la lecture de la biographie de Milarepa; comme les participants ne peuvent pas parler, ils doivent s'exprimer par geste en prononçant la formule *Om maṅi padme hūm*.

[Septième jour]

[...] Dans l'après-midi, suite du récit de Milarepa ; les fidèles font des dons aux conteurs, qui, à son tour, remet les offrandes au temple. [...]

[Huitième jour]

[...] Tsering Puntsog décrit une descente aux enfers, *das' log* (lit. 'retour de la mort'); deux peintures sont

²⁸ See Jest 1973: 332-335.

suspendues dans l'enclos, l'une représente Avalokiteśvara, l'autre illustre le récit d'un voyage aux enfers fait par une personne frappée de mort apparente. Lecture du texte : '*das log bstan-jin chos grong gi srid pa bar do nyong pa'i rnam thar*. [...]

[Neuvième jour]

[...] Dans l'après-midi, Tsering Puntsog lit le récit *nor bzang*, prenant une intonation différente pour chacun des héros. Tout le monde écoute attentivement le récit du roi *nor bzang* qui va lutter contre les hommes sauvages mi rгод, habitant la grande plaine du Nord, le Changthang. [...]

[Dixième jour]

[...] Dans l'après-midi, Tsering Puntsog continue la lecture de *nor bzang*.

[Onzième jour].

[...] Tsering Puntsog lit dans l'enclos l'histoire du roi *dri med kun ldan* ; la peinture porte en son milieu une représentation de *spyang ras gzigs*.

However, during the fasting rituals I attended in the Pin Valley, none of the Buchen did this. Other than on these specific occasions, the Buchen and his helpers may read any story from the former's repertoire during the pilgrimage. Nowadays, most of them spend a few weeks every winter at Tsopema, a holy lake situated near Mandi in Lahaul. On, 'the date of the 10th' (Tib. *tshes bcu*), they performed a ritual in honour of Guru Rinpoche (i.e. Padmasambhava), with whom the lake is associated. Then they lead a number of circumambulations around the lake, followed by pilgrims, and lastly, sitting on the grass on the shore of the lake, they read the life of the child Pema Öbar, which fits in especially well with the sacred place because it deals with one of Padmasambhava's former lives (Fig. 4).

4. Telling stories

Once or twice a year, the Buchen journey in a small group, including two or more assistants and helpers, either monks or lay people. These tours, often for both religious and trade purposes, may take them away from the Pin Valley for about six months a year.

At the beginning of the summer, when the mountain passes are free from snow, they start on their journey to Ladakh, taking horses

with them to sell. When the men reach encampments or settlements, they stay there for four or five days, taking time to hold trade negotiations and to stage religious performances. They chant mantras, recite edifying stories and perform the Breaking the Stone ceremony. They receive food, wool, or money as a fee. In former times they were occasionally given sheep and goats, which they brought back home. With the money they get from the sale of their horses, they purchase yaks, skins, blankets, sacks made of sheep or yak wool, and a little pashmina.

During the months of June-July 2000, Mémé Tsering Tobgye from Bhar set out on a journey to Ladakh Changthang. He was accompanied by Tsetan Tobgye, one of the two Buchen from Sangnam, two young lamas native of Bhar, and a fellow trader. They left with nineteen horses and came back home six weeks later for the harvest season leading a small caravan of fifteen yaks, both males and females, carrying on their backs rugs, blankets, and sacks of wool. They stopped at Shara, a village situated in the Indus Valley, to pay homage to the Ladakhi *manipa* living there, to bow in front of the Thangtong Gyalpo statue kept in his prayer room, and to ask him permission to practice their art before going any further.



Fig. 4 — The Onba from Khar village reading the story of Pema Öbar to Pilgrims in Tsopema (Mandi). ©P. Dollfus

In the past, the Buchen used to travel for three months, going first to Demchok and even further, and then walking back westwards along the Indus River as far as central Ladakh, visiting the monasteries on their way.²⁹ Since the 1962 Sino-Indian Border conflict, they have opted for shorter trips, travelling North through Ladakh Changthang, then down to the Indus Valley as far as Choglamsar near Leh, where Tibetan refugees and Ladakhi nomads have settled over the last decades. They complain that Ladakh has changed a lot and that the people no longer value their skills.

Alternatively, the Buchen spend the winter in Spiti and Kinnaur. They start their long journey in November, staying a few months at the same place and living with any family that invites them. They tell stories every day for three or four hours in the evening, and eventually perform the Breaking the Stone ceremony. Wherever the Buchen sing *mani*, read *namthar* or perform rituals, they are provided with plenty of food and beer. Households where a woman is pregnant or a girl has recently married are said to be especially generous, because chanting mantras and reciting biographies are good deeds, which bring happiness and good luck. The Buchen return home in March or April in time for ploughing and sowing, loaded with local Kinnauri products such as apples, dried apricots, nuts and buckwheat.

During these journeys the Buchen do not usually read stories but recite them from memory, consequently, each performance is unique and is highly dependent on the audience. As they recite tales in a sort of sing-song manner, they show on the large paintings they have unrolled pictorial representations of the most remarkable episodes they are retelling, pointing at them with a *vajra*-head iron rod (Fig. 5).³⁰

People listen carefully, laughing or crying according to the situation.

²⁹ On the routes from Demchok to Spiti and Ladakh; see Lange 2017 in the present volume.

³⁰ On the visual and material culture as part of the Buchen's paraphernalia; see Sutherland 2017 in the present volume.



Fig. 5 — Mémé Dorje Phuntsog from Mud village telling the story of Drowa Zangmo in Choglamsar (Ladakh). ©P. Dollfus

I do not know what the situation was in the past but these days in the Pin Valley there are few well preserved narrative paintings that are used for this purpose. Three depict in more or less detail the judgement of the dead and the terrifying Buddhist Hells and can be used to illustrate any *délok* story. Indeed, all *délok* narratives follow the same scenario: first, the *délok* is introduced to the audience by his or her name, the names of his or her parents and his or her birthplace. Then sickness leads him or her to sudden death and, consequently, to their first contact with the netherworld. Then there follows his/her first encounter with the attendants of the Lord of the dead, the crossing of a bridge, the journey into the hells – both hot and cold – and the realm of the ghosts, then the meeting with the Lord of the dead and his minions, the instructions, and the return home.

One of the other scroll paintings depicts the story of Nangsa Öbum, while the other five describe the story of Drowa Zangmo. The oldest *thangka* of this group of five was painted by an artist from Demul village; later a copy was made at the request of another Buchen. The three other paintings, which are identical, were made one or two decades ago by Sonam Angdu, a painter from Kaza (i.e. Spiti headquarters), who is still alive. Each painting is very colourful and covered in tiny old-fashioned scenes. The most recent ones are accompanied by inscriptions written in black ink, which explain the

meaning of these scenes and give the name of the characters (Fig. 6a and 6b).



Fig. 6a — A Thangka illustrating the story of Drowa Zangmo painted by Sonam Angdu (early 21st century). © P. Sutherland



Fig. 6b — A Thangka illustrating the story of Drowa Zangmo painted by Sonam Angdu (early 21st century) – detail. © P. Sutherland

Tibetan culture lends great importance to reciting memorized texts. Both monks and religious specialists have to memorize numerous books and prayers. The same is true here. The Buchen read the story over and over again, until it literally enters into them, possesses them.³¹ But contrary to Western actors who are given a new play, they do not learn it by heart, verse by verse, stanza by stanza.

Regardless of which story is recited, some of the specific details may be forgotten or changed, but no mistakes must be made regarding the main characters, place names, and names of important things (e.g. horse, dog, and so on). During the performance, even though tiny details or inscriptions painted on the *thangka*, which is hung on a wall or fixed to a rope between two poles, do not help the audience to follow the story, as they are often too far away to see them properly. Yet, they provide the Buchen with visual cues and help him remember the stages in the story. Contrary to other such paintings which are neatly organized into sections and boxes, and where the events unfold starting from the lower left and moving to the top, like in the paintings depicting Milarepa and scenes of his life, which were collected by Jacques Bacot in Eastern Tibet in 1910,³² the dozen *thangkas* I saw in the Pin Valley appear to have been executed in a rather sloppy manner and therefore the storyteller has to jump from one place to another in an apparent disorderly fashion. In addition, only some episodes and characters are represented. Therefore the Buchen may come back to the same picture several times in the course of his account. This is the case for instance of the five *dākinī* aspects (Tib. *mkha' 'gro ma sde lnga*) that figure only once on the painting depicting Drowa Zangmo *namthar* but appear many times during the story, or of the king's beloved female dog, etc.

Just like when they read, the Buchen alternate sung sequences with spoken sequences where they explain the story told in the local language; the duration of the performance is very variable and depends largely on the context and the public. The storyteller may or

³¹ Contrary to the storytellers specialized in the Gesar epic (*sgrung mkhan* or *sgrung pa*), I have never heard of Buchen inspired through dreams or possession (*babs*), through enlightenment (*dag snang*), through 'treasure hidden in the heart' (*dgongs gten*), or by circular light (*pra phab*), whereby the narrator places a mirror, or any reflecting surface, in front of him and sings bit by bit to the audience what he sees in the mirror.

³² On these paintings, see Dollfus 1991.

may not elaborate on certain events. That is why an account is never the same from one session to another, even when the same storyteller tells the same story based on the same painting.

The same is true when the Buchen sing accompanied by music played on a string instrument, a long-necked lute, *dranmyen* (Tib. *sgra snyan*) or a kind of fiddle, *piwang* (Tib. *spyi dbang*).

They improvise their own tunes and alter them as much as they like. If you ask them to repeat the same song several times, the tunes will be different each time.

5. Acting out stories³³

From time to time the Buchen may also enact some of the stories from their repertoire. However, from what I know, even in former times the Buchen never fully staged these plays.³⁴ They only recounted some sequences and these sketches were and still are always combined with other performances such as the ritual of the Breaking of Stone, the recitation of *namthar* or of sacred Buddhist scriptures. For example, during winter 2013-14, the four-member team led by Pema Tundup, a 40-year-old Buchen from Mikkim village, went to Kinnaur. All Buchen say that they enjoy visiting Kinnaur very much. The people are friendly and generous, and never treat them as fools or scroungers. The audience bursts into tears when hearing the self-sacrifice of Nangsa and other pious characters, and listens with special attention to the description of the hells and the punishments awaiting those who do not behave properly.

Pema Tundup and his troupe stayed more than a month in Rispa where they read the Kangyur and performed a (Breaking the) Stone ceremony, then one week in Nesang, and a month and half in Kunu-Charang, two small villages a few kilometres apart. There, besides Buddhist canonical texts, they read the story of Pema Öbar and of Drowa Zangmo, performed two Stone rituals in each village, and

³³ Unfortunately, despite my numerous attempts, I have never had the opportunity of attending a whole play. The information I have gathered so far comes from the Buchen themselves or from spectators.

³⁴ At rGyal mkhar chos rdzong, near Rinpung in Tibet, there were traditionally two companies—one of *A Ice lhamo* actors, one of storytellers or *manipa*. They acted out the same repertoire. But while the former staged the stories *in extenso* (Tib. *rgyal rabs rgyas pa*), the latter retold only short versions (Tib. *rgyal rabs khug pa*). I. Henrion-Dourcy, personal communication.

they acted out three 'dramas': Lingza Chökyit and her travels into the Hells; the Prince Drime Künden; and one play featuring a royal wedding, probably that of the Tibetan King Srong btsan sgam po with two princesses, one from China and one from Nepal (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. A performance of *Drime Künden* in Lara (Feb. 2004). © P. Sutherland

The Buchen perform plays drawn from the Tibetan drama repertoire,³⁵ but in a completely different manner. The troupes are much smaller and are generally exclusively made up of three to four men. Besides the Buchen or Lochen (Tib. *lo chen*), who is the leader of the troupe, there is his right-hand man known as Onba, then a man who knows how to dance and twirl around called Lhamo and one or two Nyama helpers.³⁶ When travelling, the Buchen carry with them the wooden box (Tib. *thang rgam*) containing the statue of Thangtong Gyalpo and their costumes and ornaments which are

³⁵ The traditional repertoire of *A lce lha mo* includes nine plays drawn from both religious and historical literature: *Gcung po don yod grub*, *Chos rgyal nor bzang*, *Ras chung rdo rje grags pa'i rnam thar*, *Rgyal bza' bal bza'*, *'das log Snang sa 'od bum*; *Dri med kun ldan*; *'Gro ba bzang mo*, *Gzugs gi nyi ma*, *Padma 'od 'bar*.

³⁶ Onpa/Onba (Tib. *ngon pa*, lit. 'hunter'), popularly known as *lug rdzi*, 'shepherd', by the audience in Spiti, and Lhamo (Tib. *lha mo*, lit. 'female celestial being or goddess') are the names given to two of the three main characters carrying out the specific ritualised performance to prepare the stage for the unfolding Buddhist story that will follow in Tibetan drama performances, *a lce lha mo*. However, while Lhamo, in our case, wears a five-lobe crown (Tib. *rigs nga*) and is dressed more or less like his Tibetan *alter ego*, this is certainly not the case for Onba. Nyama (Tib. *nya ma*) means 'hearer of a Lama, without being a regular disciple', according to Jäschke's dictionary.

difficult to find locally; robes made of brocaded silk, Tibetan boots, round hats with red fringes that were worn by Tibetan officials in the past and which are still used in Spiti for wedding ceremonies, some jewellery and a *perak* (i.e. the elaborate headgear studded with turquoise that women wear for ceremonial occasions).

The performances take place outdoors with the audience arranged on all sides of the actors. There is no stage and no dressing room. The scenery is minimal. One or two low tables, a chair which in the course of the play becomes a throne, a mountain, or a huge lotus, just to name a few, and simple objects, mats and the like, and also a large kettle of tea and a big pot of *chang* (local beer). Contrary to Lhamo troupes, the actors do not have any script, the dialogues are spoken, not sung, and are usually rather brief. Sitting in a corner, one of the members of the troupe, usually the main Buchen, reads the *namthar* and, at the same time, plays the roles of hieratic (and rather static) characters: king, prince, lama, etc. In addition, he sings and plays the Tibetan lute or a kind of fiddle during the interludes.

Onpa plays roles that require real acting talent and which hold together the play. He must know how to make an impression on people, how to make them laugh, cry and tremble with fear. Finally, Nyama plays supporting roles, lesser roles not unlike the role of an extra, even when he plays the hero or heroine in the play.

Let us take for example the play *Drowa Zangmo*, which was performed last winter by Pema Tundup and his friends. Pema Tundup himself played the role of King Kalawangpo dressed in a magnificent Tibetan-style brocade gown, one shoulder uncovered with the sleeve dangling down, wearing the red-fringed hat of Tibetan officials and big Tibetan boots that lent him a military gait. Onpa played Hachang Dümo, the extremely evil ogress and former wife of King Kalawangpo; her tousled hair gathered together into a thick strand and held with butter, her black face coated in soot which is made even more frightening with prominent fangs drawn on it, and her dress dirty and ripped. And the Nyama played various minor roles, such as Drowa Zangmo; dressed like a princess with a lovely woollen robe tied at the waist with a beautiful belt, a *perak* on the head, and as many ornaments as possible (e.g. earrings, strings of beads made of turquoise, coral and pearls, bracelets); the Butchers, the elder and the younger one; then the Fishermen with their faces painted in red, and dressed in rags carrying long fearsome knives. Lastly, the prince and princess (King Kalawangpo and Drowa

Zangmo's children) were portrayed by children from the village that hosts the performance. They were dressed in their best clothes, their faces slightly lightened with barley flour to give them a light complexion typical of the nobility.

The characters are usually played in a comic manner, although they have their serious and even dramatic moments. In *Drowa Zangmo* during the search for the king's lost bitch, the minister and the king's servant looked in the audience, making funning comments while checking behind the altar, in the baskets of food, and even in the folds of a robe worn by an old woman in the audience. In the episode where Hachang Dümo pretends to suffer from a serious illness that can be treated only by eating the hearts of the royal children, Onba who was playing the role, blew things up out of proportion. Lying down on a putrid skin rug, he made unbearable cries of anguish and suffering, provoking in the audience extreme emotions which went from joy to terror and from laughter to tears.

In the past, some of the actors used to wear masks. Mémé Sherab, now a retired Buchen, remembers that many years ago when he was young, his father used to act out the stories of Drime Künden. The old man still has in his house a painted narrative scroll depicting Drime Künden's *namthar* and a blue triangular mask adorned with cowry shells that was specially worn by the recitant of Tibetan drama. Another Buchen showed me a mask with prominent fangs depicting the ugly female demon Hachang Dümo.

Today, the masks have been replaced by makeup. Three colours are used: a dark colour made of soot mixed with oil; a light colour made from roasted barley flour and water; and a red colour extracted from the root of a plant called *dimok* ('*bri mog*, *Arnebia euchroma*) and which is now very often replaced by red lipstick.

Before leaving a place, the Buchen blows a conch shell one more time to bring together the crowd. Then he reads aloud a list of benefactors, first giving their names and then describing precisely how much everyone has offered in terms of food, clothing, and money. Every benefactor is heartily thanked and an *om maṇi padme hūm* is chanted on their behalf. Finally, the Buchen organises a *chedo* (Tib. *mched do*, "pair of sisters/brothers") ceremony, very similar to the pairing of *chos spun* (i.e. 'religious siblings') that takes place in Ladakh. Each of the men and women present give a small personal possession (e.g. a ring, necklace, safety pin, prayer beads). The Buchen gathers these items, pairs them off randomly, and finally

holds them up for identification. The owners of the paired articles become *chedo* partners throughout their lives, well into old age.

In 1932, George de Roerich prophesized: "These ceremonies represent a vanishing art, closely inter-woven with religious beliefs and magic practices. A few decades more and the Land of Snows will see the last of its religious actors."³⁷ The future proved him wrong. Today there are eleven Buchen in the Pin Valley and the Buchen from Shara in Ladakh should be finishing his apprenticeship this year to take up the tradition perpetrated by his ancestors. However, though they still perform the Breaking the Stone ceremony for local people, this performance is reserved more and more for fairs to promote local folklore or upon special request by tourists, journalists, photographers and filmmakers. Recounting or acting out *namthar* has met with less success. Watching a performance where someone chants for three-four hours in an incomprehensible language is not quite as funny and visually attractive for foreigners as the Breaking the Stone ritual and the preceding spectacular sword dance in which the Buchen first pierces his cheek with a long needle or a trident, then points the two swords towards his belly, straightens up and balances himself on the tips of the sword which are placed either in his armpits, or on his bare abdomen; or perhaps what is more fascinating is when he does the same with one blade holding the tip under his neck or inside his mouth.

Times have changed. More and more people spend the day away from home, working as government servants in schools, hospitals, or banks. Children attend school often far from their native village. During the winter, only elders roam around when they are not on pilgrimage tours elsewhere in India or in Nepal. In fact, more and more people, natives of Spiti and Upper Kinnaur, now spend the cold season elsewhere. They rent a room for several weeks in auspicious places such as Tso Pema,³⁸ where Padmasambhava is said to have transformed his funeral pyre into a lake, or in Bodhgaya to attend the Dalai Lama's teachings. There, they spend the time reciting *mani* and making circumambulations, enjoying the sun in places that have a

³⁷ Roerich 1932: 40.

³⁸ As it says in the Great Treasure of Blessings, the king of Zahor and his ministers arrested Padmasambhava and his consort Mandarava and burned Padmasambhava alive, but he transformed the pyre into a lake and was found sitting on a lotus blossom in its centre. In the 1960s Dudjom Rinpoche built on its banks a Nyingmapa monastery. Other monasteries and temples were built later.

milder climate than the windy and icy heights of Spiti and its borderlands. Parallel to this, people who stay at home prefer to invite the Buchen to read Buddhist scriptures and eventually *namthar* than to retell or enact these edifying stories. According to the Buddhist clergy, it is more meritorious and, for the host, much easier. You do not have to be there; you only need a nice room with a *bukhāri* (i.e. a wood burning stove) to warm it and somebody to cook meals.

Everywhere throughout the Himalayas, generalised merit-making practices such as reading texts and chanting mantras, prostrations and pilgrimages are on the rise, and former local religious practices are slowly dying out or are being rehashed for cultural/tourist purposes, whenever they are colourful enough.

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Decoding Mid-19th Century Maps of the Border Area between Western Tibet, Ladakh, and Spiti¹

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Introduction

n general, this paper is about maps and their makers. The respective maps were made in the mid-19th century by a Tibetan lama and commissioned by the British official William Edmund Hay (1805–1879). They show the border area between Western Tibet, Ladakh, and Spiti. In fact, these maps are just extracts of a much larger panoramic map. They are part of a set of so-called *picture maps* that belongs to the British Library's Wise Collection.² The maps cover the areas of Lhasa, Central Tibet, Southern and Western Tibet, Ladakh and Zangskar. According to the British Library's references they are divided into six map sections: 'Lhasa map' (Add.Or. 3013, folios 1–2), 'Central Tibet map' (Add.Or. 3017, folios 1–6), 'Southern Tibet map' (Add.Or. 3016, folios 1–3), 'Western Tibet map' (Add.Or. 3015, folios 1–7), 'Ladakh Indus Valley map' (Add.Or. 3014, folios 1–4) and 'Zangskar Valley map' (Add.Or. 3018, folios 1–5). Placed side by side, the maps present a continuous panorama from Lhasa to Leh on a length of more than 10 metres and thus represent the largest panoramic map of Tibet of its time. Places on the maps are consecutively numbered from Lhasa (No.1) westwards to the Parang La (No. 404) – the mountain pass on the 'old established' border between Ladakh and Spiti. The maps of Ladakh

¹ This paper refers to my research on the Wise Collection and represents an extract of my forthcoming monograph *Journey of Discovery. An Atlas of the Himalayas by a 19th Century Tibetan Monk*.

² Next to the *picture maps* the Wise Collection consists of 28 additional drawings that depict monastic rituals and different kinds of ceremonies. For a general overview on the Wise Collection; see Lange 2016a.

and Zangskar are provided with separate numberings.³

In particular, this paper is about decoding maps. Toby Lester stated about his research on the 'Waldseemüller map' – the map that gave America its name: "The map draws you in, reveals itself in stages, and doesn't let go."⁴ This is also true for the Wise Collection's maps. Some of them reveal themselves more easily than others. Explanatory notes referring to the numbers on the maps were written by William Edmund Hay on separate sheets of paper. Full keys exist only for the picture maps of Ladakh and Zangskar; the maps of Central Tibet are mainly labelled by captions in Tibetan – which makes them comparatively easier to 'read'. In contrast, the maps of Lhasa and Southern Tibet are not accompanied by captions nor explanatory texts – thus many places on these maps cannot be identified with certainty. The maps of Western Tibet are not accompanied by explanatory texts either. However, there are (incomplete) English captions on these maps. Decoding these maps has been a real challenge, but they have revealed themselves in stages. The two westernmost sections of the 'Western Tibet map' show the border area between Western Tibet, Ladakh, and Spiti. This paper focuses on decoding exactly those two maps.

The mapmakers

The maps were commissioned by William Edmund Hay who was appointed Assistant Commissioner of Kullu in the Western Himalayas in 1847.⁵ In November 1844 Hay departed from the army of the East India Company.⁶ He then became a merchant in Shimla where he was also appointed Postmaster.⁷ Situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, Shimla was a good starting point for exploration trips and Hay travelled widely in the following years to the Tibetan borderlands northeast of Shimla, in today's Kinnaur district,

³ For a general overview of the Wise Collection's maps and the numberings; see Lange 2016b: 135.

⁴ Lester 2009: xxi.

⁵ Diack 1899: 26 and 152.

⁶ Hay joined the army as a cadet in 1821 (London Gazette, 19 May 1821), fought in the First Afghan War (1839–1842) and reached the rank of Major.

⁷ British Library, India Office Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur F335/6: 1845.

himachal Pradesh.⁸ Hay's commercial ventures were not successful, and his appointment as Assistant Commissioner provided a more stable income, while his duties enabled him to travel and explore. In the winter of 1849/50 he successfully undertook an exploration of the Spiti Valley. His most popular publication was his *Report on the Valley of Spiti*, published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1850.⁹ Hay was knowledgeable about natural history; especially botany, geology, and ornithology. During his stay in India he created large collections of coins, minerals, plants, and zoological specimens such as birds; he eventually published papers on various topics related to these collections.¹⁰

It seems likely that Hay's travels in the Western Himalayas stimulated his interest in Tibetan culture. Thus, he also started collecting objects from Tibet. Furthermore, in 1857 William Edmund Hay engaged a travelling lama from Lhasa to make the set of maps and drawings that became known as the British Library's 'Wise Collection'.¹¹ Hay was definitely aware of the ongoing exploration of the Himalayas at that time and thus he took the opportunity to engage this man to draw the maps of his travel route for him. We do not yet know the mapmaker's name; like many other mapmakers he has remained anonymous. However, this does not mean that we know nothing about him. Charles Horne (1823–1872) stated that he was 'one of the travelling Llamas from Llassa'.¹² So, it very likely that

⁸ See Pagell and Heyde 1860: 141, Hay 1859 and Hay's private letters to Leopold von Orlich (British Library, India Office Records and Private Papers, Mss Eur F335/6: 1845).

⁹ See Hay 1850.

¹⁰ See Hay 1840, 1841 and 1859 and Lange 2017 (forthcoming).

¹¹ "In the year 1857 one of the travelling Llamas [lamas] from Llassa [Lhasa] came to Lahoul, in the Kûlû country on the Himalêh [Himalaya], and hearing of the mutiny [this refers to the Indian rebellion in 1857] was afraid to proceed. Major Hay, who was at that place in political employ, engaged this man to draw and describe for him many very interesting ceremonies in use in Llassa, [...]" This statements most probably refers to the drawings that now form the British Library's Wise Collection. (Horne 1873: 28). See also Lange 2016a.

¹² Charles Horne worked for the Bengal Civil Service. He was a judge in Benares and travelled extensively in India. He published papers on various topics such as archaeology, Buddhism and anthropology; see (Horne and Sherring 1866 and Horne 1876a). Several times he mentioned Hay in his publications. Obviously Hay must have provided him objects from his collections to work on, such as the so-called 'Kulu vase' and a Tibetan teapot, both now hold in the British Museum (see Horne 1876 and 1871).

he came from Central Tibet. He was probably on a pilgrimage when he met Hay in the Western Himalayas. The extent of the Wise Collection – the large number of maps and drawings and the breadth of detail – means that the lama had in-depth local knowledge about many of the places he depicted, and he was clearly experienced in drawing. Horne called him 'a very fair draughtsman'. Hay referred to him as 'my lama' in the explanatory notes accompanying the drawings.

The maps

Thanks to explorers like Alexander Cunningham and Henry Strachey the Western Himalayas were comparatively well-known to the British in mid-19th century. Both officers travelled extensively in their respective areas and produced accurate maps thereof.¹³ The maps that were based on their observations have been very helpful to decode the Wise Collection's maps. This is also true for the maps compiled by Frederic Drew and John Walker. Furthermore, the maps and travel accounts by Sven Hedin, who travelled in the Western Himalayas in the early 20th century, provided useful information, too.

The maps which this paper deals with show the route between the village of Demchok and the Parang La mountain pass. The use of scale is not uniform across the maps, neither is their orientation. While they might not always seem 'accurate', they can give lots of information about their maker, e.g. the travelling lama from Lhasa. Shrunken to the dimension of the maps and ignoring scale and cardinal orientation, one could virtually walk through the landscape along the travel route shown on the maps. As the most important points of orientations are depicted, these maps would pass a practical test. I assume that the mapmaker travelled along this route, familiarizing himself with topographical and infrastructural characteristics, such as mountains, rivers, lakes, flora, settlements, bridges and mountain passes, which in turn were depicted on the maps.

¹³ See Cunningham 1854 and Strachey 1854.

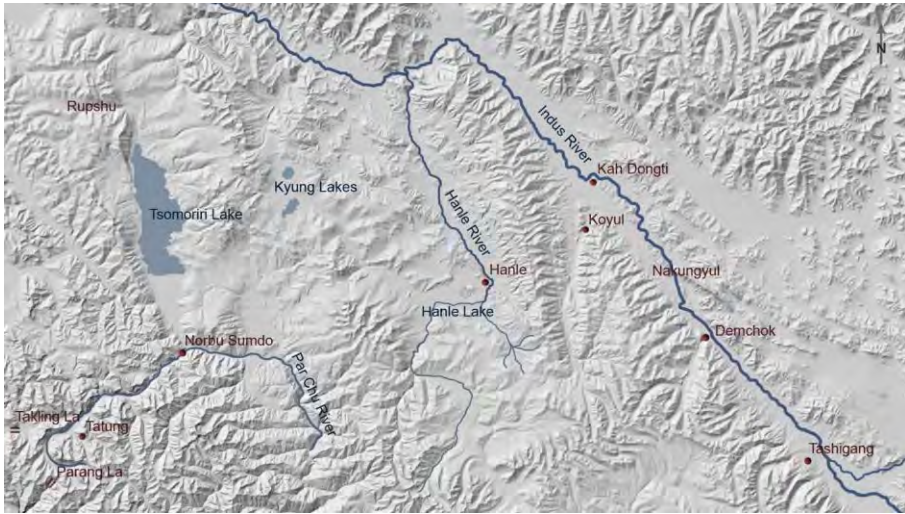


Fig. 1 — Modern map covering the area shown on the maps, drawn by Marina Durovka (IAM/TU Graz).

At present officially located in India, the village of Demchok marked the border between Tibet and Ladakh for a long time. Abdul Wahid Radhu, a former representative of the Lopchak caravan,¹⁴ described Demchok in his travel account as “the first location on the Tibetan side of the border”.¹⁵ The caravans travelling from Leh to Lhasa usually followed the Indus River to Rupshu, passed the Tsomoriri Lake, and continued through Hanle and Demchok.¹⁶ This route, however, is not shown on the maps of the Wise Collection. Instead, the ‘Ladakh Indus Valley map’ of the collection shows the route between Leh and Hanle following the Indus River and later the Hanle River, without ever crossing Rupshu and the Tsomoriri Lake.¹⁷

The route coming from Western Tibet along the Indus River, as represented on the ‘Western Tibet map’, follows the Indus only until Demchok. Instead of continuing to Leh, it leads to the Parang La mountain pass, the ‘old established border’ between Ladakh and Spiti. In fact, two routes are even depicted from Demchok to the Parang La that later meet up.

¹⁴ For a detailed travel account of this caravan; see Gray 1997, Bray and Gonkatsang 2009.

¹⁵ Gray 1997: 84.

¹⁶ See also Lange 2016b: 161.

¹⁷ *ibid.*: 139-147.



Fig. 2 — Map showing the route leading to Spiti from Demchok.
The lower part is oriented to the south, on the upper right part the orientation is changing.
Add. Or. 3015 f6 © British Library Board.

This map shows illustrations of the places labelled as *Lungmur* (383), Tashigang Monastery – labelled as *Chang Tushigung* (385),¹⁸ Demchok – labelled as *Demjök* (386), and a place labelled as *Nakūnggyul* (388, from left to right). A route is indicated. It leads from Demchok southwards through the mountains and continues on the right side of the map, passing through two lakes. Taking a look at Strachey's map one realize that there are several routes leading from Demchok via the Lhagang La mountain pass southwards. Thus, it is impossible to say which of these routes the mapmaker had in mind

¹⁸ There are three different settlements known as Tashigang in the Western Himalayas, i.e. in Upper Kinnaur, Spiti, and West Tibet. The *Chang Tushigung* (Tib. *byang bkra shis sgang*) of the map designates the settlement and Gelgupa monastery located on the northern plateau (Tib. *byang thang*) of West Tibet as the use of the toponym 'Chang' indicates.

here.

The large river appearing in the map's lower left corner is the Indus River (382). It is labelled as *Singki Ka Bub, Ladak Indus River*—referring to its Tibetan name *Senge Khabab* (Tib. *seng ge kha 'bab*). The Gartok River coming from the east and labelled as *Garchū river* is flowing into the Indus. The building labelled as *old fort* (381) has not been identified yet. Written on the upper part of the map, a Tibetan term refers to the frontier area in the south as 'chu-mo-stil', or Chumurti, which was described by Cunningham as "the Chinese district of Chumurti".¹⁹ There is no English caption describing the exact border between Ladakh and Tibet. The absence of comment regarding the boundary between Tibet and Ladakh indicates that the person who commissioned the drawings already knew where the border was located.²⁰ As Assistant Commissioner of Kullu, a district close to the Tibetan border area, William Edmund Hay already had that knowledge, and there was no need for further comments on the map.



Fig. 3 — Extract of fig. 1, Tashigang and surroundings.

¹⁹ Cunningham 1854: 22.

²⁰ The boundaries between British India and Kashmir and between Kashmiri and Tibetan territories were demarcated in 1846/7 by the commissioners Van Agnew and Cunningham as part of the 'first and second boundary commissions'; see Howard 2005.

The place east of Tashigang (384) is shown with tents, houses, and green patches. The place could not be identified with certainty. It probably represents the place called 'Tagle' on Walker's map; one of the halting stages between Tashigang and Gartok. Some houses are depicted next to Tashigang Monastery, along with green patches, water spots, two *chorten* and a mani wall. The monastery's main characteristics are illustrated like they were described by Hedin who visited the place some 50 years after the map was made: "Right in front of us the monastery Tashi-gang gradually grows larger. Its walls are erected on the top of an isolated rock of solid porphyrite, which crops up from the bottom of the Indus valley like an island drawn out from north to south. (...) on the short side stand two round free-standing towers, (...). The whole is surrounded by a moat 10 feet deep (...)." ²¹



Fig. 4 — Photography of Tashigang, taken by Eugenio Ghersi as part of the Tucci's expedition in 1935. The two round free-standing towers are clearly visible.

© IsIAO, reference N.6043_08.

²¹ Hedin 1913: 48-49.



Fig. 5 — Extract of fig. 1, Demchok.

The depiction of Demchok consists of three black tents and a house. Green patches and the Demchok bridge, labelled as *Demjok zampa* (387), are also depicted. Hedin described the place as follows: "Rolled stones play an important part in the country which we have now reached. The whole of Demchok, the last village on the Tibetan side, is built of them. It consists, however, of only four or five huts with brushwood roofs."²² A fork in the road is clearly visible next to the Demchok bridge; with one route turning southwards before the bridge (coming from the east), and a second crossing the bridge and continuing westwards.

²² Hedin 1913: 60.



Fig. 6 — Extract of fig. 1, Nakungyul.

Travelling from Demchok westwards the route crosses a place labelled as *Nakūnggyul*,²³ which is further described as *a cultivated spot belonging to the Rūpchū Gōpā* (Tib. *rub chu 'go pa*); a reference to the headman (Tib. *'go pa*) of Rupshu. This place must refer to the spring that Sven Hedin called 'the spring Na-gangkal' in his travel account, and to a place called 'La Gangskiyil' on Strachey's map.²⁴ Next to the tents, green patches and a spring are depicted; the presence of natural resources underlines the significance of this place as an important halting stage.

²³ According to local informants from Leh, 'Nakung' means 'North' and 'Yul' means 'Village'.

²⁴ Hedin 1913: 61.



Fig. 7 — Extract of fig. 1, mani wall and Kah Dōngti.

Following the route one crosses a mani wall labelled as *Mani* (389). It was probably used as a waymarker and was mentioned by Hedin as “an excellently built stone wall with slabs bearing large letters in red and white is named Mani-tumtum.”²⁵ Soon after the mani wall, the route turns southwards at another waymarker, which is composed of a pile of stones, prayer flags, and a *lhato* (Tib. *lha tho*),²⁶ and labelled as *Kah Dōngti* (390). *Kah Dōngti* is most probably the ‘Kardong’ on Hedin’s map. Following the numbers on the map, one reaches an unlabelled cross (391). It likely represents the place called ‘Koyul’ on Strachey’s and Drew’s maps, which is located at the same place on the same route turn. On Hedin’s map the place is called ‘Kujul’. Granting that the cross No. 391 represents Koyul, the river running parallel to the route must be the so-called ‘Koyul River’ (on Drew’s map).

²⁵ Hedin 1913: 213.

²⁶ A *lha tho* is a small structure made of stones for propitiating the gods, very often decorated with branches on the top (as shown in the drawing).

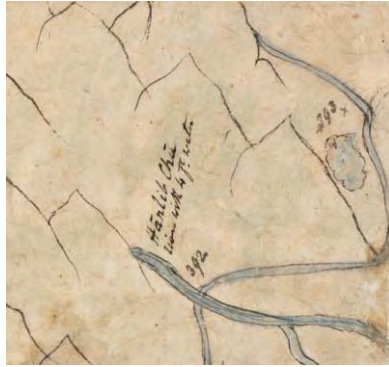


Fig. 8 — Extract of fig. 1, Hānlib Chū and lake.



Fig. 9 — Extract of fig. 10, continuation on the adjoining map.

The route now crosses a river, labelled as *Hānlib Chū*, river with 4 ft. water (392) and an unlabelled lake (393). I very much assume that *Hānlib Chū* refers to the Hanle River and that the depicted lake is the Hanle lake; the only lake I could find in that area. The small houses close to the lake probably represent the Hanle Monastery. Cunningham who also marked the Hanle lake on his map, stated about it: “The *Hānlé-Tsho* is the largest sheet of fresh water that to my knowledge exists in Ladák. The extent of open water is not great, but the whole extent of swamp is between three and four miles in length. (...) To the east of the lake is situated the picturesque

monastery of Hanle (...)."²⁷



Fig. 10 — Extract of a map of the "Ancient Lake System of Ladak" by Cunningham. The Hanle Lake is shown on the right side.



Fig. 11 — Extract of fig. 1, two lakes and nomad tents.

²⁷ Cunningham 1854: 142-143. The Hanle Lake is depicted on the map between pages 136 and 137 (in the same book).

The route continues crossing unlabelled lakes (393, 394) before arriving at a nomad settlement labelled as *Kyungū dōkpa* (396). The term *dōkpa* (Tib. *'brog pa*) refers to the Tibetan word for nomads. The term *Kyungū* most probably refers to two lakes both called 'Kyun lake'. Drew distinguished between a fresh and brackish 'Kyun Lake' on his map. Walker and Strachey showed only one 'Kyung Lake' on their maps.²⁸ In this regard, Strachey stated that: "In addition to the lakes above described, there are several small ones, all fresh-water, (...) but they have no geographical importance, and are often mere duck-ponds, though interesting as objects of topography or landscape, and seldom without Tibetan names. The largest that I have heard of is the lake of Kyung, said to be 3 or 4 miles round, in the ravine of *Nidar*, entering the left of the Indus in Upper *Ladak*, (...)." ²⁹ On modern maps both lakes are shown and called 'Kiung Tso N.' and 'Kiung Tso South'.³⁰ The area around the lakes seems to have been an attractive grazing ground and thus provided good conditions for a nomad settlement. Furthermore, it probably represented an important halting stage or even market place for caravans passing through the plain.

The route coming from the west and leading between the two Kyun lakes is labelled as *road leading to Spiti from Demjōk* (395). It is not possible to decode this route since we only see the starting point, i.e. Demchok. It seems to lead from Demchok southwards through the mountains. Some houses are depicted on the mountains, although hardly recognizable, perhaps representing a settlement or a monastery. Maybe this route leads partly through the area of Chumurti?

From the nomad camp the route goes through a mountain range and crosses an unlabelled mountain pass (397) before continuing on the following map. The pass could be the 'Kyungse La' on Strachey's and on Walker's maps; or 'Kyanse La' on a modern map.³¹ Lethbridge described the pass as "Kyungzang pass, leading out of Rupshu into the Hanle province."³²

²⁸ On Hedin's map only one unnamed lake is depicted in the respective area.

²⁹ Strachey 1854: 52.

³⁰ Trekking map of Ladakh and Zanskar/South, by Editions Olizane, 1:150,000. Genève: 2013.

³¹ Trekking map of Ladakh and Zanskar/South, by Editions Olizane, 1:150,000. Genève: 2013.

³² Lethbridge 1929: 80.



Fig. 12 — Adjoining map showing the route to the Parang La; mainly oriented to the south.
Add. Or. 3015 f7. © British Library Board



Fig. 13 — Extract of fig. 10, Norbu Sumdo and surroundings.

Coming down from the mountain range and after having crossed another unlabelled mountain pass (398), probably the 'Kurzakh La' on Strachey's map, a comparatively green landscape is shown (399). There is no further comment on the map but the area must represent a watershed called 'Norbu Sumdo', or 'Nurbu Sumdo' on Strachey's and Walker's maps, a marshy landscape and an important halting stage.³³ The term 'Sumdo' (Tib. *sum mdo*) can be translated as 'a place where three roads intersect'.³⁴ Indeed, three routes meet up at

³³ I owe Veronika Hein from Solothurn in Switzerland special thanks for sharing her knowledge about that region with me and for helping me decoding the places on the map.

³⁴ Goldstein 2001: 1125.

that place: one leading from the Parang La, one leading from the unlabelled mountain pass (398), and one leading from the Tsomoriri. Just below this green landscape a route to the Tsomoriri lake is indicated. It is labelled as *road to Chūmoriri Lake* (400). Following the route from the watershed to the other direction, a small building labelled as *Zowara Singh fort* (401) is depicted before crossing a river.³⁵ This river is most probably the Par Chu or 'Pára River' on Walker's map.



Fig. 14 — Extract of fig. 10, Parang La.

The route now follows the river through a gorge; with a tributary stream labelled as *river from Tugling* [?] *Lā* (402) flowing into the

³⁵ According to Quentin Devers this fort marked the traditional border between Spiti and Ladakh.

main river. *Tugling La* must refer to the 'Takling La', which is located northwest of the Parang La. It was described as a pass into Rupshu and "off the direct route, and not much used" by Lethbridge who travelled in that area in the 1920s.³⁶ On the left side of the route, a cross indicates a place labelled as *Tātung* (403); an important pasture ground for animals. On Strachey's map the place is marked as "Pasture Grounds, or Encamping Places of Travellers" and called 'Tratang'. The route continues through the gorge, crossing a rocky landscape and a formation that looks like a glacier. It then arrives at the Parang La mountain pass; labelled as *Parung Lā* (404). In his *Report on the Valley of Spiti* Hay mentioned three "passes into Tartary", including the Parang La about which he gave the following description: "2nd Pass into Tartary – 'Párang.' – The second pass over the 'Párang' lámú, upwards of 16,000 feet, and goes by the village of 'Ki Gúnpá' and Kibar to Rúksú, a district of Ladak. This is usually called the 'Párang Lá,' Lá being the contradiction of 'lámú' a pass."³⁷ Regarding the boundaries of Spiti, he explained: "It is bounded on the North by the Párang range, which separates it from Ladakh. To the North East there is no defined boundary, but inaccessible mountains."³⁸ According to Hay's statement, the Parang La did not only represent the border between Spiti and Ladakh at the time of the creation of the maps, but was also regarded as one of the gateways to 'Tartary'; a term often used to describe the land of nomadic people such as the Tibetans.³⁹

Considerations about the purpose of the maps

We know for certain that the lama who produced these maps travelled from Lhasa westwards. It is unclear, however, which route he took to get to Kullu where he met Hay. We can therefore only speculate on the itinerary followed based on the maps. Coming from Western Tibet the most important trade route led to Leh along the

³⁶ Lethbridge 1929: 78.

³⁷ Hay 1850: 431.

³⁸ Hay 1850: 431.

³⁹ In several travel accounts the word 'tartars' is used for nomadic people, such as in Markham's description of Tsomoriri nomads: "a tribe of wandering Tartars, who, like the Bedouins of the desert, have no fixed residences, but roaming about their flocks and herds, dwell altogether in tents."; Markham 1854: 324.

Indus River.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the 'Western Tibet map' does not show a direct route to Leh. Instead, the route turns to the southwest from Demchok to the Parang La mountain pass. After crossing this pass one would arrive in the Spiti Valley from where it was possible to continue towards the British territories of Lahul, Kullu, or Bashahr-Kinnaur.

The map of the 'Ladakh Indus Valley' represents in reality the continuation of the route on the 'Western Tibet map'. According to the numbering on the map, the starting point is Leh and the map leads to the southeast along the Indus Valley. At the very end of the Indus Valley map, the route splits. The first route follows the Hanle River to Hanle,⁴¹ while the second continues along the Indus River and leads directly to Demchok. The 'Western Tibet map' ends at the Parang La, but Demchok and the Indus coming from the east are depicted on this map. The 'Western Tibet map' and the 'Ladakh Indus Valley map' do not fit together seamlessly, yet, the route that is shown represents a continues one.

According to these maps, the lama could have travelled to Kullu along the route from Demchok to the Spiti Valley. Whichever route the lama has chosen the maps suggest that he travelled in that area, most probably just before he came to Kullu. Thus, his memories of these routes were probably still very fresh. The itinerary he followed was not unusual. Several similar routes were shown on the maps of Strachey and Walker. For a long time, I assumed that the maps under review depicted an unusual, perhaps even unknown, route between Demchok and the Parang La. But they don't.

These maps were made in the late 1850s at a time when the mapping of British India was largely complete, but before the time when Tibet began to be mapped for the first time by Indian pundits, the 'spies' of the British Empire. Because of its strategic location in Central Asia and increasing economic interests and mercantile investments, Europeans edged closer to Tibet during the 19th century. Hence the role of knowledge production was significant, especially for the competing empires Russia and British India. The seeking and acquisition of systematic knowledge of Tibetan landscapes and societies became an ambitious goal for both empires. Thus, these maps were most probably of high interest for the British, for several

⁴⁰ See the map of the local trade routes in Rizvi 2012 and Gray 1997: 60.

⁴¹ See Lange 2016b.

reasons – such as the British Indian trans-Himalayan trade. Particularly, the Parang Pass was used to divert part of the wool and pashm trade from West Tibet towards British territories, and thus circumvent Kashmir monopoly.⁴²

During my research on the whole Wise Collection I have started to learn the 'codes' of these historical maps and how to 'read' them. Ignoring 'Western' cartographical codes and references like 'orientation' and 'scale' enabled me to approach the mapmaker's way of thinking. As far as I know, these are the only maps that provide us with a visual representation of a route used in mid-19th century between Demchok and the Parang La from an indigenous perspective. These maps have many stories to tell. They transmit valuable ideas about the mapmaker's perception and representation of the territory they illustrate, as well as his way of seeing and looking.

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⁴² For further information; see Rizvi 2012, particularly chapter 2 on Pashm trade.

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