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The Inscription in the Lo tsa ba lha khañ of Kanji, Ladakh*

The village of Kanji¹ is located in a side valley of the Indus river, some ninety kilometres to the west of Leh (linear distance), and mainly known for the small, one-roomed temple on its eastern fringe (fig.1). Locally, this temple is said to have been constructed by the famous translator Rin chen bzañ po (958-1055) and accordingly called Lo tsa ba lha khañ, but there is no supporting textual evidence for this attribution. Roberto Vitali, who provided the first description and discussion of the structure, notes that it “contains at present monumental sculptures and murals painted in the Tibeto-Pala style popular in Central Tibet during the late twelfth and the thirteenth centuries” (Vitali 1996: 94). Moreover, based on his comparison of the Lo tsa ba lha khañ’s art work with that in the Gu ru lha khañ at Phyang and in the gSum brtsegs at Wanla, he concludes that the temple in its present form must have been constructed around the middle of the thirteenth century (ibid., p. 100).² It should be noted, however, that this does not necessarily invalidate the local tradition, as the structure itself and the extant art work could date from different times, or an original temple could

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¹ As with many other Tibetan toponyms, various spellings are attested. In the inscription edited and translated below, we find *kan ’ji* (verse-line 62; for the editorial signs, see p. 150f.), whereas the historical inscription in the gSum brtsegs temple of Wanla has *kan ji* (verse-line 36; edition and translation in Tropper 2007a: 115 and 129). According to dKon mchog bkra śis (1995: 681) the original spelling is *rkan bži*, and Vitali (1996: 93) reports the variant *gañs bži*. For the sake of convenience, throughout this article I adopt the spelling which is most commonly used in contemporary western sources (including several maps), i.e., Kanji.

² Christian Luczanits, based on his own evaluation of the temple’s art work, favours a slightly later dating, i.e., the beginning/middle of the fourteenth century (oral communication). The results of his research on the murals and statues of the Kanji temple will be published sometime in the future. A preliminary survey (Luczanits, n.d.) is available online at: <http://www.achiasso.ciation.org/activities/sites/kanji/tsuglag-khang/reports/description-of-paintings-and-sculpture/>.

have been entirely rebuilt, resulting in a monument that is structurally new but essentially still qualifies as having been founded by Rin chen bzañ po.³

The inscription that forms the subject of the present paper is found on the northern part of the temple's east wall and has until now not been edited, translated or studied in detail. Vitali (1996: 95f.) provides a brief discussion, in which he points out that the epigraph is in a poor state of preservation and summarises some selected passages. Apart from that, no other studies on the inscription are known to me.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The inscriptional panel is ochre in colour and measures ca. 19 × 81 cm (height/width). Its lower edge is situated approximately 50 cm above the ground, while its left margin abuts the narrow platform that extends across the temple's northern part and accommodates clay statues of Bhaiṣajyaguru, Avalokiteśvara and Green Tārā⁴ (fig. 2). The space immediately above the inscription is taken up by a large *maṇḍala* which has Buddha Śākyamuni as its central figure⁵ (fig. 3 and 4).

The inscription comprises eighteen lines and is written in black *dbu med* characters, with vowel signs in *dbu can*.⁶ It has an entirely metrical structure, with the repeatedly interspersed interjection *e ma ho* separating a total of 126 verse-lines into thirteen sections.⁷ While most of these sections have an even number of verse-lines,⁸ two consist of seven and thirty-seven verse-lines, respectively.⁹ Moreover, the number of syllables per verse-line is not always consistent within these thirteen sections. In the first one, for instance, verse-lines 1 and 2 are made up of eleven syllables, whereas verse-lines 3-8 comprise only nine. In the fifth section, verse-lines 19, 20 and 22 have nine syllables, while verse-line 21 consists of eleven. Similarly, in the seventh and eighth sections, the last verse-

³ On this possibility, cf. also the remarks of Vitali (1996: 93f.). For similar scenarios with other temples, see Khosla 1979: 49, Tropper 2007a: 108f. & 136 (n. 253), and Tropper 2008: 1ff. (n. 3f.) & 8ff.

⁴ Cf. dKon mchog bkra śis 1995: 681 and Luczanits, n.d.

⁵ Cf. Luczanits, n.d.

⁶ For this combination, cf. Tropper 1996: 15ff.

⁷ Verse-lines 1-8, 9-10, 11-14, 15-18, 19-22, 23-30, 31-34, 35-46, 47-53, 54-69, 70-85, 86-89 and 90-126.

⁸ Specifically, there is one section with only two verse-lines (9-10), five with four (11-14, 15-18, 19-22, 31-34, 86-89), two with eight (1-8, 23-30), one with twelve (35-46) and two with sixteen (54-69, 70-85).

⁹ 47-53 and 90-126.

line has eleven syllables, while the others have nine, and more such cases can be found in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and thirteenth sections. Some of these inconsistencies are obviously the result of a mistake, either by the scribe or by the author,¹⁰ but others could have been fully intended by the author. Where it seemed appropriate, I have added a discussion in the footnotes to my edition and translation, although it is not always possible to come to a definitive decision. To facilitate a quick overview, the edition also provides the (actual or conjectured) number of syllables for all verse-lines.¹¹

CONTENTS AND QUESTIONS OF DATING

In regard to its contents, the inscription can be divided into eight more or less distinct parts. At the beginning, we find the usual benedictory verses to the Buddha, the *dharma* and the *saṅgha* (1-8), which are followed by some general maxims and advice on how to live a religious life (9-53). Next, there is a description of Kanji's geographical setting, its natural beauty and its agricultural riches (54-69). The inscription then provides a historical account of the events that led to the foundation of the temple (70-98), which is followed by a brief description of its major works of art and a short reference to copies of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* and the *Vajracchedikā*, which were also sponsored by the founder¹² of the temple (99-108). In the next seven verse-lines (109-115) we are informed that "a son was born to the father"¹³ – the latter most likely being the previously mentioned founder of the temple – and are given a brief sketch of his life, up to "when he reached old age".¹⁴ Finally, we have what appear to be colophons by the inscription's author (116-120), who is probably the "son" mentioned in the preceding part, and by the scribe (121-126).

Unfortunately, the part that provides the historical background (70-98) is the one that is most damaged and thus much of it remains unclear. Similarly, the names of the founder and of the inscription's author and its scribe are either not given, not preserved or uncertain,¹⁵ and the local population was unable to provide much help in this respect. The only thing that can be said with certainty is that the inscription describes the founder as a descendant of a noble

¹⁰ Regarding these two see the following paragraphs.

¹¹ For details, see the explanation of the editorial signs (p. 150f.).

¹² On whom see the following paragraphs.

¹³ *pha la {b}u skyes*.

¹⁴ *rgan por gyur pa'i tshe*.

¹⁵ Cf. n. 169 and 271.

family, which it somehow traces back to the Yar luñ kings and to sKyid lde Ņi ma mgon.¹⁶

We are thus left with a deplorable lack of historical and chronological information in regard to the temple's founder and the main protagonists behind the production of the inscription, with the inscription itself providing little evidence that would help in dating the temple or the inscription. The only, albeit rather vague, clue that can be found occurs in verse-lines 83-84, which are considerably damaged but seem to state that the parents or forefathers of the founder erected a temple in near-by Lachutse¹⁷ and possibly some more religious structures in “the surroundings of the *chos 'khor* of Wanla”.¹⁸ The age of the present-day temple in Lachutse is not known,¹⁹ and it is also somewhat unclear what the inscription's “*chos 'khor* of Wanla” refers to. The gSum brtsegs temple in Wanla (located some twenty-five km linear distance to the east of Kanji) can be dated to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century,²⁰ and if we assume that the Kanji inscription refers to a “*dharma* center” (*chos 'khor*) that was based at the Wanla gSum brtsegs, the founding of the Kanji temple would have to have taken place at least one generation after that of the gSum brtsegs. Furthermore, if the above-mentioned “son” who “reached old age” was indeed the author of the inscription and the son of the founder of the Kanji temple, the inscription itself would have had to have been written at least one generation after the founding of the temple. On the basis of these uncertain premises and conclusions, we would thus arrive at the beginning of the fourteenth century as the *terminus post quem* for the structure,²¹ while the inscription could not be earlier than around 1325 (i.e., one generation later).

¹⁶ I.e., a descendant of the Yar luñ kings who migrated from Central to Western Tibet in the first half of the tenth century and subsequently established himself as a powerful ruler there. For a concise summary of sKyid lde Ņi ma mgon's activities, see Petech 1997: 231f.

¹⁷ The small hamlet is spelt *la chu*^{es} in the Kanji inscription (verse-line 84), whereas some contemporary western sources refer to it as “Lhachuse” (cf. n. 19). It is located to the southwest of Kanji, from where it can be reached by a two-hour uphill hike.

¹⁸ *wa_n la'i chos 'khor' khor' y'u'g*.

¹⁹ According to Luczanits (2005: 80f.), the carved wooden elements constituting the door frame of the temple predate that of the *'du khañ* in Alchi, which he attributes “to the mid-12th century at the earliest”. It is clear, however, that the Lachutse temple as a whole is a later structure for which several wooden fragments of an earlier temple were reused (cf. *ibid.*), and the latter must not necessarily have been located in Lachutse. The door frame of the Lachutse temple was also discussed by Heinrich Poell in his paper “The Wood Carvings of Lhachuse and their Art-historical Context”, which he presented at the 14th Colloquium of the International Association for Ladakh Studies in Leh on July 17, 2009.

²⁰ See Tropper 2007a: 108-112.

²¹ Note that this is somewhat at variance with Vitali's point of view, according to whom the temple dates back to the middle of the thirteenth century (cf. p. 145, above).

The latter proposition is corroborated by the fact that the inscription lacks the typical palaeographic and orthographic hallmarks of pre-thirteenth/fourteenth century sources, specifically the *gi gu log*, *da drag*, and *ya btags* with *m* before *e* and *i*.²² It is also interesting to compare this with the corresponding evidence of the historical inscription in the gSum brtsegs temple of Wanla, which is of roughly the same length as the one in Kanji and appears to date back to the foundation of the gSum brtsegs in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. The Wanla inscription does not contain any cases of *gi gu log* or *ya btags* with *m* before *e* and *i* either, but it has a single instance of *da drag*.²³ In addition, it features more than a dozen cases of redundant *'a rjes 'jug*²⁴ and eight where *'a sñon 'jug* was used instead of *ma sñon 'jug*,²⁵ which contrasts with the Kanji inscription's six or seven instances of the former characteristic²⁶ and its mere three of the latter.²⁷ As all these palaeographic and orthographic peculiarities only gradually fell out of use, the figures indicate that the Kanji inscription is slightly later than the one in Wanla.

Finally, the uncertainties in dating the inscription are compounded by the fact that there is some evidence that such temple inscriptions were not infrequently touched up or “restored”, which could sometimes even result in a complete re-writing of the text, e. g., in the form of an epigraphic palimpsest.²⁸ While I could not discern any signs of such “restoration” in the Kanji inscription, it is a possibility that cannot be completely ruled out.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE EDITION AND TRANSLATION

The edition is mainly based on a video-documentation that I prepared in August 2002.²⁹ In July 2009 and May 2011, I was also able to reassess a num-

²² See Scherrer-Schaub 1999 (in particular the table on p. 25) and Scherrer-Schaub – Bonani 2002. See also Tropper 2008: 10-13 and 2010: 17 for comparable material and some general remarks on the problems in dating Tibetan manuscripts and inscriptions merely on the basis of their paleography and orthography.

²³ See Tropper 2007a: 118 (verse-line 80).

²⁴ See op. cit., p. 109 (n. 23).

²⁵ See op. cit., p. 110 (n. 24).

²⁶ *dge'* (v.-l. 17, 37, 50), *mdo'* (v.-l. 65), *mdo_*' (v.-l. 68), *pa_*' (v.-l. 90 [reading highly uncertain]), *dgra'* (v.-l. 94).

²⁷ *'gul* (v.-l. 60), *'choñ* (v.-l. 65), *'gyogs* (v.-l. 124).

²⁸ See Tropper – Scherrer-Schaub 2015.

²⁹ From the video-sequences about 270 exposures were extracted, all of which can be viewed at <http://www.univie.ac.at/Tibetan-inscriptions> (links: Ladakh → Kanji → Lo tsa ba lha khang → Inscription 01). CD copies (CD Kanji 1) are kept in the Western Himalayan Archive Vienna (WHAV) and in the South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Library at the University of Vienna.

ber of readings *in situ* which had been hard to make out in my earlier recordings.

The inscriptional text is presented in the form of a diplomatic transcription, with all conjectures, emendations (including adjustments of “irregular spellings” to classical norms)³⁰ and resolutions of contracted writing (*bskuñs yig*) relegated to the footnotes. There, the reading of the inscription is first repeated and then the respective conjecture, emendation or resolution is given after a colon.³¹ Conjectures and emendations that I consider slightly doubtful are followed by a question mark in brackets,³² and in more speculative instances the brackets are omitted. In the former case, the corresponding passage in the translation is also followed by a bracketed question mark; in the latter, the translation is provided in the footnotes (with question mark) and, where required, the running text shows an ellipsis (...).

EDITORIAL SIGNS

{1}, {2}, {3} etc.	beginning of a line
*	<i>dbu</i>
/	<i>śad</i>
.	<i>tsheg</i> ³³
#	ornamental sign
xxx _{pa} xxx / xxx ^{pa} xxx	insertion below / above the line
<i>ṃ</i>	<i>bindu</i>
<u>t</u>	uncertain reading (underlined)
=	illegible ‘letter’ ³⁴
-	illegible letter(s) that formed part of a partly legible “letter”, with one hyphen representing up to three letters ³⁵

³⁰ No emendations are provided for “incorrect” *sandhi*-forms (e.g., *tu* instead of *du*), as such particularities generally do not pose major obstacles to a fluent reading of the text.

³¹ E.g., “*brtso= : brtson*”, “*klog : glog*”, and “*’jien : ’jig rten*”.

³² E.g., “*= : par (?)*” and “*śdroñs : ’droñs (?)*”.

³³ Note that the rendering of the *tsheg* is limited to the edition of the inscription (including the suggested conjectures, emendations and resolutions of contracted writing provided in the footnotes).

³⁴ Cf. Steinkellner – Luczanits 1999: 15 (n. 12), where “letter” is defined as “any combination of letters in the Tibetan alphabet that occupy in vertical arrangement of the letter sequence the space of a single grapheme”, while letter “refers to the single signs for consonants or vowel modification only”. Thus a “letter” can be composed of up to four letters.

³⁵ E.g., *-in* (partly damaged *śin*), *’-o* (partly damaged *’gro*) and *-od* (partly damaged *spyod*).

- (7), (9), (11) etc. (actual or conjectured) number of syllables per verse-line; where the inscription's poor state of preservation and/or other circumstances³⁶ do not allow for a reasonably certain statement, the conjectured figures are followed by a question mark.

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

< >	conjectures
{ }	emendations
« »	deletions

EDITION

{1} *** // # om: swa sti // //

- 1 mkhyen· rtse'i³⁷ 'od· zer· 'od· stoñ· bye· ba· phrag· rgya³⁸ (11)
yis· //
- 2 chos· ñid· 'od· gsal· spro· byed· thub· pa'i· ñi³⁹ dbañ· po· // (11)
- 3 'gro· blo'i· mun· pa· ma· lus· kun· gsel⁴⁰· ba'i· // (9)
- 4 thub· dbañ· bstan· pa'i· gtso· la· rgyal· gyur· cig· // (9)
- 5 don· gñis· ma· r⁴¹· phyin· skyob· pa· sañs· rgyas· dañ· // (9)
- 6 bden· gñis· mthar· phyin· dam· pa'i· chos· rnam {2} dañ· // (9)
- 7 mkhyen· gñis· mthar· phyin· 'phags· pa'i· dge· 'dun· gtso· // (9)
- 8 m=r· -ug⁴²· skyabs· gnas· gsum· la· rgyal· gyur· cig· // (9)
e· ma· ho //
- 9 -toñ⁴³· gsum· 'jig· rten· khyad· par· mi· mjed· 'dir· // (9)

³⁶ E.g., ambiguities in the metrical value of genitive formations like *pa'i* etc.

³⁷ *rtse'i* : *brtse'i*.

³⁸ *rgya* : *brgya*.

³⁹ *ñi* : *ñi*· del.? Cf. n. 215.

⁴⁰ *gsel* : *sel*.

⁴¹ *ma· r* : *mthar*· (cf. v.-l. 6 and 7). It seems that the scribe first put a *tsheg* after the *m* and then tried to correct his mistake with a makeshift *bskuñs yig*, partly overwriting the original *tsheg* with the *r*.

⁴² *m=r*· *-ug* : *mthar· thug*·.

⁴³ *-toñ* : *stoñ*·.

- 10 sgrub⁴⁴ dbaṅ bstan pa -in⁴⁵ tu gsal ba la // (9)
e ma ho //
- 11 dal' byor mi lus rin cen⁴⁶ thob nas kyaṅ // (9)
- 12 tshogs gñis sgrub la rtag tu ma brtso=⁴⁷ na // (9)
- 13 nor bu rin chen gliṅ du phyin nas kyaṅ // =⁴⁸ //⁴⁹ (9)
- 14 {3} don med stoṅ par log par ma byas bsam // (9)
e ma ho //
- 15 lus kyis rgyal sras mchod la brtson par rigs // (9)
- 16 ṅag gyis bstod dbyaṅs rgya mtsho brjod par rigs // (9)
- 17 yid kyis rtag tu dge'⁵⁰ la brtson par rigs // (9)
- 18 rtag tu ma spaṅs rtog -ed⁵¹ bsgo=⁵² par rigs // (9)
e ma ho //
- 19 tshogs gñis bsgrub la dbyaṅs⁵³ med brtson par rigs // (9)
- 20 ji phyir ze na 'dus byas mi -tag⁵⁴ phyir // (9)
- 21 {4} lus la sñiṅ po med daṅ tshe la loṅ med phyir // (11)
- 22 legs par bsoms⁵⁵ la bsgrubs⁵⁶ daṅ skyes bu====⁵⁷ // (9)
e ma ho //

⁴⁴ sgrub : grub. The syllable could perhaps also be read as thub. In either case the first two syllables of the verse-line are clearly an epithet of the Buddha.

⁴⁵ -in : śin.

⁴⁶ cen : chen.

⁴⁷ brtso= : brtson.

⁴⁸ = : #?

⁴⁹ Cf. the end of lines 5, 6, 9 and 11, where various combinations with multiple śads were obviously just used to fill up the end of the lines.

⁵⁰ dge' : dge.

⁵¹ -ed : med.

⁵² bsgo= : bsgom.

⁵³ The first two letters are slightly blurred, but the syllable can hardly be read as 'gyaṅs or bgyaṅs, although the latter readings are certainly more apposite. Thus dbyaṅs is probably just a mistake of the scribe, caused by the syllable's near homophony with 'gyaṅs/bgyaṅs.

⁵⁴ -tag : rtag.

⁵⁵ bsoms : soms.

⁵⁶ bsgrubs : sgrubs.

⁵⁷ bu==== : bur gyur, bu gdul or bu thul?

- 23 phyi· ma'i· mdun·⁵⁸ gros· tshe· 'dir· ma· bsgrubs· na· // (9)
- 24 g-i·⁵⁹ rje'i· dmag· tshogs· sleb· dus· su· -is·⁶⁰ skyob· // (9)
- 25 phyi· ma'i· rgyags· phye· 'di· ru· =·⁶¹ sdroñs·⁶² na· // (9)
- 26 yi· dags· b-res·⁶³ skom·⁶⁴ dgan· su·⁶⁵ su· yi· -ter·⁶⁶ // (9)
- 27 mun· se· 'od· gsal· tshe· 'dir· ma· bsgrubs· na· // (9)
- 28 gti· mug· {5} byol· so=s·⁶⁷ gnas· su· ji· ltar· bsgom· // (9)
- 29 gśin· rje'i· dgra· dpuñ· mams· ni· sleb· dus· su· // (9)
- 30 gñen· dañ· druñ· po'i· tshogs· mams· su· yi· skyob· // (9)
e· ma· ho· //
- 31 de· ltar· bsams· nas· tshe· 'dir· bs-rubs·⁶⁸ pa· na· // (9)
- 32 mdun·⁶⁹ gros· gru·⁷⁰ pa· yi· go·⁷¹ skal· ldan· kun· // (9)
- 33 thar· pa'i· lam· sna· zin· -o·⁷² skyes· bu· kun· // (9)
- 34 dal· 'byor· thob· pa· chud· ma· zas· so·⁷³ tshogs·⁷⁴ // (11?)

⁵⁸ mdun· : 'dun·.

⁵⁹ g-i· : gśin·.

⁶⁰ -is· : yis·.

⁶¹ =· : ma·.

⁶² sdroñs· : 'droñs· (?).

⁶³ b-res· : bkres·.

⁶⁴ It seems that the scribe started to write a *ra btags* (perhaps under the influence of the preceding *b<k>res*·), then realised his mistake and continued with the long down-stroke of the *k*, without deleting the partly finished *r*.

⁶⁵ dgan· su· : *gna(s) su*· (?) (probably just a slip of the pen; cf. v.-l. 28). Alternatively, the two syllables could be an “irregular” variant of *gan du*.

⁶⁶ -ter· : ster·.

⁶⁷ so=s· : soñ·. The inscription probably read *soñs*·.

⁶⁸ bs-rubs· : *bsgrubs*·.

⁶⁹ mdun· : 'dun·.

⁷⁰ gru· : *grub*·.

⁷¹ go· : *bgo*·.

⁷² There is a thin diagonal line cutting off what was probably the left half of the root-letter from the following *lacuna* where the ground coat of the panel is almost completely gone. This diagonal line seems to be a smear rather than the remainder of some original letter. The extant traces allow for the conjectures *chog*· and *mod*·, the first alternative being somewhat more likely.

⁷³ so· : *soms*· *ya rabs*·? Cf. especially v.-l. 46 and 53, as well as v.-l. 40. In any case, v.-l. 34 must have contained more syllables than the three preceding ones.

⁷⁴ tshogs· : 'tshogs· (?); cf. n. 229.

- e· ma· ho· // //⁷⁵
- 35 {6} dad· pa· brtan· po'i· žiñ· sa· dag· pa· dañ· // (9)
- 36 rnam· smin· stig·⁷⁶ bral· sbyin· pa· dag· pa· dañ· // (9)
- 37 dge'⁷⁷ bcu· dañ· du· blañ· ba'i· sems· dag· dañ· // (9)
- 38 mi· dge'i· lam· bral· brtso=⁷⁸ 'gru=⁷⁹ dag· pa· ste· // (9)
- 39 dag· pa· bži· ldan· gñen· gyi· mchog· 4· po· // (9)
- 40 rtag· tu· brten· ==⁸⁰ mdzod· dañ· ya· rabs· tshogs·⁸¹ // (9)
- 41 'dus· byas· mi· rtag· rtag· pa'i· dus· de· la· // (9)
- 42 kun· stoñ· =-i·⁸² bden· bden· par· -i· -i====⁸³ // //⁸⁴ (9?)
- 43 {7} '-o·⁸⁵ ba'i· chos· la· žen· na· slu· ba'i· lugs· // (9)
- 44 de· phyir· sgyu· ma· rmi· lam· klog·⁸⁶ dañ· ni· // (9)
- 45 rtsa·⁸⁷ rtse'i· zil· pa· lta· bu'i· chos· bži· po· // (9)
- 46 legs· par· bsoms·⁸⁸ la· dge· ba· bsgrubs·⁸⁹ dañ· -a·⁹⁰ rabs· tshogs·⁹¹ // (11)
- e· ma· ho //
- 47 dus· riñ· 'grog=⁹² pa'i· gñen· mdun·⁹³ so· sor====⁹⁴ -o· brais·⁹⁵ // (11)

⁷⁵ Cf. n. 49.

⁷⁶ stig· : sdig·.

⁷⁷ dge'· : dge·.

⁷⁸ brtso=⁷⁸ : brtson·.

⁷⁹ 'gru=⁷⁹ : 'grus·.

⁸⁰ == : par· (?).

⁸¹ tshogs· : 'tshogs· (?).

⁸² =-i· : pa'i· (?).

⁸³ The remaining traces allow for the (rather uncertain) conjecture *mi· zin· pa'i·*.

⁸⁴ Cf. n. 49.

⁸⁵ '-o· : 'gro·.

⁸⁶ klog· : glog·.

⁸⁷ rtsa· : rtswa·.

⁸⁸ bsoms· : soms· (cf. v.-1. 34 and 53).

⁸⁹ bsgrubs· : sgrubs·.

⁹⁰ -a· : ya·.

⁹¹ tshogs· : 'tshogs· (?).

⁹² 'grog=⁹² : 'grog·.

⁹³ mdun· : 'dun·.

⁹⁴ Perhaps something like *so· sor· bžag·* or *so· sor· mña'·?*

⁹⁵ -o· brais· : cho· brais·; i.e., irregular for *cho 'brañ* (?).

- 48 mñam· por· skyes· pa'i· 'dus· kyañ· -ul^{.96} du· lus· // (9)
- 49 'bad· pas· bsa=s^{.97} pa-i^{.98} {8} nor· kyañ· sul· du· lus· // (9)
- 50 sñon· du· byas· pa'i· dge'· stig^{.99} rjes· su· 'breñ· // (9)
- 51 rtse^{.100} ba'i· bus^{.101} kyañ· nor· la· bgo· śas^{.102} gtoñ· // (9)
- 52 'di· rñams· 'chi· dus· byuñ^{.103} bas· da· lta· nas· // (9)
- 53 med· par· bgyi· la· bsoms^{.104} dañ· ya· rabs· tshod^{.105} // (9)
e· ma· ho· //
- 54 g-ul^{.106} bya'i· gnas· =g-ur^{.107} -t-ñ^{.108} gsum· 'jien^{.109} khamś· // (9)
- 55 khyad· par· mi· mjed· 'jien· 'dul^{.110} -ya-i-ul^{.111} -yur^{.112} pa· // (11)
- 56 'dzam· {9} gliñ^{.113} gliñ· 4'i· mchog· 'gyur^{.114} 'dzam· gliñ· chuñ· (11)
ñu· 'dir· //
- 57 ston· pas^{.115} =ñs^{.116} rgyas· tshul· bstan· rdoer^{.117} gdan· // (9)
- 58 de'i· byañ· phyogs· sa· khoñ^{.118} stoñ· yul· dbus· // (9)

⁹⁶ -ul· : sul· (cf. the following verse-line).

⁹⁷ bsa=s· : bsags·.

⁹⁸ pa-i· : pa'i·.

⁹⁹ dge'· stig· : dge· sdig·.

¹⁰⁰ rtse· : rtse· (?).

¹⁰¹ bus· : bu·?

¹⁰² śas· : bśas·.

¹⁰³ byuñ· : 'byuñ·.

¹⁰⁴ bsoms· : soms·.

¹⁰⁵ tshod· (i.e., tshogs·; cf. v.-l. 73, 82, 89, 93, 102, 103) : 'tshogs· (?).

¹⁰⁶ g-ul· : gdul·.

¹⁰⁷ The syllable probably read 'gyur·, but semantically gyur· is certainly preferable (also cf. the end of the following verse-line).

¹⁰⁸ -t-ñ· : stoñ·.

¹⁰⁹ 'jien· : 'jig· rten·.

¹¹⁰ 'dul· : gdul·.

¹¹¹ -ya-i-ul· : bya'i· yul·.

¹¹² -yur· : gyur·.

¹¹³ 'dzam· gliñ· : 'dzam· gliñ· del.? A mistake on the part of the scribe easily could have been caused by both the line break and the repeated occurrence of (')gyur· in v.-l. 55 and 56.

¹¹⁴ 'gyur· : gyur·.

¹¹⁵ ston· pas· : ston· pas·.

¹¹⁶ =ñs· : sañs·.

¹¹⁷ I.e., rdo· rje·.

¹¹⁸ khoñ· : khoñs·?

- 59 dam· chos· dar· ba· kha· ba· can· gyi· ljoñs· // (9)
- 60 chu· bo· 4· 'us¹¹⁹· -i· -e¹²⁰· ma· phaṃ· 'gul¹²¹ // (9)
- 61 mña'· ris· bstod¹²²· -yogs¹²³· chu· -o¹²⁴· sen· -e-i· g.yas¹²⁵ // (9)
- 62 yul· la· dge· =-u¹²⁶· 'dzom· =i¹²⁷· kan· 'ji· 'dir· // //¹²⁸ (9)
- 63 {10} phu· na· gañs· ri· dar· dkar· yol· ba· 'dra· // (9)
- 64 bar· na· lha· brag· btsun· mo· 'gyiñs· pa· 'dra· // (9)
- 65 mdo'¹²⁹· na· klu· brag· siñ¹³⁰· ge· 'choñ¹³¹· ba· 'dra· // (9)
- 66 phu· na· rtsi· thog· rgyas· pas· rta· phyugs· nor· ⁱ_{gy s.} phyug· // (11)
- 67 bar· na· ziñ_{sa}· bzañ· bas· 'bras· bu· 'bru· yis· phyug· // (11)
- 68 mdo'¹³²· na· =====g¹³³· dpuñ· dgras· -i¹³⁴· 'tshugs· // (11?)
- 69 'di· 'dra'i· yul· po· no· mtsha=ch-¹³⁵ // (7)
- e· ma· ho· //
- 70 ==¹³⁶· par· mi· rgyud· ya· rabs· {11} ldiñ· gyi· rigs· // (9?)
- 71 spyod· pa· brlabs¹³⁷· kyis· che· bas· rgyal· po'i· blon· po· bgyis· // (11)
- 72 khri· sroñ· lde· brtsan¹³⁸· mña'^{bdag}· khri· ral· dañ· // (9)

¹¹⁹ 'us· : 'dus·.

¹²⁰ -i· -e· : ti· se·.

¹²¹ 'gul· : mgul·.

¹²² bstod· : stod·.

¹²³ -yogs· : phyogs·.

¹²⁴ -o· : bo·.

¹²⁵ sen· -e-i· g.yas· : sen· ge'i· g.yas· (i.e., for the more regular *sen ge'i g.yas*).

¹²⁶ =-u· : bcu·.

¹²⁷ =i· : pa'i·.

¹²⁸ Cf. n. 49.

¹²⁹ mdo'· : mdo·.

¹³⁰ siñ· : señ·.

¹³¹ 'choñ· : mchoñ·.

¹³² mdo'· : mdo·.

¹³³ A highly uncertain conjecture, which more or less tallies with the remaining traces, is *sa· roñ· bcabs· pas· jag·*.

¹³⁴ -i· : mi·.

¹³⁵ mtsha=ch· : *mtshar· che·*.

¹³⁶ ==· : *khyad·* (?).

¹³⁷ brlabs· : rlabs·.

¹³⁸ For this archaic spelling see, e.g., Zhang 1993, s.v. *khri sroñ lde brtsan*.

- 73 khri·¹³⁹ lde· ñi· ma· mgon· loḍ·¹⁴⁰ pa'i· // (9?)
- 74 rgyal· po· rims·¹⁴¹ bzin· thugs· kyi· blon· po· bgyis· // (9)
- 75 rgyal· pos· bka'· lu=¹⁴² brtsal·¹⁴³ na=ni·¹⁴⁴ // (7)
- 76 slad· ky=¹⁴⁵ r¹⁴⁶====¹⁴⁷ thil·¹⁴⁸ du· 'oñs· // (7/9)
- 77 śi=-e¹⁴⁹====ñ· du· =====_{=tsun}· nas· ni· // // (9/11)
- 78 {12} rgyal· po=¹⁵⁰ bka'· luñ· brtsan· pas· kun· kyi· grtso·¹⁵¹ bor· (11)
'gyur·¹⁵² //
- 79 pho· skyes· zañ· druñ· mo· skyes· jo· mo·¹⁵³ -uñ·¹⁵⁴ sa· ni· // (11)
- 80 physis· kyi· dus· su· zañ·_{=tsun}·¹⁵⁵ =====ñis·¹⁵⁶ kysis· // (9/11)

¹³⁹ khri· : skyid· (?).

¹⁴⁰ I.e., logs·. Perhaps this is a somewhat unusual *bskuñs yig* for *la sogs* (cf. Śes rab 2003: 597 and n. 165 below).

¹⁴¹ rims· : rim·.

¹⁴² lu=¹⁴² : luñ·.

¹⁴³ brtsal· : bstsal·.

¹⁴⁴ na=ni· : nas· ni·.

¹⁴⁵ ky=¹⁴⁵ : kysis· (?).

¹⁴⁶ The top parts of the first two “letters” are completely damaged. The first one has a long down-stroke, while the second one could have read *cha/chü/che/cho*, *ma/mi/me/mo*, *pha/phi/phe/pho* or *ya/yi/ye/yo*. Two possible but highly uncertain conjectures are *dmār*· and *da*· *char*·.

¹⁴⁷ The last “letter” could have read *m(a)*, *l(a)* or *s(a)*. Thus (*dmār*·) *kham*· is a possible but very uncertain conjecture; (*g*)*dan*· *sa*· (*{m}*)*thil*· could also be justified by the remaining traces but is equally uncertain. By contrast, the conjecture (·)*bri*· *guñ*· (*{m}*)*thil*· cannot be aligned with what remains of the passage.

¹⁴⁸ thil· : mthil·?

¹⁴⁹ śi=-e : śin· rje(·) (i.e., irregular for *gśin rje*)?

¹⁵⁰ po=¹⁵⁰ : po'i·.

¹⁵¹ grtso· : gtso·.

¹⁵² 'gyur· : gyur·.

¹⁵³ The syllable also could have read *bo*·.

¹⁵⁴ Read *khruñ*·, *chuñ*·, *zuñ*· (irregular for *gzuñ*?) or *byuñ*· (the first two alternatives being perhaps slightly more supported by the remaining traces)? In *Ñag dbañ blo gros grags pa* 1992: 44, one Jo mo chuñ ma is referred to as the mother of sGam po pa's student (Bha' Ba' rom [pa]) Dar ma dbañ phyug (1127-1199 [according to Grags pa 'byuñ gnas – Blo bzañ mkhas grub 1992: 1203]), but there is no evidence to suggest that the woman mentioned in the inscription is identical with Dar ma dbañ phyug's mother. In addition, the penultimate syllable of the verse-line can hardly be read as *ma*·.

¹⁵⁵ _{=tsun} : btsum·.

¹⁵⁶ The last syllable probably read *gñis*· and the remains of the preceding letters allow for different conjectures, but none of them is really convincing. Thus *bdag*· *gñis*· (short for *bdag po/mo gñis*) would make good sense, but there are clear traces of writing below what in this case would have to be read as *b* (which in any case looks more like a *p* or *s*). Moreover, the second “letter”

- 81 dgos· med· rgyud· la· skyes· pas· khar·¹⁵⁷ rnamṣ· spañs· pa· (11)
yin· //
- 82 zas·¹⁵⁸ sgyu· mar· śes· pas· -yod·¹⁵⁹ med· sbyin· pa· btañs·¹⁶⁰ // (11)
- 83 wa_n·¹⁶¹ la'i· chos· '·¹⁶² 'khor·u·¹⁶³ // (11?)
- 84 la· chu·^{e 164} rts·¹⁶⁵ rgya· ma· mañ· {13} du· bžeñs· // (11?)
- 85 'di· 'dra'i· gduñ·^{e 166} brt n khyad· du· 'phags· // (7)
e· ma· ho //
- 86 ya· rabs· rnamṣ· ni· siñ·¹⁶⁷ ge· 'gyiñs· pa· 'dra· // (9)
- 87 btsun· mo· rnamṣ· ni· lha· mo· =-u·¹⁶⁸ pa· 'dra· // (9)
- 88 stag· śar· rnamṣ· ni· lha· phrug· gar· byed· 'dra· // (9)
- 89 'di· 'dra'i· pha· spun· tshoḍ· pa· no· mtshar· che· // (9)
e· ma· ho· //
- 90 de· 'dra'i· nañ· nas· mi· chen· gces· pa'· bu·¹⁶⁹ // (9?)

may have contained a *śabs kyu* (note that the left part of the vowel sign could account only for some of the traces below the *b/p/s*) and thus it might also have read *du*. Because the remaining traces of the first three 'letters' do not suggest that they were separated from each other by *tshegs* and a conjecture like *bdag· gñis* would result in only nine syllables for the verse-line (as opposed to eleven in v.-l. 79, 81 and 82) there is also some reason to believe that the damaged space contained a(n unusual) *bskuñs yig*, e.g., for *sa bdag śug* (cf. Śes rab 2003: 621), *sa spyad* (for the more regular *sa spyod*) *śug* or *sras bu bdag*.

¹⁵⁷ *khar*· : *mkhar*·.

¹⁵⁸ The remaining traces suggest the conjecture *zas*· *nor*·.

¹⁵⁹ *-yod*· : 'gyod· (the inscription probably had the irregular spelling *gyod*·).

¹⁶⁰ *btañs*· : *btañ*·.

¹⁶¹ The *n* is written below the *w*. For similar cases, see Śes rab 2003: 541f.

¹⁶² Both the context and the remaining traces strongly support the conjecture 'khor·.

¹⁶³ The first syllable after 'khor·(·) may have read *yug*·, whereas the rest is almost completely damaged.

¹⁶⁴ I.e., *rt*s· was inserted below the line, while the 'greñ *bu* was placed slightly to the right above the *tsheg* following *chu*·.

¹⁶⁵ None of the letters can be read with certainty, but the remaining traces allow for the conjecture *loḍ*· *pa*· (i.e., *bskuñs yig* of *la sogs pa*; cf. n. 140). Alternatively, but somewhat less likely, the damaged space may have contained a *bskuñs yig* of *loñs spyod*, followed by *du* (e.g., *loñsd*· *du*·).

¹⁶⁶ *br*t n : *rten*(·).

¹⁶⁷ *siñ*· : *señ*·.

¹⁶⁸ *=-u*· : 'dzum·?

¹⁶⁹ The end of the verse-line is difficult to read and interpret. While *pa*' (instead of *pa*) is attested in early sources (cf. Taube 1980: 15 and Tropper 1996: 36 & 99), it is perhaps more

- 91 sño-¹⁷⁰ tshe bsod nams pos¹⁷¹ ya rabs sras su 'khruñs // (11?)
- 92 {14} pha ma'i sñiñ du sdug pas ya rabs 'dzañs kyi bu // (11)
- 93 yotan¹⁷² khoñ nas che bas ñer¹⁷³ riñ kun kyañ 'khor // (11)
- 94 še moñ dpa' rtsal che bas dgra'¹⁷⁴ rnamś mtha' nas
'joms // (11)
- 95 ljags kyi dbañ po bde bas gtam lab smra la mkhas // (11)
- 96 ser sna sñiñ la med pas sbyin pa gtoñ la mkhas // (11)
- 97 dam pa'i choś la lo=koon¹⁷⁵ mchog spyi bos bkur¹⁷⁶ // (11)
- 98 pha ma drin du bzo b=¹⁷⁷ {15} grtsug¹⁷⁸ lag khañ¹⁷⁹_d
bžeñs // (11)
- 99 pha rol phyin pa sdzod¹⁸⁰ par bya ba'i phyir // (9)
- 100 'jien¹⁸¹ 'das pa'i dkyior¹⁸² drug bžeñso¹⁸³ // (9)

proximate to assume that the scribe simply forgot to add a *gi gu* here, and the emendation *gces pa'i bu* certainly would make good sense. Furthermore, since above the 'letter' *bu* there is a somewhat blurred blotch which resembles a *bindu* and because the writing in front of *bu* is also not entirely clear, the alternative reading *gces pa' bum* could be justified as well. In either case, the verse-line only contains nine syllables (as opposed to eleven in v.-l. 92-98; v.-l. 91 is somewhat unclear). Thus the scribe may have omitted two syllables here, but it is hard to come up with a convincing conjecture.

¹⁷⁰ sño- : sñon.

¹⁷¹ pos : chen pos (?). As it stands, the verse-line contains an uneven number of syllables and (*bsod nams*) *pos* does not make any sense. It thus seems likely that the scribe accidentally omitted a syllable here.

¹⁷² yotan : yon tan.

¹⁷³ ñer : ñe.

¹⁷⁴ dgra' : dgra.

¹⁷⁵ lo=koon : loñs spyod dkon (the passage seems to have featured a *bskuñs yig*).

¹⁷⁶ / : //.

¹⁷⁷ b= : bas (?). To the right side of the damaged space there is a long vertical line that was most likely added as a makeshift boundary to separate the text from the painting on its right which here slightly extends into the inscriptional panel. In any case, the semantic context and the frequent occurrence of the instrumental case in a causal/modal sense (cf. v.-l. 92-96) make it seem likely that the last syllable of the line read *bas*.

¹⁷⁸ grtsug : gtsug.

¹⁷⁹ I.e., 'd was inserted below the line, whereas the *gi gu* was placed above the *tsheg* following *khañ*.

¹⁸⁰ sdzod : rdzogs.

¹⁸¹ 'jien : 'jig rten.

¹⁸² dkyior : dkyil 'khor (cf. Śes rab 2003: 19).

¹⁸³ bžeñso : bžeñs so.

- 101 sa· rnam̄s· bcuis¹⁸⁴ thob· par· bya· ba'i· phyir· // (9)
- 102 mdzad· pa· bcuis¹⁸⁵ sdzod¹⁸⁶ par· bris· // (7)
- 103 khyad· par· pha'i· don· du· thuḍ· rje· chen· po· dañ· // (11)
- 104 ma'i· don· du· 'phags· ^{ma}sgrol· ma· dañ· // (9)
- 105 bu· mo'i· don· du· sañs· ^{rgyas}sman· ^{lha}¹⁸⁷ gžeñs¹⁸⁸ // (9)
- 106 btsun· mo-i¹⁸⁹ -o=¹⁹⁰ du· 'phags· {16} pa· brgyad· stoñ· pa· // (9)
- 107 bu· mo'i· don· du· rdoer¹⁹¹ gcod· pa· bžeñs· // (9)
- 108 de· la· sogs· pa· rgya· ma· mañ· du· byas· // (9)
- 109 pha· la· pu¹⁹² skyes· ya· rabs· 'dzañs· kyī· bu· // (9)
- 110 -a¹⁹³ tshod· dañ· po· zo¹⁹⁴ nur· gyur· pa'i· tshe· // (9)
- 111 pha· ma'i· sñiñ· sdug· lta'i· rtse· dga'· byas· // (9)
- 112 gñis· pa· ^{na}tshod· dar· la· bab· pa'i· tshe· // (9)
- 113 'jien¹⁹⁵ khye· grags· brtsod¹⁹⁶ phyir· mi· chos· mañ· du· byas· // (11)
- 114 gsum· pa· =¹⁹⁷ tshod· {17} rgan· por· gyur· pa'i· tshe· // (9)
- 115 dad· pa· khoñ· nas· skyessñiñ¹⁹⁸ dam· chos· dañ· du· blañs· // (11)
- 116 'di¹⁹⁹ ^{lar}bsal¹⁹⁹ 'debs· sgron· me· brtsams· pa· yis· // (9)
- 117 bdag· dañ· yon· bdag· kham̄s· sum²⁰⁰ -emñ²⁰¹ kun· // (9)

¹⁸⁴ *bcuis* : *bcu*· *gñis*· (cf. Śes rab 2003: 330).

¹⁸⁵ *bcuis* : *bcu*· *gñis*·.

¹⁸⁶ *sdzod* : *rdzogs*·.

¹⁸⁷ ^{lha} : *bla*·.

¹⁸⁸ *gžeñs* : *bžeñs*·.

¹⁸⁹ *mo-i* : *mo'i*·.

¹⁹⁰ -o=¹⁹⁰ : *don*·.

¹⁹¹ *rdoer* : *rdo*· *rje*·.

¹⁹² *pu* : *bu*·.

¹⁹³ -a : *na*·.

¹⁹⁴ *zo* : *gzon*·.

¹⁹⁵ 'jien : 'jig· *rten*·.

¹⁹⁶ *brtsod* : *brtson*·.

¹⁹⁷ = : *na*·.

¹⁹⁸ *skyessñiñ* : *skyes*· *śiñ*·.

¹⁹⁹ *bsal* : *gsal*·.

²⁰⁰ *sum* : *gsum*·.

²⁰¹ -emñ : *semñ*· (i.e., *bskuñs yig for sems can*; cf. Śes rab 2003: 626).

- 118 bde· g-e====²⁰² sñiñ· po· de· 4n²⁰³ ñid· kyi· dbyiñs· // (9)
- 119 blo²⁰⁴ bur· dri· ma'i· sbubs· las· ñes· grol· te· /²⁰⁵ (9)
- 120 chos· ñid· 'od· gsal· myur· tu· gtog=gyur²⁰⁶ 1²⁰⁷ / # //²⁰⁸ (9)
- 121 {18} ==²⁰⁹sñan· sñags²¹⁰ nor· bu'i· 'phren· ba· 'di· // (7?)
- 122 rig· pa'i· gnas· lña· dag· la· legs· sbyañs· pa'i· // (9)
- 123 mkhas· par· gyur· pa· ston· pa· brcon²¹¹ g'zon· ñas· // (9)
- 124 -yur²¹² 'gyogs²¹³ sor· mo'i· rtse· la· skyon· nas· bris· // (9)
- 125 noñs· par· gyur· na· mkhas· rmañs· bzod· par· mdzod // (9)
- 126 mi· śes· rmoñs· pa· rmañs· la²¹⁴ ji· byar· yod· // # // (9)

TRANSLATION

om svasti.

- 1 The lord of the sun, who is able to spread the radiant light²¹⁵ of reality through a trillion lights with light rays of knowledge and love, the lord

²⁰² g-e==== : gśegs·

²⁰³ 4n· : bžin· (cf. Śes rab 2003: 550).

²⁰⁴ blo· : glo·

²⁰⁵ / : //.

²⁰⁶ gtog = gyur· : gtogs· gyur·

²⁰⁷ 1· : cig·

²⁰⁸ /#// : // # // . There follows an insertion (*ji· byar· yod· // # //*), providing the end of line 18. Cf. n. 214.

²⁰⁹ The left edge of the panel is somewhat damaged, but it probably did not have any text. As the number of syllables per verse-line is inconsistent in quite a few places (cf. the introduction), it does not seem farfetched to assume that this verse-line contained only seven syllables.

²¹⁰ sñags· : ñag·

²¹¹ brcon· : brtson·

²¹² -yur· : myur·

²¹³ 'gyogs· : mgyogs·

²¹⁴ Here the concluding śads of the somewhat sloping verse-line 120 extend to the lower edge of the panel and what follows (*ji· byar· yod· // # //*) was inserted at the rightmost side of line 17. Cf. n. 208.

²¹⁵ Or: "The lord of the sages, who spreads the radiant light ..."? In accordance with Buddha Śākyamuni's solar descent, he is often referred to by expressions like *ñi ma'i gñen*, *ñi ma'i rgyud* or *ñi ma'i rigs skyes/ 'khruiñs*, but *ñi (ma'i) dbañ (po)* is not attested as one of his epithets. Moreover, *thub (pa'i) dbañ (po)* is a stock epithet of Buddha Śākyamuni, and thus the inscription's *thub pa'i ñi dbañ po* could, perhaps, be a mistake on the part of the scribe. Yet in this case the repeated use of *thub (pa'i) dbañ (po)* (cf. v.-l. 4) would seem somewhat awkward, and *pa'i* in v.-l. 2 would have to

of the sages, who completely dispels all the darkness of the minds of living beings – victory to the sovereign of the teaching!

- 5 The enlightened protector, who is perfect in regard to the two kinds of meaning,²¹⁶ the noble *dharmā*,²¹⁷ which is perfect in regard to the two kinds of truth, the noble and sovereign *saṅgha*, which is perfect in regard to the two kinds of knowledge – victory to the three ultimate places of refuge!

Oho!

- 9 In this exceedingly suffering three-thousandfold world, while the teaching of the lord of the *siddhas*²¹⁸ is greatly shining, (...) ²¹⁹

Oho!

- 11 Even after one has obtained a precious human body of the (eight) freedoms and (ten) riches, even after one has gone to the island of precious gems, having accomplished the two accumulations (of merit and wisdom) without ever having exerted oneself, one has to consider (all this) (as) meaningless, as empty, as erroneous, (as) uncreated.

Oho!

- 15 With one's body, it is fitting to exert oneself and to worship the *jina-putra*(s). With one's speech, it is fitting to proclaim an ocean of praise.

be read as two syllables (which is possible but occurs rarely; instead the spelling is usually changed to *pa yi*). Therefore, the inscription's *thub pa'i ñi dbaṅ po* should probably be kept here.

²¹⁶ In this descriptive attribute referring to the Buddha, *don gñis* is probably to be understood as referring to “provisional meaning” (*neyārtha*) and “definitive meaning” (*nīārtha*), rather than to “personal benefit” (*svārtha*) and “altruistic benefit” (*parārtha*). This interpretation also makes more sense in combination with *bden gñis* (i.e., *kun rdzob bden pa* and *don dam bden pa*) and *mkhyen gñis* (i.e., *ji lta ba'i mkhyen pa* and *ji sñed pa'i mkhyen pa*) in v.-l. 6 and 7.

²¹⁷ Verse-lines 5-7 obviously refer to the *triratna*, and thus *rnams* can only be interpreted as a metrical expletive here (for a similar case, cf. v.-l. 101). On the more common use of *dag* for this purpose, see Hahn 1996: 225.

²¹⁸ Or “lord of the sages” (*thub dbaṅ*)? Cf. n. 44.

²¹⁹ In contemporary Tibetan the particle *la* is frequently used after a nominalised verbal stem in the sense of “how ...!”, “what ...!”, and Beyer 1992: 384 also cites examples for Classical Tibetan. Yet this usage is characteristic for an informal idiom and generally restricted to short expressions (cf., e.g., Beyer's examples *khyi che ba la* “How big that dog is!” or *gnam sdug pa la* “What a beautiful sky!”). The formal style of the inscription in general and the length of the phrase thus suggest that verse-lines 9-10 should not be taken as an exclamation (i.e., “How greatly the teaching of the lord of the *siddhas* [or sages] is shining in this exceedingly suffering three-thousandfold world!”). Moreover, the inscription does not contain any other instances of a sentence being disconnected by *e ma ho*, which militates against taking verse-lines 9-14 as a syntactical unit with an embedded interjection. It is much more likely that the scribe accidentally skipped two (or more verse-lines) here, thus producing an incomplete sentence. This assumption is corroborated by the fact that overall the inscription shows a fairly regular structure of 4, 8, 12 or 16 verse-lines, respectively preceded and followed by *e ma ho* (cf. the introduction).

With one's mind, it is fitting to exert oneself and to always be virtuous. It is fitting to never have given (this) up (and) to always meditate without conceptual thinking.²²⁰

Oho!

- 19 It is fitting to exert oneself without delay and to accomplish the two accumulations (of merit and wisdom). If one asks why: because conditioned things are impermanent, because there is no essence to the body and no(t enough) time in life.²²¹ Think well, become accomplished and ... great/human being(s)!²²²

Oho!

- 23 If one has not completed one's preparations for one's next (life) in this life, who protects one when the troops of the lord of death come? If one has not acquired (?) flour supplies for one's next (life) in this one, who provides (them) in the realm of (?)²²³ the hungry and thirsty spirits?

- 27 If one has not attained the radiant light that dispels the darkness in this life, how will one meditate in the realm of the ignorant animals? When the hostile troops of the lord of death come, who protects one's kinsmen and near ones?

Oho!

- 31 All those who thought in that way, then accomplished (these things) in this life and are provided with (their) allotted share for completing (their) preparations, all great beings who ... enter(ed)²²⁴ the path of liberation: ...²²⁵ not wasted the obtained (eight) freedoms and (ten) riches ... gather ...²²⁶

Oho!

- 35 Pure ground of firm faith, pure charity defying (karmically) ripening harmful action, pure mind, which will eagerly apply itself to the ten virtues, pure effort defying the non-virtuous path: being provided with

²²⁰ One could be inclined to take *rtag tu ma spañs* in a modal sense, referring to *rtog <m>ed bsgo<m>*. In this case, however, the combination of the future stem (*bsgom*) and the perfect stem ([*ma!*] *spañs*) would be stylistically even more awkward than in the interpretation provided above, where both *rtag tu ma spañs* and *rtog <m>ed bsgo<m>* are taken together with *rigs*.

²²¹ Alternatively, verse-line 21 can also be taken together with the following one.

²²² Read: "become a great being!" or "train the human beings!"?

²²³ Or: "in the proximity of"?

²²⁴ Read: "are ready to enter", "indeed enter" or "have indeed entered"?

²²⁵ Read: "think that (they) have"?

²²⁶ Read: "(and) gather the most excellent!"? Cf. v.-l. 40.

the four purities,²²⁷ always rely (on) (?) the 4 best antidotes²²⁸ and gather the most excellent! (?)²²⁹

- 41 At that time when impermanent conditioned phenomena are (considered) permanent, (it is) a deceptive approach if (you) hold on to the *dharmas* of the world, ...²³⁰ as truth the truth of (?) everything being void; therefore think carefully about the four *dharmas*, which liken (impermanent conditioned phenomena) to a mirage, a dream, a flash of lightning and dew on a grass tip,²³¹ practice virtue, and gather the most excellent! (?)²³²

²²⁷ The expression *dag pa bži* usually refers to the four purities of a Buddha, viz. *lus dag pa* (pure body), *dmigs pa dag pa* (pure objectives), *sems dag pa* (pure mind) and *ye šes dag pa* (pure primordial awareness); cf., e.g., Zhang 1993, s.v., and Tsepak Rigzin 1997, s.v. Here, however, it obviously subsumes the four terms listed in v.-l. 35-38, and the expression *dag pa bži ldan*, as a form of literary address, seems to relate to the reader.

²²⁸ I take *gñen gyi mchog 4 po* as a poetically garnished variation of *gñen po bži*, which is often used as a synonym of *stobs bži* and designates the four antidotes to negative deeds.

²²⁹ The phrase *ya rabs tshogs* is somewhat unclear. Commonly, *ya rabs* refers to people (lit. “the high class”) and *tshogs* is used intransitively. Thus *ya rabs tshogs* could be taken in the sense of “the most excellent (people) (will) gather (scil. around you)”, or as an impersonal imperative/optative (i.e., “may the most excellent [people] gather [scil. around you]!”). Yet in combination with the preceding imperative(s) followed by *dañ* (or *la*) (cf. v.-l. 34, 46 and 53), I am more inclined to take *tshogs* as an “irregular” *skul tshig* of the transitive *tshog* (for which see, e.g., Hackett 2003, s.v., and Zhang 1993, s.v.), with *ya rabs* possibly referring to some (unspecified) virtuous traits (cf. Zhang 1993, s.v. *ya rabs* [2]) rather than to a group of people.

²³⁰ Read: “which does not embrace”?

²³¹ It is not completely clear what *chos bži* refers to here. The term forms part of various expressions like *dge sbyoñ gi chos bži*, *dkar (po'i) chos bži* and *chos sku'i chos bži*, all of which relate to different concepts. Given the strong bKa' bgyud background of Ladakh in general and of the area around Lamayuru and Wanla in particular, it is perhaps most proximate to assume that the passage refers to sGam po pa's *dwags po chos bži* (i.e., *blo chos su 'gro ba* “turning one's mind to the *dharmas*”, *chos lam du 'gro ba* “following the *dharmas* path”, *lam [gyi] 'khrul pa sel ba* “removing confusion on the path” and *'khrul pa ye šes su 'char ba* “confusion becoming primordial awareness”). This theme was elaborated on by Kloñ chen Rab 'jams pa Dri med 'od zer in his *Chos bži rin po che'i phreñ ba* (Engl. transl. in Berzin 1993), which shows many parallels with the first half of the inscription as regards general contents. Regarding the inscription's similes of ephemerality, cf. in particular the following passages (Chos bži rin po che'i phreñ ba, fol. 3r4, 6v3-4, 7v2-3; Berzin 1993: 7, 16, 31): *tshe 'di'i snañ ba mi rlam sad ka 'dra* //, “The appearances of this life are just like a dream before you are about to wake up”; *sgyu ma rmi lam 'khrul pa'i tshul tsam las ...*, “Although everything exists (on the conventional level) only in the manner of mirages, dreams and deceptive appearances, ...”; *stoñ snañ dños med rab rib skra śad dañ* // *rmi lam sgyu ma duñ la ser 'dzin bžin* //, “These void appearances do not actually exist. They are like a blur of falling hairs (seen by someone with cataract), or like a dream, a mirage, or a conchshell perceived as yellow (by someone with jaundice)”. Also cf. the following stanza in the rDo rje gcod pa as found in the Kanjur versions of Derge and Peking, as well as the Sanskrit text and the English translation provided by Conze: *skar ma rab rib mar me dañ* // (/ P) *sgyu ma zil pa chu bur dañ* // (/ P) *rmi lam glog dañ sprin lta bur* // 'dus byas de ltar blta bar bya // (D:

Oho!

- 47 Not only relatives that have been close for a long time, the individually ... family (?),²³³ and the assembly of one's coevals are left behind; the wealth that has been strenuously gathered is also left behind; (yet) the good and evil that have previously been done follow.
- 51 Your beloved (?) child(ren) is/are also attributed²³⁴ to (your) wealth. (?)²³⁵ Because the time of their²³⁶ death comes: from now on think to yourself²³⁷ that (they) are non-existent and gather the most excellent! (?)²³⁸
- Oho!
- 54 In the three-thousandfold world sphere that has become the abode²³⁹ of those to be trained, specifically (in) (our) Sahāloka²⁴⁰ that has become

fol. 132v5-6; P: fol. 175v5-6); *tārakā timiraṃ dīpo, māyāvaśyāyabudbudam / supinaṃ vidyud abhraṃ ca, evaṃ draṣṭavyaṃ saṃskṛtam //* (Conze 1957: 62), “As stars, a fault of vision, as a lamp, A mock show, dew drops, or a bubble, A dream, a lightning flash, or a cloud, So should one view what is conditioned” (Conze 1957: 92). Finally, for the expression *rtswa rtse'i zil pa*, cf., e.g., the following passage in rGyal sras Thogs med bzañ po's Lag len so bdun ma (Tibetan text and English translation in Sonam Rinchen 1997: 39 and 104): *srid gsum bde ba rtswa rtse'i zil pa bžin / yud tsam žig gis 'jig pa'i chos can yin /*, “Like dew on the tip of a blade of grass, pleasures of the three worlds Last only a while and then vanish”.

²³² Cf. n. 229.

²³³ The end of v.-l. 47 may simply mean “the individual family” (i.e., “the individually bestowed family”, “the family that each one has”, or the like).

²³⁴ Here *bgo {b}śas gtoñ* (lit. “give by way of attribution”) is understood as having the same meaning as *bgo bśa' bgod*, *bgo bśa' rgyag* and *bgo bśa' byed*.

²³⁵ It seems that somewhere in this segment one verse-line was omitted, most likely between v.-l. 50 and 51, or 51 and 52. At any rate, as it stands v.-l. 51 does not make much sense. The suggested emendations and the translation offered above are more or less consistent with the general context, but it is uncertain if this was the verse-line's intended meaning.

²³⁶ Cf. the preceding footnote. In the original manuscript, *'di rnams* may well have referred to one or more people or things that were mentioned in the omitted verse-line.

²³⁷ I take (*med par*) *bgvi la «b»soms* in the sense of a hendiadyoin.

²³⁸ Cf. n. 229.

²³⁹ Or: “In the three-thousandfold world sphere, where those to be trained are transformed”? Cf., however, *<y>ul <g>yur (pa)* (v.-l. 55) and (*gliñ 4'i*) *mchog «'»gyur* (v.-l. 56), where one has to postulate an omitted “terminative” particle (following the terminology of Hahn 1996: 127) in front of (*«'»*)*gyur*, with the latter (literally) meaning “has become”, “turned into”. Analogously, *gnas «=>g<y>ur* is probably best taken in the sense of “has become the abode”.

²⁴⁰ On this term denoting the world-system which is inhabited by us human beings, cf. Kloetzli (1989: 5f.), who also provides a useful list of references to various suggested translations (ibid., p. 6 [n. 1]). Renderings of the etymologically somewhat unclear Tibetan *mi mjed 'jig rten* include “world of endurance” (Almogi 2009: 478), “world of no fear” (Ngawang Pelzang 2004: 323), “suffering world”, “unbearable world”, (*Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan-English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture*. Version 3 on CD ROM, 2003, s.v.).

the land of those to be trained, (in) Jambudvīpa,²⁴¹ the best of the four continents, this small Jambudvīpa, (in) the interior of the land²⁴² to the north of that *vajra* seat where the teacher taught the way to enlightenment,²⁴³ (in) the middle of the deserted land, (in) the snowy region(s) where the noble *dharmā* spread, (on) the slope(s) of Mt. Kailāsa and Lake Mānasa,²⁴⁴ where the four rivers²⁴⁵ are gathered, (in) the upper part of mÑa' ris, (to) the right of the Lion River,²⁴⁶ here in Kanji, whose land abounds in the ten virtues:

- 63 In the upper part, the snowy mountains resemble a curtain of white silk; in the middle part, the divine rocks resemble a dignified queen;²⁴⁷ in the lower part, the rocks of the *nāgas* resemble a pouncing lion.²⁴⁸
- 66 In the upper part, the grass shoots²⁴⁹ are abundant, and therefore (it/Kanji is) rich in the wealth (consisting of) horses and cattle;²⁵⁰ in the middle part, the farm land is good, and therefore (it/Kanji is) rich in fruit and

²⁴¹ Delete “Jambudvīpa”? On the meaning of the term, see Wujastyk (2004), according to whom Jambudvīpa “is not ‘the Land of the Rose Apple Tree’” (as it is often translated) but “more correctly the ‘Isle of Jambul’, or ‘Black Plum Island’” (p. 297).

²⁴² Or: “(in) the territory”?

²⁴³ Referring, of course, to Buddha Śākyamuni’s enlightenment on the *vajrāsana* in Urubilvā (present-day Bodhgāya).

²⁴⁴ This specification of Kanji’s geographical position (cf. v.-l. 62) has to be understood in a very general sense. The village is located in a side valley of the Indus, which has its source near Mt. Kailāsa and Lake Mānasa. Yet there is a distance of about 600 km between the latter two places and Kanji.

²⁴⁵ I.e., Indus (Tib. *Señ ge kha ’bab*), Sutlej (Tib. *Glañ chen kha ’bab*), Karnali (Tib. *rMa bya kha ’bab*) and Brahmaputra (Tib. *rTa mchog kha ’bab / gTsañ po*).

²⁴⁶ This implies an upstream view, as Kanji is located to the south of the Indus and thus true left of it. By contrast, cf. v.-l. 8 of the historical inscription in the gSum brtsegs temple at Wanla (edition and translation in Tropper 2007a: 114 and 124), where a similar reference to the Indus calls for a downstream view.

²⁴⁷ According to dKon mchog nor bu (oral communication; cf. n. *), the inscription’s *lha brag* probably refers to a rock formation to the south-southwest of Kanji on which there are two *lha thos* (cf. fig. 5). He also proffered that the larger of these two structures and the *Lo tsa ba lha khañ* were erected at around the same time. I was, however, unable to see any resemblance of a “dignified queen” (*btsun mo ’gyiñs pa*) in these rocks, and neither dKon mchog nor bu nor any of the other residents of Kanji that I spoke with were familiar with this notion.

²⁴⁸ dKon mchog nor bu tentatively identified this as the large rock formation to the north-northwest of Kanji, and with a little imagination one can indeed see a “pouncing lion” (*s{e}ñ ge {m}choñ ba*) there (cf. fig. 6). However, as with the “dignified queen”, I could not find anyone in Kanji who had heard of this before or was able to make sense of the inscription’s *klu brag*.

²⁴⁹ Or: grass seeds? Cf. Zhang 1993, s.v. *rtsi thog*: *rtswa dañ lo tog sño ldum sogs kyi ’bras bu’am sa bon* / 草芽 (i.e., grass shoots), 草子 (i.e., grass seeds).

²⁵⁰ On *phyugs nor* cf. Richardson 1985: 168, s.v. “NOR”.

grain; in the lower part, ...²⁵¹ not penetrated by enemies²⁵² Such a region (?)²⁵³ is marvellous!

Oho!

- 70 The noble lDiñ²⁵⁴ family of an excellent (?) lineage, being exceedingly great in their practice, served as the *blon po(s)*²⁵⁵ of the king(s). In the succession of the kings Khri Sroñ lde b(r)tsan, mÑa' bdag Khri Ral (pa can), sKyid (?)²⁵⁶ lde Ñi ma mgon and others (?)²⁵⁷ they served as the

²⁵¹ Read: “the narrow passage of land is hidden, and therefore (it/Kanji is)”? Note that the easiest access to Kanji is provided by a steep and narrow gorge which is situated to the north of the village. Other routes necessitate crossing high passes and long stretches of uninhabited areas.

²⁵² Read: “(and) hordes of bandits”?

²⁵³ Here *yul po* is taken in the sense of *yul*, the variation perhaps being due to metrical reasons. Alternatively, the scribe may have inadvertently omitted some text here, as the verse-line has only seven syllables (as opposed to eleven in v.-l. 66 and 67; v.-l. 68 is too damaged to allow for a definite statement, but it certainly appears to have contained more than seven syllables). In the master-copy the beginning of v.-l. 69 thus may have contained two or four additional syllables between *yul* and *po* (e.g., 'di dra'i yul gyi khyad par bzañ po ño mtshar che // 'The excellent particularities of such a region are marvellous!').

²⁵⁴ While I could not find any references to this family in the literature, dKon mchog 'phrin las (cf. n. *) strongly suggested that this relates to one of the two families who founded the village many centuries ago. According to him, one of these families came from Sakya and the other from Olding (spelt 'ol ldiñ by dKon mchog 'phrin las), the latter being located near Skardu, i.e., in what now is Pakistani territory. His proposition could also explain a short caption found in the Gu ru lha khañ of Phyang which reads *sa ldiñ pa bla ma stob{s} brtan {b}žugs*. Vitali (1996: 97) speculates that *sa ldiñ pa* might have to be taken in the sense of *sa skya ldiñ pa* and accordingly translates “the Sa-skya flying bla-ma sTobs-brtan is [depicted] here”. In the light of the information provided by dKon mchog 'phrin las, it is perhaps better to interpret the caption's *sa ldiñ pa* as a reference to the *bla ma*'s descent from two families, of which one originated from the Sakya migrants and the other from those of Olding.

²⁵⁵ On the Ladakhi title of *blon po* designating “the officials who governed the small districts (yul)” see Schwieger 2005: 163.

²⁵⁶ The inscription's *khri lde* could, perhaps, refer to Khri lDe gtsug btsan, aka Mes Ag tshom(s) (r. 712-754/55), or to Khri lDe sroñ btsan, aka Sad na legs (r. 804-817), in which case the translation should read “... Khri Ral (pa can), Khri lDe (gtsug btsan / sroñ btsan), (sKyid lde) Ñi ma mgon and others (?) ...”, and sKyid lde Ñi ma mgon is sometimes indeed just referred to as Ñi ma mgon in the sources. Yet the mention of Khri lDe gtsug btsan or Khri lDe sroñ btsan after Khri Sroñ lde b(r)tsan (r. 756-797/802?) and Khri Ral pa can (r. ca. 817-841) would seem strange from a chronological point of view (all dates given according to the table in Sørensen – Hazod 2005: 308f.). Moreover, it is even less likely that *khri lde* refers to Khri lDe mgon ñin or Khri lDe rig pa mgon, i.e., the son and grandson of Yum brtan. For not only were both Khri lDe mgon ñin and Khri lDe rig pa mgon historically rather insignificant figures, sKyid lde Ñi ma mgon was a descendant of Yum brtan's (alleged) half-brother 'Od (b)sruñ(s) (cf., e.g., rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me loñ, p. 238f., and Deb ther dmar po, p. 40 & 42) and therefore neither Khri lDe mgon ñin nor Khri lDe rig pa mgon are a link in the succession of kings reaching from Khri Sroñ lde b(r)tsan to (sKyid lde) Ñi ma mgon. Thus I think that the inscription's *khri* is simply a slip on the part of the scribe, most likely caused by the repeated occurrence of the syllable in the preceding verse-line.

²⁵⁷ The exact meaning of *lod pa'i* is unclear. From a metrical point of view one could be

honoured *blon po(s)*. After the king had given orders, ... subsequent(ly) (?) ... came to ... after ...,²⁵⁸ through the powerful order of the king, became the highest of all.

- 79 As for ...²⁵⁹ the man, *Žaṅ druṅ*,²⁶⁰ (and) the woman, Jo mo (?)²⁶¹ ...²⁶² – at a later time, *Žaṅ (druṅ)* (and) the queen (?)²⁶³ ...²⁶⁴, because the futility (of worldly possessions) dawned in (their) mind(s), gave up (their) castles. Because (they) recognised food and wealth as illusory, (they) gave alms without regret. ...²⁶⁵ the Wanla *chos 'khor* ... Lachutse,²⁶⁶ etc.

inclined to argue that it should be taken as a *bskuṅs yig of la sogs pa'i* because this yields nine syllables for the verse-line and thus allows it to match the ones that precede and follow. However, this is not a very strong argument, because throughout the inscription the number of syllables per verse-line is far from being consistent (cf., e.g., v.-l. 71, which has eleven syllables). Thus the term may simply have to be understood in the sense “other, additional, by-, co-, spare-” (deriving from *logs* “side”) as given by Jäschke (1992: 553, col. 2). Zhang (1993) does not have a lemma for *logs pa*, though, and its use, especially in the sense given by Jäschke, seems to be rare at any rate. It should also be noted that the syntactic/semantic unit(s) beginning with *khri sron lde brtsan* (alternatively: = *par mi rgyud*) and ending in *thugs kyi blon po bgyis*, result(s) in an uneven number of verse-lines, which indicates that somewhere in this passage the scribe may have inadvertently skipped a verse-line.

²⁵⁸ The two verse-lines are too damaged to allow for a reasonably certain reconstruction of their contents. The general meaning of v.-l. 75-78 may have been that the king ordered one or several people of the *blon po* family to go to another place (gDan sa mthil?) and after his/their return (following the death of some other person?), provided him/them with supreme power.

²⁵⁹ Read “the place where”?

²⁶⁰ A person called *Žaṅ druṅ* occurs twice in the Lalung inscription, where the appellation could either be a name, a title or a kinship term (for the edition and annotated translation of these passages, see Tropper 2008: 23, 26, 43f. and 50; for further examples of *Žaṅ druṅ* as [part of] a name see *ibid.*, n. 220). Dotson (2006: 114f. and 363), referring to a group of high-ranking ministers mentioned in PT 1017, translates *btsan po'i žaṅ druṅ chab srid la dbaṅ ba* as “the veritable maternal uncle of the emperor endowed with political authority” – obviously taking *druṅ* as a kind of honorific marker (as, e.g., in *rje druṅ*); also cf. *op. cit.*, p. 225 (n. 225), where the same phrase is rendered in a slightly different way as “the emperor’s maternal uncle in charge of political affairs”. For *Žaṅ druṅ* as a name of an area, see Sørensen – Hazod 2007: 719. The context of v.-l. 79 in the Kanji inscription definitely rules out the latter usage of the term, but its exact meaning and the identity of the person it refers to remain unclear.

²⁶¹ Or “(and) the Jo bo”?

²⁶² Read “were born”, “were married” or “ruled”?

²⁶³ Here *žaṅ btsun* is understood as short for *žaṅ druṅ (daṅ) btsun mo* (with *btsun mo* relating to the woman mentioned in the previous verse-line) but it could also be a variant of *žaṅ druṅ* or refer to an altogether different person.

²⁶⁴ Read “the two rulers”, “the region’s ruler and his wife, the two” or “(and) (his) son, the two rulers”?

²⁶⁵ Read “In the surroundings of”?

²⁶⁶ Cf. the introduction.

(?),²⁶⁷ (they) created great works²⁶⁸ in great numbers. Such (a) reliquary shrine(s) (?)²⁶⁹ is/are extraordinary.

Oho!

- 86 The noble ones resemble(d) poised lions. The ladies resemble(d) ...²⁷⁰ goddesses. The young men resemble(d) dancing children of the gods. Such a family assembly (is) amazing.

Oho!

- 90 From such a home, the great man (and) beloved son (?),²⁷¹ owing to the great (?) merit (of) (his) previous life, was born as the child of noble people. Being a delight for his parents, the noble (and) smart son, being greatly virtuous from his depths, travelled around, near and far, indeed everywhere.

²⁶⁷ Or “for the enjoyment (of the people)” instead of “etc.”?

²⁶⁸ On *rgya ma* in the sense of “great works”, “great deeds” see Tropper 2007a: 116 and 135f., n. 250. If the conjecture *lod pa* for the damaged passage preceding *rgya ma* is correct (cf. n. 165), the end of verse-line 83 probably contained one or more toponyms. In any case, despite the various lacunas and uncertain readings, the context suggests that the “great works” consisted in the foundation of the temple in Lachutse and possibly some other structure(s) near Kanji. Note that the foundation of the temple in Kanji itself is described in verse-line 98 and obviously took place at some later date.

²⁶⁹ It is unclear to what *gduñ «b»rten* refers here. Usually the term denotes a tomb or a *stūpa* that contains the remains of a deceased person, but I do not know of any evidence which would point to the temple in Lachutse serving or having ever served such a purpose. Thus the inscription’s *gduñ «b»rten* may have to be understood in a very general sense and refer to some temple(s) as (a) shrine(s) embodying the Buddha and his teachings. Alternatively, although this is not supported by the dictionaries, it could have the altogether different meaning “support(er)(s) of the lineage”, “holder(s)/representative(s) of the lineage” (cf. *gsuñ rten* “support of the sacred word”, “holder of the doctrine”, “scripture”). In this case, the following four verse-lines (86-89) would semantically also fall into line more naturally.

²⁷⁰ Read “smiling”?

²⁷¹ Or “the beloved son (of) a great man”? The alternative reading *gces pa ’bum* (cf. n. 169) can probably only be interpreted as a name (i.e., “the great man, gCes pa ’bum”). In Francke 1926: 220 and 290 mention is made of a prince from Bar ’bog (Lahul) who is called “[G]ce[s] pa” (seventeenth c.), but generally this is a rather uncommon (part of a) Tibetan name. By contrast, *’bum* is found at the end of many names all over the Tibetan cultural realm. Perhaps the most well-known case in Ladakh is (lHa chen) Grags pa ’bum (ca. 1400-1440, according to Francke 1926: 102), who ruled over several places including Rab brtan lha rtse and gTe ya (both Lower Ladakh) and is also reported to have built the “capital” of gTiñ (mo) sgañ (*lha chen grags pa ’bum gyis / rab brtan lha rtse dan / gte ya* [MS *te ba*] *sogs la mña’ mdzad / rgyal sa gtiñ sgañ rtsigs* [La dwags rgyal rabs, ed. Francke 1926: 37]). However, I could not find any literary references to a gCes pa ’bum, and a person of that name was also unknown to the various people in Kanji whom I consulted in this matter. Similarly, they could not come up with another name ending in *’bum*, whose bearer played an important role in the local history of Kanji.

- 94 Having great power, courage and skill, he defeated the outermost enemies. With his powerful tongue, he was proficient in conducting a conversation. His heart being without stinginess, he was proficient in giving alms. Enjoying the noble *dharma*, he venerated the (three) most precious things with the crown of his head. Showing (?) gratitude to his parents, he erected this temple.
- 99 In order to complete the perfection(s), he created the six supramundane *maṅḍalas*.²⁷² In order to attain the twelve *bhūmis*,²⁷³ he painted the twelve deeds (of the Buddha) in their entirety.²⁷⁴
- 103 In particular, he created Mahākaruṇika (Avalokiteśvara) for (his) father, the venerable Tārā for (his) mother, and Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru for (his/the) daughter(s).²⁷⁵ For the noble lady he created the venerable Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā, for the daughter(s) the Vajracchedikā.²⁷⁶ He accomplished great works²⁷⁷ like these in abundance.

²⁷² The east, south and west wall each display two large *maṅḍalas*. On their identification, see Luczanits, n.d.

²⁷³ On the plural particle, cf. n. 217. For the twelve *bhūmis*, see, e.g., Bhattacharyya 1987: 333-337.

²⁷⁴ The murals showing the life of the Buddha form a band starting next to a painted eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara to the right of the inscription. The scenes continue on the entry wall and may have extended to the partly damaged west wall.

²⁷⁵ Cf. fig. 2.

²⁷⁶ Obviously, this refers to the production of copies of the two texts. As the earliest known block prints prepared in Tibet date from the fifteenth century (cf. Ehrhard 2000: 11-19), these copies were probably paper manuscripts or inscriptions. — On my visit to Kanji in May 2011, I was shown an old manuscript of the brGyad stoñ pa (fig. 7 and 8), which is kept in the lHa guñ lha khañ (spelling according to dKon mchog nor bu [oral communication; cf. n. *]), a small temple located some seventy meters to the west of the Lo tsa ba lha khañ. A cursory perusal of the manuscript revealed that its orthographic peculiarities are similar to those of the inscription in the Lo tsa ba lha khañ and the two literary documents thus could date from roughly the same period. Moreover, the colophon at the end of the manuscript reads: *rgya gar gyi mkhan po śag kya sena dañ* == *na si ti dañ / źu chen gyi lo tsa ba ban de dar ma śila las stsogs pas / / sgyur ciñ źus te gtan la phab pa / źus dag go //* (followed by the *ye dharma* formula and some *mantras* and benedictions). Some minor differences and one damaged syllable notwithstanding, it thus tallies with the information on the original translators and editors (Śākyasena, Jñānasiddhi, Dharmatāśīla) as given in the brGyad stoñ pa Kanjur versions of Derge and Peking: *rgya gar gyi mkhan po śākya se na dañ dzñāna siddhi dañ (siddha diñ P) źu chen gyi lo tśha ba ban de dharma tā (dharma māta Q) śī la la sogs pas bsgyur ciñ źus te gtan la phab /* (D: fol. 286r2; P: fol. 312r1). Yet following this, D (fol. 286r2-6) and P (fol. 312r1-6) refer to several subsequent revisions by Subhāṣita, Rin chen bzañ po, Dīpaṅkaraśrījñāna, 'Brom rGyal ba'i 'byuñ gnas and Blo ldan śes rab, and while the end of the cited passage in the Kanji manuscript also refers to some unspecified revisions (*źus dag go //*), the names are completely missing there. The Kanji manuscript thus might contain an early version of the Tibetan translation of the brGyad stoñ pa which escaped at least some of the subsequent revisions, and this certainly deserves closer study. Regrettably, I

- 109 A son was born to the father, a noble smart son. As for the first stage of (his) life: when (he) had become a youth, (he) was the sweetheart-like playful joy of (his) parents. Second, when he had come of age, striving for worldly profit and fame, he practised secular matters in abundance. Third, when he had reached old age, faith arose from his depths, and he eagerly took on the noble *dharmā*.
- 116 Having composed an elucidating lamp in this way, may the seeds of buddhahood (*tathāgatagarbha*) (of) myself, (of) the donor and (of) all sentient beings (in) the three realms be truly liberated (in) the realm of suchness (*tathatādhātu*) from the sheaths of temporary defilements and soon be part (of) the luminous reality (*dharmatā*).
- 121 This jewel necklace of poetry was written very quickly, (with the pen) astride the finger-tips, by one who has become a scholar well trained in the five sciences, an endeavouring (and) young teacher, myself.²⁷⁸ Scholars, bear it if mistakes have occurred! What is there to do for ignorant fools?

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could not find any information on the sponsor of the manuscript. — At any rate, to have copies of texts prepared in order to gain merit for oneself or for others is a practice that is still very common in Western Tibet, and the Vajracchedikā is often carved into dozens of stone slabs which are then placed on so-called *mañi*-walls (cf. Tropper 2007b). In Kanji, however, I could not find any such epigraphic versions of the Vajracchedikā.

²⁷⁷ On *rgya ma*, cf. n. 268.

²⁷⁸ Cf. p. 147, above. Also note the use of *brtsams* “composed” (v.-l. 116) and *bris* “written” (v.-l. 124).

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Addendum

In late 2014, I became aware of a monograph by Dieter Schuh and Ajaz Hus-sain Munshi (*Travel into the History of Purig*. Preliminary Report about a Journey to Purig in 2013. Andiast: IITBS, 2014), which contains a short chapter on Kanji (p. 153ff.) as well as a critical discussion of my (and Christian Luczan-its') dating of the gSum brtsegs temple in Wanla and its inscription to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century (p. 58-61). An appraisal of the arguments put forward in this monograph could not be incorporated into the present article and will have to be provided elsewhere.



Fig. 1: The Lo tsa ba lha khañ as seen from the south
(© Christian Luczanits, WHAV, CL 00 44,39)

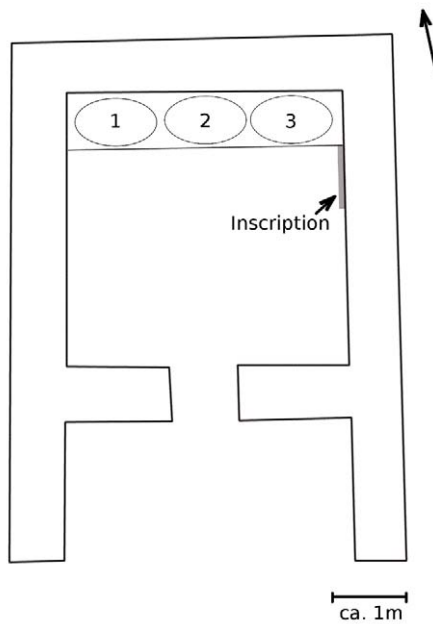


Fig. 2: Sketch plan of the Lo tsa ba lha khañ showing the location of the inscription (marked in grey) and of the three statues (1: Bhaiṣajyaguru, 2: Avalokiteśvara, 3: Green Tārā) on the platform in front of the northern wall (© Kurt Tropper)

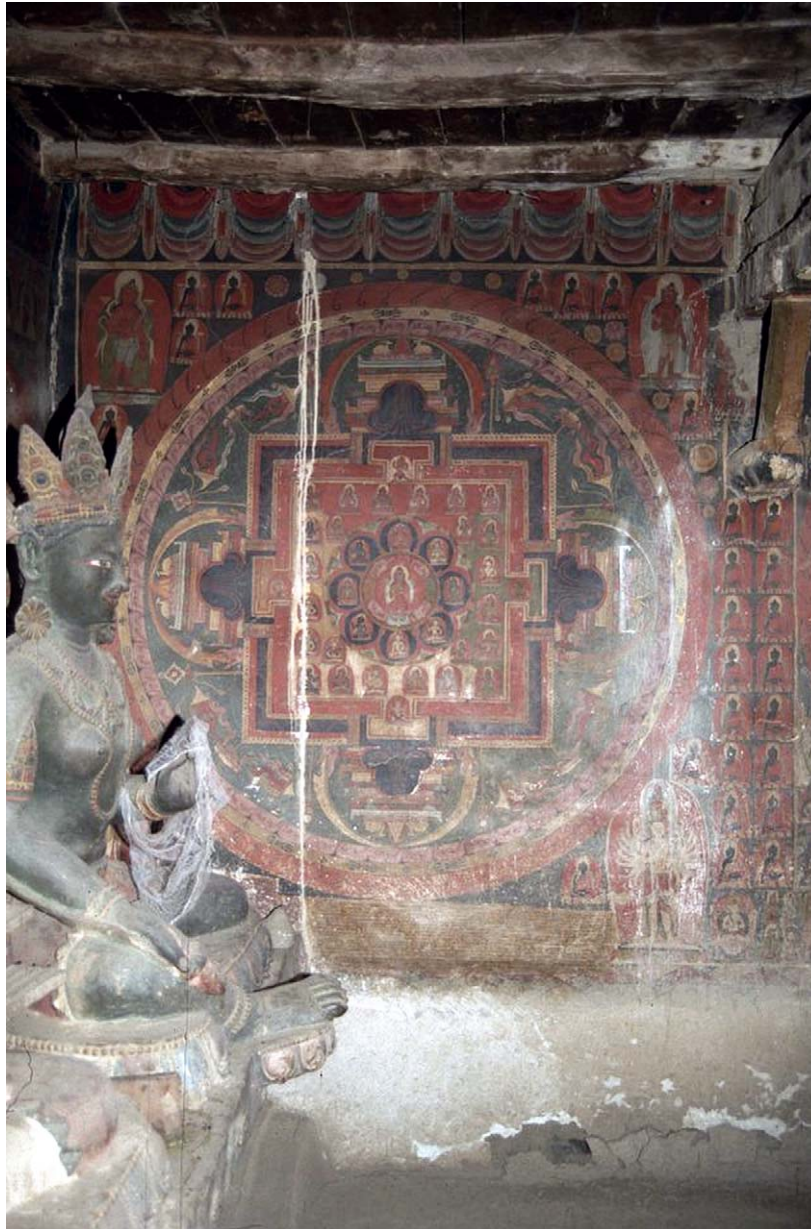


Fig. 3: Inscription below the *mañḍala* of Buddha Śākyamuni
(© Christian Luczanits, WHAV, CL 00 49,3)

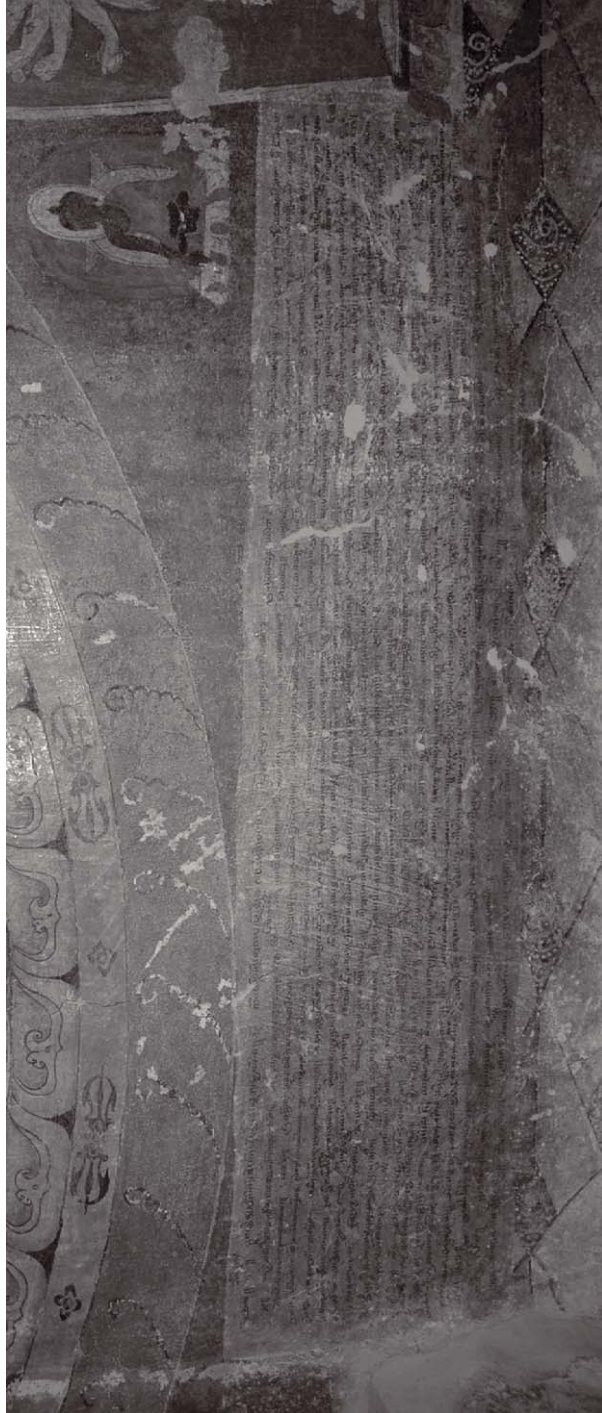


Fig. 4: General view of the inscription with the lower part of the *maṅḍala* (© Kurt Tropper)



Fig. 5: Rock formation to the south-southwest of Kanji, tentatively identified as the inscription's *lha brag* by dKon mchog nor bu (two *lha thos* marked by red arrow) (© Kurt Tropper)



Fig. 6: Rock formation to the north-northwest of Kanji, tentatively identified as the inscription's *klu brag* by dKon mchog nor bu (© Kurt Tropper)



Fig. 7: The brGyad stoñ pa manuscript in the lHa gcuñ lha khañ (© Kurt Tropper)



Fig. 8: Folio 1 (recto) of the brGyad stoñ pa manuscript (© Kurt Tropper)