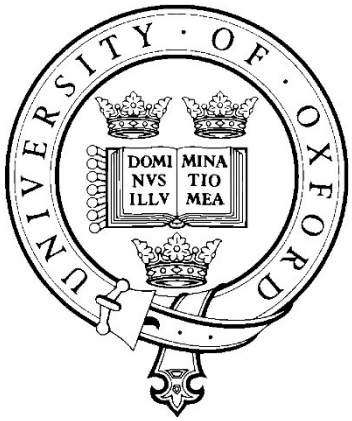
Dangkhar: The *rgyal sa* of Spiti

Archaeological and Historical Research in the Western Himalayas



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APPENDICES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX 1

Dates and Key Events in Spiti and Neighbouring Regions 1

APPENDIX 2

Maps and Architectural Documentation 9

APPENDIX 3

Photographic and Visual Archives (1822–1968) 39

APPENDIX 4

Visual Documentation 65

APPENDIX 5

Epigraphic Documentation and Donor Prefaces 109

APPENDIX 6

Legal and Diplomatic Archives from Dangkhar 149

APPENDIX 7

Catalogue of Seals 251

APPENDIX 8

Oral Tradition 270

APPENDIX ONE

Dates and Key Events in Spiti and Neighbouring Regions

Seventh to Tenth Centuries

640s	The Kingdom of Zhangzhung is annexed by the troops of Srong btsan sgam po
842	Assassination of Glang dar ma and collapse of the Tibetan Empire
910s	sKyid lde nyi ma mgon establishes the Kingdom of the Three Dominions of Upper Tibet (*stod mnga' ris skor gsum*)
*c.*925–950	lDe gtsug mgon receives Spiti, Kinnaur, Lahul, and Zanskar at the death of King sKyid lde nyi ma mgon
*c.*950–975	After the death of lDe gtsug mgon, the regions of Spiti, Kinnaur, and Zanskar merge into the Kingdom of Guge-Purang
958–1055	Life of the great translator Lo tsā ba Rin chen bzang po
996	Foundation of Tabo Monastery in Spiti by the monk-king (*lha bla ma*) Ye shes 'od

Eleventh Century

1016–1111	Life of the royal monk and translator Zhi ba 'od
1023	Ye shes 'od issues an order (*bka' lung*) in which thirty young men from Spiti are requested to take monastic vows
1024	▪ Ye shes 'od dies in Tholing ▪ lHa lde becomes the new King of Guge-Purang
1037	The royal monk (*lha bla ma*) Byang chub 'od ascends the Guge-Purang throne
1042	▪ The main temple in Tabo is renovated by Byang chub 'od ▪ The Buddhist master from Bengal Atiśa Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna arrives in West Tibet
1056	Ordination of Yongs srong lde who takes the name Zhi ba 'od
1057	rTse lde (alias Khri lde btsan) ascends the throne of Guge-Purang
1076–1077	Great religious council (*chos 'khor*) of Tholing in the Fire-Dragon Year
*c.*1083–1092	▪ King rTse lde's son Seng grags settles in Dangkhar ▪ The Kingdom of Guge-Purang splits into two separate territories

Twelfth Century

*c.*1100–1125	Further fragmentation of the Kingdom of Guge during the reign of dSod nams rtse's successors
*c.*1150	sPyi lde btsan is born from King rTse 'bar bstan and the Queen of Spiti lHan rgyas (aka lHa rgyan)
1191	First wave of Drigungpa adepts to reach the region of Mount Kailash

Thirteenth Century

1208	Second wave of Drigungpa hermits to travel to West Tibet
1214–1216	The Drukpa master rGod tshang pa mGon po rdo rje travels through Spiti where he meets hermits and yogins
1215	Third wave of Drigungpa hermits to reach West Tibet
1260s	Reunification of the Guge-Purang Kingdom under King Grags pa lde
1277	Death of King Grags pa lde
*c.*1277–1280	▪ Guge is taken over by the Sakyapa and their regional allies ▪ West Tibet is integrated into a network of postal relays (*'jams mo*) as part of the Mongol-Sakyapa organisation of Tibet

Fourteen Century

*c.*1363–1372	Decline of Sakyapa rule in West Tibet and gradual resurgence of influence of the royal family of Guge
1399	rNam rgyal lde becomes the King of Guge

Fifteenth Century

1404–1471	Life of the Tenth Lo chen sprul sku Zhang zhung pa Chos dbang grags pa
1420s	▪ Gu ge mkhan chen Ngag dbang grags pa returns to West Tibet to diffuse Tsong kha pa's religious system ▪ The royal house of Guge appoints Ngag dbang grags pa to the position of court chaplain (*bla mchod*)
1424	▪ King rNam rgyal lde leaves the throne to his son Nam mkha'i dbang po phun tshog lde ▪ The new king moves the capital of Guge to Tsaparang
1436	mKhan po Rin [chen] bsod [nams] from Spiti attends Ngor chen's teachings in Purang
*c.*1450s	The Sakyapa-Ngor master Chos dpal bzang po establishes Tengyu Monstery in Spiti
*c.*1459–1474	▪ The Gelukpa master lHa dbang blo gros is active in Western Tibet ▪ King (*rgyal po*) bSod nams lde, Lady (*jo co*) Lham 'dzes, and a minister (*blon po*) from Dangkhar are portrayed on the walls of the Mandala Temple at Tabo

Sixteenth Century

16th century	*Donor preface from Tabo (DP1)*
1544	Birth of the Gelukpa scholar (*slob dpon rab 'jams pa*) dBang phyug dpal ldan to the royal lord (*jo bo*) of Spiti
*c.*1550-1590	No rNam rgyal don grub oversees the administration of Spiti during the reign of the King of Ladakh Tshe dbang rnam rgyal

Seventeenth Century

*c.*1610s-60s	The Nyingmapa masters Byang chub bzang po and Padma bsam gtan establish Padma gling pa's tradition in the side valley of Pin in Spiti
1610s	The Gelukpa master Shes rab blo gros founds the monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel in Kyi
1617	The Gelukpa master Sangs rgyas 'od zer converts and enlarges the monastery of Lagope in Dangkhar
1618	The Fourth Panchen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan gives teachings in Guge
1620s	*Stone inscription from Nadang (SI4)*
1624	Jesuit Father António de Andrade's first trip to West Tibet
1625	De Andrade returns to Guge and establishes a mission in Tsaparang the following year
1630	King Seng ge rnam rgyal's conquest of Guge: Spiti is *de facto* annexed by Ladakh
*c.*1630–1647	*Stone inscription from Dangkhar (SI1)*
1647	The Kingdom of Ladakh is partitioned among Seng ge rnam rgyal's sons: bDe ldan rnam rgyal receives Ladakh; Indra bodhi rnam rgyal receives Guge; bDe mchog rnam rgyal receives Zanskar and Spiti; and the dowager queen is given Purang.
1647–1684	Spiti is ruled by the Kingdom of Zanskar
1654/5	A native of Dangkhar dPal ldan rgyal mtshan becomes the Fortieth Throne Holder of Tsong kha pa's order (*dga' ldan khri pa*)
1679	Signing of the Tibet-Bashahr Treaty
1679–1684	The Tibetan-Ladakhi-Moghul war
1684	▪ Signing of a peace treaty between Tibet and Ladakh at Tingmosgang ▪ The dGa' ldan pho brang government of Tibet takes over the administration of Spiti

1685	▪ Thang grong pa is assigned resident prefect of the fort (*rdzong sdod*) of Spiti by the Tibetan government ▪ *Dangkhar archive (BmK03)*
1686	Troops from Kulu invades Spiti
1687	The district officer Rong dga' bde ba is sent to Spiti by the Tibetan government to replace Thang grong pa
*c.*1694–1703	The Buddhist master dPal ldan 'phrin las renovates Mang spro Monastery in Ladakh and improves the administration of Tengyu Monastery in Spiti
1699	Ladakh exercises jurisdiction over the Sakyapa monastery of Tengyu

Eighteenth Century

*c.*1707–1729	*Stone Inscription from Lower Mani (SI2)*
1708	The Tibetan King lHa bzang khan returns Spiti to Ladakh
1720	The King of Ladakh Nyi ma rnam rgyal regulates the period of presence of the prefect of the fort (*mkhar dpon*) in Spiti
1729	Nyi ma rnam rgyal abdicates leaving the throne to his son bDe skyong rnam rgyal *Dangkhar archive (BmK05)*
1734	Purig is separated from the Kingdom of Ladakh
1734–1765	Spiti is placed under the jurisdiction of the King of Purig bKra shis rnam rgyal
1738	Death of King Nyi ma rnam rgyal
1739	Death of King bDe skyong rnam rgyal
1740	*Dangkhar archive (BmK01)*
1748	Tensions between Spiti and the princely state of Bashahr
1749/50	Bashahr invades Spiti: a man named Tshe ring don grub stands out opposing the army of Bashahr; in return for his bravery he is granted privileges by King bKra shis rnam rgyal in 1751
1753	▪ Treaty of Hanle (aka Wamle): Spiti remains under the control of King bKra shis rnam rgyal; bSod nams bstan 'dzin from the Kyiling nobility is listed among the signatories as the headman of Spiti ▪ *Dangkhar archive (BmK25)*
*c.*1753	Enthronement of the King of Ladakh Tshe dbang rnam rgyal
*c.*1753–1782	*Donor preface from Kyi (DP3)*
1758	Death of the King of Purig bKra shis rnam rgyal
1760s/70s	Two year-long occupation of the Dangkhar fort by the troops of Bashahr
1765	Reintegration of Purig, hence Spiti, into the Kingdom of Ladakh

*c.*1765–1782	*Dangkhar archive (BmK30)*
1776	The Kyiling nobility is replaced by the aristocratic family of Guling as the valley headmen of Spiti
1778	*Dangkhar archive (BmK14)*
1779	Enthronement of Tshe brtan rnam rgyal who bears the title of prince (*lha sras*) until 1794
1783	The King of Ladakh Tshe dbang rnam rgyal is forced to abdicate.
1785	The two district prefects of the fort of Dangkhar are dPal 'bar cag and Na sib 'beg
1793	Byams pa rgya mtsho is the prefect of the fort of Spiti.

Nineteenth Century

1802	▪ Death of King Tshe brtan rnam rgyal ▪ Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal becomes King of Ladakh
*c.*1802–1840	*Donor preface from Rangrik (DP2)*
1803–1815	Gurkha invasion of Bashahr
1811	Bhai is the representative (*ngo tshab*) of the district prefect of the fort
1813	*Dangkhar archive (Jo ba1)*
1815	The East India Company establishes a wool factory at Kotgarh in the lower Sutlej Valley
1816	Treaty of Sagaul: the East India Company takes hold of the hilly regions of Kumaon, Garwhal, Shimla, and Bashahr-Kinnaur
*c.*1816	Ga ga Rab rgyas is the prefect of the fort of Spiti
1818	*Dangkhar archive BmK02*
1819	The Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh conquers Kashmir
1821	The Gerard brothers survey parts of the Spiti Valley
*c.*1821	▪ The King of Ladakh seizes a contraband trade in wool; a retaliation attack is launched by the troops of Kulu against Spiti ▪ No no Sa bhi from the Kyiling nobility is the valley headman
1822	▪ George Trebeck's exploration of Spiti on behalf of William Moorcroft ▪ Ga ga mKhan (alias bKra shis don grub) is the representative of Sultan Bheg, the prefect of the fort of Spiti ▪ On 15 August, the chief minister (*bKa' blon*) of Ladakh levies an army against Kulu and requests the intervention of the people of Spiti
1830	Victor Jacquemont travels to Spiti

1831	No no mKhan from Guling is the headman of Spiti
1834	▪ Dogra conquest of Ladakh led by Zorawar Singh ▪ Smallpox epidemic in Ladakh ▪ No no bsKal bzang from the Kyiling nobility regains the leadership of Spiti by means of forged documents
1837	▪ Prince *mchog sprul* Tshe dbang rab brtan rnam rgyal flees to Bashahr via Spiti ▪ A Sikh-Dogra contingent mutilates the religious images inside Tabo Monastery
1838	Lieutenant Thomas Hutton stops at Dangkhar in the month of June
1839	▪ Zorawar Singh invades Baltistan ▪ The Ladakhi regent dNgos grub btsan 'dzin is arrested in Tabo by Zorawar Singh's men ▪ Lieutenant Arthur Broome conducts a survey of the Spiti River on behalf of Alexander Cunningham
1840–1846	A Sikh-Dogra coalition collects the revenue of Spiti through Ladakh
1840	▪ King Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal dies in Baltistan ▪ Zorawar Singh appoints Kun dga' rnam rgyal as the new King of Ladakh ▪ The people of Spiti are subjected to the payment of heavy tribute ▪ Rising tension over the sale of wool and pashm at the borders of West Tibet ▪ The Ladakhi prefect dPal le is dispatched to Spiti to collect Gulab Singh's tribute, raise taxes, manage the fort, and enforce a ban on wool trade
1841	Zorawar Singh invades West Tibet
1841–1842	Captain Joseph Cunningham spends the winter season in Hangrang
1842	Ladakh is integrated into the Dogra state of Jammu
1845–1851	Decline of 43% in number of tax-paying households in Dangkhar
1846	▪ Following the treaties of Lahore and Amritsar, Spiti is added to Kulu and the boundaries between Spiti, Ladakh, and Tibet are fixed ▪ First Boundary Commission: Alexander Cunningham's tours Kulu, Lahaul, and Rupshu while Vans Agnew surveys parts of Spiti
1846–1849	The revenue from Spiti is collected by the Rāja of Bashahr
1847	▪ Second *Boundary Commission*: Alexander Cunningham surveys Ladakh while Thomas Thomson travels through Spiti ▪ The winter of 1847-48 is particularly severe
1849	Major Hay is the first Assistant Commissioner of Kulu; he spends the winter of 1849-50 in Spiti
1850	George C. Barnes is the District Commissioner of Kangra
1851	*Dangkhar archive (BmK11)*
1853	Lieutenant Conway Mordaunt Shipley visits Spiti

1855	A population census of Spiti is conducted by the British
1856	The Moravian Church settles in Kyelang, Lahul
1861	Malacologist William Theobald spends the night in Dangkhar on 5th August
1862	James B. Lyall's first visits to Spiti as Assistant Commissioner of Kulu
1863	▪ Vaccination campaign against smallpox conducted by Dr Garden, Superintendent of Hill Vaccination ▪ Philip H. Egerton resides in Dangkhar from 18th to 31st July and from 7th to 10th August; he travels with Moravian missionary August Wilhelm Heyde ▪ No no Tshe ring from Guling claims the title of No no of Spiti formerly held by his father (bsTan 'dzin chos 'phel) and grand-father (No no mKhan). ▪ Captains Henley and James Ruthven Pond (Rifle Brigade) on a sporting tour in Spiti
1864/65	bsTan 'dzin rnam rgyal becomes the No no of Spiti at the death of his father bsKal bzang
1865	The Moravian Church settles in Pu in Kinnaur
1866	Samuel Bourne's photographic journey through Spiti, Lahaul, and Kulu
1867	James B. Lyall returns to Spiti to revise the revenue settlement of 1846
1868	A new population census is conducted under J.B. Lyall's superintendence
1869	▪ Captain Alfred F.P. Harcourt stays in Dangkhar ▪ The No no of Spiti is still bsTan 'dzin rnam rgyal ▪ Frank Mason-Good's photographic tour of Kulu and Spiti on behalf of F. Frith's
1872	bsTan 'dzin rnam rgyal is still the No no of Spiti
1873	Andrew Wilson's tour of Spiti in the month of August
1881	Mrs J.C. Murray-Aynsley travels through Spiti in the month of August
1887–1891	Alexander H. Diack is the Settlement Officer of Kulu
1891	The No no rDo rje tshe brtan loses his eyesight; his younger brother bKra shis rin chen, who is a monk, takes over the position during the minority of the No no's son
1894	▪ Ga ga rDo rje tshe brtan is still formally addressed as the lord of the region (*yul dpon*) ▪ Blo bzang sbyin pa is the abbot (*mkhan po*) of Kyi Monastery
1897	bKra shis rin chen still occupies the position of No no of Spiti

Twentieth Century

1904	Indian civil servant H. Calvert visits Spiti

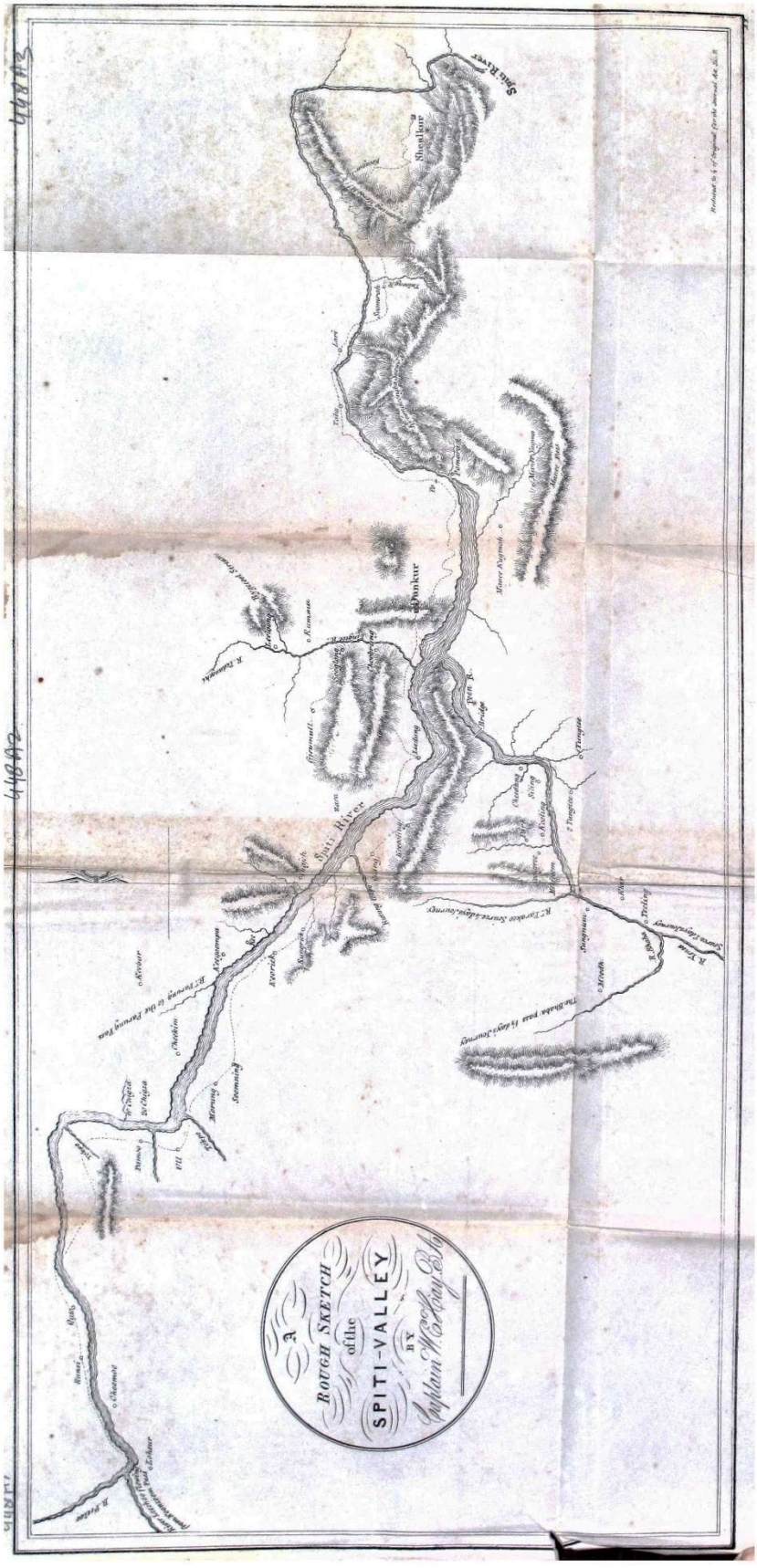
1909	August Hermann Francke's exploration of Spiti on behalf of the Archaeological Survey of India; he stays in Dangkhar between 31st July and 2nd August
1912	The Assistant Commissioner of Kulu John Coldstream inspects Spiti accompanied by Rev. Peter of the Moravian Mission
1917	Assistant Commissioner of Kulu Henry Lee Shuttleworth visits Spiti for the first time
1918	Henry Lee Shuttleworth visits Spiti for the second time
1921	Death of the Seventeenth Lo chen skrul sku Blo bzang dpal ldan rin chen rgya mtsho
1923–1957	Life of the Eighteenth Lo chen sprul sku Blo bzang thub bstan rin chen bzang po
1924	Henry Lee Shuttleworth's last trip to Spiti; he documents the temple of Lhalung assisted by Joseph Gergan on 18th August
1932	The first public school of Spiti is established at Kaza
1933	Giuseppe Tucci's scientific expedition to the Western Himalayas
1941	Spiti becomes a sub-division of Lahaul
1947	Indian Independence: Lahaul and Spiti are integrated into the East Punjab Province
1953/4	Tibetologist David L. Snellgrove travels through Spiti
1960	Formation of the Lahaul-Spiti District
1961	Birth of the Nineteenth Lo chen sprul sku bsTan 'dzin skal bzang at Shelkhar in Hangrang
1962	Sino-Indian Border Conflict
1966	The Lahaul-Spiti District is incorporated into the state of Himachal Pradesh

Figure 2.1



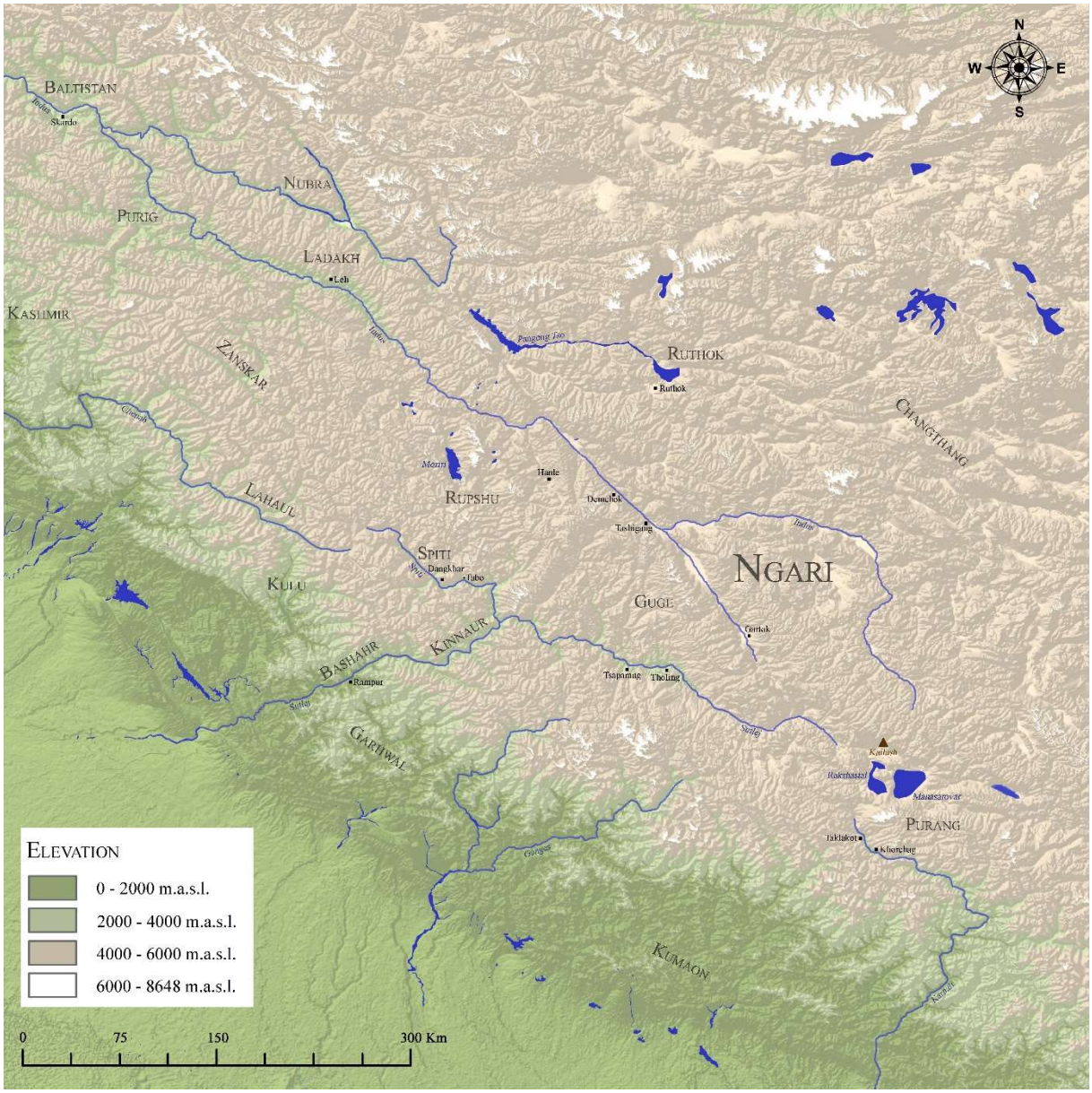
"A Map of Koonawur [i.e. Kinnaur] by Capt. A. Gerard". Map published in 1841.

Figure 2.2



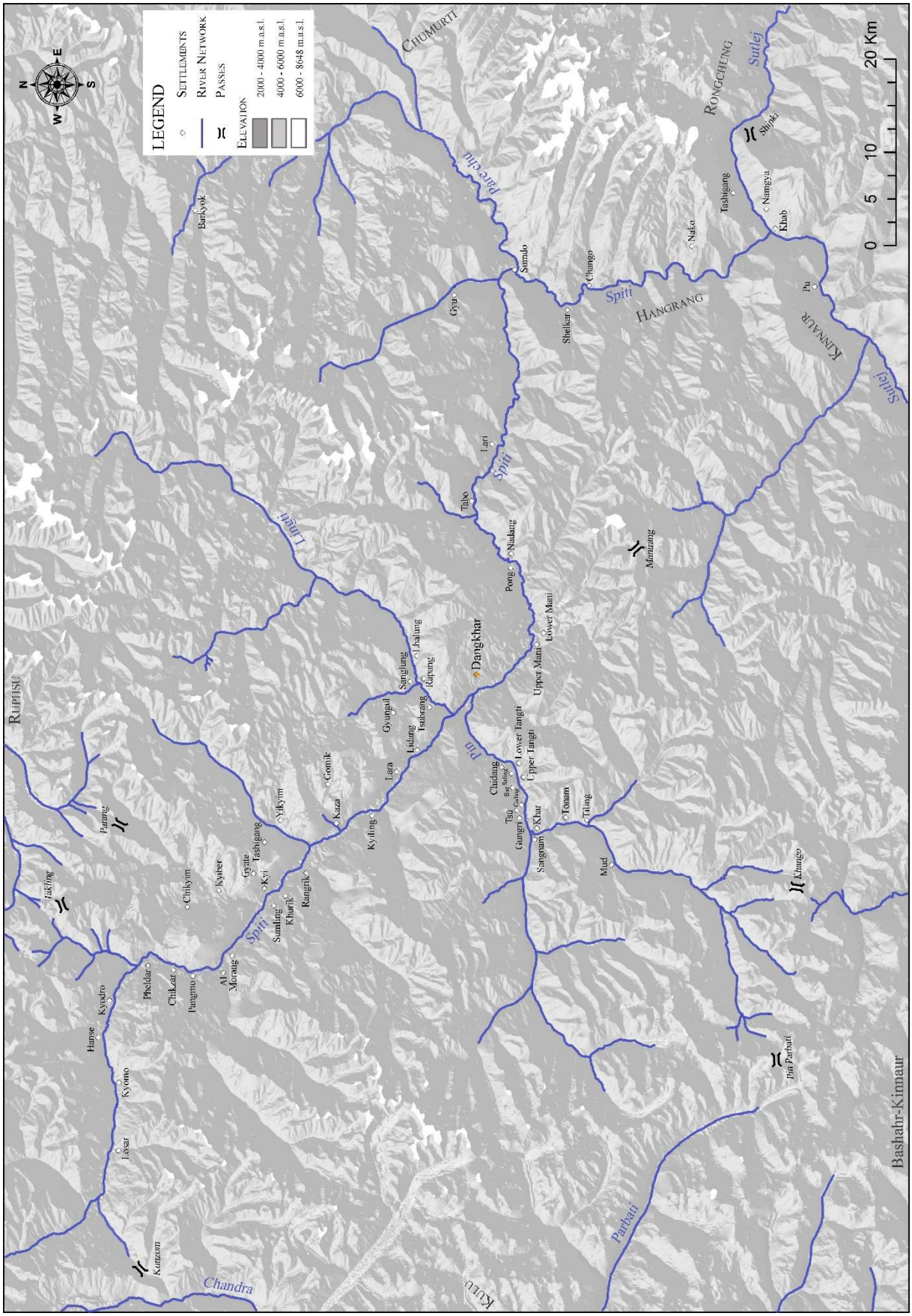
"A Rough Sketch of the Spiti-Valley by Captain W.E. Hay BA". Map published in 1851.

Figure 2.3



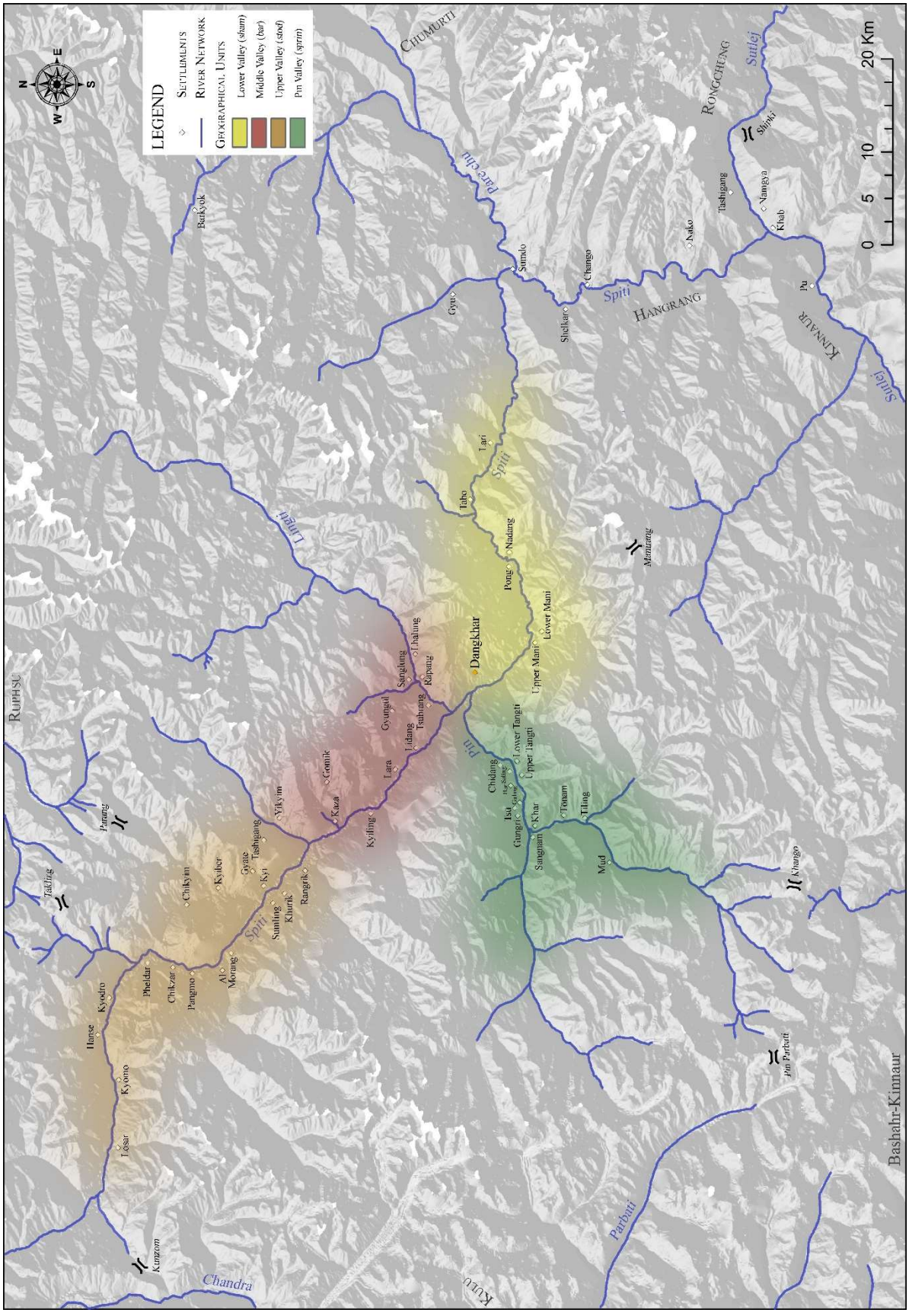
The Western Himalayas in historical times and the main places discussed in this thesis.
Map: the author, 2019.

Figure 2.4



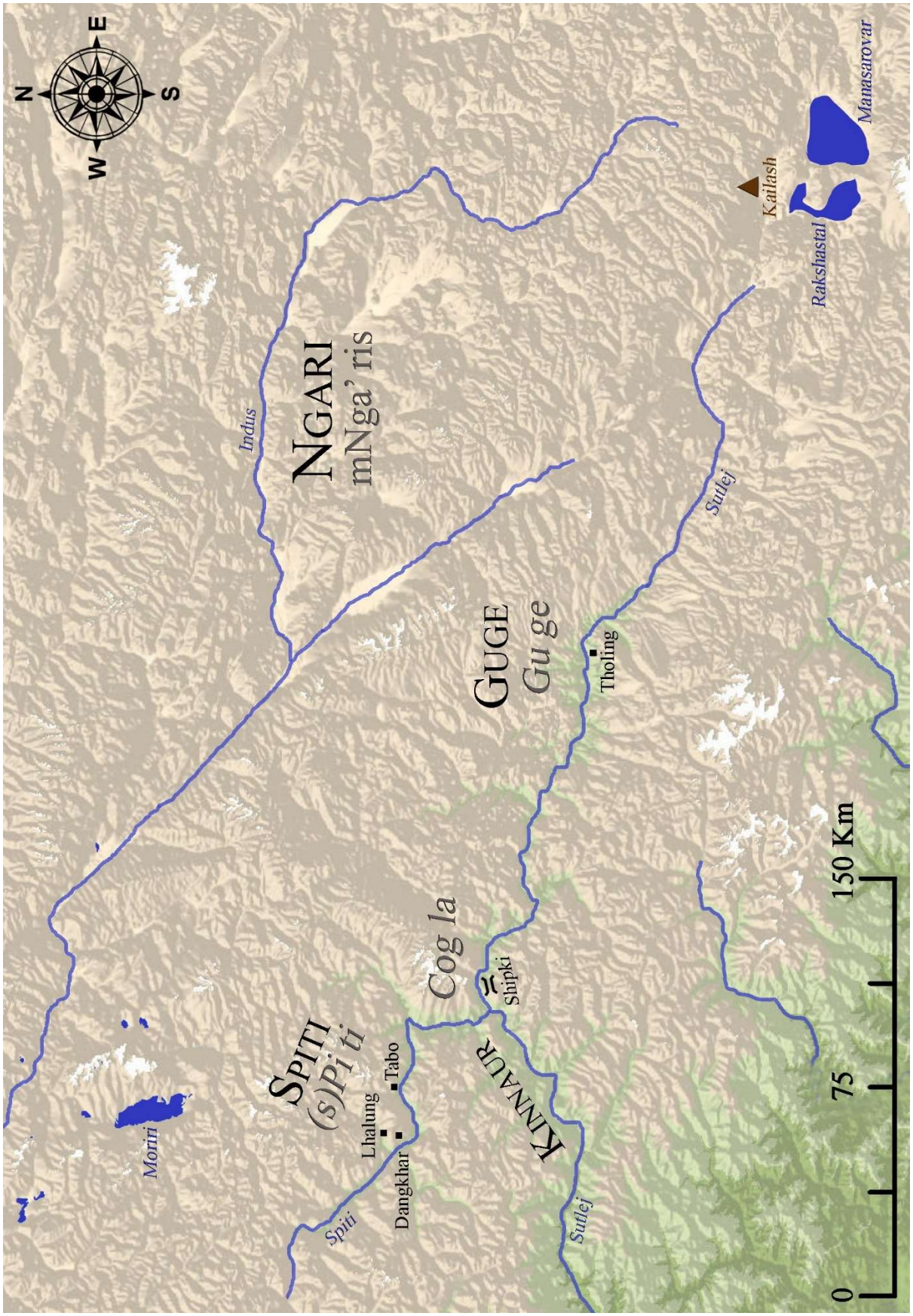
The Spiti Valley and the main settlements of the river valley. Map: the author, 2019.

Figure 2.5



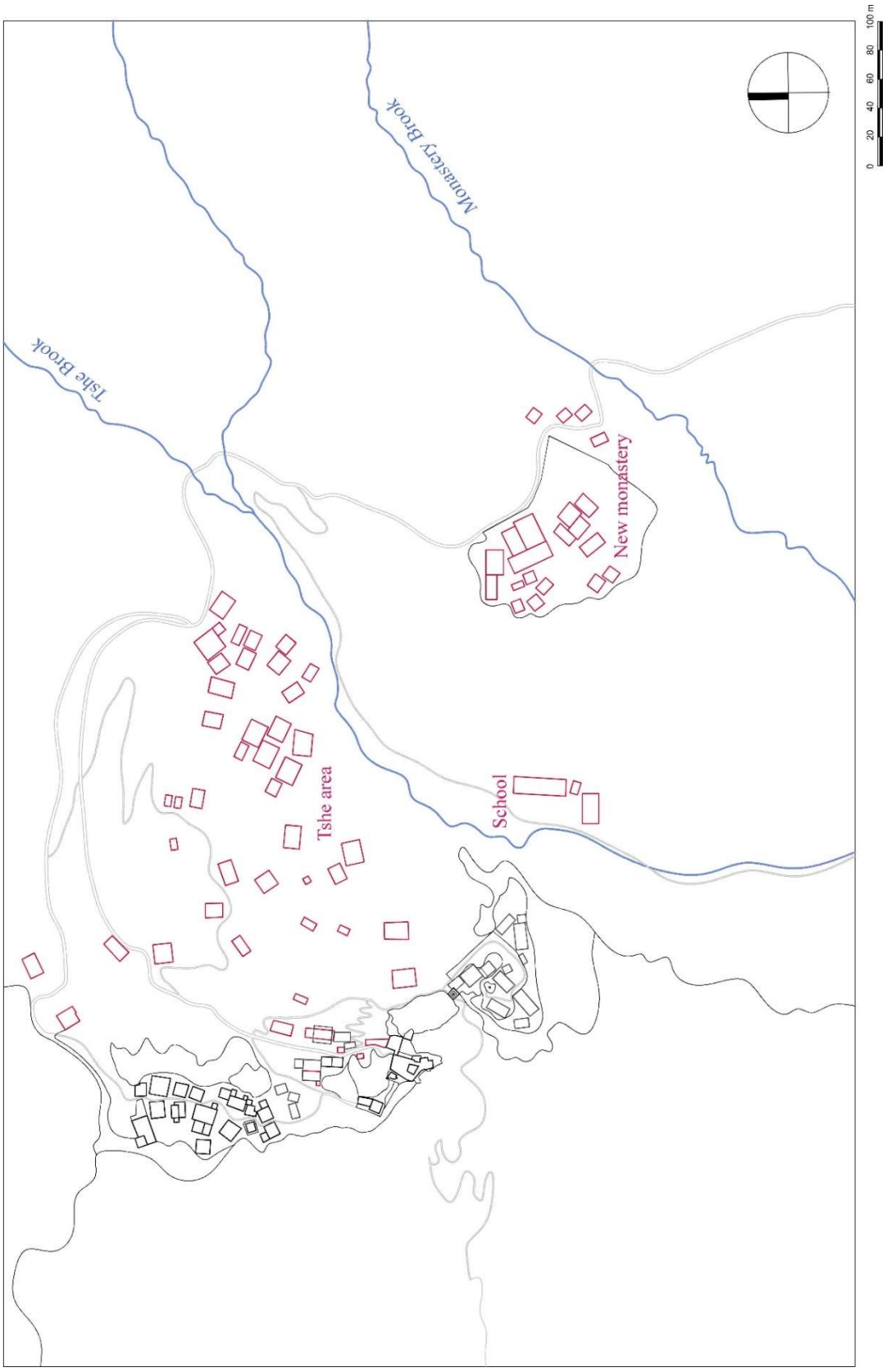
The four geographical and administrative units of the Spiti Valley in historical times.
Map: the author, 2019.

Figure 2.6



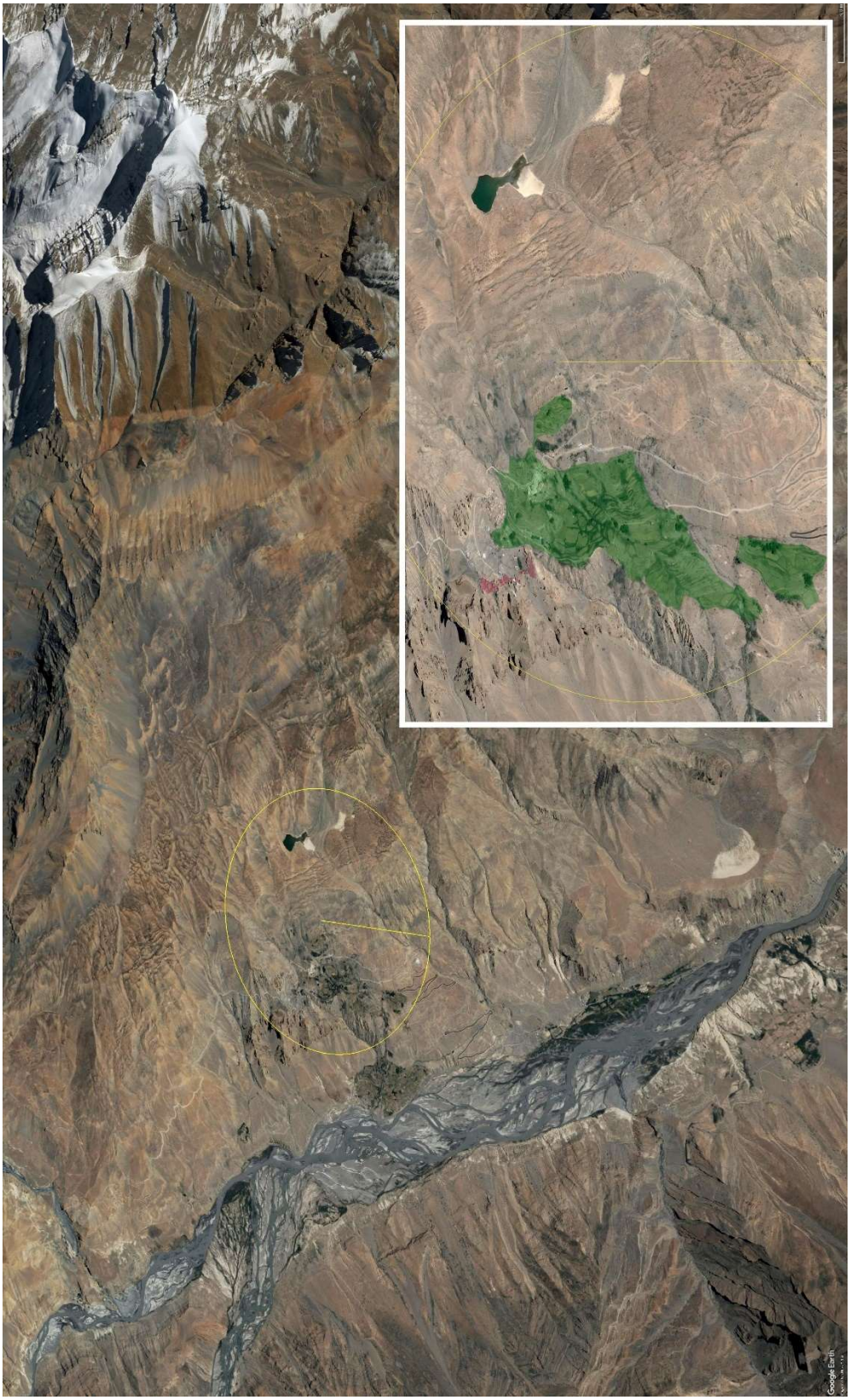
The three Western Tibetan regions of *Gu ge*, *Cog la*, and *(s)Pi ti* around 1200. Map: the author, 2019.

Figure 2.7



The Dangkhar settlement: historical buildings in black and modern expansion in red.
Plan: Carmen Auer and the author, 2018.

Figure 2.8



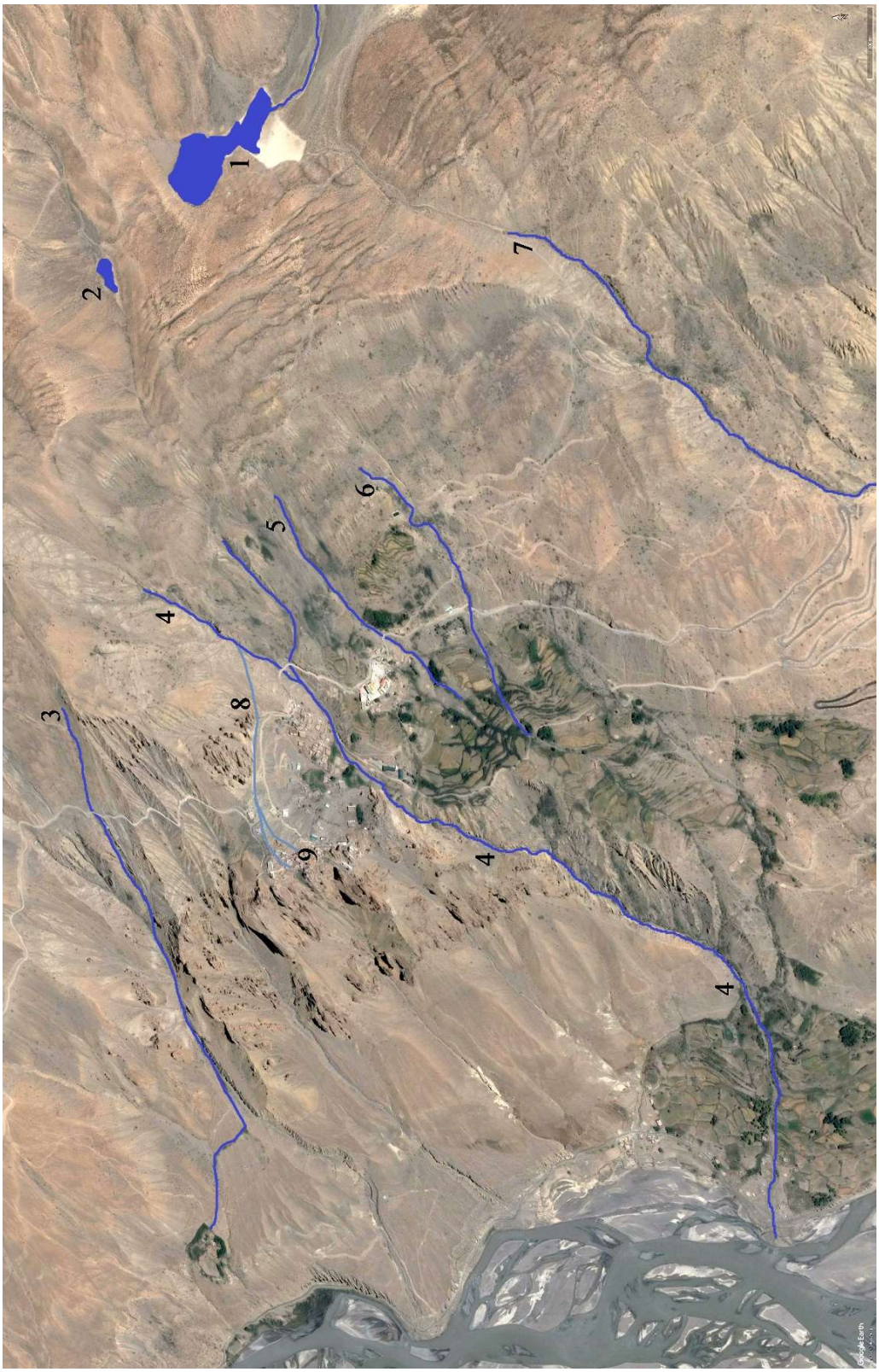
Site catchment analysis of the Dangkhar settlement: catchment circle in yellow (territorial radius of approximately 1.15 km), residential areas in red, and agricultural land in green.
Map: Google and the author, 2018.

Figure 2.9



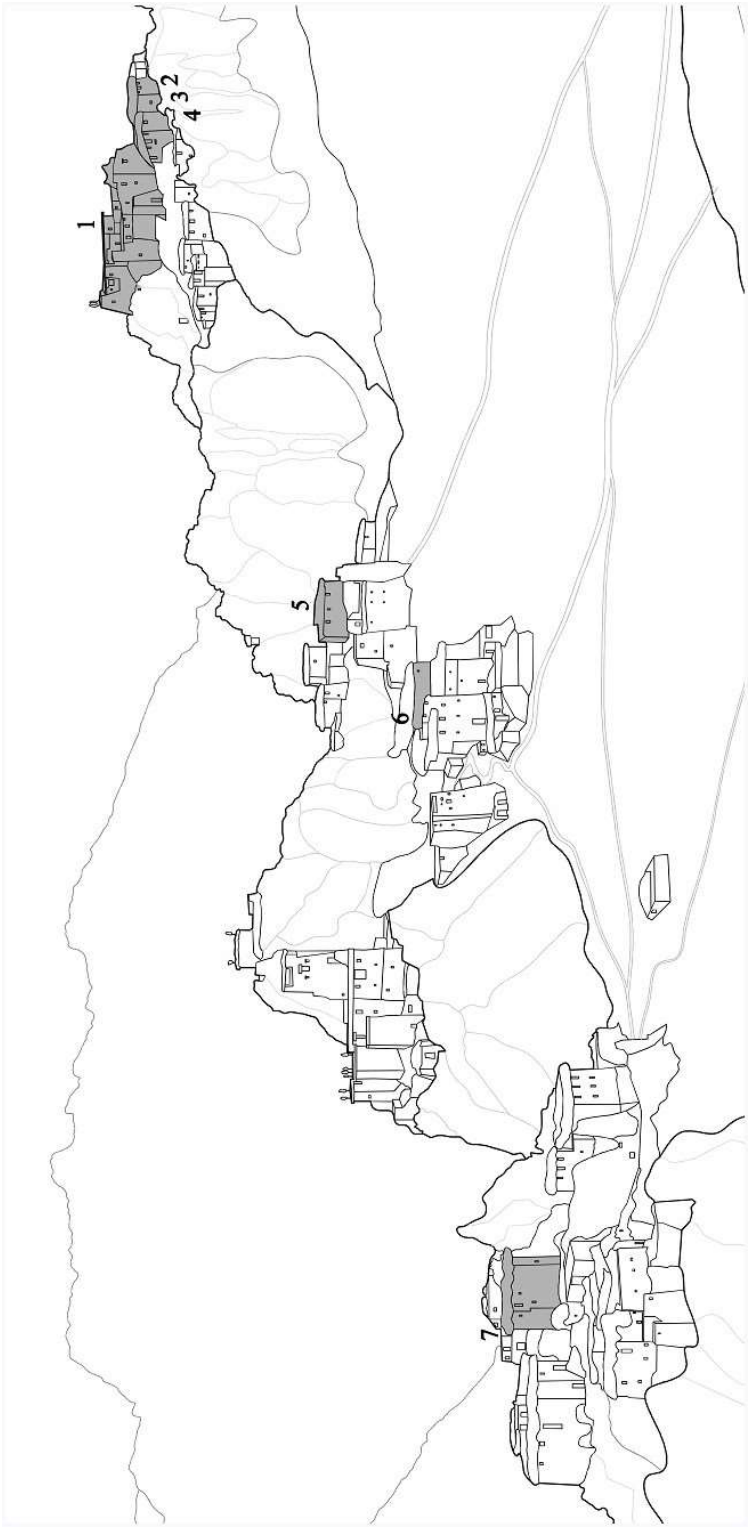
Itinerary of the annual ritual circumambulation of fields (*'bum skor*). The procession starts at the gateway stūpa. It passes above the Tshe residential area and the new monastery, before circumambulating fields downhill. Having reached the cultivated area of Bu brag by the Spiti River, the procession starts walking uphill again towards its starting point. Map: Google and the author, 2018.

Figure 2.10



Dangkhar hydrological network: 1.) Dangkhar Lake (*brag mkhar mtsho*) 2.) Manak Lake (*dmar nag* mtsho*) 3.) Great Spring (*chu mig chen*) 4.) Tshe Brook (*tshe grog po*) 5.) Monastery Brook (*dgon pa'i grog po*) 6.) Bangshak Brook (*bang shag* grog po*) 7.) Chöten Kyegar Brook *(chos rten skye khar* grog po*) 8.) Underground channels 9.) Cistern (*chu dong*). Map: Google and the author, 2018.

Figure 2.11



Schematic drawing illustrating the ancestral homes of some particular families in Dangkhar: 1) District fort 2) Minister's house 3) Medium's house 4) Physician's house 5) Blacksmith's house 6) Tantric Lama's house, 7) Bheda's house. Drawing based on Bournes' photograph: Carmen Auer and the author, 2018.

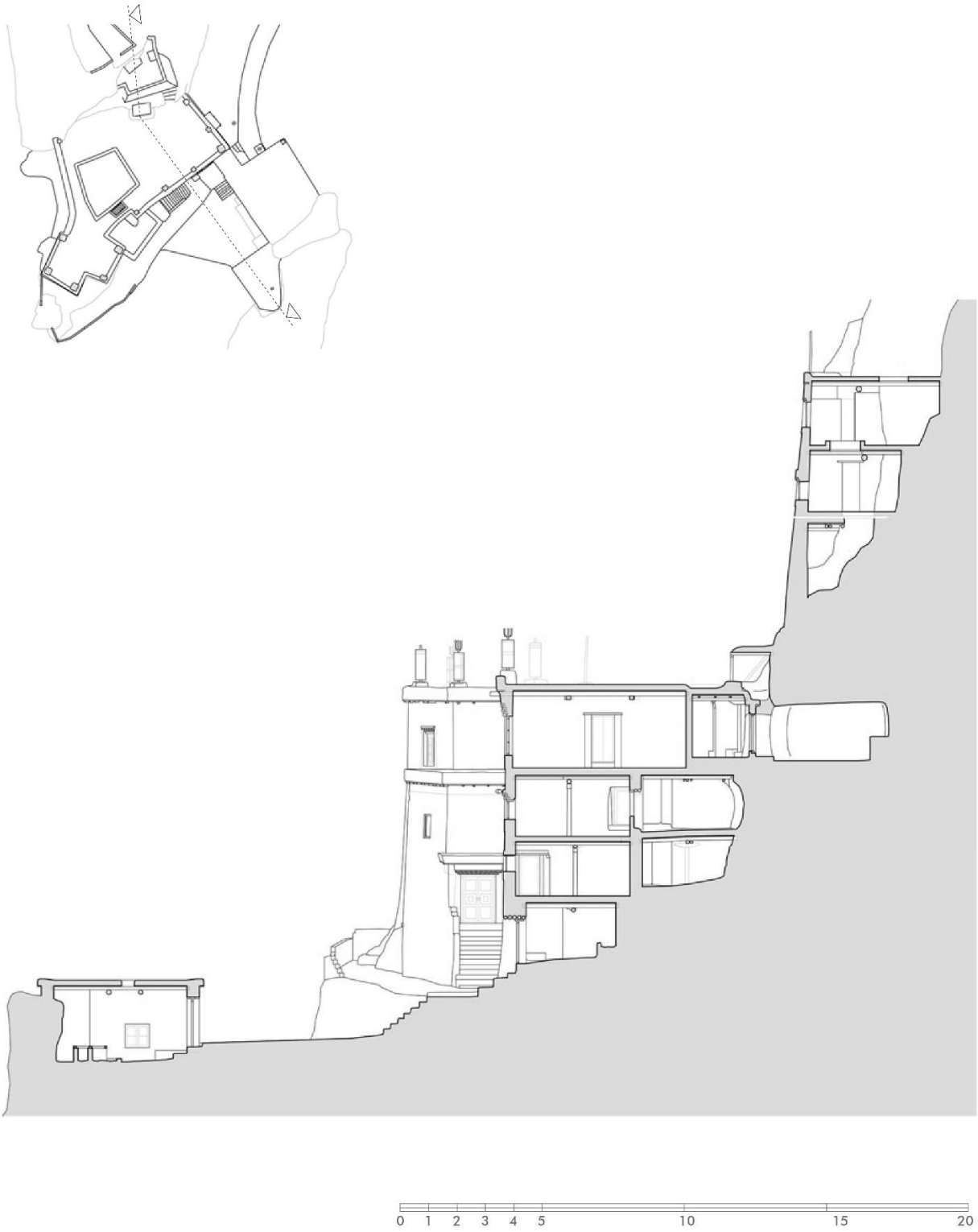
Figure 2.12



General section: the gateway stūpa, the monastic building, and the upper temple.[1] Plan: TU Graz, 2011.

[1] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

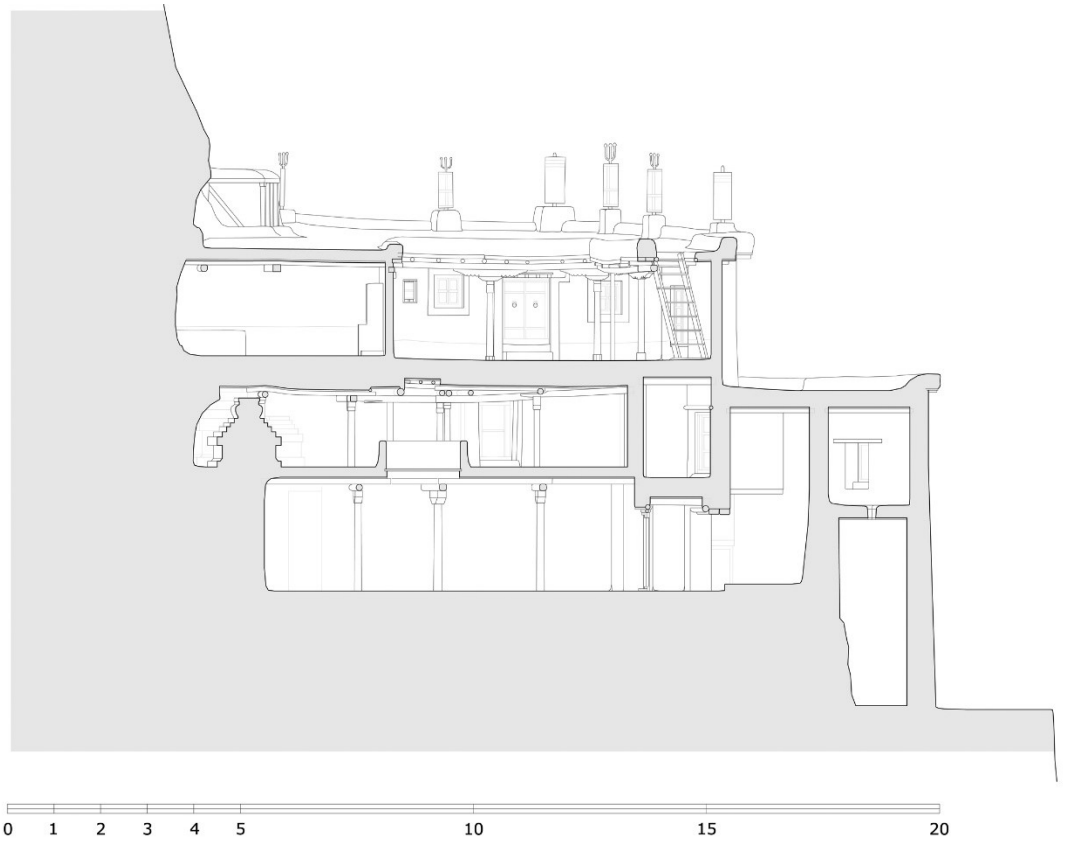
Figure 2.13



Section of the main monastic building and tower, view from the north.[2] Plan: TU Graz, 2011.

[2] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

Figure 2.14





Section of the main monastic building and corresponding model, view from the south-west.[3]
Plan and model: TU Graz, 2011.

[3] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

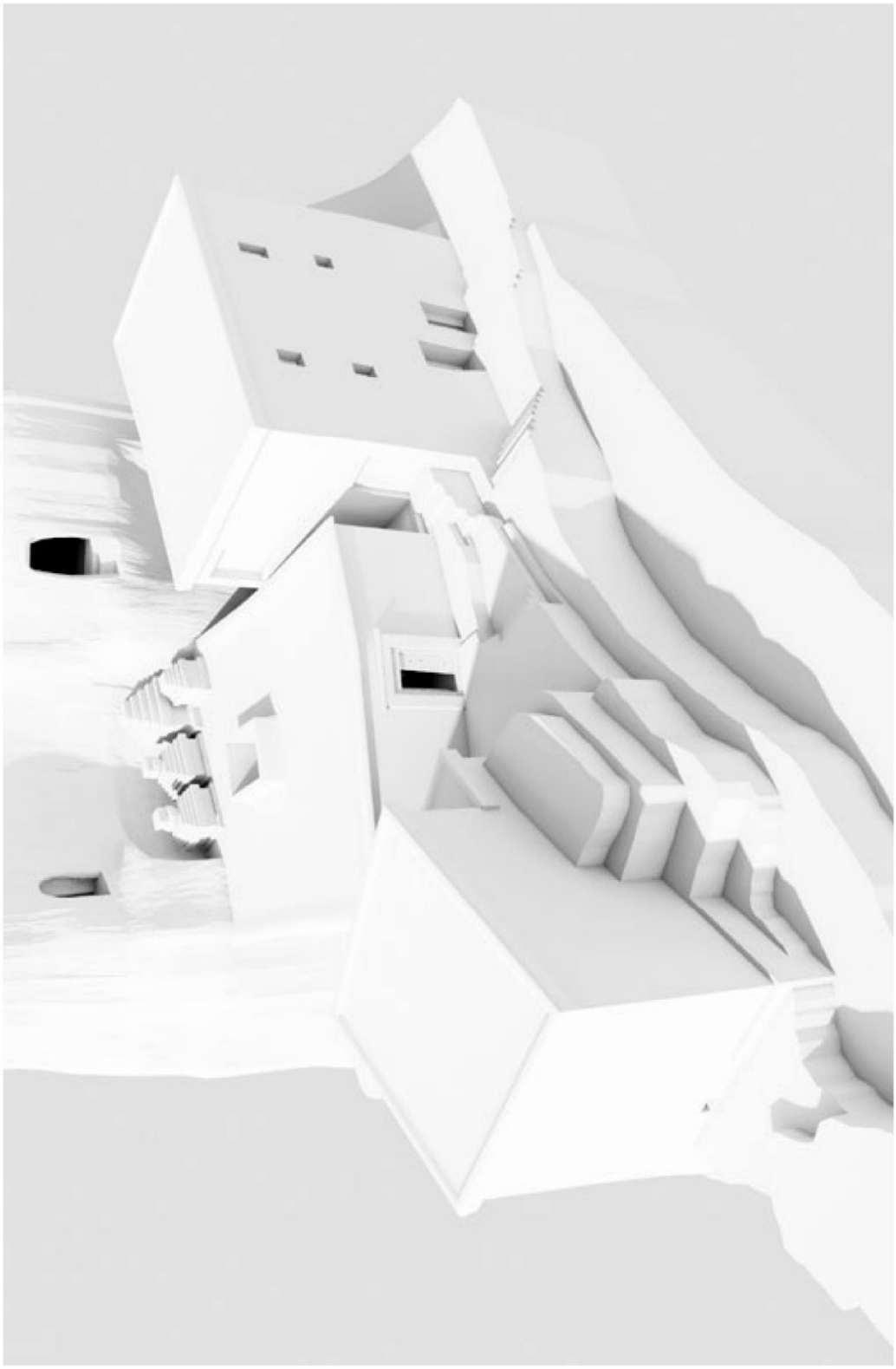
Figure 2.15



Individual storey plans of the main monastic building and their vertical juxtaposition.[4]
Plan: TU Graz, 2011.

[4] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

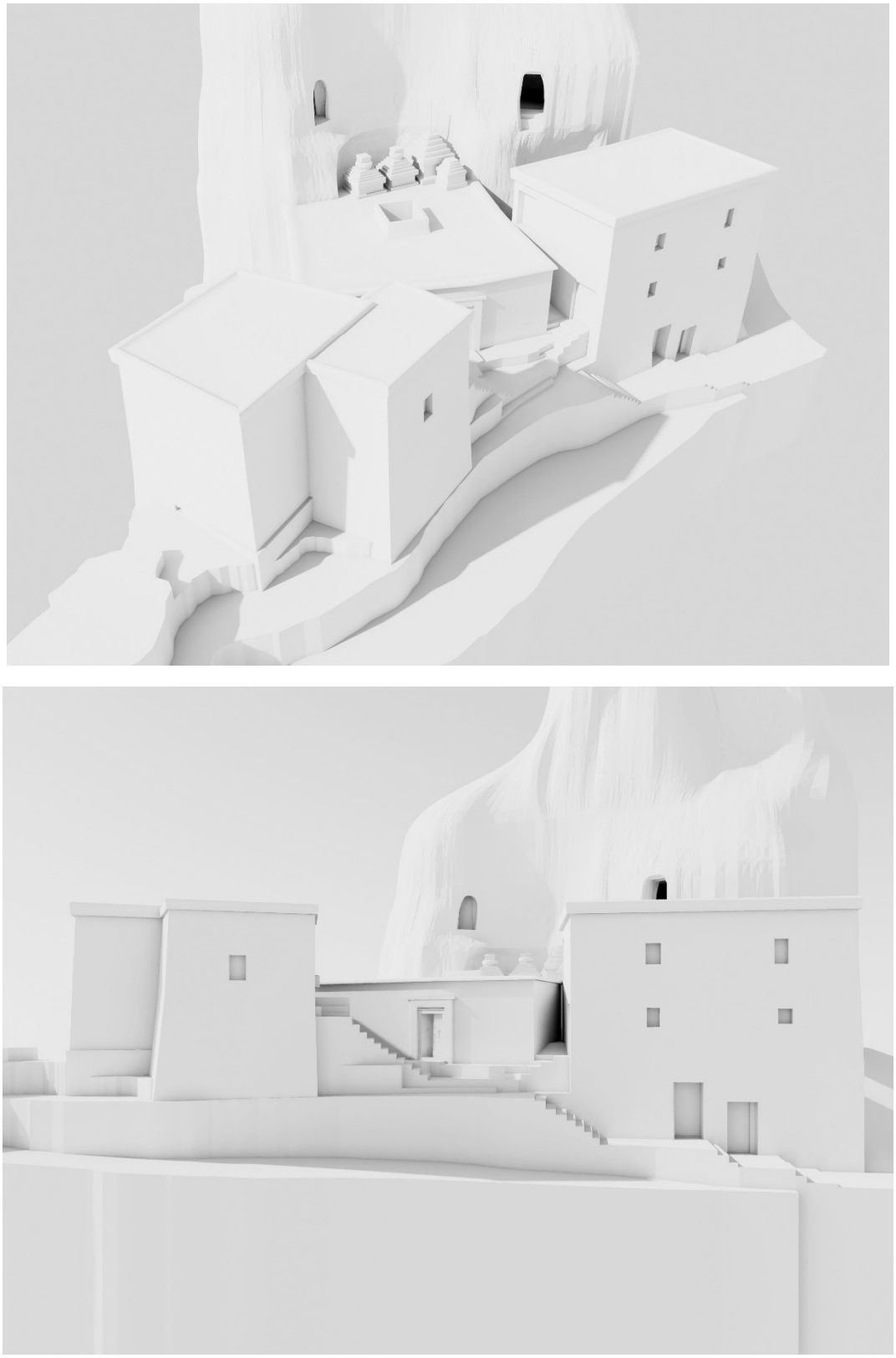
Figure 2.16



The three main buildings–Protectors' chapel (*mgon khang*) excluded–forming the core of the monastic edifice prior to its architectural enlargement in the 17th century.[5] Model: TU Graz, 2011

[5] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

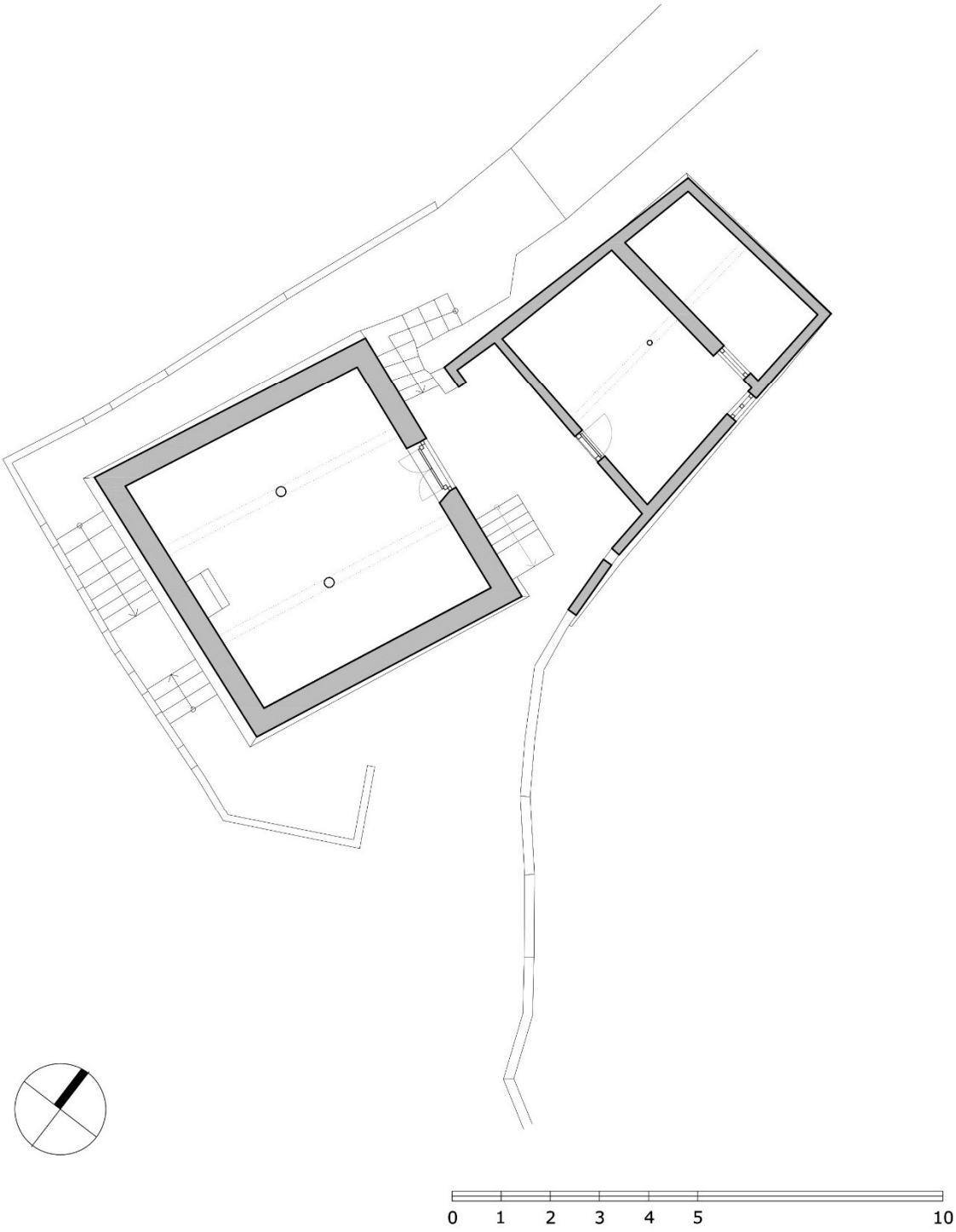
Figure 2.17



The three main buildings–Protectors' chapel (*mgon khang*) included–forming the core of the monastic edifice prior to its architectural enlargement in the 17th century.[6] Model: TU Graz, 2011.

[6] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

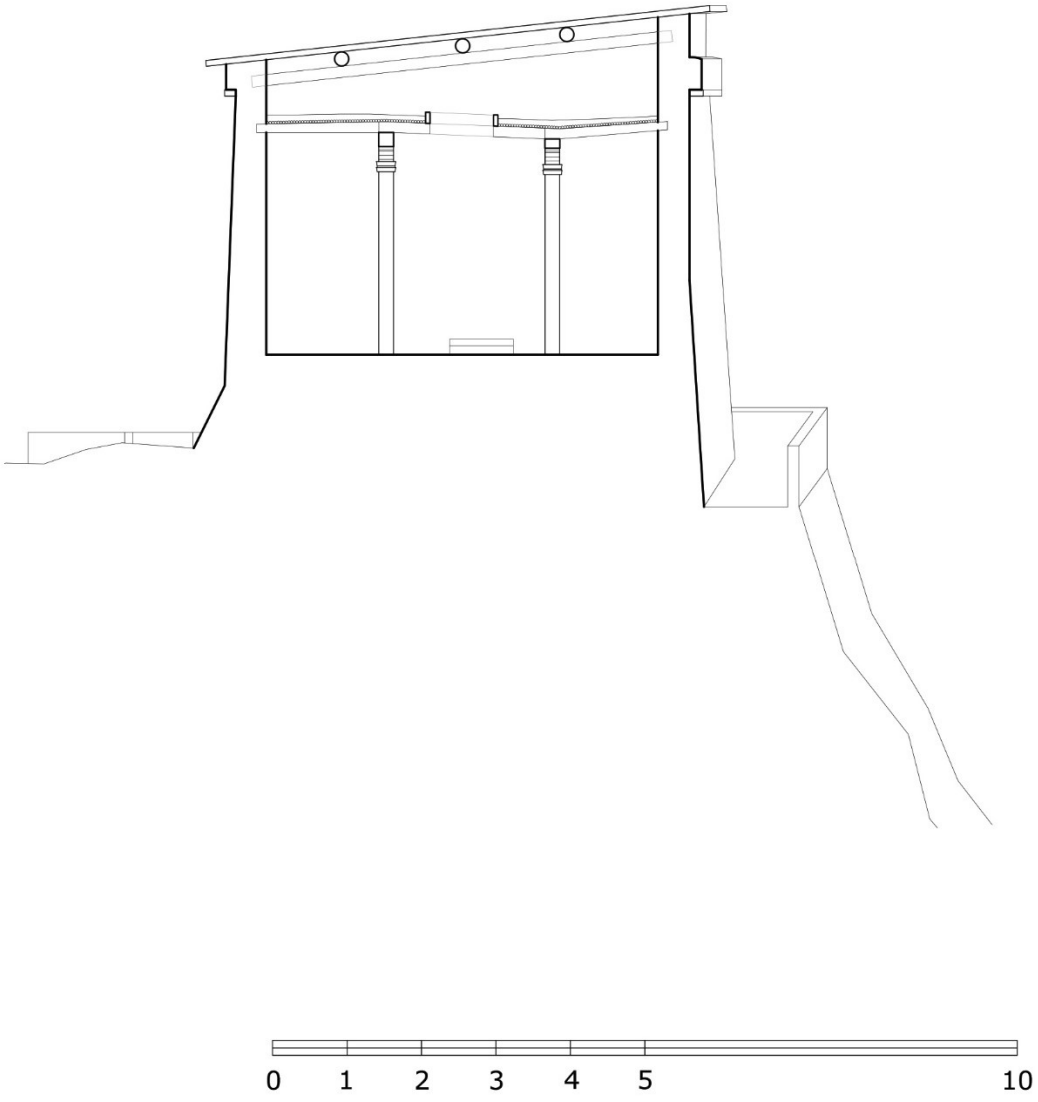
Figure 2.18



The upper temple of the Dangkhar settlement and adjacent building.[7] Plan: TU Graz, 2013.

[7] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

Figure 2.19



Cross section of the upper temple of the Dangkhar settlement, view from the north-east.[8]
Plan: TU Graz, 2013.

[8] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013.

Figure 2.20



South-eastern wall, upper temple, Dangkhar.[9] Photo montage and outline: TU Graz, 2013.

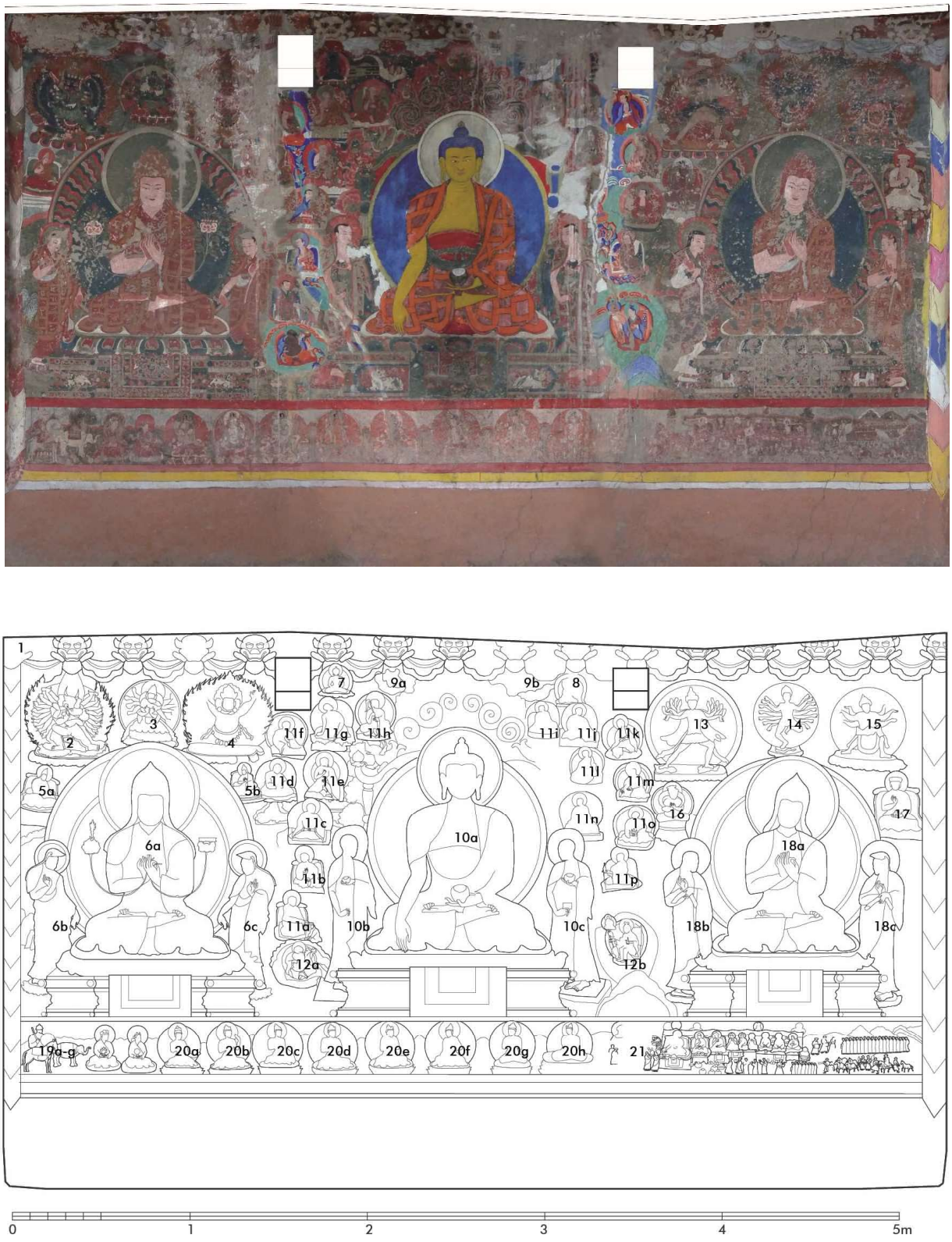
[9] After LAURENT 2014.

Iconographic Inventory of South-Eastern Wall

1 Wall-painted hanging with siṃhamukha (Tib. *sham bu*)
2 *The thirty-five confession Buddhas grouped around the Conquerors of the five family* (Tib. *ltung bshags kyi sangs rgyas so lnga ni rgyal ba rigs lnga dang so so'i 'khor drug*)
2a+6 Amoghasiddhi (Tib. *Don yod grub pa*)
2b+6 Amitābha (Tib. *'Od dpag med*)
2c+6 Ratnasambhava (Tib. *Rin chen 'byung gnas*)
2d+6 Akṣobhya (Tib. *Mi bskyod pa*)
2e+6 Vairocana (Tib. *rNam par snang mdzad*)
3 *Consorts of the Conquerors of the five family* (Tib. *rgyal ba rigs lnga yi yum*)
3a Samaya Tārā (Tib. *Dam tshig sgrol ma*)
3b Pāṇḍaravāsinī (Tib. *Gos dkar mo*)
3c Māmaki (Tib. *Mā ma ki*)
3d Buddha Locana (Tib. *Sangs rgyas spyan ma*)
3e Vajradhātvīśvarī (Tib. *rDo rje dbyings phyug ma*)
4 *The eight Medicine Buddhas* (Tib. *sman bla de gshegs brgyad*)
4a Sunāman (Tib. *mTshan legs*) *
4b Ratnacandra (Tib. *Rin chen zla ba*) *
4c Dharmakīrtisāgaraghoṣa (Tib. *Chos sgrags rgya mtsho'i dbyangs*) *
4d Bhaiṣajyaguru (Tib. *Sangs rgyas sman bla*)
5 Buddha making the gesture of fearlessness, i.e. *abhayāmudrā* (Tib. *skyabs sbyin phyag rgya mdzad pa'i Sangs rgyas*)
6 *Padmasambhava and consorts* (Tib. *Pad ma 'byung gnas dang yum*)
6a Padmasambhava (Tib. *Gu ru rin po che Pad ma 'byung gnas*)
6b Mandāravā (Tib. *Man da ra ba me tog*)
6c Ye shes mtsho rgyal
7 Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara (Tib. *Thugs rje chen po bcu gcig zhal*)
8 Buddha Amitābha (Tib. *Sangs rgyas 'Od dpag med*)
9 Caturbhuja Avalokiteśvara (Tib. *sPyan ras gzigs phag bzhi pa*)
10 Buddha making the gesture of generosity, i.e. *varadamudrā* (Tib. *mchog sbyin phyag rgya mdzad pa'i sangs rgyas*)
11 Amitāyus (Tib. *Tshe dpag med*)
12 *The twelve deeds of Buddha Śākyamuni* (Tib. *Sangs rgyas mchog gi sprul pa'i skus 'jig rten du mdzad pa bcu gnyis*)
12a Descent from Tuṣita heavenly realm (Tib. *dga' ldan gnas nas 'pho ba*)
12b Entering into Queen Māyādevī's womb (Tib. *lhums su zhugs pa*)
12c Taking birth (Tib. *sku bltams pa*)
12d Becoming skilled in worldly arts and demonstrating physical prowess (Tib. *gzhon nu'i rol rtsed*)
12e Enjoying a retinue of queens and a life of pleasures (Tib. *btsun mo'i 'khor gyis rol ba*)
12f Renouncing the world (Tib. *rab tu byung ba*)

* Identity of the figure within the theme not secured
** Identification of the iconographical figure not secured
*** Identification of the iconographical theme not secured
† Restitution

Figure 2.21



South-western wall, upper temple, Dangkhar.[10] Photo montage and outline: TU Graz, 2013.

[10] After LAURENT 2014.

Iconographic Inventory of South-Western Wall

1 Wall-painted hanging with siṃhamukha (Tib. *sham bu*)
Meditational deities (Tib. *yid dam*)
2 Vajrabhairava and consort Vajravetālī (Tib. *rDo rje 'jigs byed dang rDo rje ro langs ma*)
3 Guhyasamāja and consort Śparsavajra (Tib. *gSang ba 'dus pa dang Reg bya rdo rje ma*)
4 Hayagrīva (Tib. *rTa mgrin*)
5 ***A pair of dGe lugs pa teachers*** (Tib. *dGe lugs pa'i slob dpon gnyis*)
5a *unidentified*
5b *unidentified*
6 ***Father and spiritual sons*** (Tib. *yab sras gsum*)
6a rJe Rin po che Tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419)
6b rGyal tshab rje Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432)
6c mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang po (1385–1438)
7 Ādibuddha Samantabhadra (Tib. *Kun tu bzang po*)
8 *unidentified*
9 ***Celestial nymphs***
9a apsarasaḥ (Tib. *mchod pa'i lha mo*)
9b apsarasaḥ (Tib. *mchod pa'i lha mo*)
10 ***The historical Buddha and his two main disciples*** (Tib. *Thub pa gnas bcus bskor ba*)
10a Buddha Śākyamuni (Tib. *Shākya thub pa*)
10b Śāriputra (Tib. *Shā ri'i bu*)
10c Maudgalyāyana (Tib. *Ma'u dgal gyi bu*)
11 ***The sixteen arhats*** (Tib. *gnas brtan bcu drug*)
11a Gopaka (Tib. *sBed byed*) *
11b Bhadra (Tib. *bZang po*)
11c Cūḍapanthaka (Tib. *Lam phran bstan*)
11d Bakula (Tib. *Ba ku la*)
11e Kanakavatsa (Tib. *gSer be'u*)
11f Vanavāsin (Tib. *Nags na gnas*) *
11g Vajrīputra (Tib. *rDo rje mo'i bu*) *
11h Aṅgaja (Tib. *Yan lag 'byung*)
11i Kanakabharadvāja (Tib. *Bha ra dhwa dza gser can*) *
11j Nāgasena (Tib. *Klu'i sde*) *
11k Panthaka (Tib. *Lam bstan*)
11l Piṇḍolabharadvāja (Tib. *Bha ra dha dza bsod snyoms len*)
11m Ajita (Tib. *Ma pham pa*)
11n Kālika (Tib. *Dus ldan*) *
11o Rāhula (Tib. *sGra gcan zin*)
11p Abheda (Tib. *Mi phyed*)
12 ***The two attendants***
12a Hwa shang
12b Upāsaka Dharmatrāta (Tib. *dGe bsnyen Dharma*)
Meditational deities (Tib. *yi dam*)
13 Kālacakra and consort Viśvamātā (Tib. *Dus kyi 'khor lo dang sNa tshogs yum*)
14 Hevajra and consort Vajranairātmyā (Tib. *Kye rdo rje dang rDo rje bdag med mo*)
15 Cakrasaṃvara and consort Vajravāhārī (Tib.*'Khor lo bde mchog dang rDo rje phag mo*)
16 Nāropa (Tib. *Nā ro pa*) (*c.*1016 – 1100)
17 sTag tshang ras pa O rgyan Ngag dbang rgya mtsho (1574–1651)
18 ***Atiśa and his two main disciples***
18a Atiśa Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (Tib. *Jo bo rje dPal ldan A ti sha*) (980–1054)
18b 'Brom ston pa (1004 – 1064)
18c rNgog lo tsā ba Legs pa'i shes rabs (1018–1115)

19 ***The seven precious possessions of a universal monarch*** (Skt. *sapta rājāyaratna* Tib. *rgyal srid rin chen sna bdun*)

19a The precious general (Skt. *senāpatiratna* Tib. *dmag dpon rin po che*)

19b The most precious horse (Skt. *aśvaratna* Tib. *rta mchog rin po che*)

19c The precious elephant (Skt. *hastiratna* Tib. *glang po rin po che*)

19d The precious minister (Skt. *pariṇāyakaratna* Tib. *blon po rin po che*)

19e The precious jewel (Skt. *maṇiratna* Tib. *nor bur in po che*)

19f The precious queen (Skt. *rānīratna* or *strīratna* Tib. *btsun mo rin po che*)

19g The precious wheel (Skt. *cakraratna* Tib. *'khor lo rin po che*)

20 ***The eight close sons or great bodhisattvas*** (Skt. *aṣṭa utaputra* Tib. *nye ba'i sras chen brgyad*)

20a Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin (Tib. *sGrip pa rnam sel*) *

20b Avalokiteśvara (Tib. *sPyan ras gzigs*)

20c Vajrapānī (Tib. *Phyag na rdo rje*)

20d Mañjuśrī (Tib. *'Jam dpal byangs*)

20e Ākāśagarbha (Tib. *Nam mkha'i snying po*) *

20f Samantabhadra (Tib. *Kun tu bzang po*) *

20g Maitreya (Tib. *Byams pa mgon po*) *

20h Kṣitigarbha (Tib. *Sa'i snying po*) *

21 The banquet-consecration scene

Figure 2.22



North-western wall, upper temple, Dangkhar.[11] Photo montage and outline: TU Graz, 2013.

[11] After LAURENT 2014.

Iconographic Inventory of North-Western Wall

1 Wall-painted hanging with siṃhamukha (Tib. *sham bu*)

2 ***Group of seventeen Buddhas***

Seven universal or heroic Buddhas (Tib. *sangs rgyas rab bdun nam sangs rgyas dpa' bo dbun*) ***

2a rNam par gzigs *
2b gTsugs tor can *
2c Thabs cad skyob *
2d 'Khor ba 'jigs *
2e gSer thub *
2f 'Od srung *
2g Shākya thub pa *

Buddhas of the ten directions and three times (Tib. *phogs bcu dus gsum gyis sangs rgyas*) ***

2h dKon mchog 'byung gnas *
2i Mya ngan med pa *
2j Rin chen 'od 'phro *
2k rGyal pa' dbang po *
2l Pa dmo dam pa' dpal mnga' *
2m Nyi ma snang ba' dpal *
2n gDugs mchog dam pa *
2o Ting 'dzin glang pod pal mnga' *
2p Pad ma' dpal nyid *
2q dKa' ba' dpal can *

3 A pair of dGe lugs pa teachers (Tib. *dGe lugs pa slob dpon gnyis*)

3a *unidentified*
3b *unidentified*

4 ***The six ornaments and the two excellent ones*** (Tib. *rgyan drug mchog gnyis*)

4a Nāgārjuna (Tib. *Klu sgrub*)
4b Āryadeva (Tib.*'Phags pa lha*) †
4c Asaṅga (Tib. *Thogs med*) †
4d Vasubandhu (Tib. *dByig gnyen*) †
4e Dignāga (Tib. *Phyogs kyi glang po*)
4f Dharmakīrti (Tib. *Chos kyi grags pa*)
4g Guṇaprabha (Tib. *Yon tan 'od*)
4h Śākyaprabha (Tib. *Shākya 'od*)

5 ***The forefathers of the bKa' brgyud pa lineage*** (Tib. *bKa' brgyud pa'i bla ma rgyud pa*)

5a Vajradhara (Tib. *rDo rje 'chang*)
5b Tilopa (Tib. *Ti lo pa*) (988–1069)
5c Nāropa (Tib. Nā ro pa) (*c.*1016–1100)
5d Mar pa lo tswa ba Chos kyi blo gros (1012–1097)
5e rJe btsun Mi la ras pa (1040–1123)
5f sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen Dwags po lha rje (1079–1153)
5g Ras chung pa rDo rje grags pa (1085–1161)
5h Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po (1100–1170)
5i gLing chen ras pa Pad ma rdo rje (1128–1188)

6 Prajñāpāramitā (Tib. *Yum chen mo* or *Sher phyin ma*)
7 Maitreya (Tib. *rGyal ba Byams pa*)
8 Uṣnīṣavijayā (Tib. *gTsug tor rnam par rgyal ma*)

9 ***A pair of 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud pa teachers*** (Tib.*'Brug pa bka' brgyud pa'i slob dpon gnyis*)

9a *unidentified*
9b *unidentified*

10 Sitātapatrā (Tib. *gDugs dkar*)
11 Mañjuśrī (Tib.*'Jam pa'i dbyang*)
12 Jāṅguli (Tib. *Dug sel ma*)

13 ***A pair of 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud pa teachers*** (Tib.*'Brug pa bka' brgyud pa'i slob dpon gnyis*)
13a *unidentified*
13b *unidentified*
14 Nīla Siṃhavaktrā (Tib. *Seng ge gdong ma sngon mo*)
15 Vajrapāṇi (Tib. *Phyag ma rdo rje*)
16 ***The eight Medicine Buddhas*** (Tib. *sman bla de gshegs brgyad*)
16e Aśokottama (Tib. *Mya ngan med mchog*) *
16f Śākyamuni (Tib. *Shākya thub pa*)
16g Suvarṇabhadravimala (Tib. gSer bzang dri med) *
16h Abhijñarāja (Tib. *mNgon mkhyen rgyal po*)
17 Sita Tārā (Tib. *sGrol dkar*)
18 Śyāma Tārā (Tib. *sGrol ljang*)
19 Parṇāśabarī (Tib. *Ri khrod lo ma gyon ma*)
20 ***The twelve deeds of Buddha Śākyamuni*** (Tib. *Sangs rgyas mchog gi sprul pa'i skus 'jig rten du mdzad pa bcu gnyis*)
20g Practicing asceticism (Tib. *dka' ba spyad pa*)
20h Reaching the point of enlightenment Tib. *byang chub snying por gshegs pa*) †
20i Defeating Māra's hosts (Tib. *bdud btul ba*)
20j Attaining perfect enlightenment (Tib. *mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa*)
20k Turning the wheel of doctrine (Tib. *chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba*)
20l Departing for the ultimate peace of parinirvāṇa (Tib. *mya ngan las 'das pa*)

Figure 2.23



North-eastern wall, upper temple, Dangkhar.[12] Photo montage and outline: TU Graz, 2013.

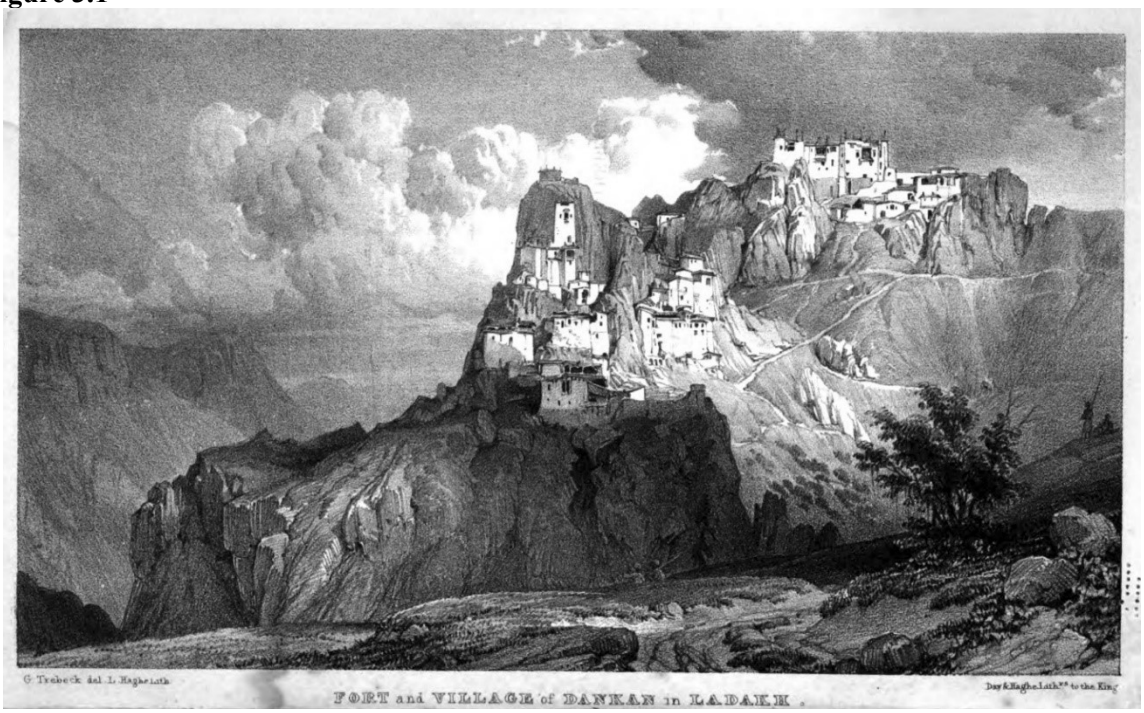
[12] After LAURENT 2014.

Iconographic Inventory of North-Eastern Wall

1 Wall-painted hanging with siṃhamukha (Tib. *sham bu*)
2 Vajrasattva (Tib. *rDo rje sems dpa'*)
3 Śyāmanīla Vajravidāraṇa (Tib. *rDo rje rnam 'joms ljang sngon*)
4 Akṣobhya (Tib. *Mi 'khrugs pa*)
5 Rakta Mahākāla (Tib. *mGon dmar*) **
6 Pañjara Mahākāla (Tib. *Gur gyi mgon po*)
7 Caturbhuja Mahākāla (Tib. *mGon po phyag bzhi pa*)
8 Mañjuśri Nāgarākṣa (Tib.*'Jam dpal nā ga rakṣa*)
9 Brāhmaṇarūpa Mahākāla (Tib. *mGon po bram ze'i gzugs can*)
10 Ṣaḍbhuja Mahākāla also known as Sarvavighnavināyaka Mahākāla (Tib. *mGon po phyag druk pa* or *mGon po bar chad kun sel*)
11 Dhūmavarṇa Krodha Ucchuṣma (Tib. *Khro bo sme brtsegs dud kha*) **
12 Yama Dharmarāja and consort Cāmuṇḍā (Tib. *gShin rje Chos rgyal dang Tsā mundi*)
13 ***Mahākāla's four lieutenants and retinue***
13a Kṣetrapāla (Tib. *Kṣe tra pā la*)
13b Jinamitra (Tib. *Dzi na mi tra*)
13c Ṭakkirāja (Tib. *Ṭakki rā dza*)
13d Trakṣad (Tib. *Trakṣad*)
13e Śri Devī (Tib. *dPal ldan lha mo* or *bDud mo re ma ti*)
13f Śaṅkhapāli Devī (Tib. *Lha mo dung skyong ma*) **
14 ***Wealth deities*** (Tib. *rgyu nor gyi lha rnams*)
14a Sadbhuja Vasudhārā (Tib. *Nor rgyun ma phyag drug ma*) *
14b Vasudhārā from the dhāraṇi (Tib. *gZungs las byung ba'i lha mo nor rgyun ma*) *
14c Jambhala (Tib. *Dzambha la*)
14d Vasudhārā (Tib. *Nor rgyun ma*)
14e Mahāpīta Vaiśravaṇa (Tib. *rNam sras ser chen*)
14f Kṛṣṇa Jambhala (Tib. *Dzambha la nag po*)
15 ***Guardian kings of the four directions*** (Skt. *lokapāla* or *cāturmahārājika* Tib. *phyogs skyong rgyal po* or *rgyal chen sde bzhi*)
15a Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Tib. *Yul 'khor skyong* or *Yul 'khor srung*)
15b Virūpākṣa (Tib. *sPyan mi bzang*)
15c Virūḍhaka (Tib. *'Phag skyes po*)
15d Vaiśravaṇa (Tib. *rNam thos sras*)
16 ***The three forefather Dharma kings of Tibet*** (Tib. *chos rgyal mes dbon rnam gsum*)
16a Chos rgyal Srong btsan sgam po (r.60?–649)
16b Khri srong lde btsan (r.755–797)
16c Khri ral pa can (r.815–836)
17 Śāntarakṣita (Tib. *slob dpon Zhi ba 'tsho*) (725–788)
18 *unidentified*
19 ***The equestrian scene***
19a A human female rider
19b Autochthonous warrior deity of West Tibet (Tib. *Mes ba'u zhes pa'i gu ge yul lha*)
19c Autochthonous warrior deity of West Tibet (Tib. *Mes ba'u zhes pa'i gu ge yul lha*)
19d Autochthonous warrior deity of West Tibet (Tib. *Mes ba'u zhes pa'i gu ge yul lha*)
19e A human female rider with child
19f A human female rider
20 ***A group of five dGe lugs pa teachers*** (Tib. *dGe lugs pa'i slob dpon lnga*)
20a Brag sgo Rab 'byams pa Phun tshogs rgya mtsho *
20b mKhar rdo bZod pa rgya mtsho (1672–1749) *
20c sGrub khang pa dGe legs rgya mtsho (1641–1713) *
20d The Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) *
20e The Fifth Panchen lama, Paṇ chen Blo bzang ye shes mtsho(1663–1737) *
21 Vajrapāṇi (Tib. *Phyag na rdo rje*)
22 Cintāmaṇi Sita Mahākāla (Tib. *mGon dkar yid bzhin nor bu*)

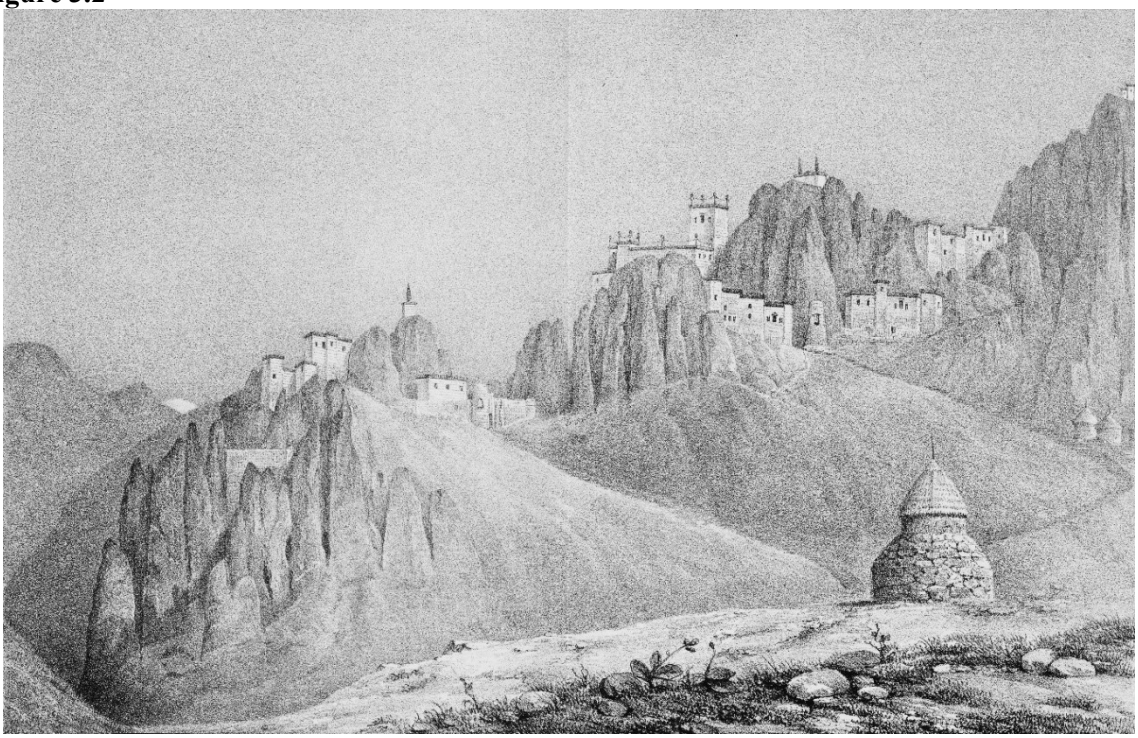
23 Śrimatī Pārvatī Rājñī (Tib. *dPal ldan dmag zor rgyal mo*)
24 ***The goddesses or queens of the four seasons*** (Tib. *dus bzhi'i rgyal mo* or *dus bzhi'i lha mo*)
24a The spring goddess (Tib. *dPyid gyi rgyal mo* or *dPyid gyi lha mo*) †
24b The summer goddess (Tib. *dYar gyi rgyal mo* or *d.Yar gyi lha mo*) †
24c The autumn goddess (Tib. *sTon gyi rgyal mo* or *sTon gyi lha mo*)
24d The winter goddess (Tib. *dGun gyi rgyal mo* or *dGun gyi lha mo*)
25 ***Śri Devī's other attendants*** (Tib. *dPal ldan lha mo'i 'khor bzhan*)
25a Makaramukhī also called Makaravaktrā (Tib. *Chu srin mo*) †
25b Siṃhamukhī (Tib. *Seng ge dong ma*)
26 ***The five sisters of longevity*** (Tib. *tshe ring mched lnga*)
26a mThing gi zhal bzang ma †
26b Cod paṇ mgrin bzang ma †
26c bKra shis tshe ring ma
26d Mi g.yo blo bzang ma
26e gTad dkar 'gro bzang ma

Figure 3.1



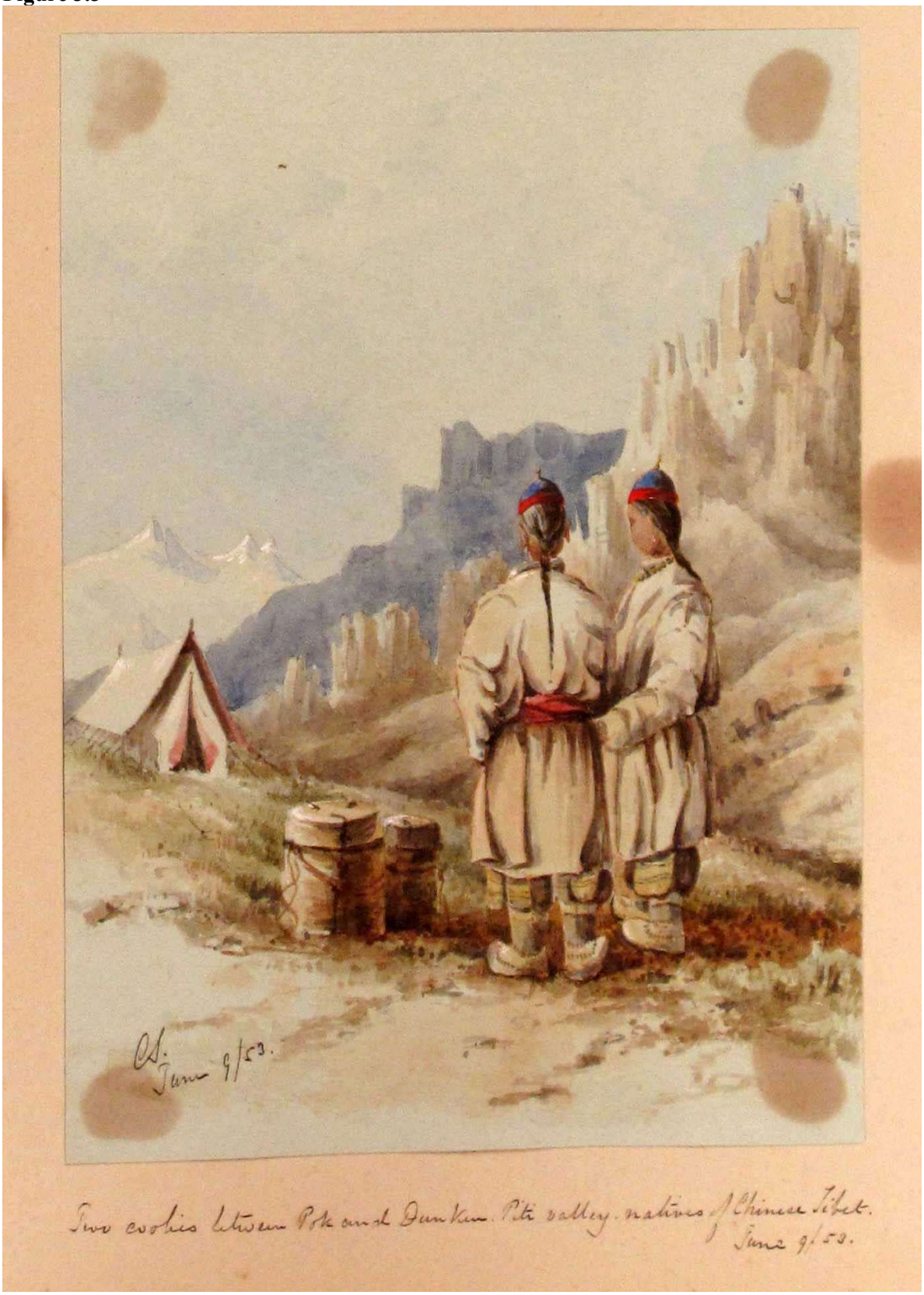
"Fort and Village of Dankar in Ladakh". Lithograph by Louis Haghe published in 1841 based on a drawing made by George Trebeck (1800–1825) in 1822. After MOORCROFT & TREBECK 1841.

Figure 3.2



"View of Dankhar from my camp to the East (8th September 1830)". Drawing by Victor Jacquemont (1801–1832) published posthumously in 1841. After JACQUEMONT 1841.

Figure 3.3



"Two coolies between Pok and Dunkur. Piti valley. Natives of Chinese Tibet. June 9 / [18]53"

Original water colour by Conway Mordaunt Shipley (1824–1888) pasted in a bound volume published in 1854. After SHIPLEY 1854

Figure 3.4



"The village and fort of Dunkur, capital of the Piti or Spiti district from below, near the river. To the left is the junction of the Piti and Pin rivers. The snowy mountains in the distance are those of Lahaul, towards the Parang La. The table mountain in the centre, is remarkable, as being the first we have met within the Himalayahs, with horizontal strata. The curious needle shaped pinnacles upon which the fort is built, are (of conglomerate) the end of a spur given off from the range to the right. The bed of the river is here about 12.000 feet above the sea, that of the fort 13.000 feet. 3 PM. June 9/ [18]53".

Original water colour by Conway Mordaunt Shipley (1824–1888) pasted in a bound volume published in 1854. After SHIPLEY 1854

Figure 3.5



"Another view of Dunkur in the Piti valley from our camp. June 10 / [18]53"

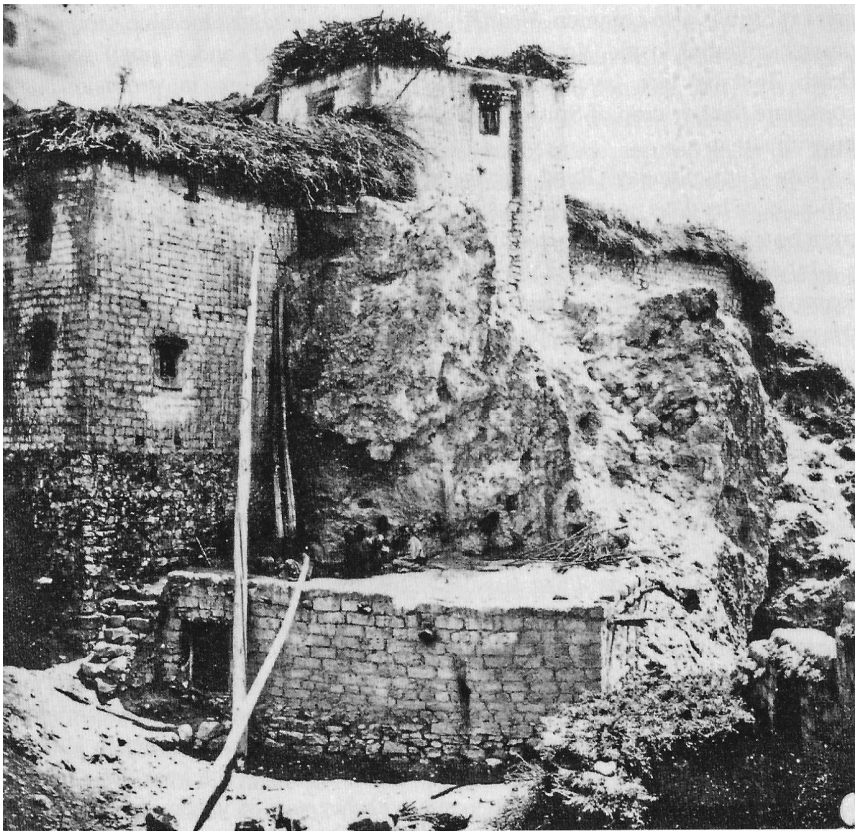
Original water colour by Conway Mordaunt Shipley (1824–1888) pasted in a bound volume published in 1854. After SHIPLEY 1854.

Figure 3.6



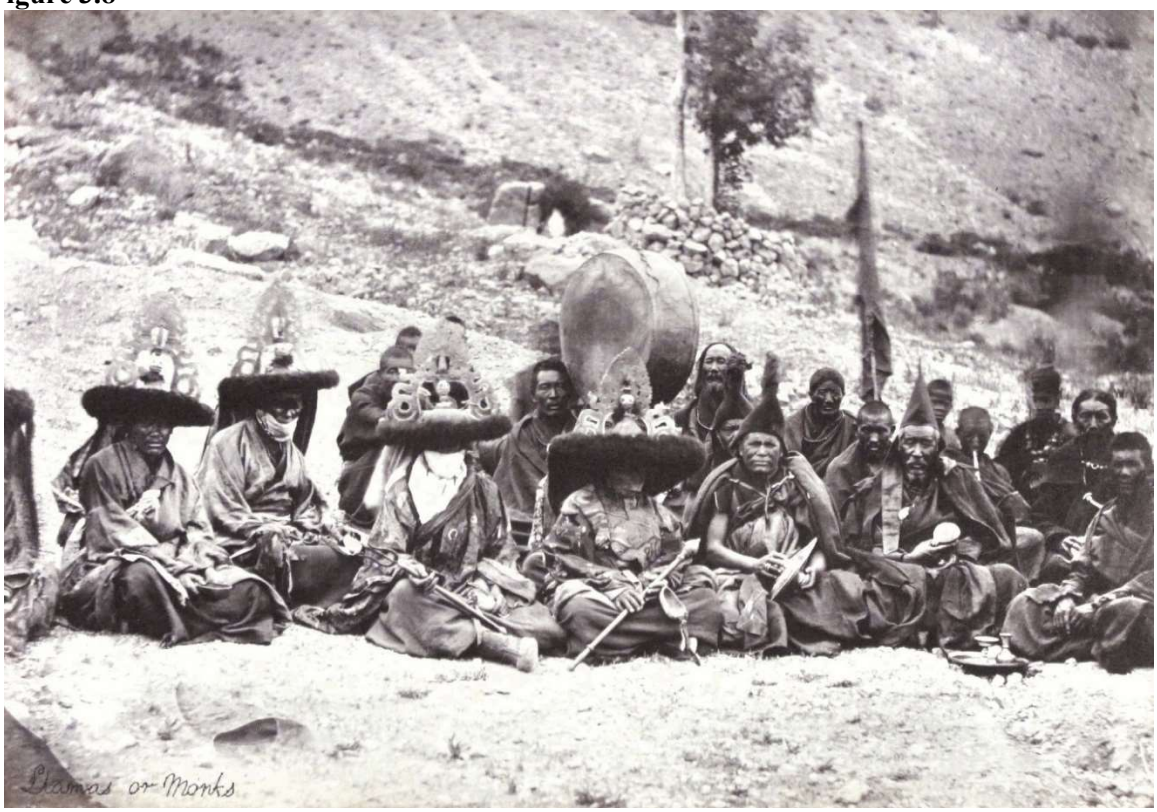
View of *"Dhunkur"* taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.7



"House in Spiti". One of the main households (*khang chen*) of the upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) at Dangkhar. Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.8



"Monks in full dress". Monastic community of Lagope Monastery in Dangkhar.
Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.9



"Monks in procession". Monastic community of Lagope Monastery in Dangkhar. Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.10



"Abbot of Dhunkur". Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.11



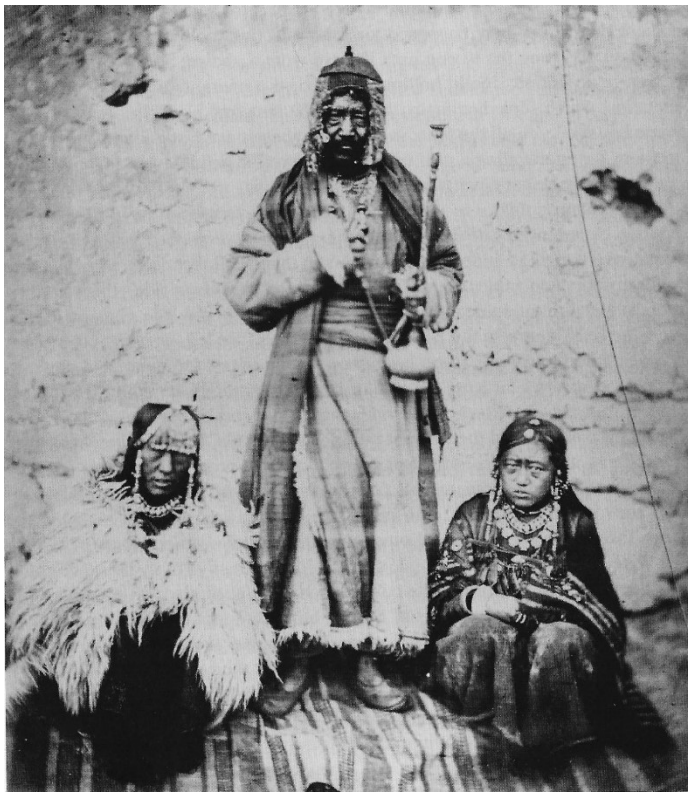
"The Nono [bsKal bzang]*, wife, and granddaughter"*.
Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.12



"The Nono [bsKal bzang]*, wife, and daughter"*.
Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.13



"The Nono [bsKal bzang]*, wife, and daughter"*.
Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.14



"A rich doctor, the Nono [bsKal bzang], his son [bsTan 'dzin rnam rgyal], and a poor monk".
Photo taken by Philip Henry Egerton (1824–1893) in 1863. After EGERTON 1864.

Figure 3.15



"The picturesque village of Dunkar, Spiti".
Photo taken by Samuel Bourne (1834–1912) in 1866, courtesy of the V&A Museum.

Figure 3.16



"The Spiti valley from the Dunkar, – evening".
Photo taken by Samuel Bourne (1834–1912) in 1866, courtesy of the V&A Museum.

Figure 3.17



"Dunkar Fort, with the Manirung Pass and range in the distance".
Photo taken by Samuel Bourne (1834–1912) in 1866, courtesy of the V&A Museum.

Figure 3.18



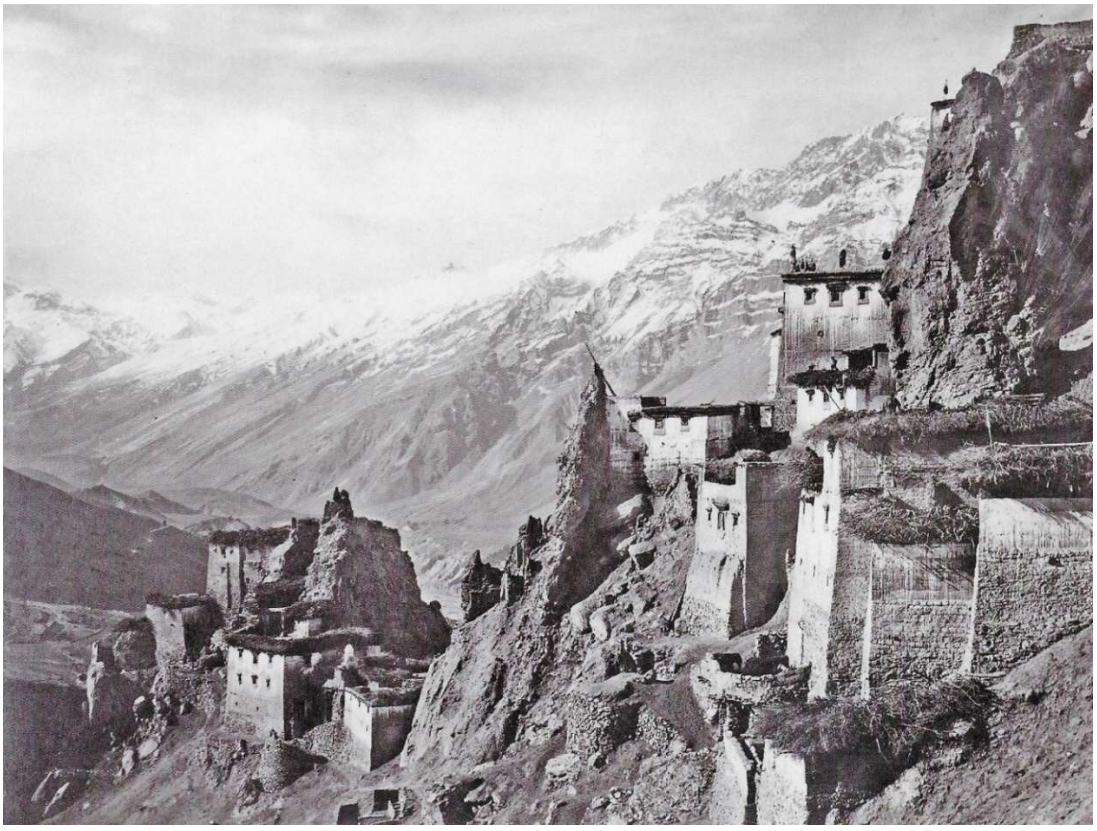
View of Dangkhar. Photo taken by Samuel Bourne in 1866, courtesy of the V&A Museum.

Figure 3.19



"Spiti. The Village of Dunkar, from the South". Photo taken by Frank Mason-Good (1839–1928) in 1869. Published by Francis Frith in 1870. After RYANER 2015.

Figure 3.20



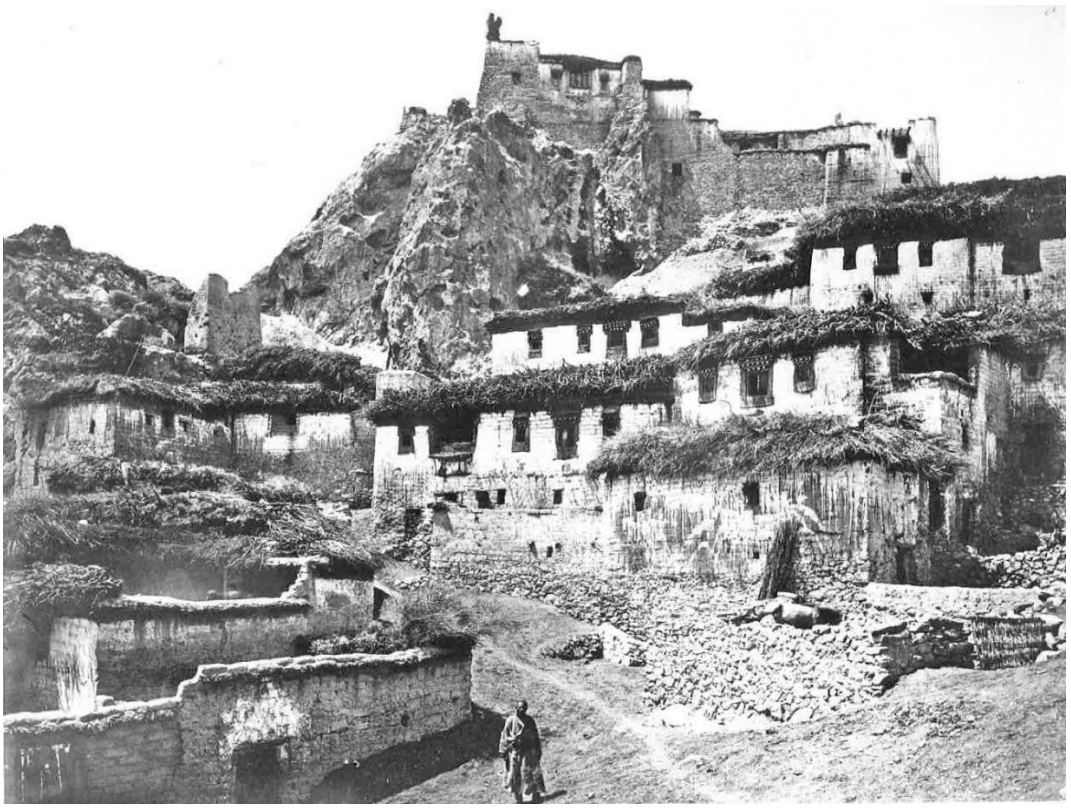
"Village of Dunkar, Spiti". Photo taken by Frank Mason-Good (1839–1928) in 1869. Published by Francis Frith in 1870. After RYANER 2015.

Figure 3.21



"Village of Dunkar, Spiti". Photo taken by Frank Mason-Good (1839–1928) in 1869. Image courtesy of Clark Worswick Collection. After RYANER 2015.

Figure 3.22



"View of Dunkar, Spiti". Houses from the upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) with district fort (*mkhar / rdzong*) on top of the hill. Photo taken by Frank Mason-Good (1839–1928) in 1869. Published by Francis Frith in 1870. After RYANER 2015.

Figure 3.23



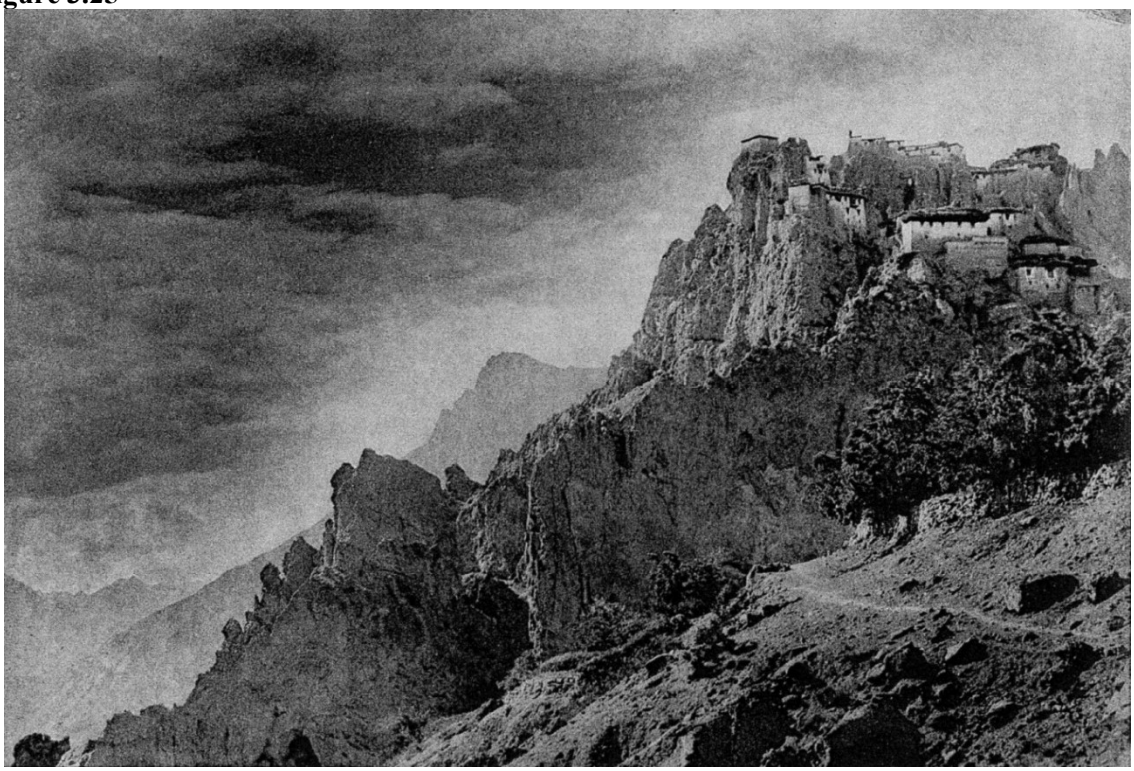
"Spiti. The Village of Dunkar, from the South with the Manirung Range and Pass. Elevation 18,600 ft". Photo taken by Frank Mason-Good (1839–1928) in 1869.
Published by Francis Frith in 1870. After RYANER 2015.

Figure 3.24



Wood engraving based on Frith's *Spiti.–View of Dankar* by illustrator T. Taylor and engraver Armand-Emile-Jean-Baptiste Kohl. Published in *A Universal Geography: the Earth and its Inhabitants* in 1883. After RECLUS 1883.

Figure 3.25



"Drangkhar, the capital of Spiti". Photo taken by Babu Pindi Lal during August Hermann Francke's expedition in 1909. After FRANCKE 1914.

Figure 3.26



View of Dangkhar. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912.
Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.27



View of Dangkhar. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912.
Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.28



View of Dangkhar. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912.
Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.29



View of Dangkhar. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912.
Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.30



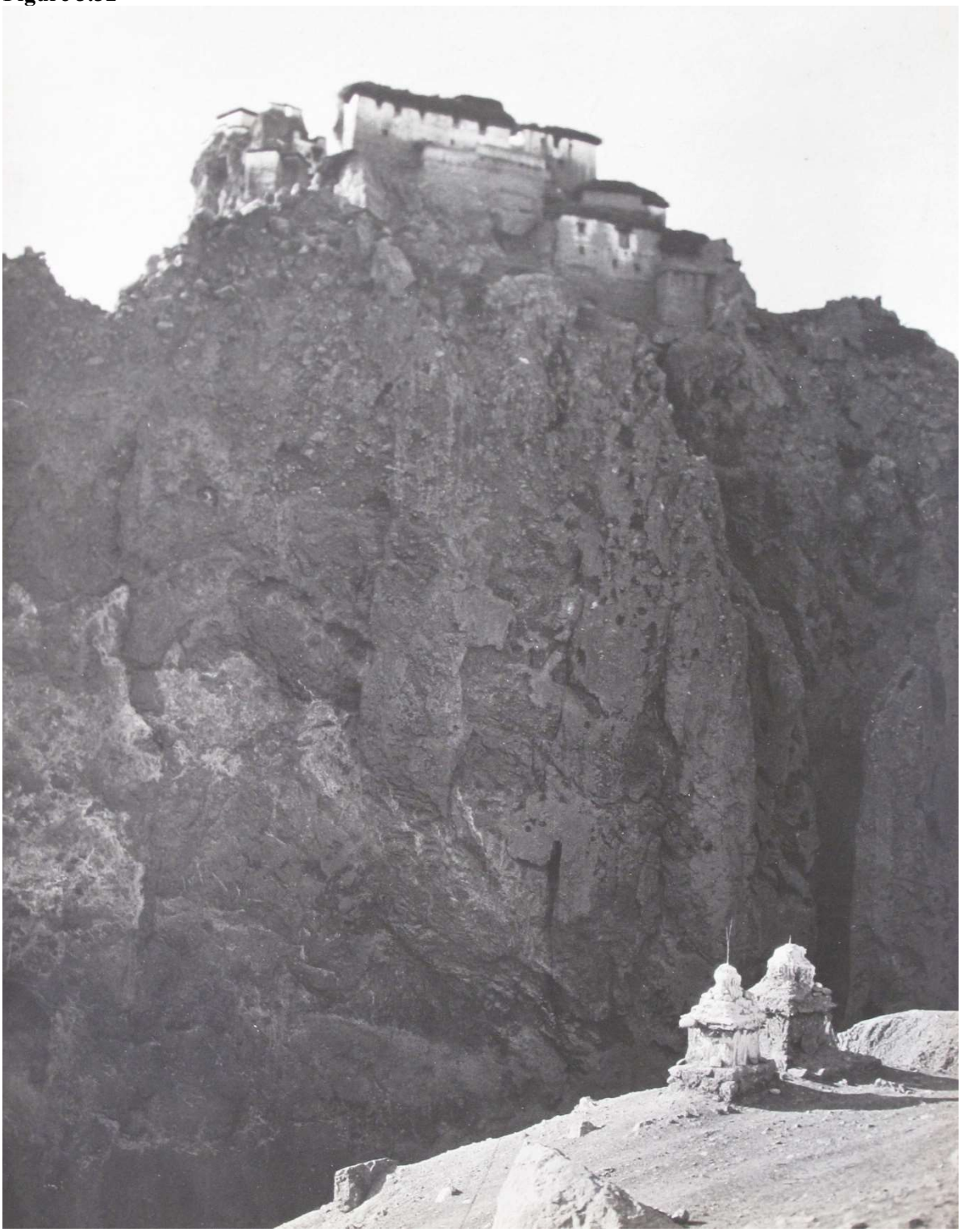
View of the Dangkhar settlement with its cultivated area and villagers. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912. Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.31



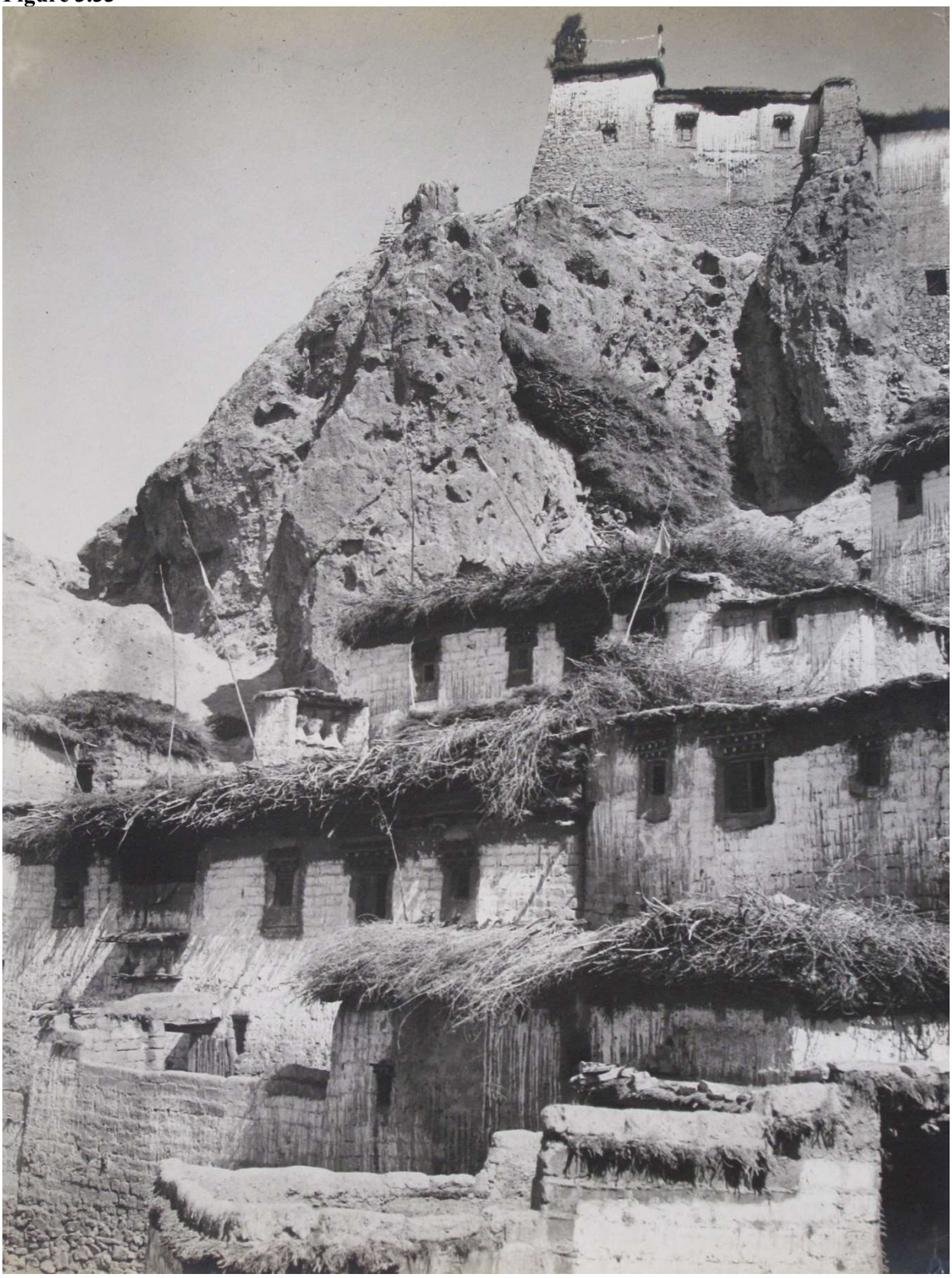
Two villagers leaning against a shrine with the Dangkhar cliffs at the back. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912. Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.32



View of the large lower stronghold (*mkhar 'og che*) from below with access road skirting the gully at the foot of the Dangkhar cliffs. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912.
Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.33



Some houses from the upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) with the western part of the district fort (*mkhar* / *rdzong*) on top of the hill. Photo taken by John Coldstream (1887–1954) in 1912. Photo courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.34



Panoramic view of the Dangkhar settlement. Photo taken by Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) between 1917 and 1924. Photo: D733/30, photo 1119/5 0009, courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.35



Panoramic view of the Spiti valley from the Dangkhar fort. Photo taken by Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) between 1917 and 1924. Photo: D733/30, photo 1119/5 0008, courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.36



The house roofs of the upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) with the terraced fields of the Dangkhar settlement spreading towards the valley floor and the Spiti River.
Photo taken by Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) between 1917 and 1924. Photo: D733/30, photo 1119/4 0008, courtesy of the British Library Board.

Figure 3.37



View of the monastic complex at Dangkhar with some houses from the large lower stronghold (*mkhar 'og che*) in the lower left corner.
Photo taken by Henry Lee Shuttleworth (1882–1960) between 1917 and 1924. Photo courtesy of the Ancient Iran and India Trust, Cambridge.

Figure 3.38



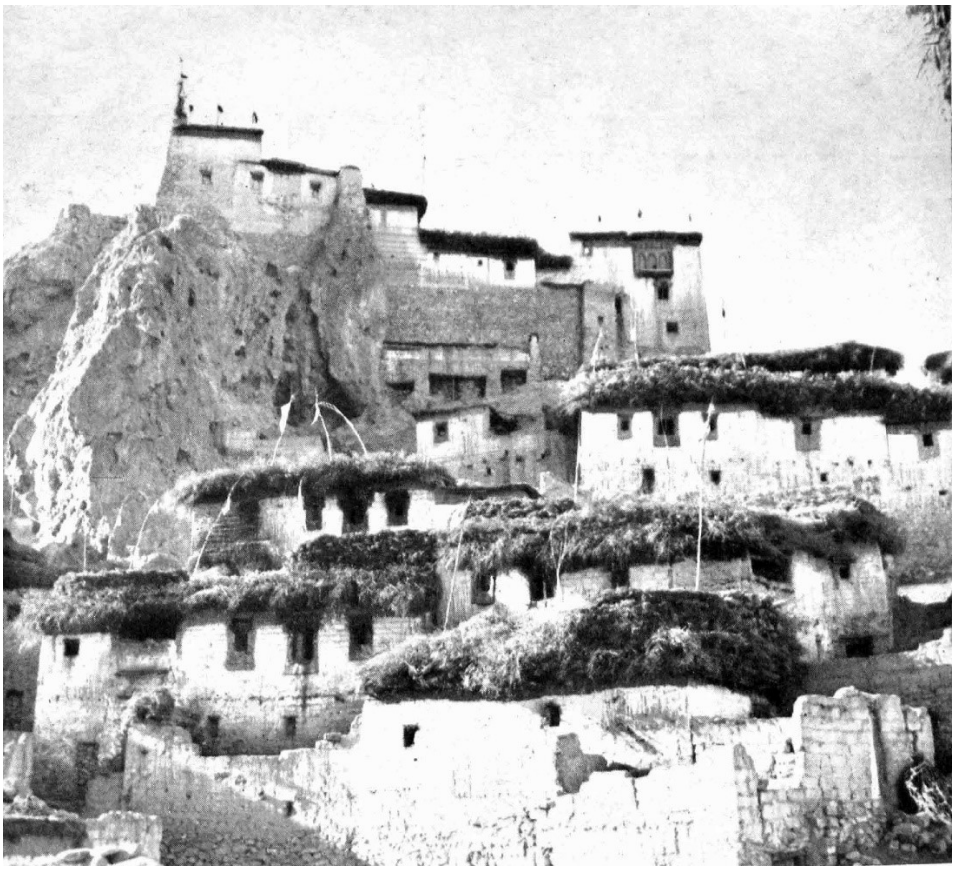
View of Dangkhar taken by Eugenio Ghersi during Giuseppe Tucci's expedition in 1933. After BELLATALLA et al. 2008.

Figure 3.39



Small alley in the upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) of Dangkhar. Photo taken by Eugenio Ghersi during Giuseppe Tucci's expedition in 1933. After BELLATALLA 2016.

Figure 3.40



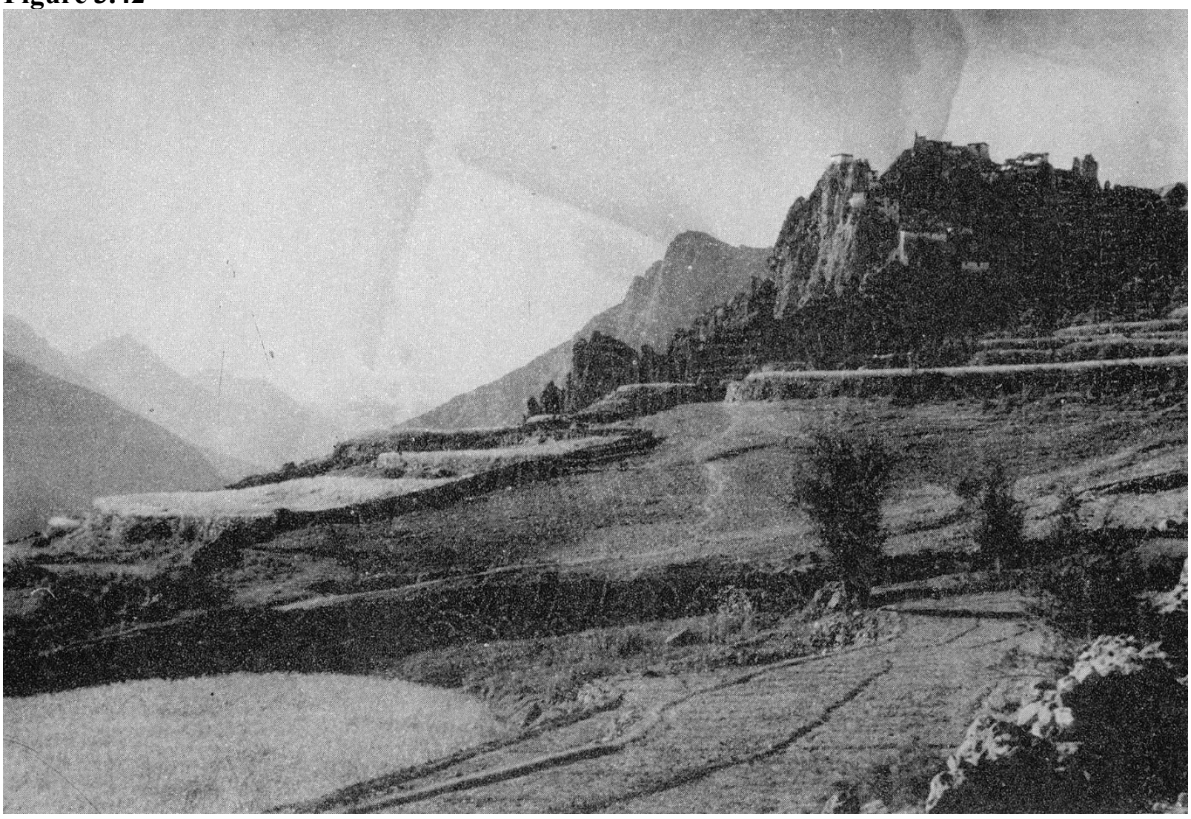
"Dankhar, old capital of Spiti". Upper stronghold (*mkhar stod*) and district fort (*mkhar* / *rdzong*).
Photo taken by David L. Snellgrove (1920–2016) in 1953/54. After SNELLGROVE 1957.

Figure 3.41



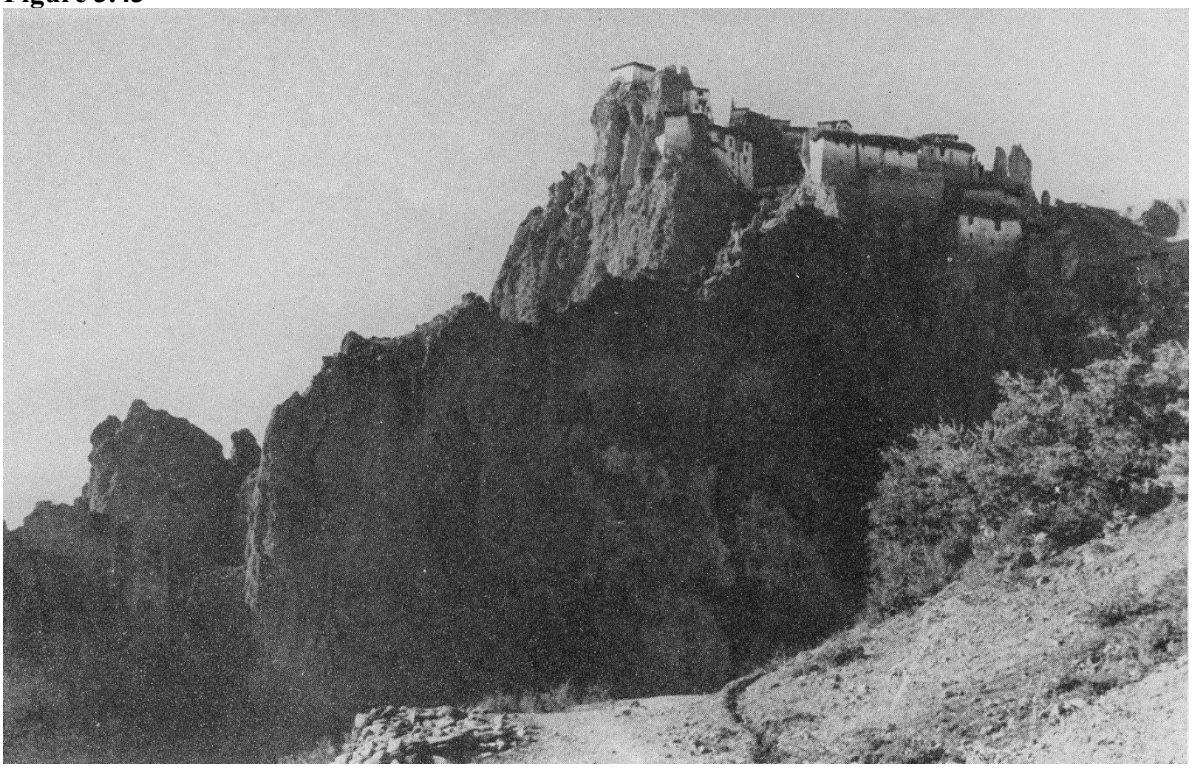
"Ridge leading up to Dankhar, which may be seen on the summit to the left".
Photo taken by David L. Snellgrove (1920–2016) in 1953/54. After SNELLGROVE 1957.

Figure 3.42



"Dhankar Village". Photo taken by Romi Khosla (b.1941) in 1968. After KHOSLA 1979.

Figure 3.43



"General view of Dhankar monastery and fort".
Photo taken by Romi Khosla (b.1941) in 1968. After KHOSLA 1979.

APPENDIX FOUR

Visual Documentation

Figure 4.1



Rock inscription from sNog sog in Ruthok containing the earliest known reference to the Spiti Valley.[1]
Photo: John V. Bellezza, 2011.

[1] After BELLEZZA 2017.

Figure 4.2



The Dangkhar settlement and the confluence of the Rivers Spiti and Pin. Photo: the author, 2008.

Figure 4.4



Depiction of Tabo's monastic compound (*chos 'khor*) and religious teaching, Mandala Temple, Tabo. Photo: Carmen Auer, 2010.

Figure 4.3



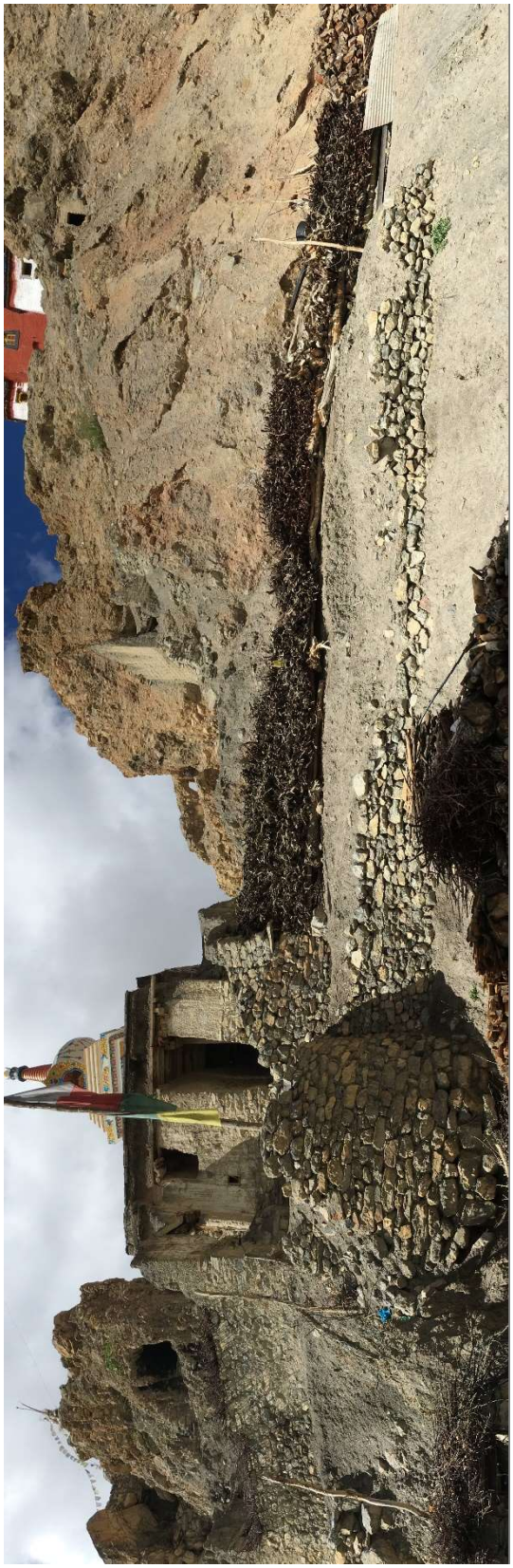
Portion of North wall murals with portrait of lHa dbang blo gros and depiction of Tabo's monastic compound (*chos 'khor*), Mandala Temple, Tabo.[2]

Photo: Luigi Fieni, 2010.

[2] After HELLER 2017.

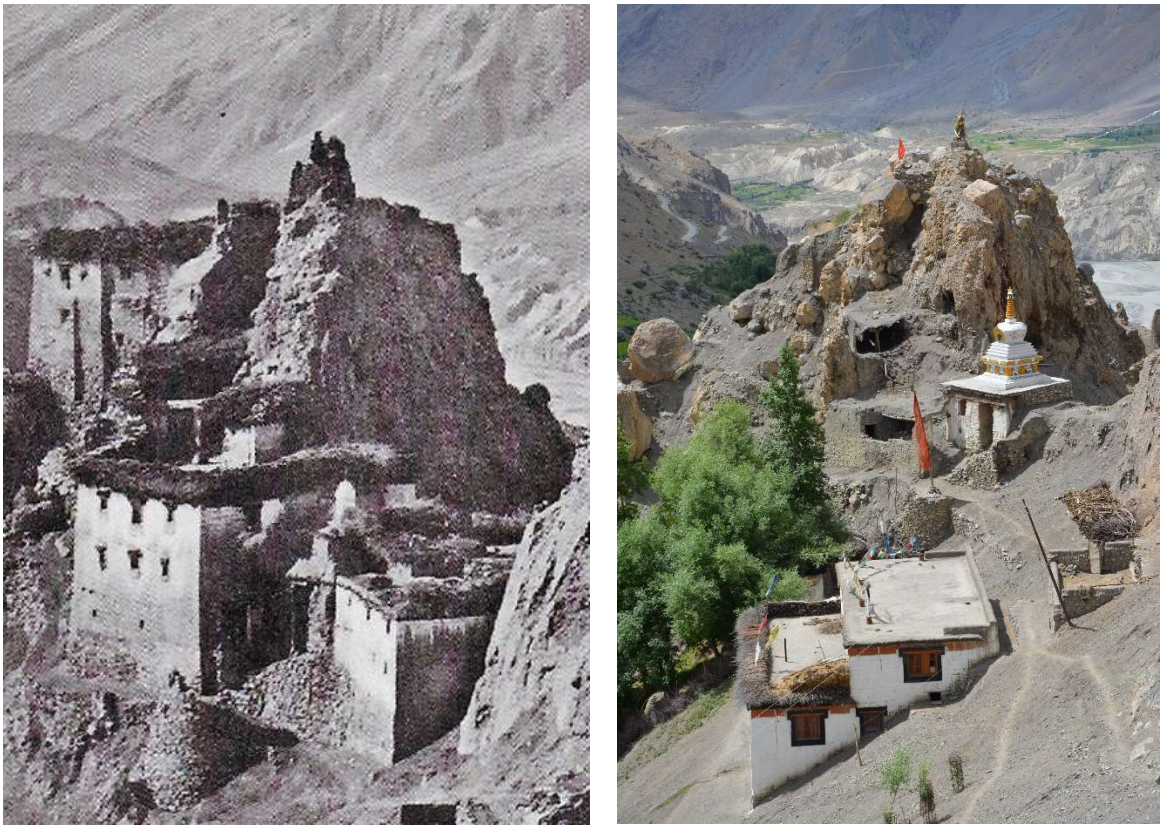
Figures 4.5 & 4.6





The main entrance gate. Left side: view from the South-West. Right side: view from the North-East. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figures 4.7 & 4.8



The main entrance gate in 1869 (left) and 2011 (right). Photos: Frank Mason-Good and Carmen Auer.

Figure 4.9



Close-up view of the main entrance gate, view from the North-East. Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.10



Leonine beam end. Detail of the main entrance gate, view from the North-east. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.11



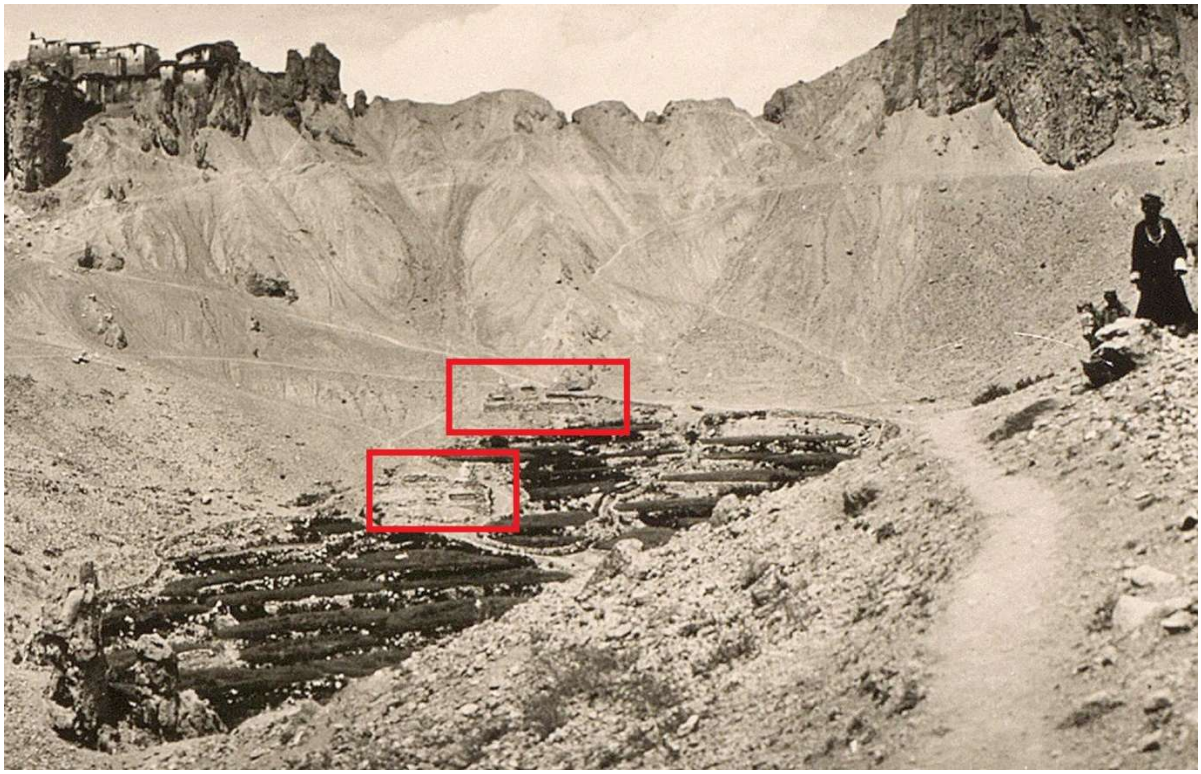
Representation of Four-armed Mahākāla, niche of the main entrance gate. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.12



Depiction of Raven-faced Mahākāla and other guardian deities, niche of the main entrance gate.
Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.13



Stūpa monuments and religious structures marking the access to the residential area from the North-East. Photo: Henry L. Shuttleworth, *c.*1918-24.

Figure 4.14



Remains and current location of *stūpa* monuments and religious structures. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.15



Old *stūpa* monument marking the access to the settlement from the East. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.16



Remains of possible defensive structures, upper part of the settlement. Photo: Frank Mason-Good, 1869.

Figure 4.17



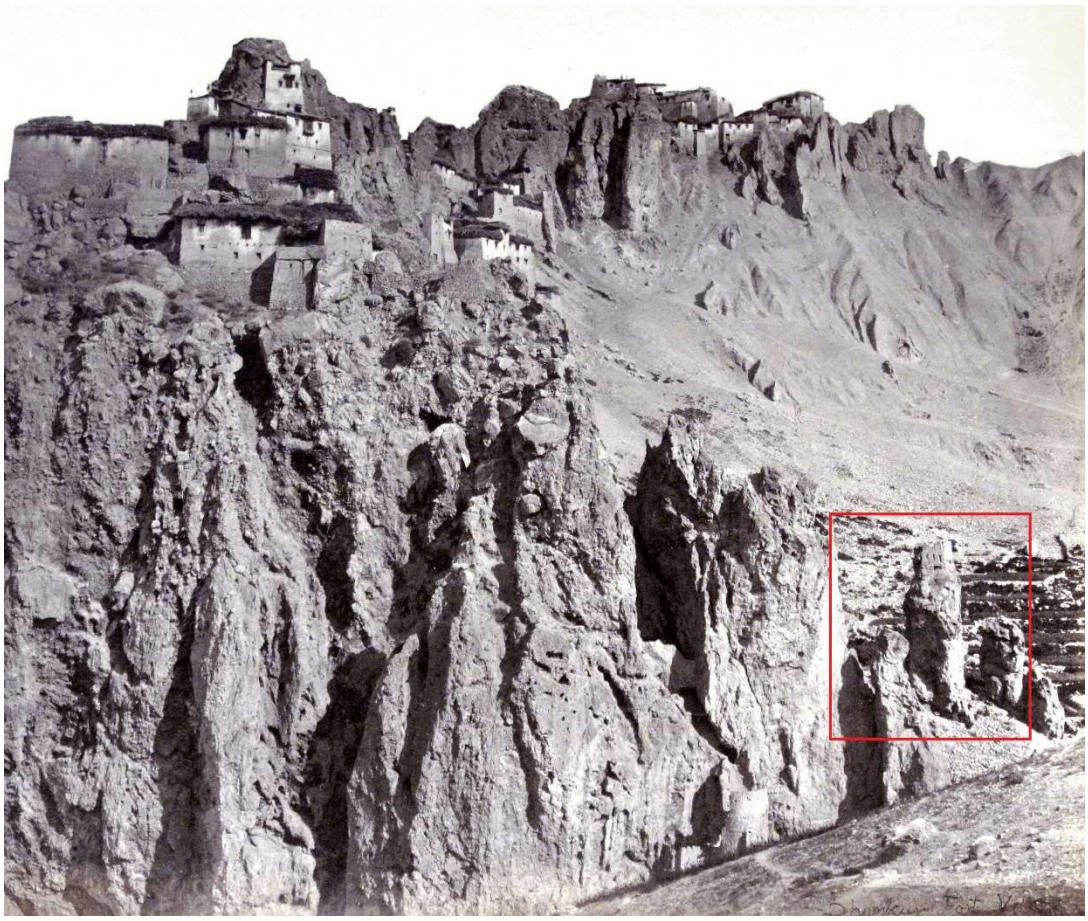
Storage room formerly known as the ‘Red Temple’ (*lha khang dmar po*). The right side of the building corresponds to the architectural feature in a red square (fig. 4.16). Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.18



Remains of stone course and mud-brick wall from a watch tower (*skyong ra*) situated atop an earth pillar. Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.19





Remains of a watch tower (*skyong ra*) equipped with loopholes protecting the lower part of the residential area. Photo: Philip H. Egerton, 1863.

Figure 4.20



View of the district fort with its abandoned monastic quarters on top of the 'upper stronghold' (*mkhar stod*). Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.21



The district fort on top of the Dangkhar settlement. Photo: Samuel Bourne, 1866.

Figure 4.22



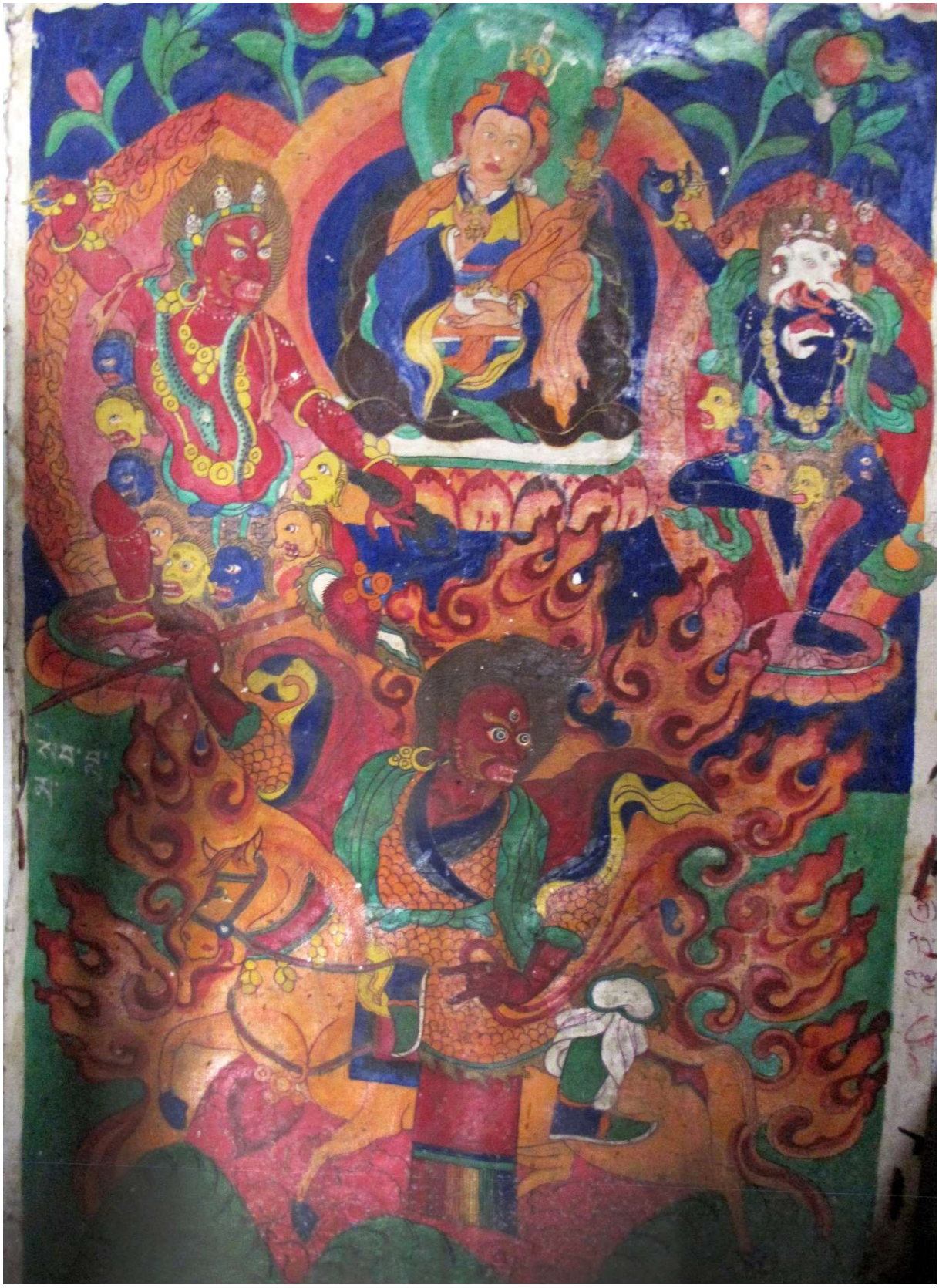
The altar-shrines (*lha tho*) of Seb lha/bla ma and Jo dar on top of the district fort.
Photo: Frank Mason-Good, 1869.

Figure 4.23



The altar-shrines (*lha tho*) of Seb lha/bla ma and Jo dar on top of the district fort.
Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.24



The warlike mountain god and territorial deity Seb lha/bla ma, painting, chapel of the district fort. Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.25



The dry banks of the Dangkhar Lake were used as a horse race track in the 19th century. Spectators would sit against the low stone wall visible in the background to watch the events.
Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.26



Location of the former 'Nono's prison cell' inside a shaft of the Dangkhar cliffs. Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.27



The main religious image (*rten gtso*) of Dangkhar Tashi Chöling. Dated to 712 CE by inscription, this Buddha image from Gilgit was offered to the royal monk and translator Zhi ba ’od (1016–1111) after his ordination in 1056. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.28



Cave hermitage of Chango with series of *stūpa* monuments built on the roof. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.29



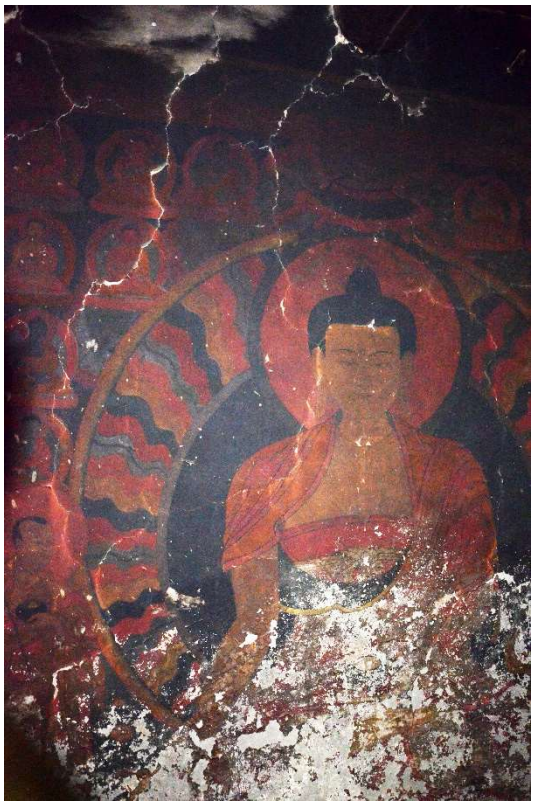
The *stūpa* room above the assembly hall with its skylight in the foreground. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.30



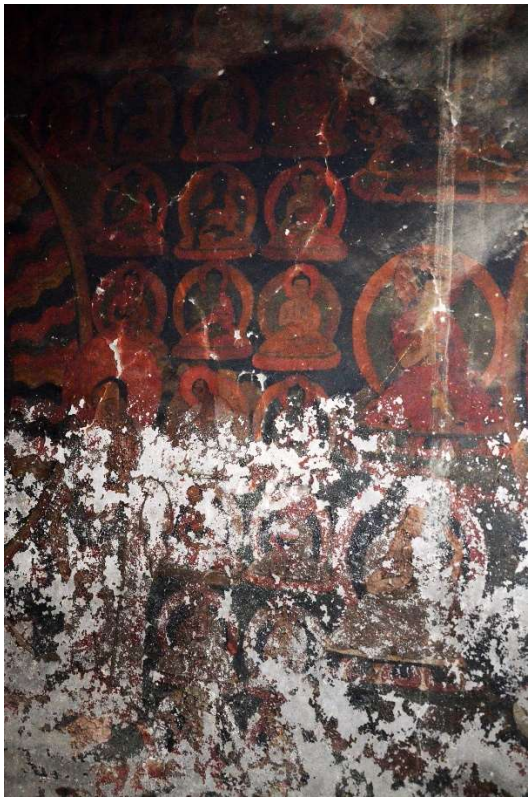
Guardian kings–Virūpākṣa and Virūḍhaka–above the door of the assembly hall. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.31



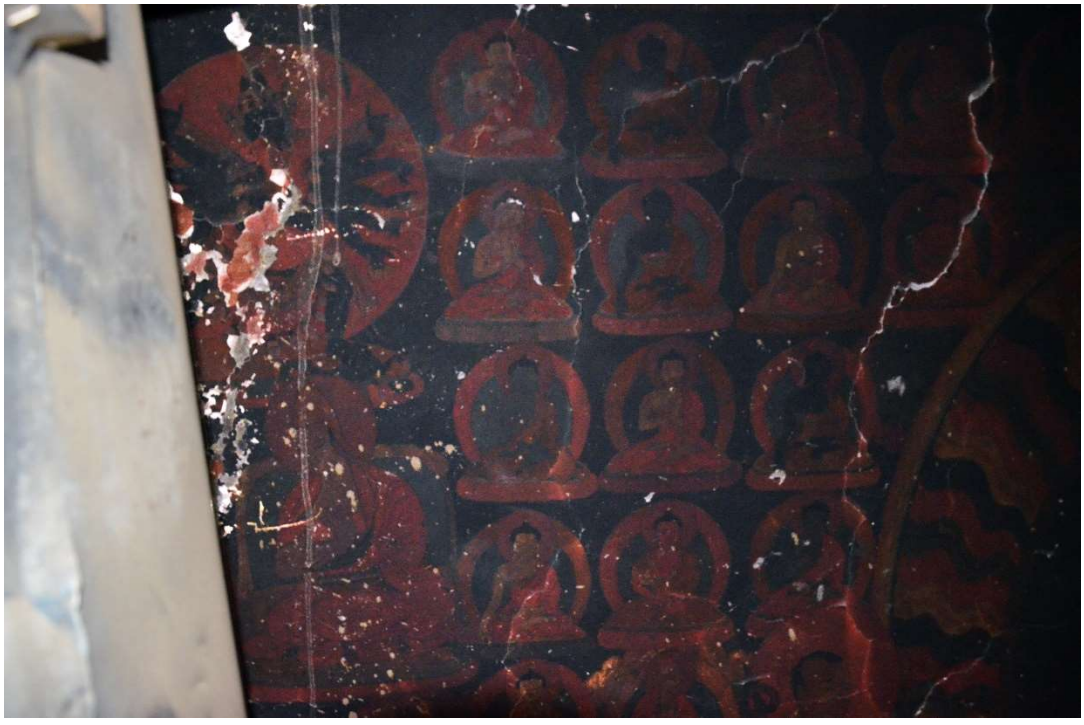
Buddha Śākyamuni, main wall of the assembly hall. Photo: Carmen Auer, 2011.

Figure 4.32



Nāgārjuna and other figures on the main wall of the assembly hall. Photo: Carmen Auer, 2011.

Figure 4.33



Depiction of Cakrasaṃvara and other figures, upper left corner of the main wall of the assembly hall. Photo: Carmen Auer, 2011.

Figure 4.34



Buddha Amitābha flanked by bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi-Mahāsthāmaprāpta, north-east wall of the assembly hall. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.35



Depiction of Green Tārā with portraits of Atiśa (left) and ’Brom ston pa (right) above her head. Photo: the author, 2010.

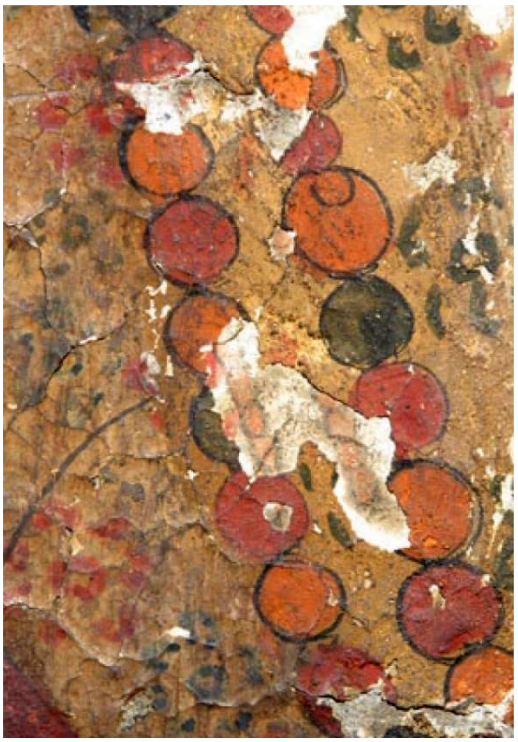
Figure 4.36



Guru Rinpoche and his eight emanations, thangka from Dangkhar, 16th-17th centuries, MNAO, inv. 1000/833.[3]

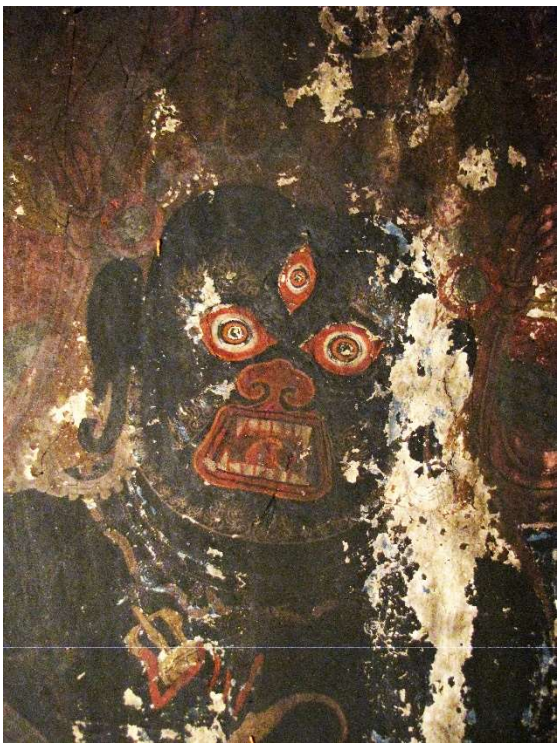
[3] After KLIMBURG-SALTER 2015: 132–133.

Figure 4.37



Detail of Green Tārā's necklace, first and second paint layer.[4]
Photo: Maria Gruber and Kathrin Schmidt, 2011.

Figure 4.38



Detail of Six-armed Mahākāla, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: the author, 2011.

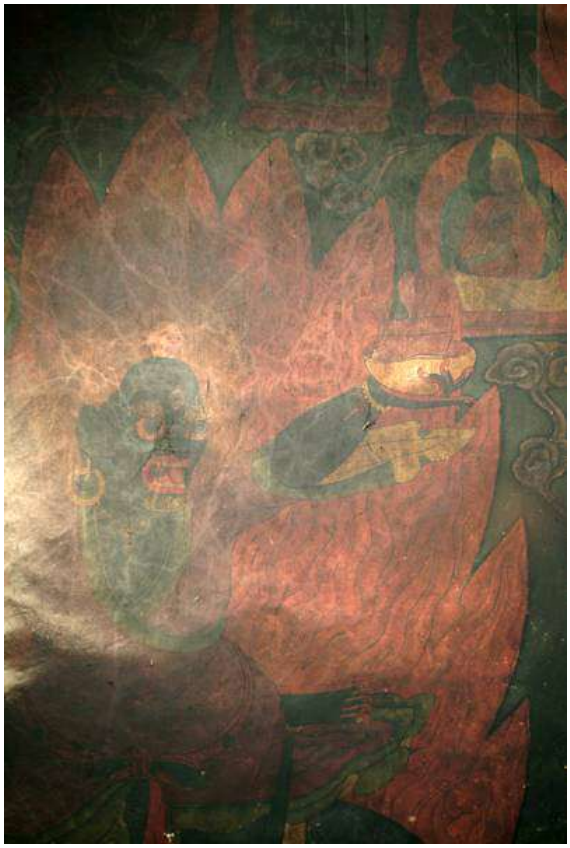
[4] After NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013: 254.

Figure 4.39



Depiction of Six-armed Mahākāla from the Protectors' Chapel. Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.40



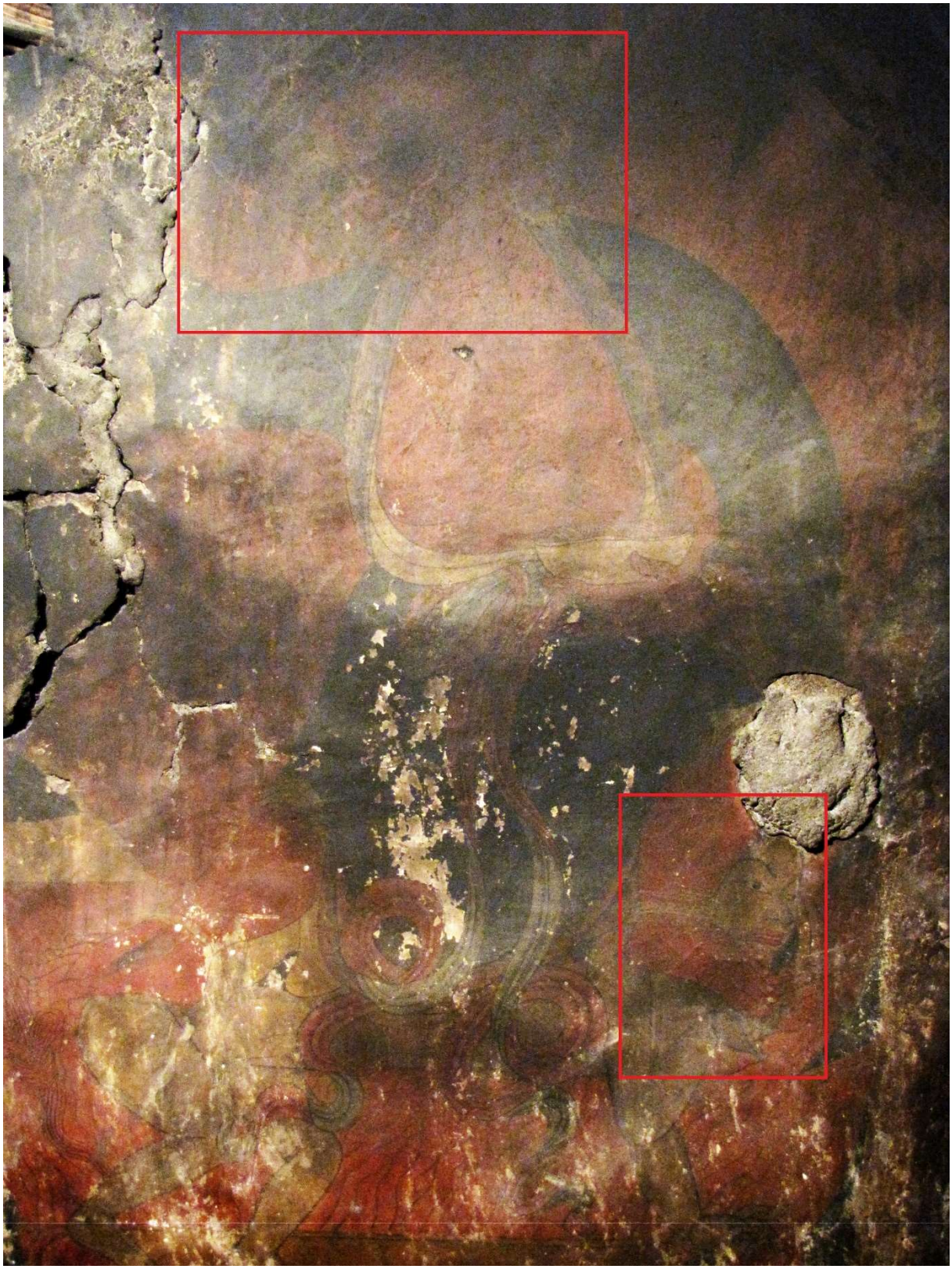
Depiction of Kṣetrapāla, Protectors' Chapel.
Photo: Rob Linrothe, Western Himalaya Archive Vienna (WHAV), 2006.

Figure 4.41



Kṣetrapāla's mount, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.42



Depiction of Jinamitra, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.43 and 4.44



Details of Jinamitra as framed in red in fig. 4.42. Photos: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.45



Depiction of White Mahākāla, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: Rob Linrothe, WHAV, 2006.

Figure 4.46



Representation of Yama Dharmarāja, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: Rob Linrothe, WHAV, 2006.

Figure 4.47



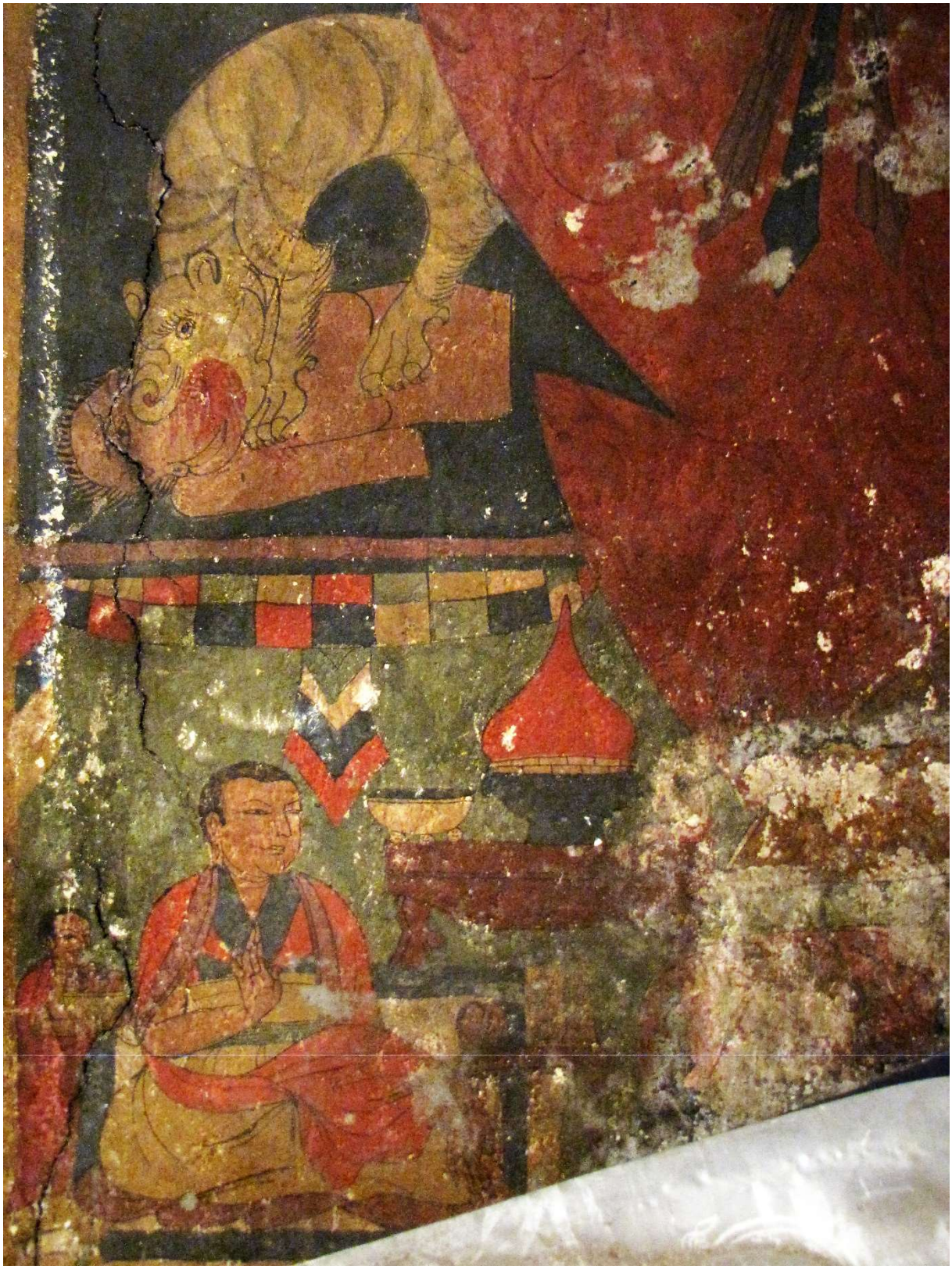
Depiction of Īrṣyāvajra Yamāntaka, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: Rob Linrothe, WHAV, 2006.

Figure 4.48



Gelukpa lama with yellow paṇḍita hat and yellow winter overcoat. Photo: Rob Linrothe, WHAV, 2006.

Figure 4.49



Officiating lama at the foot of Six-armed Mahākāla, Protectors' Chapel. Photo: the author, 2011.

Figure 4.50



Depiction of Six-armed Mahākāla, rGya ’phags pa temple, Nako.[5] Photo: John Henry Rice, 2015.

[5] After KERIN 2015: pl.6.

Figure 4.51



Depiction of Six-armed Mahākāla, upper temple, Dangkhar.[6] Photo: Peter Van Ham, 1997.

[6] After VAN HAM & STIRN 1997: 113.

Figure 4.52



Dried-brick entrance of a cavity situated in the Dangkhar cliffs. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.53



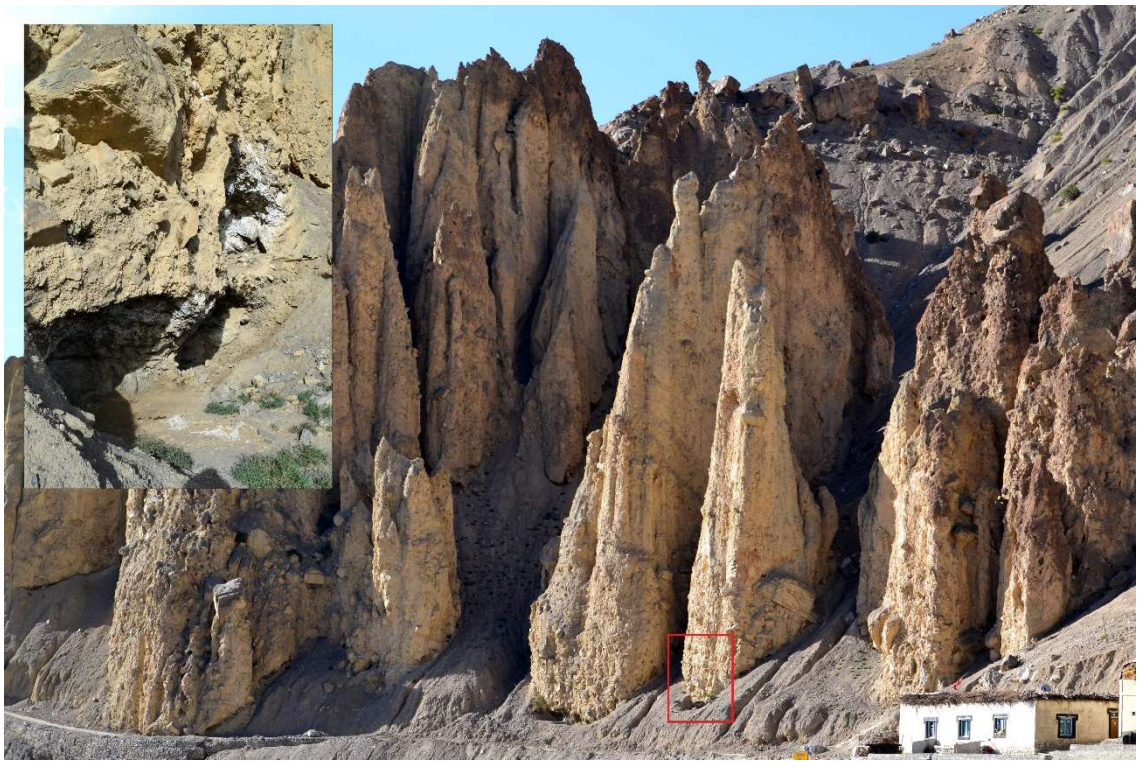
Beam holes and remnants of caves and cavities as part of a former building. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.54



Remnants of two large caves at the north-western corner of the monastery. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.55



Former meditation cave of Ra brag phug, Dangkhar. Photos: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.56



Deserted cave hermitage by the Spiti River on the Dangkhar-Tabo road. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.57



The upper temple of the Dangkhar settlement. Photo: the author, 2014.

Figure 4.58



Portrait of Atiśa Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (982–1054), upper temple, Dangkhar. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.59



Portrait of Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), upper temple, Dangkhar. Photo: the author, 2010.

Figure 4.60 and 4.61



Portraits of Mar pa (1012–1097) and Mi la ras pa (1040–1123). Photo: the author, 2018.



Portraits of sGam po pa (1079–1153) and Ras chung pa (1085–1161). Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.62



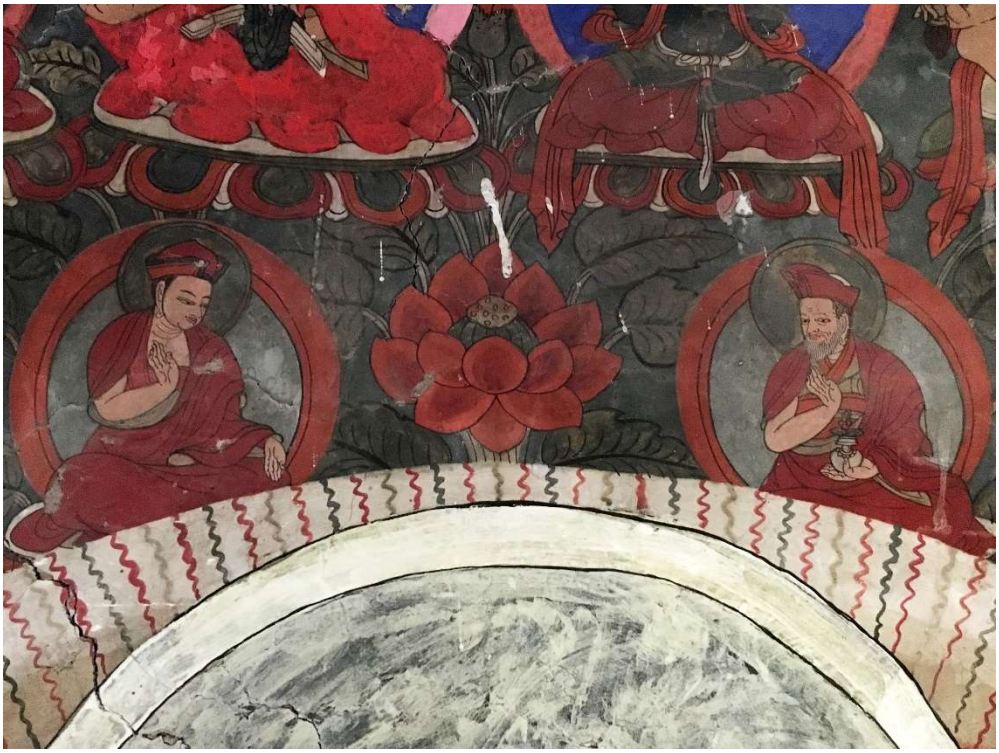
Portraits of Phag mo gru pa (1100–1170) and gLing chen ras pa (1128–1188). Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.63



Two unidentified Drukpa lamas. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.64



Two unidentified Drukpa lamas. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.65



Depiction of sTag tshang ras pa (1574–1651). Photo: the author, 2018.

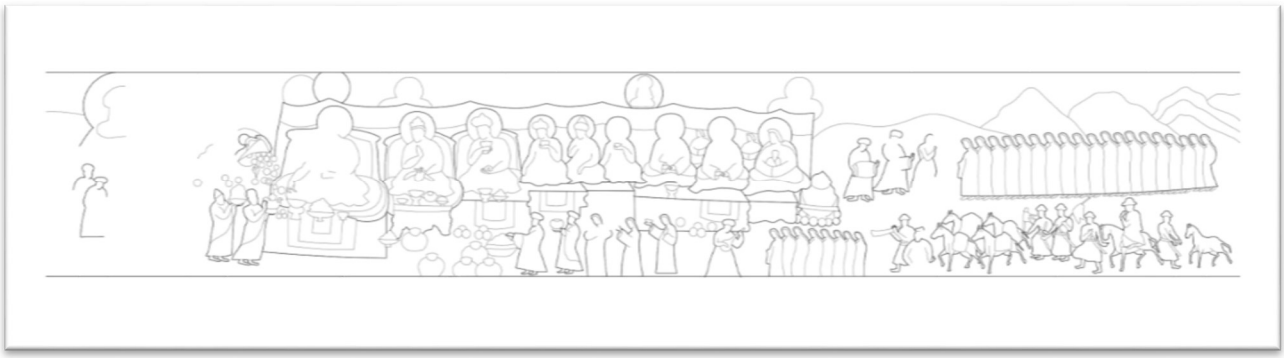
Figure 4.66



Portrait of sTag tshang ras pa (1574–1651) with attendant. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.67





The consecration and royal banquet scene.[7] Photo and outline: TU Graz, 2013.

[7] After LAURENT 2014.

Figure 4.68



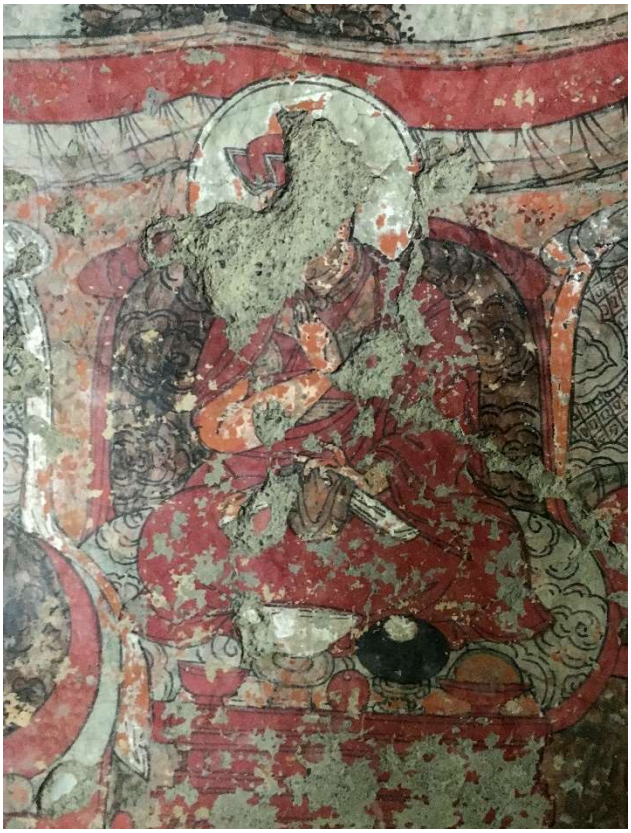
Detail of the consecration and royal drinking scene. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.69



The royal donor followed by his court spiritual adviser and retinue. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.70



A Drukpa lama and court spiritual adviser. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.71



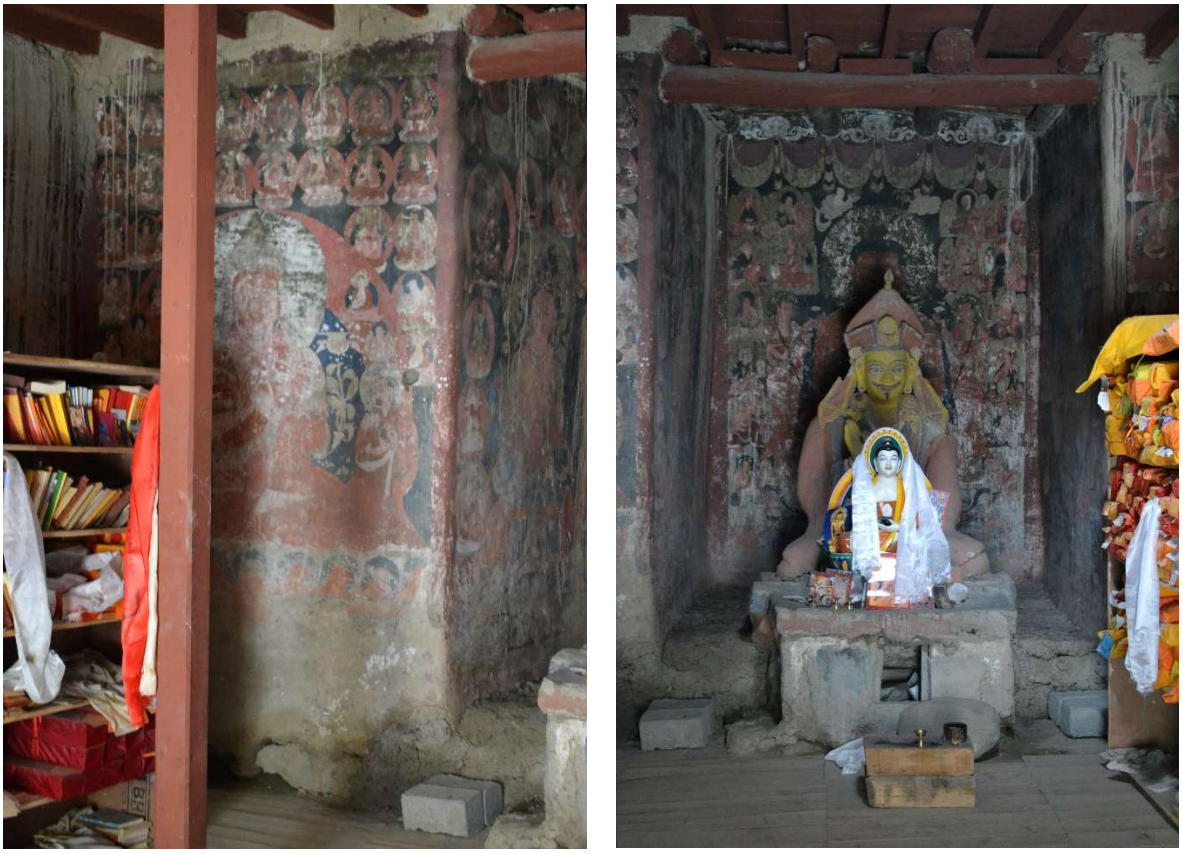
Foot soldiers leading a convoy of mules. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.72



Autochthonous warrior deities of West Tibet (*mes ba'u*) and a lady with infant, details of the equestrian scene. Photo: the author, 2018.

Figure 4.73 and 4.74



Interior views of the Gelukpa temple at Nadang with murals depicting Tsong kha pa and disciples (left). Photos: the author, 2016.

Figure 4.75



Graffito in Shahmukhi script, upper temple, Dangkhar. Photo: the author, 2010.

The documents presented in this appendix are all, without exception, records of donation. They are the public or semi-public compilations of meritorious deeds performed by patrons and benefactors for the sake of spiritual growth. These acts of religious piety could consist of donations made in kind to monastic communities; the commissioning of canonical manuscripts; or the offering of votive stone carvings. The documents of this appendix can thus be divided into two groups: stone inscriptions (SI) and donor prefaces (DP). Traditionally, stone inscriptions were deposited on *maṇi* walls, an architectural feature ubiquitous across the Tibetan Buddhist world.[1] In most instances, *maṇi* stones were carved with mantras, excerpts from Buddhist texts, or figurative representations. Occasionally, a donor inscription was placed at a prominent position on a *maṇi* wall and may thus offer the means to determine when and why the votive structure was established in the first place. What I call 'donor prefaces' refer on the other hand to donative records written on paper. These prefaces were intended to be inserted inside copies of canonical works produced at the request of local patrons, against some form of remuneration.[2]

The epigraphs and prefaces presented here conform to a model of written documents produced in Spiti, Zanskar, and Ladakh from at least the 13th century onwards.[3] Though they may vary in length, the structure of these donative records is in all respects identical, whether they are carved in stone or written on paper. They usually open with a religious eulogy and invocations (*mchod brjod*), followed by a cosmological and politico-religious narrative, then the donative section (*zhal 'debs kyi rnam pa*), and finally a dedication of merit and blessings (*bsngo smon*). These donative records also contain a number of recurring religious formulae, either in Sanskrit or in Tibetan (e.g. *maṅgalaṃ*, *dge'o*); cultural references and archaisms alluding to the time of the Tibetan empire (e.g. 'helmet' (*dbu rmog*) for political rule); and exclamatory interjections (e.g. *kye lags*, *e ma ho*). Among these features, religious formulae and exclamatory interjections are usually inserted at specific places in the text, and can help

[1] On *maṇi* walls, stone inscriptions, and epigraphy; LAURENT 2017b.
[2] For donor prefaces from Spiti and neighbouring regions not reproduced in this appendix; see TAUSCHER 1999; DE ROSSI FILIBECK 2007.
[3] LAURENT 2017b: 253.

to identify the major sections of these documents. Finally, the texts of these donative records tend to be loosely versified, with a distinct preference for lines of nine syllables. This can be helpful when attempting to reconstruct or interpret lacunae or syntactic ambiguities.

The stone inscriptions and donor prefaces presented here were all composed in Spiti. As such, they are among the most reliable sources we have for a regional study of Spiti's political, religious, and social history. Numerous references to clerics, monarchs, officials, places and institutions help to map the religious landscape of the region as much as they shed light on the major political forces of the time. They often illustrate, for example, the importance of the Gelukpa tradition in Spiti through praises addressed to Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) and his disciples. Likewise, the documents typically relate the wider geo-political order within which the Spiti Valley and its inhabitants were located–often referring to the kingdoms of Guge or Ladakh. Based on internal evidence, these documents can generally be dated to the period ranging from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

Among the following donative records, the stones inscriptions from Dangkhar (SI1), Lower Mani (SI2), Mani (SI3), and Nadang (SI4) were first published by the present author in 2017.[4] The translation of these texts has been slightly revised for the present edition and their analysis integrated into the main body of the work. As for the documents written on paper, Elena De Rossi Filibeck took an early interest in donor prefaces from the Western Himalayas, benefitting from the Tucci archives in Rome.[5] In 2001, she published the donor preface from Tabo (DP1) which constitutes the earliest document of this collection.[6] The importance of this Tabo preface for the history of Dangkhar and Western Tibet demanded that its text be reproduced here and its translation partially amended. The so-called *Register from the Rangrik Region* (DP2), on the other hand, is the latest donor preface we have for the period prior to the annexation of Spiti by British India.[7] The study and translation of this document by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub has been entirely revised. In the same vein, the donor preface from Kyi (DP3) published by Lahuli researcher Tobdan in 2017, who produced a rather crude and

[4] LAURENT 2017b.
[5] DE ROSSI FILIBECK 2007.
[6] DE ROSSI FILIBECK 2001.
[7] SCHERRER-SCHAUB 2013.

incomplete translation of the text, deserved to be reproduced and properly studied for the purpose of this thesis.[8] As for the donor preface from Dangkhar (DP4), it is unfortunately incomplete.

The editorial conventions for the presentation of these Tibetan documents have been kept relatively simple. All donor records are presented in normalised transliteration with emendations given in square brackets, while abbreviations (*bsdus yig*, *bskungs yig*; e.g. *bkris* for *bkra shis*) and ligatures (e.g. *thuT* for *thugs*) are given in parentheses. This approach has the merit of simplicity and allows the reader to follow the Tibetan texts without an excessive number of additional signs and intercalated information. Experts used to more elaborate philological conventions, for their part, will still be able to identify corrected words or passages and can refer to the original documents which have been reproduced in facsimile. Notes and commentaries are given at the end of each translation when necessary. However, the most salient features of these donative records are discussed in the main volume of this dissertation and will therefore not be addressed again here.

Conventions for the presentation of Tibetan text

(…) lacunae in the text
[ ] emendations
( ) normalised rendering of ligatures and abbreviated spellings
* major insertions by scribes

[8] TOBDAN 2017.

SI1 – Stone Inscription from Dangkhar

Handwritten copy on paper
Date: *c.*1630–1642
Script: *dbu can*
Lines: 14

Normalised Transliteration

[1] // Oṃ bde legs su gyur cig / phyag stong [2] 'khor lo sgyur ba'i rgyal po stong / spyan stong skal pa bzang po'i [3] sangs rgyas stong / gang la gang ['dul] de la de[r] ston pa'i [/] btsun [pa] [4] spyan ras gzigs la phyag 'tshal lo / kyee // seng ge kha 'bab [5] [rgy]ug pa'i g.yas phyogs na [/] sa 'bur du thon pa'i ble chen dpal [6] [m]kha[r] rtser [/] chos rgyal seng ge rnam rgyal [dbu] [r]mog mtho gyur cig // [7] kyee // de yi chab srid spi ti grang khar rtser [/] ga ga tshe ring rna[m] rgyal [8] sku tshe [brtan] gyur cig // kyee / yab mes khung[s] [b]tsun par ca blon [9] gyi [b]rgyud / yon gyi bdag po blon po tshe ring (bkra shis) kyis rgyal [10] blon rnam kyi [dbu] [r]mog [m]tho phyir du / [g]sung [m]chog yi ge drug ma [11] nyis [b]rgya [rdzogs] [b]sags pa'i don can mdzad pa khong la [b]stod / [12] [gd]ung [b]rgyud dri med 'od [g]sal lha nas [mche]d yon gyi bdag mo [13] jo co 'dzoms lags kyis / mi zas la lha yi bdu[d] rtsir [14] sbyar / mchod gnas [m]nyes par byed pa [e] ma ho

Translation

[1-4] Oṃ. May this be auspicious! I bow down to the Venerable Avalokiteśvara who has a thousand hands like a thousand Universal Monarchs; who has a thousand eyes like the thousand Buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon; and who displays whatever is necessary to tame and guide each and every one.

[4-6] Hail! May the helmet of the Dharma King Seng ge rnam rgyal be high on top of the Glorious Palace erected on the promontory of the Great [capital of] Leh on the right side of the flowing Indus River.

[7-8] Hail! At the hilltop of Grang khar in his dominion of sPi ti, may Ga ga Tshe ring rnam rgyal enjoy a long life.

[8-14] Hail! The patron [and] minister Tshe ring bkra shis, whose noble ancestry is the minister family of Par ca, is praised for having accomplished the deed of completing two hundred of the supreme six-syllable mantra for the sake of holding high the helmet of the king and the ministers. [His] relative is from the immaculate lineage of 'Od gsal lha. The patron, Lady Jo co 'Dzoms lags, supplied sustenance, [like] a divine nectar, to the people, delighting those receiving the offerings. How wonderful!

Commentary

Inscription SI1 was recorded by Shuttleworth at Dangkhar in July 1918. The copy of the text indicates that it was carved on a large green blackish stone of approximately 18 by 13 inches (45.7x33cm), together with an image of Vajrapāṇi. Shuttleworth further explained that the epigraph was found in the small temple located on the roof of the district fort: "An inscribed votive stone tablet, found by the writer in 1918 in a small temple on the roof of Drangkhar fort names both Seṅ-ge-rnam.rgyal and Ga-ga Tshe-riṅ-rnam.rgyal of the family of Par-cha Blon-po (minister), who was apparently the ruler of Spiti under this king of Leh. The king's name also occurs in a book dedication sheet found at Drangkhar in 1908, and in a wall inscription in the small entrance shrine at Lha-lung, as well as in other inscriptions or documents of these parts".[9]

The carving of this donor inscription can be dated by internal evidence to the last decade of King Seng ge rnam rgyal's life (*c.*1590–1642), following the annexation of Spiti by Ladakh in 1630.

Notes

Line 7, *de yi chab srid spi ti*: the use of the possessive determiner 'his' (*de yi*) refers to King Seng ge rnam rgyal, the overlord of Spiti.

Line 13, *jo co*: affectionate term of address for a woman or a little girl in Spiti.

[9] LAURENT 2017b: 239–243; SHUTTLEWORTH MssD722/8.

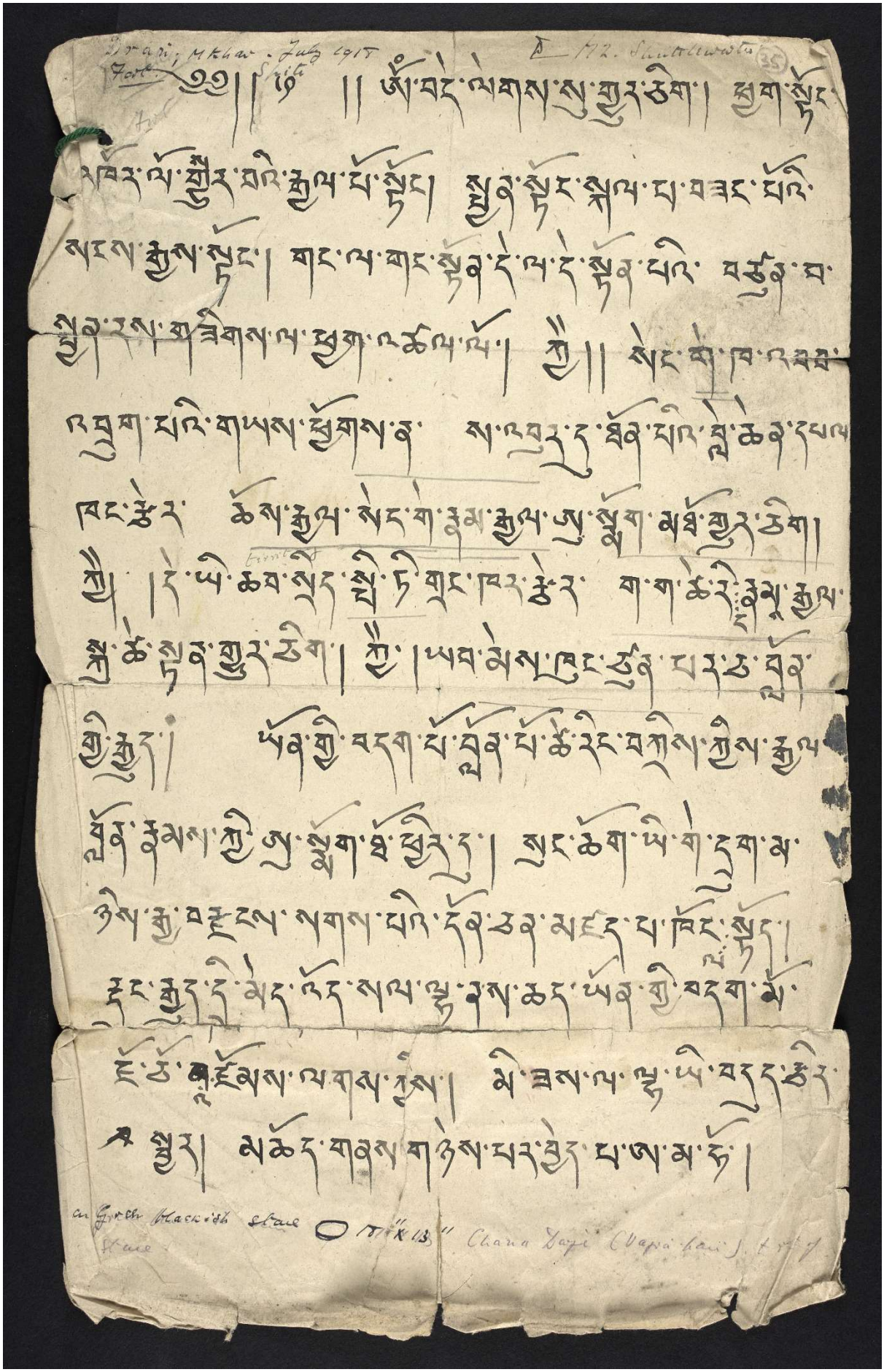


Photo: MssEur D722/4-12 f35r © British Library Board

SI2 – Stone Inscription from Lower Mani

Handwritten copy on paper
Date: *c.*1694–1738
Script: *dbu can*
Lines: 9

Normalised Transliteration

[1] // Oṃ [swa] sti // bde l[e]gs su gyur [c]ig [/] sku [g]su(m) [mng]on du [’]gyur pa(’i) ston pa [2] sangs rgyas dang [/] [s]de snod [g]su(m) [g]yi [’ju]g pa(’i) da(m) chos dang[/] [bslab] pa [g]su(m) [g]yi [’ju]g pa(’i) da(m) chos dang / [3] skyab[s] gnas dkon mchog [g]su(m) la gus phyag ’tshal / kye la(gs) gling [g]i [mchog] gyur l[h]o [y]i [4] ’dza(m) [b]u gling [/] dgra bcom gzhu(gs) gnas [ti] s[e] gangs kyi [m]gul [/] ma [d]ro[s] bzhugs [5] [g]nas ma [pham] [g.y]u [y]i mtsho [/] s[e]ng ge kha [’bab] [rgy]ug pa’i g.yas phyo(gs) ’dir [/] yul la [y]ar [6] phy(ogs) skyid pa’i ma nas ’dir / chos rgyal chen po nyi [ma] [r]na(m) rgyal [g]yi sku tshe [br]tan [zh]ing [ch]ab srid rgyas [7] gyur [c]ig / yon [g]yi bdag mo sgrol ma skyabs kyis / mgo ’[d]ren dpon po’i sku tshe [br]tan [8] phyir dang [/] drin chen pa m[a] thar la(m) [’gro] phyir du [/] m[i] ’gyur [r]do la ma Ni [b]rgya [r]tsa gcig sbyangs [9] (bkra shis) [/] phyi [y]i dgra ’dul nang gi [g]nyen [r]na(m)[s] skyongs [/]

Translation

[1-3] Oṃ svasti. May this be auspicious! I respectfully bow down to the three rare and sublime objects of refuge: to Lord Buddha in whom the three bodies are manifest; to the noble doctrine composed of the three scriptural collections; and to the the noble doctrine formed by the threefold training.

[3-7] Hail! The best continent is the southern Jambudvīpa. The snowy hillsides of Mt. Kailash are the dwelling place of foe destroyers. The tepid abode is Lake Manasarovar. On the right side of the flowing Indus River, up in the hinterland, is the charming [village] of Ma nas. May the great Dharma King Nyi ma rnam rgyal live long and his dominion thrive!

[7-9] The patron, Lady sGrol ma skyabs, practised purification [and had] a hundred *maṇi* on immutable stones [inscribed] for the long life of the leader [and] lord, [and for her] loving and kind parents to move along the path of liberation. May this be auspicious! May external enemies be subjugated and family members be protected!

Commentary

Captured on paper by Shuttleworth, presumably in 1918, the copy of SI2 indicates that the inscription was engraved on a white stone adorned with a representation of Padmasambhava.[10]

The present donor inscription can be dated to the reign of the King of Ladakh, Nyi ma rnam rgyal (r. *c.* 1694–1738).

The opening invocation (*mchod brjod*) addressed to the three jewels could have been miscopied by Shuttleworth as it omits a reference to the spiritual community (*dge 'dun*; *saṃgha*) while praising the noble doctrine twice. A comparison with the same opening invocations recorded in the donor prefaces published by Tobdan and De Rossi Filibeck shows that the third line should read "the threefold training embellishes the monastic community".[11]

Notes

Line 1, *sku gsum*: the 'three bodies' (*trikāya*) are the 'truth body' (*dharmakāya),* the 'complete enjoyment body' (*saṃbhogakāya*), and the 'emanation body' (*nirmāṇakāya*).

Line 2, *sde snod gsum*: the 'three scriptural collections' (*tripiṭaka*) are the 'scriptural collection on moral discipline' (*vinaya piṭaka*), 'the scriptural collection in discourses' (*sūtra piṭaka*), and 'the scriptural collection on knowledge' (*abhidharma piṭaka*).

Line 2, *bslab pa gsum* (*ex conjectura*): the 'threefold training' (*triśikṣā*) comprises 'the training in moral discipline (*śīlaśikṣā*), 'the training in concentration' (*samādhiśikṣā*), and 'the training in wisdom' (*prajñāśikṣā*).

Line 3, *dkon mchog gsum*: the 'three rare and sublime' jewels (*triratna*) are the Buddha, the Dharma, and the monastic community.

Line 4, *dgra bcom pa*: 'foe destroyer' (*arhat*).

Line 4, *ma dros*: the 'unheated' lake of Anavatapta (*ma dros pa*) according to Buddhist cosmological views. This lake is often identified as Lake Manasarovar.

Line 6, *ma nas*: aka Ma ni; a settlement of the lower valley

[10] LAURENT 2017b: 243–247; SHUTTLEWORTH MssD722/8.

[11] */ bslab pa gsum gyis mdzes pa'i dge 'dun*; see DP1 in this appendix; DE ROSSI FILIBECK 2001; TOBDAN 2017.

Photo: MssEur D722/4-12 f41r © British Library Board

SI3 – Stone Inscription from Mani

Handwritten copy on paper
Date: -
Script: *dbu can*
Lines: 2

Normalised Transliteration

[1] // Oṃ swa s[t]i siddha(m) [/] sku [g]sum [mngon] du gyur pa'i ston pa sangs rgyas dang [/] 'phags pa spyan ras gzigs la phyag 'tshal lo / kye lags / dad ldan yon [gyi] bdag po / dge slong [2] nam mka' rgy[a] [m]tsho'i tshe 'di 'gal [rkyen] bar chad [zhi ba] dang / phyi ma bde ba can du skye bar shog/

Translation

[1] Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ. I bow down to the Buddha, in whom the three bodies are manifest, and to the noble Avalokiteśvara.

[2-3] Hail! May the pious patron, the monk Nam mkha' rgya mtsho's adversity and obstacles of this life be appeased and [may he] be reborn in Sukhāvatī in the next life!

Commentary

The second stone inscription recorded by Shuttleworth at Mani, the settlement of which is not specified, is the shortest in length. Moreover, the reproduction of this epigraph preserved at the British Library offers no information whatsoever about the stone and its location.[12]

[12] LAURENT 2017b: 247–248; SHUTTLEWORTH MssD722/8.

Photo: MssEur D722/4-12 f38r © British Library Board

SI4 – Stone Inscription from Nadang

Date: *c.*1606–1630
Script: *dbu chen*
Line: 11

Normalised Transliteration

[1] // phyag [s]tong [’]khor lo[s] [s]gyur [b]a’i [/] rgyal po [s]tong / spyan

[2] [s]tong skal pa [b]zang po’i sangs rgyas [s]tong / gang la gang [’dul] de la de[r] [s]ton pa’i

[3] [bts]un pa spyan [ras] [g]zigs la phyag ’tshal lo / kye lags/ gling gi [m]chog gyur lho’i

[4] [’dz]am bu [g]ling / sin ti [gtsang] po [rgy]ug pa’i [/] g.yon [phy]ogs ’dir / chos rgyal chen

[5] khri grags pa lde la [bstod] / khong gi [m]nga’ ’og drang khar ’dir / [d]pon po yid rgyal khong la

[bstod]

[6] yul la g.yang chags [s]kyid pa’i bzhur yul na dang ’dir / dad ldan yon

[7] gyi bdag po / [d]kon [m]chog tshe ri[n]g gi[s] / lha khang gi [tsh]ogs gong [’]phel mdzad pa la

[8] dam chos khyad ’phags ma Ni stong [rtsa] bzh[e]ngs / yon gyi bdag mo [j]o co chog pa

[9] [gis] kyang zas rnams [bdud] [rtsir] [s]gyur / [d]pon gnyis par byed pa ngo mtshar che

[10] khong gi gnyen [grogs] rnams kyi[s] kyang / phyi mi zong [bsk]ur mdzad pa ng[o]

[11] mtshar che [//]

Translation

[1-3] I bow down to the Venerable Avalokiteśvara who has a thousand hands like a thousand Universal Monarchs; who has a thousand eyes like the thousand Buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon; and who displays whatever is necessary to tame and guide each and every one.

[3-5] Hail! The best continent is the southern Jambudvīpa. To the left side of the flowing Indus River, praise the Dharma King Khri Grags pa lde! At Dangkhar under his dominion, praise the lord Yid rgyal!

[6-11] In the land of Na dang where prosperity and happiness thaw, the faithful patron mKon mchog tshe ring had one thousand holy and sublime *maṇi* stones made for the development of the temple’s assembly. Likewise the patron, Lady Jo co Chog pa, transformed sustenance into nectar. What the two of them did is marvellous. Their relatives and friends also had outsiders [and] commodities dispatched. How wondrous!

Commentary

SI4 was documented and photographed during fieldwork in 2016. It is carved in high relief on the flat surface of a naturally polished stone of approximately 49 by 23 centimetres. The stone was preserved inside a small temple at Nadang.

The present inscription can be dated to the reign of the King of Guge bKra shis grags pa lde (r. *c.* 1606–1630).

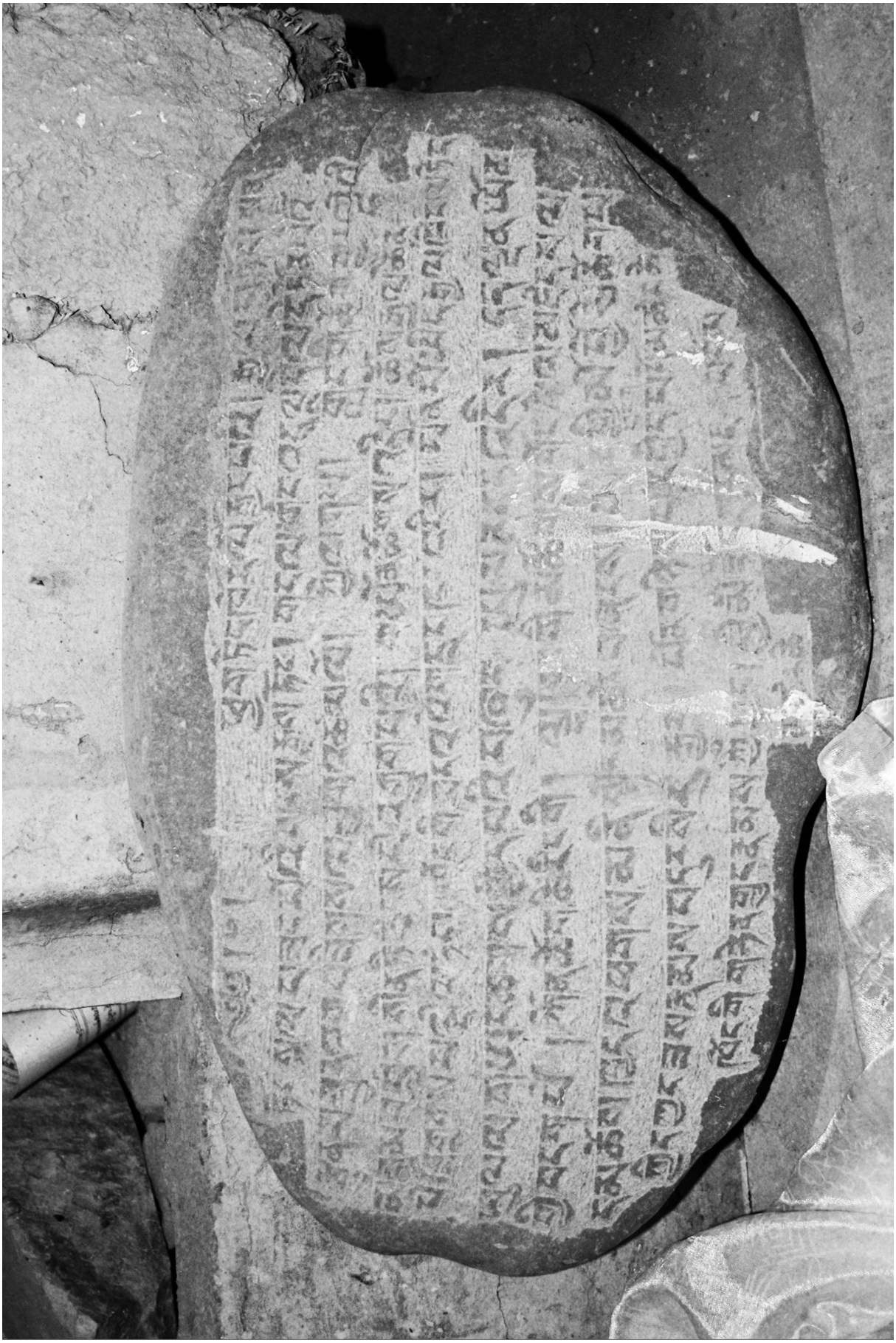


Photo: the author, 23rd August, 2016.

DP1 – Donor Preface from Tabo

Date: 16th century
Script: *dbu can*
Folios: 1

Normalised Transliteration (based on De Rossi Filibeck's rendition and photographs. Emendations are mine)

[F1.r] // Oṃ sva sti siddham [/] sku gsum mngon du 'gyur pa'i ston pa sangs rgyas dang / sde snod gsum gyis chug pa'i dam chos dang / bslab pa gsum gyis mdzes pa'i dge 'dun [2] ste skyabs gnas [-] dkon mchog gsum la gus phyag 'tshal / gangs can shing rta'i s[r]ol 'byed tshong kha [pa] / mngon stobs rig pa'i dbang phyug rgyal tshab rje / mdo sngags bstan pa'i [3] bdag [po] mkhas grub rje / [m]tshungs med yab sras gsum la gus phyag 'tshal / zab yangs blo gros gting [m]tha['] mi mngon zhing / legs par spyad pa'i rin chen bye ba'i ster / bstan pa'i dpal [4] gyur ['ph]rin las bzang po can / dpal ldan bla ma'i zhabs la [gus] phyag 'tshal / mang thos rab ma [r]gyan gyis rab mdzes gzhonu'i sku / legs bshad chos sgra zab mo sgrog [pa'i] gsung / mkhyen brtse'i 'od zer phyogs [5] bcur ['']phro ba'i thugs / dpal ldan bla ma'i zhabs la [gus] phyag 'tshal / rim gnyis zab mo'i rnal 'byor mthar phyir pa'i / mi 'jigs bzhi ldan seng ge'i khri dang ldan / slob dpon [6] tshung med chos rje'i zhabs la gus phyag 'tshal / ston pa'i zhing khams mi phyed 'dzam bu'i gling / bstan pa phyi dar kha ba can gyi gnas / rab dkar gangs ri'i phreng bas kun nas [7] bskor / yan lag brgyad ldan nyal 'gro ltung lting sgrog / nor 'dzin phyogs rnams g.yu'i gos gyon zhing / 'dab chags rkang drug snyan pa'i glu len pa'i / [r]tsi bcud 'bru rnams dus [8] su smin byed pa'i / dge bcu khrims gnyis ldan pa'i la btags tu / lha dbang rnam rgyal dang [m]tshungs pho brang na / mi [m]thun phyogs kun 'joms shing 'khor 'bang skyong / chu sbyin [9] rgya pa dang [m]tshungs rgyal mchog / sa skyong tshe dbang [r]nam rgyal de la [b]stod / gong ma'i thugs 'dzin 'khor 'bangs byams pas skyong / blon po'i mchog gyur ga dga' 'bum

[F1.v] pa lde de la [b]stod / de'i chab srid chen po yangs pa 'dir / mnga' ris mchog gyur spyi ti zhes bya ba 'dir / sa la 'bur thon pa'i rgyal sa brang khar 'dir / no [r]nam [2] rgyal don grub de la [b]stod / / kye legs / yul la dge bcu 'dzom pa'i / [c]ho[s] 'khor ta [p]o ru mi rigs kh[u]ng[s] bstun khyung po jo sras rgyud / de rgyud 'dzin [3] yon gyi bdag po dpon po ol tses / yab yum gnyis [kyi] dgongs pa rdzogs phyir dang / yab sras gnyis kyi sku tshe ring phyir dang / rang gi 'gal rkyen bar chad zhi [4] ba dang

phyi ma [th]ar pa thob phyir dang / sems can thams cad kyi don dang / khyad par du a ne dkon mchog mdzes kyi bsam pa /rdzogs phyir du / dam chos zab mo [5] gzungs chen bral lnga dang rdo rje gcod pa bzhengs / bsags [pa] don can khyed la kun kyang bstod / / o na dzo'i rgyun 'dzin 'phrul gyi bu mo 'dra' / ltas na[s] bzhin [6] legs smra na[s] ngag [s]nyan pa'i / yon gyi bdag mo a ne dkon mchog mdzes dang mchog 'dren ma 'u gnyis gyis / zas rnams bdud rtsi'i sbyar nas [7] mchod gnas pa mnyes par byed pa ngo [m]tshar che / ljon pa'i tshal nas 'dab chags ji bzhin du / sbrang rtsi'i rol [p]a [m]nga[r] 'du ltar / khong gi gnyen drung yul mi khyim [8] m[tsh]es rnams kyis kyang / dge si ka ru zhal dkar legs sbyar nas / dge ba'i mchog la 'bad pa sngo [m]tshar che / //dge'o / dge'o //

Translation

[F1.r 1-2] Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ. I respectfully pay homage to the three rare and sublime objects of refuge: to Lord Buddha in whom the three bodies are manifest; to the noble doctrine composed of the three scriptural collections; and to the monastic community embelished by the threefold training.

[F1.r 2-3] I respectfully pay homage to the unparalleled father and sons: to Tsong kha pa who is the charioteer of the Land of Snow; to rGyal tshab rje who is the lord of knowledge and realisation; and to mKhas grub rje who is the master of sutra and mantra teachings.

[F1.r 3-4] I respectfully bow down at the feet of the glorious lama. The depth and extant of his intelligence cannot be fathomed. His spiritual activities are endowed with the splendour of the doctrine.

[F1.r 4-5] I respectfully bow down at the feet of the glorious lama. His youthful body is beautified by the adornment of extensive erudition. His speech proclaims the deep sound of the Dharma and eloquent teachings. From his mind emanate light rays of knowledge and love to the ten directions.

[F1.r 5-6] I respectfully bow down to the unparalleled master, the lord of the Dharma. Having reached the limit of the two profound stages of the yogi, he who possesses the four [states of] fearlessness owns the leonine throne.

[F1.r 1-9] The indestructible realm of the Buddha is Jambudvīpa. The Land of Snow is the place of the later spread of the teaching. It is encircled from all sides by a garland of glittering snow-capped mountains, where resonates the clicking sound of the Ganges River. The regions of the earth are draped with turquoise garments, and the feathered race and six-footed bees sing beautifully. Honey and crops ripen in good time. In Ladakh where the ten virtues and the two systems of governance [converge], he conquers all hostile opposition and rules over his subjects from the palace, like lHa dbang rnam rgyal [did]. Praise be to the supreme conqueror, similar to the one who made a hundred water offerings, the protector of the earth Tshe dbang rnam rgyal. Upholding the intention of the latter, [F1.v 1] praise be to the supreme minister Ga dga' 'bum pa lde, who rules over the subjects with affection.

[F1.v 1-2] In his great and vast kingdom is the excellent dominion [of West Tibet] called sPyi ti. On the promontory of the capital Brang khar, praise be to No rNam rgyal don grub.

[F1.v 2-5] Hail! At the monastic complex of Ta po, a land where the ten virtues convene, are human beings of noble descend, the lineage of Khyung po jo sras. Their heir is the patron Lord Ol tses. In order to honour the memory of [his] father and mother, for the long life of the father and his son, for the pacification of one's own hardship and obstacles, for obtaining liberation in the next life, for the benefit of all sentient beings and, in particular, for the fulfilment of [his] paternal aunt's aspirations, dKon mchog mdzes, he commissioned the five classes of *dhāraṇī* and the *Vajracchedikā*, which are the

profound and excellent Buddhist doctrine. Praise be to all of you for an accumulation of beneficial merits.

[F1.v 5-8] But then, Dzo'i rgyun 'dzin is like a miraculous girl. Similar to an omen, a pleasant speech [comes] from words of praise. The two patrons, the aunt dKon mchog mdzes and lady mChog 'dren 'u, supplied sustenance [similar to] ambrosia. How wonderful that they showed their appreciation to the recipients of these offerings! Just as the feathered race from the woods is attracted by the sweet taste of honey, even their relatives, fellow countrymen, and neighbours prepared excellent cups of white rice pudding. It is wonderful how they strived for the best of virtues! How virtuous! How virtuous!

Commentary

Published in Italian by De Rossi Filibeck in 2001, the study of this donor preface is based on two folios preserved in the Tucci Fund in Rome.[13] The content of these folios is the same, despite minor differences, indicating that the donor preface was recopied, possibly more than once, before being inserted inside canonical manuscripts. The Tibetan transliteration and translation presented here correspond to Folio A, while the corrections and suggestions given in the normalised transliteration are all mine.

De Rossi Filibeck recalls in her article that the presence of historical elements allows the dating of these documents. Based on internal evidence, the composition of this text can be attributed to the reign of the King of Ladakh Tshe dbang rnam rgyal, who succeeded his father lHa dbang rnam rgyal, some time in the 16th century. The palace (*pho brang*) where both monarchs resided was located at Tingmosgang (*tin sgang*) about 90km west of Leh. Their residence should therefore not be confused with the Glorious Palace of Leh (*ble chen dpal mkhar*) built in the 17th century. In his work on Ladakh, Petech described Tshe dbang rnam rgyal as "one of the most warlike and successful rulers of Ladakh" having extended his control to the regions of Guge and Purang in West Tibet as well as to the valleys of Kulu and Spiti; see section 4.4 in Chapter 4.[14] Following Francke's work, the Italian historian also noted a number of inscriptions mentioning the king's minister Ga dga' 'bum pa lde.[15]

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[13] DE ROSSI FILIBECK 2001.

[14] PETECH 1977: 31–32.

[15] "His [i.e. Tshe dbang rnam rgyal] single inscription (F.77e) mentions his minister Bum-bha-lde, apparently the same as Ga-ga 'Bum-lde of the inscription of the *yab-c'en rgyal-po* Lha-dbaṅg-rnam-rgyal (F.38). A colophon found by professor Tucci at Braṅ-mk'ar (Spiti) also mentions king Ts'e-dbaṅ-rnam-ryal and his minister Ga-ga 'Bum-pa-lde"; I wonder whether Tucci's "colophon from Dangkhar" might not be, in fact, the present donor preface from the Tucci Fund; see PETECH 1977: 32. As for the stone inscriptions recorded by Francke, the relevant passage of F.38 reads as follows: *kye legs / gling bzhi mchog 'gyur lho yi 'dzam bu gling (...) mchog mar yul gzhung gi lte ba rdo rje [g]dan / chu chen seng ge kha [']ba[b] [rgy]ug pa'i g.yas / phyog las rnam rgyal pho brang ting sgang 'dir / e ma ho / khams gsum mgon [p]o zas [g]tsang sras kyi brgyud / chos dang srid kyi dpal 'byor rab rgyas shing / bsod [n]ams yid bzhin nor bu'i dpal yon can / yab chen rgyal pol ha dbang rnam rgyal dang / sa skyong chen po tshe dbang rnam rgyal dang rnam rgyal mgon po 'jam dbangs rnam rgyal sogs yab sras bcas pa rtag tu rgyal gyur cig / e ma ho / (...) stong stong gim 'degs pa'i spyin bdag mchog phun tshogs rigs kyi mngon par 'gro / smra ba'i gsung gis pha rol (...) 'phrogs (...) chos blon chen po ga ga 'bum ldes snga kod spe med cha (...) e ma mi mchog 'di 'dra'i rgyal blon rnams sku tshe chab srid dpal du zhabs brtan pa'i (...)*; "Hail! The best continent is the southern Jambudvīpa. (…) The navel of the government of Mar yul [i.e. Ladakh] is the Vajrāsana. On the right side of the great flowing Indus River is the victorious palace of Ting sgang [i.e. Tingmosgang]. How wonderful! The protectors of the three realms are the descendants of Śuddhodana's son. The prosperity of religion and politics having reached its peak, they are imbued with the merits and glorious qualities of a wish-fulfilling jewel. May the great father, King lHa dbang rnam rgyal, together with his sons, the great protector of the earth Tshe dbang rnam rgyal and the victorious protector 'Jam dbyang rnam rgyal, forever prevail. How wonderful! The respectable benefactor who supported (…) will be fulfilled. While speaking the words (…) by the great minister Ga ga 'bum lde (…) Wonderful! [May] the life, kingdom, and glory of the best of men such as kings and ministers ever remain (…)". As for F77, it reads: */ chos rgyal chen po tshe dbang rnam rgyal [g]yi [db]u rmog [m]tho zhing chab srid rgyas pa'i [b]lon chen 'bum bha lde'i ming (...) bka' [k]hrims chos bzhin [m]dzad pa ngo mtshar che ba [m]dzad par shog /*; "[May] the helmet of the great Dharma King Tshe dbang rnam rgyal be high and his dominion prosper. May the great minister 'Bum bha lde carry out marvellous deeds in

Notes

F1.r – line 2, *mngon stobs*: sic, for *mngon rtogs*.

F1.r – line 5, *rim pa gnyis*: 'the two stages' (*karma*) of tantric practices are the 'generation stage' (*utpannakrama*) and the 'completion stage' (*saṁpannakrama*).

F1.r – line 5, *mi 'jigs pa bzhi*: 'the four states of fearlessness'.[16]

F1.r – line 7, *yan lag brgyad ldan*: literally, 'possessing height qualities', a poetic expression designating the Ganges River.

F1.r – line 7, *nyal 'gro*: literally, 'supine motion' is a metaphor for a 'river' or 'stream'.

F1.r – line 8, *la btags*: sic, for 'Ladakh' (*la dwags*).

F1.v – line 5, *gzungs chen bral lnga*: sic, for 'the five classes of *dhāraṇī*' (*gzungs chen sde lnga*).

F1.v – line 8, *dge si*: sic, for 'rice pudding' (*'bras sil*).

accordance with the law and the doctrine". For the facsimiles of these two inscriptions, see TOBDAN & CHERING DORJE 2008: 86–87, 108–109.

[16] For a complete description of 'the four states of fearlessness', see TSEPAK RIGZIN 1986.

Folio A – recto (only)

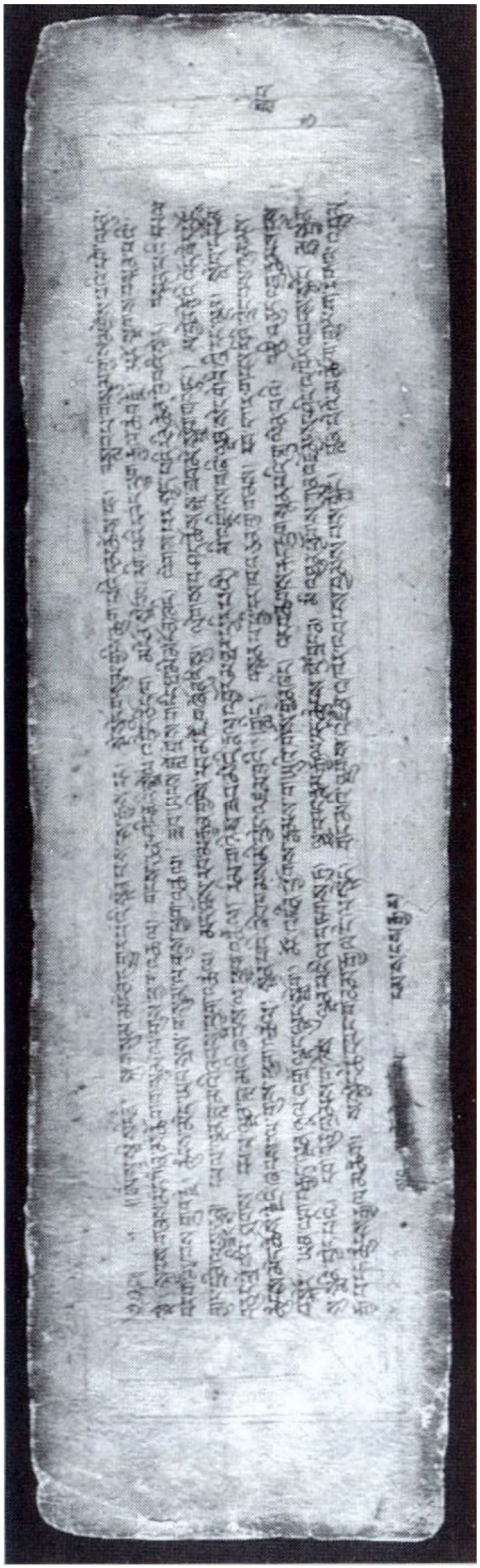

Photo: De Rossi Filibeck, 2001.

DP2 – Donor Preface from Rangrik

Date: *c.* 1802–1840
Script: *dbu can*
Lines: 33

Normalised Transliteration (based on Scherrer-Schaub's rendition and photographs. Emendations are mine)

[1] Oṃ sva sti s[i] dham / sku gsum mngon du [']gyur pa'i ston pa sangs rgyas dang / [s]de snod gsum gyi ['j]ug pa'i dam chos dang / [2] [b]slab gsum ngur [s]m[r]ig 'dzin pa'i dge 'dun ste / skyabs gnas dkon mchog gsum la gus phyag 'tshal / kyee lags / dri [3] med rnam dag [gr]u bzhi bang rim can / 'dul [by]a gling bzhi dbus na lham me ba / ga[ng] sku padm[a]'i dbus na gser gyi mdog / thung thang [4] lhun po'i zhabs la gus phyag 'tshal / kyee lags / gangs can shing [r]t[a'i] srol byed tsong kha pa / mngon rtogs rig pa'i dbang phyug rgyal tshab [5] rje / mdo sngags [b]stan pa'i bdag po mkhas grub rje / rgyal ba yab sras gsum la gus phyag ['']tshal / kyee lags / blo bzang rgyal ba'i [6] ring lugs padm[a]'i tshal / dpal ldan y[e] shes 'od gyi rgyas mdzad pa'i / ri[s] med 'gro ba'i 'dren pa kun gyi [g]tso / [7] rje btsun bla ma'i zhabs la phyag 'tshal lo / blo bzang rgyal ba gnyis pa'i thugs kyi [b]cud / gcig [bs]dus b[s]kal bzang rgya mtsho las [8] mthon pas / [g]rang [m]e[d] skyi dgu'i re [kh]ong yid bzhin nor / bsam ['']phel dbang [g]i rgyal po la gus phyag 'tshal / kyee lags / gling gi [9] mchog gyur lho'i '[dz]am bu'i gling / dgra bcom bzhugs gnas ti se gangs kyi mgul / m[a] [d]ro[s] bzhugs gnas ma [pham] g.yu'i [10] mtsho / seng ge kha 'bab [r]g[y]ug pa'i g.yas [phy]ogs 'dir / pho [b]rang chen po bla chen dpal mkhar rtser / dbyibs la [blta]s na[s] pha rol [sk]rag [11] [s]nang skye / pha rol dgra la nam [m]kha'i thog las 'jigs / 'khor 'bangs rnams la rgya mo dar las 'jam / chos rgyal chen po tshe dpal [12] rna[m] rgyal gyi / [db]u [r]mog [m]tho zhing chab srid rgyas gyur cig / khong gi chab srid bzang po'i mnga['] zhabs spyi ti 'dir / rdzong [m]tho la [13] [brt]an pa rgyal sa grag mkhar rtser / rdzong dpon chen po ga ga mkhan yab sras [g]nyis kyi dbu rmog [m]tho gy[u]r cig / [14] [d]gon chen po nor bu dge 'phel na / dpon slob chen po y[e] shes rna[m] rgyal kyi / chos [b]tsug[s] [m]tho gyur cig [/] yul [15] la [g].yan[g] chags skyid pa'i rang rig rgyal sa 'dir / phu ru rtsa chu rgyas shing mdo ru 'bru [r]nams smin / mi rigs khung [16] [b]tsun rus chen byo'i rgyud / da[d] ldan yon gyi bdag po khyi'u tshe ring dang / yon gyi bdag mo blo bzang ming [']dzom [17] / gnyis kyi tshe 'di [']gal [r]kyen bar [ch]ad zhi phyir dang / [phy]i ma bde '[gro]r thobs thabs su / 'phags pa rdo rje bcod [18] pa dang rdo rje bcod pa'i pha[n] yon dang / sdig [b]sh[a]gs

ser gyi pu [g]ri dang [l]tung bshags dang / sdig sgrib kun ’[j]om[s] [19] dang / ’phags pa so sor [g]rang ma dang / [’]khor ba [’]khor [tsh]e dang / mdo sna bdun tsam bzh[e]ngs / [b]sags pa [20] chos phyir [g]tong pa ngo mtshar che / chos [d]gon n[o]r bu dge [’]phel nas / dpon [s]lob y[e] shes rnam rgyal gyi[s] gsel [21] bya dro bkar / [d]ka[’] [ch]en phu[n] [tsh]ogs [g]sol [j]a / [d]ka[’] [ch]en tshe dbang rdo rje [g]sol [j]a / [dbu] [m]dzad [g]sol [j]a / dge [s]long rdom [22] [g]sol [j]a [g]ro [d]kar / sangs rgyas [s]pun [g]nyis kyi[s] [g]sol [j]a / tshe [b]rtan rdo rje [g]sol [j]a / ber [g]sol [j]a [g]ro [d]kar / n[o]r bu d[on] [g]rub [23] [g]sol [j]a / rab [br]tan [g]sol [j]a / rang rig rgyal sa nas [gts]o byed [m]khar dpon [bs]ta[n] ’dzin tshe dbang chang [tsh]od / [gts]o byed bkr[a] [24] shis [’]byor chang [tsh]od nyin gang / ’jam dbyangs chang [tsh]od nyin gang / [b]so[d] nam[s] tshe dbang chang [tsh]od [/] rdo rje sgrim ’dul chang [25] tshod nyin gang / rin chen rdo rje khang chen kh[a]ng chung gnyis kyi chang tsho[d] nyin gang [/] sber to chang tsho[d] [/] (tshe ring) d[on] [g]rub chang tsho[d] / [26] bkra shis n[o]r bu chang tsho[d] / phun tshogs chang tsho[d] / a ma dge’u / tho lo chang tsho[d] [g]ro [d]kar / no cung ba chang tsho[d] / [b]sam [27] pa ’byor chang tsho[d] / (tshe ring) [dp]al ’byor [chang] tsho[d] / blo bzang rgya [m]tso chang tsho[d] [g]ro [d]kar / i pa’i phri khyil dge’u / ti mdzim / phun [28] [tsh]ogs chang tshod nyin gang / rdo rje phun tshogs chang tsho[d] [/] [b]sam phu mdzo chang tsho[d] [/] no rdob rdob dge’u / dge [ph]rug pa chang [29] thso[d] / [d]gon cung (bkra shis) [s]gang na [db]on po yab sras [g]sum gyi[s] chang tsho[d] nyin gang / rgya te [na] shes tshe ring chang tsho[d] / dpal ’byor [30] chang tshod / kyi na ’byor chang tsho[d] / khri stang chang tsho[d] / sum [g]ling na n[o]r bu [b]sam [’]phel chang tsho[d] nyin gang / khu rig [31] na [b]sam phun tshogs chang tsho[d] / dpal ’byor ch[a]ng tsho[d] / ka rdzes na tin chos [g]ra[gs] chang tsho[d] / [g]sun[g] rab ’di la zhabs [32] tog l[e]gs par mdzod / bkra shis / ’gyur lags / dge’o / zhus dag / [33] rang rig yul gyi [d]kar chag /

Translation

[1-2] Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ. I respectfully pay homage to the three rare and sublime objects of refuge: to Lord Buddha in whom the three bodies are manifest; to the noble doctrine made of the three scriptural collections; and to the maroon-clad monastic community who uphold the threefold training.

[2-4] Hail! I respectfully bow down at the feet of Munindra’s Mount Meru. Having undefiled and immaculate square terraces, it radiates in the midst of the four continents of those to be tamed. In the middle of a lotus, its body has the appearance of gold.

[4-5] Hail! I respectfully pay homage to the three Victors, father and sons: to Tsong kha pa who is the charioteer of the Land of Snow; to rGyal tshab rje who is the lord of knowledge and realisation; and to mKhas grub rje who is the master of sutra and mantra teachings.

[5-7] Hail! I bow down at the feet of the venerable lama. The system of Blo bzang rgyal ba is [like] a lotus garden. dPal ldan ye shes is a beacon of light; foremost among all those who guide migratory beings without distinction.[17]

[7-8] I respectfully pay homage to the king of wish-fulfilling gems. The quintessence of the mind of the second Blo bzang rgyal ba is embodied in bsKal bzang rgya mtsho, from whom come wish-fulfilling jewels for each and every countless beings.[18]

[8-12] Hail! The best continent is the southern Jambudvīpa. The snowy hillsides of Mt. Kailash are the dwelling place of foe destroyers. The tepid abode is Lake Manasarovar. On the right side of the flowing Indus River is the great palace, the Glorious Palace on the hilltop of the great Leh. Looking at its dimensions from afar fear arises. In the distance, enemies are terrified by it more than by lightning. To the subjects, it is smoother than the silk of Chinese women. May the helmet of the great Dharma King Tshe dpal rnam rgyal be high and his kingdom prosper.

[12-13] In sPyi ti, the vassal [dominion] of his excellent kingdom, the district fort is firmly established in the uplands. At the hilltop of the capital Grag mkhar, may the helmet of the great prefect of the fort Ga ga mkhan, along with his son, be high.

[14] In the great monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel, may the doctrine of the great master Ye shes rnam rgyal be prominently established.

[14-20] In the capital Rang rig, a region of prosperity and happiness, where water and grass are plentiful in the upland, and where crops fructify in the lowland, are human beings of noble descent, the members of the great clan of Byo.The pious patron Kyi'u tshe ring and the patron lady Blo bzang ming 'dzom, for the purpose of pacifying adversity and obstacles in this life, and as a means to obtain a good rebirth in the hereafter, have commissioned a selection of about seven scriptures: the *Ārya Vajracchedikā*, the *Benefits of the Vajracchedikā*, the *Golden Razor of Confession*, the *Confession of Misdeeds*, the *Destroyer of Misdeeds and Defilement*, the *Ārya Mahāpratisarā*, and the *Cyclic Existence of Samsaric Life*. The assortment [of offerings] given for the benefit of the doctrine is marvellous!

[20-23] From the monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel, the great master Ye shes rnam rgyal [offered] tea, food, and dairies; dKa' chen Phun tshogs [offered] tea; dKa' chen Tshe dbang rdo rje [offered] tea; the chant master [offered] tea; the monk rDom [offered] tea, food, and dairies; Sangs rgyas and his relative [offered] tea; Tshe brtan rdo rje [offered] tea; Ber [offered] tea, food, and dairies; Nor bu don grub [offered] tea; Rab brtan [offered] tea.

[23-29] From the capital Rang rig, foremost the district prefect of the fort bsTan 'dzin tshe dbang [offered] a service of ale; foremost bKra shis 'byor [offered] services of ale the whole day; 'Jam dbyangs [offered] services of ale the all whole day; bSod nams tshe dbang [offered] a service of ale; rDo rje sgrim 'dul [offered] services of ale the whole day; the main and subsidiary households of Rin chen rdo rje [offered] services of ale the whole day; sBer to [offered] a service of ale; Tshe ring don grub [offered] a service of ale; bKra shis nor bu [offered] a service of ale; Phun tshogs [offered] a service of ale; A ma dge'u [and] Tho lo [offered] a service of ale, food, and dairies; No cung ba [offered] a service of ale; bSam pa 'byor [offered] a service of ale; Tshe ring dpal 'byor [offered] a service of ale; Blo bzang rgya mtsho [offered] a service of ale, food, and dairies; I pa'i phri khyil dge'u, Ti mdzim, and Phun tshogs [offered] services of ale the whole day; rDo rje phun tshogs [offered] a service of ale; bSam phu mdzo [offered] a service of ale; and No rdob rdob [with his] pupil [offered] a service of ale.

[29] From the small monastery of bKra shis sgang, the astrologer with his two sons [offered] services of ale the whole day.

[29-30] From Gya te, Shes tshe ring [offered] a service of ale; dPal 'byor [offered] a service of ale.

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[17] The 6th Panchen Lama Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes (1738–1780).

[18] The 7th Dalai Lama bsKal bzang rgya mtsho (1708–1757) was the teacher of the 6th Panchen Lama.

[30] From Kyi, ’Byor [offered] a service of ale; Khri stang [offered] a service of ale.

[30] From Sum gling, Nor bu bsam ’phel [offered] services of ale the whole day.

[30-31] From Khu rig, bSam phun tshogs [offered] a service of ale; dPal ’byor [offered] a service of ale.

[31] From Ka rdzes, Tin chos grags [offered] a service of ale.

[31-32]The catering services [reported] in this written account have to be performed properly. May this be auspicious! May you enjoy prosperity! Excellent! Reviewed.

[33] Register of the Rang rig region.

Commentary

Published by Scherrer-Schaub in 2013, the so-called *Register from the Rangrik Region* (*rang rig yul dkar chag*) is fully consistent with other donor prefaces.[19]

However, the format of the present document and the extensive use of red ink would suggest that this donative record is a copy of an original preface. In addition, the title given to this document was written in black ink at the bottom of the page; presumably by a different hand judging from the handwriting. Preceding this title, the word ‘Rangrik’ was also added in Urdu as remarked by Scherrer-Schaub.

In view of the historical information contained in the relevant sections of this donor preface, the original document must have been composed during the reign of the King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal (*c.*1802–1840). As a later copy, however, the so-called *Register* could have been written during the century that saw the administration of Spiti by the Dogra (1842–1846) and its transfer to British India (1846–1947).[20]

Notes

Line 3, *’dul bya*: Literally, ‘to be trained’ or ‘to be tamed’. An expression that often designates a disciple or a student.

Line 3, *thung thang*: sic, for ‘Munindra’ or ‘Śākyamuni’ (*thub dbang*). Assimilated as a sun, the manifestation of Śākyamuni’s enlightenment dispels the darkness of ignorance of one hundred million world-systems, each of which contains a Mount Meru at its centre.

Line 8, *skye dgu*: Literally, ‘nine creatures’ or ‘all beings’.

Line 16, *byo*: sic, for the Jo pa or Jo ba, a family lineage of astrologers (*dbon po*).

Line 18, *sdig sgrib kun ’joms*: the only known copy of the *sDig sgrib kun ’joms* comes from Kinnaur; see BDRC W3JT13749.

Line 19, *’phags pa so sor grang ma*: *’Phags pa so sor grang ma chen mo’i rig pa’i cho ga*; see bsTan ’gyur (*sna thang*), vol.71 (*tu*).

Line 20-21, *sel bya dro kar*: sic, for ‘tea’ (*gsol ja*), ‘food’ (*gro*), and ‘dairies’ (*dkar*).

[19] SCHERRER-SCHAUB 2013.

[20] The provenance of this document was not recorded in the registers of the Museum of Lahore where it is kept nowadays. Among all possible scenarios, it is worth mentioning that John Coldstream (1877–1954), who was the Assistant Commissioner of Kulu between 1910 and 1913, and who visited Spiti in 1912, continued his career as a judge at the High Court of Lahore from 1926 to 1937.

Line 21, *ka cen*: sic, for a scholar from Tashi Lhunpo monastery (*dka' chen*). Whithin the Gelukpa tradition, the title of *dka' chen* is similar to that of *dge bshes*.

Line 1-18

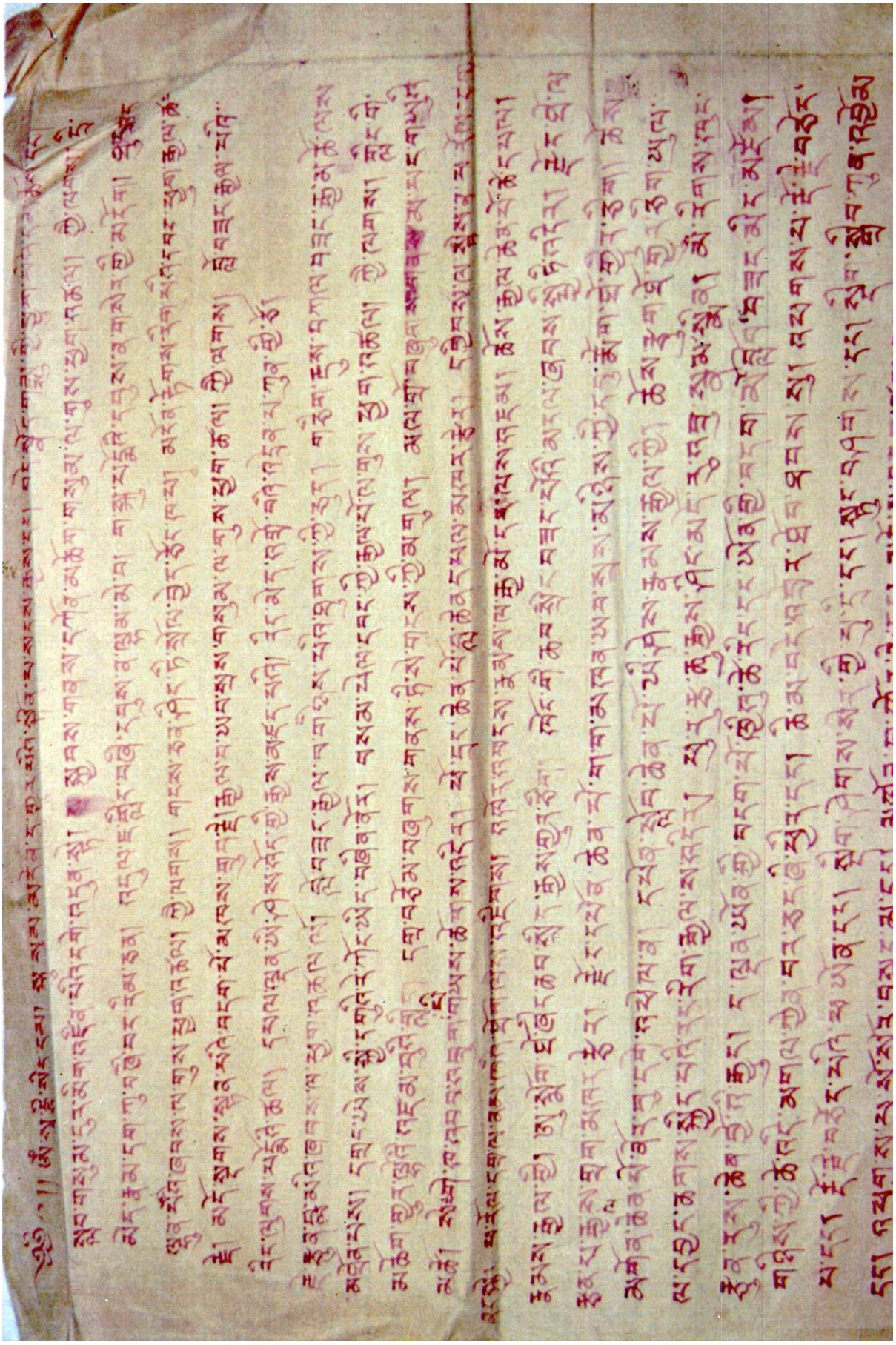


Photo: Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, 2013.

Line 18-33

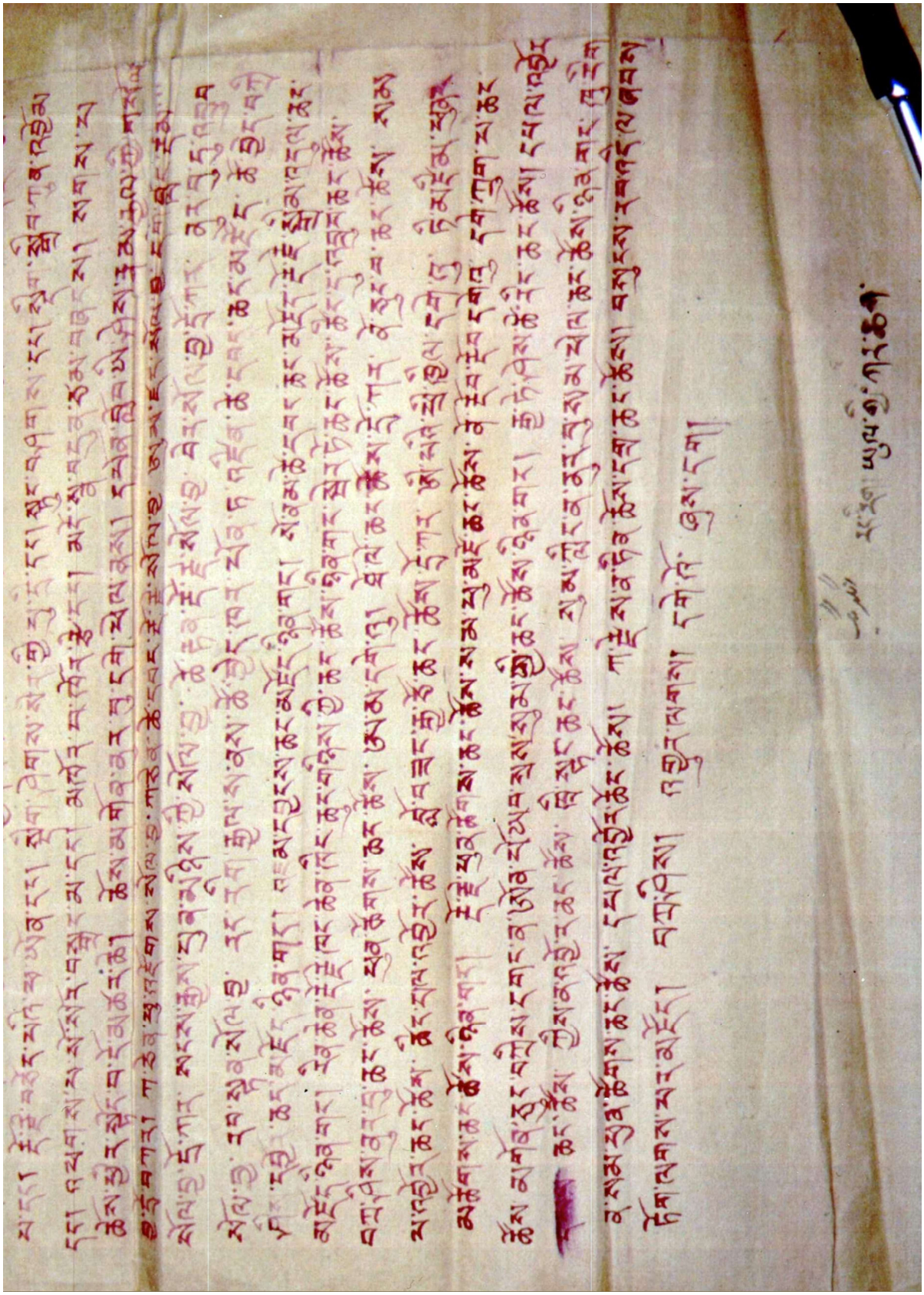


Photo by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, 2013

DP3 – Donor Preface from Kyi

Date: *c.*1753–1782
Script: *dbu can*
Folios: 3

Normalised Transliteration

[F1.r] // om swa sti si dha(m) / sku gsum mngon du [’]gyur pa’i ston pa sangs [2] rgyas dang / sde snod gsum gyi[s] [’j]ug pa’i dam chos dang / [b]slab pa gsum gyis mdzes [3] pa’i dge ’dun ste / skyabs gnas dkon gsum la gus [phyag] ’tshal / kyee lags / thabs mkhas [4] thugs rjes shA kyA’i rigs ’khrungs shing / [g]zhan gyi mi thub bdud kyi dpung [bc]om pa / gser gyi [5] lhun po lta bur brjid pa’i sku / shA kyA’i rgyal po de la phyag ’tshal lo / kyee lags /

[F1.v] gangs can shing rta’i srol [’]byed [t]song kha pa / mngon rtogs rig pa’i dbang phyug rgyal [tsh]ab rje / / mdo sngags bstan pa’i [2] bdag po mkhas [g]rub rjes / rgyal ba yab sras gsum la gus phyag ’tshal / kyee lags / gling gi mchog [3] gyur lho’i [’]dzam bu gling [/] dgra bcom bzhugs gnas [t]i [s]e gangs kyi [m]gul / ma [d]ros bzhugs gnas ma [4] [pham] g.yu’i mtsho / seng ge kha ’ba[b] [r]g[y]ug pa’i g.yas phyogs ’dir / pho brang chen po [m]tho la yang[s] pa’i [s]nang [/] [5] rgyal sa chen po ble chen dpal mkhar rtser / chos rgyal chen po tshe dbang [r]nam rgyal kyi / dbu rmog [m]tho zhing chab srid rgyas [6] gyur cig / khong gi mnga’ ’og [b]zang po’i spyi [ti] ’dir / sku mkhar mtho la [b]rtan pa rgyal sa grag mkhar rtser / mkhar dpon

[F2.r] // chen po bstan skyong rgya mtsho’i / sku tshe b[r]tan zhing chab srid rgyas [g]yur cig / dgon pa khyad ’phags nor [2] bu dge [’]phel na / dpon slob chen po blo bzang don [g]rub kyi / / chos [g]tsug[s] mtho zhing grwa b[t]sun dar gyur cig / yul la g.yang chags [3] [s]kyid pa’i kyis ’di ru / phu ru rtsi bcud rgyas shing mdo ru ’bru rnams smin / mi rigs khungs [b]tsun rus chen khyung [4] po’i [b]rgyud / yon [g]y[i] bdag po tshe ring chos ’dzin gyis / grogs tshe las ’das pa’i [th]ar lam bsgrod phyir du / dam chos khyad [5] ’phags rdo rje gcod pa ma bu gsum bzhengs / bsags pa chos phyir [g]tong ba ngo mtshar che / a pa’i mchog [g]yur dga’ dga’ bkra shis dang [6] a ma’i mchog [g]yur tshe ring ming ’dren / sring mo’i mchog [g]yur no mo shes dang / bu’i mchog [g]yur bsod nams dpal ’byor dang /

[F2.v] shes pa tshe ring dang / tshe dbang rab bstan rnams / tshe ring nad med bde [s]kyid ldan par shog / gsung rab ’di la dge rtsis [2] byung grangs la dgon pa nor bu dge [’]phel na / dge slong blo bzang

bts[o]n ’grus/ dbu mdzad dpal ldan grags pa ∗ [3] kyid par na / ’a pha rigs ’dzin don grub / chos ’phel ma bu gnyis kyi[s] gung [4] tshigs ja chang / tshe ring bstan ’dzin gung tshigs ja chang / ’gar mo chos sgron / tshe ring (bkra shis) [/] rgud chung / bkra shis tshe ring / blo bzang tshe ring / [5] ga ga tshe ring / ye shes ’byo[r] ra / kham pa (bkra shis) legs [’]dzom[s] ∗ dge slong bsod nams rgyal mtshan / dge slong dam pe / dge slong ku kyes [6] dge slong se ldor / dge slong ku ’a ra / dge slong am [ch]i blo bzang rin chen/ dge tshul nor bu bkra shis /

[F3.r] // bkra shis sgang na jo pa dga’ dga’ chang tshod cig / blo bzang tshe [br]tan / tshe ring / rang rig na [2] ’a pha nor bu / ’byor ra blo bde / khu rig na blo bzang tshe ring / blo bzang don grub / ’al na [b]sod nam[s] [3] bkra shis / pha ldar na padma don grub / lho sar na tshe ring g.yang [’]phel / kyo gro na dge ’dun tshe ring / [4] spyi khyim na tshe ring chos ldan / steng rgyud na ’a pa padma tshe ring / [b]sod nam[s] don grub / rgya te na pa le [5] skyis na bkra shis rgya [m]tsho chang tshod [g]cig / (bkra shis) blo bde / pa le / ’grug la tsho mo / tshe ring ldum chung / snum tin

[F3.v] tshe ring [b]sam grub / padma rigs ’dzin / ldum bu tshe ring / blo bzang dpal ’byor / blo bzang don grub / cig [2] zar na me me [b]sod nam[s] don grub / lag shes dong grug pa / lag shes ts[h]e ring don grub / lag shes khyi [3] gu don grub / sbyin bdag [g]tso byas kha [m]nyam sems can rnams / bla med rdzogs byang thob pa’i [g]yur sngo / sarba manga la(m) /

Translation

[F1.r 1-3] Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ. I respectfully bow down to the three rare and sublime objects of refuge: to Lord Buddha in whom the three bodies are manifest; to the noble doctrine made of the three scriptural collections; and to the monastic community embellished by the threefold training.

[F1.r 3-5] Hail! I pay homage to the very king of the Śākya. Resourceful and compassionate, he was born among the clan of the Śākya. He who is unable to be harmed by others triumphed over Māra’s armies. [His] resplendent body is like the golden Mt Meru.

Hail! [F1.v 1-2] I respectfully pay homage to the three Victors, father and sons: to Tsong kha pa who is the charioteer of the Land of Snow; to rGyal tshab rje who is the lord of realisation and knowledge; and to mKhas grub rje who is the master of sūtra and mantra teachings.

[F1.v 2-6] Hail! The best continent is the southern Jambudvīpa. The snowy hillsides of Mt. Kailash are the dwelling place of foe destroyers. The tepid abode is Lake Manasarovar. On the right side of the flowing Indus River, the great palace appears high and monumental. On the hilltop of the Glorious Palace [of] the great capital of Leh, may the helmet of the great Dharma King Tshe dbang rnam rgyal be high and his kingdom prosper.

[F1.v 6] In his excellent dominion of sPyi ti, a district fort is firmly established. High up, at the hilltop of the capital Grag mkhar, [F2.r 1] may the great prefect of the fort, bsTan skyong rgya mtsho, enjoy a long life and may his kingdom prosper.

[F2.r 1-2] In the excellent monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel, may the teaching of the great master Blo bzang don grub be prominently established and his disciples increase.

[F2.r 2-6] At Kyis, a region of prosperity and happiness, where the upland is filled with honey and where crops fructify in the lowland, are human beings of noble descent, the members of the great clan of the Khyung po. [Among them,] the patron Tshe ring chos 'dzin commissioned three copies of the *Vajracchedikā*, the most excellent teaching, for his deceased companion to travel towards the path of liberation. The assortment [of offerings] given for the benefit of the doctrine is marvellous! May the respectable father dGa' dga' bKra shis, the respectable mother Tshe ring ming 'dren, the respectable daughter No mo shes, and the respectable sons bSod nams dpal 'byor, [F2.v 1] Shes pa tshe ring, and Tshe dbang rab bstan enjoy a long life, health, joy and happiness.

[F2.v1-6] At the monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel, quantity of virtues arose from [the copying of] this scripture [thanks to] the monk Blo bzang brtson 'grus, the chant master dPal ldan grags pa, the monk bSod nams rgyal mtshan, the monk Dam pe, the monk Ku skye, the monk Se ldor, the monk Ku'a ra, the monk physician Blo bzang rin chen, and the novice Nor bu bkra shis.

[F2.v 3-5] From Kyid par, the father Rigs 'dzin don grub, [his wife] Chos 'phel and their child [offered] beverages for the midday meal of the monastic congregation; Tshe ring bstan 'dzin [offered] beverages for the midday meal of the monastic congregation; 'Gar mo chos sgron, Tshe ring bkra shis, rGu chung, bKra shis tshe ring, Blo bzang tshe ring, Ga ga tshe ring, Ye shes 'byor ra, and Kham pa bkra shis [offered] plenty of excellent things.

[F3.r] From bKra shis sgang, the astrologer dGa' dga' [offered] one service of ale; Blo bzang tshe brtan and Tshe ring [offered one service of ale].

[F3.r 1-2] From Rang rig, the father Nor bu and 'Byor ra blo bde [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 2] From Khu rig, Blo bzang tshe ring, Blo bzang don grub [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 2-3] From 'Al, bSod nams bkra shis [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 3] From Pha ldar, Padma don grub [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 3] From lHo sar, Tshe ring g.yang 'phel [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 3] From Kyo gro, dGe 'dun tshe ring [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 4] From sPyi khyim, Tshe ring chos ldan [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 4] From sTeng rgyud, the father Padma tshe ring and bSod nams don grub [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 4] From rGya te, Pa le [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.r 5] From sKyis, bKra shis rgya mtsho [offered] one ration of ale; bKra shis blo bde, Pa le, 'Grug la tsho mo, Tshe ring ldum chung, sNum tin, [F3.v 1] Tshe ring bsam grub, Padma rigs 'dzin, lDum but she ring, Blo bzang dpal 'byor, Blo bzang don grub [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.v 1-3] From Cig zar, the grandfather bSod nams don grub, the craftsman Dong grug pa, the craftsman Tshe ring don grub, and the craftsman Khyi gu don grub [offered one servive of ale].

[F3.v 3] The [merit] is dedicated to the leading donors, indiscriminately, and to the sentient beings. May they obtain the unsurpassed and perfect enlightenment. Sarva maṅgalaṃ.

Commentary

As mentioned in the introduction of this appendix, the present document was first published by Tobdan who provided only a partial transliteration and English translation of its content.[21]

This document can be dated to the 18th century based on internal evidence. It was composed during the reign of King Tshe dbang rnam rgyal of Ladakh (r. *c.*1753–1782). It cannot be ascribed, however, to his 16th century namesake, as Tobden does, on the account that the Glorious Palace of Leh (*ble chen dpal mkhar*) mentioned in the preface was erected by Seng ge rnam rgyal (r. *c.* 1590–1642) in later times.

Notes

F2.v – line 2, *mgon pa nor bu dge 'phel*: the Gelukpa monastery of Nor bu dge 'phel is situated on a hill resembling a gem (*nor bu*) above the village of Kyi in Spiti.

F2.v – line 3, *kyid par*: the village of Kibbar or Kyiber is located in a side valley of the upper Spiti Valley (*stod*).

F2.v – line 4, *ja chang*: literally, 'tea-ale'.

F3.r – line 1, *bkra shis sgang*: the hamlet of Tashigang is situated in the upper part (*stod*) of the Spiti Valley.

F3.r – line 1, *rang rig*: the village of Rangrik lies on the right bank of the Spiti River in the upper Spiti Valley (*stod*).

F3.r – line 2, *'al*; the hamlet of Al is situated on the right bank of the Spiti River between the villages of Pangmo and Morang in the upper part of the valley.

F3.r – line 3, *pha ldar*: the village of Pheldar (*phal 'dar*) or Phelchar is situated on the right bank of the Spiti River in the upper part of the valley.

F3.r – line 3, *lho sar*: established in the upper part of the valley, the village of Losar constituted the northern boundary of the Spiti territory in the 19th century.

F3.r – line 3, *kyo gro*: the village of Kyodro or Kyoto lies on the left bank of the Spiti River in the upper part of the valley.

F3.r – line 4, *spyi khyim*: the village of Chikyim (*ci khyim*) is situated opposite the village of Kyiber in a side valley of upper Spiti.

F3.r – line 4, *steng rgyud*: situated in the upper part of the valley, the village of Tengyu was established on a high plateau overlooking the village of Kaza (*ka rdzes*).

F3.r – line 4, *rgya te*: the hamlet of Gyate of Jete is situated on a plateau to the north-east of Kyi village at approximately 1,8 km as the crow flies.

F3.r – line 5, *skyis*: the village of Kyi (*ki*), sometimes mistaken for its monastery, is located on the left side of the Spiti River in the upper valley.

F3.v – line 1-2, cig zar: the hamlet of Chikzar lies to the north of Pangmo on the right bank of the Spiti River.

[21] I wish to thank Tobdan for sharing the original photographs of this document; see TOBDAN 2017.

Folio 1, recto

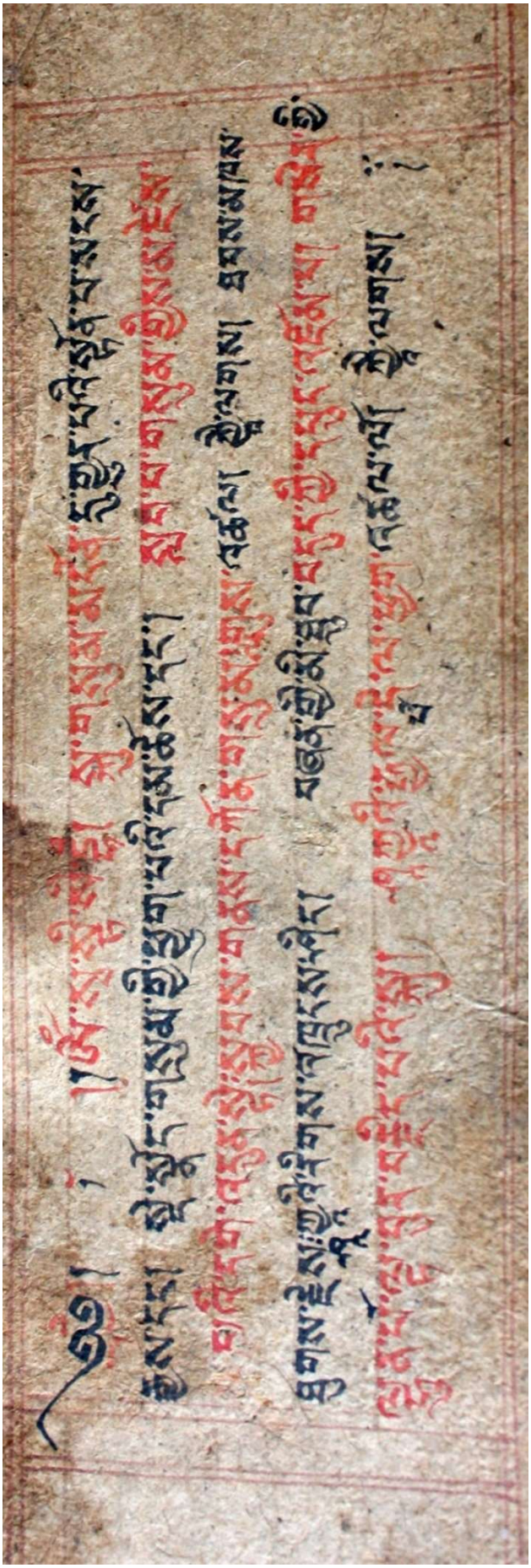


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

Folio 1, verso

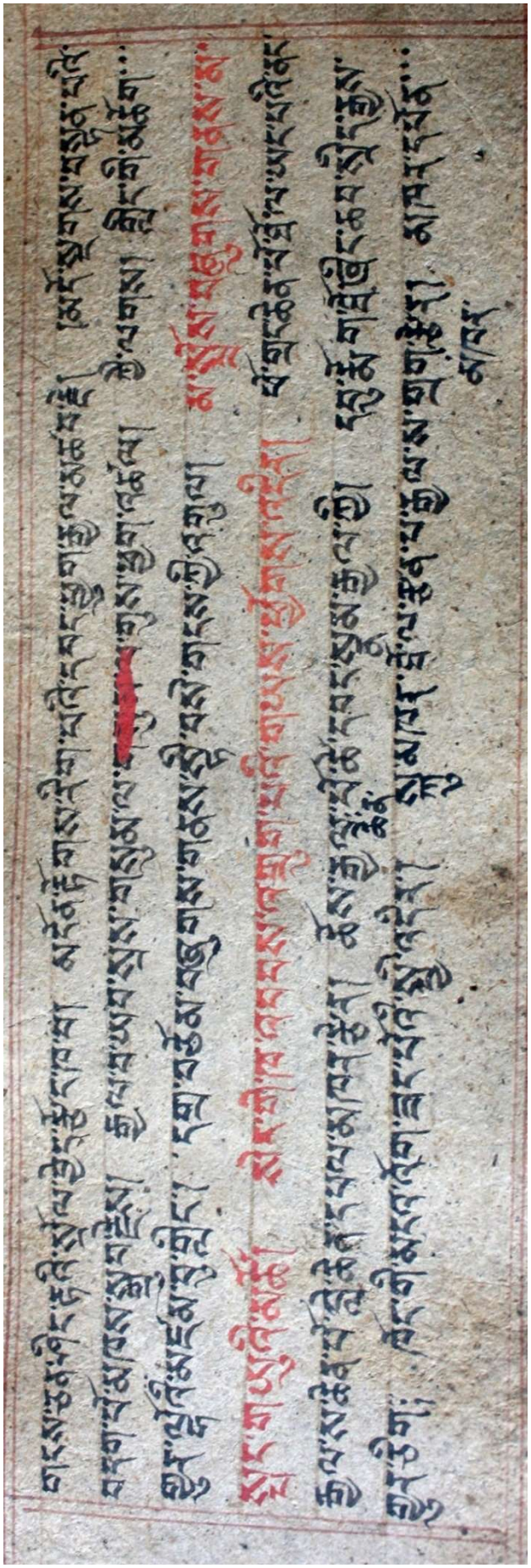


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

Folio 2, recto

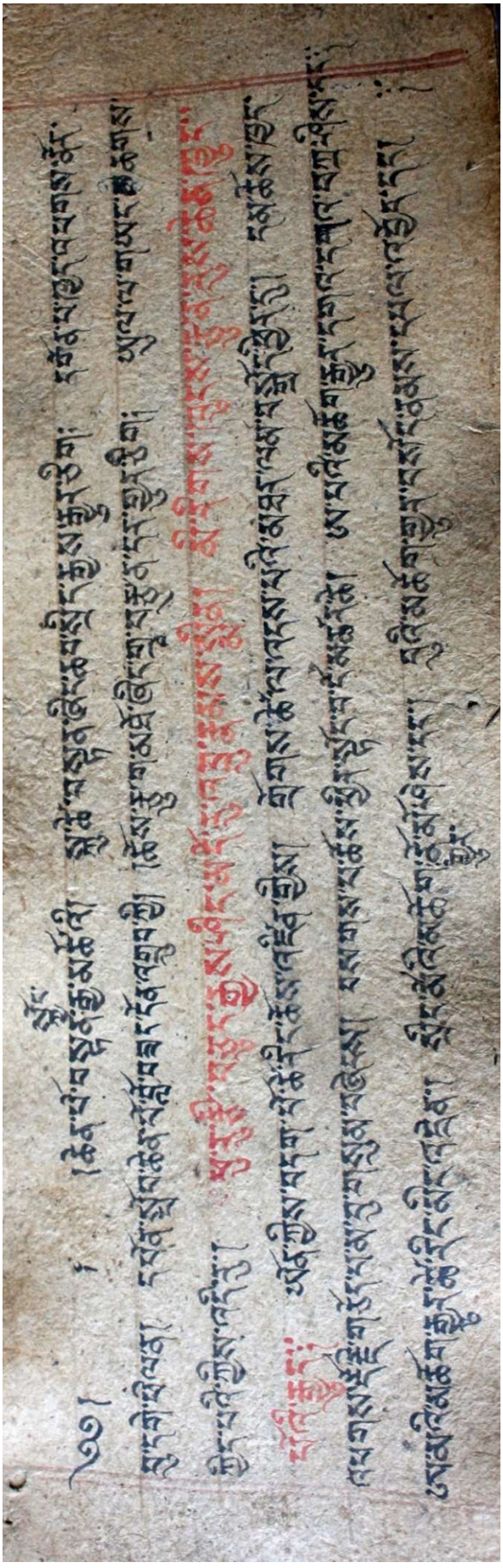


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

Folio 2, verso

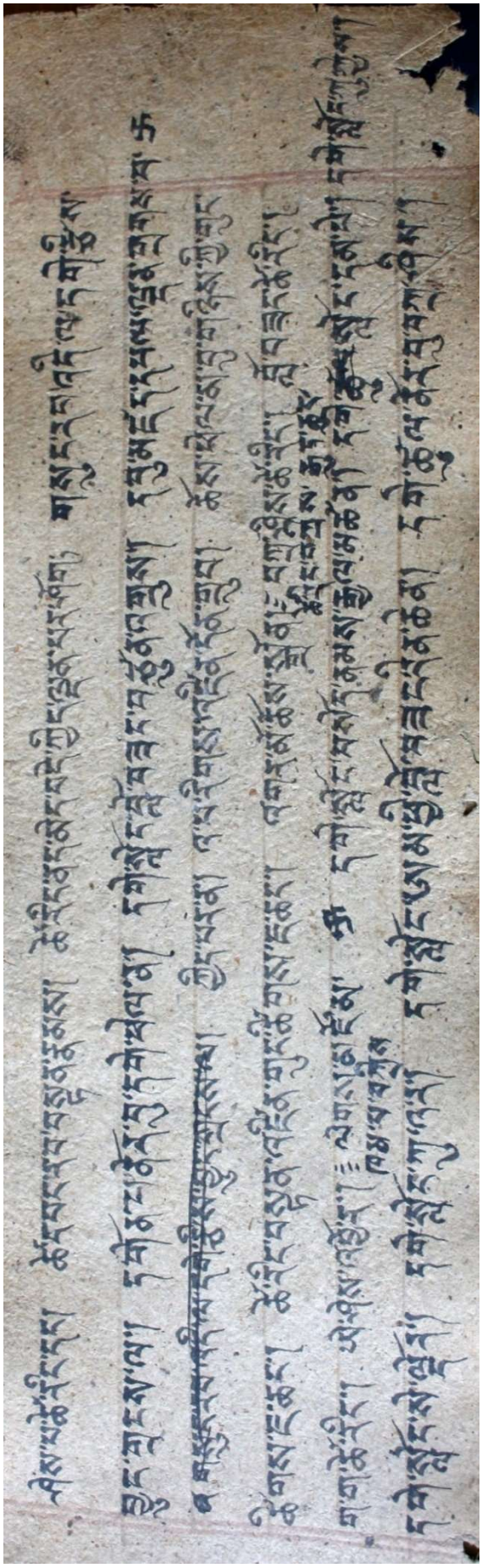


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

Folio 3, recto

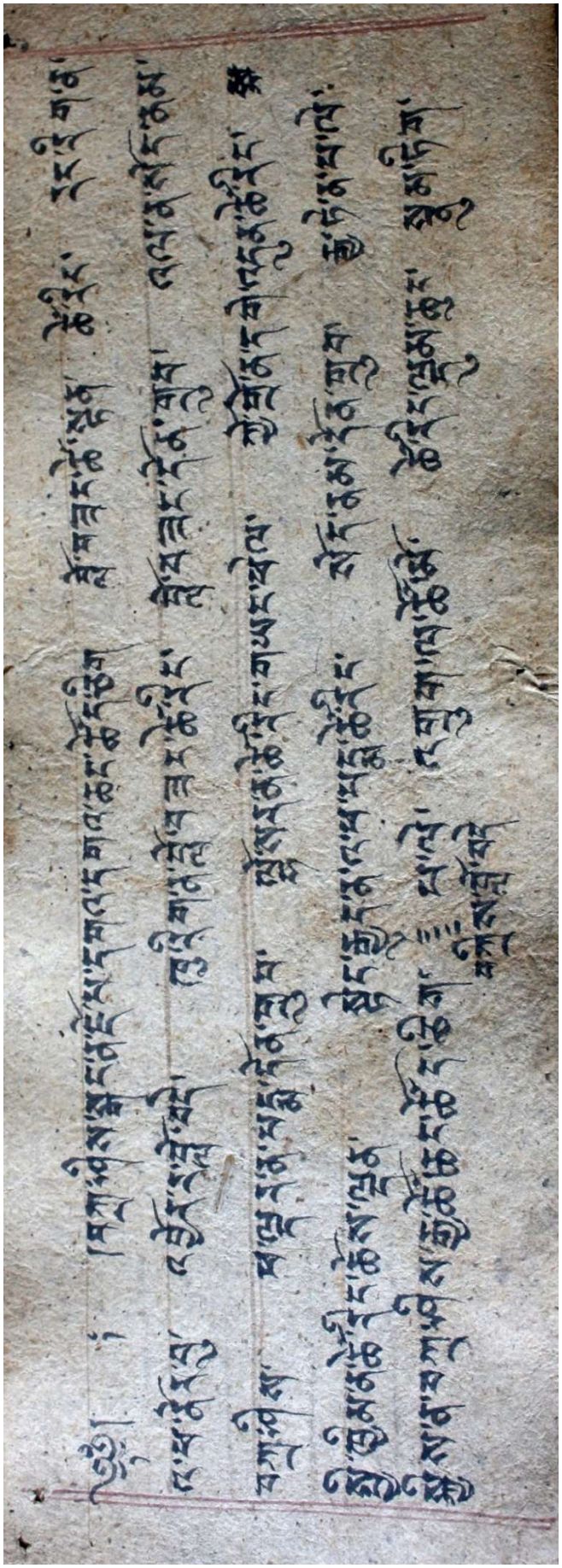


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

Folio 3, verso

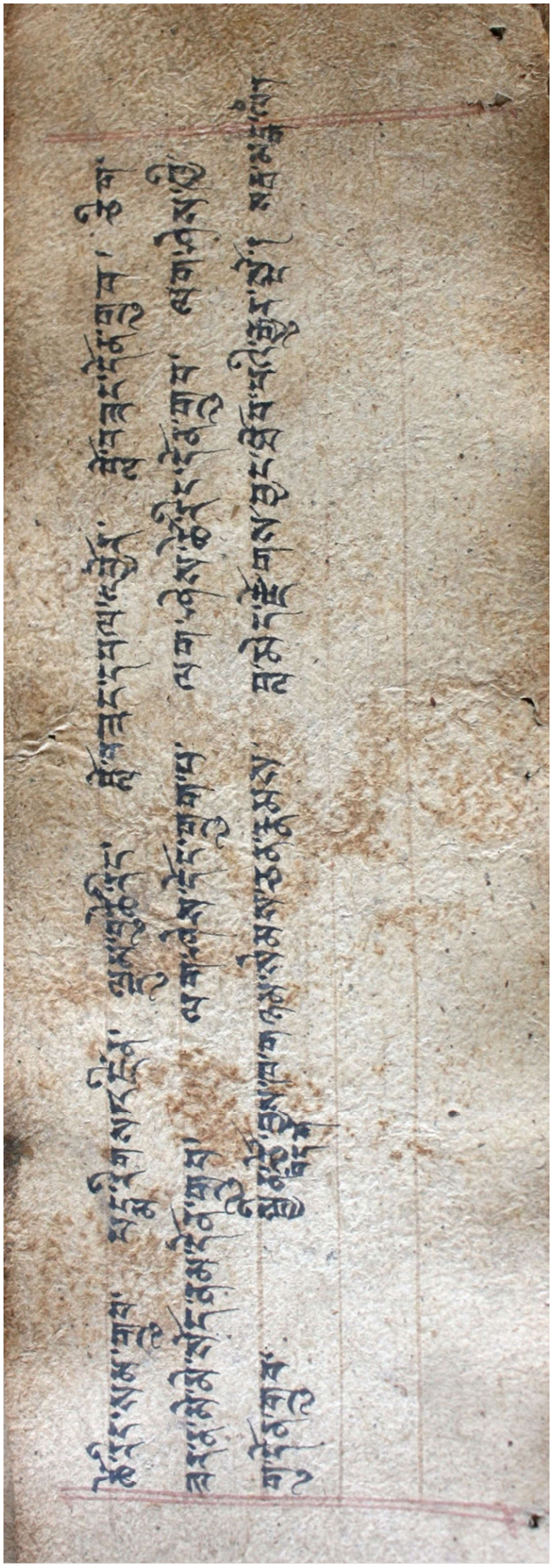


Photo: Tobdan, 2017.

DP4 – Donor Preface from Dangkhar

Date: After mid-15th century
Script: *dbu can*
Folios: 1

Normalised Transliteration

[1] /Oṃ sva sti s[i] dham/ / dus gs[um] (…) kun gyi ’dri (…)

[2] dbyings dag pa’i nam mkha’ la/ /mkhyen [b]rtse lhu [grub] nyi zla’i ’od (…)

[3] rab rdzogs nas/ /sku gsum lhun grub go ’phan[g] m[cho]g gnyis (…)

[4] la/ / snying nas ’dud cing gus pas phyag ’tshal lo/ /mkhas mchog (…)

[5] dngos stobs rig pa’i dbang phyug rgyal tshab pa/ /mdo sngags (…) ’phags pa’i yul sgr[o]d nas/ (…)

[6] ’dir dar mdzad pa’i/ /skyes mchog lo paN rnams la (…) mchog pho brang ti se’i gangs kyi mgul/ ma [d]ros zil chen ma pha[m] ’tsho [’]di

[7] ’gram/ /phun sum tshogs ldan mnga’ ris [s]tod kyi yul/ /pho (…) -r cig /khyed kyi chab srid bzang po’i mnga’ ’og ’dir/ /’bru bcud

[8] ’dzom pa’i spyi ti [g]zhung g[i] dbus/ / sku mkhar mtho la b[rt]an pa’i gra[ng] (…) ’jal/ /spyin pa phyogs med [b]tang bas longs spyod dpal du shar//

[9] yar la dkon mchog mchod cing phyogs med sbyin btong mdzad/ /gdung (…) thugs dgongs (…)

Translation

[1] Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ. All (…) of the three times (…)

[2] (…) in the pure space of the dharmadātu, the spontaneous presence of wisdom and compassion is the radiance of the sun and moon (…)

[3] (…) having been perfected, the spontaneous presence of the three bodies [of the Buddha] (…) the two supreme stages (…)

[4] (…) from the heart I pay homage and respectfully bow down. The eminent scholar (…)

[5] rGyal tshab pa who is the lord of knowledge and realisation. (…) sutra and mantra teachings. Having travelled through the holy land [of India] (…)

[6] (…) made it flourish here. (…) to the eminent translators and paṇḍitas (…) the mansion on the hillsides of the snow-capped Mount Kailash. (…) on the shores of the tepid and resplendent Lake Manasarovar (…)

[7] (…) the excellent land of Ngari [in West Tibet] (…) In your excellent kingdom lies this dominion, where crops and beings

[8] come together under the central government of sPyi ti. The fort is firmly [established] on top of Grang [mkhar] (…) By bestowing gifts without prejudices, enjoyment and wealth appear in all their glory.

[9] [You] make offerings indiscriminately when you worship [the three] rare and sublime [objects of refuge] above. (…) aspiration (…).

Commentary

This important folio was used to mend the backside of a clay statue of Tsong kha pa which is now preserved inside the assembly hall of the old monastery in Dangkhar. Although incomplete and only partially visible, the content of this folio is in line with the donor prefaces discussed in the present appendix. Concerning the political opening, the name of the ruler under whose reign the preface was composed is no longer available; it must be mentioned in line 7 right before 'In your excellent kingdom'. The date of composition of this preface is thus out of reach. However, the phraseology of line 5 corresponds almost word by word to a religious eulogy already found in DP1 and DP2, in which Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), rGyal tshab rje (1364–1432) and mKhas grub rje (1385–1438) are praised in a single verse. It is therefore possible to specify that this donor preface cannot be earlier than the 15th century.

Note

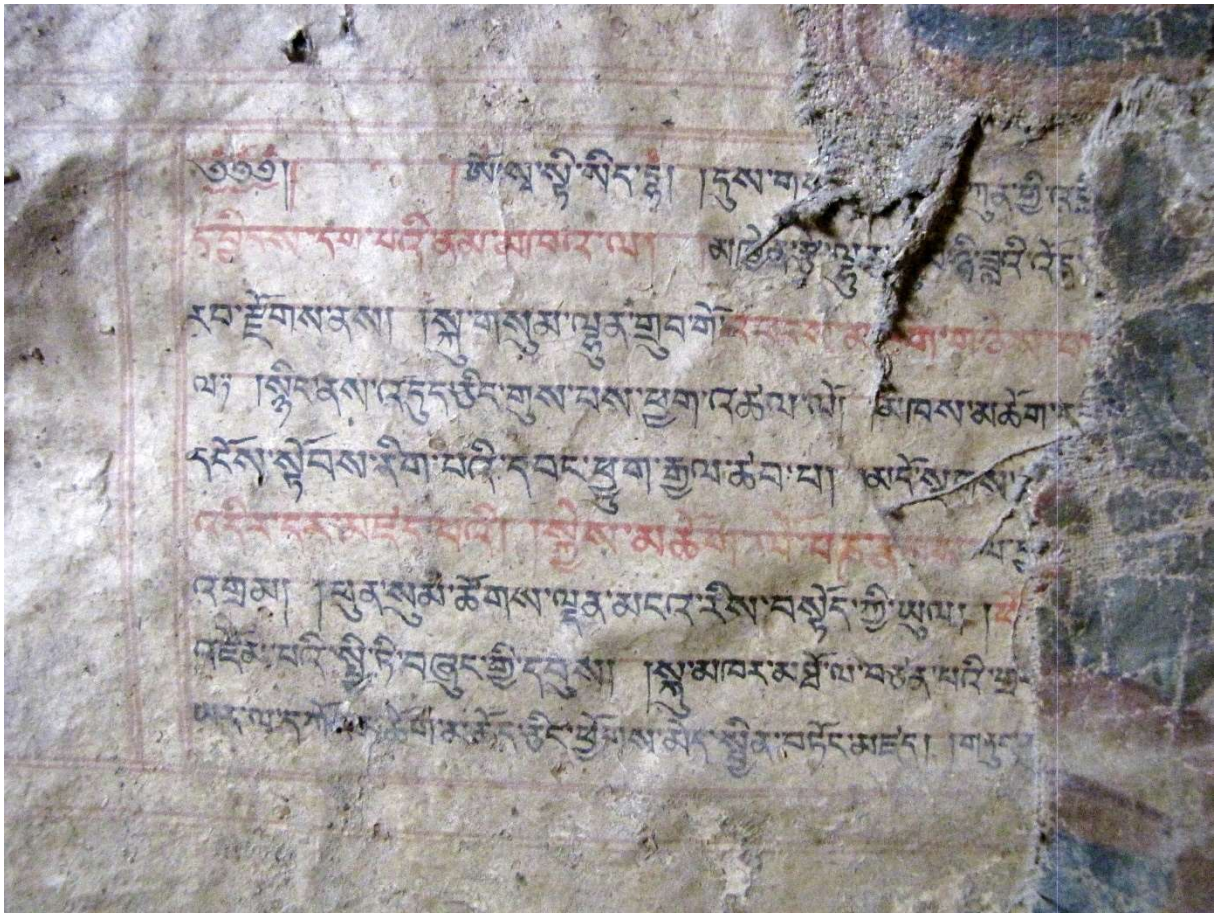
Line 1, *dus gsum (...) kun*: mostly likely 'all the Victorious Ones of the three times' (*dus gsum rgyal ba kun*).

Line 5, *rgyal tshab pa*: sic, for *rgyal tshab rje.*

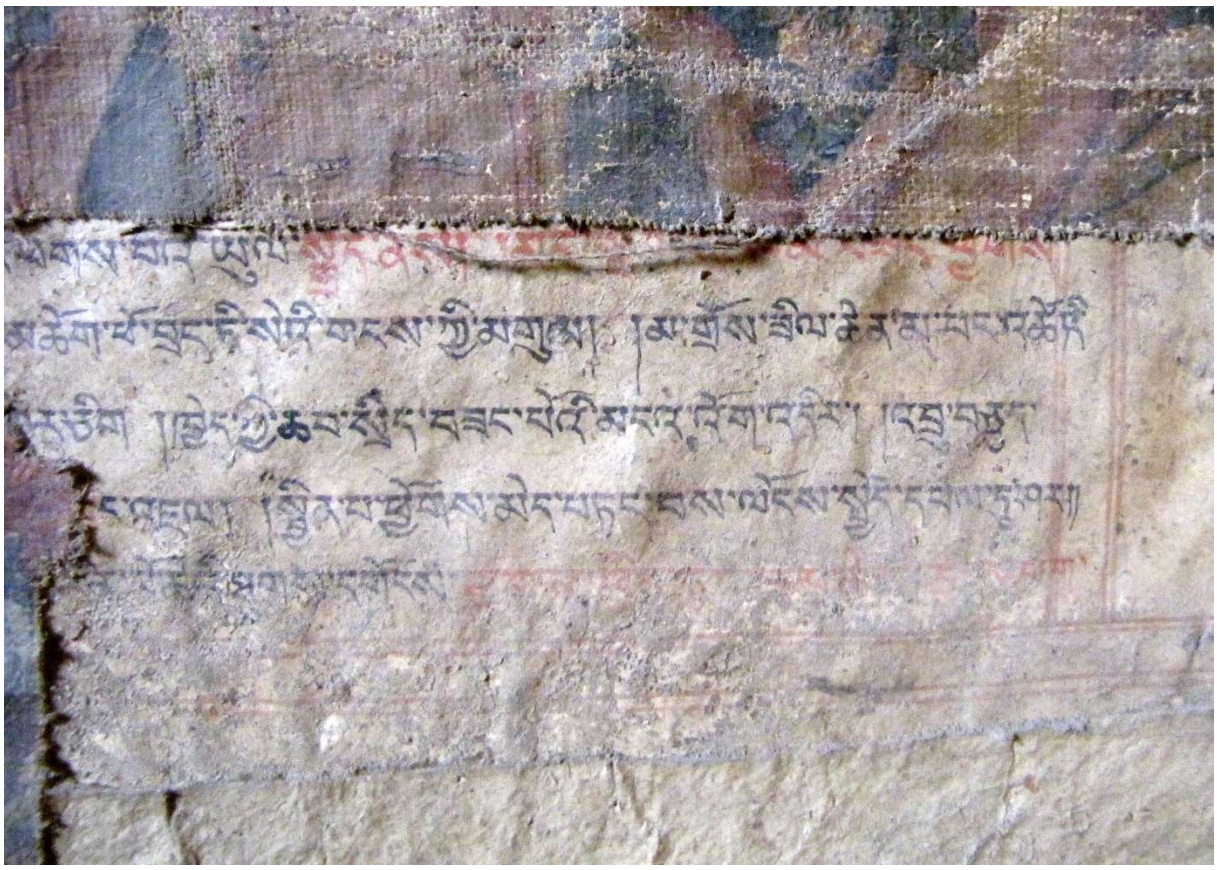
Line 7, -r cig; most likely 'gyur cig' as in the expression 'May the helmet of X be high!' (*dbu rmog mtho gyur cig*) in accordance with the structure and content of other donor prefaces.



The position of the donor preface from Dangkhar on the back of the statue is indictated in red. The middle section of the folio is covered with pieces of different painting scrolls (*thang ka*). Photo: the author, 2011.



Left side of the folio: lines 1 to 9. Photo: the author, 2011.



Right side of the folio: lines 5 to 9. Photos: the author, 2011.

APPENDIX SIX

Legal and Diplomatic Archives from Dangkhar

The documents contained in this appendix are in the possession of Dangkhar Tashi Chöling (*brag mkhar bkra shis chos gling*). Having been kept in a 'letter chest' (*yig sgam*) for centuries, they constitute the historical and legal archives of Lagope, the Gelukpa monastery of the Dangkhar settlement. References to documents will use the abridged form: BmK (for Brag mkhar). Coldstream, who first consulted them in 1912, described these documents as "always in a very confused state, being only a mass of tattered manuscripts packed without any order into leather boxes".[1] This was still the case when I photographed them in 2011 (BmK01-11) and in 2016 (BmK12-30).[2] The entire archives could not be included in this thesis, nor was there any reason to do so. Instead, a selection of twenty-six documents were chosen on the basis of their legibility, the presence of seals, and the interest and relevance of their content. A preliminary translation of BmK01 was published in 2011 and completely revised for this edition.[3] Unprepared as I was to tackle the subtleties of official papers, I am forever indebted to Tsering Gonkatsang (University of Oxford) and Dieter Schuh (IITBS) for the prodigious amount of patience and time spent together looking at them.

To this collection are added two documents photographed by Patrick Sutherland, who kindly shared these images with me in March 2019. The document Jo ba 1A is a royal charter belonging to the household of the astrologer (*jo pa/ba*) of the Dangkhar settlement. Jo ba 1B is a modern handwritten copy of the previous document–written in *dbu can* script and partly revised–presumably at the request of its owner.

[1] COLDSTREAM 1913 : 9.
[2] See Chapter 1.
[3] LAURENT 2013a.

The study of these local archives has been a challenging journey for fairly obvious reasons. The documents reproduced in facsimile and discussed hereafter are both literally and figuratively 'diploma', a term derived from a Greek word meaning 'doubled' or 'folded'. All without exception are official papers of legal and administrative import, and as such fall within the scope of diplomatics. In spite of the deep jurisdictional and procedural aspects of Tibetan and Himalayan societies throughout the ages, Tibetology to date has paid relatively little attention to this field. By and large, the diplomatic study of documents issued in Tibet and in the Himalayas has largely been a preserve of the German school of philological and historical analysis. Headed by historian and Tibetologist Dieter Schuh, this group of scholars includes Christoph Cüppers, Karl-Heinz Everding, Petra Maurer, Hanna Schneider, and Peter Schwieger. In addition, within the Anglophone academic *milieu*, anthropologist and Tibetologist Charles Ramble has also taken a leading role in the study of local archives in Highland Nepal. With regard to the material presented here, the 'provincial character' of these archives has often rendered the deciphering of these documents a high-wire exercise.

Official papers, legal documents, registers, and archives are conventionally classified following different sets of criteria by historians. Here, a first distinction can be drawn between public documents, which are those issued by kings and chanceries (e.g. BmK01, BmK02, BmK03, BmK07, BmK11, BmK19, BmK23, BmK25, Jo ba1), and private documents, which comprise all the others. Another way of classifying these documents is according to whether they record or notify a legal act already existing, or the actual issuing of an act. Evidentiary documents include, for instance, confirmation letters of privileges (e.g. BmK01, BmK11, BmK16, BmK25, Jo ba1), while dispositive documents consist of private contracts (e.g. BmK04, BmK12, BmK17, BmK21, BmK27) and commands (e.g. BmK14, BmK19, BmK23).

All the documents retrieved from Dangkhar were written with ink on paper. Paper samples were sent by the author to the world-leading expert on Himalayan paper, Agnieszka Helman-Ważny in 2016. Although the outcome of her scientific analysis is still pending, it is worth mentioning the noticeable differences in quality between the various types of paper photographed. If traditional Tibetan paper (*bod shog*) was used for documents issued in West Tibet (e.g. BmK03, BmK05) or even in Ladakh (e.g.

BmK02, BmK07), a rather coarse paper with speckled appearance was clearly in use for local documents (e.g. BmK04, BmK26, BmK27). This observation is in line with reports made by nineteenth-century British officials who noted that paper was manufactured from a wild grass in Spiti.[4]

With the exception of a single bilingual text (BmK11), all the documents here are written in classical Tibetan using either cursive (*'khyug*) or semi-cursive (*tshugs ma 'khyug*) style. Yet, here again, substantial differences exist between public documents issued by royal or state chanceries, and formal documents drawn up locally. Documents of the latter group, which form the bulk of the archive, are filled with spelling oddities, grammatical inconsistencies, and regionalisms. In view of the high degree of idiomatic language used, one can question if the term 'vernacular' would not be better suited than 'literary Tibetan' for at least some of these documents.

It is hardly necessary to recall that one of the major tasks of diplomatic studies is to distinguish between genuine documents and forgeries based on detailed examination of external and internal features. To my knowledge and understanding, the historical documents contained in the monastic archives of Dangkhar are either originals, drafts, or copies. Among them, BmK01 and BmK08 are partial transumpts of an earlier document. Twenty-four of these formal documents were certified by means of seals or ink fingerprints (*the mo*, *rtags*). These seals have been subject to a preliminary sphragistic analysis and catalogued in Appendix 7. When the use of a seal came to represent a body of individuals, it is customary to find the expression 'seal passed from hand to hand' (*lag bskor zhus ba'i rtags*). In such a case, a seal would have been passed from person to person, or touched by each signatory, before being applied onto the document.

Likewise, the regular use of legal stock phrases and expressions (e.g. perpetuity and contravention clauses) are highly indicative of the formal nature of the documents. According to

[4] As summarized by Harcourt: "Egerton mentions that a paper is manufactured in Spiti from a kind of grass that grows wild in the Peen valley, and by Manee village, below Dhunkar; and Captain Hay, in his report on Spiti, alludes to the fact 132 *shoogoes* of paper (equal to 600 Hindoostani *takhtas*) were paid in 1839 as part of the Spiti tribute to the ruler of Ladakh. It is probable that this paper was made from the grass above referred to"; see HARCOURT 1871: 255; J.D. CUNNINGHAM 1844: 211; HAY 1850: 438; EGERTON 1864: 41, 51; DIACK 1899: 107.

Western diplomatics, each document is a series of formulae built upon three distinctive parts: the introduction, the main text, and the final protocol.[5] These parts are generally subdivided as follows:

I. The introduction (*protocol*)
  I.1 The invocation (*invocation*)
  I.2 The title (*superscription* or *intitulatio)*
  I.3 The address (*inscriptio*)
  I.4 The formula of greeting (*salutatio*)

II. The main text (*context*)
  II.1 The motive for the issue of the document (*arenga*)
  II.2 The notification (*promulgatio*)
  II.3 The statement (*narratio*)
  II.4 The operative clause (*dispositio*)
  II.5 The penal clause (*sanctio*)
  II.6 The notice of authentication (*corroboration*)

III. The final protocol (*eschatocol*)
III.1 The names (*subscriptiones*) or marks (*signationes*)
III.2 The date of place (*actum*)
III.3 The date of time (*datum*)
III.4 The religious ending (*amen*) and the appraisal (*appreciatio*)

Sometimes, the subdivisions of a document may vary in composition or order. These Latin formulae have been indicated in the translation of each text in italics where feasible.

The general conventions for the presentation of these Tibetan documents have been kept to a minimum. As in Appendix 5, these texts are presented in normalised transliteration with emended spellings and corrections given in square brackets, while abbreviations (*bsdus yig*, *bskungs yig*; e.g. *bkris* for *bkra shis*) and ligatures (e.g. *thuT* for *thugs*) are given in parentheses.

[5] The study of archives and the development of diplomatics as a historical science can be traced back to Jean Mabillon's *De Re Diplomatica* published in 1681. Extensive studies of mediaeval documents eventually became part of the curriculum of many European universities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; see POOLE 1901: 11–30. The present classification, as far as its most significant divisions are concerned, seems apt for the study of non-European documents. The full use of proper diplomatic terminology, as generally adopted by our German colleagues, certainly helps to highlight the structure of written documents issued in Tibet or in the Himalayas; see SCHNEIDER 2002.

Conventions for the presentation of Tibetan text

(…)	lacunae in the text
[ ]	emendations
( )	normalised rendering of ligatures and abbreviated spellings
§	*bskur yig mgo*
(v)	*che mgo*
○	seals and ink fingerprints
Narratio	Diplomatic formulae

BmK01

Date: Iron-Monkey Year, 1740
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug* and *'khyug*
Lines: 26 recto
Seals: 1

Summary

Confirmation letter of privileges (*rgyab gnon*) issued from sGar tog recording the monastic endowments and munificence shown to La sgo dpe Monastery by royal benefactors, religious hierarchs, and patrons.

Normalised Transliteration

1. dbu mdzad / sa dgon gog mig pa'i (…)

2. [m]cho[d] gzhis ra spangs kyi [']grams (…) gsar 'don byas pa la

3. 'dren sa med pa'i rkyen khyod tshos byas 'dug pa de rigs ma 'os pas / da nas bzung chu sbug gi yur bar chu gang

4. shom / la sgo dpe dgon thar pa gling dang / sa dgon gong mig pa gnyis chu mnya(m) chu ma gto(gs) 'the[n] khyer gyi rigs

5. gtan nas mi byed pa dang / la go (…) dgon thar (…) blon sangs (rgy)as 'od z[er] (…) gyis gsar rgyag byas pa'i

6. gu ge chos (rgya)l nas bkrin bskyangs pa'i brang mkhar (…) gzhi (…) pa gsu(m) gyi sa cha dang (…) chu'i gra gu

7. tshul dus mchod kyi thebs sa bon khal gsu(m) gyi sa cha (…) dang zhing kha yang skya gcig / go byang / gung gi /

8. arig / tig ge ring / ma ṇi gong na skya phyed / song kri skya phyed / dga' bzhi bon khal gnyis kyi sa cha

9. lha lung nas don grub dpal mgon skya gcig / tshogs pa rang gis nyos pa'i bcas spungs gi sa cha gang yod / gu

10. ge bdag mos 'bul ba gnang ba'i ras chung pa'i sa rigs tog [ts]e gar (rgy)ab la lha lung nas spen bar khra gsu(m)

11. kyung rtse khra gnyis / 'ol zhing gnyis / ra spang nas zhing rtsa rig /skyog pol dong / gra(m) pa byings / tha snying rgya che ba /

12. skyab ri / smyug gu 'bur / paN chen blo bzang chos kyi (rgya)l mtshan gyis bkrin bskyangs pa'i la ra na sa bon khal lnga'i /

13. sa cha / lha lung nas dbyar gnas la bon khal bdun gyi sa cha / gu ge bdag mo dang / dmag dpon rna(m)s kyis /

14. dge rgyun du grong drag pa gcig / chos (rgya)l gyis bkrin bskyangs pa'i ri zhing zhing gcig ma / ri zhing lhun grub lding /

15. gu ge bdag mos bkrin bskyangs pa'i 'brug pa'i dus kyi sbyin bdag / [d]kor [zas] / gr[w]a rgyun sogs gang yod dang / ra tsa'i

16. sa gzhi gsu(m) gra gu zer ba / lha lung gi sbyin bdag / [d]kor [zas] gr[w]a rgyun / skru dbang / ra spang / gtsu(m) rang gi [d]kor [zas]

17. gr[w]a rgyun / chos ra sa nas bkrin bskyangs pa'i ma Ni nas sa gzhi gcig / sbyin bdag dad can gyi phul ba'i

18. bon zhing / bon khang / nyos zhing / nyos khang / so(gs) so so'i 'bul tho nang gsal ltar dand / gu ge bdag po'i dus /

19. bkrin bskyangs pa'i la go dpe dgon thar pa gling gi [m]cho[d] gzhis / mchod khang / bon zhing / bon khang / sa rigs sa

20. mtsha(m)s sogs la sngar rgyun bzhin mnya(m) za mnya(m) 'thung byed pa las drag zhan sus kyang 'then [r]tsod bkag bya'i /

21. rigs sogs mi byed pa dang / chos (rgya)l na ri[m] kyi bka' shog dang / sbyin bdag dad can gyi 'bul tho'i nang ltar /

22. la 'di nas kyang (rgya)b [s]non byin pa yin pas / mdor na da lta phan gyi 'dzin bdag gang yin la khyod gong 'khod /

23. ser skya drag zhan tshang mas [r]tsod med bde bar gnas 'jug pa dang / gal [sr]i[d] 'd[i] don la mi gnas pa'i rigs khyod /

24. su thad nas byas pa byung kyang sgar [t]og nas 'phral du gcod (rgya) byed thub na dang / de min 'di khar mnya(m) rdzong [brda] byed

25. dgos rgyu yin pa bcas nges pa[r] spang blang 'jol med yong ba gyis /lcags spre[l] zla 3 tshes 4/4 la // (v) gzhan mchod gzhung

26. gnod med [ky]is babs 'brel gang yod la gnan cug // ○

Translation

Narratio

[1] (…) the chant master, the [monks of] the Sa skya monastery at Gog mig (…) [2] the ecclesiastical estate near Ra spang (…) was newly laid out where [3] there was no place to draw water. Since what you did was inappropriate, henceforth, and regardless of the amount of water in the water pipes of the irrigation channels, [4] La sgo dpe Monastery of Thar pa gling and the [monks of] the Sa skya monastery at Gong mig must never make use of water that is not communal water. [5] La sgo [dpe] Monastery of Thar [pa gling] was renovated by the learned preceptor Sangs rgyas 'od zer. [6] The Dharma King of Gu ge graciously granted from Brang mkhar (…) an area the size of three (…) the water rivulets [7] by means of [the establishment of] a monastic endowment worth a plot of three loads of grain (…) and again the full harvest of the [following] fields: Go byang, Gung gi, [8] A rig, Tig go ring; in Upper Ma ṇi, half of the harvest; from Song kri, half of the harvest; from dGa' bzhi, a plot worth two loads of grains. [9] From Lha lung, the full harvest of Don grub dpal mgon. The [monastic] community owns

whatever plots of land of bCas spung, which they purchased. [10] The Lady Sovereign of Gu ge donated all the cultivable land of Ras chung pa. From Lha lung, three *khra* [from] sPen bar, [11] two *khra* [from] Kyung rtse, and two clover fields. In Ra spang, [the pieces of land of] Zhing rtsa rig, rKyog po ldong, Gram pa byings, the large Tha snying, [12] sKyab ri, and sMyug gu 'bur. Panchen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan graciously granted in La ra a plot worth five loads of grain. [13] In Lha lung, a plot worth seven loads of grain [was given towards] the summer retreat. The Lady Sovereign of Gu ge and the generals [14] donated [the harvest of] a good household for the accumulation of merit. The Dharma King graciously granted the hillside field of Zhing gcig ma and the hillside field of lHun grub lding. [15] The Lady Sovereign of Gu ge graciously presented the patrons from the time of the 'Brug pa, food offerings, novices, and so forth, as much as possible, and [16] three bare lands called Gra gu. The patrons of Lha lung [graciously granted] food offerings [and] novices; the food offerings [and] novices of sKra 'ang, Ra spang, and gTsum rang. [17] Chos ra sa nas graciously granted a piece of land in Ma ṇi. Devout patrons offered [18] assigned fields, assigned households, purchased fields and houses, and so forth as clearly established in the register of donation. In the time of the Sovereign of Guge, [19] the ecclesiastical estates, the chapels, the assigned fields and households, the territory and borders, and so forth were graciously granted to La go dpe Monastery of Thar pa gling.

Dispositio

As we keep eating and drinking together like in former times, it is not appropriate for anyone, of lower or higher rank, to dispute and refute these facts. [21] I have thereby given confirmation of the successive Dharma kings' charters and the register of donations of devout patrons. [22] In short, whatever are the properties of the present owners, those aforementioned, [23] clerics and lay people, commoners and the better off, all of you must let them be in peace without dispute.

Sanctio

Should the present meaning be contravened, [24] whosoever appeared to be responsible will be immediately prosecuted from sGar tog. Or else, you will need to be summoned and brought to this very place. [25] Make sure you do not mistake what is to be adopted from what is to be rejected.

Eschatocol

[Issued] on the second fourth day of the third month of the Iron-Monkey Year [1740]. (*seal*) Also, let the [religious] offerings be unimpaired as intended.

Commentary

This confirmation letter of privileges belonging to La sgo dpe Monastery is by far the most important record related to the history of Dangkhar. Several passages of this document are given *in extenso* in BmK08. However, variants between the two texts exist. Furthermore, BmK08 would appear to be the transumpt of a lost manuscript known as *The Crown Register on Grain Collection*. There is thus reason to believe that *The Crown Register* served as the original document for both BmK01 and BmK08.
The date of issue of the confirmation letter can be securely attributed to the 30th April, 1740, on account of being the only Iron-Monkey Year whose third month had two fourth days.[6]

[6] I thank Dieter Schuh for clarifying the date of the document based on the graphic convention whereby the dual occurrence of a specific day in Tibetan calendrical system is indicated by the same number written twice on top of each other.

Notes

Line 2, *ra spangs*: a small settlement situated upstream of the Lingti River in the direction of Lha lung; see BmK05.

Line 5, *blon*: BmK08 reads *slob dpon* whence the use of 'master' rather than 'officer' or 'minister' (*blon po*).

Line 6, *gra gu*: a term which seems to be originally related to the corners (*gra*) of a small piece of land (*gu*). The term *grwa bu* is reported in Zanskar in the naming of fields.[7] It is used in other documents (i.e. BmK07, BmK08, BmK27) and could perhaps describe a source of water, a rivulet, or an irrigation channel according to interviews conducted in Spiti.

Line 9, *bcas spung*: a toponym referring to an area located roughly 1.5 km above the new monastery north-east of the lake. This place name also features in BmK08 and BmK13.

Line 10, *gu ge bdag mos 'bul ba gnang ba'i*: BmK8 reads *gu ge bdag mos bka' drin skyangs pa'i*.

Line 10, *tog tse gar rgyab*: Literally, 'wherever a hoe was used' whence 'all cultivated land'.

Line 12, *paN chen blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan*: the 4th Panchen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mthsan (1570–1662).

Line 13, *dbyar gnas*: a summer residence and a period of religious confinement, known as *vārṣika* in Sanskrit, during which Buddhist monks and nuns reaffirm their religious commitments.

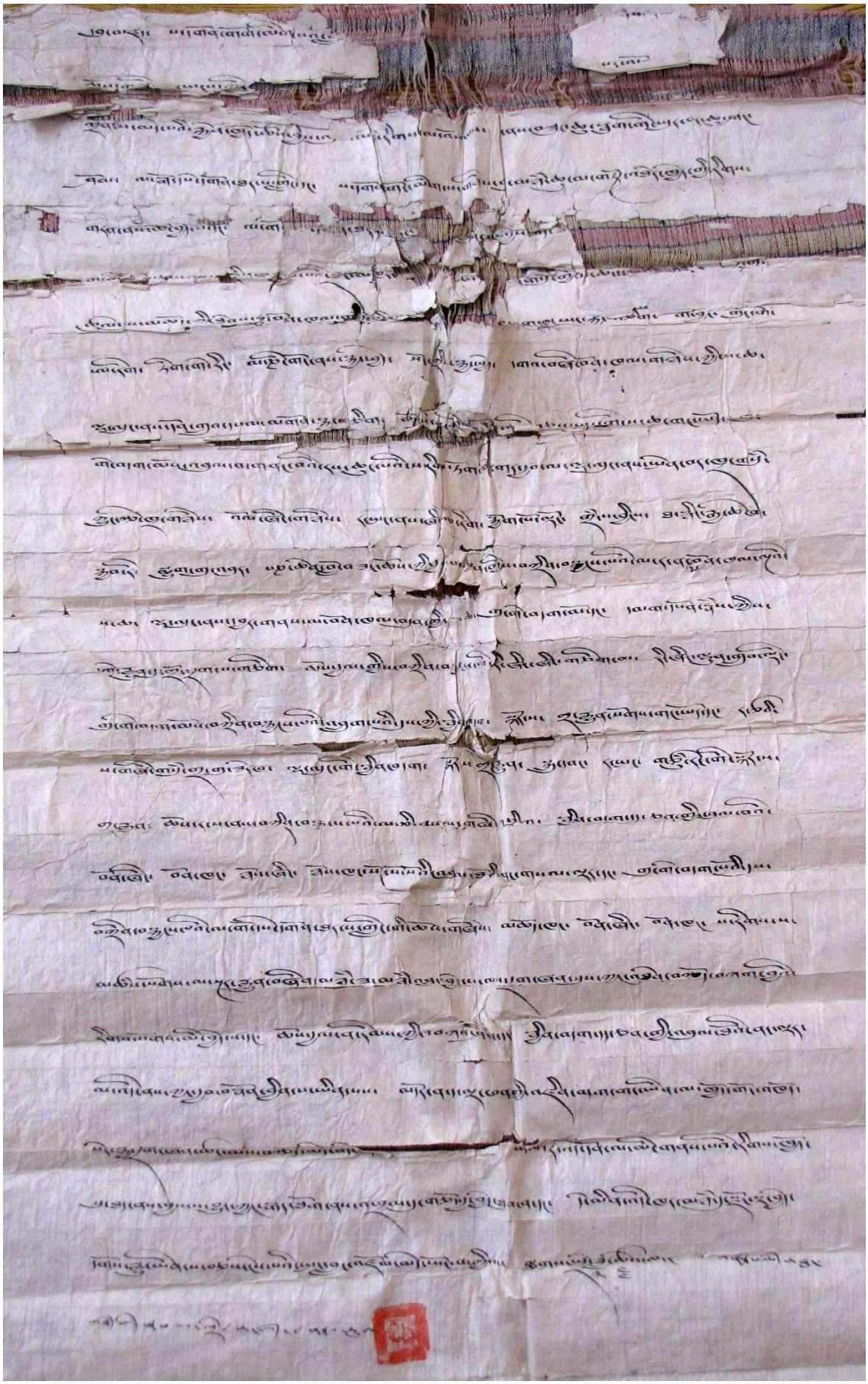
Line 14, *ri zhing*: a field located on hill slopes away from a settlement.

Line 15, *gu ge bdag mo*: BmK08 reads "the Lady Sovereign of Gu ge and her progeny" (*gu ge bdag mo yum sras*).

Line 15, *ra tsa*: similar to *ra tsa med* (mineral) hence 'bare'.

Line 16, *gtsum rang*: a small settlement situated upstream the Lingti River in the direction of Lha lung.

[7] GUTSCHOW & GUTSCHOW 2003.



BmK02

Date: Earth-Tiger Year, 1818
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 14 recto
Seals: 2

Summary

Royal charter (*bka'*) issued by the King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal (r.*c.*1802–1840) in response to a request from the monasteries of Spiti to end animal sacrifices in Dangkhar.

Normalised Transliteration

1. (…) 'gyur don grub rnam par (rgy)al ba lha'i bka' // ○

2. spyi ti mkhar dpon / grong dpon / gnyer pa

3. do kha che / rgad po / bcu dpon / chi[bs] dpon / [m]dor na / rgan mgo yod dmangs bcas la springs

4. pa / de [kh]ar brag mkhar rdzong du lha chen po'i 'gur lha [g]so[l] dus / dbyar mo thang du sngar s[r]sol med

5. pa[r] [phy]i[s] su spyi ti['i] rgan dmangs rna(m)s nas / (v) sku mkhar du gsol [r]as zhus pa / mkha' (rgy)u'i

6. nas [kh]al nyi shu [r]tsa bzh[i] / gsol [r]as zhus na [s]byin pa yin shing / [r]gyu de la brten na

7. rgan dmangs bcas na[s] / nas [kh]al ny[i] shu [r]tsa bzh[i] de g.yag rin du sprad na[s] / rgan gsum

8. thog na[s] g.yag [kh]yu [sp]u[s] [g]cig 'dzin rkyang byas 'dug pa / phyi[s] su mi [s]er [kh]yer zhan la

9. brtan nas / spyi ti [d]gon lag lnga ba'i bla ma las sne rna(m)s [n]as [r]ten bcas zhus 'byor la

10. mkhar na[s] nas [kh]al ny[i] shu [r]tsa bzh[i] phud bt[ang] du by[ed] na dgongs ba zhus song ba / da phyin

11. la spyi t[i] mnga' 'og rna(m)s nas g.yag [b]zung [kh]yu [de]d [s]o(gs) [g]ten na[s] by[ed] mi [ch]og [c]ing

12. [kh]yod mkhar sdod ri[m] [pas] brta(gs) [n]as d[e] la mi gnas pa byung tsh[e] shar na mi ['']thus pa

13. nges par gyis / [kh]yod gong ['']khod rna(m)s nas 'di la (so s[o]) nas slar y[a]ng yig [ph]r[i]n 'di la [s]or

14. gnas yong ba gyis / sa stag zla tshes / pho brang lha che'i (v) [b]zhug[s] gnas [nas] bris // ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1] (…) divine order of the Victorious [Tshe dpal mi] 'gyur don grub [rnam rgyal]. (*seal*)

Promulgatio

[2] This is addressed to the prefect of the fort of sPyi ti, the village headman, the steward, [3] the Do kha che, the elders, the leader of ten, the head groom, in short all those holding public offices.

Narratio

[4] As for the time of the thanksgiving ritual for the great deity [which takes place at] the district fort of Brag mkhar: there was no such custom on the plain of dByar mo in former times. [5] Later, the elders and the people of sPyi ti requested that [his cult] be established in the fort. [6] In order to [worship him] with offerings, a gift of twenty-four loads of barley from mKha rgyu was bestowed. For that reason, [7] the elders and the people shall give twenty-four loads of barley in payment for a yak. [8] On the part of three elders, a yak of good quality was regularly selected from the herd. Later, due to the low economic conditions of the common people, [9] the lamas and monastic officials of the five branch monasteries of sPyi ti presented a petition with ceremonial scarf, [10] and sought exemption of twenty-four loads of barley from the [district] fort.

Dispositio

[11] Henceforth, those under the authority of sPyi ti shall never be engaged in selecting and chasing a yak [from] a herd. [12] In order that [such events] do not occur, those of you holding offices in the fort ought to ensure that such a thing is never allowed. [13] All above mentioned [officials] must abide by this written document.

Eschatocol

[14] This was issued from the great divine palace [of Leh] in the Earth-Tiger Year [1818]. (*seal*)

Commentary

In the present case, the use of the term *lha gsol* appears as a euphemism for a 'red offering' (*dmar mchod*). Animal sacrifices in the forms of yaks, or goats in later times, were conventionally carried out on the third day of the New Year. The altar (*lha tho*) located on top of the district fort was first renewed. Men in charge of the sacrifice would bring the animal to the fort, cut open the victim and tear out its heart. The meat was traditionally shared among all those having attended the ceremony. Local informants state that bloody sacrifices were conducted until the late 1970s or early 80s when the new head of the monastery in Dangkhar, dGe shes lha rams pa Blo bzang legs ldan, ended the practice and had part of the district fort transformed into a nunnery.

The two seals used by Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal in the present document have been studied by Cüppers.[8] The red round seal stamped at the end of the *intitulatio* was also used by two other kings of Ladakh and is found again in BmK07.

[8] CÜPPERS 2016.

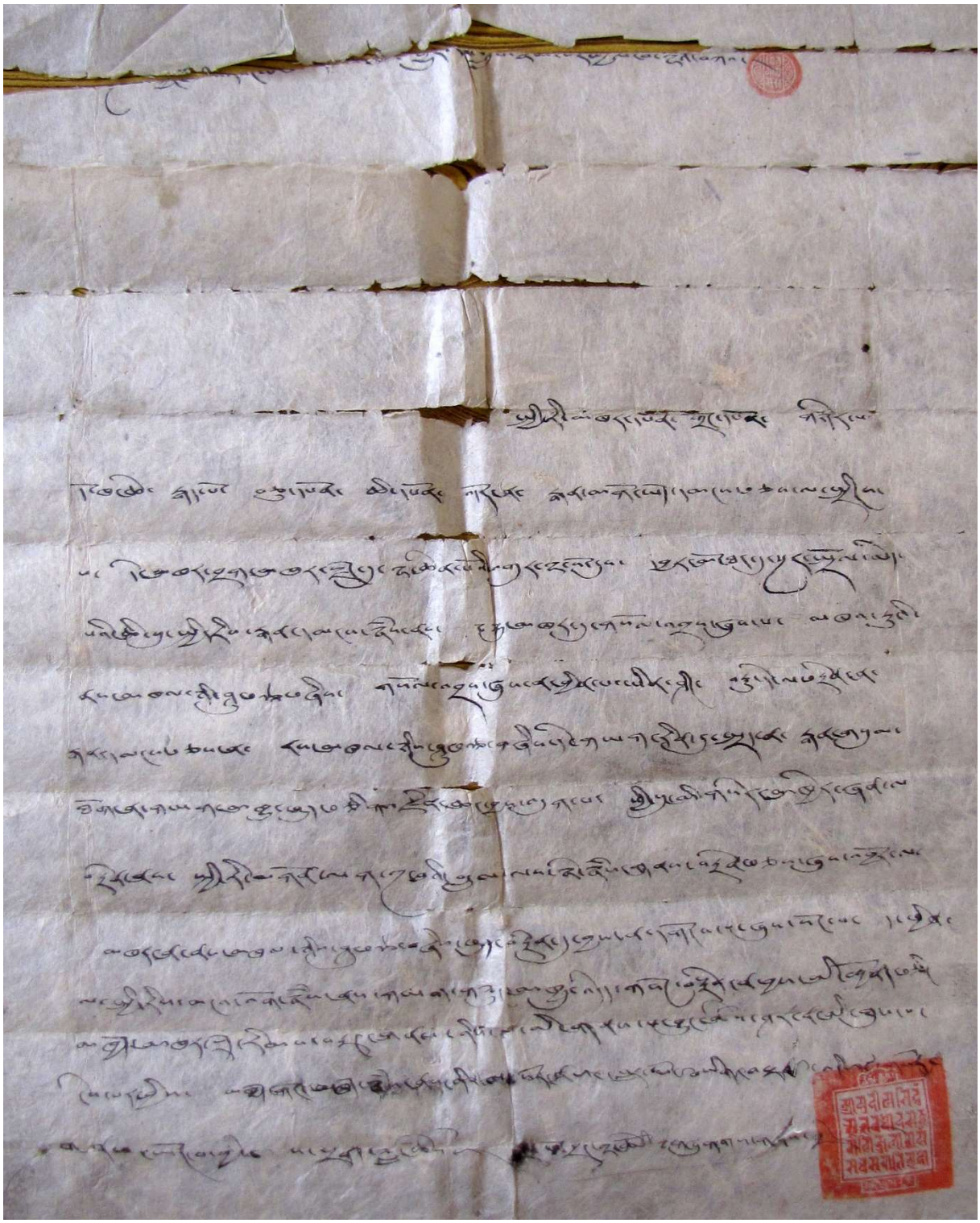
Notes

Line 3, *rgan mgo*: sic, for *'gan khur*?

Line 4, *lha chen po*: territorial deity (*yul lha*) known as Seb lha ma, also Seb bla ma.

Line 4, *dbyar mo thang*: the plain of dByar mo is a small area situated uphill next to the Dangkhar Lake overlooking the settlement.

Line 8, *mkhyer*: sic, for *mkhos*?



BmK03

Date: Wood-Ox Year, 1685
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 10 recto
Seals: -

Summary

Copy of a decree from Tholing and originally issued by the dGa' ldan pho brang government of Tibet in order to regulate the economic activities of emissaries in Western Tibet.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § spyi ti mkhar dpon do ba che [kh]ang gnyer / grong dpon / 'gro 'grims bang chen dbang [b]tsan rna(m)s [n]as ma zad pa'i / phyogs dbus mnga' ri[s] mi

2. [g]cig pa'i dpon [kh]ungs gyi las byed mi / rgan mgo yod dmangs bcas rna(m)s nges dgo[s] [r]gyur / 'di [kh]ar gzhung sa rin po che'i / de[b] grar ['g]od pa'i

3. spyi ti sa dge rnying gsu(m) gyi dgon / 'di pa'i mchod gzhis 'di bar chags brten / (v) gzhung sa skyabs mgon rgya[l] dbang y[id] [bzh]in [nor] [b]u [g]tsos pa'i zhabs brtan

4. sgrub (rgy)u'i chags [r]ten 'di bar la / [kh]yod [b]ang chen [d]rag b[ts]an pa su thad nas / dpon ring gnyan zhus mi sgrod pa'i las tshod kho na byas nas /

5. [m]chod [g]zhis [s]er skya 'di bar la bab b[l]tas 'gro [ts]ad gyi[s] / khral rigs gsar 'gel / 'ba(m) ['']tshong spus brgyur / dmag [g]la rmu spyi sngar med [k]yis [kh]ral

6. rigs bang chen ring thung 'gro mi rna(m)s nas / dos rta 'ul [kh]al ma / ga rtsas 'u lag / thab shing za cha chugs tshir so lo / sha lag khral /

7. chang mi hreng [s]ogs mdor na / mi ['']bab pa'i khral rigs [s]ogs gsar 'gel byas mi chog [c]ing mchod gzhis 'di bar / mtha' [m]tshams [k]yi

8. dgon [g]zhir [s]ong nas / s[b]rang ma me 'od du mi chags pa (lta bu) byung tshe shar n[a] / gzhung sa ba'i zhabs brtan chag pa ma zad / [s]er skya

9. 'chags min byung na / (v) gzhung khri(m)s [k]yi rtsa ra [d]rag po spyod nges yin pa / de ltar mi dgos pa[s] / [kh]yod gong ['']khod su thad nas bde bar gnas

10. bcug / shing glang zla tshe[s] la / mtho lding bla brang na[s] bris //

Translation

Promulgatio

[1] The prefect of the fort of sPyi ti, the Do ba che, the steward, the village headman, the powerful travelling emissaries in addition to [2] the functionaries of local lords in Ngari and Central Tibet, all those holding offices must clearly obey.

Narratio

[3] The monasteries of the Sa skya pa, dGe lugs pa, and rNying ma pa [traditions] of sPyi ti, whose ecclesiastical land properties are established here, are the base for the performance of religious services for those whose leader is the wish-fulfilling protector and victorious lord (i.e. Dalai Lama) [of the] precious Government of Tibet. [4] In this regard, you, the emissaries and powerful noblemen or whosoever you may be, exerted only inappropriate and autocratic measures. According to the circumstances, you levied new taxes as much as possible [amongst] [5] the clergy and laity of the ecclesiastical estate. [You practiced] forced exchange and compulsory business. There has been unprecedented taxes on military wages and *rmu spyi*. [6] From couriers and long-and-short distance travellers, [you requested] transport animal and horse corvée obligations, *ga rtsas* post service, firewood, provision food, *chugs tshir so lo*, taxes on meat and goat, [7] barley ale, vagrants and so on.

Dispositio

In short, any new taxes and compulsory services shall not be imposed. With respect to this ecclesiastical estate, if this were to happen on the land of these border monasteries – [8] like flies unable to resist the light of a [burning] flame – , it would not only [cause] the interruption of religious services of the government authorities but [9] would also [contribute to] displacing the clergy and laity.

Sanctio

Severe punishments under governmental law shall be duly executed. In order to avoid that, you, who are mentioned above, whosoever you may be, shall let [them] abide in peace.

Eschatocol

[10] This was issued from the monastic residence of mTho lding in the Wood-Ox Year [1685].

Commentary

The publication of this document appears to be related to the arrival in Spiti of an official from Lhasa. Following a report of unrest at the western border, Thang grong pa was assigned district officer (*gzhis sdos*) of Spiti by the regent of Tibet in 1685. He was replaced by Rong dga' bde ba in 1687 (see Chapter 4 section 4.6).

A second copy of this decree was retrieved from the Sakyapa monastery of sTeng rgyud in Spiti. Both documents are identical despite some spelling discrepancies. Yet, they do not appear to have been written by the same hand.[9]

Notes

Line 2, *rgan mgo*: sic, for *'gan khur*?

Line 3, *gzhung sa skyabs mgon rgyal dbang yid bzhin nor bu*: the expression 'the government of the wish-fulfilling protector and victorious lord' refers to the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Government (*dga' ldan pho brang*).

[9] See document sTeng-rgyud 5 in HEIMBEL & SCHUH forthcoming.

BmK04

Date: Iron-Sheep Year
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 17 recto, 1 verso
Seals: 5

Summary

Written agreement (*gan tshig*) drawn by the five monastic colleges of Dangkhar to enforce a hunting prohibition within the sanctuary hill of Ri res spe.

Normalised Transliteration

1v. yi ge 'di [m]i chen po por go / gser gar [g]yi '[d]ra [bsh]u[s] yin //

1r. // phan bde 'byung gnas khri(m)s bdag (rin po che)'i (v) zhabs drung du /

2. zhu ba bdag ming sha(m)s gsal blo[s] [b]lang[s] 'gyur med ky[i] gan tshig [g]tsang mar

3. phul snying la / lags phel dgon gy[i] ri res spe sngar nas / gu ge khri (rgy)al mo'i thu(gs) [b]sa(m) rna[(m)] dag gi

4. sgo nas se(m)s can snying rj[e] la / dgongs nas / brag sdong ri res spe srung ri phul bar [b]stun / ri [d]wa(gs) [b]sad [m]khan

5. byung rung bka' gros / [m]cho[d] [g]zhir / btang zhal [g]ros yang yang byas rung [kha] ['']cham kyang / da dung yul

6. tsho yul tsho zhal gros [g]cig tu zhib sbril ba la [ka] [b]a mi 'gyur ka [dbr]ag [do] [s]dong / mkhas pa mi 'gyur [ch]ed

7. du yig cha [r]do la [rk]os zer ba byung bas / de la mi ['']thus pa'i mi ngan nang [g]ta(m) phyi la sky[e]l [ba] phyi [g]ta(m) [l]kog du sbas

8. l[a]s 'bras khya[d] [g]sod byas phar [dk]ru[g] byas byung phyin / mi ma shes pa rnams la bka' [s]gos [g]nyer du [g]tad

9. pa'i yi dam (rdo rje) 'ji(gs) byed myur mdzad y[e] shes kyi mgon po / dam can chos kyi (rgy)al po / dpal ldan dmag

10 [z]or gy[i] (rgy)al mo / (rgy)al po chen po rna[(m)] thos sras / [rdzu] ['phr]ul [m]th[u] dang ldan pa'i / (rgy)al po sku [l]nga [r]na(m)s kyi[s] [b]sad pa dang

11. gzir ba dang spra[d] pa dang rings ba dang / [r]mug pa dang sdig[s] shing dpa' [s]kong ba la so(gs) / [d]rag p[o]'i las kyi[s] tshar [g]cod de

12. thal ba'i [r]dul phran bzhin du / [br]lag pa'i ['']phrin las mdzad gcig / mi rna(m)s gyi shes pa'i su thad nas [d]ra[n] [g]ta(m) ser skye[l]

13. [ny]o[g] pa [g]ting [s]long / ri sgul [m]tsho skyom / rtso[d] p[a] [gy]e[n] log / kha [g]cig lce gnyis byung tshe / khri(m)s zhabs su 'ba'

14. gser [s]rang gang / zhu ngo sgron (rgy)u med pa[r] zh[u] zhing / lcags mo lug lo ba'i / zla 4 tshe[s] 13 [bs]tan don la[r] (rgy)a'i [ch]ed du yi[g] cha

15. 'di bzhin la [bs]kal pa'i bar du gnas dgos don du / lags spel bla spyi lag [s]kor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ ma Ni 'og ma dge 'dun

16. lag [s]kor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ ma Ni gong m[a] dge 'dun lag [s]kor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ brang khar dge 'dun lag [s]kor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○

17. lha lung dge 'dun lag [s]kor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1 verso] This document is a copy of the great Por go['s] *gser gar*.

Inscriptio

[1 recto] To the Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law who is a source of benefits and happiness.

Narratio

[2] We, as clearly named below, have freely and willingly drawn up a written agreement. [3] In essence: [Regarding] Ri res spas of Lags phel Monastery, in former times the queen of the throne of Guge [4] had looked at sentient beings with genuine compassion and agreed to offer Brag sdong ri res spe as a hill sanctuary.

[5] Discussions were held as to whether it is acceptable for [hunters to] kill animals [there]. Although it was unanimously approved and repeatedly discussed that [those individuals ought to be] sent to the ecclesiastical estate, [6] [the people of] the villages are [hereby informed] once again in order to ensure the understanding [of good practice].

But as the saying goes, "For the pillar to be steadfast, join its middle parts together. For the scholar to be steadfast, [7] engrave the words in stone". In this regard, unauthorized and dishonest people have disclosed information outside and concealed public matters, [8] disregarding the law of causality and instigating dissentions hither and thither.

Dispositio

In order to encourage public order among these ignorant people, [9] may the swift-acting wisdom protectors and tutelary deities Vajrabhairava, [Yama] Dharmarāja, Śrimatī Pārvatī [10] Rājñī, the Great [Guardian] King Vaiśravaṇa, and the five supernatural and mighty Conquerors kill and [11] torment [them], banish and expel [them], bite, threat, terrorize [them] and so on. May [all these protectors] annihilate [them] and [12] turn [them] into ash dust through their wrathful activities.

Sanctio

Whosoever is cognizant [of these facts yet] was to put forward new arguments from memory, [13] stir up sludge, shake the mountain, agitate the lake, foment disputes, have two tongues in one mouth, in

such an event, a penalty of [14] one ounce of gold should be paid to the Upholder-of-the-Law without objection.

Eschatocol

[This was written] on the 13th of the 5th Month of the Iron-Sheep Year. For the sake of the doctrine and the general interest, may this document [15] be enforced for the duration of an eon.

Seal of Lags spel governing council, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). Seal of Lower Ma ṅi monastic congregation, [16] passed from hand to hand (*seal*). Seal of Upper Ma ṅi monastic congregation, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). Seal of Brang khar monastic congregation, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). [17] Seal of Lha lung monastic congregation, passed from hand to hand (*seal*).

Notes

Line 1, *gser gar*: this term could perhaps be a Hindavi loanword for a written endorsement (*sikār*). Alternatively, it could also be related to the Persian word for hunting (*shikār*), which was commonly used in British India.

Line 4, *brag sdong ri res spe srung ri*: this topnyom designates a hilly area and sanctuary located on the other side of the Spiti River from Dangkhar.

BmK05

Date: Earth-Bird Year, 1729
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 10 recto, 1 verso
Seals: 1

Summary

Notification letter (*gsung shog*) issued by the monastic house of bKra shis sgang in West Tibet to all those living within the jurisdiction area of Spiti with respect to a dispute over the irrigation channel of the riverbank in the small village of Ra spang.

Normalised Transliteration

1v. pha pa la ra [sp]ang gram pa'i yur ba'i gsung shog

1r. § spi ti [kh]ul [g]yi sa yi char 'khod pa'i / lha sde / mi [s]de / rdzong [s]dod / gnyer las

2. byed rgan bcu mi man[g] bcas kyis nges rgyur / legs sgo spe dgon gyi mchod [g]zhi[s] ra spang

3. gyi gram pa zer ba'i sa skor [g]yi yur ba slob dpon dge 'dun yar 'phel skabs / ra spang ky[i]

4. phu nas span[g] [r]dol byung nas gram pa'i yur ba sha[g] mas [m]nan par brten / zhing bying[s] la

5. chu ma thon par / ra spang gi chu nas zhing (phran [b]u) [b]tab bon blangs nas mi rabs gsu(m)

6. song 'dug pa dang / chu byings [gts]angs po na[s] 'dren rgy[u] la / 'di lo yur ba 'don skabs

7. go mig pas gram pa spyi sa thang yin zer snyad 'dug pa ma 'os pa bcas rtsod med dang / dge

8. 'dun yar 'phel skabs la go spe pas klu [kh]ang la yang dar [l]cog [b]tsu(gs) 'dug pa bcas

9. la / khyod gong 'khod [s]er skya [s]us kyang snyad med bde bar yi ge 'dzin bcug pa

10. gyis / sa bya zla tshes la (bkra [shis] sgang) bla brang nas bris // ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1 verso] As for [the entry] *pha*: A notification letter about to the irrigation channel of the riverbank in Ra spang

Promulgatio

[1 recto] All those inhabiting the land within the jurisdiction area of sPi ti – clergy, laity, the district prefect of the fort, the steward, [2] officials, the ten elders, and the common people – are hereby informed.

Narratio

The irrigation channel in the area known as the riverbank of Ra spang [belonged to] the ecclesiastical estate of Legs sgo spe Monastery at the time of the learned preceptor dGe 'dun yar 'phel. [4] The meadows [situated] above Ra spang having been flooded, the irrigation channel of the riverbank became littered with gravel. [5] As water could not be conveyed to most of the fields, water from Ra spang [was used] for the cultivation of a few assigned fields during three generations, while [6] the remaining water was drawn from the river itself. This year, when it was time to dig up the irrigation channels, [7] the people of Go mig falsely claimed the riverbank to be communal land. This is indefensible and beyond dispute as at the time of dGe [8] 'dun yar 'phel the people of La sgo spe had even planted a prayer-flag mast at the shrine of a *klu*.

Dispositio

[9] You, the above mentioned, clergy or laity, whosoever you may be, must uphold this document and let peace prevail without malice.

Eschatocol

[10] This was issued from the monastic house of bKra shis sgang in the Earth-Bird Year. (*seal*)

Commentary

Ra spang is a small settlement situated on the right side of the Lingti River in the direction of Lha lung. The hamlet was recorded as Ra ma in British settlement reports and listed under both the lower (*sham*) and middle (*bar*) administrative units of Spiti.[10] The cultivated areas belonging to Ra spang was assessed to be 2 and 3 acres respectively in 1891. British officials did not record any grain revenues assigned to either the government (*nas khral*) nor to the ecclesiastical estates (*bon*). Following Coldstream's assessment, however, it was decided that a revenue worth Rs. 8.16 would yet be levied as ecclesiastical dues and collected with effect as of 1913.

The documents from Spiti studied by Schuh did not yield any figures vis-à-vis this hamlet. The historian and Tibetologist is yet of the opinion that the settlement of Ra ma should be assigned solely to the middle administrative unit of Spiti in view of its geographical location.[11] This seems to be in contradistinction with observations made by colonial administrators who recognised that some villages could be paying revenues in more than one administrative unit.[12]

In light of this document, it is clear that some fields were cultivated in Ra spang on behalf of the monastery of the Dangkhar settlement and thus subject to ecclesiastical dues (*dgon pa'i bon*). Other

[10] COLDSTREAM, 1913: 13–14.

[11] SCHUH 2016b: 309.

[12] "The distribution of the *jama* [i.e. uncultivated land (*jamnā*)] between hamlets is far from regular. This is most noticeable where one hamlet pays revenue in more than one *kothi*, and the holdings belonging to different *kothis* are treated as separate hamlets. At the darbar at Dangkhar this point was discussed with the people, and they expressed a strong desire that no attempt should be made to alter the present custom unless this was absolutely necessary"; see COLDSTREAM 1913: 11.

fields in Ra spang, which also belonged to the monastery, are enumerated in BmK01. One of them was locally known under the name 'riverbank sunk in water' (*gram pa byings*) and seems to be referring to the area discussed above. This situation may perhaps explain why Ra ma was listed by British officials under the lower administrative unit of Spiti to which Dangkhar belonged. Although the communal ecclesiastical estate constituted a different administrative unit (*mchod gzhis*), it is possible that the fields in Ra spang assigned to Legs sgo spe Monastery were incorrectly recorded by the British as being the property of the Dangkhar settlement instead.

As for the present case, it was brought under the purview of the monastic house of bKra shis sgang in West Tibet but does not appear to have been serious enough as to include a *sanctio* clause. The matter was eventually raised again and another decree was issued by bKra shis sgang in the Iron-Pig Year, 1731.[13]

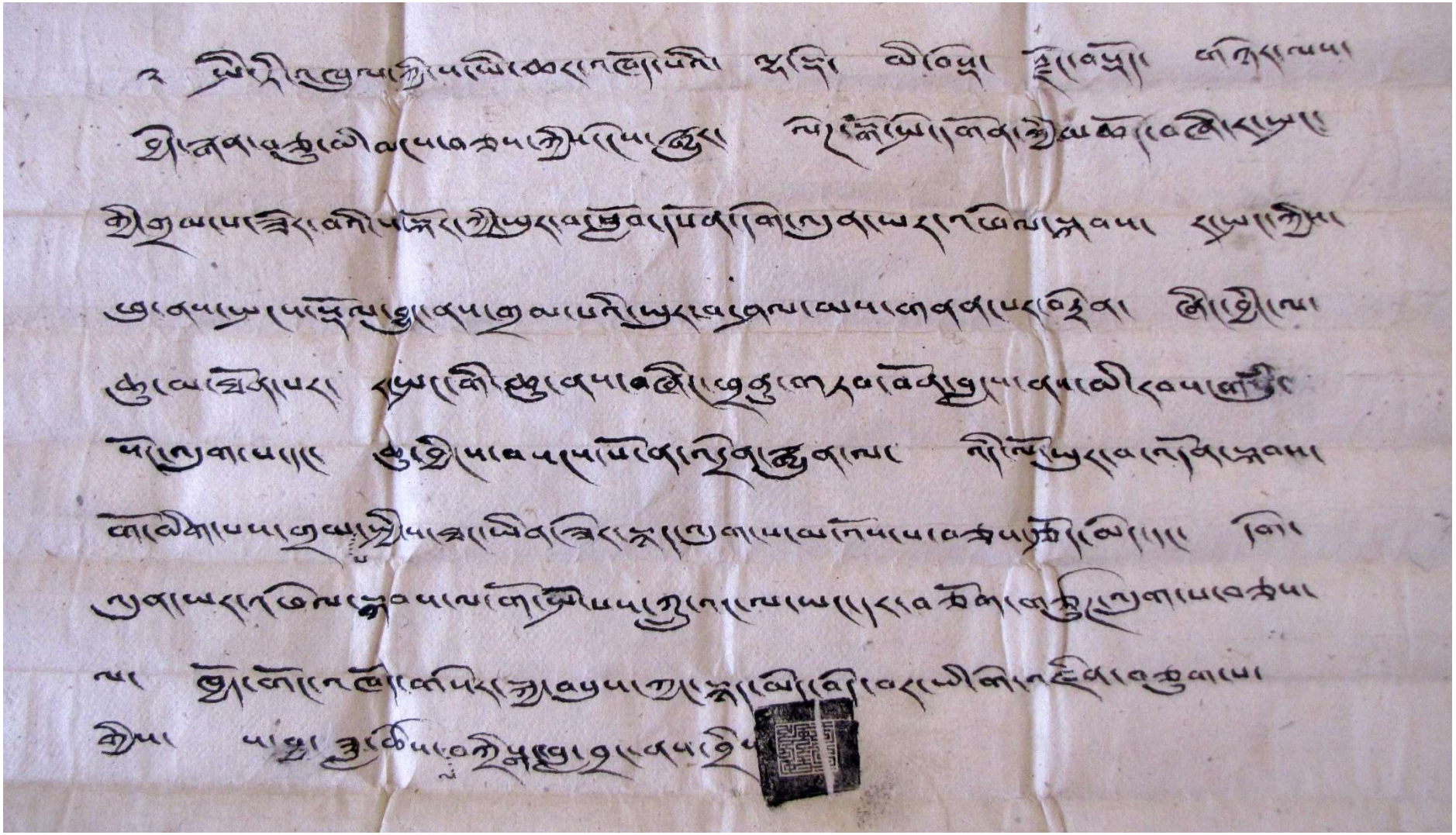
Notes

Line 3, *slob dpon dge 'dun yar 'phel*: the learned preceptor (*ācārya*) dGe 'dun yar 'phel (17th century) from Shang rtse is listed under the abbatial line (*bla rabs*) of La go spel monastery in the *Vaiḍūrya ser po*; see Chapter 3 section 3.5.3.

Line 7, *go mig pa*: the villagers of Go mig; in particular those working on behalf of the Sakyapa monastery of sTeng rgyud.



[13] See document sTeng-rgyud 67 in HEIMBEL & SCHUH forthcoming.



BmK06

Date: Water-Tiger Year
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 9
Seals: 3

Summary

Copy of a register (*tho*) recording the contractual obligations of a benefactor towards the monasteries of La go pe and rTa pho vis-à-vis the collection of ecclesiastical dues (*bon*).

Normalised Transliteration

1. § ta pa la ldu(m) bu'i nyos zhing gi 'bur tho'i 'dra gsu(m) /

2. § chu stag zla tshes la bstan pa'i sbyin bdag ldu(m) bu'i nyos zhing gi thog nas sdu[d]

3. phud la dad pas la go pe'i dgon du dgu [g]tor chen mo la bco b(rgy)ad khal khal gnyis / lta pho

4. dgon du sa ga zla ba la bco b(rgy)ad khal khal gnyis bstan pa na(m) gnas bar la ['']phul

5. ba de rna(m)s la khral ri(gs) spu tsam yang ['']khr[i] med yin / dgon gnyis na[s] bon yar [b]t[e]g

6. (rgy)u yang med / spyin bdag gi[s] mar phab (rgy)u med / bon de 'di n[a] [b]skyal dgos med / dus

7. kyi stabs kyi[s] rtsod gzhi la so(gs) pa byung na / rtsod zlog de dgon pa gnyis po na[s] mgo

8. 'dren mdzad dgos / 'di nang ltar la yon mchod sus ma [b]sta[g] na (dkon mchog) gsu(m) dang chos skyong

9. [s]run[g] m[a] gzi(gs) / dgon pa gnyis kyi the / ○○ sbyin bdag gi the / ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1] As for [the entry] *ta*: Three copies of the register for barley collection [with regard to] sDum bu's purchased field.

Dispositio

[2] On a day and month of the Water-Tiger Year. As for the field purchased by lDum bu, [3] the benefactor of the doctrine shall offer from the best harvest, and out of piety, two loads of eighteen units for the great *dgu gtor* offering at La go pe Monastery and [4] two loads of eighteen units for the [celebrations of] the Sa ga month at lTa pho Monastery for as long as the doctrine prevails; [5] for which not even the tiniest kind of tax shall be levied. There is no provision for a raise of ecclesiastical dues by the two monasteries. [6] There is no provision for a reduction [of these amounts] by the benefactor.

There is no necessity to transport the assigned amounts of grain from here elsewhere. [7] Should any concern arise due to unforeseen events, the two monasteries should take leadership in resolving the dispute.

Sanctio

[8] Accordingly, whosoever does not implement this donor-donee [agreement], shall be looked upon by the Three Rare and Sublime [Jewels], and by the guardians and protectors of the doctrine.

Eschatocol

[9] Seals of the two monasteries. (*seal*) (*seal*) Seal of the benefactor. (*seal*)

Notes

Line 1, *'bur*: a term that usually refers to boiled barley.

Line 3, *dgu gtor*: a Tibetan Buddhist celebration that traditionally takes place on the 29th day (*dgu*) of the 12th month during which an offering cake (*gtor ma*) is cast into a fire as part of a cleansing and apotropaic ritual preceding the start of the New Year.[14]

Line 4, *sa ga zla ba*: name of the 4th Tibetan month, known as *vaiśākha* in Sanskrit, during which a ceremony is held on the 15th day to commemorate the Buddha's birth, awakening, and death.[15]

[14] TSEPAK RIGZIN 1993: 68–69.

[15] TSEPAK RIGZIN 1993: 26–36.

BmK07

Date: Earth-Dog Year (1778 or 1838)
Script: ’*khyug*
Lines: 12
Seals: 1

Summary

Royal dispositions issued by the King of Ladakh concerning a case of land spoliation.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § spyi ti mkhar dpon dang / rgan po rna(m)s la springs pa / sngon (sangs rgyas) (phun tshogs) kyi sa zhing

2. bshul ’bad dang / mu gnyis la lha lung yul pas ’os med kyi snyad ’tsho[l] byas rdo [s]nu(m) la

3. thug nas dkar po thon kyang / yul pas dmag ’dus lta bus dbang shed mgo non

4. byas / (sangs rgyas) (phun tshogs) la sa cha sne mo zhig btang nas de m[i]n tshang ma yul pas bdag

5. po byas yod ’dug pa / de ’dra mi dpung gi dbang du phud na kun gyi la (rgy)ar gnod nges las

6. mi yong zhing / da cha sa zhing gang yin (sangs rgyas) (phun tshogs) rang gi lag tu sprod lu(gs) gal (che che) dang

7. gzhan yang shi na(m) gra gu gnyis padma (bkra shis) na[s] nyos pa’i chod yig kyang ’dug pa / [j]o mo y[o]ng ’dzin

8. gyis bka’ blon gyi phyag bris la’ng ma [b]rtsis pa[r] / la ’go dgon du phul yod ’dug pa[s]

9. de ’dra’i ’os med du ma song ba khyod rang gi yul (rgy)a lta gra gu gnyis po (sangs rgyas) (phun tshogs) la sprad lu(gs)

10. kyang bgyis / gong gsal sa zhing rna(m)s kyi [s]ton thob de ’dir phul pa yin pa[s] mkhar du

11. (len nas) sa ro rna(m)s (sangs rgyas) (phun tshogs) la gtong lu(gs) khag che / nges med mi rtsi ba byas tshe nyes

12. chad gtong nges yin pas ’dir la(m) [mi] [’]chug pa gyis / ces sa khyi zla tshe[s] la ○ bris //

Translation

Promulgatio

[1] This is addressed to the prefect of the fort of sPyi ti and the elders.

Narratio

Formerly, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' cultivated fields of [2] bShul 'bad and Mu were [object of] false allegations by the people of Lha lung. Even though a white stone [3] had been extracted from [boiling] oil, the people [of Lha lung], like an armed militia, resorted to using force. [4] It came to my attention that except for the corners of a few plots most of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' [land] [5] was used by the people [of Lha lung]. Such dispossession by the power of a mob will assuredly damage the general interest of all and shall not be.

Dispositio

[6] Henceforth, it is imperative that all [confiscated] fields are delivered back into Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' hands.

Narratio

[7] Furthermore, it was brought to my attention that there is also a written purchase agreement for the two plots of Shi nam bought by Padma bkra shis. Lady Yong 'dzin [8] having also disregarded the minister's document, [these] were donated to La 'go Monastery.

Dispositio

[9] This should not have happened. The two plots of rGya lta in your territory are also due to be returned to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs. [10] As aforementioned, it is imperative that the harvest of the fields donated to the fort to this [day], [11] the untilled soil and refuse must be given back to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs.

Sanctio

In the unlikely event of disregard [for the above], [12] and as punishment will certainly be carried out, do not commit any false steps.

Eschatocol

This was issued in the Earth-Dog Year (*seal*).

Commentary

The red round seal stamped at the end of this document was used by the three kings of Ladakh, Tshe dbang rnam rgyal (r.*c.*1753–1782), Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal (r.*c.*1802–1840), and Kun dga' rnam rgyal (r.*c.*1840–1842).[16] According to the Tibetan date of Earth-Dog Year, these royal dispositions must have been ratified by the chancery of Ladakh under the reign of either Tshe dbang rnam rgyal in 1778, or Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal in 1831. It precludes the possibility, however, of having been issued by Kun dga' rnam rgyal at a later date.

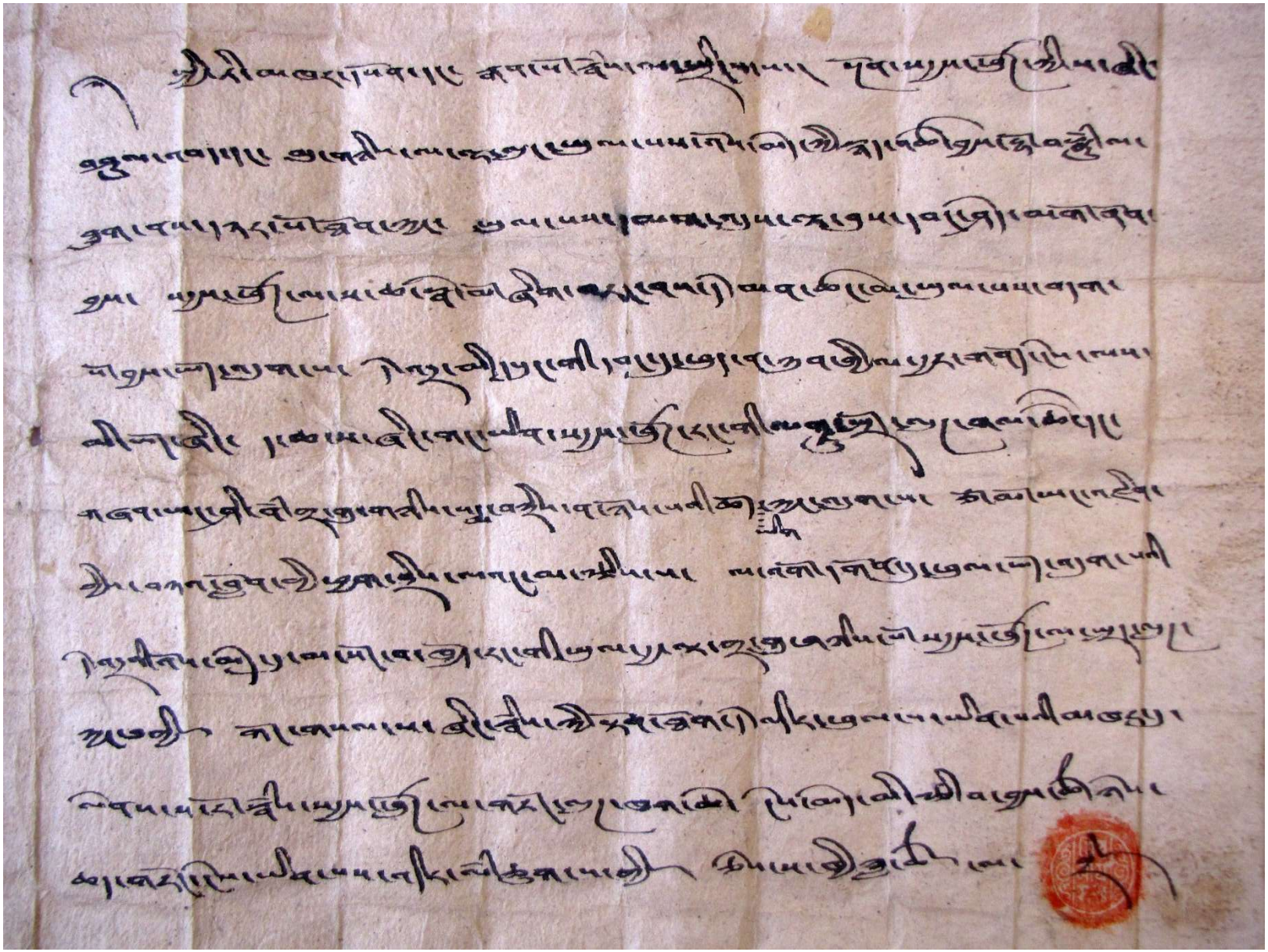
Notes

Line 2-3, *rdo snum la thug nas dkar po thon*: literally, 'A stone in contact with oil that comes out white'. This expression refers to a traditional ordeal during which the innocence of the accused is proven when

[16] CÜPPERS 2016.

a white stone is extracted from boiling oil. A similar ordeal was reported by Hay in Spiti and Cunningham in Ladakh.[17]

[17] "*Mode of detecting crime and oath* – When two parties are accused of crime, an oath is taken in the following manner. The names of each are written on paper or engraved on stone, then wrapped up in flour, and either thrown into hot oil, or water, a person then plunges in his hand, and the first name that comes up is considered the guiltless person"; see HAY 1850: 444. Similarly, "In doubtful disputes, where the evidence was unsatisfactory, a decision was obtained either by casting lots, or by ordeal. In the latter case, the accused had either to draw a red-hot iron through his hand, or to take a stone out of a pot of boiling oil without injury. In Great Tibet both of these ordeals are practised; but the latter is rendered much more complicated and difficult by the immersion of two stones, one black and the other white, in the boiling oil. The extraction of the white stone, with an uninjured hand, is held as a complete proof of innocence; while the extraction of the black stone, with uninjured hand, is equivalent to the Scotch verdict of 'not proven,' of which the accused receives the benefit"; see A. CUNNINGHAM, 1854: 266–267.



BmK08

Date: -
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 28 recto, 1 verso
Seals: -

Summary

Copy of a confirmation letter of privileges (*rgyab gnon*) with excerpts from *The Crown Register on Grain Collection* listing endowments granted to Legs sgo spe Monastery by royal benefactors, religious hierarchs, and patrons.

Normalised Transliteration

1v. § ca pa la / sa bon zin [b]ris mgo rgyan //

1r. § sa bon zin [b]ris mgo rgyan da kha nas gzo ba gnang ngos / s[b]rul lo[r] slob dpon sangs (rgy)as 'od zer gyis / le(gs) sgo

2. spe dge dgon gsar rgyag byas pa'i / gu ge chos rgyal nas / bka' drin [b]skyangs pa / grang mkhar na chos [g]zhi[s]

3. khal gsu(m) gy[i] sa dang / go dang chu pa'i gra gu / tshul dus [m]chod [k]yi [th]ebs su bon khal bcu gsu(m) gyi sa

4. lha lung na mang 'ga' zhing kha yang skya gcig / gung gis / go lcang / Ag rig / ti gi ring / ma Ni gong ma

5. na skya phyed / srong (bkra shis) la kya phyed / dga' bzhi bon khal gnyis ky[i] sa / yang lha lung na don drub

6. dpal mgon kya gcig / tsho(gs) pa rang na[s] nyos pa'i bcas spung gi rtsa lag gang yod / yang gu ge bdag

7. mos bka' drin [b]skyangs pa'i / ras chung pa'i sa ri(gs) tog tse gar rgyab la / lha lung na yen bar [kh]ra gsu(m)

8. skyum tse khra gnyis / 'ol zhing gnyis / ra spang na / zhing tsa rig / skyog go ldong / gram pa

9. byings mtha snying rgya che ba / skyab ris / smyug gu 'bur / yang paN chen blo bzang chos ky[i] rgyal mtshan

10. gyis bka' drin [b]skyangs pa'i la ra na[s] sa bon khal lnga'i sa / lha lung na[s] d[by]ar [g]nas la bon khal bdun gy[i]

11. sa dang / chos rgyal la le(gs) sgo spe dgon [th]ar pa gling dgos tshul bka' 'phebs par brten / chos rgyal

12. nas le(gs) sgo spe'i dgon [th]ar pa gling dang / de'i [m]dun ras be zer ba'i ris sdig tsha[b] shin du che ba bcas

13. mi 'ji(gs) pa skyabs kyi sbyin pa la dmi(gs) nas / sa 'tshams dang bcas / dgon par bsrung ris [s]byor 'ja(gs) bka' drin

14. [b]skyangs pa yin / yang gu ge dmag dpon rna(m)s kyis / bdag mo yu(m) sras dang / dmag mi sku ri[m]

15. la dmi(gs) nas / lha lung na[s] grong [d]rag pa gcig gnang / yang chos rgyal gyis bka' drin [b]skyangs pa'i

16. ri zhing zhing gcig ma dang / ri zhing lhun grub ldings lho byang gnyis / yang gu ge bdag mo

17. yu(m) sras kyis bka' drin skyangs pa'i / '[b]rug pa'i dus ky[i] [sby]in bdag / [d]kor [zas] / gr[w]a rgyun

18. chos [g]zhi[s] so(gs) gang yod / ra tsa'i sa [g]zhi gsu(m) / gra gu zer ba / lha lung gi [sby]in bdag

19. [d]kor [zas] gr[w]a rgyun / skra 'ang / ra spang / gtsum rang gi / [d]kor [zas] / gr[w]a rgyun / yang chos ra sa

20. nas bka' drin [b]skyangs pa ma Ni na sa [g]zhi gcig / [sby]in bdag dad can gyis [ph]ul ba'i bon

21. zhing / bon khang / nyos zhing / nyos khang so(gs) / (so so'i) 'bul [t]ho / nang gsal ltar dang / gu ge

22. bdag po'i dus / bka' drin [b]skyangs pa / le(gs) sgo spel dgon gy[i] / chos [g]zhi[s] / [m]chod khang / bon zhing

23. bon khang / sa ri(gs) sa 'tshams so(gs) la / sngar rgyun bzhin mnyam za / mnyam ['']thung / byed pa las

24. [d]ra[g] zhan sus kyang mi 'os pa'i / 'then [r]tsod / bkag 'g[og] med pa dang / chos rgyal na ri[m] gy[i]

25. bka' shog dang / [sby]in bdag dang can gyis [ph]ul 'bul [th]o ltar / rgya[b] [s]non du /

26. byin pa yin pa[s] / [m]dor na da lta phan gy[i] 'dzin bdag gang yin la / khyod gong ['']khod [s]er skya

27. [d]rag zhan tshang mas / [r]tsod med bde bar gnas chug / gal srid 'di la mi gnas pa

28. [d]rag zhan sus byas na / [r]tsar a [d]rag po yang ba / bde bar yi ge 'dzin [b]cug par gyis //

Translation

Intitulatio

[1 recto] As for [the entry] *ca*: *The Crown Register on Grain Collection*

Narratio

[1 verso] Remembering *The Crown Register on Grain Collection*, [it is said] verbatim that in the Snake Year the learned preceptor Sangs rgyas 'od zer renovated the Gelukpa monastery of [2] Legs sgo spe. The Dharma King of Guge graciously granted from Brang mkhar an ecclesiastical estate [3] the size of a plot of three loads, a *go*, and the water rivulets. In order to [establish] a monastic endowment, a plot worth thirteen loads of assigned grains [was offered]; [4] and again, the full harvest of many more fields from Lha lung like Gung gis, Go lcang, Ag rig, Ti gi ring; in Upper Ma ṇi, [5] half of the harvest; [from] Srong bKra shis half of the harvest; [from] dGa' bzhi a plot worth two loads; and again in Lha lung, the full harvest of Don drup [6] dpal mgon. The [monastic] community owns whatever rTsa lag of bCas spung, which were purchased. Likewise, the Lady Sovereign of Guge [7] graciously granted all the cultivable land of Ras chung pa; in Lha lung, three *khra* from Yen bar; [8] two *khra* from sKyum tse, and two clover fields; in Ra spang, [the pieces of land of] Zhing tsa rig, sKyog go ldong, gram pa byings, [9] the large mTha' snying, sKyab ris, and sMyug gu 'bur [were donated]. And again, Panchen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan [10] graciously granted a plot worth five loads of grain in La ra; in Lha lung, a plot of seven loads of grain [was given towards] the summer retreat. [11] Because it was felt necessary for Legs sgo spe Monastery of Thar pa gling to address spiritual directives to the Dharma King, the Dharma King [12] granted protection to Legs sgo spe Monastery of Thar pa gling by pacifying the sanctuary hill together with its boundaries. [13] This was graciously bestowed with the aim of ensuring protection against dangers for which a very large drawing of a scorpion, called Ras be, was made in front of the monastery as substitute for evil. [14] And again, the army commanders of Guge offered to the Lady Sovereign, her sons, and the troops [15] [the harvest of] a good household towards a religious ceremony. Then again, the Dharma King [16] graciously granted the hillside field of Zhing gcig ma and the hillside field of lHun grub lding in the south-west. Furthermore, the Lady Sovereign of Guge [17] and her sons graciously presented the patrons from the time of the 'Brug pa, food offerings, novices, [18] ecclesiastical estates and the like, as well as the three bare lands called Gra gu. The patrons of Lha lung [graciously presented] [19] food offerings [and] novices; the food offerings [and] novices of sKra 'ang, Ra spang, and gTsum rang. Also, Chos ra sa nas [20] graciously granted a piece of land in Ma ṇi. Devout patrons offered assigned fields, [21] assigned households, purchased fields and houses, and so forth as clearly established in the register of donations. In the time of the [22] Sovereign of Guge, the ecclesiastical estates, the chapels, the assigned fields and [23] households, the territory and borders, and so forth were graciously granted to Legs sgo spel Monastery.

Dispositio

As we keep eating and drinking together like in former times, [24] it is not appropriate for anyone, of lower of higher rank, to unlawfully dispute and refute these facts. I have thereby given confirmation of the successive Dharma kings' [25] charters and the register of donations of devout patrons. [26] In short, those aforementioned – clerics or laity, of higher or lower rank, all [of you] – [27] shall let the owner of the present benefits whatever they are be in peace and free of disputes.

Sanctio

Those not abiding by the content, [28] whosoever it may be – of higher or lower rank – shall be severely prosecuted. Let [the beneficiary] keep the document in peace.

Commentary

This document appears to be drawing on one or multiple confirmation letters of privileges, a copy of which was ratified in Gartok in 1740 (BmK01), as well as on a text referred to as *The Crown Register on Grain Collection*. In general, the content of this document appears more detailed than in BmK01. The monarchs of Guge occupy a prominent position amongst the benefactors of Legs sgo spe Monastery, together with the fourth Panchen Lama, Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1550–1662). The list of properties bequeathed to the Gelukpa monastery includes various fields and pieces of land located in different areas of Spiti. The complex terminology employed to describe the endowments granted to the monastery of the capital is not always clear. It includes ecclesiastical estates (*mchod gzhis*), ecclesiastical dues in kind (*bon*), assigned fields (*bon zhing*) and households (*bon khang*), food offerings (*dkor zas*), chapels (*mchod khang*), as well as new novices (*grwa rgyun*).

Notes

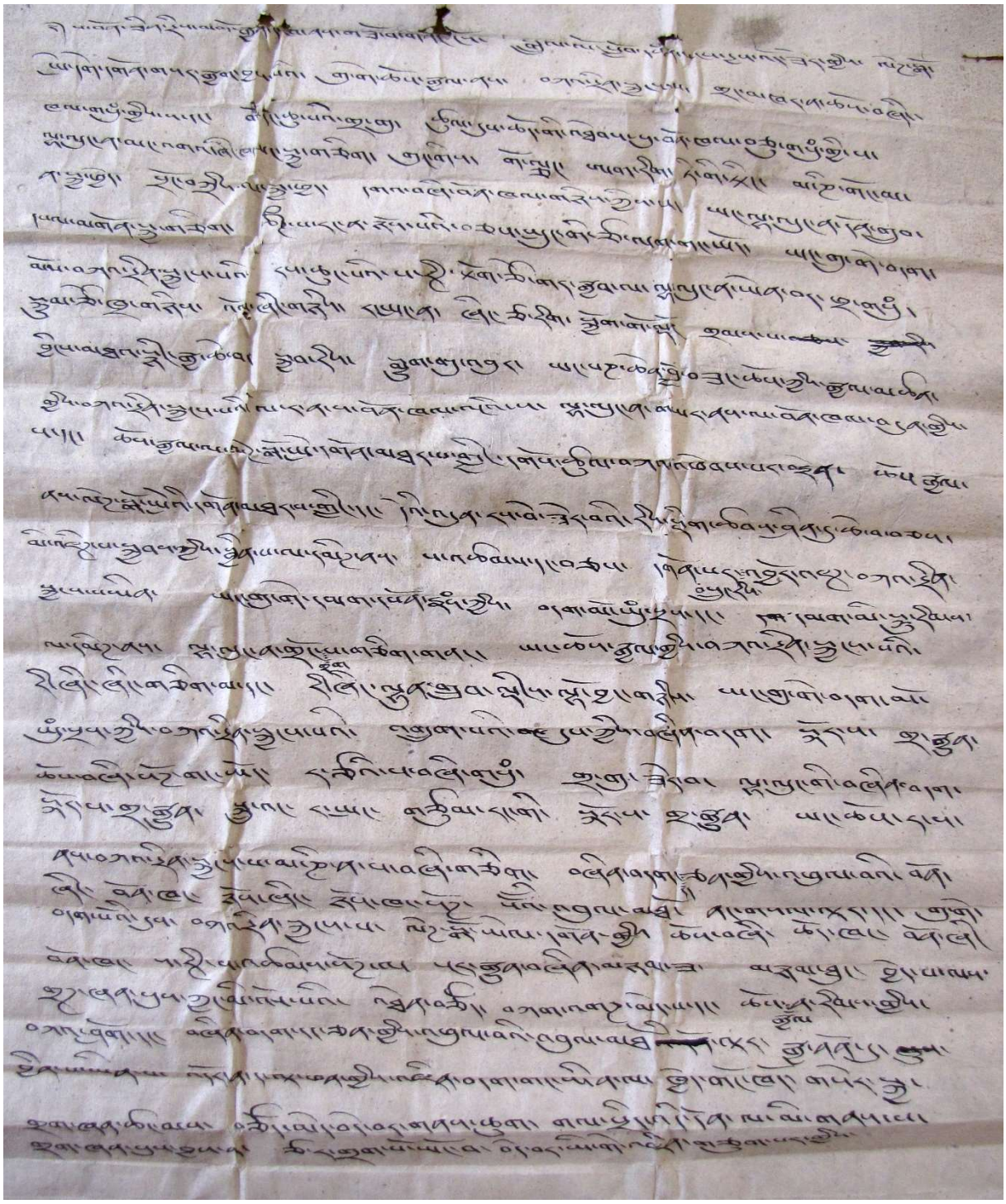
Line 6, *bcas spung gi rtsa lag gang yod*: BmK01 reads, ‘owns whatever piece of land of bCas spung” (line 9: *bcas spungs gi sa cha gang yod*). The same toponym is mentioned again in BmK12.

Line 7, *spen bar*: BmK01 reads *yen bar* probably due to a cursive scribal error.

Line 15, *sku rim*: a religious term which is often used to describe a variety of ceremonies, rituals, and acts of worship intended to heal or increase someone’s longevity.

Line 25, *bka’ shog*: a term used to describe an official document issued by a higher authority such as a ‘permit’, an ‘authorisation’, a ‘decree’ or an ‘edict’.





BmK11

Date: 1851
Script: Urdu/Persian cursive and Tibetan *'khyug*
Lines: 14
Seals: 1

Summary

Bilingual work permit issued by the Office of the Assistant Commissioner of Kulu in 1851 to a man of Dangkhar.[18]

Normalised Transliteration

1. *nil*
2. *nil*
3. *nil*
4. *nil*
5. *nil*
6. *nil*
7. *nil*
8. 1851

9. § brag khar bhe ta 'byor (rgy)as 'di [r]ta grid kho rang la
10. ko gri [l]nga po sngar kyang 'dug pa de ltar la mgo [d]rin
11. [b]skyang pa[s] yin pa'i [b]ar [m]khan tahe sab kyis yin
12. [s]kya [s]er su[s] thog na [s]kad 'di nyan ma byung na (rjes su) rtsa[d] [g]cod
13. 'ong nges yin pas go bar [b]gyis / la ri gyen blo sar man
14. su[s] kyang lag pa thog sa med [bs]kal ba la grag khar bhe ta yin /

Translation

[1-7] (…) Dange nagar district,

[As for] the works which ought to be completed (…) Nono *kadar*.

[18] I am indebted to Professor Najam-ur-Rashid (University of the Punjab) for his assistance in reading the first half of this document. The seal has been studied by Dr. Shailendra Bhandare (Ashmolean Museum) and is discussed in Appendix 7.

You are hereby granted a licence to carry out these works which will be [performed] by all of you as in the past.

You shall uphold this order and ensure all [appropriate actions] for this area.

[8] [As of] 1851

Narratio

[9] The present Bheda 'Byor rgyas of Brag khar was [in charge of] horses [10] for the five *kothīs* already in former times. Accordingly, [the monastery of] La mgo granted favours [11] through the intermediary of the Tahe sab.

Dispositio et sanctio

[12] Whosoever was to ignore this statement, [be it a member of] the laity or the clergy, [13] let it be understood that they will be prosecuted. Nobody, from La ri upward to Blo sar downward, [14] shall claim the right of the Bheda of Gra khar for [the duration of] an aeon.

Notes

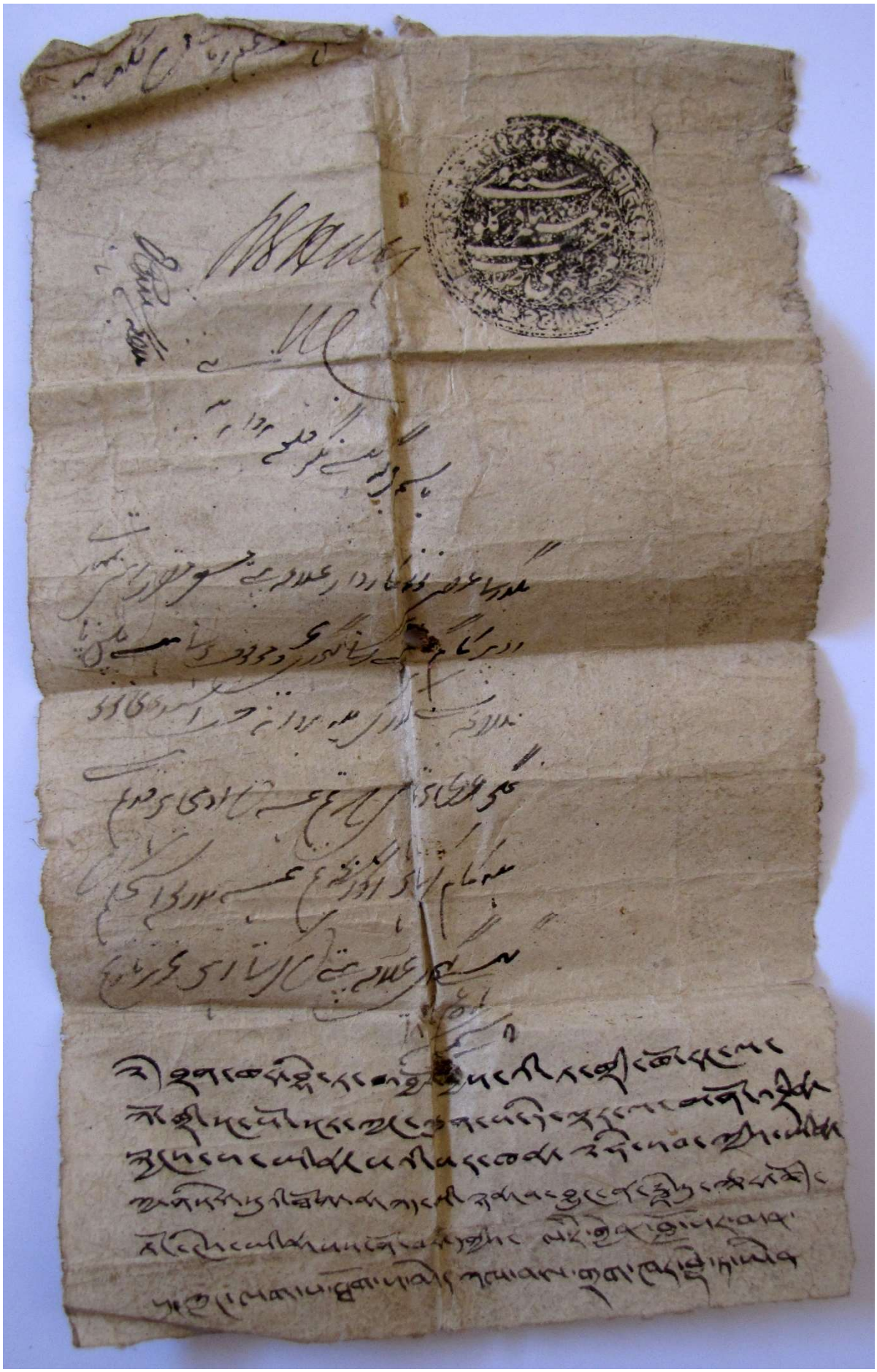
Line 1-7, *kadar*: a Persian noun used for the office of an alderman or a bailiff.

Line 9, *bhe ta*: in Spiti, the term Bedha defines a group of low social status; see Chapter 3 section 3.3.2.

Line 9, *rta grid*: *caveat lector*; a term which could apply to horses and mules (*rta drel*), the killing of horses (*rta gri*), or more likely to the practice of gelding (*bya gcod*).

Line 10, *ko gri*: the *kothīs* of Spiti were the five administrative units under British rule.

Line 11, *tahe sab*: *caveat lector*; a title which could perhaps designate a master (*sāhab*) or the revenue officer in command of a *tehsil*, who was commonly referred to as 'tahsildar' (*tehsildar*) in British-India.



BmK12

Date: unknown
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 8 recto
Seals: 4

Summary

Written agreement between the monastic congregations of Legs spel Monastery

Normalised Transliteration

1. § ming 'di [g]sh(am) [g]sal blo[s] [b]lang[s] 'gyur med kyi gan tshig [g]tsang mar phul ba'i snying po la
2. le(gs) spel [d]gon [g]yi / ri res pas la / brang khar yul pa [g]i '[d]ra [m]in [c]ig byung tshe
3. dge 'dun rnam[s] kyi 'd[u] khang gcig [s]gril du / g.yas then g.yon [then] med pa[r] lung lce [c]ig la [s]gril
4. yod pas / de [m]in phyi [gt]am nang du sdud dgos / nang [gt]am phyi ru sk[y]el tshe byung na
5. rtsar gcod drag po [g]tong nges yin pas / rtsu[b] [c]ung gcig kyang [d]gon pa snying khungs su [m]a bcug pa
6. byung na ['ba'] [g]ser s[r]ang 5 khrim[s] bdag (rin po che'i) drung du zhu ngo [s]gron med pa[r] [g]tsang 'bul dang / ma ni yog ma dge 'dun
7. lag [b]skor ba'i the / ○ la go dge 'dun lag [b]skor ba'i the / ○ brang khar dge 'dun lag [b]skor ba'i the / ○
8. l[h]a lung dge 'dun lag [b]skor ba' the / ○

Translation

Dispositio

[1] We, as clearly named below, have drawn up of our own free will an unalterable written agreement made without reservation. In essence: [2] if a disagreement arises among the people of Brang khar over [the area of] *ri res pas* of Legs spel Monastery, [3] the assembly hall of all monastic congregations are to be united without taking sides (lit. without pulling to the right or left). Since we speak with one voice (lit. with one tongue), [4] we must also gather information from outside.

Sanctio

If internal information were to be spread outside, [5] heavy punishment will certainly be carried out. If somebody brings anything mildly unpleasant into the heart of the monastery, [6] a penalty of five ounces of gold shall be paid in full to the Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law without obstructing.

Eschatocol

Seal of the monastic congregation [7] of Lower Ma ni, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). Seal of the monastic congregation of La go, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). Seal of the monastic congregation of Brang khar, passed from hand to hand (*seal*). [8] Seal of the monastic congregation of Lha lung, passed from hand to hand (*seal*).

Commentary

The circumstances leading to the ratification of this agreement are unclear. Internal cohesiveness is requested from the monastic congregations (*dge 'dun*) of the settlements of Dangkhar, Lhalung, and Mani. It is followed by a quasi-proverbial injunction to gather outside information and prevent leaks of insider information.

Notes

Line 2, *ri res pas*: the toponym Ri res pas also features in BmK04 under the form Brag sdong ri res spe. It designates a hilly area and sanctuary located on the other side of the Spiti River.

BmK13

Date: unknown
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 10 recto, 1 verso
Seals: 5

Summary

Special obligations involving Lags sgo spe Monastery, a family from sGyung ngul, and the village of La ra

Normalised Transliteration

1v. § na pa la sgyung yul dpal 'byor bzang po dang / la ra ba gnyis kyi dan yig 'dra [b]shus /

1r. § la(gs) sgo spe dang / dpal 'byor bzang po gnyis / bcas spungs kyi rtsa lag / sgyung ngul du yod pa la

2. ma [']cha(m) par / A pa [nam mkha'] dpal ld[an] dang / don [g]rub dpal 'byor / blo [g]ro[s] 'dza(m) dang gsu(m) gyi[s] mna' shag

3. byas pa la / [phy]o(gs) gnyis [bka'] nyan bcas yin / [r]dzong dpon kun [g]yi[s] [b]ka' stsal la [br]ten nas / bon

4. kyi spus kho la btang ba yin / bon khal (bcu gnyis) yin / bon ma byung na zhing 'gogs bcas yin / le(gs)

5. sgo spe pa'i the / ○ dpal 'byor bzang po'i the / ○

6. § la go spe pa dang / la ra ba gnyis kyi bar na / bon khal bcu bzhi yin pa / la ra rna(m)s na(m) nus

7. kyi bar la bzung bcas yin / ma nus pa'i [m]tsha(m)s [s]u la go spe la [sl]og bcas yin / de la

8. su 'gal' na / gser srang gang gong du ['b]ul bcas yin pa / de'i yig don [d]u la ra'i the / ○

9. le(gs) go spe pa'i the / ○ legs go spe pa la ['b]ul na chu res kyi chu [s]ter bcas yin / ma gtang

10. na / la ra ba su gser srang gang gong du ['b]ul bcas yin / ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1 verso] As for [the entry] *na*, copy of a written agreement between the two [parties]: dPal 'byor bzang po [from] sGyung yul and the people of La ra.

Narratio

[1 recto] Lags sgo spe [Monastery] and dPal 'byor bzang po disagreed over the rTsa lag of bCas spungs that belongs to sGyung ngul. [2] A pa Nam mkha' dpal ldan, Don grub dpal 'byor, and Blo gros 'dzam pledged [3] that both parties will fulfil their obligations.

Dispositio et sanctio

In accordance with the orders issued by Kun, the district prefect of the fort [4], the first yield will be delivered to [the monastery], [namely] twelve loads of grains, failing which the field will be barred.

Eschatocol

[5] Seal of Legs sgo spe (seal). Seal of dPal ’byor bzang po (seal).

Dispositio

[6] Between the [monastic] community of La go spe and the people of La ra, fourteen loads of grains are [due to the former]. The people of La ra [7] can keep them for as long as necessary. When it may not be possible, they should be given back to La go spe.

Sanctio et signationes

[8] Whosoever violates this [agreement] shall make payment of an ounce of gold to the one mentioned above. [In accordance] with the content of this document, seal of La ra (*seal*). [9] Seal of [the monastic] community of Legs go spe (*seal*). If [the loads] are returned to Legs go spe, the water at the time of irrigation will be granted. If the water is not released, [10] an ounce of gold is to be given to the people of La ra and to the one mentioned above.

Commentary

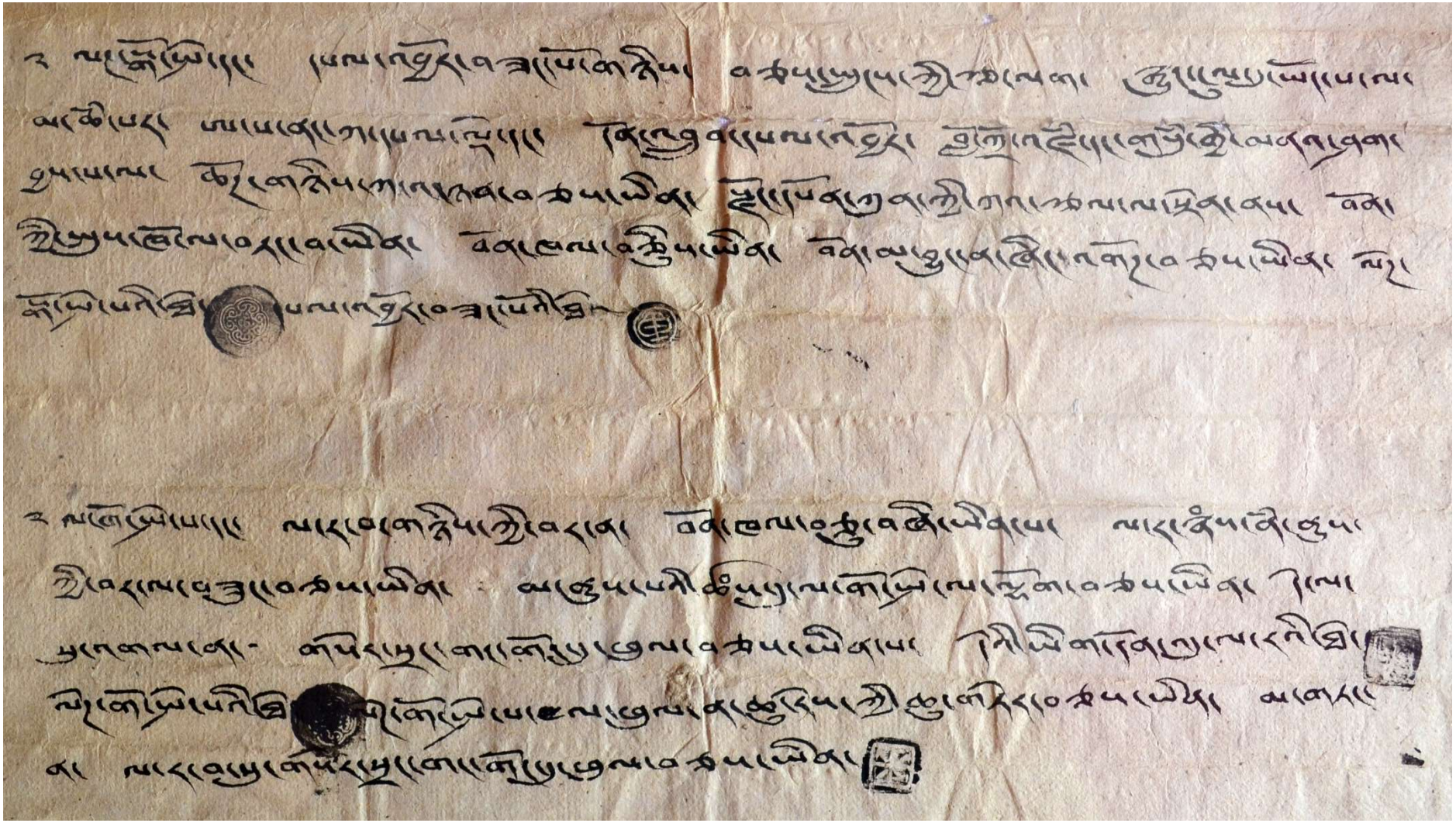
The settlements of La ra and sGyung ngul (also rGyu ngul) officially belonged to the administrative unit of the middle valley (*bar*, *bar cig*) and as such were subject to governmental taxes. The two agreements presented above show that particular villages and households, despite not being recorded among the communal ecclesiastical estate (*mchod gzhis*) of Spiti, must have been subject to a different regime of taxation, suggesting perhaps a progressive transfer of land tenure to the monasteries.

Notes

Line 1, *bcas spungs kyi rtsa lag*: the same toponym is mentioned in BmK01 and BmK08. The area of *bcas spungs* is located roughly 1.5 km above the new monastery north-east of the lake. Low stone walls and terraces indicate the location of former fields. The area is used as grazing land by the people of Dangkhar nowadays.

Line 8 and 10, *gang gong du*: the expression ‘to the one above’ refers here to the Precious-Upholder-of-the Law (*khrims bdag rin po che*) who normally collects the amount of a fine and whose ruling is solicited in cases involving a breach of contract.





BmK14

Date: Earth-Dog Year, 1778
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 8
Seals: 1

Summary

Request for financial and material assistance towards the repair of Legs spel Monastery following the depredations inflicted by the troops from Bashahr-Kinnaur.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § le(gs) spel dgon gyi dkor [zas] thob kh[u]ng[s] tshan[g] mar springs par / sngon ma khu nu'i
2. dma[g] [g]i[s] der dgon pa la zhig hr[a]l mang [t]sa(m) byung 'dug pa / de ltar la bzhag na khyod rang
3. yul tsho tshan[g] ma'i (bsod nams) [g]so(gs) pa'i zhing mchog dgon pa'i gtsug lag khang gi[s] mtshon
4. (dge 'dun) 'd[u] khang rten mchod bcas la / rag lus pa yin tsa na / de rna(m)s la (zhig gs[o])
5. gang dgos khyod tshang mas byed dgos (rgy)ud yin / dgon pa zhig hr[a]l la bzhag na
6. der (phyogs su) nad mug ['']khrug [r]tsod sad ser so(gs) 'byung nye[n] che bas de ltar ma
7. song ba[r] sems can [g]yi bde skyid la bsa(m) nas do ['']khur che ba nas dgon pa'i zhig [gso]
8. byed dgos nges 'dug pas blang dor 'dzol med yong ba gyis / sa khyi zla 5 tshe[s] 20 la / ○

Translation

Promulgatio

[1] This is addressed to all those contributing to the monastic properties of Legs spel Monastery.

Narratio

In the past, the army of Kinnaur [2] caused a lot of damage to the monastery there. Left in such a state, [3] the excellent pure field of virtuous accumulation for all the local folk depends upon the monastic complex (*gtsug lag khang*) such as [4] the monastic community, the assembly hall, the sacred images and offerings.

Dispositio et sanctio

As far as these are concerned, [5] all necessary repairs must be undertaken by you all. Should the monastery remain in disrepair, [6] there is great danger that disease, famine, conflict, frost, hail and so forth will arise in the region. [7] To avoid that, it is necessary to repair the monastery with due consideration to the sentient beings' happiness. [8] Let there be no mistake between what should and should not be done!

Eschatocol

As of the 20th [day] of the 5th month of the Earth-Dog Year [1778]. (*seal*)

Commentary

The identity of the signatory is unknown, pending the results of sphragistic studies. The invasion of Spiti by troops from the neighbouring state of Bashahr-Kinnaur was reported in other sources; see Chapter 4 section 4.9.

Notes

Line 1, *dkor zas*: monastic properties and funds made of offerings and material things donated to a congregation by worshippers.

BmK16

Date: Earth-Ox Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 10 recto, 1 verso
Seals: 3

Summary

Written agreement (*gan tshig*) between two monastic servants from Kyi and Dangkhar concerning the ownership of a piece of land.

Normalised Transliteration

1v. (v) mo rang pa dang 'a pa gnyis ky[i] che[d] yin /

1r. § sa glang zla ba 2 tshes 9 la / khrim[s] bdag (rin po che'i) zhabs drung du //

2. (v) lha la zan sgril bas 'a pa rna(m)s kyis tho[b] pas sa cha [g]an tshi[g] ltar yong ba gyis / ○

3. blos [b]lang[s] 'gyur med ky[i] [g]an tshi[g] gtsang mar phul snying / no[r] bu dg[e]

4. ['']ph[e]l gy[i] g.yo[g] mo rang pa dang / la bor rne pa'i g.yo[g] 'a pa gnyis dga' mu spyi thug man dang gro(gs) gi yin yan gy[i] sa cha la [r]tsod [la]ng byung ba[r]

5. brten ph[a]n [t]shun dag gsher gyi[s] 'bris pa byas pa la su la yang [kh]ung[s] [g]i yig ri(gs) bs[t]an tshi[g] med par ma [z]ad / ha(m) rdzun dang [s]hed [k]hyer gyis za ba 'dug cing

6. ko pa gnyis kyi byed bab la [bl]tas na / sna [th]ag snu(m) so(gs) las ma mchis kyang dgon pa gnyis kyi g.yog ri(gs) yin pa dang bcas / sna [th]ag so(gs) yang[s] pa yin / (dkon mchog) la [g]sol b[a]

7. b[t]a[b] te lha la zan [s]gril gyis su mthon kyang / de [bsk]al (ji srid nam) gnas bar long[s] spyod par [d]ag gtsan[g] mar bcad pa yin / [gal] srid gong tshi[g] la 'g[a]l ba['i] ri(gs)

8. nga mi[n] kho yin / dran [g]sar skyes / kha gcig lce gnyis / ri [s]gul mtsho skyom / [n]yo[g] [p]a gting [s]long / (v) bka' da(m) zhung ['']bebs / kha ngo drung [b]rgyud so(gs) byas pa

9. shar tshe / (v) khrim[s] zhabs su 'ba' gser srang lnga gtsan[g] [sg]rub dang slar yang bris [mkh]an 'di [g]ar sor gnas byed / zhus pa ming thog du ['']j[a(gs) phul ba 'a pa rna(m)s lag

10. bskor ba (lhun grub) pa['i] [r]tags / ○ mo rang pa lag bskor ba (blo bzang) ch[o]s 'dzin gy[i] [r]tags / ○

Translation

[1 verso] With respect to Mo rang pa and 'A pa

Datum et inscriptio

[1 recto] On the 9th of the 2nd Month of the Earth-Ox Year. In the presence of the Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law:

Arenga

[2] To be implemented according to the written agreement in which the land obtained by ’A pa’s kin was determined by [dough] divination.

Narratio

[3] An unchangeable written agreement was drawn up of our own free will. In essence: [4] A dispute had arisen between Mo rang pa, the servant of Nor bu dge ’phel [Monastery], and ’A pa, the servant of La bor rne pa, over the land [situated] below dGa’ mu spyi thug and above Grogs gi yin. [5] Having questioned them both, not only did they not have any kind of written agreement, but they were consumed with deceitfulness and displays of power. [6] When looking at their behaviour, as nothing came but greasy snuff snot and the like, the servants of the two monasteries were brought together, and the snuff snot became thicker.

Dispositio

The [Three] Rare and Sublime [Jewels] [7] were besought, and it was made clear that whosoever was recognised by [dough] divination would make use of the benefits for as long as this eon abides.

Sanctio

In the event of any kind of infringements to the aforementioned agreement – [8] [by saying] it is not I but he, by bringing new arguments from memory, having two tongues in one mouth, by shaking the mountain and agitating the lake, stirring up sludge, getting advice and official [support], or by having the mouth and face of an official, and so forth – [9] a penalty of five ounces of gold should be paid in full to the Upholder-of-the Law. Furthermore, what has been written here is unalterable.

Eschatocol

In the name of the parties concerned: [10] Seal of Lhun drup on behalf of ’A pa’s kin, from hand to hand. (*here*) Seal of Blo bzang chos ’dzin on behalf of Mo rang pa, from hand to hand. (*here*)

Commentary

The circumstances leading to the ratification of this document suggest that a mediator, whose seal has not been identified, had recourse to a ‘divine judgement’ to arbitrate the dispute. In the context of Tibetan Buddhist praxis, a particular divination (*zan sgril*) is performed with two balls of dough (*zan ril*), each containing a piece of paper with opposite terms related to the matter to be settled. The balls are placed in an open and round vessel, such as a large bowl, and set in motion by rotation of the container. The officiant stands in front of an image of the deity (*lha*) who is being summoned, for instance dPal ldan lha mo, until one of the two balls of dough rolls out of the vessel (*sgril*), thereby expressing the deity’s response. Following this ceremony, the divination verdict was recorded in the form of a private contract and countersigned by two witnesses on behalf of the parties.

Notes

Line 3-4, *nor bu dge ’phel*: name of the Gelukpa monastery in Kyi (*dkyil*), also known as Kyi Monastery.

Line 4, *la bor rne pa*: *caveat lector*; perhaps a scribal error or unknown spelling variant for the Gelukpa monastery in Dangkhar.



BmK17

Date: Rat Year
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 7
Seals: 1 finger print

Summary

Prenuptial agreement in the form of a private contract (*gan tshig*) between the father of the bride and her fiancé.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § lu[gs] g[nyis] gong ma khrim[s] bdag rin [p]o che yi / [zh]abs [d]rung du gus [pas] (zhu gsol) la / gan tshig [mdor] [d]u la

2. byi lo zla ba drug [p]a'i tshe[s] bc[o] [l]nga la / grag khar bzang [p]o [d]ng[os] [g]rub [k]yi[s] bo mo (tshe ring) l[h]a mo sto rtsa / be sta [b]stan [p]a yi / bu [t]sa dbang chen stob[s]

3. (rgy)a[l] la [b]tang nas / spu[s] rin sgor bdun [b](rgy)a / rin la sgor drug [b](rgy)a s[pr]ad [p]a yin / chang rin sgor nyi shu [rtsa] lnga song / bo mo la lnga [pa] s[pr]ad tho la [g]du [b]u [g]cig la

4. drug [c]u re lnga yang [g]du [b]u [g]cig la bzhi bcu chog bsrungs la sgor lnga g[a']u la sgor nyi shu [rtsa] lnga / 'bu r[a]s la sgor bcu gsum / tshu[r] rub [br]tan [p]a'i kha nas

5. s[pr]ad ba yin / [ts]ang zhing khang bu tsa che [b]a la tsha mo che [b]a gnyis [ky]i lag du yin / (tshe ring) l[h]a mo yi [m]g[o] lus (rgy)a[n] la (rgy)a dang bzhi bcu zh[e] lnga song u stig bzhi

6. res mi rdzo(gs) byo ba yin / phyi[s] su [mi] [r]tag [p]a 'byung tshe [']ba['] gser [sr]ang gsum gong zhabs su [g]tsang 'bul [rgyu] yin / [r]gad [p]o (rdo rje) chos [']phel the / ○

7. blo ba sgrim 'dul the / dgel nag rdo rje [d]ng[os] [g]rub pha bu gnyis the / rjo'ang blo ba yi the / bzang [d]ng[os] [g]rub the / dbang chen stob[s] (rgy)a[l] the / cho[d] gnyis '[dra] gnyis yod //

Translation

Inscriptio et datum

[1] I respectfully request the supreme Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law of the twofold system of governance to consider the main points of the written agreement [2] drawn up on the 15th day of the 6th month of the Rat Year.

Narratio

bZang po dngos grub from Grag khar sent the girl Tshe ring lha mo *sto rtsa* to dBang chen stobs rgyal, son of Be sta bsTan pa.

Dispositio

[3] Thus, seven hundred *sgor* units [of] merchandize of which six hundred *sgor* units were given. Twenty-five *sgor* units worth of barley ale were past. Five items intended for the girl are listed as follows: a bracelet [4] worth sixty-five and another bracelet worth forty; a hair ornament worth five *sgor* units; an amulet box worth twenty-five *sgor* units; raw silk worth thirty *sgor* units; these were given verbally by brTan pa. [5] Therefore, the holding and household go to the eldest son and the eldest granddaughter. Tshe ring lha mo's head jewellery and body adornments worth hundred and forty-five were passed on *U stig bzhi* [6] *res mi rdzogs byo ba yin*.

Sanctio

Should [this agreement] not last, a fine of three ounces of gold ought to be paid in full to the above [Upholder-of-the-Law].

Eschatocol

Seal of the village headman rDo rje chos 'phel. (*finger print*) [7] Seal of Blo ba sgrim bdul. Signet of the father and son dGel nag rdo rje dngos grub. Seal of rJo'ang blo ba. Seal of bZang dngos grub. Seal of dBang chen stobs rgyal. There are two copies of these decisions.

Commentary

Betrothal and marriage ceremonies (*bag ston*) in Spiti have not been studied extensively. Based on basic information recorded by British officials in the 19th and early 20th centuries,[19] they appear to follow the wedding customs observed in other Indo-Tibetan border regions. The rationale for the drafting of this prenuptial agreement remains unclear. The name of the bridegroom's father, however, would seem to indicate that the lovers were not of the same social status. The unusual term *be sta* placed in front of the traditional Tibetan name bsTan pa suggests that the groom and his father belonged to a particular social group known as Bheda. Members of this group did not possess land and were often required to perform menial duties. Some of them are known from other sources to have lived in Dangkhar.[20] While unions between a woman and a man of lower status were not very common,[21] a marriage between a Spiti woman and a member of the Bheda social group might have motivated the bride's father to legally ensure his daughter's happiness and dowry.

Whatever the reason, the main signatory did not own a seal and resorted to apply an ink fingerprint – perhaps another indication of his social status – in order to countersign the document in front of several witnesses, among them a village headman (*rgad po*).

[19] "A marriage not being a common event in a family a good deal is spent on the occasion. The bridegroom's father presents the bride's with two or three ponies and 30 *khals* of grain, and also gives the bride's mother a present of Rs. 6 in cash. On the other hand, the bride is provided by her parents with a dowry of clothes and ornaments of the value of Rs. 100 or more including the *pérak* [i.e. head ornament] that distinguishes the married women. It is usual to spend about Rs. 50 on the marriage feast"; see DIACK 1899: 84–85.

[20] For example, the *bhe ta* from Dangkhar named 'Byor rgyas; see BmK11 and Chapter 3.

[21] "A man may marry a woman of an inferior *got* [i.e. paternal lineage (*gotra*)], but a woman must, if possible, marry a man of superior *got*"; see CALVERT 1909: 49.

Notes

Line 3, *sgor*: Currency unit (*sgor mo*). Coins were not widely used by the people of Spiti, where bartering prevailed locally. A number of coinages, however, circulated in the Indo-Tibetan border regions for the sake of trans-himalayan trade; see BmK23.

Line 4, *chog bsrungs*: a square or rectangular hair ornament (*skra'i rgyan*) made of silver which is worn by women in Spiti to hold plaits together in the lower back.

BmK18

Date: Water-Dragon Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 6
Seals: 1

Summary

Unilateral written agreement (*gan tshig*) drawn up by the monastic council of Legs spel Monastery in order to control the broadcasting of private information.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § lugs gnyis khrim[s] bdag (rin po che) zhab drung [du] /

2. [b]dag ming [g]sha(m) gsal blos [b]lang[s] 'gyur med kyis gan tshig [g]tsang mar phul

3. ba'i snying po la / le(gs) spel [d]gon ky[i] mcho[d] [g]zhis mchod khang / bon [g]zhis bon khang / ri ([r]gy)a [s]l[o]ng kha(m)[s] la / [r]tsod pa byung tshe

4. bla spyi na(m) [mth]un ma byung tshe / nang [g]ta(m) [ph]yi[r] skye[l] sa med pa[r] 'dun ma gcig [sg]ril byed don la / bre lnga zur don / de la ngo 'dzin

5. khyod yin nga [m]in / zer tshod byung tshe / gcig thog [g]cig dang gnyis thog gnyis ma byung tshe ['']ba['] gser s[r]ang gsu(m) nas lnga 'i bar [g]tsang

6. 'bul [zhu rgyu] yin / chu 'brug [z]la 3 tshes 8 la / bla spyi lag [b]sk[o]r ba'i [r]tags / ○

Translation

Inscriptio

[1] In the presence of the Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law of the twofold system [of governance].

Narratio

[2] We, as clearly named below, have freely and willingly drawn up an unchangeable agreement.

Dispositio

[3] In essence: in the event of a dispute regarding the ecclesiastical estates, the chapels, the ecclesiastical dues, the assigned households, and the territory of Legs spel Monastery, [4] and when the governing council does not reach an agreement, private matters are not to be leaked outside for the sake of ensuring the unity of the council.

Sanctio

If one were to accept to put aside five *bre* measures, [5] to say it is he not I, or [to say] one is not one and two is not two, a penalty of three to five ounces of gold [6] ought to be paid in full.

Eschatocol

[6] On the 8th day of the 3rd month of the Water-Dragon [Year]. Seal of the monastic governing council, passed from hand to hand (*seal*).

Notes

Line 3, *bon gzhis bon khang*: the use of these compounds seems to be similar to the assigned fields (*bon zhing*) and assigned households (*bon khang*) recorded in BmK08

Line 3, *ri rgya slong khams*: Schuh argues that the phrase *ri rgya slong khams sa* describes a hilly area (*ri rgya*) used as grazing land from which income could be derived (*slong khams sa*).[22]

Line 5, *gcig thog gcig dang gnyis thog gnyis ma byung tshe*: literally, 'when one on top of one and two on top of two do not occur'. An expression that conveys the idea of a lack of clarity, or the impossibility to determine between what is the same and what is other.

[22] SCHUH 2016b: 121–125.

BmK19

Date: Fire-Pig Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 12
Seals: 2

Summary

Instructions and dispositions issued by the Tibetan government of sGar tog in West Tibet according to which assigned ecclesiastical dues (*bon*) must be transfered from Spiti to a remote place of learning.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § la sgo spe grwa tshang gi [m]cho[d] [g]zhis li thang / kyu gling / spogs bcas na dud phyed lnga yod

2. 'dug pa (…) nang so'i gling grwa tshang du phul ba la phyir slog ma bde ba / la sgo spe bla ma

3. (…) ba bcas grwa p[a] kyang zhabs phyir 'gyur pa byung ba dang / slar nas sa zur

4. 'dzin grwa yin 'dug pa / la(m) bdag [r]kyen du 'ong [g]sal dud phyed lnga'i sa tshab [t]u 'o[s] pa'i 'bab

5. blo bzang tshe ring rkang gcig la bon khal (nyi shu) rtsa bzhi / khyi khu tshe ring rkang gcig la bon khal

6. (nyi shu) rtsa bzhi / 'byor (rgy)a mo (…) rkang gcig la bon khal (nyi shu) rtsa bzhi /yang khyi khu tshe ring rkang

7. gcig la bon khal (nyi shu) rtsa bzhi / ku[n] 'ga' tshe ring rkang gcig la bon khal (nyi shu) rtsa bzhi /

8. khyi khu tshe ring gi[s] (…) [s]g[e]r zhing bon (rgy)u'i khal gcig bre (bco lnga) 'gro bar bon blab bre'i

9. khal dgu bcas dang / na[m] [m]kha['] tshe [db]ang gi[s] lha khang rna(m)s bka' drin [b]skyangs pa yin pa [d]rag zhan

10. sus kyang [br]nyad [g]tser ma byed pa[r] bde bar gnas bcug / me phag zla tshes la sgar nas

11. snga 'phros 'di lo ring ja(gs) gnas byas pa yin cing zhib cha [/] (rgy)al zhabs (rin po che[s]) skyes rgyur ['b]ul [rgyu]

12. thog nas gsal byed rgy[u] yin // ○○

Translation

Narratio

[1] The ecclesiastical estates of La sgo spe monastic college in Li thang, Kyu gling, and sPogs comprise four and a half households. [2] It was not easy for them to return what had been offered to the monastic college of (…) nang so'i gling. The lamas of La sgo spe [3] together with (…), and even the monks became of service. Furthermore, it is a place of learning in a remote area.

Dispositio

Under the apparent prevailing conditions, the appropriate levy in lieu of the plots [belonging to these] four and a half households are: [5] Blo bzang tshe ring: twenty-four loads of assigned grain per unit of land; Khyi khu tshe ring: twenty-four loads of assigned grain per unit of land; [6] 'Byor rgya mo (…): twenty-four loads of assigned grain per unit of land; again Khyi khu tshe ring: [7] twenty-four loads of assigned grain per unit of land; Kun dga' tshe ring: twenty-four loads of assigned grain per unit of land [8]; Khyi khu tshe ring (…) personal field, one load and fifteen *bre* measures of assigned grain to cover [9] (…). Nam mkha' tshe dbang graciously granted temples. [10] Everyone, high and low, should refrain from malicious accusation and abide in peace.

Eschatocol

As of this date of the month in the Fire-Pig Year, [the decision] from sGar [tog] is provisional for the duration of a year, the details of which are presented for clarification to rGyal zhabs Rin po che's consideration. (*seal*) (*seal*)

Notes

Line 1, *li thang*: also, *na dang*. A settlement situated in the lower administrative unit of Spiti.

Line 1, *kyu gling*: a settlement situated in the middle administrative unit of the valley

Line 1, *spogs*: also, *po* and *spong*. A settlement belonging to the lower administrative unit of Spiti with as many as eleven households in the mid-nineteenth century.

Line 2, *nang so'i gling grwa tshang*: unidentified monastic college.

Line 8, *bre*: volume measure used for yields where twenty *bre* units equal a full load (*khal*).

BmK20

Date: Water-Pig Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 20
Seals: 3

Summary

Solomonic-styled agreement (*gan tshig)* concerning the right of succession and ownership of a field subject to ecclesiastical dues.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § phan bde[’i] ’byung gnas khrims bdag (rin po che)’i zhabs drung du //
2. zhu ba bdag ming [g]sham gsal
3. [s]long[s] [g]leng ’gyur med [g]is gan tshig [gts]ang mar phul ba la / la(gs) spel [d]gon
4. gy[i] ri zhing sa lug [z]er ba sngon du blo gros ((rgy)a mtsho) nas mi brgyud [s]dom bar
5. du b[zu]ng ’dug kyang bar [s]kabs su [b]sdom[s] nas chos mgo ma thon pa’i rang snong phu[g] [r]dol
6. kyis zhing bzin ma thug pa babs la brten nas la(gs) sp[el] [d]gon nas kho la [’d]ri ba tsam med [par] byang pa
7. tshe [dba]ng (dar (rgy)as) dang khyi ’u ba gnyis la btang ’dug pas chu phag lo[r] sdom nas bla ma dge
8. ’dun spyi la pha shul bu ’ja(gs) dgos pa’i ([r]gy)u [m]tshan zhus byung ba[s] bla spyi zhal gros
9. babs [’th]un thog nas / § dkon mchog [d]pang [bts]u(gs) [g]is [rts]od ’dzom[s] byas ’[j]og la sdom la
10. zhing phyed gras dang chu phyed gras p[h]a bu b(rgy)ud la btang ba yin / zhing phye gras chu phye gras
11. byang pa tshe [dba]ng (dar (rgy)as) la kho rang gi ma [b]u gnyis kyis tshe dbang la btang pa yin zhing
12. de ltar la mi gnas pa’i ([r]gy)ur le(gs) spe [d]gon bla spyi [n]as kyang kho pa gnyis
13. gnas [skabs] gnas gzhan la nor ltas byas nas btang sa med pa dang / kho pa gnyis
14. [n]as kyang ’di lo nas bzung bon khal drug zha chag med pa[r] phul ba ma zad bu byung
15. min la ma bltos pa[r] zhing dbyug sa med pa de ltar la mi gnas pa’i ’gal
16. ri(gs) phyo(gs) su thad nas [d]ran [g]tam [g]sar skye[s] nyog pa [g]ting [s]long ri sgul [m]tsho skyom
17. [r]tso[d] pa zhor log kha gcig lce gnyis byung tshe khrim[s] zhabs su ’ba’ gser
18. [sr]ang do zhu ngo sgron ([r]gy)ud med pa[r] zhu zhing la(gs) spel bla spyi lag [b]skor ba’i

19. [r]tags / ○ ming thog du lag [b]skor ba [s]dom [g]yi [r]tags / ○ ming thog

20. pa lag [b]skor bat she [dba]ng (dar (rgy)as) kyi [r]tags / ○

Translation

Inscriptio

[1] In the presence of the Precious-Upholder-of-the Law, who is the source of all benefit and happiness.

Narratio

[2] We, as clearly named below, [3] have drawn up of our own free will an unalterable written agreement made without reservation. [4] The hillside field of Lags spel Monastery known as 'earth sheep' was formerly the possession of Blo gros rgya mtsho down through the generations until sDom. [5] In the meantime, however, sDom was unable to uphold his religious obligations as revealed by his profound guilt. Not capable of running the field due to that situation, the monastery of Lags spel, without consulting him, handed it over to Byang pa Tshe dbang dar rgyas and Khyi 'u ba. In the Water-Pig Year, sDom presented arguments to the lamas, the monks, [8] and the monastic council for a resolution of the paternal inheritance *pro* his son. Following the outcome of a discussion held by the governing council of the monastery, [9] they made him agree to the decision taking the [Three] Rare and Sublime [Jewels] as witness.

Dispositio

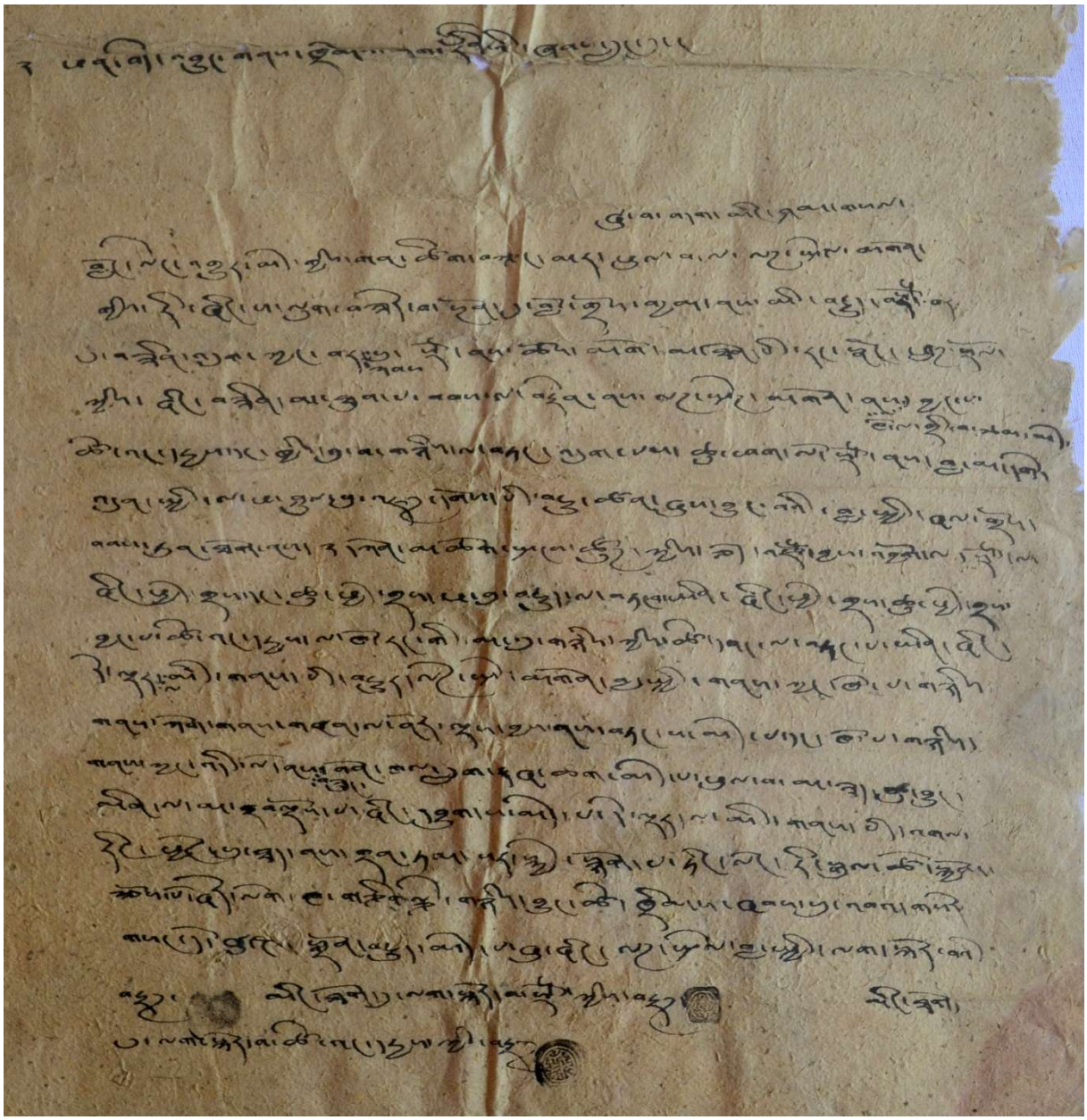
[10] Half of the field and irrigation water was handed over to sDom from father to son. Half of the field and irrigation water [11] went to Byang pa Tshe dbang dar rgyas, which had been given to Tshe dbang by his mother and her son. [12] As proof, [the field] did not remain fallow and the governing council of Lags spel Monastery did not even send them elsewhere in order to make a living. Not only that, but the two of them have continuously, [14] from that time onward, paid six loads of assigned grain in full. Irrespective of the existence of a heir, [15] the field cannot be abandoned.

Sanctio

Accordingly, whosoever attempts to contravene [16] these dispositions by bringing new arguments from memory, stirring up sludge, shaking the mountain, agitating the lake, [17] reviving disputes, and having two tongues in one's mouth, in such an event, a penalty [18] of two ounces of gold should be paid to the Upholder-of-the-Law without objection.

Eschatocol

Seal from the monastic council of Lags spel, passed from hand to hand. (*seal*) [19] Seal in the name of sDom, passed from hand to hand. (*seal*). Seal in the name of [20] Tshe dbang dar rgyas, passed from hand to hand. (*seal*)



BmK21

Date: Water-Pig Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 20
Seals: 4

Summary

Written agreement (*gan tshig*) between the monasteries of Lags spel and dKyil together with their tenants with regard to ecclesiastical fields and assigned dues.

Normalised Transliteration

1v. § na pa la 'al pa sgu lu'i zhing [g]sar [b]tul [d]kyi[l] dgon [g]sar [g]cod ky[i] khra tan yin la(gs)

1r. chu phag zla tshe[s] la /

2. § phan bde['i] 'byung gnas gong ma khrim[s] bdag (rin po che['i]) zhabs drung du /

3. zhu ba bdag [ny]i[d] ky[i] ming [g]sham gsal [g]yis

4. blo[s] [b]l[a]ng[s] 'gyur med [g]is gan tshig [gtsang] mar zhu snying la / la(gs) spel [d]gon [g]yis ['a]l

5. [pa'i] sa khyad [th]og [t]u zhing dgu [t]sa[m] [g]sar [b]tul byas thog chu b(rgy)a da cha min pa la / bzh[i] cha snan

6. khyer 'dug pas 'di lo bla spyi gnas zhib [bc]ad kyis 'al pa bying la [d]ri ba btang ba[s]

7. sgu lu la ji yin 'bris ba snang zer bas 'd[i] [g]ar [d]kyi[l] bla ma las sne dge 'dun [g]ras rim

8. la(gs) spel bla ma las sne dge 'dun [g]ras rim bcas / la(gs) spel mgon du ['']dzom[s] thog

9. tu 'al pa bying sgu lu gnyis bden shod byas thog sgu lu nas [d]kyi[l] mgon gyis zhing [d]mig[s]

10. drug yod thog du la(gs) spel mgon kyis sa khyad thog [g]sar [b]thul [g]y[i] zhing dgu dang chu bzhi cha

11. snan khyer ba[s] A ru (bde bar) thog lta [b]ur byung ba[s] la(gs) spe[l] bla ma [d]kyi[l] bla ma gnyis

12. dge 'dun gnyis phyo(gs) bcas nas rtsod 'dzom[s] la chu phag lo nas bzung sgu lu nas

13. [d]kyi[l] [d]gon du [b]on khal b(rgy)ad la(gs) spel [d]gon du bon khal b(rgy)ad bcas [b]skal ba

14. nam gnas bar du ['']b]ul [rgyu] thag [g]tsang mar chod pa yin zhing de ltar la su thad nas

15. [ch]a phra mo [ts]am mi gnas pa'i [r]gyu [r]k[ye]n [z]hu the 'bebs [d]ran [g]tam gsar skye[s] [ny]og

16. pa [g]ting [s]long ri sgul [m]tsho [s]kyom rtso[d] p[a] zhor log kha [g]cig lce gnyis byung tshe

17. khrim[s] zhabs su 'ba' gser srang bcu [n]as [b]co lnga bar [g]tsang 'bul zhu ba['i] ming thog

18. [r]ta(gs) [s]por ba [d]kyi[l] bla spyi thun mong nas lag [b]skor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ la(gs) spel bla spyi lag

19. skor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ 'al pa bying lag [b]skor ba'i [r]ta(gs) / ○ sgu lu khra [g]tan '[d]ra gnyis kyi

20. lag [r]ta(gs) / ○

Translation

Intitulatio

[1 recto] As for [the entry] *na*: The verdict of a new decision concerning the fields newly established at dKyil [Monastery] by 'Al pa [and] sGu lu.

Datum

[1 verso] [In this] month of the Water-Pig [Year].

Inscriptio

[2] In the presence of the Superior One, the Precious-Upholder-of-the Law, who is the source of all benefit and happiness.

Narratio

[3] We, as clearly named below, [4] have drawn up of our own free will an unalterable written agreement made without reservation. In essence: [5] about nine new fields were established by 'Al pa from Lags spel Monastery, and one fourth of the [irrigation] water was diverted. [6] This year, the governing council, after inspecting the place, asked 'Al pa bying [7] about sGu lu's perception [of the situation]. At that point, the lamas, officials, and monastic congregation of dKyil [Monastery] of all ranks, [8] together with the lamas, officials, and monastic congregation of Lags spel Monastery of all ranks, convened at Lags spel Monastery to get the truth [9] out of 'Al pa bying and sGu lu. [It has been found that] six fields from sGu lu belong to dKyil [10], [while] Lags spel Monastery owns nine fields and one fourth of the [irrigation] water. [11] As the myrobalan producing well-being, the lamas and [12] congregations of both Lags spel and dKyil monasteries gathered to settle the case.

Dispositio

From the Water-Pig Year onwards, sGu lu is [assigned to deliver] eight loads of grain to [13] dKyil Monastery and eight loads of grain to Lags spel Monastery [14] for as long as the present eon lasts.

Sanctio

In these ways, whosoever does not abide [15] for even a tiny bit to these conditions, by bringing new arguments from memory, stirring up sludge, [16] shaking the mountain, agitating the lake, reviving disputes, and having two tongues in one's mouth, in such an event, [17] a penalty of ten to fifteen ounces of gold should be paid to the Upholder-of-the-Law without objection.

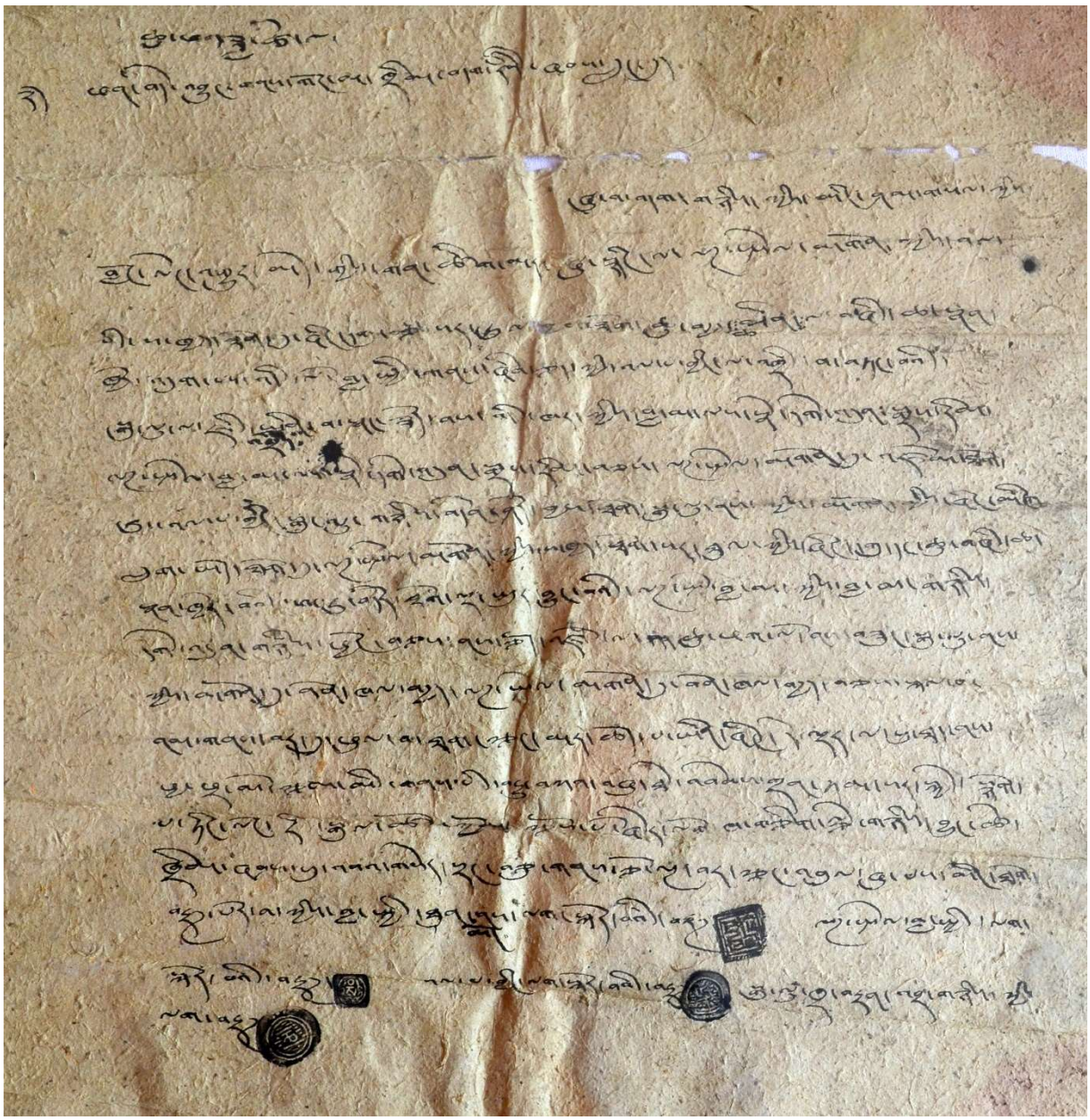
Eschatocol

Names and seals of the parties involved: [18] Seal on behalf of the collective governing council of dKyil [Monastery], passed from hand to hand. (*seal*) Seal from the governing council of Lags spel Monastery, passed from hand to hand. (*seal*) [19] Seal of 'Al pa bying, passed from hand to hand. (*seal*) Seal of sGu lu on both copies of the contract. [20] (*seal*)

Notes

Line 19, *khra gtan*: a likely contraction of the words verdict or judicial decree (*khra ma*) and logical argumentation (*gtan tshig*).





BmK22

Date: Tiger Year
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 5
Seals: 2

Summary

Incomplete document recording contractual obligations between La go dpe and a man named bKra shis phun tshogs.

Normalised Transliteration

1. Oṃ (bkra shis) par gyur 1: stag lo zla ba drug pa'i tshe la: (…)

2. § tshe ring gi[s] la go dpe pa la dbyar [g]nas la phul ba la (…)

3 (bkra shis) phun tshogs la bon la btong ba la nas khal / nyi shu rtsa 3 yin /

4. la go dpe pa'i (dge 'dun) la seng ge skyabs [ky]i[s] zhabs [t]og gang byed yin [/] la go [d]pe pa kyi gnang ba (…)

5. × la go dpe pa dang (bkra shis) phun tsho(g)s 2 kyi the / ○○

6. × us pa tshe dbang mi cha mi [b](rgy)u[d] sus kyang rtsod pa med do: la go dpe pa [b]kog dbang

med (bkra shis) sgyur dbang med/ ri lhung gar phyin kyang khan

7. dman med do/

Translation

Dei gratia et datum

[1] Oṃ. May this be auspicious! In the 6th month of the Tiger Year (…)

Narratio

[2] Tshe ring made a donation to the people of La sgo dpe on the occasion of the summer retreat (…) [3] bKra shis phun tshogs received twenty-three loads of assigned barley grain.

Dispositio

[4] Seng ge skyabs [is free to offer] whatever service to the monastic community of La go dpe. (…) The permission of La go dpe (…) [6] No family member from Us pa tshe dbang of any kind should put forward an argument. This cannot be taken away by the people of La go dpe nor be altered by bKra shis. Wherever you go, up to the mountain or down to the plain, [7] it makes no difference.

Eschatocol

[5] Seals of the people of La go dpe and bKra shis phun tshogs (*here and here*).

Commentary

Two small swastika crosses indicate that a line had been forgotten during the drafting and subsequently added at the bottom of the page.

Notes

Line 2, *dbyar gnas*: a summer residence and a period of religious confinement, known as *vārṣika* in Sanskrit, during which Buddhist monks and nuns reaffirm their religious commitments.

BmK23

Date: -
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 8
Seals: 1

Summary

Payment request (*zhabs dgnul*) forwarded to all monastic congregations of the district on behalf of the Tibetan Government (*gzhung sa*).

Normalised Transliteration

1. (v) gzhung sa mchog nas / bka' (rgy)a (rin po che) phebs don bzhin / bskor gsu(m) dgon khag (so so) nas / zhabs dngul 'bul dgos yod pa / bang mi sngon song gdong yig don ltar

2. (…) [']di khul dgon lag nor bu dge 'phel ba / grwa grangs 75 srang 15 / la phan pa / 'ja' man dngul drug 'ja' su(m) the ba dngul bzhi bcu tha(m) pa / brag dkar le(gs) spel ba grwa grangs 61

3. srang (…) rta pho the(gs) chen chos gling pa / grwa grangs 60 dngul srang 8/4 la phan pa dngul (nyi shu) tha(m) pa dang 'ar gnyis / sa dgon gong smig pa grwa grangs 30 dngul srang 2/3 la phan pa / dngul drug

4. (…) (bkra shis) sgang pa / grwa b[ts]un 15 srang 1/2 pi ni sbug grwa b[ts]un 30 srang 19 / dge dgon lnga dang / sa [r]nying gnyis bcas kyi bla ma spyi khongs nas dngul srang 20 'bab pa / le(gs) spel

5. dgon nas dngul 23 / sa dgon nas dngul drug / smig dgon dngul 3 'ja' 1 / pi ni sbug dgon nas dngul 3 / dge dgon bla ma gsu(m) dang / sa dgon bla ma gnyis bcas spyi khongs nas dngul 36/2

6. [d]kyi[l] rta pho gnyis gong gsal ltar bcas / bsdus 'ded bar bla gdong byung ba / de phros dngul srang 29 chad pa / de thog 'ded [g]la lnga zur bcas / dgon sde'i bla ma las sne (so so) nas lca(gs) dmar

7. ska(m) [g]cun [g]yi[s] bsdu 'ded thog zla 4 tshes 15 [chad] lus med pa grangs tshang bcas dus 'byor don tshang ma [mi] byung tshe / gtan nas mi 'thus ma zad / 'gan khri (so sor) rjes su mi l[e](gs) pa'i gzhi yod ba de don spang

8. blang go shes ci[s] kyang yong ba [g]yis / bkr[i]s bla gnyer nas zla 3 tshe[s] 25 la / ○

Translation

Narratio

[1] In accordance with the precious order dispatched from the High Government, each monastery in the three dominions [of Ngari] ought to offer service money. As set out in the document sent by the messenger who had come earlier [2] with regard to the affiliate monasteries of this district:

Dispositio

The people of Nor bu dge 'phel: 75 monks, 15 [silver] coins equivalent to six silver *'ja' man* [and] three *'ja'* [for a total of] 40 silver *the ba*. The people of Brag dkar Legs spel: [3] 61 monks, (…) [silver] coins. The people of rTa pho thegs chen chos gling: 60 monks, 8/4 silver coins equivalent to twenty silver and two *'ar*. The people of the Sa skya monastery [of] Gong smig: 30 monks, 2/3 silver coins equivalent to six silver (…) [4] The people of bKra shis sgang: 15 monks and nuns, 1/2 [silver] coins. [The people of] Pi ni sbug: 30 monks and nuns, 19 [silver] coins. From among the lamas of the five dGe lugs pa monasteries and the two Sa skya pa and rNying ma pa monasteries, 20 silver coins are levied. From Legs spel [5] Monastery, 23 silver [coins]. From the Sa skya pa monastery six silver [coins], sMig Monastery 3 silver [coins] 1 *'ja'*. From Pi ni sbug Monastery 3 silver [coins]. From among the 3 dGe lugs pa lamas and the two Sa skya pa 36/2 silver [coins]. [6] dKyil and rTa pho have been mentioned above. It derives from the collector that the amount received on behalf of the lamas is short of 29 silver coins. On top of that the collector's fee is a fifth [of this amount]. In this regard, the [amount] will be strictly collected while the iron [7] is still hot on the 15th of the 4th month. If the complete amount is not provided in the full sense at the appointed time, it will not only be disapproved but each of you will be held accountable with ground for unpleasant [consequences]. Make sure [8] to discern what is to be rejected from what is to be adopted by all means.

Eschatocol

From the steward of the monastic house of bKra [shis gang] as of the 25th day of the 3rd month (*seal*).

Commentary

Issued by the monastic house of Tashigang in West Tibet, this document claims to be implementing an official written order (*bka' rgya*) from the dGa' ldan pho brang government of Tibet. Consignments of grain dispatched to the abbot of Tashigang were reported by Cunningham in 1844, as far as the communities of the Pin Valley were concerned.[23]

The list and number of Gelukpa monasteries involved in this document are unclear. Traditionally, the main centres of that tradition in Spiti were those of Tabo, Dangkhar, and Kyi. Gelukpa temples at Lhalung and Mani were also under the provisions of the monastery of Dangkhar. It may well have been the case that the hamlet of Tashigang with its chapel-like *stūpa* had once hosted a small community of fifteen monks and nuns as the village people are still Gelukpa supporters nowadays. Finally, a small temple at Nadang also displays strong artistic affinities with Tsong kha pa's school dating back to the 15th-16th centuries.

[23] "Besides the revenues appropriated to the monasteries, the division of Pitti, called Pin, pays to the Abbot of Teshingang on the lndus, a quantity of grain. The Abbot also sends a quantity of tea to the houses or families of the valley, for which he asks and gets double price. Teshigang belongs to the Chinese"; see J.D. CUNNINGHAM 1844: 211.

The type of currency and amounts listed in this document are a far greater problem. Based on our current knowledge, it is not possible to mathematically establish conversion tables and check the total sums listed.

Notes

Line 2, *nor bu dge 'phel ba*: the Gelukpa congregation of Nor bu dge 'phel Monastery in Kyi.

Line 2, *phan pa*: to bring benefit or assistance. It is loosely translated here as 'equivalent to' in the absence of a better understanding of this document.

Line 2, *'ja'*: sic, for *ja'u*. A silver Ladakhi coinage struck for the first time in 1771 and then periodically after 1881. Inspired by the Garhwal timashas, the Ladakhi coins were made in Leh with silver obtained from Yarkand and India (i.e. Spiti and Bashahr-Kinnaur).[24] The silver *ja'u* circulated in Western Tibet alongside other coinages such as the gold tillas from Bukhara, Indian rupees, silver mohars from Nepal, and Chinese currency. They did not play a significant role on a domestic level but were mainly used for the purpose of trade.[25]

Line 2, *brag dkar legs spel ba*: the Gelukpa congregation of Legs spel Monastery in Dangkhar.

Line 3, *rta pho thegs chen chos gling pa*: the Gelukpa congregation of rTa pho thegs chen chos gling in Tabo.

Line 3, *sa dgon gong smig pa*: the congregation of the Sakya monastery in Gomik, also known as Tengyu Monastery.

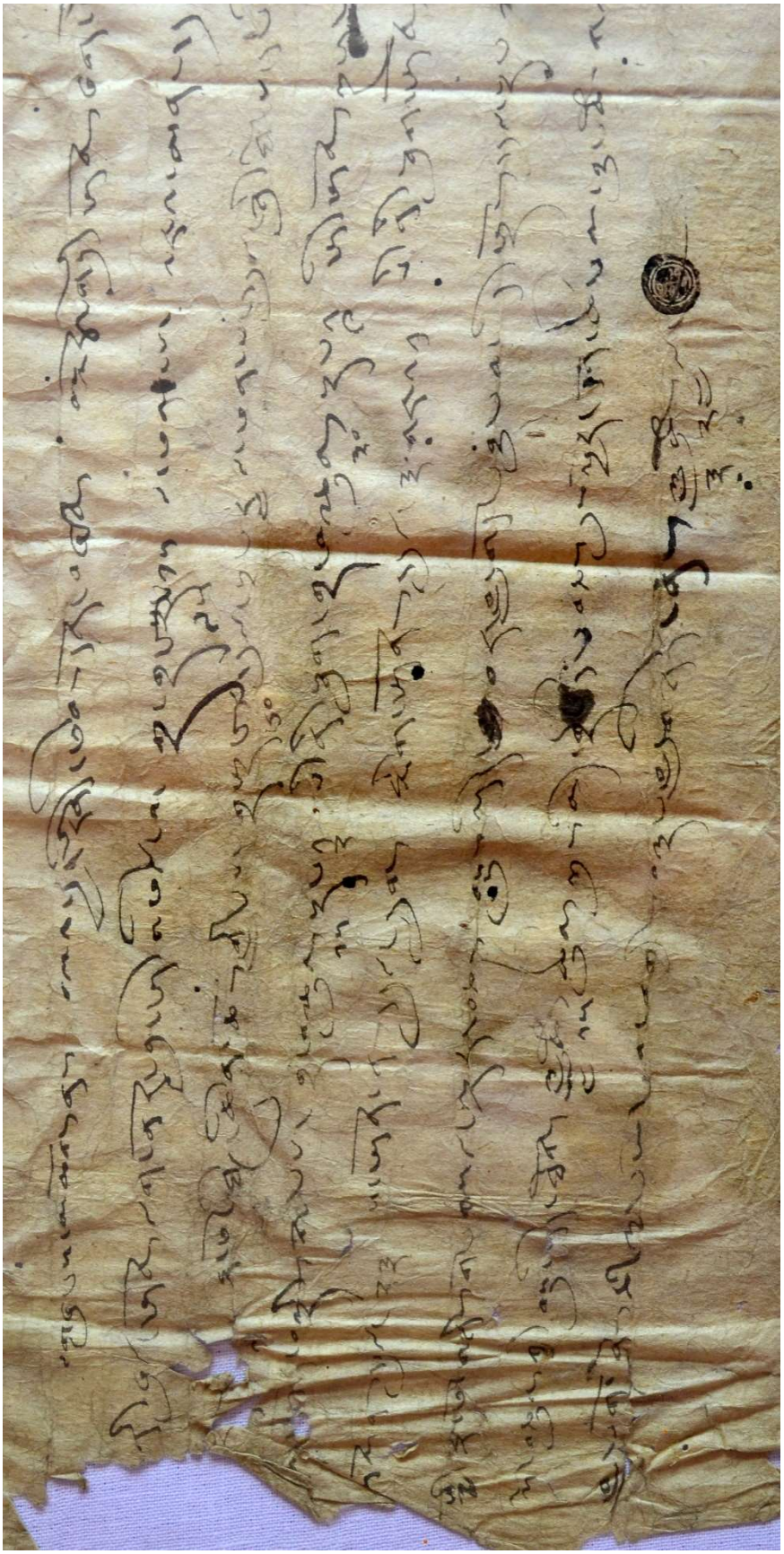
Line 4, *bkra shis sgang pa*: the monastic congregation of the hamlet of Tashigang in Spiti.

Line 5, *pi ni sbug dgon*: the troglodytic Nyingma monastery of the Pin Valley.

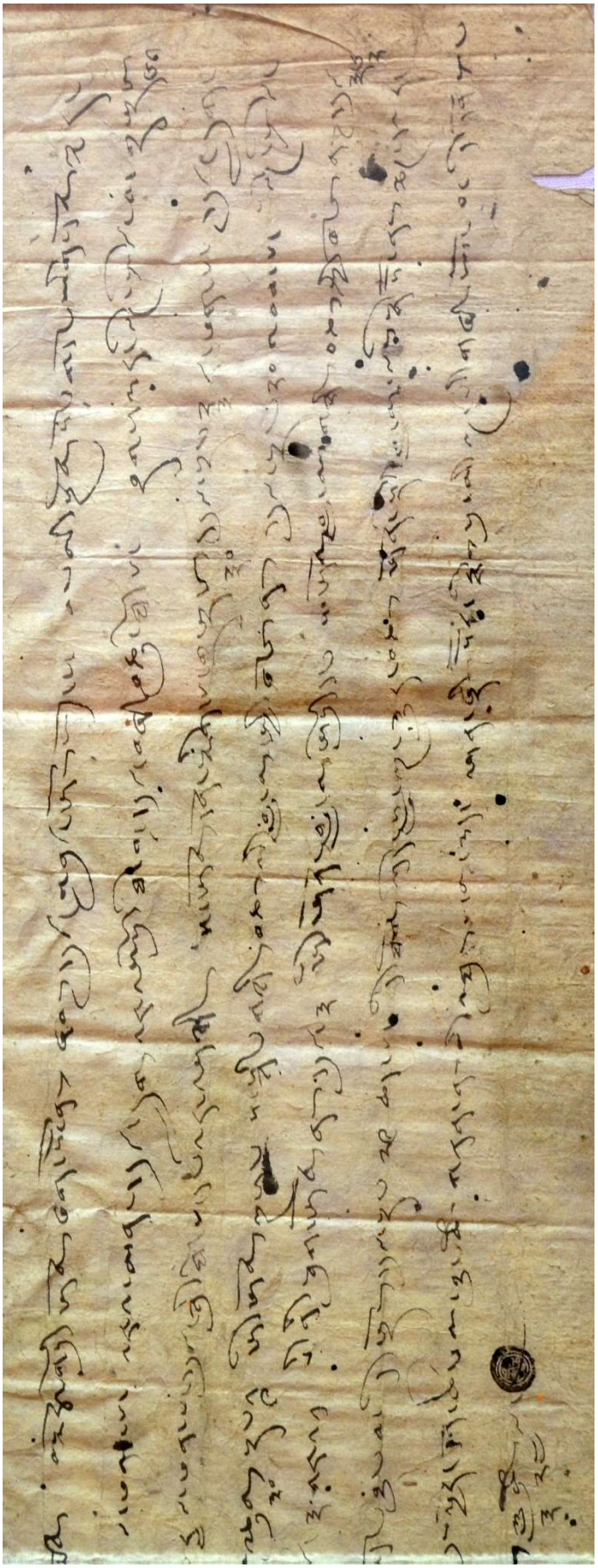
[24] "In the years 1844-45 and 46, the annual revenue paid to the Thánádár [i.e. officer in charge of a fort or police station (*thānedār*)] at Ladak was 1,031 rupees. Besides this, 100 "Múndís" or iron-crow bars (…) To the Busáhir people they [i.e. the Spiti people] also exchanged part of the salt they received from China [i.e. Tibet], for iron and tobacco, and a small quantity of pashm, about 12 maunds, is also exchanged for iron: if this iron is more than sufficient to supply their own wants they trade with it to Ladak and Rúksú, and exchange it for ornaments for their women, and other trifles"; see HAY 1850: 438–440. Petech also recalled an episode during the occupation of Ladakh by the Dogra in 1842 when a cannon was made with iron bars from Spiti; "A Ladakhi attempt at storming the both stronghold failed. As the rebels had no artillery, they tried to manufacture cannon utilizing iron bars which formed a part of the annual revenue from Spiti, and which were brought to Ladakh via Purig"; see PETECH 1977: 147.

[25] RHODES 1981.

Left side of BmK23



Right side of BmK23



BmK24

Date: -
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 5
Seals: 1

Summary

Written agreement (*gan tshig*) between the different monasteries of Spiti concerning the regulation of financial revenues received by lamas.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § gong ma khrims [b]da[g] (rin po che'i) zhabs drung du / gus [p]hran spy[i] [t]i dge dgon snga dang sa [r]nying bcas bla mkhan [']dun gyis gan tshi[g] [g]tsang dmar [ph]ul ba'i snying por snga sor du bla ma rna(m)s

2. [k]yis dngul 'bab bskor la ma [']chams par thul yangs mang [t]sam byung bar brten / da nas [b]zung dngul 'bab che chung c[i] 'dra byung kyang phyed ka bla ma che chung med pa[r] mnya(m) khur

3. yin / phyed ka dgon che chung la [sprad] [rkyang] yin da nas [b]zung yi ge 'di la m[a] brtag[s] pa[r] byas nas dran [g]tam [g]sar [s]kyes [b]se ru sbugs [b]zhugs [n]yog pa [g]ting [s]long ri [s]gul

4. mtsho skyom dpon [l]tag [kh]ur kha [g]cig lce gnyis nga min kho yin bcas so so nas [']gal rigs spu [t]sam byung tsh[e] gong ma khrims zhabs su [']ba['] [gs]er [sr]ang [g]su(m) zhu ngo [b]sgron

5. rgyu med pa [g]tsang 'bul zhu zhu // gong bsal bla ma [']dun gyis phyag bskor ba'i [r]tags // ○

Translation

Inscriptio

[1] In the presence of the Superior One, the Precious-Upholder-of-the-Law.

Narratio

In all humility, the lamas, abbots, and monastic congregations of the five dGe [lugs pa] monasteries together with the Sa [sky pa] and rNying [ma pa] monasteries of sPyi ti have drawn up a written agreement without reservation. In essence: [2] a large amount of disagreements occurred between the lamas over financial revenues in former times.

Dispositio

Therefore, from now onwards, half of whatever large or small revenues should be the joint share of the lamas irrespective of rank, [3] and half should be given without hesitation to the monasteries irrespective of their size.

Sanctio

From now onwards, without due regard for this agreement – by bringing new arguments from memory, sitting in the hollow of a rhinoceros, stirring up sludge, shaking the mountain [4], agitating the lake,

being backed up by an official, having two tongues in one's mouth, [saying it is] not I but he – in the event of any such contravention, a penalty of three ounces of gold [5] should be paid without objection.

Eschatocol

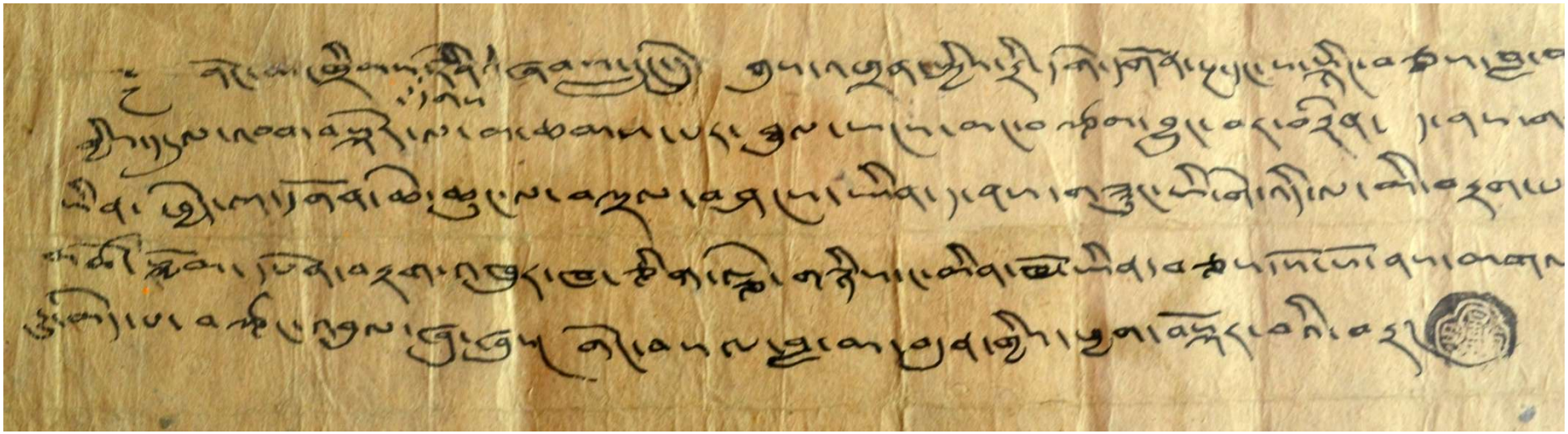
Seal of the above-mentioned lamas and communities, passed from hand to hand (*seal*).

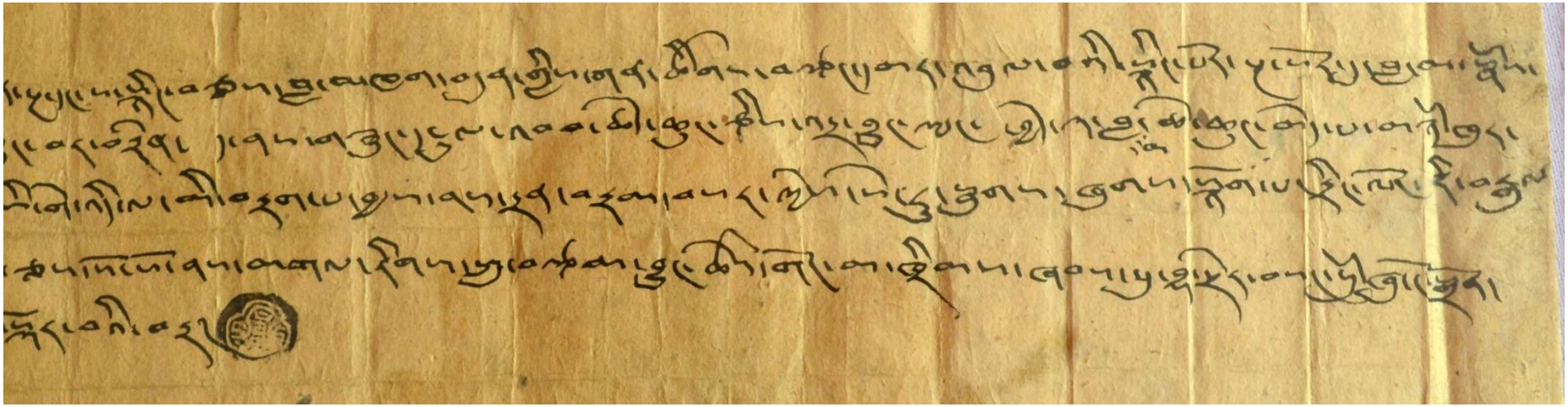
Notes

Line 3, *bse ru sbugs bzhugs*: a contravention clause whose meaning could be expressed as "there is somebody acting behind the scenes" according to Schneider.[26]

Line 4, *dpon ltag khur*: Literally 'to carry an official on one's neck', in other words, 'to threaten to use the support of a person of influence' (*dpon po ltag khur gyis gzhan la sdigs mo byed pa*). The same expression occurs in BmK29.

[26] SCHNEIDER 2002 : 426.





BmK25

Date: Water-Bird Year, 1753
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 3
Seals: 1

Summary

Confirmation letter of privileges (*rgyab gnon*) issued by the King of Purig bKra shis rnam rgyal to the people of Dangkhar concerning the prerogatives of the capital groom-farrier.

Normalised Transliteration

1. mkhar gyi chibs bzo mkhan yin stabs la chan brag dkar bar dang springs bcas kyi yul (…) rta bzo rgyu (…) bzo ga

2. (…) [s]gos su ma 'gyang pa[r] ['']phral ['']phral du bzo phyin kho rang gi ma gto(gs) gzhan gyi bzo mi chog pa yin pa'i (…)

3. [de] ltar yong ba gyis // chu bya zla 4 tshe[s] […] ○ bris /

Translation

Narratio

[1] Since [he] is the groom-farrier of the fort, this is addressed to the people of Brag dkar of the land (…) to make horse (…) [2] in particular when it must be made urgently (…)

Dispositio

Apart from him, no one else is permitted to carry it out. [3] Let it be done!

Eschatocol

Issued on the (…) of the 4th month in the Water-Bird Year [1753]. (*seal*)

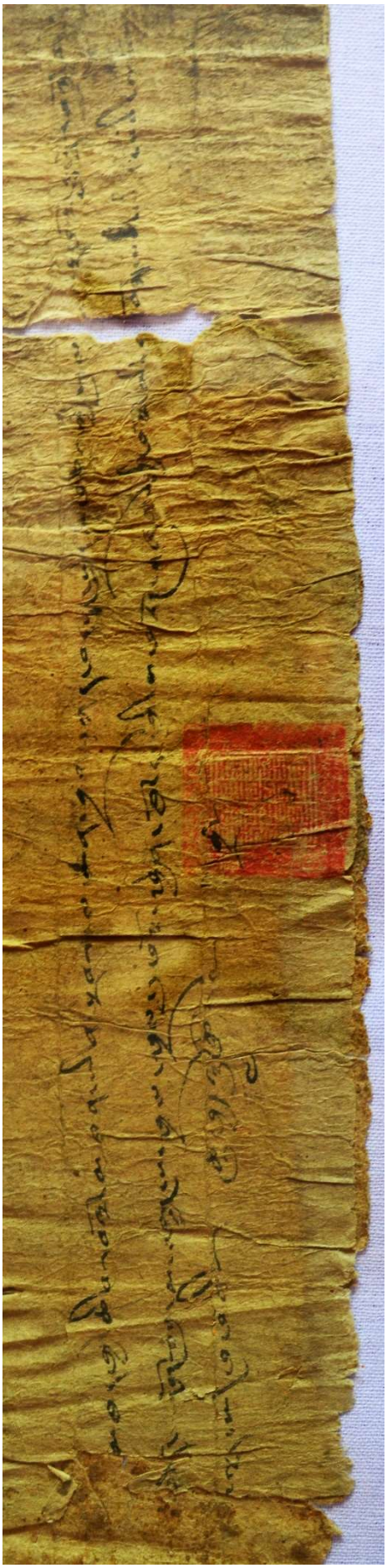
Commentary

The seals used by bKra shis rnam rgyal during his short rule over Spiti have been studied by Schuh.[27] A couple of years earlier, the King of Purig was already concerned with the sale of stallions from Spiti in a document issued in 1748.[28] Similar concerns as those expressed in this document are found in BmK11 and discussed further in Chapter 3 section 3.3.2.

Notes

Line 2, *phyin*: uncertain reading

[27] SCHUH 2016c.
[28] SCHUH 2016b: 174.



BmK26

Date: -
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 8
Seals: 2

Summary

Incomplete written agreement concerning the lamas of Dangkhar following internal divisions.

Normalised Transliteration

1. (…)

2. bcu po de dge 'dun byings thog [t]u chod ces yin b[s]kal pa [n]am [g]n[a]s

3. bar du bla ma rim pa ltar la ['']thab ['kh]rug gyi bla 'ja'u [g]cig kyang chogs (…)

4. de la su ma [r]tag[s] pa byas byung na ['ba'] gser srang gcig zhu ngo s[p]rod do /

5. nga[g] med pa[r] dge 'dun phyag du [g]tsang 'bul yin / bla la(gs) bel bla ma'i

6. the / ○ [db]u chos l[a]s [s]n[e] dge 'dun rnam gyi the / ○ rta po sdod

7. la[g] la khal ['ge]l sa dang khyer sa gang yang med [/] sa dang chu bla brang na

8. bla ma rim pa ltar la snang [ba zhu] [d]gos yin //

Translation

Dispositio et sanctio

[1] (…) [2] those ten are said to be the *chod* within the general monastic community. For as long as the aeon abides, [3] any quarrel directed against the successive lamas, even for a single *'ja'u*, is [not] permitted. [4] Hence, whosoever is put under examination, [a fine of] one ounce of gold ought to be given. [5] Without a word, everything should be offered to the monastic community.

Eschatocol

Seal of the lama [6] of Bla lags bel (*here*). Seal of the chief disciplinarian, officials, and monastic community (*here*). [Regarding] horse boarding, [7] there is no provision for unloading and storing the freight of a small group of animals. A place and water within the lama's residence are to be claimed from the successive lamas.

Notes

Line 2, *chod*: in the absence of the beginning of the text, a possible reference to the ten monastic trainings (*chos spyod bcu*) or perhaps to the ten kinds of offering (*mchod rdzas bcu*).

Line 4, *su ma rtags pa byas byung na*: the negation as been regarded as a scribal error and therefore omitted in the tranlsation.

Line 3, *'ja'u*: a blanket (*'ja'u*) or more likely a silver Ladakhi coin (*ja'u*).[29]

Line 5-6, *bla lags bel*: another spelling variant of the name of the monastery in Dangkhar.

[29] The introduction of silver coinage in Ladakh (*ja'u*) took place in the 18th century; see BmK23; PETECH 1977: 117; RHODES 1981.

BmK27

Date: 10th day of the lunar month of the Dragon Year
Script: *tshugs ma 'khyug*
Lines: 38
Seals: 2 seals and 12 finger prints

Summary

A legal document comprised of three written agreements (*gan tshig*) concerning the right to farm and ecclesiastical dues attached to fields belonging to La mgo spe Monastery.

Normalised Transliteration

1. (…) par gyur (…) 'brug lo zla ba (…)

2. (…) 'i nyin la / dge (…) yag (…) / chos skyong

3. zhing tshong byas dang / (…) nga gra gu che ba chung

4. (…) er zho [g]sum dang / zho [g]sum [b]tang nas nya (…)

5. (…) / [b]ka' [b]cu ba dang kan [gy]i d[g]ong[s] [pa rdzogs]

6. [phyi]r du dus [m]chod la mgo spe (chos sde) la

7. btsug pa yin / zhing 'di [b]stan pa nam gnas

8. gyi bar du / pad ma tshe ring gi bu tshar (rgy)ud gyi[s] bz[o]

9. re bzod pa by[e]d ts[a] (ba nas) min / gal te byas

10. n[a] gong du [g]ser [s]rang gang / la go spe'i chos

11. sde la [g]ser [s]rang gang / zhing sde la gnas pa byas

12. chu [r]gyab gang dang / [g]zhi bya dang 'dam ga byed c[e]s

13. yin / zhing pur mo kha' tshe ba / kha' khyum chung ba

14. khang (rgy)ab kyi gra khu [g]sum po yin / me me slob [d]pon

15. gyi the / ○ [b]ka' [b]cu mgon po tshe ring gi the / ○ [d]pang po'i dge

16. tshul don grub ((rgy)a mtsho) dang / A pa [b]kra shis (rgy)[a] [m]tsho gnyis

17. gyi the / ○ dge tshul mga' nge'i the / ○ pad ma tshe ring gi the / ○

18. § // A pa [b]kra shis ((rgy)a mtsho) la bon la [g]tang ba la

19. (chos skyong) gi zhing [g]sum po la bon sne'u zer khal

20. [b](rgy)ad [b]stan pa nam gnas gyi bar du gan pa byas sde pa

21. [b]kog dbang med pa / A [p]a [s]kyur dbang med pa

22. de la ’gal nas gong du [g]ser [s]rang gang [g]nyis po su[s] [’]gal

23. na ’ba[’] de [g]ser [s]rang gang yin / sde pa’i the / ○ bon ’di ru

24. (…) byas yin pa’i the / ○ ’di [d]pan[g] po sprong po skya pa yin [d]pan[g]

25. pa’i the’i / ○

26. § ’brug lo zla ba’i tshe bcu’i nyin / dge tshul

27. dga’ tshe ring dang / lho ro tshe ring zhing tshong byas pa la

28. (…) zhing pha [b]ong can la dmar zho [g]sum spr[ad] pa yin /

29. bon khal (bcu bzhi) kha [b]cad yin / zhing ’di [b]stan pa

30. nam gnas [k]yi bar du / grong [mkh]an [b]ka’ [b]cu’i d[g]ongs pa

31. rdzo(gs) phyir du / dus [m]chod la [b]tsug pa yin / zhing ’di [b]kog

32. dbang dang / [s]kyur dbang dang bon mi [’]khor ba med da byas

33. yin ’di la pha[n] tshun su[s] [’]gal na / [’]gal

34. ba de / gong du [g]ser [s]rang gang / mi [’]gal ba de la [s]rang gang thob

35. cas yin / zhing yang de la gnas pa byas / (me me) slob [d]pon gyi the / ○

36. ([b]ka’ [b]cu) mgon po tshe ring g[i] the / ○ [d]pan[g] po dge slong

37. byang chub [k]yi the / ○ [d]kon [m]chog [g]i the / ○ dge tshul [d]ga[’] tshe

38. ring [g]i the / ○ l[h]o ro tshe ring [g]i the / ○ Oṃ (bkra shis) gyur 1 /

Translation

I. Narration

[1] (…) in the Dragon Year … [2] of that date (…) Chos skyong[’s] field was sold, [3] and the large and small irrigation channels [4] (…) having given three *zho* units and three *zho* units (…) [5] in fulfilment of bKa’ bcu ba and Kan’s wishes, [6] it is established towards funeral service at the learning centre of La mgo spe [monastery].

I. Dispositio et sanctio

[7] This field, for as long as the [Buddha’s] teaching lasts, [8] will not be worked by and imposed on Pad ma tshe ring’s son and descendants. [9] If this happened, [10] the one above (i.e. Upholder-of-the-Law) [will collect] one ounce of gold. The educational centre of La go spe [11] [will also receive] one ounce of gold. As the field remains with the [learning] centre, [12] the person in charge of allocating irrigation water and the division of labour are to be left optional. [13] The field comprises [the plots of] Pur mo kha’ tshe ba, the small Kha’ khyum [14] and the irrigation channel at the back of the house.

I. Eschatocol

Seal of the venerable master (*seal*) [15] Seal of bKa' bcu mGon po tshe ring (*seal*). Seal of the two eye-witnesses, the novice [16] Don grub rgya mtsho and A pa bKra shis rgya mtsho (*seal*). [17] Seal of the novice mGa' nge (*seal*). Seal of Pad ma tshe ring (*seal*).

II. Narratio

[18] A pa bKra shis rgya mtsho gave assigned grain from [19] Chos skyong's third field known as Bon sne'u, [equals to] eight loads [of grain]. [20] A contract was drawn up for as long as the teaching lasts.

II. Dispositio

The district manager [21] does not have the authority to get hold of it. A pa does not have the authority to abandon it.

II. Sanctio

[22] In the case of infringement [of such contractual obligations], the one above [will received] one ounce of gold. Whosoever of the two infringes [this agreement] [23] is [subject to] a fine of one ounce of gold.

II. Eschatocol

Seal of the district officer. (*seal*) Seal of (…) the assigned grain was made here and now. (*seal*) [24] The eye-witness of this is sProng po skya pa. Seal of the witness [25] (*seal*).

III. Narratio

[26] On the tenth day of the lunar month of the Dragon Year, the novice [27] dGa' tshe ring and lHo ro tshe ring gave, for a field put on sale [28] [known as] the field with boulders, three red *zho* units. [29] It covers an area of fourteen loads of assigned grain.

III. Dispositio

This field, for as long [30] as the [Buddha's] teaching lasts, [30] in fulfilment of Grong mkhan bKa' bcu's wishes, [31] is established towards funeral service. This field cannot be seized, [32] abandoned, or exempt from ecclesiastical dues.

III. Sanctio

[33] Therefore, whosoever from whichever side infringes [this agreement], [34] one ounce of gold will be collected by to the one above, [and] one ounce of gold by who did not infringe it. [35] The field remains with [who owns it].

III. Eschatocol

Seal of the venerable master (*seal*) [36] Seal of bKa' bcu mGon po tshe ring (*seal*). Seal of the eye-witness, the monk [37] Byang chub (*seal*). Seal of dKon mchog. Seal of the novice dGa' tshe [38] ring (*seal*). Seal of lHo ro tshe ring (*seal*). May this be auspicious!

Notes

Line 3, *gra gu*: a term which seems to be originally related to the corners (*gra*) of a small piece of land (*gu*). The term *grwa bu* is reported in Zanskar in the naming of fields.[30] It is used in other documents (i.e. BmK01, BmK07, BmK08) and could perhaps describe a source of water, a rivulet, or an irrigation channel according to interviews conducted in Spiti.

Line 4, *zho*: a currency unit used for different types of coin made of copper, silver, or gold.

Line 5, *bka' bcu ba*: title received by a monk scholars from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery (*dka' chen*), which is equivalent to the Gelukpa degree of *dge bshes*.

Line 5, *kan*: sic, for 'abbot' (*mkhan po*)?

Line 6, *chos sde*: a monastic institution devoted to scholastic learning.

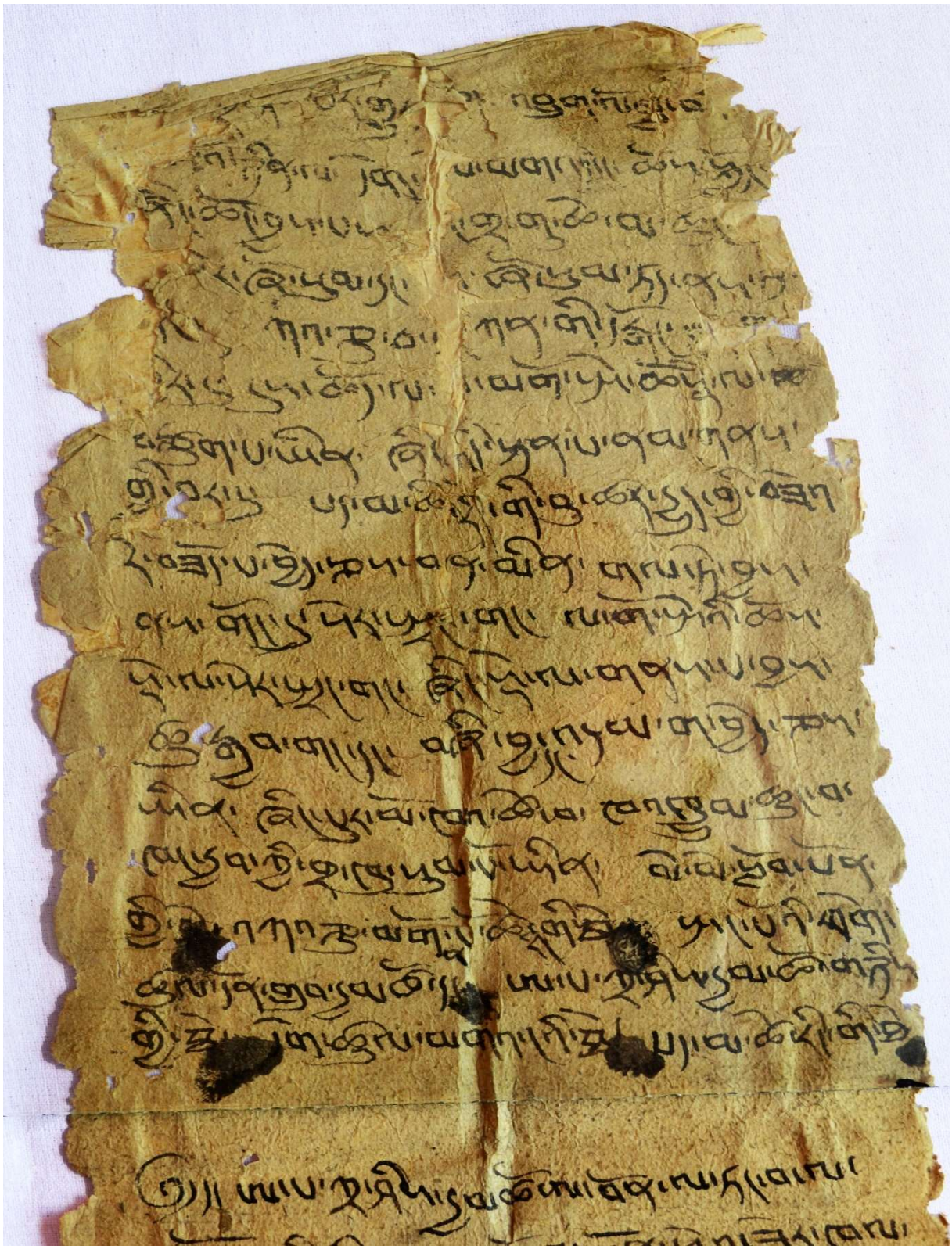
Line 14, *me me*: a term of respect used in Ladakh and Spiti.

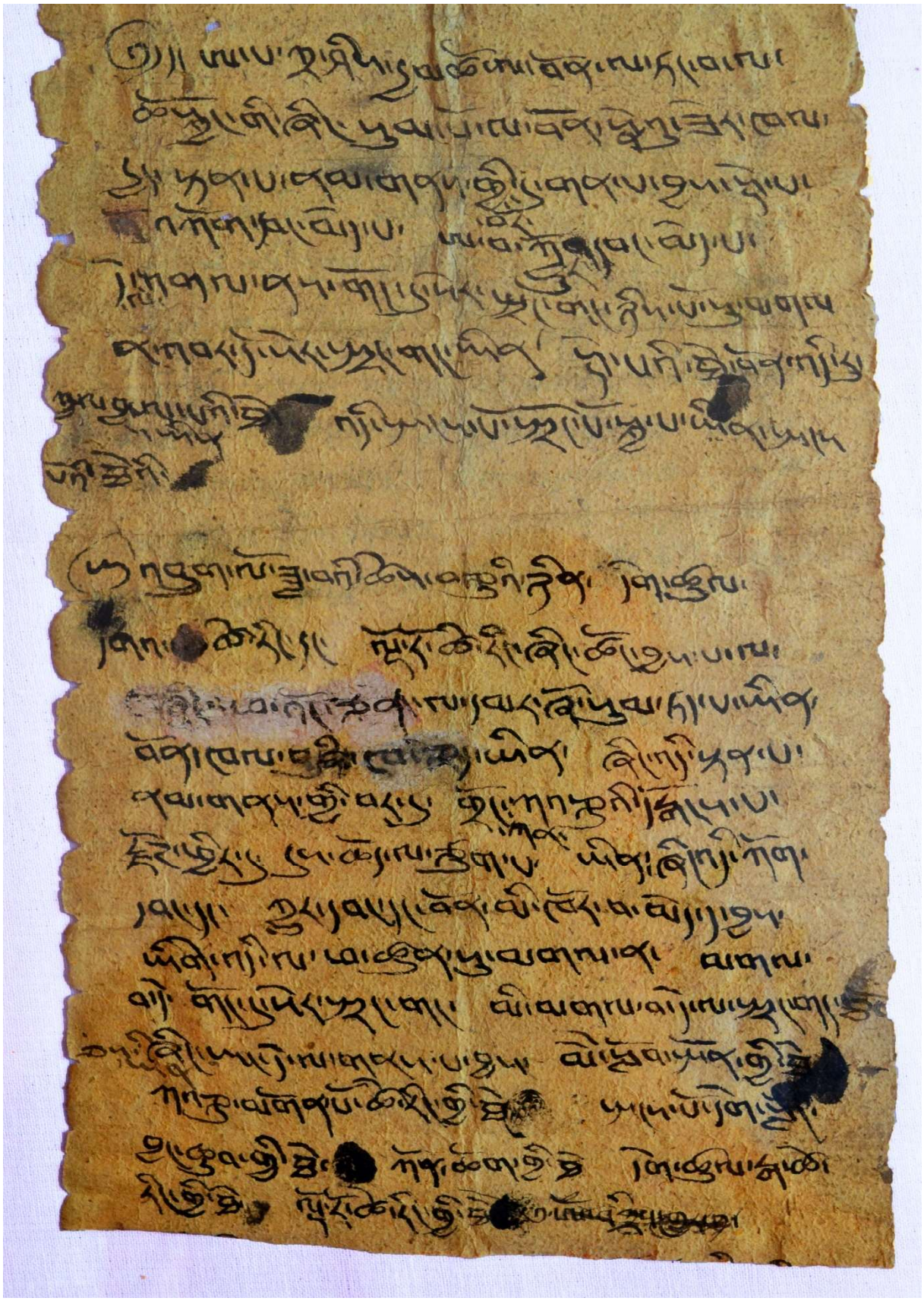
Line 23, *sde pa*: a dignitary in charge of a district or province.

Line 28, *dmar zho*: sic, for *dngul dmar zog*? A currency unit in circulation in the Western Himalayas. Although its meaning is uncertain, it is believed that it could refer to the Nepalese mohars, which were first introduced in 1640.[31]

[30] GUTSCHOW & GUTSCHOW 2003.

[31] RHODES 1981: 122.





BmK29

Date: Wood-Ox Year
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 8
Seals: 1

Summary

Arbitration decision rendered by the monastic house of Tashigang in West Tibet in the case of a failed reconciliation (*'dum 'grig*) between La go spe Monastery and the steward of Dangkhar concerning the payment of ecclesiastical dues (*bon*).[32]

Normalised Transliteration

1. (…) bzhi dang bre bcu (…) nas (…)

2. 'bul bdus la (…) 'di la brang mkhar gnyer pa nas […] dpon [lt]ag khur gyis ma sprad par brten lag spe bla brang

3. nas nad ma theg pa[r] zhu sbyor la so(gs) pa'i byas 'dug par / spyi ti do ka che nas phan tshun nang bsgrigs gi[s] gong

4. gsal bon [ldab] 'phar 'bul (rgy)u byas tshul zhu don la / 'di thad sa mtha'i dge dgon gyi gtong thebs [sa] (…)

5. (…) che nges bcas 'di nas kyang rtsa ba zhib gcod zhig [bs]kos [tsh]od 'dug kyang / gong gsal [b]ar 'du(m) la ji srid par

6. gnas [rgy]u'i kha dan byas don la lha sde nas kyang 'dod [kyi] yod tshod bcas / da nas bzung dgon ji srid na(m) gnas

7. (…) brang mkhar gnyer [p]a rim na[s] (…) d[e] don [g]zhi bon [ldab] 'phar khal dgu (lo lo) bzhin chag pa [med]

8. ['bul] lugs yong ba gyis / zhing glang zla tshe[s] la / (bkra shis) sgang bla brang nas [bris] // ○

Translation

Narratio

[1] (…) four [loads] and ten *bre* units [of grain] (…) [2] were not supplied by the steward of Brang mkhar, [who received] official backing. Therefore, the monastic house of Lag spe, unable to endure the loss, [3] put forward a request. From the agreement negotiated by the Do ka che of sPyi ti in the interest of both parties, [4] it appears that double the amount of assigned grain as quoted above will be supplied. In this respect, the religious offerings sent to the remote dGe lugs pa Monastery […][5] are very much needed.

[32] I am grateful to Dieter Schuh for sharing his own photograph of the document which is reproduced hereafter.

Dispositio

Hence, even if it is necessary to make a detailed decision about this case, a conciliatory settlement, as previously expressed, [6] is to be established as the final agreement, which in effect appears to have been accepted by the monastic community. Henceforth, for as long as the monastery lasts, [7] the successive steward will ensure the annual supply of nine loads of assigned grain, which is twice the amount, [as stipulated] in the agreement.

Eschatocol

[8] [Issued] from the monastic house of bKra shis sgang in the Wood-Ox Year.

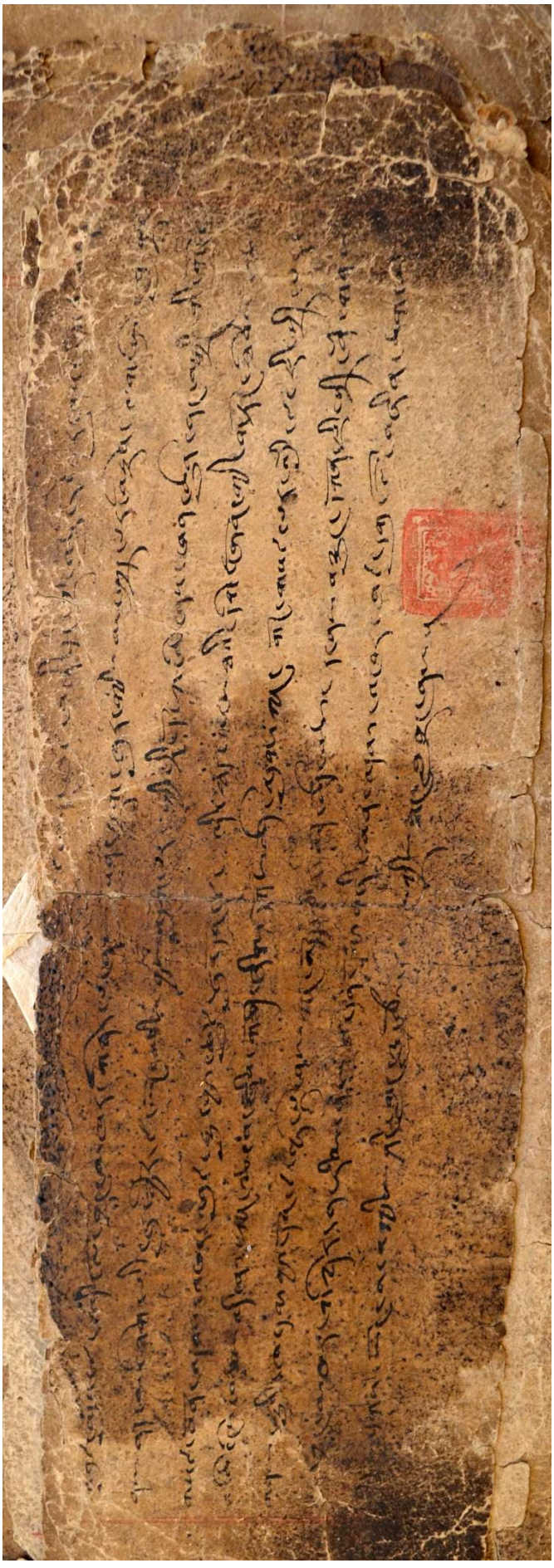


Photo: Dieter Schuh, 2015

BmK30

Date: -
Script: *tshugs yig*
Lines: 7
Seals: 1

Summary

Written document concerning the donation of assigned grain (*bon yig*) to Lag spel Monastery on behalf of the royal family of Ladakh.

Normalised Transliteration

1. § mi chen (bkra shis) rna(m) ([r]gy)al gyi dgongs rdzo(gs) dang / (v) mi dbang tshe dbang rna(m) par ([r]gy)al ba ([r]gy)al blon

2. (lhan rgyas) kyi sku'i tshe grub [k]yi rgyur [b]sngos nas / lag spel [d]gon gyi bla ma / dge [']dun 'dus [tsh]o(gs)

3. su 'tsho ba'i [m]thun 'gyur / gsu(m) gling sman bla (rin chen) gyi rtsa bon khal bc[o] lnga dang / bog na

4. tshe ring dbang (phyug gi) rtsa nas khal b(rgy)ad / gra khal [b]zhi bcas gnang 'dug don ltar / phyis 'jug

5. [br]tan [g]yis khyad / (v) mi dbang tshe brtan rna(m) ([r]gy)al mi 'gyur rdo rje dbang gi [s]de [y]ab sras [g]dung rgyud kyi

6. sku tshe['i] tshe [s]grub la zhin[g] [g]zhan phyo(gs) su ma song ba bcas / ngos mkhar dpon [s]brel por bon yig 'di

7. [b]rgyud ro(gs) gsung byung ba[s] / phyag ([r]gy)[a] nang ltar nas bre gang la'ang [m]tho [d]man med la(gs) // ○

Translation

[1] This was distributed [on the occasion of] the great bKra shis rnam rgyal's memorial service and for the longevity of King Mi dbang Tshe dbang rnam rgyal, [2] together with the ministers, as a means towards sustaining the lamas and monastic community of Lags spel Monastery: [3] Fifteen loads of assigned *rtsa bon* [on behalf of] sMan bla rin chen from gSum gling, [4] together with eight loads of *rtsa* barley and four loads of *gra* [on behalf of] Tshe ring dbang phyug from Bog were donated. Likewise, it is for the stability of the life of his offspring. [5] This was prepared to accomplish the longevity of Mi dbang Tshe brtan rnam rgyal mi 'gyur rdo rje dbang gi sde, father and son, [6] and to prevent them from departing to another spiritual realm. We, the two prefects of the fort, were instructed to help transmit this grain missive. [7] Therefore, in accordance with the seal the amount should not be reduced even by one *bre* measure. (*seal*)

Commentary

The reigns of these monarchs make it possible to narrow down the date around which this document was issued from 1779 to 1782. The King of Purig bKra shis rnam rgyal, to whom a memorial service (*dgongs rdzogs*) is offered, died in 1758 following which his kingdom was reunited with Ladakh. Tshe dbang rnam rgyal ruled with his ministers (*rgyal blon lhan rgyas*) from the late 1750s until his abdication in 1782. Born in 1779, his elder son Tshe brtan rnam rgyal was enthroned but continued to bear the title of prince (*lha sras*) until 1794. He died at the age of 24 in 1802.

Notes

Line 3, *gsum gling*: a settlement situated to the west of the Spiti River, opposite the monastery of Kyi, and which belonged to the ecclesiatical estates (*mchod gzhis*) of the valley.

Line 3, *bog*: sic, for sPong. A settlement of the lower valley recorded as Po in British settlement literature.

Line 4, *gra*: sic, for ears of cereals (*gra ma*) or perhaps buckwheat (*bra bo*) by homophony. A thorny shrub, *Caragana versicolor* (*gra ma*), is also used as a combustible in Spiti where it is collected in *khur* units.

Line 6, *zhing*: a Buddhist pure land or Buddha field (*zhing khams, zhing mchog*).

Line 7, *bre*: volume measure used for yields where twenty *bre* units equal a full load (*khal*).

Jo ba 1A

Date: Water-Bird Year, 1813
Script: *'khyug*
Lines: 10 recto
Seals: 2

Summary

Royal charter (*bka'*) issued by the King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal (r.*c.*1802–1840) to confirm the privileges of the astrologer (*jo pa/ba*) of Dangkhar.

Normalised Transliteration

1. (dpal ldan) sa yi tshang pa chen po mi dbang (rdo rje) tshe dpal mi [']gyur (don grub) rna(m par) (rgy)al ba lha'i bka'// ○
2. rang (zhabs su) gtogs pa'i skye [d]gu spyi dang bye brag tu/
3. spyi ti'i mkhar dpon/ grong dpon/ do ga che/ rgan las 'dzin 'go yod mtha' dag la springs pa//
4. de ga'i grang dkar kyi jo pa (bsod nams) 'di pa dbon po'i las ma gtogs [']bab khung[s] med pa'i sngon du yab me[s] gong ma yi
5. phyag (rgya) gnang 'dug pas/ [b]ar skabs zhig tu khu nu'i dmag [']thon skabs bka' shog thor [r]kyen
6. song 'dug kyang/ da lta sngon ma'i bka' shog kyi tsha[b] [t]u (rgy)a[b] snon 'di bzhin bka' drin skyangs yod pa'i
7. 'di na phyin kho pa jo pa (bsod nams) la sngon [']bab khung[s] gang yin kyang dbon las byed pa ma gtogs gzhan
8. khral ri(gs) gcig kyang sko mi chog pa dang/ yang dgos kho rang kyi pha ma'i sa [g]zhi gang yin bcas
9. skad med bde bar gnas [b]cug pa dang/ nyes med phyag (rgya) 'di [m]thong bzhin rtsis med kyi skad [gts]er bcas
10. tshe nyes chad yongs nges yod pa[s] so so nas go len bgyis/ chu bya zla 7 tshes la dkar zu'i skyed tshal nas bris// ○

Translation

Intitulatio
[1] Divine order of the glorious and great protector of the earth Mi dbang rDo rje tshe dpal mi 'gyur don grub rnam rgyal (*seal*)

Promulgatio
[2] This is addressed to all those under my [authority], individually and collectively: [3] to the prefect of the fort of sPyi ti, the village headman, the Do ga che, the elders and all those being in office.

Narratio

[4] Right here in Grang dkar, Jo pa bSod nams does not have a source of income aside from his work as an astrologer, [5] as evidenced by the sealed [document] granted by my eminent ancestors in the past. At the time when the troops of Khu nu attacked, however, it resulted in the loss of the charter.

Dispositio

[6] As for the present confirmation letter of privilege, it is graciously granted as a substitute for the former charter. [7] With the arrival of this [document], he, Jo pa bSod nams, [shall keep] whatever former source of income, including his position as astrologer, [8] and shall not be appointed for any other tax and compulsory services. In particular, he [shall retain] whatever land his parent possessed.

Sanctio

[9] Let him abide in peace without a sound. Should a shrill of disregard occur upon seeing this faultless seal, [10] punishment will be inevitable. May each of you think twice!

Eschatocol

Issued from the royal garden of dKar zu on the 7th month of the Water-Bird Year [1813]. (*seal*)

Commentary

The present document is effectively a confirmation letter of privilege (*rgyab snon*). It was issued by the King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal in replacement for a charter or certificate (*bka' shog*) which went missing during a raid against Spiti by the troops of Bashahr-Kinnaur (*khu nu*). The princely state of Bashahr invaded Spiti on two occasions in the 18th century. A first attack was conducted in 1749/50. The troops of Bashahr then launched a new military campaign in the 1760s or 70s, during which time they are said to have occupied the fort of Dangkhar for two years, causing substantial damage to the settlement as attested by other documents from Spiti.[33] It is presumably during this second offensive that the certificate of Jo pa bSod nams was lost.

A similar document was granted to another family of astrologers of the Spiti Valley. "At a place called Táshigong [i.e. *bkra bshis sgang*]", wrote Lyall in 1874, "a family of hereditary astrologers (choba) [i.e. *jo ba*] hold two allotments granted to them by the kings of Ladákh free of demand for revenue or begár". In a footnote, Lyall underlines that "The phraseology of the deed of grant is curious. It is drawn up and attested by officials with high sounding titles, signed and sealed at our palace, &c., and promises that the grant shall endure till the feathers of the raven turn white and the snow on the mountains black". His observations are, however, in perfect conformity with Tibetan diplomatic literature.[34]

Notes

Line 10, *dkar zu'i skyed tshal*: sic, for *dkar bzo skyed tshal*: the old royal garden at Leh according to K. Marx.[35]

[33] See document BmK14 in the present Appendix and No-no 18 in SCHUH 2016b: 205–207.

[34] The expression "till the feathers of the black raven turn white" (*pho rog nag po la skra dkar nam 'gro'i bar*), for instance, is attested in the Tibet-Bashahr Treaty of 1679; see HALKIAS 2009.

[35] FRANCKE 1926: 124.

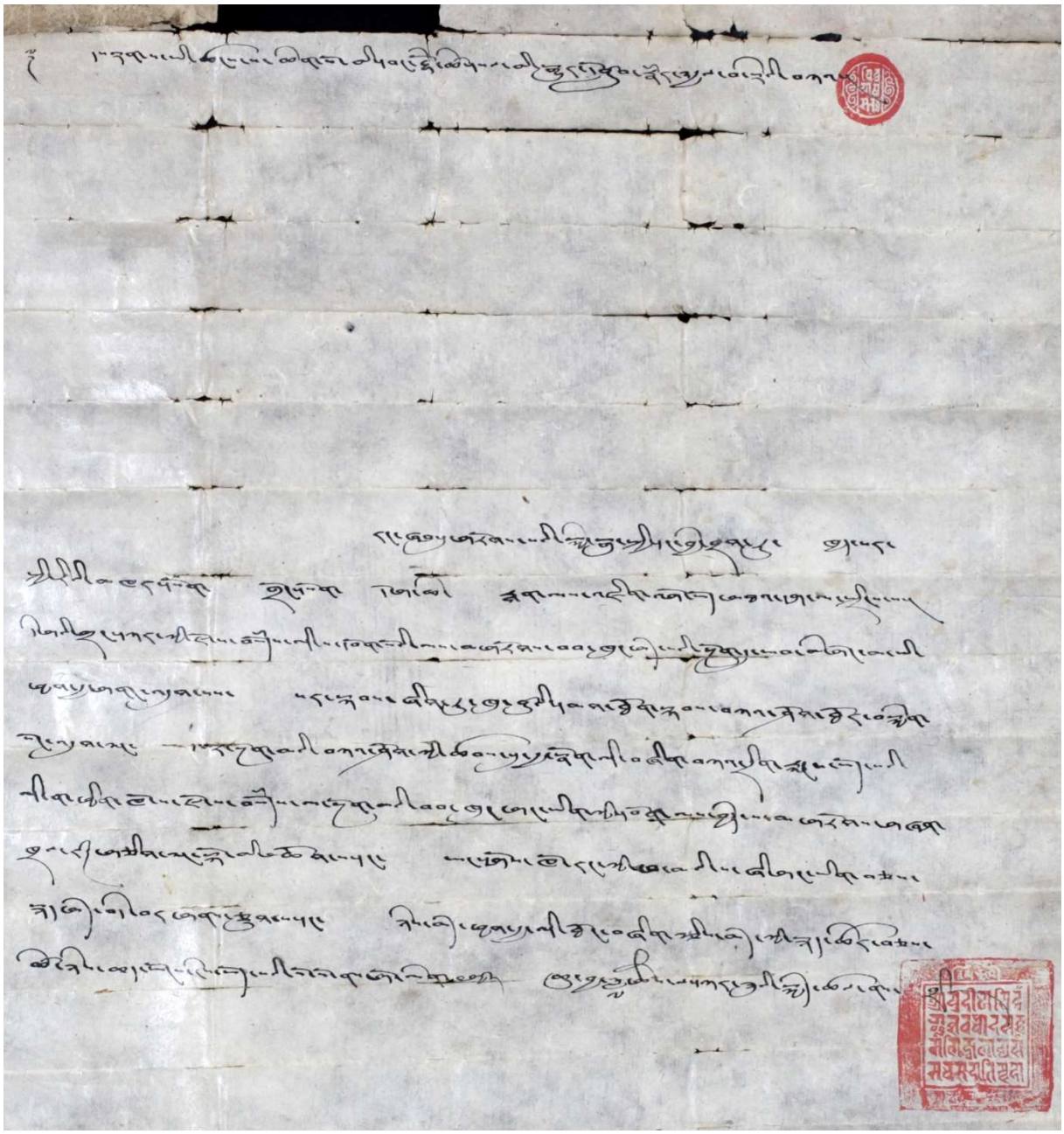


Photo: Patrick Sutherland, 2015

Jo ba 1B

Summary

Copy of Jo ba 1A with emended passages and edits. This modern copy must have been requested by the owners of the original document; i.e. the Jo ba family of Dangkhar.

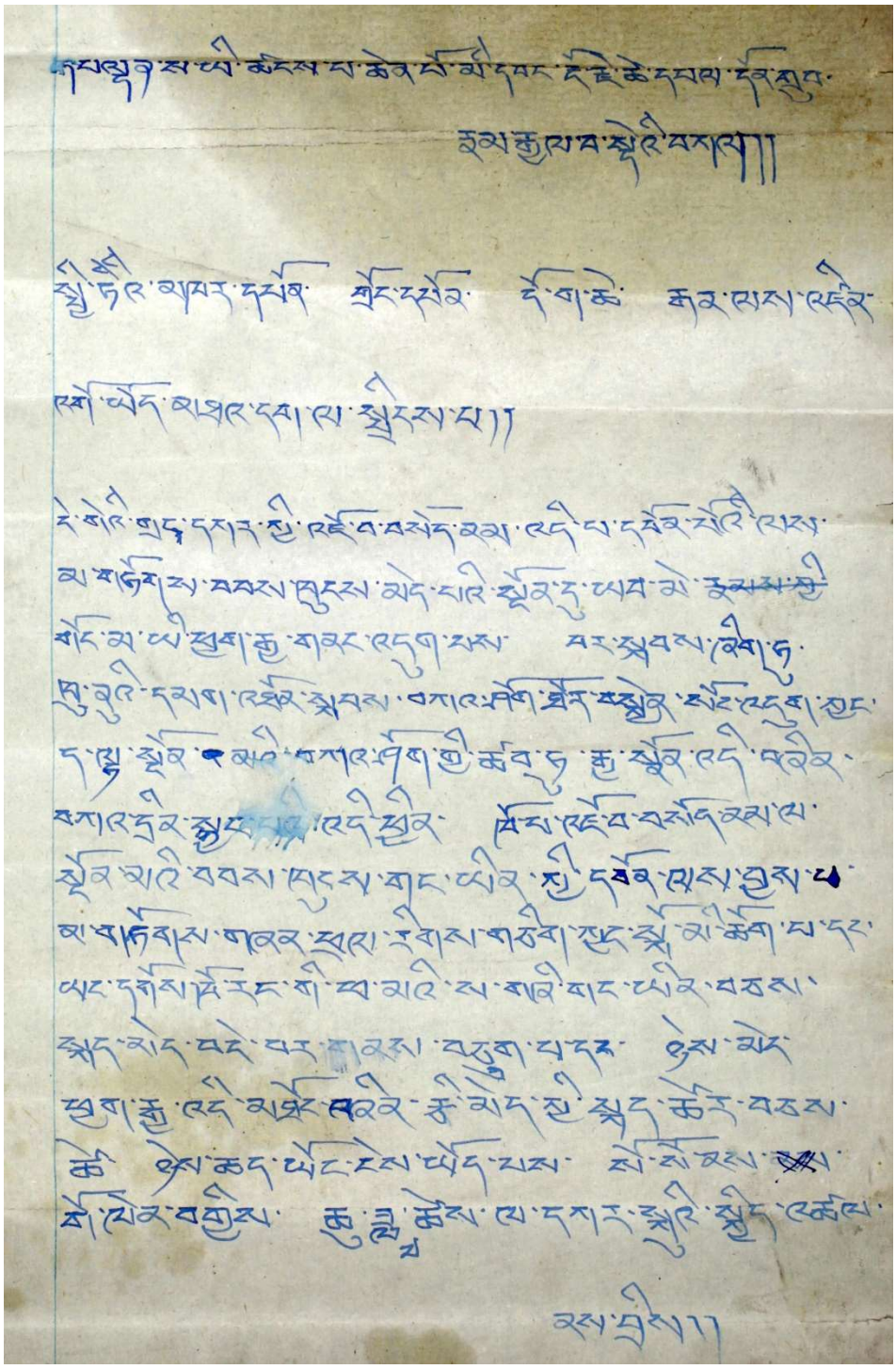


Photo: Patrick Sutherland, 2015

APPENDIX SEVEN

Catalogue of Seals

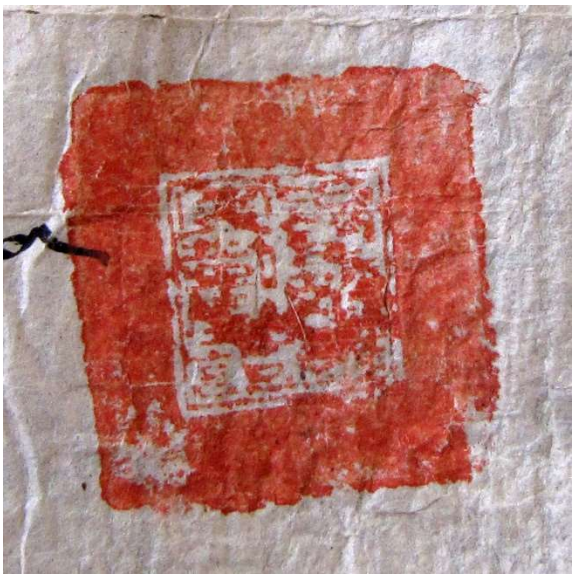
The study of seals, known as sigillography or sphragistics, is one of the auxiliary sciences to the study of history. Seals have been the focus of medievalists and European historians since the 19th century, and this has also laid the foundations for the study of non-European sealing practices.[1] In pre-modern Tibet, as in mediaeval Europe, seals were the primary means of authentication for legal and diplomatic documents. In general, Tibetan and Himalayan seals have not raised significant interest amongst Tibetologists; their study has been mostly carried out by those few scholars dealing with diplomatics. The one notable exception relevant to this work, is a catalogue of seals from Ladakh, Purig, and Spiti compiled by Dieter Schuh in 2016.[2]

The word 'seal' has two meanings. Firstly, it designates an object, known as a 'matrix' or 'die', made from a durable material such as metal, wood, or ivory into which a device was engraved. Secondly, the term is also used for the impression made by that object in soft material such as clay, wax, fabric, or paper; technically speaking, seal impressions are referred to as 'sealings'.

Most of the seals used in the local archives from Spiti had a flat surface, called the 'face', which bore an image and/or a legend in *intaglio*. Designs and/or wordings—often a single letter of the Tibetan alphabet—have been summarily described when possible. Seal impressions were made using black, and less frequently red, ink; the latter seems to reflect the higher status of its owner or user. The seal impressions that are catalogued here were mostly employed as seals of validation; they were used as the primary means of validating charters and confirmation letters of privileges in the case of evidentiary documents, or as proofs of ownership and identity in dispositive documents such as written agreements. For each seal reproduced in facsimile below, I have attempted to identify their owner, use, and provenance as far as possible.

[1] As a reference and source of inspiration for the present catalogue; see NEW 2010.
[2] SCHUH 2016c.

BmK01



Year: 1740

Date: lcags sprel zla 3 tshes 4/4

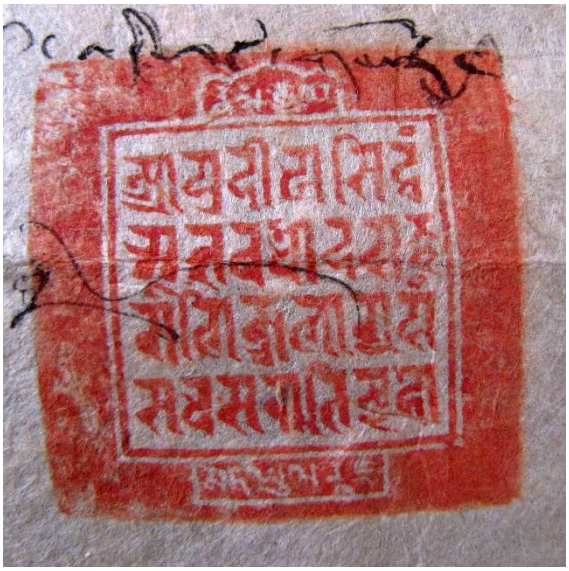
Owner: unknown

Use: seal of office?

Provenance: sGar tog, West Tibet

Description: red square seal with inscription in *'phags pa* script divided into two columns.

BmK02a



Year: 1818

Date: sa stag

Owner: King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal

Use: seal of validation, personal

Provenance: Leh, Ladakh

Description: large red square seal with inscriptions in Tibetan (*dbu chen*) and Sanskrit (*rañjanā*).

Upper cartouche: *rnam rgyal*
Lower cartouche: *mang yul rA dza*
Middle insert*:* *āyudīrgha siddhaṃ*
īśavardhodayaḥ
maṇijvalāvyayaṃ
sarva sadā tiṣṭha ho

Note:[3] identical to Jo ba 1Aa

[3] For a detailed study of this seal, CÜPPERS 2016.

BmK02b



Year: 1818

Date: sa stag

Owner: King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal

Use: seal of validation, personal

Provenance: Leh, Ladakh

Description: Red round seal with Sanskrit inscription in *rañjanā* script reading:

vipra
ghoṣa
saraḥ

Notes:[4] identical to BmK07 and Jo ba 1Ab

BmK04a



Year: unknown

Date: lcags mo lug zla 4 tshe 13

Owner: governing council (*bla spyi*) of Legs spel monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal with a circle containing a letter *sa* topped by an anusvāra

Note: identical to BmK20b and BmK21b

[4] CÜPPERS 2016.

BmK04b



Year: unknown

Date: lcags mo lug zla 4 tshe 13

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Maṇi 'og ma, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal with Tibetan letter *cha* in the centre.

BmK04c



Year: unknown

Date: lcags mo lug zla 4 tshe 13

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Maṇi gong ma, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK04d



Year: unknown

Date: lcags mo lug zla 4 tshe 13

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Brang khar, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK04e



Year: unknown

Date: lcags mo lug zla 4 tshe 13

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Lha lung, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK05



Year: unknown

Date: sa bya

Owner: monastic house (*bla brang*) of bKra shis sgang

Use: seal of office?

Provenance: bKra shis sgang, West Tibet

Description: black square seal with inscription in *'phags pa* script-like maze.

BmK06a



Year: unknown

Date: chu stag

Owner: either La go pe Monastery (Dangkhar) or lTa pho Monastery (Tabo)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkar or Tabo, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK06b



Year: unknown

Date: chu stag

Owner: either La go pe Monastery (Dangkhar) or lTa pho Monastery (Tabo)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkar or Tabo, Spiti

Description: very small black ground seal.

BmK06c



Year: unknown

Date: chu stag

Owner: lDum bu

Use: proof of identity**,** personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: black square seal with concentric squares and four lobed design in the centre.

BmK07



Year: 1778 or 1838

Date: sa khyi

Owner: King Tshe dbang rnam rgyal or King Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal

Use: seal of validation, personal

Provenance: Ladakh

Description: red round seal with Sanskrit inscription in *rañjanā* script.

Note: Identical to BmK02b and Jo bo 1Ab

BmK11



Year: 1851

Date: ١٨٥١

Owner: Office of Assistant Commissioner of Kulu

Use: seal of validation, seal of office

Provenance: Kulu, Kangra Dist., British India

Description: large round black seal with inscriptions in Farsi in the centre and the same in *devanāgarī* script – with due phonetic changes – around in a circle.

The inscription reads:[5]

Muhr Kachahari Asistant Kamishanar Saheb Bahadur Kulu Iswi 1849

"Seal of the Office of Assistant Commissioner [of] Kulu [dated] 1849"

BmK12a



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Mani 'og ma, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

[5] I would like to thank Dr. Shailendra Bhandare from the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, for his assistance in the study of this seal.

BmK12b



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of La go, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK12c



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

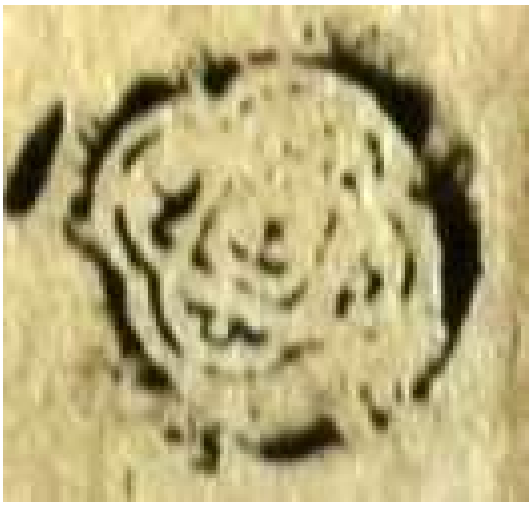
Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Brang khar, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal with endless knot (*dpal be'u*) design in the centre.

BmK12d



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: monastic congregation (*dge 'dun*) of Lha lung, Dangkhar Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal with Tibetan letter *cha* in the centre.

Note: identical to BmK04b?

BmK13a



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: Legs sgo spe Monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal with Tibetan letter *cha* in the centre.

Note: identical to BmK13d and BmK20a

BmK13b



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: dPal ’byor bzang po

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: sGyung ngul, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK13c



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: people of La ra

Use: proof of identity, seal of office?

Provenance: La ra, Spiti

Description: small black square seal.

BmK13d



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: Legs sgo spe Monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

Note: identical to BmK13a and BmK20a

BmK13a



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: possibly one of the three individuals mentioned in line 3

Use: proof of identity

Provenance: *nil*

Description: small black square seal.

BmK14



Year: 1778

Date: sa khyi zla 5 tshe 20

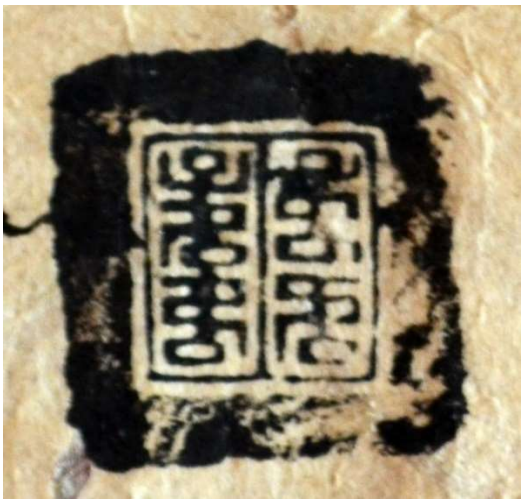
Owner: unknown

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: unknown

Description: small black square seal with four lobbed motif and three Tibetan letters in the centre, possibly *cha gyo rtsa* or *rtsha*.

BmK16a



Year: unknown

Date: sa glang zla 2 tshe 9

Owner: unknown

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: unknown

Description: black square seal with design in *'phags pa* script-like design divided into two columns.

BmK16b



Year: unknown

Date: sa glang zla 2 tshe 9

Owner: lHun grub

Use: proof of identity, individual

Provenance: Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK16c



Year: unknown

Date: sa glang zla 2 tshe 9

Owner: bLo bzang chos 'dzin

Use: proof of identity, individual

Provenance: Spiti

Description: small black square seal with Tibetan letter *cha* in the centre.

BmK18



Year: unknown

Date: chu 'brug

Owner: monastic council (*bla spyi*) of Legs spel Monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

BmK19a



Year: unknown

Date: me phag

Owner: unclear

Use: *nil*

Provenance: sGar tog, West Tibet?

Description: black round seal.

BmK19b



Year: unknown

Date: me phag

Owner: unclear

Use: *nil*

Provenance: sGar tog, West Tibet?

Description: square black seal with design in *'phags pa* script-like wording divided into three columns.

BmK20a



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag or slightly after

Owner: monastic council (*bla spyi*) of Legs spel Monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal

Note: identical to BmK13a and BmK13d

BmK20b



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag or slightly after

Owner: governing council (*bla spyi*) of Legs spel monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black square seal with a circle containing a letter *sa* topped by an anusvāra.

Note: identical to BmK04a and BmK21b

BmK20c



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag or slightly after

Owner: Tshe dbang dar rgyas from Byang?

Use: proof of identity, personal?

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small round black seal.

Note: similar to BmK21c?

BmK21a



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag

Owner: monastic council (*bla spyi)* of dKyil Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Kyi Monastery, Spiti.

Description: small black square seal

BmK21b



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag

Owner: monastic council (*bla spyi*) of Lags spel Monastery

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black square seal with a circle containing a letter *sa* topped by an anusvāra.

Note: identical to BmK04a and BmK20b

BmK21c



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag

Owner: 'Al pa bying

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: black round seal with swastika cross.

Note: identical to BmK20c?

BmK21d



Year: unknown

Date: chu phag

Owner: sGu lu

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: black round seal with a hatched circle containing a letter *cha* in the centre.

BmK22a



Year: unknown

Date: stag

Owner: La go dpe monastery (Dangkhar)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal.

Note: identical to BmK12c?

BmK22b



Year: unknown

Date: stag

Owner: bKra shis phun tshogs

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: black round seal.

BmK23



Year: unknown

Date: zla 3 tshes 25

Owner: steward of the monastic house of bKra shis sgang

Use: proof of identity, seal of office?

Provenance: bKra shis sgang, West Tibet

Description: small black round seal with two Tibetan letters or more among which the letter *cha*.

BmK24



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: the monastic council of Spiti?

Use: proof of identity, seal of office?

Provenance: Spiti

Description: small black round seal with indistinct pattern or 'character' in the centre.

BmK25



Year: 1753

Date: chu bya zla 4

Owner: King of Purig bKra shis rnam rgyal

Use: seal of validation, personal

Provenance: Purig

Description: large red square seals with inscription in *'phags pa* script in the centre.

BmK26a



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: lama of Bla lags bel monastery in Dangkhar

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti

Description: small black round seal. Content is illegible.

BmK26b



Year: *nil*

Date: *nil*

Owner: chief disciplinarian (*dbu chos*), officials (*las sne*), and monastic community (*dge 'dun pa*)

Use: proof of identity, seal of office

Provenance: Dangkhar, Spiti?

Description: small black round seal. Content is illegible. Letter *cha*?

BmK27a



Year: unknown

Date: 'brug lo zla ba'i tshe bcu

Owner: bKa' bcu mGon po tshe ring

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: small black ground seal with endless knot-like (*dpal be'u*) pattern in the middle.

Note: identical to BmK27b

BmK27b



Year: unknown

Date: ’brug lo zla ba’i tshe bcu

Owner: bKa’ bcu mGon po tshe ring

Use: proof of identity, personal

Provenance: Spiti

Description: small black ground seal with endless knot-like (*dpal be’u*) pattern in the middle.

Note: identical to BmK27a

BmK29



Year: unkown

Date: zhing glang

Owner: monastic house (*bla brang*) of bKra shis sgang

Use: seal of validation?, seal of office

Provenance: monastic estate (*bla brang*) of bKra shis sgang in West Tibet

Description: large red square seal with indistinct design in the centre.

BmK30



Year: *c.* 1765–1782

Date: *nil*

Owner: district prefects of the fort (*mkhar dpon*)

Use: seal of validation? Seal of office?

Provenance: Spiti or Purig?

Description: black square seal with two columns of *’phags pa* script-like wording.

Jo ba 1Aa



Year: 1813

Date: chu bya

Owner: King of Ladakh Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal

Use: seal of validation, personal

Provenance: Leh, Ladakh

Description: large red square seal with inscriptions in Tibetan (*dbu chen*) and Sanskrit (*rañjanā*).

Upper cartouche: *rnam rgyal*
Lower cartouche: *mang yul rA dza*
Middle insert*:* *āyudīrgha siddhaṃ*
īśavardhodayaḥ
maṇijvalāvyayaṃ
sarva sadā tiṣṭha ho

Note: identical to BmK02a

Jo ba 1Ab



Year: 1813

Date: chu bya

Owner: King Tshe dbang rnam rgyal or King Tshe dpal don grub rnam rgyal

Use: personal, royal

Provenance: Ladakh

Description: Red round seal with Sanskrit inscription in *rañjanā* script reading:
vipra
ghoṣa
saraḥ

Note: identical to BmK02b and BmK07

A. Expulsion of the Ladakhi invaders from Spiti

The following account was collected by A.H. Francke in 1907 and included in *Die historischen und mythologischen Erinnerunger des Lahouler Gesammelt* (*sngar ma'i dus kyi lo rgyus gar zha pa rnams la yid du tsam lus pa bzhin bzhugs so*).[1] There is no evidence to support that the events put into writing here, which must have been transmitted orally from one generation to the next, can be dated to the 17th century as suggested by Francke. His informant was a man from the village of Kyiling in Spiti. This well-known narrative, whose outcome takes place in the Dangkhar settlement, is still being told to vistors and travellers today.

དང་པོ་ལ་དྭགས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་སྤྱི་ཏི་པ་ལ་དབུ་བཅོ་ཅས་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ནི།།
དེའི་དུས་ལ། ལ་དྭགས་པ་ཀུན་སྤྱི་ཏི་ཡུལ་ལ་སོང་སྟེ། ཐོག་བཅོམ་བཏང་སྟེ་ཆོད་ཟ་བཀོས། བོ་མོ་ཀུན་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་ཅ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་བཏུག་སྐྱེ་ཚང་མ་ཡང་བཅོམ་སྟེ་ཁྱེར།[2] སྤྱི་ཏི་པ་ཚང་མ་དེ་ལ་ཕོངས་ཏེ་སོང་། དེ་ཟླག་གི་བན་ཆེན་ལ་དྭགས་པས་ལན་མང་པོ་བཅོས[3]པ་སང་[4]། སྤྱི་ཏི་པས་འདི་ཟླག་ཐབས་ཤེགས་བཅོས། བང་གི་ཆོང་རྒྱལ་ལ་ཚང་མ་དེ་ལ་འཁྱེར་ཏེ་སྡས། དེ་ཟླག་གི་ཆོང་སྤྱི་ཏིའི་ཇོ་བང་སྤྱི་ཏི་པ་སྡུག་པོ་ཀུན་གྱིས་ད་རུང་ཡང་དེ་ལ་སྡས་ཏེ་ཡོད། དེ་ནས་ཡང་ལན་ཅིག་ལ་དྭགས་པ་ཀུན་སྤྱི་ཏི་ལ་བསྟེབས་ཏེ་དགྲ་ཅིག་དེ་རུ་བསྡས་སོང་། དེ་ནས་ལོ་གསར་གྱི་དུས་རབ་ཏེ་སྤྱི་ཏི་པ་ཀུན་གྱིས་འདི་ཟླག་གྲབས་བཅོས། ལ་དྭགས་པ་ཚང་མ་ཡུལ་ཚོ་དེ་དེ་ལ་བཞོས་ཏེ། མཐོན་ལ་ཁྱེར།[5] དེ་ནས་མཚན་མོའི་དུས་ལ་ལ་

[1] For a facsimile of Francke's document, see TOBDAN & CHERING DORJE 2008: 175–176.
[2] Sic, for *khyer*.
[3] Sic, for *spyod*.
[4] Sic, for *song*.
[5] Sic, for *khyer*.

དུགས་པ་ཚང་མ་དང་རོ་སྟེ་སྤྱི་ཏེ་བས་རྒྱང་སྟེ་བསད་སོང་། ཁ་ཅིག་གྲང་མཁར་མཁར་གྱི་ཐོག་ལ་ཡོད་ཏེ་མི་ཀུན་གྱིས་དེད་ཏེ་ཐོག་ནས་ཐུལ་ཏེ་ཤི་སོང་། ཁ་ཅིག་དེ་ལ་ཡོད་ཏེ་ད་རོ་སྟེ་ཡོད་པ་སོང་། དེ་ནས་བྱད་ཏེ་ཤི་སོང་།།

ཁྱུ་[6]སྒྲིང་པ་དགའ་[7]ཞེལ་[8]གྱིས་བྲིས་སོ།།

Translation

To begin with, an account about how the Ladakhi are said to have antagonised the people of Spiti.

At that time, a great number of Ladakhi people went to the land of Spiti which they ransacked and plundered heavily. Even the ornaments of women's garments were stolen and taken away. And so the people of Spiti fled to the hills. As such atrocities were perpetrated many times by Ladakhi men, the inhabitants of Spiti devised a ploy. They took all their possessions and hid them in the hills. The lord of Spiti and the inhabitants being well-off, they went to the hills to hide their possessions in that manner again and again. The next time the Ladakhi people arrived in Spiti, they stayed there over the winter. When the time to celebrate the New Year arrived, all the inhabitants of Spiti started the usual preparations. The Ladakhi men were divided among the inhabitants who invited them [home] to celebrate. By the time the evening came, all the Ladakhi men were drunk and the people of Spiti beat them to death. Some of them ran to the top of the Dangkhar fort pursued by the people who took their lives there. Others fled down the hills still drunk, rolled off the cliffs, and died.

This was written by dGa' 'phel from Kyling.

*****

B. Song of Dangkhar based on Hein's *A Collection of Spiti Songs*

This sitting song was recorded by Veronika Hein on two separate occasions during fieldwork in 2009 and 2011. In her recently published article the linguist provides a transliteration in phonetic notation (IPA) along with an English version of the song based on her local informants' translations and commentaries.[9] Using Hein's phonetic transliteration and translation, I have attempted to work out a

[6] Sic, for *skyid*.
[7] Sic, for *dge*.
[8] Sic, for *'phel*.
[9] HEIN 2019.

back translation into the original language which I give in Tibetan transliteration. While the first two verses can be confidently reconstructed, the translation of the remaining lines is more challenging. Likewise, the song of Dangkhar is known under two different titles, the first one of which is not fully comprehensible.

Sitting song 3

Hein's English version	**Back translation into Tibetan**
Chhukpo Poloi Lu / Dangkhar Panma	*[Phyug po?][10] (...)'i glu / Brag dkar Padma*
On the top of the lotus flower of the white rock	1. brag dkar pad ma'i steng na
There is a small monastery like a heap of white rice	2. dgon chung 'bras dkar phung lta
Inside the Lama lives	3. nang na bla ma kun bzhugs yod
The Lama of all the sentient beings	4. 'gro ba 'dren pa'i bla ma
Lama Lobzang lives there	5. bla ma blo bzang kun bzhugs yod
The Lama who lights up the darkness.	6. mun pa sel ba'i bla ma
*****	*****
Facing east	7. kha gtad shar la gzigs ba
From well-fitted windows and doors	8. rab gsal sgo 'grig pa'i nang nas
His holy bedroom facing east	9. gzim khang shar la gzigs ba
From well-fitted windows and doors	10. rab gsal sgo 'grig pa'i nang nas
Inside the king lives	11. nang na dpon po kun bzhugs yod[11]
The king who leads all the people.	12. mgo nag skyong ba'i dpon po
*****	*****
The ones who were born in the central room	13. ma khang dkyil du skye ba
We, the four brothers and sisters	14. ngo cag spun lags gzhi po
The one who was born first	15. (…) lus srid dang ma
Is our only elder sister	16. ba'i a che gcig gcig
The one who was born first	17. (…) lus srid dang ma
Is our elder sister Dawa Putit.	18. a che zla ba bu khrid
*****	*****
The very skillful blacksmith, what did he make?	19. [gser?] mgar mkhas ba rdung ba[12]
A key to the magic lock	20. sgo lcags sprul gyi lde smig
The inside bar of the lock	21. sgo lcags nang gi gze ma[13]
Is sister Dawa Putit	22. a che zla ba bu khrid
To the very true *dharma*	23. rje'i drang pa'i lha chos la
There are very few followers.	24. 'dren mkhan nyung tsam 'dug pa

[10] The term *phyug po* could be related to the name of a mount or that of a pass which form the geographical and allegorical setting of the Dangkhar settlement; see *A Concise History of Dangkhar Monastery* in this appendix.

[11] Interestingly, the Tibetan word *dpon po*, meaning a lord or an official, is understood as synonymous with the word king (*rgyal po*) in Hein's translation. I would suggest that this local perception reflects the heightening status of the valley headman (*rgya pa*) who, under the honorific title 'Nono of Spiti', was progressively assimilated to a monarch by the people of the valley.

[12] Hein's phonetic rendering seems to provide an alternative reading: *sems dkar mkhas ba rdung ba*; "The virtuous and skilled blacksmith". Either way the English translation does not seem to match completely.

[13] Perhaps from the word *gze ru* meaning a spike or a nail.

*****

The very precious wealth of the people
There are many who follow
The layman *Bodhisattva*
Is my, the girl's husband
The layman *Bodhisattva*
Is my, Dawa's husband.

*****

The ones who live in the empty sky
Are the sun and the moon
Do not stay in one place as a word
Please, come to look after the world!

*****

25. mi rtag ['chi?] mi nor [tshan?] la
26. 'dren mkhan mang tsam 'dug pa
27. (…) byang chub sems dpa'
28. no mo nga'i mag pa
29. (…) byang chub sems pa
30. zla ba nga'i mag pa

*****

31. dgung nam stong la bzhugs ba
32. nyi ma zla ba gnyis bo
33. skad cig tsam la ma bzhugs ba
34. 'dzam gling skor tu spyod cig

*****

C. A *Concise History of Dangkhar Monastery* by dGe bshes Thub bstan bstan 'dzin

The following account is based on oral lore related to the history of Spiti. It was recorded in writing by dGe bshes Thub bstan bstan 'dzin in the 2010s. A Gelukpa monk and native of Spiti, the author belongs to one of the most important families in Dangkhar. He was born in the house of the astrologer (*jo ba*) and tantric lama of Dangkhar. He underwent intensive monastic training at dGa'ldan shar rtse, Karnataka State, and obtained the prestigious title of dGe shes lha rams pa. His *Concise History of Dangkhar Monastery* is based on popular lore and religious views thereby offering an emic perspective into the history of the Dangkhar settlement. Photocopies of a Word document were obtained during fieldwork in 2018.

བོད་མཁར་དགོན་གྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་སྙིང་བསྡུས། ཚོགས་གདམས་མཚོ་ཡི་དཀྱིལ་ན། བོད་མཁར་བད་མའི་སྙིང་ན། ཞེས་ཚོགས་གདམས་ཀྱི་སྒན་ལས་བྱང་བ་ལྟར་བོད་མཁར་དགོན་བཙམ་བོད་ཡུལ་འདི་མེ་ཏོག་བད་མའི་ཟེ་འབྲུ་ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ་དེ་ཡང་ཤར་དུ་སེར་སྟོད་དེ། ཡོར་མ་ནེས་དེ། ནུབ་ཏུ་རེ་བས་དེ། བྱང་དུ་བ་གླང་རིཁམ་ཁུ་མཆོག་དེ། ཤར་ལྷོར་སྐྱིད་ཕྱིང་ཐང་དེ། ལྷོ་ནུབ་ཏུ་ལྷག་པོ་རྩོ་ཝེ་རང་། ནུབ་བྱང་དུ་རྒྱལ་བོ་དབལ་ལྡན། བྱང་ཤར་དུ་ལྷག་པོ་རྩོ་ཀུ་ལ་སྟེ་བད་མ་འདབས[14]བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་

[14] Sic, for *'dab*.

དབུས་སུ་ཅེ་འབྲེའི་ཚུལ་དུ་བབ་མཁར་དགོན་ལེགས་འཛེལ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཆོས་སྒིང་འདི་ཉིད་གནས་ལ། དེ་ཡང་ཏན་རབས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དགེ་རྩྭ་དུ། མཁར་དགོན་རྩ་ཐག་བརྒྱང་[15]འབྲེལ། ས་ཚགས་པའི་དང་པོ་རྡོ་འཇིག་པའི་ཉིང་མ་ཅེར་བ་བཞིན་མཁར་དགོན་གཉིས་རི་ལྟར་ཤ་ལ་མཐོས་[16]ཀྱི་ཁ་ལོ་བསྟུར་བའི་ཚེ་སྲབ་དང་མཉུལ་ཐུར་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཐག་བརྒྱང་[17]འབྲེལ་ཅེར། དེ་ལྟར་བག་མཁར་དགོན་པ་འདི་ས་ཚགས་པའི་དང་པོ་སྟེ་མཁར་ཚགས་པ་དང་དུས་མཉམ་ཡིན། མཁར་ནི་སྤྱི་ཏིང་རྩྭ་པོ་བྱང་བ་ནས་ཡིན། སྤྱི་ཏིང་རྩྭ་པོ་ཐོག་མ་སྐྱི་ལྷེ་ཉེ་མ་དགོན་ཡིན། རྩྭ་པོའི་མཚན་ལུང་པ་ལ་ཐོགས་ཏེ་སྐྱིད་ལྷེ་ཅེར་རྩྭ་ལ་སྤྱི་ཏི་ཞེས་སྐད་རྒྱང་ཆག་པའམ་ཉམས་པ་ཡིན། ཁོང་གིས་སྲས་ལྷེ་གཙུག་མགོན་གྱིས་སྤྱི་ཏིར་དབང་བསྐྱུར་ནས་ཡམ་[18]མེས་ཀྱི་སྒོལ་རྩྭན་བཞིན་བག་མཁར་དུ་རྩྭ་པོའི་པོ་བང་མཁར་དང་ལྷ་ཁང་གོང་མ་སྨན་ཆའི་ལྷ་ཁང་གཉིས་དུས་གཅིག་དུ་ཟུག་བཏབས་པར་བྱུབ་སྟེ། ཐུང་དར་གྱི་སྲས་འོད་སྲུང་གིས་ལྷ་ལུང་དཔལ་གྱི་རྡོ་རྗེ་ནས་སྨན་ཆའི་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཞུས་ནས་གནས་གྱི་སྐར་མ་ལྷ་བུའི་ལྷ་ཁང་བཞེང་པར་ལོ་རྩྭས་རྣམས་སུ་གསལ་བས་འོད་སྲུང་གི་སྐུ་ཚ་དང་ཡང་ཚ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་ཡབ་མས་[19]ཀྱི་སྒོལ་བཟང་སྐྱིངས་བར་མངོན་ནོ། ཕྱིས་ལྷ་ཐུ་མ་ཞེ་བ་འོད་ཀྱིས་ཉམས་གསོ་མཛད་པས་ལྷ་ཆ་མས་བཞེངས་ཞེས་བཤད་སྒོལ་ཡོད། འོན་ཀྱང་མང་ཐོ་ཞེག་གིས་ལྷ་ཆ་མའི་བཞེངས་ཟེར་དུས་སྐྱལ་བའི་ལྷ་ཁང་ལྷ་བུར་གོ་བས་དེ་འདུ་མིན། ཡང་བརྒྱ་ཐྲག་བཅུ་གཅིག་ཧང་ཆ་མ་ལྷ་འོད་ཀྱིས་ལྷ་ཁང་གོང་འོག་དང་ལྷ་བར་ད་ལྟ་དགོན་ཆྱེང་ཡོད་སངས་དེར་སྤར་ཡོད་སྟེང་ཉམས་གསོ་རྒྱ་ཆེར་བསྐྱོན་པས་ན་ལྷ་འོད་དགོན་ཞེས་འབོད། ཁར་ཤེས་རྒ་ལ་འོད་ཡོད་ས་དེར་དགོན་པ་བཏབས་པས་ལ་འོད་དགོན་འབོད་ཅེས་པ་ས་དག་པར་མངོན། ལྷ་ཁང་སྟེང་བཤོད་རྣམས་སུ་ལྷེབས་རིས་མང་པོ་འདུག་ཀྱང་རྩིང་གོག་ཏུ་བྱུར་ཏེ་གསལ་པོ་འཇལ་མི་ཐུབ། འོན་ཀྱང་འབྲུ་རྩིང་པ་གང་ཚམས་[20]འཇལ་[21]རྒྱུ་ཡོད། དགོན་པ་འདིར་ཐོག་མར་སྨན་ཆའི་སྐོ་ནས་བསྐྱབ་མཆོད་སོགས་དང་ཞིང་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རྒྱ་དབུལ་ལས་བྱབ་པ་བགོད་མཛེས་ལྷན་པ་འཇལ་རྒྱ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་ཕྱིས་བཤིག་ནས་འབྲུ་སྐུ་བཞེངས་ཚུལ་ད་ལྟའི་ཏན་ལས་བྱབ་པ་འདི་ཉམས་གསོ་གནང་བ་དེར་ཅི་ཡིན་ཞེ་ན་ཁག་ཡོ་ཁྲུས་ཀྱི་ཚེ་ཐུབ་ཏུ་ཁྱད་ཆོས་སྲུང་མཐོག་ཡོ་ཐྲག་བྱུག་ཡིན་ཀྱང་དམ་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་ཀྱུ་ཁོ་ནས་ཁྱབ་ཅིང་ཁྱབ་ཏུ་ཡོད་པ་ཞིག་ཡིན། ཁོང་ལ་དུས་འགྱུར་མ་བྱུང་གོང་དགོན་པ་འདི་ནས་དགེ་བཤེས་དང་བཀའ་ཆེན་རྒྱུད་པ་བཅས་རིམ་པ་བྱུང་ཡོད། ཅགོང་ས་མཆོག་རྒྱ་གར་ལ་འཕེལས་པ་ནས་གཙན་སའི་ནང་དགོན་པ་འདི་ནས་སློབ་གཉེར་བ་རིམ་པ་ཐོན་ཟེན་པ་ཀ་རབས་[23]འབྱམས་དགེ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་དུ་མ་དང་འཚོན་

[15] Sic, for *zung*.
[16] Sic, for *'gros* or perhaps *gros*.
[17] Sic, for *zung*.
[18] Sic, for *yab*.
[19] Sic, for *mes*.
[20] Sic, for *'tshams*.
[21] Sic, for *mjal*.
[22] Sic, for *'jam*.
[23] Sic, for *rab*.

འཚུང་ཤང་མཚོད་བརྟེན་གྱི་བར་རིམ་ལྟར་གནས་ཡོད། དགོན་པ་འདིའི་ནང་བསམས་གཏན་གྱི་ཐུགཔ་པ་ལྟ་ཅམ་ཡོད་ཤང་ཉམས་གསོའི་སྐབས་ཁཡས་ཞིག་འརྩོལ་དུ་གྱུར་ཤང་། ཐུགཔ་ཞེས་གཅིག་ད་ལྟ་མཇལ་རྒྱུ་ཡོད་པ་དེའི་ནང་དུ་དགེ་འདུན་བཞི་གྲྭ་ནས་བརྒྱ་ཙམ་ཐུབ་བར་མང་ཉུང་རི་ལྟར་ཡོང་དེད་ཆུད་པ་དང་། ད་ལྟའང་དེད་བསྒོམས་སྐྱབ་བྱེད་ན་སེམས་བཀ་ཝེབས་པ་སོགས་ཀྱི་ཁྱད་ཆོས་ཡོད། དེའི་གཡོན་དུ་ ལགོང་ས་མཆོག་གི་གཟིམས་ཆུང་གམས་བའི་ལྟ་ཁང་རྟེན་གཅོ་རྟེ་བཙུན་བྱམས་པ་མགོན་པོའི་སྐུ་བརྙེན་མཐོ་སྟེ་ཆ་མཐུལ་བ་ཅམ་གྱི་བྱམས་བའི་ཉིང་དེ་འཇོན་བརྒྱད་[24]ལ་སྐྱབ་[25]པ་ཞེག་ཡོད། དེའི་གཡོན་ན་ཐུབ་ཁང་ཞེས་སྐུང་མ་ཁང་དུ་བྱ་པ་གཅིག་གིས་ཐུབ་ཀུ་མགོན་ཆོས་ལྟའི་བསྐངས་[26]གསོ་བཀང་དགོས་ཤིང་། དེང་གཅོ་པོ་སྔར་ཉ་སོ་དགའ་བའི་དམག་སྐབས་དགོན་པར་གཏོར་བཅོམས་མང་པོ་ཀུས་འཞེར་དང་དམ་ཅན་ཆོས་ཐུལ་གྱི་གཞལ་འབག་ཐྱིར་སྐོག་ཏེ་བསྐྱལ་དགོས་བྱུང་ནས་ཉེ་འདབས་སུ་བཞག་པས། མ་ཉེ་ངར་སྐུ་སྐོགས་པས་ཀུན་དེར་ཐྱིན་པས་གཞལ་འབག་དེ་བརྟེབ། དེ་ནས་གཞལ་འབག་གསུང་འབྱོན་མ་ཞེས་གཤེན་[27]ཀུ་བཀའ་གཉེན་ཅིང་འཁྲིན་[28]ལས་ལ་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པ་འགོ་བ་སྤྱི་དང་ཁྱད་པར་དགོན་ཡུལ་ཆོས་གཞི་ཚུལ་བཞིན་སྐྱབས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་བྱ་མོས་སྐོ་ལྟ་ལ་གནས་[29]པ་ལྟར་གཟིགས་པ་དུས་ལས་མི་གཡེལ་[30]བ་དང་། དེའི་གཡོན་དུ་ལོ་ཆེན་གཟིམས་ཆུང་དང་ ལི་སྐུ་ ཟངས་སྐུ་ རྡོ་སྐུ་ རགས་སྐུ་སོགས་བྱིན་ཅན་མང་པོ་མཇལ་རྒྱུ་ཡོད། དེ་ནས་མར་ཡོང་ཉེ་རྡོ་སྐས་གུག་མཚམས་དེར་མགོན་ཁང་ཡོད། སྐོ་ཆུང་ཟེ་ནས་སྐོས་དང་མར་མེ་འབུལ་ནས་གསོལ་བ་སྐོན་ལས་བཏབ་པ་ལས་ནང་དུ་འཛུལ་བཞུགས་མི་ཆོག་དེ་ནི་གཡེན་[31]ཀུ་གཅང་མ་དགོས་པའི་གནད་ཀྱི་ཡིན། མགོན་ཁང་ནང་མགོན་པོ་ཐུགཔ་དྲུག་གི་ལྟེབས་རིས་སོགས་རྩིང་པ་མང་དག་ཅིག་ཡོད་ཀྱང་སྐོས་མཆོད་ཀྱི་དུད་པས་མི་མངོན་པར་གྱུར་འདུག ཡ་མཚན་པ་ཞེག་ལ་མགོན་ཁང་དེར་ཆུན་ཀུ་[32]དྲི་ཞེམ་པ་བརྩོད་ཀྱི་[33]མེ་ལངས་[34]པ་གུག་གྱི་སྒོང་བྱབ་ལགས། དེའི་གཡམས་[35]འདུ་ཁང་ཀ་བ་བཞི་ལྟན་ དབལ་བྱག་ལྟན་ རྟེན་གྱི་གཙོ་པོ་དབུས་སུ་སྟོན་པ་ཐུབ་པའི་དབང་པོ་ གཡས་སུ་རྗེ་གཙོང་ཁ་པ་ གཡོན་དུ་འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ གསུང་རྟེན་ཆུལ་བའི་བཀའ་འབྱུང་ འདུ་ཁང་གི་སྟེང་དུ་ཐུགས་བརྟེན་[36]འཕགས་པ་རིགས་གསུམ་མགོན་པོའི་མཆོད་རྟེན་བཅས་མགོན་[37]པ་འདི་སུའི་མཛལ་ཀྱང་། ཡ་མཚན་ཞིང་བཟི་[38]བརྩེད་དང་བྱིན་བརླབས་ཆེ་བ་གུག་གྱིས་ཡིད་མོས་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་ལྟར་མཁར་མགོན་གཉེས་ཀྱི་བར་ན་བྲག་མཁར་ཡུལ་ཆགས་ཤིང་ ཁར་སྟོད་ རྩ་སྐོ་དབར་མ་ མཁར་བོ་ཆེ་སྟེ་ཀུལ་སྐོ་གསུམ་གྱི་ལམ་ནས་འཚུལ་བཞུགས་བྱེད་དགོས། བྲག་མཁར་ནི་ཀུལ་པོའི་བཞུགས་གནས་དང་ཀུལ་ས་ཡིན་པས་བྲག་མཁར་བ་ལ་

[24] Sic, for *rgyun*.
[25] Sic, for *skrun*.
[26] Sic, for *bskang*.
[27] Sic, for *shin*.
[28] Sic, for *'phrin*.
[29] Sic, for *gags*.
[30] Sic, for *yol*.
[31] Sic, for *shin*.
[32] Sic, for *du*.
[33] Sic, for *kyis*.
[34] Sic, for *lang*.
[35] Sic, for *gsham*.
[36] Sic, for *rten*.
[37] Sic, for *dgon*.
[38] Sic, for *gzi*.

ཐོབ་ཐང་ཆེན་པོ་ཡོད། དཔེར་ན་དགོན་སྡེ་ལྟ་ཚོགས་ན་བག་མཁར་མཁན་པོ་གལ་དབུ་འཛིན་ རྡོ་བ་ཀུན་འཛོམས་ན་བག་མཁར་རྡོ་བ། སྨན་པ་ཀུན་འདུས་ན་བག་མཁར་ཞེས་རྗེ། ཏཀ་པོ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནང་ནས་བག་མཁར་ཏཀ་པོ། ལྷ་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནང་ནས་བག་མཁར་ལྷ་བ། ལྷར་སྡགས་ཀུན་ཀྱི་ནང་ནས་ཀུག་མཁར་ལྷར་སྡགས་ཀུལ་དབུ་འཛིན་པ་སོགས་སྡ་སྲོལ་མི་ཉམས་རྒྱུན་འཛིན་གལ་ཆེ་ལ། དཔལ་ལྡན་དགོན་པ་གསར་པ་འདི་དག་ལྷན་ཁར་རྩེ་རོང་དགེ་བཤེས་བློ་བཟང་ལེགས་ལྷན་ཀྱིས་སྒུག་བཏབ་ཅིང་། དམ་པ་ཁོང་ནི་ཕྱི་ལོ་ ༡༩༤༤ ནས་ ༡༩༤༦ བར་ ཅགོང་ས་མཚོག་གི་བཀའ་དགོངས་བཞིན་འོ་ཡུན་དེའི་རིང་བག་མཁར་དགོན་བའི་མཁན་པོ་གནང་ཞིང་། གཞི་གསུམ་ཀྱི་ཚོ་ག་དང་དགོན་པ་གསར་སྐྱུན་[39]སོགས་བཀའ་དྲིན་གཤེན་[40]ཏུ་ཆེ། དགོན་པ་གསར་བའི་རྒྱབ་རི་སྐྱེང་ན་བག་མཁར་མཚོ་ཡོད། དེ་ནི་ས་གཅངས་ཤེང་རྒྱ་ཡངས་པ་གནས་བག་ཝེབས་པ་མཁའ་འགྲོ་བའི་མཚོ་ཞེས་རེས། འདི་ནི་གསུམ་པ་ཆུ་མིག་ནས་བྱང་བས་གསུམ་པ་ཞེས་པ་ལྷའི་མིང་ཡིན་པས་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་སྐྱབ་ཆུ་དེ་ཉིད་ཡོངས་སུ་འཁྱིལ་བས་མཚོ་འདི་བྱང་། འདི་ལ་མཚོ་མཇལ་སོགས་དུ་མ་མཐོངས་བའི་གཏམ་རྒྱུད་འདུག་ཀྱང་གང་འབྱུང་དུ་བཤད་ན་མིག་ལོངས་[41]སོགས་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་བཀའ་ཚད་ཡོད་སྐད། གཞན་ཡང་དམར་ནག་མཚོ་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྐྱས་མཚོ་བཅས་གསུམ་ཡོད། དེའི་མདུན་རི་སྐྱེང་དང་ཆེན་ཀེ་སྦྱི་ཀི་མང་ཚོགས་འཇོམས་ནས་ནམ་ཁན་ཆེན་མོ་ཅེ་དང་ཆེན་བརྒྱ་སྲོལ་ཡོད། ཅས་སྐྱིང་བསྡུས་སུ་ཟུལ།།

Transation

A Concise History of Dangkhar Monastery

"[According to] common accounts Brag mkhar appeared on top of lotus in the middle of a lake. Thus, as if appearing out of the darkness of common accounts, the monastery in Brag mkhar or the territory of Brak mkhar is thus similar to the stamens of a lotus flower: with Mount Ser stod in the east; Mount Nes in the south; Mount Re bas in the west; Mount Glang or Khyu mchog in the north; Mount sKyid gling thang in the southeast; Mount Phyug po jo phe rang in the southwest; Mount rGyal bo dpal ldan in the northwest; and the pass Phyug po jo ku in the northeast forming the eight petals of the lotus in the centre of which is situated the monastery of Legs 'phel bkra shis chos gling in Brag mkhar just like stamens would be.

Moreover, and according to the oral tradition and living memory of elders, the stronghold and the monastery were joint like a horse to a lunge. It is explained that the initial settlement being an outcrop made of crumbling rocks, the fort and the monastery were joint just as the life of a charioteer is bound to his horse gait and the slope below. In this way, the monastery in Brag mkhar is contemporary with the establishment of the stronghold of the initial settlement.

As for the stronghold, it was [the residence of] the King of sPi ti. The first King of sPi ti was sKyi lde nyi ma dgon. As time passed, the name of the king became sKyid lde in the local parlance or corrupted [language] of the country. His son, lDe gtsugs mgon, took control of sPi ti and, like his paternal ancestors, established a royal palace and stronghold as well as the upper temple – the chapel of the Medicine Buddha–in Brag mkhar at the same time.[42]

[39] Sic, for *skrun*.
[40] Sic, for *shin*.
[41] Sic, for *long*.
[42] On the iconographical programme of the upper temple and its dating, see section 3.5.5 in Chapter 3.

As it is clearly reported in historical accounts, the son of Glang dar [ma], 'Od srung, having requested teaching sessions on the Medicine Buddha from lHa lung dpal gyi rdo rje, [as many as] the stars of the sky, had temples erected, as evidenced also by the good custom of the paternal ancestors preserved by 'Od srung's nephews and grand-nephews.

Later, it is believed that lHa bla ma Zhi ba 'od carried out the renovation and established [other temples]. However, it is not commonly accepted that they were founded at the time of lHa bla ma, like for instance miraculous temples. Yet, in the eleventh century, Bla ma lha 'od extensively renovated the lower and upper chapels, as well as the medium ['s chapel] in today's old monastery, which already existed in the past, and it became called lHa 'od Monastery. According to some, the monastery having been established in a luminous place, it was called La 'od Monastery, which seems inaccurate.

Although there are many wall paintings inside the upper and lower chapels, they are old and damaged, and it is not possible to clearly assess them. However, there are quite many old statues to look at. Initially, the monastery was dedicated to the promotion of the Medicine Buddha practice and had a richly made *maṇḍala* on display to be worshipped. Nowadays, the elders remember being told that it was later destroyed and that the image was made anew.

The yogi Rang rig ras pa, who was born in Rang rig in sPi ti, renovated the monastery.[43] I think that the connection with six-armed Mahākāla, the principal dharma protector, and even with the samaya-bound protector Vajrasādhu dated from that time.

Concerning the secular and religious role of the monastery in Brag mkhar, a crucial point is the presence of a so-called junior official on the wall paintings of rTa po Monastery [i.e. Tabo], as part of a scene showing members of the clergy and nobility, according to both Buddhist and non-Buddhist historians.

From the religious point of view, His Eminence, the descendant of the victorious [Tsong kha pa], the 40th holder of the dGa' ldan throne named dPal ldan rgyal mtshan came from this monastery. He left the monastery and, before the situation changed, became successively dGe bshes [i.e. Geshe] then bKa' chen [i.e. Kachen] in Tibet. After the His Holiness the Dalai Lama went to India, batches of students departed from this monastery and stayed in the monastic centres [of South India] where many were to become Geshe Ka rab 'byams [pa] [i.e. 'the one with unobstructed knowledge of scriptures'], like series of lined-up stūpas.

There are about five meditation caves inside the monastery, although some got destroyed during renovation. In one of the caves, which can still be visited, a number of monks up to one hundred [would be able to] get into and stand between its four corners. Even today, it is particularly conducive for the practice of meditation and the like.

To the left [of the cave] is the residential room of the Dalai Lama or the Maitreya Chapel. The main image is a precious statue of the venerable Maitreyanātha which brings liberation through seeing; and by merely seeing it, one generates the *samādhi* of Maitreya in the mental continuum.

To the left is the so-called rGyun khang, the protectors' chapel, where one monk must propitiate the five doctrines of the protector without interruption. In the past, many monasteries were destroyed and ransacked in particular at the time of Ha so dga's war [i.e. Aśoka], and the mask of the Pledge-holder Dharma King [i.e. Yama Dharmarāja] was taken away. It became necessary to bring it [back], and the mask stayed in the vicinity. It let out the roar of a buffalo, and everyone went there, and so the mask was found. From then on it was referred to as "the speaking mask". Without delay, one saw the adepts and their virtuous activities being unhindered, the common and special migratory beings, the land

[43] On the renovation of Lagope Monastery and the identity of its founder, see section 3.5.3 in Chapter 3.

of the monastery, the ecclesiastical estates, and those practicing in the right way were inclined towards [the right] actions , as if the doors of the five sense organs were obstructed.

To the left is the residential room of Lo chen [Rin po che] [i.e. *lo tsā ba* Rin chen bzang po] where many sacred statues made of bronze, copper, stone, and brass can be seen.

From there, the protector's shrine is located downstairs in the corner of a stone staircase. A small door opens on butter lamps and incense which were offered to express devotion and request prayers. Admission into this room is strictly forbidden in order to preserve its sanctity. Inside the protector's shrine is an old wall painting of six-armed Mahākāla along with [other representations] which, however, have been tarnished by the smoke and soot of worshipping incense. Remarkably, an indescribable and delicate fragrance continuously [pervades] that room, as experienced by many.

Further down is the assembly hall with its four pillars and six rafters. The main supports of worship are the Lord of Sages [i.e. Buddha Śākyamuni] in the centre, master Tsong kha pa on the left, Avalokiteśvara on the right, and the sacred volumes of the bKa' 'gyur [i.e. Buddhist canon].[44] On the roof of the assembly hall is the support of the mind [in the form] of stūpas for the noble protectors of the three families. Whosoever visits this monastery will find it a place of amazement, splendour, and great blessings.

Likewise, the territory of Brag mkhar extends from the monastery and the stronghold with [the residential areas of] Khar stod, rTa sgo dbar ma, mKhar bo che, and three gates granting access [to the settlement]. Since Brag mkhar was a royal residence and a capital, its people enjoyed important privileges. The abbot of Brag mkhar, for instance, presided over five monastic communities; the astrologer of Brag mkhar presided over the many astrologers; the traditional physician of Brag mkhar presided over an assembly of doctors; the elder of Brag mkhar presided over the elders; the medium of Brag mkhar presided over the mediums, and those of Brag mkhar who praised the deities presided over all those who praised the deities. These are ancient traditions which are important to keep alive.

A new monastery was recently established by Geshe Blo bzang legs ldan from the rDo khang house of Shar rtse college at dGa' ldan Monastery. His Excellency was appointed abbot of the monastery in Brag mkhar on the recommendations made by His Holiness [the Dalai Lama] for the period from 1969 to 1986. We are extremely grateful to him for setting up the new monastery and three practices of *poṣadha*.

On top of the hill behind the new monastery is the Dangkhar Lake. It is said that *ḍākinīs* convene in the lake ensuring the absence of disease over a vast extent of land. There are three water sources bearing the name of deities flowing there. These sacred streams of the *ḍākinīs* come together to form the lake. There is a legend that many prophetic signs could be seen on the surface of the lake. However, whosoever reveal them, people say, would go blind as a punishment from the *ḍākinīs*. In addition, there is the King of the Dark Red Lake together with his two attendants. On top of the opposite hill are prayer masts. It is customary for the people of sPi ti to meet and renew the masts of the one called Nam khan chen mo."

I offer this [to the reader] in all brevity."

[44] Based on their respective iconography, the three statues of the assembly hall are those of Buddha Śākyamuni in the centre flanked by Tsong kha pa in the left and Maitreya in the right; see NEUWIRTH & AUER 2013: 37.