exists, but deprived of administrative and judicial powers. Ladakhi rule lasted till the 19th century, except for the years 1729–1748, when Spiti was a part of the dominions of brilliant king of Purig.

In the thirties of the 19th century Guge may have suffered from forays of Sikh forces from Lahore. This was certainly the case for Spiti and Tabo, an event for which we have epigraphic evidence. This was nothing, however, compared with the large-scale expedition led against Tibet by the Dogra general Zorawar Singh, who in 1835 had conquered Ladakh for Gulab Singh, Raja of Jammu and later Maharaja of Kashmir. In 1841 he invaded western Tibet with a small army. He reached Tsaparang and advanced as far as Taklakoth, his soldiers plundering and damaging several temples and monasteries. He was checked, however, by an army sent from Lhasa, and in November Zorawar Singh was defeated and killed, his force was practically wiped out.

For the following 150 years the tale is merely one of increasing economic and cultural decay. In recent times the so-called Cultural Revolution inflicted irreparable damage to the religious life and to the artistic treasuries of the country. Only Spiti with Tabo was spared, because in 1846 it was detached from nominal allegiance to Ladakh, to be annexed to British Indian territories. It is now included in the Himachal Pradesh state of the Indian Union.

Giuseppe Tucci and Eugenio Ghersi visited the temples in Tabo from July 18th to 21st 1933. The inscription was copied for Tucci by his lama. No photograph seems to have been made of the inscription proper, so that the later edition was entirely based on the lama’s copy. Consequently Tucci had no means of knowing the extent of the many gaps in the inscription when he came to prepare his edition. In addition, the lama’s copy contains a number of misreadings. For some of these Tucci proposed corrections which now can actually be confirmed as the true readings.

THE RENOVATION INSCRIPTION OF THE TABO GTSEG LAG KHAN
NEW EDITION AND TRANSLATION

by Ernst Steinkellner & Christian Luczanits

Giuseppe Tucci and Eugenio Ghersi visited the temples in Tabo from July 18th to 21st 1933. The inscription was copied for Tucci by his lama. No photograph seems to have been made of the inscription proper, so that the later edition was entirely based on the lama’s copy. Consequently Tucci had no means of knowing the extent of the many gaps in the inscription when he came to prepare his edition. In addition, the lama’s copy contains a number of misreadings. For some of these Tucci proposed corrections which now can actually be confirmed as the true readings.


2 The proper old spelling of modern Tabo and the etymology of the name are unclear. Several different etymologized spellings such as ltu, ria, sta can be found, and the variations po/pho/bo are also attested in inscriptions and manuscripts. For convenience’s sake, we earlier followed the proposal of Klimburg-Salter to use the spelling Ta pho (1987: n.9). At the last meeting of the Tabo research group in Vienna (January 19–20, 1996) it was decided to abstain in the future from this or similar differentiations, and to return to the modern spelling ‘Tabo’.

3 Tucci & Ghersi 1934: 121–132.

4 According to Tucci’s notes in the edition (cf. Tucci 1935: 197, ns.1,8; 198, ns.3,4; 200, n.3). This lama joined the expedition on July 7th (cf. Tucci & Ghersi 1934: 80). He was from Kaze monastery (ibid.) and his likeness is shown in fig. 74, but his name is not mentioned.

5 Cf. however, Photo Tucci Archives Neg.Dep.L. 6029/38, which shows the inscription in its place below the painting.

9
During our stay in Tabo in 1991, Luczanits made a careful survey of the inscription, comparing it with Tucci's edition. The state of the inscription in 1991 was such that in a number of places syllables or parts of syllables which were evidently still legible for the lama in 1933 and are contained in Tucci's edition, were no longer extant. Thus Tucci's text is, now, the only testimony for these readings which have been added to our edition in the footnotes. After our return the new readings were checked with the aid of various, usually inadequate photographs and with the only useful colour photograph of the inscription which was taken by Thomas Pritzker, and we gratefully acknowledge the photographer's permission to use it. Since the left side of the inscription was not completely taken, additional photographs were made in 1994 by Luczanits (cf. Pls. 1-8).

The new reading by Luczanits revealed a number of features that decidedly improve upon Tucci's edition. Not only do we now know the extent of the gaps, but a considerable number of syllables and words read differently. In addition, the use of the sad and other marks of separation in the inscription which evidently the lama did not pay any attention to, now turns out to be a carefully applied means for graphically structuring the text.

Since the need for a new edition seemed to have arisen, we also present a new translation which we believe also improves upon Tucci's pioneering attempt at its interpretation. No new historical information has emerged. However, the inscription (written in verse except for its narratio) proves to be a piece of monastic Tibetan poetry of considerable quality, and, although deteriorated, merits our attention as one of the rare documents of early Tibetan poetry.

This inscription was treated in Steinkellner's seminar in the winter term 1992/93. Besides the students and Luczanits, Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Chizuko Yoshimizu, Helmut Tauscher, and Kurt Tropper took part and contributed valuable suggestions which are gratefully acknowledged. We are also grateful to Prof. Luciano Petech, Jampa L. Panglung, Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, and Paul Harrison for their helpful remarks.

6 As members of the joint expedition of the Istituto per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Rome, and the Institut für Tibetologie und Buddhismskunde, Vienna. Our participation was supported by a grant from the Austrian Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung.

7 This photo was put at the disposal of Deborah Klimburg-Salter and was available to us.
the lama made his copy for Tucci in 1933, but all that now remains of the author’s name is the last syllable: bdag.

In the inscription’s narratio, the author gives the date and states his wish of giving a short historical record as well as expressing a transfer of merit at the conclusion of the renovation works in the gTsug lag khan.

The inscription is clearly divided into three main parts:

1. a short narratio in prose which contains the date is followed by
2. a record (lo rgyus) (1–7a). This record consists of three parts:
   2.1 an introductory call for attention (1–2a),
   2.2 the foundation of the temple by Ye šes ’od (2b–4),
   2.3 its renovation by Byan chub ’od (5–7a).
3. a formulation of the transfer of merit (bsnyo ba) (7b–17) which consists of two parts:
   3.1 ‘primary merit’
      3.11 first, the merit accrued from the actual renovation work is dedicated to the main donor, the king, and others (7b–9) and
      3.12 extended in particular to all visitors of the temple (10–11).
3.2 Then the ‘secondary merit’ accrued from dedicating the primary merit to other beings (gian la gshos pa las, 12a) is reflexively dedicated to the author, his friends, and the participants in the work of renovation (12–17).
   3.21 This second dedication uses an extended simile (12–14) and concludes with final wishes (15–17).

The internal structure of the inscription is corroborated by external features of the inscription. The internally coherent verses 1–7a [2.], 7b–11 [3.1] and 16–17 [3.22] are of 9 syllables while the dedication of secondary merit in 12–15 [3.2] is in verses of 11 syllables. Moreover, sad, spaces and ornaments are used to separate these coherent groups. Space and one ornament separate 7a and 7b, i.e. [2.] and [3.]. Space and two ornaments, a double sad between, separate 11 and 12.

1. in 7b–9 [3.1], the king and others are the receiver of the results of the merit gained by the monks’ co-operation: … yon bdag dam pa ni … las stogs (8b–c) … … spyod spyad cu (9c) … bsgrod cog (9d),
2. in 10–11 [3.12], the results of the same merit are extended to embrace all visitors: … ldad mo pa rnams kyan (10d) … … ded dpun yid stund (?) cog (11d),
3. and in 12–17 [3.2], the results of the secondary merit gained from the dedication of the primary merit to all beings are, finally, received by the monks, their retinue, and the workers themselves: … bdag cog grogs bcas las su stogs pa ‘i khor kun dag (12c) … … noms pa dan (14e) … sprad par srog (14f), and final wishes are expressed … ‘khrus srog (15d) … dgsren par srog (17d).

The text shows those orthographic peculiarities that are typical for the ‘irregular’ orthographic style which was usual in West Tibet at the beginning of the second spread of Buddhism. The transliterated text of the inscription has not been changed in any way. It therefore even contains spellings that are apparently ‘impossible’ in terms of Tibetan linguistic possibilities, e.g. gshos (12a), dgsren (17d). Generally it can be said that the writing does not seem to display any flaws of personal idiosyncratic orthographic usage or carelessness.11 This high standard of its orthographic usage would be quite appropriate to the semi-official function of the inscription. We may assume, therefore, that this document is a paradigmatic case of the orthographic standard at that time and place, and that the ‘irregularities’ and freedom of choice

11 The only clear case of an orthographic mistake is dag (14d) for drug.

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1 Cf. Tucci 1915: n.2.
found in its orthography can be considered as the norm in this cultural context. For this reason, a list of words spelled differently from the later classical norms is added in the appendix both in order to provide a survey and to facilitate identification and interpretation.

Subscribed ya after m before i and e is probably usual. But m?e (3d) is an uncertain case, and mes (1.1, 6b) definitely does not have a subscribed letter. Superabundant 'a chun occurs. The da drag is regularly used. The use of pa as ba seems to be free. The letter ba seems to be written in two ways: one is written with the head first, while the other is written like the letter pa with the left inceptive stroke continuing directly downwards. The right-hand side stroke often comes so close to the inceptive stroke that the letter is nearly or fully closed. However, there seems to be no way of distinguishing this second form of the letter ba from the letter pa. Since most of the ba letters in the text are written in the second way, we transliterate only those letters as pa which are clearly wide open. Only the following instances are ba letters of the first kind: skye bo (1c), bskul (1.1), brgyad (17b), 'gro bas (1.1), <mth>on ba (10d), gdul bya (9a), bdag (14b), dbon (5a).

These peculiar palaeographical features are also known from the West-Tibetan context. Inverted gi gu (i) is frequent. s-p, s-t, s-ts ligatures of a horizontal kind are seemingly normal usage. But in two cases we find the second letter clearly subscribed (spans in 1b and 3d).

Two further peculiarities of the poem’s metrical structure are worth noting: on the one hand the suffixed genitive particle ('i) is read as an independent syllable in the following verses: 2b, 4d, 5a, 9a, and 17c, and on the other hand the particle 'am, although written separately, has no syllabic value.
Tueci’s proposal for rülies in the transcription is confirmed.

ris Tu,

gdul rnams is Tucci’s emendation metri causa.
The lama’s reading was: gdu ma rnams,

Here Tucci proposes ‘dus; ‘dui could be read, but metri causa the reading must be du ma.

Presumably Tucci’s copy read stöogs too, which was corrected by him to sogs (cf.202,n.4).

Empty space of about seven ‘letters’ with an ornament in the centre.
A complex syllable of two 'letters'.

'gro ba'ki skye ba thams cad du //
gdal bya ma lus 'dund par nas pa' //i

 gzugs mchog mishan bza'ns du mas rnam spras te //

'gro ba'ki mgon d+yid //
sku gzugs man po bris pa 'di dag kun //

'rent' //

A complex syllable of two 'letters'.

'gro ba'ki mgon d+yid //
sku gzugs man po bris pa 'di dag kun //

'rent' //

Tucci's proposal for steds in the transcription (?) is confirmed.

Two ornaments separated by double sad.

Verses of eleven syllables.

nas is written below; perhaps a later addition.

mal?
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bsam+stan⁵⁴zasdan = grolbtuṇpaṇmspaṇ //
pharolündhyin dug grogs⁵⁵dan rag tu sprad par sog // //³⁶ (14)
der ni ci dag-ar 'khol ba'i ŋon mons bran 'khol žin //
rnam thar rdzin la tin ne 'dzind kyi chus bkan ste //
d = dag pad ma rgy-s⁵⁷paq kun nas ? {11} = =
³⁶ (15)
³⁷ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
mtshan dan dpe' byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes bsam gtran.
³⁹ Tucci assumes dug grogs; the transcription has grogs.
⁴³ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁷ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci assumes dug grogs; the transcription has grogs.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
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³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
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³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
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³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
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³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
³⁹ Byad bsan pos legs brgyand eph //
³⁸ Tucci proposes dug grogs; the transcription has grags.
A detail of the Renovation Inscription (C. Luczanits 1994, 123, 28)

A detail of the Renovation Inscription (C. Luczanits 1994, 123, 29)
A detail of the Renovation Inscription (C. Luczanits 1994, 123, 30)

A detail of the Renovation Inscription (C. Luczanits 1994, 123, 31)
Earlier, in the monkey year, the ancestor, the Bodhisattva\textsuperscript{66}, erected this temple. Then, after 46 years, the grand-nephew \textit{lHa btsun pa Byan chub 'od}, motivated by the thought of enlightenment, restored this temple. Exhorted by his precious order we were commissioned\textsuperscript{67} ... ... ... as reward.

Therefore, when the painting of the cella (\textit{dri gtsan khan, gandhakuti}) was completed, the wish to make a record [of this] and a transfer (of merit) arose in the monk Phes(?) \textit{kha rgyu bdag}\textsuperscript{68}, and he said:

To the short\textsuperscript{69} record of the erection\textsuperscript{70} of this beautiful temple for all those beings who are tired from [having walked] distant paths and are abandoned by friends and beloved ones, and who perceive the misery [in this world], listen with ... \textsuperscript{71}. (vv.1–2a)

\textsuperscript{66} I.e. Ye ses 'od. Verse 3a alludes to his name (cf. Tucci 1935: 198, n.7). He is considered to be a bodhisattva (cf. Karmay 1980a: 150–51). This appositional term was used by his descendants as his name but seemingly not by himself. It may go back to the phrase \textit{byan chub sems dpa'i gdun (bgyud) ascribed to earlier kings (Karmay 1980b: 9; 1981: 209) which is used here as well (cf. v.2b).}

\textsuperscript{67} Read \textit{bskos} (cf. v. 6d).

\textsuperscript{68} The first syllable of the name is highly uncertain. Petech (letter Oct.19th, 1996) supposes that \textit{kha} is a nominal particle of belonging, \textit{Phes(?)} \textit{kha} meaning "the man from Phes(?)".

\textsuperscript{69} Complements implied by phrase or term are given in round brackets. Complements of interpretation are given in square brackets. Words in \textit{italics} are uncertain proposals of meaning.

\textsuperscript{70} Read \textit{cun. iiig.}

\textsuperscript{71} “interest”? (read perhaps \textit{nan}?).
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This king, personification of a god72, born of divine race, of the lineage of bodhisattvas73, lord over all black-headed (people), who by (his) perfect innate insight brought the light of wisdom (ye ses 'od) to the darkness of ignorance, abandoned (his) reign, which is connected with samsara, like a withered garland of flowers because he regarded (it) as an illusion. [He] then offered the whole kingdom74 for the sake of the Dharma. When the lay people75 of the realm (mna' ris) had become white, [he] erected here the temple dPal ldan bkra' šis bde gnas as a lamp for this kingdom. (vv.2b-4)

The same grand-nephew, in the family lineage of this excellent being, truly provided with the threefold training, planted the root of faith of the tree of insight and spread the flowers and fruits of the Tripiṭaka.

(v.5)

72 The interpretation of the attribute myi rje lhas mdzad pa is problematic. Tucci says “La formule est intensionnelle, on a donc: myi lhas mdzad pa” (1935: 199,n.4). He seems to be referring to the ‘Phyon rgyas inscription (6f.) where Li-Coblin translate it as “acted as ruler of men” (Li-Coblin 1987: 246; cf. also rje mdzad pa las, 58: “he served as lord” 1987: 249). An exact parallel to this formula is to be found in the Zwa'i lha khan inscription, E.1: myi rgyal po lhas mdzad pa, translated as “king of men, personified by a god” (Li-Coblin 1987: 291). The phrase lhas mdzad pa as part of royal attributes is also known from Tunhuang materials: myi rje lhas mdzad pa (P.T. 16,33b1) which Macdonald translates as “parce qu’il est un dieu devenu souverain des hommes” (MacDonald 1971: 337), myi rje lhas mdzad pa (P.T. 16,253b), and myi rje lhas mdzad pa (P.T. 1290,22f) the latter of which she translates as “un dieu devenu souverain des hommes” (MacDonald 1971: 320). Finally Karmay translates the phrase myi rje lhas mdzad pa from a colophon connected with Ži ba 'od as “the god who reigns over man” (Karmay 1988b: 8). The problem lies in the instrumental particle of lhas, since the occurrence of lha in 1290 is unique. In their interpretation of the formula in the Zwa'i lha khan inscription, Li-Coblin understand it as an agent “king of men, personified, made, represented by a god”. This interpretation seems to be the best so far.

73 A similar phrase occurs in P.T. 840: lha'i rigs la byan chub sems dpa'i rgyu[s] (corrections according to Karmay). This text is datable to the early tenth century (cf. Karmay 1981: 194–96,203).

74 Read rgyal srin?75 gdul rnam for gdul bya rnam.

The Renovation Inscription

When this sovereign, the lHa btsun Byaṣ chub 'od, regarded the work of the ancestor as old, he gathered many masters and craftsmen, and provided the materials. When we, then, were commissioned by (his) profound order, we purified [the place] well and [the work] was done. (vv.6–7a)

May through this merit which we, motivated in this way by good thoughts, gathered76 [as] white as jasmine .... the light of a very white moon .... .... because of the work which was done77 here, the noble donor, the king in the Dharma rJe btsun Byaṣ chub 'od, and others78 in all births in all forms of existence79 be adorned with excellent bodies with many good features that may be desired by all lay people, and then practice the conduct of a bodhisattva80 in all forms of existences, and in due course proceed towards highest enlightenment! (vv.7b–9)

May also all the visitors who see or touch all these many painted images of the lords of (the five kinds of) existence, the Sugatas together with their sons .... .... , after seeing in person the Sugatas of the good age and their sons, and hearing the best teaching identify81 [their] minds with82 .... the guides who rescue all living beings from the ocean of samsara!83 (vv.10–11)

74 lhas pa'i Tu, Read (hs)utangs pa'i ?
75 Read ‘di byas las ?
76 “Others” may refer to all other beings. Then “all the visitors” mentioned below are emphasized in particular as a special group of beings. On the other hand, it may refer to the masters and craftsmen gathered together who, like the king, gained merit by working on the temple. The latter alternative would, however, be contradicted by 12a (glan la gnos pa las) where glan would refer to the “king and others” of 8bc. The most likely interpretation would be “other donors”.
77 Tucci proposes bya for byas, but a modal interpretation seems to be appropriate.
78 Byan chub sgrub short for Byan chub sems dpa'i sgrub ?
80 Luczanits reads stumdn/stumnd, while Steinkellner reads and proposes stumnd.
81 Read yid ?
82 <'khor ba'i rgya m> tsho' las.
By this great merit, as extensive as space, which came about from dedicating all the good to others in this way, may we, together with our friends (and) the whole retinue attached to (this) work be very quickly pulled out from such a house, .... having the high walls of pride and intoxication piled up through [our] erroneous conceptions which take, since beginningless (time), as real [what is not real] (dnos žen), and which is .... .... down from a .... 34 .... .... and has firmly established the pillars and beams of passion and hatred and thus bears the name of the circle of the three existences, by the long arms of wisdom, expert in distinguishing (bṣan mna’), and great compassion! [May we] then be .... [in] the excellent house, the house of the thought of truth, which was taught by you85, .... well furnished86 with the seat87 of happiness .... and88 be satisfied by the food of meditation and the drink of liberation89, and be brought together always with the friends of the six90 perfections! (vv.12-14)

In this [excellent house] the defilements are used as servants which [we] employ as [we] please, and the pond of release is filled with the water of meditation .... with the lotus of .... spread .... from all .... may [we] be bathed91 in the teaching of good thoughts ....! (v.15)

84 gzaa?  
85 Read khyed kyi (b)stan pa’i?  
86 Read legs par bgos po?  
87 Read mal stan?  
88 Read dun?  
89 Read grol ?  
90 Read drug for dug.  
91 Read khrus ? for khrus ?  
92 Read bdugs nas ni?  
93 dri?  
94 Read tshul khrims?  
95 The meaning of bodhimančala (byan chub dkyil ’khor) is unclear to us. It seems to be used here as a synonym of bodhimāṇḍala (byan chub stūṇ po) which refers to the seat of the Buddha’s enlightenment.
APPENDIX

1. SPELLINGS DIFFERENT FROM THE ‘CLASSICAL NORM’

For convenience, spellings and their variations attested in Jiischke’s dictionary are considered as the ‘classical norm’. Differences in b/p-spellings are not recorded.

Superabundant: ‘a chen: bkra’ (4c) mgo’ (2c), mtho’ (13a), dpe’ (16c), <m>tsko’ (11c), bzo’ (6c), gso’ (1.1).

Other: dgsren (17d); bsren, gsnos (12a, but bsno 1.2); bsnos, tu (1.1): du, stan (14d): gtan, gdu<\> (4b,9a): du, spre ‘u (1.1): spre’u, mon (1c, but mons 15a): mons, stsoogs (6c,8c): sogs.

The da drag is regularly used: bskald (11a), ’khrul (12d), gyurd (3b,4b), dgond (17c), brgyand (16c), mhand (2a), stund(?) (11d), bstand (15d), ’dund (9a), ’byord (3b), stsum(?) (11d), ’dzind (15b), zind (1.2), rotld (14f).

2. METAPHORS AND SIMILES

’dod chags ze s doctrines
kha gdun (13c)
kunla ltar dkar ... bsod nams (8ab)
gdu rnams(?)
byan chub sems kyi
dkar por ‘ons gyurd (4b)
<da pa> ’i don sems
khan khyim (14c)
dsren ni srid gsum ‘khor ba’i myin ldan (13d)
gog (16b)
grogs (14f)
mgo’ nag (2c)
<’khor ba’i
byan chub dgyig ‘khor
rgyal mthun (17d)
rgyal mthun (17d)
gdu ma lta bur (3c)
sgrom mar (4ed)
sly (15b)
<’dzind kyi
‘dzin ni’
ses rab
lien sin (5c)

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<rnam> gral
thugs rje chen po’i
mon mons
ma rig
rgyal srid ....
sde snod gsum gri
dad pa’i
ha rozal drags pa’i
rnam thar
bia myed theg chen mons ses
bsam gtan (:stan)
Ye ses
Ye ses
khyim ni
srig gsum ‘khor ba’i myin ldan (13d)

bsun pa (14e)
phyugs rin bya (14a)
bsun ‘khol (15a)
mun pa (3a)
nte tog ’phren riis bez du spans (3bd)
nte tog ’bras bya (5d)
rtsa ba (5c)
rgs = mtho’ (13a)
rgs = mtho’ (13a)
bsun pa (16d)
zes (14e)
’od (3a)
bsun mna’ (14a)
srig gsum ‘khor ba’i myin ldan (13d)
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THE «ADMONITORY INSCRIPTION» IN THE TABO 'DU KHAN

by Helmut Tauscher

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The inscription edited and translated in this paper is located on the face of the south wall separating the Assembly Hall from the Cella (cf. Figs 3 and 4). Inclusive a frame of 2-2.5 cm it measures ca. 63 x 103 cm, starts immediately below the statue of Vajrapāṇa (rDo rje žags pa), the gate-protector of the South, and ends ca. 50 cm above the floor.

The left side of the inscription starts less than 1 cm from the edge of the wall, and, although the whole face of the wall has been prepared with yellow priming paint and the lining for inscriptions, it covers only slightly more than the left half of it, leaving the right half blank. This part shows only the drawing of a wishfulfilling gem on a lotus in the

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1 I wish to express my gratitude to my colleagues J. Chu, H. Hu von Hindenburg, K.N. Mishra and J.L. Panglung, who contributed essentially to this paper with their valuable suggestions, comments and corrections.

An abbreviated version of the introductory part is to be published under the title "An introduction to the «Admonitory Inscription» in the Tabo 'Du khan" by the Karuna Foundation, Delhi, in the proceedings of the "International Seminar on Rinchen Zangpo and his Works", Tabo, June 28 to July 3, 1996.

INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE TABO MAIN TEMPLE

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Edited by
Luciano Petech and Christian Luczanits

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The work presented here is one of the results of a long-standing co-operation between the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (ISIAO, formerly ISMEO) and the Institute of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna. From the outset, Tabo was the focus of this co-operation. Both, the co-operation with ISIAO and the interest in Tabo, have been initiated by Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter. Following Tucci's tracks, she had first been in Tabo in 1978. In 1984 the President of ISMEO, Gherardo Gnoli, in consultation with Giuseppe Tucci invited D.E. Klimburg-Salter to undertake the cataloguing of the Tucci Photographic Archives housed in the Museo Nationale d'Arte Orientale. Together with Oscar Nalesini and Giulia Talamo of the Museum, she has organised the archives and it is presently accessible to the scholarly public. Also a catalogue of the expeditions through 1935 was produced. The work on the archives was partially conducted with funds granted to Luciano Petech by the Concilio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR). Most of the scholars contributing to this volume have benefited from consultation with the archives.

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Tabo Monastery also played a decisive role. The extensive studies carried out on the spot since 1989 have profited from the tolerance, interest and support of the abbot of Tabo Monastery, Geshe Sonam Wangdu (bSod nams dban 'dus) and the monks, Zangpo and Yeshe Puntsok, among others.

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the editors

As other major results of this co-operation the following publications may be mentioned:

East and West 44 (1), 1994, is dedicated to a joint mission at Tabo in 1991.

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