It is only recently that the inscriptions and wall texts of Tabo monastery have begun to receive the attention they deserve as records of secular and religious history. Beside the wall texts, excerpts from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* and the *Kṣitigarbhāsūtra*, and the famous Renovation Inscription, a large number of minor inscriptions and captions can be found throughout the Tabo Main Temple (*gtsug lag khañ*). Besides a few names of historical significance the majority of

* I am grateful to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, Helga Uebach, Luciano Petech, and Jampa L. Panglung Rinpocche for their help and comments as well as to Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter, Ernst Steinkellner and Maurizio Taddei for their help, encouragement and continuous support throughout the preparation of this publication. I am also indebted to Gherardo Gnoli, President of ISIAO, and to Donatella Mazzin, director of the Museo Nazionale d’Arte Orientale, for letting me consult the Tucci Photographic Archives. The study of the inscriptions in situ as well as the preparation of this publication was only possible due to the generous support of the Austrian ‘Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung’.

1 STEINKELLNER 1995 and 1996.

2 TAUSCHER in this volume. On the function of the two wall texts cf. STEINKELLNER (in press).


these texts and names have escaped scholarly attention until now. The first aim of this article is to make them available to a wider public.

The early paintings and inscriptions in the Main Temple fall into two chronological groups, the foundation of the temple in 996 A.D. and the renovation initiated by Byaṅ chub 'od and completed in 1042. These two dates mark two completely different phases of the development of Buddhism within the kingdom of Purang-Guge. Here only the inscriptions and captions belonging to these two phases are recorded. In addition, there are a few later inscriptions written on paper attached to the wall of the Main Temple. These are discussed by Elena De Rossi Fillbeck in this volume.

The two early groups of minor inscriptions are of great historical and religious interest. They are not only distinguished by their physical characteristics but also by the content due to the fact that they resulted from two completely different social and cultural phases within the same kingdom. While in the first phase non-Tibetan names written in a completely inconsistent orthography appear, the second phase is already Tibetanized. This despite the small gap of only 46 years between the two phases. In the second phase we find nearly standard Tibetan orthography and such a highly sophisticated Tibetan Buddhist poem as the Renovation Inscription. Beside the wider historical interest a large number of captions naming the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas depicted on the walls are of great art historical, especially iconographical, importance.

In order to best preserve all the cultural, cultural-historical and religious information contained in the inscriptions, they are edited in the way they are found on the wall. All the ‘mistakes’ and inconsistencies are faithfully copied in the transcription. Unclear readings are indicated and variants of the presented reading are mentioned in the footnotes.

5 The dates for these two phases have been extracted from the Renovation Inscription found in the temple (cf. STEINKELLNER & LUCZANITS). Although the inscription only mentions a monkey year for the foundation, the dates proposed here are widely accepted. However, one always has to keep in mind that this is just an hypothesis (cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: 45–6 and PETECH 1997: 133–5).

6 These can be spellings different from the later classical norm as well as real writing errors!

7 Of course, this method only records the present state and cannot avoid mistakes on the basis of parts of ‘letters’ being lost in the course of time.

In summer 1990 I had the great luck to be one of the first to profit from the cleaning work done by the Archaeological Survey of India (A.S.I.) in the Entry Hall (sgo khan) where the oldest paintings and inscriptions are located. Until then it was not known that the royal bla ma Ye sê ‘od and his two sons are depicted in the temple. At that time I completed a first reading of most of the captions found in the Main Temple. During subsequent visits in 1991, 1993 and 1994, these readings have been supplemented and controlled several times. The degree of attention depended on the importance of the captions and their location, as many are virtually inaccessible. For example, the sgo khan inscriptions have been controlled several times, in 1991 also by Prof. Ernst Steinkellner and Dr. Jampa L. Panglung. On the other hand the names of the Buddhas of the bhadrakalpa located in the Ambulatory or the names of the Buddhas in the Cella have usually been read only once and partly could not be read at all. However, as these are independent of the iconographic details of the Buddhas depicted beside them, possible misreadings and gaps are less significant. The main purpose of including them here is to assist in the identification of the textual source or a particular variant of it. The famous formula condensing the teachings of the Buddha into one verse, the ye dharmā-verse, is found in the Assembly Hall as well as in the Ambulatory and has only been read in full in a few cases, but its occurrence is noted in every case. Also empty panels and gaps are recorded.

The in situ readings have also been checked with the help of slides and black and white photographs now in the Tabo Archives, Vienna. The archive numbers of the photographs and slides in the Tabo Archives are given with the transcription of the captions. However, the comments on the orthography and palaeography have been made only on the basis of my notes and the archives’ photographs and could not be controlled again on the spot.

The inscriptions are arranged by location and content. In the first instance the principal spatial units of the Main Temple (gtsug lag khan) — Entry Hall (sgo khan), Assembly Hall (’du khan), Cella (dri gtsan khan, gandhakut), and Ambulatory (skor lam) — are differ-
entiated (cf. Fig. 1). Within these units captions of related or similar content are grouped together. A full reference containing the complete information on the location — including the name of the temple’s section, a letter indicating the wall within the section, the part of the wall and a location number — would be too long and repetitive if noted for each inscription. Therefore, to allow easy reference to the inscriptions a running number has been added in front of each in round brackets. The ve dharmá-verses quoted are excluded from the running numbers and the Buddhas of the bhadralmpa in the Ambulatorium are referred to by their respective Buddha number (indicated by a B in front of the number).

Further each group is provided with the information concerning its exact location within the temple. Additional numbers (roman numerals for the rows and each row numbered from left to right) provide information about the relationship of the respective captions within each of the larger groups. This information is complemented by diagrams illustrating the location of each caption. An approximate translation of the inscriptions and captions is provided in the footnotes as a service to the reader who is not familiar with Tibetan.

All the captions of the early phase are written in dbu can with dark ink directly on browish-yellow panels of different sizes painted on the wall. These panels are framed by a red line, and sometimes ruled lines are visible.

**Editorial signs and abbreviations**

- **a** partly uncertain letter, uncertain reading
  - + illegible 'letter' (consonant or ligature plus vowel-sign, including sad)
  - - ‘letter’ rubbed or broken off completely
  - – illegible letter (including vocal sign), when accompanied by legible letter(s) in the same ligature
  - + letter rubbed or broken off, when accompanied by legible letter(s) in the same ligature
  - a/b both readings possible

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**Minor Inscriptions and Captions**

[ ] supplementation supported by traces of letters and context empty space

[>no.<=] heavily damaged, broken out or washed away passage with approximate number of ‘letters’ lost

[?] broken passage with approximate number of ‘letters’ lost

/>no.<=] indicates the beginning of a new line

/>/ presence of further ‘letters’ or words uncertain; possibly lost ‘letters’ (space but no definite evidence of writing, remains of an overpainted text)

/> presence of further letter(s) uncertain

/> inverted gi gu (gi gu log)

/> single dbu-sign, beginning the opening (mgo yig) of a caption, or an ornament between giis sad

/> double dbu-sign beginning the opening (mgo yig)

/> small illegible letter

/> large illegible letter or ‘letter’

/> a ‘letter’ written below

/> slide in the Tabo Archives, Vienna

/> black and white photograph in the Tabo Archives, Vienna

Photographs by: CL Christian Luczanits
DKS Deborah E. Klimburg-Salter
JP Jaroslav Poncar (Cologne)

Other readings by: Pa. Jampa Panglung Rinpoche
St. Ernst Steinkellner
Td. Tshering Dorje

**Orthography and palaeography**

As already mentioned, there are two main groups of inscriptions, one attributable to the founding of the temple in 996 A.D. and exclusively found in the Entry Hall, and one attributable to the time around the renovation which was finished in 1042. As these groups are quite

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8 It turned out to be useful to differentiate ‘letters’, which means any combination of letters in vertical arrangement that occupies the space of a single grapheme, from letters, which refers to the single sign for consonants or vowel modification only. In this way also parts of ligatures, if legible, can be preserved (cf. STEINKELLNER & LUCZANITS in this volume, n.12).
different from each other, their orthography and palaeography have to be discussed separately.

One feature common to both groups is that there seems to be no way of distinguishing the letters ba and pa as they are usually written in the same way. Only in a minority of cases can pa clearly be differentiated by the opening on top of the letter. The usage appears not to be standardised.\(^{10}\)

**Founding period**

It is not clear if the inscriptions from the founding period in the Entry Hall are all written by the same hand. However, some differences in their content suggest that the historical inscriptions on the north wall are written by a different person than the other ones, and most probably also at another time. In a similar way the style and colours used for the donor paintings on the south and north walls differ.

The orthographic features recorded in the Entry Hall represent a pre-classical stage of Tibetan orthography, as is also found in the Dunhuang documents. However, really striking is the high number of inconsistencies. Side by side the name of presumably the same place or clan (e.g. \(s\i\)el \('or\) [5, 8, 26] and \(s\i\)el wer [13], but note \(s\i\)es wer [30], which seems to be another place or clan name) and the same Tibetan term (e.g. \(r\)ge \(s\)lon [5, 6], \(d\)ge \(s\)lon \([7, 8, 9, ...]\) and \(d\)ges \(s\)lon [14]) are written differently. While the first cases can be judged as common when a word of a foreign language is rendered in a script created for another language, the variations in the word \(d\)ge \(s\)lon rather indicate that the scribe had a poor education or was simply careless.\(^{11}\)

Beside \(d\)ge \(s\)lon there are many instances of words spelt differently from the 'classical norm'.\(^{12}\) Superabundant ‘\(a\) chun’ is common. However, there is only one certain case of palatalisation of \(m\)a by \(y\)a \(b\)tags (\(m\)yin in caption 53) and no instance of \(da\) \(d\)rag in the captions of the founding period. There is also a single instance of the ligature \(r\)h (14).

The style of writing, too, is rather comparable to pre-classical Tibetan. All \(g\)i \(g\)u in the Entry Hall are written reversed and if possible the ligatures are written horizontally. There is an evident inconsistency in the case of \(w\)a: it can be in the shape of a \(l\) with \(w\)a \(z\)ur (13), an angular ‘\(a\) chun’(1) with \(w\)a \(z\)ur (30) and an ‘\(a\) chun’ with \(w\)a \(z\)ur (34) on the south wall and as an ‘\(a\) chun’ with double \(w\)a \(z\)ur (48) on the north wall.\(^{13}\) The uncertainty concerning the letter \(w\)a might also be responsible for the variant readings ‘\(e\)r’ and \(w\)er as the superscribed \(w\)a \(z\)ur might have easily disappeared or become illegible.

Some examples of spellings which differ from the ‘classical norm’ in the captions from the founding period (the inscriptions are quoted according to their serial number, the surnames are not included):

Superabundant ‘\(a\) chun: \(d\)ge’ in \(d\)ge’ \(s\)lon (7, 8, 9, 10, 11 ...), \(d\)ge’ \(b\)a (14) and \(d\)ge’ \(t\)shul ma (30) but not in \(d\)ge \(b\)shen (20, 21, 22, 47), \(d\)blo’ \(g\)ros (27).

Other: \(r\)ge \(s\)lon (5, 6), \(d\)ges \(s\)lon (14), sod \(n\)ams (15) and \(b\)som \(n\)ams (25), \(b\)rton \(g\)rus (17, 28), \(d\)ge \(s\)ien (21), \(d\)ul \(b\)a (25), \(d\)blo’ \(g\)ros (27), \(b\)sam \(t\)an (44), \(d\)gla’ (54, L2), \(c\)hi (54, L3).

Unusual names or terms: \(b\)rug \(d\)pal (31), \(g\)un \(s\)um (33), \(g\)un \(c\)he \(s\)kyan \(b\)u (49).

**Renovation period**

Different hands are evidenced during the renovation period (cf. the Bodhisattvas in the Ambulatory). However, the number of different hands and if the same handwriting is evidenced in the Ambulatory and in the Assembly Hall cannot be verified. There is even evidence that at least some of the captions were filled in twice (cf. Buddhas of the Ten Directions), which makes the attribution of all these inscriptions to the renovation period doubtful.

\(^{10}\) The same phenomenon has been recognised in the Renovation Inscription and the Admonitory Inscription.

\(^{11}\) It seems quite probable that the scribe actually just copied the pre-written captions onto the wall. Evidence for this might be \(r\)ge \(s\)lon, where the \(r\) could be explained as a misinterpretation and ‘correction’ of the prescript \(d\).

\(^{12}\) For convenience, spellings and their variations as attested in Jäckel’s dictionary are considered as the ‘classical norm’. Of course, such a differentiation is artificial as most of the variants attested are quite common in early Tibetan writings.

\(^{13}\) This inconsistency might reflect an uncertainty concerning the right shape of the letter, which apparently was introduced last in the Tibetan alphabet and originally was a ligature of ‘\(a\) chun’ with \(w\)a \(z\)ur (cf. \(U\)r\(a\)y 1955). It is interesting to note here that in one case on the northwall (36) also the small straight tick protruding from the upper semicircle of the ‘\(a\) chun’ upward to the right (cf. \(U\)r\(a\)y 1955: 111) is evidenced.

I am grateful to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub for pointing out the Ur\(a\)y article to me.
There are only a few gi gu log in the Assembly Hall (67, 70, and five in caption 75 alone; no cases in the Ambulatory). Palatalisation of ma by ya btags before e and i is common (73, 74, 89, 98, 99, 116, 121, 123, 125, 140, B10, B44, B57, B64, B98, B146, B163, B192) and da drag also occurs regularly: said (65), 'daind (82), gnond (83), gyurd (111), 'byord (143), bryand (B148), mkhyand (B190).

Other spellings different from the 'classical norm':
Buddhas of the Ten Directions: 'od gzer kun gzer (69, cf. also B93), gna's (70).
32 Bodhisattvas: nam ka (108), bzans (110), gzo nu (111), spyobs : spobs (115), zad : bzad (116) 'od gzer (132).
Buddhas of the bhadrakaipa: cen : chen (B13, B14, B143), g ye sès : ye sès (B100), dban sphyug : dban phyug (B165). Twice the vocal in bzin is long (B82, B141), and once ta thā ga ta replaces de bzin gšegs pa (B100).

Again, when possible, ligatures are written horizontally (e.g. sp in no. 66). In the transcription of the ye dharmā-verse the reversed letters for the Sanskrit cerebrals are common, and the anusvāra is written with a circle in a bow or a hook to the right, which seems to be a cursive version. There are several scribal errors evidenced, some of them have been corrected at once (e.g. nos. 118, 122 and B23, where the scribe started twice to write de bzin gšegs pa).

**Minor Inscriptions and Captions**

**ENTRY HALL**

The Entry Hall (sgo khaṅ) is a small room through which the Main Temple is entered (Fig. 5). It houses two large standing protectors of clay and paintings attributable to the foundation of the temple in 996. Among these paintings the depictions of the donors associated with the foundation of the temple are historically most interesting, particularly as the donors have been identified by captions. Beside these, a few non-historical inscriptions are also found: one identifying the protectress of the temple and several others among the fragments of a Wheel of Life. The large number of protective deities—local and Hindu gods in the service of Buddhism—have captions too, but these where never filled in.15

**HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ENTRY HALL**

The historical inscriptions in the Entry Hall (sgo khaṅ) are exclusively in the form of captions naming the person depicted. These names are built according to the following scheme:

surname (clan or place of origin) – (religious) title – personal name

While the surname is of non-Tibetan origin, the personal names and titles are mostly Tibetan, sometimes Sanskrit. On the north wall some

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14 Cf. Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 8. Although since the foundation there have been protectors in this location, the present sculptures are quite recent (cf. Luczanits 1997: 189).
Fig. 6: Entry Hall south wall; the location of the captions

SOUTH WALL

Originally a large assembly of seven rows of historical figures covered the whole lower half of the wall (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 9; 1997: fig. 45). The figures have been arranged along a vertical axis which is approximately at the centre of the wall. On the left side only lay persons have been depicted, while on the right side the upper four rows are occupied by religious figures. Nearly all these figures are turned towards the central axis of the composition. However, only a part of the composition survives. Best preserved is the upper right corner with the monks while the sixth and seventh row on the bottom are nearly completely defaced (cf. Fig. 6).

All the figures have been identified by captions placed above their shoulders. Like the images, they are best preserved in the upper right (western) corner, and the readings are therefore most reliable there. The captions have been arranged in rows, each row reading from left to right. The location of the captions is illustrated in Fig. 6. Roman numerals are used for the rows from top to bottom. The remaining figures, even if there are only traces left, are numbered from left to right.

16 Comparing the scheme in the sgo khan with the one used in the Assembly Hall, i.e. [community] – (spiritual) title – personal name – place or clan (of origin) (cf. below nos. 60-64), it seems likely that the non Tibetan terms in front of the names represent localities rather than clans. In any case these terms were shifted to a secondary position by the mid eleventh century and later on disappeared completely. Thakur (1997: 970) is of the opinion that the surnames denote localities.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

First, uppermost row (I)

Up to approximately the middle of the wall lay persons are turned towards the right. The central figures (I.3 to I.5) are covered by a baldachin.

I.1 Of the first two figures only traces are left. Like the following central images these were seated on a throne and are covered by a baldachin. Of the first one a fragment of the inscription is preserved:

(1) \( b n . c e n . m c h o g . g e y \ y = n . b a. \)

I.2 Only fragments of the figure preserved.

I.3 Nāgārāja shares the throne and the baldachin with the following figure. Their separation from the other figures depicted is further stressed by a closed umbrella on a pillar depicted to the proper right of this image (cf. the depiction of Byan chub 'od above the Renovation Inscription).

(2) \( l h a . s r a s . n a . g a . r a . d z a \)

I.4 Ye sē 'od is depicted a little larger than the previous and dressed in a coat with a flower pattern (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 10, 1997: fig. 2). Pl. 9,a s CL91 12,21,12,36

(3) \( * \ / d \ - l = r t l . c h e n . p o . y e . s e s . \ \ \ - \ o d / \)

I.5 Devarāja is separated by vertical lines from the other images. He is sitting on a throne and under a baldachin. He and the following persons in the first row are now turned to the left and hold a mālā with the right hand in front of the chest. While 1.4 heads the secular half 1.5 heads the monastic half of the assembly (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 10, 1997: fig. 2). Pl. 9,b s CL91 12,22,17,28

(4) \( * \ l h a . b t u s n 18 . p a ? / d ^ { 9 } . e . b a . r a . d z a / 19 \)

17 This title is practically illegible. The \( d \) seems fairly clear, while the following two 'letters' can be read in the range of \( s l o b \) to \( b l a . m a. \) Of course it would be tempting to read \( l h a . b l a . m a . c h e n . p o \), but a lha is certainly not supported by the remaining traces.

18 Pa., St.

19 St. dhe, but the line of this h usually looks different.
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To the right of I.5 seven monastic figures sitting on cushions are depicted. They are all holding a mālā with their right hand (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 11, 1997: fig. 3).

I.6  f CL91 12,31, 17,28
(5) * sñél. 'or21, rge. slon. grags. pa. bšes. \ gñen /
I.7  f CL91 17,27
(6) */ /gran. la. rge. slon. rad. na. \ gar. ba β2
I.8 Pl. 10,a  s CL91 12,24, 12,25; f CL91 17,27
(7) */ /rugs. 'or23. dge'. slon. dbyig. gl. \ bsod. nams
I.9 Pl. 10,b  f CL91 17,6
(8) */ : /sñél. 'or. dge'. slon. \ 'dul. ba. byan. chub β4
I.10  s CL91 12,37; f CL91 16,22a, 17,5
(9) */ jñi. ma25. dge'. slon. rig. pa. 'byun \ gnas /

20 According to the mNa' ris rgyal rabs (59–60) De ba ra dza was ordained in 996 at Pa sgam Byams stongs glin, a place said to be in Rum, and obtained the ordination name De ba pra bha. bsod nams rie mo places this event in the year 1016 (cf. Peitich 1997: 235, n.37). The depiction of De ba ra dza at the head of the monks and bearing the title lha btsun pa, “Royal Monk” (cf. Ruegg 1995: 23), at Tabo, certainly supports the mNa' ris rgyal rabs.
21 sNél 'or and sNel 'or appear to be identical. A certain sNel 'or Klu mgon sgra appears as scribe in a Satasāhasrikā-colophon (Scherrer-Schaub forthcoming). The name also occurs in documents of Mazār Tāgh (cf. Thomas 1951: 293 (M.Tagh. b.i,0058).
22 The same monk’s name mentioned here appears in an identical phrasing in a Śatasāhasrikā-colophon. In the latter instance he is the recipient (mchod gnas) of a donation made on behalf of the Great Princely Donor Byan chub sems dpa’, “Royal Monk” (cf. Scherrer-Schaub in press, Chapter 5: forthcoming).
23 *Hugs 'or is probably the same as Hugs 'er/wer (cf. below n.29).
24 He is mentioned two more times in the inscriptions of the renovation period (nos. 60 and 104).
25 Cf. gNé ma as name for a part of Upper žath žun (Tucci 1956: 83) and Né mo bag in M.Tagh.c.iii.0019 (Né mo bag i sde rgye lig 'or khin tse, Thomas 1951: 293), both variants actually referring to the same sdon sde of Upper žath žun (cf. Uebach 1987: 22–3).

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

I.11  f CL91 16,22a, 17,1 17,4
(10) * /mo.lo.dge'.slon. šes. rab. sniin. \ po /
I.12  f CL91 16,22a, 17,2, 17,3
(11) */ /mag.pi.tsa.dge'.slon. mos. pa. šes. \ rab /

Second row (II)

Fragments of six figures, each wearing a flat hat, turned to the right and kneeling on one knee. Only the last of them has an inscription which is partly legible. This inscription may also refer to some of the figures depicted before this one (II.1 to II.5), as there is no trace of another caption even when the figure is fairly visible.

II.6  s CL91 12,22; f CL91 17,29

In the right half seven monks are depicted. They are again turned towards the centre and now perform a kind of vitarkamudrā (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 11).

II.7  s CL91 12,22; f CL91 17,29
(13) * /sñél. w27 er.dge'. slon. drik. \ er. co \ x23
II.8  f CL91 17,29
(14) */ /rugs. 'er29. dges. slon. dge'. ba. skyon /

26 tshar ?
27 Written like an I with wa zur.
28 Perhaps drik myed followed by a long letter or ‘letter’ with na ro. Td. suggested blo.gros, but the remaining strokes below the first na ro seem to contradict this reading. A ‘letter’ with a t or with a similar round delimitation at the bottom is a more likely possibility.
29 Hugs 'er seems to be identical with Hrugs wer, which occurs in this form in caption 34. In Rin chen bzang po’s biography Hrugs wer appears as his family name (cf. Snellgrove & Skorupski 1980: 101,113–14; biography published by Lokesh Chandra in Tucci 1988: 104, 2v, 1.3). Rin chen bzang po is said to have been born at a place called Khva tse in Gu ge. According to Tucci (1935: 8–10) this place can be identified with a small village containing the ruin of a large castle somewhat to the west of Tholing (Khartse on the map).

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Minor Inscriptions and Captions

III.1

(20) ma_p.pi:tsa.dge.slo.n.yon.tan.go \ byan.chub.ldan /

III.2

(21) ma_p.pi:tsa.dge.slo.n.yon.tan / .... ? d.pa /

III.3

(22) ma_p.pi:tsa.dge.slo.n.yon.tan \ mo=p pa /

III.4

(23) ma_p.ts.e.dul.ba.dzin.pa \ rgyal.ba.bsou.nams /

III.5 below Ye ses 'od (I.4)

(24) ma_p.ts.e.slob.dpon.yon \ tan.bla.ma./

From here onward seven monks were represented, only the last four figures (9-12) of which are preserved. These are depicted like the monks in row II.

From here onward seven monks were represented, only the last four figures (9-12) of which are preserved. These are depicted like the monks in row II.

III.6

(25) */ : mu.dru.n.yar.dge'.slo.n.dul.ba.bsom.nams /

III.7

(26) */ : s.nel.or.dge'.slo.n.yon \ ? ? nams /

III.8

(27) */ : bod.dge'.slo.n.tshul.khrims.dblo'.gros /

III.9

(28) */ : nam.bu.sud/nd.dge'.slo.n.dad.pa.brtson.grus /

III.10

(29) */ : mag.pi:tsa.dge'.slo.n.dul.ba.yon.tan /

The ga is written below the ma (id. in nos. 22 and 24).

Third row (III)

In the left half only a few fragments of the figures are preserved, but several of the captions are fairly legible.

Possibly the same person as no. 63!

Beside the surname Rum, denoting a clan or locality, in the captions in Tabo (cf. also no. 102 and n.144) there also exists a region of Rum (rum yul), which is located somewhere west of Tholing (cf. PETECH 1997: 233, n.21 and VITALI 1996: 307). Logically Rum alone would be a place within this region, but here it might also denote the region the person stems from. Evidently the Rum people were the most prominent donor group for the renovation. According to THOMAS (1951: 149-50, M.I.xxviii,902) Rum denotes a clan name.

There is nothing known about this designation, however, the frequency with which it occurs in the Tabo inscriptions alone, especially in the founding period (nos. 11, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 32, 33), mainly in a secondary position, points to a local clan or place. It occurs only once again in the renovation captions (cf. n.144).

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Of III.11 the inscription is lost, and for III.12 the caption never was filled in (s CL91 14,17).

Fourth row (IV)

From the left half only the fragment of a hat is preserved approximately in the middle of the row. In the left half, below the monks of the previous row, presumably four more monks (only the red of their dress is preserved) are followed by five female figures, presumably nuns. Their hands, covered by long sleeves, rest on their lap. They are kneeling and turn towards the centre (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 48). The first and the last of their captions are partly legible.

IV.1  

(30) sñes.\(37\)es.w\(38\).dgru.\(38\).tsa.\(39\).s\(37\).dban.\(37\).phyug.\(39\).rt\(40\).en / 

IV.6 This inscription is written in red and in another handwriting!

(31) m =\(39\) 'an.s\(39\).rgyas m\(40\).brug.dpal / 

Fifth row (V)

In the fifth row apparently only lay figures have been depicted. Only in the right half five male donors, performing abhayamudrā, are clearly visible. The figures wear a flat hat and two red ribbons are projecting from their shoulders. Except for the last one, which is shown frontally, the figures turn towards the left (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 49). Only the last three of the preserved images still have their captions.

35 St., Pa.  
36 Only once, in 1991, did I read a fragmentary caption there. As this reading has never been controlled again it is only added here in the footnote:  
mag.pi.ts.\(42\).dba\(40\).p\(40\).yug.\(41\).rt\(40\).en / 

37 Written rather like an angular 'a chun with wa zur!  
38 The place or clan name sñas \(37\) 'ver\(41\).\(42\).wer appears in the colophon of a Śatāsāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā-manuscript in the Tabo collection (sñas 'iwer dge s\(39\)i\(39\)an man dus ba iru = Māljūjahādra). I am grateful to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub for this information.  
39 This first syllable is written in pink, afterwards red ink was used!  
40 Most probably an abbreviation for sans rgyas (Pa.).  

NORTH WALL

Three rows of lay figures with inscriptions are found in the lower left corner of the north wall. Except for the main image all the depicted figures have been identified. The location of the captions is illustrated in Fig. 7. The handwriting seems to be different from the one on the south wall. The figures and their inscriptions are numbered like the ones on the south wall: Roman numbers for the rows from top to bottom and counting from left to right.

First row (I)

I.1 This figure is shown frontally and sits in lalitāśana on a throne. He wears a yellow coat with a red border. His right hand is raised in abhayamudrā, the left arm rests in the sleeve on the knee. Although he appears to be the main figure of this composition, his name is not recorded in the caption (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 50).

(35) *f \(41\)tha.\(37\).\(39\).s\(39\)a!s?  

41 Written like an 'a chun with wa zur.
C. Luczanits

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

II.5
(44) sīnel. 'or.bsam\textsuperscript{43}.tan.byan.chub

II.6
(45) sīnel. 'or.byan.tshul/

Third row (III)
The figures to the captions of this row are not preserved.

III.1
(46) rin.can.rgyal\textsuperscript{46}?=?#

III.2
(47) sgye.ini.dge.bsēn.tshul \ khrims.legs.pa./

III.3
(48) sīnam.w\textsuperscript{47}.er.khrims.mchos

III.4
(49) sīnel. 'or.guṅ.che.skyan.bu/

III.5
(50) ... chad ... n/

III.6
(51) sīnel. 'or.skyid.mchos/

III.7
(52) sīnel. 'or ... ...

Second row (II)
All figures except II.3 are male. All kneel on one knee, and are turning towards the left (the wall).

II.1
(40) sīnel. 'or.bo.di.ba.dra.

II.2
(41) stag.lo\textsuperscript{43}.tshul.khrim,

II.3
(42) gza\textsuperscript{44}.ma.byan.chub.brde.?

II.4
(43) sna.ro.chos.kyi.sni.po.

I.2 Depicted like I.1 this figure wears a brown coat and turns slightly towards the previous one (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 50).
(36) */lha.sras.'jig.\ rten.mgon./ s CL91 15,35; f CL91 17,16

I.3 Female wearing a yellow coat and shown frontally. She performs abhayamudrā.
(37) */lha.lcam.'od\textsuperscript{42}.\ phro s CL94 77,25; f CL91 17,17

I.4
(38) */lha.sras.\ brden.britsan s CL94 77,25; f CL91 17,18

I.5
(39) lha.sras

I.6
(35) */lha.sras.\ rten.mgon.\ s CL91 15,35; f CL91 17,16

I.7
(34) */lha.lcam.'od\textsuperscript{42}.\ phro

42 Also 'di could be read. The vocal was apparently written twice (probably a reversed gi gu corrected to a na ro).
43 sTag lo as a surname occurs in Nel pa Paṇḍita's Me tog phreṅ ba (UEBACH 1987: 133).
44 Pa. read a gi gu.
45 Pa.
46 Also ri mo rtsun rgyal could be read.
47 Written like an 'a chuṅ with double wa zur.
NON-HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ENTRY HALL

THE PROTECTRESS

On the west wall, above the entrance to the main hall an inscription identifies the main protectress whose image is not preserved (cf. Fig. 8). She was depicted riding on a deer. To both sides of the protectress a female retinue of nine figures on each side is depicted (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 6; 1997: figs. 37–39). The caption is in the lower left corner of the screen held behind the protectress by two women of the retinue.

CAPTIONS AT THE BHAVACAKRA

Several inscriptions are found in connection with the Wheel of Life (bhavacakra, srıd pa’i ’khor lo) in the northern part of the east wall (cf. Fig. 9; Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 41, 42). Only the inscription above the Wheel in the upper left corner is well preserved.

114 “The protectress of the main temple, the great (healing) woman (sman chen mo) Wi niu myin together with [her] retinue.” sman in certain contexts seems to denote just ‘woman’ (cf. STEIN 1956: 371), however, there also exists a whole class of pre-Buddhist female deities called sman mo (NEBERKY-WOIKOWITZ 1956: 198–202).

It contains two verses of the conclusion of the Prāti­mokṣaśātra (verses 14 and 15 in the Mālasarvāstivāda­Vinaya) as prescribed by the Vinaya for the decoration of a sgo khan. Beside the caption a Buddha performing bhūmispardā­mudrā is depicted (PI. 12; Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 40).

Remarkably line five was written twice, one over the other. It seems that the scribe forgot at first to copy the word ’khor ba. After he realised this mistake he apparently rewrote the whole line in the same place. This can be taken as evidence that it was less important for the text to be legible than for it to be complete. The wall text has been compared with the Prāti­mokṣaśātra in the Peking edition (Q Vol. 42 149,3,6–7).

49 The description of the bhavacakra in the passage in the Mālasarvāstivāda­Vinaya prescribes that the following three elements be displayed with the Wheel of Life: the depiction of a (teaching) Buddha, the pratityasamutpāda on the outer circle of the Wheel (see below), and the two verses encouraging the conversion to Buddhism (Vinayavibhaliga, Q Vol. 43 73,1,6–2,4).

50 Q reads against the metre bstan pa la.

51 Q bsii.

52 Q glaṅ.

53 Q chi.

54 Q sde.

55 Q gyur.

56 Written bl with subscribed a chuni for Q ba’i.

57 On the edge stiḥ ba seems to be written, but it is not clear if it belongs to the inscription.
The remains of two more inscriptions can be found directly on the Wheel, one on the left side, directly in front of the red figure holding the Wheel from the left corner, and one below the hand of another green figure holding the Wheel from the opposite, upper right corner. Although there is not much preserved from these two inscriptions, the beginning of the right caption does allow me to propose their purpose. The captions on the Wheel were most probably used to represent the pratityasamutpāda in writing instead of the form of metaphorical pictures generally used in later depictions. The presence of the pratityasamutpāda in writing appears to be unique to Tabo.

(55a) caption on the left side of the wheel:

... ... ... ch/thun.ba.dan ?
? ... ch/tsha ? ba.la.ch/mab/s ?
‡ ... phyir.ro.

(55b) caption on the right side of the wheel:

$ CL91 18,9

* / rga.si.62 gi.st n63
=$0 r l' = p.dah.?-ra

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61 "Commence, go forth [and] join the Buddha’s teaching! Destroy Māra’s host, as an elephant destroys a reed-hut! Who conscientiously observes the [Buddhist] monastic rules (dharma-vinaya) will leave the circle of rebirth, and reach the end of suffering; thus it is said.”

This translation follows to a large extent the German translation in SCHMIDT 1989: 79. PREBISH (1975: 113) translates the verses quite differently. I thank Haiyan Hu von Hinüber for discussing the translation with me.

62 Old age and death (jīvamaraṇa), the twelfth item of the pratityasamutpāda.
63 Vocal above, most probably gi gu.

64 “The southern [continent] Jambudvīpa.”
The Assembly Hall ('du khan) is dominated by the 33 deities of a three-dimensional Vajradhatu-mandala. Except for the fourfold Vairocana in the centre, behind the altar, the clay sculptures are attached to the walls all around the room. The sections below and above the sculptures are painted with different iconographic themes. The area below the sculptures is mainly dedicated to two narrative themes - the Pilgrimage of Sudhana from the Gandavyūhasūtra and the Life of the Buddha, the first of them accompanied by a wall text. In the northern half of the east wall there was also a larger area dedicated to the donors of the renovation of the temple completed in 1042. This section is only very fragmentarily preserved. All the historical captions of the Assembly Hall are found there. In the section above the sculptures different iconographic groups are placed. Among these the deities of two groups - the Protectors of the Three Families and the Buddhas of the Ten Directions - have been identified by captions.

Fig. 10: The Assembly Hall ('du khan)

Fig. 11: Assembly Hall east wall

Donor Assembly

Below Vajragandhā there are fragments of a large composition depicting a row of main donors surrounded by secondary figures. Only a part of the left half of this composition and a tiny section in the top right corner are fairly well preserved. In the centre was a row of eight or nine figures sitting in front of a screen or curtain. Only fragments of four of the figures are preserved on the left side of the composition. These main donor figures can be identified by their dress - a combination of a monk's habit and a Tibetan-style coat as is also worn by Byañ chub 'od in the painting above the Renovation
Inscription - as royal bla mas. Originally they were identified by captions below their thrones. Sadly the remains of these captions are very fragmentary and none of the names are left.

The first image from the left (figure 1) is the only one wearing a hat. His caption is lost.

The following three have retained fragments of their captions. The three captions together are fairly visible in s DKS91 34,28.

Figure 2, the second figure from the left, has the right hand raised as if in abhayamudrā. Of his caption of four lines only fragments are left: Pl. 13

(57) ... ... ... 1 ... ... 58
... ... n.byan| ... d.pa. // //

The third figure has the right hand lifted towards the shoulder with some fingers outstretched. His caption is of two lines and the best preserved in this group. Pl. 13

(58) rje.lha.btsun.pa =-u.n/d n/d =
m/68.sda/nas // // //

The fourth figure has his right hand in the sleeve resting on his thigh.

Pl. 13

(59) rje.lha ... ... =69.she.sda.na/70

All around these central figures a whole assembly of people has been depicted, the ones in the foreground are much larger than the ones at the back behind the screen, which creates a sort of depth in the representation. While the nobles who wore a flat type of headdress are usually hidden by his apron, is well preserved. There are five figures with captions.

I.1 is depicted frontally with the right hand pendent and the left on the knee. He wears a red hat and red monk's dress and has white hair (Klimburg-Salter 1987: pl. 2,a; 1994: fig. 13).

Pl. 14,a s DKS91 34,25 37,37, CL91 34,34 34,35, CL94 85,6

(60) gnas.brtan.chen.po. 'dul.ba.byan.chub. \ sūel.'or.71

I.2 wears a hat open at the front and a patchwork monk's dress. His right hand is raised at the side towards the shoulder, while his left is pendent. He is turned towards the former (Klimburg-Salter 1987: pl. 2,a).

Pl. 14,a s DKS91 34,25, CL94 85,7

(61) chos.sg/a'i.slob.chen.po.gu.na.bar.ma \ te.'or.72

71 "The Great Elder (mahāsthāvira) 'Dul ba byan chub from [the place/the clan] sNel 'or." He apparently was the abbot at the time of the renovation (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1994: 34 and below n.141).

This and the following caption were first published and discussed in Klimburg-Salter 1987: 690, pl. 2,a, the provisional reading based on the photograph. A revised reading has been published in Klimburg-Salter 1994: n.14.

72 Thakur (1997: 974) erroneously reads the name as gu na ba na ti 'or and interprets the phrase chos zga as a place name. However, here one presumably has to
I.3 is also directed towards I.1. He has no hat, a red monk’s dress and a stubbly beard. His right hand is raised in vitarkamudrā and his left rests on the knee. PI. 14,b s DKS91 34,28 37,36 60,2 60,3, CL94 85,8

(62) lcog.la\textsuperscript{3} i.sde.dge.sloṅ. \(\text{mos.pa.bسود.nامs} \: \text{g.brags}\textsuperscript{4}.)\textsuperscript{75}

I.4 is depicted like I.3 but he turns towards the following figure (I.5). His right hand is resting on the thigh, while the left is held out towards the following figure as if he were talking to him.

PI. 14,b s DKS91 34,28 60,4, CL94 85,9

(63) [gu.\textsuperscript{4} i.sde.sman.pa.brton. \# \# \# =.rin.cen. man. \textit{or} j]\textsuperscript{76}

I.5 is consequently turned towards the former (I.4). He wears a red hat and only the right hand, lying on the knee, is preserved.

(64) lcog.la ... \text{tan.dad.pa}

read \textit{chos sgra'i slob chen po} and interpret the whole phrase as a religious title. This assumption is supported by the fact that the section below the \textit{sga} is rubbed off, thus a subscribed \textit{r} could easily have been there. This title, although sounding very much like a translation of a Sanskrit title, is not found as such in the common dictionaries. Nevertheless it seems quite likely that here a specialist in Buddhist terminology, a translator, is depicted. This is further supported by the Sanskrit name of the person. Thus, the phrase would translate: “The mahakārya of Buddhist terminology Gunavarman from [the place/the clan] Te ‘or.” Gunavarman, *Yon tan go cha in Tibetan, is not found in the common Tibetan historical works. Another possibility would be that \textit{chos sga} actually stands for \textit{chos grwa} “Buddhist college”.

\textsuperscript{3} ICog la apparently designated a larger area around the confluence of the Spiti and Sutlej rivers reaching at least as far north as the Lingti river (as the term occurs in an inscription at Lalung [to be published in future]) and to the region east of the Shipki pass. Its variants \textit{a} (ts) lcog (la) and GuG lcog (= Gu ge lcog la) might denote the respective western and eastern parts of the region. For a much more differentiated picture and references cf. \textit{VITALI} 1996: 307-9, and \textit{PETECH} 1997: n.20. In the \textit{miNu' ris rgyal rabs} Tabo monastery is called the ornament of ICog la in Spiti (\textit{pi tīr ta po cog la brgyan}, 54, 1-9-10).

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Gunavarman}. \textit{Gunavarman}, *Yon tan go cha in Tibetan, is not found in the common Tibetan historical works. Another possibility would be that \textit{chos sga} actually stands for \textit{chos grwa} “Buddhist college”.

\textsuperscript{5} “The mahakārya of Buddhist terminology Gunavarman from [the place/the clan] Te ‘or.” \textit{Gunavarman}, *Yon tan go cha in Tibetan, is not found in the common Tibetan historical works. Another possibility would be that \textit{chos sga} actually stands for \textit{chos grwa} “Buddhist college”.

\textsuperscript{6} “The monk from the ICog la region Mos pa bsod nams [grags].”

Both lcog la (cog la) and gu ge (gug ge) are names of thousand-districts (\textit{stöṅ sde}) of Lower \textit{Zaṅ züh} (\textit{aṅ züh smad}) (cf. e.g. \textit{UEBACH} 1987: 22). I therefore understand \textit{sde} as referring to a region or district rather than to a community.

\textsuperscript{7} “The physician of the Gu ge region br’Tson ... rin can from [the place/the clan] Man ‘or.” \textit{THAKUR} (1997: 974,6) reads \textit{brton} and \textit{yin ‘or(od)} for Man ‘or.

\textsuperscript{8} “The physician of the Gu ge region br’Tson ... rin can from [the place/the clan] Man ‘or.” \textit{THAKUR} (1997: 974,6) reads \textit{brton} and \textit{yin ‘or(od)} for Man ‘or.

Of the four other rows only tiny fragments of figures and traces of captions are left. Of the second row only the upper edges of panels are left, one of them containing the phrase \textit{gu.ge’i.sde} only. Of the third row only the legs of one image are visible under which, presumably belonging to the fourth row, another panel with a fragmentary caption is left.\textsuperscript{77} Below these captions are again more fragments of a figure, and below that apparently was a larger panel containing an inscription. There are further small fragments of a fifth row. These few traces, however, do not really allow the reconstruction of the arrangement that was once there.

In addition four more historical figures are depicted in the space between the \textit{dvārapāla} (\textit{sgo srun ba}) and the door. These were never named.

\textit{or.} The person is possibly identical with the monk mentioned above in caption no. 17.

\textsuperscript{7} I once read: \textit{lcog.la ... \text{bsod.nams} \text{g.brags}}, but this reading has never been controlled again.
C. Luczanits

NON-HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL

FRAGMENTS OF AN INSCRIPTION ON THE LINTEL

Very few fragments are left of a long inscription in two lines written on the wooden lintel just below the depiction of the temple’s protectress (cf. Fig. 11). The inscription presumably covered the whole length of the lintel (c. 180 cm) with the first line, while the second line ended after approximately 50 cm. The inscription is written in the old orthography, but is so fragmentary that it is not even clear what it refers to. I only tried once, in 1990, to decipher the fragments and the reading has never been controlled.

THE PROTECTORS OF THE THREE FAMILIES

In the southern half of the east wall in the upper register above the sculptures there is a Bodhisattva triad depicting the Protectors of the Three Families (rigs gsum mgon po), the Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāni (cf. Fig. 11). Mañjuśrī (in the form of Mañjughoṣa) in the centre is slightly larger than the other two. All three Bodhisattvas sit in lalitāsana.

Each of the Bodhisattvas is identified by a panel above the shoulder to the right of the respective image. In the captions all three are called bodhisattva mahāsattva (byan chub sems dpa’ sems dpa’ chen po) followed by one or several epithets, which appear rather unusual. The identifications are followed by the ye dharma-verse. The panels are arranged from left to right, that is in the direction of pradaksīṇā.

The first panel to the left of Avalokiteśvara contains only the ye dharma-verse:

ye.dha.rma.he.tu.pra.bha.ba.he.tun.te.sān.ta.thā.gā.to.hya.ba.dad.te.sān.tsa.yo.ni.ro.dha.e.baṁ.ba.ti.ma.ha.ṣra.ma.ṇa. / /

Karunēśvara(?) Avalokiteśvara is white and holds a mālā with vitarkamudrā in the right hand. The left hand rests at his hip and holds the stem of a white lotus (padma). He has an antelope skin wrapped around his upper body and wears a one-pointed crown with the Buddha Amitābha in front of his high hair-knot. The āṇā has the shape of a vertical eye (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 107).

On the panel above his right shoulder he is identified.

Pl. 15,a

byan.chub.sems.dpa’.sems.dpa’.chen.po.thugs.rje.’i.mṇa’.bdag.spyan.ras.gzigs.kyi.dban.phyug.// ye.dha.rma. ....

Ārya Mañjughoṣa is (bright) red, his right hand shows varadamudrā in front of the knee while the left fist on his thigh holds the stem of a blue lotus (utpala). Above the lotus a Prajñāpāramitā is depicted. Mañjughoṣa wears a scarf across his upper body and a crown with five points. The āṇā has the shape of a vertical eye.81

80 thugs rje’i mṇa’ bdag used here as a synonym for thugs rje’i dban phyug (BIT 1015).

81 Iconographically the depiction corresponds with the “royal” Mañjuśrī as differentiated by MALLMANN (1964: 35–6; 1986: 252–3), a form found in Sādhana-mālā nos. 50, 69 and 70. There the deity is unanimously called Mañjughoṣa. However, the Tabo image does not sit on a lion throne and adds the book above the lotus. His epithets in front of the name are only partially preserved. They might include nam sūn gi’ gro ba – apāyagati and nam par’ joms pa – vidārana (as occurs in the name of another deity, BIT 14, 34, 2376).

78 The length of this fragment is 11 cm.

79 This fragment covers ca. 22 cm.
Vajrapāṇi is only partly original. Apparently he was once coloured in a dirty bright green that was later repainted blue. His right hand in front of the breast appears to hold a pointed object resembling a bud or fruit. The object as it is left today does not appear to be a vajra, and if it was, then it was probably a vajra in the sense of a diamond as it is depicted in the Ambulatory as well. However, there also the diamond has a completely different shape. The left hand of Vajrapāṇi is clenched and rests on his thigh. He wears a scarf across his upper body and a crown with five points. The šīrā is not preserved.

The Buddhas of the Ten Directions

The Buddhas of the Ten Directions are depicted in the upper register on the south and north walls of the Assembly Hall. Each of the ten Buddhas is flanked by two Bodhisattvas. The names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are recorded in captions just above their shoulders (cf. Fig. 12 and Fig. 13). The remaining space in the panels is filled with the ye dharma-verse.

82 The part within ( ) brackets was read in 1990, but was broken out in 1991. In 1994, when I was studying the sculptures carefully, I found parts of this inscription again in the lotus base of a clay sculpture. The fragments were put back in place by a team of the A.S.I. headed by Dr R.P. Singh.

83 Read: 'Jam pa'i dbyan.

84 Cf. below the MBS 13.

85 Most probably guṣṭ ha'ī byad po - guhyākāśākṣipti as an epithet (cf. Tshig mdzod p. 3006 and in several variations in the Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary 2482–83).

86 Cf the table in CONZE 1960: 47. Translations of the introductory chapter are found in CONZE 1961: 1–9 and 1975: 37–44.

87 The Sanskrit equivalents of the names are taken from Dutt and the alternative spellings in Q are mentioned. Variant readings common in the orthography of Tabo, such as myed for med, cen for chen and da drag, are not recorded.

The names of the Buddhas and of one of the accompanying Bodhisattvas are taken from the introductory chapter to the three larger versions of the Prajñāpāramitā, i.e. Satasāhasrika-, the Pañcavimśatisāhasrika-, and the Āśādāśasāhasrika-Prajñāpāramitā. There also the names of the respective worlds (lokadhātu) the Buddhas reside in and their principal Bodhisattvas are mentioned. The Sanskrit and Tibetan texts of the Pañcavimśatisāhasrika-Prajñāpāramitā have been used for comparison.

As can be seen from the sequence of the content, the captions of the Buddhas of the Ten Directions were meant to be read in pradaksinā starting with the eastern triad in the south-east corner and ending with the zenith triad in the north-west corner. In the literature, first the Buddhas in the cardinal directions are enumerated, then the intermediary ones and last the ones at nadir and zenith. Here I record the captions as they actually appear in Tabo, the arrangement following the pradaksinā, and each triad is read from left to right.

For the Buddhas, the captions mention the quarter (phyogs) or intermediary quarter (phyogs mishams) the respective Tathāgata resides in, and his name. The Bodhisattvas are only named. In each caption the ye dharma-verse follows in the next line. It is remarkable that at least some captions on the north wall apparently have been filled in twice (cf. nos. 81, 82, 85, and 86). At least in the cases of 81 and 86, the only captions where the earlier inscriptions are fairly legible, the content of the captions has been changed, although within the same context. No. 81 originally referred to the Bodhisattva depicted to the right of the caption and not to the Buddha to the left of it as today, and 86 mentions the Bodhisattva Padmo dam pa/Padmottara, the Bodhisattva of the Nadir. The latter case indicates the reversal of the triads in zenith and nadir.

It can be assumed that the Buddhas of the Ten Directions do not have a standardised iconography, they are rather displayed with a tendency towards stereotype repetition (cf. also the comparisons mentioned below). With one inconsistency, the five Buddhas on each wall of the Assembly Hall are actually performing the mudrā of the
five *jina*, with the preaching Buddha (*dharmacakramudrā*) in the centre. However, the *varadamudrā* is replaced by a gesture where the hand above the knee is raised as in *abhayamudrā*, which looks rather like a gesture of blessing. The Buddha of the south-east (above sculptures S6 and S7) performs *vitarkamudrā* instead of the regular *abhayamudrā* of his counterpart on the opposite wall. However, the body colours do not follow the five *jina* configuration as only red and white is used alternately. With the exception mentioned, the Buddhas and the colours of the attending Bodhisattvas facing each other are identical, the walls mirroring each other.88

The Bodhisattvas are facing towards the central Buddhas holding (or as if holding) a small offering in their right hand. The left arm is stretched behind the thigh with the palm facing downwards towards the seat as if they were leaning on their arm. Although there are remarkable differences between the depictions of the Bodhisattvas on the north and south walls – like the different dhotis and their textile patterns – stylistically they belong to the same group.89 While the Bodhisattvas on the south wall hold flowers or jewels as offerings, the ones on the north wall are empty-handed. 

The Buddhas of the Ten Directions and their principal Bodhisattvas are also depicted in the Derge *bKa’ ’gyur* illustrating the beginnings of volumes 15 to 24 of the *Ses phyin* section.90 There the Buddhas are uniformly depicted with *dharmacakramudrā* and the principal Bodhisattvas are venerating them. The Buddhas alone are depicted in BIT 1084 to 1093 as part of an *Āstasāhasrikā* pantheon.91 Here, too, the *mudrās* of the five *jinas* have been used.

**South wall**

The location of the south wall captions is shown in Fig. 12.

**East**

Bodhisattva Samantaraśmi: white; right hand held in a kind of reversed *vitarkamudrā* (facing towards the shoulder) in front of the breast; left arm behind the leg. s JP1984 480

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88 The symmetry of the walls was noticed by D.E. Klimburg-Salter.
89 Cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter III.
91 The group was not recognised as the Buddhas of the Ten Directions and consequently the rendering of the Tibetan captions into Sanskrit is faulty.
92 The way the name is written here either is a mistake or it reflects the source the name was copied from. Q (e.g. 43,5) and KOLMAŚ (1978: 15b) have ‘Od zer kun nas ‘byun ba.
93 Q (e.g. 43,4), BIT 1084 and KOLMAŚ 1978: 15a: Rin chen ‘byun gnas.
C. Luczanits

(71) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.lag na.pad.mo./ ye.dha.rma ... ...

Buddha Padmottarasīri95: white; right hand in vitarkamudrā; left hand on lap (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 109).

(72) šar.lho.mtshams.kyi.de.bzin.gšes.gspa. pad.mo.dam.pa'i.dpal./   ye.dha.rma ... ...

Bodhisattva: white; offering a tiny closed flower; left hand behind leg. Caption lost (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 110).

South

Bodhisattva (Vigat-)Aśoka: red; holding a jewel in reversed vitarkamudrā; left hand behind leg.97

(73) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.mya.nan.myed.pa.// ye.dha.rma ... ...

Buddha Aśokaśri98: red; dharmacakramudrā s JP1984 119

(74) lho.phyogs.kyi.de.bzin.gšes.gpa.myan.myed.pa'i.dpal./ ye.dha.rma ... ...

Bodhisattva: dark green; offering a jewel; left hand behind leg. Caption not read or lost (in a photograph of 1984 the caption is visible just below the capital; it contains at least the ye dharma-verse).

Nadir

Bodhisattva: green; mudrā with open palm in front of breast; left hand behind leg. The caption above his right shoulder refers to the following Buddha: s JP1984 128

(76) 'og.gi.phyogs.kyi.de.bzin.gšes.gpa.pad.mo.dam. p = ×,100/ / / / /[ye.dha.rma] ... ...

Buddha Padmaśri: red; gesture of blessing (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 25).101 The caption above his right shoulder refers to the following Bodhisattva: s JP1984 129

(77) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po. pad.mo.dam.pa'. / 102/ / /

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

South-west

Bodhisattva [Śūryaprabhāsa/Śī ma rab tu snañ ba] and his caption lost.

Buddha Śūryamaṇḍalaprabhāsottamaśri99: white, bhūmisparśa-mudrā. s JP1984 124

(75) lho.nub.kyi.phyogs.mtshams.kyi.de.bzin.gšes.gpa. ni.ma'i.dkyil.'khor.snañ.ba.d = ×'i.dpal./ ye.dha.rma ... ...

Bodhisattva: red; offering a closed flower with the right hand; left hand behind leg. Fragmentary caption not read or lost (in a photograph of 1994 fragments of a caption are visible just below the capital; it contains at least the ye dharma-verse).

94 “The Tathāgata of the southern quarter Ratnākara.” Translated exemplarily. The caption is published in Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 36.
95 BIT 1089.
97 In 1984 the caption was still in perfect condition.
98 BIT 1085.
99 Q (e.g. 48,1) Ni mā'i dkyil ’khor snañ ba dam pa’i dpal; BIT 1090: Ni dkyil snañ ba dam pa’i dpal.
100 Q (e.g. 49,4) Pad mo'i dpal; BIT 1092.
101 The right arm is stretched towards the knee where its hand is raised as in abhayamudrā. That this gesture has the meaning of blessing can be seen in the paintings of the pilgrimage of Sudhana.
102 Q (e.g. 49,5) Pad mo dam pa.
**C. Luczanits**

*Bodhisattva* Padmottara: white; offering a jewel; left hand behind leg.

**North wall**
The location of the north wall captions is shown on Fig. 13.

*West*
Caption in the corner:

*ye.dha.rma* .... ....

*Bodhisattva* Ārya Avalokiteśvara: white; *vitarkamudrā*; left hand behind leg (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 26).

(78) *byan.chub.sems.dpa*. *'phags.pa.spyan. ras.gzigs.dban.phyug.//* *ye.dha.rma* .... ....

*Buddha* Ratnārcis[103]; red; gesture of blessing[104].

(79) *nub.phyogs.kyi.de.bzin.gse[gse].pa.rin. cen.'od.phro.//* *ye.dha.rma* .... ....

*Bodhisattva* [Cāritramati/sPyod pa'i blo gros]; green; right hand as if offering something; left behind leg.

**North-west**
*Bodhisattva*: red; right hand in front of breast, *mudrā* not preserved.

The original murals and captions of the Buddha [Ekacchattrā/gDugs dam pa'[105] and the right *Bodhisattva* [Ratnoṭtama/Rin chen mchog] are lost. Both have been repainted at a later period.

---

[103] BIT 1086.
[105] BIT 1087.
[106] Underneath this inscription an older, faded one is quite readable. It is written with much larger letters and has only three lines. There was no *ye dharma*-verse in the older version. Instead of mentioning a Buddha it refers to the Bodhisattva Jayadatta: *'[byan.chub.sems.dpa'. *sems.dpa'.chen.po.rgyal. bac.g/byin.//* // *ye.dha.rma* .... ....
C. Luczanits

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

Buddha Nandaśtri\textsuperscript{10}: red, dhyānamudrā. \textit{Pl. 16,b} s JP1984 548

(85) \textit{ste̱.gi.phyogs.kyi.de.bţin.}
\textit{gšēgs.pā.gda'.ba'i.}
\textit{dpal.// ye.dha.rma ... ...} \textsuperscript{111}

Bodhisattva Nandadatta: white; right hand raised towards the shoulder\textsuperscript{112}, left arm behind leg. s JP1984 547

(86) \textit{byan.chub.sems.dpa{'}/}
\textit{dga'.bas.byin.pa/}
\textit{ye.dha.rma ... ...} \textsuperscript{113}

THE PILGRIMAGE OF SUDHANA (NOR BZAN[S])

The reader is referred to Steinkellner 1995 for the inscriptions in connection with the narrative of Nor bzān(s) in the lower register of the southern half of the temple. There inscriptions occur in large panels adjacent to the paintings as well as short captions written on the paintings which explain the content of the pictures.\textsuperscript{114}

THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

Not even the large panels have been used in the depiction of the Life of the Buddha. The only short caption occurring in the Life is a

\textsuperscript{108} Here, too, traces of an older inscription are visible below the present one.
\textsuperscript{109} Q (e.g. 46,4) Tīn ː dzin gyi glaṅ po dam pā'ī dpal; BIT 1088: Tīn 'dzin glaṅ po dam pā'ī dpal.

\textsuperscript{110} BIT 1091.
\textsuperscript{111} Here, too, a faded older inscription of different content is visible.
\textsuperscript{112} Probably the "mudrā of deference" which goes back to Gandhāran art (cf. TADDEI 1969: 375).\textsuperscript{113} Again, traces of an older inscription of different content are visible underneath the present one! It can be read as:
\textit{byan.chub.sems.dpa{'}/pad.}
\textit{mo.dam.pā?}

\textsuperscript{114} At the end of the narrative frieze depicting the story of Sudhana, and apparently not part of the story, is an interesting short inscription: \textit{ra mo mktan dam bu}. It belongs to a group of four riders with their shields and horses depicted there (cf. STEINKELLNER 1995: 104, n.6).
In the back part of the temple a small Cella is surrounded by an Ambulatory. Together this western section of the temple could be called an apse (Fig. 14). The Cella contains a group of three larger-than-life-size clay sculptures to which also the two Bodhisattvas in the passage leading from the Assembly Hall to the apse belong.\(^{117}\) The central Vairocana and the two Bodhisattvas against the side walls of the Cella are flanked by two painted goddesses each. Above them different rows of Buddhas cover the space.\(^{118}\)

In the Cella itself there are no historical inscriptions, nor is there any trace of an inscription below the donor picture on the north wall.\(^{119}\) Captions are found only with the rows of Buddhas at the top of the walls.

**THE CELLA BUDDHAS**

The uppermost part of the north and south walls is covered by four rows of eight (in the lower rows seven) Buddhas respectively. On the west wall three rows have 11 Buddhas each, while in the corners

\(^{115}\) Also the reading b.dan is possible.

\(^{116}\) This inscription was only read once!

\(^{117}\) For a discussion of the iconography and the date of these sculptures cf. LUCZANITS 1997: 195–200.

\(^{118}\) For a more detailed description and depictions of the Cella cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: chapter V.3.

\(^{119}\) About the possible identity of this donor cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: 148–150, fig. 151.
C. Luczanits

three more Buddhas are placed in a fourth row. All these Buddhas are accompanied by captions (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 152, 153).

However, only a very small number of these Buddha captions could be read. Firstly the captions are so high up that it is not possible to read the inscriptions even standing on a ladder. Secondly the sculptures and their pedestals do not permit one to move the ladder close to the wall, and thirdly most of these captions are extensively covered with dust, thus they are hardly visible at all. Most of the Buddha-names have been read only once, in 1991. For these reasons there is only a random selection of captions recorded (cf. the location of the legible captions in Fig. 15), and their reading is not very reliable.

Nevertheless, the legible names collected are sufficient to exclude the possibility that the names are from the Bhadrakalpikasūtra. The names are taken from different collections. They also include some rather unusual, but telling, names for which a source could not be identified at all. Most of the names recorded belong to the 35 Buddhas of Confession (ltun bṣags sans rgyas gsum bcu so lha\(^{120}\)), but also names of the Seven Heroic Buddhas (sans rgyas dpa' bo bdun\(^{121}\)), the Buddhas of the Ten Directions (phyogs bcu'i sans rgyas) and the Eight Healing Buddhas (sman bla dhe gṣegs brgyad) appear.

Except the subscribed \( y \) in myed pa and the tsheg in front of the sād there are no signs of old orthography. It is uncertain if these inscriptions, as also the paintings, were part of the renovation or if they were made during a subsequent repair.

All the Buddhas in the Cella are shown meditating. The same dress-colour is used for the Buddhas in a vertical row. Stylistically the Buddhas belong to the painted goddesses and the donor depiction, now provisionally attributed to the last phase of the renovation period.\(^{122}\)

The readings are arranged according to the walls and the horizontal rows, in which they are read from left to right.

**South wall**

First row, first Buddha: Bhaśajayaguru (sMan gyi bla)

(88) \( \text{de.bzin.gṣegs.\ pa.sm/pan.gyi.z/blu} \)

\(^{120}\) Also called ltun bṣags bla so lha (Tshig mdzod, 1089).

\(^{121}\) On sans rgyas dpa' bo bdun cf. n.175. They are also called sans rgyas rabs bdun (Tshig mdzod, 2919; DAGYAB 1977: 39).

\(^{122}\) Cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: Chapter III.

Second row, first Buddha

(90) \( \text{de.bzin.gṣegs.\ 'jogs.pa.thams.cad/ rab.du.zi.bar.mdzad.pa/} \)

Second Buddha

(91) \( \text{de.bzin.gṣegs.\ 'gro.ba.thams.cad.yo.s/ su.spyan.ba/} \)

Third Buddha

(92) \( \text{de.bzin.gṣegs.\ pa.r.n.s.thams/ cad.rab.tu.zi.bar/ mdzad.pa/} \)

\(^{123}\) "The Tathāgata who pacifies all..." 'jogs pa is probably misread.

\(^{124}\) "The Tathāgata who completely purifies (read: sbyon ba) all living beings."
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Others illegible!

Third row, first Buddha: Nandasri, the Buddha of the Zenith
(93) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.dga'.
ba'i.\ dpal.//

Second Buddha: Candanaśri, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession
(94) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.tsan.dan.gyi.dpal.//

Third Buddha: *Vira
(95) de.bzin.gsegs.pa.\ dpal.'po.//

Sixth Buddha: Viśvabhū ("bhuj") the third of the Seven Heroic Buddhas
(96) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.thams.cad.skyob

Others illegible!

Fourth row, the space occupied by the first Buddhas in the upper rows is partly covered by the end of the capital; there is only a caption without inscription. The caption of the first Buddha (below the second Buddhas of the upper rows), Kāśyapa, is written in a script different from the others!
(97) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.'od.sruṅ.//

All others illegible.

West wall

Nothing of the first row could be read.

Second row, first Buddha: Vimala, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession
(98) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.dri.ma.myed.pa.//

Third row, first Buddha, Aśoka?
(99) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.\tan.myed.pa'i.\ ...

Third row, eighth (?) Buddha: most probably Suparikirtitanāṃśrī (mTshan dpal [sin tu] yoṅs bsgrags), one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession
(100) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa tshan.dpal.\ yoṅs.bsgrags.//

Fourth row, second Buddha from the right: Yuddhajaya (g.Yul las [sin tu rnam par] rgyal ba), one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession
(101) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.g-yul.las ...

No Buddha-name has been recorded from the north wall!

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

(98) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.dri.ma.myed.pa.//

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(99) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.\tan.myed.pa'i.\ ...

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(100) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa tshan.dpal.\ yoṅs.bsgrags.//

Fourth row, second Buddha from the right: Yuddhajaya (g.Yul las [sin tu rnam par] rgyal ba), one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession
(101) de.bzin.gsegs.\ pa.g-yul.las ...

No Buddha-name has been recorded from the north wall!

125 "The Tathāgata who completely pacifies all . . ."
126 The same as in caption no. 85.
127 BIT 64, 2317.
128 May be Virasena/dPa' bo'i sde, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession; BIT 51, 2304.
129 BIT 57, 2310.
130 BIT 57, 2310.
131 BIT 74, 2327.
132 BIT 77, 2330.
As has already been mentioned, the Cella is surrounded by an Ambulatory. The Ambulatory is covered with paintings on both sides, the inner side mainly dedicated to the Buddhas of the bhadrakalpa. On the front walls of the Cella, being also the inner wall of the Ambulatory, the only historical depictions are found. Here, to the left of the Cella (cf. Fig. 16), the Renovation Inscription has been preserved, together with a depiction of the main donors. Another depiction of historical figures on the opposite side of the Cella is today largely lost. The main themes of the Ambulatory paintings are 16 Bodhisattvas, 16 Mahabodhisattvas, the Eight Buddhas and their prominent disciples, the Buddhas of the bhadrakalpa, all of which are at least partly accompanied by captions and a narrative, which has not yet been identified.

Fig. 16: The Ambulatory (skor lam); the triangle indicates the location of the Renovation Inscription

HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE AMBULATORY

The most important place for donor depictions and inscriptions belonging to the renovation phase was the front of the walls enclosing the Cella. Here, on the south side (to the proper right of the main image) the Renovation Inscription is found in the lower section of the wall. The painting accompanying the inscription also has captions. On the other side of the Cella another donor picture has been photographed by E. Gherzi which has almost completely disappeared by now.

CAPTIONS ON THE PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE RENOVATION INSRIPTION

Some of the figures depicted in the assembly around the central figure, presumably Byan chub 'od (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 5, 139), are identified by captions. These inscriptions, however, are hardly legible.

The most prominent secondary figure is the layman in the lower row immediately to the proper right of the main image. He is dressed in a white coat with a wide collar and long sleeves, and wears a flat disc-like hat, the typical dress for a West Tibetan nobleman in the Tabo paintings (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 4, 140). The caption is heavily damaged at its left side.

<table>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

134 Published in Klimburg-Salter 1987: pl. 2,b; 1994: fig. 12.
135 Tucci’s reading (1935: 73, no.1) of this caption is certainly erroneous. He read: gzi’ mal la dban phyug mgon/ mkhar rum gu sde. There is no space left in the first line to add mgon after dban phyug. An erroneous interpretation of this caption was Tucci’s reason for dating the Tabo paintings to the 13th/14th centuries (cf. 1935: 73-4) by interpreting gzi’ mal la as a variant of the personal name of the Malla king Dzi smaI.
136 I noted g or b for the first letter. However, here also could be an ornament and/or a beginning sad. The second letter might also be a long ‘letter’, but the lower part looks rather like a scratch. Thakur (1997: 974) reads gzi’.
137 Tucci, Pritikzer (1989: fig. 3a), Vitali (1996: 306, n.474), and Thakur (1997: 974) read mal la. However, the remaining traces contradict this reading. Either it has to be read as mal.ba or as ma’la.
138 The second ‘letter’ seems to be long and wide, the third ‘letter’ could also be a tsheg with two sad. Also Tucci’s reading mkhar seems possible. Pritikzer (1989: fig. 3a) and Thakur (1997: 974) read, presumably following Tucci, mkhar.
139 It is not completely clear how this caption has to be understood and the interpretations published so far vary to a great extent. As already mentioned (n.135) Tucci...
Behind the man from Rum there are two more lay figures, with different hats, venerating the central figure.

In the upper row three monks are kneeling. A caption between the monks has been left empty. In the left corner of this row the right half of an inscribed caption is preserved, presumably referring to the monks.

A third caption is written in the upper right corner above a whole group of monks. These are headed by a figure seated immediately to the left of the main donor. He holds a flower in his raised hand and wears a hat with an opening in the front. The caption apparently refers to this more prominent person and the monastic assembly depicted

C. Luczanits

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

behind him (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 6, 141).140

Pl. 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s CL94 69.33, 69.34; f CL94 123.36</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(104) gnas.bri탄.chen.po. ʼdul.ba.byan.chub.//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta po.yi.dge. ʼdun.sde.chen.po/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, above the Renovation Inscription the principal donor of the renovation, the royal bla ma Byān chub 'od is flanked on his proper right by some lay and monastic donors representing the central authority of Guge (gu ge'i sde). On the proper left of the main donor the monastic community of Tabo is represented. Additional donors, at least partly of local origin have been displayed on the opposite side, to the right of the Cella.

DONOR DEPICTION TO THE RIGHT OF THE CELLA

Some of the donors depicted to the right side of the Cella are also identified. This painting was seriously damaged some time after Tucci's visit, and of both, the donors and the labels, hardly anything is left and legible today.143 The first two fragments preserved and recorded here are from the left edge of the donor depiction and were not published by Tucci. The fragment of the third allows certain improvements on Tucci's readings, which can also be verified on the hand of Gherzi's photograph in the Tucci Photographic Archives (Neg.Dep. 6024/03).144 From left to right:

140 Tucci (1935: 73, no.2) misread the personal name as 'dul ba mdzad. Sadly, this inscription has been misinterpreted several times in the last years by reading or interpolating. Byān chub 'od himself into it (cf. Petzker 1989: fig. 3b and VITALI 1996: 306, n.474).
141 "The Great Elder (mahāsthavira)'Dul ba byan chub."
142 "Dul ba byan chub has already occurred twice in other parts of the temple (cf. nos. 8 and 60). Prominently placed in front of the monastic community of Tabo, he seems to have been the abbot of the monastery at the time of the renovation (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1994: 34, n.7). There are traces that the inscription actually continues in this line. Theoretically here should follow the surname of the abbot. The remaining traces could be read brtsegs pa, but then there would be no space for a particle before it. These traces could also be from an older inscription.
143 “The great monastic community of Tabo.”
144 Cf. Tucci 1935: 74, tav. xxv.
145 The photo in the Tucci Photographic Archives taken in 1933 (Neg.Dep. 6024/03) provides additional (and even better information) on the captions not
Two captions on the left edge refer to noble children. These captions were not recorded by Tucci.

(105) ........................... yo
\#dag ...........................
\#\textsuperscript{145}o,\textsuperscript{d}ha\textsuperscript{ug}lo

(106) rkyam, \#d, \#\eta.
bar .............................

In the middle of the panel another fragment of a caption is preserved. This caption was also published by Tucci (cf. n. 144).

(107) rhugs, 'or ...........................
sgron, / do ...........................
\textsuperscript{146}bdas

preserved anymore. It is thus worthwhile suggesting new readings here. The readings preserved only in Tucci's publication without any confirmation by the photographs are underlined; if they appear to be even contradicted by the photograph they are set in round brackets.

The first caption recorded by Tucci is the one in the centre of the picture, between a male and a female donor. Left of this caption, behind the male donor, a caption seems to begin with rum.

The central caption most probably refers to the kneeling male donor to the left of the caption, although Tucci records a female there. However, his reading is not really confirmed by the photograph. The first line of this caption is lost because of a crack, it therefore could be re-edited in the following way:

\textsuperscript{144} => \textsuperscript{5}c\textsuperscript{=}t\textsuperscript{=}u \textsuperscript{\textdegree}b\textsuperscript{=}h\textsuperscript{=}r\textsuperscript{=}u \textsuperscript{\textdegree}f\textsuperscript{=}l\textsuperscript{=}a\textsuperscript{\textdegree}p\textsuperscript{=}a

The second caption in Tucci is largely confirmed, but refers to a female from (the family of) Mag pi tsa, her name largely illegible:

mag pi tsa za bren \#a ? dige / yon / \textsuperscript{145}bdag /

The third caption has only two lines and refers to the second female donor:

rum za (ctun) po \textsuperscript{=}yag

As evident from the photograph the following two captions in Tucci's edition have been mixed up. The first one is identical with no. 107 and refers to the female depicted right below the caption.

rhugs, 'or za / ye kes \textsuperscript{=}sgron / \textsuperscript{d}nas \#d'yon / \textsuperscript{146}bdag //

The last caption refers to the small female below it and is only of one line.

\textsuperscript{145} rum za gi\textsuperscript{=}sa t\textsuperscript{=}i\textsuperscript{=}i

\textsuperscript{146} Earlier I read \textit{bsa}ns.
groups have not been indicated here. It is likely that the captions for the 16 Bodhisattvas and the ones for the 16 Mahābodhisattvas were written by different (groups of) persons. In one panel (no. 112, cf. note 157) two handwritings are evidenced.

Following the captions, the 32 Bodhisattvas are divided into two groups of 16 Bodhisattvas: 16 Bodhisattvas (BS) and 16 Mahābodhisattvas (MBS). The BS are placed in the upper level, the MBS below them. The group of 16 BS is a variant of the groups known so far, while the group of 16 MBS is hitherto unknown. Several of their names do not occur elsewhere. For neither of the groups has the source been identified until now. The captions are divided and arranged according to these two groups, each group of captions is read in the direction of the pradakṣiṇā, from the south corner of the east wall to the north corner.

Iconographically the 32 Bodhisattvas can also be grouped by their respective body colours: blue and white on the south wall, red and green on the north wall. Apparently these colours refer to the respective directions and families of the Bodhisattvas. With the exception that yellow is replaced by white, the colours agree with the jinas of the Vajradhatumandala depicted in the Assembly Hall.

The Sixteen Bodhisattvas

Although the group of 16 Bodhisattvas is known from several mandalas, none of these groups agrees with the group of 16 Bodhisattvas represented at Tabo. The one closest to Tabo is the group described in a commentary to the Sarvadurgatiparisodhanatantra (cf. Table 1). There the root mandala of this tantra is described, the Vajradhātumandala. In addition to the same Bodhisattvas grouped together according to their respective families this description also prescribes the family colour for each group.

The iconography of the individual images also varies. While in some cases the depiction of the respective deity in Tabo conforms to the descriptions published by Mallmann, in other cases they are so

### Table 1: The 16 Bodhisattvas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direction</th>
<th>BS1</th>
<th>BS2</th>
<th>BS3</th>
<th>BS4</th>
<th>BS5</th>
<th>BS6</th>
<th>BS7</th>
<th>BS8</th>
<th>BS9</th>
<th>BS10</th>
<th>BS11</th>
<th>BS12</th>
<th>BS13</th>
<th>BS14</th>
<th>BS15</th>
<th>BS16</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colour</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East blue</td>
<td>blue</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South white</td>
<td>blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>blue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West red</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>North green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

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divergent that it is even possible that the Tabo image has been wrongly identified. However, despite these difficulties it is still possible to suggest the identification of some of the images for which the captions have been lost (e.g. BS8).

**Ambulatory, east wall, south corner**

BS1 blue; stem of something in the right hand; left hand not preserved.
No panels preserved.

**Ambulatory, south wall**

BS2 Gaganagañja (Nam mkha' mdo): blue; something that looks like a small prayerwheel held in front of the body with the right hand\(^{150}\); left in varadamudrā in front of the left knee.

Left panel (i.e. above the left shoulder of the Bodhisattva):\(^{151}\)

(108) de.byant.chub.sems.dpa'.nam.kha.

mdo.\] /

Right panel empty.

BS3 Vajragarbha: dark blue; holding a vajra in the right hand; left with fist or abhayamudrā above the knee.

Left panel: \(^{152}\)

(109) byant.chub.sems.dpa'.

rdo.rje.s\'in.po./ /

Right panel empty.

BS4 blue; holds a cloth(?) with a cellular pattern\(^{153}\) with both hands.

\(^{150}\) The 'prayerwheel' could be the dharmaagñja, 'treasury of the dharma', the common attribute of Gaganagañja (cf. MALLMANN 1986: 164–5).

\(^{151}\) Another empty panel is painted right below this one!

\(^{152}\) It could be made of jewels, or it could be an armour (vajra-armour, but it has no vajra-ends). From the iconography this Bodhisattva can neither be identified with Amitaprabha nor with Jaliniprabha, which are the options remaining according to the comparison to the Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-root mandala (Table 1).

\(^{153}\) Just an example where it appears possible that the captions identify the wrong Bodhisattva: Bhadrapala's usual attribute would be the jewel (MALLMANN 1986: 116; BHATTACHARYYA 1968: 96–7), while the iconography of the depicted Bodhisattva rather would agree with the description of Amitaprabha/Amitabha, who is holding a vessel with amrta (MALLMANN 1986: 96–7; BHATTACHARYYA 1968: 90–1). However, also the iconography of the different Bodhisattvas is not always as consistent in the textual sources as these two examples, thus it has to be presumed that the depiction at Tabo represents just another form of the respective Bodhisattvas.

\(^{154}\) Both larger than at MBS2 (cf. below).

\(^{155}\) Additional 'gren bu or gi go on the sa!'

\(^{156}\) Cf. MALLMANN 1986: 133.

\(^{157}\) In addition byant ch is written in smaller and more cursive handwriting at the top left corner of the panel!

---

**Minor Inscriptions and Captions**

Panels on both sides lost.

BS5 Bhadrapala (bZaṅ skyon): white; decorated vessel with spout in the right hand; left in varadamudrā in front of the knee.\(^{153}\)

Left panel:

(110) [byant chub] sems.dpa'.bzaṅs.skyon./

Right panel empty.

BS6 Candraprabhakumārabhūta: white; right hand with crescent on a lotus\(^{154}\); left fist on thigh.

Left panel: \(^{155}\)

(111) byant.chub.sems.\] dpa'.zla. od.gzo.nur.gyur.d. pa./

Right panel empty.

BS7 Samantabhadra: white; right arm held at his side with a long white twig with jewelled ends, a ratnamaiñari, 'bouquet of jewels',\(^{155}\) in the right hand; left hand in varadamudrā in front of the knee (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 169).

Left panel: \(^{157}\)

(112) byant.chub.sems.dpa'/ kun.tu.

bzaṅ.p\] // / /
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Minor Inscriptions and Captions

BS12 Akṣayamati (Blo gros mi bzad pa): red; holds a book; left fist on thigh.

Left panel:

(116) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.bio.gros.

myi.zad.pa

Right panel empty.

BS13 Maitreya: green; holding a flask in the right hand in front of the knee; left fist on thigh.

Left panel:

(117) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.byams.pa.//

Right panel empty.

BS14 Gandhahastin: (dark) green; conch of perfume (gandha-sankha)\(^{161}\) in the right hand; left fist on thigh.

Left panel:

Pl. 18,c

(118) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.spos.kyi

gian.po.//

Right panel empty.

BS15 Sarvāpāyajaha (Nan soñ kun 'dren): dark green; holds a kind of stick (probably with a round point) in the right hand; left fist on thigh.

Left panel:\(^{162}\)

(119) byan.chub.sems[s dpa'] ??

soñ.kun.'dre ??

Right panel empty.

---

158 This is the only Bodhisattva of the South for which the name has been lost. As his iconography conforms well to Sūramgama (Surangama), the fourth Bodhisattva in the comparable group from the Durgatiparipūdana, this identification is tentatively suggested.

159 After this three syllables the panel is empty!

160 Sarvākata-katamonīrghatānamatī usually holds a stick or club (danḍa) (Mallmann 1986: 342–3).

161 Mallmann 1986: 170, n.5.

162 Right side of the panel lost.
Ambulatory, east wall, north corner
BS16: green; probably an object or ornament with a viśvavajra as attribute in the right hand; left fist on thigh.
Remains of left panel empty; no right panel.

The Sixteen Mahābodhisattvas
The 16 Mahābodhisattvas represented in Tabo are not known from elsewhere and their names are partly unusual, too (cf. Table 2).

Ambulatory, east wall, south corner
MBS1: blue; viṭarkamudrā, left fist on the thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 180).
No panels preserved.

Ambulatory, south wall
MBS2: blue; holds a tiny lotus with a tiny crescent on it in the right hand; left fist on the thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 163, 164).163
Left panel: s JP1984 379
(120) byan.chub.sems.dpa’.sems.dpa’.chen.
po.kun.tu.snān.ba /// ///
Right panel empty.

MBS3: blue; something like a flaming jewel (tripartite yellow centre with red fringes around) in the right hand; left hand rests with palm on thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 165).164
Left panel: s JP1984 381
(121) byan.chub.sems.dpa’.sems.dpa’[paj’.
chen.po.dri.ma.myed.pa ///
Right panel empty.

MBS4: rgya mtsho’i blo gros

MBS4: rgya mtsho’i blo gros

163 Possibly *Samantāvabhāsa, MVy 6305.
164 Possibly *Vimala.
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MBS4 Sāgaramati: blue; right hand in front of breast, small attribute not preserved; left fist on thigh.

Left panel: PI. 19,b

(122) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.

s JP1984 383

Left arm in front of the knee with a small pearled twig or bud in the pendent hand; left palm on thigh, two middle fingers outstretched.

MBS5: white; right arm raised at side, (large?) attribute not preserved; left palm on thigh, fingers towards the knee.

Left panel:

(123) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.

s JP1984 385

Right panel empty.

MBS6: white; vitarkamudrā; left fist on thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 166).167

Left panel:

(124) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.

s JP1984 387

Right panel empty.

MBS7: white; right arm in front of the knee with a small pearled twig or bud in the pendent hand; left palm on thigh, two middle fingers outstretched.168

Left panel:

(125) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.

s JP1984 389

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

MBS8: white; holds an object with a round bottom and a flat top with balls/pearls along the edge in the right hand; left fist on thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 170, 171).169

Left panel:

(126) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.chen.

s JP1984 391

po.tshon.dpon.//

Right panel empty.

Ambulatory, north wall

MBS9: not preserved.

MBS10: red; right hand in front of breast; left hand on thigh.

Left panel:

*// ye.dha.rma .......

s JP1984 393170

Right panel:

(127) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.ses.

s JP1984 396172

Right panel empty.

MBS11: red; dhyānamudrā.

Left panel:

*/ ye.dha.rma .......

s JP1984 364

(128) byan.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.glan.po.sugs.ldan.//

s JP1984 365

166 Actually an 'a chu corrected to a pa.
167 Possibly *Amitabuddhi.
168 *Asaṅga?
169 *Śrāṣṭhī?
170 Before restoration.
171 Right half of the panel not preserved.
172 Before restoration.
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Minor Inscriptions and Captions

Right panel:  
(131)  
byan.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.[po]  
dpa'.chen.[po]  
dpam.o.byin.173

MBS15 Jñānaprabha: green; right hand holding a coniferous twig in front of knee; left fist above the thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 178, 179).

Left panel:  
(132)  
byan.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.ye.ses. 'od.gzer./

Ambulatory, east wall, north corner

MBS16: dark green; meditation.  
No panels preserved.

THE EIGHT BUDDHAS

On the west wall of the Ambulatory a group of eight Buddhas is depicted on two levels. The group consists of the Seven Buddhas of the Past, including Śākyamuni,175 and the Buddha of the Future, Maitreya. Again the arrangement has to be read along the horizontal levels in the direction of pradaksīna. The first Buddha of each row in the south-west corner is lost because of repainting. Each of the Buddhas is seated under a different tree. In the inscriptions the Buddhas are referred to with the epithets tathāgata (de bzin gsegs pa), arhat (dgra bcom pa) and sāmyaksambuddha (yan dag par rdzogs pa'i sans rgyas).

173 Possibly *Śūradatta.
174 Possibly *Mahābala.
The Buddhas are flanked by their respective most eminent disciples. While in the lower register the Buddhas are identified on the dividing line above their heads, the disciples have proper captions. To the proper right of the Buddha the disciple (śīya, slob ma) foremost among the sages (prajñāvatām agryah, śes rab can gyi mchog) is usually placed, and to his left the disciple foremost among the ones possessing magical powers (rddhismatāṃ agryah, rdzu 'phul gyi mchog).

The representation of the eight Buddhas does not conform with the depictions of the same Buddhas found in later periods.176

B1 [Vipaśyin, rNam par gzigs] is lost.

B2 [Śikhin, gTshug tor can]: yellow samghāti with folds, both hands in front of the breast with the palms towards each other, the middle fingers are bent and the outer ones straight.

The disciple Saṃbhava to the proper left of the Buddha:

(133) slob.ma.rdzu.'phrul.gyi.mchog.'phags.pa. 'byun.ba. // //

B3 [Viśvabhū/Viśvabhuj, Thams cad skyob/Kun skyobs]: patchworked yellow samghāti, dhyānāmudrā.

The disciple Śrṇṇa (Gro bzin skyes) to the proper right of the Buddha:

(134) slob.ma.ses.can.gyi.mchog.'phags.pa. gro.zin.skyes.// //

The disciple Uttara to the proper left of the Buddha:

(135) slob.ma.rdzu.'phrul.gyi.mchog.'phags. pa.bla.ma.// //

B4 [Krakucchanda, 'Khor ba 'jig]: blue and red samghāti with folds, bhūnāsparśāmudrā (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 186).

The disciple to the proper right of the Buddha:178

(136) slob.ma.ses.rab.can.gyi.mchog.'phags. pa.yan.dag. 'byun.ba. // //

The second disciple in the corner to the proper left of the Buddha is depicted standing, his right arm pendent, the thumb and index joined as in vitarkāmudrā. There is no caption.

B5 [Kanakamuni, gSer thub] is lost.

B6 [Kāśyapa, 'Od srun]: blue samghāti with folds, both hands as in dhyānāmudrā on the lap, but a gap is left between their palms, which are directed towards each other. Most probably this is the mudrā of the Buddha’s alms bowl (buddhapāṭramudrā).179

On the dividing line above this Buddha is written:

(137) de.bzin.gṣags.pa.dgra.bcom.ba.yan.dag.par.‘gyus ... ...

176 It seems that later Tibetan depictions of this group of Buddhas are not so consistent as it appears in some publications (cf. e.g. Waddell 1895: 346; BT 114–119, 746–752; Gordon 1978: 53–4; Schumann 1986: 81–87).

The names of the seven Buddhas are consistent throughout Buddhist literature, regardless of the schools (Höbögirin III, 195–7). Thus the Buddha names, and most of the names of their disciples at Tabo do conform even with such remote texts as the Mahāvādānasūtra (ed. Walschmidt 1955).
The disciple to the proper left of the Buddha (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 189):180

(138) slob.ma.rdzu. 'phrul.can.gyi. mchog. 'phags.pa.rkan. gnis. spyod. // //

B7 Śākyamuni: red samghāti, dharmacakrapravartanamudrā.

On the dividing line above the Buddha is written:
(139) de.biin.gsegs.pa.dgra. mcom.ba.yan.dag.par.rdzogs.pa'i. sans.rgyas.\  \ \ sans. rgyas.\  \ \ sans.rgyas.\  \ \
His disciple Maudgalyāyana to the proper right of the Buddha:181
(140) slob.ma.rdzu. 'phul.gyi.mchog. 'phags. pa.mye. 'u. 'gal.gyi.bu. // //
His disciple Śāriputra to the proper left of the Buddha:
(141) slob.ma.šes.rbam.gyi. mchog. 'phags.pa.ša.ri'i bu. // //

B8 Jina Maitreya: green samghāti with folds, performing a variant of the dharmacakramudrā and holding a mālā (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 181, 182).

On the dividing line above the Buddha it is written:
(142) de.biin.gsegs.pa.dgra. bcom.ba.yan.dag.par.rdzogs.pa'i. sans.rgyas.rgyal.pa.byams.pa'//
The standing monk to his proper left holds a flask in the pendent hand.

180 The Mahāvadānasūtra names Tiṣya or Bharadvāja as the most eminent disciples of Krakucchanda, both names do not conform with the name preserved at Tabo.

181 The position of Śākyamuni’s disciples is reversed, i.e. the disciple foremost among the ones possessing magical powers is placed to the proper right of the Buddha.
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less reliable than almost all of the previous ones. The tsheg have not been recorded for the Buddhas' names.

The presentation of the captions has been arranged in the order they appear in the Bhadrakalpikasūtra, and at least for every fifth Buddha the number of the Buddha is given. It appears that the captions also have been filled in this order.

Ambulatory, east wall, south side

The row of the Buddhas of the bhadrakalpa on the upper edge of the wall begins with a narrative scene. A kneeling red BS, with his hands raised in anjalimudrā, is depicted in 2/3 profile. He is turned towards a Buddha on a lion throne, of which only the edge of the mandorla and a lion of the throne are preserved. Directly behind the Bodhisattva a group of monks is depicted. To the right above the BS there is a panel containing two captions separated by a red line (left panel). To the right of this panel, between the halos of the Bodhisattva and the Buddha, is a second panel (right panel; Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 161).

Left panel:

(143) \[ \text{phags.pa. byan.chub.sems.dpa'}.mchog.} \]
\[ \text{rab.'byord. tu.dga'}'.ba'i.rgyal.pos./bcom.} \]
\[ // \] //185 \[ \text{ldan.'das.la.zu.ba.} \] //186

Right panel:

(144) \[ // /bcom.ldan.'das.sag.kya.thub.} \]
\[ /p}'.mni.an.yod.na.blugs.te./dge.} \]
\[ slo.n.'bum.dan.'byan.chub.sems.dpa.'} \]
\[ bye.ba.phrag.brgyad.bcu.dan.thabs.gcig.//187 \]

183 The number refers to the list of the Buddhas published as an appendix to the English translation of the Bhadrakalpikasūtra: The Fortunate Aeon, Vol. IV. The names have been compared with this list and the list published in WELLER 1928.

184 The whole scene is documented in s CL91 45,11.

185 "The noble Subhūti."

186 "The Bodhisattva Pramuditarāja asks the Bhagavat."

187 "The Bhagavat Śākyamuni is residing in [the city of] Śrāvasti; together with one hundred thousand monks and eight hundred million Bodhisattvas."

188 "The noble (Mahā-) Kāśyapa."

189 It is quite likely that here the Ten Great Disciples, a group which mainly became popular in Central Asia and China (cf. LAMOTTE 1968: 692), were intended. This group also appears in Mahāyāna literature (e.g. the Śrāngamasamādhisūtra, transl. LAMOTTE 1975: 258–59). Cf. also the bhadrakalpikā pantheon in BIT 1022–31, also including ten eminent disciples, but Subhūti (Rab 'byor) is not among them.

190 Read in 1991.
Buddha: red, meditation, sitting under a tree

(B6) de bzin gsegs pa \ seng ge /
blue, bodhyang imudra

(B7) de bzin gsegs pa rab \ gsal //
red, meditation

(B8) de bzin gsegs pa thub pa //
white, both hands, the fingers as in tarjan imudra, before breast; written very small

(B9) yellow, meditation

(B10) de bzin gsegs pa mye riog giis pa //
green, bhuminispar samudra or varadamudra

(B11) de bzin gsegs pa spyan \ legs // //
red, meditation

(B12) Caption illegible.
green, mudra beside the body

(B13) de bzin gsegs pa lag cen //
yellow, meditation

(B14) de bzin gsegs pa ... \ ... can //
white, like vitarkamudra but palm turned upwards

191 That no. 6 is already mentioned here can be easily explained. The Tathagata Sthapta Sinha is actually the second Buddha after Sakyamuni (only Maitreya between them), while the Bhadrapalipakasitra actually commences with the last three predecessors of Sakyamuni (Krakuchanda, Kanakamuni and Kasaya). As the introductory scene already depicts Sakyamuni, the three predecessors have been left out. The previous image, the red Buddha exceptionally depicted under a tree, is Maitreya.

192 This should presumably be mye rtog for Me tog.

193 This should be rGyu skar rgyal po.

194 This should be rNam par snah mdzad.

195 From here until Ha'i dpal (no. B37) the names were also read in 1994 (south-west corner).
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Ambulatory, west wall

First Buddha painted in the corner

(B25) de bzin gšeqs pa դ་ནան ... pa  
Of the following eight Buddhas only some fragments of the names, which have not been recorded, are preserved!

orange, dhyānamudrā

(B34) de bzin gšeqs pa des pa 

green, vātakaṃudrā turned upward

(B35) de bzin gšeqs pa mdzod 

red, dhyānamudrā

(B36) de bzin gšeqs pa brtan ldan 

blue, hands in the lap

(B37) de bzin gšeqs ... lha'i 

yellow, dhyānamudrā

(B38) de bzin gšeqs pa gdul dka' 

white, hands at side

(B39) de bzin gšeqs pa yon 

red, dhyānamudrā

(B40) de bzin gšeqs pa sgrags can 

green, vāradamudrā

---

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

(B41) de bzin gšeqs pa tshogs can //
red, dhyānamudrā

(B42) de bzin gšeqs pa tshants pa'i 

blue, abhayamudrā at side

(B43) [de bzin gšeqs pa] ... rtan //
yellow, dhyānamudrā

(B44) de bzin gšeqs pa myi 'gyi //
white, bhūmisparśamudrā

(B45) de bzin gšeqs pa 'od mdzad //
red-green, dhyānamudrā

(B46) de bzin gšeqs pa ...

green, dharmacakramudrā

(B47) de bzin gšeqs pa rdo rje //
red, dhyānamudrā

Ambulatory, north wall

Three Buddhas and their captions lost.

red, dhyānamudrā

(B52) de bzin gšeqs pa stobs sde //

green, vāradamudrā

(B53) Caption lost.
red, dhyānamudrā

---

199 Read in 1991.
200 Mya han med pa.
201 For Yon tan rgyal mtshan.
202 For sūtra gcant.
203 For Tshig(s) brtan or Tshogs brtan.
204 Presumably misread for Mi 'gyi pa.
205 Read in 1991.
The captions of three more Buddhas are lost. The last Buddha is painted around the corner.

_Bibliography_ (B69) Caption illegible.

**Ambulatory, east wall, north side**
white, hands in front of breast

(B69) Caption illegible.

_red-green 210

(B70) _de bzin gsegs pa gyes pa // gsegs pa //

The following Buddhas depicted on this wall are painted in a different style with hard outlines and have not been named. They are apparently later than the Buddhas painted on the other walls of the Ambulatory.

_Ambulatory, inner walls (outer walls of the Cella)_

The names of the Thousand Buddhas continue in the western corridor of the Ambulatory on the inner wall. In the top two rows the names are continued on the north wall. On the south and east walls there are no names. On the inner walls of the Ambulatory the Buddhas have their captions on the dividing line directly above the respective images. Each caption is thus of one line only. All the Buddhas on the inside walls of the Ambulatory are depicted in _dhyanamudrā_.

_in the top row the Buddhas are also separated by vertical lines, a feature which was given up in the lower rows. Apparently it copies the way the Buddhas were represented in the founding period as evidenced by some fragments preserved on the same walls underneath the present layer.

orange, name not preserved.

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206 Weller has dgyes! In another script la phyag 'trak is added!
207 From scarce fragments I noted šen brt. However, it should be _bstan par_.
208 For Don yod mthon ba.
210 Below this image there is an inscription in _dbu med_, probably belonging to the green BS below: ... ? / gyon dbur 'dzog pa / – "heap together on the left side" ??
211 Read in 1991.
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(B82) green: de bzin gsogs pa drag 'ugs can

(B83) red: de bzin gsogs pa sen ge spags

(B84) blue: de bzin gsogs pa 'o n pa

(B85) yellow: de bzin gsogs pa rnam par rgyal ba

(B86) white: de bzin gsogs pa 'ses rab rtsegs

(B87) yellow-orange: de bzin gsogs pa ... ? ras

(B88) green: de bzin gsogs pa blo bros

(B89) red: de bzin gsogs pa yan lag skyes

(B90) blue: de bzin gsogs pa blo mtha' yas

(B91) orange: de bzin gsogs pa gzugs bran

(B92) white: de bzin gsogs pa mkhyen Idan

(B93) orange: de bzin gsogs pa 'od gze

(B94) green: de bzin gsogs pa rtul 'ugs bstan

red: de bzin gsogs pa bkra shis

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

(B96) blue: de bzin gsogs pa[b] / bden pa tog /

(B97) (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 155) de bzin de gsogs pa pad ma /

(B98) white: de bzin gsogs pa sred myed kyi bu /

(B99) lost.

(B100) green: ta thä ga ta 'byun 222 gye 'ses 'byun gnas /

(B101) lost.

North wall, first row

(B102) blue: de bzin gsogs pa ? s tshans pa'i byin /

(B103) yellow: de bzin gsogs pa rin cen 'byun gnas /

(B104-107) illegible.

(B108) blue: de bzin gsogs pa ? rtsegs pa

(B109) yellow: de bzin gsogs pa rdo ... 225

(B110) white: de bzin gsogs pa phan bar bzed pa /

(B111) yellow: de bzin gsogs pa rnam par rol ba /

(B112) blue: de bzin gsogs pa mun pan bral ba

(B113) red: de bzin gsogs pa sgra gcan lha

212 From now on WELLER's numbering is one behind, however, most of the Tibetan versions he used agree with the numbering used here!

213 For Drag sul can.

214 For stabs or stobs.

215 For lion pa.

216 Shes rab brtsegs.

217 For Legs gnas.

218 Probably misread for grol.

219 For 'Od zer.

220 brTul 'ugs bstan.

221 Written in red!

222 For rDo rje rgyal mtshan.

223 For mun pa dan bral ba.
Three more illegible!

West wall, second row228
Now the Buddhas are not separated anymore by a vertical line.
(B134) white: \textit{de bzin gsags pa rdzogs pa} /
(B135) red: name lost.
(B136) green: name lost.
(B137) red: \textit{de bzin gsags pa bsgron} ma chen po /
(B138) blue: \textit{[de bzin gsags pa]} ... rten 'od /
(B139) orange-yellow: \textit{de bzin gsags pa spos dri 'tim pa} /
(B140) white: \textit{de bzin gsags pa yon tan mchos mdzin} /
(B141) red-green: \textit{de bzin gsags pa tshun = par prul pa} /
(B142) green: \textit{de bzin gsags pa sen ge'i 'gram pa} /
(B143) orange: \textit{de bzin gsags pa rin cen grags pa} /
(B144) blue: \textit{de bzin gsags pa skyon rab zhi ba} /

227 For Ri bo'irgyal mtshan.
228 Read in 1991. The gap here, and from the second to the third row, is larger
than could be accounted for on the basis of the missing images alone. Therefore, one
has to presume that the names continue in a place which has escaped my attention.
229 Probably misread for bsgron.
230 For 'Jig rten 'od.
231 For Mun daIi bral pa.
232 In Weller's list, which follows the Manchurian, Mongolian and Sanskrit
versions, the following twelve names have the numbers 179 to 190. Thus, the
succession of Buddhas in these versions is considerably different from the Tibetan
version, which is represented at Tabo.
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(B164) white:  de bzin gsogs pa klu dga’ /
(B165) red-green:  de bzin gsogs pa spas²³⁸ kyi dban sphyug /
(B166) green:  de bzin gsogs pa šin tu grags pa /
(B167) red:  de bzin gsogs pa stobs kyi lha /

The following captions are illegible!

West wall third row²³⁹

Of the first five Buddhas the names are lost.
(B187) white:  de bzin gsogs pa don ... s f²⁴⁰
(B188) red-green:  de bzin gsogs pa grags pa mtha’ yas /
(B189) green:  de bzin gsogs pa rin cen lha /
(B190) red:  de bzin gsogs pa don gnas mkyend pa /
(B191) blue:  de bzin gsogs pa blo rdzogs pa
(B192) orange-yellow:  de bzin gsogs pa mya nan myed pa /
(B193) white:  de bzin gsogs pa dri ma dañ bral ba /
(B194) red-green:  de bzin gsogs pa tshañs lha /
(B195) green:  de bzin gsogs pa sa’i dban sphyug /
(B196) red:  de bzin gsogs pa me tog spyan /
(B197) blue:  de bzin gsogs pa rnam pa ’byes pa’i sku /
(B198) red-yellow:  de bzin gsogs pa chos kyi ’od la /

²³⁸ For spas.
²⁴⁰ For Don mdzad gzigs pa.

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(B199) white:  de bzin gsogs pa kun gzigs /
(B200) orange:  de bzin gsogs pa yon tan ’od gs’al /
(B201) green:  de bzin gsogs pa zla ba’i žal /

In the fourth row on the west wall only de bzin gsogs pa is written above the Buddhas. This has not been continued in the fourth row of the north wall.
C. Luczanits

APPENDIX

RELATED CAPTIONS FROM THOLING PRESERVED IN THE TUCCI PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES

Three donor compositions which are very similar to the fragments depicting donors in the Tabo Assembly Hall were photographed by E. Ghersi in Tholing in a temple dedicated to the sixteen Arhats. Two of them were published by G. Tucci and E. Ghersi (1934: figs. 237, 238), the third is preserved in the Tucci Photographic Archives. In each of these compositions a central triad is sitting in front of a large curtain, surrounded by attendants.

Two of the three donor compositions contain captions identifying the main donors. However, Tucci did not publish the full text of the captions but only identified the figures depicted. As the original paintings are not preserved anymore at Tholing, I attempted to decipher the captions from the photographs preserved in the Tucci Photographic Archives, ISIAO, Rome. The two triads with captions are painted side by side and the relatively large captions are placed at the upper edge of the respective composition.

In the triad of the first (right) photograph the central figures are dressed in secular dress consisting of a coat and a turban (?) with ribbons at the sides. All three figures are depicted frontally and they sit on a flat seat with their legs crossed at the ankles. Above each of them is placed an umbrella.

The original negative of the picture is not preserved in the Archives. The photograph was published in Tucci & Ghersi 1934: fig. 238 and republished in Klimburg-Salter 1985: fig. 15. As far as is legible from the photographs read (from left to right):


242 Tucci & Ghersi 1934: 322. In the case of the monks depicted in his fig. 237, which are not identified by captions, it is only a guess that there Ye sles 'od, Byan chub 'od and Zi ba 'od are represented.

The original negative of the picture is preserved in the ISIAO, Rome. The two triads with captions are placed side by side and the relatively large captions are placed at the upper edge of the respective composition.

In the triad of the first (right) photograph the central figures are dressed in secular dress consisting of a coat and a turban (?) with ribbons at the sides. All three figures are depicted frontally and they sit on a flat seat with their legs crossed at the ankles. Above each of them is placed an umbrella.

The original negative of the picture is not preserved in the Archives. The photograph was published in Tucci & Ghersi 1934: fig. 238 and republished in Klimburg-Salter 1985: fig. 15. As far as is legible from the photographs read (from left to right):


242 Tucci & Ghersi 1934: 322. In the case of the monks depicted in his fig. 237, which are not identified by captions, it is only a guess that there Ye sles 'od, Byan chub 'od and Zi ba 'od are represented.

The captions identify the ‘Three Religious Kings’ of the Tibetan monarchy and also mention the deities these kings are believed to have incarnated, the rigs gsun mgon po. Sroth btsan bsam po is differentiated from the others by the epithet “great king who protects the [Buddhist] teaching”.

The second photograph, Pl. 20, depicts a panel which is directly adjacent to the previous one. The photograph preserves the left half of the last caption on the previous photograph (no. A3), and has been used to improve the reading of that caption.

The triad represented on this photograph is only partly preserved, the last figure and its caption are hidden behind the shoulder of a sculpture and are damaged by water. The figures are now dressed in plain monk’s dress, sit in vajrasana, and perform dharmacakramudrā. The side images are facing towards the central one. Again an umbrella is placed above their heads.

As here the original negative is preserved in the Tucci Photographic Archives the inscriptions are much more legible, but the left part of the second caption has been damaged by water (from left to right).

243 Ral pa can was considered an incarnation of Vajrapāni (cf. e.g. Bu ston’s Chos ‘byin 144b6).

244 “The respected emanation of [Vajrapāni], the great king (?) Ral pa can.”

245 Possibly thugs rje chen po (mahākārulkha), thugs rje dbang phyug or thugs rje mna’ bdag (as occurring in Tabo as epithet for Avalokiteśvara with the rigs gsun mgon po, cf. caption no. 66) as an epithet for Avalokiteśvara, of whom Sroth btsan bsam po was considered an incarnation (e.g. Bu ston’s Chos ‘byin 139a2-4).

246 The respected great king who protects the [Buddhist] teaching, the emanation of the [Merciful One], Sroth btsan bsam po.”
C. Luczanits

(A4)  "lf. lha.btsun.pa./ de.ba.pra.ba'i./\n    za.ska.nas. / 246\n
(A5)  "lf. byan.chub.sems.dpa'.chen.po./ / cho= sk'y-[=-]?\n    lha.bla.ma.ye. s'es. 'od.kyi.ze.ska.nas. / 247

Devaprabhā is the ordination name of Devarāja,248 the son of Ye śes 'od, and one can presume that, as in Tabo, the second son Nāgarāja was depicted on the other side. In Tholing Devarāja is placed to the proper right of the king Ye śes 'od, while in the Tabo Entry Hall he is on his proper left. There, however, the composition is completely different as the secular and the monastic figures are separated and Nāgarāja is shown as a secular figure. Ye śes 'od is called a Bodhisattva and — like Sroṅ brtsan bsجام po — a protector of the Buddhist teaching.

The sculpture on the right edge of the photograph can be identified as the Arhat Abheda/Mi phyed pa, who is holding a mchod rten in his hands.249

Of the old palaeographic and orthographic features only the occurrence of one da drag in sprul'd can be noted. There is no reversed gi gu. Thus there are certainly fewer 'old' features present in these captions than evidenced in the first two phases at Tabo. Although this fact must not be overestimated, it rather points towards a later date for these captions. However, more decisive for dating the paintings and the accompanying captions is a stylistic analysis of the images.

Although the composition with the central images screened off by a curtain and the surrounding people in local West Tibetan dress are typologically similar to the depiction of the Tabo Donor Assembly and other donor depictions found throughout the Kingdom of Purang-Guge,250 there are some remarkable stylistical differences. It is particularly obvious that here the royal bla ma Ye śes 'od and his son are not dressed anymore in the particular West Tibetan dress as evidenced in Tabo by the image of Byan chub 'od (cf. Kliment-

246 "The respected royal monk Devaprabhā."
247 "The respected Mahābodhisattva, protect[or] of the [Buddhist] teaching ... the royal bla ma Ye śes ‘od."
248 mNa‘ ris rgyal rabs 59; cf. n.20.
249 Cf. DAGYAB 1977: 110.
250 Cf. n.241.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

Salter 1997: figs. 5, 139), but they wear plain monks' dress. Seated in vajrāsana, performing dharmacakraṇudrā, and with the upper part of the garment virtually framing the body of the figures, these depictions are rather reminiscent of the depictions of eminent teachers on Central Tibetan than ka attributed to the 13th and 14th centuries251 or to the so called Rin chen bsجام po depictions in Alchi.252 This association is also confirmed by the style of the Buddhas depicted above the donor compositions (only the lower half of the figures is visible). The simple outlines and the (white) edges of the dress and the horseshoe shaped nimbus are also comparable to some paintings from the temple of Ye śes 'od in Tholing preserved only in the Tucci Photographic Archives.253 On the basis of this general analysis I would propose that these paintings and the accompanying captions are definitely not as early as the 11th century.254

The captions are similar to the fragmentary captions in the Tabo Assembly Hall. Besides similar titles in both cases the archaic phrase žal sia nas255 has been used. The phrase originally (in the Tibetan

251 Most important among them, as attributable to a certain monastery, are the representations of the stTag lung teachers and others (e.g. the hierarch and secondary images on the than ka Stongpa 1994: figs. 24-27).
252 GOEPPEL 1993: 138: fig. 14 following SNELLGROVE & SKORUPSKI 1977: 78-79, pl. xiii and fig. 67. The identification of this figure with Rin chen bsجام po has not yet been confirmed by an exhaustive analysis of these representations at Alchi and is based solely on the local tradition.
253 E.g. Neg.Dep. 6074/44, 6074/1, 6097/12, 6097/13. These paintings are not from the founding of the temple at the end of the tenth century, but from a major renovation some time later. At that time also the clay sculptures were added. Stylistically these paintings are linked rather to paintings preserved in or attributed to Central Tibet (13th to 14th) than to the West Tibetan school of painting as evidenced in Tabo, Alchi and also in the Red Temple of Tholing.
254 The exact period and circumstances of the occurrence of this painting style in West Tibet still needs to be analysed in detail. One line of influence comes directly from Central Tibet and is evidenced in the Alchi gSum brtsangs, where a Bīr guṇ pa lineage is depicted (GOEPPEL 1990). It is to be assumed that the foundation of permanent establishments around 1200 by the 'Brug pa and in particular the 'Bri guṇ pa schools in the region around the Klāla mountain (cf. PETECH 1988: 356-9) played a decisive role in the transmission of this style. It is thus quite likely that these paintings of Tholing were done sometimes in the 13th century.
255 The phrase žal sia nas occurs in different variations in colophons and letters, and its meaning has been discussed several times, e.g. DE JONG 1972: 510-1, TAKUCHI 1990: n.14 (the variants occurring in his letters are ža sna nas, ža sna nas and ža bsan nas) MALANOVA 1990 (According to MALANOVA (1990) in the Mongolian

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documents of Central Asia) meant or implied that the person referred to is physically present or that he is at least still living, and it apparently was used in that way in Tabo as well. This can at least be assumed, as the persons represented are wearing the common local dress.

The Tholing captions evidence a definite shift of meaning of the phrase, as it is evidently used for historical personages who were not alive when the captions were written. The phrase is therefore to be understood in the simple sense of honouring the person mentioned.

Cf. the examples of DE JONG (1972: 511) and SCHERRER-SCHAUB (forthcoming) or the examples in TAKEUCHI (1990).
C. Luczanits

Captions of the Entry Hall south wall
Captions of the Entry Hall south wall

a) rHugs 'or dge' sloi dByig gi bshod nams (C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 25)

b) sNel 'or dge' sloi 'Del ba byai chub (C. Luczanits 1991, 17, 6)

c) Mag pi is a dBa phyug rten (C. Luczanits 1991, 17, 13)

The caption identifying the protectress Wi ́i nu myin (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 26)
The quotation from the *Pratimokṣastra* above the Wheel of Life (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 18, 3)

b) lCig la'i sde dge slo To btsod namgs grag and [Gu] ge'i sde smon po btsun (...) rin cen Man 'or (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 34, 27)

Historical captions in the Assembly Hall
a) The Buddha of the North, Jayendra; with traces of a previous inscription underneath (J. Poncar 1984, 559)

b) The Buddha of the Zenith, Nandasri (J. Poncar 1984, 548)

Captions of the Buddhas of the Ten Directions
a) Candraprabha, BS6 (J. Poncar 1984, 386)
b) Samantabhadra, BS7 (J. Poncar 1984, 388)
c) Gandhahastin, BS14 (J. Poncar 1984, 372)

Three captions of the 16 Bodhisattvas

a) *Samantavabhāsa, MBS2 (J. Poncar 1984, 379)
b) Sāgaramati, MBS4 (J. Poncar 1984, 383)
c) The ye dharma-verse, left panel of MBS12 (J. Poncar 1984, 370)

Three captions of the 16 Mahābodhisattvas
Inscriptions dating to periods later than the 11th century were found in three different parts of the Tabo monastery: 1) in the 'Du khan of the gTsug lag khan, 2) in the dKyil khan, and 3) in the Byams pa lha khan.

These inscriptions are of two different kinds: those of the gTsug lag khan found on the north wall and the east wall to the right of the entrance to the 'Du khan are on paper, while those in the dKyil khan and Byams pa lha khan are written directly on the wall.

Besides the type of material on which they are written, the two types of inscription also differ in content. The former, three sheets in all, recall the restorations made to the temple, mentioning the donors (sbyin bdag) and the offerings made in favour of the work.

The inscriptions of the dKyil khan and the Byams pa lha khan are illustrative in the sense that, placed as they are below or beside the fresco to which they refer, they illustrate its content as though they were captions. The present article deals only with the three inscriptions on paper found in the Tabo Main Temple.

Concerning the locations of the three paper inscriptions of the 'Du khan (Pls. 21–26) they may be said to be respectively:

Proceeding in the direction of pradaksīna, the first paper inscription (Paper Inscription 1), the longest, lies on the north wall of the 'Du khan between the sculptures of Amitābha and Vajraheu' (cf. Fig. 19

1 Concerning the identification of the sculptures cf. LUCZANITS 1997.
INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE TABO MAIN TEMPLE

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Edited by

Luciano Petech and Christian Luczanits

ROMA
ISTITUTO ITALIANO PER L'AFRICA E L'ORIENTE
1999
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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.

As a result of Klimburg-Salter’s research in Rome and her teaching in Vienna the President of then ISMEO Gherardo Gnoli, and the head of the Institute of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, Ernst Steinkellner in 1990 formalised the co-operation regarding research in the western Himalaya and the scientific publication of its results. The success of this co-operation owes much to the continuous efforts of Luciano Petech and Maurizio Taddei; our sincere thanks also go to the Director of the Museo Nationale d’Arte Orientale, Donatella Mazzeo, who has always supported the co-operation by providing working space, photographs and help. Without the encouragement and the personal initiatives of all of the above mentioned, this publication would not have come about.

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.

Throughout the years continuos support was also given by the Archaeological Survey of India, in particular by the Directors General M.C. Joshi, I.A.S. Achala Moulik, and Ajay Shankar, by permitting the
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The research work on the part of the Institute of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies as well as the work done in Vienna during the preparation of this publication has only been possible because of the continuous support of the Austrian Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung.

Last, but not least, the editors would also like to thank Maurizio Taddei and Benjamino Melascechi for their guidance during the preparation of the publication.

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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