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MINOR INSCRIPTIONS AND CAPTIONS IN THE TABO GTSUG LAG KHAN*

by Christian Luczanits

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*¹ and the *Kṣitigarbhasūtra*², and the famous Renovation Inscription,³ a large number of minor inscriptions and captions can be found throughout the Tabo Main Temple (*gtsug lag khan*). Besides a few names of historical significance⁴ the majority of

* I am grateful to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, Helga Uebach, Luciano Petech, and Jampa L. Panglung Rinpoche 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 Mazzeo, 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).

³ First published and translated by TUCCI 1935: 195–204. Newly edited and translated by STEINKELLNER & LUCZANITS in this volume.

⁴ The royal *bla ma* Ye śes 'od and his two sons Nāgarāja and Devarāja, Byaṅ chub 'od and the presumed abbot of Tabo 'Dul ba byaṅ chub are mentioned and partly discussed in several publications (e.g. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1987: 687–690; 1994: 27–33; 1997: Chapter II; PRITZKER 1989: 39–41; 1992: 81–82; VITALI 1996: e.g. 266–7, 306–9; PETECH 1997: 232–239; THAKUR 1997: 969–71, 973–975). A general survey

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 *Byañ chub 'od* and completed in 1042.⁵ 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 Filibeck 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'⁶ and inconsistencies are faithfully copied in the transcription. Unclear readings are indicated and variants of the presented reading are mentioned in the footnotes.⁷

of the historical figures represented in the Tabo Main Temple is found in KLIMBURG-SALTER 1996: 325–31.

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 khañ*) where the oldest paintings and inscriptions are located. Until then it was not known that the royal *bla ma Ye ses '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 khañ* 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 khañ*) — Entry Hall (*sgo khañ*), Assembly Hall (*'du khañ*), Cella (*dri gtsaṅ khañ*, *gandhakuṭī*), 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 *ye dharmā*-verses quoted are excluded from the running numbers and the Buddhas of the *bhadrakalpa* in the Ambulatory 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 brownish-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 abbreviations⁸

\underline{a}	partly uncertain letter, uncertain reading
$\underline{=}$	illegible 'letter' (consonant or ligature plus vowel-sign, including <i>śad</i>)
\neq	'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

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).

[]	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
[=>no.<=]	broken passage with approximate number of 'letters' lost
{no.} or \	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
\bar{i}	inverted <i>gi gu</i> (<i>gi gu log</i>)
/	<i>śad</i>
*	single <i>dbu</i> -sign, beginning the opening (<i>mgo yig</i>) of a caption, or an ornament between <i>gñis śad</i>
**	double <i>dbu</i> -sign beginning the opening (<i>mgo yig</i>) ⁹
\underline{x}	small illegible letter
\underline{f}	large illegible letter or 'letter'
a_x	a 'letter' written below
s	slide in the Tabo Archives, Vienna
f	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

⁹ Most of the captions have an opening (*mgo yig*) consisting of a single *dbu* followed by two *śad* often with two dots above each other in-between. This is transcribed with $\ast / : /$. For an overview of the meaning and development of the Tibetan opening symbol cf. SCHERRER-SCHAUB (in press: Chapter 3.3).

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. *sñel 'or* [5, 8, 26] and *sñel wer* [13], but note *sñes wer* [30], which seems to be another place or clan name) and the same Tibetan term (e.g. *rge sloñ* [5, 6], *dge' sloñ* [7, 8, 9, ...] and *dgeṣ sloñ* [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 *dge' sloñ* rather indicate that the scribe had a poor education or was simply careless.¹¹

Beside *dge' sloñ* there are many instances of words spelt differently from the 'classical norm'.¹² Superabundant *'a chuñ* is common. However, there is only one certain case of palatalisation of *ma* by *ya* *btags* (*myin* in caption 53) and no instance of *da drag* in the captions

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 *rge sloñ*, 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 Jäschke'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.

of the founding period. There is also a single instance of the ligature *rh* (14).

The style of writing, too, is rather comparable to pre-classical Tibetan. All *gi gu* in the Entry Hall are written reversed and if possible the ligatures are written horizontally. There is an evident inconsistency in the case of *wa*: it can be in the shape of a *l* with *wa zur* (13), an angular *'a chuñ*(!) with *wa zur* (30) and an *'a chuñ* with *wa zur* (34) on the south wall and as an *'a chuñ* with double *wa zur* (48) on the north wall.¹³ The uncertainty concerning the letter *wa* might also be responsible for the variant readings *'er* and *wer* as the superscribed *wa zur* 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 chuñ*: *dge'* in *dge' sloñ* (7, 8, 9, 10, 11 ...), *dge' ba* (14) and *dge' tshul ma* (30) but not in *dge bsñen* (20, 21, 22, 47), *dblo' gros* (27).

Other: *rge sloñ* (5, 6), *dgeṣ sloñ* (14), *sod nams* (15) and *bsom nams* (25), *brtson grus* (17, 28), *dge sñen* (21), *dul ba* (25), *dblo' gros* (27), *bsam tan* (44), *dglan* (54, 1.2), *chi* (54, 1.3).

Unusual names or terms: *brug dpal* (31), *guñ sum* (33), *guñ che skyan bu* (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.

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 chuñ* with *wa zur* (cf. URAY 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 chuñ* upward to the right (cf. URAY 1955: 111) is evidenced. I am grateful to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub for pointing out the Uray 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: *sald* (65), *'dzind* (82), *gnond* (83), *gyurd* (111), *'byord* (143), *brgyand* (B148), *mkhyend* (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), *bzañs* (110), *gzo nu* (111), *spyobs* : *spobs* (115), *zad* : *bzad* (116) *'od gzer* (132).

Buddhas of the *bhadra kalpa*: *cen* : *chen* (B13, B14, B143), *g.ye śes* : *ye śes* (B100), *dbañ sphyug* : *dbañ phyug* (B165). Twice the vocal in *bzin* is long (B82, B141), and once *ta thā ga ta* replaces *de bzin gśegs 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 gśegs pa*).

ENTRY HALL

The Entry Hall (*sgo khañ*) is a small room through which the Main Temple is entered (Fig. 5). It houses two large standing protectors of clay¹⁴ and paintings attributable to the foundation of the temple in 996. Among these paintings the depictions of the donors associated

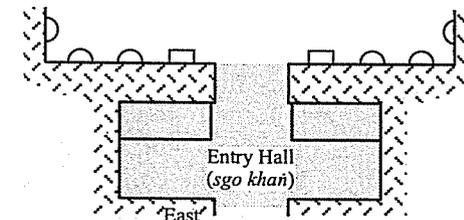


Fig. 5: The Entry Hall (*sgo khañ*)

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 were never filled in.¹⁵

HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ENTRY HALL

The historical inscriptions in the Entry Hall (*sgo khañ*) 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

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).

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1994: fig. 7. For a more detailed description of the paintings in the Entry Hall cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter V.1.

captions only consist of title and personal name, or surname and personal name.¹⁶

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.

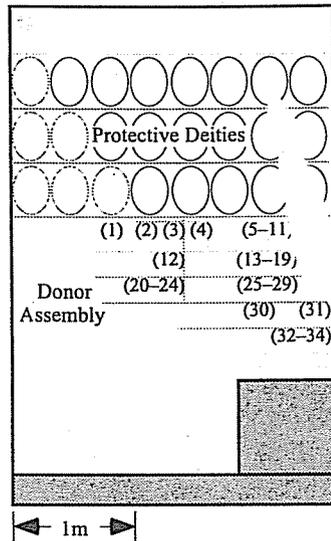


Fig. 6: Entry Hall south wall; the location of the captions

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

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.

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 . cen . mchog . g^z y? ≠ n . ba .*

I.2 Only fragments of the figure preserved.

I.3 Nāgarāja 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 *Byaṅ chub 'od* above the Renovation Inscription).

(2) *lha . sras . na . ga . \ ra . dza*

I.4 *Ye śes '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 =^{x17} . chen . po . ye . śes . \ 'od /*

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) ** lha . btsun¹⁸ . pa ? \ d¹⁹ e . ba . ra . dza ²⁰*

¹⁷ This title is practically illegible. The *d* seems fairly clear, while the following two 'letters' can be read in the range of *slob* to *bla ma*. Of course it would be tempting to read *lha bla ma chen po*, 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.

To the right of 1.5 seven monastic figures sitting on cushions are depicted. They all are holding a *mālā* with their right hand (Klimburg-Salter 1994: fig. 11, 1997: fig. 3).

- I.6 f CL91 12,31, 17,28
 (5) * *sñel. 'or*²¹. *rge.sloñ.grags.pa.bśes. \ gñen /*
- I.7 f CL91 17,27
 (6) */ *|grañ.la.rge.sloñ.rad.na. \ gar.ba* ^f²²
- I.8 Pl. 10,a s CL91 12,24, 12,25; f CL91 17,27
 (7) */ *|rhugs. 'or*²³. *dge'.sloñ.dbyig.gi. \ bsod.nams*
- I.9 Pl. 10,b f CL91 17,6
 (8) */ : *|sñel. 'or.dge'.sloñ. \ 'dul.ba.byañ.chub* ^f²⁴
- I.10 s CL91 12,37; f CL91 16,22a, 17,5
 (9) */ *|ñi.ma*²⁵. *dge'.sloñ.rig.pa. 'byuñ \ gnas /*

²⁰ According to the *mÑa' ris rgyal rabs* (59–60) De ba ra dza was ordained in 996 at Pa sgam Byams sñoms gliñ, a place said to be in Rum, and obtained the ordination name De ba pra bha. bSod nams rtse mo places this event in the year 1016 (cf. PETECH 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 *mÑa' ris rgyal rabs*.

²¹ sÑel 'or and sÑal 'or appear to be identical. A certain sÑel 'or Klu mgon sgra appears as scribe in a *Śatasāhasrikā*-colophon (SCHERRER-SCHAUB forthcoming). The name also occurs in documents of Mazār Tāgh (cf. THOMAS 1951: 293 (M.Tāgh. 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 Byañ chub sems dpa', presumably Ye śes 'od (cf. SCHERRER-SCHAUB in press, Chapter 5; forthcoming).

²³ rHugs 'or is probably the same as rHugs 'er/wer (cf. below n.29).

²⁴ He is mentioned two times more in the inscriptions of the renovation period (nos. 60 and 104).

²⁵ Cf. gÑe ma as name for a part of Upper Žaň žuň (TUCCI 1956: 83) and Ñi mo bag in M.Tāgh.c.iii.0019 (*ñi mo bag'i sde rhye lig 'or khen tiñ tse*, THOMAS 1951: 293), both variants actually referring to the same *stoñ sde* of Upper Žaň žuň (cf. UEBACH 1987: 22–3).

- I.11 f CL91 16,22a, 17,1 17,4
 (10) */ : *|mo.lo.dge'.sloñ.ses.rab.sñiñ. \ po /*
- I.12 f CL91 16,22a, 17,2, 17,3
 (11) */ : *|mag.pī.tsa.dge'.sloñ.mos.pa.ses. \ 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
 (12) ≠ ≠ *r*²⁶. *'dī.rnams. 'khor.ba /*

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) */ : *|sñel.w*²⁷. *er.dge'.sloñ.dri. ≠ed. ≠o ≠s*²⁸
- II.8 f CL91 17,29
 (14) */ : *|rhugs. 'er*²⁹. *dge'.sloñ.dge'.ba.skyoñ /*

²⁶ ≠tshar ?

²⁷ Written like an *l* with *wa zur*.

²⁸ Perhaps *dri 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 delineation at the bottom is a more likely possibility.

²⁹ rHugs '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. SNELGROVE & SKORUPSKI 1980: 101, l.13–14; biography published by Lokesh Chandra in TUCCI 1988: 104, 2v, l.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).

- II.9 f CL91 17,30
 (15) */ : |mañ.wer³⁰.dge'.?sloñ.sod.nams.rin.cen |
- II.10 f CL91 17,30
 (16) */ : |ma.toñ.dge'.sloñ.lha.≠i.g-yuñ.druñ |
- II.11 s CL91 12,33; f CL91 17,7
 (17) */ |mañ.'er.dge'.sloñ.rin.cen.brtson.grus β¹
- II.12 s CL91 12,34, 14,17; f CL91 16,22a, 17,8
 (18) */ : |rum³².dge'.sloñ.dran.ba.śes.rab | /
- II.13 s CL91 12,35, 14,17; f CL91 16,22a, 17,9
 (19) ? | mag.pī.tsa³³.dge'.sloñ.yon.tan.go \ cha |

Third row (III)

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

³⁰ Presumably the same as *mañ 'er* (no. 17) and *mañ 'or* (no. 63). A monk and translator called Mañ wer Rin chen śes rab (*mñā' ris rgyal rabs*, 52, 1.1) is said to have accompanied Rin chen bzañ po on his second journey to Kashmir. *mañ 'or* appears in the name Mañ 'or Byañ chub śes rab, who attended the religious council (*chos 'khor*) presumably held at Tholing in 1076 (BA 328, SZERB 1990: 116 [= Bu ston's *Chos 'byuñ* 158a5], TUCCI 1933: 30). Byañ chub śes rab is said to have translated the *Kālacakrantra* (BA 837). Interestingly some Gu ge ministers of the 15th and 16th century bear the clan name Mañ dber ba (VITALI 1996: 522, n.889). However, it is yet to be determined if this clan name derives from the surname mentioned in Tabo.

³¹ Possibly the same person as no. 63!

³² 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,oo2) Rum denotes a clan name.

³³ 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).

- III.1
 (20) *ma*_g³⁴.pī.tsa.dge.bsñen. \ byañ.chub.ldan |
- III.2
 (21) mag.pī.tsa.dge.sñen. \ ? d.pa./
- III.3
 (22) *ma*_g.pī.tsa.dge.bsñen. \ mo^x pa |
- III.4 f CL91 17,32
 (23) *mag.pī.tsa.'dul.ba.'dzin.pa*³⁵ \ rgyal.ba.bsoč.nams |
- III.5 below Ye śes 'od (I.4) f CL91 17,32
 (24) *ma*_g.pī.tsa.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.

- III.6 f CL91 17,31
 (25) */ : |mu.druñ.yar.dge'.sloñ.dul.ba.bsom.nams.
- III.7
 (26) */ |sñel.'or.dge'.sloñ.yon.?? nams./
- III.8
 (27) */ : |bod.dge'.sloñ.tshul.khrims.dblo'.gros |
- III.9 f CL91 17,11
 (28) */ |nam.bu.śud/ñ.dge'.sloñ.dad.pa.brtson.grus |
- III.10 f CL91 17,10
 (29) */ |mag.pī.tsa.dge'.sloñ.?dul.ba.yon.tan./

³⁴ The *ga* is written below the *ma* (id. in nos. 22 and 24).

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.³⁶ 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

f CL91 17,12

(30) sñes.w³⁷er³⁸.dge'tshul.ma ≠e/o/i gī.gī. \ dad.pa /

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

(31) m ≠³⁹ 'añ.srgyas⁴⁰.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 *añjalimudrā*, 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.pī.tsa dpal
khib.rtan

³⁷ Written rather like an angular 'a chuñ with wa zur!

³⁸ The place or clan name sñas 'wer/lwer appears in the colophon of a *Śata-sāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā*-manuscript in the Tabo collection (*sñas 'lwer dge' sloñ man dzu ba tra* = Mañjubhadra). 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 *sañs rgyas* (Pa.).

V.4 Pl. 10,c

s CL91 12,29; f CL91 17,13

(32) */ : |mag.pī.tsa.dbañ.phyug.rten |

V.5

s CL91 12,30; f CL91 17,14

(33) */ |mag.pī.tsa.guñ.sum.|

V.6 female?

f CL91 17,15

(34) */ |hrugs.w⁴¹er.śes.≠ /

While the following sixth row has nearly disappeared, fragments of lay figures survive in the seventh row.

NORTH WALL

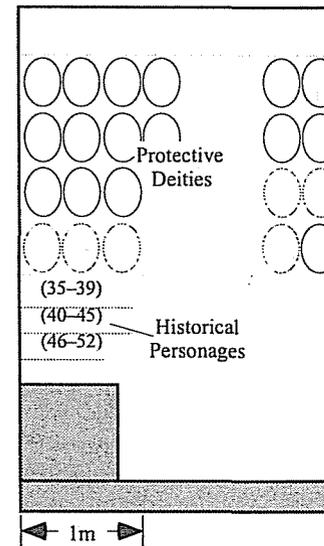


Fig. 7: Entry Hall north wall; the location of the captions

name is not recorded in the caption (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 50).

(35) */ |lha.[sra]s ?

⁴¹ Written like an 'a chuñ with wa zur.

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*. s CL94 77,25; f CL91 17,17

(37) */ *lha.lcam. 'od.⁴² \ 'phro*

I.4 s CL94 77,25; f CL91 17,18

(38) */ *lha.sras. \ brden.brtsan*

I.5 s CL94 77,25

(39) *lha.sras*

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 f CL91 17,23

(40) *sñel. 'or.bo.dī.ba.dra.*

II.2 f CL91 17,22

(41) *stag.lo⁴³.tshul.khrim_s. ...*

II.3 f CL91 17,21

(42) *gza⁴⁴.ma.byañ.chub.brde.?*

II.4 f CL91 17,20

(43) *sna.ro.chos.kyi.sñiñ.po.*

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 phreñ ba* (UEBACH 1987: 133).

⁴⁴ Pa. read a *gi gu*.

II.5

(44) *sñel. 'or.bsam⁴⁵.tan.byañ.chub*

II.6

f CL91 17,19

(45) *sñel. 'or.byañ.tshul /*

Third row (III)

The figures to the captions of this row are not preserved.

III.1

(46) *rin.can.rgyal⁴⁶ \ ? ≠ ≠*

III.2

f CL91 17,24

(47) *sgye.ñni.dge.bsñen.tshul \ khrims.legs.pa./*

III.3

f CL91 17,25

(48) *sñam.w⁴⁷er.khri.mchog*

III.4

f CL91 17,26

(49) *sñel. 'or.guñ.che.skyan.bu /*

III.5

(50) *... chad ... n /*

III.6

(51) *sñel. 'or.skyid.mchog /*

III.7

(52) *sñel. 'or*

⁴⁵ Pa.

⁴⁶ Also *ri mo rtsun rgyal* could be read.

⁴⁷ Written like an 'a *chuñ* with double *wa zur*.

NON-HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ENTRY HALL

THE PROTECTRESS

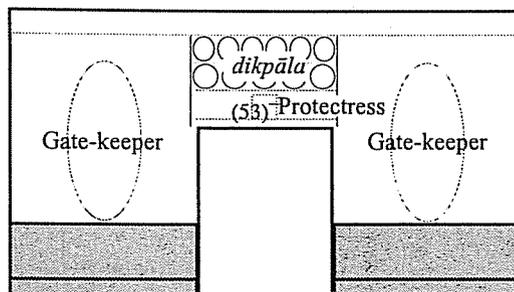


Fig. 8: Entry Hall west wall; the caption identifying the protectress

corner of the screen held behind the protectress by two women of the retinue.

(53) Pl. 11

s CL91 12,26

* |:/ gtsug.lag.khañ.gi.
 sruñs.ma || sman.che~~≠~~.~~≠~~o ||
 wi.ñu.myin.'khor.ba.dañ
 bcas.pa || //⁴⁸

CAPTIONS AT THE BHAVACAKRA

Several inscriptions are found in connection with the Wheel of Life (*bhavacakra*, *srid 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.

⁴⁸ "The protectress of the main temple, the great (healing) woman (sman chen mo) *Wi ñu 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* (NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1956: 198–202).

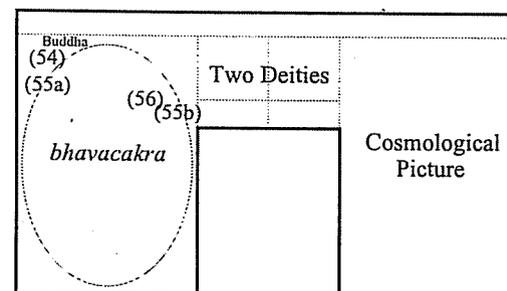


Fig. 9: Entry Hall east wall; captions in connection with the *bhavacakra*

It contains two verses of the conclusion of the *Prātimokṣasūtra* (verses 14 and 15 in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya*) as prescribed by the *Vinaya* for the decoration of a *sgo khañ*. Beside the caption a Buddha performing *bhūmisparśa-mudrā* is depicted (Pl. 12; Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 40).⁴⁹

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 *Prātimokṣasūtra* in the Peking edition (Q Vol. 42 149,3,6–7).

(54) Pl. 12

s CL91 18,3

- {1} * | brtsam.bar.byā.ñiñ.'byuñ.bar.byā | s[añs.]rgyas.
 {2} bstan.la⁵⁰. 'jug.par.byā | 'dam.bu⁵¹.khyi_m.la.dglañ⁵².can.bžiñ
 {3} chi⁵³.bdag.de⁵⁴.ñi.gzom.bar.byā || gañ.žig.rab.du.[ba]g.
 {4} yod.par || chos.'dul.'di.la.spyod.'gyur⁵⁵.pa | skye.ba⁵⁶.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ The description of the *bhavacakra* in the passage in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* prescribes that the following three elements be displayed with the Wheel of Life: the depiction of a (teaching) Buddha, the *pratīyasamutpāda* on the outer circle of the Wheel (see below), and the two verses encouraging the conversion to Buddhism (*Vinayavibhaṅga*, 31. *Pāṭiyantika*, Q Vol. 43 73,1,6–2,4).

⁵⁰ Q reads against the metre *bstan pa la*.

⁵¹ Q *bu'i*.

⁵² Q *glañ*.

⁵³ Q 'chi.

⁵⁴ Q *sde*.

⁵⁵ Q *gyur*.

⁵⁶ Written *bī* with subscribed 'a *chuñ* for Q *ba'i*.

⁵⁷ On the edge *stiñ ba* seems to be written, but it is not clear if it belongs to the inscription.

C. Luczanits

- {5a}⁵⁸ *rab.spañs.nas./sdug.sñas* s // *gyes g* ≠.
 {5b} *'khor.ba.rab.spañs. ? 'sdug.[sñal].*⁵⁹
 {6} *mtha*⁶⁰ *.mar.byed.par.'gyur.žes.gsuñs* .
 {7} *so*⁶¹

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 *pratīyasamutpāda* in writing instead of the form of metaphorical pictures generally used in later depictions. The presence of the *pratīyasamutpāda* in writing appears to be unique to Tabo.

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

... .. *ch/thuñ.ba.dañ ?*
 ? ... *ch/tsha ? .ba.la.ch/mab/s ?*
 ž ... *.phyir.ro.!*

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

s CL91 18,9

*| *rga.šī.*⁶² *nī.st n̄*⁶³
 =o r l' ≠ p.dañ.?-ra

⁵⁸ Here, the two lines are written one on top of the other!

⁵⁹ Reconstructed line 5: *'khor ba rab spañs nas / sdug sñal* (Q *bsñal*).

⁶⁰ Q *tha*.

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 (dharmavinaya) 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 (*jāramaraṇa*), the twelfth item of the *pratīyasamutpāda*.

⁶³ Vocal above, most probably *gi gu*.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

≠ ≠ ≠ dog. 'gyur.

≠ ≠ ≠ ≠ i ≠ m/s.y'.

... ..

Another small caption within the Wheel below some human figures in the upper right half of the Wheel identifies the human world Jambudvīpa.

(56) *lho.* 'i. 'dzam.bu.glin⁶⁴

⁶⁴ "The southern [continent] Jambudvīpa."

ASSEMBLY HALL

The Assembly Hall ('*du khañ*) is dominated by the 33 deities of a three-dimensional Vajradhātumaṇḍala. Except for the fourfold Vairocana in the centre, behind the altar, the clay sculptures are attached to the walls all around the room.⁶⁵ 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 *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* and the Life of the Buddha, the first of them accompanied by a wall text.⁶⁶ 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.⁶⁷

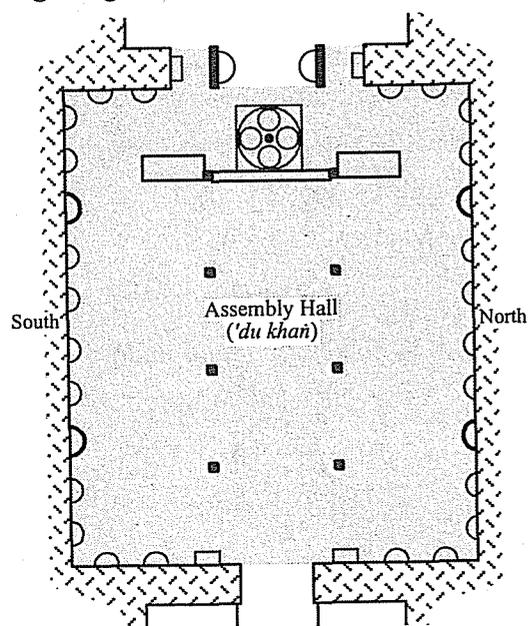


Fig. 10: The Assembly Hall ('*du khañ*)

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 54, 60. For a discussion of the technique and the iconography of the sculptures see LUCZANITS 1997.

⁶⁶ Cf. STEINKELLNER 1995; 1996 and in press.

⁶⁷ For a detailed description of the Assembly Hall cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter V.2.

HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL

On the east wall of the Assembly Hall a large section of the painting was dedicated to the depiction of historical figures. Like most of the paintings preserved in the Assembly Hall, this section too, is datable to the renovation of the temple completed in 1042. The donor

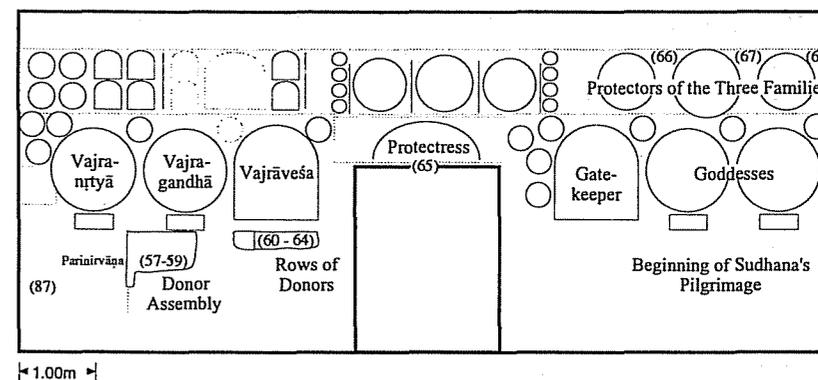


Fig. 11: Assembly Hall east wall

depictions are found below the clay sculptures in the northern half of the wall between the final scene of the Life of the Buddha (the depiction of the *parinirvāṇa*) and the entrance, i.e. below the sculptures of the goddess Vajragandhā and the *dvārapāla* (*sgo bsruñs ba*) Vajrāveśa (cf. Fig. 11). The whole composition is only preserved in fragments, but a division in two parts is evident. Below Vajragandhā is a large donor assembly, and to the right of it (below Vajrāveśa) there were several rows of historical figures.

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) \ sg
 n.byañ \ 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 .sd/na.nas // // //

The fourth figure has his right hand in the sleeve resting on his thigh. **Pl. 13**

(59) rje.lha ≠ ⁶⁹ .ze.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 were placed in front, the women and the men with other hat-styles were placed to the sides and at the back.

⁶⁸ The fragments could also be the upper part of a *z*, which one would expect here.

⁶⁹ *n* or *r* depending on preceding *i/u*.

⁷⁰ The last two of these captions were apparently also noticed by THAKUR (1997: 974, transcriptions no. 6 and 7). For comparable inscriptions from Tholing cf. the Appendix. There also the phrase *zal sna nas* is discussed.

ROWS OF DONORS

The second part of the donor depictions below Vajrāveśa consists of several rows (presumably five) of figures placed one above the other. However, only a very small part of these rows, some figures in the uppermost row immediately below the sculpture, is well preserved. Most of the rows were covered quite recently (probably at the turn of the century) with plaster and repainted. Only where the plaster which was used in this 'renovation' has fallen off are the very fragmentary remains of the original visible. In the lower right corner of this composition there was also a larger inscription. Only a very careful removal of the plaster and the repainting which covers most of the section could bring the originals to light, and even then the remains might be too fragmentary to reveal new information. Again the rows are given Roman numerals and the figures are counted and arranged from left to right.

Only some part of the first row immediately below the *dvārapāla* (*sgo bsruñs ba*), and 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.byañ.chub.* \ *sñel.'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 (*mahāsthavira*) 'Dul ba byañ chub from [the place/the clan] sñel '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 sga* 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. **Pl. 14,b** s DKS91 34,28 37,36 60,2 60,3, CL94 85,8

(62) *lcog.la*⁷³ 'i.sde.dge.sloñ. \ mos.pa.bsod.nams. \ g/brag/s⁷⁴.⁷⁵

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.

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

(63) [gu.]ge 'i.sde.sman.pa.brtsen. \ # # =^x.rin.cen. mañ. 'or /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 \ tan.dad.pa

read *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 *sga* is rubbed off, thus a subscribed *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 mahācārya of Buddhist terminology Guṇavarman from [the place/the clan] Te 'or." Guṇavarman, *Yon tan go cha in Tibetan, is not found in the common Tibetan historical works. Another possibility would be that *chos sga* actually stands for *chos grwa* "Buddhist college".

⁷³ lCog la apparently designated a larger area around the confluence of the Spiti and Sulej 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 sPi (ti) 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. VITALI 1996: 307–9, and PETECH 1997: n.20. In the *mNa' ris rgyal rabs* Tabo monastery is called the ornament of lCog la in Spiti (*pi tir ta po cog la brgyan*, 54, 1.9–10).

⁷⁴ THAKUR (1997: 974,3) reads *bums*.

⁷⁵ "The monk from the lCog la region Mos pa bsod nams [grags]."

Both *lcog la* (*cog la*) and *gu ge* (*gug ge*) are names of thousand-districts (*ston sde*) of Lower Žaṅ žuñ (žuñ žuñ *smad*) (cf. e.g. UEBACH 1987: 22). I therefore understand *sde* as referring to a region or district rather than to a community.

⁷⁶ "The physician of the Gu ge region brTson ... rin cen from [the place/the clan] Mañ 'or." THAKUR (1997: 974,4) reads *thon* for *brtsen* and *yañ* 'or('od) for *mañ*

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 *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.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 *dvārapāla* (*sgo sruñ ba*) and the door. These were never named.

'or. The person is possibly identical with the monk mentioned above in caption no. 17.

⁷⁷ I once read: lcog.la ... ? \ bsod.nams, but this reading has never been controlled again.

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.

(65) {1} ? <= *skyes.bu.thos.pa.sñiñ.par.phyad.r*⁷⁸ => 21cm <= *sta kya* => 66cm <= *c ≠ ≠ d pāl. ≠ n ≠ ≠ pa.bstod.* || *deñ.nas.brtsa m s t jī.srid.*⁷⁹ => 18cm <= *n b ś ≠ kya b do mlto ≠ 'i.dgis.* || *śos.pa.g ≠ mug.mun.sald.sgron.ma.y n ≠ ≠ ≠ => 15cm <= mchog.* || => 5cm

{2} ? <= *dag.bcom.ma.* => ?

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 Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi (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* (*byañ chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po*) followed by one or several epithets, which appear rather unusual. The identifications are followed by the *ye dharmā*-verse. The panels are arranged from left to right, that is in the direction of *pradakṣiṇā*.

⁷⁸ The length of this fragment is 11 cm.

⁷⁹ This fragment covers ca. 22 cm.

The first panel to the left of Avalokiteśvara contains only the *ye dharmā*-verse: s JP1984 581; CL94 84,3

ye.dha.rma.he.tu.pra.bha.ba.he.tun.te.śan.

ta.thā.ga.to.hya.ba.dad.te.śan.tsa.yo.ni.

ro.dha.e.baṃ.bha.ti.ma.ha.śra.ma.ṇa. / /

Karuṣeśvara(?)⁸⁰-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 *ūrṇā* 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

s JP1984 582; CL94 84,7

(66) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.*

thugs.rje'i.mña'.bdag.spyan.ras.gzigs.kyi.

dbañ.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 *ūrṇā* has the shape of a vertical eye.⁸¹

⁸⁰ *thugs rje'i mña' bdag* used here as a synonym for *thugs rje'i dbañ 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 *Sādhanamālā* 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 *nan soñ gi 'gro ba – apāyagati* and *rnam par 'joms pa – vidāraṇa* (as occurs in the name of another deity, BIT 14, 34, 2376).

- (67) s JP1984 471
 {1} *byaṅ.chub.s* {⁸²*em[s.dpa'.se]ms.dpa'.chen.po.nān.soṅ.gi.'gyo* ≠ ≠
 ≠ *c/ts*}ogs.
 {2} *rnam.par.* {*'jom* ≠ ≠ .*'phags.pa.'jam.ba'ü.d-y* ≠ ≠ ⁸³}⁸² //
 {3} *ye.dha.rma*

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.⁸⁴ 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 *ūrṇā* is not preserved.

Pl. 15,c s JP1984 472

- (68) *byaṅ.[chub.se]ms.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.*
gsaṅ ≠ ≠ ≠ *po*⁸⁵.*phyag.na.rdo.rje.* // | //
ye.dha.rma

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 dharmā*-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 dbyaṅ.

⁸⁴ Cf. below the MBS13.

⁸⁵ Most probably *gsaṅ ba'i bdag po* – *guhyākādhipati* as an epithet (cf. Tshig mdzod p. 3006 and in several variations in the Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary 2482–83).

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. *Śatasāhasrikā*-, the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā*-, and the *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā*.⁸⁶ 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 *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā* have been used for comparison.⁸⁷

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 *pradakṣiṇā* 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 *pradakṣiṇā*, and each triad is read from left to right.

For the Buddhas, the captions mention the quarter (*phyogs*) or intermediary quarter (*phyogs mtshams*) the respective Tathāgata resides in, and his name. The Bodhisattvas are only named. In each caption the *ye dharmā*-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 Pad mo 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

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 *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā* ed. DUTT 1934: 12–17; Q Vol. 18 43–51. 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.

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 *dhotīs* 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 *Śes 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 *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* 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

⁸⁸ The symmetry of the walls was noticed by D.E. Klimburg-Salter.

⁸⁹ Cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter III.

⁹⁰ Cf. KOLMAŠ 1978: 66–67, 116–121 (15a–24b).

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.

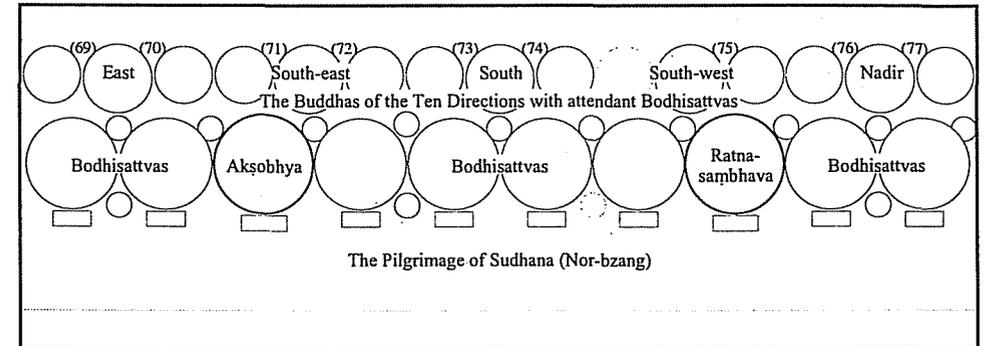


Fig. 12: Assembly Hall south wall

(69) *byaṅ.chub.sems.[dpa'].'od.gzer.kun.gzer.kun.*
*nas.'byuṅ.ba.*⁹²// //
ye.dha.rma.he.tu.pra.ba.bha.he.tun.te.śan.ta.thā.ga.to.hya.ba.dan.
te.śan.tsa.yo.ni.ro.dha.e.baṃ.ba.ti.ma.hā.śra.ma.ṇa.//

Buddha Ratnākara: red; *dhyānamudrā*. s JP1984 481

(70) *śar.phyogs.kyī.de.bzin.gśegs.pa.*
*dkon.mchog.'byuṅ.gna's.*⁹³/ ⁹⁴
ye.dha.rma

Bodhisattva: red; holding a small jewel in the right hand; left hand behind leg. Caption lost.

South-east

Bodhisattva Padmahasta: green; holds a tiny open flower in the right hand; the left arm is behind the leg (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 108).

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 KOLMAŠ (1978: 15b) have 'Od zer kun nas 'byuṅ ba.

⁹³ Q (e.g. 43,4), BIT 1084 and KOLMAŠ 1978: 15a: Rin chen 'byuṅ gnas.

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

Buddha Padmottaraśrī⁹⁵: white; right hand in *vitarkamudrā*; left hand on lap (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 109).

- (72) *śar.lho.mtshams.kyi.de.bzin.gśegs.pa.*
pad.mo.dam.pa'i.dpal./ /⁹⁶
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 s JP1984 119

- (73) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.mya.ñan.myed.pa.//* /
ye.dha.rma

Buddha Aśokaśrī⁹⁸: red; *dharmacakramudrā* s JP1984 118

- (74) *lho.phyogs.kyi.de.bzin.gśegs.pa.mya.ñan.*
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 dharmā*-verse).

⁹⁴ "The Tathāgata of the southern quarter Ratnākara." Translated exemplarily. The caption is published in KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: fig. 36.

⁹⁵ BIT 1089.

⁹⁶ "The Tathāgata of the southeastern intermediary [quarter] Padmottaraśrī." Translated exemplarily.

⁹⁷ In 1984 the caption was still in perfect condition.

⁹⁸ BIT 1085.

South-west

Bodhisattva [Sūryaprabhāsa/Ñi ma rab tu snañ ba] and his caption lost.

Buddha Sūryamaṇḍalaprabhāsottamaśrī⁹⁹: white, *bhūmisparśa-mudrā*. s JP1984 124

- (75) *lho.nub.kyi.phyogs.mtshams.kyi.de.bzin.gśegs.pa.*
ñi.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 dharmā*-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.gśegs.pa.pad.mo.dam.*
p ≠ ≠.¹⁰⁰ / // // //
[ye.dha.rma]

Buddha Padmaśrī: 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) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.*
pad.mo.dam.pa'i. ? ¹⁰² // //

⁹⁹ Q (e.g. 48,1) Ñi ma'i dkyil 'khor snañ ba dam pa'i dpal; BIT 1090: Ñi 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.

ye.dha.rma

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) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'. 'phags.pa.spyan.*
ras.gzigs.dbañ.phyug.||
ye.dha.rma

Buddha Ratnārcis¹⁰³: red; gesture of blessing.¹⁰⁴

(79) *nub.phyogs.kyi.de.bžin.gše[gs].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 [Ekacchattra/gDugs dam pa¹⁰⁵] and the right Bodhisattva [Ratnottama/Rin chen mchog] are lost. Both have been repainted at a later period.

¹⁰³ BIT 1086.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. n.101.

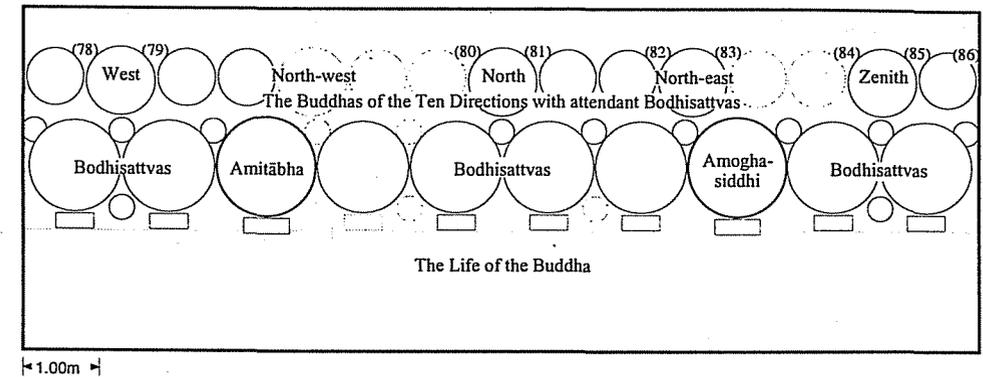


Fig. 13: Assembly Hall north wall

North

Bodhisattva repainted; caption only fragmentarily preserved.

s JP1984 560

(80) *[byañ.chub.sem]s.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.*
... ..
[ye.dha.rma]

Buddha Jayendra¹⁰⁶: red; *dharmacakramudrā*.

Pl. 16a

s JP1984 559

(81) *byañ.phyogs.kyi.logs.kyi.de.bžin.gšegs*
pa.rgyal.ba'i.dbañ.po.||
ye.dha.rma¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ BIT 1091.

¹⁰⁶ BIT 1087.

¹⁰⁷ 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:

*| *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.*
sems.dpa'.chen.po.rgyal.
bas g/byin.|| //

Bodhisattva [Jayadatta/rGyal bas byin]: red; gesture of offering towards the Buddha; left arm behind leg; caption not preserved.

North-east

Bodhisattva: white; *vitarkamudrā*; left hand behind leg. The caption above his right shoulder refers to the following Buddha:

s JP1984 554

- (82) *byañ.śar.gyi.phyogs.mtshams.kyi.de.bzin.*
gśegs.pa ≠ ñ. 'dzind.kyi.glañ.po.dam.
pa'i.dpal.||
*ye.dha.rma*¹⁰⁸

Buddha Samādhihastyuttaraśrī¹⁰⁹: white; *abhayamudrā*. The caption above his right shoulder refers to the following Bodhisattva:

s JP1984 553

- (83) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.chen.po.rnam.par.*
rgyal.bas.rnam.par.gnond.pa.|| ||
ye.dha.rma

Bodhisattva Vijayavikrāmin lost and partly repainted.

Zenith

Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī is lost and repainted, but his caption is preserved.

s JP1984 549

- (84) *byañ.chub.sem[s.dpa']'jam.dpal.*
ye.dha.rma

¹⁰⁸ Here, too, traces of an older inscription are visible below the present one.

¹⁰⁹ Q (e.g. 46,4) *Tiñ ñe 'dzin gyi glañ po dam pa'i dpal*; BIT 1088: *Tiñ 'dzin glañ po dam pa'i dpal*.

Buddha Nandaśrī¹¹⁰: red, *dhyānamudrā*. Pl. 16,b s JP1984 548

- (85) *steñ.gi.phyogs.kyi.de.bzin.*
gśegs.pa.dga'.ba'i.
dpal.|| ||
*ye.dha.rma*¹¹¹

Bodhisattva Nandadatta: white; right hand raised towards the shoulder¹¹²; left arm behind leg. s JP1984 547

- (86) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa[']*
dga'.bas.byin.pa./
*ye.dha.rma*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 bzañ(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.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

¹¹⁰ BIT 1091.

¹¹¹ Here, too, a faded older inscription of different content is visible.

¹¹² Probably the "*mudrā* of deference" which goes back to Gandhāran art (cf. TADDEI 1969: 375).

¹¹³ Again, traces of an older inscription of different content are visible underneath the present one! It can be read as:

byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.pad.
mo.dam.pa'?

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: *ra mo mkhan dum bu*. It belongs to a group of four riders with their shields and horses depicted there (cf. STEINKELLNER 1995: 104, n.6).

one-line inscription on the panel below the descent from Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. Its location can be seen in Fig. 11.

(87) *// rin.cen.ri.bo.gser. ≠ ≠. bdan¹¹⁵. 'khor.yug

It is not clear what the purpose of this inscription was and when it was written. It uses one of the panels meant to be filled in with the story of the Buddha's Life.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Also the reading *b.dan* is possible.

¹¹⁶ This inscription was only read once!

CELLA

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.

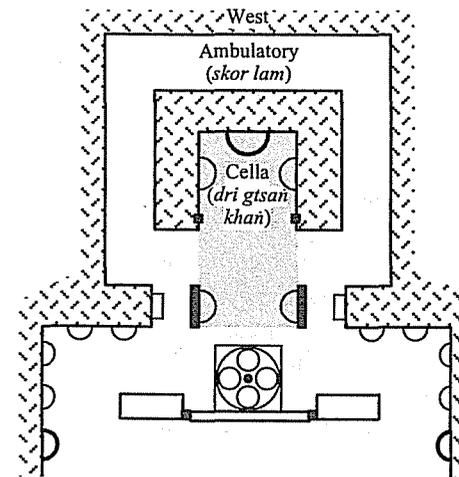


Fig. 14: The Cella (*dri gtsan khañ*)

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

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.

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 (*ltuñ bśags sañs rgyas gsum bcu so lña*¹²⁰), but also names of the Seven Heroic Buddhas (*sañs rgyas dpa' bo bdun*¹²¹), the Buddhas of the Ten Directions (*phyogs bcu'i sañs rgyas*) and the Eight Healing Buddhas (*smān bla bde gśegs brgyad*) appear.

Except the subscribed *y* in *myed pa* and the *tsheg* in front of the *śad* 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: Bhaiṣajyaguru (sMan gyi bla)

(88) *de.bžin.gśegs.\ pa.sm/pan.gyi.z/bla*

¹²⁰ Also called *ltuñ bśags lha so lña* (Tshig mdzod, 1089).

¹²¹ On *sañs rgyas dpa' bo bdun* cf. n.175. They are also called *sañs rgyas rabs bdun* (Tshig mdzod, 2919; DAGYAB 1977: 39).

¹²² Cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter III.

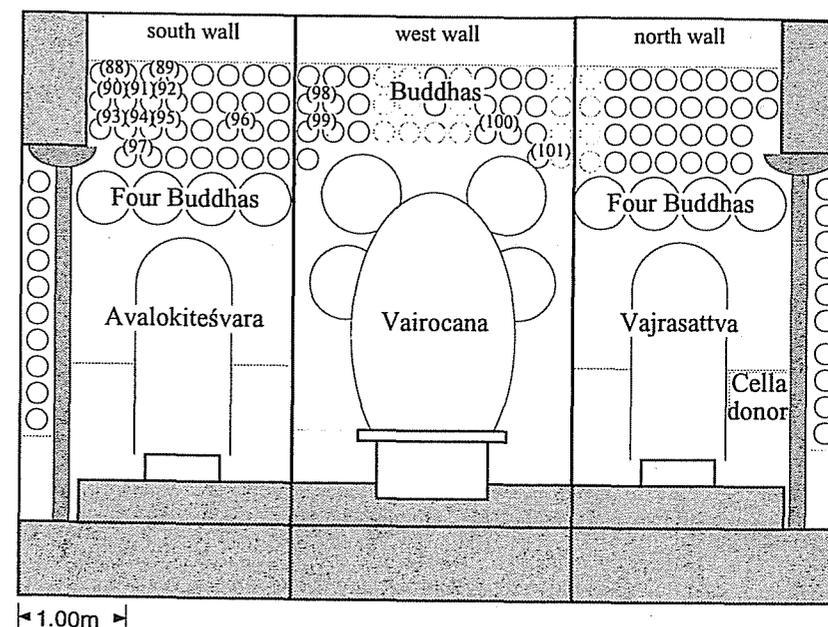


Fig. 15: The Cella walls

Third Buddha

(89) *de.bžin.gśegs.\ pa.śad.ma.myed.par.\ sgyur.ba.//*

Others illegible!

Second row, first Buddha

(90) *de.bžin.gśegs.pa.\ 'jogs.pa.thams.cad \ rab.du.ži.bar.mdzad.pa.//*¹²³

Second Buddha

(91) *de.bžin.gśegs.pa.\ 'gro.ba.thams.cad.yo_ns.\ su.spyañ.ba.//*¹²⁴

Third Buddha

(92) *de.bžin.gśegs.\ pa.r.n.s.thams.\ cad.rab.tu.ži.bar \ mdzad.pa.//*¹²⁵

¹²³ "The Tathāgata who pacifies all ..." 'jogs pa is probably misread.

¹²⁴ "The Tathāgata who completely purifies (read: sbyoñ ba) all living beings."

Others illegible!

Third row, first Buddha: Nandaśrī, the Buddha of the Zenith¹²⁶

(93) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa.dga'.ba'i.\ dpal.||*

Second Buddha: Candanaśrī, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession¹²⁷

(94) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa.tsan.dan.gyi.dpal.||*

Third Buddha: *Vira¹²⁸

(95) *de.bzin.gśegs.pa.\ dpa'.po.||*

Sixth Buddha: Viśvabhū (°bhuj) the third of the Seven Heroic Buddhas

(96) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ 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.gśegs.\ pa.'od.sruñ.||*

All others illegible.

West wall

Nothing of the first row could be read.

Second row, first Buddha: Vimala, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession¹²⁹

¹²⁵ "The Tathagata 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.

(98) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa.dri.ma.myed.pa.||*

Third row, first Buddha, Aśoka-?¹³⁰

(99) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa.ñ.nan.myed.pa'i \ ...*

Third row, eighth(?) Buddha: most probably Suparikīrtitanāmaśrī (mTshan dpal [šin tu] yoñs bsgrags), one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession¹³¹

(100) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa tshan.dpal. ≠ ≠ \ yoñs.bsgrags.||*

Fourth row, second Buddha from the right: Yuddhajaya (g.Yul las [šin tu mnam par] rgyal ba), one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession¹³²

(101) *de.bzin.gśegs.\ pa.g-yul.las ...*

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

¹³⁰ Most probably Aśokaśrī/Mya ñan med pa'i dpal, one of the 35 Buddhas of Confession (BIT 67, 2320) and the Buddha of the South (BIT 1085 and caption 73).

¹³¹ BIT 74, 2327.

¹³² BIT 77, 2330.

AMBULATORY

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

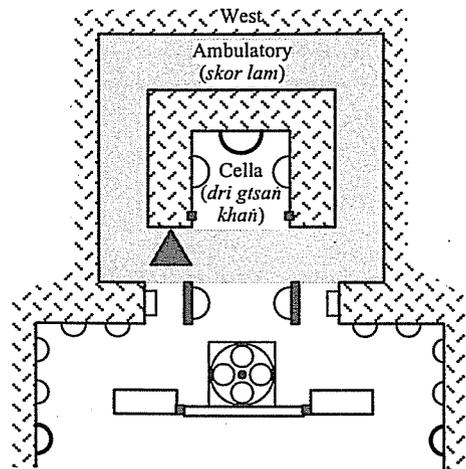


Fig. 16: The Ambulatory (*skor lam*); the triangle indicates the location of the Renovation Inscription

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 Mahābodhisattvas, 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.¹³³

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

¹³³ For a more detailed description of the Ambulatory cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1997: Chapter V.4. The depiction above the Renovation Inscription is described with the Cella at the beginning of Chapter V.3.

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. Ghersi which has almost completely disappeared by now.

CAPTIONS ON THE PICTURE ACCOMPANYING THE RENOVATION INSCRIPTION¹³⁴

Some of the figures depicted in the assembly around the central figure, presumably Byañ 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.¹³⁵

s JP1984 278, CL94 69,31, 69,32; f CL94 123,35

- (102) $gz^{136}i'.mal.ba^{137}.dbañ.phyug.$
 $m \dot{z}/n \neq^{138}.rum./gu.ge'i.sde./^{139}$

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 dbañ phyug mgon/ mkhar rum gu ge sde*. There is no space left in the first line to add *mgon* after *dbañ 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 smal.

¹³⁶ I noted *g* or *b* for the first letter. However, here also could be an ornament and/or a beginning *śad*. 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, PRITZKER (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 *śad*. Also TUCCI's reading *mkhar* seems possible. PRITZKER (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.

s CL94 69,35, 69,36, 69,37

(103) ... p g.n/par.gi/e.sug
 ... gu.ge['i].sde. | dga'
 ... ≠. ≠ab.dad.pa. |
 ... 'er.// // //

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

understands *gzi' mal la* as a personal name followed by titles. He is followed in his interpretation and translation by THAKUR (1997: 974) with the exception that Thakur notes that there is no place for *mgon*. VITALI (1996: 306) translates: "The Rum Gu.ge community *gZi'mal.la dBang.phyug* castle [is depicted here]", and interprets from this caption and a reference in the *mNa' ris rgyal rabs* about the foundations of *Byañ chub 'od* (*gzim mal blo can gyi dgon tshogs su lha khañ dmar po bzeñs* 62, 1.17–18) that Tabo was the temple of a certain *gZi' mal* community, and that Rum is just another name for *lCog la*, which indicated the region around Tabo (although in ancient times the area designated by this term was certainly much more extensive than the present one, cf. PETECH 1997: n.20). However, there are several inconsistencies with this interpretation, as on the one hand there is no evident proof beside the occurrence of the same name, *gZi'mal*, in both, the Tabo inscription and the *mNa' ris rgyal rabs*, that the place referred to in the *rGyal rabs* is actually Tabo. On the other hand, there is neither a Red Temple evidenced in Tabo, nor does the *rGyal rabs* refer to a renovation. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that *gZi' mal* is to be directly connected with Rum and the Gu.ge community in a way that one can speak of a *gZi' mal* community at Tabo. Also the identification of Rum with *lCog la* is not likely as both names occur in the inscriptions belonging to the renovation period. Thus the extensive interpretation presented by VITALI (1996: 306–309) is certainly too far-fetched.

Considering the scheme of the other inscriptions in the Assembly Hall belonging to the renovation period (e.g. nos. 60–64), it seems likely that *gZi' mal ba/la* is a surname, deriving from the place or the clan of origin, *dBañ phyug* ... would be the actual personal name, Rum again indicates a clan or place and *gu.ge'i sde* the wider region this place or clan belongs to.

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

Pl. 17

s CL94 69,33, 69,34; f CL94 123,36

(104) *gnas.brtan.chen.po.'dul.ba.byañ.chub.// ? ?* ¹⁴¹

ta po.yi.dge.'dun.sde.chen.po.// ¹⁴²

Thus, above the Renovation Inscription the principal donor of the renovation, the royal *bla ma* *Byañ 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 *Byañ chub 'od* himself into it (cf. PRITZKER 1989: fig. 3b and VITALI 1996: 306, n.474).

¹⁴¹ "The Great Elder (*mahāsthavira*) *'Dul ba byañ chub*."

'Dul ba byañ 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.

¹⁴² "The great monastic community of Tabo."

¹⁴³ Cf. TUCCI 1935: 74, Tav. XXV.

¹⁴⁴ 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
 ≠¹⁴⁵ o.d/na/ug.lo

(106) rkyam. ≠ ≠ n.
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
bdas¹⁴⁶

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

=>5<= \ khrom 'u ≠ ≠ \ (chuñ) m/pa

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 brten \ ti ? dge' / yon \ bdag /

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

rum za (rtan) po \ gsug

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.

rhug 'or za / ye šes \ sgron / d/ños ≠ d'i yon \ bdag //

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

rum za gñen tiñ /

¹⁴⁵ m?

NON-HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS IN THE AMBULATORY

THE 32 BODHISATTVAS

Two rows of seven Bodhisattvas each are depicted on the south and north walls of the Ambulatory (cf. Fig. 17). To this group four more Bodhisattvas in the corners of the east wall have to be added as they belong to the same group.

The Bodhisattvas on the south and north walls are identified by captions. Principally, two panels are painted above the shoulders of each of the Bodhisattvas, but often only one has been used. The location of the panel containing the name of the Bodhisattvas is indicated in Fig. 17. Of the four Bodhisattvas painted in the south and north corners of the east wall, belonging to the same group but painted in a different style, no captions are preserved. As the only panel partly preserved there is empty, it is not clear whether there have ever been any inscriptions.

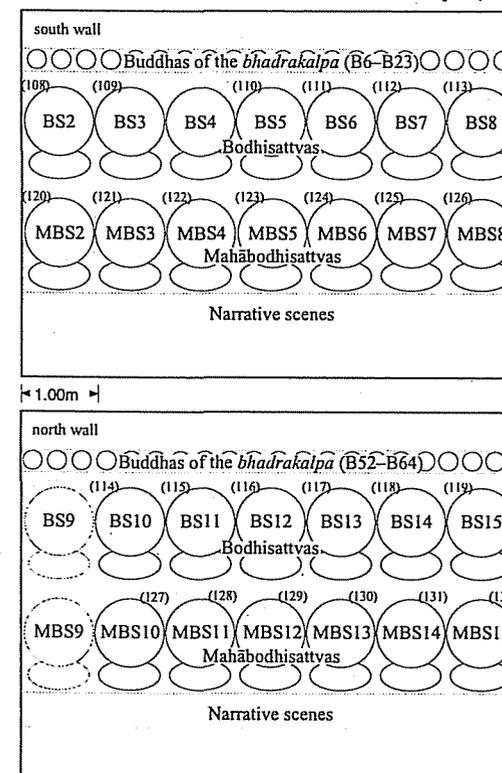


Fig. 17: The north and south walls of the Ambulatory

Among the captions of the Bodhisattvas at least three handwritings can be differentiated. Although the differences are clear in most cases, there are also captions not clearly attributable to a certain group. Therefore the different

¹⁴⁶ Earlier I read bsans.

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 Vajradhātumaṇḍala depicted in the Assembly Hall.

The Sixteen Bodhisattvas

Although the group of 16 Bodhisattvas is known from several *maṇḍalas*, none of these groups agrees with the group of 16 Bodhisattvas represented at Tabo.¹⁴⁷ The one closest to Tabo is the group described in a commentary to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra* (cf. Table 1). There the root *maṇḍala* of this *tantra* is described, the Vajradhātumaṇḍala.¹⁴⁸ In addition to the same Bodhisattvas grouped together according to their respective families this description also prescribes the family colour for each group.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. MALLMANN 1986: 125–7 or the *maṇḍalas* of the Yoga-tantras in the Ngor Collection (BSOD NAMS RGYA MTSO 1983: nos. 27, 31, 39, 40, 41).

¹⁴⁸ SKORUPSKI 1983: 312, n.5; Q 76, 124,4,3–8. The commentary is attributed to Vajravarmaṇ (rDo rje go cha) by SKORUPSKI (1983: xiv) following the Peking Edition. The Derge Canon, however, attributes this commentary to Ānandagarbha (Kun dga' sñiṅ po) (UI *et.al.* 1934: no. 2626).

Table 1: The 16 Bodhisattvas

Direction Colour	The 16 Bodhisattvas as mentioned in the Tabo captions	The 16 Bodhisattvas as described in a commentary to the <i>Durgati- pariśodhanatantra</i> ¹⁴⁹
East blue	BS1 BS2 Gaganagañja <i>nam ka mdzod</i> BS3 Vajragarbha <i>rdo rje sñiṅ po</i> BS4	South yellow Jāliniprabha Dra ba can gyi 'od Gaganagañja Nam mkha' mdzod Vajragarbha rDo rje sñiṅ po Amṛtaprabha 'Od dpag med
South white	BS5 Bhadrāpāla <i>bzaṅs skyoṅ</i> BS6 Candraprabha <i>zla 'od gzo nur gyurd pa</i> BS7 Samantabhadra <i>kun tu bzaṅ po</i> BS8 <i>byaṅ chub sems</i>	East blue Śūrangama dPa' bar 'gro ba Samantabhadra Kun tu bzaṅ po Candraprabha Zla ba 'od gzon nu Bhadrāpāla, bZaṅ skyoṅ
West red	BS9 BS10 Sarvaśokatamonirghātana- <i>mati, mya [na]n kun 'joms</i> BS11 Pratibhānakūṭa <i>spyobs pa brtsegs pa</i> BS12 Akṣayamati <i>blo gros myi zad pa</i>	West red Sarvaśokatamonirghātana mati, Nan soṅ kun 'joms Jñānaketu Ye šes tog Akṣayamati Blo gros mi bzad pa Pratibhānakūṭa sPobs pa brtsegs po
North green	BS13 Maitreya <i>byams pa</i> BS14 Gandhahastin <i>spos kyi glaṅ po</i> BS15 Sarvāpāya(ñ)jaha <i>...soṅ kun 'dre...</i> BS16	North green Maitreya Byams pa Sarvāpāyajaha Nan soṅ kun 'dren Gandhahastin sPos kyi glaṅ po Amoghadarśin Don yod grub pa

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

¹⁴⁹ SKORUPSKI 1983: 312.

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' mdzod): blue; something that looks like a small prayerwheel held in front of the body with the right hand¹⁵⁰; left in *varadamudrā* in front of the left knee.

Left panel (i.e. above the left shoulder of the Bodhisattva):¹⁵¹

s JP1984 378

(108) *de.byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.nam.ka.*

mdzod./ |

Right panel empty.

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

Left panel:

s JP1984 380

(109) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.*

rdo.rje.sñiñ.po./ |

Right panel empty.

BS4 blue; holds a cloth(?) with a cellular pattern¹⁵² with both hands.

¹⁵⁰ The 'prayerwheel' could be the *dharmagañja*, 'treasury of the *dharmā*', 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 Jāliniprabha, which are the options remaining according to the

Panels on both sides lost.

BS5 Bhadrāpāla (bZaṅ skyoṅ): white; decorated vessel with spout in the right hand; left in *varadamudrā* in front of the knee.¹⁵³

Left panel:

s JP1984 384

(110) *[byañ chub] sems.dpa'.bzaṅs.skyoṅ./*

Right panel empty.

BS6 Candraprabhakumārābhūta: white; right hand with crescent on a lotus¹⁵⁴; left fist on thigh.

Left panel: **Pl. 18,a**

s JP1984 202, 386

(111) *byañ.chub.sems¹⁵⁵.dpa'.zla.'od.gzo.nur.gyurd.*

pa./

Right panel empty.

BS7 Samantabhadra: white; right arm held at his side with a long white twig with jewelled ends, a *ratnamañjari*, 'bouquet of jewels',¹⁵⁶ in the right hand; left hand in *varadamudrā* in front of the knee (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 169). ()

Left panel:¹⁵⁷ **Pl. 18,b**

s JP1984 205, 388

(112) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'./ kun.tu.*

bzaṅ.po[.//] // //

comparison to the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-root *maṇḍala* (Table 1).

¹⁵³ Just an example where it appears possible that the captions identify the wrong Bodhisattva: Bhadrāpāla'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/Amṛtaprabha, who is holding a vessel with *amṛta* (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 '*greñ bu* or *gi gu* on the *sa!*

¹⁵⁶ Cf. MALLMANN 1986: 133.

¹⁵⁷ In addition *byañ ch* is written in smaller and more cursive handwriting at the top left corner of the panel!

Right panel empty.

BS8 [Śūraṅgama, dPa' bar 'gro ba]: white; right hand with sword in front of breast; left fist on thigh.¹⁵⁸

Left panel: s JP1984 390

(113) *byañ.chub.sems.*¹⁵⁹

Right panel empty.

Ambulatory, north wall

BS9 not preserved.

BS10 Sarvaśokatamonirghātanamati (usually Nān soñ kun 'joms): red; sword held in front of breast; left fist on thigh.¹⁶⁰

Left panel. s JP1984 244, 394

(114) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.mya.nān.kun.*

'joms.// // //

Right panel empty.

BS11 Pratibhānakūṭa (sPobs pa brtsegs po): red; both hands in a fist side by side in front of breast (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 174).

Left panel: s JP1984 248, 397

(115) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.spyobs.pa.*

brtsegs.pa

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 Śūraṅgama (Suraṅgama), the fourth Bodhisattva in the comparable group from the *Durgatipariśodhana*, this identification is tentatively suggested.

¹⁵⁹ After this three syllables the panel is empty!

¹⁶⁰ Sarvaśokatamonirghātanamati usually holds a stick or club (*daṇḍa*) (MALLMANN 1986: 342–3).

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

Left panel: s JP1984 253, 366

(116) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.blo.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: s JP1984 369

(117) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.byams.pa.// //*

Right panel empty.

BS14 Gandhahastin: (dark) green; conch of perfume (*gandha-śaṅkha*)¹⁶¹ in the right hand; left fist on thigh.

Left panel: Pl. 18,c s JP1984 262, 372

(118) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.spos.kyi*

glañ.po.// // //

Right panel empty.

BS15 Sarvāpāyajaha (Nān 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 s JP1984 375

(119) *byañ.chub.sem[s dpa'] ? ?*

soñ.kun.'dre ?

Right panel empty.

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; *vitarkamudrā*, 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: Pl. 19,a s JP1984 379

(120) *byaṅ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.*

po.kun.tu.snaṅ.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) *byaṅ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.d[pa]'.chen.po.dri.ma.myed.pa.//*

chen.po.dri.ma.myed.pa.//

Right panel empty.

¹⁶³ Possibly *Samantāvabhāsa, MVy 6305.

¹⁶⁴ Possibly *Vimala.

Table 2: The 16 Mahābodhisattvas.

Direction Colours	The Mahābodhisattvas as mentioned in the Tabo captions	Attributes and <i>mudrās</i>
East blue	MBS1 lost	<i>vitarkamudrā</i> left fist on thigh
	MBS2 <i>kun tu snaṅ ba</i>	lotus with crescent on it in the right hand; left fist on thigh
	MBS3 <i>dri ma myed pa</i>	flaming jewel in the right hand left hand rests palm open on thigh
	MBS4 <i>rgya mtsho'i blo gros</i>	right hand in front of breast ¹⁶⁵ left fist on thigh
South white	MBS5 <i>kun tu myed pa</i>	right arm raised at side; ¹⁶⁵ left palm on thigh, fingers towards the knee
	MBS6 <i>blo gros mtha' yas</i>	<i>vitarkamudrā</i> left fist on thigh
	MBS7 <i>thogs pa myed pa</i>	right hand in front of the knee with a small twig or bud; left palm on thigh, two middle fingers stretched
	MBS8 <i>tshoṅ dpon</i>	object with a round bottom, flat top and balls/pearls along the edge left fist on thigh
West red	MBS9 lost	not preserved
	MBS10 <i>śes</i>	right hand in front of breast left hand on thigh
	MBS11 <i>glaṅ po śugs ldan</i>	<i>dhyānamudrā</i>
	MBS12 <i>dpa' bas byin</i>	holding small bunch of buds in front of the knee right; animal skin held near the thigh with left hand
North green	MBS13 <i>stobs-po che</i>	holding diamond or crystal left fist on thigh
	MBS14 <i>... .. pa'i dpal //</i>	right hand at side with a trilobate leaf; left palm on thigh, fingers towards the knee
	MBS15 <i>ye śes 'od gzer</i>	right holding a coniferous twig in front of knee left fist above the thigh
	MBS16 lost	meditation

¹⁶⁵ Attribute not preserved.

MBS4 Sāgaramati: blue; right hand in front of breast, small attribute not preserved; left fist on thigh.

Left panel: **Pl. 19,b** s JP1984 383

(122) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'*.
sems.dp¹⁶⁶a'.chen.po.rgya
mtsho'i.blo.gros.//

Right panel empty.

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

Left panel: s JP1984 385

(123) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'*.
chen.po.kun.tu.myed.pa.//

Right panel empty.

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

Left panel: s JP1984 387

(124) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'*.
chen.po.blo.gros.mtha'.yas./

Right panel empty.

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

Left panel: s JP1984 389

(125) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'*.
chen.po.thogs.pa.myed.pa.// //

¹⁶⁶ Actually an 'a *chuñ* corrected to a *pa*.

¹⁶⁷ Possibly *Amitabuddhi.

¹⁶⁸ *Asaṅga?

Right panel empty.

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: s JP1984 391

(126) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.chen.*
po.tshoñ.dpon.// //

Right panel empty.

Ambulatory, north wall

MBS9: not preserved.

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

Left panel: s JP1984 395¹⁷⁰

*// // *ye.dha.rma ...* ...¹⁷¹

Right panel: s JP1984 396¹⁷²

(127) [*byañ chub*] *sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.chen.po.śes.*
 ? ? // //

MBS11: red; *dhyānamudrā*.

Left panel: s JP1984 364

*/ / *ye.dha.rma ...* ... (three lines)

Right panel: s JP1984 365

(128) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'*.
chen.po.glañ.po.śugs.ldan.// //

¹⁶⁹ *Śreṣṭhin?

¹⁷⁰ Before restoration.

¹⁷¹ Right half of the panel not preserved.

¹⁷² Before restoration.

MBS12: red; holding a bud or a small bunch of buds in front of the knee with the right hand, and an animal skin (actually looking like a fox) near the thigh in the left hand (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 172, 173).¹⁷³

Left panel: Pl. 19,c s JP1984 367

ye.dha.rma.he.tu.pra.bha.ba.he.tun.te.

śan.ta.tha.ga.to.hya.bha.dad.te.śan.tsa.

yo.ni.ro.dha.e.bam.bha.ti.ma.ha.śra.ma.ṇa.

Right panel: s JP1984 368

(129) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.[che]n.[p]o.dpa'.bas*

byin.// // //

MBS13: green; holding a diamond (*vajra*) or crystal in the right hand; left fist on thigh (Klimburg-Salter 1997: figs. 160, 175–77).¹⁷⁴

Left panel: s JP1984 370

ye.dha.rma.he.tu.pra.bha.ba.he.tu na.te

śan.ta.tha.ga.to.hya.bha.dad.te.śan.tsa.

yo.ni.ro.dha.e.bam.bha.ti.ma.ha.śra.ma.ṇa./

Right panel: s JP1984 371

(130) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.*

chen.po.stobs.po.che.// // //

MBS14: green; right hand at side with a trilobate leaf (coloured inside and fringes around); left palm on thigh, fingers towards the knee.

Left panel: s JP1984 373

ye.dha.rma (two lines and a third line of *śad* only)

¹⁷³ Possibly *Śūradatta.

¹⁷⁴ Possibly *Mahābala.

Right panel: s JP1984 374

(131) *byañ.chub.se[ms dpa' sem]s.*

dpa'.chen.[po] d =^f b/s pa'i dpal.//

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: s JP1984 376

ye.dha.rma

Right panel: s JP1984 377

(132) *byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.sems.dpa'.*

chen.po.ye.śes.'od.gzer./ |

Ambulatory, east wall, north corner

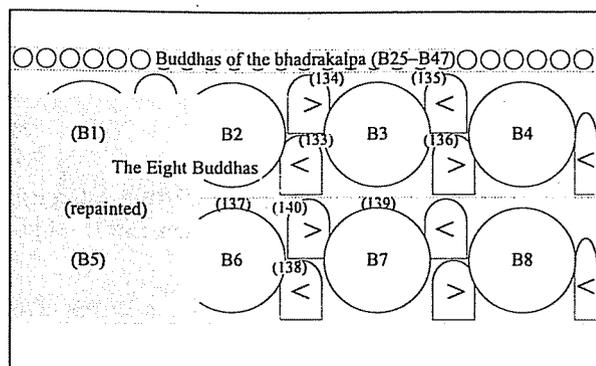
MBS16: dark green; meditation.

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 *pradakṣiṇā*. 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 gśegs pa*), *arhat* (*dgra bcom pa*) and *samyaksambuddha* (*yañ dag par rdzogs pa'i sañs rgyas*).

¹⁷⁵ This group is called the 'Seven Heroic Buddhas' (*sañs rgyas dpa' bo bdun*) (Tshig mdzod, 2916; WADDELL 1895: 345, n.2; according to BIT pp. 26 and 46 Tāranātha also called them this way in his *Yi dam rgya mtsho'i sgrub thabs rin chen 'byuñ gnas kyi lhan thabs*, § 150).



1.00m

Fig. 18: Ambulatory west wall; the Eight Buddhas

agryah, śes rab can gyi mchog) is usually placed, and to his left the disciple foremost among the ones possessing magical powers (*rddhi-matām 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, gTsug tor can]: yellow *saṃghāṭi* 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.*
'byuñ.ba. // // //

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; BIT 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 *Mahāvadānasūtra* (ed. WALDSCHMIDT 1953).

B3 [Viśvabhū/Viśvabhuj, Thams cad skyob/Kun skyobs]: patchworked yellow *saṃghāṭi, dhyānamudrā*.

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

(134) *slob.ma.śes.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 'jig¹⁷⁷]: blue and red *saṃghāṭi* with folds, *bhūmisparśamudrā* (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 186).

The disciple to the proper right of the Buddha:¹⁷⁸

(136) *slob.ma.śes.rab.can.gyi.mchog. 'phags.*
pa.yaṅ.dag. '=x'o'.// //

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 *vitarkamudrā*. There is no caption.

B5 [Kanakamuni, gSer thub] is lost.

B6 [Kāśyapa, 'Od sruñ]: blue *saṃghāṭi* with folds, both hands as in *dhyānamudrā* 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 (*buddhapātramudrā*).¹⁷⁹

On the dividing line above this Buddha is written:

(137) *de.bzin.gśegs.pa.dgra.bcom.ba.yaṅ.dag.par. #gs*

¹⁷⁷ Höbögirin III, 196: Log pa dañ sel.

¹⁷⁸ The *Mahāvadānasūtra* names Saṃjīva and Vidura as the most eminent disciples of Krakucchanda, both names appear not to conform with the one fragmentarily preserved at Tabo.

¹⁷⁹ SAUNDERS 1985: 113. Today the hands of the Buddha are certainly somewhat distorted by restoration and repainting.

The disciple to the proper left of the Buddha (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 189).¹⁸⁰ s CL91 51,18

- (138) *slob.ma.rdzu.'phrul.can.gyi.*
mchog.'phags.pa.rkañ.gñis.
spyod. // //

B7 Śākyamuni: red *saṃghāṭi*, *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*.

On the dividing line above the Buddha is written:

- (139) *de.bzin.gśegs.pa.dgra.mcom.ba.yaṅ.dag.par.rdzogs.pa'i.*
saṅs.rgyas. | śag.kya.thub.pa

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.śes.rab.can.gyi.* s CL94 67,14, 67,15
mchog.'phags.pa.śa.ri'i
bu.// //

B8 Jina Maitreya: green *saṃghāṭi* 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.bzin.gśegs.pa.dgra'.bcom.ba.yaṅ.dag.par.rdzogs.pa'i.*
saṅs.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.

THE BUDDHAS OF THE BHADRAKALPA

On the outer and inner walls of the Ambulatory the Buddhas of the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* are found. At least the names of the first 200 of the Buddhas mentioned in the *sūtra* have been written on the walls of the Ambulatory. The beginning of the list on the outer wall in the south-east corner is marked by a narrative scene. It shows the kneeling Bodhisattva Pramuditarāja (mChog dga' rgyal po), the interlocutor of the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra*, questioning the Buddha Śākyamuni (of which only the halo and a part of the throne are preserved). Behind Pramuditarāja some of the closest disciples of Śākyamuni are depicted. Each figure of the scene has been identified by a caption.

Beginning in this corner, the names are arranged in the direction of *pradakṣiṇā* along the south, west, and north sides of the outer wall of the Ambulatory. The succession is then interrupted in the north part of the east wall, where the row of Buddhas is continued in a different style of painting covering the middle portion of the east wall. In this part the captions have never been filled in, although, considering the gap of eleven names between the last Buddha mentioned here and the Buddha mentioned on the inner west wall of the Ambulatory, where the list was continued, it was originally planned that they would be filled in as well.¹⁸²

The sequence was then continued only on the inner west and north walls of the Ambulatory. There the names are written on the yellow dividing line above the respective Buddha. The list of names continues in the top row of Buddhas, in the south corner of the west wall, and proceeds on the north wall. In this way the names in the first three rows were filled in. While the second row also proceeds on the north wall, the third row was only identified on the west wall. Thus on the inner walls of the Ambulatory, too, the names were arranged in the direction of *pradakṣiṇā*, but now against the direction of writing (i.e. from left to right).

The names of the Thousand Buddhas were read on different occasions either from some distance standing on a ladder or from the scaffolding erected by the A.S.I. for restoration work. In the last instance the readings are more reliable and detailed. Usually there was only one occasion to read them. Therefore most of the readings are

¹⁸² It is also possible that the row of Buddhas was continued here originally and the captions filled in, but that the section was subsequently repainted only a relatively short period later.

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.¹⁸³ It appears that the captions also have been filled in this order.

Ambulatory, outer walls

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 *añjalimudrā*, 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).¹⁸⁴

Left panel:

- (143) *phags.pa. byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.mchog.*
rab.'byord. tu.dga'.ba'i.rgyal.pos./ bcom.
 // ¹⁸⁵ *ldan.'das.la.zu.ba.* // ¹⁸⁶

Right panel:

- (144) **| /bcom.ldan.'das.śag.kya.thub.*
[pa].mñan.yod.na.bzugs.te./ |dge.
sloñ.'bum.dañ.byañ.chub.sems.dpa'.
*bye.ba.phrag.brgyad.bcu.dañ.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."

In addition there were other captions around the group of monks, of which hardly anything is legible today. It seems that they all began with *'phags pa*. In the lower right corner one name is legible:

- (145) ... *pa.'od.sruñ*
 // // ¹⁸⁸

The captions mentioning the Bodhisattva Pramuditarāja and Śākyamuni clearly refer to the beginning of the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra*, while the monks named in the captions are not named in the *sūtra*. The monks depicted are the most eminent disciples of Buddha Śākyamuni. Beside the names Subhūti and (Mahā-) Kāśyapa preserved, several others of the monks, presumably Śāriputra, Ānanda, Maudgalyāyana and others,¹⁸⁹ were once identified by captions.

Ambulatory, south wall

After this initial scene the rows of Buddhas commence on the south wall.¹⁹⁰ On the outer wall of the Ambulatory the captions are placed on separate panels between the Buddhas (cf. Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 162). Judging from the beginning of this series, the caption above the proper right shoulder of a Buddha refers to this image. However, the iconographical details given below (colour and *mudrā* for the first 60 Buddhas, only colour for the rest) are actually meaningless, as they certainly do not reflect a particular iconography for the Buddhas mentioned, but are stereotype repetitions independent of the particular Buddha mentioned in the caption. On the inner walls of the Ambulatory all the Buddhas are depicted with *dhyānamudrā*. The iconographical details only have been kept as proof of this fact and as a reference for identifying the respective captions on the spot.

¹⁸⁷ "The Bhagavat Śākyamuni is residing in [the city of] Śrāvastī; 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 1988: 692), were intended. This group also appears in Mahāyāna literature (e.g. the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, transl. LAMOTTE 1975: 258–59). Cf. also the *bhadrakalpika* 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)¹⁹¹ *de bzin gśegs pa \ seṅ ge /*
blue, *bodhyaṅgīmudrā*

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

(B8) *de bzin gśegs pa thub pa //*
white, both hands, the fingers as in *tarjanīmudrā*, before breast; written very small

(B9) *de bzin gśegs pa ma rtag*¹⁹²
yellow, meditation

(B10) *de bzin gśegs pa mye rtog gñis pa //*
green, *bhūmisparśamudrā* or *varadamudrā*

(B11) *de bzin gśegs pa spyān \ legs // // //*
red, meditation

(B12) Caption illegible.
green, *mudrā* beside the body

(B13) *de bzin gśegs pa lag cen*¹⁹³ //
yellow, meditation

(B14) *de bzin gśegs pa ... \ ... can //*¹⁹⁴
white, like *vitarkamudrā* but palm turned upwards

¹⁹¹ That no. 6 is already mentioned here can be easily explained. The Tathāgata Siṃha is actually the second Buddha after Śākyamuni (only Maitreya between them), while the *Bhadrakalpikasūtra* actually commences with the last three predecessors of Śākyamuni (Kṛakucchanda, Kanakamuni and Kāśyapa). As the introductory scene already depicts Śākyamuni, 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 *m[ya]je rtog* for Me tog.

¹⁹³ *cen* or *can* for *chen*.

¹⁹⁴ For *sTobs chen*.

(B15) *[de bzin gśegs pa] ... ≠l de* ?¹⁹⁵
red, meditation

(B16) *de bzin gśegs pa rtsi span //*¹⁹⁶
green, *mudrā* in front of breast

(B17) Caption not preserved.
red, meditation

(B18) *de bzin gśegs pa 'od chen \ ? po //*
blue, *varadamudrā*

(B19) *de bzin gśegs pa grol ba'i \ phuṅ po /*
yellow, meditation

(B20) *de bzin gśegs pa \ ... mdzad //*¹⁹⁷
¹⁹⁸white, kind of *tarjanīmudrā* at side

(B21) *de bzin gśegs pa // \ ñi ma'i sñiṅ po // //*
red, *dhyānamudrā* (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 162)

(B22) *de bzin gśegs pa zla ba // \ // // // //*
green, *abhayamudrā* at side (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 162)

(B23) *de bzin gbzin gśegs pa 'od \ 'phro // // //*
red, *dhyānamudrā*

(B24) Caption not preserved.

¹⁹⁵ This should be *rGyu skar rgyal po*.

¹⁹⁶ *rTsi sman*.

¹⁹⁷ *rNam par snañ mdzad*.

¹⁹⁸ From here until *lHa'i dpal* (no. B37) the names were also read in 1994 (south-west corner).

C. Luczanits

Ambulatory, west wall¹⁹⁹

First Buddha painted in the corner

(B25) *de bzin gsegs pa \ ≠a nan ... pa* //²⁰⁰
Of the following eight Buddhas only some fragments of the names, which have not been recorded, are preserved!
orange, *dhyānamudrā*

(B34) s CL91 58,17, 58,18
de bzin gsegs pa des pa \ || || ||
green, *vitarkamudrā* turned upward

(B35) s CL91 58,17, 58,18
de bzin gsegs pa mdzod \ spu || || ||
red, *dhyānamudrā*

(B36) *de bzin gsegs pa brtan ldan | \ || || ||*
blue, hands in the lap

(B37) *de bzin gsegs ... lha'i \ dpal || || ||*
yellow, *dhyānamudrā*

(B38) *de bzin gsegs pa gdul dka' ||*
white, hands at side

(B39) *de bzin gsegs pa yon \ tan ≠ ≠ mtsom* //²⁰¹
red, *dhyānamudrā*

(B40) *de bzin gsegs pa sgrags can* //²⁰²
green, *varadamudrā*

¹⁹⁹ Read in 1991.

²⁰⁰ Mya nan med pa.

²⁰¹ For Yon tan rgyal mtshan.

²⁰² For sGra gcan!

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

(B41) *de bzin gsegs pa tshogs can ||*
red, *dhyānamudrā*

(B42) *de bzin gsegs pa tshañs pa'i \ dbyañs ||*
blue, *abhayamudrā* at side

(B43) [*de bzin gsegs pa*] ... *rtan* //²⁰³
yellow, *dhyānamudrā*

(B44) *de bzin gsegs pa myi 'gyis*²⁰⁴ *pa ||*
white, *bhūmisparśamudrā*

(B45) *de bzin gsegs pa 'od mdzad ||*
red-green, *dhyānamudrā*

(B46) *de bzin gsegs pa ...*
green, *dharmacakramudrā*

(B47) *de bzin gsegs pa rdo rje ||*
red, *dhyānamudrā*

Ambulatory, north wall²⁰⁵

Three Buddhas and their captions lost.
red, *dhyānamudrā*

(B52) *de bzin gsegs pa stobs sde \ || || ||*
green, *varadamudrā*

(B53) Caption lost.
red, *dhyānamudrā*

²⁰³ For Tshig(s) brtan or Tshogs brtan.

²⁰⁴ Presumably misread for Mi 'gyiñ pa.

²⁰⁵ Read in 1991.

- (B54) *de bzin gsegs pa \ ye ses 'gyes* ²⁰⁶
blue
- (B55) *de bzin gsegs pa // \ ? gzi cen // //*
yellow, *dhyānamudrā*
- (B56) *de bzin gsegs pa // \ tshañs pa //*
white, *bhūmisparśamudrā*
- (B57) *de bzin gsegs pa \ 'od dpag myed //*
red, *dhyānamudrā*
- (B58) *de bzin gsegs pa \ klu sbyin //*
green, hands at side
- (B59) *de bzin gsegs pa ≠ ≠ ≠²⁰⁷ \ gsegs pa //*
red, *dhyānamudrā*
- (B60) *de bzin gsegs pa ...?... mthoñ ba //* ²⁰⁸
blue, *abhayamudrā* at the side of the body
- (B61) *de bzin gsegs pa brtson 'grus //*
yellow, *dhyānamudrā*
- (B62) *de bzin gsegs pa bzañ skyoñ //*
white, *buddhapātramudrā* ²⁰⁹
- (B63) *de bzin gsegs pa dga' po ...?*
repainted, red, *dhyānamudrā*
- (B64) *de bzin gsegs pa 'chi myed //*
blue, *varadamudrā*

²⁰⁶ WELLER has *dgyes!* In another script *la phyag 'tshal* is added!

²⁰⁷ From scarce fragments I noted *son th r*. However, it should be *brtan par*.

²⁰⁸ For Don yod *mthoñ ba*.

²⁰⁹ Cf. above p. 161.

The captions of three more Buddhas are lost. The last Buddha is painted around the corner.

Ambulatory, east wall, north side

white, hands in front of breast

(B69) Caption illegible.

red-green²¹⁰

(B70)

s CL91 21,7

de bzin gsegs pa dgyes par \ 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 *dhyānamudrā*.

West wall, first row ²¹¹

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.

²¹⁰ Below this image there is an inscription in *dbu med*, probably belonging to the green BS below: ... ? / *gyon dkur 'dzog pa* / – “heap together on the left side” ??

²¹¹ Read in 1991.

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- (B82)²¹² green: *de bzin gsegs pa drag sugs can* ^f²¹³
 (B83) red: *de bzin gsegs pa señ ge spags*²¹⁴ /
 (B84) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa 'od n pa* ^f²¹⁵
 (B85) yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa rnam par rgyal ba* /
 (B86) white: *de bzin gsegs pa ses rab rtsegs*²¹⁶ /
 (B87) yellow-orange: *de bzin gsegs pa ... ? ras* ^f²¹⁷
 (B88) green: *de bzin gsegs pa blo bros*²¹⁸ /
 (B89) red: *de bzin gsegs pa yan lag skyes* /
 (B90) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa blo mtha' yas* /
 (B91) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa gzugs bzañ* /
 (B92) white: *de bzin gsegs pa mkhyen ldan* /
 (B93) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa 'od gze* [?]²¹⁹
 (B94) green: *de bzin gsegs pa rtul sugs brtan* ^f²²⁰
 (B95) red: *de bzin gsegs pa bkra sis* /

s CL91 58,16

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 sül can.

²¹⁴ For *stabs* or *stobs*.

²¹⁵ For lJon pa.

²¹⁶ Shes rab brtsegs.

²¹⁷ For Legs gnas.

²¹⁸ Probably misread for *gros*.

²¹⁹ For 'Od zer.

²²⁰ brTul žugs brtan.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

- (B96) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa 'i*²²¹ / *bden pa tog* / s CL91 58,16
 (B97) (Klimburg-Salter 1997: fig. 155)s CL91 58,20, CL94 90,32, 90,33, 90,34
 orange: *de bzin de gsegs pa pad ma* /
 (B98) white: s CL91 58,20, CL94 90,32, 90,33, 90,34
de bzin gsegs pa sred myed kyi bu /
 (B99) lost.
 (B100) green: *ta thā ga ta 'byuñ*²²² *g.ye ses 'byuñ gnas* /
 (B101) lost.
*North wall, first row*²²³
 (B102) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa ? s tshañs pa 'i byin* /
 (B103) yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa rin cen 'byuñ gnas* /
 (B104–107) illegible.
 (B108) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa ? rtsegs pa* ^f²²⁴
 (B109) yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa rdzo ...* ²²⁵
 (B110) white: *de bzin gsegs pa phan bar bzed pa* /
 (B111) yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa rnam par rol ba* /
 (B112) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa mun pan bral ba* ^f²²⁶
 (B113) red: *de bzin gsegs pa sgra gcan lha ≠* /

²²¹ Written རྩ་

²²² Written in red!

²²³ Read 1991.

²²⁴ sPobs pa brtsegs pa.

²²⁵ For rDo rje rgyal mtshan.

²²⁶ Mun pa dañ bral ba.

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(B114) green: *de bzin gsegs pa ri g ... tshan* ²²⁷

Three more illegible!

*West wall, second row*²²⁸

Now the Buddhas are not separated anymore by a vertical line.

(B134) white: *de bzin gsegs pa rdzogs pa* |

(B135) red: name lost.

(B136) green: name lost.

(B137) red: *de bzin gsegs pa bsgon*²²⁹ *ma chen po* |

(B138) blue: [*de bzin gsegs pa*] ... *rten 'od* ²³⁰

(B139) orange-yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa spos dri zim pa* |

(B140) white: *de bzin gsegs pa yon tan mchog mdzin* |

(B141) red-green: *de bzin gsegs pa tshun ≠ ≠ par prul pa* ²³¹

(B142) green: *de bzin gsegs pa señ ge'i 'gram pa* |

(B143) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa rin cen grags pa* |

(B144) blue: ²³²*de bzin gsegs pa skyon rab zi ba* |

²²⁷ For Ri bo'i rgyal 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 dañ 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.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

(B145) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa bdun*²³³ *rtsi 'chañ* |

(B146) white: *de bzin gsegs pa myi'i zla ba* |

(B147) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa śin tu gzigs pa* |

(B148) s CL91 58,16

green: *de bzin gsegs pa rab tu brgyand pa* |

(B149) s CL91 58,16

orange: *de bzin gsegs pa nor bu'i 'od* |

(B150) s CL91 58,20, CL94 90,32 90,33, 90,34

blue: *de bzin gsegs pa ri bo g ...* ²³⁴

(B151) s CL91 58,20, CL94 90,32 90,33, 90,34

orange: *de bzin gsegs pa chos kyi 'byuñ gnas* |

(B152) image lost: [*de bzin gsegs pa*] *na pa che spyin* ²³⁵

(B153) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa rin cen 'byuñ gnas* |

(B154) lost.

*North wall, second row*²³⁶

First six illegible!

(B161) red: *de bzin gsegs pa rnam rol ...* ²³⁷

(B162) blue: name lost.

(B163) yellow-orange: *de bzin gsegs pa mye tog ri bo* |

²³³ For *bdud*.

²³⁴ For Ri bo brtsegs pa'i tog.

²³⁵ For Tshe spyin. Possibly the *pa* before *che* (: *tsh*e) already belongs to *de bzin gsegs pa*.

²³⁶ Read in 1991.

²³⁷ For rNam rol ldan pa.

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- (B164) white: *de bzin gsegs pa klu dga' |*
(B165) red-green: *de bzin gsegs pa spas²³⁸ kyi dbaṅ sphyug |*
(B166) green: *de bzin gsegs pa śin tu grags pa |*
(B167) red: *de bzin gsegs 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 gsegs pa don ... s²⁴⁰ |*
(B188) red-green: *de bzin gsegs pa grags pa mtha' yas |*
(B189) green: *de bzin gsegs pa rin cen lha |*
(B190) red: *de bzin gsegs pa don gnas mkhyend pa |*
(B191) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa blo rdzogs pa |*
(B192) orange-yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa mya nan myed pa |*
(B193) white: *de bzin gsegs pa dri ma daṅ bral ba |*
(B194) red-green: *de bzin gsegs pa tshaṅs lha |*
(B195) green: *de bzin gsegs pa sa'i dbaṅ phyug |*
(B196) red: *de bzin gsegs pa me tog spyan |*
(B197) blue: *de bzin gsegs pa rnaṃ pa 'byes pa'i sku |*
(B198) red-yellow: *de bzin gsegs pa chos kyi 'od la |*

²³⁸ For *spos*.

²³⁹ Read in 1991. Cf. above note 228.

²⁴⁰ For Don mdzad gzigs pa.

Minor Inscriptions and Captions

- (B199) white: *de bzin gsegs pa kun gzigs |*
(B200) orange: *de bzin gsegs pa yon tan 'od gs'al |*
(B201) green: *de bzin gsegs pa zla ba'i žal |*

s CL91 58,20

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

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. Gherzi in Tholing in a temple dedicated to the sixteen Arhats. Two of them were published by G. Tucci and E. Gherzi (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.²⁴¹

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.²⁴² 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 & Gherzi 1934: fig. 238 and republished in Klimburg-Salter 1985: fig. 15. As far as is legible from the photographs the captions read (from left to right):

²⁴¹ On this type of donor depiction in the kingdom of Purang-Guge cf. KLIMBURG-SALTER 1996: 325–31.

²⁴² TUCCI & GHERZI 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 šes 'od, Byañ chub 'od and Ži ba 'od are represented.

- (A1) *|| [phyag na.rdo rje]'i.spruld.pa. | rgyal.po.chen.po.
? [ral.pa.ca]n.gyi.ža.sña.nas. | ²⁴³
- (A2) *|| 'phags.pa.'jam.dpal.gyi.spruld.pa. | rgyal.po
chen.[po] ? ? khri.sroñ.lde.brtsan.gyi.ža sña.nas | ²⁴⁴
- (A3) *|| chos.skyoñ.ba'i.rgyal.po.chen.po. | thug[=>4-5<=]
spruld[.pa.] ≠e ≠.sroñ.brtsan.bsgam.p ? ²⁴⁵

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 gsum mgon po*. Sroñ brtsan bsgam 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 *vajrāsana*, 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 Vajrapāṇi (cf. e.g. Bu ston's *Chos 'byuñ* 144b6).

"The respected emanation of [Vajrapāṇi], the great king (?) Ral pa can."

²⁴⁴ "The respected emanation of Ārya Mañjuśrī, the great king (?) Khri sroñ lde brtsan."

²⁴⁵ Possibly *thugs rje chen po* (*mahākāruṅika*), *thugs rje dbaṅ phyug* or *thugs rje mña' bdag* (as occurring in Tabo as epithet for Avalokiteśvara with the *rigs gsum mgon po*, cf. caption no. 66) as an epithet for Avalokiteśvara, of whom Sroñ brtsan bsgam po was considered an incarnation (e.g. Bu ston's *Chos 'byuñ* 139a2–4).

"The respected great king who protects the [Buddhist] teaching, the emanation of the [Merciful One], Sroñ brtsan bsgam po."

- (A4) */| *lha.btsun.pa./ de.ba.pra.ba'i./*
ža.sṅa.nas. / ²⁴⁶
- (A5) */| *byaṅ.chub.sems.dpa'.chen.po./ | cho≠ sky-[=>?*
lha.bla.ma.ye.śes.'od.kyi.že.sṅa.nas./ ²⁴⁷

Devaprabha 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 bsgam 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 *spruld* 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 Byaṅ chub 'od (cf. Klimburg-

²⁴⁶ "The respected royal monk Devaprabha."

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.

Salter 1997: figs. 5, 139), but they wear plain monks' dress. Seated in *vajrāsana*, performing *dharmacakramudrā*, 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 *thaṅ ka* attributed to the 13th and 14th centuries²⁵¹ or to the so called Rin chen bzaṅ 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 sṅa nas*²⁵⁵ 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 sTag luṅ teachers and others (e.g. the hierarchs and secondary images on the *thaṅ ka* SINGER 1994: figs. 24–27).

²⁵² GOEPPER 1993: 138; fig. 14 following SNELLGROVE & SKORUPSKI 1977: 78–79, pl. xiii and fig. 67. The identification of this figure with Rin chen bzaṅ 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 brtsegs, where a Bri guṅ pa lineage is depicted (GOEPPER 1990). It is to be assumed that the foundation of permanent establishments around 1200 by the 'Brug pa and in particular the 'Bri guṅ pa schools in the region around the Kailāsa 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 sṅa nas* occurs in different variations in colophons and letters, and its meaning has been discussed several times, e.g. DE JONG 1972: 510–1, TAKEUCHI 1990: n.14 (the variants occurring in his letters are *ža sṅa nas*, *ža sṅar nas* and *ža bsṅar nas*) MALANOVA 1990 (According to MALANOVA (1990) in the Mongolian

documents of Central Asia) meant or implied that the person referred to is physically present or that he is at least still living,²⁵⁶ 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.²⁵⁷

Tanjur colophons the phrase *zal sna nas [mdzad pa]* is used in the sense of "(made) from ancient oral [tradition of the text]".

In Tabo the spelling of the phrase is rather unusual *ze sda na(s)* (the *d* being quite clear in captions no. 58 and 59). This probably evidences that the origin of the honorary phrase was not known anymore (at least not to the scribe filling in the captions). In Tholing it was presumably written *ze sna nas* (the *greñ bu* being lost or illegible in the majority of the cases).

²⁵⁶ Cf. the examples of DE JONG (1972: 511) and SCHERRER-SCHAUB (forthcoming) or the examples in TAKEUCHI (1990).

²⁵⁷ Cf. LAUFER 1914: 1135.

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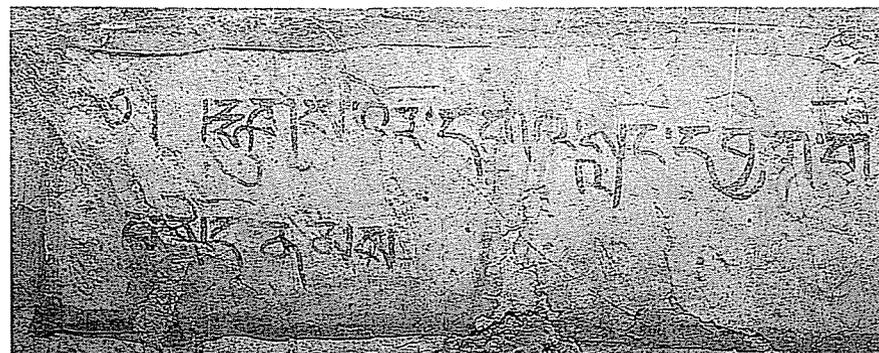


a) The caption of Ye šes 'od (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 21)

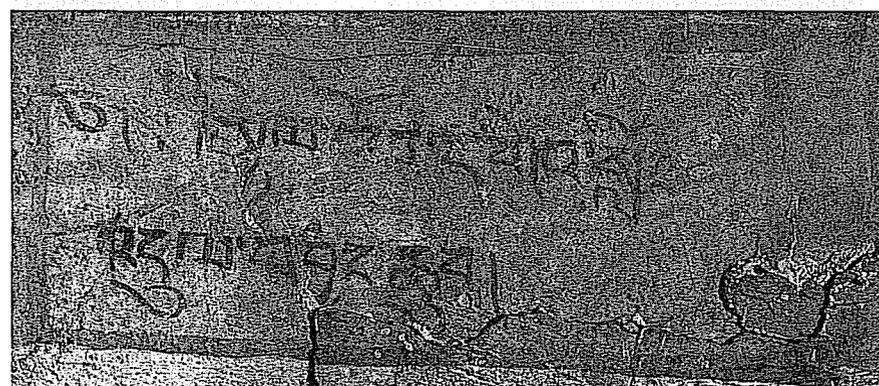


b) The caption of Devarāja (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 22)

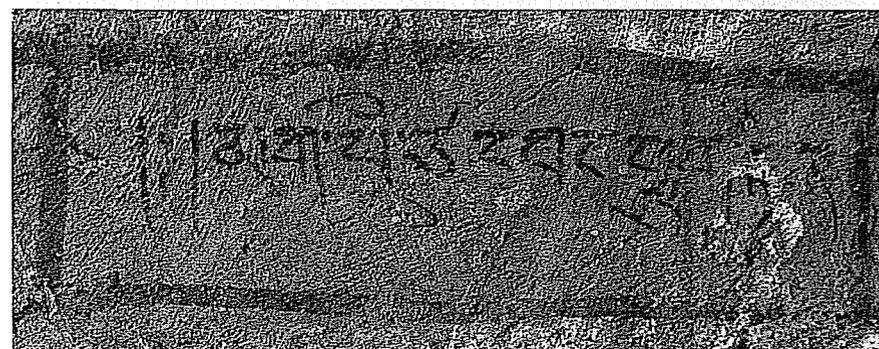
Captions of the Entry Hall south wall



a) rHugs 'or dge' sloñ dByiḡ gi bsod nams (C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 25)



b) sñel 'or dge' sloñ 'Dul ba byañ chub (C. Luczanits 1991, 17, 6)



c) Mag pī tsa dBañ phyug rten (C. Luczanits 1991, 17, 13)

Captions of the Entry Hall south wall



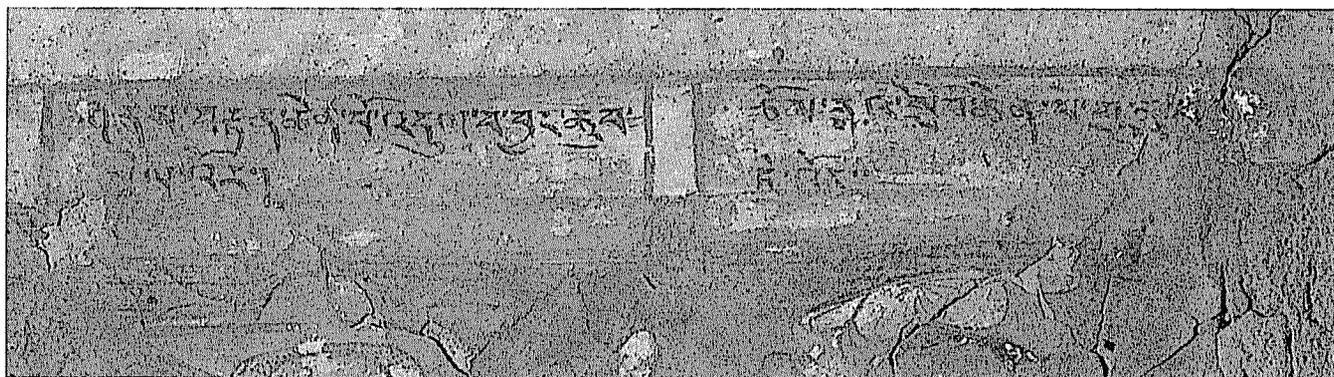
The caption identifying the protectress Wi ñu myin (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 12, 26)



The quotation from the *Pratimokṣasūtra* above the Wheel of Life
(detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 18, 3)



Detail of the Donor Assc with the remains of captions below the seats of the donors (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 34, 28)

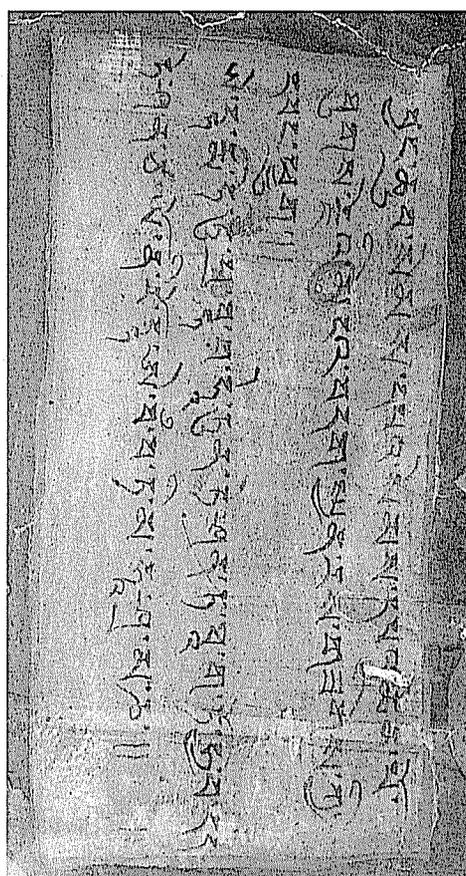


a) *gnas brtan chen po* 'Dul ba chañ chub and Gunavarma[n] (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 34, 25)

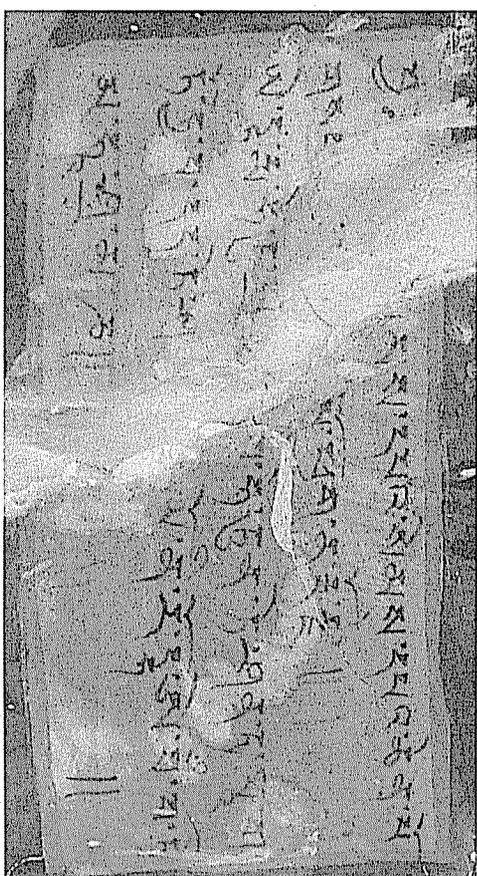


b) ICog la'i sde *dge sloñ* Mos pa bsod nams grag and [Gu] ge'i sde *sman pa* brTson (...) rin cen Mañ 'or (detail of C. Luczanits 1991, 34, 27)

Historical captions in the Assembly Hall

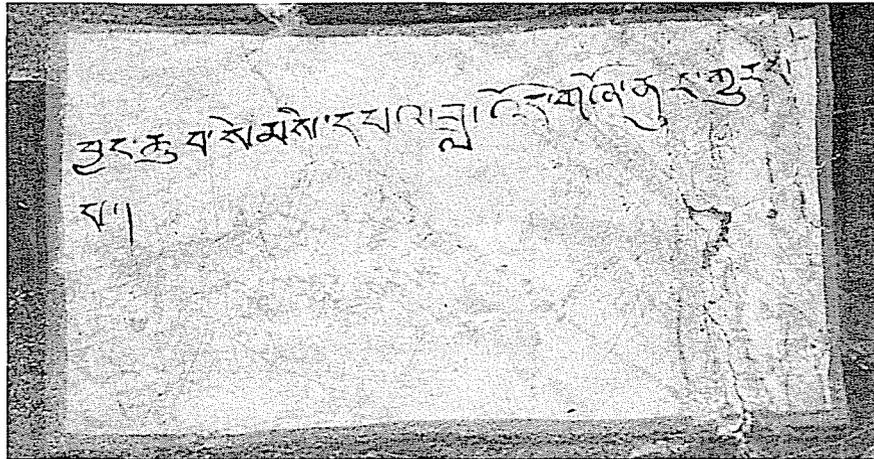


a) Avalokiteśvara (C. Luczanits 1994, 84, 7)

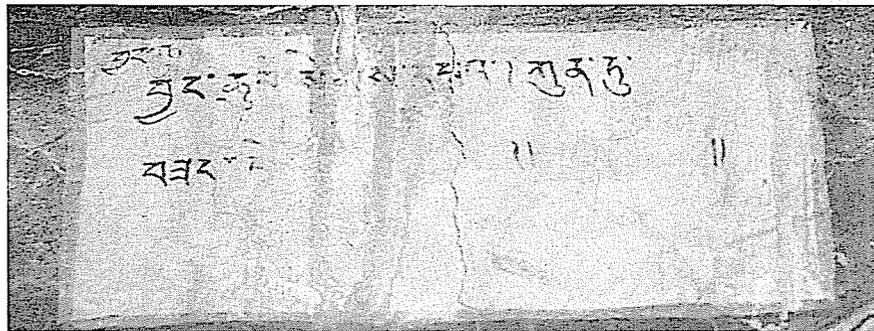


b) Vajrapāñi (J. Poncar 1984, 472)

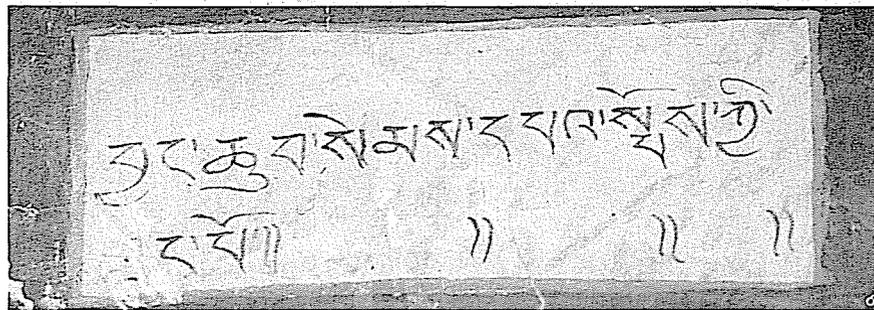
Captions of the *rigs gsum mgon po*



a) Candrababha, BS6 (J. Poncar 1984, 386)

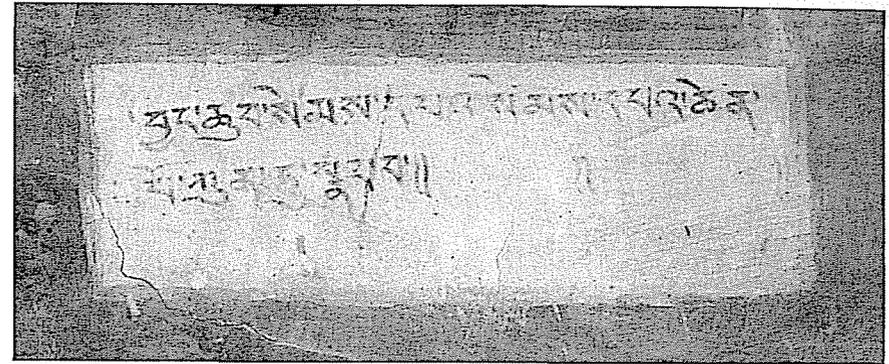


b) Samantabhadra, BS7 (J. Poncar 1984, 388)

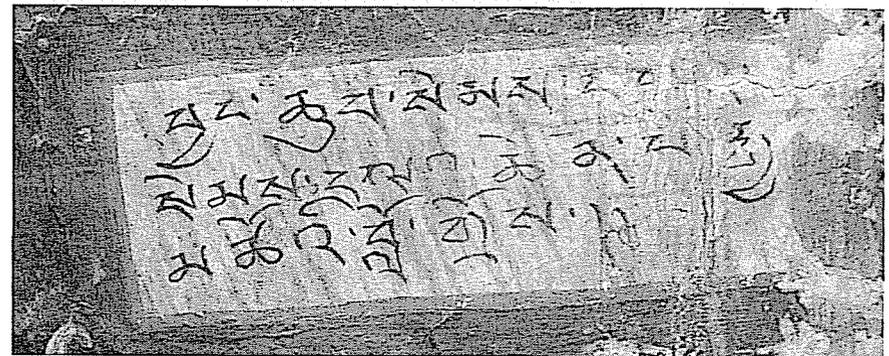


c) Gandhahastin, BS14 (J. Poncar 1984, 372)

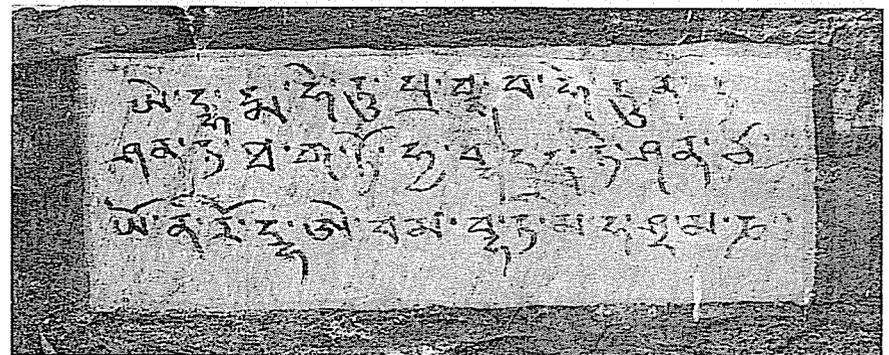
Three captions of the 16 Bodhisattvas



a) *Samantāvabhāsa, MBS2 (J. Poncar 1984, 379)

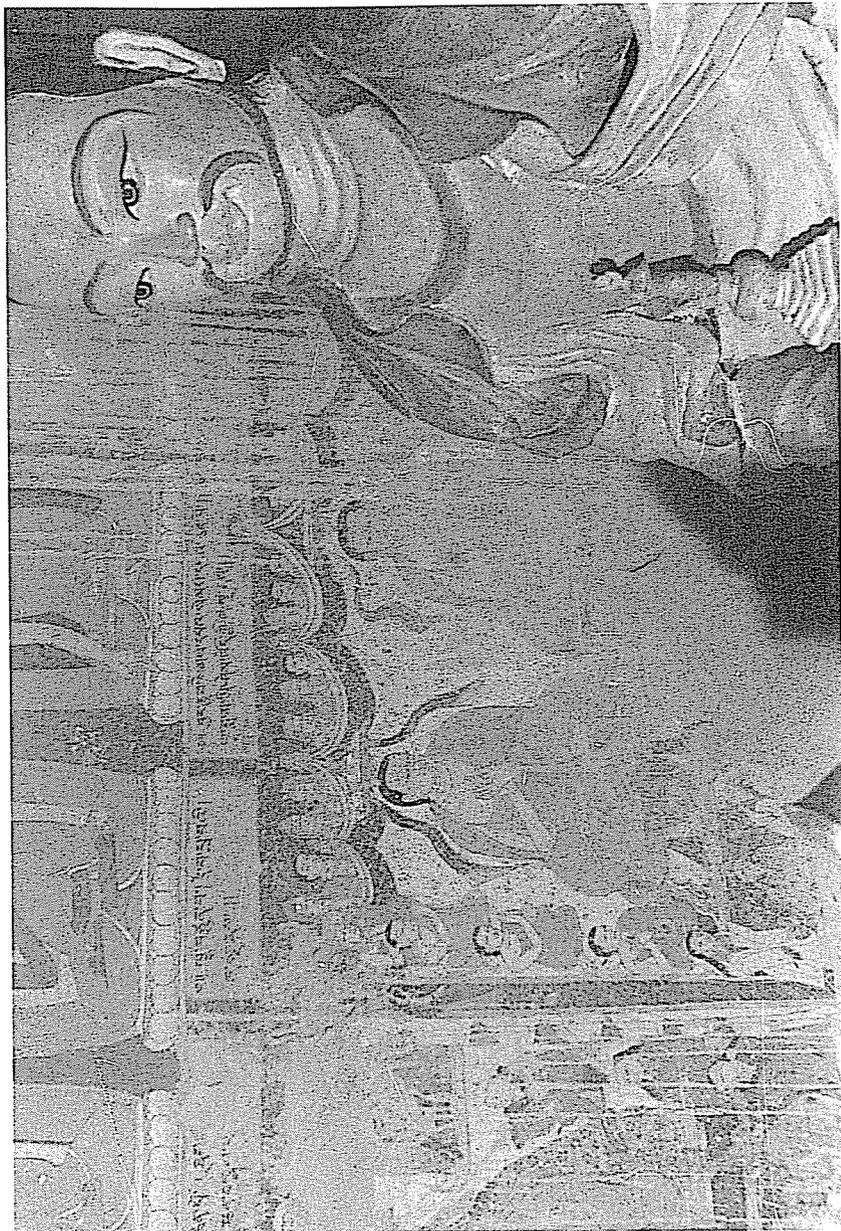


b) Sāgaramati, MBS4 (J. Poncar 1984, 383)



c) The *ye dharma*-verse, left panel of MBS12 (J. Poncar 1984, 370)

Three captions of the 16 Mahābodhisattvas



Ye śes 'od and his sons, Temple of 16 Arhats, Tholing (Tucci Photographic Archives, IsIAO, Neg. Dep. 6571/03)

LATER INSCRIPTIONS IN THE TABO GTSUG LAG KHAÑ

by Elena De Rossi Filibeck

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

These inscriptions are of two different kinds: those of the gTsong lag khañ found on the north wall and the east wall to the right of the entrance to the 'Du khañ are on paper, while those in the dKyil khañ and Byams pa lha khañ 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 khañ and the Byams pa lha khañ 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 khañ (Pls. 21–26) they may be said to be respectively:

Proceeding in the direction of *pradakṣiṇā*, the first paper inscription (Paper Inscription 1), the longest, lies on the north wall of the 'Du khañ between the sculptures of Amitābha and Vajrahetu¹ (cf. Fig. 19

¹ Concerning the identification of the sculptures cf. LUCZANITS 1997.

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THE TABO MAIN TEMPLE

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Edited by

Luciano Petech and Christian Luczanits



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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 Nazionale 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 dbañ 'dus) and the monks, Zangpo and Yeshe Puntsok, among others.

Throughout the years continuous 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

study and the photographic documentation of the monuments. The research in Himachal Pradesh has always been approved and supported by many Indian national and local government officials. We would like to mention exemplarily: Deepak Sanan (former ADC Spiti and DC Kinnaur), his wife Dhanvanti Swadi, and Narinder Chauhan (former DC Lahaul-Spiti). The field research has also been greatly supported by the staff of the Austrian Embassy, namely the former Ambassador C. Cornaro, the present Ambassador K. Peterlik as well as Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Johannes Wimmer and the ever-helpful Munish Bahl among others.

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Last, but not least, the editors would also like to thank Maurizio Taddei and Benjamino Melasecchi 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.

D.E. KLIMBURG-SALTER, *Tabo, A Lamp for the Kingdom. Early Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Western Himalaya*. London–Milan 1997.

Abbreviated Inventory of the Tucci Himalayan Photographic Archive 1928–1935. Synopsis of the Complete Catalogue kept in the Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale Photographic Archives. Compiled by D. KLIMBURG-SALTER, O. NALESINI & G. TALAMO, Rome 1994.

E. STEINKELLNER, *Sudhana's Miraculous Journey in the Temple of Ta pho. The inscriptional text of the Tibetan Gandavyūhasūtra edited with introductory remarks*. Serie Orientale Roma LXXVI. Rome 1995.

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