

**EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE  
IN THE PRE-MODERN BUDDHIST WORLD**

Proceedings of the Eponymous Conference  
Held in Vienna, 14-15 Oct. 2011

EDITED BY  
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WIEN 2014

ARBEITSKREIS FÜR TIBETISCHE UND BUDDHISTISCHE STUDIEN  
UNIVERSITÄT WIEN

## CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Preface .....   | vii |
| Arlo Griffiths: The ‘Greatly Ferocious’ Spell ( <i>Mahāraudra-nāma-hṛdaya</i> ). A <i>dhāraṇī</i> Inscribed on a Lead-Bronze Foil Unearthed near Borobudur. ....  | 1   |
| Guntram Hazod: The Stele in the Centre of the Lhasa Maṇḍala. About the Position of the 9th-Century Sino-Tibetan Treaty Pillar of Lhasa in its Historical and Narrative Context. ....  | 37  |
| Charles Manson & Nathan W. Hill: A <i>Gter ma</i> of Negatives. H.E. Richardson’s Photographic Negatives of Manuscript Copies of Tibetan Imperial Inscriptions Possibly Collected by Rig ’dzin Tshe dbang nor bu in the 18th Century CE, Recently Found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. .... | 83  |
| Cristina Scherrer-Schaub: A Perusal of Early Tibetan Inscriptions in Light of the Buddhist World of the 7th to 9th Centuries A.D. ....  | 117 |
| Suey-Ling Tsai: Historische Inschriften aus der Tang-Dynastie (618-907) im “Kloster des Liegenden Buddha” in Anyue, Sichuan. ....   | 167 |
| གུ་གོ་ཚེ་རིང་རྒྱལ་པོ་: མངའ་རིས་ས་ཁུལ་རྩ་མངའ་རྫོང་ན་མཆིས་པའི་གུ་གོ་<br>རྒྱལ་རབས་སྐབས་བཞེངས་པའི་ལྷ་ཁང་གི་མཚན་བྱང་སྐོར་ལ་རགས་<br>ཅས་བརྗོད་པ། .....   | 193 |
| Nobuyoshi Yamabe, in collaboration with Academia Turfanica: Toyok Cave 20. Paintings and Inscriptions. ....   | 217 |
| About the Contributors .....  | 263 |

## A *GTER MA* OF NEGATIVES

H.E. Richardson's Photographic Negatives of Manuscript Copies of Tibetan Imperial Inscriptions Possibly Collected by Rig 'dzin Tshedbang nor bu in the 18th Century CE, Recently Found in the Bodleian Library, Oxford

CHARLES MANSON & NATHAN W. HILL

Every scholar who has studied early Tibetan inscriptions will know of the journal articles that H.E. Richardson wrote on inscriptions, from the first published in 1949 to the last in 1995. In 1985, Richardson also published a book entitled *A Corpus of Early Tibetan Inscriptions*.<sup>1</sup> The 1949 first article (on inscriptions at Skar cung, Bsam yas and Mtshur phu) was published while Richardson was in Tibet; all subsequent articles were published after he had left in 1950. Thus, without access to the actual stones at the time of the later articles, apart from other authors' publications on the subject he must have relied on his collection of notes, photographs, copying of inscriptions, and rubbings.<sup>2</sup> He also re-

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<sup>1</sup> A full listing of Richardson's articles on inscriptions can be found in the bibliography of Iwao *et al.* 2009: xxviii. Therein 15 articles and two monographs on inscriptions by Richardson are listed.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Charles Bell (1870–1945) left some *stelae* rubbings (made in 1921) to Richardson, which apparently first awakened the latter's interest in inscriptions. Bell's and Richardson's rubbings are preserved in the British Library, London, in a box of 'Richardson rubbings', containing envelopes marked MS35 to MS41. The six envelopes contain rubbings (in whole or fragment) for the inscriptions of the Lhasa Treaty pillar (all four faces), the Kun bde ling monastery pillar (Lha sa), and the Lcang bu pillar (Mtshur phu). Kazushi Iwao has created a preliminary handlist

lied on a copy made for him of the inscription at Rkong po, because he never did visit that site.<sup>3</sup> In addition, it must be obvious to any reader of Richardson's articles that from 1959 onward he referred often to a series of photographs of a manuscript text.<sup>4</sup> The photographs and negatives had been given to him by Rai Bahadur T.D. Densapa (also known as Burmiok Athing, 1902-1988), of Gangtok.

Densapa had informed Richardson, in a letter sent from Gangtok to St Andrews (Scotland), that several of the notes on the original manuscript appeared ("certain degree of resemblance") to be in the handwriting of Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698-1755).<sup>5</sup> The manuscript apparently records the inscriptions of five *stela*e in the Central Tibet region, and from internal evidence the text may be an original record made in the 15th century, with possibly 18th-century additions and notes. Several times Richardson expressed in articles the intention to publish the photographs of the manuscript, but he never did so. Indeed, the photographs in St Andrews seemed to have disappeared, and the original manuscript in Gangtok has not surfaced.

In 2007 one of the authors of this paper – Charles Manson, currently (2012) Tibetan Subject consultant librarian at the Bodleian Library – was then a student at Harvard. Required to write an essay on a Tibetan

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of the contents of the envelopes, and digital reproductions of the rubbings are in the process of being created by the British Library (2012).

<sup>3</sup> Bodleian Library Special Collections, Oxford, holds the original copy made of the Rkong po inscription (in the Richardson Papers collection, MS. Or. Richardson 38, folio 16) as reproduced in Richardson 1954: 157-173. The making of the copy was arranged by Bdud 'joms Rin po che ('Jigs bral Ye shes rdo rje, 1904-1987) for Richardson, in 1950. The Rkong po copy was sent to Richardson in Scotland by Pemba Tsering from Lhasa in March 1951 (as described by the latter in a letter, Bodleian MS. Or. Richardson 32; folios 15, 16).

<sup>4</sup> The first published reference to the photographs appeared in Richardson 1959: 79. Richardson's first publication based on research using the photographs did not appear until his article on the 'Phyong rgyas bridge-head inscription (Richardson, 1964: 1-13).

<sup>5</sup> The letter, undated, is in Bodleian's Richardson Papers (MS. Or. Richardson 32, folios 8, 9, 10).

inscription, he chose the 'Phyong rgyas bridge-head inscription as his subject. The essay necessarily had to be based on information on the inscription in Richardson's 1964 article and 1985 book.<sup>6</sup> The *stela* was reported by Richardson to be ten feet high by two feet wide.<sup>7</sup> Very few words of the original inscription *in situ* remain legible, and Richardson's 'record' of the inscription relied almost entirely on the Densapa manuscript photographic record. With the essay completed, later that year Manson happened to be in the Bodleian and spent a pleasant summer's afternoon searching through the Richardson Papers for any negatives or photographs of the manuscript, but to no avail. Likewise, enquiries and letters to the Pitt Rivers Museum (repository of Richardson's photographs), the British Museum, British Library and Richardson's will-executors in St Andrews also drew a blank: no evidence of the negatives.

In 2009 Manson had the good fortune to be appointed as the librarian for the Tibetan collection at the Bodleian. In late 2010, he started the process of attempting to clear up several boxes of books in a back room at the top of New Bodleian Library. Some of Richardson's books which had yet to be catalogued were in the boxes. Amongst the books Manson came across a folder of negatives with the Das Studio (Darjeeling) logo printed on it, along with several positive prints of a manuscript text, marked with pagination and notes in Richardson's handwriting. Manson immediately felt that this find might be the 'missing' negatives. It was indeed.

Since then, the negatives have been expertly processed and digitized by Bodleian Libraries staff,<sup>8</sup> and are now presented online as positives on the Luna website, specifically at:

[http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/view/search?q=Class=Tibetan%20LIMIT:ODLodl~23~23&sort=Shelfmark,sort\\_order](http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/view/search?q=Class=Tibetan%20LIMIT:ODLodl~23~23&sort=Shelfmark,sort_order)

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<sup>6</sup> Richardson 1964: 1-13; Richardson 1985: 36-41.

<sup>7</sup> Richardson 1964: 4.

<sup>8</sup> With thanks to James Allan and Nick Cistone (Bodleian Imaging Services) and Alex Franklin (Bodleian Centre for the Study of the Book) for their expertise and advice.

They can also be found easily by inputting the terms “bodley luna tibetan richardson” into an Internet search engine such as Google. From such a search, initially 15 photos of the manuscript are presented, but each can be viewed individually and enlarged for easier reading. Information on each page of the manuscript is presented in the left-side panel of its website page.<sup>9</sup>

The negatives are two regular 35mm strips: strip A with six exposed frames and strip B with only two frames, so a total of eight exposed frames, each containing exposures of the manuscript. *In toto* there are 28 pages of text contained in the eight frames, some frames having four pages within (Strip A, frames 1 and 2; Strip B, frames 7 and 8), others having three pages per frame (Strip A, frames 3, 4, 5, 6). As shall be seen below, the original text consisted of seven folios, hence 14 page sides. With 28 pages on the negatives, it would at first seem that there are probably duplicate photographs of each side of the seven folios. This is so, and will be clarified below.

Before presenting the layout of the pages contained within the negatives, it would be useful to give an overview of the contents: the text pages appear to contain copies of the inscriptions at

- 'Phyong rgyas bridge-head pillar,
- 'Phyong rgyas valley pillar (near Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb),
- Rkong po (Bde mo sa) rock,
- Skar cung pillar,
- Lha sa treaty pillar (East and West faces),

thus six inscriptions from five *stelae*.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The original folder and contents are in Bodleian, MS. Or. Richardson 47. Strip A is folio 316, strip B is folio 317. A CD of the negatives, digitized, is also available for consultation at the Bodleian Library.

<sup>10</sup> Richardson presents an outline of the contents of the manuscript and an initial overall assessment in Richardson 1964: 1-4. The order of the list of inscriptions given here is in the chronological order in which Richardson wrote about the inscriptions, once he had the negatives (he had written articles on some of these inscriptions before he received the negatives). The sequence of the inscriptions in the text pages is given below, after the tables of the negatives.

The correspondence of the pages of the text in the negatives and the inscriptions themselves is shown in the diagrams below, after the key.

Key:

Each diagram below represents a negative frame, with the text pages diagrammed within the frame, either four or three pages per frame. The information within each page is presented as follows:

|   |                  |  |
|---|------------------|--|
| [Strip. frame, page]                    | [inser. name]    | [ <i>Old Tibetan Inscriptions</i> (OTI) lines of inser.] |
| [Left margin page marking, recto/verso] | [lines per page] | [first words] [last words]                               |

The '+' after the no. of lines per page (e.g., '8 +') indicates the presence of interlinear corrections, remarks or notes on the page. Details of the interlinear additions are in the transliteration notes, below.

### Eight photo negatives of Tibetan text, the Densapa manuscript

Strip A: (Bodleian) MS. Or. Richardson 47 folio 316:

|                                 |  |   |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Strip A, frame 1, page a:       | Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.                                 | OTI: lines 33-56.                         |
| L.: <i>cha - gsum</i> (recto).  | 8 lines +. First: <i>pa yin na / ...</i>                   | Last: <i>... bod rgyang</i> [sic]         |
| Strip A, frame 1, page b:       | 'Phyong rgyas bridge pillar.<br>Lhasa Treaty pillar, East. | OTI: lines 16-34.<br>OTI: lines 1-7.      |
| L.: <i>cha - gnyis</i> (recto). | 6 lines +. First: <i>btsan po ...</i>                      | Last: <i>... mthon po'i ni dgos</i> [sic] |
| Strip A, frame 1, page c:       | Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb pillar.                         | OTI: lines 1-25.                          |
| L.: <i>cha - gcig</i> (recto).  | 8 lines +. First: <i>btsan po lha sras / ...</i>           | Last: <i>... ma thag du</i>               |
| Strip A, frame 1, page d:       | Rkong po rock.   | OTI: lines 1-10.                          |
| L.: [no markings] (recto).      | 7 lines. First: <i>lha btsan po ...</i>                    | Last: <i>... gces shing mchis</i>         |

Strip A, frame 1

|                                   |  |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Strip A, frame 2, page a:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.                   | OTI: lines 56-71.                |
|                                   | Lhasa Treaty pillar, West.                   | OTI: lines 1-16.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gsum</i> ] (verso).  | 8 lines. First: <i>gnyis rabs khir / ...</i> | Last: ... <i>'phral</i>          |
| Strip A, frame 2, page b:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.                   | OTI: lines 7-33.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gnyis</i> ] (verso). | 8 lines +. First: <i>chu bo chen ...</i>     | Last: ... <i>nye zhing gnyen</i> |
| Strip A, frame 2, page c:         | Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb pillar.           | OTI: lines 25-30.                |
|                                   | 'Phyong rgyas bridge pillar.                 | OTI: lines 1-16.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gcig</i> ] (verso).  | 6 lines +. First: <i>bod kyi dmag ...</i>    | Last: ... <i>'phrul gyi lha</i>  |
| Strip A, frame 2, page d:         | Rkong po rock.                               | OTI: lines 10-21.                |
| L.: [no markings] (verso).        | 7 lines +. First: <i>na / nam du'ang ...</i> | Last: ... <i>gnang ngo //</i>    |

## Strip A, frame 2

|                              |   |                                    |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Strip A, frame 3, page a:    | Lhasa Treaty pillar, West.                  | OTI: lines 16-63.                  |
| L.: <i>bzhi</i> (recto).     | 8 lines +. First: <i>yun gnyis ...</i>      | Last: ... <i>gza' skar</i>         |
| Strip A, frame 3, page b:    | Skar cung pillar.                           | OTI: lines 1-27.                   |
| L.: <i>gcig</i> (recto).     | 7 lines +. First: <i>'phrul gyi lde ...</i> | Last: ... <i>blun kun gyi</i>      |
| Strip A, frame 3, page c:    | Skar cung pillar.                           | OTI: lines 53-56.                  |
| L.: <i>gnyis so</i> (recto). | 3 lines. First: <i>pa dag mi bya ...</i>    | Last: ... <i>pa yin no / (end)</i> |

## Strip A, frame 3

|                                   |   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Strip A, frame 4, page a:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar, West.              | OTI: lines 63-77.                   |
| L.: [page <i>bzhi</i> ] (verso).  | 4 lines. First: <i>la yang...</i>       | Last: ... <i>dgu 'gro'o / (end)</i> |
| Strip A, frame 4, page b:         | Skar cung pillar.                       | OTI: lines 27-53.                   |
| L.: [page <i>gcig</i> ] (verso).  | 8 lines +. First: <i>dbu snyung ...</i> | Last: ... <i>phud</i>               |
| Strip A, frame 4, page c:         | Skar cung pillar.                       | OTI: no lines.                      |
| L.: [page <i>gnyis</i> ] (verso). | [blank]                                 |                                     |

## Strip A, frame 4



|                                   |   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Strip A, frame 5, page a:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar West.               | OTI: lines 63-77.                   |
| L.: [page <i>bzhi</i> ] (verso).  | 4 lines. First: <i>la yang ...</i>      | Last: ... <i>dgu 'gro 'ol</i> (end) |
| Strip A, frame 5, page b:         | Skar cung pillar.                       | OTI: lines 27-53.                   |
| L.: [page <i>gcig</i> ] (verso).  | 8 lines +. First: <i>dbu snyung ...</i> | Last: ... <i>phud</i>               |
| Strip A, frame 5, page c:         | Skar cung pillar.                       |                                     |
| L.: [page <i>bgvis</i> ] (verso). | [blank]                                 |                                     |

## Strip A, frame 5

|                              |   |                                    |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Strip A, frame 6, page a:    | Lhasa Treaty pillar West.                   | OTI: lines 16-63.                  |
| L.: <i>bzhi</i> (recto).     | 8 lines +. First: <i>yun gnyis ...</i>      | Last: ... <i>gza' skar</i>         |
| Strip A, frame 6, page b:    | Skar cung pillar.                           | OTI: lines 1-27.                   |
| L.: <i>gcig</i> (recto).     | 7 lines +. First: <i>'phrul gyi lde ...</i> | Last: ... <i>blun kun gyi</i>      |
| Strip A, frame 6, page c:    | Skar cung pillar.                           | OTI lines 53-56.                   |
| L.: <i>gnyis so</i> (recto). | 3 lines. First: <i>pa dag mi bya ...</i>    | Last: ... <i>pa yin no /</i> (end) |

## Strip A, frame 6

**Strip B:** (Bodleian) MS. Or. Richardson 47 folio 317:

|                                   |   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Strip B, frame 7, page a:         | Rkong po rock.                                | OTI: lines 10-21.                |
| L.: [no markings] (verso).        | 7 lines +. First: <i>na / nam du'ang ...</i>  | Last: ... <i>gnang</i>           |
| Strip B, frame 7, page b:         | Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb pillar.            | OTI: lines 25-30.                |
|                                   | 'Phyong rgyas bridge pillar.                  | OTI: lines 1-16.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gcig</i> ] (verso).  | 6 lines +. First: <i>bod kyi dmag ...</i>     | Last: ... <i>'phrul gyi lha</i>  |
| Strip B, frame 7, page c:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.                    | OTI: lines 7-33.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gnyis</i> ] (verso). | 8 lines +. First: <i>chu bo chen ...</i>      | Last: ... <i>nye zhing gnyen</i> |
| Strip B, frame 7, page d:         | Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.                    | OTI: lines 56-71.                |
|                                   | Lhasa Treaty pillar, West.                    | OTI: lines 1-16.                 |
| L.: [page <i>gsum</i> ] (verso).  | 8 lines. First: <i>gnyis rabs khrir / ...</i> | Last: ... <i>'phral</i>          |

## Strip B, frame 7

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Strip B, frame 8, page a: Rkong po rock.<br>L.: [no markings] (recto). 7 lines. First: <i>lha btsan po ...</i> Last: <i>... gces shing mchis</i>  | OTI: lines 1-10.                     |
| Strip B, frame 8, page b: Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb pillar.<br>L.: <i>cha - gcig</i> (recto). 8 lines +. First: <i>btsan po lha sras / ...</i> Last: <i>... ma thag du</i>                             | OTI: lines 1-25.                     |
| Strip B, frame 8, page c: 'Phyong rgyas bridge pillar.<br>Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.<br>L.: <i>cha - gnyis</i> (recto). 6 lines +. First: <i>btsan po ...</i> Last: <i>... mthon po'i ni dgos</i> [sic] | OTI: lines 16-34.<br>OTI: lines 1-7. |
| Strip B, frame 8, page d: Lhasa Treaty pillar, East.<br>L.: <i>cha - gsum</i> (recto). 8 lines +. First: <i>pa yin na / ...</i> Last: <i>... bod rgyang</i> [sic]                                       | OTI: lines 33-56.                    |

## Strip B, frame 8

One can see from the above that each of the 14 photographed page sides appears twice on the negatives. Strip A's frame 1 has an obscuring mark crossing pages b and c – perhaps strip B's frames 7 and 8 (which duplicate strip A's frames 1 and 2, but in different sequence of pages) were created later as 'retakes' in order to provide good copies. The Luna website's 15 reproductions of the negatives as positives gives the two complete strips plus 13 individual pages of the seven folios (omitting one blank verso page), ensuring no duplications on the website presentation.

The negatives being black and white, there is no immediate evidence of variations in ink colour. However, in the one-sided Richardson-Densapa correspondence preserved in the Bodleian (the library only has Densapa's letters), Densapa makes it clear in his discussion of the Rkong po inscription that the ink of the corrections and interlinear notes added to the manuscript record of that inscription is red.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently Densapa had a handwritten copy made for Richardson, in *dbu can*, with the ink colours copied. This copy also is in the Bodleian, so at least

<sup>11</sup> MS. Or. Richardson 32, folio 7.

there is for one section an indication of which parts of the Densapa manuscript were red.<sup>12</sup>

The page numberings, or lack of them, in the left-side margins of recto pages indicate that the original folios were three parts:

- a one-folio copy of the Rkong po inscription,
- a two-folios copy of the Skar cung inscription,
- four folios of copies of (in corresponding order):
  - Khri Lde srong brtsan tomb pillar,
  - 'Phyong rgyas bridge pillar,
  - Lhasa Treaty pillar, East,
  - Lhasa Treaty pillar, West.<sup>13</sup>

Richardson remarks that the text of the transcriptions is written in three different hands, but he does not elaborate his reasoning for this view (Richardson 1964: 2). An examination of the manner in which the syllable *khri* is written in the various texts serves to confirm Richardson's claim. The angle at which the *ra btags* descends to the right differs between the Rkong po transcription and the Skar cung transcription. The left tail of the *kh* intercepts the *ra btags* in the transcriptions of the Lhasa Treaty inscription, the inscription at the tomb of Khri Lde srong brtsan, and 'Phyong rgyas bridge inscription, but the left tail of the *kh* does not intercept the *ra btags* in the transcriptions of the Rkong po or Skar cung inscriptions (v. Table 1).

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<sup>12</sup> The *dbu can* copy is MS. Or. Richardson 38, folio 11. Richardson briefly mentions the red ink markings in Richardson 1972: 30. A photograph of the *dbu can* modern transcription with red ink markings can be consulted on the Bod Blog website ("An occasional update from the Tibetan subject librarian at the Bodleian Library, Oxford") at <http://yeshiuk.blogspot.co.uk/>.

<sup>13</sup> Richardson also made this division into three, and labelled his prints of the photographs texts X (Rkong po), Y (Skar cung) and Z (remaining group of four). The prints are in the MS. Or. Richardson 47 box. The X, Y, Z formula is kept to in this article, see shortly below.






|   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| Rkong po<br>(1d.1. 4)   | Skar cung<br>(6b.1.6)   | Lhasa Treaty,<br>East<br>(8c.5.6)   | Khri Lde srong<br>brtsan tomb<br>(8b.2.27)   | 'Phyong rgyas<br>bridge<br>(7b.4.30)  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Table 1: The syllable *khri* as written in different parts of the text

Thus, on the basis of pagination and penmanship it is possible to divide the transcriptions into three original texts (X, Y, and Z) written by three different scribes (A, B, and C). Scribe A penned text X which contains the Rkong po inscription; scribe B wrote text Y which contains the Skar cung inscription; and scribe C is responsible for text Z which contains the inscription at the tomb of Khri Lde srong brtsan, the 'Phyong rgyas bridge inscription and the Lhasa Treaty East and West inscriptions.

Regarding dating of the manuscript, Richardson (1964: 2 and 1978: 137) mentions that the Densapa manuscript transcription of the Lhasa Treaty West inscription has a colophon that reads:

*de ltar na rdo rings chu yos la btsugs nas da lta'i chu stagi bar lnga brgya dang dgu bcu rtsa dgu 'gro'o* //<sup>14</sup>

“Thus since the erection of the stela in the water-hare year [823] until now, the water-tiger year, 599 years have passed”.

The colophon of text Z thus puts the year in which the transcription was made as 1422. It must be stressed that this date applies only to the transcription of the Lhasa Treaty inscription, it cannot be assumed that the other inscriptions were copied at the same time. However, it may be plausible to surmise that the two 'Phyong rgyas inscriptions (tomb and bridge-head) were transcribed at the same period, because they are in the same hand and are included with the treaty pillar inscriptions all in one text (text Z).

Richardson discusses the possible rough dating of the 'Phyong rgyas tomb transcription (Richardson 1969: 30) with respect to a notation in

<sup>14</sup> See strip A, frame 5, page a, line 4.

the transcription as to how many lines were legible (29 lines) and how many further lines were illegible and above ground (14 lines).<sup>15</sup> At the time of Richardson's visit in 1949 he found 22 lines above ground. At that time he did some cautious digging with the help of Kazi Sonam Topgye of Sikkim (1925-2009) and an 'orderly' known as 'Brug skad in order to note any subterranean lines, and published in 1969 that the full inscription was 47 lines (Richardson 1969: 35; but Richardson 1985: 90 has 46). As we now know, the full inscription is 59 lines (Iwao *et al.* 2009: 27).

This is not the place for a fresh systematic study of these inscriptions in light of this newly found manuscript historical evidence. Instead our goal is merely to bring these materials to the attention of the scholarly community and to provide such introductory remarks and background as will facilitate the consultation of these transcriptions.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, a few pertinent observations on the text of the transcriptions in relation to the original stones may prove to be of interest.

It is hardly surprising that in numerous cases the orthographic and lexical peculiarities of Old Tibetan have in some way been modernized in transcription. Thus, the Rkong po inscription itself reads *kar po mang po rje dang /* (line 3; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 15), but the manuscript transcription renders *kar po* as *dkar po* (strip B, frame, 8 page a, line 1; i.e., photo 8a.1), a reformulation of the name to look less unusual, perhaps. However, above the line someone – possibly Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu – has corrected *dkar* to *kar* (photo 8a.1). This clearly suggests that the manuscript was corrected against the inscription *in situ*. The *dbu can* transcription of the Rkong po inscription sent by Densapa to Richardson makes clear that this correction, and indeed all the others made in this particular Rkong po transcription, are in red ink. It is notable that the other inscriptions presented in the Densapa manuscript have very few corrections or additions.

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<sup>15</sup> See strip B, frame 7, page b, lines 2 & 3, and Richardson 1969: 29-30.

<sup>16</sup> See below for a correlation of our transcription of the manuscript with the inscriptions as presented in Iwao *et al.* 2009.

Another instance of such an interaction among the texts is the line in the Rkong po inscription *nya grī btsan po myi yul gyī rjer //* (line 4; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 15), which appears as *gnya' khri btsan po myi yul gyi rjer //* (photo 8a.2) in the Densapa manuscript transcription. The notes in red ink place a *nya* above the *gnya'* and a *gi gu inversé* directly atop the *gi gu* of *gyi*; this notation suggests the reading *nya khri btsan po myi yul gyī rjer*, closer to the original but still missing out the *gi gu inversé* and the *g* rather than *kh* of the syllable *grī*. An instance that particularly illuminates the practice of the red-ink editor is the phrase *bdagi srog la' bab pa* (line 7; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 15), which is transcribed *bdag gi srog la bab pa* (photo 8a.5); the word *bab* is then amended to *'bab* in red. The sporadic use of *'* after grammatical morphemes is characteristic of Old Tibetan (Hill 2005: 115-117) but is quite unknown in Classical Tibetan. Consequently, when his eyes presented him with the sequence of letters *l, ', b, b*, the editor with the red pen read them as *la 'bab* rather than the correct *la' bab*.

While the textual history of these transcriptions and of the concomitant editorial practices of the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries is no doubt interesting in its own right, the student of early Tibetan history will hope to find places in which these transcriptions help us to arrive at a better analysis of the original text. Of course, the most clear-cut case of these transcriptions providing information which we would otherwise lack is the inclusion of the *'Phyong rgyas* bridge-head pillar inscription. The utility of the transcriptions in other cases is limited, but there are occasional lacunae in the original stones for which the transcriptions offer useful or interesting readings. Thus, the West face of the Lhasa Treaty inscription has *nyes cī yang === thugs rje chen* (line 17; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 33)<sup>17</sup> transcribed as *nyes ci yang mkhyen thugs rje chen* (photo 6a.1), providing the word *mkhyen* where previously the reading was unknown. However, there is no way to know whether the word *mkhyen*

<sup>17</sup> The syllable *yang* in the edition of Iwao *et al.* is provided on the basis of “previous study(ies), but not reconfirmed by the editors” (cf. the “Signes critiques” in Iwao *et al.* 2009: xix).

was actually visible in the stone at the time the transcription was done, or whether it is a conjectural emendation on the part of the transcriber.

In another case the transcriber seems likely to have relied on conjecture. On the East face of the Lhasa Treaty inscription the phrase [*dbon zhang g*]nyis kyi tshul ci 'dra ba dang // (line 3; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 35) is transcribed *bod rgya gnyis kyi tshul ci 'dra ba dang //* (photo 8c.5). Reading the text *bod rgya* is contextually appropriate, but the conjecture [*dbon zhang g*]nyis of Iwao *et al.* has the advantage of matching the parallel phraseology on the West face – *dbon zhang gnyis* (line 4; Iwao *et al.* 2009: 33) and in our judgment better satisfies the principle of *lectio difficilior potior* since by *dbon zhang* the text means *bod rgya*. The testimony of these transcriptions must be taken with a proverbial pinch of salt.

One might hope that in the future the entire corpus of Tibetan inscriptions will be scientifically documented with a full array of squeezes and advanced photographic techniques; such an undertaking would probably help resolve at least some of the uncertain readings. Until such a result is eventually realized, these photographs of the earlier transcriptions, now available for the first time to all scholars, contribute another puzzle piece both in the study of Tibet's imperial civilization and in our understanding of the knowledge and appreciation of this civilization by later generations of Tibetans.

### Transliteration of the Densapa manuscript

The transliteration of the six inscription transcriptions in the Densapa manuscript is presented below line by line. Supralinear and sublinear additions are indicated in footnotes. In the manuscript transcription of the Rkong po inscription, text X, all the supralinear and sublinear additions and corrections were in red ink (see above). It is notable that the Densapa copyist (cf. n. 12, above) has also added some red corrections which are not featured in the original manuscript (e.g., *btsan* to *brtsan*, *ri* to *ri* for lines 1 and 2 of the Rkong po inscription transcription). It is not known whether the additions for texts Y and Z were in red ink.

In keeping with the Vienna tradition, the following signs and conventions are used:

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| { 1 }, { 2 }, etc. | Beginning of a line in the manuscript   |
| *                  | <i>dbu</i>  |
| /                  | <i>shad</i>   |
| :                  | <i>double tsheg</i> (frequently used instead of a <i>shad</i> or double <i>shad</i> )                 |
| ï                  | <i>gi gu inversé</i>  |
| m̄                 | <i>bindu</i> (frequently used instead of a <i>ma rjes 'jug</i> ; e.g., <i>nam̄</i> [for <i>nam</i> ]) |
| d̄                 | <i>d inversé</i> (occasionally used instead of -gs; e.g., <i>bzhud̄</i> [for <i>bzhugs</i> ])         |

In Iwao *et al.* 2009, the square brackets containing three numbers refer to the line reference of the relevant inscription, e.g., [002] for line 2, [027] for line 27. These references are inserted in the manuscript transliteration.

Our thanks are due to Dr Lewis Doney for checking the transliteration and for his useful comments.

### The Rkong po Bde mo sa inscription (Text X; page 1, recto l. 1 - verso l. 7)

#### Strip B, frame 8, page a

{ 1 } [001] \*\* // lha btsan<sup>18</sup> po khri<sup>19</sup> srong lde brtsan<sup>20</sup> dang/ lde srong yab sras kyi ring la' / [002] rkong dkar<sup>21</sup> po la gtsigs gnang ba'<sup>22</sup> / [003] \* / dkar<sup>23</sup> po mang po rje dang: blon po lha'i zung gis gsold pa' //<sup>24</sup> x<sup>25</sup> thog mar

<sup>18</sup> Red *ra mgo* added by Densapa's copyist, although not present in original manuscript. The copyist may have deemed it necessary as four words further on another red *ra mgo* is given. The manuscript photo has *btsan* and *brtsan*.

<sup>19</sup> *gi gu* correction added to indicate *khri*.

<sup>20</sup> *ra mgo* added in red by Densapa copyist.



{2} phywa ya bla bdag drug gi sras las/ [004] gnya<sup>26</sup> khri btsan po myi<sup>27</sup> yul gyi<sup>28</sup> rjer/ lha ri<sup>29</sup> gyang dor gshegs pa tshun chad/ dri gum<sup>30</sup> btsan po phan chad/ gdung rabs<sup>31</sup> bdun gyi<sup>32</sup> bar du: phyng ba stag

{3} [005] rtse na bzhugs bzhugs/ dri<sup>33</sup> gum<sup>34</sup> btsan po'i sras: gtsen<sup>35</sup> nya khi<sup>36</sup> dang: gcung sha<sup>37</sup> khi gnyis las: gcung sha<sup>38</sup> khi ni lha btsan po/ gtsen<sup>39</sup> nya khi<sup>40</sup> [006] ni rkong yul du bzhugs ste/ gtsen<sup>41</sup>

{4} dkar<sup>42</sup> po ni<sup>43</sup>/ thog mar<sup>44</sup> yas gshegs pa'i tshe: mched gnyis kyis: sku bla gnyan po gsol ba dang: sku bla de mo dang bshos pa'i [007] lha bdag bgyid<sup>45</sup> kyis kyang: lha sras kyis<sup>46</sup>: sku'i

<sup>21</sup> *d* in red.

<sup>22</sup> ' in red.

<sup>23</sup> Supralinear addition: *kar* (red).

<sup>24</sup> The first *shad* seems to impinge on the '.

<sup>25</sup> 'x' indicates a mark, somewhat like a '2' in red: perhaps it is the scribes indication of the start of the quoted petition.

<sup>26</sup> Supralinear addition: *nya* (red).

<sup>27</sup> Densapa copyist has *ya btags* in red.

<sup>28</sup> *gi gu* correction added: *gyi* (red).

<sup>29</sup> *gi gu* correction added: *ri* (red).

<sup>30</sup> Supralinear *bum* (red).

<sup>31</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *s*.

<sup>32</sup> Supralinear correction: *kyi* (red).

<sup>33</sup> *gi gu* correction added: *dri* (red).

<sup>34</sup> Supralinear *bum* (red).

<sup>35</sup> Densapa copyist has 'hook' of *ts* in red (unnecessarily?).

<sup>36</sup> Supralinear *khri* (red).

<sup>37</sup> Supralinear *tha* (red).

<sup>38</sup> Supralinear *tha* (red).

<sup>39</sup> Densapa copyist has 'hook' *ts* in red (unnecessarily?).

<sup>40</sup> Supralinear *khri* (red).

<sup>41</sup> Densapa copyist has 'hook' of *ts* in red (unnecessarily?).

<sup>42</sup> Supralinear *dkar* (red).

<sup>43</sup> *gi gu* correction: *ni* (red).

<sup>44</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *r*.

<sup>45</sup> Supralinear *bkyid* (red).

<sup>46</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *s*.

{5} rim gro la/ bdag gi srog la bab<sup>47</sup> pa man chad kyi cho gar mdzad pa: srogs<sup>48</sup> 'phongs<sup>49</sup> ma bgyis<sup>50</sup> te/ lha sras kyi chab [008] srid 'di ltar mtho: dbu rmog btsan: yong lha sras

{6} gnaṃ dang 'dra ba'i chags 'og na: gnaṃ kol<sup>51</sup> du gnaṃ ba'ang<sup>52</sup>: ci<sup>53</sup> bas zhig mchis na: bdag [009] cag lta zhig [*vacat*] thog ma mched gyes po<sup>54</sup> nas/ pha myes<sup>55</sup> dang po lha

{7} myi<sup>56</sup> ma bye ba<sup>57</sup> tshun chad: bde skyid cing/ chu srid g.yung<sup>58</sup> drung dang 'dra bar gnaṃ gis kyang: deng sang [010] du/ khab so dpon sna<sup>59</sup> dag gis khral gyi<sup>60</sup> sna 'tshal te gtses shing mchis

### Strip B, frame 7, page a

{1} na: naṃ du'ang bde bar thugs<sup>61</sup> dbag<sup>62</sup> mdzad pa'i/ gtsigs tsam zhig ci gnaṃ zhes [011] gsold<sup>63</sup> nas: de bzhin du gnaṃ ste: gtsigs<sup>64</sup> 'phra men sgroṃ bur<sup>65</sup> stsal ba'i<sup>66</sup> dper bris

<sup>47</sup> Supralinear 'bab (red).

<sup>48</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *s*.

<sup>49</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above '.

<sup>50</sup> Supralinear *dgyis* (red).

<sup>51</sup> Supralinear *bkol* (red).

<sup>52</sup> Supralinear *ba'ang* (tautologically?) and triangle of dots above *ng* in the running text. Both are red in Densapa copyist version.

<sup>53</sup> *gi gu* correction: *cī* (red).

<sup>54</sup> Densapa copyist has no *na ro*, instead has a horizontal red line above *pa*, perhaps indicating a *na ro* in *dbu med*, although all copyist's writing is in *dbu can*.

<sup>55</sup> Densapa copyist has *ya btags* in red.

<sup>56</sup> Densapa copyist has *ya btags* in red.

<sup>57</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *ba*.

<sup>58</sup> Short horizontal line (red) above *g*.

<sup>59</sup> Supralinear *snang* (red).

<sup>60</sup> Supralinear *kyi* (red).

<sup>61</sup> Short horizontal line (red) added above *s*.

<sup>62</sup> Short horizontal line (red) added above *d*.

<sup>63</sup> Densapa copyist has added red *d* after *gsol*, and repeats (for clarification?) with sublinear *gsold nas*; in the photographed Densapa manuscript the clarifying *gsold nas* is supralinear.

{2} pa<sup>67</sup>/ [012] \* / btsan po lha sras khri srong lde btsan gyi ring la: dkar<sup>68</sup> po'i gtsigs<sup>69</sup> gnang ba la:<sup>70</sup> [013] lha sras lde srong gi sku ring la: gtsigs<sup>71</sup> snga ma bas bskyed par bkas<sup>72</sup>

{3} gnang ba:<sup>73</sup> [014] nam zhar kyang<sup>74</sup>: rkong dkar<sup>75</sup> po'i rgyal por<sup>76</sup> gzhan myi<sup>77</sup> gzhug<sup>78</sup> par: dkar<sup>79</sup> po mang po rje'i<sup>80</sup> bu tsha<sup>81</sup> 'phel rgyud las stsal bar<sup>82</sup> gnango/ [015] dkar<sup>83</sup> po mang por<sup>84</sup> rje'i rgyud rab<sup>85</sup>

{4} chad na: gcen rgyal po: dkar po'i ming mi rlag par: rgyal por yang: dkar po rgyal btsan gyi rgyud las [016] bsko'o: rgyal btsan gyi rgyud kyang rab chad na: nye 'tshams las:

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<sup>64</sup> Supralinear *gtsig khra* or *rtsig khra* (not clear). Densapa copyist has *rtsig khra* (red), sublinear.

<sup>65</sup> Short horizontal line (red) added above *r*.

<sup>66</sup> Supralinear *stsald ba'i* (Densapa copyist has the same, sublinear, in red).

<sup>67</sup> Supralinear *pa'* (red).

<sup>68</sup> Short horizontal line (red) added above *d*.

<sup>69</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *s*.

<sup>70</sup> Supralinear *las* (red).

<sup>71</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *s*.

<sup>72</sup> Supralinear *bka'* (red).

<sup>73</sup> Supralinear *bar* (red).

<sup>74</sup> Supralinear *zhard kyang* (red).

<sup>75</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *d*.

<sup>76</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *r*.

<sup>77</sup> Densapa copyist has *ya btags* in red.

<sup>78</sup> Supralinear *bzhug* (red).

<sup>79</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *d*.

<sup>80</sup> Supralinear *'di yi* (red).

<sup>81</sup> Sublinear *tsa* (red).

<sup>82</sup> Supralinear *stsald par* (red).

<sup>83</sup> Triangle of dots (red) above *d*.

<sup>84</sup> Densapa copyist has sublinear *r* addition (red).

<sup>85</sup> A note added in margin: *'di yan rdo ring dngos las bshus shubham/*. Densapa copyist has *'di yan rdo ring dngos las bshus*, supralinear (red). Note that no further additions or corrections in Densapa manuscript (or by copyist) are evident in text X.

{5} kha chems kyis: gang gsold ba'i nang nas: spus dang [017]  
sbyard te: gang 'os pa l stsal bar gnango: [018] \* / rkong dkar po'i bran  
dang: zhing 'brog: slan chad mi dbri zhing:

{6} rje blas dang: dpya khral bla skyes mi dbab pa dang: [019]  
stsang ra phywa nas dang: 'bras gang 'bul yang rung: 'bul ba'i sa tshig/  
da ltar gyi las mi bsring bar: lha sras [020] yab

{7} kyis bkas gnang ba bzhin du: lha sras lde srong gi sku ring la: rje  
blon mol te [021] bkas gnang ngo//

### The Skar cung inscription

(Text Y; page 1, recto l. 1 - page 2, recto l. 3)

#### Strip A, frame 3, page b

{1} [001] \*\*<sup>86</sup> 'phrul gyi lha btsan po khri lde srong brtsan gyi ring<sup>87</sup>:  
[002] dam pa'i chos yun du brtan pa'i gtsig [003] bsnan pa/ [004] \* /  
'phrul gyi lha btsan po mes khri srong btsan gyi [005] ring la: sangyas  
kyi chos mdzad de: ra sa'i gtsug

{2} [006] lag khang la sogs pa brtsigs te: dkoog [007] gsum gyi rte  
btsugs pa dang: mes khri 'dus srong gi [008] ring la: gling gi khri rtse la  
sogs par: gtsug lag [009] khang brtsigs te: dkoog gsum gyi rte btsugs  
[010] pa dang: mes khri

{3} lde btsug brtan gyi ring la: brag dmar gyi [011] ka cu dang:  
'ching phur gtsug lag khang brtsigs te: dkoog [012] gsum gyi rten btsugs  
pa dang: yab khri srong lde [013] btsan gyi ring la: brag dmar gyi

{4} bsam yas la sogs [014] par dbung mthar gtsug lag khang brtsigs  
pa dang: lha btsan po khri [016] lde srong btsan gyi ring la<sup>88</sup>: skar cung  
gtsug lag khang [017] la sogs pa brtsigs te: dkoog gsum

{5} gyi rten [018] btsug pa la sogs pa: gdung rab rgyud kyis [019]  
'di ltar chos mdzad pa 'di: nam du yang ma [020] gzhig ma btang na:  
legs pa dpag tu med par 'gyur: [021] btang ste zhid nas med par gyur

<sup>86</sup> Supralinear title addition: *skar cung rdo rings kyi yi ge*:

<sup>87</sup> Sublinear insertion: *la*.

<sup>88</sup> Supralinear *yang*.

{6} na: sdig pa grangs med [022] pa/ [vacat] 'ong bas: da phyin chad/ nam nam [vacat] zhar zhar: 'phrul gyi lha [023] btsan po yab khri srong lde btsan gyi ring la: dgoog [024] gsum gyi

{7} rten btsugs pa dang: sangyas kyi chos mdzad pa [025] mi btang: ma zhig par: gdung rab rgyud kyis yi dam bca' 'o [026] zhes 'byung ba la sogs pa: btsan po yab sras rje [027] blon kun gyi

### Strip A, frame 4, page b

{1} dbu snyung dang bro bor te: gtsigs kyi yi ge dang: [028] rdo rings la bris pa bzhin mdzad<sup>89</sup> do/ 'di ltar yab [029] mes rgyud kyis: dkoog gsum gyi rten [030] btsugs shing: sangyas kyi chos mdzad pa 'di

{2} gcas<sup>90</sup> spras [vacat] spyi<sup>91</sup> [031] yang sdigo zhe'am: mi legso zhes: mo dang rmi ltas<sup>92</sup> [032] sogs te: ci'i phyir yang rung: mi gzhigo: mi spang ngo: de skad [033] ces che chung sus gsol kyis kyang:

{3} de ltar mi mdzad do: btsan [034] po dbon sras sku chung ngur bzhud pa yan chad: chab srid kyi [035] mnga' bdag mdzad pa man chad kyang: dge slong las dge ba'i [036] bshes gnyen bskos te:

{4} chos thugsu ci chud chud slob cing: bod [037] yongs kyi chos bslab cing spyad pa'i sgo mi bca/ nam du yang: bod ya [038] rab man chad/ bod 'bangs las thar par gzud pa'i sgo mi dgag [039] par:

{5} dad pa nam las thar par btsud de: de'i nang na [040] nus pa las: bcomdas kyi ring lud rtag tu 'doms [041] shing: bcomdas kyi: ring lud byed pa'i gtam: chos 'khor [042] nas bya 'o cogi bka' la yang brta te

{6} chos khor<sup>93</sup> gyi las dang [043] dbang byed cing: dge ba'i bshes gnyen<sup>94</sup> pa bsko 'o: rab tu byung ba [044] nam: nged yab sras kyis

<sup>89</sup> Supralinear *du*, with dots indicating it should be inserted here (but probably intended to be before the *mdzad*).

<sup>90</sup> Long horizontal line is above *gcas*, not readable as a 'g<sup>reng</sup> bu (but also is not scribe's usual *na ro* vowel sign), so may be a mark by an editor noting a possibly misspelt *gcas*. The likely correct term is *gces spras*.

<sup>91</sup> Sublinear insertion *la*.

<sup>92</sup> Sublinear insertion *la*.

<sup>93</sup> Sublinear insertion '.

<sup>94</sup> Supralinear *pyed pa* [sic].

mehod gnasu gnang ba bzhin bya [045] ste: btsan po'i phrong na gnasu bgyi 'o/

{7} [047] mdor na: btsan po'i phrong dang: bod khamṣ na: dkoog gsum med [048] pa dang: dkoog gsum gyi rkyen bead pa rnamṣ [050] kyang: ma smad ma zhig pa'i chos so zhes: lha ris kyi khyim yiggi mgo

{8} mnan las [051] byung ba bzhin du mi mdzado: da phyin chad: gdung rab ree<sup>95</sup> bzhin yang [052] btsan po yab sras kyi 'di bzhin du yi dam bca' 'o/ di las mna' kha [053] phud

### Strip A, frame 3, page c

{1} \*\* // pa dag mi bya: mi bgyi: mi sgyur bar: 'jiten las 'das pa dang: 'jiten [054] gyi mi ma yin pa thamḍ kyang dpang du gsol te: btsan po [055] rje blon kun gyis kyang: dbu snyung

{2} dang bro bor ro: gtsigs bsnan pa'i [056] yi ge zhib mo 'di: yab kyi ring la gtsigs kyi yi ge bris pa'i zla la [057] bzhago: [ms. continues with a note] *ces pa 'di skar cung rgyal sde'i rdo rings nyid las*

{3} [ms. note continues] *bcus pa yino/*

[Text Y, page 2, verso is blank]

### Incription at the tomb of Khri Lde srong brtsan (also known as 'Phyong rgyas tomb inscription) (Text Z; page 1, recto l. 1 - verso l. 3)

### Strip B, frame 8, page b

{1} [001] \*\* //<sup>96</sup> / btsan po lha sras/ 'o lde spu rgyal gnas kyi [002] mi'i rjer gshegs pa/ chos lugs bzang [003] po ni gzhar gzhug mi 'gyur/ mnga' thang chen po chin chad [004] kyang byin mi nyamṣ ste

{2} chab srid ni phyir zhing che/ dbu rmog [005] ni shin du brtsan pa'i/ g.yung drung gi gtsug lag chen po [006] bzhin du/ btsan po lha

<sup>95</sup> I.e., *r* with two 'greng bus (for *re re*).

<sup>96</sup> Supralinear title addition: *srong btsan bang so'i rdo rings la:*

sras khri lde srong brtsan/ mi'i rje [007] mdzad pa/ lha'i lugs dang  
'thun par

{3} ni mnga' thang che/ [008] gnam gyi chos dang mtshungs par ni  
bka' brtsan te [009] thugs sgam po'i rlabs dang / bka' lung bzang po'i  
[010] lugs kyis/ phyi nang gnyis su legs shing / chab srid che [011] ba'i

{4} tshul/ nam du yang mi yongs kyis shes par/ mdo [012] tsam zhig  
rdo rings la bris pa'o / [vacat] [013] \* / btsan po lha sras/ khri lde srong  
brtsan/ lha 'phrul

{5} gyi [014] zha snga nas/ thugs sgam/ khong yangs/ bka' brtan/  
zung thub/ [015] thugs stobs che'o/ rang nyid de lta bas na/ 'greng gi  
[016] rje mdzad na yang/ myi dgos pa'i las kyi mu bskyangs pas [017]  
nang

{6} du 'khrug pa dang myi bde ba med cing / bod yongs kyis [018]  
khongs la yul phyug ste/ 'bangs skyid do / nam zhar/ dbon [019] sras  
rgyud kyi chab srid brtan zhing / 'bangs skyid par bya ba'i [020] gdams  
ngag dang /

{7} phyi'i dgra 'dul ba'i byin gyi dgra thabs [021] sngon med pa'i  
bzang po bka' lung du bzhang ste/ yun gyi legs pa [022] yang rgya cher  
dgongs so / lha 'phrul gyi zha snga nas mtha' bzhi [023] phyogs brgyad

{8} du bka' brtsan chab srid che ste/ shar phyogs/ [024] \* / rgyal po  
chen po rgya 'dug pa dang / bar du bka'<sup>97</sup> khon byung nas [025] dgrar  
bsdo ba las/ dang po chab srid phyag du bzhes ma thag du

### Strip B, frame 7, page b

{1} bod kyis [026] dmag gis rgya'i yul thog phyogs su drangs pas spa  
ba'o / [027] de tshun chad kyis chab srid kyis mnga' bdag mdzad ma  
thog la bar du [028] lan 'ga' rgyas chab srid la ma bsdo ste/ rtag du 'jal

{2} [029] dum gsol lo / lho phyogs kyis rgyal po chen por rgya gar  
'dug pa yang / [additional note] *'dir bris pa yan la yige phreng nyiu rtsa  
dgu: mi gsal ba man la yig phreng bcu bzhi/ de nas sa 'og tshud pa la ji  
tsam yod*

<sup>97</sup> Probably *bka'* intended, to form *bka' khon*.

{3} [additional note continues] *ma bris so / rdo rings 'di'i srid du sa las mthon pa yan la mtho nyishu rtsa cig/ zheng che ngos la mtho bzhi/ chung ngos la mtho do yod//*

### Inscription at the 'Phyong rgyas bridge

(Text Z; page 1, verso l. 4 - page 2, recto l. 4)

[As the actual inscription is now almost completely illegible, Richardson's transliterations of the Densapa manuscript are the source for this inscription in Iwao *et al.* 2009: 13-14. Richardson gave details of adjustments he made to a literal transliteration (1964: 7, 1985: 36), however also at line 17 he read *zha* for *zhal* and at line 27 he omitted *kyi* after *chub*.

Richardson (1964: 4-5) stated that he based his arrangement by lines on his "fragmentary notes" of the "sporadic fragments" legibly extant on the stone in 1949. He was able to make notes on the fragments down to line 26.]

#### Strip B, frame 7, page b

{4} [001] \* // <sup>98</sup> lha btsan po yab mes lha dang mi'i [002] rjer gshegs te chos gtsug lag ni [003] lugs kyis bzang / dbu rmog brtsan po ni [004] byin du che'o// [005] \* / lha btsan po khri srong lde brtsan gyi zha [006] snga nas

{5} kyang yab myes kyi lugs bzhin [007] lha'i gtsug lag ni ma nyams gnam [008] sa'i chos dang ni 'thun par mdzad sku [009] yon tan yongs kyis brjod pa'i yi ge [010] nam zhig rdo rings la bris so// [011] chos

{6} rgyal chen pos phrin las su ci [012] mdzad pa dang: dbu rmog btsan po byin [013] gyis chab srid skyes pa la stsogs pa'i [014] gtam gyi yi ge zhib mo gcig ni gud [015] na yod do// [016] \* / 'phrul gyi lha

<sup>98</sup> Supralinear title addition: *'phyong rgyas stag rtse zam sna'i rdo rings la/*



**Strip B, frame 8, page c**

{1} \* / btsan po khri srong lde [017] brtsan gyi zhal snga nas mtha' bzhi'i rgyal po [018] gzhan dang mi 'dra ste byin gyi sgam dkyel [019] chen po dang dbu rmog brtsan pos yar ni [020] ta zhig gyi mtshams man chad/

{2} mar ni long [021] shan gyi la rgyud yan cad chab 'og du 'du [022] ste chab srid ni lho byang shar nub [023] mthas klas par che'o// de ltar chab srid [024] che ba'i byin gyis bod yongs yul che khong [025] phyug du<sup>99</sup> gyurd<sup>100</sup>

{3} pas nang nas kyang nam [026] zhar bde zhing skyid par gnas so// [027] thugs la byang chub kyi spyod pa rlabs po [028] che mnga' bas 'jig rten las 'das pa'i [029] chos bzang po brnyes nas kun la bka' [030] drin du

{4} byino// de ltar 'greng dud [031] gnyis la 'phral yun gnyis kyi bka' drin [032] chen pos ma khyab pa med de/ myi yongs [033] kyis mtshan yang 'phrul gyi lha byang chub [034] chen por gsol to//

**The Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription of 821-822 (East face)**

(Text Z; page 2, recto l. 5 - page 3, verso l. 6)

**Strip B, frame 8, page c**

{5} [001] \*\* //<sup>101</sup> 'phrul gyi lha btsan po khri gtsug lde btsan<sup>102</sup> dang / rgya rje bun bu he'u [002] tig hwang de gnyis chab srid gcig tu mol te mjal dums mdzad pa'i tshel / [003] bod rgya gnyis kyi tshul ci 'dra ba dang / mjal dums

<sup>99</sup> Richardson's 1964 version has *du*; in the 1985 version his scribe (Ngawang Thondup Narkyid) corrected it to *tu*.

<sup>100</sup> There could be a possible reading of a *shad* here, rather than a *tshel*. However, "gyurd/ pas nang nas" would not make sense. The beginning of line 3 might be read as "sas nang nas" which also does not make sense. So the mark after *gyurd* is read as a 'long' *tshel*.

<sup>101</sup> Supralinear title addition: *ra sa 'phrul snang gi rdo rings la/*

<sup>102</sup> Sublinear note: *ral pa can.*

{6} mdzad pa'i [004] gtan tshigs rdo rings la bris pa'o// [005] 'phrul gyi lha btsan po 'od lde spu rgyal/<sup>103</sup> yul byung / sa dod tshun chad/ [006] gdung ma 'gyur bar bod kyi rgyal po chen po mdzad pa yang / gangs ri [007] mthon po'i ni dges

**Strip B, frame 7, page c**

{1} chu bo chen po'i ni mgo/ yul mtho: sa gtsang : [008] zhes: gnam gyi lha las mi'i rgyal por gshegs te/ gtsug lag [009] chen pos ni yun gyi srid btsud/ chos khriṃs bzang pos ni [010] mi'i lugs bsrang / byams pa'i bka'

{2} drin gyis ni nang gi tshis sbyar/ [011] dgra thabs mkhas pas ni<sup>104</sup> dgra btul te/ chab srid ni phyir zhing che/ [012] dbu rmog ni slar zhing btsan pas nam zhar gtsug mi 'gyur/ byin mi [013] nyams pa'i g.yung drung gi rgyal po chen po yin/

{3} de'i phyir/ lho phyogs [014] kyi rgya gar dang: nub phyogs kyi ta zhing dang: byang phyogs kyi gru gu no [015] smel la sogs pa/ g.yas g.yo'i rgyal po sde chen por bya ba kun kyang: [016] 'phrul gyi lha bstan po'i dbu rmog btsan po dang:

{4} lugs bzang po la mi [017] phyogs mi gus pa ni med de/ phan tshun dgyes shing: bka' stsal to cog [018] nyan pa yin/ shar phyogs na rgya 'dug pa: <sup>105</sup>mtsho chen po'i bar/ nyi ma [019] shar logs kyi rgyal po ste/ lho bal gzhan dang

{5} mi 'dra bar: srid dang [020] lugs bzang: gtsug lag che bas: bod dang yang 'thab kyi zla: gnyen [021] gyi sde/ dang po rgya rje<sup>106</sup> rgyal sar zhugs nas/<sup>107</sup> [022] 'phrul gyi lha btsan po [023] khri srong btsan<sup>108</sup> dang: rgya rje the'i<sup>109</sup> dzung bu sheng hwang de gnyis chab

<sup>103</sup> Sublinear note: *gnya' khri btsan po.*

<sup>104</sup> Supralinear *phyi'i* [in *dbu can*].

<sup>105</sup> Sublinear note: *phyi'i rgya.*

<sup>106</sup> Supralinear *li* [in *dbu can*].

<sup>107</sup> Swastika mark indicating note written below line 8 which supplies (in *dbu can*) scribe's omission: *de'i tang gi srid la brtsa gsum lon rgyal rabs gcigi 'og tu* (tu placed below 'og).

<sup>108</sup> Sublinear note: *srong btsan sgaṃ po.*

{6} [024] srid gcig tu mol nas: cang kwan gyi lo la/ kun sheng kong co [025] btsan po'i khab tu blangs/ phyis 'phrul gyi lha btsan po khri lde gtsug [026] btsan<sup>110</sup> dang: rgya rje saṃ lang kha'e 'grwan sheng bün shin bū hang de [027] dang chab srid gcig<sup>111</sup>

{7} tu mol te/ gnyen rtsegs: keng lung gi lo la [028] ma shang kong co btsan po'i khab tu blangs nas/ dbon zhang du gyur [029] te dgyes pa las: bar 'ga'/ phan tshun gyi so so'i blon pos gnod pa [030] dag brtul<sup>112</sup> gyis kyang: gnyen

{8} pa'i chab gang du bya ba : thugs dkyel chen po [031] dag gi tshe/ dmag stongs kyis phan thogs par byas pa dang: phan tshun [032] thugs nongs byung ngo cog la: dgyes gnad dag kyang ma chad par bsrings te/ [033] 'di ltar nye zhing gnyen

### Strip A, frame 1, page a

{1} \*\* // pa yin na/ dbon zhang gi tshul kho na ltar thugs [034] yid ma phebs pa las/ stsan<sup>113</sup> po yab lha 'phrul khri lde srong btsan<sup>114</sup> gyi zhal [035] snga nas/ bsgam dkyel chen pos ni [036] phyi nang med par phyod

{2} brgyad khyab ste/ [037] mtha bzhi'i rgyal po kun dang yang mjal zhing 'dun par mdzad na/ rgyal lha [038] zhig/ gnyen brtsegs ma yin pas/ lhag par chab srid [039] gcig tu dgyes te/ phan tshun dbon zhang dgongs pa

{3} 'thun nas/ rgya rje zheng [040] shing bun bū hwang ti dang mjal dums su mol te/ bka' bon rnying pa ni [041] sbyangs shing bsal/ dgyes pa gsar pa ni slar zhing bstur/ de tshun [042] chad btsan po dbon ni sku tshe gcig/ rgya

<sup>109</sup> Sublinear note: *thong bün* [obscure].

<sup>110</sup> Sublinear note: *mes ag tshoms*.

<sup>111</sup> *ga rjes 'jug* placed below *ci*.

<sup>112</sup> Obscure sublinear note, possibly a *bsdus yig* for *brtson 'grus*. Richardson saw it as *brtson 'grus* (1978: 144); v. sublinear addition *brtson* below the word *brtul* at strip A, frame 1, page a, line 6.

<sup>113</sup> Possible orthographic error for *btsan*.

<sup>114</sup> Sublinear note: *sad na led*.

{4} rje zhang ni gdung rabs gsum gyi [043] bar du/ bka' 'khon gyi gcugs ni ma byung: dgyes pa'i srid zhu ni phan tshun [044] phrad de: pho nya ces pa las/ bka' phrin snyan pa dang: dkon nor [045] bzang pos ni rgyun du

{5} 'grul na/ mjal dum gyi mdo chen po btsid pa [046] bca ba lta bu yang ma grub/ dbon zhang mol ba'i rjes kyang tshar ma phyin par [047] thugs nongs kyis stsal te/ bar gyi gcud rnying pa phran tshegs kyi

{6} [048] dogs 'phrig gis legs pa chen po'i sku don phyi lcigs<sup>115</sup> she dag tu gyur [049] nas/ dgra chos kyis thabs dang: dmag btsan po dag kyang mi brtul<sup>116</sup> du ma [050] rung ste/ dgra zun gyi tshul du gyur gyis kyang: yong

{7} nye zhing gnyen la/ [051] 'phrul gyi lha btsan po khri btsug lde<sup>117</sup> btsan gyi zhal snga nas/ mkhyen pa ni [052] 'phrul gyi tshul chags/ mdzad pa ni lha'i lugs dang 'thun te/ bka' [053] drin chen pos phyi

{8} nang gnyisu snyoms shing: dbu rmog btsan/ bka' [054] lung gnyan te/ rgya rje bün bu he'u tig hwang de dang dbon zhang gnyis/ [055] 'phrul gyi dgongs pa ni 'thun/ legs pa'i chab srid ni gcig ste/ [056] bod rgyang

### Strip A, frame 2, page a

{1} gnyis rabs khrir/ bde zhing skyid pa'i mjal dums chen po mdzad nas/ [057] rgya yul du ni keng shi'i nub phyogs/ sang shi'i drung du/ bod chen [058] po'i lo'i ming: skyid rtag lo bdun: rgya chen po'i lo'i

{2} ming: [059] cang keng lo dang po/ lcags mo glang gi lo'i dgun zla ra ba'i tshes bcu la/ [060] dkyior la 'dzegs te rgyas btsid bzung ngo / bod [061] yul du ni: pho brang lha sa'i shar phyod: sbra stod tshal du bod

{3} chen po'i [062] lo'i ming/ skyid rtag lo brgyad: rgya chen po'i lo'i ming/ cang keng lo [063] gnyis: chu pho stagi lo'i dbyar zla 'bring

<sup>115</sup> Sublinear *shol* with dots leading to *sa yang 'jug of lcigs*.

<sup>116</sup> Sublinear *brtson*; strip B, frame 7, page c, line 7, has a sublinear note below *brtul*, which may be *brtson 'grus*.

<sup>117</sup> Sublinear note: *ral pa can*.

po'i tshes drug la/ dkyior [064] la 'dzed te: bod kyis rtsid gzung ngo // rtsid kyi [065]

{4} rdo rings la bris pa 'di yang: bod chen po'i lo'i ming: skyid rtag [066] lo dgu/ rgya chen po'i lo'i ming: cang keng lo gsum: chu mo yos [067] lo'i dpyid zla 'bring po'i tshes bcu bzhi la/ rdo rings la yi ger

{5} bris so / [068] rdo rings 'di bri:<sup>118</sup> ba'i spyen yang: rgya'i pho nya thabs cung [069] shing yod pa do tse'e dang: thabs tsan shan de bū yod pa/ [007] li kri'u la sogs pas byas so / rtsid kyi rdo rings 'di [071] dra cig/ rgya'i

{6} yul keng shir yang btsud so// [Introductory note to West face inscription follows]

### The Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription of 821-822 (West face)

(Text Z; page 3, verso l. 6 - page 4, verso l. 4)

#### Strip A, frame 2, page a

{6} [Introductory note] 'di yan shar loḍ kyi yige/ nub loḍ la/ [vacat]

[001] \* // bod kyi rgyal po<sup>119</sup> [002] lha btsan po dang: [003] rgya'i rgyal po chen po rgya rje hwang de : [004] dbon zhang gnyis chab srid

{7} [005] geig tu mol nas/ mjal dums [006] chen po mdzad cing: rtsigs bcas [007] pa/ nam zhar yang mi 'gyur bar/ [008] lha mi kun gyis shes shing dpang byas [009] te/ tshe tshe rabs rabs su: brjod [010] yod: zhir rtsid

{8} [011] kyi ming: rdo rings la bris pa'o// [vacat] [012] / 'phrul gyi lha btsan po khri gtsug [013] lde btsan<sup>120</sup> gyi zhal snga nas/ rgya rje [014] būn bū he'u tig hwang de: 'phrul dbon [015] zhang gnyis: bsgam: dkyel chen pos [016] ni: 'phral

<sup>118</sup> Supralinear insertion of ' to give 'bri:. The double *tsheg* after 'bri is possibly a scribal error.

<sup>119</sup> No *chen po*. Sublinear 'phrul gyi [in *dbu can*].

<sup>120</sup> Sublinear *ral pa can*.

**Strip A, frame 6, page a**

{1} \*\* // yun gnyis kyi leg [017] nyes ci yang mkhyen/ thugs rje chen [018] pos ni bka' drin gyis dgab pa [019] la phyi nang med pas/ mang po kun bde zhing [020] skyid par bya ba la ni dgongs pa gcig/ [021] yun ring por

{2} legs pa'i don chen po [022] la ni bka' gros 'thun te/ gnyen [023] pa'i srid zhu ni bstud/ khyim tshes [024] dgyes pa'i tshad kha ni rtseg mar [025] mol nas/ mjal dums chen po [026] mdzad de / bod rgya gnyis: da ltar [027] su mnga' ba'i

{3} yul dang mtshams bsrung [028] zhing: de'i shar phyogs thamd [029] rgya chen po'i yul: nub phyogs thamd [030] ni yang dag par bod chen po'i [031] yul te/ de las phan tshun dgrar mi [032] 'thab: dmag mi drang: yul gyi mi [033] mangs rnam

{4} yid mi ches pa zhig yod [034] na: mi gzung zhing: gdam dris te/ [035] phyir btang<sup>121</sup> ngo / [036] da: chab srid gcig cing: mjal [037] dums chen po 'di ltar mdzad pas/ [038] dbon zhang dgyes pa'i bka' phrin [039] snyan pas kyang 'dul dgos te/

{5} [040] phan tshun gyi pho nya 'dong ba yang: lam [041] rnying par byung na: sngar lugs bzhin [042] bod rgya gnyis kyi bar/ tsang kun [043] yog tu rta rjes la: rtsi zhung cheg tu [044] rgya dang phrad pa man cad ni rgyas phu dud [045] bya/ rtseng shu hyan du phrad pa

{6} [046] yan chad ni: bod kyis phu dud bya ste/ [047] dbon zhang nye zhing gnyen pa'i tshul bzhin [048] du/ srid zhu dang bkur sti'i lugs [049] yod par sbyar te/ yul gnyis kyi [050] bar na dud brtul mi snang: glo bur [051] du dngang ba dang: dgra'i ming

{7} mi grag ste: [052] sa mtshams bsrung ba'i mi dang [053] yang: dogs shing 'jigs pa med par: [054] sa mal na bag brkyang ste: bde [055] bar 'khod cing: skyid pa'i bka' drin [056] ni rabs khri'i bar du thob: snyan pa'i [057] sgra skad ni nyi zlas slebs

{8} so cog tu [058] khyab ste/ bod bod yul na skyid : [059] rgya rgya yul na skyid pa'i srid chen po [060] sbyar nas: rtsigs beas pa 'di/ [061]

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<sup>121</sup> Sublinear *brdzangs*.

nam zhar mi 'gyur bar: \* dkoog [062] gsum dang: 'phaḍ pa rnaṃs dang: [063] nyi zla dang: gza' skar

**Strip A, frame 5, page a**

{1} la yang dpang du [064] gsol te/ tha tshig gi rnaṃs kyang [065] bshad/ srog chags bsad de/ mna' [066] yang bor nas: rtsigs bcas so/ [067] rtsigs 'di bzhin du ma byas sam/ [068] bshig na/ bod rgya gnyis gang gis sngar nyes

{2} [069] pa la bsdig cing: lan du brku sgyu byas kyang [070] rtsigs bshig pa la ma gtogs so// [071] 'di ltar bod rgya gnyis kyi rje blon gyi zhal [072] gyis gshegs/ mna' bor te/ rtsigs [073] kyi yi ge zhib mor bris nas/

{3} rgyal po chen [074] po gnyis kyis ni phyag rgyas btab: blon po [075] rtsigs 'dzin pa la gtogs pa rnaṃs [076] kyis ni lag yig tu bris te/ rtsigs kyi [077] yi ge so so'i phyag sbal du bzhag go/ [ms. additional note] *shu bham*

{4} [ms. additional note] *lho logs la rgya'i blon po'i ming 'dugol byang logs la bod kyi blon po'i ming 'dug gol de ltar na rdo rings chu yos la btsugs nas da lta'i chu stagi bar lnga brgya dang dgu bcu rtsa dgu 'gro'oll*

**Addendum: Recent research on early Tibetan inscriptions**

In addition to these transcriptions uncovered at the Bodleian in 2010, a number of publications on Old Tibetan inscriptions have either appeared subsequent to or were overlooked in Iwao *et al.* 2009. Since that volume otherwise serves as a comprehensive guide to the bibliography of Old Tibetan inscriptions it may prove useful to the reader to have an inventory of these omissions and potential additions, supplied here in 2013 by one of the co-authors (N.W. Hill) of Iwao *et al.* 2009.

Regarding omissions, two inscriptions and three publications went unnoticed there. First, an inscribed bell, badly damaged, probably dating to the imperial era was published by Aris (1979: xxvii and page 35,

plate 6). Second, Neelis (2001: 238-239, 374) published a transcription and an image of the Haldeikish Graffito in the Hunza valley, along with a translation suggested by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub. Third, in addition to Francke's work on Balu-mkhar inscriptions is a paper by Denwood & Howard (1990).

As for additions, an impressive number of new discoveries and new publications have appeared subsequent to Iwao *et al.* 2009:

Hazod (2009: 181-184; 2010) demonstrates that the Zhol inscription was originally erected in Sri, and moved to Zhol at the end of the seventeenth century by Sde srid Sangs rgyas mtsho.

Denwood (2009: 258) draws attention to three short Tibetan inscriptions discovered in Pakistan.

In 2010 a Tibetan bell was discovered in Dpa' ris and has been published by Lha mchog rgyal (2011). The same bell is treated by Pa sangs dbang 'dus (2011).

Alexander & van Schaik (2011) present a stone carving of Maitreya in Ladakh with accompanying inscription.

Dotson (2013: 70-71) published a new transcription and translation of the Haldeikish Grafitto, along with a photo. The same photo also appeared in Scherrer-Schaub 2012: 254.

Although the rock inscriptions of Alchi are not newly discovered, Takeuchi (2012) provides documentation of them exceeding in depth and scope what has been known heretofore.

An eight-folio manuscript on Tibetan stone inscriptions was reproduced by the Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (2011).

Papers treating previously known inscriptions, especially with an eye to establishing their date and authenticity, include Walter & Beckwith 2010, Uebach 2010, and Imaeda 2012. Studies treating the background or interpretation of known inscriptions include Hill 2013 and Iwao 2012.

Both Pa sangs dbang 'dus (2011) and Chab 'gag rta mgrin (2012) have published an edition of the entire corpus of Old Tibetan inscriptions, including a number of inscriptions not treated in Iwao *et al.* 2009.



Chab 'gag rta mgrin (2012) also includes Tibetan inscriptions from later historical periods.

Finally, Tashi Tsering (2012) published a collection of inscription transcriptions in facsimile as a celebration of Amnye Machen Institute's 20th anniversary. It includes monochrome reproductions of Densapa's original manuscript, with the Rkong po inscription transcription reproduced in colour to show the red ink additions. Also the publication includes an introductory essay by Tashi Tsering (pp. 51-72).

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