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## 6

## A Tibetan Guide for Pilgrimage to Ti-se (Mount Kailas) and mTsho Ma-pham (Lake Manasarovar)

Toni Huber & Tsepak Rigzin

Out of the arid high plateau lands of Western Tibet, near the meeting point of the present-day Chinese, Indian and Nepalese frontiers, there rises an isolated, snow-capped 6,714-metre-tall mountain. It is known to Tibetans as Ti-se (or Gangs-dkar Ti-se) while most non-Tibetans call it Mount Kailas. Just to the south of it lies the sizeable lake of mTsho Ma-pham (or mTsho Ma-dros-pa, and Ma-pang for Bon-pos), also called Lake Manasarovar. Mountain and lake together constitute the most well-known natural pilgrimage sanctuary in high Asia. Not only has this area been of great cultural importance to Tibetan Buddhists and Bon-po alike, it has also featured in the art, literature and ritual of the major Indic religious traditions (Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain) for the best part of several millennia.

More recently, the area has held a fascination for Western scholars, adventurer-explorers, spiritual seekers and tourists whose interests lie in Asia. Consequently, a whole shelf-full of books and articles in Western languages have been dedicated to describing, eulogising and analysing the site and its traditions. Yet, within this body of Western sources surprisingly little attempt has been made to appreciate Ti-se and mTsho Ma-pham from the point of view of their most common ritual users—the ordinary Tibetan pilgrims who have for long frequented the region.

The present contribution is a translation of a lengthy extract from a Tibetan Buddhist ritual manual, or "guide-book" (*gnas-bshad*), written for pilgrims visiting the mountain and lake. Although composed nearly 100 years ago, the original text has recently been reprinted in China, India and Europe and is once again in use by Tibetans visiting or reading about the area today. It provides various local representations of the mountain and lake that reflect the ways in which Tibetan pilgrims themselves might understand the region as an empowered and auspicious landscape, and ritually interact with it accordingly.

Its translation may thus be of value not only to non-Tibetans who study the area and its pilgrimages (e.g. anthropologists and scholars of religion), but also to those who now visit the region in increasing numbers as Buddhist practitioners, adventure tourists, and the like. The following brief notes on the text and its author also provide some insights into the composition of this type of Tibetan pilgrimage literature.

## The Text, Its Author and Translation

The full Tibetan title of our text reads, *Gangs ri chen po ti se dang mtsho chen ma dros pa bcas kyi sngon byung gi lo rgyus mdor bsdus su brjod pa'i rab byed shel dkar me long*, or in English "*The Crystal Mirror*": *an Analysis which Briefly Explains the Chronicle of Past Events at the Great Snow Mountain Ti-se Together with the Great Lake Ma-dros-pa*. The short marginal title is *Ti se gnas bshad*. For the translation we have used several published versions (dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin 1992; bsTan-'dzin Chos-kyi Blo-gros 1983; De Rossi Filibeck 1988; L.T.W.A. acc. no. 904), between which only minor variations exist. Some details of the composition of the *Ti se gnas bshad* are given in its colophon. The author wrote it in 1896 at the request of various interested persons, while residing at an encampment north-west of the mountain. Over a period of about two years he collected many local oral traditions and used existing guide-books to compile the text.

The original is comprised of a total of seven chapters covering a great variety of material relating to the site, including cosmology, eulogy, geographical description, history, mythical narrative, polemics and ritual instruction. Our translation covers only chapters six and seven, with these final two chapters constituting the actual practical manual which pilgrims may use to negotiate and interpret their ritual journeys around the mountain and lake. This includes itineraries for circumambulation of both Ti-se and mTsho Ma-pham, histories of specific sites and holy objects (some of which have not survived the Chinese occupation), classical Buddhist, esoteric and mundane accounts of the landscape and mention of the benefits to be gained from correct ritual performances in the area. Included at the end of the text is a translation of a short Tibetan pilgrim's "prayer" (*gsol-'debs*) dedicated to the mountain and its environs. It was also written by the author of our guide-book, at the request of pilgrims he met on the slopes of Ti-se. Although it may seem self-evident, it is worth noting here that the *Ti se gnas bshad* is a specific example of Tibetan Buddhist ritual literature, and moreover has been composed from within a certain sectarian position. These points are reflected in both the way the text alludes to much which would only be apparent to someone actually using it in practice at the site (an oral commentary is also implicit), and the emphasis it directs towards several of the lineages of the bKa'-brgyud-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism.

This last point is not surprising when we learn that its author, dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Chos-kyi Blo-gros 'Phrin-las rNam-rgyal, was the 34th hierarch (*gdan-rabs*) of the 'Bri-gung bKa'-brgyud lineage. The few biographical notes we have on him (summarized from Khetsun Sangpo [1981:429]; rTogs-ldan sPrul-sku

[1964:22a-23a]) begin to indicate why he was interested in the religious geography of Western Tibet and composed such detailed works on the subject. bsTan-'dzin Chos-kyi Blo-gros was born into the aristocratic lHa-klu family of Lhasa in 1869, in the home of the 12th Dalai Lama 'Phrin-las rGya-mtsho (1856-1875). He studied under tutors such as the Lo-chen Nges-don rGya-mtsho, and was ordained in the presence of the 12th Dalai Lama himself. In addition to being the 34th hierarch he was also the 6th incarnation in the 'Bri-gung Chung-tshang lineage. Early at some stage in his life, probably when he was in his mid-twenties, he made the long journey right across Tibet from Khams in the east to sTod (Western Tibet) and Ladakh. He was known in Ladakh for his services to the 'Bri-gung-pa monasteries there. During his stay he established the monastic community of Phun-tshogs-gling in Eastern Ladakh, and appointed the 9th rTogs-ldan incarnation dKon-mchog bsTan-'dzin Dam-chos 'Gyur-med (1878-1944?) as the religious head of the 'Bri-gung-pa monasteries in Mang-yul and Ladakh. Between 1894 and 1896 he made an extensive pilgrimage to Ti-se and mTsho Ma-pham and wrote his comprehensive guide-book for the area towards the end of his stay there. Then later, in 1901 he travelled the pilgrimage circuit through the La-phyi Chu-dbar region of south-western Tibet and composed his guide-book for that area while residing at La-phyi. In addition to his two religious geographies he is known to have written works on various other topics concerning Tibetan Buddhism. He passed away in 1906 at the age of 37. It is perhaps a fitting tribute to the scholarly labours of this author that his guide-books have been so widely used as sources by contemporary Western scholars (e.g. Huber 1990 & 1997, Loseries 1990, Macdonald 1962, Macdonald 1990 and Petech 1978 & 1980) and recent Tibetan writers (e.g. Chos-dbyings rDo-rje 1990).

Purely academic translations of Tibetan literature often tend to be inaccessible to the interested lay reader because of their technical language and extensive apparatus. In order to aid non-specialist readers and practical users, yet maintain scholarly accuracy, a number of conventions have been followed in our translation. Most Tibetan place names have been glossed once in English as they are often descriptive of topographical and other local features which may relate to the experience of the site. The Tibetan proper names in Wylie transcription follow in parentheses after their first occurrence in the text, and are then used thereafter. A few Sanskrit place names are also given when they are commonly used in other sources. Dates, where known, of historical figures mentioned throughout the main narrative follow in parentheses after the first occurrence of their names in the text. Technical terms have been translated where possible, with the relevant Tibetan or Sanskrit term given after the first occurrence. Our own paragraphing and section headings have been introduced for ease of use. For reference to the Tibetan text the folio numbers of the widely available Delhi edition are indicated in brackets throughout. No attempt has been made to provide detailed notes on the contents of the text. A wealth of information concerning the material it covers has already been published, and we direct the interested reader to the following selection of more recent publications concerning the area of Ti-se and mTsho Ma-pham: Allen (1982), Cutler (1996), Huber (1990),

Johnson & Moran (1989), Loseries (1990), McKay (in this volume), Martin (in this volume), Petech (1978), Ramble (in this volume), Ricard (1994: chapt.11), Snelling (1990), Staal (1990), Varna (1986) and Vitali (1996); and for those who read Tibetan: Che-tshang Rin-po-che (1990), Chos-dbyings rDo-rje (1990), Donrgyud bsTan-'dzin (n.d.), Ngag-'phrin (1995), Norbu & Prats (1989), bsTan-'dzin Rin-chen (1973) and Ye-shes rGyal-mtshan (1973). A great many more works are also referred to by these authors. Finally, those who wish to use our text while performing the pilgrimages are recommended to do so with reference to several of the useful route-maps published to date (e.g. in Chos-dbyings rDo-rje 1990, Johnson & Moran 1989:124-5 and Snelling 1990:36-37).

## Translation

[70a...] Chapter Six

*Praising the Amazing Features of the Place*

### [The Mountain's Appearance]

Now, there are four types of impressions of this king of snow mountains, Ti-se, produced in accordance with the [70b] measure of a person's disposition. So firstly, to the perception of those of lesser fortune who do not follow the path [of Buddhism] it is a glistening and lofty snow mountain rising into the sky like a king seated upon his throne. And it has so much magnificence because its minor peaks are arranged in the manner of ministers bowed before it, including: to its east the Fragrant Mountain (sPos-ngad-ldan or Gandhamādana) which was prophesied by the Buddha; to the south the snow mountain Gurla Mandata (or sMan-nag-snyil), the palace of the goddess Sarasvatī; to the west the Eight-peaked Mountain Abode (Gnas-ri-bo rTse-brgyad), the dwelling of the exalted Lady Tārā; and to the north Grand Silk Tent [Mountain] (Za-'og Gur-chen), the palace of the local mountain god (*lha-btsan*).

Secondly, in the opinion of heretics [i.e. Hindus], those non-Buddhists who seek the path, externally this snow mountain resembles a crystal reliquary shrine (*stūpa*). [71a] And, it has so much magnificence because internally it has the layout of a palace in which the mother-father union of the great god Mahādeva and the goddess Umā reside.

Thirdly, in the opinion of those in the lineage of Hinayāna hearers and solitary realizers who have entered the path, its external appearance is that of a mountain of snow, but its internal reality has the great, sublime Buddhist saint (*sthavira*) Aṅgaja (Yan-lag-'byung) abiding in the complete enjoyment of meditative absorption with his retinue of five hundred Buddhist worthy ones (*arhat*).

Fourthly, according to the perception of those with superior fortune, the saints who have attained completion of the Vajrayāna path of secret ritual formulas (*mantra*), externally the mountain of Ti-se possesses the form of Samvara, perfect ability, and is embraced by Vārāhī, perfect wisdom, [in the form of] the snow mountain Little Ti-se (Ti-chung). All its minor peaks have the form of sixteen knowledge goddesses making offerings to it. The [major] valleys of Flag Valley

(Dar-lung), Divine Valley (lHa-lung) and Fortress Valley (rDzong-lung) [71b] possess the form of the three vital energy channels [of the subtle yogic body], the central, left and right respectively. But, internally it can be comprehended like the mighty Mi-la Ras-pa's (1040-1123) account in the form of a 62-deity Cakrasaṃvara *maṇḍala* of perfect cognition in the centre of an exquisitely arranged divine mansion which is thoroughly established in luminosity, unobscured and directly present.

### [Se-lung and Dar-lung Valleys, the Inner Circumambulation]

Furthermore, when one recounts the manner in which the amazing features are arranged on the circumambulation path: Firstly, to the west [i.e. actually south] of Ti-se there is a ruined castle which is on top of a small hill behind the college presently to the east of the Ear-shot (rGyang-grags) Monastery, and this is renowned as having been the personal residence of the local religious administrator (*rdor-'dzin*) Ghu-ya sGang-pa (13th cent.). East of there on the so-called Mirror Terrace (Me-long-steng) there is the meditation cell and attainment water (*sgrub-chu*) of Ri-pa Nag-po (active late 13th century), the great [72a] meditator of 'Bri-gung. On a rock to the south of there, called Ghu-ya-sgang, the local religious administrator Ghu-ya sGang-pa had a meditation cell and attainment water resembling milk. The mountain to the right of there is presently called Buddha's Throne (Sangs-rgyas-kyi bZhugs-khri) because this is the spot where previously the Teacher Buddha preached the Buddhist doctrine to Madros-pa, the king of the serpent deities (*klu*). Below there, in between the glacier and the slate rock, is a meditation cave of the sPyan-snga 'Bri-gung Gling-pa (1187-1241), the meditation caves of many 'Bri-gung-pa hermits and the sPyan-snga's attainment water. Beneath that is a mountain like a parasol which was prophesied by the 'Bri-gung sKyob-pa ['Jig-rten mGon-po] (1143-1217). To the west of there is the so-called Ridge [Between] lHa and Dar [Valleys] (lHa-dar-sgang). In the valley which is behind that there is a personal residence, complete with protectors temple (*mgon-khang*), of the local religious administrator Grub-thob Bu-chung called Grey Valley (Se-lung). On the [72b] rock mountain which is behind Se-lung is the renowned Crystal Likeness (Shel-'dra). And the upper part of the circumambulation path there has a self-produced Hayagrīva [image] and the rocky mountains have the shape of the seven aspects of royal power. Below the rocks at the foot of Shel-'dra are many meditation cells of great 'Bri-gung-pa meditators, including the Tantric master (*siddha*) Seng-ge Ye-shes (13th cent.). On the peak of Shel-'dra is the rock mountain known as Śiva's Palace (dBang-phyug-gi Pho-brang) and to the side of that is a protruding rock which is called Śiva's monkey assistant Hanumanju (Ha-lu-mandzu). In amongst the frog-shaped boulders below there, it is said there is a mark which was made by the key which opened the entrance to this power place (*gnas*), and a self-produced raven [image].

Within the enclosure of ritual sceptres (*rdor-rje ra-ba*) [encircling the sublime *maṇḍala* of Ti-se] is the so-called Inner Circumambulation (*nang-skor*) of Shel-

'dra, and here [73a] are situated the golden funerary shrines of the hierarchs (*gdan-rabs*) of the 'Bri-gung sect. And concerning these golden funerary shrines, which remain there radiating the lustre of their empowerment (*byin-brlabs*), there are those belonging to:

1. 'Bri-gung-pa 'Dzam-gling Chos-kyi rgyal-po (1335-1407), the manifestation of the great Indian Tantric master Tilopa;
2. The spiritual friend Don-grub rGyal-po (1369-1427), the manifestation of the great Tantric master Ber-wa-pa;
3. 'Bri-gung-pa Chos-rgyal Rin-chen dPal-bzang (1421-1467), the manifestation of Sha-wa-ri;
4. 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen Chos-kyi rGyal-mtshan (1446-1484), the manifestation of Vajrapāṇi;
5. 'Bri-gung-pa Kun-dga' Rin-chen (1457?-1527), the manifestation of Nāgārjuna;
6. 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen Phun-tshogs (1509-1557?), the manifestation of Saraha;
7. 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen rNam-rgyal (1507-1565), the manifestation of Tillipa;
8. 'Bri-gung-pa Paṅ-chen dPal-gyi rGya-mtsho, the manifestation of the Lord Indian Dam-pa [Sangs-rgyas];
9. 'Bri-gung-pa Chos-rgyal Phun-tshogs (1547-1602), the manifestation of the Za-hor king gTsug-lag-'dzin;
10. 'Bri-gung-pa bKra-shis Phun-tshogs (1574-1628), the manifestation of Nāropa;
11. Lord dKon-mchog Ratna (1590-1654), the manifestation of sublime Avalokiteśvara;
12. 'Bri-gung-pa Chos-kyi Grags-pa (1595-1659), the manifestation of Saraha;
13. 'Bri-gung-pa 'Phrin-las bZang-po (1665-?1718), the manifestation of Avalokiteśvara;
14. 'Bri-gung-pa Don-grub Chos-rgyal (1704-1754), the manifestation of Saraha;
15. [74a] 'Bri-gung-pa Chos-kyi Nyi-ma (1755-1792), the manifestation of Saraha;
16. Lord Chos-nyid Nor-bu (1827-1865), the manifestation of Saraha;
17. 'Bri-gung-pa Thugs-rje'i Nyi-ma (1828-1889), the manifestation of Avalokiteśvara.

Just as mentioned above, included among these there exist in the assembly hall of rGyang-grags [monastery] the golden funerary shrines of the three, the Lord bsTan-'dzin 'Gro-'dul (1724-1792), Padma'i rGyal-mtshan (1770-1826) and Chos-kyi rGyal-mtshan (1793-1826).

[To the south,] out in the open, in front of these golden funerary shrines is a rock hill known as the Palace of the Buddhist Saint Aṅgaja (gNas-brtan Yan-lag-'byung-kyi Pho-brang), and on the slopes of the mountain [to the east] which looks as if it has a curtain of white silk attached there resides the divine assembly of Ye-shes mGon-po. [74b] At the base of that there is an empowered pool which is a bathing place of the female sky-goers (*mkha'-'gro-ma/dākini*), called Skull-cap Lake of Medicinal Elixir (bDud-rtsi'i sman-gyi mTsho Ka-pā-la). If one goes some way up into the small valley which is behind Shel-'dra, below the rock

mountain which looks like a meditator's hat there are many meditation caves of the 'Bri-gung-pa hermits, including the one called Prophecy Cave (Lung-bstan-phug) where the 'Bri-gung sKyob-pa Rin-po-che pronounced a prophecy to his local religious administrator Chu-ya sGang-pa about the founding of rGyang-grags monastery.

### [Lower lHa-lung Valley, the Main Circumambulation]

Then, passing on from the lower reaches of the Dar-lung valley when one first proceeds [north-west] around the Buddhist circumambulation path (*chos-skor*), there is the so-called Prostration Ridge (Phyag-'tshal-sgang) in the lower reaches of the lHa-lung valley. Concerning that place, previously when rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa (1189-1258) performed a circumambulation of the mountain from the shores of Lake Ma-pham (*mTsho Ma-pham*), he went to the river bank in the lower reaches of the lHa-lung valley and [75a] thinking that he would prepare some hot water for a drink, he searched for some hearth-stones while he was meditating. As a result, all the stones just changed into self-produced images, such as divine bodies and letters, and he was unable to find any hearthstones. So, after this miraculous transformation in his meditation he offered prostrations here, and thus nowadays this site is renown as the Phyag-'tshal-sgang. The mountain which is east of here is the Palace of Yellow Jambhala (Dzambha-la Ser-po'i Pho-brang), and when you proceed on a little further from there, one finds a mad flag (*dar-smyon?*) silk image of the patron-priest emperor with heaven's mandate [i.e. of China]. Above here to the west, on Maṇḍala Terrace (dKyil-'khor-steng) is a "nail which is immutable", being a footprint of the Teacher Buddha which is encircled by the footprints of the 500 Buddhist worthy ones. A little above there on the lower slopes of the mountain, [75b] is the cave where Na-ro Bon-chung stayed in the past, and also inside it is a footprint of the Master Mi-la [Ras-pa]. To the side of that cave is a spring which is called Illness Curing Medicinal Water (sMan-chu Nad-sel), and as for the rock like a reliquary shrine which is on the top side above that, it is known as Self-produced Sixteen Buddhist Saints (gNas-brtan bCu-drug Rang-'byung).

### [Detour to Nyan-ri or Chos-sku Monastery Area]

From there, to the west of Golden Basin (gSer-gzhong) one crosses over the lHa-chu river, and proceeding on there is a mountain which is called Palace of Black Jambhala (Dzambha-la Nag-po'i Pho-brang). In a valley which is above here, there are a few meditation caves, including a meditation cave of the Tantric teacher Padmasambhava (8th cent.) which is called Cave of Secret Mantra Buddhist Doctrine (gSang-sngags Chos-kyi Phug-pa), and there are such things as the Tantric teacher's attainment water, hand-prints and footprints there. Above it, there are a self-produced Avalokiteśvara, the chief and his attendants all three, and a Kha-sar-pa-ni which where the personal visions [76a] of rGyal-ba gNyos lHa-nang-pa (1164-1224). As for the mountain which is to the left of there,

resembling a pitched grand silk tent, it is the palace of the local mountain god (*lha-btsan*) of Ti-se. And on the shoulder of that peak there is a place called Great [Mi-la] Ras-pa's Cave (Ras-chen-phug), where the Master Mi-la remained when he stepped with his foot to the other side of the mountain in order to display his magic to Na-ro Bon-chung. In among the peaks, ravines and rocks which are gathered around that site there are many meditation cells and caves of the glorious 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud sect.

Below these sites, previously there someone named Nyan-pa Grub-chen established a monastery which bears the name Nyan-po's [Mountain] Fortress (Nyan-po'i [Ri]-rdzong=Nyan-ri). And as for the story of the main empowered sacred representation (*sten*) of that place, the self-produced Precious Dharmakāya (Chos-sku Rin-po-che): [76b] Previously, this very image manifested self-produced from out of the Milk Lake ('O-ma'i mTsho) of Gar-zha to the west [i.e. Lahoul]. It was brought here from Gar-zha by a yogin who was an emanation of Mahākāruṇika, who then offered it to the religious king (*chos-rgyal*) of Gu-ge, mNga'-bdag rTse-lde (11th cent.). Then, after it had remained for a long period in a monastery in Gu-ge, one day the local mountain god of Ti-se manifested as seven Indian yogins who blocked the doors to the monastery itself, and begged for alms. The monks there did not give them any alms and acted with a degree of contempt. As a consequence the seven yogins at once turned into seven wolves, and disappeared. On the seventh day after that, this very image went up to Nyan-ri monastery after [77a] the local mountain god took it there. Thus, as the Gu-ge people had no idea of its whereabouts, even though they searched for a long time they did not find it. After that many years passed, and at the time of the religious king of Gu-ge named Khri Gags-pa bKra-shis (early 17th cent.) it became known that the precious image was residing at Nyan-ri. And although the Gu-ge army started to carry off the Chos-sku Rin-po-che concealed at Nyan-ri, as the image was extremely heavy and they could not lift it, they tied a rope around its neck and dragged it along but were unable to go beyond the Dzambha-la Nag-po'i Pho-brang. Although they carried off both the conch-shell trumpet of Nāropa and his tea cauldron, as a consequence of the local mountain god's magical powers the conch-shell trumpet flew up into the air from among the company of troops and then went back into the monastery. The tea they were boiling inside the tea cauldron turned into blood, and taking this to be a bad omen they [77b] poured it out and went back home. Then, a few days later an old man passed by in that direction and he saw the Chos-sku Rin-po-che abandoned among the rocks. From the mouth of that holy image came the words, "You must carry me to the monastery!" And the old man replied, "If so many soldiers could not hold you, how will I pick you up?" It said to him, "You will be able to pick me up, so carry me!" Wondering whether this was true he lifted it, and finding it to be as light as a cotton bud he took it to the monastery.

Furthermore, when I myself went to Nyan-ri, even though I inquired, hoping the actual historical register of this image would be there, I was only told a few of the old people's oral traditions [78a] and that none had seen a real register for it. And this story which has been related just now, I obtained from the remnants

of an ancient guide-book. I have written it here, therefore one can consider whether or not the actual story is this one itself.

Furthermore, many images of Buddhas and bodhisattvas exist in that temple, including an image of the Teacher Buddha, the precious *Translated Teachings* (*bka'-gyur*) of the Buddha and an image of the Zhabs-drung Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal. And, there is a protectors temple which exhibits an image of the fierce local mountain god of Ti-se. As for the keepers of the place, it is occupied by the glorious lHo-'brug sect [of Bhutan]. Below the site is a protruding rock called Palace of Maitreya (Byams-pa'i Pho-brang), and [78b] near there are the footprints of a manifestation of the Lady Tārā. On the hillside there is a meditation place of the Tantric teacher Padma[sambhava] called Elephant Secret Cave (Glang-chen sBas-phug), and that is mentioned in his biography (*thang-yig*) as follows:

At white snowy Ti-se he subdued the 28 deities of the lunar mansions.  
In the Elephant Secret Cave he also concealed a treasure.

Here there is a spring which is said to have mTsho Ma-pham as its source, and if one proceeds on a little from there, on the mountain side there are a meditation cave known as Lotus Cave (Padma-phug) and a stream of elixir flowing from the surface of a flat stone which resembles a cosmic matrix-triangle (*chos'-byung*). Proceeding uphill from there, is a high mountain in the direction straight towards the snows, which is the reliquary shrine of Uṣṇīṣvijayā, and the seven minor peaks which are near to it have the form of the seven paternal brothers who [79a] surround King Gesar of Gling.

### [Upper lHa-lung Valley, 'Bri-ra-phug Monastery]

Then, after re-crossing the lHa-chu river from Nyan-po Ri-rdzong, as you walk further upstream across the surface of the rocks there flows the so-called Stream of the Five-coloured Rainbow ('Ja'-tshon sNa-lnga'i Chu-rgyun) which carries the empowerment of Gangs Rin-po-che [i.e. Ti-se]. On the peak of the mountain which is nearby there are some spires on the pointed mountain rock, and these are said to be the Palace of the Glorious Protector Beng (dPal mGon-po Beng-gi Pho-brang), the protector's ritual cake (*gtor-ma*) and his yak and dog. On the lower edge of the mGon-po'i Pho-brang, on a rock face which is in the direction of the incense-holding monkey [i.e. Hanumanju mountain to the east] there is a boulder resembling a crystal box, and rGyal-ba gNyos [lHa-nang-pa] had a vision of sublime Mahākāruṇika which was absorbed into this. Right in the middle as you go a little uphill from the mGon-po'i Pho-brang there is a self-produced image of the serpent deity-subduer, the hero Hayagrīva, which is called Hayagrīva's Guesthouse (rTa-mgrin mGron-khang), and to the north of it there is a "nail which is immutable," a [79b] footprint of the Teacher Buddha, called Sunk In Ankle-deep (Bol-nub-ma). On the surface of the glacier above [on Ti-se] there are gates of crystal which have the appearance of being guarded by the four gate guardians [of the *maṇḍala*].

Now we come to the account of Female Yak-horn Cave ('Bri-ra-phug). Previously, when rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa came here to open the entrance to the power place, at the time he arrived there at the bottom end of Wild Yak Valley ('Brong-lung), a wild female yak ('brong-'bri) suddenly appeared in front of him. Wondering what this was, he had an insight after entering into meditation, and thus realized that the wild female yak was a manifestation of the female sky-goer Seng-ge dong-ma, and gave the name 'Brong to that valley. Then, he followed the tracks of that female yak to the east, and from the lower part of the meditation cave which is there today he was able to see where that female yak had gone to. [80a] Wondering where it had gone he watched from the top of a boulder, and this gave rise to his footprints on the boulder, which are there today. Then, because that female yak had made the imprint of its horn as a trace of where it was vanished into a stone in the cave, henceforth that excellent place was given the name Vanished Female Yak [or] Female Yak-horn Cave ('Bri-thim 'Bri-ra-phug). Thinking to renovate that place as he was meditating there, when he set about repairing the cave's canopy he went up on the top of the cave and looked at the arrangement of amazing features at the site, and produced a footprint on the stone there as well. After that he performed meditation for a long period in that cave, and the female sky-goer Seng-gdong-ma brought him the nourishment of fatty-earth (*sa-zhag* [a sublime food from the beginning of the cosmic age]) and offered it. The traces which were left behind when she took him the fatty-earth are known today as Drifting Snows (Gangs-'khyams). [80b] Then the Master rGod-tshang-pa considered things, thinking "Now I will go from this place as it is a very high spot, food is scarce and it will get bitterly cold." And then having pressed his head on a stone in the cave he swore by his head with the words, "Any who press their heads here in this cave of mine, chiefly those with a precious human body, but also the three types of living creatures—birds, rodents, insects and ants—each will escape rebirths in the lower realms, even if they are kicked down there." And with that he produced an imprint of his head on the rock. When he was leaving, he produced clear imprints of his hat when his meditator's hat touched the rock, and of his foot on a stone at the front of the cave. Since then, there has been a continuous stream of all sorts of greater and lesser meditators in this excellent place. And today it is occupied by the glorious 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud sect, and has lamas and monks who follow the doctrinal lineage of sDing-che Don-grub mThong-smon [81a].

There are a great many sacred representations of body, speech and mind there, including a statue of rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa mGon-po rDo-rje which is the main image, and a protectors temple of the glorious four-armed Mahākāla, and so on. Concerning the mountain behind [i.e. north of] the 'Bri-ra-phug, it is said to be the abode of the Thousand Buddhas of the Excellent Cosmic Age (bsKal-bzang Sangs-rgyas-stong). On the surface of the snows which you see straight out ahead of 'Bri-phug are the forms of Gu-ru [Padmasambhava] riding on a pig and a pig being led by a demoness. On the snow drifts there is a palace of the serpent deity king, gTsug-sna Rin-chen, called Hundred Thousand Silver Springs (Chu-mig dNgul-'bum), and behind the ice images are three mountains

which are Palaces of the Protectors of the Three Classes (Rigs-gsum mGon-po'i Pho-brang).

### [Route Over the Pass of sGrol-ma La]

If you walk up [the sGrol-ma-la chu river] a little further from 'Bri-phug, there is a place [81b] which later became known as Raven Guesthouse (Bya-roq mGron-khang), where previously rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa offered a ritual cake on the river bank as a way of giving thanks to the local deity (*gzhi-bdag*) of the upper lHa-lung valley. The whole ritual cake was carried off by a raven which was an emanation of Mahākāla. So he chased after it, and when it got just below the charnel ground there that raven vanished into a boulder and produced the imprint of a bird in that spot. In amongst the clay area which is just above there, is the charnel ground which is named Cool Grove (bSil-ba-tshal or Sitāvana), and above that on a terrace there are also a very clear footprint of the 'Bri-gung-pa Tantric master rGyal-ba gNyos lHa-nang-pa and a self-produced letter A which is white. If you proceed a little further on there is a three-storeyed giant stone which both the Master Mi-la Ras-pa and Na-ro Bon-chung pulled out in the past during a contest of strength.

To the east [82a] of that there is the so-called Tārā Pass (sGrol-ma La). As for the story of that place: Previously, when rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa was walking here in search of the circumambulation path, as if pretending he knew about the circumambulation path he thought to proceed along the Female Sky-goer's Secret Path (mKha'-'gro gSang-lam), and just as he did so, 21 blue wolves appeared as ghostly images directly in front of him. And thinking to himself "What's this?" he looked at them after he had entered into a meditative trance. Thus, as he realized that he was being shown the path by emanations of the 21 Tārās (sGrol-ma), he followed after them, and when he walked to the summit of the pass they disappeared into one another until there was only one remaining, which then vanished into a boulder. And so ever since then the name of the pass has been famous as the sGrol-ma La. And, it is said that on the edges of that boulder are the imprints of wolves, and on the side a [82b] self-produced Avalokiteśvara. Previously here, on the summit of sGrol-ma La, a footprint was produced by rGyal-ba gNyos lHa-nang-pa. Nowadays, it is kept in Magical Powers Cave (rDzu-sprul-phug). On the left-hand side [i.e. north] of the sGrol-ma La there are several mountains which are known as the Reliquary Shrine of Great Awakening (Byang-chub Chen-po'i mChod-rten), the Palace of Mahākāla (mGon-po'i Pho-brang) and the Palace of Completely Good Yaksa (gNod-sbyin Gang-ba bZang-po'i Pho-brang). On the heights up behind the sGrol-ma La there is a small lake which is called Female Sky-goer's Bathing Pool (mKha'-'gro-ma'i Khrus-kyi rDzing-bu), and its [ice] covering remains closed over in the summer and winter. When you descend a little from there, it is said one finds a footprint of 'Phrin-las Shing-rta, the Lord of the 'Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud sect. On the surface of the cliffs which are on the right-hand [i.e. south] side of that, there are the forms of the bodies of the female sky-goer Seng-ge'i gdong-pa-can [83a],

Vajrapāṇi and Hayagrīva. And nowadays, although this last is called Gray Horse of Karma (Las-kyi rTa-se), it is known as the Horse-head of Hayagrīva (rTā-mgrin-gyi rTa-mgo).

Proceeding a little down the hill from the mKha'-gro Khrus-mtsho, at the base of a votive cairn on the so-called Mirror Terrace (Me-long-steng), there are perhaps three or four footprints from the time when the Master Mi-la [Ras-pa] lead Na-ro Bon-chung around the Buddhist circumambulation path and had to pull him along, this way and that. In a river gully on the right side when you go downhill a little further on, there are perhaps eight or nine footprints of the Master and the Bon-po on the surface of a large slab of rock. There is a rock mountain to the left of these resembling a pointed weapon, and named Palace of Śiva's Goddess (lHa-mo 'Phrog-ma'i Pho-brang), and the rock mountain to the right is named Palace of the Seventy Glorious Protectors of the Pure Abodes (gTsang-ris-kyi dPal-mgon bDun-bcu'i Pho-brang) [83b].

### [The rDzong-lung Valley, rDzu-sprul-phug Monastery]

To the east upon a piece of rock at the foot of the pass there is a "nail which is immutable", a footprint of the Teacher Buddha, which is called Rock Footstep (Brag-rdog-ma). In the grassy valley which is a little further on there is a footprint of the Tantric teacher Padma[sambhava]. On a mountain to the east of there are the self-produced images of a wrathful Acala and a Mahākāla which were visualized by 'Brug-chen gTsang-pa rGya-ras (1161-1211), and a self-produced Vajravārāhī which was visualized by rGyal-ba gNyo. The mountain [to the south] at the bottom end of the mKha'-gro gSang-lam is the Palace of Auspicious Long-life Mother (bKra-shis Tshe-ring-ma'i Pho-brang). From there, over on the eastern bank of the rDzong-chu river is a footprint of the protector of beings gTsang-pa rGya-ras, and to the side down from it is a hill [84a] resembling a golden double-storied house which is called Medicine Buddha's Palace (Sangs-rgyas sMan-bla'i Pho-brang). On the slopes of this hill where all sorts of medicinal herbs grow, there are unlimited meditation cells of many of the great hermits of 'Bri-gung. As for the two mountains to the east [actually west] of there, they are known as the Palace of King Kuvera (rGyal-po rNam-thos-sras-kyi Pho-brang) and the Auspicious Many-doored Reliquary Shrine (bKra-shis sGo-mang-gi mChod-rten). On the left-hand side [i.e. south-east] of the Sangs-rgyas sMan-bla'i Pho-brang there are situated together the palaces (*pho-brang*) of Perfect Cognition Garuda (Ye-shes Khyung), Glorious Guhyasamāja (dPal gSang-ba 'Dus-pa) and Yellow and Black Jambhala (Dzam-ser-nag), and image of the eight Tathāgata reliquary shrines and a self-produced Vajravārāhī on the back side of a rock. As for the mountain which is on the opposite side and straight out ahead of the Sangs-rgyas sMan-bla'i Pho-brang, this mountain is the Palace of the Ti-se Field-protector (Ti-se Zhing-skyong-gi Pho-brang). And on the slopes of this mountain [84b] is the so-called A Cave (A-phug), a cave which Mi-la [Ras-pa] engraved with the letter A using his finger, when the Master Mi-la was invited here by the Tantric master Gu-ru brTse-chen in the past.

And on a bank below there is the so-called Magical Powers Cave (rDzu-sprul-phug). As for the story of that place: In the past here, because Na-ro Bon-chung was performing a counter-clockwise Bon-po circumambulation (*bon-skor*) and the Master [Mi-la Ras-pa] was making a clockwise Buddhist circumambulation (*chos-skor*) they meet up with each other in the rDzong-lung valley to the south of Ti-se, and it began to pour with rain. So the Master said "The rain has come, and as both of us need to build a rain shelter would you like to erect the walls or set up the roof?" Bon-chung replied "I'll put up the walls," and he split apart some stones using his magical powers (*rdzu-sprul*). But the Master cut through the middle of the stones using a powerful yogic stare which cuts. Because [Bon-chung] had attempted a yogic stare which he was unable to perform [85a], he remained there with his eyes bulging out, unable to endure it. At that, the Master disabled his meditation, and thus the stone wall were erected by him as well. Then, upon a command from the Master a great flat stone was positioned for the roof, and remarking to himself "It's too low," he raised it up with his head from underneath, and in doing so made an imprint of his head on the stone. And then saying "It's too high," he pressed it down with his feet and produced footprints there. In this place are found many sacred representation of body, speech and mind, including: a likeness of the Master [Mi-la Ras-pa] which has some of his own blood mixed in with the materials, and was crafted mainly by the Master gTsang-smyon-pa (1452-1507); [images] of gNyo lHa-nang-pa, the Master Ras-chung-pa and the Tantric master gTsang-smyon; and a likeness of the powerful Ngag-dbang rNam-rgyal. Although it is said that there [85b] were fifty lamas and monks in this place in the past, nowadays there is no one here save the caretaker. Notwithstanding that, the place is maintained exclusively by the glorious lHo-'brug sect.

### [From rDzu-sprul-phug Back to Dar-lung Valley]

To the south, in amongst the rocks which are above the bottom corner of the rDzu-sprul-phug, there is a "nail which is immutable", a footprint of the Teacher Buddha, called White One (dKar-mo), and below that a spring which is called Attainment Water (*sgrub-chu*) of Bram-ze sKye-bdun. On the path at the bottom corner of the rDzu-sprul-phug is a footprint of the Tantric master dBus-smyon-pa (b.1458), and going on a little further from there one finds footprints of the five female sky-goer families and a rock which was the abode of Bram-ze sKye-bdun. [86a] Then, on the approach to the pass which lies between rDzu-sprul-phug and the rGyang-grags monastery, there is a self-produced Vajravārāhī and on the summit of the pass a self-produced wrathful sMe-brtsegs-pa. In between Great Flag (Dar-chen) and Small Flag (Dar-chung) there are two sand hills which are called Nipples of the Demoness (Srin-mo'i Nu-ma), and between these is the so-called Vajra Cave (rDo-rje-phug) which brings relief to those who have leprosy as it possesses the empowerment of the sublime Avalokiteśvara. Crossing the pass from there and continuing on, one comes to the rGyang-grags monastery which was prophesied by the lama ['Bri-gung sKyob-pa Rin-po-che], and its

story has been given above. In that place there is a footprint of the sPyan-snga Chos-kyi rGyal-po 'Bri-gung Gling-pa, and I, 'Bri-ban Chos-kyi Blo-gros, also left a footprint there.

### [Evidence and Faith]

[86b] As for the certainty of such things as the meditation caves and hand prints which I have reported above accordingly, although I became thoroughly familiar with them after carefully questioning the many keepers, both old and young, of these sites during my visit to Ti-se snow mountain itself, and even though I was unable to prove the identity of a few, I have presented them here at length on account of my having accepted them as a reliable guide-book of the events of the past. And for the most part, not only are they supported by the original written documents, but also with permissible appraisals having been undertaken, thus this may be accepted as reliable.

Accordingly, as for my assertions [about landscape features] that "This is a deity, and this is its palace," it is inappropriate to hold heretical views which consider these to be exaggerations merely for the reason that they are invisible to ordinary perception. [87a] These also are exclusively the visions of the many bodhisattvas who have dwelt in this place, including our predecessors Jo-bo Atiśa (982-1054), the Lord Mi-la [Ras-pa], the protector of beings [gTsang-pa] rGya-ras, rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa, gNyos and Sangs-rgyas Ras-chen (1203-1280). And on account of that, one may develop faith and reverence in one's heart with unequivocal confidence that it is like that. Having said that, these words express furthermore the greatness of the amazing features of Ti-se.

#### Chapter Seven

#### *The Benefits of Performing Prostrations, Offerings and Circumambulation [and the Guide to mTsho Ma-pham]*

In the *Teachings on Discipline (Vinayagama)* it states,

If anybody takes steps around a reliquary shrine of the Buddha  
With faith and devotion in mind,  
It is equivalent to one hundred thousand  
Ounces of Jambu river gold.

That is to say, the benefits for anyone who takes a step with the intention of [87b] performing circumambulation around a reliquary shrine of the Buddha, with faith in mind, are as great as making a donation of 100,000 ounces of Jambu river gold. And likewise, there are the same benefits for those who generate a faithful and devout mind with regard to a reliquary shrine housing the relics of the Buddha. Accordingly, on account of the wisdom-body of the Blessed One Cakrasamvara and his 62 deities residing here [at Ti-se] in person, it is certain that the benefits one obtains here are the same as those stated above. And furthermore, the Lord gTsang-pa rGya-ras said,

If you circumambulate one circuit  
Around the great palace of Ti-se,  
The obscurations of one life will be purified.  
Accordingly, if you circumambulate it ten times,  
The obscurations of a cosmic age will be purified.  
If you do one hundred circumambulations,

After perfecting the ten marks and eight qualities,  
You will attain Buddhahood in one lifetime.

This is what is enumerated in the old guide-books, and although we can consider these to be proper limits for circumambulation, nowadays, according to oral traditions, the limit of circumambulations is said to be thirteen. There is a reason for that. It is said that in the past, at the small lake which is at the top of the sGrol-ma La pass, a woman pilgrim from Khams who was carrying a small child on her back, bent over to take a drink of water. Because she did this the child slipped into the water and died. Ever since that time, the surface of the lake has been closed over [by ice]. The Khams-pa woman began to accumulate circumambulations to atone for the killing of the child. Thus, when she had made 13 circuits she produced imprints of her hands and feet on a stone [88b] as a mark of the purification of her obscurations, and she passed on to the Abode of Celestial Action (Khecara) in the rainbow-body state. Since then, one makes a limit of 13 circumambulations. The keepers of the place say that this is how it came about. It is certainly a valid practice to keep a count of one's circumambulations, as a proof of whether one's obscurations have been purified or not.

### [Important Sites Immediately South and West]

There is a large lake in front of Ti-se which is called Mountain Pass Skin (Lapags=Lang-kha mTsho or Rakas Tal), possessing the form of a hide-couch made out of a human skin. Concerning this, they say such things as,

In the *rākṣasa* country of Langka Pu-rang,  
A black lake of poison ripples.

And, in accord with these statements it is said to be the palace of the brother and sister Ye-shes mGon-po Beng-chen (i.e. Rāvaṇa from the *Rāmāyaṇa*). [89a] If you proceed several miles to the west, there is the so-called Tre-ta-pu-ri [=Pretapuri], the first spoke of the [yogic] body wheel (*cakra*) and one of the eight underground sites from among the 24 countries [listed in the highest yoga Tantras]. Because that place is a palace of Samvara and an abode of the hero (*vīra*) sTobs-po-che and the female sky-goer 'Khor-lo'i Shugs-can-ma, it is no different to the large and the small Ti-se mountains [in terms of its being a natural Tantric *maṇḍala*]. And as for the central power place there, the hot spring itself is taken to be the flow of the white yogic awakening fluid [in the subtle body], and so on. One can obtain other details from the guide-books.



## [The Guide-Book to mTsho Ma-pham]

Secondly, in the chronicle of mTsho Ma-pham there are three sections: First, an introduction as to how this lake initially came into being; second, the manner in which it was empowered by Buddhas and bodhisattvas; and third, the benefits of bathing and performing prostrations and offerings there.

## [The Origin and Names of the Lake]

So firstly, in the past, at the time when the present cosmic age had just begun, this lake itself did not exist. [89b] Immediately after that, a wheel-turning monarch (*cakravartin*) named sMyug-sbam who was a tenth-stage bodhisattva came into the world. One day, when that king was growing up, he witnessed the sufferings of life, such as old age, illness and death on the road while walking to a pleasure garden. Thus, having become disheartened he spoke with his court-priest, a Brahmin named Dus-spog, saying "Brahmin, are these sufferings of old age, illness and death a phenomena common to all our lives, or only of these particular people [whom I saw]?" The Brahmin replied "Yes my Lord, they are common to us all!" The king asked "Is there a way to alleviate this?" and the Brahmin replied "My Lord, there is certainly a way to alleviate this; you must practice giving without expecting reward." [90a] As a result of that discussion, the king built a charity house and began collecting for all the peoples of the world. Then, for 12 years the king also gave, without expectation of reward, whatever was wished for; food, clothing, wealth and so on. At the time of this great [deed], a huge pit was excavated in the ground and then the water used to boil the rice was poured into it. And so, when the 12 years had passed by, the pit became full and turned into a great lake. Furthermore, although initially warm rice water was poured in, it later became completely cooled, and on that basis the name of Not Warm One (Ma-dros-pa) was given to this lake. And a river was produced when the lake of rice water overflowed, and according to the *Basic Teachings on Discipline (Vinayavastu)* this is how the so-called River of Rice Water ('Bras-khu'i chu) [90b] or River Gaṅgā came into being.

As for the lake being named Unbeaten One (Ma-pham-pa), the waters of this very lake are exclusively endowed with the eight properties, and it is said to have been named Ma-pham since it is unbeaten with regard to its excellent qualities.

## [Classical Buddhist Geography of the Region]

If one asks what size and type of layout it has, regarding that one can consider both its state of existence and its mode of appearance. Firstly, as for its state of existence there are many [classical Buddhist] statements about it, such as that in the *Treasury of the Phenomenal World (Abhidharmakośa)*,

The dimensions of Anavatapta (Ma-dros-pa)  
Are 50 *yojanas* in length and breadth, and

Its edges are lined with jewelled tiles.  
There are four rivers flowing from it;  
These are the Gaṅgā and Sindhu, and  
The Sitā and Pakṣu [or Vakṣu].

And if we properly qualify the actual sense of these [statements]: that lake Anavatapta is completely square [91a], its length and breadth are 50 *yojanas* (1 *yojana* = about 9 miles), and it has a fine form when viewed. The waters within it are said to be endowed with the eight properties:

1. The property of cleanness, as it is free from such things as stench in its currents and tributaries.
2. The property of mildness, affecting good health in its users.
3. The property of purity, as its waters are unpolluted by large and small creatures.
4. The property of clarity, as it is very cool and [appears to be] without surface or bottom.
5. The property of coolness, as it has the ability to cool painful sensations of heat.
6. The property of being unsullied, as it is free from the dirt of swamps and the like.
7. The property of being easy on the throat, as it is delicious to drink [91b].
8. The property of being harmless to the stomach, since it does not produce aggravating illness and such things as a swollen belly when it is first drunk.

And therefore, it is filled with water which is endowed with the eight excellent qualities. It is adorned with various species of flowers, and various sorts of water birds singing pleasantly. On the right shore of that lake the branches of the Jambutriṣa [i.e. mythical rose-apple] tree spread out as wide as the sky. Its ripe fruits, as big as clay pots, are endowed with a sweet flavour. As the fruits fall into the lake they produce the sound "Jam". Through the combination of these fruits and the state of the waters, the gold of the Jambu river comes into being, and moreover it has a weight, colour and lustre [92a] like that of other gold which has been refined 16 times. On the slopes of this snow mountain [Ti-se], there is a cave of the 500 Buddhist worthy ones with an overhanging bird shelter of golden rock.

Around the shores of the lake there are rivers flowing out from openings in rocks of different shapes. To the east, from the mouth of a splendid horse, comes the Pakṣu which appears to convey silver sands, and after circling seven times around Anavatapta it flows into the eastern ocean contained in 500 tributaries. To the south, from the mouth of a "head of the flock" (*Khyu-mchog*), comes the Sindhu which appears to convey sands of various precious stones, and which flows southward. West, from the mouth of an elephant, comes the Gaṅgā which appears to convey golden sands, and which flows westward. North, from the mouth of a lion, comes the Sitā which appears to convey sands of diamond, and which flows to the north. Such excellent qualities, which are explained in the Buddha's discourses (*sūtra*), still exist even today [92b].

## [Mystic Perceptions and the Apparent Geography]

Secondly, as for its mode of appearance, it has two: superior and inferior. The superior mode is that seen by saints who have attained perfection and possess the eye of perfected cognition, and even today manifestly it has all those excellent qualities which were clearly explained according to the Buddha's discourses above. In the second place, to those persons who have not purified their karmic defilements, the sort who have inferior fortune, it appears as this lake which is named Ma-pham-pa and this water endowed with the eight properties.

As for the statement that the Jambutriṣa tree exists here, it is seen by tenth-stage bodhisattvas and therefore is not seen by ordinary people. To illustrate this, previously, although the sPyan-snga 'Bri-gung Gling-pa [93a] hung his monastic robes on a branch of the Jambutriṣa tree, to ordinary people it appeared that his robes were just hanging in mid-air, and so according to that it is said that they cannot see it. It is also the same with regard to the statement "This lake has an [extent] of 50 *yojanas*." Notwithstanding that, the state of its underground reservoir has [such a size], but its observable length and breadth are not as much as that.

Concerning the four river flows: As for what is said about the eastern river, like the statement "In the east the Gaṅgā flows from the mouth of an elephant." The Gaṅgā is described as the "eastern river" on the basis that it originally flowed from the lake itself in a valley which lay to the east. However, later on it cut through the middle of this very lake and came [93b] out of the mouth of a mountain called rDul-chu, which resembles an elephant (*glang-chen*), in the highlands of the Gu-ge region to the west. And on account of it flowing to the west it is actually the western river.

Concerning the southern river Sindhu, it flowed to the south from the north of the lake itself. As a result, it came out of the mouth of a mountain which resembles a peacock (*rma-bya*) or "head of the herd, i.e. bull" (*khyu-mchog*) in the upper valley of Langka Pu-rang, from where it flows on cutting through Nepal and the centre of India.

Concerning the western river Pakṣu, it flowed to the east from the west of the lake itself. As a result, it came out of the mouth of a mountain which resembles a horse (*rta*) at gTsang Bye-ma g.Yung-drung, and it flows on from there cutting through the centre of Tibet, including [the regions of] gTsang, dBus and Kong-po. And although it is described as the "western river" on the basis of it having originally flowed to the east from the west, it is actually the eastern river.

Concerning the northern river [94a] Sitā, it flowed to the north from the south of the lake itself. As a result, it came out of the mouth of a mountain which resembles a lion (*seng-ge*) which is in the Seng highlands of the 'Brong region behind [i.e. north of] Ti-se, and it flows on through countries which include Ladwags, Bhal-ti[stan] and Hor.

Concerning the statement that here there exist sands of gold, silver, lapis and diamond, this is how it appears when seen by tenth-stage bodhisattvas who have perfectly completed the twin accumulations [of merit and wisdom]. But it

does not appear this way to ordinary persons whose karmic obscurations have not been purified. An example of that is when rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa perceived the sands of mTsho Ma-pham to be gold.

As for the statement that various birds frequent this place, even today there are over a thousand, including geese, ducks, cranes and water-fowl.

[94b] As for the true sense of the statement that the [four] rivers flow on after having circled around Anavatapta seven times: From mTsho Ma-dros-pa they flow on with a long course in the four directions, then they each become curved clockwise around that lake. And as such, up to the point when they reach the various oceans, such as the one to the east, they are described like that in a poetic manner as having been each drawn out seven times. And, it is also said to be surrounded by 500 tributary streams. This accords with the statement by the Lord Klong-chen Rab-'byams (1308-1363) "Having flowed here, the streams of 500 different valleys try to enter it through being mixed together." Furthermore, this lake itself has very amazing features, such as when in the past the Master Mi-la raised it into the air on his fingertip, [95a] and on the basis of that even today the centre of this lake is high and its margins are low.

There are four bathing entrances (*khru-sgo*) to this lake [equivalent to the four doors of a *maṅḍala* palace], of which the eastern one is the bathing entrance at Thorn Bush Valley (Se-ba-lung). On its shores, which resemble an open lotus flower, it has five types of sand with the character of Jambu [river] gold. At the southern entrance are five types of perfume associated with the mountain sPosngad-ldan (=Gandhamādana or Fragrant Mountain). At the one in the west there are five types of soda which are associated with the bath which purifies moral transgressions and defilements. At the northern entrance there are five types of pebbles which are associated with such things as religious symbols, divine images and written characters, which increase faith and reverence in believers.

## [The Serpent Deities Living in the Lake]

Secondly, as to the way in which this lake was empowered by Buddhas and bodhisattvas, it states, for example, in the '*Phags pa bsadud pa*,

If there were no serpent deities in Lake Anavatapta,  
What would become of the rivers flowing in the world?  
[95b] If there were no rivers, flowers and fruits would not be produced;  
The manifold precious forms in the oceans would not even exist.

And further,

There are many rivers flowing in the world, and  
They cause forests and medicinal herbs with flowers and fruits to grow.  
This depends upon the Lord of serpent deities who lives in Anavatapta.  
The power and glory of that Lord of serpent deities exists there.

And in accord with that, within this very lake there is a Buddha from the excellent cosmic age who, having taken the form of a bodhisattva king of serpent

deities, teaches the Buddhist doctrine to the serpent beings and works to increase such things as the rivers, and the flowers, fruits, medicinal herbs and forest of the world. [96a] And furthermore, when the Teacher victorious Śākyamuni, together with his retinue of 500 Buddhist worthy ones, came here by way of their magical powers, a gigantic lotus stem appeared and shot up due to the pleasure and friendship of the serpent deity king. It had 501 flowers, and when the Buddha was seated on the central bloom and the 500 Buddhist worthy ones such as Śāriputra were seated on the 500 flowers below him, he then preached the *Discourse Which Predicts the Causes of Karma* (*Las kyi rgyu ba lung bstan pa'i mdo*). That is how this place came to be empowered, according to what is said in the *Basic Teachings on Discipline*.

According to Tantric traditions, it was empowered as the palace of the four divisions of Secret Mantra lineage by the divine Lady Vajrayoginī. Therefore, to the perception of saints who have attained perfection the form which is situated within this lake is that [96b] of the Jambutiṣa tree with its roots anchored in the serpent deity world [below], its leafy branches filling the intermediate space, and its crown extending into the divine world [above]. Seated upon its topmost leafy branches are the lamas of the bKa'-brgyud sect, and on its intermediate boughs the divine assembly of the archetype deity (*yi-dam*) Vajravārāhī, and under its canopy of foliage at its lotus base the serpent deities are being taught the Buddhist doctrine by the bodhisattva serpent deity king. This is stated so in an old guide-book.

Accordingly, there are also numerous stories about how this bodhisattva serpent deity king performed devotional services to the Teacher Śākyamuni and his followers. We can even give examples concerning the 'Bri-gung-pa sect. Originally, when the Lord of the 'Bri-gung-pa teachings sKyob-pa 'Jig-rten mGon-po maintained a monastic assembly of 10,018 [97a] as his retinue, this serpent deity king offered the paranormal power (*siddhi*) for a bumper harvest of good grain to 'Bri-gung. And as a consequence, there was an incredible abundance in the bursting grain-stores at 'Bri-gung, such that 'Bri-gung became a supplier of grain, even giving it to all of the peoples in lower sKyid [i.e. the Lhasa Valley]. And also, in the biography of rMa-bya Seng-ge-ma (12th cent.) it states, "The serpent deity king Ma-dros sponsored him in maintaining an ocean-like assembly."

Following that, the Tantric master of 'Bri-gung, rGyal-ba gNyo sIHa-nang-pa, went to the shores of mTsho Ma-pham. Then when he bathed there, this Tantric master himself was invited by the king of the serpent deities, who ferried him across to the centre of the lake while he was seated in a cross-legged *vajra* posture and without sinking below the surface. And the way in which he taught the Buddhist doctrine [97b] to the serpent deities for seven days is elucidated in the biography of gNyo sIHa-nang-pa. Following that, when the sPyan-snga 'Bri-gung Gling-pa was residing at rTse-brgyad mountain he was invited by the king of the serpent deities, and when he went to the shores of mTsho Ma-pham he taught the Buddhist doctrine to him. As a result, the serpent deity recalled the advice of the Teacher Buddha and then offered him the mighty gTsug-gtor-ma [or Chu-gnyer-

pa image] which was the king's most beloved possession. Later on, the Tantric master of 'Bri-gung, Seng-ge Ye-shes, was invited by the king of Pu-rang. When he detoured from the road to Pu-rang and was going [instead] to the Retaliation Cave (Lan-phug), there was a strong earthquake, and just then the master and his disciples saw Ma-dros-pa, the king of the serpent deities, manifest as a very long, venomous snake. [98b] It then blocked the valley, laying across it from one side to the other, and asked them not to proceed with their detour. And the way in which it asked for the vow of the aspiration to awakening is elucidated in the biography of Seng-ge Ye-shes. Still later, the Tantric master of 'Bri-gung and local religious administrator of the mountain lDa-ma Kun-dga' Grags-pa (16th cent.) went to the shore of mTsho Ma-pham. And having bound the Lord of the lake by oath, he took a handful of pebbles from out of the lake and among them there appeared in his hand a black stone with the six-syllable ritual formula self-produced in white stone on its surface, as if it had been made by a skilled craftsman. It is said that this was offered to him by Ma-dros-pa the king of the serpent deities, and these days it remains as an important sacred representation within sGang-sngon monastery in La-dwags.

There appear to be many amazing stories [98b], such as these, of how this serpent deity cultivated his devotion towards the highest lamas of this lineage. And as a consequence of the compassion of those highest of victors, when I too initially arrived at Se-ba-lung valley, the eastern entrance to Ma-pham, during the wood-horse year (=1894), on that occasion I offered such things as serpent deity medicine (*klu-sman*) and serpent deity ritual cakes (*klu-gtor*) to the lake and a beautiful dwelling-tent of five-coloured rainbow appeared in the sky. It was pitched in the middle of the lake as if by way of a rainbow centre pole, and at the foot of sPos-ri ngad-ldan mountain to the south, on that morning when I stopped for a rest, everybody there saw the canopy of rainbow over the lake. Once when I halted on the lake shore at Bathing Entrance (*Khirus-sgo*) monastery, there appeared also a vision of the Teacher Buddha directly manifest in amongst the clouds in the sky in front of me [99a].

During the last 80 years or so the stream connecting lakes Ma-pham and La-lpags ceased to flow as the level of Ma-pham had dropped. However, on the night when I stayed there the lake level began to rise suddenly, probably on account of my offering serpent deity medicine and requisites to the lake. That night the channel between the two lakes rose up to about calf-height on persons who crossed it. Then, five or six days later it was around knee-deep, and then gradually it became more and more swollen until even horses had to swim across it. Such things also can be taken as signs that the king of the serpent deities is pleased.

Thirdly, the benefits of performing circumambulations, prostrations and bathing at this lake. As for the statements about the good qualities which its waters possess, [99b] the religious king Srong-btsan sGam-po (7th cent.) said,

There is a bodhisattva king of the serpent deities in mTsho Ma-pham.  
The waters in it also possess good qualities.

And the great meditation master Padmasambhava said,

The turquoise lake Ma-pham can be circled with a day's horse ride.  
It is the same for the lake of Dha-na-ko-sha.  
Whoever circumambulates it with sincere faith,  
Will attain Buddhahood without having to seek it elsewhere.  
Circumambulating it will purify the five inexpiable sins.  
Those drinking from and bathing in the turquoise lake will go to the  
Great Bliss Celestial Action Abode.

In general, the water of this very lake is not only endowed with eight properties, it is said to possess a quality which can purify ones transgressions and defilements and close the door to lower rebirths merely by drinking it or bathing in it. Concerning this lake, [100a] the Buddha and his disciples have said that it is a superior lake which Buddhas and bodhisattvas have empowered. If a person were to perform circumambulations of it with the knowledge that it is like this, even if they were a monstrous sinner who had committed the five inexpiable sins, as soon as they died the door to lower rebirths would close. And if one drinks from it and bathes there with faith, according to what was said above by the precious meditation master [Padmasambhava] one would take birth in the divine field of Celestial Action.

## Appendix:

### *A Brief History of the Monasteries Associated with the Lake*

Furthermore, there are eight [monasteries arranged clockwise around] the great lake:

1. To the east of the Ma-dros ocean is the Thorn Bush Valley (Se-ba-lung) monastery, a meditation place of the peerless 'Bri-gung bKa'-brgyud sect.
2. To the south-east is the Pleased Head (mNyes-mgo) monastery, occupied by the glorious Sa-skyapa school.
3. [100b] To the south is the Bathing Entrance (Khrus-sgo) monastery, a religious establishment of the glorious, peerless Ri-bo dGa'-ldan-pa [i.e. dGe-lugs-pa] sect.
4. To the south-west is The Beginning (mGo-tshugs) monastery, a meditation place of rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa.
5. To the west is the Small Bird (Byi'u) monastery, a place of practice of the meditation master Padmasambhava.
6. To the north-west is the Bird Shelter of Golden Bluff (Gad-pa gSer-kyi Bya-skyib), which was prophesied by the Buddha.
7. To the north is the Elephant's Trunk (Glang-sna) Monastery, occupied by the glorious 'Brug-pa school.
8. To the north-east is Bon Mountain (Bon-ri) monastery, a religious

establishment of the glorious, peerless Ri-bo dGa'-ldan-pa sect.

Firstly, as for the one called Se-ba-lung: In the past there was a local religious administrator of the mountain, from 'Bri-gung, named dKon-mchog brGyud-'dzin (17th cent.). His mind had such a powerful meditative cognition that he understood the true state of reality. His own lama, [101a] the 'Bri-gung Zhabs-drung dKon-mchog 'Phrin-las bZang-po (1665-?1718), said to him:

The valley of the golden-surfaced Jambu river at the bathing entrance to the east of mTsho Ma-pham is a perfect practice site, which includes an upland area resembling an open lotus, a lowland area in the form of the protectors of the three classes, a mountain to the right like the eight auspicious symbols, a mountain to the left like the seven extraordinary treasures, an eight-spoked wheel in the sky and an eight-petalled lotus on the ground. In the future, at ceremonies to mark the invitation of statues of the Buddha it will be a place where gods and goddesses take a bath. Establish a hermitage there!

In accord with that he went out searching and initially, after thinking he had located the site, he laid out the foundations of a monastery on a mountain which was [101b] a part of Thog-chen. However, later on in accord with a female sky-goer's prophecy this hermitage which is presently called Se-ba-lung, or Se-ra-lung in the colloquial language, was founded in the earth-male-monkey year (=1728) 12 years after the passing away of the omniscient 'Phrin-las bZang-po. Its patron was named Zing-gir Aer-ke Chog-thu, the Lord of Thog-chen Hor-stod, a principality of gDol-pa Sha-zan to the north. He sponsored the building of the hermitage to cleanse the sin of having dispatched 60 soldiers as reinforcements when the army of the Mongol general dGa'-ldan Tshe-dbang (late 17th cent.) went against La-dwags.

The chief sacred representation which resides in this place is an image of 'Phrin-las bZang-po which is actually Avalokiteśvara. This was made exclusively [102a] out of the cremation ash and skeletal remains of that very master by lamas holding his lineage. Its internal contents include: four large and small multiplying-bone relics of the Teacher Śākyamuni; five parts of medicinal Buddhist doctrine elixir and O-rgyan Rin-po-che's [i.e. Padmasambhava's] aspiration to awakening pills; a text belonging to the great translator Vairocana; the body flesh of Bram-ze sKye-bdun; hair from the head of 'Brom[-ston] rGyal-ba'i 'Byung-gnas; a cushion belonging to the peerless Dwags-po [lHa-rje sGam-po-pa]; body flesh, hair locks and life-water pills of the Lord Chos-rgyal Phuntshogs; the head hair, nasal blood and robes of Rigs-'dzin Chos-kyi Gags-pa; ten relic fragments of the very feet of the omniscient Bhadra; and the head hair, robes and nasal blood of dBu-skyes Bub-rje Don-grub Chos-rgyal. [102b] Not only does it contain such a powerful collection of sacred representations of many who were very learned and free from prejudice, relics of the body of absolute Buddha nature (*dhamakāya*), and so on. It contains genuine perfect cognition due to the power of having been specially consecrated by persons who have

attained perfection. And because of that, it has the exclusive ability to publicly reveal prophecies, such as whether or not one will succeed in a venture, and good and bad fortune, by way of such things as the appearance of its facial lustre.

This place also houses many other sacred representations which are empowered, including: images of Mahākāruṅika and Padmasambhava which were constructed together with that one [mentioned above]; a self-produced letter A which arrived on the hat of the local religious administrator dKon-mchog brGyud-'dzin himself; a reliquary shrine which contains many of his relics; a Buddha image which was made by the local religious administrator brTson-'grus; medicinal [clay] images of the Lord Mi-la, the glorious Phag-mo Gru-pa and the Lord 'Jig-rten mGon-po; an image [103a] of Padmasambhava which was made by the local religious administrator 'Phrin-las dBang-phyug; a relic shrine of the prostrating Chinese lama 'Jam-dbyangs bZang-po; a manuscript of the *Discourse on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines (Aṣṭāsāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra)*; a protector's temple which contains images of Mahākāla and A-phyi Chos-sgron and a multiplying-bone relic of the Buddha; an image of A-phyi Chibs-bzhon which was hand-crafted by the local religious administrator 'Phrin-las dBang-phyug; a mask of Tshe-ring-ma called Fruit-accepting Mother ('Brum-bzhes-ma).

Concerning mNyes-mgo (or Pleased Head) monastery to the south-east: Previously, when the glorious Lord Jo-bo Atiśa came to circumambulate mTsho Ma-pham, as an indication of how [103b] this spot pleased him he stayed here for several days. And after casting many votive clay tablet images (*tsha-tsha*) of deities, he constructed a shrine to house them in. Sometime after that, the one named Ngor-chen Kun-dga' lHun-grub (d. 1773) founded a monastery in this place, on the spot where a vision of Padmasambhava's head appeared to him. It contains many sacred representations, including the principal one which is a taking Tārā brought here from the Byams-sprin temple in Mang-yul. The residents of the place belong to the glorious Sa-skya-pa sect.

Concerning the monastery called Khrus-sgo (or Bathing Entrance) to the south: Previously, a local religious administrator of the 'Brug-pa sect named sGyi-pa excavated a small house here for both monastic and lay hermits. Following that, a lama holding the lineage of Rwa Lo-tṣā-ba arrived here from gTsang-stod, [104a] and he built a four-pillared guesthouse which eventually came to be used as the temple. In later times, during the period of the [7th] Dalai Lama bsKal-bzang rGya-mtsho (1708-1757), a dispute arose between a monk named Rab-'byams Tshul-khrims from bShad-'phel-gling monastery in Pu-rang and a local religious administrator from the 'Brug-pa sect over the sharing of the site of Khrus-sgo. It was settled by the Pho-lha *taiji* bSod-nams sTobs-rgyal (1689-1747), who gave the rDzu-sprul-phug monastery at Ti-se to the 'Brug-pa and Khrus-sgo to those at bShad[-'phel]-gling, after which the monastic subjects (*lha-brangs*) and tenant farmers (*mi-ser*) also were brought into peaceful agreement. Since then, it has been taken over as a religious establishment of the glorious, peerless Ri-bo dGa'-ldan-pa, and its monastic community who are adorned with the triple vow came to be fixed at about 18 members.

Many sacred representations of body, speech and mind are housed within the 12-pillared [104b] assembly hall, including a gold image of the Buddha Vajradhara which is the chief among them, a gold image the Buddha the height of an arrow, and images of the religious king of the three realms the Easterner Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang Gags-pa and his spiritual sons.

Concerning the monastery called mGo-tshugs (or The Beginning) to the south-west: Previously, when the glorious Lord Jo-bo Atiśa came to circumambulate the lake, he stayed for seven days in the Guesthouse Cave (mGron-khang-phug) on the shore of the lake here, and empowered it. After that, when rGyal-ba rGod-tshang-pa arrived here to open the entrance to this power place of snow mountain and lake, he practised for three months in the meditation cave which is now the recess in the present-day assembly-hall here. And so, it is said that because he was the one beginning (*mgo-tshugs-pa*) the spread of the doctrine of the 'Brug-pa sect at the snow mountain and lake, it was given the name The Beginning Cave (mGo-tshugs-phug) [105a]. Thus, although that is its actual name, presently it is incorrectly pronounced as "Go-zul". Later on, although a few Buddhist religious practitioners certainly came here in succession, there was no regular monastery. Later, at the time of the [10th] Dalai Lama Tshul-khrims rGya-mtsho (1816-1837), a student of the great master Zhabs-dkar rDo-rje-'chang (1781-1851) who was a monk named sByin-pa Nor-bu from the bShad-'phel-gling monastery in Pu-rang, established this monastery in accordance with a prophecy of the lord of the lake, the king of the serpent deities.

Many sacred representations of body, speech and mind are housed in this place, including: an Indian bronze of Avalokiteśvara the height of an arrow, which is the inner representation of White Crystal (Shel-dkar) lake entrance to the south; the precious Translated Teachings of the Buddha; an Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara made of sandalwood; and a silver shrine [105b] with statues of the great master [Zhabs-dkar-ba] Tshogs-drug Rang-grol and his spiritual son sByin-pa Nor-bu. There is also a community of four monks living here who wear saffron robes and adhere to the three vows.

Concerning the monastery called Khrus-sgo Byi'u (or Small Bird Bathing Entrance) to the west: The monastery is situated on top of a rocky hill which is shaped like a heart. It has the layout of the Glorious Copper-coloured Mountain [Paradise of Padmasambhava]. In the past here, Padmasambhava stayed for seven days in this rock cave in preparation for his journey to subdue a demon to the south-west, and he left behind his footprint on a rock. There is an image of Padmasambhava made of sandalwood, and the one that is housed here today is said to have been hand-crafted by the Guru himself. The residents of the place are of the glorious 'Brug-pa sect, and also there is a meditation community who hold the doctrinal lineage of sDing-che Don-grub mThong-smon.

[106a] Concerning the monastery called Bya-skyib (or Bird Shelter) to the north-west: It is identified with the so-called Bird Shelter of Golden Bluff (Gad-pa gSer-kyi Bya-skyib), which was prophesied by the Teacher Buddha in the past. When the Buddha came here long ago, this cave itself in which his retinue of 500 Buddhist worthy ones dwelt was self-produced in the rock. Later, it was

occupied for a long time by the 'Bri-gung sPyan-snga Shes-rab 'Byung-gnas (1187-1241) together with his retinue of 500 meditators, and it came to be owned by the 'Bri-gung-pa sect. Following that, the Tantric master gTsang-smyon-pa arrived, and although he established a meditation community which flourished, finally later on it is said that due to the vile intrigues of a destructive war most of the [106b] caves fell into the lake, and the meditation community was abandoned. Nowadays there are about four caves, and in the temple which was founded here by the glorious lHo-brug-pa sect who occupy the place there are such things as the Lake Viewing (mTsho-gzigs-ma) statue of O-rgyan Rin-po-che, an Indian bronze image of Vajrasattva and an image of the mighty Teacher Buddha made out of Central Indian bronze.

Concerning the monastery named Khrus-ngo Glang-sna (or Elephant's Trunk Bathing Entrance) to the north: Because the monastery is situated on the side of a hill shaped like an elephant (*glang-chen*), it is said to have been named in that way. Furthermore, originally this monastery was founded by the Tantric master named sNye-mo-ba bSam-gtan Phun-tshogs after he had meditated for many years at Ti-se. After that, his own reincarnation Kun-dga' Blo-gros sNying-po [107a] is said to have built it up, having laid out the buildings of this monastery as a replica of those at 'Bri-gung Yang-ri-sgar. The chief sacred representation here is a statue of the Lord Śākyamuni which has in its heart an image of Vajravārāhī which arrived self-produced from a drop of the protector of beings gTsang-pa rGya-ras's melted butter. There are also such things as: an evil-conquering reliquary shrine; a manuscript of the *Discourse on the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines*; a protector's temple with a four-armed Mahākāla; a temple which contains the precious *Translated Teachings* of the Buddha; and private quarters which house the *Collected Works (gsung-'bum)* of the Omniscient Padma dKar-po. The place is also occupied by monks of the 'Brug-pa sect [107b].

Concerning the monastery named Bon-ri (or Bon Mountain) to the northeast: Previously, when the Master Mi-la defeated Na-ro Bon-chung here with his magical powers, Bon-chung said to him "Indeed, by way of your superior ability with magical powers you have gained control of Ti-se. Do you think there is a resting place in the area where I at least could look out on this power place?" The Master replied "You yourself stay there!" and threw a handful of snow to the east, a little of which landed on the peak of Mount sTag-le in the east. This story is elucidated in the Master's biography, and this mountain [Bon-ri] is said to have been named that way because it is the same one. As for the monastery, when a long time had elapsed after the great Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419), the king of the Buddhist doctrine and second Buddha Manjuśrī had mastered [108a] the entire teachings of the Buddha in the northern land of Tibet, an accomplished scholar named Blo-bzang Nor-bu who came from the great seat of Se-ra Theg-chen-gling [in Lhasa] performed meditation on the slopes of Ti-se snow mountain. Thus, when he had become a leading exponent of the Buddha's teachings after perfecting his knowledge and comprehension, he established this same religious community with the help of patrons from Hor. This place contains all kinds of sacred representations of body, speech and mind, including: a statue of the

Teacher Buddha; an image of the Buddha 'Jam-dpal sNying-po [i.e. of the enlightened Tsong-kha-pa in the Tuṣita heavens]; the precious *Translated Teachings* of the Buddha; a relic shrine of the successive reincarnate lamas here. The place is also occupied by followers of the sect who are holders of the purified golden crown [i.e. dGe-lugs-pa]. [108b] That concludes my account of the history of both mountain and lake.

[110a...] *A Short Prayer to the  
Three Power Places Ti-se, Ma-pham and Pre-ta-pu-ri*

Praise to the Teacher!

I pray to the perfected site of action on the earth (Bhūcara),  
Hi-ma-la[-ya], a palace of the Buddha together with his sons,  
[Who are as numerous] as a pod full of sesame seeds and include  
The splendid king victorious Heruka and his retinue of 62 deities.

I pray to Pre-ta-pu-ri, the site of Tantric action under the earth,  
Where the mighty queen of female sky-goers, Vārāhī,  
Together with an ocean-like assembly of female attendants [110b],  
Sport in the dance and music which are the pure state of bliss and  
emptiness.

I pray to the dwelling [lake] of faithful Ma-dros [king of serpent deities],  
The pool of elixir which washes off impurities and faults,  
The miraculously manifested divine mansion  
Which was praised and empowered by the Buddha's pronouncement.

When I pray with an intense faith in mind  
To this great offering shine which is a magical appearance of [Buddha's]  
body, speech and mind,  
And where infinite Buddhas compassionately favour all beings,  
Empower me to obtain the supreme and mundane paranormal powers.

Let a burning lamp filled with the assiduous penance  
Of my prostrations, circumambulations, offerings, and so on [111a],  
Instantly overcome the darkness of defilements accumulated over  
numberless aeons,  
And then burn perpetually with a clear light of happiness and bliss!

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*Edited by*

Toni Huber

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Cover illustration: Painted clay sculpture depicting Mount Gaurishankar as the abode of the Tshe-ring mched-lnga goddesses and meditation site of Mi-la ras-pa. Courtesy of the Ethnographic Museum of the University, Zürich.

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**Dedicated  
to the memory of Graham E. Clarke,  
colleague and friend**