

**For love of the word: a new translation of Pt 1287,
the Old Tibetan Chronicle, chapter I**

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§ 1 clause v1-v27 (OTC I. 1-6): Drigum's naming

When Drigum btsanpo was still small in size, ^{v1} [they] asked ^{v3} the nurse Grožama Skyibringma ‘how (lit. as what) shall [he] be named?’ ^{v2} [and] from the words of the nurse: ‘The Golden Rock of *Skyi*, <1> did it crumble to pieces ^{v4} or not? ^{v5} *Daṅma*, the Meadow of the *ḥbri*, did it get burnt by fire ^{v6} or not? ^{v7} Lake *Damle*, the Pointed Lake, did it dry up ^{v8} or not?’ ^{v9} <2> it was spoken ^{v10} thus. ‘The rock did not crumble. ^{v11} Nor did the lake dry up. ^{v12} Nor did the meadow get burnt by fire’, ^{v13} so [they] answered (lit. said), ^{v14} [but] the nurse Grožama, being aged, ^{v15} heard ^{v16} it just the opposite way as due to her ears: <3> ‘Not only did the rock crumble into pieces, ^{v17} but the meadow got burnt by fire, ^{v18} and the lake dried up, ^{v19} as well’, having heard ^{v20} it this way, [she] spoke: ^{v24} ‘Well then, in order to kill the water spirit (lit. to kill ^{v21} the water, to kill ^{v22} the spirit) <4> name ^{v23} [him] as Drigum btsanpo!’, and thus they named ^{v25} [him] as Drigum btsanpo, but the name-giving was an error ^{v26} <5> and [it] affected (lit. entered) ^{v27} also his mind (or personality).

§ 2 clause v28-v73 (OTC I. 6-21): fight between Loṅam and Drigum

The divine son, not having the manner ^{v28} of (ordinary) men, <6> [namely as] possessing ^{v30} great gifts and magical powers such as really going to heaven, ^{v29} was unable to withhold ^{v31} heat and pride and when, being full of violence, ^{v32} <7> vying ^{v33} and chasing ^{v34} [everyone], [he] called upon ^{v37} nine cousins [among] the paternal bondsmen and three cousins [among] the maternal bondsmen: ‘Dare [you] to fight ^{v35} [Us] as an enemy and stand up ^{v36} against [Us], the yak?’, <8> one by one, they said ^{v39} ‘[I] shan’t dare’. ^{v38} When marshal Loṅam likewise said ^{v41} ‘[I] shan’t dare’, ^{v40} [the emperor] did not accept ^{v42} [it] and thereupon Loṅam prayed ^{v43} ‘If, thus, you do not accept, ^{v44} if you bestow ^{v46} me with the divine treasures, such as the self-stabbing spear, self-cutting sword, self-donning mail, and self-parrying shield, the great magical treasures which you possess, ^{v45} [I] shall dare.’ ^{v47} Thus [he] prayed. ^{v48} Then [the emperor] bestowed ^{v49} [Loṅam] with all the divine treasures. Thereupon marshal Loṅam, on his part, went ^{v50} ahead to the castle Myaṅro Šampo. After the emperor likewise betook ^{v51} himself to Myaṅro Šampo, [they] arranged ^{v52} the battle in the grove Myaṅro Thalba and then, as from the words of the marshal it was prayed ^{v54} <9> to cut ^{v53} the ?bright red ?divine ribbon (*dbuḥḥbreṅ zaṅnyag*), <10> and prayed ^{v56} <9> to also turn upside down ^{v55} (lit. with the opening downwards) the nine-?stepped ?divine ladder (*dbuḥskas stendguḥ*), <11> [the emperor] granted ^{v57} these two [requests] accordingly. Thereupon Loṅam fas-

tened_{v58} two hundred golden spear heads on the horns <12> of (lit. upon) a hundred oxen <13> and loaded_{v59} ashes on [their] backs, following which [Loṅam and the emperor] (started to) fight_{v60} among the oxen, <14> so that the ashes got whirled_{v61} about [because of a stampede or because the oxen (got) pushed against each other], and within that [haze] Loṅam attacked_{v62} [the emperor]. As for the emperor Drigum [his ancestor deity] Ldebla Guṅrgyal tried to pull him up_{v63} to the heaven, but Loṅam drew out_{v64} a monkey from [his] armpit, who then cast_{v65} Ldebla Guṅrgyal into the womb of the glacier Titse, <15> [where the latter] died (lit. betook himself [to the heaven])._{v66} Since [he=Loṅam /?the monkey] had killed_{v67} emperor Drigum likewise at this place, [he=?Loṅam] placed_{v68} the corpse into a juxtaposed(ly) sealed copper (vessel) <16> and discarded_{v69} [it] in the middle of the Rtsaṅ river. <17> At Chabgžug Sertshaṅs [it] went_{v70} into the stomach of the water spirit Ḥodde Bedde Riṅmo. Having, in turn, named_{v71} the two sons as Šakhyi and Ńakhyi, <18> [he=?Loṅam] banished_{v72} [them] to the land of Rkoṅ and separated_{v73} them (or: redistributed [their property]).

§ 3 v74-v86 (OTC l. 21-26): the killing of Loṅam

Thereafter, two [loyal men], Rhulbžikhugs of Rhyamo <19> and Btsanbžoṅrgyal of Snam smears_{v74} poison into the fur of the great dog of the dominion: Ḥonzugsyargags (?), and of the two [dogs] of Ḥjaṅ: Zulemahjaṅ and Ḥonrku (?), and when, passing_{v75} the ?rock shelter (/?rocks and slates) <20> at (lit. of) the narrow passage, [they] examined (lit. looked at)_{v76} a [bird's] stomach <21> for the signs: the signs were good,_{v77} thus arriving_{v78} in the land [of] Myaṅro Šampo, [they] infiltrated (?/fastened; lit. stringed)_{v79} [the dogs] with a trick, and while there was_{v80} poison in the dogs' fur, now my marshal(s) led_{v81} [them] along, and as for the good dogs, Loṅam's hand patted_{v82} them, and since our marshal(s) had anointed_{v83} the dogs' fur with poison, [his =Loṅam's] hand got besmeared,_{v84} and [so] [they] killed_{v85} [him] and took_{v86} his life (lit. flesh) in revenge. <22>

§ 4 v87-v119 (OTC l. 21-35): the Rhya-Bkrags war and Darleskyes' birth and his inquiry about father and lord

Thereafter, the son of Bkrags, the divine son Rulaskyes, <23> a paternal cousin, fought_{v87} with Rhya as a paternal cousin (i.e. they fought a fraternal war). <24> Rhya cut off_{v88} the Bkrags lineage. [He] confiscated (or drove away)_{v89} the livestock. <25> One consort <26> of Bkrags fled_{v90} and was able to rescue_{v91} herself in the land of her father and brother. Carrying_{v92} a child in her womb (lit. belly), [she] had gone,_{v93} and [thus it] was born (lit. appeared)_{v94} [here]. As soon as the son was able to stand upright_{v95} among the man of the Spu clan, <27> [he said] to his mother: 'If every man and every bird has_{v96} a lord, where is_{v97} my lord? If every man and every bird has_{v98} a father, where is_{v99} my father?', thus he said._{v100} 'Show_{v101} [them] to me!', having spoken_{v102} thus, from the words of the mother: 'Child little, don't talk big (lit. be big_{v103} with your mouth)! Colt, little <28> don't talk strong (lit. be strong_{v104} with your mouth)! <29> I don't know_{v105} [nothing]', having spoken_{v106} thus, from the words of the son of the Spu clan, Darleskyes: <30> 'If [you] do not show_{v107} [them] (/if you do not explain [this]) to me [I] am going_{v109} to die.'_{v108} thus [he] said_{v110} and [his] mother explained_{v111} [it] [from] the beginning: <31> 'As for your father, Rhya killed_{v112} him.

As for your lord, marshal Loᅇam killed_{v113} him, placed_{v114} the corpse into a juxtaposed(ly) sealed copper (vessel), and discarded_{v115} [it] in the middle of the Rtsaᅇ river. At Chabᅇᅇug Sertshaᅇs [it] went_{v116} into the stomach of the water spirit ᅇode Riᅇmo. As for the royal sons, the two brothers, having named_{v117} [them] as ᅇakhyi and ᅇakhyi, [he ?=Loᅇam] banished_{v118} [them] to the land of Rkoᅇ and separated_{v119} [them] (or: re-distributed [their property]).”

§ 5 v120-v182 (OTC l. 36-49): ransom of Drigum’s corpse

Thereafter, from the words of the son of the Spu clan, ᅇarlaskyes: ‘The one destroyed by men (/the destroyed man) [i.e. Bkrags], his traces to follow,_{v120} and the one destroyed by water [=Drigum], his remnants to search,_{v121} I shall go”,_{v122} saying_{v123} this, he started off._{v124} In Bresnar [in] the land [of] Rkoᅇ [he] met_{v125} with the sons ᅇakhyi and ᅇakhyi, on the one hand. On the other hand, [he] met_{v126} with the water spirit ᅇode Bedde Riᅇmo. ‘By what that you wish_{v127} [in exchange] for the corpse of the emperor may [I] ransom_{v128} [it]?’”, having said_{v129} this, [the water spirit] spoke:_{v134} ‘[I] do not desire_{v130} anything else: [I] want_{v133} one who has_{v131} human eyes like bird eyes, one who closes (lit. covers)_{v132} [them] from beneath”, <32> but although the son of the Spu clan, ᅇarlaskyes searched_{v135} in the four directions, <33> [he] did not find_{v138} [one with] human eyes, [but] similar_{v136} to the eyes of a bird, [one who] closes_{v137} [them] from beneath, then, [his] provisions finished,_{v139} his boots having got holes,_{v140} [he] came back_{v141} to [his] mother and after telling_{v154} her: ‘As for the one destroyed by men (/the destroyed man) [i.e. Bkrags], [I] was able to follow_{v142} his traces, as well as for the one destroyed by water [=Drigum], [I] found_{v143} his remnants. [I] met_{v144} with the sons ᅇakhyi and ᅇakhyi, and when [I] also met_{v145} with the water spirit ᅇode Riᅇmo, [the spirit] said:_{v149} ‘As ransom for the corpse [I] want_{v148} [one with] human eyes, [but] similar_{v146} to the eyes of a bird, one who closes_{v147} [them] from beneath”, and since [I] have not [yet] found_{v150} [any such], [I] must set out_{v152} again to search_{v151} [this being]. Pack up [/?Give me] <34> [some] provisions!’”,_{v153} he went off_{v155} [again]. As [he] came_{v156} to [a place] below Gaᅇparᅇᅇhrun and went up_{v158} to [the spot] where a daughter of the family <35> Manbird (/Menbirds), was working_{v157} on a canal (/?where someone was trying to make a daughter of the family Menbirds asleep), <36> and when, [realising that] [s/he] had,_{v162} lying_{v159} in a cradle/crib, <37> a child [who] covers_{v161} the eyes from below, similar_{v160} to bird eyes, [he] asked_{v165} the mother: ‘If [I] shall ransom_{v163} that one, what do [you] wish_{v164} [in exchange]?’”, ‘[I] do not wish_{v166} anything else: Forever and ever, whenever the emperor, lord or wife dies,_{v167} as for [one’s] tuft of fine plaits (lit. fine tuft), having tied it (up),_{v168} having [one’s] face <38> anointed_{v169} with vermilion, having applied ornaments_{v170} <39> on [one’s] body, one assembles_{v171} <40> at the corpse of the emperor. For (/Towards) the people: swag and swaggering (*ᅇphroᅇrom*). <41> For (/Towards) the fare: eating and drinking! <42> Shall you act_{v172} like this or not?’”,_{v173} the mother having spoken_{v174} thus, [he] laid down a solemn vow (lit. cut a vow,_{v176} cut a high [one]_{v177}), [he] made a commitment (lit. made the promise,_{v178} made the word_{v179}) to act accordingly,_{v175} and went,_{v181} leading along_{v180} the daughter of the family Manbird. [He] deposited_{v182} [the child /?the daughter] in the belly <43> of the water spirit ᅇode Riᅇmo as ransom for the corpse.

§ 6 v183-v225 (OTC l. 49-62): Spude Guṅrgyal assumes power

Ña[khyi] and the [future] lord (*lha* or *lhasras*) <44> took hold_{v183} of the corpse of the emperor. On top of (mount) Gyaṅto [in Rkoṅ], <45> [they] built_{v185} a tomb like a ?neck (/tent) <46> turned upside down._{v184} As for the younger brother Ñakhyi, he hosts_{v186} the funeral repast. As for the elder brother Šakhyi, he goes (?went)_{v188} to take revenge_{v187} for the father. As for Ñakhyi, he is (/was)_{v189} the White [Prince] of Rkoṅ. [He ?= Ñakhyi /As for ø ?= Šakhyi, he] <47> departs (/departed)_{v190} with an army [of] about three thousand three hundred [men]. [He] go(es) (/went)_{v191} to the castle Pyiṅba. ‘If there is_{v192} no lord over (lit of) the elders of the country, <48> the outer nomads and the vassals will one by one turn away (and leave)._{v193} <49> If the rain for the elder of the pike (?the sprout) <50> does not come_{v194} [in time], seeds and ?insects <51> will one by one decay”,_{v195} thus [he/?they] spoke._{v196} [He] crossed_{v197} the pass of the Menpa chain. [He] passed through_{v198} the long gorge of Tiṅsrab. [He] came_{v199} to Bachos Guṅdaṅ. When [he] came_{v200} to Myaṅro Šampo, the hundred men [of the] Loṅam [clan], having sheltered_{v201} <52> their heads with pots, [?nevertheless] jumped (/run)_{v202} into death. The hundred women [of the] Loṅam [clan], having pressed_{v203} large iron pans against their breasts, were [nevertheless] ?disgraced (/were scared shitless)._{v204} <53> [He] overthrew_{v205} Myaṅro Šampo. The bipeds [he] took_{v206} as prisoners, the quadrupeds [he] confiscated_{v207} as [his/the state’s] livestock, <54> and went_{v208} [back] to Bachos Guṅdaṅ. [He] sang_{v209} the following song: ‘*ḥabañi-ñepañid*. In every <55> bird the tip of the lance. <56> In every hare the tip <57> of the boot. [We] have beaten_{v210} the thigh (perhaps an euphemism for animal and/or human sacrifices?). [We] have disposed_{v211} of the corpse. The pit <58> is no more._{v212} The [former] Spu is no more.”_{v213} <59> Thus [he] spoke._{v214} [He] went_{v215} again (back) to [the castle] Pyiṅba Stagrtse. [He] went_{v216} [there] as the lord of the elders of the country. [Thus:] ‘[In] the country, the outer nomads and the vassals will not turn away._{v217} Because the water for the elder of the pike (?the sprout) has come,_{v218} seeds and ?insects will not decay.”_{v219} Such sang (lit. spoke)_{v220} [he] that song. At the fundament of the hearth (?=the dominion) <60> [he] brought down (?=subdued)_{v221} copper ore (?=the competing rulers) from above <61> and came_{v222} as the lord. When he was engendered:_{v223} Spude Guṅrgyal, when he died:_{v224} Graṅmo Gnam Bseḥbrtsig. <62> [He] came_{v225} as the lord for the black headed bipeds, and as assistance for the maned quadrupeds.

<1> *mar*. As a reference to a particular place, it is not unlikely that the Zhangzhungian meaning ‘golden’ had been intended and not the classical meaning ‘red’ for which the spelling would be *dmār*-. For the respective colour terms cf. also Zeisler to appear, §5.3.4.1.

<2> Contrary to all other translations, NWH insists on a present tense reading, explaining this as follows: ‘The three verbs *rñil* ‘crumble,’ *tshig* ‘burn,’ and *skams* ‘dry’ appear to be present stems. They are here unexpectedly negated with *ma* rather than *mi*. Bacot et al. translate these passages with the *passé composé* (1940: 123), and Haarh with a present perfect (1969: 402). To me present makes better sense. If these events had taken place very far in the past the nurse would already know about them. Additionally, to ask about them in the past implies some expectation on part of the nurse that they are likely, whereas a present simply asks about their current condition’ (2006: 89f, n. 4). *skams* is clearly not a ‘present’ stem, but evidently stem II of the adjectival *skam* ‘get, be dry’, cf. the derived nominal adjectival *skampo* ‘dry’. Stem II can have a resultative or present perfect function (present result of a past event), especially in the case of adjectivals, while stem I seems to denote the inchoative meaning (cf. Zeisler 2004: 450). *rñil* and *tshig* are verbs with no (apparent) stem alternation, although the form *nñil-tam* points to an inherent *-d* suffix as marker for

stem II. In the case of verbs without stem alternation, the negation markers *ma* and *mi* help to locate the event on the time axis, *ma* usually indicating a past event. Presumably not all native speakers of American English would follow NWH's argument above, and even if so, the somewhat particular restrictions for the use of a present perfect in English cannot be the measure for its use in other languages. In German as well as in French the present perfect or *passé composé* makes perfect sense in this context: the nurse is asking about a present state resulting from an event that necessarily took place before the speech act. As these events imply a transition, it would be rather strange to ask about the breaking down of a rock or the drying up of a lake in the simple or progressive present tense.

- <3> The phrase *ma logpar thosste* follows the model of *sku chungba* 'small, little with respect of the body' in clause v1 (see also Hahn 1985: 48, section 7.5 d) where he gives *gtiṅ/sgra/blo zabpo* 'deep with respect to the ground/voice/intellect', and *rgyan riṅba* 'be long with respect to the distance'.
- <4> *chu dgum, srin dgum*. It seems to be a common poetic or rhetorical means in Old Tibetan to divide up a compound and duplicate the predication, cf. the division of *dmaḥmtho* in clauses v176 and v177, and of *damtshig* in clauses v178 and v178. A similar example, but without predication, is the division of *phatshan* in clause v35. Bacot et al. translate 'pour tuer les humeurs et les Sri' with a note 'Démons s'attaquant spécialement aux enfants' (1940: 123, n. 3). Haarh translates 'because there is water-death, and there is sri-death', but the verb stem III has a patient-oriented gerundive function with a strong obligational character (cf. Zeisler 2004: 264).
- <5> Bacot & et al. translate this likewise as 'ce fut une faute', Haarh more freely as 'was ominous'. NWH chose the possible meaning 'regret', but then, given the close connection between two events indicated by the *lhagbcas* morpheme {ste}, which does not easily support a 'subject' switch, the 'subject' of regretting should have been the 'subject' of entering Drigum's mind in the following clause, which would not make much sense.
- <6> *myiḥi myitshulte*. We follow Bacot & al., since it is more probable that the emperor, styled a descendant of the gods, is not like other human beings, than that he is (as suggested by Haarh). The word *tshul* is normally a noun. The *lhagbcas* morpheme {ste} may well combine with nouns, especially when introducing an enumeration, but in our case the resulting meaning 'the human manner of man' would be extremely infelicitous with the enumeration of super-human faculties. Therefore, the syllable *myi* must be interpreted as a negation morpheme and not as the word 'man' for the story to make sense. But because negation markers only combine with verbs, *tshul* must be a verb, with the highly irregular case frame Abs Gen. The genitive seems to be triggered by the nominal use, but it might perhaps also be a misspelt instrumental or it might reflect an ancient pattern as found in the Kenhat dialects of Ladakh, where agents, causes, media, and possessors receive the same case marking. But, of course, one also has to reckon with some mistake in mounting the text passages.
- <7> Given the fact that *btsan* is an adjectival, and thus basically a verb 'be mighty, powerful, violent, strong, etc.', and that the nominaliser *-po* of the imperial title is missing, one should take all three words as verbs, describing the behaviour of Drigum. The use of stem I in its non-finite function (actually a case of cross-clausal group inflection, since the morpheme of the last verb in the row extends over the preceding verb(s)), binds correlated or like events closer together and suspends the sequential order as suggested by the linear presentation, giving thus the impression of simultaneity (cf. Zeisler 2004: 355-357). Since Drigum is already the implicit subject/topic of the preceding clauses, there is also no need for an explicit mentioning, either under his name or under the Imperial title. NWH prefers to interpret the first of these three clauses as NP with *btsan* for *btsanpo* 'emperor'. His original note runs as follows: 'Haarh suggests three translations: '1. accused of contending, vying; 2. contending for, he chased; 3. fighting and hunting' (1969: 402 n. 5 on pg. 453). He opts for the third in his translation. Wang and Bsodnams Skyid interpret it as '*btsan šedkyis ḥgranbsdur byedbcug* [with imperial authority he made [them] contend and fight]' (1988 [=1992]: 34 n. 129 on pg. 81). It is presumably on this authority that Jacques translates this phrase as 'et il poussait (ses sujets) à participer à des épreuves de force (avec lui).' I think it simpler to see *btsan* as the topic and *ḥdran bdaḥ* as a description of his action or state at the time that he proposed to his subjects that they vie with him' (transliteration adjusted).

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- <8> *druṅ*. This word is not attested as verb or adjectival, but only as noun or postposition. But Haarh's translation 'Are we equal in prudence to the Yak?' (p. 402), based on the adjective *druṅpo* 'prudent', does not really fit the context. Nor does it fit the grammar of the verb *phod*₂ 'come up to, be nearly equal in worth to' which requires a locational marker (cf. JÄK). Wang & Bsodnams Skyid 1992: 34 emendate *g.yogdu* for *g.yagdu*, which apparently is intended to yield the meaning 'dare you to fight [us] in front of the servants (as witnesses)?', but is completely against the syntax (*g.yogdu druṅ* should then precede *dgraru rgal-phod*). NWH suggests a similar inversion: 'I wonder however if it could be odd syntax for *g.yagdu druṅ dgraru rgal phoddam?*' (transliteration adjusted). An alternative possibility to interpret *druṅ* as an archaic form of *ruṅ* 'be fit, suitable' (for a possible alternation *rV ~ ḥdrV*, cf. Sprigg 1970: 16-17, Hill 2006) is ruled out by the following modal verb *phod*₁ 'dare, be able'. Nevertheless, there might have been an etymologically related verb with an agentive semantics.
- <9> Bacot & al. as well as Haarh translate the two speeches as one single direct speech, with *gsol* as a performative verb. (In the case of performative verbs, the utterance is identical with the event referred to, e.g. when saying 'I promise ...' a promise is given or when saying 'I request that ...' the act of requesting is performed.) However, at least in the case of the second speech, the verb *gsol* cannot be a performative verb and part of the speech, since it is given in a non-finite form *gsol-nas*, lit. 'from (having) spoken'. The request itself is thus given as embedded proposition or indirect speech. It is also not so clear whether *gsol* can ever be used as performative verb or only as descriptive verb relating to third persons, particularly since the verb *žu* 'ask, request (a person of high status)' is commonly used as performative verb. NWH, thus, translates both parts correctly as indirect speech. From that it follows that the two *verba dicendi* form a close unit and the ablative morpheme *nas* of the second verb operates also on the first one, a case of cross-clausal group inflection.
- <10> The first element would suggest a reading as '?head-ribbon'. But as there is some evidence for an interchange of (prenasalised) oral and nasal labial stops, *dbuḥi* might perhaps be taken as a dialectal variant of *dmu*, a particular 'deity' and the realm of the heaven (cf. Stein 1941: 226-230, Zeisler, to appear, §5.3.4.3 for some interesting oral and nasal doublets, as well as Beckwith 2006: 187 for similar sound changes in Chinese). Other mythological narrations have Drigum accidentally cut the *dmuthag*, a rope that allows the defunct to ascend to heaven, and thus he is the first king whose body remains on earth after death, and the first king to be buried. The latter motive recurs also in the present text. It seems thus not to be too far fetched to assume, that the ribbon, which Drigum cuts according to the request of Loṅam, is exactly the crucial connection to the heaven.
- <11> The single elements would suggest a reading such as '?head-?ladder', qualified as having nine *sten* or '?holders'. Perhaps simply a kind of auspicious insignia or ornament. But perhaps again a reference to the *dmuthag* (the rope that allows ascend to heaven) or, in mythical duplication, a reference to a similar tool, which is likewise made useless by turning it upside down.
- <12> *rḥba*. Bacot & al. (1940: 98, l. 1), Haarh (1969: 403), as well as TDD/OTDO represent the word as *rba*, Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 35) as *sba*. They suggest an interpretation as 'joined one behind each other' (p. 80, n. 133). Without any comment, Bacot & al. as well as Haarh translate the word correctly as 'horn'. In fact, the superscribed consonant looks very much like the superscribed *s*- in *stendguḥi* just one line above (l. 15) and in *ḥtabste* just one line below (l. 17). However at a closer look, one will realise that there is too much space between the initial cluster and the following *la*, enough to insert a syllable separating *tsheg*. The final right stroke of the apparent superscript *sa* ends up exactly where one would expect a *tsheg* and the accurate eye can, in fact, perceive a *tsheg* at this point. The stroke apparently resulted from moving the pen too hastily from the base of the letter to the *tsheg* (a similar line, although much weaker, can be seen in *gser* of the same line). Without mentioning, who pointed out all this to him, NWH summarises our discussions as "An examination of the facsimilies [!] convinces me that the text has *rwa la*, though hastily written such that the *r* obscures and combines with the following *tsheg*," (2006: 92, n. 16). The radical (or subscribed?) *ba* actually corresponds to the *wazur*, the subscribed *va*, in accordance with the expected spelling for the word 'horn'. Apart from this, it is interesting to note that throughout the whole document the consonant in question does not yet have the small size of the subscribed *wazur*, but is a full-sized triangular *ba* without the horizontal bar on its top, cf. the other

two occurrences of r̥ba ‘horn’ in the OTC: line 215 and 502 (the obviously derived character of the letter is reflected here in the representation as ‘B’). These instances are represented more or less correctly as *rava* and *rva* in Bacot et al. (1940: 107 l. 11, 121 l. 8), as *rwa* (with *wazur*) in Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 46, 64) and in TDD/OTDO. The upper bar is, however, also found in one of two instances of K̥Bacu l. 340, 341 (the latter with the bar). Both the form of the radical *ba* and that of the radical or subscribed *va* are important epigraphic traits, which can help to date early documents. The fact that in OTC a derived (bar-less) *ba* could apparently still interchange with a full *ba* (with top bar), and that the derived letter is not reduced in size, has not yet been brought to the attention of the public, as far as we know (Uray, who obviously had no access to the OTC manuscript, only points to a case of non-reduction in size in another text, but does not mention the occurrence of the top bar; 1955: 108). As mentioned by NWH (2006: 92, note 16), the honour for first representing the text (almost) correctly as *rwala* (with *wazur*) might go to Gñahḡoṅ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan (1995: 17). Unfortunately, the author does not comment his decision.

- <13> Haarh apparently analyses the additional locational argument (oxen) as the primary location and the locational argument (horn) as a manner adverb, translating this passage as ‘fastened two hundred spearheads like horns upon one hundred oxen’, which is somewhat against the grammar (one would have expected locative-purposive case marking in this case) as well as against the intended meaning (the expression would have made sense, only if the oxen were hornless).
- <14> The clause is somewhat difficult to analyse. The problem does not get easier in view of the possible variation in the frame. The whirling up of ashes in the following clause indicates that the oxen with their spears and their sacks of ashes must have got into close contact with each other. This seems to rule out some human agency for the fighting in the present clause. Bacot & al., followed by NWH, prefer thus an interpretation where the oxen fight against/among each other. NWH argues that the further context, where Loṅam is said to attack among the haze, does not really support the idea that Loṅam (and/or the emperor) should be the agent of the fighting, but he admits that his solution ‘may not be philologically justified.’ According to Haarh, the oxen simply fight. Seen from a technical side, it is not absolutely necessary that the oxen fight each other in order to get the sacks of ashes torn by their lances. The same could happen, if they simply get somewhat to close to each other by being driven together or in a stampede. This even more so, if the ashes were not loaded upon the oxen in sacks, but simply ‘put’ upon their back, as Haarh translates (however, the little quantity of ashes that can be deposited so, might not yield the necessary haze). One might think of an interpretation where the implicit agent Loṅam drives the oxen ‘inside’, i.e., into the forest or — since this evidently goes against the documented meaning of the verb *ḡthab* — where the oxen ‘get driven’, ‘get entangled’, or ‘huddle together inside’, assuming an etymological relation (intransitive or inagentive vs. causative) between *ḡthab* and *ḡdebs* ‘drive’, lost in CT. In that case we should assume only a frame with the first argument in the absolutive. But then again, the absolutive of the noun *naḡ* ‘inside’ could not be accounted for. Since postpositions can be realised as compounds, by which transformation their case marker is dropped, the best solution seems to be to take *glaynaḡ* ‘among the oxen’ as such a compound, hence the missing co-actors must be Loṅam and the emperor: It would be utterly infelicitous to state that the oxen fought among the oxen by using the full NP two times or by even dropping the first NP (cf. the corresponding sentences in English; nobody would ever assume that ‘they’ in a sentence like ‘they fought among the oxen’ refers to exactly the same oxen). Further more, the deletion of the agent argument is much better motivated when it continues a preceding agent, which by virtue of being human is also high on the animacy hierarchy, than an argument that is animate, but takes the role of a location. That the empty argument actually refers to two different previous agents should not be a hindrance. The fact that Loṅam attacks the emperor in the resulting haze is also not really a contradiction to a previous statement that Loṅam and the emperor fought, or perhaps rather started to fight, among the oxen. Nevertheless, there seems to be a passage lacking, describing how and why exactly the ashes got scattered.
- <15> While following the translation of Bacot et al., this seems to be also the linguistically most feasible interpretation. Fieldwork in Ladakh has shown that there is a strong preference to link up an empty argument with the P argument of the preceding clause. We do also have examples for an AGENT – PATIENT cross-reference relation in contexts of employment and assistance. Nevertheless, from the perspective of the Tibetan prehistory and mythology, monkeys seem to have played an essential

role for the self-definition of particular ethnic groups, assuming the role of totems or ancestor-deities (cf. Zeisler to appear, §5.3.4.2). One could therefore think that Loṅam pulled out the monkey from the bosom of god Ldebla Guṅrgyal as a representation of the latter's soul or magical power, and that this deprivation caused the latter's death. On the other hand, as the whole episode implicitly reflects a dynastic change and ultimately the installation of the Spurgyal lineage, and since the clan name Spu has some quite obvious etymological relations with the word for 'monkey', and one could likewise assume — against the Tibetan tradition — that Loṅam was actually associated with the Spu clan and thus could use the magical power of the monkey totem to overcome the Lde (*deva*) lineage.

- <16> *zansbrgyaḥ*. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH translate this as 'hundred copper vessels', the former two omitting the adjective *khasprod*, the latter translating it as 'closed'. However, according to the standard word order within noun phrases, the numeral would be misplaced before a further adjective. The numeral might have thus been part of a compound, but this solution does not seem to be well motivated here. In the light of the expression *zans brgyaḥma* in clause v115 below, where the corresponding derivation 'hundredth' would be even less motivated than the plain numeral, I would suggest the interpretation 'sealed copper vessel(s)'. For an alternative reading '*wide copper vessel' one would expect an inverted order of the compound elements on the model of *rgyamtsho* 'wide lake, i.e. ocean'. The notion 'juxtaposed' may refer either to a small set of vessels fitted into each other in a juxtaposed manner or to the position of the opening of the vessel with respect to the corpse (thus at the feet). In a less felicitous way, it might perhaps also indicate the juxtaposition of the seals.
- <17> The interpretation that the empty arguments in clauses v67 to v69 actually refer to Loṅam is corroborated by the parallel episode clauses v113 to v115, narrated by Darleskye's mother: there Loṅam is the explicit agent of killing and, given the close connection between events indicated by the *lhagbcas* morpheme {ste}, which does not support a subject switch, also the implicit agent of the following two actions.
- <18> If we correctly interpret that Loṅam is the agent of the name giving (because this event is closely connected with the following two events in clauses v72 and v73,), this may imply that according to this narrative, the names given are thought to be non-auspicious and were literally understood by the author or compiler as 'Stag-Dog' and 'Fish-Dog'. This would further imply that it was not generally known that the element *khyi* was an East Tibetan variant of *khri*, surfacing in so many regal names. The latter element, although unanimously translated as 'throne', seems to be related to the word *ḥkhrid* 'lead', and may thus correspond to the title of a 'Duke'. Together with Byakhri, the 'Bird-Leader', known from later traditions, Šakhri, the 'Stag-Leader', and Ṇakhri, the 'Fish-Leader', represent the three realms of the world (Heaven, Middle-World, and Yonder-World), cf. also Haarh (1969, passim). They would certainly not have received such prestigious names from their foe. On the other hand, it also seems to be somewhat unlikely that Loṅam would have left them alive, if they had already been given such names (at birth or later). They would have been a constant threat to his usurpation. Although we are here certainly not dealing with 'real' facts, it is noteworthy that according to the narrative, Loṅam does not attempt to cut off the progeny of Drigum. In the conflict between Rulaskyes and Rhya, narrated somewhat later, clauses v87 to v89, the winner, Rhya, is said to do exactly that, although eventually one son, Darleskyes, survives. While, quite apparently, the Tibetan historical tradition has fused these two narratives into a single one, making Darleskyes or rather his father Rulaskyes a posthumous son of Drigum, it is quite evident the two narratives do not, as Haarh (1969: 156) thought, represent the same historical event under different names.
- <19> A Zhangzhungian dynastic name and/or title (cf. also Lig Myirhya, the last ruler of Zhangzhung, and Rhyelig, a ruler or official in Ṇimobag). It seems to be related to the Tibetan place names Rgya and as a title it seems to be related to the Tibetan verb *rgyal* 'win' and the corresponding title *rgyalpo* 'king'. Note that while final *-l* is pronounced in all Ladakhi varieties, the Lower Ladakhi word for king is /gyapo/, apparently going back to a form **rgyapo*.
- <20> This is only one of several possible interpretations of a rather enigmatic passage. There are basically three options: *g.yaḥ* or *g.yaḥbo* could either refer to the dogs or to the people who sent the dogs. In both cases the word could be interpreted as *g.yaḥba* 'relative' (BRGY) or perhaps rather

‘helper’ (cf. JÄK, GShS *yado*) or also as *yapo* ‘executioner’ (JÄK). However, the word order with the subject following a topicalised location seems to be utterly unmotivated, particularly because that location was not mentioned previously, whereas the apparent subjects in the focus position (either the dogs or the people who sent them) are given (previously mentioned), and should thus either be deleted or found in the topic slot. We would likewise think that Haarh’s translation ‘Trembling [*g.yaḥbo*] they passed *Hphaṅpoḥi brag* (the rock at the narrow foot-path)’ (transcription adjusted) is neither warranted by the word order nor by the Tibetan grammar: As a non-finite verb form in a modal sub-clause, one would have expected either a verbal noun *g.yaḥba* or a converb *g.yaḥmas*, which should have preceded the argument(s) of the verb ‘to pass’. As an adverb modifying the verb ‘to pass’ the adjective should have taken the locative-purposive case marker. While it is certainly possible that the sentence had been taken out of its context (where the word order might well have been motivated) and was merely mounted to the preceding one, an interpretation in terms of ‘relative’, ‘helper’, ‘executioner’, or also ‘trembling’ appears to be rather forced, and it is more likely that the subject was deleted. The expression should be thus taken as a compound. Again there are several possibilities for the second element. *g.yaḥbo* could stand for *g.yaḥ* ‘sign’ (GShS), *g.yab* ‘covert, shelter, overhang’ (cf. JÄK sub *yabpa*), or simply for *g.yaḥma* ‘slates’. In all these cases, the additional element *-bo* should perhaps be interpreted as a definiteness marker, as in West Tibetan. The marker could have been motivated if the whole expression referred to a then well-known place.

- <21> *pho* for *phoba*. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH all translate this word as ‘male’, leaving it, however, open to which of the previously mentioned dogs or persons this might refer. On the other hand, since we are dealing with some kind of oracle here, it is most likely that the stomach of a bird had been examined. This also fits with the description of the location (a narrow path among the rocks). Bird offering for prognostics is described by the Chinese sources Suishu and Beishi as being practised in prehistoric times (or up to the 7th century) in the ‘Women’s Dominion’ (Nüguo) or country of the ‘Gold Race’ (Suvarṇagotra) that apparently extended from Hunza through Ladakh, all along the Changthang to Eastern Tibet, cf. Pelliot 1963: 694f. as well as Rockhill 1891/2005: 339f. A reverberation of this technique might perhaps be found in the *Chanṅraps*, the ‘genealogy of the beer’, from the Ladakhi cycle of marriage songs: various birds are killed in search of the first grain; finally barley is found in the stomach of a pigeon and disseminated for the first time.
- <22> Quite apparently, clauses v78 (or v81) to v86 constitute a mounted citation. The narrative might have been part of a legal document, issued at much later times, bestowing a grant for the assistance. This would explain not only the first person perspective, but also the use of the singular pronoun. Bacot & al. put these words into the mouth of Loṅam ‘la caresse m’a tue’, Haarh and NWH interpret them as part of the omen. Haarh, however, interprets the second occurrence of the word *rtardzi* as referring to Loṅam, but then he would have been killing himself.
- <23> Bacot & al. translate this name as ‘né de la corne’, obviously influenced by the Tibetan tradition of a boy being born as a lump of blood, which his mother deposits in a horn. Most probably this legend had been inspired by the name and not the name by the legend. We should bear in mind that the Tibetan rendering might well be an attempt to etymologise a name of foreign origin. NWH suggests the translation ‘a son of Bkrags, born into the family [of] divine sons’, assuming against Haarh (1969: 279ff.) that *ru* ‘military division’ or ‘horn’ can be taken to be identical with *rus* ‘lineage, family’ or ‘bone’. According to our discussions, NWH further thinks that a finite verb is rather uncommon in Tibetan names, and in fact, one could have expected either a verbal noun: **Rula-skyespa* or a compound: **Ruskyes*. But the same objection should hold for the name Ḍarlaskyes, which NWH accepts as name. He also does not mind that his proposed subordinated clause (born into a family...) is not closed by a nominalised or otherwise non-finite verb form. Given the fact that names have their own logic or structures, the use of finite verbs forms in names (a topic yet to be researched) is not necessarily a violation of Tibetan grammar, but even if so, this ‘violation’ seems to be much more tolerable than the non-marking of a subordinated clause.
- <24> It remains somewhat questionable whether this literal meaning is, in fact, the intended meaning. While the translation tries to do justice to the text, it appears as if some linguistic accident had happened when mounting this passage.

<25> *dudsna*. Most probably a compound derived from *dudhgro* ‘quadruped’ (lit. ‘what is going in a bent manner’) and *snatshogs* ‘all kinds’ (cf. also Haarh 1969: 403 with n. 17, p. 453; but cf. also clauses v207 and v225 where *dud* is used alone for the meaning ‘stooped one, quadruped’). According to Uray (1966: 250 ff.) this compound must refer here to the essential livestock. NWH (2006: 93, n. 22: ‘Haarh sees the word *sna* as a contraction for *snatshogs* ‘various’ (1969:403 n. 17 on p. 453), but I prefer [!] to see it as meaning ‘nose’ and here used as a classifier word for cattle as synecdoche, in part because it seems likely that no cattle would have been specifically spared.’) This somewhat circular analysis does not account for expressions such as *darsna lña* ‘five sorts of silk’, *rinpochesna bdun* ‘seven kinds of jewels’, *šišnaḥi dudpa* ‘smoke of several kinds of wood’ as well as the compounds *snatshogs*, *snamañ*, *snatshad* ‘of every sort’, etc. (cf. JÄK sub *sna*, 5). When *sna* is used in combination with numerals, one could perhaps describe it as a (kind of) classifier, but we have no prove that it originally meant ‘nose’ or is even distantly related with the word for ‘nose’ (in the case of mere monosyllables, often resulting from originally much longer word forms, it cannot be taken for granted that the look-alikes always have a shared etymology), nor is there any prove that its application was originally restricted to animals.

<26> *chuḅba*. Demagnifying adjectives, such as ‘small, low (in rank or merit)’ are typically used for females, cf. *skyedman* ‘woman’ (lit. of low birth) vs. *skyebo* ‘man, person’ (lit. of birth), similarly *bud-med* ‘girl, woman’ < *bu-dmad* ‘low offspring’. Bacot et al. and Haarh translate *chuḅba* as ‘(male) child’, however, as NWH (2006: 93, n. 23) commented correctly, a child of Bkrags would have no land of its father to return to. Moreover the *chuḅba* returns to the land of her father and brother (*phamiḅgi yul*), where the brother is referred to by a designation (*myiḅ(bo)*) that is only used in relation to women (cf. JÄK sub *miḅbo*). The term /miḅbo/ is still used in Ladakh with reference to a female’s brother, irrespective of his greater or lower age, while the compound /miḅšriḅ/ ‘sibling’ is used by both genders with respect to both genders.

<27> *Spus* is the collective form of the clan name Spu; for the collective suffix *-s* cf. Denwood 1986. Interesting examples for this suffix, appearing in the same syntactic context as the collective marker *-dag*, are found in the Tibetan Rāmāyaṇa (de Jong 1989) in D6: *g.yubrag šjonpos sprepa n[i]*, ‘as for the arranged (lit. joined, combined) (collective of) green-blue turquoise rocks’ and E3 v8: *nehuseng šjonpos ni springyi [!] mtho* ‘as for the (collective of) green-blue meadows, they are higher than the clouds’. Cf. the parallel use of the collective marker *-dag* in *nagstshal stugpodag* ‘(a collective of) dense forests’ (D7) and *darzabkyi loma lhubspadag* ‘(a collective) of silky leaves’ (E6, v8).

The Spu (var. Spa) clan seems to have been instrumental in installing the Spurgyal (king over/from the Spu) lineage of the Tibetan emperors, the first being Drigum’s successor and ‘son’ Šakhyi (or Ņakhyi) under the regal name Spude Guḅgyal (cf. clause v223f.). The name must have been of very high prestige in order to be adopted by the Turkic-Mongolic Tuoba elites who took over power in prehistoric Tibet. There might be an etymological relation to the Irano-Tibetan clan name Dmu, which is also a designation for a certain class of deities. *spu* might thus have been a synonym for *deva* or *lha* (cf. Zeisler to appear, §5.3.4.3 and §5.4, particularly with notes ca. 170, 171). Bacot & al.’s, Haarh’s, and NWH’s translations as ‘excellent’ or ‘noble’, based on the CT noun *spus* ‘quality’, therefore, totally miss the point. In the present clause they also violate the grammar, since they all overlook that the noun *Spus* is followed by dative-locative case marker: *Spusla ḅgreḅmus-tsamnas*.

<28> *rteḅcuḅ*. To my opinion, it is necessary to distinguish between verbal adjectivals which are monosyllabic and may have two stems (more frequently in OT than in CT, e.g. *che / ches* ‘be big’) and nominal adjectivals which are always derived (whether by a derivational morpheme or composition) and thus at least disyllabic. Like other verbs, the monosyllabic verbal adjectival can occur in compounds. That we are, in fact, dealing with a compound is corroborated by the spelling *cuḅ* in clause v104 below, since non-first syllables within an intonation unit (word) tend to be deaspirated. The OT orthography, however, switching between a more phonemic and a more phonetic rendering, is not very consistent with respect to this feature. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH translate the phrase like a normal noun plus (nominal) adjective. In our discussions NWH suggested to read the combination *c(h)uḅkha* as a derived form. In that case however, the remainder of the clause has to be translated as ‘don’t be big’, which is certainly less motivated than our ‘don’t talk big’ or Bacot & al.’s ‘n’aie pas bouche trop grande’, cf. also note 29.

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- <29> Haarh, followed by NWH, translates these two clauses as ‘... don’t be big’ and ‘a little colt is not strong’. Bacot & al. get at least the sense of the first clause by translating ‘n’*ai*e pas bouche trop grande’. For the compound *khadrag* JÄK has the meanings ‘mighty’ and ‘haughty’, for *khache* he gives a literal meaning ‘a large mouth’ as well as a figurative meaning ‘a person that has to command over much’. Given the antonym *khañuŋ* ‘laconic, sparing of words’, *khache* should also have the meaning ‘so who talks too much’. It may be noted, en passant, that the Tibetan name for ‘Kashmir’ or Muslims in general: *Khache*, is readily misunderstood as ‘loudmouth, braggart’ in Ladakh.
- <30> The name has the same structure as that of Rulaskyes. It might well be possible that one name is the translation of the other and the two persons were actually identical. This is what the Tibetan traditions suggests which know only of Rulaskyes, making him a posthumous son of Drigum. In the version of Dpaño Gtsuglag, the name Rulaskyes is equated with Ñarsospo (Haarh 1969: 145). But as Haarh (1969) has shown quite clearly, these traditions had been manipulated from the very beginning for political purposes. If one wants to translate Rulaskyes as ‘born from a horn’, one might translate Ñarleskyes as ‘born from the strength/front side/stalk/corner’. *ñar* is the Zhangzhung word for ‘corner’, in Tibetan it might either refer to the ‘front side’, to the ‘stalk of plants’ *ñarpa*, or to ‘strength’, cf. *ñarba* and *ñarma*. *-le-* as a variant of the dative-locative case marker is likewise a Zhangzhung form (cf. Haarh 1968: 20). As the variants Ru-las-skyes (Debther dmarpo, Haarh 1969: 143-146) and Rgyu-las-skyes (Buston, Haarh 1969: 154) indicate, the dative-locative marker in both names should be interpreted according to its ablative function (for which see JÄK sub la IV). What is not possible is Bacot & al.’s translation ‘né de lui-même” (p. 125, n. 6) which disregards that *ñar* is an already case-marked form of the pronoun *ña* ‘I’ and that the pronoun does not refer to the third but to the first person.
- <31> *gdod*. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH all translate this as ‘wish’ or as ‘what he wanted’. The verb ‘wish, want’ *hdod*, however, does not have any stem form *gdod*; and such stem form, which would represent the gerundival stem III ‘to be wished’, would also not make sense in the context. There is no reason why *gdod* (for *gdodma*) should not mean ‘beginning’ here, since the mother explains everything from the very beginning. For the short form *gdod* cf. JÄK’s citations from Milaraspa and TETT.
- <32> *hgebspa gchig*. All translations have an intransitive rendering, disregarding the fact that the verbal noun necessarily must refer to a human being not to the eyes themselves. The water spirit does not wish ‘one that gets closed’ (a single eye) but ‘one who closes (the eyes)’. Apparently all translators reject the idea that there should be an agent in the case of shutting the lid of an eye, although first of all, the Tibetan text is not talking about ‘shutting’ or ‘closing’ the eye, but of covering the eye, where, in other contexts, the linguistic agent could well be the lid. None of them would probably mind that everybody blinks, actively or not, or, when losing all potency of agency, closes one’s eyes for ever. Languages might differ considerably in which body-related events can have a human subject or actor and how they are represented in a [±control] or [±transitivity] paradigm. It would be certainly an interesting research topic to study how Tibetan languages in general or a particular Tibetan language treats body-related events. As a first step, one could try to follow the wording as closely as possibly, and if one’s own or the goal language does not allow a transitive rendering, one could perhaps refer to the literal meaning in a note or bracket.
- <33> *btsalkyaŋ (... mañed)*. NWH (2006: 95, n. 27): ‘It is odd to see *kyañ* directly after a verb” (transliteration adjusted). This statement is, so to speak, oddly odd, as it is in sharp contrast with what we find in the dictionaries, grammars, and morphological indexes (e.g. Jäschke 1881: 505b, 1865/83: 75, Bacot 1948: 15-18, Hahn 1985: 78, Nagano 1997: 139-140). Furthermore NWH seems to have forgotten that he had used a similar phrase in his BA thesis (Hill, MS: 30) as an example for a ‘non-finite past [being] used to show contrast between one past action and another”: *btsalkyaŋ dñul mabrñasso* ‘Although [he] searched [he] did not find [his] money’ (example [53], taken from Hahn 1994: 70). All efforts of his team mate to convince him otherwise were to no avail: *brslabskyaŋ ma(s)lobs*.
- <34> *thogsig*. I do not want to preclude that this form is simply an error for *thoŋ*, stem IV of *gtoŋ* ‘give’. Nevertheless, one should not prematurely rule out the possibility that the word *hdogs* might have

had a broader spectrum of meanings. In the present context it is also possible that the provisions will be ‘attached’ on some pack animal.

- <35> *cho*. For the correct analysis of possible compounds, it is necessary to recapitulate the structure of two important types of noun-noun compounds: a) *tadpuruṣa* or determinative compounds and b) *karmadhāraya* or descriptive compounds. In Tibetan, like in English, German, and many other languages, the modifying element of a *tadpuruṣa* compound always precedes the head. This order corresponds to the order of an ordinary Tibetan possessor construction and to the order of the German and English s-genitive. For instance: *fatherland* = *father’s land*, in Tibetan *phayul* = *phaḥi yul*. There is no indication that the order could have been different in Old Tibetan. The only type of compound, where the order is inverted, is found with the *karmadhāraya* compound, such as in Skr. *meghaduta* ‘the cloud that is the messenger’, *puruṣasiṃha* ‘a man like a lion’, or *rājadeva* ‘a king like a god’ for which we have a Tibetan equivalent in *rgyallha* used as the translation for the Roman title Caesar/Kesar/G(y)esar and as a generic term for a certain type of protective deities.

Bacot & al. do not translate *cho*, Haahr leaves the whole expression untranslated, although elsewhere (Haahr 1969: 209), he suggests a translation ‘family-man-bird’. The three words cannot form a compound, or otherwise the translation should be something the ‘family’s men and birds’ (*tadpuruṣa* & *dvandva*) or the ‘family’s men that are like birds’ (*tadpuruṣa* & *karmadhāraya*). The expected reading ‘family of the men-birds’ (however we analyse the latter compound) should have taken the form *myibya-cho* in Tibetan. We, therefore, think that *cho* has to be treated like a designation or title which precedes a name ‘the family man-bird’. If man-bird thus functions as a name, the interpretation as *karmadhāraya* compound ‘a human who is like a bird’ would make more sense than the *dvandva* compound ‘men and birds’. We would also think that the hidden punchline is that an offspring of this family bears bird-like features just because of the family or clan name, whatever the rationale behind the name might have been, not because it is a family of, or descending from, birds and men.

NWH suggests the translation ‘bird-man head’ on the basis that in ‘Zhang (1985) the word *co* is defined as an archaic word for ‘head.’ It is because of this that I have the translation I have proposed, the difference in aspiration between *co* and *cho* being hardly relevant (cf. Hill, forthcoming [!] ‘aspiration’ [= Hill 2007])’ (Hill 2006: 95, n. 29). Apart from the fact that NWH inverted the order of the elements completely (the Tibetan equivalent to this translation would be something like *byamyi-mgo/*co*), I have quite some difficulties to conceive of this ‘bird-man head’: does the ‘bird-man’ have a human body and a bird’s head or is it the other way round? Or does NWH actually mean ‘a head with human and birdlike’ characteristics’?

In contrast to NWH, I do not think that the aspiration contrast is irrelevant. Even if it could be proved that the aspiration contrast was not phonemic with respect to the vocabulary inherited from *proto-Tibetan (whatever language this might have been), Old Tibetan had already incorporated a large number of words from other languages of various affiliations, among them obviously a number of words with non-aspirated initials. It is a common feature that loanwords tend to be assimilated according to the phonologic structure of the receiving language. The fact, that the loans preserved their non-aspiration might thus be indicative, first of all, that the assumptions concerning the phonologic structure of *proto-Tibetan might not be correct. On the other hand, one can also observe (e.g. in Baltistan and Ladakh with respect to the Urdu phoneme /q/) that speakers may get used to a foreign phoneme and begin to reinterpret and reorganise the phonological structure of their ‘own’ vocabulary even with respect to the complementary articulations (in this case /qh/ and /c/). A third possibility is that loans may retain their phonetic features, by virtue of being loans. In that case the alternation between aspiration and non aspiration would at least have a pragmatic function, and it would certainly be semantically distinctive. In NWH’s own words: ‘In the period of Old Tibetan inscriptions aspiration had begun to be phonemic’ (Hill 2007: 489).

In the case of a somewhat questionable OT *co* ‘head’ and the much better attested OT *cho* ‘family, lineage’, surviving in the CT compounds *choḥbran* ‘lineage from the mother’s side’ and *chorigs* ‘lineage from the father’s side’ (JĀK) we would even have a clear minimal pair. Whether or not both words were ultimately of *proto-Tibetan origin, only one of them, or even none, should not make much difference synchronically. For the philologist, at least, the question of how these two apparently unrelated words are spelled should not be irrelevant. The recourse to ‘misspellings’ or

to the ‘arbitrariness’ or ‘interchangeability’ of certain graphemes can only be the last step, when all alternative attempts for an explanation have failed.

- <36> The context as well as the syntax of this and the following clauses is not very clear. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH all interpret the sentence in the sense that the daughter of *cho myibya* was sleeping. Implied in this analysis is the identity between *bumo* ‘daughter, girl’ and *bu* ‘son, child’ in clause v159. There are several arguments speaking against this interpretation, and while each one might not be very strong, the sum might gain a certain weight.

The first argument is the different wording. I would think that the gender distinction between *bumo* ‘daughter’ and *bu* ‘son’ cannot be ignored, and that the text would, in fact, be utterly messed up, if an identity was intended. I would further think that in a society of warriors it is more likely that a male child had to be offered in recompense for an emperor’s body than a female one.

Secondly, the (male) child in question (*bu*) seems to lie in a sort of cradle, v159, while the girl (*bumo*) is led along (*khrid*), v180. To my understanding the verb *ḥkhrid* implies that an animal or person one leads along can move by its own. By contrast, a child in a cradle would rather be carried along.

Thirdly, if *bumo* and *bu* were identical, one would also not expect that the subject of clause v159 would be explicitly mentioned.

Further more, while the verb *yur* or perhaps only the collocation *gñid yur* may have the meaning ‘slumber’ or ‘sleep’, it seems somewhat strange that this should be combined with the agentive verb *byed* ‘do, make, perform’, which leads to an agentive reading, such as ‘tried to slumber’, ‘pretended to slumber’, or ‘caused so else to slumber’. Except perhaps for the causative reading (see further below), these interpretations do not seem to be applicable. A more modest function, namely to highlight the agentivity or responsibility, would make sense only in contexts where the ‘act’ of slumbering is somehow important for the plot, but it does not seem to be well-motivated in the case of a simple background information, rendered in the translations as ‘who was lying asleep’ (Haarh; similarly Bacot & al.) or ‘a sleeping girl’ (NWH).

With the necessary reservation that the text might have been utterly messed up, we would suggest to distinguish between the adult *bumo* who is doing some work, and her child (*bu*) lying in the ‘cradle’ near to her or even on her back. Ladakhi women traditionally carried their small children in baskets on their back while working on the fields. The only linguistic argument that might speak against our analysis is that the *bumo* as working on the *yurba* does not receive an ergative marker. But this is not a very strong argument, since agent marking tends to be somewhat unpredictable. Nevertheless, I should point to the fact that this solution as well as that of the available translations are somewhat infelicitous with respect to the clause structure: Like other quantifiers, the limiting quantifier *žig* ‘a, some’ demarcates the right end of a noun phrase. The following phrase *yurba byedpa*, however one wants to analyse it, cannot be subordinated to, or cannot modify, the NP ending with *bumožig*. The nominaliser *-pa*, to which the postposition is joined, must therefore operate on the whole clause. I can see only two possible interpretations, both of which would need some emendation:

1. *pa* or the verbal noun refers to the actor of the embedded clause: ‘(goes towards) somebody *who is causing* a daughter of ... *to sleep*’. In that case, however, one would have expected a limiting quantifier inserted between the nominaliser and the postposition. On the other hand, as clause v137 shows, the limiting quantifier may be dropped, but perhaps only in cases where the context is clear, e.g. in the case of repetitions (but the omission could well be a mere mistake due to copying the same phrase again and again). All the same, I would think that the construction does not seem to be very well motivated, if neither the person who acts nor the person acted upon had been previously introduced. Somewhat further down, immediately after clause 165, there is mention of the child’s mother. This would again be better motivated if the mother could be identified with the girl, that is introduced by her family relation, rather than with ‘the one who causes the girl to sleep’, since such person could be of either sex, and even if female, she could have been merely a servant.

2. *pa* or the verbal noun refers to the actor of the embedded clause: ‘(goes towards) the place *where a daughter of ... is doing yurba*’. Here we would have only one previously unknown argu-

ment and thus a much better motivated construction, but the main problem is that we have to emend *byedsa* for *byedpa*. While printed *pa* and *sa* cannot be confounded easily, some of the handwritten *sa*-s of OTC look somewhat like a *pa* with a small loop at the lower left edge (one could also misread them for a *ma*). While OTC has a clear *pa*, there remains a faint possibility that it might have been misinterpreted in the process of compiling. We are aware that our suggestions are based on the fiction of a more or less coherent narrative, but if this fiction is given up, our interpretation is at least as likely as the previous one.

- <37> NWH (2006: 95, n. 30): ‘Gñāḥgoṅ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan points out that *khuljo* is equivalent to the term *khulžo* ‘crib’ «*khuljo* | *khulžodaṅ don mtshungste byispa ḥjogsnod* | *der ḥdzoṅ (ḥdzuṅ) khug kyang zer* [*khuljo* has the same meaning as *khulžo*, a container for babies. Here, a cylindrical cavity.]» (1995: 19 n. 16 on p. 17). Wang and Bsodnams Skyid approached this solution, defining *ljo* with the remark: «*buphrug sgalpar khursnodkyi smyugslel ltabu* [a vessel, like a reed basket, for carrying a child on the small of the back]» (1988 [=1992]: 36 n. 142 on p. 80)’ (transliteration adjusted). The underlying sound change, namely the leftward migration of the initial of a consonant cluster after open syllable, has been described under various labels mostly for the modern Tibetan varieties, but cf. also Hogan 1996 for Old Tibetan. The change from *j* to *ž* may have been triggered by the original pre-radical, but we also find in West Tibetan a certain interchangeability between /tʃ/ and /ʒ/. Bacot & al. give the grammatically possible translation ‘sous un arbre de paradis’ emending *khuljo* as *khuljon*. Haarh’s translation ‘it was the daughter of *Khuljona*’ is simply incorrect. If at all, the sentence could be interpreted as ‘the boy was *Khuljona*’ or ‘it was the boy *Khuljona*’. However, any translation of *ḥdug* as an attributive copula (*x is y*) is presuming that the evidential distinction as found in the modern Tibetan languages had already fully developed in Old Tibetan, so that it could override the distinction between the attributive and the existential copula (*at y there exists x*). To our present knowledge, such an assumption would be premature.
- <38> Note the non-honorific form. The action is thus to be performed by the addressee and his compatriots reflexively upon themselves.
- <39> *bžags (gžags)*. The verb is only attested in ThDG, while BRGY mentions it as an adjective. Bacot & al. and Haarh translate as ‘lacerate’ on the base of the verb *ḥjog*₂ ‘cut, hew, carve, chip’, stem II of which, however, is *bžog(s)*. NWH translates as ‘lay down the body’ based on the verb *ḥjog*₁, stem II of which is *bžag* not *bžags*. This comes as a surprise, since he refers to the above mentioned entry in BRGY, as well as to the interpretations of Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 80, n. 143) and Gñāḥgoṅ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan (1995: 22, n. 20, as cited by NWH 2006: 96, n. 35) as ‘anoint’ or ‘beautifully ornament’. Bacot & al., Haarh, and NWH overlook, that according to the case marking, something should be ‘lacerated’ or ‘laid down’ *on* the body. And, of course, none of the translations renders stem II correctly as a form signalling anteriority and not a command. Given the fact that linguistic analysis as well as cultural comparison seem to point at a prehistoric presence of Iranian (Scythian) tribes on the Tibetan plateau or a close cultural exchange (Zeisler, to appear, §5.2.4.3; Walter ###, Bellezza 2008, ##), I wonder whether ‘applying an ornament on the body’ might not mean here ‘apply a tattoo’. Note again the non-honorific form for *lus* ‘body’ instead of *sku* or *spur*. The action is thus to be performed by the addressee and his compatriots reflexively upon themselves.
- <40> *ḥtshog*. I follow Bacot et al., who translate as ‘assemble at’, based on the verb *ḥtshog*₁. Haarh translates ‘incision should be made into the corpse’, NWH as ‘pierce the corpse’, the latter without accounting for the locational case marker. Both translations are based on the verb *ḥtshog*₂, given as ‘beat’ in BRGY. BRGY gives an example for a locational marker on the second argument. Together with the classification as *thadadpa* this would yield our pattern 07 (ergative & dative-locative). (We find pattern 07 also in Ladakhi for the verb *rduṅ* ‘beat’, but not necessarily in other varieties.) Only JĀK offers the meaning ‘pierce, inoculate, vaccinate, but this meaning would not fit with a pattern 07 (but it might yield our pattern 09a ergative & dative-locative & absolutive if something is inserted into something). Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 80, n. 144) opt for the meaning ‘beat’, while Gñāḥgoṅ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan (1995: 23, n. 21, as cited by NWH 2006: 96, n. 36) suggests the reading ‘embalm’. This latter suggestion looks rather like a mere guess and again does not account for the locational marking. I have difficulties to understand why a corpse should be beaten (except perhaps to break the bones, but then this should be mentioned). This holds also for clause v210 below, where the thigh (bone) is beaten (this time, however, the verb

rdun with our pattern 08: ergative & absolutive is used; for an introduction to, and an overview over, the respective patterns, cf. Zeisler 2007 and <http://www.sfb441.uni-tuebingen.de/b11/b11fieldwork05.html#Clauses>). The interpretation ‘assemble’ fits well with the fact that food and drinking is to be distributed (see the second nominal clause after this clause). The verb form does not conform to the standard stem IV but to stem I. We do not think that it necessarily represents a command form. The clause is part of a conditional construction. As such it may also have a more general application.

<41> *rlom*. Bacot & al. (1940: 99) and Haahr (1969: 405) read *phom*, Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 37) read *bcom*, which would similarly yield the compound ‘ravish and plunder’ (TETT). The first reading can definitely be ruled out. The second reading cannot be corroborated by the corresponding letters in the manuscript. The next candidate, letter *cha*, likewise looks somewhat different in the manuscript: its two loops are usually smaller and somewhat slanted, than the two visible semi-circles. The only letters that seem to fit the visible pattern are the cluster *rl* of *rlag* in line 35 and 40: in both cases, the *r* starts with a short head line from which a vertical stroke descends in the middle, to this is added at the bottom an almost horizontal stroke, moving slightly upwards to the right side, where it is joined again by a vertical stroke downwards. The *l* forms a three-quarter circle, open at the bottom. From the low right end of this open circle a straight line leads to the bottom of the right vertical stroke of the *r*. The straight line of the *l* and the lower part of the *r* form thus a semi-square. In the case of the defect letter, one can see this semi-square with slightly rounded edges, the middle vertical stroke of the *r* and the left part of the circle of the *l*. In between these two parts the facsimile shows a sort of white scratch, reaching even the head line. Helga Uebach (p.c.) consents with this analysis.

All translations take *hphrog* as a verb. According to Bacot & al., a pot is taken away from the people — but then its content, the food is distributed to the people. According to Haahr it is the corpse that should be taken away from the people. Both translations play down the aggressive semantics of the verb *hphrog* ‘rob, deprive’. NWH captures this notion of force by his translation “expell [!] the men”, but none of the dictionaries gives this meaning, and it is somewhat odd (to use NWH’s own words) that the entity expelled should bear a locational case marker. All translations neglect the fact that the word *hphrog* does not take the last position in the clause or phrase, and thus cannot be a verb, except if the following word is again a verb. If *rlom* were an independent verb, it would lack a suitable argument, even more since *hphrog* is nowhere attested as noun. As for the intended meaning, I have difficulties to understand why the people should be either deprived of the corpse or be expelled, especially if the corpse is where people should assemble and where victuals are distributed. If *hphrog* and *rlom* denote two independent actions, it is also difficult to understand how one could command a forceful disappropriation (*hphrog*) in the same breath as a boasting behaviour (*rlom*₂, treated as inagentive verb in BRGY) or a sort of oppressing (*rlom*₁) the mind of the people.

I would think that Bacot & al.’s translation comes closest to the intended meaning. But I should suggest reading this and the following clauses as nominal clauses. At least in the second nominal clause after clause v171 it is absolutely evident that *za* (stem I) cannot be the command form ‘eat!’: stem IV should be *zo* (some dictionaries give the command form also as *zos*, but that might be an artificial form). *zahthun* should thus be taken as a compound, see also note 42. Expecting a parallel construction in the present clause, I would suggest reading *hphrogrlom* as compound, combining the agentive stems I of the verbs *hphrog* and *rlom*.

According to the Tibetan grammatical theory of *bdag* & *gžan* ‘self and other’, which describes correctly the agent-orientation of stem I and the patient-orientation of stem III in nominal or embedded usage (cf. Zeisler 2004: 264f.), the compound should be translated as ‘robber and swaggerer’ (or ‘robber and oppressor’), but since this apparently does not make sense in this context, the compound seems to denote the activities as such, ‘robbing and boasting’ (or ‘robbing and oppressing’), which I have tried to capture by a word play. My colleague Frank Müller-Witte, who presently studies the problems of *bdag* & *gžan* in some detail and who would argue for an even wider range of the opposition, has no objection against the use of stem I for actions — as long as the agentship remains foregrounded (p.c.). Nevertheless, I should add an observation made in this connection: the above-mentioned compound *hphrogbcom* ‘ravish and plunder’ combines stem I (agent focus) with stem III (patient focus) in order to express an activity from a holistic perspec-

tive, combining the two possible foci. The order of these foci does not seem to be fixed, as we can also observe a similar compound *byabyed* ‘activity, fuss’ (TVP, v198) with the opposite order of stem III and stem I.

Not fitting at all into our view of the Tibetan world, the intended meaning of the compound *hphrogrlom* seems to be that the warriors are allowed to show off their booties or, even worse, that they are allowed to go on a raid (only the second interpretation is possible if one reads *hphrogbcom*). Ritual practice of violence is, however, not unheard of, and while we seem to have evidence only from the Indo-European antiquity (cf., as an extreme example, the *Krypteia* terror system against the Helotes in Sparta), this does not mean that other archaic societies did not have similar rites or institutions. One may thus wonder whether the raid against the Loṅam tribe described in v197 to v207 was not just such an act of ritual man-hunting, rather than an act of revenge. The Loṅam are depicted here either as cowards or as comparatively defenseless people and the subsequent song (following v209 up to v213), quite apparently likens the raid to a hunting expedition. Since the former vassal and ‘rebell’ Loṅam became the ruler after killing Drigum, until being himself assassinated, one could have expected that his clan or tribe should have had strong allies and better possibilities to defend themselves than mere cooking utensils. The identity in name might thus have been a mere accident.

<42> Like in the case of the above *hphrogrlom* the compound *zahthun* shows the combination of the agentive stem I of the verbs *za/bzah* ‘eat’ and *hthun* ‘drink’. One should thus likewise expect a translation as ‘eater and drinker’ or as referring to the activities of ‘eating and drinking’ directed towards the victuals. The corresponding compound referring to the objects of this activity predictably shows stem III (for *hthun*, at least), at least in the dictionary entries: *zabtung* (TETT) or *bzahbtun* (BRGY, TETT) ‘eating and drinking’, i.e., ‘what is to be eaten and to be drunk’, cf. also the non compound form *bzahbadan btunba* ‘meat and drink, specially the quality and quantity of food’ (JÄK). The compound is also found in some modern varieties: in Ladakh as /zathun/ (RN and own data: Upper and Lower Ladakh) ~ /zatuŋ/ (HAM, with the spelling *bzahbtun*) ~ /zapthun/ (RAM, own data: Lower Ladakh and GYA), in Balti as /zapthun/ with the meaning ‘food management, catering’ (SPR), in Nubri as /saptun/ and in and Spiti with vowel assimilation as /siptun/ both ‘food and drinking’ (CTTD).

While most versions correspond to a spelling *zabtung* or *bzahbtun* with stem III for the verb *hthun*, the first Ladakhi variant rather corresponds to the OT compound with the combination of two times stem I, apparently against the rules of *bdag* & *gžan*. The forms /zapthun/ (possibly reflecting an OT pronunciation), /saptun/, and /siptun/ are instances of left-ward consonant migration by which prefixes could be preserved as finals of preceding open syllables. Due to various sociolinguistic factors, such compounds are now in decline in Ladakh and are replaced by compounds without the migrated prefixes. While it cannot be precluded thus that the form /zathun/ actually goes back to /zapthun/ (one would have otherwise expected also the occurrence of the form */zanthun/), the Ladakhi compound /zathun/ as well as the formally identical OT compound *zahthun* could perhaps indicate that the rule of *bdag* & *gžan* is a very useful rule of thumb, but may have exceptions.

One reason could perhaps lie in the irregular behaviour of the verb ‘eat’. According to a regular weak paradigm one could expect the form *za* to represent stem I and *bzah* stem III, but it seems that the verb does not behave regularly, so that we find the latter spelling also for stem I, e.g. in BRGY, while the data from the dialects suggests that the prefixed forms for stems I/III, and II are not based on linguistic facts, cf. CDTD sub *za*. This may have combined with the likewise somewhat irregular behaviour of the verb ‘drink’, which at least according to JÄK does not necessarily follow the paradigm with respect to stem II: as we apparently find *thun*s instead of the paradigmatic *btun*s. Thus it might be possible that already at an early time some varieties the verb *hthun* either followed a paradigm of non-agentive verbs or already showed a levelling of stem forms (cf. Zeisler to appear §4.3), in this case towards stem I. It is interesting to see, that the overwhelming majority of the modern varieties shows an aspirated form based on the regular stem I, thus /thun/ in West and Central Tibetan, and variants of /nthun/ in East Tibetan (CTTD), the exceptions being a few Western and Central Tibetan varieties: Ngari Purang, Dingri, Shigatse, and Lhasa with variants of /tūn/. If it was not for these exceptions and the above compounds one could think

that the prefixed written forms *btuŋs* (stem II) and *btuŋ* (stem II) had no base in the spoken language.

Given this data from the spoken languages it is quite obvious that the compound *zaḥthuŋ* might equally have an agent and a patient reading: ‘eater and drinker’ (‘eating and drinking as activities’) and ‘what is to be eaten and drunk’. The parallelism with the preceding nominal clause, however suggests an agentive or activity reading.

- <43> Wang & Bsodnams Skyid (1992: 80, n. 146) suggest to interpret *lto* as *ltotshay* ‘family, household’. They seem to overlook that the same interpretation should hold for clause v72, where Drigum’s corpse eventually gets into the Household’ or rather belly of the same spirit. From a Buddhist perspective it is certainly preferable if a person given as ransom is given into a household and not be devoured by a spirit. But by all that we know from the early burial practises, animals were sacrificed as ‘ransom’ for the defunct, and hence we cannot preclude a similar human sacrifice.
- <44> Obviously a compound, the first element of which is a short form of the name *Ñakhyi*. The second seems to be the (imperial) title, rather than a name, since otherwise one would have expected the compound *Ña-Ša*. Bacot & al. do not translate the names and simply speak of ‘les deux frères’. NWH follows Zeisler (2004: 388, example 283), where it is suggested to read *ša* instead of *lha*. An emendation is, however, not necessary. Šakhyi becomes the new lord, and as such he is the country’s god, *lha*, or with some more probability, he is the *lhasras* ‘son of the gods’, as the emperor is usually addressed.
- <45> Bacot & al. (unfortunately followed by Zeisler 2004: 388, example 283) did not understand that Gyaŋto or Gyaŋtho is the name of a holy mountain in Rkoŋpo, one of the candidates for the descent from heaven of the primordial king. Tradition has it that emperor Drigum is buried at Lhari Gyaŋtho (Kirkland 2003). Haarh translates this phrase as ‘with its upper part like Gyaŋto’, NWH as ‘pitched high [as] Gyaŋto’ (transliteration adjusted). In both cases at least one locational case marker is missing, either on *bla* to make it an adverb of ‘pitch’ or on Gyaŋto for the comparison. We think that *bla* should be understood as a postposition. As already mentioned, postpositions can be realised as compounds, by which transformation their case marker is dropped.
- <46> All translations opt for ‘tent’. Bacot & al. (unfortunately followed by Zeisler 2004: 388, example 283) and NWH furthermore understand the tent to ‘be pitched’ (NWH: ‘because the verb *ḥbubs* means specifically ‘to pitch a tent’). However, stem II of the agentive-causative verb *ḥbubs* ‘put (a roof), pitch (a tent)’ is *phub(s)* (OTC *pub*, cf. clause v201 below) < **b-pub*. The inagentive counter part does not seem to be well attested in CT and is thus not included in BRGY or BTSH. JÄK and other word lists give stem II as *bub* or *ḥbub*, with no final *-s*. The inagentive verb is, however, attested in the western and central dialects (CDTD). The Balti and Ladakhi form /bubs/ indicates that the spelling variant *ḥbubs* of OTC represents a linguistic fact. Given the fact that the item in question is not ‘pitched’ but ‘upside down’, the reading ‘tent’ is as unlikely as the reading ‘throat, neck’. One could perhaps think of a construction where the main chamber below the earth is reached by a manhole, hence the picture of a ‘neck’ plus head turned upside down, but this remains speculation. NWH: ‘Gñahgoŋ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan offers the alternative explanation « *mguldaŋ mtshuŋste ḥdir riskedla godgospa ḥdra* [meaning ‘throat,’ it must here refer to a mountain cavern] » (1995: 20 n. 21 on p. 23 where it is given as n. 22)’ (transliteration adjusted). Similarly Wang & Bsodnams Skyid 1992: 80, n. 147, suggest reading *mgur* as *rimgur/mgul*, which they define as *rildebs* ‘mountain slope’. This would neither explain the inversion nor a pitching.
- <47> It is not quite evident who the agent is. One would have expected a continuation of the contrasting of *Ñakhyi* and *Šakhyi*. Linguistically, however, the omitted argument should by preference refer to the last mentioned subject. Reference to previous subjects are not generally precluded, especially when two agents of different status or different importance for the narrative act upon each other (in the case of differing status, subjecthood can be discovered by lexical means, in the other case, it is a matter of common sense). In our case, however, the last mentioned subject is particularly highlighted by the topic marker *ni*. It can be expected that by its special emphasis as well as its introductory character, the topic marker blocks a reference beyond the emphasised argument. From this it would follow that *Ñakhyi* is the agent. One should compare the Tibetan clauses to similar English sentences, where the subject is continued with zero or the anaphoric pronoun *he*. If one says: *A did x, B did y and then (he) did z*, it would be quite clear that B is also the actor of z, even more so

if we emphasise the contrast: *A, for his part, did x, B, by contrast, did y, and (he) did z*. Tibetan cross-clausal references function pretty much along the same lines (that is, they follow the principles of communicative economy and clarity), except that anaphoric pronouns are used much less frequently than in English.

According to various Ladakhi traditions it is *Ñakhri* (*Ñakhyi*) who is to be identified with the first king of the Spurgyal lineage, and as Haarh (1969: 158f.) has pointed out convincingly, the name *Ñakhri* is identical to that of *Gñahkhri*, the primordial king. Only one line earlier, OTC shows a similar hesitation: The two brothers are referred to in a compound as *Ña* and *lha*, where *lha*, either by itself or as an abbreviation for *lhasras* ‘son of the gods’, is obviously the royal title. The name of the second brother was apparently avoided, certainly not without a reason. Both lacunae indicate that there must have been a contradiction in the various traditions, which the compiler could not solve.

- <48> *yulyab*. We take the honorific form to indicate some higher status in the social hierarchy. Disregarding the order of the elements of a *tadpuruṣa* compound (see also n. 35 above), NWH translates this as ‘fatherland’. As the ‘land of the father’ is *phaḥi yul*, the corresponding compound ‘fatherland’ is *phayul*, the honorific form would then be *yabyul*.
- <49> *pyolpyolgyi-chaḥo*. The reduplication functions as an intensifier, either with respect to the duration or with respect to the iteration. We think that the morpheme {*kyi*} corresponds to the connective {*kyi*} that we can find in modern Lhasa Tibetan and which seems to be related to, if not identical with, the connective morpheme {*kyin*} of OT and CT. It can be used to form a sort of present participle as well as complex periphrastic expressions; here with the verb *cha* that apparently signals a future event (cf. the use of *ḥgro*). In non-finite as well as in the complex finite forms, it might indicate duration or iteration (cf. Zeisler 2004: 286f.). According to NWH (2006: 97, n. 42), however, ‘the use of the genitive to connect two verbs seems odd.’
- <50> *dogyab*. NWH’s translation as ‘father’s ear’, again does not take into account the order of the elements.
- <51> *buspur*. All translations take *spur* to mean ‘corpse’, but then cannot account for the preceding *bu*, which would yield a ‘corpse of the son’. NWH (2006: 97, n. 42) suggests that the compound might have something to do with agriculture and could perhaps denote ‘chaff’. This implies an emendation from *sbun* or *sburma* to *spin*, without again accounting for the element *bu*. Furthermore, how can the ‘chaff’ decay without rain, and is it such a problem, if it decays? If we cannot avoid an emendation, then *ḥbusbur* ‘insects’ or ‘worms and beetles/ants’ may perhaps be more suitable (cf. also Wang & Bsodnams Skyid 1992: 80, n. 152 who interpret *spur* as an insect called black ant ‘*sburnag zerbahi ḥbutshig*’. These insects, like the human beings, will have a problem, if the spikes do not get filled for lack of rain. The verse would then demonstrate that the future ruler, according to the ideal of the good ruler, and according to his cosmic role as a god, is taking care of all beings, even the smallest ones, not only of the mighty chiefs.
- <52> *pub*. NWH: ‘*phub* is the past tense of *ḥbubs* ‘to cover up, cover over.’ Haarh translates « The hundred male Loṅam took a hundred copper vessels, Put them over their heads, and sought death by precipitation. » (1969: 405). One could first make a grammatical objection to this interpretation, the Loṅam are in the absolutive and not the ergative case, and *ḥbubs* expects the ergative (though perhaps not when used reflexively). More importantly this interpretation makes little sense. In the face of the enemy the Loṅam subject themselves to an odd sort of suicide. It makes better sense that in recompense for the fate of Dridgum Brtsanpo they have the pots put over their heads, and then because of lack of vision they fall to their deaths.’ While I cannot preclude a causative interpretation, I would think that the reflexive interpretation makes a lot of sense. The Loṅams are depicted as ridiculous cowards who, instead of fighting, jump into death; and they are even so coward that they cannot even bare the sight of where they are jumping to. Alternatively, one could perhaps describe them, equally ridiculously, as trying to protect their heads with pots against the swords, but nevertheless jumping into death. A more compassionate interpretation might perhaps be that the Loṅam had neither weapons nor armours and although they tried to protect themselves with mere household implements, they eventually run into death. The last interpretation would perhaps better match the fate of their women. Note that the verb *ḥbubs* does not simply mean ‘cover’, but rather to set up a shelter (roof or tent). As for the grammatical argument: there are

several reasons why the ergative marker is omitted here. Reflexivity could be one. The second is that the topic marker *ni* often (although not necessarily) replaces case marking. Finally I would think that the clause in question is embedded, so that the NP is linked with the following intransitive verb.

<53> *ηoggo*. BRGY paraphrases this verb as either *non* (sub *ηoggo*) or *ηgro* ‘go’ (= *soηna*; sub *ηogna*). *non* is the resultative and/or potentialis form of *gnon* ‘suppress’, with which it seems to be commonly confounded. BRGY defines it as *spa hkhumspaηaη žumpa* ‘be discouraged’ or, as CDTD translates ‘to be timorous, cowardly’. TETT gives the inagentive meaning as be oppressed, burdened. Haarh, most probably because of the parallelism, suggests the meaning ‘precipitate oneself’. Bacot & al., followed by NWH suggest the meaning ‘flee’. Fleeing is certainly the best solution for ‘discouraged’ or ‘coward’ people. I wonder, however, why then the ordinary word *ηbro* ‘flee’ is not used. Similarly in the case of ‘be oppressed’ or perhaps ‘be overcome’. Could it be that the word signals the common fate of women in war times? And could it be that it was lost because it actually was a taboo word? That would at least explain why the women were protecting their breasts with the large iron pan. Cf. also the apparent transitive-causative counterpart *ηyog*, explained as ‘search through, dig out’ in BRGY and other Tibetan dictionaries, but also as ‘criticise bluntly’ in DYGB, and as ‘vex, annoy’ in JĀK. The women should then have been ‘embarrassed’, at least.

<54> *mnansu bchad*. Apparently, the verb *gcod* can be used in the sense of ‘single out, separate’ with respect to livestock and other items of wealth. Cf. also Pt 1042, l. 54-56: *skugšen khagtsaη gnyis-la | gciggis || chibs-/-las gcig bcadde | g.yaηrtar bgraη || dkarmodaη | g.yaglas gcig bcadde | donpor | bgraη || skugšen gciggi dkorlas sna gcig bcade || phugsnordu bgraη* | ‘From the two royal priests of the preceding day,^a one [priest] singled out one from the horses and denoted (lit. counted) it as propitious horse. From the white ones (ewes) and the yaks [he] singled out one [each] and denoted them as essential ones,^b the [other] royal priest singled out one specimen from the property and denoted it as the ultimate riches.’^c

^a *khagtsaη* for *khartsaη*; according to Bellezza (2008: 455) two specific but unknown ritual roles.

^b *donpo*; Bellezza (ibid.) has ‘divine sheep’; the entries in TETT show that according to David Holler’s study on *tshethar*, the words *donpo* and *donmo* are nowadays used for the ‘liberated’ sheep set aside from consumption, another type of ‘sacrifice’.

^c *phugsnor*; according to Bellezza ibid., n. 317 “the essential or vital wealth of a household, which is ritually enshrined in a special receptacle”; TETT (Ives Waldo) translates as “the essential wealth of the goal, trump card, last resort”.

According to Bellezza (ibid., p. 455, n. 315), the verb *gcod* is used among present-day nomads “to describe the separating of individual animals from the herd”.

However, it might be more appropriate to interpret the verb *gcod* in both cases as ‘decide upon’, corresponding to its use in the classical and modern, somewhat opaque collocation *thag gcod* ‘cut a rope’. After reading Helga Uebach’s article on the replacement of tallies by paper documents (and unfortunately not when reading her draft version), where she points to the quite surprising fact that the earliest mentioning of ‘paper’ as *šog* comes a century after paper must have been introduced in the administration (Uebach 2008: 64), it appears to me that the collocation *thag gcod* must have been derived from the phrase *thaη gcod* ‘cutting an unrolled document’ as we find it in Pt 1042, l. 105-106: *rgyalgyis thaη bcadde khram | gnyis bgyiste ||* ‘the *rgyal* cut the document (*thaη*) and made two tallies’ and probably not ‘the *rgyal* decided upon the authority’ as translated in Uebach (2008: 58, n. 2). In the same document, namely l. 53, just before the example given above, we find the phrase *rgyalgyis kyaη | mηaηthaη bcad mηaηthaηdu ηdusso ηtshal || bzaη-/-ηan rimpar plagste || ηo dod bod ||* ‘It was requested [that] the *rgyal* cut the declarative^a document and joined it again as a declarative document. (Alternatively: The *rgyal* requested [that] ...) Right and wrong were read out one by one and the specific (*ηo*) equivalent/payment (*dod*) was announced.’

^a The dictionaries would give us the meaning ‘power, dominion, control’ for *mηaηthaη*. Again, this seems to be a secondary development, due to the loss of the meaning *thaη* ‘scroll’. For the collocation *mηaη gsol* JĀK gives the following meanings: ‘name, nominate, appoint, declare as’, ‘praise’, and ‘congratulate’. Particularly the first meaning would indicate that the word *mηaη* did not only

mean ‘power, might, control’, but possibly also something like an ‘authoritative utterance’ or ‘utterance from an authority’. It is clear from the context that neither a dominion nor a ruler’s power was cut into pieces and reassembled, but a kind of tally or ‘authoritative scroll’.

The word *thaŋ* is apparently the same as *thaŋ* ‘plain (land)’, and we also find it in *thaŋka*, and in *bkaḥthaŋ* ‘order’ or (*bkaḥ*)*thaŋyig* ‘decree’. Corresponding to the notion of ‘a plain’, it seems to have designated any flat, unrolled document whether of cloth (like a *thaŋka*), leather, or paper. While it may well be that the element *thag* replaced the word *thaŋ*, because the meaning of the latter had become opaque, the interchange of final *-g* and *-ŋ* is not unheard of, and a rope, *thagpa* is ultimately likewise an item that is rolled up for storage and unrolled for usage. Since in the early stages of the Tibetan administration official documents were always cut into tallies for the purpose of verification or identification, it is quite evident how the meaning ‘decide (upon)’ could develop. This derived meaning could easily be transferred to other collocations as in our present case(s).

Haarh translates this passage as “*Dud* were brought under yoke”, likening the expression to the collocation *dbaŋsu gcod* ‘subjugate’ (p. 454, n. 29), which might have likewise contained an administrative connotation. NWH who rejects this interpretation and translates as “the cattle they took as wealth”, nevertheless adduces a passage from OL 0751, 38a2-4, where we find almost the same phrase *mnaŋs bcadpa* in the context of an enumeration of what able rulers and ministers do to their enemies (Hill 2006: 98, n. 45). This would rather corroborate Haarh’s intuition, although perhaps with a slightly different undertone: ‘confiscate’.

Uray (1966: 254) translates the passage as “the bent ones, being killed, were butchered.” In his note 21, he explains *mnaŋs* as a past tense form of **noŋ* or **gnoŋ*, which he takes as transitive-causative form of **noŋ*, *noŋs* ‘die’. But his interpretation seems to be unlikely for several reasons. First of all, one might wonder why it should be mentioned explicitly that the animals were killed before being slaughtered or rather cut into pieces, and if so, why such an uncommon word should be used. Secondly the form *mnaŋsu* does not allow an interpretation in terms of anteriority (having or being X-ed), but rather points to a posterior event, aimed at (‘in order to X’). Thirdly, as NWH (ibid.) rightly comments, Uray’s translation misses the parallelism with the preceding clause.

BRGY defines *mnaŋspa* as 1. *nor loŋsspyod* ‘wealth, property’ and 2. *sriddam hjiŋrten* ‘dominion or world’. The second meaning would support the interpretation ‘confiscated for the state’, the first meaning the interpretation as ‘confiscated as (his personal) wealth’. But one could also think of a combined interpretation ‘confiscated as state property’. Bacot et al.’s translation ‘les animaux [furent] emmenés au royaume’ is as close or free a translation of this collocation as NWH’s ‘took as wealth’.

- <55> (*bya*) *roro*. I do not think that the text speaks of the corpses of the prey, but of the prey itself. Dan Martin in TETT mentions an entry in *Btshanlha*, which defines this word as an old expression for ‘all’: ‘*thamscad cespaḥi brdarñiŋ*’. Most probably it is related to CT *rere*. There are other cases where the vowels *e* and *o* interchange, the most obvious is perhaps *che* ‘be big’ with the nominal forms *chenpo* and *chenmo* which is attested as /ʃho-/ or /ʃhu-/ in various dialects (CDTD).
- <56> *nig*. I should suggest to take it as a dialectal variant of the topic marker *ni*, as it is found in the Shamskat dialects of Ladakh. Cf. also JÄK (sub *ni*) who cites the colloquial form *niŋ*. Whatever the main function, the word apparently replaces a copula.
- <57> *goŋra*. The word seems to be related to *goŋ* ‘the above’ and *goŋma* ‘superior, first’. The ‘heel’ is *riŋpa*, from *riŋ* ‘what is behind’, so the tip might be ‘what comes first or above’. Bacot & al translate freely as ‘coup de bottes’, Haarh gives ‘pointed blade’, reading *ltam*, instead of *lham*. Without further comment, he suggests (1969: 454, n. 31) a relation between the non-existing word *ltan* (!) and the component *sta* in *stari* ‘axe’ and *dgrasta*, an axe with a semi-circular blade (Jim valby in TETT). A closer look at the manuscript reveals that Haarh is mistaken. Both clusters *lt* and *lh* appear at the end of line 10 in the words *deltar* and *lha*. The upper vertical stroke of the *ta* is more or less a continuation of the right vertical stroke of the superscript *l*-. The round hook of the *ta* either starts from the bottom of this stroke (l. 10, l. 20) or may start somewhere below, so that the upper vertical stroke is connected with its apex (l. 20). In any case the hook is placed more or less immediately below the superscript. In the case of *lh*, the head line of the *ha* is identical with the base line of the superscript *l*-, and from the left side of this base line starts first a short vertical

stroke, to which is connected another short slanted stroke downwards to the right, to which finally a round hook like that of the *ta* is joined. The clusters thus cannot be easily confounded, and in our case the distance between the round hook and the superscript is even more prominent.

Haarh further suggests that *ra* might be a mistake for *raṅ*. This would yield a nice parallel to the above *rtse raṅ* and corroborates my interpretation of *goṅ* or *goṅra* as ‘point, tip’. Nevertheless, one can never be sure that the lines are composed in strict parallelism, and it is also possible that the emphatic pronoun *raṅ* was added to *rtse* for the sake of the metre, where *goṅra* might be a corresponding disyllabic noun. NWH translates *goṅra* as ‘mass of a shoe’, taking *goṅpo/bu* ‘lump, mass, heap, clot’ as base. It is, however, difficult to imagine what a ‘lump’ of boots could have to do with a (dead) hare.

- <58> *ḥob*. The final *-b* is added below the *ḥa*, but offset to the right. This is a common graphical device in OT manuscripts, cf. also RAMA *gsol*, which is commonly transliterated as *gslo*, despite the offset. A less misleading representation of the offset could be achieved with a diagonal slash: *ḥo/b* or *gso/l*. Biased by his then new insights in the structure of the letter *wa* (cf. Hill 2006b), NWH suggests the reading ‘*vwode*’ (*ḥwode*).

It may be noted that his analysis of the letter *wa* as digraph *ḥwa* is misleading in so far as the digraph in question, *ḥba* (or *ḥva*) in OT, *lba* in CT, consists of a superscribed letter *ḥa* or *la* and a subscribed letter for the voiced stop consonant *ba* — if there had been already a letter ‘*wa*’, there would never have been the need to invent the digraph. As Uray 1955 points out, the OT letter *ba*, triangular in its shape, stems from the letter *va* in the Kuṭīla form of the Brāhmī script, and it is found in Central Asian alphabets still in the place of the Indic *va* (between *la* and *ṣa*; p. 103). But since the opposition between *ba* and *va* had collapsed in many Indic scripts (cf. *ibid* p. 105), the Tibetan scribes could easily reanalyse it as a stop consonant *ba* and shift it its present position (between *pha* and *ma*). Contrary to Uray’s argument (p. 110), the letter for the voiced labial should have had only the value of a stop consonant when or before the digraph was invented, invented especially to indicate a fricative value. But if Uray is right and the letter had still two different values for the early scribes, depending on certain phonetical environments, namely as voiced fricative [v] or [β] and as stop consonant [b], the epigraphic transliteration of the digraph should follow Uray’s model: ‘*va*. The apostrophe, however, is not a good representation for a consonant. It is quite unfortunate that Chinese scholars chose the symbol *v* for the letter ‘*aḥa*. If one follows this convention, the epigraphic transliteration of the digraph *wa* can only be *vba*. If one chooses the symbol *ḥ*, one has both options: *ḥba* and *ḥva*.

- <59> Bacot & al. and many Tibetan scholars interpret the whole passage as an act of revenge. NWH: ‘Gñāḥgoṅ Dkonmchog Tshesbrtan paraphrases, and remarks on these two lines « *byaro chechena mdunḡi rtse la btags | yoste ribongro chechena lhamgyi yuba byas ḡespaḡi donte Spulde Guṅrgyalgyis yabkyi dgraṣa lenpar Loṅampa tshar bcadpa de byadaṅ riboṅ bsadpaḡi dper sbyar paḡo* [The significance of ‘In the very large bird corpse is the point of a lance affixed. In the very large hare, i.e. rabbit corpse has been put the leg of a boot.’ is that Spulde Guṅrgyal destroying the enemy of the father Loṅam is linked to the example of killing a bird and rabbit] » (1995: 20 n. 26 on p. 23 where it is given as n. 27)’ (transliteration adjusted). This interpretation overlooks the fact that the corpse deposited has the honorific form *spur* and thus refers to the emperor’s corpse, not to the slain enemies. The song seems to signify something like the famous ‘Le roi est mort, vive le roi.’ The initial boasting of the singer with his ability as a perfect hunter who does not need arrows to reach the birds and hares, but can kill all of them almost by hand (with the tip of the lance and the tip of the boot) could perhaps be understood as a warning to the lesser lords.
- <60> *sgyedpoḡoggzugsna*. Bacot et al. followed by NWH mistake take the noun *zugs* ‘form’ as stem II of the verb ‘*ḡdzugs* ‘put in, plant, establish’. Stem II, however regularly takes the form *btsugs*, only stem III, the gerundive, has the form *gzug* or *zugs*. The gerundive can be used, e.g., in a purposive clause, but in this case it should either be followed by the locative-purposive marker {*tu*} or by zero. It cannot be combined with the locative marker *na*. A rendering ‘in order to set up below the hearth’ would be furthermore quite infelicitous without the specification of the item to be set up. The only possible candidate, the copper ore, is mentioned in the following clause, but one wonders, why this should be ‘set up’ or ‘founded’ below the hearth. Bacot & al. (followed by NWH) also take *ḡog* as an independent adverb, in which case it should have the form *ḡogtu*. Haarh

misreads the noun *gzugs* as *gzugs* ‘spoke’. Given the fact that *gzugs* cannot be a verb in this context, I can only suggest reading *hoggzugs* as a compound ‘the lower form’ or ‘fundament’. I would have expected a genitive marker between *sgyedpo* and *hoggzugs*, but apparently this phrase is contracted to a more complex compound.

<61> The intended meaning is somewhat opaque. Why should copper ore be placed at or below the hearth? In a literal sense, the purpose could perhaps be its melting. Given the fact that the clause is continued with the statement that the agent is or becomes the lord, I think that this clause contains a simile. The copper ore from the heights might refer to the haughty lords which the new king had subdued, that is, put under his hearth or even melted. The hearth could then stand for his dominion. Haarh and NWH translate ‘copper stones fell from above’, notwithstanding the transitive-causative verb form. Bacot & al. delegate the agency to some anonymous natural force or deity, overlooking that the verb is followed by the *lhagbcas* morpheme {ste} which disfavours a subject switch. Unlike flowers that fall or are sent down from the sky by an anonymous agency, the sending down of copper ore does not appear to be a common image in Tibetan literature. I do not know whether the falling down of meteors was ever taken as an auspicious sign, but meteors do not seem to be ever denoted by the words *zagsrdo* or *lcagsrdo*, the common designation being *skarrdo* (cf. BRGY).

<62> *Graṅmo Gnam Bbseḥbrtsig*. Given the parallelism with the preceding sentence, the reading ‘to be built’ for the last element of this name seems not to be well-motivated. Bacot et al. (1940: 128, n. 4) take this as the name of the successor, since the same name is found in the Ms. 249 of the font Pelliot as *Graṅmo Gnam Gserbrtsig*. The immediate successor is usually given as *Ašolegs* (with variants; cf. Haarh 1969: 47). The Ms 249, a genealogical list, is now classified as PT 1286. In l. 48-50 we find: *Drigum btsanpoḥi sras || Spude Guṅrgyal gnamlā Dri bdun | sale [!] Legs drug bšosna | Spude Guṅrgyal groṅsna || Graṅmo Gnam Gserbrtsig | Gserbrtsiggi sras || Tholeg btsanpo...* (TDD/OTDO) ‘The son of Drigum btsanpo: Spude Guṅrgyal, [coming in-between] the seven Dri [in/of] the sky and the six Legs [on/of] the earth, when engendered: Spude Guṅrgyal, when having died: Graṅmo Gnam Gserbrtsig. The son of Gserbrtsig: Tholeg btsanpo.’

Graṅmo Gnam Gserbrtsig is thus the name of Spude Guṅrgyal after his death and not the name of his son, which is given here as Tholeg btsanpo ([A]šolegs coming second), cf. TDD/OTDO, l. 50-51: 1. Tholeg btsanpo, 2. Šolegs btsanpo, 3. Gorulegs btsanpo, 4. Ḥbronžilegs btsanpo, 5. Thišoleg btsanpoḥ, 6. Išoleg btsanpo, altogether six members of the Legs dynastical group. While NWH decided not to take care for the historical context (see his ‘preamble’, 2006: 89), it is all the more astonishing that Haarh happened to overlook this passage of a text which he had quite obviously studied well (it is no. 1 of his sources, Haarh 1969: 33). The translations ‘Graṅmo Gnambseḥ was built’ (Haarh) and ‘a cold bronze dome erected’ (NWH) overlook that the element *-brtsig* of the name does not correspond to stem II (typically used for past time reference or for a present, sometimes also future perfect), but to stem III the future oriented gerundive of the verb *rtsig* ‘build’.