

The Forty Magical Letters A 19th c. AD Manuscript from Hor on Bon po Scripts

by Josep Lluís Alay
University of Barcelona

Introduction¹

n recent years there has been an increasing number of publications regarding the cultural history of the ancient kingdom of Zhangzhung and its relevance to Himalayan and Tibetan culture in general and Bon religion in particular. Especially significant among them are the studies (carried out outside and inside Tibet) of the still too obscure Zhangzhung language, such as dictionaries and vocabularies.² However, there is still a remarkable lack of published research about Zhangzhung scripts and other Bon related scripts, such as the ones supposedly attributed to ancient countries like sTag gzugs or Bru sha. The intention of this paper is to briefly discuss this relatively unknown aspect of Zhangzhung culture by describing and transliterating a manuscript recently discovered in Tibet.

Discovery, general description and physical condition

The manuscript, entitled '*Phrul gyi yi ge bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me*', was composed in the 19th c. AD as a sort of manual for seven Bon po scripts. According to the Bon tradition, those scripts were created throughout history to express the archetypal Forty Magical Letters (arisen from the "five seed heroic letters": *om ram srum kham yam*) revealed by sTon pa gshen rab in 'Ol mo gling.

This study is based on a black and white photocopy found in Lhasa in 2009.³ The whereabouts of the original manuscript were unknown at the time of the finding and remain unknown at present. The quality of the photocopy is far from optimal but sufficient to carry out a reliable study of its content. The copy contained a total of eight unfolded pages, three of them numbered and five without a trace of pagination.

¹ I wish to thank Dan Martin for his comments and assistance to complete this study; Samdrup for his precious advices and fruitful discussions on the content of the manuscript; Henk Blezer, for his initial interest in the manuscript and for his reading of the colophon; and Jean-Luc Achard for his comments and support for its publication in *RET*.

² The latest Zhangzhung dictionary was precisely published in the previous issue of *RET*: Martin (2010). Other recent Zhangzhung-Tibetan(-English) dictionaries and vocabularies include: Blo gros rab gsal (2010), Pasar Tsultrim Tenzin, Changru Tritsuk Namdak Nyima, Gatsa Lodroe Rabsal (2008), The bo Legs bshad rgya mtsho (2006) and Dagkar Namgyal Nyima (2003). For a comprehensive review of Zhangzhung language studies, see Martin (2010).

³ An image of folio 1 was published in Alay (2009).

The first challenge was therefore to establish the original order and number of folios in order to transliterate and fully understand the content. An examination on the content of the text suggested that the copy contained four complete folios (1ab, 2ab, 3ab and 5?ab). Folio 5?ab (without any visible number) is the last one of the manuscript since it contains the colophon. We cannot be entirely certain of its numbering, although the content of the text seems to indicate that only one folio 4 is missing, as will be discussed later in this paper.

The manuscript makes use of symbolic words for page numbers. The first folio is *zla ba*, the second one is *mig* and the third one *rtse mo*. The last folio is not numbered but the margin location where the number/symbol would have been is occupied by an added correction to the main text in that page: *dbang sogs grangs ldan gong*.⁴

Contents

The manuscript can be divided into the following parts: 1. Title (1a); 2. Invocation (1b, 2a); 3. Offering verses (2b); 4. Scripts and Forty Magical Letters (2b-5?a); 5. Concluding prayer (5?a); and 6. Colophon (5?a-5?b). We will discuss below their most important aspects.

Title and invocation

The title (folio 1a) and the text corresponding to the starting exhortation (folios 1b-2a) to the Bon Bodies are written both in Zhangzhung and Tibetan languages using Tibetan scripts. Furthermore, the title is also written in *sTag gzigs spungs so che ba* script and the supplication in both *sTag gzigs spungs so che ba* and *sTag gzigs spungs so chung ba*, obviously giving *sTag gzigs* scripts some preeminence over other Bon po scripts mentioned in the manuscript. On the other hand, these initial lines provide an interesting Zhangzhung-Tibetan vocabulary to the reader.⁵

Folios 1 and 2 offer a prolific display of designs and symbolism, which is interesting to examine in more detail. Although the photocopy was in black and white, the drawings are clear enough to enable a fairly accurate description. Folio 1 clearly displays a white conch in the left margin of the title, whilst on the right the drawing is more difficult to identify; but could

⁴ "Before *ldan: dbang sogs grangs*". The correction obviously transgresses the poetic measure of the verse.

⁵ Zhangzhung (Tibetan) pair equivalents derived from the title and the exhortation are as follows (folios 1a-2a): *rgyu ra shel* ('*phrul*), *gu ge* (*yi ge*), *bing cu* (*bzhi bcu*), *wer spungs* (*rgyal bstan*), *khir* (*gsal ba*), *ne ting* (*sgron me*), *da dod ci* (*zhes bya ba'o*); *ru drod* (*rang bzhin*), *dod min* (*skye med*), *he khyab* (*khyab gdal*), *gyer mu wang* (*bon gyi sku*); *ti sku* (*mkhyen brtse*), *ha ra* (*ye shes*), *nga drug* (*lnga [ldan]*), *slig tso wang* (*rdzogs pa'i sku*); *ye dul* (*gang 'dul*), *skye tsa* ('*dren pa*), *ku khir* (*kun mkhyen*), *da dod wang* (*sprul pa'i sku*); *rko sum* (*sku gsum*), *mu sangs* (*sangs rgyas*), *ghing ti?* (*mchog des*), *de smar brum* (*bde legs stsol*). The Zhangzhung term *ghing ti* (*mchog des*) is not found in any dictionary and the combination <*ghi*> is very uncommon. The grammar treatise *brDa sprod srid pa'i sgron me* by Khyung sprul rin po che [Khyung sprul rin po che (2004) p. 178] has *sle ye* for Tibetan *mchog des*.

be either a second conch or more likely the parasol usually attached to the *bkra shis rtags brgyad* design. This second interpretation seems to be corroborated by the *bkra shis rtags brgyad* displayed in the center of folio 2a and where the parasol is the only missing symbol.

In the left margin of folio 1b a jewel and a scripture are supported by the lotus, whereas the right side is filled by the sword of wisdom. Finally folio 2a lacks any central image but shows two on the sides. This folio seems to represent the five senses with a water jar (smell), a *gtor ma* (taste) and a butter lamp (sight) on the right side. Objects on the left side are indiscernible, although a musical instrument and a piece of cloth are likely options for representing the senses of hearing and touch.

The Forty Magical Letters and the scripts to express them

The body of the text (folios 2b-5?b) was written in the Tibetan script known as *yig chung* or *kham s yig*, very popular among Bon po scribes, and numerous *skung yig* or *bskungs yig* or "concealed letters"⁶ were also included; some of which add a certain level of difficulty for the reader.⁷

After mentioning the Forty Magical Letters as the root of all words used for the spreading of Bon teachings, the manuscript speaks of seven scripts to express those magical letters which were transmitted by sTon pa gshen rab to humans. The lands of these scripts are enumerated as: sTag gzigs, Bru sha, Zhangzhung and Tibet. And the corresponding seven scripts are the main topic of the manuscript, which can be considered as a Manual for teaching and learning those scripts. Unfortunately, two of them are presumably in the missing folio 4 and the Tibetan script is just mentioned in folio 5?a.

Nevertheless, a complete series of characters is given for the *sTag gzigs spungs so che ba* and *sTag gzigs spungs so chung ba* scripts;⁸ and a partial series for the *Bru sha* script since the folio where this series should have continued is missing (folio 4). All script series follow the same pattern with an upper line in the script in question and a lower line with a *dbu can* Tibetan script equivalent⁹:

*ka kha ga nga ca cha ja nya ta tha da na pa pha ba ma tsa tsha dza wa zha za 'a ya ra
la sha sa ha a / ki ku ke ko kaṃ kya kra kla rka lka ska / oṃ*

⁶ For a complete dictionary of *skung yig* terms, see Shes rab (2003). However a few *skung yig* used in the manuscript could not be found in the dictionary.

⁷ They have been indicated through hyphenation in the transliteration. *skung yig* in the manuscript are used for the following Tibetan and Zhangzhung terms: *rnam dag*, *shes rab*, *ye shes*, *mkhyen brtse'i*, *blo gros*, *stag gzigs*, *'bral med*, *gshen rab*, *sems can*, *rnam mkhyen*, *nyon mongs*, *dug lnga*, *zhang zhung*, *stag gzig*, *spungs so*, *bdag gis*, *sgron mer*, *yid bzhin*, *smar ro*, *'jig rten*, *g.yung drung* and *bde chen*.

⁸ On the appearance of sTag gzigs scripts see bsTan 'dzin rnam dag (1997) pp. 20-21.

⁹ Only the very last part of the series *kla rka lka ska / oṃ* is missing (in folio 4).

Brief but interesting descriptions and explanations are provided for both *sTag gzigs spungs so che ba* and *sTag gzigs spungs so chung ba* scripts.¹⁰ The former is considered to be the main script, since it was the first to be established in the sacred land of *sTag gzigs*¹¹ 'Ol mo gling, the origin of Bon. The text goes on to explain that the script "was put into letters (*gu ger*)¹² by Gling gshen Mu la¹³ in *sKu bla rmog mtho* in accordance with the prophecy of Tshe dbang".¹⁴ According to the author, "Kun grol grags pa¹⁵ systematized the *sTag gzigs spungs so chung ba* script and Khro bon Mu la wang ya¹⁶ wrote it into letters (*gu ger*)." Without any further explanation, the *Bru sha* script is displayed next but incomplete since as mentioned before folio 4 is missing.

Although, we can only guess which scripts were displayed next, certain indications can help us. Folio 5?a mentions Tibetan as the last script (without having displayed the series as expected), which leaves only three missing scripts. Seeing the size of the other script series we can suppose that these unknown scripts would have fitted into one single folio, and can thus deduce that there is probably only one missing folio (number four) in the manuscript. But which could have been those three scripts?

The missing scripts were presumably linked to Zhangzhung (according to the initially mentioned territories), which leaves us with two clear candidates and one more disputed one. There is not much room left for doubt that two of the Zhangzhung scripts were *sMar chen* and *sMar chung*,¹⁷ unanimously mentioned in all sources as the standard scripts in the ancient Bon po kingdom. The third one also associated to Zhangzhung according to

¹⁰ *Indian Scripts in Tibet* (1982) pp. 59-60 gives a nearly identical description, but in *dbu med* style, of these three scripts including the entire series of characters. See Kun bzang blo gros where f. 137 shows the entire *sTag gzigs spungs so che ba* script.

¹¹ The text indistinctly makes use of *sTag gzigs* or *sTag gzig*.

¹² The author uses the Zhangzhung word *gu ge* for Tibetan *yi ge* combined with the Tibetan postposition *-r*.

¹³ Gling gshen Mu la (Gling gshen nam mkha') is mentioned in several Bon po works such as Shar rdza bkra shis rgyal mtshan's *Legs bshad rin po che*. See Karmay (1972) p. 179: "(The oral tradition of Gling gshen Mu la Thogs med) Texts were passed on orally to Gling gshen Mu la Thogs med by sTong rgyung (mThu chen). They were the *gSer 'od nor bu 'od 'bar*, the cycle of the *Char 'bebs klu sgrub*, the *sGra bla rgyal mo*, etc."

¹⁴ The famous Bon po master Tshe dbang rig 'dzin, son of Dran pa nam mkha' (8th c. AD).

¹⁵ Born in Khams in 1700, he was the compiler of the first catalogue of the Bon po Canon, see Martin, Kvaerne, Nagano (2003), p. 7, and Rossi (1999), p. 32. A study of a *thangka* derived from his *Compendium for the Contemplation on Peaceful and Wrathful Deities* can be found in Blezer (2007) pp. 180-207, which also includes a possible portrait of him. His date of death is not clear, but Blezer (2007) suggests between 1766 and 1779. See also Karmay (1972) p. 185: "(The discovery of Rig 'dzin Kun grol grags pa) The textual discovery of Kun grol grags pa consisted of...". For a complete study of his lineage and especially his fourth incarnation in the 19th c, see Achard (2004), p. xii.

¹⁶ He could be one of the disciples of Kun grol grags pa and the elder brother of the Khro chen king Kun dga' nor bu. He took a great part in the engraving of the *bKa' 'gyur* under the direction of Kun grol grags pa. Thanks to Jean-Luc Achard for this information.

¹⁷ *Indian Scripts in Tibet* (1982) pp. 59-60 includes both Zhangzhung scripts: *sMar chen* and *sMar chung*. The entire script of *sMar chen* is shown on the first page of Zhu yi Rnal 'byor Nyi ma grags pa (1965) and in Kun bzang blo gros, f. 137. There is also a brief remark on Zhangzhung scripts in Dagkar Namgyal Nyima (2003), p. 22.

some authors such as bsTan 'dzin rnam dag could have been the *Drag yig* script with a long history in Tibet.¹⁸

Just after naming Tibetan as the last script and before the concluding prayer (folio 5?a), we find an exceedingly interesting remark regarding the spread of Bon and the role played by the Forty Magical Letters. After mentioning the existence of seven scripts (*yig rigs 'phags nor*) to teach Bon, the manuscript gives a description of the magical letters.

According to these lines, the Forty Magical Letters are formed by thirty consonants (*ka kha ga nga ca cha ja nya ta tha da na pa pha ba ma tsa tsha dza wa zha za 'a ya ra la sha sa ha a*) and ten additional letters.¹⁹ The latter have been the object of much discussion among Bon po scholars.²⁰ The manuscript clearly defines eight of them: four vowels, *dang thog* (or *mgo yig*),²¹ *tsheg*,²² *shad*²³ and *klad kor*²⁴. The text adds two more letters without mentioning them, but they are associated to the four vowels and altogether form the so called six son vowels (*dbyangs yig bu drug*), in contrast with the well known thirty mother consonants (*gsal byed ma yig sum cu*). A fragment from *mKha' 'gro rin chen 'phreng rgyud*²⁵ establishes those six son letters as the upper vowels (*na ro, gu gi, 'greng bu*) and the lower vowels (*ra sta, ya sta, zhabs kyu*) with an obvious positional criteria of the "son" with respect to the "mother". Consequently, the two additional letters in our manuscript could only be the *ra btags*²⁶ and *ya btags*²⁷. The same conclusion can be drawn from Khyung sprul Rin po che's *brDa sprod srid pa'i sgron me*²⁸ treatise (written in the beginning of the 20th c. AD and based on various Bon po scriptures)²⁹ that the additional letters³⁰ were *ra btags* and *ya btags*.

¹⁸ See bsTan 'dzin rnam dag (1997) p. 27, Dagkar Namgyal Nyima (2003), p. 22 and Nam mkha'i nor bu (1996) pp. 104-105 or Namkhai Norbu (2009) pp. 161-162 for the origin and development of *Zhang zhung drag yig* script. Nonetheless, there are plenty of possible candidates for the "third" Zhangzhung script as can be seen in script compilations such as Bod ljongs dga' skyid gling 'dzugs skrun tshad yod kung si'i gros 'dri tsho chung (2006).

¹⁹ *de yang gsal byed ma yig sum cu la / dbyangs yig bu drug dang thog tshig [> tsheg] shad dgu / klad kor bsnan pa 'phrul yig bzhi bcu'i grangs /* (folio 5?a).

²⁰ Dran pa nam mkha's commentary on the *mDzod phug* already mentions the '*phrul chen yi ge bzhi bcu*. Cf. Dran pa nam mkha', f. 7a / p. 13 (thanks to Dan Martin for this hint), and most of the Bon po grammatical treatises (and commentaries), such as the *brDa sprod nyi shu bdun pa* speak of Forty Magical Letters, see *brDa dag sgra sbyor gyi skor*, pp. 1-9.

²¹ Corresponding to *kSha* in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²² Corresponding to *a*: in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²³ Corresponding to *Shṭa* in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²⁴ Corresponding to *aṃ* in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²⁵ */yi ge'i ma ni sum cu'o // yi ge'i bu ni drug tu bstan // na ro gug 'greng steng bu gsum // 'og gi bu gsum bstan pa ni // ra sta ya sta zhabs kyu gsum /* Cf. *rDzogs chen ye khri mtha' sel*, p. 49 and bSam 'grub nyi ma and bsTan 'dzin 'brug grags (1989) p. 50.

²⁶ Corresponding to *bhi* in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²⁷ Corresponding to *mhing* in Zhangzhung language. See note 29.

²⁸ Khyung sprul rin po che (2004) pp. 176-214

²⁹ Khyung sprul rin po che mentions *Ma rgyud* tantras and *gZi brjid* among the many different sources he used for composing his own treatise. Khyung sprul rin po che (2004) pp. 179-181.

³⁰ Khyung sprul rin po che describes the origin of the Forty Magical Letters as taught by sTon pa gshen rab. They originated from the "five seed heroic letters" (*/dpa' bo 'bru lnga las spros pa'i // 'phrul gyi tho yig bzhi bcur byung /*); and can be classified in various ways,

Author and date

The colophon (folios 5^{ab}) reveals the authorship and other details related to the composition of our manuscript. It was written by a certain Drung mu wer zhi (g.Yung drung rgyal mtshan)³¹ at the behest of his teacher She tsu wer ya (bSod nams dbang ldan) and was based on the works composed by Nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang gi rgyal po.³² Drung mu wer zhi wrote it in g.Yung drung bde chen gling Monastery, better known as Klu phug Monastery, located in present sBra chen county (Nag chu prefecture, T.A.R.),³³ and which, at the time of composition of this manuscript, was the spiritual and political center of the Bon po nomadic kingdom of the Thirty-nine Hor Tribes.

The colophon also establishes the moon's waxing face of the third month (*nag pa zla ba'i zhi phyogs*) of the female fire pig year (*me mo phag*) as the date of composition, corresponding to 1887. The year of composition is also given in Tibetan as the twenty-first year of the *rang byung* cycle (*thams cad 'dul*) and in Sanskrit as the equivalent *sarjavit*. Finally, the year is mentioned in Zhangzhung (*'tsho ba*) and Chinese (*ting ja'i*)³⁴.

Concluding remarks

The *'Phrul gyi yi ge bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me* probably represents one of the few examples of a manual composed to teach and learn the various Bon po traditional scripts (sTag gzig, Bru sha, Zhangzhung and Tibetan) as well as to keep alive the mystical concept of the Forty Magical Letters taught by sTon pa gshen rab himself in the temporal and spatial

which Khyung sprul rin po che extensively develops. One classification divides them into five groups (space, fire, earth letters, water and wind) of eight letters each (...*dpa' bo yi* // *'bru lnga om ram srum kham yam* // *lnga las spros pa'i 'byung chen tshul* // *om las nam mkha'i yi ge ni* // *kSha ka kha ga nga ha a* // *lam ste 'bru brgyad byung ba yin* // *de bzhin ram las me yig brgyad* // *e ca cha ja nya ra bhi* // *Shta byung srum las sa yig brgyad* // *o ta tha da na la sa* // *mhing shing kham las chu yig brgyad* // *u pa pha ba ma za 'a* // *a: byung yam las rlung yig ni* // *i tsa tsha dza wa ya sha* // *zha brgyad srid de byung khungs rtogs* /...) [Khyung sprul rin po che (2004) p. 179]. The equivalence for the ten additional letters is given as follows: / *kSha ni 'go 'dren a: ni tshag* // *Shta ni shad de bhi ra sta* // *mhing ni ya sta i gi gu* // *u ni zhabs kyu e 'grent bu* // *o ni na ro am klad kor* / [Khyung sprul rin po che (2004) p. 181]. This key passage clarifies the two letters not mentioned in the manuscript (*ya sta* and *ra sta*). A similar analysis can be found for the Forty Magical Letters in Nam mkha'i nor bu (1996) pp. 96-107.

³¹ This is such a common name in Bon po communities that it is very difficult to identify the author. Achard (2004), p. xxii, 21, etc. mentions several monks called Drung mu wer zhi related to bDe chen gling pa in the 19th c. but none of them seems to fit the biography of the author of the manuscript.

³² Nyi ma bstan 'dzin (1813-1875) was the Twenty-second *sMan ri khri 'dzin*, compiler of the second catalogue of the Bon po Canon and prolific author; see Martin, Kvaerne, Nagano (2003), p. 10, Rossi (1999) p. 32 and Achard (2004) p. 248. He was also the author of the grammar treatise entitled *Bod skad brda dag gi rtsa tshig 'bel gtam nyi 'od gzhon nu*, see *brDa dag sgra sbyor gyi skor*, pp. 251-260.

³³ For a complete history of Klu phug Monastery see g.Yung drun gtsug phud (2007) and Karmay S. and Nagano Y. (2003), pp. 143-153.

³⁴ Chinese: dīnghài.

primordial origin of Bon. At the time of writing these lines, this manual of Bon po scripts written in 1887 and hence its uniqueness and relevance, since it can be considered as one of the oldest dated compositions of its kind.

Bibliography

Tibetan sources

Kun bzang blo gros

Zhang bod kyi skad gnyis shan sbyar sgra yi rtogs brjod, Reprint of ms., pp. 122-137. For more information on this work see Martin (2010). I got a copy of the manuscript in mNga' ris (2005).

Khyung sprul rin po che (2004)

Gangs can bod kyi brda skad ming gzhi gsal bar ston pa'i bstan bcos dgos 'byung nor bu'i gter chen, G.yung drung bon gyi bshad sgrub 'dus sde / Bon Dialectic School, Dolanji, 2004.

bsTan 'dzin rnam dag (1997)

sNga rabs bod kyi byung ba brjod pa'i 'bel gtam lung gi snying po (English title: An Early History of Tibet According to Bon Tradition), Paljor Publications, New Delhi, 1983 (reprint 1997).

The bo Legs bshad rgya mtsho (2006)

Zhang bod skad gnyis shan sbyar gyi ming mdzod chung ngu, Legs lung gtso tshang dgon / gSang sngags smin grol dar rgyas gling, 2006.

Dran pa nam mkha'

bDen pa bon gyi mdzod sgo sgra 'grel 'phrul gyi lde mig, bKa' brten Vol. 277, 1998.

brDa dag sgra sbyor gyi skor in *Gangs ti se bon gzhung rig mdzod 2*, Hi ma la ya'i Bon website

(http://himalayabon.com/up_files/2010-7-9/2010070919140992.pdf).

Thanks to Amdo Tsogyal and bsTan 'dzin 'brug grags for bringing my attention to this website.

Nam mkha'i nor bu (1996)

Zhang bod lo rgyus ti se'i 'od, Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, Qinghai, 1996.

Bod ljongs dga' skyid gling 'dzugs skrun tshad yod kung si'i gros 'dri tsho chung (2006)

Gangs ljongs yig gzugs kun btus zhal thang (English title: A Collection of Tibetan Scripts in the Form of Thangkas), Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, Lhasa, 2006.

Blo gros rab gsal (2010)

gNa' bo'i zhang bod tshig mdzod, Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Lanzhou, 2010.

rDzogs chen ye khri mtha' sel in *Gangs ti se bon gzhung rig mdzod 25*, Hi ma la ya'i Bon website

(http://himalayabon.com/up_files/2010-7-9/2010070920271020.pdf).

Zhu yi Rnal 'byor Nyi ma grags pa (1965)

Sgra yi don sdeb snang gsal sgron me, pp. 1-22, Delhi, 1965.

g.Yung drun gtsug phud (2007)

dPal gshen bstan klu phug dgon g.yung drung bde chen gling gi lo rgyud, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Beijing, 2007

Shes rab (2003)

sKung yig gsal byed nor bu'i me long zhes bya ba bzhugs so, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Beijing, 2003.

bSam 'grub nyi ma and bsTan 'dzin 'brug grags (1989)

"Bod kyi yi ge'i dpyad gtam dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i mgrin dbyangs", in *Bon sgo* issue 3, pp. 48-57, 1989.

Western sources

Achard, Jean-Luc (2004)

Bon po Hidden Treasures, A Catalogue of gTer ston bDe chen gling pa's Collected Works, Brill's Tibetan Studies Library, volume 6, Brill, Leiden, 2004.

Alay, Josep Lluís (2009)

Arrels del Tibet, Cultura i cooperació al sostre del món, Pagès editors, Lleida, 2009.

Blezer, Henk (2007)

"Imagining the Beyond, Beyond Imagination" in *Bon, The Magic Word*, Samten G. Karmay and Jeff Watt (eds.), Rubin Museum of Art - Philip Willson Pub., New York, 2007.

Dagkar Namgyal Nyima (2003)

Zhang-zhung — Tibetan — English Contextual Dictionary, Selbstverlag, Bonn, 2003.

Karmay, Samten G. ed. (1972)

The Treasury of Good Sayings, A Tibetan History of Bon, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1972 (reprint 2005).

Karmay, Samten G. and Nagano Y. ed. (2003), *A Survey of Bonpo Monasteries in the Himalaya*, Bon Studies 7, Senri Ethnological Reports 38, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, 2003.

Lokesh Chandra ed. (1982)
Indian Scripts in Tibet from the Collection of Prof. Raghuvira, Sata-Pitaka Series Vol. 297, Jayyed Press, New Delhi, 1982.

Martin, Dan (2010), "Zhangzhung dictionary", *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines*, n. 18, Avril 2010, pp.5-32 (Introduction), p. 33-253 (Dictionary).

Martin, Dan, Kvaerne, Per and Nagano Yasuhiko ed. (2003), Bon Studies 8, Senri Ethnological Reports 40, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, 2003.

Namkhai Norbu (2009)
The Light of Kailash, A History of Zhang Zhung and Tibet, Vol. 1 The Early Period, Shang Shung Publications, 2009.

Pasar Tsultrim Tenzin, Changru Tritsuk Namdak Nyima, Gatsa Lodroe Rabsal (2008)
A Lexicon of Zhangzhung and Bonpo Terms, Bon Studies 11, ed. by Yasuhiko Nagano and Samten G. Karmay, Senri Ethnological Reports 76, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, 2008.

Rossi, Donatella (1999)
The Philosophical View of the Great Perfection in the Tibetan Bon Religion, Snow Lion, Ithaca, 1999.



'Phrul gyi yi ge bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me

Folio 1a: zla ba

rgyu ra shel gu ge bing cu wer spungs khir zhi ne ting da dod ci lhan //
'phrul gyi yi ge bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me zhes bya ba'o //

Folio 1b

ru drod dod min he khyab gyer mu wang /
rang bzhin skye med khyab gdal bon gyi sku //

ti sku ha ra nga drug slig tso wang /
mkhyen brtse'i ye shes lnga ldan rdzogs pa'i sku //

Folio 2a: mig

ye dul skye tsa ku khir da dod wang /
gang 'dul 'dren pa kun mkhyen sprul pa'i sku //

rko sum mu sangs ghing ti de smar brum /
sku gsum sangs rgyas mchog des bde legs stsol //

Folio 2b

rnam-dag³⁵ dbyings la dbyings rol ye-shes la /
thabs mchog srid pa srid gsum kun bskyed gzhi /
shes-rab phul ldan phul phyung mkhyen-brtse'i bdag
lha gshen srid gsum srid bzhi'i mgon der 'dud //
gsal gsal blo-gros gter 'chang smra ba'i seng /
des des mkhas par mnga' bsnyems gdung sob [> 'tshob] mchog
mang mang sTag-gzigs Zhang Bod lo paṅ sogs /
yang yang 'bral-med snying gi ze 'brur rol /
rgyal gsung 'phrul ngag bden pa bon gyi sgra /
sgra bsgyur lo paṅ mkhas pa'i zhal gyi lung /
lung rig 'dzin rnam dga' ston 'phags nor grangs /
grangs mang rgyal bstan gsal sgron 'dir 'god spro //
zhes mchod par brjod pa'i tshig 'phreng snyan 'jeb glu dbyangs kyi mdun
bsus te /
'phrul chen yig 'bru bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me zhes bya ba ste/
mdo la Sangs po 'bum khri sTon pa gshen-rab kyis /
sems-can bkrid phyir khri dang 'bum du bris /
khyad par rnam-mkhyen gShen-rab mi bo de nyid kyi /
thugs gsang ba ye-shes kyi lag la byung /
gsung ja yi rgyun lam nas drang zhing /
'gro ba bkrid drang gi thabs su nyon-mongs pa brgyad khri bzhi stong la
ltos te /
bon gyi sgo mo brgyad khri bzhi stong /
blo rim pa dgu la ltos te /
bon theg pa rim dgu /
rgyu dug-lnga la ltos te /
bon sgo bzhi

Folio 3a: rtse mo

mdzod lnga /
nyon-mongs dug gsum la ltos te /
bon sde snod gsum /
rig pa dang [ma]³⁶ rig pa gnyis la ltos te /
bon drang don dang nges don gnyis la sogs gsungs pa'o /

³⁵ The use of *skung yig* in the ms. is indicated by hyphenation in this transliteration.

³⁶ Added as a correction in *dbu can*.

de rnams don gyi mdo rtsa sgra rig pa ming tshig kun gyi rtsa ba 'phrul
 chen yig 'bru bzhi bcu 'di nyid 'chad pa la don bdun te /
 de yang sTag-gzigs Bru sha Zhang-zhung Bod la sogs yul phyogs rer yi ge
 rer byung ba /
 de yi dang po sTag-gzigs kyi spungs so che ba'i ka dpe ni /

ka kha ga nga ca cha ja nya ta tha da na pa pha ba ma tsa tsha dza wa zha za
 'a ya ra la sha sa ha a /
 ki ku ke ko kaṃ kya kra kla rka lka ska /
 oṃ

bon gyi 'byung gnas sTag-gzig 'Ol mo gling /
 sangs rgyas zhing gyur de yi yig rigs gtso /
 spungs-so che ba 'di [ni] Tshe-dbang gis /
 lung bstan ci [> ji] bzhin sKu bla rmog mtho ru /
 Gling gshen Mu la bdag-gis gu ger btabs /
 dge bas rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron-mer shog
 sa ma yā /
 rgya rgya rgya :
 zhes spungs-so che ba de skabs

Folio 3b

dang po'o //
 gnyis pa sTag-gzig gi spungs-so chung ba ni /

ka kha ga nga ca cha ja nya ta tha da na pa pha ba ma tsa tsha dza wa zha za
 'a ya ra la sha sa ha a /
 ki ku ke ko kaṃ kya kra kla rka lka ska /
 oṃ

sTag-gzig spungs so che ba gtsor bzhag nas /
 Kun grol grags pa'i dpal gyi [> gyis] khog dbub cing Khro bon Mu la wang
 ya'i [> yas] gu ger bris /
 spungs-so chung ba 'di yang shes bya'i gzhi rig gnas mkhan por byas na
 bstan pa'i sgron /
 yid-bzhin blo sbyang thugs la nges bcag 'tshal /
 mu tsug smar-ro //
 zhes spungs-so chung ba ste /
 skabs gnyis pa'o //
 gsum pa Bru sha'i yul gyi yi ge'i ka dpe ni //

ka kha ga nga ca cha ja nya ta tha da na pa pha ba ma tsa tsha dza wa zha za
 'a ya ra la sha sa ha a /
 ki ku ke ko kaṃ kya kra

Folio 4: missing

Folio 5?a: *folio number is not indicated*

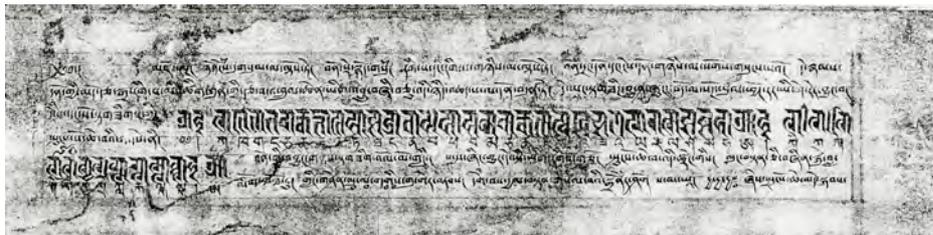
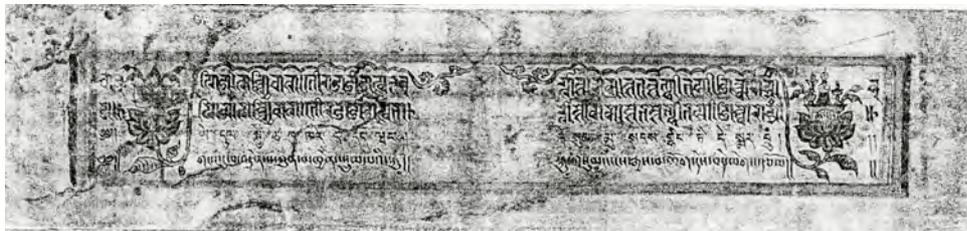
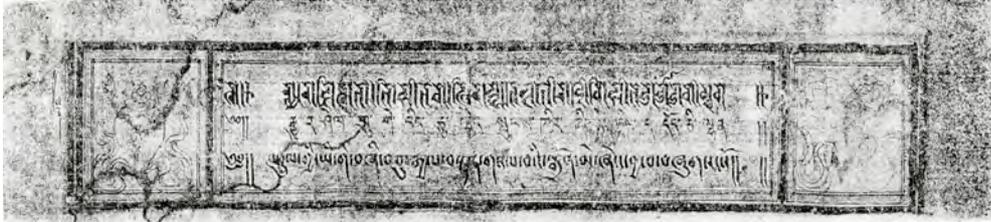
ni gong du song zhing gzhan rnams kyang go sla'o /
 zhes Bod yig gi sa bcad ste skabs bdun pa'o //
 gang zhig mos pa'i nyer drangs snang ba'i ngor /
 dMu rgyal sras gyi thabs thugs ma 'gag sgor
 'jig-rten khams kun dpe rtse gsum spel zhing /
 yig rigs 'phags nor grangs 'di ngo mtshar bon /
 de yang gsal byed ma yig sum cu la /
 dbyangs yig bu drug dang thog tshig [> tsheg] shad dgu /
 klad kor bsnan pa 'phrul yig bzhi bcu'i grangs /
 rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me 'di 'god tshal /
 'di bris dge tshogs tshogs gnyis rgya mtsho ru /
 thos [b]sam grub bgrod bgrod med gnas phyin nas /
 'dren mchog bla med med pa [dbang sogs grangs]³⁷ ldan dngos /
 ye-shes lnga rdzogs rdzogs ldan gsal du smon //
 ces pa 'phrul gyi yi ge bzhi bcu rgyal bstan gsal ba'i sgron me zhes bya ba
 'phags nor bdun ldan 'di ni rang cag gi slob dpon She tsu wang ya'i gsung
 rgyun gzhi byas /
 lung rig bon gyi spyen ldan /
 smra dbang mkhan chen Nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang gi rgyal pos gsung
 brtsoms mdzad pa rnams legs cha blangs de / thos chung gis Drung mu wer
 zhi 'bod pa bdag gis legs sbyar sam kri ta yi skad du sbar dza'i / zhang-
 zhung brda yi skad du 'tsho ba / ma ha tsi na'i skad du ting ja'i / bstod 'brel
 bod kyi skad du thams cad 'dul zhes / dbang thang

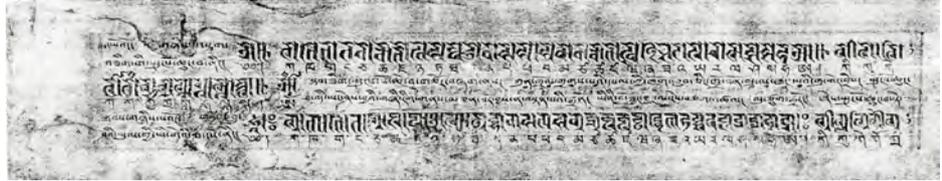
Folio 5?b

bstun pa'i me mo phag lo'i nag po zla ba'i zhi phyogs su 'dus sde chen po
 g.Yung-drung bde-chen gling du rig gnas 'thor bu rnams blta ba'i ko [> go]
 skabs bde ba'i phyir du phyogs gcig tu bris pa /
 dge des kun [phan] rgyal ba'i bstan pa rin po che phyogs dus kun tu dar
 zhing rgyas pa'i rgyu ru gyur cig
 mu tsug smar ro //



³⁷ Added in the left margin as *dbang sogs grangs ldan gong*.

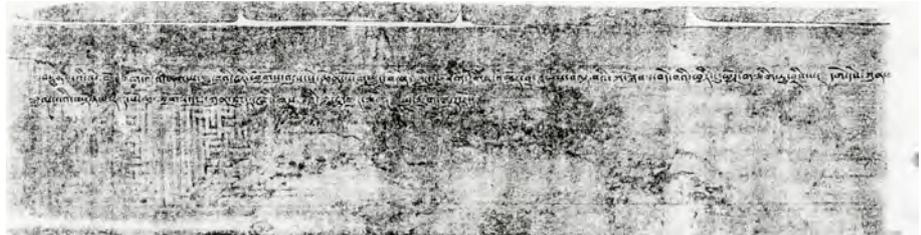




fol. 3b



fol. 5?a



fol. 5?b