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**Guide to Shambhala in an Unique Manuscript by the Sixteenth
Century Tibetan Ruler of Rin spungs
(Extract from his Letter to his Father
Ngag dbang rnam rgyal)**

Abstract

The text *Chos kyi rgyal po ngag dbang rnam par rgyal ba la zhu 'phrin du bya ba rig pa 'dzin pa'i pho nya zhes pa shambha la'i lam gyi yi ge dang bcas pa* ('A Letter to the Father, Dharma King Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, called Messenger of a Yogi, Including a Guide Letter to Shambhala'), is a work of the 16th century Tibetan ruler Ngag dbang 'jig rten dbang phyug grags pa of Rin spungs. The unique manuscript of this text has been found during cataloguing of the Pander Collection of Tibetan materials preserved in the Jagiellonian Library in Cracow, Poland. More detailed information about the Pander Collection one can find in the *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*,¹ and in the book, *A Preliminary Report on the Wanli Kanjur Kept in the Jagiellonian Library, Kraków* (Warsaw 2010). Soon a catalogue of the Tibetan collection of "Pander A" and part of "Pander B" will be published. The manuscript is unique for several reasons. First of all, it was written in the middle of the sixteenth century by a Tibetan ruler. Secondly, the whole text has been written in a poetical style, with numerous metaphors rather than with the use of the usual prose. Thirdly, the text not only explains a detailed itinerary to Shambhala, it also tells, although it is difficult to find in it precise and detailed information, on the rise and fall of his kingdom after his father's death. I did a preliminary study of this text and present here information which the author provided in the text itself – the itinerary to Shambhala, people, places passed by en route and the actual place of Shambhala. Except for its colophon, the text is written in verse. The poetic language of this work is rich stylistically and metaphorical, yet often confusing and therefore difficult to translate. In general, the text concentrates on two main points: a) description of Shambhala and a road map from Rin spungs to Shambhala, b) Ngag dbang rnam rgyal's death, conflict and

¹ Chashab 2014: 76–91.

decline of the Rin spungs kingdom. In the text Shambhala is presented as a heavenly pure land on Earth, possessing the nature of rainbow. It talks about the known and unknown physical lands outside of Tibet. According to the author, after visiting Ti se mountain (Mount Kailash) and taking a bath in the lake Manasarovar one has to travel west and north from the place called Par sig (Persia), in the land of Sog pos.²

Keywords: Shambhala, Tibetan manuscript, Rin-spungs, Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, Pander collection, Jagiellonian Library

Introduction

The work of Ngag dbang 'jig grags' consists of thirty-seven folios and it can be divided into four chapters: a) Paying homage to Mañjuśrī, Sarasvatī and the author's father, b) Death of his father, c) Guide to Shambhala, d) Conflict and decline of the Rin spungs power. From amongst the above mentioned chapters here will be discussed the description of Shambhala itself and the route to Shambhala provided by the author. Quotations extracted from the original text have been transliterated according to the Wylie transliteration system and translated into English. Their Tibetan versions are provided in the footnotes.

There exists a second *dbu med* manuscript in Bhutan which has the same contents as the text I am dealing with. The manuscript was reproduced by the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives (LTWA) in 1974, with the help of the Bhutanese Education adviser Slob dpon Gnag mdog. A scanned copy of this manuscript is preserved in LTWA as well as in the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center. Despite having similar contents the two above mentioned manuscripts differ regarding number of the text lines found in folios, size of the folios and style of the calligraphy. Moreover, after the comparison of a few first folios thoroughly it appeared that the two manuscripts differ considerably in regard to insertion of prefixes or suffixes in the syllable, use of genitive or instrumental particles, superscript letters, etc. Moreover, occasionally we find differences in word reading in the verses which could change the meaning of the whole verse.³ Therefore, to understand

² Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las, 2009, vol. II, pp. 2063–2064: *Bod kyi snga rabs lo rgyus nang du nub phyogs na stag gzig sog po'i dmag byung bar bshad pa'i sog po ni Po si btsan rgyal zer ba'i gna' rabs kyi dbyi lang rgyal khab /*; 'In the ancient Tibetan history it is said that from the west there will come a war of Stag gzigs Sog po and that Sog po means imperialist Persia (Po si), that is the ancient country of Iran'. It is probable that the Tibetans borrowed the word *Sog po* from "Sogdiana" or "Sogdia". The name Sogdiana was applied to the ancient civilization of Central Asian people. Nowadays Tibetan word *Sog po* is used only for Mongolian people. A well-known Tibetologist suggested that in Tibet the word *Sog* came to be associated with the Mongols only after their presence in Tibet.

³ Here are a few examples of those words found at the beginning of the text; they are: *sgra* and *dgra*, *zung* and *zur*, *rnar* and *snang*, *'bigs byed* and *'bebs byed*, *mngar po* and *mang po*, *ngan gyo* and *ngan song*, *spud pa'i* and *dpung pa'i*, *gangs can* and *khang can* etc.

differences between the two texts manuscripts well we need to do thorough analyses and comparative studies of the two manuscripts along with the blockprint version of the text published in Qinghai, China, in a book *Gangs ljongs mkhas pa rim byon gyi rtsom yig gser gyi sbram bu* ('Works of Various Tibetan Scholars, Called the Golden Box'). However, more than one third of the work, that is the whole last part, is missing in this publication.

Shambhala (Śambhala) is a well-known subject among Tibetan Buddhists as well as Western Tibetologists. According to the information provided in an article by Jason Jeffrey,⁴ several Western travelers and researchers attempted to find the location of Shambhala. Yet no one has ever been able to find or localize the exact place of Shambhala on earth. John Newman in his article⁵ says that the Shambhala literature originated from Hindu mythology and was subsequently borrowed and adapted by Indian and Tibetan Buddhist teachers. Furthermore, he claims that Tibetans created two entirely different descriptions of the Shambhala itinerary, a realistic and a spiritual one. The former one, which depicts physical geographic places on earth, is authored by Man lung guru in his work *Rmi lam brdzun bshad sgyu ma'i sgra dbangs chen mo*, and the latter explaining the way in a more visionary manner was written by Tāranātha. The text *Chos kyi rgyal po ngag dbang rnam par rgyal ba la zhu 'phrin du bya ba rig pa 'dzin pa'i pho nya zhes pa shambha la'i lam gyi yi ge dang bcas pa* belongs to the first of those traditions. According to the author's explanation Shambhala should exist somewhere in Central Asia.

Nowadays we have books and places under the name of Shangrila. It is very probable that the word Shangrila has been borrowed from the word Shambhala.⁶ There exist many commentaries, the earliest from the 13th century,⁷ on this sacred and secret land, written by Tibetan Buddhist teachers. Among those works one will find both prayers and guides to the holy land. Certainly, we can find numerous praising prayers and wish-fulfilling prayers recited in order to be born in that land. Moreover, we have guides to Shambhala. According to Newman, an earliest dateable work on a guide to Shambhala is the one by Man lung guru (1239–?) mentioned above. It contains only several folios and is the fourth chapter of the work *Rmi lam rdzun bshad sgyu ma'i sgra dbyangs mo* ('Magical Melody of Telling a False Dream').⁸

The great Buddhist teacher of Tibet, Tāranātha, also translated a guide to Shambhala: *Dpal ldan ka la par 'jug pa zhes bya ba yul rnams kyi mchog tu gyur ba sham bha lar 'gro tshul gyi lam yig 'phags pa yod lcags kyus gsung pa* ('Entering the Glorious Kalāpa; Travel Guide to Shambhala, the Best of all Places, Told by Ārya Don yod lcags kyu'). It is said in the colophon that he translated this text from a Nepali source taking occasional help from a Nepali Paṇḍit Krishna (Kṛṣṇa). The guide explains the way to

⁴ *New Dawn Magazine*, 2002, No. 72, *A Journal of Alternative News and Information*.

⁵ Newman 1996: 485–499.

⁶ James Hilton narrated the Shambhala story in his novel *Lost Horizon* and based on that story a movie called "Shangrila" was made in Hollywood.

⁷ Newman 1996: 485–499.

⁸ Newman 1996: 488.

Shambhala more from a religious aspect and perspective unlike a normal guide-letter. First of all, it says that to start a journey to Shambhala one should receive an empowerment, generate the *bodhicitta* mind, have a strong will to practice the Tantra-yāna taught by the Well-Gone One (Tathāgata), keep the *samaya* and obtain permission from a god of the desire realm. Furthermore, on the way one ought to perform many prayers and practices, which as it seems, is not possible to prepare or perform anyway. The mountains and rivers pictured in the text are unimaginable by their size, number and height, etc.

Pañchen Dpal ldan ye shes also wrote a guide to Shambhala, called *Grub pa'i gnas chen po shambha la'i rnam bshad 'phags yul gyi rtogs brjod dang bcas pa ngo mtshar bye ba'i 'byung gnas* ('Explanation of Shambhala, the Sacred Place of the Siddhas, Along with the History of the Ārya Land [India], called Source of a Millionfold Amazement'). According to Newman, this has much more in common with the text explained by Tāranātha than with Man lung guru's description. We can also find contemporary Tibetan works on Shambhala by Tibetan authors such as *Nges don du sham bha la gang du yod pa thog mar dpyad pa* and *Sham bha la rdzong gi gna' bo'i mkhar shul*. Author of the first article, Hor tshang 'jig med, suggested that Shambhala should be located somewhere near Mount Kailash (Kailāsa). As for the second work mentioned above, I have not had an opportunity to go through it and its author is not given in the LTWA catalogue, accession no. ID 141544.

Edwin Bernbaum published in 1989 a book on Shambhala, called *The Way to Shambhala, A Search for the Mythical Kingdom Beyond the Himalayas*. In the eighth chapter, "The Guide Books", the author presents three Tibetan commentaries on a guide to Shambhala in detail, a commentary by Tāranātha (1575–1634), by Pañchen Blo bzang ye shes (1738–1780), and by Rin spungs Ngag dbang 'jig grags. The third commentary, *Rig pa 'dzin pa'i pho nya*, 'Messenger of a Yogi' by Rin spungs Ngag dbang 'jig grags, although the author translated the title differently than here, is nicely narrated in English as Ngag dbang 'jig grags did in Tibetan. On the other hand, journey and places passed en route are a bit too much fantasized and mystified than in the original text. For example, when explaining a path which leads through valleys, it is said:

“Now the journey becomes more difficult. You will have to follow narrow paths that wind north through a maze of treacherous mountains. Many of these paths lead off into valleys from which the traveler can never return. If you take the wrong one you will become hopelessly lost”.⁹

His commentary gives an impression that the author was impressed and enjoyed working on Ngag dbang 'jig grags's beautifully written poetry on the guide to Shambhala. There are additional explanations in the book which I could not find in the original text. For example, it says:

“Before you lies a long journey through a dangerous region of red dust storms that shoot up like fire offerings into the sky. Thunder and lightning

⁹ Bernbaum 1989: 198.

will strike all around you, bombarding the ground with deadly showers of diamond hail. At any moment flocks of shrieking eagles can drop out of the sky with claws extended to rip you shreds. Demons with red eyes and beings who embody nameless fears lurk in ambush, waiting to feast on your flesh”.¹⁰ And so on.

The author believed that the three commentaries, viz. by Tāranātha, Pañchen Blo bzang ye shes and Ngag dbang ’jig grags explain roughly the same route to Shambhala. Both Tāranātha and Ngag dbang ’jig grags describe physical land routes to Shambhala, yet the two commentaries do not agree on its road map and places passed by, etc. Tāranātha mentioned in his guide the countries such as India, China and Tibet, yet Ngag dbang ’jig grags did not. Guide letter by Ngag dbang ’jig grags is more clear, logical and understandable for an ordinary reader than the one by Tāranātha.

At the beginning of the text Ngag dbang ’jig grags pays homage to the wisdom deity Mañjuśrī, to the goddess Sarasvatī, and to his father Ngag dbang rnam rgyal. Then he proceeds to the actual description of Shambhala. Further on he briefly relates his father’s death, his sadness and his indulgence concerning the glory of the palace and his own responsibility for the Rin spungs kingdom. The author also mentions that while serving for the kingdom he became busy with writing poems, thus signs of declining of the kingdom and religion appeared. He says:

*Legs byas phung po’i zla tshes bskrun las slar// snyan ngag kunda grol
ba’i chun po yis// nyams brgyad gar la lta ba’i yid brel tshel/ ’khor ba’i
rgya mtsho mtha’ dbus bral ba ’di// snyigs dus lhun pos bsrubs pa’i
gzhan dbang las// srog ’phrog nag po brtsegs pa la reg pa’i// mi bsrung
skye bo’i tshogs dang chabs cig tul//¹¹*

“(I) produced heaps of good deeds (like) full moon. And later when (my) mind became busy watching eight dancing styles of piles of blooming jasmine (flowers) of poem, ocean of Samsara (*samsāra*), without end and center, is shaken by a giant mountain of impure time. Because of that power and a group of mischievous people who take others’ life like Mara (Māra, Nag po rtsegs pa) does.”

*Rgyal bstan dpal gyi dum bu gyur za ball/ bcad brdar ’jig pa’i cho ga
dang po nil/ mi dge’i sta re lag rtser gnas pa yil/ bdud kyi mdza’ shes
bstan ’dzin zol can mthong//¹²*

¹⁰ Bernbaum 1989: 200–201.

¹¹ Pander A 199, fol. 3b.4: ལེགས་བྱས་ལྷུང་པོའི་ལྷ་ཚོས་བསྐྱུན་ལས་སྤངས། ལྷ་ན་ངག་ཀུན་གྱིས་བའི་ཚུན་པོ་ཡིས། ཉམས་བརྒྱད་གར་ལ་ལྷ་བའི་ཡིད་བྲེལ་ཚོ། འཁོར་བའི་རྒྱ་མཚོ་མཐའ་དཔྱད་བྱས་བའའདི། ལྷོགས་དུས་ལྷན་པོས་བསྐྱུབས་བའི་གཞན་དབང་ལས། རྫོག་འཕྲོག་ནག་པོ་བརྗེགས་པ་ལ་རིག་པའི། མི་བསྐྱུན་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོགས་དང་ཆབས་ཅིག་ཏུ།

¹² Pander A. 199, fol.3b.6: ལྷུང་བསྐྱུན་དཔལ་གྱི་དུམ་ལྷུང་གཞི་བཞུགས་ལྷུང་གི་ལྷ་ཚོས་ལྷོ་ག་དང་པོ་ནི། མི་དགའི་སྐྱེ་རིལ་ག་ཚེར་གནས་པ་ཡི། བདུད་ཀྱི་མཐའ་ཤེས་བསྐྱུན་འཛིན་པོས་ཅན་མཐོང་།

“Fruitful part of the glorious Buddha teaching is cut and rubbed (as) the first act of destruction. (I) saw a friend of a demon, holding a non-virtuous axe on the tip of his hand and pretend (to be) a holder of religion (Tenzin).”

Author

The author, Ngag dbang 'jig rten dbang phyug grags pa, was the son of Rin spungs ngag dbang rnam rgyal and grandson of Mtso skyes rdo rje. Mtso kyes rdo rje and his brother were sons of Nor bu bzang po's mistress, a daughter of 'Phos rnam pa.¹³ Formally Nor bu bzang po and Dpal bzang rin chen were married to a daughter of Gong ma (emperor) Che sa sangs rgyas rin chen. There are several more works attributed to this author and all of them are either written in a form of a poem or connected with poetry. Therefore, we can assume that his talent and passion for traditional Tibetan poetry was enormous. According to the colophon, this work was completed in the 3rd month (*'dod pa'i zla ba nag pa can*) of the Fire Snake year and that Fire Snake year is supposed to correspond to 1557 A.D. In a brief biography of the author, which is found at the beginning of the “Chos kyi rgyal po Ngag dbang rnam rgyal la phul ba'i zhu yig” in *Gangs ljongs mkhas pa rim byon gyi rtson yig gser gyi sbram bu*, although a colophon is missing, exactly the same date of the text composition is given as the one which we find in the text I am dealing with now. Therefore, the question arises: Where did the editor of the mentioned book obtain the information on a year of composition from? Information regarding the author's dates of birth and his death which are found in different sources seem rather be a speculation than a confirmed fact. Hence, in the electronic sources¹⁴ we do not find his date of birth, whereas only the date of his death given in 1565. In the above mentioned short biography it is said that he was born in 1482 and probably passed away sometime between 1557 and 1565, according to the Fifth Dalai Lama's history of Tibet. However, in the history of Tibet by the Fifth Dalai Lama *Dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, with an annotation given by Nor brang dbu rgyan, the death of Ngag dbang 'jig grags is not mentioned at all, neither in the main text nor in the annotation. Nor brang dbu rgyan's annotation says:

*Sa skya pa dang byang bdag ma mthun pa'i skabs te chu phag spyi lo 1563 lor sa skya'i dpung rgyab tu rin spungs Ngag dbang 'jig grags dpung bcas phebs pa de'i tshe skabs de'i bsam grub rtse'i rdzong dpon Zhing gzhag Tshe brtan rdo rje 'di pas 'bangs gyen log byas skabs Ngag dbang 'jig grags kyi sras Padma dkar po bkrongs ba'i gtam byung bal!*¹⁵

¹³ LTWA, Ka.1:10-14-17268-17272, Yar lung A 'byum (manuscript) fol. 130, l. 6-131.

¹⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rinpungpa>.

¹⁵ Nor brang O rgyan (ed.), 1993, *Bod kyi deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs kyi 'grel ba yid kyi dga' ston*, p. 410.

“In 1563, when Sakya pa and Byang pa were in conflict, Rin spungs Ngag dbang 'jig grags with his army went for the battle in support of Sakya pa. He heard the news of the assassination of his son Padma dkar po during an uprising of Zhing shag pa Tshe brtan rdo rje, head of Bsam grub rtse district.”

In the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC) we can find different information. There, 1482/1542 is given as the date of his birth and 1595 as the date of his death.

Itinerary to Shambhala in general

Description of Shambhala starts from folio 4a.5 and ends on folio 22b.2. In total it covers sixteen folios and several additional lines of the whole work consisting of thirty-seven folios. It starts with an explanation that the author heard the news that his father was sitting on the northern Kalāpa throne and was giving teachings to his disciples. It says:

*Yong ye snang srid ma lus dag pa'i zhing// byang phyogs chos kyi pho
brang ka la pa'i// rin chen khri steng rigs ldan skur bzhugs pall rang gi
bla ma lha cig btsan po dell zla 'od 'bum yang ring por byed nus pa'i//
tshems dkar myu gu gsal ba'i 'dzum dkar las// rigs grol chos kyi 'khor
lo'i skeyes bzang poll bcud len snying po ster zhing bzhugs so zhes//¹⁶*
“In the Northern Dharma palace Kalāpa, the land of pure appearance and
existence, on (its) jewel throne, in the form of a ruler, sits my father, king
and teacher. (He is) able to outshine a hundred thousand moon lights, smiles
with white teeth like a clean sprout and lives there giving excellent gift
of Dharma wheel, an essential nutrition of understanding and liberation.”

The author, himself being unable to travel to Shambhala, complains and asks the Sun – the liquid of gold and producer of Lotus, and the Moon which has the pride of mercury, to take his message to Shambhala where his father lives. According to the preliminary research on the text, Ngag dbang 'jig grags talks about both the existing physical land through which one has to travel to reach Shambhala, and about the spiritual power needed to enter Shambhala. First, he enumerates many actual existing places inside and outside of Tibet like Bsam grub rdzong, Sa skya, Rdzong kha, Ti se, Kashmir (Kaśmīra), Par sig, Zlog 'gro ('going opposite') and Semi-human (*Mi'am ci*), etc. While mentioning places which are to be passed by, the text also describes the peculiarities and beauty of those places and people. Yet these are often exposed with a poetic exaggeration and

¹⁶ Pander A 199, fol.4a.5: ཡོངས་ཡེ་སྣང་སྲིད་མ་ལུས་དག་པའི་ཞིང་། བྱང་ཕྱོགས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་པོ་བྱང་ཀ་ལྷ་པའི། རིན་
ཚེན་ཁྱིལ་རིགས་ལྡན་སྤར་བཞུགས་པ། རང་གི་བླ་མ་ལྷ་ཅིག་བཅོན་པོ་དེ། ལྷ་འོད་འབྱུང་ཡང་རིང་པོར་བྱེད་རྒྱས་པའི།
ཚོན་པ་དཀར་ལྷ་གྲུ་གསལ་པའི་འཇུག་དཀར་ལས། རིགས་གྲོལ་ཚོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོའི་སྤྱོད་བཟང་པོ། བཅུད་ལེན་སྲིད་པོ་སྲིད་ཞིང་
བཞུགས་སེའོས།

sometimes escape our imagination. For example, after reaching the place called Par sig, in the country of Sog pos, it says: “One crosses a dangerous mighty river: touching its drop is like touching a stone, therefore with the help of a leaf machine one crosses the river like a bird does.”¹⁷ Then one passes by a peaceful park and a green grassland filled with fragrance and full of flocks of wild animals. The author invites to enjoy and take rest there for a while. Furthermore it says: “There are magical evil spirits (*phra men*), which become a human during the day and a wild animal at night, showing different manifestations. Flesh eating evil spirits run around at night. Even gods are frightened of them”.¹⁸ The text continues telling to cross carefully a big sea on a ship. By the power of the wind and karma a person is taken to his destination. Subsequently one reaches a desert without any sign of water. In that place dry branches moving as a fan give you hot wind instead of coolness and the whistling wind of sad old inhabitants is hot as well. At that time if one knows how to taste uvula (*lce chung*), that will remove your thirst.

Secondly, the text explains that through the heat practice of the letter *Hom*, the chakras (*cakra*) and channels (*nāḍi*) one attains a diamond body with the seven limbs of enlightenment.¹⁹ This body is the fastest and easiest path to reach the Arya land which has the nature of rainbow. According to the author, the place of Shambhala is located in the northern part of the south of the Earth (*'dzam gling*).²⁰ Specifically it says that a giant mountain having the nature of six jewel elements is surrounded by six continents, including the moon, and six mountains and six oceans alternating with each other. Outside of them, in the middle of cool mountains and a salty sea there is the seventh continent of Earth, the place of Karma. Dividing south of the Earth into three parts, Shambhala exists in the north of middle south. Shambhala is in the shape of a round eight-petal lotus flower. It has ninety-two *yuls* (towns, countries or places) with millions of inhabitants.

Route to Shambhala in detail

The places one passes by en route in Tibet and outside of Tibet will be explained here in the order they appear in the source text. It should also be clarified that the author provides distance indicators in a traditional way of measurement such as *zhu mo* (*gzhu 'dom*, ‘bow

¹⁷ Pander A 199, fol.15b.5: ཉལ་འགོའི་རླུང་ཆེན་བྱུངས་པའི་ཟིལ་ཟེགས་ཅན།། གང་ལ་རིག་པ་རྫོ་བོའི་དངོས་བྱེད་པའི།། ཉེར་འཚོ་ཡོད་ཀྱི་ཤིང་ལོའི་འཕུལ་འཁོར་གྱིས།། སྐད་གཅིག་མཁའ་ལ་འདབ་ཆགས་བརྒྱལ་ཤུགས་གཟུང།།
Nyal 'gro'i rlung chen brubs pa'i zil zags tsam// gang la reg pa rdo bo'i dngos byed pa'il// nyer 'tsho yod kyi shing lo'i 'phrul 'khor gyis// skad gcig mkha' la 'dab chags brtul shugs gzung//

¹⁸ Pander A 199, fol.16a.4: ཉིན་གཟུགས་མི་ལུས་མཚན་གཟུགས་གཅན་གཟན་སོགས་ས།། སྤུལ་སྤྱར་དུ་མའི་གར་མཁའ་འཁོར་པའི་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ།། སྤུལ་སྤྱར་དུ་མའི་གར་མཁའ་འཁོར་པའི་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ།།
Nyin gzugs mi lus mtshan gzugs gcen gzan sogs// sprul gyur du ma'i gar mkhan phra men dang// mtshan rgyu chen po mi zad sha za'i gdon// skabs gsum grong khyer pa yang skrag byed pa//

¹⁹ Dran pa, chos rab tu nman par 'byed pa, brtson 'grus, dga' ba, shin tu spyangs pa, ting nge 'dzin, btang snyoms.

²⁰ This is how the word *'dzam gling*, 'earth', is understood by the author or by the sources he used.

fathom'), *rgyang grags* ('hearing distance') and *dpag tshad*.²¹ Journey starts with visiting the chapel of his father at the Rin spungs palace in the Rin spungs town. He briefly describes the people of the town, attractive girls and their potential to break one's heart and destroy monastic discipline as well as joys of people singing songs with seven different melodies, dancing to the sound of a guitar. At the same time he also claims that the place is demoralized by wealth and ruled by five strict poisonous decrees. Yet people feel free and joyful. The author suggests that the inhabitants should not change this quality for any other.

Approximately a hearing distance (*rgyang grags*) from Rin spungs, at the foot of a hill there is a medicinal pond and spring water. Drinking that water increases one's lifespan and purifies complexion. Having crossed the town called Town of the Rich,²² resembling a heavenly town fallen on the earth, one reaches a sandy place devoid of water. Then one reaches a monastery of the "holders of golden color" (*gser mdog 'dzin pa'i chos gra*) tradition, in which a thousand peaceful, calm and learned monks live. In the center of the monastery there is a temple with a silver stupa (*stūpa*), containing relics of the teacher Pañchen Shākya Shri. Several hearing distances (*rgyang grags*) from there, on top of a rocky mountain there spreads a beautiful and prosperous Bsam grub rtse district. The author explains that life of ordinary people in this place is hard and rules are difficult.²³ After travelling the distance of *dpag tshad* one reaches Snar thang monastery which belongs to Dīpaṅkara tradition and is the site of the eleven Arhat reincarnations. Next the text describes a Khro phu monastery with an enormous gilded Maitreya statue in it. Travelling several *dpag tshad* to the north, near a lake, which looks like a shell vessel filled with milk, one finds Ngam ring city. The color of yellow robes (*snam sbyar*) worn by ten thousands monks could change the color of sky into orange. In that place a reliable Dharma king does a thousand good deeds for the people and is praised for that.

Further on, the author describes Sa skya as the source of all goodness of nirvana and samsara, a site of seven wise manifestations of Mañjuśrī. It also describes thirteen days' debate between Sa skya Paṇḍita and his Hindu opponent Khrog byed dga' bo. The author praises Sa skya Paṇḍita for his knowledge and for defeating the Hindu scholar with logical arguments by devoting to him the longest poem in the whole text (eighty-five syllables). The author also talks about the decline of the Sa skya tradition. After taking a short rest in the prosperous Rdzong kha kingdom ruled by a pure descendant of the three Dharma kings (*chos rgyal me dbon rnam gsum*) one leaves for Skyid grong, which is similar to

²¹ *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (Bilingual Tibetan Chinese Dictionary) 1993, vol. 2, p. 1622: Twenty four finger or inch is equal to 1 *khru*, 4 *khru* are equal to 1 *gzhu 'dom* ('bow fathom'), 500 'bow fathoms' are equal to 1 *rgyang grags* ('hearing distance') and 8 *rgyang grags* are equal to 1 *dpag tshad*. Therefore, the approximate calculation of 1 'bow fathom' gives almost 2 meters. Thus, 1 *rgyang grags* ('hearing distance') is equal to 1 kilometer and one *dpag tshad* equals 8 kilometers. Similar counting system is applied in the *Abhidharmakośa* treatise of Vasubandhu.

²² འཕྱོར་བ་བཏགས་པའི་ལྷུ་ཅན་གྱི་མ།། ལུ་མའི་མིང་ཅན་བསྐོད་པའི་མཐར།། 'Byor ba btags pa'i lus can khyim// du ma'i ming can bgrod pa'i mthar//

²³ Pander A 199, fol. 9a-10a.

Potala,²⁴ to receive there a blessing from Avalokiteśvara. Travelling for many days from there one reaches eighty white hot springs of Glo bo (Mustang i.e. Muktinath, now in Nepal).

After all this the author describes Mount Kailash in more details. The text says it is a high peak mountain of the northern Snow Land. The crystal stupa, being like a light dome, is called Ti se. It is place of Heruka of the Rnam par snang mdzad (Vairocana) Buddha family. Sthavira Yan lag 'byung (Aṅgaja) and many other Arhats enjoyed the sound of a bell (*gaṇḍī*) in this place. It is the entertaining place of Śiva and Viṣṇu. The Great Teacher Dīpaṅkara (Atīśa) also gave teachings on non-duality and destroyed wrong views here. Mi la ras pa practiced in a beautiful golden cave and achieved his rainbow body there. It is good to meditate for a while in this place and take a bath in Lake Manasarovar (Mānasarovara; associated with the legendary Anavatapta lake, Ma dros pa).

From Lake Manasarovar one has to go west²⁵ and reach a high mountain, completely green and full of flowers. In that place there is a self-arisen Shiva Linga (Śiva-liṅga) stone, a secret symbol of the declining era, standing in token of right conduct and wisdom. Next, after crossing a dense forest with frightening sounds of wild animals, rivers and dangerous Rocky Mountains, which are piercing the sky with their peaks, one reaches the place called Kashmir (Kaśmīra) blessed by the Sthavira Nyi ma gung (Madhyāntika).²⁶ This place is rich in sandal wood and saffron gardens filled with medicinal fragrance. The text also talks about market where different jewels are sold, about beautiful stone houses and attractive girls who give joy to eyes but hurt one's heart. Chieftains of that place wear thin white cotton cloths.

²⁴ Avalokiteśvara statue (*Mi skyod rdo rdo*) moved to Skyid grong while Buddhism was suppressed in central Tibet at the beginning of 9th century.

²⁵ Pander A 199, fol. 14a.3: མ་དོས་གདེངས་ཅན་དབང་པོ་ཚེ་དགའི་མཚོ། བསོད་ནམས་ཤེལ་གྱི་འབབ་སྐྱེགས་ལྷ་བ་འབྲུམ། གསེར་གྱི་རིལ་བའི་གཟི་བྱིན་ཉི་སྟོང་དང། གྲུ་གྲུར་འདྲེས་པའི་འཇམ་མཚོན་གྲར་བྱིས་དེར། ཇི་བལ་ལྷུས་ཀྱི་འཇུག་པ་ལ་རིལ་ཞིག། ལྷར་ཡང་རྩལ་ལྷགས་ས་འཛིན་མངོན་མཐོའི་སུལ།

Ma dros gdengs can dbang po rtse dga'i mtshol bsod nams shel gyi 'babs stegs zla ba 'bum// gser gyi ril ba'i gzi byin nyi stong dang// gya gyur 'dres pa'i 'ja' mtshon gur kyim der// dri bral khru kyi 'jug pa la rol zhig// slar yang nub phyogs sa 'dzin mngon mtho'i sull//; 'The lake (in which) enjoys Naga, the lord of Manasarovar. Stairs of a crystal merit (like) hundred thousand Moons. Brightness of round gold is (like) thousand Suns. In that colorful rainbow dom get engage in a process of pure bath. Again in a valley of the high mountain at the West...'

²⁶ Pander A 199, fol. 14b.2: ཉེར་འཚོ་གཞོན་ལ་མཁའ་འགྲོའི་དབང་པོ་བཞིན། གནས་བརྟན་ཉི་མ་གུང་པའི་སྦྱིལ་གུང་གི་གྲིབ་མ་ཉེར་ཞིའི་བསེལ་བ་སྟོང་འབབ་པའི། རྩ་འབྲུལ་ལྷ་ཡི་གདུགས་ཀྱིས་ལབས་པའི་ལྷུས། ཀམྱི་ར་ཞེས་ཀུན་དགའ་རྩལ་པའི་བཞིན། ཏཱ་ལི་ཅན་དན་གྲར་གུམ་གི་སར་གྱི། སྦྱང་ཚོལ་དྲི་ཞེས་སྤུན་གྱི་ལང་ཚོ་ཅན། འབྲུམ་ཕྱག་སུམ་ཅུ་ཙུག་གིང་བྱིར་གྱི། *Nyer 'tshes gzhom la mkha' 'gro'i dbang po bzhin// gnas brtan nyi ma gung pa'i skyil krung gil' grib ma nyer zhi'i bsil ba stong 'bab pa'il rdzru 'phrul lha yi gdugs kyis khyabs pa'i lus// kasmī ra zhes kun dga' rgyas pa'i bzhin// ha ri tsan dan gur kum ge sar gyil// skyed tshal dri zhim sman gyi lang tsho can// 'bum phrag sum cu rtsa drug grong khyer gyil*; 'Like a lord of Dakinis (*dakīṇī*) who destroys harmfulness, (the place) is filled with immense coolness of the shadow of the cross-legged posture of Sthavira Madhyāntika (Gnas brtan nyi ma gung pa). Body (place) is like covered by a magical umbrella of a god. So called Kasmī ra (Kaśmīra) is (like) a joyful face. There is white sandal forest and saffron garden with the prime of medicinal fragrances. The city has three million six hundred thousand inhabitants.

Then, travelling across many beautiful rivers and streams over bridges and listening to water birds singing, one's tiredness is eased for a while. One enjoys beautiful things, passing by rich and poor villages, towns and cities as well as different people, especially a place called Par sig,²⁷ in the country of Sog pos. Par sig people are rich as if possessing the treasure of Vaishravana (Vaiśravaṇa). Local Sultans wear cotton lined cloths and pure white turbans on their heads. They carry great weapons such as eagle's wing power. They are fast as lightning and thunderbolt.²⁸

From Par sig, one has to travel many *dpag tshad* to the North;²⁹ after passing through a dense forest and going across dangerous rivers toward the north, one finally reaches green grasslands, parks and flocks of wild animals. Here one can take some rest under a cool shadow of a sandal tree, eat mango fruits and enjoy the smell of canopies and saffron. Going in the midst of clouds one reaches a place full of aggressive wild animals with sparks in their eyes and tails. One hears the roar of wild animals drunken with blood of their victims and hears the sound of breaking bones. On the way one encounters more harmful beings which are only waiting to take the life of others. Yet compassion will protect the traveler from danger.

Later on one reaches near a big lake, which looks like the sky embracing the earth. It is so huge that the horizon is invisible. Sailing on a ship with the help of the wind and by the power of karma one will be led to the desired destination. Then one has to go through a desert. It is so hot that a fan made of dried branches gives heat instead of coolness. The whistling air of a sad native old man becomes hot as well.

Later one reaches a place called Zlog 'gro ('moving opposite'). A blowing wind storm in this place disturbs one's visibility. To eliminate that problem one must use a medicine called *don yod (amogha)*. After travelling for long time to a place of *gnod sbyin (yakṣa)* one reaches a forest called "Copper Forest". Amongst *sāla* trees there is a copper eyed snake which sleeps for six months. Its deadly poison can reach the distance of one *dpag*

²⁷ In Shakabpa's history book Persia (Par sig) is called by the name Stag gzig. It is regularly used for Persia by Tibetans.

²⁸ Pander A 199, fol. 15a.6: བྱང་པར་པར་སྐག་ཅེས་བྱ་སྐག་པོའི་ཡུལ། རིན་ཆེན་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་འོས་ཉོར་བུའི་ཚོགས། གནོད་གནས་གནས་སྤང་དབང་པོའི་བང་མཛོད་ལ། འདྲན་བྱེད་བྱེད་པོའི་སྐྱུ་མས་སྐྱུལ་འདྲ་མཛོད། ལྷས་བོངས་ཁོ་ལག་ཆེ་བ་གནོད་སྐྱེན་གཏུགས། ལྷལ་ལྷན་ཡན་ལག་རགས་སྐོམ་མཁའ་ལྷིང་གོ། གཤོག་པའི་ཤུགས་འཆང་མཚོན་ཆའི་འཕྲུལ་འཁོར་ཡངས། སྐྱུ་འཕྲུལ་འཕྲུལ་བཞིན་གནམ་ལྷགས་བབས་པ་བཞིན།

Kyad par Par Sig ces bya sog po'i yull rin chen chen po la 'os nor bu'i tshogs// gnod gnas gnas srung dbang po'i bang mdzod lall 'dran byed byed po'i sgyu mas sprul 'dra mthong// lus bongs kho lag che ba gnod sbyin gzugs// sul ldan yan lag rags sbom mkha' lding gill gshog pa'i shugs 'chang mtshon cha'i 'phrul 'khor yangs// glog 'phreng 'khyug bzhin gnam lcags babs pa bzhin//

²⁹ Pander collection: Pander A 199, fol. 15b.3: འོ་འཇུ་མ་མེ་ལྷེ་འབར་བས་གཞན་སྐྱུ་ཀྱང་། མཛོད་ན་དགའ་བའི་རིག་འཛིན་བུ་ཤོད་ཀྱིས། འོ་ལྷན་དེ་རྣམས་བསེལ་བར་གདོན་མི་བླ། དེ་ནས་བྱང་ཕྱོགས་དཔག་ཚང་དུ་མའི་ལམ། བསྐྱོད་ཚོ་དབྱར་སྤྱན་རླུ་དང་བཅས་པ་བཞིན། ཁ་ལ་མར་གད་འོད་ཆགས་ནགས་ཀྱི་ཚལ། ལྷ་ཆར་འབྲིགས་པའི་གྲོབ་མ་ས་ལ་འབབ།

Khro 'dzum me lce 'bar bas gzhan sreg kyang// mthong na dga' ba'i rig 'dzin bu khyod kyiis// khro ldan de nams bsil bar gdon mi zall de nas byang phyogs dpag tshad du ma'i lam// bgrod tshe dbyar sprin chu dang bcas pa bzhin// kha la mar gad 'od chags nags kyi tshall//; 'Though (their) anger like flaming fire and simile burns other, you sweetie and knowledgeable son certainly cool down those angry ones. From there travelling many miles towards North, (there is) a vast dense forest like a summer cloud with heavy rain. Above shines emerald light and falls shadow of the dense forest on the earth'.

tshad from the top of the mountain. To eliminate its poison one must use a medicine called *maghī*. Not very far from this place there are high mountains called “Three Peaks”. The area is full of thorn bushes and people having copper plates on their feet.

Moving many *dpag tshad* from there one comes to a mountain like touching the sky. Around it aromatic trees, nest of Garuda bird (*garuḍa*), ripened fruits, hanging flowers and *kuśa* grass. In that attractive place yogis can stay in still and meditate. So, pray and prostrate to the yogis and ask for their blessing and instructions for the dangerous journey ahead. Because of the power of their blessing and their instructions the evil spirit become angry and shows numerous frightening omens.

Travelling for a while from there one reaches the town of Mi'am ci³⁰ (Semi-human). Houses there are built with bluish beautiful precious stones, have gardens and crystal fans. Inhabitants of that place obtain everything from the *dpag bsam shing* (‘wish fulfilling tree’) as they wish. The ponds built of precious stones are filled with purifying stones, lotuses and fragrance, and are full of ornamented young attractive girls having fun. The text encourages to join them in the dance of meditation. These are the signs that the traveler is not very far from the palace of the Secret One. By the power of the heat of the letter *Ho* defilements of aggregates and elements are burnt out. By the nectar of a melting *Ham* letter of the moon six chakras (*cakra*) are moistened along with seventy-two thousand channels, and one attains the Vajra body. There is no other easier path to reach a blissful land which is in the form of a rainbow.³¹

Joyfully passing through beautiful villages one reaches a high snow mountain as if a second Mount Meru, shooting its head toward the sky. It is surrounded all around with fan. Enter the gate using any possible method.

Shambhala palace and its location

A great mountain of the nature of six jewel elements is surrounded by six continents including the Moon, six mountains including the Blue Light Mountain, and six oceans including the Honey Ocean. Outside of it, among beautiful mountains and a salty ocean the seventh continent, Earth exists. It is the land of karma. The width of Earth is 25,000 *dpag tshad* (200,000 km).³² The length of its outer boundaries is 300,000 bows (600 hearing

³⁰ “Mi'am ci” also mean “Human or What”.

³¹ Pander A 199, fol.18b.3: ཡན་ལག་བདུན་ལྷན་མི་ཤིགས་རྫོ་རྗེའི་སྤྱུ། འགྲུབ་བྱེད་ལྷན་བདེའི་ལམ་སྲང་གཞན་གང་ཞིག། ཐ་མལ་ལྷགས་གྱི་ཁམས་ལ་གསེར་འགྱུར་ལྟར། ཟག་མེད་བདེ་བས་རྣམ་པར་སྦྱངས་པའི་ལུས། འཇའ་མཚོན་རང་བཞིན་འཕགས་པའི་ཞིང་མཚོག་དེས། བསྐྱོད་ལ་དབུགས་འབྲིན་ཀུན་གྱི་དང་པོར་འགྱུར།།
Yan lag bdun ldan mi shigs rdo rje'i sku// 'grub byed myur bde'i lam bzang gzhan gang zhig// tha mal lcags kyi kham la gser 'gyur ltar// zag med bde bas rnam par sbyangs ba'i lus// 'ja' mshon rang bzhin 'phags pa'i zhing mchog der// bgrod pa dbugs 'byin kun gyi dang por 'byur// ; ‘There is no other faster and easier path than this (one) to accomplish Vajra-kāya with Seven Limbs. Body purified by uncontaminated joy like an ordinary iron changed into the gold. (You) will be the first living beings who travel to the supreme Ārya land in nature of rainbow’.

³² Size in km given in brackets are calculated based on measurement description found in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* dictionary, see footnote 17.

distances or 600 km) and the inner boundary is 150,000 bows (300 hearing distances or 300 km). First, divide the Earth into four directions and each direction is possessed of a part on both sides. For example, south direction has three parts, i.e. center and right and left wings. In total the Earth has twelve parts. Each part has 25,000 bows (50 km) for its outer boundary and 12,500 bows (25 km) for its inner boundary. Then divide south direction of the Earth into three parts, viz. center, right and left wings. Next divide center south into two, south and north. Northern part of the south direction has 12,500 bows (25 km) in size. When the north is divided into two, each part will have the size of 6250 bows (12.5 km). The right part of the north is of the size of 500 bows (~1 km); from the center in all directions and in circumference it is totally 1000 bows (~2 km). According to the author's earlier measurement the right part of the north should have the size of 3125 bows (6.25 km). Therefore, it seems to me that the author suddenly switched to a different measurement system or made a mistake and changed the size which he had provided earlier.

Finally, the text points out that the place of Shambhala exists in the northern part of the center South of the Earth. Taking into consideration the explanation of the road map and the fact that location of Shambhala is provided in the '*Dzam gling* (World) divided into twelve parts, the present author does not believe that '*Dzam gling* and India ('*Phags yul*) are the same place. Furthermore, we also do not know how the directions and measurements of *rgyang grags* and *dpag tshad* were determined at that time.

Shambhala is in a shape of round eight-petaled Lotus; its center is raised and surrounded by mountains. Of the overall size of the land, 1/3 makes the center and 2/3 are the petals.

(fol. 20a.5) *Grong khyer chen po dpal ldan ka la pall zhes bya chos kyi rgyal po'i pho brang mchog// sa la gnas pa'i 'og min stug po bkod// gang gi nye 'khor tshang pa'i drang song dang// kun dgar gnas pa'i grong ni bye bas bskor// lho na ma la ya yi skyed mos tshal//*³³

“Called glorious great city Kalāpa is the supreme palace of Dharma king. This place is a land of “Abundantly Arrayed” i.e. Akanishtha (Akanishṭha) on the Earth. Around it there are millions of joyful towns of brahmanical saints. At South of it there is park Malaya”.

On one petal there are twelve *yuls*,³⁴ partitioned by rivers and mountains into four parts, each with three *yuls* in a row. In total there are ninety-six *yuls*. The text also says that each place has its name and provides a few names of them, e.g. Tugma su Rambha, Tsam pa ka, Spre'u gser, etc.

³³ Pander A 199, fol. 20a.5: ལྷོང་ཁྱེར་ཆེན་པོ་དཔལ་ལྷན་ཀླུ་ལ་པ། ཞེས་བྱ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཕོ་བླ་པ་མཚོགས་ས་ལ་གནས་པའི་འོག་མིན་སྐྱུག་པོ་བཀོད། གང་གི་ཉེ་འཁོར་ཚངས་པའི་དྲུང་སྲོང་ཚོགས། ཀུན་དགར་གནས་པའི་གྲོང་ནི་བྱེ་བས་བསྐོར། ལྷོ་ན་མ་ལ་ཡ་ཡི་སྐྱེད་མོས་ཚལ།

³⁴ The Tibetan word *yul* can have different meanings depending on the context; it can mean 'place, town, city or country'.

Sources

The author does not mention any sources which he used while preparing the guide to Shambhala either in the colophon or in the text proper. But basing on two annotations which we find in the text, written in the *dbu med khyug yig* script as annotations in the part of the Shambhala description, we know that he had seen several commentaries on Shambhala. The two annotations are provided below. We can assume from these quotations that he referred and used Sutra materials to write his commentary. However, first annotation given below does not give the name of the Sutra, therefore it remains unclear. Moreover, the author says that what he explains in his text is the same as what is said in the “Guide to the Land of Junipers”, *Rgya shug gling du 'gro ba'i lam yig*. This means that he also had access to that guide book. The text says:

'di sogs mdo las 'byung ba'i bkod pa 'di rnams rgya shug gi gling du 'gro ba'i yi ge las bshad cing de yang 'phags yul gyi byang ri gangs can gyi phyogs su shad pa 'brel che'ol³⁵

“This and other arrangements mentioned in the Sutra are explained in the travel guide to the Land of Junipers. It is more reasonable to explain it with reference to direction of the Snow Mountain which is in the north of the Ārya Land (India)”.

In his second quotation he clarifies that there is no contradiction between explanation given in the Kālacakra text and his commentary regarding the explanation of the Semi-human place. Therefore, this suggests that the author had studied and learned the Kālacakra as well as the *Sde snod nyan gyi gong rgyan* about Shambhala.

dus 'khor las longs spyod kyi sa'i gling bzhi pa mi 'am ci yi yul du bshad pa dang 'dir mi 'am ci yi grong yod par bstan pa la 'gal ba gtan med cing/ shin tu rgyas pa'i sde snod snyan gyi gong rgyan las 'dzam bu'i gling gi byang phyogs ri bo gangs can dang nye ba'i sa na mi 'am ci yi grong khyer chen po yod pa'i gangs can yang shambha la yin par don gyis bshad pa sogs bshad khungs rnam dag kyang yod pas phyogs re'i log rtog la ma zhen par mang du thos pa'i mkhas pa la dris zhig³⁶

“There is no contradiction between what is explained in the Kālacakra, that is, the fourth continent of the place of Sambhoga-kāya is the country

³⁵ Pander A 199, fol.16b.6: འདི་སོགས་མདོ་ལ་འབྱུང་བའི་བཀོད་པ་འདི་རྣམས་རྒྱ་ཡིག་གི་སྒྲིང་དུ་འགྲོ་བའི་ཡི་གེ་ལས་བཤད་ཅིང་དེ་ཡང་འཕགས་ཡུལ་གྱི་བྱང་རི་གངས་ཚན་གྱི་ཕྱགས་སུ་བཤད་པས་འབྲེལ་ཆེད།

³⁶ Pander A 199, fol. 17b.6: དུས་འཁོར་ལས་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་གྱི་སའི་སྒྲིང་བཞི་པ་མི་འམ་ཅི་ཡི་ཡུལ་དུ་བཤད་པ་དང་འདིར་མི་འམ་ཅི་ཡི་གྲོང་ཡོང་པར་བསྟན་པ་ལ་འགལ་བ་གཏན་མེད་ཅིང་། ཤིན་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པའི་སྡེ་སྡོད་སྟན་གྱི་གོང་རྒྱུན་ལས་འཛམ་གུང་གྱིང་གི་བྱང་ཕྱགས་རི་བོ་གངས་ཚན་དང་ཉེ་བའི་ས་ན་མི་འམ་ཅི་ཡི་གྲོང་གྲིང་ཆེན་པོ་ཡོད་པའི་གངས་ཚན་ཡང་ཤརྒྱུལ་ཡིན་པར་དོན་གྱིས་བཤད་པ་སོགས་བཤད་ཁྲམས་རྣམ་དག་གྲང་ཡོད་པས་ཕྱོགས་རའི་ལོག་རྟོག་ལ་མ་ཞིན་པར་མང་དུ་རྩོམ་པའི་མཁས་པ་ལ་དྲིས་ཞིག།

of Mi'am ci (Semi-human) and the town of semi-humans explained in this text. In a detailed scriptural collection, called *Nyan gyi gong rgyan* it is said: «In the north of the Earth, near the Snow Mountain there is a town of semi-humans». Ultimately it says that the Snow Mountain is Shambhala. There also exist other reliable sources. Therefore ask learned scholars and do not be attached to a biased misunderstanding.

For a detailed analysis of this commentary on the guide to Shambhala we ought to study the texts which the author mentioned in above two quotations.

Conclusion

Here I have been able to give a brief and general outline of the itinerary to Shambhala. The text provides more details about Shambhala itself and the route to this holy land. Therefore, those who are interested to learn more about Shambhala and its itinerary should not overlook this text. The author's explanation of Shambhala gives a feeling that he believes Shambhala is on the Earth and it is possible to be reached by anyone yet he was uncertain of the exact location. The text is one of the most interesting commentaries on the itinerary to Shambhala because of its clarity and precision of explanations as well the style of writing. What is confusing in the text is the location of Shambhala in reference to the word *'Dzam gling*. In the text as well as in the two quotations the author referred to it is said that Shambhala is located somewhere near the great mountain with snow (Ri bo gangs can). In the two quotations provided above, it is said first that it lies in the north of 'Phags yul (India), and secondly that it lies in the northern part of 'Dzam gling (Earth).

In the text the description takes us from Rin spungs to Ti se, to Kashmir and to Par sig. From there one moves north and crosses an ocean, and then passing through the dessert, park and places of Zlog 'gro and Semi-Human one reaches Shambhala. At the end of the guide when author explains the location, shape and size, the author says that Shambhala is at northern part of south of the Earth. Therefore, does Shambhala exist at the north of the Earth (*'Dzam gling*) or in the northern part of the south of the Earth (*'Dzam gling*)? Unfortunately, the provided size of Shambhala and other places as well as people living there do not match each other. The existence of dozens of countries and several million people living in an area of several kilometers is not possible in reality. However, the description of Shambhala given here seems more realistic than what we find in other commentaries.

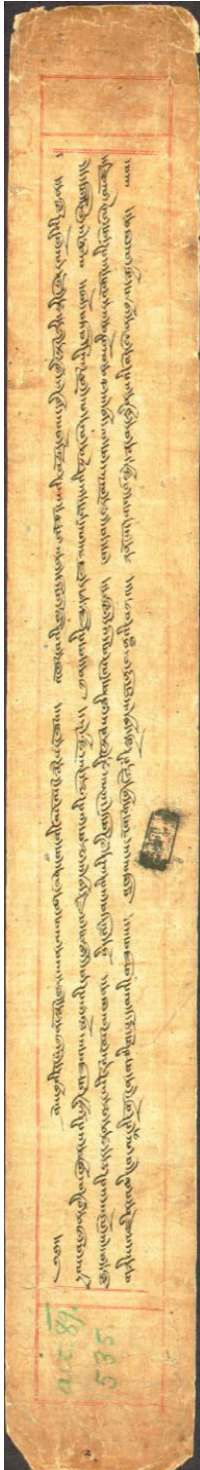
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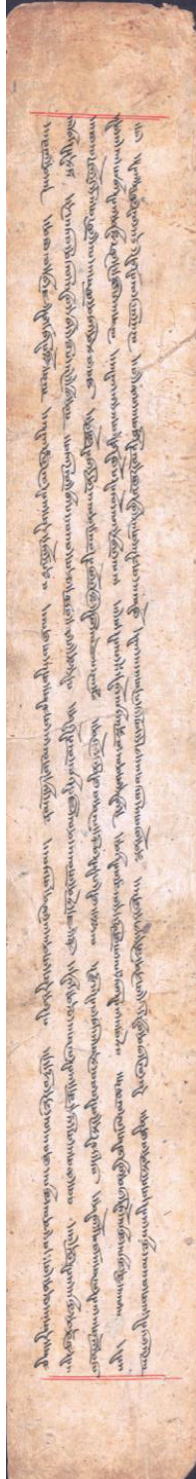
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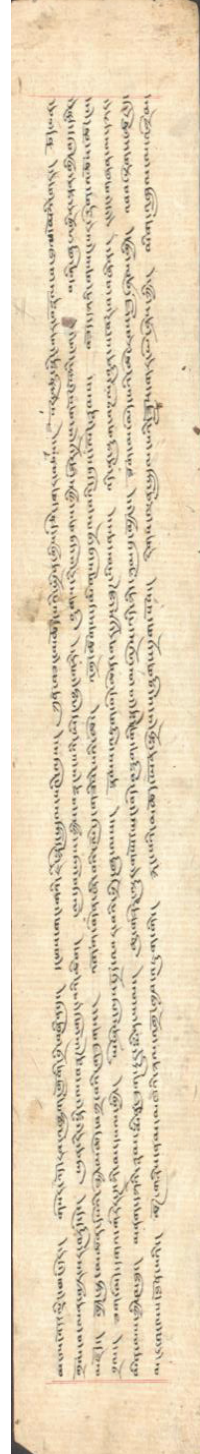
A few sample folios of the manuscript Pander A 199, acc.1889,535



Fol. 2a, Beginning of the text



Fol. 2b



Fol. 22b, the last folio of the Guide to Shambhala

