

## M A N Ḍ A L A

TANKA n. 178 (Plates 211-213).

It might apparently be taken for a maṇḍala, but if carefully examined the maṇḍala scheme is discovered to be purely external and the meaning of the picture quite different: we see a multiplication of houses and temples, and on the interior side small figures of deities inside palaces: in front of the central image two maṇḍala. Above in the centre rDo rje ṅc'aṅ / underneath, a standing *yab yum* figure, viz. that determined aspect of Dus kyī ṅk'or lo which is known as Zuṅ ṅjug dus ṅk'or lo.<sup>288</sup>) On the left: in a palace, rDor rje ṅc'aṅ, on his left gSin rje gṣed, and on the right other *yab yum* figures.

Next, on the left, eight figures of kings; two more on the right, under the palace just described. These images are accompanied by inscriptions.

On the left, 1st row above:

*C'os rgyal bla ma zla ba bzaṅ po, C'os rgyal lha yi dbaṅ p'yug, C'os rgyal gzi brjid mt'a' yas.*

2nd row:

*C'os rgyal zla ba ṣbyin, C'os rgyal lha yi dbaṅ p'yug, C'os rgyal sna ts'ogs gzugs, ... Lha yi dbaṅ ldan, Rigs ldan ṅjam dpal dbyaṅs.*

On the right:

*Rigs ldan drag po ṅkor lo ... las rnam rgyal.*

Underneath, a representation of a battle, in which a warrior on horseback stands out: Drag po ṅk'or lo, who is piercing with his lance an enemy fallen on the ground: the inscription declares him to be *Byas pai blo*.

Near Drag po ṅk'or lo, above, a warrior on a black horse, in the act of shooting an arrow against enemies on the opposite side; his name is: *Hanumanda*.

We are now in a position to identify the subject of this picture. It is the Kālacakra's story and the victory of King Drag po ṅk'or lo over the Kla klo, i. e. the Moslems.

The smaller circle in which temples and lesser figures are seen, represents therefore Kalāpa: the *Kulika's (rigs ldan)* royal palace, built in the country of Śambhala, which tradition places vaguely in the North: an old itinerary, inserted in the bsTan ṅgyur mDo, CXXX, 12, *Ka la pai ṅjug pa*, shows the way to this place, to be sought in some part, not yet clearly defined, of Central Asia.<sup>289</sup>) Śambhala, round like an eight-petalled lotus flower, has become, in the tradition, a heaven consecrated to the Kālacakra's glories. Like the country of the Dākinī, U rgyan (Uddīyāna), Śambhala is a place the devout try to reach, in order to be redeemed from sin; it was later transfigured into a distant heaven. The houses filling the second tier represent the 96 minor kingdoms surrounding Kalāpa. The maṇḍala seen on the middle of the tanka represents the maṇḍala of the Dus kyī ṅk'or lo, which Zla ba bzaṅ po caused to be built.

As to the personages represented, there is no doubt that they are some of the C'os rgyal and other Rigs ldan, Kulika; among the first is Rigs ldan ṅjam dpal grags (Maṅ-juṣṭī-kirtī). All this will become clearer when we shall have translated the tradition concerning the Kālacakra and its origins, as it is summarized by Buston in the *Dus ṅk'or c'os ṅbyuṅ rgyud sdei zab don sgo ṅbyed rin c'en gces pai lde mig*, complete works, vol. *na*, p. 28 a.

"As to the diffusion of the Kālacakra in India and next in Tibet, (it is necessary to know that) the fundamental Tantra was revealed by the Buddha to Zla ba bzaṅ po: the latter, then, made a summary of it; he composed an explicative commentary in 60.000 *grantha*

and wrote it in a book, revealing its meaning to the people of Śambhala etc.; he dedicated a maṇḍala of the Kālacakra, made with various precious stones (evidently the painting refers to this), and, after having displayed many miracles, he entered nirvāna. After him came: Lha dbaṅ gzi brjid can / Zla bas byin pa, Lhai dbaṅ p'yug, sNa ts'ogs gzugs, Lhai dbaṅ ldan, each of whom, for 100 years, taught the Law. Then aJam dbyaṅs grags pa, for a hundred years preached the fundamental Tantra. After him the explanation of the fundamental Tantra and of its commentary (continued) to be explained and listened to. ... Next, after Grags pa had preached on the fundamental Tantra for a hundred years, Ņi mai śin rta and others were awakened, and the ṛṣi asked for baptism and for a summary of the Tantra, already summarized before. Then, at the full moon of the month of Citrā (*naḡ pa*, March-April) he initiated the ṛṣi with the maṇḍala dedicated by Zla ba bzaṅ and wrote in three thousand verses a summary of the fundamental Tantra, called *bsDus pai rgyud me tog p'reñ aḍsin gyi ts'igs bcaḍ ...*; next, in the day of the full moon of *Saga (Vaiśakha)*, April-May) the ṛṣi obtained the perfect realization of the mahāmudrā. Then Grags pa, after having explained the Tantra to Pad dkar, enjoined him to write the commentary and then he too entered nirvāna. Then Pad dkar made the commentary in 12.000 verses and explained the Law: after him came bZaṅ po, rNam rgyal, bŠes gñen bzaṅ po, P'yag dmar, K'yab ajug sbas pa, Ņi ma grags, Śin tu bzaṅ, eight in all, who preached the Law, each for a hundred years. In this time certainly the law of the Kla klo was installed in Ma k'a. So said Grags pa's son, predicting that after eight generations the Kla klo's law would be established, that is, eight hundred years after Grags pa had entered nivāṇa. "Certainly,, means: beyond all doubt the Kla klo's law will be established in Ma k'a ... Then rGya mts'o rnam

rgyal and rGyal dka' too, for a hundred years each, taught the Law. One hundred and eighty-two years after the Kla klo's (power) had begun, rGyal dka' began to calculate the cycle of the Kālacakra.

"Then Ņi ma sna ts'ogs gzugs, Zla bai 'od, mT'as yas, Sa skyoṅ, dPal skyoṅ seṅ ge, rNam gnon, sTobs po c'e, Ma aḡag pa, Mi yi seṅ ge, dBaṅ p'yug c'en po, mT'a' yas, rNam rgyal, Drag po aḡ'or lo can who broke the power of the Kla klo ...

Tibetan tradition assigns to Drag po aḡ'or lo can, with the aid of the gods, victory over the Kla klo and the restoration of the Buddhist Law; therefore in this school he corresponds to the puranic figure of Kalkin, to whom indeed Kloṅ rdol bla ma compares him (see *Daṅ po saṅs rgyas dpal dus kyī aḡ'or lo lo rgyus daṅ miñ rnam graṅs*, complete works, vol. ca, p. 14) " (King Drag po aḡ'or lo can) with an innumerable army of soldiers set out, and to the South of the Sitā river he fought a great battle, in the country of Rum pa C'a rgyal of the Kla klo, and the Kla klo's master, Byis pai blo gros, was vanquished. The commander-in-chief (of Drag po aḡ'or lo can) overcame the master (of the Kla klo) Zla bai bu, and the heroes of his army, famous archers, the Kla klo troops; his *sa skyoṅ* (overcame the *sa skyoṅ* of the former), and his elephants their elephants, and his horses their horses, and the 12 great gods the Kla klo's impious protecting deities, and the latter were destroyed,,. Thus wrote Kloṅ rdol bla ma, copying from Blo bzaṅ dpal ldan ye šes, see *Weg*, pp. 58, 79.

TANKA n. 179 (Plate 214).

Four maṇḍalas of Kyai rdo rje. In the centre of the tanka the figures of two lamas, fronting each other; as can be read in the inscription underneath, they are Abhayā- (karagupta) and dPe med (Anupama). Below, Kun mk'yen pa, on each side: Byaṅ c'ub rgyal mts'an and bSod nams (rdo rje);

above a mK'a' agro ma. In the first row above, various figures of masters: Klu grub, Āryadeva, Lohipā, Saraha, mTs'o skyes rdo rje, Ḍombiheruka, Birvapā, Byis pa pa, Dril bu pa, Nalendrapā, Kukuripā, Ye šes žabs, Nag po spyod pa. Below, between the two upper maṇḍalas, Kyai rdo rje.

The maṇḍalas are all dedicated to the same god Hevajra, in different aspects and attitudes, but each consists of nine figures, including the central deities, i. e. besides Hevajra, the 8 lha mo, of which we have already given a list in *Indo-Tibetica*, III, part II, p. 54.

Below:

*slob dpon rdo rje a mañ (?) c'en kun dga' bzañ po yab sras rgyud pa dañ bcas pa rnams kyis ... dgoñ (sic) pa k'yad par can ... (rdogs) par gyur cig ...*

*... rnams kyī byaṅ c'ub saṅs rgyas ... aduḷ bya rnams kyis (sic) dge' ... aḅad med. ...*

"The master's thought... the great Kun dga' bzañ po and of his disciples and of his... may be exhausted. All... enlightenment, the merits of all those who may be converted by the Buddhas... without effort...

This enables us to fix the date of the painting: it must be a little later than Kun dga' bzañ po, who as we have seen founded the Nor monastery in 1429. This is therefore one of the oldest tankas in the collection.

TANKA n. 180 (Plate Z).

The three maṇḍalas present no special difficulties, except the third; the first above represents Ts'e dpag med's novenarian cycle, with Ts'e dpag med in the centre, surrounded by eight acolytes.

The second below on the left, is the maṇḍala of rDo rje sems dpa', surrounded by four rGyal c'en sde bži.

The last maṇḍala represents rDo rje sems dpa' between the eight Lha c'en, the gods of Hinduism. On each side, three divinities, one riding on a bird, perhaps Ts'aṅs pa, the other on a black horse and the third with a lion's head, perhaps Sen ge dgoñ ma.

Outside the real maṇḍalas, the images are disposed haphazard, without a logical order between them. In the first row rNam par snañ mdsad; rNam par snañ mdsad, yellow; Śākyamuni; rDo rje sems dpa'; a king, probably K'ri stroñ lde btsan; two Indian ācārya.

In the second row: P'yag na rdo rje, sMan bla, rDo rje sems dpa', Ts'e dpag med; above: the Buddha.

In the third row: rTa mgrin, four manifestations of sGrol ma, P'yag na rdo rje.

The cycle of rNam t'os sras and of the eight rTa bdag, Mi gyo ba (Acala), white; P'yag na rdo rje, rDor rje sems dpa'; more to the right Mi bskyod pa, blue.

The inscription in *dbu med*, under the tanka, reads:

*ak'yil ak'or bcuīs (= bcu gñis) dge bai ... a c'os rje lña ri ... c'en ts'ul kr'im (sic) 'od zer gyi t'ug (sic) kyī dgoñ (sic) ... don du yoñ su rdsog (sic) par gyur cig degi (sic) tus (sic) rje dañ byin rlabs la rtens (i. e. rten nas);*

*bdag rgyan (i. e. rgyal mts'an) 'or (i. e. 'od zer) gi p'a mai gtso byas sems can sdig sgrī(b) dag nas saṅs rgyas t'ob par gyur cig.*

"Through the merit derived from having had these twelve maṇḍalas made, may C'os rje lña ... (Rin) c'en ts'ul k'rims 'od zer's thought be exhausted. By virtue of the blessing of his mercy may I, rGyal mts'an 'od zer, together with my father and my mother and all creatures, purify the stains of sin and obtain the condition of a Buddha, ..

There were, then, twelve maṇḍalas, but in this tanka they are only three; if we count as a maṇḍala also rNam par t'os sras and the eight rta bdag's cycle, they are four at the most; therefore there was a series of three or four tankas, which rGyal mts'an 'od zer had caused to be painted for the spiritual welfare of his parents and according to the wish of the C'os rje Ts'ul k'rims 'od zer.

Who this lama was it is impossible to say, probably some abbot of the Nor monastery, from which the tanka came.

TANKA n. 181 (Plate 215).

This is a maṇḍala dedicated to one of the principal deities of Tantric esoterism, Kyai rdo rje, Kye rdo rje, Hevajra, particularly venerated as the *yi dam*, or protector of the sect, by the Sa skya pa.

He is another of Heruka's and Akṣo-bya's hypostases, like Saṃvara: his experiences go back to a famous Tantra of the Vajrayāna, which was also introduced into China.

The god being identified, the maṇḍala would be easy to read if we knew what liturgy has inspired the painter. Ritual treatises dedicated to this god abound, naturally, in the Sa skya pa, Nor pa and Jo nañ pa sects, from the *Kyai rdo rje mñon par rṅos* by bSod nams rtse mo (*Sa skya pa* works, vol. ca) to the *dGyes pai rdo rjei lag len gsal bar byed pa dpal he ru ka dgyes pa* by Tāranātha (complete works, vol. Ta). In these books the construction of the maṇḍala is identical: after the *me ri* or halo of fire, which turns to the right and surrounds the maṇḍala, we have in the first circle the representation of the eight cemeteries, according to the traditional patterns. I have studied them elsewhere. Each of them is marked by its P'yogs skyon, klu, mountain, mc'od rten, tree, clouds, ascetics, fire, water, which symbolize them. Then comes the square city of the maṇḍala, inside which are arranged eight deities in a first circle, six in a second circle and another two, one to the North and the other to the South, sixteen in all; they are alike inasmuch as they brandish the *gri gug* in their right hand and hold on the palm of the left a skull-cap, while the *kbatvānga* leans on their left shoulder.

Hence they are mK'a' agro ma; this means that the model followed by the painter departs from the liturgy laid down in the treatises we have quoted above, according to which the maṇḍala is composed of 9 deities, i. e. a central deity and eight lha mo.

Point of space	name	colour	hands	
			right	left
East	Gauri on Tsañs pa	black	<i>gri gug</i>	<i>robita</i> fish
South	Gauri on Lhai dbañ po	btsod	dāmaru	boar
West	Ro lañs ma on K'yab ajug	yellow	tortoise	lotus
North	Ghasmarī on dBañ p'yug c'en po	green	serpent	skull
S. W.	Pukkasi on gŠin rje	blue	lion	axe
N. W.	Ri k'rod ma on Nor bdag	white	monk or fox	fan
N. E.	gDol ma mon ma (Caṇḍālī) on Srin po	blue	wheel	skull-cap
S. E.	gYun mo on T'ag zañs ris	various colours	rdo rje	threatning mudrā

In the centre towers Kyai rdo rje's figure, according to traditional iconography, with 8 heads and 16 arms; in the 8 right arms he carries as many skull-caps, on which are respectively a white elephant, a green horse, an ass with a white blaze on its forehead, a yellow ox, a grey camel, a red man, a blue stag, a black cat. On his left hands: the earth-goddess, yellow; the water-god, white; the fire-god, red; gŠin rje, blue; Nor sbyin, yellow, etc. He embraces bDag med ma, black, who grasps in her right hand the *gri gu* and holds a skull-cap in her left.

The gods surrounding the maṇḍala have no direct connection with it; the liturgies we have mentioned know no deities participating in these rites, beside the five supreme Buddhas in their esoteric form, with eight faces and 16 hands (see *dPal kye rdo rjei dkyil ak'or du slob ma sñin poi byed pai c'o ga dbañ gi c'u bo c'en po*. *Sa skya pa*, complete works, vol. ca, p. 39).

That horror of a void, which artists used to Indian schools of painting cannot overcome, has induced the author of this tanka to fill up every empty place with the images of an extremely vast pantheon, taken from

the most different liturgies, not only of this cycle but of the kindred cycles belonging to Heruka, Guhyamāja and Śaṃvara.

TANKA n. 182 (Plate 216).

This tanka too refers to a cycle well known to us, both because we have studied it thoroughly in *Indo-Tibetica*, II, part III, and because we have already met with it in the present collection: I allude to rDo rje ajigs byed's cycle. But which liturgical system does the maṇḍala here represented reproduce? This maṇḍala in fact has nothing to do with the commonest cycle of 13 deities; the rDo rje ajigs byed lha bcu gsum dkyil ak'or, which we have seen in Tsaparang.

Here the cycle is different: in the maṇḍala are represented 8 deities which seem to be mK'a' agro ma, besides the central deity which is without his śakti, like the dPa' bo gcig, *ekavīra* in the tanka we have already studied. But besides these figures, we see on the four quarters a head, two feet, two hands and a design of floral patterns. What is the meaning of all this? The explanation is found if we turn to the dPal rdo rje ajigs byed lha bcu p'yag mts'an sum cu rtsa gnīs dan' bcas pai dkyil ak'or kyī c'o ga rab gsal snañ ba, by dKon mc'og lhun grub, founded on a tradition going back to P'ags pa of Sa skya, to Rvā lotsāva and to Kun dga' bzañ po of Nor, i. e. to a *sampra-dāya* of a prevailing Sa skya pa character.

According to this liturgy, in the centre of the maṇḍala should be placed rDo rje ajigs byed, as the intellective body (*ye śes sku*) of all the Buddhas; around him must be drawn the 32 symbols (*p'yag mts'an*):

to the East: a head; to the South: the hands; to the West: the guts; to the North: two feet; to the S. E.: a skull-cap; to the S.-W.: a skull; to the N.-W.: a rag picked up in a cemetery; to the N.-E.: an impaled man (*skyes bu gsal śiñ gis p'ug ba*).

Hence in the first inner edge (called *lha snam*), to the East: *gri gug*, spear, club (*gtun*

*śiñ*), knife (*c'u gri*), vajra, hook; to the South: axe, arrow, stick, *kbatvāṅga*; to the West: five-pointed vajra, tambourine, shield, bow, bell, flag; to the North: threatening mudrā, trident, elephant's skin, hammer lance...

In the intermediate points the eight *ro lañs*, black, their tongues projecting from their mouths. In the inner corners, eight vases full of ambrosia. In the outer circle, as usual, the eight cemeteries.

Out of the maṇḍala's surface the seven gems, various aspects of gŠin rje, Nag po c'en po and the donors. Above, some masters: (Jñā)nakumāra, Gaganagarbha, Ananta(?), Padmavajra, Lali(ta)vajra, Vajra... Anatadhvaja.

TANKA n. 183 (Plate 217).

This tanka is dedicated to the same god, but based on a different liturgy.<sup>290</sup>

TANKA n. 184 (Plate 218).

This tanka represents the maṇḍala of P'yag na rdo rje ak'or lo c'en po, a divinity we have already met with (concerning which see *Grub t'abs kun btus, ga*, p. 129).

The god brandishes a five-pointed rdo rje in his right hand; the left is in the threatening mudrā to kill fiends, with the other two he embraces the sakti mDañs ldan' ma, clapping his hands; the last two hold the king of snakes tightly.

A description of this maṇḍala, as it is represented on the tanka, is found in a treatise by Tāranātha: *dPal p'yag na rdo rje ak'or lo c'en poi dkyil c'o ga srid gsum adul byed*. From this liturgical text we learn that the deities arranged around the maṇḍala are the following:

to the East: K'ro bo c'en po bdud las rgyal byed, white, four-handed; in his first right and left hands a rdo rje and a trident with a *ak'or lo* under the three points. He embraces the śakti 'Od zer can, white, with razor and skull-cap;

to the South: K'ro boi brgod mt'a' yas, yellow, four-handed; in his first right hand rdo rje, in his first left hand a vase containing gems. With the other two he embraces mDañs ldan ma, yellow, with rdo rje and skull-cap;

to the West: rNam pai sgra sgrog, red, with rdo rje and snake-noose; a lotus in his first two arms. With the other two arms he embraces sGra dbyañs can, with axe and skullcap;

to the North: bDud rtsii ak'yil ba, green, rdo rje and club marked with a *viśvavajra*; with the other two he embraces rLuñ abyin ma with wheel and skull-cap.

On the four doors of the maṇḍala:

to the East: rDo rje lcags kyu and lCags kyu ma, white, two-handed: the symbol is the hook;

to the South: rDo rje zags pa and Žags pa ma, yellow; the symbol is the noose;

to the West: rDo rje lcags sgrog and lCags sgrog ma, red, two-armed; the symbol is the chain;

to the North: rDo rje dril bu and Dril bu ma, green, two-armed; the symbol is the bell.

Around, the cemeteries; above Grub t'ob and masters; on the four corners rDo rje sems dpa', rNam par rnam ajoms, 'Od dpag med, Klui dbaṅ po. And further: below two rTa mgrin, red and blue, Indra and Śiva. Above, two P'yag na rdo rje. Below the donors; more to the right rNam t'os sras, Gur mgon, dPal ldan lha mo, Bram ze gzugs nag po c'en po, two Jambhala; to the right two K'ro bo, Ts'ogs bdag; two sGrol ma.

TANKA n. 185 (Plate 219).

As the inscription says, this tanka represents a Vajradhātumaṇḍala, symbol of the adamantine plane, the sphere of the absolute. But we know several Vajradhātumaṇḍalas: they are especially taken from the literature of the *Tattvasaṅgraha*, of the *Vairocanābbhisambodhi* and

of other Tantric texts, almost all centering round the symbol of Vairocana. Concerning this maṇḍala and that literature, I refer the reader to what I have written in *Indo-Tibetica*.<sup>291)</sup>

But the Vajradhātumaṇḍala is found in other Tantric cycles as well: the presence, in this tanka, of Kyai rdo rje, Hevajra's figure might suggest, for instance, that the painter has wished to represent here the Vajradhātumaṇḍala according to the *Samputatantra*, a text akin to the *Kyai rdo rie rgyud*: but the structure of this maṇḍala, of which we have an ample description, for instance, in the *gSuñ abum* by Kun dga' bzaṅ po of Nor (complete works, vol. *k'a*), has no relation with the pattern of this tanka.

Above, in the centre: rDo rje ač'añ with his śakti, Dus kyi ak'or lo and Kyai rdo rje; below: Mi gyo ba in the centre, with his śakti, rDo rje mk'a' agro ma and Kurukullā.

TANKA n. 186 (Plate 220).

It represents the maṇḍala of bDe mc'og, Śaṃvara, concerning whom I have written at length in *Indo-Tibetica*, II, part III.

The cycle here reproduced is different from the one studied in all its details in *Indo-Tibetica*. The latter was based on Lūi pā's liturgy, this one centres rather on Nag po pa's ritual.

Above, grub t'ob and masters, below figures offering gifts to a lama: black Jambhala, Bya rog gdon mgon po, mK'a' agro ma etc.

TANKAS nn. 187, 188 (Plates 221-224).

These tankas too belong to Padmasambhava's cycle and their principal subject is the heaven over which he presides, *gzañs mdog sprul gyis no bo cittai dbyibs t'ogs kyi don*, as we find written in tanka n. 187. This heaven, which tradition has imagined and the paintings represent on a mountain in the middle of the sea, is called Zañs mdog dpal ri, the copper-coloured mountain: according to the

rÑiñ ma pa traditions it is in the country of rÑa yab lañ kai gliñ, to the N.-W. of rDo rje gdan, Bodhgayā. Roerich<sup>292</sup>) has already spoken of this fabulous place, publishing a painting very much later and less elaborate than the one given here. Describing his tanka, Roerich has also translated a chapter of a famous book which speaks of this heaven. The book is entitled *gSol adebs leu bdun ma*, and we have often mentioned it. On page 22 there is a description of Padmasambhava's heaven which it will be well to repeat although it has been already translated by Roerich, because it helps the interpretation of the tanka.

1. The happy-omened mountain (*Śrīgiri*),<sup>293</sup>) copper-coloured, has the form of a heart (*citta*); its base rests on the nāga king's country; its miraculous (*lhun cags = lhun grub*) slopes are flung into the sphere of the dākinī - the top reaches Brahmā's land.

2. On the sparkling top of the happy-omened mountain, the Western side is of the colour of crystal (white), the Southern side of the colour of beryl (blue), the Western side of the colour of ruby (*rāga = padmarāga*), the Northern side of the colour of emerald (*indranīla*). This heavenly palace is translucent, with no outside and no inside (no interior and no exterior).

3. The four sides, the intermediate sides, the upper and lower parts of this heavenly palace, are made of precious stones. The verandas and the quadrangular projecting parts (*glo bur*) are each of the colour of the four mystical families and of the four magical works.

4. Its walls, its ramparts (*adod snam*), its tiles, its staircases, its bannisters, its balconies, are made of the five kinds of gems. The arches over its four doors, the emblem of the wheel of the Law, all the friezes, are beautifully ornamented with great gems of various kinds.

5. Outside and inside it is thick with heavenly trees, fountains of ambrosia and

rainbows of the five colours. The scent of blooming lotus flowers pervades the atmosphere; by simply recalling such a place to memory, great peace is obtained.

6. On the octagonal lunar seat made of gems, within that great palace, Pad ma abyuñ gnas is found; his body is an accumulation (of the essence of all the) Sugata.

7. Although the colour of his body, his symbols, his ornaments are not unchangeable, but vary according to the intentions (of those who meditate upon him) and (of the four) magical actions, reciprocally meant to pacify, to cause to prosper, to submit and to offend, his splendour is greater than the light of a thousand suns.

Its supreme majesty is that of the king of the mountain (Sumeru).

8. The manifestations of the (Guru's) spirit penetrate the world; he gazes, turning his pupils all around, like the sun or the moon. The deeds of his mercy are swifter than lightning in the sky. His intentions are deep as the vastity of space.

9. Through compassion towards the world, he accomplished the good of the universe. His smiling face has a fair appearance; the sound of his voice is stronger than the roaring of a thousand thunderclaps; the sound of the deep Law, contained in secret formulas, echoes.

10. On the four sides and on the eight intermediate points of the great mystical body (*sprul sku*), on thrones pressing down upon demons lying face downwards (*log pa*) sit the Tathāgatas belonging to the five mystical families and the terrific deities which conquer demons; these deities represent the activity of the physical plane, a corporeal and active symbol.

11. On thrones resting on lotus flowers placed in the four points of space and having five petals each, are the Giñ<sup>294</sup>) of the four mystical families and four troops of mK'a'agro ma; they are all furnished with ornaments taken from cemeteries and stand in graceful postures, playing on musical instruments.

12. On the four sides of the great palace, the central verandas and the projecting corners are full of Rig ḁsin and of mK'a' agro ma, and (crowded) with gods and goddesses like clouds; they present offerings of all kinds exoteric, esoteric and secret.

13. On the bridge of the precious palace, goddesses bearing offerings, filling the world with their offerings, are crowded thick as clouds of the six kinds of desirable things, and by Kun tu bzañ po's offering they honour Sugata.

14. At the four doors on the four sides of the great palace, four kings of the four quarters mount guard (*bka' gñen*) at the door.

The eight troops of Lha min, acting as servants and messengers, overthrow fiends and heretics as if they were dust,.

The authority enjoyed by the *Leu bdun ma* explains how this description of Padmasambhava's heaven recurs in almost all the sMon lam, i. e. in the formulation of the vow to act according to the Law, so that the devotee may be rewarded by rebirth in the heaven where the great miracle-worker sits. Thus, for instance, the *Zaṅs mdog dpal rii smon lam rig ḁsin gsañ lam*, which passes for a gTer ma, adds nothing to the description in the book translated above.

We know besides that this heaven, imagined as a great mountain, is surrounded on the right by the *Rig ḁsin*, the masters of esoterisms, and on the left by the doctors (*Pañ c'en*) and ascetics, while all around are arranged the gTer ston, discoverers of those sacred books which Padmasambhava was believed to have hidden in caves in the mountains, in order that they should be taken out when men's minds were mature enough to understand their secret meaning.

Thus this image of Padmasambhava's heaven, placed on earth, in a vaguely South-Western direction, is a Tibetan creation, in which are mixed together traditions on the famous Indian Śrīparvata (*dPal ri*), the Mahāyāna's sacred citadel, and the Western

heaven; fancies are blended with it, concerning paradises and far-away worlds, difficult of access, where the Law is handed down, spotless, undefiled by impure contacts and choirs of blissful beings sit in contemplation, precisely as it was in the Sukhāvātī or in Śambhala, the supreme heaven of the Kālacakra system.

The tanka is inspired by this idea, but it is evidently based on a literary tradition describing the road to this heaven and the manner of reaching it. There is no other explanation, for instance, of the bridge on which the devotees pass and of the fiends guarding it. The existence of a literature which dealt with travels to the Zaṅs ri, in the same way as others offered information on the way to reach Potala, Avalokiteśvara's abode, is proved by some allusions to it, which I have found in the biography of the third Dalai Lama bSod nams rgya mts'o. This book, describing this lama's ancient incarnations, mentions a journey the master made to the rÑa yab country, Cāmara, as we have seen from the allusions to it in tanka n. 33.

"When I went to rÑa yab, the Srin mo's land, in a frontier country, a one-headed Srin po appeared and asked me where I was going. 'I am going to the Srin's country: where is the road leading to the Zaṅs mdog dpal ri?'. 'From here on he answered a large frontier land is there whose access is difficult on every side'. Then a two-headed Srin po appeared; he had four huge teeth in each mouth. He told me that the road leading to the Srin po's country was there and a sort of road appeared, made of silken stuff stretched out and he went towards that road, but was unable to pass, neither could I pass. Then a Srin po came, eleven-headed, whose tallest head was that of a horse. He scattered flowers all around, and said: "He who protects against the sufferings of the saṃsāra has arrived here as if by virtue of meditation, through which one may go everywhere. In the middle of this



country of the Srin po, by this road, go before the spiritual preceptor ... Then a road appeared, made of silken stuff. Walking on it I had covered half of it, when a four-headed Srin po appeared, who pulled me by one foot. But then out of that country two Sruñ ma appeared, who threatened to strike him, and then he fell. Thus I arrived happily ... (Complete works, na, p. 8).<sup>295</sup>)

On the other hand the *Pad ma t'añ yig*, chap. 97 says that the *Zaṅs mdog dpal ri* lies between *Lañkāpuri* to the East, *dGa' ba* can to the South, *Ko ka t'añ dmar gliñ* to the West, *Byañ lag* to the North.

All around the scenes represent fanciful itineraries to the *Zaṅs mdog ri* heaven, the places to be crossed, the dangers which must be overcome, the gods met on the way; we find there the cemeteries of *rÑiñ ma pa* tradition, but also allusions to *Padmasambhava's* life and to his masters.

The inscriptions, not always legible, begin on the right, above and unfold as follows round the image of the heavenly palace where *Padmasambhava* is seated:

1. *rgyal du sprul.*
2. *c'ur ... nub stod ša mk'ar can gyi gliñ na groñ k'yer abum c'a dgu sa bdag klu dur k'rod gñan ... padma rtsegs.*
3. *dur k'rod bde c'en brdal ba.*
4. *nañ grol.*
5. *šar byañ rluñ nag k'rig gliñ sems can kyī k'rag.*
6. *rin po c'ei ... byuñ mañ po.*
7. *rgyal po lag na rts'o rdsus sprul nas drag snags kyī c'os ston pa.*
8. *nor ... dañ abras la ...*
9. *dur k'rod pad ma rtsegs.*
10. *kluī rgyal poi gnas.*
11. *rgyal po gtsug na me abar ba sprul nas c'os ston pa.*
12. *mu le ap'rul gyi ...*
13. *dur k'rod ajig rten rtsegs rigs adsin ša nti gar bha.*
14. Near the bridge: *srin po agro bai bla srog ...*
15. *dbañ gi lba mo mc'ed dgu.*
16. *slob dpon c'en por ... mc'og rgyal sogs lbo nub mai.*
17. *deb ra dsar sprul nas sku ap'rul.*

18. *šar lho dra tii nags gliñ srin groñ abum c'a ñer gcig.*
19. *rigs adsin hūm kara ... t'añ yan lag.*
20. *smra bai señ ge sprul nas aJam dpal skui ston pa.*
21. *šar smad na ban ... gliñ na gliñ p'ran bye ba gsum.*
22. *šar lho bar bai gliñ na abri gyag ri lug la.*
23. *rigs (for rig) adsin vi ma la mi tra.*
24. *dur k'rod lbun grub brtsegs.*
25. *srin po grul abum rigs lag pa brgya ston gis mts'on adebs šiñ ri dags la ... ston pa. rigs adsin aJam dpal gšes gñen.*
26. *lho zaṅs t'al k'a ri groñ k'yer ... bcu drug dur k'rod ku la rdogs rgyal po ... ap'reñ du sprul nas dur k'rod gson c'en rol pa rigs adsin dba na sam skri ta.*
27. *rgyal po ra kša t'od p'reñ du sprul nas k'yab ajug rtoq pa.*
28. *lho nub ra kša ... mi rta k'yi gsum za ba.*

1. He appears as a king.
2. In the water ... to the West, in the upper part, in the island of *Ša mk'ar* can there are 90.000 cities, *Sa bdag, Klu, gñan* of the cemeteries. (The cemetery) *Pad ma rtsegs.*
3. The cemetery *bDe c'en brdal* (see tankas nn. 33 and 109).
4. In the interior [s]Grol (*ma?*).
5. To the North-West (in the) island *rLuñ nag k'rig* (black wind) the blood of created beings.
6. ... precious ... are born many ...
7. Miraculously appearing as king *Lag na*, he teaches the law of the violent exorcisms.
8. ... riches and fruits ...
9. The cemetery *Pad ma rtsegs* (in *Uddi-yāna*, see tankas nn. 33 and 109).
10. The king of the *klu's* abode.
11. Miraculously appearing as king *Tsug na me abar*, he teaches the Law.
12. Appearing miraculously in *Mu le*.<sup>296</sup>
13. The cemetery *ajig rten rtsegs* (see tankas nn. 33 and 109), the possessor of mystical wisdom *Šāntigarbha*.
14. The *Srin po*... the life of created beings...
15. The 9 sisters goddesses of the magic power.

16. The great master ... the lofty, king etc. to the South-West.
17. He is miraculously born, appearing as a Devarāja.
18. On the South-East in the island Dsa tii nags there are 21.000 cities of Srin.
19. The possessor of mystical wisdom Hūm kara ... a part of T'añ.
20. Miraculously appearing as sMra bai señ ge he shows aJam dpal's body.
21. To the East, in the lower part, in the island ... millions of lesser islands.
22. To the South-East in the intermediate continent, to the sheep in Mount aBri gyag...
23. The depositary of mystical wisdom Vimalamitra.
24. The Lhun grub brtsegs cemetery (in Nepal, see tankas nn. 33 and 109).
25. The Srin po of the lineage of the Grul abum (Kumbhāṇḍa) called "the 10.000 handed", flings weapons and shows to the gazelles ...
26. To the South in Zañs t'al ka ri sixty... city the cemetery sKu la rdsogs ... (see tankas nn. 33 and 109) miraculously appeared as king [T'od] aṅ'reñ ... the gSon c'en rol pa cemetery (see tankas nn. 33 and 109) ... the depositary of mystical wisdom Dhanasamskṛta.
27. Having miraculously appeared as king Ra kṣa t'od aṅ'reñ, he reflects on K'yab ajug.
28. To the South-West the rakṣa ... eats a man, a horse, a dog.