

“Remembering the Ordained Nuns: Models for Modern Tibetan Communities”

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Introduction

Generally in the Buddhist tradition, the Sanskrit term *anusmṛti*, associated with the term *smṛti*, refers to formalized recollections that lead to some higher meditative state or they can be the states themselves. The meditations are in the form of invocations of the three jewels (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha), including remembering of past lives, and cultivation of qualities and moral characteristics. It is also often an act of commemorating or remembering a Buddha and thus establishing a relationship with him. This act occurs in the form of a ritual recitation of or meditation on the name, acts, or attributes of a Buddha like the Abhidharmic lists of the attributes of the Buddha or the nembutsu to Amida Buddha. In invoking the Buddha in this way, Buddhists are showing their devotion and cultivating themselves as well as solidifying the tradition through its repetitive use. Although the concern here is not with *anusmṛti* in any formal sense of the word,¹ this study, however, is about how the Tibetan Buddhist tradition has remembered ordained women, especially one from the Indian Buddhist tradition, as models for others to follow, through repetitive copies of stories, retellings and ritual acts. One example in

¹ See Paul Harrison, “Buddhānusmṛti in the pratyutpanna-buddha-saṃmukhāvasthita-samādhi-sūtra.” In *Journal of Indian Philosophy*. Volume 6, No. 1 (September, 1978): 35-57; Janet Gyatso, *In the Mirror of Memory: Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992) for a formal study of *anusmṛti* within the concept of memory and comparative philosophy.

particular is that of the 10th century Indian or Kashmiri Buddhist nun, Dge slong ma Dpal mo. In the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*, she is referred to as an ideal Buddha figure:

Moonlike mother of the Conquerors,
Whose body is of a beautiful female deity,
Homage to the six-syllable mantra,

.....
empty by nature,
you [evolve] from emptiness
with a woman's form
and discipline beings.²

Although there are debates as to her identity, this hymn is one example of the Tibetan Buddhist reverence for a nun³ and Buddha figure who had tremendous power as a monastic leader of her own fasting lineage. This brief study⁴ reflects upon how the Tibetan tradition through the textual genres of hagiographies (*rnam thar*), fasting (*smyung gnas*) texts, and hymns of praise (*bstod pa*, *stotra / stava*) as well as modern practice has remembered Dge slong ma Dpal mo as an extraordinary ordained nun who transformed not only herself during an early period where there were few like her, but also an entire fasting tradition throughout the centuries. In exploring

² Dge slong ma Dpal mo, *Rje btsun thugs rje chen po*, Toh. no. 2740, fol. 127b.1-2, 254: *zla ba'i 'od ltar rgyal ba'i yum/ gzugs kyi lha mo yid 'ong sku/ yig drug ma la phyag 'tshal lo/.../rang bzhin mi dmigs stong pa'i ngang/ bud med gzugs kyis 'gro ba 'dul*

³ It is unclear whether this hymn is referring to the same Dge slong ma Dpal mo (Bhikṣuṇī Lakṣmī) of the hagiographies. See Dragomir Dimitrov, "Lakṣmī--On the Identity of Some Indo-Tibetan Scholars of the 9th-13th Centuries." *Zentralasiatische Studien* 30 (2000), 9-27 and Bstan pa rgyal mtshan, *'Phags mchog Thugs rje chen po dpal mo lugs kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar pad ma dkar po'i phreng ba*. Vol. Ka. *Collected Works*, folios 8a.2-10a.1 for debates on identity.

⁴ For more in-depth studies on Dge slong ma Dpal mo, see Ivette Vargas, "Nun Palmo: A Legend Across Tibetan Communities," *Socially Engaged Buddhist Women*, Chapter 19, Karma Lekshe Tsomo, ed., (Delhi, India: Indian Books Centre 2006); "The Life of dGe slong ma dPal mo: The Experiences of a Leper, Founder of a Fasting Ritual, & Transmitter of Buddhist Teachings on Suffering and Renunciation in Tibetan Religious History." In the *Journal for the International Association of Buddhist Studies*. 24.2 (2001): 157-185. Individual studies on women in the 10th and 11th centuries by Dan Martin are included in Janet Gyatso and Hanna Havnevik, eds., *Women in Tibet: Past and Present* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2005): 49-82; and a recent study by Hildegard Diemberger draws attention to the role of a Tibetan woman who is ordained, *When a Woman Becomes a Religious Dynasty: The Samding Dorje Phagmo of Tibet*. Columbia University Press, 2007.

select examples, we get a sense of the immense role Dge slong ma Dpal mo played in Tibetan Buddhist history.

Identity and Lineage

During *sagadawa*, one of the most auspicious times of the Tibetan calendar, the annual fasting ritual (*smyung gnas*) is often held in nunneries (*a ne dgom pa*).⁵ This ritual includes recitation of prayers to the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, fasting, circumambulation of sacred sites, offerings to officiating lamas, and the retelling of the story of the leprous Dge slong ma Dpal mo, the founder of the fasting ritual. As in the case of many narratives about women in India and Tibet, we often encounter the diverse forms she takes, the hardships she faces in terms of her decisions and her place in society, and her revelations as a Buddha figure.

As hagiographies from as early as the 14th century to the present day show, Dge slong ma Dpal mo is known by various names. Prior to her renunciation, she is known as Princess Lakṣmīṅkarā, and after her healing experience, as Rdo rje Phag mo. She is referred to as a *dge slong ma* (a fully ordained nun),⁶ *sprul sku* (a reincarnate being), *mkha' 'gro ma*, and *rnal 'byor ma*. She is, therefore, a conglomeration of figures from one of royal background and renunciation to one of advanced spiritual attainments.⁷

⁵ “Ani” (*a ne*) is one of many terms referring to a female renunciate, not a fully-ordained nun. See Hanna Havnevik, *Tibetan Buddhist Nuns*, 44.

⁶ In Sanskrit, Dge slong ma Dpal mo might be referred to as Bhikṣuṇī Lakṣmī. In Tibetan, *dge slong ma* means “fully ordained nun” and *dpal mo* means “splendorous, lustrous, or wealthy woman”.

⁷ Many of the extant hagiographies themselves first describe Dge slong ma Dpal mo as a beautiful princess from Kha che (a Tibetan word referring to Kashmir during a time of great patronage for Buddhism or the valley of Srinagar) or Northern India who attained great spiritual accomplishments. ‘Od dpag rdo rje’s text states that Dge slong ma Dpal mo was the daughter of the king of O rgyan (Oḍḍiyāna), a place in Northwest Pakistan. See ‘Od dpag rdo rje. *Thugs rje chen po bcu gcig zhal gyi bla ma brgyud pa’i rnam thar nor bu’i phreng ba* contained in *Instructions for the Practice of the Gso Sbyong and Smyung gnas Focusing Upon the Invocation of Avalokiteśvara in the Eleven-faced Form*. Thimphu: Dorji Namgyal, 1985, 30.1. The modern hagiography specifically states that she came from Śrīnagar, Kashmir. Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo’i rnam thar nges ’byung rgyud la skye ba’i*

Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho records in his travelogue dating from 1918-20 the existence of the relics of Dge slong ma Dpal mo in Zhwa lu monastery in Gtsang province, Tibet.⁸ These relics establish her close connection with Avalokiteśvara. Her reputation is known also in Tibetan cultural areas outside of Tibet proper in Nepal and India.⁹

chos gtam (added English title: *The Biography of Kamala Bhikshuni, Princess of King Dharma Pal, an Ancient King of Kashmir, India*). Author unknown. (Kalimpong: Tibet Mirror Press, 1953[63]), 1.7.

⁸ One is of her liver (*sku mchin*) inside an image of Thugs chen rgyal ba rgya mtsho (Mahākāruṇika Jina Sāgara) and the other inside a medicine image (*smān sku*) of Spyān ras gzigs, See *Gangs ljongs dbus gtsang gnas bskor lam yig nor bu zla shel gyi se mo do* (*An Account of a Pilgrimage to Central Tibet During the Years 1918 to 1920, being the text of Gangs ljongs dbus gtsang gnas bskor lam yig nor bu zla shel gyi se mo do*) (Tashijong: Tibet Craft Community, 1972), 407, 409.

⁹ Among the Newars in Nepal, Dge slong ma Dpal mo is referred to as the 10th century Śrīmatī Bhikṣuṇī and Candrikāntā. In the Newar tradition in Nepal, Dge slong ma Dpal mo is known as Candrikāntā (corresponding to the Tibetan name Zla mdzes?). See Dan Martin, *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works*. London: Serindia Publications, 1997, 62. See also Lāmā Jyampal Dorjye and Nīmā Rinchen Yolmo, *Śrīmatī Bhikṣuṇī Kamalāko Upoṣādhā (nyungne) Grantha*. 2nd edition (Darjeeling: Yolmo Prakāśan, 1996). There is also reference to an Ani Palmo Cave Settlement in the Dhaulagiri Zone of the North Mustang district, where a person called Ani Palmo ate only stones and took only one grain of barley every 11 days. Michel Peissel, *Mustang: The Forbidden Kingdom, Exploring a Lost Himalayan Land* (New York: Dutton, 1967), 189-190.

The *Blue Annals*¹⁰ is the only historical textual account that establishes possible dates for Dge slong ma Dpal mo and delineates her impressive line of fasting lineage descendents that include Atiśa (?982-?1054), Rin chen bzang po (958-1055), dPal gyi bzang po (Śrībhadrā), ‘Jo gdan Bsod nams bzang po (1341-1433), ‘Od dpag rdo rje (?late 14th-?early 15th century), Zhu chen Tshul khriṃs rin chen (1697-1774), Blo bzang bzkal bzang rgya mtsho (1708–1757), ‘Jam mgon Kong sprul (1813-1899), and a host of prominent others in Tibetan religious history.¹¹ Zhu chen, for example, was one of the most revered 18th century scholars of Eastern Tibet, selected by the ruler of Sde dge to be the editor of the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan ’gyur* (1744).

Rnam Thar Accounts: Fasting Master, Abbess, and Bodhisattva

For the most part, hagiographies give a consistent representation of Dge slong ma Dpal mo over time as an extraordinary ordained woman and Buddha figure. Writings by Jo gdan Bsod nams bzang po and one anonymous author¹² reflect the Tibetan tradition’s reverence for this figure as a leader of a monastery, a *mkha’ ‘gro ma*, founder of a fasting lineage, a bodhisattva, and a *sprul sku*, despite the stigma endured related to her leprosy

¹⁰ See passages in George N. Roerich, tr., *The Blue Annals* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), 1007-18, 1044 for information on her lineal descendants.

¹¹ Śākyaśrībhadrā was founder of a famous Vinaya ordination lineage and community, the latter of which became the basis of the “four communities” (*tshogs pa bzhi*).

¹² Jo gdan, *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa’i rnam thar* (Lhasa: Dpal ldan Par khang, n.d.), folios 1-7 [*The Hagiography of the Lineage Gurus of the Fasting Ritual*]; Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo’i rnam thar nges ‘byung rgyud la skye ba’i chos gtam* (added English title: *The Biography of Kamala Bhikshuni, Princess of King Dharma Pal, an Ancient King of Kashmir, India*) (Kalimpong: Tibet Mirror Press, 1953[63]), 1-21 [*The Hagiography of Nun Palmo: A Religious Discourse Which Gives Rise to Aversion in the [Mind] Stream*].

and gender. From the very beginning, Dge slong ma Dpal mo forsakes her royal position for a life of renunciation and undertakes the vows of a nun despite her family's wishes for a political marriage.¹³ In this role, she maintained herself as a high status nun or abbess of a monastic community. As her story develops, she is praised as an extraordinary being a Buddha figure, a conflation of many figures, as well as a founder of a fasting ritual associated with another prominent bodhisattva in Tibetan history, Avalokiteśvara:

This particular nun was the daughter of King Indrabhūti, the senior, and moreover, it is said:
“Homage to the feet of the Lustrous Dpal mo
who has realized the Holy One [in accordance with]
what Indrabhūti prophesized,
attained the supreme realization in [Li kha ra] Shing ‘phel,
and showed the great wonder [of herself?] as Khasarpaṇa.¹⁴

Societal stigma and discrimination due to disease and gender are themes, however, that run throughout the hagiographic accounts. In the end of these narratives, they are shown to be critical for her as a leader. Jo gdan's brief account, *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, shows how the force of karma does give way despite her learned state:

Despite [the fact] that this nun was knowledgeable in the five domains of knowledge [*rig pa'i gnas lnga*]¹⁵ and also instructions and vows were present [in her] in a very noble way, leprosy arose due to the force of previous karma. [Her

¹³ Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo'i rnam thar*: 5.19-6.4: de nas gzhon nu dgung lo brgyad nas slob sbyangs la brtson pas / lo bcu gnyis kyi bar du bla ma dang 'bral ba med par bzhugs pa'i tshes / phyis shes bya'i chos thams cad la bla ma dang mnyam par song / nang gi don gyis rtogs pa bla ma las lhag tsam song ba las / de nas dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa gnang nas mtshan yang dge slong ma dpal mo mtshungs mor grags so //

¹⁴ Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo'i rnam thar*: 2a.4-2b.3: dge slong ma 'di nyid /rgyal po indrabodhi che ba'i sras mo yin zhing /de yang / Indrabodhis lung bstan 'phags pa bsgrubs // shing 'phel gnas su mchog gi dngos grub brnyes // kha sar pa nir cho 'phrul chen po bstan // dpal ldan dpal mo'i zhabs la phyag 'tshal lo // zhes pa ste /

¹⁵ *Rig pa'i gnas lnga* refers to linguistics, medicine, technology, logic and epistemology, and inner science (Buddhism proper).

body was] severed from the wrist of her right hand, even the front of her face was like it had been pounded with bronze nails, her complexion was like an autumn flower struck by frost, [and] taking food and drink was like an animal eating grass not knowing how to feed [herself] with [her left] hand. Even though knowledgeable in the five domains of knowledge, by being afflicted with a virulent illness, there arose immeasurable suffering, settling in her mind as if without recourse. Attendants carried her into an isolated thatched hut where she remained crying.¹⁶

‘Od dpag rdo rje from the 14th/15th century recounts a scene when this nun, in her attempt to find an image of Avalokiteśvara, is critiqued by a temple custodian for her gender and affliction, reflecting society’s attitude toward impurity and women:

On top of being of low birth [*skye dman*],
you are a leprous woman.
Stay behind the door and make your request.¹⁷

It is clear here that both women and lepers, who are often portrayed as low status persons, defile sacred spaces like temples--a theme common throughout diverse religions and cultures. In her work, Mary Douglas¹⁸ has argued that anxiety about bodily margins and the preoccupation with keeping them clean express anxiety about social integrity and concern for maintaining social order.

¹⁶ Jo gdan, *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa’i rnam thar*: 2b.3-3a.5: dge slong ma ‘di ni rig pa’i gnas lnga la mkhas shing / bslab sdom rnam kyang shin tu btsun par bzhugs pa las / sngon gyi las dbang gis mdze byung ste / phyag g.yas pa’i ‘khrigs ma nas chad / zhal gyi gdong la yang khro gzer btab pa bzhin du gyur / sha mdog ni ston ka’i me tog la ba mos phog pa bzhin du gyur / bza’ btung byed pa yang phyag gis bsnyod mi shes par dud ‘gro rtsa za ba bzhin du gyur / rig pa’i gnas lnga la mkhas kyang / nad drag pos btab pas sdug bsngal sems la bzhag thabs med pa lta bu dpag tu med pa byung ste / ‘khor rnam kyis logs shig tu rtsa’i spyil bu cig tu bskyal nas der bshum gyin bzhugs pa na / See for more information on Buddhist nuns, Susan Murcott, *The First Buddhist Women: Translations and Commentaries on the Therigatha* (New York: Parallax Press, 1991); Edou, Jérôme. *Machig Labdrön and the Foundations of Chöd*. (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1996).

¹⁷ The Tibetan term used to signify “woman,” *skye dman*, means “low birth” implying the low status of women in relation to the male gender. ‘Od dpag rdo rje, *Thugs rje chen po*, 23.1-2: *dkon gnyer na re khyod skye ba dman pa’i thog du mdze mor ‘dug pa sgo rgyab tu ‘dug la gsol ba thob cig gsungs/*

¹⁸ See Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 65-81 and *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1984).

In addition, the relationship of gender to suffering in texts have specific significance in the Buddhist tantric context. Despite the societal anxiety about bodily margins and purity in the temple precinct, Dge slong ma Dpal mo embraces her gender, the impurity, and the suffering of her illness condition, and transforms them all into positive and useful representations. Note the *smyung gnas* text by Dalai Lama VII's *Thugs rje chen po*, "May [I] accept the sufferings [of others] with the thought to bring benefit and happiness"¹⁹ and the passage from the modern hagiography, "Dge slong ma Dpal mp said, 'I am sick for the sake of sentient beings who are as vast as the sky.'"²⁰ Like Tārā and Guanyin,²¹ Dge slong ma Dpal mo insists on being reborn as a women for the sake of others and achieves liberation in that female, ill state despite the negative image attributed by society as the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur, Rje btsun thugs rje chen po* passage makes clear:

Moonlike mother of the Conquerors,
 Whose body is of a beautiful female deity,
 Homage to the six-syllable mantra,

 empty by nature,
 you [emerge] from emptiness
 with a woman's form
 and discipline beings.²²

¹⁹ Dalai Lama VII, *Thugs rje chen po*, 53b.1-3: *mdor na smyung bar gnas pa'i dus kun tu// lus dang sems la sdug bsngal ci byung yang// 'gro kun sdug bsngal 'di yis byang snyam pa'i// phan bde'i sems kyis sdug bsngal dang len shog/*

²⁰ Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo*, 7.12-13: *nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i sems can gyi don la na ba yin gsungs/*

²¹ See Martin Willson, *In Praise of Tārā: Songs to the Saviouress* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1986), 12 regarding Tārā's wish to be reborn as a woman. For Avalokiteśvara's appearance in the form of Kuan Yin in East Asia, see Chün-Fang Yü, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteśvara* (New York: Columbia University, 2001).

²² Dge slong ma Dpal mo, *Rje btsun thugs rje chen po*, Toh. no. 2740, fol. 127b.1-2, 254: *zla ba'i 'od ltar rgyal ba'i yum/ gzugs kyi lha mo yid 'ong sku/ yig drug ma la phyag 'tshal lo/.../rang bzhin mi dmigs stong pa'i ngang/ bud med gzugs kyis 'gro ba 'dul*

In *Dge slong ma dpal mo'i rnam thar nges 'byung rgyud la skye ba'i chos gtam*,²³ Dge slong ma Dpal mo is described as an incredible *yoginī* and bodhisattva worthy of devotion. The publication of this modern text was requested by a Bhutanese scholar Bla ma Rab brtan, who came to Kalimpong Leprosy Hospital for medical treatment:

Homage to the bodily constituents of the illustrious Dpal mo,
a *yoginī* who came as a luster of the world in this degenerate time,
subsumed into one the Buddha activity of all the conquerors of the three times.

Such a *yoginī* like that is Rdo rje Phag mo,
the supreme mother of the conquerors of the three times,
after she has miraculously re-embodied into the body of a female
for the sake of sentient beings.
It will be shown, on the basis of the constellation,
just a part of the sun and the moon
of what is inconceivable and inexpressible.²⁴

Overall, these passages reinforce two notions, that gender and suffering are relevant for spiritual development. Part of Dge slong ma Dpal mo's redemption has to do with renouncing what is not beneficial in the first place (what is impermanent) in order to gain liberation and help others' religious development. A passage from feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether can be generally applied here relating to issues of redemption, liberation, and gender:

²³ *The Hagiography of Nun Palmo: A Religious Discourse Which Gives Rise to Aversion in the [Mind] Stream*

²⁴ Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo'i rnam thar*: 1.1-3: dus gsum rgyal ba kun gyi 'phrin las pa // geig tu sdud cing snyigs ma'i dus 'di ru // 'gro ba'i dpal tu byon pa'i rnal 'byor ma / dpal ldan dpal mo'i tshogs la phyag 'tshal lo //

1.3-7: de lta bu'i rnal 'byor ma de nyid dus gsum rgyal ba'i yum mchog rdo rje phag mo 'gro ba bud med kyi lu su skur sprul nas sems can gyi don la bsam gyis mi khyab cing brzod kyi mi lang shing rgyu skar nas nyi zla'i zur tsam ston pa la /

Redemption is not primarily about...rejecting our bodies and finitude, and ascending to communion with a spiritual world that will be our heavenly world after death. Rather, redemption is about reclaiming an original goodness that is still available as our true selves, although obscured by false ideologies and social structures that have justified domination of some and subordination of others.²⁵

Reminiscent of bhakti poets in the Hindu tradition like Mirabi and Andal and medieval mystic women in the Christian tradition, Dge slong ma Dpal mo overturns societal conventions and biases despite the stigma. Her stories offer an alternative view of her circumstances and interpretation of her condition.²⁶ She was not defiled in terms of the Dharma, a higher state of mind. She persevered as a premier ordained nun in her fasting in dedication to Avalokiteśvara and revealed her underlying self as a Buddha figure attaining a rainbow body,²⁷ dancing *mkha'* *'gro ma*, and eventually even subduing and converting the *klu* (*nāga*) who were responsible for her disease state.²⁸

Thus, all the texts end with Dge slong ma Dpal mo as a Buddha figure worthy of remembrance. As Jo gdan's *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* notes:

[N]ow²⁹ the people, in realizing that she was one who has attained spiritual realization, all requested a blessing and obtained a realization as well. Moreover, externally, she was Dge slong ma Dpal mo. Internally, she was the Holy Rdo rje Rnal 'byor ma [Dākinī Vajrayoginī]. It is said so that Dge slong ma [Palmo], of a powerful royal family, had obtained the realization after having dispelled again the demons who interfered during the month of [the constellation] *nam mthongs*,

²⁵ Although Ruether in her work is concerned primarily with the Christian tradition, her insights are useful in terms of how gender relations change alongside ideas about redemption. See Rosemary Ruether, *Women and Redemption: A Theological History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 8.

²⁶ John Stratton Hawley. *The Bhakti Voices: Mirbai, Surdas, and Kabir in Their Times and Ours* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

²⁷ Anonymous, *Dge slong ma dpal mo'i rnam thar*, 16.7-17.3, 17.3-18.2.

²⁸ Jo gdan Bsod nams bzang po, *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar bzugs so*:5a.1-5, 5b.5-6a.2.

²⁹ I hesitantly take *bzod* to be a possible misspelling for the term *da gzod* meaning "now."

[and] because of this time, when those followers practice at first in the *saga* month [during the constellation of] *nam mthongs*, [then] obstacles will diminish and the realization is swift. Her record should be known in extenso elsewhere.³⁰

Modern Reflections and Conclusions

Commemoration for Dge slong ma Dpal mo is also evident in rituals of fasting and retellings of the hagiographies in present-day practices throughout Tibetan communities in Asia and the West. In Nepal during the late 1990s, numerous Tibetans pointed out that in a temple on Chobar Hill in Patan, Dge slong ma Dpal mo appeared as a dancing *mkha'* *'gro ma* in the residence of Adinātha Lokeśvara. In Lhasa, Tibet, female and male Tibetans continue to perform her ritual and remember well known sites of her revelations, some unknown from textual sources.³¹ Many have even spoken of a *sprul sku* of Dge slong ma Dpal mo present today. As in the case of the diverse lineage holders in the textual traditions, Dge slong ma Dpal mo, an ordained nun, bodhisattva, and tantric master, continues to inspire practitioners of all walks of life.

³⁰ Jo gdan Bsod nams bzang po, *Smyung gnas bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*: 7a.5-7b.4: bzod mi rnam kyis grub pa thob par shes nas thams cad kyis byin rlabs zhus shing dngos grub kyang thob bo// de yang phyi ltar dge slong ma dpal mo// nad ltar rje btsun rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'o// de ltar rgyal rigs stobs ldan gyi dge slong ma des nam mthongs kyi zla ba la bar du gcod pa'i bdud rnam phyir bsal nas dngos grub thob pa'i dus yin pa'i rjes 'jug da lta sgrub pa byed pa rnam gyis kyang thog mar nam mthongs sa ga'i zla ba la byas na/ bar chad nyung zhing dngos grub myur zhes gsung ngo// 'di'i lo rgyus rgyas par ni gzhan du shes par bya'o//

³¹ The nunneries and monasteries I viewed *smyung gnas* included: Skyid grong thugs rje chos gling dgon pa (Kathmandu, Nepal), Nga gi dgon pa (Kathmandu, Nepal), A ne mtshams khung dgon pa (Lhasa, Tibet), Shug gseb dgon pa (Lhasa, Tibet), and Sera Je's (?)Ham gdong Khang tshan (Lhasa, Tibet).

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_____. *'Phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug gi bstod pa*. Sde dge Bstan 'gyur, Nu, vol. 72, Toh. no. 2739. Delhi: Karmapa Choedhey Gyalwa Sungrab Partun Khang, 1985, folios 126a-127a, 251-253.

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