

# **Gateways to Tibetan Studies**

A Collection of Essays in Honour of  
David P. Jackson  
on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday

Edited by

Volker Caumanns, Jörg Heimbels,  
Kazuo Kano, and Alexander Schiller

**Volume One**



INDIAN AND TIBETAN STUDIES 12.1

Hamburg • 2021

Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Universität Hamburg



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INDIAN AND TIBETAN STUDIES

Edited by Harunaga Isaacson, Dorji Wangchuk, and Eva Wilden

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*His Holiness  
The Gongma Trichen*  
SUPREME HEAD OF THE SAKYAPA ORDER  
OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM

#### FOREWORD

I am very pleased that this commemorative volume is being compiled in celebration of David Jackson's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

I have known Ngawang Kalden, as we know him in Tibetan, for a very long time and in one instance, we received teachings from Chogye Trichen Rinpoche together. We have always maintained contact throughout the years.

David's grasp of the Tibetan language is truly remarkable, certainly placing him among the most accomplished Tibetan-speaking westerners. Likewise, his knowledge of Tibetan literature and of the Tibetan Buddhadharmas is pre-eminent, while his translations of the same are of exceptional precision.

He is a scholar in the true sense of the word, and it is befitting that his former students at Hamburg University show their gratitude to his accomplishments by dedicating this Festschrift to him.

With blessings,

The Sakya Trichen

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

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White Tārā, Artist: Tsechang Penba Wangdu (brTse byang sPen pa dbang 'dus).



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## Preface

It is our great pleasure and honour to present this Festschrift to David P. Jackson on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. For more than forty years now, David has been an outstanding scholar influencing and shaping the course of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies. As such, he has been an invaluable source of inspiration for his colleagues and former students, like us, the editors of the present Festschrift. We are thus extremely delighted and grateful that so many of David's colleagues and friends immediately agreed to support this project by offering to write a contribution for his felicitation volume.

Since David came to know of the Festschrift while it was still in the making, we thought to get him on board for an interview on his scholarly life, and have it precede the individual contributions written in his honour. In this interview, David opens an interesting window in his fascinating life and long career as a very versatile Tibetologist. In doing so, he also documents important aspects of the larger history of Tibetan and Buddhist studies. In addition to this interview (and also at the risk of repeating some already familiar details), we would like to briefly summarise here, as an introduction, the most important stages of David's life in chronological order.

David was born in Seattle on September 1, 1951, as the second of the six children of Donald Pearce Jackson and Constance Evelyn Jackson (née Reinertson). His father was a doctor of medicine, and his mother worked as a primary school teacher. He grew up in Davison, a small town in Michigan, where the family had moved shortly after his birth. Later, in the early 1960s, the family returned to the Seattle area, where David spent his teens. In 1969, he began his academic education at Western Washington University (Seattle), taking classes in Latin and Western philosophy. This was the time when Tibetan Buddhism started to become popular in the West, and David—like many other members of his generation—developed a lasting interest in Tibet and its culture. His wish to get in touch with Tibetan lamas and to properly learn spoken and literary Tibetan grew so keen that he finally set off for Asia in 1972. After arriving in Nepal, he started his acquisition of the Tibetan language, beyond the academic tradition, among Tibetans who had

settled in the Kathmandu Valley. Many more sojourns in Tibetan communities in Asia were soon to follow.

When David returned to the United States one year later, in 1973, with now solid language skills, he entered the Tibetan program at Washington University (Seattle), studying under the tutelage of Geshe Ngawang Nornang (1924–2014) and Prof. David Seyfort Ruegg (1931–2021), the latter providing an important academic role model. After receiving his B.A. degree in 1975, David graduated in 1979 with an M.A. thesis on historical, oratorical, and religious aspects of speech making in Mustang, a revised version of which was published in 1984 with the title *The Mollas of Mustang*. In 1985, he completed his Ph.D. thesis investigating Indian and Tibetan traditions of Pramāṇa and scholastic debate as set forth by Sakya Pandita in the third chapter of the *mKhas pa 'jug pa'i sgo*. David's Ph.D. thesis was published in 1987 as *The Entrance Gate for the Wise*.

Even David's early publications—worth noting here are the aforementioned *The Mollas of Mustang* (1984), but also his English translation of Chogye Trichen Rinpoche's manual of Tibetan monastic customs and religious art (published as *Gateway to the Temple* in 1979), and his book on *Tibetan Thangka Painting* (1984; together with Janice A. Jackson)—testify to his high scholarly standards, and have lost none of their relevance as the standard works even today, after several decades. This is certainly due to David's outstanding command of the Tibetan language, his careful handling of sources, and his scholarly rigour. In addition, right from the beginning of his academic career, David attached great importance to collaboration with qualified representatives of the living Tibetan tradition. This brought him into close contact with some of the greatest Tibetan Buddhist masters of the 20th century, including Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987), Chogye Trichen Rinpoche (1919–2007), and Khenchen Appey Rinpoche (1927–2010). Later, he would write full-length biographies of the first two of these three revered teachers.

In the 1980s, David (now in his thirties) took on his first academic assignments. From 1984 to 1986, he served as lecturer of Tibetan language at the Department of Indian and Buddhist Studies, Faculty of Letters, Osaka University. In the following years, he held several research

fellowships that took him to Kyoto, Vienna, and Hamburg. Moreover, in 1989, he joined the Bodh Gaya Buddhist Studies Program of Antioch University as an instructor. Eventually, in 1992, he was appointed Professor of Tibetology at the Department for Indian and Tibetan Studies, Hamburg University (succeeding his former teacher David Seyfort Ruegg), a position he held for fifteen years until 2007. During these years, he trained numerous students—including the editors of this Festschrift—and supervised a whole range of Magister, Ph.D., and Habilitation theses. With important research projects such as the third-party funded project “Historische Studien zum Raum westlich von Sakya” (Historical Studies on the Area West of Sakya; DFG 1998–2003) he was instrumental in establishing Hamburg as a leading and vital centre of Tibetological research.

During his professorship, David also served as co-director of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) from 1992 to 2001. In addition, he held the post of director of the Department for Indian and Tibetan Studies from 2000 to 2007. It should also be mentioned that he edited nine volumes (the last four in cooperation with Franz-Karl Ehrhard) of the series *Contributions to Tibetan Studies* (Reichert Verlag), a publication which included doctoral and habilitation theses that originated from the Department for Indian and Tibetan Studies at Hamburg University.

In 2007, David left Hamburg University and Germany to return, together with his family, to the United States. In the years that followed, he devoted himself to his great passion for Tibetan art and curated a series of exhibitions at the Rubin Museum of Art, New York. These exhibitions were accompanied by masterfully researched catalogues that were full-length studies of, for instance, individual painting styles such as the Nepalese-influenced Beri style, the painting tradition of the Dri-gung Kagyu school, or the style established by Khyentse Chenmo of Gongkar. Other catalogues investigated specific topics such as sacred portraits of Tibetan lamas or regional styles in Tibetan painting. These catalogues also always included an introductory chapter for newcomers to the at first confusing and overwhelming world of Tibetan and Himalayan painting explaining, for instance, the basic principle behind how deities are arranged on paintings, the different structures of lineage

depictions, and most importantly, David's method for art historical research in dating paintings "through gathering and interpreting the internal and external evidence relating to datable people."

As evident from this short sketch, David's research interests and contributions are very wide-ranging, making it difficult to subsume them under a few keywords. One major focus is, of course, the history of Tibetan painting with its various traditions illustrated by his numerous publications including his early *Tibetan Thangka Painting* (1984), the six exhibition catalogues in the Rubin Museum of Art's Masterworks of Tibetan Painting Series (2009–2016), and a vast number of articles (see Publications of David P. Jackson). If one wishes to single out a work of outstanding importance, David's pioneering monograph *A History of Tibetan Painting* (1996) must not go unmentioned, the first history of its kind ever written. Reviewers praised it as a "truly monumental publication" (de Jong in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41: 398) and a "true mine of information for students of Tibetan art as well as a milestone in the history of Tibetan painting and art for years to come" (Lo Bue in *East and West* 47/4: 461). The considerable impact of this publication to this day is reflected not least in the fact that it has even been translated into Chinese and Japanese.

The writings of Sakya Pandita comprise another important field of research. Major publications in this regard are David's aforementioned monograph on the third chapter of the *mKhas pa 'jug pa'i sgo* (1987) and the recently published masterful translation of the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (*Clarifying the Sage's Intent*; 2015). Moreover, David authored a number of important articles on this topic, such as (to mention only a few) the still very useful overview of "Commentaries on the Writings of Sa-skya Paṇḍita" (1983), the comprehensive contribution on "Sa-skya Paṇḍita the 'Polemicist'" (1990), or the article on "Key Contributions of Sa-skya Pandita to Tibetan Buddhism" (1997), which is intended for a more general readership.

This focus on Sakya Pandita can be placed within a larger field of interest in studying the history of Tibetan Buddhist traditions, their institutions, and their representatives. In this respect, it may suffice to refer to studies as diverse as David's brief monograph on *The Early Abbots of 'Phan-po Na-lendra* (1989), a number of pioneering articles on



the Ngor tradition, his painstakingly compiled biographies of Dezhung Rinpoche (2003) and Chogye Trichen Rinpoche (2019), and his study of the *dkar po chig thub* controversies titled *Enlightenment by a Single Means* (1994); the treatment of these controversies was lauded for David's "clarity of presentation" and "the meticulous precision and accuracy of his scholarship" (Mayer in *The Tibet Journal* 22/3: 79). Some of the aforementioned works have even been translated back into Tibetan, which once again indicates that David's influence extends well beyond the academic milieu.

We could list many other important contributions that are not covered by the research fields provisionally outlined above, such as several seminal articles dealing with aspects of the history of Tibetan block-printing, his translations of canonical texts from the Kanjur for the 84,000 project, or his two articles on earthquakes in the Himalayas. However, for an exhaustive overview, it must suffice to refer the interested reader to the full list of David's publications that is attached to the interview we conducted with him.

At the end of this brief sketch, the editors of this Festschrift are left with the pleasant duty of thanking all the people and institutions whose commitment made the completion of this volume possible. First of all, we wish to wholeheartedly thank all the authors for the great effort they have devoted to this project and their bodhisattva-like patience during the editing process. Moreover, we are indebted to September Cowley for her help in proofreading this preface. And last but not least, we are very grateful to the Reiyukai funded Lumbini International Research Institute (Lumbini), Prof. Dorji Wangchuk (Hamburg University), the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (KAKENHI grant number JP17K02222), and Dr. Jörg Heimbels (Hamburg University) for providing crucial financial help to cover the layout costs of this Festschrift.

Finally, we would like to say thank you, David la. Not only are we very grateful for your willingness to conduct the interview on your scholarly life with us, but would also like to say *bka' drin che* for all your guidance and support over the years. Now it remains for us to wish you a lot of joy reading the Festschrift.

Alexander, Jörg, Kazuo, and Volker



## རང་ལྷན་པའི་ལན་མ།

### **An Interview with the Honoree, David P. Jackson**

We are very happy and grateful that you, David la, immediately agreed to our request that we might interview you about your scholarly life as a Tibetologist. The idea of conducting this interview with you, the honoree, and to have it precede the contributions of your Festschrift, did not merely arise from our own curiosity. Much more importantly, it arose from our conviction that to hear and learn more about the personal history of one of our field's leading scholars would contribute significantly to the history of Tibetan Studies as a whole.

**To begin with, is there anything you might like to share with us about your family background and upbringing?**

I was born in 1951 in Seattle the son of Dr. Don and Connie Jackson. My wonderful father had two medical degrees and my kind mother was a primary school teacher by academic training. They were both from Genesee County, Michigan, and we moved back to that state and county when I was just 10 months old. The next 12 years I lived in Michigan in a small town named Davison. Then when I was in 7th grade they moved back permanently to the Seattle area. My kind parents supported me a lot during my earliest studies and travels.

As a teenager I hated high school in my last two years of it, and wanted to leave for the next level as soon as possible. I now realize our move from Seattle to the Mercer Island schools one year later was good for me because I still remember the inspiring words of one of my teachers in my last years there, the outstanding Mr. Milton Yanicks (who recently passed away in November 2020). "The unexamined life is not worth living" (a dictum attributed to Socrates).

My best friend in 9th and 10th grades was my next-door neighbor. He later became a lawyer, but then he was the son of a university art history professor. He could speak much better French than I because he and his siblings had accompanied his father during his field work. He left my high school when his father got a higher academic position elsewhere.

**What sparked your initial interest in Tibetan culture? And what made you study Tibetology in an academic setting at the University of Washington (Seattle)?**

Many university students of that period were exposed to Tibet through the sudden popularity of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. My first year at the university, 1969, was precisely the time that lamas such as Trungpa Rinpoche suddenly were making their colorful presences felt in the West. (You also have to imagine that it was a time of very strong anti-war protest, with the UW administration building being bombed by activists.)

My first two years after high school (fall 1969 to summer 1971) I spent in Bellingham, which had a smaller university, Western Washington University (WWU), and a new cluster college called Fairhaven College. My main teacher and advisor there was an academically very qualified Trungpa disciple named Dr. Ives Waldo, who was then also newly arrived in Bellingham. He had recently done a PhD in philosophy at Oxford, and there met his lama, who left an indelible impression on him. (Ives Waldo—Rime Lodro Waldo—studied with Trungpa Rinpoche from 1970 to 1988, and was trained in Tibetan translation as a member of the Nalanda Translation Committee, of which he is still a member, though I lost touch with him since 1972.)

In 1971 Ives Waldo had many talents, but his Tibetan then was not nearly enough to teach me. Someone in Bellingham did teach me the Tibetan alphabet. It soon became obvious to me that the best strategy for me was to go meet lamas and learn the languages in Asia. (Waldo later supported that plan by writing letters of support for visas in Nepal.)

One forgotten secret of my first academic year was that I almost avoided Fairhaven College courses and chose to learn Latin from the main professor of European classical languages at Western Washington, a very impressive scholar whose name now eludes me. He provided me a very useful model for systematically learning a classical language, such as through using extensive and elaborate vocabulary notebooks. Another recently remembered fact: I took two Western philosophy classes at WWU, and in one we read Stephen Toulmin's book *The Uses of Argument*, which I later totally forgot having read or studied. (That classic book was much later rediscovered as a terma by Tom

Tillemans among my basement books in my Schenefeld house, and fits well my later PhD theme.)

I thought that kind of Ordinary Language Philosophy was boring and was a bit more interested in Ives Waldo's Fairhaven class on European Phenomenology. But I actually was far more fascinated by books like Lama Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds*, and the Evans-Wentz Tibetan series, such as his *Life of Milarepa*.

After taking a year off school to try to save up travel money, I left for Asia in September 1972, paying almost nothing (I think \$70) for a student discount charter-flight ticket from Seattle to London. By a combination of flights, trains and local busses, with many adventures and misadventures I reached the Raxaul and Birgunj border towns of Bihar and southern Nepal in winter 1972/73, after being stuck in Afghanistan for a few weeks by the Indo-Pakistan War. From there I traveled by the next available bus to the capital, Kathmandu.

I wanted to stay where more Tibetans were, so it was my good fortune that someone I knew in Kathmandu recommended Bouddhanath. There I began teaching myself both spoken and written Tibetan. I made elaborate vocabulary notebooks as in Latin. For learning spoken I had also lugged with me in my backpack a new manual of spoken Tibetan by Goldstein and Nornang that was recently published by the UW Press. (The fact that it uses a terrible phonetic transcription actually helped me because I had to write out in Tibetan script hundreds of example sentences.) In addition to that huge and heavy and difficult to use manual, I brought along another weighty book purchased at the University Book Shop, Seattle, *A Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* by James Bosson (1969). I brought it along for possible language practice, and it has a strong connection with Sakya Pandita. (Bosson presents editions of both Tibetan and Mongolian versions of the *Sa skya legs bshad*.)

I was gone travelling around the world for nearly two years, using tourist visas in India (6 months) and Nepal as long as possible. To stay in Nepal I applied for three trekking permits and actually completed two, walking to Helambu (a Sherpa area to the north) and Dzong Sampa (in the Kali Gandaki Valley). One of my hobbies as a teenager was Alpine trekking to the Cascade or Olympic Mountains, so I had a reasonably good backpack, down jacket and sleeping bag for walking in the Himalayan Mountains. (The Helambu trek to Tarkyegang was

very memorable, especially the first passing up into the Tibetan stupa zone culturally.) The trek to Dzong Sampa started in Pokhara town and reached its terminus in Jomsom village and involved meeting in the sole restaurant a bored Danish anthropologist based in a nearby village (whom I would meet again below).

In Bouddhanath I was luckily introduced at once to the artist Darpa Thargye, who was then painting the new murals of Tarik Rinpoche's new monastery. The very kind Ngorpa Thartse monk (Gelong Tendzin) said we by all means should meet the great Sakya lamas in Rajpur.

**Who were your main teachers at the University of Washington, and what impact did they have on your own scholarly life and career?**

When I returned to the UW in fall 1973, I entered the Tibetan program as an undergraduate. One of the main professors officially (Turrell V. Wylie) was that year gone to Italy for a sabbatical. So I saw very little of him except for a few key examinations later. The main teacher of spoken language, Geshe Ngawang Nornang (1924–2014), was present, as was Prof. Seyfort Ruegg (1931–2021). Geshe-la allowed me to test out of one year of course work since I could speak and read at about third- or fourth-year level (having used his own textbook). He also helped me a lot later as an informant when I was reading various sources for my MA thesis.

I was the first and last Tibetan student at the UW to come with prior language skills or to do a BA degree first. All others came to the program with other BAs (like History or English), wanting to change to Tibetan as a grad student.

After finishing my BA as quickly as possible, in winter 1975, I applied for grad school and was able to continue in a serious way thanks to support from a NDFL (National Defense Foreign Language) five-year fellowship. I ended that fellowship when I finished my MA thesis in autumn 1979. Several chapters of my thesis I submitted as research reports to the Inner Asia Colloquium, which was also attended by in-house Turcologists (such as Ilse Cirtautas), and the great Mongolist Nicholas Poppe (1897–1991), whose colorful criticisms were very memorable (pronouncing as he did all the letters in *rgyal po*, the common term for “king”).

For the success of my thesis I travelled to Nepal and did field work in summer 1977. I was formally affiliated with the Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, and that summer I flew to Dzung Sampa and also trekked to the Muktinath Valley. There I met again and collaborated with the Danish anthropologist Michael Vinding.

**What impact did your teachers have on your own scholarly life and career?**

Prof. Seyfort Ruegg was fortunately in Seattle all of my time at the UW except the final year of my PhD (1985, when he had started in Hamburg). I was in awe of him, but had to attend his Introduction to Buddhism class in the 1970s, and in later years attended at least one of his reading courses whenever I was in residence (the last time was in spring 1984). We read a lot of Madhyamaka in those years (he was writing a book for the History of Indian Philosophy series, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India* [1981]). I highly admired his amazingly lucid renderings of abstruse Tibetan Buddhist philosophical passages. He also put me in his debt by carefully reading and commenting on both my MA thesis and PhD dissertation (which he directed).

For me as an American he was culturally so different. In language and behavior, he was very high-class English, and (as I later learned) came from a highly artistic family. At the end of the semester he would kindly invite me with a tiny group of other grad students over to his apartment in scenic Lakewood district for sherry and snacks, which was so English. Though I was just a bumpkin American who was from both rural Michigan and, more recently, the crass frontier West Coast, I felt it was nice of him to want to chat with us about shared scholarly interests as he did. He told me much later that he had also spent time studying in the 1950s with outstanding lamas (like Geshe Wanggyal) in the Himalayas in places like Kalimpong, and could speak Tibetan (though with a noticeable French accent). He had done his own PhD in Paris, writing a huge tome in French, and I then idolized French Tibetologists like R.A. Stein, whom he personally knew.

I was so lucky to have such a fine scholarly role model as Seyfort Ruegg. You have to remember what incredible liberties were being taken in the name of “Tibetan translations” in those days in North America

by scholars with university positions, such as the flamboyant, seemingly sophisticated but too inventive renderings of Herbert V. Guenther (1917–2006) or the painfully clumsy and opaque “Yig-cha-ese” calques of Jeffrey Hopkins in Virginia.

Reading with Seyfort Ruegg, I quickly began to regularly note down on vocabulary notebooks the equivalents he would give for many Tibetan words. I lugged those cards around for years, to India and Japan. His wonderful terms were all the more useful since he also had a superb grasp of Indian Buddhist philosophy as found in the Sanskrit source texts. Later during the end of my time in Seattle, after I had studied for ten years or more, in 1983 and 1984, he enjoyed challenging me in class sometimes, asking whether I would be willing to take on the next (fairly tough) passage. I mention it to show how deeply indebted I am for his (then peerless) training.

Another thing I owe Seyfort Ruegg is his example regarding the need to be thorough as a scholar regarding documenting the existing literature. “We Tibetologists go on reinventing the wheel!” he would often say.

I still remember preparing for his classes with my co-student Paul Nietupski, followed by a much-needed cheese toast snack offered by Paul. (I later crossed paths with Paul for a very memorable bicycle tour of Tibetan publishers in Chengdu in 1986, after suddenly bumping into him in the same hotel lobby.)

We were so lucky that Seyfort Ruegg and Dezhung Rinpoche were both in Seattle at that time. “This is all so impermanent,” Rinpoche said to us so many times. He was in his late sixties at the time, something like my age now.

The UW in Seattle was a place you could study Mongolian and Tibetan in the 1960s and 1970s. (Now it is totally dead for both.) Two scholars from there who later made incredible contributions to the field were E. Gene Smith (1936–2010) and Mel Goldstein (b. 1938). In 1963, both were grad students assisting Wylie for his Sakya history project. Goldstein started in academics studying history to the level of BA and MA at the University of Michigan. During those Seattle years (the early 1960s) he married a *kudrak semo* (noble lady), to mention a personal detail of his vita, and switched his main subject to anthropology (with a heavy emphasis on modern politics), with a remarkably long and prolific career



as scholar. (His dictionaries and detailed histories make him indispensable to all Tibetologists.)

Gene Smith, on the other hand, never married, to mention again a personal fact, but was incredibly generous and reliable as a senior friend and mentor. His monumental struggle to save Tibetan sacred literature is the stuff of legend. We are all indebted to him in so many ways, not the least because of his enduring scriptural legacy, the TBRC (now BDRC) website.

Other memorable recollections of the UW in the 1970s: During my time I had significant contacts with two MA students. I mention them at the end for the sake of completeness; they were not as important as my teachers. The first was my senior, John Ardussi, who finished his MA a few years before me. He had done a BA in history, and he helped me a lot by recommending classic historiographical books, such as by Jacques Barzun.

The second memorable MA student was my junior academically, Ivanka Vana Jakic, though she was chronologically older. Born in Yugoslavia, she as a devout Buddhist who had before coming to Seattle spent a few years in Dharamsala (LTWA), and I helped her as tutor and informant during my last years at the UW (1980–1985). I helped her with passages that were too tough “even for Dr. Wylie.” She finally submitted her thesis in 1985 as the opus: “A Study of the Life and Work of Bya ’Chad kha ba Ye shes rdo rje,” which I had suggested as a subject.

**Since 1960, there lived the Sakya family of Jigdral Dagchen Rinpoche (1929–2016) in Seattle. That group also included the Sakya master Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987), the uncle of Jigdral Dagchen Rinpoche’s wife, whose important biography you have written with painstaking care. Would you like to share with us what was your relationship with Dezhung Rinpoche? When and how did this begin? Is it right that you also served as his interpreter? And what influence did he have on your scholarly life and studies? Were you already studying Tibetan at the University of Washington (Seattle) when you met him for the first time?**

I first had the great honor of first meeting my revered teacher Dezhung Rinpoche when I came back to Seattle in fall of 1973. I told quite a few

details about my contacts with him in *Saint in Seattle*. To try to answer now your specific questions, I moved then to the same neighborhood in Wedgewood district northeast of the UW. It was not far from the Phüntshok Phodrang residence, and Rinpoche could then reach both houses if he walked slowly on crutches.

My house had several flights of steps you had to climb up (a major nuisance for his crutches) and also a view of the Olympics snow mountains. He told me, “You need to have great merit to have a nice view,” referring to his own little house with views only of the nearby quiet neighborhood streets.

Fall of 1973 was my first academic quarter back at the UW and I was trying to begin Tibetan studies there, with Geshe Nornang present at school (but Wylie not).

I recently found stuck in one of my old spoken Tibetan text books, a wonderful name and address card that Dezhung Rinpoche (“Kunga D. Labrang”) had carefully written out and must have given me then. It’s charming because he makes a minor mistake in capitalizing when writing the local prefix for the telephone, which was LA (Lakewood). He was living at his little house at 6202 26th Ave NE for most of my first three UW years. In those years he began teaching from his house, and I acted as main translator when available. (I was gone in Asia from winter 1975 to summer 1976, financed by several months working as letter carrier at the post office.)

During my first years in Seattle, Dezhung Rinpoche kindly allowed me to read with him a classic Buddhist introductory text once a week, the *sNang gsum mdzes rgyan* of dKon mchog lhun grub, though he had never formally studied it in Tibet. Sometimes when visiting I noticed the Jesuit priest and UW Tibetology MA and PhD student, Father Sherburne reading with him. I did not know him yet and felt a bit jealous and resentful when I saw him there, thinking, “Why is Rinpoche wasting his precious time with him?” I did not know the real situation and thank Rinpoche for his example of open-minded wisdom.

For me and many other Seattle students those three years were golden, which ended when Rinpoche went to New York City in 1976 and 1977, to work on a translation project with Lobsang Lhalungpa (1926–2008), which saddened us greatly. I witnessed his return in May of 1978,

when he met His Holiness Sakya Trizin in Seattle and accompanied him for a few days after that to Canada.

In 1973 and 1974 I sort of became his local translator if he needed one. (Before that he would sometimes need to call his niece, Damola.)

In general, I accompanied him as translator several trips to Vancouver and Oregon (Fig. 6), and still cannot forget a wonderful teaching trip to Santa Cruz, California, in spring of 1979, shortly before my trip to Oxford and to recently opened Ladakh that summer. I remember now that one of my earliest academic book reviews (of a book on the Life of Padmasambhava published by Dharma Publishing) was inspired by an illuminating conversation we had while travelling from Seattle to Portland by car.

Seeing the old card with the added name “Kunzang Nyima,” I remember also Dezhung Rinpoche introducing to me in 1973 his brother with that name, who was then his constant companion. He was an accomplished Tibetan doctor, and I remember that he always had ready in the kitchen a pot of tea concentrate for his siblings to use, much too strong for me. When I first got to know him, he strongly insisted on teaching me and a small group of students Tibetan medicine. A handful of would-be students agreed to meet once a week in the evening, using an empty classroom in Thompson Hall, at the university. (The very small group included Richard Baldwin, later Lama Richard.) We finally gave up mainly because of the great barriers to communication—the willing teacher’s very thick Gapa dialect was almost impossible to understand.

Kunzang Nyima assured me that one of his strong points as physician was treating women’s complaints. I thought he was joking, but I also remember later actually translating for him to help him communicate with a UW nursing student named Carla from the nearby Ravena/Roosevelt district, whose monthly menstruation had stopped. His horrible tasting medicine managed to solve that, but only after she took a full month of the prescribed nearly unbearable doses.

The only time in all my many contacts that I heard Dezhung Rinpoche loudly and vehemently disagree with someone was two or three times with this wacky younger brother of his. At the end of their long and very intense strife, Kunzang Nyima would finally softly concede: “Yes, Rinpoche (*lags so rin po che*). Yes, Rinpoche.”

**Another eminent Sakya master whose biography you published two years ago was Chogye Trichen Rinpoche (1919–2007). What was your relationship with Chogye Trichen Rinpoche? One of your first publications, in 1979, was an English translation of one of Rinpoche’s works, *Gateway to the Temple: Manual of Tibetan Monastic Customs, Art, Building and Celebrations*. How did this collaboration come about?**

My revered master Chogye Trichen Rinpoche I had had the honor of first meeting and received teachings from at Rajpur in June 1972, during my first trip to Asia. My second trip to India happened in winter 1975, to receive the Lamdre Tshogshe teachings from H.H. Sakya Trizin in Rajpur. After that, during the next spring and summer (1976) I travelled from India and visited Lumbini (Figs. 1–2) and finished then my translation of that book. (Its first Tibetan edition had been published by the former Nalendra monk Ngawang Tobgyal.)

I realize now that the subject matter of that book was important for supporting my later art studies in my career since it touched on several aspects of sacred art. The book was published with both English and Tibetan texts, carefully laid out by the late Hal K. Kuløy (1941–2001), UNICEF administrator for Nepal, who was the series editor, a Norwegian expatriate. A friend of Gene Smith, I would get to know him better in later years, when he visited Hamburg fairly regularly, trying to lure me into contributing a book to his Orchid Press based in Bangkok.

**Your extensive research on the history of the Sakya tradition and its different branches, as well as your translations of religious scriptures and philosophical treatises originating from within that tradition, both seem to have benefited enormously from your close collaboration with Tibetan scholars and informants, including Dezhung Rinpoche, Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, and Khenchen Appey Rinpoche (1927–2010). Why do you think such collaborative work is so important for scholars engaged in Tibetan Studies? And how has it influenced your own scholarship?**

Collaborative work with those great masters was so “personally convincing” that I guess after a certain point I never questioned how excellent and useful it could be. My suggestion to any doubters is: take the

trouble to learn the spoken language well enough and engage in conversations with many very qualified Tibetan collaborators, whether laymen or ordained. But at the same time, as one Turkology teacher (Ilse Cirtautas) once warned me many years ago: “Try to be better informed than your informants.” (I later heard that Prof. Cirtautas had done her own doctorate in Hamburg.)

Each of those three venerable masters was so different in dialect, personality and teaching style. And they each knew their subjects in a supremely masterful way. It was impossible for someone on my level to be better informed than they were.

**In the 1970s and 1980s, you spent long periods doing research in India, Nepal, and Tibet. What was doing field work like back then? Could you share some particular experiences that well illustrate those times?**

So many vivid memories come back when thinking about my travels in the 1970s and 1980s. My first winter in Bouddhanath, in early 1973, I stayed in a small single unfurnished room on the second floor, facing the great stupa and hearing the clang of little prayer wheels much of the day. The upstairs neighbors were Sherpas who at Losar had come for a few weeks or months to celebrate. I remember their jovial cries and also recall once when their partying had gotten so out of hand that their *chang* home-brew barley beer actually started leaking and dripping through in one corner of my ceiling! You have to imagine that I paid as rent just 30 Nepalese rupees a month, about two dollars U.S. (But no running water or toilet.)

I remember learning spoken Tibetan by practicing at one of the only restaurants then existing out on the main street (Dorje’s Restaurant). My main teacher there was Dorje’s mother, Nyi Dechen-la, who spoke such beautiful Central Dialect, coming as she did from Zhol in Lhasa (directly beneath the Potala Palace). I just called her “Amala.” So many beautiful practice hellos and goodbyes she graced me with, that I can still here the musical tone of her voice. One of the crazy episodes then was when I stupidly tried to correct the “buff” on the menu to “beef” when trying to help make a new copy of their menus.

Those were the times when the big, paved road from Kathmandu

first reached all the way to the stupa entrance. Once I was called over by the Chini Lama, a prominent local politician and landlord, who often sat on a collapsible chair at the edge of the circumambulation path, giving hand blessings to local Tamangs. “I heard you are learning Tibetan,” he said. “Come tomorrow, I want to give you something.” The next day he surprised me by handing me a nice fresh print of the sacred Mahāyāna scripture, the *Vajracchedikā Sūtra*. Looking back now, it seems like a nice start for my future studies.

I wrote out hundreds of example sentences in my beginner’s *dbu can* Tibetan script for my huge spoken Tibetan manual by Goldstein and Nornang with its extremely awkward phonetics. And the local Gapa Ngorpa lama Traruk Rinpoche (who was always kind and generous both then and for years later) sent his young helper Kargyal, a teenage monk, to tutor me in reciting Tibetan books out loud. (He was later known as Lama Kalsang in North America.)

A second unforgettable experience when travelling in the 1970s was visiting the home of Gene Smith in New Delhi. I had first met Gene in Seattle at the Ward Street Dharma centre in November 1975, which was the first time he came back to Seattle since 1963. This was when Dezhung Rinpoche was about to leave for New York. Gene had come in part to collect quite a few of his own books that he had left in storage in Dezhung Rinpoche’s house.

He quietly listened to Dezhung Rinpoche’s Dharma presentation of the *Parting from the Four Attachments* as a non-sectarian (Rime) teaching, which I translated as best I could. After all his years listening to Rinpoche in the early 1960s, he could understand everything, I am sure. Anyway, soon thereafter he personally invited me to visit him in the future, if ever I was in Delhi. (I was about to leave Seattle for India a few days later.)

I think I may have first visited him that coming winter or spring (1975/76) when on my way from Rajpur to Nepal. In my MA thesis I profusely thank him for his great help, second only to Chogye Rinpoche.

It was so extraordinary to visit his palatial diplomat’s house, then in the Golf Links suburb of New Delhi. (Later he stayed in another huge, rented house for many years in South Extension, Part II.) There I was as a total neophyte! But he introduced me at parties like a normal junior

colleague. One of the most important members of his household was Mangaram Kashyap, his major domo. That very reliable person's many domestic responsibilities included not just managing the household staff, but also sometimes helping Gene find a lost book in his immense personal library. (He would later have his own house in Noida, where he supported Gene's scanning projects.)

"Oh, I'm just an office babu," Gene would say, with a yawn, and by day he was a bureaucrat. Evenings at his place featured many graciously hosted cocktail parties, which seemed strange and new. Much later that evening, four or five hours after the last guest had left, my sleep would be disturbed in what was for me the middle of the night by the soft whirring of his manual typewriter. He was waking up very, very early to begin his day by transcribing whatever Tibetan book he was most interested in at the time, or maybe he was writing overdue English introductions for books currently "in the press" with the many local Tibetan publishers.

Gene's house often was filled with distinguished house guests. Many of whom I met for the first time when having breakfast, such as Rishikesh Shah (1925–2002) of Nepal! (He was a Nepalese writer, politician and human rights activist that Gene was fond of.)

Gene kindly first introduced me there to my distinguished Tibetan friend who was and is still living in Dharamsala, Mr. Josayma Tashi Tsering, the great historian (now with the Amnye Machen Institute). (So many other Tibetan-studies colleagues and friends I also met there first, it would sound like a Who's Who to mention them all, but I should mention at least Aung San Suu Kyi, wife of the brilliant young Michael Aris, just to give an idea of the very high level of house guests you might encounter.) Or the house guest might be a very humble Buddhist practitioner or a low-key Bhutanese publisher friend. Or he or she could be a scholar of various nationalities, disciplines and ages.

Now I also recall that after I had gone back to Seattle (in summer or fall 1976), Gene requested an urgent favor. He sent me a money order to pay for many, many copy-flow printouts of bibliographical rarities then available only on microfilm in the UW library. He later had his resident Bhutanese scribes/publishers such as Mani Dorje or Kunzang Tobgye carefully copy them out and publish them, having eighteen

copies immediately acquired by his own Library of Congress Delhi office (using the PL-480 rupees to pay for them).

A third unforgettable memory of travelling in Asia was going to Tibet for a conference in 2004 (Figs. 15–18). I had previously visited Tibet in 1986 from Japan via Hong Kong and Chengdu when it newly opened. This second opportunity was something I could attend more easily from my base which was then in Germany. It was organized by Scandinavians, mainly Prof. Knud Larsen, a Danish professor of architecture based in Oslo, so I could join the group from Europe by flying to Lhasa via Nepal.

For someone like me who speaks fairly fluent Tibetan, visiting Tibet is always a treat in many ways. But in this case it was being organized specifically to support the preservation of Tibetan art, another cause very dear to my heart. So the whole thing was for me just one amazing experience after the next.

The chance to see the original classic murals in the nearby Potala Palace like those of Tsangpa Chöying Gyatsho was incredible. And to hear the personal and family reminiscences of the senior Tibetan professor, Genla Tenpa Rabten, while viewing the Potala murals with him was also truly unforgettable. By drinking Tibetan tea every day, the high altitude did not affect me as much as feared.

Here I want to add a fourth memorable travel experience. It was something almost miraculous that I witnessed while visiting and staying at a holy pilgrimage place in India, Bodh Gaya. It was fall of 1989, and I had come there to teach one semester of introductory Tibetan to a handful of the American undergrad students of the Antioch Buddhist study-abroad program.

The miracle was the change that happened when that holy town stopped being an annoying Bihar village and became much more bearable and loveable. In mid to late December the unbearable humidity and heat suddenly dropped, and many Tibetan restaurant tents also popped up, with hundreds of pilgrims showing up from all over the Himalayas.

This Antioch program housed its participants in individual rooms of the Burmese Pilgrim's Hostel. For me it was fascinating as a Buddhist-studies wallah to observe the introduction of those students to the three main different brands of Buddhist practice, Theravadin Vipassanā, Zen Buddhist and Tibetan Buddhist, and to experience it as a staff member.



In my year, the final group activity we all took part in was an exciting intra-sectarian softball match, with the Antioch staff and students pitted against a very competitive team fielded by the Zen Buddhist temple.

At the end the other team beat us, though the game was very close. The Zen temple had recruited several sporty Bihari youths to fill out their roster, who played expertly, applying their similar skills from cricket. That is when we learned “the Zen of softball.”

**As a versatile scholar with interests in various genres and many subject matters within Tibetan literature, and as someone who doubtless has read thousands upon thousands of folios of Tibetan texts, could you share with us what makes Tibetan language and its literature so fascinating? What makes them so appealing to you?**

Literary Tibetan has its great charms and a huge variety that slowly reveal themselves to patient readers. Sometimes I regretted how difficult it can be to understand for students with less preparation.

Knowing literary Tibetan was my passport to so many fascinating adventures that I don't know where to begin.

All I can say is that I have recently come to appreciate more how remarkably conservative written Tibetan is. If you know one area well, such as old canonical, then you can still learn “Modern Tibetan” fairly easily, due to the amazingly conservative orthography of verbs, for instance.

**During your long academic career, you worked in various institutions in different countries. From 1984 to 1986, you worked as the lecturer of Tibetan Language in the Department of Indian and Buddhist Studies of Osaka University. How did your connection with Japan come about?**

How did I end up in Japan in 1984? After my AIIS (American Institute of Indian Studies) research fellowship for my PhD dissertation ended in India in 1983, I decided to live in Kyoto, Japan, to finish that project. There I could access needed published sources through my kind friends there; Katsumi Mimaki, for example, loaned me many books from his personal library. (Pointing to a xerox machine he joked: That is our *mKhas pa rnam s' jug pa'i sgo* nowadays!)

The easiest way to support myself was to teach English for two hours per night, three days a week. In 1984, Prof. Aramaki suddenly appeared at my little rented house in the garden of the Kubo sans near Hana-zono and Tokiwa, riding his bicycle. His Tibetan native lecturer at Osaka University (Tshultrim Kalsang) had just become a Japanese citizen. So lacking anyone else, he proposed hiring me as a “foreign lecturer.” I gladly accepted.

Just to give a little more background about my being in Japan, I should add that for people from Seattle on the West Coast, Japan was a much easier place to visit than Europe. For travelers like me it was also a much nicer and more civilized part of Asia, especially after the dangers and hassles of India and Nepal. For young Americans, it was also a place you could easily find well-paid work as an English conversation teacher.

I visited Japan first in summer 1973 on my way home from South Asia, with brief visits of Burma, Thailand and Hong Kong. I had been told in India that a Sakyapa lama had been affiliated with the Toyo Bunko library, so I even visited it once or twice.

I should add that for Seattle people in 1973 you could travel from Yokohama port to our commercial port of Seattle using the Fesco (then the Soviet Far Eastern) Steamship Line. It took 12 days, but cost only \$300 US dollars (cash), with food and unlimited personal luggage! You ate at the captain’s table. Dramamine was not included. You would be met at the dock by federal agents holding Geiger counters.

I just remembered, as a UW student in the 1970s I also sometimes attended the Japanese art history slide shows of Prof. Glenn Webb, who also had a “Kyoto Program” for his students. That also introduced me to many of the major temples in Kyoto. (I recently learned that Webb was a Buddhist priest and founded the Seattle Zen center.)

Professionally, Japan was also important because my colleagues there took the trouble to translate some of my main books (now available as pdf files on Academia). I also had the great honor of being invited as keynote speaker to a conference convened by Professor Shunzo Onoda at Bukkyo University (September 10, 2005), Kyoto. I also had the honor of attending in March, 2008, an international seminar on esoteric Buddhism at Koyasan University, which was very memorable in many ways.

I also had the honor of having a research fellowship from the Japan Science Foundation (invited by Prof. Mimaki, Kyoto University) in 1990, and still later (2010) served as guest professor for one quarter in Tokyo (at the invitation of Prof. Deleanu, IIBS). I should add that lecturing during that last visit in 2010 would have been impossible without the kind translating of my respected colleague Dr. Kimiaki Tanaka (Fig. 24). He and I are fellow Tibetan thangka addicts or obsessive fanatics. (So many times we ended up being like a pair of twins—avidly visiting together the nearest thangka collection after the various Tibetan conferences.) For him to volunteer his translating at the IIBS was a godsend.

Also very memorable, during one of my main stays in Kyoto (in 1990), was to have the honor of attending the weekly canonical Tibetan reading sessions at Otani University for mainly foreign students that was taught by the great scholar of Buddhism and Tibetan studies, Nagao Sensei. We read a passage from a major Mahāyāna Sūtra, and the young Jonathan Silk I believe was also present as one of the main participants. This session had some connection with *The Eastern Buddhist* journal or was located near its office. Not only did I benefit from that sensei's careful explanations then, but also enjoyed a very positive personal interaction with him when I visited his home (at the insistence of his nephew, my dear late friend Tsuguhito Takeuchi), and we all enjoyed extremely rare New Year's refreshments.

So I really did enjoy many very good connections with Japan and its scholars.

**In 1992, you were awarded the professorship for Tibetology in the Department for Indian and Tibetan Studies of the University of Hamburg. How did this happen? What brought you to Hamburg?**

What I later deduced was that the fact that I had been two years in Hamburg in the late 1980s with a Humboldt fellowship didn't hurt my chances.

I was then in Vienna, and my sponsor and boss there (Prof. Steinkellner) was strongly encouraging me to apply for the position that Seyfort Ruegg had recently left. Both Steinkellner and his close friend in Hamburg, the eminent Lambert Schmithausen (later my revered senior

colleague), strongly fought for me coming. Their efforts did work, in the end.

**And what are some of your fondest memories of working in Hamburg for almost fifteen years, ending in 2007?**

Now that I think back, I was very lucky to be to start in Hamburg at that time in 1992. Then our program's instructor for spoken Tibetan was Ngawang Tsering of Nurla, Ladakh. He became not just a dear friend but also my respected informant. He kept trying to interest me in Dri-gung art and he kindly agreed in the early 1990s to do an interview of the last surviving painter of the Driri style. That helped me a lot, and I mention my great indebtedness to him in my fifth RMA catalog. He also planted in the backyard garden of my house a patch of cilantro plants, so that we would be properly equipped for fresh herbs whenever he might want in the future to make a proper Indian style dal. (He had gained an excellent dal recipe during his student days at Shanti Niketan University, in West Bengal.) The black and white photo of him is from about 1994 or 1995 (Fig. 12). He is joining me while I am drinking my late-morning coffee. He probably stayed as a house guest, which he sometimes did, raiding the Tibetan book collection in one of the upstairs rooms that many guests used then.

Another very vivid warm memory that now comes from my early Hamburg years has to do with the fact that as Tibetan professor in Hamburg you were officially responsible for the NGMPP (Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project) in Nepal. That meant that I could and should make "inspection tours" of the project in Nepal every few years. This photo with the Ven. Thrangu Rinpoche is from one such visit, from April 13, 1999. I was inviting him and his attendant that day to see some Tibetan things of interest at the Nepal Research Centre (Fig. 14).

I had got to know that venerable representative of the Karma Kagyu tradition in 1975, and had even tried to help him fund his struggling establishment by selling Tibetan incense. He was always a huge help regarding the history of his native province, Gapa, and was such an incredible lama to talk with when he was quietly at home (and not traveling to teach in the West).

Another very memorable classroom memory was during one class in the late 1990s one of my older students suddenly remarked: “Professor Jackson, you are teaching by means of the Socratic method.” (Frau Sigrid Pietsch was her name, who was then starting a second university-level study after qualifying as a teacher.) It surprised me but when I much later thought about it, I concluded that it must have been the method I had learned as a high school student from Mr. Milton Yanicks. Even now as a teacher I think it’s boring to just throw the final conclusion at the students.

Another of the fondest memories is how much I and my family were accepted in the end. (My German friends and neighbors used the word *auswandern* for my family leaving their new home country.) And the wonderful high-quality scanner that my students kindly gifted me at the end helped me in the coming years a lot (Fig. 22). Also unforgettable was the wonderful issue of the *mTho slob Bang chen* announcing my departure that the students made (Fig. 30), which still hangs prominently in my office.

**After leaving Hamburg University in 2007, you returned to the US and devoted yourself to your great passion for Tibetan sacred art, working until 2015 as curator for the Rubin Museum of Art, New York, and publishing a series of six exhibition catalogues while in that position. As one of the leading scholars in the field of Tibetan art history, we wonder how did you get interested in Tibetan art in the first place? And what makes it such a fascinating field of study for you?**

Personally I felt in the 1970s and 1980s that Tibetan painting (including its history) was being threatened by destruction. I wanted to fight that as a scholar. I still do.

In general, I was always interested in art, including painting even in High School, where I took art (not music) as an elective. During my BA studies I presented a paper on stones that are mineral pigments in my geology class (and audited a course on painter’s materials in the UW Art Department). My mother’s paternal Norwegian family includes one noteworthy artist, so I think I inherited an artistic sense or eye from her. (She was also a big book lover.)

What makes it such a fascinating field of study? Part of the fascination for me is that it also involves not just history but something still very alive (that we can contact through living artists). From early on I was interested in learning how paintings were made and what materials used. It was during my trip to India and Nepal in 1975/1976 that I did the most intense interviews with my two main teachers, Wangdrak and Legdrup Gyatsho.

I came to Rajpur in winter 1975 for other reasons, and that was fortuitous because I was also able to meet and interview Wangdrak, who was then living with his nun sister, renting a few rooms in a little house on the main road in upper Rajpur. I commissioned a thangka from him, giving me a pretext to drop in on him regularly. (I donated it to the Sakya College, where it was hung framed in the dining hall.)

For my future studies, the interviews with Wangdrak were crucial for it was he who opened my eyes to the difference between Üri and Tsangri painting styles. Though he came from western Tsang, he and his family followed a painting style of Lhasa.

In my 1984 book, much to the puzzlement and resistance of the London publisher, I adamantly insisted on mainly representing Wangdrak's iconometric tradition there, and not that of Robert Beer, the highly skilled Englishman. For the peaceful deities the faces seem a bit fat. (Khenpo Appey's sharp eyes noticed it and he teased me about that regarding the painting I had donated to his school.)

I finished my book *Tibetan Thangka Painting: Methods and Materials* in spring 1982, while staying in Library Bazaar of the Mussoorie hill station. I was then a newly minted "PhC," a candidate who was allowed to write his dissertation. (I was using the extra time and excess rupees from the AIIS to finish this art-related project.) A few months earlier, while still in Seattle, I had done one field exam on Tibetan literature under Prof. Wylie. I had suggested to him doing a detailed write-up of Tibetan *bzo rig* literature. When I finished it, he seemed to have forgotten our agreement. Anyway, he finally accepted it without suggesting any changes, and it shows that my art interests were not completely outside my UW studies in those days. (If you want to see what I submitted in that exam, just look at the long Tibetan bibliography sections in *Tibetan Thangka Painting*.)

Just three years earlier, in 1979, I had published Chogye Rinpoche's *Gateway to the Temple* manual, which contained a full chapter on iconometry! It contained Legdrup Gyatsho's drawings and that, too, perfectly supported my learning that theme for my 1984 book. In any case, though I have started to ramble on a bit, I want to stress here again my indebtedness to my modest looking teachers, Shekar Wangdrak and Legdrup Gyatsho of Nalendra, for what they taught me serendipitously at that crucial point in 1975 and 1976.

On art I should add that friends in the West assisted and encouraged me in the 1990s for art history when I was living in Germany (and much needed illustrations for my coming *A History of Tibetan Painting*). One was Ulrich von Schroeder, the noted expert on Buddhist sculpture, author of many huge, award-winning books. He kindly accompanied me in the early 1990s to four very important collectors in Switzerland (including the Nobel laureate Prof. Ernst), and also introduced me to Prof. Driesch in Cologne, another major collector with whom I fruitfully collaborated. For many years I was preparing with von Schroeder a (never published) book that was meant to document in great detail major thangka sets of the Sakya and Ngorpa.

The second person who helped was my old friend, the Asian art expert, Moke Mokotoff in the States. From his base in New York City he accompanied me (in March, 1997) to several major museums and private collections—a thangka pilgrimage of sorts. (We visited together the incredible Zimmerman and Ford collections, as well as Philadelphia.) In 2006 he was the one who first suggested to me the concrete idea of leaving Germany to do a series of exhibition catalogs for a new museum in New York City. He also provided vital help for many of those subsequent six catalogs (when I faced huge obstacles).

And I actually need to mention a third friend, but living in India, not in the West, who has helped a lot to make my research possible—Mr. Josayma Tashi Tsering. Specifically regarding art, what he embodies is a matchless knowledge of many aspects of Tibetan written sources, but here mainly regarding art-related technical writings (and he also possesses a peerless private collection of such works). So many times he provided the needed help with crucial texts or with his own personal wake-up emails to important institutions in India (when mine were being ignored for months). Much more could be said.

Jan Van Alphen, my boss in the RMA curatorial department for many years, once described my research method: “This persistence has involved the cultivation of many learned and venerable native scholars and artists as informants, collaborators and friends.” The fifth catalogue would not exist without the last-second crucial help of several friends, especially Moke and Tashi Tsering.

**Besides your research on Tibetan art, you have also published a number of important contributions on Tibetan scholasticism, for example, *The Entrance Gate for the Wise* which presents the third chapter of Sakya Pandita’s *mKhas ’jug* (1987), *Enlightenment by a Single Means* treating the *dkar po chig thub* controversies in Tibet (1994), and, more recently, a translation of Sakya Pandita’s *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal* (2015). Could you tell us more about this field of interest?**

The writings of Sakya Pandita were one of my early main interests. I was so lucky to be taught two of them by the late incomparable scholar Khenpo Appey as part of my dissertation research in 1983 at the Sakya College. He only agreed to teach me the *mKhas ’jug* if I also agreed to translate Sapan’s classic Mahāyāna work, the *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal*, as he would carefully explain it. So he started it, and in Hamburg I used to read a chapter or two with different students over the years. I am happy that finally a polished translation appeared in a book published by Wisdom.

One of my fondest memories in Hamburg is one of the later reading classes when one visiting Japanese student managed to identify the final chapter’s verses as a big quotation from Gro lung pa’s classic *bsTan rim chen mo*. Another fond memory was being able to use the taped IBA (International Buddhist Academy) explanations by Khenpo Appey when preparing to read with my students the most difficult *Sa lam rnam gzhag* chapter.

Once in Hamburg a student said, “Your *mKhas ’jug* dissertation is the first comparative edition of a native Tibetan treatise.” That is not true, since there was already Bosson’s edition of the *Sa skya legs bshad*. But I think in 1985 I was trying to show how that kind of more definitive edition could be made. (This is the so-called *dpe bsdur ma* edition.)



It might be the first Tibetan comparative addition that took into accounts all available old xylographs and manuscripts. Later the series editor Thubten Jinpa told me that it had inspired him to see my book with that edition in the late 1980s.

**What can we expect to read from you in the future? What kind of projects are you working on at present? We have heard that you are in the midst of revising some of your early writings. Could you also be working on a revised version of your history of Nalendra monastery, which includes a detailed history of fifteenth-century Tibet?**

As possible future projects I would mention:

1. A survey of Sakya monasteries? It would be very nice to have one like the survey of Bönpo monasteries compiled by Karmay and Nagano. I have a list of over four hundred establishments, based on the list of Dampa Rinpoche. (Dezhung Rinpoche once said he would like some day to write a history of Sakyapa monasteries like the *Vaidurya g.ya sel.*)
2. A survey of Sakya (and Ngorpa) paintings?
3. Yes, it is true that I am revising some of my early books such as *Gateway to the Temple* and *Mollas of Mustang*.

**Looking back now on your scholarly life and an eventful career spanning more than forty-five years, what is your impression of how Tibetology has developed during those years? And what might the future of Tibetan Studies hold in store?**

Having started in Nepal in 1972, I guess I am now definitely an older guy. That's forty-nine years (I needed a calculator).

One of my favorite thangka painter informants in Bodhnath, Kathmandu, Ngawang Zangpo-la, expert of both Gardri and Menri, the last surviving one, the last time I saw him at his home in 2015 referred to me almost affectionately as "a guy from way back when" (*mi rnying pa*), so that is what I have become. (There is a Tibetan saying, "Older friends are better," *mi rnying pa yag.*)

You have to remember that I began my studies in the pre-computer age. In my day, a well-arranged pile of note cards was cutting edge. So I still find the whole digital revolution of texts and images to be amazing.

That's likely to continue into the future, whether we like it or not. That's my obvious *ma 'ong lung bstan*.

But it's hard for me to generalize much about the entire field, past or future. Still, one more recent memory that keeps coming to my oldie mind again and again is my most recent visit to both Nepal and Lumbini (Figs. 25–29), at the kind invitation of the Lumbini International Research Institute (LIRI), in 2015.

For me it was such a treat to stay in the beautiful Japanese hotel and wake up to view the beautiful Terai natural setting, with almost no jet lag.

Attending the little academic conference by ramshackle and breaking down rental bicycle, stopping on the way to pay respects at holy spots....

Sharing recent art history findings with my laptop during dinner in a nice Japanese restaurant with several of my old students who also managed to come to that wonderful place (Fig. 26). (Several had to come, as organizers! [The conference was organized by Marta Sernesi and Volker Caumanns with the title *Towards a History of 15th Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming, Religious Fervour and Political Unrest*])

It was such a pleasant culmination for me then, as oldest Lumbini wallah present.

If that somehow symbolizes the progress we have made, my ancient brain can't complain.



**Fig. 1**  
To board the river ferries between Bhairahawa in summer sometimes meant (as in summer 1976) wading ankle deep in mud. Photo courtesy David Jackson.



**Fig. 2**  
Jackson leaving Lumbini on horseback (1976). Photo courtesy David Jackson.



**Fig. 3** Visiting Copenhagen after Oxford conference on way to India (1979). Photo courtesy Michael Vinding.



**Fig. 4** Cracking a few books in Vinding's library while visiting Copenhagen (1979). Photo courtesy Michael Vinding.



**Fig. 5** Seattle house fixing basement while cutting Uni classes (1979).



Fig. 6  
Dezhung Rinpoche  
with brother and  
translator Jackson at  
a Dharma center in  
Oregon (1980).



Fig. 7 Dezhung Rinpoche with translator Jackson at the end of a Seattle teaching (1980).



Fig. 8 Japanese Association of Tibetan Studies 1985 at Nagoya. Jackson near back left corner. Photo courtesy Shunzo Onoda.



Fig. 9 Japanese Association of Tibetan Studies 1990 at Tokyo (Rissyo Univ.). Jackson near top center. Photo courtesy Shunzo Onoda.



**Fig. 10**

Jackson seated with Phende Lhakpa, the great Ngorpa historical source (Bodhnath, 1994). Photo courtesy Moke Mokotoff.



**Fig. 11**

At his home office working on his forthcoming *A History of Tibetan Painting* book (Schenefeld, 1995).



**Fig. 12**  
Sitting with Ngawang  
Tsering in living room  
(Schenefeld, 1994 or  
1995).



**Fig. 13**  
Jackson with just ha-  
bilitated Franz-Karl  
Ehrhard, with commit-  
tee members Lambert  
Schmithausen, the late  
Roland E. Emmerick  
and Albrecht Wezler  
(Hamburg, 1998). Photo  
Adelheid Mette.



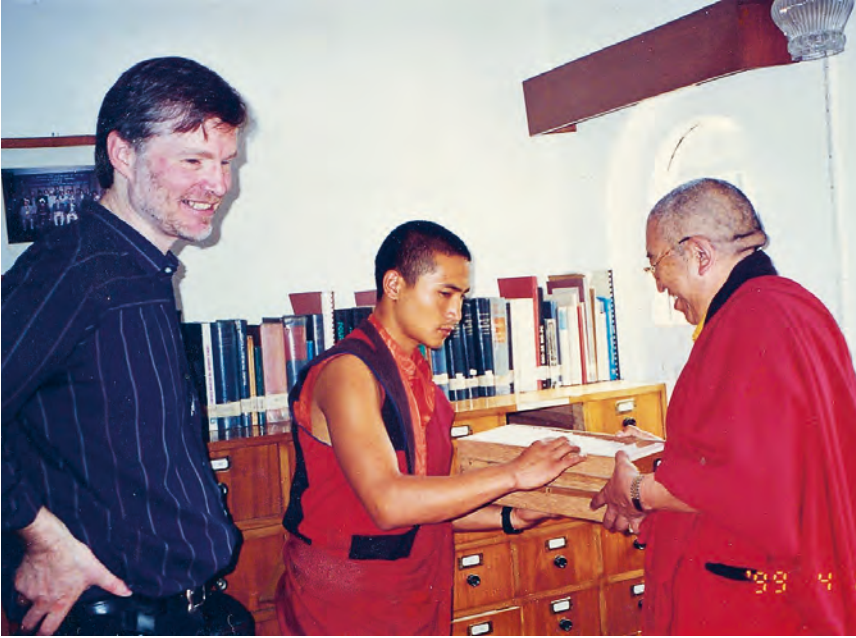


Fig. 14 Accompanying Thrangu Rinpoche when visiting the Nepal Research Centre (Kathmandu, 1999).



Fig. 15 Get-together with Feng Lingmin (Vice President of Tibet University), Weihong (Head of the Foreign Students Department), and Tashi Tsering (Head of the Department of Fine Arts) at Tibet University (Lhasa, 2004). Photo courtesy Penba Wangdu.



Fig. 16 Jackson's lecture, Tibet University (Lhasa, 2004). Photo courtesy Penba Wangdu.



Fig. 17 Enjoying a meal, Tibet University (Lhasa, 2004). Photo courtesy Penba Wangdu.



Fig. 18 Lhasa group photo of the International Conference on Traditional Architecture & Mural Conservation (2004). Photo courtesy Knud Larsen.



Fig. 19 With son Josef in Copenhagen for a Lhasa Restoration meeting with Knud Larsen (2006). Photo courtesy Knud Larsen.



Fig. 20 Leonard van der Kuijp visiting Schenefeld house for Lambert Schmithausen's retirement celebration (2006).



**Fig. 21** Rare group photo with students including Kōichi Takahashi, Eva Strähle, Rosita Faber, Mathias Fermer, Jörg Heimbel, Rebecca Hufen, and Katja Thiessen (Hamburg, 2007).



**Fig. 22** Opening a present (scanner) at beginning of departure party with Mr. and Mrs. Singh, Mr. and Mrs. Isaacson, and Mr. and Mrs. Schmithausen (Hamburg, 2007).



Fig. 23 Talking with Dorji Wangchuk near end of departure party (Hamburg, 2007).

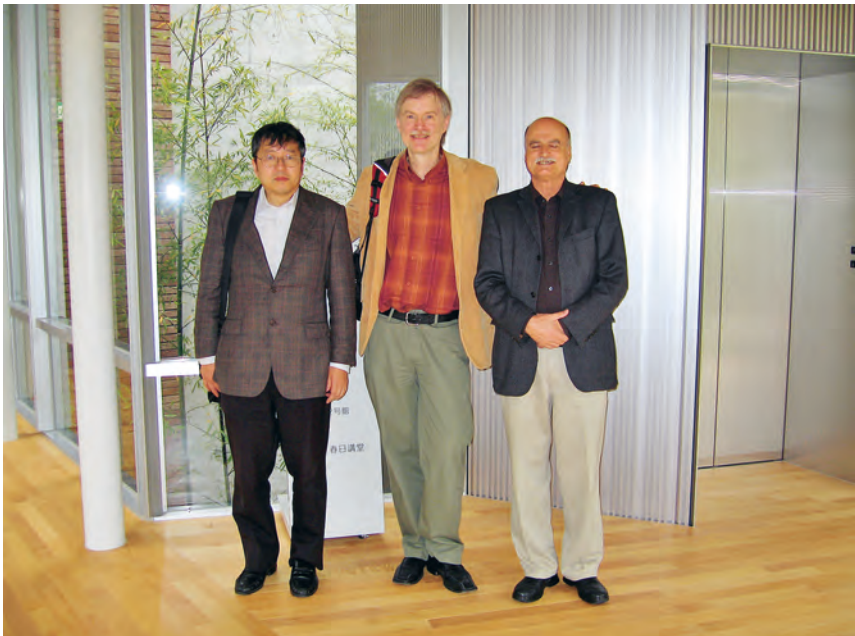


Fig. 24 With Kimiaki Tanaka who kindly translated Jackson's talk and Christoph Cüppers who was also there at IIBS Tokyo (2010).



Fig. 25 Group photo, LIRI conference (Lumbini, 2015).





Fig. 26 At evening enjoying meal and talking with students about recent findings (Lumbini, 2015).



Fig. 27 Is Jackson rushing by bike to the first session (Lumbini, 2015)?



Fig. 28 Talking with local host and expert (Lumbini, 2015).



Fig. 29 Enjoying samosas with the LIRI conference organizers and participants including Mathias Fermer, Marta Sernesi, Volker Caumanns, Tibor Porcio, and Jörg Heimbel (Lumbini, 2015).





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published by 84000 ([www.84000.co](http://www.84000.co))

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2. *The Noble Entering into the Seal of Going to What is Assured or Not Assured: 'Phags pa nges pa dang ma nges par 'gro ba'i phyag rgya la 'jug pa (Niyatāniyatagatimudrāvātāra)*. Toh 202, 2017.
3. *The Sūtra of the Seer Vyāsa's Questions: Drang srong rgyas pas zhus pa'i mdo (Rṣivvyāsaparipṛcchāsūtra)*. Toh 93, 2018.
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## **Does a Buddha Possess Gnosis? Three Deliberations in 12th–13th Century Tibet**

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### **Introductory Remarks**

Theoretical reflections on the nature of the Buddha, or a *buddha*, has generated various controversies. One of them in particular has stirred up heated debates among later Indian Madhyamaka scholars, namely, the question as to whether gnosis (*jñāna: ye shes*) exists at the stage of a *buddha*, which is, in turn, closely related to the question as to how a *buddha* is able to act in the world for the sake of sentient beings along the lines of Mahāyāna doctrine. The debates on the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* seem to have gained momentum in India among scholars adhering to various branches of the Madhyamaka school from the 8th or 9th century, culminating sometime during the 11th century. Tibetan authors inherited this controversy and engaged in it further, particularly from the 11th–13th century. However, although it appears that approximately in the 15th century the topic finally lost much of its resonance, it has nonetheless continued to be treated by Tibetan scholars in various contexts up until the present day. In the following I wish to present discussions of the controversy by three prominent Tibetan scholars of the 12th and 13th century, juxtaposed to the discussion by the 11th-century Tibetan scholar Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po.

### **The Background of the Controversy**

In order to provide the background for the discussions of the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* in 12th–13th century Tibet, I wish to first provide a brief overview of the issue at hand. For this purpose, I shall resort to the treatment of the topic

by the 11th-century rNying ma author and translator Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (henceforth Rong zom pa). I have discussed Rong zom pa's presentation and position in detail on a previous occasion and shall thus merely provide here a brief summary.<sup>1</sup> Rong zom pa has devoted an entire work, his *Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo* (*Great [Exposition] on the Stage of a Buddha*), to discussing what could be called Buddhology in its true sense. In fact his exposition, the only known work of its kind, offers a uniquely detailed discussion on the concepts of Buddhahood found in various Indian Buddhist systems and scriptures, with a focus on the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*.<sup>2</sup> In his *Sangs rgyas kyi sa chen mo*, he presents six different doctrinal positions regarding the constituents of Buddhahood as follows:<sup>3</sup>

**Position 1:** Only one constituent is posited: the purified *dharmadhātu* (*chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa: dharmadhātuviśuddha*).

**Position 2:** Two constituents are posited: (i) the purified *dharmadhātu* and (ii) non-conceptual gnosis (*rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes: nirvikalpajñāna*).

**Position 3:** Three constituents are posited: the two just mentioned, and (iii) pure mundane gnosis (*dag pa 'jig rten pa'i ye shes: śuddhalaukikajñāna*).

**Positions 4–6:** In addition to the three just mentioned, a number of other constituents are posited, including various kinds of bliss, *buddha*-Bodies, and *buddha*-fields.

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1 See Almogi 2009, where the controversy surrounding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, focusing on the deliberations by Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po, is discussed in detail, including consideration of discussions by Indian authors and Tibetan scholars up until the early 12th century. The presentation of his position in the present paper is based on Almogi 2009 unless specified otherwise.

2 Rong zom pa also treats the subject in other works, including his lengthy commentary on the \**Guhyagarbhatantra* (known as the *dKon cog 'grel*), and his *lTa ba'i brjed byang* (*Memorandum on the Views*), both of which shed light on the matter from other perspectives.

3 To be noted is that in his other works he often presents only four positions, the last three (i.e., positions 4–6) being conjoined.

The controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* seems to have evolved in Yogācāra and Yogācāra-Madhyamaka circles, as is evident from the doxographical association of the various positions regarding this issue with the various subschools of Yogācāra and their different theories of knowledge. Such association has been systematically described in Rong zom pa's writings on various occasions, and can be found in various Indian sources as well, although in a less pronounced manner. As made clear by Rong zom pa, the proponents of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka, who on the conventional level adopt Yogācāra doctrines, that is, foremost the Mind-Only theory, according to which no external objects exist, and the notion that the object-subject dichotomy is a mental construct, are most likely to postulate the existence of a mental entity at the stage of a *buddha*. Since they, however, consider such Yogācāra concepts to be merely a means of gaining access to ultimate reality, they only accept its existence on the conventional level. In contrast, those Mādhyamika-s who do not adopt any of the Yogācāra theories on the conventional level reject the existence of any mental entity whatsoever also on this level. Moreover, as pointed out by Rong zom pa, the position of the Yogācāra-Mādhyamika-s regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* is far from being uniform. The main reason for the discrepancies is that they, like the followers of (late) Yogācāra, adopted various theories of knowledge that differ in their postulation regarding the existence of images, or modes of apprehension (*ākāra: rnam pa*).<sup>4</sup>

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4 As I have already shown elsewhere, there is a perfect correlation between how the epistemological principle is conceived under the various positions on the level of ordinary beings and on the level of a *buddha*. The positions among the adherents of Madhyamaka as presented by Rong zom pa may thus be summarized as follows: (1) Those who adopt none of the theories of knowledge of the Yogācāra school maintain that even on the conventional level no mental entity whatsoever exists at the stage of a *buddha*, and thus, needless to say, no images (= position 1). (2) Those who adopt Yogācāra theories of knowledge maintain the existence of some kind of a mental entity on the conventional level also at the stage of a *buddha*, namely, (a) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the \*Nirmala-Alikākāravāda branch postulate the non-existence of images at the stage of a *buddha* (hence their designation by Rong zom pa as Nirākāravādins) and thus maintain only the existence of non-conceptual gnosis on this level (= position 2), (b) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the \*Samala-Alikākāravāda branch postulate the existence of false images even at the stage of a *buddha* (hence their

Furthermore, the proponent of the first position, according to which the stage of a *buddha* is nothing but the purified *dharmadhātu* is identified by Rong zom pa as being based on the philosophical system that maintains the indivisibility of the two truths, which is referred to by him as the special Mahāyāna. In his *lTa ba'i brjed byang* (*Memorandum on the Views*), Rong zom pa identifies the proponents of this position as Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda, that is, those who maintain that phenomena have no substratum (Chos thams cad rab tu mi gnas par 'dod pa / smra ba, or short, Rab tu mi gnas pa), as opposed to the proponents of the remaining positions, which he identifies as the Māyopamādvayavāda, that is, those who maintain that [phenomena] are one, in as much as they are like illusions (sGyu ma lta bu gnyis su med par smra ba, also sGyu ma lta bur 'dod pa or sGyu ma rigs grub pa).<sup>5</sup>

Rong zom pa outrightly dismisses positions advocating the existence of any constituents besides the purified *dharmadhātu* and the two kinds of gnosis and devotes much of his discussion to describing at length the debate regarding the existence of the two types of gnosis. The question surrounding the cognitive aspect of the absolute was common to various traditions of Indian philosophy, the core of the discussion being the

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designation by Rong zom pa as \*Alikākāravādins) and thus maintain the existence of both non-conceptual gnosis and pure mundane gnosis on this level, but, as the images are false, no objects of perception supposedly truly exist (= position 3), and (c) those who follow the theory of knowledge of the \*Satyākāravāda branch postulate the true existence of images at the stage of a *buddha* (hence their designation by Rong zom pa as Sākāravādins) and thus maintain not only the existence of both gnoses on this level, but also the true existence of various objects of perception (= positions 4–6). In short, the existence of merely non-conceptual gnosis implies the existence of no images whatsoever, the existence of pure mundane gnosis requires the existence of images, be they true or false, and the existence of anything besides these two gnoses implies the existence of true images. For more details on this correlation, see Almogi 2009: 33–38, 43. On Rong zom pa's presentation of the subschools of Yogācāra, see Almogi 2013.

5 For a presentation of this correlation in the form of a table, see Almogi 2009: 42. For a detailed discussion of the question as to what exactly the terms Māyopamādvayavāda and Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda refer to, see Almogi 2010. For Rong zom pa's notion of the Special Mahāyāna and its identification with the view of Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda, as well as for the role the doctrine of the indivisibility of the twofold truth/reality plays in this system, see Wangchuk 2009: 226–227, and Wangchuk 2017: 91–93.



tension between the notion that the absolute is eternal and unchanging, on the one hand, and the desire that it be active in the world, on the other. Moreover, since the absolute was thought to be unchanging, it ought not to include a cognitive element, a postulation that poses a difficulty when explaining the link between the absolute and the world. Those who maintain the existence of merely non-conceptual gnosis conceive it as a necessary substratum for the appearance of the pure phenomena associated with Buddhahood, without which a *buddha's* salvific activities in the world would not be possible. Those who in addition maintain the existence of pure mundane gnosis insist on the necessity of a *buddha* to cognize the manifold world in order to be able to act in it. On the other hand, those who deny the existence of any mental aspect maintain that neither a substratum in the form of non-conceptual gnosis nor a cognition of the manifold world through pure mundane gnosis is necessary. According to these latter, the array of Bodies and gnoses arises without a substratum (*rten med*) and is possible in virtue of (a) previous resolutions or aspirational wishes (*praṇidhāna: smon lam*) and compassion (*karuṇā: thugs rje*) on the *buddha's* part, (b) the purified *dharmadhātu*, and (c) the favourable residual impressions (*vāsanā: bag chags*) of sentient beings.

There is no doubt that Rong zom pa is a proponent of the first position, according to which gnosis does not exist at the stage of a *buddha*. He argues that it is not only that there is no substratum for the appearances at the stage of a *buddha*, but that there is also no substratum for the manifold appearances even at the level of sentient beings. He further argues that that which arises without a substratum also lacks all substance, just like water's bluishness or quivering in a mirage. It should be, however, pointed out that while he indeed rejects the existence of gnosis, he does so particularly when it is posited as a substratum for a *buddha's* salvific activities. He does not reject its existence, though, as mere appearance in the view of sentient beings. Yet, in spite of the fact that Rong zom pa himself asserts that the *dharmadhātu* is the sole constituent of Buddhahood, he is clearly more cautious when it comes to rejecting the existence of the two gnoses, especially the non-conceptual one, than to rejecting the other constituents of Buddhahood posited by the remaining positions. And yet, in what appears to be an attempt to leave some room for the positions that maintain the existence

of gnosis—that is, despite him systematically refuting them in various ways—he repeatedly states that Buddhahood is an inconceivable phenomenon, and thus one should not categorically reject these positions.

In the past I have also presented and discussed the positions of three other early Tibetan scholars: (1) Ye shes sde (8th/9th cent.), who in his *lTa ba'i khyad par* (*Differentiation of the Views*) advocates the second position according to which only non-conceptual gnosis exists (possibly influenced by the positions of Nāgamitra and Jñānacandra). This stands in harmony with the fact that during the Early Period of Propagation of Buddhism the dominant Madhyamaka view was that of Yogācāra-Madhyamaka. (2) Gro lung pa Blo gros 'byung gnas (11th/12th cent.), who in his *bsTan rim chen mo* (*The Great [Exposition on] the Stages of the Doctrine*) advocates the third position (possibly also positions 4–6), according to which both gnoses exist. This position was rarer in both India and Tibet. And (3) sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153), who in his famed *Thar pa rin po che'i rgyan* (*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*), just like Rong zom pa, advocates the first position. (As alluded to above, this position was adopted by scholars influenced by Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda thought, which gained some popularity in Tibet during the 11th century.) I have, however, also demonstrated that this position appears to have been problematic in the view of sGam po pa's followers, which in turn eventually led to a textual interpolation and thus corruption of the pertinent passage in the *Thar pa rin po che'i rgyan*.<sup>6</sup>

Rong zom pa's and sGam po pa's stance regarding the nonexistence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* even on the conventional level, however, is rather rare among Tibetan scholars, as the generally accepted position in Tibet from the 12th century onwards (i.e., excluding the position of the *gzhan stong* theory's proponents) is that a *buddha* does possess gnosis on the conventional level, while stressing in this context that the ultimate level is beyond all notions of existence and nonexistence. Nor, for that matter, do later discussions normally differentiate between non-conceptual and pure mundane gnosis. Like Rong zom pa, most Tibetan scholars of the following generations took pains to support their

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6 For the presentation and discussion of the view of these three scholars in regard to the controversy in question, see Almogi 2009: 185–187 (general discussion), 343–360 (English translations), and 457–472 (Tibetan texts).

position with numerous logical arguments (*rigs pa: yukti*) backed up by citations from authoritative scriptures (*lung: āgama*), while employing in addition the notions of inconceivability and inexpressibility of the absolute. In the following, I wish to present in a chronological order the positions of three Tibetan authors of the 12th and 13th centuries—namely, Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po (1110–1170, BDRC: P127), Bla ma zhang brTson 'grus grags pa (1123/1121–1193, BDRC: P1857), and Sa skya paṇḍi ta Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251, BDRC: P1056)—which in my view well demonstrate the formation of the view that became prevalent in Tibet.

### Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po

One early scholar to discuss the controversy of the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* is the 12th-century master Phag mo gru pa rDo rje rgyal po, one of sGam po pa's most influential disciples. Phag mo gru pa devotes a passage to the controversy in question in his work within a genre called Stages of the Doctrine (*bstan rim*) titled *Sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa la rim gyis 'jug pa'i tshul* (*The Manner of Entering Buddha's Doctrine by Stages*; henceforth *Sangs rgyas bstan rim*). David Jackson considers Phag mo gru pa's *Sangs rgyas bstan rim* to be an early *bstan rim* of the bKa' brgyud school modified so as to meet the demands of its tradition—a more strictly practice- and meditation-oriented one as represented by sGam po pa's Mahāmudrā doctrine—and dated it to the period of ca. 1150–1170. As already pointed out by Jackson, the work concludes, as expected, with a discussion of Buddhahood, including the controversy regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, being “an almost compulsory subject in such Tibetan treatises of the 12th and 13th centuries.”<sup>7</sup>

In his *Sangs rgyas bstan rim*, Phag mo gru pa presents two positions regarding the controversy in question: (i) one that maintains the existence of gnosis accompanied by appearances, and (ii) another that maintains the nonexistence of gnosis. According to the first position, reality is referred to as both the non-contaminated sphere of reality and as the *dharmakāya*, and the four gnosés arise by relying on it as a substratum.

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7 See Jackson 1996: 233–235. For the catalogue entry of this work, see Schiller 2014: 581 (PHAG 7); for Jackson's previous discussions of it, see *ibid.*: 21–22.

According to the second position, reality is the *dharmakāya*, manifesting for the sake of oneself, and the two Material Bodies, manifesting for the sake of others. The Bodies arise on account of the gathering of accumulations and the making of aspirational wishes on the part of both the Buddha and the disciples. While he substantiates the former position with numerous citations from authoritative scriptures—mainly ones that refer to the four gnoses—Phag mo gru pa offers very few corresponding citations to back up the latter position, and concludes with some lines of verse of his own in which he summarizes the points that seem logically defensible in his eyes. There he clearly opts for the notion that gnosis is beyond the extremes of existence and nonexistence, which he complements with the notions of inconceivability and inexpressibility. This strategy appears to allow him to solve the apparent tension and navigate more easily between two seemingly conflicting conceptions, that is, that reality (and gnosis) is by nature pure, on the one hand, and that a *buddha*'s Bodies and gnoses appear to disciples, on the other. He states:<sup>8</sup>

In regard to this presentation of the stage of a *buddha*, there are two traditions, namely, (1) [one] maintaining the existence of gnosis accompanied by appearances and (2) [the other] maintaining its non-existence.

(1) The first: Reality (*chos nyid: dharmatā*) is by nature pure and free from adventitious stains and thus is referred to as the “non-contaminated sphere” as well as the “*dharmakāya*.” Resting on it [as a substratum], the four gnoses arise, namely, (a) mirror-like gnosis (*me long lta bu'i ye shes: ādarśajñāna*), (b) the gnosis of equality (*mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes: samatājñāna*), (c) discerning gnosis (*so sor rtog pa'i ye shes: pratyavekṣaṇājñāna*, and (d) the gnosis of performing [beneficial] activities (*bya ba grub pa'i ye shes: kṛtyānuṣṭhānājñāna*).

[...]⁹

8 *Sangs rgyas bstan rim* (A: p. 100.2–4, B: fols. 129b6–130a1, C: fol. 142a2–4, D: fols. 130b6–131a1, E: pp. 473.3–474.1; A: pp. 102.6–103.3, B: fol. 131a3–7, C: fol. 143b1–6, D: fol. 132a3–7, E: pp. 478.1–479.1). For a critical edition of the Tibetan text, see the Appendix, §I. Cf. the English translations in Barrett 2008: 128–132, and in Karma Dondup Chophel and Bruns 2008: 126–130.

9 The passage omitted here contains numerous citations concerning the four gnoses from various treatises including the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* and *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*. Since these citations amount to rather general statements regarding the four gnoses, and thus contribute little to our discussion, they have been

(2) According to those maintaining [its] nonexistence, reality—which is by nature pure and free from adventitious stains—is the *dharmakāya*, [manifesting] for the sake of oneself, and the two Material Bodies (*gzugs sku: rūpakāya*) are [merely] appearances [manifesting] to others. [The Material Bodies] arise on account of a *buddha* having gathered accumulations and made aspirational wishes for the sake of others while on the path, and on account of the appearances consisting in disciples' gathering accumulations and making aspirational wishes to meet with the Buddha. [This matter] should be known [in the light of] the following statements:

Similarly, [to] those endowed with pure faith and the like....<sup>10</sup>

And:

To those who are far from purity and those who are near to it....<sup>11</sup>

(3) [In conclusion, I offer] these [verses] as instructions, summarizing the points that are logically maintainable:

[The sphere of reality] is by nature pure,

And cognitive awareness (*dran rig*) is purified from adventitious stains.

Gnosis is free from the extremes of existence and nonexistence.

It is inconceivable and inexpressible gnosis.

If an excellent harvest [can] be seen in the autumn

Despite the very short cultivation in the spring,

The three excellent Bodies [with their] two objectives (i.e., those relating to oneself and others) [can] certainly be attained,

Provided accumulations have been gathered with faith over a long period of time.

### **Bla ma zhang brTson 'grus grags pa**

The position of another 12th-century bKa' brgyud master, Bla ma zhang brTson 'grus grags pa, regarding the issue of whether gnosis exists at the stage of a *buddha* is briefly described in a work known as the *rGyal*

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left out.

10 *Ratnagotravibhāga* 4.20a (Johnston 1950: 100, there v. 4.19c): *tathā śraddhādi vimale....* For the Tibetan canonical passage, see *ibid.* (D, fol. 68a3). For an English translation of the entire verse, see Takasaki 1966: 357.

11 *Ratnagotravibhāga* 3.39a (Johnston 1950: 97): *śuddher durāntikasthānām....* For the Tibetan canonical passage, see *ibid.* (D, fol. 67a5). For an English translation of the entire verse, see Takasaki 1966: 349.

*blon ma*. This work is a biography of Bla ma zhang, which was apparently composed/compiled some years after his death by one of his “spiritual grandsons” named rGyal ba lo zhig, or in short rGyal lo, and which appears to also include autobiographical material.<sup>12</sup> The passage does not occur in a philosophically oriented context but rather in an episode containing a somewhat personal account from Bla ma zhang’s life. Although its content does not contribute much to the philosophical discussion as a whole, it first and foremost tells us that this issue was in vogue during his time and shows us the generally accepted view among his circles. The small passage provides a short teaching by the master Bla ma zhang that touches upon the controversy in question. There, too, the two general positions asserting the existence and nonexistence of gnosis are briefly described. Interestingly, both are presented as positions that have been considered as valid by previous masters. To support the position maintaining the nonexistence of gnosis, the argument that awareness is not enduring and thus there exists no substratum for gnosis is brought forth. To support the position maintaining the existence of gnosis, the following arguments are put forward: Gnosis is like the shining sun in a clear empty sky, and such clarity undergoes no cessation. Further, gnosis appears in all possible forms and needs neither basis nor root, just like the reflection of the heavenly bodies in the ocean. According to the *rGyal blon ma*, Bla ma zhang, though he obviously found some sense in both arguments, maintained that both assertions are fabrications of the mind. The nature of awareness, he states, is beyond the existence and nonexistence of gnosis, and therefore resembles space. Although he does not explicitly employ terms such as inconceivability or inexpressibility, he clearly does so by implication. In this case, too, he opts for this option in order to resolve apparent doctrinal tensions. The biography—which notably employs language uncommon when presenting such philosophical issues, steeped as it is in vernacular usage—narrates the following:<sup>13</sup>

12 On the *rGyal blon ma* and its author, see Yamamoto 2012: 41–42. See also Dan Martin’s *The Works of Zhang Rinpoche* (published online in 2012), Part One, Section II, no. 19.

13 *rGyal blon ma* (pp. 250.2–251.2). For a critical edition of the Tibetan text, see the Appendix, §II. The passage is also found in another work titled *sPyan ’dren chen mo* (pp. 273.4–274.3). The work seems to be a compilation of various records of

[Bla ma zhang taught as follows:] “All teachers claim [either of the following]: The statement ‘a *buddha* has no gnosis’ is true. The statements ‘awareness (*rig ge ba*; lit. “wakefulness”) is not particularly enduring,’ ‘gnosis has no substratum,’ and ‘gnosis does not cease,’ too, are true. [Gnosis] is thought to be like the shining sun in a clear, empty sky, [and] this clarity, being the lack of any entity, does not cease. [Gnosis] appears in all possible [forms] and has neither substratum nor root. It is like [the reflection of] the heavenly bodies in the ocean. Having seen these points (*gnad ka*), [one realizes that] both the position asserting the existence of gnosis and the one asserting its non-existence are mental constructs. The nature of awareness (*rig pa*) is beyond the existence and nonexistence of gnosis, and is hence like space.”

[In this way Bla ma zhang] established what is known as the Buddha’s Single Intention (*dgongs gcig*). [He] then bestowed the instructions on the flawless energy winds,<sup>14</sup> and afterwards [he] went to ‘Brong bu lkug pa and meditated. His experience increased dramatically (*‘ur gyis*), and the gnosis of realization became, beyond his control, exceedingly vivid, as a result of which [he] became extremely delighted.

### Sa skya paṇḍi ta Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan

Lastly, I shall present the position of Sa skya paṇḍi ta Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (henceforth Sa paṇ) as laid out in two of his works. Sa paṇ touches upon the issue surrounding the existence of gnosis at the

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Bla ma zhang’s teachings, including hagiographical material. As is evident from the passage cited in the present paper, although the *sPyan ’dren chen mo* is contained in Bla ma zhang’s collected writings, and indeed contains teachings by him, it (or at least parts of it) cannot be strictly speaking considered his own composition but rather a compilation (perhaps by one of his students?). The identity of its compiler remains, however, unknown. For its catalogue entry, see Martin 2012, Part One, Section II, no. 1, and also Part Six, vol. Ka, Section C (*bSlab bya lag len gyi skor*), no. 2. As already shown by Martin, the work is also listed by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his Records of Teachings Received under the section *bSlab bya lag len gyi skor* (*Advice and Directions*). See Martin 2012, Part Two, Section III, no. 2.

14 The variant reading *rlung skye med*, “energy winds characterized by non-arising,” though possible seems less likely.

stage of a *buddha* in his *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* (*Clarifying the Sage's Intent*), which according to David Jackson is his “most complete presentation of Mahāyāna doctrine and philosophy.”<sup>15</sup> As pointed out by Jackson, *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*'s general structure was not directly or primarily an outgrowth of the main bKa' gdams tradition stemming from \*Adhīśa (/ \*Atiśa)—through 'Brom ston rGyal ba 'byung gnas (1004/5–1064; BDRC: P2557) and Po to ba Rin chen gsal (1027–1105; BDRC: P3442)—but rather continued, at least in its main topical arrangement, a *bstan rim* tradition stemming from rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109; BDRC: P2551) which expounded the stages of the *bodhisattva* path in accord with *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* 19.61–62. Recently, Jackson published an annotated English translation of the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*, and I shall therefore merely present here a summary of the main points of Sa paṇ's discussion there, which is set forth in three stages: (1) refuting the position of others, (2) presenting his own position, and (3) eliminating objections.<sup>16</sup>

(1) In his refutation of the position of others, Sa paṇ first presents (A) the position that asserts the existence of gnosis and its main arguments, namely, gnosis must exist at the stage of a *buddha* because (a) a *buddha* is omniscient, (b) a *buddha* is the Body that is the ripening of the two accumulations, (c) nonexistence of gnosis would lead to the undesirable consequence that a *buddha* would then be either nonexistent or an inanimate object, and a position negating the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* would lead to the illogical and undesirable consequence that (d) Buddhahood is the same as the cessation of the *śrāvakas*, and to (e) the nihilistic view of the non-Buddhist. He then presents (B) the position that asserts the nonexistence of gnosis and the main logical arguments brought forward by its proponents, namely, that if gnosis exists, this would lead to several undesirable consequences, including that (a) a *buddha* would have a deluded perception and would cling to the notion of “self,” (b) this position would be equivalent to that of the Mind-Only school, and (c) it would not be different from the position propagated by the non-Buddhist proponents of eternalism. Sa paṇ then goes on to refute both positions as follows: If gnosis hypostatically exists (*bden par grub pa*), the logical lapses put forward by the proponents

15 See Jackson 1996: 235–239.

16 For the English translation of this passage, see Jackson 2015: 573–577.



of the nonexistence of gnosis would be applicable, while if gnosis does not exist, and is merely an appearance perceived by others, it would lead to the undesirable consequence that a *buddha* has no qualities. Further, if the existence of a *buddha* is not verifiable, there would be no point in cultivating the path, while if it is verifiable, that would mean that a *buddha* exists but that his gnosis does not, which would lead to the illogical consequence that he would be inanimate matter. Sa paṅ continues on by refuting the notion that despite the fact that a *buddha* has no gnosis his beneficial activities for the sake of others come about as a result of his past resolutions, or aspirational wishes—this, by posing the following question: If these aspirational wishes could be fulfilled, why could aspirational wishes to become a *buddha* not be likewise fulfilled? If aspirational wishes are fulfilled, they should be equally so, and if not, they should be likewise equally so.

(2) In his presentation of his own position, Sa paṅ states that this issue should be dealt with separately on the absolute and conventional levels. In regard to the absolute level, he likewise indirectly employs the argument of inconceivability-cum-inexpressibility, stating that because Buddhahood is beyond our intellect, it is free from all extremes of existence and nonexistence. As scriptural supports, he resorts to the *Samādhirājasūtra*, Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, and the *Suvikrāntavikramiparipṛcchā*. Concerning the conventional level, he argues as follows: If on the conventional level one refers to the mind and mental factors as gnosis, the latter does not exist, because the mind and mental factors are delusions and all delusions have been exhausted at the stage of a *buddha*. From the perspective of knowing/perceiving all objects of knowledge, however, gnosis does exist, because the Body that results from transformation has been attained. In order to undergird this notion of transformation, Sa paṅ cites Candragomin's *\*Buddhabhūmi* (*Sangs rgyas kyi sa*), a work that appears to have been lost.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, he continues, the conventional level is *samsāra* and the ultimate level is *nirvāṇa*, and a *buddha* is the Body characterized by the

17 These verses (with occasionally slightly different reading though) are discussed in Sakuma 1992, where it is suggested that they may be from the lost work *\*Trikāyāvātāra* ascribed to Candragomin. See particularly Sakuma 1992: 515–512, where several verses ascribed to Candragomin as quoted by Tsong kha pa and 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (including the ones cited by Sa paṅ) are presented, discussed, and translated. The verses cited by Sa paṅ can be identified as the verses Sakuma numbers 8, 9, and 11ab.

union of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, that is, the unfixed *nirvāṇa*. This is followed by citations from the *Pañcakrama* attributed to Nāgārjuna in support of the notion of Buddhahood being a state of a union of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*.

(3) In the third part, devoted to the elimination of objections, Sa paṇ raises the objection that the expressed faults regarding the existence of gnosis will occur if one maintains that it is an existing phenomenon that appears to its possessor, and the expressed faults regarding the nonexistence of gnosis will occur if one maintains that it merely exists in the perception of others. In reply, Sa paṇ argues that such an objection presupposes an object–subject dichotomy, but that thanks to the transformation this dichotomy has already been eliminated and thus does not apply in the case of a *buddha*’s gnosis. In support, he resorts to several authoritative canonical works, including the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* (D4020) ascribed to Maitreya, Indrabhūti’s *Jñānasiddhisādhanopāyikā* (D2219), and Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇavārttika* (D4210) and *Samtānāntarasiddhi* (D4219). The citations from the latter two appear mainly to be resting on the notion of inconceivability. The first is a citation of *Pramāṇavārttika* 3.532, which states the following:<sup>18</sup>

This [is the way of] conceptualizing characteristics of the  
to-be-grasped—  
Visible forms etc. and mind—  
Among those having an impure mind.  
The realization of the *yogins*, however, is inconceivable.

The second is not an explicit citation but a mere reference to the *Samtānāntarasiddhi*, which is reported to have stated that gnosis, which results from transformation, is inconceivable.<sup>19</sup> As Sa paṇ employs the

18 *Pramāṇavārttika* 3.532 (in Miyasaka 1972: 2.532):

*rupādeś cetasaś caivam aviśuddhadhiyaṃ prati |*  
*grāhyalakṣaṇacinteyam acintyā yoginām gatiḥ ||.*

For the canonical version, see *ibid.* (D, 138b6). Cf. the translation in Jackson 2015: 576–577.

19 This statement (i.e., *gnas gyur pa’i ye shes bsam gyis mi khyab par*) is not found *verbatim* in the *Samtānāntarasiddhi*. As suggested in Jackson 2015: 662, n. 545, however, this appear to be a reference to the concluding passage of the *Samtānāntarasiddhi* (D, 359a6). Indeed, a similar idea is expressed there as follows: “That the Exalted One cognizes all phenomena cannot be conceived by the [ordinary] mind” (*bcom ldan ’das kyis don thams cad thugs su chud pa ni bsam gyis mi khyab stel*).

notion of inconceivability in the section on eliminating objections—that is, after having put forward several logical arguments and citations from authoritative scriptures to substantiate his view—it seems that the notion of inconceivability is employed by him as the last bit of armament, so to speak, against some objection that has not otherwise been refuted.

Another discussion of the issue is found in a work titled *rNel phu ba'i zhus lan* (*A Reply to rNel phu ba's Question*) ascribed to Sa paṅ—an ascription that, according to Jackson, is doubtful.<sup>20</sup> The position presented there is, nonetheless, strikingly similar to the position put forward in the *Thub pa'i dgongs gsal* in both content and form, though very concise. In the *rNel phu ba'i zhus lan*, too, the issue is treated separately on the ultimate and conventional levels, it being postulated that on the conventional level both the existence and nonexistence of gnosis are taught in different contexts and for different purposes, and that on the ultimate level all phenomena are beyond existence and nonexistence. The author first argues that, on the level of ultimate reality, all phenomena are primordially peaceful by nature, the distinction between existence and nonexistence does not exist there in regard to phenomena, phenomena are free from all manifoldness, and there is no duality of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. He then proceeds to state that there indeed exist teachings of both existence and nonexistence of gnosis at the stage of a *Buddha*, but that *sūtras* of definitive meaning teach that a *buddha's* gnosis is free from the extremes of existence and nonexistence. Also in this case, although the author does not explicitly resort to the notion of inexpressibility, it is in a way implied by his argument that gnosis is beyond existence and nonexistence. In order to explain the teachings asserting either of these options, he resorts to the notion of scriptures of provisional and of definitive meaning. The reply, merely consisting of

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20 See Jackson 1987: 50, where the work is listed under heading “(13) *sKye bu dam pa rnam la spring ba'i yi ge*,” as epistle no. 16 (TB no. 33); *ibid.*: 87, for its position in the various lists of Sa paṅ's works; *ibid.*: 90, where it is listed as one of the works identified as later additions and thus probably spurious, and particularly the pertinent note (*ibid.*: 103, n. 13), where it is suggested that this and two other epistles (i.e., TB nos. 39 and 40, which are considered by Jackson even more likely to be spurious) “were probably written by someone from Sho dgon pa with the aim of glorifying that monastery.” The identity of rNel phu ba, for whom this short work was (allegedly) composed, remains unclear.

six verses, is as follows:<sup>21</sup>

Oṃ svasti siddhaṃ! I pay homage at the feet of the sublime guru!

On the ultimate level all phenomena

Are by nature and primordially tranquil.

They are devoid of the distinction between existence and nonexistence.

Thus they are free from all manifoldness. (1)

If one realizes ultimate reality,

[One sees that] *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are one.

The worldlings have termed

*Saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* as two [different phenomena]. (2)

For the sake of providing answers to genuine questions,

[It is taught that] the Omniscient One possesses gnosis.

[In view of] those who have attained the *dharmadhātu* free of manifoldness,

It is also taught that gnosis does not exist. (3)

In *sūtras* of definitive meaning it is taught

That the *buddhas*' gnosis

Is free from the extremes of existence and nonexistence.

This is the intent of the Buddha. (4)

I beg you to [properly] understand

Whatever statements that may be found in *sūtras* and *tantras*

[Regarding] existence, nonexistence, both, or neither,

[In view of the distinction of] provisional and definitive meaning. (5)

Pay close attention to this concise reply

To your question, you, sublime one,

Who has realization, is committed to practice,

Has devotion to the guru, and exercises austerities. (6)

This is taught as a reply by Sa skya paṇḍi ta to Bla ma rNel phu ba's question.

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21 For the Tibetan text, see the Appendix, §III.

### Concluding Remarks

The above-presented discussions of the issue regarding the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha* by three Tibetan authors of the 12th–13th century demonstrate that, on the one hand, the topic was still very much in vogue at the time, but, on the other hand, that it had already been on the decline in terms of the discourse's sophistication, for these discussions obviously lack the detailed and differentiated cutting-edge lines of argument offered by Rong zom pa. The discussion has been reduced in all three cases (even Sa paṅ's, though his is clearly the most detailed one among them) to a more or less brief presentation of the positions that maintain the existence of gnosis and its nonexistence, followed by the author's own position. The latter could practically be summarized as advocating that a *buddha's* gnosis is beyond, or free from, the extremes of existence and nonexistence, thereby also implying, explicitly or implicitly, that it is inconceivable and/or inexpressible. It is beyond the scope of the present paper to delve into the notions of inconceivability and inexpressibility, but a few words may nonetheless be devoted to them. While both Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka authors have in their discussions on the status of a *buddha's* gnosis resorted to logical arguments alongside citations from authoritative scriptures, several authors have also availed themselves of the notions of the inconceivability, and by implication also the inexpressibility, of the absolute, and thus also Buddhahood. The question as to what extent human thought and logical consideration can comprehend Buddhahood has been raised and discussed by the tradition time and again in various contexts. While there have been Buddhist logicians who attempted to rely solely on reasoning and authoritative scriptures in order to fathom Buddhahood, many others conceived the goal to ultimately be beyond the scope of human intellect and language. According to them, inference and language are inadequate and insufficient when it comes to gaining insight into true reality, including Buddhahood, which can only be captured directly by way of meditative experience.<sup>22</sup>

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22 See, for example, Makransky 1997: 269–279, presenting Ratnākaraśānti's critique of Haribhadra's interpretation of *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* chap. 8, which is based on the employment of logico-epistemological means, an approach rejected by Ratnākaraśānti, who believed that Buddhahood could not be analyzed in

Also for Rong zom pa, who is clearly a proponent of the position maintaining the nonexistence of gnosis, means of knowledge such as logical reasoning and authoritative scriptures are of limited value. There is no such thing as absolutely immaculate or perfect logical reasoning, and thus by implication also no absolutely valid inferential cognition based on it. Therefore, according to him, it would be unwise to be categorical and apodictic with regard to such a profound subject as the existence of gnosis at the stage of a *buddha*, unless of course one has gained direct access to the absolute. Furthermore, as I pointed out on a previous occasion, this stance of Rong zom pa's is also an example of his respect for the various Buddhist traditions. That is, he employs the notion of inconceivability in order to leave some room for the positions favouring the existence of gnosis, which he himself opposes, particularly as he understands that the issue in question is not only complex but also connected with some of the core issues of the Mahāyāna doctrine.<sup>23</sup>

The main difference, however, between Rong zom pa and the three scholars presented above (and in fact all other Tibetan scholars who hold a similar position) is that Rong zom pa's discussion entirely concerns the conventional level, for such a discussion on the ultimate level, from his point of view as a Mādhyamika, is completely irrelevant and out of the question. In the three above discussions we see a clear shift from Rong zom pa in that they all treat the issue separately on the conventional and ultimate levels, implicitly in the case of Phag mo gru pa and Bla ma zhang, and explicitly in that of Sa paṅ. The general tendency has been to accept, in one way or another, the existence of gnosis on the conventional level, while stating that ultimately gnosis is beyond existence and nonexistence. In addition to shifting the discussion to a consideration of conventional versus ultimate levels, we also witness the resorting to the notion of teachings of provisional and definitive meaning.

This attempt to address the controversy by treating the issue separately on the ultimate and on the conventional levels raises questions as to whether later Tibetan scholars were fully aware of the fact that

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logical terms; it is thus inaccessible to human thought and can only be realized through direct yogic experience. See, to give another example, Seyfort Ruegg 1989: 44–50, where the notions of inconceivability and inexpressibility of the absolute (particularly in the context of the *tathāgatagarbha* theory) are presented and discussed.

23 See Almogi 2009: 232.

the entire discussion took place in regard to the conventional level alone, while from a purely Madhyamaka point of view there has never been any controversy concerning the ultimate level in this regard. Whether they simply overlooked this fact is unclear, and may need further clarification. What seems certain, however, is that this controversy gained momentum in 11th-century Tibet against the backdrop of the Māyopamādvayavāda–Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda distinction of Madhyamaka, with the latter presented (by Rong zom pa among others) as the higher in terms of doxographical hierarchy. With the falling of this Madhyamaka classification into oblivion and the introduction of the Svātantrika–Prāsaṅgika classification instead, and the establishing of Prāsaṅgika–Madhyamaka as the dominant view in Tibet, it appears that Tibetan scholars abandoned not only the position maintaining the nonexistence of gnosis on the conventional level but also all lines of argument and logical reasoning that accompanied the discussion based on the Māyopamādvayavāda–Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda distinction. Moreover, to follow Rong zom pa’s presentation and analysis, admitting the existence of gnosis in one way or another on the conventional level would be a Yogācāra–Madhyamaka position. It may seem surprising that later Tibetan scholars opted for what would rather seem to be a Yogācāra–Madhyamaka position despite the fact that this Madhyamaka strand generally came to be considered as second in rank to Prāsaṅgika–Madhyamaka. One wonders therefore whether later Tibetan scholars were actually aware of the fact that this position was associated with Yogācāra–Madhyamaka, which in Rong zom pa’s discussions is equated with Māyopamādvayavāda, particularly since most, if not all, later discussions fail to treat the various positions in terms of doxography. What seems to be clear, however, is that very soon the Māyopamādvayavāda–Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda distinction and the positions and debates associated with it nearly disappeared from the Tibetan discourse, and it is very likely that many later scholars were unaware of the exact details of the controversy in question, particularly of the fact that it solely concerned the conventional level and that admitting the existence of gnosis was considered among Sarvadharmāpratiṣṭhānavāda circles to be a Yogācāra–Madhyamaka position.

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## Appendix

### I. Phag mo gru pa, *Sangs rgyas bstan rim*

A: p. 100.2–4, B: fols. 129b6–130a1, C: fol. 142a2–4, D: fols. 130b6–131a1, E: pp. 473.3–474.1

sangs rgyas<sup>24</sup> kyi sa’i rnam gzhag<sup>25</sup> ’di la snang bcas kyi ye shes<sup>26</sup> mnga’ ba<sup>27</sup> dang| mi mnga’ bar ’dod pa’i lugs gnyis<sup>28</sup> te| dang po ni<sup>29</sup> chos nyid rang bzhin<sup>30</sup> gyis rnam<sup>31</sup> par dag pa la glo<sup>32</sup> bur gyi dri ma dang bral ba de| zag pa med pa’i dbyings zhes kyang bya| chos kyi sku zhes kyang bya’o|| de la brten nas ye shes<sup>33</sup> bzhi<sup>34</sup> ’byung

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24 sangs rgyas] ABCE, sa[ngs ]rgyas D

25 gzhag] BE, bzhag ACD

26 ye shes] ACE, ye[ sh]es BD

27 mnga’ ba] ACDE, kyi mnga’ ba B

28 gnyis] ACE, 2 BD

29 |] AD, om. BCE

30 bzhin] ABCE, 4n D

31 rnam] ACDE, rnam B

32 glo] E, blo ABCD

33 ye shes] ACE, ye[ sh]es BD

34 bzhi] ABCE, 4 D

ste| melong lta bu'i<sup>35</sup> ye shes<sup>36</sup> dang| mnyam pa nyid kyi ye shes<sup>37</sup> dang|<sup>38</sup>  
so sor rtog<sup>39</sup> pa'i ye shes<sup>40</sup> dang| bya ba grub pa'i ye shes<sup>41</sup> so||

A: pp. 102.6–103.3, B: fol. 131a3–7, C: 143b1–6, D: fol. 132a3–7, E: pp. 478.1–479.1

snang bcas kyi ye shes<sup>42</sup> mi mnga' bar 'dod pa ltar na| chos nyid rang  
bzhin<sup>43</sup> gyis rnam<sup>44</sup> par dag pa la glo<sup>45</sup> bur gyi dri ma dang bral ba ni|<sup>46</sup>  
rang don<sup>47</sup> chos kyi sku yin la| gzugs<sup>48</sup> sku gnyis<sup>49</sup> ni gzhan gyi snang ba<sup>50</sup>  
ste| sangs rgyas<sup>51</sup> kyis lam<sup>52</sup> gyi gnas skabs su<sup>53</sup> tshogs bsags<sup>54</sup> shing  
gzhan don du<sup>55</sup> smon lam<sup>56</sup> btab pas na<sup>57</sup> | gdul byas<sup>58</sup> tshogs<sup>59</sup> bsags<sup>60</sup>

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35 lta bu'i] BDCE, lt[a b]u'i A

36 ye shes] ABCE, ye[ sh]es D

37 ye shes] ABCE, ye[ sh]es D

38 |] BDCE, || A

39 rtog] BCD, rtogs AE

40 ye shes] ACE, ye[ sh]es BD

41 ye shes] AE, ye[ sh]es BCD

42 snang bcas kyi ye shes] BCDE (ye[ sh]es D), *om.* A

43 rang bzhin] ACE, rang 4n B, rang[ bzh]in D

44 rnam] ACDE, rnam B

45 glo] B? (the subscript la is illegible), blo ACDE

46 |] BCDE, || A

47 don] ABDE, bzhin C

48 gzugs] ACDE, gzut B

49 gnyis] CE, 2 BD, gnyes A

50 ba] DE, bas ABC

51 sangs rgyas] ACE, sa[ngs ]rgyas BD

52 lam] ACE, lam BD

53 gnas skabs su] ACD (gnas skab[s ]su D), gnas skabs su] E, skab[s ]su B

54 bsags] ACE, bsat BD

55 gzhan don du] ACDE, *om.* B

56 lam] ACE, lam BD

57 pas na] ABD, pa na E, pa ni C

58 byas] BCDE, bya A

59 tshogs] ACE, tshot BD

60 bsags] ACE, bsat BD

shing sangs rgyas<sup>61</sup> dang phrad par<sup>62</sup> smon lam<sup>63</sup> btab pa'i snang ba las  
 'byung ba'o|| de yang|  
 de bzhin<sup>64</sup> dad<sup>65</sup> sogs<sup>66</sup> dri med can||  
 zhes pa la sogs<sup>67</sup> pa dang|  
 dag las nye dang ring rnam la||<sup>68</sup>  
 ces<sup>69</sup> pa la sogs<sup>70</sup> pas<sup>71</sup> shes so<sup>72</sup>||  
 rang bzhin<sup>73</sup> rnam<sup>74</sup> par dag pa la||<sup>75</sup>  
 dran rig glo<sup>76</sup> bur<sup>77</sup> dri ma dag||  
 ye shes<sup>78</sup> yod med mtha' dang bral||  
 bsam<sup>79</sup> brjod<sup>80</sup> med pa'i ye shes<sup>81</sup> so||

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61 sangs rgyas] ACDE, sa[ngs ]rgyas B

62 *The phrase sangs rgyas dang phrad par is inserted in D in a gloss by a different hand in dBu can.*

63 lam] ACE, lam BD

64 bzhin] ACE, 4n BD

65 dad] BCDE, dang A

66 sogs] ACE, so[g]s BD

67 sogs] ACE, so[g]s BD

68 dag las nye dang ring rnam la] CDE (rnam D; C appears to have initially read ... ring dang nye... as the syllables nye and ring are clearly later corrections), dag la ring dang nye rnam la AB (rnam B; this variant reading appears to have been likewise often cited).

69 ces] ABD, zhes CE

70 sogs] ACE, so[g]s D, soṭ B

71 pas] BCDE, bas A

72 shes so] ABCE, shes par bya'o D

73 bzhin] ACDE, 4n B

74 rnam] ACDE, rnam B

75 rang bzhin rnam par dag pa la||] CDE (rang[ bzh]in rnam D), khams rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa la| A

76 glo] em., blo ABCDE

77 bur] BCDE, bur gyi A

78 ye shes] ACE, ye[ sh]es BD

79 bsam] ACE, bsam BD

80 brjod] BCDE, rjod A

81 ye shes] ACE, ye[ sh]es BD

dpyid<sup>82</sup> dus yud tsam<sup>83</sup> so nam<sup>84</sup> byas pa yang||  
 ston dus lo thog<sup>85</sup> phun sum<sup>86</sup> tshogs<sup>87</sup> snang na||  
 yun ring<sup>88</sup> dus nas gus par<sup>89</sup> tshogs<sup>90</sup> bsags<sup>91</sup> na||<sup>92</sup>  
 don gnyis<sup>93</sup> phun tshogs<sup>94</sup> sku gsum<sup>95</sup> thob par<sup>96</sup> nges<sup>97</sup>||  
 ces<sup>98</sup> pa ni 'thad pa'i<sup>99</sup> don bsdus te<sup>100</sup> gdams<sup>101</sup> pa'o||

## II. rGyal ba lo zhig, rGyal blon ma and Unknown, sPyan 'dren chen mo

rGyal blon ma (A): 250.2–251.2, sPyan 'dren chen mo (B): 273.4–274.3

ston pa kun na re||<sup>102</sup> sangs rgyas la ye shes med zer ba de bden par 'dug|  
 rig ge ba<sup>103</sup> gtan pa<sup>104</sup> rang mi 'dug<sup>105</sup>| ye shes kyi gzhi mi 'dug| ye shes  
 rgyun ma chad zer ba de yang bden par 'dug| gsal stong nam mkha' la  
 nyi ma shar ba lta bu ngos bzung<sup>106</sup> dang||<sup>107</sup> dngos po med par gsal ba

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82 dpyid] BCDE, dbying A

83 tsam] ACDE, tsam B

84 so nam] BCDE (rnam B), bsod nams A

85 thog] BD, tog ACE

86 sum] ACE, sum BD

87 tshogs] ABCE, tshot D

88 ring] ABE, rings CD

89 par] ABD, pas CE

90 tshogs] ACDE, tshot B

91 bdags] ACDE, bsat B

92 *The entire verse line is inserted in D in a gloss by a different hand in dBu can.*

93 gnyis] ACE, 2 BD

94 tshogs] ACDE, tshot B

95 gsum] ACE, gsum B, 3 D

96 par] BCDE, bar A

97 nges] BCDE, des A

98 ces] ABD, zhes CE

99 pa'i] CE, pa ABD

100 te] BCDE, te| A

101 gdams] ACE, gdams BD

102 ] B, *om.* A

103 ba] *em.*, pa AB

104 gtan pa] B, rten A

105 'dug] B, 'dug pas A

106 bzung] A, zung B

107 ] B, *om.* A

'di<sup>108</sup> rgyun chad mi 'dug| cir yang 'char zhing gzhi rtsa ma grub pa<sup>109</sup>  
 rgya mtsho'i gza' skar lta bur<sup>110</sup> 'dug|  
 gnad ka de mthong bas<sup>111</sup> ye shes yod par 'dod pa dang| med par 'dod  
 pa gnyis ka blos btags pa'i chos su 'dug| rig pa'i ngo bo<sup>112</sup> ye shes yod  
 med las 'das pas<sup>113</sup> nam mkha' lta bur 'dug|  
 sangs rgyas kyi dgongs pa nyag gcig<sup>114</sup> zer ba de gtan la phebs [=phab]|  
 de nas rlung skyon<sup>115</sup> med kyi gdams<sup>116</sup> pa de gngang| de nas 'brong bu  
 lkug<sup>117</sup> par byon nas bsgoms pas<sup>118</sup> nyams myong 'ur gyis<sup>119</sup> 'phel te<sup>120</sup>|  
 rtogs pa'i ye shes rang dbang med par lhag lhag<sup>121</sup> byung pas<sup>122</sup> shin tu  
 brod par byung|

### III. Sa skya pañḍi ta (ascribed), rNel phu ba'i zhus lan

A: pp. 159.3–160.1; B: pp. 171.4–172.3

om swasti siddham| bla ma dam pa'i zhabs la phyag 'tshal lo||  
 dam pa'i don du chos rnams kun||  
 rang bzhin gdod nas nye bar zhi||  
 de la yod med dbye ba med||  
 de phyir spros pa thams cad bral|| 1  
 don dam rtogs na 'khor ba dang||  
 mya ngan 'das pa gnyis su med||  
 'jig rten pa yis 'khor ba dang||  
 mya ngan 'das pa gnyis su btags|| 2

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108 'di] A, 'di la B

109 pa] B, par A

110 lta bur] A, lta bu ru B

111 bas] A, pas| B

112 ngo bo] B, ngo bo 'di A

113 pas] B, pa A. *The syllable pas in B is inserted above the line.*

114 gcig] A, cig B

115 skyon] B, skye A

116 gdams] A, gdam B

117 lkug] B, lkugs A

118 pas] B, pas A

119 'ur gyis] A, 'u gyi B

120 te] B, om. A

121 lhag lhag] A, lhag lhags pa B

122 byung pas] B, byung| A

yang dag zhu ba lung ston phyir||  
 thams cad mkhyen la ye shes mnga' ||  
 chos dbyings spros bral brnyes pas na||  
 ye shes med par gsungs pa'ang yod|| 3  
 nges pa'i don gyi mdo sde las||  
 sangs rgyas rnams kyi ye shes ni||  
 yod med mtha' las grol bar gsungs||  
 sangs rgyas dgongs pa de nyid yin|| 4  
 drang ba'i don dang nges pa'i don||  
 mdo rgyud rnams la yod med de||  
 gnyi ga med ces gang gsungs pa||  
 de dag khyed kyis mkhyen par gsol<sup>123</sup> || 5  
 rtogs ldan sgrub pa la brtson pa||  
 bla ma la gus brtul zhugs can||  
 dam pa khyed kyis dris pa'i lan||  
 mdor bsdus pa 'di legs par dgongs|| 6  
 sa skya paṇḍi tas bla ma rnel phu ba la zhus lan du gsungs pa'o || ||

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123 gsol] *em.*, gsal AB



## Roads Taken and Not Taken: The Encounters of Eric Teichman and André Migot with the Scholarly Traditions of Kham

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### Introduction: Straight Paths and Crossroads

After the work of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784–1842) had marked the beginning of modern Tibetology, it took more than a hundred years to fully assess the Tibetan scholarly traditions in Kham.<sup>1</sup> In Csoma's time, Kham was home to a fine but rather limited scholarly scene. The teachings of Jigme Lingpa<sup>2</sup> (1730–1798) from northern Derge<sup>3</sup> were spreading throughout Tibet and the Himalayas. South of the Rudam<sup>4</sup> mountain range, Situ Penchen<sup>5</sup> (1700–1774) had left a rich legacy but seemingly few scholarly disciples. In the century to come, Kham-pa scholasticism would undergo significant development, especially through the activities of Khyentse'i Wangpo<sup>6</sup> (1820–1892). This remained mostly unnoticed by academics such as Giuseppe Tucci (1894–1984) and Hugh Richardson (1905–2000), who approached the Tibetan cultural sphere from India and naturally focused on western and central Tibet. Also scholars in Beijing, such as Vasily Vasilyev (1818–1900)

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1 Khams.

2 'Jigs med gling pa.

3 sDe dge.

4 Ru dam.

5 Si tu Paṅ chen.

6 mKhyen brtse'i dbang po.

and William Woodville Rockhill (1854–1914), seem to have worked primarily with Gelugpa<sup>7</sup> scholars at the Yonghe Palace.<sup>8</sup>

More systematic academic assessments of Buddhism in Kham would appear only in the early 1960s, including Lokesh Chandra’s “Les imprimeries tibétaines de Drepung, Derge et Pepung” (1961) and Ariane Macdonald’s *Le maṇḍala du Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (1962). Gene Smith’s 1970 introduction to Jamgon Kongtrul’s (1813–1899) encyclopedia<sup>9</sup> can probably be considered the breakthrough to full academic recognition of Khampa scholasticism.

Mostly behind the scenes of such publications worked Khampa scholars such as Namkha’i Norbu<sup>10</sup> (1938–2018), whom Tucci had invited to Italy in 1958, and Dezhung Rinpoche<sup>11</sup> (1906–1987), who lived in Seattle from 1960 and became one of Smith’s main informants.<sup>12</sup> Both had studied at the Dzongsar Khamje<sup>13</sup> college, founded in 1918 according to the wishes of Khyentse’i Wangpo and set up by a scholar in the tradition of Jigme Lingpa. Since the tradition *in situ* was under duress in the 1960s, when the Tibetological assessment of the Khampa religious traditions gained momentum, two foreign eyewitness accounts from the first half of the twentieth century will be presented below.

### Eric Teichman and the Nyingma Sage

In autumn 1918, the British consular officer Eric Teichman (1884–1944) was travelling hurriedly from Derge Gonchen<sup>14</sup> to Rongpatsa.<sup>15</sup> A military campaign had just brought the kingdom of Derge under the control of the (British-allied) Central-Tibetan government, and Teichman’s presence was needed to negotiate a peace agreement with the Chinese forces. He had left Derge Gonchen on September 12 and passed

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7 dGe lugs pa.

8 Name of the Tibetan temple in the Yonghe Palace (雍和宮): dGa’ ldan byin chags gling.

9 The *Shes bya kun khyab* by ’Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha’ yas.

10 Nam mkha’i nor bu.

11 sDe gzhung Rin po che.

12 See Jackson 2003: 288, 507.

13 rDzong gsar Khams bye.

14 sDe dge dGon chen.

15 Rong pa tsha.

through Changra<sup>16</sup> on the same day.<sup>17</sup> On September 13, his sizable party reached the monastery of Pelpung,<sup>18</sup>

lying in a pleasant region of grassy vales and pine woods draining south into the Yangtze.

A small Nyimaba monastery called Dordra Gomba lies on the mountain side a little way off to the south-west. This is the home of the Reincarnation who accompanies the Chala Chief,<sup>19</sup> partly as religious adviser and partly as associate peace envoy. Nearly all the monasteries of Kam, of which there must be many hundreds, have one or more of these Reincarnations attached to them, though not always in residence. This lama is a learned and intelligent individual, and a mine of information on such subjects as the history of De ge. He was anxious that we should go and stop in his monastery; but the visit would have entailed a detour and a climb up and down the mountain; and as we have now reached the stage when we avoid all excursions which will take us off our direct line of march, we declined the invitation and kept to the main road.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, Teichman decided to proceed, following “the trail [that] runs up a long wooded valley to a pass and descends the other side through a pine-clad ravine which suddenly debouches on to a cultivated valley at a big Sajya monastery called Dzongsar Gomba.”<sup>21</sup> By following this major route, Teichman was passing by two main centers of Khampa scholasticism: the seats of the Tā’i Situ<sup>22</sup> and Kongtrul incarnations at Pelpung, and the seat of the Khyentse incarnations at Dzongsar. At Pelpung, Dezhung Rinpoche’s later teacher Dzogchen Khenpo Zhenga<sup>23</sup> (1871–1927) had set up a college in 1910 (after raising a generation of scholars at Dzogchen in northern Derge). In early 1918, he had moved to Dzongsar in order to establish a college according to the same principles he had

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16 lCang ra.

17 On lCang ra, see Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2012: 13.

18 dPal spungs.

19 lCags la rGyal po.

20 Teichman 1922: 160.

21 *Ibid.*

22 Tā’i Si tu (大司徒, Dà Sítú).

23 mKhan po gZhan dga’.



“The Chala Chief (left) and the lama of Dordra Gomba lunching on the road from Chamdo to Rongbatsa.” (Teichman 1922)

applied in Dzogchen and Pelpung.<sup>24</sup> It is not unlikely that the monks in both Pelpung and Dzongsar, Khenpo Zhenga among them, watched Teichman’s caravan passing nearby.

Still, it seems that Teichman had no time to visit either place. He rather incidentally became aware of the sophisticated scholarly tradition that flourished in the area by travelling with the *trulku*<sup>25</sup> of Dordra<sup>26</sup> monastery. The latter was putting his education to a partly mundane use as a diplomat on the frontline between British and Chinese Republican spheres of influence, and he was probably the source for some of the historical information in Teichman’s book. Surely, Teichman’s book would have become an even richer source for Khampa history had he found time to stay at Dordra.

### **André Migot: The Path is the Goal**

Twenty-nine years after Teichman’s journey, a similar encounter with the eastern Tibetan scholarly tradition was recorded by André Migot (1892–1967), a French physician, biologist, and mountaineer, who traveled widely throughout Asia. Migot reached China in 1946, partly on

24 On rDzong gсар and the Khams bye bShad grwa, see Bayer 2019: 116–127.

25 *sprul sku*.

26 rDo rje brag?

a mission to buy books for the École française d'Extrême-Orient but mostly as an experienced practitioner of meditation and a spiritual seeker.<sup>27</sup> Having obtained a travel permit from the Republic of China, Migot followed the main trade route from Chengdu and reached Karze<sup>28</sup> in mid-May 1947. Here, he stayed in a hut below the massive Gelugpa monastery, recording his impressions of Tibetan monastic life. Having “spent a good deal of time in the monastery,” he “was soon on friendly terms with several of the lamas, including the Living Buddha who had authority over all the temples in Kantsé.”<sup>29</sup> From there,

I went to spend a few days in a tiny little lamasery belonging to the Red (or unreformed) sect, perched up on top of a hill not far from Kantsé. The head lama was seriously ill and the monks wanted me to stay on there until I had cured him, but the poor *trulku's* condition was beyond hope, and all I could do was to keep him alive for a few days longer.

I have the happiest memories of my stay in this retreat [...] in the company of an old lama who was beginning my initiation into the practices of Lamaist meditation. It was here that I made a discovery which subsequent experience abundantly confirmed, that the unreformed lamaseries are much more interesting from a spiritual point of view than those of the Yellow sect [...]. You always find, among adherents of the Red sect, certain lamas versed in the mystical doctrines and their practice according to the teachings of the “direct way.”<sup>30</sup>

Migot left Kardze on May 20, 1947. Since his travel permit from the Republic of China allowed him to use the transport-tax (*ulag*)<sup>31</sup> system, he joined one of the small caravans that were usually formed for *ulag*

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27 As we will see below, Migot traveled to Khams on two occasions. A short version of his travelogue, describing only his first visit, was published in 1954. It was translated into English, rather freely, by Peter Fleming (1955). The complete French version was published only posthumously, in 1978. In this article, translations from the travelogue are based on the 1978 French edition, while some phrasings of Fleming have been adopted.

28 dKar mdzes.

29 Migot 1955: 132.

30 Migot 1978: 155. Cf. *id.*: 135.

31 *'u lag*.

travel on the trade route to Jyekundo.<sup>32</sup> This route passes the Rudam mountain range, the heart of the former kingdom of Derge, to its north. While setting out from Kardze, Migot planned “to stop on the way at the big lamasery of Dzogchen Gompa, whose fame as a religious center made powerful appeal to me.”<sup>33</sup>

### The Scholars of Dzogchen

The caravan that Migot had joined first journeyed from Kardze to Rongpatsa, where Teichman had negotiated the peace agreement in 1918. However, peace had lasted only until the Beri<sup>34</sup> war in 1930–32, and after that time, the whole of Derge was controlled by the Republic of China.<sup>35</sup> From Rongpatsa, Migot traveled in the company of Chang Feng-shi, “a young Chinese teacher who ran a school at Derge [Gonchen].”<sup>36</sup> After staying at a caravanserai in Yilhung, next to the residence of the headman (“chef tibétain,” quite surely of the influential Jago family),<sup>37</sup> they reached the village below Dzogchen monastery. The next morning, they were joined by a friend of Mr. Chang, a young Chinese man known as “Gya Yeshe” (“Yeshe from China”), who lived as a “lama” (Migot) in Dzogchen and had formerly studied at a Canadian-owned university in Chengdu.<sup>38</sup> With Mr. Chang and Gya Yeshe helping as interpreters, Migot was invited to meet the head lamas of the monastery.

One of them, a lad of fifteen with an alert, intelligent face, was the foremost “Living Buddha” of the *gompa* and had authority over two hundred lamaseries belonging to the Gnimapa sect. The lamasery of

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32 *Ibid.*: 137. On sKye dgu mdo, see Bayer 2019: 26, n. 94, on the main routes through Khams, Jackson 2003: 621, n. 557.

33 Migot 1955: 141.

34 Migot 1978: 188 reports seeing the castle of “the prince of Be ri” at a river crossing some hours before reaching Rong pa tsha.

35 See Jackson 2003: 92–95 for sDe gzhung Rin po che’s account of the Be ri war.

36 Migot 1978: 110. Fleming (Migot 1955: 129, 141) renders “professeur” as “professor.”

37 Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2012: 89 contains a photo of the ruined Bya rgod residence in Yid lhung. See also *ibid.*: 150–153, and Bayer 2019: 169.

38 Migot 1978: 124. Cf. *id.* 1955: 143. The original name of rGya Ye shes was Li Tien-ming (李天明?).

Dzogchen belongs to a special subdivision of the sect, the Dzogchenpa, [and it is] famous among all of them for philosophical science and the contemplative life of its monks.<sup>39</sup>

In 1889, about fifty-eight years before Migot, Rockhill had passed by Dzogchen monastery and simply remarked, “Zoch’en gomba is one of the chief lamaseries of the Nyimapa, the ‘red-capped’ lamas of the Chinese, of whom over two thousand live here.”<sup>40</sup> The fact that Rockhill left its scholarly tradition unmentioned may support the supposition that in the late 1800s, Dzogchen monastery prospered economically but had not yet fully revived its college.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, Rockhill’s statement presents no hard evidence since he rarely mentions local scholarship in his travelogue. Living in Beijing, he had studied intensely with a scholar from Lhasa and mentions only as an aside that Lhasa was “the chief seat of Buddhist learning,”<sup>42</sup> which may have been a mere matter of fact in 1889. When Migot visited Dzogchen in 1947, however, there was a thriving tradition partly critical of Gelugpa doctrines. On this occasion, Migot was especially impressed by the two teachers of the head *trulkus*:

They all looked extraordinarily kind and serene. One had the noble head of an ascetic. I felt instinctively that he would be an incomparable master for me, but the time had not come for me to settle here before having finished my preliminary inquiry, which I wanted to carry out in diverse lamaseries. [...] We talked at length of meditation, but the masters of Dzogchen do not have a one-size-fits-all method; Every disciple lives in close union with his master who guides him step by step, taking heed of his character.<sup>43</sup>

The “Living Buddha,” possibly the Sixth Dzogchen Drubwang Rinpoche<sup>44</sup> (1935–1959), took a keen interest in Migot’s notebook and “could hardly get over the idea of a foreigner reading and writing the

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39 Migot 1978: 124. Cf. *id.* 1955: 145.

40 Rockhill 1891: 232.

41 See Bayer 2019: 61f.

42 See Rockhill 1891: 1, 83.

43 Migot 1978: 125. Cf. *id.* 1955: 15. “Une belle tête d’ascète” here probably refers to a topknot.

44 rDzogs chen Grub dbang Rin po che.

Tibetan script.”<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, it is not possible to reconstruct who was present during Migot’s visit. We know that among the Sixth Dzogchen Drubwang Rinpoche’s tutors were his father Adro Ngawang Norbu (d. 1958),<sup>46</sup> and Yonten Gonpo (1899–1959),<sup>47</sup> two important disciples of Khenpo Zhenga, who served as abbots of the college (*bshad grwa*) at Dzogchen at different times. In any case, the *trulku*’s

preceptor gave me some valuable advice on my spiritual direction and was kind enough to invite me to return for working with him and stay, if I wish. I hoped that I could profit from that exceptional offer another day, since it was for his realization that I had come to this country. I took some photographs of my hosts [only one of which has been published in *Tibetan Marches*] and left them with sadness, for deep within me I felt that in the short time we had spent together, strong bonds had been established between us.<sup>48</sup>

The next day, Migot and his Chinese friends visited the hermitages above the monastery, leaving him once again deeply impressed.

In a nearby clearing, a group of young monks sat in a circle in the sunlight, reading a text on which their *guru* commented. They were learning the technique of meditation, and I envied them for living in this so peaceful world. What demon pushes me forward along these roads when I *know* strongly that peace, which [I] foolishly seek around the world, is here, within easy reach? But it’s no use. I cannot, as yet, rid myself of this futile need for agitation, a heritage of my sad *karma* of an Occidental.<sup>49</sup>

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45 Migot 1978: 125, *id.* 1955: 146. According to Migot 1978: 124, there were three main *sprul skus* in rDzogs chen, namely the teenager he spoke to, his brother, who was studying in Lhasa at the time, and an older lama who assisted in the conversation.

46 A gro Ngag dbang nor bu was one of the authors of a multi-volume history of rDzogs chen monastery that was lost in the 1950s or 60s (see Bayer 2019: 272, 249). Being the father of the rDzogs chen Rin po che probably made him one of the most influential persons in rDzogs chen at the time.

47 Yon tan mgon po was by some counted as gZhan dga’s foremost disciple. He was among the students who stayed with gZhan dga’ during his final retreat near the Khro la (about 1922–1927). See Bayer 2019: 248.

48 Migot 1978: 125. Cf. *id.* 1955: 146.

49 Migot 1978: 126. Cf. Fleming’s translation (Migot 1955: 146f.): “I am quite incapable, as yet, of subduing the silly sterile *wanderlust* with which Western culture has infected me.”



The demon that made Migot decline the tutorship of this *khenpo* can probably be found in his past. Migot had been a medical officer during the First World War, thereafter a physician, researcher, and alpinist. In 1938, he set out by bicycle, headed for Tibet on a spiritual quest. However, when he reached Calcutta after a ten-month journey, the Second World War broke out, and he turned towards Saigon in order to return to France. There, he served once again as a medical officer, and later as a physician in occupied Paris.<sup>50</sup> At that time,

the prestigious name [“Tibet”] was for me the small glimmer that one could see at the very end of a somber tunnel which would open itself to great, free spaces. My soul remained illuminated by the light of Asia. The pervasive brutality and the drama in which we lived made me long all the more ardently to return to the calm lands scented by the sweetness of Buddhism.<sup>51</sup>

In the “dark years of occupation,” Migot found strength in the idea of one day returning to the route of his dreams.<sup>52</sup> However, the images of his goal were clearly images of legendary “forbidden Tibet” and its capital Lhasa. The eastern regions, controlled by the Republic of China, were merely the stations on the path. Thus, he continued his westward travel.

### Words and Silence at Derge Gonchen

Though ultimately headed for Lhasa, Migot temporarily left the main route in order to visit the former capital of the Derge kingdom, Derge Gonchen, “for I came here, partly, to have certain Tibetan Buddhist works printed.”<sup>53</sup> The journey led him from the nomadic regions to the north of the Rudam mountains through the first of the agricultural regions in the south, the homeland of Namkha’i Norbu (mentioned above), a day’s journey north of Derge Gonchen.<sup>54</sup>

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50 Peter Fleming in Migot 1955: 11.

51 Migot 1978: 12. Cf. *id.* 1955: 16, quoted in Bishop 1989: 211.

52 Migot 1978: 12 (“la route rêvée”). Cf. *id.* 1955: 15f.

53 Migot 1978: 128. Cf. *id.* 1955: 150. The books were meant for the *École française d’Extrême-Orient*. See Fleming in Migot 1955: 10, R.A. Stein in Migot 1978: 9.

54 On ‘Khor lo mdo, see Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2012: 93–95, Bayer 2019: 151.

Derge Gonchen derives its name from its main monastery, which is part of a building complex including the royal palace, the monastery proper, and the printing press. Here, Migot was lodged by his friend Mr. Chang in a shrine atop the monastery, where the Chinese school operated (perhaps symbolically) until a new building was completed.

On the following day, he went to meet the director of the printing press and his secretary. He first enthralled them by revealing that a catalogue of their canon existed in Europe, only to be enthralled in return when the secretary revealed “a precise knowledge of the name, the number of chapters, and the number of pages in each of several thousand works which are to be found in the 333 volumes of the *Kanjur* and the *Tenjur*.”<sup>55</sup>

The press had no books in stock and only printed “sur demande.” Thus, Migot had to wait for his books and spent his time either in the monastery or with an old lama in charge of a chapel next to his room.

For the hours of meditation, we sat side by side on our cushions, facing the small altar on which butter lamps burned in honor of the veiled image of Dodiephuwa,<sup>56</sup> the tutelary deity of the Sakyapa. The lama made me read a passage from a *tantra* dedicated to this divinity, and then gave me an explanation, to which he added advice for guiding me in my meditation. Then he would absorb himself in his contemplation. I used to slip away when I felt tired, but he stayed on, hour after hour, motionless and seemingly drained of life.<sup>57</sup>

Although it is true that “the lamasery is almost a little town in itself, and its other buildings vertically striped with red, white, and black, [identify] them as belonging to the Sakyapa sect,”<sup>58</sup> the complex housed monks of different traditions. Since his neighbor was in charge of a chapel dedicated to Vajrakīlaya, it is possible that he belonged to the Nyingma tradition rather than to the Sakyapa.<sup>59</sup>

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55 See Migot 1955: 150, *id.* 1978: 129.

56 Migot 1978: 130 provides the spelling rDo rje phur ba, which is an alternative spelling for rDo rje phur pa and conforms to the pronunciation “Do-dié-phu-wa” he recorded.

57 Migot 1978: 130. Cf. *id.* 1955: 151f.

58 *Ibid.*: 149.

59 On the rNying ma and Sa skya traditions in the monastic complex, see also Bayer 2019: 5, 55.

### Denkhog: A Glimpse of “Forbidden Tibet”

On June 10, 1947, Migot left Derge Gonchen with six yaks carrying his books and possessions. Having regained the main route towards Jyekundo, he reached the important Drichu<sup>60</sup> (Yangtse) crossing at Denkhog a few days later.<sup>61</sup> Without a permit, nonetheless, he could not cross over to “forbidden Tibet” on the other shore.

In the afternoon, I sat down at the stream. [...] Never have I seen [“forbidden Tibet”] so close. Every detail engraved itself in my spirit, and for a long time, I contemplated that earth of which I dreamed, which lays itself bare before my eyes [...]. Still, she is more closed, far, and inaccessible than if an ocean would separate her from me. Close by, boats of yak-skin passed from one shore to the other as though it was the most natural thing in the world. It is, of course, for the Tibetans, but they would never know how much the white man envied them, whom they watched, smiling.<sup>62</sup>

Although it would not be far-fetched to suppose that a few of these passengers might have preferred to live in Paris, at that moment, it was clearly Migot who was restricted in his movement, holding a travel permit from the Republic of China but not the Central-Tibetan government (the Ganden Podrang).<sup>63</sup>

Migot’s fascination with the other side of the river might have been among the reasons that he presents only the most essential information about Denkhog, saying, “here the trading centre is not only a place of considerable importance but—and this is unusual in Tibet—it overshadows the local lamasery.”<sup>64</sup> Probably, Migot here refers to the palace (*pho brang*) of the Den Dilgo<sup>65</sup> family. This was the home of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (1910–1991), whose grandfather had become one of the most influential persons in the kingdom of Derge after the Nyagrong war in the 1860s. Widely known as the “Derge governor,” he

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60 'Bri chu.

61 On the spelling “lDan khog,” see Bayer 2019: 130, n. 595. Note Migot 1978: 138: *'dan kho*.

62 Migot 1978: 139. Cf. *id.*, 1955: 160f.

63 dGa' ldan pho brang.

64 *Ibid.*: 160.

65 lDan Dil mgo.

was a main sponsor of his cousin Khyentse'i Wangpo (1820–1892) and in a way his worldly pendant.<sup>66</sup>

When Eric Teichman visited Denkhog about thirty years before Migot, he commented quite extensively on the valley and “the ex-chief of Adu (Adu Bon in Tibetan), in whose castle we are lodged.”<sup>67</sup> Teichman did not mention the Derge governor's grandson, who was still a child of about eight at the time and had not yet embarked on a religious career. It was only two years later that he was ordained and studied together with Dezhung Rinpoche in Jyekundo for some months.<sup>68</sup> By the time of Migot's visit in 1947, he had become a figure of considerable renown and influence.

Gazing across the Drichu, Migot could not foresee that Dilgo Khyentse would assemble a considerable following in France during the 1970s and 1980s. We are thus left with the most rudimentary information about the *centre commerçant*, where Migot probably spent the night. Fortunately, he is more explicit about his visit to the Drolma Lhakhang, “poor, and not well looked after,”<sup>69</sup> where an old lama presented him with three unused *thangkas* “for your shrine in your home country.”<sup>70</sup>

### Prisoner of Zhang-gu

In the following days, Migot travelled upstream along the Drichu, in the company of some fellow *ulag* travelers, including “three young lamas, cheerful and friendly people.”<sup>71</sup> Eventually, he reached a ferry crossing at a point where, on the other shore, a valley would lead directly to the Karma Kagyu<sup>72</sup> monastery Benchen,<sup>73</sup> from where the path continues to Trangu<sup>74</sup> monastery (of the same denomination) and Jyekundo.

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66 On the “sDe dge governor” bKra shis tshe dpal (late 19th to early 20th c.), see Bayer 2019: 129–132.

67 Teichman 1922: 85. “Ado” could be confounding the actual name of the A lo Dil mgo family with the name of the A gro family.

68 Bayer 2019: 139–144.

69 See also Teichman 1922: 85.

70 Migot 1955: 160, *id.* 1978: 138f.

71 See Migot 1978: 142. Cf. *id.* 1955: 161.

72 Karma bKa' brgyud.

73 Ben chen.

74 Khra 'gu.

Since the lower part of the valley was controlled by the central Tibetan government, this was a somewhat sacred moment for Migot, and he writes: “Should I hide it? I was quite moved by touching the right bank of the Yangtse,” for “we now found ourselves on the territory of independent Tibet.”<sup>75</sup> Still, the central Tibetan government granted free passage to travelers from Denkhog to Jyekundo,<sup>76</sup> and it seems Migot met no border post at the ferry crossing. Most probably, the inhabitants considered themselves subject to the mostly defunct kingdom of Nangchen,<sup>77</sup> while the Karma Kagyu monasteries in the area followed directions from Pelpung monastery in the kingdom of Derge.<sup>78</sup> The first house of a Chinese magistrate was to be found only later, after crossing a pass, near Benchen monastery, about twenty kilometers from the ferry crossing.<sup>79</sup> Migot even held that the power of the Muslim Qinghai government did not extend far beyond the city limits of Jyekundo.<sup>80</sup>

Migot and his fellow travelers had not traveled far from the ferry crossing when they decided to stop for the night at the Karma Kagyu monastery of Zhang-gu,<sup>81</sup> “romantically situated on a ledge high above the valley, with its back to the cliff.”<sup>82</sup> Migot was not the first to be capti-

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75 *Ibid.*: 164.

76 Migot 1978: 142.

77 Nang chen.

78 On Migot’s visit to dPal spungs, see below. Karma rgyal mtshan (1997: 283) lists Khra ’gu, Zhang ’gu, and Ben chen among the branch monasteries of dPal spungs. Zhang ’gu is also mentioned in Jackson 2003: 530, and Kong sprul Blo gros mtha’ yas 2003: 169.

79 Teichman (1922, map 2) supposed that Ben chen was under the jurisdiction of sKye dgu mdo, while the ’Bri chu crossing near Ben chen and the south-western shore of the ’Bri chu down to lDan khog belonged to sDe dge (at least until 1910). He had not visited these lands himself, but when he reached the northeastern shore of the ’Bri chu in lDan khog, he observed: “A little further up [from the Dil-mgo residence] lies Drenda Druka, the ferry where the main road crosses the river” (Teichman 1922: 85). Earlier, Rockhill (1891: 227) had claimed that “Drenda or Dré ch’u dru-k’a (i.e. the Dré ch’u ferry), marks the boundary between Jyékundo and the kingdom of Dérgé.” At present, the border between the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Qinghai lies at the northwestern limit of the lDan khog plain. Kessler (1983, Blatt XVII) counts both sides of the ’Bri chu valley, down to Go ’jo, as belonging to sDe dge. See also Jackson 2003: 254.

80 See *ibid.*: 173. See also Jackson 2003: 523.

81 Zhang ’gu (mentioned above).

82 Migot 1955: 164. For a photograph, see Migot 1955, plates, and Jackson 2003: 22.

vated by the scenery. More than fifty years earlier, Rockhill had passed through the same valley, coming from Benchen, and remarked:

We were filled with amazement and delight; even my stolid Chinese showed their admiration for this lovely scenery by suggesting that we stop at once by the little village of Lori, and breakfast, to admire it at our ease, for we would probably soon leave this dreamland behind.<sup>83</sup>

In Zhang-gu, Migot was allotted a room of his own, after which he was greeted by the *trulku*, who “bade me welcome and said that he had been expecting me, having heard a great deal about me; not for the first time I remarked the speed with which news travels in a country where all means of locomotion are extremely slow.”<sup>84</sup> As Migot went out to explore the monastery, he saw that “most of the monks lived in lonely cells built into the mountainside. This is normal practice in the Karmapa sect [...]. Yielding to a strong impulse, I visited one of these cells, painted white and poised like an eyrie on a minor peak.”<sup>85</sup> After the resident practitioner opened the door, he

made me sit down in his little shrine and told me that he too had been expecting my arrival, a lama from Dzogchen Gompa having given him news of my approach. He interrogated me at length about my knowledge of Buddhism, the methods I used in meditation and my religious experiences. He made me read out various passages from the *Mahāmudrā*, the essential text used by the Kagyupa and expounded them to me in a most lucid and instructive way.

I did not notice how quickly the time was passing until I realized that night had fallen. The lama shared his frugal meal with me and then showed me into a tiny cell tucked in at the back of the hermitage where I was astonished to find my sleeping-bag. They had brought it up there without saying a word to me.<sup>86</sup>

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83 Rockhill 1891: 226.

84 Migot 1955: 164. A photograph of the *sprul sku* is contained among the plates of Migot 1978.

85 *Ibid.*: 164f.

86 Fleming (Migot 1955: 165) omits the title of the text, which has been added according to Migot 1978: 143 (*phyag rgya chen po*). This probably refers to one of the basic *mahāmudrā* texts by Rang byung rdo rje or Dwags po bKra shis rnam rgyal.

From then on, Migot felt like he was “in the grip of a secret and compelling force,” in this monastery where “everything seemed to have been prepared for me in advance and where everything conspired to keep me an uncomplaining captive.”<sup>87</sup> His caravan left quietly the next day, leaving Migot in his mountain retreat.

The days passed as they pass in a dream. Even today, I could not provide a reasonable estimate of the time I spent there. I hardly ever left the cell, always sitting next to my master before the immense scenery of the landscape or before the image of Milarepa, reading or meditating.<sup>88</sup>

After a few days, Migot’s teacher set up an elaborate “*angkur*” ceremony, a “transmission of strength,” meant to invest the disciple with “certain powers residing in [...] the occult forces of which the [master] has gained control,” thus permitting the disciple to utilize the specific powers of the various deities, which are, in reality, empty and mere personifications of “form-thoughts” manifesting from the *ālaya-vijñāna*. Migot does not report the name of the deity into whose *maṇḍala* he was initiated, but his mention of a “*mani-lung*” suggests that it could have been the red or white Avalokiteśvara. After the initiation, “the lama bade me repeat the ‘Triple Refuge’ to mark my entry into the Buddhist Church, and bestowed on me the name by which I should be known to the members of my new religion.”<sup>89</sup> The ceremony lasted for about an hour and at the end of it, Migot was completely content with the fact that he “had now become a member of the Karmapa sect.”<sup>90</sup> His refuge name was Karma Chopel Toga, and he suggests elsewhere that he became known

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87 Migot 1955: 165.

88 Migot 1978: 144. Cf. *id.* 1955: 166. The caption to an (unpaginated) image in the posthumous 1978 edition describes Zhang ’gu as “the hermitage where I stayed several months.” It is quite probable that the caption was not written by Migot himself, considering that a male aristocrat with long hair and earring is identified as female on another image, while a female pilgrim is identified as male.

89 Migot 1955: 166. Migot 1978: 145 contains a lengthy footnote on *angkur* (Nang chen dialect for *dbang bskur*) detailing the relation between the deities, emptiness, and mental constructions. The footnote probably stems from the original 1954 edition but is absent in Fleming’s English translation (1955).

90 Migot 1955: 166.

to Tibetans as “Karma.”<sup>91</sup> Migot also outlines the basic attitude underlying his initiation:

Ever since I entered Tibet, I made efforts not to be the “tourist” who passes by, regarding Lamaist religious life as a strange or curious spectacle, studying the religion as an ethnologist. I wanted to partake at that life, to assimilate myself to that religion as far as it is possible for an Occidental. [...] Even today, after spending years of research, after staying in Cambodian and Singhalese *vihāras*, Chinese temples, Mongolian and Tibetan lamaseries, living the life of the monks [...], I am still certain it would take not one but several lifetimes in the ambiance of Tibet for penetrating all those mysteries, for seriously advancing in that mystic Lamaist way, abrupt and desolate just like the mountains that frame it.<sup>92</sup>

His hosts at Dzogchen had done their best to invite him to more systematic studies and practice, and they may have even sent word to Zhang-gu that he was an interested but somewhat restless adept. At Zhang-gu, he finally found rest for some days, enchanted by the beautiful scenery and under the impression that he was now in “forbidden Tibet.” Here, at last, he had received the formal refuge, the starting point for a more traditional spiritual career. However, the feeling that “it would take several lives” also seems to have convinced him to first carry on with his attempt on Lhasa. After the initiation, he set off for Jyekundo “in due course,” “with Gelu, the young lama who had been travelling with us,” and who had waited for him during his stay in Zhang-gu.<sup>93</sup>

### Scholars and the Modern World in Jyekundo

Gelu’s patience was remarkable. With his help, Migot passed Benchen and Trangu to eventually reach Jyekundo, where he received the most

91 Migot 1978: 161 provides the spelling Karma Chos dpal thos dga’.

92 Migot 1978: 161. Fleming (Migot 1955: 168) translates “encore aujourd’hui” as “before coming here,” “ambiance tibétaine” as “Tibetan twilight,” and speaks of an “advance down the spiritual road which leads out of its desolate mountains.” See also Bishop 1989: 228f.

93 *Ibid.* The name “Gelu” could either indicate “dGe legs” or include the local affectionate suffix *lu* (on which see Bayer 2019: 35, n. 143).



cordial support from the local Muslim governor “Captain Ma.”<sup>94</sup> In the city, as usual, Migot set about taking photographs and visiting local markets in search of artefacts and texts. On these occasions, and during the summer festival held in the Sakyapa monastery Dondrubling and in the plain below,<sup>95</sup> he established friendly relations with young *trulkus* and their tutors. In no time, he found himself helping a *trulku* in the monastery to repair his phonograph. They also put the *trulku*’s camera to use by setting up a dark-room for developing photographs under the main altar of the assembly hall.<sup>96</sup>

Migot’s travelogue contains no details about the scholarly tradition in Dondrubling. About twenty-seven years earlier, the above-mentioned Dzogchen Khenpo Zhenga had set up a teaching college here, teaching to a crowd of several hundred students, including Dezhung Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. The latter, around ten years old, had received his novice vows on this occasion,<sup>97</sup> possibly in front of the same Buddha statue under which Migot and the *trulku* now developed photographs, using ceremonial silver bowls to soak the film. As might be expected, Migot was in touch with the bearers of the scholarly tradition, too:

In spite of all these mundane occupations, I managed to have some spiritual conversations with the preceptor of the younger of the two *trulkus*, but I never recaptured the calm and recollection that I had tasted at Shangu.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, he accepted an invitation by Captain Ma to watch religious dances at Trangu monastery, about five kilometers out of town. After the dances, a dinner reception was held in Captain Ma’s tent, and Migot was introduced to the dignitaries of Trangu. In order to conceal his plan of going to Lhasa, Migot related that he was about to visit monasteries along

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94 “Ma” (lit. “Horse,” 馬) stands for “Muhammad” and is used as family name by most Muslims in Qinghai.

95 Migot 1955: 175–178. The festival was probably held near rGya nag Ma ṅi, on which see Bayer 2019: 149. On the monastery sKye dgu Don grub gling, see *ibid.*: 128, 139.

96 Migot 1955: 178.

97 See Jackson 2003: 30–33, Bayer 2019: 139–146.

98 Migot 1978: 156. Cf. *id.* 1955: 179.

the route from Jyekundo to Xining, upon which “everyone wished me a journey fruitful for my studies.”<sup>99</sup>

### Into “Forbidden Tibet” and Back

A few days later, he left Jyekundo in the dark of night, heading west towards Lhasa with the help of Gelu. They managed to get close to the border of Qinghai but were stopped ascending a pass in the source region of the Dzachu<sup>100</sup> (Mekong). When they were brought before the local headman at Trashigompa,<sup>101</sup> “despite all the sympathy that the *ponpo* showed towards me, a fervent Buddhist and like myself an adept of the Kar-ma-pa sect, he could not infringe upon the strict orders he had received only recently.”<sup>102</sup> He even offered to accommodate Migot for an indeterminate period while trying to get him a permit for Lhasa. However, Migot had been robbed of much of his funding in Sichuan before reaching Tibet, and he was now concerned that his funds would run out in the months of waiting for a reply. Migot’s worries were probably unnecessary, since the *ponpo* had offered to entertain him, and since a physician would have been able to make a living in this area. In any case, he declined the offer and returned to Jyekundo, while Gelu went on to Lhasa.<sup>103</sup>

### The Drichu and the Books of Xuanzang and Migot

Although Migot had not reached Lhasa, his foray had left him strangely satisfied, considering how far he had come. At this point, he decided to end his sojourn in the Tibetan cultural sphere. After a brief happy reunion with his friends in Jyekundo, he joined a caravan heading

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99 Migot 1978: 160. Cf. *id.* 1955: 183. In the decades to come, mKhan chen Khra ’gu Rin po che (born 1933; Bayer 2019: 20), a *sprul sku* of Khra ’gu dgon, became known as one of the foremost scholars as of the Karma bKa’ bgyud tradition.

100 rDza chu.

101 Migot (1955: 212) correctly identifies bKra shis dgon pa (TBRC-G1KR2861) as belonging to the ’Bri gung tradition. See also Grenard 1904: 127–131.

102 Migot 1978: 173. Cf. *id.* 1955: 198. One would *a priori* assume that the *dpon po* of the area around bKra shis dgon pa was, like Migot, a bKa’ bgyud pa, albeit of the ’Bri gung tradition. However, the details are unknown.

103 *Ibid.*: 198f.

for Xining. Half of this caravan belonged to the governor of Qinghai, Ma Bufang (馬步芳, 1903–1975), who had decreed that Migot should receive all possible support. The caravan comprised a thousand yaks and four hundred horses, half of which belonged to Ma Bufang. Most were probably “requisitioned” from the local population.<sup>104</sup>

En route, Migot first visited the site where the French explorer Dutreil de Rhins had died in a (probably avoidable) skirmish with the local population in 1894, about ten kilometers south of Dezhung Rinpoche’s home village.<sup>105</sup> Thereafter, he reached the Drichu (Yangtse). As he was travelling north towards the river crossing, two of the yaks carrying his books, notes, and other luggage waded into the water in order to quench their thirst, calmly soaking their load. With parts of his luggage in this state, Migot reached the ferry crossing at Tagda, the lower opening of the valley leading up to Dezhung Rinpoche’s home village.<sup>106</sup>

Here, two *stūpas* stood out on the eastern side of the river, and Migot’s Chinese escort told him that the older one commemorated Xuanzang’s crossing of the river in 641, when he dropped some Sanskrit books into the water, which forced him to wait two days for the books to dry.<sup>107</sup> Migot was well aware that the legend was historically false.<sup>108</sup> Still, although Xuanzang returned through Dunhuang, it is not impossible that a later translator traveled this route. More probably though, the story originated with the escort’s sense of humor, considering that some of Migot’s books were at that point soaking wet. Migot found no time to dry them during their overnight stay at Lab monastery,<sup>109</sup> and only at their next stop, Trindu, could he inspect and dry the “papers,

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104 *Ibid.*: 204, 210.

105 The village where the skirmish took place is known as “Tombumdo” (Grenard), “Tongbumdo” (Teichman), or as Tongmoda (同莫達) in Chinese.

106 On Thag mda’, the lower part (*mda’*) of the Thag lung valley, see Jackson 2003: 220.

107 Migot 1955: 208f. On the white *stūpa* of sGa, see also Jackson 2003: 680, n. 1440.

108 Migot 1978: 181 (“historiquement faux”). Cf. Fleming’s translation at Migot 1955: 209.

109 On Lab kha, see Jackson 2003: 189, on the dGe lugs pa monastery of Lab, *ibid.*: 219.

maps, Tibetan books, and paintings” that had been immersed.<sup>110</sup> Unfortunately, he does not detail how badly his notebooks were affected.<sup>111</sup> His final stop in the Tibetan cultural sphere was the Drigung Kagyu monastery Drubgyu Gon,<sup>112</sup> where he “was given a delightful room with a balcony looking out over the plain. [...]. We were here for two days, and I spent most of my time with the monks, who were extremely kind to me.”<sup>113</sup>

Travelling on towards Beijing, Migot made a short detour to the Koko Nor and met Governor Ma Bufang in Xining on September 14. When he visited nearby Kumbum<sup>114</sup> monastery on the following day, although commending its beauty, he “did not retrieve that atmosphere of solitude and spirituality which constitute the charm and the mystical beauty of the simple Tibetan hermitages.”<sup>115</sup>

On the final part of his journey, he was more occupied with traversing the changing frontlines in the civil war, all the while gaining sympathy and courteous treatment from officials on both sides and reaching Beijing in mid-October 1947.

### Return to Derge

Those encounters seem to have confirmed his view that the communist insurgents were basically good-natured, and he had no intention of leaving China. Despite the civil war, he spent a most inspiring time in besieged Beijing, for a while lodged by his friend R.A. Stein (1911–1999) of the French Sinological research institute, and enjoying quiet study in pleasant libraries and meditation in the Lama temple.<sup>116</sup> Before long, however, Migot would venture on a journey to Inner Mongolia, quite probably driven by his “impatience chronique,” an effect of his “*karma*

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110 Migot’s description matches Khri ’du quite well. The place-name “Tsaidam” he uses could be a confusion with Qaidam (柴旦) in the north of Qinghai.

111 Migot 1955: 208–211.

112 sGrub brgyud dgon in northern Nang chen belongs to the ’Bri gung bKa’ brgyud tradition.

113 *Ibid.*: 211f.

114 sKu ’bum.

115 Migot 1978: 205.

116 *Ibid.*: 210. Unfortunately, I could not discern whether Stein worked with the scholars at the Yonghe Palace.

d'Occidental"<sup>117</sup> again. On this occasion, he seems to have underestimated the war situation, and his journey turned out to be troublesome and basically unsuccessful.

Returning to Beijing briefly, he set out by ship to Shanghai on January 7, 1948, financially refurbished and heading for Lhasa once more. In Shanghai, he got to know twenty-year old Claude Balp, who served as a petty officer in Indochina but was now "dreaming of nothing but Tibetan lamaseries and Hindu monasteries, Himalayan chains and Mongol steppes, Buddhism and Vedanta, Milarepa and Ramakrishna, yoga and meditation."<sup>118</sup> Together with Balp, Migot reached Dartsedo<sup>119</sup> where they stayed for several weeks (from April 11 to the end of June).

After moving on to Ta'u<sup>120</sup> (June 30 to probably late July), Migot prepared a study of the local dialect with the help of the elderly interpreter for the Chinese administration. In the travelogue, we further find his observations of local customs, such as gender relations or the sky burial of a Buddhist dignitary.<sup>121</sup> Despite having spent almost four months in the Tibetan cultural sphere, Migot mentions neither meditation nor the study of Buddhist thought and history, and as they moved on towards Derge Gonchen, he also leaves dKar mdzes (where he had stayed in retreat the year before) unmentioned. Although the reasons for this imbalance in the travelogue are not quite clear, Migot might not have wanted to report much about places he had already described. In any case, it seems that he did not pursue textual studies in a systematic way, dedicating more time to the spoken language (which would also help his work as a physician).

On July 25, Migot and Balp reached Yilhung, where they made a brief detour to a Bonpo monastery and acquired a number of rare books.<sup>122</sup> Heading for Derge Gonchen, they decided to follow the short but arduous route across the Tro-la, a pass at 4,196m in the midst of the Rudam

117 *Ibid.*: 191.

118 *Ibid.*: 231.

119 Dar rtse mdo.

120 rTa'u.

121 See *ibid.*: 231–235.

122 *Ibid.*: 236. Migot's rendering "Den-chin" seems to indicate rDza sTeng chen dgon, where a major Bon po printing press (TBRC-G3JT12600) was located.

mountain range.<sup>123</sup> It is quite remarkable that Migot did not follow the more convenient main trade route via Dzogchen, as he had the year before. Although he had hoped that he would return to Dzogchen for more profound spiritual instruction one day, the second part of his travelogue does not contain any plans towards that end.

In Derge Gonchen, they were lodged by Migot's old friend Chang, whose school now operated in newly finished buildings. Right away, Migot set out to treat patients *pro bono* inside the school and soon befriended a number of Tibetans. Among them was a Dawa Trulku of Pelyul monastery, who lived in the palace-monastery complex.<sup>124</sup> In the Chinese school, however, Migot found the attitude of the local Republican Chinese officials to be mostly hostile. In his own view, these officials were simply jealous that he established most friendly relations with the local Tibetans immediately, while they had tried but failed to do so. However, they may also have sensed that Migot, like many locals, disapproved of them running local affairs.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, we do not know whether Migot made any effort to hide his sympathies with the communist insurgency, a question that could become a matter of life and death for Kuomintang officials.

### Peaceful Days in Pelpung

Disenchanted by the situation, Migot and Balp set out for Pelpung on August 27, 1948. There, Migot hoped to find several books on meditation that had been recommended to him in Kardze (either in the same or in the previous year). He also hoped to “retrieve, for some days, the atmosphere of pure contemplation of the kind that I had tasted in that little lamasery [Zhang-gu].”<sup>126</sup> Zhang-gu Gompa, like its head

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123 *Ibid.*: 1978. On the Khro la, its hermit tradition and significance, see Bayer 2019: 150–152, 169.

124 The TBRC catalog lists a lCags ra Yang srid Zla ba 'od zer (1916–1981, P8543) of dPal yul, who was a son of A 'dzom 'Brug pa's (1842–1924) daughter and a disciple of A 'dzom rGyal sras 'Gyur med rDo rje (b. 1895). Notably, also the family of Nam mkha'i nor bu Rin po che was originally from lCags ra, had close relations with A 'dzom 'Brug pa, and partly lived in the royal palace (see Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 2012: 29–31).

125 See Migot 1978: 236.

126 See *ibid.*: 237.

monastery Pelpung, belongs to the Karmapa tradition, to which Migot had become affiliated the previous year.<sup>127</sup>

Upon arrival at Pelpung, they first visited the house of the *khenpo*, whom Migot identifies as the “secular head” (“chef temporel”) of the monastery. Upon presenting a letter of introduction by the “Tibetan governor of Derge” (possibly a regent of the ten-year-old prince Urygen Dudul),<sup>128</sup> they were received like old friends, served a meal, and sat to enjoy the spectacular view over the valley. The next day, they met the director of the printing press, who had most of the books on Migot’s list printed and suggested the addition of some works of the Karmapa canon to substitute for the books he could not provide.<sup>129</sup>

We spent marvelous days in an ambient of peace and high spirituality, most often in the company of the young “Living Buddha” of the lamasery and his preceptor, a cultivated old man, profoundly versed in the practices of meditation.<sup>130</sup>

On the evening before their departure, the head (“supérieur”) of the monastery gave them an initiation for a protective deity of the Karmapa lineage. Unfortunately, it is not possible to verify whether Migot here refers to the aforementioned *khenpo* or to the eleventh Situ Rinpoche (1886–1952).<sup>131</sup>

### Return to sDe dge and Journey to Dartsedo

When Migot and Balp returned to Derge Gonchen, it seems that the Chinese officials were not impressed by their unaccompanied journey. They were now banned from any further travel except for returning to Dartsedo. Of course, this thwarted Migot’s secret ambitions for Lhasa. Enraged and disappointed, they went to Dawa Trulku, who in fact

127 *Ibid.*: “[...] à laquelle ja’i été affilié l’an dernier à Shang-gu gom-pa.”

128 *Ibid.*: 238. On U rgyan bDud ’dul, see Hartley 1997: 97.

129 Migot may have bought primarily canonical books on his first visit to Derge and more autochthonous works the second time.

130 See Migot 1978: 239. “Précepteur” seems to stand for *mkhan po*. It is not quite clear whether Migot was aware of the difference between *mkhan po* as a scholarly title and as a Vinaya position.

131 *Ibid.* On the eleventh Si tu Rin po che, see Bayer 2019: 92. The deity was probably Ber nag chen or dPal ldan Lha mo.

lived in a luxurious apartment in the “house” (“maison”) of the young king. Not a friend of the Chinese representatives himself, he offered them a vast shrine room on the top floor of a monastery building, overlooking the town and the valley. Quite different from their nettlesome life in the Chinese school, old lamas now dropped by for a chat or simply smiled at them while moving their prayer beads. Similar to the previous year, Migot found time to meditate with an old lama who performed his rites in the room next door, three times a day. Unfortunately, he does not clarify whether this was the same room and the same lama as the year before.<sup>132</sup>

As the conflicts with the Chinese representatives continued, Migot and Balp also found that their funds were running out and decided to return. In the same year, 1948, Migot had recorded guerilla warfare in Yilhung, the homeland of the above-mentioned Jago family on the eastern side of the Tro-la.<sup>133</sup> However, it seems that by the time of their departure, the situation had calmed down. They thus set out to cross the Tro-la once again, this time forcing their way through the snow, wary of the frequent avalanches in this steep ravine. Migot does not record the date of their departure in his travelogue. A map contained in the 1978 edition dates their stay in Derge from early August to October 25.<sup>134</sup> Since the map was published only posthumously, we cannot be sure whether all dates are correct. In this case however, October 25 fits in well with Migot’s record that they reached Rongpatsa at the time of threshing barley, the sound of which was to be heard everywhere.<sup>135</sup>

In Migot’s opinion, their journey back to Dartsedo was “sans histoire,” and this may be the reason that he does not record the length of their stay in Rongpatsa and treats their journey through Kardze and Ta’u in a single sentence. Nonetheless, since they reached Dartsedo around December 20, we can conclude that the journey took them about two months, with most of the time possibly spent in Rongpatsa.

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132 Migot 1978: 239f.

133 *Ibid.*: 242.

134 See *ibid.*: 57.

135 *Ibid.*: 242f. This omnipresence of crop farming just below nomadic rDza chu kha could be a reason for the place name “Rong pa tsha,” *rong pa* being a nomads’ term for a person who dwells in the valley (*rong*) or lowland. See also *ibid.*: 119, Teichman 1922: 167.



This is again somewhat surprising, considering that Migot had mentioned their funds running out in late October already. In any case, after arrival in Dartsedo, Balp had to return to his duties in Indochina immediately, while Migot waited for luggage and a money transfer to arrive. He ultimately left Dartsedo with a Tibetan caravan on January 4, 1949, faced with the task of transporting almost one ton of Tibetan books and artefacts through war-ridden China back home to France.<sup>136</sup>

### **Conclusions I: Migot and the Khampa Scholarly Tradition**

Like Teichman in 1918, Migot clearly grasped that the non-Gelugpa scholarly traditions of Kham were in no way inferior to the famed academies near Lhasa. There is thus reason to assume that this was known to his friend R.A. Stein, too, even though he does not dwell on Khampa colleges in works such as *La civilisation tibétaine* (1962). When the first part of Migot's travelogue (until his return to Beijing) appeared in 1954, it was, despite its brevity, probably the most informative account of Buddhist scholarly life in Dzogchen, Pelpung, Derge Gonchen, Jyekundo, and places nearby. Quite certainly, his travelogue and the books and artefacts he bought played a major role in the above-mentioned studies by Lokesh Chandra and Ariane Macdonald, gradually introducing an international audience to Khampa scholasticism.

Migot was undoubtedly a highly gifted, enthusiastic researcher. In 1954, he managed to publish not only the first part of his travelogue but also a study of Śāriputra and the Śāriputra-abhidharma in the *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, mentioning Jean Przyluksi and Paul Demiéville as his teachers.<sup>137</sup> Three years later, in the same bulletin, he published his studies of eastern-Tibetan dialects and a collection of eleven Tibetan narratives in transliteration and local pronunciation, including short biographies of his informants.<sup>138</sup>

Still, the accounts of his journeys are primarily a travelogue and not meant for a scholarly audience. When he met the physicist and Yoga enthusiast Gabriel Monod-Herzen in Vietnam (probably in 1950), he was fully engaged in combatting malaria and never mentioned that he had

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136 *Ibid.*: 243.

137 See Migot 1954b: 405.

138 See Migot 1957.

been to (eastern) Tibet. At the time, Migot was convinced that he would never find a publisher for his notes and planned to throw them away. After reading the manuscript, Monod-Herzen convinced him of the opposite, and luckily, both of them also survived a landmine exploding close to their car the same evening.<sup>139</sup>

The above is to say that, in spite of all its imperfections, we have to be grateful that Migot's travelogue has been preserved. In total, Migot spent about five months in the Tibetan cultural sphere on his first journey, and about nine on the second. Unfortunately, the published versions of his travelogue partly lack dates, the names of the Buddhist dignitaries he met, the titles of the texts he studied and so on, and there is not much hope that they are recorded in the original notebooks.

Furthermore, the travelogue also shows the limitations of his scholarship. For example, we find a readable and informative introduction to Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, about nine pages long.<sup>140</sup> Here, Migot rightly disapproves of the expression "Living Buddhas." Nonetheless, objecting that *trulkus* are manifestations of Bodhisattvas, not Buddhas, he presents the Penchen Lama, a reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Eupa-mé, as an example.<sup>141</sup> Migot was a studious person but well aware that this restlessness, his "*karma* d'Occidental," impeded his ability to stay in one place. Even when the monks of Zhang-gu did their best to prevent his departure, Migot was driven towards new horizons and seemingly found little time to sit and study with the scholars he met.

## Conclusions II: Migot and the "Orientalism" Stereotype

This leads us to the question of Migot's image of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. Migot surely does not fit the stereotype of the uninformed bourgeois trying to ignore social injustice by clinging to romantic fantasies, or, in other words, by hallucinating a heart into a heartless world. This can be said with some certainty, since the sympathy he held towards the communists while travelling through civil-war China eventually

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139 Monod-Herzen in Migot 1978: 251.

140 Migot 1978: 75–84.

141 *Ibid.*: 83. See also Migot 1955: 211f.: "[sGrub brgyud dgon] belongs to an obscure subsect called Drugong [Bri gung], which is, unless I am mistaken, an offshoot of the Sakyapas."

resulted in a 312-page monograph on Mao Zedong.<sup>142</sup> It would be methodologically unsound to mention Migot's idealized view of Lamaist Tibet without mentioning his idealized view of communist China.

When the first reflections on "Orientalist" images of Tibet appeared in the late 1980s, Peter Bishop pointed to Migot's statement that "Tibet, where social harmony prevails..., deserves to rank as one of the best-governed countries in the world."<sup>143</sup> This may seem inappropriate today, but Migot had left Europe only months after the end of WWII, when most of Africa and Asia was still colonized. Furthermore, it should be recognized that Migot had never reached "forbidden Tibet." What he saw in practice was the conflict between Chinese Republican officials (who were mostly ignored by the local population) and traditional eastern Tibetan administration (which Migot held to be more effective). Migot also thought that the power of the monasteries somehow mitigated pure feudalism. Unfortunately, we do not find his discussion of the relation between local headmen (*sa mgo*) and Chinese officials in the English translation but only in the second part of the 1978 French edition,<sup>144</sup> which was probably unknown to Bishop.

As for the English translation of the first part, by Peter Fleming (the brother of James Bond author Ian Fleming), it should be noted that Fleming himself had formerly published his own travelogue to Asia on a mostly adventurous note. Unsurprisingly, he translates rather freely into a partly Bond-ish style, omitting some of Migot's more profound reflections.

In a thoughtful article of 2008, Bishop clarified that his intention was never to disqualify those who viewed Tibet as a social utopia, stating, "while [the death of Shangri-la] is welcome for those who saw Shangri-la as a prison of naïve idealism, as merely an oppressive Western orientalist fantasy, we must also mourn its passing."<sup>145</sup> We may thus acknowl-

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142 See Migot 1966.

143 Bishop 1989: 231. Compared to Peter Fleming's English translation (Migot 1955: 104), the section is much more elaborate in the 1978 edition (p. 84), and the sentence in question phrased more carefully: "[L]orsque l'on constate la paix sociale qui règne au Tibet, l'absence de guerres étrangères, on peut dire que ce pays est un des plus sagement administrés."

144 See Migot 1978: 242.

145 Bishop 2008: 179.

edge its inspirational value, since “the Shangri-la myth also offers an image of a core interiority, the possibility of an interior depth,” lest we should be “so consumed [...] with the mundane that our horizons are closed in all around and we have lost a particular horizon which allows us a vision of great importance.”<sup>146</sup>

Just as Migot did not reach forbidden Tibet, he did not live to see the long-term effects of the revolution in China. What we know now about both may be sobering, but it need not be the end of all hope. Progress towards a better world, in both social and spiritual terms, seems possible, but such progress is probably made in small steps rather than grand upheavals. For Bishop, “the utopian imagination is now less about formulating large models of an ideal wholeness, than [about] providing glimpses, sparks, fragments of hybrid spaces in-between,”<sup>147</sup> that is to say, between “earth and sky [...], belief and rejection.”<sup>148</sup>

We may also find this inspiring space between extremes such as the condemnation and glorification of Tibetan culture, between the rhetorical misuse of meditative experience and its factuality, between the shallowness and the depth of “Orientalism” discourse, between defeatism and delusional social utopia. On a most fundamental level, there seems to be a space between the harsh realities of our factual situation and the “thirst” to deny those realities, a space where the path can be the goal.

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146 *Ibid.*: 188.

147 *Ibid.*: 197.

148 *Ibid.*: 195.

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**„Ein Spektakel für jedweddes Auge, Speisen für jedwedden Mund“:  
Die Einsetzung der 'Khon-Adligen bSod-nams dbang-po  
(1559–1621) und Graggs-pa blo-gros (1563–1617) auf dem Großen  
Dharma-Thron des Klosters Sa-skya im Jahr 1570**

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Im *Ozean der Wunder*, 'Jam-mgon A-mes-zhabs' (1597–1659) Biographie des 23. Sa-skya-Hierarchen sNgags-'chang Kun-dga' rin-chen (1517–1584), begegnet uns eine detaillierte Schilderung elaborierter Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten, welche jener Kun-dga' rin-chen für seine beiden Söhne bSod-nams dbang-po (1559–1621) und Graggs-pa blo-gros (1563–1617) ausrichten ließ.<sup>1</sup> Diese Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten, die sich vom Ende des zwölften Monats des Erde-Schlange-Jahres (1569) bis in die Mitte des ersten Monats des Eisen-Pferd-Jahres (1570) über nahezu drei Wochen erstreckten, fanden ihren Höhepunkt in der Einsetzung bSod-nams dbang-pos und Graggs-pa blo-gros' auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron (*chos khri chen mo*) des Klosters Sa-skya, durchgeführt in Form einer dreitägigen Darlegung eines für die Sa-skya-Tradition grundlegenden Lehrtextes: Sa-skya Paṇḍitas (1182–1251) *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* (*Thub pa'i dgongs gsal*). Nach der Einsetzung fungierten bSod-nams dbang-po und Graggs-pa blo-gros als „Herren der

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1 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 263,5–274.2. Mein Dank gilt mKhan-po Thub-bstan rgyal-mtshan, mit dem ich Ende 2019 die entsprechende Passage im *Ozean der Wunder* (*Ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*), so der Schmucktitel der Biographie, durchgehen konnte. Die Zusammenarbeit mit mKhan-po *lags* kam durch die großzügige Unterstützung des Instituts für Religionswissenschaft der Universität Bern zustande. Ebenfalls zu Dank verpflichtet bin ich dem Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienst (DAAD), der mir durch ein sechsmonatiges Stipendium im Jahr 2015 ermöglichte, einen ersten Einstieg in das Thema des vorliegenden Beitrags zu finden. Für eine Zusammenfassung von Kun-dga' rin-chens und bSod-nams dbang-pos Biographien siehe Ehrhard 2015: 143–160.

Lehre“ (*bstan pa'i bdag po*) und als „Regenten“ (*rgyal tshab*) ihres Vaters Kun-dga' rin-chen, das heißt als Halter der Sa-skya-Lehren und Hierarchen *in spe*.<sup>2</sup>

Die Einsetzung bSod-nams dbang-pos und Grags-pa blo-gros' im Jahr 1570<sup>3</sup> stellte kein singuläres Ereignis in der Geschichte Sa-skyas dar. Vielmehr sind für die Zeit ab dem späten 15. Jahrhundert regelmäßige Durchführungen solcher Einsetzungen der männlichen Nachkommen der Adelsfamilie der 'Khon in den Quellen gut dokumentiert, beginnend mit der Einsetzung von Kun-dga' rin-chen's Onkel Sa-skya Lo-tsā-ba Kun-dga' bsod-nams (1485–1433) im Jahr 1496 bis zur Einsetzung des Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' theg-chen dpal-'bar (geb. 1945) im Jahr 1959, kurz vor der Flucht der 'Khon-Familie ins Exil.

Ganz offensichtlich handelte es sich bei diesen Einsetzungen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron des Klosters um einen zentralen rituellen Baustein im institutionellen Gefüge Sa-skyas, der dazu beitrug, die

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2 Die Bezeichnung „Sa-skya-Hierarch“ soll sich im Folgenden auf den höchsten Repräsentanten der 'Khon-Familie in Sa-skya beziehen, also jener Familie, die das Kloster mitsamt den zugehörigen Ländereien von der Gründung im Jahr 1073 bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts kontrollierte. Das Amt des Sa-skya-Hierarchen, das religiöse Autorität und weltliche Macht in sich vereinte, hat im Hinblick auf seine Konzeption im Laufe der langen Geschichte Sa-skyas diverse Veränderungen erfahren. Dies zeigt sich nicht zuletzt an den unterschiedlichen Bezeichnungen, mittels derer zu verschiedenen Zeiten auf das Amt verwiesen wurde, wie bspw. *gzhi thog gi go sar* (siehe hierzu Heimbel 2017: 83–85), *gzhi thog gi gdan sa, bdag khri (rin po che), (sa skya'i) khri thog, (sa skya) khri chen* und *(sa skya) khri 'dzin*. Die Titel *khri chen* bzw. *khri 'dzin* („Sa-skya-Thronhalter“), die heutzutage gerne rückwirkend auf alle Sa-skya-Hierarchen angewendet werden, existierten im 16. Jahrhundert noch nicht und werden daher im vorliegenden Beitrag nicht verwendet. Laut Cassinelli und Ekvall 1969: 20 wurde der *khri chen*-Titel im 18. Jahrhundert eingeführt. Die früheste Erwähnung des *khri 'dzin*-Titels, die mir bislang begegnet ist, findet sich in einer Biographie des Sa-skya-Hierarchen Padma bDud-'dul dbang-phyug (1792–1853) in Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 533.3–5.

3 Der Einfachheit halber gebe ich hier und im Folgenden bei der Datumsangabe der Einsetzung bSod-nams dbang-pos und Grags-pa blo-gros' nur das Jahr 1570 (*lcags rta*) an, auch wenn die Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten bereits gegen Ende des Jahres 1569 (*sa sbrul*) begannen. Bei der Übertragung tibetischer Jahresangaben in westliche Jahreszahlen bleibt unberücksichtigt, dass das tibetische Jahr später als das westliche beginnt. Das Alter von Personen wird nach traditioneller tibetischer Zählweise angegeben. Um der allgemein im Westen üblichen Zählung zu entsprechen, muss also ein Jahr abgezogen werden.



Weitergabe religiöser Autorität und weltlicher Macht innerhalb der Familienlinie der 'Khon zu regulieren. Seitens der tibetologischen Forschung haben diese Einsetzungen jedoch bislang kaum Aufmerksamkeit erfahren.<sup>4</sup> Von daher soll in dem vorliegenden Beitrag eine konkrete Durchführung – nämlich die Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten des Jahres 1570 – in den Blick genommen und in Aufbau und Ablauf vorgestellt werden. Die Festlichkeiten des Jahres 1570 bieten sich im Besonderen für ein solches Unterfangen an, und zwar aus den folgenden zwei Gründen: Zunächst einmal handelt es sich dabei um die erste Durchführung dieser Festlichkeiten, von der sich ein detaillierter Bericht in den tibetischen Quellen erhalten hat. (Die Schilderungen der Einsetzungen von Sa-skya Lo-tsä-ba im Jahr 1496 und Kun-dga' rin-chen im Jahr 1525 sind vergleichsweise knapp gehalten.) Darüber hinaus hatte Kun-dga' rin-chen im Jahr 1570 an dem auf ihn gekommenen Format der Einsetzung eine maßgebliche Modifikation vorgenommen, die dann für alle folgenden Durchführungen bis in die Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts hinein beibehalten wurde. Diese Modifikation zielte darauf ab, eine möglichst große Öffentlichkeit für die Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne zu schaffen.

Der vorliegende Beitrag gliedert sich in zwei Teile. Zunächst sollen die Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten des Jahres 1570 im historischen Kontext der „Wiederbelebung“ Sa-skyas im 16. Jahrhundert verortet werden (Teil 1). Daran schließt sich eine ausführliche Darstellung des Aufbaus und Ablaufs der mehrwöchigen Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten jenes Jahres an (Teil 2). In einem Schlusswort wird ein ritualtheoretischer Rahmen skizziert, in dem die Einsetzung in ihren Grundzügen eingeordnet werden soll. Ergänzt wird der Beitrag durch einen Anhang, der sämtliche Durchführungen der Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron Sa-skyas vom Ende des 15. bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts auflistet.

## 1 Kun-dga' rin-chens „Wiederbelebung“ Sa-skyas

Regelmäßige Durchführungen von Einsetzungen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron in Sa-skya sind – wie eingangs erwähnt – für die

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4 Eine kurze Erwähnung der Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron Sa-skyas findet sich in Cassinelli und Ekvall 1969: 195–196.

Zeit ab dem späten 15. Jahrhundert in den Quellen dokumentiert.<sup>5</sup> Interessanterweise fällt dieser Beginn der dokumentierten Einsetzungen zeitlich zusammen mit einem folgenreichen Einschnitt in der Geschichte Sa-skyas. So waren drei der vier Familienzweige, in welche sich die 'Khon seit Beginn des 14. Jahrhunderts aufgespalten hatten, bis zum Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts abgebrochen.<sup>6</sup> Allein der Duschod-Zweig der Familie hatte überlebt, und so begann – mit der Einsetzung des Sa-skyas Lo-tsā-ba zum Hierarchen von Sa-skyas im Jahr 1498 – die alleinige Kontrolle dieses Familienzweiges über Sa-skyas.<sup>7</sup>

5 Die Ursprünge und die frühe Geschichte der ab dem Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts dokumentierten Einsetzungen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron liegen im Dunkeln. Möglicherweise handelt es sich bei gewissen als *che 'don* bezeichneten Einsetzungen – Schuh 1976: 262 übersetzt diesen Begriff als „Verleihung von Rang und Würde“ – um Vorformen dieser späteren Einsetzungen; siehe hierzu die kurzen Verweise auf solche „Verleihungen von Rang und Würde“ in Mus-srad-pa, *Sa skyas gdung rabs*, Fols. 42a1, 46b4, 47a3, 47a6–b1, 54a1; sTag-tshang Lo-tsā-ba, *Sa skyas gdung rabs*, S. 52.3–4; A-mes-zhabs, *Sa skyas gdung rabs*, S. 242.17–22, 259.8–9, 305.7–13, 356.5–6, 357.3–5, 358.1–2. Das spezifische Format der dreitägigen Lehrdarlegung ist m.W. das erste Mal für die späten 1460er Jahre in Sa-skyas belegt, ist aber sicherlich älteren Datums; siehe sTag-tshang Lo-tsā-ba, *Sa skyas gdung rabs*, S. 68.2–4; A-mes-zhabs, *Sa skyas gdung rabs*, S. 378.20–379.2. Die oben erwähnte Zäsur gegen Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts findet sich auch in einer kurzen Diskussion der „Durchführungsgeschichte“ der Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron in Drag-shul, *Sa skyas gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 404.9–405.6.

6 Dies betraf die Familienzweige, die dem gZhi-thog, lHa-khang und Rin-chen-gang Bla-brang zugeordnet waren; siehe hierzu die genealogischen Überblicke in Schoening 1983: 338 (gZhi-thog), 339–340 (lHa-khang), 348–349 (Rin-chen-gang).

7 Kurze Schilderungen der Einsetzung des Sa-skyas Lo-tsā-ba in das Hierarchenamt finden sich in dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 17.2–4; A-mes-zhabs, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 9.4–5. Es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass die Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron, um die es in dem vorliegenden Beitrag gehen soll, nicht mit der Einsetzung in das Hierarchen-Amt verwechselt werden darf. Es handelt sich dabei um zwei unterschiedliche Ereignisse, die aber ab dem 19. Jahrhundert auf das gleiche Datum fallen konnten. Dass es sich trotzdem um zwei verschiedene Einsetzungen handelte, zeigt sich an dem Umstand, dass noch zu jener Zeit die Hierarchen-Einsetzung nicht auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron durchgeführt wurde, sondern auf Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pas Lotus-Thron, der sich in der Roten Halle (*tshoms dmar*) im gZhi-thog-Palast befand; siehe z.B. Drag-shul, *Sa skyas gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 533.6–8 (Padma bdud'dul dbang-phyug, 1806); S. 617.3–5 (Ngag-dbang rDo-rje rin-chen, 1843); S. 666.16–18 (Theg-chen bkra-shis rin-chen, 1845); S. 634.13–15 (Kun-dga' bsod-nams, 1866); S. 736.2–6 (Kun-dga' snying-po, 1883).

Auch wenn es zweifellos schon zuvor in Sa-skyas Einsetzungen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron gegeben hatte, scheinen diese ab dem Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts eine andere Gewichtung erhalten zu haben, bedingt durch die veränderte Familienstruktur der 'Khon.

Zu Beginn der Dus-mchod-Periode war wenig von der einstigen Machtfülle des Klosters während der Sa-skyas-Yüan-Ära (Mitte des 13. bis Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts) übrig geblieben. Damals hatte Sa-skyas als tibetisch-mongolisches Verwaltungszentrum fungiert und die 'Khon-Familie galt eine Zeit lang als führende politische Kraft des Landes. Mit dem Aufstieg der Phag-mo-gru-Dynastie zur herrschenden Macht in Tibet und dem Zusammenbruch der Yüan-Herrschaft in China in der Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts setzte für die 'Khon-Familie dann eine lange Phase des Niedergangs ein. Zwar gelang es den 'Khon, die Kontrolle über Sa-skyas zu halten, jedoch sah sich die Familie zunehmend zu einer reinen Regionalmacht degradiert.<sup>8</sup>

Wie kritisch die Situation innerhalb Sa-skyas während der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts war, zeigen verschiedene Episoden, die Ames-zhabs im *Ozean der Wunder* mitteilt. So war der Beginn von Kundga' rin-chens Amtszeit als Sa-skyas-Hierarch (ab 1533) überschattet von Konflikten mit anderen Adelsfamilien und Regionalmächten, allen voran mit dem sogenannten lHa-sa rdzong-pa.<sup>9</sup> Diese Konflikte eskalierten schließlich so weit, dass der lHa-sa rdzong-pa zusammen mit seinen Alliierten einen (letztlich gescheiterten) Mordanschlag auf Kundga' rin-chen ausführen ließ. Nur mit Hilfe mächtiger Verbündeter wie den Rin-spungs-pa und dem Fürsten von rGyal-rtse – und, wie im *Ozean der Wunder* immer wieder betont wird, der Schutzgottheit Mahākāla Pañjaranātha – gelang es Kundga' rin-chen, die Kontrolle über Sa-skyas zurückzuerlangen und zu stabilisieren.<sup>10</sup>

Darüber hinaus waren Teile Sa-skyas – es handelte sich ja dabei um eine ausgedehnte Anlage zahlreicher Gebäude, unterteilt in einen

8 Zur Sa-skyas-Yüan-Ära der tibetischen Geschichte siehe Petech 1990. Der Aufstieg der Phag-mo-gru-Adligen im 14. Jahrhundert ist ausführlich in Czaja 2013: 109–196 beschrieben. Zum Niedergang der Macht Sa-skyas ab der Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts siehe Everding 2000: 453–454.

9 Cassinelli und Ekvall 1969: 365 lokalisieren das lHa-sa rDzong in Srad.

10 Zum Mordkomplott des lHa-sa rdzong-pa und seiner Alliierten siehe Ames-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 95.4–101.2. Weitere Konflikte mit dem lHa-sa rdzong-pa werden in *ibid.*, S. 88.1–89.5, 197.6–198.4, 328.3–333.5 geschildert.

südlichen und (älteren) nördlichen Klosterkomplex – zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts in einem beklagenswerten baulichen Zustand. Kun-dga' rin-chen war sich dieser Situation laut *Ozean der Wunder* bereits als Jugendlicher bewusst gewesen und soll früh den Entschluss gefasst haben, dem Verfall Sa-skyas entgegenzuwirken.<sup>11</sup> Dem *Ozean der Wunder* zufolge begann Kun-dga' rin-chen diesen Entschluss ab seinem dritten Lebensjahrzehnt – d.h. irgendwann in den späten 1540er oder frühen 1550er Jahren – in die Tat umzusetzen, und so findet sich in seiner Biographie ein langer Abschnitt, in dem diverse Instandsetzungen und Neuerrichtungen von Tempeln, Stüpas und anderen Heiligtümern geschildert werden.<sup>12</sup> Zweifellos handelte es sich bei diesen Maßnahmen, die nach Kun-dga' rin-chens Tod von seinen beiden Söhnen fortgeführt wurden, um die umfänglichste Umgestaltung der Klosteranlage seit der intensiven Bautätigkeit während der formativen Periode der Fünf Patriarchen (*gong ma lnga*) im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert.<sup>13</sup> Somit erhielt Sa-skya im 16. und frühen 17. Jahrhundert die Gestalt, die es bis zu den Zerstörungen der Kulturrevolution in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts beibehalten sollte.

Vor allem aus diesem Grund gilt Kun-dga' rin-chen der tibetischen religiösen Geschichtsschreibung als ein „Wiederbeleber“ Sa-skyas. So bekundet sein Enkel A-mes-zhabs – zweifellos einer der einflussreichsten

11 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 69.6–70.3, 102.1–3, wo der schlechte bauliche Zustand des Klosters u.a. auf die „üblen Aktivitäten früherer Machthaber, welche Emanationen Māras waren“ (*sngar byung ba'i bdud sprul dpon rigs rnam ky'i byed pa ngan pa*), zurückgeführt wird. Zum Entschluss Kun-dga' rin-chens, sich dem Verfall Sa-skyas entgegenzustemmen, siehe *ibid.*, S 87.6–88.1.

12 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 101.6–123.1.

13 Dies lässt sich gut an der „Chronologischen Beschreibung der Gebäude Sa-skyas“ in Schoening 1990: 13–20 ablesen. Siehe auch Ferrari 1958: 148, Anm. 481, die davon spricht, dass das Kloster „was practically re-built by Kun dga' rin c'en“. Bezeichnend ist in diesem Zusammenhang auch eine Anmerkung in Tucci 1949: 172, wo dieser im Hinblick auf Kun-dga' rin-chens Instandsetzungs- und Neugründungsaktivitäten bedauernd feststellt: „if Kun dga' rin c'en had not reconstructed it [d.h. Sa-skya] in the XVIth century, or if his repairs had not been continued by his successors, many important documents of the Mongol period would have come down to us. We would have seen the art of India and that of Yüan China coexisting, as was to be expected in a place where the two cultures met.“

vormodernen Chronisten der Geschichte Sa-skyas –, dass Kun-dga' rin-chens „die Glut der Lehre wieder entfachte, mitsamt der religiösen Gemeinschaft des glorreichen Sa-skyas[-Klosters], [dessen] Lehren und der [’Khon-]Familienlinie“. <sup>14</sup> A-mes-zhabs vergleicht Kun-dga' rin-chens „Wiederbelebungsprojekt“ also – wie aus der Phrase „die Glut der Lehre wieder entfachen“ (*bstan pa'i me ro gso ba*) hervorgeht – mit der Anfangsphase der späteren Verbreitung des Buddhismus in Tibet (*bstan pa phyi dar*).

Darüber hinaus war die Wiederbelebung Sa-skyas aber auch – wie im obigen Zitat des A-mes-zhabs anklingt – von den Anstrengungen der damaligen 'Khon-Elite geprägt, die religiösen und historischen Überlieferungen ihrer Vorväter zu bewahren und für die aktuellen Erfordernisse zu adaptieren. Dabei entstand zunehmend eine immense Masse an Textmaterial, das schließlich in großen Werksammlungen kompiliert wurde. Ablesen lässt sich diese Entwicklung an den *gsung 'bums* der Sa-skyas-Hierarchen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. So zählen Sa-skyas Lo-tsā-bas Gesammelte Werke in der modernen nepalesischen Poti-Ausgabe gut 1.000 Seiten. <sup>15</sup> Die dreibändige Sammlung der Werke Kun-dga' rin-chens, von denen allerdings nur ein Band erhalten ist, zählt hochgerechnet schon 2.500 bis 3.000 Seiten. <sup>16</sup> A-mes-zhabs' Werk – Höhepunkt und Abschluss dieser Entwicklung – umfasst in der modernen nepalesischen Poti-Ausgabe schließlich über 22.000 Seiten in insgesamt 29 Bänden. <sup>17</sup>

Man kann sich des Eindrucks nicht erwehren, dass sich im Zuge dieser vielfältigen Aktivitäten auch ein neues (oder wiedergewonnenes)

14 Diese Formulierung taucht leitmotivartig in einer Reihe von Werken A-mes-zhabs' auf; siehe z.B. A-mes-zhabs, *Grag pa blo gros kyi rnam thar*, S. 60.1–2: *sngags 'chang chos kyi rgyal po ngag dbang kun dga' rin chen gyis dpal sa skya'i sde bstan pa gdung brgyud dang bcas pa'i bstan pa'i me ro gso bar mdzad [...]*. Ähnliche Formulierungen finden sich u.a. in A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 3.3, 69.3, 70.3.

15 Siehe BDRC W1KG4325. Für eine Titelliste siehe Sobisch 2008: 196–202.

16 Siehe BDRC W00KG02358 und W1KG4326. Für eine vollständige Titelliste, die auch jene Werke umfasst, welche in den beiden zurzeit nicht greifbaren Bänden enthalten sind, siehe Sobisch 2008: 208–210. Der Verbleib der Gesammelten Werke bSod-nams dbang-pos (2 Bände) und Grags-pa blo-gros' (1 Band) ist ungewiss; siehe die entsprechenden Titellisten in *ibid.*: 213–215.

17 Siehe BDRC W29307. Vgl. die zweiundvierzigbändige Ausgabe in Buchformat (IHa-sa, 2012; BDRC W1PD159398), die noch vollständig ist.

'Khon-Selbstverständnis herausbildete, wohl auch dadurch bedingt, dass am Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts die Aufspaltung der 'Khon in vier Familienzweige zum Ende gekommen war. Dies zeigt sich nicht zuletzt an dem Umstand, dass die 'Khon-Meister der Wiederbelebungsphase in einem weitaus größeren Umfang als zuvor Werke verfassten, in denen sie die historischen und legendarischen Überlieferungen des Klosters und ihrer Familie zusammentrugen.<sup>18</sup>

Besonders interessant im Hinblick auf das Thema des vorliegenden Beitrages ist zudem eine Beobachtung Ter Ellingsons, der – sich dabei auf Handbücher für die Vajrakīlaya-Ritualpraxis beziehend – davon ausgeht, dass das Kloster Sa-skya während des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts eine Art „renaissance of the ritual arts“ erlebte, welche letztendlich auf Kun-dga' rin-chens Aktivitäten zurückzuführen sei.<sup>19</sup> Für Ellingsons Beobachtung spricht, dass Kun-dga' rin-chen offensichtlich auch Veränderungen an der Konzeption des Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Rituals (*dus mdos chen mo*) vornahm, einem der zentralen Ereignisse im Ritualkalender Sa-skyas.<sup>20</sup> Und auch die Modifikation im Ablauf der (hier im Folgenden besprochenen) Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron,

18 Beispielhaft erwähnt seien hier nur bSod-nams dbang-po's *Beschreibung der heiligen Stätte Sa-skya* (*Sa skya'i gnas bshad*); die *Geschichte der Weitschallenden Weißen Dharma-Muschel* (*Chos dung dkar po rgyang grags kyi lo rgyus*; nicht greifbar) und die *Geschichte der Schwarzen Fliegenden Mahākāla-Maske* (*bSe 'bag nag po 'phur shes kyi lo rgyus*; nicht greifbar) des Grags-pa blo-gros (Nr. 4 und 5 in der Titelliste in Sobisch 2008: 215); sowie die vielen historischen Werke des A-mes-zhabs (wie bspw. das bekannte *Sa skya gdung rabs*), bei denen es sich oft um Kompilationen früheren Materials handelt; siehe hierzu auch den umfangreichen Katalog der Werke des A-mes-zhabs in Sobisch 2007: 141–528.

19 Siehe Ellingson 1979: 169: „During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Sakyapas were undergoing a kind of renaissance of the ritual arts. In this period there appeared several new compilations of ritual vocal and instrumental notations and two descriptive-analytical musical treatises, as well as works dealing with the history and religious significance of the Phur pa rituals. Much of this new scholarship derived from the inspiration of one man, the Tantric Master (Sngags 'chang) Kun dga' Rin chen, who wrote on various aspects of Phur pa practices [...], including instrumental music.“

20 Zum Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Ritual siehe die Abschnitte 2.3.1.1–2 im vorliegenden Beitrag. Zu den Veränderungen, die Kun-dga' rin-chen an diesem Ritual vornahm, siehe bSod-nams dbang-po, *Sa skya'i gnas bshad*, S. 61.4–9; A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 321.5–322.2.

die auf Kun-dga' rin-chen zurückgeht, scheint sich in das von Ellingson skizzierte Bild einer „renaissance of the ritual arts“ – bzw. in den größeren Kontext der Wiederbelebung Sa-skyas – einzupassen.

## 2 Die Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten im Jahr 1570

Wenden wir uns nun diesen Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten zu. Im Folgenden soll zunächst ein Überblick über den Gesamtaufbau dieser Festlichkeiten gegeben werden (2.1), gefolgt von einigen Anmerkungen zum Ort ihrer Durchführung (2.2). Den Hauptteil bildet dann die ausführliche Beschreibung des Ablaufs der knapp dreiwöchigen Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten (2.3).

### 2.1 Aufbau der Festlichkeiten

Verschaffen wir uns zunächst einen Überblick über den Aufbau der Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten des Jahres 1570. In diesem Zusammenhang soll auch ausführlich auf die Modifikation eingegangen werden, welche der damalige Sa-skyia-Hierarch Kun-dga' rin-chen im Hinblick auf den Ablauf vornahm.

Uns bekannte frühere Durchführungen der Einsetzung – belegt sind die Inthronisationen Sa-skyia Lo-tsä-bas im Jahr 1496 und Kun-dga' rin-chens im Jahr 1525 – bestanden allein aus der (bereits mehrfach erwähnten) dreitägigen Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni*. Die Einsetzung begann in diesen beiden Fällen am Neujahrstag und endete am 3. Kalendertag des ersten Monats.<sup>21</sup> Anders dagegen gestaltete sich die Einsetzung, die Kun-dga' rin-chen eine Generation später für seine beiden Söhne bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros ausrichten ließ: Hier bildete die Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron in Form der dreitägigen Lehrdarlegung den Höhepunkt und Abschluss elaborierter Festlichkeiten, die sich vom 26. Tag des zwölften Monats des Erde-Schlange-Jahres (1569) bis zum 15. Tag des ersten Monats des darauffolgenden Eisen-Pferd-Jahres über nahezu drei Wochen erstreckten.

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21 Siehe dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 15.5–16.2; A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 64.6–65.6.

Der Aufbau dieser Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten sah wie folgt aus:

- 26. Tag des zwölften Monats bis 1. Tag des ersten Monats: Großes Alljährliches *mdos*-Ritual (*du mdos chen mo*)
- 2. bis 12. Tag des ersten Monats: Bewirtung der Gäste (*gzhi len*)
- 13. bis 15. Tag des ersten Monats: Inthronisation und dreitägige Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni*

Wie wir sehen, stellte Kun-dga' rin-chen der eigentlichen Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne in Form der dreitägigen Lehrdarlegung zwei weitere Programmpunkte voran: das sogenannte Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual (i.e. ein apotropäisches Ritual, in dessen Mittelpunkt eine Fadenkreuz-Konstruktion stand) sowie eine mehrtägige Bewirtung höhergestellter Gäste, die anlässlich der Festlichkeiten nach Sa-skya gekommen waren. Dass diese Abfolge von Ritualen und Festlichkeiten von Kun-dga' rin-chen tatsächlich als eine zusammengehörige Einheit konzipiert worden war, zeigt sich u.a. daran, dass in den uns vorliegenden Quellen das *mdos*-Ritual (wohl einschließlich der Bewirtung) als „Präliminarien“ (*sngon 'gro*) und die eigentliche Einsetzung als „Hauptteil“ (*dnagos gzhi*) bezeichnet werden.<sup>22</sup>

In diesem Zusammenhang ist wichtig zu wissen, dass in Sa-skya das Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual regulär im elften Monat stattfand, und nicht im zwölften Monat. Kun-dga' rin-chens Modifikation bestand also darin, dass er für die Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne das *mdos*-Ritual extra um einen Monat nach hinten verschob. Somit bettete er die eigentliche, dreitägige Einsetzung in einen größeren, übergeordneten Rahmen ein und schuf ein nahezu dreiwöchiges „Mega-Event“.

Über die Absichten, die Kun-dga' rin-chen mit dieser Modifikation verfolgte, sind wir gut unterrichtet. Wie wir aus dem *Ozean der Wunder* erfahren, verstand Kun-dga' rin-chen dies im Allgemeinen als einen „Dienst an der großen Klosterresidenz“, d.h. am Kloster Sa-skya.<sup>23</sup> Ins-

22 Für die Bezeichnung des *mdos*-Rituals als „Präliminarien“ siehe bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 251.5–6: *sngags 'chang 'jig rten gyi mig tu gyur pa de nyid kyis rje btsun sa skya pa'i gdung rgyud khri 'don gyi sngon 'gro'i dga' ston du du mdos zab spros mdzad [...]*. Die dreitägige Lehrdarlegung wird u.a. in A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 265.3 und bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 252.1 als „Hauptteil“ bezeichnet: *khri ston [/'don] gyi dnagos gzhi*.

23 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 264.5: [...] *du rim chen mo*



besondere zielte Kun-dga' rin-chens Modifikation aber darauf ab, dass möglichst viele Menschen in Sa-skya zusammenkommen würden, um der Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne beizuwohnen. So wird Kun-dga' rin-chen die Erwägung zugeschrieben, dass „unermesslich [viele] Menschen, welche die Inthronisation erbeten“, und „unzählige Ordinierte und Laien von außerhalb“ sich versammeln würden, „während alle größeren und kleineren Gabenherren der Sa-skya-pa-Lehre – [d.h.] die Gruppen der weltlichen Machthaber zusammen mit den [Abgesandten der] Klöster – die Verleihung von Rang und Würde an die [’Khon-] Nachkommen (i.e. bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros) gewähren“.<sup>24</sup> In diesem Zusammenhang soll Kun-dga' rin-chen den Anspruch getätigt haben: „Ein Spektakel für jedwedens Auge, Speisen für jedwedens Mund!“ Laut *Ozean der Wunder* wollte Kun-dga' rin-chen damit zum Ausdruck bringen, dass die Festlichkeiten – auch wenn sie im Einklang mit dem „Gang der Welt“ stünden – nicht der Religion widersprächen, und somit „ein unübertreffliches Vorbild für die Verbindung der beiden Ordnungen“, also der religiösen und der säkularen Ordnung, seien.<sup>25</sup>

Diese Erwägungen Kun-dga' rin-chens werden verständlicher, wenn man bedenkt, dass es sich bei dem Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Ritual

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*zab mo dang khri 'don 'dab nye bar mdzad pa'i rgyu mtshan ni gdan sa chen po nyid kyi zhabs 'degs [...]/.*

24 So verstehe ich jedenfalls A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 264.5–265.1: *khyad par sa skya pa'i bstan pa'i sbyin bdag sde dpon rigs dgon gnas dang bcas pa che phra kun gyis gdung brgyud che 'don gnang ba la/ khri ston zhu mi bsam gyis mi khyab pa zhig 'byung ba de rnams dang/ gzhan yang skabs der phyogs nas skye bo skya ser grangs med pa zhig 'du ba de thams cad dus mdos chen mo zab bsham gnang ba'i thog der ma lus pa kun kyang gdan sa chen po nyid du legs par 'dzom pa'i bca' sgrig mdzad [...]/.* Diese Erwägungen Kun-dga' rin-chens finden sich auch, in jeweils leicht anderem Wortlaut, in bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 250.2–4 und A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 253.2–4.

25 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 265.1–2: *der 'tshogs pa kun la mig gang gis [=gi] ltad mo/ kha gang gis [=gi] zas zhes pa 'jig rten lugs dang mthun zhing/ chos dang mi 'gal ba la dgongs pa yin [...]/.* Die oben zuletzt genannte Formulierung („ein unübertreffliches Vorbild für die Verbindung der beiden Ordnungen“) findet sich nur in der entsprechenden parallelen Textpassage in bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 250.4–5: *lugs zung gi mig rkyen bla na med pa*. Siehe auch die Fortführung dieser Passage in *ibid.*, S. 250.5–251.6, wo Zitate aus Sa-skya Paṇḍitas *Rol mo'i bstan bcos* für die weitere Argumentation herangezogen werden.

– und vor allem bei den zugehörigen *'chams*-Tänzen – um ein äußerst populäres Ereignis im Ritualkalender des Klosters handelte, das viele Besucher von außerhalb nach Sa-skya zog. So ist zum Beispiel aus vor-moderner Zeit überliefert, dass das Kloster Ngor E-waṃ chos-ldan seine jährlichen (immer im Winter durchgeführten) *Lam 'bras*-Unterweisungen extra im elften Monat unterbrach, damit die Teilnehmer zum Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Festival nach Sa-skya reisen konnten.<sup>26</sup> Die große Anziehungskraft des *mdos*-Rituals blieb ganz offensichtlich bis in die jüngere Vergangenheit bestehen. In seinem Erinnerungsbuch *Tibet: The Road Ahead* bezeichnet Dawa Norbu das „Sakya Dochen“ als „the biggest religious festival of the Sakya sect“ und erwähnt, dass sogar „many Muslim tradesmen used to visit Sakya annually during the Dochen festival“.<sup>27</sup> Kun-dga' rin-chens Kalkül, die Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne in ein großes soziales Ereignis zu verwandeln, dürfte also aufgegangen sein, selbst wenn wir davon ausgehen, dass ein (im Rahmen der Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten) irregulär im zwölften Monat durchgeführtes *mdos*-Ritual möglicherweise weniger Menschen anzog als die reguläre Ausrichtung im elften Monat.

## 2.2 Ort der Festlichkeiten

Nachdem wir uns einen Überblick über den Aufbau der Festlichkeiten verschafft haben, soll an dieser Stelle auf den Ort in Sa-skya eingegangen werden, an dem diese stattfanden. Die eigentliche Einsetzung – aber auch große Teile des *mdos*-Rituals – wurde auf dem sogenannten Großen Versammlungsplatz von Sa-skya (*tshogs chen mo*, auch: *sa skya tshogs*, *ser skya tshogs*, *chos khri thang chen*) durchgeführt. Dieser Platz grenzte südlich an den nördlichen Klosterkomplex von Sa-skya an, vor allem an den imposanten gZhi-thog-Palast, der zu jener Zeit Sitz des Sa-skya-Hierarchen war und als Regierungsgebäude diente. Direkt an

26 Siehe Heimbel 2017: 399, Fn. 848, der hier Kaḥ-thog Si-tus *dBus gtsang gnas yig* zitiert: *bla brang gzhung du/ zla ba bcu pa' i tshes nyer lnga la lam 'bras dgun chos dbu tshugs/ zla ba bcu gcig pa' i nyi shu bzhi lnga nas sa skya' i mdos chen la ltad mo btang bas chos mtshams/*.

27 Siehe Norbu 1997: 10, 78. Siehe des Weiteren de Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1976: 33, der das Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual kurz in einem Überblick über die verschiedenen *'chams*-Tänze erwähnt, welche jährlich in Sa-skya abgehalten wurden.

dieser nördlichen Seite des Großen Versammlungsplatzes gelegen war der Große Dharma-Thron (*chos khri chen mo*), der eine zentrale Rolle in der Einsetzung spielte. Der Große Dharma-Thron befand sich innerhalb eines pavillonartigen Gebäudes mit einem doppelten Golddach. Südlich des Großen Versammlungsplatzes befand sich schließlich der Grum-Fluss, der den nördlichen und südlichen Klosterkomplex voneinander trennte.<sup>28</sup>

Im *Sa-skya-Register* des dGe-slong Kun-dga' rin-chen<sup>29</sup> stoßen wir auf die folgende Beschreibung des Großen Versammlungsplatzes:

Südöstlich von jenem [Pu-tra khang befindet sich] der Große Platz des Dharma-Throns des 'Phags-pa Rin-po-che (1235–1280), die große mit Steinen ausgelegte Fläche, heutzutage [auch] bekannt als Sa-skya-Versammlungs[platz]. In dessen Mitte [befindet sich] der Große Dharma-Thron – [dies ist] der Ort, an dem 'Phags-pa Rin-po-che das Dharma-Rad der vorläufigen und letztgültigen Bedeutung in Bewegung setzte, und auf dem den aufeinander gefolgt Generationen [von 'Khon-Adligen] Rang und Würde verliehen wurde. Auf den Wandgemälden [des Großen Dharma-Throns], die gen Süden blicken, [sind] sich zugewandte Abbildungen von Mañjuḥṣa und rJe-btsun Sa-skya-pa chen-po (i.e. Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po; 1092–1158) [zu sehen], umrundet von den Lamas der Überlieferungslinie. Auf [den Wandgemälden], die gen Osten blicken, [ist] rJe-btsun Rin-po-che (i.e. rJe-btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan; 1147–1216) [zu] sehen, der in der Mitte weilt, rechts von ihm [befindet sich] Sa-skya Paṇ-chen (i.e. Sa-skya Paṇḍita) und links Sa-lo 'Jam-pa'i rdo-rje (i.e. Sa-skya Lo-tṣā-ba), umrundet von dem Herren der Weisen und Maitreya, den Sechs Ornamenten (i.e. Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Āryadeva, Vasubandhu, Dīnāga und Dharmakīrti) und Zwei Vortrefflichen (i.e. Guṇaprabha und Śākyaprabha) und anderen – [d.h.] von dem Lehrer und einer Schar von Lehrhaltern – [sowie] den zwei Religiösen der Großen

28 Einen guten Überblick über die Anordnung der einzelnen Gebäude gibt Schoening 1990: 27 (Map 5).

29 dGe-slong Kun-dga' rin-chen, der Verfasser des *Sa-skya-Registers*, ist nicht zu verwechseln mit sNgags-'chang Kun-dga' rin-chen, dem 23. Hierarchen von Sa-skya. Venturi 2013: 260 gibt (aufgrund interner Hinweise im Text) das Jahr 1593 als *terminus post quem* für die Abfassung des *Sa-skya-Registers* an. Für eine Edition und englische Übersetzung des tibetischen Textes siehe Venturi 2013.

Klosterresidenz [Sa-skya, nämlich] g.Yag[-ston Sangs-rgyas-dpal] (1350–1414) und [Red-mdā'-ba] g.Zhon[-nu blo-gros] (1349–1412).<sup>30</sup>

Eine kurze Beschreibung des Großen Dharma-Throns geben Cassinelli und Ekvall in ihrem Buch zum politischen System Sa-sykas. Demnach handelte es sich um:

[...] a two-layer throne: the lower part, of unfired brick, was reputedly the throne of Sa sKya Pandita and it symbolized religion; the upper part, of wood decorated with gold filigree, was reputedly the throne of aPhags Pa and it symbolized government.<sup>31</sup>

Es mag für Verwirrung sorgen, dass der Große Dharma-Thron im *Sa-skya-Register* Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa zugeordnet wird, wohingegen in anderen Quellen häufig vom Großen Dharma-Thron des Sa-skya Paṇḍita die Rede ist bzw. Cassinelli und Ekvall von einer Art Doppelthron sprechen.<sup>32</sup> Wie bestimmte weitere Formulierungen in den Quellen zeigen, gibt es hier aber keinen Widerspruch. Demnach handelt es sich bei dem Großen Dharma-Thron letztlich um den Lehrthron des „Onkels Sa-skya Paṇḍita und des Neffen [Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa]

30 Siehe *Sa skya dkar chag*, Fol. 38b2–5 (in Venturi 2013: 347–348): *de'i shar lho na 'phags pa rin po che'i chos khri thang chen deng sang sa skya tshogs su grags pa'i rdo 'chal [=gcal] chen mo'i dbus na 'phags pa rin po ches drang nges kyi chos 'khor bskor ba'i sa dang gdung brgyud rim par byon pa rnams che 'don mdzad pa'i chos khri chen po'i zhal lho gzigs kyi gyang ris la 'jam dbyangs rje btsun sa skya pa chen po'i sku 'dra zhal sprod la bla ma brgyud pas bskor ba/ zhal shar gzigs la rje btsun rin po che dbus na bzhugs pa'i g.yas su sa skya paṇ chen dang gyon du sa lo 'jam pa'i rdo rje la thub pa'i dbang po dang byams pa dang rgyan drug mchog gnyis la sogs pa ston pa bstan 'dzin gyi tshogs gdan sa chen po'i chos las pa gyag gzhon rnam gnyis dang bcas pas bskor ba bzhugs/. Vgl. die englische Übersetzung in Venturi 2013: 528. Zum Großen Versammlungsplatz von Sa-skya siehe auch Heimbel 2017: 75, Fn. 31.*

31 Siehe Cassinelli und Ekvall 1969: 195. Eine vergleichbare Beschreibung in vor-modernen tibetischen Quellen ist mir nicht bekannt. Siehe auch die Beschreibung des Großen Dharma-Throns in Akester 2016: 587: „The great teaching throne was positioned on the north wall of an open rectangular courtyard before the south entrance (Chos khri thang chen), where meetings and public teachings were held. It [gemeint ist der Dharma-Thron] was sheltered by a grand two storey pavilion with a double gilt canopy roof and mural paintings of the great Buddhist and Sakyapa masters of the past.“

32 Siehe z.B. dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 15.5–6; A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 65.2.

mitsamt den Nachkommen“.<sup>33</sup> So gesehen verweist der Große Dharma-Thron auf die ununterbrochene Abfolge von 'Khon-Meistern, die Generation für Generation auf ihm Platz nahmen.<sup>34</sup>

Leider sind heutzutage all diese Örtlichkeiten nicht mehr erhalten, da der nördliche Klosterkomplex von Sa-skya während der Kulturrevolution nahezu vollkommen zerstört wurde. Geblieben sind uns ein paar wenige alte Fotografien, auf denen der Große Versammlungsplatz samt gZhi-thog-Palast und Großem Dharma-Thron zu sehen ist.<sup>35</sup> Gut erkennbar auf diesen Fotografien sind die großen Ausmaße des Versammlungplatzes, der zweifellos mehrere tausend Personen fassen konnte.

### 2.3 Ablauf der Festlichkeiten

Wenden wir uns nun dem Ablauf der Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten des Jahres 1570 zu. Der folgenden Beschreibung dieses Ereignisses liegt der entsprechende, sehr detaillierte Bericht im vierten Kapitel des *Ozeans der Wunder* zugrunde, an den wir uns eng anlehnen werden.<sup>36</sup> Zweifel-

33 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 273.4–5: *dpal sa skya'i bdag nyid chen po sa skya pañdi ta khu dbon brgyud pa dang bcas pa'i chos kyi khri chen po*. Für eine ähnliche Formulierung siehe bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 252.4–5: *'jam mgon sa pañdi ta sogs mkhas grub kyi bla ma gong ma mang pos chos 'khor bskor ba'i rin po che'i khri chen po*.

34 Bezeichnenderweise wird das Thema der kontinuierlichen Abfolge von 'Khon-Meistern, die letztlich ihren Anfang bei den Gottheiten des Klaren Lichts nimmt und bis zu den beiden Brüdern bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros reicht, auch in einer öffentlichen Ansprache (*mol gtam*) aufgenommen, die offenbar am dritten Tag der eigentlichen Einsetzung vorgetragen wurde; siehe Kun-dga' rin-chen, *Mol gtam*, S. 25.2–26.2.

35 Gut zugänglich sind die Fotografien, die Arthur J. Hopkins im Jahr 1948 von diesen Örtlichkeiten aufnahm und die heute Teil der A. J. Hopkins-Collection des British Museum sind. Siehe hier vor allem die Fotografien mit den Inventar-nummern BMH.M. 48.1, 52.1, 53.1, 54.1, 55.1, online einsehbar unter: [https://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/thumbnails\\_region\\_Sakya.html](https://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/thumbnails_region_Sakya.html) (abgerufen am 13.11.2020). Siehe des Weiteren Heimbel 2017: pl. 41–43 für eine Reproduktion entsprechender Fotografien, die Felice Boffa Ballaran 1939 während des damaligen Aufenthaltes der Tucci-Expedition in Sa-skya machte.

36 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 263.5–274.2. Knappe Erwähnung findet die Einsetzung auch in den Biographien von Kun-da' rin-chens Söhnen; siehe A-mes-zhabs, *bSod nams dbang po'i rnam thar*, S. 101.2–4; A-mes-zhabs, *Grags pa blo gros kyi rnam thar*, S. 55.2–3.

los handelt es sich bei diesem Bericht nicht um eine nüchterne, objektive Darstellung der Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten. Allerdings zeigt ein Vergleich mit Schilderungen späterer Durchführungen der Einsetzung, dass die Darstellung im *Ozean der Wunder* – zumindest was den formalen Ablauf der Handlungssequenzen betrifft – recht zuverlässig ist. Man kann diese Darstellung vielleicht ganz treffend bezeichnen als eine Inszenierung zweiter Ordnung bzw. eine Re-Inszenierung der Einsetzung auf Textebene.

### 2.3.1 Präliminarien

#### 2.3.1.1 *mdos*-Ritual

Den ersten großen Ritualblock der Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten bildete – wie oben erwähnt – das Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual, das Kun-dga' rin-chen extra für diesen Anlass vom elften auf den zwölften Monat verlegt hatte. Im *Ozean der Wunder* wird nur knapp und recht beiläufig auf das *mdos*-Ritual eingegangen.

Demnach begann das *mdos*-Ritual am 26. Kalendertag des zwölften Monats mit einer „Einladung des Dharma-Schützers“ (*chos skyong spyan 'dren*) Mahākāla Pañjaranātha samt der ihn begleitenden Gottheiten. Am 28. Kalendertag führten Kun-dga' rin-chen und seine beiden Söhne zusammen mit ihrem Gefolge den rituellen Tanz (*gar 'chams*) der Begleitgottheiten des Dharma-Schützers aus, wobei sie entsprechende Instruktionen befolgten, die einst Gong-dkar rDo-rje gdan-pa Kun-dga' rnam-rgyal (1432–1496) in einer Vision empfangen hatte.<sup>37</sup> Der eigentliche Austreibungsritus (*gtor rgyag*) fand schließlich am 29. Kalendertag statt, gefolgt von einem Besänftigungsritus (*bskang ba brgya rtsa*) und einer abschließenden Danksagungszeremonie (*gtang rag*) am 30. Tag des zwölften Monats bzw. am 1. Tag des ersten Monats.<sup>38</sup>

Diese Skizze aufeinanderfolgender Riten, die A-mes-zhabs im *Ozean der Wunder* zeichnet, vermittelt sicherlich nur sehr bedingt einen

37 Im Gesamtkatalog von Kun-dga' rnam-rgyals Werken in Fermer 2009: 195–250 ist das entsprechende Tanz-Handbuch unter dem Titel *Pu tra lcam sring sogs ru 'dren dang bcas pa'i 'cham yig* aufgeführt. (Das Werk ist zurzeit nicht greifbar.) Wie in Fermer angemerkt, empfing Kun-dga' rnam-rgyal Instruktionen zum Ablauf des Tanzes von einem schwarzen Mann (*mi nag po*), der ihm im Traum erschienen war; siehe *ibid.*: 224–225, Nr. 63.

38 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 264.1–4.

Eindruck von den Abläufen des Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Rituals. Peter Schwieger hat treffend den allgemeinen Sinn und Zweck solcher Rituale – sich hierbei auf ein vergleichbares *mdos*-Ritual aus dem *Rin chen gter mdzod* beziehend – wie folgt beschrieben: „Im Mittelpunkt des *mDos*-Rituals steht die Darreichung des *mdos* als ein Opfer an *mGon-po* [i.e. Mahākāla Pañjaranātha] und sein Gefolge zu dem Zweck, die Gottheiten mit der Abwehr, Unterwerfung und gar Vernichtung feindlicher Dämonen zu beauftragen.“<sup>39</sup> Wie wir in Kürze sehen werden, konnten diese Dämonen zuweilen sehr menschliche Formen annehmen.

### 2.3.1.2 Der Ursprungsmythos des *mdos*-Rituals

In den Gesammelten Werken des Kun-dga' rin-chen findet sich eine Ansprache (*mol gtam*), welche dieser anlässlich des *mdos*-Rituals verfasst hatte. In dieser Ansprache verweist Kun-dga' rin-chen auf den Ursprungsmythos des Rituals.<sup>40</sup> Dieser Ursprungsmythos handelt, kurz gesagt, von dem Sieg, den einst der erste Sa-skyā-Patriarch Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po (1092–1158) über zwei seiner Widersacher, sNgags-nag Bla-chen sTag-tsha und Bon-nag Re-pa 'Dzu-gur (auch: Jo-gur), mit Hilfe des Dharma-Schützers Mahākāla Pañjaranātha, errungen hatte.<sup>41</sup>

Diesem Mythos zufolge hatten einst Bla-chen sTag-tsha und Re-pa 'Dzu-gur, erfüllt von Neid und Missgunst, den Plan gefasst, Sa-chen Kun-dga' snying-po zugrunde zu richten. Daher schickten sie einen Schüler des Bla-chen sTag-tsha, den aus lDan-ma in Khams stammenden

39 Siehe Schwieger 1999: XXXVI–XXXVII.

40 In der verschriftlichten Fassung dieser Ansprache wird der Ursprungsmythos nur knapp angerissen; siehe Kun-dga' rin-chen, *Mol gtam*, S. 22.2–5. Meine obige Zusammenfassung beruht auf A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 307.1–312.3. Eine weitere Fassung des Mythos findet sich in bSod-nams dbang-po, *Sa skyā'i gnas bshad*, S. 58.16–63.5. Zur Textsorte *mol gtam* / *molla* und den darauf aufbauenden Traditionen des Redenhaltens siehe Jackson 1984 sowie den Beitrag von Charles Ramble in der vorliegenden Festschrift.

41 Vitali 2001: 14 geht davon aus, dass es sich bei Bla-chen sTag-tsha um den Pu-hrang Jo-bo sTag-tsha Khri-'bar (gest. 1219) handelt, der Anfang des 13. Jahrhunderts über Pu-hrang herrschte und vor allem die 'Bri-gung-pa unterstützte. Allerdings ist diese Gleichsetzung, wie Vitali einräumt, aus chronologischen Gründen nicht ganz unproblematisch. Siehe auch Venturi 2013: 473, Fn. 119, wo Bla-chen sTag-tsha identifiziert wird mit dem „Duraka king, who first propitiated Yama and then violated his promise by pillaging Vajrāsana“.

rDo-rje rgyal-po, nach Sa-skya, damit dieser Sa-chen töte. Sa-chen wusste aufgrund seines übernatürlichen Wissens jedoch um rDo-rje rgyal-pos Vorhaben und stellte ihn zur Rede. Dabei präsentierte Sa-chen seine Fußsohlen, auf denen sich klar und deutlich die Maṇḍalas der tantrischen Gottheiten Hevajra und Cakrasaṃvara abzeichneten. Überwältigt von diesen Zeichen spiritueller Verwirklichung, bekannte rDo-rje rgyal-po reumütig das ganze Mordkomplott und gelobte Sa-chen Treue. Sa-chen schickte ihn zurück zu Bla-chen sTag-tsha, den rDo-rje rgyal-po täuschte, indem er ihm von der vermeintlichen Ermordung Sa-chens berichtete. Bla-chen sTag-tsha, der keinen Verdacht schöpfte, ernannte daraufhin rDo-rje rgyal-po zu seinem Gehilfen (*nye gnas*). Zur gleichen Zeit in Sa-skya brachte Sa-chen die Dharma-Schützer unter seine Macht und führte magische Verrichtungen (*las sbyor*) durch, welche die Vernichtung von Bla-chen sTag-tsha und Re-pa 'Dzu-gur herbeiführen sollten. Das hatte zur Folge, dass an deren Aufenthaltsstätte diverse Emanationen der Dharma-Schützer auftauchten, wie zwei furchterregende schwarze Yaks, schwarze Krähen, schwarze Hunde und Schakale. Alle Schüler von Bla-chen sTag-tsha und Re-pa 'Dzu-gur ergriffen die Flucht, nur rDo-rje rgyal-po blieb und täuschte weiterhin seine Gefolgschaft vor. Als die Zeit reif war, tötete rDo-rje rgyal-po die beiden und brachte ihre Leichen nach Sa-skya. Dort brachte Sa-chen im sGo-rum-Tempel das Herz des Bla-chen sTag-tsha der Schwarzen Fliegenden Mahākāla-Maske (*bse mgon*) dar.<sup>42</sup> Dann platzierte er den Körper des Bla-chen sTag-tsha unter der Türschwelle des sGo-rum-Tempels, wohingegen er den Körper des Re-pa 'Dzu-gur unter einem Stūpa nahe des Großen Versammlungsplatzes vergrub.<sup>43</sup>

42 Bla-chen sTag-tshas Herz soll sich auch noch zu späteren Zeiten im sGo-rum-Tempel befunden haben; siehe z.B. die entsprechende Passage in *Sa skya'i dkar chag*, Fol. 13a3 (in Venturi 2013: 305): *mgon po'i sku gdong 'brub khung na dam nyams bla chen stag tsha'i snying yod/*, die Vitali 2001: 34, Anm. 36 wie folgt übersetzt: „Inside the 'brub.khung ('sacrificial fire pit for rituals'), in front of the image of mGon.po, is the heart of bla.chen sTag.tsha, who broke his monk's vow.“ Vgl. die Übersetzung in Venturi 2013: 473.

43 Zu diesem Stūpa findet sich in A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 312.3 das folgende interessante Detail: *'di la ched gtad kyi [=kyis] bskor ba mi bya zhing/ gal te byed kyang mgon po'i rtsa sngags dang bzlog bsad kyi sngags rnams bzla zhing bskor ba gyon bskor du bya ba yin [...]*; also: „Diesen [Stūpa] soll man nicht mit Absicht umrunden. Falls man [dies] doch tut, soll man das Wurzelmantra



Neben diesem Ursprungsmythos gab es noch weitere Erzählungen, die mit dem *mdos*-Ritual verknüpft waren und die später A-mes-zhabs in seiner *Geschichte von der Entstehungsweise des Großen Alljährlichen mdos-Rituals* zusammenstellte. Darin findet sich eine längere Erzählung vom Sieg Sa-skyas über die 'Bri-gung-pa gegen Ende des 13. Jahrhunderts;<sup>44</sup> eine kurze Erwähnung der Plünderung des lHa-khang chen-mo zu Zeiten des Theg-chen Chos-kyi rgyal-po (1349–1425) durch einen nicht weiter benannten dBus-Herrscher (*dbus gong ma*);<sup>45</sup> und eine sehr ausführliche Erzählung von Kun-dga' rin-chens Konflikt mit dem lHa-sa rdzong-pa und dessen Alliierten wie z.B. Byang-pa bKra-shis stobs-rgyal (geb. 1550) und mNga'ris Rig'dzin chen-po Legsldan bdud-'joms rdo-rje (geb. 1512) in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts.<sup>46</sup>

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des Schützers sowie das Austreibungs- und Tötungsmantra rezitieren und [den Stüpa] links herum umrunden.“

- 44 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 313.1–317.2. Große Teile dieser Erzählung finden sich nahezu wortgleich auch in A-mes-zhabs' *rDor nag chos skor byung tshul*; siehe die Textedition und englische Übersetzung der betreffenden Passage in Everding 2002: 119–121.
- 45 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 317.2–6. Bei dem oben genannten *dbus gong ma* muss es sich um den Phag-mo-gru-Herrscher dBang Gags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1374–1432; reg. 1385–1432) handeln. Zu den Auseinandersetzungen um den lHa-khang chen-mo nach der Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts siehe Jackson unpubl.: 58: „Many rights of the Sa-skya lamas concerning their own temples had been lost to Phag-mo-gru-pa Byang-chub-rgyal-mtshan after his overthrow of the Sa-skya regime, including the right to garrison and appoint a commander to the lHa-khang-chen-mo (which could double as a military bastion). [...] In the early fifteenth century, Theg-chen Chos-rje helped procure an imperial decree of 1413 ordering the dBus-pa to return the lHa-khang-chen-mo to the great monastic seat (Sa-skya).“
- 46 See A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 318.1–329.3. Der lHa-sa rdzong-pa – d.h. der Herr des lHa-sa-rdzong in Srad – gilt in Sa-skya-Quellen als Erzfeind Kun-dga' rin-chens, v.a. weil er zu Beginn von Kun-dga' rin-chens Amtszeit als Sa-skya-Hierarch auf diesen einen (letztlich) misslungenen Mordanschlag verübt haben soll; siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 95.4–101.2. Weitere Konflikte mit dem lHa-sa rdzong-pa werden geschildert in *ibid.*, S. 88.1–89.5 und 197.6–198.4. Die Auseinandersetzung, auf die oben angespielt wird, fand möglicherweise erst nach der Inthronisation von bSod-nams dbang-po und Gags-pa blo-gros statt; siehe hierzu auch A-mes-zhabs' Bericht in *ibid.*, S. 328.3–333.5.

Wie unschwer zu erkennen ist, handeln all diese Erzählungen von krisenhaften Ereignissen, durch welche das Fortbestehen Sa-skyas (als einer von der 'Khon-Familie beherrschten Institution) existentiell gefährdet war. Im Grunde geht es in diesen Erzählungen immer wieder darum aufzuzeigen, wie die Sa-skya-Hierarchen aufgrund ihrer großen Macht über die Dharma-Schützer – v.a. über Mahākāla Pañjaranātha – Sa-skya (und dies schließt die mit den 'Khon verbündeten Adelsfamilien mit ein) zum Sieg verhalfen und ihre Feinde vernichteten.<sup>47</sup>

Bezeichnenderweise hatten diese Erzählungen, bzw. die darin berichteten Ereignisse, Einfluss auf ein entscheidendes Detail bei der Ausführung des jährlich wiederkehrenden *mdos*-Rituals: Wie A-mes-zhabs in seiner *Geschichte* erwähnt, korrespondierte die Richtung, in welche man während des eigentlichen Austreibungsritus (*gtor rgyag*) alljährlich das *mdos* (also die Fadenkreuz-Konstruktion) ausrichtete, mit der Richtung, in welcher sich der jeweilige Gegner des zuletzt real ausgetragenen Konflikts befand – das heißt, nach Sa-chens Sieg über Blachen sTag-tsha und Re-pa 'Dzu-gur gen Westen, in Folge des Konflikts mit den 'Bri-gung-pa gen Osten, zu Theg-chen chos-rjes Zeiten ebenfalls nach Osten und in Folge von Kun-dga' rin-chens Streit mit dem lHa-sa rdzong-pa und dessen Alliierten nach Westen.<sup>48</sup> Es handelt sich bei dem *mdos*-Ritual also um einen rituellen Nachvollzug der Siege Sa-skyas über seine Feinde, so wie sie im Ursprungsmythos und den späteren Erzählungen überliefert wurden.<sup>49</sup>

47 Wohl auch deshalb bezeichnet A-mes-zhabs in *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 305.4–306.1 das Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual als: *spyir sangs rgyas bstan pa'i spyi rim/ sde dpon rigs rnam kyis sku rim/ khyad par dpal ldan sa skya pa'i bstan pa sde gdung brgyud dang bcas pa'i sku'i rim 'gro*; d.h.: „im Allgemeinen ein *spyi rim*-Ritus für die Buddha-Lehre, ein *sku rim*-Ritus für die Gruppen der weltlichen Machthaber, und insbesondere ein *sku'i rim gro*-Ritus für die Lehre der glorreichen Sa-skyapa, die religiöse Gemeinschaft [des Klosters] und die ['Khon]-Familienlinie“. Inwieweit sich die Termini *spyi rim*, *sku rim* und *sku'i rim gro* in ihrem Bedeutungsspektrum unterscheiden, ist mir nicht ganz klar. Ganz offensichtlich beziehen sie sich aber auf Ritualhandlungen, die (im Allgemeinen) der Ehrbezeugung und (in einem spezielleren Sinne) dem Schutz und Wohlergehen einer bestimmten, in der Regel ranghohen Person oder Personengruppe dienen sollen; siehe hierzu die Ausführungen in Walter 2009: 166–174.

48 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Dus mdos chen mo byung tshul*, S. 313.1–2, 317.1–2, 317.5, 318.1–2.

49 Welch starken Eindruck die 'chams-Tänze des Großen Alljährlichen *mdos*-Rituals auf die damals Anwesenden hinterlassen haben müssen, lässt sich anhand der

### 2.3.1.3 Bewirtung der Gäste

An das *mdos*-Ritual schloss sich vom 2. bis zum 12. Kalendertag eine Bewirtung (*gzhi len*) bzw. Verköstigung (*bsnyen bkur*) der auswärtigen, höhergestellten Gäste an, welche – wie es im *Ozean der Wunder* heißt – „die Inthronisation erbat“ (*khri ston zhu mi*), mitsamt jenem Gefolge aus Ordinierten und Laien, das „als wert erachtet wurde“ (*'os su gyur ba*), ebenfalls an der Verköstigung teilzunehmen.<sup>50</sup>

### 2.3.2 Hauptteil: Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron

Nachdem A-mes-zhabs im *Ozean der Wunder* das Große Alljährliche *mdos*-Ritual und die daran anschließende Verköstigung knapp abgehandelt hat, richtet er den Hauptfokus seiner Schilderung auf die Einsetzung von Kun-dga' rin-chens beiden Söhnen bSod-nams dbang-po und Gags-pa blo-gros auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron.

Im *Ozean der Wunder* heißt es zu Beginn des entsprechenden (vierten) Kapitels, dass Kun-dga' rin-chen „die beiden Adelsöhne, [d.h.] die Mañjuhoṣa-Brüder, als die eigenen edlen Regenten [auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron] einsetzte“.<sup>51</sup> Eine weitere Formulierung findet sich in A-mes-zhabs' Biographie des Gags-pa blo-gros, wo der Titel „Regent“ (*rgyal tshab*) mit dem Titel „Herr der Lehre“ (*bstan pa'i bdag po*) kombiniert wird. Dort heißt es dann, dass Gags-pa blo-gros zusammen mit

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Fotografien einer neueren Durchführung dieses Rituals in Sa-skya erahnen, die in mDzod-rtags phur-bu, *Sa skya'i gnas yig*, S. 185–186 abgedruckt sind.

50 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 265.2–3. Für eine ausführliche Beschreibung einer solchen Bewirtung, die A-mes-zhabs im Rahmen der Inthronisation seines eigenen Sohnes Ngag-dbang bSod-nams dbang-phyug (1638–1685) im Jahr 1651 in Sa-skya durchführen ließ, siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 253.4–255.4.

51 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 263.3: *gdung sras 'jam dbyangs sku mched gnyis rang nyid kyi rgyal tshab dam par mnga' gsol [...]*. Vergleichbare Formulierungen finden sich in *ibid.*, S. 273.4–5, 316.5–6. Siehe auch die Verszusammenfassung am Ende des Kapitels (*ibid.*, S. 315.5–6), wo die Einsetzung bSod-nams dbang-pos und Gags-pa blo-gros' als Regenten des Hierarchen Kun-dga' rin-chen mit der Einsetzung Maitreyas im Tuṣṭita-Himmel durch den Bodhisattva Śvetaketu (i.e. der spätere Buddha Śākyamuni) verglichen wird: */de ltar dga' ldan gnas su byams pa bzhin/ /de ltar sngags 'chang rgyal ba'i rgyal tshab mchog/ /de ltar sprul pa'i skyes mchog 'jam dbyangs mched/ /de ltar 'gro ba'i mgon du mnga' gsol bas/*.

seinem älteren Bruder bSod-nams dbang-po „auf dem Dharma-Thron des Sa-skya Mahāpaṇḍita [...] als Regent des Vaters, des ehrwürdigen Dharma-Königs, [und / nämlich] als großer Herr der Lehre eingesetzt wurde“. <sup>52</sup>

Auch wenn es sich hierbei wohl um Ehrentitel handelte – ein offiziellerer Titel lautete möglicherweise *khri thog pa*<sup>53</sup> –, deuten die Bezeichnungen „Herr der Lehre“ und „edler Regent“ nichtsdestotrotz auf den hohen Status als Lehrhalter und Hierarchen *in spe* hin, welcher den beiden Söhnen durch die Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron verliehen wurde.<sup>54</sup> Dieser hohe Status zeigt sich nicht zuletzt daran, dass die neu eingesetzten 'Khon-Adligen ab diesem Zeitpunkt – wie es wiederholt in Urkunden heißt – „die Bürde dieser großen Klosterresidenz (i.e. des Klosters Sa-skya) trugen“, eine Formulierung, die zu späteren Zeiten auf die Verantwortung des Hierarchenamtes verweist.<sup>55</sup>

52 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Grag pa blo gros kyi rnam thar*, S. 55.2–3: [...] *sa skya paṇḍi ta chen po'i chos kyi khri ga la ba der* [...] *yab rje chos kyi rgyal po'i rgyal tshab bstan pa'i bdag po chen por mnga' gsol* [...]. Ein weiterer Titel, der jedoch nicht im Rahmen der Schilderung der Einsetzung des Jahres 1570 erwähnt wird, ist „großer Dharma-König der drei Bereiche“ (*kham gsum chos kyi rgyal po chen po*). Siehe dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 15.6 und A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 65.2, wo dieser Titel Sa-skya Lo-tsā-ba und Kun-dga' rinchen zugesprochen wird.

53 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 323.4, 323.6, wo die beiden Brüder als *khri thog pa gnyis* bezeichnet werden, bzw. bSod-nams dbang-po als *khri thog pa rgan pa* und bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (aka Grags-pa blo-gros) als *khri thog pa gzhon pa*.

54 Der eigentliche Einsetzungsakt wird im übrigen zumeist kurz als „Inthronisation“ (*khri 'don*) bzw. als „Verleihung von Rang und Würde [an die] Adelsöhne“ (*zhal ngo che 'don*; *gdung brgyud che 'don*) bezeichnet; siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, u.a. S. 264.4, 264.5, 264.6. Des Weiteren finden sich – v.a. in Schilderungen von Einsetzungen im 19. Jahrhundert – Formulierungen wie *khri phebs*, *khri phebs mnga' gsol*, *khri phebs chen mo*, *chos khri che 'don* und *gser khir mnga' gsol*; siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 29.1, 398.12, 406.1, 533.5, 644.12.

55 Diese (stereotype) Formulierung begegnet uns in verschiedenen Reisebegleitschreiben (*lam yig*), die Kun-dga' rin-chen und A-mes-zhabs für Getreue ausstellten, die in Osttibet Spenden für das Sa-skya-Kloster sammelten. Siehe z.B. A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 170.2–3, wo es in einem Reisebegleitschreiben Kun-dga' rin-chens für einen gewissen mKhas-grub dPal-bzang-po heißt: [...] *'khon sa skya pa'i rigs dang chos kyi lam srol 'dzin par khas 'che ba nged kyis kyang rang lo dgu pa la* | *dpal sa skya'i chos khri chen por mnga' gsol gyi*

Bemerkenswert ist in diesem Zusammenhang zudem, dass die eigentliche dreitägige Lehrdarlegung – also das spezifische Format der Einsetzung – zuweilen als ein *rnam gzhag*, d.h. als eine „systematische Präsentation [der Lehre]“ bezeichnet wird.<sup>56</sup> Im scholastischen Ausbildungssystem tibetischer Klöster bezieht sich dieser Terminus in der Regel auf die erste öffentliche Darlegung eines curricularen Textes, die ein Mönchsschüler nach seinem „Grundstudium“ im Beisein eines größeren Publikums gibt, also eine Art Abschlussprüfung.<sup>57</sup> Dass es sich hier im Rahmen der Einsetzung auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron tatsächlich um eine Adaption einer solchen ersten öffentlichen Darlegung handelt, zeigt sich an einer verwandten Formulierung, die uns in der Schilderung der Einsetzung der drei Brüder Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (geb. 1588), Kun-dga' dbang-rgyal (1592–1620) und A-mes-zhabs im Jahr 1602 begegnet. Dort wird die dreitägige Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* als die „Großtat der ersten Dharmarad-Drehung“ (*chos 'khor thog mar bskor ba'i legs mdzad*) bezeichnet.<sup>58</sup>

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*me tog gtor ba nas brtsams | gdan sa chen po 'di'i khur khyer [...]*. Nahezu identische Formulierungen finden sich in *ibid.*, S. 208.1–213.4 und A-mes-zhabs, *Bla ma gnang dus kyi yi ge*, S. 439.6–440.1.

56 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 67.4, wo die Lehrdarlegung im Rahmen von Kun-dga' rin-chens eigener Einsetzung als „ausladendes Fest der systematischen Präsentation [der Lehre]“ (*rnam gzhag gi dga' ston rgya chen po*) bezeichnet wird. Ähnliche Formulierungen finden sich auch in Bezug auf die dreitägige Lehrdarlegung, die Sa-skya Lo-tsa-ba anlässlich seiner eigenen Einsetzung gab; siehe dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 14.8 (*bstan pa la rnam par gzhag pa*), 16.4 (*rnam gzhag gi dga' ston rgya chen po*).

57 Ein verwandter Terminus zu *rnam gzhag* ist *bshad gsar*. Siehe hierzu die Erklärung des abgeleiteten Begriffs *bshad gsar pa* in Jackson 1984: 68: „This term means [...] monastic students who are giving their first public exposition (*bshad pa*) of a religious text, as a sort of graduation exercise following their first major course of scriptural studies.“ Zusätzliche Informationen finden sich in *ibid.*: 74–75, Anm. 38. Für ein Beispiel eines *rnam gzhag* / *bshad gsar* im Sa-skya-Kontext, siehe Heimbel 2017: 98–102, wo die „erste öffentliche Schrift-Darlegung“ des damals achtjährigen Ngor-chen Kun-dga' bzang-po (1382–1456) beschrieben wird. Im Falle Ngor-chens handelte es sich bei der dargelegten Schrift um das *Hevajra-Tantra*. Siehe auch Kramer 2008: 159, wo die erste öffentliche Schriftdarlegung des Glo-bo mKhan-chen, die dieser vor neunhundert Mönchen absolvierte, beschrieben wird.

58 Siehe Kun-dga' blo gros, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 298.10–11.

### 2.3.2.1 Einsetzung, Tag 1

Laut *Ozean der Wunder* gestaltete sich der Ablauf des ersten Tages der dreitägigen Einsetzung nun wie folgt: Am Morgen des 13. Kalendertages des ersten Monats ertönte als Zeichen des Beginns die Weitschallende Weiße Dharma-Muschel (*chos dung dkar po rgyang grags*).<sup>59</sup> Die Disziplinarherren des Klosters (*chos khirms pa*) luden daraufhin eine zehntausendköpfige Schar von Ordinierten ein, bestehend aus den Mönchen des südlichen und nördlichen Klosterkomplexes von Sa-skya, gefolgt von Mönchsgemeinschaften der näheren und weiteren Umgebung. Nachdem die Ordinierten, geordnet nach ihrem jeweiligen Rang, auf dem Großen Versammlungsplatz vor dem Großen Dharma-Thron zusammengekommen waren, stimmte der Zeremonienleiter des Großen Versammlungsplatzes (*tshogs chen dbu mdzad*) das *Yon tan rgya mtsho ma an*, Sa-skya Paṇḍitas Eulogie des rJe-btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan. Danach strömte eine große Zahl von Laien auf den Versammlungsplatz und füllte ihn völlig aus.<sup>60</sup>

Dann begaben sich die Disziplinarherren des Klosters zum gZhi-thog Bla-brang, um die beiden „Mañjuḥoṣa-Brüder“ (*'jam dbyangs sku mched*), also bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros, formell einzuladen. In einer großen Prozession hielten daraufhin die beiden Brüder mit ihrem Gefolge Einzug auf dem Großen Versammlungsplatz.

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59 Die Weitschallende Weiße Dharma-Muschel gilt bis zum heutigen Tag als eines der herausragenden heiligen Objekte Sa-skyas. Gemäß A-mes-zhabs, *Sa skya gdung rabs*, S. 155.13–16 (als Zitat aus dem verlorengegangenen *sNyan ngag dbang po'i nyer mtsho*) soll es sich dabei ursprünglich um das Muschelhorn des Buddha Śākyamuni gehandelt haben, das dieser vom Götterkönig Indra erhielt. Grags-pa blo-gros – Kun-dga' rin-chens Sohn und A-mes-zhabs' Vater – verfasste eine (zurzeit nicht greifbare) Geschichte (*lo rgyus*) dieses Muschelhorns; siehe Titel 4 in der Liste der Werke des Grags-pa blo-gros in Sobisch 2008: 215. Für eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der legendenhaften Überlieferung im Zusammenhang mit diesem heiligen Objekt, siehe Wylie 1988. Ganz offensichtlich kommt im obigen Kontext der Inthronisation der Weitschallenden Weißen Dharma-Muschel, die ein wenig später noch ein zweites Mal zum Einsatz kommt, eine wichtige Rahmungs- bzw. Strukturierungsfunktion zu. Für eine Fotografie der Weitschallenden Weißen Dharma-Muschel siehe <https://www.himalayanart.org/items/66431> (abgerufen am 23.12.2020).

60 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 265.3–6. Zum *Yon tan rgya mtsho ma* siehe Stearns 2006: 665, Anm. 526.

Im *Ozean der Wunder* gibt A-mes-zhabs eine detaillierte Beschreibung, aus welchen Personengruppen sich diese Prozession zusammensetzte. Demnach wurde die Vorhut angeführt von den Disziplinarherren, gefolgt von den *skya hos*,<sup>61</sup> dann jeweils zwei Zweiergruppen von Mönchen, die Schalmeien (*rgya gling*) spielten bzw. Räucherwerk schwenkten, sowie Gabenherren, welche die Inthronisation erbaten (*khri ston zhu ba po*) und ebenfalls Räucherwerk schwenkten, wiederum gefolgt von zwei Mönchen, die die Sitzkissen (*bzhugs gding*) der beiden Brüder trugen, dann dGe-slong Kun-tshe-ba, der Exemplare der *Ratnagunasañcayagāthā* (i.e. der Verszusammenfassung der *Prajñāpāramitā in 8000 Zeilen*) bei sich hatte, dGe-slong Kun-seng-pa, der den „Duft-elefanten“ mit sich führte,<sup>62</sup> sowie mChod-dpon dGe-slong Byams-pa lha-dbang, der die Gerätschaften für die siebenunddreißigfache Maṇḍala-Opferung trug.<sup>63</sup>

Das Zentrum der Prozession bildeten die zwei Brüder. Der ältere Bruder bSod-nams dbang-po trug dem *Ozean der Wunder* zufolge eine goldfarbene Mönchsrobe (*snam sbyar gser ma*) und einen Paṇḍita-Hut. Er wurde begleitet von seinen beiden Gehilfen (*phyag 'degs*) sKu-zhang rNam-rgyal und gZims-dpon sKu-rdzi Rab-'byams-pa. Letzterer hatte den Mantel bSod-nams dbang-pos bei sich, der hier als ein „Mantel, dessen Glanz das Volk blendete“ (*sku bem khrom zil gnon*), bezeichnet wird. bSod-nams dbang-pos jüngerer Bruder Grags-pa blo-gros trug die weiße Kleidung eines Laienpraktizierenden, wobei sein Gewand als spiegelgleich beschrieben wird (*sku chos me long ma*), und er trug ebenfalls einen Paṇḍita-Hut. Wie sein Bruder, wurde auch er von zwei Gehilfen begleitet, sKu-zhang bsTan-pa und gZims-dpon 'Phrang-ba Inga'dzom. Letzterer trug Grags-pa blo-gros' goldenen Mantel (*sku bem gser ma*) bei sich.<sup>64</sup>

61 Eine als *skya ho* (auch: *skya bo*, *skya 'o*) bezeichnete Gruppe von Menschen wird zuweilen in Sa-skya-Quellen erwähnt; siehe z.B. A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 254-5, 324.1. Offenbar handelt es sich hierbei um bestimmte Funktionsträger in Sa-skya. Der Begriff *skya bo* scheint ein Lehnwort (aus dem Chinesischen?) zu sein.

62 Tib.: *spos glang reng bu*. Oder ist hier *spos kyi reng bu* zu lesen, Jäschke 1871: 334 zufolge eine „Räucherkerze, lang u. dünn“?

63 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 265.6–266.3.

64 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 266.3–267.1.

Die Nachhut der Prozession bildeten der Großabt (*mkhan chen*), der *brgya dpon* und der *las chen*,<sup>65</sup> gefolgt von weiteren monastischen Amtsträgern und hohen Mönchsgelehrten sowie den Mönchen des Ban-gsang-dpon(-Kollegs?).<sup>66</sup> Die ganze Prozession war von festlich gekleideten Menschen umgeben und begab sich nach und nach vom gZhi-thog Bla-brang zum Großen Versammlungsplatz.<sup>67</sup>

Als die beiden „Mañjuḥoṣa-Brüder“ den Großen Versammlungsplatz durch das Osttor betraten, blies dGe-slong Kun-dga' bkra-shis vom südlichen kleinen Thron (*khri chung lho ma*) aus dreizehn Mal die Weitschallende Weiße Dharma-Muschel, die in diesem Zusammenhang als *bla*, d.h. die Vitalkraft der beiden Brüder bezeichnet wird.<sup>68</sup> Nachdem bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros mit ihrem ganzen Gefolge die Menschenmenge auf dem Platz umschritten hatten, machten sie, am südlichen kleinen Thron angekommen, vor dem Großen Dharma-Thron Halt. Die *skya hos* breiteten die roten Sitzteppiche (*stan dmar*) vor den beiden Brüdern aus, und nachdem die Diener

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65 In einer „Rangfolge von Amtsträgern in Sa-skya“ listen Cassinelli und Ekvall 1969: 368 *mkhan chen* und *brgya (tsho) dpon (slob)* als hohe monastische Würdenträger auf und identifizieren diese als die Äbte des nördlichen und südlichen Klosterkomplexes von Sa-skya. (Hinsichtlich dieser „Rangliste“ ist eine gewisse Vorsicht geboten, da sie die Situation in Sa-skya in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts widerspiegelt und somit nicht ohne weiteres auf frühere Jahrhunderte zurückprojiziert werden darf.) Bei dem *las chen* handelte es sich ebenfalls um einen hohen monastischen Amtsträger in Sa-skya, wie bspw. aus der Biographie des Sa-skya-Meisters Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507) hervorgeht; siehe Caumanns 2015: 134, 292.

66 Formulierungen wie z.B. *ban gtsang dpon gyi dbu mdzad* und *ban gtsang dpon gyi mchod dpon* in A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 257.4, 259.4, deuten darauf hin, dass der Terminus *ban gtsang dpon* auf eine Institution innerhalb Sa-skyas (und nicht auf ein Amt) verweisen muss.

67 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 267.1–2.

68 Wie bereits erwähnt, fungiert die Weitschallende Weiße Dharma-Muschel hier als ein wichtiges Strukturierungselement im Ablauf der Inthronisation. Dass das Muschelhorn genau dreizehn Mal erklang, war sicherlich von hohem Symbolwert. Wie in Everding 2010 herausgearbeitet, brachte man im vormodernen Tibet die Zahl Dreizehn unweigerlich in Verbindung mit Vorstellungen von Auserwähltheit und auf karmischer Reifung beruhender gerechter Herrschaft. In administrativen Kontexten diente diese Zahl „in einem erheblichen Maße der Stärkung des für jede Herrschaft essentiellen Legitimationsglaubens auf Seiten der Untergebenen;“ siehe *ibid.*: 23.



(*zhabs 'brings pa*) deren Paṇḍita-Hüte in Empfang genommen hatten, warfen sich bSod-nams dbang-po und Grag-s-pa blo-gros drei Mal vor dem Großen Dharma-Thron rituell nieder. Dann setzten sie wieder ihre Kopfbedeckungen auf, umrundeten in westlicher Richtung die Versammlung der Ordinierten und betraten durch das Westtor den Großen Dharma-Thron, wo sie ihre Plätze einnahmen. Gleichzeitig begaben sich der Großabt, der *brgya dpon*, der *las chen* und die weiteren Würdenträger zu den für sie vorbereiteten Sitzen.<sup>69</sup> Unmittelbar nachdem die beiden „Mañjuḥṣa-Brüder“ sich gesetzt hatten, gaben die Disziplinarherren ein Zeichen, auf das hin die Schar der Ordinierten rituelle Niederwerfungen machte und sich dann schließlich ebenfalls niedersetzte.<sup>70</sup>

Dann wurden Kopien der *Ratnagaṇaśāncaya-gāthā* verteilt, wobei die Würdenträger auf den verschiedenen thronartigen Sitzen Exemplare des vollständigen Sūtras in vier oder fünf Blättern (*shog bu bzhi lnga*) aus den Händen des dGe-slong Kun-tshe-ba erhielten. Alle anderen Anwesenden erhielten Kopien des Textes auf zwei oder drei weißen Blättern (*chos skya pod shog bu gnyis gsum*), welche eine große Schar junger Mönche (*grwa shar*) verteilte, die aus dem südlichen und nördlichen Klosterkomplex von Sa-skya stammte. Nachdem bSod-nams dbang-po eine Verehrungsformel gesprochen hatte, rezitierten alle Meister und Schüler gemeinsam den Text der *Ratnagaṇaśāncaya-gāthā*. Danach sprach dGe-slong bsTan-pa bkra-shis, der Zeremonienmeister (*dbu mdzad*) des Ban-gtsang-dpon, eine weitere Verehrungsformel, woraufhin man den Sūtratext drei Mal als einen Ritus zur Abwehr von Dämonen (*bdud bzlog*) verlas.<sup>71</sup>

Danach erhoben sich dBu-mdzad dGe-slong bsTan-pa, dGe-slong dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan und mChod-dpon dGe-slong Byams-pa lha-dbang von ihren Sitzen, warfen sich drei Mal rituell nieder und führten die siebenunddreißigfache Maṇḍala-Opferung aus, wobei

69 Vgl. A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 258.2–6, wo im Falle der Inthronisation von A-mes-zhabs' Sohn Ngag-dbang bSod-nams dbang-phyug detaillierte Angaben über die Sitzarrangements der monastischen Würdenträger gemacht werden, d.h. Anzahl, Art und Beschaffenheit der verschiedenen Decken, Kissen und Sitzteppiche.

70 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 267.2–268.1.

71 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 268.1–4.

sie die entsprechende Liturgie des Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa rezitierten.<sup>72</sup> Schließlich brachten sie das Maṇḍala, eine Repräsentation des Universums, den beiden Brüdern dar, während sie – wohl an bSod-nams dbang-po gerichtet – den „edlen glorreichen Lama, der alle Buddhas der drei Zeiten in sich vereint“, um den „tiefgründigen edlen Dharma des Mahāyāna“ baten. Abschließend warfen sich die drei Mönche erneut drei Mal rituell nieder und begaben sich zurück auf ihre Sitze.<sup>73</sup>

Die erbetene Belehrung eröffnete bSod-nams dbang-po mit der obligatorischen Hervorbringung von Bodhicitta, gefolgt von einer Ansprache über die „guten Qualitäten der Großartigkeit“ (*che ba'i yon tan*) des Sa-skya Paṇḍita. Wie sich aus einer Lehranleitung (*'chad thabs*) ergibt, die später A-mes-zhabs in Zusammenhang mit der Einsetzung seines eigenen Sohnes Ngag-dbang bSod-nams dbang-phyug (1638–1685) auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron im Jahr 1651 zusammenstellte, handelte es sich dabei um Strophen und kurze Prosa-Ausführungen, mittels derer Sa-skya Paṇḍita – der Verfasser der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* – als eine Emanation des Bodhisattva Mañjuḥṣa gepriesen wurde.<sup>74</sup> Danach fing bSod-nams dbang-po mit der Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* an, wobei er an diesem ersten Tag mit dem sanskritisierten Titel *Munimataparakāśanāmaśāstra*, der das Lehrwerk eröffnet, begann und mit den Erklärungen zur Vollkommenheit der Einsicht (*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*) endete.<sup>75</sup> Dem *Ozean der Wunder* zufolge verwendete bSod-nams dbang-po dabei den „Geschichten-Kommentar“ (*sgrung 'grel*) des Glo-bo mKhan-chen bSod-nams lhun-grub (1456–1532).<sup>76</sup>

72 Eine kurze Darstellung der siebenunddreißigfachen Maṇḍala-Opferung findet sich in Beyer 1973: 168–170.

73 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 268.4–269.2. Die obige Bitte um Belehrung lautet im Tibetischen: *dus gsum sangs rgyas thams cad bsdu pa'i ngo bo dpal ldan bla ma dam pa la theg pa chen po dam pa'i chos zab mo zhu ba'i yon du dbul bar bgyi'o [...]*.

74 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *'Chad thabs*, S. 60.2–62.3.

75 Siehe Jackson 2015: 383–525, 613–622 für eine englische Übersetzung dieses ersten Abschnitts sowie die entsprechenden Gliederungspunkte. Die Menge an Text, die bSod-nams dbang-po an diesem ersten Tag der Thron-Einsetzung darlegte, entspricht etwa zwei Dritteln des gesamten Lehrwerks.

76 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 269.2–4. A-mes-zhabs schreibt hier den „Geschichten-Kommentar“, der eigentlich von Zhang mDo-sde-dpal (13. Jahrhundert) stammt, fälschlicherweise Glo-bo mKhan-chen zu.

bSod-nams dbang-pos Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* wurde durch einen Teeausschank für die Versammlung (*mang ja*) unterbrochen. Der Zeremonienmeister des Großen Versammlungsortes stimmte die Teeopfer-Liturgie (*ja mchod*) an und die Ordinierten nahmen ihren Tee zu sich. Während des Teeausschanks hatten die „Gabenherren der Lehre“ (*bstan pa'i sbyin bdag*) – d.h. die großen und kleinen Herrscher sowie die Abgesandten der verschiedenen Klöster – die Gelegenheit, den beiden „Mañjuḥoṣa-Brüdern“ die Inthronisationsgeschenke (*khri ston gyi 'bul ba*) zu überreichen.<sup>77</sup> Nach Abschluss des Teeausschanks für die Versammlung setzte bSod-nams dbang-po die *Darlegung der Erläuterung des Muni* noch eine Zeit lang fort, bis dann der erste Tag der Einsetzung am Nachmittag zu Ende ging. Die beiden Brüder verließen mit ihrem Gefolge den Versammlungsort durch das Osttor und begaben sich zurück in den gZhi-thog Bla-brang.<sup>78</sup>

### 2.3.2.2 Einsetzung, Tag 2

Der zweite Tag der Einsetzung – dies war der 14. Kalendertag des ersten Monats – ähnelte im Ablauf dem ersten Tag. Nach dem bereits geschilderten Einladungsprozedere, dem Einzug der Prozession auf den

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Zu Glo-bo mKhan-chens Kommentaren zur *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni*, siehe Jackson 1983: 4–5.

77 Das Überreichen der „Inthronisationsgeschenke“ lässt sich als ein legitimierendes Element im Ablauf der Einsetzung verstehen, durch das die „Gabenherren der Lehre“ den neuen Status der beiden „Mañjuḥoṣa-Brüder“ als „Herren der Lehren“ und „Regenten“ bestätigten. Leider erfahren wir aus dem *Ozean der Wunder* nichts Genaueres über diese „Inthronisationsgeschenke“. Vgl. aber Ames-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 261.1–265.6, 268.2–276.1 und 278.6–294.3, wo minutiös alle Gabenherren aufgelistet werden, einschließlich der „Inthronisationsgeschenke“, welche anlässlich der Inthronisation des Ngag-dbang bSod-nams dbang-phyug im Jahr 1651 dargebracht wurden. Wie eine erste, bislang unvollständige Auswertung dieser Liste ergab, bestand ein Großteil dieser Geschenke, neben den obligatorischen Glücksschals (*bkra shis kha btags*), aus verschiedenen Stoffen und Kleidungsstücken, des Weiteren umfassten die Geschenke Statuen, Thangkas und Ritualgegenstände, aber auch Tee, Schalen und Porzellangeschirr, bis hin zu Pferden und vielem mehr. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass sowohl die Reihenfolge des Auftretens der Gabenherren sowie die Art der Geschenke ihren jeweiligen sozialen Status widerspiegelten.

78 Siehe Ames-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 269.4–270.2

Großen Versammlungsplatz und den einleitenden Riten setzte bSod-nams dbang-po die Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* fort, wieder eingeleitet durch die Hervorbringung von Bodhicitta und einer kurzen Ansprache über die „guten Qualitäten der Großartigkeit“ des Sa-skya Paṇḍita.<sup>79</sup> bSod-nams dbang-pos Darlegung der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* begann mit dem Abschnitt, in dem Sa-skya Paṇḍita erklärt, dass die Anzahl von sechs Vollkommenheiten festgelegt ist (*phar phyin drug gi grangs nges*), und endete mit dem Anhang über die Vernichtung der vier Māras (*bdud bzhi bcom pa*).<sup>80</sup> Auch an diesem zweiten Tag unterbrach bSod-nams dbang-po die Darlegung für einen Teeauschank, während dem die „Gabenherren der Lehre“ ein weiteres Mal den beiden Brüdern die Inthronisationsgeschenke darbrachten.<sup>81</sup>

### 2.3.2.3 Einsetzung, Tag 3

Der dritte Tag – also der 15. Kalendertag – begann zunächst wie die zwei vorangegangenen Tage, allerdings mit einem wichtigen Unterschied: Nachdem an den ersten beiden Tagen der Einsetzung Kundga' rin-chen, der amtierende Sa-skya-Hierarch, nicht öffentlich in Erscheinung getreten war, betrat dieser nun zum ersten Mal, zusammen mit seinen beiden Söhnen, den Großen Versammlungsplatz. Kundga' rin-chen nahm auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron in der Mitte Platz, rechts von ihm setzte sich bSod-nams dbang-po nieder und links von ihm Grags-pa blo-gros.<sup>82</sup> bSod-nams dbang-po legte – wiederum

79 Vgl. A-mes-zhabs, *'Chad thabs*, S. 63.4–65.4. Die „guten Qualitäten der Großartigkeit“ dieses zweiten Tages bezogen sich (zumindest in der Lehrdarlegung des Jahres 1651) auf Sa-skya Paṇḍitas überragende Gelehrsamkeit in allen Wissensgebieten; dadurch „brachte [dieser] die Lehre des Muni gleich der Sonne zum Erstrahlen“ (*thub pa'i bstan pa nyin mo ltar gsal bar mdzad*).

80 Eine englische Übersetzung des entsprechenden Abschnitts aus der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* sowie ein Überblick über die zugeordneten Gliederungspunkte findet sich in Jackson 2015: 525–593 und 622–630. Dieser Teil von Sa-skya Paṇḍitas Lehrwerk, den bSod-nams dbang-po am zweiten Tag der Inthronisation darlegte, entspricht einem knappen Drittel des Gesamttextes.

81 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 270.2–5.

82 Vor dem Hintergrund, dass der Große Dharma-Thron als ein Symbol für die Kontinuität der 'Khon-Familienlinie angesehen werden kann (siehe oben Abschnitt 2.2), ließe sich dieses Zusammen-Platznehmen des Vaters und der beiden Söhne am dritten, abschließenden Tag als ein zeichenhaftes Nachvollziehen des

nach der Hervorbringung von Bodhicitta und der Preisung der „guten Qualitäten der Großartigkeit“ des Sa-skya Paṇḍita<sup>83</sup> – den noch ausstehenden Teil der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni* dar. Dabei führte er die Erklärungen zur Vernichtung der vier Mārās fort und endete schließlich mit dem Kolophon (*sbyar byang*).<sup>84</sup> Während des darauf folgenden Teeausschanks für die Versammlung überreichten die „Gabenherren der Lehre“ ein letztes Mal die Inthronisationsgeschenke.<sup>85</sup>

Daran schloss sich eine große Gabenverteilung an, bei der im Namen Kun-dga' rin-chens und seiner beiden Söhne Geschenke an alle Anwesenden ausgeteilt wurden. Den verschiedenen Tempeln Sa-skyas brachte man unzählige Opfergaben dar wie Zeremonialschals (*snyan dar*), Butterlampen (*dkar me*) und Teigopfer (*gtor ma*). Die anwesenden Menschen – angeführt von hohen monastischen Würdenträgern wie dem Großabt, dem *brgya dpon*, dem *las chen*, gefolgt von den Ordinierten und schließlich den Laien – erhielten eine große Menge von materiellen Gaben wie z.B. Gold, Silber, Kupfer und Eisen sowie Tee und Seidenkleidung.<sup>86</sup>

Es sei an dieser Stelle angemerkt, dass solche Gabenverteilungen, die zum Teil erhebliche Ausmaße annehmen konnten, eine lange Tradition

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Einsetzens der beiden Söhne in die Kontinuität dieser Linie verstehen.

83 Vgl. A-mes-zhabs, *'Chad thabs*, S. 65.4–68.3, wo – im Rahmen der Preisung der „guten Qualitäten der Großartigkeit“ – Lo-tṣā-ba Bai-ro tsa-na (8. Jahrhundert) und der Tathāgata Dri-ma med-pa'i dpaḥ als eine frühere und spätere Existenzform des Sa-skya Paṇḍita identifiziert werden. Zugleich „beweisen“ die von A-mes-zhabs in dieser Passage der Lehranleitung zitierten Strophen, dass alle drei (Bai-ro tsa-na, Sa-skya Paṇḍita und Dri-ma med-pa'i dpaḥ) wiederum auch frühere und spätere Existenzform(en) des Kun-dga' rin-chen waren bzw. sein werden. Inwieweit diese Strophen, die z.T. *gter ma*-Texten entnommen sind, auch während der Einsetzung des Jahres 1570 von bSod-nams dbang-po zu Gehör gebracht wurden, wissen wir leider nicht. Siehe in diesem Zusammenhang auch das Kapitel über Kun-dga' rin-chens frühere Existenzen in A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 3.1–8.5, das viele Parallelen zu der hier angesprochenen Passage aus der Lehranleitung aufweist. Für eine englische Übersetzung dieses Präexistenzen-Kapitels siehe Caumanns 2019.

84 Siehe Jackson 2015: 593–602, 630 für eine englische Übersetzung dieser letzten Abschnitte (einschließlich der entsprechenden Gliederungspunkte) aus der *Erläuterung der Intention des Muni*, welche gerade einmal drei Prozent des Gesamttextes ausmachen.

85 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 270.5–272.2.

86 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 272.2–5.

im vormodernen Tibet hatten und spätestens ab dem 16. Jahrhundert zum festen Repertoire politischer und religiöser Akteure gehörten, die sich so als gerechte buddhistische Herrscher inszenieren konnten.<sup>87</sup> Bedauerlicherweise bleiben hier die Anmerkungen im *Ozean der Wunder* recht formelhaft. Genauere Angaben liegen uns jedoch für die Einsetzung vor, die A-mes-zhabs zwei Generationen später für seinen Sohn Kun-dga' bsod-nams im Jahr 1651 durchführen ließ. Damals ließen A-mes-zhabs und sein Sohn an eine Menge von über siebzehntausend Menschen insgesamt 22,5 Tonnen Getreide verteilen, zuzüglich einer immensen Menge weiterer Gaben.<sup>88</sup> Dies verdeutlicht sehr eindrücklich die Ausmaße, welche die Einsetzungsfeierlichkeiten nach Kun-dga' rin-chens Modifikation angenommen hatte.

Kehren wir noch einmal zur Einsetzung des Jahres 1570 zurück: Nachdem der Großsekretär (*dpon yig chen mo*) von Sa-skya, gemäß alter Tradition, eine Auflistung all jener Gaben verlesen hatte, welche die 'Khon-Elite hatte verteilen lassen,<sup>89</sup> beendete Kun-dga' rin-chen die Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron mit der abschließenden Verdienstwidmung, gefolgt von Wunschgebeten und Segenssprüchen. Dem Bericht des *Ozeans der Wunder* zufolge stellten sich dabei die obligatorischen Wunderzeichen ein, d.h. Regenbogen-Pavillions erschienen am klaren Himmel und die Gottheiten ließen als Zeichen ihrer Verehrung einen Blumenschauer niederregnen.<sup>90</sup>

### 3 Schlusswort

Absicht des vorliegenden Beitrags war es, eine konkrete Durchführung der Einsetzung von jungen 'Khon-Adligen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron des Klosters Sa-skya in Aufbau und Ablauf vorzustellen. Im Fokus standen dabei die Inthronisationsfestlichkeiten, die der 23.

<sup>87</sup> Siehe hierzu Ardussi 2003; Sørensen und Hazod 2007: 543–545.

<sup>88</sup> Eine ausführliche Auflistung der anlässlich der Einsetzungsfeierlichkeiten im Jahr 1651 verteilten Gaben findet sich in A-mes-zhabs, *Deb bsgrigs*, S. 296.2–321.2.

<sup>89</sup> Die entsprechende Formulierung in A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 272.5–6 ist mir nicht ganz klar: [...] *sa skya dpon yig chen mos 'dul bar gda' zhes pa'i skad gtong* [...]/. Siehe aber die verständlichere parallele Textpassage in bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 259.4: [...] *gdan sa chen po'i dpon yig mkhan gyis snyan dar sogs so so'i tho byang rnams bklags* [...]/.

<sup>90</sup> Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 272.5–273.4.

Sa-skya-Hierarch sNgags-'chang Kun-dga' rin-chen für seine beiden Söhne bSod-nams dbang-po und Grag-s-pa blo-gros vom Ende des zwölften Monats des Erde-Schlange-Jahres (1569) bis zur Mitte des ersten Monats des Eisen-Pferd-Jahres (1570) ausrichten ließ. Diese knapp dreiwöchigen Festlichkeiten waren äußerst aufwendig inszeniert, wobei es Kun-dga' rin-chens erklärte Absicht gewesen war, dass möglichst viele Menschen der Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne beiwohnten.

Bei dieser Einsetzung handelte es sich – wie eingangs erwähnt – um einen zentralen rituellen Baustein im institutionellen Gefüge Sa-skyas zur Regulierung der Weitergabe religiöser Autorität und weltlicher Macht innerhalb der Familienlinie der 'Khon. Aus ritualtheoretischer Perspektive könnte man von einer „zweifachen Struktur“ sprechen, die hierbei ganz offensichtlich zum Tragen kam: Auf der Ebene des Individuums markierte das Einsetzungsritual den Übergang von Nichtzugehörigkeit zu Zugehörigkeit und führte zu individueller Statusmodifikation. Auf kollektiver Ebene diente das Ritual der Selbstdarstellung der kulturellen Formation, in unserem Fall der 'Khon-Elite, und trug zur Sicherung von institutioneller Kontinuität und Stabilität bei.<sup>91</sup>

Vor diesem Hintergrund sei abschließend auf eine Anmerkung der Historikerin Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger verwiesen. Auch wenn sich diese Anmerkung ursprünglich auf Thronwechsel und Herrschereinsetzungen im europäischen Mittelalter bezog, lässt sie sich ohne Weiteres auch auf Kun-dga' rin-chens Ausrichtung der Einsetzung seiner beiden Söhne auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron des Klosters Sa-skya übertragen. Demnach bildeten solche Einsetzungen „stets die symbolisch-rituelle Mitte der Herrschaftsordnungen, umgaben sie mit sakraler Würde und machten ihre elementaren Leitwerte und Gliederungsprinzipien in verdichteter Form sichtbar.“ Dabei erfüllten sie „zwei miteinander verschränkte Funktionen, nämlich einerseits den jeweiligen neuen Inhaber in seine Rolle einzusetzen und darin zu legitimieren und andererseits die Herrschaftsordnung als Ganze mit einer Aura der Unantastbarkeit und Heiligkeit auszustatten“ – dies nicht zuletzt, um vergessen zu machen, „dass es sich bei *jeder* Form von Herrschaft um eine von Menschen abhängige, kontingente Ordnung handelt, die immer auch anders sein könnte.“<sup>92</sup>

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91 Dücker 2007: 161–163.

92 Stollberg-Rilinger 2013: 90, 91–92.

### Anhang: Einsetzungen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron (Ende 15. bis Mitte 20. Jahrhundert)

Der folgende Überblick listet chronologisch sämtliche Einsetzungen von 'Khon-Adligen auf dem Großen Dharma-Thron des Kloster Sa-skya auf, die vom Ende des 15. bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts durchgeführt wurden. Eine Reihe der hier genannten 'Khon-Adligen fungierte in der Folge auch als Hierarchen von Sa-skya. In diesen Fällen beziehen sich die römischen Ziffern auf die (heute übliche) Zählung der Sa-skya-Hierarchen. Die Amtszeiten der jeweiligen Hierarchen sind den römischen Ziffern nachgestellt.<sup>93</sup>

- 1496** (*me 'brug*): Sa-skya Lo-tsä-ba Kun-dga' bsod-nams (1485–1533; XXII: 1498–1533)<sup>94</sup>
- 1525** (*shing bya*): sNgags-'chang Kun-dga' rin-chen (1517–1584; XXIII: 1533–1584), zusammen mit seinem Bruder 'Jam-dbyangs Kun-dga' bsam-'grub (1515–1572)<sup>95</sup>
- 1570** (*lcags rta*): bSod-nams dbang-po (1559–1621; XXIV: 1584–1589), zusammen mit seinem Bruder Grags-pa blo-gros (1563–1617; XXV: 1589–1617)<sup>96</sup>
- 1602** (*chu stag*): mThu-stobs dBang-phyug Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (geb. 1588), zusammen mit seinen Brüdern Kun-dga' dbang-rgyal (1592–1620; XXVI: 1618–1620) und A-mes-zhabs Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bsod-nams (1597–1659; XXVII: 1620–1659)<sup>97</sup>
- 1651** (*lcags yos*): Ngag-dbang bSod-nams dbang-phyug (1638–1685; XXVIII: 1659–1685)<sup>98</sup>

93 Die Amtszeiten sind angegeben nach bSod-nams rgya-mtsho, *gDan rabs*, S. 309, 337, 346, 352, 358, 366, 376, 384, 389, 396, 401, 406, 414, 421, 426, 433, 439, 444, 470.

94 Siehe dKon-mchog lhun-grub, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 15.2–16.5; A-mes-zhabs, *Sa lo'i rnam thar*, S. 8.5–9.3.

95 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 64.4–66.3. Kun-dga' rin-chen und Kun-dga' bsam-grub waren die Neffen des Sa-skya Lo-tsä-ba.

96 Siehe A-mes-zhabs, *Kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar*, S. 263.5–274.2. bSod-nams dbang-po und Grags-pa blo-gros waren die Söhne des Kun-dga' rin-chen.

97 Siehe bSam-gtan rgya-mtsho, *A mes zhabs kyi rnam thar*, S. 248.1–263.3. Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan, Kun-dga' dbang-rgyal und A-mes-zhabs waren die Söhne des Grags-pa blo-gros.

98 Siehe Kun-dga' blo-gros, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 418.17–420.7. bSod-nams dbang-phyug war der Sohn des A-mes-zhabs.



- 1668** (*sa spre'u*): Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' bkra-shis (1656–1711; XXIX: 1685–1711)<sup>99</sup>
- 1716** (*me spre'u*): Ngag-dbang bSod-nams rin-chen (1705–1741; XXX: 1711–1741)<sup>100</sup>
- 1740** (*lcags spre'u*): Sa-chen Kun-dga' blo-gros (1729–1783; XXXI: 1741–1783), zusammen mit seinem Bruder mThu-stobs dbang-phyug<sup>101</sup>
- 1777** (*me bya*): dBang-sdud snying-po (1763–1809; XXXII: 1783–1806), zusammen mit seinem Bruder<sup>102</sup>
- 1806** (*me stag*): Padma bdud-'dul dbang-phyug (1792–1853; XXXIII: 1806–1843), zusammen mit seinen Brüdern Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' rin-chen (1794–1856) und mGon-po dNgos-grub dpal-'bar (1801–1856)<sup>103</sup>
- 1843** (*chu yos*): Ngag-dbang rDo-rje rin-chen (1819–1867; XXXIV: 1843–1845), zusammen mit seinen Brüdern 'Jam-dbyangs Kun-dga' theg-chen dbang-sdud bKra-shis rin-chen (1824–1865; XXXV: 1846–1865) und 'Jam-dbyangs gzhon-nu Kun-dga' bsod-nams (1842–1882; XXXVI: 1866–1882)<sup>104</sup>
- 1884** (*shing spre'l*): Kun-dga' snying-po (1850–1899; XXXVII: 1883–1899), zusammen mit seinem Bruder gSang-bdag dPal-chen 'od-po aka Byams-pa Kun-tu bzang-po (1858–1894), sowie den

99 Siehe Kun-dga' blo-gros, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 501.14–503.4. Kun-dga' bkra-shis war der Sohn des bSod-nams dbang-phyug.

100 Siehe Kun-dga' blo-gros, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 599.9–603.11. bSod-nams rin-chen war der Sohn des Kun-dga' bkra-shis.

101 Siehe Kun-dga' blo-gros, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 718.16–19; Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 27.19–32.3. Kun-dga' blo-gros und mThu-stobs dbang-phyug waren die Söhne des bSod-nams rin-chen.

102 Siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 397.13–406.2. dBang-sdud snying-po und sein nicht weiter benannter Bruder waren die Söhne des Kun-dga' blo-gros.

103 Siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 522.19–527.5. Padma bdud-'dul dbang-phyug (i.e. der Gründer des sGrol-ma Pho-brang), Kun-dga' rin-chen (i.e. der Gründer des Phun-tshogs Pho-brang) und dNgos-grub dpal-'bar waren die Söhne des dBang-sdud snying-po.

104 Siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 613.11–616.19. rDo-rje rin-chen, bKra-shis rin-chen und Kun-dga' bsod-nams waren die Söhne des Padma bdud-'dul dbang-phyug.

- Cousins 'Dzam-gling che-rgu dbang-sdud alias Drag-shul Yontan rgya-mtsho (1863–1919; XXXVIII: 1901–1915) und 'Jam-dpal dNgos-grub rgya-mtsho (1865–1889), sowie Kun-dga' snying pos Sohn Ngag-dbang Drag-shul 'Phrin-las rin-chen (1871–1935; XXXIX: 1915–1936)<sup>105</sup>
- 1915** (*shing yos*): Ngag-dbang Drag-shul 'Phrin-las rin-chen (1871–1936; XXXIX: 1915–1936)<sup>106</sup>
- 1937** (*me byi*): Ngag-dbang mThu-stobs dbang-phyug (1900–1950; XL: 1937–1950)<sup>107</sup>
- 1959** (*sa phag*): Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' theg-chen dpal-'bar (geb. 1945; XLI: 1959–2017)<sup>108</sup>

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105 Siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 730.13–735.18; Drag-shul, *Drag shul gyi rtogs brjod*, Bd. 1, S. 96.2–103.2. Kun-dga' snying-po und dPal-chen 'od-po waren die Söhne des bKra-shis rin-chen; 'Dzam-gling dbang-sdud und dNgos-grub rgya-mtsho waren die Söhne des Kun-dga' bsod-nams; Drag-shul 'Phrin-las rin-chen war der Sohn des Kun-dga' snying-po.

106 Siehe Drag-shul, *Sa skya gdung rabs kyi zhal skong*, S. 842.10–15; Drag-shul, *Drag shul gyi rtogs brjod*, Bd. 1, S. 423, 437.

107 Siehe sDe-gzhung sprul-sku, *mThu stobs dbang phyug gi rnam thar*, S. 25.4–30.1. mThu-stobs dbang-phyug war der Sohn des 'Dzam-gling dbang-sdud.

108 Siehe Kun-dga' theg-chen dpal-'bar, *Kun dga' theg chen dpal 'bar gyi gsung rnam*, S. 38.1–39.11. Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' theg-chen dpal-'bar ist der Sohn des Ngag-dbang Kun-dga' rin-chen (1902–1950).

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1559–1565.

**Of Bird and Brush: A Preliminary Discussion of a *parinirvāna*  
Painting in the Distinctive Idiom of the Tenth Karmapa Recently  
Come to Light**

Karl Debreczeny  
(Rubin Museum of Art)

The first Western study of the Tenth Karmapa Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674) as an artist was published by David Jackson as a chapter in his monumental *A History of Tibetan Painting*.<sup>1</sup> In this pioneering work, David briefly outlined the life and artistic activity of Chos dbyings rdo rje based on Tibetan primary sources available to him at the time, including the short biographies by gTsang mkhan chen 'Jam dbyangs dPal ldan rgya mtsho (1610–1684; late 17th cent.), the Seventh Zhwa dmar Ye shes snying po (1631–1694; 1775), and Karma Nges don bsTan pa rab rgyas (b. 19th cent.; 1891). Jackson also gathered Tibetan descriptions of the Tenth Karmapa's art found in disparate Tibetan sources such as Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas's (1813–1899) encyclopaedia (1864), Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho's (1880–1923/25) pilgrimage guide (1920), and Zhwa sgab pa dBang phyug bde ldan's (1908–1989) history (1976). Based on these terse textual descriptions, David even ventured a few artistic attributions that helped lead us on this path of discovery. Once David's work was translated into Chinese in 2001 as *Xizang huihua shi* 西藏绘画史, his research has been used (largely uncredited) in Chinese publications, and now the Tenth Karmapa has started to appear in Chinese narratives of Tibetan art history as well.<sup>2</sup>

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1 See Jackson 1996: 247–258.

2 Some years later a crucial textual source, the most detailed account of the Tenth Karmapa's life which is rich in details of his artistic activities, originally part of the history of the Karma bKa' brgyud by Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas and 'Be lo Tshe dbang kun khyab (1775) but cut from the original printing blocks, re-surfaced (referred to here as *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*). The original text has since been republished by the Seventeenth Karma pa O rgyan

David Jackson has since written six catalogs and curated five exhibitions on the history of Tibetan painting at the Rubin Museum of Art from 2009 to 2016.<sup>3</sup> His contributions to the museum also included a brief chapter on the challenging terminology of Tibetan art explored through the considerable biographical literature of the Tenth Karmapa, as part of a monograph on the artist, *The Black Hat Eccentric* (2012).<sup>4</sup> So it seems fitting to pay tribute to David by introducing a work in the distinctive idiom of the Tenth Karmapa that has recently come to light: an unscribed painting depicting the passing of the Buddha into Nirvāṇa (fig. 1) that was offered at auction at Bonhams New York in 2016.<sup>5</sup> It measures 62.3 × 42.2 cm on silk, and is one of the few narrative compositions in the unusual style of the Tenth Karmapa. The Buddha reclines on a decorative light green plinth surrounded by a colourful multitude of grieving followers. In the upper-right corner, the cremation of the Buddha's remains is portrayed as a Chinese coffin decorated with a delicate scrolling pattern. Above, his cremated relics are distributed into *stūpas*.

### General Stylistic Observations

This recent discovery displays a number of features close to what is known of the artist's work. The whimsical naïveté of the Tenth

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'phrin las rdo rje as part of the biography collection *rGyal dbang Karma pa sku phreng bcu pa Chos dbyings rdo rje'i rnam thar dang Gar dbang Chos kyi dbang phyug gi rnam thar rtogs brjod 'dod 'jo'i ba mo*. On the original biography, see Mengele 2011; and Tashi Tsering 2016. This has led to a remarkable flowering of publications on Chos dbyings rdo rje's life and art, including von Schroeder 2001: 796–819; Debreczeny 2012; Shamar Rinpoche 2012; Mengele 2012; and Debreczeny and Tuttle 2016, to name just a few.

- 3 The *Masterworks of Tibetan Painting Series* published by the Rubin Museum of Art, in association with University of Washington Press, with support from the Rubin Foundation. Most of these books have been made freely available on the Rubin Museum's publication webpage: <https://rubinmuseum.org/page/rubin-museum-publications>.
- 4 Now freely available digitally on the Rubin Museum's website: <https://rubinmuseum.org/page/rubin-museum-publications>. As this book is easily accessible, I will be referencing images from that book directly in the text here as *Black Hat Eccentric*.
- 5 Bonhams 2016: 60–63, lot 34. More photographic details of the painting are also available on the Bonhams website: <https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/23200/lot/34/>.

Karmapa's figural style is recognizable by long heads with fleshy abbreviated faces and tiny pursed red lips.<sup>6</sup> One of the most immediately noticeable features is the unusual depiction of the Buddha's deathbed in modulated shades of light green, fancifully decorated with animals and offering figures, that appears to emulate relief sculpture, specifically ancient throne ornamentation found in Kashmiri sculptures of the 7th and 8th centuries (see also fig. 8).<sup>7</sup> Ancient Kashmiri and Gilgit sources can also be observed here in the rippling folds of the Buddha's red robe. Indeed, Chos dbyings rdo rje was recorded as fond of making painted copies of old famous statues, such as Atiśa's (ca. 982–1054) personal image, the *Thub pa gSer gling ma* (or "Sumatran Buddha"), which served as a model for his painted images of the Buddha.<sup>8</sup> This aspect of his painting was observed by Tibetan connoisseurs and adorants such as the Thirteenth Karmapa (1733–1797): "... [figures] painted by the hand of the venerable Tenth which follow Kashmiri bronzes are a great matchless wonder."<sup>9</sup> While this is quite unusual to Tibetan painting, both in manner and archaic sources of inspiration, it is found repeatedly in both the Karmapa's own works, that of his workshop, as well as later followers.

Some of the brushwork, including animals depicted with boneless washes, such as the pair of animals baying mournfully and roll in their grief in the foreground, are also typical of the Tenth Karmapa's oeuvre. Perhaps the subtlest and most telling clue of the Karmapa's own hand are the quick broken lines found in some of the hands and faces (fig. 2), a Chinese brush technique known as "tremulous brush" (*zhanbi* 顫筆) which is especially distinctive to Chos dbyings rdo rje's hand.<sup>10</sup> In gen-

6 These faces do not resemble contemporary Tibetan forms, but seem to draw on ancient Chinese Tang models (618–906). See Debreczeny 2012: 125–127, 210–211; and Luo Wenhua 2016: 160–183.

7 See Luczanits 2016: 109; Alsop 2012: 234–235, fig. 8.26; and Jackson 2012: 280–282, fig. 10.1. For a ca. 8th century Kashmiri comparison, see the sculpture "Buddha and Adorants on the Cosmic Mountain" in The Norton Simon Museum (F.1972.48.2.S), which both authors cite.

8 See Jackson 2012: 282–286.

9 Tib.: *rje btsun bcu pa'i phyag bris kha che li'i// nyams 'gyur ngo mtshar zla bral chen po'o//*; see Smith 2001: 336–337, n. 870; and Jackson 1996: 52.

10 It should be noted that these tremulous lines do not appear throughout the work. For a more detailed discussion of the Karmapa's brushwork, see Debreczeny

eral, the Karmapa's paintings are said to follow Chinese paintings, and such specialized Chinese brush techniques are not common to Tibetan painting, which tends to emphasize outlining and complete forms. Also the material this work is painted on is silk, a ground more common to Chinese painting and known to have been favoured by the Tenth Karmapa.

### Textual Evidence

This painting no doubt belongs to a larger set depicting the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha, which focuses on major events in the life story of the historic Buddha Śākyamuni, which we know Chos dbyings rdo rje painted and wrote about several times. One of the first mentions of this theme is made in 1629, when his primary teacher, the Sixth Zhwa dmar pa (1584–1630), wrote the young Karmapa a commentary on the Deeds of the Buddha: *A Joyful Song: Instruction on the Twelve Deeds of Our Teacher [i.e. the Buddha]* (*bDag cag gi ston pa'i mdzad pa bcu gnyis kyi tshul rab dga'i glu*), one of the last teachings he received before his beloved teacher passed away in 1630, which no doubt served as a textual inspiration for some of the Karmapa's own written, painted, and sculpted compositions.<sup>11</sup> The Karmapa had repeatedly requested these teachings on the life of the Buddha; it is emphasized in his hagiography as an important part of the transmissions he had received from his main guru. It should also be mentioned that *avadāna* literature (*rtogs pa brjod pa*), the “noble deeds” stories of the Buddha's previous lives, was a major inspiration for the Tenth Karmapa's own literary production, serving as a model for his lengthy biographical and autobiographical works, including *The Avadāna of a Bodhisattva: A Wish-fulfilling Cow* (1648) (primarily a biography of his teacher the Sixth Zhwa dmar pa, but which is quite rich in autobiographical details up to his teacher's death in 1630); *The Avadāna of a Bodhisattva: Travel Song of the Cuckoo Bird* (1651); and *The Avadāna of a Bodhisattva: The Great Dharma Drum*

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2011: 399–406; 2012: 125–129, 132, 153, 180; 2016: 207–209.

11 Karma pa 10, *Travel Song of the Cuckoo Bird*, pp. 45.7–46.2; Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fols. 181b7–182a1. There are also two sculptures carved from ivory depicting the Deeds attributed to the Tenth Karmapa; see von Schroeder 2008: 114–115, figs. 33a–b; and Debreczeny 2012: 165–169.

(1662), which he wrote about the time he was composing new texts and paintings of the Twelve Deeds.<sup>12</sup>

In 1649, twenty years after receiving the commentary on the Twelve Deeds from his guru, and two years after settling in exile in 'Jang Sa tham (Lijiang 麗江), the Karmapa read the *Lalitavistara Sūtra* (*rGya cher rol pa*) and composed his own poetic verses praising the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha.<sup>13</sup> Then in 1653, four years after composing his own praises, the Karmapa “painted by his own hand *thang ka(s)* of the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha.”<sup>14</sup> A year later during the New Year festivities of the Wood Horse Year (1654) “he once again began to draw at one time the Twelve Deeds [of the Buddha].”<sup>15</sup> There are several other instances recorded of the Karmapa designing related paintings, for instance in ca. 1649–1650: “he painted the composition (*bkod pa*) for [the *jātaka* of] the Bodhisattva offering his body to the tigress.”<sup>16</sup> This specific wording in these passages, that he designed them, instead of simply saying he painted them, suggests that these were possibly made as a model for others to complete in a workshop, of which we have at least one complete extant copy.

### Workshop Copy

This recently discovered *parinirvāṇa* painting (fig. 1) is almost identical in composition and size to another painting (fig. 3), the final from a complete set of nine paintings of the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha preserved at Si tu Paṅ chen's seat, dPal spungs Monastery. Each painting measures

12 See Gedun Rabsal 2016.

13 Karma pa 10, *Travel Song of the Cuckoo Bird*, pp. 45–46: *thub pa'i mdzad pa bcu gnyis la bstod dbyangs tshigs su bcad pa yang ngas bya bar brtsams so/*; Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fols. 181b.7–182a.1: *sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa'i tshul la bstod pa tshigs bcad mdzad/*; Karma Nges don bstan rgyas, p. 365.

14 See Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 184a6: *ston pa'i mdzad bcu'i sku thang phyag ris gngang/*.

15 See Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 184b1: *slar yang mdzad bcu tshar gcig bri ba'i dbu tshugs/*.

16 See Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 181b7: *byang chub sems dpa' stag mo lus spyin gyi bkod pa phyag ris gngang ste phyag mchod mdzad/*. The setting of this tale is also known as Namobuddha, near Kathmandu in Nepal.

61 × 43 cm, with silk brocade mounts measuring in total 120 × 58 cm. This is probably the same set of *thang kas* of the Twelve Deeds, or a copy of them, said to have been painted by the Tenth Karmapa and given to Si tu Paṅ chen by the Thirteenth Karmapa in 1763.<sup>17</sup> The paint layer is applied quite thickly on a very thin white cotton ground. These paintings are much more colourful than other paintings attributed to the Tenth Karmapa, and are characterized by a heavy use of bright flat pastel colours, especially blue and green, both highlighted in white.

The dPal spungs set is even more removed in style and technique from other attributed works, and provides more concrete visual evidence of workshop production and later copies in the idiom of the Tenth Karmapa: colour notations (*tshon yig*). Colour notations are a common device used by a master to indicate the colour scheme to the painters working under him, or to record colours for future copies. Such notations are clearly visible through the pigment layers throughout all nine paintings in the dPal spungs set. For instance, in the lower left of this *parinirvāṇa* painting, the colour notation *spya*, shorthand for the second to lightest shade of malachite green (*spang skya*), is visible in the figure holding up the incense brazier (on his back just above his belt) (see fig 9). There are also the hands of several painters of varying skill in evidence, further indications of workshop production. One suspects that the dPal spungs set could even be a later copy of fig. 1, as we know the Tenth Karmapa's paintings were emulated at least into the 18th and 19th centuries at dPal spungs Monastery in the courts of the Eighth (1700–1774) and Ninth Si tu incarnations (1774–1853).<sup>18</sup>

### Possible Visual and Textual Sources

The appearance of the cremation scene as a Chinese sarcophagus in this *parinirvāṇa* composition (figs. 1 and 3, top right) may be an indication of some of the Karmapa's visual sources of inspiration, such as sMan bla don grub's famous 15th century "Great Chinese [Depiction of the] Deeds of the Buddha" (*rGya mdzad chen mo*).<sup>19</sup> It seems that by the 15th

17 Si tu, *Diaries*, pp. 503–504.

18 See for instance dKon mchog bstan 'dzin, Yon tan tshe ring, and rDo dril 2006: 219, discussed in: Debreczeny 2016: 219–231.

19 The Karmapa's visual models may have included sMan bla don grub's 15th century painting of the "Great Chinese [Depiction of the] Deeds of the Buddha" (*rGya mdzad chen mo*) at gNas rnying. David Jackson has suggested that the paintings



century Tibetans had shown a marked preference for Chinese inspired depictions of these narratives.<sup>20</sup> A set of *thang kas* depicting the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha “in a Chinese style” (*rgya bris ma*) in ten paintings by Chos dbyings rdo rje is recorded to have survived at mTshur phu Monastery in the Karmapa’s private chambers into the 1920s when Kaḥ thog Si tu visited that place.<sup>21</sup>

Corroborating visual evidence for some of the textual sources of the Tenth Karmapa’s depiction of the Twelve Deeds can be found in a minor sub-scene from Chapter 18 of the *Lalitavistara Sūtra*, a scene on the Nairāñjanā River when Indra in the form of a *garuḍa* tries to steal the bowl-relic from the king of the *nāga*, depicted in one of the other dPal spungs paintings.<sup>22</sup> Also, some other discrepancies in the scenes the Karmapa chose not to depict, such as the descent from the Trāyastriṃśa heaven or the displays of miracles, suggests he may have been consciously hearkening back to ancient models in these works, a pattern we can observe consistently in both his painting and sculpture.<sup>23</sup>

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depicting the Twelve Deeds at gNas rnying were originally gifts of the Ming imperial court, and therefore itself a Chinese model; see Jackson 1996: 111.

20 Beyond sMan bla don grub’s “Great Chinese Deeds of the Buddha” *thang ka* painting(s), one can see for instance the contemporary wall paintings at Gong dkar Monastery attributed to mKhyen brtse chen mo (painted 1464–1476); as well as those probably produced by Ming Chinese court artists for Tibetans at Gro tshang rdo rje ’chang (Qutansi 瞿曇寺) in Amdo ca. 1427.

21 See Kaḥ thog Si tu 2001: 86, 95, line 5: *karma pa’i gzim khang du chos dbyings rdo rje’i phyag bris mdzad bcu rgya bris ma thang ka bcu*/. Also cited by Jackson 1996: 250. Karl-Heinz Everding has recently published a complete German translation of Kaḥ thog Si tu’s *Pilgrimage Record*; for the above-mentioned set of *thang kas*, see Everding 2019, vol. 1: 191. While mTshur phu Monastery was destroyed by the Chinese in the 1950s, many personal objects related to the Karmapa lineage in mTshur phu were taken to Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim, and may have survived there. Unfortunately, due to the current complicated internal political situation involving competing factions, the Rumtek treasury is locked and seems will remain inaccessible for the foreseeable future.

22 A minor sub-scene in the *Lalitavistara Sūtra* can be found depicted in the sixth painting: after the Bodhisattva consumes milk-porridge, he throws the empty bowl into the Nairāñjanā River and the king of the snake spirits (*nāga*) Sāgara takes it. However, Śakra (a form of Indra, chief of the gods) who appears in the guise of a *garuḍa* bird, swoops down and tries to snatch it away, and can be seen winging his way off with his bowl-relic at upper left to enshrine it in a *stūpa* in his heavenly realm Trāyastriṃśa; see *Black Hat Eccentric*: 161, fig. 5.6.

23 This set does not include depictions of either the descent from the Trāyastriṃśa heaven or the displays of miracles, which are both common to depictions of the

### Special Silk Tapestry Mounting

Another material feature that links this *parinirvāṇa* painting (fig. 1) to other works attributed to the Tenth Karmapa is its mounting. Since its sale in 2016, this painting was discovered by Ed Wilkinson to have been sold at a Sotheby's New York auction in 1979 still with its original mounting (fig. 4). It was sold not for the painting itself, but for the two silk tapestry (*kesi* 缙丝) "mandarin squares" decorated with birds that were once integrated into the traditional Tibetan brocade mounting directly above and below the painting, from which the painting was unceremoniously removed.<sup>24</sup> This distinctive mounting with silk tapestry squares featuring birds (ca. 120–125 cm)<sup>25</sup> is also constant with several other paintings associated with Chos dbyings rdo rje, including the central painting from the set of nine at dPal spungs Monastery discussed above (fig. 5) which is almost identical in size (120 cm), as well as the central painting from a set of seventeen (also a workshop production) in the Lijiang Museum (fig. 6),<sup>26</sup> and a similar painting of Buddha Śākyamuni in the Hermitage Museum (fig. 7).<sup>27</sup>

Birds are a special unifying theme in the Tenth Karmapa's artworks, poetry, and life story. His love of birds was so well known that people would offer them in great profusion so that his court was inundated

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life of the Buddha, sometimes counted as Deeds ten and eleven, in contemporary paintings. However, the descent from the Trāyastriṃśa heaven and the displays of miracles are not consistently included in the enumeration of the Twelve Deeds in older depictions; see Luczanits 1993: 96. On the Tenth Karmapa's archaist models, see von Schroeder 2001: 796–819; Luczanits 2016; Luo Wenhua 2016; and Debreczeny 2020.

24 "Two Ming k'o-ssu Mandarin Squares," Sothebys NY 1979, lot 426.

25 This should be slightly smaller, closer to 120 cm, due to overlap of the mounting and the painting.

26 For a discussion of this as a workshop production, see Debreczeny 2012: 128–147; and Debreczeny 2016: 209–216. Thank you to Rubin Museum of Art intern Joana Llamosas for digital colour adjustments in figs. 6, 10, and 11.

27 See Elikhina 2009: 414. And possibly a White Mañjuśrī attributed by inscription to Chos dbyings rdo rje; see Himalayan Art Resources (HAR) website no. 36410: <https://www.himalayanart.org/items/36410> (accessed 12-17-20); and Debreczeny 2020: 83, fig. 13. A set of seven arhat paintings inscribed by the Karmapa himself (dated 1660, e.g.: fig. 10) have been remounted in Chinese style paper hanging scroll mounts, as made clear by additional stitch holes, so we do not know if they also once followed this pattern.

with them.<sup>28</sup> Many of his artworks are teeming with birds, some of his arhat paintings could even be described as birdsapes.<sup>29</sup> Even in his sculptures, which tend to draw from ancient Kashmiri models, one finds in an ivory carving of Avalokiteśvara little birds hiding in his hair, or in a cast bronze of Tārā a pair of birds nestling in a leafy bower above the goddess's head.<sup>30</sup> None of these subtle avian details are dictated by iconographic strictures, and are unique to the Karmapa's artistic creations. Birds are also a constant theme in the Karmapa's autobiographical literature and poetry, where peacocks symbolize beauty, the sounds of ducks are compared to the splashes of heavenly maidens, and cranes sing and play. The Thirteenth Karmapa even remarked that his ability to speak to birds was inherited from his predecessor Chos dbyings rdo rje.<sup>31</sup>

In a seventeen painting set of the sixteen arhats only the central painting (fig. 6) receives this special addition of bird-themed *kesi* squares in its mounting. Interestingly, in the dPal spungs set, only the mounting of the brocade of the eighth painting in the series (fig. 5), depicting the eleventh Deed "Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine," contains elaborate *kesi* squares decorated with birds. Even though this is the eighth painting in the series, due to Tibetan conventions of hanging the iconic form of the Buddha preaching at the centre, this was likely the central painting when hung as a set. This being the central image is further reinforced by the appearance of a single lineage figure, the Karmapa himself, at the top centre of only this painting in the set. In this arrangement, the central painting and the two end paintings would have iconic images: the Buddha's Enlightenment, the First Teaching (fig. 5), and his death, the *parinirvāṇa* scene (fig. 3).<sup>32</sup> In other words, it follows a common visual structure where key iconic scenes are emphasized by

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28 gTsang mKhan chen, *rGyal mchog Chos dbyings rdo rje'i rnam thar mdo sde rgyan gyi lung dang sbyar ba*, p. 210; Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 174b2, 6–7.

29 See Debreczeny 2012: 121.

30 Ivory of Avalokiteśvara in the Cleveland Museum of Art (1968.280) and bronze of Tārā in the Rubin Museum of Art (C2005.16.3); see Debreczeny 2012: 2010, fig. 7.32, and 241, fig. 8.35.

31 Gene Smith 2001: 50, n. 90.

32 Thanks to Elena Pakhoutova for pointing this juxtaposition of iconic images out to me.

placement, and not displayed in a linear fashion with Deeds 1–12 from left to right, as if passively following a text. This would place the work under discussion (fig. 1) as the right end painting when hung. The fact that this painting is mounted with bird-themed *kesi* squares breaks the convention in which only the central painting in a set receives this special mounting treatment. Perhaps in this set either all the paintings were so mounted, or only these three key iconic scenes.

### **Hand of Master or Workshop? (or Both?)**

A basic question arises in looking at these paintings together: is this recently surfaced *parinirvāṇa* painting (fig. 1) by the hand of the master or a workshop production? For while one finds some evidence of Chos dbyings rdo rje's characteristic tremulous brush technique, other tell-tale details require a more complicated reading. For instance, the control of ink and boneless washes of pigment in the sensitive depiction of animals is something of which the Karmapa has repeatedly demonstrated he was a master.<sup>33</sup> However in the pair of dogs (lions?), here in the centre foreground (fig. 8), the forms are indistinct and even difficult to understand. Perhaps they are meant to be shaggy mastiffs with brown matted fur, as seen in the top right of the sixth painting in the dPal spungs set.<sup>34</sup> The handling of gradations of ink on silk and controlling how silk absorbs it is a very difficult skill that requires years to master and is outside the usual Tibetan repertoire. In the dPal spungs version (fig. 9), ink is dispensed with entirely and the pair have become rather cartoonish blue lions with green manes, but at least their forms are clearly rendered and easy to understand. Indeed, it is through the later copy that we can understand the original.

As previously mentioned, the blue-green forms such as the ornately ornamented plinth the Buddha lies on (fig. 8), which replicate ancient Kashmiri relief sculpture, is quite unusual for Tibetan art but is found on a number of paintings ranging from the Karmapa's own hand to his workshop productions and later copies, and thus makes a good point of comparison. For instance, in the Buddha's throne from the set dated 1660 painted by the Karmapa himself (fig. 10), we see very thin subtle pigment washes with details delineated in minimal quick strokes

33 Especially in paintings attributed to him by inscription; see Debreczeny 2020.

34 See *Black Hat Eccentric*: 161, fig. 5.6.

of ink and sparingly highlighted with light green pigment to help suggest three-dimensional form.<sup>35</sup> In the Buddha's throne from the Karmapa's workshop set in the Lijiang Museum (fig. 11) we see a thicker layer of light green, forms that are completely outlined in darker lines of the same colour, highlighted with a much lighter shade and touches of white. Still, the forms are quite sophisticated and aesthetically pleasing. In the dPal spungs set, which appears to be a later copy (fig. 9), we see rather thick layers of light green heavily highlighted in white, clumsier forms, faces enlarged to fill the elongated heads, and details like hair, eyes, and eyebrows of the offering figures strongly delineated in black pigment. Note also that in the dPal spungs version (fig. 9) many forms are simplified compared to our main focus of inquiry, including the folds of the Buddha's robes, and the absence of the row of kneeling deer along the bottom of the plinth. By comparison, in the painting under consideration (fig. 8), the faces remain truer to the Karmapa's fleshy forms; white highlights are employed, but sparingly; both outlining and treatment of the hair is more subtly achieved through a darker shade of green, much like in fig. 10. (Some of the under-drawing is also visible in areas of pigment loss, and it would be interesting to have infrared reflectography done to see the complete under-drawing and any other revelations, such as compositional changes, colour notations, etc.) Thus at least in the depiction of the plinth, this painting seems to fall somewhere closer to the Karmapa's workshop (fig. 11) than by the hand of the master (fig. 10), but displays greater nuance and sophistication than the later copy (fig. 9).

One also sees an increased interest in Chinese material culture in the dPal spungs workshop paintings, seen here in a painted fan of birds (fig. 3, mid-left), replacing a peacock feather fan in fig. 1. One also sees this in an arhat workshop set (fig. 11), in the form of ornate green celadons with various rabbit, dragon, and blossom patterns; blue and white ware; carved red and black lacquer; bronze vessels, etc. It also seems the workshop artists and later copyists could not resist embellishing the otherwise flat gold of the metal vessels (such as the incense brazier in fig. 9).

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35 One could also use other similar forms from this set, including the garden gate. See "Three Arhats with jade gate," Lijiang Municipal Museum (no. 439.5), in *Black Hat Eccentric*: 110, fig. 3.5.

## Provisional Theory

Another interesting curiosity in these narrative paintings is that the costumes of many of the minor figures are neither Indian, Chinese nor Tibetan and likely reflect local Naxi 纳西 (or more Tibetanized Mosuo 摩梭) dress in northwestern Yunnan (figs. 1–5, 8, 9). This division of primary actors depicted in Indian dress, and minor figures as well as their environment, being drawn from local inhabitants or environments evokes ancient Tibetan artistic practices, as seen in 10th century sites like Tabo, which further suggests the Karmapa may have been drawing on archaic Tibetan models.<sup>36</sup> (In the Chinese tradition, by contrast, the Bodhisattva was typically depicted as a Chinese prince.<sup>37</sup>) In the Karmapa's set of the Deeds there are also depictions of anachronistic technology, such as firearms.<sup>38</sup> Here it would be helpful to remember that after the victory of the dGa' ldan Pho brang by combined Tibetan dGe lugs and Khoshuud (Qoshot) Mongol forces of Gūshri Khan (1582–1655) over sDe srid gTsang pa (1606–1642) in 1642 in Central Tibet, and the subsequent attack on the Karmapa's traveling court (*karma sgar chen*) in 1645, the Karmapa fled and lived in exile in the Naxi Kingdom of 'Jang yul (Lijiang 麗江), northern Yunnan, for about 25 years, ca. 1647–1672. These local and contemporary material cultural references suggest that the Karmapa did not base all of his forms on received painting conventions but also from personal observances drawn locally in his daily life.

Drawing on local qualities is also corroborated in comments on other paintings found in his biographies, for instance: “He collaborated with several tens of artisans to make images [...] which had particularly wonderful local elements (*yul nyams*).”<sup>39</sup> This quote brings up an in-

36 To my knowledge this practice was generally out of use by the 17th century; for more see *Black Hat Eccentric*: figs. 5.1–5.9.

37 Examples include Sino-Tibetan sites such as 15th century wall paintings at Gro tshang rdo rje 'chang (Qutansi 瞿曇寺) in A mdo, 15th century Chinese album leaves of Chongshansi 崇善寺, and later 18th–19th century Sino-Mongolian album leaves depicting Sarvavid Vairocana visualization practice in the Museum aan de Stroom collection (AE.1977.0026.001.054), among many others.

38 E.g., *Black Hat Eccentric*: 151, fig. 5.1; 154, fig. 5.2, and an enlarged detail on p. 8.

39 Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 174a6. The full passage reads: *phags pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug gi sku brnyan yul nyams khyad par can yod pa phyag ris dang/ phyag si gnang ba'i yol ba ling tshe gsum pa/ ka rgyan zung*

teresting possibility, that this painting (fig. 1) may have been created collaboratively, not solely by the hand of the master alone, nor merely an atelier production. It is not unusual in a workshop context for the master to do the initial outline sketch, the workshop to fill in colours, and the master to come back and do final line work, which would account for the presence of the Karmapa's distinctive brushwork in some passages as well as some of the less subtly handled parts in others. We also have some supporting textual evidence for this theory, as previously mentioned his biography specifies that he sketched or designed paintings of this theme of the Deeds in 1654,<sup>40</sup> suggesting that it was intended for others to fill in.

Of course another possible (and perhaps simpler) interpretation could be that the Tenth Karmapa had simply not yet perfected his technique when he was painting the Twelve Deeds (ca. 1653–1654), in comparison to the inscribed painting dated 1660 (fig. 10). However, a telling phrase that is recorded several times in his biographies, and also contained in the 1660 inscription: “painted by his own hand *in their entirety*” (*yongs su rdzogs pa phyag bris*), in other words painted from start to finish as opposed to doing the outlines and having others fill in the colours, etc., combined with records of his previously producing images with groups of artists, strongly suggests that many other works by the Karmapa were made under such collaborative conditions.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, Thang bla tshe dbang (1902–1989), scribe and court painter to the previous (Eleventh) Si tu incarnation, in his *Brief Explanation of the History*

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*la bkra shis pa'i rtags brgyad sogs yod pa/ gdung kheb la mchod lha bcu gnyis yod pa rnam bzo bo bcu phrag gis phyag gyug zhus te bsgubs par mdzad/*; “He collaborated with several tens of artisans to make images (*sku brnyan*) of the holy Sixteen Elders (arhats) painted by his own hand which had particularly wonderful local elements (*yul nyams*); and a silk curtain (*yol ba*) in three parts (*ling tshe*); pillar banners (*ka rgyan*) with such things as the eight auspicious symbols on them; and *thang ka* covers (*gdung kheb*) with the twelve offering goddesses on them.”

40 Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 184b1.

41 For instance, beyond the painting dated 1660 and given to the crown prince of Lijiang (fig. 10), this phrase appears in entries for paintings made in 1646: *bcad rgya'i khong du gnas bcu'i si thang yong tshangs zhag bcu drug la rdzogs par phyag ris gnang/*; see Si tu and 'Be lo, *Original 1775 Biography of Chos dbyings rdo rje*, fol. 178a6; and another in 1660 (for a different image given to the Si tu incarnation): *si tu sprul pa'i skur gnas bcu zhal thang bdun tshar phyag ris gnang/*; see *ibid.*, fol. 186a1–3.

of *Tibetan Painting* (*Bod kyi ri mo byung tshul cung zad gleng ba*) written in the 1950s, specifies that the Tenth Karmapa made these images together with groups of his followers: “master and disciple(s), together with his students (*slob tshogs*), made images in painting, relief sculpture, and cast-metal images made from a variety of precious materials.”<sup>42</sup> Thus it may be that this painting is neither a “mere” workshop production or “solely” by the hand of the master, but somewhere in the middle, a truly collaborative piece. But this must remain conjecture at this stage; no doubt when other paintings from this set come to light, we will have a more complete picture.

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42 *de rjes rje bcu pa chos dbyings rdo rje yab sras slob tshogs dang bcas pas bris 'bur blug sku shel dang rin po che sna tshogs las grub pa dang/ skyes rabs dang/ mdzad bcu/ nye sras brgyad/ gnas bcu sogs mang du mjal bas rgya rigs lta bu 'dug/*; reproduced in dKon mchog bstan 'dzin, Yon tan tshe ring, and rDo dril 2006: 217.



- Karma pa 10, *Great Dharma Drum* = Chos dbyings rdo rje, Karma pa 10. *Byang chub sems dpa'i rtogs brjod chos kyi rnga bo che* ("The Avadāna of a Bodhisattva: The Great Dharma Drum"). Written in 1662. In *rje karma bcu ba chos dbyings rdo rje'i gsung 'bum* [The Collected works of the Tenth Karmapa Chos dbyings rdo rje]. mGo log dpe rnying dpe tshogs. Chengdu: Sichuan Minzu Chubanshe [Khrin tu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang], 2004, vol. 19, pp. 121–367.
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**Fig. 1** Passing into Nirvāṇa; Attributed to Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674); Kham Province, Eastern Tibet or Northern Yunnan; 17th century; Pigments on silk; 62.3 × 42.2 cm (24 ½ × 16 ⅝ in.); Private collection, USA (HAR 61461)



Fig. 2 Bottom left detail of Fig. 1 (photo by author)



**Fig. 3** Passing into Nirvāṇa (Ninth painting from a set of nine depicting the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha); Atelier of Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674) or later followers; Kham Province, Eastern Tibet; 18th–19th century (?); Pigments on cloth; 61 × 43 cm; dPal spungs Monastery Collection (HAR 51837) (photo by author)



**Fig. 4** Fig. 1 with original mounting. “Two Ming k’o-ssu Mandarin Squares” Sothebys NY 1979, lot 426. “Squares 14 ½ × 12 ½ in. (37 × 32 cm); 13 ½ × 12 ¾ in. (34.3 × 32.5 cm); painting 16 ½ × 24 in. (42 × 61 cm)” [with mount = ca. 125 cm long]. After: Sotheby’s, eds. 1979. *Chinese Paintings, Textiles, Snuff Bottles, Ceramics, and Works of Art. Wednesday and Thursday March 14 and 15, 1979. Sale Number 4223.* New York: Sotheby Parke Bernet Inc., lot 426. Photograph Courtesy of Sotheby’s, Inc. © 1979





**Fig. 5** “Turning the Wheel of the Doctrine” with brocade mount (Eighth painting from a set of nine depicting the Twelve Deeds of the Buddha); Atelier of Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674) or later followers; Kham Province, Eastern Tibet; 18th–19th century (?); Pigments on cloth; 61 × 43 cm (24 × 17 in.), with silk brocade mounts 120 × 58 cm (47 × 23 in.); dPal spungs Monastery Collection (HAR 51826) (photo by author)



**Fig. 6** Buddha Śākyamuni (Central painting from a set of seventeen); Atelier of Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674); Lijiang, Yunnan Province, China; 17th century, Ink and color on silk; 78 × 52 cm; Lijiang Municipal Museum (no. 2387.11) (photo by author)



**Fig. 7** Buddha Śākyamuni; Attributed to Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674); Tibet; 17th century; Ink and pigment on silk; 37 × 28.5 cm (14 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 11 in.); The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Inv. no. Y-40 (photo by Dmitry Sirotkin), Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum



Fig. 8 Detail of Fig. 1



Fig. 9 Detail of Fig. 3 (photo by author)



**Fig. 10** Buddha Śākyamuni (Central painting from a set of seven); Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–1674); Lijiang, Yunnan Province, China; dated 1660; Ink and pigment on silk; 68 × 42 cm; Lijiang Municipal Museum (no. 439.1) (photo by author)



**Fig. 11** Detail of Fig. 6 (photo by author)

## Zum Hintergrund der in Zentral- und Ostasien verbreiteten Maudgalyāyana-Legende

Siglinde Dietz und Helmut Eimer

Bis in die heutige Zeit ist in den vom Buddhismus geprägten Ländern Asiens die Legende verbreitet, wie der Mönch Maudgalyāyana durch die jenseitigen Welten wanderte, um seine Mutter aus der tiefsten Hölle zu befreien. Er war zusammen mit Śāriputra als einer der frühesten Mönche vom Buddha selbst ordiniert worden, wie das *Vinayavastu* berichtet. Ihm werden übernatürliche Fähigkeiten (Skt. *abhijñā*, Tib. *mngon shes*) zugeschrieben, darunter vor allem die, sich ungehindert überall hin begeben zu können (Skt. *ṛddhipāda*, Tib. *rdzu 'phrul*). In den Schriften der Theravādins<sup>1</sup> und weiterer früher buddhistischer Schulen<sup>2</sup> wird mehrfach berichtet, dass Maudgalyāyana mit Hilfe seiner *ṛddhipāda* in die Himmel und die Höllen gelangt sei. In diesen alten Texten ist jedoch eine Erzählung über die Befreiung seiner Mutter nicht enthalten.

Bisher wurde der Tradition folgend als Quelle für die zentral-/ostasiatische Maudgalyāyana-Legende das im chinesischen Kanon enthaltene kurze apokryphe Sūtra *Yulanpen jing* 盂蘭盆經 (Taishō 685)<sup>3</sup> gesehen. Es gilt als Übersetzung eines indischen Sūtras, die von Dharmarakṣa, einem Übersetzer aus einer in Dunhuang ansässigen Familie, um die Wende vom 3. zum 4. Jh. angefertigt wurde.<sup>4</sup> Doch diese Datierung des Textes hat heute keinen Bestand mehr. Matthew T. Kapstein sagt dazu: „The origins of the *Yulanpen jing* itself remain mysterious, and it has been proposed that it is a Chinese apocryphon of about the fifth or early sixth century.“<sup>5</sup> In China wurde der Text zur Grundlage für

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1 Siehe z.B. Malalasekera 1938, Vol. 2: 541–543, s.v. Mahā-Moggallāna.

2 So z.B. im *Mahāvastu*, dem Vinaya der Lokottaravādins. Deutsche Übersetzung Franke 1930.

3 Übersetzung des chinesischen Textes Beal 1880: 85 und Kapstein 2007b: 216–227.

4 Vgl. Demiéville, Durt und Seidel 1978: 68 (Nr. 685) und 259 (s.v. Jiku Hōgo).

5 Vgl. Kapstein 2007a: 349.

das ‚Geisterfest‘, bei dem am 15. Tag des 7. Monats die Geister der Verstorbenen mit Speise und Trank bedacht werden.

In der nur handschriftlich überlieferten Them spangs ma-Traditionslinie des tibetischen Kanjur ist eine tibetische Übertragung des *Yulanpen jing* enthalten, die, wie zuverlässig durch den Kolophon bezeugt ist, von 'Gos Chos grub (Chin. Facheng 法成) im 9. Jh. in Dunhuang erstellt wurde.<sup>6</sup> Deren Titel *'Phags pa yongs su skyob pa'i snod ces bya ba'i mdo* übersetzt Matthew T. Kapstein in seinem Beitrag „The Tibetan *Yulanpen Jing*“ mit „The Sublime Sūtra entitled ‚The Vessel of Complete Protection.‘“ Zugleich stellt er fest, dass der Übersetzer sich bei seiner Arbeit einer mehr vom Indischen als vom Chinesischen geprägten Ausdrucksweise bedient hat. 'Gos Chos grub hat – so Kapstein – den Ausdruck *Yulanpen jing* als ‚set term‘ verstanden, der sich auf ein zum Schutz-Ritus verwendetes Gefäß bezieht: „Though this is semantically consistent with a hypothetical derivation from *ullumpana*, it does not confirm the fact of such a derivation.“<sup>7</sup>

Das *Yulanpen jing* berichtet, dass Maudgalyāyana seinen Eltern die empfangene Zuneigung erwidern wollte (Chin. *xiao* 孝, ‚filial piety‘<sup>8</sup>) und dabei aufgrund seiner übernatürlichen Fähigkeiten erfährt, dass seine Mutter wegen ihrer Sünden als Hungergeist (Skt. *preta*, Tib. *yi dwags*) leide. Er begibt sich zu ihr, doch sie kann die ihr mitgebrachten Speisen nicht essen, da sich diese sofort in Feuer verwandeln.<sup>9</sup> Maudgalyāyana wendet sich mit der Bitte um Hilfe an den Buddha. Dieser belehrt ihn, dass die Mutter aufgrund ihrer schweren Sünden in diese missliche Existenz gekommen sei, und rät ihm, Spenden für die Feier zum Ende der Regenzeit (Skt. *pravāraṇā*, Tib. *dgag dbye*)<sup>10</sup> zu

6 Übersetzung der tibetischen Fassung Kapstein 2007b: 216–227 und Berounský 2012: 116–120.

7 Vgl. Kapstein 2007b: 213–215.

8 Die tibetische Entsprechung ist *sri zhu*, das Kapstein 2007a: 230, § 9, mit „pious conduct“ übersetzt und das nach LC II 2458 s.v. Skt. *paricaryā* „Aufwartung, Bedienung“, *gaurava* „Ehrfurcht, Respekt“ und *śúśruṣā* „Gehorsam, Dienst, Verlangen zu hören“ wiedergibt; Tib. *drin lan bsab pa* hat eine ähnliche Bedeutung. Eine Sanskrit-Entsprechung ist nicht bekannt. Nach Schopen 1984 konnte man im frühen buddhistischen Indien seine Dankbarkeit den Eltern gegenüber erweisen, indem man ihnen eigenes religiöses Verdienst (*puṇya*) übertrug.

9 Im tibetischen Text heißt es *me lce 'bar gyur pa*, vgl. Kapstein 2007b: 218, Ziffer 6.

10 Vgl. Berounský 2012: 117.



geben, da nur die Mönchsgemeinde mit ihrer spirituellen Kraft helfen könne. Damit könne man Vorfahren bis zur siebten Generation aus der Hölle retten. So wird die Mutter schließlich erlöst.

Eine erheblich umfangreichere Version der Legende ist in einer chinesischen Handschrift aus Dunhuang erhalten; sie ist durch die englische Übersetzung von Victor H. Mair in *Tun-huang popular narratives*<sup>11</sup> auch für Nichtsinologen zugänglich. Die Überschrift der Legende *Da muqianlian*<sup>12</sup> *mingjian jiumu bianwen* 大目乾連 冥間 救母 變文 (weiterhin: *Bianwen*) übersetzt Matthew T. Kapstein in seinem Aufsatz „Mulian in the Land of Snows and King Gesar in Hell“ als „Transformation Text on Mulian saving his mother from hell“.<sup>13</sup> Seishi Karashima verweist hinsichtlich der Bedeutung des Begriffs *bianwen* 變文 auf die Verwendung des Textes durch wandernde Mönche: „I assume that *bianwen* was meant to be nothing other than scripts for such story-telling monks...“<sup>14</sup>

Kürzlich wurde in „Maudgalyāyana rettet seine Mutter aus der Hölle“ gezeigt,<sup>15</sup> dass eine nicht ganz so umfangreiche tibetische Version der Maudgalyāyana-Legende in verschiedenen Einzelhandschriften erhalten ist. Sie findet sich auch in ‚local Kanjurs‘, die ja nur handschriftlich überliefert sind,<sup>16</sup> nicht aber in den beiden großen Traditionslinien des Kanjur.<sup>17</sup> Zudem konnten unter den tibetischen Textfunden aus Turfan zwei Fragmente dieses Textes identifiziert werden.<sup>18</sup>

Diese Fassung wird auch in der *lHan dkar ma*, dem Verzeichnis der frühen buddhistischen Übersetzungen ins Tibetische, angeführt;<sup>19</sup> sie stammt also wie das *Bianwen* aus dem 9. Jahrhundert. Je nach Handschrift trägt der Text einen eigenen Titel, wie z.B.: *'Phags pa me'u 'gal gyi*

11 Mair 1983: 87–121 und 223–263 (Anmerkungen).

12 Dies ist neben ‚Mulian‘ eine weitere chinesische Transliteration von Maudgalyāyana.

13 Kapstein 2007a: 346–347.

14 Karashima 2016: 273.

15 Vgl. Dietz und Eimer 2020.

16 Verweise auf das *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* werden hier nach den Folienangaben der Handschrift aus Dol po (weiterhin: Dol po-Ms.) angeführt.

17 Also in der Tshal pa- und der Them spangs ma-Tradition.

18 Beschrieben in Taube 1980: 82–83 (Fragmente 28–29) und Tafel XVIII–XIX.

19 Verzeichnet von Herrmann-Pfandt 2008: 145 (Nr. 263). Die Identifizierung findet sich schon bei Samten 1992: xxiv, § 3, und 83, n. 2.

*bu chen pos ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa bshad pa'i mdo* (weiterhin: *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa*), „Darlegung, [wie] Mahā-Maudgalyāyana seine Mutter aus den Höllenbereichen [heraus]führte, in [Form] eines edlen Sūtra“, oder aber *Pha ma'i drin lan bsab pa'i mdo*, „das Sūtra [darüber, wie Maudgalyāyana] seinen Eltern Dank für die [erwiesenen] Wohltaten abstattete“.<sup>20</sup> Ob die unterschiedlichen Titel darauf hinweisen, dass die Texte auch im Bestand einzelner Episoden voneinander abweichen, müsste in einer eigenen Untersuchung geklärt werden.

Ein Vergleich des *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* mit dem *Bianwen* zeigt, dass alle wesentlichen Elemente des tibetischen Textes auch in dem umfangreicheren chinesischen enthalten sind. So geben die beiden Quellen eine sehr ausführliche Schilderung der Wanderung des Maudgalyāyana durch eine Vielzahl von Höllen und beschreiben die Qualen, denen die dorthin gelangten Sünder ausgesetzt wurden. Das *Bianwen* und das *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* unterscheiden sich häufig in der Anordnung der einander entsprechenden Passagen; oft fügt das *Bianwen* zusätzlich Unterredungen und ausführliche Beschreibungen ein, es kann aber auch erheblich kürzer als der tibetische Text sein. Dies lässt darauf schließen, dass das *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* auf eine frühere Form der Legende zurückgeht, während der Stoff im *Bianwen* in der mündlichen Überlieferung durch wandernde Mönche weiter, also ‚publikumswirksam‘, aufbereitet worden ist.

Im *Yulanpen jing* wird nicht gesagt, welche Verfehlungen der Grund dafür waren, dass die Mutter des Maudgalyāyana in die Hölle gelangte, während dies im *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* und im *Bianwen*, d.h. in den beiden aus dem 9. Jh. stammenden umfangreicheren Texten der Legende, ausgeführt wird: Das *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* schildert ausführlich,<sup>21</sup> wie der Sohn vor dem Aufbruch zu einer Handelsreise das Familienvermögen ordnet und je einen Teil für Spenden an die Armen, einen für Spenden an die buddhistische Gemeinde und den dritten für den Unterhalt der Mutter bestimmt. Doch die Mutter verschleudert die Habe, den Teil für die Gemeinde verwendet sie für Opfer an Geister und Dämonen, den Teil für die Armen veruntreut sie. Über diese Verfehlungen hinaus belügt sie den Sohn bei dessen Rückkehr, sie

20 Für weitere Formen des Titels siehe Dietz und Eimer 2020: 125–128.

21 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 331a9–b3. Das *Bianwen* gibt dieses Stück ganz knapp, vgl. Mair 1983: 87, Zeilen 18 bis 28.

habe sich ganz nach seinen Verfügungen gerichtet. Bei seinem Besuch im Brahma-Himmel erfährt Maudgalyāyana dann von seinem Vater, der sich stets eines tugendhaften Lebens befleißigt hatte, dass die Mutter sich nicht nach den Regeln der Religion verhalten habe, sondern sich mannigfach versündigt und damit viel Schuld auf sich geladen habe.<sup>22</sup>

Im Majjhima-Nikāya des Pālikanon ist nun eine Erzählung enthalten, die über eine Vorexistenz des Maudgalyāyana (Pāli Moggallāna) zur Zeit des Vorzeit-Buddha Kakusandha (Pāli) als ein Māra, ein ‚Versucher‘, namens Dūsin (Pāli) handelt.<sup>23</sup> Dieses *Māratajjaniya-Sutta*<sup>24</sup> schildert ausführlich, wie der Māra Dūsin sich gegen die ethischen Normen des Buddhismus versündigt, es endet damit, dass Moggallāna deswegen direkt nach dem Tode in der Hölle wiedergeboren wird. Wie Sanskrit-Fragmente aus den Turfan-Funden belegen,<sup>25</sup> war diese Erzählung auch auf buddhistischem Sanskrit im Madhyamāgama der Sarvāstivāda-Schule enthalten. Die Handlung der Erzählung ist kurz folgende:

Ein Māra namens Pāpima, ‚der Böse‘ (Pāli; Skt. Pāpiman), fuhr dem ehrwürdigen Mönch Moggallāna in den Leib und belästigte ihn. Dieser erkannte den ‚Bösen‘ und jagte ihn zum Munde heraus. Der Mönch belehrte dann den Māra: „Once upon a time [d.h. zur Zeit des Buddha Kakusandha], I, Evil One, was the Māra called Dūsin, as such Kālī was the name of my sister, you were her son, thus you were my nephew.“<sup>26</sup>

Moggallāna berichtet dann, wie er sich als Māra Dūsin gegen den Buddhismus versündigte:

Um Gewalt über die gläubigen Buddhisten in einem Dorf zu erlangen, begann er zunächst erfolglos, diese gegen die Mönche aufzuwiegen. Zu

22 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 334a3–6; entsprechend im *Bianwen Mair* 1983: 92, Zeilen 190 bis 196.

23 Nur drei der 150 Suttas des Majjhima-Nikāya enthalten solche Vorgeburtsgeschichten: MN 50 (*Dūsin*), MN 81 (*Jotipāla*) und MN 83 (*Makhādeva*), nach Hikata 1954: 9.

24 MN 50 (Trenckner 1888: 332–338, dort ist der Titel: *Māratajjaniyasutta*), englische Übersetzung Horner 1954: 395–403; die chinesischen Parallelen bzw. Übersetzungen nennt Anālayo 2011, Vol. 1: 300–307.

25 Studie und deutsche Übersetzung siehe Waldschmidt 1976.

26 Horner 1954: 396, 27–29 (Trenckner 1888: 333, 7–9 *bhūtapubbāhaṃ pāpima Dūsi nāma māro ahoṣiṃ, tassa me Kālī nāma bhaginī, tassā tvaṃ putto, so me tvaṃ bhāgineyyo hosi*).

dieser Zeit kamen die Menschen nach dem Tod in die Hölle. Dann versuchte er, die Menschen dazu zu bringen, die Mönche besonders zu achten und zu ehren. Auch damit konnte er keinen Einfluss auf die Menschen gewinnen, doch die Gläubigen gelangten nach dem Tod in den Himmel. Schließlich verwandelte sich der Māra Dūsin in einen Knaben, schleuderte eine Scherbe auf den Mönch Vidhura (Skt. Vidūra<sup>27</sup>), der zur Begleitung des Buddha Kakusandha gehörte; er traf ihn am Kopf und schlug eine blutende Wunde. Er war damit ‚einer, der in Gegenwart eines Tathāgata in böser Absicht Blut vergießt‘ (*tathāgatasyāntike duṣṭacitta-rudhirotpādaka*), er beging also ein besonders schlimmes Vergehen.<sup>28</sup>

Das *Māratajjanīya-Sutta* endet damit, dass der Buddha die Verletzung bemerkte und den Māra Dūsin tadelte, der daraufhin sofort in die ‚große Hölle‘ (*mahāniraya*) verbannt wurde.<sup>29</sup> Für die Hölle führt der Pālitext drei Namen an: ‚Böser, es gibt fürwahr drei Bezeichnungen für die große Hölle: ‚die sich auf die sechs Berührungsbereiche beziehende‘, ‚die mit Nägeln beschlagene‘, ‚die individuell zu erleidende‘.<sup>30</sup> Das entsprechende Stück in den Sanskrit-Turfan-Fragmenten, das jedoch vier Höllen nennt, übersetzt E. Waldschmidt: ‚Zu der Zeit gab es für die große Hölle Avīci vier Namen: Avīci, (die Hölle) ‚ohne Zwischenraum‘,<sup>31</sup> (die) ‚mit hundert Nägeln‘, (die) ‚mit individueller (vielfacher) Pein‘ und die ‚sich auf (sämtliche) sechs Sinnesorgane<sup>32</sup> erstreckende‘.<sup>33</sup>

Kann diese Vorgeburtsgeschichte – ganz oder in Teilen – trotz der gegebenen Unterschiede als Vorlage für die Rahmenerzählung zu der in Zentral- und Ostasien verbreiteten Legende oder zumindest für einen

27 So im Sanskrit-Turfan-Fragment, vgl. Waldschmidt 1976: 141 und 146, Ziffer 6.

28 SWTF s.v.; dies ist eine der fünf Handlungen, die unmittelbar zur Wiedergeburt in den Höllen führen. Vgl. BHSD s.v. *anantariya*.

29 Die dem Prosateil des *Māratajjanīya-Sutta* folgenden Verse sind in den Turfan-Fragmenten nicht erhalten, sie werden hier außer acht gelassen.

30 Die Bezeichnungen lauten in Pāli (Trenckner 1888: 337, Zeile 7–8): *chaphassāyatānika*, *saṅkusamāhata*, *paccattavedaniya*.

31 ‚(Eine Hölle, in der die Qualen) nicht unterbrochen (werden)‘.

32 Wörtlich ‚Berührungsbereiche‘.

33 Waldschmidt 1976: 146 gibt als Sanskritformen der letzten drei Namen: *śataśaṅku*, *pratyātmavedaniya* und *ṣaṭsparsāya(ta)nīya*.

Teil davon gedient haben? Während nach dem *Māratajjanīya-Sutta* sich Maudgalyāyana in seiner früheren Existenz versündigt und mit Verbannung in die Hölle bestraft wird, ist es in der Legende hingegen seine Mutter, die höllische Qualen für ihre Verfehlungen erduldet. In dem *Sutta* erklärt Moggallāna (Pāli), und zwar in seiner Existenz als Māra Dūsin, dem Māra Pāpima, dass dieser sein Neffe sei, weil seine, d.h. des Māra Dūsin, Schwester namens Kālī dessen Mutter gewesen sei.<sup>34</sup> Im Chinesischen ist der Name der Mutter Qingti; im Alttürkischen ist es Činti, wie Peter Zieme in seinem Aufsatz zu den buddhistischen Unterweltsberichten zeigt.<sup>35</sup> Chinesisch *qing* 青 bedeutet ‚schwarz, dunkelfarbig, blau, grün‘; *ti* 提 bedeutet ‚hochheben, hochziehen, voranbringen‘, es wird auch als Transliteration für Sanskrit *ti* gebraucht. Nach dem *Māratajjanīya-Sutta* trug die Schwester des Māra Dūsin den Namen Kālī ‚die Schwarze‘. Victor H. Mair führt Chinesisch *qingti* auf Sanskrit \*Niladhi zurück.<sup>36</sup> Daraus kann man auf das Bahuvrīhi-Kompositum *nīladhī* schließen, das zu verstehen ist als: ‚jemand, dessen / deren Gedanken schwarzblau sind‘. Doch dies dürfte nicht gemeint sein, selbst wenn man Skt. *nīla* auch die Bedeutung ‚böse‘ zuschreibt.

Im *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* fragt Maudgalyāyana auf seiner Wanderung durch die Höllen die Höllenknechte und die Verstorbenen nach dem Aufenthaltsort seiner Mutter und nennt dabei deren Namen ‚Mo’u [Variante Me’u] dgal‘. Die tibetische Wiedergabe von Maudgalyāyana ist Mo’u dgal gyi bu. Victor H. Mair sagt zur Ableitung des indischen Namens Maudgalyāyana: „*mudga* (*Phaseolus mungo*, the mungo bean) [> *maudga*, ‘relating to beans, consisting of beans’] > *mudgala*, ‘name of an ancient sage’ > *maudgalya*, ‘descended from *Mudgala*’ > Maudgalyāyana, ‘patronymic for son of *Mudgala*‘.“<sup>37</sup> Neben dem Namen Maudgalya verzeichnen die Sanskrit-Wörterbücher auch das Stichwort *maudgali* ‚Krähe‘ (dessen Entsprechung im Pāli ist Moggali); es ist der Name der Mutter des Maudgalyāyana.<sup>38</sup> Neben die allgemein bekannte Deutung des Namens als ‚Abkömmling des Maudgalya‘,

34 Für den Wortlaut siehe oben Anm. 26.

35 Zieme 2011: 150.

36 Mair 1983: *passim*.

37 Mair 1983: 224–225, Anm. zu Zeile 17.

38 So Malalasekera 1938, Vol. 2: 541; s.v. Mahā Moggallāna Thera.

d.h. des alten brahmanischen Geschlechts, tritt noch ‚Abkömmling der Krähe‘, also wahrscheinlich aus einer Familie, die sich auf eine Krähe zurückführt. Eine hier bemerkenswerte Parallele bildet der Mönchsname des anderen jungen Mannes, der gleichzeitig mit Maudgalyāyana vom Buddha in den buddhistischen Orden aufgenommen wurde:<sup>39</sup> Śāriputra (Tib. Śā ri'i bu), dessen Mutter ihres Aussehens wegen Śārikā, ‚Predigerkrähe‘, genannt wurde.<sup>40</sup>

Die erste Silbe von Chinesisch *qing ti* ist nach Mair die Übersetzung von Sanskrit *nīla* ‚schwarz‘; die zweite Silbe *ti* muss dann eine lautliche Umschrift (und keine Übersetzung) aus dem Indischen sein und Sanskrit *dhi* entsprechen. Das chinesische *ti* kann auch als Wiedergabe von Sanskrit *dvi* angesehen werden. Fügt man dem ein *ka*<sup>41</sup> an, liest also *dvika*, so ergibt sich eine indische Bezeichnung der Krähe. Dieses Wort lässt sich gut deuten, es bezeichnet ‚das Tier, dessen Name aus zweimal *ka* besteht‘, nämlich *kāka*, also ‚Krähe‘.

Wahrscheinlich war eine Sanskritfassung des *Māratajjanīya-Sutta* die Grundlage für den erzählenden Rahmen im *Yulanpen jing*. Dieses apokryphe chinesische Sūtra kann seiner Kürze wegen nicht als direkte Vorlage für die spätere ausführliche Legende gedient haben: Das *Yulanpen jing* spricht nur von dem Aufenthalt der Mutter in der ‚Welt der hungrigen Geister‘ (Tib. *yi dwags*, Skt. *preta*), nicht aber wie das *Mādmyal khams nas drangs pa* und das *Bianwen* von einer Wanderung des Maudgalyāyana durch mehrere Höllen oder Höllengebiete.

In den beiden frühen ausführlichen Fassungen der Maudgalyāyana-Legende – und auch in den zahlreichen späteren – nimmt die Schilderung der Höllenreise den größten Teil des Textes ein: Bei einem Aufenthalt im Himmel des Gottes Brahma trifft Maudgalyāyana seinen Vater. Dieser belehrt ihn, dass die Mutter sich nicht nach den Regeln der Religion verhalten habe, sondern viel Schuld auf sich geladen habe.<sup>42</sup> Auf der weiteren Wanderung, die direkt danach beginnt, sieht der Sohn, wie zahlreiche Gruppen Verstorbener getrieben hin und herziehen. Sie, die von Höllenknechten gequält werden, berichten ihm von

39 Eimer 1983, Teil 1: 92, Zeile 15–26.

40 Eimer 1983, Teil 1: 23, Zeile 3–9; Vogel und Wille 1992: 96.

41 Ein bedeutungsloses *ka* wird in der Sanskrit-Grammatik auch *ka svārthe* genannt.

42 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 334a4–6; entsprechend im *Bianwen*, Mair 1983: 92, Zeilen 190 bis 196.

ihren Sünden, der Ursache für ihre Qualen. Im Bemühen, seine Mutter in einer der Höllen zu finden, fragt Maudgalyāyana nicht nur die Höllenwächter, sondern auch die Sünder.<sup>43</sup>

Im frühen Indien lag es nahe, die Beschreibung von Höllenreisen entsprechend der weitverbreiteten Folge der ‚acht heißen Höllen‘<sup>44</sup> zu ordnen. Dieses Schema finden wir in mehreren kanonischen Texten, außerdem z.B. auch in der *Lokaprajñapti*, dem *Suḥr̥llekha* des Nāgārjuna<sup>45</sup> und in der altuigurischen *Daśakarmapathāvadānamālā*.<sup>46</sup> In der Maudgalyāyana-Legende finden wir diese Folge nicht, es gibt nur wenige Entsprechungen zu solchen Sanskritbegriffen, die in indischen Texten zur Bezeichnung von Höllen, Nebenhöllen und bestimmten Höllenqualen erscheinen. Hier seien nur wenige Beispiele aus dem *Ma dmyal khams nas drangs pa* genannt: So die bereits in frühen Texten<sup>47</sup> enthaltene Vorstellung von einer Nebenhölle namens *Ral gri'i tshal*, dem ‚Schwerterwald‘, einem Wald, in dem statt Bäumen und Sträuchern Schwerter wachsen und den die Sünder durchqueren müssen oder dessen Bäume Schwerter tragen, die herabfallen und die Verstorbenen verletzen (Skt. *asipattravana*).<sup>48</sup> Eine der besonderen Qualen ist der ‚[glühende] Eisenkloß‘ (Skt. *ayoguḍa*), der, wie das *Mahāvastu* sagt, von den Höllenknechten am Ufer des aus Säure bestehenden Flusses Vaitaraṇī den Sündern in den Mund gesteckt wird.<sup>49</sup> Als die Mutter

43 Einer der Sünder trägt einen chinesischen Namen (Dol po-Ms., Fol. 334a7): *cang zhan ha* (Lesart: *hwa*) *la*. Kapstein 2007a: 364 verweist auf die von sNa nam btsun pa sKal bzang chos kyi rgya mtsho verfasste Kurzfassung der Legende und führt als chinesische Form des Namens ‚\*Zhang Shanhua‘ an, ohne jedoch die Zeichen anzugeben.

44 Verzeichnet in Mvy 4919–4926. Nach mGon po dbang rgyal 1988: 272 sind es: *yong sos | thig nag | bsdus 'joms | ngu 'bod | ngu 'bod chen po | tsha ba | rab tu tsha ba | mnar med do |*.

45 Dietz 2019: 64.

46 Wilkens 2016: 285–315. Zu einer Übersicht über die Entwicklung der indischen Höllenvorstellungen siehe Berounský 2012: 240–241 sowie Dietz 2019: 63–64.

47 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 342a6; Franke 1930: 4 und 7, Vers 25–26; Dietz 2019: 63–77.

48 Mvy 4941, Tib. *lo ma ral gri lta bu'i nags*. Franke 1930: 4 und 7. Dieser Name einer (Neben)- Hölle findet sich bereits in der *Manusmṛti*, dem ‚Gesetzbuch‘ des frühen Indien, vgl. auch Berounský 2012: 22. Das *Bianwen* spricht von „Knife Hill and Sword Forest Hell“, vgl. Mair 1983:100, Zeile 485–500.

49 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 344b8, Tib. *lcags kyi tho lum* (Mvy 4942); vgl. auch Franke 1930: 4 und Dietz 2019: 77.

des Maudgalyāyana in der Avīci trinken und essen will, verwandeln sich Wasser und Speise spontan in Feuer (Tib. *me ma mur*).<sup>50</sup>

Es ist an verschiedenen Stellen deutlich zu erkennen, dass umfangreiche Episoden aus der chinesischen Kultur in die zentral-/ostasiatische Legende aufgenommen wurden: So kommt nach langer vergeblicher Suche Maudgalyāyana in den Palast des gShin rje (Skt. Yama), des Gottes der Unterwelt<sup>51</sup> und Herrschers über die Höllen. Dessen Schreiber können aber in ihren Aufzeichnungen über die Sünder nur herausfinden, dass die Mutter vor drei Jahren verstorben ist. Maudgalyāyana erhält den Rat, weiterzuziehen und die Frage nach dem Verbleib der Mutter dem ‚Herrn über die fünf Wege/Daseinsformen‘ (*lam rgyud lnga*<sup>52</sup> *la dbang ba'i bdag po*) vorzutragen.<sup>53</sup> Sein Name lautet im Dolpo-Manuskript ‚mGo de tsong kun‘;<sup>54</sup> dies ist eine Transliteration von Chinesisch Wudao dashen 五道大神.<sup>55</sup> Er wird auch als ‚General of the Five ways‘ oder auch als ‚Commandant [or: Lord] of Mount T'ai‘<sup>56</sup> bezeichnet.

Die Höllenknechte des ‚Herrn über die fünf Daseinsformen‘ sagen nach langer Suche in ihren Aufzeichnungen, dass die Mutter in der Hölle *bstir* (Lesarten: *sti* oder *gtir*) *med pa'i dmyal khams*<sup>57</sup> Qualen leidet.

50 Dol po-Ms., Fol. 342b1, Skt. *kukūla* (Mvy 4936). Im *Mahāvastu* ist dies die Bezeichnung einer Hölle; vgl. Franke 1930: 3. Die tibetische Fassung des *Yunlan penjing* kennt diesen Ausdruck nicht; vgl. oben Anm.9.

51 Im *Bianwen* ist hier noch eine Audienz bei dem Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha (Tib. Sa'i snying po) eingeschoben.

52 *Lam rgyud lnga* sind hier die ‚fünf Daseinsbereiche der belebten Welt‘; *lam rgyud* entspricht hier offensichtlich Sanskrit *gati*. Vgl. mGon po dbang rgyal 1988: 161, s.v. *lam rgyud lnga*: 1. Höllen, 2. Hungergeister, 3. Tiere, 4. Titanen und 5. Menschen. In der Liste der „Tibetan Versions of the Scripture of the Ten Kings“ (Berounský 2012: 240–241) steht Yama an fünfter, der ‚Herr über die fünf Daseinsbereiche‘ jedoch an zehnter, d.h. höchster Stelle.

53 Dol po-Ms., ab Fol. 337a3; ausführlicher in Mair 1983: 94–95, Zeile 242–305.

54 Dieser Name lautet im Dol po-Ms. (ab Fol. 339a8) *lam rgyud lnga la dbang ba'i bdag po mgo de tsong kun*. Im anschließenden Gespräch erscheint der Name mehrfach in abweichender Form (z.B. Fol. 339b1: ... *bdag po 'go de tsong kun*) oder verkürzt zu *de tsong kun* (Fols. 339b8 und 340a1) und zu *'go de tsong* (Fol. 343a7).

55 Die Identifizierung verdanken wir Herrn Peter Wyzlic M.A. (Bonn).

56 Mount T'ai entspricht dem Palast des Yama; vgl. Mair 1983: 233–234, Anm. zu Zeile 262.

57 *bsTir med pa'i dmyal khams*, „die Hölle, in der es keine Erholung gibt“, entspricht wohl der etymologischen Interpretation des Namens Avīci, die im



Dies ist Avīci, die tiefste der acht heißen Höllen, in der Maudgalyāyana dann seine Mutter findet und bewirken kann, dass sie erlöst wird und schließlich eine Existenz in der Welt der Götter erreicht.

Dem Gott der Unterwelt Yama, dem eigentlich alles in seinem Herrschaftsgebiet bekannt sein sollte, wird also ein noch mächtigerer Herrscher übergeordnet, nämlich der ‚Gott der Fünf Wege‘. Die Vorstellung von diesem Gott Wudao dashen, der als Herr der Aufzeichnungen („bureaucratic deity“) über den Verbleib aller Verstorbenen gilt, stammt nach Chen<sup>58</sup> aus nichtbuddhistischen Kulturen in China, sie fand im Zusammenhang mit Texten zur Biographie des Buddha wohl schon vor Beginn der Tang-Dynastie (A.D. 618–907) Eingang in den Buddhismus, also zu einer Zeit, in der sich auch die zentral-/ostasiatische Maudgalyāyana-Legende herausgebildet haben dürfte.

Man wird davon ausgehen können, dass die umherziehenden Mönche den Text im Verlauf der Zeit ausschmückten, um die Zuhörer in eine Stimmung zu versetzen, die das Sammeln von Spenden begünstigte. Da im Bereich der Seidenstraße Menschen aus verschiedenen Kulturen mit jeweils eigenen Vorstellungen zusammentrafen, ist damit zu rechnen, dass sich diese Traditionen in den jetzt zugänglichen Fassungen der zentral-/ostasiatischen Maudgalyāyana-Legende wiederfinden. Dazu nahmen die umherziehenden Mönche verständlicherweise von den an der Seidenstraße umlaufenden, weit verbreiteten Höllendarstellungen – vor allem aber aus der chinesischen Kultur – diejenigen auf, die ihnen als besonders geeignet erschienen.<sup>59</sup>

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*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* 163.3 von Vasubandhu *duhkhanirantaravād*, „wegen der Ununterbrochenheit des Leids“, tibetisch *sdug bsngal gyi bar mtshams med pa*, genannt wird. Vgl. Dietz 2019: 75.

58 Vgl. Chen 2018: 93. Den Hinweis auf diese ausführliche Darstellung verdanken wir Herrn Peter Wyzlic M.A. (Bonn).

59 Ein Beispiel für die mannigfachen Vorstellungen ist in der Teufelshöhle A in Kyzil zu sehen, die auf etwa 600 n. Chr. datiert wird; vgl. Härtel und Yaldiz 1987: 58f.

## Abkürzungen

- BHSD Edgerton 1953.  
 Dol po-Ms. Handschrift (spätes 11. bis frühes 16. Jh.) aus Bicher Gaon (Dolpo / Nepal), Vol. *mdo, ba* (15), Fols. 331b8–348a7.<sup>60</sup>  
 LC Lokesh Chandra 1971.  
 MN [Majjhima-Nikāya] Trenckner 1888, Horner 1954.  
 Mvy [Mahāvvyutpatti] Ishihama und Fukuda 1989.  
 SWTF *Sanskrit Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden.*

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60 Verzeichnet in der Datenbank rKTs (‘Resources for Kanjur and Tanjur Studies’) [www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/collections/index.php](http://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/collections/index.php) mit der Angabe „K965 / Do[l po] 15.13“. Die Datei verdanken wir Herr Dr. Bruno Lainé; die Zahl 15 steht für Band *mdo, ba*, die 13 bezeichnet die Stellung des Textes im Band.

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# In Search of the *bKa' gyur lung* The Accounts of the Fifth Dalai Lama and His Teachers

Franz-Karl Ehrhard

## 1. Introduction

The production and dissemination of the Buddhist canonic texts known as the *bKa' gyur* and *bsTan gyur*, whether as manuscripts or prints, and whether in simple or deluxe editions, was a central part of the religious life in Tibet. It continues to be so even in the digital age, with complete new editions still being made available in the old formats. These text collections may take the form of “dharma gifts” to Buddhist teachers and their institutions, and play a role in ritual contexts. In the 17th century, with the rise of the dGa' ldan pho brang rule, state government financing became a general practice, with deluxe *bKa' gyurs*, in particular, being produced as individual initiatives.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting example of how such sets were delivered as gifts and how under certain circumstances the “reading authorisation” (*lung*) for some of the volumes was given can be found in the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682). The secular and religious head of Tibet was on his way back from Beijing, where he had met the Kangxi emperor (Shengzu) of the Qing dynasty, and in Amdo he was invited to the monastery of his important disciple, the First bTsan po No min han Ngag dbang 'Phrin las lhun grub (1622–1699):

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1 On *bKa' gyur* production in 17th-century Tibet, especially in regard to deluxe editions, see Cüppers 2010: 115–126 and Heimbels 2019: 219–229; both studies look into how artisans and craftsmen were remunerated. See Wangchuk 2016: 390–396 for a list of some deluxe editions, including one from the 17th century. Online editions of the Tibetan Buddhist canonical collections are available at the University of Vienna; see <https://istb.univie.ac.at//Kanjur>. For the importance of Sūtra collections for investigations into the production processes of *bKa' gyurs*, see Viehbeck 2020: 253–256.

As Lama Tsenpo wanted me to come to his new monastery in Serkhog, I went there, and he had prepared a reception for me with ‘white food’ and ‘red food’. He presented me with gifts including silk, tea bricks, horses and, most particularly, a set of the red-ink edition of the Kanjur printed at the time of Chamchen Chogyal (sic!) together with complete wooden boards and cords made in the Chinese way, all very neat. This Kanjur is now in Drepung, and later I obtained the *lung* [of the Kanjur] based on this edition. I gave the *lung* of the *Mani* to a crowd of more than 2,000 people. Lama Tsenpo wanted me to give the *lung* of the *dKon mchog brtsegs pa* sutra from the beginning of it simply for the auspicious occasion. Although I had not yet obtained the *lung*, I recited three folios of the sutra, thinking that it would be good if the people heard the sound of the scripture—there would not be anything amiss in this.’<sup>2</sup>

The mentioned xylograph was the one printed in 1410 under the Yongle emperor (Chengzu) of the Ming dynasty in red ink, the word *mtshal* designating the colour of the script of the so-called Yongle edition. One copy of the second edition of this set was brought to Lhasa by Byams chen Chos rje Śākya ye shes (1352–1435), the founder of Se ra monastery, and a second set was handed over to Sa skya monastery by Theg chen Chos rje Kun dga’ bkra shis (1349–1425); another set, according to the Fifth Dalai Lama’s testimony, must have reached ’Bras spungs monastery after the latter’s journey to Beijing.<sup>3</sup>

2 Karmay 2014: 316. See also Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Du kū la’i gos bzang*, vol. 1, p. 425.2–12: *gser khog tu bla ma btsan po’i dgon gsar du yong dgos tshul byung ba ltar phyin dkar spro dmar spros bsnyen bskur / byams chen chos rje’i dus kyi bka’ gyur mtshal par ma glegs shing glegs thag rgya lugs dngos gtsang ba cha tshang gis thog drangs gos dar ja rta sogs kyi bdog pa bteg / bka’ gyur da lta ’bras spungs su bzhugs shing kho bos lung yang phyis su ’di thog nas thob pa yin / khrom stong phrag gnyis lhag pa la ma ni’i bzlas lung byas / bla mas rten ’brel gyi khyad kyis dkon cog brtsegs pa’i dbu nas sgrog dgos gleng ba ’di skabs lung ma thob kyang skye bo rnam kyis chos kyi sgra rna bar thos pa’i phan yon yong bas gal ba med ’dra snyam shog ldebs gsum tsam zhig bklags / khrom pa kun bshar ba’i byin rlabs byas /*

3 On the *bKa’ gyur* printed under the Yongle emperor, the circumstances of its production and the two mentioned sets, see Silk 1996: 160–170 and Eimer 2007: 43–44; consult Sernesi 2017: 199 regarding the first edition (offered to the monastery of Mount Wutai) and further copies of the second edition of the imperial gift distributed, among others, to the Fifth Karma pa bDe bzhin gshegs pa (1384–1415) and the Phag mo gru pa ruler Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1374–1432).



We are also informed that Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho had at the time of his long journey to the Qing court, started in the spring of 1652, not yet obtained the reading authorisation for the *bKa' gyur*; this he received only later, with the first xylograph edition of the collection. He had obviously not yet heard the transmission of the section including such Mahāyāna sūtras as the *Ratnakūṭa*, but he nevertheless recited a small portion of the text, aware that this was not the generally accepted practice. In the following I want to look more closely into the reading practices surrounding the *bKa' gyur* and their frequency at a time when the production of both simple and deluxe editions was quite common. This is offered to David for many years of friendship, ever since we first met in the 1980s at Hamburg University.

## 2. The Account in the *gSan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama

The most obvious source to look for information is the “record of [teachings] heard” (*gSan yig*) of the Fifth Dalai Lama, as it contains a section on the development of the Buddhist scriptural canon up through the first *bKa' gyur* manuscript in dPal sNar thang and the catalogue of it compiled by bCom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri (1227–1305), and on to the rGyal rtse Them spangs ma edition of 1431, with special importance being attached to what is called the *Tshal pa bka' gyur*. The latter manuscript edition was produced by the Tshal pa lords of Central Tibet in the 14th century, so that the related catalogue was obviously available to Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho; this latter encompassed the sections of the Vinaya, Sūtra (including the *Ratnakūṭa* and *Avatamsaka*) and the Prajñāpāramitā texts.<sup>4</sup>

In regard to the reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur*, the Fifth Dalai Lama names Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1432–1496) from the Sa skya pa

4 See Ehrhard 2012: 80–81 on the part of the *gSan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama dealing with the history of the *bKa' gyur*. An annotated edition of the catalogue of bCom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri can be found in Schaeffer and van der Kuijp 2009: 101–277; see also *ibid.*: 32–41 concerning the canonical production in Tshal Gung thang and *ibid.*: 33–34, n. 71, concerning the *gSan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, The *Tshal pa dkar chag* bears the title *rGyal ba'i bka' gyur rin po che gsar bzhengs kyis (sic) dkar chag deb ther dkar po*. According to Sle lung rJe drung, the catalogue to the rGyal rtse them spangs ma edition was written by Lo chen Thugs rje dpal (14th/15th cent.); see bZhad pa'i rdo rje, *Ngo mtshar bkod pa rgya mtsho'i lde mig*, fol. 26b1–2.

monastery Gong dkar rDo rje gdan, who occupies a special place in Tibetan Buddhism as one of the great transmitters of the *lung* for the *bKa' gyur* and *bsTan gyur*. Among the literary sources used by Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho for his work—completed between the years 1665 and 1670 in the Potala Palace—one finds the *gSan yig* of Kun dga' rnam rgyal, and in various “interlinear notes” (*mchan*) in the sections devoted to the Vinaya and the above-mentioned Mahāyāna sūtras reference is made to the work of the Sa skya pa scholar.<sup>5</sup>

The part of the *gSan yig* which discusses the various texts of the Vinaya section and the Sūtras is introduced by remarks on the reading practices associated with the *bKa' gyur*, with the Fifth Dalai Lama providing some evidence of the precarious situation in which the transmission of the textual collection found itself:

Thus in many Prajñāpāramitā texts and precious Sūtra sections it is pronounced extensively in manifold ways that this very noble doctrine has to be grasped, has to be held firmly, has to be given as a reading, has to be obtained as a reading, has to be recited and has to be totally comprehended; moreover, apart from venerating it in such a way, the acts of hearing, reflecting on and contemplating [the doctrine] have been praised as the best.

With that in mind, at a time when reading authorisations, with the exception of [those for] some Tantra cycles closely sought with great effort by many earlier Noble Ones, slowly faded away more and more, the Mighty One of Great Strength, the All-Knowing rDo rje gdan pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal dpal bzang po, heard it from the Precious bKa' gyur ba [Śākya rgyal mtshan]; and when afterwards [the reading authorisation of] the mDo mang [and] Prajñāpāramitā sections had not

5 The importance of Kun dga' rnam rgyal for the transmission of the *bKa' gyur* and *bsTan gyur* testified to by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his *gSan yig* has been pointed out by Jackson 1983: 12 and 23, n. 28. See Fermer 2016: 443 on the complete reading authorisation for the Tibetan Buddhist canon received by Kun dga' rnam rgyal from his teacher bKa' gyur ba Śākya rgyal mtshan (15th cent.); it covered 30 volumes from the Sūtra section and 6 volumes of the Vinaya section of the *bKa' gyur*. The copy used by rDo rje gdan pa to bestow the text transmission of the *bKa' gyur* was still to be found at his monastery in the 20th century, as documented by the travel account of Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho; see Almogi 2012: 513 and 521. On the various *gSan yigs* used by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his record of teachings received, see Ehrhard 2012: 84–87.

increased further to any great extent from the excellent stream passing through persons like 'Bum ram pa, uncle [and] nephew,<sup>6</sup> people were heard to say that the transmission was needed from some teachers from the region of Dwags po.

And thus, with a very rigorous consideration of all the initiations and reading authorisations in that region, and being unable to cope with the latter one after another, on top of the many kinds of practices—including the reading of just some pages at the beginning, middle, [and] end—[these] three—of a volume, [known as the practice] “Beginning, Middle and End—[these] Three”; and reading a scattering of readings consisting of a few pages [of text taken] from some 30 or 40 pages, as appropriate, [to form a running text] at their junctures; the loud recitation of a single line from the middle of each facing page, [known as] “Cutting off the Wave,” and the “lock method” of reading just a line at the top [and] the bottom [of a page]—the Kong po treasure discoverer 'Ja' tshon snying po [1589–1656] and [the Second] sGam po sPrul sku Nor bu rgyan pa [1589–1633]—[these] two—established a new system, and the complete initiations and reading authorisations were obtained, as is clear in the granting of reading authorisations in the records of teachings received. [In this case] one was guided into the library, a prayer was said, and afterwards the reading authorisation was heard for whatever [volumes] were stored [there]; as [this] came about by conferring [through] the intent [to confer], without an actual *ācārya* being encountered, [it is known as] “Conferring Initiations and Reading Authorisations [through] the Intent [to Confer]” and so forth.<sup>7</sup>

6 The *gSan yig* of an individual called 'Bum ram pa, i.e., 'Bum rab 'byams pa, is also contained among the literary sources used by the Fifth Dalai Lama; see *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, p. 735.3 (*phag gru mkhan po 'bum ram pa kun dga' chos dbang*). Concerning the individual called 'Bum ram pa Rin chen chos dbang in the transmission list of the *Ratnakūta* and *Avatamsaka*, see the Conclusions below. He is known as a scholar associated with teaching activities of the Seventh Karma pa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506) during the latter's stay in dBus in 1503; see *gTsub lag phreng ba, mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, p. 1196.10–15.

7 This part of the *gSan yig*, namely the Fifth Dalai Lama's critique of the specific practice of conferring the *bKa' gyur lung* and a discussion of how the reading authorisation was conferred by Nor bu rgyan pa alias Mi pham Chos kyi dbang phyug, is contained in a modern historiographical work; see dKon mchog rgya mtsho, *Dwags po bka' brgyud chos 'byung*, pp. 581.4–582.20. Reference is there

Meanwhile, as the importance of those from the region of Dwags po having been accepted shows, it was not as if the authentic reading transmission had been interrupted, so that—apart from the request and yearning for at least the reading authorisation of the Collected Tantras transmitted from Ngor and the Vinaya transmitted from Gong dkar—there was no additional need for the benefit that comes from hearing the other teaching sections of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas, and at a time when everyone had reciprocally exhausted themselves as a result of hardship, and it came down to dedicating oneself to practising pleasant equanimity, a trustworthy story was heard of the outgoing of lHo brag sPrul sku Chos rgyal don grub [= Second dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba (1504–1566)], the [Fifth] Zhwa dmar dKon mchog yan lag [1525–1583], and the [Fourth] rGyal tshab Grags pa don grub [1550–1607]—[these] three—and of reading authorisations definitely being provided one after another, so that sDom brtson Tshogs gnyis dpal grub requested [some] with certainty from rGyal tshab Grags [pa] don [grub]. And after the former and Dhīḥ tsha sPrul sku [Jig rten dbang phyug]—[these] two—granted without leaving out a single word [reading authorisations] for the Prajñāpāramitā and sections of the mDo mang to the learned and realized Blo mchog rdo rje [1607–1677], and I had become encouraged, discovering definitely that there existed an authentic reading transmission, I requested here [i.e., in the Potala,] with a great effort not to follow the traces of distracting and foggy appearances: [1] the first pronouncement, the Vinaya, emerging from the Dharmacakra of the Four Truths, [2] the middle [pronouncement], the Prajñāpāramitā, emerging from the Dharmacakra of Signlessness, [3] the final

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made to the terms *bKa' gtad po ti dbang* and *bKa' gtad po ti lung* current among the *bKa' gdams pas* and *rNying ma pas*. The Fifth Dalai Lama was acquainted with the treasure cycles of Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po, the lineage passing from the treasure discoverer via Kong smyon lHa btsun Nam mkha' 'jigs med (1597–1653) to his teacher Zur Chos dbyings rang grol (1604–1669); see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, pp. 100.2–101.6. The first work among the teachings obtained is the biography of Rigs 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po written by the Second sGam po sPrul sku; concerning this work, see Mi pham Chos kyi dbang phyug, *Nyung ngu'i bsdu pa*. The Fifth Dalai Lama also met personally Kong smyon lHa btsun Nam mkha' 'jigs med after the latter's encounter with Zur Chos dbyings rang grol; see *Du kū la'i gos bzang*, vol. 1, p. 317.13–23, and Ehrhard 2008: 7–8.

[pronouncement,] the *Ratnakūṭa* and *Avataṃsaka*, emerging from the Dharmacakra of Correct Differentiation, [4] the mDo mang [volumes,] which array sections of the three Dharmacakras—whatever is suitable—all in one place, and [5] the Collected Tantras, which have attained the highest peak of the Yānas—[these] five.<sup>8</sup> [= Appendix I]

Although not mentioned by name in this account, it was mGon po bSod noms mchog ldan (1603–1659), abbot of Zhwa lu monastery and an important Sa skya pa teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama, who undertook the arduous journey to Kong po and obtained from Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po the transmission of the *bKa' gyur* known as “Confering Initiations and Reading Authorisations [through] the Intent [to Confer]” before going into the following journey of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje, who finally acquired the proper transmission in lHo brag, I take a closer look at the first journey undertaken with the aim of acquiring the complete *bKa' gyur lung*.

### 3. The Account in the Biography of mGon po bSod noms mchog ldan

Among the various biographies devoted by Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho to documenting his teachers, the one concerned with the life of mGon po bSod noms mchog ldan is an especially elaborate one. It was completed at dMar po ri (i.e., the Potala Palace) in the year 1676, and among the persons who requested its composition was Rin chen bSod noms mchog grub (1602–1681), another abbot of Zhwa lu monastery and teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama. As the description of the journey to Kong po is quite extensive in this source, for the present purpose I just give the relevant section from the history of Zhwa lu monastery, supplemented with additional references to the original biography.<sup>9</sup>

8 The section on the history of the *bKa' gyur* as recounted in the work of the Fifth Dalai Lama was included in later *gSan yigs*. It was quoted verbatim, for example, by another scholar from Gong dkar rDo rje gdan; see 'Phrin las rnam rgyal, *Bum pa bzang po*, pp. 267.16–272.10 (the translated passage starts on p. 271.9). The part concerning the various reading practices of the *bKa' gyur*, i.e., Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, pp. 294.2–295.3, was omitted in this case.

9 For the colophon, see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa'i rlabs 'phreng*,

When he was searching, [saying] to himself: “In what direction is the transmission of the reading authorisation of the Jina’s precious *bKa’ gyur* [to be obtained]?” he heard that it might be [obtainable] in the region of Kong po in [the presence of] the treasure discoverer ‘Ja’ tshon snying po, whence he proceeded to Kong po. In Dwags la sgam po’s upper valley, just beyond the road to gNyal, the way was blocked by a great river, and when it seemed that there was no way out, he was guided by a raven, and [finally] found an ice bridge. Having reached that point, he crossed to the hill on the opposite side, whereupon the ice bridge broke apart. He said that even when he hastened after [the raven] with [the help of] some droppings, he was left with a look of amazement [at] having escaped the channel of water.<sup>10</sup>

The treasurer discoverer, having also seen this with his clairvoyance, dispatched a person to meet [the master] on the way. When

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pp. 568.3–569.6. The Fifth Dalai Lama also wrote a biography of Rin chen bSod nams mchog grub. These Sa skya pa–related biographies were first introduced to Western scholarship in the form of a short résumé by Tucci 1949: 166–167. The *gSan yig* of both teachers was cited by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his own record of teachings heard; see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā’i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, p. 735.1 (*khyab bdag gnas gsar chen po / ’khor lo’i mgon po zha lu mkhan chen*). For the illustrations in the biography of mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan, see Appendix V.

10 According to the biography, the conditions were not favourable for travelling due to the political situation in Dwags po resulting from the disgraceful behaviour of the local population in the fire mouse year [= 1636] against the gTsang sDe srid, i.e., Karma bsTan skyong dbang po (1606–1642). For the first leg of the journey, see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa’i rlabs phreng*, p. 485.1–6: *me byi byar dags* [= *dwags*] *rnam kyis gtsang sde srid kyi zhabs ’dren byas pa nas bzung bkag po mang du ’phel ba’i dags* [= *dwags*] *kong phyogs su rgyu ’grul mi bde ba yod pas phebs pa mi ’gab pa zhu mi mang ba byung na’ang gsan ’jog ma gnang bar chos kyi gdung shugs drag pos bltos med du phebs pa’i dwags po ru’i gru bton sgam po’i gzhis ka klu mkhar zhol du bzhugs nub sngar zhal ’dris med kyang gdung brgyud nas sne len dang bkag po’i nyes sel la sda pa* [= *sde pa*] *bkra shis rtse pa’i sku skye yin zer ba’i btsun pa drag pa zhig gis ’go byas mi bcu gnyis tsam phebs skyel du btang ba’i dags* [= *dwags*] *la sgam po’i phu gnyal la ma thebs tsam gyi byang stongs na chu chen pos bcad nas mi thar ba thug tshes bka’ yas mas tshor ’khyags zam yod ’dra ltos dang sungus pa ltar bya reg* [= *bya rog*] *cig gis sna ’drangs pa’i rnyed nas pha rir byon pa dang ’khyags zam brdib pa* [= *brtibs pa*] *na sna mo shag grub chen pas mchi ma ’don* [= *bton*] *zhing phyag mang du btsal bla ma khyed la thugs rje yod kyang yong byung yang byung / zhus shing zag pa kha shas ’ong pa’ang chur ma thar ba sogs chom thun gyi ’jigs pa las grol te kun la mtshan du gyur /*.

he, [the master,] arrived, [the other] prostrated himself and offered a ceremonial scarf; he welcomed him by burning varieties of incense. [The treasure discoverer] said: “Who requested that you come to me, [to] an *ācārya*?” There was no need for any discussion; and he himself (i.e., the master) replied that he [had heard] hearsay of [the other’s] complete knowledge. Once he had met the treasure discoverer, it seemed not to be the case that there was a reliable reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur* to be obtained [from him]. The treasure discoverer, joining the fingers of his right and left [hands] said: “We two have manifested here! This is the reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur*!” And he gave whatever teachings were suitable, including the New Treasures of the *dKon mchog spyi 'dus*. [The master] offered in return some teachings of the Sa [skya pa] system. Eventually, in the wood male monkey year [= 1644], aged forty-two, he returned to the region of gTsang.<sup>11</sup>

He remained in his private quarters at the Great Residence of Zhwa lu Ri phug, [called] rNam grol yang rtse, during a very extensive [and] sublime retreat of three years. He properly completed [uttering] the mantras of a number of deities in accordance with an earlier vow. When he was released [from his retreat,] he travelled to dBus at the invitation of sDe pa bKra shis rtse pa. With much hard effort

11 The biography mentions in particular that the reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur* known as “Beginning, Middle and End—[These] Three” could not be obtained from 'Ja' tshon snying po; for the full account and the list of teachings exchanged, see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa'i rlabs 'phreng*, pp. 486.3–487.2: *gter ston dpon slob dgun tshang du chos thog la phebs pa dang 'grigs par dngos po brgya phrag tu longs pa'i 'bul ba dang bcas mjal / gter ston gyis bka' gyur thog mtha' bar gsum gyi lung las mtshan nyid pa gsan tshod kyang min 'dug / gter ston rang gi phyag g.yas gyon mdzub mo gnyis sbrel ba'i phyag rgya mdzad nas nged rang dpon slob gnyis 'di ga byung ba bka' gyur gyi lung yin / phyag sor rnam zlum po / zla gam / gru bzhi / gru gsum du mdzad de spos phor nang du til btav pa'i zhi rgyas dbang drag gi sbyin sreg cig car du grub pa sogs snang tshul dang gnas tshod mi gcig pa'i grub thob zhig po'i rnam thar rtogs dga' ba dang ma nas tshad thub kyi gter ston du thugs nges shes 'ongs pa'i gter gsar yang zab dkon cog [= mchog] spyi 'dus / tshe dpag med gnam lcags rdo rje dngos grub kun 'byung / thugs rje chen po ngan song rang grol / zhi khro nges don snying po / rta phag yid bzhin nor bu gar ma [= kar ma] gling pa'i zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol rnam kyi dbang lung / sgrub thabs gsor [= gser] chos ma'i lung / bi mā la'i snying tig gi chos skor / yang rdzong gi snying tig gi chos skor / mkha' 'gro snying tig gi chos skor rnam gsan / phar sa lugs kyi chos skor kha shas 'bul ba gnang /.*

he searched [again] for a genuine transmission of the reading authorisation of the complete *bKa' gyur*. Even though the transmission of the reading authorisation of the mDo mang [section] was extremely rare, he heard that it was with the teacher [sDom brtson] Tshogs gnyis don grub in lHo brag. Later, after he had word sent to the *zhabs drung* of sMan lung khra tshangs, Blo mchog rdo rje, to request it [on his behalf], [he] was able to receive the authentic reading authorisation. And as he gave the reading authorisation to many teachers in the monastery of Gong dkar, nowadays in all domains of Tibet and Greater Tibet the transmission of the reading authorisation of the actual pronouncements of the Jina has not decreased; this is due solely to his benevolence!<sup>12</sup>

Afterwards he offered for the first time the teachings of the Tshar [pa] tradition [of the Sa skya pas] to Zur Chos dbyings rang grol and then went to 'Bras spungs. He encountered the Jina, the Great Fifth [Dalai Lama,] and was eventually accepted as the latter's personal teacher. He offered countless initiations and teachings in the great Potala Palace, including the *Slob bshad* of the *Oral Instructions* [i.e., the *Lam 'bras*], and the *Vajrāvalī*. [= Appendix II]

As this account makes clear, it was mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan who not only undertook the first journey in search of the *bKa' gyur lung*

12 The precarious situation in transmitting the *bKa' gyur lung* is also highlighted in the biography, which refers to the various reading practices and the dispatching of Blo mchog rdo rje. mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan finally received the missing reading authorisation in the earth mouse year [= 1648]; see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa'i rlabs phreng*, pp. 495.6–496.4: [...] *rje btsun bla ma' di nyid kyis bde bar gshegs pa'i ring lugs kyi srol 'chad snyan rtsi sman ljon pas 'thud pa'i snying stobs kyis khur phrag [= phrog] par bzhes pa'i rgyud 'bum dang 'dul lung gnyis ngor dang gong dkar du gsan zin kyang / sher phyogs dang mdo mang gnyis phyogs kun tu 'tshol pa gnang bar / 'thor klog / lcags rim / dba' shur ma / thog mtha' bar gsum tshogs nyan bshad kyi gzugs brnyan cam [= tsam] las mtshan nyid dang ldan pa ma byung ba sda pa [= sde pa] rnam gling pa sdom brtson tshogs gnyis dpal grub ya mthar chags su chad med kyi klog lung yod pa'i khung chod par brten khra chang ba [= tshang ba] chen po mkhas grub blo mchog rdo rjer g.yu pad gser dngul sogs sku chas kyi mthun rkyen gya nom pa dang bcas lho brag phyogs su rdzong bda' gnang ba dhih cha [= tsha] sprul pa'i skur bla ma tshogs gnyis dpal grub kyi lung phul ba'i sher phyogs rdzogs mchams [= mtshams] dang 'grig pa'i skor cig gsan ma thub rung mdo mang rnam rdzogs par byung na dam pa'i chos kyi skye bzang po dang bcas byon par sa byi lo gsan /.*



but who was also behind the next endeavours towards the same end. It may have been a personal report of his teacher, which was made use of later by the Fifth Dalai Lama in the extensive account of his life.

#### 4. The Account in the Biography of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje

The work on the life of this teacher of the Myang lineage, who is also known as sMan lung pa or Khra tshang pa after the ancestral temples of his forefathers, was again completed by the Fifth Dalai Lama at dMar po ri (i.e., the Potala Palace) in the year 1676. The text was requested by the Second rDo rje brag Rig 'dzin Padma 'phrin las (1640–1718), another disciple of the master. It has already been noted that the record of teachings heard was the only volume of the writings of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje available at the time.<sup>13</sup>

Now, although the Vajradhara, the Great One from gNas gsar [= mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan] had heard the reading authorisation of the Collected Tantras in Ngor and the Vinaya in the monastery of Gong dkar, he spoke in regard to acquiring a reading [authorisation] of what was left over and not heard [on that occasion] with a feeling like the Bodhisattva Sadāprarudita: Although I entertained the wish for an entirely complete reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur* when I was performing [a retreat of] three years in Zhwa lu, I relied on a vegetarian [diet] at the time [of the practice] of the three lower Tantra [classes,] so that the phlegm increased and my body strength became weak; and as it happened in particular that it was difficult to progress in attaining impartiality towards [my] unyielding arrogance in bearing responsibility for this very monastery [of Zhwa lu], it is thus necessary for you [= Blo mchog rdo rje] to take care of a mind that is in search of the dharma.

13 For the colophon, see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Nyung ngu rnam gsal*, pp. 368.6–370.5. The biography of the rNying ma pa master was again first introduced by Tucci 1949: 165. For the line of the gNyos family of the Khra tshang and sMan lung pa seat in Yar lung, see Sørensen and Hazod 2007: 677–678. Details of the *gSan yig* according to the biography are related in Ehrhard (2012: 91). This work of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje's was used in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *gSan yig*; see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, p. 735.1 (*mkhas grub khra chang pa* [= *tshang pa*]). For the illustrations in the biography of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje, see Appendix VI.

And although [the master] had offered much of what he possessed, especially turquoise lotuses as objects of financial worth, presently, at a time when [Blo mchog rdo rje] was having doubts, wondering how any suitable occasion would present itself, there was news of his being invited from mKha' reg by sDom brtson Tshogs gnyis don grub, the governor of rNam gling, with a plan to [have him] hear a reading authorisation of the *bKa' gyur* from Dhīḥ tsha sPrul sku [Jig rten dbang phyug] of Nyi lde dGon pa in lHo brag.<sup>14</sup> [In the letter, sDom brtson Tshogs gnyis don grub said:] “If you too wish to receive a *bKa' gyur* [authorisation,] [come]!” The teacher Tshogs gnyis don grub, seeing that Gong ra Lo tsā ba [gZhan phan rdo rje; 1594–1654], who was on his way [there,] would deliver the letter, immediately became a hermit [i.e., left his official duties]. At a time when the master and his disciples all had doubts, wondering how such an abundance of materials [for the journey] would materialize, Nyi lde [Dhīḥ tsha] sPrul sku [Jig rten dbang phyug] was setting up a Dharmacakra, and immediately upon hearing the news thought that this was [because of] the Buddha [Śākyamuni]’s compassion, [and] with great determination, without any hesitation, [Blo mchog rdo rje] set out on the path with a horse and one servant.

Proceeding on, they lost their way and arrived at the bottom of a narrow-mouthed valley in the vicinity of Seng ge rdzong. There being no further place found for answering questions in the discussion [about the way,] the servant guided the horse, and the master became disheartened and had to suffer hardship along the rugged path winding ahead. Finally, at the end of a fragile bridge they arrived within eyesight of a village. When asked by one person what it was all about, and they had answered [by querying whether] he might be someone who knew the way to Nyi lde dGon pa, he said: “It is astonishing that a horse can pass over this way. [The danger] of losing one’s way is very great. As no harm has occurred to [either] horse or man, you can make use of this place. You cannot arrive at the village before tonight, so remain here!” And they did so.

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14 Nyi lde dGon pa in lHo brag was a former residence of the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos kyi grags pa (1453–1524) and the seat of the Dhīḥ tsha sPrul sku incarnation lineage. A description is contained in Kaḥ thog Si tu’s travel account; see Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *Nor bu zla shel se mo do*, pp. 298.8–302.10. The monastery housed two handwritten copies of the *bKa' gyur*; see Almog 2012: 525.

The next day they asked [for the way] and were told that although one further [off from] the very well-known way was uncovered [i.e., unforested], if they [crossed] the [nearby] bridge and ascended up into the hills, in a fortunate [region] higher up there were some empty valleys and they would come to [a site] called bKra shis bde chen. They went [up] step by step, and as they were setting their faces towards an empty valley a raven flew up from the south and made many sounds. When it landed near [the master,] a strong devotion to renunciation and the Dharma protectors arose [in him]. From discarded food he produced something that had the shape of a *gtor ma*, and performed a mantra dedication. And when the raven had swallowed it without leaving any leftovers he proceeded on with the words: "I'll go after the raven wherever it flies!" The raven for its part was flying in the manner of birds no further away than about the distance of an arrow's range. Completing its task as guide, it arrived at a village in the southern up[lands]. This raven was obviously a manifestation of the glorious Great Black Vajra, [Mahākāla] Pañjaranātha! No sooner had the village people said that the teacher of Nyi lde [i.e., Tshogs gnyis dpal grub] had gone to bKra shis bde ldan than [the master] was invited, without further ado, to the teacher's private quarters, where he had established his residence. After the [transmission of] the Prajñāpāramitā section had been completed, and upon starting in on the mDo mang section, [the teacher] said: "Now we have come to a break; tomorrow we will leave together!" Very happy at [hearing] this, [the master] went via [the region of] sPe'u to Nyi lde.

The teacher Tshogs gnyis pa said further: "If [only] you would arrive—such a thought used to come constantly to mind! Now all is well, and we can stay here both day and night!" And although [the reading authorisation] had been accomplished up to volume *cha* of the mDo mang [section], feeling [that there were still] gaps, he received the reading authorisation of nearly fifty volumes—scattered parts—of the Prajñāpāramitā together with the *Ratnakūṭa* and the *Avatamsaka*. Therefore, as he had heard each single line of this noble doctrine, good at the beginning, [middle] and end, the perfect meaning, the well-established words, one cannot but think that [his] merit was great and more than complete. And not only is belief increased

for the Sugata, the teacher, and the one who teaches his doctrine, but also, similar to this, is respect [for] the honourable, the great *bKa' gyur ba* [mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan] like a lake in the summer, considering [his] benevolence! [= Appendix III].

Once again it was a quite difficult journey, finding the destination only after the raven, regarded as a manifestation of Mahākāla, in a reenactment of the first journey showed the proper way. The account is more detailed, providing the words mNgon po bSod nams mchog ldan spoke to Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje relating to his task and giving the number of the *bKa' gyur* volumes during the actual transmission. It seems to have happened successively at two locations in lHo brag with a break between the Sūtra and the mDo mang sections. Once again it seems that the Fifth Dalai Lama has recorded the personal report of the journey related by his teacher.

## 5. Conclusions

It is known from the biography of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje that the Fifth Dalai Lama finally obtained the reading authorisation of the above-mentioned sections of the *bKa' gyur* during the master's regular visits to the Potala Palace in the period from 1660 to 1666. If one looks into the sections relating to the *Ratnakūṭa* and *Avatamsakaa*, the following transmission lineages go back to Kun dga' rnam rgyal of Gong dkar rDo rje gdan are given:

Thams cad mkhyen pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal—Chen po Blo gros rgyal mtshan—'Bum Rab 'byams pa Rin chen chos dbang—Rab 'byams Chos rje Tshul khriṃs dbang phyug—dPa' bo Chos rgyal don grub—sPyan snga dKon cog 'bangs—Drung pa Grags pa don grub—Bla ma Tshogs gnyis dpal grub—Nyang rigs mKhas grub Blo mchog rig pa'i rdo rje—Za hor bande [i.e., Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho].

rDo rje gdan pa sNgags 'chang 'Jigs med dpa' bo—Chen po Blo gros rgyal mtshan—'Bum ram pa Rin chen chos dbang—Rab 'byams Tshul khriṃs dbang phyug—rJe Chos rgyal don grub—sPyan snga dKon cog 'bangs—Drung pa Grags don grub—Bla ma Tshogs gnyis dpal grub [add: *rin po che sman lung nas kyis po ti lnga bla ma tshogs gnyas* [= *gnyis*] *par gsan nas drug pa dhiḥ tsha sprul skur gsan pa yin 'dug pas 'jug pa bde ba'i dbang du byas ta* [= *te*] *bla ma gnyis ka dangs so*]—[Dhiḥ tsha] sPrul

sku 'Jig rten dbang phyug—mKhas grub Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje—Za hor bande.<sup>15</sup>

Concerning the particular practice known as “Conferring Initiations and Reading Authorisations [through] the Intent [to Confer]” which figured in the original search for the *bKa' gyur lung*, one can add what is stated in the account of 'Ja' tshon snying po. In his autobiography, the treasure discoverer has left a description of the encounter with mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan, the term being only mentioned in the context of the *Lam 'bras* teachings, which he had received from the scholar of Zhwa lu on this occasion:

From dBus gtsang the Upādhyāya [i.e., mGon po bSod nams mchog ldan], [who was] a paternal relative of bKra shis rtse, the monk-official from gNas gsar, arrived on foot—master [and] disciples, some twenty persons. They presented as many as a hundred great offerings. On that day, too, I asked for the conferral of the [reading authorisation] of the *Lam 'bras* [*slob bshad*] of the Sa [skya pa] tradition [through] the intent [to confer]. In addition, quite a few people who wanted to meet him showed up, [and] more than 150 [among them] needed to be given food. Also, I delivered the New Treasures a single time, gave the major and minor empowerments, and explained in manifold ways the guidance and instructions.

The master, the monk-official, spoke: “These days in dBus gtsang, due to the changing times, realized beings of the noble doctrine who are in accord with the pronouncements of the Buddha are rare. If [one asks] how this has come about, [the answer is that] a full gathering of respectful persons of pure conduct, who are exemplars of discernment, [number just] two or three hundred; this is what people

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15 Concerning the regular visits of Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje and the obtained reading authorisations, including for some volumes of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, see Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Nyung ngu rnam gsal*, p. 328.3 and Ehrhard 2012: 92. The Fifth Dalai Lama also received the transmission of the *mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa*, the main Anuyoga tantra, from Blo gros mchog gi rdo rje and requested the master to transmit it to the Second rDo rje brag Rig 'dzin; on this and the latter's autobiographical account, see Dalton 2016: 82–85. The two lineages of the *Ratnakūta* and *Avatamsaka* are contained in Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, pp. 323.2–4 and 331.4–332.1. Compare the corresponding lineage in the transmission of the mDo mang section, *ibid.*: p. 380.2–4.

say. Even if one relies on melodious speech that is independent [and] adequate, one [still] does not give up depending on the mere talk of scholars or their explanations. Therefore, in consideration of the profound treasures it was good that I have come!" [This] he said.

I answered: "What you say is true. As the doctrine of the Buddha has been impaired, it appears that in dBus gtsang and in India, the source of the noble doctrine, the latter flourished and straightaway declined. In [a place] like Kong po, the noble doctrine is all one talks about. The authentic tradition of the Karma pas, father [and] sons, and the tradition of the Western 'Brug [pa bKa' brgyud pas] can only be regarded as astonishing! Although there are many treasure teachings, these days the teaching tradition of Pad [ma] gling [pa] [1450–1521] and of Zhig po gling pa [1524–1583] are [the ones] close at hand and authentic; the others are as you said!" [= Appendix 4]

One could regard the precarious situation of the *bKa' 'gyur lung* in Central Tibet addressed at the beginning of this dialogue as reflecting the political and religious climate just before the dGa' ldan pho brang government took control over the country. Regions like Kong po and lHo brag were obviously regarded at that time as places where the authentic teachings and transmissions were secure, and it was only through combined efforts by two of his teachers that, at a quite late date in his religious career, the reading authorisation of the complete collection of the Buddha's pronouncement could finally reach the new head of state.

## Appendices

[I] Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Gang gā'i chu rgyun*, vol. 4, pp. 293.5–295.5:

de'ang sher phyin dang mdo sde rin po che du ma las / dam pa'i chos  
 kyi tshul 'di nyid gzung bar bya / bcang bar bya / lung dbogs par bya /  
 lung nod par bya / kha ton du bya / kun tu chub par bya zhes lan grangs  
 mang por rgya cher bka' stsal pa ltar ri mor 'dra ba las kyang thos bsam  
 sgom gsum du [294] bya ba ni mchog tu bsngags shing / de la dgongs  
 nas sngon byon dam pa du mas 'bad pa chen po nye bar brtsal ba'i lung  
 gi rgyun rgyud skor tsam ma gtogs rim gyis je phrar gyur pa'i tshe mthu  
 stobs gyi dbang phyug kun mkhyen rdo rje gdan pa kun dga' rnam rgyal  
 dpal bzang pos rin po che bka' 'gyur ba la gsan nas 'bum ram pa khu  
 dbon sogs la gnang ba'i rgyun bzang po las mdo mang sher phyogs  
 gzhan du cher ma 'phel ba'i dags [= dwags] brgyud phyogs kyi bla ma  
 'ga' zhis la brgyud dgos zer ba thos pas phyogs der dbang lung mtha' dag  
 la thugs rtog shin tu rtsig zhing bklags lung mthar chag [= chags] su mi  
 lcogs par glegs bam gyi stod smad bar gsum shog bu re tsam sgrogs te  
*thog mtha' bar gsum ma*<sup>16</sup> / shog bu sum cu [= bcu] bzhi bcu ji ltar 'os  
 pa sbyar [= sbyor] mtshams nas shog re tsam klog pa'i 'thor klog dang /  
 shog logs re re bzhin gyi dkyil nas 'phreng re bsgrags pa'i *dba' bshur ma*<sup>17</sup>  
 dang / stod smad kyi 'phreng re tsam klogs pa'i lcags rim sogs mdzad  
 rgyun rnam grangs mang po'i steng kong po gter ston 'ja' tshon snying  
 po dang sgam po sprul sku nor bu rgyan pa gnyis kyis srol gsar du btod  
 pa'i thob yig gi lung gnang der gsal gyi dbang lung mtha' dag thob pa  
 dang / dpe khang du khrid nas smon lam mdzad pas der bzhugs so cog  
 gi lung thos pa dang / dpon slob dngos ma mjal bar dgongs pa gtad pa  
 las byung ba'i *dbang lung dgongs gtad ma*<sup>18</sup> sogs la'ang dags [= dwags]  
 brgyud rnams bzhed pa'i che ba'i stabs bar skabs su lung rgyun tshad  
 ldan rang zhis med 'dra bas ngor nas brgyud pa'i rgyud 'bum dang gong  
 [295] dkar nas brgyud pa'i 'dul ba lung tsam zhu 'dun las gzhan rnams  
 nyan rang chos kyi sga [= sgo] rna par thos pa'i phan yon dgos pa lhag  
 po med shing phan tshun thams cad ngal ba'i 'bras bur zad dam snyan  
 btang snyoms su 'jog par gzhol ba'i tshe lho brag sprul sku chos rgyal

16 Emphasis added.

17 Emphasis added.

18 Emphasis added.

don grub / zhwa dmar dkon cog [= mchog] yan lag / rgyal tshab grags pa don grub gsum thugs sgam zhing lung rnam kyang mthar chags su nges par mdzad pa'i nges shes kyi lo rgyus thos pas rgyal tshab grags don par sdom brtson tshogs gnyis dpal grub kyis zhus nges dang / de dang dhih tsha sprul sku gnyis kyis sher phyogs dang mdo mang skor mkhas grub blo mchog rdo rje la tshig tsam yang ma lus pa par gnang ba nas lung rgyun mtshan nyid pa yod par nges pa rnyed pas yid drangs te 'dir snang gi rnam g.yeng ban bun rnam kyis rjes su ma 'brangs par 'bad pa chen po zhus pa la / bka' dang po bden bzhi'i chos 'khor las byung ba 'dul ba lung / bar pa mtshan nyid med pa'i chos 'khor las byung ba sher phyogs / mtha' ma legs par rnam par phye ba'i chos 'khor las byung ba dkon brtsegs dang phal chen / 'khor lo gsum pa ci rigs par gtogs pa sde tshan phyogs gcig bsgrigs pa mdo mang / theg pa thams cad kyi yang rtser son pa rgyud 'bum dang lnga /.

[II] Blo gsal bstan skyong, *Ngo mtshar dad pa'i 'jug ngogs*, pp. 333.2–335.1:

... rgyal ba'i bka' 'gyur rin po che'i lung rgyun phyogs gang dang gang na yod ces 'tshol ba gnang bas / kong po phyogs na gter ston 'ja' tshon snying po la yod 'dra zer ba gsan nas kong por phebs / dwags la sgam po'i phu gnyal lam rgyab tsam na chu chen pos lam bcad nas mi thar pa 'dug pa la bya rog gcig gis sna drangs nas 'khyags zam zhig rnyed / der byon nas pha rir slebs pa dang 'khyags zam bsdibs [= brtib] / zag pa 'ga' res rjes bsnyags [= bsnyegs] kyang chu lam thar pa mig hur re lus skad / gter ston pas kyang mngon shes kyis rig nas mi zhig phebs sur brdzangs / khos yongs nas phyag btsal mjal dar phul / spos sna byas te gdan drangs / khyed slob dpon la nga yong ba sus zhus gsungs pas / skad cha mi dgos khong rang gis shes yongs zer skad / gter ston dang mjal nas khong la bka' 'gyur gyi lung tshad thub ni bzhugs yod tshod kyang min pa 'dug / gter ston khong rang gi phyag mdzub g.yas g.yon rtsa [= rtse] sprod mdzad nas nga cag gnyis 'di ga byung ba ka bka' [334] 'gyur gyi lung yin mod gsung (= gsungs) / gter gsar dkon mchog spyi 'dus sogs chos bka' ci rigs pa gnang / phar yang sa lugs kyi chos 'ga' zhig phul te rim gyis dgung lo zhe gnyis shing pho spre'u lo [= 1644] gtsang ljongs su chibs bskyod / gdan sa chen po zhwa lu ri phug gi gzims khang rnam grol yang rtser lo gsum gyi sku mtshams bcad rgya shin tu



dam pa bzhugs / sngar gnang ba'i dam bca'i lha grangs kyi ljags bsnyen rnam legs par grub pa mdzad / de grol dang mnyam du sde pa bkra shis rtse bas gdan drangs pa bzhin dbus su phebs nas bya dka' ba du mas bka' 'gyur yongs rdzogs kyi lung rgyun khungs ma tshol ba mdzad cing de yang mdo mang gi lung rgyun shin tu dkon zhing lho brag ngos su bla ma tshogs gnyis dpal grub la yod par gsan te sman lung khra tshangs pa'i zhabs drung blo mchog rdo rje zhu bar rdzong brda mdzad nas physis lung tshad ma gsan thub pa dang gong dkar chos sder bla ma mang por ljags lung gnang bas deng sang bod dang bod chen po'i rgyal khams thams cad du rgyal ba'i bka' dngos kyi lung rgyun ma nyams pa yod pa ni 'di nyid kho na'i bka' drin yin / de nas zur chos dbyings rang grol la thog mar tshar lugs kyi chos bka' 'bul ba dang / de rjes 'bras spungs su phebs te / rgyal ba lnga pa chen po dang mjal zhing rim gyis dbu slar [= blar] bzhes nas pho brang chen po po ta lar gsung ngag slob bshad dang rdo rje 'phrang ba [= 'phreng ba] sogs dbang chos bsam gyis mi khyab pa 'bul ba [335] mdzad /.

[III] Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Nyung ngu rnam gsal*, pp. 297.1–299.6:

de yang rdo rje 'chang gnas gsar ba chen pos ngor du rgyud 'bum dang / gong dkar chos sder 'dul ba lung gsan na'ang de 'phros ma gsan pa'i rgyun 'tshol ba la byang chub sems dpa' rtag tu ngu lta bu'i dang tshul dang ldan pas kho bo bka' 'gyur lung yongs su rdzogs pa zhid 'dod na'ang zha lur [= zhwa lur] byas skabs rgyud sde 'og ma gsum gyi tshe sdor dkar la brten pa'i stabs bad gan [= bad kan] 'phel zhing lus stobs zhan pa dang / khyad par chos sde 'di nyid kyi khur 'khur gyi ming btags mkhan tshugs kyi sgrob sgrob kyi phyogs med du 'jug pa de'i bgrod dka' ba byung bas khyed kyis chos 'tshol ba'i thugs khun [= khur] bzhes dgos zhes sku chas kyi mthun rkyen du g.yu pad kyis gtsos pa'i bdog pa gya nom pa tsal na'ang 'phral du stabs 'grig pa zhid ci 'dra 'ong dgongs pa'i thugs the tshom gyi dus lho brag nyi lde dgon pa dhih tsha sprul sku bka' 'gyur gsan rtsis kyis mkha' reg nas sde pa rnam gling pa sdom brtson tshogs gnyis dpal grub gdan drangs pa'i gnas tshul dang / khyed rang yang bka' 'gyur gsan 'dod yod na zhor la 'gro ba'i gong ra lo tsā bas 'phrin yig bskur ba gzigs ma thag bla ma tshogs gnyis pa'ang ri khrod par song dpon slob thams cad chas rkyen 'dzom pa zhid ci 'dra

'ong ngam snyam pa som nyi'i skabs nyi lde sprul skus chos 'khor btsugs  
 pa dang de'i [298] gnas tshul 'phral du thos pas sangs rgyas kyi thugs  
 rje yin dgongs rje nyid la chabs [= chibs] dang phyag g.yug gcig bcas  
 tsham tshom med par snying stobs chen pos lam la zhugs nas phebs pas  
 lam nor nas seng ge rdzong dang nye ba lung pa kha dog la gting zab  
 pa zhig tu byon / der skad cha dris bshad kyi yul tsam yang ma rnyed  
 pas nye gnas kyi chibs khrid rje nyid kyi 'phongs nas skyor gyin lam  
 gzar po la dka' spyad mdzad / mthar zam pa phra mo snar grong yod  
 par phebs de'i mi zhig gis ci yin 'dra ba zhus par nyi lde dgon du 'gro  
 mkhan yin tshul gsungs pa na lam 'di la rta thar ba ngo mtshar lam nor  
 chebs che zhing mi rta la skyon ma byung ba'ang go spyad do nub grong  
 yod sar mi 'byor bas 'di khar bzhugs / zer ba ltar mdzad / sang nyin dri  
 ba gngang bar yongs grags kyi lam 'di yin rang gi par [= phar] bkab med  
 kyang zam pa 'di don ri 'di tsho yar 'dzegs pa na lung stong kha yar yod  
 stabs legs na bkra shis bde chen zer bar slebs 'ong zhus pa ltab rim gyis  
 phebs pas lung stong zhig tu ngo mdzad pa'i tshe lho phyogs nas bya  
 rog gcig 'phur nas skad cha sna tshogs sgrog cing drung du nye sar sdod  
 pa na nges byung dang chos skyong la gdung shugs drag po 'khrungs  
 te gsel [= sel] zan gyi steng nas gtor dbyibs bzos sngags kyi bsngo ba  
 mdzad pas bya rog des lhag med du zos da bya rog gang song gyi rjes  
 la 'gro zhes phebs pa na bya des kyang mda' rgyang gang las mi ring bar  
 'phur sdod byed pa'i ngang nas lho stod kyi grong sna 'dzin zin par 'byor  
 / bya [299] rog de dpal rdo rje nag po chen po gur gyi mgon po'i sprul  
 bar mngon / grong pa de dag gis nyi lde bla ma bkra shis bde ldan du  
 byon song zer ba ltar 'phral du phebs pas bla ma gzims mal du bzhugs  
 grub pa'i drung du shar mar gdan drangs sher phyogs rdzogs nas mdo  
 mang tshugs pa'i thog tu 'dir gcod cig la 'ongs pa yin sang lhan du 'degs  
 gsungs dgyes dgyes mdzad nas spe'u la brgyud nyi lder phebs / bla ma  
 tshogs gnyis pas kyang khyed byung na bsams yang yang sems la shar /  
 da lam cis kyang legs nyin mtshan gnyis ka 'di gar bzhugs gsungs mdo  
 mang gi po ti cha pa yan song grub pa'ang srubs dbar tshor gngang bas  
 sher phyogs thor bu dang / dkon brtsegs phal chen bcas po ti lnga bcur  
 nye ba'i lung gsan pas / dam pa'i chos thog mar dge ba / tha mar dge  
 ba / don bzang po / tshig 'bru bzang po 'di 'dra'i tshig bcad gcig thos  
 pas bsod nams che na tshang ba lta ci smos dgongs pa'i ston pa bde bar  
 gshegs pa dang chos ston pa po la thugs mos 'phel par ma zad 'di lta

bu'ang rje btsun bka' gyur ba chen po'i bka' drin yin dgongs pa'i gus pa dbyar mtshos ltar gyur /.

[IV] 'Ja' tshon snying po, *mThong thos kun 'grol* [= *grol*], pp. 162.6–164.1:

dbus gtsang nas bkra shis rtse'i gnas gsar rje drung gi dbon drung mkhan po dpon slob nyi shu tsam yang rkang gtang byon te brgya 'bul tsan che ba tsam du phul / de nyin la sa lugs kyi lam 'bras kyang dgongs gtad zhus pa'o / gzhan yang mjal mi shin tu ba mang ba tsam lto btang dgos pa yang phyed dang nyi brgya lhog [= lhag] tsam byung / yang gter gser [= gsar] tshar gcig gsungs / dbang rjes gnang khrid man ngag sogs mang du bshad lo byas / zhabs drung dpon de nyid kyi [= kyiis] 'di gsungs / da lta dus dbang gi [= gis] dbus gtsang la gsung rab dang mthun pa'i dam chos grub thob dkon par 'dug / de ji ltar yin na rnam dpyod mig ltos rnams / gtsang btsun gyi tshogs gang che nyi brgya sum brgya 'dug zer pa'i tam [= gtam] dang / gdangs dbyangs smra 'grig rang gtsor stan [= sten] / yang na bshad so [= sa] slob gnyer smra ba'i tsam la blo gtad pa ma gtong / des na zab gter nyid la bsam nas yongs pa legs zer / bdag gi smras pa / ci gsungs bden / sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa nyams dma' bas / dbus gtsang dang / rgya gar dam chos byung khungs la / dar rgud shar nang [= snang] / kong po lta bu la dam chos sha stag gi smras pa / brgyud pa mtshan ldan karma pa yab sras dang / stod 'brug nas brgyud pa 'di tsho ya mtshan par mthong / gter chos shin tu mang yang / ding sang pad glings [= gling] zhig po gling pa'i chos brgyud thag nye ba dang khung btsun par 'dug / gzhan ni nyid kyi gsungs pa ltar yin 'dug zhus /.

[V] Miniatures in Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa'i rlabs 'phreng*, pp. 368–369 (see figures, p. 231):

*grags pa rgyal mtshan rigs kun bdag/*  
[= Fifth Sa skya throne-holder  
Grags pa rgyal mtshan  
(1147–1216)]

*rdo rje 'chang dbang bdag chen rje/*  
[= Twenty-fourth Sa skya throne-  
holder sNgags 'chang Kun dga'  
rin chen (1517–1584)]

*chos kyi rgyal po gnas gsar pa/*  
[= mGon po bSod nams mchog  
ldan (1603–1659)]

*za hor bande rtsom pa po/*  
[= Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya  
mtsho (1617–1682)]

[VI] Miniatures in Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Nyung ngu rnam gsal*, pp. 246–249 (see figures, p. 232):

*paṅ chen bi mā [=ma] la mitra'i zhabs/ sprul pa'i gter ston chos dbang zhabs/*  
 [= Mahāpaṇḍita Vimalamitra] [= Guru Chos kyi dbang phyug  
 (1212–1271)]

*sman lung mkhas grub śākya 'od/ khyab bdag dbang phyug rab brtan dpal/*  
 [= sMan lung pa Śākya 'od [= Eighteenth Zhwa lu mKhan chen  
 (b. 1239)] dBang phyug rab brtan (1558–1636)]

*karma dbang 'byor (illegible syllables)/ blo mchog rdo rje dkyil 'khor gtso/*  
 [= Gar dbang Karma dBang [= Khra tshang pa Blo mchog rdo  
 'byor (16th/17th cent.)] rje (1607–1677)]

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- . *Dad pa'i rlabs 'phreng = Dus gsum rgyal ba'i mkhyen brtse'i gtso bo khyab bdag rdo rje sems dpa'i ngo bo mgon po bsod nams mchog ldan bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*. In *The Collected Works (gSung 'bum) of the Vth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (reproduced from Lhasa Edition (Xylograph preserved in SRIT))*. 25 vols. Gangtok: Director, Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, 1991–1995, vol. 8, pp. 367–569.
- . *Du kũ la'i gos bzang = Za hor gyi ban de ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul pa'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa*. 3 vols. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1989–1991.
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Miniatures in Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Dad pa'i rlabs 'phreng*, pp. 368–369



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**The 1920 Tibetan New Year's Festival in Lhasa:  
Impressions and Observations of  
Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho**

Karl-Heinz Everding  
(Bonn)

Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho's account of his pilgrimage—*Si tu pa Chos kyi rgya mtsho's description of [his] route to the holy places of Central Tibet, [situated in] the "Land of Snow", [entitled] "long necklace of jewel[-like] moon crystals"* (*Si tu pa chos kyi rgya mtsho gangs ljongs dbus gtsang gnas bskor lam yig nor bu zla shel gyi se mo do*)—represents, in its 270 Tibetan folios, the most comprehensive work of Tibetan pilgrimage literature. It deals with a two-year-long pilgrimage that Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1924) undertook in the years 1918–1920, a journey that he started from his monastic residence Kaḥ thog rDo rje gdan,<sup>1</sup> one of the six main monastic traditions of the rNying ma school, and that took him to hundreds of holy places and monasteries located in Central Tibet. His clear idea, which likely arose even before the beginning of his journey, was to create a comprehensive record of his pilgrimage, and in this way, to provide his countrymen in eastern Tibet with a better understanding of these distant monasteries and their holy relics. He had likely already developed this idea as a child when listening to the stories of his famous uncle 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang po's (1820–1892) travels to the regions of dBus and gTsang. He is also likely to have closely studied his uncle's pilgrim's guide, *Brief list of the names of the holy places of Central Tibet [and their] objects of worship in rough, seed of faith* (*dBus gtsang gi gnas rten rags rim gyi mtshan byang mdor bsdus dad pa'i sa bon*).<sup>2</sup>

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1 For the history of this monastery see Eimer and Pema Tsering 1979.

2 For an edition and translation of 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse's pilgrimage guide, see Ferrari 1958. See also Akester 2016.

With his detailed notes, Kaḥ thog Si tu has left behind an important but as yet unstudied contemporary Tibetan literary document. It contains relatively detailed descriptions of some 300 monasteries and a sketch of about 1,000 additional monasteries in the region of the pilgrimage route and provides a unique overview of the monastic geography of central Tibet. Due to its detailed route descriptions, the work represents one of the most important sources for research into the historical geography of Tibet, and with its comprehensive descriptions of monasteries, it also represents a unique source for the architecture and cultural history of Tibet. In addition, the work contains a mass of interesting local and social historical information, including descriptions of the countryside, flora and fauna, as well as philosophical and ritual traditions of individual monasteries, their festivals, and monastic rules. Not least of all, it provides a broad perspective of the deep religious nature of Tibetans through a detailed description of a broad spectrum of the religious objects kept in the monasteries. In addition to the thangkas, murals, *stūpas*, and relics, which were above all objects of religious reverence, the description particularly covers the so-called “Inner Objects” (*nang rten*), which traditionally would only be shown to high-ranking religious figures, except during special religious occasions when they are shown to the common people as well. The descriptions of *terma* (*gter ma*), the objects which had been hidden under magic conditions for the treasure discoverer were considered to have a special power to provide blessings as well; since the author was a high-ranking representative of the rNying ma school, these were of particular interest.

Since it was written a good thirty years before the Chinese invasion, Kaḥ thog Si tu’s travelogue, in its comprehensiveness as well as diversity of topics, is a unique document recording the status quo of the Tibetan cultural monuments and the artistic works they contained before 1949. To make this work available to the broader circle of researchers now engaged in the study of Tibetan culture, the original text has been edited and a translation of the entire work has been produced to support Tibetological research in its various branches.<sup>3</sup>

For several decades now, I have been closely connected with David Jackson. He was an advisor on my habilitation thesis at the University

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3 For an edition and translation of this text, see Everding 2019.

of Hamburg and due to our shared interest in the history of western Tibet and the study of Tibetan cultural history as such, it is my particular honour and joy to contribute this excerpt from Kaḥ thog Si tu's guide for pilgrimage, which perhaps also will serve to awaken his memories of our time together in Hamburg. It struck me as particularly interesting to provide an excerpt of this record containing Kaḥ thog Si tu's lively, largely versified impressions of his visit to the 1920 New Year Festival in Lhasa. As far as I know, this text has to date only been marginally considered, but not as yet studied in depth.

This pilgrimage record is written from the perspective of a rNying ma lama who has spent his life in a remote mountain monastery in eastern Tibet and who, as his detailed and skilled descriptions demonstrate, possessed an exceptional knowledge of Tibetan culture, which he could not have obtained only through extensive and intensive study. As a monk, as his statements frequently show, he made high ethical demands on the Buddhist approach to life. During his visit to Lhasa, he was confronted with a swirling city life, which even in normal times would have created innumerable distractions, but would have been particularly so during the time of the New Year's celebration, given the great crowds of people this period attracts. The city was filled with groups of pilgrims, countless monks, and not least of all, vendors seeking to use the flood of people for business purposes. Although most had come to participate in religious performances, the enticement of colourful experiences provided a welcome change from their normally monotonous lives, and for many, the longer they remained, the happier they were to enjoy that release. Ernst Schäfer, in particular, in his *Festival of the White Veil* has thoroughly described the protracted celebrations extending over almost a whole month as well as the city's heightened atmosphere.<sup>4</sup> If one believed his report, in this festival time, a number of monks threw out their year-long discipline.

Kaḥ thog Si tu's account only touches briefly on most of the events of the festival. Because of the 13th Dalai Lama's hoarseness, he gained little from the Dalai Lama's teachings on the 15th calendar day of the

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4 Schäfer 1950. For the festive celebrations of the Tibetan New Year, see also Cantwell 1985; Dorje Yudon Yuthog 1990: esp. 61–72; Ronge 1985; Tsepa Rigzin 1993: 1–20.



Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1924)

first month. On the 23rd calendar day, he witnessed a ceremony for the *Throwing of the Great Torma* (*gTor rgyag chen mo*), performed under the leadership of monks of 'Bras spungs sNgags pa grwa tshang and rNam rgyal grwa tshang. He critically remarked that the performance was not carried out in a technically correct fashion, and that essential ritual utensils were absent.

Then he goes into detail regarding disputations on the extension of the title of *dge bshes lha rams pa*. He cites the contenders and describes the process of disputation in precise detail. As a representative of the rNying ma school he had little regard for the system of disputation and

the monks who became increasingly fierce in the dispute and their logical discussions. He had good reason to end his remarks with a true-to-life image of a few young tulkus who sat through the presentation sound asleep.

After a brief report of his visit to various residences of nobles and shrines, in which he gave teachings and blessings, he appends remarks in verse form, which can be seen as a summary of the impressions that he had of the city of Lhasa and its people. He makes no bones about his preference for a hermit's lifestyle focused on religious practice, being unimpressed by the prosperity of the city and its sensory blandishments. He is indeed appalled by the intensity with which people pursue diversions and by their rushing after things which seem valuable but ultimately prove valueless. He is not sparing in his use of emphatic language to lend his experiences and insights more impact.

And yet, judging on the basis of Kaḥ thog Si tu's observations and impressions, an unbiased perspective leads to the conclusion that the Tibetans, despite the religious inclinations that dominated their lives, were a perfectly normal society: Trade and commerce, individual views of life, seeking one's own advantage and pursuing one's own interests, self-assertion, *joie de vivre*, casual gatherings and extensive celebrations, the search for the extraordinary and the need for variety, overcoming rigid social conventions and many other aspects of a worldly life made extensive room, especially on occasions such as the New Year Festival.

In summary, it can be said that Kaḥ thog Si tu has left us a most personal account, highlighting what from his perspective are numerous grievances, but which from a Buddhist perspective can all be reconciled, as in the closing verses he praises the innumerable three types of receptacles in Lhasa, the pilgrims' countless offerings which he designates as vast as the ocean, and the number of monks equalling the vast expanse of an ocean—even though the vast majority of them likely belonged to the dGe lugs school.

The following edition of this excerpt follows the photographic edition of version A of the *Si tu pa chos kyi rgya mtsho gangs ljongs dbus gtsang gnas bskor lam yig nor bu zla shel gyi se mo do*. It was photographed in Darjeeling in 1969 by Dieter Schuh from the library of bDud

'joms Rin po che (1904–1987).<sup>5</sup> This edition has been supplemented through notes of version B produced as an offset print by the 'Brug pa bKa' brgyud lama Khams sprul Don brgyud nyi ma (1931–1980), Tashi dzong, Palampur, India, as well as through standardized spelling consistent with written Tibetan. Section markers (*tshig shad*) in the Tibetan text are indicated with an “※”.

### **Kaḥ thog Si tu's Notes on the Tibetan New Year Celebrations in March 1920<sup>6</sup>**

[fol. 251b] *sa lug zla 12 tshes 29 rtse dang rmi ru'i gtor rgyags nyin lha sar sleb bo //*

*lcags sprel zla 1 <B: -> tshes 1 lha gdan kun bzang rtser lo gсар / thag rgyug smon [5] lam gral 'dzin / rgyal ba bcu gsum pa tshes brgyad nyin tshogs phebs chib <B: tshigs, read: chibs> bsgyur chen mo / smar khams tshong dpon spo mda' bu nyi <B: nya> rgyal pa dang / 'on rgyal sras rin po ches rgyu sbyar /*

*tshes 15 [6] la phyi rol gsung chos ra bar stag mo lus sbyin skyes rab <read = B: rabs> bsдus tsam bsrung <read: gsungs> song rung / gsung lu <read: lo> bskyon cing mgul <B: mgal> 'cham phebs <read: phebs> pa dang / grwa dang khrom mang 'ur nas ye <B: ge> ma thos /*

*bco lnga [fol. 252a] mchod par bla ma brgyud pa'i mchod pa zhal zas ko ba <read: ra> mar gyis shan nas gsang thag 'then chog pas gnas chung chos skyong dang / zhal ngo spre'u bzhin rgyug pa'i 'phrul sogs [2] dang / mi tshogs chen po'i ltas <read: ltad> mo / 'di nub rgya gar cha byad dmag mi ser po rnambs skor lam du 'gro bas phyi gling pa sleb pa 'dra ba'i nyams shar / skyabs mgon phebs <read: phebs> / gos chen ser po'i <B: bo'i> [3] gzim <B: gzims> gur nang cung bzhugs nas phebs <read: phebs> song /*

*tshes nyer gsum phyi mar gtor rgyags kyi mi rta pa dang / 'bras spungs sngags pa'i gtor rgyag rnam rgyal grwa tshang gtor rgyag bcas la rgya gser phrag [4] khebs <read = B: khebs> can / gser dang / rgya rag gser ma'i spos phor ba bcu bcu / skyems phor ba gnyis / gos chen bzang po'i dar mdung rten thug thog so gsum re lhag nyi shu rtsa lnga, slob dpon pa so so / [5] zhal ngo bcas bzang mod / 'on kyang chos skyong 'khor ba'i srog gnad sogs dang /*

5 Compare Schuh 1973: XXII.

6 To the use of “read:” and “read =”, see Everding 2000, vol. 1: 37–39.



'khor lo bla rdo sogs yod par mi 'dug chos skyong rgyal po'i gsob ru 'dren dang bcas pa'ang phebs <read: phebs> mod / [6] zil chag po ma byung /

lung bstan gyi stobs las / sku rten da lta btang snyoms su kha tham zer / zla gam par rgyab 'phen mgo snam ma mang / sbub brgyad re / sil gnyis re / gser [fol. 252b] rnga brgyad cu rnams spus legs / gzhung gi snga srol rta dmag tsho legs po <B: bo> snang / 'on kyang dgra bla 'khor ba'i mi ye mi snang /

smon lam tshogs bzhugs dge 'dun khri gcig dang / gtso [2] bor skal lhag bcas stong tsho brgyad yod par bshad pas stong tsho bcu drug tsam / smon lam tshogs phebs <read: phebs> dang / 'phros stong gcig tsam dgon gsum na yod nges 'dug ltas <read: ltad> mo 'di [3] tsho bri rgyu ci'ang med mod / don du dge 'dun mang po 'di lta bu'i zhal <B: gal> mjal ba la dag snang gi <read: gis> mos gus bgyis so //

bla brang thog kha nas / gnas chung grwa tshang / zhabs brtan 'bul [4] mkhan mang / lab sprul sku rin po che rgya chas can dang / smin gling khri chen / khu nu'i rtsis pa de wa ram sogs bcas sbug rnam par 'dren pa'i gser zhal mig gi bdud rtsir thob /

khyams ra na [5] rjes su rtse <read: rtsis> nas ang gi dang po'i spa <B: sba> dar gnang ba se ra ba red kyang zer / dge bshes khams 'brog lo lon gcig dam bca' la bzhugs / rtse zhwa dzor dzor byed nas gyon / rigs lung pa <B: -> [6] zhig gis rkang pa brdeg <read: brdegs> gzan rked dkris byas nas / gya' / ma rig pa <B: ba> yin na rten 'brel bcu gnyis kyi nang tshan ma rig pa yin par thal / 'dod yi /

'o na byang <B: byad> 'phags [fol. 253a] rgyud kyi ma rig pa chos can / khyod der thal / zer nas thal mo gdeng gdeng byed pa la / 'dod yi / zer / 'o na 'khor rgyu ma spang pa'i byang sems mthong lam pa yod [2] par thal / zer / gong der dge bshes rgan song cha shas rub rub shub shub byas pas / rtags ma grub zer / 'o na rten 'brel bcu gnyis kyi nang tshan du gyur pa'i ma rig pa de 'khor rgyu'i [3] ma rig pa min par thal / tsha'i zer ba la / rtags ma grub kyi lan btab song /

mtshams der gyon nas rig <read = B: rigs> lung pa zhig lang byung bas snga ma de <B: da> shad kyis bskrad pas / snga ma des [4] kyang phar bgrad tshur bgrad nan tan mthar shed dang ham pa gyon pa che bas / g.yas pa de khros nas bzhin dmar por gyur nas 'dug song / des / ki'i / g.ya' / theg chen 'phags [5] par las nyon gyis 'chi ba yod par thal / zer / ci'i phyir / ki'i / 'khor gsum / de chos can / der thal / khyod srid rtsa'i ma rig pa rgyud ldan

gyi gang zag yin pa'i phyir / rkang pas brdab / [6] lag pas 'dzing 'dra 'then  
'dra byed / rtags ma grub zer byung / rigs lung pa thogs thogs byed pa la /  
thong shog zer / yang g.yon nas grwa pa gcig lang / des snga ma de bskrad /  
de'ang [fol. 253b] bzhin dmar por song /

khos / ki'i / kun brtags kyi ma rig pa yin na / rten 'brel bcu gnyis kyi  
sogs 'brel med med 'dra ba 'phen / der tshogs skad byas pa dang mi mang  
tshab tshub mthar [2] bzhag mtshams med pa zhig thog lus song /

gong der sprul sku sku gzhon rtse zhwa legs pa mnab mkhan kha shas  
'dug kyang de rnam phal cher gsung bcad la mnal chog pa dmigs gsal [3]  
yin 'dug tshogs chen de grol ring lha klur don gnyer ba mang tsam la dbang  
chos 'dra byas pa yin no //

※ lha sa nas rten kha shas mthong byung bar / spu bo stag sham sprul  
skus bsnam [4] 'ong ba / stag sham gter ma li ser phur pa phra men smad  
gnam lcags can khru gang / lcags kyi rdo rje rwa gdengs pa pad <B: pang>  
bkod byang sgo nas bzhes pa / dga' ba lung gi gter ma srin thod zhabs [5]  
bkag gu ru bye ma a krong ma pan <read: pan> zhu <read = zhwa> bde  
ba chen por 'chos se ba /

※ kong po rtsa ra ba dbang phyug nyi ma'i lag nas rig 'dzin 'ja' tshon  
snying po'i dbu zhwa rnying pa kha tshang / ※ mchog gling gter [6] sras  
tshe dbang grags pa'i sprul sku'i phyag nas mchog gyur gling pa'i gter byon  
gu ru'i sku tshab / ※ kong po nga phod phog dpon lag nas rig 'dzin sangs  
rgyas gling pa'i gter byon gu ru drag po'i [fol. 254a] sku li dmar dang / sku  
tshab byin ldan mjal /

※ pho brang chen mo po ta lar sngar lo las zhib pa'i lha khang khag nyi  
shu rtsa bdun tsam la mchod mjal rgyas pa zhus /

※ kun [2] bde gling gzim <B: gzims> chung khyad 'phags phan tshun  
thams cad dang / 'du khang dang / rta tshags gong ma na rim sku gdung  
gser sdong legs po sogs mjal / ※ tshe smon gling / rmi ru ba dang / [3] ra  
bsgreng ba'i gzhi <read = bzhi> sde rnam mjal to //

※ lha sar lha klu la sngon gyi lha bris phul du gyur pas bris pa'i rgyal  
ba'i 'khrungs rab <read = B: rabs> kang <read: thang> ka bcu gsum dang  
/ mtha' shan tshad 'gran bral ba [4] res 'ga' /

※ bsam 'grub <read = grub> pho brang na rgyal mchog skal <read =  
bskal> bzang gi yab bsod nams stobs rgyal gyis bzhengs pa'i / padma rgya  
bya / thon thi / ding phon / tā hun / gnas brtan sku [5] rags / hor gos ma  
nu / gser jus / gsang lam sogs sbyar ba'i rgyal ba'i 'khrung rab <read: rabs>

*thang ka bcu gsum pa nang sha mdzod gos ser pos byas pa dmag dus sbas*  
 <B: skas> pa sogs [6] *mthong / rdo ring dang / ra ga gshag* <read = rag kha  
*shag> sogs sde dpon chen po rnams la sngon gyi thang rnying legs po yod pa*  
*phal cher nye char rgya dmag dus brlag pas ye mi snang ngo //*

※ / *chos srid* [fol. 254b] *'byor pa brgya phrag 'du ba'i gnas /*  
 / *dbus 'gyur lha gdan ni tsū la yi tshal /*  
 / *rten gsum rgya mtsho mchod sprin rgya mtshos bskor /*  
 / *dge 'dun rgya mtsho rnam dkar rgya mtsho rgyas /*  
 / *ri rnams* [2] *dpyad tshang skyid shod rgya che yangs /*  
 / *'phags pa thugs rje'i dbang phyug phrin las kyi /*  
 / *dge mtshan bye brag 'khor lo nam du'ang /*  
 / *rgyun mi chad pas lag na padmo'i zhing /*  
 / *mi bdag che* [3] *rnams khengs pa'i ri bo mtho /*  
 / *tshong pa rnams ni g.yo sgyu'i 'phrang la 'grim /*  
 / *dan* <read = ngan> *'bag rags rgyab khrag gi rgya mtsho 'khyil /*  
 / *jigs rung sgyu ma'i gnas su 'jigs pa'ang 'dra /*  
 [4] / *gdong na thal sbyar rgyab nas thal ba gtor /*  
 / *'phrad lang med par ha las gnam sa tsam /*  
 / *'dris rgyu ma khom mgo bsgril yid sun pas /*  
 / *sprel rgan gdung brgyud 'khrul med dbus 'dir* [5] *nges /*  
 / *nyin re bzhin du ltad mo mi 'dra re /*  
 / *dro re bzhin du phyogs kyi gtam sar re /*  
 / *yud tsam re la sngar ma mthong ba brgya /*  
 / *ji tsam bsdad kyang yengs ma lam du 'gro /*  
 / *za bar 'dod dang lta* [6] *bar 'dod pa dang /*  
 / *smra bar 'dod pa chu bo'i gnyer ma ltar /*  
 / *mtha' med 'gro ba 'khor ba'i mtshan nyid las /*  
 / *lhag par 'gro ba lha sa'i yul 'di 'o /*  
 / *mchog gsum rten gsum* [fol. 255a] *rgya mtshos mtha' bskor la /*  
 / *phyag mchod mjal bas thar pa'i sa bon theb* <read = thob> /  
 / *chos dang yon tan lhag na shugs kyis mtho /*  
 / *'dod rgu 'byung ba'i sa 'di* [2] *skyid pa'ang 'dra /*  
 / *gos rgyan mtho dman bkod dang 'byor pa'i 'grigs /*  
 / *legs shing rgyal srid 'byor pa thams cad kyang /*  
 / *dkon mchog mchod rgyur phal cher 'gro sogs kyis /*  
 / *chos* [3] *lan* <read: len> *gzhung rgyal 'dzam gling phal las lhag*

/ phra ma mang zhing cam bur dga' ba dang /  
 / mi dgos dogs mang nor rdzas dga' ches skyon /  
 / grub mtha' i phyogs lung phyogs 'dzin cher gyur [4] pas /  
 / 'grog par dka' ba yul 'di 'i mtshan nyid do /

/ nyams mtshar du smras pa'o // ※

### Attending the New Year Celebrations

I reached Lhasa on the 29th day of the 12th [Tibetan] month in the Earth-Monkey year (1920),<sup>7</sup> on the day on which the *gtor mas* of rTse [Po ta la] and the rMi ru [rnying pa] were cast [by the monks].

For the New Year, on the first day of the first Tibetan month in the Iron-Monkey [year (1920),<sup>8</sup> I stayed] in Kun bzang rtse in lHa ldan. [I saw] the distance race (*thag rgyug*), [participated] in the *sMon lam* presentation [and experienced] on the eighth day the public assembly for the 'Great Arrival' (*chibs bsgyur chen mo*) of the 13th Dalai Lama. The sMar khams tshong dpon, Nyi rgyal ba, the son of [the house of] sPo mda', as well as the 'On rGyal sras Rin po che<sup>9</sup> provided the financial resources [for the presentation of the festival].

On the 15th [day of the 1st month] on the teaching place<sup>10</sup> outside [the gTsong lag khang the 13th Dalai Lama] gave only a short [teaching] from the Jātaka about how [the Buddha in a previous life] offered up his life to a tigress (*stag mo lus shyin skyes rabs*). However, since his voice had been weakened and he had developed bronchitis (*mgul 'cham*), and the monks and assembled masses were agitated, one [simply] could understand nothing.

On the 15th [fol. 252a] [day] as a ritual performance (*bco lnga mchod pa*) the *Bla ma brgyud pa'i cho ga* [was staged]. After food offerings were placed on a leather [base] as decoration, secret connections were

7 This Tibetan date corresponds to March 1, 1920.

8 This Tibetan date corresponds to March 3, 1920.

9 This is the tulku of the monastery of 'On Chos sdings (Ferrari 1958: 47 and note 191).

10 The gSung chos ra ba lies to the south of the lHa sa gTsong lang khang. Compare the map drawn by Zasad J. Taring from his memory (Larsen and Sing-Larsen 2001: 30, no. 4).

made.<sup>11</sup> [One then witnessed] the gNas chung chos skyong and the magic play with monkey-like *zhal ngo* running here and there as well as [other] spectacles for the great mass of people. That night when the kha-ki-coloured police with their Indian costumes walked around on their patrols [around the gTsub lag khang], one had the idea that the English had come [back to Tibet]. The Dalai Lama (*skyabs mgon*) [also] appeared. He attended [the happenings] in his golden-brocade decorated litter for a short while, and then left [again].

On the later 23rd day [of the 1st Tibetan month]<sup>12</sup> all those who were riders for the *gtor [ma]*-throwing-ritual, as well as those who [took part in] the *gtor [ma]*-throwing-ritual of the 'Bras spung sngags pa [grwa tshang], and in the *gtor [ma]*-throwing-ritual of the rNam rgyal grwa tshang, wore golden Chinese shawls. The golden and gilded bronze incense holders [carried in] tens, the ladles and bowls [used for the ceremonies], the spears [decorated with] silk bows of fine brocade, the 25 *thug*[-banners], more than three stories high, the teachers from the various [faculties] together with the *zhal ngo*, [everything] was excellent.

Missing were, however, the main requirements and so on for the control of the life[line] (*srog gnad*) of the *chos skyong* and his attendants, the *cakra* and [his] accompanying life stone (*bla rdo*).<sup>13</sup> Even though the effigy (*gsob*) of the Chos skyong rgyal po [12] together with his leading [protectors] (*ru 'dren*) had appeared, [all] this was not very impressive.

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11 Tib. *gsang thag 'then chog pas* is a phrase that has many meanings which I cannot actually determine, and which can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, this could mean (perhaps referring to the huge butter sculptures) "invisible bands were attached, which one could pull on." On the other hand, this has the connotation of "secretly and separately held connections, which could be set in motion" in the sense of corrupted human beings. Given the tenor of the surviving testimonies regarding the sMon lam chen mo, I prefer the second interpretation.

12 As Dieter Schuh's conversion tables of the Tibetan calendar dates into the Gregorian calendar show, there was an earlier and a later 23rd day in the 1st Tibetan month of the Iron-Monkey year (1920).

13 Here Kah thog Si tu is critical of the fact that the control of the actual gNas chung chos skyong through its mantras and so on was completely absent, since the relevant objects with whose assistance the gNas chung chos skyong and all of the *dharmapālas* could be controlled had not at all been brought into the ceremony; what had been presented was essentially an effigy of the Chos skyong.

As I was told, due to a prophecy the medium (*sku rten*) keeps its mouth closed, since it is fallen into rigidity (*btang snyoms*).<sup>14</sup> It throws off the *zla gam* and one sees [his (?)] helmet made of numerous [assembled components] (*mgo snam ma mang*). [He was accompanied by a procession (?)] of some eight *sbub* [*sil* cymbals], some two *sil* [*snyan* cymbals],<sup>15</sup> eighty golden [fol. 252b] drums of superb quality [as well as] armed, mounted troops corresponding to the time-honoured tradition of the central government. The accompanying attendants (*'khor ba'i mi*) of the *dgra lha* were in fact not at all to be seen.<sup>16</sup>

It was explained to me that [the number] of monks assembled at the ["Great] Prayer Festival" (*smon lam*) was 10,000, and that including the [distributed] special payments in accordance with their importance<sup>17</sup> the number would be 18,000. However, the masses in attendance at the sMon lam were only about 16,000, while the remainder of the roughly 1,000 [monks] definitely remained in the three [great] monasteries [of the dGe lugs order]. Otherwise there was absolutely nothing noteworthy in this spectacle. The [inner] encounter with such a large [number] of monks indeed [led me to] dedicate great respect for them, as I saw them in a pure vision (*dag snang*) [as the *saṅgha*].

Looking down from the gallery (*bla brang*) which was [reserved for] the religious dignitaries, I caught [a glimpse] of [the members] of the gNas chung grwa tshang, the numerous providers of offerings, the Lab sprul sku Rin po che attired in Chinese clothing, and the sMin gling Khri chen together with the astronomer Devara derived from Kinnaur (*khu nu*), [and] at the head [of the seating arrangement] (*sbug*) the

14 Tib. *btang snyoms*, "balance", "impartiality", is in Buddhist philosophy an important characteristic of buddhahood. Here I take it to be meant as an ironic remark implicitly criticizing the state of immobility or rigidity of the medium.

15 These are the big (*bub sil*) and small cymbals (*sil snyan*) used in Tibetan rituals.

16 Kaḥ thog Si tu again criticizes the fact that gNas chung, who according to ritual tradition is surrounded by a retinue, appears here as the main deity without a large part of his accompanying deities.

17 As sKu ngo Kra ring told me in 1985, every monk who comes to the sMon lam chen mo and studies at one of the three major dGe lugs pa monastic seats near Lhasa receives a certain amount of money from the *dkon gnyer* of the gTsong lag khang. However, monks who hold high positions in the monastic hierarchy receive an additional obulus. Therefore, the amount of money paid out does not indicate the number of monks participating in the sMon lam chen mo.

golden face of the fully-realized leader (*rnam par 'dren pa*)<sup>18</sup>, the nectar (Skt. *amṛta*) of [my] eyes.

Although in the monastic courtyards (*khyams ra*) they say that, seen from the back forward, the first place [in debating should belong to] the Se ra monks, [on this particular day] a Khams-pa nomad [from Se ra who had just completed his] *dge bshes* [degree] a year ago [sat in the position of the respondent (*dam bca' ba*).<sup>19</sup> When he had somewhat crookedly donned the debating hat (*rtse zhwa*), a proponent (*rigs lung pa*) stamped his leg [on the ground]. After he had fastened the belt on his robes, [he said]: “Now then! When there is ignorance (*ma rig pa*), does it then follow that ignorance also exists in the 12-fold [cycle] of *pratītyasamutpāda*? [In response to which the *dam bca' ba*:] “With this I concur.”

[The *rigs lung pa*] said [then]: “Now, when this is so [fol. 253r] then do you not [also] have to accept that for example there is also ignorance in the spirit of an *āryabodhisattva*?” As he clapped his hands together, [the *dam bca' ba*] answered: “With this I concur.” [When the *rigs lung pa* then] said: “In this case you must also accept that a *bodhisattva*, who has not left the causes for existence in *saṃsāra* behind him, can reach the path of seeing (*mthong lam*)”, some of the old *dge bshes* put their heads together and discussed with each other as the *dam bca' ba* said: “Your deduced conclusion is not correct!” [To this the *rigs lung pa* responded]: “Does it not follow in this case, that the ignorance existing in the *pratītyasamutpāda* is not the ignorance that is the root of *saṃsāra*?” [When he received no answer], he continued “Shame! Your deduced conclusion is not correct!”

In this phase, as [another] *rigs lung pa* stood up on the left side, [he tried] to violently push the former aside. After the former also [defended himself and thereby] a rough back and forth pushing took place, at last the one on the left who had greater strength and authority took control, so that the one on the right, angry and flushed red, [had to] sit

18 Here an alternative designation of the 13th Dalai Lama.

19 The *dam bca' ba* is the one who in philosophical debates is required to answer the questions of the *rigs lung pa*. Sitting on a cushion, he awaits the questions of the questioner standing before him, whose goal, through clever logical arguments, is to tangle the *dam bca' ba* in contradictions and where possible to finally gain from him an agreement to capitulate.

down. He [then] said: “*Ki’i! g.Ya’!*” Does it not follow from this, that due to this [thereby accompanying] *karma*, the *āryabodhisattvas* must be subject to death due to their obscuration?” [The *dam bca’ ba*] answered: “On what basis [should they do this]?” [The left side answered:] “*Ki’i!* You are wrong! That is the example! You must follow this [and indeed] on the basis that you are someone who has an awareness of ignorance, which is the root of *samsāra!*” [With that], he stamped his foot on the ground [and] performed [movements] with his hands [as if] he was fighting and dragging someone along. [The *dam bca’ ba*] thereupon responded: “Your sequence of propositions is not correct!” As the *rigs lung pa* thereupon resisted, [the *dam bca’ ba*] said: “Come now!” [Then] another on the left [side] got up again, one who had pushed the previous one aside, [so that] his [fol. 253b] face became red as well.

He [thereupon argued]: “*Ki’i*, if there exists an ignorance of *parikalpita* (*kun brtags*), then there is an ignorance [founded in] *pratītyasamutpāda...*,” and [posed] other irrelevant [questions]. Then a shouting arose among those assembled, and after they had grown excited, they let it lie, since a solution could not be reached.

Although a number of young tulkus sat above and wore the debating hat well, during the whole time they said absolutely nothing. They actually had special permission to sleep through it.

As soon as the debate was over, I gave a rather large number of interested people in the IHa klu<sup>20</sup> consecrations and teachings.

### Visiting Holy Sites in Lhasa

Among the receptacles that I was able to see in Lhasa [notice should be taken of] the *gter ma* [objects] of sTag sham, which were revealed by the sPu bo sTag sham sprul sku: a *phur pa* of golden *li* [*ma* in the size of] a full forearm. The upper section (?) was made of *phra men*, and the lower section of meteoric metal (*gnam lcags*). [Further I saw] an iron *vajra* with spokes strutted apart, which was revealed at the northern entrance [to the holy site] Pad[ma] bkod [and] as a *gter ma*[-object] from dGa’ ba lung a Gu ru[-statue] of Bye ma a khrong [called] Srid thod zhabs bkag

20 Also noted as IHa klu pho brang, the residence (*yab gzhis*) of the family IHa klu, the family of the 8th Dalai Lama. For further information on this residence, see Petech 1973: 39–49; Petech 1972: 16 and 146.



[can]<sup>21</sup>, wearing a *paṇḍita*-hat, modelled after that of [Gu ru] bDe ba chen po.

In the possession of the Kong po rTsa ra ba dBang phyug nyi ma [there was] a complete, old hat of the Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po. In the possession of the incarnation of the Tshe dbang grags pa, who was [also] a student of mChog [gyur] gling [pa, I saw] the *sku tshab*-[statue] of Gu ru [rin po che], which was revealed by mChog gyur gling pa. In the possession of Kong po Nga phod phog dpon I saw the statue of Gu ru drag po, revealed by Rig 'dzin Sangs rgyas gling pa as a *gter* [ma object], [fol. 254a] made from red *li* [ma] and a blessed *sku tshab*-[statue of Gu ru rin po che].

In the great Potala Palace I paid more extensively than last year a visit to as many as twenty-seven *lha khang* and made offerings there.

In Kun bde gling I saw the excellent private shrine and all rooms adjoining here and there, the 'Du khang, the superb reliquary [*stūpas*] of the previous rTa tshags [Rin po ches in the shape of] golden *stūpas* (*gser sdong*) and much more. I visited Tshe smon gling, the [religious site] of rMi ru ba and the bZhi [sic] sde [bla brang] of Ra bsgreng ba. In Lhasa [I took the occasion to pay] in the lHa klu a visit to the thirteen thangkas of the incarnation series of the Dalai Lamas (*rgyal ba*) which had been painted by earlier excellent artists. [They were endowed with] incalculable borders.

In bSam grub pho brang I saw the thirteen thangkas of the incarnation series of the Dalai Lamas which had been commissioned by the father of the Dalai Lama bsKal [sic] bzang [rgya mtsho] (rGyal mchog bsKal bzang), which were made of *padma rgya ba*, *thon thi*, *ding phon*, *tā hun*, *gnas brtan sku rags*, *hor gos ma nu*, *gser jus*, *gsang lam* and other brocade [materials], and whose inner lining (*nang sha*) was made from golden *mdzod gos*[-brocade]. In the time of warring conflicts [these] were hidden. Since the fortunate old thangkas belonging to the great

21 As Lothar Rinpoche (Blo thar Rin po che), the former treasurer (*phyag mdzod*) of the 14th Karma pa Rang byung rig pa'i rdo rje (1924–1989), explained to me in 1985, Srin thod zhabs bkag can is the name of a rare representation of Padma-sambhava. Here Gu ru Rin po che, sitting on the skull of a Srin demon, subjugates the demon by “pressing down” his skull, which is said to resemble the shape of a lump of sugar, with his right leg. For a comparable object revealed by Nyang Gal pa can (1212–1270), see Everding 2019, vol. I: 220f.

*sde dpon* from rDo ring, Rag kha shag [sic] and so on were recently destroyed in the time of the warring conflicts with the Chinese (*rgya dmag*),<sup>22</sup> they are no longer to be seen.

### Closing Verses

The place where hundreds of religious [and] worldly [fol. 254b] riches are united,  
 lHa gdan,<sup>23</sup> which has become the center [of Tibet], is a grove of eucalyptus trees (*ni tsū la yi tshal*).  
 The three [types] of receptacles [which in their expanse are like an] ocean  
 Are surrounded by clouds of offerings which [in their expanse are vast like an] ocean.  
 The ocean of monks [of this city] expands an ocean of completely white [deeds].  
 The mountains [of Lhasa] are filled with pure propaedeutic signs, [the region of] sKyid shod extends itself expansively wide.  
 Since—as the particularly wholesome signs of 'Phags pa Thugs rje'i dbang phyug's<sup>24</sup> activities—  
 The [*dharma*] *cakra* is constantly present in the sky,  
 [This place] is the heavenly abode of Padmapāṇi.  
 Filled with lords (*mi bdag*) [resembling] proud, high mountains,  
 With traders, who have traversed the dangerous paths of cleverness (*g.yo sgyu*),  
 [Filled with] evil [beings wearing] masks, with corpse carriers,<sup>25</sup> [like] an ocean of blood in swirling [movement],  
 At [such a] place of terrifying illusions, virtually reigns also the horror.  
 In front, they have folded their hands, behind they throw ashes on one.

22 Kaḥ thog Si tu is here referring to the conflicts between the Tibetans and Chinese, who after the end of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), expelled all Chinese out of Tibet in the year 1912. See for example Goldstein 1981: 58ff.

23 lHa gdan corresponds to lHa ldan, an alternative name of Lhasa (Roerich 1949: x and 45f.).

24 A Tibetan designation for Avalokiteśvara.

25 Tib. *rags rgyab*, “those who live behind the embankment,” refers to a low class of people who work as corpse carriers and live behind the embankment (*chu rags*) protecting Lhasa from floods.

Since they have no character, [their lack of shame] is, oh wonder, [as  
 great as the distance between] heaven [and] earth.  
 Because the bald-headed (*mgo bsgril*)<sup>26</sup>—not having the time to ask  
 [the right] questions—are confused.  
 Those who [inhabit] this [region] of Central [Tibet are] definitely those  
 who are the true descendants of the past monkeys.  
 Depending on the particular day, [they carry out] another [particular]  
 theatre,  
 Depending on their particular temper of mind [they enact] discrimina-  
 tory sayings.  
 In every moment [there occur] hundreds of [things] never seen before.  
 No matter where one remains, one continually wanders along paths of  
 distraction.  
 The desire to eat, the desire to see and  
 [The desire] to speak [appears here as regular] as [the rhythm of] the  
 waves [of the ocean].  
 Even if this may be the nature of living beings continually circling [in  
*samsāra*],  
 It is all the more so [the nature] of this place, of lHa sa, [and] its people.  
 Through being surrounded by an ocean of the three [types of] recepta-  
 cles of the best Three [Jewels] [fol. 255a],  
 [Through completing] prostrations, [making] offerings and encounter-  
 ing [receptacles, here] One attains the germination of liberation,  
*dharma*[-comprehension] and good qualities in ample [measure] with-  
 out any involvement on one's part.  
 [In this way] this place, in which all desires appear, is also a fortunate  
 one.  
 Through the decoration of clothing [it is made apparent what the] so-  
 cial ranks of  
 high [and] low [are, and] the accoutrements [of persons] who own  
 property  
 Are excellent, and also because the total wealth of the state  
 Is largely [dedicated] as an assembly of offerings to the Three Jewels  
 and so on,

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26 Here to be understood as a term referring to the monks.

The state's acceptance of the *dharma* is here stronger than in most [other countries] of Jambudvīpa.

That [here flow around] many slanders, that one takes joy in idleness and

That one experiences here a great desire for unnecessary, doubtful [and] costly objects is [however] a mistake.

That one [here is] in a philosophical sense largely biased and sectarian, [and] that it is difficult [here] to build [true] friendships, is the fundamental nature of this place.

[Set down in] wonder, [these verses were] spoken.

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# Once More on the so-called Old dGa' ldan Editions of Tsong kha pa's Works\*

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## 1 Introduction

The year 2019 marked the 600th death anniversary of Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), the founding figure of the dGa' ldan pa or dGe lugs pa, who is throughout the different traditions of Tibetan Buddhism remembered as an outstanding scholar in his own right. As part of the ceremonial program in late 2019, the master's literary oeuvre was released in two anniversary editions of the *Collective Writings of Lord Tsong kha pa and his Spiritual Sons* (*rje yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum*). In two independent publication projects conducted in Tibet/P.R. China and in India, the collected writings of Tsong kha pa and his two main disciples, rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432) and mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang (1385–1438), were ambitiously re-edited and compiled as comparative editions (*dpe bsdur ma*) in a modern book format.

The Tibetan anniversary edition in 37 volumes was compiled by a team of editors and researchers under the direction (*spyi'i 'gan 'dzin*) of bZhang pa rin po che 'Jam dbyangs mkhas grub<sup>1</sup> (b. 1968; 夏坝·

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1 sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar and Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum skor dpyad pa 2018*, p. 23. Information on the project is found on the website of the Renmin University of China, School of Philosophy; see “中国人民大学国际佛学研究中心发布重大研究成果 《宗喀巴师徒三尊文集（对勘本）》出版”， posted 2019-12-02, URL: [http://phi.ruc.edu.cn/Index/news\\_cont/id/5835.html](http://phi.ruc.edu.cn/Index/news_cont/id/5835.html) (accessed: 28.08.2020).

降央克珠) and published by the Nationalities Publishing House (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2019) as *rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma* (宗喀巴师徒三尊文集 对勘本). In two additional articles, sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, who was among the leading researchers of the project, compares the different pre-1950 xylograph editions of Tsong kha pa's and his disciples' writings and addresses editorial interventions and issues in the compilation process.<sup>2</sup> I was unable to access the edition while preparing this paper. The Indian anniversary edition with the same title, *rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma*, was edited by Loseling college of Drepung monastery in South India (Mundgod: Drepung Loseling Pethub Khangtsen Education Society, 2019). It consists of 44 volumes,<sup>3</sup> plus an additional volume with background information on earlier Tibetan printed editions and on the publication project.<sup>4</sup> Having recently heard about the release of the two new comparative editions, I became very curious as to whether or not material from the so-called "Old Ganden xylographs"<sup>5</sup> (*dGa' ldan par rnying*) had been employed for the text collation.

The "Old Ganden xylographs" represent the earliest printings of Tsong kha pa's works dating from the early fifteenth century. This "edition" was first made known to a wider audience in the late 1980s by the Tibetan scholar Dung dkar rin po che Blo bzang 'phrin las (1927–1997) and by David Jackson.<sup>6</sup> In two articles, David Jackson described

2 sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017* and sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar and Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum skor dpyad pa 2018*. For a catalogue and detailed description of the edition, see sNyan bzang pa dGe 'dun, *rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma rab gsal me long* (《宗喀巴师徒三尊文集 (对勘本)》说明及目录大全), Pe cin: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2019.

3 Digital PDF files of the volumes are available at "Jetsongkhapa Net", *rJe tsong kha pa'i dra ba*, URL: <http://bo.jetsongkhapa.net/gsungrab/sungbum/2020-03-02/3571.html> (accessed: 28.08.2020).

4 So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*. On the publication project, see also "Je Yabje Sungbum - World Sungbum Project", URL: <https://jeyabsesungbum.org/> (accessed: 28.08.2020).

5 Depending on the context, the short form "*par rnying*" can refer to either "old wooden block(s) [for printing]" (*par shing rnying pa*) or "old print(s)" (*par ma rnying pa*).

6 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, pp. 74–120, *Bod yig dpe rnying dpar skrun dang 'brel ba'i gnad don 'ga' zhib skor gleng ba*, first published in *Bod ljongs zhib 'jug* 1989/4: 1–13, continued in *Bod ljongs zhib*



and contextualized six xylographs from the edition that he had located during fieldtrips to India and Nepal. His research remains a seminal contribution to the origins of book printing in Central Tibet (dBus).<sup>7</sup>

Particularly with regard to the substantial amount of medieval literature that is being rediscovered and published from the surviving Tibetan collections at Drepung, the Potala, the Norbulinka and elsewhere, I was intrigued to find out if examples from among the earliest prints of Tsong kha pa's oeuvre could have been consulted for the new comparative editions. In fact, they had been consulted for the 2012-book edition of Tsong kha pa's collected writings in 18 volumes, edited by the Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang).<sup>8</sup>

My hopes to discover new evidence relating to the "Old Genden prints" in the two new book editions were, however, diminished with the initial inquiries carried out for this paper: Both projects had employed the standard xylograph collections from centuries later. mKhar byams thar clarifies that the Tibetan anniversary edition employed the collections produced at gTsang bKra shis lhun po (sigla: gTsang), A mdo Bla brang bkra shis 'khyil (sigla: Bla), mDo smad sKu 'bum dgon (sigla: sKu) and lHa sa'i Zhol par khang (sigla: Zhol), with the old bKra shis lhun po prints serving as the master copy (*ma phyi'i gzhi 'dzin sa gtso bo*) for the collation.<sup>9</sup> For the edition compiled by Drepung Loseling, three of the four editions were considered: sKu 'bum Byams pa gling (sigla: sKu), Zhol (sigla: Zhol) and gTsang (sigla: gTsang). The

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<sup>7</sup> jug 1990/1: 61–83; also *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, pp. 137–142, "Bod kyi dpar skrun," in *Bod kyi dkar chag rig pa*. Dung dkar rin po che's article *Bod kyi dkar chag rig pa* was first published in *sBrang char*, 1986/2: 70–82, 69 and 1986/3: 72–98.

<sup>7</sup> Jackson 1989; Jackson 1990.

<sup>8</sup> In the preface, the editors state that they, in addition to the main editions of Zhol and sKu 'bum, also considered "Old Genden prints" (*dge ldan par rnying*) in cases of uncertain and problematic readings; see Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.), *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum 2012*, vol. 1, *bsDu sgrig gsal bshad*, pp. 7f.: *the tshom can dang dka' gnas khag dga' ldan phun tshogs gling gi par ma dang / dge ldan par rnying / bkra shis [8] lhun po'i par rnying sogs la'ang dpe bsdur zhus pa ma zad mkhas dbang dag la dka' 'dri zhus te bka' phebs bzhin go sgrig zhu snas gtan la phab pa [...]*.

<sup>9</sup> sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017*, p. 154; *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum skor dpyad pa 2018*, pp. 21f.

sKu 'bum prints served as the master copy (*ma phyi gtso bo*) to which the readings of the Central Tibetan editions were compared.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, this paper will draw from other material that has become available since Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las and David Jackson encountered the first examples more than thirty years ago. Taking their findings as a starting point, I will present new evidence from recently discovered block prints, secondary literature and the most recent research.

## 2 Overview – What is Known About the Edition?<sup>11</sup>

According to Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las and David Jackson, the “Old Ganden xylographs” constitute the earliest printings of Tsong kha pa's works that were produced in the first decades of the fifteenth century. The production of blocks was undertaken at different locations in Central Tibet (dBus), distributed among regional ruling houses and

10 So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, p. 169. On the different print editions of Tsong kha pa's oeuvre, see *ibid.*, pp. 11–139, 147f., as well as sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017*, pp. 148f.; sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar and Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum skor dpyad pa 2018*, pp. 21f.; dPal rdor, *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum par shing skor 2018*; Tsering 2020: 201–211.

11 Before describing here xylograph witnesses and the setting of their production, a short note on terminology should be made. Given that colophons of Tibetan printed works indicate the time, place, sponsorship and staff of the block's production (if they do) and not of the actual printing, I prefer to talk of “block colophons” or “xylograph colophons” (*par byang*) and “carving projects” instead of the more commonly used expressions “printing colophons” and “printing projects.” It must be acknowledged that we can hardly tell when and where prints (and reprints) were made from the blocks without a proper analysis of paper, ink and so forth. I follow here Andreï Vostrikov's translation of *par byang* as “a technical term meaning ‘publisher's’ or more correctly ‘xylograph’ colophon”; see Vostrikov 1970: 46; also Cabezón 2001: 253; David Jackson frequently uses the translation “xylographic colophon”; cf. Jackson and Onoda 1988; Jackson 1989, 1996, *et passim*. I understand “*par*” in “*par du brkos pa*,” “*~ bzhengs pa*” or “*~ bsgrubs pa*” not as referring to the printing, but to the manufacture of the text as a “[physical] image” (*par/dpar/spar*) in the form of an engraved wooden block or xylograph (*par shing*). The phrases “*par (du) brkos pa'i par byang*” and “*par (du) bsgrubs pa'i par byang*” point to this meaning and are frequently attested in the 5th Dalai Lama's collected works; see Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.), *lNga pa chen po'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 2 (*kha*), p. 172, vol. 5 (*ca*), p. 394, vol. 9 (*ja 3*), p. 271, vol. 19 (*ma*), pp. 124f., 143f., 357, vol. 20 (*tsha*), pp. 144f., *et passim*.

monastic communities who facilitated the carving on their territory. Traditional histories and the blocks' colophons reveal that the xylographic production of Tsong kha pa's oeuvre was encouraged by the fifth Phag mo gru pa ruler Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1374–1432) and that the rulers of Gong dkar and sNe'u were strong forces behind this transregional endeavour.<sup>12</sup>

The surviving prints tell us that blocks were produced by Tsong kha pa's wealthy patrons at Gong dkar and in the wider lHa sa area, at 'Bras spungs and dGa'ldan, but also in 'Ol dga' and likely at Brag dkar (?) in Upper sKyid shod, as is claimed by Dung dkar rin po che. David Jackson had identified six prints from the edition on account of their block size (ca. 47×6 cm), similar appearance and the information contained in the xylograph colophons (*par byang*). Dung dkar rin po che, and recently Pad ma bkra shis, recognise a particular typeface (*yig gzugs*) and style of miniature illustrations (*dbu lha*, *dbu zhabs lha sku*) in those early prints that is said reflect the high degree of wood craftsmanship.<sup>13</sup>

At some point in time, the wooden printing blocks (*par shing*) were offered or transported to dGa'ldan monastery, which is how this collection obtained its name. Jackson writes that “many of these early blocks, if they were not originally carved at Dga'ldan, were later moved there. Xylographs from them later came to be known as “old Dga'ldan prints” (*dga'ldan dpar-rnying*)”.<sup>14</sup> Khri byang rin po che (1901–1981) reports in his autobiography that the blocks of Tsong kha pa's *Great Treatise on the Path of Mantra* (*sNgags rim chen mo*) were donated to dGa'ldan monastery in the seventh year of rGyal tshab's tenure as throne holder (i.e. 1425/26?),<sup>15</sup> while Dung dkar 'phrin las explains that the collection was xylographically manufactured (*dpar skrun*) after Tsong kha pa's death by the Brag dkar estate officer at the prompting of rGyal

12 Paṅ chen bSod nams grags pa, *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (Tucci ed. 1971), fol. 98.1–3 (cited below), fol. 101.1–6. Also Jackson 1990: 107f.

13 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, pp. 88f., 138 (for a translation, see Gonkatsang 2016: 166). Pad ma bkra shis, *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, pp. 156f., *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 14of. For stylistic features of the xylographs, compare the example folios reproduced under figures 1–8.

14 Jackson 1990: 108.

15 Khri byang Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *Khri byang rin po che rang rnam*, p. 478.1–3 (for a translation, see Tenzin Trinley 2018: 330). Also Jackson 1990: 108.

tshab rje and that it was offered to dGa' ldan monastery, comprising a total of 18 volumes.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere, Dung dkar rin po che writes that the dGa' ldan par khang contained a few printed works by Tsong kha pa and his two main disciples that were produced with the patronage of the sNe'u district officer Nam mkha' bzang po at the time when mKhas grub rje was occupying the abbatial throne.<sup>17</sup>

The carving of rJe rin po che's works on wooden blocks for a wider dissemination might have begun at his monastic seat. David Jackson documented two titles (cf. title list, nos. 1, 3) that were produced at dGa' ldan monastery. Here, a collection of old blocks referred to as the "dGa' ldan spar rnying" survived until the first half of the twentieth century. According to a pre-1950 inventory of Central Tibetan block holdings, the collection was stored at the Zung 'ju khams tshan and amounted to more than two thousand folios.<sup>18</sup> Phur lcog Ngag dbang byams pa (1682–1762), in his survey of the four great Gelugpa monasteries of Central Tibet, writes that the printing house of dGa' ldan was storing blocks of Tsong kha pa's major compositions that the master himself had consecrated.<sup>19</sup> Perhaps it was this passage that led later authors

16 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1659: *gsung 'bum pod bco brgyad yod pa sku gshegs rjes rgyal tshab rjes bskul ma gnang ba ltar gzhis ka brag dkar nang sos dpar skrun byas te dga' ldan du phul ba dga' ldan par rnying zhes de sngon zung chu khang tshan du bzhugs yod/.*

17 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 139: *dga' ldan par khang / rje tsong kha pa sku 'das rjes khong gi slob ma mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang gis dga' ldan khri pa gnang skabs sne'u rdzong dpon nam mkha' bzang pos sbyin bdag byas te rje tsong kha pa dang / rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen/ mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang bcas kyi gsung rtsom khag gcig dpar bskrun byas pa ni yig gzugs ha cang legs/.*

18 See Gangs can gyi ljongs su bka' dang bstan bcos sogs kyi glegs bam spar gzhi ji ltar yod pa rnam nas dkar chag spar thor phyogs tsam du bkod pa phan bde'i pad tshal 'byed pa'i nyin byed, in Ngawang Gelek Demo (ed.), *Three dkar chag's*, p. 201.4–5: *zung 'ju khams tshan du/ dga' ldan spar rnying sngags rim chen mo dang / lam rim che chung sogs rje tsong kha pa chen po'i bka' 'bum gras shog bu nyis stong brgal tsam dang / [...].* Also Jackson 1990: 108; Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 88 (cited below), *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, p. 1659 (cited above).

19 See Phur lcog Ngag dbang byams pa, *Grwa sa chen po bzhi dang rgyud pa stod smad chags tshul pad dkar 'phreng ba* (compiled 1744), in Ngawang Gelek Demo (ed.), *Three dkar chag's*, p. 77.6: *par khang du / 'grel pa bzhi sbrags/ lam rim che chung / sngags rim/ rim lnga gsal sgron sogs kyi par shing rje'i phyag nas mang du gnang ba rnam bzhugs so//.*

to assume that the *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (no. 4; no xylograph colophon) and some other prominent works were carved onto blocks during Tsong kha pa's lifetime.<sup>20</sup>

Regarding the origins of the collection, it must be noted that the colophons and additional Gelugpa biographies reviewed for this contribution do not indicate whether or when the blocks were moved to dGa' ldan.<sup>21</sup> We cannot exclude the possibility that the transport and gathering of blocks might have taken place only centuries after the production, maybe for reprinting or recarving the blocks. Recent research has shown that the term "dGa' ldan par rnying" can first be attested in a dGa' ldan pho brang print from 1715 that was reproduced from an Old Ganden original (no. 18).<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, Tibetan authors seem to have different ideas about the extent and completeness of what became referred to as the "Old Ganden xylographs."<sup>23</sup> While some refer to only the early xylographs of Tsong kha pa's writings from around the 1420s–30s, others consider the

20 sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor* 2017, pp. 149f.: *dga' ldan par rnying ni rje rin po che khong zhal bzhugs dus su* <byang chub lam rim chen mo> [150] dang / <legs bshad gser 'phreng > sogs glegs bam 'ga' dngos su shing par du rkos zin na'ang skabs der rje gsung 'bum cha tshang shing par du brkos mi 'dug; rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum sdud sgrig khang (ed.), *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma 2*, p. xvi: *rje nyid zhal bzhugs pa'i skabs nyid nas dga' ldan du gsang 'dus 'grel pa bzhi sbrags dang / lam rim chen mo/ sngags rim chen mo/ drang nges rnam 'byed sogs par shing du brko thub par mdzad pa las/ rim pas dga' ldan par mar grags pa byung ba sogs yongs su grags/*. In the context of the block manufacture of the *Guhyasamājantra* and its *Pradīpoddyotana* commentary in the years 1418–19, Thupten Jinpa (2019: 305) states that "other texts commissioned for printing probably included *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*, *The Great Treatise on Tantra*, *The Essence of True Eloquence*, and *The Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages*."

21 Jackson (1989: 10) noted this lack of evidence for a later xylograph of the *Middle-Length Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (*Lam rim 'bring po*).

22 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 143, 146. Also Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, p. 39.4–6 (cited under no. 18). A dGa' ldan pho brang print of the *Legs bshad gser 'phreng* carved in 1722 at dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling (formerly rTag brtan phun tshogs gling) identifies a group of old blocks patronized by the gZhis ka sNe'u pa as the master copy for reproduction; see Tsong kha pa, *Legs bshad gser 'phreng*, fol. 622a3–5 (cited under no. 15).

23 Pad ma bkra shis rightly designates the titles that were produced at Gong dkar as Gongkar prints (*Gong dkar spar ma*); see *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134, 140, 143.

complete literary output by his inheritors, rGyal tshab rje (1364–1432) and mKhas grub rje (1385–1438), as part of the larger collection.<sup>24</sup> Dung dkar 'phrin las states that “dGa' ldan dpar rnying” refers to Tsong kha pa's complete oeuvre carved onto wooden blocks, and that the entire collection existed as xylographs in the libraries of the Potala (rTse po ta la),<sup>25</sup> Sera and Drepung (Se 'bras),<sup>26</sup> Gyalse Labrang (rGyal sras bla brang) and Kundeling (Kun bde gling).<sup>27</sup> Regardless of what later authors understand by the term, it is difficult to estimate the scope of the original collection with only a few witnesses accessible. Lately, doubts

24 Apart from the earliest prints of Tsong kha pa's works, mKhar byams thar considers another, later xylographic collection of Tsong kha pa and his disciples' writings, apparently produced or assembled at dGa' ldan, to be “Old Ganden prints” (*dGa' ldan par rnying gi rje yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum*); see *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017*, pp. 148, 150. See also Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 139 (cited above). Early fifteenth-century xylograph witnesses of rGyal tshab rje's commentaries of the *Abhisamayālamkāra* and *Pramāṇavārttika* have survived; see under BDRC W1KG15417 and W00KG03841. The blocks of both titles were produced in gTsang, at gNas rnying gi chos grwa chen po in 1441(?) (*bya'i lo*) and at 'Thon gyi dGa' ldan rtse in 1449 (*sa mo sbrul gyi lo*). For the latter, see also van der Kuijp 2018. An old(?) Ganden print of rGyal tshab's *Ratnagotravibhāga* commentary is furthermore mentioned by Jeffrey Hopkins; see Hopkins 2003: 1050, n. 1146, 1068.

25 A xylograph collection of 18 volumes is listed in Po ta la rig dngos srung skyob do dam so'o, *Po ta la gsung 'bum dkar chag*, pp. 1–12, catalogue nos. 00368–00385.

26 Several printed works of Tsong kha pa survive at Se ra and 'Bras spungs; see sKa ba Shes rab bzang po, *Chos sde khag dpe rnying dkar chag*, pp. 203–419 (*gDan sa chen po se ra theg chen gling gi tshogs chen yang thog gzims chung du bzhugsu gsol ba'i dpe rnying dkar chag*) and dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, inter alia*, vol. 2, pp. 2329–2475 (*'Bras spungs kun dga' rwa ba'i dpe mdzod dkar chag*).

27 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 88: *bod du dpar shing rko ba'i lag rtsal thog mar dar nas yun ring ma song bar rje tsong kha pa sku 'das shing / de nas lo bcu (sic!) bdun song ba'i me rta spyi lo 1426lor gong dkar dang sne'u rdzong dpon nam mkha' bzang po bcas la rgyal tshab rin po che dang / rtogs ldan 'jam dpal rgya mtsho sogs kyis bka' gnang ba ltar rje tsong kha pa'i gsung 'bum cha tshang dpar skrun byas pa de'i gras de sngon rtse po tā la (=po ta la) dang / se 'bras/ 'on rgyal sras bla brang / kun bde gling bcas kyi dpe mdzod khang du cha tshang yod/ dpar shing de la dga' ldan dpar rnying zer zhing de sngon rig gnas gsar rje'i gong tsam bar dga' ldan zung ju khang tshan du bzhag yod pa [...]. Also *ibid.*, p. 138 (for a translation, see Gonkatsang 2016: 166).*

about the completeness of the edition have been raised,<sup>28</sup> and it remains an open question whether the earliest printings of Tsong kha pa's works were meant to embody a complete set of the master's collected writings (*bka' 'bum*, *gsung 'bum*). The surviving prints lack marginal notations (*pod rtags*) and are partly without xylograph colophons. And there are other challenges for a proper identification of titles belonging to this "edition". The fact that blocks were fabricated somehow independently in different parts of Central Tibet must naturally have resulted in regional varieties in style and typography.<sup>29</sup> In addition, there is evidence for slightly later Central-Tibetan prints whose relation to the "Old Ganden xylographs" is unclear.<sup>30</sup> As holds true for the oeuvre of many masters, a great number of hitherto unknown prints of Tsong kha pa's works are listed in the many catalogues of surviving Tibetan collections that have appeared in the past years. Without access to the originals or a fuller documentation, however, it is almost impossible to relate those titles to a distinct period, let alone a particular edition or printing house. Some "Old Ganden prints" in the Drepung collection, for instance, seem to be mistakenly identified as Uchen manuscripts (*bris ma dbu can*).<sup>31</sup> Dung dkar rin po che had recognised this similarity long ago, pointing out that the old prints can easily be mistaken for handwritten manuscripts, due to their typeface being similar to the copper (*zangs dpar*) or bronze prints (*khro dpar*).<sup>32</sup>

28 sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar and Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum skor dpyad pa 2018*, p. 21; rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum sdud sgrig khang (ed.), *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma 2*, p. xv; So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, p. 17; also dPal rdor, *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum par shing skor 2018*, p. 199.

29 Compare the miniature depictions of Tsong kha pa in figures 1–4.

30 David Jackson, for instance, discovered another edition of the *Middle-Length Treatise on the Stages of the Path* that was produced at gZhis chen sNe'u rdzong in 1465; see Jackson 1989: 7–10. Early 'Bras spungs prints of Tsong kha pa's collected writings (*'Jam mgon tsong kha pa chen po'i gsung 'bum par rnying gras*) are listed in Eimer 1992: 11ff. A later Ganden print of the *rTsa ltung gi rnam bshad* is mentioned in the 1897 Zhol reproduction of this text; see under no. (12).

31 See references under nos. (6) and (7).

32 Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Dung dkar 'phrin las gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, p. 88: *de la dga' ldan dpar rnying zer zhing [...] de'i yig gzugs dpe cha lag bris ma dang nor 'gro ba lta bu'i dpar rko'i lag rtsal ha las pa zhig 'dug*. Also Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 140.

### 3 New Titles in Context

This contribution surveys a total of nineteen titles, among them the six titles documented by David Jackson (nos. 1–6), three new xylograph discoveries in the form of digital scans (nos. 7–9) and nine further titles cited in the later literature (nos. 15–19) and modern publications (nos. 11–14). Particularly the recent research by Padma bkra shis from the TAR section for the Preservation of Ancient Scriptures (Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas) brought to light several hitherto unknown works from the edition. The author cites short passages from the xylograph colophons and links those titles to the early book production at Gong dkar. Unfortunately, he fails to provide valuable information about the provenance, size and extent of the originals.

#### A Titles from Gong dkar (Yar rgyab sponsorship)

Gong dkar, during the reign of I nag bZhi 'dzom<sup>33</sup> (1372/73–1446) of the Yar rgyab family, was a major place for the production of religious books. In the *New Red Annals*, Paṅ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478–1554) recounts that Gong dkar bZhi 'dzom ordered a Golden Kanjur and many of the works of rJe rin po che to be printed, following the order of Gong ma Grags pa rgyal mtshan.<sup>34</sup> Gong dkar must have been a privileged location for taking part in the ambitious project of producing the first printed examples of Tsong kha pa's writings. The 'Ching ru valley to the southeast of the old fortress at Gong dkar (Gong dkar rdzong) has been recognised as an important site for producing xylographs in dPon bZhi 'dzom's realm.<sup>35</sup> bZhi 'dzom's nephew and

33 On him, see Fermer 2017: 70, 73f. The dates of his life are given according to Byang chub rnam rgyal dge legs, *Byams pa gling pa'i rnam thar*, fols. 31a–32b. Pad ma bkra shis and dPal rdor give the dates 1371–1445 for his life; *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 135, *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154 and *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum par shing skor 2018*, p. 198. I nag bZhi 'dzom should not be confused with bZhi 'dzom Rin chen don yod; Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 135f. He was a later Yar rgyab official who lived in the second part of the fifteenth century; see Fermer 2017: 82f.

34 Paṅ chen bSod nams grags pa, *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (Tucci ed. 1971), fol. 98.1–3: *gong dkar bzhi 'dzom pas ni gong ma grags pa rgyal mtshan pa'i gsung bzhin/ gser gyi bka' 'gyur sogs gsung rab mang po bzhengs pa dang / rje rin po che'i gsung rab mang po'i spar brko ba sogs mdzad/* (translation in *ibid.*, p. 237). Also Jackson 1990: 107f.

35 Fermer 2017: 75.



foster-son, Byams pa gling pa bSod nams rnam rgyal (1400–1475), compiled an inventory list of the existent blocks at 'Ching ru (var. 'Phying ru) while sojourning at Gong dkar in 1434.<sup>36</sup> This lost inventory and the colophon information of an old 'Ching ru print point to the full-scale adoption of printing technology during bZhi 'dzom's reign. By the 1420s the powerful official of Gong dkar could probably draw upon existing facilities and skilled personal to produce woodcut blocks on a larger scale.

Among the earliest xylographs manufactured under his patronage are a volume of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra in Eight Thousand Lines*<sup>37</sup> (*Sher phyin brgyad stong pa*) and a group of Indian works, both said to be produced by the wishes of the sNe gdong ruler. Two witnesses of Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* survive from the latter collection which was explicitly dedicated to the Gong ma's wellbeing and temporal success.<sup>38</sup> The carving of Guṇaprabha's text on long wooden blocks (paper size: ca. 64 × 10 cm) was accomplished in 1419 at bZhi 'dzom's palace (*pho brang*) at Gong dkar.<sup>39</sup> The block colophon reports that the collection, among other titles, included also Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* and the *gTsong tor dri med rab gnas cho ga*.<sup>40</sup> Shortly afterwards, two other works of Indian authorship, similar in size and general appearance, were carved onto blocks at Gong dkar. They were Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*<sup>41</sup>

36 *Ibid.* After Byang chub rnam rgyal dge legs, *Byams pa gling pa'i rnam thar*, fol. 22a3.

37 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134f., 137f., 144. The *Prajñāpāramitā* volume in this length is said to be the first xylographic edition of the text produced in Tibet; see *ibid.*, p. 134: *kha ba can 'dir dar zhing rgyas na yang / /sngon chad par du bzhangs pa'i srol ma dod/*.

38 Yon tan 'od, *'Dul ba'i mdo*, fol. 82a. Witnesses of this edition are preserved at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (Dharamsala), signature: *kha 5 / 14585*, and at Matho monastery (Mang spro Shar gling chos 'khor) in Ladakh, signature on title folio: *da 12*.

39 *'Dul ba'i mdo*, fol. 82a.

40 *Ibid.*, fol. 82a. Here seems to be referred to the *gTsong tor dri ma med pa'i gzungs kyi cho ga* (\**Vimaloṣṇīṣadhāraṇīvidhi*) attributed to Atiśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna; see Tōh. 3082, also Tōh. 3081.

41 Zhi ba lha, *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa* [= *sPyod 'jug*]. A xylograph witness is preserved in the Peltsek xylograph collection, text no. 4; see dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (ed.), *Porong Dawa Collection*, p. 12–14; Fermer 2017: 75, nn. 34f.; Ehrhard and Sernesi 2019: 121f.

(carved in 1422) and Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*<sup>42</sup> (carved prior to the Gong ma's death in 1432) and represent the earliest Tibetan print productions of these Buddhist classics outside of the Tengyur collection.<sup>43</sup> A closer look at their block colophons brings to light the names of several individuals who were also active in the production of Tsong kha pa's writings at Gong dkar. As David Jackson inferred from the colophon, the carving of the *Great Treatise on the Path of Mantra* (no. 6) was accomplished at Gong dkar palace in the year 1426 under the patronage of Drung chen bZhi 'dzom pa and his nephew (*khu dbon*),<sup>44</sup> who can now be identified as the Yar rgyab official lHun grub bkra shis.<sup>45</sup>

Among bZhi 'dzom's main editors (*zhus dag pa*) for the text, the colophon specifies, was a certain Rin chen dpal bzang.<sup>46</sup> Rin chen dpal bzang *alias* bShes gnyen Rin chen dpal must have been a key figure in the book production at Gong dkar, having earlier directed (*do dam*) the manufacture of the *Vinayasūtra*<sup>47</sup> (completed 1419) and commissioned xylographs of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*<sup>48</sup> (completed 1422) and the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*.<sup>49</sup> Sponsored by bZhi 'dzom, the carving of the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* must have been accomplished at around the same time. Rin chen dpal bzang himself can be identified as a disciple of rJe Rin po che.<sup>50</sup> He was a member of the rNgog family based in

42 'Phags pa lha, *Byang chub sems dpa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa bzhi brgya pa* [= bZhi brgya pa]. This old Gong dkar print of Āryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses* had already caught David Jackson's attention; see Jackson 1990: 115, n. 3. It is preserved in the Library of Tibetan works and Archives (Dharamsala), signature: *kha 3 / 19137* (old signature: *kha 3, 44, no. 2615*).

43 These titles may have been single productions, or they may have well belonged to a larger xylograph collection of Indian treatises produced at Gong dkar for the scriptural study centres flourishing in dBus at the time.

44 Jackson 1989: 5.

45 For this official, see Fermer 2017: 74.

46 Jackson 1989: 4, here *mkha' spyod brnyes pa'i gdung brgyud sdom brtson mchog // rgyud sdé'i mnga' bdag rin chen dpal bzang yin /*.

47 Yon tan 'od, *'Dul ba'i mdo*, fol. 82a5–6, here *par du bsgrubs pa'i do dam zhal lta pa [...]* *dpal ldan sa skya'i gshes (=bshes) gnyen rin chen dpal*.

48 Zhi ba lha, *sPyod 'jug*, fol. 34a2, here *dad pa'i gsal 'debs bshes gnyen rin chen dpal*.

49 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134f., here *deng sang bshes gnyen dam pa rin chen dpal / bstan la gcig tu bya ba byed pa des / [...]* *dge la spro ba'i padma kha phye nas [...]*.

50 Kaschewsky 1971: 211; Pañ chen bSod nams grags pa, *bSod grags bka' gdams chos*

the neighbouring gZhung valley under Gong dkar's administration.<sup>51</sup> Another member of the rNgog family, who was strongly involved in book production at Gong dkar, is Nam mkha' bzang po. Addressed in the *Commentary of the Root Infractions* (no. 12) as gZhung pa Nam mkha' bzang po, his association with the gZhung valley and the hereditary lineage of the rNgog gzhung pa can be clearly established.<sup>52</sup> Nam mkha' bzang po was responsible for copying the manuscript pages for carving this text, as well as for the *Great Treatise on the Path of Mantra* (*sNgags rim chen mo*),<sup>53</sup> Āryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses*<sup>54</sup> and the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*,<sup>55</sup> all produced under the commission of the Gong dkar ruler. The identity of a person called Gu ru in the *sNgags rim chen mo* colophon can now also be established.<sup>56</sup> He was bZhi 'dzom's steward in charge of Gong dkar estate, who supported the carving of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* and is referred to as gNyer chen 'Gu ru in the colophon.<sup>57</sup>

The identity of the block carvers for Tsong kha pa's influential treatise on the Vajrayāna path can also be clarified by comparing the historical information in the block colophons. sKyabs pa,<sup>58</sup> one of the main carvers, can be identified with mKhas pa sprul sku dPon mo che dPon skyab, who is listed as the master carver for the *Vinayasūtra* and

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*'byung*, pp. 57, 179; Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, *Las chen bka' gdams chos 'byung*, p. 707 (here Chos rje sna rab ba Rin chen dpal bzang), *ibid.*, p. 821. He should not be confused with Tsong kha pa's scribe Brag dgon dKa' bzhi pa Rin chen dpal; see *ibid.*, p. 814.

51 This has also been noticed by Pad ma bkra shis; see *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 139f. On Rin chen dpal, see Ducher 2017: 324f. He belonged to the gTsang tsha branch of the rNgog family and is known for having established Brag dmar Chos 'khor gling monastery on the western ridges of the gZhung valley; see Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, *Las chen bka' gdams chos 'byung*, pp. 821f. For gZhung, see Fermer 2017: 75f. and Fermer forthcoming.

52 Pad ma bkra shis (*Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 138f.) describes Nam mkha' bzang po as a master copyist (*yig mkhan dbu chen*) at Gong dkar.

53 Jackson 1989: 4, here *mkhas pa'i phul byung nam mkha' bzang pos bris*.

54 'Phags pa lha, *bZhi brgya pa*, fol. 13a4, here *yi ge pa ni nam mkha' bzang pos bzabs*.

55 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 138, here *yig mkhan mkhas pa gzhung pa nam mkha'*.

56 Jackson 1989: 4, here *phun tshogs dpal 'byor gyis mdzes gu ru*.

57 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 137.

58 Jackson 1989: 4, here *rig byed 'dzin pa'i gtso bo skyabs pa*.

the supervisor for the *Catuḥśataka* carving.<sup>59</sup> Addressed as dPon mo che, he can be considered a leading carver entrusted by bZhi 'dzom with the execution of prestigious book projects. Another accomplished carver addressed with this title was dPon mo che dGe 'dun 'od zer, who was in charge of the carving of Rong ston's *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* commentary at 'Phan po Nalendra in 1436,<sup>60</sup> and probably also for the Cakrasaṃvara maṇḍala ritual (no. 11) at Gong dkar.<sup>61</sup> dGe bsam,<sup>62</sup> the other main carver for the *sNgags rim chen mo*, appears as a sponsor for the *Middle-Length Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (*Lam 'rim 'bring po*; no. 5) carved in the northern Lhasa area, and as the head carver for Dar ma rin chen's *Abhisamayālamkāra* exegesis produced in a bird year (1429/1441?) at gNas rnying in gTsang.<sup>63</sup>

## B Titles from sKyid shod (sNe'u pa/sNel pa sponsorship)

An "Old Ganden print" of Tsong kha pa's *Essence of Eloquence distinguishing between the provisional and the definite meaning*, the *Drang nges legs bshad snying po* (no. 8), found in the BDRC database, reveals the involvement of another dGa' ldan pa monastery in the overall project. The colophon reveals that the carving was carried out at 'Bras spungs monastery within the realm of the sNe'u pa family. Mi dbang Nam mkha' bzang po (fl. ca. 1400–1430), the incumbent ruler, and his nephew (*khu dbon pa*) commissioned and funded (*zhal ta dang mthun pa'i rkyen sbyar*) the production that was completed in a hare year (1423?).<sup>64</sup> Uncle and nephew had earlier taken on the manufacture of Tsong kha pa's *Vajrasattva sādhana* from the Guhyasamāja cycle (no. 2) in lHa sa shortly after the master's demise in 1419. The personnel recruited for

59 Yon tan 'od, 'Dul ba'i mdo, fol. 82a6, here *rkos mkhan mkhas pa sprul sku dpon mo che/ /dpon skyab thog grangs mkhas pa rnam kyis gzabs//*; 'Phags pa lha, bZhi brgya pa, fols. 12b7–13a1.

60 Rong ston Shes bya kun rig, *dBu ma rtsa ba rnam bshad*, pp. 336f.

61 Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 140, here *dge 'dun dang (?) 'od zer*. A certain Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan was likewise addressed with this title. He led a group of carvers in preparing the blocks of an early *Rig gter rang 'grel* edition completed at Glang thang of 'Phan po in 1445; cf. Van der Kuijp 1993: 153f.

62 Jackson 1989: 4.

63 rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen, *mNgon rtogs rgyan 'grel pa*, fol. 191b3, here *dge sbyong dge bsam 'khor dang bcas pa'i lag pa'i 'du byed las [...]*.

64 Tsong kha pa, *Drang nges legs bshad snying po*, fol. 60b.

the project's realization at 'Bras spungs were basically the same as for the *Vajrasattva sādhana* with sDom brtson bSod nams blo gros responsible for proofreading and dGe sbyong Yon tan 'od responsible for the carving.<sup>65</sup> As may be deduced from their names, both craftsmen were ordained monks. Yon tan 'od had also coordinated (*do dam*) the production of the *Lam rim 'bring po* (no. 5), which was accomplished with the funding of a certain dPon Nam, who can probably be identified as Tsong kha pa's great advocate, the sNe'u district officer sNe'u dPon Nam mkha' bzang po from above.<sup>66</sup> At Gong dkar, Yon tan 'od led a group of carvers in cutting the blocks of the *Catuḥśataka* mentioned above.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, the Zhol edition of the *Guhyasamājantra with its Four Combined Commentaries* (*gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*) reproduces what seems to be the original colophon of the first ever printed edition of the *Guhyasamāja* root tantra. The colophon states that the expert mKhas pa Yon tan 'od was the master carver for the project facilitated by Tsong kha pa himself.<sup>68</sup> A gloss added by the Zhol editors elaborates that the first Tibetan xylograph edition of the root tantra (*rtsa ba'i rgyud*) and its explanatory tantra (*bshad pa'i rgyud*) was accomplished at 'Bras spungs monastery under sNe'u pa patronage by the persons of dPon Nam mkha' bzang po and his nephew.<sup>69</sup> Tsong kha pa's main biographer mKhas grub rje likewise recounts that the carving project of the *Guhyasamāja* root tantra and Candrakīrtipāda's *Pradīpoddyotana* ('*Grel pa sgron gsal*) in the years 1418–19 was initiated and facilitated (*sbyor ba nye bar brtsams*) by Tsong kha pa himself.<sup>70</sup> Considering this, we can now ask, if the project included the

65 Jackson 1990: 109f., 112. Notice that a certain bSod nams blo gros served as the proofreader for the carving template of Rong ston's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* commentary in 1436; see Rong ston Shes bya kun rig, *dBu ma rtsa ba rnam bshad*, p. 336. Tsong kha pa's exposition on Nāgārjuna's *Root Verses of the Middle Way*, the *rTsa shes tik chen*, is also found among the new titles identified from the edition; see no. (10).

66 Jackson 1989: 7.

67 'Phags pa lha, *bZhi brgya pa*, fol. 13a4, here *shakya'i dge slong yon tan 'od*.

68 Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, p. 151.5–6 (cited under no. 17).

69 *Ibid.*, p. 151.6–7 (cited under no. 17).

70 mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang, *Tsong kha pa rnam thar 1*, p. 111.4–5: lo [1418] *de'i gzhus nas thugs kyi dgongs pa dang sta gon mdzad nas/ dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa rgyud 'grel pa sgron gsal dang bcas pa par du brko ba'i sbyor ba nye bar brtsams*

carving of Tsong kha pa's interlinear sub-commentary (*yang 'grel*) to Candrakīrtipāda's *Guhyasamāja* commentary (no. 17). Indeed, some modern authors have understood mKhas grub rje in this way. Thupten Jinpa (2019: 305) writes that "Tsongkhapa also initiated the project of having some of his major compositions committed to woodblock prints, including especially his interlinear annotations on the *Guhyasamāja* root tantra and Candrakīrti's commentary on it, *The Clear Lamp (Pradīpodyotana)* (sic!)."71

The colophon of another dGa' ldan pho brang print reveals the patronship of the sNe'u pa for yet another title from the edition: Tsong kha pa's famous *Abhisamayālamkāra* commentary known as the *Legs bshad gser 'phreng* (no. 15).72 Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that the sNe'u family, after the death of Drung chen Nam mkha' bzang po, continued to produce printed editions of Tsong kha pa's works, as well as those of his disciples. The main agents in the second generation of patrons from the sKyid chu valley were the nobleman dPal 'byor rgyal po and his wife Chos kyi dpal 'dzom from the Brag dkar family.73 Under their sponsorship a later copy of the *Lam rim 'bring po* was produced in 1465 at sNe'u rdzong.74

### C A title from 'Ol dga' (Brag dkar sponsorship)

An "Old Ganden print" of Tsong kha pa's commentary on the Laghu-tantra of *Samvara* (no. 7) stands out from the other titles. This witness, contained in the set of xylographs collected by Porong Dawa,75

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*te / 'bad rtsol med par phag lo'i [1419] nang du legs par mthar phyin par mdzad la/ [...].* Also Jackson 1990: 107; Jinpa 2019: 305.

71 Also dPal rdor, *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum par shing skor* 2018, p. 198; Tsering 2020: 198. David Jackson (1990: 107) understands the passage from Tsong kha pa's *vita* as referring to only "the *Guhyasamājamūla Tantra* and its *Pradīpodyotana* commentary by Candrakīrtipāda."

72 Tsong kha pa, *Legs bshad gser 'phreng*, fol. 622a3–5 (cited under no. 15).

73 Pañ chen bSod nams grags pa, *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (Tucci ed. 1971), fol. 101.4–6 (translation in *ibid.*, p. 241). Also Jackson 1990: 108; Sernesi 2017: 205; So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, pp. 19f., "dPal 'byor lhun po'i shing par"; rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen, *Tshad ma rnam nges kyi tik chen dgongs pa rab gsal*, fols. 400b–402a, here Nang so Chos kyi dpal 'dzom pa.

74 Jackson 1989: 7–10, here Bu khrid dpal 'dzom, dPal 'byor rgyal po with his nephew (*khu dbon pa*).

75 dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (ed.), *Porong Dawa Collection*, text no. 5, pp. 15–17.

locates the site of manufacture as being a considerable distance from the known production sites in dBus. The colophon states that the project was realized at rTag rtse rNam par rgyal ba'i khang bzang of 'Ol kha (var. 'Ol dga', 'Ol kha) in present-day Zangs ri county, where Tsong kha pa maintained a circle of devotees from the noble Brag dkar family. Tshul khrims rin chen and bSod nams rgyal [... ?] are mentioned as donors for the carving in 1428,<sup>76</sup> at a time when Tsong kha pa's major patron, Brag dkar ba Rin chen dpal, reigned as the district's officer (*rdzong dpon*). Besides them, the colophon names further persons active in the sponsorship. Due to the damage of the folio's side portions, their names remain unidentified for the time being. The other individuals mentioned for the copying, proofreading and the carving of the work are presently unknown.

#### 4 Concluding Remarks

With the discovery of the first witnesses in the 1980s, David Jackson acknowledged the historical and philological significance of the so-called "Old Ganden editions."<sup>77</sup> Next to the early printed works of Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451) and Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449) from around the same time, the titles described here can be identified as the earliest Central-Tibetan xylograph productions from a master's literary heritage.<sup>78</sup>

The discovery of a title from 'Ol dga' in the north-eastern part of lHo kha reveals that the enterprise of reproducing Tsong kha pa's works in print was geographically much wider in scope than previously

76 Tsong kha pa, *bDe mchog rgya cher bshad pa*, fols. 166b–167a. Also Ehrhard and Sernesi 2019: 122.

77 Jackson 1990: 110.

78 Also Jackson 1989: 1. On early printed editions of Bo dong's works, see Ehrhard 2016: 215f.; Sharshon 2016; Sernesi 2017: 205f.; Ehrhard and Sernesi 2019: 120f. On surviving xylographs from Rong ston's oeuvre carved at different places in dBus, see Rong ston Shes bya kun rig, *dBu ma rtsa ba rnam bshad*, pp. 336f.; Jackson and Onoda 1988; Van der Kuijp 1991; Cabezón 2001: 245–247; Pho brang po ta la dpe rnying bsdu sgrig khang, *Po ta la'i sa skya'i gsung rab dkar chag*, pp. 171f., nos. 01906(7), 01906(9), digitized under BDRC W4PD1496, vol. 2; Dan Martin mentions "an extremely old woodblock print" of Rong ston's *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag lam lnga gsal ba'i sgron me* (6 fols.) that he had seen in the library of Ellis Gene Smith (1936–2010), see "Printery Catalogues, Par-tho," *Tibetological Google site*, URL: <https://sites.google.com/site/tibetological/so-tibetan-geo-texts/Home/printeries-par-khang> (accessed: 23.09.2020).

thought. It fosters the assumption of yet more production sites to be discovered outside lHa sa and the surrounding regions, or even in the gTsang province. Speculating a bit further, one is tempted to think of the Phag mo gru pa seat at sNe gdong in Yar lung as another likely site of production.

The overall project was realized through the joint endeavour of different ruling houses of dBus, at that time under the administration of the Phag mo gru pa. The exploration of new titles further affirmed a strong involvement of dGa' ldan pa monasteries in providing facilities and labour. Several monastics are recorded as being directly involved in the tasks of copying, editing and carving. The identity of previously unknown craftsmen from Gong dkar and other production sites could be clarified by consulting the colophons of xylographs from the same period and region. Considering the length of some of Tsong kha pa's works comprising several hundred folios, the editing and the preparing of the blocks must have required a large staff of specialized workmen. The colophons convey that the craftsmen and artisans were headed by accomplished carvers and supervisors, whose involvement has been attested in several of the above production sites. What the colophons do not tell is how and from where the overall project was coordinated. Although the colophons' wish verses and dedication include the Phag mo gru pa administration, the donors appear to have operated largely independently. Information on the larger operational framework might be found in the extensive collection of Tsong kha pa's biographies that was also compiled for the master's 600th death anniversary, but has been only randomly consulted for this contribution.<sup>79</sup> Interestingly, the biographies of other Central-Tibetan masters indicate that Tsong kha pa's oeuvre continued to be reproduced in the fifteenth century in other editions.<sup>80</sup> I assume that those were handwritten copies of his

79 dGa' ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling gi tshogs chen (ed.), *rJe tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs*. 6 vols. Mundgod: Gaden Monastery, 2019.

80 See the life stories of sGo sel ba bSod nams bzang po (1380–1416), sNar thang pa Shes rab seng ge (1383–1445) and Nam mkha' 'od zer (b. 1368); cf. rTa tshag Tshe dbang rgyal, *lHo rong chos 'byung*, p. 392; Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan, *Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, pp. 736f. and also the nineteenth-century Tsong kha pa *vita* by Tho yon Ye shes don grub (1792–1855), i.e. *Tsong kha pa rnam thar* 2, p. 355f.; sTag tshang lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen, *Nam mkha' 'od zer rnam thar*, p. 94: [...] *bu ston rin po che dang tsong kha pa chen po'i bka' 'bum mtha' dag dang rje btsun chen po'i brtsams chos phyed tsam la sogs pa'i gsung rab mang du bzhengs pa/* [...]. The existence of other fifteenth-century editions of Tsong kha pa's collected



collected writings produced next to the earliest prints, whose status as a complete collection is questionable. Thanks to the ongoing initiatives of digitizing and distributing Tibetan material inside and outside of Tibet, I am very confident that more titles will soon become accessible to help in clarifying the origins of this early printed oeuvre of a great master.

## 5 Title List

This list documents currently identified titles from among the “Old Ganden xylographs” for which a set of particularities can be observed. Each entry provides remarks on the work’s title, information on the provenance of the witness, its physical appearance and references to secondary sources and available copies from the same edition. Due to the limitation of space in this paper, main information on the block production has been extracted from the block colophons, while the full transcripts of available witnesses are made available on the SRC website (see respective IDs under references).

### Particularities of the Edition

- size: ca. 47.5 × 6.5 cm [block], ca. 48–52 × 8–9 cm [paper]
- text body unframed<sup>81</sup>
- no marginal notations<sup>82</sup> (*pod rtags med pa*)
- miniatures with framed inscription
- reversed *gi gu* (*gi gu phyir log*)<sup>83</sup>
- word shortenings with stacked suffixes (*yang ’jug rjes ’jug gi ’og tu bris pa*)<sup>84</sup>
- similar wish verses after author colophon<sup>85</sup>

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writings has been pointed out by others; see Jinpa 2019: 330, 453f., nn. 612, 613; rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung ’bum sdud sgrig khang (ed.), *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung ’bum dpe bsdur ma 2*, p. xv; So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung ’bum zhib ’jug*, pp. 147f.

81 Cf. also So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung ’bum zhib ’jug*, p. 17.

82 Cf. also Jackson 1989: 2.

83 Cf. also sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung ’bum dpar shing skor 2017*, p. 150.

84 Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 150.

85 Tsong kha pa, *sNgags rim chen mo* (no. 6), fol. 360a7: *’dis kyang bstan pa rin po che phyogs kun tu rgyas par byed nus par gyur cig; bDe mchog rgya cher bshad pa* (no. 7),

**(1) dPal rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub pa'i thabs**

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Jackson 1990: 109, no separate title folio; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 10 (*tha*), pp. 439–471) reads *dPal rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub thabs rin po che'i za ma tog*.

**Provenance:** Monastic library near Bodhnath, Nepal.

**Physical Description:** 11 fols., 47.2×6.0 cm [block], 7 lines, no marginal notation, xylograph colophon: fol. 11?, wish phrase at text ending: *shubham//*.

**Date of Writing:** [around 1418];<sup>86</sup> **Date of Carving:** [before 1419];<sup>87</sup>

**Place of Carving:** 'Brog ri bo che dGe ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling;

**Supervisor** (*do dam*): bTsun pa Chos seng.

**Other copies:** 'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, vol. 1, p. 488, no. 005187, *phyi da 31, shing dpar*, 11 fols., 49×9 cm, title: *bCom ldan 'das rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub thabs rin po che'i za ma tog*; 'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, vol. 1, p. 495, no. 005280, *phyi da 39, shing dpar*, 11 fols., 50.6×8.2 cm, title: *dPal rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub thabs rin po che'i za ma tog ces bya ba bzhugs so*; 'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, vol. 1, p. 496, no. 005295, *phyi da 41, shing dpar*, 11 fols., 50×8 cm, title: *dPal rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub thabs bzhugs so*; 'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, vol. 2, p. 2260, no. 000604, *nang 163, shing dpar*, 12 fols., 48×9 cm, title: *dPal rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i sgrub pa'i thabs rin po che'i za ma tog ces bya ba bzhugs*.

**References:** Jackson 1990: 109, 111 (colophon transcription); the Zhol edition has preserved the block colophon of the Old Ganden xylograph; see *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 10 (*tha*), pp. 470.6–471.5; SRC: S4853 (digital transcription of the colophon).

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fol. 166a3: [*bsta*]n pa rin po che phyogs kun tu rgyas par byed nus par gyur cig; Drang nges legs bshad snying po (no. 8), fol. 59b7: 'dis kyang bstan pa rin po che phyogs kun tu rgyas par byed nus par gyur cig; dPal gsang ba 'dus pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga (no. 3), fol. 43 (Jackson 1990: 113), here after the block colophon: 'dis kyang bstan pa rin po che phyogs dus kun du rgyas par byed nus par gyur cig.

86 Jinpa 2019: 304.

87 The blocks for this title seem to have been produced during Tsong kha pa's lifetime; see Jackson 1990: 111: [...] *mgon khyod nam mkha' ji srid par/ /mya ngan mi 'da' rtag bzhugs nas/ /ma rig mun par lhung rnam la/ /chos kyi 'khor lo bskor du gsol//*.

(2) *Khyab bdag rdo rje sems dpa' bsnyen bsgrub bzhi'i sbyor bas mnyes par byed pa'i 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Jackson 1990: 111; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 7 (ja), pp. 627–683) reads *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa*.

**Provenance:** Monastic library near Bodhnath.

**Physical Description:** 19 fols., 46×5.7 cm [block], 7 lines, no marginal notation, xylograph colophon: fols. 18b–19a.

**Date of Carving:** [after 1419]; **Place of Carving:** Chos 'khor chen po dPal gyi lha sa; **Carver:** Yon tan 'od and companions (*grogs mched*);

**Donor:** dPon 'Dir<sup>88</sup> and his spouse (*yab yum*), dGe sbyong Rin chen dpal;<sup>89</sup> **Fundraiser** (? *dad pa'i gsol 'debs*): Bla ma 'Jam pa; **Proofreader/Editor:** sDom brtson bSod nams blo gros; **Intention/Dedication:** fulfilling the intentions of Tsong kha pa and to cause the domain of Nam mkha' bzang po and his nephew (*khu dbon*) to flourish.

**Other copies:** *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 404, no. 004170, *phyi tha 12, shing dpar*, 19 fols., 49.2×8.2 cm, title: *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa zhes bya ba bzhugs*; *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 406, no. 004183, *phyi tha 13, shing dpar*, 19 fols., 50.8×7.3 cm, title: *Khyab bdag rdo rje sems dpa' bsnyen bsgrub bzhi'i sbyor bas mnyes par byed pa 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa*; *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 412, no. 004266, *phyi tha 37*, 004261, *shing dpar*, 19 fols., 49×8.3 cm, title: *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa zhes bya ba bzhugs so*; *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 2, p. 2044, no. 001069, *shing dpar*, 19 fols., 50×8 cm, *nang 201*, title: *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i sgrub thabs rnal 'byor dag pa'i rim pa zhes bya ba bzhugs so*.

**References:** Jackson 1990: 109f., 111 (colophon transcription); SRC: S4854 (digital transcription of the colophon).

**Remarks:** This is said to be the first ever xylograph (*sngon med dpar du sgrub pa*) of this work (Jackson 1990: 110, 112); a certain Bla ma 'Jam pa seems to have been responsible for raising funds for the block production (Jackson 1990: 112: *dad pa'i gsol 'debs bla ma 'jam pas mdzad*).

88 A certain dPon 'Dir from dPon bKra shis sben tsa' dir in the northern lHa sa area is mentioned in the *Lam rim 'bring po* colophon; see text (no. 5).

89 dGe sbyong Rin chen dpal may have been identical with Tsong kha pa's disciple bShes gnyen Rin chen dpal of the rNgog gzhung pa (see above).

(3) *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga dbang gi don gyi de nyid rab tu gsal ba*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Jackson 1990: 113; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 5 (ca), pp. 549–681) reads *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga dbang gi don gyi de nyid rab tu gsal ba*.

**Provenance:** Monastic library near Bodhnath.

**Physical Description:** 43 fols., 46.5×6.0 cm [block], 7 lines, no marginal notation (?), xylograph colophon: fol. 43?.

**Date of Carving:** [between 1419–1432];<sup>90</sup> **Place of Carving:** Ri bo dge ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling; **Carver:** sDom brtson Sangs rgyas bsam grub and companions (*gros mched*); **Requester** (*bka' yis bskul*): Rin chen rgyal mtshan; **Donor:** [Rin chen rgyal mtshan and] the monastic community (*dge 'dun rnams*) of [dGa' ldan]; **Intention/Dedication:** fulfilling the final intentions (*thugs dgongs?*) of Bla ma mchog [Tsong kha pa] and to increase the lifespan and activities of rGyal tshab dam pa [Dar ma rin chen] (1464–1432).

**References:** Jackson 1990: 110, 113 (colophon transcription); SRC: S4855 (digital transcription of the colophon).

(4) *Thams cad mkhyen pa tsong kha pa chen pos mdzad pa'i byang chub lam rim che ba bzhugs so/ mang ga lam* [i.e. *Lam rim chen mo*]

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Jackson 1989: 2 (witness A), title written in *dbu med* script on the cover folio, cover folio reinforced with newer paper; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 13 (pa)) reads *mNyam med tsong kha pa chen pos mdzad pa'i byang chub lam rim che ba*.

**Provenance:** (A) Theg chen chos gling (residence of the 14th Dalai Lama, Dharamsala), offered to H. H. the Dalai Lama by the late Khri byang rin po che; (B) Nor bu gling kha, ending folios reproduced in Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe'i ming mdzod*.

**Physical Description:** (A,B) 336 fols., (A) 47×6cm [block], (B) 9×5.5cm (sic!) [paper], (A) 7 lines, (A,B) no marginal notation, (A,B) no xylograph colophon; **Particularities:** text body unframed;

<sup>90</sup> Jackson 1990: 110.

miniatures with inscription (fols. 1b, 2a); reversed *gi gu*,<sup>91</sup> wish phrase at text ending: *mam gha la bha wa tu//*; sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar describes particularities of the xylograph in *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor* 2017, pp. 150f.

**Date of Writing:** [1401–02];<sup>92</sup> **Date of Carving:** ?.

**Other copies:** *'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 2, p. 2468, no. 001768, *nang ma 41 440*, *shing dpar*, 336 fols., 52×8.5 cm, title: *Byang chub lam rim chen mo bzhugs so*.

**References:** sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor* 2017, pp. 149–151; *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134, 143; Jinpa 2019: 305, 330; (A) Jackson 1989: 2; Jackson 1990: 108; Khri byang Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *Khri byang rin po che rang rnam*, pp. 451f. (for a translation, see Tenzin Trinley 2018: 314); SRC: S1924 (digital transcription of the colophon); (B) Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe'i ming mdzod*, pp. 66–71, no. 06629 (facsimile reproduction of folios 335b, 336a);<sup>93</sup> SRC: S3305.

**Remarks:** The title has no xylograph colophon. Some modern authors claim that this title was produced during Tsong kha pa's lifetime (see above). Pad ma bkra shis (*Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134, 143) presumes that it was carved at Gong dkar.

(5) *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa bzhugs* [i.e. *Lam rim 'bring po* or *Lam rim chung ngu*]

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Jackson 1989: 6 (witness A), title written in *dbu med* script on cover folio of newer paper; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 14 (*pha*), pp. 5–406) reads *sKyes bu gsum gyi nyams su blang ba'i byang chub lam gyi rim pa*.

**Provenance:** (A) Theg chen chos gling (residence of the 14th Dalai Lama, Dharamsala), offered to H. H. the Dalai Lama by gSer skong rin po che Thub bstan stobs 'byor (1912–1983); (B) Nor bu gling kha, folio

91 sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor* 2017, p. 150.

92 Jinpa 2019: 198f.

93 Folios of mKhas grub rje's Tsong kha pa biography from an unknown xylograph edition (fol. 2a) and the *Lam rim 'bring po* (no. 5) from the "Old Ganden edition" (fol. 1b) are mistakenly reproduced under this catalogue entry (pp. 68f.).

1b reproduced in Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe'i ming mdzod*, p. 68.

**Physical Description:** (A) 135 fols., (A) 47.5×6.3 cm [block] (B) 9×5.5 cm (sic!) [paper], (A,B) 7 lines, (A,B) no marginal notation, (A) xylograph colophon: fols. 135a–b?; **Particularities:** text body unframed; framed miniatures with inscription (fols. 1b, 2a); The miniatures show a particular style different from other titles of the edition.<sup>94</sup>

**Date of Writing:** [1415?];<sup>95</sup> **Date of Carving:** ?; **Place of Carving:** bKra shis sben tsa 'dir in the northern lHa sa area (*lHa sa'i byang gi phyogs*); **Donor:** dPon 'Dir ba and his spouse (*yab yum*); dGe bsam and dPon Nam [mkha' bzang po?]; **Supervisor** (*do dam*): Yon tan 'od; **Fundraiser** (gathered the offerings): Bla ma 'Jam nyag.<sup>96</sup>

**Other copies:** 'Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag, vol. 2, p. 1634, no. 018537, *phyi la 267, shing dpar*, 135 fols., 48×9 cm, title: *Byang chub lam rim chung ba bzhugs so*.

**References:** (A) Jackson 1989: 6f. (colophon transcription); Jackson 1996: 128, figs. 60–63 (miniature reproductions); SRC: S1925 (digital transcription of the colophon); (B) Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe'i ming mdzod*, pp. 68, no. 06629<sup>97</sup> (facsimile reproduction of folio 1b); SRC: S3305.

94 See fig. 2 and Jackson 1996: 128, figs. 60–63. A similarity in the style and composition of miniatures can be noticed in an illuminated print of a manual on the *Six Yogas of Nāropa* authored by the sPyan snga bSod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1386–1434). This xylograph of similar size and appearance (ca. 49×9cm, 7 lines) has been dated to the author's lifetime or shortly afterwards. It survives in the Tucci Tibetan collection at the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, IsIAO (De Rossi Filibeck 2003: 448, no. 1359) and is described in Sernesi 2010. Several of the miniature illustrations are reproduced in *ibid.*: pp. 124f., 148, 150f. and Czaja 2013: 610–612.

95 Jinpa 2019: 285f.

96 He and Bla ma 'Jam pa, who is mentioned in the block colophon of the *Vajrasattva sādhana* (no. 2; carved in lHa sa), may have been one and the same person. Bla ma 'Jam nyag might furthermore be identical with a certain bKa' bzhi 'dzin pa gZhon nu rdo rje *alias* 'Jam nyag pa who is mentioned in the biography of Byams pa gling pa bSod nams rnam rgyal (1400–1475); see Byang chub rnam rgyal dge legs, *Byams pa gling pa'i rnam thar*, fol. 17a.

97 Folios of Tsong kha pa's biography by mKhas grub rje from an unknown xylograph edition (fol. 2a) and the *Lam rim chen mo* (no. 4) from the "Old Ganden edition" (fols. 335b, 336a) are also reproduced under this catalogue entry (pp. 69–71).

**Remarks:** This is said to be the first ever xylograph (*sngon med spar du legs par grub pa*) of this work (Jackson 1989: 6).

(6) [*sNgags rim chen mo*]

**Title Remarks:** No original title, the cover folio is reinforced with newer paper (Jackson 1989: 3); the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 3 (*ga*)) reads *rGyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyis* (sic!) *rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba*.

**Provenance:** (A) Theg chen chos gling (residence of the 14th Dalai Lama, Dharamsala), offered to H. H. the Dalai Lama by the late Khri byang rin po che; (B) unknown collection, information from *gNa' dpe rnam bshad* and *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*.

**Physical Description:** (A,B) 361 fols., (A) 47.5×6.5 cm [block], (A,B) 7 lines, (A,B) no marginal notation, (A,B) xylograph colophon: fols. 360a7–360b7; **Particularities:** text body unframed, miniatures with framed inscription (fols. 1b, 2a, 360b); reversed *gi gu* (?), wish phrase at text ending: *maṃ ga la bha wa tu//*.

**Date of Writing:** [1404/05];<sup>98</sup> **Date of Carving:** *zil gnon kyil lo* (1426);

**Place of Carving:** Pho brang gnyis pa Gong dkar dpal gyi sde chen;

**Carver:** sKyabs pa, dGe bsam and others; **Requester:** rGyal tshab chos kyil rje [Dar ma rin chen] (1364–1432), 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1356–1428), [Byang sems] Kun dga' bzang po; **Donor:** Drung chen bZhi 'dzom and his nephew (*khu dbon*) [i.e. dGe bsnyen lHun grub bkra shis]; **Leading Staff** (*las byed*): Gu ru, g.Yu rung [and]? bSam bzang; **Proofreader/Editor:** Blo gros (?) chos rgyal, Rin chen dpal bzang; **Copyist:** Nam mkha' bzang po; **Author of wish verses** (?): gZhon nu seng ge; **Intention/Dedication:** dedicated to fulfil Tsong kha pa's final intentions (*dgongs rdzogs*) and to stabilize the Gong ma Grags pa rgyal mtshan's rule, dedicated to the accomplishment of spiritual and temporal concerns during bZhi 'dzom's lifetime.

**Other copies:** Several prints with the same folio amount are listed in '*Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*'; see, for example, '*Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 747, no. 008274, *phyi ma* 304, *shing dpar*, 361 fols., 50.5×8 cm, title: *rGyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba bzhugs*; '*Bras spungs dpe*

98 Jinpa 2019: 210f.

*rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 762, no. 008450, *phyi ma* 355, *shing dpar*, 361 fols., 52×8 cm, title: *rGyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba zhes bya ba bzhugs so*, also title entry above under no. 008449, *phyi ma* 355; 'Bras spungs *dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 786, no. 008736, *phyi ma* 384, *shing dpar*, 361 fols., 51×8 cm, title: *rGyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba zhes bya ba sngags rim chen mo*; 'Bras spungs *dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 2, p. 2207, no. 000091, *nang* 26, *shing dpar*, 361 fols., 49×9 cm, title: *rGyal ba khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba zhes bya ba bzhugs*; 'Bras spungs *dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 2, p. 2209, no. 000115, *nang* 37, *shing dpar*, 362 fols., 53×8.5 cm, title: *Khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba zhes bya ba bzhugs*; 'Bras spungs *dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 2, p. 2469, no. 001778, *nang ma* 45 449, *bris ma dbu can* (!), 361 fols., 53×10 cm, title: *Khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po'i lam gyi rim pa gsang ba kun gyi gnad rnam par phye ba sngags kyi rim pa chen mo bzhugs so*.

**References:** Jinpa 2019: 305; (A) Jackson 1989: 2–5 (colophon transcription); Jackson 1990: 108; Khri byang Blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *Khri byang rin po che rang rnam*, p. 478 (for a translation, see Tenzin Trinley 2018: 330); SRC: S1392 (digital transcription of the colophon); (B) *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, pp. 136, 152f., 155 (facsimile reproduction of folios 360a, 361a); *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134, 135 (facsimile reproduction of folio 360b) 138f., 14of. (facsimile reproduction of miniatures of folio 360b); SRC: S4997.

**Remarks:** Another old print of this work is recorded in IHo kha grong khyer rig gnas cus, *IHo kha bod yig gna' dpe dkar chag*, p. 65 (facsimile reproductions of folios 1b, 2a).

(7) *dPal 'khor lo sdom par brjod pa bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba bzhugs*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to cover folio; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 8 (*nya*), pp. 379–853) reads *bDe mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba*.

**Provenance:** (A) 'Bras spungs gNas bcu temple (?), signature on title folio: *phyi ka* 134; digitized images published by dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, see *Porong Dawa Collection*, text no. 5,



digitized under BDRC W2PD19644, vol. 5; (B) Tucci Tibetan collection, Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, IsIAO, text no. 642.

**Physical Description:** (A,B) fols. 1a–167a, size unknown, (A) 7 lines, (A) no marginal notation, xylograph colophon: fols. 166a3–167a4; **Particularities:** title on cover folio framed, text body unframed, miniatures with inscription (fols. 1b, 2a), reversed *gi gu*, shortenings have suffixes stacked under letters; folio nos. 166 and 167 have the ends torn off. **Date of Writing:** [1419];<sup>99</sup> **Date of Carving:** *sa pho spre'u'i lo* (1428); **Place of Carving:** 'Ol kha rtag rtse rNam par rgyal ba'i khang bzang; **Carver:** sDom brtson dam pa Sangs rgyas bsam [grub]; **Requester:** ?; **Donor:** Tshul khrims rin chen, bSod nams rgyal [...], Nor bu bzang po (?) and nephew (*khu dbon*) with their officials (*zhal ngo nang blon*); **Proofreader/Editor:** ? blo gros? and bShes gnyen Kun mchog pa;<sup>100</sup> **Copyist:** rGyal mtshan grags. **Intention/Dedication:** dedicated to the enduring activities and long life of the Gong ma Grags pa rgyal mtshan.

**Other copies:** 'Bras spungs *dpe rnying dkar chag*, vol. 1, p. 225, no. 002148, *phyi kha 91, bris ma dbu can* (!), 167 fols., 62 × 9.5 cm, title: *dPal 'khor lo sdom par brjod pa bde mchog bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa sbas pa'i don kun gsal ba ces bya ba bzhugs so*. [Considering the folio size of this title, it might be a handwritten copy from the block print].

**References:** (A) dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (ed.), *Porong Dawa Collection*, pp. 15–17; Ehrhard 2016: 214f., n. 4; Ehrhard and Sernesi 2019: 121f.; BDRC: W4CZ301802, W2PD19644; SRC: S4868 (digital transcription of the colophon); (B) De Rossi Filibeck 2003: 328, no. 642; SRC: S5002.

(8) *gSung rab kyi drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phye ba gsal bar byed pa legs par bshad pa'i snying po* [*i.e. Drang nges legs bshad snying po*]

**Title Remarks:** Title according to xylograph colophon (fol. 59b6), title folio missing; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 14 (*pha*), pp. 443–669) reads *Drang ba dang nges pa'i don rnam par phye ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po*.

99 Jinpa 2019: 308f.

100 Tsong kha pa, *bDe mchog rgya cher bshad pa*, fol. 167a3: *zhib mo'i blo gros can bshes gnyen kun mchog pa gnyis kyis/ /bris shing brkos la dag par bgyis te / [...]*.

**Provenance:** unknown collection (maybe Cultural Palace of Nationalities, Beijing), digitized under BDRC W1CZ1011.

**Physical Description:** fols. 1a–6ob, size unknown, 7 lines, no marginal notation, xylograph colophon: fols. 59b7–60b7; **Particularities:** text body unframed, framed miniatures with inscription (fols. 1b, 2a), reversed *gi gu*, shortenings have suffixes stacked under letters.

**Date of Writing:** [1407–08];<sup>101</sup> **Date of Carving:** *yos bu'i lo* (1423?);

**Place of Carving:** dPal ldan 'Bras spungs kyi sde chen; **Carver:** mKhas pa dGe sbyong Yon tan 'od, Sang rdor (Sangs rgyas rdo rje ?) and others;

**Commissioner and Donor** (*zhal ta dang mthun pa'i rkyen*): Mi dbang Nam mkha' bzang po and nephew (*khu dbon pa*); **Proofreader/Editor:** Shākya'i dge sbyong bSod nams blo gros.

**Other copies:** David Jackson (1989: 17, n. 15) remarks that Dwags po rin po che Blo bzang 'jam dpal byams pa rgya mtsho (b. 1932) “is said to have had with him in the 1960s an old dGa'ldan edition of Tsong-kha-pa's *Legs bshad snying po*, which he subsequently sent back to a monastery in India”.

**References:** Jinpa 2019: 305, 330; rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum sdud sgrig khang (ed.), *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma 2*, p. xvi; SRC: S4867 (digital transcription of the colophon).

(9) *Rim pa lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me zhes bya ba bzhugswo* [i.e. *Rim lnga gsal sgron*]

**Title Remarks:** Title according to witness A, title written in *dbu can* script on cover folio (fol. 1ab might be from another edition of the same work); the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 7 (*ja*), pp. 3–626) reads *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i man ngag rim pa lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me*.

**Provenance:** (A) unknown collection, digitized under BDRC W4CZ74399, vol. 1; (B) unknown collection, information from *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*.

**Physical Description:** (A) fols. 1a–221b, incomplete (ending missing), size unknown, (A) 7 lines, (A) no marginal notation; **Particularities:** text body unframed; reversed *gi gu*.

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101 Jinpa 2019: 218, 231.

**Date of Writing:** [1411];<sup>102</sup> **Date of Carving:** ?; **Place of Carving:** ?.

**References:** Jinpa 2019: 305; (A) BDRC: W4CZ74399; SRC: S4952; (B) *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, pp. 141 (facsimile reproduction of folio 1b? showing three miniatures with inscription), 154; SRC: S4884.

**Remarks:** Pad ma bkra shis (*gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154) presumes that this title was carved at Gong dkar.

(10) *dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho zhes bya ba* [i.e. *rTsa shes tik chen*]

**Title Remarks:** Title according to witness A, incipit, fol. 1b1 (Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Nag chu gna' dpe'i dpar mdzod*, p. 154), original cover folio replaced with newer paper; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 15 (*ba*), pp. 3–562) reads *dBu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba'i rnam bshad rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*.

**Provenance:** (A) Text holding of dGa' ldan rab brtan gling in Sog rdzong rong po rab brtan, see Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Nag chu gna' dpe'i dpar mdzod*, p. 154; (B) Potala collection; see Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.), *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum 2012*, preface.

**Physical Description:** (A) fols. 1a–93a?, (A) 60×6 cm [block] (sic!), text ending missing, (A,B) 7 lines; **Particularities:** text body unframed, framed miniatures with inscription (fols. 1b, 2a), reversed *gi gu*.

**Date of Writing:** [1408];<sup>103</sup> **Date of Carving:** ?; **Place of Carving:** ?.

**References:** (A) Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Nag chu gna' dpe'i dpar mdzod*, pp. 154–156, no. 26;<sup>104</sup> also Bod rang skyong ljongs gna' dpe srung skyob lte gnas, *Nag chu gna' dpe'i dkar chag*, p. 229, no. 540000-6089-0000039; SRC: S3278; (B) Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.), *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum 2012*, preface (facsimile reproduction of folios 1b and 2a, caption reads: *po tā (=ta) lar bzhugs pa'i dus rabs bco lnga pa'i nang gi rje'i gsung 'bum par ma*); *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; SRC: S4960.

**Remarks:** Modern authors claim that this title was produced during

102 Jinpa 2019: 262.

103 Jinpa 2019: 230.

104 The folio reproduced on p. 156 seems to be of a different text!

Tsong kha pa's lifetime (see above). Pad ma bkra shis (*gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154) presumes that this title was carved at Gong dkar.

(11) *dPal 'khor lo bde mchog lus kyi dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i cho ga rin po che'i bang mdzod*

**Title Remarks:** Title and colophon information according to *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 144; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 10 (*tha*), pp. 57–105) reads *rNal 'byor dbang phyug dril bu lugs bde mchog lus dkyil gyi dbang chog rin po che'i bang mdzod*.

**Place of Carving:** [Gong dkar]<sup>105</sup>; **Carver:** dGe 'dun dang (?) 'od zer;<sup>106</sup> **Donor:** bZhi 'dzoms pa. **Proofreader/Editor:** rNgog gi ston pa mKhas btsun Rin chen dpal bzang po, bSod nams dpal grub.

**References:** *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134, 139f., 144; SRC: S4858.

**Remarks:** Deducing from the persons involved in the project, Pad ma bkra shis (*Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 144) concludes that this title was carved at Gong dkar.

(12) *rDo rje theg pa'i tshul khrims kyi bslab pa yongs su dag par bya ba'i tshul rnam par bshad pa dngos grub kyi snye ma* [i.e. *rTsa ltung gi rnam bshad*]

**Title Remarks:** Title and colophon information according to *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 145; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 373–512) reads *gSang sngags kyi tshul khrims kyi rnam bshad dngos grub kyi snye ma*.

**Date of Writing:** [ca. 1402/03?];<sup>107</sup> **Place of Carving:** Pho brang chen po Gong dkar dpal gyi bde chen; **Proofreader/Editor:** sDom brtson ldan pa Rin chen [dpal?] bzang po; **Copyist:** gZhung pa Nam mkha' bzang po.

**References:** *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 134 (here *rTsa ltung gi rnam bshad*), 137–139, 145; SRC: S4856.

**Remarks:** The Zhol edition preserves the original colophon of a later

105 *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 144

106 This individual can probably be identified with dPon mo che dGe 'dun 'od zer, the master carver responsible for carving Rong ston's *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* commentary (see above).

107 Sparham 2005: 2.

Ganden print from which the blocks were reproduced in 1897.<sup>108</sup>

(13) *gSang sngags theg pa'i cho ga*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; This work remains unidentified.

**References:** *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; SRC: S4953.

**Remarks:** Pad ma bkra shis (*gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154) presumes that this title was carved at Gong dkar.

(14) *'Dul ba'i rnam gzhang*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 2 (*kha*), pp. 3–199) seems to be the *'Dul ba mdo rtsa ba'i zin bris*.

**References:** *gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154; SRC: S4951.

**Remarks:** The title seems to refer to the *Notes on Guṇaprabha's Vinayasūtra ('Dul ba mdo rtsa ba'i zin bris)* that rGyal tshab rje compiled on the basis of Tsong kha pa's exposition in 1401.<sup>109</sup> Pad ma bkra shis (*gNa' dpe rnam bshad*, p. 154) presumes that this title was carved at Gong dkar.

(15) *Legs bshad gser gyi phreng ba*

**Title Remarks:** Title according to a dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling print of the text; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*,

108 *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 511.5–512.4: //swasti/ rdzogs rim khor yug gting zab cing / /bskyed rim rgyu skar gzugs brnyan bkra/ /'phrin las dus rlabs ci yang g.yo/ /rgyud sde rgya mtshor 'jug pa yi/ /don mthun 'gro ba'i ded dpon che/ /dngos grub bsam 'phel stsol mdzad pa/ /lam gsum dkar bas brnyes pa'i thabs/ /'phags yul dpa' bos gsal bar mdzad/ /gang de'i bzhed gzhung padmo'i tshal/ /blo bzang grags pa'i tsha zer gyis/ /slar yang phye bas sprad [512] rtsi'i bcud/ /'phel zhing rgyas pa'i ge sar g.yo/ /ze 'bru'i phreng ldan gsal ba 'di/ /gzhon nu blo ldan seng ge yis/ /yi ge'i rin chen 'byung gnas bskrun/ /gang des 'dren mchog chos kyi rje'i/ /mkhyen dgongs dkar po 'o ma'i mtsho/ /srid rtse'i bar du lud nas kyang / /srid gsum khongs 'dir 'khyil gyur cig/ // / swasti/ sku bzhi'i ngo bo rdo rje 'chang du/ /bgrod pa'i lam bzab rdo rje theg pa'i/ /sgor zhugs mchog thun dngos grub rnam gnyis/ /dam tshig sdom pa rnam par dag la/ /ngag las blang dor gsal byed rnam bshad/ /chos sbyin 'dzad med lha lam mdzod 'gran/ /dga' ldan rnam par rgyal ba chen por/ /par du bsgrubs pa'i rnam dkar dge 'dis/ /mthun rkyen sgrub pa'i grogs dang 'gro kun/ /ma rig sgrub gnyis g.yul las rnam rgyal/ /rim gnyis them skas zab mor son nas/ /zung 'jug go 'phang thob pa'i rgyur bsngo// sarba mangga lam//.

109 Jinpa 2019: 194f.

vols. 17–18 (*tša–tsha*) reads *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan 'grel pa dang bcas pa'i rgya cher bshad pa'i legs bshad gser phreng*.

**Date of Writing:** [1385–88];<sup>110</sup> **Date of Carving:** ?; **Donor:** gZhis ka sNe'u pa.

**References:** sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017*, p. 150; SRC: S4977.

**Remarks:** The colophon of a dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling print of the *Legs bshad gser 'phreng* conveys that its blocks were reproduced in 1722 from a print whose blocks had once been sponsored by the gZhis ka sNe'u pa.<sup>111</sup> sNyan bzang pa mKhar byams thar (*Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpar shing skor 2017*, pp. 149f.) presumes that the *Legs bshad gser 'phreng* was carved during Tsong kha pa's lifetime.

(16) '*Grel pa bzhi sbrags*<sup>112</sup>

**Title Remarks:** Title according to So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, p. 38.

**References:** So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, p. 38; rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum sdud sgrig khang (ed.), *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma 2*, vol. 1, p. xvi; SRC: S4961.

**Remarks:** According to So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas an “Old Ganden print” served as basis for the later dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling blocks.<sup>113</sup> Phur lcog Ngag dbang byams pa (1682–1762) mentions a block set of the '*Grel pa bzhi sbrags* existent in the printing house at dGa' ldan.<sup>114</sup> See also title nos. (17) and (18).

110 Jinpa 2019: 384.

111 Tsong kha pa, *Legs bshad gser 'phreng*, fol. 622a3–5: *legs bshad gser gyi phreng ba 'di nyid snga thog gzhis ka sne'u pas bstan la gus btud kyi sbyin bdag mdzad pa'i par rnying bgras (= bgres) pas/ par ma de nyid la ngos bshus 'khrul med dang lung rigs smra ba rnams kyis zhus dag par bgyis te/ slar yang rab byung bcu gnyis pa'i nang gi chu pho stag gi lo [1722] chos grwa chen po dga' ldan phun tshogs gling du gsar du spel ba dge legs 'phel//*.

112 The gSang 'dus 'grel pa bzhi sbrags refers to a collection of four commentarial works on the *Guhyasamāja* tantra, including Candrakīrtipāda's *Pradīpoddyotana* ('*Grel pa sgron gsal*), Tsong kha pa's interlinear commentary on it ('*Grel pa sgron gsal yang 'grel*), his topical outline (*sa bcad bsdus don*) and analysis (*mTha' dpyod rin po che'i myu gu*).

113 So ru Blo bzang dar rgyas, *Yab sras gsum gyi gsung 'bum zhib 'jug*, p. 38.

114 See *Grwa sa chen po bzhi dang rgyud pa stod smad chags tshul pad dkar 'phreng ba*, in Ngawang Gelek Demo (ed.), *Three dkar chag's*, p. 77.6 (cited above).

(17) *dPal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa rgyud 'grel pa sgron gsal* (? including the 'Grel pa sgron gsal yang 'grel)

**Title Remarks:** Title according to mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang, *Tsong kha pa rnam thar 1*, p. 111.4 and Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags* (Zhol edition), p. 151; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 4 (nga)) reads *rGyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rgya cher bshad pa sgron ma gsal ba'i tshig don ji bzhin 'byed pa'i mchan gyi yang 'grel*.

**Date of Carving:** *khyi/phag lo* (1418–19);<sup>115</sup> **Place of Carving:** dPal ldan 'Bras spungs kyi chos grwa chen po; **Carver:** mKhas pa Yon tan 'od and others; **Requester:** dPal ldan bla ma dam pa Blo bzang grags pa; **Donor:** dPon Nam mkha' bzang po and nephew (*khu dbon*).

**References:** mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang, *Tsong kha pa rnam thar 1*, p. 111.4–5; Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, p. 151.5–7; dPal rdor, *Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum par shing skor 2018*, p. 198; Jinpa 2019: 305; Tsering 2020: 198; SRC: S5023.

**Remarks:** A 1890 Zhol print of the *Guhyasamāja* root- and explanatory tantra in the *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags* collection, reproduces what seems to be the original colophon of the first ever Tibetan xylograph of the tantra. A gloss by the Zhol editors specifies that it was produced with the patronage of Nam mkha' bzang po and his nephew at 'Bras spungs.<sup>116</sup> The production of the *Guhyasamāja* tantra and the

115 mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang, *Tsong kha pa rnam thar 1*, p. 111.4 (cited above); Also Jackson 1990: 107, 114; Jinpa 2019: 305.

116 *rGyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa ba'i rgyud rgyud phyi ma dang bcas pa* in Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, p. 151.5–7: *gsung rab mthar thug dpal ldan 'dus pa yi//rgyud kyi mthar thug rtsa ba'i rgyud rgyal 'di//par mkhan mkhas pa yon tan 'od la stsogs//lag pa'i 'du byed rkos la mkhas rnam kyis//sngon med dpar du legs par bsgrubs pa ni// dpal ldan gsang ba 'dus pa'i rnal 'byor pa//blo bzang grags pa'i dpal gyis zab mo'i tshul// phyogs dus kun tu rgyas par bya phyir bgyis//di yi phyogs? su sgo gsum re res kyang //mthun pa'i rkyen la 'bad pa gang bgyis pa//de dag kun kyang rgyal ba'i dam chos kun//rgyal ba'i dgongs ba ji bzhin 'dzin gyur cig// {gloss: ces snyigs dus kyi rgyal ba gnyis par gyur pa dpal ldan bla ma dam pa blo bzang grags pa'i zhal snga nas kyi bkas bskul te/bstan pa'i sbyin bdag chen po dpon nam mkha' bzang po khu dbon gyis bstan pa spyi dang khyad par du zab mo rdo rje theg pa phyogs kun tu rgyas par bya ba'i phyir dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa ba'i rgyud dang/de'i bshad pa'i rgyud phyi ma dang bcas pa/ dpal ldan 'bras spungs kyi chos grwa chen por par du legs par bsgrubs pa la phyi mor bgyis te/sprul shad rnam bsdu don dang mthun par bkod pa 'di ni gnam bskos? dga' ldan pho brang gi mchod yon? nyi zla zung gcig gis rnam dkar 'phrin las kyi cha shas las sngar bskrun par mdzad pa la gzhi bgyis te slar lcags stag lor [1890] bzhengs pa'o//}*

*Pradīpodyotana* commentary in the years 1418–19 might have also included Tsong kha pa's interlinear commentary to it, the 'Grel pa sgron gsal yang 'grel, as is claimed by some modern authors (see above).

(18) ***rGyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa ba'i rgyud/sgron ma rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i rgya cher bshad pas 'chad pa'i sa bcad bsdus don***

**Title Remarks:** Title according to Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags* (Zhol edition), p. 3 and *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, p. 146; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 5 (ca), pp. 5–57) reads *rGyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa ba'i rgyud/sgron ma rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i rgya cher bshad pas 'chad pa'i sa bcad bsdus don*.

**References:** Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, pp. 3–39; *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 143, 146; SRC: S4974.

**Remarks:** The colophon of the Zhol edition states that an Old Ganden xylograph (*dga' ldan gyi par rnying*) served as master copy for the dGa' ldan pho brang edition produced in 1715? (*shing lug*) which was then employed for the New Zhol reproduction in 1890.<sup>117</sup>

(19) ***Dril bu lus dkyil gyi sgrub thabs dgongs pa rab gsal***

**Title Remarks:** Title according to sKal bzang rgya mtsho, *bDe mchog dril bu lha lnga sgrub thabs*, p. 206; the title in the Zhol edition (*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol*, vol. 10 (tha), pp. 5–55) reads *rNal 'byor dbang phyug dril bu lugs bde mchog lus dkyil gyi mngon rtogs dgongs pa rab gsal*.

**References:** sKal bzang rgya mtsho, *bDe mchog dril bu lha lnga sgrub thabs*, p. 206; SRC: S4973.

**Remarks:** The 7th Dalai Lama sKal bzang rgya mtsho (1708–1757)

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117 *rGyud thams cad kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa ba'i rgyud/sgron ma rab tu gsal bar byed pa'i rgya cher bshad pas 'chad pa'i sa bcad bsdus don* in Tsong kha pa, *gSang 'dus rtsa rgyud 'grel pa bzhi sbrags*, p. 39.4–6: //dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rtsa rgyud/'grel pa sgron gsal gyis 'chad pa'i sa bcad bsdus don 'di ni/ dga' ldan gyi par rnying sor bzhag la tshig gi gcod 'tshams log pa rnams/ rtsa 'grel gyi sa bcad thobs tshod dang mthun par bgyis te/ gnam bskod dga' ldan pho brang gi 'phrin las kyi zegas ma las shing mo lug gi lor [1715] par du grub par mdzad pa la phyis mor bgyis te rab byung bco lnga pa lcags pho stag lor [1890] yongs' dzin dge sbyong byams pa nas par du bzhengs pa'o//. Also Pad ma bkra shis, *Gong dkar spar ma'i skor*, pp. 143, 146 (here wrongly(?) indicated as dGa' ldan pho brang print from 1624).



refers to the “Old Ganden print” of the *Dril bu lus dkyil gyi sgrub thabs dgongs pa rab gsal* in his *sādhana* of *Cakrasaṃvara*.<sup>118</sup>

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### Abbreviations

BDRC = Buddhist Digital Resource Center (<https://www.tbrc.org>)

'*Bras spungs dpe rnying dkar chag* = dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. '*Bras spungs dgon du bzhugs su gsol ba'i dpe rnying dkar chag*. 2 vols. Pe cin: Mi rigs dpe skrung khang, 2004.

*Gong dkar spar ma'i skor* = Pad ma bkra shis. 2019. “Dus rabs bco lnga pa'i skabs kyi gong dkar spar ma'i skor la mdo tsam dpyad pa.” *Bod ljongs zhib 'jug* 2019/4: 133–145.

*gNa' dpe rnam bshad* = Pad ma bkra shis. *Bod yig gna' dpe'i rnam bshad*. lHa sa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 2013.

SRC = Sakya Research Centre (<https://sakyaresearch.org>)

Tōh. = The sDe dge edition of the Tibetan canon. Ui, Hukuji et al. (eds.). *A complete catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist canons (Bkaḥ-ḥgyur and Bstan-ḥgyur)*. Sendai: Tōhoku Imperial University, 1934.

*Tsong kha pa gsung 'bum Zhol* = Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa. *rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsun 'bum*. Reproduced from prints from the 1897 Lha-sa Old Źol (Dga'-ldan-phun-tshogs-glin) blocks. 18 vols. New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1978.

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sKal bzang rgya mtsho. *bDe mchog dril bu lha lnga sgrub thabs = dPal 'khor lo sdom pa grub chen dril bu zhabs kyi lugs lha lnga'i sgrub thabs*

118 sKal bzang rgya mtsho, *bDe mchog dril bu lha lnga sgrub thabs*, p. 206.9–11: [...] {gloss: ces pa dang / yum gyi rtsa sngags ni/} om {gloss: sngags 'di dag la 'dra min sna tshogs yod par 'dir rje thams cad mkhyen pa'i dril bu lus dkyil gyi sgrub thabs dgongs pa rab gsal dga'ldan par rnying ltar bkod/}.

*bde chen dbang gi rgyal po*. In *rGyal dbang sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum dpe tshogs*. 80 vols. Dharamsala, Distt Kangra (H.P.): sKu bcar rnam rgyal grwa tshang phan bde legs bshad gling, 2014, vol. 53, 172–222.

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mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang. *Tsong kha pa rnam thar 1 = rJe btsun bla ma tsong kha pa chen po'i ngo mtshar rmad du byung ba'i rnam par thar pa dad pa'i 'jug ngogs zhes bya ba bzhugs so*. In *rJe yab sras gsum gyi gsun 'bum*. Reproduced from prints from the 1897 Lha-sa Old Žol (Dga'-ldan-phun-tshogs-gliñ) blocks. 18 vols. New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1978, vol. 1, 5–146.

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dang go rim 'khrugs pa'i skor la dpyad pa." *mTsho sngon mi rigs slob chen rig deb* 2018/2: 20–33.

rTa tshag Tshe dbang rgyal. *lHo rong chos 'byung = Dam pa'i chos kyi 'byung ba'i legs bshad lho rong chos 'byung ngam rta tshag chos 'byung*. lHa sa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1994.

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**Fig. 1** Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa, Xylograph, 1428, 'Ol kha. From the *Lengthy Cakrasamvaratantra commentary* (no. 7), fol. 2a, right end.



**Fig. 2** Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa, Xylograph, early 15th century, sKyid shod. From the *Middle-Length Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (no. 5), fol. 2a, right end (after Jackson 1996: 128, fig. 63).



**Fig. 3** Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa, Xylograph, 1426, Gong dkar. From the *Great Treatise on the Path of Mantra* (no. 6), fol. 2a, right end (after Gong dkar spar ma'i skor, p. 141).



**Fig. 4** Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa, Xylograph, 1423?, sKyid shod. From the *Essence of Eloquence* (no. 8), fol. 2a, right end.

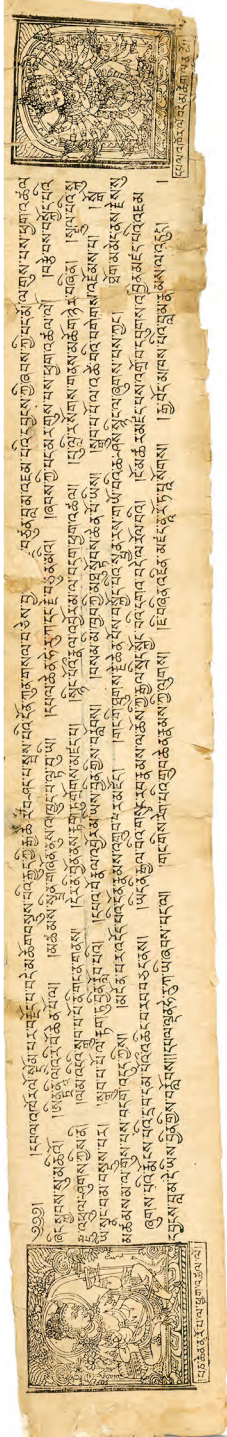


Fig. 5 Lengthy Cakrasamvaratantra commentary (no. 7), fol. 1b. Xylograph, 1428, 'Ol kha.

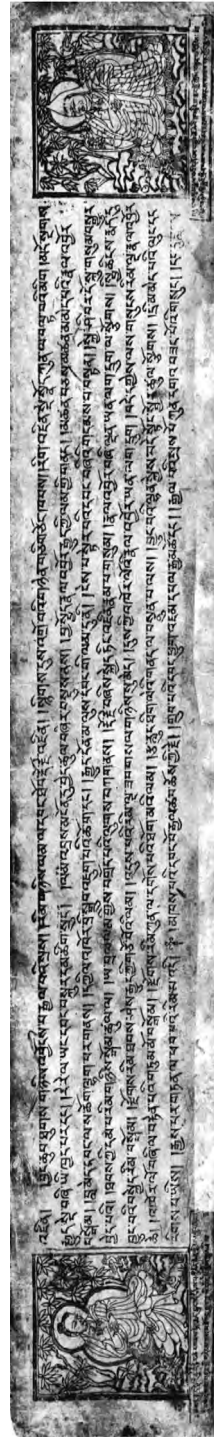


Fig. 6 Great Treatise on the Path of Mantra (no. 6), fol. 2a (after Gong dkar spar ma'i skor, p. 141). Xylograph, 1426, Gong dkar.

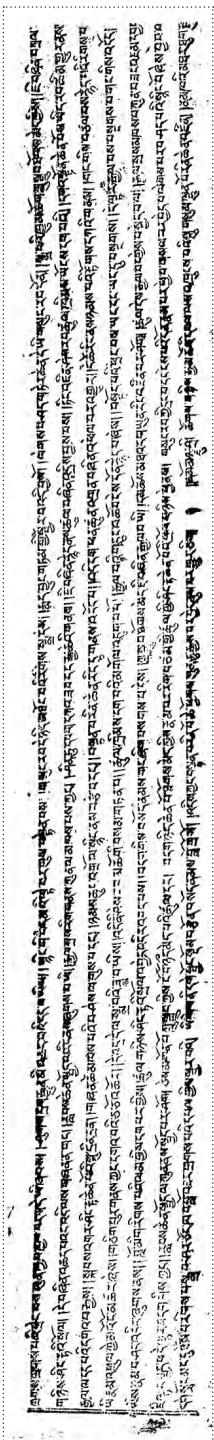


Fig. 7 Essence of Eloquence (no. 8), fol. 59b. Xylograph, 1423?, sKyid shod.

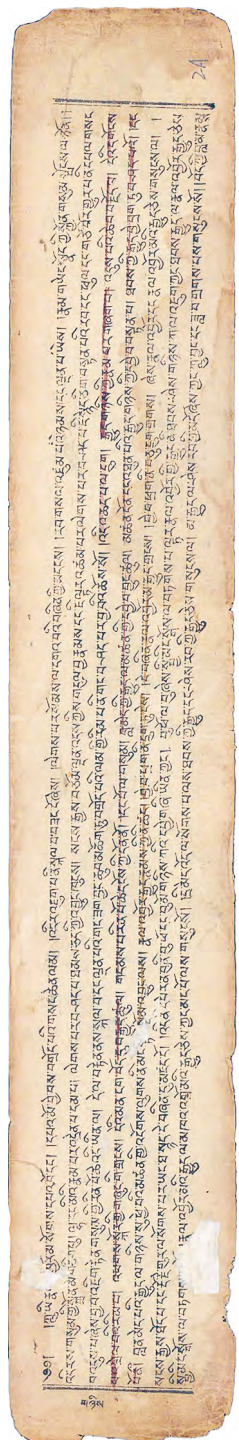


Fig. 8 Lamp to Illuminate the Five Stages (no. 9), fol. 2a. Xylograph, early 15th century.



**Portraits of the Great Abbots of Ngor:  
The Memorial or Death Anniversary Thangka (*dus thang*)\***

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Among connoisseurs and researchers of Buddhist sacred art of the Tibetan cultural realm, Ngor monastery, the main seat of the Ngor branch of the Sa skya school in gTsang province of central Tibet, is best known as an erstwhile repository for thangka paintings commissioned, to a large degree, in the Newari-influenced painting style (*bal ris*), as well as for its eclectic collection of metal sculptures. Part of the monastery's former collection consisted of sacred artworks that had been commissioned after the death of incumbent or retired abbots, as part of the religious services aimed at fulfilling the wishes of those departed (*dgongs rdzogs*). Well-studied examples of posthumous images include the portraits of Ngor abbots, both in painting and sculpture, as sets or supplements to the depiction of the lineage masters of the *Lam 'bras* teaching cycle.<sup>1</sup> Among those commissioned representations, as recorded in the biographies of Ngor's successive abbots, another type of portrait is frequently listed, the technical term for which in its most abbreviated form is *dus thang*. According to descriptions found in those biographies, it is evident that this term referred to the portrait of a deceased abbot (shown surrounded by lineage masters) that ought to be displayed on the occasion of the memorial service held on his death anniversary.

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\* I would like to express my gratitude to Yannick Laurent and Volker Caumanns for their valuable suggestions and remarks on an earlier draft of this contribution. I also wish to thank September Cowley for carefully proofreading my English. Needless to say, any shortcomings and mistakes that remain are solely my responsibility.

1 See, for instance, Jackson 2003, Jackson 2010: 206–208, fig. 8.19, Jackson 2016: 312–316, fig. 3.19. Moreover, I plan to discuss different types of Ngor abbot portrayals in a separate article.

Thus, I suggest that we preliminary translate the term *dus thang* as “memorial thangka” or “death anniversary thangka.”<sup>2</sup>

This specific type of painting has so far not been the subject of any art historical research, though examples of monumental memorial thangkas—their imposing size is specified in biographies as having the height of one storey (*thog tshad ma*)—can be found in private and museum collections around the world. Thus far, without identifying them as memorial thangkas, these paintings have, for the most part, been mistakenly identified as portraits that belong to a series or set of paintings depicting the lineage masters of the *Lam 'bras*.<sup>3</sup> In this contribution, I shall thus introduce this specific type of painting by presenting written descriptions of its commissioning and by identifying existing paintings. As a result, this article should help us deepen our understanding of Tibetan art history and allow for a reattribution of several posthumous portraits of the great abbots of Ngor.

This present article would not have been possible without the manifold contributions that the honouree of the present volume, David Jackson, has made to the field of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies. David has not only sparked my initial interest in Tibetan art in general and the Ngor tradition in particular through his fascinating lectures, extensive publications, and personal communications (e.g., suggesting the life of Ngor’s founder as my dissertation topic), but his vast insight, knowledge, and enthusiasm for Tibetan culture and history have been a huge source of inspiration for my own modest attempts in pursuing Tibetan Studies. One of the innovative approaches from which this present contribution has benefitted the most is David’s historical method for art-historical research in dating paintings “through gathering and interpreting the internal and external evidence relating to datable people.”<sup>4</sup>

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2 It needs to be further ascertained whether other Tibetan Buddhist traditions also commissioned memorial thangkas.

3 On distinguishing a set from a series, see Repo 2014.

4 Jackson 2003: 92. For a detailed description of the individual steps of this method, see Jackson 2003 and Jackson 2016: 303–319. See also Jackson 2005a, Jackson 2010: 1–49, Jackson 2011: 19–24, and Jackson’s other art historical publications for its practical application.



As outlined by David,

Internal evidence may be written or iconographic clues that relate to datable persons within the painting. Written evidence begins with the careful deciphering and copying of all labels or inscriptions on the front and back of the painting and its mount. [...] Iconographic evidence can be the identification of famous founding or lineage masters through the iconography of their portrayals. It can also entail identifying the lineage through structural analysis and through identifications, sometimes hypothetical, of series of individual masters.<sup>5</sup>

External evidence relevant to chronology can mean information that helps identify and date the historical figures portrayed, such as: life histories of individuals in biographies and biographical sketches, records of religious lineages of transmission (*thob yig*), and histories of religious schools (*chos 'byung*). External evidence from histories may be records of commissioning or painting of thangkas or murals. [...].<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, David has also always been an extremely generous scholar, kindly sharing precious references, texts, images, and unpublished drafts, and also taking time to carefully proofread some of my articles and even most of my monograph on the life and times of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456).<sup>7</sup> Thus, as a tiny little token of appreciation and gratitude for his continued support and guidance, I dedicate this modest article to David lags.

## 1 Commissioning Memorial Thangkas as Part of *dgongs rdzogs* Ceremonies

The biographies of the successive abbots of Ngor are an important and very rich source for the study of the monastery's art-historical heritage because they provide us with numerous references to the commissioning of sacred works of art. A first analysis shows that these references can occur within different sections of those abbot biographies (these sections can also intersect): (1) As part of the section listing the

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5 Jackson 2016: 303.

6 Jackson 2016: 303.

7 See Heimbel 2017.

protagonist's commissioning of the "three receptacles" or "three supports" (*rten gsum*); (2) As part of the section narrating the death of the protagonist and the succeeding funeral ceremonies during which the commissioning of religious objects belongs to what is called the "means for fulfilling the intentions [or last wishes]" (*thugs dgongs rdzogs pa'i thabs*), in order to create merit on the departed's behalf; and (3) Scattered mentions within different contexts of the protagonist's life, such as in the section about his abbatial tenure when hosting, as incumbent abbot, the funeral ceremonies of his own teachers or abbatial predecessors.

Since memorial *thangkas* were almost entirely commissioned as part of funeral ceremonies, they are mostly mentioned within the second and third of the three above-mentioned categories. To better illustrate such a commission, the related passage from the biography of Sangs rgyas seng ge (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot of Ngor,<sup>8</sup> shall be introduced in translation:

In order to fulfil the last wishes of the Lord, there were commissioned as inner sacred objects a life-sized gilt "chamber sculpture" of himself; one supplementary sculpture of himself for the *Lam zab* [lineage] of one *mkhyid* in size; an inner reliquary of a Victory *Stūpa*, [namely] a silver reliquary *stūpa* equal in size to the inner reliquaries of the previous lamas with magnificent features of craftsmanship and embellished with all sorts of precious substances; a painted image equal [in height] to one storey of the *gTsug lag khang* to be displayed on the occasion of the monthly offering ceremony [on his death anniversary]; and numerous magnificent painted images including a *Lam 'bras* [lineage] supplement [of the Lord] and *Vajramahākāla* [i.e., *Pañjaranātha Mahākāla*].<sup>9</sup>

8 For the terms of office of all Ngor abbots mentioned in this paper, see Heimbel 2017: 513–546.

9 Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 344a1–3: *nang rten du rje nyid kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i thabs su| de nyid kyi gzims mal gser sku sku tshad ma dang| lam zab kha skong mkhyid gang ba gcig| nang rten rnam rgyal mchod rten| bla ma gong ma rnams kyi nang rten dang tshad mnyam pa'i dngul gdung bzo'i bye brag khyad par du 'phags pa rin po che sna tshogs kyis spras pa| zla dus kyi mchod pa'i steng du 'grem pa'i bris sku gtsug lag khang gi thog dang mnyam pa| lam 'bras kha skong dang| rdo rje nag po chen po la sogs pa'i bris sku khyad par du 'phags pa du*

This commission is also described in the biography of dKon mchog dpal ldan (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot, who, as it turns out, was Sangs rgyas seng ge's successor on the throne of Ngor and commissioning patron of his predecessor's funeral ceremonies:

In order to fulfil the last wishes of the one whose name Sangs rgyas seng ge is clearly standing out universally, who is the lord of the families of all *maṇḍalas*, [and] who is identical with the great Vajradhara, [dKon mchog dpal ldan] commissioned the “chamber sculpture” of the Lord, a gilt image of about an arrow's length; a clay sculpture [of him] having about [the size of] one cubit; a supplement for the *Lam zab* lineage [in the form of his] gilt sculpture having about [the size of] one *mtho*-back; an inner reliquary in the inner sanctum [of Ngor's assembly hall, the dBang khang chen mo], [namely] a silver reliquary of equal size to the reliquary *stūpas* of the previous lamas, a Victory *Stūpa* with very fine features of craftsmanship and outstanding ornamental decorations; an image of the Lord himself, a very beautiful *thangka* with the height of one storey to be displayed on the occasion of [his] memorial tea of the twenty-seventh;<sup>10</sup> [and] a supplementary *thangka* [of him] for the *Lam 'bras* lineage. Moreover, [dKon mchog dpal ldan] commissioned *thangkas* of the [permission-granting] vision [for teaching the *Lam 'bras*] of the Victorious One, the great Vajradhara [i.e., Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po], including [depictions of] the five Supreme Masters [of Sa skya such as] rJe Sa chen;<sup>11</sup> of rJe dKon mchog lhun grub; [and] of rJe Sangs rgyas seng ge; [and] *thangkas* of Hevajra, [Cakra]saṃvara, [Vajra]bhairava, Eight-deity [Pañjara]nātha [Mahākāla], [the four-faced Mahākāla form of] gNyan mgon chen po, Śmaśānādhipati, [Śrīdevī] Rematī, Pu tra, Bran bdud [gShin rje nag po?], Thirteen[-deity] Karmayama, Vaiśravaṇa [with his] Eight Horsemen, [and] the Triad of Red Ones [i.e., Kurukullā, Gaṇapati, and Ṭakkirāja].<sup>12</sup>

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*ma bzhengs*]. Nam mkha' dpal bzang completed writing the biography on the fifteenth day of the first half of the eighth month of 1571.

10 Sangs rgyas seng ge had passed away on the twenty-seventh day of the fourth month of 1569; see Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 342a4–6.

11 On this vision, see Heimbel 2017: 219–221.

12 Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar*, fols. 436b5–437a6: *dkyil*

It seems appropriate to follow these two descriptions with some general comments resulting from the analysis of the biographical corpus of Ngor's abbots. With regard to the memorial *thangka*, it is noticeable that it is not always termed *dus thang*, but instead referred to in a rather descriptive way that also clarifies its size and purpose, a common feature that shall be addressed in the next section. As exemplified by those two descriptions, the listings of commissioned objects can be very rich in detail and extremely useful for art historians, usually recording what can be considered Ngor's standard *dgongs rdzogs* commissions, including, among others, a "chamber sculpture," that is, a sculpture portraying the deceased abbot that was destined for his chambers (*gzims mal sku 'dra*),<sup>13</sup> as well as his sculpture as a supplement for the *Lam zab* lineage, his silver reliquary, his memorial *thangka*, and his supplementary *thangka* for the *Lam 'bras* lineage. At the same time, however, we have to be aware of the limitations of those listings, which can hardly ever be considered complete. The biographical corpus of Ngor's abbots shows that the presentation of the commissioning of works of art can vary to

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*'khor thams cad kyi rigs bdag rdo rje 'chang chen po dang gnyis su med pa sangs rgyas seng ge pa zhes mtshan yongs su gsal ba de nyid kyi thugs kyi dgongs pa rdzogs pa'i phyir du| rje de nyid kyi gzims mal sku 'dra gser sku mda' tshad tsam dang| lder sku khru gang tsam yod pa dang| lam zab brgyud pa'i kha skong gser sku rgyab mtho gang tsam yod pa dang| gtsang khang du nang rten bla ma gong ma'i gdung rten rnams dang tshad mnyam pa'i dngul gdung rnam rgyal mchod rten bzo khyad shin tu legs shing 'phra phul du phyin pa dang bcas pa| nyer bdun gyi dus ja'i thog tu 'grem pa'i rje nyid kyi sku 'dra zhal thang thog tshad ma shin tu mtshar ba| lam 'bras brgyud pa'i kha skong gi zhal thang| gzhan yang rje sa chen gong ma lnga dang bcas pa rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang chen po'i gzigs snang ma| rje dkon mchog lhun grub| rje sangs rgyas seng ge pa rnams kyi zhal thang| kye rdor| bde mchog| 'jigs byed| mgon po lha brgyad| gnyan mgon chen po| dur khrod bdag po| dmag zor ma| pu tra| bran bdud| las gshin bcu gsum ma| rnam sras rta bdag brgyad| dmar po skor gsum rnams kyi thang sku| [...] bzhengs|. Kun dga' bkra shis completed the biography of dKon mchog dpal ldan on the first day of the first half of the seventh month of 1596.*

- 13 Early biographies refer to a "chamber sculpture" (*gzims mal sku 'dra*) that was placed in Ngor's *Lam 'bras lha khang* as a continuation of the sculptures of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters housed there. This term is not used in later biographies which refer to this image, for instance, as a sculpture "continuing the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters" (*lam 'bras bla brgyud kha skong*). This suggests a transformation of this type of portrait sculpture over time from being first placed in the chambers of the deceased abbot to be later on installed in the *Lam 'bras lha khang* to function as a supplement of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters.

a huge extent from hardly mentioning any objects to detailed enumerations filling several folios. In the present case, we see that whereas the first description refers at its end to “numerous magnificent painted images,” of which only two examples are given, the second clearly spells out the subject of those images. Moreover, as evidenced by inscribed objects, not all commissions were always recorded in biographies. For instance, none of the presently available and inscribed commissions by IHa mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth abbot, are recorded in his available biography by Brang ti Paṅ chen Nam mkha’ dpal bzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot.<sup>14</sup>

Whereas the two descriptions translated above simply list the memorial thangka as one of numerous *dgongs rdzogs* commissions, some biographies devote a separate section to its production. This is, for instance, the case for the memorial thangkas of three nineteenth-century abbots from the Brang ti family-run Thar rtse bla brang—Byams pa Kun dga’ bstan ’dzin (1776–1862), the forty-seventh abbot; ’Jam dpal bzang po (1789–1864), the fifty-first abbot; and Byams pa Kun dga’ bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan (1829–1870), the fifty-fourth abbot. All three thangkas were produced during the first year after the passing of the respective abbot and they were ceremonially installed either on one of those abbots’ monthly days of death or their first annual death anniversary:

Furthermore, beginning from the first half of the second [of two] third *hor* months [of 1862],<sup>15</sup> having summoned the painter from rTa nag, [the latter] created in an extremely excellent manner [and] qualitatively very pure a precious memorial thangka [of Byams pa Kun dga’ bstan ’dzin] to be displayed in the gTsug lag khang, and [its] entire brocade mounting [and] cloth cover were also produced [by him?] consummately. Presided over by mKhan chen rDo rje ’chang

14 However, a presently unavailable, more extensive biography of IHa mchog seng ge was written by Kun dga’ grol mchog (1507–1566), which served as the basis for the one by Nam mkha’ dpal bzang that is accessible to us; see Heimbel 2017: 518. For images of paintings that were commissioned by IHa mchog seng ge but that are not recorded in his biography, see, for instance, <https://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setid=5566> (accessed 12.08.2020).

15 Byams pa Kun dga’ bstan ’dzin had passed away on the seventeenth day of the first of two third *hor* months of 1862; see Byams pa Kun dga’ bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan, *Byams pa kun dga’ bstan ’dzin gyi rnam thar*, pp. 323.6–324.1.

rNal 'byor 'Jam dpal bzang po, we, together with some fully ordained monks, performed the consecration [of that thangka] on the basis of Amitāyus. On the day of the seventeenth of the fifth *hor* month, [it] was ceremonially taken into the gTsug lag khang of [Ngor] E waṃ's monastic community. On that day, I accomplished in that gTsug lag khang a consummate offering of reverence including a hundredfold series of offerings and for the entire monastic community performing the *guru puja*, a distribution of one silver coin to each fully ordained monk; and as careful as possible an offering to also invite the incumbent mKhan Rin po che [i.e., the abbot] for dedicating the accumulation [of merit].<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, beginning from the end of the fifth *hor* month, the painter from rTa nag created, within three months and five days, a precious memorial thangka [of 'Jam dpal bzang po], which is most fine and of very pure quality, to be displayed in the gTsug lag khang, and [its] brocade mounting, cloth cover, and the like were also produced [by him?] consummately.<sup>17</sup>

16 Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan 'dzin gyi rnam thar*, p. 339.2–5: *yang hor zla gsum pa phyi ma'i yar tshes nas bzung ste rta nag lha bris pa bos te| gtsug lag khang du bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che che legs shin tu sgros gtsang bar bzhengs te gong gsham zhal khebs thams cad kyang phun sum tshogs par bgyis pa la| mkhan chen rdo rje 'chang rnal 'byor 'jam dpal bzang po dbur bzhugs pa'i bdag cag dge slong kha shas dang bcas pas tshe dpag med la brten pa'i rab tu gnas pa bgyis te| hor zla lnga pa'i tshes bcu bdun gyi nyin e waṃ pa'i gtsug lag khang du spyang drangs| de nyin bdag gis gtsug lag khang der mchod pa'i phreng ba brgya phrag dang bcas shing| dge bdun [= 'dun] gang yod kyis bla ma mchod pa tshogs pa la| dge slong re re la phyag 'gyed dngul tam re dang bcas pa'i bsnyen bkur phun sum tshogs pa dang| mkhan rin po che khri thog pa'ang tshogs bsnor gdan zhus kyi 'bul ba gang zab bcas bsgrubs pa dang|.*

17 Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, p. 510.5: *yang hor zla lnga pa'i mjug nas bzung ste rta nag lha bris pas gtsug lag khang du bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che che legs shin tu sgros gtsang ba zla ba gsum dang zhag lnga'i bar du bzhengs te| gong gsham zhal khebs sogs kyang phun sum tshogs par bgyis pa dang|.* The biography continues to present in much detail the consecration of the *dus thang* of 'Jam dpal bzang po, together with a sculpture of his, and the subsequent ceremonial procession on his first death anniversary (the tenth day of the fourth month of 1865) when both were formally taken to Ngor's Lam 'bras lha khang and gTsug lag khang, and at one time also to the Bla brang gzhang; see Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, pp. 511.4–513.2. 'Jam dpal bzang po had passed away on the tenth

Furthermore, in the second *hor* month of the female iron sheep year [i.e., 1871], the year following the passing away [of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan], the painter from rTa nag created a very fine precious memorial thangka—with that Vajradhara himself [i.e., Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan] present as the central figure surrounded by countless lamas, tutelary deities, buddhas, bodhisattvas, Dharma protectors, [and] gods of wealth—to be displayed on the day of the anniversary of the Lord's passing away. [It] was extensively consecrated by some masters and disciples. On the fourth day of the ninth *hor* month of that year,<sup>18</sup> the precious memorial thangka was ceremonially taken into the gTsuṅ lag khang. In conjunction with that, a two-day *guru puja* was also held during which a distribution of one silver coin each was offered to the ocean-like monk assembly and of one silver *zho* each the following day.<sup>19</sup>

Since all three memorial thangkas were painted by an artist from rTa nag within a period of less than ten years—1862, 1864, and 1871—they might as well have been painted by one and the same artist. The memorial thangka of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin has survived, as will be shown below, and its inscription reveals the full name of its painter, rTa nag lHa bris sKal bzang rab rgyas, who could thus have also painted the other two memorial thangkas.

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day of the fourth month of 1864; see Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, p. 494.3 and *'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, p. 614.5–6.

18 Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan passed away on the fourth day of the second of two ninth *hor* months of 1870; see *'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, p. 652.4–5.

19 *'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, pp. 667.6–668.2: *yang sku mya ngan las 'das pa'i phyis lo lcags mo lug lo'i hor zla gnyis pa'i nang du rta nag lha bris pas rje nyid zhi bar gshegs pa'i dus chen gyi nyin bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che rdo rje 'chang de nyid gtsor bor bzhugs pa la bla ma yi dam sangs rgyas byang sems chos srung nor lha dpag tu med pas bskor ba shin tu che legs shig bzhengs pas dpon slob 'ga' zhiḡ gis rab tu gnas pa rgyas par mdzad| lo de'i hor zla dgu pa'i tshes bzhi'i nyin dus thang rin po che gtsug lag khang du gdan drang ba dang chab cig 'dus pa rgya mtshor bla mchod nyin gnyis btsugs par mdzad pa la'ang phyag 'gyed pa dngul tam re dang| de'i phyi nyin dngul zho re phul bar mdzad|.*

## 2 The Tibetan Term *dus thang* and Its Variants: A Chronological Overview

At present, it is unclear when the tradition of commissioning memorial thangkas of deceased Ngor abbots originated. Within the corpus of Ngor abbot biographies, however, the earliest contemporaneous mention of a memorial thangka is that of lHa mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth abbot, which was painted in 1535.<sup>20</sup> One difficulty in correctly identifying such mentions lies in the fact that there does not exist one standard term that is consistently utilised when referring to them. By comparison, we encounter a variety of terms that range from the above-mentioned most concise term *dus thang* to rather descriptive presentations, which take a standard term for thangka (e.g., *sku thang*, *thang ka*, *thang sku*, *bris sku*, *zhal thang*) as their basis and add an explanation specifying its purpose and/or size. To illustrate this range of terms and descriptions, the references to memorial thangkas, as I was able to locate them within the corpus of Ngor abbot biographies, shall be introduced here in chronological order:

Memorial thangka of lHa mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth abbot

- [...] a painted image to be displayed in the gTsub lag khang on the occasion of [his] memorial tea serving [...] <sup>21</sup>
- [...] a thangka for [his] death anniversary service [...] <sup>22</sup>
- [...] a thangka for [his] memorial tea serving [...] <sup>23</sup>

Memorial thangka of dKon mchog lhun grub (1497–1557), the tenth abbot, portraying together with him two previous abbots—Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478), the fourth abbot, and Go rams pa bSod

20 See Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar*, fols. 261b5–262b5.

21 Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 262b4: *gtsug lag khang du dus ja'i steng du 'grem pa'i bris sku la sogs pa rnams bzhengs te*l.

22 dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 273b4–5: *rje lha mchog seng ge'i sku 'dra mda' gang lhag tsam| gtsang khang du gser zangs kyi gdung rten shin tu che ba dang| dus mchod thang sku rnams bzhengs*l.

23 Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 294a3–4: *rje lha mchog seng ge'i sku 'dra mda' gang lhag tsam zangs gser las grub pa dang| gtsang khang du gser zangs dang dngul las grub pa'i rnam rgyal mchod rten mi tshad lhag tsam dang| dus ja'i thang ka bzhengs nas rab gnas mdzad| zla ja dang dus chen gyi bla mchod btsugs pa sogs thugs kyi dgongs pa yongs su rdzogs par mdzad do*l.



nams seng ge (1429–1489), the sixth abbot—to commemorate their coinciding death anniversaries (this thangka survives and is introduced below; fig. 1).

- [...] a thangka for [his] death anniversary service with three lamas joined together on [its] canvas [made of] a shroud and surrounded by the lineage masters of the Three Vows [...] <sup>24</sup>
- [...] a painted image of the three, [namely] the Lord, [i.e.,] the father, and [his two spiritual] sons to be displayed on the twenty-first [...] <sup>25</sup>

Memorial thangka of Sangs rgyas seng ge (1504–1569), the eleventh abbot

- [...] a painted image equal [in height] to one storey of the gTsong lag khang to be displayed on the occasion of the monthly offering ceremony [on his death anniversary] [...] <sup>26</sup>
- [...] an image of the Lord himself, a very beautiful thangka with the height of one storey, to be displayed on the occasion of [his] memorial tea of the twenty-seventh [...] <sup>27</sup>

Memorial thangka of dKon mchog dpal ldan (1526–1590), the twelfth abbot

- [...] an image equal in height to one storey of the 'Du khang to be displayed at [his] memorial tea serving [...] <sup>28</sup>

24 dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 283b2: *dus mchod sku thang gdung ras la bla ma gsum 'dus la| sdom pa gsum gyi bla ma brgyud pas bskor ba|*.

25 Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 337b3–5: [...] *nyer gcig gi steng 'grem pa'i rje yab sras gsum gyi bris sku dang lam 'bras kha skong gi bris sku la sogs pa dang|*. All three masters passed away on the twenty-first day, though all of different months and years; see n. 55 below.

26 Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 344a3: *zla dus kyi mchod pa'i steng du 'grem pa'i bris sku gtsug lag khang gi thog dang mnyam pa|*.

27 Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar*, fol. 437a1–2: *nyer bdun gyi dus ja'i thog tu 'grem pa'i rje nyid kyi sku 'dra zhal thang thog tshad ma shin tu mtshar ba|*. Sangs rgyas seng ge had passed away on the twenty-seventh day of the fourth month of 1569; see n. 10 above.

28 Kun dga' bkra shis, *dKon mchog dpal ldan gyi rnam thar*, fol. 450b5–6: *dus ja la 'grem pa'i sku 'dra 'du khang gi thog tshad dang mnyam pa rnams legs par bzhengs pa'i zhal bkod grub rjes|*.

- [...] a thangka with the height of one storey to be displayed on the occasion of [his] memorial tea serving [...]<sup>29</sup>

Memorial thangka of Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot

- [...] a painted image, a thangka [to be displayed at his] memorial tea serving with the height of one storey of the 'Du khang [...]<sup>30</sup>

Memorial thangka of Kun dga' bkra shis (1558–1615), the fourteenth abbot

- [...] a thangka [to be displayed at his] memorial tea serving [...]<sup>31</sup>

Memorial thangka of dPal ldan don grub (1563–1636), the sixteenth abbot

- [...] a memorial thangka [...]<sup>32</sup>

Memorial thangka of Nam mkha' sangs rgyas (fl. 16th/17th century), the seventeenth abbot

- [...] a great memorial thangka [...]<sup>33</sup>

Memorial thangka of Shes rab 'byung gnas (1596–1653), the eighteenth abbot

- [...] a great memorial thangka [...]<sup>34</sup> (this thangka survives and is introduced below; fig. 2)

Memorial thangka of Nam mkha' rin chen (1612–1657), the nineteenth abbot

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29 bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar*, fol. 14b2: *dus ja' i steng du 'grem pa'i zhal thang thog tshad ma bzhengs pa dang*l.

30 bSod nams shes rab, *Nam mkha' dpal bzang gi rnam thar*, fol. 27a4: *bris sku dus ja thang sku 'du khang gi thog tshad ma*l.

31 Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *Kun dga' bkra shis kyi rnam thar*, fol. 61b6: *sa ga zla ba'i tshes gnyis nas dus ja thang sku klu sdings nas bzhengs*l.

32 Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *dPal mchog rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, fol. 156a6–b1: *gser dngul las grub pa'i byang chub chen po'i dngul gdung dus thang dus ja 'dzin pa sogs mdzad do*l.

33 Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Nam mkha' sangs rgyas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 86b3–4: [...] *dus thang chen mo bzhengs te zla mchod dus ja bla mchod*l lo *dus mchod kun rig bsnyen rgyas sgrub mchod sogs rgyun ma chad pa deng sang gi bar du gnas pa de nyid do*l.

34 Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 106b3: *dus thang chen mo* [...].

- [...] a memorial thangka [...] <sup>35</sup>

Memorial thangka of bSod nams rgya mtsho (1616–1667), the twenty-first abbot

- [...] a thangka with the height of one storey to be “invited” [i.e., displayed] at [his] monthly memorial tea serving [...] <sup>36</sup> (this thangka survives and is introduced below; fig. 4)

Memorial thangka of dPal mchog rgyal mtshan (1599–1673), the twenty-second abbot

- [...] a memorial thangka [...] <sup>37</sup>

Memorial thangka of Tshul khrims dpal bzang po (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot

- [...] a very fine memorial thangka [...] <sup>38</sup>

Memorial thangka of bKra shis lhun grub (1672–1739), the thirty-first abbot

- [...] a very large thangka with the height of one storey to be displayed on the occasion of my own memorial tea serving [...] <sup>39</sup>

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35 Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Nam mkha' sangs rgyas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 87b2: *dus ja dus thang sogs thes che bar byung ste*l.

36 lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, fol. 151a5: [...] *zla dus kyi dus ja la 'dren pa'i sku thang thog tshad ma rnams bzhengs nas de dag la rab tu gnas pas byin rlabs zer 'od 'bar ba mdzad do*l.

37 Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *dPal mchog rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, fol. 162a2–3: *dus thang sde dge bla brang du bzhengs nas phul zhing*l.

38 bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khrims dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, fols. 289b3–290a2: *dus thang che legs zhig gсар du bzhengs nas* [...].

39 Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bKra shis lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 363b1–2: *skar ma lha ldings pa'i lha ris pa de yang mdangs 'dra byed pa la mkho bas khrid shog lnga rang gi dus ja'i steng du 'grem rgyu'i thang ka shin tu che ba thog tshad ma zhig bzhengs bsam pas* [...]. At the court of sDe dge, bKra shis lhun grub served as royal chaplain of bsTan pa tshe ring (1678–1738, r. 1714–1738), who had invited him to sDe dge in 1728, where he remained until his death in 1739. Shortly before his own demise, he gave instructions for his funeral ceremonies at sDe dge and Ngor. The passage quoted above, as well as the following one, show that he had also made plans of the commissioning of his own memorial thangka, which was destined to be sent to Ngor, and even of the sketching of its basic outline; see Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bKra shis lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 366b5: *dus thang de nga rang gi lag ris kyi dpe zhig 'dri bsam pa yod de bar chad kyi dbang gis grub pa zhig ma byung| da khyed rang rnams yar 'gro gong la 'dir bris nas khur rgyu byas na stabs bde bar 'ong zhes sogs dus tha'i zhal lung rnams mthil phyin par gnang gis 'dug pas*l.

- [...] a memorial support, a marvellous large thangka [...] <sup>40</sup>

Memorial thangka of Sangs rgyas dpal bzang (1699–1745), the thirty-fifth abbot

- [...] a large memorial thangka [...] <sup>41</sup>

Memorial thangka of bSod nams lhun grub (1714–1745), thirty-sixth abbot

- [...] a very fine memorial thangka [...] <sup>42</sup>
- [...] a very fine memorial thangka of [good] quality [...] <sup>43</sup>

Memorial thangka of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin (1776–1862), the forty-seventh abbot (this thangka survives and is introduced below; fig. 9)

- [...] a precious memorial thangka to be displayed in the gTsong lag khang [...] <sup>44</sup>

Memorial thangka of 'Jam dpal bzang po (1789–1864), the fifty-first abbot

- [...] a precious memorial thangka, which is most fine and of very pure quality, to be displayed in the gTsong lag khang [...] <sup>45</sup>

Memorial thangka of Kun dga' bstan pa'i blo gros (1822–1884), the fifty-third abbot

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40 Sangs rgyas ye shes, *bKra shis lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 370a5–6: *ngor du tshes nyi shu'i zla dus su dus ja dang| gzims khang du bla mchod 'dzugs pa dang| dus rten zhal thang chen mo khyad mtshar*].

41 dPal ldan chos skyong, *Sangs rgyas dpal bzang gi rnam thar*, fol. 384a1–2: *dus thang che ba gnam stong nyin gyi dus ja'i rten bcas bla ma bzang po bkra shis dang dbon po grags pa bcas nas phul*].

42 bsTan 'dzin rgya mtsho, *bSod nams lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 14b3: *rje rin po che'i dgongs rdzogs dus thang che legs*].

43 Ngag dbang chos grags, *Ngag dbang chos skyong bzang po'i rnam thar*, fol. 13b3: *gtsug lag khang du dus thang che legs sgros ldan bzhengs nas dus ja zla ba byung ngo cig gi tshes bcu bdun la gtong rgyu mdzad*].

44 Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan 'dzin gyi rnam thar*, p. 339.2–5: *gtsug lag khang du bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che che legs shin tu sgros gtsang bar bzhengs te [...]*.

45 Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *'Jam dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, p. 510.5: *[...] gtsug lag khang du bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che che legs shin tu sgros gtsang ba [...]*.

– [...] a memorial thangka [...] <sup>46</sup>

Memorial thangka of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1829–1870), the fifty-fourth abbot

– [...] a very fine precious memorial thangka—with that Vajradhara himself [i.e., Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan] present as the central figure surrounded by countless lamas, tutelary deities, buddhas, bodhisattvas, Dharma protectors, [and] gods of wealth—to be displayed on the day of the anniversary of the Lord's passing away [...] <sup>47</sup>

With a few exceptions, those descriptions show a general development in the designation of the paintings over the centuries: From the mid-seventeenth century on, the term *dus thang* began to be used as the standard designation for those paintings, whereas the previously used, more descriptive references became less common. If we speculate on the etymology of the term *dus thang*, it appears to be an abbreviation of previously used terms such as *dus mchod thang sku* (“death anniversary service thangka”) or *dus ja thang sku* (“memorial tea service thangka”), as well of those longer descriptive passages such as *dus ja'i steng du 'grem pa'i zhal thang* (“a thangka to be displayed on the occasion of the memorial tea serving”).

At the same time, however, those descriptions raise the question of whether memorial thangkas were displayed monthly or only annually, and closely related to this, the question of whether death anniversaries were observed monthly (*zla dus*) or annually (*lo dus*)? Some of the passages cited above suggest that a memorial tea service was held monthly and that on this occasion the memorial thangka was shown (*zla dus kyi mchod pa'i steng du, zla dus kyi dus ja la*), whereas a more elaborate ceremony (which could include conducting *sgrub mchod* rituals) was held annually on the actual death anniversary, on the occasion of which the

46 dPal ldan blo gros rgyal mtshan, *Kun dga' bstan pa'i blo gros kyi rnam thar*, p. 851.2–3: *dus ja'i rten dang 'dra sku gdung rten dus thang sogs* [...].

47 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, pp. 667.6–668.1: [...] *rje nyid zhi bar gshegs pa'i dus chen gyi nyin bsham rgyu'i dus thang rin po che rdo rje 'chang de nyid gtso bor bzhugs pa la bla ma yi dam sangs rgyas byang sems chos srung nor lha dpag tu med pas bskor ba shin tu che legs shig* [...].

memorial thangka was displayed as well.<sup>48</sup>

Instituting both a monthly (*zla dus*) and an annual (*lo dus*) memorial service, or better to say establishing an endowment fund (*thebs rtsa*) to hold those services, appear to have been a customary part of *dgongs rdzogs* ceremonies.<sup>49</sup> But in view of the fact that with the increasing number of former abbots the number of memorial services also increased, and with it also the economic burden of hosting those services,<sup>50</sup> we might speculate that at one point in time death anniversaries came to be observed only on an annual basis, as appears to be the case at present,<sup>51</sup> and that memorial thangkas were thus also only shown annually.

Another consequence of the increasing number of former abbots was that death anniversaries could coincide. One option in such a case was to switch the memorial service, and the display of the memorial thangka, to another day that was still available. We learn about such scheduling difficulties in the biography of Tshul khirms dpal bzang po (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot, who had died on the twenty-fifth day of the third month of 1710,<sup>52</sup> the same day (though not month) on which Ngor's founder, Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, had also passed away:

48 For instance, for the monastery's founder, Ngor chen, a monthly service was held on the twenty-fifth (*zla ba byung ngo cog gi nyer lnga la zla mchod*), the day of his passing, and around his death anniversary (referred to as *dus chen*), on the twenty-fifth day of the fourth month, annual *sgrub mchod* rituals were observed for seven days; see Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge, *'Bul sdud rdzong dus kyi yi ge*, p. 653.5 and Heimbel 2020: 345.

49 See, for instance, Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *Sangs rgyas seng ge'i rnam thar*, fol. 343a5–b1; Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dPal ldan don grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 73a1–3; lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, fol. 147a4–5; and nn. 33, 34, 41, 42, and 44 above. Ngag dbang brtan pa'i rdo rje, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fol. 294a3–4 expresses this slightly differently by saying that a monthly memorial tea serving (*zla ja*; most likely short for *zla dus kyi dus ja*) and a *guru pūja* for the annual death anniversary (*dus chen gyi bla mchod*) were instituted.

50 See, for instance, lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, fol. 147a4–5: *bla ma gong ma'i lo dus dang zla dus kyi dus mchod rnam bla brang bzhuks mkhan des shin tu 'dzin dka' ba' dug pa*l.

51 However, I was informed by Blo gsal don grub (email, 30.09.2020) that lamas and monks can perform offerings privately on both the monthly and annual death anniversaries of their most important lineage masters.

52 bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khirms dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*, fol. 287a5–b3.

After a very fine memorial thangka had been newly made, the tradition [lit. “continuity”] was established to simply display [it] facing the memorial thangka of rDo rje ’chang [i.e., Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po] on the occasion when the [latter’s] memorial tea of the twenty-fifth took place. Apart from [that], no actual memorial tea [of Tshul khriims dpal bzang po] was instituted. But because Bla ma dKon mchog rgyal mtshan, alias Yon tan tshul khriims, the spiritual son of the Lord, wanted to maintain the tradition [lit. “continuity”] of the memorial tea in accordance with what was taught [...],<sup>53</sup> [he] offered 100 *srang* units of silver, 50 *zho* units of gold, [and] 50 tea bundles consisting of six bricks each to the E waṃ bla brang [i.e., Ngor’s central office headed by the abbot] at the same time when the memorial thangka was newly made. Thereupon, because [the memorial tea of Tshul khriims dpal bzang po] would coincide with the memorial tea of rJe rDo rje ’chang [i.e., Ngor chen] on the twenty-fifth day, and because there was some space [in between] memorial teas on the thirtieth day, [he] instituted the memorial tea [on that thirtieth day] displaying the memorial thangka.<sup>54</sup>

Nevertheless, as suggested by another example, it was actually possible to combine the memorial service of former abbots and to display a memorial thangka that portrayed them together. The single existing example is the above-mentioned memorial thangka depicting three Ngor abbots—Kun dga’ dbang phyug, Go rams pa, and dKon mchog lhun grub—who had all passed away on a twenty-first day, though of different months and years, and which shall be introduced in the following section.

53 Here, the biography quotes some passages, the sources of which are not specified, highlighting the importance of worshipping one’s lama after his demise.

54 bKra shis dbang phyug, *Tshul khriims dpal bzang po’i rnam thar*, fols. 289b3–290a2: *dus thang che legs zhig gsar du bzhengs nas nyer lnga’i dus ja nam yod la rdo rje ’chang gi dus thang zhal sprod du ’grem pa’i rgyun tsam ma gtogs dus ja dngos ni ma tshugs ’dug kyang| ji skad du| [...] |zhes gsungs pa ltar| rje nyid kyi thugs sras bla ma dkon mchog rgyal mtshan nam yon tan tshul khriims kyiis dus ja’i rgyun ’dzin bzhed kyi dus thang gsar bzhengs dang mnyam du dngul srang brgya| gser zho lnga bcu| ja khag drug lnga bcu rnams e waṃ bla brang du phul nas tshes dus nyer lnga la rdo rje ’chang gi dus ja dang ’dom pas gnam stong dus ja’i seng yod stabs dus thang bkram nas btang rgyu dang| [...] mdzad song zhing|.*

### 3 Examples of Memorial Thangkas

Among the numerous portraits of Ngor's abbots presently known to me, ten can be conclusively identified as memorial thangkas and the identity of six of the ten abbots portrayed can be established. To a large degree this identification is made possible by interpreting the internal historical evidence (e.g., colophon-like inscriptions, recognisable lineages) of those paintings and relating it with the external historical evidence about those paintings from the biographical corpus presented above. For those paintings where inscriptions appear to be non-existent or regrettably inaccessible, comparing their compositions allows them to be identified as memorial thangkas. Each of those thangkas shall be introduced in chronological order of its commission, whereas due to the limited scope of the present contribution, I could not follow in detail all the steps of David Jackson's method having to omit, for instance, an in-depth structural analysis of the shown lineages and providing diagrams for all paintings indicating the position of each of the depicted figures.

#### 3.1 Memorial Thangka of Kun dga' dbang phyug, Go rams pa, and dKon mchog lhun grub (commissioned in about 1557; size: 160 × 136 cm; fig. 1)

The earliest existing example of a memorial thangka is already a very special case because it is the only known painting to portray not just one but three great abbots of Ngor: Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478), the fourth abbot; Go rams pa (1429–1489), the sixth abbot; and dKon mchog lhun grub (1497–1557), the tenth abbot. All three having died on a twenty-first day (yet all of different months and years),<sup>55</sup> the painting thus commemorates the death anniversary of all three of them. An unpublished in-depth analysis of this painting was prepared by David Jackson ("Paintings of Three Great Abbots of Ngor and Their Lineages in the Pesl Collection") on behalf of its owner in 2005, but only a

55 Kun dga' dbang phyug passed away on the twenty-first day of the fourth month of 1478; Go rams pa on the twenty-first day of the first month of 1489; and dKon mchog lhun grub on the twenty-first day of the ninth month of 1557; see bSod nams lhun grub, *Kun dga' dbang phyug gi rnam thar*, fol. 110a2–3 and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *gDan rabs*, p. 11.2–3; dBang phyug grub pa, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar*, pp. 61.9–63.1 and Sangs rgyas rin chen, *Go rams pa'i rnam thar*, fol. 122a5; and dKon mchog dpal ldan, *dKon mchog lhun grub kyi rnam thar*, fols. 278a4–280b3 and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *gDan rabs*, p. 21.5, respectively.



fraction of his extensive study was included in the catalogue of the Peshart collection (*Buddha in the Yurt*).<sup>56</sup> In his study, Jackson highlights the importance of the painting's damaged colophon-like inscription, a common feature of memorial thangka:

Based purely on iconography or style, nobody could date this painting or identify its three main figures with any degree of certainty. This was only made possible by the presence of a long and detailed inscription in the long strip at the bottom of the painting.<sup>57</sup>

As Jackson outlined further,

The inscription begins, in just four metrical lines of nine syllables each, with a versified praise of all three of the main masters portrayed above. The following passage continues with very respectful and at times florid praises of the third main figure, dKon mchog lhun grub.<sup>58</sup>

The inscription continues mentioning the passing of dKon mchog lhun grub by giving his date of death (the twenty-first day of the *tha skar*

56 See Meinert (ed.) 2011: vol. 1, pp. 38–41 and vol. 2, p. 769, *Tibetica*, n. 1.

57 Jackson 2005b: 13. Inscription: [1st line] *na mo shrī gu ra wel kun mkhyen dga' bde'i dbang phyug rdo rje 'dzin bsod nam [= nams] ye shes kyi [= kyi?] bskrun 'jam pa'i dbyangs| smra ba'i seng ge dkon mchog grang [= grangs] yas kyi| yon tan lhun grub pad? dkar 'dzin phyag 'tshal| |zhes rigs gsum gyi rnam? par 'phrul ba'i □□ tu gyur ba? gsum la phyag tshal ba sngon du brjod de?| rje btsun mkhyen rab dang thugs rje tshad med pa mnga' ba| skye dgu chos? □□ pa rnams □ gtsug gi nor bur gyur pa| mtshan? brjod? gyi srid zhi'i rgud pa ma lus pa sel ba'i bdag nyid dkon mchog gsum gyi □□ 'phrin las ma lus pa lhun grub tu mnga' □ par mdzad □□ pa? mchog □□ 'di dgung lo drug cu rtsa gcig tu phebs pa me mo sbrul? gyi? lo tha skar zla ba'i nyer gcig la chos kyi dbyings su mnyam par gzhang pa'i tshul bstan nas? □□□ [2nd line] □□ sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la ye shes gzigs pa 'jug pa'i slad? du?| rgyal ba gnyis pa'i rgyal tshab kun dga' dbang phyug pa dang| kun mkhyen mkhyen rab kyi dbang phyug bsod nam seng ge pa dang| de? nyid kyi sku dang □□ gsung ngag rin po che'i bla ma rgyud [= brgyud] pa dang| byang sems sdom pa'i brgyud pas yongs su bskor ba □□□ rgyal? ba'i? bstan pa phyogs thams cad du dar zhing rgyas pa dang| bstan pa'i rtsa lag bla ma dam? pa? rnams kyi thugs dgongs yongs su rdzogs pa dang| mthong ba dang thos pa dang reg? pa? □ sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la bla ma dam pa'i brgyud pa dang bcas? pa'i byin rlabs khyad par can myur du 'jug par gyur cig| ma [= mang/m] ga lam|. A square "□" indicates one illegible syllable, "□□" about two illegible syllables, and "□□□" about three or more illegible syllables. This transliteration is adapted from Jackson 2005b: 13 and is based on my reading of what was decipherable from a scan of Meinert (ed.) 2011: vol. 1, pp. 39–41; emphasis added.*

58 Jackson 2005b: 14.

month of the female fire snake year [i.e., 1557]) and age at death (sixty one = sixty), a circumstance Jackson considered “unusual.”<sup>59</sup> By comparison, however, it turns out that the mention of the death of the portrayed abbot is also recorded in inscriptions of other memorial thangkas, the existence of which Jackson was not aware when writing his description in 2005. This reference to the passing of dKon mchog lhun grub points to the fact that the thangka was painted soon after his death, which is further corroborated by his biography listing it among the religious objects commissioned as part of his *dgongs rdzogs* ceremonies,<sup>60</sup> and thus it can be dated to about 1557.<sup>61</sup> The biography adds the interesting detail that the memorial thangka was even painted on the shroud (*gdung ras*) of dKon mchog lhun grub.<sup>62</sup> Given the fact that the memorial thangka was commissioned after the passing of its last portrayed abbot, dKon mchog lhun grub, but was also commemorating the death anniversaries of two previous abbots, who had died seventy-nine (Kun dga’ dbang phyug) and sixty-eight (Go rams pa) years earlier, it is reasonable to assume that previously no separate memorial thangkas had been commissioned for those two abbots.

The inscription also identifies the two lineages whose labelled masters (images unavailable) are depicted surrounding the three main figures (providing in this context now also the full names of the first two abbots) in the top, side, and bottom registers: The masters on the left (from the viewer’s perspective) represent the main *Lam ’bras* lineage of Ngor, which begins at the left of the top centre with Vajradhara, proceeds to the end of the left row, drops down the left column—including those two masters in the central part above the heads of the two lower main figures, that is, Zhang ston Chos ’bar (1053–1135) and Sa chen Kun dga’ snying po (1092–1158)—, and continues further to the right in the bottom row. At its end, the lineage might possibly alternate between the

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59 Jackson 2005b: 14.

60 See n. 24 above.

61 Interpreting the inscription, Jackson has reached a similar conclusion; see Jackson 2005b: 14: “One does get the impression that the thangka was commissioned soon after his death, in his memory”; and: “Thus the thangka can be dated to the second half of the sixteenth century, and if it was commissioned soon after his death, it would date more specifically to the late 1550s.”

62 See n. 24 above.

last minor and major figures. The lineage appears to depict twenty-eight figures when counting both the twenty-five minor and three major figures. Though lineage master number 21 in his own record of teachings received,<sup>63</sup> Ngor chen appears to be number 22 in the depicted *Lam 'bras* lineage (fifth from the left in the bottom row), and is followed by representations of three Ngor abbots as minor figures.<sup>64</sup> As pointed out by Jackson as one characteristic mark of his depiction, Ngor chen is shown with the prominent bald spot on his head.<sup>65</sup>

It must be noted, however, that a more detailed or complete *Lam 'bras* lineage with its different forks could also be shown. In that case, for instance, all three teachers from whom dPal ldan tshul khrim (1333–1399) received the *Lam 'bras*—Chos rje Ri khrod pa Blo gros brtan pa (1316–1358), dKar po brag pa Rin chen seng ge (fl. 14th century), and Bla ma dam pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375)—could be depicted, instead of showing only Bla ma dam pa. Alternatively, Bla ma dam pa could even be replaced as in the case of Ngor chen's famous commission of eleven *Lam 'bras* lineage master paintings, in which he had Blo gros brtan pa portrayed in Bla ma dam pa's stead.<sup>66</sup> In the present painting, there appears to have been one additional *Lam 'bras* master inserted after Bla ma dam pa; the latter is shown first on the left in the bottom row wearing a red *paṇḍita* hat. Within the lineage record of dKon mchog lhun grub, *Lam 'bras* lineages can be found that pass through an additional master after Bla ma dam pa, namely Chos rje Ri khrod pa, and it might thus be possible that one of those lineages is depicted in the present painting.<sup>67</sup>

63 On Ngor's *Lam 'bras* lineage, see Ngor chen, *Thob yig rgya mtsho*, p. 271.1–6; Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 158.6–161.1; Heimbel 2017: 393–413; and Jackson 2005b: 15–19.

64 On the specifics of this lineage depiction—e.g., its last part seems to be shortened, omitting some abbots “who were not essential for the transmission of this lineage to the last figure,” see Jackson 2005b: 14–19.

65 See Jackson 1990: 142–143, n. 33 and Jackson 2011: 18–19.

66 See Heimbel 2017: 140–145, 173, 399; Jackson 2003: 96–97, and Jackson 2016: 313, fig. 13.9, 334.

67 dKon mchog lhun grub received the *Lam 'bras* from different teachers. For instance, for the lineages he received from dKon mchog 'phel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot, and Sangs rgyas rin chen (1453–1524), the eighth abbot, see dKon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa'i chos thos pa'i tshul*, pp. 153.5–19, 153.19–155.4, 156.2–5; and 199.16–201.14, respectively.

The masters on the right represent the lineage of the bodhisattva vow according to the Madhyamaka tradition and the lineage begins to the right of the top centre with Buddha Śākyamuni, proceeds right to the end of the row, and descends down the right column. It comprises fifteen minor figures and, as pointed out by Jackson, the five Sa skya founding fathers shown within the *Lam 'bras* lineage have to be added to the bodhisattva vow lineage as well.<sup>68</sup> By comparison with another depiction of this lineage on a portrait of Ngor chen (fig. 11), which shall be discussed below, the last lineage master depicted at the bottom of the right column wearing a distinctive hat (number 20) can presumably be identified as Byang chub rtse mo (1303/15–1379/80). From him, the lineage would be expected to descend through Shar chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1359–1406) to Ngor chen, and from the latter to continue via some or all of the remaining minor *Lam 'bras* figures and also possibly the two major figures down to dKon mchog lhun grub, the last major figure. However, this proposition is unable to explain the absence of Shar chen in the depiction of the lineage. Another possibility would thus be to consider the bodhisattva vow lineages that Ngor chen received from his *Lam 'bras* teacher Buddhaśrī (1339–1420) according to both Madhyamaka and Yogācāra traditions. The depiction of the lineage according to the Yogācāra tradition can be ruled out from the start because the lineage begins with Śākyamuni, Maitreya, and Asaṅga instead of the depicted Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrī, and Nāgārjuna. In the remaining option, the depiction of the lineage according to the Madhyamaka tradition, Buddhaśrī himself is number 20 in the lineage, which would be the exact same position of the above-mentioned Byang chub rtse mo in the transmission line from Shar chen. Though this would be in line with the depicted lineage assuming that it continues from Buddhaśrī to Ngor chen, the identification of Buddhaśrī with the figure shown wearing that red hat would be very unusual because he is otherwise not portrayed in such a way (This is also evident in comparison with the other lineage depiction discussed below).<sup>69</sup> The identifica-

68 See Jackson 2005b: 19–21.

69 On the different lineages through which Ngor chen received the bodhisattva vow according to both Madhyamaka and Yogācāra traditions, see Ngor chen, *Thob yig rgya mtsho*, pp. 183.1–4, 299.2–300.3. Note that the biography of dKon mchog lhun grub mentions that the three central figures are surrounded by the lineage masters of the Three Vows (*sdom pa gsum*); see n. 24 above.

tion of this figure as Byang chub rtse mo and not Buddhaśrī is also supported by the entry for the lineage of the bodhisattva vow according to the Madhyamaka tradition, as found in the record of teachings received of dKon mchog lhun grub. The modern print edition of this work preserves glosses specifying iconographic details of some lineage masters that might have actually been added for their painted depiction. The gloss for Byang chub rtse mo within the lineage as received from dKon mchog 'phel (1445–1514), the seventh abbot, reads: “fleshy, red hat with a long-pointed tip” (*tshan po zhwa dmar rtse ring can*),<sup>70</sup> which fits very well his depiction in the present painting.<sup>71</sup>

Still other minor figures are depicted in the painting. These include the standard group of eight bodhisattvas representing the Eight Great Close Sons (Aṣṭamahopaputra) of the Buddha. Two of them—Maitreya and Mañjuśrī—are shown with one standing on each side of the upper main figure; the remaining six are shown sitting in the second top row, with three on each side.<sup>72</sup> In addition, three deities are depicted in the right corner of the bottom register: the long-life deity Uṣṇīṣavijayā, the wealth goddess Vasudhārā, and the protector Pañjaranātha Mahākāla.

### 3.2 Memorial Thangka of Shes rab 'byung gnas (commissioned in 1653; size: 185 × 142.2 cm; fig. 2)

The portrayed abbot of this memorial thangka can be identified as Shes rab 'byung gnas (1596–1653), the eighteenth abbot, with the help of the two-line inscription written in gold in the long red strip at the bottom of the painting.<sup>73</sup> It begins with a praise of Shes rab 'byung gnas in two

70 dKon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa'i chos thos pa'i tshul*, p. 142.10. For his fleshy portrayal with a distinctive hat and beard, see also HAR 8202.

71 dKon mchog lhun grub received the bodhisattva vow according to the Madhyamaka tradition from different teachers. For instance, for the lineages he received from dKon mchog 'phel, the seventh abbot, and lHa mchog seng ge, the ninth abbot, see dKon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa'i chos thos pa'i tshul*, pp. 142.3–19 and 358.17–359.3, respectively.

72 See Jackson 2005b: 23–25 and Meinert (ed.) 2011: vol. 1, 40.

73 Inscription: [1st line] @@||om swasti| rgya chen **shes** bya'i chos rnam ma lus pa| |ji bzhin **rab** tu gsal ba [= bar] mkhyen pa'i mthus| |dge legs '**byung gnas** thub bstan brgyas [= rgyas] mdzad pa'i| |'gro ba'i 'dren pa mchog la gsol ba 'debs|| ||dpal ldan phun tshogs dge legs 'byung ba'i? gnas| |sa gsum skye dgu'i gtsug gi rgyan gcig pul| |mtha' yas 'gro? ba'i re ba bskong mdzad pa'i| |'jam dbyangs □□ yid bzhin nor bur

verses (of four metrical lines of nine syllables each), whereby the first verse includes the common play on words interweaving the individual syllables that make up the personal name of the portrayed abbot.<sup>74</sup> The following passage is partly heavily worn but it appears to continue with the circumstances for commissioning the thangka: It was commissioned in 1653 to fulfil the last wishes of the portrayed abbot and then offered to the gTsub lag khang of Ngor (i.e., the dBang khang chen mo, Ngor's assembly hall). Unfortunately, the part on the commissioning patron is partly illegible (*gzung 'jug pa'i* □□ *pho brang nas*). Nevertheless, this is already enough information to date the painting to 1653, the same year in which its main figure, Shes rab 'byung gnas, had died as incumbent abbot on the twenty-first day of the first month.<sup>75</sup> This dating can be further corroborated by the biography of Shes rab 'byung gnas in which the thangka is mentioned among his *dgongs rdzogs* commissions. Moreover, both inscription and biography allow us to identify the artist painting the memorial thangka: sPrul sku Kun dga' dar rgyas, whose remuneration is even recorded in the biography.<sup>76</sup>

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'dud|rab dangs rnyog bral gnam sngon gzhu 'dra'i steng|□□□bcas pa'i snang snyan mchog □|□□mtshar du □□lta lam gyi|dbang po'i □□□sa 'di|rnam rgyal chu mo sbrul gyi lo|zung 'jug □□pa'i pho brang nas □'dren pa dam pa'i thugs dgongs □□|lus can rgya mtsho'i tshogs gnyis rdzogs byed du|legs byas lhag bsam rnam dag gyis [=gis] bskrun? te|e waṃ chos ldan [2nd line] gtsug lag khang du phul|'di ltar bgyis? pa'i rnam dkar dge ba des|deng nas bzungs ste byang chub snying po'i bar|lthos bsam sngon song bsrugub la brtson pa dang|rang don mthar phyin gzhan don byed par shog|'di' 'du byed pa ni|pir 'dzin dbang? po lho brag sman thang pa'i|rings lugs rgya mtsho'i □□□|cha tsam 'dzin pa'i gzo rigs sna tshogs pa|kun dga'i ming can gang des gus pas bskrun?|□□□|dpyod ldan gzur gnas □□□|'on kyang dad ldan □□chud gson pa'i|blun? po'i mig lam mdzes pa?'di mi mtshungs|'di bskrun dge ba □□'bum ldan □|mkha' mnyam 'gro ba'i □□gsol? nas|zab mo rdo rje theg la mos pa dang|smin grol nyams len byed la gegs med shog||sarba maṃ? ga lam?||; emphasis added. For images of this inscription available online, see [www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=2734](http://www.himalayanart.org/search/set.cfm?setID=2734) (accessed 12.08.2020).

74 The same verse is also used for his praise in a ritual text worshipping the lineage masters of the *Lam 'bras*; see Kun dga' chos 'phel, *Lam 'bras bla ma mchod pa'i cho ga*, p. 858.1–2. The only difference is the last syllable of the second metrical line reading *thugs* instead of *mthus*.

75 See Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 103b3–4 and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *gDan rabs*, p. 44.4.

76 Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Shes rab 'byung gnas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 106b3: *dus thang chen mo 'dri mi sprul sku kun dga' dar rgyas la|bkras btags|*

Two lineages of labelled masters are arranged around Shes rab 'byung gnas. Both begin in the top centre from where they proceed to the left and right respectively, before descending through the left and right columns, one on each side, and ending in the left and right halves of the two respective bottom registers. Both lineages apparently descend further down to the main figure, Shes rab 'byung gnas, through the two pairs of figures shown with larger proportions to the left and right of his head, the lower pair sitting within the outer lobes of the three-lobed backrest arch of the main figure and the upper pair above those outer lobes. Some inscriptions (though mostly worn) and the iconography of some minor figures identify the masters depicted on the left side (from the viewer's perspective) as representing the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor.<sup>77</sup> The lineage shown on the right side is more difficult to identify. But the few legible inscriptions and the iconography of some minor figures, and the related lineage record of Ngor chen and that of Blo gter dbang po (1847–1914) for the *rGyud sde kun btus*, allow us to identify the lineage as the one for the initiation into Guhyasamāja Mañjuvajra according to the Sa skya system (*sa lugs*) as transmitted by gNyan Lo tsā ba Dar ma grags.<sup>78</sup>

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*gos stod| sham thabs zho gsum ri ba| gzan gos spus gtsang ba| snam bu gnyis| gser zho lnga| dngul srang lnga| bzang ja bar khag gcig |lham gos snam| ras yug rnam dang| srad dgon khag gnyis kyi dus ja|.*

77 The *Lam 'bras* lineage apparently comes down through twenty-nine minor figures plus the additional four figures arranged around the head of the major figure, Shes rab 'byung gnas. The letter would then be number 34 in the lineage. However, if all Ngor abbots were included, his position in the lineage would be number 38. This suggests that the lineage is shortened, omitting some Ngor abbots at its end. One of the few labels I was able to read identifies the figure shown directly to the proper right of his head as Byams pa Kun dga' bkra shis (1558–16150), the fourteenth abbot. Since there is only one more lineage master shown before the lineage descends to Shes rab 'byung gnas (the one to the proper left of his head), but we know that there were three more abbots in office after the tenure of Kun dga' bkra shis and before that of Shes rab 'byung gnas, two of these abbots were obviously omitted. A further possible omission of two more abbots would explain his position in the lineage. Faint traces of other labels suggest identifying the minor figures number 18 as Bla ma dam pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan and number 20 as Buddhaśrī. Ngor chen would thus be depicted as the second minor figure from left in the upper bottom row and be number 21, his usual position in Ngor's *Lam 'bras* lineage.

78 The depicted lineage begins with Mañjuvajra followed by seven minor figures

There are other minor figures shown in the centre of the two bottom rows of the painting. The upper centre is occupied by Uṣṇiṣavijayā, the lower one by a group of protectors with Pañjaranātha Mahākāla in the middle flanked by Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on his left and what appears to be Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī (dPal ldan lha mo Dud sol ma) on his right: the three principal protectors of the Sa skya school. This triad is further flanked by Vaiśravaṇa on the left and what appears to be Śrīdevī Rematī (dPal ldan lha mo dMag zor rgyal mo) on the right. As explained by Jeff Watt, each *bla brang* of Ngor had its own protector, and Rematī was ritually worshipped by the Klu sdings bla brang.<sup>79</sup> Since Shes rab 'byung gnas was a member of the Shar pa family-run Klu sdings bla brang, the depiction of Rematī might represent this special relation.

### 3.3 Memorial Thangka of a Seventeenth-century Abbot (commissioned ca. mid-17th century; size: 177.2 × 131.8 cm; fig. 3)

The identity of the portrayed abbot is presently unknown. This is mainly due to the fact that the long strip at the bottom of the painting, where one would usually find the colophon-like inscription revealing his name, is hidden under some fabric stitched over it. However, in comparison with the previous painting (fig. 2), we notice that its composition

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portrayed as Indian *paṇḍitas*, and proceeds through two Tibetan masters—gNyan Lo tsā ba Dar ma grags and gNam Kha'u pa, who is identified by Blo gter dbang po as Chos kyi rgyal mtshan—to the five Sa skya founding fathers. On this lineage record, see Ngor chen, *Thob yig rgya mtsho*, p. 311.1–4 and Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 71.6–72.2, 73.2–4, 72.4–73.1. Note that the lineage record of Blo gter dbang po adds two non-depicted figures: Vajradhara at the beginning, and among the Indian masters, Ri sul gyi rnal 'byor ma as the second last master. According to Ngor chen's record, Ngor chen is number 24 in the lineage (and number 26 according to Blo gter dbang po). After Ngor chen, Blo gter dbang po gives a shortened lineage of eight masters down to Shes rab 'byung gnas (number 9), consisting of one Sa skya hierarch and seven Ngor abbots. Shes rab 'byung gnas would thus either be number 33 or 34 in the lineage. However, the depicted lineage comes down to Shes rab 'byung gnas through twenty-nine minor figures and seemingly also through the additional four figures shown around his head, which would make him number 34 in the lineage. Moreover, the figure to the proper right of his head, labelled as Byams pa Kun dga' bkra shis is not recorded by Blo gter dbang po. The depicted lineage after Ngor chen might thus be an alternative lineage of Guhyasamāja Mañjuvajra.

79 See Watt 2014.



is very similar depicting, among others, two lineages surrounding the main figure in the top, side, and bottom registers, showing four masters as two pairs (with larger physical proportions than the other minor figures) to the left and right of the head of the main figure, and with the same group of deities and protectors in the centre of both bottom rows.<sup>80</sup> An interesting Chinese-inspired decorative detail, which also occurs in later memorial thangkas, is the pair of dragons shown on the pillar capital supporting the backrest arch and with their winding tails delineating the outer borders of the lower arch.

The iconography of the masters depicted on the left side (from the viewer's perspective) identifies them as representing the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor. Interestingly, their depiction (e.g., posture, dress, hat, and hand gestures) is nearly identical to those of the masters in the previous painting and even the number of depicted minor figures is exactly the same (i.e., 24). Moreover, the lower pair of masters shown to the left and right of the central figure's head is depicted iconographically in a similar manner to the pair in the previous painting, and the upper pair also exhibits similarities such as dress and hand gestures. Including also these latter four masters, the portrayed abbot would be number 34 in the *Lam 'bras* lineage, similar to the main figure of the previous painting, *Shes rab 'byung gnas*.

The second lineage shown on the right differs from the one in the previous painting. The depicted lineage begins with Buddha Śākyamuni, Vajrapāṇi, and the Za hor king Rab gsal zla ba (Prakāśacandra?), continues through six minor figures portrayed as Indian *paṇḍitas*, and descends further via twenty Tibetan masters. Among them, we find three (but not all five) of the Sa skya founding fathers (i.e., Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, rJe btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan, and Sa skya Paṇḍita) and following Ngor chen, representations of successive Ngor abbots can be expected. In addition, including the four masters portrayed around the head, the main figure would be number 34 in the lineage, similar to that of the *Lam 'bras*. The record of teachings received by Blo gter dbang po for the *rGyud sde kun btus* suggests that the portrayed masters

80 Though the individual lineage masters are labelled, the image of the painting available to me does not allow to decipher their names. Even the deities depicted in the centre of the two bottom registers—one in the upper and five in the lower—appear to be identical.

might represent a lineage of initiation into the *maṇḍala* of Sarvavidvai-rocana.<sup>81</sup>

Since the main figure would be number 34 in both lineages, could this painting thus be another memorial *thangka* of Shes rab 'byung gnas? A close look at the main figure reveals that he is portrayed iconographically in a similar manner to Shes rab 'byung gnas with the same hand gestures, monastic garb, and hat.

### 3.4 Memorial *Thangka* of bSod nams rgya mtsho (commissioned in about 1667; size: 196.2 × 159.3 cm; fig. 4)

As revealed by its badly worn, three-lined gold inscription in the long red strip at the bottom, this *thangka* painting portrays bSod nams rgya mtsho (1616–1667), the twenty-first abbot.<sup>82</sup> On the basis of the legible parts of its inscription, which identifies the painting as a support for commemorating the passing (*'das mchod kyi rten*) of bSod nams rgya mtsho, and the corroborative evidence of its having been mentioned

81 On this lineage and its various branches or forks, including one through Shes rab 'byung gnas, see Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 56.2–58.1.

82 Inscription: [1st line] @@|| *swasti* | **bsod nams** ye shes lhun grub grub pa'i sku | smon lam **rgya mtsho**'i dbus nas legs 'khrungs te | 'gro ba'i dgos 'dod rtsol ba'i dpal yon can | dpal ldan bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs | dpal e waṃ chos ldan gyi gdan sa nyi shu pa | [about 15 cm illegible] ['] *das mchod kyi rten rje nyid sku rten la* | lha 'gron chos [illegible passage] dbang chen dang chos 'phrul gyis [2nd line] lam 'bras bla [b]rgyud | [illegible passage] [bde] mchog bla brgyud | yi dam kye rdo rje man ngag lugs | 'khor lo bde mchog nag po pa [sa] lugs | 'jam [dbyangs] | spyan ras gzigs | rnam rgyal ma | chos skyong | gur zhal [illegible passage] byin rlabs 'jug | [3rd line] [illegible passage] brgyad bcu bzhes pa [illegible passage]; emphasis added. The inscription is adapted from the transliteration prepared by Jackson, who reconstructed it “from the research notes kindly shared by Valrae Reynolds” (email, March 2, 2020). The inscription identifies bSod nams rgya mtsho as the twentieth *gdan sa pa* of Ngor, though he was its twenty-first abbot. On omitting some abbots from this count, see Heimbel 2017: 513, n. 1. There are also inscriptions in Sanskrit and Tibetan on the back (Reynolds et al. 1986: 155), which were partly transliterated in the object file of the Newark Museum (kindly sent to me in 2010). The Tibetan inscription contains a prayer to bSod nams rgya mtsho including his name (adapted from the object file): *phan bde'i 'byung gnas bstan 'dzin yongs rnam kyil thugs sras mchog gyur bsod nams bye ba'i gter | ngag dbang rgya mtsho 'phrin las skyong mkhas pa'i | 'jam mgon bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs*; emphasis added. According to that object file, the portrayed abbot was first identified by Dezhung Rinpoche (1906–1987).

in the latter's biography as part of his *dgongs rdzogs* ceremonies,<sup>83</sup> this painting can conclusively be identified as another memorial thangka and can be dated to about 1667, the year in which bSod nams rgya mtsho passed away on the sixth day of the first half of the third month.<sup>84</sup>

Moreover, its basic composition is similar to that of the two previous memorial thangkas (figs. 2–3). It again depicts two lineages in the top, in both sides, and in the two bottom registers, as well as two pairs of minor figures shown with larger proportions to the left and right of the main figure's head.<sup>85</sup> The lineage on the left side (from the viewer's perspective) represents the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor, and the one on the right a Cakrasaṃvara lineage of Ngor as transmitted through Kṛṣṇācārin into the Sa skya tradition (*sa lugs*).<sup>86</sup> Each lineage depicts thirty-six minor figures and possibly descends at its end to the main figure, bSod nams rgya mtsho, through one or both pairs of masters portrayed to both sides of his head.<sup>87</sup> In addition, in the centre of the upper

83 See n. 36 above.

84 See lHun grub dpal ldan, *bSod nams rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, fol. 149b3–5.

85 Due to the low quality of the available image, it is impossible to read the colophon-like inscription at the bottom and the labels of the minor figures.

86 On this lineage and its branches or forks, see Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 113.4–115.2, 107.1–109.5.

87 The documentation of the Newark Museum identifies the upper of the two masters portrayed to the proper left of the main figure's head as Ngor chen dKon mchog lhun grub (1497–1557), the tenth abbot. Provided this identification is correct, the upper pair of masters might possibly not be part of the *Lam 'bras* lineage but rather part of the Cakrasaṃvara lineage because dKon mchog lhun grub occupies a much earlier position within that former lineage. If it included all abbots of Ngor, he would be number 30, and with the possible omission of another one or two abbots—such as 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474), the third abbot, and/or dPal ldan rdo rje (1411–1482), the fifth abbot—he would be number 28 or 29 and would be depicted in the upper row of the bottom left register as one of the first three masters from the right. Interestingly, the second master from the right, number 29, is depicted as fleshy like the one identified above as dKon mchog lhun grub and also with the same hand gesture. He might thus preliminary be identified as dKon mchog lhun grub as well. Judging by his portrayal wearing an orange *pañḍita's* hat (with the flaps folded and turned inward?), the second figure from the left in the lower bottom row appears to be Brang ti Paṅ chen Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1535–1602), the thirteenth abbot, and number 32 of the depicted *Lam 'bras* lineage. By comparison, the Indian side of the Cakrasaṃvara lineage, including numerous *mahāsiddhas*, is much longer than that of the *Lam 'bras*. Its first two non-Indian figures appear to be the two Newari

bottom row we have Uṣṇīṣavijayā and the standard group of Sa skya protectors in the lower bottom row centre: Pañjaranātha Mahākāla, flanked by Brahmaṛūpa Mahākāla on his left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī on his right.

By comparison with the previous two paintings, some further minor figures and decorative details have been added, which we shall also see in later memorial thangkas. The tutelary deities (*yi dam*) associated with the two depicted lineages are shown: Hevajra in the “tradition of instruction” (*man ngag lugs*), which stands for the *Lam ’bras* as one of the four major Hevajra systems,<sup>88</sup> is depicted in the upper left corner of the painting’s central part and Cakrasaṃvara in the tradition of Kṛṣṇācārin in the upper right corner. Below each tutelary deity, another deity is shown: Mañjuḥṣa on the left and Avalokiteśvara on the right. Moreover, two *stūpas* are placed on top of the lotus capital of the elaborately decorated pillars of the backrest arch of the main figure, and Chinese dragons curl around those vase-based pillars.

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Pham mthing pa brothers ’Jigs med grags pa (Abhayakīrti) and Ngag gi dbang phyug (Vāgīśvara)—numbers 17 and 18—who are followed by the first two Tibetan masters, Klog skya Shes rab brtsegs and Mal lo Blo gros grags pa—numbers 19 and 20. Next the lineage would descend further through Sa chen Kun dga’ snying po, who would be number 21, whereas he is number 11 of the *Lam ’bras* lineage. Ngor chen would be number 32 of the Cakrasaṃvara lineage, whereas he is number 21 of the *Lam ’bras* lineage. This suggests that the Cakrasaṃvara lineage is shortened at its end, omitting some Ngor abbots, and that it might continue through both pairs of masters arranged around the head of the central figure. For such a lineage record, see Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 113.4–115.2, 107.1–109.5. Note that the depicted lineage after Kūrmapāda (number 9) and before the Pham mthing pa brothers (numbers 17–18) includes an additional figure not recorded in the latter lineage record. For slightly different records of how dKon mchog lhun grub received that lineage from, for instance, Sangs rgyas rin chen, the eighth abbot, and lHa mchog seng ge, the ninth abbot, see dKon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa’i chos thos pa’i tshul*, pp. 217.7–218.3 and 367.5–14, respectively. The former record preserves as glosses iconographic details of individual figures, which correspond to their present depiction and which were thus apparently destined as instructions for their painted depiction.

88 See Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, pp. 158.6–164.2 and Jackson 2005b: 19.

### 3.5 Memorial Thangka of 'Jam dbyangs Nam mkha' dpal bzang (commissioned in 1672; size: 190 × 142 cm; fig. 5)

The golden inscription in the red strip at the bottom identifies the portrayed abbot as 'Jam dbyangs Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1611–1672), the twenty-third abbot. It opens with a praise in one verse (of four metrical lines of nine syllables each) interweaving the individual syllables of his name. It continues identifying the two lineages depicted in the two registers above, on both sides, and at the bottom: The lineage on the left (respective of the viewer) is a shortened depiction of the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor and the one on the right of the *Vajrāvalī* cycle.<sup>89</sup> Next,

89 Both lineages begin with Vajradhara in the top centre and each continues through twenty-five minor figures before possibly descending down to the main figure via the two pairs of minor figures portrayed with slightly larger proportions to the left and right of the main figure's head, with the lower pair in the outer lobes of the main figure's backrest arch and the upper pair above those lobes. The minor figures are labelled, but only a few inscriptions are still legible. Assuming that Ngor chen is the usual number 21 of the *Lam 'bras* lineage, only a shortened lineage of nine more masters would be depicted after him and before the lineage would end with the main figure, number 30. The *Vajrāvalī* lineage begins with Vajradhara and Vajrayoginī, proceeds through four Indian *paṇḍitas*, and continues along through nineteen Tibetan masters. Down to Ngor chen, the number of depicted deities and Indian and Tibetan masters is in accord with the third of three lineages for the initiation into the forty-two *maṇḍalas* of the *Vajrāvalī* as received by him from Sa bzang 'Phags pa gZhon nu blo gros (1346–1412); see Ngor chen, *Thob yig rgya mtsho*, pp. 307.6–308.3. In this lineage, Ngor chen is number 14 and thus the lineage would continue after him with eleven further masters portrayed as minor figures and perhaps down to the main figure through the two pairs of minor figures depicted around the main figure's head. The position of Ngor chen as number 14 can also be confirmed by the labelling inscription of the minor figure representing him (@||brgyal [= rgyal] ba rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po la na mol||). Other minor figures with partly legible inscriptions are number 12: Sa bzang Ma ti Paṇ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1294–1376) (@||ma ti paṇ chen la phyags? [= phyag] 'tshal lo||); number 15 (directly following Ngor chen): Byang sems Blo gros rin chen (@||blo gros rin chen dpal bzang po la na? mo?||); 17: 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474), the third abbot (@||'jam dbyangs shes rab brgya [= rgya] mtsho [add: la] phyag 'tshal □□□), 18: Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478), the fourth abbot (@||rgyal tshab dam pa kun dga' dbang phyug la na mol||); and 21: Sangs rgyas rin chen (1453–1524), the eighth abbot (@||rje? btsun? sangs rgyas rin chen la na mol||). An interesting iconographic detail is the depiction of Śākyaśrībhadrā (number 6) and Glan Ba/Bang so ba (number 7) with the characteristic undergarment known from representations of the Tibetan members of the four monastic communities in Śākyaśrībhadrā's

the details of commissioning the painting in the male water mouse year (i.e., 1672)—that is, the year in which 'Jam dbyangs Nam mkha' dpal bzang passed away on the nineteenth day of the fourth month<sup>90</sup>—are related: The commissioning patrons were the nephew and students of the deceased abbot; they had secured the material means for producing the painting in Ngor's Thar rtse bla brang, the *bla brang* to which Nam mkha' dpal bzang had also belonged and which he had headed before being appointed abbot of Ngor. The painting was commissioned as a support for making offerings in order to fulfil the last wishes of Nam mkha' dpal bzang, and it was donated to the gTsug lag khang of Ngor, where, as we can expect, it was displayed on his death anniversary. The inscription also mentions the painter of the memorial thangka: mDo mkhar lHa ris pa Dar rgyas bzang po, who identifies himself as a student of Nam mkha' dpal bzang.<sup>91</sup>

The basic structure of the painting is similar to that of the three previous ones (figs. 2–4) with the slight difference that a second row of lineage masters is added at the top, whereas there is only one row at the

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Vinaya tradition, the Jo gdan tshogs pa sde bzhi; see Heimbel 2013: 223–224. A reason for depicting a *Vajrāvalī* lineage on the painting might be that Nam mkha' dpal bzang taught this cycle numerous times; see Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Nam mkha' sangs rgyas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 88a4. For a composite lineage of all those *Vajrāvalī* and *Kriyāsamuccaya* lineages descending from Ngor chen that also lists Nam mkha' dpal bzang, see Blo gter dbang po, *rGyud sde kun btus kyi thob yig*, p. 195.2–6.

90 See Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Nam mkha' sangs rgyas kyi rnam thar*, fol. 88a4.

91 Inscription: [1st line] @@|| om swa sti|| smad byung rgyal ba kun gyi mkhyen brtse'i gzugs| mtha' dag gcig bsduṅ ngur smrig 'dzin pa'i? gtso| |legs skyes **nam mkha'**i nor bu skye rgu'i mgon| |dbang gi rgyal po **dpal** 'byor **bzang** por 'dud| |rigs brgya'i mgon po slu med dam pa la| |dus gsum rgyal ba'i bsgrod lam gsung ngag dang □ rdor? phreng? brgyud pa □□□ [the photo of this part of the inscription is missing] dge rgyun sgrub pa'i rten| |rje btsun bla ma'i thugs dgongs rdzogs phyir du| |kun ldan zhes pa chu pho byi lo la| |gnas mchog dam pa thar pa'i yang rtse du| |sku yis [= yi] dbon dang slob bu'i tshogs rnams kyis| |cha rkyen bzang pos legs par bskrun byas stel| [2nd line] 'og min gnyis pa e waṃ gtsug lag du| |phul bas rnam dkar dge tshog [= tshogs] dpag med kyis| |drin mchog bla ma'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa dang| |bstan 'gro'i bde skyid chos bzhin 'grub par shog|| |tshul 'di'i ri mo'i 'du byed dam pa de'i| |slob 'bang [= 'bangs] tha chung mdo mkhar lha ris pa| |dar rgyas bzang pos sgo gsum gus □□□ [the photo of this part of the inscription is missing] par shog| |mi 'gyur lhun po sku'i bkra shis shog| |yan lag drug cu gsung gi bkra shis shog| |mtha' bral don rtogs thugs kyis bkra shis shog| |rgyal ba'i sku gsung thugs kyis bkra shis shog|| |sarba manggala[m]| |bha wantu||; emphasis added.

bottom. As in the previous painting, we see again two *stūpas* shown on top of the pillars of the backrest arch of the main figure. Instead of Mañjuḥoṣa and Avalokiteśvara, the present painting depicts a pair of White Tārās right next to the upper pair of masters portrayed directly above the outer lobes of the main figure's arch. The labels of the lower pair depicted inside the outer lobes are legible and they can be identified as Nam mkha' sangs rgyas (fl. 16th/17th century), the seventeenth abbot, and his nephew Nam mkha' rin chen (1612–1657), the nineteenth abbot; both were former heads of the Thar rtse bla brang from the Brang ti family, whose successive members were heading this familial lama palace.<sup>92</sup> In the bottom row, a group of protectors is shown with its central triad of Sa skya protectors consisting of Pañjaranātha Mahākāla, flanked by Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on his left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī on his right. This triad, in turn, is flanked by Vaiśravaṇa on the left and Vyāghravāhana Mahākāla (mGon po sTag gzhon ma) on the right. The depiction of Vyāghravāhana Mahākāla might represent his function as protective deity of the Thar rtse bla brang.<sup>93</sup>

The thangka has a protective silk cover that might have once belonged to another painting because it labels the portrayed abbot as dKon mchog lhun grub, the tenth abbot. Its inscription states that something (the original painting it once covered?) was offered to the relics or reliquary (*sku gdung*) of dKon mchog lhun grub by his disciple dKon mchog rgyal mtshan.<sup>94</sup>

### 3.6 Memorial Thangka of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (commissioned in 1704, size: 206 × 158 cm; fig. 6)

This monumental thangka painting most likely portrays Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705), the twenty-fifth abbot. The three-line

92 Inscription Nam mkha' sangs rgyas: @||mtshungs med nam mkha' sangs rgyas la phyags [= phyag] 'tshal lo||; inscription Nam mkha' rin chen: @||mtshung [= mtshungs] med nam mkha' rin chen la phyag 'tshal lo||.

93 See Watt 2014.

94 Inscription: [1st line] @@|| rje btsun 'jam dbyangs chos rje dkon mchog lhun grub [2nd line] kyi sku gdung byin rlabs gzi 'od 'bar ba'i drung du| [3rd line] rdo rje'i slob ma dkon mchog rgyal mtshan gyis [4th line] 'bul lo| skye ba dang tshe rabs thams cad du rjes su bzung du gsol|| [5th line] sarba maṃ ga lam||. For images of this inscription, see Tanaka 2005: 129.

colophon-like inscription written in gold in the bottom red strip opens with a praise composed in one verse (of four metrical lines of nine syllables each) with the usual play on words interweaving the syllables of the portrayed abbot's name.<sup>95</sup> But without emending one syllable of this praise to have it also include the second and otherwise missing name element *rgyas*, the full name of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs cannot be read into the praise. However, there is more evidence suggesting that the portrayed abbot ought to be identified as Sangs rgyas phun tshogs. The inscription, which is heavily worn in parts, makes mention of a year called *nyi sgröl*, the proper name for the male wood monkey year (*shing pho sbrel*) of each sixty-year cycle. With regard to the life of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, that year would be 1704, the year in which he fell sick during its second month while serving in sDe dge as the court chaplain of the royal family, which was also the year before he passed away on

95 Inscription: [1st line] @@|| ||*om swa sti pra dzāḥ bhyāḥ* [|] *mkhyen brtse'i 'od bzang stong gi* [= *gis*] *ma rigs* [= *rig*] *mun*|| **sangs mdzad thub bstan skyes** [= **rgyas?**] *'tshal bzhed pa'i gnyen*|| **phun sum tshogs pa'i thugs bskyed** □□ *cher*|| *mngon mthos? bstan pa'i nyi mar phyag bgyi'o*|| *ras?* □ *inta ni le nor blo mang*|| *lhun brjod gser gyi sa 'dzin mdzes pa? bzhin*|| *mtha' yas yon tan kun sdzogs* [= *rdzogs*] *gang gi sku'i*|| *snang brnyan? mthong?* □□|| *gsang sngags* □□ *dang gsang? mtha' yas*|| *smin? grol? brgyud bcas mngon sum* □□ *gzhan*|| *chos dang long spyod sprul? sku'i? rten rnam rims?*|| *byang chen rnam gnyis bde rigs 'dus pa dang*|| *rigs gsum mgon po chos? sbyin lha mo bcas*|| *gur zhal* □□ *'dzin sogs*|| □ *tshad med pa mchod yul tshogs kyi grang* [= *grangs*]|| *bcu phrag* [2nd line] *bcu dgu las bcu yi lhag pa'i gar?*|| *e ma rab 'byams rgyal ba rgya mtsho'i tshogs*|| *rnam mang 'gro ba'i don du bka' bgros nas*|| *gcig tu tshogs bzhin mchod sdong mchog 'di ni*|| *bi sho karma'i las? pa'i bskrun du med*|| *gang de thub dbang 'das nas sum stong dang*|| *brgyad brgya so bzhi son? la? nyi sgröl lor*|| *nye bar len po shes rab lhun 'grub pas? dang*|| *lhan cig* □ *rkyen e waṃ bla brang nas?* □□ *pa'i dge tshogs mthus*|| *bdag sogs 'brel yod lus can ma lus kun*|| *skye zhing skye bar mgon khyod rje bzung zhing*|| *yon tan bdun ldan dal 'byor lus thob cing*| *tshul sogs lam bzang ma lus mthar phyin cing*|| *'gal rkyen kun zhi mthun rkyen phun tshogs dang*|| *rnam mang? 'gro ba kun gyi gnyen gcig* [3rd line] *po*|| *thub dbang ye shes nyi ma thob phyir bsngo*|| *||zhes pa'i kar chags tshigs su bcad pa cung zad kyi zhabs brtan pa 'di yang shākya'i dge slong byams pa tshul khrims dpal bzang gis e waṃ bla brang du bris pa dge zhing bkra shis par rgyur cig*|| *||sarba? manga lam bha wantu*||; emphasis added. The praise of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs in a ritual text worshipping the lineage masters of the *Lam 'bras* contains parts that are reminiscent of the praise in the inscription; see Kun dga' chos 'phel, *Lam 'bras bla ma mchod pa'i cho ga*, p. 858.6–7: *|mkhyen rab 'od kyis ma rig mun sangs shing* |*brtse chen thugs rje'i dkyil 'khor rgyas pa yis* |*nus pa phun tshogs thub bstan rgya mtsho'i gnyen* |*dge legs 'od stong ldan pa de la 'dud*||; emphasis added.



the eighteenth day of the eighth month of 1705.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, the person composing the inscription identifies himself as Byams pa Tshul khriṃs dpal bzang, who was no other than Tshul khriṃs dpal bzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot. He was in office in 1704 and states that he wrote the text of the inscription in the E wam bla brang, that is, the central office of Ngor headed by the abbot.<sup>97</sup> Tshul khriṃs dpal bzang was also a student of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs and wrote the official biography of his teacher.<sup>98</sup> Another person mentioned in the inscription who can be linked to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs is Shes rab lhun grub, who served as his secretary (*drung yig*).<sup>99</sup> Interestingly, Tshul khriṃs dpal bzang calls his composition a *zhabs brtan pa*, a prayer requesting longevity, and the portrayed abbot is also depicted holding a long-life vase topped by Amitāyus. Taken together, the aforementioned evidence suggests that the memorial thangka of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was commissioned at Ngor prior to his passing when he fell sick in sDe dge, and it was accompanied with prayers for his longevity. The fact that it was possible to commission a memorial thangka before the death of the portrayed central master is illustrated by the above-mentioned memorial thangka of bKra shis lhun grub (1672–1739), the thirty-first abbot, who had himself started planning its production before his own demise.<sup>100</sup>

Again, two lineages of labelled masters are depicted surrounding the central figure in the top register (beginning to the immediate left and right of an unidentifiable deity shown in the top centre), both side columns (one on each side), and the two bottom registers. The masters on the left (from the viewer's perspective) represent the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor, and those on the right a Cakrasaṃvara lineage of Ngor as transmitted by Kṛṣṇācārin.<sup>101</sup> Both lineages might descend

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96 See Heimbel 2017: 42–43.

97 See Heimbel 2017: 526–527.

98 See Heimbel 2017: 31.

99 See Heimbel 2017: 42. His title in the inscription, *nye bar len po*, remains to be clarified. In a colophon of a work by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs for which Shes rab lhun grub acted as scribe, the latter bears the title of an attendant (*nye bar gnas pa*); see the *sGrub thabs kun btus*, vol. 2, p. 124.1.

100 See n. 39 above.

101 The *Lam 'bras* lineage on the left depicts forty-one minor figures and the one of

further down to the central figure through one or both pairs of minor figures portrayed with larger proportions than the other minor figures to both sides of the main figure's head, the lower pair shown sitting inside the outer lobes of the main figure's backrest arch and the upper pair directly above those lobes. The right figure of the lower pair is depicted as a white-clad Sa skya hierarch and not as a fully ordained Ngor abbot.

Similar to the painting portraying bSod nams rgya mtsho (fig. 4), this memorial thangka also depicts additional minor figures and decorative details: the tutelary deities (*yi dam*) associated with the depicted lineages, that is, Hevajra in the "tradition of instruction" (*man ngag lugs*) and Cakrasaṃvara in the tradition of Kṛṣṇācārin; Mañjuḥoṣa below Hevajra and Avalokiteśvara below Cakrasaṃvara; the two *stūpas* (identified by the colophon-like inscription as representing the *Stūpa* of Great Awakening) on top of the lotus capital of the pillars of the backrest arch of the main figure; and the Chinese dragons curling around those vase-based pillars. Moreover, the centre of the lower two bottom rows depicts a group of protectors similar to those of the second and

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Cakrasaṃvara on the right forty. If the four masters portrayed around the head of the main figure are part of both lineages, the main figure would be number 46 of the left lineage and number 45 of the right one. Unfortunately, the quality of the available images does not allow one to read the inscriptions of more than two minor figures: Shes rab 'byung gnas, the eighteenth abbot, portrayed as the second figure from the left in the lower bottom register as number 36 of the *Lam 'bras* lineage (*shes rab 'byung gnas la na mol*), and lHa mchog seng ge, the ninth abbot, as the first figure from the right in that same bottom register as number 35 of the Cakrasaṃvara lineage (*lha mchog seng* □□□). The position of Shes rab 'byung gnas as eighteenth abbot makes it rather unlikely that the *Lam 'bras* lineage also descends—in addition, to the five minor figures following him in the bottom register—through the four masters shown around the head of the main figure down to the latter, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, the twenty-fifth abbot. In comparison with the previous painting portraying bSod nams rgya mtsho, the Ngor abbots at the end of both lineages are portrayed in an iconographically similar way. For instance, the fleshy master who might be dKon mchog lhun grub, the tenth abbot, is shown as number 28 of the *Lam 'bras* lineage, and Brang ti Paṅ chen Nam mkha' dpal bzang as its number 31 (see n. 87 above). An interesting detail is the master shown in the Cakrasaṃvara lineage wearing a huge leaf as his hat. On bSod nams rgya mtsho's portrait, he is depicted as the fourth figure from right in the upper row of the right bottom register (number 27), and on the present painting as the second from right in the upper right bottom register (number 27). On some specifics of the depiction of this Cakrasaṃvara lineage, see n. 87 above.

third memorial *thangkas* discussed above (figs. 2–3): the standard Sa skya protector triad of Pañjaranātha Mahākāla flanked by Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on the left and what appears to be Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī on the right. This group is, in turn, flanked by Vaiśravaṇa on the left and what appears to be Śrīdevī Rematī on the right.<sup>102</sup> Uṣṇīṣavijayā is also depicted, not in the centre of the upper row, as in some previous paintings, but rather in the middle of the cloth draped over the centre of the throne base.

### 3.7 Memorial Thangka of an Eighteenth-century Abbot (commissioned eighteenth century; size: 160 × 95 cm; fig. 7)

The identity of the portrayed abbot cannot be established with certainty at present because I do not have access to the golden colophon-like inscription written in the red bottom strip over three lines. Regrettably, it was not considered for the published description of the painting, which merely notes that there is a “partially legible dedicatory inscription.”<sup>103</sup> Likewise, none of the “partially legible Tibetan inscriptions” of the minor figures were recorded.<sup>104</sup>

The painting exhibits the aforementioned characteristic features of a memorial *thangka*, but its basic composition differs from the previous paintings with regard to its basic setting, which consists not of a dark blue background but rather of a Chinese-inspired green landscape (containing elements such as flowers, leaves, rocks, and streams of water) and a blue sky with clouds. As usual, two lineages are arranged around the central figure: the main *Lam ’bras* lineage of Ngor on the left of the viewer and a Cakrasaṃvara lineage of Ngor as transmitted by Kṛṣṇācārin on the right. The arrangement of lineage masters has changed from linear rows and columns to more informal but still balanced clusters in the four corners of the painting, the upper and lower left corners representing the *Lam ’bras* lineage and the right corners

102 Since Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was affiliated to the Thar rtse bla brang, though not a member of the Brang ti family, the depiction of Śrīdevī Rematī cannot be explained as representing her role as protective deity of the the Klu sdings bla brang, as suggested earlier, for instance, for her depiction on the memorial *thangka* of Shes rab ’byung gnas.

103 Sotheby’s 2014: 409.

104 Sotheby’s 2014: 409.

representing that of Cakrasaṃvara. Next to these upper clusters, the tutelary deities (*yi dam*) associated with those lineages are depicted: Hevajra in the “tradition of instruction” (*man ngag lugs*) on the left and Cakrasaṃvara in the tradition of Kṛṣṇācārin on the right. Moreover, two pairs of masters are portrayed flanking the central figure, one pair at the level of his shoulders (partly covering his backrest cushion) and the other at the level of his head (partly covering the main backrest lintel), whereas the lower pair is depicted with much larger proportions than the upper one. The lower pair are also portrayed as white-clad Sa skya hierarchs and not as fully ordained Ngor abbots. The bottom row depicts in its centre a group of protectors with Pañjaranātha Mahākāla in the middle, flanked by Vaiśravaṇa, Śrīdevī Dhūmavātī, and Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on the left and by what appear to be Śrīdevī Rematī, Vyāghravāhana Mahākāla, and Śrīdevī rDo rje rab brtan ma on the right. Again, a pair of Chinese dragons is depicted curling around the vase-based pillars of the backrest arch of the central figure, and a pair of *stūpas* on top of the main backrest lintel. As in the memorial thangkas of bSod nams rgya mtsho and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (figs. 4 and 6), there are small depictions of Mañjuḥoṣa on the left and Avalokiteśvara on the right, arranged in the present painting between the *stūpas* and upper clusters of lineage masters.

In addition, further minor figures have been added to the composition that were not part of the previously discussed memorial thangkas: (1) A group of three figures and an individual deity have each been depicted on either side of the top centre; the group on the right is identifiable as Padmasambhava with his two consorts, Mandāravā and Ye shes mtsho rgyal; (2) Amitāyus is shown in front of the third row of the cluster of lineage masters at the upper left corner and White Tārā is shown in the same position in the cluster at the upper right corner. Taken together with Uṣṇīṇavijayā crowning the long-life vase held in the left hand of the main figure, these three deities form the traditional set of three long-life deities (*tshes lha rnam gsum*); (3) In front of each lineage cluster, two masters are portrayed on top of each other (the lower right one as a white-clad Sa skya hierarch); (4) Below the upper lineage cluster on the left, Vajrayoginī (Nāro Khecarī) is depicted, with Caturbhujā Mahākāla in the same position opposite her on the right.

The comparison of the iconographic representation (e.g, dress, hair, hats, and hand gestures) of the final minor figures of the *Lam 'bras* lineage with that of those of the previous painting (fig. 6) might allow for some concluding speculations about the identity of the portrayed abbot. The iconographic representation of the final six masters in the last row of the left bottom corner is similar to the first six of seven final masters of the lineage shown in the memorial thangka of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs. But, in total, the present *Lam 'bras* lineage consists of forty-two minor figures (or forty-three when one adds, for the sake of comparison Vajradhara, who is not shown) and that of the previous painting consists of forty-one.<sup>105</sup> The lineage likely continues through the two pairs of masters portrayed one on top of each other to each side of the shoulders and head of the central figure. Though both pairs are inscribed, the available images do not permit an easy deciphering. Whereas the labels of the lower pair are illegible, those of the upper pair of Sa skya hierarchs reveal individual parts of some syllables hypothetically suggesting they be identified as Kun dga' bkra shis (1656–1711), the twenty-ninth Sa skya hierarch, and bSod nams rin chen (1705–1741), his son and thirtieth Sa skya hierarch.<sup>106</sup> Whether the two masters depicted in front of each of the lineages that are clustered in the upper left and right corners are part of the lineage awaits further clarification. These preliminary observations suggest that the central master portrayed here appears to be an eighteenth-century abbot following Sangs rgyas phun tshogs. Moreover, his pointed beard might be another clue to his identification.<sup>107</sup> As pointed out by Jackson, some Ngor abbots from the Thar rtse bla brang were famous for their distinctive beard.<sup>108</sup> In addition, as mentioned above, the presence of Vyāghravāhana Mahākāla in the bottom row might represent another link with the Thar rtse bla brang. Possible candidates might thus be such abbots as Byams pa Nam

105 By comparison, the Cakrasaṃvara lineage is also represented by forty-two minor figures. However, the iconographic representation of its final masters differs from that of those on the previous painting portraying Sangs rgyas phun tshogs.

106 Inscriptions: *gong ma kun dga'?* [...]; [...] *bsod? nams rin? chen* [...].

107 Similar to the portrayal of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, the abbot is also depicted holding a long-life vase topped by Uṣṇīṣavijayā.

108 See Jackson 2012: 74.

mkha' bsam 'grub (1696–1755), the thirty-third abbot,<sup>109</sup> or maybe even Nam mkha' 'chi med (1765–1820), the eminent forty-fourth abbot, which would postdate the painting to the 1820s, however (I am unable to evaluate whether this would be possible stylistically).

### 3.8 Two Memorial Thangkas of an Eighteenth-century Abbot (commissioned mid- or late eighteenth century; size MT1: 168 × 123 cm, size MT2: 158.7 × 118.1 cm; figs. 8a and 8b)

The present two memorial thangkas (MT<sub>1</sub> and MT<sub>2</sub>) appear to be two versions of exactly the same composition portraying one and the same abbot in an iconographically identical way, with the same hand gestures, symbolic hand implements, monastic garb, and hat. Moreover, all depicted minor figures, including the lineage masters who completely fill out the space of the landscape and sky behind the main figure, are identical and even the same decorative details are shown everywhere.<sup>110</sup> The reason for making two compositionally identical memorial thangkas of one abbot remains unclear for the time being, but we might speculate that perhaps one painting was made for displaying in Ngor's assembly hall and the other for the lama palace (*bla brang*) to which the portrayed abbot had belonged.<sup>111</sup>

The identity of the portrayed abbot cannot be established at present. Neither published images of the paintings mention a colophon-like

109 For another portrait of Byams pa Nam mkha' bsam 'grub surrounded by a lineage of Ngor abbots, see HAR 81875. He is identified by an inscription written in a defective spelling in the left and right corners of the red bottom strip of his throne base: @|| *brang ti mkhas mong [= mang?] rigs su 'khrungs|gsang chen brtan [= bstan] pa'i mnga' bdag che| rdo rje 'chang thar rtse pa|? nams [= nam] mkha' bsam 'grubs [= 'grub] zhabs la 'dud||*.

110 A few minor differences can be observed: (1) MT<sub>1</sub> depicts the three long-life deities Amitāyus, Uṣṇīṣavijayā, and Tārā with Amitāyus above and the other two below, whereas MT<sub>2</sub> depicts Amitāyus and Uṣṇīṣavijayā next to each other and Tārā below; (2) MT<sub>1</sub> depicts, diagonally to the left above Amitāyus, a Tibetan lama, who might be Ngor chen, whereas MT<sub>2</sub> depicts that same lama as part of the upper right row of minor figures directly next to Virūpa and above Amitāyus; (3) MT<sub>1</sub> shows, in the lower right bottom corner, a monastic structure with a small lama on top of its roof (the patron of the painting?), whereas MT<sub>2</sub> depicts a lineage master in this corner.

111 I would like to thank David for his informative email exchange (March 2020) with me on both paintings.

inscription (and also not of labels of the minor figures) nor do they show the bottom strip were that inscription could be expected to be found.<sup>112</sup> By comparison with the previous memorial thangkas, the present two paintings appear to depict lineage masters representing only one, rather than the usual two lineages. Considering the depiction of the lineage masters at its beginning and the presence of only one tutelary deity (*yi dam*), Hevajra, those masters might represent the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor, and Hevarja represent the “tradition of instruction” (*man ngag lugs*), which stands for the *Lam 'bras* as one of the four major Hevajra systems. Assuming that only one lineage is depicted that descends all the way down to the portrayed abbot as its final figure, he would be lineage master number 55, and thus would be a mid- or late eighteenth-century abbot of Ngor.<sup>113</sup>

With some variations, additional elements of memorial thangkas also occur in both of these paintings. Instead of the usual two pairs, just one pair of lamas is depicted flanking the head of the main figure. A pair of dragons is shown on top of the main figure's backrest lintel at the height of his shoulders, the winding tails of the dragons delineating the outer borders of the lower backrest arch. The centre of the bottom row depicts the triad of Sa skya protectors with Pañjarañātha Mahākāla in the middle, and flanked by Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on the left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvati on the right. In addition, Vaiśravaṇa is shown to the left of Brahmarūpa Mahākāla.

### 3.9 Memorial Thangka of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin (commissioned in 1862; size: 182.9 × 111.8 cm; fig. 9)

The present memorial thangka portrays Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin (1776–1862), the forty-seventh abbot. His identity can be firmly established on the basis of two inscriptions. The first is the colophon-like inscription written in the black bottom register in golden letters over two lines.<sup>114</sup> It opens with the usual versified praise interweaving the

112 For MT1, see Pal 1984: pl. 41 and for MT2, see Sotheby's 2000: pl. 65.

113 To count the main figure as number 55 excludes what appears to be a depiction of the historical Buddha as a minor figure in the top left row and the possible depiction of Ngor chen (mentioned in n. 110) at the top right.

114 Inscription: [1st line:] @| |oṃ swasti| |dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang| |**byams** brtse nus **pas** 'gro rnam sgröl ba'i slad| |**kun dga'**i mtshan dper shar

syllables of the portrayed abbot's name. The second inscription is another versified praise written on four petals of the lotus seat (i.e., two petals on each side of the central petal), with one metrical line with seven syllables on each of those four petals.<sup>115</sup> Moreover, the first inscription provides additional details about the commissioning of the painting. It was sponsored by Ngor's Thar rtse bla brang—to which Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin had belonged and which he had headed—and was painted by rTa nag lHa bris sKal bzang rab rgyas. The author of the inscription (and most likely also of the one on the lotus petals) reveals himself only indirectly by making use of one of his aliases, but with the help of written sources he can be identified as Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1829–1870), the fifty-fourth abbot.<sup>116</sup> He was a nephew of the portrayed abbot, belonging to the same Thar rtse bla brang as his uncle, and was also the author of his biography. Though the inscription does not make mention of the passing of the main figure, that biography, as translated above, details the production of the memorial thangka, the work on which began just one month after the demise of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin, and thus the painting is datable to 1862.<sup>117</sup>

*ba'i sgyu 'phrul gyi* | **bstan 'dzin** rgya mtsho'i gtsug rgyan zhabs la 'dud | |<sub>1</sub> gang de'i gzugs sku blta bas mi ngoms pa | |mngon sum 'jal ba'i skal ba bral na yang | |de dang gnyis su med pa'i sku brnyan 'di | |dad ldan bsod nams zhing du bzhengs pa'i dges | |<sub>2</sub> rgyal bstan dar zhing de 'dzin zhabs pad brtan | |'gro kun bde skyid yar zla'i dpal la spyod | |bdag sogs 'dul bya mtha' dag mgon □□ | | [2nd line] rjes bzung don gnyis ldan gyis 'grub par shog | |<sub>3</sub> de ltar sku brnyan rin po che mthong ba'i mod la yid kyi brtan pa mtha' dag gcig char du 'phrog pa 'di'ang | e waṃ thar rtse bla brang nas rgyu sbyor yon gyi bdag po bgyis te rta nag lha bris skal bzang rab rgyas kyis sor mo'i zlos gar las bskrun pa'i tshul ched du brjod pa 'di ni 'jam dpal dgyes pa'i bshes gnyen gtsug lag smra ba'i nyi ma phyogs thams cad las rnam par rgyal ba'i sdes smras pa dge legs 'phel | |mangga la shrī dzwa la dzambu dwi pa maṅdantul | |; emphasis added (individual syllables of the title and name are also highlighted in the Tibetan original). For a discussion of the present painting and the transliteration of its inscription, see also Jackson 2012: 74–76, fig. 4.22 and 215, n. 145, respectively.

115 Inscription: *rgyal kun ye shes 'dus pa'i mtsho* | **byams brtse'i?** *rlung gis 'dus pa las* | *nyer thon kun dga'i?* *cha rdzogs pa'i* | **bstan 'dzin** *rgyu skar bdag por 'dud* |; emphasis added (the individual syllables of the name are also highlighted in the Tibetan original).

116 See Byams pa Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, *Khu dbon gsum gyi rnam thar*, p. 523.4–6 and 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho, *Byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar*, pp. 558.5–559.1.

117 See nn. 15–16 above.



As with the last three paintings (figs. 7, 8a, 8b), the basic composition of the present memorial thangka differs from that of the other earlier examples. The main figure is portrayed against a Chinese-inspired background consisting of a green landscape below and a blue sky above. From the numerous lineage masters that were otherwise arranged in linear rows and columns around the main figure, only a few appear to be depicted to both sides of the main figure as representatives of their respective lineages. To the left above the head of the main figure, Virūpa is depicted as the first lineage master, and right next to him is the tutelary deity (*yi dam*) associated with his lineage: Hevajra. Their presence, and the fact that in all other memorial thangkas it was always the *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor that was depicted on the left side, suggests that they and the following two figures shown as Tibetan monks also represent that *Lam 'bras* lineage.<sup>118</sup> The last of these two figures is identified by a labelling inscription as Ngor chen.<sup>119</sup> The lineage on the right is more difficult to identify. Next to the tutelary deity Vajrayoginī (Nāro Khecari), there are three white-clad and two red-clad Tibetan masters, who appear to portray the five Sa skya founding fathers, and as the last minor figure, Paṅ chen Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1535–1602),<sup>120</sup> the thirteenth abbot, is depicted. They might thus represent a Ngor lineage of Vajrayoginī. But this assumption is not very certain, and it remains unclear whether the minor figures depicted on the right constitute a second separate lineage. Another possibility could be to consider all minor figures as representing just one lineage, the *Lam 'bras*, and that thus the representation of Vajrayoginī would not be connected to the depicted lineage.

Other common features of the composition include the Sa skya triad of protectors depicted at the bottom centre with Pañjaraṅtha Mahākāla flanked by Brahmaṛūpa Mahākāla on the left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvati on the right. In addition, White Ṣaḍbhujā Mahākāla is shown in the left corner, and Vaiśravaṇa in the right. The pair of Chinese dragons also occurs, though they are, in the present painting, not shown curling around the pillars on both sides of the main figure's

118 Some exceptions are the previous two identical paintings (figs. 8a and 8b) and the following one (fig. 10), which only depict one lineage, the *Lam 'bras*.

119 The inscription for this figure reads: [rdo rje] 'chang kun dga' bzang po la na mol|.

120 The inscription for this figure reads: paṅ chen nam mkha' dpal [bzang la na mol|].

backrest but are projecting from its lintel ends above the pillars. Moreover, the memorial thangka also features elements not seen previously, such as the historical Buddha with his two main disciples depicted in the top centre and accompanied on both sides by a group of six Indian gurus who seem to represent the Six Ornaments (*rgyan drug*): Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Dignāga, and Dharmakīrti. The Two Supreme Ones (*mchog gnyis*), Śākyaprabha and Guṇaprabha, who are generally added to the Six Ornaments, can be assumed to be depicted as well, most likely as the second and third masters of the upper left column.

### 3.10 Memorial Thangka of a Nineteenth-century Abbot (commissioned nineteenth century; size: 184.8 × 135.2 cm; fig. 10)

After having finalised the present contribution, I came across another portrait of a Ngor abbot on the Himalayan Art Resources (HAR) website, which I assume to be a memorial thangka and thus I would like to add it here briefly. Though inscribed, neither the long inscription written in golden letters in the red bottom strip nor the labels of the depicted lineage masters are legible online, and they were also not recorded when the painting was sold by Sotheby's in 2016.<sup>121</sup> The identification of the portrayed Ngor abbot and a more definite dating of the painting thus have to be postponed until those inscriptions can be read.

It is noticeable that the basic composition of the painting is reminiscent to that of fig. 7, especially the arrangement of lineage masters in clusters floating in the sky on clouds in the upper left and right corners (though, by comparison, as an unbalanced composition) and their placement to both sides of the central figure's throne in the lower part. Considering the fact that two tutelary deities (*yi dam*)—Hevajra in the "tradition of instruction" (*man ngag lugs*) on the left and Cakrasaṃvara in the tradition of Kṛṣṇācārin on the right—are depicted, I would assume that those masters represent two lineages, as was also the case in some previous paintings (figs. 4, 6, 7): the *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor on the left (of the viewer), individual figures of which can also be identified iconographically, and a Cakrasaṃvara lineage of Ngor as transmitted

<sup>121</sup> See HAR 13105 and Sotheby's 2016: lot 1334.

by Kṛṣṇācārin on the right. The *Lam 'bras* lineage seems to begin with the seven minor figures shown in the heavily worn top centre, above the head nimbus of the central figure, and then proceeds through the masters arranged in the two clusters in the upper left area before dropping down to the masters in the lower left part.<sup>122</sup> However, the difficulty in identifying any obvious beginning of the Cakrasaṃvara lineage—there are no Indian *mahāsiddhas* and gurus depicted—makes me wonder whether the masters on the right constitute a separate lineage at all and whether instead the *Lam 'bras* lineages returns to the three clusters of lineage masters at the top right and descends through them down to the masters at the lower right. In this case, the lineage would comprise about seventy-seven minor figures,<sup>123</sup> to which the pair of figures shown with larger proportions at the level of the head of the central figure likely have to be added. The painting would thus portray a Ngor abbot from about the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>124</sup>

The painting also exhibits some other features of memorial thangka mentioned above, including the Chinese dragons curling around the pillars of the main figure's throne. In the present case two pairs of dragons are even shown, one pair supporting the pillars of the throne's backrest and the other pair as dragon-head finials of that backrest. The bottom left depicts the standard group of Sa skya protectors headed by Pañjaranātha Mahākāla in its centre, who is flanked by Brahma-rūpa Mahākāla on his left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī on his right. At the bottom right, another group of three is shown headed by White Ṣaḍbhujā Mahākāla, who is flanked by Black Jambhala on his left and Yellow Jambhala on his right.

122 The upper cluster depicts, for instance, the five Sa skya founding fathers. The cluster below shows at its front the eighth abbot of Ngor, Sangs rgyas rin chen (1453–1524), who is identifiable from traces of a legible inscription: *rje btsun □□ rin chen*. The figure at the upper back of this cluster can be assumed to be Ngor chen, who would be number 21 in the lineage, his standard position.

123 Since the painting is heavily worn in some areas and its edges framed, not all lineage masters are clearly visible.

124 Sotheby's 2016: lot 1334 dates the painting to the seventeenth century and identifies the central figure as Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182–1251). HAR 13105 dates it to the eighteenth century.

#### 4 Characteristic Features of Memorial Thangkas

In order to facilitate further identifications, some essential features of memorial thangkas shall be briefly presented as an overview, though it must be noted that not each and every painting necessarily displays all of them. In addition, having been painted over a period of more than three hundred years (ca. 1557–1862), some of the existing memorial thangkas differ stylistically, reflecting the respective developments of the time periods during which they were created.

- The size of a memorial thangka is very large and is specified in Tibetan sources as having the height of one storey (*thog tshad ma*). The examples introduced above, which all lack their original brocade mounting, have heights between 158.7 to 206 cm and widths between 95 to 159.3 cm. Once mounted, they would have been much bigger.
- The bottom strip features a colophon-like inscription including a versified praise of the portrayed abbot interweaving the syllables of his name. Some commissioning details such as of the purpose, patron, and painter can be mentioned as well.
- The abbot is portrayed as the central figure, and two lineages are arranged around him. The lineage masters depicted on the left usually represent the main *Lam 'bras* lineage of Ngor, whereas those on the right represent different Ngor lineages, such as those of the bodhisattva vow (fig. 1), *Vajrāvalī* cycle (fig. 5), or *Cakra-saṃvara* (figs. 4, 6–7). However, it seems that in later memorial thangkas from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the representatives of only one lineage, the *Lam 'bras*, were arranged around the central figure on both sides (figs. 8a, 8b, 9, 10).
- The abbot is portrayed sitting on a throne within a three-lobed golden backrest arch supported by ornamented vase-based pillars. Individual elements of this richly decorated setting are heavily influenced by the *bal ris* painting style. Gold is thickly applied in the head and body nimbuses, backrest arch, and gold is also used for the brocade designs of the monastic garb (including the hat) of the main figure. Like Jackson described for early *bal ris*

style paintings, some artists of memorial thangkas retained some earlier elements of that style and “portrayed the outer edges of head nimbuses with thinner, often monochrome bands on the inside and a thicker golden band of flame on the outside” (figs. 1–2, 4, 6).<sup>125</sup> Other artists richly ornamented the backrest arch and/or body and/or head nimbuses with (at times stylised) jewels engulfed by golden flames (figs. 3, 5, 8a, 8b, 9, 10) or simply as golden strips consisting of stylised flames (fig. 7).

- With larger proportions than the other minor figures, two pairs of Tibetan masters are depicted at the level of the shoulders or head of the main figure. The lower pair can be portrayed sitting within the left and right lobes of the three-lobed backrest arch of the main figure, whereby the central lobe is above the main figure’s head nimbus, and the upper pair outside and above those outer lobes (figs. 2–6). However, there are variants of this arrangement: the two pairs of masters can also be depicted partly covering the main figure’s backrest cushion below the main horizontal backrest beam (fig. 7); only one pair of masters can be portrayed (figs. 8a, 8b, 10); or no masters at all may be shown in that position (fig. 9).
- The bottom usually depicts the standard triad of Sa skya protectors prominently headed by Pañjaranātha Mahākāla in its centre, who is flanked by Brahmarūpa Mahākāla on his left and Śrīdevī Dhūmāvātī on his right. This triad can be flanked by further protective deities such as Vaiśravaṇa, Śrīdevī Rematī, and Vyāghravāhana Mahākāla.
- The tutelary deities (*yi dam*), such as Hevajra or Cakrasaṃvara, associated with the depicted lineages can be shown (figs. 4, 6, 7, 8a, 8b, 9, 10).
- Other minor figures that can be depicted are long-life deities, such as Uṣṇīṣavijayā, shown at times in the upper centre of two bottom rows, and the entire group of all three long-life deities (Amitāyus, Uṣṇīṣavijayā, and Tārā) can also occur. Other deities as minor figures include Mañjuḥṣa and Avalokiteśvara.

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125 Jackson 2010: 92.

- Decorative elements can be depicted, such as a pair of Chinese dragons curling around the pillars of the main figure's backrest arch or sitting on top of that backrest, as well as a pair of *stūpas* on top of the lotus capital of those pillars or on top of that backrest.

## 5 An Uncertain Case

The present painting portraying Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456) might be the earliest existing memorial thangka (fig. 11), though this cannot be definitely established at present and remains a preliminary hypothesis. But by comparison with the other paintings and their characteristic features discussed above, some of its elements justify such an assumption. The painting has a large size (161.3 × 131.1 cm) and features a long inscription on the lower red bottom strip written with golden letters over two lines.<sup>126</sup> The inscription opens with a versified praise of Ngor chen and continues, among other things, with the prediction of his future attainment of Buddhahood quoted from the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*. It also identifies LHa mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth abbot, as the painting's patron and dates its commissioning to a dragon year. The reverse side has another inscription identifying Sangs rgyas rin chen (1453–1524), the abbatial predecessor of

126 Inscription: [1st line] @@||om swasti|| rgyal ba'i mdun na dri ma med pa'i dpal dga' ldan gnas na dul ba'i dbang po ste| 'phags pa'i yul du gsang ba'i rgya mtsho nyid| kha ba can 'dir kun dga' bzang por grags| kun dga' bzang po nga yi bstan pa 'dzin| bde gshegs bye ba drug bcu mchod byas te| ma 'ongs dus kyi tshe na rgyal bar 'gyur| ces gsungs rgyal bas lung bstan de la 'dud| skye ba bcu gsum bar ma chad pa ru| mkhas pa paṇḍi ta ru 'khrungs gyur te| 'gro mangs thar pa'i lam la rab bkod nas| 'phags yul bstan pa gsal mdzad de la 'dud|| gzhi dang snying po me tog gis [2nd line] brgyan pa zhes bya ba rgyal ba'i zhing khams mchog gi mnga' bdag chen po nyid bdag sogs gdul bya tha mal pa'i ngor so so skye bo'i tshul bstan pa rdo rje slob dpon dmigs pa med pa'i thugs rje chen po dang ldan pa| chos nyid kyi cha mngon par gzigs pa| las 'bras kyi tshul ji lta ba bzhin du mkhyen cing dge ba rgyun ma 'chad pa bsgrub pa la brtson bas [= pas] gdul bya rnam kyang gcig tu dge ba dang? legs? pa kho na la 'god par mdzad pa don gyi slad du mtshan nas smos na kun dga'i zhabs pad bzang po 'khor lo'i ri mo can la phyag 'tshal zhing skyabs su mchi'o| byin gyi brlab tu gsol| ces pa 'di rig pa 'dzin pa lha mchog seng ges 'brug lo bzhangs| dge ba byang chub chen por bsngol|. For a discussion of the painting and parts of its inscriptions, see also Jackson 2012: 18–20, fig. 1.19 and Pal 2003: 250–251, no. 165, 293–294, no. 165. See also Heimbel 2017: 72.

lHa mchog seng ge, as the person consecrating the painting.<sup>127</sup> This information allows for the dating of the commission of the painting to 1520 when lHa mchog seng ge was the incumbent abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1516–1534).<sup>128</sup>

The basic composition of the painting portrays Ngor chen as the central figure in partial profile—whereas none of the central figures of the above-mentioned memorial thangkas are portrayed in partial profile—surrounded by masters representing two lineages arranged in the top, side, and bottom registers. The inscription on the reverse helps in clarifying that he is surrounded by the lineage of the mantra vow of a *vidyādhara* (*rig 'dzin sngags kyi sdom pa*) on the left and that of the bodhisattva vow (*byang sems kyi sdom pa*) on the right. The first lineage embodies full initiation into the practice of the Vajrayāna and appears to be represented in the present case by the *Lam 'bras* lineage, the first fifteen minor figures of which can be identified iconographically (i.e., from Vajradhara to 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan). In addition to depicting its lineage masters as minor figures in the left part of the top row, left column, and bottom row, some of its masters are also placed into the central part of the painting. The upper corners show, with larger proportions than the other minor figures, Virūpa on the left and Sa chen Kun dga' snying po on the right, with the former as part of the *Lam 'bras* lineage and the latter belonging to both lineages. The upper pair of Tibetan masters portrayed within the two outer lobes of the three-lobed backrest arch above the shoulders of the main figure represent Slob dpon bSod nams rtse mo and rJe btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan, who also have to be counted as masters of both lineages. As the central figure, Ngor chen also forms part of the lineage and is most likely in his standard position (number 21) after his own teacher Buddhaśrī (number 20), the first figure on the left in the bottom row, and before his disciple Mus chen dKon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469; number 22), second from left and his abbatial successor. The lineage continues through three further Ngor abbots before ending with the last pair of abbots facing each other (numbers 26–27): dKon mchog 'phel, the

127 Inscription: [1st line] @@||rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang chen po kun dga' bzang po'i sku 'di la| rig 'dzin dang| byang sems rgyud [= brgyud] bas [= pas] bskor ba'i bris sku 'di la| rje bla ma mus pa chen po sangs rgyas rin chen gyi rab gnas bzhugs|.

128 On this dating, see also Jackson 2012: 18–19, fig. 1.19 and Pal 2003: 250, no. 165.

seventh abbot, and Sangs rgyas rin chen, the ninth abbot and consecrating master of the painting.<sup>129</sup>

The lineage of the bodhisattva vow is represented by fifteen minor figures, beginning with Buddha Śākyamuni in the top right centre and proceeding rightwards until the end of the row through Mañjuśrī, Nāgārjuna, and two other Indian *paṇḍitas* before dropping down the right column through five further Indian *paṇḍitas* and five Tibetan masters. Since the five Sa skya founding fathers depicted as part of the *Lam 'bras* lineage have to be counted as members of this lineage as well, the last minor figure shown with a distinctive beard and red hat at the bottom of the right column would be number 20 in the lineage.

According to his record of teachings received, as mentioned above when discussing the first memorial thangka (fig. 1), Ngor chen obtained the bodhisattva vow from two of his principal teachers, according to the Madhyamaka tradition: five times from Shar chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1359–1406) and one time from his *Lam 'bras* teacher Buddhaśrī. In the former lineage, the master number 20 is Byang chub rtse mo (1303/15–1379/80)—of whom there is a portrayal showing him also with a distinctive beard and hat<sup>130</sup>—and through him the lineage descended to Shar chen, who might possibly be depicted twice on the present painting as the lower pair of masters at the level of Ngor chen's shoulders. As in his lineage record, Ngor chen would thus be number 22 in the lineage received from Shar chen that seems to be depicted in the present

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129 These three abbots appear to be 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474), the third abbot, Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478), the fourth abbot, and Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge, the sixth abbot, shown wearing a red *paṇḍita* hat. The fifth abbot, dPal ldan rdo rje (1411–1482), was seemingly omitted. On his possible omission, see Heimbel 2017: 513, n. 1. dKon mchog 'phel and Sangs rgyas rin chen can be identified on the basis of another painting commissioned by lHa mchog seng ge that depicts them as the final two minor figures of Ngor's *Lam 'bras* lineage, and there, they are identifiable by labelling inscriptions. This painting shows as its central figures Kun dga' dbang phyug, the fourth abbot, and Go rams pa, the sixth abbot, and was commissioned as a continuation (*kha skong*) of earlier *Lam 'bras* lineage paintings; see Jackson 2003, Jackson 2016: 312–316, fig. 13.9, 334, and HAR 30518. I would like to thank Tarun Kumar Jain for kindly pointing out the iconographical similarities between those two final masters.

130 See HAR 8202.



painting. In the latter lineage received from Buddhaśrī, the master number 20 is Buddhaśrī himself. However, since no other depictions of him with such a beard and hat are known, and also considering the evidence presented in the discussion above, the depicted lineage seems to represent the one that Ngor chen received from Shar chen.<sup>131</sup> After Ngor chen, the lineage might continue through the abbots of the *Lam 'bras* lineage depicted in the bottom row. Moreover, it appears possible that both lineages were actually the ones that the commissioning patron, lHa mchog seng ge, had received.

As in the first memorial thangka portraying three Ngor abbots, the right end of the bottom row depicts three deities: Uṣṇīṣavijayā, Vasudhārā, and Pañjaranātha Mahākāla. Other minor figures include the pair of Mañjuḥṣa shown below Virūpa on the left and Amitābha below Sa chen on the right.

Moreover, the existence of a memorial thangka of Ngor chen is also confirmed by its having been mentioned in the biography of Tshul khriims dpal bzang po (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth abbot.<sup>132</sup> However, the present painting does not exhibit any signs of continuous usage as some of the other memorial thangkas that have obviously been rolled and unrolled many times, and thus it might be a different one.

On the basis of a passage from the biographical sketch of lHa mchog seng ge as found in the abbatial history of Ngor, the late E. Gene Smith concluded that the present painting would seem to be part of a set painted by a Mustangi artist called dGe slong Chos dpal bsod nams.<sup>133</sup> With the help of that biographical sketch and the full-length biography of lHa mchog seng ge, the background of that artist's work can be further clarified.<sup>134</sup> When lHa mchog seng ge returned to Ngor from his second Mustang visit (1523–1524), he found the entire collection of Ngor's

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131 For another depiction of this lineage, see fig. 1. Ngor chen also received the bodhisattva vow from Buddhaśrī according to the Yogācāra tradition, which is a different lineage, however. For references to Ngor chen receiving the bodhisattva vow, see n. 69 above.

132 See n. 55 above.

133 This has been restated with a question mark in Jackson 2012: 20, fig. 1.19 and Pal 2003: 250, no. 165.

134 See Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *gDan rabs*, p. 19.3 and Nam mkha' dpal bzang, *lHa mchog seng ge'i rnam thar*, fols. 257b3–258a2.

religious objects, which were rich in blessings of the previous lamas, in a big mess with their seals broken. Many indispensable books and other objects were even completely missing. In particular, lHa mchog seng ge expressed his disappointment about the missing Hevajra *maṇḍala* that had been commissioned as Ngor chen's *samaya* painting (*dam tshig bris sku*). This statement is found as part of a letter that he had sent to Glo bo asking dGe slong Chos dpal to come to Ngor to create a replacement (*tshab*) for that painting. It thus seems very likely that that monk artist travelled to Ngor to paint the replacement there. However, it remains uncertain whether the present portrait of Ngor chen can be ascribed to him as well.

That replacement might still exist. The website of Himalayan Art Resources has a digital image (i.e., a photo of a paper poster) of an eight-deity *maṇḍala* of Hevajra with a newly added inscription identifying the painting as the support of Ngor chen's personal practice (*thugs dam*).<sup>135</sup> At first sight, it looks stylistically similar to other *maṇḍalas* commissioned by lHa mchog seng ge, but whether this hypothesis holds true needs to be investigated further.

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135 See HAR 61216.

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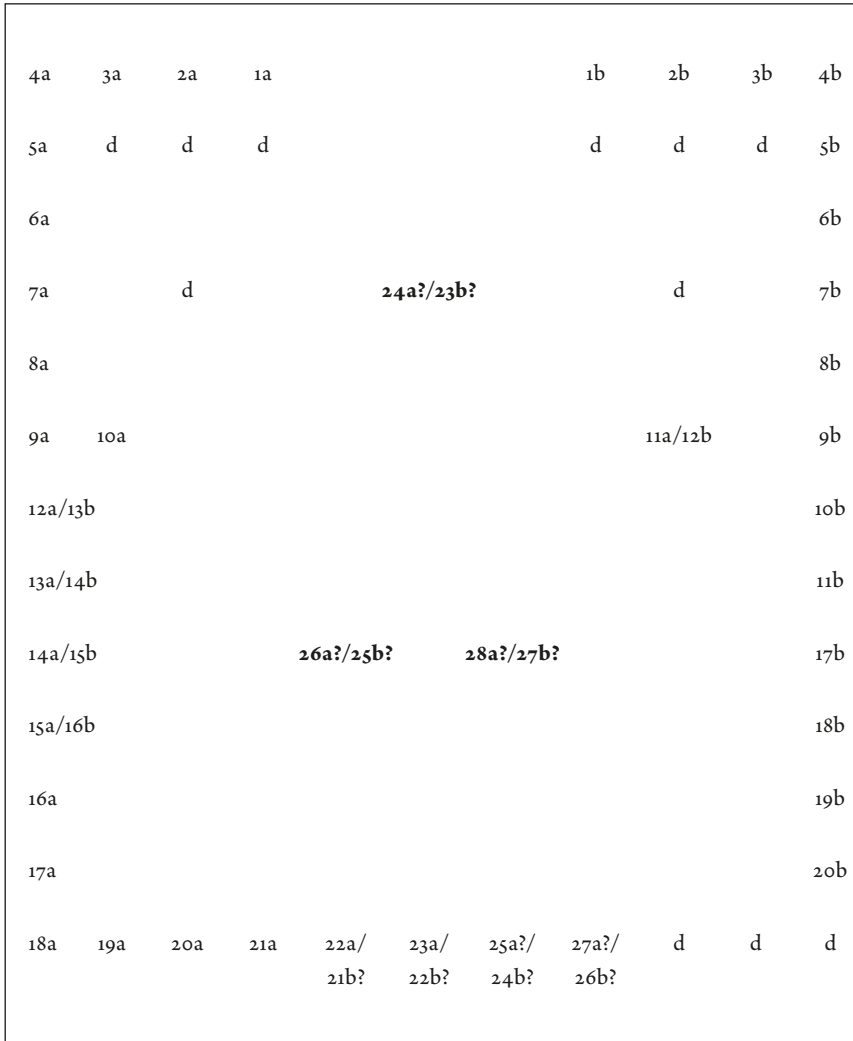
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**Fig. 1** Memorial thangka of three Ngor abbots (four, six, and ten): Kun dga' dbang phyug, Go rams pa, dKon mchog lhun grub ca. 1557; 160 × 136 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang Rudolf Pesi Collection  
 Literature: Meinert (ed.) 2011: vol. 1, 38–41, no. 1  
 After Meinert (ed.) 2011: vol. 1, 39, no. 1



**Diagram Fig. 1**



**Fig. 2** Memorial thangka of Shes rab 'byung gnas, the eighteenth abbot 1653; 185 × 142.2 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
 Rubin Museum of Art; C2004.15.2  
 Literature: Jackson 2010: 214–215, fig. 8.24; HAR 65362  
 Photograph courtesy of the Rubin Museum of Art, New York

6a	5a	4a	3a	2a	1a		1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b
7a												7b
8a		30a/b?								31a/b?		8b
9a												9b
10a			32a/b?							33a/b?		10b
11a												11b
12a												12b
13a						34a/b?						13b
14a												14b
15a												15b
16a												16b
17a												17b
18a												18b
19a												19b
20a	21a	22a	23a	24a	25a	d	25b	24b	23b	22b	21b	20b
26a	27a	28a	29a	d	d	d	d	d	29b	28b	27b	26b

**Diagram Fig. 2**



**Fig. 3** Memorial thangka of a seventeenth-century abbot  
 mid-17th century; 177.2 × 131.8 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
 Michael C. Carlos Museum; 2000.005.005  
 The Ester R. Portnow Collection of Asian Art, a gift of the Nathan Rubin–Ida Ladd Family Foundation  
 Literature: Michael C. Carlos Museum 2011: 122  
 Photograph courtesy of the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta



6a	5a	4a	3a	2a	1a		1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b
7a												7b
8a		30a/b?								31a/b?		8b
9a			32a/b?						33a/b?			9b
10a												10b
11a												11b
12a												12b
13a						34a/b?						13b
14a												14b
15a												15b
16a												16b
17a												17b
18a												18b
19a												19b
20a	21a	22a	23a	24a	25a	d	25b	24b	23b	22b	21b	20b
26a	27a	28a	29a	d	d	d	d	d	29b	28b	27b	26b

**Diagram Fig. 3**



**Fig. 4** Memorial thangka of bSod nams rgya mtsho, the twenty-first abbot  
 ca. 1667; 196.2 × 159.3 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
 Collection of the Newark Museum of Art 79.65  
 Purchase 1979 Anonymous Fund  
 Literature: Reynolds et al. 1986: 154–155, P12, pl. 11; Reynolds 1999:  
 199–200, pl. 112  
 Photograph courtesy of the Newark Museum of Art, New Jersey

7a	6a	5a	4a	3a	2a	1a		1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b	7b
8a														8b
9a	d		37b?							38b?			d	9b
10a														10b
11a	d		37a?/39b?							38a?/40b?			d	11b
12a														12b
13a														13b
14a														14b
15a														15b
16a							39a?/41b?							16b
17a														17b
18a														18b
19a														19b
20a														20b
21a														21b
22a														22b
23a														23b
24a	25a	26a	27a	28a	29a	30a	d	30b	29b	28b	27b	26b	25b	24b
31a	32a	33a	34a	35a	36a	d	d	d	36b	35b	34b	33b	32b	31b

**Diagram Fig. 4**



**Fig. 5** Memorial thangka of 'Jam dbyangs Nam mkha' dpal bzang, the twenty-third abbot  
 1672; 190 × 142 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
 The Hahn Cultural Foundation–Hwajeong Museum  
 Literature: Tanaka 2005: 126–129, no. 53.  
 Photograph courtesy of the Hahn Cultural Foundation–Hwajeong Museum, Seoul

6a	5a	4a	3a	2a	1a/b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b
7a	8a	9a	10a				10b	9b	8b	7b
11a	26a?/b?	d					d	27a?/b?		11b
12a										12b
13a		28a?/b?					29a?/b?			13b
14a										14b
15a										15b
16a					30a?/b?					16b
17a										17b
18a										18b
19a										19b
20a										20b
21a										21b
22a										22b
23a	24a	25a	d	d	d	d	d	25b	24b	23b

**Diagram Fig. 5**



**Fig. 6** Memorial thangka of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, the twenty-fifth abbot 1704; 206 × 158 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Private collection?

Literature: Galerie Koller Zürich 1989: 13, no. 188; Sotheby's 2018: lot 38

Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's, Inc. © 2018

8a	7a	6a	5a	4a	3a	2a	1a		d		1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	6b	7b	8b
9a																		9b
10a	d			41b?										42b?		d		10b
11a																		11b
12a	d																d	12b
13a				43b?										44b?				13b
14a																		14b
15a																		15b
16a																		16b
17a									42a?/45b?									17b
18a																		18b
19a																		19b
20a																		20b
21a																		21b
22a																		22b
23a																		23b
24a																		24b
25a										d								25b
26a	27a	28a	29a	30a	31a	32a	33a	34a		34b	33b	32b	31b	30b	29b	28b	27b	26b
35a	36a	37a	38a	39a	40a	41a	d	d		d	d	d	40b	39b	38b	37b	36b	35b

**Diagram Fig. 6**



**Fig. 7** Memorial thangka of an eighteenth-century abbot  
Early or mid-18th century; 160 × 95 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Private collection?  
Literature: Sotheby's 2014: 14–15, lot 409; HAR 12873  
Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's, Inc. © 2014





**Fig. 8a** Memorial thangka of an eighteenth-century abbot  
Mid- or late 18th century; 168 × 123 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Private collection  
Literature: Pal 1984: 72, 96, pl. 41; HAR 99648  
After Pal 1984: 96, pl. 41



**Fig. 8b** Memorial thangka of the same eighteenth-century abbot as fig. 8a  
 Mid- or late 18th century; 158.7 × 118.1 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
 Private collection  
 Literature: Sotheby's 2000: 86–87, lot 65; HAR 11727  
 After Sotheby's 2000: 87, lot 65



**Fig. 9** Memorial thangka of Byams pa Kun dga' bstan 'dzin  
1862; 182.9 × 111.8 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Zimmerman Family Collection  
Literature: Pal 1997: 68, pl. 34; Jackson 2012: 74–76, fig. 4.22  
Photograph courtesy of the Zimmerman Family Collection, New  
York



**Fig. 10** Memorial thangka of a nineteenth-century abbot  
19th century; 184.8 × 135.2 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Private collection?  
Literature: Sotheby's 2016: lot 1334; HAR 13105  
Photograph courtesy of Sotheby's, Inc. © 2016



**Fig. 11** Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po with two lineages  
1520; 161.3 × 131.1 cm; Ngor monastery, gTsang  
Navin Kumar Collection  
Literature: Pal 2003: 250–251, no. 165; Jackson 2012: 18–20, fig. 1.19  
Photograph courtesy of the Navin Kumar Collection, New York



## A Page from an Artist's Sketchbook

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Dedicated with esteem and friendship to David Jackson whose research on Tibetan paintings and their historical literature closely followed the path of Giuseppe Tucci, mentor *hors pair* and pioneer scholar of Tibetan history and Tibetan historical literature. Giuseppe Tucci first drew attention to Tibetan and Himalayan manuscript illuminations and painted scrolls, David has firmly anchored the discipline of Tibetan art history thanks to his personal stamina and intellectual rigor, stemming from his 1996 volume *A History of Tibetan Painting*, and his more recent mandate from the Rubin Museum of Art to write the *Masterworks of Tibetan Painting Series*.

David Jackson's pioneering scholarship on Tibetan painting considerably advanced our understanding of the historical context and aesthetic differentiation among schools of Tibetan and Himalayan art as well as the analysis of paintings in relation with their lineages of spiritual forefathers and monastic transmission. In particular, the nomenclature of the aesthetic styles and schools of Tibetan painting have been a specific focus in his publications. As of 2011 in his volume *Mirror of the Buddha: Early Portraits from Tibet*, David Jackson has emphasized a preference for the term "Sharri style" to refer to Tibetan paintings inspired by the style of eastern India (*shar*) and painting (*bris*). The complete form of the term would be Gyagar Sharri (*rgya gar shar bris*, "painting of Eastern India").<sup>1</sup> In previous catalogues, he called the same style the "Eastern-Indian style" or the "(Tibetan) Pala style."<sup>2</sup> The source of the terminology Sharri (*shar bris*) is attributed to Taranatha (Tā ra nā

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1 See Jackson 2011: 1.

2 See *ibid.*

tha, 1575–1634), who identified two schools of art in India, differentiating between the Indian provinces of Magadha (*dbus*; roughly equivalent to modern Bihar) and Bengal, which is east (*shar*) of Magadha, thus is qualified in Tibetan as *shar*. While Taranatha's classification refers to Indian paintings, in which he was followed by the nineteenth-century Tibetan polymath Jamgön Kongtrul ('Jam mgon Kong sprul, 1813–1899) who adopted this terminology, Jackson specifies that he uses the term to refer to the painting style which was created in Tibet by following the aesthetic models of the Indian antecedents. Indeed, the only Indian paintings of the period to survive are illuminated palm-leaf manuscripts such as the Prajñāpāramitā leaf reproduced below (fig. 1).<sup>3</sup> Such illuminations demonstrate Indian painters' consummate artistic skills due to the extremely small scale of the painted surface and the difficulties inherent in painting on palm leaf.<sup>4</sup> As so few such manuscripts are extant today, Jackson explained accordingly "Tibetan Sharri-style thangkas from the twelfth century, in all their glorious detail, may be the closest we will ever get to seeing what large-format Indian paintings once looked like."<sup>5</sup>

The present small contribution will focus on a single historical document which corresponds well to the profile of the "Tibetan Sharri-style" according to Jackson's definition. This document may be firmly attributed to artist(s) working in Central Tibet due to the two sets of inscriptions in Tibetan language, attributed tentatively to the twelfth to thirteenth century and the sixteenth century. This document, to the best of my knowledge, is unique as an isolated leaf of drawing, perhaps an excerpt from a very ancient Tibetan sketchbook? Although artists' sketches are found among the Dunhuang manuscripts, the few sketches with incidental Tibetan inscriptions are found among bi-lingual sheets implying Chinese rather than Tibetan artists.<sup>6</sup> The present document is different: this page has several drawings executed in aesthetic models derived from Pala India which gained considerable following in Tibet

3 For another Prajñāpāramitā manuscript representing Vajrapāṇi in this distinctive aspect, see Allinger 2008: 103, fig. 13a: "Vajrapāṇi, green, seated in *vajraparyāṅkāśana* and holding *vajra* and *utpala*."

4 Losty 1982: 6–7.

5 See Jackson 2011: x.

6 On Chinese artists' use of sketches, see Fraser 2000: 189–224 and Fraser 2003.



due to numerous Indian *paṇḍitas* who travelled afar from the great monastic universities of eastern India to teach first in Nepal and eventually reached the Land of Snows. These teachers travelled with didactic tools such as Buddhist manuscripts, replete with illuminations, as well as ritual sculptures in clay moulded (*tsha tsha*) or butter, as well as portable clay moulds and small-scale cast sculptures.<sup>7</sup> These examples allowed the canons of proportions and distinctive aesthetic characteristics to be apprehended by the avid students of Buddhism and Buddhist art in both Nepal and Tibet. In addition to finished examples of Buddhist art, it is well known from later examples that artists relied on examples (*dpe ris*) drawn on sheets of paper, the most famous being the fifteenth-century sketchbook of 39 pages of a Newar artist working in Tibet, now conserved in the Suresh Neotia collection.<sup>8</sup> The present sheet of paper is thus understood to be a fragment from an artist's notebook with line-drawings on both sides of the page to serve as models for portable or mural paintings.

It is thanks to the generosity of the gallery of John Eskenazi Ltd., London, that research on the present document is authorized as well as new photography for inclusion in the present volume of homage to David Jackson and his scholarly achievements. There are two photographs of this sheet (figs. 2 and 3); in view of the lack of pagination, it is a convention to refer to *recto* or *verso*. The sheet measures 40 × 53.5 cm, the medium is black ink on paper, no pigments. The sheet appears to be intact for the full width but originally it may have been longer. As will be explained in more detail below, due to the inscriptions in Tibetan language, in terms of certain archaisms in the spelling complemented

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7 For example, Atiśa's biographers describe his skills as an artist and a calligrapher; see Eimer 1979: fol. 20a–b. For Atiśa's instructions on making *tsha tshas*, see his *Pha rol tu phyin pa'i theg pa'i sātstsha gdab pa'i cho ga* in the *bsTan 'gyur dpe bsdur ma*, vol. 65, pp. 706–708. See also Skilling 2005: 681.

8 See Lowry 1977: 83–118 and Huntington 2006: 76–85. Pratapaditya Pal has studied many Nepalese sketchbooks comprising several folia of folded paper glued together (Newari *thyāsaphu*, lit. “folded book”) of both Hindu and Buddhist origin, now conserved in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; see Pal 1985: 145–181. I thank Christoph Cueppers for clarification that the Newari word *thyāsaphu* is composed of *thyāye* (“to fold”) and *saphū* (“book”); it simply refers to a book in leporello style, without indicating the genre or contents etc. of the text. It is not a “sketchbook” per se (personal communication, October 2020).

by the style of the drawings which may be related to mural and portable paintings from Central Tibet of late eleventh to twelfth century, and the geo-historical context indicated by certain features, the provenance attributed is tentatively central Tibet, drawings ca. twelfth century, and inscriptions in Tibetan language, co-eval with the drawings of ca. twelfth century, as well as a later additional inscription which tentatively has been attributed to the sixteenth (see below).

One side presents several drawings of different sizes, all of which appear to be the work of a single artist. There is a very large drawing of a head and upper torso of a Bodhisattva in three-quarter profile, his elaborate crown is decorated with triangular panels and a border of pearls graces his upper forehead; his stylized facial features exhibit the curving dip of the upper eyelid, long aquiline nose, and bow-shaped upper lip, emulating characteristic Pala aesthetics. Beside the head of the crowned bodhisattva, there is the head and upper torso of a *vyāla*, i.e., the Indian fantastic beast which is a hybrid lion-goat, often guardian of thrones. In between the horn of the *vyāla* and the bodhisattva, beneath an arc, there are three large teardrops, each with two concentric inner circles. Although at first sight enigmatic, clarification is provided by the drawing of Hevajra on the other side of the sheet—this represents a large-scale study to practice the expressive wrinkles of his forehead and his three eyes. The head of a man inside an ovoid halo has been drawn with similar facial features to those of the bodhisattva, but his shaven head, stubble of a beard and collar of a monastic robe clarify his identification as a monk. A second head of a crowned male bodhisattva is far smaller. The center of the page is covered by eleven lines of script, a succinct ritual description of Hevajra (see below). Beside the text there is also a study of a face of a male bodhisattva, again in three-quarter profile, represented from the hairline to the chin. There are also three separate studies of lotus petals.

On the reverse, there is a crowned bodhisattva seated in three-quarter view with crossed leg pose in which one foot is tucked in and the other is seen with sole and toes exposed. His neck is gracefully bent towards his torso, while the shoulders sway slightly in the opposite direction. This sinuous bending of the body (Skt. *bhaṅga*), frequent in standing or seated poses, is consistent with Eastern Indian manuscript

illuminations, thus corresponding to the nexus of the “Sharri–style” as defined by Jackson.<sup>9</sup> He is the epitome of an Indian prince, draped in necklaces, scarves and *dhoti*, seated above three successive swirls of fabric in soft folds. To his left, there is a separate sketch of a hand and wrist with bracelet on the forearm, as if the artist practiced in magnified scale to better render the clasped fingers of the *mudrā* formed by the fleshy hand with long elegant fingernails. In between the bodhisattva and the study of the hand, a *vyāla* with gaping jaw prances on its hind legs. There are also two studies for the animal heads and multiple arms of the meditation deity Hevajra and his partner Nairātmyā standing in *yab yum* embrace.

All of the drawings related to the bodhisattva, the lotus petals and the *vyāla*, as well as the portrait of the monk appear to be co-eval and the product of one artist or one atelier. Below the monk's head, there is a short inscription which reads *bya yul*. This is understood to refer to the district Bya yul and the eponymous monastery in central Tibet,<sup>10</sup> implying these drawings were possibly made while the artist was working in central Tibet at Bya yul monastery which was a twelfth-century Kadampa (bKa' gdams pa) foundation. This inscription may also be understood to refer to the monk himself, as there was a teacher known by the epithet Bya yul ba, “the man of Bya yul.” This monk, i.e., Bya yul ba gZhon nu 'od (1075–1138), was a direct disciple of sPyan snga Tshul khrim s'bar (1038–1103), one of 'Brom ston's disciples.<sup>11</sup>

The bodhisattva's facial features, jewellery and body proportions correlate closely to the style of the Pala inspired mural paintings of the bodhisattvas in the entrance chapel at Shalu (Zhwa lu; mid-eleventh century) and the mural paintings of Maitreya and Mañjuśrī at Drathang (Grwa thang; dated to 1083–1100); there are no representations of a

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9 In 1990, John Huntington had proposed the terminology *shar mthun bris* (“painted in harmony / accordance with Eastern [Indian style]”) for painting styles which took form in Tibet following the aesthetic conventions of Pala India; see Huntington and Huntington 1990: 294–297.

10 H. E. Richardson cited by P. Pal. 1983: 116 discussed possible provenance of Bya yul due to the inscriptions on the thangka of Tathāgata Amitāyus, attributed to the twelfth century. On Bya yul monastery, see <https://www.tbrc.org/#!rid=G229> (accessed February 3, 2011), Roerich 1979: 286–291, and Akester 2016: 173.

11 See Roerich 1979: 284–285; Jackson 2011: 70–72.

*vyāla* in these murals.<sup>12</sup> Pala style thrones with rampant *vyāla* are documented in clay sculpture in the Kyangbu monastery (rKyang bu dgon) in central Tibet attributed to the eleventh century.<sup>13</sup> The horns of the *vyāla* are more simply rendered in Kyangbu while the present sketch shows a distinctive decoration of curling lines on the length of the horn. The *vyāla* represented with this distinctive curling decoration of the horn is also documented on a painted book cover, attributed to late eleventh to early twelfth century on stylistic criteria, lacking however an historic inscription.<sup>14</sup> It is striking that this specific feature of the horns as well as a slender elongated body like the *vyāla* on the sketch leaf may be observed on the *vyāla* in the late eleventh century inscribed portrait consecrated by sPyan snga Tshul khriṃs 'bar. As mentioned above, this Tibetan monk, a disciple of 'Brom ston, became the teacher of Bya yul ba, thus in direct relation to the monk portrayed on the sketch leaf via their historic lineage (fig. 4).<sup>15</sup>

This painting has been studied in detail by Jackson stating, “This painting exemplifies the Sharri style, with its colorful outer border of inlaid jewels and head nimbus of the main figure that is accompanied by the usual decorative upper fringe of the throne back adjoining it. Here the artist has repeated the second element in the outer fringe of arch beneath which the main figure sits. The throne back’s upper edge continues as a series of colorful jewel-like bumps the tails of geese (*haṃsa*), while the arch fringe above it continues the tails of *makaras*. The two bodhisattvas at the top of the painting, Mañjuśrī and Maitreya, are strongly reminiscent of the same pair of bodhisattvas as they were seen by Atiśa in a vision. The thangka contains an important inscription, which was mentioned but not quoted by Kossak.”<sup>16</sup> Jackson studied and re-translated the important Tibetan inscription in two lines on the reverse which had been difficult to decipher:<sup>17</sup>

12 See Vitali 1990.

13 For the Kyangbu thrones, see Tucci 1941, vol. IV/3: fig. 31; Vitali 1990: fig. 9, 12; all photographs by Fosco Maraini who was a member of the Tucci expedition.

14 See Kossak and Casey Singer 1998: 70–71.

15 I thank Kurt Behrendt of the Metropolitan Museum of Art for kindly facilitating publication of this painting and for sending detail photographs of the Tibetan inscription on the reverse.

16 See Jackson 2011: 70.

17 See Casey Singer 1994: 112–113.

- 1 *spyan snga tshul khrims 'bar gyis sku phyag nas ma 'o gzim*
- 2 *chung shar ma'i lha me sdug ma'o/*

Jackson's reading is elucidating:

It is a sacred object consecrated by sPyan snga Tshul khrims 'bar. A deity of the eastern residence room. It is an image that withstood fire.<sup>18</sup>

Jackson clarifies the use of sacred barley (*phyag nas*) during a consecration ceremony as well as the whole term *phyag nas ma*, literally "one that was blessed by the grain (of a particular teacher)." Thus this indicates that it was consecrated and blessed by the teacher himself, i.e., sPyan snga Tshul khrim 'bar. In this instance, Jackson notes that the inscription is slightly ungrammatical, stating that it was the self-blessed sacred image of (*gyi* rather than *gyis*) the sPyan snga himself, with the implication that it dates to the latter portion of his lifetime, during the late eleventh century. As a *contrappunto*, additional photography of the inscription indicates that rather than *phyag nas ma*, the inscription letters are *phyang nas ma*, *phyang* either being a contraction for *phyag gnang* or simply a mis-spelling of *phyag*, as very often spelling errors are found in dedication inscriptions on portable paintings and sculptures. Jackson's fine analysis of this painting and its inscription greatly advances our understanding of the signification of portraiture in early Tibetan painting.

Returning to the present series of sketches, several portable paintings with buddhas and/or bodhisattvas with similar crowns, as well as similar foliate edge lotus petals, and *vyāla*, have been identified and attributed to the thirteenth century, or second half of thirteenth century.<sup>19</sup> The exceptionally large and refined thangka of Amitāyus in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, attributed to production at Ba yul or possibly Bya yul according to the analysis of the inscriptions by H. E. Richardson, presents a similar tiered crown configuration, and has been attributed a date of late twelfth century.<sup>20</sup> The lotus petals of this thangka of Amitāyus do not have the elaborate volutes of the tips of

18 See Jackson 2011: 72.

19 See Kossak and Casey Singer 1998: fig. 24, Maitreya Buddha with slender rampant *vyāla*, and fig. 25, Amoghasiddhi with similar crown and lotus petals.

20 See Pal 1983: 134–135, identified as Amitābha, Accession number M.84.32.5

the petals among the drawings on the present sheet and on the portable paintings attributed to thirteenth century, it has thus been attributed a chronology of twelfth century.

On the reverse of the present sheet, there is the drawing representing Hevajra and Nairātmyā as an embracing *yab yum* couple of deities, dancing above their four small attendant deities in the lower half of the page. Hevajra has eight heads, sixteen arms, holding a skull cup in which small animals and small gods are positioned. Beside several of the animals, there are inscriptions in Tibetan print letters stating the name of the animal. The upper section of the page has an enlarged drawing of Hevajra's seven lateral right arms holding skull cups containing small animals. There are small one-word Tibetan inscriptions on the four small attendant deities, in Tibetan cursive script, stating their body colour. The crown worn by one of the four attendant deities directly reflects the Sharri style crowns worn by the bodhisattva, while Hevajra and Nairātmyā both have similar bracelets to the bodhisattva, albeit in smaller scale and less delicately rendered. This tends to indicate that all the drawings on this sheet, *recto* and *verso*, are co-eval.

### Analysis of the Tibetan inscriptions

(1) At the top of the sheet, written horizontally across the page, there are two lines of Tibetan inscription in somewhat large, cursive handwriting, partially effaced, but legible:

- 1 //mgon po thugs rje che ldan pa/ thams cad mkhyen pa'i
- 2 ston pa'o/ bsod nams rgya mtsho yon tan zhing/ de bzhin gshegs pa

This is a verbatim (but slightly incomplete) quotation of a verse from a prayer composed by Śūraṅgavajra, an Indian *paṇḍita* from the tenth century.<sup>21</sup> The full verse reads, in English translation:

To the protector gifted with compassion, the omniscient teacher, ocean of merit (*bsod nams rgya mtsho*), field of good qualities, to the Tathāgata [I] pay homage!

21 I thank Volker Caumanns for the information that this is a citation from the *dKyiil 'khor drug gi cho ga* by Śūraṅgavajra (personal communication, December 2020); see the *bsTan 'gyur dpe bsdur ma*, vol. 37, pp. 1045–1046: //mgon po thugs rje che ldan pa/ /thams cad mkhyen pa'i ston pa po/ /bsod nams rgya mtsho yon tan zhing/ /de bzhin gshegs la phyag 'tshal lo/.

This verse may possibly be interpreted to refer to a specific Tibetan teacher, due to the special expressions stipulating omniscience and compassion used here. Thus, although composed by an Indian *paṇḍita* as early as the tenth century, this phrase of praise may possibly refer to the Third Dalai Lama bSod nams rgya mtsho (1543–1588). As an emanation of Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, it is frequent that members of the Dalai Lama lineage have this epithet as well as the qualification of omniscience. While it is possible however that no specific person is implied, one cannot determine with certainty.<sup>22</sup> The sentence of homage is terminated by the drawing of a lotus petal, horizontally oriented, which appears to be earlier than the inscription. The likelihood of the identification as bSod nams rgya mtsho is reinforced because Bya yul dgon pa subsequently became a dGe lugs pa establishment; already bSod nams rgya mtsho was qualified as omniscient during the early seventeenth century in Mongolian sources.<sup>23</sup>

(2) Inside a vertically oriented lotus petal, there are two very brief inscriptions in black ink. Inside the lotus petal, there are merely the Tibetan letters *pad ma* (“lotus”) in print letters, and a rather effaced inscription in two lines written in cursive letters. The word *pad ma* can be discerned but the inscription is not legible. In the other lotus petal, written in Tibetan cursive script inside the lotus petals, very briefly, *'di yang ni legs so* (“This is also fine”). There is no indication that these two inscriptions are written consistently by the same hand, the thickness of the print letters and the cursive script is quite different, indicating they were written with different brush.

Underneath the depiction of the Tibetan monk, written again in slightly smaller size and shape than the cursive handwriting from the previous inscriptions, there is the name “Bya yul” (literal meaning: the region or province of Bya). This is understood at present to probably refer to the monk Bya yul ba chen po, founder of the Bya yul monastery in the twelfth century. This inscription is understood to be co-eval with the portrait of the monk. On the reverse, between the wrist and the edge of the page, a few faint letters in Tibetan cursive script may be seen but are too pale to be legible.

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22 I thank Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz for this information (personal communication, December 2020); see also Kollmar-Paulenz 2005.

23 See *ibid.*

(3) At the centre of the sheet, there are eleven continuous lines of cursive Tibetan script in the same handwriting. This long inscription is an excerpt from a *sādhana*, comprising a description of Hevajra in his aspect with sixteen arms, four legs and eight heads, embracing the goddess Nairātmyā, his anthropomorphic partner, the couple dancing above four attendant deities. Legible portions of the inscription state that Hevajra should be dark blue, Nairātmyā black, holding a copper chopper (*gri gug*), as well as Hevajra's number of heads, number of arms, some of the animals, the goddesses of the sun, moon, earth and water represented inside the skull cups. There is no author named for this *sādhana* description. The other side of the page shows precisely a drawing of this aspect of Hevajra and Nairātmyā. The handwriting and spelling do not present any archaisms which would be characteristic of the date of the drawings of the bodhisattva, while the last three lines are written above a section of the drawing of one bodhisattva. It is thus suggested that the Hevajra drawing was executed after the bodhisattva, while the Hevajra *sādhana* may have been written at the same time or possibly later. The handwriting of the inscription rendering the excerpt from the *sādhana* is different from the inscription in homage to the Third Dalai Lama, which, in the opinion of the present writer, would be the latest element written on this sheet of paper.

### Appendix: Transliteration of the *sādhana* text

Inscription of eleven lines at centre of the page (letters are faint and there is underdrawing which renders the last three lines difficult to decipher). As already mentioned, this inscription is not written in archaic spelling or punctuation.

Conventions used in transcribing the inscription:<sup>24</sup>

- [abc] emendation of letters partly illegible
- [abc?] uncertain readings
- [a/b?] ambiguous readings
- illegible letter
- illegible syllable

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<sup>24</sup> The following conventions have been adapted from Cantwell and Mayer 2012: IX.



- 1 bcom l[d]an 'das dgyes pa rdo rje sku mdog mthing nag po/ zhal  
brgyad phyag bcu drug [pa]/ zhal rtsa ba na[g?]
- 2 pa'i rtsa na [pa/pha?]r [ma] ni/ g.yas dkar ba'i sa [pa/pha?]r/ nag po  
nyis rtsag/ — — — ba['i?] rtsa na [par] nag po [2?]
- 3 [-]g/ st[e?]ng zhal ba dud kha ba dang brgyad do// thod [pa?] [l]ngas  
dbu brgyan pa'o// phyag g.yas pa brgyad na ni//
- 4 glang chen rta bong glang rnga mo mi dang seng ge byi lha brgyad/  
bong pa re re na kha phyir bstan pa'o/ /phyag g.yon pa
- 5 brgyad na ni/ sa'i lha mo ser [m?]o dang/ chu'i lha mo dkar mo  
dang/ rlung gi lha mo dud kha mo dang/ me'i lha mo
- 6 dmar mo dang/ nyi ma'i lha mo dmar mo dang/ zla ba'i lha mo dkar  
mo dang/ gshin rje nag po/ — lha ser po//
- 7 de dag [thams cad?] zhal cig phyag gnyis pa/ thal mo snying khar  
sbyar ba thod pa'i nang du [brdams?] pa'o// de cho kha
- 8 nang du bstan pa'o// yum bdag myed ma sku mdog nag mo/ phyag  
g.yas dri gug zangs las byas/ g.yon
- 9 khyud de thod pa kar po khrag gis bkang ba stong pa stob pa/ /rus  
pa'i rgyan cha lngas yab yum gnyis kha
- 10 brgyan pa/ dbu['i?] snga ser po gyen du brdzes pa'o/ /bdud bzhi ni  
ser po cig dkar po 1 nag po 1 sngon po 1/
- 11 bzhi gan kyal du [bkyil?] ba'i snying khar bnan pa'o// //

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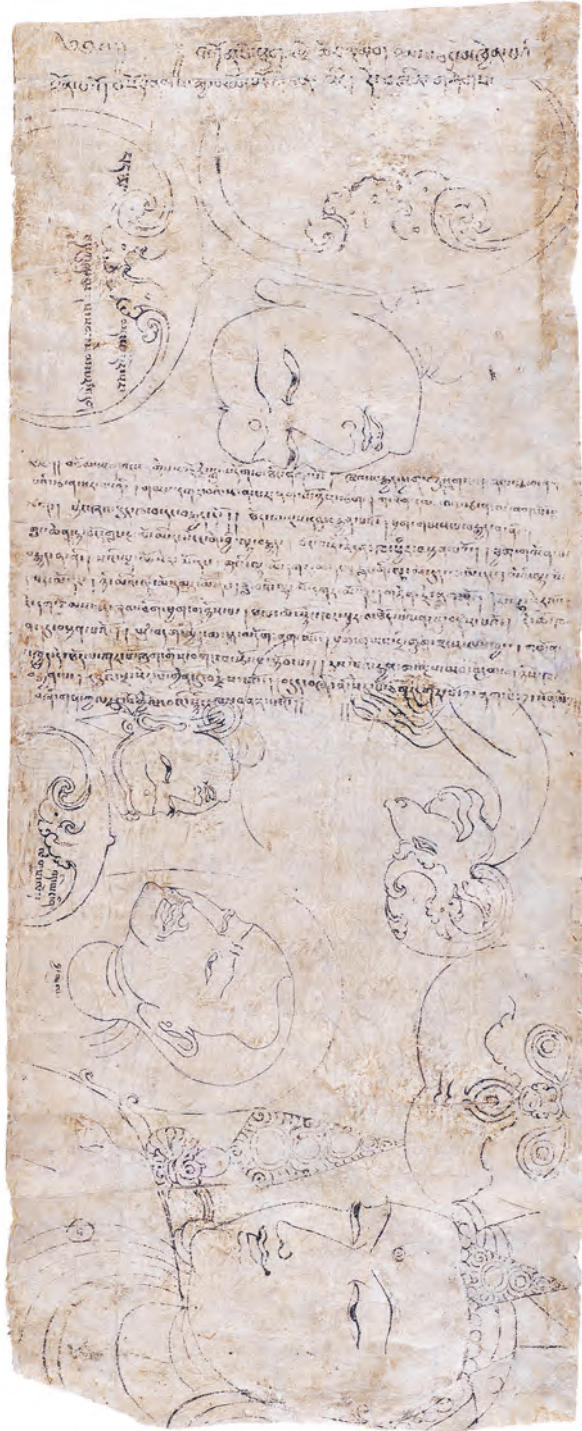




Figure 1 Full leaf, opaque watercolor on palm leaf, 6.5 × 44 cm, 12th century, private collection.



Figure 2 detail of Fig.1, Vajrapāṇi, 6.5 × 6.5 cm, opaque watercolor on palm leaf, 12th century, private collection.



**Figure 3**  
 Recto of the page  
 from the artist's  
 sketchbook, ink on  
 paper, 40 × 53.5 cm,  
 courtesy of John  
 Eskenazi Ltd.,  
 London.



**Figure 4**  
Verso of the page  
from the artist's  
sketchbook, ink on  
paper, 40 × 53.5 cm,  
courtesy of John  
Eskenazi Ltd.,  
London.



**Figure 5** Portrait of the Lama sPyan snga Tshul khrim s'bar (1038–1108), ink and distemper on cotton, 46 × 36 cm, Central Tibet. Consecration inscription attributed to sPyan snga Tshul khrim s'bar. Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts 1991. Accession number 1991.195.



## A Rare Image of the 28th Sakya Throne Holder Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk (1638–1685)\*

Michael Henss

Compared with the numerous sculptural representations of Sakya lamas, predominantly of the founder Khön Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102, r. 1073–1102) and of the Five Patriarchs—Sachen Künga Nyingpo (1092–1158, r. 1111–1158), Sönam Tsemo (1142–1182, r. 1159–1171), Dragpa Gyaltsen (1147–1216, r. 1172–1215), Sakya Pandita Künga Gyaltsen (1182–1251, r. 1216–1243) and Phagpa Lodrö Gyaltsen (1235–1280, r. 1265–1280)—identifiable metal and painted images of the successive throne holders, the Sakya Trizins (*sa ska khri 'dzin*), are surprisingly rare.<sup>1</sup>

A large polychromed and inscribed clay statue of the 28th Sakya Trizin, Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk (1638–1685, r. 1659–1685), 38 cm in height, is preserved in a Swiss private collection (figs. 1–4). Based on its inscription, the statue can be clearly identified as a representation of the 28th Sakya Trizin, who occupied the throne from 1659 until 1685.<sup>2</sup>

His father was Ame Zhab Ngawang Kunga Sonam (1597–1659), who acted as the 27th throne holder of Sakya from 1620 until 1659.<sup>3</sup> His

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\* This contribution is dedicated to David Jackson after many years of our mutual interest in Tibetan art and “Sakya affairs.” For the transliteration and translation of the inscription, I have to thank Andreas Kretschmar and Jörg Heimbel. For improving an earlier draft of this contribution and his editorial assistance, I am indebted with gratitude to Jörg Heimbel.

1 For a depiction of Ngawang Kunga Tashi (1656–1711), the 29th throne holder, see Pal 1983: 156–157, P20; Tucci, 1999: 372–373, no. 32, pls. 54–58; and HAR 85735. For a depiction of the 32nd Throne Holder Wangdü Nyingpo (r. 1765–1806) with an unusual siddha headdress, *khatvāṅga* and *vajra*, as identified by Jeff Watt, see HAR 31222.

2 For his biography, see Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, pp. 412–497. For his full-length biography written by his son Ngawang Kunga Tashi, the 29th Sakya Trizin, see BDRC: W22134, pp. 213–423.

3 For his biography, see Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, pp. 289–412. On his biographies and life, see Sobisch 2007: 2–31.

mother's name was Machik Orgyen Kyabma.<sup>4</sup> In the earth-tiger year (= 1638), on the eighth day of the eighth month (according to the Tibetan lunar calendar), when Ame Zhab was in his forty-first year, his son Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk was born.<sup>5</sup>

The political power at the time was in the hands of the ruler of Tsang, Desi Karma Tenkyong (1604–1642). In Ame Zhab's forty-fourth year (= 1641), the army of the Mongolian leader Gushri Khan (1582–1655) invaded Tsang and the Desi Karma Tenkyong was defeated.<sup>6</sup> Immediately afterwards, the 5th Dalai Lama (1617–1682) was installed as the ruler of Tibet. As the Sakyapas had formerly had a teacher-patron relationship with the Mongols, no great harm was inflicted on them by Gushri Khan.

In the year 1656, when Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk was eighteen years old, his wife Machik Pekar Butri, the daughter of the Dagchen Sharpa,<sup>7</sup> gave birth to a son called Ngawang Kunga Trashī (1656–1711).<sup>8</sup> Later he became installed as the 29th throne holder of Sakya and occupied the throne from 1685 until 1711.<sup>9</sup>

In the year 1674, when Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk was in his thirty-sixth year, he went to Lhasa and had an audience with the 5th Dalai Lama in the Potala.<sup>10</sup>

In 1685, at the age of forty-seven, Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk died in Phagri, on the twenty-fifth day of the eighth month of the wood-ox year. His corpse was placed in a "corpse box" (*gdung sgrom*) and brought to Sakya, where it arrived on the first day of the ninth month. For three months, extensive offerings and rituals were conducted in the presence of the "precious body" (*sku gdung rin po che*). On the twenty-first day of the eleventh month, his body was cremated. Some of the relics that were found in the cremation house (*gdung khang*) were later placed into our present statue.

4 See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 416.5–6.

5 See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 361.6–8.

6 See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 363.8–18.

7 I.e., the head of the Labrang Shar whose family was one of a handful of prominent religious families that had aligned themselves with Sakya but did not directly descend from the Sakya Khön lineage; see Heimbel 2017: 112–118.

8 See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 421.7–15.

9 For his biography, see Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, pp. 497–567.

10 See Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 436.18ff.

Most of the body turned into what is called *dunglog* (*gdung log*), that is, “relics that turned bad.” But some special relics were also found, such as bones with images of Vajrabhairava. All the *dunglog* relics were pulverised and made into small images of tutelary deities and Dharma protectors, as well as *stūpa-tshatshas*; in total, into 73,677, as the biography specifies.

Also, representations of the lama’s body (*sku tshab*) were made, such as a gilded portrait statue (*’dra sku*) in life-size and a clay statue for his chambers (*gzim mal sman sku*).<sup>11</sup>

Within two years after the cremation, all the sacred objects that were erected to fulfil the last wishes of Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk were completed, and they were consecrated by Jamgon Trichen Rinpoche, his son, the 29th Trizin Ngawang Kunga Tashi, with a retinue of thirty masters, in the third month of the fire-rabbit year (= 1687).<sup>12</sup>

Our present statue might have been among those objects, and it might even be the aforementioned clay statue made for the chambers of Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk. Since it contains some of his own relics, the statue could not have been made before his passing away. Therefore, we can assume that the statue was commissioned between 1685 and 1687, as the earliest possible date, but certainly not before.

The missing emblem in the Sakya Trizin’s proper left hand may have been a skull cup (*kapala*), originally a “wisdom container” filled with the life blood of human passions to be transmuted into the elixir of immortality.

A special attribute of this image is the *phurba* (*phur pa*). Its upper part with the human head of the dagger deity can be recognised at the belt of the inner garment. This rare motif indicates the early Nyingma connection of the Sakyapas. Similarly, this *phurba* characterises several statues portraying the 5th Dalai Lama, and symbolises the same

11 See Kun dga’ blo gros, *Sa skya’i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 495.16–18: *phyi nang gi rten yang rje de nyid kyi sku tshab gser zangs kyi ’dra sku sku tshad can dang/ gzim mal sman sku/*. On other sculptures destined for a lama’s chambers (*gzims mal sku ’dra*), see the contribution by Jörg Heimbel in this volume.

12 On the death, funeral ceremonies, and commissions in the last three paragraphs, see Kun dga’ blo gros, *Sa skya’i gdung rabs kha skong*, pp. 495.2–497.7. To Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk is dedicated one of the eleven large memorial *stūpas* in the “Silver Chörten Hall” (Ngul gdung lha khang), adjacent to the Great Assembly Hall of the Southern Sakya Monastery; see Henss 2014, vol. 2: 746.

influence and orientation towards that foundational school of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>13</sup>

The two cushions (*'bol gdan*) of the throne seat are common for renowned lamas, although apparently, in the case of our present statue, without a distinctive hierarchical relationship to the “rank” of the represented person.<sup>14</sup> The bottom is originally sealed with a painted double *vajra* on the outer canvas. The extraordinary importance of this highly refined image is underlined by “a large piece of garment” of Sakya Pandita inserted in it (see inscription below)—a relic of the 6th throne holder of Sakya and one of the most influential religious and political authorities in Tibetan history. Portable statues with documented inserted relics of a comparable origin are extremely rare. Thus, the inscription and the consecrational filling make this “portrait statue” an outstanding treasure of Tibetan art and cultural history.

There are two other metal portrait statues of the 28th Sakya Trizin, which are also identifiable by inscription,<sup>15</sup> and that are also represented with the “Nyingma *phurba*,” one in the Paris Musée Guimet (figs. 5–6) and the other one in an unknown private collection.<sup>16</sup>

While the title of the Sakya Trizin was only introduced later on, the tradition and institution are acknowledged today from the very Sakya beginnings under Khön Könchog Gyalpo and the successive Five Sakya Patriarchs of the 12th and 13th centuries.<sup>17</sup> The Sakya Trizin, the official temporal head of all Sakya monasteries and of the whole school, was until 2017 represented by the 41st Throne Holder Ngawang Künga

13 See also Henss 2020a: 180.

14 See, for example, Henss 2020b for a statue of Rölpai Dorje (1717–1786) in the Zhi-guan Museum of Fine Arts, Beijing, seated on five cushions.

15 The inscription of the statue in the Musée Guimet reads: *@/ grub pa'i dbang phyug ngag dbang bsod nams dbang phyug gi sku 'di la de bzhin gshegs pa'i 'phel gdung sogs byin rten mang po bzhugs so/ sarba mangga lam/*. Translation: In this statue of the Accomplished Lord Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk are present many blessing bestowing objects such as a multiplying bone relic of the *tathāgata* (transliterated and translated by Jörg Heimbel).

16 For the statue in the Musée Guimet (height 10,3 cm), see Béguin 1991: no. 43 and HAR 85918. For the other Sakya Trizin image (height 10,5 cm), see Kreijger 1989: 116. The attribute in his proper left hand can be identified as a flaming jewel.

17 On the institution of the Sakya Trizin, see, for instance, Cassinelli and Ekvall 1969: 186ff., and Schoening 1983. On the institution of the Sakya Trizin, see also the contribution by Volker Caumanns in this volume.

(b. 1945), a descendant of the founding Khön family, now living in Indian exile. On March 9, 2017, Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche (b. 1974), his oldest son, was installed as the 42nd Sakya Trizin.<sup>18</sup> With His Holiness the Sakya Trizin (now Sakya Trichen) Ngawang Kunga relinquishing his throne, a new system of three-year terms was introduced, following the wish of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö (1893–1959) to adopt the practice of Ngor monastery. Thus, from now on, the sons of the Dolma Phodrang and Phuntshog Phodrang will assume the role of Sakya Trizin by taking turns for a period of three years, respectively.<sup>19</sup>

The Sakya Trizin, a high lama but not an ordained monk (although he could have been) and not celibate, has been a most powerful and rather autocratic person in political and religious affairs, usually considered more by his religious functions. His office and residence were in Sakya's Northern and Southern Monasteries (in winter, respectively in summer), on both of which he had the final control, occasionally acting as abbot (of the South Monastery), who was usually selected from lists submitted to him.

### The Inscription

The spelling of the inscription is slightly defective and the readability of a few syllables impaired due to small damages on the surface of the inscription plates. The following transliteration of the inscription is based on digital photos:

#### Front Inscription

[first line:] @@/ om swa sti/ bka' drin mtshungs med rtsa ba'i bla ma dam pa dpal sa skya pa chen po sngags 'chang bla ma thams cad mkhyen pa ngag?

[second line:] dbang bsod nams dbang phyug bkra shis grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i zhabs [add: la] gus pas phyag 'tshal lo/ manggalam/

18 See Sakya Dolma Phodrang 2017a: 6.

19 See Sakya Dolma Phodrang 2017b: 25 and Sakya Dolma Phodrang 2017c: 31. For clarifying this new system, I am indebted to Jörg Heimbel.

### Translation Front Inscription

Oṃ svasti! I bow to the feet of the sublime [or: late?] root guru, whose kindness is incomparable, the great and glorious Sakyapa, the mantra-holding master, the omniscient Ngag dbang bsod nams dbang phyug bkra shis grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po. Maṅgalaṃ!

### Back Inscription, Upper Plate (lines 1–4)

[first line:] @@/ oṃ swa sti/ byams pas 'gro ba kun la bu gcig rtse [= brtse]/ kun nas dga' mdzad rje btsun chos kyi rje/ grags pa yongs mgon sa gsum 'dren pa'i dpal/ mtshungs med ngur smrig 'dzin pa gtsug na  
 [second line:] rgyal/ gang gi nang rtan [= rten] dgong [= dgongs] pa rdzogs pa'i thab [= thabs]/ gong ma punya'i mtshan gyi sku mchog 'di/ ded dpon bstan pa dar rgyas bdag cag gi/ dad cing bzheng [= bzhengs] pas ma dag nyes kun rnam [= rnames]/ yang bsags ma lus  
 [third line:] rnam [= rnames] kun byang gyur cig/ de mthu'i [= mthus] ma gyur sems can thams cad la/ bde skyid sbrang rtsi mngar po'i ro mchog bzhin/ spyi khyab ma lus 'bed [= 'bad] rtsol mi dgos pa/ bsam pa chos mthun 'grub pa'i sgyur [= rgyur] gyur cig/  
 [fourth line:] mangga lam/

### Translation Back Inscription, Upper Plate (lines 1–4)

Oṃ svasti! This is the renowned Venerable Dharma Lord [Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk], the protector of all, the glorious master, who extends his loving kindness to all beings like a mother cares for her only child, who rejoices in them, who leads them in the three realms, and who is the incomparable crown jewel among those who wear the saffron robes. As his inner reliquary and as a means to fulfil his wishes, we, headed by Depön Tenpa Dargye,<sup>20</sup> have faithfully erected this most excellent statue of the supreme one bearing the name Sonam.<sup>21</sup> May through this

20 Depön Tenpa Dargye was the main sponsor of the statue.

21 Some of the throne holders took monk-ordination at a young age, but had to take a wife later in life in order to preserve the Khön family line. These masters are considered “three-fold vajra holders” (*sum ldan rdo rje 'dzin pa*), as they are said to maintain all three sets of vows without contradiction: the *pratimokṣa* vows (*so thar gyi sdom pa*), the *bodhicitta* vows (*byang sems kyi sdom pa*) and the precepts of the Secret Mantrayāna (*gsang sngags kyi dam tshig*).

[act of erecting this statue] our impurities and mistakes that we have repeatedly accumulated all be completely purified. May through this [virtuous] power the happiness and wellbeing of all mother-like sentient beings be all-pervasive, just like the supreme taste of sweet honey, and may it serve as the cause so that all their wishes are effortlessly accomplished in accordance with the Dharma. Maṅgalaṃ.

#### Back Inscription, Upper Plate (lines 4–5)

[fourth line:] @/ de bzhin gshegs pa'i 'phel gdung/ sngags 'chang? gi mkha' spyod ril bu dang/ bsod nams dbang phyug gi dam rdzas rgya rdo/ sbye bdun dam rdzas 'phel che ba/ bsod nams dbang phyug gi gdung [one syllable illegible]

[fifth line:] 'di'i gzung [= gzungs] bzhugs tshul ni/ stod smad bar gsum gzung/

#### Translation Back Inscription, Upper Plate (lines 4–5)

A multiplying bone relic of the *tathāgata*; a Khecarī pill [blessed by] the Mantra Holder [i.e., Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk?];<sup>22</sup> a consecrated substance of Sonam Wangchuk, a *gyado*;<sup>23</sup> a consecrated substance of a seven birthed [Brahmin] that produces many relics.<sup>24</sup> As for the manner in which the fillings of the bone relics of Sonam Wangchuk abide [in this statue]: They are kept in its upper, lower, and middle parts.

#### Back Inscription, Lower Plate (lines 1–3)

[first line:] rdo rje 'jig [= 'jigs] byed kyi sku cig [= gcig]/ rje gong ma rnam gyi byin rtan [= rten] sna tshogs dang na' bza' bcas/ lhag par sa paṅ gyi na' [= na] bza' phon che ba/ rje btsun kun dga' grags pa

22 This is a pill of sacred substances that has been blessed through the practice of one of the three Khecarī cycles practiced by the Sakya school (*mkha' spyod skor gsum*): Nāro Khecarī (*nā ro mkha' spyod*), Indra Khecarī (*indra mkha' spyod*) and Maitrī Khecarī (*mai tri mkha' spyod*).

23 The meaning of the term *gyado* (*rgya rdo*) is unclear.

24 A piece of meat of the corpse of a person who has been reborn seven times as a Brahmin. The virtuous lifestyle of a Brahmin is highly regarded by Buddhist tantrikas. It is said that such a pill will prevent rebirth in the hell realms for seven lifetimes.

[second line:] nyid kyī gdung tshwa tshe dpag med kyī sku rgya [= brgya] phrag gcig dang gsum bcu so cig [= gcig] dang/ gdung log phon che ba na' [= na] bza' dang tshem [= tshems] gi [= kyī] dum bu/ gzhan yang dgos pa'i yo byad

[third line:] sman 'bru dar bzab [= gzab?] bcas bzhugs pas brtan [= bstan] 'gro la phan pa'i sgyur [= rgyur] gyur gcig [= cig]/

### Translation Back Inscription, Lower Plate (lines 1–3)

[In this sculpture] are present an image of Vajrabhairava;<sup>25</sup> various blessing bestowing objects of the previous lords [of Sakya] together with [pieces of their] garments; in particular, a large [piece of] garment of Sakya Pandita; the relic body salt of the Venerable Lord Kunga Drakpa [i.e., Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk?];<sup>26</sup> one hundred and thirty-one [small] images [i.e., *tsha tshas?*] of Amitāyus; a large amount of [Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk's] *dunglok*,<sup>27</sup> garment, and piece of tooth.

25 The biography lists among the relics of Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk an image of Vajrabhairava that had appeared on one of his lower arm bones or lower leg bones; see Kun dga' blo gros, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs kha skong*, p. 495.10–11: *sku'i rje ngar gyi rus pa gcig la rdo rje 'jigs byed kyī sku brnyan shin tu gsal bar byon pa sogs rang byon dang [...]*.

26 After death, the corpses of high lamas are kept in a box filled with salt to drain the liquid out of the body. The body of the deceased lama is called *kudung* (*sku gdung*) or *kudung rinpoche* (*sku gdung rin po che*). The *kudung* is placed in the so-called “corpse box” or “coffin” (*gdung sgrom*). That salt, which is soaked with the lama's body fluid is regarded as a sacred substance and used in the filling of statues and the like. Usually, the lama's body is kept for forty-nine days in the “corpse box” and the salt is changed on a regular basis. After the period of forty-nine days, or as in our case after three months, all the necessary rituals were concluded, and the lama's body was cremated (*zhugs mchod phul ba = me nang du sreg pa*) in the cremation shrine (*gdung khang*). The relics that can be found after the cremation are called *dung* (*gdung*), which can be translated as bone-relics. If the entire body of the lama is to be placed into a *stūpa*, then all his inner organs are removed, and the inside of the body is filled with salt. That is the connotation of the term “relic body salt” (*gdung tshwa*). When the lama is not cremated but placed into a *stūpa*, the special term is *mardung* (*dmar gdung*), which can be translated as “entombed corpse.” On some types of relics and their Tibetan terms, see, for instance, Martin 1994.

27 The term *dunglok* (*gdung log*) is mentioned in Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk's biography, where it says that when the cremation house (*gdung khang*) was opened, most of the bones had turned into *dunglok* and on one bone a very clear image of Vajrabhairava had emerged. This differentiation suggests a distinction between



Furthermore, necessary things like medicinal substances, grains, and brocade. May it thus become a cause for the welfare of the doctrine and sentient beings.

**Inscription in Tibetan**

**Front Inscription**

༄༅། ལོ་སྤྱི། བཀའ་འདྲིན་མཚུངས་མེད་ཅུ་བའི་སྐྱེ་མ་དམ་པ་དཔལ་ས་སྐྱུ་པ་ཚེན་པོ་སྤྲལས་  
འཆང་སྐྱེ་མ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་དག་དབང་བསོད་ནམས་དབང་ཕྱུག་བཀྲ་ཤིས་གྲགས་པ་  
རྒྱལ་མཚན་དཔལ་བཟང་པོའི་ཞབས་གུས་པས་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།། མཚུ་ལོ།

**Back Inscription, Upper Plate**

༄༅། ལོ་སྤྱི། བྱམས་པས་འགོ་བ་ཀུན་ལ་བྱ་གཅིག་ཅེ། ཀུན་ནས་དགའ་མཛད་རྗེ་བཙུན་  
ཚོས་གྱི་རྗེ། གྲགས་པ་ཡོངས་མགོན་ས་གསུམ་འདྲེན་པའི་དཔལ། མཚུངས་མེད་དྲུར་སྤྲིག་  
འཛིན་པ་གཙུག་ན་རྒྱལ། གང་གི་ནང་རྟན་དགོང་པ་རྗེ་གས་པའི་ཐབ། གོང་མ་སྤུའི་མཚན་  
གྱི་སྐྱེ་མཚོག་འདི། དེད་དཔོན་བསྟན་པ་དར་རྒྱས་བདག་ཅག་གི། དད་ཅིང་བཞེད་པས་མ་  
དག་ཉེས་ཀུན་རྣམ། ཡང་བསགས་མ་ལུས་རྣམ་ཀུན་བྱུང་གྱུར་ཅིག། །དེ་མཐུའི་མ་གྱུར་སེམས་  
ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། བདེ་སྲིད་སྤང་ཅི་མངར་པོའི་རོ་མཚོག་བཞིན། སྤྱི་བྱུང་མ་ལུས་འབེད་  
རྩལ་མི་དགོས་པ། བསམ་པ་ཚོས་མཐུན་འགྲུབ་པའི་སྐྱུར་གྱུར་ཅིག། མཚུ་ལོ།། ༄། དེ་བཞིན་  
གཤེགས་པའི་འཕེལ་གཏུང་། སྤྲལས་འཆང་? གི་མཁའ་སྤྱོད་རིལ་བྱ་དང་། བསོད་ནམས་  
དབང་ཕྱུག་གི་དམ་རྗེས་རྒྱ་དོ།། སྤྱི་བཙུན་དམ་རྗེས་འཕེལ་ཚེ་བ། བསོད་ནམས་དབང་ཕྱུག་གི་  
གཏུང་ [one syllable illegible] འདིའི་གཟུང་བཞུགས་ཚུལ་ནི། སྤོད་སྤྲད་བར་གསུམ་  
གཟུང་།

**Back Inscription, Lower Plate**

དོ་རྗེ་འཛིག་བྱེད་གྱི་སྐྱུ་ཅིག། རྗེ་གོང་མ་རྣམ་གྱི་བྱིན་རྟེན་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་དང་ནའ་བཟའ་བཅས།  
ལྷག་པར་ས་སུ་གྱི་ནའ་བཟའ་པོན་ཚེ་བ། རྗེ་བཙུན་ཀུན་དགའ་གྲགས་པ་ཉིད་གྱི་གཏུང་ཚུ་  
ཚོ་དཔག་མེད་གྱི་སྐྱུ་རྒྱ་ཐག་གཅིག་དང་གསུམ་བཅུ་སོ་ཅིག་དང་། གཏུང་ལོག་པོན་ཚེ་བ་  
ནའ་བཟའ་དང་ཚོས་གི་དུམ་བྱ། གཞན་ཡང་དགོས་པའི་ཡོ་བྱད་སྤྲན་འབྱུང་དར་བཟབ་བཅས་  
བཞུགས་པས་བརྟན་འགོ་ལ་པན་པའི་རྒྱར་གྱུར་གཅིག།

bone relics that show images and other miraculous signs and those that do not. Therefore, the term *dunglök* can be translated as “relics that turned bad” (*gdung log tu gyur pa*), meaning “just mere pieces of bone.” Except for the special relics with images, all the rest was pulverised and made into small statues and *tsha tshas*. See Kun dga’ blo gros, *Sa skya’i gdung rabs kha skong*, pp. 495.2–497.7.

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**Fig. 1** Statue of the 28th Sakya Trizin Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk (1638–1685, r. 1650–1685). Polychromed clay, height 38 cm. With a large piece of garment of Sakya Pandita inserted into this image. Dated (by inscription) to 1685–1687. Private collection, Switzerland.

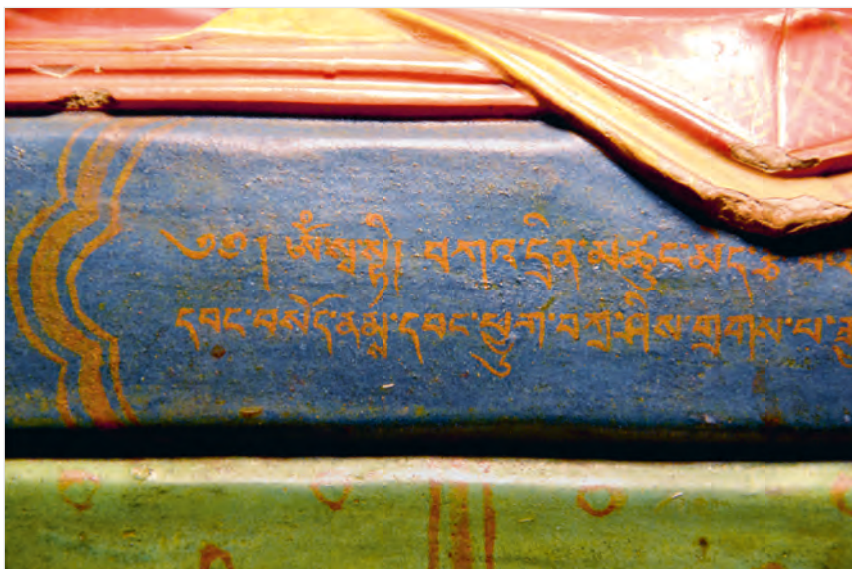


Fig. 2 Detail of the inscription at the front throne of fig. 1.

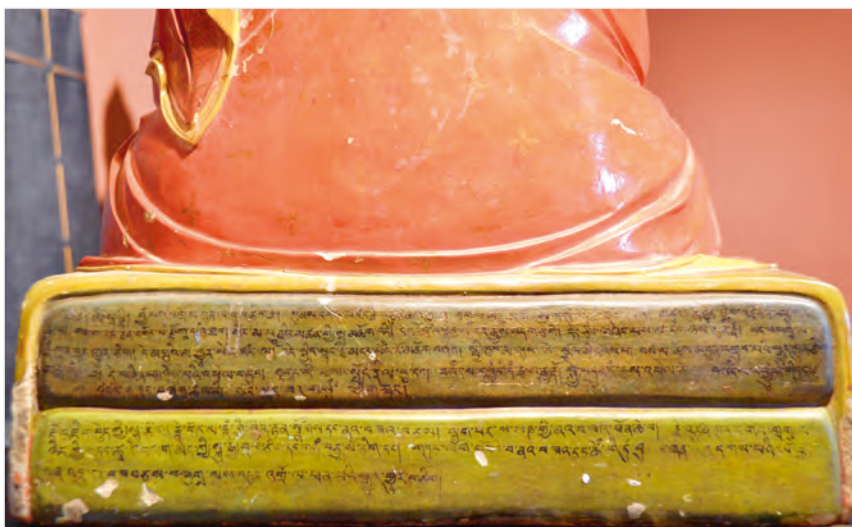


Fig. 3 Inscription at the back throne of fig. 1.



Fig. 4 Detail of fig. 1. Head of the 28th Sakya Trizin, with the upper part of the *phurba* at the inner robe.



Fig. 5 Ngawang Sonam Wangchuk. Gilt metal alloy, height 10,3 cm. Musée National des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet, Paris. After HAR 85918.

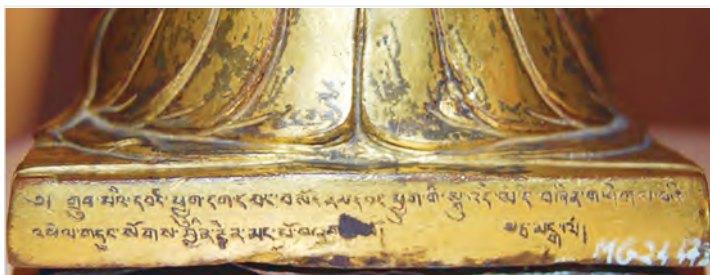


Fig. 6 Part of the engraved inscription at the back throne of fig. 5.



## Mapping Recently Recovered Early Tibetan Epistemological Works

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### Introduction

Research on the development of the Tibetan epistemological tradition (*tshad ma*) at the beginning of the Later Diffusion (*phyi dar*) of Buddhism to Tibet up to the thirteenth century, called the “pre-classical period” in van der Kuijp’s periodization of Tibetan epistemology,<sup>1</sup> has long been hindered by the scarcity of primary sources. The very first work on the topic composed in this period to have surfaced was a work by gTsang nag pa brTson ’grus seng ge (?–1195), published in 1989 in the Otani University Tibetan Works Series. Before that, indirect evidence could be found in the views reported (and largely criticized) by Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) in his *Rigs gter*, composed in 1219<sup>2</sup> (a work which, in addition to offering a window into the pre-classical period, marks the beginning of a new era in Tibetan epistemology), and yet later works by scholars such as gSer mdog Paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan (1428–1507) and Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429–1489).<sup>3</sup> Although the *Rigs gter* has been known to Western scholars since the 1930s (Jackson located the first mention of this work in Stcherbatsky’s *Buddhist Logic*),<sup>4</sup> it only became easily accessible after the publication, in 1968, of the sDe dge 1736 edition of the complete works of the Sa skya masters by the Tōyō Bunko.<sup>5</sup>

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1 See van der Kuijp 1989.

2 See notably van der Kuijp 1983: 101 and 303, n. 293 and Jackson 1987: 64.

3 Such sources were extensively used in van der Kuijp 1983, Jackson 1987, and Dreyfus 1997.

4 Jackson 1987: 44.

5 bSod nams rgya mtsho (ed.), *Sa skya pa’i bka’ ’bum: The complete works of the great masters of the Sa skya sect of the Tibetan Buddhism*, 15 vols, Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 1968–1969.

In the last two decades, the shortage of textual material pertaining to the pre-classical period and the early classical period of Tibetan epistemology has been replaced by an abundance of new manuscript sources from this period, including epistemological treatises by some of the most prominent early representatives of the field, rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109) and Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169). In particular, the publication in the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum* (KDSB) of facsimiles of manuscripts that had been preserved in the gNas bcu lha khang, at the monastery of 'Bras spungs, as part of the private library of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) offers new opportunities for investigating the developments of Tibetan epistemology in the pre-classical period.<sup>6</sup>

It is my pleasure to contribute to this volume in honor of Professor David Jackson by offering a preliminary survey of recently surfaced early epistemological works, aimed at providing some orientation and drawing out features that are relevant to the mapping of this corpus of new sources.

## 1 Epistemological works in the 'Bras spungs collection

The vast collection of texts preserved in the gNas bcu lha khang at 'Bras spungs was rediscovered in the last decade of the twentieth century and a catalog was published in 2004 by the dPal brtsegs Tibetan Ancient Texts Research Centre (dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang).<sup>7</sup> It is not known whether the manuscripts in this collection were strictly speaking cataloged at the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama—no catalog has been recovered so far—but they were subjected to a preliminary classification based on their origin and the topics of the works. This is shown in the signature that these works bear, typically on their cover page or in the top margin of the first available folio. The signature consists of three elements: the mentions “external” (*phyi*) or “internal” (*nang*) indicating whether the work was brought from outside 'Bras spungs or not; a letter standing for the topic of the work (twenty-three letters are used: *ka* to *la*, *bā*, *mā*, *zā*; the letter *zha* stands for epistemology [*tshad ma*])<sup>8</sup>; and a bundle number.

6 For an introduction to the collections of the gNas bcu lha khang, see Ducher 2020.

7 See 'Bras spungs dkar chag in References.

8 See 'Bras spungs dkar chag, vol. 1, Introduction, pp. 14–15.

For the gNas bcu lha khang collection, the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* records no less than 24,295 entries,<sup>9</sup> 23,135 of which are texts that were brought from outside *'Bras spungs*, the remaining ones being “internal.”<sup>10</sup> Also listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* are 3,044 “internal” works in the rJe Lam rim pa (1922–1977) (*'Bras spungs pho brang gzim chung gi rje lam rim pa'i dpe mdzod*) and the dGa' ldan pho brang zim chung libraries; 1,244 works in the library of sGo mang college; 1,855 more in the Kun dga' rwa ba library; and numerous volumes of collected works of individual authors in the sGo mang and Pho brang libraries. The gNas bcu lha khang collection was not complete at the time of cataloging. The bundle numbers lead one to expect a minimum of 4,417 bundles, whereas only 1,833 bundles were actually found on location.<sup>11</sup> Some bundles had been relocated to the Potala at the time of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama Thub bstan rgya mtsho (1876–1933). A large amount of Potala-bundles were brought to the China Library of Nationalities in Beijing in 1962 and manuscripts were later returned to the Tibetan Autonomous Region in the 1990s.<sup>12</sup>

The grouping of the manuscripts into bundles does not appear to have followed specific rules of organization. Tibetan translations of Indian works and Tibetan-authored works are not grouped in separate bundles and works by the same author in the same topic category are found in various bundles. Within a topic category, commentaries

9 First remarked by Jörg Heimbel and noted in Ducher 2020: 127, n. 21, although the entry numbers only go up to 22,694 in the catalog, 1,601 entries (from 10,000 to 11,600) are mistakenly given the same number. None of the latter are mentioned in the present article. Elsewhere, I add a “prime” to their catalog number to distinguish them from the previous entries with the same catalog number.

10 According to van der Kuijp (2018: 7), it is likely that the texts from outside “were originally part of the spoils of the civil war that had raged on and off for more than two decades between the Dga' ldan pho brang and the ruling family of Gtsang, the Gtsang pa Sde srid, whose court was located in Bsam grub rtse, that is, what is now Gzhis ka rtse (=Shigatse).” For the details of these historical events, see van der Kuijp 2018: 7–14.

11 *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, vol. 1, Introduction, pp. 14–15. See also Ducher 2020: 128.

12 See *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, vol. 1, Introduction, p. 12, Ducher 2020: 128, and van der Kuijp 2018. As van der Kuijp reports, “the vast majority of the manuscripts that were housed at the CPN were repatriated to the Tibetan Autonomous Region in 1993. Reports have it that many were redistributed to those monasteries when they could be identified as the sources for those manuscripts that had been initially collected from them in the early 1960s, apparently at the order of then Premier Zhou Enlai” (van der Kuijp 2018: 18).

related to distinct Indian treatises are not grouped by bundle. Bundles also contain manuscripts of various extension and dimension. One may propose the hypothesis that texts assigned to a topic category were grouped into bundles “on the go”—a new bundle being started when the preceding one had reached a given size of, say, anywhere from 500 to 700 folios.<sup>13</sup> The grouping of texts in a single bundle may also, to some extent, reflect their having been grouped in a previous collection imported to 'Bras spungs.<sup>14</sup>

The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* lists 159 items in the category of epistemological works (letter *zha* in the signature) collected from outside 'Bras spungs (*phyi*).<sup>15</sup> This is only a portion of the original collection: the bundle numbers indicated in the signature go up to 45, but only works from twenty-four bundles are listed in the catalog:

**Table 1**

Bundle numbers and number of items in the section *zha* of the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*

<b>Bundle nr.</b>	1	2	3	6	10	11	14	15	19	21	23	24
<b>Nr. of items</b>	1	6	1	7	3	2	26	7	7	9	7	3
<b>Bundle nr.</b>	25	26	27	29	31	32	34	35	38	42	44	45
<b>Nr. of items</b>	2	6	7	5	11	4	7	7	5	16	2	8

13 My estimation is based on the count of folios per bundle in the *zha* section. The first bundle contains a single text of 723 folios; the second six texts adding up to 465 folios; the third a single text of 128 folios; bundles 4 and 5 are missing; bundle 6 contains seven texts adding up to 504 folios. Since numerous bundles are missing and we have no way of knowing whether the extant bundles are complete or not, it is not possible to arrive at a more precise calculation.

14 The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* (vol. 1, Introduction, p. 7) names the inclusion in the 'Bras spungs libraries of the libraries of the Phag mo gru pa, of the gTsang pa in bSam grub rtse, and of the Karma pa library of rTse lha sgang. These libraries, in turn, might have included the contents of earlier library collections.

15 *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, vol. 2, pp. 1447–1461, Nos. 16311 to 16469. By “item” I refer here and below to the referent of a catalog entry. Several items can represent the same work in different exemplars. In the *KDSB dkar chag*, two distinct items sometimes represent the same exemplar that was printed two times.

Leonard van der Kuijp recorded the presence at the National Library of the Cultural Palace in Beijing (CPN) of manuscripts bearing the signature *phyi zha* with the bundle numbers 9, 12, 17, 18, 22, 30, 37, 39, and 43, which may originally have been part of the 'Bras spungs collection.<sup>16</sup>

Among the 159 items listed in section *zha* of the 'Bras spungs *dkar chag*, 133 are compositions by Tibetan scholars, and twenty-six are Tibetan translations of Indian treatises. The Tibetan translations consist of thirteen manuscripts both in cursive and capital script, nine xylograph prints (*shing dpar*) (reference number in bold), and four lithographs (*rdo dpar*) (reference number italicized).

**Table 2**

Translations of Indian epistemological works in section *zha* of the 'Bras spungs *dkar chag*

Title	Author	Nr. of items	'Bras spungs catalog no.	Bundle no.
<i>Ālambanaparīkṣā</i>	Dignāga	1	16385	23
<i>Pramāṇaviniścaya</i>	Dharmakīrti	9	16318	3
			16327	10
			16328	10
			<b>16388</b>	24
			16390	15
			16398	26
			16402	27
			<b>16409</b>	29
			16451	42

<sup>16</sup> See van der Kuijp 1993a, 1993b, and 1994a. A manuscript of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab's work reported by van der Kuijp as bearing the bundle number "83" (van der Kuijp 1994a: 6) has been published in the KDSB (see "2.3 Epistemological works not listed in the 'Bras spungs *dkar chag* published in the KDSB"). The bundle number is slightly faded but reads "43" rather than "83" (see No. 2 in the Summarizing table). A manuscript of an early commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika* by sTon gzhon bearing the signature *phyi zha* 5, described in van der Kuijp 2014: 116–119, may possibly be of the same origin.

Title	Author	Nr. of items	'Bras spungs catalog no.	Bundle no.
<i>Vādanyāya</i>	Dharmakīrti	2	16319	6
			16459	42
<i>Nyāyabindu</i>	Dharmakīrti	2	16334	14
			16411	31
<i>Pramāṇavārttika</i>	Dharmakīrti	8	16372	21
			16387	24
			16403	27
			16404	27
			16405	29
			16408	29
			16425	34
			16431	34
<i>Pramāṇaviniścayaṭikā 1</i>	Dharmottara	1	16320	6
<i>Pramāṇaviniścayaṭikā 2</i>	Dharmottara	1	16321	6
<i>Nyāyabinduṭikā</i>	Dharmottara	1	16357	15
<i>Nyāyabinduṭikā</i>	Vinītadeva	1	16458	42

Among the 133 Tibetan compositions, at least five items appear to be non-epistemological works that have been misplaced in this topic category. Notably No. 16349 (bundle 14), an anonymous work entitled *dBu ma 'jug pa'i rnam bshad*, appears to be a Madhyamaka work that should have been labeled with the letter *tsa* rather than *zha*. Nos. 16364 (*Chos 'byung rin po che'i gter*), 16367 (*dBu ma chos kyi dbyings su bstod pa'i rnam par bshad pa snying po gsal ba*), 16368 (*'Dul ba'i lag len rin po che'i gter*) and 16369 (*Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i lus rnam gzhag gi bsod don*) also are, in view of their titles, not works of epistemology, but were placed in bundle 19 together with two epistemological works (Nos. 16365 and 16366) by the same author, Jo gdan dka' bzhi gNyag phu ba bSod nams bzang po (1341–1433).

Conversely, some Tibetan epistemological works are found outside the *zha* section. Such cases identified at this point are two

epistemological works by bCom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri (1227–1305) with the letter *ma* in the signature (the category identified by the editors of the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* as “diverse: bKa' rgyud teaching, etc.” [*bKa' rgyud chos skor sogs sna tshogs*]): No. 10493 (*rTsod pa rig pa'i bsdus don*), and No. 10496 (*rTsod rig rgyan gyi me tog*). They were grouped in a bundle (number 599) with eight other works by the same author. Two further epistemological works by bCom ldan Ral gri (see Nos. 24 and 39 in the Summarizing table) are found under the letter *la* (which stands for catalogs, gradual expositions of the path, and mental training [*dkar chag skor dang lam rim blo sbyong sogs*]), in bundle 501 together with twenty-five other works by the same author.

Epistemological works being classified in other categories is in other cases due to misidentification. For instance, a work by Rin chen tshul khrim (1297–1368) entitled *'Grel bshad kun las btus pa'i snying po nyi ma'i 'od zer gyi snang ba* (No. 27 in the Summarizing table) was classified under the topic category of Abhidharma (letter *dza* in the signature). Presumably, the title was understood to refer to *Chos mngon pa kun las btus pa* (Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*), whereas the contents of the text make it clear that this is a work of epistemology, more precisely a commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the Tibetan compositions in the *zha* section are anonymous. The names of forty-four authors appear in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. Besides fifteen authors whose works were published in the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum* (for these, see below “4.1 Authorship”), the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* lists works by well-known Sa skya pa scholars and a number of individuals (presumably non-bKa' gdams pa) whose identity I have not yet investigated.

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17 Another manuscript preserved at the CPN of what appears to be the same work is described in van der Kuijp 1994a: 13. CPN 4895, signature: *phyi zha* 12, 117 folios, title: *Tshad ma rnam nges kyi legs par bshad pa 'grel pa kun las btus pa'i snying po nyi ma'i 'od zer gyi snang ba*. The incipit and colophon differ from those in No. 27.

**Table 3**

Authors of epistemological works in the *zha* section of the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* not published in the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum*

Authors of non-epistemological items in the *zha* section have not been included in the list. For authors without dates and whose identities are in question, I report under “Name” the authorship statement from the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. For all others, I list their usual names. Catalog number references for distinct works are separated by a semi-column. Those for different exemplars of the same work are separated by a comma.

Name	Item no.
Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251)	16331, 16336, 16389, 16401, 16406, 16444, 16465; 16391, 16399 <sup>18</sup>
'U yug pa Rig pa'i seng ge (?–1253)	16325, 16421; 16410
Phyogs glang gсар ma (fl. 1320)	16466
Jo gdan dka' bzhi gNyag phu ba bSod nams bzang po (1341–1433)	16365, 16366
Red mda' ba gZhon nu blo gros (1348–1412)	16312
rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432)	16420
Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449)	16394
mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang (1385–1438)	16332
gSer mdog Paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan (1428–1507)	16311, 16392, 16441; 16393; 16416, 16417, 16432, 16456; 16433; 16442; 16434, 16443, <sup>19</sup> 16453; 16439; 16440; 16430, 16437, 16448; 16428, 16429, 16436; 16427, 16435, 16450; 16374, 16438, 16449; 16455 <sup>20</sup>
Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429–1489)	16400, 16407
Blo gros dpal bzang gi dgongs slob Rin chen rgyal mtshan	16317

18 According to the number of folios, seven items represent the verses of the *Rigs gter*, two items (16391 and 16399) the work with auto-commentary.

19 According to the catalog, the author is Śākya'i dge slong Kun dga' rgyal mtshan; but the title is one of Śākya mchog ldan's commentaries on Sa skya Paṇḍita's treatise.

20 This might be the same work as 16416, etc.



rTog ge pa Grags pa kun bzang	16333
Chos 'phel bzang po	16335
'Chi ba med pa'i sde	16339; 16342
mNga' ris zangs mkhar Tshul khrimis shes rab	16341
bsTan pa dar rgyas	16344
Blo gros rgyal mtshan	16345
dKon mchog ming can	16348
Śākya'i btsun pa Sangs rgyas bkra shis	16351
lHa khang Chos kyi rgyal mtshan	16352
Śākya dpal bzang	16360
Gangs ri'i khrod kyi rtog ge ba chen mo dGe ba rgyal mtshan	16326
rGyal ba sku phreng dang po	16377
Blo gros rgya mtsho dang Blo bzang bstan 'dzin	16381
sNar thang Sangs rgyas dpal rin	16397
b'Tsun pa Sangs rgyas lhun grub	16414; 16418; 16462
Khams ston smra ba'i seng ge bzod pa dpal gyi skul ngor 'Jam sgeg	16415
b'Tsun pa 'Jam sgeg	16422
'Jam dbyangs yon tan mgon po	16452

## 2 Epistemological works in the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum*

### 2.1 The *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum*

A portion of the enormous bulk of new manuscript findings from the gNas bcu lha khang has already been published in various series—notably author-based, school-based, lineage-based and topic-based collections—as facsimile and type-set editions. One of these is the series entitled *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum* (“Collected works of the *bKa' gdams pa*,” hereafter KDSB), published in Chengdu between 2006 and 2015. The KDSB consists of four sets of thirty volumes each (altogether 120 *dpe cha*-format volumes). Its table of contents lists 533 items published in facsimile (apart from a few exceptions that appear in typeset format, e.g., vol. 91, pp. 215–291). However, not all of these represent distinct works. Some items represent the same work in different exemplars.

On occasion, items represent the same exemplar, but one which was reproduced in different volumes. In addition, some items actually consist of two (or more) texts written one after the other with continuous page numbering. Thus, we will only be able to specify the exact number of works once the collection has been properly documented. These some 530 works are by more than 160 thinkers associated by the editors with the bKa' gdams pa tradition—the label “bKa' gdams pa” itself being subject to question, as is its application to the authors whose works have been included in the KDSB.<sup>21</sup>

Scanned images of the KDSB are accessible on the web site of the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC).<sup>22</sup> Basic cataloging information is provided by the editors of the KDSB in their introduction and table of contents within the *KDSB dkar chag*, which was integrated into the BDRC database. An annotated list of contents was prepared by Kazuo Kano for the first two sets.<sup>23</sup> A more detailed descriptive catalog is being prepared in the framework of the project *A Gateway to Early Tibetan Scholasticism* by Hugon and Kano.<sup>24</sup>

The majority of the works in the KDSB are from the gNas bcu lha khang collection in 'Bras spungs (ca. 80% in the first set). However, not all of the bKa' gdams pa works extant in the 'Bras spungs collection have been included in the KDSB. For example, a five-folio manuscript of a work by dBang phyug seng ge, one of Phya pa's “Eight great lions,” is listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* under No. 15727 (signature: *phyi tsa* 120), but has not been published in the KDSB.<sup>25</sup> Also, when several exemplars are listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* for the same work, not all of them appear in the KDSB.<sup>26</sup>

21 For some remarks on the question of the affiliation of scholars associated with the tradition of epistemology stemming from rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, see Hugon 2016a: 306 and n. 63.

22 See W1PD89051, W1PD89084, W1PD153536, W4PD3076. The four sets are in open access.

23 Kano 2007: 19[102]–33[87]; Kano 2009: 138[179]–152[165].

24 See <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikga/forschung/tibetologie/materialien/a-gateway-to-early-tibetan-scholasticism/> [accessed: 2.9.2020].

25 This text entitled *dBu ma rgyan gyi don legs par bsdus pa* is presumably a synoptic table of Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*.

26 For instance, two exemplars of Phya pa's commentary on the *Madhyamakāloka* are listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* (Nos. 15677 and 15726), but only the first was published in the KDSB.

## 2.2 Epistemological works from the gNas bcu collection in the KDSB

Of the 133 works by Tibetan authors in the *zha* section of the gNas bcu lha khang collection that are listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, twenty-five were published in facsimile in the KDSB. The others were presumably not held to qualify as “bKa' gdams pa works” by the KDSB editors (see Table 3 for those whose authors are named); also, not all exemplars of the same works were included in the KDSB. This is in particular the case for works by bCom ldan Ral gri.<sup>27</sup>

In several cases, there is some incertitude regarding the item catalog number in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* corresponding to the work published in the KDSB. The KDSB editors indeed report the signature but not the *'Bras spungs* catalog number of the texts. In some cases, the signature they report is unclear or not actually visible in the published facsimile. There are also frequent differences with regard to the number of folios of the published manuscripts and the number indicated in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, which turn out, in many cases, to be due to the latter reporting the number written on the last folio, without consideration of additional or missing folios.

In particular, my identification of No. 16375 and No. 16376 in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* as No. 13 and No. 9 in the KDSB (see the Summarizing table), respectively, is tentative. The signature reported by the KDSB editors corresponds (*phyi zha* 21 in both cases), and the number on the last folio in the KDSB exemplar matches the number of folios reported in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. The catalog reports identical physical size and script for the two items. The indication of title and authorship in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* suggest that the two texts are commentaries (possibly by the same author) respectively on the second and first chapter of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*.<sup>28</sup> No. 13 (which I take to

27 For his commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (No. 22 in the Summarizing table), at least two additional exemplars listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* (No. 16370 [*phyi zha* 19, 267 folios] and No. 16396 [*phyi zha* 26, 117 folios]) were not published in the KDSB. Another exemplar of his summary (No. 23) is also listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* (No. 16464, *phyi zha* 45, 102 folios). For his commentary on the *Sambandhaparīkṣā* (No. 24), the copy in the KDSB is from section *la*, and there is another exemplar listed in section *zha* (No. 16382, *phyi zha* 23, 9 folios) that was not published.

28 No. 16735: *Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i ṭikka las rang don le'u bzhugs so/*. Author: *ye shes dpal ste chos kyi ye shes min nam snyam brtag/*. No. 16736: *Tshad ma rnam*

correspond to No. 16375) indeed includes many references to the second chapter of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, but I describe it, rather, as a kind of summary.<sup>29</sup> However, while the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* names “Ye shes dpal” as the author of No. 16375, No. 13 bears no indication of authorship. As for No. 9 (which I tentatively identify as No. 16376), it is not a commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* but on all three chapters. While the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* offers the hypothesis that the author might be Chos kyi ye shes, a student of Chos kyi bla ma of Ne'u thog, the editors of the KDSB identify the text as a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī. The colophon of No. 9 confirms that the work was composed by “Dza na shri” in Ne'u thog, and provides the full title *Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i ṭikka blo gsal gyi mgul*.

Another tentative identification is for No. 19, listed as a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*Tshad ma rnam nges kyi 'grel pa*) in the KDSB. Its last folio is numbered “64”; the first folio is missing but the signature appears in the top margin of the second folio. The unclear bundle number is reported to be “12” by the KDSB editors, but the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* does not list any item in bundle 12 (though some works from this bundle were preserved at the CPN). On the other hand, one finds a sixty-four-folio manuscript in bundle 15, No. 16358, the title of which is reported to be *Tshad ma rnam nges le'u gsum pa'i 'grel pa zhig*—this corresponds to the colophon of the third chapter in No. 19 (fol. 64a5).

The identification is tentative as well for two works by bCom ldan Ral gri, his commentaries on the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (No. 21) and on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (No. 22a), for which the signature is not visible on the facsimile. For the first, the number of folios suggests that it corresponds to item No. 16395 (signature: *phyi zha 26*) in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. For the second, the number of folios and the title suggest a correspondence with No. 16373 (signature: *phyi zha 21*).

Four epistemological works in the KDSB (Nos. 24–27) are not from the *zha* section of the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*, but from sections *la*, *ma*, and *dza*.<sup>30</sup>

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*par nges pa'i ṭikka las mngon sum le'u bzhugs so/*. Author: *ne'u thog pa chos kyi bla ma'i slob ma chos kyi ye shes yin nam snyam/*.

29 The KDSB editors give to No. 13 the descriptive title *Tshad ma rnam 'grel le'u gsum pa'i rnam bshad*.

30 See nn. 17 and 27.

While some items from the *zha* section were not included in spite of their representing works by bKa' gdams pa scholars (see above), conversely, the editors of the KDSB have included works that were not authored by bKa' gdams pa scholars. Notably, as I have argued elsewhere,<sup>31</sup> the author of No. 29 is not the Blo gros mtshungs med associated with gSang phu monastery, but his namesake, the Sa skya pa Blo gros mtshungs med gNas drug pa (active between 1330 and 1371). This conclusion was based on the fact that the Blo gros mtshungs med who authored No. 29 (writing after bCom ldan Ral gri and Chu mig pa, whom he abundantly refers to) wrote his work in Sa skya; he mentions the Sa skya pa master Phyogs glang gсар ma, and sides with the “followers of the *Rigs gter*” against the “followers of the Summaries.”<sup>32</sup> The question of authors' institutional affiliation should, however, in general be distinguished from that of their philosophical affiliation.

### 2.3 Epistemological works not listed in the '*Bras spungs dkar chag* published in the KDSB

Some items published in the KDSB appear to have been originally part of the '*Bras spungs* collection—they bear a signature characteristic of the manuscripts in the gNas bcu lha khang collection—but are not listed in the '*Bras spungs dkar chag*. Their bundle numbers correspond to bundles that were not at '*Bras spungs* at the time of cataloging at the beginning of the twenty-first century. These are No. 2 (*zha* 43),<sup>33</sup> 10b (*zha* 6), and Nos. 11, 22b and 28 (*zha* 9). They had been kept at the CPN and were returned to various locations.<sup>34</sup> The first was obtained by the KDSB editors from the private collection of gZan dkar Rin po che Thub bstan nyi ma, the third from Zha lu monastery. No. 30 also seems to correspond to the manuscript in 122 folios with the same incipit kept at the CPN (catalog No. 5853(5)) that was described by van der Kuijp.<sup>35</sup>

31 Hugon 2018: 867, n. 36.

32 E.g., fol. 38a5: *yang bsdus pa ba dang rigs gter ba rnams* [...].

33 See n. 16.

34 See van der Kuijp 1994a: 6, about No. 2, which was returned to Se ra; van der Kuijp 1993a: 295–296, about Nos. 10b and 11; van der Kuijp 1993a: 286–289, about No. 28; and van der Kuijp 1994b: 305, about No. 22b.

35 Van der Kuijp 1994a: 21. The colophon on the KDSB facsimile is hardly legible (due to heavy blotting) but seems to correspond to the one transcribed by van der Kuijp. No signature is reported.

The remaining epistemological works published in the KDSB come from rGyal rtse (No. 3) and Otani library in Japan (No. 6).

In total, the four sets of the KDSB contain thirty-nine entries for epistemological works. These represent thirty-seven different manuscripts, for thirty-five distinct works (thirty-six if one considers interlinear annotations such as in No. 24 to constitute a “work”).<sup>36</sup> Only five of these thirty-five works had been published prior to their diffusion through the KDSB: Nos. 2, 6, 22, 23, and 28.<sup>37</sup> Since then, several works have also been published as typeset *dbu can* editions, such as No. 1 in a volume of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab’s works and No. 5 in a volume of Phya pa’s works.<sup>38</sup> A critical edition of No. 21 appeared in van der Kuijp and McKeown 2013.

### 3 Other sources

To the epistemological works published in the KDSB, one should add here three treatises that are relevant for studying Tibetan epistemology

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36 For No. 17, the same manuscript is printed twice, in vols. 46 and 88. For No. 30, the same manuscript is printed twice, in vols. 88 and 112. No. 10 is represented by two different manuscripts (Nos. 10a and 10b), as is No. 22 (Nos. 22a and 22b). In No. 24, which includes an annotated translation of the *Sambandhaparikṣā* and a topical outline of this text, the interlinear notes on the Indian base text were not listed as a distinct work in the Summarizing table. The excerpt from a *Pramāṇaviniścya*-commentary by mKhas pa bSam gtan bzang po of sNar thang added at the end of No. 15 has not be counted either.

37 No. 2 was published on the basis of a manuscript other than the one in the KDSB in *Tshad ma rnam nges kyi dka’ ba’i gnas rnam par bshad pa*, Sun Wenjing (ed.), Xining: Krung go’i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1994. A facsimile of the manuscript of No. 6, reproduced in the KDSB, was published by Rinsen Book Co (Otani University Tibetan Works Series 2), Kyoto, 1989. Nos. 22 and 23 appeared in *Tshad ma sde bdun rgyan gyi me tog*, rDo rje rgyal po (ed.), Beijing: Krung go’i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1991 (see van der Kuijp 1994b). The manuscript used for No. 23 in this publication is different from that published in the KDSB (CPN 4780(2) in eighty-nine folios, incomplete, fols. 13–18 missing). A critical edition of No. 28 appeared in Hugon (ed.) 2004.

38 The reference for the first is: *rNgog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab kyi gsung chos skor*. In *bKa’ gdams dpe dkon gces btus*, vol. 3. dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhig ’jug khang (ed.), Beijing: Krung go’i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009, pp. 545–625. BDRC: W1PD104832. That of the second: Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge, *Phya pa chos kyi seng ge’i gsung gces btus dbu tshad kyi yig cha*, Byang chub ljon bzang, no. 6. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 2012.

in the pre-classical period. The first (No. 36 in the summarizing table) is an epistemological summary published in Chengdu in 2000 as a typeset edition based on two manuscripts, a cursive manuscript from the monastic library of dPal ldan byams 'byor, and a manuscript in capital script from rTse pho brang (i.e., the Potala) reported to be a copy of a manuscript in rDo rje brag monastery in dBus. Its colophon identifies the treatise as a work entitled *Tshad ma'i de kho na nyid bsdu pa* by the rNying ma scholar Klong chen rab 'byams pa (1308–1364). In his introduction to this treatise, van der Kuijp pointed out that this attribution of authorship should not be trusted.<sup>39</sup> The title provided in the colophon as well may be regarded as editorial. The introductory verse of the treatise identifies the work as *Tshad ma'i de nyid rab tu bsdu pa'i brjed byang*. A relative dating for this work can be suggested by considering the author's extensive awareness of the positions of Phya pa and rGya dmar ba, as well as of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab and his disciples, and, in contrast, his complete silence on notable innovations by Phya pa's student gTsang nag pa, and on the criticism of Sa skya Paṇḍita. In a recent article, Jonathan Stoltz has presented convincing arguments for ascribing this work to 'Jad pa gZhon nu byang chub (ca. 1150–1210), whose teacher Byang chub skyabs was a direct student of Phya pa.<sup>40</sup>

The other two works are a summary of epistemology (No. 37) and a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (No. 38) by Dar ma dkon mchog (or Dharmaratna). Van der Kuijp tentatively identifies the author as a native of Phu thang and a disciple of gNyal zhid 'Jam pa'i rdo rje. He was active in Yar lung and mTsho smad temples and wrote in the first or second decade of the thirteenth century. A copy of the ninety-seven-folio summary previously preserved at the CPN (No. 4783(1)), which may also originally be from 'Bras spungs (signature: *phyi zha 17*),<sup>41</sup> can be accessed via BDRC (W26453). Images of the commentary (which also bears a CPN stamp, but no visible signature) are accessible as well via BDRC (WooKG03840).

In addition to these three works, there is an additional work by bCom ldan Ral gri on the *Sambandhaparīkṣā* (No. 39). This work, preserved in

39 See in particular van der Kuijp 2003: 390, 403, 405, 415, and 419.

40 See Stoltz 2020.

41 It was described in van der Kuijp 1993a: Appendix 2, 293–294. See also van der Kuijp 2003.

the gNas bcu lha khang, was not included in the KDSB but appeared in the typeset-format publication of his collected works.<sup>42</sup>

Further works described in van der Kuijp's survey of epistemological works at the CPN<sup>43</sup> will hopefully become available as well in the future, as will the non-bKa' gdams pa epistemological works from 'Bras spungs, and possibly works still preserved at other locations.

#### 4 Some orientation

The limited scope of the present paper and the actual state of research do not allow me to provide extensive details for each work. This section is meant to organize the available information that helps us situate these works chronologically and intellectually in relation to each other, and to single out some remarkable features that should support and facilitate future exploration of this material. Considered below are: the authorship of the works; their genre and format; references to Indian and Tibetan works and thinkers; and their authors' views.

##### 4.1 Authorship

The thirty-five epistemological works in the KDSB are by more than sixteen different authors—fifteen are named in the manuscripts (typically, in the colophon or on the cover page) and one more (the author of No. 28) could be identified by means of external evidence. Accordingly, the dates of the works can be broadly assessed as ranging from the late eleventh century to the fourteenth century, and in at least one case even to the early fifteenth century. Among the authors' names, one recognizes some of the most important figures linked with gSang phu monastery, and the names of some of their students and successors:

- rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), gSang phu's second abbot (Nos. 1, 2)<sup>44</sup>

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42 This short work is entitled *'Brel ba brtag pa rgyan gyi me tog*. It appeared in typeset format in *bCom ldan rigs pa'i ral gri'i gsung 'bum*, 10 vols., Lhasa: Khams sprul bSod nams don grub, 2006, vol. 10, 48–56. The source manuscript could be item No. 19262 in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*.

43 See van der Kuijp 1994a.

44 See van der Kuijp 1983 and Kramer 2007. On his extant epistemological works see Hugon 2014, and the abovementioned website *Gateway to Early Tibetan Scholasticism*.



- Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169), the sixth abbot of gSang phu (Nos. 3, 4, 5)<sup>45</sup>
- gTsang nag pa brTson 'grus seng ge (?–after 1195), one of Phya pa's "Eight Lions" (No. 6)<sup>46</sup>
- mTshur ston gZhon nu seng ge (ca. 1150–1210), a student of gTsang nag pa (No. 28)<sup>47</sup>
- Chu mig pa Seng ge dpal (ca. 1200–1270/1220–1280), another abbot of gSang phu (head of the Upper College from ca. 1235 to 1253) (Nos. 10, 11)<sup>48</sup>

Other figures whose identity is well-known or could be tentatively ascertained are:

- gTsang drug pa rDo rje 'od zer (12th c.), possibly one of the nine spiritual sons of gNyal zhig (No. 20)<sup>49</sup>
- bCom ldan Ral gri (1227–1305), the famous scholar of sNar thang monastery (No. 21–26)<sup>50</sup>
- Rin chen tshul khrims (1297–1368) (No. 27)<sup>51</sup>
- Blo gros mtshungs med (active between 1330 and 1371) (No. 29)<sup>52</sup>
- Ānanda (Tib. \*Kun dga') (1372–1454), who wrote his work based on lectures by Chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (perhaps Bo dong paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal, 1376–1451) and Blo gros chos kyi seng ge (No. 30)<sup>53</sup>

45 See the website *Materials for the Study of Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169)* (<https://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikga/forschung/tibetologie/materialien/materials-for-the-study-of-phy-pa-chos-kyi-seng-ge-1109-1169/>) for a compilation of the available information on Phya pa's life and works and bibliographical resources [accessed: 2.9.2020].

46 See van der Kuijp 1989.

47 See Hugon (ed.) 2004 and, on the question of whether mTshur ston was a student of Phya pa, Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 51–52.

48 These works were briefly introduced in van der Kuijp 1993a: 295–296.

49 See Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 59.

50 See van der Kuijp 1994b and, on No. 21, van der Kuijp and McKeown 2013.

51 According to van der Kuijp 1994a: 27, n. 16, Rin chen tshul khrims could be the thirteenth abbot of the Bye rdzing pa monastic community and teacher of Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361).

52 See above and Hugon 2018: 867, n. 36

53 See van der Kuijp 1994a: 21 and 28, n. 25.

- Zha lu Rin chen bsod nam s 'phel (1361–1438) (No. 35, maybe No. 15)

The identity of the following scholars is yet to be ascertained or explored further:

- gNyag (No. 8)<sup>54</sup>
- Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī (Nos. 8, 9)<sup>55</sup>
- Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (No. 12)<sup>56</sup>
- Sangs rgyas bzang po (No. 16)<sup>57</sup>
- Grags pa rgya mtsho bDe legs 'byung gnas (No. 18)<sup>58</sup>

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54 A study of his short summary, which will include a discussion of its date and authorship, is in preparation.

55 His works were written after 1219 (as he cites the *Rigs gter*) in gSang phu, and post-date Chu mig pa's commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (No. 11). The colophon of his summary (No. 8) indicates that the text was composed in the 54th year of the cycle, which could be 1260, 1320, or 1380 (probably not later).

56 He was writing after 1219 (as he cites the *Rigs gter*) and possibly after 1300 (as he refers to Mokṣākaragupta) in dBen gnas brag dkar. The '*Bras spungs dkar chag* (No. 16315) names him "gSang phu'i gdan rabs sum cu pa Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan." He could have been the abbot of the Lower monastery of gSang phu listed as sMad 24 in Onoda 1989: 210. The "bTsun pa Rin chen bzang po" referred to in the author's colophon of No. 12 could then be the previous abbot (sMad 23) bSam gtan bzang po. In view of the dates of the 30th abbot and the number of years of office indicated for the previous ones, Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan's dates of activity would lie somewhere in the middle of the fourteenth century.

57 Written after 1219 in Brom pa rgyang gi gtsug lag khang chen po. A "gTsang pa Sangs rgyas bzang po" is listed as 29th abbot of the Lower monastery of gSang phu (Onoda 1989: 210).

58 The author wrote after 1219 in Gur thang (maybe for Gung thang?) rtsug lag khang chen. The colophon verses give the alternative name "bDe legs 'byung gnas" for the author, 'Jam dbyangs 'od zer mgon po as the source of the teaching, and the author refers several times to the "Old sGros" (*sgros snying* [for *rnying*]). Kano and I think that this "'Jam dbyangs 'od zer mgon po" could be 'Jam dbyangs Śākya gzhon nu, the eighth abbot of the Lower monastery of gSang phu and founder of Tshal Gung thang monastery, or possibly, "'Jam dbyangs 'od zer mgon po" refers to both the seventh abbot Slob dpon 'Od zer mgon po and the eighth abbot. It is reported that during 'Jam dbyangs Śākya gzhon nu's time as abbot of the sGros seminary of the Lower monastery (ca. 1326), there was a split between the old (*rnying*) and the new (*gsar*). Śākya gzhon nu's oral teachings were taught in "Old sGros" (van der Kuijp 1987: 118). This would place this text in the fourteenth century.

– Chos kyi bzhad pa (No. 33)<sup>59</sup>

The authorship and date of Nos. 14, 15, 17, 19, 31, 32 and 34 remain to be ascertained.

## 4.2 Genre and format

The epistemological works in the KDSB fall, roughly speaking, into two categories: commentaries and summaries.

The first category is considered here in the broad sense of the term, including “classical” linear commentaries, works I have elsewhere called “concise guides” (and that comment on the base text section by section) (*don bsdus*), as well as topical outlines (detailed hierarchical tables of contents of the base text) (*don bsdus/bsdus don*) and more unusual types of explanations that refer to specific passages in a base text, such as the “chains of consequences” in No. 15. A borderline case (because it does not constitute an independent text) are the interlinear annotations attached to the Tibetan translation of the base text in No. 24.

The base text of these commentaries is always an Indian work. In the KDSB sample, it is found to be either the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (thirteen times) or the *Pramāṇavārttika* (twice), the only exceptions being the contributions by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab—who also comments on Dharmottara’s *Nyāyabinduṭīkā* (No. 1)<sup>60</sup>—and bCom ldan Ral gri, whose commentaries also bear on Dignāga’s *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (No. 21), and Dharmakīrti’s *Vādanyāya* (Nos. 25 and 26) and *Sambandhaparīkṣā* (No. 24; see also No. 39). Most commentaries address the complete base text, but sometimes only a specific chapter is commented on—as in No. 31 the third chapter of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* on inference for others, and in No. 32 the first chapter on perception. Some commentaries address only the difficult points (e.g., No. 2), selected issues and/or passages (e.g., No. 15 and No. 35), or a specific topic within a work, as No. 34, which comments on the verses on reflexive awareness in the third chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV 3.485–510).

59 The work is a compendium of a treatise by rDo rje dbang grags written in 1217 or 1277. See Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 60 for some remarks.

60 The KDSB editors mistakenly identify this work as a concise guide on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*tshad ma rnam nges kyi bsdus don*).

What I call here “summaries”—following a widespread English translation for the Tibetan *bsdus pa*, an expression that sometimes occurs in their titles, and by which some of the early ones are commonly referred to in Tibetan literature—are compendia that typically claim to explain the whole range of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti’s thought (i.e., the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, and Dharmakīrti’s works, referred to as “the seven-fold collection”), although, at least in the case of the earliest summaries, they generally rely mainly (if not exclusively) on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*. No. 7, in eight folios, is properly speaking a “summarized” presentation. The other instances are, rather, extensive presentations, i.e., *summæ* rather than summaries.<sup>61</sup>

It appears to have been common for authors to write one work of each of these two genres. The pair “*Pramāṇaviniścaya*-commentary and summary” is extant for Phya pa (Nos. 4 and 5), Chu mig pa (Nos. 10 and 11), Byang chub sems dpa’ Jñānaśrī (Nos. 8 and 9), bCom ldan Ral gri (Nos. 22 and 23) and Dar ma dkon mchog (Nos. 37 and 38), and is reported for Phya pa’s teacher rGya dmar ba as well (*Tho yig* 11809–11810).

The border between the two genres is however somewhat blurred due to the fact that some commentaries also follow a structure of presentation akin to that of summaries and do not explicitly refer to the base text. This is the case for instance for work No. 9 by Jñānaśrī, which, were it not for the explicit statement of the author in his introduction that this work is a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, could be thought to be a summary. The anonymous No. 14, identified with the editorial title “Commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika*” on the cover page, belongs rather to the category of summaries: it does not follow linearly the *Pramāṇavārttika* (nor the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*), but, rather, embarks on a hierarchically structured presentation of valid cognition, which refers extensively to Dharmakīrtian sources and their Indian commentaries, and often also follows the explanations by Sa skya Paṇḍita in his *Rigs gter*, in particular the eighth chapter of that work. Similarly, No. 13, identified in the KDSB with the editorial title “Explanation of the third chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika*,” is also a kind of summary. The author does refer to the third chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika* and Devendrabuddhi’s

61 On the English rendering “summary” see also my remarks in Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 48–50.

commentary, but also refers extensively to the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and Dharmottara's commentary, both being adduced in a general discussion of valid cognition.

The structural format of works I categorized as “summaries” in the Summarizing table varies. A multi-layered, hierarchical structure is well-illustrated in Phya pa's summary (No. 5), and this structure tends to be re-used for instance, in the summaries of Chu mig pa (No. 10), gTsang drug rDo rje (No. 20), mTshur ston (No. 28), Blo gros mtshungs med (No. 29), Chos kyi bzhad pa (No. 33), Dar ma dkon mchog (No. 37), as well as in No. 36 (which is the closest to No. 5 in structure). A chapter-division is sometimes combined with the overall hierarchical structure. Evolution and changes in structure are noticeable and often reflect a difference of interpretation. The similarity of local hierarchical structures in clusters of works suggests intellectual ties between their authors.<sup>62</sup>

In contrast to the hierarchical structuring, the summaries by Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī (No. 8) and Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (No. 12) are both organized according to a division into twenty topics listed at the outset of the work, a list which reminds one of the “lessons” in the compositions of *bsdus grwa*.<sup>63</sup>

i	yul	vi	ldog pa	xi	mtshan	xvi	dam bca'
ii	yul can	vii	spyi	xii	mtshon	xvii	thal 'gyur
iii	'gal ba	viii	bye brag	xiii	rtags	xviii	rgol ba
iv	'brel pa	ix	dgag pa	xiv	sgrub bya	xix	dpang po
v	rdzas	x	bsgrub pa	xv	bsal bya	xx	tshad 'bras

These two works (whose other similarities suggest a connection between their authors) resemble the well-known *Don gnyer mun sel* ascribed to Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419) in their style of presentation, and many of the definitions they provide. In the latter

62 For instance, the similarities between gTsang drug rDo rje's summary (No. 20) and Chu mig pa's (No. 10) could result from their authors being in the same teaching lineage going back to gNyal zhig and Dan bag pa. Chos kyi bzhad pa's summary (No. 33) shares a similar structure and often cites the same Indian sources. See Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 59–60.

63 See Onoda 1992: 61–65.

work, the presentation of “the means of cognizing the object” (*yul rtogs pa'i thabs*) is dealt with by way of eight pairs of topics, including Nos. iii—xii of the above table. The discussion of pairs of topics within a hierarchical structure characterizes the summary by Sangs rgyas bzang po (No. 16). In the second-level subdivision of the overall hierarchical structure, he includes seven pairs, five of which correspond to the numbers iii to xii in the above list of twenty topics, with the addition of two pairs not found in this list (*khyab bya dang khyab byed* and *cig dang tha dad*). bCom ldan Ral dri's summary (No. 23) adopts a division into chapters, among which chapters 4–8 correspond to topics i–xii (dealt with in pairs) in the above list, and chapter 13 corresponds to topic xx.

Works that deal with topical pairs within a hierarchical structure appear to represent an intermediate state between the early summaries (organized hierarchically) and later works of *bsdus grwa* (organized in lessons). One can note that such a format is also attested in an epistemological summary by mKhas grub rje (1385–1438), the *rGyan mun sel*.<sup>64</sup> Earlier yet, the *Rigs gter* of Sa skya Paṇḍita—which Jackson rightly characterized as “a Summary of sorts”<sup>65</sup>—combines a hierarchical structure with chapter divisions that correspond to topical pairs (*spyi/bye brag*, *sgrub pa/gzhan sel*, *brjod bya/rjod byed*, *'brel/'gal*).<sup>66</sup>

One more thing worth mentioning in relation to the format of the works is the syntax of the arguments. Indeed, a number of works resort extensively to the formulation of arguments in the form of argumentation by consequence (... *thal... phyir*) and chains of such arguments, in which features of the initial consequence are examined (namely, the relationship between the subject and the logical reason, pervasion, and the derived conclusion), leading then—if the first two are contested or the third is accepted—to the formulation of subsequent consequences. In spite of the tradition crediting Phya pa with the invention of this technique, it is worth repeating here that it is not illustrated in any of his works.<sup>67</sup> The earliest among the datable works in the corpus instan-

64 See Hugon 2008: 74–75.

65 Jackson 1987: 131. This characterization is backed up by a statement of Śākya mchog ldan, who described the *Rigs gter* as an alternative tradition of epistemological summaries (see Jackson 1987: 172).

66 See Hugon 2008: 111–113.

67 See Hugon 2008: 91–92. Phya pa's system does account for the formulation of *thal... phyir* (or *phyir... thal*) arguments, and Phya pa provides many illustrations

tiating this technique seem to be those of Chu mig pa (Nos. 10, 11).<sup>68</sup> It is also used abundantly in Nos. 16, 17, 19, 27, 29 and 32, and to a lesser extent in Nos. 8 and 9. No. 15 is a commentary entirely formulated in chains of consequences. The use (or not) of the pronoun *khyod* as a variable in these arguments is also a notable feature of some of these works.<sup>69</sup>

### 4.3 Textual background and references

#### 4.3.1 Indian background

The Indian epistemological corpus is unequally represented in the Tibetan texts considered from the perspective of the range of Indian works that were the objects of commentaries, as well as in terms of the range of Indian work referred to and cited in Tibetan treatises. This may be linked to the availability of the translations of particular works (for instance the relatively late translation of works by Jinendrabuddhi or Mokṣākaragupta), but also reflects the importance given to specific works within a given intellectual milieu.

In twelfth-century Tibetan epistemological treatises, such as the works of Phya pa (Nos. 4, 5), gTsang nag pa (No. 6) or mTshur ston (No. 28), references to Dharmakīrti's treatises other than the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and *Pramāṇavārttika* are rare, and, when present, are usually limited to a specific verse, as for instance the initial, programmatic verse of the *Vādanyāya* or occasional references to the *Hetu-bindu*. Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, although a declared principal source of reference, is hardly ever mentioned in early summaries. As

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when classifying such arguments. It is, however, not his favorite way of presenting an argument, and when he does resort to argumentation that draws an absurd consequence from an opponent's position, the argument does not develop into a chain of consequences in the way attested in *bsdus grwa* literature, and now in earlier bKa' gdams pa works. (See the following note for an example that should suffice illustrating what I call here "chain of consequences").

68 See for example in No. 10 (10a, fols. 3b8–4a1; 10b, fol. 3a6–7) the following argument: *ma gzhäl na rjes dpag des chos can snang ba yang dag par na grub pa'i dogs pa tshad mas mi khegs par thal/ snang ba yang dag par na ma grub pa'i yid ma rtogs pa'i phyir/ rtags khas blangs khyab pa tshad ma/ 'dod na snang ba la bden pa'i dogs pa tshad mas mi khegs par thal lo/ 'dod na snang ba brdzun pa sgyu ma lta bur ma rtogs par thal lo// 'dod na rtogs pa nyams so//.*

69 On this feature, characteristic of *bsdus grwa* logic, see Tillemans 1989: 269–273.

for Dharmakīrti's commentators and other Indian scholars, one finds a few references to the positions of Devendrabuddhi, Prajñākaragupta, Vinītadeva and Śāṅkaranandana on specific topics (for instance, on the definition of valid cognition), and more frequently to the views of Dharmottara. In contrast, Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī, writing after Chu mig pa in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, refers extensively in his commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (No. 9) to the views of a large range of Indian scholars, including Dharmottara, Prajñākaragupta, Śāṅkaranandana, Devendrabuddhi, but also Jñānaśrībhadra, Śākyabuddhi, and Jinendrabuddhi. He also refers in his summary (No. 8) to Dharmottara, Devendrabuddhi and Śākyabuddhi, as well as to Mokṣākaragupta (Thar pa 'byung gnas), whose *Tarkabhāṣā* was translated only around 1300 by dPang Blo gros brtan pa (1276–1342). Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan also mentions Mokṣākaragupta (Thar pa 'byung gnas sbas pa) in his summary (No. 12), in the same context as Byang chub sems dpa'. This is a passage about the number of logical reasons qua non-apprehension, in which both authors also mention the count given by Jitāri, an author often mentioned in connection to this issue in early works (such as Phya pa's commentary, No. 4).

Occasional references on isolated issues are not compelling evidence for an author's extensive acquaintance with the work of any Indian author referred to. They could be derived from oral instruction, or textual re-use. These are to be taken with caution when dating a work. For instance, despite the late date of the translation of Mokṣākaragupta's *Tarkabhāṣā* by dPang Lo tsā ba, this work is listed among the Indian works that Sa skya Paṇḍita studied with Indian paṇḍits at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Sa skya Paṇḍita is even reported to have translated this work with Sugataśrī.<sup>70</sup> Works referring to Mokṣākaragupta thus do not necessarily post-date dPang Lo tsā ba's translation. The same caution holds for mentions of the position of Jinendrabuddhi (e.g., in Nos. 9, 14, 29), whose commentary on the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* was also translated by dPang Lo tsā ba at the beginning of the fourteenth century. In contrast to isolated references, the multiple references to Jitāri in Blo gros mtshungs med's text (No. 29) suggest a more extensive knowledge of Jitāri's work(s). Blo gros mtshungs med also stands out in referring a couple of times to Jinamitra's *Nyāyabindupiṇḍārtha*.

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70 See Jackson 1987: 113.



The Indian commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by Jñānaśrībhadrā—translated by the author himself and Khyung po Chos kyi brtson 'grus in the second half of the eleventh century—does not seem to have been known to rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, Phya pa, and gTsang nag pa. On the other hand, it is taken into consideration in the commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by Chu mig pa (No. 11), who also mentions Jñānaśrībhadrā's translation of the base text, and (as mentioned above) in the commentary on the same text by Byang chub sems dpa' (No. 9). The name of Jñānaśrī is also mentioned in No. 18 by Grags pa rgya mtsho (along with Dharmottara and Nor bzangs, fol. 3a1); the author also cites his commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (e.g., fol. 4a4). Jñānaśrī's views are also referred to by Blo gros mtshungs med (No. 29, e.g., fols. 31a7, 40a6, 55b4, 57a3). Not to be confused with Jñānaśrībhadrā, called “Dznya na shri,” and explicitly referred to as the author of a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (on fol. 40a6), Jñānaśrīmitra is also mentioned once in this work as “Dznya na shri mi tri” (sic) (on fol. 33b6). No. 14 also has a reference to Jñānaśrī (fol. 9b3–4).

#### 4.3.2 References to Tibetan scholars

References to other Tibetan scholars is a precious source of information for (at least relatively) dating anonymous works and works of authors whose dates are not known. They also open a window into the views of numerous scholars whose works are not extant, and further our knowledge of the intellectual networks of scholars in the domain of epistemology.

Typically, authors extensively discuss alternative positions before presenting their own view. But this is not an absolute rule. For instance, No. 7 only presents an opposite position once, probably in view of the reduced size of the work. No. 12 limits itself to the presentation of the author's own system, as does (mostly) No. 8.

Contrary to references to the positions of Indian authors, which usually include the mention of their name, sometimes of the title of their work, references to Tibetan scholars are often left unidentified by the author, who introduces them either simply as “someone” (*kha cig*) or with a descriptive expression such as “ancient teachers” (*sngon gyi slob*

*dpon*) or “great being” (*bdag nyid chen po*).<sup>71</sup> The generic expression “upholders of summaries” (*bsdus pa smra ba*) is already attested in the summary of Chu mig pa (No. 10) and of Blo gros mtshungs med (No. 29), who criticizes them (see fol. 15a2–3).

Especially useful are manuscripts bearing interlinear notes identifying the proponents of opposing views (proponents that are otherwise left anonymous by the author), even if such identifications need to be taken with caution.

The names most frequently found in the body of the epistemological works in the KDSB are those of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, Phya pa, and Sa skya Paṇḍita. For instance, No. 17 only names “Lo tsha ba chen po” and “Chos rje Sa paṇ” and refers to a multitude of other positions anonymously. Chu mig pa, in his summary (No. 10), identifies more opponents: rNgog Blo ldan shes rab and Phya pa, but also Khyung, gTsang nag pa, and gNyal zhid. Blo gros mtshungs med (No. 29) identifies in the body of the text Phya pa, Chu mig pa, Sa skya Paṇḍita, ’U yug pa and Phyogs glang gsar ma Byams pa mgon po, whereas the interlinear notes complete many of the other references with the identification “’U yug,” “Byams,” “Ral” (Rigs pa’i ral gri), and “Chu” (Chu mig pa). The author of No. 33 only refers to Phya pa and gTsang nag pa; the interlinear notes additionally provide the names of “Bre” and “g.Yor gnyan.”

The anonymous summary No. 36 is a mine of information about the views of a broad panorama of authors pre-dating and contemporaneous with Phya pa. Particularly often referred to are: rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, rGya dmar ba, Phya pa and Byang chub skyabs. Also mentioned are the views of Jo btsun (= Khyung), Zhang tshes spong, Gangs pa she’u, g.Yor gnyan, Me dig pa, sTag pa, gNyags, Gong bur can and sNa chung ston pa.<sup>72</sup>

bCom ldan Ral gri’s summary (No. 23) also deals with numerous alternative views, but the KDSB manuscript has no interlinear identifications. Those are found, however, in another manuscript of the text preserved at the CPN (No. 4780(2))<sup>73</sup> and nowadays available via BDRC (WooKGo3838).

71 I discuss the question of quotations and identification and the difference between Indian and Tibetan sources in more detail in Hugon 2015.

72 See van der Kuijp 2003: 415–416 and Stoltz 2020.

73 See van der Kuijp 1994b: 305.

The manuscripts of gTsang drug rDo rje's summary (No. 20) and mTshur ston's (No. 28) are the richest in interlinear identifications. In No. 20 (the author of which only names "rGya" in the body of the text), one finds references to several generations of scholars starting with rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, his students Gangs pa she'u, Khyung Rin chen grags, their student rGya/sTod rgya (=rGya dmar ba), rGya's student Phya pa, his students gTsang nag pa and Dan bag pa, and additional figures such as gNyags, sBas dge mthong, Su rgya and rDu. mTshur ston, in No. 28, does not refer to any other Tibetan scholar by name, but the notes identify Lo, rNgog, Gangs pa, Khyung, rGya, rGya grags sod, Jo, gNyags Ye shes 'bar, sTag, Phya, Byang, rTsang (pa), rTsang nag pa, Su rya and U (/rDu?).

Similarly, the numerous views introduced by Dar ma dkon mchog (Nos. 37 and 38) are identified in interlinear notes. Notably, one finds the names of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, Phya pa, rGya dmar ba, rGya grags bsod nams, Khyung po grags se, Dan bag pa, gTsang nag pa, rTsags dbang seng ge, rMa bya, and gNyal zhig.

References to specific Tibetan works' titles are extremely rare. In the corpus considered here, the only instances I could (so far) locate are references to the title of Sa skya Paṇḍita's epistemological work, the *Rigs gter*. References to Sa skya Paṇḍita and/or the *Rigs gter* are an important chronological tip, establishing 1219—the date of the composition of the *Rigs gter*<sup>74</sup>—as a *terminus a quo* for the writing of the works concerned. One can note that works post-dating the *Rigs gter* are also the ones in which one finds references to Jñānaśrībhadrā, Jinendrabuddhi, and Mokṣākaragupta. I could (so far) identify references to the *Rigs gter* and/or its author in No. 8 (e.g., fol. 15b4), No. 9 (e.g., fol. 88a8), No. 12 (e.g., fol. 3a5–6), No. 13 (e.g., fols. 80a9 and 80b8), No. 14 (numerous references to verses and auto-commentary, *passim*), No. 16 (e.g., fols. 10a9 and 23b8), No. 17 (e.g., fols. 3b3, 7a2, 13b1, 19a9), No. 18 (e.g., fols. 2b7 and 4b1). Some of the references to the *Rigs gter* on given topics are shared by several texts (suggesting some degree of relation between their authors). Notably, the same verse from the *Rigs gter* (on the ascertainment of validity) is cited in Nos. 12, 14 and 18.

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74 See n. 2.

#### 4.4 Views

The available works offer a broad panorama of positions, largely illustrating the notion of “hermeneutic flexibility” which van der Kuijp associated with Tibetan epistemological literature.<sup>75</sup> Typically, these views are articulated around the definitions of key notions. Some works in the corpus, such as No. 8 and No. 12, consist in compilations of definitions and typologies. This makes definitions and typologies an attractive starting point for mapping works in terms of their authors sharing or not the same definitions and typologies, and to a further degree, sharing or not a position on a given topic.

One difficulty in doing so is that differences may appear at times to surpass similarities, and that authors positioning themselves against opposing positions—refuting opposing positions, presenting their own, and defending it against actual or potential objections—tend to do so in the same way, whether the difference is a matter of detail or reveals a profound divergence of interpretation. We may pick out, for our mapping, features that appear relevant to us, though it may not be obvious what the philosophical weight of the variations might have been at the time the text was composed. One can, in addition to pure questions of interpretation, surmise that personal rivalries, and perhaps in some cases institutional rivalries, were involved in arguments against opposing positions, as can be seen by the occasional use of some particularly virulent expressions used in reference to opponents, or, on the contrary, particularly laudatory references to the scholars being cited.<sup>76</sup>

Another difficulty, when dealing with selected features, is the risk of setting apart authors who concur in the general lines, or, on the contrary, of focusing on similarities that veil important distinctions.

A well-known illustration of the first phenomenon is found in the Tibetan tradition itself (and Western scholarship in its wake) in regard to

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75 Van der Kuijp 2003: 406.

76 For instance, Phya pa refers in his summary (No. 5) to the upholder of a given view as “Someone who boasts about being the best although his intelligence is small” (fol. 27b2: *blo chung ngur gyur kyang mchog du rlom pa kha cig*) (the reference could be to Me dig pa, who is identified in No. 36, p. 89, as being the upholder of that view). In contrast, in No. 14, Sa skya Paṇḍita is referred to as “the great paṇḍit, the lord, the crown jewel of Tibet’s experts (fol. 16b7: *gangs can mkha pa’i gtsug rgyang chos rjes paṇḍita chen po*).

the conception of the *rngog lugs* and the *sa lugs* as two antagonistic epistemological traditions.<sup>77</sup> This construction follows Sa skya Paṇḍita's criticism of his predecessors, which, strategically, suggests that all of his predecessors partake in the same mainstream system, and that they are refuted on all points. It is well attested in Blo gros mtshungs med's summary (No. 29), which opposes "followers of the Summaries" and "followers of the *Rigs gter*," and in the commentarial literature on the *Rigs gter*. Such a construct veils the fact that Sa skya Paṇḍita integrated in great part in his system the contributions of his predecessors—something that his commentators usually gloss over, Śākya mchog ldan constituting an exception, as he points out those topics on which Sa skya Paṇḍita follows Phya pa's system.<sup>78</sup> In addition, if this split had become well-established by the fifteenth century,<sup>79</sup> a cursory look at those KDSB works that refer to the *Rigs gter* shows that it was not entirely representative of the reception of Sa skya Paṇḍita's work in the thirteenth/fourteenth century. Sa skya Paṇḍita's own views are indeed found as part of the "positions to be refuted" in the Summary of Sangs rgyas bzang po (No. 16)<sup>80</sup>; and in No. 17, the author rejects a view ascribed to both rNgog Blo ldan shes rab and Sa skya Paṇḍita in the "refutation (of other views)" section (fol. 7a2). Some authors also acknowledge and reject Sa skya Paṇḍita's criticism of previous positions. (Elsewhere, I have argued this to be the case for instance in the summary of Chu mig pa (No. 10), whose author does not however refer to Sa skya Paṇḍita explicitly.<sup>81</sup>) However, Sa skya Paṇḍita is often found in the KDSB corpus to be cited in support of the author's own view. For instance, the verses on the ascertainment of validity from the *Rigs gter* are cited in No. 12, 14

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77 These two systems are notably distinguished by gSer mdog Paṇ chen (see van der Kuijp 1983: 5 and chapter 1). The term "*rngog lugs*" refers to the tradition of epistemology initiated by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, "*sa lugs*" to that going back to Sa skya Paṇḍita. These two systems vary considerably in their interpretation of Dharmakīrti although they have a considerable overlap.

78 See Hugon 2008: 115, n. 70.

79 See Dreyfus 1997: Introduction II and Dreyfus 1999.

80 The "partisans of the *Rigs gter*" (*rigs gter ba*) are mentioned when refuting other views (*gzhan lugs dgag pa*) on the definition of a definiens (f. 23b8), and the author subscribes to a view that corresponds to that of Phya pa.

81 See for instance Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 233. Van der Kuijp (2019: 314) reports rGyal tshab's defense of Sa skya Paṇḍita against a criticism by Chu mig pa.

and 18. No. 14 makes constant references to the *Rigs gter's* verses and the auto-commentary. Further analysis of the contents of these works will be necessary to ascertain to what extent their authors side with Sa skya Paṇḍita. Such works may suggest an environment in which the *rngog lugs/sa lugs* divide had not yet become a standard model, and Sa skya Paṇḍita was considered just another influential scholar of epistemology, independently of issues of institutional affiliation.

While systematic positioning against alternative positions highlights the individuality of each author, there is also a large degree of agreement among thinkers, which stands out in the phenomenon of textual re-use and the adoption of similar formats of presentation (or the re-use of hierarchical structures), and in their concurring on definitions and typologies. The notion of a “shared system” could be constructed by being based either on the consideration of “family resemblances” across texts, or through comparing elements to a central point of reference (such as Phya pa’s system) so as to elaborate a category containing more or less peripheral elements.

The fivefold typology of invalid cognitions—cognitions that do not qualify as valid cognition (*tshad ma*)—could be considered an element of such a “shared system.” Found at the earliest in the works of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (Nos. 1, 2), the fivefold typology is attested in the works of Phya pa (Nos. 4, 5), gTsang nag pa (No. 6), Chu mig pa (Nos. 10, 11), gTsang drug rDo rje (No. 20), mTshur ston (No. 28), Chos kyi bzhad pa (No. 33), Dar ma dkon mchog (No. 37) and in No. 36.<sup>82</sup> It is sharply criticized by Sa skya Paṇḍita, who ascribes it to “most Tibetans” (*bod phal cher*). However, a fine-grain analysis of the various accounts of the fivefold typology discloses numerous differences regarding the definition adopted for each type and the inclusion of specific sorts of mental events in some categories. There are also some terminological (and orthographical) differences pertaining to the key terms in the typology.<sup>83</sup> In some cases, notably when comparing rNgog Blo ldan shes rab and

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82 See Hugon and Stoltz 2019 for a detailed discussion of Phya pa’s position and consideration of alternative views in these other works.

83 See Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 273–281, which lists the terminological variants in a selection of early epistemological works and distinguishes, for each type, several groups of definitions that, even if their formulation differs, involve the same defining criteria.

Phya pa, the shared adoption of a fivefold typology of invalid cognition should not obscure a major difference regarding their definition of valid cognition and the model of perceptual knowledge that they advocate.<sup>84</sup>

## Conclusion

bCom ldan Ral gri writes at the end of his short survey of the Indian epistemological tradition that “logical treatises composed by Tibetans are innumerable.”<sup>85</sup> Clearly, the material available nowadays is but the tip of the iceberg of Tibetan contributions to the field of epistemology in the pre-classical and the beginning of the classical period.

The first studies taking advantage of this new material have already amply demonstrated to what extent access to first-hand sources allows us to shed a completely new light on the Tibetan epistemological tradition. Yet, a good number of the extant bKa’ gdams pa works still awaits further investigation of their contents, authorship, date, and relationship with other works. This is greatly facilitated when full searchable versions of the texts are available. An important growing resource in this regard is the website of Prof. Yoichi Fukuda, *Online Search System on Logical Works in the Pre-Gelug pa Period*,<sup>86</sup> where many complete e-texts from the corpus dealt with in this paper are available for download and can be searched individually or collectively.<sup>87</sup> More details about the manuscript exemplars themselves, outlines of the texts, bibliographical resources, as well as additional e-texts and the translation of excerpts are in the process of being included in the descriptive catalog of the KDSB as part of the *Gateway to Early Tibetan Scholasticism* project.<sup>88</sup>

A more substantial exploration of the works’ contents will hopefully soon enable the establishment of intellectual profiles of their authors (collections of the definitions they adopt for key concepts, and

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84 See Hugon and Stoltz 2019: 92–100.

85 *Phyi nang gi rtog ge tshad ma’i bstan bcos ji ltar byung ba’i tshul*, KDSB 3, vol. 62, pp. 775–780. Fol. 2b7: *bod rnams kyis byas pa’i rtog ge’i bstan bcos la grang med do//*.

86 See <https://tibetan-studies.net/tiblogsearch/index.cgi> [accessed 2.9.2020].

87 Available on that website at the time of writing are the e-texts of Nos. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 33, 36.

88 See the URL provided in n. 24 above.

the positions they adopt on debated topics), through which the affinities, continuities and divergences between the thinkers represented in the corpus will stand out more clearly, as will their relationship with the epistemological treatises of the classical and post-classical period.

I hope that the present survey, in spite of its limited scope, will provide, if not a roadmap, at least an incentive for researchers to engage further, and on a broader scale, in the exploration of this fascinating material.

### Summarizing table

- The numbers in the first column are editorial and are used to refer to the works in the body of the article. The ordering of the works mostly follows their location in the KDSB, except for some authors whose works appeared in distinct sets.
- Titles are partly from the KDSB table of contents, partly editorial.
- [signature] indicates a signature (or part of a signature) that is unclear or not visible on the facsimile copy but is reported by the KDSB editors or in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* for the text assumed to correspond.
- Numbers under “Source” refer to the item number in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag* (in parentheses when the identification is uncertain) unless indicated otherwise. I report in footnotes information from colophons regarding the place of composition of the text or copy.
- Under “Genre,” S refers to a summary, “-c” to a commentary. Parentheses indicate a tentative categorization (see the section 4.2 in the article).



	Vol., p.	Fols. <sup>89</sup>	Title	Author	Date	Signature	Source	Genre
1	1, 369–409	21	<i>Rigs thigs 'grel don bsdus</i>	rNog Blo ldan shes rab	1059–1109	<i>phyi zha 21</i>	16371; rGyal rtse	NBT-c
2	1, 419– 682(706)	132 <sup>90</sup>	<i>Tshad ma rnam nges kyi 'grel ba</i>	rNog Blo ldan shes rab	1059–1109	<i>phyi zha 43</i> <sup>91</sup>	CPN 5139(1); Se ra	PVin-c
3	8, 3–28	13	<i>Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i bsdus don</i>	Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge	1109–1169		rGyal rtse	PVin-c
4	8, 35–427	197	<i>Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i 'grel ba</i>	Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge	1109–1169	<i>phyi zha 11</i>	16330	PVin-c
5	8, 434–626	97 <sup>92</sup>	<i>Tshad ma yid kyi mun sel</i>	Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge	1109–1169	<i>phyi zha 11</i>	16329 <sup>93</sup>	S

89 Given in this column is the number of extant folios. Additional details are provided in the footnotes.

90 The last portion of the manuscript is lacking; typeset pages based on another manuscript have been added by the editors. Folios 85 and 86 are on the same page. Folio 107 appears twice, with the specifications *gong ma* and *'og ma* respectively.

91 The first digit of the bundle number is slightly unclear on the KDSB facsimile, but I read “43” rather than “83” (as reported in van der Kuip 1994a: 6).

92 The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* reports 96 folios. Last folio number: 96. There is however an additional folio between fol. 27 and fol. 28, numbered *nyer bryad gong ma*.

93 Colophon information: *bri'u las gtsug lha khang du bris*.

6	13, 13–434	210+1	<i>Tshad ma rnam nges kyi 'greI ba</i>	gTsang nag pa brTson 'grus seng ge	?-after 1195		Otani	PVin-c
7	44, 199–214	8	<i>Tshad ma'i spyi skad bsdus pa</i>	gNyang		<i>phyi zha 45</i>	16463	S
8	44, 217–247	16	<i>Rig pa'i snying po de kho na nyid bsdus pa gsal byed nyi ma'i 'od</i>	Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī	13th or 14th c. >1219 >1300? 54th year of the cycle <sup>94</sup>	[ <i>phyi zha 2</i> ]	16314 <sup>95</sup>	S
9	44, 253–456	102 <sup>96</sup>	<i>Tshad ma rnam nges kyi fīkka blo gsal mgul rgyan</i>	Byang chub sems dpa' Jñānaśrī	13th or 14th c. >1219, and after No. 11	[ <i>phyi zha 21</i> ]	(16376) <sup>97</sup>	PVin-c

<sup>94</sup> I.e., 1260/1320/1380...?

<sup>95</sup> Colophon information: *dpaI ldan gsang phu'i chos grwar sbyar ba*.

<sup>96</sup> Last folio number: 102 (not legible, but *brgya 1* is legible on the previous folio). First folio missing. There are two consecutive folios numbered 35 between fols. 34 and 36.

<sup>97</sup> Colophon information: *gsang phu ne'u thog du sbyar ba*.

10a	45, 11–161	76 <sup>98</sup>	<i>Tshad ma sde bdun gyi don phyogs gcig tu bs-dus pa</i>	Chu mig pa Seng ge dpal	ca. 1200–1270/ 1220–1280	<i>phyi zha 15</i>  <i>[phyi zha 9]</i>	16362 <sup>99</sup>  CPN 4827(1) <sup>100</sup>	S
10b	87, 314–448	68						
11	87, 11–307	149 <sup>101</sup>	<i>Tshad ma rnam nges 'grel</i>	Chu mig pa Seng ge dpal	ca. 1200–1270/ 1220–1280	<i>phyi zha 9</i>	CPN 4827(4); Thub bstan nyid ma <sup>102</sup>	PVin-c
12	45, 165–181	9	<i>Tshad ma'i mtshan nyid bsdus pa rigs pa'i sgo 'byed</i>	Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan	Mid-14th c.? >1219 >1300?	<i>phyi zha 2</i>	16315 <sup>103</sup>	S

98 The 'Bras-spungs dkar chag reports 777 folios (probably a typo for 77). Last folio number: 77. Folios 58 and 59 are regrouped on the same folio.

99 Colophon information: *gsang phu ne'u thog gi gtsug lag khang du legs par brtsams; dpal rtse dkar gyi gtsug lag khang du yi ger bkod pa.*

100 Colophon information, see n. 99.

101 Last folio is number: 152. Two folios are missing (fols. 12 and 13) and the image of fols. 75b and 89a is lacking in the KDSB copy but can be found in another set of images of the same manuscript (BDR: W1CZ2.15S), in which fols. 12 and 13 are also missing.

102 Colophon information: *chen po'i pho brang dge ba'i gnas; gsang phu ne'u thog gi gtsug lag khang du brtsams; yar lungs khra 'brug gi gtsug lag khang du yi ger bkod pa.*

103 Colophon information: *dben gnas brag dkar du sbyar ba.*

13	45, 191–254	32 <sup>104</sup>	Tshad ma rnam 'grel le'u gsum pa'i rnam bshad	- <sup>105</sup>	>1219	phyi zha 21	(16375)	(S)
14	45, 261–525	133 <sup>106</sup>	Tshad ma rnam 'grel rnam par 'byed pa	-	>1219 >1300?	phyi zha 2	16313	(S)
15	46, 7–25	10	Thal phreng mdor bsdu pa <sup>107</sup>	-	14th c.?	[phyi zha 45]	16469	PVin-c
16	46, 33–115	42 <sup>108</sup>	Lags par bshad pa'i gter mdzod blo gsal yid la dga' ba ster byed	Sangs rgyas bzang po	>1219	phyi zha [2/8] <sup>109</sup>	16316 <sup>110</sup>	S

104 The 'Bras spungs dkar chag reports 106 folios. Last folio number: 106. In the KDSB 32 folios are printed, starting with a cover page with the signature and on the verso (?), a portion of text that does not seem to represent the beginning of the work. The second available folio is numbered "76."

105 'Bras spungs dkar chag: ye shes dpal te chos kyi ye shes min nam sryam brtag/. No author's name is found in the manuscript.

106 The 'Bras spungs dkar chag reports 123 folios.

107 The text ends on fol. 9a2 with a verse of dedication to the recipient of the work, bSod nams rgya mtsho. It is followed by an addition that, according to the colophon on fol. 10a4, consists in an excerpt from a *Pramāṇaviniscaya*-commentary by mKhas pa bSam gtan bzang po of sNar thang. The latter could be bCom ldan Ral gri's student and biographer. The addition and the preceding work could then be dated to the late thirteenth or fourteenth century, or later.

108 Last folio number: 46. Four folios missing: 12, 13, 14, 44.

109 Signature "phyi zha 8" according to the editors of the KDSB, "phyi zha 2" according to the 'Bras spungs dkar chag. Number not visible on the first folio.

110 Colophon information: *brom pa rgyang gi gtsug lag bkhang chen por nye bar sbyar ba*. Read *khang* for *bkhang*. "Brom pa rgyang" might be (s)Grom pa rgyang in gTsang.

17	46, 123–215 = 88, 220– 311	47 <sup>111</sup>	Tshad ma'i legs bshad dri med bcud kyi bdud rtsi	-	>1219	phyi zha 15 <sup>112</sup>	16359	S
18	46, 225–399	88 <sup>113</sup>	Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i sbyor 'phreng yid bzhin nor bu	Grags pa rgya mt- sho bde legs 'byung gnaas	14th c. (?) >1219	phyi zha 6	16322 <sup>114</sup>	PVin-c
19	46, 405–520	58 <sup>115</sup>	Tshad ma rnam nges kyi 'grel ba	-		[phyi zha 15] <sup>116</sup>	(16358)	PVin-c
20	47, 11–165	78	Rigs pa'i gsal byed sgron ma	gTsang drug pa rDo rje 'od zer	12th c.	phyi zha 31	16412	S
21	53, 445–527	42	Tshad ma kun btus rgyan gyi me tog	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	[phyi zha 26]	(16395)	PS-c

111 Image of fol. 33a missing in volume 88, but present in volume 46.

112 The syllable *phyi* is not visible on the image in vol. 46.

113 The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* reports 89 folios. Last folio number: 89. One folio missing: 45.

114 Colophon in information: *gur thang rtsug lag khang chen 'di sbyar rdzogs*. Large spaces are found between the syllables "*khang chen*" "*'di sbyar*" and "*rdzogs*." One would expect to read "...*chen du*." "*Gur thang*" might be a mistake for *Gung thang*.

115 The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* reports 64 folios. Last folio number: 64. Six missing folios: 1, 11, 12, 16, 25, 49.

116 The KDSB editors report the unclear bundle number to be "12." There are no texts from this bundle listed in the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. One could rather read "15" and the work might correspond to No. 16358 in bundle 15.

22a	54, 9–323	158	<i>Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i tikkka rgyan gyi me tog</i>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	[ <i>phyi zha 21</i> ]	(16373)	PVin-c
22b	62, 449–743	148 <sup>117</sup>				<i>phyi zha 9</i>	CPN 4827(2)	
23	54, 329–515	94 <sup>118</sup>	<i>Tshad ma'i bstan bcos sde bdun rgyan gyi me tog</i>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	<i>phyi zha 44</i>	16461 <sup>119</sup>	S
24	55, 5–12	4	' <i>Brel ba brtag pa'i rab tu 'byed pa mchan dang sa bcad</i> <sup>120</sup>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	<i>phyi la 50</i> [1]	19282	SP-c

117 148 folios are extant (as indicated on the cover page). Last folio number: 152. The scribe skipped “5” when numbering the folios. Fols. 71 and 72 occur on the same page, so do fols. 84 and 85 and fols. 147 and 148. Another manuscript of this work with a different number of folios is described in van der Kuijp 1994b: 6. CPN No. 5148(10) in 131 or 121 folios, signature *phyi zha 36*. Yet another 126-folio manuscript bearing a CPN stamp is available via BDRC: W11848, signature *phyi zha 5*.

118 The *Bras spungs dkar chag* reports 98 folios. Last folio number: 98. The scribe skipped “4” when numbering the folios. One folio missing: 93. Fols. 36 and 37 are grouped together on the same page, as well as 41 and 42.

119 Colophon information: *gtsang rung lhag gi snying po dpal me tog mdangs ldan gyi dgon par sbyar pa*.  
120 Although counted here as one item, this manuscript includes two components (this is reflected in the editorial title in KDSB *dkar chag*: '*Brel pa brtag pa'i mchan dang sa bcad gnyis*): first, the Tibetan translation of the SP, with interlinear annotations by bCom ldan Ral gri (according to a note reading '*Brel pa brtag pa'i chan bu dpal ldan ral gris bkod*') up to fol. 4b1, followed by a topical outline of the SP ('*Brel pa brtag pa'i don legs par bsadus pa*) by bCom ldan Ral gri on fol. 4b2–5. The author is identified as Dharmakirti in the '*Bras spungs dkar chag*. In contrast, what appears to be another exemplar with the same contents listed as No. 16382 in the *zha* section is ascribed to dGe slong Dar ma rin chen. Since the annotations do not constitute an independent text, they have not been given a separate number in this Summarizing table.

25	55, 13–25	7	<i>rTsoḍ pa rigs pa'i bsdus don</i>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	<i>phyi ma</i> 599	10493	VN-c
26	55, 33–177	73	<i>rTsoḍ rigs rgyan gyi me tog</i>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	<i>phyi ma</i> 599	10496	VN-c
27	81, 427–621	98 <sup>121</sup>	<i>'Grel bshad kun las btus pa'i snying po nyi ma'i 'od zer gyi snang ba</i>	Rin chen tshul khrim	1297–1368	<i>phyi dza</i> 8	16068 <sup>122</sup>	PVin-c
28	87, 450–582	67	<i>Shes rab sgron ma</i>	[mTshur ston gZhon nu seng ge]	ca. 1150–1210	[ <i>phyi zha</i> 9]	CPN 4827(S); Zha lu	S
29	87, 586–707	61	<i>Tshad ma'i don bsdus pa</i>	Blo gros mtshungs med	active between 1330 and 1371	[ <i>phyi zha</i> 6]	16323 <sup>123</sup>	S
30	88, 7–219 = 112, 209–454	107/ 122 <sup>124</sup>	<i>Tshad ma rnam 'grel gsal bar byed pa'i zin bris legs par bshad pa'i rin po che'i snying po</i>	Ānanda (?)	1372–1454		CPN 5853(S); sphyi tshogs thog nas dpe rnyed son byung ba	PV-c

121 The *'Bras spungs dkar chag* reports 100 folios. Last folio number: 100. Two missing folios: 6, 7. Image of fol. 85b blank in the BDRC PDF.

122 Colophon information: *ne'u thog gi chos sgra chen por sbyar ba*.

123 Colophon information: *dpal sa skya gtsug lag khang du legs par sbyar ba*.

124 The copy in vol. 112 has twenty-three more pages than that in vol. 88, where fols. 49, 76–90, and 95b are missing.

31	88, 312–376	34 <sup>125</sup>	<i>gTan tshigs tshul gsum gyi zin bris</i>	-		<i>phyi zha 21</i>	16378	PVin-c
32	88, 377–435	30	<i>mNgon sum le 'u' i 'grel pa slob ma' i yid 'phrog</i>	-		<i>phyi zha 23</i>	16383	PVin-c
33	88, 436–476	21	<i>Tshad ma' i de kho nyid bsodus pa nye bar bsodus pa</i>	Chos kyi bzhad pa	13th c. >1217 or 1277	<i>phyi zha 31</i>	16419	S
34	88, 542–555	7 <sup>126</sup>	<i>Tshad ma rang rig gi sgrub tshul</i>	-		<i>phyi zha 23</i>	16380	PV-c
35	88, 504–523	10	<i>bsDus chos nor bu' i phreng ba</i>	Zha lu Rin chen bsod nams 'phel	1428	<i>phyi zha 45</i>	16468	(S)

125 The 'Bras spungs dkar chag reports 79 folios. Only the first 34 folios are reproduced in KDSB.

126 The 'Bras spungs dkar chag reports 9 folios. I take *nang rig* in the title reported in the 'Bras spungs dkar chag to be a typo for *rang rig*.



Sources external to the KDSB							
36	364 pp.	<i>Tshad ma'i de kho na nyid bsdus pa</i>	[Jad pa gzhon nu byang chub] (mis- taken attribution to Klong chen rab 'byams pa)	ca. 1150– 1210		dPal ldan byams 'byor / rTse pho brang (← dBus rDo rje brag)	S
37	97ff.	<i>rTog ge rigs pa'i rgyan gyi snying po</i>	Dar ma dkon mchog	13th c.	<i>phyi zha 17</i>	CPN 4783(1)	S
38	180ff.	<i>Tshad ma nam par nges pa'i ti ka rigs pa'i rgyan gyi snying po</i>	Dar ma dkon mchog	13th c.		(CPN)	PVin-c
39	4ff.	<i>'Brel ba brtag pa rgyan gyi me tog</i>	bCom ldan Ral gri	1227–1305	<i>(phyi la 501)</i>	(19262)	SP-c

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**A Critical Edition of Ratnākaraśānti's *Muktāvalī Hevajrapañjikā*:  
Commentary on *Hevajratantra* I.i.1–12 \***

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**Introduction**

I owe David Jackson much: first of all for being an excellent, most pleasant, colleague during the years that we both taught in Hamburg, and secondly for his writings, from which I have benefited greatly. Among those writings, his book of 1994, *Enlightenment by a Single Means*, in which Ratnākaraśānti figures importantly, has a special place for me. It is with gratitude and affection that I offer in his honour this first specimen of what will eventually be, I hope, a critical edition of the entirety of Ratnākaraśānti's commentary on the *Hevajratantra*, the *Muktāvalī*—another work which has a special place for me, and which I regard as its author's most important.

The Sanskrit text of the *Muktāvalī* has thus far been published once, in 2001, edited by Ram Shankar Tripathi and Thakur Sain Negi; this edition is referred to below with the siglum  $E_{TN}$ . An *editio princeps* of a rich and learned work which deals with difficult and in part truly esoteric subjects is a very challenging task; I would like to state my admiration of Tripathi and Negi for having undertaken to edit the *Muktāvalī*, thereby making it feasible for many to read the *Muktāvalī* in its Sanskrit original.

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\* I am grateful to Torsten Gerloff, Shanshan Jia and Francesco Sferra for reading through a draft of this article and making numerous suggestions for its improvement. I remain indebted to the institutions and individuals who, decades ago already, made it possible for me to consult the manuscripts on which my edition is based: the National Archives of Nepal, the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Tokyo University Library, Prof. Dr. Albrecht Wezler, and Prof. Dr. Minoru Hara. [Since the edition and notes were prepared by the author with LaTeX, the layout of these parts differs from the rest of the Festschrift (The Editors).]

It is possible, nonetheless, to improve on the *editio princeps*. Such a thing is theoretically always possible; no editor(s) should expect (and in my view none ought to hope) that his/her/their work will not be improved on. No new manuscript material of the *Muktāvalī*, not known to Tripathi and Negi, has become available; but with more careful consultation of the evidence of the most important manuscripts (the palm-leaf ones), and with more thorough use of the evidence of parallels and of the Tibetan translation, numerous significant improvements on the *editio princeps* are possible. The specimen here presented, a new critical edition of the opening of the commentary,<sup>1</sup> together with the annotation, to demonstrate this.

A thorough account of the manuscripts of the *Muktāvalī*, and discussion of their relationship, must be reserved for another occasion. Some things should however be said here, briefly, concerning the manuscripts, concerning what is stated in E<sub>TN</sub> about them, and concerning how the editors have used them.

Five manuscripts (though as we will see shortly, they could also be counted as four) of the *Muktāvalī* are known to me at present. All were known to and were, as they tell us, used by Tripathi and Negi as well. Three of them (which might be counted as two) are palm-leaf manuscripts; two are paper apographs of two of those palm-leaf manuscripts.

Of the palm-leaf manuscripts, one is in the National Archives, Kathmandu (NAKMS 4–19, microfilmed by the NGMPP on reel A 994/6, retake on reel A 1267/7); one is a manuscript microfilmed by the NGMPP (on reel E 260/2) on June 16th, 1977, at which time it was in a private collection in Kathmandu;<sup>2</sup> and one is in the library of Tokyo University (MS 513). My sigla for these manuscripts are, respectively, A, B, and C; E<sub>TN</sub>'s are, respectively, *kha*, *gha*, and *ña*.

1 The portion here included covers up to the end of the commentary on *Hevajratantra* I.i.12 (I follow in this paper the numbering for the *Hevajratantra* given in the *editio princeps* by Snellgrove, which has been adopted also in E<sub>TN</sub>). Note that what E<sub>TN</sub> prints on p. 16 as the final three sentences of the commentary on I.i.12 (*tad evam utpannakramapakṣe ... tasyādhāraṇḍalam*) I take rather as the beginning of the *avataraṇikā* to I.i.13, and hence do not include here.

2 The NGMPP card records as 'Place of Deposit' Santa Ratna Bajracarya. I am not aware of the present location of the manuscript.



In fact, however, B and C, both of which are very incomplete, form two parts of what was once a single manuscript. This is quite clear, though it can be a little hard to see it immediately (mainly, I think, because the available photographs of B are rather poor). As a single piece of evidence—there is more—let me adduce the fact that the text on f. 32r of B continues precisely where the text on f. 31v of C breaks off.<sup>3</sup>

It is not entirely clear to me whether Tripathi and Negi recognized that B and C are two parts of a single manuscript. Against such a recognition speaks, clearly, the fact that they describe B (their *gha*) both on p. x and on p. 70 as written in *prācīna nevēri* script, while they describe in the same places C (their *na*) as written in *maithilī* script.<sup>4</sup> In favor of it is the frequent, though not absolutely consistent, reference in the critical apparatus of  $E_{TN}$  to C and its readings with the siglum *gha*, the siglum for B.<sup>5</sup>

The two paper manuscripts, recent apographs, are: National Archives, Kathmandu, MS 5–98, microfilmed on NGMPP reel A 135/12, an apograph of A (i.e. of  $E_{TN}$ 's *kha*), and Oriental Institute, Baroda, MS 13275, an apograph of B (i.e. of  $E_{TN}$ 's *gha*). For the first of these,  $E_{TN}$ 's siglum is *ka*; for the second it is *ga*. Incidentally, although it seems to me that anyone working closely with the manuscripts can hardly fail to observe that Tripathi and Negi's *ka* is an apograph of their *kha*, and that their *ga* is an apograph of their *gha*, they do not appear to have pointed this out explicitly. In fact, as far as I can see they say nothing at all about the relationship between the manuscripts of the *Muktāvalī*.<sup>6</sup>

3 Namely after *dvāv eva kālau tau* in the commentary on HeTa I.vii.23,  $E_{TN}$  p. 72.

4 As is perhaps almost needless to say, in my judgement the script (for which Old Bengali would be my preferred appellation) and ductus of B and C are identical.

5 For example, where the first folio that survives in C begins, Tripathi and Negi have a note (n. 8 on p. 7) which reads *itaḥ 'gha' — pāṇḍulipiḥ prārabhyate*. This in spite of the fact that the testimony of *gha* had been quoted regularly before this in the critical apparatus; there, however, it was B instead of C that was being so designated.

6 There are some other problems and oddities in the account(s) of the manuscripts given by Tripathi and Negi. Again, a fuller discussion must be postponed, but here are a few observations. There are two places where the editors list and provide some information about the manuscripts of the *Muktāvalī*: p. x and pp. 70–71. At the first of these two places, alone, they tell us what sigla have been assigned to the manuscripts. In the second of the two places, the same NGMPP

Now an examination of the manuscripts, of the *editio princeps*, and of the readings that the *editio princeps* attributes to the manuscripts, shows that the editors have not read the palm-leaf manuscripts with great care. Instead, it seems to me, they have in fact mainly relied for their constituted text on the apograph of A.<sup>7</sup> That apograph is a rather good one; but nonetheless the scribe has sometimes misread the palm-leaf exemplar. Several of those misreadings have not been detected by Tripathi and Negi and have found their way into the edited text. Some examples are pointed out in the annotation below; see, for instance, the notes *o*, *r*, *av*, *bb*, *bh*, and *bj*.

The over-reliance on the apograph of A which can be detected in  $E_{TN}$  is a weakness not only because the scribe of the apograph misread his exemplar a number of times. The palm-leaf manuscript A itself, though good, is, in my judgement, not quite as good as the other palm-leaf manuscript of which two parts are preserved to us as B and C. Many excellent readings of B or C have not been noticed at all, it appears, by the editors; others have been recorded but not adopted though arguably (and sometimes quite certainly) superior to the A readings which have been preferred.

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reel-number, A 135/12, is given for two different manuscripts, one of which (NAK 5–98, which is the manuscript that indeed is filmed on that reel) is said to be paper, and one (NAK 4–619) palm-leaf; because of this error, which I cannot explain, the second list contains four instead of three palm-leaf manuscripts. [fn:MS-ca] The first list somewhat mysteriously includes among the *pāṇḍulipiyāñ*, i.e. manuscripts, with the siglum *ca*, ‘Notes on Three Sanskrit Commentaries (Muktāvalī, Yogaratnamālā and Ratnāvalī) on Hevajrat Tantra Chapt. 3 (Paper Presented in International Symposium, on Indo-Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, 1995, CIHTS, Sarnath, VNS)’. I am able to clarify who the unnamed author of the paper is—I gave it—but not to explain why it is listed among the manuscripts of the *Muktāvalī*. A perhaps related mystery is the occasional occurrence of the word *hālainḍa* in parenthesis after the siglum *na* in the apparatus of  $E_{TN}$  (see, e.g., p. 39 footnote 17); I speculate (though this does not fully explain the matter) that this is related to the fact that when I participated in the conference at CIHTS, Sarnath, in 1995, I lived in Holland and was associated with a Dutch university (the University of Groningen).

7 The very fact that that apograph is assigned the siglum *ka*, while the other manuscripts are given sigla corresponding to the consonants which follow *ka* in the sequence of the *mātrkā*, is a hint, I think, that it has been their main—and perhaps first, in the sense that their edition may have begun as a transcription of it, to which corrections were made and variants added—source.

It should be stated, however, that A has great value as well.<sup>8</sup> Apart from the fact that it sometimes preserves a better reading than B/C, and that where B/C are lacking it effectively provides the only primary evidence for the Sanskrit wording of the text, one more point is worth mentioning (Tripathi and Negi seem not to have mentioned it): A contains a number of marginal annotations in a later, Nepalese, hand which are of considerable interest. (The scribe of the apograph, E<sub>TN</sub>'s *ka*, has, incidentally, also done his best to copy these marginal annotations.) I intend to treat these annotations elsewhere.

In the specimen re-edition presented here I have tried to report accurately the readings of the palm-leaf manuscripts<sup>9</sup> and their lacunae.<sup>10</sup> The positive apparatus does not record the readings of the apographs, though some readings are mentioned in the annotation. I have aimed to record my differences from E<sub>TN</sub>'s text quite fully, with the exception of differences in word, sentence, or paragraph division. Wrong word-divisions will usually not cause the attentive reader too much difficulty, and some of the errors of this kind in E<sub>TN</sub> may well be simply typos. It must however be said that some of the different sentence or paragraph divisions of E<sub>TN</sub> are in my view not only mistaken but potentially very misleading.<sup>11</sup> In this respect too—the segmentation of the text—I believe

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8 In my opinion, where the testimony of both palm-leaf manuscripts is available, in most cases the text can be constituted with a considerable degree of confidence; where the evidence of B/C is lacking, the level of certainty that can be achieved drops noticeably.

9 I do not however report variants which I regard as non-substantive orthographical ones, such that no learned traditional reader would, I think, consider the words to be different; i.e. variants such as *anusvāra* versus homorganic nasal, gemination of consonants after *r*, degemination of consonants before *v*, and the like. Of course when a manuscript has a substantive variant reading, it is reported exactly as I read it, without any 'standardization'.

10 Note that footnotes which only report loss of some *akṣaras* in one of the palm-leaf manuscripts are flagged by footnote numbers which are placed **before** the first lost *akṣara*.

11 As examples of decidedly unhelpful sentence and paragraph division let me mention two which strike me as egregious. In the long sentence at A f. 10v, C f. 8r, p. 19 of my edition below, beginning *tatas tasya sarvadharmālabane samādhau* ..., E<sub>TN</sub> (p. 12) starts not only a new sentence but a new paragraph in the middle of a sentence, after *lokottaram jñānam*, cutting off the subject of the sentence (namely that *lokottaram jñānam*) not only from the equivalents/synonyms which

that my edition should make it considerably easier for Sanskrit readers to understand Ratnākaraśānti's thought than if they had access to the text only through  $E_{TN}$ .

I should mention briefly two things which the edited text which I give here does not provide, but which are (on the whole quite helpfully) provided in  $E_{TN}$ . These are the text of the *Hevajratantra* itself, and an indication, for instance by the use of bold face, of which words in the commentary should be regarded as cited from the root tantra. As to the first of these, let it be remarked that to determine what readings of the *Hevajratantra* were known to Ratnākaraśānti is a non-trivial task, and one which Tripathi and Negi have not really taken on.<sup>12</sup> I may also observe that, inconvenient though the modern reader may at first find them, these two omissions are exactly what a traditional reader of Ratnākaraśānti's commentary would also encounter. For none of the manuscripts of the commentary contains the text of the *Hevajratantra*, and in none are the words cited from the tantra marked in any way.

The annotation provided here has limited aim and scope. It does not attempt to provide a full commentary on Ratnākaraśānti's work. Nor does it aim to deal with all doubtful points; nor with all problems of the constitution of the text. It has solely the aim of discussing at least briefly (a fuller discussion would be desirable in several cases, but would

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Ratnākaraśānti gives for it (*pāramārthikam bodhicittam, mukhyā prajñāpāramitā, and sarvāvaranapratipakṣo mārgaḥ*) but also from its verb (*utpadyate*). And similarly in another long sentence at A f. 11r, C f. 8v, p. 19 of my edition below, beginning *tato yeyam ākāravati ...*,  $E_{TN}$  (p. 12) again starts not only a new sentence but a new paragraph in the middle of a sentence, after *saṃsārāvahaḥ*, cutting that adjective off from the noun (*prayāsaḥ*) which it qualifies, and making it appear as if the objection (flagged by *iti kasyacid āśānkā syāt*) consists only of the words *prayāso na mokṣāvahaḥ*.

- 12 Though they have collated quite a few manuscripts of the *Hevajratantra*, the text which Tripathi and Negi give follows almost slavishly that of Snellgrove's *editio princeps* of the tantra. The attentive reader of Ratnākaraśānti's commentary will often find the reading which is being explained among the variants in the critical apparatus. In any case, a better edition of the *Hevajratantra*, taking into account the readings of better manuscripts (especially palm-leaf ones; Tripathi and Negi apparently have not collated any such, though at least a few are relatively easily accessible) and of at least the commentaries which survive in Sanskrit, is a separate desideratum, which I think may still take some time to fulfil. Careful editions of all those commentaries would, it may be added, help considerably in fulfilling that desideratum.

lengthen this paper excessively) all points where my text diverges from that of the *editio princeps* in wording.<sup>13</sup>

In most cases I have quoted more than just the word/words in whose reading I differ from Tripathi and Negi, so that it may be easier to follow the argumentation without having to turn back to the edited text. Edition and notes are linked to each other by raised italic letters before the first word of each annotation.

I should note that for the Tibetan translation (to which I give only sparing references here) I have consulted the Derge and Peking *bstan 'gyur* blockprints, but have provided folio references in the annotation only to the Peking.

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13 I regard *antaḥśuṣiraṃ* of  $E_{TN}$  versus *antaḥsuṣiraṃ* of my constituted text as a merely orthographical variant. Both spellings were, I believe, used in Ratnākaraśānti's East Indian milieu, and I could perhaps equally well have adopted, as Tripathi and Negi have done, the orthography of B. Note though that in the quotation from the *Vajrasekhara* below  $E_{TN}$  reads, as I do, *asauṣīryam*, which presupposes the orthography *suṣira* rather than *śuṣira*.

## CRITICAL EDITION

[A f. 1v, B f. 1v, E<sub>TN</sub> p. 1]

<sup>1</sup>*siddham*\* namo vajrasattvāya† |

<sup>a</sup>pādanyāsaiḥ pṛthivyā<sup>2</sup> vihitaviḥaṭaṇaṃ bhūbhṛtām  
 aṭṭahāsair  
 dṛktejaḥketugha<sup>3</sup>ṅṭādhvanibhir api nayan nāśasṛṣṭir  
 jaganti<sup>4</sup> |  
 bibhrāṇasyāvaliptaprasāmanavidhaye bhīṣaṇān abhyupāyān  
 pāyād vo jainaguhyatrayaḥṛdayaḥṛdas tāṇḍavaṃ  
 herukasya || 1

darśitasūtrānuga<sup>5</sup>mā pramāṇavṛttaprasādhitā viśadā<sup>6</sup> |  
 muktāvalīva ḥṛdyā hevajre pañjikā kriyate || 2  
 aśraddhā mūlaripuḥ praṇāśapadam<sup>7</sup> ekam iyam atīśraddhā |  
 °nanu sarvavit pramāṇaṃ na gaura<sup>8</sup>vāt sarvavid bhavati || 3  
 kṛtaṃ apy akṛtaṃ jinena yas  
 tadanuktaṃ ca taduktaṃ āha yaḥ |  
 kṣipataḥ samam eva tāv ubhau  
 paramāptaṃ jagatas tathāgatam || 4 [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 2]  
<sup>9</sup>hitam uktaṃ anekadhā jinaiḥ  
 pratigr<sup>10</sup>hṇanti yathāśayaṃ janāḥ |

\*This is in lieu of the so-called *siddham*-sign, which is present in B, and most likely was present in A before being lost due to damage to the leaf.

†I set this obeisance, preserved in B, here at the beginning, without regarding it as part of Ratnākaraśānti's work. It is very probable that the scribe of A wrote the same obeisance, though before *sa*, which is partly damaged but readable with near certainty, the remnant of the preceding *akṣara* is not clear enough to confirm the reading *jra*.

<sup>1</sup>*siddham* namo vajra° ] lost in A <sup>2</sup>pṛthivyā ] AB, pṛthivyāṃ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>3</sup>ṅṭā...ja-  
 ganti | ] lost in A <sup>4</sup>jaganti ] B (cf. 'gro rñams Tib.), jagattri E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>mā... vṛt-  
 tapra° ] lost in A <sup>6</sup>viśadā ] em. E<sub>TN</sub>, viśadā A, sadā B (*unmetrical*) <sup>7</sup>padam ]  
 BE<sub>TN</sub>, °yadam A <sup>8</sup>t pramāṇaṃ na gaura° ] B (pramāṇan na), lost in A, °t  
 pramāṇān na gaura° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>hitam ukta° ] lost in A <sup>10</sup>hṇanti...pra° ] lost in B

tad ihāpi <sup>d</sup>ruciḥ<sup>1</sup> pravartanī<sup>2</sup>  
 vivṛṇoty artham iyaṃ tu pañjikā || 5  
 śrutam asati na bodhe nāśrute cāsti cintā  
 dvayavipadi na yogo yogahānau na siddhiḥ ||  
<sup>3</sup>iti ciram iha tantrē tāpam utkaṅṭhitānām  
 haratu hṛdi nibaddhā hanta muktāvalīyam || 6

[A f. 2r] evaṃ mayetyādi nidānavākyam yatas tantrāntaram eva saṃkṣiptam etad ity eke. vistaratantrāt kalpadvayam etad ākrṣṭam. <sup>e4</sup>tat tu<sup>5</sup> yathāsaṃgītam eveti nivedanārtham <sup>f</sup>nidānavākyena sa-  
 hākṛṣṭam<sup>6</sup> ity apare. anya evāsyā paramarahasyo 'rtha ity anye. tad asat, tasyādau vaktum ayogāt, paścād eva vakṣyamāṇatvāt, ana-  
 kṣa[B f. 2r]rārūḍhatvāc ca. tad amī vakṣyamāṇam artham anyārthe  
 granthe haṭhena ghaṭayanti mūḍhavismāpanārtham. tasmād ihāpi  
 nidānavākyam evedam. uktaṃ ca bhagavatā—evaṃ mayā śrutam  
 iti bhikṣavo mama dharmāḥ saṃgātavya iti.<sup>i</sup> ataḥ<sup>7</sup> saṃgītikāra  
 āha—evaṃ mayā śrutam iti.

svayam abhisambuddho dharmo deśyate, daiśikāc chrutaḥ saṃ-  
 gīyate. ataḥ śrutam ity anena saṃgītiṃ sūcayati. asākṣācchrute  
 'nyathāśrute ca saṃgītir apramāṇam, vipralambhasambhavāt. tad  
 anayor vyudāsāya dve pade evaṃ mayeti. tatra mayeti mayaiva  
 daiśikāc chrutam, <sup>9</sup>na śrutiparamparayā mayy<sup>8</sup> āgatam. evam iti  
 yathā saṃgāsyāmy evam eva mayā śrutam nānyathety arthaḥ. [A  
 f. 2v]

anurūpe sthāne kādācitko daiśikasya vihāro 'nurūpaś ca pariṣat-  
 sannipāto deśanāyā nidānam. tad āha—ekasminn ityādi. samayaḥ  
 kālaḥ. bhagavān iti hevajramūrtir vajradharaḥ.<sup>9</sup> aiśvaryaḍayaḥ  
 ṣaṭ samagrā bhagāḥ. yathoktam—[E<sub>TN</sub> p. 3]

<sup>i</sup>Dharmasaṃgītisūtra? Cf. e.g. *Abhisamayālaṃkāralokā* p. 5; Almogi 2020, p. 72.

<sup>1</sup>ruciḥ ] AB, ruci° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>2</sup>vartanī ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, °vṛttanī A <sup>3</sup>iti... °tkaṅṭhitānām ]  
 lost in B <sup>4</sup>tat tu... ity apa° ] lost in B <sup>5</sup>tat tu ] A<sup>pe</sup>(ante correctionem *read-*  
*ing not certain*), tatra E<sub>TN</sub> (cf. der Tib.) <sup>6</sup>nidānavākyena saḥākṛṣṭam ] A (cf.  
 gleñ gzi'i tshig dañ bcas te bsdus pa'o Tib.), nidānavākye mayākṛṣṭam E<sub>TN</sub>  
<sup>7</sup>ataḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, arthataḥ B <sup>8</sup>paramparayā mayy ] AB, paramparāyām apy  
 E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>mūrtir vajra° ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, °mūrtivajra° A

aśvāryasya samagrasya jñānasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ |  
rūpasyārthaprayatnasya ṣaṇṇām bhaga iti smṛtiḥ || <sup>ii</sup>

iti. bhagā asya santīti bhagavān. vijahāreti buddhavihārair viharati sma. catvāro buddhavihārāḥ: iryāpathavihāro deśanāvihāraḥ samāpattivihāraḥ pratisaṃlayanavihāras ceti. samāhito hi [B f. 2v] cāro vihāraḥ. <sup>h</sup>nityasamāhitās ca buddhā bhagavantaḥ.<sup>1</sup> tasmād yat kiṃcid buddhānām bhagavatām<sup>2</sup> kāyakarma sa teṣām iryāpathavihāraḥ. yat kiṃcit teṣām vākkarma sa deśanāvihāraḥ. yat teṣām samādhisamāpattau prakṛtisamāhitaṃ vā manaskarma sa<sup>3</sup> samāpattivihāraḥ. yad buddhānām dṛṣṭadharmasukhavihāre devatādyupasaṃkramaṇe ca manaskarma sa teṣām pratisaṃlayana-  
navi[A f. 3r]hāraḥ.

kva vijahāra? sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrayoṣidbhageṣu. sarvatathāgatānām kāyavākcittaṃ triguhyasaṃhāraḥ, <sup>i</sup>kāyaś cāsau vāk ca cittaṃ<sup>4</sup> ceti kṛtvā. tat punar bhagavato vajradharasya rūpaṃ dharmodayākhyam teṣām eva tathāgataguhyānām suviśuddhatathātāmakam. tad dhi yasmāt triguhyasaṃhāras<sup>5</sup> tasmāt trikoṇam. yasmāt suviśuddhā tathatā tasmāc charadindudhavalam antaḥsuṣiraṃ<sup>6</sup> ca. yasmād uttarottaraviśālena pramuditādibhūmikramaṇa viśuddham tasmād uttarottaraviśālam. tad eva ca vajrayoṣitām locanādīnām bhagāni, anāsravānanta<sup>7</sup> dharmadharmatāśārīratvāt tāsām. ata eva sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittaṃ ca tad vajrayoṣidbhagāni<sup>8</sup> ceti viśeṣaṇasamāsaḥ. teṣv iti tatrasthe kūṭāgāra ity arthaḥ. tadyathā <sup>j</sup>nagare vasaty āḍhya<sup>9</sup> iti nagarasthe prāsāda ity arthaḥ.

gu[B f. 3r]<sup>10</sup>hyātiguhyatare sthāne bhagavato vihāram upalabhya nūnam atra bhagavān guhyātiguhyataram dharmam deśaiṣyatīty a[A f. 3v]nurūpapariṣatsannipātaḥ sāmārthyād<sup>11</sup> uktaḥ. sā

<sup>ii</sup>For a collection of citations, not only from Buddhist literature, of this often-quoted verse, see note e on p. 65 of Sferra's edition of the *Paramārthasaṃgraha Sekoddeśatikā*.

<sup>1</sup>buddhā bhagavantaḥ ] AB, bhagavanto buddhāḥ E<sub>TN</sub>    <sup>2</sup>bhagavatām ] B(°tān) E<sub>TN</sub>, om. A    <sup>3</sup>sa ] A<sup>pc</sup>BE<sub>TN</sub>, om. A<sup>ac</sup>    <sup>4</sup>vāk ca cittaṃ ] A(°ttañ), vāk cittaṃ B, vāk-cittaṃ E<sub>TN</sub>    <sup>5</sup>saṃhāras ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, °saṃhāra A    <sup>6</sup>suṣiraṃ ] em., °suśirañ A, °suśirañ B, °suśiraṃ E<sub>TN</sub>    <sup>7</sup>anāsravānanta° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, anāsravānanta° B    <sup>8</sup>bhagāni ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °bhagāniś B    <sup>9</sup>āḍhya ] AB(cf. khyim bdag Tib.), āḍya E<sub>TN</sub>    <sup>10</sup>hyātiguhyatare sthā° ] lost in B    <sup>11</sup>sāmārthyād ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, sāmārthād A



punaḥ pariṣad vajragarbhādayo bodhisattvā locanādayo gauryādayaś ca<sup>1</sup> vajrayoginyah. [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 4]

tatreti tasmin vihāre. āheti. kimartham āha? śrotṛ<sup>2</sup>janasyo-  
tkaṅṭhanārtham.<sup>3</sup> kim āha? sarvetyādi. yathā gantavyaṃ tathaiva  
gatā iti tathāgatāḥ, savāsanasarvāvāraṇapra<sup>4</sup>hānāt. athavā gataśa-  
bdo jñānārthaḥ. yathaiva dharmās tathaiva gataṃ jñānam eṣāṃ iti  
tathāgatāḥ, sarvadā sarvākārasarvajñeyasamyagjñānāt.<sup>5</sup> athavā  
vyatyayena dakārasya takāro yathā gaditavyaṃ tathaiva gadanti-  
ti tathāgatāḥ, yathāśayaṃ yathāgotraṃ yathākālaṃ ca vineyaja-  
nebhyaḥ samyagdharmaśānāt. sarve ca te tathāgatāś ca, teṣāṃ  
kāyavākciṭṭaṃ sa eva vajradharaḥ, tasya hṛdayaṃ sāram. bhāṭṭā-  
rakam iti paramadaivatam. niṣprapañcajñānātmanām<sup>6</sup> mantrade-  
vatānām sarvāṅy eva kāyavākciṭṭāni guhyāni, durabhiśraddhāna-  
tvāt.<sup>7</sup> teṣv atiguhyāni guhyātiguhyaṇi yāni rau[A f. 4r]drāṇi sam-  
yuktāni vā. hevajrākhyam<sup>8</sup> tu kāyavākciṭṭaṃ paramaraudram udri-  
ktaṛāgaṃ ca. tasmād guhyātiguhyataram.<sup>9</sup> tad asya durlabhatarāḥ  
śraddhātāra iti bhāvaḥ. itīty evam ity arthaḥ.

ittham utkaṅṭhitānām pāriṣadyānām [B f. 3v] trayo vitarkā ut-  
pannāḥ. yadi guhyātiguhyataram idam tadā yādṛśaḥ puruṣo 'smin  
bhavyaḥ sa vaktavya iti prathamo vitarkaḥ. nāsti vajradharāt para  
iti siddhāntaḥ. tat kiṃ tasyaiva sāram idam, kiṃ vā tato 'nyasya  
kāyavākciṭṭanāmna iti dvitīyaḥ. kiṃnāmakaṃ caitad bhāṭṭārakam  
iti tṛtīyaḥ.<sup>10</sup> tad eteṣāṃ vitarkānām nirākaraṇāyāha—aho ityādi.  
ihāpy ante pūrvavākyād itīśabdo 'nuvartayitavyaḥ.<sup>11</sup> cārtho ga-  
myate. iti cety evaṃ cāhety arthaḥ. itīśabdaḥ kvacit pustake prāg  
api na paṭhyate, vināpi tena tadarthagateḥ.<sup>12</sup>

[E<sub>TN</sub> p. 5] aho vajragarbhethi. <sup>k</sup>sarva eva bodhisattvās tathāga-  
tagarbhāḥ,<sup>13</sup> tathāgatagotrā ity arthaḥ. pañcaiva ca mohadveṣa-  
mānarāgersyāḥ<sup>14</sup> kulata<sup>15</sup>thāga[A f. 4v]tāḥ. tatra yo dveṣagotraḥ

<sup>1</sup>locanādayo gauryādayaś ca ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, lo···yo B(space for ca. 3 akṣaras)  
<sup>2</sup>śrotṛ° ] AB<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, śrotṛsa° B<sup>ac</sup> <sup>3</sup>tkaṅṭhanārtham ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °tkaṅṭhārtham B  
<sup>4</sup>hānāt ] lost in B <sup>5</sup>jñeya° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °jñeyasya B <sup>6</sup>jñānātmanām ] BE<sub>TN</sub>,  
°jñānātmanā A <sup>7</sup>durabhiśraddhānatvāt ] A<sup>ac</sup>BE<sub>TN</sub>, durabhiśraddhadhānatvāt  
A<sup>pc</sup> <sup>8</sup>hevajrākhyam ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, hevrajrākhyan A <sup>9</sup>guhyāti° ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, guhyāni A  
<sup>10</sup>tṛtīyaḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, tṛtīyamma B <sup>11</sup>itīśabdo 'nu° ] E<sub>TN</sub>, itīśa···'nu° A, itīśabdo  
anu° B <sup>12</sup>tadarthagateḥ ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, tadartha(mā)ga··· A <sup>13</sup>tathāgatagarbhāḥ ]  
A(cf. de bzin gsegs pa'i sñiñ po Tib.), om. B<sup>ac</sup>, vajragarbhāḥ B<sup>pc</sup>, vajragarbhās  
E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>14</sup>rāge° ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, °rāgai° A <sup>15</sup>thāga° ] lost in A

sa vajragarbha iti nāmedam anvarthaṃ bodhisattvasya. durlabhaṃ caitad gotram. ata eva savismayam āmantraṇam aho iti. sādhu sādhu mahākṛpa mahābodhisattveti. paramaraudrādibhiḥ sarvopāyair parārthakaraṇāśayatvān mahākṛpaḥ. tair eva niravadhiviśvārthasādhanī bodhir mahābodhiḥ.<sup>1</sup> tasyām<sup>2</sup> sattvam abhi<sup>3</sup>prāyo 'syeti mahābodhisattvaḥ. yasyedṛśaḥ parahitāśayaḥ svahitāśayaś ca sa paraḥ puruṣasiṃhānām. ata eva sādhu sādhv iti ślāghādvayam. śṛṇv iti śrute niyojayati.

iyataivaṃgotra eva[B *end of f. 3v*]māśayaś ca satpuruṣo 'smin bhavya<sup>4</sup> 'iti sūcitam.<sup>4</sup> ayam evaṃgotra iti kathaṃ jñāyate? tadguṇeṣu śraddhārucivīṣeśādibhir liṅgaiḥ. uktaṃ cāryalaṅkāvatāre—

dhūmena jñāyate vahniḥ salilaṃ<sup>5</sup> ca balākayā |  
nimittair jñāyate gotraṃ bodhisattvasya dhīmataḥ || iii

iti.

iyatā prathamavitarko nirastaḥ. dvitīyasya nirāsārtham āha—vajra[A f. 5r]sattvasya<sup>6</sup> mahāsattvasya<sup>m</sup> mahāsamayasattvasya<sup>7</sup> hṛdayam iti. satyam, nāsti vajradharāt paraḥ, kiṃ tu mahākaruṇāpradhānatvād vajrakulasya hevajro vajradharasya<sup>8</sup> paraṃ rūpam. tasmād ayaṃ tasya hṛdayam ucyate. sārārtho hi hṛdayārtha<sup>n</sup> 'iti bhāvaḥ.<sup>9</sup>

hevajrākhyam ity anena tṛtīyavitarkanirāsaḥ.

[E<sub>TN</sub> p. 6] uvāceti. kim<sup>10</sup> uvāca? praśnatrayam. kimartham uvāca? padatrayasūcitasya vajradharmāhātmyasya vivaraṇārtham.

āheti. kim āha? yathāpraśnam uttaratrayam. abhedyam<sup>11</sup> iti bhettum aśakyam. vajram ity uktam iti vajrasādharmyāt. trayo bhavāḥ sarve buddhadharmāḥ. bhavantīti bhavāḥ. kasmād atra buddhadharmā eva bhavāḥ? prādhānyāt. kutaḥ sarve? vyāpter

<sup>iii</sup> *Daśadharmasūtra* (Tōhoku 53) D f. 167v7.

<sup>1</sup>mahābodhiḥ ] BE<sub>TN</sub>, mahābodhiṃ A <sup>2</sup>tasyām ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, tasyā B <sup>3</sup>prāyo ] lost in B <sup>4</sup>sūcitam ] *em.*, sū(c)i... A, sūcayati E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>salilaṃ ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, sali... A <sup>6</sup>vajrasattvasya ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, va...satvasya A <sup>7</sup>mahāsamayasattvasya ] A (*cf.* dam tshig sems dpa' chen po'i Tib.), samayasattvasya E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>8</sup>vajradharasya ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, vajradha...sya A <sup>9</sup>After this E<sub>TN</sub> adds ity anena dvitīyavitarkanirāsaḥ (*cf.* 'dis ni rtog pa gñis pa bsal tu Tib.) <sup>10</sup>kim ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, ...m A <sup>11</sup>abhedyam ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, a...dyam A

nyāyāt. katham trayah? kāyavākcittabhedena. traya eva bhavāḥ tribhavam. tasyaikatā samatā sā sattvam. katham tasyaikatā?<sup>1</sup> sarvasāsravadharmabijakṣayāt pratiṣṭhādehabhoganirbhāsānām vijñānānām nirodhāt<sup>2</sup> kevalavimalānantanabhastalanibhe<sup>3</sup> cittasantāne<sup>3</sup> [A f. 5v] tyaktālayavijñānalakṣaṇe 'nāsravadhātulakṣaṇaprāpte<sup>4</sup> śaktilakṣaṇa<sup>4</sup> sarvabuddhadharmabījādhāre<sup>5</sup> nirābhāsenā prakāsarūpeṇa mahāsukhamayena tribhavasya<sup>5</sup> yāvadākāśam avasthānam<sup>6</sup> tribhavasyaikatā. sā kutaḥ sattvam ucyate? yataḥ saiva<sup>7</sup> suvisuddhatā. atra hi sato bhāvaḥ sattvam iti<sup>8</sup> praśastatāvācī<sup>8</sup> sattvaśabdaḥ prakarṣagateḥ suvisuddhatāyām vartate. dharmakāya ity arthaḥ. viśuddhatā hi mahāpuruṣasya<sup>9</sup> vimuktikāyaḥ,<sup>10</sup> suvisuddhatā dharmakāyaḥ. buddhadharmānām kāyo nivāsa āśrayas tad bījādhāratvād iti dharmakāya ity ucyate. dharmakāyasya ca pradhānam śarīram anādinidhano dharmadhātuḥ prakṛtiprabhāsvaraḥ, sarvakālam tathaiveti kṛtvā tathatākhyāḥ. [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 7] ata eva na kadācid bhidyata ity abhedyatvād vajraḥ. prakṛtinityatayā nitya ity arthaḥ. kevalam āgantukamalaśuddhis tasya bhidyate, pūrvam abhāvāt, pramuditādibhūmiṣu krameṇopacayāt, buddhabhūmau yā-[A f. 6r]vadākāśam sākalyena bhāvāt.

anayā prajñayeti padārthayoḥ pravibhajyajñānena, yuktyeti yogena tayor eva sāmānādhi<sup>11</sup> karaṇyajñānena vajraś cāsau sattvas cety anena vajrasattva iti smṛta uktaḥ. chāndaso liṅgavyatyayaḥ. vārṣam hi vacanam sarvam eva<sup>12</sup> [C f. 5r] cchando<sup>13</sup> na vā kiṃcid api.

mahājñānara<sup>14</sup> sair ityādi. mahājñānāni mahāyānasvabhāvāḥ śuklā dharmāḥ, teṣām rasā āsvādāḥ sambhogāḥ. paramojjvalasaptaratnamaye 'nantalokadhātvantarasphara<sup>15</sup> ṇamahāraśmipramokṣe pariśuddhe<sup>16</sup> buddhakṣetre vividhaguṇavyūhālamkāre ni-

<sup>1</sup>tasyaikatā ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, tasyai· · · tā A <sup>2</sup>nanta° ] A (*cf.* mthā' yas Tib.), °nanda° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>3</sup>santāne ] *em.* (*cf.* sems kyi rgyun Tib.), cittasa· · · A, cittamala° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>4</sup>lakṣaṇa° ] A<sup>ac</sup>, °lakṣaṇe A<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>mayena tribhavasya ] *conj.*, °maye... bhavasya A (*space for ca. 2 akṣaras*), °mayatribhavasya E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>6</sup>avasthānam ] A, eva sthānam E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>yataḥ saiva ] *em.*, yataḥ syaiva A, yato'syaiva E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>8</sup>praśastatāvācī ] *conj.*, praśasta· · · vācī A (*space for maximally one syllable*), praśastapadavācī E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>mahāpuruṣasya ] *conj.* (*cf.* skyes bu chen po'i Tib.), puruṣasya A E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>10</sup>vimukti° ] A<sup>ac</sup>, vimukta° A<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>11</sup>sāmānādhi° ] *em.* E<sub>TN</sub>, sāmānyadhi° A <sup>12</sup>eva ] A, etac E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>13</sup>cchando ] C, cchāno AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>14</sup>sai° ] *lost in* A <sup>15</sup>ṇamahāraśmi° ] *lost in* C <sup>16</sup>pariśuddhe ] C, pariśuddha° AE<sub>TN</sub>

rupamalakṣaṇānuvyañjanavirājitena <sup>x</sup>dehenāryair bodhisattvaiḥ<sup>1</sup> saha sambhūya bhogāḥ sambhogāḥ, taiḥ pūrṇaḥ, tair eva bodhisattvaiḥ saha <sup>y</sup>pratikṣaṇam tṛptaḥ.<sup>2</sup> yato 'sau na kadācid vinaśyati, <sup>z</sup>asraṃsananityatayā<sup>3</sup> nityo bhavatīty arthaḥ. <sup>aa</sup>asraṃsanam anidhanaḥ<sup>4</sup> pravāhaḥ. tathā hi pariśuddheṣu buddhakṣetreṣu mahādharmaśāpṛitisukhair upasta<sup>5</sup>mbhaḥ [A f. 6v] sattvānām na kavaḍikārādyāhāraiḥ.<sup>6</sup> kaḥ punar asau mahājñānarasaiḥ pūrṇaḥ? sām̐bhogikaḥ kāyo buddhānām. sa mahāsattveti nigadyate mahā<sup>7</sup>sattva ity ucyate. katham? sīdati<sup>8</sup> tiṣṭhati na vinaśyatīti sattvaḥ. mahān<sup>9</sup> sattvo mahāsattvaḥ, atyantam na vinaśyatīty arthaḥ.

[E<sub>TN</sub> p. 8] nityam ityādi. atra <sup>10</sup>samayaśabdena mahāsamayo draṣṭavyaḥ, padaikadeśena padasaṃsūcanāt, bhīmo bhīmasena iti yathā. <sup>ab</sup>spharaṇa<sup>11</sup>yogena samantād gamanaṃ samayaḥ. <sup>12</sup>yathāśayaṃ viśvavinayanopāyaiḥ sarvair ākārāiḥ samayo mahāsamayaḥ. mahāsamayena sattvo mahāsamayasattvaḥ. <sup>ac</sup>satatapravṛttatvāt sattvaḥ,<sup>13</sup> [C f. 5v] nairuktena varṇānām lopena. ata evāha—nityam samayapravṛttatvād<sup>14</sup> iti. yo buddhānām anantaprabhedo nirmāṇakāyaḥ prabandhanityatayā nityaḥ sa<sup>15</sup> mahāsamayasattvaśabdenocyata ity arthaḥ. tadyathā <sup>ad</sup>mahaty arāṇye lagnō 'gniḥ<sup>16</sup> kvacij jvalati, kvacij jvalita evāste,<sup>17</sup> kvacin nirvāti, evaṃ buddhānām nirmāṇakāyo 'nyeṣu buddhakṣetreṣūtpadyate, anyeṣūtpanno viharati, anyeṣu parinirvāti. <sup>ae</sup>na ca<sup>18</sup> sarvalokadhātavas tena śūnyāḥ kadācid<sup>19</sup> bhavantīti prabandhanityatārthaḥ.

<sup>af</sup>evam ete trayāḥ kāyāḥ prabhedato 'nantā<sup>20</sup> ekaikasya buddhasya. ye sarvabuddhānām te sarva ekasyaiva<sup>21</sup> vajradharasya. sarvaṃ hi teṣāṃ tadadhīnam tanmayam ca. tad ayaṃ bhagavān

<sup>1</sup>dehenāryair bodhisattvaiḥ ] C<sup>pc</sup>((he)dehena| āryair bodhisattvaiḥ), dehena| āryair bo?? satvaiḥ A, dehena| āryabodhisattvaiḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>2</sup>pratikṣaṇam tṛptaḥ ] A(pratikṣaṇam tṛptaḥ) C, praktikṣaṇatṛptaḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>3</sup>asraṃsananityatayā ] C, asraṃsa(na)?? tayā A, asraṃsanatayā E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>4</sup>asraṃsanam anidhanaḥ ] AC, asraṃsanamañidharaḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>mbhaḥ ] *lost in A* <sup>6</sup>kavaḍikārā° ] AC, kavalikārā° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>sattva i° ] *lost in A* <sup>8</sup>sīdati ] A<sup>pc</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, sīditi A<sup>ac</sup> <sup>9</sup>mahān ] A<sup>pc</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, mahā° A<sup>ac</sup> <sup>10</sup>samaya° ] *lost in A* <sup>11</sup>spharaṇa° ] AC, sphuraṇa° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>12</sup>ya° ] *lost in A* <sup>13</sup>sattvaḥ ] C, sattva A (*a visarga has probably been lost after this due to damage to the leaf*), sattva iti E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>14</sup>samayapravṛttatvād ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, pravṛttatvād C <sup>15</sup>sa ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, om. C <sup>16</sup>lagnō 'gniḥ ] A, lagnō agniḥ C, lagnāgniḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>17</sup>evāste ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, evāsti C <sup>18</sup>ca ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, tu C <sup>19</sup>kadācid ] C, ka· · ·cid A, kathañcid E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>20</sup>prabhedato 'nantā ] A, prabhedato anantā C, prabhedenānantā E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>21</sup>ekasyaiva ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, ekaikasyaiva C

vajradharo dharmakāyena vajrasattva iti, sambhogakāyena mahāsattva iti, nirmāṇakāyena mahāsamayasattva<sup>1</sup> ity ucyate. iyatā ca<sup>2</sup> vajradharasya mähātmyavivaraṇena<sup>3</sup> hevajrasyāpi mähātmyam arthād vivṛtam, taddhṛdayatvāt tasya.

vajragarbha uvāceti. kim uvāca? aparaṃ praśnatrayam. kimartham uvāca?<sup>4</sup> hevajrasya vajradharahṛdayatve kāraṇaṃ nāmaiva yat sūcitaṃ tasya vivaraṇā<sup>5</sup>rtham. [A f. 7v] <sup>ag</sup>tuśabda iti śabdasyārthe.<sup>6</sup> hevajra itīdṛśaṃ nāma saṃgrahaṃ<sup>7</sup> iti samastaṃ keneti<sup>8</sup> kena vighraheṇa bhavet. vajreṇeti vajraśabdena.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>ah</sup>heśabdena<sup>10</sup> [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 9] mahākaruṇeti bhāṇyata iti sambandhaḥ. nairukto malopa<sup>11</sup>itvaṃ ca karuṇāśa[C f. 6r]bdasyeti bhāvah. <sup>ai</sup>atyantaduṣṭaraudrāṇāṃ vinayanāya paramaraudrakāyavāk-karmasaṃdarśanī karuṇā<sup>12</sup> mahākaruṇā. prajñā ca vajraṃ bhāṇyate. vajraśabdena bhāṇyata ity arthaḥ. prakṛṣṭaṃ jñānaṃ prajñā. advayajñānaṃ ity arthaḥ.<sup>13</sup> iha tu śūnyataiva prajñety ucyate, prajñālanbanatvāt. tathā coktaṃ śrīmadguhyasamāje—

yā niḥsvabhāvatā<sup>14</sup> prajñā upāyo bhāvalakṣaṇaḥ | <sup>iv</sup>

<sup>aj</sup>iti.<sup>15</sup> sā kathāṃ vajraṃ ucyate?

ḍṛdhaṃ sāraṃ asauṣiryam acchedyābhedyalakṣaṇam |  
adāhī avināśī ca śūnyatā vajraṃ ucyate || <sup>v</sup>

<sup>ak</sup>iti śrīmadvajraśekhara<sup>16</sup> vacanāt.

prajñopāyātmakam iti. prajñā ca śūnyatā, upāyaś ca mahākaruṇā prajñopāyau, tāv ātmā svabhāvo 'syeti prajñopāyātmakam.

<sup>iv</sup>*Guhyasamājantra* 18.33cd

<sup>v</sup>*Vajraśekharatantra* (Tōhoku 480) D f. 149r7–149v1.

<sup>1</sup>mahāsamayasattva ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, samayasattva C <sup>2</sup>ca ] A<sup>pc</sup>C<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, om. A<sup>ac</sup>C<sup>ac</sup>  
<sup>3</sup>mähātmyavivaraṇena ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, mahātmavivaraṇena C <sup>4</sup>uvāca ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, om. C <sup>5</sup>rtham ] lost in A (possibly with space for one more akṣara) <sup>6</sup>tuśabda iti śabdasyārthe ] AC, na tu śabda iti śabdasyārthe E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>nāma saṃgrahaṃ ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints as a compound, nāmasaṅgrahaṃ <sup>8</sup>keneti ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, om. A <sup>9</sup>vajraśabdena ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, om. C <sup>10</sup>heśabdena ] C, om. AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>11</sup>itvaṃ ca karuṇāśa° ] lost in C <sup>12</sup>karuṇā ] C, (ka)... A (space for two akṣaras), tu E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>13</sup>dvyajñānaṃ ity arthaḥ ] em. E<sub>TN</sub> (silently), °dvyajñāna ity arthaḥ A, lost in C <sup>14</sup>niḥsvabhāvatā ] A<sup>pc</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, nisvabhāvatā A<sup>ac</sup> <sup>15</sup>iti ] AC, om. E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>16</sup>śrīmadvajraśekhara ] C, śrīvajraśekhara A, vajraśekhara E<sub>TN</sub>

etena <sup>al</sup>heś ca vajraṃ ca<sup>1</sup> hevajram iti vigrahaḥ sūcitaḥ. [A f. 8r] <sup>am</sup>sarvadharmā<sup>2</sup>śūnyatālambanā mahākaruṇā hevajram ity<sup>3</sup> arthaḥ.

tantram iti. prabandhas tantram. tac ca trividham—hetutantram, phalatantram, upāyatantram ca. ata eva hevajro 'pi trividhaḥ—hetuhevajraḥ, phalahevajraḥ, upāyahevajraś ca. hetur gotraṃ<sup>4</sup> kulam iti paryāyāḥ. iha tu vajrakulam eva mahākaruṇā-prajñāpradhānānām kuśalānām<sup>5</sup> bhājanatvena hetuhevajro hetutantram cocyate. tat kathaṃ hevajraḥ? hevajrahetutvāt. kathaṃ prabandhaḥ? <sup>am</sup>vajrakulinām sattvānām bahutaratvāt.<sup>6</sup> hetuhevajrabalād upāyahevajracirābhyāsalabhyaṃ mahāvajradharapadaṃ pha[C f. 6v]lahevajraḥ phalatantram cocyate. tat kathaṃ hevajraḥ? hevajraphalatvāt. kathaṃ prabandhaḥ? anantabuddhadharmamayativāt. <sup>ao</sup>mahākaruṇāprajñāpradhānas<sup>7</sup> tu kuśalaprabandho mukhyo<sup>8</sup> hevajro mukhyam upāyatantram.

tatra hetuphalatantre prāg eva nirdiṣṭe, [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 10] upāyatantram tu na jñāyate. tatas tad adhikṛtyāha—drṣṭītyādi.

sāmarthyam śaktiḥ. bahavidham iti varṣāpaṇamegha[A f. 8v]-sphātanādi.<sup>9</sup>

yathānyāyam yathāyogam. utpattir ākāracinādi. sthitir ādhāramaṇḍalam. kāraṇam candrasūryādi. <sup>ap</sup>sāmarthyam<sup>10</sup> japabhāvanotkarṣajaḥ prabhāvaḥ.<sup>11</sup> jñānam jyotiṣādi.<sup>12</sup> vijñānam sarvācāryakarmakauśalam. devatānām iti śrīherukasya saparivārasya nairātmyāyā vā. yathodayam iti yathāyogam utpattiḥ.

ekam iti yathoktaṃ drṣṭyākṛṣṭyādi. herukaḥ phalahevajraḥ, tasyotpattis tatpadaprāptiḥ, tasyāḥ kāraṇam upāyatantram ity arthaḥ. kasmād idaṃ prathamam? devatādyākāramahopāyabahulasyotpatitikramasya prakṛṣṭataratvāt.

<sup>1</sup>vajraṃ ca ] AC (both vajraṃ ca), vajraś ca E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>2</sup>°dharmā ] AC<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, om. C<sup>ac</sup> <sup>3</sup>hevajram ity ] A<sup>pc</sup>C, hevajra?? ?? A<sup>ac</sup> (two akṣaras have apparently been effaced before ty and mi has been written by a later hand over them), hevajra ity E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>4</sup>hetur gotraṃ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, hetuggotraṃ C <sup>5</sup>kuśalānām ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, kulānām C <sup>6</sup>bahutaratvāt ] C, bahu?? ??tvāt A, bahutvād E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>°pradhānas ] AC, °pradhānaḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>8</sup>kuśalaprabandho mukhyo ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, kuśalaprabandha upāyamukhyo C <sup>9</sup>varṣāpaṇameghasphātanādi ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, varṣāpaṇame· · ·pātanādi A <sup>10</sup>sāmarthyam ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, sāmarthyamñ A <sup>11</sup>°bhāvanotkarṣajaḥ prabhāvaḥ ] em., °bhāvanotkarṣa(ja)· · ·vaḥ A (space for two akṣaras), °bhāvanotkarṣajam prabhāvaṃ C, °bhāvanotkarṣaprabhāvaḥ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>12</sup>jyotiṣādi ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, jyautiṣādi C

nanu mahāyānam idam, mahāyāne ca vijñaptimātraśarīrāḥ savadharmāḥ. uktaṃ cāryadaśabhūmake<sup>1</sup>—

cittamātram idaṃ<sup>2</sup> yad uta traidhātukam<sup>vi</sup>

iti. prakāśo hi vijñapteḥ svarūpam. yasyāsau svabhāvo<sup>3</sup> na bhavati na sa prakāśate, virodhāt. tasmāt prakāśamānaṃ nilapītādi na vijñānabāhyo 'rthaḥ, kiṃ tarhi vijñā[C f. 7r]nasyaivā<sup>4</sup>tma[A f. 9r]-bhūtaḥ pratibhāsa ābhāsa ākāraḥ, sajātiyavikalpāhitavāsanopahatāc cittād<sup>5</sup> eva nānākārasya vijñānasyotpatteḥ, tadyathā svapne. uktaṃ cāryalankāvatāre—[E<sub>TN</sub> p. 11]

bāhyo na vidyate hy artho yathā<sup>6</sup> bālair<sup>7</sup> vikalpyate |  
vāsanāluṭhitam cittam arthābhāsam pravartate ||<sup>vii</sup>

iti. luṭhitam upahatam.

api ca nedaṃ nilādikaṃ bāhyo 'rthaḥ, ekānekasvabhāvavirahāt. na hi tad ekam, bhāgabhedena pratibhāsanāt. <sup>aq</sup>nāpy anekaṃ paramāṇuśaḥ, paramāṇor ayogāt.<sup>8</sup> tathā hi yady asau sāṃśaḥ,<sup>9</sup> sa kathaṃ paramāṇuḥ? atha niraṃśaḥ, tadā saṃyuktāḥ paramāṇavaḥ sarvātmanā<sup>10</sup> saṃyogāt parasparam abhi<sup>11</sup>nnadeśāḥ syur iti sarvaḥ piṇḍaḥ paramāṇumātraḥ syāt, gajo 'pi, girir api, sāgaro 'pi, pṛthivy api. uktaṃ cāryalankāvatāre—

yathaiva da<sup>12</sup>rpaṇe rūpam ekatvānyatvavarjitam |  
dṛṣyate na ca tatrāsti tathā bhāveṣu bhāvataḥ ||<sup>viii</sup>

iti. tasmān nāsti vijñānabāhyo grāhyo 'rthaḥ. tadabhāvāt tada<sup>13</sup>pekṣaṃ grāha[A f. 9v]katvam api vijñānasya nāstiti<sup>14</sup> sarvathā dvayaṃ nāsti, grāhyaṃ grāhakaṃ ca. asati dvaye dvayapratibhāsā bhrāntir asti. saiva bhrāntir abhūtaparikalpaḥ. <sup>ar</sup>tasya cābhū<sup>15</sup>ta-

<sup>vi</sup>Daśabhūmikasūtra p. 49; cf. also Harada 2000.

<sup>vii</sup>Lankāvatārasūtra 10.154cd–155ab.

<sup>viii</sup>Lankāvatārasūtra 10.709.

<sup>1</sup>°bhūmake ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, °bhūmeke A <sup>2</sup>cittamātram idaṃ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, cittamātram C  
<sup>3</sup>svabhāvo ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, svabhā A <sup>4</sup>kiṃ tarhi vijñānasyaivā° ] AE<sub>TN</sub> (kiṃ tarhi ?  
vijñānasyaivā°), ki· ·nasyaivā° C <sup>5</sup>°hatāc cittād ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, °hatācittād A <sup>6</sup>hy  
artho yathā ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, illegible in C <sup>7</sup>bālair ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, bālai A <sup>8</sup>paramāṇor ayogāt ] C, paramā(ṇo)?? yogāt A (*space for one akṣara*), paramāṇor yo[r ayo?]gāt  
E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>sāṃśaḥ ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, sāṃśaḥ A <sup>10</sup>sarvātmanā ] A<sup>pc</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, sarvātmanā  
A<sup>ac</sup> <sup>11</sup>°nnade° ] lost in A <sup>12</sup>°rpaṇe ] lost in A <sup>13</sup>°pekṣaṃ grāha° ] lost in  
A <sup>14</sup>nāstiti ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, nāsti C <sup>15</sup>°lpaḥ. tasya cābhū° ] C, °lpa(sta)?? ?? A (*a  
visarga has been added after lpa*), °lpaḥ| tasya vābhū° E<sub>TN</sub>

parikalpasya tena dvayena sūnyatā rahitatā vijñaptimātratā nityam asti. tad eva dvayaṃ parikalpitaḥ<sup>1</sup> svabhāvo bhāvānām, yathālakṣaṇam asattvā<sup>2</sup>t. abhūtaparikalpaḥ paratantraḥ svabhāvaḥ, paraḥ tantrya[C f. 7v]te hetupratyayair utpādyata iti kṛtvā. dvayaśūnyatā pariniṣpannaḥ svabhāvaḥ, nityaṃ tathaiva<sup>3</sup> bhāvāt. uktaṃ cāryamaitreyaṇāthena<sup>4</sup> —

kalpitaḥ<sup>5</sup> paratantraś ca pariniṣpanna eva ca |  
arthād abhūtakalpāc ca dvayābhāvāc ca deśitaḥ ||<sup>ix</sup>

iti.

tatra bodhisattvena<sup>6</sup> trayāḥ samādhayo bhāvayitavyāḥ. na santi sarvabhāvāḥ parikalpitaiḥ skandhāyatanadhātulakṣaṇair iti śūnyaḥ samādhiḥ, parikalpitaskandhā<sup>7</sup> dināstitālambanatvāt. duḥkhaṃ duḥkhaheṭuś ca traidhātukam, satā paratantraṇa svabhāvenābhūtaparikalpatvāt, asatā dvayarūpeṇa prakhyānād ity [A f. 10r] apraṇihitaḥ samādhiḥ, punarbhavapraṇidhānaparipanthitvāt.<sup>8</sup> dvayaśūnyatā sarvadharmāṇāṃ prakṛtiḥ, anāgantukatvāt. saiva tathatā, nityaṃ tathaiva [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 12] bhāvāt. <sup>as</sup>saiva bhūtakotiḥ, tattvānām<sup>9</sup> agratvāt. saivānimittam, bhrāntinimittānām ākāraṇāṃ parivarjane sati tasyāḥ prakhyānāt. saiva paramārthaḥ,<sup>10</sup> paramasya lokottarajñānasya gocaratvāt. saiva dharmadhātuḥ, āryadharmāṇāṃ balavaiśāradyādīnāṃ hetutvāt, tām evāmbamānānām āryadharmotpatteḥ.<sup>11</sup> sā ceyaṃ dvayaśūnyatā na bhāvo nāpy abhāvaḥ. kuto na bhāvaḥ? dvayābhāvalakṣaṇatvāt. kuto nābhāvaḥ? sarvadharmāṇāṃ prakṛtitvāt—ity ayam ānimittaḥ samādhiḥ, animittālambanatvāt.<sup>12</sup> eta<sup>13</sup>[C f. 8r]c ca samādhitrayaṃ gauṇī<sup>14</sup> prajñāpāramitā, tatprayogatvāt.<sup>15</sup>

tata evam upaparikṣeta<sup>16</sup>—yo 'yaṃ nilapītādir ākāraḥ khyāti, na sa bāhyam āntaraṃ vā vastu, ekānekasvabhāvavirahāt,<sup>17</sup> pūr-

<sup>ix</sup>Madhyāntavibhāga I.5.

<sup>1</sup>parikalpitaḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, parikalpita° C <sup>2</sup>t. a° ] lost in A <sup>3</sup>bhāvā° ] lost in A <sup>4</sup>maitreyaṇāthena ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °maitreyaṇa C <sup>5</sup>kalpitaḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, kalpita° C <sup>6</sup>tra° ] lost in A <sup>7</sup>dinā° ] lost in A <sup>8</sup>panthitvāt ] AC<sup>cc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, °panthitvatvāt C<sup>pc</sup> <sup>9</sup>tattvānām ] C, sarvatattvānām AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>10</sup>paramārthaḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, paramārthaṃ C <sup>11</sup>tpatteḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °tpatte C <sup>12</sup>animittā° ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, ānimittā° A <sup>13</sup>eta° ] A, illegible in C <sup>14</sup>gauṇī ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, gauṇī A <sup>15</sup>tatprayogatvāt ] AC<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, tatprayogatvatvāt C<sup>cc</sup> <sup>16</sup>upaparikṣeta ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, upaparikṣet C <sup>17</sup>virahāt ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °virahāta C



vavat. <sup>at</sup>kevalam anādyavidyābhyāsavāsanābala[A f. 10v]viplutānām<sup>1</sup> bālānām buddhir asataiva tena<sup>2</sup> tenākāreṇa khyāti. <sup>au</sup>tam eva cākāraṃ nimittikṛtyālabanikṛtya lokasya dvayakalpanā dvayagrāhaś<sup>3</sup> ca sarvānarthanidānabhūtaḥ pravartate. yāvac cāyam ākāraḥ khyāti, tāvat paramārtho na dṛśyate, keśamaśakādīdarśibhis<sup>4</sup> taimirikaiḥ keśādīsūnyatāvad iti. sa evam upaparīkṣya sarvanāmāni sarvanimittāni ca parivarjayati.

tatas tasya sarvadharmālabane samādhau nirjalpe nirābhāse sthitasya pūrvaprayogavāsanābalād anābhogato 'nabhisamskāraḥ sarvaprapañcanimittānām astamgamād <sup>av</sup>avikalpam anābhāsam sarvadharmasūnyatādarśanaṃ kevalavimalānanta<sup>5</sup>gaganopamaṃ lokottaram jñānaṃ pāramārthikaṃ bodhicittaṃ mukhyā prajñāpāramitā sarvāvaraṇapratipakṣo mārḡa utpadyate. <sup>aw</sup>tena pratipakṣeṇālayavijñānasanniviṣṭānām sarvasāmkleśikadharmabijānām vāsanānām parīkṣayāt pratiṣṭhādehabhoganirbhāsānām vi[A f. 11r]jñānānām nirodhāt tad ālayavijñānam ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād<sup>6</sup> anāsravadhātu[C f. 8v]lakṣaṇam parigrhṇāti. sa evānāsravo dhātur buddhānām dharmakāyaḥ. tatprāptau tadadhīnā sambhoganirmāṇakāyapṛāptir iti siddhāntaḥ.

etasmin siddhānte prajñāpāramitāiva buddhatvāya<sup>7</sup> bhāvvyate.<sup>8</sup> sā ca dvayaprabhedānām arthānām samyag abhāvajñānam. dvayābhāvaniścayād dvayākārānām alikānām astamayād anantaprakāśamātrakhyātiḥ.<sup>9</sup> tato yeyam ākāravatī herukasya yoginīnām<sup>10</sup> mantracihñāsanakūṭāgārādīnām ca bhāvanā, sā prapañco viparyāsaḥ saṃsārāvahaḥ prayāso na mokṣāvaha iti kasyacid āśānkā syāt. atas tām apākartum āha—bhāvenaiva vimucyanta iti. <sup>ax</sup>bhāvayaty atyantam sthāpayati sarvabuddhadharmān vā<sup>11</sup> prāpayatīti bhāvaḥ ṣaṭ pāramitāḥ. tenaiva mucyante mahākāruṇikāḥ. ata evāmantraṇam mahākṛpeti. [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 13] ekayā hi prajñāpāramitayā mucyamānās tayā [A f. 11v] laghu-laghv eva sarvakleśaprahāṇād arhattvaṃ sāḡṣātkuryuḥ. tataḥ śrāvakabodhim adhigaccheyur na punar<sup>12</sup> buddhabodhim. mahākāruṇikās tu bodhisattvāḥ sattvā-

<sup>1</sup>°viplutānām ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °viplutā° C <sup>2</sup>tena ] C, om. AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>3</sup>°grāhaś ] C, °grāhakaś AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>4</sup>°maśakādi° ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, °masakādi° A <sup>5</sup>°nanta° ] AC, °nanda° E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>6</sup>°ālayavijñānam ālayavijñāna° ] C, ālayavijñāna° AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>buddhatvāya ] A<sup>c</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, buddhātṛvāya A<sup>ac</sup> <sup>8</sup>bhāvvyate ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, ucyate C <sup>9</sup>°ananta° ] AC<sup>p</sup>°E<sub>TN</sub>, anantara° C<sup>ac</sup> <sup>10</sup>yoginīnām ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, yoginīnā C <sup>11</sup>vā ] AC, om. E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>12</sup>punar ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, om. C

rthānāṃ paraṃ sādhanam anuttarāṃ bodhim abhilaṣanti,<sup>1</sup> na hīnām. tad amī ṣaḍbhir eva pāramitābhir mucyante, naikayā.

yadi tarhi ṣaḍbhir eva mucyante, kiṃ teṣāṃ pañcabhiḥ kriyate kiṃ ca ṣaṣṭhyā? ata āha—badhyanta ityādi. atra bhāvaśabdena pañca<sup>2</sup> pāramitā ucyante, sthāpa<sup>3</sup>[C f. 9r]ne prāpaṇe ca tāsām eva prādhānyāt. <sup>ay</sup>bhāva eva bandhaḥ, sthāpakatvāt, iti bhāva-bandhaḥ.<sup>4</sup> tena badhyante, muktānām api teṣāṃ tadbaleṇa niravadhisarvākārajagadarthakaraṇāya kāyatrayeṇa<sup>5</sup> yāvadākāśa<sup>6</sup>m avasthānāt. tasya bhāvasya parijñā paramārthajñānaṃ tatparijñā. <sup>az</sup>sā ca prajñāpāramitaiva.<sup>7</sup> tayā mucyante, tayaiva savāsanasarvāvaranaprahānāt, saha bījena sarvasāṃkleśikadharmaparikṣayāt. evam eṣāṃ nirvā[A f. 12r]ṇam apratiṣṭhitanirvāṇam ucyate, saṃsāranirvāṇayor apratiṣṭhānāt.

upasaṃharann āha—bhāvam ityādi. bhāvam iti pañcapāramitāmayaṃ kuśalam. bhāvyaṃ iti svacittasantatau prayatnād utpādya bhāvanābalena sātmikartavyam. <sup>ba</sup>abhāvaṃ ca parijñayeti grāhyagrāhakasvabhāvābhyām abhāvaś<sup>8</sup> ca tasya bhāvasya parijñeyah<sup>9</sup> prajñāpāramitayā. yo hi bhāvaṃ na bhāvayati sa mucyamānaḥ śrāvakabodhau patati. <sup>bb</sup>yas tu na parijānāti sa saṃsāra eva tiṣṭhatīty ubhayathā<sup>10</sup> jaḍaḥ syāt. prājñas tu bodhisattva ubhayaṃ karoti. ata evāmantraṇaṃ prājñeti.

iyatā mahāyāne yat karaṇīyaṃ tat samāsato vyavasthāpitam, mahāyānābhisamgrahatvān mantranayasya. <sup>bc</sup>tad eva hevajre 'py atidiśann<sup>11</sup> āha—tadvad ityādi. herukam iti herukataccihñāsana-kūṭāgārādi, pradhānagrahaṇena<sup>12</sup> [C f. 9v] paricchadasyāpi grahaṇāt. tadyathā [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 14] ko 'yaṃ yāti? rājeti. ayam arthaḥ—yāvantaḥ [A f. 12v] kuśalā dharmā mahāyāne bhāvyaṃ, tāvatām ekarasaḥ samyagbodho maṇḍalādhipatiḥ,<sup>13</sup> prabhidyā samyagbodho maṇḍalam. <sup>bd</sup>tair eva jagadarthakriyā maṇḍalaspharaṇam.<sup>14</sup> trayam etad atra kāyatrayasya sukham āśu ca prāptaye bhāvanī-

<sup>1</sup>abhilaṣanti ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, abhilaṣanti A <sup>2</sup>pañca ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, prañca C <sup>3</sup>pāramitā ucyante, sthāpa° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, illegible in C <sup>4</sup>bandhaḥ ] AC, °bandhena E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>kāyatrayeṇa ] AC<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, kāya(ṇa)traye(ṇa) C <sup>6</sup>yāvadākāśa° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, illegible in C <sup>7</sup>pāramitaiva ] AC, °pāramitā E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>8</sup>abhāvaś ] A, avabhāvaś C, abhāvaṃ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>parijñeyah ] AC, parijñayā E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>10</sup>ubhayathā ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, ubhaya(sth)ā C <sup>11</sup>atidiśann ] C, anitidiśann A<sup>pc</sup> (ante correctionem reading not certain), atinirdiśann E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>12</sup>grahaṇena ] AC<sup>pc</sup>E<sub>TN</sub>, °(pra)grahaṇena C <sup>13</sup>dhīpatiḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, °dhīpati° C <sup>14</sup>spharaṇam ] AC, °sphuraṇam E<sub>TN</sub>

yam, pariśiṣṭaṃ tu kuśalam asyā eva bhāvanāyāḥ <sup>be</sup> sukham āśu ca<sup>1</sup> niṣpattaye. <sup>bf</sup> sarvaṃ caitac cittamātratayā yathāpratibhāsam asattayā ca pariññeyam iti.<sup>2</sup>

evam ekam upāyatantram utpattikramam āśritya nirdiṣṭaṃ pra-sādhitam ca. idānim utpannakramam āśritya dvitīyam upāyatan-tram ākhyātum āha—dehastham ityādi.

mahac ca tat, sarvabuddhadharmabījādhāratvāt, jñānam ca, prakāśanijarūpatvād iti mahājñānam.<sup>3</sup> dehastham iti dehasyādhiṣṭhā-yakam, tat-karmaphalabhūtānām vedanānām dehāvinirbhāgena saṃvedanāt, indriyāṇām ca vedanāśrayāṇām dehāvinirbhāgena vṛt-teḥ. <sup>bg</sup> yady api taj jñānam asmin dehe sthitam<sup>4</sup> tathāpi [A f. 13r] tan mahājñānam. tathā hi yā tasya dharmatā tathatā tad eva bud-dhānām gotram, yac ca buddhagotram tat sarveṣāṃ buddhadhar-māṇām gotram. tena ca dharmatāśarīreṇa taj jñānam prakṛti-nirmalam. tataś ca sarvasaṃkalpavarjitam, pratiṣṭhādehabhogādi-nirbhāsānām sarvavikalpamalānām atanmayatvena tatrāgantuka-tvā[C

f. 10r]t, abhratamastuhinādimalānām iva nabhastale. ata eva ca<sup>5</sup> dharmakāyaḥ prakṛtinityatayā nitya ucyate. <sup>bh</sup> yathā hi buddhā-nām dharmadhātur anādinidhanas tathā tasya<sup>6</sup> śuddhir api sarva-buddhaguṇabī<sup>7</sup>jabhājanatāpi.

hevajra iti prakṛtam. tad eva mahājñānam hevajraḥ. vyāpakāḥ sarvavastūnām iti <sup>bi</sup> mādiye 'pi jñāne<sup>8</sup> sarvavastūnām prakhyānāt. dehastho 'pi na dehaja iti. kasmān na dehajaḥ? jñānabāhyasya deha[A f. 13v]syābhāvāt, jñānākāradehasyāpy alīkatvāt, asataś ca janakatvāyogāt. arthād uktaṃ bhavati—<sup>bj</sup>vyāpako 'pi na sarva-vastuja iti, dvayasamgrhītānām sarvavastūnām abhāvāt,<sup>9</sup> tatprati-bhāsānām<sup>10</sup> apy alīkatvāt. [E<sub>TN</sub> p. 15] dehādipratibhāsāni jñānāny eva vastuto<sup>11</sup> dehādivastūni. teṣāṃ ayaṃ hetuphalabhāvo loke śā-stre ca prasiddhaḥ. uktaṃ cāryalaṅkāvatāre—

hetupratyayavyāvṛttiṃ kāraṇasya niṣedhanam<sup>12</sup> |

<sup>1</sup>āśu ca ] C<sup>pc</sup>, āśu AC<sup>ac</sup>E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>2</sup>iti ] AC, om. E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>3</sup>mahājñānam ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, mahājñāna C <sup>4</sup>sthitam ] C, vyavasthitam AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>5</sup>ca ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, om. C <sup>6</sup>tathā tasya ] A<sup>pc</sup>(one syllable, possibly ga, apparently cancelled before tasya) C, tathāgatasya A<sup>ac</sup>? E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>guṇabī° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, illegible in C <sup>8</sup>'pi jñāne ] AC, vi-jñāne E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>abhāvāt ] A<sup>ac</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, abhāvāt tu A<sup>pc</sup>? <sup>10</sup>tatpratibhāsānām ] AC, tattatpratibhāsānām E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>11</sup>vastuto ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, na vastuto C <sup>12</sup>niṣedhanam ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, nisedhanam A

cittamātravyavasthānam anutpādaṃ vadāmy aham||<sup>x</sup>

iti. nāgārjunapādair apy uktam—

dharmo notpadyate kaścīn nāpi kaścīn nirudhyate |  
utpadyante nirudhyante pratyayā<sup>1</sup> eva kevalāḥ ||<sup>xi</sup>

iti. cittamātraṃ vijñaptimātram. dharmā itī vijñaptibāhyo 'rthaḥ.  
pratyayā evety arthākāravijñaptaya eva.

nāgārjunapādamate jñānākāra<sup>2</sup> [A f. 14r] eva jñānam itī cet—na.  
te hy āhuḥ—

ma[C f. 10v]hābhūtādi vijñāne proktaṃ samavarudhyate |  
taj jñāne vigamaṃ yāti nanu mithyā vikalpitaṃ ||<sup>xii</sup>

iti. asyārthaḥ—<sup>bk</sup>bhūtabhautikādi<sup>3</sup> yac chāstre proktaṃ tad vijñāne  
laukikajñāne samavarudhyate saṃgrahaṃ yāti, vijñānamātrasyai-  
va bhūtabhautikādyākāreṇa prakhyānāt. tan mahābhūtādi jñāne  
lokottarajñāne vigamaṃ yāty astaṃgacchati. nanu mithyeti yato  
'likam eva tan mahābhūtādi bhrāntena vijñānena vikalpitaṃ, na  
tat tasya nijaḥ svabhāvaḥ, tasmād abhrānte jñāne 'staṃgacchatīti.  
ata eva na sat sarvaṃ dvayarūpeṇa dvayākārarūpeṇa ca, nāsat sar-  
vam advayaparakāśamātrarūpeṇeti mādhyamikānāṃ yogācārāṇāṃ  
ca sadṛśaḥ siddhāntaḥ śreyān. itare trayo mādhyamikapakṣās ca-  
tvāras ca<sup>4</sup> yogācārapakṣā dūṣitāḥ pramāṇāgamaśāstranipuṇaiḥ.

tat punar idṛśaṃ mahājñānaṃ kathaṃ hevajraḥ? mahāprajñā-  
mahākaruṇāsva[A f. 14v]bhāvatvāt.<sup>5</sup> tad eva kutaḥ? niravadhisar-  
vākārajagaddhita<sup>6</sup>sādhaneṣu sarvabuddhadharmeṣu bodhisattva-  
dharmeṣu ca bhāvanālabhya<sup>7</sup>svabhāvabhūteṣu tasya prakṛtyaiva  
bhājanatvāt.

yady evaṃ hetutantram eva tat syāt, tat katham upāyatantram?  
satyam etat. yas tasya dehādhiṣṭhāyakatvena vyāpitvena prakāśa-  
mātratvena nirābhāsatvena<sup>8</sup> mahāsukha[C f. 11r]tvena<sup>9</sup> sarva[ETN

<sup>x</sup>Laṅkāvatārasūtra 3.96 = 10.592.

<sup>xi</sup>Cf. *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21; Li and Ye 2014, 42–46.

<sup>xii</sup>*Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 34.

<sup>1</sup>pratyayā ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, prapatyayā C <sup>2</sup>jñānākāra ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, jñānākārā C <sup>3</sup>bhūtab-  
hautikādi ] AC, bhūtabhautikaṃ E<sub>TN</sub> <sup>4</sup>tvāras ca ] A<sup>pc</sup>CE<sub>TN</sub>, om. A<sup>ac</sup>  
<sup>5</sup>mahāprajñāmahākaruṇā° ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, mahākaruṇāmahāprajñā° C <sup>6</sup>jagad-  
dhita° ] C, °sarvajagaddhita° AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>7</sup>svabhāva° ] lost in C <sup>8</sup>nirābhāsatvena ]  
C, nirābhāsamātratvena AE<sub>TN</sub> <sup>9</sup>mahāsukhatvena ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, mahāsukhamaya-  
tvena C

p. 16] buddhaguṇabhājanatvena samagramahāyānasamgrahatvena ca manasikāraprabandhaḥ sarvatathāgatādhiṣṭhitaḥ, sa evātra mukhyam upāyatantram. kevalam manaskāramanaskartavyayor abhedena prakhyānād upāyatantram api tad evocyate.

api ca tasya mahājñānasya bhāvanārtham mudrāpi sarvabuddhair adhiṣṭhitā,<sup>1</sup> tadyathā sūkṣmaḥ<sup>2</sup> samagro hūmkāraḥ svaramātrārahito vā bindumātram vā sarṣapasūkṣmam paramasūkṣmam vā catuścakrabhedena vā catvāry akṣarāṇi saporicchādāni.

mudrāpakṣa utpattikramaḥ prāpnoti [A f. 15r] notpannakrama iti cet—naitad asti. <sup>bl</sup>utpattikramaśabdo hy atra pāribhāṣiko<sup>3</sup> na laukikaḥ. sa ca mantracihnādipariṇāmajaṃ devatādeham āha na mantramātram api.

<sup>1</sup>adhiṣṭhitā ] CE<sub>TN</sub>, adhiṣṭhitāḥ A <sup>2</sup>sūkṣmaḥ ] AE<sub>TN</sub>, sūkṣmaḥ C <sup>3</sup>pāribhāṣiko ] C, pārabhāṣiko A<sup>pc</sup> (*ante correctionem reading cannot be determined*), paribhāṣiko E<sub>TN</sub>

## NOTES

<sup>a</sup> *pādanyāsaiḥ pṛthivyā vihitavighaṭanam bhūbhṛtām aṭṭahāsair* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *pṛthivyām* for *pṛthivyā*. The negative apparatus reports *ga* as reading *pṛthivyā*, thus wrongly implying that the other MSS consulted by them here have the accepted *pṛthivām*. The palm-leaf manuscripts both have in fact *pṛthivyā*. Natural though it might at first sight seem to have here a locative (since *ni-√as* is naturally construed with an *adhikaraṇasaptamī*), here the genitive is better, paralleled with the genitive *bhūbhṛtām*, just as the instrumental *pādanyāsaiḥ* is paralleled with *aṭṭahāsaiḥ*. Note that in the first line of the first verse of this ‘String of Pearls’ commentary, not only the metre (Sragdharā, ‘Garland-Bearer’; a flower garland may be regarded as structurally similar/parallel to a pearl-necklace) but also the syntax evokes the symmetry of a string of pearls (as seen by someone facing the wearer of the string): X<sub>3</sub> Y<sub>6</sub> Z<sub>1</sub> Y’<sub>6</sub> X’<sub>3</sub> (subscript numbers denoting the *vibhakti* of the word).

To translate this verse-quarter: ‘[the wild dance] in which the earth (*pṛthivyāḥ*) is shattered (*vihitavighaṭanam*)<sup>14</sup> by [the force of] the setting down of [Heruka’s four] feet (*pādanyāsaiḥ*),<sup>15</sup> and the mountains (*bhūbhṛtām*) [are shattered] by the boisterous laughs (*aṭṭahāsaiḥ*) [emitted from the mouths of his eight heads].<sup>16</sup>

<sup>b</sup> *jaganti* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *jagattri*, an unattested and grammatically hardly justifiable compound, recording as variant only *jagantī*, a reading which is attributed to *ga*. Almost superfluously, I note in addition that the Tibetan translation, which has here *’gro rnams* (f. 262r3), supports *jaganti*.

<sup>14</sup>Even more literally ‘in which a shattering is done of the earth’. The compound *vihitavighaṭanam* is a bahuvrīhi, for which my preferred analysis would be *vihitam vighaṭanam yasmin*, qualifying the subject of the whole verse, the Tāṇḍava dance of Heruka, i.e. Hevajra.

<sup>15</sup>The word is of course plural; but for the sake of a slightly more natural sounding English expression I have rendered with a singular. The plural is, incidentally, intended, I think, to remind us of the fact that Heruka’s feet are plural, to wit four (even though it is of course true that even with only two feet one may have multiple *pādanyāsas* in dance).

<sup>16</sup>The translation I gave twenty years ago (Isaacson 2000, 125) is slightly different, but my understanding of the literal meaning of the verse has not changed significantly.

<sup>c</sup> *nanu sarvavit pramāṇam* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *pramāṇān* for *pramāṇam*, without recording any variant. This reading may be felt to have some support from the Tibetan translation (*gañ phyir* [h.l. probably a rendering, though not ideal, of *nanu*] *kun mkhyen tshad mas yin*, f. 262r5). But B, the only palm-leaf manuscript whose testimony is available, A being damaged here, reads in fact *pramāṇan*, alternative sandhi for *pramāṇam*, and I continue to find this reading more cogent and plausible; see Isaacson 2000, 127 with note 19.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>d</sup> *ruciḥ pravartanī* ]  $E_{TN}$  prints *rucipravartanī*, with a note attributing the reading *ruciḥ pra°* to *ka*. Presumably they have understood this as a compound adjective qualifying *pañjikā*. The Tibetan translators might have also read thus (the rendering is 'dod pas 'jug par byed pa yin, f. 262r7). However the reading I have chosen, which is that of B, supported by A except for the latter's evident error °*pravṛttanī* (sic) for °*pravartanī*, is in my view clearly superior. For Ratnākaraśānti *ruci*, which is a matter of *vāsanās* (not something which a commentary, for instance, could cause), is what will draw some people to a particular teaching of the Buddha, make them become active (for instance to study the *Hevajratāntra*); the commentary for its part has the function of explaining the meaning to them. With the expression *ruciḥ pravartanī* here cf. *rucito bahavaḥ svayaṃ pravṛttā* in the second of the opening verses of Ratnākaraśānti's *Guṇavatī*, his commentary on the *Mahāmāyātāntra*.

<sup>e</sup> *tat tu yathāsaṃgītam eveti nivedanārtham* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *tatra* for *tat tu*; the Tibetan translation, which has here *der* (f. 262v2) can be said to support Tripathi and Negi's reading. The editors do not record the reading *tat tu*, but it appears to me that that is the reading of  $A^{pc}$ . I cannot quite determine what the *ante correctionem*

<sup>17</sup>Although I do not now agree with everything written in that paper of twenty years ago, I think that the translation there given is basically sound. Without discussing my earlier discussion in detail, let me just add here that only with the reading *nanu sarvavit pramāṇam* it seems possible to read the third quarter of this Āryā verse as a brief, elegant, explanation of why *aśrad-dhā*, the *mūlaripuḥ* of the first quarter, is unjustified, just as the fourth quarter is a brief, elegant, explanation of why *atiśrad-dhā*, the *ekaṃ praṇāśapadam* of the second quarter, is inadequate.

reading was. Possibly there were two stages of correction: *tata* being first corrected to *tatra* and then corrected again to *tat tu*. In spite of the support for *tatra* from the Tibetan translation, I judge *tat tu* to be the better reading. The *tat* is deictic, referring to *kalpad-vayam etat* in the previous sentence; with the reading *tatra* the absence of a word denoting the subject is stylistically somewhat abnormal. The contrastive particle *tu* likewise seems contextually appropriate. For a translation of the entire sentence, see the discussion of the next point.

<sup>f</sup> *nidānavākyena sahākrṣṭam ity apare.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *nidānavākye mayākrṣṭam* for *nidānavākyena sahākrṣṭam*, without a variant reading recorded. In my judgment A quite clearly reads the text as I have constituted it; the testimony of B is absent due to damage to this folio. It may seem hard to account for Tripathi and Negi's reading; but it becomes easier to understand in the light of the fact that the apograph of A reads *nidānavākyena mahākrṣṭam* instead of A's *nidānavākyena sahākrṣṭam*. I suspect that  $E_{TN}$ 's reading may be an attempted correction (although it hardly yields adequate sense) of the faulty text of the apograph. If so, it was not made in the light of the Tibetan translation, for that rather clearly reflects *nidānavākyena sahākrṣṭam* in its rendering *glen̄ gzi'i tshig dan̄ bcas te bsdus pa'o* (f. 262v2).

The entire sentence could be translated, e.g., 'But in order to let it be known that this [pair of *kalpas* extracted from the root tantra] is exactly as [it was originally] recited, [it] was extracted together with the statement of the circumstances/initial reason [of/for the Bhagavān giving the discourse] (*nidānavākyā*)—so say others.'

<sup>g</sup> *na śrutiparamparayā mayy āgatam.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *na śrutiparamparāyām apy āgatam*. Tripathi and Negi report manuscripts *ga* and *ca* (!)<sup>18</sup> as reading *śrutiparamparayām apy āgatam*, and record no further variants. In fact both palm-leaf manuscripts read the text as I have constituted it. Though the Tibetan translation of the *Muktāvalī* does not have a reflex of *mayi*, this reading is in my view clearly preferable. It is supported, incidentally, by a close parallel in Kumāracandra's *Ratnāvalī*, his commentary on the *Kṛṣṇayamāri-tantra* (p. 2, *na tu śrutiparamparayā mayy āgatam*).

<sup>18</sup>See n. 6 above.



<sup>h</sup> *nityasamāhitās ca buddhā bhagavantaḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *bhagavanto buddhāḥ*, reporting in the apparatus *ka* and *kha* as reading *buddhā bhagavantaḥ* instead. In fact both the palm-leaf manuscripts have *buddhā bhagavantaḥ*. In the very next sentence the two words occur in the same sequence; in that passage E<sub>TN</sub> too has *buddhānām bhagavatām*. It is worth noting that the phrasing here echoes Haribhadra's in the *Abhisamayālaṃkāralokā*; in the parallel phrase Haribhadra has the words in the same order that the *Muktāvalī* palm-leaf manuscripts do (p. 277, *nityasamāhitānām eva buddhānām bhagavatām ...*).

<sup>i</sup> *kāyaś cāsau vāk ca cittaṃ ceti kṛtvā* ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints *kāyaś cāsau vāk-cittaṃ ceti kṛtvā*, with no variant recorded. However A very clearly reads *vāk ca*, not *vāk*(°). B does have *vāk cittaṃ* instead of *vāk ca cittaṃ*, so this is one place where (probably without consciously intending to do so) Tripathi and Negi have followed B rather than A (and/or its apograph). E<sub>TN</sub>'s use of a hyphen suggests that the editors may have taken *vākcittam* as a *samāhāradvandva*; given that they have perhaps overlooked the reading *vāk ca cittaṃ* this is understandable, and not wholly impossible, but the reading of A is in my view preferable.

<sup>j</sup> *nagare vasaty āḍhya iti* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *nagare vasaty ādya iti*, with no variant recorded. The ligatures *ḍhya* and *dya* can indeed be quite similar; but both palm-leaf manuscripts clearly have the former, and only the former gives good sense. The example occurs elsewhere, for instance in the *Āmnāyamañjarī* (f. 12r5–12v1), further confirming the (already virtually certain) reading.

<sup>k</sup> *sarva eva bodhisattvās tathāgatagarbhāḥ, tathāgatagoṭrā ity arthaḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *sarva eva bodhisattvāḥ vajragarbhās tathāgatagoṭrā ity arthaḥ*, without reporting any variant. In fact A reads *tathāgatagarbhāḥ*, while B has *vajragarbhāḥ* added in the margin by a later hand. The Tibetan translation supports A's *tathāgatagarbhāḥ*, which I would say is obviously correct. Note, by the by, the sidelong glance, so to speak, which Ratnākaraśānti takes here at the Tathāgatagarbha doctrine; an implication of his words here is that in the famous dictum of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, *sarve sattvās tathāgatagarbhāḥ, sattvāḥ* should be understood to mean

Bodhisattvas (alone!).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>l</sup> *iti sūcitam* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *iti sūcayati*. A is damaged; its apograph reads *iti sū – –*, presumably indicating that the scribe judged that there were two syllables in A after *sū* which were lost or could not be read. This alone would favour *sūcitam* just slightly, rather than *sūcayati*, with three syllables after *sū*. However it is clear enough, though apparently not noticed by the scribe of the apograph, that the syllable after *sū* in A had a medial *i* vowel; and that the consonant was *c* is likewise almost certain from the fragment of the tip which is preserved. After this probable *ci* there is room for one more *akṣara*. Since the reference is ‘backwards’, and the sentence does not introduce a new portion of the root text, *sūcitam* is in any case to be expected rather than *sūcayati*,<sup>20</sup> and the restoration can be regarded as quite certain.

<sup>m</sup> *mahāsamayasattvasya* ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints here *samayasattvasya*, without a variant recorded. Their adoption of that reading is perhaps mainly because they print *samayasattvasya* likewise in HeTa I.i.2, of which this is part of a *pratīka*; unfortunately they have not recorded in the apparatus that A—and, incidentally, its apograph,—read *mahāsamayasattvasya*. In fact we should understand that Ratnākaraśānti indeed reads the word in the tantra as *mahāsamayasattvasya*. That reading is further supported by passages a little further on in the commentary, where the term occurs three more times as *mahāsamayasattva*, and by the Tibetan translation here (*dam tshig sems dpa’ chen po’i*, f. 265r4).

<sup>n</sup> *iti bhāvaḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub>’s addition of *ity anena dvitīyavitarkanirāsaḥ* after this is certainly a ‘back-translation’ from the Tibetan translation. Note that the editors record the MS evidence inaccurately.

<sup>19</sup>For useful overviews and discussions of references to Tathāgatagarbha in Ratnākaraśānti’s works I may refer to Kano 2015 and Kano 2016, chapter 3.

<sup>20</sup>Ratnākaraśānti is fond of this structure, always with a *ka*-participle, though the verb may differ. There are three other examples within the portion re-edited here: *iyatā prathamavitarko nirastah*; *iyatā vajradharasya mātmyavivaraṇena hevajrasyāpi mātmyam arthād vivṛtam*; and *iyatā mahāyāne yat karaṇīyaṃ tat samāsato vyasthāpitam*. I cite for the moment only one further example, from the commentary on *Hevajratāntra* I.v.1: *iyatā daśāyatanāni rūpacakṣurādīni draṣṭrādirūpaś* [ *draṣṭrādirūpaś* ] em., *draṣṭādirūpaś* AE<sub>TN</sub>) *ca pudgalo nāstīty uktam* (E<sub>TN</sub> p. 51).

Their note 6 on p. 5 reports the two MSS available to them (viz their *ka* and *kha*, that is to say A and its apograph) as lacking the words *dvitīyavitaranirāsaḥ*; but also the *ity anena* before that is a back-translation, those words too being absent in both, with no damage or indication of a lacuna in the exemplar of A. There is a possibility that the Tibetan translation is a faithful reflection of a reading in a Sanskrit manuscript available to the translators. There is no obvious trigger for an eyeskip that would easily account for the omission (if it is that) in A, however, and for the moment I consider it better to follow the reading of the available Sanskrit manuscripts and to assume that the phrase may have been added by the translators.

<sup>o</sup> *kevalavimalānantanabhastalanibhe* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* prints *kevalavimalānandanabhastalanibhe*, with no variant reported. This is probably not a typo; the (mis)reading °*nanda*° for °*nanta*° is found in the apograph of A (f. 3r5); cf. also the parallel discussed in note <sup>av</sup> below. The combination *kevalavimalānanta*, qualifying a following *nabhastala* (as here) or the virtually equivalent *gagana* or *vyoman*, appears to be almost a signature of Ratnākaraśānti.

<sup>p</sup> *cittasantāne tyaktālayavijñānalakṣaṇe* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* print *cittamatyaktālayavijñānalakṣaṇe*. In A, still the only palm-leaf manuscript available here, there would have been room for at least two syllables after *cittasa*°. I do not fully understand the conjecture of *E<sub>TN</sub>*, though I suppose that a part of the problem is that they have misread the last syllable preserved in A as *ma* instead of *sa* (which it rather clearly is). I regard the emendation *cittasantāne* as nearly certain. In my view we expect a noun here, the head of the locative absolute construction,<sup>21</sup> and the only reasonable possibility for the second member of the compound is *santāna*, since the ending of the qualifiers is a masculine or neuter locative. The Tibetan translation *sems kyi rgyun* (*rgyun* ] D, *rgyu* P, f. 265v3) is consistent with the emendation.

<sup>q</sup> *śaktalakṣaṇasarvabuddhadharmabījādhāre* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads, with *A<sup>pc</sup>*,

<sup>21</sup> Admittedly *sarvabuddhadharmabījādhāre* is a noun, and I suppose that Tripathi and Negi may have assumed that to be functioning as the head. In my view, however, that word too, though a noun, is functioning as a *viśeṣaṇa* of the true head, *cittasantāne*.

*śaktīlakṣaṇe sarvabuddhadharmabījādhāre*. The correction (the addition of a medial *e* above *ṇa*) has been made by a second hand. But the *ante correctionem* reading is to be preferred. It is not the *cittasantāna* but rather the *sarvabuddhadharmabīja*, ‘seeds of all the qualities of Buddhas,’ which are characterized by/as (that is to say which exist as) potentiality (*śakti*). The Tibetan translation reflects this, even though the translators have chosen to change the order of the units; it reads *sañs rgyas kyi chos thams cad kyi nus pa’i mtshan ñid sa bon gyi gzi* (f. 265v3–4), as if translating *sarvabuddhadharmaśaktīlakṣaṇabījādhāre*.

<sup>r</sup> *nirābhāseṇa prakāśarūpeṇa mahāsukhamayena tribhavasya yāvadākāśam avasthānaṃ tribhavasyaikatā*. ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *nirābhāseṇa prakāśarūpeṇa mahāsukhamaya(tri)bhavasya yāvadākāśam eva sthānaṃ tribhavasyaikatā*. Presumably the parentheses around *tri* are meant to mark the syllable as conjecturally restored. That restoration can be accepted as quite certain, and is supported by the Tibetan translation. However the syllable before the damage to the right margin in A (the only palm-leaf manuscript available here) is clearly *ye*, not *ya*. To read *mahāsukhamaye*, taking this to be another qualifer of *cittasantāne* at the beginning of the sentence, would be grammatically possible. However I believe that that reading is less plausible than the conjecture I have adopted. It also seems to me clear that if the right margin of the written area on this folio side was as straight as usual, it is more likely that two syllables have been lost, not one. I interpret *prakāśarūpa* here as a noun and a karmadhāraya compound, rather than as a bahuvrīhi adjective, as one normally would. This is not untypical of Ratnākaraśānti’s writing; one may compare for instance, in the portion of the *Muktāvalī* edited here, *ata eva na sat sarvaṃ dvayarūpeṇa dvayākārarūpeṇa ca nāsat sarvaṃ advayaṃ prakāśamātrārūpeṇeti mādhyaṃkānāṃ yogācārāṇāṃ ca sadṛśaḥ siddhāntaḥ śreyān* (p. 18). Here it seems to me necessary to take all three compounds ending in *°rūpeṇa* as nouns (karmadhārayas) rather than as bahuvrīhi adjectives. *E<sub>TN</sub>*’s *yāvadākāśam eva sthānam* (with no variant reported) appears to be a misreading of A which is already found in the apograph (f. 3r6–7). The reading is clearly inferior (especially because the particle *eva* after *yāvadākāśam* is unnatural).

For a Ratnākaraśāntian parallel for the formulation see *Sāratamā* p. 25 *yāvadākāśam avasthānāt*.

I note in passing that it could also be possible to understand *yāvadākāśam*, two words, instead of an *avyayībhāva* compound. It cannot be determined which of the two possibilities  $E_{TN}$  preferred.

<sup>s</sup> *yataḥ saiva suviśuddhatā*. ]  $E_{TN}$  prints *yato'syaiva suviśuddhatā*, without recording a variant. A, the only palm-leaf manuscript available here, has in fact *yataḥ syaiva suviśuddhatā*. That is clearly an impossible reading. The emendation I have preferred is slightly smaller and, in my judgment, smoother (the referent of *asya* would be a little unclear; granted that it could reasonably be taken to be *tribhava*, but the emphatic particle *eva* after the genitive would be somewhat odd, I think). It is also more likely to be what was seen by the Tibetan translators in the Sanskrit text before them (they render *de ñid śin tu rnam par dag pa ñid yin pas so*, f. 265v5).

<sup>t</sup> *praśastatāvācī* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *praśastapadavācī*. The apparatus reports MSS *ka* and *kha* (which should be the only manuscripts available here, namely A and its apograph) as reading *praśastavācī*. In fact there is again a small lacuna in A, and the apograph has indicated this. I think that there is space only for a single syllable, and that the only two reasonable candidate readings are *praśastatāvācī* and *praśastatvavācī*. A tiny part of the lost syllable is preserved, and I judge it to be consistent with (though not unambiguously supporting) the syllable having been *tā*. It is in any case not consistent with the syllable having been *tva*.

<sup>u</sup> *viśuddhatā hi mahāpuruṣasya vimuktikāyaḥ* ]  $E_{TN}$  prints *viśuddhatā hi puruṣasya vimuktakāyaḥ*, with no variant recorded. A clearly has *vimuktikāyaḥ*, but the medial *i* of the syllable *kti* has been cancelled with three small strokes. The apograph reads *vimuktakāyaḥ* (f. 3r8); possibly the editors are again simply following the apograph, and have not checked A carefully. As a pair with *dharmakāya* it is *vimuktikāya* that is the correct, standard term;<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Many sources could be quoted for this; I confine myself to referring to *Triṃśikā* 30, one of the passages Ratnākaraśānti is very likely to have consciously had in mind here, and, among Ratnākaraśānti's other works, to *Sāratamā* p. 173.

the ‘correction’ to *vimuktakāyaḥ* must have been made by someone who was unfamiliar with the terminology, perhaps out of the mistaken idea that the compound should be a bahuvrīhi. As for *mahāpuruṣasya*, I have emended thus, tentatively, on the basis of the fact that the Tibetan translation suggests this reading (*skyes bu chen po’i*, f. 265v6),<sup>23</sup> and, perhaps more importantly, because the normal formulation (for which the canonical *locus classicus* is the tenth chapter of the *Sandhinirmocanasūtra*) would be that the *vimuktikāya* is obtained by Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas as well as Buddhas. It seems plausible that Ratnākaraśānti might use the term *mahāpuruṣa* as inclusive of all of these here; and it is at least not very implausible that *mahā°* might have dropped out due to an eyeskip from *hi* to °*hā*. The emendation remains nonetheless no doubt tentative.

<sup>v</sup> *ārṣaṃ hi vacanaṃ sarvam eva cchando na vā kiñcid api.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* prints *ārṣaṃ hi vacanaṃ| sarvam etac cchāndo na vā kiñcid api*. The testimony of C resumes from *chando*. The form *chāndaḥ* (as a neuter!) seems virtually impossible, and as far as I can see is unattested.

<sup>w</sup> *paramojjvalasaptaratnamaye ’nantalokadhātvantaraspharaṇamahāraśmipramokṣe pariśuddhe buddhakṣetre* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *paramojjvalasaptaratnamaye ’nantalokadhātvantarasphuraṇamahāraśmipramokṣe pariśuddhabuddhakṣetre*, with no variant recorded. I read both palm-leaf manuscripts as having *spharaṇa* rather than *sphuraṇa*. This may be regarded, however, as a non-substantive variant, as the roots *sphar* and *sphur*, though sometimes listed separately, are in usage usually synonymous and conjugationally equivalent, with the variation sometimes treated as purely orthographic.<sup>24</sup> There is likewise not that much to choose between *pariśuddhe buddhakṣetre* and *pariśuddhabuddhakṣetre*, but the linguistically slight-

<sup>23</sup>The Tibetan translation has an additional/superfluous *sku* after this, as if the translators read *mahāpuruṣasya kāyo vimuktikāyaḥ*.

<sup>24</sup>Thus for instance in Westergaard’s edition of the Pāṇinian *Dhātupāṭha* (6.95). It is interesting to note that among the works of Buddhist grammarians the *Cāndradhātupāṭha* only appears to give √*sphur* without mentioning √*sphar* even as an orthographical variant (6.88), while Maitreya’s *Dhātupradīpa* first gives √*sphur* (6.114) and then √*sphar* (6.115), the latter however with the addition *ity eke*.

ly more normal *pariśuddhe buddhakṣetre* is preferable, also in view of the *pariśuddheṣu buddhakṣetreṣu* a little below, and Ratnākaraśānti's comment on *Hevajratāntra* II.ii.38 *amitābhāsyā tathāgatasya pariśuddhaṃ buddhakṣetraṃ* (rather than *pariśuddhabuddhakṣetraṃ*) *sukhāvātī* (E<sub>TN</sub> p. 145).

<sup>x</sup> *dehenāryair bodhisattvaiḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints *dehena| āryabodhisattvaiḥ* with no variant reported, but both palm-leaf manuscripts clearly have *āryair* as a separate word (see my critical apparatus).

<sup>y</sup> *pratikṣaṇaṃ trptaḥ* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *pratikṣaṇatrptaḥ*, without reporting a variant. Both palm-leaf manuscripts support the linguistically more natural reading which I have adopted.

<sup>z</sup> *asraṃsananityatayā nityo bhavatīty arthaḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints *asraṃsanatayā* for *asraṃsananityatayā*. However C reads as I do (the reading is reported in E<sub>TN</sub>'s apparatus, attributed to *gha*). In A it seems certain that two *akṣaras* are lost after *asraṃsana*. For the formulation *asraṃsananityatayā nityaḥ* instead of *asraṃsanatayā nityaḥ* cf. the parallels in this passage *prakṛtinityatayā nitya ity arthaḥ*, *prabandhanityatayā nityaḥ*, and *prakṛtinityatayā nitya ucya-te*.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>aa</sup> *asraṃsanam anidhanaḥ pravāhaḥ*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads (hardly comprehensibly) *asraṃsanamañidharaḥ pravāhaḥ*. The two palm-leaf manuscripts both read clearly *asraṃsanam anidhanaḥ*, though E<sub>TN</sub> reports *ka* as lost here (*truṭitaḥ pāṭhaḥ*) and *kha* (and *gha*) as reading *asraṃsanamañidhanaḥ*. The Tibetan translation (*mi 'jig pa ni rgyun mi 'chad pa ste*, f. 266r7) is reasonably consistent with the reading of the palm-leaf manuscripts, and certainly does not provide any support for the reading of E<sub>TN</sub>.

<sup>ab</sup> *spharaṇayogena* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *sphuraṇayogena* (with no variant recorded). Again (cf. note <sup>w</sup> above) the palm-leaf manuscripts read rather *spharaṇayogena*.

<sup>ac</sup> *satatapravṛttatvāt sattvaḥ, nairuktēna varṇānām lopena*. ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *satatapravṛttatvāt sattva iti nairuktēna varṇānām lopena*, without reporting any variant, but the *iti* is not in either of the palm-leaf

<sup>25</sup>The locus classicus for the three kinds of *nityatā* and their correlation with the bodies of a Buddha is *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* 9.66 and the *Bhāṣya* thereon.

manuscripts. Note that there is damage to the right side of the leaf of A here, but I think it is likely that no more than the visarga of *sattvaḥ* has been lost. The apograph, however, has indicated loss of a (full) *akṣara*, and the reading of  $E_{TN}$  is perhaps an attempt to restore a lacuna the size of which was over-estimated by the editors. The Tibetan translation lacks any reflex of an *iti*.

<sup>ad</sup> *mahaty araṇye lagno 'gniḥ* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads instead *mahaty araṇye lagnāgniḥ*; but both palm-leaf manuscripts have the two words separate, rather than compounded, though C with non-standard sandhi (*lagno agniḥ*).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>ae</sup> *na ca sarvalokadhātavas tena śūnyāḥ kadācid bhavantīti.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *kathañcid* for *kadācid*, which is reported as the reading of *gha*. Although in A two syllables are lost after *ka* and before *cid*, a fragment that remains of the first of the two lost syllables is, I think, consistent with the syllable having been *dā*, and inconsistent with it having been *tha*. The Tibetan translation *nam yañ* (f. 266v7) is more likely to reflect *kadācit*.

<sup>af</sup> *evam ete trayāḥ kāyāḥ prabhedato 'nantā ekaikasya buddhasya.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *prabhedenānantā* for *prabhedato 'nantā*, which the editors report as the reading of *gha*. Both the palm-leaf manuscripts support the reading *prabhedato 'nantā*, though C again has non-standard sandhi (*prabhedato anantā*).

<sup>ag</sup> *tuśabda itiśabdasyārthe.* ]  $E_{TN}$  prints *na tu śabda iti śabdasyārthe*, and a footnote at the end of this phrase reads *truṭitaḥ pāṭhaḥ — ka.kha*. It is true that there is text lost in A before this phrase due to the damage of the right margin of the leaf, and it is true that there could have been room for another syllable, such as *na*. However the reading adopted by  $E_{TN}$  does not make good sense. Ratnākaraśānti is claiming that the particle *tu*, which he reads in HeTa I.i.6, is used, exceptionally, in the sense of *iti*. The Tibetan translation, though not very successful here, does not support the addition of a negation (*ni zes bya ba'i sgras ni 'di'i zes bya ba'i don to*, f. 267r3–4).

<sup>ah</sup> *heśabdena mahākaruṇeti bhāṇyata iti sambandhaḥ.* ]  $E_{TN}$  omits *heśabdena*, with A, reporting no variant. The Tibetan translation

<sup>26</sup>This particular non-standard sandhi seems to be relatively common in C.



(*dgyes* [*dgyes* ] D, *dgyis* P] *pa'i sgras*, f. 267r5) supports *heśabdena*, which is present in C. It is unlikely that Ratnākaraśānti would have omitted this word in giving the *sambandhaḥ*.

<sup>ai</sup> *atyantaduṣṭaraudrāṇām vinayanāya paramaraudrakāyavākkarmasaṃdarśanī karuṇā mahākaruṇā.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *tu* for *karuṇā*, which is reported as the reading of *gha*. Of the two palm-leaf manuscripts, C, undamaged here, has *karuṇā*; A has suffered damage, but what is most probably *ka* (and cannot, I think, be *tu*) is partly preserved; after that probably two syllables have been lost to the damage of the right margin. The Tibetan translation, though not entirely satisfactory, confirms the presence in the sentence of *karuṇā* as well as of *mahākaruṇā*.

<sup>aj</sup> *iti.* ] The *iti* after the quotation of *Guhyasamājatantra* 17.33cd is omitted in E<sub>TN</sub>, with no variant reported. It is present in both palm-leaf manuscripts; the omission is presumably not intentional but simply a slip.

<sup>ak</sup> *iti śrīmadvajraśekhare vacanāt.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *iti vajraśekhare vacanāt*, and records *śrīmadvajraśekhare* as a variant in *gha*. I have followed C here; A reads *śrīvajraśekhare* instead of *śrīmadvajraśekhare*, and this is of course also unobjectionable. The Tibetan translation has here *zes dpal rdo rje rtse mo las gsuñs so* (f. 267v1). This could translate either *śrīvajraśekhare* or *śrīmadvajraśekhare* (just before this, *śrīmadguhyasamāje*—as both palm-leaf manuscripts, and E<sub>TN</sub>, read—was translated *dpal gsañ ba 'dus pa las* [f. 267r7]). In a case like this, where the readings of A and C are, though different, virtually equivalent, and where I am unable to find a cogent argument in favor of one over the other, I follow C as the manuscript which seems, when there are more substantive divergences between the two, more often to preserve better readings.

<sup>al</sup> *heś ca vajraṃ ca* ] E<sub>TN</sub> prints *heś ca vajraś ca*, recording *vajrañ ca* as the reading of *gha*. Both palm-leaf manuscripts in fact read *vajrañ ca*. Since in this context *vajra* is being treated as a neuter noun (meaning *prajñā*), there is no reason to prefer a masculine form against the testimony of the palm-leaf manuscripts.

<sup>am</sup> *sarvadharmasūnyatāmbanā mahākaruṇā hevajram ity arthaḥ.*

]  $E_{TN}$  reads *sarvadharmasūnyatālambanā mahākaruṇā hevajra ity arthaḥ*. The reading with the neuter form is that of both palm-leaf manuscripts, but in A it is *post correctionem*. I am unable to determine what the *ante correctionem* reading was. There is no good reason, in any case, to emend the transmitted neuter to a masculine; note the neuter *hevajram* directly above (with no variant).

<sup>an</sup> *vajrakulinām sattvānām bahutaratvāt*. ] For *bahutaratvāt*, which is what C clearly reads,  $E_{TN}$  reads *bahutvād* (with no following *daṇḍa*), attributing the variant *bahutaratvād* to *gha*. In A most probably two *akṣaras* have been lost after *bahu°* and before *°tvāt*, due to the damage of the right margin. Of the first of those *akṣaras* a part is preserved which seems to me consistent with the possibility that it was *ta*. Although the Tibetan translation *mañ ba ñid yin pas* may be more likely to render *bahutvāt*, I judge that to be insufficient reason to reject what was probably the very natural reading of both palm-leaf manuscripts.

<sup>ao</sup> *mahākaruṇāprajñāpradhānas tu kuśalaprabandho mukhyo hevajro mukhyam upāyatantram*. ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *mahākaruṇāprajñāpradhānaṃ* in place of *mahākaruṇāprajñāpradhānas*, with no variant reported. Both palm-leaf manuscripts have, however, the required masculine form; the compound must be a bahuvrīhi adjective to the masculine *kuśalaprabandhaḥ*.

<sup>ap</sup> *sāmarthyam japabhāvanotkarṣajāḥ prabhāvaḥ*. ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *sāmarthyam japabhāvanotkarṣaprabhāvaḥ*, attributing in a note the reading *japabhāvanotkarṣajam prabhāvam* (which is that of C) to *gha*. The more natural reading with nominatives, *japabhāvanotkarṣajāḥ prabhāvaḥ*, which I have preferred, was probably that of A; in spite of damage, the fragment of the *akṣara* after *rṣa* can be said, I think, to be certainly not *pra*, but rather, very probably, *ja*. There should have been sufficient space for *°jaḥ prabhāvaḥ*, which is linguistically and stylistically preferable to a karmadhāraya compound *°japrabhāvaḥ*. The reading is further supported by the use of exactly the same gloss in the *Yogaratanmālā* (YoRaMā p. 7).

<sup>aq</sup> *nāpy anekam paramāṇuśaḥ, paramāṇor ayogāt*. ]  $E_{TN}$  prints *paramāṇor yo[r ayo?]gāt*, apparently intending to indicate that the manuscripts read *paramāṇor yogāt* (a footnote reports however

that *ka* and *kha* read *paramāṇuyogaḥ* instead) but that the editors wonder if an emendation to *paramāṇor ayogāt* should be preferred. They are right to think that that reading is better; but it requires no emendation. In fact *paramāṇor ayogāt* is the reading of C, and almost certainly was the reading of A as well, although the damage to the right margin has left the *ṇo* incomplete and the *ra* has been entirely lost.

<sup>ar</sup> *tasya cābhūtaparikalpasya tena dvayena śūnyatā rahitatā vijñaptimātratā nityam asti.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *vābhūtaparikalpasya* for *cābhūtaparikalpasya*; a footnote (nr. 7 on p. 11) reports *truṭito'tra pāṇḍuliper aṃśaḥ*. This is true (though the precise *aṃśaḥ* cannot be determined from the note) for A; but the other palm-leaf MS, C, preserves the whole sentence, and clearly has the reading with *ca*, which in any case is the naturally expected particle here.

<sup>as</sup> *saiva bhūtakotiḥ, tattvānām agratvāt.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *sarvatattvānām* for *tattvānām*. The editors are following A; but C has *tattvānām* (not reported as a variant in the critical apparatus of *E<sub>TN</sub>*). It may seem natural to have *sarva°* here. However the Tibetan translation shows no sign of that, and parallel passages in Ratnākaraśānti's *Sāratamā* (p. 161, twice) explain or justify *bhūtakoti* as a name/synonym for emptiness (specifically the being empty of the pair of object and subject) with *tattvaśikharatvāt*, not *sarvatattvaśikharatvāt*. In view of this I have preferred C's reading, assuming *sarva°* to be a secondary addition in A.

<sup>at</sup> *kevalam anādyavidyābhyāsavāsanābalaviplutānām bālānām buddhir asataiva tena tenākāreṇa khyāti.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *tenākāreṇa khyāti* in place of *tena tenākāreṇa khyāti*. The former is the reading of A, the latter, which I have adopted, the reading of C. Both readings are plausible enough, though just slightly different in feeling, mainly because if there is but a single *tena* it could be natural to understand the *tenākāreṇa* to refer back to the *yo 'yam nīlapītādir ākāraḥ* of the previous sentence, whereas the double pronoun hardly allows that possibility, instead yielding naturally the sense 'with/in various forms'. Here my preference for C's reading is based mainly on the consideration of parallels, although their evidence too is not unanimous. Firstly, in the *Muktāvalī* itself there is a close parallel in the commentary on HeTa I.v.1. There the tes-

timony of C is not available; A<sup>pc</sup> reads *kevalam bhrāntā buddhir bālānām asataiva tena tenākāreṇa khyāti* (A f. 36r1, E<sub>TN</sub> p. 51); *ante correctionem* the reading was *na tenākāreṇa*, which is clearly impossible. The Tibetan translation in this parallel supports the repetition of the pronoun. A similar sentence in Ratnākaraśānti's *Mahāmāyāsādhana* may be noted: *cittamātram evedam sarvam asataiva tena tenākāreṇa prakhyāti*. The most recent editor, Mori, records no variant in the seven manuscripts he has used; and the Tibetan translation of the *Mahāmāyāsādhana* likewise supports the doubling of the pronoun. It is worth mentioning, however, that a good palm-leaf manuscript of the *Mahāmāyāsādhana*, not used by Mori for his edition, has the reading with a single *tena* (NGMPP A 936/15 f. 98v6). The evidence is therefore in fact divided here too. The recently published *Prajñāpāramitābhāvanākrama* attributed to Ratnākaraśānti, extant in a single palm-leaf manuscript, with no Tibetan translation identified, in a sentence which is closely parallel to our sentence here has the double pronoun (§4, p. 28). Though I doubt that this work is truly an independent composition of Ratnākaraśānti, and see it rather as a composite of material from some of his genuine works, including, prominently, the *Muktāvalī*, this is at the least a testimony of sorts for the reading of the *Muktāvalī* known to the compiler.

What has been cited here (and further, less direct, evidence which I do not cite for reasons of space) is in my view sufficient to, on balance, justify the adoption of the reading with the doubled pronoun.

<sup>au</sup> *tam eva cākāraṃ nimittikṛtyālabhanīkṛtya lokasya dvayakalpanā dvayagrāhaś ca sarvānarthanidānabhūtaḥ pravartate.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *dvayagrāhakaś* instead of *dvayagrāhaś*. In this the editors are following A. They do not record a variant, but C reads *dvayagrāhaś*. This reading is in my view clearly preferable. The structure suggests, I think, that we should have an approximate synonym for *dvayakalpanā* here. To put what is essentially the same point another way, it is not the grasper of the pair (of grasper and grasped, nota bene!) that is the cause of all disasters (*sarvānarthanidānabhūta*), but rather the grasping of or clinging to that pair.

<sup>av</sup> *avikalpam anābhāsaṃ sarvadharmasūnyatādarśanaṃ kevalavi-*

*malānantagaganopamaṃ lokottaraṃ jñānaṃ* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *kevala-vimalānandagaganopamaṃ* in place of *kevalavimalānantagaganopamaṃ*, without recording a variant. As in the very similar earlier passage (see note <sup>o</sup> above) the palm-leaf manuscripts in fact both read *nanta°*, not *°nanda°*, and the former reading is further supported by the Tibetan translation and (in any case) certainly correct. And again this is, surely, not a typo in  $E_{TN}$  but rather the result of too exclusive a reliance on the apograph of A, in which the (mis)reading *°nanda°* is once more found (f. 5r11).

<sup>aw</sup> *tena pratipakṣeṇālayavijñānasanniviṣṭānāṃ sarvasāṃkleśikadharmabījānāṃ vāsanānāṃ parikṣayāt pratiṣṭhādehabhoganirbhāsānāṃ vijñānānāṃ nirodhāt tad ālayavijñānaṃ ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād anāsravadhātulakṣaṇaṃ parigrhṇāti.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *tad ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād* for *tad ālayavijñānaṃ ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād*; no variants are reported. The palm-leaf manuscripts differ, however; *tad ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād* is the reading of A, *tad ālayavijñānaṃ ālayavijñānalakṣaṇatyāgād* the reading of C. The Tibetan translation supports the reading of A; on the other hand the reading of C is supported by the testimony, as we may call it, of the *Prajñāpāramitābhāvanākrama* attributed to Ratnākaraśānti (§4, p. 29). My preference for the latter is based not simply on C's general superiority (as it seems to me) to A, but, firstly, on the fact that *tat* alone as subject seems unnatural,<sup>27</sup> and, secondly, the feeling that a haplography, for which a trigger is easily visible, is more likely to have happened than a dittography for which there is no clear trigger.

<sup>ax</sup> *bhāvayaty atyantam sthāpayati sarvabuddhadharmān vā prāpayatīti bhāvaḥ ṣaṭ pāramitāḥ.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads thus except for omitting the particle *vā*, with no variant recorded. The particle is present in both palm-leaf manuscripts, though A is a little hard to read here. I note that the apograph of A is in error here, having *sa* instead of *vā* (f. 5v5). The Tibetan translation has here the particle

<sup>27</sup>The only 'easy' referent would be the *sarvadharmasūnyatādarśanam* of the previous sentence; but that can hardly be said to have the *ālayavijñānalakṣaṇa* so that it could abandon it, and furthermore we are to understand that that is referred to in this sentence by *tena pratipakṣeṇa*, so that it is hardly possible that it occur in the same sentence referred to by *tat*.

*dañ*, but I think it is not very certain that the translators saw in the Sanskrit available to them *ca* rather than *vā*. Nor do I think that the *ca* which links *sthāpane* and *prāpane* in a related sentence below gives us strong support for a conjecture *ca* here, although such a conjecture could perhaps indeed be considered.

<sup>ay</sup> *bhāva eva bandhaḥ, sthāpakatvāt, iti bhāvabandhaḥ.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *bhāvabandhena* for *bhāvabandhaḥ*, which is reported as the reading of *gha*. In fact it is the reading of both palm-leaf manuscripts, and is in any case clearly preferable. The word occurs, it is true, in the instrumental in the root-text; but it is here simply being analyzed, and only in the following sentence ‘transferred back’ to the instrumental.

<sup>az</sup> *sā ca prajñāpāramitaiva* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *sā ca prajñāpāramitā*, and attributes the reading *prajñāpāramitaiva* to *gha*. In fact both the palm-leaf manuscripts have *prajñāpāramitaiva*, and the *eva* is also reflected in the Tibetan translation.

<sup>ba</sup> *abhāvaṃ ca pariñāyati grāhyagrāhakasvabhāvābhyām abhāvaś ca tasya bhāvasya pariñēyaḥ prajñāpāramitayā.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *abhāvaṃ ca pariñāyati grāhyagrāhakasvabhāvābhyām abhāvaṃ ca, tasya bhāvasya pariñāyā prajñāpāramitayā*, with no variants recorded. Both palm-leaf manuscripts read as I do, apart from the clearly inferior variant in C *avabhāvaś* for *abhāvaś*. There is no need to ‘emend’ the transmitted masculine nominative *abhāvaś* to *abhāvaṃ*. Ratnākaraśānti explains, as he regularly does, the non-classical Sanskrit of the tantra (in which *abhāvaṃ* is to be understood, he tells us, as a nominative) using more classically ‘correct’ forms.

<sup>bb</sup> *yas tu na pariñānāti sa saṃsāra eva tiṣṭhatīty ubhayathā jaḍaḥ syāt.* ]  $E_{TN}$  reads *yas tu na pariñānāti, saṃsāra eva tiṣṭhatīty ubhayathā jaḍaḥ syāt*. Although  $E_{TN}$  records no variant for *saṃsāra*, both palm-leaf manuscripts read the syntactically expected *sa saṃsāra*. The Tibetan translation does not have a reflex of *sa* here, but this absence is insufficient reason to reject the natural reading of the palm-leaf manuscripts.  $E_{TN}$  seem to have again followed the apograph of A here, in which the same haplographic (no doubt accidental) omission is found (f. 6r2).

<sup>bc</sup> *tad eva hevajre 'py atidiśann āha—tadvad ityādi.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *tad eva hevajre 'py atinirdiśann āha—tadvad ityādi*, with no variant recorded. As far as I can see, the combination *atinirdiś* is extremely rare; I am unable to cite any occurrence apart from the single one which is given in the EDSHP, s.v. The reading of E<sub>TN</sub> probably derives from the apograph of A, which seems to read *atitirdiśann* (f. 6r3), but could conceivably be read as *atinirdiśann*; the difference between *t* and *n* is often quite small in this manuscript. A itself has been corrected (apparently by the first hand); I am not sure about the *ante correctionem* reading, but the *post correctionem* reading is most probably *anitidiśann*. C's reading *atidiśann* is in my view completely natural. Similar usages in *avataṛaṇikās* are not extremely rare. The Tibetan translation has here *lhag par ston pas* (f. 270v7); though TSD does not have an entry s.v. *lhag par ston pa*, and apparently only records *bsgre ba* and *bsgre bar byed* as translations of *atidiśati*, it seems to me entirely plausible that this rendering is consistent with the translators having read *atidiśan*.

<sup>bd</sup> *tair eva jagadarthakriyā maṇḍalasphaṛaṇam.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> again (cf. notes <sup>w</sup> and <sup>ab</sup> above) reads °*sphuraṇam* for °*sphaṛaṇam*, without any variant recorded. But both the palm-leaf manuscripts again read °*sphaṛaṇam*.

<sup>be</sup> *sukham āśu ca niṣpattaye.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *sukham āśu niṣpattaye*, which is the reading of A and C<sup>ac</sup>, with no variant reported. The *ca* has been added in the margin in C, by what I take to be a later hand. Nonetheless I prefer this reading, which seems to me more natural, and which mirrors the almost directly preceding *sukham āśu ca prāptaye*.

<sup>bf</sup> *sarvaṃ caitac cittamātratayā yathāpratibhāsam asattayā ca pariññeyam iti.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> omits the final *iti*, with no variant reported; the *iti* is, however, present in both palm-leaf manuscripts. The *iti* is not reflected in the Tibetan translation, and has presumably only the function of indicating the end of a section (*samāptau*), but even if it is possible that the particle was absent in the Sanskrit seen by the translators, I do not regard this as sufficient reason to omit it.

<sup>bg</sup> *yady api tajñānam asmin dehe sthitam tathāpi tan mahājñānam.* ] E<sub>TN</sub> reads *vyavasthitam* in place of *sthitam*. A note records *sthi-*

*tam* (sic, rather than *sthitam*) as the reading of *gha*. The two palm-leaf manuscripts differ, A having *vyavasthitam* and C *sthitam*. The Tibetan translation, with *gnas pa*, is more likely to render *sthitam* than *vyavasthitam*, and *dehe sthitam* is closer to the wording of the root text, *dehastham*. Without these two small but not insignificant arguments I would perhaps still prefer *sthitam*, but in that case it would only be as a result of ‘lying down’ on my ‘Housman’s stretcher’, C.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>bh</sup> *yathā hi buddhānām dharmadhātur anādinidhanas tathā tasya śuddhir api sarvabuddhagunaḥ abhijājanatāpi.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *tathāgatasya* for *tathā tasya*, with no variant recorded. They are, no doubt, following the apograph of A, which reads *tathāgatasya* (f. 6r11). But this is not a quite accurate representation of A. There has certainly been a correction, perhaps two successive corrections; unfortunately I am not completely certain of either the *ante correctionem* nor the intended *post correctionem* reading. I judge the latter however to be likely to be *tathā tasya*. The *ante correctionem* reading could conceivably have been *tathāgatasya*. As for C it simply and clearly reads *tathā tasya*. That reading seems to me to yield good sense in a straightforward manner. I understand the whole sentence to mean ‘For just as the Dharma Realm of the Buddhas is without beginning or end, so its purity too [is without beginning or end], and its being the vessel of the seeds of all the qualities of a Buddha too.’ It is worth noting that the Tibetan translation neither suggests *tathā tasya* nor *tathāgatasya*; instead it may reflect a reading *tathā taccittasya* (*bzin* [read *de bzin?*] *du sems de’i*). Such a reading would not be a bad one, it seems to me; but I nonetheless regard it as more likely to be secondary (perhaps the result of the intrusion of a gloss on *tasya/de’i?*), and follow again C.

<sup>bi</sup> *madīye ’pi jñāne sarvavastūnām prakhyānāt.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *madīye vijñāne*, recording *madīye ’pi jñāne* as the reading of *gha*. In fact both palm-leaf manuscripts read *madīye ’pi jñāne*, and that reading is arguably preferable. The change in terminology from *jñāna* (throughout this paragraph and the previous one) to *vijñāna* seems

<sup>28</sup>For the expression, which I think deserves to be better known than it is, see Housman 1905, xv.



implausible, and the particle *api* has some force. The Tibetan translation does not render *api*; for that matter, it does not reflect the locative ending clearly), but the translators are more likely to have had the word *jñāna* than *viññāna* before them: *bdag gi ye śes dños po rhams cad du snañ ba'o* (f. 271v2).

<sup>bj</sup> *vyāpako 'pi na sarvavastuja iti, dvayasamgr̥hītānām sarvavastūnām abhāvāt, tatpratibhāsānām apy alikatvāt.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *tat-tatpratibhāsānām* for *tatpratibhāsānām*; a footnote attributes the reading *tatpratibhāsānā°* (i.e., presumably, *tatpratibhāsānām*) to *gha*. In fact both palm-leaf manuscripts read *tatpratibhāsānām*, and the Tibetan translation too supports a single occurrence of the pronoun. The reading *tattatpratibhāsānām* again originates in the apograph of A (f. 6v1–2).

<sup>bk</sup> *bhūtabhautikādi yac chāstre proktaṃ tad viññāne laukikajñāne samavarudhyate saṃgrahaṃ yāti.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *bhūtabhautikaṃ* for *bhūtabhautikādi*. No variant is reported; but both palm-leaf manuscripts have *bhūtabhautikādi*. The Tibetan lacks a reflex of °*ādi*, but I do not think that this need be regarded as sufficient reason to depart from the testimony of the Sanskrit manuscripts.

<sup>bl</sup> *utpattikramaśabdo hy atra pāribhāṣiko na laukikaḥ.* ] *E<sub>TN</sub>* reads *paribhāṣiko*. A has been corrected, perhaps again more than once; the *post correctionem* reading is *pārabhāṣiko*, with the *akṣaras rabhāṣi* written by a later, rather clumsy, hand. I cannot determine the original *ante correctionem* reading. C has the normal, and doubtless correct, *pāribhāṣiko*. Since *E<sub>TN</sub>* records no variant, there is a possibility that *paribhāṣiko* is simply a typo.

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## A Later Interpolation or a Trace of the Earliest Reading? —*Ratnagoṭravibhāga* 5.19 and an “Extra Verse”—<sup>1</sup>

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The *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* was translated into Chinese by Ratnamati 勒那摩提 in the early 6th century. This is the earliest surviving witness of the text, one reflecting a textual transmission much older than those of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions (ca. the 11th century). In previous studies, however, unique words, expressions, or passages found only in the Chinese text and not in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts have been considered without further discussion as additions or modifications by the Chinese translator and not of Indic origin (or from a source circulated in India). In order to re-evaluate the significance of this Chinese text the present paper, a case study, aims to trace the possible Indic origin of text found only in it by focusing on verse 5.19 and an “extra verse” of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* reported in Tibetan commentaries.

### 1 The “extra verse”

David Jackson drew our attention to the “extra verse” in his introductory remarks to the facsimile edition of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* commentary by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (ca. 1059–1109), who brought the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* and its scholarly tradition to Tibet:

Another typical feature of rNgog-lo’s writings and personality which one could mention here was his acute critical sense. According to Gro-lung-pa’s versified biography of rNgog-lo (v. 25), the master corrected and removed even the smallest faults from all scriptures and

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treatises he read—including even those he just glanced at. Such a mentality seems to be reflected in the critical discussion near the end of his *rGyud bla ma* commentary (pp. 128.3–129.1) of a putative “extra” verse in the basic verses. Here he discusses the possibility that this verse was an extraneous addition to the original work. (Jackson 1993: 19)

rNgog’s statement in question is as follows:

*gzhung kha cig las tshigs su bcad ’di’i de ma thag tu |*  
*ma rig mdongs rnam kyis kyang srin bu’i yig ’dra’i mu stegs bstan bcos*  
*su yang ||*  
***don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang***  
***yin dang ||***  
*’jig rten so so’i legs bshad gang de’ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin ’dzin*  
*na ||*  
*gsung gang zag med blo mnga’ rnam kyis zhal nas byung smos ci dgos ||<sup>2</sup>*  
 (Boldfaced text will be discussed later.)

In some text (*gzhung kha cig*) [there is] a reading (*’don pa*) immediately after this verse (i.e., RGV 5.19): “Even those blinded due to their ignorance (i.e., non-Buddhists) receive, as if it were a wise sage[’s words] (*drang srong bzhin*), each mundane well-spoken teaching (*legs bshad*, *subhāṣita*)—accompanied by *artha* and *dharma* (*don ldan chos ldan*) and removing defilements in the triple realms (*sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed*)—found in non-Buddhists’ treatises, which are like a woodworm’s [bore marks forming what appear to be] letters<sup>3</sup> (*srin bu’i yig*, *ghuṇākṣara*). Thus how much more [ought they to receive] the words uttered by those (i.e., bodhisattvas) possessed of unafflicted wisdom (*anāsravajñāna*)!”

As pointed out by Jackson, rNgog judges this verse as “an extraneous addition to the original work” “because it is obvious that this was interpolated by some self-satisfied person” (*mi rang dgar byed pa ’ga’ zhig gis bcug par snang bas*). According to rNgog, this is an interpolation because the contents of this verse accord neither with the

2 For the full text of this passage, see Appendix 2.

3 An alternative translation is “what appear to be [in] some alphabet.”



corresponding explanation found in the heading preceding the Tibetan text<sup>4</sup> nor with the corresponding explanation in the commentary verse, RGV 5.26 (see Appendix 1). As far as the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* are concerned, rNgog's judgement seems plausible.

## 2 On the 11th-century source text of the “extra verse”: *gzhung kha cig*

rNgog's argument against this “extra verse” was seconded by later *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* commentators in Tibet, for instance, Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169), bCom ldan ral gri (1227–1305), gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481), Glo bo mkhan chen (1456–1532), and rGyal tshab (1364–1432).<sup>5</sup> bCom ldan ral gri for one states that this “extra verse” is found in a “Kashmiri manuscript” (*kha che'i dpe kha cig*),<sup>6</sup> rNgog having merely stated that it was found in “some text” (*gzhung kha cig*). If bCom ldan ral gri's statement is true, the verse in question must have been transmitted within a Kashmiri tradition before the 11th century.<sup>7</sup>

## 3 Remarks on the “extra verse”

Although rNgog held this verse to be a later interpolation, the verse has some remarkable early features that call into question rNgog's judgement, namely the boldface in the Tibetan text quoted above:

- (1) *srin bu'i yig 'dra'i mu stegs bstan bcos* premises a passage from the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*;
- (2) *don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang yin* reprises parts of RGV 5.18, which is in turn based on the *Adhyāśaya-saṃcodanasūtra*;
- (3) *drang srong bzhin 'dzin* reprises a phrase in RGV 5.19 (*ārśam iva pratīcchet*).

4 D4025, 128b3: *gang gis bshad pa de las brtsams te tshigs su bcad pa*.

5 See below, Appendix 2 and Kano 2016: 290–291.

6 See below, Appendix 2.

7 On the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility that rNgog's *gzhung kha cig* refers to the lost translation of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* by Atiṣa and Nag tsho Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba, which predates rNgog's own translation (see Kano 2016: 156–163).

### 3.1 *srin bu'i yig 'dra'i mu stegs bstan bcos*

The expression in the first line of the verse “non-Buddhists’ treatises, which are like a woodworm’s [bore marks forming what appear to be] letters” harkens back to *ghuṇākṣaranyāya*, “the maxim of letters bored by an insect in wood” listed by V.S. Apte in his “Collection of Popular Sanskrit Maxims” appended to his *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, concerning which he writes: “It takes its origin from the unexpected and chance resemblance of an incision in wood or in the leaf of a book made by an insect to the form of some letter and is used to denote any fortuitous or chance occurrence.” The maxim found use here and there, including in Buddhist literature, for example in Śāntarakṣita’s *Tattvasaṃgraha* v. 2352c,<sup>8</sup> but the most striking instance is the following passage in the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*:

*mu stegs pa rnams kyis bdag bstan pa ni srin bus brkos pa'i yi ge dang 'dra ste | de'i phyir nga sems can thams cad la bdag med do zhes bstan pa ston par mdzad do ||* (*Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*, § 107, l. 10–12)<sup>9</sup>

The instruction on *ātman* by non-Buddhists is like letters [consisting] of incisions left by a woodworm (*\*ghuṇa*). Therefore, [the Buddha] said, “I taught that no sentient being has an *ātman*.”

This is detailed in the following passage in the same *sūtra*:

*dper na shing ngam rtsig pa la srin bus brkos te | yi ge'i 'bru 'dra bar gyur pa mthong yang mkhas pa rnams kyis srin bus yi ge shes so zhes brjod par mi bgyi | yi ge sbyar ba lta bur gyur kyang ya mtshan du gzung bar mi bgyi ba (...)* (*Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*, § 106, ll. 69–72)<sup>10</sup>

For instance, a woodworm bites into wood or a wall surface, and [its trail] happens to take the shape of letters, but when knowledgeable

8 *Tattvasaṃgraha*, v. 2352: *sarvam etad dvijātīnām mithyāmānavijrmbhitam | ghuṇākṣaravad āpannam sūktam naiṣām hi kiñcana ||*. Kamalaśīla’s *Pañjikā* explains: *ghuṇākṣaravad iti kākatāliyanāyāyēnāpīty arthah*.

9 Cf. Translation by 法顯 (T12, 863a8–9): 似彼虫食爲書。諸異道輩受吾我 故而言無我; Translation by 曇無讖 (T12, 378c24–25): 是諸外道所言我者、如虫食木偶成字耳。是故如來於佛法中唱是無我。

10 Cf. Translation by 法顯 (T12, 862c15–17): 譬如板木有虫食跡似生<sup>a</sup>名字。不善書者謂是真字。其善書者乃知非真。(°生] Yang, Ming; 王 Taishō); Translation by 曇無讖 (T12, 378b28–28): 如虫食木有成字者、此虫不知是字、非字。智人見之終不唱言、是虫解字。亦不驚怪。

people see them, they never say that woodworms know the letters. Although it might look like [a woodworm] has written letters, [these people] never take them as something extraordinary. (...)

The passage in the verse in question, “non-Buddhists’ treatises, which are like a woodworm’s [bore marks forming what appear to be] letters,” obviously echoes these *sūtra* passages. The *sūtra* says that the Buddha first taught people the absence of *ātman* as a provisional teaching in order to steer them away from this mistaken non-Buddhists idea, and later taught them the true *ātman* (i.e., *tathāgatagarbha*) as a definitive teaching. According to the *sūtra*, this non-Buddhist *ātman* is like a woodworm’s letter-like marks because non-Buddhists were being taught only the semblance of the true *ātman*.<sup>11</sup>

The author of the “extra verse” was obviously familiar with the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*, and probably expected readers to be equally familiar with it. If so, the verse is less likely to have been a later interpolation, as rNgog thought, since the textual tradition of the *sūtra* seems to have lessened in the course of development of Indian Buddhism. Rather, there is a chance that the “extra verse” was later replaced by the verse (i.e., RGV 5.19) currently preserved in Sanskrit and Tibetan texts.

Another remarkable point is that references to the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra* in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* are said to have been deliberately limited,<sup>12</sup> so that this “extra verse” would have been one of the rare cases that alludes to it.

### 3.2 *don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gangyin*

The expression in the second line of the verse, “[each mundane well-spoken teaching (*subhāṣita*)] accompanied by *artha* and *dharmā* (*don ldan chos ldan*) and removing defilements in the triple realms (*sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed*),” repeats phrases in RGV 5.18, which runs:

*yad arthavad dharmapadopasamhitam tridhātusamkleśanibar-*  
*haṇam vacaḥ |*

11 Cf. Jones 2020: 37–38.

12 See, for instance, Takasaki 1974.

*bhavec ca yac chāntyānuśamsadarśakam tad uktam ārṣam viparītam  
anyathā ||*

(Transl.) When an expression (*vacas*, i.e., teaching) (1) has *artha* (i.e., is meaningful) (2) is accompanied by *dharma*-words (*dharmapada*), (3) is conducive to removing defilements in the triple realm, (4) offers (or displays) praise to the peaceful state (*śānti*, i.e., *nirvāna*), it is called the words of a sage (*ārṣam*, i.e., here, the Buddha's words). But [an expression] of the opposite character is otherwise.

Our “extra verse” mentions the three criteria (1) (2) (3) of a “well-spoken teaching” (*subhāṣita*), namely, words (*vacas*) which are *arthavat*, *dharmapadopasaṃhita*, and *tridhātusaṃkleśanibarhaṇa*, but it leaves out the fourth criterion (4). While RGV 5.18 teaches that any text satisfying these four criteria can be regarded as *ārṣa* (i.e., the Buddha's words), our verse states that since even mundane well-spoken teachings in non-Buddhists' treatises that meet three of these criteria are accepted as a sage[’s words] (*drang srong bzhin*),<sup>13</sup> how much more should the well-spoken teachings in the Buddhist treatises be. These four criteria are, according to Prajñākaramati (ca. early 11th century), based on a passage in the *Adhyāśayasamcodanasūtra*, which runs:

*api tu maitreya caturbhiḥ kāraṇaiḥ pratibhānam sarvaṃ buddha-  
bhāṣitam veditavyam | katamais caturbhiḥ | iha maitreya pratibhānam  
arthopasaṃhitam bhavati nānarthopasaṃhitam | dharmopasaṃhi-  
tam bhavati nādharmopasaṃhitam | kleśaprahāyakaṃ bhavati na  
kleśavivardhakam | nirvāṇaguṇānuśamsasamdarśakam bhavati na  
saṃsāraguṇānuśamsasamdarśakam | etais caturbhiḥ | peyālam |<sup>14</sup>*

(1) On the other hand, O Maitreya, when an insightful expression (or inspired speech, *pratibhāna*)<sup>15</sup> is accompanied by four conditions, the expression should be known as the teaching of all buddhas. By which four? In this regard, O Maitreya, when an insightful expression is **meaningful** (*arthopasaṃhita*), it is [the teaching of all buddhas], but not when [it] is meaningless (*anarthopasaṃhita*). When

13 The original Sanskrit for *drang srong bzhin* was probably not \**rṣir iva* but \**ārṣam iva*, echoing RGV 5.19d. See below.

14 *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā*, p. 205. Cf. Wakahara 1990 and Kano 2021.

15 See Seyfort Ruegg 1995: 180 n. 53.

[an insightful expression] **is accompanied by rightness** (or a buddha’s teaching, *dharma*), it is [the teaching of all buddhas], but not when [it] is accompanied by wickedness (or lacks a buddha’s teaching, *adharmā*). When [an insightful expression] **is conducive to removing defilements**, it is [the teaching of all buddhas], but not when [it] is conducive to increasing defilements. When [an insightful expression] offers **praise to *nirvāṇa*’s qualities**, it is [the teaching of all buddhas], but not when [an expression] offers praise to *saṃsāra*’s qualities. O Maitreya, when accompanied by these four, [all insightful expressions should be known as the Buddha’s words (*\*buddhabhāṣita*)].<sup>16</sup>

This *sūtra*-passage—probably the source for RGV 5.18—states that any *pratibhāṇa* (anything insightful spoken by a *dharmabhāṇaka*) which fulfills the four criteria should be regarded as having been taught by the Buddha (*buddhabhāṣita*); and RGV 5.18 itself, that any *vacas* (word or statement) which fulfills the same four is taught as being the Buddha’s word (*ārṣam*). With the replacement of the expression “*pratibhāṇa*” with a more general term “*vacas*,” RGV 5.18 seems to be implying an extension of the range of referents up to a written text (i.e., the RGV)

Our “extra verse” appears to have appropriated the phrase in RGV 5.18 rather than being based on the source *sūtra*, since the wording corresponds exactly to that in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*. The reason why the verse mentions the first three criteria while omitting the fourth criterion (*śāntyanuśamsadarśaka*) is obviously because the fourth one is only applicable to Buddhist treatises, not to “non-Buddhists’ treatises” (*muṣṭeḥ bṣtan bcos*).

### 3.3 *drang srong bzhin ’dzin*

The phrase in the third line of our verse “receive, as if it were a sage[’s words]” links to RGV 5.19:

*yat syād avikṣiptamanobhir uktam śāstāram ekaṃ jinam uddiśadbhiḥ |*  
*mokṣāptisambhārapathānukūlaṃ mūrdhnā tad apy ārṣam iva pratī-*  
*cchet ||*

<sup>16</sup> The words in square brackets are supplied on the basis of the Tibetan translation. See Kano 2021.

When [an expression/teaching] is uttered by [bodhisattvas] possessed of an undistorted mind who declare that the Victor (*jina*) is the sole teacher and that [that expression/teaching] is in accord with the path of accumulation leading to the attainment of liberation, **one should** respectfully (*mürdhnā*) **receive** (*praticchet*) it, too, **as if it were the Sage’s words** (*ārṣam iva*).

The expression *drang srong bzhin ’dzin* obviously corresponds to *ārṣam iva praticchet* in RGV 5.19d. This expression *drang srong bzhin ’dzin* literally means “accept as if it were the Sage,” but in view of the parallelism with RGV 5.19 and the comparison (i.e., between well-spoken teachings in non-Buddhists’ treatises and the Sage[s words]), we can understand—due to the limitation on syllables in the verse—that *drang srong bzhin ’dzin* is a truncated expression for *drang srong [bka’] bzhin ’dzin*, as in RGV 5.19d (*de yang drang srong bka’ bzhin spyi bos blang*).

#### 4 Contextualizing the “extra verse” in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*

Let us summarize RGV 5.18, 5.19, and the “extra verse”: RGV 5.18 defines the criteria for establishing the Buddha’s words as such, RGV 5.19 expands the context in which those criteria apply (to include the teaching of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* itself), and our “extra verse” states that the words “uttered by those (i.e., bodhisattvas) possessed of unafflicted wisdom” (*gsung gang zag med blo mnga’ rnam kyī zhal nas byung*) and that meet the criteria (again implying the teaching of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* itself), too, should be received as the Buddha’s words (i.e., on a par with the Buddha’s own words).<sup>17</sup> In other words, while RGV 5.18 defines the

17 Phya pa Chos kyī seng ge summarizes the “extra verse” in his *rGyud bla don gsal*, p. 343.4–5 (see also Appendix 2): *’on kyang ’di yod na ’di’i don ni ’di yin ste | phyi rol pa dang ’jig rten pa’i gtsug lag las legs par bshad pa ’byung* (read: *’byung ba*) *yang gzung na chos ’dir gtogs pa’i bstan bcos lta ci smos zhes pa’o || de’ang byed pa po dang rang bzhin dang rnam pa dang gang du byas pa rnam ma rig mdongs rnam zhes pa dang | don ldan zhes pa dang srin bu’i myig* (sic for *yig*) *’dra zhes pa dang | mu stegs bstan bcos dang ’jig rten so so’i legs bshad zhes pa nas rim pa bzhin no ||* (Translation:) “If, however, [we accept that] this [‘extra verse’] exists [in the original text of the RGV], the meaning of [the verse] is as follows: When there is a well-spoken teaching [even] among non-Buddhists and in mundane treatises, we will receive it. It applies all the more to [well-spoken teachings in] Buddhist treatises. [In this verse], further, (1) the agent [who receives the teaching], (2) the nature [of the teaching], (3) the mode [in which it is taught], and (4) the

words of the Buddha, both RGV 5.19 and the “extra verse” assert that the words of bodhisattvas count as the Buddha’s words as well.

Both RGV 5.19 and our “extra verse,” then, similarly uphold the textual authenticity of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* (i.e., the words of a bodhisattva) itself as being the Buddha’s words, and thus either of the two may seem redundant. Still, apart from this redundancy, the “extra verse” fits perfectly into the context.

### 5 A problem still unsolved: the summarizing verse RGV 5.26

The most crucial problem left unsolved is an inconsistency arising from the summarizing verse RGV 5.26, a list of contents of verses 5.16–19. In concrete terms, while RGV 5.26 refers to four verses (i.e., RGV 5.16–19) as clarifying four topics (i.e., the foundation of the teaching in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* etc.; *ślokaiś caturbhiḥ paridīpitam*), if we add the “extra verse” to these four, the number of verses becomes five, in contradiction to RGV 5.26, which mentions only four.<sup>18</sup> This problem was pointed out by Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge in his commentary on the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*,<sup>19</sup> and was the main reason why the “extra verse” was regarded by rNgog and his followers as a later interpolation.

### 6 Tracing the “extra verse” back to the 6th-century text: the Chinese translation

Is the “extra verse,” then, just a later addition by a “self-satisfied person” (*mi rang dgar byed pa ’ga’ zhig*) and has nothing to do with the original text, as rNgog states? There is counterevidence to rNgog’s judgement,

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places [where the teaching is taught] are respectively [specified] by the expressions ‘blinded ones,’ ‘meaningful [teaching],’ ‘[treatises whose] letters [look] like a woodworm’s [bore] marks,’ and ‘non-Buddhists’ and ‘mundane well-spoken teaching.’

18 For the text and a translation of RGV 5.26, see below.

19 *rGyud bla don gsal*, p. 343.3: ‘og nas *tshigs su bcad pa bzhis bstan* (RGV 5.26) *zhes ’jug* (read: *mjug*) *sdud nas ’byung ba* (read: *bas*) ‘*di yod na tshigs su bcad pa lngar ’gyur bas ’di ni rang dga’ ba kha cig gis bshad ba yin no* ||. “Since afterward in the final summary [of the text] (i.e., RGV 5.26) there is the statement ‘They (i.e., the four topics taught in RGV 5.16–19) are clarified in **four** verses,’ if [this ‘extra verse’] exists [in the text, the number of] verses becomes **five** [instead of four, and thus contradicts what is taught in RGV 5.26]. This [‘extra verse’] was, therefore, articulated by some self-satisfied person [and is not part of the original text].”

namely, the Chinese translation (of both the *mūla*-verse text and the commentary), which contains the following verse in place of RGV 5.19 (bold-faced words are ones corresponding to the “extra verse”):

雖說法句義 斷三界煩惱 無明覆慧眼 貪等垢所縛  
 又於佛法中 取少分說者 世典善言說 彼三尚可受  
 何況諸如來 遠離煩惱垢 無漏智慧人 所說修多羅

(T<sub>31</sub>, 820b9–12 = 847b28–c3)

There are those who teach *dharmapada*, *artha*, and the abandonment of defilements of the triple realm, but whose wisdom-eyes are covered by ignorance are bound by such impurities as greed, and only partially accept the Buddhist teachings; even such people receive well-spoken teachings (善言, \**subhāṣita*) in mundane treatises (世典, i.e., non-Buddhist treatises) which teach these three [topics] (i.e., which teach what fulfills the three criteria).<sup>20</sup> Thus how much more [will they receive] “sūtras” (修多羅) [that fulfill the four criteria] taught by *tathāgatas* and by [bodhisattvas] possessed of unafflicted wisdom (*anāsravajñāna*) who are free from the impurity of defilements!

In order to clarify the correspondences, I shall again quote here the “extra verse,” marking the corresponding words in bold:

*ma rig mdongs rnam* kyis *kyang srin bu'i yig' dra'i mu stegs bstan bcos*  
*su yang* ||  
*don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang*  
*yin dang* ||  
*'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de'ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin 'dzin*  
*na* ||  
*gsung gang zag med blo mnga' rnam* kyi *zhal nas byung smos ci*  
*dgos* ||

These two versions more or less match each other in terms of their structure (e.g., *smos ci dgos* and 何況), expressions, and themes.<sup>21</sup> With

20 The three topics (說法句義斷三界煩惱) are the criteria by which a teaching can be recognized as an *ārṣa* (as defined in RGV 5.18).

21 Differences between the two versions are: in the first two lines (*pādas* abc in the Tibetan) 世典 can correspond to *mu stegs bstan bcos*, but *srin bu'i yig' dra'i* is missing in the Chinese; a precise equivalence of the the phrases 貪等垢所縛 又於佛



regard to the first two lines of the Chinese version, there is room for other interpretations,<sup>22</sup> and my translation is based on the above-mentioned investigations of the verse. We can summarize the contents of the two versions as follows:

The Chinese version:

If even ignorant people who teach three (of the four) topics (required for them to be accepted as a sage's words) accept<sup>23</sup> mundane teachings fulfilling the three criteria, how much more (deserve to be accepted) the teachings (or sūtras) of *tathāgatas* and bodhisattvas that fulfill the same criteria, (which represent the fourth criterion).

The Tibetan version:

If even ignorant people accept teachings fulfilling the three criteria in non-Buddhist treatises as if they were a sage's words, how much more will they accept the teachings of bodhisattvas that fulfill the same criteria (with addition of the fourth criteria).

What is intended by these two versions in common is obviously the request to readers to accept the teachings by bodhisattvas that complete

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法中 取少分説者 is not found in the Tibetan; and in the last line the words 諸如来 and 修多羅 are not found in the Tibetan. The most crucial problem is the ambiguous syntactic structure of the first two lines in the Chinese version, which is smoother in the Tibetan version.

22 As for the first two lines, alternative translations are possible:

“If those whose wisdom-eyes are covered by ignorance despite being taught [topics fulfilling the three criteria], i.e., *dharmapada*, *artha*, and the abandonment of defilements of the triple realm—who are bound fast by such impurities as greed, and who only partially accept the Buddha's teachings—then even they will receive well-spoken teachings in mundane treatises which teach [topics fulfilling] these three [criteria]”;

“Although [some scripture] teaches *dharmapada*, *artha*, and the abandonment of defilements of the triple realm, when the wisdom-eyes [of readers] are covered by ignorance, they will be bound fast by such impurities as greed. Even those who partially accept the Buddhist teachings receive well-spoken teachings in mundane treatises which teach these [topics fulfilling] these three [criteria].”

The translation (書き下し) by Takasaki 1999: 260 is again different from these “法句の義を説き、三界の煩惱を断つと雖も、無明、慧眼を覆い、貪等の垢に纏わるるあり、又、仏法中に於いて、少分の説を取る者あり。世典にして良き言説あり——彼の三すら尚、受く可し。何に況んや、諸の如来と、諸煩惱を遠離せる無漏の智慧人の所説の修多羅においてをや。”

23 An alternative interpretation is: If even ignorant people, when teachings of three topics are taught, accept ...

the criteria for being the Buddha's words; the immediately following verses RGV 5.20–24 criticize both the abandonment of the Mahāyāna and a preference for the *śrāvakas'* path.<sup>24</sup>

### 7 The “extra verse”: The earliest available version of RGV 5.19

The most remarkable point is the fact that in this Chinese text RGV 5.19 is replaced by this verse. If we consider two points, namely, (1) in the Chinese text the verse is a replacement (i.e., is not an interpolation), and (2) RGV 5.19 and this verse overlap in content (as mentioned above), we can classify the verse as an earlier (or the earliest available) version of RGV 5.19 (henceforth **RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup>**), meaning that what we currently have as RGV 5.19 in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts is a younger version of the same verse (henceforth **RGV 5.19<sup>Y</sup>**).

Accordingly, it has become clear that the “extra verse” found in “some text” (*gzhung kha cig*, or “a Kashmiri manuscript”) transmitted in the 11th century in India is not a later interpolation, but rather a witness of possibly the earliest version of RGV 5.19. To shift our perspective, although the verse in the Chinese text does not correspond to the Sanskrit version of RGV 5.19<sup>Y</sup>, it is not an unpolished or loose Chinese translation of the current Sanskrit version, but rather simply a different (and earlier attested) version of the same verse, one traceable to an Indic source.

### 8 Toward solving the problem of the summarizing verse RGV 5.26: again two versions

Let us turn back to the problem still to be solved, that is, the inconsistency with the summarizing verse RGV 5.26. It seems that the problem with regard to the number of verses (stated in RGV 5.26 as “four verses”) is immediately cleared up if we take the verse as an old version of RGV 5.19, for then the number of verses remains four. But the situation is more complicated. Let us compare the Sanskrit text of RGV 5.26–27 with the Chinese version.<sup>25</sup> The former runs:

24 At the same time, this verse points out to readers the fault of *śrāvakas* (i.e., not accepting the Buddha's words in the Mahāyāna).

25 Since the Tibetan text is more or less similar to the Sanskrit, I omit here the Tibetan.

*yataś ca yannimittam ca yathā ca yadudāhṛtam |  
yanniṣyandaṃ ca tac chlokaiś caturbhiḥ<sup>26</sup> paridīpitam ||*

Four verses (RGV 5.16–19<sup>Y</sup>) clarify [the following five points]: on what basis (RGV 5.16a), with what motivation (RGV 5.16bcd), and in what way (RGV 5.17) [this treatise was taught], what [topics] are set forth [in it] (RGV 5.18), and what consequences [it has] (RGV 5.19<sup>Y</sup>).

*ātmasaṃrakṣaṇopāyo dvābhyām ekena ca kṣateḥ |  
hetuḥ phalam atha dvābhyām ślokābhyām paridīpitam ||*

Two verses (RGV 5.20–21) clarify the means of protecting oneself, one verse (RGV 5.22) clarifies the causes leading to the destruction [of the Buddha's excellent teaching], and then two verses (RGV 5.23–24) clarify the result [of the destruction].

The Chinese version of the same verses (RGV 5.26–27) is significantly different:

依何等法說 依何等義說 依何等相說 如彼法而說  
如彼義而說 如彼相而說 彼一切諸法 六行偈示現

Six lines of verse (RGV 5.16–18) clarify [the following three points]: what *dharma* (法), what *artha* (義), and what characteristics (相) all of this teaching taught is based on.

護自身方便 以七行偈說 明誹謗正法 故有三行偈  
六偈示彼因 以二偈示現 於彼說法人 深生敬重心

Seven lines of verse (RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup>–5.21) clarify the means of protecting oneself (護自身方便), and the three lines of verse (RGV 5.22) clarify [the fault of] the criticizing the excellent teaching, six [lines] of verse (RGV 5.23–24) clarify the cause of it (i.e., the teaching), and two [lines] of verse (RGV 5.24+: only preserved in the Chinese text<sup>27</sup>)

26 cd: *yanniṣyandaṃ ca tac chlokaiś*] Ms. A (Schmithausen), *yanniṣyandaphalam ślokaiś* Johnston.

27 若人令衆生 覺信如是法 彼是我父母 亦是善知識 彼人是智者 以如來滅後 迴邪見顛倒 令入正道故 (T<sub>31</sub>, 820c11–14). (Translation) “If somebody makes sentient beings understand and believe in this teaching [of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga*], he is my father and mother, my virtuous teacher (*kalyāṇamitra*), and a knowledgeable one (智者), for after the *tathāgata*'s passing he [in his place] removes mistaken views and leads people to the correct paths.” The phrase “father and mother” obviously echoes the same words in RGV 5.24b “-mātāpitṛ-”

clarify the profound (深) arising (生) of respect (敬重心) for those who proclaim it (i.e., the teaching).

In sum, the topics and their corresponding verses according to the Sanskrit and Chinese versions of RGV 5.26–27 are as follows<sup>28</sup>:

*RGV 5.16–24 and their themes according to two versions of summerizing verses 5.26–27*

Sanskrit version <sup>29</sup>		Chinese version	
5.16a	<i>yataś</i>	5.16	依何等法說
5.16abc	<i>yannimittam</i>		
5.17	<i>yathā</i>	5.17	依何等義說
5.18	<i>yadudāhṛtam</i>	5.18	依何等相說
5.19 <sup>Y</sup>	<i>yanniṣyandam</i>		
5.20–21	<i>ātmasaṃrakṣaṇopāyaḥ</i>	5.19 <sup>E</sup> –21	護自身方便
5.22	<i>kṣateḥ hetuḥ</i>	5.22	誹謗正法
5.23–24	<i>kṣateḥ phalaṃ</i>	5.23–24	彼因 <sup>30</sup>
		5.24+	於彼說法人深生敬重心

While the current Sanskrit version of RGV 5.26 takes RGV 5.16–19<sup>Y</sup> as a series of verses forming a unit, the Chinese version of RGV 5.26–27 identifies RGV 5.16–18 as one set of verses and RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup>–21 as another, the latter clarifying “a means of protecting oneself” (護自身方便), namely from the misfortune resulting from the bad *karman* of criticizing a buddha’s or bodhisattva’s teachings. Under these circumstances, RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup> fits the context of the Chinese version, since it requests readers to accept the treatise’s teaching, which fulfills the criteria for being accepted as the Buddha’s words.<sup>31</sup>

28 The correspondences of topics and verses are confirmed by introductory sentences added to each verse in the Sanskrit and Chinese texts.

29 The Tibetan text of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* (D4025) has introductory phrases to these verses which are not found in the Sanskrit. For instance, RGV 5.17, 5.18, and 5.19 are respectively followed by “*ji ltar bshad pa ’di las brtsams te tshigs su bcad pa,*” “*gang bshad pa de las brtsams te tshigs su bcad pa,*” “*gang gis bshad pa de las brtsams te tshigs su bcad pa.*”

30 Takasaki 1999: 313 n. 7 points out that 彼因 is probably a mistake for 彼果.

31 RGV 5.20 teaches that one should not deviate from (*na vicālyam*) the Buddha’s word because only a buddha knows reality; if one does deviate, one will be guilty of rejecting the excellent teaching. RGV 5.21 states that criticism of *āryas* and their teachings is due to foolish bondage to attachment; it draws a physical comparison: only a clean cloth is dyeable,

It is obvious that not only RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup> but also 5.26–27 as preserved in the Chinese translation are significantly different from what we have in the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions. It is thus very probable that, like RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup>, RGV 5.26–27 of the Chinese version reflect an earlier recension traceable to an Indic tradition. In the light of this earlier available version of the *Ratnatotravibhāga* preserved in the Chinese, rNgog's criticism of the "extra verse" based on the current Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of RGV 5.26 can no longer be held valid.<sup>32</sup>

### 9 The preamble of the *mūla*-verse text missing in the current Sanskrit version

Accordingly, we know that the unique variations only found in the Chinese text were not an invention on the part of the Chinese translator but derive from an Indic recension. There are further unique variations only found in the Chinese text,<sup>33</sup> and one of the most crucial ones is the preamble consisting of 18 verses in the *mūla*-verse text of the Chinese translation (T<sub>31</sub>, 813a11–b17). These preamble verses are very closely related to the last chapter of the text (above all, RGV 5.16–25<sup>+</sup>) and share expressions with it.<sup>34</sup> The final and the preamble verses were probably worked on by the same Indic redactor. (Note that the text of the *mūla*-verses was likely the work of multiple authors.<sup>35</sup>)

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not a greasy cloth, meaning that the treatise's teaching is only for people with a pure mind, not for the stubborn bound by attachments. RGV 5.20 and 5.21 respectively deal with criticism of the Buddha's and his disciples' teaching. They parallel RGV 5.18 and 5.19, which also deal with the Buddha's and his disciples' teaching. These verses assert that one should not criticize the teaching of a buddha's disciples (i.e., bodhisattvas), since it matches the Buddha's teaching.

32 On the other hand, it is valid for the text seen by rNgog, which had both the new and old versions of RGV 5.19.

33 For instance, the quotation of *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* 9.23–24b is only found in the Chinese translation of the RGV (T<sub>31</sub>, 829c23–803a4). See Takasaki 1966: 212, n. 96, Kano 2016: 389, n. 19.

34 For instance, the expressions 順三乘菩提 and 對三界煩惱 in the preamble verses (T<sub>31</sub>, 813a17) respectively correspond to *mokṣāptisambhārapathānukūla* and *tridhātusamkleśanibarhaṇa* in RGV 5.18b and 5.19<sup>v</sup>c.

35 Takasaki (1999: 22) pointed out the correspondances between the last verses and the preamble verses, but speculated that these preamble verses were possibly added to the text during its transmission in Central Asia ("なお、漢訳冒頭の「教化品」の諸偈は梵本、チベット訳には存在せず、恐らく中国に渡来する以前に西域に流

Around the 5th century when the Sanskrit original of the Chinese text was being copied in India,<sup>36</sup> the updating of the *mūla*-verse text was still ongoing. We know that the textual transmission of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* was so fluid that the way was open to produce several derivative texts of this work, including 大乘法界無差別論, 佛性論, and even a sūtranized text 無上依經.

This Chinese text lacks the name of the author of the text, so that its authorship had probably not yet been determined in the Indic tradition on which Ratnamati's Chinese translation was based. From another perspective, the open authorship could not but have served to increase the textual fluidity. The anonymity probably mirrors the continuous redacting process of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* by multiple persons.<sup>37</sup> It was, as we know, only later that the authorship of this text was ascribed to Sāramati, Maitreya, etc.<sup>38</sup>

## 10 Tracing the current Sanskrit version of RGV 5.19 back to an earlier source

We saw above that the “extra verse” reported in the 11th-century text material is traceable back to an early-6th-century text preserved in Chinese and is identifiable as the earliest available version of RGV 5.19. On the other hand, the current Sanskrit version of RGV 5.19 attested in two Sanskrit manuscripts (Ms. A and Ms. B<sup>39</sup>), and the Tibetan translation of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* can be dated to around the 11 or 12th century. Is this version, RGV 5.19<sup>y</sup>, preserved in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, then, just a later revision, or is it too traceable back to an earlier source?

There exists a text in Chinese translation which quotes RGV 5.16–27, namely, Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānaśāstra* commentary (T no. 1595:

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伝中にも加わったものであろう。そこでは法師を誹謗することを誡めているが、これは「信功徳品」中で漢訳のみが法師を敬重すべきことを説く偈を挿入していることと呼応しているように思われる。”)

36 Ratnamati's arrival in China was either in A.D. 498 or 508 (discussed by Susumu Ōtake 2013: 46–47). See Kano 2016: 20.

37 For the relation between the anonymity of the RGV and its scriptural authenticity, see Kano 2021.

38 See Kano 2016: 29 (Table: Assignment of Authorship to the RGV) and Kano 2021.

39 See Kano 2016: 17.

T31, 270a9–b6) translated by Paramārtha 真諦 (499–569) in A.D. 563.<sup>40</sup> RGV 5.19 preserved in this material runs:

若亂心人作是說 能顯佛是無上師  
隨順涅槃道資糧 頂戴此言如佛教 (T31, 270a15–16)

When [a teaching] is uttered [even] by **one with a distorted mind** who declares that the Buddha is the [single] supreme teacher and is in accord with the accumulation that is the path for [the attainment of] *nirvāṇa*, one should respectfully receive (or serve) these words, as if they were the Buddha’s teachings.

This precisely corresponds to the current Sanskrit version of the same verse (see Appendix 1, RGV 5.19) except for the bold-faced expression 亂心人 “one with a distorted mind,” the negative of which is expressed in the Sanskrit: *avikṣiptamanobhir* “by those possessed of an **undistorted** mind” (RGV 5.19<sup>a</sup>). We might be tempted to correct 若亂心人 to 無亂心人 so as fit the Sanskrit, but alternatively we can simply keep the reading as it is without changing any words. This expression 若亂心人 reminds us of one in RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup> (≈ the “extra verse”), which states that even as the spiritually blind<sup>41</sup> (無明覆慧眼, *ma rig mdongs rnam*) accept mundane teachings that meet three (of the four) criteria of being the Buddha’s word, how much more do they accept the teachings of bodhisattvas (“and *tathāgatas*” in the Chinese) that display the same criteria. The expression 亂心人 thus corresponds to 無明覆慧眼 or *ma rig mdongs rnam* in RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup> in substance, if not literally. If the reading 若亂心人 is correct, the verse preserved in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* commentary matches the current Sanskrit version almost word for word, while at the same time it also suggests some link to RGV 5.19<sup>E</sup>. If so, this version of the verse might bridge the gap between the earlier and the younger versions of RGV 5.19.

In any event, the current Sanskrit version of RGV 5.19 can be traceable to this *Mahāyānasamgraha* commentary and extends back at least to the date of its Chinese translation, A.D. 563. Moreover, RGV 5.26–28

40 This was identified by Takasaki 1964. Puji 普寂 (651–739) was aware that the verses were citations from the RGV (see his 攝大乘論釋略疏, T68, 200b4). These RGV verses are found only in this translation by Paramārtha, not in other versions of Vasubandha’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* commentary.

41 Lit. “those whose wisdom-eyes are covered with (or blinded by) ignorance.”

of Paramārtha's translation also matches the current Sanskrit and Tibetan versions precisely.<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, we know that if Paramārtha had obtained his knowledge of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* when he was still in India, then the same version of RGV 5.16–28 preserved in the current Sanskrit and Tibetan texts was already circulating in India (in particular, his homeland Ujjainī) before A.D. 543, when he was active in West India as an adherent probably of the Sāmmitīya (正量部) before heading off towards 廣州南海群 via Funan (扶南国).<sup>43</sup>

We cannot exclude the possibility that even Paramārtha himself was a redactor of the version of the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* that is currently preserved in the Sanskrit and Tibetan, for we know of his profound knowledge of and keen interest in the *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* from his translations. In other words, the version redacted by Paramārtha was transmitted and spread in India before his departure for China and continued to be so up to the 11th century.<sup>44</sup>

## 11 Conclusion

We started out investigating the “extra verse” preserved in 11th-century Indic material, judged by rNgog to be an “interpolation,” by demonstrating its author's knowledge of the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra* and RGV 5.18. We then showed that although the verse does not appear to be out of context in the RGV, it does overlap with the content of the current Sanskrit version of RGV 5.19, and thus seems redundant.

Next we saw that this “extra verse” is traceable to the earliest available material of the RGV from the early 6th century, that is, the Chinese translation of the RGV. From the fact that the Chinese text replaces

42 從此及爲此 由此是所說 此流說四偈 爲顯前五義 守自身方便 是故說二偈 傷法因說一 傷法果說二 (T31, 270b1–4).

43 Funayama 2012: 5–9.

44 In addition to the two Sanskrit manuscripts and the Tibetan translation, there is another witness that attests the spread of this same version of RGV 5.19<sup>y</sup> in 11th- or 12th-century India, namely, a quotation of the verse in Śāśvatavajra's *Tattvaviśadā* (or \**Tattvaviśāradā*) *Śrīcakrasaṃvaravṛtti* (D1410, 351a1–2: *gang phyir ston pa gcig pu rgyal bas mdor bstan pas || rnam par g-yeng ba med pa'i yid rnams kyis bshad pa || thar pa thob pa'i tshogs dang rjes mthun pa || de yang drang srong bka' bzhin spyi bos long ||*). The work is preserved only in Tibetan translation, the author Śāśvatavajra having been active from around the late 10th to the early 11th century (or a bit later) in the area of Vikramapura (*dpal ldan rnam gnon grong*, D1410, 352a2) in Bengal.



RGV 5.19 (i.e., the current Sanskrit version) with this “extra verse,” we inferred that this verse is an earlier version of RGV 5.19. With this replacement, the problem of the redundancy has been solved.

Although rNogog called this verse “extra” on the basis of what is stated in RGV 5.26 of the current Sanskrit and Tibetan versions, rNogog’s criticism is not valid for the Chinese version, in which not only RGV 5.19 but also 5.26–27 are significantly different from those of the current Sanskrit and Tibetan versions. Accordingly, we know that with regard to RGV 5.16–28 the Chinese translation mirrors an earlier attested recension of the RGV (henceforth recension A), whereas the current Sanskrit and Tibetan versions represent another recension (henceforth recension B).

The Indic origin of recension A is datable to before Ratnamati’s arrival in China in 498 or 508,<sup>45</sup> and the *terminus ante quem* of recension B can in turn be also determined by Paramārtha’s arrival in China in 543, his Chinese translation of Vasubandhu’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* commentary quoting RGV 5.16–28 in almost precise correspondence with recension B.

The crucial differences between the two recensions are thus visible in RGV 5.19, 26–27, and 24+ (the last of which is only found in recension A). Moreover, RGV 5.16–28 of recension A are closely linked to the preamble’s 18 verses, preserved only in the *mūla*-verse text of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* in the Chinese translation. Probably both these 18 verses and RGV 5.17–28 (in recension A) were worked on by the same redactor in India.<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, the two recensions and their dates are summarized as follows:

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45 See Kano 2016: 20 n. 11. The 歷代三寶紀 (composed in 597 A.D.) provides the date of Ratnamati’s arrival in China as 508 A.D. (T49, 86b27–c2: 中天竺國三藏法師勒那摩提. 或云婆提. 魏言寶意. 正始五年來在洛陽殿內譯. See also Ui 1959: 12 and Silk 2015: 7). Ōtake (2013: 46–47) quotes the date of Ratnamati’s arrival as 498 A.D. (太和二十二年), as stated in Haiyun 海雲’s (d. 646) 靈裕法師灰身塔大法師行記 (composed in 632 A.D., transcribed by Ōuchi 1997: 329). See below n. 46.

46 The redactor may have been someone who either lived before Ratnamati or was his contemporary. Also, we cannot exclude the possibility that Ratnamati himself was one of the redactors, and even if that is the case, we can say that the redaction was in any event done by an Indic person steeped in the Indic tradition of textual transmission. Ratnamati’s activities in India are unclear, but it is known that he was from Central India (中天竺國 according to 歷代三寶紀 T49, 86b26; 中天竺優迦城 according to 靈裕法師灰身塔大法師行記 Ōuchi 1997: 329 and Ōtake 2013: 46).

## RGV 5.16–27 and its recensions

Recension A (Chinese transl.)	Recension B (Skt. ≈ Tib. ≈ Ms. comm.)
Preamble 18 verses (no equivalent)	
5.16–18	5.16–18
5.19 <sup>E</sup> ≈ “extra verse”	5.19 <sup>Y</sup>
5.20–23	5.20–23
5.24	5.24
5.24+	N. E.
5.25	5.25
5.26 <sup>E</sup>	5.26 <sup>Y</sup>
5.27 <sup>E</sup>	5.27 <sup>Y</sup>

## Dating the two recensions

Date	Recensions of RGV 5.16–28 [Source texts]	
Before 408 or 508	Recension A [Preserved as Ratnamati’s RGV transl., T no. 1611]	
Before 543		Recension B [Preserved in Paramārtha’s <i>Mahāyānasamgraha</i> com- mentary transl., T no. 1595]
11–12th cent.	A contaminated recension [Fragmentarily preserved in <i>gzhung kha cig</i> ]	Recension B [Preserved as two Skt. Mss. and Tib. transl.]

It is difficult to determine which of the two recensions is closer to the “original” RGV. Although the precise determination of the “original” RGV is difficult, it has been admitted, among others, by Takasaki 1966: 10–19 and Schmithausen 1971: 120–130 that the current version of the RGV is a multilayered text that resulted from repeated redactions. As seen above, a hint of the “original” version of the text physically available to us is found in the *mūla*-verse text preserved in the Chinese, which we have called here recension A (which excludes the

summarizing verses RGV 5.26–28). But already in this earliest attested text a process of redaction is recognizable,<sup>47</sup> for even this earliest witness has layers that signal redaction. The transmission of the text may have split during the very early phase of its formation, at the latest during the 5th century in India, so that its textual development was likely not a linear one.

Moreover, we can even detect mutual influences between the two recensions, that is, ones that occurred after the split in transmission. Concerning RGV 5.19, for instance, the “extra verse” as preserved in Tibetan has the expression *drang srong bzhin ’dzin*, which corresponds to *ārṣam iva pratīchet* in recension B, but the Chinese version in recension A does not have it. This might suggest that the transmission of recension A was influenced by recension B (or *vice versa*) after the split. What we can say for the moment is only that recension A almost certainly took shape in India before 498/508, and recension B before 543.

Accordingly, while previous studies in general have tended to ascribe unique variations only found in Chinese translations of Indic texts to translators’ own interventions, there may be, as more careful studies on Chinese translations may show, a good chance that some of these variations are traceable back to the Indic tradition and that the uniqueness is due to the fluidity of the texts themselves.

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47 The *mūla*-verse text has some serious inconsistencies regarding its doctrinal contents, as pointed out by Takasaki and Schmithausen. See, for instance, Schmithausen 1971: 126 “Ein zusätzliches Problem ergibt sich daraus, daß — wie Tak. [= Takasaki 1966] (p. 10ff.) gezeigt hat — auch der Grund-Verstext keine ganz einheitliche Komposition ist.” Kano 2021 also points out the redundancy of some of the *maṅgala* verses (T31, 813a11–12 and 813b19–c15) in the *mūla*-verse text.

Appendix 1: RGV 5.16–28 in three versions<sup>48</sup>

Recension A		Recension B	
Verse	T no. 1611	The current Skt. version (≈ Tib. D4o25)	T no. 1595
Mūla-verses			
5.16	(依何等法說) 我此所說法 爲白心清淨 依諸如來教 修多羅相應 若有智人 聞能信受者 我此所說法 亦爲攝彼人	(yataḥ, yannimittam ) itidam āptāgamayuktisamśrayād udāhṛtam kevalam ātmasuddhaye   dhiyādhimuktyā kuśalopasampadā samanvitā ye tadanugrahāya ca	(從此及爲此) 由依佛言及道理 說論爲自得清淨 爲利智信正行人 爲立正法令久住
5.17	(依何等義說) 依燈電摩尼 日月等諸明 一切有眼者 皆能見境界 依佛法光明 慧眼者能見 以法有是利 故我說此法	(yathā / ji lkar bshad pa) pradīpavidyūnmanicandrabhāskarān pratītya paśyanti yathā sacaksuṣaḥ   mahārthadharmapratibhāprabhākaram munim pratīyedam udāhṛtam tathā	(由此) 依燈電寶日月光 如淨眼人見衆色 依具智悲三解尊 通達說論亦復爾
5.18	(依何等相說) 若一切所說 有義有法句 能令修行者 遠離於三界 及示寂靜法 最勝無上道 佛說是正經 餘者顛倒說	(yadudāhṛtam / gang bshad pa) yad arthavad dharmapadopasamhitam tridhātusamkleśanibarhaṇam vacaḥ   bhavec ca yac chāntyanuśamsadarśakam tad uktam āraṣam viparītam anyathā	(是所說) 若真實義應法句 能除皮肉心煩惱 諸顯涅槃道功德 此是聖言餘悉非

48 The Sanskrit text offered here is the version of Johnston's *editio princeps* as revised by Schmithausen 1971: 175 (revised words are marked in italic. Words in round brackets represent headings preceding each verse in the texts, but in the case of the Sanskrit text and T. no. 1595 they have been extracted from the summarizing verses RGV 5.26–28 (since neither of them has headings).

S.19	<p>(自此已下依護法方便)</p> <p>雖說法句義斷三界煩惱 無明覆慧眼貪等垢所纏 又於佛法中取少分說者 世典善言說彼三尚可受 何況諸如來遠離煩惱垢 無漏智慧人所說修多羅</p> <p>ma rig mdongs rnam s kyis kyang srin bu'i yig'dra'i mu stegs bstan bcos su yang    don ldan chos ldan sa gsun nyon mongs zad byed br- jod gyur gang yin dang    'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de'ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin 'dzin na    gsung gang zag med blo mnga' rnam s kyi zhal nas byung smos ci dgos   </p>	<p>(yannis'yandam / gang gis bshad pa)</p> <p>yat syād avikṣiptamanobhir uktam śāstāram ekam jinam uddisādbhīh   mokṣāptisambhārapathānukūlam mūrdhnā tad apy ārṣam iva pratūcchet   </p>	<p>(此流)</p> <p>若亂心人作是說 能顯佛是無上師 隨順涅槃道資糧 頂戴此言如佛教</p>
S.20	<p>以離於諸佛一切世間中 更無勝智慧如實知法者 如來說了義彼不可思議 思者是謗法不識佛意故</p>	<p>(ātmasamirakṣaṇopāya / bdag bsrung ba'i thabs)</p> <p>yasmān neha jināt supandītatamo loke 'sti kaścit kvacit sarvajñāḥ sakalam sa veda vidhivat tattvam param nāparaḥ   tasmād yat svayam eva nītam rñiṇā sūtram vicālyam na tat saddharmapratibādhanaḥ hi tad api syān nītibhedān muneh   </p>	<p>(守自身方便)</p> <p>世無慧人能勝佛 具智通真理無餘 是佛自了法巨動 若違正法由佛教</p>

S.21	<p>謗聖及壞法 此諸邪思惟 煩惱愚癡人 妄見所計故 故不應執著 邪見諸垢垢 以淨衣受色 垢膩不可染</p>	<p>āryāms cāvavadanti tannigaditam dharmam ca garhanti yat sarvaḥ so 'bhinivesādarśanakṛtaḥ kleśo vimūḍhātmanām   tasmān nābhinivesādrśtimaline tasmin niveśyā matih śuddham vastram upaiti raṅgavikṛtiṃ na snehapaṅkāṅkitam   </p>	<p>若謗聖人及正法 迷人見執之所作 於此生智離三汚 如衣受染淨非垢</p>
S.22	<p>(明誹謗正法)</p> <p>愚不信白法 邪見及憍慢 過去謗法障 執著不了義 者供養恭敬 唯見於邪法 遠離善知識 親近謗法者 樂著小乘法 如是等衆生 不信於大乘 故謗諸佛法</p>	<p>(kṣateḥ hetuḥ / nyams pa'i rgyu)</p> <p>dhīmāndyād adhimuktīśuklavirahān mithyābhīmānāśrayāt saddharmavyasanāvr̥tātmakatayā neyārthataṭṭvagrahāt   lobhagredhatayā ca darśanavasād dharmadviśāṃ sevanaād vārād dharmabhṛtām ca hīnarucayo dharmān kṣipanty arhatām   </p>	<p>(傷法因)</p> <p>智鈍離信及白法 邪慢法災不了執 貪利邪見事法怨 離勝下願謗正法</p>
S.23	<p>(示彼因)</p> <p>智者不應畏 怨家蛇火毒 因陀羅霹靂 刀杖諸惡獸 師子虎狼等 彼但能斷命 不能令人入 可畏阿鼻獄 應畏謗深法 及謗法知識 決定令人入 可畏阿鼻獄</p>	<p>(kṣateḥ phalam / nyams pa'i 'bras bu)</p> <p>nāgner nograivisād aher na vadhakān naivāsānibhyas tathā bhetaṅgāṃ viduṣāṃ atīva tu yathā gambhīradharmakṣateḥ   kuryur jīvitaviprayogam analavayālarvajrāṅgayas taddehetoḥ na punar vrajed atibhayām āvīcīkānām gatim   </p>	<p>(傷法果)</p> <p>於火蛇怨及霹靂 法傷可畏此非畏 火等但斷世間命 無間可畏不由此</p>

S.24	雖近惡知識 惡心出佛血 及殺害父母 斷諸聖人命 破壞和合僧 及斷諸善根 以繫念正法 能解脫彼處 若復有餘人 誹謗甚深法 彼人無量劫 不可得解脫	yo 'bhikṣuṇaṃ pratisevya pāpasuhr̥dah syād buddhaduṣṭāśayo mātāpitrarihadvadhācaranākṛt saṅghāgrabhettā narah   syāt tasyāpi tato vimuktir aciram dharmārthanidhānato dharme yasya tu mānasam pratihatam <i>tasyāsti</i> muktīḥ kutah	若人數事諸惡友 邪見五逆斷善根 思法速離無間苦 謗法何因得解脫
S.24+	(示現於彼說法人 深生敬重心) 若人令衆生 學信如是法 彼是我父母 亦是善知識 彼人是智者 以如來滅後 迴邪見顛倒 令人正道故	—	—
S.25	(依彼說法所得功德以用迴向) 三寶清淨性 菩提功德業 我略說七種 與佛經相應 依此諸功德 願於命終時 見無量壽佛 無邊功德身 我及餘信者 既見彼佛已 願得離垢眼 成無上菩提	(parisaṃmandalam, ksāntir, bodhiprāptih. tridhādharmārthavādasya phalam)  ratnāni vyavadānadhātum amalāṃ bodhim. guṇān karma ca vyākṛtyārthapadāni sapta vidhivad yat punyam āptam mayā   teneyaṃ janatāmītyuṣam ṛsim paśyed anantadyutiṃ dṛṣtvā cāmaladharmacakṣur udayād bodhim. parām āpnuyāt	(重說勝果: 大集, 法忍, 證 無上菩提)  衆寶界如覺德業 我說句義所生善 因此願悉見彌陀 由得淨眼成正覺

Summarizing verses			
5.26	<p>依何等法說 依何等義說            依何等相說 如彼法而說            如彼義而說 如彼相而說            彼一切諸法 六行偈示現</p>	<p>yataś ca yannimittam ca            yathā ca yadudāhṛtam              yannisyaṇḍam ca tac chlokaś            caturbhiḥ paridīpitam   </p>	<p>從此及爲此            由此是所說            此流說四偈            爲顯前五義</p>
5.27	<p>護自身方便 以七行偈說            明誹謗正法 故有三行偈            六偈示彼因 以二偈示現            於彼說法人 深生敬重心</p>	<p>ātmasamrakṣaṇopāyo            dvābhyām ekena ca kṣateḥ              hetuḥ phalam atha dvābhyām            ślokābhyām pardīpitam   </p>	<p>守自身方便            是故說二偈            傷法因說一            傷法果說二</p>
5.28	<p>大眾聞忍受 得彼大菩提            略說三種法 示現彼果報</p>	<p>pariśammandalam kṣāntir            bodhiprāptiḥ samāsataḥ              tridhādharmārthavādasya            phalam antyena darśitam   </p>	<p>至大集法忍            證無上菩提            略明此三法            是重說勝果</p>



**Appendix 2: Passages on the “extra verse”**

(the verse itself is in italics)

**rNgog Blo ldan shes rab** (*rGyud bla don bsdus*, A 39b1–4; B 64b3–65a2; C Su-b1–5)

gzhung kha cig las tshigs su bcad 'di'i de ma thag tu |

*ma rig ldongs*<sup>49</sup> *rnams kyis kyang srin bu'i yig 'drar mu stegs*<sup>50</sup> *bstan*  
*bcos su'ang*<sup>51</sup> ||

*don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod*<sup>52</sup> *gyur*<sup>53</sup> *gang*  
*yin dang* ||

*'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de'ang*<sup>54</sup> *blo ldan*<sup>55</sup> *drang srong bzhin*  
*'dzin na* ||

*gsung*<sup>56</sup> *gang zag med blo mnga'*<sup>57</sup> *rnams kyi zhal nas byung ba*<sup>58</sup> *smos*  
*ci dgos* ||

zhes 'don pa de<sup>59</sup> ni | tshigs su bcad pa 'di gnyis gang gis bshad pa'i  
'chad byed kyi rang bzhin ston par brjod mod kyi | 'di ni mi rigs te |  
'chad byed ni rgyud bla ma nyid yin te<sup>60</sup> | rgyu dang dgos pa la sogs<sup>61</sup>  
pa ni 'di nyid kyi yin par snang ba'i phyir dang | 'chad byed<sup>62</sup> kyi rgyu  
dang dgos pa dang ma 'brel ba<sup>63</sup> yang 'dir 'chad byed yin par brjod par<sup>64</sup>

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49 ldongs] em., mdongs AC, dngos B. Cf. bCom ldan ral gri reads: ldongs.

50 stegs] AB, sdegas C.

51 'ang] A, yang B, om. C.

52 brjod] AB, rjod C.

53 gyur] BC, 'gyur A.

54 de'ang] AB, de C.

55 ldang] BC, om. A.

56 gsung] AB, su C.

57 mnga'] AB, mang C.

58 byung ba] A, byung BC.

59 de] AB, dang C.

60 te] AC, no B.

61 sogs] B, stsogs AC.

62 byed] BC, om. A.

63 ba] AB, bar C.

64 brjod par] B, rjod par C, om. A.

mi 'dod<sup>65</sup> pa'i<sup>66</sup> phyir ro || 'chad byed 'di nyid<sup>67</sup> ni ji<sup>68</sup> ltar sgron glog<sup>69</sup>  
 (RGV 5.17a) ces bya bas bstan zin to || des na<sup>70</sup> tshigs su bcad pa 'di ni<sup>71</sup>  
 yod kyang bshad par bya ba'i rgyu mthun par rigs so || 'on kyang 'di  
 dag gi<sup>72</sup> tshig lhag ma<sup>73</sup> rjes su mi mthun pa gzhan dag | mi rang dgar<sup>74</sup>  
 byed pa 'ga' zhis gis bcug par snang bas 'di nyid<sup>75</sup> kyang de lta bu yin  
 par dogs te | gzhung dang yang mi mthun pa'i phyir ro ||.

**Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge** (*rGyud bla don gsal*, pp. 342.7–343.5)

gzhung kha cig las de'i de ma thag du

*ma rig mdongs rnam*s kyi kyang srin bu'i myig (read: yig) 'dra mu stegs  
 bstan bcos su'ang ||

*don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed mngon gyur gang yin*  
*dang* ||

'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de 'ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin 'dzin  
 na || <sub>(343.1)</sub>

*gsung gang zag myed blo mnga' rnam*s kyi zhal nas byung pa smos ci dgos

zhes 'byung pa ltar na tshigs su bcad pa 'di gang gis 'chad pa'i 'chad  
 byed kyi rang bstan par brjod dam 'on te bshad par bya ba'i rgyu  
 'thun par brjod ||

gang gis bshad pa'i 'chad byed gyi rang bzhin ston par bstan pa mi  
 rigs te | 'chad byed ni rgyud bla ma <sub>(343.2)</sub> 'di nyid yin ste | rgyu dang dgos  
 pa la sogs pa ni 'di nyid kyi yin bar snang ba'i phyir dang | 'chad byed  
 kyi rgyu dang dgos pa dang ma 'brel (ba) yang 'dir 'chad byed yin par  
 brjod par mi 'dod pa'i phyir dang | 'chad byed 'di nyid ni ji ltar sgron  
 glog (RGV 5.17a) zhes pa la sogs pas bstan zin pa'i phyir gong ma dang  
 zlos pa'i phyir ro ||

65 'dod] AB, dod C.

66 pa'i] AC, om. B.

67 nyid] AB, om. C.

68 ji] AB, ci C.

69 glog] AB, rlog C.

70 na] AB, ni C.

71 ni] AC, om. B.

72 'di dag gi] AB, 'di ni C.

73 tshig lhag ma] BC, lhag pa A.

74 dgar] AB, rga C.

75 'di nyid] BC, 'di dag A.

'o na (read: 'on) ste tshig 'di gong<sup>(343.3)</sup> ma'i bshad bya'i rgyu 'thun pa yin no zhe na | rgyu 'thun pa **gang zhig rgyal ba** zhes pa'i tshig gong ma kho nas bstan pas zlos pas don mi 'grigs pa dang | 'og nas **tshigs su bcad pa bzhis bstan** (RGV 5.26) zhes 'jug sdud nas 'byung ba (read: bas) 'di yod na tshigs su bcad pa lngar 'gyur bas 'di ni rang dga' ba kha cig gis bshad ba yin no ||<sup>(343.4)</sup>

'on kyang 'di yod na 'di'i don ni 'di yin ste | phyi rol pa dang 'jig rten pa'i gtsug lag las legs par bshad pa 'byung (ba) yang gzung na chos 'dir gtogs pa'i **bstan bcos lta ci smos** zhes pa'o || de'ang byed pa po dang rang bzhin dang rnam pa dang gang du byas pa rnam **ma rig mdongs rnam** zhes pa dang | **don ldan** zhes pa dang **srin bu'i**<sup>(343.5)</sup> **myig** (read: yig) 'dra zhes pa dang | **mu stegs bstan bcos dang 'jig rten so so'i legs bshad** zhes pa nas rim pa bzhin no ||.

**bCom ldan ral gri** (*rGyud bla rgyan gyi me tog*, pp. 772.5–773.2; Kano 2016: 319, n. 144)

bar 'dir kha che'i dpe kha cig las

*ma rig ldongs rnam*<sup>(773.1)</sup> *kyis kyang srin bu'i yig 'dra'i mu stegs bstan bcos su'ang* ||

*don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang yin dang* ||

*'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de'ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin 'dzin na* ||<sup>(773.2)</sup>

*gsung gang zag med blo mnga' rnam kyis zhal nas byung ba smos ci dgos* ||

zhes 'don pa yod de de ni sdom gyis ma zin cing mi rang dga' bas bcug pa yin no zhes lo tsa ba chen pos dor ro ||.

**rGyal tshab Dar ma rin chen** (*rGyud bla tika*, fol. 225b3–5; Kano 2016: 352, n. 30):

gzhung kha cig tu tshigs bcad 'di'i rjes su |

*ma rig ldongs rnam kyis kyang srin bu'i yig 'drar mu stegs bstan bcos su'ang* ||

*don ldan chos ldan pa* (read: sa) *gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang yin dang* ||

*'jig rten so so legs bshad de yang blo ldan drang srong bzhin 'dzin na ||*  
*gsung gang zag med blo mnga' rnam ki zhal nas 'byung ba smos ci*  
*dgos ||*

zhes pa dkyus su dris pa ni ma dag par gsal te | 'og bsdu don gyi skabs  
 nas 'byung ba dang mi 'grig pa'i phyir dang | rtsa ba'i tshigs bcad dang  
 rigs kyang rnam pa kun tu mi 'dra ba'i phyir ro ||.

**gZhon nu dpal** (*rGyud bla me long*, pp. 568.24–569.3; Kano 2016: 359, n.  
 70):

'di'i rjes la |

*ma rig ldongs rnam ki ki yang srin bu'i yig 'drar mu stegs bstan bcos*  
*su'ang ||*  
*don ldan chos ldan sa gsum nyon mongs zad byed brjod gyur gang yin*  
*dang ||*  
*'jig rten so so'i legs bshad gang de'ang blo ldan drang srong bzhin gzung*  
*na ||*  
*gsung gang zag med blo mnga' rnam ki zhal nas byung ba smos ci*  
*dgos ||*

zhes tshigs su bcad pa gcig gzung 'ga' zhig tu 'byung mod kyi | de ni 'og  
 nas tshigs su bcad pa'i grangs kyi nges pa gsungs pa dang 'gal bas rtsa  
 ba'i tshig ma yin no zhes lo tsā ba chen po blo ldan shes rab gsung ngo ||.

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**Portrait of an Unknown Adept:  
An Inscribed Scroll-painting of Bla ma Rin po che  
Sangs rgyas grags pa\***

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David Jackson and I both enjoyed the good fortune of studying with the great Sa skya pa master Dezhung Rinpoche Kunga Tenpai Nyima (1906–1987) and to have been nurtured in our studies by that teacher’s most noted American disciple, E. Gene Smith (1936–2010). It is therefore gratifying to be able to make a small gesture here to salute a distinguished brother in Dharma and scholarship, particularly in an area upon which he has shed so much light, the study of Tibetan painting.<sup>1</sup>

**I**

The magnificent thangka that is my topic belongs to the collection of Mr. Ulrich von Schroeder, to whom I owe thanks for the superb photographs of it that he has made available to me, together with his dossier of notes about the thangka itself.<sup>2</sup> The first and fullest of these is a description dated 7 May 2003 that attempts to identify several of the figures depicted on the basis of the inscriptions that accompany them and that attributes the painting to “Southern or Central Tibet; *circa*

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\* I wish to thank Dr. Volker Caumanns and Dr. Jörg Heimbels for their careful reading of this article, improving the final version and lending greater consistency to the conventions used within it.

- 1 In connection with the present essay, the methodological observations of Jackson 2003 and 2005 are especially pertinent.
- 2 All illustrations used in the present article are derived from those sent to the author by Mr. Ulrich von Schroeder, Weesen, Switzerland, and are the sole property of Mr. von Schoeder. They are reproduced here with his kind permission.

1450 AD.” The author of the description, who remains anonymous, regarded the thangka as representing “exponents of the *Shangs pa* tradition, one of the minor schools of the *bKa’ brgyud* sect.” As will be seen in what follows, none of these points, concerning provenance, date, and religious tradition, can now be accepted as correct. Moreover, with the exception of just one of the figures portrayed in the thangka, Thang stong rgyal po, the description did not succeed in establishing the identity of any of those who appear there. This said, there are aspects of the painting that still remain puzzling and further improvements upon the present small effort to advance our understanding of it will be welcome. This is very much a work-in-progress.

The painting (fig. 1), which measures 32.5 × 45 cm (or 35 × 76 cm including the surrounding cloth mounting), depicts six figures, whose names are helpfully noted in small captions written in gold in a neat, cursive *dbu med* script. The central figure, a wide-eyed meditator naked but for a single red garment with a finely realized, gold brocade floral design—perhaps an iconographic elaboration of the *ras gzán*, or cotton-cloak, worn by adepts—is identified as Bla ma Rin po che Sangs rgyas grags pa, the “precious guru Buddha-Fame” (fig. 2). Above his head, in the position of his “clan lord” (*rigs kyi bdag po*), or root-teacher, is Ngag gi dbang po, in the accoutrements of a *bKa’ brgyud* hierarch, his hands poised in the *dharmacakrapravartana* gesture (fig. 3). Above the right shoulder of the central figure we find Thang stong rgyal po (fig. 5), shown as a naked, goateed *siddha*, wearing only gold ornaments and holding a section of linked chain. Above the left shoulder is the long-haired gTer ston Kun skyong gling pa (fig. 6). He holds a ringed golden object in his right hand, perhaps a cord or lasso, and his left hand is raised, apparently in the gesture of protection (*abhayamudrā*). His brocade garments—a red robe and white outer cloak—are not properly monastic robes, but a variety of the *sngags pa’i cha lugs* (the garb of lay tantric specialists) frequently sported by *gter ston* figures. The remaining two personages, painted at the waist-level of Sangs rgyas grags pa and apparently behind him, are both depicted as *bKa’ brgyud* hierarchs. To his right, A rid dPal ’byor sits with his hands in the *dharmacakrapravartana* gesture (fig. 7), while dBon po dPal ’byor rgya mtsho, to his left,

holds what may be a book wrapped in a cloth cover or *kha btags* (fig. 8).<sup>3</sup>

The painting includes two lengthy inscriptions, besides the short labels identifying the figures. These are transcribed and translated in full below. On the front (fig. 4), beneath the throne of Bla ma Rin po che Sangs rgyas grags pa, is a prayer in seven stanzas addressed to the “peerless guru” (*mtshungs med bla ma*), allusively but clearly named in the first stanza as Sangs rgyas grags pa. The concluding stanza, dedicating the merit for his continuing longevity, suggests that the thangka was executed during his lifetime. On the back (fig. 9), we find an elaborate text calligraphed in the form of a stūpa and containing a series of mantras followed by an ornate poem of propitiation and prayer in roughly thirty stanzas.<sup>4</sup> This poem is dedicated to a teacher referred to as Ngag dbang grags pa or Ngag gi dbang phyug, who is to be identified with the Ngag gi dbang po depicted in the painting as Sangs rgyas grags pa’s own master. Their guru-disciple relationship is also confirmed by their successive inclusion in the series of mantras with which the inscription begins.

The thangka was reported to have come from a rNying ma pa monastery called Ro che situated several hundred kilometers to the northwest

3 The 7 May description contains errors with respect to the reading of both of these names. For no discernible reason, the unfamiliar designation ‘A rid’ in the first name is given there as Ārya. The inscriptions of the present thangka are scrupulously regular with respect to Sanskrit transcription, so there can be no justification for such guesswork here. A rid perhaps is to be interpreted as an otherwise unknown clan or place name, in which case it is used here in perfect accord with normal Tibetan onomastic conventions. Thus, we may read: dPal ’byor of A rid (clan or place). There is, however, some possibility that the final cursive *-d* of A rid is in fact the reversed *da*. If so, the name should in fact be A rigs, the “A clan,” though not likely referring to A rig, an important Amdo Mgo log tribal designation, at least in recent times. One final possibility is that A rid derives from a Khams pa form of familiar abbreviation of a proper name, as we find in A pad (from Padma) or A ’jam (from ’Jam dbyangs). Only further information can clarify the correct interpretation in this case, but Ārya may be confidently ruled out. In the second name, the final two syllables are transcribed in the 7 May description as “rGyal pa,” but the cursive abbreviated form of rGya mtsho is in fact quite clear. His title of *dbon po*, “nephew,” raises the possibility that he was thus related to one of the other figures depicted, perhaps A rid dPal ’byor or Sangs rgyas grags pa himself.

4 On stūpa-form thangka inscriptions, refer to the appendices of Jackson 2011. See also Quintman 2013, though in the present instance the explicitly biographical register of the inscriptions he studies there is not in evidence.

of Chamdo (Chab mdo).<sup>5</sup> In fact, this is no doubt the famous sTag lung bKa' brgyud monastery of Ma thang Ri bo che, located to the south of the old principality of Nang chen and to the northwest of Chamdo. Ri bo che is now often thought of as rNying ma pa, in accord with the rites and teachings that have become prominent there in recent centuries.<sup>6</sup> As will be seen below, the association of the painting with the tradition of Ma thang Ri bo che is an important key to its interpretation. The extreme refinement of the workmanship we find displayed in it, notably in the intricate gold work and treatment of textiles, certainly comports well with what is now known of sTag lung and Ri bo che artwork.<sup>7</sup>

As for the attribution of the portrait to the Shangs pa bKa' brgyud lineage, it may be supposed that the author of the 7 May description believed the presence of Thang stong rgyal po, among the persons illustrated, to justify this. This, however, was doubly incorrect. It is often the case that a given teacher is the heir to several lineages, as may have been true of Sangs rgyas grags pa, so that it is unwise to assign a sectarian

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5 This information was conveyed to me orally and did not form part of the unsigned 7 May 2003 description of the thangka that was forwarded to me by Mr. von Schroeder.

6 One not familiar with the phonological peculiarities of the Khams pa dialects might easily hear the local pronunciation of Ri bo che as *Ro che*, for what many Khams pa speakers actually say is, roughly, r<sup>o</sup>wətʃe.

7 A number of important early thangkas of the sTag lung/Ri bo che traditions have become important touchstones in the history of Tibetan painting. Among many discussions of them, see in particular Singer 1997, Kossak and Singer 1998, Jackson 2011 and 2012. It is of some interest that most of these paintings have been assigned to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As I argue here for a sixteenth-century date for the present thangka, it appears to have been the work of a deliberately archaicizing artistic tradition. The implications of this for the dating of other paintings ascribed to the same tradition is an issue that I will leave to the side. Besides the treatment of fabrics, the depiction of the lions supporting Sangs rgyas grags pa's throne may be compared with the lions in the famous fourteenth-century depictions of Jñānatapa (Singer 1997: pl. 47; Kossak and Singer 1998: pl. 33; Jackson 2011: pl. 4.19) and of Marpa (Singer 1997: pl. 48; Jackson 2011: pl. 2.10). One curious detail in our painting is the treatment of the lotus petals beneath the throne: instead of the double petals, turning upwards and downwards, that we find in most sTag lung/Ri bo che paintings, here we see seven single petals all turning downwards. A similar convention appears in an early thirteenth-century portrait of sTag lung Thang pa with his footprints (Singer 1997: pl. 36; Jackson 2011: pl. 4.2).

identity on the basis of any one of his predecessors alone. Moreover, because the association of Thang stong rgyal po with the Shangs pa bKa' brgyud is itself problematic and can be affirmed in only some contexts, it is not clear that it has any particular bearing in the present case.<sup>8</sup>

## II

As mentioned above, all six of the figures portrayed in the thangka are explicitly identified by inscription. Of these, three prove to be well-known from readily available sources on the history of Tibetan Buddhism. These allow us to gain a clearer understanding of the lineages that concern us and, on this basis, to attempt to learn something of the apparently obscure central figure, Sangs rgyas grags pa.

In virtue of occurrence of the name Ngag dbang grags pa to designate the teacher to whom the long prayer on the back was directed, the painting's possible provenance as Ri bo che, and the apparent stylistic conformity with sTag lung/Ri bo che traditions, as described above, it is plausible to identify the figure of Ngag gi dbang po as the twelfth sTag lung khri thog (occupant of the sTag lung throne) Ngag dbang grags pa (1418–1496).<sup>9</sup> This identification is confirmed, in fact, in the first stanza of the lengthy prayer on the back of the thangka, where Ngag dbang grags pa is said to have been the “second emanation of Ratnākara,” referring to the incarnation line, at Ri bo che, of the seventh sTag lung khri thog Rin chen 'byung gnas (1300–1361), just as is stated, too, in the

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8 The Shangs pa tradition was just one of several that figured among the transmissions of Thang stong rgyal po. Others included, for instance, the Byang gter lineage of the rNying ma pa. Among Tibetan sectarian categories, Thang stong rgyal po is often considered as representing his own unique tradition, the lCags zam pa, loosely grouped among the rNying ma pa. The reason for which he came to be thought of in the West as Shangs pa was perhaps the inclusion of his Shangs pa-related writings under this rubric in the *gDams ngag mdzod* of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899). On Thang stong rgyal po, his life and religious affiliations, refer to Stearns 2007.

9 The *sTag lung chos 'byung* is, of course, the standard source on the early succession of the sTag lung throne and the formation of the branch of the tradition at Ri bo che. The biography of Ngag dbang grags pa appears in *sTag lung chos 'byung*, pp. 421–446, followed by a brief account of his leading disciples, *sTag lung chos 'byung*, pp. 446–459.

*sTag lung chos 'byung*.<sup>10</sup> As he is depicted here, his robes and crown well accord with those of a *sTag lung* hierarch.<sup>11</sup>

There is no need to discuss at length the identification of Thang stong rgyal po (1385–1464), who is clearly designated in our painting both by name and iconographic attributes. What is perhaps less certain is whether his presence should be taken to indicate that the main figure, Sangs rgyas grags pa, was a direct disciple of the saint, or of one or another of his successors.

Similarly, the inclusion of the *gter ston* Kun skyong gling pa (1396–1477) must at least be taken to mark a lineage connection, but possibly direct discipleship as well. Though he is not so famous a figure today, Kun skyong gling pa was to be counted among the prominent revealers of “treasures” (*gter ma*) in his time; his teachings, which he transmitted to several important figures of the fifteenth century including 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481), were among those considered authoritative by the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617–1682) and there is no reason to doubt his identity in our present context.<sup>12</sup> The reference, in the prayer on the front of the thangka, to Sangs rgyas grags pa as having been taken into the following of the “second Sage,” that is, Padmasambhava, possibly alludes to his association with the *gter ma* tradition.

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10 *sTag lung chos 'byung*, p. 422. On the incarnation of Ratnākara at Ri bo che, see *idem*, pp. 636–640. As Ngag dbang grags pa was the second Ratnākara of Ri bo che, he was actually the third in the line, though it does not seem that this was ever his formal hierarchical position.

11 In fact, most of the early *sTag lung* paintings depict the masters of the lineage without headdress. However, the few examples of crowned figures—e.g., a fourteenth-century painting of *sTag lung* Thang pa bKra shis dpal (Singer 1997: pl. 44; Jackson 2011: pl. 4.12) and a sixteenth-century portrait of 'Jig rten dbang phyug (Heller 1999: pl. 104; Jackson 2011: pl. 4.21)—offer useful points of comparison. Additional examples will be found in book illustrations from Ri bo che, to appear in Kapstein forthcoming, ch. 6.

12 The Great Fifth summarizes the teachings he received in the lineage of Kun skyong gling pa in his *gsan yig*, in *rGyal dbang lnga pa ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i gsung 'bum*, vol. 3, pp. 424–428. The prominence of Kun skyong gling pa's tradition may have begun to decline rather early, for, as Gu ru bKra shis (*Gu bkra'i chos 'byung*, p. 421) tells us, although one of his sons did much to promote his teachings, this was not sustained and by Gu ru bKra shis's time, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the familial line appears to have vanished altogether (*deng sang gdung brgyud yod pa mi snang ngo/*).

As these three masters were contemporaries, all active during the mid-fifteenth century, and Ngag dbang grags pa almost to the end of that century, it is likely that Sangs rgyas grags pa, who was their follower, flourished during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. If we assume that he was born around 1450, he may have even encountered the great Thang stong rgyal po during his youth, though there appears to be no mention of him in the biographies of the bridge-building saint. Assuming that he remained active for some time after his masters and given the probability that the painting was commissioned during his lifetime, as an offering for his continued longevity, we may be not far wrong in assigning it to *circa* 1525.

One further clue tends to support this dating. In the history of sTag lung, a certain Nang chen Sangs rgyas grags pa is named among the disciples of the thirteenth sTag lung khri thog rNam rgyal grags pa (1469–1530).<sup>13</sup> Nothing else appears to be known of him, but, because it is often the case that a given individual comes to be regarded as the disciple of his master's successor, particularly when the period during which he was active involves a lengthy overlap with the successor, it is possible that this is what has occurred here. In the sTag lung historical record, Sangs rgyas grags pa may have been transferred from his true master, Ngag dbang grags pa, to rNam rgyal grags pa, with whom he was almost perfectly contemporaneous.

Of the last two figures depicted in the painting, A rid dPal 'byor and dBon po dPal 'byor rgya mtsho, I have been able to learn nothing whatsoever. That they belonged to the sTag lung bKa' brgyud is clear from their attire and their position in the painting suggests that they were Sangs rgyas grags pa's disciples; perhaps they were even involved in commissioning the painting itself. Nothing more, however, can be said about them on the basis of the materials that I have been able to consult. Although the opulence and artistic finesse of the thangka might lead us to expect that it stems from a preeminent lineage—and in the general sense that it was produced within the sTag lung/Ri bo che tradition it surely does—the fact that the central figure and his two companions remain obscure is a puzzle. Perhaps this will be resolved someday with the appearance of previously unknown biographical or historical sources.

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13 See *sTag lung chos 'byung*, p. 486.

Reverse: *Stūpa-form consecratory inscription:*

1. om̐
2. āḥ
3. hūm̐
4. om̐ sarba
5. bid swā hā:
6. om̐ badzra garbhe
7. swā hā: om̐ dharmā dhātu:
8. garbhe swā hā: om̐ su
9. pratiṣṭha badzra ye swā hā: om̐
10. āḥ na mo rad na gu ru ngag dbang grags
11. pa hūm̐: om̐ āḥ na mo rad na gu ru
12. sangs rgyas grags
13. pa hūm̐: dus
14. gsum rgyal ba' i (?)
15. mam 'phrul las (?)
16. 'khrung shing// bka'
17. brgyud bstan pa phyogs
18. beur rgyas mdzad pa//
19. rad na ka ra gnyis sprul
20. chos kyi rje// ngag dbang grags
21. pa 'i zhabs kyi pad mor 'dud//
22. mkhyen brtse' i lha lam shun tu
23. yangs pa la// mdzad phrin bdud
24. rtsi yī char gyis 'gro kun
25. skyong// 'jig rten dbang
26. phyug zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// tshogs
27. gnyis lhun gyis grub par byin brlabs gsol//
28. // om̐ svāsti/ nyes pa thams cad rab zad cing//
29. yon tan kun gyi gzhir
30. gyur pa// 'bras bu thams
31. cad rdzogs mdzad pa // bla
32. ma mams la phyogs 'tshal lo// chos nyid ngang las ma
33. g-yos kyang// 'bdag cag slob 'bang 'gro drug la// sngon gyi
34. dam bca' ma bsnyel bar// thugs rje chen po' i sprin bsdu te// bde
35. la zhen pa med pa 'i rnyams// gsal la 'dzin pa med pa 'i don// rgyun chad
36. med pa 'i bsam gtan mechoq// char pa chen po dbab tu gsol// skye med ngang



37. las ma g.yos kyang// bdag cag rjes ,jug sems can gyi// miam rtog  
bde sdug ,khrug pa kun// mnyam nyid byams pa 'i chut'o yis// 'tshe ba thams cad
38. rab zhi nas// bde ba chen por mnyam du gsol// snang med ngang la mnyam nas
39. kyang: bdag cag gsol ba 'deb pa 'i// gang dang gang gis 'dod pa 'i// don kun  
'grub par mdzad du gsol//
40. ma 'i dngos po zhig gyur kyang  
AH  
HUM  
dam pa khyed kyī rogs pa yi// mshan  
dus gsum gsal bar mkhyen  
zag mams// thugs kyī tsir gyis
41. pa 'i. bsgrub pa byed pa 'i gang  
42. bzung du gsol// rab zhi spros pa rnamts zad kyang// bdag cag
43. bka 'i ,khor 'bang mams// dran par gyur pa tsam gyi kyang// skyon dag yon
44. tan rdzogs mdzad gsol// bde sdug mnyam par mkhyen na 'ang// sdug bsngal
45. zag mgus non pa 'i// sems can bde la 'god mdzad cing// mya ngan zhi bar mdzad du gsol//
46. dus gsum ma lus thams cad du// g.yeng ba 'i, mshan ma zhi nas kyang// rjes su bsgrub pa 'i gang
47. cag sems can ma lus pa// sdug bsngal nad las, thar mdzad nas// thams cad mkhyen pa 'thob mdzad gsol//
48. phrad cing rang dhang thob mdzad gsol// ma rnamts bu la sems pa bzhim// khyed kyī thugs rje chen po yis// bdag
49. rje rin po che 'i byim rlabs kyī// bdag cag 'khor dang bcas pa la// de bzhim gshags pa 'i, ye shes kyī// gang dang dang shin tu gang
50. ba dang: smin dang shin tu smin mdzad gsol// yi dam dkon mchog chos skyong gis// bdag cag bsgrub pa tyed pa la// bar chad
51. thams cad rab zhi nas// rtogs pa mchog nyid thob nas kyang// byin rlabs chen po mdzad du gsol// byams pa 'i chut'o mi good cing.
52. par dhang med 'khrid pa dang// phyi la zhen cing chags pa 'i tshe// rmi lam bzhin du go ba dang// nang la zhi cing chags pa 'i
53. tshe[ ] 'dod chags bde bar bsgyur mdzad gsol// sdang sems byung war gyur pa na// snying rjer gyur gyi ,gyur ba dang// mi shes
54. snying rje 'i, brise bas rab brlan ste// byangs sems bjon shing rab rgyas nas// nyams rogs me tog shar gyur te// don gnyis 'bras bu smin mdzad
55. gnyid rnuug bying ba mams// 'od gsal snang med shes rab tu// msho la kha wa bab pa bzhim// ngang du gnas
56. par mdzad du gsol// dus gsum rgyal ba sras bcas thams cad kyī// mkhyen brise mdzad pa  
cje tu bsdus pa las// mshunges med ngag dhang gres par mshan gsol ba 'i// dhal
57. ldan bla ma 'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// skye ba skye bar goms pa 'i stugs thob pas// mngon shes
58. sgyu ma la bu 'i ting 'dzin sog's// skyes thob nyid la lhun gyi grub par ldam// ngag gi dhang phyug
59. zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// ngon khyod gzhoon nu rol rtsed mdzad pa 'i tshe// snang wa thams
60. cad bden med sgyu ma ltar// mngon du gyur pa 'i mshan ma du ma bsten// ngag gi dhang phyug
61. zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// bka' rgyud gong ma 'i gdung tshob miam thar 'dzin// miam mang yi dam
62. lha yis rjes su bzung// bstan srung rgya msho bka' las mi 'da' ba 'i// ngag gi dhang phyug
63. zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// skye was thob dang mkhas mang bsten pa 'i mthus// blo mig
64. phyi nang shes bya 'i spyod yul can// mngon du gyur pas mkhas pa 'i dhang gyur pa// ngag gi dhang phyug zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// ting 'dzin yongs su
65. dag pa 'i me long la// dus gsum shes bya 'i dkyil 'khor gsal bar 'char// spyang dang mngon shes yon tan kun gyi mdzod// ngag gi dhang phyug zhabs
66. la 'god pa// ngag gi dhang phyug zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// mngon po khyod la gsol ba btob pa 'i mthus// bdag dang mkha' mnyam 'gro ba ma lus
67. pa. srid dang zhi ba 'i mlha' la mi gnas pa 'i// beu gsum rdo rje 'dzin pa 'i sa thob shog// bdag cag gzhan gyi mthong dang thos pa dang// dran dang reg gyur gdam dag
68. [bl]rjod kyang rung// de dag gso byas 'gro drug sems can mams// rtag tu bde ba dam pa 'thob par shog// phrin las miam dag sku g'sung thugs// ren yon lan ma
69. lha rgya che wa// bzhangs pa rnamts la byin gyi brlob's// rten mchog tu gyur pa 'i bkra shis shog//

## Inscriptions

### Obverse

#### *Conventions*

- XXX = an effaced or illegible syllable. (The syllable count is assured by the prosody of the text.)
- Square brackets in the text of the inscription indicate effaced or illegible letters, the insertion of which seems nevertheless warranted.
- Questionable readings are signaled by a question mark in parentheses or within a bracketed insert.
- Abbreviations (not common in this text) are unpacked throughout without comment.
- Irregular spellings and grammatical forms (both of which are rare here) are left as they appear in the text.

#### *Obverse inscription beneath throne*

- 1 na mo gu ra we/ dpal ldan sangs rgyas kun gyi ngo bo nyid// grags pa gsal ldan lung rtogs chos kyi gter// 'phags tshogs 'dus pa rgya mtsho'i gtsor gyur pa// mtshungs med bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// XXX [perhaps = mgon]
- 2 khyod bla med byang chub mchog brnyes kyang// thugs rje'i dbang gi snyigs dus gdul bya'i phyir// rang rang skal ba dang 'tshams mdzad pa can// mtshungs med bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// srid (?) XXX XXX XXX [perhaps something like: pa'i gnas kun]
- 3 'bar ba'i me 'ob dang// tshe 'di'i phun tshogs klog phreng ltar gzigs te// bslab gsum nyes pa'i dri ma dang bral ba// mtshungs med bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'debs// smig rgyu['i] (?) XXX XXX [perhaps = snang bas]
- 4 bying ba'i 'gro wa rnam// grangs med brtse was bskyangs pa'i ma yin zhes// bcos ma min pa snying rje'i gzhan dbang can// mtshungs med bla ma'i zhabs la gsol ba 'de[bs//] XXX [probably = rig]
- 5 'dzin thub dbang gnyis pas rjes su bzung// gdams pa'i bdud rtsis khyod thugs bum bzang bltam// bsgrub la brtson pas yon tan mchog brnyes pa// mtshungs med bla ma'i zhab[s] XXX XXX [= la gsol]

- 6 ba 'debs// 'khor dang mya ngan 'das pa'i chos rnams kun// nam  
mkha'i dkyil dang mig 'phrul ltar gzigs pas// re dogs rtsol ba'i rim  
nad las grol ba// mtshungs me[d] XXX XXX XXX [bla ma'i zhabs]
- 7 la gsol ba 'debs// zhing gi mchog gyur bla ma rje btsun la// cung zad  
bstod pa'i dge wa gang mchi 'dis// mgon khyod skyes dgu'i dpal du  
zhabs brten zhing// 'gro kun rdo rje 'chang dbang myur XXX XXX  
[perhaps = thob shog]

*Translation*

Homage to the guru!<sup>14</sup>

Essence of all the glorious *buddhas*,

Mine of scriptural and realized dharma, whose *fame*<sup>15</sup> is pristine,

And foremost of the oceanic assembly of the exalted—

To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

Though you<sup>16</sup> have obtained unsurpassed and supreme awakening,

By<sup>17</sup> the power of compassion, for the sake of those to be trained in the  
age of corruption,

You act in accord with each and every one's fortune—

To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

Seeing the [whole] world to be a blazing conflagration

And all the goods of this life to be like a lightning flash,

[You have practiced] the three lessons without taint of sin—

To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

14 The care with which the text has been produced is at once evident in the use here of the correct Sanskrit form *gurave*, “to the guru,” which is almost always mis-transcribed in Tibetan works as *gu ru we*.

15 “Buddha-fame” (*sangs rgyas grags pa*) is the proper name of the lama here petitioned, who is the central figure of the thangka.

16 The one syllable missing at the end of line one is modified by the second person pronoun and thus, in the present context, must be a term of respectful address, such as *mgon*, “lord.”

17 Read here *gis* for *gi*.

You are known as a maternal protector, with limitless love,  
 Of beings bound by mirage-like [appearances?];  
 You have forsaken your freedom for uncontrived compassion—  
 To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

Taken into the following of the [knowledge?]-holder who is the second  
 Sage [Padmasambhava],  
 So that your mind, like a treasure vase, has been filled by the nectar of  
 instruction,  
 You have attained supreme qualities by striving for attainment—  
 To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

Seeing all phenomena of samsara and nirvana  
 To be like the circle of the sky and optical illusions,  
 You have freed yourself from the plague of efforts [motivated] by hope  
 and fear—  
 To the feet of the peerless lama I pray.

By whatever virtue is gained by this little praise  
 Of the venerable Lama, the best field [of merit],  
 May you, Lord, remain firm of feet, the glory of creatures,  
 So that all beings swiftly [attain the realization of] lord Vajradhara!

### **Reverse**

#### *Translation*

Lines 1–13, opening mantras

NB: I reproduce the mantras here in the normal IAST transcriptions, without, however, correcting the Sanskrit grammar. The Tibetan forms of transcription are followed in the entire text as given above.

*oṃ āḥ hūṃ.*

*oṃ sarvavid svāhā: oṃ Omniscient One! svāhā!*

*oṃ vajragarbhe svāhā: oṃ Vajra-matrix! svāhā!*

*oṃ dharmadhatugarbhe svāhā: oṃ matrix of the expanse of reality!  
svāhā!*

*oṃ supraṭiṣṭha vajraye svāhā: oṃ vajra well-set-in-place! svāhā! [the  
mantra of consecration]*

*oṃ āḥ namo ratnaguru ngag dbang grags pa hūṃ:*

*oṃ āḥ! homage to the precious guru Ngag dbang grags pa! hūṃ!*

*oṃ āḥ namo ratnaguru sangs rgyas grags pa hūṃ:*

*oṃ āḥ! homage to the precious guru Sangs rgyas grags pa! hūṃ!*

ll. 13–21

Born from the magic of the Conquerors of the three times,  
Promulgating the bKa' brgyud teaching throughout ten directions,  
Lord of Dharma, second emanation of Ratnākara—  
Before your lotus feet, Ngag dbang grags pa, I bow!

ll. 22–27

In the broadest sky of knowledge and love,  
You protect all beings with the shower of enlightened deeds—  
I pray to your feet, Lokeśvara,  
And pray for your blessing to effortlessly accomplish the two  
provisions.

ll. 28–32

*oṃ svāsti!*

All faults completely exhausted,  
Foundation for all qualities,  
Bringing all fruit to perfection—  
To the gurus I give salutations.

ll. 32–34

Though you never stray from way of the real,  
 For us, your disciples, adherents, and for the six classes of beings,  
 Your former vow has not faltered  
 And so gathers into clouds of great compassion.

ll. 34–36

I entreat you, then, to bring down the deluge  
 Of supreme contemplative absorption unceasing,  
 In which there is experience of bliss without craving,  
 The objective clear without subjective grasping.

ll. 36–39

Though you never depart from the unborn way,  
 With a river of impartial love  
 May you pacify all the injuries,  
 All the rambling thoughts, pleasures and pains, and disturbances  
 Among us, the creatures who have entered your fold,  
 So that together we achieve great bliss.

ll. 39–41

Though you abide in equipoise in the state without appearance,  
 I pray that you fulfil all the purposes  
 Desired by each and every one  
 Of us who offer our prayers.

Note: the syllables OM̐, ĀḤḤ, HŪM̐, in lines 41–43 are not part of the text, but pertain to the consecration of the main figure depicted on the thangka, Bla ma Rin po che Sangs rgyas grags pa.

ll. 41–44

Though your realization, o sage,  
 Is such that all determinate entities have dissolved,

By knowing clearly the three times,  
May you firmly grasp in mind  
Those persons who strive for attainment.

ll. 44–46

Though, in perfect peace, elaborations are exhausted,  
We, followers and subjects of your command,  
Pray that by recollection alone  
Faults be finished and qualities perfected.

ll. 46–47

Though you know pleasure and pain to be equivalent,  
May you establish in happiness sentient beings,  
Who are tormented by pain,  
And bring them to peace in nirvana.

ll. 48–50

Though the marks of distraction have subsided,  
Throughout all the three times,  
May your followers encounter you and achieve autonomy,  
Adhering to solitary wilderness retreat  
And gazing without distraction  
Upon the very essence of mind itself.

ll. 50–51

Like a mother thinking on her child,  
May you, with great compassion,  
Free all us sentient beings, none excepted,  
From the disease of suffering,  
And cause us to attain omniscience.

## ll. 52–53

By the blessings of the precious master  
 May we, with all our adherents,  
 Be fulfilled, utterly fulfilled,  
 And matured, utterly matured,  
 In the tathāgata's gnosis.

## ll. 53–54

By the meditational deities, the Precious Jewels, and the dharma protectors,  
 May all obstacles subside  
 For us, we who aspire to attainment,  
 And, when we have obtained supreme realization,  
 May you still grant us your great blessings.

## ll. 54–56

Not interrupting the river of loving kindness,  
 Moistened with compassionate love,  
 May the rich tree of the enlightened mind flourish,  
 Producing flowers of spiritual experience and realization,  
 Ripening the fruit of the two aims [of self and other].

## ll. 56–58

When we turn to distraction,  
 May the lama, meditational deity, Precious Jewels,  
 Dharma protectors and ḍākinīs of the pure [lit. “white”] side,  
 Lead us, powerless to resist, to solitude, where,  
 When we hanker after external things,  
 We understand them to be like dreams,  
 And when we hanker internally,  
 May that desire be transformed into bliss.



ll. 58–60

When hateful thoughts arise  
 May they be transformed into compassion,  
 And unknowing, torpor, dullness and withdrawal  
 Into luminosity, discernment without appearance,  
 So that we are brought to abide in the essential disposition,  
 Wherein [thoughts, etc.] become like snow falling on a lake.

ll. 60–62

I pray before the feet of the glorious guru  
 Known by the name of peerless Ngag dbang grags pa,  
 Who combines in one the knowledge, love and deeds  
 Of all the Conquerors of the three times with their sons.

ll. 62–64

With the power born from practice throughout successive lives  
 You were spontaneously born with innate attainments  
 Of telepathy, apparitional samādhi and more—  
 I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

ll. 64–66

Lord! When you acted as a playful child  
 All appearances became as untrue illusions;  
 You disclosed many such characteristics—  
 I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

ll. 66–68

Seizing the career of the heir of the bKa' brgyud forebears,  
 Taken into the following of numerous meditational divinities,  
 Never transgressing the commands of the ocean of the teaching's  
 protectors—

I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

ll. 68–69

By the force of inborn ability and reliance on many scholars  
The eye of your intellect, ranging over outer and inner knowledge,  
Is manifest so that you have become a lord among scholars—  
I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

ll. 69–71

In the pure mirror of samādhi  
The mandala of the knowable throughout the three times clearly arises;  
You are the storehouse of all qualities, clairvoyance and telepathy—  
I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

ll. 71–72

When you have practiced the swelling conduct of enlightenment  
By the power of planting ten million prayers,  
You have established in benefits and bliss those who have seen, heard,  
thought of or touched [you]—  
I pray before the feet of Ngag gi dbang phyug!

Lord! By the force of these prayers to you,  
May I and all beings to the extent of space, none excepted,  
Without remaining in the limits of worldly existence or peace,  
Attain the thirteenth level of the vajra-bearer.

ll. 73–74

May we and others, sentient beings of the six classes,  
Above all those who have seen or heard,  
Thought of, touched, or even mentioned [you],  
Always attain holy bliss!

ll. 74–75

Bless those who created as a pure enlightened deed  
 [This] shrine [painting], with all extensive qualities,  
 Of body, speech and mind!  
 May it be propitious, becoming a supreme shrine!

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Fig. 1 Portrait thangka of Bla ma Rin po che Sangs rgyas grags pa, identified by the inscription in the central red lotus petal of his throne.



Fig. 2 Bla ma Rin po che Sangs rgyas grags pa.



Fig. 3 Upper center: Ngag gi dbang po. Note the abraded inscription above his crown.



Fig. 4 Obverse inscription, beneath the throne of the central figure.



Fig. 5–8 (reading left to right, beginning above): Thang stong rgyal po, gTer ston Kun skyong gling pa, A rid dPal 'byor, dBon po dPal 'byor rgya mtsho.





Fig. 9 The inscribed back of the thangka, in the form of a stupa.



## Surveying Architecture the ‘Danish Way’ with an Example from Tibet

Knud Larsen

The intention of this small essay is to try explaining why I consider the way Danish architects survey architecture special and show as an example a survey of Lingtsang (Gling tshang), the home of Ling Rinpoche (Gling Rin po che, 1903–1983), the senior tutor of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, in Lhasa, Tibet.<sup>1</sup>

My first encounter with this surveying method was during my studies of architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen in the early 1960ies. My teacher, Erik Hansen (Fig. 2), taught us how to look at an existing structure in order to make recordings on paper with as much factual information as possible without any personal assumption of aspects that were not clearly evident.

He built on a long Danish tradition but added his own methods that resulted in his long row of outstanding surveys of archaeological structures as well as old architecture in countries like Greece, Italy, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Cambodia, Sudan and Denmark.

### Greece

I was lucky to get a more thorough experience with Erik Hansen’s methods when I became a member of the group of students at the Copenhagen School of Architecture he asked to assist him in surveying the entire holy enclosure in Delphi, Greece. Twenty-two students spent four summer months 1963–67 in Delphi surveying the ruins. This was a continuation of a 60-year-long tradition by the French School of Archaeology in Athens of using only Danish architects in its surveys of the ‘French sites’ all over Greece. In fact, Danish architects were not only

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1 Regarding editorial policy, the editors of the present volume have added the Wylie transliteration for Tibetan words.

used as surveyors by the French School but also as designers. I, for example, was in 1965 commissioned to be responsible for the design and construction of the new research museum for the French site in Crete, the Minoan palace in Mallia (Fig. 5). My fellow student from the School of Architecture in Copenhagen, Elga Andersen, was at the same time directing the survey of the palace in Mallia with the help of six Danish students. She was recommended to the French School by Erik Hansen and used his method.

I spent six fine months in Mallia living together with the French archaeologists and my friend Elga and swimming twice a day in the Mediterranean Sea from a deserted sandy beach, which today is surrounded by hotels and filled up with tourists. The museum is still functioning.

Erik Hansen himself surveyed especially two ruins at Delphi: The Siphnian treasure house in the late 1950ies and the Apollo temple in the 1990ies. His way of attacking the problem of doing more than surveying only the existing foundations of the treasure house justifies calling his method outstanding. He examined first closely how the site was excavated by the French towards the end of the 19th century. The archaeologists at that time were only interested in artefacts like gold and sculpture and the stones of the collapsed roof and walls were carried off and dumped far out in the surrounding landscape. This was done with tip-pers on iron tracks, whose location he was able to reconstruct and find in the surroundings that were littered with overgrown stones from all of the buildings in the holy enclosure. By calculating when and where the stones from the treasure house were dumped he found almost all of them.

After measuring each stone carefully noticing exactly the look and dimensions of all worked surfaces as well as the method of working each surface whether flattened with pick chisel, tooth chisel, axe, etc. he got a catalogue of all the stones, which enabled him to reconstruct the entire building. The friezes of the treasure house, now in the local museum, are some of the most famous from the time of classical Greece in line with the friezes of the Parthenon. Combined with the findings of construction stones still scattered around the holy enclosure the friezes would enable an almost complete physical reconstruction of the Siphnian treasure house if one decided to do so.

The surveying task was directed by my fellow student, Gregers Algreen-Ussing who also, together with Annelise Bramsnæs, both dear friends of mine, was responsible for the later tracing of everything on plastic sheets with Indian ink back in Copenhagen and for the publication, which is remarkable for the quality of the prints and the layout on separate sheets. This work took a couple of years (Fig. 1).

At the holy enclosure in Delphi each student got a more or less clearly defined subject to survey like the theatre, the Apollo temple, the physically reconstructed treasure house of the Athenians, etc. In the first years the plans were surveyed. Then the sections were recorded. All this was drawn with pencil on large panels of metal-reinforced paper (Fig. 4). The final publication was printed in Denmark commissioned by The French School of Athens and it really deserves to be called outstanding. In the American Journal of Archaeology Robert Lorentz Scranton of the University of Chicago wrote about the publication in 1977 the following (extracts): "This is a luxurious publication," "The word 'luxurious' then refers to the amount and quality of work that went into the preparation of the drawings, and the quality of the production," "No pretensions, no bravura—quiet and easily intelligible," "One would say it is all thoroughly professional in the highest degree, executed with taste and discrimination as well as skill," "From another point of view, of course, the publication is 'caviar to the general.'" Certainly it is not the ordinary diet of most students of antiquity, and even for the connoisseur of archaeological architecture it is a rare delicacy for uncommon occasions (Fig. 3).

## Tibet

I ended up as a professor of architectural design at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and after having 'discovered' Tibet in 1987 and revisited Lhasa in 1994 I launched a Tibetan international advanced course for 5th year students of architecture. Each fall I took eight students to Lhasa for two months. At the same time I run, together with Oslo-architect Amund Sinding-Larsen, a research project on Old Lhasa intended to survey all remaining old secular houses and townscapes in Lhasa. Some of our students as well as students from other European countries also assisted in this project. One of the

results of this research, *The Lhasa Atlas, Traditional Tibetan Architecture and Townscape*, was published in 2001. This work gave me an intimate knowledge of Old Lhasa, which I used in the student course.

I was normally in Lhasa in June-July to work on the research project and could prepare for the students arriving early September. I then found three or four sites in the Old Town where a house was missing and asked the students to select a site and design a new house there. It was up to each student to choose the function and style of the building to design from traditional to modern. My only requirements were that the building should adjust to the neighbouring buildings and that the design was based on studies of a local building tradition and available building materials. This meant that the students had to study existing buildings and talk to people about traditions and materials. The first month was spent with that while the second month consisted of development of ideas and sketching of designs as well as some travelling, normally including a five day trip to Mount Everest with visits to the major monasteries along the way.

Every course included the survey of an old building in Lhasa. Among those were the large manorhouses Yabshi Phünkhang (Yab gzhis Phun khang) and Pomdatsang (sPom mda' tshang) where I was commissioned to be an unpaid consultant for the owner wishing to transform the buildings into hotels. I helped him with Yabshi Phünkhang, but in the case of Pomdatsang we only did the survey and further engagement was delayed. In 2006 Lingtsang was empty in the process of being transformed into a hotel and because the house is quite small I saw the opportunity to do a complete survey with the help of my students. Lingtsang is located a few hundred meters southwest of the Jokhang Temple and situated on a corner with narrow streets and almost attached to the neighbouring houses. It has three floors and a tiny oblong courtyard with open stairs. Supposedly built in 1938 it is in good shape and seemed to be fairly intact until the upgrading began (this dating I question after having done the survey). When we arrived not much new had been done apart from bathrooms starting to be built in the future guestrooms.

Seven students, four from Norway, one from Portugal, one from Germany and one from Lithuania spent the greater part of a week at

Lingsang surveying and measuring everything. Only one space was inaccessible, namely the toilet tower.

My intention was that the students should do a complete survey ending up with a set of floorplans, sections and façades drawn on plastic with Indian ink. This proved to be too ambitious. One thing was that the students had no earlier experience with surveying, another was that the 'Danish way' was too demanding and that not all understood the point in doing very exact measuring and a third thing was that drawing very fine lines with Indian ink in the then warm climate proved to be impossible especially if you had no earlier experience. The end of the story was that I collected all the survey sheets and spent a month at home drawing everything on plastic while the students worked in the drawing hall finishing their projects before Christmas.

Another intention was that I wanted the 'Danish way' used in the general surveying of Lhasa. The students at the School of Architecture at Tibet University, where I was supposed to teach, should learn the method and the town planning authorities of Lhasa should use it.

As to teaching it never materialized and as to the town planning office I signed a contract with UNDP (the local branch of the United Nations Development Program) in 2008 about working on the old houses of Lhasa. My first assignment was to evaluate surveys of the same secular house made by two competing local companies to choose the one I found is the best for surveying all of Lhasa's old houses. That done I never heard again from UNDP and things messed up because of all the political noise in 2008. I drew up guidelines for doing 'Danish surveys' for the town planning department but I don't know if they were ever used.

As working with the school of architecture at Tibet University did not turn out as planned I turned my attention to a related field, the art of restoring old wall paintings. This was also a result of the International Conference on Conservation of Cultural Heritage in Tibet, which Amund Sinding-Larsen and I together with Tibet University arranged in Lhasa in 2004. The close relation between the condition of wall paintings and the technical condition of the buildings housing them seemed to be an area worth attention. In fact, as we understood, the technical aspects of traditional wall painting had never been researched scientifically in the way David- and Janice Jackson did it in their book *Tibetan*

*Thangka Painting: Methods & Materials*, and also Tibetan artists were not being used in the conservation of wall paintings in Tibet at all in spite of their knowledge of special traditional Tibetan procedures. We wanted to help giving them insight into modern conservation methods.

In 2007 I had started a project with Tibet University on surveying the technique of Tibetan wall paintings because the Tibetan painters, several of them my friends, at Tibet University were really interested. David Jackson, who had participated in our 2003 workshop and 2004 conference in Lhasa organized with the Tibet University on conservation of cultural heritage soon became and still is involved in the project, which we hope will result in a book in 2021.

### **The survey of Lingtsang**

The survey consists of four floor plans, two sections and four façades (Fig. 6).

### **The plans**

The plans were measured first by student groups of two using measuring tapes (Fig. 8). Three groups divided the house among them while one student experimented with an advanced photo digital measuring method called “Photomodeller”.

Even if the house seems to be relatively new it is not laid out perfectly regularly. The Eastern façade is one meter longer than the western façade. This can be a result of the site being restricted by already existing neighbouring houses, but we cannot know without investigating the matter. Anyway, it means that the rooms are not regular with 90-degree angles even if it looks so. A conventional survey, which assumes all rectangular rooms to have 90-degree corners, would not have picked up the difference. A room would be characterized only by two measures, length and depth. Our method implies that we must take at least five measures, and often we take six: the length of each wall and a diagonal and for safety also the other diagonal. This is normally easy but the Tibetan architecture poses a special problem because of the pillars. As is well-known the Tibetan way of construction implies that larger rooms have at least one central pillar and that room sizes are often characterized by their number of pillars. In Lingtsang we thus find one-,



two-, four- and six-pillar rooms. The pillars make it difficult to measure the diagonals exactly and this can result in cases where you will have a problem translating the notes into a final drawing. Sometimes walls seem not to have uniform thickness.

Finding the thickness of the outer wall sometimes also creates a problem when there is no window where directly to take the measure. In that case the thickness will be the result of the difference between the inner and outer measures of a house, however also here Tibetan architecture poses a special problem as the outer walls are slanting getting thinner towards the top and outer measures can often be taken only at ground level.

At Lingtsang the inner walls in the Western part of the house are inexplicably thick and one wall especially is strange in that it is not evenly thick. I only became aware of this after coming home and started making the final drawings. First I thought that the students had made a mistake when noting down the measures of the room, but when the same abnormality showed up in the room on the floor above, I had to realize that the thickness of this wall indeed is not regular. This would most probably not have been detected by a conventional survey and it is an example of the 'Danish' method being in fact architectural archaeology.

All the walls in the Western part of the house are thicker than in the Eastern part. The reason for this is not evident and a closer investigation will be required to solve the question. It might imply that the house was built in two stages. The wall with uneven thickness is still an enigma. Can it hide a secret treasure? Not likely – but the possibilities are many.

The hatching of the outer wall signifies that we know the type and material of the wall. How the inner plastered walls are built we did not analyze and therefore they are left unmarked.

We could not enter the toilet tower and the thickness of its walls is therefore unsure and not marked. Unlike other toilet towers in Lhasa, which are normally entered from the roof, this tower is entered from the third floor. Also normally the entrance, if downstairs, is from the corridor but here one enters from a two-pillar room, a strange waste of space. New toilets are built on all floors towards the main street.

The small enclosures inserted in some of the rooms are future bathrooms for the rooms to be used as guestrooms in the future hotel.

The four-pillar room on the first floor with the large window facing south towards the small courtyard (Fig. 7) was without doubt used as Ling Rinpoche's reception room. To be noticed are the three narrow slits (also seen on the façade) in the outer wall, two of them opening into the room. Can it be an intake of air? Then why — because there is also a window? As per now I do not know. Similar slits are also found on the outer walls of the Potala Palace and the Jokhang Temple where they apparently supply air to basement spaces without windows.

The construction system can be studied both from the plans and from the sections. It is interesting that the roof beams shift direction in the western wing. This also indicates that the western wing is special. Also note that the two small windows at the ground floor towards the street in this wing are walled up.

Like in almost all houses in Old Lhasa the ground floor was only used for storage and animals. This can be seen from the shape of the pillars on the ground floor plan where most of them are round, signifying that they are less manufactured than the ordinary pillars with a square cross-section. In many houses, like for example Yabshi Phünkhang, these ground floor pillars are simply rough tree trunks with the bark still intact, but in Lingsang they are at least manufactured to a certain degree. It is interesting to notice that some of the pillars on the ground floor are square. There is even a small room with one square and one round pillar.

All floors as well as the roof are made with the traditional technique of applying many layers of arga clay on a layer of small wooden sticks.

### **The sections**

The first thing to note when looking at the sections is that the room height is lower at the ground floor than at the two upper floors with living rooms. Also see the outer walls being vertical on the inside and sloping on the outside.

Section A-A shows the incredible mixture of window types and shapes towards the courtyard. One can wonder why a stable/storage would have such relatively elaborate windows as shown on the ground floor and an ornate door. This seen together with the plan showing the four-pillar room behind with the two front pillars being square and

two others being round could mean that this space was perhaps a living room for a servant or caretaker. The lintel over doors and windows is heavy square cut timber placed closely together to form a horizontal wide beam. Notice how the direction of wooden construction shifts from level to level in the left wing. Also notice that the capitals of the pillars, those horizontal members of timber that support the main beams, are less elaborate on the ground floor than on the upper levels in accordance with the lower status of these spaces.

Section B-B shows a lower room height in the new bathrooms. The explanation is simply that these lowered ceilings hide modern downlights. It also shows that there is a step down into the courtyard on entering from the street. This could indicate that at least the foundations of the house are quite old as it is a well-known fact that town streets 'grow' with time because of rubble accumulating during the years.

### **The façades**

The character and details of the façades are similar to many other Lhasa houses. The overall design is well proportioned with a lively play of neatly made windows. The entrance door is somewhat more elaborate than usual but at the same time it is very low. A person of average height must bow his head to enter. This could mean that the door itself was originally higher when the level of the street was lower; again an indication of age.

On the rear the toilet tower cuts strangely into the window next to it. When also noticing that the stonework of the tower is not attached to the wall itself it is evident that it is a newer construction. There is no unmistakable explanation for where the original toilet was located.

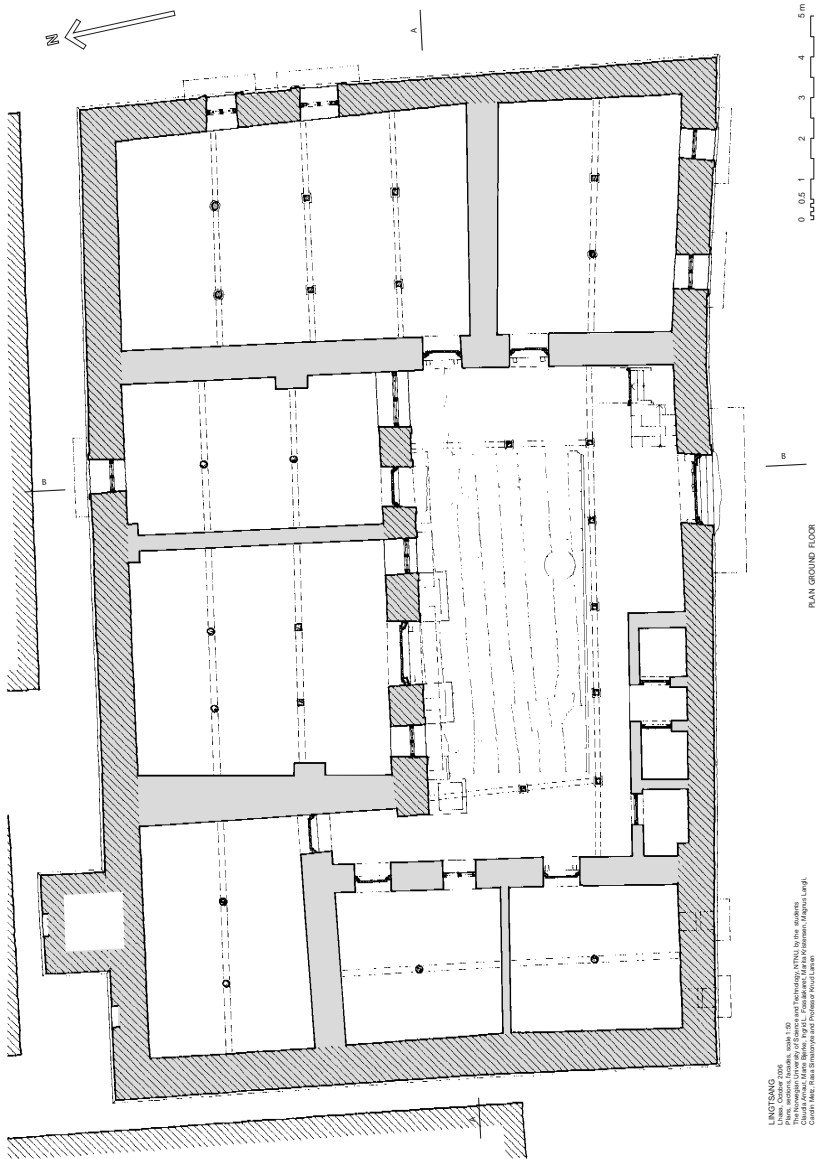
### **Conclusion**

No doubt one can still extract much information not mentioned in the Lingsang survey by applying 'architectural archaeology'. However, the gained knowledge may be of little relevance unless closely related to the life of Ling Rinpoche and so the survey may be "Caviar for the General" meaning that it is perhaps a little overdone for a small and relatively insignificant structure like Lingsang. I'm also not sure that it would be

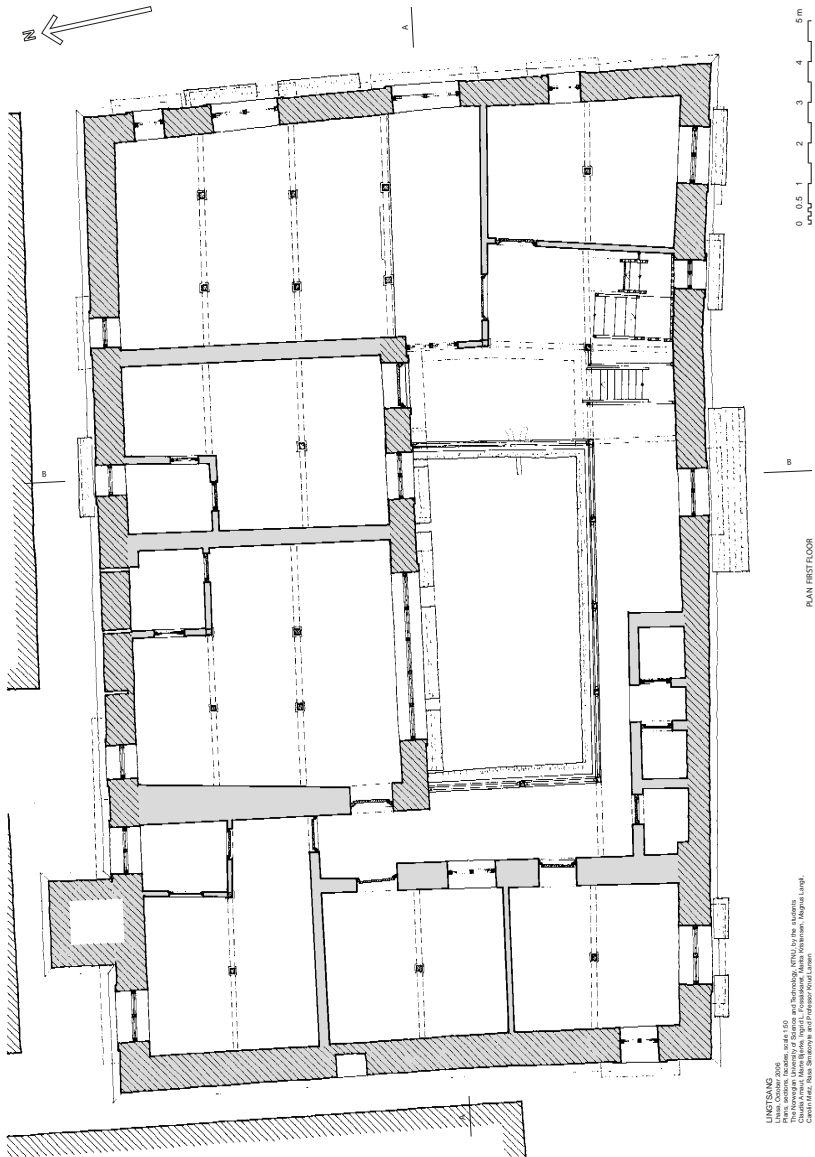
useful to use this method on all of Lhasa's secular houses, but it would certainly be very worthwhile used on important structures like the Jokhang Temple, the Potala Palace and other great monasteries in Lhasa and Tibet as such. The existing surveys of these complex assemblies of buildings are all done in the conventional way that does not do much more than characterizing the type of architecture. By applying the 'Danish way' to new surveys a wealth of new information would emerge, information that cannot be gathered in any other way even by modern laser 3D scanning. Having in mind the recent fire in the Jokhang Temple it is to be hoped that such surveys will be done before anything serious happens to these unique structures.

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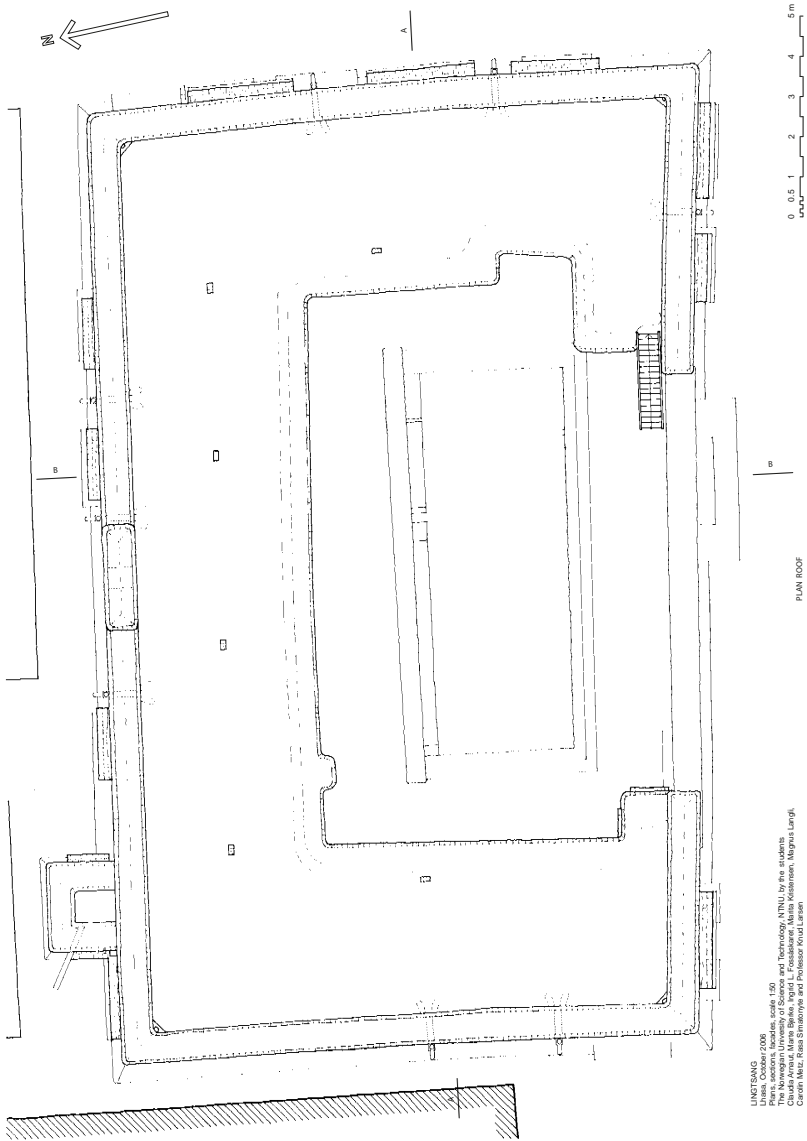


**Plan 1** Plan ground floor. The house covers approximately 25 by 15 meters with a courtyard of 8 by 4 meters surrounded on three sides by a covered gallery. This floor was mainly for animals and storage. The stairs are immediately to the right of the main entrance. The first five steps of the stairs are of stone while all upper stairs are made of wood. North is up. The measure stick below right is 5 meters long.



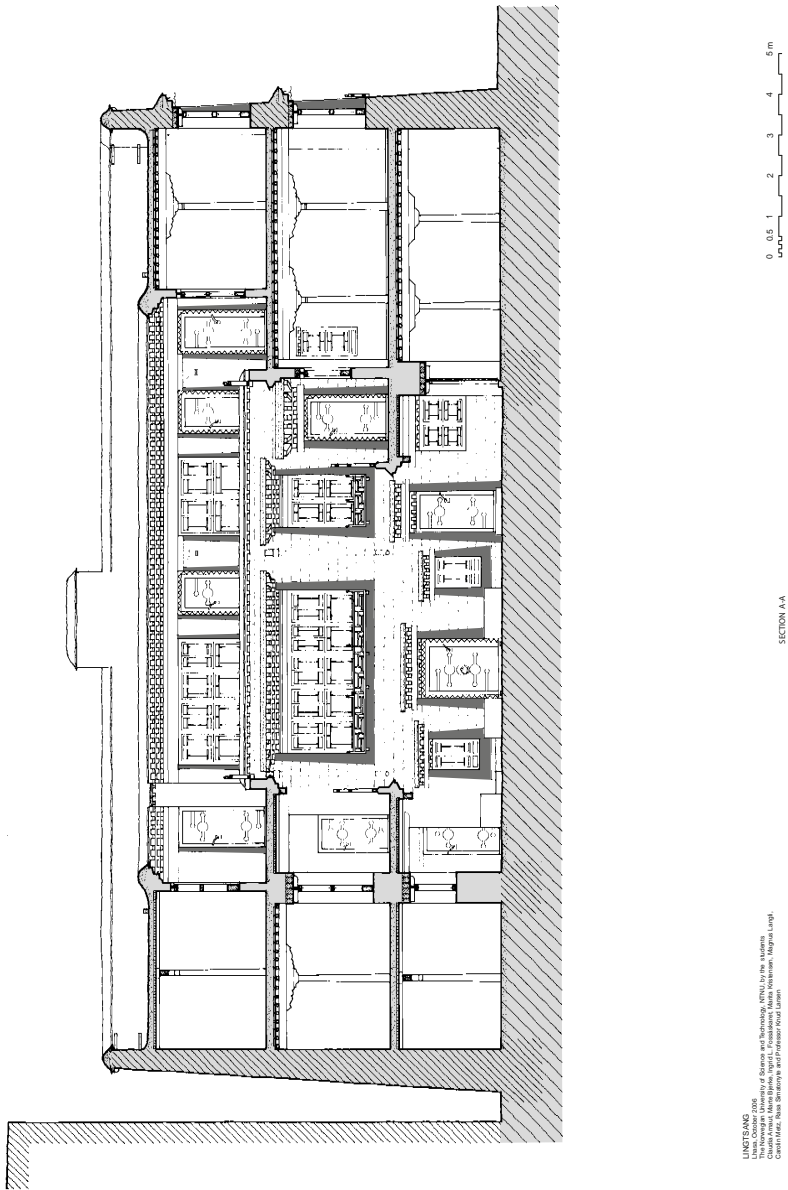
**Plan 2** Plan first Floor. The four-pillar room facing the courtyard is the main living room. This is according to the conventional layout found in practically all secular- as well as manor houses in Lhasa. The six-pillar room was probably a prayer room. The northern part of it is raised two steps over the entrance level. The rooms are accessed from a partly covered gallery. The toilets along the southern wall are modern.





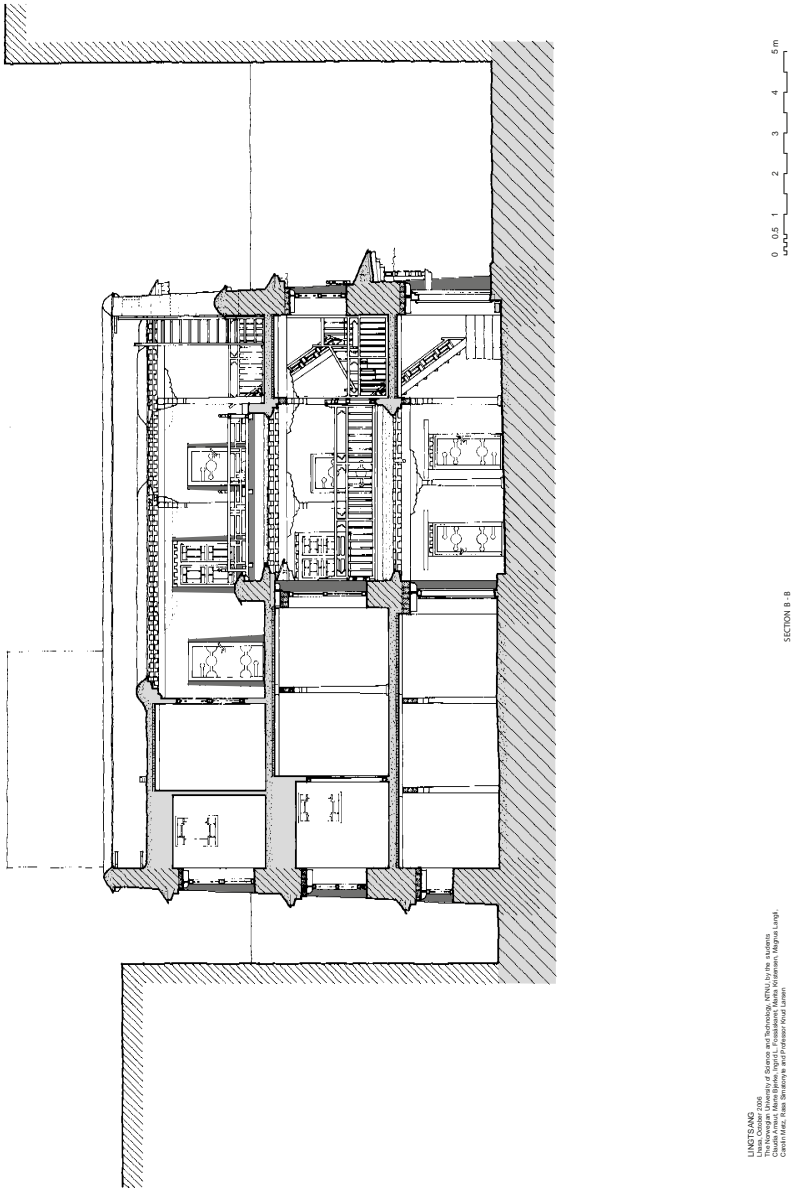
**Plan 4** Plan roof. The roof is used in a number of ways, like for drying different things like medicinal herbs and incense as well as storage for firewood. On the roof can be seen six small rectangles marking the location of perforated stone slabs inserted in the arga and used for attaching ropes to hold a sheet of canvas acting as a sunscreen over the courtyard.



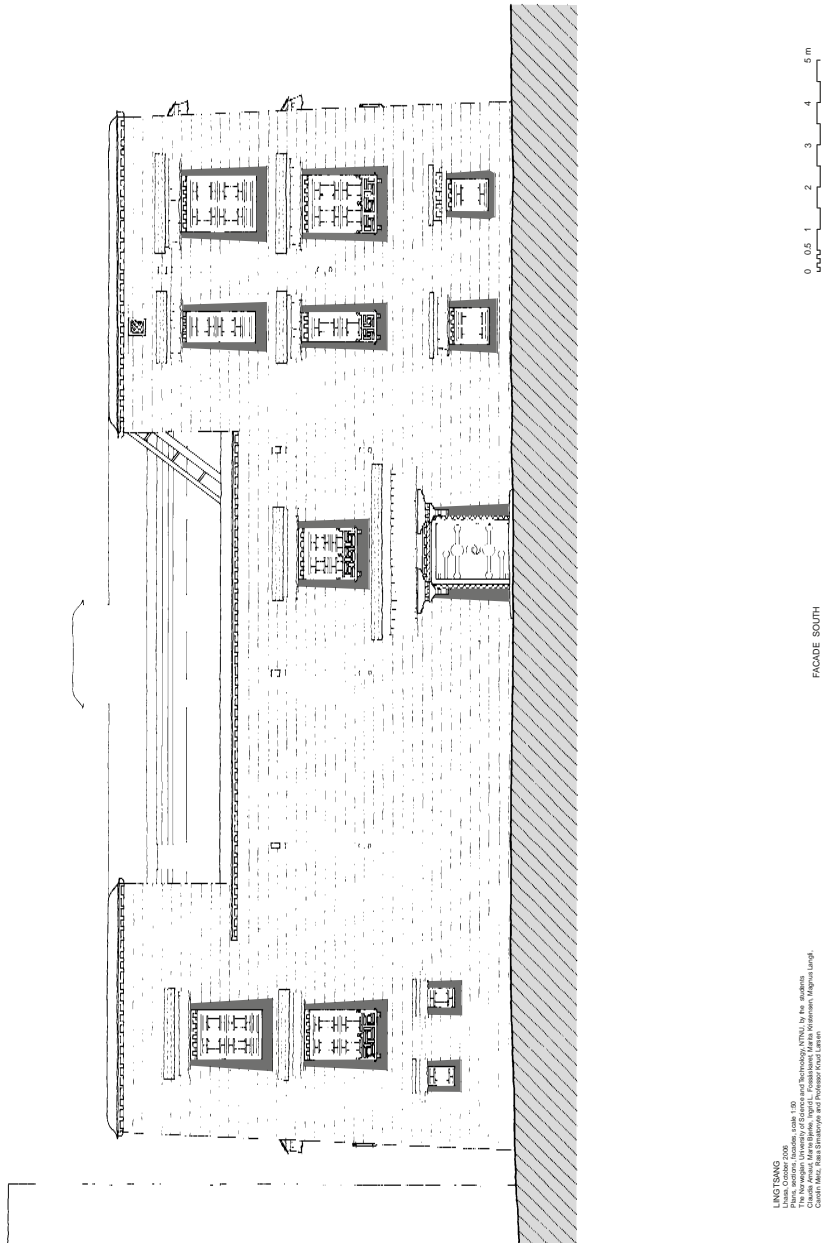


**Plan 5** Section A-A. Like all buildings in Old Lhasa Lingsang has no underground basement the reason being that the town was regularly flooded. See how the outer walls taper towards the top. The inside is vertical while the outside is slanting about seven degrees. The walls consist of two layers of granite with a cavity filled with rubble and clay.

LINGSANG  
 Old Lhasa  
 The Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU, for the students  
 The Norwegian University of Science and Technology, NTNU, for the students  
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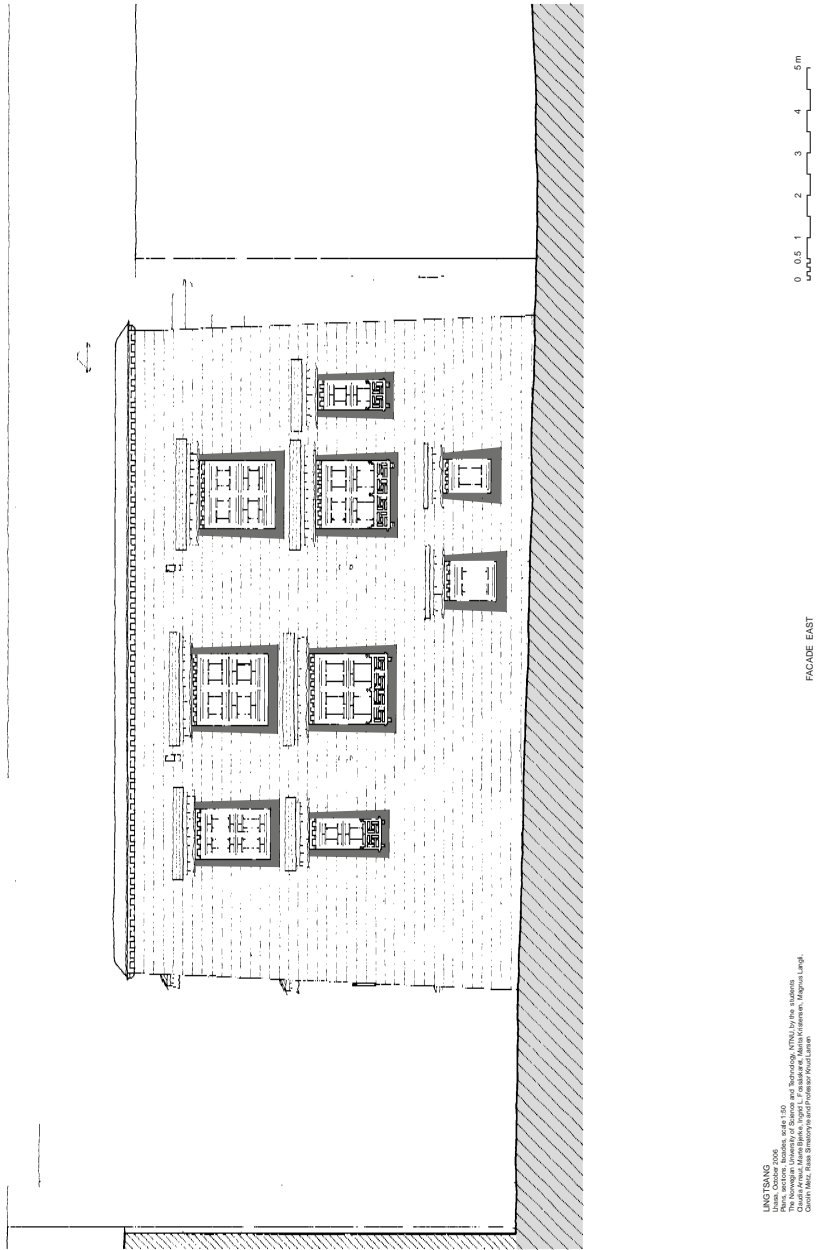
**Plan 6** Section B-B. The unfortunate difference in level between the street and the courtyard is clearly visible here as well as the very low main entrance. Considering the danger of flooding a new house would never be constructed like that. The present condition must be the result of old age and a considerable “growth” of dirt in the streets.



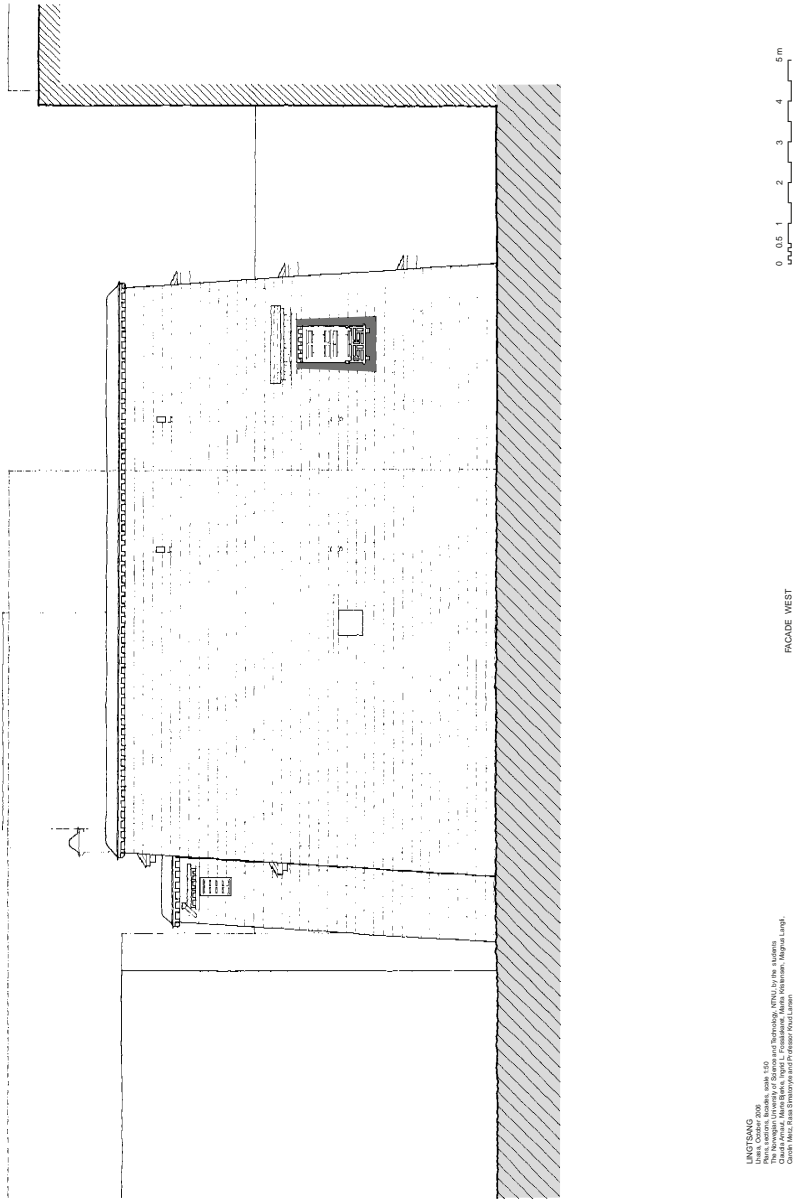
**Plan 7** Façade south. The facades are constructed as a section in the ground/buildings in front of the house. Thus the shaded hatched base here is a section in the street. One can almost see how the street level has “grown” over time to hide the lower part of the doorway and also resulting in the two small windows to the right being much too close to the ground.



**Plan 8** Façade north. Here it is clearly seen that the toilet tower is a later addition because of the way it cuts into the window. See also the three narrow slits, which open to the main living room.



**Plan 9** Façade east. Again here the shaded section is in the street. Even if the street level is sloping towards the right (north) the two small windows on the ground floor are closer to the ground than originally built indicating that also this street has “grown”.



**Plan 10** Façade west. The street widens considerably west of Lingtsang. This shows that Lingtsang is one of the oldest houses in the area and that it is blocking a town plan with wider streets.

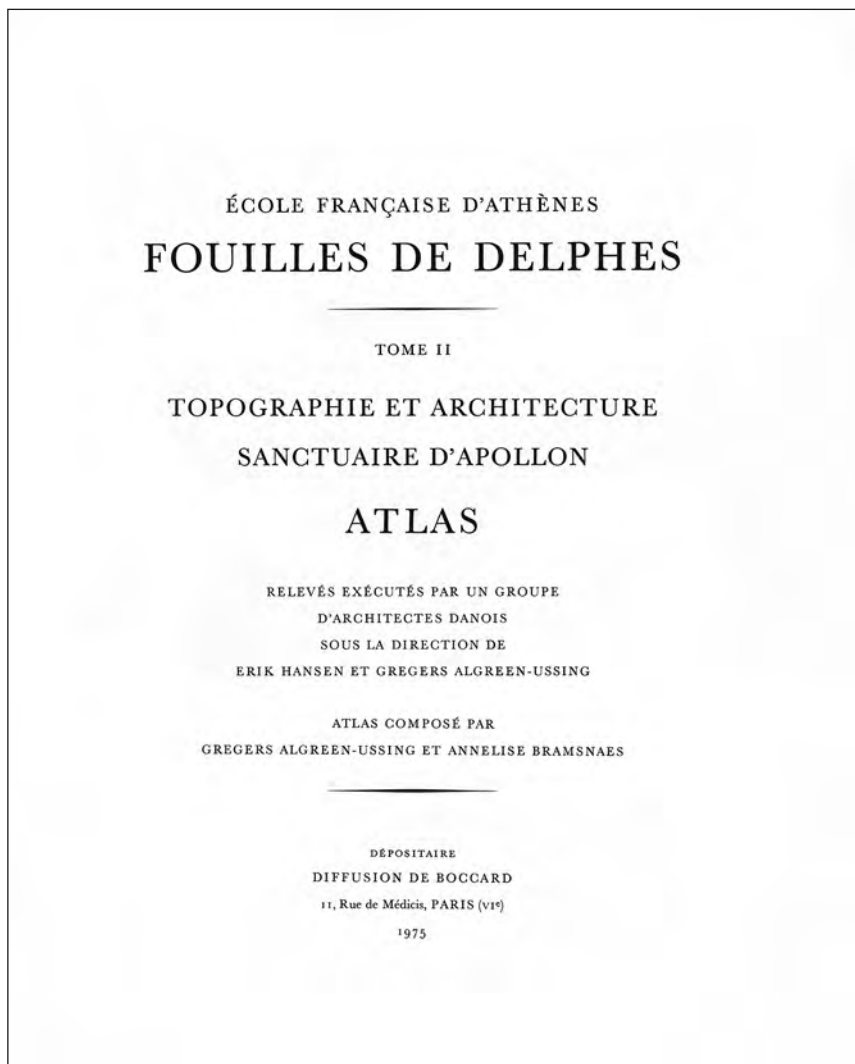


Fig.1 The front-page of the Delphi publication from 1975.



Fig. 2  
Erik Hansen in Copenhagen 2012  
with my Tibetan 'daughter.'

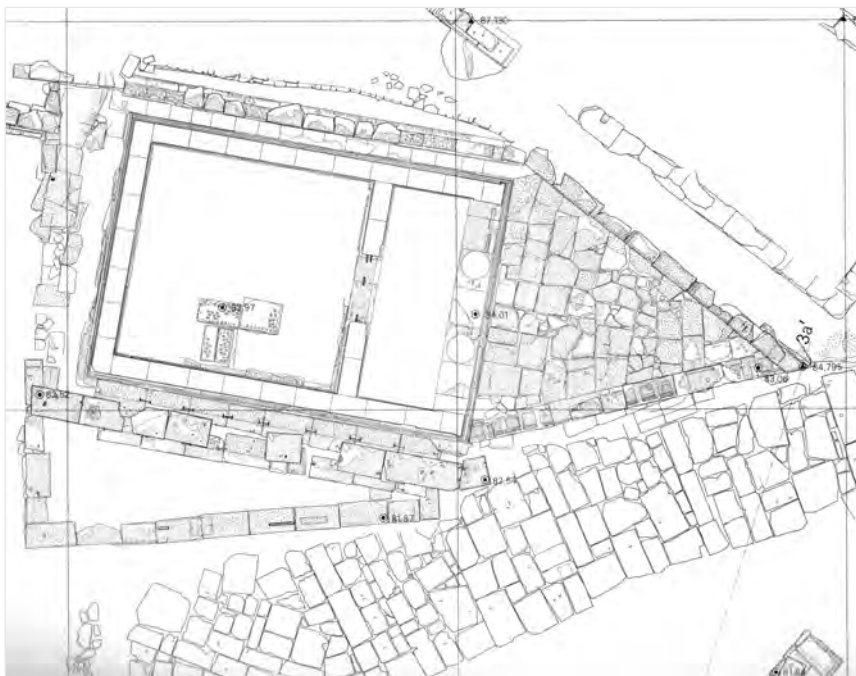


Fig. 3 Plan of Athen's treasury from the Delphi atlas.



Fig. 4  
Me scaling the ruins in  
Delphi 1963 carrying my  
large drawing board.





**Fig. 5** The archaeological museum, which I designed and had built, in Mallia, Crete, 1965. It is not a public museum but a combination of exhibition, storage, workshops and study cells for excavated objects not found important enough to go to the main museum in Heraklion.



**Fig. 6**  
Lingsang, Lhasa, 2007.  
The south façade with the entrance.



Fig. 7 The tiny courtyard at Lingtsang 2007.



Fig. 8 Students surveying Lingtsang 2007.







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