

# Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines



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# Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines

numéro vingt-deux — Novembre 2011

## Revisiting Tibetan Religion and Philosophy

### Proceedings of the Second International Seminar of Young Tibetologists, Paris, 2009

Edited by Marc-Henri Deroche, Joshua Schapiro,  
Seiji Kumagai and Kalsang Norbu Gurung

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The Editors.



SHENRAB'S ANCESTORS AND FAMILY MEMBERS:  
WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Kalsang Norbu Gurung

**Introduction**

**T**his paper is a part of my doctoral dissertation in which I study the life account of the founder of Bon, Shenrab Miwo (Gshen rab mi bo), which was written by Bonpos in the beginning of the last millennium. In the process of writing the life account of Shenrab Miwo in the *Mdo 'dus*,<sup>1</sup> the Bonpos have incorporated a number of stories from various Tibetan sources. In order to make these stories complete, they have also adopted many personal names in the stories, which I will discuss in this paper.

There are an abundance of names in the *Mdo 'dus*. Many of these belong to members of Shenrab Miwo's family, including his ancestors. The author(s) seems to have considered these family names to be of equal importance as the other material contained in the *Mdo 'dus*. One might wonder where the author(s) got these names from. I will try to answer this question by tracing the possible origins of these names. I have elsewhere discussed some of Shenrab Miwo's family members, including his wives and children.<sup>2</sup> Here I will discuss the name of Shenrab's father, the name of his mother and her family background, Shenrab's ancestors, and his brothers.

**Father Rgyal bon thod dkar, *Bon po* of Men & Gods**

According to the *Mdo 'dus*, Shenrab's father, named Rgyal bon thod dkar, was the son of *Dmu* King Lan kyis them pa skas and Queen Ngang 'brang ma.<sup>3</sup> His mother, the queen, was a daughter of A lde khyab pa of the *Phya* family. This indicates that Shenrab was a grandson of *Dmu* and *Phya*, which are recognized as two important clans in old Tibetan historical sources.<sup>4</sup> In the very brief account in

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<sup>1</sup> The *Mdo 'dus* is a shorter and older account compared to the other accounts: the *Gzer mig*, a mid-length account and the *Gzi brjid*, a long account. For the dating of the *Mdo 'dus*, See Gurung 2011 (chapter ii) and Gurung (forthcoming).

<sup>2</sup> Gurung 2011, chapter v.

<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, the *'Dul ba gling grags* and *Rtsa rgyud nyi sgron* record the name of Rgyal bon thod dkar's mother as Lha za 'phrul mo. Shar rdza (1985: 16) gives us yet another similar name, Ngang grags ma, who was the lady (consort) of Srid rje 'brang dkar, an ancestral member of *dmu* lineage, and was also called *lha za*, "a divine princess."

<sup>4</sup> See Mkhas pa lde'u 1987: 233. A dialogue between the ruler of *Dmu* and an envoy of *Phywa* (alternatively *phyra*) is also described in Pelliot tibétain 126 (lines

the *Mdo 'dus*, we see Shenrab's parents and grandparents being identified by several names.<sup>5</sup> These names also include those of Shenrab's maternal grandparents, although their family name is not recorded.

In order to trace the possible sources of Shenrab's father's name, I shall first look closely at the structure of his name. His name is written in at least five different ways in the *Mdo 'dus*, including some that are probably modified from *mi* (human) to *myes* (grandfather). The names are:

1. *Mi bon lha bon rgyal bon thad/thod dkar*<sup>6</sup> and its shorter version *Rgyal bon thod dkar*<sup>7</sup> are the most well known names among the Bonpos. To translate them literally, *mi bon* means "human bon," *lha bon* "divine bon," *rgyal bon* "royal bon," and *thod dkar* means "[wearing a] white turban."
1. *Mi bon lha bon rgyal po thod dkar* and its shorter version *Rgyal po thod dkar*,<sup>8</sup> in which *rgyal bon* is replaced with *rgyal po* (king).
2. *Myes bon lha bon rgya bon thod dkar*,<sup>9</sup> in which *mi bon* is replaced with *myes bon* (grandfather bon) and *rgyal bon* is replaced with *rgya bon* (Chinese bonpo).<sup>10</sup>
3. *Me (or mes) bon lha bon rgyal bon thod dkar*.<sup>11</sup> There is an alternative spelling of *me bon* (literally "fire bon") with *mes bon* or *myes bon* in the name. The word *mes* is the alternative spelling of *myes*.
4. *Yab myes rgyal bon thod dkar*.<sup>12</sup> In this name, *mi bon* or *myes bon* is replaced with *yab myes* (father and grandfather). This name clearly shows *Rgyal bon thod dkar* as the father of Shenrab and a grandfather (probably of Shenrab's son as well as, metaphorically, of Shenrab's followers). All the instances of the word *bon* in these names seem to be an ab-

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104-68, see Imaeda 2007: 22-24). In this text, a man from the *Phywa* is asking a man from the *Dmu* to rule the land of the black-headed men, which latter generally refers to Tibetans (for a detailed discussion, see Karmay 1998: 178-180, note 31). This *Dmu* and *Phya* family relationship is also maintained in the *Mdo 'dus*.

<sup>5</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 55.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 41 and *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyai: 18a and 24a for this name.

<sup>7</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 52, 55, 59, 105, 119, 191 and 203 and *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyai: 22b, 24b, 26a, 46a, 52a, 84a and 89b.

<sup>8</sup> *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 26b, 28a and 29b for the short name.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: 21a.

<sup>10</sup> The word *rgya* refers to China. I have argued for this translation in Gurung (2009: 258). See Stein 2003: 600 for a different opinion. The word *rgyal* means king as in *rgyal po* above.

<sup>11</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 55.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*: 203, *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 90b, *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyai: 89b.

breviated form of *bon po* (cf. *mi'i bon po*, *lha'i bon po*, *rgyal po'i bon po* and *rgya'i bon po*).

All the above names are only present in the *Mdo 'dus*. There is a slightly different name, *Mi bon lha bon yo bon rgyal bon thod dkar*, recorded in the *Gzer mig*.<sup>13</sup> Here, an extra word *yo bon* is added, the meaning of which is not clear to me, unless it is derived from *ye bon* (primordial bon) or from *yog bon*, which is a name that appears among the thirty-three *bonpos*.<sup>14</sup> As I will argue later, *yo bon* corresponds with *yo phyi*, a part of the name of Shenrab's mother. Shenrab's father's name is one example of a name that seems to have been derived in different ways from old Tibetan sources.

### References to *mi bon lha bon rgyal bon*

Among the old Tibetan sources, I will first look at some Tibetan documents preserved in Dunhuang caves. Those documents were only accessible until the early 11<sup>th</sup> century due to the closure of the caves either in 1002 AD<sup>15</sup> or in 1035 AD.<sup>16</sup> The documents became available again after their discovery in the beginning of the twentieth century. I assume that some fragments of these texts, or oral traditions that correspond to the documents preserved in Dunhuang, were probably available elsewhere and Bonpos may have had access to them. To the best of my knowledge, such hypothetical fragments and traditions are no longer in circulation today, apart from what has been preserved in Dunhuang sources and what may be reflected in some of our Shenrab narratives. Based on this assumption, I shall try to determine how the name of Shenrab's father relates to the names found in the Dunhuang documents.

As stated above, the first part of the name of Shenrab's father is *Mi bon lha bon rgyal bon*, which is recorded in Pelliot tibétain 1134<sup>17</sup> as follows.

[119] *bu ni lha'i bu tsha ni srin gyi tsha' / myi bon / lha'i bon / rgya bon  
brim tang gis / rgyal tag brgyad [120] / ni / gnam las / bre<sup>18</sup> [ / ] se [mo]  
gru bzhi ni / sa la / bchas / [...]*

The son is the son of a god and the nephew/grandson is the nephew/grandson of a demon, [he who is] the human *bon*, the

<sup>13</sup> *Gzer mig*: 15.

<sup>14</sup> For the list of the thirty-three *bonpos*, see Gurung 2011: appendix 2.

<sup>15</sup> Rong 2000: 274.

<sup>16</sup> Stein 2003: 591.

<sup>17</sup> Imaeda 2007: 149.

<sup>18</sup> There may be a different interpretation of the word *bre*, but here I translate it in the sense of *bre ba* which means "to connect," "to display" or "to weave," as defined in Zhang (1996: 1906-1907, see *gnam la 'ja' tshon bre ba*) and in Bon ritual texts.

divine *bon* and the *rgya bon* called *brim tang* connects the eight *rgyal* cords<sup>19</sup> in the sky and constructed the *se [mo] gru bzhi* (four sided tomb) on the earth.<sup>20</sup>

As shown in the above passage, there is a long phrase *myi bon lha'i bon rgya bon brim tang*. This phrase appears to be either a description of a person called *brim tang* (the last part of the phrase), or a description of three different people—judging from the punctuation marks separating the phrases into three parts in the original document. In the latter reading, one would take *myi bon*, *lha'i bon* and *rgya bon brim tang* separately. Alternatively, this phrase can also be read as a description of two persons (*myi bon lha'i bon* and *rgya bon brim tang*), as we find in the late 13<sup>th</sup>-century Tibetan history, *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* written by Mkhas pa lde'u, which I will discuss later.

It is well known that *myi* is an alternative spelling for *mi*, and thus *myi bon* becomes an alternative spelling for *mi bon*.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, as I have shown in the list of the father's names above, *rgya bon* seems to be an alternative spelling of *rgyal bon* in the *Mdo 'dus*, although the literal meanings of *rgya bon* and *rgyal bon* in present-day use are different. The Bonpos probably considered *rgya* and *rgyal* to be interchangeable.<sup>23</sup> However, the *rgya bon brim tang* that appeared in Pelliot tibétain 1134 has become *rgyal/rgya bon thod dkar* in the account of Shenrab. I will discuss *thod dkar* in the next section.

**Table:** A Speculative Example of Name Transformation

Pelliot tibétain 1134	Transformation	<i>Mdo 'dus</i>
<i>rgya bon brim tang</i>	<i>rgya</i> <alternative> <i>rgyal</i> <i>brim tang</i> >replaced by> <i>thod dkar</i>	<i>rgyal bon thod dkar</i>

<sup>19</sup> In this context, I prefer to translate *rgyal t(h)ag* as “a protection cord belonging to *rgyal* spirit,” as *rgyal* is, alternatively, one of the eight classes of gods and demons (Tib. *lha srin sde brgyad*) who is assigned to remove obstacles to the funerary ritual activities.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. also Stein 2003: 601-602, for *se [mo] gru bzhi* and *rgyal t(h)ag*.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *myi bo* for *mi bo*, *myi rje* for *mi rje* in Pelliot tibétain 16 [25v3] (see Imaeda 2007: 7) and *myi rabs* for *mi rabs* in Pelliot tibétain 1047 [8] (see Imaeda 2007: 51).

<sup>23</sup> There are other examples like, *rgya rong* and *rgyal rong* (a region in Sichuan province in China) and *rgya mkhar* and *rgyal mkhar* (a mythical palace in Bon texts), which are interchangeable too. Most of these interchangeable words are the result of how these words are pronounced by the people of eastern Tibet.

The rendering of names in the *Mdo 'dus* from old Tibetan documents can also be seen in some other names. Within the list of thirty-three *bonpos*, there are three names listed as *phya bon thod dkar*, *rgyal bon bong (bon) po* and *sman bon 'bring dangs*.<sup>24</sup> If these names are compared with the names found in the above passage in Pelliot tibétain 1134, the similarity is evident. Here we can see that one name is spread over three names: *thod dkar* in the first name, *rgyal bon* in the second name, and *'bring dangs* (cf. *brim tang*) in the third name. This proves that either several names were compiled to form one name or that an existing name was modified to form another.

Another reference to the name of Shenrab's father is given in the late 13<sup>th</sup>-century Tibetan history *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* written by Mkhas pa lde'u. Although this source is dated almost two hundred years later than the *Mdo 'dus*, some information recorded in Mkhas pa lde'u's *chos 'byung* could still depend on an older tradition. Furthermore, this Tibetan history was apparently composed on the basis of an older source, although the author(s) does not specify any details. In fact, the names recorded in this text are comparable to the names given in Pelliot tibétain 1134. I shall first quote the passage from the history by Mkhas pa lde'u<sup>25</sup> and then compare it to Pelliot tibétain 1134:

*'bring mo dre btsun rmu mo dang mi bon lha bon dang rgya 'brong tam chen po bshos pa'i sras 'chi med gshen gyi rmu rgyal tsha dang/ ce'u gshen gyi phyag (phyas) dkar tsha gnyis so.*

The middle daughter, Dre btsun dmu mo, consorted with Mi bon lha bon and Rgya 'brong tam chen po. From [each] union, they had two sons. The first is a grandson of Dmu King, 'Chi med gshen, and the second is a grandson of White *Phya* called Ce'u gshen.

This passage has been translated by Karmay as, "Mi bon lha bon unites with the second daughter Dre btsun dmu mo. From this union two brothers Mtshe mi gshen gyi dmu rgyal tsha and Gco'u gshen gyi phyag mkhar were born."<sup>26</sup> In his translation, Karmay omits the name Rgya 'brong tam chen po. In reference to the first son 'Chi med gshen gyi rmu rgyal tsha, he also reads *mtshe mi* instead of 'chi med. Karmay seems to have used the version of the history by Mkhas pa lde'u published in 1987 in Lhasa, volume three of the series *Gangs can rig mdzod*, which I have also checked. However, for an unknown reason, he has read the passage differently from the original passage in Tibetan.

According to this Mkhas pa lde'u's *chos 'byung*, Dre btsun dmu mo had two husbands: Mi bon lha bon and Rgya 'brong tam chen

<sup>24</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 53.

<sup>25</sup> Mkhas pa lde'u 1987: 232.

<sup>26</sup> Karmay 1994: 418.

po. From these unions, she also bore two sons: a grandson of the *Dmu* King and a grandson of White *Phya*. The two names of the husbands suggest a significant relationship between this source and Pelliot tibétain 1134, although Pelliot tibétain 1134 gives Myi bon lha bon and Rgya bon brim tang as two names of the same person, while Mkhas pa lde'u lists them as the names of two separate persons. If we look carefully at the names (Rgya bon brim tang in Pelliot tibétain 1134 and Rgya 'brong tam chen po in the history by Mkhas pa lde'u), we can find a link between their sources. Given that one of these sources is dated before the *Mdo 'dus* and the other after it, we may conjecture that the two later accounts derive from a source similar to the passage in Pelliot tibétain 1134. Mkhas pa lde'u could have written the *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* on the basis of the same source. In other words, the anonymous source first related in Pelliot tibétain 1134 and later recorded in the *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* could have influenced later Bonpo authors' understanding of Shenrab's father's name.

Regarding the descriptive name of the first son, 'Chi med gshen gyi rmu rgyal tsha, there seems to be a conflation, as 'chi med corresponds with 'Chi med gtsug phud (the name used for Shenrab before his descent, according to the *Mdo 'dus*), and *gshen* with Gshen rab mi bo (i.e. Shenrab Miwo). As indicated in the last part of the name, the person is said to have been a grandson of the *Dmu* King (Tib. *dmu rgyal tsha*). The only person whom this description could be referring to is Shenrab, because he is not only described as we have seen earlier as a grandson of the *Dmu* King and a son of Rgyal bon thod dkar, but he is also connected to the name 'Chi med gshen ('Chi med gtsug phud plus Gshen rab mi bo).

Now we can further speculate as to why it was Rgyal bon thod dkar who was portrayed as Shenrab's father. I shall refer here to the above passage from the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Tibetan history by Mkhas pa lde'u, regarding the relation between the first son 'Chi med gshen, and the first husband of Dre btsun dmu mo, Mi bon lha bon. Bonpo authors might have interpreted the first husband Mi bon lha bon as Mi bon lha bon rgyal bon thod dkar. The first son, or grandson of the *Dmu* King, 'chi med gshen might have been interpreted as Shenrab Miwo. The name 'Chi med gshen could be read as combination of Shenrab's name in his previous life, 'Chi med gtsug phud, with *gshen* from Shenrab Miwo. Therefore, it is clear that this sort of information may have driven the author(s) of the *Mdo 'dus* to assert that Rgyal bon thod dkar was the father, Shenrab Miwo the son, and that their family descended from the *Dmu* clan.

References to *thod dkar*

There are two different references to *thod dkar* found in the Dunhuang documents. The first is *pho gshen thod dkar* found in Pelliot tibétain 1285<sup>27</sup> and IOL TIB J 734.<sup>28</sup> It refers to male ritual priests wearing white turbans. There was a group of a hundred such priests who were invited from the White Pure Mountain (Tib. *dags ri dkar po*) to cure someone's illness. This reference always appears before a reference to "female priests" (Tib. *mo gshen*), who were also invited from the Black Shadowy Mountain (Tib. *sribs ri nag mo*) to cure illness.<sup>29</sup> We can see from this reference that *thod dkar* is an epithet for a group of male ritual priests (Tib. *pho gshen*) who were probably wearing white turbans (Tib. *la thod*). The second reference to *thod dkar* is recorded in Pelliot tibétain 1286<sup>30</sup> and Pelliot tibétain 1290.<sup>31</sup> The reference is to the name of a person identified as the king of Rtsang (nowadays spelled as Gtsang) province.<sup>32</sup> What is evident from these two references is that *thod dkar* is also a name of an historical figure. Therefore, it is very likely that these references could have influenced not only the name of Shenrab's father, but also his designation as a king, and even the clothing he is described as wearing.

I should also like to mention an interesting reference to *thod dkar* found in the list of twelve lords, spirits and masters given in the *Srid pa spyi mdos*.<sup>33</sup> According to this text, twelve lords, spirits and

<sup>27</sup> Pelliot tibétain 1285: [r39] *dags ri dkar po las/ pho gshen thod / dkar brgya' bsdus tel;* [r66] *dags rI dkar po la' las / pho gshen thod / dkar brgya bsogs te;* [r86] *dags rI dkar po la / pho gshen thod dkar brgya bsdus ste;* [r151] *dags rI dkar po la / pho gshen / thod kar brgya bsdus kyang;* [r165-66] *dags rI dkar po // pho/ gshen thod kar brgya bsdus kyang,* cf. Lalou 1958: 200 and Imaeda 2007: 184-186, 189-190.

<sup>28</sup> IOL TIB J 734: [2r48] *bdags raM / dkar po la / po gshen thod kar brgya bsogs te / / mo bthab [pya?] blhags/* See Imaeda 2007: 277.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. also Blezer 2008: 430-431 and Dotson 2008: 48-49 for a discussion on this reference.

<sup>30</sup> Pelliot tibétain 1286/line 8: *[myang?] ro'i pyed kar na/ rje rtsang rje'i thod kar/* See Imaeda 2007: 197.

<sup>31</sup> Pelliot tibétain 1290/line r4: *myang ro'i phylr khar na rje rtsang rje'i thod kar/*, line v5: *myang ro'i phylr khar na rje rtsang rje'i thod kar/* See Imaeda 2007: 249-250.

<sup>32</sup> See also Smith 2001: 219. Here the name *Rtsang rje thod dkar rje* is listed among the four lords of the *Stong* tribe, the fourth original Tibetan tribe.

<sup>33</sup> Bonpos claim that this text was discovered in 1067 AD by Gnyan ston shes rab seng ge. According to Shar rdza (1985), he was a shepherd called Gnyan ston shes rab rdo rje, but the people called him Gnyan 'theng re ngan (Tib. 'theng, "lame") because of his lame leg (cf. Karmay 1972: 153 and Blondeau 2000: 249). Karmay (1998: 346) has translated part of this text into English. In the colophon to the *Srid pa spyi mdos*, this text is attributed to Sangs po khrin khod. Nam mkha'i nor bu (1996: 581) considered this text to be an old Bon source and he identified the author as Ra sangs khri na khod, who is said to have lived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. According to Karmay (1972: 12), Ra sangs khri na khod was born into the Khyung po clan as one of the two sons of Gyer chen zla med (8<sup>th</sup> century AD?, cf. Karmay 1977: 51 for this date). The name Ra sangs rje from Khyung po is also recorded in Pelliot tibétain 1286, line 7: *zhang zhung dar pa'I rjo bo lig snya shur / blon po khyung po ra sangs rje dang* (see Imaeda 2007: 197) and

masters were invited for a ritual offering at the *mdos* altar.<sup>34</sup> The first of these twelve and perhaps their leader, *Gshen rab myi bo*, was asked to pacify some demonic forces, including *Māra Khyab pa*, who often interfered in *Shenrab's* practices.<sup>35</sup> The remaining nine lords and spirits (see table below) were offered whatever food and drink they desired, so that they would not cause any harm to other beings. The final two of the twelve are described as divine masters (Tib. *dbon/dpon gsas*). Although not specified clearly, their task seems to have been to mediate between the spirits and the humans. Elsewhere in the same text,<sup>36</sup> the author briefly writes that there were three hundred and sixty *thod dkar* in total, "*srid ni thod dkar srid/ sum rgya drug cu srid.*" This suggests that *thod dkar*, according to the *Srid pa spyi mdos*, is also the name of group of divine masters, which corresponds to some extent with the description in Pelliot tibétain 1285 and IOL TIB J 734. Apart from the name *thod dkar*, parts of a few other names like, *rmu rje* and *btsan rje* can also be found in the list of *Shenrab's* ancestors. This will be discussed later in this essay.

**Table:** The Twelve Lords and Spirits Listed in the *Srid pa spyi mdos* (3b-4b)

	Their description	Place
1. Gshen rab myi bo	A god of <i>gshen</i> (cf. <i>gshen lha</i> or <i>lha gshen</i> )	at the border of god and human world
2. Dgung rgyal ma	Queen of the sky	at the upper of the three spaces
3. Rmu rje	King of <i>rmu</i> (alt. <i>dmu</i> )	at the middle of the three spaces
4. Gu lang	Cf. Maheśvara? Tib. <i>gu lang dbang phyug</i>	at the lower of the three spaces
5. Btsan rje	Lord of <i>btsan</i> spirit	on the other side of the space

Pelliot tibétain 1290 (line r4): *blon po khyung po ra sangs rje* [...] (line v5) *zhang zhung dar ma'i rje bo lag snya shur / / blon po khyung po ra sangs rje /* (see Imaeda 2007: 249). The two names: *Sangs po khri na khod* and *Ra sangs khri na khod* are very similar, although it is not certain that these two names belong to the same person. Particularly, the latter part of the names *Khri na khod* and *Khri na khod* are very close. However, what can be justified here is that the narrative content of the text seems to have been derived from a source from a period contemporaneous to the Dunhuang documents.

<sup>34</sup> This altar may be similar to the altar built in the *Mkha' klong gsang mdos* ritual (see Blondeau 2000: 279, for an illustration of the altar).

<sup>35</sup> Gurung 2011: 83-92.

<sup>36</sup> *Srid pa spyi mdos*: 3b.

6. This rje	Lord of goblin (Tib. <i>this rang / the'u rang</i> )	in between the space
7. Ma mo	Female demonic spirit	on this side of the space
8. Dogs (dong) bdag	Lord of hole (nāga spirit?)	at the upper hole at the rainbow and the cloud
9. Gnyan rje	Lord of <i>gnyan</i>	at the middle hole at mountains and rocks
10. Klu rje	Lord of nāga	at the lower hole in water
11. Thod dkar		at the palace called Snang srid
12. Wer ma		lis rgyad kyi zer ma <sup>37</sup>

A passage from the *Khyung 'bum gong ma* (a text found amongst the manuscripts collected from Gansu)<sup>38</sup> sheds light on the question of why the phrase *rgyal bon thod dkar* is attached to the phrase *lha bon* (divine bon). This work informs us of a person by the name of *Lha bon thod gar*, a part of the name of Shenrab's father. According to the text, *Dung myi lha gar* invited *Lha bon thod gar* to defeat his enemy, a demon named *Lan pa skyin reng*. *Dung myi lha gar* is described as a primordial god and is also called *lha chen* (great god). Since all of the relevant events take place in a heavenly land called *Lha yul gung thang*,<sup>39</sup> *Lha bon thod gar* must also be identified as a divine figure. That is probably the reason why the name *Rgyal bon thod dkar* was also attached to *lha bon* (divine bon) to construe the name of Shenrab's father, *Mi bon lha bon rgyal bon thod dkar*.

### Shenrab's Mother Rgyal bzhad ma, Mother of Men and Gods

Like the long name of his father, Shenrab's mother also has a very long name, *Mi phyi lha phyi yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma*. She is popularly known amongst the Bonpos by the shorter version of her

<sup>37</sup> The passage in the *Srid pa spyi mdos* (4b) reads: *lis rgyad kyi zer ma na/ spyan ['dren ni su 'dren na]/ spyan 'dren ni wer ma 'dren/* From the context, this *lis rgyad kyi zer ma* seems to be a name of place, but I am not clear about its location or meaning.

<sup>38</sup> No information is available so far regarding the date of this source. I am grateful to Ngawang Gyatso for sharing this rare manuscript with me.

<sup>39</sup> This toponym, *Lha yul gung thang*, is found in Pelliot tibétain 1060 [3] (see Imaeda 2007: 83) and IOL TIB J 731[r44] (see Imaeda 2007: 264).

name, Yo *phyi rgyal bzhad ma*. According to the *Mdo 'dus*,<sup>40</sup> Shenrab's mother's maiden name was *Gsal ba'i 'od ldan mo*. When she married *Rgyal bon thod dkar*, she was initiated with the longer name. In regard to the construction of this long name, the author(s) of the *Mdo 'dus* used the same model as he used for the name of the father. Just as the word *bon* is repeated three times in the father's name, the term *phyi* is repeated three times in the mother's name. Also, the first two names of Shenrab's father, *mi bon* and *lha bon*, are repeated here with the suffix *phyi*, becoming *mi phyi* and *lha phyi*. These are followed by *yo phyi* (cf. *yo bon*) and *rgyal bzhad ma*. As mentioned above, in the *Gzer mig*, the name *yo bon* is added to Shenrab's father's name, which here corresponds with *yo phyi*. However, it is not entirely certain which one of the two, *yo phyi* or *yo bon*, influenced the other. *Rgyal* also appears in her name (cf. *rgyal bzhad* instead of *rgyal phyi*), which probably corresponds to *rgyal bon* in the father's name. However, modifying *rgyal bon* into *rgyal phyi* (following the same system of replacement) apparently was not possible; perhaps the latter phrase does not carry any relevant meaning in this context.

The old Tibetan word *phyi* as it appears in Shenrab's mother's name is to be interpreted as an abbreviation of *phyi mo*, which in this context means "grandmother."<sup>41</sup> It can be said that she was honoured as the grandmother of all human beings, as is clear from her descriptive name. From the long name of Shenrab's mother, she was known as *mi phyi* (grandmother of men), *lha phyi* (grandmother of gods), and *yo phyi* (everyone's grandmother) who is called *rgyal bzhad ma* (a blooming queen-cum-mother).

In the *Mdo 'dus*, there are several variants of Shenrab's mother's name, although they are all clearly referring to the same woman. I shall list them here, including those variants that are probably only the result of scribal errors:

1. *Mi phyi lha phyi yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma*<sup>42</sup> and its shorter version *mi phyi lha phyi'i rgyal bzhad ma*<sup>43</sup> are the name used most often by the Bonpos.
2. *Mi phye lha phye yo phye rgyal gzhan ma*.<sup>44</sup> The word *phyi* is replaced with *phye*, and *bzhad* with *gzhan*, probably scribal errors.

<sup>40</sup> *Mdo 'dus*, p. 55.

<sup>41</sup> See Pelliot tibétain 1071[r332], *zhang lon 'di rnams kyl myes pho dang / pha dang phyi mo dang ma' dang...* (see Imaeda 2007: 106) "these *Zhang lon*'s grandfather, father, grandmother, mother and..." The word *zhang lon* in this text seems to be a title of a high ranking position, but its real meaning is unclear to me. Almost an identical passage is also found in Pelliot tibétain 1072[078] (see Imaeda 2007: 115).

<sup>42</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: p. 55, *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 21r and *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyal: 18r and 24v.

<sup>43</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 41.

<sup>44</sup> *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 28r.

3. *Mi phyi lha phyi yo phyi rgyal bzhad*,<sup>45</sup> *Mi phyi lha'i yo phyi rgyal bzhed*,<sup>46</sup> and *mi phye yo phye rgyal bzhed*.<sup>47</sup> The main difference here is that *ma* is omitted, probably to achieve the required amount of syllables for this verse. In the third name, *phyi* is replaced by *phye*, which again looks like a scribal error.
4. *Yo phyi/phye rgyal bzhad yum*.<sup>48</sup> In this name, *ma* is replaced with *yum*, "mother."

### The Family Background of Yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma

According to the *Mdo 'dus*, Yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma, alias Gsal ba'i 'od ldan mo, was a daughter of King Sa la<sup>49</sup> and Queen 'Gir ti ma. This tells us that she was born into a royal family. Elsewhere in the *Mdo 'dus*,<sup>50</sup> it is suggested that the mother of Shenrab must be from royal descent (Tib. *rgyal rigs*). However, the author of the *Gzer mig* disagrees with the account in the *Mdo 'dus* and supplies us with the information that King Sa la was born into a lower class, in Tibetan *dmangs rigs*, which is equivalent to Sanskrit *śūdra*, the "commoner" or "servant" class in the Indian caste system. It is also suggested that it was Yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma's engagement to Rgyal bon thod dkar that entitled her family to become members of the royal family.

Apart from the brief account mentioned above, the author(s) of the *Mdo 'dus* does not provide further details on the family background of Shenrab's mother. I shall summarize the account recorded in the *Gzer mig*,<sup>51</sup> which also demonstrates how Bonpos later elaborated the story of Shenrab's mother.

Even after the whole world had been searched, it was very difficult to find a suitable bride for the Prince Rgyal bon thod dkar, the *Gzer mig* reports. When the Prince reached the age of thirteen, a father and a son came to visit him and introduced themselves as coming from the city Lang ling near the lake Mu le stong ldan had,<sup>52</sup> and being from a *dmangs rigs* (Skt. *śūdra*) family. The purpose of their visit was for the father to offer his beautiful daughter to the Prince. When the Prince saw that they were physically handicapped (the father was blind in his right eye and the son had a lame left leg)

<sup>45</sup> *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyal: 84r.

<sup>46</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 191.

<sup>47</sup> *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 84v.

<sup>48</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 52, *Mdo 'dus* Karmay: 26v and *Mdo 'dus* Lhagyal: 22v.

<sup>49</sup> The name Sa la occurs four times in the *Mdo 'dus* (55, 59, 113 and 208), three of which refer to the King who was the father of Yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma and one of which refers to a Brahmin.

<sup>50</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 52.

<sup>51</sup> *Gzer mig*: 15-25.

<sup>52</sup> A similar name is mentioned in Shar rdza 1985. It is a crystal lake (Tib. *shel mtsho*) called Mu le had, located in Spu rangs (cf. Vitali 1996 for Spu rangs). According to Karmay (1972: 124), three hunters, including Mar pa 'phen bzang, found some Bonpo treasures nearby this lake.

and belonged to the *dmangs rigs*, he replied with embarrassment. He said, "It is impossible that you could have a beautiful daughter, who would be appropriate to be my wife, therefore do not spread this news. If you have a beautiful daughter, then bring her secretly to the lake Mu le stong ldan had, when I go there to take a bath."

Because Prince Rgyal bon thod dkar was embarrassed by this meeting, he lied to those who asked him about it, though he reported the news truthfully to his father. His father responded positively and declared that it is not impossible for the visitor's daughter to be beautiful, for the man and his sons' disfigurements might be the result of either the downfall of a celestial being, or the liberation of someone from the suffering of Hell. Furthermore, this might be either an indication of the downfall of a king to become an ordinary person, or the uplifting of an ordinary member of a lower class to rule the country as a king. The physical disabilities of the father and son are not bad omens, he continued, because blindness of the right eye is an indication of blocking the door to the lower realms and a lame left leg is an indication of benefitting sentient beings. The Prince was convinced his father's reply and prepared to meet the daughter of the *dmangs rigs* family.

When the mother of the *dmangs rigs* family heard of the Prince's response, she became sad and cried. When the father decided to send his daughter to marry a man from the same class, she begged her father not to send her away, at least not until the full moon of the next month. The daughter told her father that she wished to go to see the prince. The parents agreed to her appeal that she may go to see the prince.

During the prince's bathing event, the Prince was looking at the centre of the city full of astonishment. Seeing the Prince's amazement, the Brahmin Gsal khyab 'od ldan asked, "You do not seem to appreciate the amusing performances of the gods, *nāgas* and humans; but you seem to be entertained by something else in the city centre. What is the amusement that you see there?" The Prince replied, "There is a beautiful girl on the top of the white palace in the centre of the city of Lang ling. Is she the daughter of a *nāga*, who has come in the form of a human, or a sky-goddess, who has come in the form of a *nāga*, or a human? I am amazed by this, therefore I am smiling."

The Brahmin saw the girl and went to gather information about her family background. He asked the girl, but she left without reply. Then he made enquiries among the local people who told him about her family. The Brahmin reported this to the Prince, who sent him again to enquire further. The lame son received the Brahmin. When the Brahmin found the girl exceptionally beautiful, he also became excited. He suggested to the parents that they offer their daughter to the prince. Although the father and son disagreed, the girl proposed a condition. The girl sent message that if the prince wished to be with her from his heart, he should offer a royal position to her

parents. The Brahmin conveyed the girl's proposal to the prince. The latter accepted the proposal and decided to appoint the girl's parents to royal positions. The Brahmin gathered the people of the city of Lang ling and announced the enthronement of the girl's parents. The father Sa la was enthroned as a king, the mother 'Gir ti ma as a queen and the brother Gsal khyab as a prince. After the marriage, the daughter Gsal ba'i 'od ldan mo was named Mi phyi lha phyi yo phyi rgyal bzhad ma.

In this long story from the *Gzer mig*, there are at least two points to consider. The family of *dmangs rigs* (Skt. *śūdra*), in which Shenrab's mother was born, and the activities of the Brahmin, which are also reported in the *Rgya cher rol pa*, the Tibetan translation of the *Lalitavistara*.

The *dmangs rigs* (Skt. *varṇa*) or the caste system is rooted in Indian culture and does not apply to Tibet, although the system is mentioned in numerous early Tibetan translations of Indian Buddhist texts. These early Tibetan texts probably influenced the understanding of the social order among Bonpos. However, the author(s) of the *Mdo 'dus* describes the origin of the four castes differently from how we know it from Indian texts and Tibetan translations. In the following passage from the *Mdo 'dus*, the four castes are said to have originated from the four elements: earth, water, fire and wind.

The nāgas were miraculously born from the four elements: earth, water, fire and wind. The royal caste born from the earth, the merchant caste from water, the Brahmin caste from fire, and the commoner from wind.<sup>53</sup>

Although this passage describes the four castes of *nāga* spirits, the variation indicates a different understanding of the four-caste system in Tibet. We may understand that this interpretation of the four castes also applies to the human realm, although the author(s) of the *Mdo 'dus* does not explicitly mention these four together anywhere in the text. The author(s) does however mention all four of the castes: royal caste (Tib. *rgyal rigs*), merchant caste (Tib. *rje'i rigs*), Brahmin caste (Tib. *bram ze'i rigs*) and commoner caste (Tib. *rmang rigs gdol ba*) on various other occasions and there they do apply to the human realm.<sup>54</sup>

The four-caste system has been elaborated further in later Bonpo works, and there it is more clearly connected to humans. As examples, I will present two relevant passages from the *Gzer mig* and the *Mdzod sgra 'grel*. The four castes are even organized in hierarchical order in accordance with their distinct natures. The *Gzer mig* describes that there are four human castes. People belonging to royal

<sup>53</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 13, 'byung bar smon lam btab pa las/ sa chu me rlung 'byung bzhi las/ klu rnams rdzu 'phrul las la skyes/ sa la rgyal rig/ chu las rje'u rigs 'byung/ me las bram ze rlung las rmang rigs 'byung/ de tshes rigs bzhi klu chen brgyad/

<sup>54</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 40, 47-48 and 207.

caste (Tib. *rgyal rigs*, Skt. *kṣatriya*) are the greatest, those belonging to merchant caste (Tib. *rje'i rigs*, Skt. *vaiśya*) are the purest, those belonging to Brahmin caste (Tib. *bram ze'i rigs*, Skt. *brāhmaṇa*) are the noblest, and those belonging to commoner caste (Tib. *rmangs rigs*, Skt. *śūdra*) are the lowest.<sup>55</sup>

A very similar interpretation is given in the early twelfth-century Bon cosmological text, *Mdzod sgra 'grel*.<sup>56</sup> According to this text, the greatest are those who belong to the royal group. The noblest are those who belong to the merchant group, the purest are those who belong to the Brahmin group and the lowest are those who belong to the commoner group. However, in contrast to the categorization of castes in the *Gzer mig*, the status of the merchant caste and the Brahmin caste are switched in this Bon cosmological text. This suggests that there was no standard categorization of the four caste systems among the Bonpos. Since the system of the four castes is foreign to Tibetan culture, its categorization depends largely on how an author understands the four castes, or how he remembers the interpretation of the four-caste system, as it appears in relevant texts.

### Shenrab's Ancestors of the Dmu Family

As discussed in the first section above, only two male ancestors are recorded in the list of Shenrab's paternal lineage that appears in the *Mdo 'dus*. The first one is Shenrab's grandfather, the king of *Dmu* named Lan kysis them pa skas, and the second is his father, Rgyal bon thod dkar. Let me paraphrase here the relevant passage. There was a king of *Dmu*, named Lam gyi them pa skas, in the Bar po so bryad palace, in the land of 'Ol mo gling in Jambudvīpa. He consorted with the *Phya* Princess Ngang 'brang ma, a grand-daughter of Ma btsun 'phrul mo. Their son was Rgyal bon thod dkar, who married Rgyal bzhad ma with whom he had nine sons and one daughter. The youngest of them was Shenrab, who became the ruler of the kingdom.<sup>57</sup>

In later Bon sources, the paternal lineage list of Shenrab's ancestors was further extended to include three or more names and their female partners. The inclusion of these names demonstrates the way in which the life account of Shenrab continued to develop. I shall discuss that expansion providing examples from two earlier Bon sources (*'Dul ba gling grags* and *Lta ba khyung chen*) and from a

<sup>55</sup> *Gzer mig*: 14.

<sup>56</sup> *Mdzod sgra 'grel*: 28. This text is said to have been discovered by Gyer mi nyi 'od and Sma ston srid 'dzin in 1108 AD.

<sup>57</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 41–42 and 55.

twentieth-century Bon history by Shar rdza.<sup>58</sup> The '*Dul ba gling grags* has three extra names in the list of Shenrab's ancestors.<sup>59</sup>

From the heart of Gshen lha ['od dkar], a brown-reddish light arose and landed on the peak of the brown *Dmu* mountain. That [light] transformed into a human, who possessed a white light. He was called *Dmu phyug skyir mzhon*. His union with *Lha za gangs grags*<sup>60</sup> bore a son named *Dmu btsan bzher gyi rgyal po*. [The latter] consorted with a *Phya* lady called *Rgyal mo* and they had a son named *Dmu btsan rgyal po*. [The latter] and [his wife] *Rim nam rgyal mo* son was *Dmu King Lan gyi them skas*. The latter consorted with *Lha za 'phrul mo* and their son was *Dmu King Thod dkar* [the father of Shenrab Miwo].

As we will see in the following quotation, four names are added in the second source, *Lta ba khyung chen*, which is datable to approximately the twelfth century.<sup>61</sup>

There was a king called *Dmu phyug skye rab*, who was a direct descendant of the nine '*then*.<sup>62</sup> In this lineage, the king who had the power to liberate [his people] was the *Dmu King Lam pa phya dkar*. The king who was enthroned in the place of [Lam pa phya dkar] was the *Dmu King Btsan pa gyen chen*. His successor was the *King Thog rje btsan pa*, and the latter's successor was *Dmu King Lan gyi them skas*. He [*Dmu King Lan gyi them skas*] was succeeded by *Rgyal bon thod dkar*, the one who supported all existence.

As seen in the two passages above, it is generally agreed that all the figures are kings and are descendants of the *Dmu* family. However, the lists are not consistent in the '*Dul ba gling grags* and *Lta ba khyung chen*. For instance, the second and the third names recorded in the '*Dul ba gling grags* are not given in the *Lta ba khyung chen*. Instead, the second and third names are different and a fourth name is also added in the *Lta ba khyung chen*. This inconsistency between the two texts is probably due to different sources.

<sup>58</sup> Shar rdza 1985.

<sup>59</sup> '*Dul ba gling grags*: 118–19. Another early Bon text *Rtsa rgyud nyi sgron* (79–80) also follows the '*Dul ba gling grags* list: *dmu phyug skyer zhon*, *dmu btsan bzher gyis rgyal po*, *dmu btsan rgyal ba*, *dmu rgyal lan gyi them skas*, *rgyal po thod dkar*, *ston pa gshen rab*.

<sup>60</sup> This can be compared to *Lha za gung drug*, one of the six wives of Shenrab Miwo in the *Mdo 'dus*. Another comparable name *Lha mo gang grags* appears in the Bon cosmogonical text, the *Mdzod phug*.

<sup>61</sup> *Lta ba khyung chen*: 4–6. According to the colophon, a person with the family name *rma* discovered the text *Lta ba khyung chen* in Sham po cave. He is identified as *rma Shes rab blo ldan* in a small note, but I assume that *rma* in the colophon refers to *rma Shes rab seng ge* (b. 12<sup>th</sup>-century), because many other Bon texts were discovered by him in the same cave.

<sup>62</sup> The nine '*then* spirits are said to be descendants of a god.

Nevertheless, these early sources have influenced later Bonpo authors' presentations of the names of Shenrab's ancestors. This is evident from the early twentieth-century Bon history by Shar rdza. Shar rdza's history has received great deal of attention in Western academia as it has been translated into English by Karmay (1972). Shar rdza combined the two lists above and then extended it to create a well-known list of Shenrab's ancestors. As can be seen in the table below, Shar rdza gives eight names, including the father Rgyal bon thod dkar, and thus pushes the family lineage of Shenrab Miwo about eight generations back. Nam mkha'i nor bu<sup>63</sup> seems to consider this to be an authentic list of the *Dmu* kings, though he pushes the list of Shenrab's ancestors even further back, to thirteen generations.

Table: Ancestors of the *Dmu* Family

<i>Mdo 'dus</i> : 41–42	<i>'Dul ba gling grags</i> : 118–119	<i>Lta ba khyung chen</i> : 4–6	Shar rdza 1985: 17–18
X	Dmu phyug skyir mzhon	King Dmu phyug skye rab	Dmu phyug skyer gzhon
X	X	<i>Dmu</i> King Lam pa phyag dkar	<i>Dmu</i> King Lam pa phyag dkar
X	Dmu btsan bzher gyi rgyal po	X	Dmu bzher rgyal po
X	X	<i>Dmu</i> King Btsan pa gyen chen	<i>Dmu</i> King Btsan pa gyen chen
X	Dmu btsan rgyal po	X	Dmu rgyal btsan po
X	X	King Thog rje btsan pa	<i>Dmu</i> King Thog rje btsan pa
<i>Dmu</i> King Lam gyi them pa skas	<i>Dmu</i> King Lan gyi them skas	<i>Dmu</i> King Lan gyi them skas	<i>Dmu</i> King Lan gyi them skas
Mi bon lha bon Rgyal bon thod dkar	<i>Dmu</i> King Thökar	Rgyal bon thod dkar	Rgyal bon thod dkar
Shenrab Miwo	[Shenrab Miwo]	[Shenrab Miwo]	Shenrab Miwo

<sup>63</sup> Nam mkha'i nor bu 1996: 48-49.

### Nine Brothers or Nine Ways

In chapter twelve of the *Mdo 'dus*, Shenrab is described as the only son of Rgyal bon thod dkar,<sup>64</sup> but chapter six of the *Mdo 'dus* informs us that King Rgyal bon thod dkar and Queen Rgyal bzhad ma had nine sons and one daughter. This is to say that there were nine brothers and one sister in Shenrab's family. The three elder brothers were named *Phya gshen*, *Snang gshen* and *Srid gshen*, who became teachers of three heavenly realms (Tib. *lha gnas gsum*).<sup>65</sup> The three middle brothers, *'Phrul gshen*, *Mi/Ye gshen* and *Gtsug gshen*, went to tame the *g.yen* spirits of the three spheres: *yar g.yen* (the spirits in the sky), *bar g.yen* (the spirits in the intermediate sphere) and *sa g.yen* (the spirits on the earth).<sup>66</sup> They became the masters of the *g.yen* spirits. The younger three brothers are *Grub gshen*, *Grol gshen* and *Gshen rab* (Shenrab). These three stayed to assist their mother Rgyal bzhad ma. The sister, *Ngang ring ma*, was married to *Phya An tse lan med*, who gave birth to a son named *Yid kyi khye'u chung*. The youngest of the nine brothers, Shenrab, became the ruler of the kingdom, married six wives, and had ten children.

This description of the nine brothers is nowhere to be found in the other accounts of Shenrab Miwo. What can be the possible origin of this description? In chapter seventeen of the *Mdo 'dus*, there is a list of the Nine Ways of Bon or the nine methods for teaching the doctrines of Bon.

Table: Nine Brothers vs. Nine ways<sup>67</sup>

The Nine ways ( <i>Mdo 'dus</i> , ch. xvii)		The Nine brothers ( <i>Mdo 'dus</i> , ch. vi)
1. <i>Phya gshen</i>	=	<i>Phya gshen</i> (B1)
2. <i>Snang gshen</i>	=	<i>Snang gshen</i> (B2)
3. <i>'Phrul gshen</i>	=	<i>'Phrul gshen</i> (B4)
4. <i>Srid gshen</i>	=	<i>Srid gshen</i> (B3)
5. <i>Dge snyen</i>	=?	<i>Gtsug gshen</i> <sup>68</sup> (B6)

<sup>64</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 105, *rgyal bon thod dkar bu cig gshen rab 'di*

<sup>65</sup> I have not been able to identify these three heavenly realms.

<sup>66</sup> See the thirty-three *Bonpos* listed in Gurung 2011 (appendix 2), who were also responsible for subduing the spirits of these three spheres.

<sup>67</sup> For the nine ways of Bon, see Snellgrove 1967: 9-11.

6. <i>Drang srong</i>	=?	
7. <i>A dkar sngags rgyud</i>	=?	<i>Grub gshen</i> <sup>69</sup> (B7)
	=?	<i>Grol gshen</i> (B8)
8. <i>Ye gshen</i>	=	<i>Mi/Ye gshen</i> (B5)
9. <i>Rdzogs chen a ti ba'i sde</i>	=?	<i>Grol gshen</i> (B8)
	≠	<i>Gshen rab</i> (B9)

Among the names of the nine brothers listed in the table, five names (B1–B5) exactly match five of the nine Bon doctrinal teachings. Three names (B6–B8) are also related to four of the Nine Ways (5–7 and 9), but only from their contexts. The remaining name, *Gshen rab* (B9), does not match any of the Nine Ways, but since he is identified as *Shenrab Miwo*, he is, after all, the one who taught the Nine Ways. I would therefore argue that most of the names of the eight brothers of *Shenrab Miwo* as listed in the *Mdo 'dus* are derived from the doctrinal system of the Nine Ways of Bon. It is still a mystery why such an interpretation was made, given that it does not add any credibility to the life account of *Shenrab*. In fact, it contradicts the assertion in chapter twelve of the *Mdo 'dus* that *Shenrab* was an only son. However, considering the highly composite nature of this text, we probably should not expect consistency.

In regard to how the names of the nine brothers were constructed, a few other factors are also worth discussing. There are two names listed among the thirty-three *bonpos* in the *Mdo 'dus*<sup>70</sup> that are relevant here: *srid(srid) bon* and *phya bon*. According to Pelliot tibétain 1285, the term *phya* is used to describe a ritual (text) to be recited (Tib. *mo btab phya klags*),<sup>71</sup> so the priest who performs that ritual is known as *phya bon*. This document also informs us that there are two kinds of ritual priests: *bon* and *gshen*.<sup>72</sup> Since both the terms *bon* and *gshen* designate a ritual priest, the names *phya bon* and *srid bon* could

<sup>68</sup> Cf. *gtsug phud thob pa'i gshen*, the *gshen* who has removed his crown and renounced worldly life, thus becoming an ascetic monk. This name also corresponds to *gtsug gshen* of *Gtsug gshen rgyal ba*, otherwise known as *Yid kyi khye'u chung*.

<sup>69</sup> The Tibetan terms *grub* and *grol* have the connotations of “practicing” and “liberating,” which belong to Tantric practices, while *sgrol (lam)* may also refer to the *Rdzogs chen* path, the ninth of the Nine Ways.

<sup>70</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 53–54.

<sup>71</sup> The *phya* ritual is generally performed to avert misfortune and to ensure a long life. See *A Lexicon of Zhangzhung and Bonpo terms* (Nagano [et al.] 2008: 152).

<sup>72</sup> Dotson 2008: 43–44.

have been reinterpreted as *phyi gshen* and *srid gshen* in the list of Shenrab's brothers in the *Mdo 'dus*.

Table: Some Other Examples of *bon* and *gshen* designations

<i>Bon</i>	<i>Gshen</i>	Source
<i>'Phrul bon</i>	<i>'Phrul gshen</i>	Stein: 1972, 230
<i>Lha bon</i>	<i>Lha gshen</i>	
<i>Ye bon</i>	<i>Ye gshen</i>	
<i>Dur bon</i>	<i>Dur gshen</i>	
<i>'Ol bon</i>	<i>'Ol gshen</i>	PT 1285

### Conclusion

As discussed above, the way that the names of Shenrab's parents, ancestors, and other family members are presented in the *Mdo 'dus* can demonstrably be traced back to earlier sources. As for the name of Shenrab's father, we find two separate names in the Dunhuang documents: *Mi bon/ lha'i bon/ rgya bon brim tang* and *Thod dkar*. It is evident that the first two names, *mi bon* and *lha'i bon*, are kept unaltered, as in the original. A part of the third name, *rgya bon* was modified and put together with *thod dkar*, a name found in old Tibetan documents. The intermingling of the names derived from old Tibetan sources is further evidenced by other names found in the *Mdo 'dus*<sup>73</sup> and in the late thirteenth-century Tibetan historical text called *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa*. The relationship between *Mi bon lha bon* and *'Chi med gshen*, as father and son, is also recorded in this history. Since *'Chi med gshen* is none other than Shenrab, later Bonpo authors may have remembered him as the son of *Mi bon lha bon* Rgyal bon thod dkar, and therefore as a grandson of a *Dmu* king.

After the father's name was settled, a similar model was applied to construe the name of Shenrab's mother. In parallel to the word formations with *bon* in Shenrab's father's named (*mi bon*, *lha bon*, and so on), Shenrab's mother's name features word formations with *phyi*

<sup>73</sup> *Mdo 'dus*: 54.

(*mi phyi, lha phyi*), where the *bon* in Shenrab's father's name are replaced by *phyi* in his mother's name.

As I have shown above, only two of Shenrab's ancestors were listed in the *Mdo 'dus*, but this list was extended in later sources. By the time of Shar rdza's twentieth-century Bon history, this list had increased up to four times in length. It was extended even further by Nam mkha'i nor bu, who added several other names.

Finally, confusion between the names of the Bon doctrinal teachings and the personal names of Shenrab's brothers that appear in the *Mdo 'dus* raises questions about the construction of this extended group of nine brothers.

Based on this evidence, I conclude that the names found in the *Mdo 'dus* have several origins. These names help us to construe the hagiography of Shenrab, but they also serve to connect the *Mdo 'dus* to other available historical sources. The author(s) seems to have had recourse to many old sources and/or oral traditions when including these names. Although the names that are recorded in the *Mdo 'dus* are comparable to the names that appear in documents preserved in Dunhuang, they do not necessarily derive from those specific texts. This would in fact be very unlikely, because there is a gap between the date of sealing of the cave in the early eleventh century and the emergence of the *Mdo 'dus* in the late eleventh century (approximately). But I think that it is safe to conclude that older Tibetan documents or oral traditions, closely corresponding to what has been preserved in Dunhuang, were in fact available to Bonpo authors and also influenced later works, including the *Mdo 'dus* and the later thirteenth-century Tibetan history by Mkhas pa lde'u.

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RNYING MA AND GSAR MA: FIRST APPEARANCES OF THE TERMS  
DURING THE EARLY *PHYI DAR* (LATER SPREAD OF THE DOCTRINE)

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**I**n this article, I will investigate the distinction between the *rnying ma* (the Old Tradition) and the *gsar ma* (the New Tradition) in Tibetan Buddhism. Several other terms are closely related to this pair, of course. Tibetan history writers ubiquitously use the terms of the early spread of the teachings—*bstan pa snga dar*, and the later spread of the teachings—*bstan pa phyi dar*. They likewise divide Tibetan translation efforts into two periods: the old tradition of the early translations and the new tradition of the late translations (*snga 'gyur rnying ma* and *phyi 'gyur gsar ma* or simply *snga 'gyur* and *phyi 'gyur*). I would like to make an attempt to clarify the meaning and the relationship of these various terms. I will also investigate the terms' early appearances in the literature, particularly in polemical works, such as those texts gathered under the heading of *sngags log sun 'byin* (refuting the erroneous mantras).<sup>1</sup> The early and later *chos 'byung* also provide useful references about the distinction between these terms.<sup>2</sup>

### History writing – continuity and change

As the threefold divisions of *bstan pa snga dar* / *bstan pa phyi dar*, *snga 'gyur rnying ma* / *phyi 'gyur gsar ma*, and *rnying ma* / *gsar ma* are terms directly related to the historical development of Buddhism in Tibet, it would be appropriate to begin with some general remarks about history writing and possible methods for interpreting historical events. The above-mentioned terms are in focus here, in so far as they constitute historical events.

One common conception of history is that it is a narrative, to be divided into meaningful events that participate in a broader historical continuity. Historical narratives show us how a specific group of

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<sup>1</sup> Under this designation can be included early polemical writings written by Lha bla ma ye shes 'od (947-1024), Pho brang zhi ba 'od, and 'Gos khug pa lhas btsas; the *Sngags log sun 'byin* attributed to Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197-1264), the *Chos log sun 'byin* attributed to Bu ston rin chen grub (1290-1364), and so on. The subject matter of all these writings is refuting erroneous mantras (tantras).

<sup>2</sup> The *Dharma* histories of Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer (1124/36 – 1192/1204), Mkhas pa lde'u, Lde'u jo sras, Bu ston rin chen grub (1290-1364), 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal (1392-1481), and Dpa' bo gtsug la phreng ba (1504-1566) are all productive sources for these distinctions, for example.

people or culture has tried to understand its own history by choosing to highlight certain kinds of events. Narrative histories are also always written in chapters.<sup>3</sup> Tibetan historians, for example, have usually approached history by trying to describe coherent continuities and break-ups, surrounded by transition periods. When writing about the arrival of Buddhism in Tibet, for example, Tibetan historians appeal to the chapters of the *bstan pa snga dar* and *bstan pa phyi dar*.<sup>4</sup> The twofold distinction of *bstan pa snga dar* and *bstan pa phyi dar* is probably the only periodization that has found general acceptance amongst Tibetan authors. Yet this significant periodization also colors how the spread of the teachings are articulated, namely by the distinction between *snga 'gyur rnying ma* and *phyi 'gyur gsar ma*.

All historical periodizations are founded upon theoretical interpretations of continuity and change. Debates around periodization tend to flare up around where one chooses to locate the break-up points between periods, the interruptions between continuities. This is certainly the case in Tibetan history, where the breaking point between various interpretations of the early and the late has incited significant polemics.

While addressing the use and the meaning of the *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* monikers, it would be pertinent to make use of Michel Foucault's reflections of the genealogical approach to history. According to Foucault, the structural approach to history, wherein one tries to establish longer continuities and linear successions, does not reveal a genuine history. Because history is never a coherent flow of events, such presentations become arbitrary. It is inevitable that such normative history speaks the language of its writer, while the possibility arises that the real history remains masked behind the letters on the paper.<sup>5</sup> Where normative history tends to see unity and linear development, as with the twofold division of early and later spread of the teachings in Tibet, for example, Foucault would rather see "series full of gaps, intertwined with one another, interplays of differences, distances, substitutions, transformations."<sup>6</sup>

Foucault also emphasizes that the genealogical approach to history is not a search for "origins." Likewise, with reference to the "origins" of the dichotomies of *bstan pa snga dar/bstan pa phyi dar*, *snga 'gyur rnying ma/phyi 'gyur gsar ma*, and *rnying ma/gsar ma*, it must be understood that discovering the historical beginnings of

<sup>3</sup> A detailed account of such a phenomenon is given in Cuevas 2006: 44-55.

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes an intermediary period, *bar dar*, is added. Bcom ldan rigs pa'i ral gri (1227-1305) has used it to denote the early part of the *phyi dar* associated with Rin chen bzang po (Cuevas 2006: 47). According to Cathy Cantwell and Robert Mayer, Dge ye tshul khri ms seng ge also used this term in his *Chos 'byung thos pa'i rgya mtsho dad pa'i ngang mo'i rnam par rtse ba* published in 1474. Yet he only uses *bar dar* in relation to the Kālacakra transmission (Cantwell and Mayer 2008: 290).

<sup>5</sup> Foucault 1984: 94.

<sup>6</sup> Foucault 2007 (reprint): 40.

these terms will not provide us with a proficient understanding of their meaning and practical use. In actuality, the historical beginning of these events cannot be found. As is most often the case, the materials that are available to modern historians are secondary sources. In case of these specific Tibetan terms, there is a considerable time gap between the events and the primary sources composed by Tibetan historians.

Furthermore, in accordance with Foucault's insights, I suggest that locating the initial use of the distinction between the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* is not of utmost importance. One reason for this is that these terms do not have a stable, univocal definition, as the following analysis will show. A second reason is that the use of these terms depends on a variety of contributing factors. Much more attention should be paid to all kinds of subjective details: in whose interests are these terms used, in what kind of environment do they appear, and what precise purpose do they serve for their users at the moment of their usage in a given environment?

A genealogical approach to history seeks to make visible all of those discontinuities that appear to the modern historian. In the case of the use of terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*, it would not be appropriate to consider them as entities with fixed meanings. Rather, we should attempt to observe the shifts in their meaning over time, as used by distinct groups with various motivations. We should notice its discontinuities, which from the surface seem to be fitting into a general narrative of history.

#### **Definitions of the *rnying ma*, *gsar ma* and related terms; their appearances in textual sources**

Speaking about earlier (*rnying ma*) and later traditions (*gsar ma*) with respect to the very beginning of the later spread of the teachings is clearly mistaken, as both the *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* identities had not yet been established at this time. This time period brought with it the arrival of new teachings lineages into Tibet. In the course of adapting to the Tibetan environment, some lineages died out while others merged together. Gradually, those groups of lineages that successfully merged together became the basis for the later *chos lugs*, "teaching traditions."<sup>7</sup>

The beginning of the *phyi dar* was the moment when the founders of the major Tibetan traditions made dangerous journeys to India to bring the teachings to Tibet. It became a common practice to define the authority of the teachings in terms of unbroken lineage going

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<sup>7</sup> In Tibetan, the expression "*chos lugs*" is used to indicate a teaching tradition or a teaching system of the Buddha. In order to avoid unnecessary extra meanings to this notion, I have avoided the common translations of "sect," "order," and "school" and instead chosen "teaching tradition" or "*Dharma* tradition" as equivalents to this term.

back to the Buddha himself.<sup>8</sup> The idea of a lineage (*rgyud*), after all, is directly related to the transmission of teachings from teacher to disciple in an unbroken flow. This notion of lineage was therefore of major importance during early *phyi dar*.

The term *chos lugs*, in contrast, can be understood as groups of lineages, which all share a focus on one particular teacher or teachings. *Chos lugs* and *rgyud* (lineage) may therefore share such features as distinctive bodies of ritual and literature and a clearly identified founder.<sup>9</sup> However, *chos lugs* have extra features related to their function within society. They have centers with permanent buildings and a shared administrative hierarchy.

In traditional accounts,<sup>10</sup> the arrival of Buddhism into Tibet is usually traced back to the king Lha tho tho ri, the 27<sup>th</sup> king of Tibet.<sup>11</sup> Legend tells that scriptures (including the *Karaṇḍavyūhasūtra*) and ritual objects fell from the sky onto the roof of his royal palace Yum bu bla sgang. There are competing accounts, of course.<sup>12</sup> Still, because there are no reliable historical sources depicting that period, Tibetan historians have generally accepted the legendary account of the arrival of the Buddha's teachings into the Land of Snows. To the point, there are no polemics about the initial arrival of the teachings to Tibet.

This is not the case with respect to the beginning of the later spread of the teachings, about which we find multiple accounts with diverse variations. The later spread of the teachings is usually said to have begun with the return of ten men to central Tibet (the number of men varies from four to thirteen) after their ordination in Tsong kha in northeast Tibet.<sup>13</sup> Most of the sources report them to be direct disciples of Dge ba rab gsal. Such reports are not very credible, however, because they require these persons to have had exceedingly long lives. More probably, there were several generations of monks between Dge ba gsal and the group of men who spread the *Vinaya* from the northeast to central Tibet.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Lopez 1998: 24.

<sup>9</sup> In the case of a lineage, teachings are often traced back to the Buddha or perhaps Padmasambhava in *nirmāṇakāya* form, or some other teachers in *sambhogakāya* form. In the context of *chos lugs*, major importance is laid on the founder of the tradition in Tibet, who is usually the founder of a permanent religious center.

<sup>10</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 38; Bu ston Rin chen grub 1988: 181; Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma 2007: 35; Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams Rgyal mtshan (1312-1375) 1994: 137, and so on.

<sup>11</sup> Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams Rgyal mtshan 1994: 137. Sometimes it is said that he was the 26th or the 28th king.

<sup>12</sup> According to Nel pa Paṇḍita, for example, those scriptures were brought to Tibet by the scholar Buddhiraṅkṣita and the translator Thilise. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 509.

<sup>13</sup> Davidson 2005. In chapter three, Davidson gives a concise overview of the beginning of the *phyi dar* in central Tibet.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*: 92.

According to later Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the breaking point between the early and the later spread of the teachings is more or less equivalent to the breaking point between the early and the late translation traditions, commonly referred to as *snga 'gyur rnying ma* (the old tradition of early translations) or *gsang sngags snga 'gyur rnying ma* (the old tradition of early translations of secret mantras),<sup>15</sup> and *phyi 'gyur gsar ma* (the new tradition of later translations). The early translation period started with the translation activities of Rma rin chen mchog, Ska ba dpal brtsegs and Cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan during the second half of the eighth century under the patronage of Khri srong lde bstan (742 – c. 800).<sup>16</sup> There are no polemical debates about these claims.

In the traditional accounts like *chos 'byung*, the exact year of the break-up point between *bstan pa snga dar* and *bstan pa phyi dar* is sometimes given. For example, in *The Blue Annals*, author 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392-1481) quotes Bu ston Rin chen grub as reporting that the later spread of the teachings started in the year of the water female bird (*chu mo bya*) (973 CE). 'Gos lo tsā ba also adds that 'Brom ston rgyal ba 'byung gnas (1005-1064) considered the year 978, the earth male tiger year (*sa pho stag*), to be the beginning of the later spread of the teachings.<sup>17</sup> According to the *Dharma History of Lde'u jo sras*, it was rather year of earth female bird (*sa mo bya*), probably 949, when the *Dharma* rose from ashes.<sup>18</sup>

According to some accounts, the date of Rin chen bzang po (958-1055)'s return from India is considered to be the beginning point of the *bstan pa phyi dar*.<sup>19</sup> Rin chen bzang po's was born in 958 and, according to his *rnam thar*, he was ordained at the age of thirteen, in 971.<sup>20</sup> It is said that he went to India around the age of seventeen, which would be approximately 975, and stayed there for more than ten years (usually, thirteen years is mentioned). Therefore, Bu ston, 'Brom ston, and Lde'u jo sras' dates for the beginning of the *phyi dar* (973, 978, and 948 respectively) would all be too early to be indexed to Rin chen bzang po's return from India (nor would they be linked to his departure for India).

Most often, the beginning of the later spread of the teachings is explained with reference to other events, not the translation acti-

<sup>15</sup> *Mantrayāna* (*gsang sngags kyi theg pa*), *mantranaya* (*gsang sngags kyi tshul*) and *vajrayāna* (*rdo rje theg pa*) are the common terms used to designate that which modern scholars call "Tantra" or "Tantrism," names which themselves come from *tantra* in Sanskrit (*rgyud* in Tibetan). See David Ruegg 1981: 212. Monier-Williams gives the following definitions of a *mantra*: "instrument of thought," "sacred speech or text," "prayer or song of praise." See Monier-Williams 1994 (reprint): 785-786.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer 1988: 482.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.* 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 1086; *Bu ston chos 'byung*, *Gsung 'bum vol. XXIV* (Ya) folio 136a.

<sup>18</sup> Lde'u jo sras 1987: 158.

<sup>19</sup> Buswell 2003: 36.

<sup>20</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 68.

vities. As it is commonly said that the *bstan pa phyi dar* began simultaneously in western and central Tibet, dates for its inception are probably related to the revival of the *Vinaya* in central Tibet by Klu mes and his companions. Mkhas pa lde'u (mid-to-late thirteenth century) places this event in the year of 988.<sup>21</sup>

In the later historiographical literature, there is an absence of polemics or even fundamentally diverging opinions about the beginnings of the *bstan pa phyi dar*. The distinction between the early and later spread of the teachings only becomes polemical when it indicates distinct translation periods – *snga 'gyur rnying ma* and *phyi 'gyur gsar ma*. Locating the breaking point between these distinct translation periods did, in fact, incite polemical debates by Tibetan scholars, debates that are discussed in the last section of this article.

The terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* are not actually chronological categories. Their precursors emerged in the early polemical material, where they are used in direct opposition to one another. As in many early polemical texts, debates were related to authenticity problems of scriptures (at that time, doctrinal debates were still rare).<sup>22</sup> The division of the old and the new traditions began to emerge amidst these authenticity debates. Most often, *gsar ma* polemicists condemned certain *rnying ma* translations and practices, but it was not always so. Polemics also arose the other way round, or between the proponents of the emerging *gsar ma* traditions themselves.

How were the precursors of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* used in the early polemics? In the “ordinance” (*bka' shog*) of Lha bla ma ye shes 'od (947-1024), probably written around the year 985, we do not find any words which would refer to an earlier or a later period. In some occasions, the author does use the word *sngon* (early, before), but this use has a different meaning here, solely referring to the *Dharma* kings era.<sup>23</sup> Ye shes 'od is stating that the early kings were actually the emanations of bodhisattvas who inspired many people to follow the Buddhist path.

In the *Sngags log sun 'byin* of 'Gos khug pa lhas btsas (born around 1015) there are also no clear references to two translation periods or to multiple *Dharma* traditions. The author only mentions earlier translations connected with *Dharma* king Khri srong lde btsan. While speaking about what we now call the later spread, he criticizes the Zur family lineage. To designate this later time, he uses the expression “*phyis la brtan nas*” (literally: “relying upon later”).<sup>24</sup> In the *bka' shog* or “ordinance” written by Pho brang zhi ba 'od around 1092, we find for the first time clear references to the earlier and later periods. In the introductory lines of his *bka' shog*, he uses

<sup>21</sup> Mkhas pa lde'u 1987: 394.

<sup>22</sup> See also Davidson 2002: 203-24.

<sup>23</sup> Karmay (1988a: 14): [...] *mna' sngon bod yul dbus su chos byung ba* / [...] *sngon gyi rgyal po byang chub sems dpa' yin*

<sup>24</sup> 'Gos khug pa lhas btsas (1979: 21): /...*phyis la brtan nas*.../ (“relying upon later time”).

the *snga-phyi* dichotomy (“early-late”), proclaiming that Tibetans forged texts during two periods, early and late.<sup>25</sup> He then enumerates the “false” texts from each of these two periods. He uses the terms *snga* and *phyi* elsewhere, as well. He refers to texts translated at early times (*sngar gyi dus*), and then while speaking about later texts, such as tantras, commentaries and *sādhana*s composed in Tibet, he uses the expression “*phyi gsar*” or “later new.”<sup>26</sup> The word “*gsar*” appears now for the first time, as opposed to simply “*phyi*” (later). This is the first step in the process of the term *gsar ma* being used to designate a distinct group of new teaching traditions.

As the (late appearing) terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* are polemical categories by nature, we should expect them to appear in early polemical literature. One of the earlier appearances of the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* is found in the *Sngags log sun 'byin*, probably wrongly attributed to Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197-1264).<sup>27</sup> The exact date of composition of this text is not clear. It was most likely written during the second half of the thirteenth century if not later, and almost certainly not during the lifetime of Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal. The author, while referring to the old tradition, uses the expression “*gsang sngags rnying ma*,” (the old tradition of secret mantra). The term is used in the context of pointing out corrupted texts and practices.<sup>28</sup> When the author describes the later spread of the teachings and points out the spurious texts and teachings written during this later spread, he uses the term *gsar ma*.<sup>29</sup>

While Chag lo tsā ba may not have written the *Sngags log sun 'byin*, he is known to have also used the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*. In a letter to Sa skya Paṇḍita, known as Chag lo's *Zhu ba*, he uses the phrase “*gsang sngags gsar rnying*” (new and old secret mantra) while asking Sa skya Paṇḍita to enumerate the tantras that were composed in Tibet. Sa skya Paṇḍita, in a diplomatic response, uses the terms “*sngags rnying ma*” and “*gsar ma*” in turn.<sup>30</sup> According to Jared

<sup>25</sup> Karmay 1998b: 31-40.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*: 39. /...*phyis gsar du byung ba'i rgyud dang/ 'grel ba dang/ man ngag dang/ sgrub thabs la...*/

<sup>27</sup> For a more detailed account, see Raudsepp 2009.

<sup>28</sup> The same use occurs in the *Chos log sun 'byin*, probably written in the beginning of the fourteenth century and wrongly attributed to Bu ston rin chen grub.

<sup>29</sup> Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1979: folio 6): *rgya gar na med par gsang sngags rnying mar ming btags pa rnams sol* ; and the occurrence of the term “*gsar ma*” (folio 14): /...*yang gsar ma la chos log dar ba ni...*/

<sup>30</sup> *Sa paṇ Gsung 'bum*, 533-534: *gsang sngags gsar rnying gnyis la bod kyis ni/ sbyar ba'i rgyud sde mang ste gang dag lags/*. The answer of Sa skya paṇḍita (545-46): *dri ba bcu gcig pa gsang sngags gsar rnying la bod kyis sbyar ba'i rgyud sde gang lags gsungs pa'ang/ sngags rnying ma la lha mo skye rgyud dang/ bum ril thod mkhar la sogs pa shin tu mang bar gda'/ gsar ma la bod kyis sbyar ba'i rgyud dus 'byung dang/ phyag na rdo rje mkha' 'gro dang/ ra li nyi shu rtsa bzhi la sogs pa shin tu mang po brjod kyis mi lang ba cig gda' ste/ thams cad gsal kha ston na phog thug bag tsam yong bar gda' bas khyed nyid kyis dpyod mdzod.*

Douglas Rhoton, this letter to Sa paṅ was written somewhere between 1236 and 1241.<sup>31</sup>

In summary, we see that the clear dichotomy of *snga/phyi*, early and later, appears for the first time at the end of the eleventh century. In one occasion, “*gsar*” is added to the term “*phyi*.” However, the terms “*snga*” and “*phyi*,” when used, merely indicate distinct *spreads* of Buddhism into Tibet. We cannot yet speak about distinct *Dharma* traditions at this point. A clearly new use appears in Chag lo tsā ba’s *Zhu ba*. His use of these terms, I would argue, attests to the fact that a distinct textual corpus of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* had been set by this time. As the occurrence of these terms in the *Zhu ba* is limited to enumerating text names only, it should be emphasized that doctrinal differences are not being discussed here.

Apart from polemical texts, *chos ’byung* (literally “*Dharma origins*”) are essential sources for this research. It should be remembered that several early *chos ’byung* have been lost. Some believe that the first *chos ’byung* was written by Rong zom pa (1012-1088), but only its fragments have survived. Khu ston btson ’grus (eleventh century) is also known for having written a *chos ’byung*. But again, only fragments in the form of quotations in the later *chos ’byung* have survived.<sup>32</sup>

Nyang ral nyi ma ’od zer’s *chos ’byung* entitled *Chos ’byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi’i bcud* (*The Essence of the Flower, the Elixir of Honey*) is one of the earliest *chos ’byung* still available to us. Nyang ral’s life dates differ according to variances in his birth year’s element: sometimes it is given as the wood dragon year (1124), sometimes as the fire dragon year (1136). His death year likewise varies (1192 or 1204).<sup>33</sup> We do not know the exact composition date of his *chos ’byung*, but it was probably composed towards the end of his life.

In Nyang ral’s *Chos ’byung*, we can find one of the earliest mentions of the distinction between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*. Although the work primarily focuses on the *Dharma* kings era, he also gives detailed accounts of certain events during the *phyi dar*. At the end of his *chos ’byung*, there is a paragraph where the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* are used:

Relying upon the kindness of Lha bla ma, in the set of teachings translated in this way, as there are slight differences between the translations, starting from the great being Rin chen bzang po and all the later translations, and the early translations from Rma Rin chen mchog, Ska ba dpal brtsegs and Cog ro klu’i rgyal mtshan onwards, Tibetans named them

<sup>31</sup> Rhoton 2002: 206.

<sup>32</sup> For example, in Dpa’ bo gtsug la phreng ba’s *Chos ’byung mkhas pa’i dga’ ston* (2003), reprint.

<sup>33</sup> See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, 2<sup>nd</sup> part: 70, notes 989 and 995.

[the later translations] *gsar ma*, and in the same way, all the old translations are famous under the name of *rnying ma*.<sup>34</sup>

The author is evidently using these terms to refer to distinct translation periods rather than distinct spreads of the teachings. Again, a chronological distinction is in use. However, he does not give further details about how he perceives these slight differences in translation to appear.

The last section of the *Chos 'byung* raises some questions regarding the consistency and authorship of the work. One possibility is that the very final part of the *Chos 'byung* could be a later addition to the core text. According to David Germano, the final section may have been written by Nyang ral's son 'Gro mgon Nam mkha' dpal ba, or some other direct disciple of his.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, this final chapter of the work, where the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* actually appear, seems to be an annex, filling the details of all of the accomplishment lineages (*sgrub brgyud*) as they continued after the composition of the original text. The *Chos 'byung* itself seems to end earlier with the traditional concluding formulas of praises, where the author honors Indian scholars and *mahāsiddhas* like Grub pa thob pa rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug, Paṇḍita 'Bum phrag gsum pa and Atsa ra mar po can who came to Tibet for the benefit of beings.<sup>36</sup> Of course, in the conclusion that follows the annex, it is said that the entire text was written by Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer himself. However, the list of accomplishment lineages nonetheless seems to be a later addition to the main text. Regardless, as the exact composition date of the text (or its parts) is not known, definitive conclusions about the exact time of the appearance of the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* cannot be established.

Another famous *Dharma* history with uncertain dates is Mkhas pa lde'u's *Chos 'byung*. Mkhas pa lde'u probably wrote his work around the middle of the thirteenth century. In his *Chos 'byung* there is an interesting passage that elucidates how the differences between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* should be understood:

It is said that all the translations of Vajrāsana are *gsar ma* and all the translations of Oḍḍiyāna are *rnying ma*. These [texts], which have been transmitted by the *dākini*, are *gsar ma* and these, which have been transmitted by *vidyādhara*, are *rnying ma*. If there is no *gter ma*, then it is *gsar ma*, and if there are *gter ma*, then it is *rnying ma*. All this is not certain. If one would ask why this is like that, this is explained in Scriptures. If we

<sup>34</sup> Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer (1988: 482): / ... De ltar bsgyur ba'i chos sde la/ lha bla ma'i sku (drin) la brten nas/ bdag nyid chen po rin chen bzang po nas bzung ste/ de rjes bsgyur ba thams cad dang 'gyur snga ma ka cog yan chad kyis bsgyur ba rnams dang/ cung mi 'dra ba 'dug pa rnams la bltos nas bod kyis mi rnams kyis gsar ma zhes grags te ming du chags so/ de ltar snga 'gyur rnams la rnying ma zhes grags te / ...

<sup>35</sup> Germano 1994: 237.

<sup>36</sup> Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer 1988: 482.

would point out the four immeasurables<sup>37</sup> and seven pure actions<sup>38</sup> and Vajradhara of cause being transformed into Vajradhara of fruit [result], then this is *gsar ma*. If we would directly outline the threefold contemplations,<sup>39</sup> then, generally speaking, the Vajradhara of fruit being brought to perfection [directly], then this is *rnying ma*. In reality, there is no such distinction in India. This is a distinction made by Tibetans. It does not have a scriptural authority.<sup>40</sup>

In this passage, various distinctions are pointed out, including doctrinal ones. First, the different places of origin of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* are indicated. The *Rnying ma pa* connect the origin of their teachings to Guru Padmasambhava and the land of Oḍḍiyāna, while the *Gsar ma pa* claim that their teachings come from Rdo rje gdan (Vajrāsana) and are directly related to the Buddha. The next distinction is about *gter ma* (treasure revelations). Mkhas pa lde'u states that if a *Dharma* tradition has *gter ma* then it is *rnying ma* and if there is no *gter ma*, then it is *gsar ma*. While this is, of course, a simplification, the *Rnying ma* tradition has always made a distinct place for *gter ma* (and by extension, for continuous revelation).

Mkhas pa lde'u also describes differences with respect to achieving the fruit of practice. With reference to the *Gsar ma* tradition, it is emphasized that through the practices of the four immeasurables and seven pure actions one will achieve the Vajradhara of fruit (fruit of the Buddha nature). That is to say, through the practice of the four immeasurables and seven pure actions, the full fruition of

<sup>37</sup> Love (*byams pa*), compassion (*snying rje*), joy (*dga' ba*), and equanimity (*btang snyoms*).

<sup>38</sup> The seven pure actions are: confession (*bshags pa*), joy (*yi rang*), development of absolute bodhicitta (*don dam sems bskyed pa*), refuge (*skyabs 'gro*), development of aspiration bodhicitta (*smon sems bskyed pa*), development of application bodhicitta (*'jug sems bskyed pa*), and dedication of merit (*bsngo ba*). These aspects are also described by Bu ston in his *Chos 'byung* during his explanation of the superiority of *Mahāyāna* to *Hinayāna*.

<sup>39</sup> The threefold contemplations are: empty suchness, all-pervading compassion, and clear seed syllables. These are the three contemplations of *bskyed rim* practice of *Mahāyoga* and *tantra* in general. In further detail, the contemplations are: the contemplation of the essential nature where one meditates on the intrinsic emptiness of all phenomena, the contemplation of total manifestation where one meditates on equanimous compassion for all sentient beings, and the contemplation on the cause where one concentrates on the seed syllable of the *yi dam* deity (*de bzhin nyid kyi ting nge 'dzin, kun tu snang ba'i ting nge 'dzin, rgyu'i ting nge 'dzin*).

<sup>40</sup> Mkhas pa lde'u (1987: 142-143): *rdo rje gdan nas 'gyur ba gsar ma yin la/ u rgyan nas 'gyur ba rnying ma yin zer/ mkha' 'gro nas rgyud pa gsar ma la/ rig 'dzin nas rgyud pa rnying mal/ gter ma med pa gsar mal/ gter ma yod pa rnying ma yin zer te/ de rnams ma nges gsungs/ o na gang yin zhe na/ gzhung las gsal te/ tshad med pa bzhi dang bdun nam dag bkod nas/ rgyu'u rdo rje 'chang las 'bras bu'i rdo rje 'chang du bsgyur ba'i gzhung 'dug na de gsar ma yin la/ ting nge 'dzin gsum sngon du bkod nas 'bras bu'i rdo rje 'chang de phal cher yongs su grub pa'i gzhung de ni rnying ma zer te/ don la rgya gar na gsar rnying gi dbye ba med de/ bod kyis phye ba yin te/ de la lung mi gda' /*

Buddhahood can be attained. The aspect of transformation is emphasized here. In contrast, Mkhas pa lde'u asserts that the three concentrations (*ting nge 'dzin gsum*), practices related to *Mahāyoga-tantra*, are the specific practices of the *Rnying ma* tradition that lead to full Buddhahood. Unlike with *gsar ma* practices, no transformation is necessary. Through these examples, we see that the teachings have, by this time, been systematized into two distinct traditions, with some doctrinal distinctions already evident.

### **Polemics about the distinctions between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* and related terms**

The eighteenth century scholar Thu'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802) has made some essential clarifications about the meaning and relationship of these terms. He dedicated an entire chapter in his *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* entitled "*Spyir gsar rnying gi dbye tshams ngos bzung ba*" or "The General Distinction Between Rnying ma and Gsar ma," to the distinction between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*.<sup>41</sup> In the beginning of the chapter, he presents the common view that there is no distinction between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* on the *sūtra* level. The *gsar ma* classification was set when the teachings of the secret mantras began to spread. Thu'u bkwan, probably basing his statements on a variety of sources, concludes that according to common understanding, all of the tantras that were translated before the coming of the paṇḍita Smṛtijñānakīrti were *gsang sngags rnying ma* (the secret old mantras), and all the tantras that were translated after lo tsā ba Rin chen bzang po (958-1055) were conventionally called *gsang sngags gsar ma* (the secret new mantra). It is stated in the *Blue Annals* that Smṛtijñānakīrti "had inaugurated the translation of the "new" tantras."<sup>42</sup> It is also added in the *Blue Annals* that all the tantric texts translated into Tibetan after the persecution of king Glang dar ma are called "gsar ma."<sup>43</sup>

The exact dates of Smṛtijñānakīrti are not known. In Bu ston's *Chos 'byung* and in other sources<sup>44</sup> it is mentioned that he arrived in Tibet at the time of Lha bla ma ye shes 'od, the 11<sup>th</sup> century ruler of Pu rangs, and is believed to have taken rebirth shortly after his demise as Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (1012-1088).<sup>45</sup> This account conflicts with a statement by 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820-1892), who asserts that Smṛtijñānakīrti was Rin chen bzang

<sup>41</sup> Thu'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma 2008: 40. See also *Gu bkra'i Chos 'byung* 1990: 977-980 and 991-993.

<sup>42</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 204.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*: 204.

<sup>44</sup> For example, Bu ston rin chen grub (1988: 202); Dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba (2003: 511).

<sup>45</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 160.

po's (958-1055) junior.<sup>46</sup> It is not clear which sources were available to Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, but it seems that there is more evidence to suggest that Smṛtijñānakīrti's activities slightly preceded those of Rin chen bzang po than the other way around. Regardless, as we will see later, a chronological approach to who came earlier does not solve the whole issue.

Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma, after pointing out the precise temporal distinction between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* translations, immediately shows its shortcomings. He gives the example of the root tantra of Mañjuśrī which, despite having been translated during the time of Khri srong lde btsan and therefore which logically should be accepted among the old translations, is still classified as a *gsar ma* translation. To explain this contradiction, he states that the propagators of this tantra were those who were actually deciding which tantras belong to *gsar ma* and which do not. This statement demonstrates that Tibetan scholars were themselves well aware of the arbitrariness of the attempt to set an exact demarcation line between the early and later translation periods.

Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po also made similar statements. In his *Mtshan tho*,<sup>47</sup> he points out that there existed many texts that were translated before Rin chen bzang po but were still classified among *gsar ma* translations and later integrated into the canon. He gives the examples of the *De nyid 'dus pa* (*Gathering Thatness*), the *Rnam snang mngon byang* (*Tantra of the Awakening of Mahāvairocana, a Caryāyoga tantra*), and the *Bsam gtan phyi ma* (*Concentration Continuation Tantra, one of the four main Action tantras*).<sup>48</sup>

As we can see, using chronological logic in order to distinguish between *snga 'gyur* and *phyi 'gyur* does not work, and an attempt to fix the time limit between these two periods does not lead us out of confusion. Historically, there is simply no such precise demarcation line. Thu'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma himself points out that Rin chen bzang po was not the only one who was translating texts in the beginning of *phyi dar*. There were many translators besides him, like 'Brog mi (992/993-1043/1072), 'Gos khug pa lhas btsas (born around 1015),<sup>49</sup> the lord Mar pa (1012-1077) and so on. The new translation period actually started with all of these new translators and their respective lineages.<sup>50</sup> And while Rin chen bzang po may have appeared slightly earlier than the other aforementioned translators, it is well known that he did not translate the texts all by himself. He had many disciples, such as Gur shing brtson 'grus rgyal mtshan and others, who worked together with him and later continued his

<sup>46</sup> *Op. cit.* Ramon Prats 1995: 789.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: 789-790.

<sup>48</sup> *Sarvatathāgatātattvasaṃgraha, Mahāvairocanaḥśambodhi and Dhyaṇottarapatalakrama*, respectively.

<sup>49</sup> He was contemporary to Zur chen Shākya 'byung gnas (1002-1062), Zur chung Shes rab grags pa (1014-1074) and Rong zom chos kyi bzang po (1012-1088), all of which he met personally.

<sup>50</sup> Thu'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma 2008: 41.

translation lineage.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, the chronological demarcation line is simply not as sharp as it appears to be in textual accounts. In all likelihood, there were different groups of translators working in different parts of Tibet, with Rin chen bzang po and his disciples in the west of Tibet, and Smṛtijñānakīrti in Khams at Dan long thang either at the same time as Rin chen bzang po or earlier. And while the early translators that Thu'u bkwan mentions are known to have translated texts which are included to the *gsar ma* tradition, there are also other examples. The well-known *Rnying ma* scholar Rong zom chos kyi bzang po (1012-1088) was also active at the beginning of the *phyi dar*, translating many of the “new” tantras as well. Yet he is still considered to be the last in a line of translators of the *snga dar* period.<sup>52</sup>

The well-known *Rnying ma* scholar Sog bzlog pa blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552-1624)<sup>53</sup> has made similar statements to those that we looked at by later scholars Thu'u bkwan and Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po. Sog bzlog pa also emphasizes the fact that many translators who were either contemporaries of Rin chen bzang po or even came after him translated texts which were later included among *rnying ma* translations. Conversely, some of the tantras belonging to the *kriyā*, *caryā* and *yoga* classes that were translated during the time of Khri srong lde btsan have been included amongst *gsar ma* translations.

As we can see from these above-mentioned examples, the distinction of the early and later translations cannot be made on a chronological basis. It is rather a distinction related to the category of texts. Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po concludes that the *rnying ma* label should be applied to the teachings which were translated secretly by Vairocana and other of his contemporaries according to the instructions of Indian teachers (such as Padmasambhava, and so on). The *gsar ma* label should be applied to the tantras of *rnal 'byor bla na med pa* (the unsurpassed yogatantras) that were translated from Rin chen bzang po onwards.<sup>54</sup> In addition, the distinction between *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* should be understood as applying only to the higher tantras' translations.

As we can conclude from these examples, it is quite easy to refute the statement that all the translations that were later classified under *gsar ma* were translated from Rin chen bzang po onwards. The more essential issue, however, should be to establish clearly the actual meaning of the later translations. As Thu'u bkwan said, there is no

<sup>51</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 68-69. Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer mentions his four main disciples: Gzhon nu bzang po shes rab spu (rang) pa, Bkra pa gzhon she, Kyi nor nya na and Gung shog brtson 'grus rgyal mtshan: 1988: 464.

<sup>52</sup> Almogi 2000: 67.

<sup>53</sup> Sog bzlog pa blo gros rgyal mtshan 1975: 27-28.

<sup>54</sup> Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po mentions the three tomes of the *Eighteen Tantrapitaka* (*tantra sde bco brgyad*): *Gsang 'dus* (*Guhyasamāja*), *Zla gsang thig le* (*Candraguhya-tilaka*) and *Sangs rgyas mnyam sbyor* (*Buddhasamāyoga*). *Op. cit.* Ramon Prats 1995: 789 -790.

doctrinal distinctions between the early and the late translations on the *sūtra* level. Even if the later tradition gathers under the name of *gsar ma* texts from all four categories of tantra, its distinction only becomes significant in the higher category of *rnal 'byor bla na med pa* tantras. A simple statement that all the *gsar ma* translations start from Rin chen bzang po is slightly misleading.<sup>55</sup>

Although we do observe an effort to discriminate distinct spreads of the teachings and distinct translation periods in the polemics and historiographical literature, for Buddhist lineage holders and followers these distinctions have never been of major concern. For them, the arrival of Buddhist teachings into Tibet and its development can only be understood in terms of an unbroken lineage, *rgyud*.

The term *rgyud* (lineage), which literally refers to a continuity, should render the search for breaking points meaningless. *Rgyud*, by its nature, refers to something which is continuous, uninterrupted. There has always been an endeavor to establish the continuity of the teachings in an uninterrupted way, be it in the sense of family line or a succession of a teacher and a disciple. An attempt to find a breaking point between the earlier and the later spread of the teachings is entirely against this spirit. With respect to an uninterrupted lineage, it would be impractical to talk about earlier and later spreads of the teachings. We should rather conclude that there was a continuous stream of lineages coming into Tibet, lineages that were dying out and those that grew together, lineages in perpetual motion.

Nonetheless, while reading *chos 'byung*, *rnam thar*, and so on, it seems that these two opposite aims appear side by side. In the same way that it is essential to these authors to emphasize the continuity of the lineage, it is also important to them to distinguish between the earlier and later spreading of the teaching, and between early and late translations. As we have established, when speaking about distinct translation traditions, the chronological terms “early” and “later” cannot be accurately applied. Rather, “new” translations are related to the higher tantra texts of the new lineages that were introduced in Tibet from the end of tenth century onwards, while “old” translations are related to the higher tantras of the *Rnying ma* tradition. The first *gsar ma* translations, namely the translations of *rnal 'byor bla na med pa* tantras, do seem to be traditionally related to the figure of Rin chen bzang po.

According to these short reflections, the attempt to set the chronological breaking point between the early and later translation periods is historically arbitrary. Tibetan scholars themselves admit these contradictions. It also becomes evident from analysis that the

<sup>55</sup> It is stated in that way in most of the historiographical sources, as well as in contemporary sources and dictionaries. For example, *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* 1996 (reprint), gives the explanation that *gsar ma* should be understood as translations from Rin chen bzang po onwards. See also Ben Deitle, “Biography of Rin chen bzang po.” <https://collab.itc.virginia.edu/> 31.03.2010.

terms *bstan pa snga dar* and *bstan pa phyi dar* point to a wider meaning than simply distinct translation periods. With these terms, *all* of the activities of spreading the teachings are emphasized. These terms pick out the activities of translating texts, but also other activities of spreading the teachings: building new temples and monasteries, renovating old ones, giving teachings, and so on. As already explained above, when the spreading of the teachings is mentioned in the historiographical literature, distinct events are articulated. The *bstan pa snga dar* is said to have been started from the time of the king Lha tho tho ri, while the *snga 'gyur* is only said to have started with the first translations under the patronage of Khri srong lde bstan in the second half of the eighth century, hundreds of years later. The beginning of the *bstan pa phyi dar* is related to the return of ten men to central Tibet and the revival of *Vinaya*, while the beginning of the *phyi 'gyur* is related to the figure of Rin chen bzang po, (though this is only a hypothetical distinction). Furthermore, the idea of an *uninterrupted* lineage has to be kept in mind when describing the spread of Buddhist teachings in Tibet, as there has always been an attempt to ensure the continuity of the lineages.

Still, the temptation to divide history into distinct periods has strongly influenced the way that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition understands its own historical development. Therefore, two commonly accepted, yet contradictory understandings of the spread of the teachings to Tibet appear. On the one side, we see the claim of a continuous, uninterrupted lineage, and on the other side, we witness the claim of interruption via a chronological division into two distinct periods of the spread of the teachings and two distinct translation periods.

It would also be pertinent to examine how the distinctions of “early” and “late” have been perceived according to the proponents of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*. We find a competitive spirit prevailing in Tibetan comparisons of the early and later translations. From the *Rnying ma* tradition’s side, we can find examples of *rnying ma* translations being described as being higher than *gsar ma* translations. For example, Dudjom Rinpoche in his *History of the Rnying ma School* quotes Rong zom pa chos kyi bzang po’s *Dkon cog 'grel* (*The Commentary of Guhyagarbha*) as pointing out the different ways in which the ancient translations of the secret mantras are superior to the later translations.<sup>56</sup> He declares that there are six different reasons for this superiority. In the first place, he emphasizes the greatness of the benefactors, the three ancestral kings who were actually the sublime Lords of the Three Families in kingly guise. Second, he describes the location of the early translations: they were made in such places as Bsam yas and other holy places of the past.

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<sup>56</sup> Dudjom Rinpoche 1991: 889.

Third, he points out the distinction of the translators of the past: exceptional translators such as Vairocana, Ska ba dpal brtsegs, Cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan, Zhang Sna nam ye shes sde, Rma Rin chen mchog, and Gnyags Dznyāna kumāra. They were not like *gsar ma* translators, who spent their summers in Mang yul and traveled to Nepal and India for only a short time in the winter (meaning that in older times, translators stayed in India to study for long periods). Fourth, he speaks about the distinction of the scholars who supervised the ancient translations, claiming that in older times, teachings were introduced by great buddhas and bodhisattvas, such as Śāntarakṣita, Buddhaguhya, Padmakāra, Vimālamitra, and so on, who understood directly the meaning of the texts. They did not make lexical word-by-word translation, as was done by *gsar ma* translators, but rather directly translated the meaning of the text. The scholars of early times also had purer motivations, he claims. They were not just wandering around in the search of gold.

Fifth, in the past, translations were requested with offerings of gold weighed out in deerskin pouches, or by the measure. That is to say, in the past, one had to pay a much higher price for the teachings than during the time of the *gsar ma* translations. The sixth distinction is the most prominent one and concerns the doctrine itself. It is said that the translations of the past were completed at the time when the doctrine of the Buddha had reached its zenith in India. There were also many teachings that did not exist in India but were taken directly from pure Buddha realms.<sup>57</sup>

This extract attributed to Rong zom pa seems to be a reply to the first wave of criticisms that arose from the new, nascent Buddhist traditions, such criticisms as those of Lha bla ma ye shes 'od and 'Gos khug pa lhas btsas. In later sources, opposite statements are known. 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal states in the *Blue Annals* that the later translations were considered greater than the early one from the beginning because of the activities of great translator Rin chen bzang po.<sup>58</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba's statement clearly reflects the *gsar ma* side's understanding.

One problem with the statements of Rong zom pa is that they do not actually appear in *Dkon cog 'grel*, as we now have it. The extract in question has not been found in other works of Rong zom pa, either. It is true that an important part of the textual heritage of Rong zom pa has been lost. It is also known that a follower of Rong zom pa named Rog ban shes rab 'od (1166-1233) enlarged the opinions of Rong zom pa and himself wrote some polemical commentaries. Whatever the historical origin is of these statements, *Rnying ma* scholars and teachers appreciate highly these six superiorities. They often form an introductory part of oral teachings given

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*: 890-891.

<sup>58</sup> 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal 1996 (reprint): 68.

within the *Rnying ma* tradition.<sup>59</sup> However, it is asserted that these points are not brought up out of a desire to vilify the *gsar ma* traditions, but rather to remind the audience of the preciousness of the teachings. Their use is not polemical.

Even though the continuity of the lineage seems to be the basis of the teachings, Tibetan Buddhist historians have always been fond of divisions and classifications. Even in the *Rnying ma* tradition itself, the translations are divided into two categories – old translations and new translations. Nevertheless, sometimes there is a lack of consensus regarding to which category a translation belongs. Taking the *sems sde* texts of *rdzogs pa chen po* for example, we see that amongst these texts there are five translations of Vairocana (*snga 'gyur lnga*) that are considered old, and thirteen translations of Vimalamitra (*phyi 'gyur bcu gsum*) that are considered to be later translations.<sup>60</sup> However, often opinions diverge about this distinction and a consensus has not been reached.

Even though the main arguments in this article are related to textual accounts, the political situation during the early *phyi dar* should also be taken into account. The lack of a strong central power in the beginning of the *phyi dar* influenced the arrival of the numerous teachings lineages into Tibet. There was a justified danger that some of these teachings would be misinterpreted or not properly understood. As a result, to avoid the corruption of the teachings, the political and religious figures of the early *phyi dar* constantly questioned the authenticity of the lineages and their texts. In addition, in order to survive, separate lineages started to mix, and were later associated with either *rnying ma* or *gsar ma*. In the early polemical literature, these identities became more solid in opposition to one other. The teachings traditions of *gsar ma* and *rnying ma* slowly began to be associated with distinctive bodies of ritual and literature, clearly identified founders, centers with permanent buildings and shared administrative hierarchies.

According to Paul Harrison, those involved in political efforts for power also engaged in the struggle for religious esteem.<sup>61</sup> From the beginning of the *phyi dar*, political rulers influenced religious matters with their activities, promoting and condemning certain texts and practices.<sup>62</sup> Fearing the decline of the teachings that was happening in the surrounding countries, a critical attitude was taken towards certain Tibetan compositions whose authors opposed the nascent monastic institutions and purported the capacity for direct visionary contact with religious authority.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Per a personal communication with Stag lung rtse sprul Rinpoche in August 2010 in Darnkow, Poland.

<sup>60</sup> Karmay 1998b: 34.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Mayer 1996: 17-18.

<sup>62</sup> For example, Lha bla ma ye shes 'od and Pho brang zhi ba 'od, and later the authorities of the emerging Sa skya tradition.

<sup>63</sup> By the thirteenth century, Buddhism in India had practically disappeared; the conquest of Tangut Buddhist Empire by the Mongols in 1227 was seen as a

### Conclusions

The gradual development of the meanings associated with *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* was a long process extending over several centuries. As there is no absolute certainty about the dating of most of the relevant polemical and historical writings, and an important amount of textual material about early *phyi dar* has been lost, definitive conclusions cannot be drawn on a textual basis. This investigation has shown the most polemical moment to be the debate surrounding the breaking point between the longer continuities of the early and the late. The beginning of the *phyi dar* is introduced in the various *chos 'byung* as the moment when the *Dharma* raised from the ashes in central Tibet, with the events of the arrival of Klu mes with his companions in central Tibet and the revival of *Vinaya* emphasized. In contrast, the beginning of the *phyi 'gyur gsar ma* is mainly related to the translation activity of Rin chen bzang po. However, it becomes evident that the distinction between the early and late translations cannot be understood on the basis of chronological distinctions, but rather on the basis of doctrinal distinctions.

These doctrinal distinctions connect the use of the *snga 'gyur* and *phyi 'gyur* to the later appearing terms of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*. In fact, these two sets of terms can even be used synonymously. The dichotomy of *rnying ma/gsar ma*, when used in opposition, usually refers to early and late translations.<sup>64</sup> The long process of formation of the terms *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* started from the *snga/phyi* dichotomy, dating back to the end of the tenth century. In the *Dharma* history of Nyang ral nyi ma 'od zer, probably from the end of the twelfth century, *snga 'gyur rnying ma/phyi 'gyur gsar ma* is used. In the middle of the thirteenth century, in Chag lo's *Zhu ba* and Mkhas pa lde'u's *Chos 'byung*, the terms appear as designating distinct teaching traditions (*chos lugs*). In Chag lo's *Zhu ba*, the new term "*gsang sngags gsar rnying*" indicates tantras belonging respectively to *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* traditions. Mkhas pa lde'u uses the distinction to point out some doctrinal differences concerning the attainment of the fruition of full enlightenment. In both cases of *snga 'gyur/phyi 'gyur* and *gsar ma/rnying ma*, the distinction is thus based on doctrinal differences.

Furthermore, in both cases the distinction is significant in relation to the higher tantras, belonging on the one hand to *Mahāyoga*, *Anuyoga* and *Atiyoga* (the inner tantras, or *nang rgyud*) of the *rnying ma* tradition, and on the other to the *rnal 'byor bla na med pa* tantras (the unsurpassed yogatantras) of the *gsar ma* traditions. As confirmed by Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma, there are no contradictions

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threat to Buddhist teachings and surely influenced, for example, those statements of Sa skya Paṇḍita or Chag lo tsā ba that lamented the decline of the teachings. The setting of the early polemics is not the subject of this article. For more details, see Martin 1996.

<sup>64</sup> Personal communication with Tenzin Samphel in April 2005, Paris.

or misunderstandings between these two traditions on the sūtra level or with respect to the outer tantras (*phyi rgyud*). The division of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* is important on a polemical level. However, these terms should not be treated as exclusive to one other. Many Buddhist masters have been and still are the holders of both *gsar ma* and *rnying ma* lineages.<sup>65</sup> For accomplished masters, the Buddha's teachings are not limited by the narrow distinctions of *rnying ma* and *gsar ma*.

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<sup>65</sup> For example, in the Sa skya tradition some Rnying ma rituals related to Rdo rje gzhon nu and Yang dag Heruka are practiced until the present day (Ronald Davidson 2005: 272). It is known from the *Sa skya gdung rab chen mo*, that in the beginning, the older brother of 'Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po (b. 1034) named Shes rabs tshul khriims was the follower of *gsang sngags snga 'gyur rnying ma* ('Jam mgon a myes zhabs ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams 1986).

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BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES FOR RESEARCHING THE LIFE OF  
NGOR CHEN KUN DGA' BZANG PO (1382–1456)<sup>1</sup>

Jörg Heimbel

*Introduction*

ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po was one of the most important masters of the Sa skya school in the 15th century.<sup>2</sup> That tradition honours him as one of its “Six Ornaments that Beautify the Snow Land [Tibet].”<sup>3</sup> Ngor chen was born in 1382 at Sa skya. Outwardly, his father appeared to have been Dpon tshang

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<sup>2</sup> The life of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po and the foundation and historical development of Ngor monastery and its tradition is the topic of a dissertation in progress by the author. For a brief account on the Ngor tradition, see Davidson 1981. On the chronology and succession of the abbots of Ngor, see Jackson 1989.

<sup>3</sup> The list enumerating the “Six Ornaments that Beautify the Snow Land [Tibet]” (*gangs can mdzes par byed pa'i rgyan drug*) is made up of six Sa skya masters in pairs of two, from the generations after Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375): (1) two experts in *sūtra*: G.yag phrug Sangs rgyas dpal (1350–1414) with either Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449) (*g.yag rong rnam gnyis*) or Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros (1349–1412) (*g.yag gzhon rnam gnyis*), (2) the two experts in *mantra*: Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po and Rdzong pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1382–1446) (*kun dga' rnam gnyis*), and (3) the two experts in *sūtra* as well as *mantra*: Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge (1429–1489) and Gser mdog Pañ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507) (*go shāk rnam gnyis*). The earliest source, I could find so far, enumerating these six ornaments is 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po's (1820–1892) *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 100.4–101.2, in which he designates them as the “Holders of the Teachings of the Venerable Sa skya Tradition, the Six Ornaments that Beautify the Snow Land [Tibet]” (*rje btsun sa skya pa'i bstan 'dzin gangs can mdzes par byed pa'i rgyan drug*). Prior to Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, Rta nag Mkhan chen Chos rnam rgyal (flourished 17th century) in his *Bstan rtsis dang bstan 'dzin gyi lo rgyus*: 159–160, had already presented Sa skya scholars under the categories of *sūtra* and *mantra*, but he did not arrange them into one group of ornaments. Though the individual expert pairs, except for the *go shāk rnam gnyis*, are already mentioned in 15<sup>th</sup> century sources, the arrangement as a group of six ornaments seems to be a later development, probably originating with Shākya mchog ldan's reevaluation by the *Ris med* movement. Concerning the pair of *mantra* experts, a few sources mention Gong dkar Rdo rje gdan pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1432–1496) as second *mantra* expert instead of Rdzong pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan; see *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*: vol. 2, 542.4–5 and Chogay Trichen Rinpoche 1983: 27. For sources naming Rdzong pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, see *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed*: 213, *Bstan rtsis dang bstan 'dzin gyi lo rgyus*: 160, *Ngor chos 'byung*: 344.2, *Rgyud sde kun btus*: 359.4–360.3, *Sa skya grub mtha' rnam bzhag*: 75, and *Sa skya chos 'byung*: 222.4. The pair of Ngor chen with either Rdzong pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan or Gong dkar Kun dga' rnam rgyal is also known under the term *ngor rdzong (rnam) gnyis*; see *Ngor chos 'byung*: 344.2 and *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*: 211.1–2 respectively.

Grub pa yon tan (b. 1356), a lay servant holding the rank of “Great Attendant” (*nye gnas chen po*) in the Sa skya tshogs<sup>4</sup> whose family line belonged to the old Cog ro clan of ‘Bring mtshams. Some of its members had moved to the area of Sa skya, where they lived as nomads. In the course of time, they rose to the position of personal valets (*gsol ja ba*) to the Bdag chen Gzhi thog pa, the head of the Gzhi thog lama palace (*bla brang*) of Sa skya. Dpon tshang Grub pa yon tan even achieved a higher position, being promoted to the rank of Great Attendant to the Sa skya tshogs.

However, this version of Ngor chen’s paternity was a fiction, probably aiming at concealing the true paternity of his real father. In fact, his father was the highest lama of Sa skya at that time, Ta dben Kun dga’ rin chen (1339–1399) of the Gzhi thog bla brang, the seventeenth throne holder of Sa skya (ca. 1364–1399). This family relation was of great importance for Ngor chen’s monastic education and future activities, since members of the Gzhi thog bla brang and one of its branches, the masters residing at Chu mig estate, would later patronize his activities and act as the main donors for the first abbots of Ngor.

Ngor chen spent most of his early years in Sa skya, studying in its old libraries the writings of the “Five Founding Fathers of Sa skya” (*sa skya gong ma lnga*). Among his main *gurus* we find such famous masters as Shar chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1359–1406), Dpal ldan tshul khirms (1333–1399), Sa bzang ‘Phags pa Gzhon nu blo gros (1358–1412) and Grub chen Sangs rgyas dpal alias Buddha shrī (1339–1419), from whom he received the entire *Path with the Fruit* (*Lam ‘bras*) teachings.

Ngor chen was a great tantric master, but he was at the same time a strict monk who carefully uphold the *vinaya* rules. Withdrawing from sectarian conflicts with the Dge lugs school on the one hand, and from the worldly distractions of the bustling town of Sa skya on the other hand, Ngor chen founded in 1429 the monastic retreat of E waṃ chos ldan in the remote Ngor valley, located around 20 km southwest of Gzhis ka rtse, hoping to go back to traditional Sa skya teaching and practice in a more supportive environment. Thinking

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Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in more recent Tibetan literature of the Sa skya school we find a group of not only six but nine ornaments mentioned, whose composition, again, varies to a certain extent; see *Gnas mchog sa skya*: 11 and *Sa skya pa’i slob rgyud*: 66, n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> The *Gnas mchog sa skya*: 168 contains an interesting description of a place called Ser skya tshogs, where the monastic as well as lay community came together for Buddhist teachings at special events. The throne at that place from which the teachings were given was the throne of Sa skya Paṅḍi ta Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (1182–1251), on which the newly installed throne holders of Sa skya had to give their first public teachings. This was also confirmed by Mkhan Thub bstan snying po (Gzhis ka rtse, 6 February 2011) and his contacts in Sa skya, according to whom this place is generally known as the Sa skya tshogs. This gathering place was located just south of the Gzhi thog pho brang; see Ferrari 1958: 150–151, n. 501 and Schoening 1990: 35, Map 10. *The Bzhi-thog Pho-brang* (...), no. 15; and 47, n. 14.

of the benefits of “a remote place devoid of barmaids,”<sup>5</sup> he established his new monastic retreat instituting strict monastic rules.

Under Ngor chen and his successors on the abbatial throne of Ngor, the monastery became one of the most influential and well known centres for tantric study and teaching in the Sa skya tradition, attracting students and patrons from all over Tibet. It became the main institution for the transmission of the *Lam 'bras* teachings according to its exoteric transmission in larger assemblies, called the “Explication for the Assembly” (*tshogs bshad*). Ngor chen was the founding father of a dynamic Ngor tradition which developed quickly into a lasting and prominent subdivision of the Sa skya school.<sup>6</sup> In recent centuries, the Ngor tradition came to be considered as one of Sa skya's three main sub-schools, together with the Sa skya tradition proper and the Tshar pa (*sa ngor tshar gsum*).<sup>7</sup>

The religious influence of Ngor extended to western Tibet (Mnga' ris), including the regions of Dolpo (Dol po) and Mustang (Glo bo) within present-day northwest Nepal. Following the invitation of its kings, Ngor chen himself travelled three times to the kingdom of Mustang (1427–1428, 1436, and 1447–1449), establishing a strong link with this area by founding a number of monastic communities there.<sup>8</sup> During the following centuries, the influence of Ngor and its abbots also extended eastwards to the province of Khams, where the tradition became very influential in the kingdom of Sde dge and the area of Sga pa. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century onward, the tradition enjoyed

<sup>5</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 524.3: *chang ma med par dben gnas shig tu bzhugs te 'chad nyan mdzad na* |. Based on the preceeding sentence that mentions too many festivities in Sa skya (*chang sa ches pa*) one could be inclined to correct *chang ma* to *chang sa*, but all available editions of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen uniformly read *chang ma*.

<sup>6</sup> Other sub-schools emerged such as the Rdzong pa of the Rdzong chung bla brang at Sa skya, the Na lendra pa of Na lendra monastery in 'Phan po in Dbus, or the Gong dkar ba in the monastery of Gong dkar chos sde in southern Dbus. On these sub-schools and their different exegetical systems of the *Lam 'bras*, see Fermer 2010: 163–189.

<sup>7</sup> The earliest use of the term *sa ngor tshar gsum* that I could find appears in the *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 87.1, 94.1, and 118.6. Further sub-schools of the Sa skya tradition such as the Gong dkar ba, founded by Gong dkar Rdo rje gdan pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1432–1496), and others are left out in this enumeration. However, one does find other similar terms, which do not include the Sa skya tradition proper, but summarize their various sub-schools: *ngor gong tshar gsum*, *ngor rdzong gong gsum*, and *ngor rdzong tshar gsum*; see *Bstan 'dzin skyes bu ming grangs*: 1211.2, *Zhwa lu gdan rabs*: 172.4, and *Gnas mchog sa skya*: 3 respectively.

<sup>8</sup> The connection to Mustang was maintained by Ngor chen's successors on the throne of Ngor such as Gtsang Chu mig pa 'Gar ston 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474), the third Ngor abbot (tenure: 1462–1465), Mkhas grub Dpal ldan rdo rje (1411–1482), the fifth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1479–1482), Yongs 'dzin Dkon mchog 'phel (1445–1514), the seventh Ngor abbot (tenure: 1486–1513), and Rgyal ba Lha mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1524–1534). On the connection between Ngor and Glo bo, see for example Dowman 1997, Jackson 1980, Jackson 2010: 150–156, Kramer 2008, Lo Bue 2010: 17–18, [76]–89, and Vitali 1999.

the royal patronage of the ruling family of Sde dge, where they became the dominant Buddhist tradition.<sup>9</sup> From the numerous

<sup>9</sup> According to tradition, a link between the Ngor tradition and the Sde dge family was already established by the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was in 1446 when Thang stong rgyal po (1361?–1485) visited Sde dge that he became the teacher of Bo thar Blo gros stobs ldan, under whose patronage he founded the monastery of Lhun sgrub steng and whom he named Bkra shis seng ge; see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 13.2–6, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 9–12, 20, 89, *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 29–30, 172, Kolmaš 1968: 31–32, and Stearns 2007: 56–57. The fact that Thang stong rgyal po had received teachings from Ngor chen was considered to be an auspicious connection with respect to Lhun sgrub steng becoming a Ngor pa monastery; see *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 84.4–85.1. From that time on members of the Sde dge ruling family have relied on Ngor pa masters as their teachers, also travelling to central Tibet for further studies and ordination. From the source material we know that Bla ma Dpal ldan seng ge, the first son of Bo thar Bkra shis seng ge, became a monk in Ngor, where he received teachings from Rgyal ba Lha mchog seng ge (1468–1535), the ninth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1524–1534), and returned to Khams only in old age; see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 14.1–2, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 20, *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 31, 172, and Kolmaš 1968: 32. Also Dge sar bir alias Grags pa lhun grub, the son of Rdo rje lhun grub, is said to have studied under Lha mchog seng ge; see *Sde dge rgyal rgyabs*: 15.1–2 and *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 21–22. The Ngor related sources mention Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis (1558–1615), the fourteenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1595–1615), as the first Ngor pa master to have visited Khams. Following the order of Dkon mchog dpal ldan (1526–1590), the eleventh Ngor abbot (two tenures: 1569–1579, 1582–1590), to go to Khams and collect donations, Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis embarked on his journey to Khams, where he spent seven years from 1584 to 1591; see *Ngor gdan rabs*: 26.6–27.1, 37.2–39.2 and *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 28, 666.3–675.2. The *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 32, 173 mentions that Kun dga' bkra shis was invited to Sde dge by Bla ma Kun dga' rin chen. Cf. *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 14.5 and *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 21, where it is only stated that Kun dga' rin chen relied on Kun dga' bkra shis as his teacher. The latter's biography mentions some places he visited in Khams, but neither records his visit to Sde dge nor mentions Bla ma Kun dga' rin chen among his disciples or patrons; see *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 28, 666.3–675.2, 704.1–708.2. On Kun dga' rin chen, see also Kolmaš 1968: 32. The next Ngor pa master in Sde dge was Sgrub khang pa Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan (1599–1673), the twenty-second Ngor abbot (tenure: 1667–1671), who seems to have spent most of the second part of his life in Khams. He had been invited to Sde dge by Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs; see *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 85.2–4, *Ngor gdan rabs*: 48.6, *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 23.4, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 92, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 173. During his stay in Sde dge Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan was involved in various religious activities: among others, he performed rituals in the scope of Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs' construction of the Gtsug lag khang Bsam 'grub mthong grol chen mo at the Sde dge family's main monastery of Lhun grub steng. He also instituted the *sgrub mchod* rituals known as the "Five or Seven *maṇḍalas* of the Ngor Tradition" (*ngor lugs dkyil 'khor lnga'am bdun*), gave teachings on a large scale in many monasteries of that area, and ordained numerous monks; see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 23.5–24.1, 26.2–27.2 and *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 24–25, 92–93. Note that the presentation of his activities in Sde dge is somewhat different in his biography authored by Mnga' ris pa Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705), the twenty-fifth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1686–1689); see *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 29, 90.1–93.5. The *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 24.1, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 25, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 41 note that as the result of talks between Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs and Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan the tradition was established that monks from the majority of Sa skya monasteries in Sde dge would go to Ngor for further studies. It is interesting to note that already before Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs invited Dpal mchog rgyal

branch monasteries that were founded in those regions, a steady stream of monks travelled to Ngor for ordination and further study.

With the steady influx of students, Ngor quickly developed into a substantial monastic complex. Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the four main *bla brang* (lama estates or lama palaces) of Ngor were founded: (1) Thar rtse, (2) Klu sdings/lding, (3) Khang gsar / Khang (g)sar phun tshogs gling or Phun tshogs khang (g)sar and (4) Phan bde or Phan khang.<sup>10</sup> These *bla brang* were usually headed by monks who originated from religious-aristocratic families of Gtsang. Nevertheless, only the Klu sdings bla brang succeeded in maintaining an unbroken link with the Shar pa family up to the present day.

Initially, the abbots of Ngor were chosen mainly on the basis of their spiritual achievements, leaving aside their familial or financial background. With the founding of the four main *bla brang* the situation changed in so far as a large number of abbots were now selected from those aristocratic families with which the various *bla brang* were linked. These monks were chosen in their youth as "candidates to the abbacy" (*zhabs drung*) and had to pass through a special curriculum.<sup>11</sup> Around the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new system for abbatial appointments was established, whereby, at

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mtshan, he had relied on another Ngor pa master, namely Shar chen Shes rab 'byung gnas (1596–1653), the eighteenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1625–1653/54?), probably in Ngor or Zhwa lu; see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 18.2, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 23, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 35–36. On Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs, see also Kolmaš 1968: 33–34.

Although the *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 85.1 mentions Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis as the first Ngor master to have visited Sde dge, this source specifies in an annotation that Sgrub khang pa Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan was the first in the line of Ngor abbots that had visited Sde dge (*Ibid.*: 70.1). The *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 85.1–2 also mentions the invitation of Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan by Bla chen Byams pa phun tshogs, but does not specify any details of Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis' visit. The fact that both masters visited Sde dge before they were installed as abbots rules out the explanation that the former had yet to become the abbot of Ngor while the latter already was the abbot of Ngor when they visited Sde dge. A possible explanation for the annotation mentioned above could be that Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan's activities in Sde dge were much more extensive than the ones of Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis.

<sup>10</sup> At the present stage of my research, the following picture emerges. (1) The monastic structure of Thar rtse was established, probably in the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century, as a residence and place of retreat for former prominent abbots and was taken over by the Brang ti family in the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. (2) The Klu ldings bla brang was probably founded by Shar chen Kun dga' bkra shis (1558–1615), the fourteenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1595–1615). He was the first abbot from the Shar pa family and might have founded Klu sdings as his private residence in Ngor. (3) The Khang gsar bla brang seems to have been established in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. (4) According to Jackson 2001:90 and Smith 2001: 89, the Phan bde or Phan khang was established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–1759/69), the thirty-fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1733–1740). However, Ngor-related source material suggests that this monastic complex was already founded before Dpal ldan chos skyong's birth.

<sup>11</sup> See Stearns 2006: 660–661, n. 455.

least in theory, the abbacy rotated through the four *bla brang*, with each *bla brang* taking a three-year turn. With the exception of the Klu sdings *bla brang*, the other three *bla brang* also introduced a reincarnation system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by which important candidates for the abbacy were identified as rebirths of previous masters or abbots.<sup>12</sup>

### 1. Biographical Sources

Since Ngor chen did not compose an autobiography, the most promising sources for researching his life are the surviving independent full-length biographies that were written by his disciples, or by later adherents to his tradition. Among the numerous full-length biographies that once existed, only two are presently available. Let us first examine these two surviving biographies and then survey those that were lost. While we can gain further information on Ngor chen's life from biographies of his illustrious disciples such as Mus chen Sems dpa' chen po Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469), Gser mdog Paṅ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge (1429–1489) and from the autobiography of Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456–1532), I will limit my examination here to Ngor chen's own biographies.<sup>13</sup>

### 2. Two Surviving Full-Length Biographies

The two surviving biographies were both authored by Ngor abbots; the first was a contemporaneous account, while the second was compiled more than two hundred years after Ngor chen's passing. Here, I would like to introduce both biographies, focusing on their authors' respective backgrounds and connections to Ngor chen, the circumstances of their composition, their different versions, and the textual relation between the two biographies.

#### 2.1. The Biography of Ngor chen by *Mus chen Sems dpa' chen po Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469)*

Mus chen Sems dpa' chen po Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan was one of Ngor chen's chief disciples and succeeded him as abbot on the

<sup>12</sup> See Jackson 2001: 90–91.

<sup>13</sup> Numerous short sketches of Ngor chen's life story are also recorded in various religious histories and in compositions of more recent origin. See, for example, *Ngor chos 'byung*: 339.7–343.6 and *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed*: 212–216. For short biographies of more recent origin, see for instance *Sa skya chos 'byung*: 204.1–214.5 and Khetsun Sangpo 1979: vol. XI, 391–409.

throne of Ngor (tenure: 1456–1462).<sup>14</sup> He composed a contemporary biography of Ngor chen entitled *Concise Biography of the Dharma Lord Kun dga' bzang po, the Great Vajradhara of the Degenerating Age*.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.1.1. Mus chen's Life and Relation with Ngor chen

Mus chen was born at Gling skya in Rta mo in the upper Mus valley.<sup>16</sup> In 1424, at the age of thirty-six, he had his first personal

<sup>14</sup> The main sources for researching Mus chen's life and relation with Ngor chen are the Ngor chen biography Mus chen himself composed (*Ngor chen rnam thar I*) and Mus chen's own biographies written by his disciples Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge (1429–1489), Gung ru Shes rab bzang po (1411–1475), and Bdag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1444–1495). Go rams pa's biography of Mus chen, *Rje btsun bla ma mus pa chen po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* (*Mus chen rnam thar I*), was completed on the eighth day of the fifth Tibetan month in 1465 in the monastery of Gling kha bde ba can (*Mus chen rnam thar I*: 621.5). This biography is the explanation of his Mus chen biography in seventy verses, *Rje btsun bla ma mus pa chen po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar chu rgyun* (*Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum*: vol. 11, 7.1.3–9.3.4), of which he wrote sixty-four verses in 1462 in 'Bras yul skyed tshal and added six more in 1465. The prose biography includes a supplement, *Rnam par thar pa'i kha skong* (*Mus chen rnam thar I*: 621.5–627.6), covering the last years of Mus chen's life from 1465 until his death in 1469. This work is the explanation of a thirty-three verse supplement (*Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum*: vol. 11, 9.3.4–10.3.1), composed in 1469 in the Gle lung chos sde, to the above mentioned verse biography. Gung ru Shes rab bzang po completed his composition of Mus chen's biography (*Mus chen rnam thar II*), *Rje btsun sems dpa' chen po dkon mchog rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa gsung sgras ma*, when his master was eighty-one years old on the twenty-third day of the third month of 1469 in the monastery of Bde ba can in the upper Mus valley; see *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 250.2–3 and also van der Kuijp 1994: 177, n. 4. Bdag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan finished his Mus chen biography, *Rje btsun bla ma dam pa dkon mchog rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar phreng ba* (*Mus chen rnam thar III*), on the fifteenth day of the tenth Tibetan month in 1479 in Dpal 'khor bde chen of Rgyal rtse; see *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 33.4. Among these biographies of Mus chen, the one by Go rams pa and Gung ru ba are the more detailed ones. The one by Bdag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan seems to be partly based on Go rams pa's account, which the Bdag chen also mentions among the sources available on Mus chen's life; see *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 33.5–6.

For thangka's depiction Ngor chen and Mus chen together, see Jackson 2010: 193, Fig. 8.9 and *Ibid.*: 194, Fig. 8.10. See also HAR: no. 128. For depictions of Mus chen together with his disciples, see HAR: no. 368 and no. 73818.

<sup>15</sup> See *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 432.1: *Snyigds dus kyi rdo rje 'chang chen po chos kyi rje kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa mdor bsodus pa* l. Davidson 1991: 234, n. 57, probably accidentally, ascribed this work to a certain Dkon mchog dbang phyug. The *'Bras spungs dkar chag*: vol. 2, 1515, no. 017073 records this work under a different title: *Rje btsun rin po che rdo rje 'chang chen po kun dga' bzang po'i zhal mnga' nas kyi rnam par thar pa*, 30 fol. (10 x 3cm).

<sup>16</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 588.4 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 207.5. Cf. *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 4.2 and *Ngor gdan rabs*: 4.1, where instead of Rta mo the spelling is given as Stag mo. On the region of Rta mo in the upper Mus valley, see Everding 2006: Teil 2, 20–22, according to whom the region west of the Mus chu river is called Rta mo Nub and the region to its east Rta mo Shar. Mus chen's birthplace of Gling skya is located in Rta mo Shar, and it is there where we find the residence of a family, among whom, beside Mus chen, numerous scholars of

encounter with Ngor chen at Sa skya.<sup>17</sup> However, his wish to meet Ngor chen and study with him had already manifested itself while accompanying his teacher Sems dpa' chen po Gzhon nu rgyal mchog (b. 1384?) as an attendant to Bo dong in 1423.<sup>18</sup> At that time, a certain Nyag re Grags pa skam po or Nyag re Man ngag pa approached Gzhon nu rgyal mchog and requested ordination as a *bhikṣu*.<sup>19</sup> When he heard Grags pa skam po's description of Ngor chen's special qualities and knowledge, Mus chen developed a deep conviction in Ngor chen's teaching abilities and thought of studying the three Cakrasaṃvara traditions of Lūhipāda, Kṛṣṇacārin, and Ghaṇṭāpāda (Bde mchog lo nag dril gsum) under him.<sup>20</sup>

When Mus chen reached Sa skya in late 1423, Ngor chen was in a strict retreat in his residence, the Shāk bzang sku 'bum. Through a messenger, Mus chen submitted his request to study Cakrasaṃvara ('Khor lo bde mchog) with Ngor chen, who agreed. After Ngor chen came out of retreat at the beginning of 1424, the two finally met, and Mus chen received various initiations and teachings from him.<sup>21</sup> Until 1429, Mus chen stayed for longer periods in Sa skya, eventually receiving from Ngor chen the *Lam 'bras* instructions.<sup>22</sup> During that crucial time for the Sa skya school, the leading lama of Sa skya, Theg chen Chos rje Kun dga' bkra shis (1349–1425) from the Lha khang bla brang, passed away (in 1425) and Ngor chen suffered from a severe illness (in 1426).<sup>23</sup> After recovering, Ngor chen urged Mus chen to also receive the *Lam 'bras* teachings, which he upheld.

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this region emerged: Mus chen Sangs rgyas rin chen (1453–1524), who was a nephew of Mus chen and served as the eighth abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1513–1524), Mus chen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (1542–1618), Grub chen Dkon mchog blo gros (b. 1428), and 'Dren mchog Dkon mchog rgya mtsho; see *Ibid.*: 22 and 22, n. 30. For the geography and history of the Mus valley, see *Ibid.*: 1–59 and 17, *Map Skizze des Mus chu-Tals*. The *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 207.5 specifies his place of birth as: *dpal ldan sa skya dang khad nye ba'i dgon pa 'phrang brag dmar gyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen bya 'phrang pa zhes bya bas bstan pa gzung ba'i gtsug lag khang mus stod gling skya zhes bya bar byon te* |.

<sup>17</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 597.5–6, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 214.3–5, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 9.5.

<sup>18</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 594.5, 596.5, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 213.3, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 8.4. In total, Mus chen relied on Gzhon nu rgyal mchog as his teacher for about seven years; see *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 210.5. According to the *Mdo smad chos 'byung I*: vol. 1, 28.5 and *Mdo smad chos 'byung II*: 11.19, Mus chen composed a biography of this master: *sems dpa' chen po gzhon nu rgyal mchog gi rnam thar mus chen gyis mdzad pa*.

<sup>19</sup> The *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 596.6 gives his name as Nyag re Grags pa skam po, whereby the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 213.4 as well as *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 8.4–5 specify his name as Nyag re Man ngag pa.

<sup>20</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 596.5–597.4, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 213.3–6, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 8.4–9.2.

<sup>21</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 597.4–598.2, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 214.3–6, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 9.2–10.1.

<sup>22</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 602.2: *mdor na sa skyar sngar lo gsum | phyis zla bdun | (...)*.

<sup>23</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 598.2–599.3, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 215.2–6, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 10.1–11.3.

Thus in the summer of 1426, Mus chen received the *Lam 'bras* from Ngor chen for the first time over a period of four months.<sup>24</sup>

After some time devoted to spiritual practice, Mus chen returned to his homeland, Mus, in the fall of 1426, where he stayed until the summer of 1428, when he followed Ngor chen's invitation to return to Sa skya. By that time, however, Ngor chen had already left Sa skya for his first journey to Glo bo (from 1427 to 1428).<sup>25</sup> But it seems that he had made arrangements to invite Mus chen to Sa skya before his departure, allowing Mus chen to stay in the Shāk bzang sku 'bum during his absence.<sup>26</sup>

After Ngor chen returned to Sa skya, he taught Mus chen the *Lam 'bras* for seven months, from the second half of 1428 until the first half of 1429. Initially, he taught these instructions to a group of about seventy disciples, but eventually the group was reduced to only about fourteen more qualified students, including Mus chen, who also received the experiential instructions (*nyams khrid*).<sup>27</sup> It is said that Mus chen received a very special transmission of the *Lam 'bras*, one not given by Ngor chen in the same way to others, as can be seen from the outline of the main points (*chings*) regarding Ngor chen's teaching style recorded among Mus chen's notes of these teachings.<sup>28</sup> This might refer to the special *Slob bshad* transmission of the *Lam 'bras*, which, according to tradition, Mus chen received alone and in secret from Ngor chen.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>24</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 598.4–599.3, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 215.5–6, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 11.3–4.

<sup>25</sup> The *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 599.4–6 informs us of Ngor chen's invitation to Mnga' ris in the fall of 1427 and his return one year later in the fall of 1428. According to the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.1–4, Ngor chen left for Glo bo in 1427 and came back six months later.

<sup>26</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 599.3–6 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.1–3. According to the *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 599.5–6, Mus chen stayed in the summer of 1428 in the Shāk bzang sku 'bum giving teachings to a certain group of students. Cf. *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.1–3, in whose accord he stayed with some masters and disciples in the Shāk bzang sku 'bum and received teachings such as the *G.yag t̄tk* and *Dpe chos rin spungs* from (*chos rje g.yag pa'i phar tshad kyi 'chad nyan pa*) Slob dpon Sangs rgyas dpal and Tshul bzang ba.

<sup>27</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.3–4. According to the *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 599.6–600.1, whose presentation varies slightly, Ngor chen gave the *Lam 'bras* instructions immediately after his return from the fall of 1428 for a period of seven months. Mus chen received those teachings as experiential instructions (*nyams khrid*). Although in the beginning a group of about seventy people had attended the teachings, in the end only about fourteen disciples including Mus chen successfully completed those instructions. The text (*Ibid.*: 600.1–3) goes on to describe the actual succession of the instructions and practices.

<sup>28</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 599.6–600.3 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.4–5. In total, Mus chen received the *Lam 'bras* instructions three times from Ngor chen; see *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 11.5–6.

<sup>29</sup> At that time the term *Slob bshad* ("Explication for Disciples") and its counterpart *Tshogs bshad* ("Explication for the Assembly") had not yet been in use. A reference to these transmissions was first made by Bdag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1444–1495), who had received both transmissions from Mus chen in Mus in 1464; see Stearns 2001: 39–45 and Stearns 2006: 2–3, 245–246. According

In the same year of 1429, Ngor chen founded Ngor monastery. Mus chen was among the group of disciples who accompanied Ngor chen and acted as his attendants.<sup>30</sup> In the fall of that year, Ngor chen asked Mus chen to stay in Ngor and teach, but Mus chen declined, wishing to care for his elderly father in Mus.<sup>31</sup> Some years later, in 1434, Ngor chen requested Mus chen to again stay in Ngor and teach. Obviously trying to get Mus chen's approval, Ngor chen offered to name his newly established monastic retreat in accordance with Mus chen's wishes, telling him to take from the *bla brang* whatever he needed, and asking him to act as the ceremony master in the ordination of a nephew of Bdag chen Grags blo ba.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, Mus chen turned down Ngor chen's request once again, hoping to devote his life to spiritual practice. When Mus chen was about to leave for Mus in 1435, he revealed to Ngor chen that he planned to go into a strict retreat for three years and was considering staying the rest of his life in seclusion. At that time, Ngor chen advised Mus chen to accept a few students. In order to achieve Buddhahood, he explained, one needs perfect insight, which realizes the fundamental reality of things. Though it is possible to achieve Buddhahood through profound tantric methods, it is difficult to accomplish. Therefore, it is of greater benefit to practice by means of study and contemplation. One's insight will actually broaden furthermore by teaching others what one has learned.<sup>33</sup>

From their first meeting in 1424 until Ngor chen's death in 1456, Mus chen spent much of his time studying under Ngor chen. The main exceptions were those times when he travelled back to Mus for

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to Stearns 2001: 40, "these terms had not been used before the time of Bdag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan, and many would later object to such a classification. For several more generations the *Slob bshad* instructions remained essentially oral and were completely unknown outside a very small circle of great teachers and their students."

<sup>30</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 601.5 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.5. Cf. *Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar II*: 62, which states that Mus chen acted as a "construction worker" (*mkhar las pa*) in the establishment of Ngor monastery. This statement is probably based on the misinterpretation of the following line from the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.5: *de nas rje 'di dang dpon slob ngor du byon khar las dang gsung chos kyang dmar po byung!*.

<sup>31</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 601.5–6.

<sup>32</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 606.5–6 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 219.2–3. Bdag chen Grags blo ba possibly refers to Grags pa blo gros (1367–1437/46), who was the second son of Ta dben Kun dga' rin chen (1339–1399) and thus Ngor chen's half brother. His nephew could probably be identified as Kun dga' dbang phyug (1418–1462), who was the son of Ta dben Kun dga' rin chen's first son Gu shri Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1366–1420) and the twentieth throne holder of Sa skya (ca. 1442–1462).

<sup>33</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 606.6–607.3 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 219.2–4. The picture emerges from Mus chen's biographies that in the first part of his life Mus chen avoided taking on monastic tasks and responsibility in favor of his own spiritual practice and development. See for example *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 593.6–594.2, 594.5–595.1, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 212.4–6, 213.6–214.1, 219.6–220.4, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 6.6–7.2, 9.2–3.

meditative retreats.<sup>34</sup> During such periods, he founded the monastery of Gling kha Bde ba can (in 1437) and constructed the hermitage of Bsam gtan phug (in 1454).<sup>35</sup> At times when Ngor chen was absent from Ngor, such as during his second journey to Glo bo in 1436, he asked Mus chen to give such important instructions as the *Lam 'bras*.<sup>36</sup>

When Ngor chen was about to pass away in 1456, Mus chen was called back to Ngor. During their final meeting, Ngor chen disclosed to him that he would be the successor to the throne of Ngor and instructed him on the teachings that he should give.<sup>37</sup> After Ngor chen's passing, Mus chen stayed at Ngor for the next two years, taking responsibility for the monastic seat, giving teachings and commissioning the construction of inner and outer reliquaries for his deceased *guru*.<sup>38</sup> In 1458, Mus chen bestowed teachings on Drung chen Nor bu bzang po (1403–1466)—the Rin spungs pa lord who had replaced his own former overlords, the Phag mo gru pas—in Bsam 'grub rtse. Afterwards he travelled back to Mus, where he founded the monastery of Bde ldan ri khrod.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 602.2: *mdor na sa skyar sngar lo gsum | phyis zla bdun | e wam chos ldan du lan brgyad phebs nas |*. See also *Ngor gdan rabs*: 5.2, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 216.5–6, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 11.4–6.

<sup>35</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 607.5, 608.6, *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 239.2–240.1, 240.1–2, and *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 23.6. The circumstances of founding Gling kha Bde ba can are mentioned in the *Gnyags ston pa'i gdung rabs*: 171–172. According to this source, Mus chen was reluctant to found this monastery, but, not listening to his words, the supplicants started with its construction. This account is probably based on its mention in the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 219.6–220.4. See also Everding 2006: Teil 2, 48–49, who states that the monastery was founded in honour of Mus chen, and that the patron of its foundation was probably the ruler of La stod Byang. Gling kha Bde ba can was located in the upper Mus valley; see *Ibid.*: 22, n. 29 and 17, Map *Skizze des Mus chu-Tals*. For a picture of Gling kha Bde ba can taken by Hedin, see *Ibid.*: 48, Image *Das Kloster Gling kha bDe ba can*. For two drawings by Hedin of this monastery, see *Ibid.*: 21, Image *Zwei Zeichnungen Sven Hedins mit Aussichten des Klosters Ling [sic] kha bDe ba can*.

<sup>36</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 219.1–2. For other occasions, see *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 232.3, *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 608.2–4 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 218.2–3.

<sup>37</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 561.2–562.1, *Ngor chos 'byung*: 351.1–2, *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 613.4–614.1, and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 220.6–221.1. Mus chen, however, mentions his last meeting with Ngor chen, but does not refer to his appointment as Ngor chen's successor; see *Ngor chen rnam thar I*: 471.6–472.2.

<sup>38</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 614.1–615.5 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 221.1–3: *de nas bzung ste byi glang stag gsum la ngor gyi gdan sa'i khur bzhes (...)*.

<sup>39</sup> See *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 232.4 and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 221.3–5. Cf. *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 615.5, which states that Mus chen first left Ngor in 1458 for Mus, where he established Bde ldan ri khrod, before coming back to Ngor to teach in autumn of the same year. Afterwards, he followed the invitation of the Rin spungs pa ruler and travelled during that same autumn back to Mus. The *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 23.6 mentions Mus chen as founder of the monasteries Bde ba can and Ya ma bde ldan, referring to Gling kha Bde ba can and Bde ldan ri khrod respectively. The *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 232.4 gives the full name of Bde ldan ri khrod as Ya ma Bde ldan gyi ri khrod and the *Mus chen rnam thar III*: 221.5 as Ya ma'i dgon pa Bde ldan ri khrod. This monastery is located on the western side of the Mus river in the region of Mdog lhad to the north of Gnäs

In the following years, Mus chen continued to act as the head of Ngor, though he did not stay there continuously.<sup>40</sup> Instead, he travelled on a yearly basis between Ngor and different monastic establishments in Mus, also visiting Ngam ring(s) Chos sde,<sup>41</sup> until he installed Gtsang Chu mig pa 'Gar ston 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474) as third Ngor abbot in 1462.<sup>42</sup> Later on, in 1465, Mus chen was again invited to Ngor, but instead he installed, in accord with Ngor chen's wishes, Ngor chen's nephew Rgyal tshab Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478) as fourth abbot (tenure: 1465–1478).<sup>43</sup>

Acting as teacher to Ngor chen's community of disciples, Ngor chen and Mus chen were known as the "[spiritual] father, [i.e.] the

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gsar; see Everding 2006: Teil 2, 19–20. *Ibid.*: 20–21, n. 28 also mentions its foundation based on the *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed*: 220.11–12; the latter source's chronology of events is in accord with the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 221.3–5.

<sup>40</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 221.5–6.

<sup>41</sup> In 1461, Mus chen followed the invitation of the ruler of Lha stod Byang, Ta'i si tu Rnam rgyal grags pa dpal bzang po (1395–1475), and the monastic community of Ngam ring(s); see *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 232.5, *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 616.1–3, and *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 231.6–232.2. On Ta'i si tu Rnam rgyal grags pa dpal bzang po, see Stearns 2007: 283, 546, n. 763. On Ngam ring, see *Ibid.*: 497, n. 346. On the Ngam ring(s) Chos sde, see *Gzhis rtse sa khul gnas yig*: 106–107. For its location, see *Ibid.*: [99], *Ngam ring rdzong khongs kyi gnas skor sa bkra*, Everding 2006: Teil 2, 11, Map *Das Fürstentum La stod Byang*, and Everding and Dawa Dargyay Dzongphugpa 2006: Map *Kartographische Skizze des Fürstentums La stod lHo*.

<sup>42</sup> We know from *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 615.6–616.4 that Mus chen stayed in a strict retreat in Bsam gtan phug in 1460 and at the beginning of 1461 went to Bde ldan ri khrod, where he gave the *Lam 'bras* and other teachings. Following the invitation of the Byang ruler Ta'i si tu Rnam rgyal grags pa dpal bzang po (1395–1475) and of masters of the Ngam ring(s) monastery, he bestowed in Ngam ring(s) empowerments on the ruler and gave the *Lam 'bras* teachings to the *dge bshes* of Ngam ring(s). Mus chen then proceeded in the fall of 1461 to Ngor, where he stayed until the spring of 1462, teaching the *Lam 'bras* and other instructions to an assembly of about one thousand disciples. Afterwards he left for Bde ldan ri khrod in Mus. The enthronement, however, of Gtsang Chu mig pa 'Gar ston 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho is not mentioned. The *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 232.2–3 unambiguously dates the installation of 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho to the year 1462 as does the *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 232.5–6. According to the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 232.1–3, Mus chen stayed in retreat in Bsam gtan phug in 1460 and proceeded to Ngam ring(s) in the summer of 1461, where he taught among others the *Lam 'bras* for seven months, before installing 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho as abbot of Ngor. The installation date of 1462 is also given in the *Ngor chos 'byung*: 351.1–2, according to which Mus chen acted as abbot from 1456–1458. After staying in retreat in Bsam gtan phug in Mus, Mus chen appointed 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho as Ngor abbot in 1462. This entry seems to be primarily based on the *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 221.1–2, 232.1–3. Cf. *Ngor gdan rabs*: 8.3, where it is mentioned that 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho was installed as abbot on the fourth day of the sixth Tibetan month of 1473 (*chu sprul*). As Jackson 1989: 53 proposed, the dating needs to be corrected to the iron-snake year (1461).

<sup>43</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar I*: 620.3–5.

master, and [his spiritual] son."<sup>44</sup> During Mus chen's tenure as abbot, even more students reportedly came to Ngor than during the time of the great founder, Ngor chen.<sup>45</sup>

### 2.1.2. Description of Mus chen's Biography of Ngor chen

From the colophon of Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen, we learn that he finished the greatest part on the thirteenth day of the ninth month of 1455, while at his hermitage Bsam gtan phug. As requested by Ngor chen's faithful disciples, Mus chen wrote it while Ngor chen was still alive and in his seventy-third year.<sup>46</sup> After Ngor chen's passing, Mus chen completed on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of 1457, in the *gtsug lag khang* of Ngor monastery, a short addendum focusing on the circumstances of Ngor chen's death and the subsequent religious activities that took place.<sup>47</sup> Mus chen composed the biography as a supplement to the lives of the lineage masters of the *Lam 'bras*.<sup>48</sup> At that time, Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros acted as Mus chen's scribe, who is also known to have written his own biographies of Ngor chen and Mus chen.<sup>49</sup>

Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen is available in two editions. First, in a section of twenty-two folios found among the lives of lineage masters in the *Slob bshad* section of a *Lam 'bras* collection that was reproduced from Sde dge prints from the library of the Ven. Klu lding Mkhan chen Rin po che (b. 1931) and published in India by the Sakya Centre in 1983 (*Ngor chen rnam thar I*).<sup>50</sup> The second edition is available in sixty-eight folios in a one-volume edition of biographies of famous *Lam 'bras* masters entitled *Sa-skyapa lam 'bras bla brgyud kyi rnam thar*, which was also published by the Sakya Centre in India in 1985.<sup>51</sup> Apart from the different sizes of folios, differing script and

<sup>44</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs*: 5.2: *ngor pa'i bu slob thams cad kyi bla mar khur te | bla ma yab sras zhes 'bod |*.

<sup>45</sup> See *Mus chen rnam thar II*: 241.2.

<sup>46</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar I*: 467.6–468.2.

<sup>47</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar I*: 473.4–6.

<sup>48</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar I*: 473.5.

<sup>49</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 565.2. On Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros' biography of Ngor chen, see below under 3. Lost Biographies.

<sup>50</sup> The *Lam 'bras dkar chag*: 2, text no. 21 of the Sde dge par khang records a *Lam 'bras* collection in twenty-three volumes in which this biography is included at the same place as it is in the Indian reprint, namely in vol. *ka*, text no. 21, fols. 216b1–237a6. The *Lam 'bras dkar chag*: 2, text no. 21 also lists the biography's outline.

<sup>51</sup> See *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 432–473 and *Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar I*: 189–325. In the latter source (*Ibid.*: 189), the biography bears only the abbreviated title *Chos rje rdo rje 'chang gi rnam thar*. It includes some folios that are printed only halfway through (*Ibid.*: 279–280, 283–284) or are totally blank (*Ibid.*: 281–282). One can speculate that the original manuscript folios were torn or missing. The whole volume is part of a collection of golden manuscripts from Mustang published by the Sakya Centre in five volumes. For a description of this

numbers of lines per page, these two editions also vary to a certain extent in their wording and punctuation.<sup>52</sup> The second edition concludes with a five-lined stanza of merit dedication followed by four stanzas of Tibetanised Sanskrit not included in the first edition.<sup>53</sup> However, apart from such minor variations, there are no differences in content.

Recently, Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen has also become available in three reprint editions: (1) in a *Lam 'bras* collection in *po ti* format published by the Rdzong sar lnga rig slob gling in 2007,<sup>54</sup> (2) in the *Slob bshad* section of a newly arranged *Lam 'bras* collection in *po ti* format published by Guru Lama of Sachen International (Rgyal yongs sa chen) in Kathmandu in 2008,<sup>55</sup> and (3) in the *E waṃ bka' 'bum*,<sup>56</sup> a compendium in book format of collected works of Ngor abbots edited by the Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang in 2010. All three of these newly inputted editions seem to be based on the Sde dge redaction of Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen that is included among the biographies of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters. Apart from these editions, TBRC also holds a *dbu med* manuscript version of the biography in forty-one folios, entitled *Rje btsun dam pa kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa*.<sup>57</sup> Another *dbu med* manuscript in forty folios, *Chos rje kun dga' bzang po'i rnam thar*, is preserved in Rome, as recorded by the *Catalogue of the Tucci Tibetan Fund in the Library of IsIAO*.<sup>58</sup>

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collection and, especially, the contents of this volume, see Jackson 1991: 3–5, 30–32.

<sup>52</sup> Variations in wording include the use of different but synonymous terms. In the *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 456.2 we have *snga skad* and *phyi ma red*, for example, while in the *Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar I*: 269.3–4 *snga dro* and *phyi dro*. In this case, some archaic term might have been changed to a more common one. Other variations include the shortening of phrases. In the *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 467.6 we have *shin tu mdor bsdus* and *dge ba'i bshes gnyen*, while in the *Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar I*: 305.4 *mdor bsdus* and *bshes gnyen*. We also encounter further variations such as *steng nas* and *tshes bcu gsum* (*Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 468.1) on the one hand, and *stengs na* and *yar tshes bcu gsum* (*Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar I*: 306.1–2) on the other hand.

<sup>53</sup> See *Lam 'bras bla brgyud rnam thar I*: 324.5–325.5. Shorter or longer versions of these Tibetanised Sanskrit stanzas are found at the end of six out of the seven biographies included in this volume (*Ibid.*: 55.6, 107.3–5, 187.5, 325.3–5, 407.2–5, 573.2–5). These seem to have been included by the compiler of the volume because at the end of six of the biographies one finds the otherwise remaining blank lines of each folio filled in with these stanzas. This also explains why the last biography does not feature them since its main text ends at the end of the last line (*Ibid.*: 653.5). Nevertheless, the origin of the dedication is still in question.

<sup>54</sup> See *Lam 'bras China*: vol. 1, 614.4–675.

<sup>55</sup> See *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 1, 535–587.

<sup>56</sup> See *E waṃ bka' 'bum*: vol. 8, 262–311.

<sup>57</sup> See TBRC: W2CZ7931.

<sup>58</sup> See De Rossi Filibeck 2003: 334, no. 670, section 11.

2.2. *The Biography of Ngor chen by  
Mnga' ris pa Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705)*

Mnga' ris pa Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, the twenty-fifth abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1686–1689),<sup>59</sup> was the author of the second full-length biography of Ngor chen. Its full title was *The Biography of the Victorious Vajradhara Kun dga' bzang po, The Ocean Assembling the Streams of [Biographical] Good Sayings, The Source of the Wish-fulfilling Jewel of Excellent Qualities*.<sup>60</sup>

2.2.1. *Biographical Sketch of  
Mnga' ris pa Sangs rgyas phun tshogs*

Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was from Tre ba,<sup>61</sup> a nomadic settlement in lower Mnga' ris. In 1669, at age twenty, he was brought to Ngor by Grub thob Sko phrug pa Kun dga' lhun grub. Following a written petition from his maternal uncle, he was committed to the care of the Thar rtse bla brang.<sup>62</sup> He primarily stayed in Ngor in the following years, engaging in religious studies and practices, until he was sent in 1673 to Gdong sprad Bsam gling sgar in Sga stod in Khams to collect offerings and gifts as funds for the Thar rtse bla brang's expenditures.<sup>63</sup> He seems to have stayed there until 1686,

<sup>59</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' own biography, *'Jam pa'i dbyangs sangs rgyas phun tshogs bkra shis grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa thub bstan snang ba'i nyin byed*, written by Shar Mi nyag Rab sgar pa Byams pa Tshul khriims dpal bzang (1675–1710), the twenty-eighth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1703–1710), is now available in *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 29, 265–361. This collection also contains his autobiographical account entitled *Bya bral ba sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi myong ba brjed pa nges 'byung gtam gyi rol mtsho*; see *Ibid.*: 145–264. I could not consider both sources within the scope of this article. A short autobiographical sketch also survives in the *Ngor gdan rabs*: 50.6–51.4, as does a longer biographical sketch in the *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 498.5–516.1 by Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–1759/69), the thirty-fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1733–1740).

<sup>60</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 476.1: *Rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu bo 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho yon tan yid bzhin nor bu'i 'byung gnas*.

<sup>61</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs*: 50.6. Cf. *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 498.6, where the spelling of the settlement is given as Kre.

<sup>62</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs*: 51.1–2 and *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 499.6–500.4.

<sup>63</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 500.4–501.3. The monastery of Gdong sprad Bsam gling sgar seems to be identical to Gdong sprad Bsam gtan chos 'khor gling, whose history is sketched in *Khri 'du*: 236–240. This historical sketch even mentions Sangs rgyas phun tshogs as reference point for ascertaining the lifetime of Kun spangs pa Shes rab rin chen, the seventh Gdong sprad Sprul sku (*Ibid.*: 237). According to Jackson 2003: 529, Gdong sprad Bsam gtan gling was one of the twenty-one monasteries of the Sa skya pa school in Ldan ma, whose monks went to Ngor for ordination. Although traditionally one spoke of twenty-one monasteries, twenty-four could be enumerated in recent times. For this list, see *Ibid.*: 529. On the history of this monastery, see also Gri rkyang Tshe ring rdo rje (b. 1971), *Sga khri 'du gdong sprad bsam gtan chos 'khor gling gi lo rgyus zla shel dngul dkar me long*, [s.l.]: Pho brang dmar po'i las sgrub khang, n.d.

where he also acted as head of the monastery.<sup>64</sup> In the same year, he handed over the monastery to Shabs stod Rdzi lung pa Byams pa shes bya bzang po (1661–1702?), who had come up from Ngor to Sga stod in 1683 to collect monastic funds and who would later become the twenty-seventh Ngor abbot (tenure: 1695–1702?).<sup>65</sup> In 1686, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs returned to Ngor, where he was installed as abbot, filling this position for three years until 1689.<sup>66</sup> Having completed his tenure, he accepted the request of the Sde dge Sa skyong Bla ma Tshe dbang rdo rje,<sup>67</sup> which was reinforced by an official decree of the sixth Dalai Lama, Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho (1683–1706/46). He departed in 1699 on his journey to Sde dge.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>64</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 501.3–4.

<sup>65</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs*: 52.2 and *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 501.4, 516.5.

<sup>66</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 501.4–503.2.

<sup>67</sup> Except for the *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 503.3, the only other source that I could find that mentions this name is a modern history of Lhun grub steng monastery (*Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*). In Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biographical sketch, Tshe dbang rdo rje's alias is given as Bla ma Sangs rgyas dpal bzang (*Ibid.*: 95). Earlier in the text, the same source (*Ibid.*: 33) mentions this master by the name Bla ma Dpal bzang po. In the *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 43.5 he appears under the name Bla ma Sangs rgyas dpal bzang. He was the third son of U rgyan bkra shis (*Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 39.3, 43.5–6, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 33–34, *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 50, and Kolmaš 1968: 50). He took on the actual responsibility (*'gan bzhes*) for inviting Sangs rgyas phun tshogs to Sde dge, though the official invitation came from Khri chen Bla ma Sangs rgyas bstan pa, who was the third or fourth abbot of Lhun grub steng, depending on whether or not one counts Byams pa phun tshogs as first abbot (*Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 29.5–39.3, 43.5–6, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 27–28, 95, *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 44–46, 50, 172–173, and Kolmaš 1968: 34, 50, 52). In the context of this invitation, the *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 43.6 addresses Sangs rgyas phun tshogs by the name of Byang chub sems dpa' Buddha Lakṣmi pa. Khri chen Bla ma Sangs rgyas bstan pa had been to Ngor before and studied with Sa skya pa and Ngor pa masters, among whom Sangs rgyas phun tshogs is listed; see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 29.6–30.3, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 27–28, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 44.

<sup>68</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 503.2–504.2. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was among the first Ngor pa masters who followed the invitation of the Sde dge ruling family to serve as religious master at their seat in Sde dge. He was succeeded by Gtsang Mdo mkhar ba Mkhan chen Bkra shis lhun grub (1672–1739/40), the thirty-first Ngor abbot (tenure: 1722–1725), who, after his abbatial tenure, had come up to Sde dge following the invitation of Sa skyong Bstan pa tshe ring (1678–1738) and stayed there until his death. At that time, a messenger was sent to Lhasa to deliver to the ruler of Tibet (*mi dbang*) the request of Sde dge Khri chen Bla ma Phun tshogs bstan pa, the son of Bstan pa tshe ring, that Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–1759/69), the thirty-fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1733–1740), should come to Sde dge and act as its new religious teacher (*mchod gnas*). Following the official order of the *mi dbang*, Khang gсар Byams pa bsod nams bzang po (1689–1749), who had served as the thirtieth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1713–1722), was installed as *gdan tshab* of Ngor (in 1739/40). Dpal ldan chos skyong proceeded to Sde dge, where he should stay for fifteen years; see *Ngor gdan rab kha skong*: 533.2–4, 544.2–546.4, 566.2–6, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 35, 49, 98–99, 110, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 52, 61. On Bstan pa tshe ring, see Kolmaš 1968: 36–40, 50, 52 and on Phun tshogs bstan pa, see *Ibid.*: 40, 50, 52. The ruler of Tibet, who is here referred to as *mi dbang*, is identified earlier in the *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 565.6 as Mi dbang Bsod nams rab rgyas, according to whose order Dpal ldan chos skyong had earlier been installed as abbot of Ngor. Mi dbang Bsod

The *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong* highly praises his activities in service of the flourishing of the Buddhist teachings in the region of Sde dge, where he finally passed away six years later, in 1705.<sup>69</sup>

Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was surely one of the greatest Ngor masters of his time. It is due to his literary efforts that we are equipped with the basic sources on the early history of the Ngor tradition. It was he who wrote the *Abbatial History of Ngor* (*Ngor gdan rabs*) and, in addition to Ngor chen's biography, composed biographies of other Ngor abbots.<sup>70</sup> He also completed the famous

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nams rab rgyas is probably identical to Mi dbang alias Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas (1689–1747). Regarding the invitation of the early Ngor pa masters to Sde dge, the *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong* mentions official degrees and orders of the Dga' ldan pho brang government, as well as orders and approvals of Sa skya itself. More research is needed to find out if this was merely a formality, or, if not, to clarify these connections. Apart from the Ngor pa masters visiting Sde dge, members of the ruling family came to central Tibet to visit such monasteries as Ngor and Sa skya. For the visits of Bstan pa tshe ring's sons, Mi dbang Bsod nams mgon po, Bla chen Phun tshogs bstan pa, and Bla ma Blo gros rgya mtsho (1722–1774), see *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 64.3–5, 65.2–4, 67.6–78.2 respectively. See also *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 45–51 and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 58–63. The *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong* 533.1–2 also mentions the visit of a certain Sa skyong Sde dge Bla ma Kun dga' phrin las rgya mtsho to Ngor, who according to the *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 46–47 and the *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 58 is identical to Phun tshogs bstan pa; the latter name being his ordination name that he had received from Dpal ldan chos skyong during his *bhikṣu* ordination in Ngor. For other Ngor pa masters in Sde dge, see for instance *Gsang sngags gsar rnying gdan rabs*: 85.4–96.6, *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 111–145, and *Sde dge lo rgyus*: 172–174. On the early connection between Ngor and Sde dge, see also above n. 8.

<sup>69</sup> See *Ngor gdan rabs kha skong*: 504.5–508.3, 513.4–515.1.

<sup>70</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs mentions that (1) he wrote an “expression of realizations” (*rtogs brjod*), meaning here a biographical narrative, of three masters from the Thar rtse bla brang (*Ngor gdan rabs*: 43.6), (2) he supplemented the works of Rgyal rtse ba Byang pa Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1598–1674), the twentieth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1657?), with his biography (*Ngor gdan rabs*: 45.4–5), (3) he wrote the biography of Sgrub Khang pa Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan (1599–1673), the twenty-second Ngor abbot (tenure: 1667–1671, *Ngor gdan rabs*: 49.2), and that (4) he wrote the biography of Shar Mi nyag Ston pa Lhun grub dpal ldan (1624–1697), the twenty-fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1673–1686, *Ngor gdan rabs*: 50.6). The three masters from the Thar rtse bla brang referred to under number (1) are Brang ti Mkhan chen Nam mkha' sangs rgyas, the seventeenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1622–1625), Brang ti Mkhan chen Nam mkha' rin chen (1612–1657), the nineteenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1653/54–1657), and Hor ston Paṅ chen Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1611–1672), the twenty-third Ngor abbot (tenure: 1671–1672). All these works are now available in *Lam 'bras Nepal*. For the three biographies of the masters from the Thar rtse bla brang, *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa brang ti nam mkha' sangs rgyas kyi rnam thar 'phros dang bcas pa byin rlabs chu rgyun*, see *Ibid.*: vol. 28, 745–782. For the biography of Ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Rje btsun bla ma dam pa shar rgyal mkhar rtse pa ngag dbang bsod nams rgyal mtshan gyi rnam par thar pa byin rlabs char 'bebs*, see *Ibid.*: vol. 28, 829–865. For the biography of Dpal mchog rgyal mtshan, *Rje bla ma dam pa dpal mchog rgyal mtshan dpa'i rnam par thar pa dad pa'i gsal 'debs*, see *Ibid.*: vol. 29, 79–105. For the biography of Lhun grub dpal ldan, *Mkhan chen rdo rje 'chang lhun grub dpal ldan gyi rnam par thar pa legs byas dpal gyi dga' ston*, see *Ibid.*: vol. 29, 107–144. The three latter biographies were originally included in vol. 1 (*ka*) of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' *Collected Works*; see *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 114–119.

*Ngor chos 'byung*, which had been left incomplete by the great tenth abbot Ngor chen Dkon mchog lhun grub (1497–1557). Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' *Collected Works* were carved and printed in Sde dge in four volumes, but only a few sections seem to have survived.<sup>71</sup> Recently, some of his writings were published in the *E waṃ bka' 'bum*.<sup>72</sup>

### 2.2.2. Description of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' Biography of Ngor chen

From the colophon of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen, we learn that he completed it on the fifteenth day of the ninth month of 1688, at the *gtsug lag khang* of Ngor monastery, 232 years after Ngor chen's passing. His biography of Ngor chen seems to have been printed in two different versions: one that was included among the biographies of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters and a second that existed as an independent volume. Both versions are available to us in the following two editions: the former in the *Slob bshad* section of the *Lam 'bras* collection that was reproduced from prints of the Sde dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu lding Mkhan chen Rin po che (b. 1931) and published by the Sakya Centre in 1983 (*Ngor chen rnam thar II*),<sup>73</sup> and the second as a publication in 1976 in India alongside a practice text on Hevajra written by the king of Sde dge Yab chen Tshe dbang rdo rje rig 'dzin (1786–1842), alias Byams

<sup>71</sup> The second volume of his *Collected Works* seems to have survived and was scanned by TBRC: W1CZ1145: *Ngor chen sangs rgyas phun tshogs kyi gsung 'bum las pod kha pa*. A list of the texts included in his *Collected Works* is given in *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 114–119. For this list, see also TBRC: P796. Seventeen of his writings are also recorded in the *Sde dge par khang par shing dkar chag*: 385–387.

<sup>72</sup> See *E waṃ bka' 'bum*: vol. 19–20.

<sup>73</sup> See *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 1, 475–585. There exist different Sde dge compilations of the biographies of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters. In one edition, Ngor chen's biography is included in vol. 1 (*ka*), as it is in the reproduction from the Sakya Centre "as arranged by 'Jam-dbyaṅs-blo-gter-dbañ-po and supplemented by texts continuing the lineage through Khañ-gsar Dam-pa and Sga-ston Ñag-dbañ-legs-pa Rin-po-ches;" see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 475–585. 'Jam dbyangs blo gter dbang po (1847–1914) originally arranged and oversaw the carving of the *Lam 'bras slob bshad* collection in seventeen volumes; see *Lam 'bras India*: vol. 8, 316.2–3. In another edition, Ngor chen's biography is included as the first text of vol. 2 (*kha*), as is the case in the collection made available by TBRC: W00CHZ0103345 (*Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fols. 1a1–53b6). The *Sde dge par khang par shing dkar chag*: 140–143 and the *Lam 'bras dkar chag*: 7–20 both list and record the individual texts for two different editions of vol. 2 (*kha (ya)* in 455 fols. and *kha (ma)* in 324 fols.) and 3 (*ga (ya)* in 400 fols. and *ga (ma)* in 304 fols.) of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters' biographies of a *Lam 'bras* collection in twenty-three volumes. The *Sde dge par khang par shing dkar chag*: 140–143 and the *Lam 'bras dkar chag*: 7–8 record Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen, including its outline, as the first text of vol. 2 (*kha (ya)*).

pa kun dga' sangs rgyas bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (*Ngor chen rnam thar VI*).<sup>74</sup>

Recently, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen has also been made available in three large collections: (1) the *Lam 'bras* collection published by the Rdzong sar lnga rig slob gling in 2007,<sup>75</sup> (2) in the *Tshogs bshad* section of the *Lam 'bras* collection published in 2008 by Guru Lama of Sachen International,<sup>76</sup> and (3) in the *E wam bka' 'bum*,<sup>77</sup> a compendium of the collected works of Ngor abbots edited by the Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang in 2010. All three of these newly inputted versions seem to be based on the same edition of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen, namely the one included among the lives of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters, since all three feature the same orthographic mistakes, which are already found in the reprinted edition of the Sakya Centre I mentioned before.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, TBRC holds scans of two volumes of biographies (vol. *kha* and *ga*) of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters that were printed from blocks carved at the Sde dge printing house and whose copies were made available from the library of Ta'i si tu Rin po che at Shes rab gling, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, India.<sup>79</sup> In this collection of the *Lam 'bras*, the biography of Ngor chen is included in the second volume, volume *kha*, (*Ngor chen rnam thar III*).<sup>80</sup> The aforementioned reprint from the Sakya Centre and the scan from TBRC seem to originate from the same xylographs, as they contain similar miniatures and the same orthographic mistakes.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>74</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 135–315. The “Preface” to this publication states that the two works “are reconstructions from two very old and faded blockprints from Sde-ge and presumably Ngor redactions.” The title page provides the information that the texts were “reproduced from tracing and manuscripts from the library of Mkhan-po Rin-chen by Trayang and Jamyang Samten.” Davidson 1981: 94–95, n. 10 mentions that this “published manuscript is rife with orthographic errors.”

<sup>75</sup> See *Lam 'bras China*: vol. 1, 677–823.

<sup>76</sup> See *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 27, 1–133. This collection includes a huge number of biographies that were heretofore unavailable or considered to be lost, such as those of the Ngor abbots in the *Tshogs bshad* transmission line (*Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 27–29).

<sup>77</sup> See *E wam bka' 'bum*: vol. 20, 1–117.

<sup>78</sup> Compare for example the passage in *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 482.1 and *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fol. 4b1: *gu ge pañ chen gyis sa bcad gsum du mdzad | chos dpal bzang pos sngar [lngar] mdzad pa sogs mang yang gnad don gcig go |*. The spelling mistake of *sngar* instead of *lngar* is found in all three of the recently inputted editions: *Lam 'bras China*: vol. 1, 686.1, *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 27, 8.4, and *E wam bka' 'bum*: vol. 20, 7.4. It is not found in the *Ngor chen rnam thar IV*: fol. 6a4, *Ngor chen rnam thar V*: fol. 6a4, and *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 146.5, however.

<sup>79</sup> See TBRC: W00CHZ0103345.

<sup>80</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fols. 1a–56a.

<sup>81</sup> For the miniatures (left margin: Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, right margin: Ngor chen), see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 476 and *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fol. 1b. For orthographic mistakes, see for example *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 482.1 and *Ngor*

Aside from being included among the lives of the *Lam 'bras* lineal *gurus*, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen was also printed separately as an independent volume. TBRC holds scans of two xylograph versions of this biography, each in sixty-six folios.<sup>82</sup> Of these two versions, only a scan of the former one (*Ngor chen rnam thar IV*) is accessible at the moment. A similar xylograph version in sixty-six folios also exists in Mang spro monastery in La dwags and was photographed by Blo gsal don grub of Gong dkar Chos sde (Dehradun, India) (*Ngor chen rnam thar V*).<sup>83</sup> The aforementioned edition of Ngor chen's biography that was published in 1976 in India together with a liturgy for Hevajra is based on such an individually printed version. These independent printed versions of Ngor chen's biography differ slightly from the biography as it appears among the lives of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters, as can be recognized from the miniatures at the beginning and end of the text, the arrangement of the text in seven rather than six lines per page, and the appearance of some orthographic variations and mistakes.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the independently printed versions contain the biography's versified printing-colophon together with a merit-dedication, followed by a prayer written in Lantscha, Tibetanised Sanskrit, and Tibetan.<sup>85</sup> From the printing-colophon we know that the main

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*chen rnam thar III*: fol. 4b1: *gu ge pañ chen gyis sa bcad gsum du mdzad | chos dpal bzang pos sngar [Ingar] mdzad pa sogs mang yang gnad don gcig go |*.

<sup>82</sup> See TBRC: W2CZ7950 and TBRC: W3CZ1323.

<sup>83</sup> On the history of Mang spro dgon Thub bstan shwa gling chos 'khor gling, see *Mang spro dgon gyi lo rgyus*.

<sup>84</sup> As an illustration, I would like to mention here only two examples, the first being an orthographic variation and the second being an orthographic mistake. (1) The Ngor chen biographies included among the biographies of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters all read *sku rims* (*Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 484.5, *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fol. 5b5, *Lam 'bras China*: vol. 1, 689.3, *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 27, 11.4, and *E wañ bka' 'bum*: vol. 20, 9.18–19), whereas the independently printed biographies of Ngor chen (*Ngor chen rnam thar IV*: fol. 7b4, *Ngor chen rnam thar V*: 7b4, and *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 150.2) read *sku rim*. (2) The Ngor chen biographies included among the biographies of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters (*Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 488.3, *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fol. 7b3, *Lam 'bras China*: vol. 1, 694.4–5, *Lam 'bras Nepal*: vol. 27, 16.1, and *E wañ bka' 'bum*: vol. 20, 14.3) read as follows: *so so'i bslab bya rnams byang ba [sa] dang |*. In comparison, the independently printed biographies of Ngor chen (*Ngor chen rnam thar IV*: fol. 9b6, *Ngor chen rnam thar V*: fol. 7b4, *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 155.6) all correctly read: *so so'i bslab bya rnams byang sa dang |*. Also, the title of the biography contained in the *Lam 'bras* collection varies in so far that it is shortened, due to the fact that it also includes the title for the whole volume of biographies of *Lam 'bras* lineage masters: *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam chen gsung ngag rin po che'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar glegs bam gnyis pa las rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu bo 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho*; see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 475.3 and *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fols. 1a3. The biography's full title is, however, given in the incipit; see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 476.1 and *Ngor chen rnam thar III*: fol. 1b1. The marginal title of the former collection reads *Lam 'bras bla ma'i rnam thar*, whereby the latter biography's marginal title reads *Rdo rje 'chang rnam thar*.

<sup>85</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar IV*: fols. 65a4–66a7, *Ngor chen rnam thar V*: fols. 65a4–66a.7, and *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 312.6–315.6.

patron of the printing project was the Sde dge Sa skyong Bla ma Tshe dbang rdo rje.<sup>86</sup> The scribe was Dge slong Bkra shis dbang phyug and one of the carvers was Dbu mdzad Lha skyabs. In terms of their orthography, these independently printed versions seem more reliable.

Further xylograph exemplars of the two different editions of Ngor chen's biography are preserved in Rome at the Library of the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (IsIAO). De Rossi Filibeck records the presence of the first three volumes of biographies (*ka-ga*) of the *Lam 'bras* lineage masters, among which Ngor chen's biography is found at the beginning of vol. 2 (*kha*). She also writes of two sixty-six folio block prints of Ngor chen's individually printed biography, specifying that they were engraved by Dbu mdzad Lha skyabs.<sup>87</sup>

### 2.2.3. The Editorial Work of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs

A closer look at Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' work reveals that he did not simply compose a new Ngor chen biography. Rather, he compiled older biographies into his new work, expanding on their information through his own explanatory additions.<sup>88</sup> From some of his statements we can see how he worked in putting together this biography. Here I would like to describe his way of compiling and editing, as I believe it will contribute to a better understanding of the make up of the work.

<sup>86</sup> The printing colophon contains the name elements of the patrons in the form of a eulogy. It seems that they should be combined in the following way: Sde dge Sa skyong Bla ma Tshe dbang rdo rje, Sangs rgyas bstan pa'i dpal, Bsod nams dpal, and Phun tshogs bzang po; see *Ngor chen rnam thar IV*: fol. 65a5–6, *Ngor chen rnam thar V*: fol. 65a5–6, and *Ngor chen rnam thar VI*: 313.2–3. The identification of the main patron, Bla ma Tshe dbang rdo rje, presents some difficulties. TBRC: W2CZ7950 and TBRC: W3CZ1323 state that the printing blocks were carved during the time of the Sde dge king Yab chen Tshe dbang rdo rje rig 'dzin (1786–1842). Another possibility could be to identify Tshe dbang rdo rje with the Tshe dbang rdo rje alias Bla ma Sangs rgyas dpal bzang, who took on the responsibility of inviting Sangs rgyas phun tshogs to Sde dge. In line with this, the *Sde dge rgyal rabs*: 43.5–6 mentions that Sangs rgyas dpal bzang established among others the *dkyil 'khor sgrub mchod* rituals of the Ngor tradition in monastic institutions such as Ri khrod Smin grol gling and Dbon stod gdan sa, and also commissioned the printing of the *Collected Works* of previous masters and many volumes of biographies. The *Sde dge dgon chen lo rgyus*: 34 specifies that these works and biographies were from Ngor pa masters. Moreover, the second patron mentioned, Sangs rgyas bstan pa'i dpal, could be Khri chen Bla ma Sangs rgyas bstan pa, who officially invited Sangs rgyas phun tshogs to Sde dge. On Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' invitation to Sde dge, see n. 68.

<sup>87</sup> See De Rossi Filibeck 2003: 345–346, no. 731–733 and 338, no. 690 and 695 respectively.

<sup>88</sup> Davidson 1991: 234, n. 57 designates Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' work as "pasticcio."

Sangs rgyas phun tshogs reveals his method in a terse statement at the beginning of the biography:

(...) Regarding how [Ngor chen] performed in this life deeds for the Buddha's teachings, from among the many biographical accounts written by disciples of the master himself, [I] based [myself] here on the biography written by [Ngor chen's] chief spiritual son Sems dpa' chen po Mus chen Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan. What was not explicitly mentioned in [that work] [I] completed by adding [information from] other texts as I have seen them myself.<sup>89</sup>

When we read Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' composition, we find that this is exactly how he proceeds. He incorporates Mus chen's entire Ngor chen biography, even quoting its colophons, but making a few minor changes in its wording. In between, he adds additional information that he cites from older biographies composed by Ngor chen's disciples. He also presents further descriptions and explanations that probably originate in these older biographies, cites additional sources such as praises of Ngor chen, and presents oral accounts. Since we do not have access to these older biographies, it is impossible to say how much of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' descriptions and explanations actually originate from them.<sup>90</sup>

In this regard, it would be interesting to know where the opening part of the biography comes from. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs quotes at length two *sūtras* in which the Buddha, according to the tradition, prophesied Ngor chen's coming and Ngor chen's future attainment of buddhahood, and then continues with a short account of Ngor chen's previous lives.<sup>91</sup> These parts are missing from Mus chen's

<sup>89</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 480.6–481.1: (...) *sku tshe 'dir yang sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa la bya ba mdzad tshul la | rje nyid kyi slob ma rnams kyis mdzad pa'i rnam thar gyi yi ge mang du snang ba las | 'dir thugs sras sems dpa' chen po mus chen dkon mchog rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad pa'i rnam thar gzhir bzhaq der mi gsal ba rang gis ji ltar mthong ba'i yi ge gzhan gyis kha bskang nas bkod pa la |*.

<sup>90</sup> For instance, the account on the founding of Ngor monastery is given briefly in Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen, while Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' presentation is much more detailed; see *Ngor chen rnam thar I*: 459.1–460.2 and *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 524.2–529.3 respectively.

<sup>91</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs cites from the following two *sūtras*: (1) *Kuśalamūla-paridharasūtra* / *Kuśalamūlasampragrahasūtra* / *Dge ba'i rtsa ba yongs su 'dzin pa'i mdo* (*Bka' 'gyur dpe bsdur ma*: no. 119, *Ötani*: no. 769, and *Tōhoku*: no. 101); (2) *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* / *Dam pa'i chos pad ma dkar po'i mdo* (*Bka' 'gyur dpe bsdur ma*: no. 131, *Ötani*: no. 781, and *Tōhoku*: no. 113). The *sūtras* are also identified in Stearns 2006: 245, 654, n. 362–365. For Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' quotes, see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 477.3–479.1 and 479.1–479.4 respectively. He quotes the first *sūtra* in a rather confusing way, however, as he picks out only certain verses and skips others, while presenting them as one single quote. In the last quote, he even reverses the sequence of the *sūtra* quoting back to front. His quotes correspond to *Tōhoku*: no. 101, 187.2, 187.4–5, 187.5–6, 187.6–7, 188.5–7, 190.2, 190.4, 190.1–2, 190.3, 189.1–2, 189.3–4 and *Tōhoku*: no. 113, 162.2–5. Already in the *Gsang chen bstan pa rgyas byed* it seems that the reading of this *sūtra* was

Ngor chen biography. Nevertheless, the first part at least cannot be attributed to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, since we already encounter short citations from both *sūtras* in the sketch of Ngor chen's life that is included in the *Gsang chen bstan pa rgyas byed* composed by 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang phyug (1524–1568) and translated by Cyrus Stearns.<sup>92</sup>

The passage on Ngor chen's family relations serves as a good example of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' method. In the paragraph below, the text in bold letters originates from Mus chen's life of Ngor chen. The parts not in bold letters are Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' remarks and additions, and the text in a smaller font is a citation from a Ngor chen biography authored by Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros.

(...) *rnam par thar pa cung zad cig brjod par bya ba la gnyis te | rab tu ma byon pa dang | rab tu byon pa'i rnam par thar pa'o | |gu ge pan chen gyis sa bcad gsum du mdzad | chos dpal bzang pos sngar [lngar] mdzad pa sogs mang yang gnad don gcig go | |dang po rab tu ma byon gong gi rnam thar ni | rje 'di'i rigs dang gdung ni | rgyal po chen po'i sku zhang du gyur pa cog ro'am cog grur grags pa cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan la sogs pa mang du byung ba'i brgyud pa bzang po'o | |yab mes gong ma rnams 'bring 'tshams nas sa skya phyogs su byon te | ga ra la sogs par 'brog mdzad cing bzhugs pa las rim gyis bdag chen gzhi thog pa'i gsol ja bar gyur pa yin la | khyad par rje 'di nyid kyi phyi ltar gyi yab ni | sa skya tshogs kyi nye gnas chen po dpon tshang grub pa yon tan zhes bya ba dpal ldan bla ma dam pa'i drung nas zhus pa'i yongs rdzogs dge bsnyen yin cing | nang ltar na bdag chen gzhi thog pa kun dga' rin chen yin te | grub chen srad pa kun blos | phyi ltar nye gnas chen po grub pa'i sras | |sbas pa'i yab ni bdag chen kun rin yin | |dpal ldan kun dga'i rigs brgyud sa skya pa | |dpal ldan sa skya pa la gsol ba 'debs | |zhes gsungs |.*<sup>93</sup>

altered and one verse added. This is interesting since these lines are interpreted as the prophecy for Ngor chen's controversy with Mkhas grub rje Dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438). The *sūtra* (Tōhoku: no. 101, 190.2) reads: *gang dag phyi dus dge slong rnams 'byung ba | |rtsub dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yin |*. In the *Gsang chen bstan pa rgyas byed*: 150.2–3 we read: *'phags pa dge ba'i rtsa ba yongs su 'dzin pa'i mdor | (...) khor dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yi | |dge slong gzhan gyis de la rtsod par 'gyur | zhes chos rje mkhas grub pas mdo ma yin zhes skur pa 'debs pa'ang lung bstan pa dang (...)|*. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (Ngor chen *rnam thar II*: 478.3–4) cites this part as: *gang dag phyi dus dge slong rnams 'byung ba | |rtsub dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yi | |dge slong gzhan gyis 'di la rtsod par 'gyur |*. Then, he adds a quote from two lines later in the *sūtra* (Ngor chen *rnam thar II*: 478.4, Tōhoku: no. 101, 190.4): *chos 'di rgyal bas gsungs pa ma yin zhes | |'jig rten phyin ci log la kun dgar ltos |*. Up to now I could not identify the line *dge slong gzhan gyis 'di la rtsod par 'gyur |*. It might have been added, and the *yin* in the preceding verse changed to *yi*. However, this is just my first impression and deserves more research.

<sup>92</sup> For the translation of the *Gsang chen bstan pa rgyas byed*, see Stearns 2006: 129–251. For the biographical sketch of Ngor chen, see *Ibid.*: 245–246.

<sup>93</sup> Ngor chen *rnam thar II*: 482.1–5.

Another aspect of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' editorial method becomes clear when we examine how he treated diverging information from his sources. In these cases, he strictly separates the differing versions, as the following example illustrates:

If [I] explain a little what is not explicit in [Ngor chen's] record of teachings received [it is like this]: "[Ngor chen] heard by Chos rje Ye shes rgyal mtshan five times the *Prajñāpāramitā* based on Bu [ston's] commentary" [as said in] the work [of] Chos dpal. Paṇḍi ta said [Ngor chen] heard [these teachings] four and a half [times]. Mus pa said four [times] and also that [Ngor chen] heard [them] based on Mkhan chen Buddha Shrī pa's<sup>94</sup> notes.<sup>95</sup>

In the colophon to his work, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs provides us with information on the circumstances that caused him to engage in this literary project.

(...) [I] put on my head the diadem of command given by [my guru] Khyab bdag Bla ma Lhun grub dpal ldan, who performed for a long time the activities [as] the sublime regent [of Ngor chen]: "Although the previous superior ones wrote down many biographical accounts [of Ngor chen], these days it has become difficult to bring [all these] books together and it is difficult to understand the meaning [of their] sections. Therefore, [you] should write an account incorporating the good parts of those previous biographies."<sup>96</sup>

From this passage, we learn that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs was requested by Mi nyag pa Lhun grub dpal ldan (1624–1697), the twenty-fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1673–1686), to engage in this project. Moreover, we learn that the lives of Ngor chen composed by

<sup>94</sup> Here, Mkhan chen Buddha Shrī pa refers to G.yag phrug alias G.yag ston Sangs rgyas dpal (1350–1414), who attended Ngor chen's novice ordination. According to Jackson 1987: vol. 1, 135, "This great scholiast was not only a key transmitter of *Prajñāpāramitā* exegesis, but he is also said to have been a noteworthy reviver of Pramāṇa studies within the Sa-skyapa tradition."

<sup>95</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 491.1–2: *gsan yig tu mi gsal ba cung zad bshad na | chos rje ye shes rgyal mtshan pa'i drung du | phar phyin bu ti ga gi steng nas tshar lnga gsan zhes chos dpal pa gsungs | paṇḍi tas phyed dang lnga | rje mus pas bzhi gsan gsung zhing | mkhan chen buddha shrī pa'i zin bris kyi steng nas kyang gsan gsung |*

<sup>96</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 579.6–580.2: *ces pa rgyal bas lung bstan pa'i skyes bu chen po rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu bo 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho yon tan yid bzhiin nor bu'i 'byung gnas zhes bya ba 'di ni dam pa gong ma rnams kyi rnam thar gyi yi ge du ma mdzad kyang | deng sang dpe rnams 'dzom dka' zhing skabs don rnams rtogs dka' bas rnam thar snga ma rnams kyi legs cha bsdus pa'i yi ge zhis bgyis [gyis] zhes rgyal tshab dam pa phrin las yun ring du bskyangs pa'i khyab bdag bla ma lhun grub dpal ldan gyi zhal snga nas kyi bka'i cod pan gnang ba spyi bor blangs shing |*

his personal disciples were “difficult to bring together” (*dzom dka'*). One can speculate that they were scattered across various locations, hard for even an abbot of Ngor to lay his hands on. It was, apparently, high time to preserve the old biographies of the founder of the Ngor tradition and its mother monastery for the generations to come. This project was undertaken by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs by incorporating the information of these old biographies in his own compilatory work, following the command of his own *guru*. However, as the following two sources illustrate, in the years to come the biographies of Ngor chen were still not easy to access. The scarcity of some of Ngor chen's biographies is attested to by a later list of rare Tibetan texts compiled by A khu Ching Shes rab rgya mtsho (1803–1875). Beside Mus chen's and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' works, the list records two further Ngor chen biographies composed by personal disciples.<sup>97</sup> From an annotation at the end of Mus chen's Ngor chen biography—probably stemming from the compilers of a part or the whole *Lam 'bras* collection—we can conclude that the rarity or at least inaccessibility of these biographies persisted then, too:

If the biographies of this master [Ngor chen] written by Gu ge Paṅ chen and Ye chen po are found, [they] must be included again.<sup>98</sup>

Before I turn to consider the lost biographies, let me make a few remarks about the structure of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' Ngor chen biography. He divides his work into two parts: the “Actual Subject” (*dnegos*) and a second part called “Additional Subjects” (*phros*).<sup>99</sup> In the former, he presents Ngor chen's life story as discussed above. In the latter, he adds both a discussion of the meaning of the term *e waṃ* from the sūtric and tantric perspectives,<sup>100</sup> and supplements the chapter entitled “Qualities of the Sacred Site” (*gnas kyi yon tan*), which includes three praises of Ngor monastery by Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456–1532), E waṃ chos ldan gyi Zur chen Bla ma Sangs rgyas lhun grub, and Karma 'phrin las pa Phyogs las rnam par rgyal ba (1456–1539).<sup>101</sup> After Sangs rgyas phun tshogs'

<sup>97</sup> See *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhid gi tho yig*: 508, no. 10928–10931.

<sup>98</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar* I: 473.6: *rje 'di'i rnam thar gu ge paṅ chen dang | ye chen po mdzad brnyed na slar 'dzud dgos | |*.

<sup>99</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar* II: 477.1: *'dir rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po zhes snyan pa'i ba dan srid pa gsum na g.yo ba'i rtogs pa brjod pa la don gnyis ste | dnegos dang 'phros sol*.

<sup>100</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar* II: 566.1–569.1.

<sup>101</sup> Glo bo Mkhan chen wrote his praise down according to the words of Gu ge Paṅdi ta Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1415–1486). Its full title is *E waṃ gyi bkod pa la bstod pa'i tshigs su bcad pa theg chen sgra dbyangs*; see *Glo bo mkhan chen gsung 'bum*: vol. 1, fols. 90b–91b and vol. 4, fols. 104a–105b. Zur chen Bla ma Sangs rgyas lhun grub's praise is titled *Dpal e waṃ chos ldan bstod pa kā li'i rgyan rnam par bkra ba*. The third praise bears the title *Dpal e waṃ chos ldan gsang snyags kyi*

closing verses, colophon and short versified conclusion (*smras pa*), another work entitled *Rje btsun rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i lam 'bras kyi bka' rgya thim pa'i gzigs snang gi gsal 'byed*, composed by Sgrub khang pa Dpal Idan don grub (1563–1636), the sixteenth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1618–1622), is added. That text explains and illustrates a vision Ngor chen had that indicated to him whether or not he was allowed to teach the *Lam 'bras*. Tucci in his *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* mistakenly took this text's colophon to be the colophon for the entire Ngor chen biography, which led him to wrongly ascribe it to Dpal Idan don grub.<sup>102</sup>

### 3. Lost Biographies

I have already mentioned several older biographies of Ngor chen written by his disciples. Here I would like to present what I have been able to learn about these works and their authors. In his *Ngor gdan rabs*, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs lists several of these earlier lives of Ngor chen:

Those and other virtuous activities [of Ngor chen] are beyond one's imagination and shall be known from the work by **Mus pa**, the texts written by [Ngor chen's] disciples **Gu ge Paṅ chen**, **Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan**, **Srad pa Kun blo**, **Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po** and others, and from the *Ocean of Good Sayings*, the biography I have written [myself], which [is] a compilation of all these [works].<sup>103</sup>

The first person mentioned, Mus pa, is Mus chen Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469), whom I have already introduced. The other four authors frequently appear in Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen and are all included among Ngor chen's personal disciples.<sup>104</sup>

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*pho brang chen po'i rten gdan rabs dang bcas pa la bstod pa dā ki rnam par bzhad pa'i glu dbyangs*. For the three works, see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 569.1–570.5, 570.5–571.4, and 571.4–577.6 respectively.

<sup>102</sup> See Tucci 1949: 157. Khetsun Sangpo 1997: vol. XI, 402 and Sobisch 2008: 89, 182, no. #641#, probably due to the same reason, also ascribed it wrongly to Dpal Idan don grub. The fact that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs included Mus chen's colophons in his work seems to have misled Shen Weirong 2002: 149, n. 92, 207–208, n. 289, 400 in his monograph on the first Dalai Lama Dge 'dun grub (1349–1474) to ascribe Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen to Mus chen.

<sup>103</sup> *Ngor gdan rabs*: 3.5–6: *de la sogs pa'i rnam par dkar ba'i phrin las bsam gyis mi khyab ste | rje mus pas mdzad pa | gu ge paṅ chen | sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan | srad pa kun blo | gu ge chos dpal bzang po sogs | slob ma rnam kyis mdzad pa'i yi ge rnam dang | de thams cad kyi sdud pa kho bos bris pa'i rnam thar legs bshad rgya mtshor shes par bya'o* |. Emphasis added by the author.

<sup>104</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 532.3–4, 533.5.

3.1. *Gu ge Paṅḍi ta Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1415–1486)*

The Gu ge Paṅ chen mentioned by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs is Gu ge Paṅḍi ta Grags pa rgyal mtshan.<sup>105</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs mentions some background information on the relation between Ngor chen and Gu ge Paṅḍi ta and the sources that Gu ge Paṅḍi ta based his work upon, probably taking this information from the colophon of Gu ge Paṅḍi ta's life of Ngor chen:

[Regarding Ngor chen's] biography up to this point, Gu ge Paṅ chen said that he himself relied [on Ngor chen as his teacher] for seventeen years and acted as [his] ritual attendant and servant (*go re len*).<sup>106</sup> [Concerning Ngor chen's] many activities before and after, [he] wrote them according to the oral accounts of Bla ma Dpal ldan, who [himself] had relied for fifteen years on Rje Rin po che [i.e. Ngor chen], Rgyal tshab Chos rje Kun dbang pa,<sup>107</sup> and others.<sup>108</sup>

As a further source illuminating the relation between Ngor chen and Gu ge Paṅḍi ta, we have a photocopy of a nineteen folio *dbu med* manuscript of the Gu ge Paṅḍi ta's own biography, entitled *Rnam thar dgos 'dod 'byung ba*.<sup>109</sup> It was written shortly after the Paṅḍi ta's passing by his disciple Mnga' ris G/Bzhi sde pa 'Jam dbyangs nam mkha' brtan pa in 1488 at Ngor.<sup>110</sup> According to this work, Gu ge

<sup>105</sup> *Ngor chos 'byung*: 343.1–2: *gu ge paṅḍi ta grags pa rgyal mtshan 'di la gu ge paṅ chen zer* |. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs uses both titles alternately in his Ngor chen biography. He further uses short forms like Paṅ chen Grags rgyal (*Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 499.3) or only Paṅḍi ta (*Ibid.*: 491.2).

<sup>106</sup> This term is probably identical to *go re long*. For a similar passage from Gu ge Paṅḍi ta's biographical sketch, see A myes zhabs' (1597–1659) *Bde mchog chos 'byung*: 233.2–3: *khyad par rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i mchod g.yog dang* | *gsol dpon sogs go re lan* [sic] *gyi tshul du lo bcu bdun gyi bar du zhabs pad bsten te gsung gi gsang ba zab mo 'dzin par mdzad cing* |.

<sup>107</sup> Chos rje Kun dbang refers to Ngor chen's paternal nephew Rgyal tshab Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–1478), the fourth Ngor abbot (tenure: 1465–1478).

<sup>108</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 554.2–3: *'di yan gyi rnam thar gu ge paṅ chen gyis kyang khong rang gis lo bcu bdun bsten cing mchod g.yog dang go re len bgyis pa dang* | *gzhan snga phyi'i mdzad pa mang po rje rin po che lo bco lnga'i bar brten pa'i bla ma dpal ldan pa dang* | *rgyal tshab chos rje kun dbang pa sogs kyi gsung sgras bzhin bkod pa yin gsungs so* |.

<sup>109</sup> This work survives in the Beijing collection and Leonard van der Kuijp possesses a photocopy of it. I kindly received a copy of it through Franz-Karl Ehrhard.

<sup>110</sup> 'Jam dbyangs nam mkha' brtan pa finished a small part of it in the first Tibetan month, and, requested by some faithful ones, he added further parts, ultimately finishing his work in the eighth Tibetan month of 1488; see *Gu ge paṅḍi ta rnam thar*: fol. 19a3–7. The colophon states that this manuscript was written or probably copied by a certain Lugs thang pa (*Ibid.*: fol. 19a7): *lugs thang pas sor mo'i 'du byed* | |. The manuscript is full of orthographic mistakes, though it was proofread once, as annotations to the main text and a remark after the colophon indicate. 'Jam dbyangs nam mkha' brtan pa's full name is given in the *Dkon mchog 'phel rnam thar*: 798.5 as Bzhi sde Chos rje 'Jam dbyangs nam mkha' brtan

Paṇḍi ta met Ngor chen for the first time in his twenty-first year, while in Glo bo.<sup>111</sup> Their meeting took place during Ngor chen's second visit to Glo bo in 1436 when the Gu ge king Khri Nam mkha'i dbang po (b. 1409) had sent G/Bzhi sde pa Drung Nam mkha' rtse mo to Glo bo to invite Ngor chen to Pu hrang. At that time Gu ge Paṇḍi ta accompanied Nam mkha' rtse mo as a servant. During the winter of that year, Gu ge Paṇḍi ta received the *Lam 'bras* teachings from Ngor chen. Afterwards the inviting party travelled back to Pu hrang. Ngor chen, accepting the invitation, followed a little later and ordained the king of Gu ge in Kha char.<sup>112</sup> When Ngor

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pa and in the *Sa skya gdung rabs*: 478.1 as Gzhi sde Chos rje 'Jam dbyangs nam mkha' brtan pa. He was from the Ngor pa monastery of G/Bzhi sde in Mnga' ris. The *Mnga' ris khul gyi gnas yig*: 44–45 and the *Mnga' ris chos 'byung*: 141–148 record this Ngor pa monastery under the name Zhi sde lha sde dgon. According to the *Mnga' ris chos 'byung*: 141–142, already in the 11<sup>th</sup> century a small temple existed at that place, but the original foundation of the monastery dates to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Some of its marvelous and lively paintings, such as one of the lineage of the Sa skya 'Khon family and one of the *Lam 'bras* masters, survived the destruction of the Cultural Revolution. For a picture of Zhi sde as well as one of its old murals, see *Mnga' ris chos 'byung*. For its location (24°30'N, 18°81'E), see *Ibid.*: Map, no. 60. Vitali 1996: 391–392 mentions Zhi/Bzhi sde as an important castle of Pu hrang: “Zhi sde was in Pu.hrang.smad south of sTag.la.mkhar, where remains of a massive castle are still extent. Zhi sde, a place held by the Tshal.pa-s in the third quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and by the Ngor.pa-s from the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century, goes back to antiquity, as traces dating to the period of the Yar.lung dynasty are found in its area.” According to the *Chos 'khor rnam gzhag*: 470.7–471.1 (Jackson 1987: vol. 1, 135–136) of Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), Ngor chen founded the monastery of Thub bstan rnam rgyal in Glo bo, Dga' byed tshal in Pu hrang, and Chos 'khor nor bu gling in Chu 'dus. Under his instructions the monasteries of Brgya gling thang in Gu ge and Chos 'khor dga' ldan rtse mo in Rting khebs (Gting skyes) were founded. Based on this source, Vitali 1996: 392, n. 635 remarks: “This name [Chos sde dga' byed tshal], obviously referring to the monastery and not to the place where it was sited, does not rule out a location at Zhi.sde.” There also seems to be a connection with the Zhi sde regional dormitory of Ngor, which was one of Ngor's eleven regional dormitories (*khang tshan*) and whose monks came from Mnga' ris; see Jackson 1989: 49–50, n. 2.

<sup>111</sup> According to Tibetan tradition of chronological calculation, Gu ge Paṇḍi ta's twenty-first year corresponds to 1435. However, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen states that Ngor chen's second visit to Glo bo took place in 1436; see *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 538.4. Altogether, Ngor chen had visited Glo bo three times: 1427–1428, 1436, and 1447–1449.

<sup>112</sup> According to Vitali 1996: 258–265 and Vitali 2003: vol. 2, 57–59, the monastery of Kha char was founded around 996 and its foundation was patronized by Kho re (reigned: 988–996), the king of Gu ge and Pu hrang and brother of Ye shes 'od (947–1024). For the building phases until the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, see *Ibid.*: 264. For an investigation of the foundation history of Kha char, see also *'Khor chags dgon pa*: 9–33. Gu ge Tshe ring rgyal po (b. 1961) mentions that in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, after some border regions of Pu hrang had fallen under the control of the kings of Glo bo, the Kha char monastery's 'Bri gung affiliation was lost and it was transformed into a Ngor pa branch monastery due to the Glo bo kings' strong support for the Ngor tradition; see *'Khor chags gtsug lag khang gi byung ba brjod pa*: 342 and *Mnga' ris chos 'byung*: 123–124. The *'Khor chags dgon pa*: 85–86 mentions in the biographical sketch of Ngor chen that at the time of Ngor chen's second visit to Glo bo in 1436 the king of Glo bo, A ma dpal (variation A me dpal, 1380–ca. 1440) had offered 'Khor chags and numerous monasteries of

chen was about to travel eastwards and return to central Tibet, he was requested by Gu ge Paṇḍi ta's teacher, Chos rje Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan, to take care of Gu ge Paṇḍi ta and accept him as his servant. From that time on, Gu ge Paṇḍi ta acted as Ngor chen's attendant and served him for seventeen years.<sup>113</sup>

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Glo bo to Ngor chen. Due to that, 'Khor chags monastery changed into a monastery of the Ngor pa school. For the general history of 'Khor chags monastery and a description of its religious objects, see *'Khor chags dgon pa*. On the monastery's history, see also *'Khor chags gtsug lag khang gi byung ba brjod pa*: 333–349, *Mnga' ris khul gyi gnas yig*: 5–9, *Mnga' ris chos 'byung*: 119–127, and Vitali 1996: 258–265. The *'Khor chags dgon pa*: 25–27 presents eight different orthographic variations for the monastery's name including their explanation: mKho chags, Kho chags, Kha char, Khwo char, 'Khor chags, Khwa char, Kho char, and Khur chags. Gu ge Tshe ring rgyal po also lists a couple of variant spellings; see *Khor chags gtsug lag khang gi byung ba brjod pa*: 333–335. The monastery is also known by its Nepali name Khojarnath.

<sup>113</sup> See *Gu ge paṇḍi ta rnam thar*: fol. 3a2–3b5. This source (*Ibid.*: fol. 3a2–3b2) presents an account regarding Ngor chen, Drung Nam mkha' rtse mo and Gu ge Paṇḍi ta that clearly attests to Drung Nam mkha' rtse mo's presence in Glo bo at that time. However, the account of inviting Ngor chen to Pu hrang differs from the one in the *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 539.2–6. According to this source, Bzhi sde pa Drung Nam mkha' rtse mo held talks with the Gu ge king Khri Nam mkha'i dbang po before a certain Gu ge Mkhan chen Chos nyid seng ge was sent to invite Ngor chen and about one hundred of his disciples to Pu hrang. Following the invitation, Ngor chen stayed for three months at Rgyal lde'u (Rgyal ti), one of the former capitals of Pu hrang and the castle of their kings (Vitali 1996: 390–391, 510), giving teachings to masters and reincarnations from Gu ge, Mkhan po Rin bsod from Spi ti, some *dge bshes* from Mar yul and many monks from Pu hrang. He also ordained the Gu ge king and established a large monastery (*chos sde chen po*). The Gu ge king who was ordained by Ngor chen was Nam mkha'i dbang po Phun tshogs lde (b. 1409); see *Ibid.*: 391, 508–511. The mentioned *chos sde chen po* might refer to the Chos sde Dga' byed tshal, which is mentioned as having been established by Ngor chen in Shākya mchog ldan's (1428–1507) *Chos 'khor rnam gzhag*: 470.7; see also Jackson 1987, vol. I, 135–36. On the discrepancies in the sources concerning the ordination of Nam mkha'i dbang po, see Vitali 1996: 508–511. According to Vitali's source, Nam mkha'i dbang po was ordained at Kha char in 1449 under the name Shākya 'od. In contrast, the *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 539.2–6 states that Nam mkha'i dbang po was ordained by Ngor chen during his second visit to Glo bo in 1436. The *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 539.2–6 does not specify the place of ordination, but mentions that Ngor chen stayed for three months in Rgyal lde'u, established *sgrub mchod* rituals in Nya rtse rig and Bzhi sde, and gave teachings in the latter monastery. The *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 539.5–6 goes on to mention the Gu ge king's ordination, the founding of a *chos sde chen po*, and Ngor chen's writing of a *bstan rtsis*, before Ngor chen's visit to Kha char is mentioned, where he made a butter lamp offering in front of the Three Jo bo Brothers (Dngul sku rigs gsum mgon po) and prayed for the flourishing of the Buddha's teachings. This episode of the king's ordination by Ngor chen is also mentioned in Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub's (1456–1532) autobiography; see Kramer 2008: 118, 148. According to this source, Ngor chen went to make his butter lamp offering in front of the Jo bo mched gsum in Kha char. At the same time the king of Gu ge travelled to Kha char, took monastic vows and was ordained as a full monk by Ngor chen. I disagree with Vitali 1996: 511, who states that "it cannot be ruled out that his [Ngor chen's] biographers have decided to credit him [Ngor chen] also with the ordination of the Gu.ge king, linking it with that of A.ma.dpal." I propose that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs based his account on Gu ge Paṇḍi ta's biography of Ngor chen, which was, as mentioned before, along with Mus

In general, Gu ge Paṇḍi ta was known by quite a number of different names. This is important for correctly identifying his biography of Ngor chen, which is listed among the sources of the *Mdo smad chos 'byung* of Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1801–1866), and also as an entry in A khu Ching Shes rab rgya mtsho's list of rare writings. Alongside other Ngor chen biographies, both of these sources record a biography written by a certain Gu ge Dbon po Nam mkha' blo gsal.<sup>114</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs comes to our aid in identifying him when he remarks in his Ngor chen biography that Gu ge Paṇḍi ta was also known as Dbon po A tsa ra, Dbon po Nam mkha' blo gsal, Ma ti tsi tra, and Gu ge Paṇ chen.<sup>115</sup> Together with Gu ge Mkhan chen Ngag dbang grags pa (flourished in the 15<sup>th</sup> century) and Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa (1404–1469), Gu ge Paṇḍi ta Grags pa rgyal mtshan was included in the group known as the “three [masters who bear the name] Grags pa” (*grags pa rnam gsum*) who originated from the region of Gu ge.<sup>116</sup>

Regarding the Gu ge Paṇḍi ta's life of Ngor chen, we know from Mus chen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan's (1542–1618) record of received teachings that the work had the title *Rnam thar dngos grub dbang gi rgyal po*.<sup>117</sup> Sangs rgyas phun tshogs states that this biography comprised three main topical subjects or outline sections (*sa bcad*).<sup>118</sup> He also informs us that due to the fact that Gu ge Paṇḍi ta's life of Ngor chen was, like Mus chen's, “a little bit more detailed,” he took these two as main sources when compiling his own Ngor chen biography.<sup>119</sup>

### 3.2. Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (flourished in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> c.)

Apart from being a disciple of Ngor chen, the biographer Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan also seems to have served as an attendant of

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chen's biography of Ngor chen, one of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' main sources in compiling his Ngor chen biography.

<sup>114</sup> See *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhig gi tho yig*: 508, no. 10930 and *Mdo smad chos 'byung I*: vol. 1, 25.5–6. The *Mdo smad chos 'byung I*: vol. 1, 25.5 correctly reads *dbon po*, whereby the *Mdo smad chos 'byung II*: 3 incorrectly has *dpon po*.

<sup>115</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 535.6.

<sup>116</sup> On Ngag dbang grags pa, see Vitali 1996: [89]–96. On Chos dbang grags pa, see Samten Chosphele, “Chowang Drakpa,” <http://www.tibetanlineages.org/biographies/view/240/6770>.

<sup>117</sup> See Sobisch 1998: 173. The information given in the corresponding note (*Ibid.*: 73, n. 25) seems to have been a misunderstanding, since it is not the Paṇḍi ta's Ngor chen biography that survives in the Beijing collection (of which Leonard van der Kuijp possesses a photocopy), instead it is the Paṇḍi ta's own biography. The existence of such a biography was already noted before by Smith 1970: 2, n.8.

<sup>118</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 482.1: *gu ge paṇ chen gyis sa bcad gsum du mdzad | chos dpal bzang pos sngar [lŋgar] mdzad pa sogs mang yang gnad don gcig go |*.

<sup>119</sup> *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 554.3–4: *de ltar rje mus pa dang | paṇ chen gyi rnam thar gnyis cung zad zhib par snang bas khungs bcad pa'o |*.

Ngor chen. He is mentioned in Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' life of Ngor chen as having counted and recorded the number of teachings and ordinations Ngor chen gave.<sup>120</sup> He is referred to, among others, as Gyong por grags pa Mdo khams stod pa Kun mkhyen Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan or Mdo stod Rtsa mdo pa Gyong po Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan.<sup>121</sup> From his titles we can infer that he was originally from Khams, and was either from a place called Rtsa mdo or was an expert in pulse diagnosis (*rtsa mdo pa*). He was also known as being very rough or obstinate (*gyong po*) in character.<sup>122</sup> In one of two letters Ngor chen addressed to him, he elaborates on Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan's character by describing him as "[being] the complete summed up essence of all obstinate people of this world in all the ten directions." Or elsewhere: "at the time when he shows his rough behavior, [he] outshines even extremely hard dry leather and so, needless to say, [he] is more obstinant than yaks (*g.yag*) or dzos (*mdzo*)."<sup>123</sup>

Except for the citations in Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' Ngor chen biography, we don't know anything about Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan's own biography of Ngor chen.

### 3.3. *Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros* (flourished in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> c.)

The biographer Srad pa Kun blo mentioned by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs refers to Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros. Judging from the few quotes taken from his life of Ngor chen in Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' work, he wrote his in verse.<sup>124</sup> Its printing blocks were once available at both Ngor and Sde dge.<sup>125</sup> According to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, he acted as the scribe of Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen.<sup>126</sup> Kun dga' blo gros also wrote a biography of Mus chen and an explanation of the *Lam 'bras*, both of which are presumed to be lost.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>120</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 511.3–4, 516.1.

<sup>121</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 479.6–480.1, 533.5.

<sup>122</sup> Although *gyong po* is used in Lhasa Tibetan for a person who is very capable, here it is used in its other meaning and refers to a person rough or obstinate in character. For both meanings, see Goldstein 2001: s.v. *gyong po*.

<sup>123</sup> *Sa skya'i bka' 'bum*: vol. 10, 392.4.6–393.1.4: *sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan pa la springs pa | om swa sti | phyogs bcu'i 'jig rten khams kyi gyong po kun | | ma lus gcig tu bsdus pa'i ngo bo la | sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan zhes par mtshan gsol ba'i | | rtag par rang rgyud bsreg la phyag 'tshal lo | | gang gis gyong po'i kun spyod bstan pa'i tshel | | ko skam shin tu mkhregs pa'ang zil gnun na | | g.yag dang mdzo bas gyong ba smos ci 'tshal | (...).*

<sup>124</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 482.4–5, 483.3–4, 565.3–4.

<sup>125</sup> See *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 437.

<sup>126</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 565.2.

<sup>127</sup> See *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 72.

3.4. *Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po (flourished mid 1400's)*

Identifying the biographer named Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po mentioned by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs presents many difficulties. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs lists him among a group of Ngor chen's disciples associated with the regions of Mnga' ris and Glo bo.<sup>128</sup> He informs us that Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po's biography of Ngor chen was arranged in five topical sections, and he quotes from it a couple of times.<sup>129</sup> This biography is also recorded in A khu Ching Shes rab rgya mtsho's list of rare works.<sup>130</sup> A reference to another of Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po's literary works is found in the opening part of the *Mdo smad chos 'byung*, where he is mentioned as author of a genealogy of the Shar pa family.<sup>131</sup>

One could speculate that Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po might be identical with Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po (1371–1439), a senior Sa skya master who lived in this same period.<sup>132</sup> Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po was born in Sa skya as the son of Rin rgyal, who was the "Great Attendant" (*nye gnas chen po*) of Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375). Later in his life he acted as *Sku rim pa*—a person in charge of rituals for clearing away obstacles—of the Gung thang rulers and in 1420 became the spiritual advisor to the king of Gung thang, Khri Lha dbang rgyal mtshan (1404–1464).<sup>133</sup> His biography, *Bla chen chos dpal bzang po'i rnam thar*,<sup>134</sup> mentions a meeting between him and Ngor chen when the latter visited Rdzong dkar in Gung thang during his first journey to Glo bo in 1427.<sup>135</sup>

Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po was Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po. In the first place, Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po's name closely associates him with the region of Gu ge as his place of origin while Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po was born in Sa skya, (though he is still sometimes referred to as Gung thang gi Bla chen or Mnga' ris Bla chen).<sup>136</sup> Second, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs does not refer to Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po as *bla chen*. Third, Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po passed away seventeen years before Ngor chen's death, which makes it unlikely that he composed an early biography of Ngor chen.

<sup>128</sup> See *Ngor chen rnam thar II*: 532.3–4.

<sup>129</sup> See n. 119.

<sup>130</sup> See *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhis gi tho yig*: 508, no. 10931.

<sup>131</sup> *Mdo smad chos 'byung II*: 6: *glo bo mkhan chen*[1] *gu ge chos dpal bzang po* | *kwan ting ku* [gu] *shri* [shri] *nam mkha' bzang po rnam kyis mdzad pa'i ngor shar pa'i gdung rabs lnga* | . Ordained members of this aristocratic family acted and still act as the heads of the Klu sdings bla brang of Ngor.

<sup>132</sup> We already know about some aspects of Bla chen Chos dpal bzang po's life from the research of Everding 2000, Ehrhard 2004 and Diemberger 2007.

<sup>133</sup> See Everding 2000: vol. 1, 126–127 and vol. 2, 517–519 and Ehrhard 2004: 258, 367, n. 90.

<sup>134</sup> I thank Franz-Karl Ehrhard in helping to obtain this biography and Hildegard Diemberger for sharing it.

<sup>135</sup> See *Bla chen rnam thar*: fols. 27b.6–28a.4.

<sup>136</sup> See *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed*: 212.

4. *Ngor chen's Biographies in recent Dkar chags*

All the biographies mentioned so far are recorded in the late Mkhan po A pad Rin po che Yon tan bzang po's (1927–2010) *Bibliography of Sa-skyapa Literature*, though they are mostly only referred to with descriptive titles:

1. Mus chen Sems dpa' chen po Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, *Ngor chen rdo rje 'chang gi rnam thar mdor bsdus*;
2. Gu ge Paṇḍi ta Grags pa rgyal mtshan, *Rdo rje 'chang gi rnam thar*;
3. Srad pa Kun dga' blo gros, *Rdo rje 'chang gi rnam thar*;
4. Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan, *Rdo rje 'chang gi rnam thar*;
5. Gu ge Chos dpal bzang po, *Rdo rje 'chang gi rtogs brjod*;
6. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar*.<sup>137</sup>

The bibliography also contains the following interesting entry: *kong ston sogs mkhas pa mang pos mdzad pa'i ngor chen gyi gsung rnam mi 'dra ba bcu gsum | sde dge mi nyag sog yul sogs la par bzhugs la pod brgya [brgyad?] skor*!.<sup>138</sup> In this passage *gsung rnam* seems to be a recent honorific form of *rnam thar*, as confirmed to me independently by two Sa skyapa Mkhan pos. Hence, we are told here that there once existed a total of thirteen lives of Ngor chen that were available in Sde dge, Mi nyag and Mongolia, totally about one hundred (eight?) Tibetan-style books.<sup>139</sup> Among the authors of these biographies is an unknown figure named Kong ston.<sup>140</sup>

An additional hint about a possible Ngor chen biography is given by the *'Bras spungs dkar chag*. Beside Mus chen's Ngor chen biography, it records a work entitled *Rdo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam thar* in twenty-four folios by a certain Btsun pa Bde mchog dpal bzang.<sup>141</sup> Aside from Ngor chen, I have not come across any

<sup>137</sup> See *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 54, 57, 72, 73, 73, 114 respectively.

<sup>138</sup> See *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 437.

<sup>139</sup> Other possible interpretations for the term *gsung rnam* might be to take *gsung* for *gsung 'bum* and *rnam* for *rnam thar* or even to take the whole phrase as *gsung rnam pa*. However, it seems unusual to me to use the verb *mdzad* in this context to mean to compose or to edit Ngor chen's *Collected Works*. Furthermore, I did not come across any information pointing to a "Kong ston" having edited Ngor chen's *Collected Works*.

<sup>140</sup> However, the entry for the only Kong ston recorded in the *Dkar chag mthong bas yid 'phrog*: 67, Kong ston Dbang phyug grub pa (b. 15<sup>th</sup> c.), a disciple and biographer of Go rams pa (1429–1489), does not designate him as such an author. Volker Caumanns has pointed out to me that a certain Kong ston Chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po alias Kong ston Mgon po rgyal mtshan acted as the scribe of Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507). However, Shākya mchog ldan's biographies do not specify him as a biographer of Ngor chen.

<sup>141</sup> See *'Bras spungs dkar chag*: vol. 2, 1555, no. 017555.

other Tibetan master named Kun dga' bzang po who is also referred to as Vajradhara (Rdo rje 'chang) in human form.

In an annotation at the end of Mus chen's biography of Ngor chen, translated above, we also encountered a certain Ye chen po whose Ngor chen biography should have been inserted in the biographical collection of *Lam 'bras* masters, in case it would have been found later on. I haven't been able to identify who Ye chen po was, however. We should probably take *ye* as a place name and so we are dealing here with the "Great Master from Ye."

### 5. Conclusion

This investigation of Ngor chen's biographies has hopefully shown that in addition to the critical evaluation of a biography's content, an important approach to biography-based research is the investigation of the background of the biography's author, the author's relation to his biographical subject, the sources he or she employed, and his or her methods of composing and editing. These steps are necessary for us to properly understand and assess the text, not to mention for us to explain how the biography originated and what purpose its composition served. The critical compilation of sources that constitutes Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' biography of Ngor chen is a rarity in Tibetan biographical literature. Nevertheless, the same patient methods should still be used to investigate biographies that are not compilations of this kind.

Concerning Ngor chen's biographies, at least five of his disciples composed lives of their teacher. From amongst those five, only one has become available, that by Mus chen, Ngor chen's chief disciple and successor to the throne of Ngor. Due to the efforts of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, the contents of the other four biographies have also been preserved, as is attested to in the detailed biography that he painstakingly compiled a full 232 years after Ngor chen's passing. Though his work is a solid beginning, several Tibetan sources, both old and recent, suggest the existence of even more biographies of Ngor chen. We should make an effort to trace more of them in the future.

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DOXOGRAPHY AND PHILOSOPHY: THE USAGE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF  
SCHOOL DENOMINATIONS IN RED MDA' BA GZHON NU BLO GROS'  
ORNAMENT OF THE PROOFS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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**W**orks of the genre *grub mtha'* (*siddhānta*) have already been the object of many studies and translations. *Grub mtha'* and *siddānta* are now familiar notions within both Tibetan studies and Buddhist studies, respectively. Consequently, it is not my point here to add another presentation of what a *grub mtha'* is. I rather propose to emphasize the philosophical usage and philosophical significance of certain categories that were fashioned within this genre (and have been used in other genres) to designate doctrinal positions, namely those terms that single out school denominations.<sup>1</sup> Tibetan *grub mtha'* texts present various positions and schools, but mainly focus on the four well-known philosophical schools of *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, *Cittamātra* and *Madhyamaka*.<sup>2</sup> Those positions or schools are sometimes designated as *siddhānta classification* or *doxographical categories*.<sup>3</sup> Numerous studies have

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<sup>1</sup> The term *school* is a convenient designation and does not presuppose any historical institutionalization of these movements or any self-identification of the authors said to belong to these schools.

<sup>2</sup> There has been a considerable amount of work done to discuss the precise name Tibetan authors give to these schools or their sub-schools, since the way a school is named indicates what philosophical doctrine it is taken to represent, and consequently how it is "ranked" in each author's classification (it may of course also be a mere conventional usage with no special significance). For example, Ye shes sde talks about *Rnam par shes pa tsam* (*vijñāptimātra*) where Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po talks about *rnal 'byor spyod pa* or *sems tsam pa* (*yogācāra* or *cittamātra*). See, respectively, Ruegg 1981 and Mimaki 1977, and the diversity of names that appears in this volume's article by S. Kumagai. I will use the four names of *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, *Cittamātra* and *Madhyamaka* as a convenient convention to designate the four schools in the general discussion of the problem, even if some authors use different names in their classifications. I leave aside sub-categories such as *mdo sde spyod pa* or *thal 'gyur pa* since these would neither add to nor change my argument.

<sup>3</sup> Such expressions are largely used in Western scholarship when dealing with philosophical texts to designate those schools and positions, such as in Cabezón 1992: 141, Dreyfus and McClintock 2003: 2, and Vose 2009: 10. They have also been employed in other fields of Tibetan studies, such as in Tantric studies (Weinberger 2010 *passim*), Rnying ma pa studies (Germano 2005: 7), or (as expected) in the history of text transmission and canonization (Cantwell 2002: 366). One will also find these expressions employed on internet, on the website of the Tibetan and Himalayan Library, for example, which suggests their widespread employment. These terms have clearly gained usage in Western scholarship well beyond studies on *grub mtha'*, hence I believe that such a phenomenon deserves the attention of scholars working in the field.

shown that these denominations are not historically accurate and result from a desire for categorization that arose subsequent to the arrival in Tibet of a huge body of texts. From this perspective, these denominations are regarded as ways to create order and hierarchy within the dense forest of Buddhist literature and philosophy.<sup>4</sup> The fact that some *grub mtha'* texts have been used in monasteries as introductory manuals to philosophy may be taken as evidence of their playing such a function.<sup>5</sup>

School denominations also appear outside of those texts that properly belong to the *grub mtha'* genre.<sup>6</sup> We find these denominations being used throughout Tibetan doctrinal literature, in treatises pertaining to *Pramāṇa* or *Madhyamaka* as well as to *Cittamātra*<sup>7</sup> and *Prajñāpāramitā*,<sup>8</sup> and even to tantric works.<sup>9</sup> It seems that such a usage of these denominations outside of works properly called *grub mtha'*, despite being obvious for any scholar involved in Tibetan studies, has attracted rather scarce remarks. These non-*grub mtha'* texts are thus the focus of the present paper. I want to show that school denominations can function as more than just labels for classifying opinions, and are used for purposes beyond the desire to

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<sup>4</sup> Or they provide a worldview in which the reader can orient himself. See Hopkins (1996: 182-183): "Though one of the purposes of such presentations of tenets undoubtedly is to create a hierarchical structure that puts one's own system at the top, this genre of literature functions primarily to provide a comprehensive worldview." Cabezón 1990 develops the idea that *grub mtha'* categories produced a "canonization of philosophy" by setting forth four schools circumscribing the field of Buddhist philosophy. Any doctrine outside of these four was to be considered non-Buddhist. The interpretation given in the present article takes a more internalist approach by trying to understand how these categories were fashioned to function as elements of an argument within the texts themselves. This approach emphasizes the dynamic, argumentative, and epistemic aspects of these categories over their classificatory aspect.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, the *Grub mtha' rnam bzhag rin chen phreng ba* of Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po is used as a *yig cha* in 'Bras spungs sgo mang. See Mimaki 1977: 58.

<sup>6</sup> For the sake of simplicity, I consider texts to belong to the *grub mtha'* genre if they display the term *grub mtha'* in their titles.

<sup>7</sup> It is useless to cite examples for *Pramāṇa* or *Madhyamaka* commentaries using school denominations since the practice is so common. As for commentaries on *Cittamātra* texts, one observes this usage in Mipham 2004: 59-65, Rong ston 2008: 37 or the text below.

<sup>8</sup> Many commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* show a preoccupation with different schools and positions. See for example G.yag ston's *Bang mdzod* vol. 2: 43-44, where he presents the conceptions of *Vaibhāṣikas*, *Cittamātras*, and *Mādhyamikas* concerning the presence in different meditational and soteriological states of capacities and qualities (such as faith, attention, pleasure, etc.).

<sup>9</sup> For example Mkhas grub nor bzang rgya mtsho in his commentary of the *Kalacakra tantra* refutes the views of *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, and *Vijñānavāda* proponents to preserve the *Mādhyamika* view (of Candrakīrti) as the ultimate one, above which no higher tantric view should be placed. See Khedrup Norsang Gyatso 2004: 570-573.

create a worldview or order. They also participate in authentic philosophical inquiries.<sup>10</sup>

Hence there are two issues here. On the one hand, the categories of *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, *Cittamātra* and *Madhyamaka* are widely used in Tibetan doctrinal literature, even beyond *grub mtha'* texts. On the other hand, they are referred to by Western scholarship in certain ways, ways that naturally condition our contemporary understanding of their function. I therefore want to discuss both the ways in which they have been referred to in Western scholarship and how school denominations function in Tibetan texts. My goal is to open the possibility of an authentically *philosophical* interpretation of these categories, rather than an historical (even pseudo-historical) or a classificatory interpretation.

I will proceed in two parts. First I will discuss the term *doxography* and its derived forms, forms that have come to be associated with school denominations. Second I will present an example of a philosophical work that, to my mind, accurately illustrates the argumentative strategies that school denominations enable Tibetan authors to use.

#### *Grub mtha' categories and the term doxography*

Up to this point, I have retained the Tibetan term *grub mtha'* without translating it into English, for fear of complicating the problem even before laying it out. The term *grub mtha'* generally designates a genre of Tibetan literature that presents the doctrines of a given

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<sup>10</sup> I draw here a distinction between worldview and philosophy. I am conscious that such a distinction is controversial, and that it itself presupposes a certain philosophical orientation. The distinction runs contrary to a certain common contemporary opinion that interprets "philosophy" to be no more than a possible worldview, one among others. It could be argued that philosophy cannot be reduced to a worldview, however. First, one could argue that the procedures and means by which philosophy is practiced (rational inquiry, patient investigation of concepts, questioning presuppositions and common prejudices, including one's own, etc.) set it apart from what are commonly called "worldviews." Worldviews, in contrast, whether secular or religious, are commonly either accepted on the basis of being transmitted and widely acknowledged, or on the basis of personal taste. They are not subject to procedures as are philosophical tenets. Second, one can make the point that philosophy aims to attain the root of being, from which it can properly build its reflection. This is what Plato was after with his proposition that philosophy, contrary to mathematics, is capable of going beyond given hypotheses (it is *anhypothetical*) and of founding its own principles (*Republic*, VI, 510b). Heidegger also reacted firmly against the idea that philosophy was a mere *Weltanschauung* (see *Basic Concepts*, chapters 1-2, in particular p. 2 and 11-12). The idea of the proper task of philosophy expresses, I think, what is at stake in the present paper. I will try to show that school denominations are not merely used to make neat classifications of doctrines that enable students to organize into boxes what would otherwise be a troubling chaos. Rather, these denominations serve as shortcuts to circumscribe positions so as to investigate what there is, what exists really.

number of Indian, and sometimes Tibetan, schools of thought (even including, periodically, Chinese schools of thought).<sup>11</sup> It is often translated as, or equated with, *doxography*.<sup>12</sup> By derivation, the categories used in this genre to classify doctrines under the name of a school (the school denominations) are called *doxographical* (or *doxographic*) *categories*. I believe that interpreting the categories shaped in this genre in light of the notion of doxography may convey a misrepresentation of the function that school denominations play in some Tibetan texts. This is why it seems important to me to first reflect upon the meaning and usage of the word *doxography*. For clarity's sake, I will address the general question of the translation of *grub mtha'* by *doxography*, even though I am primarily interested in the "doxographical categories" present in these works and how these categories are used outside of these works.

It is important to be aware of the scope of the word *doxography*, as it has been the object of several studies in recent decades.<sup>13</sup> The term *doxographus* was coined in 1879 by Hermann Diels, the great German classicist, to name compositions by ancient writers that reported the opinions of other philosophers. Doxographies are works concerned with the *doxai* or *gnômai* (opinions), or the *dogmata* (principles or tenets) of philosophers. However, what is designated as *doxography* is only one of several genres of ancient Greek and Latin literatures that treat the opinions of past and present philosophers. Others include histories of sects (*peri tôn philosophôn haireseôn*), biographies of philosophers (*peri biôn*) and successions of philosophers (*diadochai*).<sup>14</sup> Students and scholars of Tibetan and Indian Buddhism

<sup>11</sup> As, for example, in Thu'u bkwan 2005.

<sup>12</sup> It is not always clear if scholars interpret *grub mtha'* to be roughly equivalent to doxography, translate it thusly for principled reasons, or out of convention. Hopkins directly associates the genre of doxography and the genre of *grub mtha'*, even though he translates the latter by "presentation of tenets": "the genre of doxography called 'presentations of tenets' (\*siddhāntavyavasthāpana, *grub mtha'i rnam bzhag*)" (Hopkins 1996: 170). Lopez cautiously defers to what he considers the common translation: "In Tibetan Buddhist scholastic literature there is a genre called *grub mtha'*, often translated as 'doxography'" (Lopez 1998: 170). Mimaki seems to offer a more straightforward translation of *grub mtha'* as *doxography*: "Dans la littérature tibétaine il existe un genre littéraire appelé « doxographie », *grub mtha'* en tibétain" (Mimaki 1994: 115). Whether these examples constitute genuine translations or not, the mere association of *grub mtha'* with the idea of doxography is what I want to investigate here.

<sup>13</sup> See Brancacci 2005. What follows might seem problematic to some Greek and Latin scholars working on doxography and philosophy, since I am focusing on the opposition between philosophy and doxography. As Brancacci underlines, recent researches have pursued a contrary ambition, to understand doxographical and paradoxographical genres as genres "of philosophical writing itself" (VIII). But I think that there is a genuine difference between interpreting school denominations in Tibetan texts as doxographical categories versus philosophical categories. The difference between doxography and philosophy should therefore be maintained in our context. I will return to this matter in the conclusion.

<sup>14</sup> Gueroult 1984: 47-48.

should therefore be careful translating *grub mtha'* / *siddhānta* as *doxography*, since the word *doxography* was first used to describe a specific genre of Greek and Latin literature. The word *doxography*, when used in Tibetan studies, is twice etic. It was coined outside Greek and Latin literatures (by Diels) to describe a phenomenon in them, and was secondly transferred to another field of studies (Tibetan studies). The fact of its being an etic category is not in itself problematic. It is the lack of awareness of the proper usage of the word that leads to difficulties. For example, it may happen that the ancient genre of the succession of philosophers (*diadochai*) fits some Tibetan *grub mtha'*s better than does the genre of doxography.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, we should be aware that Greek doxographies were different from what we would call philosophical works. Doxographies such as the *Opinions of philosophers* by the Pseudo-Plutarch, or parts of the famous work of Diogenes Laertius, treated the history of a problem or the doctrines of philosophers in a very superficial way and often without concluding with a definitive answer. They were effectively manuals for non-philosophers—or, to put it more bluntly, manuals devoid of philosophy (if we understand philosophy to mean the genuine treatment of a problem with an analysis of its components, its presuppositions, and its possible answers, that leads to a dynamic clarification or even resolution of the problem). Generally, doxographies were digests providing the tenets of a school or of an individual philosopher—the conclusions or “dead thoughts” as Hegel would say,<sup>16</sup> since the life of the thinking process was missing, and only the inanimate results were given. In a sense, we could say that they were no more, and maybe no less, philosophical than is a *Dictionary of Philosophy from A to Z*.<sup>17</sup>

It is possible to argue that *grub mtha'* works are also simplified summaries of problems and doctrines. But whatever might be the case for *grub mtha'*, the categories fashioned within them such as *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, and so on were extracted and used in independent works and commentaries that used these denominations in order to arrive at determinate conclusions. What we call *doxographical categories* were not necessarily used to provide a digest of the doctrine of a school, but rather to treat a question and

<sup>15</sup> Because the *diadochai* genre is characterized as focusing on the successive generations of philosophers linked to each other by way of a teacher-pupil relationship (Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, vol. 3, p. 126), Thu'u bkwan's *grub mtha'* corresponds well to this genre. Indeed he presents not only the main teachings of each school in Tibet, but also a brief account of their foundation and sometimes also their lineage of masters and disciples. See, for example, his treatment of the 'Brug pa bka' brgyud pa and the Jo nang pa. The structure of Thu'u bkwan's *grub mtha'* also reminds one of the mixed genre represented by Diogenes Laertius' *Lives, Doctrines, and Maxims of Famous Philosophers* in which, as the title indicates, both the doctrines and the lives of philosophers were presented.

<sup>16</sup> Preface to the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*.

<sup>17</sup> Gueroult 1984: 49-50.

arrive at a solution. Hence again, the terms *doxography* and *doxographical* may turn out to be misrepresentations of what is actually happening in some Tibetan texts.

In a theoretical reflection concerned with the distinction between philosophy and doxography, where doxography plays the role of the “other” to philosophy, the question of the definition of philosophy inevitably comes to mind. This is obviously a tricky question since there are as many definitions of philosophy as there are philosophers. One’s preferred definition inevitably goes back to one’s own understanding of one’s philosophical training and practice.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, when applied to Buddhist texts, *philosophy* shares the same etic character as does *doxography*. Rather than focusing on what philosophy is, I therefore choose to describe philosophy, in contrast to *doxography*, as “the genuine treatment of a problem with an analysis of its components, its presuppositions, and its possible answers, that leads to a dynamic clarification or even resolution of the problem.” For our purposes, such a description, while not aspiring to be a full-fledged definition, is sufficient.<sup>19</sup> I believe that it should not jeopardize the overall project of the paper, which aims at distinguishing two ways of relating to past doctrines.

To summarize, I am proposing two points for consideration. First, the term *doxography* may not be the best term to translate *grub mtha’*. Other genres of Greek literature may better map onto Tibetan *grub mtha’*. Second, interpreting certain Tibetan texts from the perspective of doxography may prevent us from seeing the philosophical significance of those texts. This is why I will use the phrase *school denominations* rather than the phrase *doxographical categories*. The expression *school denominations* entails less presuppositions and leaves the door open to an interpretation of those categories as functioning either doxographically or philosophically.<sup>20</sup>

*Red mda’ ba’s Ornament of the Proofs of Consciousness and his  
philosophical usage of school denominations*

Being clear about the meaning of the word *doxography* does not tell us why we should restrain from its usage in Tibetan studies. I want to now present a text by Red mda’ ba that will illustrate how interpreting school denominations to be functioning as doxographical categories is to miss the point of the text in question.

<sup>18</sup> See Bugault 1994: 19-21.

<sup>19</sup> Roughly one could say, inspired by Aristotle, that a definition provides the essence of a thing, while a description only offers a list of more or less salient features, without attempting to account for every one of them or even for the unity which binds together the salient features.

<sup>20</sup> For a critique of the translation of the term *siddhanta* by *doxography* from a different point of view, see Mestanza 2005: 85-86.

Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros (1349-1412), the great Sa skya pa scholar, is famous for his exegesis of *Mādhyamika* texts and for being one of Tsong kha pa's most influential masters.<sup>21</sup> Over the past thirty years, new texts of his have emerged that shed new light on his work and personality.<sup>22</sup> Among these, the *Rnam rig grub pa'i rgyan*, or *Ornament of the Proofs of Consciousness*,<sup>23</sup> is a very particular, and in a sense very puzzling work in the Tibetan philosophical scene. As its title suggests, it is a defense of the *Vijñānavāda* or idealist position, which the author tries to establish as the definitive position. Nowhere does Red mda' ba refer to *Madhyamaka*, nor hint at the idea that the *Vijñānavāda* position is not the ultimate one, despite the fact that the *Vijñānavāda* position is so often subservient to the

<sup>21</sup> "He appears to have been the foremost master of the Prāsaṅgika tradition at this important point of transition from the pre-classical to the classical period of Tibetan philosophical thought. And it is to him that is indeed ascribed the re-establishment and explication of the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka after a period of relative eclipse" (Ruegg 2000: 60). Especially renowned is his commentary on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvātāra*, the *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i de kho na nyid gsal ba'i sgron ma*. Its fame may be explained by the relative scarcity of other commentaries on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* before Red mda' ba. I could not locate more than five commentaries on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* written before him: *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i bsdus don ldeb* by 'Chus dar ma brtson 'grus, *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rgya cher bshad pa gsung rab rgya mtsho'i de kho na nyid rab tu gsal ba* by Skyabs mchog dpal bzang (interestingly among the masters of Red mda' ba according to the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center), *Dbu ma 'jug pa'i dka' gnad* by Grags pa seng ge, *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i mchan bu* by Byang chub brtson 'grus (no longer available), and *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i ũka* by Ye shes 'byung gnas (no longer available). This is very limited compared to the number of commentaries on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* written before Red mda' ba (the first ninety volumes of the *bka' gdams gsung 'bum* alone includes eight of them) and compared to the number of commentaries on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* written in the one hundred years after his death (for instance those by Tsong kha pa, Rgyal tshab dar ma rin chen, Dge 'dun rgya mtsho, Rong ston, Go rams pa, Shākya mchog ldan, Mi bskyod rdo rje, and Pañ chen bsod nams grags pa). Red mda' ba may be credited for the reputation the *Madhyamakāvātāra* enjoyed from then on and for its being counted among the small number of works that were to be studied, and even better commented upon, by any scholar worthy of the name. In this commentary and others, he appears as a fierce opponent of the *gzhan stong* views (see Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 97-105, and 299-300, n. 121). His strong opposition to Jo nang pas articulated to his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* made him some sort of a representative of a "pure Prāsaṅgika" view (easier to support with Candrakīrti than with other later Indian *Madhyamika* authors), and eventually closer to Tsong kha pa than to other Sa skya pa scholars such as Rong ston or even Go rams pa. See on all these topics Roloff 2009: 15-25 and on the relationship between Red mda' ba and Tsong kha pa see Thurman 1989: 59, 74.

<sup>22</sup> His *gsung 'bum* in nine volumes has recently been published. See Red mda' ba 2009. The newly available commentaries on tantric works and on the *Abhisamayālamkāra* will certainly help us better understand those of his positions on these topics that have been the objects of controversy. See Jinpa 2009 for his position on the *Kālacakratāntra* and Roloff 2009: 221 for his disagreement with G.yag ston over a topic in the *Abhisamayālamkāra*.

<sup>23</sup> Red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros, *Rnam rig grub pa'i rgyan*, in *Red mda' ba Gzhon nu blo gros kyi gsung skor: The collected works of Red-mda-wa gzhon-nu-blo-gros*. Kathmandu: Sa skya rgyal yongs slob nyer khang, 1999, 87-122.

*Mādhyamika* position in Tibetan philosophical treatises. This is perplexing not only because Red mda' ba is remembered as a champion of a strict interpretation of Candrakīrti's *Madhyamaka*, and consequently a scholar who would not be expected to nuance his rejection of any trace of idealist thought,<sup>24</sup> but also because by Red mda' ba's time in Tibet the *Mādhyamika* position had already become dominant and was largely positioned at the pinnacle of all doctrinal systems, even if the actual content of the position called *Madhyamaka* varied significantly between thinkers.<sup>25</sup> A defense of *Vijñānavāda* would therefore not be expected to be found in a Tibetan text from this time, even less so in a text signed by Red mda' ba.<sup>26</sup> Although it is important to know towards which ultimate position his treatise aims at so as to understand the logic of his argument, the ultimate intention of Red mda' ba in composing such a text is not the focus of the present paper, but rather the way in which he uses the names of different philosophical schools to complete his project.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Candrakīrti indeed spent some time refuting the *Vijñānavāda* position in the sixth chapter of his *Madhyamakāvātāra* §45-97. See Candrakīrti 1907: 135-202 and Huntington and Wangchen 1989: 162-168. A vivid illustration of such a strong commitment to *Madhyamaka* coupled with the rejection of *Vijñānavāda* is expressed at the very beginning of Red mda' ba's commentary on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* where he explains that Candrakīrti was born to refute Bhāvaviveka and reinforce Buddhapālita's position, which corresponds unmistakably to what the Buddha meant. Red mda' ba adds: "in particular, it is by relying on the *sūtra* of the ten grounds [*Daśabhūmikasūtra*] that [Candrakīrti] wrote this *Entrance into the Middle* with its commentary in order to complete the reasonings of [Nāgārjuna's] *Root of the Middle* and to enter into the system of the *Madhyamaka* by refuting those who assert that what the *sūtras* of the *Mahāyāna* mean is consciousness-only" (*khyad par du dbu ma rtsa ba'i rigs pa'i kha bskang ba'i phyir dang/ theg chen gyi mdo sde'i dgongs pa rnam par rig pa tsam du smra ba bsal nas dbu ma'i lugs la 'jug par ya ba'i phyir/ mdo sde sa bcu pa la brten nas dbu ma la 'jug pa 'grel pa dang bcas pa 'di mdzad do/*). See Red mda' ba 1983: 28.

<sup>25</sup> Even an author such as Dol po pa, known for his originality in Tibet, considered the *Mādhyamika* position to be the ultimate one. However, the way that he understood *Madhyamaka* had little to do with the actual texts of Nāgārjuna, and was actually closer to some *Cittamātra* positions. It is true that he used the name *dbu ma chen po* (*Mahāmādhyamaka*), and not just *dbu ma*, to differentiate his interpretation from other *Madhyamaka* interpretations. See Stearns 2010: 93. As with Dol po pa's, *Madhyamaka* at times became almost a mere label, a name covering doctrines that had little to do with actual *Mādhyamika* positions. What is interesting in the present case is that Red mda' ba not only avoids assuming the *Mādhyamika* position, but he even avoids using the name *Madhyamaka*.

<sup>26</sup> It is possible, of course, to suspect that Red mda' ba is not the author of the text. The colophon is perfectly clear on the matter, however, and the style of the composition does not seem to differ radically from other famous works attributed to Red mda' ba.

<sup>27</sup> I can offer two possible hypotheses, but neither is conclusive. It may be that this work was a presentation of the *Vijñānavāda* position and that it only aimed at coining the best arguments possible (or the best presentation of arguments already well-known). It may also be that this was composed during a time when Red mda' ba was close to Jo nang pa positions, which could be understood as interpreting *Madhyamaka* on the lines of *Vijñānavāda* (see footnote 25). Some biographies indeed state that he was once enamored with Jo nang pa views before coming back to more "orthodox" *Mādhyamika* positions. See Cabezón and

A look at the general outline of the text already reveals the philosophical usage of school denominations. The central notion of the text is *dbu ma'i lam* (*madhyamā pradīpad*), or the Middle Way. This topic opens the philosophical discussion after the homage and acts as the touchstone of the correct doctrine. Red mda' ba states:

What is imputed as self and phenomena does not exist.  
 The incorrect conceptions exist.  
 The perspective of Consciousness[-only] which rejects  
 permanence and annihilation  
 Is the Middle Way.<sup>28</sup>

The treatise tries to prove that the Middle Way means *Vijñānavāda*, that is to say that the Middle Way rejects two extremes. The first extreme is superimposing something not existing (namely external things believed to exist independently from consciousness) and the second extreme is negating something actually existing (namely negating the existence of consciousness). Hence the entire treatise is a proof that idealism is a middle way. Idealism does not negate too much (it keeps consciousness), but does negate enough (it rejects things external to consciousness). In terms of schools, the treatise refutes non-Buddhist positions as well as the *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* schools, all of which suffer from the fault of superimposition. The treatise then rejects a position representing negation akin to the *Mādhyamika* school, although the name *Madhyamaka* is never used, probably because an actual refutation of *Madhyamaka* would have been too shocking at the time in Tibet.<sup>29</sup> What is most important is that each of these schools is reduced to a specific position such that they constitute a coherent moment in the development of the argument. Here, because the topic under discussion is ontology (the question is about what really exists, so it can be understood as an investigation of being), the schools are only brought into discussion from the perspective of their ontological or metaphysical commitments. Their positions on practice, ethics, hermeneutics, Buddhahood, and so on are left aside.

The first remark that we can draw from the structure concerns the significance of such abstracted positions. The schools are not

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Dargyay 2007: 295 n. 106. Unfortunately, the text does not contain any hint that would help us to either decide between the two hypotheses or think of others.

<sup>28</sup> Red mda' ba 1999: 94: *bdag dang chos su btags pa med/ yang dag ma yin kun rtog yod/ rtag dang chad pa spangs pa yil rnam rig tshul 'di dbu ma'i lam/*

<sup>29</sup> *Madhyamaka* was already taken by the large majority of the intellectuals of the time to be the highest view. It is significant, for example, that *Cittamātra śāstras* were almost never commented upon (with the exception of the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, on which Red mda' ba himself wrote a commentary). Furthermore, figures of the *Mādhyamika* school such as Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti were also considered to be Tantric authors who wrote several Tantric *śāstras* and *sādhanas*, by which they acquired an even higher status. The case was different for Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, who did not enjoy such a religious aura.

addressed for the totality of their theoretical and practical systems, as complex historical realities with a variety of characteristic features, but in the specificity in which they can relate to the problem at hand.<sup>30</sup> The treatments of the schools are partial ones, and could even be interpreted as historical distortions. This partiality may be damaging from a historical point of view, but it is not so from a philosophical point of view. The specific interest of a philosophical approach is not the opinion or position of some individual or group as such (which is justifiably the focus of a history of ideas). Rather, what is at stake is what should be considered to be right or true about a specific topic that is addressed universally. By universality I mean the mode through which an issue can be analyzed, elaborated, and given an answer (or even solved), abstracted from its mere historical, contingent conditions. A universal treatment should be capable of being transferred to other times and places without losing its power to “make sense.” The universality of the object of philosophical inquiry goes hand in hand with the universal quality of the subject of the inquiry—any good-willing soul who earnestly engages with the intellectual issues in play without taking the attitude that the issues are merely tokens of the past. In the text under consideration, schools are not addressed in a temporal fashion, but are rather elevated to a universal significance, such that their positions can be examined for the sake of resolving the problem that is the primary focus of the philosophical investigation. The primary focus of the investigation is *not*, after all, the position of the school *per se*. This is why the *partiality* of the treatment is not damaging. This partiality marks the abstraction from temporal conditions or from an historical perspective. It consequently opens the possibility for a philosophical perspective.<sup>31</sup> This is the reason why, in speaking about this treatise,

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<sup>30</sup> It was already noticed by Mimaki that the structure and classifications of *grub mtha'* works are the results of the conceptions of the author regarding the highest position – generally the *Mādhyamika* position, although in this case it is the *Vijñānavāda* school. See Mimaki 1982: 52 and Mimaki 1994: 118.

<sup>31</sup> This does not mean that the Buddhist tradition did not also, at times, consider these schools from a historical point of view. It is precisely the case when hermeneutical strategies are used to elaborate a coherent interpretation of seemingly contradictory passages: the particularity of the moment is recognized, together with the particularity of the interlocutors especially those to whom the Buddha speaks, so as to explain that passages contradicting the actual intention of the Buddha are just adapted to the (weaker) faculties of the disciples and should be interpreted by taking into account the historical circumstances of the utterance of the discourse. This exegetical strategy is different from a philosophical strategy since it only intends to conciliate contradictory scriptural passages, even though this strategy is itself intimately connected with a determination of the intention of the Buddha in which these contradictions are resolved. The determination of the ultimate intention can itself be the object of a philosophical strategy, which is concerned with the actual truth of a position, not its convenient meaning for spiritual or intellectual growth in relation to the historical circumstances of the utterance. Thus my point is not to separate philosophical and historical perspectives, since connections between the two

I will consider the terms school and position to express the same thing.<sup>32</sup>

With this in mind, we can now turn towards the order in which the schools are presented. As many scholars have already pointed out,<sup>33</sup> one of the techniques of *grub mtha'* literature is to create a hierarchy between schools by ordering them so that the final school is the true system. What I want to look at now is how this happens, concretely, inside of Red mda' ba's work (which is not a *grub mtha'* and in which the *Mādhyamika* school does not occupy the final position).

The treatise progresses by investigating each school successively. The argumentation first presents a school, then refutes it, before finally passing on to the next school. This successive progression itself can be either non-accumulative or accumulative. It is non-accumulative when a position is investigated and then entirely refuted without keeping any theoretical gain from the position. As such, the treatise does not really *progress* since it does not acquire anything, but only rejects a position (which, one could argue, is some sort of a progress).<sup>34</sup> A treatise can also have an

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can operate, but only to distinguish their goals and functions. On the lack of historical perspective in *grub mtha'*, see the very brief remarks in Conzort and Preston 2003: ix-x.

<sup>32</sup> I distinguish the philosophical perspective from the perspective of a witness who would just observe a philosophical position from outside, but would never even consider assuming it (even if it were to refute it — refutation itself presupposes that the position to be refuted is in some sense at least possible to assume, which is why one endeavors to lay out arguments to prevent such an assumption). A historian (even a historian of ideas), *as a historian*, does not engage arguments for their truth value, but rather for their historical significance, as explanations of an historical phenomenon or as elements participating in a historical process. That is why I do not consider historians to be engaging their objects in the same universal way that philosophers do, who are interested in the truth value of those arguments, whether those arguments were part of a historical sequence or not. Universality is thus directly related to the idea of truth, precisely because an utterance is said to be true not because it can be explained as resulting from the combination of different conditions of one human being or historical sequence, but because it is true by itself and for any other human being thinking it. It may first sound odd that partiality enables universality, but this is consistent with the nature of concepts. Partiality here means abstraction from some features: the usage of schools is partial because it only takes into account some features of that school, specifically its ontological commitments. The generality of a concept is increased with the loss of its specific features. In technical terms, the less detailed the intension of a concept is, the greater its extension becomes (more actual instances can be subsumed under that concept). For example, the intension of the concept of *being* is very poor, therefore I can subsume under it the totality of phenomena. But if I add to the intension of *being* a specificity such as *being human*, its extension is reduced significantly to those entities who are human beings. This is why the universality of the position is directly related to the partiality of the representation of the position. For the present purpose, I do not distinguish between universality and generality.

<sup>33</sup> Mimaki 1994: 118; Hopkins 1996.

<sup>34</sup> I could not find a treatise that uses this strategy from beginning to end. It would be quite improbable, since Tibetan Buddhism generally displays a tendency to

accumulative successive strategy when a school is investigated and only one aspect of it is refuted, whereas another aspect is retained as true and taken on to the next level, in which the next school, which possesses the previously retained aspect, is investigated. In an accumulative and successive progression there is a theoretical gain at each level. The schools are thus moments in the demonstration and are used purposively as such. Each school provides a better understanding, although always partial, which explains why the treatise progresses by keeping what is considered true and by eliminating the rest. The dynamic process of the treatise is founded upon this chiaroscuro in which the argument continuously stands.

Such strategies are manifest in Red mda' ba's *Ornament*. What I want to show is that the structure obeys a philosophical or logical frame and not a doxographical one. Each school "fills in" abstract positions that have been established previously, or to speak more accurately, abstract positions that have been established *a priori*.<sup>35</sup> These positions are not presented as items of a historical account. The outline of the structure is as follows:

Announcement of the thesis that Consciousness-only  
(*Rnam rig tsam*) is the Middle Way (*brjod bya*, p. 93).<sup>36</sup>

1. Extreme of superimposition (*sgro 'dogs pa'i mtha'*, p. 95).
  - 1.1. Refutation of the existence of the self (position of non-Buddhists – *bdag tu sgro 'dogs pa'i mtha' spangs*, p. 95).
  - 1.2. Refutation of the existence of phenomena (position of realists – *chos su sgro 'dogs pa'i mtha' spangs*, p. 97).
    - 1.2.1. General refutation of the apprehended and apprehending aspects

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integrate all teachings through hermeneutical strategies and hierarchies. The non-accumulative strategy appears in specific portions of texts, like the refutation of *Cittamatra* by the *Mādhyamikas* in Blo bzang dkon mchog's *Grub mtha' rtsa ba'i tshig tik shel dkar me long*. See Conzort and Preston 2003: 217-221. See also the example in this text below.

<sup>35</sup> One could argue that the history of ideas in Buddhism obeys this logical schema, that the logical schema articulates the structure of reality, and manifests itself by history—a Hegelian reading of the history of Buddhism. But the logical schema of thesis, antithesis and synthesis would not fit Buddhist schools as well as Hegel's reading of the history of Western philosophy, because, for example the *Vaibhāṣika* school is not properly refuted and superseded by the *Sautrāntika* school. As we will see, the relationship between the two is rather understood on the model of the *Sautrāntika* position deepening the consequences of the *Vaibhāṣika* position. Moreover, the Hegelian framework could not overcome the actual history, which is much more complex, diverse and sometimes inconsistent (among authors supposedly from the same "school") than the neat finish of logic would have it. The same remark is often made about Western philosophy as well, of course.

<sup>36</sup> I have reconstructed the outline with the Tibetan headings. They are not necessarily given as such by Red mda' ba at the beginning of each section. Sometimes he formulates the title of the section when he ends it to announce the next one. Sometimes he does not give a title at all, but only states his argument. The page references are those of the Tibetan text in Red mda' ba 1999.

(*gzung ba dang 'dzin pa spyir dgag pa*, p. 97).

1.2.1.1. Refutation of realists upholding the existence of objects external to consciousness (*phyi rol tu don du smra ba dgag pa*, p. 97).

1.2.1.1.1. Refutation of the existence of coarse (*rags pa*) objects.

1.2.1.1.2. Refutation of the existence of subtle (*phra ba*) objects.

1.2.1.2. Refutation of the existence of the consciousness apprehending the object (*'dzin pa'i yul can yang yod pa ma yin*, p. 101).

1.2.1.3. Refutation of the existence of the apprehending and apprehended aspects having the nature of internal consciousness.

1.2.2. Specific refutation of the apprehended and apprehending aspects (p. 102).

1.2.2.1. Refutation of the *Vaibhāṣika* position (*bye brag smra ba dgag pa*, p. 102).

1.2.2.2. Refutation of the *Sautrāntika* position (*mdo sde pa smra ba dgag pa*, p. 106).

2. Extreme of negation: refutation of the [*mādhyamika*] rejection of the existence of consciousness (*skur ba 'debs pa'i mtha' spangs*, p. 113).

3. Final position: to profess that consciousness-only is the spotless Path of the Middle (*rnam par rig pa tsam du smra ba ni dbu ma'i lam rma med pa yin no*, p. 114).

The issue of the text is to determine what really exists. Therefore the text has the most comprehensive scope possible: it concerns what there is in general. As Red mda' ba claims, the *Vijñānavāda* position does not negate what exists (consciousness) and does negate what does not exist (the self and external phenomena). In other words, *Vijñānavāda* sticks to reality. Nothing is left aside. All possible phenomena are considered. This is the first sign of the logical approach of the treatise: it encompasses everything and therefore encloses all possible answers.

This logical approach I would oppose to an empirical one (which parallels, but is not exactly identical, to the opposition between philosophy and doxography).<sup>37</sup> The treatise would have an empirical structure if it would just present schools as they appear through history, as Red mda' ba would have found them in the

<sup>37</sup> I am aware that the multiple senses of the term *logical* may create some confusion. I am obviously not referring to the formal character of logic. The term seems to me convenient in this context because it conveys the idea of the cohesive and totalizing framework of the argumentation, of the necessity of the argumentative procedure, and of the abstracted character of the positions. It could be argued that the term *rational* is more appropriate, but a rational argumentation does not necessarily induce a systematic architecture and could result in probable truths rather than necessary truths. Systematicity and necessity of the argument are two features present in the *Ornament*.

literature available to him. If that were the case, by refuting certain schools and electing only one of them, the treatise would end up with a non-necessary position. The chosen position would simply be the best position or most reasonable position available. By pointing to the logical structure of the treatise, I want to emphasize two features: first that in Red mda' ba's opinion all possible answers to a specific question are being considered at each stage of the argument and second that these answers are mutually exclusive. These two features of the argumentation are meant to guarantee the validity of the argumentative procedure. Thus the elimination of all schools but one necessarily leads to a true position<sup>38</sup>—even if this position is only provisionally true, before being itself reconsidered as a framework for a new question. If we were to interpret each stage of Red mda' ba's argument as if they were syllogisms, we could say that because the premise of each moment is complete the conclusion necessarily follows in each instance. If the premise were not complete, as in the case where only historical schools are presented without considering if they map the totality of all possible positions, only a probable conclusion could be obtained, at best.

This logical framework is apparent throughout the *Ornament*. As indicated above, the scope of the treatise, established at its outset, is the totality of reality. Thus the premise is complete. The argument starts by presenting reality from an ordinary perspective as being two-fold (the falsehood of such a dichotomy will be revealed as the argument unfolds):<sup>39</sup> reality is either I (the self, *bdag*) or what is external to the self (phenomena other than the self, *chos*).<sup>40</sup> At this stage, there is no third ontological category: these two categories are mutually exclusive. Red mda' ba obviously re-appropriates the well-known categories of the non-existence or emptiness of self and phenomena in order to integrate them into the logical process of his treatise. He is not simply duplicating technical terms familiar to

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<sup>38</sup> Given the assumption that the positions selected at the beginning effectively cover the totality of the possible answers and are, in fact, mutually exclusive. The validity of an argument (the rigorous deduction of a conclusion from premises) does not guarantee its soundness (the "truth" of the argument). The latter is obtained only if the premises are themselves true.

<sup>39</sup> This is an important point since it prevents an obvious objection to the completeness of the two positions. In the present case, one could argue that self and phenomena do not constitute the totality of the possible candidates for existence, since consciousness is another answer and is the one finally chosen as the one and only reality by Red mda' ba. But the treatise has to be read in its own progression, not from a synchronic perspective. Each stage of the argument attempts to consider all possible answers from its own perspective. The first moment of the argument considers all possible answers from an ordinary point of view, namely the perspective of childish beings (*byis pa*, Red mda' ba 1999: 95). The idealist position will result from the progressive refinement of the philosophical positions, and not as a point of departure.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*: 95: "because these unreal constructions are not proven to exist as self and phenomena in the way constructed by childish beings" (*yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa 'di ni byis pas ji ltar kun btags pa ltar gyi bdag dang chos su ma grub pa'i phyir*).

Buddhist philosophy. Rather, by shaping the investigation of reality in terms of these two categories alone, Red mda' ba opens the way to giving a necessary answer to the issue. The fact of their mutual exclusiveness guarantees that either one of them has to be true or both of them have to be false. In terms of school denominations, this dichotomy divides non-Buddhists, who assert the existence of a self, and Buddhists, who do not assert the existence of a self, but accept the existence of phenomena.<sup>41</sup> The mere usage of a negative term, *non-Buddhist* (versus for example Shivaite, Vedāntin, or Sāṃkhyas), indicates the mutual exclusivity of the two groups.

Part 1.1 rejects the existence of the self<sup>42</sup> by refuting non-Buddhist positions (and probably *pudgalavādin*<sup>43</sup> ones) that assert that the self really exists. Red mda' ba presents twenty possible theories of the self that are supposed to represent all possible positions asserting the existence of the self. He obtains twenty theories by combining each one of the five aggregates (*skandha*), which represent the totality of the elements of an individual, with four possible modes of relationships (identity, submission, possession, inherence) between these aggregates and the self:

The aggregates are not the self and are not of the self.

[The self] does not have the aggregates and in the aggregates

The self does not abide. [...]

One will come up with twenty extreme theories about transitory collections by distinguishing the five aggregates and by applying them [to the five relationships], from form up to consciousness, such as “form is the self, form is to the self, form possesses the self, the self abides in the form, etc.”<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> That is how Red mda' ba divides the group that makes the mistake of superimposition (*sgro 'dogs pa*): *chos 'di las phyi rol tu gyur pa rnams ni phungs po dang gcig dang tha dad pa'i bdag tu mngon par zhen cingl chos 'di pa bye brag tu smra ba dang/ mdo sde pa dag ni gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rang bzhin chos su mngon par zhen par byed del* (*ibid.*: 94). As indicated in footnote 39, these schools map the totality of answers at first sight, even though other schools (*Madhyamaka* and *Vijñānavāda*) will enter the scene later in the treatise, because they seem to propose all possible answers from an ordinary point of view. By refining their positions and progressively eliminating everything that is not consciousness, the idealist position will emerge as the right and only answer. In some ways, the dichotomy holds since at the end the non-Buddhist position is eliminated and the Buddhist one is chosen. However, the Buddhist position is not accepted as such, but is itself investigated to eliminate from the first approximation all wrong elements (such as the realist ones).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*: 95-97.

<sup>43</sup> Red mda' ba states that these positions are non-Buddhist, and not that some of them are upheld by the *pudgalavādins*. However, the formulation of the position seems to be close to that of the *pudgalavādins*. See Red mda' ba 1999: 94. Obviously in the present case the historical accuracy is irrelevant to the argumentative progression.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: 95-96: *phung po bdag gi min/ de la phung med phung rnams la'ang/ bdag gnas ma yin [...]* *de yang phung po lnga'i bye brag gis 'jig tshogs la lta ba'i mtha' nyi shur 'gyur tel/ gzugs bdag yin pa dang/ gzugs bdag gi yin pa dang/ gzugs bdag dang*

Since these twenty theories represent for Red mda' ba the totality of possible ways to establish the existence of the self, by repudiating each one of them he demonstrates the impossibility of asserting a theory about the self.<sup>45</sup> This is a good example of the logical structure of the argument. It also exemplifies a non-accumulative strategy, since the position asserting the existence of a self is simply rejected and no theoretical gain is kept. However, one can speak in terms of progression in the sense that the inexistence of the self is proven.

Since the self has been eliminated (and at the same time as non-Buddhist positions), reality is reduced to phenomena (*chos*). Section 1.2 undertakes to refute the existence of phenomena, a position earlier characterized as being Buddhist.<sup>46</sup> There are many ways in which the existence of phenomena can be argued for, and Red mda' ba shapes his argument according to all of the ways in which he understands that this position can be defended. He categorizes all possible positions on the matter as positions that assert the existence of the apprehended aspect and the apprehending aspect (*gzung ba*, 'dzin pa),<sup>47</sup> namely the object and the consciousness apprehending the object. This pair is supposed to map the totality of all possible phenomena.

In order to investigate the existence of phenomena, captured by the pair apprehending and apprehended, Red mda' ba first provides a general refutation of their existence (section 1.2.1) and later proceeds to a specific refutation of the *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* positions (section 1.2.2).<sup>48</sup> As we shall see, the refutation of these two schools adds detail to the general refutation. It approaches the realist position from another point of view, but does not fundamentally change the line of argumentation. This is a clear example of the philosophical significance of these two school denominations. They function to fill in abstract positions already delimited.<sup>49</sup> They are not examined in themselves as historical instances.

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*Idan pa dang/ gzugs la bdag gnas so zhes bya nas rnam par shes pa'i bar la de ltar sbyar ba'i tshul gyis so/*

<sup>45</sup> I am not developing Red mda' ba's arguments in detail in this article since I am primarily interested in the form of the argumentative strategy rather than in its content. For a detailed analysis of the arguments, see Harter 2006.

<sup>46</sup> See footnote 41.

<sup>47</sup> *Grāhyakāra* and *grāhakāra* in Sanskrit. Red mda' ba never actually uses *rnam pa* (*ākāra*), "aspect", to characterize this pair, but I do not think that by adding the term aspect I am distorting his argument in any way.

<sup>48</sup> Red mda' ba (1999: 102): *de ltar gzung 'dzin du smra ba la spyir dgag pa smras nas/ de'i 'og tu bye brag smra ba gang dag [...]* *mdo sde pa gang dag [...]* *dgag par bya'o/*

<sup>49</sup> See Stag tshang lo tsā ba 1999, which manifests the same approach. The *dkar chag* and chapters never state the name of a school, but always the abstract position under consideration: "general refutation of the self of individuals", "general refutation of the self of apprehended phenomena," "general refutation of the self of apprehending phenomena," and "establishment of the absence of

The general refutation first treats the “naïve” realist position that asserts the existence of things external to us, which are posited without specific reference to a consciousness (part 1.2.1.1). In this section, phenomena are investigated as they are supposed to be in themselves: it is their internal structure that is the object of inquiry. This section is carefully delimited and divided so as to encompass all possible sorts of phenomena posited as external things. External things are either coarse (objects existing as wholes) or subtle (objects composed of atoms).<sup>50</sup> Red mda’ ba shows that there is no way someone could establish the existence of either coarse or subtle things independent of consciousness. Since there are only two possibilities about the existence of external things and both have been refuted, the conclusion necessarily follows: there is no external thing that can be established in itself without the mediation of consciousness.<sup>51</sup>

Having eliminated both forms of apprehended aspect (1.2.1.1), Red mda’ ba is left with the apprehending aspect (1.2.1.2). Since the action of apprehending is dependent on an object that can be apprehended, and no such apprehended object is possible, the refutation of the apprehended aspect leads necessarily to the refutation of the apprehending aspect.<sup>52</sup> The argument thus comes full circle. Since all phenomena have been divided into apprehended phenomena and apprehending phenomena, and both categories have been negated, the real existence of all phenomena is simply negated.<sup>53</sup> The realist position, which was structured as a position asserting the existence of objective and subjective phenomena, has likewise been rejected. At this point, both the non-Buddhists have been refuted, as well as the realists. Since the realists were first identified with the Buddhists, it seems like Red mda’ ba has also refuted the Buddhist position.

This would be the case if there were no other Buddhist positions. But the previous section does not exhaust all possible realist positions. Instead of positing objects by founding their existence on their own structure, one could still assert that real things exist

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extremes by refuting the two subtle selves.” In some sense, this *grub mtha’* seems closer to a philosophical treatise than to a doxographical digest.

<sup>50</sup> Red mda’ ba (1999: 97): *phyi rol tu don du smra ba rnams kyi don gyi rnam par rtog pa ni gnyis te/ rags pa dang/ phra ba’o/*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 101: “Thus, since there are no coarse or subtle things, there are no objects different from consciousness.” (*de ltar na rags pa dang phra ba’i don med pa’i phyir shes pa las gzhan pa’i yul med la*).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: 101: *yul med pa’i phyir de ’dzin pa’i yul can yang yod pa ma yin te/ de dag ni phan tshun ltos te rnam par ’jog pa’i phyir ro/*

<sup>53</sup> I say *real* because Red mda’ ba concedes at this point that phenomena have some sort of existence, but a merely conceptual one (a nominal or imputed existence): *gzung ba dang ’dzin pa’i tha snyad kyang rnam par rtog pa tsam du zad do/ (ibid.: 101)*. This point leads nicely into the next section, since the recognition of some sort of phenomenological presence of phenomena in our awareness is constitutive of the investigation of the *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* schools. See the next footnote.

through the meditation of consciousness. Since we are aware of the presence of phenomena through perception, one could (and one often does) assert the existence of phenomena based on that perception.<sup>54</sup>

The next step Red mda' ba takes is to refute the Buddhist *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* schools. These schools are still realists, since they want to establish the existence of external phenomena, but they do so by virtue of the conscious perception of external phenomena. Thus the transition from the general refutation (1.2.1) to specific refutation (1.2.2), from what I called "naïve realists" to *Vaibhāṣikas* and *Sautrāntikas* (who could be called "indirect realists"), can be described as an internalization of sorts. Phenomena are no longer things in themselves (whose structures are investigated), but objects as they appear to our awareness.

Notice the transition from 1.2.1 to 1.2.2 and the accumulative and successive progression of the argument. A feature is eliminated (the sheer externality of phenomena) and a feature is preserved (the appearance of phenomena within consciousness), which is the next object to be investigated, which itself will eventually be refuted so that only consciousness remains. Red mda' ba progressively reduces our ontological or metaphysical commitments to the domain of consciousness, and he does so through the usage of school denominations, by passing successively through the realist, and then the *Vaibhāṣika* and the *Sautrāntika* positions.

The *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* schools again serve to circumscribe all logical answers to a given problem. The issue is to explain the appearance of phenomena.<sup>55</sup> The relationship between a phenomenon and the awareness that perceives it has to be either simultaneous (*Vaibhāṣika* position) or successive (*Sautrāntika* position). If a moment of awareness perceives an apprehended aspect, the phenomenon that is posited to be outside of awareness must either precede the moment of awareness or occur at the same time as the awareness. The apprehended phenomenon cannot be subsequent, since the apprehending aspect would occur before what it is supposed to apprehend even exists, which is absurd. Again, the two possible positions to be evaluated are mutually exclusive. The *Vaibhāṣika* position affirms that the apprehended aspect is a

<sup>54</sup> It is the notion of experience (*nyams su myong ba*) which is central to this argument. Even if one demonstrates the metaphysical position of the inexistence of apprehended and apprehending aspects, the phenomenological presence of phenomena in our awareness does not cease. Red mda' ba says just this (p. 95): unreal conceptions (*yang dag pa ma yin pa'i kun tu rtog pa*) "are not absolutely non-existing to the extent that they are being experienced" (*nyams su myong ba'i ngo bor nam yang med pa ma yin pa*). Terms denoting appearance, perception, and awareness such as (*nyams su*) *myong ba*, *gsal ba*, and *dmigs pa* are numerous in section 1.2.2.

<sup>55</sup> While keeping the term *gzung ba*, Red mda' ba progressively abandons the reference to *'dzin pa* and speaks more of awareness or consciousness (*shes pa*). I speculate that this is a conscious effort to prepare the rejection of the whole structure of apprehending and apprehended aspects.

phenomenon posited outside of consciousness that exists at the same time as the consciousness of it.<sup>56</sup> The idea is that the perceived phenomenon is identical with the apprehended aspect on which awareness directly shapes itself. The *Sautrāntika* position maintains that the external thing is the cause that precedes awareness and projects an apprehended aspect onto awareness.<sup>57</sup> Since Red mda' ba demonstrates that neither of these two explanations works, the entire hypothesis of the existence of external phenomena needs to be abandoned.

A revision of the hypothesis of the existence of external phenomena is made necessary only because all possible realist positions have been presented and have been refuted. The conclusion Red mda' ba arrives at is that there is no other cause of objective appearances other than consciousness itself in the form of the store-consciousness (*kun bzhi, ālayavijñāna*) and its impregnations or predispositions (*bag chags, vāsanā*).<sup>58</sup>

Notice the slow and subtle progress towards an internalization of phenomenal contents. First external objects alone are considered (1.2.1), then two aspects are investigated of which just one is a mental aspect (*Vaibhāṣikas*, 1.2.2.1), then both aspects are mental, albeit with an external object outside of consciousness still postulated as the cause of one of the aspects (*Sautrāntikas*, 1.2.2.2), and finally consciousness alone is kept through a complete relinquishing of the hypothesis of an external object (*Vijñānavāda*, end of 1.2.2.2 and 3). This progress is made possible through an accumulative-successive strategy: first the thing existing externally is rejected while its phenomenal aspect is kept, then the phenomenal aspect as external object is rejected and the mental aspect is kept, then the mental aspect caused by an external thing is rejected and only consciousness is kept. At each successive stage, the position that is saved from refutation in the stage prior is re-investigated and re-divided into what is to be rejected and what is to be kept.

At this point of the treatise, we could say that Red mda' ba reaches the "tip of a needle." Having started with the totality of reality, he is left with consciousness as the only existing entity.<sup>59</sup> Everything else has been eliminated. This "razor-like trend" could

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*: 102: *bye brag smra ba gang dag shes pa dang dus mnyam pa'i don gzung bar smra ba/*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*: 102: *mdo sde pa gang dag shes pa'i snga logs kyi rnam pa gtod byed kyi rgyu gzung bar smra ba/*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*: 113-115 for the formulation of the final and definitive position, although the *ālayavijñāna* is only mentioned earlier on page 104.

<sup>59</sup> It should be emphasized that the notion of consciousness reached at this point is different from the notion of self which was refuted in the first place, by the fact that consciousness is not understood to be permanent, as the self is. Consciousness is not a phenomenon either, even though the demonstration of the existence of consciousness-only is obtained through the refinement of the notion of phenomenon. This is because phenomena (in the sense of *chos, dharma*) exist within the structure of apprehended and apprehending phenomena, which Red mda' ba rejects as being a distorted representation of reality.

be pushed further to lead to a final refutation, the refutation of consciousness itself. Such a possibility is the object of the investigation of the last section of the treatise, the refutation of the extreme of negation (section 2). This section of the text clearly targets a *Mādhyamika* position without using the name of the school.<sup>60</sup> The *Mādhyamika* position is used to wrap up the dialectical progress. It represents the final logical step, since everything else has been eliminated. I shall not develop the arguments leading Red mda' ba to reject the "*Mādhyamika* extremism," which arguments are not original anyway (most of them coming from Vasubandhu and Sthiramati). The point is rather that the *Mādhyamika* position participates in the argumentative strategy by acting as the final logical possibility, the final possible refutation, since everything else has already been refuted.

With *Madhyamaka* we have a nice example of an argumentative strategy that is no longer accumulative. The progression is no longer accumulative because Red mda' ba does not preserve any aspect of the *Mādhyamika* position, but rather dismisses it entirely as a form of nihilism. Nonetheless, the rejection of *Madhyamaka* still constitutes progression in the sense that it enables a final vindication of the *Vijñānavāda* position.

### Conclusion

By introducing the example of Red mda' ba's *Ornament of the Proofs of Consciousness*, this study proposes an alternative understanding of the function of school denominations in Tibetan texts. Its ambition is not to establish one and only one way to interpret the usage of *grub mtha'* works and the denominations that appear within them. These denominations have many functions. They are sometimes used as *doxographical categories* to report opinions of past thinkers,<sup>61</sup> and

<sup>60</sup> There are several hints indicating that the argument attacks *Madhyamaka*. The (rejected) refutation of consciousness proceeds from the reason that consciousness is produced by the process of *pratītyasamutpāda* and therefore does not exist ultimately. The identification of *pratītyasamutpāda* and non-existence is an important feature of *Madhyamaka* (see Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 24, 18). Red mda' ba refutes this position with the argument that such a position would be without a support (*rten, āśraya*), which is exactly the argument used by Sthiramati to counter *Mādhyamika* arguments at the beginning of his commentary on the *Triṃśika*.

<sup>61</sup> See a clear example in the *Bang mdzod* of G.yag ston 1973: vol. 1, 315-317 where G.yag ston successively presents the positions of the *Vaibhāṣikas*, *Sautrāntikas* and *Cittamātras* on the topic of lineage (*rigs*). This seems to be a purely scholarly digression that does not contribute in any way to the development of the commentary on this issue. Another example would be Ye shes sde's *Lta ba'i khyad par* which, according to Ruegg 1981: 228 "ne cherche pas à classer les différents systèmes philosophiques en présence selon un ordre hiérarchique où une doctrine est censée à la fois englober et primer celle(s) qui la précède(nt) ; il se borne à donner une description purement doxographique, généralement sans

sometimes used as *philosophical categories*, when they instantiate abstract positions and participate in the argumentative response to a problem. Sometimes there are “hybrid usages” where these denominations are used loosely to make a point without enclosing all possibilities in a logical framework. My sole claim is that the usage of schools in Tibetan philosophical literature should be evaluated carefully each time it occurs, without necessarily interpreting it as an artificial, pseudo-historical, or polemical exercise. The use of school denominations can also function as a genuine philosophical practice that engages with abstract problems and investigates abstract solutions that happen to be represented by these school denominations.<sup>62</sup>

In other words, the abstract problems, positions, and solutions are primary, and the school denominations are secondary. As a matter of fact, some positions in Red mda' ba's text are not even attributed to any specific school, such as the theories of coarse and subtle objects, for example. Yet these unnamed positions still represent moments in the development of the proof of idealism. This observation reinforces the point being made here. What matters is not the number of schools, but the progression of the argument, which may necessitate more abstract positions than are provided by the number of historical schools available. Unfortunately, Red mda' ba did not have enough schools to fill all his required positions!

The structure of Red mda' ba's work is a logical one, not an historical and not even a pseudo-historical one. Using school denominations is a way to situate one's own philosophical position and not just a way to categorize other people's opinions.<sup>63</sup> Using school denominations as a way to map the possible answers of a philosophical problem and to enclose the totality of the problem within a logical frame enables one to navigate through possible solutions to find the one that responds accurately to the problem, to find one that is *necessarily* true.

I do not have the space to develop the comparison here, but it would be fruitful to analyze the dialectical method of Aristotle in order to further ponder the modality of the approach described in

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porter un jugement de valeur même implicite. ” Notice the precise usage of the term *doxographique* here with which the present study agrees.

<sup>62</sup> In some sense, the usage of *-isms* in analytical philosophy is similar to the Tibetan usage of the school denominations that I describe. Analytical philosophers sometimes discuss very specific authors, but other times shape abstract positions (internalist/externalist foundationalism, coherentism, empiricism, pragmatism, consequentialism, etc.) for the sake of their own discussions, without referring to some specific historical expressions of these positions.

<sup>63</sup> See what Thu'u bkwan explicitly says about the purpose of his composition at the beginning of Thu'u bkwan 2005, where he presents Indian non-Buddhist philosophies. Without knowing others' philosophies and systems, he states, one is incapable of asserting the value of one's own, and especially the superiority of one's own! For Thu'u bkwan, the study of the positions of others has an internal value.

this paper. By modality, I mean the qualification of the truth of a statement as being necessary, probable, possible, and so on. Aristotle, in some of his works, proceeds first to give an overview of the state of a question by providing the responses given by previous philosophers.<sup>64</sup> This method, sometimes called “diaporematic,” was not an exercise designed to pay lip service to previous masters, but rather a sincere philosophical attempt to grasp a problem in many of its dimensions and to analyze possible answers to it—so as to evaluate their value, or, if they were not correct, to understand why they were not so. If one of them was chosen as a solution, it was nevertheless only probable, not yet apodictical or necessary, as in a scientific investigation.<sup>65</sup> The modal categories of probability and necessity are not used in Tibetan philosophical literature (nor in Indian philosophical literature for the most part). It would be worth reflecting on this absence and what it entails for Buddhist thought.<sup>66</sup> Yet even though the modality of necessity is not categorized as such Red mda’ ba’s work, for example, it is presupposed by the argumentative procedure. If it were not presupposed, the positive progression of the argument would barely make sense, and that is why I have used this modality in my interpretation of his text. Thus the comparison between Red mda’ ba’s and Aristotle’s ways of appropriating older positions sheds some light on Red mda’ ba’s approach. The comparison reveals his approach to be apodictic while Aristotle’s is not, precisely because he adopts a logical framework rather than an empirical one.

Throughout this paper, there looms the opposition between history and philosophy.<sup>67</sup> In sum, this opposition is necessary in order to understand the philosophical perspective. A philosophical perspective does not understand something from the past as something of the past as such, but rather as something that is still valid in the present should it have some grasp on truth. This does not mean that the study of past philosophical systems and past philosophers precludes the practice of philosophy itself. To the contrary, this whole study is about philosophizing with old materials. But, as we have seen, these old materials have not been taken as representing something past, something that cannot be relevant to the present. They have rather been elevated to the eternal present, not just *my* present (the very short stretch of time and space

<sup>64</sup> See for example his *Metaphysics* B, 1; *Nicomachean Ethics*, VII, 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> This is because a scientific investigation has to start from true (evident) and primary premises, whereas the diaporematic approach starts with the available positions, which are neither evident nor necessarily occupy the totality of possible answers. In the diaporematic approach the premises are not complete. This recalls the discussion above of logical *versus* empirical approaches. The diaporematic approach is only empirical. See Aristotle’s *Topics*, I, 1-2.

<sup>66</sup> On the issue of modality in Indian philosophy see Matilal 1982: 132-155; Kapstein 2001: 136.

<sup>67</sup> I share here the concerns expressed by P. Patil about the “tyranny of social and cultural history” in south Asian religions and Buddhist studies. See Patil 2009: 6, 17.

in which I live), but a universal present, a present that can be extended for eternity to include all possible subjects who would ask the same question.<sup>68</sup> As stated earlier, this process makes room for universality.

Of course, this does not mean that a historical approach to philosophers and their ideas cannot nurture philosophical investigation. A historical approach can show, for example, that a problem has been historically constructed through the specific understanding of certain concepts, which calls into questions our own reception of problems and ideas. Such a historical approach is not only helpful but often necessary to ensure the rigorous and precise distinctions that are so critical to philosophical clarity. Such a historical approach serves philosophical reflection. Yet we should still safeguard the latter from being reduced to a historical approach by maintaining a reference to universal truth, and not just to historical truth.<sup>69</sup> The distinctions between history, history of philosophy, philosophy, and a philosophical investigation of history need be maintained, for fear that they might have a tendency to overlap and cancel out each others' benefits.

Since this study has spent time trying to free some space for philosophy, let us now reflect upon the issue at stake with a philosophical question: why does the status of school denominations in Tibetan texts matter? I do believe that it matters to philosophers, and more generally to anyone who wants to fully appreciate the intellectual strength of the Buddhist tradition. By viewing these treatises as not merely reporting the opinions of previous thinkers, but as using these opinions to address a problem and to answer that problem, we can allow the texts to speak to us in the present, where "speaking" means causing us to fundamentally question our own conceptions and behaviors. It is the only way that these texts can be meaningful with regard to truth and falsehood. Otherwise we would have to leave everything to history. Philosophy would have nothing left to do but to choose between being a history of ideas (and therefore be submissive to the past), or functioning in the present without reference to the past, frightened of past opinions and ignorant of its own history. Thus the way that we understand these past ideas may tell us as much about their content as about our own relationship to the past and to truth.

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<sup>68</sup> See the description by Gueroult 1979: 49-50 of the history of philosophy treated as an object of philosophical activity.

<sup>69</sup> *The Philosophy of Spinoza* by H. A. Wolfson is an excellent example of a study that does just that.

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GORAMPA SONAM SENGE ON  
THE REFUTATION OF THE FOUR EXTREMES

Constance Kassor

orampa Sonam Senge (Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge, 1429-89) is regarded as one of the most influential scholars in the Sakya (Sa skya) tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. A prolific writer and a renowned practitioner, he is credited with consolidating and systematizing the mainstream Sakyapa view. Some of his philosophical works were so overtly critical of Tsongkhapa (Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa, 1357-1419) and the politically dominant Gelug (Dge lugs) school that they were banned in the seventeenth century under the rule of the fifth Dalai Lama.<sup>1</sup> Over the past century, however, Gorampa's views have experienced a resurgence amongst many Tibetan Buddhists, particularly among followers of the so-called "nonsectarian (*ris med*) movement."<sup>2</sup> Both the suppression and the subsequent resurgence of Gorampa's works highlight the significance of his philosophy: his compositions were originally censored because of the threat they posed to the established religious authority, and they are currently experiencing a revival because they espouse a philosophical view that is compatible with the meditative practices of a number of schools. In both cases, it is clear that Gorampa's thought was, and continues to be, taken seriously by Tibetan Buddhists, even by those who do not belong to the Sakya school.

This essay will analyze Gorampa's treatment of the negation of the four extremes (*mtha' bzhi*) in order to suggest a possible philosophical basis for his influence across sectarian divides. By illustrating the ways in which Gorampa's negation of the four extremes leads to freedom from conceptual constructs (*spros bral*), I will indicate the extent to which his own views contrast with those of Tsongkhapa and align with those of other non-Sakyapa scholars, such as Jamgon Ju Mipham ('Jam mgon 'ju mi pham rnam rgyal rgya mtsho, 1846-1912). This illustration, in turn, will serve to suggest how Gorampa's approach to philosophy and the path supports an ecumenical vision of Buddhist practice, perhaps explaining the recent resurgence of his popularity amongst Tibetan Madhyamaka scholars from non-Sakya lineages.

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<sup>1</sup> Cabezón 2007: 31-33.

<sup>2</sup> Between 1906 and 1925, Jamgyal Rinpoche organized the editing and printing of the complete works of Gorampa in Derge, totaling 13 volumes. See Jackson 2003: 58.

Briefly, Gorampa's emphasis on *spros bral*, as demonstrated through his refutation of the four extremes, allows him to advocate a position that emphasizes logic and reasoning while simultaneously subordinating them to nonconceptual meditative practice. Gorampa's disagreement with Tsongkhapa over the purpose and function of the fourfold negation provides a useful lens through which to view the former's far-reaching influence across sectarian divides. Gorampa's method of logical reasoning is sufficiently sophisticated to refute Tsongkhapa's highly developed philosophical arguments, and his emphasis on nonconceptuality appeals to scholars whose traditions have historically emphasized nonconceptual meditative practices over analytical reasoning. The extent of Gorampa's philosophical influence is particularly apparent in modern-day Tibetan Buddhist institutions; Sakyapa monastic institutions, such as Sakya College in Dehradun, India, regularly educate scholars from the Kagyu and Nyingma traditions in Madhyamaka philosophy. Kagyu and Nyingma institutions, in turn, often invite Sakyapa khenpos to instruct their monks in philosophy.

Before investigating the philosophical content of Gorampa's arguments regarding the four extremes, it is important to first understand the context within which he and his texts operated. Gorampa lived during a relatively unstable time in the history of Tibetan politics, which may account – at least indirectly – for the formation of some of his views.

### History and Context of Gorampa's Philosophy

Gorampa lived during a period of political instability in Tibet. From 1244 until 1354, the Sakya sect had held political control over Tibet, and was backed by the support of the Mongol army. Eventually the Mongol court's interest in Tibet weakened, and the Pagmodru (Phag mo gru) clan ascended to power. The Pagmodrupas ruled over Tibet for 130 years, but during the latter half of Gorampa's life they too fell from power, resulting in a number of groups fiercely competing for religious and political dominance in central Tibet.<sup>3</sup>

Gorampa composed his philosophical texts, therefore, at a time in which the Sakya sect was struggling to re-assert its political dominance. Although verifiable information about the political motivations of the Sakyapas remains elusive, the unstable political situation in Tibet could have at least partially accounted for the overtly polemical nature of some of Gorampa's Madhyamaka texts. When the Gelugpas eventually ascended to political power in the seventeenth century, the fifth Dalai Lama ordered that Gorampa's texts, which were so critical of Tsongkhapa, be destroyed or

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<sup>3</sup> For more on the history of the Sakya sect, see Jackson 2003, Kapstein 2000, and Cabezon 2007.

otherwise removed from monastic institutions. However, many of Gorampa's texts continued to be studied in eastern Tibet, where the central government was unable to exert a strong influence.

Around 1905, the Sakyapa monk Jamgyal Rinpoche ('Jam rgyal rin po che) collected and republished Gorampa's extant works. Thirteen volumes of texts were recovered from monasteries throughout Tibet and were reprinted in Derge between 1905 and 1925.<sup>4</sup> While most of Gorampa's texts were recovered, some modern Sakyapa scholars suspect that a handful of his texts no longer exist.<sup>5</sup> Gorampa's extant texts, however, span a wide range of genres, indicating the scholar's mastery over a number of topics in Tibetan Buddhism. He composed treatises on the Abhidharma and Vinaya, several commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, various practice texts based on Tantra, and a number of Madhyamaka commentaries. Gorampa's major Madhyamaka texts comprise only two of the thirteen volumes of his collected works. His three major Madhyamaka texts are:

1. *Distinguishing the Views (Lta ba'i shan 'byed)*, a polemical text placing Gorampa's view in dialogue with the views of other Madhyamaka scholars;
2. *Removal of Wrong Views (Lta ba ngan sel)*, a commentary on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* which responds to a number of criticisms raised by Tsongkhapa;
3. *Synopsis of Madhyamaka (Dbu ma'i spyi don)*, an encyclopedic text outlining Gorampa's views on the major points of Madhyamaka, as well as the views of a number of Indian and Tibetan scholars with whom he both agrees and disagrees.

Although there are some subtle differences in the ways in which Gorampa presents his philosophy in each of these three texts, his explanation of the Madhyamaka view is relatively consistent throughout. Indeed, Sakyapas today consider Gorampa to be a unique scholar in so far as his views did not change over the course of his extensive philosophical career.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, for the purposes of

<sup>4</sup> Jackson 2003: 58.

<sup>5</sup> Khenpo Ngawang Jorden, personal communication.

<sup>6</sup> This view has been expressed by virtually every Sakyapa scholar with whom I have conversed. This claim appears to be true, at least with respect to the views expressed in Gorampa's three major Madhyamaka texts. Although he emphasizes different points in each of his texts, his overall philosophical view remains relatively consistent. This point is especially salient when Gorampa's works are compared to the writings of a scholar such as Tsongkhapa, whose views appeared to have changed over the course of his philosophical career (see Jinpa 2002: 18-19).

this essay, I will confine my analysis of Gorampa's treatment of the four extremes to only one of these texts: his *Dbu ma'i spyi don* (hereafter *Synopsis*).

### Gorampa on the Four Extremes

In his *Synopsis*, Gorampa argues that the most significant aspect of the realization of the Madhyamaka view is freedom from all concepts.<sup>7</sup> Concepts, according to Gorampa, must be explained in terms of the "four extremes" (*mtha' bzhi*). These extremes are four ways in which ordinary, unenlightened beings are capable of understanding the ontological status of things: as existent, nonexistent, both existent and nonexistent, or neither existent nor nonexistent. In other words, if one can possibly conceive of anything, that thing must be conceived of as either existent, nonexistent, both, or neither. Gorampa contends that there are no other possible ways to conceive of things, ideas, persons, or anything else in the conventional world.<sup>8</sup>

In his *Synopsis*, Gorampa repeatedly cites Āryadeva's *Jñānasarasamuccaya* to articulate the fourfold freedom from extreme views that constitutes the Madhyamaka position: "The reality of the learned Mādhyamikas is freedom from the four extremes: not existence, not nonexistence, not existence and nonexistence, nor the absence of the essence of both."<sup>9</sup> Throughout the *Synopsis*, Gorampa returns to this passage to demonstrate that a direct realization of the negation of the four extremes leads to *spros bral*.<sup>10</sup> This emphasis on *spros bral* is integral to Gorampa's Madhyamaka texts and can be understood as the basis upon which the rest of his philosophical views rest.

In negating the four extremes, Gorampa emphasizes that the refutations of all four positions occur at the level of the ultimate truth.<sup>11</sup> As will be shown below, opponents such as Tsongkhapa argue that a refutation of all four extremes at the level of ultimate

<sup>7</sup> *chos dbyings don dam pa'i bden pa rigs pas dpyad pa'i blo ngor rim pa ltar ram/ 'phags pa'i mnyam gzhas gi blo ngor gcig char du mtha' bzhi'i spros pa dang bral bas don dam pa'i bden pa nyid dbu ma ste/ mtha' gnyis dang bral ba la'ang dbu mar 'jog na/ mtha' thams cad dang bral ba la dbu mar 'jog pa shin du'ang 'thad pa'i phyir ro/ BPD: 48.*

<sup>8</sup> *'di ltar skye ba rgyu la ltos mi ltos gnyis las phyi ma rgyu med kyi phyogs su 'dus/ dang po la'ang rgyu de 'bras bu las tha dad mi dad gnyis su nges la/ de la'ang tha dad pa kho na las skye na gzhan skye'i phyogs su 'dus/ tha mi dad pa kho na las skye na bdag skye'i khongs su 'dus/ gnyis ka las skye na gnyis ka las skye ba'i khongs su 'dus shing/ de las gzhan pa'i mtha' mi srid pa'i phyir ro/ BPD: 257-258.*

<sup>9</sup> *yod min med min yod med min/ gnyis ka'i bdag nyid kyang min pas/ mtha' bzhi las grol dbu ma pa/ mkhas pa rnam kyis de kho na/ BPD: 173.*

<sup>10</sup> *mdor na 'phags pa'i mnyam gzhas gi blo ngo'i spros bral mtshan nyid pa gtan la phab par rlom nas rtog ngor don dam bden pa mtha' bzhi'i spros pa dang bral ba ni bsgrub bya'ol/ BPD: 175.*

<sup>11</sup> *don dam pa mtha' bzhi'i spros pa dang bral ba BPD: 173.*

truth makes no logical sense. Gorampa, however, contends that the tetralemma's purpose is to transcend the limits of logic. Having eliminated all possibilities for logical, conceptual thought at the ultimate level, one's only recourse is to abandon concepts completely. In other words, if one can successfully eliminate the possibility of conceiving of things as existent, nonexistent, both, and neither, then one is left with no other possible ways to conceive of things. The conclusion is that, ultimately, things cannot be conceived of at all.

In the *Synopsis*, Gorampa explains the refutation of each extreme one-by-one. In refuting the first extreme of existence, Gorampa bases his view on earlier arguments in the text, which refute the idea that things inherently exist by means of the Five Madhyamaka Reasonings (*rtan tshigs lnga*).<sup>12</sup> In describing the refutation of this first extreme, Gorampa and Tsongkhapa appear to be largely in agreement. Gorampa therefore turns his attention to refuting the view of Dolpopa, who is commonly associated with the "other-emptiness" (*gzhan stong*) view. While Dolpopa claims that the perfected nature (*yongs grub kyi mtshan nyid*) can withstand analysis, Gorampa reasons that *all* phenomena are subject to analysis, including emptiness itself.<sup>13</sup> He explains that all phenomena that appear to be ultimately existent will, through the application of the Five Madhyamaka Reasonings, be negated.<sup>14</sup>

The refutation of existence is extremely important here, as it serves as the basis for the refutation of the subsequent three extremes. Gorampa argues that properly negating existence actually progresses one along the Buddhist path a great deal, and that the successful elimination of just this first extreme serves as the basis for the elimination of suffering and the attainment of enlightenment.<sup>15</sup> He suggests that the misconception that phenomena truly exist is the basis of self-grasping. This self-grasping, in turn, is the first of the twelve links of interdependence that keep sentient beings trapped in *samsāra*. Therefore, in order to remove suffering and escape from *samsāra*, one must eliminate self-grasping by refuting the misconception that phenomena inherently exist.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> These are five styles of argumentation that are commonly accepted by Mādhyamikas. They are: neither one nor many (*gcig du dral*), diamond slivers (*rdo rje gzegs ma*), production and cessation of existence and nonexistence (*yod med skye 'gog*), production and cessation of the four limits (*mu bzhi skye 'gog*), and reasoning of interdependence (*rten 'brel gyi gtan tshigs*), BPD: 177. For a detailed explanation of each of these methods of reasoning, see Brunnhölzl 2004: 235-262.

<sup>13</sup> *spyir chos thams cad yin te/ stong gzhi'i chos can nyi shus ma bsdus pa'i chos ci yang med cing/ de dag la'ang thog mar bden pa bkag nas mthar bzhi char gyi spros bral du bya dgos pa'i phyir ro/* BPD: 180.

<sup>14</sup> For Gorampa's detailed explanation of the application of the Five Madhyamaka Reasonings, see BPD: 340-356.

<sup>15</sup> *bzhi pa [de ltar bkag pa'i dgos pa] la sdug bsngal spang ba'i dgos pa dang/ byang chub thob pa'i dgos pa gnyis*, BPD: 181.

<sup>16</sup> BPD: 181-183.

In order to achieve complete, Mahāyāna enlightenment, however, the refutation of existence is not enough. Gorampa asserts, “If one does not eliminate the elaborations of the four extremes, the unique Mahāyāna view will not be established.”<sup>17</sup> One must continue from this first refutation, therefore, and eventually eliminate all four extremes in succession.

The refutation of the second extreme, nonexistence, depends upon the successful refutation of the first extreme. Gorampa cites several texts, including the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, to prove this point: “If there is no existent thing, then how can there be any nonexistent things?”<sup>18</sup> In other words, once the extreme of existence is negated, it makes sense that a person’s mind might subsequently adhere to the extreme of nonexistence. But as Gorampa uses the above quote to suggest, without existence, there can be no nonexistence. The latter makes no sense at all unless it stands in relation to the former; the two depend on each other. This is fairly standard Madhyamaka reasoning, and Gorampa does not feel the need to elaborate the point much further.

The refutation of the third extreme (both existence and nonexistence) depends upon the refutation of the first two. In fact, all that Gorampa says with respect to the third extreme is that it is refuted by the same logical reasoning that is used to refute the first two extremes.<sup>19</sup> In other words, if existence and nonexistence are both refuted individually, then it makes no sense for them to somehow exist together. Gorampa apparently thinks that this position is self-evident, and he does not feel the need to explain it further anywhere in his *Synopsis*.<sup>20</sup>

The refutation of the fourth extreme, neither existence nor nonexistence, yet again depends upon the successful refutation of the previous three. In explaining this refutation, Gorampa argues, “If one grasps only the nonexistence of both true existence and true nonexistence, then one will remain there, due to seeing the middle as the abandonment of the two extremes. But one should not remain

<sup>17</sup> *mtha' bzhi'i spros pa ma bkag na theg chen thun mong ma yin pa'i lta ba mi 'grub pa*. BPD: 184.

<sup>18</sup> *dngos po yod pa ma yin na/ dngos med gang gi yin par 'gyur/ ibid.*: 184. See also *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, V: 6ab.

<sup>19</sup> *mtha' gsum pa 'gog pa'i rigs pa ni / sngar bshad pa'i rigs pa gnyis char ro / ibid.*: 184.

<sup>20</sup> When summarizing the fourfold analysis in a later chapter of the *Synopsis*, Gorampa again refers to Āryadeva’s *Jñānasarasamuccaya* and emphasizes that all four extremes need to be negated: *mtha' bzhi'i spros bral bstan pa'i rigs pa rnam kyi dgag bya mtha' bzhir phye ba*. When actually explaining the fourfold refutation, however, he condenses these possibilities into three, omitting the third lemma entirely: *de ltar gzhung las rnam gzhag du ma yod kyang bsdu na med pa skur 'debs kyi mtha' dang/ yod pa sgro 'dogs kyi mtha' dang/ dgag bya bkag pa'i stong nyid la mngon par zhen pa'i mtha' gsum du 'dus pa/ BPD*: 304. The omission of the third lemma is not unique to Gorampa’s style of reasoning. Tsongkhapa’s student (and another philosophical opponent of Gorampa), Kedrup (Mkhas grub dge legs dpal bzang, 1385-1438), similarly glosses over an analysis of the third lemma in his *Stong thung chen mo* (see Cabezón 1992: 305).

there due to seeing that, because it is not established; and if it were established, it would also be an extreme."<sup>21</sup> This means that one should not simply refute the first two extremes of existence and nonexistence (and, by extension, the third extreme of both). If one stops analysis at this point, Gorampa argues, it is possible to cling to an idea of the ultimate truth as something that is a refutation of existence and nonexistence. And according to Gorampa's view of Madhyamaka, if one grasps to *anything*—even if it is a refutation—it is also an extreme.

It may be helpful here to use an analogy: imagine a spectrum representing all possibilities for conceptual thought, with existence at one end and nonexistence at the other. One is attempting to locate "Ultimate Truth" as a point somewhere on that spectrum through logical reasoning. One first eliminates the possibility of the point existing at the extreme end of existence, and then the possibility of its existing at the extreme end of nonexistence. Because one is searching for a single point, there is no way that it can simultaneously occupy both ends of the spectrum. So, the only remaining possibility is for the point to exist somewhere in the middle of the spectrum, between the two extremes. Gorampa argues, however, that this possibility makes no sense. If both extremes are eliminated, then there is necessarily no middle between them. There can be no point that is in the middle without the extremes of existence and nonexistence, just as there can be no gray without the extremes of black and white. When one analyzes existence in this way, one realizes that there are no extremes *and* there is no middle; the spectrum doesn't exist at all.

Based on these reasonings, Gorampa understands the realization of the refutation of the four extremes to be a process. The refutation of the first extreme is done through the Five Madhyamaka Reasonings, taking as their objects anything that is believed to be truly established. The refutations of each of the subsequent extremes, in turn, depend on the refutations of the previous ones. When one arrives at the end of the process, having completely negated all four extremes, one arrives at a direct, nonconceptual understanding of emptiness that is free from these conceptual proliferations. Understanding the fourfold negation as a process—as something that one *practices* and *experiences*—will be further explained below. First, however, in order to highlight the significance of Gorampa's approach, I would like to turn briefly to an alternative understanding of the fourfold negation, espoused by Tsongkhapa.

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<sup>21</sup> *bden par yod pa dang/ bden par med pa gnyis ka ma yin pa zhig tu gzung na/ mtha' gnyis spangs pa'i dbus la dmigs pa'i sgo nas gnas par 'gyur la/ de la'ang dmigs pa'i sgo nas gnas par mi bya stel/ de ma grub pa'i phyir dang/ gal te grub na de'ang mthar 'gyur ba'i phyir.* BPD: 184.

### Tsongkhapa on the Four Extremes

Because Tsongkhapa was originally educated by Sakyapa masters, most notably Rendawa (Red mda' ba, 1349-1412), his philosophical views that diverge from the standard Sakya interpretation are some of Gorampa's favorite objects of critique.<sup>22</sup> Because Gorampa appears to have been attempting to standardize and systematize the Sakya view through his philosophical writings, his harsh criticisms of Tsongkhapa can be seen as an attempt to distance Tsongkhapa from the Sakyapas. This point becomes especially salient when we compare Gorampa's analysis of the four extremes to that of Tsongkhapa and his Gelugpa successors. Unlike Gorampa's understanding of the fourfold negation, which results in the practitioner attaining a state of *spros bral*, Tsongkhapa's interpretation culminates in the practitioner achieving a carefully constructed concept of emptiness. In other words, Gorampa argues for a method of refuting the four extremes that results in the complete elimination of *all* concepts, while Tsongkhapa argues for a method that results in the elimination of only *certain kinds* of concepts.

Gorampa presents a brief characterization of Tsongkhapa's view in the *Synopsis*, suggesting that Tsongkhapa understands not existence, but rather *trueness*, to be the object of Madhyamaka analysis. He writes that in Tsongkhapa's view, "The Madhyamaka object of negation is only truth."<sup>23</sup> In other words, as opposed to Gorampa, who wishes to negate all existence in its entirety, Tsongkhapa claims that the goal for a Mādhyamika is to stop grasping at things as only *truly*, or ultimately existent.

This view is based on Tsongkhapa's claim that all phenomena have one nature with distinct conceptual aspects (*ngo bo gcig la ldog pa tha dad*). A detailed analysis of this claim lies beyond the scope of the current essay, but in brief, by this Tsongkhapa means that all phenomena have both a conventional and an ultimate aspect. Unenlightened beings are only capable of perceiving a thing's conventional aspect, while enlightened beings can perceive both the conventional and ultimate aspects simultaneously.<sup>24</sup> By only negating *ultimate* existence, Tsongkhapa essentially argues that while an enlightened being realizes that a thing's ultimate aspect is emptiness, that thing's conventional aspect is not affected. In other words, a realization of emptiness at the ultimate level does not affect anything at the conventional level.

Based on this assertion, Tsongkhapa argues that one shouldn't read the tetralemma literally. He reads Āryadeva's assertion of "Not existent, not nonexistent, not both, nor the absence of the essence of

<sup>22</sup> For a brief biography of Tsongkhapa, see Tsong kha pa 2006: ix-xii.

<sup>23</sup> *dbu ma'i dgag bya ni bden pa kho na yin*/ BPD: 187.

<sup>24</sup> For more on this, see Hopkins 2003: 896ff.

both” as being qualified in specific ways.<sup>25</sup> Tsongkhapa explains in his *Lam rim chen mo*:

You should understand that all methods for refuting the tetralemma [...] involve some qualifier such as “essentially.” Suppose that you refute the tetralemma without affixing any such qualification. You refute the position that things exist and you refute the position that things do not exist; you then say, “It is not the case that they both exist and do not exist.” If you now continue with the refutation, saying, “It is also not the case that they are neither existent nor nonexistent,” then you explicitly contradict your own position. If you then stubbornly insist, “Even so, there is no fallacy,” then the debate is over because we do not debate with the obstinate.<sup>26</sup>

And in the *Lta ba'i shan 'byed*, Gorampa presents Tsongkhapa's argument as follows:

The meaning of this is that there is no existence ultimately, and no nonexistence conventionally; therefore it is incorrect for the mind to apprehend them as such. However, it is not correct to accept the phrase “not existent, not nonexistent” literally, because by the law of double-negation (*dgag pa gnyis kyi rnal ma go ba*), if something is not existent it must be nonexistent, and if something is not nonexistent it must be existent.

In short, Tsongkhapa's view is based on the law of double-negation, which is related to the western concept of bivalence—the logical rule that the negation of one possibility necessarily implies the assertion of another. In short, bivalence implies an “either-or” scenario; there can be only two possibilities with respect to a given situation, excluding any third alternative. For example, today is *either* Monday, *or* it is some other day; there is no third possibility.

If one adheres to bivalence, then there is no way in which Āryadeva's assertion can be read literally: “Not existent, not nonexistent” is a contradiction. Because of this, Tsongkhapa reasons that the phrase “not existent” needs to be understood from the level of the ultimate truth, while “not nonexistent” should be understood from the level of the conventional. Based on this reading, Āryadeva's quote becomes, “Ultimately, things are not existent; conventionally, things are not non-existent.” This reading simultaneously rejects true, ultimate existence, while leaving conventions intact.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See note 6 above.

<sup>26</sup> Tsong kha pa 2002: 189.

<sup>27</sup> For Gorampa's formulation of Tsongkhapa, see BPD: 187ff.

When negations are qualified in this way, Tsongkhapa claims to be able to negate all four extremes, while preserving commonsense and the laws of logic. Tsongkhapa argues that it is necessary for a Mādhyamika to qualify the tetralemma in this way, because to negate any more than ultimate, inherent existence would lead to nihilism. If one were to deny existence, nonexistence, both, and neither altogether, without qualification, one would be effectively denying all possibility for conceptual thought. Tsongkhapa claims this to be equivalent to the view of Hwa-shang,<sup>28</sup> the Chinese scholar who later Tibetans insist was defeated in the “Great Debate” at Samye (Bsam yas), and whose view is nearly universally rejected by Tibetans.<sup>29</sup>

By upholding bivalence in the context of the four extremes, Tsongkhapa argues that he is avoiding the view that external phenomena are “neither existent nor nonexistent” (*yod min med min gyi lta ba*).<sup>30</sup> According to Tsongkhapa, logic must be compatible with commonsense. If one denies both existence and nonexistence altogether, one denies conceptual thought and necessarily falls into the extreme of nihilism. Negating the first two extremes of the tetralemma thereby leads to a contradiction, because if both possibilities are negated, there is no third alternative. (The same can also be said for negating the last two extremes of both and neither.)

Because he qualifies the tetralemma with respect to different perspectives, Tsongkhapa allows for the conventions of ordinary beings to continue to function in the world, even after the ultimate existence of things has been rejected. By making this philosophical move, Tsongkhapa preserves the efficacy of the conventional truth, and as such, emphasizes the importance of logical, conceptual thought in the process of realizing emptiness. Gorampa’s response to Tsongkhapa, and the conclusions that he draws regarding the efficacy of conventional truth, are influential. They are what ultimately lead later non-Sakyapas, in their arguments against Tsongkhapa’s views, to adopt aspects of Gorampa’s philosophy.

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<sup>28</sup> *blos mtha’ gang du’ang mi ’dzin pa dbu ma’i lta bar ’dod pa ni rgya nag ha shang gi lta ba dang mtshungs pa/* BPD: 188.

<sup>29</sup> There is a great deal of disagreement concerning the historicity of the debate at Samye; it is unclear whether the debate even took place. In Tibetan polemical texts, however, Hwa-shang’s so-called subitist view (in opposition to Kamalaśīla’s gradualist view, as articulated in his *Bhāvanākrama*) is widely rejected. Comparing an opponent’s view to that of Hwa-shang is considered a severe insult. For more on Hwa-shang in Tibetan polemics, see Cabezón 2007: 19-21. For a different take on Hwa-shang’s position, see Tomoko Makidono’s paper in this volume.

<sup>30</sup> Cabezón, 2007: 45.

### Gorampa's Response to Tsongkhapa<sup>31</sup>

Gorampa spends a significant amount of time in the *Synopsis* refuting Tsongkhapa's reading of the fourfold negation. Gorampa appears to believe that Tsongkhapa's view needs to be thoroughly refuted in order to properly demonstrate his own position. Such a refutation is also necessary, Gorampa seems to believe, in order to distance Tsongkhapa and his followers from the Sakya school.<sup>32</sup>

Gorampa primarily takes issue with Tsongkhapa's emphasis on refuting only ultimate, true existence. Recall that Tsongkhapa rejects ultimate, true existence because he believes that all phenomena are *ngo bo cig la ldog pa tha dad*. As such, ordinary persons only perceive the conventional aspects of objects, while enlightened beings perceive both the conventional and ultimate aspects simultaneously. Gorampa, however, does not support the claim that all objects have two aspects. Instead, he contends that the distinction between the conventional and ultimate truths is not based on external objects, but rather on the minds of apprehending subjects.<sup>33</sup> Ordinary persons only perceive the conventional truth, while enlightened beings *only* experience the ultimate truth. In other words, while Tsongkhapa works hard in his arguments to preserve conventions, Gorampa argues that from the standpoint of one who has realized the ultimate, there is no longer a need for such conventions.

Gorampa also argues that Tsongkhapa's qualification of each of the four extremes according to the ultimate and conventional truths goes against the very purpose of the tetralemma. He argues,

The meaning of "not existent, not nonexistent" explained as "not ultimately existent, not conventionally nonexistent," must be explained as such when abandoning permanence and annihilation depending upon the two truths; however, when explaining freedom from proliferations of the four extremes, this explanation is incorrect. The characteristic of freedom from proliferations of the four extremes is the perspective of the uncontaminated wisdom of the *Ārya's* meditative equipoise.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> It is worth mentioning here that Tsongkhapa lived just before Gorampa, and that the two scholars never engaged in any actual debates with each other. Tsongkhapa's texts respond to Gorampa's (as well as his own) Sakyapa predecessors. Gorampa's texts then respond directly to the views of Tsongkhapa. Finally, Tsongkhapa's Gelugpa followers (most notably Kedrup [*Mkhas grub*]) respond to Gorampa's criticisms, defending their interpretation of Tsongkhapa's own views.

<sup>32</sup> For another account of debates between Tsongkhapa and Gorampa, see Thakchoe 2007.

<sup>33</sup> *blo tsam dbye gzhir bzhed par snang*. BPD: 114.

<sup>34</sup> *yod min med min gyi don don dam du yod pa ma yin/ kun rdzob tu med pa ma yin ces pa la 'chad pa ni bden pa gnyis char la ltos nas rtag chad spang pa'i skabs 'ga' zhig tu de ltar 'chad dgos pa yod kyang/ mtha' bzhi'i spros bral gyi tshe de ltar 'chad du mi rung*

Gorampa suggests here that the tetralemma is a special kind of reasoning, distinct from the more commonsense, two-fold *dilemma*. When analyzing only two possibilities, such as permanence and annihilation, it is perfectly reasonable to qualify the possibilities according to the two truths. But because Āryadeva mentions *four* possibilities, this type of qualification is unacceptable. The fourfold negation is a type of reasoning that applies to ultimate analysis, the end result of which is the pure, nonconceptual meditative state of an *Ārya*.

Gorampa also responds to Tsongkhapa's accusations, which compare him to Hwa-shang. Gorampa contends that his own view is one that involves analysis and a gradualist path:

The Chinese scholar Hwa-shang asserts that the ultimate view is realized when, having eliminated concepts without analyzing the truth of the nature of things, one merely does not think of anything at all. This is refuted by the scriptures and reasonings of the learned Kamalaśīla.<sup>35</sup> Here, having established the natural state of objects by reasoning which is explained in Madhyamaka scriptures, the conceptual objects of extremists are refuted individually, so one uses the term, "realizing the Madhyamaka view" for the mere not finding of any proliferations, such as existence and nonexistence.<sup>36</sup>

Here, Gorampa emphasizes that while the final, ultimate view is free from concepts, conceptual analysis is nevertheless a necessary step in realizing such a nonconceptual state. On Hwa-shang's view, one simply stops thinking, without any analysis whatsoever. Realization of the ultimate truth, however, is a mental state that only arises after analysis of each of the four extreme views.

In short, Gorampa maintains that the refutation of the four extremes occurs solely at the ultimate level, and that it therefore must occur in stages. One begins by using analysis to refute existence, then refute nonexistence, both, and neither, in turn.<sup>37</sup> When contrasted with Tsongkhapa's qualified treatment of the four extremes, which does not necessarily adhere to a specific sequence

*ste/ mtha' bzhi'i spros bral mtshan nyid pa ni 'phags pa'i mnyam gzhas zag pa med pa'i ye shes kyi gzigs ngo yin* BPD: 192.

<sup>35</sup> Gorampa is most likely referring to his *Bhāvanākrama*.

<sup>36</sup> *rgya nag ha shang gis ni gnas lugs kyi don la brtags dpyad mi byed par rtogs pa rang dgar bkag nas ci'ang yid la mi byed pa tsam la lta ba mthar thug rtogs par 'dod pa yin zhang/ de nyid mkhas pa ka ma la shi las lung dang rigs pas sun phyung ba yin la 'dir ni dbu ma'i gzhung lugs las bshad pa'i rigs pa rnams kyis yul gyi gnas lugs gtan la phab nas mthar 'dzin gyi zhen yul re re nas sun phyung ste mthar yod med la sogs pa'i spros pa gang yang ma rnyed pa tsam la dbu ma'i lta ba rtogs zhes pa'i tha snyad mdzad pa yin pa'i phyir ro/* BPD: 194.

<sup>37</sup> *mdor na mtha' bzhi rim pa bzhin du 'gog pa'o/ bzhi pa phan chad kyi 'dzin stangs mi srid pas thug med du mi 'gyur ro/* BPD: 198.

by which they are to be negated, we can begin to see that these two thinkers understand the function of the tetralemma in radically different ways. Gorampa's literal, process-oriented reading of the tetralemma turns it into a soteriological tool; that is, it is something that, when used correctly, can lead a practitioner all the way to Buddhahood. Once one eliminates the four extremes of conceptual constructs and arrives at a state of *spros bral*, one directly experiences the ultimate. Tsongkhapa's interpretive reading of the tetralemma, on the other hand, makes it function as a logical tool; it is something that, when used correctly, serves to help a practitioner cultivate a specific concept of emptiness. While a correct conceptual understanding of emptiness serves as the basis for later meditative practices, it does not lead a practitioner to enlightenment on its own.

### The Tetralemma as a Soteriological Tool

Gorampa's use of the tetralemma as a soteriological tool has important implications. If, contrary to Tsongkhapa, the end result of the fourfold negation is a state free from concepts, and if the result of this fourfold negation also leads a practitioner all the way to the "uncontaminated wisdom of the *Ārya's* meditative equipoise,"<sup>38</sup> then an *Ārya's* meditative state—as well as a Buddha's wisdom, which follows from that state—must be free from concepts. As Gorampa makes clear, however, the nonconceptual state that is the result of careful analysis should not be mistaken to be equivalent to the nonconceptual state claimed by those who espouse an extreme, anti-conceptual view. Logical analysis is essential on the Madhyamaka path to enlightenment, even though logic and concepts are given up at the end of this path.

Because Gorampa's arguments stress that the end result of the fourfold negation is a state of *spros bral*, entirely free from conceptual constructs, the particular methods that one employs to arrive at that state, which are based on conceptual constructs, are ultimately not important. The process of negating the four extremes is a process of cultivating an enlightened mind by means of eliminating concepts. One begins by negating the first extreme of existence, and then proceeds through the negation of nonexistence, both, and neither, in succession, until all four are realized simultaneously in their entirety. Because this approach is focused on eliminating concepts, rather than cultivating them, Gorampa acknowledges that there may be alternative methods that different practitioners can employ to arrive at the same result.

An analogy may be helpful to illustrate this point. Suppose that I wish to travel from Chicago to New York. It would be equally possible for me to travel by plane, by bus, or by car. Certain limita-

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<sup>38</sup> See note 34.

tions, however, such as financial or time constraints, might dictate which method I choose. Once I actually arrive in New York, however, the way that I traveled to get there is no longer relevant. My ultimate goal was to arrive in New York, and provided that I traveled within certain constraints (moving from west to east rather than from north to south, for example), I will have been able to reach my destination successfully. Certain methods of travel may be more or less efficient, or difficult, or expensive, but they are all capable of helping me to arrive at my destination. In the same way, Gorampa's method for understanding the fourfold negation allows for a multiplicity of methods for attaining the nonconceptual state, provided that those methods result in a state of *spros bral*.

Tsongkhapa's understanding of the tetralemma, however, turns it into a tool through which one cultivates one very specific concept of emptiness. For Tsongkhapa, the process is inextricably tied to the end result: a conceptual understanding of emptiness, which is the absence of ultimate, inherent existence, and the goal of specific types of reasoning. According to Tsongkhapa's model, if one fails to develop this concept correctly, one will never attain a realization of the ultimate. Tsongkhapa argues in his *Lam rim chen mo*:

In order to be sure that a certain person is not present, you must know the absent person. Likewise, in order to be certain of the meaning of 'selflessness' or 'the lack of intrinsic existence,' you must carefully identify the self, or intrinsic nature, that does not exist.<sup>39</sup>

According to Tsongkhapa, one must very carefully, conceptually understand the meaning of intrinsic, ultimate existence before attaining enlightenment. This conceptual construct—intrinsic, ultimate existence—serves as the object of meditation that eventually leads a practitioner to enlightenment. The fourfold negation, however, only results in the formulation of this carefully constructed concept. It does not, like Gorampa's method, lead to enlightenment on its own.

### **Svātantrika, Prāsaṅgika, and *spros bral***

Gorampa's tolerance of other views is apparent in the *Synopsis* in his treatment of the distinction between the so-called Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika schools.<sup>40</sup> Gorampa pays a considerable amount of

<sup>39</sup> Tsong kha pa 2002: 126.

<sup>40</sup> These two "sub-schools" of Madhyamaka are, of course, designations used by Tibetans to refer to two distinct styles of reasoning, following the Indian scholars Buddhapālita and Bhāviveka. While Tsongkhapa argues that these two schools differ in terms of their views regarding ultimate truth, Gorampa contends that their distinction is a matter of method, but not of final view. For more on these schools, see Dreyfus and McClintock 2003.

attention to delineating the differences between these two subschools, mostly in order to refute Tsongkhapa's "eight difficult points" on the same subject.<sup>41</sup> After painstakingly examining the differences between Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika, Gorampa concludes that the distinction between the two is only made at the conventional level.<sup>42</sup> Although a detailed account of Gorampa's analysis lies beyond the scope of the present essay, his conclusion is significant in light of our discussion to this point.

The Svātantrika and the Prāsaṅgika positions differ—at times greatly—with respect to the correct use of logic and conceptual constructs, and the proper methods of argumentation. Gorampa even suggests that *every single verse* in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhya-makārikā* can be interpreted differently depending on whether one employs Svātantra or Prāsaṅga reasoning.<sup>43</sup> With respect to the ultimate truth, however, both schools agree that all phenomena are free from conceptual constructs.<sup>44</sup> Multiple methods, therefore, can be understood as being equally capable of leading a practitioner to the same ultimate result.<sup>45</sup>

Gorampa was not necessarily ecumenically minded. He composed his texts primarily in order to distinguish the "mainstream" Sakyapa view from the views of his philosophical opponents, after all. Still, his claim that the Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika methods are equally capable of resulting in *spros bral* is significant when understood in terms of his treatment of the fourfold negation. His conclusion about the validity of the Svātantrika and the Prāsaṅgika positions, like his conclusion about the function of the tetralemma, suggests that Gorampa was open to the possibility of multiple paths leading to the same experience of non-conceptuality.

Moreover, because Gorampa's philosophical views involve an emphasis on conceptual reasoning while simultaneously leading a practitioner toward a state that is free from concepts, his arguments are well suited to be appropriated by non-Sakyapas who similarly emphasize nonconceptuality. The early twentieth-century Nyingma scholar Jamgon Ju Mipham ('Jam mgon 'Ju mi pham, 1846-1912), for example, successfully utilizes aspects of Gorampa's philosophy without compromising the views of his own tradition. Mipham, like

<sup>41</sup> For more on the Eight Difficult Points, see Ruegg 2002.

<sup>42</sup> *don dam gyi lta ba bskyed tshul gyi sgo nas thal 'gyur ba dang/ rang rgyud pa gnyis ste/ don dam gyi 'dod tshul la ni khyad par med do/ BPD: 59.*

<sup>43</sup> BPD: 291.

<sup>44</sup> *'di gnyis kyi khyad par don dam gyi lta ba'i sgo nas 'byed pa mi 'thad de gnyis ka'ang mtha' bzhi rim pa bzhin bkag nas mtha' bzhi'i spros bral 'dod par mtshungs pa'i phyir ro/ BPD: 254.*

<sup>45</sup> Although Gorampa expresses a certain amount of tolerance for the Svātantrika view, he by no means aligns himself with the Svātantrikas. He, like most Tibetan Buddhists, firmly aligns his own view with that of the Prāsaṅgikas. Although he understands the Prāsaṅgika school to be superior, he views the Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika distinction in terms of method, rather than final view.

Gorampa, finds fault with Tsongkhapa's emphasis on only negating ultimate existence. In his *Beacon of Certainty*, he argues that Tsongkhapa wrongly makes a distinction between an object of negation (*dgag bya*) and the basis of that negation (*dgag gzhi*). Mipham contends that because Tsongkhapa only eliminates ultimate existence but does not eliminate all aspects of existence in their entirety, he fails to eliminate the basis of negation. In other words, Tsongkhapa does not go far enough (*khyab chung ba*) in his analysis.<sup>46</sup>

With respect to the process of eliminating the four extremes, Mipham argues that an ordinary person cannot understand the simultaneous refutation of all four possibilities. Instead, one must begin with the analysis of the first extreme, and then realize the negation of the other three in succession. To arrive at a nonconceptual state without first performing analysis in this way would be "just like a grain of wheat producing a sprout of rice."<sup>47</sup> This, of course, serves as a reminder that every result must be produced from a relevant cause. Mipham's reasoning simultaneously affirms Gorampa's position, that all four extremes are to be realized in succession, and responds to Tsongkhapa's qualm, that nonconceptuality doesn't require analysis first.

A sustained analysis of Gorampa's philosophy as it might relate to Sakya, Kagyu, and Nyingma meditative practices remains to be done. However, it is clear that Gorampa's philosophical reasoning leaves open the possibility for multiple styles of practice, so long as those practices begin with logical analysis and end in a state that is free from conceptual elaborations. In short, Gorampa asserts that freedom from conceptual constructs is freedom from conceptual constructs. If one analyzes reality in a way that ultimately leads to this realization, then one is correctly following the Madhyamaka path, he contends. Unlike Tsongkhapa's analysis of the fourfold negation, which results in a singular, conceptual emptiness that is necessary for subsequent success on the path to Enlightenment, Gorampa's model allows for different methods that all lead to the same experience of *spros bral*. It doesn't matter whether one is a Svātantrika or Prāsaṅgika, practicing Dzogchen (*rdzogs chen*), Mahāmudrā, or Lamdre (*lam 'bras*); it is possible for practitioners of distinct paths to reach the same ultimate result.

### Abbreviations

BPD = *dbu ma'i spyi don*

MMK = *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*

<sup>46</sup> For more on Mipham's use of Gorampa's philosophical ideas, see Petit 2002: 135-140.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: 155.

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INSTRUCTIONS ON THE VIEW (*LTA KHRID*) OF THE TWO TRUTHS:  
PRAJÑĀRAŚMĪ'S (1518-1584) *BDEN GNYIS GSAL BA'I SGRON ME*<sup>1</sup>

Marc-Henri Deroche

Since the time of the Tibetan emperor Khri srong lde'u bstan (reign 755-ca. 800), the Mādhyamika position, originally taught by Nāgārjuna, has represented the supreme philosophical view (*dr̥ṣṭi, lta ba*) of Tibetan Buddhism. It is the keystone of Tibetan Buddhist doxographies (*siddhānta, grub mtha'*) that classify Indian Buddhist philosophical schools. One of the Mādhyamika School's primary doctrines, the doctrine of the two truths (*satya-dvaya, bden gnyis*)—relative truth (*saṃvṛitisatya, kun rdzob kyi bden pa*) and absolute truth (*paramārthasatya, don dam gyi bden pa*)—represents the quintessence of the “middle path” (*madhyamā pratipad, dbu ma'i lam*) that avoids all extremes. Inspired by the Buddha's teaching of a middle path that avoids both hedonism and asceticism, the Mādhyamika School articulates a metaphysical middle path that avoids both eternalism and nihilism.

As the correct Buddhist view *par excellence*, Madhyamaka defines both Tibetan Buddhist orthodoxy and orthopraxy. This is because the practical implementation of the two truths entails the conjunction of view (*dr̥ṣṭi, lta ba*, i.e. orthodoxy) and conduct (*caryā, spyod pa*, i.e. orthopraxy). The two truths, relative and absolute, form the “basis” (*gzhi*) of Tibetan Buddhist practice. The two collections (*dviṣambhāra, tshogs gnyis*) of merit (*punya, bsod nams*) and wisdom (*jñāna, ye shes*) correspond to the two truths, respectively, and form the “path” (*lam*) of Tibetan Buddhism. In a parallel way, the “fruit” (*bras bu*) or result of practice is constituted by the two kinds of Buddha-bodies: the form bodies (*rūpakāya, gzugs kyi sku*), corresponding to relative truth, and the absolute body (*dharmakāya, chos kyi sku*), corresponding to absolute truth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This threefold conception of the two truths into ground, path, and result, is articulated by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Karmapa Rang 'byung rdo rje (1284-1339) in the famous *Rje rang byung zhabs kyis mdzad pa'i nges don phyag rgya chen po'i smon lam* 2006: 619.2-4. / *rtag chad mtha' bral bden gnyis gzhi yi don // sgro skur mtha' bral tshogs gnyis lam mchog gis // srid zhi'i mtha' bral don gnyis 'bras thob pa'i // gol 'chugs med pa'i chos dang phrad par shog.*

Because of its centrality to *Mahāyāna* soteriology, including *Mantrayāna* and its skillful means, interpretations of Madhyamaka have functioned as sectarian markers for the competing Buddhist orders in Tibet. For the same reason, Madhyamaka interpretations have also served as the ground for Buddhist eclectic syntheses. Such interpretations, often focusing on the two truths and the classification of Mādhyamika sub-schools, have been the source for considerable creativity and polemic in Tibetan literature.

My goal is to present here one specific Tibetan treatise on the two truths, a treatise that focuses on the quest for truth along the *yogin's* path: *The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths* (*Bden gnyis gsal ba'i sgron me*), hereafter named the *Lamp*, an instruction on the view (*lta khrid*) of the two truths of Madhyamaka, written by the eclectic sixteenth-century Tibetan author Prajñāraśmi.

Written during a period marked by an intensification of sectarian and scholastic disputes, this treatise chooses to go back to Indian and early Bka' gdams pa sources with an emphasis on realization. It does so through a critical inquiry into the nature of knowledge itself. For these reasons, the *Lamp* is a valuable witness of contemplative Madhyamaka in Tibet during the period concluding the complete reception and assimilation of its Indian sources by Tibetan authors.

To this day, the text has remained an object of study for contemporary Tibetan Buddhist teachers like the late Dezhung Rinpoche (Sde gzhung rin po che, 1906-1987)<sup>3</sup> and Nyichang Khentrul Rinpoche (Nyi lchang mkhan sprul rin po che, b. 1935).<sup>4</sup> Joshua Schapiro also informed me about the insertion of most of Prajñāraśmi's *Lamp* in one of Rdza Dpal sprul rin po che's (1808-1887) work.<sup>5</sup>

## 1. Presentation

### 1.1. Prajñāraśmi: *Dge bshes, Gter ston*, and "Ris med" Figure of 16<sup>th</sup> century Tibet

Prajñāraśmi, alias 'Phreng po gter ston Shes rab 'od zer (1518-1584), is remembered in the Rnying ma tradition as the founder of Dpal ri monastery in 'Phyong rgyas, formerly one of the six main mother-monasteries (*rtsa ba'i ma dgon chen mo*) of the Rnying ma tradition.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication of Matthew Kapstein, Paris, September 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Personal communication of Nyichang Khentrul Rinpoche himself, Kyōto, November 2009.

<sup>5</sup> *Theg chen lta khrid bden gnyis rab tu gsal ba*. There Dpal sprul copies and summarizes Prajñāraśmi's *Lamp* without explicitly quoting it. He also includes other instructions, particularly on the nature of mind (*sems nyid*). Incidentally, Dpal sprul's text has no colophon and no formal signature.

<sup>6</sup> Formerly, the list of the six Rnying ma main mother-monasteries included three monasteries in upper Tibet (*stod na*): Rdo rje brag, Smin grol gling and Dpal ri, and three monasteries in lower Tibet (*smad na*): Kaḥ thog, Rdzogs chen and Dpal yul. Nevertheless, Dpal ri declined in central Tibet during modern times while

Dpal ri is where the great 'Jigs med gling pa (1729/1730-1798) was born and obtained the first revelation of the *Klong chen snying thig*.<sup>7</sup> The name Prajñāraśmi is the Sanskrit equivalent of his Tibetan religious name Shes rab 'od zer and is the name that he used for himself in his own works.<sup>8</sup> Prajñāraśmi was the original progenitor of the classification of the "Eight Great Chariots of the Lineages of Attainment"<sup>9</sup> that 'Jam mgon Kong sprul (1813-1899) followed in his *Gdams ngag mdzod*,<sup>10</sup> and which formed one of the central paradigms of the so-called *Ris med* movement.<sup>11</sup>

According to his biographies,<sup>12</sup> Prajñāraśmi had an eclectic itinerary at the very time of the intensification of sectarian conflicts between what Tucci called the "Reds and the Yellows."<sup>13</sup> He was first trained in the monastery of E waṃ in Thank skya, between Dga' ldan and 'Bri gung, where he received numerous transmissions from Rdo rgyal ba, a disciple of Śākya mchog ldan (1428-1507). He also studied the teachings of the Dge lugs order (probably in the nearby monastery of Cha dkar) with Dge 'dun bstan pa dar rgyas (1473-1568), who became the 22<sup>nd</sup> abbot of Dga' ldan in 1565. Having mastered scholastic studies, Prajñāraśmi was awarded the title of *dge bshes* in both the Sa skya and Dge lugs traditions.

During the great dispute between Dga' ldan and 'Bri gung in 1535, Prajñāraśmi found refuge in 'Bri gung, though his hagiography simply states that he was strongly attracted by the charisma of 'Bri gung Rin chen phun tshogs (1509-1557). Once in 'Bri gung, however, he did not escape the complex sectarian relations of his time. He was soon asked to make a public defense of the *Dgongs*

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Zhe chen flourished in Khams. The list thus evolved to include the following six monasteries: Rdo rje brag and Smin grol gling (*stod na*), Zhe chen and Rdzogs chen (*bar na*), Kaḥ thog and Dpal yul (*smad na*). See *Rdzogs chen chos 'byung* 2004: 810-813. Aware of Dpal ri's great significance, Nyichang Rinpoche is establishing a new Dpal ri theg mchog gling monastery in Kalimpong. The original Dpal ri monastery in Tibet has only a few monks at present. Nevertheless, it plays an important function by maintaining the Bang so dmar po, Srong btsan sgam po's tomb in 'Phyong rgyas. It also has close ties with the nunnery of Tshe ring ljongs founded by 'Jigs med gling pa in the neighboring valley (fieldwork in 'Phyong rgyas, May 2010).

<sup>7</sup> *Jigs med gling pa'i rnam thar* 1998: 6-33; Goodman 1992: 137-142; Gyatso 1998: 130-132; van Schaik 2006: 21-23.

<sup>8</sup> For this reason, in this paper concerned with one of his works, the *Lamp*, we refer mainly to him as Prajñāraśmi.

<sup>9</sup> According to this classification, the Eight Lineages of Attainment are: the Rnying ma pa, Bka' gdams pa, Shangs pa bka' brgyud, Lam 'bras, Mar pa bka' brgyud, Zhi byed (with Bcod yul), Sbyor drug (the Six Yogas of the *Kālacakratāntra*) and Rdo rje gsum gyi bsnyen grub.

<sup>10</sup> *Gdams ngag mdzod* 1971: vol. 12, 645-646. This reference was first given in Kapstein 1996.

<sup>11</sup> Deroche 2009.

<sup>12</sup> *Gu ru bkra shis chos 'byung* 1990: 544-550; *Gter ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar* 1976-1980: 559-563; *Nor bu'i do shal* 1976: 282.6-286.2; *Zhe chen chos 'byung* 1994: 262-269; *Rdzogs chen chos 'byung chen mo* 2004: 829-835. For a complete biography with complementary historical references, see Deroche forthcoming.

<sup>13</sup> Tucci 1949: vol. 1, 39-57.

*gcig*, the doctrine of the 'Bri gung order's founder, 'Jig rten mgon po (1143-1217), against the critiques of Sa skya paṇḍita's (1182-1251) *Sdom gsum rab byed*, an important work that the young *dge bshes* had certainly studied in his former Sa skya monastery.

While at 'Bri gung, Prajñāraśmi received the whole transmission of Rin chen phun tshogs, which primarily were Bka' brgyud and Rnying ma teachings. He fully embraced the strong contemplative spirit of these traditions and lived for a decade in the area of Gzho stod gter sgrom (associated with Padmasambhava and Ye shes mtsho rgyal). He eventually received a visionary revelation of the *Grol thig dgongs pa rang grol* and became a famous treasure revealer (*gter ston*). He likely remained most of his life in his hermitage in 'Phreng po, a small village inside Rdo rje brag's domain—this before Byang bdag Bkra shis stobs rgyal (1550-1602) moved his contemplative community to what was later formally established as Rdo rje brag monastery.

Because of his vast aura, Prajñāraśmi was invited by the rulers of 'Phyong rgyas, ministers of the Phag mo gru pa sovereigns (*gong ma*), to establish a Rnying ma monastery in their land consecrated by the ancient emperors' tombs. Prajñāraśmi established Dpal ri theg chen gling in 1571 and for the auspicious occasion made a revision of the *Padma thang yig*. This revision was later used by the 5<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682)<sup>14</sup> (himself born into the 'Phyong rgyas family).

Prajñāraśmi was thus trained within all four main orders of Tibetan Buddhism. Having directly encountered fierce sectarian quarrels, both in the political and scholastic spheres, he fully embraced the detached life of a contemplative hermit. Because he had been first trained as a scholar, he was honored with the title "Precious *dge bshes gter ston* Shes rab 'od zer coming from 'Phreng po [or 'Phrang sgo]" (*'phrang sgo nas dge bshes rin po che gter ston shes rab 'od zer*),<sup>15</sup> the association of *dge bshes* and *gter ston* being a singular combination of the ideals of being a scholar and an accomplished *yogin* (*mkhas grub*).

## 1.2. Sources and Orientation of *The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths*

When Prajñāraśmi was only a young *dge bshes*, it is said<sup>16</sup> that he met Rin chen phun tshogs for the first time while the latter was giving a commentary on the three following verses of Śāntideva (ca. 685-763)'s *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, from the famous ninth chapter on wisdom:

The Buddha taught that the goal  
Of all these branches [of the five perfections] is wisdom.

<sup>14</sup> Tucci 1949: vol. 1, 110-115.

<sup>15</sup> *Sngags 'chang chen mo kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam thar* 1980: 252.

<sup>16</sup> *Zhe chen chos 'byung* 1994: 264-265; *Rdzogs chen chos 'byung* 2004: 831.

This is why those who aspire to pacify sufferings  
Must generate wisdom.

[As for the objects of wisdom,] two truths are distinguished:  
Relative truth and absolute truth.  
Absolute truth is not an object of the intellect's (*buddhi, blo*)  
experience.  
Intellect is said to be relative truth.

*Yogin* and ordinary beings  
See the world [which is relative truth] in two different ways.  
[The view of] the world possessed by ordinary beings  
Is severed by [the view of] the world possessed by *yogin*.<sup>17</sup>

These strophes are of decisive importance for understanding Prajñā-  
raśmi's intention in the *Lamp*. Having first established the central  
importance of wisdom in Buddhist soteriology, Śāntideva continues  
with an interpretation of the two truths wherein the intellect or  
conceptual mind belongs to relative truth. As Prajñāraśmi will  
argue, the two truths are not only a subject for virtuosi scholars.  
Serious reflection on the two truths is a method for radically  
changing one's perspective and one's mind. After a realization of the  
two truths, the *yogin* has a radically different vision of the world.

It is said that Rin chen phun tshogs elaborated his commentary  
on Śāntideva with the practical instructions of the Bka' brgyud  
lineage. Having heard these explanations, Prajñāraśmi decided to  
emulate the *yogin's* way of life himself. In the *Lamp*, Prajñāraśmi  
decides to avoid the scholastic disputes in order to emphasize the  
yogic realization. He also avoids any reference to later Tibetan  
schools or authors, preferring to go back to the roots of  
Madhyamaka in Tibet.

David Seyfort Ruegg describes four periods of Indian  
Madhyamaka's reception and assimilation in Tibet.<sup>18</sup> They are:

- I. Preliminary assimilation (mainly in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> c.)
- II. Full assimilation (end of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> c.)

<sup>17</sup> Bhattacharya (ed.) 1960: 185. *imaṃ parikaraṃ sarvaṃ prajñārthaṃ hi munir jagau /  
tasmād utpādayet prajñāṃ duḥkhanivṛttikāṅkṣayā // 1*  
*yan lag 'di dag thams cad ni // thub pa'i shes rab don du gsungs // de yi phyir na sdug*  
*bsngal dag / zhi bar 'dod pas shes rab bskyed // 1*

*saṃvṛtiḥ paramārthāś ca satyadvayam idaṃ matam /  
buddher agocaras tattvaṃ buddhiḥ saṃvṛtir ucyate // 2*  
*kun rdzob dang ni don dam ste // 'di ni bden pa gnyis su 'dod // don dam blo yi spyod*  
*yul min // blo ni kun rdzob yin par brjod // 2*

*tatra loko dvidhā dr̥ṣṭo yogo prakṛtakas tathā /  
tatra prakṛtako loko yogilokena bādhyate // 3*  
*de la 'jig rten rnam gnyis mthong // rnal 'byor pa dang phal pa 'o // de la 'jig rten phal*  
*pa ni // rnal 'byor 'jig rten gyis gnod cing // 3.*

<sup>18</sup> Ruegg 1980: 277-279.

III. Classical period (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> c.)

IV. Scholastic period (16<sup>th</sup> c. onwards)

Our present text corresponds to the fourth period, a period marked by the repetition and classification of previous interpretations. The *Lamp* does repeat former statements about the two truths, though a look at his chosen sources is striking. Its sole sources are *sūtras*, quotations from the illustrious Indian masters, and works by early Bka' gdams pa. The *Lamp* is thus a sixteenth century treatise based on sources up to the eleventh century only. It avoids any reference to later authors or to the Tibetan Buddhist orders that established their sectarian identities during Ruegg's second phase (end of the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries).

The following authors and their *śāstra*, quoted by Prajñāraśmi, form the fundamental Madhyamaka sources for all Tibetan orders:

- Nāgārjuna (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c.), *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*Dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab*);
- Śāntideva (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> c.), *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (*Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*);
- Jñānagarbha (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> c.), *Satyadvayavibhaṅgakārikā* (*Bden pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*);
- The tantric Nāgārjuna (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> c.), *Pañcakrama* (*Rim pa lnga*).
- Atīśa (980-1054), *Satyadvayāvatāra* (*Bden pa gnyis la 'jug pa*), a text which synthesizes all the sources mentioned above.
- 'Brom ston Rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas (1005-1064), the main Tibetan disciple of Atīśa;
- Spyan snga tshul khriims 'bar (1038-1103), one of 'Brom ston pa's three main disciples (*Skumched gsum*), and considered to be the origin of the transmission of Atīśa's *Introduction to the Two Truths*.<sup>19</sup>

As an instruction on the view (*lta khrid*) of Madhyamaka, the *Lamp* does not belong to the doxographical (*grub mtha'*) genre. The *Lamp* focuses only on Madhyamaka and avoids any mention of Mādhyamika sub-schools. In other works, Prajñāraśmi expresses his disapproval for discussions based on the Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika distinction.<sup>20</sup> He also advocates that Maitreya, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu be considered Mādhyamikas, which allows him to make a

<sup>19</sup> *Bod kyi dbu ma'i lta ba'i 'chad nyan dar tshul blo gsal mig 'byed* 2004: 124. *Spyan snga bas jo bo'i "Bden gnyis la 'jug pa" zhes pa 'chad nyan rgya cher mdzad pa : gang ltar skabs der jo bo rje'i "Bden gnyis la 'jug pa" zhes pa'i bshad rgyun ches dar ba ni spyan snga ba'i bka' drin las byung bar bshad do* |.

<sup>20</sup> *Thos bsam 'chi med kyi bdud rtsi* 1977: 239.4-5. | *gsang chen rgyud dang dbu sems shing rta'i srol // klu sgrub dgongs pa thal rang srol gnyis kyis // legs par bkral ba'i bshad srol zla med pa // de dag phal cher 'khyog po'i lam du bkral* |.

larger argument for a *Gzhan stong* interpretation of Madhyamaka.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, we will see that the Great Madhyamaka propounded in the *Lamp*, (as elsewhere in his corpus),<sup>22</sup> is manifestly Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, even if the term Prāsaṅgika is not used. 'Ju Mi pham rnam rgyal rgya mtsho (1846-1912) was to later feature a similar exegesis for his Rnying ma audience.<sup>23</sup>

From the time of Rje Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419), scholastic approaches to Madhyamaka developed greatly in Tibet. In his commentaries upon Candrakīrti, Tsong kha pa also made special interpretations that became central for the Dge lugs order. Tsong kha pa developed his exegesis by taking knowable objects (*shes bya*) to be the basis for dividing the two truths. In this line of thinking, every single phenomenon can be considered in its aspect of relative truth or in its aspect of absolute truth. These two aspects of each phenomenon are experienced by two different cognitions. One of Tsong kha pa's contributions was to maintain the simultaneity of these two cognitions, even for Noble Ones (*ārya*, *phags pa*) or Buddhas, and not as two opposite cognitions like ordinary beings' cognitions versus the Nobles' cognitions.<sup>24</sup>

In contradistinction to Tsong kha pa, Go rams pa bsod nams seng ge (1429-1489) opted for a subjective and gnoseological perspective on the two truths.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Prajñāraśmi's *Lamp* first explains how all objects must be realized according the two truths, and then explains how the mode of being (*gnas lugs*) of knowledge itself must be realized according to the two truths. Prajñāraśmi, relying on the authority of the first Bka' gdams pa, asserts that the two truths are only distinguished according to the two opposite perspectives of knowledge, correct and mistaken.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*: 234.4-5. / *gangs ri'i khrod 'dir mi pham rgyal ba dang // thogs med mched kyi gzhung bzang ngo mtshar can / dbu sems so sor 'grel byed rnam mang yang // gang de dbu ma'i gzhung du gdon mi za /*

<sup>22</sup> In the following extract, his propounded type of "Great Madhyamaka" proceeds by the refutation of any reification of wisdom. *Sgom pa 'chi med kyi bdud rtsi* 1977: 253.4-5. / *gang shar rang sems mdo sems thun mong ba // gzung 'dzin 'gog pa rnam brdzun dbu ma'i lugs // gnyis med ye shes bden grub 'gog pa yis // lta ba'i rnam gzhag dbu ma chen por 'dod /*

<sup>23</sup> Ehrhard 1988.

<sup>24</sup> Newland 1992: 49. "These distinctions are critical to the Ge-luk-pa philosophical project, the preservation of non-paradoxical compatibility between the two truths. The conventional mind that finds a table is not discredited by the ultimate mind that finds the emptiness of the table. The first is valid because the table (a conventional truth) does exist; the second is also valid because the table's real nature is an emptiness of inherent existence (an ultimate truth)."

<sup>25</sup> *Dbu ma spyi don nges don rab gsal* 1969: 375b.1-2. *dbu ma'i gzhung lugs 'dir ni yul rang ngos nas bden pa gnyis su dbyer med kyi snang ba'i dngos po gcig la'ang yul can brdzun pa mthong ba dang / yang dag mthong ba gnyis sam / 'khrul ma 'khrul gnyis sam / rmongs ma rmongs gnyis sam / phyin ci log ma log gnyis sam / tshad ma yin min gnyis kyis mthong tshul gyi sgo nas kun rdzob bden pa dang / don dam bden pa gnyis su phye ba ste /* On the different perspectives of Tsong kha pa and Go rams pa on the two truths, see Takchoe 2007. See also Constance Kassor's paper in the present volume, with particular reference to the text of Go rams pa here quoted.

Prajñāraśmi's contemporary the 8<sup>th</sup> Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507-1554) undertook a vast commentary upon the works of Candrakīrti, wherein he refuted the positions of other scholars like Dol po pa, Śākya mchog ldan, Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal and Tsong kha pa. As David Seyfort Ruegg has shown,<sup>26</sup> Mi bskyod rdo rje claimed to be the heir of three lineages of Madhyamaka: from Nāropa and Maitrīpada through the Bka' brgyud lineage, from Atīśa through the Bka' gdams pa lineage, and from Pa tshab lo tsā ba Nyi ma grags. Confronted by what he judged to be excessive sophistication,<sup>27</sup> the 8<sup>th</sup> Karmapa intended to restore the Bka' gdams pa lineage's original contemplative approach.

Contrary to the 8<sup>th</sup> Karmapa, Prajñāraśmi's *Lamp* avoids any polemics. He essentially propounds the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka's presentation of the two truths according to the early Bka' gdams pa. By doing so, he also emphasizes, in his own way, the contemplative approach of Atīśa's lineage.

Having presented the historical context of the *Lamp*'s composition, we shall now examine the philosophical nature of its argument about the two truths.

### 1.3. Philosophical Argument

The *Lamp* resorts to dyads in order to show how the doctrine of the two truths can function as a means to realize non-dual truth. The first dyad emphasizes the contemplative approach through articulating the division of the teaching to be realized (*rtogs par bya ba'i chos*) and the teaching to be practiced (*nyams su blang ba'i chos*). The philosophical nature of the two truths is presented under the heading of the first, while the second deals with the soteriological progression of the path.

The other philosophical dyads that we will discuss are thus found in the section of the teaching to be realized, which deals with the view. There, one finds the distinction between the mode of being of general, knowable phenomena (*shes bya spyi'i chos kyi gnas lugs*) and the mode of being of knowledge itself (*shes rang gi gnas lugs*). The next dyad of the argument, applied to both objects and subjects, is the distinction of the two truths, and, in the ultimate sense, the inseparability of the two truths: their conjunction (*yuganaddha, zung 'jug*).

Concerning the subdivisions of relative truth, the author makes use of the two presentations of Svātantrika and Prāsaṅgika, even if their names remain implicit. To build his argument, he quotes, in order, the first three masters of the Bka' gdams pa lineage: Atīśa, 'Brom ston pa, and Sphyan snga tshul khriims 'bar. Via a quotation from Atīśa, he divides relative truth into correct (*tathya-samvṛti, yang*

<sup>26</sup> Ruegg 1988.

<sup>27</sup> Williams 1983.

*dag pa'i kun rdzob*) and mistaken (*mithyā-saṃvṛti*, *log pa'i kun rdzob*), primarily based on the principle of efficiency (*arthakriyā-samartha*, *don byed nus pa*). But he next quotes 'Brom ston pa who states that all appearances perceived with attachment by ordinary beings belong only to mistaken knowledge. So, ultimately, the term "correct" can't be applied to relative truth perceived by ordinary beings.

The correct and the mistaken relative truths distinguished by the Svātantrika-Madhyamaka are both only mistaken relative truth from the point of view of the "Great Middle Path," the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka. From this soteriological perspective, correct relative truth is constituted by the appearances perceived as illusions by the Noble Ones during their post-meditation. The Prāsaṅgika accept distinctions within the domain of the conventional perception of appearances by ordinary beings, but they do not use the term "correct" to qualify them, since *all* of these appearances are perceived by a deluded mind.<sup>28</sup>

In agreement with this understanding of mistaken and correct relative truths, Prajñāraśmi equates mistaken relative truth with the ordinary vision of the world and its beings, and correct relative truth with their tantric transformation into divine palaces and gods. This prefigures the tantric theme of the conjunction (*yuganaddha*, *zung 'jug*) of the two truths, to be discussed further on.

Concerning absolute truth, Prajñāraśmi basically follows the principle expressed by Atīśa that there are neither divisions nor distinctions within the *Dharmadhātu* itself (nor between the two truths, themselves). But Prajñāraśmi does accept the distinction from the point of view of whether the *Dharmadhātu* is manifested by realization or not. In this sense, the author offers a set of distinctions about absolute truth that can be considered to be more or less equivalent. One such distinction is between absolute truth that is not an analytical category (*rnam grangs ma yin pa*) and absolute truth that is an analytical category (*rnam grangs*) of dialectics (*mtshan nyid*). This is very similar to Bhāviveka's approach, where one finds a subdivision of absolute truth into absolute truth without discursiveness (*aprapañca*, *spros pa med pa*) and absolute truth with discursiveness (*saprapañca*, *spros pa dang bcas pa*); or Jñānagarbha's distinction between the non-dual (*advaya*, *gnyis med*) absolute or the absolute without discursiveness (*aprapañca*, *spros pa med pa*), and absolute truth which belongs to logic (*nyāya*, *rigs pa*).<sup>29</sup> The basic idea here is to distinguish between absolute truth in itself and absolute

<sup>28</sup> Dbu pa blo gsal (14<sup>th</sup> c.), for example, articulates a similar view. He argues that for the Prāsaṅgika, correct relative truth is only the Noble Ones' relative truth (*ārya-saṃvṛti*, *'phags pa'i kun rdzob*), or mere relative truth (*saṃvṛti-mātra*, *kun rdzob tsam po*) perceived as an illusion without reification. See Mimaki 1982: 158.99a5. *de dag 'phags pa'i kun rdzob dang kun rdzob tsam po yang zer ro ||*

<sup>29</sup> With reference to Atīśa, Bhāviveka and Jñānagarbha's distinctions, see Kumagai 2011: 9-15.

truth as a mere concept. We might even say that absolute truth as a mere concept is only a *relative* absolute truth.

Prajñāraśmi relies on Sphyan snga tshul khriims 'bar to equate the knowledge of ordinary, deluded beings with mistaken relative truth, the knowledge of the Noble Ones during post-meditation with correct relative truth, and the knowledge of the Buddhas with absolute truth. As different levels of truth, these three types of knowledge (mistaken relative, correct relative, absolute) represent a path from concealed truth to unconcealed truth, similar to the ascension from the cavern up to the direct vision of the sun in Plato's famous allegory (*Republic*, VII, 514-519).<sup>30</sup>

We can now summarize the definition and relation of the two truths according to Prajñāraśmi as follows:

No distinction of the two truths within the <i>Dharmadhātu</i>					
Distinction of the two truths as the two faces of knowledge: unmistaken and mistaken					Three types of knowledge
Absolute truth	No distinction of absolute truth within the <i>Dharmadhātu</i>				1. Knowledge of absolute truth (Buddhas)
	Distinction of absolute truth	Manifested by realization			
		Not manifested by realization			∅
Relative truth	∅	[ <i>Svātantrika</i> ]	[ <i>Prāsaṅgika</i> ]	<i>Mantrayāna</i>	∅
	Correct	Efficient, etc.	Appearances seen as illusions	Divine palace and gods	2. Knowledge of relative truth (Noble Ones)
	Mistaken	Non efficient, etc.	Appearances seen as true <sup>31</sup>	Ordinary world and beings	3. Mistaken knowledge (ordinary beings)
Inseparability of the two truths: conjunction ( <i>yuganaddha</i> , <i>zung 'jug</i> )					

<sup>30</sup> See Kapstein 2001 with insightful references to Heidegger's reading of Plato.

<sup>31</sup> Here are thus included both the categories of correct and mistaken relative as understood by the Svātantrika. They are both mistaken relative according to the Prāsaṅgika.

Malcom David Eckel has remarked that Jñānagarbha's argument on the two truths was more circular and paradoxical than dialectical because Jñānagarbha moves first from the distinction of the two truths to their non-distinction, and then goes back to their distinction, without stating any reconciling synthesis between distinction and non-distinction.<sup>32</sup>

In a sense, Prajñāraśmi's argument functions in a similar way to that of Jñānagarbha. He starts by saying that in the *Dharmadhātu* there are no distinctions between the two truths: they are only distinguished as the two perspectives of knowledge, for the benefit of deluded beings. Then, when Prajñāraśmi does define the two truths, he reaches the conclusion that absolute truth is the mere suchness of relative truth. Distinction leads to non-distinction. But the author then immediately reaffirms the need for the distinction of the two truths in soteriological terms. Here we see something similar to the paradoxical or circular quality of Jñānagarbha's argument, as analyzed by Eckel.

The distinction and non-distinction of the two truths are all discussed in the *Lamp's* section on the distinction of the two truths. But when the text moves to the inseparability of the two truths, the synthesis of distinction and non-distinction appears as their conjunction (*yuganaddha*, *zung 'jug*). The dual perspectives of the two truths are unified in a non-dual realization. The double aspect of the two truths is integrated in the realization of the inseparability of the appearances and emptiness (*snang stong dbyer med*) concerning the objects, and the inseparability of the intelligence and emptiness (*rig stong dbyer med*) concerning knowledge.

This concept of conjunction is introduced with reference to the *Yuganaddhakrama* (*Zung du 'jug pa'i rim pa*), the fifth and last *krama* of the *Pañcakrama*, the famous commentary on the *Guhyasamājatantra* written by the tantric Nāgārjuna. The explanation of "conjunction" with reference to the *Pañcakrama* points back to the confluence of Madhyamaka and tantrism in India. Michael Broido has also shown the importance of the notions of conjunction (*yuganaddha*, *zung du 'jug pa*) and "co-emergence" (*sahaja*, *lhan cig skyes pa*), both originated from tantric literature, in Tibetan interpretations of Madhyamaka, such as in the syntheses of Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje and 'Brug chen Padma dkar po (1527-1592).<sup>33</sup>

In Nāgārjuna's thought, the notion of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*, *rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba*), articulated in MMK XXIV-18,<sup>34</sup> is the key to understanding the two truths. As such, this

<sup>32</sup> Eckel 1987: 35-49.

<sup>33</sup> Broido 1985.

<sup>34</sup> Saigusa (ed.) 1985: 766.

*yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe /  
sā prajñāptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā //  
rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba gang / de ni stong pa nyid du bshad // de ni brten nas  
gdags pa ste / de nyid dbu ma'i lam yin no //.*

famous strophe (as translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva),<sup>35</sup> served for Zhiyi, the founder of the Tiantai School, as the basis of an original interpretation of the three truths (Chin. 圓融三諦 *yuanrong sandi*, Jap. *enyū santai*): relative truth (Chin. 假諦 *jiadi*, Jap. *ketai*), truth of emptiness (Chin. 空諦 *kongdi*, Jap. *kūtai*), and truth of the middle (Chin. 中諦 *zhongdi*, Jap. *chūtai*), the latter being the dialectical synthesis of the former two truths.<sup>36</sup>

Tibetan authors like Prajñāraśmi only asserted two truths, not three. But for synthetic purposes, they did generally rely upon Tantric terminology to explain the meditative experiences that correlate with the two truths. Esotericism thus forms a means for integrating and transcending the conceptual oppositions created by scholastic categories. In the *Lamp*, Prajñāraśmi explicitly refers to the *Mantrayāna* context: tantric visualizations of divine palaces and deities correspond to correct relative truth: relative truth perceived without attachment. Like illusions, tantric visualizations are the conjunction of appearances and emptiness, diaphanous and transparent, we might say *trans-apparent*. The two tantric phases of creation (*utpattikrama*, *bskyed rim*) and perfection (*niṣpannakrama*, *rdzogs rim*) are methods for realizing this conjunction of appearance and emptiness. In the *Ambrosia of Meditation*, Prajñāraśmi even appeals to creation stage and perfection stage practices as explanations of how one can integrate the categories of *Rang stong* and *Gzhan stong*, two interpretations of emptiness that are unified amidst the tantric experience of conjunction.<sup>37</sup> A similar approach was elaborated upon in the conclusion to Kong sprul's eclectic doxography on Madhyamaka, as found in his *Shes bya mdzod*.<sup>38</sup>

To conclude this presentation, let me mention how the conjunction of appearances and emptiness are finally to be cultivated in the context of direct contemplative practice. In Prajñāraśmi's *Practice of Pacification and Higher Insight*, a short text that draws inspiration from *Mahāmudrā* and *Rdzogs chen*, our author states:

Without falling into the unique direction of either so-called appearances or emptiness, one remains in emptiness as the own nature of appearances. But in Awareness (*rig pa*), the own nature of emptiness is clarity. The essence of Awareness (*rig pa*) can't be expressed by any example. It can't be the object of any expression. At the time of appearances: [it is] free (*khriḡ ge ba*) in emptiness. At the time of emptiness: [it is] lucid (*lam me ba*) in appearances. Similar to water and humidity, or fire and heat, [this is] the state of conjunction of

<sup>35</sup> Taisho: vol. 30, 33b11. 衆因緣生法 我說即是無[空]亦為是假名 亦是中道義。

<sup>36</sup> Swanson 1989: 4.

<sup>37</sup> 'Chi med kyi bdud rtsi 1977: 255.2-3. / de yang bskyed rim gzhan stong smra ba'i lugs / rdzogs rim rang stong lugs bzhin shes nas ni / zung 'brel sgom pa'i theg chen rnal 'byor pa // rdo rje 'dzin pa yongs kyi gtsug rgyan yin/.

<sup>38</sup> *Shes bya kun khyab* 1985: vol. 2, 557-560.

the original nature (*ye nes rang bzhin*) and spontaneity (*lhun grub*) [...] <sup>39</sup>

2. Edition of the Tibetan Text<sup>40</sup>

[A107, B54] བདེན་གཉིས་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མེ་བཞུགས་སོ་<sup>41</sup>།

[A108, B55] །དང་པོ་སྐྱབས་ཀྱི་དོན་ནི་འགྲོ་བ་མ་རིག་སྤུན་ཞུགས་དངོས་འཛིན་རྒྱུར་  
 རྒྱུད་པ་<sup>42</sup>། །བདེན་གཉིས་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མེས་ཐར་པའི་ལོ་སྣོན་ཅིང་།  
 །ཤེས་རབ་མཚོན་གྱིས་<sup>43</sup>ལོ་གཞོན་བྱ་བ་གཅོད་མཛད་པ་<sup>44</sup>། རྒྱལ་  
 བའི་རྣམ་འཕྲུལ་སྐྱེ་མ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཞབས་ལ་འདུད།  
 གཉིས་པ་གཞུང་དོན་ནི། <sup>45</sup>སྤྱིར་བསྟན་<sup>46</sup>གྱི་གང་ཟེག་གཅིག་ཐར་པ་དང་ཐམས་ཅད་  
 མཐུན་པ་ཐོབ་<sup>47</sup>པར་བྱེད་པ་ལ། སྤྱི་ནང་གི་དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱི་གནས་

<sup>39</sup> *Zhi lhag gi nyams len 1977: 503.1-3. snang ba'am stong pa zhes pa gcig gi phyogs su ma chad cing / snang ba'i rang bzhin stong nyid du bzhugs kyang / stong pa'i rang bzhin rig par gsal ba / rig pa'i ngo bo la dpe gang gis kyang mi mtshon zhing / brjod pa gang gi yang yul du ma gyur pa i / snang ba'i dus na stong par khri ge ba / stong pa'i dus na snang bar lam me pa gnyis / chu dang rlan gsher 'am / me dang tsha ba bzhin du ye nas rang bzhin lhun grub tu zung du 'jug pa'i ngang [...]*

<sup>40</sup> I rely on two editions: A, from the collected works of Prajñāraśmi, which has the advantage of being an older version but the disadvantage of numerous misspellings; and B, a modern edition that is more clear but, inconveniently, sometimes changes the original text. I would like to thank very much Hideaki Inomoto, student of Nyichang Rinpoche, for offering me the latter version which helped a lot for the present purpose. Note that the subtitle added by B below, explicitly associates the *Lamp* with the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka.

<sup>41</sup> B: དེས་དོན་དབྱུང་མ་ཐལ་འགྱུར་བའི་རྣམས་གསལ་བར་བྱེད་པ་བདེན་གཉིས་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མེ་  
 ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས།

<sup>42</sup> B: པར་

<sup>43</sup> A: གྱི་

<sup>44</sup> B: པའི་

<sup>45</sup> B: དེ་ཡང་

ལུགས་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་སྒོང་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དོན་རྟོགས་པའི་ལྟ་བ་མིག་དང་འབྲ་བ་  
 ཞིག<sup>48</sup>་དགོས། དེ་མེད<sup>49</sup>་ན་སྤྱིན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་ལམ་གཞན་གྱི་ལོང་བ་  
 དང་འབྲ་བས། དེ་དག་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར<sup>51</sup>་འབད་ཀྱང་སངས་མི་རྒྱ་སྤྱི<sup>52</sup>། སྤྱད་པ་  
 ལས།

དམུས་ལོང་དམིགས་བྱ་མེད་པ་བྱེ་བ་བྲག་ཁྲིག་རྣམས།  
 ལམ་ཡང་མི་ཤེས་གྲོང་དུ་འཇུག་པ་ག་ལ་འགྱུར<sup>53</sup>།  
 དེ་བཞིན་ཤེས་རབ་མིག་མེད་པོལ་སྤྱིན་[A109]ལྟ་འདིས<sup>54</sup>།  
 དམིགས་བྱ་མེད་བས་བྱང་རྒྱབ་རེག<sup>55</sup>་པར་རྣམ་མ་ཡིན།  
 ཞེས<sup>56</sup>་གསུངས་སོ།

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<sup>46</sup> A: བརྟེན་ ; B: རྟེན་

<sup>47</sup> B: མཁྱེན་པའི་གོ་འཕང་འཕྲོབ་

<sup>48</sup> A: གཅིག་

<sup>49</sup> B: མིན་

<sup>50</sup> B: རི་

<sup>51</sup> A: ཇི་ལྟར་ ; omitted by B.

<sup>52</sup> A: དེ

<sup>53</sup> B: ལུས་

<sup>54</sup> B: དེ་

<sup>55</sup> B: རིག་

<sup>56</sup> A: ཅེས་

དེ་ལ་ལོ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་མིག་དང་འདྲ་བའི་ཤེས་རབ་སྣོང་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དོན་  
 བསྟན་<sup>57</sup>པའི་མན་ངག་འདི་ལ་<sup>58</sup>སྤྱི་དོན་གཉིས་ཏེ་<sup>59</sup> རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་  
 ཚོས་དང་། ཉམས་སུ་བྱུང་བའི་ཚོས་སོ།

[1. རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཚོས།]

དང་པོ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཚོས་ལ་གཉིས་ཏེ། ཤེས་བྱ་སྤྱི་འོས་ཀྱི་གནས་  
 ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་[B56]ལུགས་རྟོགས་  
 པར་བྱ་བའོ།

[1.1. ཤེས་བྱ་སྤྱི་འོས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་  
 བ།]

དང་པོ་ཤེས་བྱ་སྤྱི་འོས་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་ནི་<sup>60</sup> ཤེས་བྱའི་ཚོས་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་རེ་ཤིག་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། མཐར་  
 ཐུག་<sup>61</sup>བདེན་པ་<sup>62</sup>དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱའོ་<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> B: རྟོན་  
<sup>58</sup> B: འདི་ཉིད་  
<sup>59</sup> B: སྤྱི་དོན་རྣམ་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་མ་གདམས་པར་བྱ་སྟེ།  
<sup>60</sup> B: ལའང་  
<sup>61</sup> A: མཐའ་དུག་  
<sup>62</sup> B: བདེན་གཉིས་  
<sup>63</sup> B: བྱ་བའོ།

[1.1.1. ཤེས་བྱའི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རེ་ཞིག་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་  
སྲུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ།]

དང་པོ་ཤེས་བྱའི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རེ་ཞིག་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སྲུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་  
ནི། སྤྱིར་ཤེས་བྱའི་བཤེས་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་<sup>64</sup>སྤྱོད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡེ་ནས་  
བྲལ་བ་<sup>65</sup>ལ། བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ལ་སོགས་པའི་<sup>66</sup>མིང་གི་བཏགས་གཞི་མ་  
གྲུབ་ཀྱང་། སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་<sup>67</sup>དེ་ཉིད་མ་ཤེས་པས་<sup>68</sup>ཤེས་པར་བྱ་  
བའི་ཐབས་སུ། ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པས་འཇུག་པའི་ཤེས་པ་དང་། མ་འཇུག་པའི་ཤེས་པ་  
གཉིས་ལ་སྣོས་ནས་ཤེས་བྱའི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རེ་ཞིག་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སྲུ་སྲུ་  
ནས་[A110]རྟོགས་<sup>69</sup>པ་ཙམ་མོ། དེ་ལ་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ནི། ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་<sup>70</sup>  
བདེན་པ་དང་། རོན་དམ་གྱི་<sup>71</sup>བདེན་པ་འོ།

[1.1.1.1. ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་བདེན་པ།]

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<sup>64</sup> B: ཚོས་དབྱིངས་  
<sup>65</sup> B: ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བ་  
<sup>66</sup> B: པ་  
<sup>67</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>68</sup> B: པ་  
<sup>69</sup> B: བཏགས་  
<sup>70</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>71</sup> B: དམ་པའི་

དེ་ལ་<sup>72</sup>་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི<sup>73</sup>་བདེན་པའི་ངོ་བོ་ནི། འབྲུལ་པའི་སློང་དང་དེའི་ཡུལ་སྐྱང་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་དོ། དེས་ཚིག་ནི། ཀུན་ཞེས་པ་ནི། འབྲུལ་པའི་སློང་སྐྱང་མ་ལུས་  
 པའོ། རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>74</sup>་པ་ནི། དེ<sup>75</sup>་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམས་པ་དང་། བསྐྱུ་བ།  
 གསོ་བ། གསོ་བ། ཡ་མ་བརྒྱ<sup>76</sup>་སྤིང་པོ་མེད་པས་ན་རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>77</sup>་བྱའོ།  
 དེ<sup>78</sup>་ཡང་དག་པའི་དོན་ལ་སྐྱིབ་པས་ན་འང་<sup>79</sup>་རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>80</sup>་བྱའོ། བདེན་པ་ནི་  
 འབྲུལ་པའི་སློང་ངོ་བོ་བདེན་པས་སོ།<sup>81</sup>

[1.1.1.1.1. ལོ་ག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་དང་ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་  
 རྫོབ།]

[B57] ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི<sup>82</sup>་བདེན་པ་ལ་དབྱེ་ན་གཉིས་སོ་<sup>83</sup>། ལོ་ག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 དང་། ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་སོ་<sup>84</sup>། དེ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བྱུང་པར་ནི་<sup>85</sup>་བོད་སྟོན་

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<sup>72</sup> B: དང་པོ་  
<sup>73</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>74</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>75</sup> B omits དེ་  
<sup>76</sup> A: ཡ་མ་སྐྱུ་  
<sup>77</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>78</sup> B: དེས་  
<sup>79</sup> B: ན་ཡང་  
<sup>80</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>81</sup> B adds: །ཡང་ན་འབྲུལ་པ་ཉིད་དུ་བདེན་པས་ན་བདེན་པའོ།  
<sup>82</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>83</sup> B: ཉི་

མེར<sup>86</sup>་ནི། ལྷང་ལ་དོན་བྱེད་རྣམ་པ་ནམ་མཁའི་ཟླ་བ་ལྟ་བུ་ནི་ཡང་དག་  
 པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་<sup>87</sup>། ལྷང་ལ་དོན་བྱེད་མི་རྣམ་པ་ཚུ་ནང་གི་ཟླ་བ་ལྟ་བུ་ནི།  
 ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་དུ་འཆད་དེ<sup>88</sup>། མདོར་ན་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ནི། འཇིག་རྟེན་<sup>89</sup>་པའི་  
 འབྲུལ་ངོར་སྤང་བ་འབའ་ཞིག་ལ་བྱེད་དོ<sup>90</sup>།  
 དེ་ལ་ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི<sup>91</sup>་མཚན་ཉིད་<sup>92</sup>་བཞི་སྟེ། མཐུན་པར་སྤང་བ་  
 དོན་བྱེད་རྣམ་པ། རྒྱ་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་<sup>93</sup>་བསྐྱེད་པ་བརྟགས་<sup>94</sup>་ན་དབེན་<sup>95</sup>་པའོ།  
 དེ་ལ་<sup>96</sup>་མཐུན་པར་སྤང་བ་ནི། མཁས་པ་པཱི་ཏ་<sup>97</sup>་ནས། ལྷན་པོ་བ་སྤང་རྗེ་  
 ཡན་ཆད་ལ་སྟོན་བཅུད་ཀྱི<sup>98</sup>་སྤང་བ་འདི་མཐུན་པར་སྤང་བས་སོ<sup>99</sup>། དོན་

<sup>84</sup> B: བོ་

<sup>85</sup> B: ལ་

<sup>86</sup> B: མལ་ཆེར་

<sup>87</sup> B adds དང་

<sup>88</sup> B: དོ་

<sup>89</sup> A: འཇིག་རྟེན་

<sup>90</sup> B omits these two elements from the former note.

<sup>91</sup> A: ཀྱི་

<sup>92</sup> B adds ཉི་

<sup>93</sup> A: རྒྱ་

<sup>94</sup> A: རྟགས་

<sup>95</sup> B: བདེན་

<sup>96</sup> B adds དེ་ལ་

<sup>97</sup> A: པཱི་ཏ་

<sup>98</sup> A: ཀྱི་

<sup>99</sup> B: ལྷང་བའོ་

བྱེད་རྣམས་པ་ནི་སའི་<sup>100</sup>འགྲོ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་རྟེན་<sup>101</sup>བྱེད་རྣམས་པ་<sup>102</sup>ལ་སོགས་  
 པ་དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་རང་གིས་<sup>103</sup>དོན་བྱེད་རྣམས་པས་སོ་<sup>104</sup>། །རྒྱ་རྒྱེན་  
 གྲིས་བསྐྱེད་པ་ནི། འབྲུང་བ་བཞི་ལ་སོགས་པའི་རྒྱ་རྒྱེན་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་<sup>105</sup>  
 ལས་ཐམས་ཅད་བསྐྱེད་པའོ་<sup>106</sup>། བརྟགས་<sup>107</sup>ན་དབེན་པ་ནི། དེ་དག་ལ་  
 དབུ་མའི་གཏན་ཚིགས་ཚེན་པོ་བཞིས་ནི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་གྱི་གཏན་ཚིགས། རྗེ་ཟེགས་མ། ཡོད་  
 མེད་སྐྱེ་འགོག། བཞིག་དང་དུ་བྲལ་གྱི་གཏན་ཚིགས་སོ། བརྟགས་<sup>108</sup>ན་རང་བཞིན་  
 མེད། [A111]པས་སོ་ཞེས་འཆད་དོ།<sup>109</sup>

[B58] འདི་ལ་ཇོ་བོའི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་བདེན་ཚུང་ལས།  
     ཀུན་རྫོབ་རྣམ་པ་གཉིས་སུ་འདོད།  
     ལོག་པ་དང་ནི་ཡང་དག་གོ།  
     དང་པོ་<sup>110</sup>གཉིས་ཏེ་རྒྱ་ཟླ་དང་།

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<sup>100</sup> B: ས་ཡི་  
<sup>101</sup> A: བརྟེན་  
<sup>102</sup> B: བྱེད་པ་  
<sup>103</sup> A : གི་  
<sup>104</sup> B: རྣམས་པའོ།  
<sup>105</sup> B adds པ་  
<sup>106</sup> B: སྐྱེས་པས་སོ་  
<sup>107</sup> A: རྟགས་  
<sup>108</sup> A: བརྟགས་  
<sup>109</sup> B inserts: མདོར་ན་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ནི་འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི་འཇུག་པོར་སྣང་བ་འབའཞིག་ལ་བྱེད་དོ།  
<sup>110</sup> B: པོར་

གྲུབ་མཐའ་ངན་པའི་ཉོག་པའོ།  
 མ་བརྟགས་གཅིག་བྱ་ཉམས་དགའ་བའི<sup>111</sup>།  
 ཞེས་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་གསུངས་སོ།  
 དེ་དག་གི་དོན་དབྱ་མའི་གཞུང་ལུགས་གཞན་དང་<sup>112</sup>སློབ་སྦྱོན་པའི་དབང་དུ་  
 བྱས་ན། ལྷང་ལ་<sup>113</sup>དོན་བྱེད་རྣམས་པ་ནམ་མཁའི་རྩེ་བ་ལྟ་བུ། ཡང་དག་  
<sup>114</sup>ཀུན་རྫོབ་སྣང་ལ་<sup>115</sup>དོན་བྱེད་མི་རྣམས་པ། རྒྱ་ནང་གི་རྩེ་བ་ལྟ་  
 བུ་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ལ་<sup>116</sup>།

[1.1.1.1.2. དབྱ་མ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལུགས་ལ།]

སློབ་དཔོན་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་<sup>117</sup>དབྱ་མ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལུགས་ལ་<sup>118</sup>། སེམས་ཅམ་མན་  
 ཆད་ཀྱི་གྲུབ་མཐའ་ངན་པའི་ཉོག་པ་ཐམས་<sup>119</sup>ཅད་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་<sup>120</sup>།དབྱ་

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<sup>111</sup> B: བ་

<sup>112</sup> B: གཞན་དབང་དང་

<sup>113</sup> B: བ་

<sup>114</sup> B adds དང་

<sup>115</sup> B: ཀུན་ལ་སྣང་ནའང་

<sup>116</sup> B: རོ།

<sup>117</sup> A: སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་

<sup>118</sup> A: ཀྱི་

<sup>119</sup> B adds རི་

<sup>120</sup> B adds དང་

མའི་ལྟ་བུ<sup>121</sup>་རྟོགས་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྣང་བ་ནི་ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་  
 རྫོབ་དུ་བཞེད<sup>122</sup>་དོ<sup>123</sup>། དེ་ལ་གྲུབ་མཐའ་ངན་པ་ནི་སྐྱེ་བོ་པལ་པ་རྣམས་  
 ཀྱིས་<sup>124</sup>་སྣང་བ་འདི་རང་རྒྱུད་པར་བརྟགས་པ་དང་། བ་རོལ་སྲུ་སྟེགས་  
 བས་རྟག་ཆད་དུ་བརྟགས་པ་དང་། གྲུབ་མཐའ་འཛིན་པའི<sup>125</sup>་ཉན་ཐོས་པས་  
 བཟུང་འཛིན་དངོས་པོའི་ཐ་དད་དུ་བརྟགས་པ་དང<sup>126</sup>། སེམས་ཅམ་པས་  
 བཟུང་འཛིན་གཉིས་མེད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་པ་དོན་དམ་དུ་བརྟགས་པ<sup>127</sup>་དེ་དག་ཐམས་  
 ཅད་རང<sup>128</sup>་གི་འབྲུལ་པའི་རྣམ་རྟོག་ངན་པ་དང་། སློབ་དཔོན་ངན་པ་དང་།  
 [B59] བསྟན་བཅོས་ངན་པ་དང་། སྲོལ་ངན་པའི་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་<sup>129</sup>་  
 མི་བདེན་པའི་གྲུབ་མཐའ་ངན་པ་ལ་བདེན་པར་འཛིན་པ་སྟེ། དེ་དངོས་འཛིན་  
 རྒྱ<sup>130</sup>་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱིས་<sup>131</sup>་འཁོར་བ་སྤོང་བ་དང་། ཐར་པ་ཐོབ་པའི་དོན་བྱེད་མི་  
 རུས་པའི་ཕྱིར་ན། ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་འབའ་ཞིག་ཏུ་བཞག་གོ

121 A: བལྟ་བུ་

122 A: བཞེད

123 B: རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྣམས་ཀྱི་རྫོབ་ཐོབ་ཀྱི་སྣང་བ་ནི་ཡང་དག་ཀུན་རྫོབ་པོ།

124 A: ཀྱི་

125 B: པ་

126 B: བཟུང་འཛིན་གྱི་དངོས་པོ་ཆ་མེད་དུ་བརྟགས་པ་དང་།

127 B: སེམས་ཅམ་པས་ཀུན་རྫོབ་སློ་སྣང་འདི་དག་ལ། བཟུང་འཛིན་གཉིས་མེད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་  
 རབ་ཤེས་པ་དོན་དམ་དུ་བརྟགས་པ་སོགས་ཏེ་

128 B: རང་རང་

129 A: ཀྱི་

130 B: དེ་དངོས་པོར་འཛིན་པས་

131 A: ཀྱི་

།ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ནི། དབུ་མའི།[A112]ལྟ་བུ<sup>132</sup>རྟོགས་  
 པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་པས། ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྤང་བའི་མཚན་ཉིད་སྐྱུ་མའི་དཔེ་  
 བརྒྱད་ལྟར་རྟོགས་པའོ། དེ་ལ་<sup>133</sup>ཡང་དག་<sup>134</sup>ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་<sup>135</sup>མཚན་ཉིད་  
 ནི་<sup>136</sup>། བཞི་པོ་ཇི་ལྟར་བཙི་ཞེན་<sup>137</sup>། སྤར་གྱི་<sup>138</sup>བོད་སྟོན་ཚོའི་ཡང་དག་  
 ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱི་<sup>139</sup>མཚན་ཉིད་དེ་བཞི་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་<sup>140</sup>ལོག་ཤེས་འབའ་ཞིག་གི་  
 མཚན་ཉིད་ཡིན་ལ། འདིའི་ལུགས་ཀྱི་མཐུན་པར་སྤང་བ་ནི་དབུ་མའི་ལྟ་  
 བ་རྟོགས་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་པ་རྣམས་ལ། སྤང་བ་<sup>141</sup>འདི་སྐྱུ་མའི་དཔེ་བརྒྱད་  
 ལྟར་<sup>142</sup>བརྟུན་སྤང་མེད་སྤང་དུ་མཐུན་པས་<sup>143</sup>སྤང་བས་སོ། དོན་བྱེད་  
 རུས་པ་ནི། སྤང་བ་བརྟུན་པར་ཤེས་དེས་<sup>144</sup>འཁོར་བ་སྤོང་ཞིང་ཐར་པ་

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<sup>132</sup> B: བལྟ་བ་  
<sup>133</sup> B: དེ་ལས་  
<sup>134</sup> B: པའི་  
<sup>135</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>136</sup> B: ལ་  
<sup>137</sup> B: བཞི་པོ་ཇི་ལྟར་ཡིན་ཞེན།  
<sup>138</sup> B omits ཀྱི་  
<sup>139</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>140</sup> B: མཚན་ཉིད་བཞི་པོ་དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་  
<sup>141</sup> B: སྤང་བའི་དངོས་པོ་  
<sup>142</sup> B adds རྟེན་  
<sup>143</sup> B: པར་  
<sup>144</sup> B: སྤང་བ་བརྟུན་པ་བརྟུན་པར་ཤེས་པར་ཤེས་པ་

ཐོབ་པའི་དོན་བྱེད་ལུས་པའོ། རྒྱ་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་<sup>145</sup>་བསྐྱེད་པ་ནི་སྣང་བ་བརྟུན་  
 པར་རྟོགས་པ་དེ་<sup>146</sup>་སྤྲོ་མའི་གདམས་<sup>147</sup>་ངག་དང་རང་གི་ཚོགས་གཉིས་  
 བསགས་པའི་རྒྱ་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་<sup>148</sup>་བསྐྱེད་པས་སོ་<sup>149</sup>། བརྟུགས་ན་དབྱེན་པ་ནི།  
 དོན་དམ་པར་རྟུན་<sup>150</sup>་པའི་སྣང་བ་ཙམ་ཡང་མ་གྲུབ་སྟེ། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་  
 ཡོད་མེད་བདེན་རྟུན་<sup>151</sup>་གྱིས་<sup>152</sup>་སྟོང་ཞིང་དབྱེན་པས་[B60]སོ། ཞེས་ཇོ་  
 བའི་དགོངས་པ་དེ་ལྟར་<sup>153</sup>་ཡིན་ནོ། དེ་ལ་དགེ་ཤེས་སྟོན་པའི་ཞལ་  
 ལས།<sup>154</sup>

འཇིག་རྟེན་ཚོས་མཚོག་<sup>155</sup>་མན་ཆད་གྱི་སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བའི་སྟོ་ལ་སྣང་ཆད་  
 ཙམ་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཏུ་<sup>156</sup>་འགོ་སྟེ་<sup>157</sup>། ལོག་ཤེས་གྱིས་<sup>158</sup>་བསྐྱབ་པ་

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<sup>145</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>146</sup> A: འདི་  
<sup>147</sup> A: གདེ་  
<sup>148</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>149</sup> B: པའོ་  
<sup>150</sup> B: བརྟུན་  
<sup>151</sup> B: བརྟུན་  
<sup>152</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>153</sup> B: ཇོ་བའི་དགོངས་པ་ལྟར་  
<sup>154</sup> B: དེ་ལ་དགེ་ཤེས་གཉེན་(འབྲོམ་སྟོན་རྒྱལ་བའི་འབྲུང་གནས།)སྟོན་པའི་ཞལ་ནས།  
<sup>155</sup> A: འཇིག་རྟེན་ཚོས་ཚོག་  
<sup>156</sup> A: ཏུ་  
<sup>157</sup> B omits ལྟེ་  
<sup>158</sup> A: གྱི་

ཡིན་པའི་ཕྱིར་རོ<sup>159</sup>། ལོག་ཤེས་གྱི་སྐྱོད་བ་ལ་ལོག་པ་དང་ཡང་  
 དག་གཉིས་མེད་དེ<sup>160</sup>། དེ་གཉིས་ཀ་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་པས།  
 གཉིས་ཀ་ལམ་དུ་མི་འགྲོ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ཡང་དག་པའི་སྐྱོ་མི་འཇུག་གོ །  
 ས་དང་པོ་ཡན་ཆད་གྱི་རྗེས་ཐོབ་གྱི་སྐྱོད་བ་དེ་ཐམས་ཅད། ཡང་དག་  
 པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>161</sup>བྲ་སྟེ། སྐྱོད་བ་ཙམ་ཞིག་མ་འགགས་པས་  
 ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ལ། དེ་ཉིད་[A113]བརྩུན་པ་ལ་བརྩུན་པར་མངོན་  
 སུམ་<sup>162</sup>དུ་གཟིགས་ཤིང་། དེ་ཉིད་གཟིགས་པ་ཕྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པ་ཡིན་པས་ལི་  
 དུ་འགྲོ་བའི་ཕྱིར་ན་ཡང་དག་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ལོ།  
 ཞེས་གསུངས་ཏེ།

རྩོ་བོ་དང་དགོངས་པ་མཐུན་ལོ། དེ་ཉིད་ལོ་བའི་སློལ་ལང་<sup>163</sup>འཐད་དེ་ཅི་སྟེ་ཞེ་  
 བ། སྐྱིར་དམུལ་བ་མནར་མེད་ནས་ས་བཅུ་པའི་རྗེས་ཐོབ་གྱི་<sup>164</sup>སྐྱོད་བ་དེ་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ལ། ཐོད་སྟོན་ཚོའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་གྱི་ཁོངས། འཕཇ་པ་རྣམས་གྱི་རྗེས་ཐོབ་གྱི་སྐྱོད་བ་མ་  
 འདུལ་སོ། དེ་ཡང་སོ་སོ་<sup>165</sup>སྐྱོ་བའི་སློལ་སྐྱོད་ཚད་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་གི་སློའི་  
 འཇུལ་པས་བསྐྱོད་<sup>166</sup>པའི་སྐྱོད་བ་ཡིན་[B61]ལོ། དེ་ཡང་སོ་སོ་སྐྱོ་བོ་གྲུབ་

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<sup>159</sup> B omits རོ་  
<sup>160</sup> B omits དེ་  
<sup>161</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>162</sup> A: གསུམ་  
<sup>163</sup> B: ལ་ཡང་  
<sup>164</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>165</sup> B: སོ་སོའི་  
<sup>166</sup> B: བསྐྱོད་

མཐའ་<sup>167</sup> གྲོ་མ་བསྐྱར་བ་དང་། ལས་དང་པོ་པ་ལ་སྤང་ཚད་ཅམ་<sup>168</sup> ལོག་  
 པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ཏེ། དེ་ལ་ལོག་པ་དང་ཀུན་རྫོབ་<sup>169</sup> ཡང་དག་གི་<sup>170</sup> སྐྱ་མི་  
 འཇུག་གོ། འོན་མོ་སོ་སྐྱ་བའི་གྲོ་སྤང་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ལ་དབྱེ་བ་མིད་དམ་ཞིན།  
 དབྱེ་བ་ཡོད་དེ། སྤང་ལ་དོན་བྱེད་རྣམས་པ་རྒྱ་བ་གཅིག་ཏུ་དཀར་བའམ་འབྱུང་  
 བ་ས་ཆེན་པོའི་གཞི་ལྟ་བུའོ་<sup>171</sup> དང་། དོན་བྱེད་མི་རྣམས་པ་<sup>172</sup> གཉིས། སྐྱིག་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་འམ་  
 རི་མའི་མར་མི་ལྟ་བུ།<sup>173</sup> མིག་སྐྱོན་ཅན་དང་རྒྱ་བ་གཉིས་སྤང་དང་དུང་མིར་པོར་བར་སྤང་སྐྱ་  
 འད།<sup>174</sup> སྐྱོན་མིད་ཀྱི་སྤང་བ་གཉིས། ཏྲག་<sup>175</sup> པ་ཡུན་རིང་བ་ད་ལྟར་གྱི་སྐོད་བཅུད་  
 ཀྱི་སྤང་བ་<sup>176</sup> དང་། ཡུན་<sup>177</sup> བྱུང་བ་མི་ལམ་ལྟ་བུ་<sup>178</sup> གཉིས། སྤང་བ་རང་ལོག་ཏུ་  
 འགྲོ་བ་སྐྱ་མ་ལྟ་བུ་<sup>179</sup> དང་། རང་ལོག་ཏུ་<sup>180</sup> མི་འགྲོ་བ་གཉིས་ལ་སོགས་པའི་  
 དབྱེ་བ་ཡོད་དེ། དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་འབའ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པས།  
 ཡང་དག་གི་སྐྱ་མི་འཇུག་གོ། མོས་པས་སྐྱོད་པ་རྣམས་ལ་ནི།

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<sup>167</sup> B: གྲུབ་མཐའས་  
<sup>168</sup> B: ཐམས་ཅད་  
<sup>169</sup> B omits ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
<sup>170</sup> B : པའི་  
<sup>171</sup> A's notes re-established according to B.  
<sup>172</sup> B adds ལ་  
<sup>173</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>174</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>175</sup> A: བཏྲག་  
<sup>176</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>177</sup> B omits ཡུན་  
<sup>178</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>179</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>180</sup> B omits རང་ལོག་ཏུ་

རྟོགས་པས་རྩིས་<sup>181</sup>་ཟིན་པའི་དུས་ན། སྤང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡང་  
 དག་<sup>182</sup>་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ལ། རྟོགས་པས་<sup>183</sup>་རྩིས་མ་ཟིན་པའི་དུས་ན་ལོག་  
 པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན། ས་ཐོབ་ནས་ཡར་<sup>184</sup>་སྤང་ཚད་ཡང་དག་<sup>185</sup>་ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 འབའ་ཞིག་པས་སོ་<sup>186</sup>། འཇིག་རྟེན་<sup>187</sup>་པའི་སྤང་བ་[A114]ཐམས་ཅད་སྟོ་  
 འཇུལ་པས་བསྐྱེད་པ་ཡིན་[B62]ན། ས་དང་པོ་ནས་ས་<sup>188</sup>་བཅུ་པའི་བར་  
<sup>189</sup>་རྩིས་ཐོབ་གྱི་སྤང་བ་དེ་དག་གང་གིས་<sup>190</sup>་བསྐྱེད་ཞེ་<sup>191</sup>་ན། དེ་ནི་སྤར་  
 ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་ནས་རྩོམ་པ་ལས་པ་དེ་ཉིད་ལྷན་ཅི་ལོག་པས་<sup>192</sup>་དངོས་པོར་འཇོན་པའི་  
 བག་ཆགས་འཇུག་<sup>193</sup>་པོ་ཡོད་པ་རྣམས། ལོ་བསྐོམས་<sup>194</sup>་པའི་སྟོབས་གྱིས་<sup>195</sup>་

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181 A : རྟོག་པའི་རྩི་  
 182 B : དག་པའི་  
 183 A : རྟོག་པའི་  
 184 B : ཀུང་  
 185 B : དག་པའི་  
 186 B : འབའ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ནོ།  
 187 A : ཉེན་  
 188 B omits ས་  
 189 B adds གྱི་  
 190 A: གི་  
 191 B: ཅི་  
 192 A's notes, re-established according to B.  
 193 B: མཇུག་  
 194 B: སྐོམ་  
 195 A: གྱི་

དངོས་འཛིན་དེ་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་སྡོན་གྱི་<sup>196</sup> རྣམས་སྤངས་ཀྱང་།  
 དེའི་བག་ཆགས་མ་སྤངས་པས། བག་ཆགས་ཀྱིས་<sup>197</sup> བསྐྱེད་པ་སྟེ།  
 དཔེར་ན་གླ་ཚི་བསལ་ཀྱང་<sup>198</sup> ལྡོད་སྟོང་པ་<sup>199</sup> ལ་གླ་ཚི་<sup>200</sup> མནམ་པ་ལྟ་  
 བུའོ། བག་ཆགས་རྩད་<sup>201</sup> རྣམས་སྤངས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ལ་སྤྲང་བ་གང་ཡང་  
 མེད་དོ་<sup>202</sup> དོན་དམ་སྟོབས་ལ་བའ་ཞིག་ཏུ་གནས་པའོ།

[1.1.1.1.3. ལྟགས་ཀྱི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ན།]

ལྟགས་ཀྱི་དབང་དུ་བྱས་ན། ཐམས་ལ་གྱི་སྟོན་བཅུད་ལ་དངོས་པོར་ཞེན་པ་  
 ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་དེའི་གཉེན་པོར་སྟོན་བཅུད་ཐམས་ཅད་དག་པའི་ལྟ་དང་  
 བཞུགས་ལས་ཁང་སྐྱུ་མ་ལྟ་བུར་བསྐྱར་ནས་བསྟོོ་པ་ནི་སྤྱིར་ཡང་དག་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་ནི་ཕྱིན་ཅི་མ་  
 ལོག་པ་ལ་ཟེར་རོ་<sup>203</sup> ཡང་དག་ཀུན་རྫོབ་པོ།

[1.1.1.2. དོན་དམ་པའི་བདེན་པ།]

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<sup>196</sup> B: མངོན་གྱུར་  
<sup>197</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>198</sup> B: ཡང་  
<sup>199</sup> B adds དེ་  
<sup>200</sup> B: སྟེ།  
<sup>201</sup> B: བཅུད་  
<sup>202</sup> B: དེ་  
<sup>203</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.

དོན་དམ་པའི<sup>204</sup> རོ་བོ་ནི། ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས་སྒྲོམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་  
 བྲལ་བའོ། རེས་ཚིག་ནི། དོན་དམ་པ་ཞེས་པ་ནི<sup>205</sup>། སྤྱིན་ཅི་མ་  
 ལོག་པའི་ཤེས་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ཡང་ཐར་པ་འདོད་པ་རྣམས་གྱིས་<sup>206</sup> དོན་དུ་གཉེར་  
 བྱ་ཡིན་པས་ན་དོན་ཞེས་བྱའོ། དེས་མི་བསྐྱུ་བས་ན་དམ་པ་[B63]ཞེས་བྱའོ།  
 བདེན་པ་ཞེས་པ་ནི་སྤྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པའི་ཤེས་པའི་རོ་བོར་བདེན་པས་སོ།  
 ཡང་ན་དུས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་འཕོ་འགྱུར་མེད་པས་ན་བདེན་པའོ།<sup>207</sup> དོན་དམ་པའི་བདེན་པའི་  
 དབྱེ་བ་ནི། སྤྱིར་ཤེས་བྱ་དོན་དམ་པ་ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས་སྒྲོམ་བྲལ་གྱི་རོ་བོ་  
 ལ་དབྱེ་བ་མེད་དོ།<sup>208</sup> འོན་ཀྱང་དེ་ཉིད་མངོན་དུ་<sup>209</sup> བྱུར་མ་བྱུར་གྱི་  
 རྟོགས་<sup>210</sup> པས་ཕྱོ་ནས། དབྱེ་བ་<sup>211</sup> གཉིས་ཏེ། བཤེས་<sup>212</sup> གྱི་དོན་དམ་པ་  
 དང་། དེ་ཉིད་རྟོགས་པ་མངོན་དུ་བྱུར་པའི་དོན་དམ་པའོ།  
 ཡང་ཐོས་བསམ་སྒྲོམ་གསུམ་གྱིས་<sup>213</sup> སྒྲོ་འདོགས་ཚེད་པའི་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་།  
 རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས་ཉམས་སུ་སྦྱོང་[A115]བའི་དོན་དམ་པའོ། ཡང་སོ་སོ་  
 སྤྱི་བའི་དོན་སྤྱི་རྗེས་དཔག་གི་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་། འཕགས་པ་རྣམས་གྱི་དོན་

<sup>204</sup> B adds བདེན་པའི་

<sup>205</sup> B omits པ་ནི།

<sup>206</sup> A: གྱིས་

<sup>207</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.

<sup>208</sup> B: །མདོ་ལས། སྤྱི་ན་མེད་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱུ་རྣམས་གྲགས་སུ་མི་འགྱུར་རོ།ཞེས་སོ།

<sup>209</sup> A: ཏུ་

<sup>210</sup> A: ལྟོག་

<sup>211</sup> B: ན་

<sup>212</sup> A: བཤེས་

<sup>213</sup> A: ཐོས་བསམ་བསྒྲོམ་གསུམ་གྱི་

རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་མངོན་སུམ་<sup>214</sup>་གྱི་དོན་དམ་པའོ། ལྷོ་འདོགས་ཚོད་པའི་དོན་གྱི་  
 རྗེས་དཔག་<sup>215</sup>་དེ་ལ་མཚན་ཉིད་པ་<sup>216</sup>་རྣམ་གྲངས་གྱི་<sup>217</sup>་དོན་དམ་པ་དང་།  
 རྣམ་གྲངས་མ་ཡིན་པའི་དོན་དེ་ཞེས་ཟེར་རོ་<sup>218</sup>། ཤེས་བྱའི་གཤེས་སམ་སངས་  
 རྒྱས་གྱི་དགོངས་པའོ།<sup>219</sup> མདོ་ལས། ལྷན་མེད་པའི་བྱང་ཚུབ་ནི་རྣམ་  
 གྲངས་སུ་མི་འགྲུང་ཞེས་སོ།

[1.1.1.3. བདེན་པ་གཉིས་པོ་དེ་ལ་སྤང་ལུགས་གསུམ།]  
 དེ་ལྟར་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་པོ་དེ་ལ་སྤང་ལུགས་གསུམ་ཡོད་དེ། སྤང་བ་  
 རང་རྒྱུད་པར་སྤང་ཞིང་ཞེན་པ་དང་བཅས་པ་ནི་སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བའི་ས་སྟེ་<sup>220</sup>། དེ་  
 [B64]ཀ་ལ་ལོག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>221</sup>་བྱ་<sup>222</sup>། སྤང་བ་བརྟུན་པར་རྟོགས་  
 ཤིང་ཞེན་པ་མེད་པ་<sup>223</sup>་འཕགས་པའི་ས་སྟེ་<sup>224</sup>། དེ་ཀ་ལ་ཡང་དག་པའི་ཀུན་

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<sup>214</sup> A: མངོན་གསུམ་  
<sup>215</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>216</sup> B: པས་  
<sup>217</sup> B: པའི་  
<sup>218</sup> B: ཉི་  
<sup>219</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>220</sup> A: ཉི་  
<sup>221</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>222</sup> B: བྱའོ་  
<sup>223</sup> B: ཞེན་པ་ནི་  
<sup>224</sup> A: ཉི་

རྫོབ་ཅེས་<sup>225</sup>་བྱའོ། ལྷང་བ་དང་མི་ལྷང་བ་གང་ཡང་མེད་ཅིང་ཞེན་མ་  
 ཞེན་གྱི་རྩིས་གདབ་མེད་པ་སངས་རྒྱས་གྱི་ས་སྟེ<sup>226</sup>། དེ་ཀ་ལ་དོན་དམ་པ་  
 ཞེས་བྱའོ། དེ་དག་གི་དཔེ་ནི་རྒྱ<sup>227</sup>་མ་ལ་བྱ་སྟེ། སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བོ་ལ་<sup>228</sup>་  
 ལྷང་ཞིང་ཞེན་པ་དང་བཅས་པའི་དཔེ་ནི། རྒྱ་མའི་སྐྱགས་<sup>229</sup>་གྱིས་ཐེབས་པའི་  
 ལྷང་མོ་<sup>230</sup>་པ་དང་འབྲེལ་འཕགས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་ལྷང་ཡང་ཞེན་པ་མེད་པའི་དཔེ་  
 ནི། རྒྱ་མ་<sup>231</sup>་མཁན་པོ་ཉིད་དང་འབྲེལ། སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ལ་ལྷང་  
 མི་ལྷང་ཞེན་མ་ཞེན་གྱི་རྩིས་གདབ་མེད་པའི་དཔེ་ནི། རྒྱ་མའི་སྐྱགས་  
 གྱིས་<sup>232</sup>་མ་ཐེབས་<sup>233</sup>་པའི་མི་དང་འབྲེལ། འདིའི་སྐྱབས་སུ་དགོ་བཤེས་<sup>234</sup>་སྐྱེན་  
 སྐྱ་བཤེས་པ་<sup>235</sup>་ཁ་ཚོན་<sup>236</sup>་གསུང་དུ་གཅོད་དེ། འོག་པའི་ཤེས་པ་དང་།  
 ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཤེས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་དང་། དོན་དམ་ཤེས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་དང་གསུམ།  
 འོག་པའི་[A116]ཤེས་པ་ནི། ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་ནས་སྤྱིན་ཅི་འོག་གི་སྟོ་

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<sup>225</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>226</sup> A: ཉི་  
<sup>227</sup> A: ལྷུ་  
<sup>228</sup> B: སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བོའི་སྐྱོས་  
<sup>229</sup> B: རྫོས་སྐྱགས་  
<sup>230</sup> A: བལྟ་མོ་  
<sup>231</sup> B: མའི་  
<sup>232</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>233</sup> A: ཐེབས་  
<sup>234</sup> A: དགོ་ཤེས་  
<sup>235</sup> B: བཤེས་གཉེན་སྐྱེན་སྐྱ་བས་  
<sup>236</sup> A: ཁ་དོན་

དངོས་པོར་འཛིན་པའི<sup>237</sup>་བག་ཆགས་གོམས་པའི་དབང་གིས། ལྷང་  
 གྲགས་ཀྱི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་དངོས་པོར་འཛིན་ཅིང་། དེ་ཡང་ཡོད་མེད་  
 ཉག<sup>238</sup>་ཆད་བདེན་བརྗེན<sup>239</sup>་བཟང་ངན་ལ་སོགས་པ་གཉིས་སུ་འཛིན་པ་འདི་  
 ཉིད། ལོག་པའི་ཤེས་པ། རྟོག་པའི<sup>240</sup>་ཤེས་པ། སྲིན་ཅི་ལོག་གི་  
 ཤེས་པ། མ་རྟོགས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་བྱ་བ་ཡིན་མོ། [B65]ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 པའི་ཤེས་པ་ནི། ལྷ་མ་དམ་པའི་གདམས་ངག<sup>241</sup>་གིས་<sup>242</sup>་སློབ་<sup>243</sup>་བཅོས་པས་<sup>244</sup>།  
 ལྷང་གྲགས་ཀྱི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལྷང་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པ་སྐྱེ་མའི་དཔེ་བརྒྱད་  
 ལྟར་<sup>245</sup>་རྟོགས་པ་ཡིན་མོ། དེ་ལ་ཡང་སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཀུན་<sup>246</sup>་ཤེས་པ་ནི་  
 བརྟག་དཔྱད་<sup>247</sup>་ལ་རག་ལུས་པའོ། འཕགས་པ་<sup>248</sup>་ནི་བརྟག་དཔྱད་<sup>249</sup>་ལ་  
 རག་མ་ལུས་པས་དེ་མངོན་སུམ་མོ། དོན་དམ་པའི་ཤེས་པ་ནི།ཚོས་

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<sup>237</sup> B omits ལྷོ་དངོས་པོར་འཛིན་པའི་  
<sup>238</sup> A: བརྟག་  
<sup>239</sup> B: ལྗེན་  
<sup>240</sup> B: བའི་  
<sup>241</sup> B: མན་ངག་  
<sup>242</sup> A: གི་  
<sup>243</sup> A: ལློས་  
<sup>244</sup> B: ལློ་མ་བཅས་པས།  
<sup>245</sup> B: དཔེར་བརྒྱད་དུ་  
<sup>246</sup> B: ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
<sup>247</sup> A: བརྟག་འཆད་ ; B: ཉག་ཆད་  
<sup>248</sup> B adds རྣམས་  
<sup>249</sup> A: བརྟགས་འཆད་ ; B: ཉག་ཆད་

ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་ཡོད་མེད་རྟག་ཆད་<sup>250</sup>་བདེན་རྒྱུན་གྱི་སྒྲོས་པ་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བའི་ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་རྟོགས་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ལ་ཤེས་མ་ཤེས་  
 ཀྱི་ཐ་སྲུང་མེད་དེ། འོན་ཀྱང་དེ་<sup>251</sup>་ཉིད་ཁོང་དུ་རྒྱུད་པ་ལ་དོན་དམ་ཞེས་  
 སྒྲོ་བཏགས་པ་ཅམ་མོ་<sup>252</sup>། འདི་ལ་ཡང་སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བོས་<sup>253</sup>་དོན་སྤྱི་<sup>254</sup>་  
 རྟོགས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་དང་། ས་དང་པོ་ཡན་ཆད་ཀྱི་<sup>255</sup>་མཉམ་གཞག་<sup>256</sup>་  
 ལ་དོན་རང་གི་མཚན་ཉིད་མངོན་སུམ་དུ་རྟོགས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་སྟེ་<sup>257</sup>། ས་  
 དང་པོ་ཡན་ཆད་ཀྱི་<sup>258</sup>་མཉམ་གཞག་<sup>259</sup>་དང་། སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལ་  
 བྱུང་པར་མེད་པར་བཤད་<sup>260</sup>་དོ། དེས་ནི་ཤེས་བྱའི་ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་རི་ཞེས་  
 བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་ཅམ་མོ།

[1.1.2. མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ།]

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<sup>250</sup> A: བཏགས་དཔྱད་  
<sup>251</sup> B: འདི་  
<sup>252</sup> B: བཏགས་པའོ།  
<sup>253</sup> A: བོའི་  
<sup>254</sup> A: ཅི་  
<sup>255</sup> B: ཡན་གྱི་  
<sup>256</sup> B: བཞག་  
<sup>257</sup> A: དེ་  
<sup>258</sup> B: ཡན་གྱི་  
<sup>259</sup> A: བཞག་  
<sup>260</sup> B: བཞེད་

གཉིས་པ་མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་[A117]བྱ་བ་ནི། གལ་  
 ཉེ་མོངས་པ་དག་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་རེ<sup>261</sup>་རུ་བཞིན་ངོ་བོ་ཐ་དད་དུ་རྟོག་ཅིང་།  
 ཀུན་རྫོབ་བྱས་<sup>262</sup>་པས་ཡོད་ཡོད་པོར་འཇིན། དོན་དམ་བྱས་<sup>263</sup>་པས་མེད་  
 མེད་པོར་འཇིན་དུ་<sup>264</sup>་འགོ་སྟེ། ཡོད་མེད་གཉིས་སུ་རྟོག་པས་ཤེས་པས་<sup>265</sup>་  
 དབུ་མའི་[B66]ལྟ་བུ་མི་གཏུབ་སྟེ། སྟོན་པོན་གྱུ་སྐྱབ་གྱིས་<sup>266</sup>།  
 ཡོད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་རྟག་པར་སྟེ།  
 མེད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་ཆད་པར་སྟེ།  
 དེ་བས་<sup>267</sup>་ཡོད་དང་མེད་པ་ལ།  
 མཁས་པས་གནས་པར་མི་བྱའོ། ཞེས་གསུངས་པས་<sup>268</sup>།

དེ་བས་<sup>269</sup>་ཡོད་མེད་རྟག་ཆད་ལ་སོགས་པའི་མཐའ་གང་ལ་ཡང་མི་གནས་པ་  
 དེ་ལ་དབུ་མ་ཞེས་ཐ་སྟོན་<sup>270</sup>་བཏགས་པ་ཡིན་ཅོ། དེ་ལ་<sup>271</sup>་ཡང་དག་ཀུན་རྫོབ་

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261 B: རུའི་རུ་  
 262 B: བྱེད་  
 263 B: བྱེད་  
 264 A: ཏུ་  
 265 B: རྟོགས་པས་ནི་  
 266 A: གྱིས་  
 267 B: དེ་སྐྱིར་  
 268 B adds སོ་  
 269 B: དེས་ན་  
 270 B adds དུ་  
 271 B: དེ་ཡང་

རྣལ་མ་གཅིག་<sup>272</sup> རྟོགས་པའི་དུས་རང་ན་ཡོད་མེད་རྟག་ཆད་ཀྱི་མཐའ་ཐམས་  
ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བས། བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་འབྲེས་པ་ཡིན་ལོ་<sup>273</sup>།

ཡུམ་ལས་ནི་<sup>274</sup>།

རབ་འབྱོར་འཇིག་རྟེན་<sup>275</sup> ཀྱི་<sup>276</sup> ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཀྱང་གཞན་ལ།

དོན་དམ་ཡང་གཞན་མ་ཡིན་ཏེ། ཀུན་རྫོབ་དེ་གང་ཡིན་པ་དེ་

ཉིད་<sup>277</sup> དོན་དམ་པའི་དེ་ལོ་ན་ཉིད་དོ། ཞེས་<sup>278</sup> པ་དང་།

དབྱེས་བདེན་གཉིས་ལས།

ཀུན་རྫོབ་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་གང་ཡིན།

དེ་ཉིད་དམ་པའི་དོན་ཕྱིར་བཞེས་<sup>279</sup> ཅེས་སོ།

དོན་དམ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་དགོངས་པ། ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ལ་ཡོད་མེད་རྟག་

ཆད་<sup>280</sup> ཀྱི་དངོས་པོ་དང་དངོས་མེད་<sup>281</sup> གང་ཡང་མི་དམིགས་ཏེ། སློབ་དཔོན་

ཞི་བ་ལྷས།

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<sup>272</sup> B: ཞེག་

<sup>273</sup> B: ཏེ།

<sup>274</sup> B omits ནི་

<sup>275</sup> A: ཏེན་

<sup>276</sup> B: ཀྱི་

<sup>277</sup> B: དེ་ནི་

<sup>278</sup> B: ཅེས་

<sup>279</sup> B: བཞེད་

<sup>280</sup> A: བརྟགས་བྱུང་

<sup>281</sup> A: ཡོད་མེད་

གང་ཚེ་དངོས་དང་དངོས་མེད་དག  
 ལྷོ་ཡི་<sup>282</sup>མདུན་ན་མི་གནས་ཏེ་<sup>283</sup>།  
 དེ་ཚེ་རྣམ་པ་གཞན་མེད་པས།  
 དམིགས་པ་མེད་པར་རབ་རྒྱ་ཞི། ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།  
 འོ་ན་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་སྤྱེ་བ་ལ་དགོས་པ་མེད་དོ་<sup>284</sup>ཞེ་ན། <sup>285</sup>ཤེས་  
 བྱ་<sup>286</sup>གཤེས་ལ་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གདགས་གཞི་མ་གྲུབ་ལ་<sup>287</sup>། [B67]གང་  
 ཟག་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་<sup>288</sup>དེ་ཉིད་མ་རྟོགས་[A118]པ་རྟོགས་སྣ་བའི་ཐབས་སུ་རེ་  
 ཞེག་ཤེས་ངོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ལྷོག་པས་ན་<sup>289</sup>བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་བཏགས་པ་ཙམ་སྟེ།  
 དེ་ཡང་འབྲུལ་པའི་ཤེས་ངོ་ལ་དངོས་པོ་སྣ་ཚོ་གསུ་སྣང་བས་<sup>290</sup>ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 རྒྱ་<sup>291</sup>བཏགས། འབྲུལ་པ་ཟད་པའི་ཤེས་ངོ་ལ་དངོས་པ་རྒྱལ་ཙམ་ཡང་མེད་  
 ཅིང་མེད་པ། རང་ཡང་མི་དམིགས་པས་<sup>292</sup>ན་དོན་དམ་ཞེས་བཏགས་པ་

282 A: ལྷོ་ཡི་

283 B: པ་

284 B: དམ་

285 B adds ཡོད་དེ་

286 A: བྱའི་

287 A: གྲང་

288 A: ཀྱི་

289 B: ཤེས་ངོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྟོག་པས་སྤྱེ་ནས་

290 B: བ་

291 A: རྒྱ་

292 B omits པས་

ཡིན་གྱིས་<sup>293</sup>། དོན་ལ་ཤེས་བྱའི་མཐར་ཐུག་ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས་སྒྲོས་པ་དང་  
 བྲལ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ལ་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་དབྱེ་བྱ་<sup>294</sup>མེད་དེ། མཐར་ཐུན་པ་  
 སངས་རྒྱས་གྱི་དགོངས་པ་ལ་ཡང་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་དབྱེ་བྱ་མེད་དོ་<sup>295</sup>། ད་  
 ལྟར་གྱི་འབྲུལ་སྐྱང་ལ་ཡང་<sup>296</sup>བདེན་པ་གཉིས་པའི་<sup>297</sup>རུ་བཞིན་ཐ་དད་དུ་མ་  
 གྲུབ་ཤི། སྐྱང་སྐྱོང་དབྱེར་མེད། རིག་སྐྱོང་<sup>298</sup>དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་གནས་  
 ཤིང་དེ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་པ་དེ་<sup>299</sup>ཁོང་དུ་རྒྱུད་པ་དེ་ཉིད་སངས་རྒྱས་གྱི་དགོངས་པ་  
 དོན་དམ་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་གཉིས་སུ་མེ་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཡིན་ཏེ། རོ་བོའི་ཞལ་ནས།

ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཇི་ལྟར་<sup>300</sup>སྐྱང་བ་འདི།  
 རིགས་<sup>301</sup>པས་བརྟགས་ན་འགའ་མི་བརྟེན་<sup>302</sup>།  
 མ་བརྟེན་<sup>303</sup>པ་དེ་དོན་དམ་ཡིན།  
 ཡེ་ནས་གནས་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་དོ་<sup>304</sup>། ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> B: གྱི་  
<sup>294</sup> B: དབྱེ་བྱ་  
<sup>295</sup> B: དབེར་མེད་ཅིང་  
<sup>296</sup> B: འབྲུལ་པ་ལ་ཡང་  
<sup>297</sup> B: རུའི་རུ་  
<sup>298</sup> B: རིག་སྐྱང་  
<sup>299</sup> B omits དེ་  
<sup>300</sup> A: ཏར་  
<sup>301</sup> B: རིག་  
<sup>302</sup> B: རྟེན་  
<sup>303</sup> B: རྟེན་

སྒོ་བ་དཔོན་གྱི་སྐྱབ་<sup>306</sup>་གྱི་རིམ་པ་ལྲ་བ་ལས་<sup>307</sup>།

ཀུན་རྗེ་བ་དང་ནི་དོན་དམ་དག

སོ་སེའི་ཆར་ནི་ཤེས་གྱུར་པས་<sup>308</sup>།

གང་དུ་ཡང་དག་འདྲས་<sup>309</sup>་གྱུར་པ།

ཟུང་དུ་འཇུག་པ་ཞེས་བཤད་དོ།<sup>310</sup>

དེ་ཉིད་གཉིས་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏེ།

མི་གནས་སྲུང་ན་འདས་པའོ། ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

དེ་དག་གིས་ནི་[B68]ཤེས་བྱ་སྒྲིའི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་བསྟན་

<sup>311</sup>ཏོ།

[1.2. ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ།

<sup>312</sup>ད་ནི་ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་ནི། དེ་ལྟར་

ཡུལ་ཤེས་བྱ་སྒྲིའི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་ཀྱང་ཡུལ་ཅན་ཤེས་པའི་སྒྲིའི་<sup>313</sup>ཤེས་

<sup>304</sup> B: དེ་

<sup>305</sup> B: ཞེས་དང་

<sup>306</sup> A: བསྐྱབ་

<sup>307</sup> B: རིམ་ལྲ་ལས།

<sup>308</sup> B: ཅས་

<sup>309</sup> B: འདྲས་

<sup>310</sup> B: ཟུང་དུ་འཇུག་ཅེས་དེ་ལ་བཤད།

<sup>311</sup> B adds ཟེན་

པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་མ་རྟོགས་[A119]ན། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཤེས་བྱའི་  
 ཡུལ་དུ་ལས་<sup>314</sup>ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་གཉེན་པོར་མི་འགོ་སྟེ། རྟོགས་<sup>315</sup>  
 པ་དེ་ལ་སྐྱར་<sup>316</sup>ང་རྒྱལ་དང་བརྗོམ་<sup>317</sup>སེམས་སྐྱེ་ཞིང་། གང་ཟག་གི་བདག་  
 རགས་སུ་འགོ་བར་<sup>318</sup>ཤེས་བྱ་<sup>319</sup>ཤེས་མཁན་གྱི་སྒོའི་སྲི་སྲི་ཡིད་གྱི་རྣམ་  
 ཤེས་ཁོ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་རྟོགས་དགོས་སོ། ངས་ཤེས་བྱའི་གནས་  
 ལུགས་རྟོགས་སོ་སྟེ་ལྟ་<sup>320</sup> དེ་ལ་སྒོའི་ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་  
 ལུགས་རྟོགས་དགོས་སོ།<sup>321</sup> དེ་ལ་སྒོའི་ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་  
 རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ་ལ་ཡང་གཉེས་ཡིན་ཏེ། རེ་ཞིག་བདེན་པ་གཉེས་སུ་རྟོགས་  
 པར་བྱ་བ་དང་། མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་གཉེས་དབྱེར་<sup>322</sup>མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་  
 བའོ།

[1.2.1. ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་རེ་ཞིག་བདེན་པ་  
 གཉེས་སུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ།]

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<sup>312</sup> A: དོན་གསུམ་པ།  
<sup>313</sup> B: སྒོའམ་  
<sup>314</sup> B: ལུས་  
<sup>315</sup> B: རྟོག་  
<sup>316</sup> B: སྐྱར་ཡང་  
<sup>317</sup> B: རྗོམས་  
<sup>318</sup> B: བས་  
<sup>319</sup> B: བྱའི་  
<sup>320</sup> A's notes, re-established according to B.  
<sup>321</sup> Omitted in B.  
<sup>322</sup> B omits དབྱེར་

དང་པོ་ནི་ཤེས་བྱ་སྤྱིའི་གནས་ལུགས་ཀུན་རྫོབ་སྣང་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པ་<sup>323</sup>  
 ལྷུ་མ་ལྷ་བྱུར་རྟོགས། དོན་དམ་ཡོད་མེད་སྤྱིར་ཡང་<sup>324</sup>མ་གྲུབ་པ་ནམ་  
 མཁའ་ལྷ་བྱུར་<sup>325</sup>། མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་<sup>326</sup>ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་  
 ལུ་<sup>327</sup>མཐའ་<sup>328</sup>སྤོས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བུལ་བའི་དབུ་མ་ཆེན་པོར་རྟོག་<sup>329</sup>པའི་  
 ལྷོའི་<sup>330</sup>ཤེས་པ་དེ་ཉིད་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན་ཏེ། ལྷོ་བ་དཔོན་<sup>331</sup>ཞི་བ་ལྷུ་ས།

དོན་དམ་ལྷོའི་<sup>332</sup>སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་མིན།

ལྷོ་ནི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་བདེན་པ་ཡིན་པར་[B69]བརྗོད་<sup>333</sup>། ཅེས་སོ།

དེ་ལྷུར་རྟོག་<sup>334</sup>པའི་སྤོ་གང་ལ་ཡོད་པ་དེ་ལ་ང་རྒྱལ་དང་རྫོམས་<sup>335</sup>སེམས་  
 ཡོད་དོ། ང་རྒྱལ་དང་རྫོམས་<sup>336</sup>སེམས་ཡོད་པ་དེ་ལ་ནི། བདུད་ཀྱི་ལས་ཡོད་

323 B: པར་

324 B: ཅི་ཡང་

325 B adds རྟོགས་

326 B: གཉིས་མེད་

327 B: ལུ་

328 B: མཐའ་བཞིའི་

329 B: རྟོགས་

330 B omits ལྷོའི་

331 B omits ལྷོ་དཔོན་

332 B: ལྷོ་ཡི་

333 B: འདོད་

334 B: རྟོགས་

335 A: བརྫོམ་

336 A: བརྫོམ་

པས། དེ་ཉིད་ལོག་ཤེས་སུ་འགོ་ཞིང་<sup>337</sup>།      སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་བསྟོན་  
 གྱིས་<sup>338</sup>མི་བྱུང་པ་བསྟན་པའི་མདོ་ལས།  
     ཐོབ་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དེ་ནི་གཡོ་བ་ཉིད་དོ།  
     མངོན་པར་རྟོགས་པ་ཞེས་པ་<sup>339</sup>དེ་ནི་རྫོམས་<sup>340</sup>སེམས་ཉིད་དོ།  
     གཡོ་བ་དང་རྫོམས་<sup>341</sup>སེམས་གང་ཡིན་པ་དེ་ནི་བདུད་ཀྱི་ལས་སོ།  
     ལྷག་པའི་ང་རྒྱལ་ཅན་དག།[A120]ནི་བདག་གིས་ཐོབ་པོ།  
     བདག་གིས་མངོན་པར་རྟོགས་སོ་ཞེས་རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པར་འགྱུར་རོ།  
     ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།<sup>342</sup>

རྟོག་པའི་རྫོག་ཀུན་<sup>343</sup>དེའི་རང་བཞིན་དོན་དམ་པ་ཡིན་ཏེ། རྟོག་པའི་སེམས་སྟོན་  
 རྫོམས་<sup>344</sup>ཤེས་པ་དེ་ཉིད་རང་ལ་བལྟས་པས་དངོས་པོར་ཅི་<sup>345</sup>ཡང་མ་གྲུབ་སྟེ་ཡི་  
 རས་ཡོད་མེད་ཀྱིས་སྟོང་<sup>346</sup>།      སྟེ་འགག་གིས་སྟོང་<sup>347</sup>། འགོ་འོང་གིས་

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<sup>337</sup> B: ལྟེ་  
<sup>338</sup> A: ལྱི་  
<sup>339</sup> B: བྱ་བ་  
<sup>340</sup> A: བརྫམས་  
<sup>341</sup> A: བརྫོམས་  
<sup>342</sup> B: ཞེས་སོ་  
<sup>343</sup> B: ཀུན་རྫོག་  
<sup>344</sup> B: རྫོམས་སེམས་སམ་  
<sup>345</sup> B: དངོས་པོ་ཅིར་  
<sup>346</sup> B: སྟོང་པ་

སྣོང་<sup>348</sup>། ཏྲག་ཚད་གྱིས་སྣོང་<sup>349</sup>། དུས་གསུམ་གྱིས་<sup>350</sup>སྣོང་པ་ནི།  
 ཚོས་ཉིད་དོན་དམ་པ་<sup>351</sup>སྣོང་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་སྟེ། འོད་སྤྱང་གིས་<sup>352</sup>ལྷུས་པ་  
 ལས།

འོད་སྤྱང་<sup>353</sup>།  
 སེམས་ནི་ནང་ན་ཡང་མེད།  
 རྩི་རོལ་ནའང་<sup>354</sup>མེད།  
 བཞིས་ཀར་མེད་པར་ཡང་མི་དམིགས་སོ་ཞེས་པ་དང་།

བྱམས་པས་ལྷུས་པ་ལས།  
 སེམས་ནི་དབྱིབས་མེད་པ།  
 ཁ་དོག་<sup>355</sup>མེད་པ།  
 བཞུས་མེད་པ།  
 རྣམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུའོ། ཞེས་གསུངས་[B70]སོ།

347 B: སྣོང་པ་  
 348 B: སྣོང་པ་  
 349 B: སྣོང་པ་  
 350 A: གྱི་  
 351 B: པའི་  
 352 A: འོད་བསྤྱངས་གྱི་  
 353 A: འོད་བསྤྱངས་  
 354 A: རྩ་ཡང་  
 355 A: ཁོག་

[1.2.2. ཤེས་པ་རང་གི་གནས་ལུགས་མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་  
གཉིས་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བ།]

གཉིས་པ་སེམས་ཀྱི་གནས་ལུགས་མཐར་ཐུག་བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་གནས་  
ཏེ། དེ་ཉིད་གཅིག་ལ་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་བཏགས་པའི<sup>356</sup> ཡང་རེ་ཞིག་  
མིང་ཙམ་དུ<sup>357</sup> བཏགས་པར་ཟད་དེ། ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱེངས་ལ་སེམས་མེད་  
པས། བདེན་གཉིས་ཀྱི<sup>358</sup> གདགས་གཞི་མ་གྲུབ། འབྲས་བུ་སངས་  
རྒྱས་ཀྱི་དགོངས་པ་ལའང<sup>359</sup> སེམས་མེད་པ<sup>360</sup> ཡིན་པས་ན། བདེན<sup>361</sup>་  
གཉིས་སུ་གདགས་སུ་མེད། འབྲུལ་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི<sup>362</sup> སེམས་ཉིད་  
རིག་པ་གསལ་བ་འདི་ལ་ཡང<sup>363</sup> རོས་བརྒྱང་མེད་དེ། རིག་སྟོང་གསལ་  
སྟོང་དུ་གནས་པས། བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་དུ་རྟོགས་པར་བྱའོ<sup>364</sup>། འོ་  
ན་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་བྱེ་བ་ལ་དགོས་པ་མེད་དོ་ཞེ་ན། དགོས་པ་ཡོད་དེ།  
བདེན་པ་དབྱེར་མེད་ཀྱི་དོན་དང<sup>365</sup>། ཡང<sup>366</sup> བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་མཚན་

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<sup>356</sup> B: པ་

<sup>357</sup> B omits དུ་

<sup>358</sup> B omits ཀྱི་

<sup>359</sup> B: ལ་

<sup>360</sup> B: མེད་

<sup>361</sup> B: བདེན་པ་

<sup>362</sup> B: སེམས་ཀྱིས་

<sup>363</sup> B omits ཡང་

<sup>364</sup> B : བྱ་བའོ་

<sup>365</sup> B: དེ་

ཉིད་ཤེས་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་རྟོགས་པའི་དགོས་པ་ཡོད་པས་རེ་ཞིག་  
 [A121]བདེན་པ་གཉིས་སུ་སྤྱོད་<sup>367</sup>། དེ་ལྟར་ཤེས་བྱའི་གནས་ལུགས་  
 སྒྲིམ་བུལ་དང་། ཤེས་པའི་གནས་ལུགས་སྒྲིམ་བུལ་<sup>368</sup>དབྱེར་མེད་རོ་  
 གཅིག་ཏུ་འབྲེས་ཏེ། ཚོས་དང་གང་ཟག་གི་<sup>369</sup>སྣོང་ཙམ་ན། སྤྱིང་<sup>370</sup>གི་  
 ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོད་མེད་བདེན་རྒྱུན་<sup>371</sup>ཏྲུག་ཆད་ཀྱི་སྒྲིམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་  
 བུལ་བ།འདུས་མ་བུས་ཀྱི་<sup>372</sup>ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུ་མཐོང་བུ་མཐོང་བྱེད་མེད།  
 རྟོགས་བྱ་རྟོགས་བྱེད་མེད་པའི་ཚུལ་གྱི་རྟོགས་པ་ནི། སྤྱིན་ཅི་མ་  
 འོག་[B71]པའི་རྟོགས་པ་ཡིན་ཏེ། བུ་མོ་སྦྲང་ན་མེད་པས་<sup>373</sup>ལྷུས་པའི་  
 མདོ་ལས་ཀྱང་<sup>374</sup>།  
 རྟོག་མེད་ཚུལ་གྱིས་རྟོགས་པ་ལ།<sup>375</sup>  
 ཚོས་མཐོང་མེད་ཅེས་བྱ་བ་ནི།  
 མཐོང་བའི་ཚིག་གི་སྒྲ་གདགས་སོ། ཞེས་པ་དང་།

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<sup>366</sup> B omits ཡང་  
<sup>367</sup> B: སྤྱོད་བའོ།  
<sup>368</sup> B: གཉིས་  
<sup>369</sup> B: བདག་གིས་  
<sup>370</sup> B: སྤྱི་ནང་  
<sup>371</sup> A: བརྒྱན་  
<sup>372</sup> B: པའི་  
<sup>373</sup> B: ཀྱིས་  
<sup>374</sup> B omits ཀྱང་  
<sup>375</sup> A: རྟོགས་པའི་ཚུལ་གྱི་རྟོགས་པ་ལ།

རྫོག་པའི་བདེན་ཚུང་ལས་ཀྱང་<sup>376</sup>།  
                   མཐོང་མེད་ཚུལ་གྱིས་མཐོང་བ་ལ།<sup>377</sup>  
                   སྣོད་ཉིད་རྟོགས་ཞེས་<sup>378</sup>ཐ་སྦྱད་གདགས།     ཞེས་<sup>379</sup>གསུངས་སོ།  
 དེ་ཡན་གྱི་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་དོན་བསྟན་ནོ།<sup>380</sup>

[2. ཉམས་སུ་སྐྱང་བའི་ཚེས]

སྤྱི་དོན་གཉིས་པ།     ད་ནི་ཉམས་སུ་སྐྱང་བའི་ཚེས་བསྟན་པ་ལ་གཉིས་  
 ཏི་<sup>381</sup>། དབང་པོ་རྣམ་པོས་གཅིག་ཆར་<sup>382</sup>དུ་ཉམས་སུ་སྐྱང་བ་དང་།  
 དབང་པོ་བརྟུལ་པོས་<sup>383</sup>རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>384</sup>ཉམས་སུ་སྐྱང་བའོ།

[2.1. དབང་པོ་རྣམ་པོས་གཅིག་ཆར་དུ་ཉམས་སུ་སྐྱང་བ།]

དང་པོ་ནི།     སྣོན་ཚོགས་གཉིས་བསགས་པའི་བརྒྱབས་ཆེན་<sup>385</sup>ཟབ་མེའི་  
 ལས་འཕྲོ་དང་།     སྐལ་བར་<sup>386</sup>ལྷན་པའི་དབང་པོ་རབ་ལ་བདེན་པ་

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<sup>376</sup> B omits ཀྱང་  
<sup>377</sup> Verse added according to B.  
<sup>378</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>379</sup> A: ཞེས་  
<sup>380</sup> B: དེས་ན་དེ་ཡན་ཆད་གྱི་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ་བའི་དོན་བསྟན་ཟེན་ཏོ།  
<sup>381</sup> A: སྤྱི་  
<sup>382</sup> B: ཅིག་ཆར་  
<sup>383</sup> B: རྟུལ་པོས་  
<sup>384</sup> A: གྱི་

གཉིས་ཀྱི་གདམས་<sup>387</sup>་ངག་བསྟན་པ་ཙམ་གྱིས་<sup>388</sup>་རྟོགས་པ་གཅིག་ཅེས་<sup>389</sup>་དུ་  
 འཆར་བས་རྟོགས་པའི་ངང་དེ་<sup>390</sup>་ཉིད་ལ་བསྐྱེད་སྤྱོད་པས་ཚོགས་ །དེ་ཡང་  
 མཉམ་བཞག་<sup>391</sup>་ལ་ཤེས་པ་དང་ཤེས་བྱ་གཉིས་ཀམས་སྟོང་ཞིང་བདག་མིད་ལ།  
 བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྒྲོམ་པ་དང་བྲལ་བ་ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུའི་ངང་བསྐྱོམ་<sup>392</sup>། དེ་  
 ལྟར་སྐྱོམ་<sup>393</sup>་པའི་དུས་ན། རྣམ་རྟོག་ངན་པ་<sup>394</sup>་ཞིག་འཕར་བ་<sup>395</sup>་བསལ་  
 དུ་མིད། ཡི་ཤེས་[A122]བཟང་པོ་ཞིག་ལ་སྐྱོ་བཞག་<sup>396</sup>་ཏུ་མིད་དེ་<sup>397</sup>།  
 མགོན་པོ་བྱམས་པ་དང་། སློང་པོན་གྱུ་སྐྱབ་ཀྱི་<sup>398</sup>་ཞལ་ནས།  
 འདི་ལ་བསལ་བྱ་ཅི་ཡང་མིད།

385 B: རྣམས་ཚེན་བསགས་པའི་

386 B: བ་དང་

387 B: གདམས་

388 A: ཀྱི་

389 B: ཅིག་ཅེས་

390 B omits དེ་

391 B: མཉམ་བཞག་

392 B: སྐྱོམ་

393 B: བསྐྱོམ་

394 A: རྣམ་པ་

395 B: ཕར་

396 B: བཞག་

397 B: མིད་པ་དེ་ལ་

398 B: གྱུ་བསྐྱབ་ཀྱི་

གཞག་པར་བྱ་<sup>399</sup>་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་མེད།

[B72]ཡང་དག་ཉིད་ལ་ཡང་དག་བཟླ་<sup>400</sup>།

ཡང་དག་མཐོང་ན་རྣམ་པར་གྲོལ། ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

<sup>401</sup>རྗེས་ལ་རྗེ་ལྟར་སྒྲིང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་སྒྲིང་ལ་རང་བཞིན་མེད་པ། བདེན་གཉིས་ཟུང་འཇུག་མི་ལོ་རྒྱ་མ་ལྟ་བུའི་ངང་ལ་བསྐྱུང་།<sup>402</sup> དེ་ལྟར་མ་ཉོགས་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་སྐྱུ་<sup>403</sup>་མ་ལྟ་བུ་རྣམས་ལ་བུམས་པ་དང་སྲིང་རྗེ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་བྱི་<sup>404</sup>་སེམས་སྐྱུ་མ་ཅོམ་བསག་ཅིང་<sup>405</sup>། སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་<sup>406</sup>་སློན་ལོ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་པོ་གདབ་པར་བྱའོ།

[2.2. དབང་པོ་བརྟུལ་པོས་<sup>407</sup>་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>408</sup>་ཉམས་སུ་སྒྲང་བ།]

གཉིས་པ་<sup>409</sup>་དབང་པོ་བརྟུལ་<sup>410</sup>་པོས་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>411</sup>་ཉམས་སུ་སྒྲང་བ་<sup>412</sup>་ནི།  
སློན་གྱི་བསགས་པ་རྒྱ་རྒྱུང་བའི་དབང་པོ་བརྟུལ་<sup>413</sup>་པོ་དག་ལ་ཟབ་

<sup>399</sup> B: བཞག་པར་བྱ་བའང་

<sup>400</sup> B: ལྟ་བ་

<sup>401</sup> A adds : འདིའི་སྐབས་སུ་བདེན་པ་གཉིས་ལ་སློ་སྐྱུང་བར་བྱའོ།

<sup>402</sup> B: བདེན་གཉིས་ཟུང་འཇུག་གི་དོན་སྐྱུ་མ་དང་མཚུངས་པའི་ངང་བསྐྱུངས།

<sup>403</sup> A: ལྟ་

<sup>404</sup> A : ལྟི་

<sup>405</sup> B: ལྟ་མ་ཅོམ་གྱི་ངང་ནས་ཚོགས་བསགས་ཤིང་

<sup>406</sup> A: ལྟ་

<sup>407</sup> B: ལྟལ་པོས་

<sup>408</sup> A: ལྟི་

མེའི་རྟོགས་པ་དོན་སྤྱི་སྤྱི་རྣམ་པ་ཙམ་ལས་མི་སྐྱེ་བས། དེ་ཉིད་  
 ཉམས་སུ་སྤོང་བར<sup>414</sup>་བྱེད་པ་ལ།སྐྱེས་བུ་གསུ་གྱི་ལོ་ལ་སློ་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>415</sup>་  
 སྐྱེས་པས། ལོ་འོག་མ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་གོང་མ་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>416</sup>་སྐྱེ་བས།  
 དལ་འབྱོར་བརྟེན་པར་དཀའ་བ་<sup>417</sup>། འཆི་བ་མི་ཉག་<sup>418</sup>་པ་དང་<sup>419</sup>།  
 ལས་རྒྱ་འབྲས་དང་<sup>420</sup>། འཁོར་བའི་ཉེས་དམིགས་དང་། བྱང་ཚུབ་གྱི་<sup>421</sup>་  
 སེམས་རྣམས་ལ་མས་ཡར་<sup>422</sup>་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>423</sup>་བསྐྱོམ་ཞིང་། མཐར་བཅེན་པ་  
 གཉིས་གྱི་དོན་བསྐྱོམ་<sup>424</sup>་སྟེ། <sup>425</sup>་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྤྲང་བ་འདི་<sup>426</sup>་སྐྱེ་མའི་

409 A: རྩེ་ལྟུང་ལ། [?]

410 B: ལྟུང་

411 A: གྱི་

412 B: བ་

413 B: ལྟུང་

414 B: ལེན་པར་

415 A: གྱི་

416 A: གྱི་

417 B: རྟེན་དཀའ་

418 A: ཉག་

419 B omits པ་དང་

420 B omits དང་

421 A: གྱི་

422 B: མས་ནས་ཡར་

423 A: གྱི་

424 B: བསྐྱོམ་པ་

425 B adds དེ་ལ་

དཔེ་བརྒྱུད་གྱིས་མཚོན་<sup>427</sup>ནས་བསྒྲོ། དེ་ལ་སློང་ངེས་པ་དང་། ཀུན་རྫོབ་  
 གྱི་<sup>428</sup>རང་བཞིན་དོན་དམ་པ་<sup>429</sup>སློང་ས་<sup>430</sup>པ་འདུས་མ་བྱས་གྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་  
 མཚོན་<sup>431</sup>ནས་བསྒྲོ། དེ་ལ་སློང་ངེས་པ་དང་། བདེན་པ་གཉིས་དབྱེར་  
 [B73]མིད་སློས་བྲལ་དབུ་མ་ཆེན་པོའི་དོན་དམ་བསྒྲོ་མོ། དེ་ལྟར་བསྒྲོས་པས།  
 སེམས་གནས་པའི་ཞི་བདེ་སྐྱེས་པ་<sup>432</sup>ཞི་གནས་ཡིན། དེ་ལ་<sup>433</sup>བསྒྲོ་  
 [A123]བྱ་བསྒྲོ་<sup>434</sup>བྱེད་བསྒྲོ་<sup>435</sup>པ་གསུམ་རང་བཞིན་མིད་པར་རྟོགས་པ་ལྟག་  
 མཐོང་ཡིན་ཅོ་<sup>436</sup>། རྗེས་ལ་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་<sup>437</sup>བསོད་ནམས་  
 བསལ་གྱི་<sup>438</sup>པ་ལ་འབད་པའི་<sup>439</sup>སློད་པ་བྱུང་འཇུག་ཏུ་སྐྱུངས་པས་ལོ་ལྟ་པ་<sup>440</sup>  
 ས་<sup>441</sup>བཅུའི་རྟོགས་<sup>442</sup>པ་རིམ་གྱིས་<sup>443</sup>སྐྱེ་སྤེ། རྗེ་བའི་ཞལ་ནས།<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>426</sup> B: འདི་དག་  
<sup>427</sup> A: ཚོན་  
<sup>428</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>429</sup> B: པར་  
<sup>430</sup> B: ལྟོང་  
<sup>431</sup> A: ཚོན་  
<sup>432</sup> B: སྐྱེ་བས་ན་  
<sup>433</sup> B: དེ་ལྟར་  
<sup>434</sup> B: སྒྲོམ་  
<sup>435</sup> B: བསྒྲོམས་  
<sup>436</sup> B omits ཅོ་  
<sup>437</sup> A: ཏུ་  
<sup>438</sup> B: བསལགས་  
<sup>439</sup> B adds ལྟ་

དེ་ལྟར་ལྟ་བུ་ས་མ་རྫོངས་ཤིང་།  
 ལྷོད་པ་ཤིན་ཏུ་དག་གྱུར་ན།  
 ལོ་ལ་བའི་ལོ་དུ་མི་འགོ་སྟེ།  
 འོག་མིན་གནས་སུ་འགོ་བར་འགྱུར།    ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

[2.3. དེས་པའི་ཤེས་པ་ཐོབ་པའི་རྟགས་]

དེ་ལྟར་སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་གྱི་དོན་སྲིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པ་<sup>445</sup>རྟགས་ཤིང་།    དེ་ལ་དེས་  
 པའི་ཤེས་པ་ཐོབ་པའི་རྟགས་ནི། སྤྱིང་གི་<sup>446</sup>དངོས་པོ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱི་<sup>447</sup>མངོན་  
 ཞེན་བརློག་<sup>448</sup> །སྤྱང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་བན་སུན་ལང་ལོང་དུ་འགོ་ །གང་དང་  
 ཅི་ལ་ཡང་<sup>449</sup>ཆགས་ཞེན་མེད་པ་<sup>450</sup>ཞིག་འབྱུང་། ཤེས་པ་གང་ལ་ཡང་<sup>451</sup>

440 B: ལྟ་

441 A omits ས་

442 A: རྟག་

443 A: ལྷི་

444 B: རོ་བོ་རྗེས།

445 B: པར་

446 B: སྲིན་

447 B: ལ་

448 B: ལྷོག་

449 B: ཅི་ལ་ཡང་

450 B: མེད་

451 B: གང་ལ་ཡང་

ཆགས་ཐོགས་<sup>452</sup>་མིང་པར་འཕྲི་གིས་<sup>453</sup>་འགོ། རྒྱུད་འབོལ་ཤིགས་གི་  
 འགོ།<sup>454</sup>་ཉམས་དགའ་ཞིང་སློབ་དེ་འབོལ་གིས་<sup>455</sup>་འགོ། །སྤར་འགྱུད་དང་  
 ཕྱིས་གོས་<sup>456</sup>་གི་རྩིས་གདབ་འདོར་<sup>457</sup>། ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་སློབས་པ་ཐོགས་  
 མིང་དུ་འབྱུང་། རང་གཞན་གི་ཐེ་ཚོམ་<sup>458</sup>་ཐམས་ཅད་ཐད་ཀར་གྲོལ་བའི་ཤེས་  
 རབ་ཁོང་ནས་འཆར། ལས་རྒྱ་འབྲས་ལ་ཤིན་ཏུ་འཛོམ་<sup>459</sup>། སེམས་ཅན་  
 ལ་[B74]བྱམས་སླིང་ཇི་བུང་རྒྱབ་གི་<sup>460</sup>་སེམས་ལྷག་པར་སླེ། འགོ་དོན་  
 ཐམས་ཅད་གི་སློབ་པ་མ་གཏོགས་པ་<sup>461</sup>་རང་སློབ་འཇིག་རྟེན་<sup>462</sup>་མཐའ་<sup>463</sup>་དག་  
 དང་མི་མཐུན་ཞིང་། ཟབ་པ་དང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ་དང་རབ་ཏུ་བཏོན་པའི་ལྷ་<sup>464</sup>་སློབ་  
 ལ་གནས་པར་ངེས་པའོ། དེ་ལ་ཟབ་པ་ནི་ཚོས་ཉིད་གི་དོན་ལ་མཁམས་

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<sup>452</sup> B: ཐོགས་པ་  
<sup>453</sup> A: གི་  
<sup>454</sup> B: རྒྱུད་འབོལ་ལེ་ཤིག་གིས་འགོ་  
<sup>455</sup> A: གི་  
<sup>456</sup> B: ཕྱི་འགྱུད་  
<sup>457</sup> B: གདབ་བོར་  
<sup>458</sup> B: ཐེ་ཚོམ་  
<sup>459</sup> B: འཛོམས་  
<sup>460</sup> A: གི་  
<sup>461</sup> B omits པ་  
<sup>462</sup> A: ཏིན་  
<sup>463</sup> B omits མཐའ་  
<sup>464</sup> A: བལྷ་

པ་བརྒྱུ་ཡིས་<sup>465</sup>་གཏུགས་<sup>466</sup>་ནས་དྲིས་ཀྱང་དེའི་གྲུབ་མཐའ་དཔག་<sup>467</sup>་པར་མི་  
 རུས་སོ། རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ་ནི་<sup>468</sup>་ཚོས་ཅན་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ཉིད་ལ་བསྐྱབ་  
 པར་མཁའས་ཤིང་། སྐྱུ་མ་ཙམ་གྱི་སེམས་[A124]ཅན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་<sup>469</sup>་བྱང་  
 རྒྱུ་སེམས་དཔའི་བསྐྱབ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་རབ་ཏུ་གྲུས་པའི་<sup>470</sup>་སློབ་པར་  
 དེས་<sup>471</sup>་པའོ། བརྟན་པ་<sup>472</sup>་ནི། བདུད་དང་མུ་སྟེགས་དང་ཉན་ཐོས་དང་རང་  
 སངས་ལ་སོགས་པ། ལྟ་སྟོན་ལོག་ཅིང་དམན་པ་དག་གིས་<sup>473</sup>་གང་ཟག་  
 དང་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སློབ་མི་འགྲུལ་བའོ། འཕྲུལ་ཏུགས་དེ་དག་དང་ལྡན་པའི་གང་  
 ཟག་དེ་ནི་སྤྱིར་མི་སྟོག་པའི་ལམ་དུ་རྩུབ་པ་ཡིན་ཏེ། དེ་ཉིད་ལ་གོས་པར་  
 བྱས་པས་རིང་པོར་མི་ཐོགས་པར་ཚོས་ཉིད་བདེན་པའི་དོན་མངོན་སུམ་<sup>474</sup>་དུ་  
 མཐོང་ནས། ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ལ་བགྲོད་པའི་ཐབས་ལ་མཁའས་པ་  
 དང་། གཟུངས་དང་སློབས་པ་ཡུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་། སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་

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465 B: བརྒྱས་  
 466 B: གཏུགས་  
 467 B: དཔོག་  
 468 B: རྒྱ་ཆེ་བའི་  
 469 A: ཏུ་  
 470 B omits གྲུས་པས་  
 471 B: དེས་  
 472 B: བརྟན་པ་  
 473 A: གི་  
 474 A: མངོན་གསུམ་

ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོངས་སུ་བསྐྱུས་<sup>475</sup>་པ་འཐོབ་ཅིང་།    ཟག་པ་མིད་པའི་  
 སྐྱིན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་པ་རོལ་ཏུ་སྐྱིན་པ་དུག་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པར་འགྱུར་  
 བས། ལྷུང་།B75།དུ་སྐྱ་ན་མིད་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱུ་ཐོབ་ནས་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་  
 གྱི་<sup>476</sup>་དོན་ལྷུང་<sup>477</sup>་བྱེད་པར་འགྱུར་ཏེ།    འཕགས་པ་གོ་ཆ་བཀོད་པར་  
 བསྐྱེད་<sup>478</sup>་པའི་མདོ་ལས།

གང་ལ་ལ་ཞིག་སྐྱེ་བ་མིད་པ།    འགག་པ་མིད་པ།    ཤིན་ཏུ་ཟབ་  
 པ།    སྣོང་པ་ཉིད་གྱི་ཚོས་འདི་ནན་ཏན་<sup>479</sup>་བཙོན་འགྱུས་གྱིས་<sup>480</sup>་  
 ཡང་དག་པར་བསྐྱབ་<sup>481</sup>་པར་བྱེད་ན་ནི།    ལྷུང་དུ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་  
 སེམས་དཔའི་ཚོས་གྱི་དབྱིངས་གྱི་ཚུལ་ཐབས་མཁས་པ་དང་།  
 གཟུངས་དང་སློབས་པ་སུན་སྤྱོད་ཚོགས་པ་དང་།    སྐྱ་ན་མིད་པའི་ཚོས་  
 ཡོངས་སུ་བསྐྱུད་<sup>482</sup>་པ་འཐོབ་ཅིང་།    སངས་རྒྱས་བཙོམ་ལུན་  
 འདས་རྣམས་གྱིས་<sup>483</sup>་བསྐྱེད་པ་བརྗོད་པ་དང་།    ཚོས་བཀོད་པའི་ཡོ་

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<sup>475</sup> B: ལྷུང་  
<sup>476</sup> B: སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་  
<sup>477</sup> B: ལྷུ་བྱུ་བ་ཏུ་  
<sup>478</sup> A: བཏྱན་  
<sup>479</sup> B adds: ཚོན་པ་དང་  
<sup>480</sup> A: གྱི་  
<sup>481</sup> B: ལྷུབ་  
<sup>482</sup> B: ལྷུད་  
<sup>483</sup> A: གྱི་

བྱང་གྱིས་རབ་རྩ་རྒྱན་<sup>484</sup>་པ། སྤྱིན་པ་ཡོངས་སུ་རྫོགས་པར་བྱེད་  
 པ་དང་། རྩེལ་གྱི་མས་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་ལ་གནས་པ་དང་། བཟོད་པ་  
 རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་དང་། རྣམ་མེད་པའི་བརྩོན་<sup>485</sup>་འགྲུས་དང་།  
 དམིག་པ་མེད་པའི་བསྟོན་། [A125]གཏན་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཆེན་པོ་ཐོབ་  
 རྣམ། བྱང་རྒྱལ་གྱི་<sup>486</sup>་སྤྱིང་པོ་ལ་འདུག་པར་གྱུར་པས་<sup>487</sup>། རྩེལ་  
 པོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞིས་གདུགས་ཐོགས་རྣམ། ཆོས་གྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་བསྐྱོར་  
 བར་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པས་<sup>488</sup>། ལྷ་དང་མི་རྣམས་ལ་སྤྲང་བ་ཆེན་པོ་  
 བྱས་རྣམ། རྣམ་མེད་པ་ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་<sup>489</sup>་  
 ལ་རབ་རྩ་བཀོད་པར་འགྱུར་རོ། ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

[B76]དེ་ཡང་སྤོང་ཉིད་ཟབ་མེའི་དོན་ཆོས་ལ་<sup>490</sup>་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཆེན་པོས་  
 ཉམས་སུ་གྲངས་ན། ལུས་འདི་བོར་མ་ཐག་འབྲུང་གི་སྤྱུ་གུ་<sup>491</sup>་སྤོང་<sup>492</sup>་རྣམ་

<sup>484</sup> B: བརྒྱན་

<sup>485</sup> A: རྩོན་

<sup>486</sup> A: གྱི་ ; omitted by B.

<sup>487</sup> B: འགྱུར་བས།

<sup>488</sup> B: ཤིང་

<sup>489</sup> B: རྣམ་མེད་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་

<sup>490</sup> B omits ལ་

<sup>491</sup> B: སྤྱུ་གུ་

<sup>492</sup> B: སྤོང་

ཐོན་<sup>493</sup>་པ་བཞིན་དུ<sup>494</sup>། མཚོག་གི་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ་ནས་སངས་ཀྱི་ཞིང་  
 ཁམས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ<sup>495</sup>་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པའི་རྩ་འཕུལ་དང་ལྡན་པར་<sup>496</sup>་འགྱུར་  
 ཏེ<sup>497</sup>། གཙུག་ཏོར་གྱི་མདོ་ལས།  
 ཚོས་ཐམས་ཅད་མཚན་མ་མེད་པའི་ཡི་ཤེས་ལ་བདེ་བར་གནས་པ་དེ་  
 རི་ལུས་འདི་བོར་ནས་སྐྱ་ན་མེད་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ཏུ་<sup>498</sup>་བྱན་<sup>499</sup>་པ་དང་  
 ལྡན་པར་གྱུར་<sup>500</sup>་ཏེ། སེམས་ལུས་རྒྱ་དང་བུལ་མ་ཐག་ཏུ་བྱ་  
 སྐོར་<sup>501</sup>་ནས་ཐོན་<sup>502</sup>་པ་བཞིན་དུ་<sup>503</sup>། མ་རབས་<sup>504</sup>་གྱི་<sup>505</sup>་ལུས་ལ་  
 སྐྱ་མེད་ཀྱི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་འཐོབ་སྟེ། ཡིད་ཀྱི་ལུས་ཐོབ་ནས་འགྲོ་བ་དང་  
 འོང་བ་ལ་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་དོ་ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ་<sup>506</sup>།།

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<sup>493</sup> B: འཐོན་  
<sup>494</sup> A: ཏུ་  
<sup>495</sup> B: ལ་  
<sup>496</sup> B: དང་ལྡན་པས་བགྲོད་པར་  
<sup>497</sup> B: ལྟེ་  
<sup>498</sup> A: ཏུ་  
<sup>499</sup> B: འདྲེན་  
<sup>500</sup> B: འགྱུར་  
<sup>501</sup> B: སྐོར་  
<sup>502</sup> B: འཐོན་  
<sup>503</sup> A: ཏུ་  
<sup>504</sup> B: རབ་  
<sup>505</sup> A: ཀྱི་  
<sup>506</sup> ཞེས་སོ་

།ཞེས་བདེན་གཉིས་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དུལྟོ་རྣམས་སྤྱད་བའི་ཞིག་རྫོགས་སོ།།<sup>507</sup>

### 3. English Translation

#### *The Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths*

<sup>508</sup>Sentient beings entered into the obscurity of ignorance are caught into the trap of clinging to objects as real. The *Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths* shows the path of liberation, and the sword of wisdom cuts the net of mistaken conceptions.

I bow to the feet of the masters who are emanations of the Victorious.

<sup>509</sup>Generally, for a person, in order to obtain liberation and omniscience, it is necessary to possess the view, like an eye, which realizes the meaning of the emptiness of all phenomena, the mode of being of all external and internal things. If it is lacking, one is like a blind person along the other paths of generosity, and so forth.<sup>510</sup> Even if we were to engage them with effort, the state of a Buddha would not be obtained. The *Compendium* said:

How could a person born blind without a guide possibly enter into a city  
Without knowing the path [among] myriads?  
Similarly, the five perfections without the eye of wisdom  
Are without a guide and cannot lead to the attainment of enlightenment.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> A: །ཞེས་པ་འདི་ནི་འདེན་པ་གཉིས་གསལ་བའི་སྣོན་མ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དུལྟོ་རྣམས་སྤྱད་བའི་ཞིག་རྫོགས་སོ།།

<sup>508</sup> A's notes: "First, about the object considered..."

<sup>509</sup> A's notes: "Second, the object of the treatise..."

<sup>510</sup> The other paths are the five perfections (*pāramitā, pha rol tu phyin pa*): generosity (*dāna, sbyin pa*), ethics (*śīla, tshul khrims*), endurance (*kṣānti, bzod pa*), diligence (*vīrya, brtson 'grus*), and meditation (*dhyāna, gsam gtan*). The sixth perfection, the eye of all the other five, is the perfection of wisdom (*prajñāpāramitā, shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*), the view of emptiness and the subject of the present treatise.

<sup>511</sup> *Arya-prajñāpāramitā-saṅcaya-gāthā, 'Phags pa shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa tshig su bcad pa*, P: Otani n° 735, vol. 21, 185-195 (*Sher phyin, Tsi*), 1b1-22a8; extract, 188, 6b3-4. / *dmus long dmigs bu med pa bye ba khrag khrig rnam* // *lam yang mi shes grong khyer 'jug par ga la 'gyur // shes rab med na mig med pha rol phyin lnga 'di // dmigs bu med pas byang chub reg par nus ma yin /*.

Thus, according to this instruction teaching the meaning of emptiness, [with regard to] the wisdom similar to the eye of all the [perfections'] paths, [we consider] two points:

1. The teaching to be realized (*rtogs par bya ba chos*)
2. The teaching to be practiced (*nyams su blang ba'i chos*)

### [1. The teaching to be realized]

First, concerning the teaching to be realized, [we consider]:

- 1.1. The mode of being of general and knowable phenomena to be realized (*shes bya spyi'i chos kyi gnas lugs rtogs par bya ba*),
- 1.2. The own mode of being of knowledge to be realized (*shes rang gi gnas lugs rtogs par bya ba*).

### [1.1. The mode of being of general and knowable phenomena to be realized]

First, all knowable phenomena are to be understood according to the two truths, and ultimately, the two truths are to be realized as inseparable.

#### [1.1.1. The realization of knowable phenomena according to the two truths]

First, [we consider] the realization of knowable phenomena according to the two truths. Generally, the nature of knowable things, the *Dharmadhātu*, has been free from all elaborations (*prapañca, spros pa*) since the origin. Although there is not any basis of designation for terms like the two truths that could be established in it, beings do not recognize suchness. Thus, as a means for what is to be known, omniscience simply examines [the two truths] according to the points of view of the two faces of knowledge (*shes ngo*)<sup>512</sup> and first distinguishes all knowable phenomena according to the two truths. The two truths are relative truth (*saṃvṛitisatya, kun rdzob kyi bden pa*) and absolute truth (*paramārthasatya, don dam gyi bden pa*).

#### [1.1.1.1. Relative truth]

Accordingly, the essence of relative truth is the deluded mind and all objects appearing to it. Etymologically, “*kun*” [Skt. *saṃ*] signifies the totality of the deluded mind and all that appears to it. “*Rdzob*” [Skt. *vri*] means that all of these appearances are wrong, deceptive, vain, empty, pointless and without essence. “*Rdzob*” also means to cover up the correct meaning. It is called “truth” (*satya, bden pa*) because it appears as truth from the point of view of the deluded mind.

#### [1.1.1.1.1. The distinction of relative truth: mistaken and correct]

<sup>512</sup> A's notes: “the deluded knowledge and the knowledge without illusion.”

Concerning relative truth there are two divisions: mistaken relative (*log pa'i kun rdzob*) and correct relative (*yang dag pa'i kun rdzob*). For these two distinctions, most of the Tibetan teachers explain that what is endowed with efficiency in the field of appearances, like the moon in the sky, is correct relative [truth]; and what is not endowed with efficiency in the field of appearances, like the moon [reflected] in the water, is explained as mistaken relative [truth]. In order to summarize what concerns relative truth, it is only appearances from the deluded point of view of mundane people.

Then, correct relative [truth] has four characteristics: it is perceived accordingly, is efficient, is produced from causes and conditions, and is empty (*dben pa*) if it is examined. It is perceived accordingly: everyone, from scholars and *paṇḍita* down to idiots and cowboys, perceive accordingly these appearances of the world and its living beings. It is efficient: this is the capacity of earth to support all beings and so forth, the proper efficiency of each and every substance. It is produced from causes and conditions: everything is produced from a variety of causes and conditions, the four elements and so forth. It is empty when examined: if this is examined according to the four great arguments of the Middle Path,<sup>513</sup> it does not have any self nature.

It is said in the *Introduction to the Two Truths* of the Lord [Atīśa]:

Relative truth is presented according to two aspects:

Mistaken and correct.

The first is twofold: the moon [reflected in] the water

And the conceptions of wrong doctrinal systems.<sup>514</sup>

The meaning of these [verses] is, according to other scriptural traditions of the Middle Path: what is efficient in the field of appearances, like the moon in the sky, is correct relative [truth]; what appears but is not efficient, like the moon [reflected] in the water, is mistaken relative [truth].

#### [1.1.1.1.2. The distinction of mistaken relative and correct relative according to the Great Middle Path]

<sup>513</sup> There are generally five great arguments of the Middle Path, which is also confirmed by A's note: "the argument of dependent origination, the *vajra* sliver, existence and nonexistence, arising and cessation, and the argument of unity and plurality."

<sup>514</sup> SDA, k. 2, Lindtner (ed.) 1982: 190. *kun rdzob rnam pa gnyis su 'dod // log pa dang ni yang dag go // dang po gnyis te chu zla dang // grub mtha' ngan pa'i rtog pa'o / /*. Prajñāraśmi then quotes the first verse of the next strophe: *ma brtags gcig pu nyams dga' ba'i*. The full strophe is (SDA, k. 3, op. cit.: 190): *ma brtags gcig pu nyams dga' ba'i // skye ba dang ni 'jig pa'i chos // don byed nus dang ldan pa ni // yang dag kun rdzob yin par 'dod /*.

Phenomena which appear and disappear,

Which satisfy only if not analyzed

And which are efficient,

Are said to be correct relative [truth].

According to the tradition of the Great Middle Path (*dbu ma chen po*) of the master Nāgārjuna, it is taught that all the mistaken conceptions of the philosophical systems up to the proponents of Mind Only (*sems tsam pa*) are mistaken relative [truth]. And the appearances perceived by the *yogin*<sup>515</sup> who has realized the view of the Middle Path, are correct relative [truth]. Thus, considering these philosophical systems, ordinary people consider these appearances as their own mental continuum. Non-Buddhists consider them to be either eternal or annihilated. The Hearers<sup>516</sup> consider the subject and the object to be entities (*vastu, dngos po*) that are indivisible. The proponents of Mind Only consider the knowledge devoid of the subject-object duality to be the absolute meaning. All of them hold as true [what are in fact] wrong and untrue philosophical systems, because of their own wrong and deluded conceptions, wrong masters, wrong treatises, and wrong friends. Because all of these<sup>517</sup> are not efficient causes to abandoning cyclic existence and to obtaining liberation, they are only established as mistaken relative [truth].

Concerning correct relative [truth], the *yogin* who realizes the view of the Middle Path understands the own characteristic of appearances to be superficial, similar to the eight metaphors of illusion (*aṣṭa-māyopāma, sgyu ma'i dpe brgyad*).<sup>518</sup> Thus, this is the definition of correct relative [truth]. Adhering to these four [formed by the wrong masters, wrong treatises, wrong philosophical systems and wrong friends], the definition of correct relative [truth] by Tibetan masters of the past was only a definition made by a mistaken knowledge.

The appearances collectively perceived according to this tradition [of the Great Middle Path] are as follows. For the *yogins* who have realized the view of the Middle Path, these appearances are similar to the eight metaphors of illusion, illusory appearances, because they do not exist but appear as accordingly perceived appearances. This [relative truth] is efficient: the knowledge that appearances are illusory is an efficient cause for abandoning cyclic existence and obtaining liberation. It is produced from causes and conditions: this realization of the illusory nature of appearances is produced by the causes and conditions of the master's instructions and the accumulation of one's own two accumulations (*dviṣaṃbhāra, tshogs gnyis*) [of merit (*puṇya, bsod nams*) and wisdom (*jñāna, ye shes*)]. It is empty if it is examined: in the absolute truth, the simple illusory appearances are not even established. All phenomena are empty of existence and of non-existence, truth or illusion, thus they are said to be empty.

<sup>515</sup> B adds: "during post-meditative period."

<sup>516</sup> A's notes: "Those who adhere to the philosophical systems of [the Hearers]."

<sup>517</sup> A's notes: "grasping at a substance."

<sup>518</sup> Dream (*svapana, rmi lam*), magical illusion (*māya, sgyu ma*), optical illusion (*indrajāla, mig 'khrul*), mirage (*marīci, smig sgyu*), moon in the water (*jalacandra, chu zla*), echo (*pratiśabda, sgra brnyan*), the city of *gandharva* (*gandharvanagara, dri za'i grong khyer*), apparition (*nirmāṇa, sprul pa*).

Such is the intention of the Lord [Atīśa]. And according to the words of the spiritual friend 'Brom ston pa:<sup>519</sup>

In the mind of ordinary beings up to those who reached the Supreme Dharma of the World (*laukikāgradharma*, 'jig rten chos mchog),<sup>520</sup> all appearances only proceed as mistaken relative [truth], because they are established by mistaken knowledge. Concerning the appearances [perceived by] mistaken knowledge, we do not make the twofold distinction of what is mistaken and what is correct. Both belong to mistaken relative [truth]. Since they are not suitable as the [correct] path, we do not use the term "correct".

All appearances of the post-meditative period (*prṣṭhalabdha*, *rjes thob*), from the first stage [of bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, are known as correct relative [truth]. Because they are not interrupted in any mode, they belong to correct relative [truth]. These appearances are recognized as illusory by a direct perception (*pratyakṣa*, *mngon gsum*).<sup>521</sup> Because this is suitable as the [correct] path, we call it correct relative [truth].

This is also in accord with the intention of the Lord [Atīśa]. If one asks: is this correct also concerning my mind? Generally, all appearances from those of the hell of unceasing suffering (*avīci*, *mṅar med*) up to those of post-meditation at the level of the tenth stage [of Bodhisattva] are relative truth.<sup>522</sup> Moreover, all of what is perceived by the mind of ordinary beings are appearances confused by the illusions of their own minds. And concerning the mind of ordinary beings and beginners [in the spiritual path], all of what is perceived is simply mistaken relative [truth]. So we do not follow the terms of mistaken relative [truth] and correct relative [truth] [at the level of ordinary beings].

Nevertheless, one might ask: aren't there distinctions concerning the relative truth of the appearances perceived by the mind of ordinary people? [Yes] there are. Concerning appearances, there are what is efficient<sup>523</sup> and what is not<sup>524</sup>; the appearances due to vision's faults<sup>525</sup> and those without such faults; what remains a long time<sup>526</sup>

<sup>519</sup> Source not yet identified.

<sup>520</sup> It is the higher state of cyclic existence corresponding to the fourth step of the path of application (*prayogamārga*, *sbyor lam*), itself the second of the five paths (*pañcamārga*, *lam lnga*).

<sup>521</sup> A's notes: "because it is an unmistakable perception..."

<sup>522</sup> A's notes: "the appearances [perceived by] Noble Ones during post-meditative periods are not included within relative truth by [former] Tibetan teachers [who did not follow the Prāsaṅgika school]."

<sup>523</sup> A's notes: "like the whiteness of the unique moon [not of its reflection] and the basis of the great element of earth."

<sup>524</sup> A's notes: "like an optical illusion or the drawing of a lamp."

<sup>525</sup> A's notes: "the appearance of a second moon, a [white] conch perceived as yellow, [the vision of] hairs in the sky."

and what is of short duration<sup>527</sup>; appearances which proceed by disappearing by themselves<sup>528</sup> and those which proceed without disappearing by themselves. And so forth, there are divisions. Since all of these are only mistaken relative [truth], we do not use the term “correct.” For those who practice with faith, when the appearances are recognized by realization [as illusory], all of them are correct relative [truth]. When they are not recognized by realization, they are mistaken relative [truth].

From the attainment of the [first] stage [of Bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, all that is perceived is only correct relative [truth]. One might ask: if all the appearances of the world are produced by the mind’s illusions, then what produces these post-meditative appearances from the first stage up to the tenth? About these, since a past without beginning, strong imprints (*vāsanā*, *bag chags*) have existed in connection with the sense of grasping at a substantial reality.<sup>529</sup> Whereas the former causes of passions, which appeared from grasping at a substantial reality, are eliminated by the force of meditation, their imprints are not eliminated. Then, they generate [appearances]. For example, this is similar to the fact that whereas one removes musk from a container the latter while empty still exhales the [musk’s] perfume. [But] for the Buddha who has eliminated imprints at their roots, there are no appearances at all. He remains only in the absolute truth free from elaborations.

#### [1.1.1.1.3. The perspective of the *Mantrayāna*]

From the point of view of mantras, as an antidote to this mistaken relative [truth] of grasping at a substantial reality in the world and ordinary living beings, we meditate by transforming the world and the living beings into a divine palace and pure gods, like illusions. Then they become correct relative [truth].<sup>530</sup>

#### [1.1.1.2. Absolute truth]

The essence of absolute meaning (*paramārtha*, *don dam pa*) is the *Dharmadhātu* free from all elaborations (*prapañca*, *spros pa*). Concerning the word’s meaning, what is called “absolute meaning” is an unmistaken knowledge. Moreover, this is the goal which those aspiring to liberation try to reach, thus it is called “goal” (*artha*, *don*). Because it is not deceitful, it is called “absolute” [or “authentic”] (*parama*, *dam pa*). It is called “truth” (*satya*, *bden*) because this is truth from the point of view of an unmistaken knowledge.<sup>531</sup>

[We shall now consider] the divisions of absolute truth. Generally, from the point of view of the *Dharmadhātu* free from elaborations,

<sup>526</sup> A’s notes: “presently, the appearances of the world and its beings.”

<sup>527</sup> A’s notes: “dream.”

<sup>528</sup> A’s notes: “like an illusion.”

<sup>529</sup> A’s notes: “not recognizing appearances as illusions is mistaken...”

<sup>530</sup> A’s notes: “it is called correct because it is unmistaken.”

<sup>531</sup> A’s notes: “Or, because it is not subjected to change in all times, it is truth.”

there is no distinction concerning the absolute meaning that is to be realized. Nevertheless, according to whether this is manifested by realization or not, we distinguish two elements: the absolute truth of the nature (*gzhis*) and the absolute truth of the realization of suchness. Otherwise there are the absolute truth of the elimination of imputations through study, reflection and meditation (*thos bsam sgom*), and the absolute truth experienced by *yogins*. Or, there are the absolute truth of the universal object (*artha-sāmānya, don spyi*) [attained] through inference (*anumāna, rjes dpag*)<sup>532</sup> by ordinary beings, and the absolute truth of the own characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa, rang gi mtshan nyid*) [attained] through direct perception (*pratyakṣa, mngon sum*) as the object of Noble Ones (*ārya, 'phags pa*). There are also the absolute truth as an analytical category (*pariyāya, rnam grangs*) of dialectics (*mtshan nyid*) and the absolute truth that is not an analytical category.<sup>533</sup> According to a sūtra, it is said:

The unsurpassable enlightenment is not changed into an analytical category.

#### [1.1.1.3. The three aspects of the two truths]

These two truths have three modes of manifestation. Appearances perceived as autonomous and objects of attachment at the level of ordinary beings are none other than what we call mistaken relative [truth]. Appearances realized as illusory, without any attachment conceived toward them at the level of the Noble Ones, are none other than what we call correct relative [truth]. The absence of judgment concerning whether there are appearances or not, with attachment or without, at the level of Buddhas, is none other than what we call absolute [truth].

About this, the example of magical illusion is given. The ordinary individuals who perceive appearances and are affected by attachment are similar to the spectators under the power of the magical illusion's mantra. The Noble Ones who also perceive appearances but without attachment, are similar to the illusionist himself. Buddhas do not have any judgment concerning whether if there are appearances or not, with attachment or without. They are similar to men who are not under the power of the magical illusion's mantra.

In reference to this, Dge bshes Sphyan snga ba has defined three categories (literally "decisions," *kha tshon*) of knowledge: mistaken knowledge (*log pa'i shes pa*), knowledge which knows relative [truth] (*kun rdzob shes pa'i shes pa*) and knowledge which knows absolute [truth] (*don dam shes pa'i shes pa*).

Concerning mistaken knowledge, from time without beginning, mind has been deluded by the power of habituation to the imprints [that arise] from grasping at a substantial reality, that are taken as the substance of the phenomena of appearances and sounds. [Mind] proceeds with this grasping according to the duality of existence

<sup>532</sup> A's notes: "inference which aims at eliminating imputations."

<sup>533</sup> A's notes: "the nature to know, the Buddha's intention."

and nonexistence, eternity and annihilation, true and false, good and bad, and so forth. This is wrong knowledge, erroneous knowledge, mistaken knowledge, knowledge that has not realized [absolute truth].

Concerning the knowledge of relative [truth], the mind being corrected by the holy master's instructions, all the phenomena of appearances and sounds are perceived but understood according to the eight metaphors of illusion as being devoid of their own nature. In the same respect, the knowledge of relative [truth] possessed by ordinary beings is dependent on intellectual investigation. The Noble Ones do not depend on intellectual investigation but they have a direct perception.

Concerning the knowledge of absolute [truth], this is to realize that the mode of being of all phenomena is the *Dharmadhātu* free from all elaborations of existence and nonexistence, eternity and annihilation, truth and illusion. In [the *Dharmadhātu*], there is no term to designate knowing or not knowing. For the sake of understanding, we talk about the absolute but this is a mere superimposition. In the same regard [we make the distinction between] knowledge of ordinary beings that cognizes the universal object, and knowledge belonging to the meditative experience from the first stage [of a bodhisattva] up to the higher ones, which cognizes the own characteristic of the object by direct perception. Moreover, the meditative experiences from the first stage up to the higher ones are explained not to differ from the wisdom (*jñāna*, *ye shes*) of the Buddha.

Thus, this is merely how all knowable phenomena are first to be realized according to the two truths.

#### **[1.1.2. The realization that ultimately the two truths are inseparable]**

Second, [we shall explain] the realization that ultimately the two truths are inseparable. From the point of view of ignorant people who conceive the essence of the two truths as different, [the two truths] are similar to the two horns of a goat. Having made relative truth, they grasp it as really existent (*yod yod po*). Having made absolute truth, they grasp [relative truth] as totally nonexistent (*med med po*). The knowledge which conceives existence and inexistence as dual will not suit the view of the Middle Path. According to the master Nāgārjuna:

The notion of existence [implies] grasping to permanence,  
And the notion of inexistence [implies] the view of annihilation.

This is why the wise does not dwell

Either in existence or in nonexistence.<sup>534</sup>

So, not dwelling in any extreme whatsoever, existence or non-existence, eternity or annihilation, is expressed by the term “Middle Path.” At the very moment when one realizes that absolute truth and relative truth have the same fundamental nature (*rnal ma*), free from the extremes of existence and inexistence, eternity and annihilation, the [two] truths melt together inseparably.

According to the *Mother*<sup>535</sup>:

Oh Subhūti, although the relative truth of the world is other,  
Absolute truth as such is not other.

Whatever relative truth is itself is the suchness (*tathatā, de kho na nyid*) of absolute truth.

According to the *Two Truths of the Middle Path*:

What is relative truth itself?

We accept it as absolute truth itself.<sup>536</sup>

In the absolute truth—the Buddha’s intention, *Dharmadhātu*—there is no consideration of any substance or any non-substantial entity belonging to existence or nonexistence, eternity or annihilation.

According to Śāntideva:

When substances (*vastu, dngos po*) and non-substantial entities (*avastu, dngos med*)

Do not dwell in the mind,

Because there are then no other appearances,

In the absence of any consideration, there is complete pacification.<sup>537</sup>

But if one were to say that there is no need for the distinction of the two truths, [this would not be correct]. Although the basis of designation of the two truths is not established in the nature of the knowable, the two perspectives of knowledge (*shes ngo*) are opposites, so we apply the terms of the two truths only as an easily understood means for the benefit of those who do not understand suchness. Moreover, from the point of view of deluded knowledge,

<sup>534</sup> MMK, XV, k. 10, Saigusa (ed.) 1985: 420. *astiti śāśvatagrāho nāstityucchedadarśanam / tasmādistivoanāstitve nāśriyeta vicakṣaṇaḥ // yod ces bya ba rtag par 'dzin / med ces bya ba chad par lta // de phyir yod dang med pa la / mkhas pas gnas par mi bya'o //*.

<sup>535</sup> *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*. Not identified.

<sup>536</sup> SDV, D: Tohoku n° 3881, D2b2. *kun rdzob de bzhin nyid gang yin // de nyid dam pa'i don phyir bzhed //*.

<sup>537</sup> BCA, IX, k. 35, Bhattacharya (ed.) 1969: 194. *yadā na bhāvo nābhāvo mateḥ saṃtiṣṭhate puraḥ / tadānyagatyabhāvena nīrālambā praśāmyati // gang tshe dngos dang dngos med dag / blo yi mdun na mi gnas pa // de tshe rnam pa gzhan med pas // dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi //*.

appearances manifest in the form of various substances, so we apply the term relative truth. From the point of view of knowledge in which illusion is exhausted, there do not exist any substances, not even an atom, nothing is considered in itself, so we apply the term absolute truth.

In reality, in the ultimate knowable—the great *Dharmadhātu* free from elaborations—there is no distinction of the two truths. Ultimately, in the Buddha’s intention, there is no more distinction of the two truths.

And even concerning the illusory appearances that are present, the two truths are not established to be different like the goat’s horns. Remaining in the inseparability of appearances and emptiness (*snang stong dbyer med*) and the inseparability of cognition and emptiness (*rig stong dbyer med*),<sup>538</sup> realizing this completely and fully assimilating it, is the non-dual wisdom (*jñāna, ye shes*) of the nature of reality, absolute truth, the Buddha’s intention.

According to the Lord [Atīśa]:

Concerning what appears as relative truth,  
If one analyzes it by reasoning, nothing is found.  
What was not found is absolute truth,  
The nature of reality dwelling from the beginning.<sup>539</sup>

According to the *Five Stages* of the [tantric] master Nāgārjuna:

Relative truth and absolute truth:  
Knowing the part of each,  
They have perfectly melted.  
This is explained as the conjunction (*yuganaddha, zung du ’jug pa*).<sup>540</sup>  
The non-dual wisdom of this itself  
Is the non-dwelling *nirvāṇa*.<sup>541</sup>

This explains the mode of being of general knowable [phenomena].

### [1.2. The realization of the mode of being of knowledge itself]

Now, [we shall explain] the mode of being of knowledge itself, that is to be realized. Although one may have realized the mode of being

<sup>538</sup> B mentions the “inseparability of cognition and appearances” (*rig snang dbyer med*).

<sup>539</sup> SDA, k. 21, *op. cit.*: 192. / *kun rdzob ji ltar snang ba ’di // rigs pas brtags na ’ga’ mi rnyed // ma rnyed pa nyid don dam yin / ye nas gnas pa’i chos nyid do /*.

<sup>540</sup> *Pañcakrama, Yuganaddhakrama*, k. 13, Mimaki and Tomabechi (eds) 1994: 51. *saṃvṛtiṃ paramārthaṃ ca prthag jñātvā vibhāgataḥ / saṃmilanaṃ bhaved yatra yuganaddhaṃ tad ucyate //*.

*kun rdzob dang ni don dam dag // so so’i char ni shes gyur pa // gang du yang dag ’dres gyur pa // zung du ’jug par de bshad do //*.

<sup>541</sup> *Pañcakrama, Yuganaddhakrama*, k. 25.1, *op. cit.*: 53. *etad evādvaya-jñānam apratiṣṭhita-nirvṛtiḥ / de nyid gnyis med ye shes te // mi gnas mya ngan ’das pa yin //*.

of general knowable objects (*yul*), if one has not realized the mode of being of the subject (*yul can*)'s knowledge itself, in regard to the knowable objects of all phenomena, the antidote to the passions and karma will not be effective. After this [partial] realization, pride and vanity will arise. It is necessary to understand the own mode of being of the intellect (*buddhi, blo*), mind (*citta, sems*) or mental consciousness (*mano-vijñāna, yid kyi rnam shes*), the knowing subject whose object of knowing roughly (*rags su*) constitutes the self of the person. Thus, one has to realize the own mode of being of mind or knowledge.

The own mode of being of mind or knowledge is to be realized through two [aspects]. First, it is to be realized as the two truths. Ultimately, it is to be realized as the inseparability of the two truths.

### [1.2.1. The realization of the own mode of being of knowledge as the two truths]

The mode of being of general knowable [phenomena], concerning the appearances of relative truth, is realized as devoid of any own nature, like an illusion. In absolute truth, the categories of existence and inexistence are not at all established, like space. [But] this mind or consciousness that conceives [conceptually] what is ultimately the inseparability of the two truths, the *Dharmadhātu*, as the Great Middle Path free from all elaborations of extremes, is itself relative truth.

According to the master Śāntideva:

Absolute truth is not an object of the intellect (*buddhi, blo*)'s experience.

Intellect is said to be relative truth.<sup>542</sup>

One who has such a conceptual intellect (*rtog pa'i blo*) has pride and vanity. Because there is pride and vanity, there are the actions of Māra. Thus it proceeds as a mistaken knowledge.

According to the *Sūtra revealing the inconceivable field of Buddha*:

What is called "attainment" is only deception.

What is called "manifest realization" is only vanity.

To those who possess higher pride arise the discursive thoughts:

"I obtained," "I [have] manifest realization."<sup>543</sup>

<sup>542</sup> BCA, IX, k. 2, op. cit.: 185. *buddheragocaras tattvaṃ buddhiḥ samvṛtirucyate // don dam blo yi spyod yul min // blo ni kun rdzob yin par brjod //*.

<sup>543</sup> *Arya-acintya-buddhaviśaya-nirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa sangs rgyas kyi yul bsam gwis mi khyab pa bstan pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-35, vol. 24, 114-123 (*Ratnakūta, Dkon brtsegs, Zi*), 281a1-302a5; extract, 117, 288b2-3. *thob pa zhes bya ba de ni g.yo ba nyid de // mngon par rtogs pa zhes bya ba de ni rlom sems nyid do // g.yo ba dang rlom sems gang yin pa de ni bdud kyi las so // lhag pa'i nga rgyal can dag ni bdag gis thob bo // bdag gis mngon par rtogs so zhes 'di lta bu 'di dag gi tshul du rnam par rtog par 'gyur ro |*.

[In reality] the own nature of this conceptual mind is [in itself] absolute truth. One observes within oneself that this conceptual thought, mind or knowledge, is not established as anything substantial. Since the origin, empty of existence and inexistence, empty of arising and cessation, empty of going and coming, empty of eternity and annihilation, empty of the three times, the nature of reality, absolute truth is said to be empty.

According to the *Question of Kāśyapa*:

Oh Kāśyapa, mind is not inside, it is not outside, neither is it in both, it is not observed.<sup>544</sup>

According to the *Question of Maitreya*:

Mind has no form, no inside, no place, it is like space.<sup>545</sup>

### [1.2.2. The realization of the own mode of being of knowledge as the inseparability of the two truths]

The mind's mode of being dwells ultimately in the inseparability of the two truths. They are a unique [truth]. Although we apply the designation of the two truths, what was first applied then dissolves. In the *Dharmadhātu*, mind (*citta*, *sems*) does not exit, thus the basis of designation of the two truths is not established. At the level of the fruit, and the Buddha's intention also, mind does not exist, thus there is no designation such as the two truths. In the deluded beings' nature of mind that is clarity and emptiness, [the two truths] are not further grasped. Remaining in the empty cognition (*rig stong*), empty clarity (*gsal stong*), one will realize the inseparability of the two truths. Then, one might object that the division of the two truths is not necessary, but it is necessary. It is necessary to realize the meaning of the inseparability of the two truths, and to realize [this] on the basis of the knowledge of the two truths' characteristics.

In this way, the mode of being of knowable [phenomena], free from elaborations, and the mode of being of knowledge, free from elaborations, melt inseparably into one taste (*ekarasa*, *ro gcig*). Phenomena and the person being empty, all phenomena, external and internal, are devoid of any elaboration of existence and nonexistence, truth and illusion, eternity and annihilation, and are similar to un compounded space. There is no object seen or subject seeing (*mthong bya mthong byed med*). The realization in which there

<sup>544</sup> *Ārya-kāśyapa-parivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa 'od srung gi le'u shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-43, 188-203 (*Ratnakūta*, *Dkon brtsegs*, *Zi*), 100b3-138a6, extract, 197, 123a4-5. / 'od srung sems ni nang na yang med / phyi rol na yang med / gnyig med pa la yang mi dmigs so l.

<sup>545</sup> *Ārya-maitreya-pariprccha-parivarta-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa byams pas shus pa le'u shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo (P: Otani n° 760-41); or another text of the same name: *Ārya-maitreya-pariprccha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa byams pas shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo (P: Otani n° 760-42, n°816). Extract not identified.

is no object to realize or subject realizing (*rtogs bya rtogs byed med pa*) is unmistakable realization.

According to the *Sūtra of the Girl Concerning Nirvāṇa*:

We call realizing non-discursively

“Not seeing phenomena.”

Seeing is taken as a synonym [of realizing].<sup>546</sup>

Also, according to the short [treatise] of the [Two] Truths of the Lord [Atīśa]:

We apply the expression “realizing emptiness”

To seeing without seeing.<sup>547</sup>

## [2. The teaching to be practiced]

The exposition of the teaching to be practiced has two aspects. Those of sharp faculties practice immediately. Those of lower faculties practice progressively.

### [2.1. The immediate practice of those with sharp faculties]

For the fortunate ones with higher faculties who experience the results of their karma as a great and deep blessing together with the former accumulation of two collections [of merit and wisdom], the realization arises immediately from the simple exposition of the two truths’ instruction, and they are able to remain in the state itself of this realization. Moreover, this experience is empty of the duality of knowledge and knowable. They meditate on non-self in the state free from elaborations concerning the two truths, like the sky. Meditating accordingly, when bad discursive thoughts arise, they come and disappear without being rejected, and the intellect (*buddhi*, *blo*) is not established [coercively] in this good wisdom (*jñāna*, *ye shes*).

According to the protector Maitreya<sup>548</sup> and the master Nāgārjuna:<sup>549</sup>

Here, there is nothing to be eliminated.

And there is not the slightest thing to establish.

Seeing correctly the authentic nature,

<sup>546</sup> *Ārya-dārikā-vimalasuddha-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, ‘Phags pa bu mo rnam dag dad pas zhus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-40, vol. 24, 177-181, (*Ratnakūta*, *Dkon brtsegs*, *Zi*), 73b7-84a6. Extract not identified.

<sup>547</sup> SDA, k. 6, *op. cit.*: 190. / *rtogs med tshul gyis rtogs pa na // stong nyid mthong zhes tha snyad gdags* /. Thus it differs from the author’s quotation. The terms “realizing” (*rtogs*) and “seeing” (*mthong*) are reversed, and taken as synonyms according to the other quotation above.

<sup>548</sup> *Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra*, *Theg pa chen po rgyud bla ma’i bstan bcos*, D: Tohoku n° 4024, D61b6. ‘*di la bsal bya ci yang med // gzhang par bya ba cung zad med // yang dag nyid la yang dag lta // yang dag mthong na rnam par grol* //.

<sup>549</sup> *Kāyatrayastotra-nāma-vivarāṇa*, *Sku gsum la bstod pa shes bya ba’i rnam par ’grel pa*, D: Tohoku n° 1124, D72a3. ‘*di la bsal bya ci yang med // gzhal bar bya ba gang yang med // yang dag nyid la yang dag lta // yang dag mthong na rnam par grol* //.

Seeing it correctly is complete liberation.

Then, whatever might be appearances appear but do not have any own nature. One remains in the state similar to the illusion of dreams: conjunction of the two truths. In this way, one will develop, like a simple illusion, love, compassion, the enlightened mind toward the illusions that are all beings who have not obtained realization, and one will make vast wishes for the sake of beings.

### [2.2. The progressive practice of those with lower faculties]

For those with lower faculties, having formerly accumulated little [merit and wisdom], the deep realization does not arise simply by means of the sole expression of the universal objects' general terms. In order to experience suchness, mind is trained progressively according to the paths of the three [types of] persons. The higher stages are based upon the lower ones. They meditate progressively on the lower methods, then the higher ones, [and focus] on precious human life, death and impermanence, the law of cause and effect, the imperfection of cyclic existence, the enlightened mind, and finally the meaning of the two truths. They meditate on relative truth's appearances, whatever they are, according to the examples of the eight metaphors of illusion. Mind acquiring certainty [about this], they meditate on the own nature of relative truth as being absolute truth, empty, like uncompounded space. Mind having acquiring certainty [about this], they meditate on the conjunction of the two truths, the absolute truth of the Middle Path free from elaborations. Meditating accordingly, peace and happiness arise in the mind: this is the pacification (*śamatha, zhi gnas*). Then, realizing that the object of meditation, the subject meditating and the action of meditating do not have any own nature: this is the higher insight (*vipaśyana, lhag mthong*). Then training [in this] together with the diligent conduct that accomplishes the accumulation of merit for the sake of beings, the realization of the five paths (*pañca-marga, lam lnga*) and the [Bodhisattva's] ten stages (*daśa-bhūmi, sa bcu*) will arise progressively.

According to the Lord [Atīśa]:

Thus, if the view is without ignorance,  
And the conduct is completely purified,  
One will not go into a mistaken path.  
One will go into the realm of Akaniṣṭa.<sup>550</sup>

<sup>550</sup> SDA, k. 24, op. cit.: 192. / *de ltar lta bas ma rmongs shing // spyod pa shin tu dag gyur na // gol ba'i lam du mi 'gro zhing // 'og min gnas su 'gro bar 'gyur /*. Akaniṣṭa ("Below none" or "Unexcelled") is the fourth level of the form realm (*rūpadhātu, gzugs khams*) and the place where a bodhisattva is said to attain the state of a perfect Buddha.

### [2.3. The signs of the attainment of definite knowledge]

Thus, one realizes without errors the meaning of emptiness. The signs of the attainment of definite knowledge are as follows. The attachment to all external and internal things' reality is reversed. All appearances proceed as if they were evanescent (*ban bun*) and equal (*lang long*). The absence of attachment arises towards any of the variety of things. All knowledge, whatever it might be, proceeds continuously without obstruction. The stream of consciousness is pacified. There is joy, and mind functions comfortably. Regrets concerning the past and anxious apprehensions concerning the future are abandoned. Courage (*pratibhāna, spobs pa*) towards all phenomena arises without obstructions. From the bottom of one's heart arises the wisdom which liberates all doubts of oneself and others. Causes and consequences of karma are completely avoided. Love, compassion, and the enlightened mind toward beings arise greatly. With the exception of conduct [acting] for the sake of beings, one's own conduct differs from all those of the world. One acquires certainty while remaining in the profound view and the vast conduct, completely stable. "Profound:" were one hundred scholars to attain the meaning of the nature of reality, even if they were questioned, they could not evaluate [the view in terms of] a philosophical system. "Vast:" one will be an expert at teaching the definition of various subjects (*dharmin, chos can*) and one will make an effort to train with full devotion in all the Bodhisattvas' disciplines for the sake of beings who are [in reality like] simple illusions.

Concerning the teaching, demons, extremists, Hearers and Solitary Buddhas have mistaken view and conduct. These lower individuals do not move (*'gul ba*) from the non-self of person and phenomena. [But later] the persons endowed by these circumstantial signs will enter into the path of non-return. Having meditated on suchness, having seen without discontinuity the truth of the nature of reality's meaning via direct perception, one will become expert in the means of traversing the path of the *Dharmadhātu*. One will acquire powers, courage, excellence and the complete gathering together of all the Buddha's teachings. Having fully completed the six perfections, undefiled generosity and so forth, and having quickly obtained the unsurpassable enlightenment, one will dedicate oneself to the welfare of all beings.

According to the *Sūtra Revealing the Nobles' Armor*:

If one perfectly practices with perseverance and diligence this teaching of emptiness, which is not arising, not ceasing, very profound, then one will quickly become expert in the means of the way of the Bodhisattvas' *Dharmadhātu*. One will obtain powers, courage, excellence, and the reunion of all the unsurpassable teachings. One will be praised by the Buddhas and the Victorious Ones, and one will be fully endowed with the requirements for the Dharma. One will accomplish gene-

rosity, remain in a perfectly pure discipline, and obtain perfectly pure patience, unsurpassable diligence, meditation without object and the great wisdom. Then, remaining in the heart of enlightenment, the four great kings (*caturmahārāja*, *rgyal po chen po bzhi*)<sup>551</sup> holding banners will pray to one to turn the Dharma wheel. Manifesting a great appearance to gods and humans, one will establish oneself in the perfect and unsurpassable enlightenment.<sup>552</sup>

Moreover, if one practices with great diligence the teaching of the profound meaning of emptiness, then at the time of leaving this body, one will exit like the newborn *garuḍa* exits from the egg. Having obtained the supreme accomplishment, one will be endowed with magical powers [and travel] without obstruction in all of the Buddhas' pure fields.

According to *the Sūtra of the Crown's Prominence*:

While remaining blissfully in the wisdom of all phenomena's absence of characteristics, at the time of leaving this body, one will remember the unsurpassable enlightenment. At the time of the separation of body and mind, one will exit like the bird exits from the egg. One will attain the unsurpassable enlightenment with a human body, and endowed with a mental body, comings and goings will be without obstructions.<sup>553</sup>

*Prajñāraśmi* has composed this text entitled the Lamp Illuminating the Two Truths. For the time being, it is finished.

## REFERENCES

### 1. Abbreviations

D	Tibetan Canon, Sde dge Edition
JLABS	<i>Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies</i>
JIP	<i>Journal of Indian Philosophy</i>

<sup>551</sup> According to Buddhist cosmology, the four kings, or the four guardians (*lokapāla*, *'jig rten skyong ba*) of the universe, dwell in the four directions of the Mount Meru. They are: Dṛtīrāṣṭra (Yul 'khor bsrung) in the East, Virūḍhaka ('Phags skyes po) in the South, Virūpakṣa (Mig mi bzang) in the West, and Vaiśravaṇa (Rnam thos sras) in the North.

<sup>552</sup> *Ārya-varmavyūha-nirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa go cha'i bkod pa bstan pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n° 760-7, vol. 22, 160-191, 80a6-158a1.

<sup>553</sup> Considering the large number of sūtras quoted here which belong to the same collection (*Ratnakūṭa*, *Dkon brtsegs*, P: Otani n° 760), it is probably the *Ārya-ratnacūḍa-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa gtsug na rin po ches shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo, P: Otani n°760-47, vol. 24, 229-251, 204a1-257a8. Extract not identified.

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## 2. Indian Sources (with their Tibetan Versions)

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- Ārya-dārikā-vimalasuddha-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, 'Phags pa bu mo rnam dag dad pas shus pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo. Tib. P: Otani n° 760-40.
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- SDV Jñānagarbha: *Satyadvayavibhaṅgakārikā*, *Bden pa gnyis rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*. Tib. ed. Eckel 1987. Tib. D: Tohoku n° 3881.
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AN ENTRANCE TO THE PRACTICE LINEAGE AS EXEMPLIFIED IN KAḤ  
THOG DGE RTSE MAHĀPAṆḌITA'S COMMENTARY ON SA SKYA  
PAṆḌITA'S *SDOM GSUM RAB DBYE*<sup>1</sup>

Tomoko Makidono

Introduction

ge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub (1761–1829) was a Rnying ma scholar of Tibetan Buddhism, who was the first of the Dge rtse incarnation lineage in KaḤ thog monastery in Khams in eastern Tibet.<sup>2</sup> Apart from his having produced the Sde dge edition of the *Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum*,<sup>3</sup> little is

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Loppon Urgyen Tenphel for reading the *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod* with me. I express my deep gratitude to Dr. Jann Ronis who provided me with instructions, suggestions, comments, answers to my numerous questions, since I initially began my work on Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita. I also am very grateful to H. E. Dr. Trungram Gyaltsul Rinpoche for introducing me to *gzhan stong* and the practice lineages, and for reading some of Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's doxographical works on *gzhan stong* with me. I would also like to thank Professor Matthew Kapstein for giving me comments on my conference paper of the Second ISYT, and Joshua Shapiro for giving me valuable comments, suggestions and for correcting this essay. Also, I thank Marc-Henri Deroche for correcting the essay.

<sup>2</sup> For biographical information on Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita and the first four Dge rtse incarnations, see 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan 1996 and Ronis 2009. Eimer and Tsering 1981 identifies Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita in the list of abbots of KaḤ thog monastery.

<sup>3</sup> The twenty-sixth volume of the Sde dge edition of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* is Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's own work, entitled *Bde bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa thams cad kyi snying po rig pa 'dzin pa'i sde snod rdo rje theg pa snga 'gyur rgyud 'bum rin po che'i rtogs pa brjod pa lha'i rnga bo che lda bu'i gtam* (henceforth *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*), in which, as Thondup notes, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita writes a history of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* and its *dkar chag*. See Thondup 1997: 182. For a brief biography of Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita based on 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan's *KaḤ thog pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus* and for an ana-lysis of Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag*, which is the fourth chapter of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*, see Achard 2003: 43-89. Ronis 2009 also includes a study of the biography of Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita. For descriptions of the twenty-one different editions of the *Rnying ma 'rgyud bum* including the Sde dge edition and the catalogues of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* by 'Jigs med gling pa and Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, see Thub bstan chos dar 2000, cf. Achard 2002: 63, n. 4, and Achard 2003. For an historical ana-lysis of the transmission and the doxographical structures of the nine extant editions of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* and comparisons between the Gting skyes, Mtshams brag and Sde dge edition of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum*, see Derbac 2007 and the THL Tibetan Literary Encyclopedia. A concordance of the various editions of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* are found in Cantwell, Mayer, and Fischer 2002, cf. Cantwell and Mayer 2007. For the Sde dge edition's relationship to 'Jigs med gling pa's edition of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum*, see Achard 2003, and also van Schaik 2000: 5. The *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che* is also included in the Gting skyes edition: see Cantwell 2002: 375, and Cantwell and Mayer 2006: 13, n. 13. Dorje and Kapstein point out that Dudjom Rinpoche's *The Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism* derives in part from Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*. See Dorje and Kapstein 1991: 398.

known to us about either Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita or his works. The majority of his *Collected Works*, in ten volumes, has yet to be studied.<sup>4</sup> Doctrinally speaking, his position is the Great Madhyamaka of other-emptiness (*gzhan stong dbu ma chen po*), which he elucidates in various doxographical texts.<sup>5</sup> His work also brings together the major practice lineages (*sgrub brgyud shin rta brgyad*) of Mantra-yāna in Tibet, such as the Jo nang, the Bka' brgyud, the Sa skya, the early Dge lugs, the Rnying ma, and Zhi byed.<sup>6</sup> As such, his ecumenical view anticipates the non-sectarian movement (*ris med*) in Khams in the nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

This paper will address Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, entitled *The Unconditioned Storehouse that Dispels the Debates [caused] by the Sdom gsum rab dbye on the Early Translation School* (henceforth '*Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*').<sup>7</sup> In particular, the essay will analyze the differentiation between the view of Madhyamaka and that of Mantrayāna as it appears in the commentary. Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's discourse touches upon a number of related issues in affirming the superiority of Mantrayāna over the Sūtric path. For example, he discusses the three wisdoms that arise from study, reflection and meditation (*thos bsam sgom gsum*) in relation to their efficacy in bringing about ultimate realization. He also defends the authenticity of the teachings of the Chinese monk Hwa shang, in service of mounting a broad defense of Rnying ma teachings.

### **Why Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita composed his '*Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*'**

Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab dbye* addresses the three vows of *prātimokṣa*, *bodhisattva*, and *mantra*. The work also contains Sa skya Paṇḍita's numerous criticisms about problematic practices amongst his fellow Tibetans, as explained by Rhoton in his scholarship on the text.<sup>8</sup> According to Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, Sa skya Paṇḍita explicitly

<sup>4</sup> Among Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's works, two texts on the creation stage are translated into English. See Guenther 1987 and Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2006: 97-151.

<sup>5</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's *gzhan stong* doctrine is articulated in the following texts: *Bde gshegs snying po'i rgyan*, *Nges don dgongs gsal*, *Rton pa bzhi ldan gyi gtam*, *Sangs rgyas gnyis pa'i dgongs pa'i rgyan*, and the first chapter of the *Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*. For scholarship on Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita and *gzhan stong*, see Burchardhi 2007, which situates Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's position amongst various forms of *gzhan stong*. Duckworth 2008 also looks at Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's *gzhan stong* doctrine.

<sup>6</sup> The *Gdams ngag mdzod* compiled by Kong sprul (1813-1899) encompasses the practice lineages of Tibetan Buddhism; also see Smith 2001: 264.

<sup>7</sup> The entire title of the text is *Sdom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i bstan bcos chen pos snga 'gyur phyogs la rtsod pa spong ba 'dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*.

<sup>8</sup> Rhoton 2002: 5; Karmay 1975: 152-153; Karmay 2007: 142, 197-200.

made a point of addressing certain practices, including Rdzogs chen, Mahāmudrā, the teaching-cycle of the non-mental engagement (*yid la mi byed pa*),<sup>9</sup> the traditions of blessings (*byin rlabs brgyud pa'i bka' srol*),<sup>10</sup> the stage of transferring blessings (*byin rlabs 'pho ba'i rim pa*), the teaching of pure vision (*dag snang*) and the oral transmission (*snyan nas brgyud pa'i chos skor*), the Lama's quintessential instruction (*man ngag*), the single-lineage (*gcig brgyud*),<sup>11</sup> the uncommon profound meaning of Mantra (*gsang sngags kyi zab don thun mong ma yin pa rnams*), the explanation which relies on the meaning (*don la rton pa'i bshad pa*), the creation stage of non-elaboration (*b skyed pa'i rim pa spros med*) [of Śamatha], and the profound completion stages of non-characteristics (*mtshan ma med pa'i rdzogs rim zab mo*) [of Vipāśyanā].<sup>12</sup>

One consequence of Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab dbye* was that it provoked longstanding, negative opinions about Rnying ma tantric practices amongst Tibetans. For Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, the purpose of the *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, as indicated in the title, is to dispel those objections to Rnying ma practices that were generated by the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*.<sup>13</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita acknowledges that there are statements capable of generating doubts about the Rnying ma tradition in the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*. Nevertheless, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita does not directly criticize Sa skya Paṇḍita for these state-ments, but rather criticizes the interpreters of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* who have mistakenly understood Sa skya Paṇḍita's intention to have been to discredit Rnying ma teachings and practices. He suggests that these interpreters have misused Sa skya Paṇḍita's treatise in the service of harming the Rnying ma pas.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita first explains why Sa skya Paṇḍita needed to compose the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*. Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita sets the scene by describing some of the Tantric practices present in Tibet shortly after the later diffusion of Buddhism. Amongst Rnying ma practices, whose Tantric teachings were themselves unmistakable,

<sup>9</sup> According to Jackson, "Amansikāra-Madhyamaka" (*yid la mi byed pa'i dbu ma*) is associated with Maitrīpa. See Jackson 1994: 83.

<sup>10</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita includes the *nyams len phyin brlabs brgyud pa* in the third lineage of the Pāramitāyāna tradition called the "practice lineage" (*sgrub brgyud don gyi brgyud pa* or *zong men* 宗門), which was transmitted from India to China. See Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 158.1.

<sup>11</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita identifies the *gcig brgyud* with the *snying po don gyi bstan pa* transmitted from Bodhidharma to his Chinese disciple Huīke. See Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 160.6-160.7. Also, it is called *don brgyud*, *ibid.*: 161.5. On the term *snying po don* or *snying po don gyi brgyud*, see Seyfort Ruegg 1989: 117-118, n. 224, 226.

<sup>12</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 111.1-5.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: 111.1-2.

<sup>16</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*: 113.2): *dpal ldan zur pa mes dbon gsum sogs mdo dang sgyu 'phrul gyi lam la brten nas bsad pa gso bar nus pa sogs thun mong gi las chen po rnams thogs med du grub ...*; Also see Dalton 2002.

some people misunderstood them and therefore improperly practiced them.<sup>16</sup> Sa skya Paṇḍita thus wrote his treatise to rectify this situation.<sup>17</sup>

For Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, Sa skya Paṇḍita's seeming criticisms of rNying ma practices were only on the level of words and were not meant to convey a literal criticism of the practices. Critics of the Rnying ma pas who subsequently relied on Sa skya Paṇḍita's words did not fully understand his intent.<sup>18</sup> What Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita claims to do in his own commentary to the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* is to carefully examine Sa skya Paṇḍita's text and establish its author's actual intention.

#### Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's hermeneutical strategies and means of proof

As mentioned earlier, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita does not criticize Sa skya Paṇḍita. To the contrary, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita uses Sa skya Paṇḍita's controversial treatise to support his own view on *tantra*. Unlike other interpreters, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita emphasizes Sa skya Paṇḍita's status as a Tantric practitioner<sup>19</sup> and tries to show that Sa skya Paṇḍita's views on *tantra* and the path to ultimate realization are entirely in accord with his own views. The following sections of the essay examine the ways in which Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita skillfully manages his task of defending Rnying ma tantric practices.

There are four components to his defense. First, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita appeals to the Four Reliances (*rton pa bzhi*) as hermeneutical devices for interpreting Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab dbye*. For example, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita shows how a literal reading of the

<sup>17</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*: 113.5-7): *gong du brjod pa de dag gi don gyi gnas la nor ba mi srid kyang tshig gi spros pa dang phyag len cung zad zor yang du mdzad pas mdo sngags thun mong ba'i shing rta chen po'i lugs srol las bag tsam gyel ba ltar gyur pa gzigs nas chos kyi rje dpal ldan sa skya pa dus skabs der gangs can gyi ljongs 'dir bstan pa'i bdag por mthun snang du grub pas yongs su grags pa'i gzhung lugs chen po rnams la thos bsam gyis 'jug pa'i shing rta'i srol mi nyams pa la dgongs nas rab dbye'i bstan bcos 'di nyid brtsams pa ....* "Although there are not mistakes in the reality of these [teachings] mentioned earlier [such as the *Mdo*, the *Sgyu 'phrul*, *Phyag chen* and *Rdzogs chen*], the elaboration of words and practice was made a little simple. Therefore, Sa skya Paṇḍita considered the Great Chariot traditions of the common *sūtra* and *mantra* to be slightly neglected. At that time, here in the Snowy Land, the Lord of Dharma, glorious Sa skya pa, was commonly known as the owner of doctrines; therefore, having intended not to damage the tradition of the Great Chariot that [one] enters the widely known great textual traditions through studying and reflection, he composed this very treatise of the [*Sdom gsum*] *rab dbye*."

<sup>18</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 112.4-114.3.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Sa skya Paṇḍita, *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, III. 650-660, where Sa paṇ himself states that he is endowed with vast knowledge of almost all of the teachings of Buddhism, including Mantra. See Rhoton 2002: 181-182, 328-329.

*Sdom gsum rab dbye*'s words distorts Sa skya Paṇḍita's, as I have already begun to discuss.

The second component of his defence is an appeal to reasoning (*yukti, rigs*) and scripture (*āgama, lung*). In terms of scriptural proof, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita shows us his vast knowledge of Indic sources by frequently quoting *sūtras, tantras* and *śāstras*. The third component of his defence is an effort to authenticate the Rnying ma path's Indic origin. This method of authentication applies in particular to his defence of Chinese Buddhist lineages, whose origin Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita traces back to India.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, the fourth component is a specification of Rnying ma practices that exist in other schools of Tibetan Buddhism, with a particular emphasis applied to defending the Rnying ma *gter mas*.

To begin with, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita repeatedly applies the Four Reliances<sup>21</sup> to his interpretation of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*.<sup>22</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita quotes the *Sūtra of Repaying Kindness* (Toh. 353), which states two of the four Reliances to be as follows:

Abide by the doctrinal content, but do not abide by following the letters.

Abide by gnosis, but do not abide by following consciousness.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1989: 12 n. 12, 13, 14.

<sup>21</sup> For various sources for the Four Reliances, see Mochizuki Bukkyo Daijiten 1967: 1719-1720, s.v. 四依 (シエ), for example. The categories appear in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra*, for example. See *Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra* (ed. Taisho Daigaku 2004: 484): *arthapratisāraṇatā na vyamjanapratisāraṇatā jñānapratisāraṇatā na vijñānapratisāraṇatā | nitārthasūtrāntapratīśaraṇatā na neyārthasavṛtyabhiniveśaḥ | dharmatāpratisāraṇatā na pudgaladr̥ṣṭyupalambho |*; *don la rton gyi tshig 'bru la mi rton pa | ye shes la rton gyi rnam par shes pa la mi rton pa | nges pa'i don gyi mdo sde la rton gyi drang ba'i don kun rdzob la mngon par ma zhen pa | chos nyid la rton gyi gang zag tu lta ba dmigs par 'dzin pa la mngon par ma zhen pa |*. "To rely on the doctrinal content, but not to rely on the words; to rely on gnosis, but not to rely on consciousness; to rely on the *sūtra* of definitive meaning, but not to adhere to the relative truth of provisional meaning; to rely on the reality, but not to adhere to the view of the individuals, who grasp at referential objects." Also see Waldschmidt 1950–51: 238, 292, in the sentences, 24.2,3,52, with the Sanskrit word *pratisāraṇa*.

<sup>22</sup> It is worth remarking that Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's entire discourse revolves around the Four Reliances, which teach that one must rely on gnosis (*jñāna, ye shes*) rather than on consciousness (*vijñāna, rnam shes*). In accordance with this "reliance," Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's treatise shows that the way to attain gnosis is through Mantrayāna. One should therefore enter Mantrayāna from the very begin-ning, since Mantrayāna is unexcelled, and without it one cannot attain the ultimate fruition. See *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 147.3–6: *des na theg pa chen po ni gcig nyid de ... theg chen gcig po de la'ang rgyu dang 'bras bu'i theg pa gnyis su dbye ba'i skabs 'bras bu'i theg pa bla na med pa de nyid ... bla na med pa'i theg pa gcig gang yin pa der gdod 'jug dgos te thob bya'i mthar thug rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang de nyid lam bden mthar thug theg pa mchog nyid las 'byung dgos pa yin na der ma zhugs pas 'bras bu'i mthar thug pa thob par mi nus pa'i phyir |*; *Sangs rgyas gnyis pa'i dgongs pa'i rgyan*, A. vol. 2, fol. 159a3, p. 353.3: *'phags pa'i rtogs pa sngags la ma brten par sgra ji bzhin pa rtogs par mi nus pa ....*

<sup>23</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 115.7-116.1: *drin lan bsab pa'i mdo las don la gnas kyi yi ge'i rjes su mi gnas | ye shes la gnas kyi rnam par shes pa'i*

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita uses this principle in his interpretation of both the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* and the Rnying ma tantric path at large, as will be explained below.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita understands the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* to be an absolutely correct, unmistaken, authentic teaching, which belongs to the long tradition of the Great Chariots of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga, which is ultimately the teaching of the Victorious One.<sup>24</sup> By relying on the mere words of Sa skya Paṇḍita's treatise, however, some conceited scholars have not understand its meaning and ultimate intention.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, these scholars have "stained" the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* through their misunderstanding of Sa skya Paṇḍita's intention.<sup>26</sup>

This same logic applies to the whole set of teachings of Mantrayāna of the Rnying ma pa (called the path of means: *thabs lam*), a set of teachings which is absolutely genuine, authentic, and unmistaken. Some people have mistakenly practiced them, however, without knowing the meaning of the texts wherein they are taught. All of the problems have been caused by those individuals who have misunderstood Rnying ma teachings.<sup>27</sup> These mistakes, like the mistakes of those who have misinterpreted Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, are therefore examples of people "following the letters" as opposed to following the doctrinal content.

### Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's comments on the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.275-277, and 282abc

*Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.275-277 sets forth the claim that the Rnying ma pas regard Yoga, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga as vehicles, while the Gsar ma pas regard them only as stages of meditation, not as classes of *tantra*:

Proponents of the early diffusion of Mantra say,

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*rjes su mi gnas* | ; *Thabs mkhas pa chen po sangs rgyas drin lan bsab pa'i mdo*, Q, fol. 192b7-193a1; S, p. 778.2-4: *gzhan yang chos rnam pa bzhi la gnas par bya'o* | | *bzhi gang zhe na* | [om | Q] *chos la gnas kyi* | [om | Q] *gang zag gyi rjes su mi gnas pa dang* | *don la gnas kyi* | *yi ge'i rjes su mi gnas pa dang* | *ye shes la gnas kyi* | [om | Q] *rnam par shes pa'i rjes su mi gnas pa dang* | *nges pa'i don gyi mdo sde la ni gnas kyi bkri ba'i don gyi mdo sde la mig gnas pa ste* | *chos 'di brgyad la nan tan byed na drin lan shes pa zhes bya'o* | | ; 大方便佛報恩經, T, no. 156, p. 162b23-24.

<sup>24</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *op. cit.* 187.5-6.

<sup>25</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 113.7-114.3, 187.6-7.

<sup>26</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, 'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod, 114.3: *skal ba dman pa'i skye bo 'ga' zhig chos spong ba la sbyar ba'i zhar du gzhung 'di nyid kyang dri ma can du byas so* | | .

<sup>27</sup> For example, *ibid.*: 154.6: *phyis kyi lo tsā ba 'ga' zhig gis rdzogs chen rgya gar du ma grags par bsam pa* ....

'The four tantra classes of yoga [*rnal 'byor*], great yoga [*rnal 'byor chen po*], further yoga [*rjes su rnal 'byor*], and super yoga [*shin tu rnal 'byor*] are levels of vehicle.'  
 They maintain super yoga [*shin tu rnal byor*] to be best among these. (275–276)  
 Adherents of the later-diffusion Mantra systems accept yoga, great yoga, further yoga, and super yoga to be stages in meditative concentration, not levels of tantra. (277)  
 If this system is rightly understood, the theory of the *Atiyoga*, too, Is seen to be a gnosis [*ye shes*], not a vehicle. (282abc) (Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>28</sup>

In response to this passage, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita states that some people have misunderstood Sa skya Paṇḍita to have been criticizing the Nine Vehicles of the Rnying ma pa in this passage.<sup>29</sup> Sa skya Paṇḍita, however, did not state that the Nine Vehicles of the Rnying ma pas were mistaken.<sup>30</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita explains that the Highest Yogatantra of the four *yogas* of the Gsar ma pas is divided into three in the Rnying ma's Nine Vehicles scheme:<sup>31</sup> the profound, the very profound, and the extremely profound. These three correspond to Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga, respectively. Atiyoga is further divided into three: the stages of the profound, the very profound and the extremely profound. These three corresponds to the Mind Class (*sems sde*), the Space Class (*klong sde*), and the Instruction Class (*man ngag sde*), respectively.<sup>32</sup> Further, the Instruction Class is divided into four classes: the Outer (*phyi skor*), the Inner (*nang skor*), the Secret (*gsang skor*), and the Even More Secret Unexcelled (*yang gsang bla na med pa'i skor*). These stages are increasingly vast and profound. In this way, the wisdom of the upper stages refutes that of the lower ones.<sup>33</sup>

For Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, the relationship between gnosis (*ye shes*) and vehicle (*theg pa*) is a relationship between the expressed (*brjod bya*) and the expresser (*rjod byed*), just like the relationship between the content of *Prajñāpāramitā* (*sher phyin*) and the text that teaches it, named *Prajñāpāramitā* (*shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa*).<sup>34</sup> To support his reading, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita quotes the Dignāga's *Āryaprajñāpāra-mitāsaṃgrahakārikā* (Toh. 3809) that states that both

<sup>28</sup> Rhoton 2002: 132, 309. Brackets added by the author of the article. Karmay 2007: 147-148 discusses Sa skya Paṇḍita's view regarding these verses.

<sup>29</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 153.6-7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: 149.3-4.

<sup>31</sup> For an extensive exposition of the Nine Vehicles by Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita himself, see the first chapter of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*:151.3-4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*:151.7-152.2; cf. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 9.4.

<sup>34</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 153.2-3.

the text and the content (*don*) to be accomplished are called *Prajñāpāramitā*.<sup>35</sup> He also quotes the *Suvikrāntavikrāmipariprcchā Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (Toh. 14) that states that “the gnosis of the Buddha<sup>36</sup> is the Mahāyāna.”<sup>37</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita gives a clear definition of the “vehicle” as gnosis in the following statement:

Gnosis is a vehicle. That which becomes a means or a cause of the realization of gnosis is called a vehicle. Based on the distance to see gnosis, the causal and resultant vehicles, or the Lesser and the Great Vehicles are divided.<sup>38</sup>

By demonstrating this interpretation of gnosis as a vehicle, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita aims to show how Sa skya Paṇḍita’s *Sdom gsum rab dbye* should be read as interpretative (*dgongs pa can*) and of provisional meaning (*drang don*), while those of lower faculty (*blo dman*) mistakenly take it to be of definitive meaning (*nges don*). For them, “it is necessary to meditate on the meaning of his teaching as it is.”<sup>39</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita thus applies the teaching of the Four Reliances, to rely on the doctrinal content, but not the words.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita also applies reasoning to explain the status of the highest Rnying ma *Atiyoga* as both vehicles and gnosis, as follows:

It is established through reasoning as well, like a chariot which has a horse is called a horse-chariot. There is no fault in saying that the vehicle that is endowed with the gnosis is called the vehicle of Atiyoga.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 153.3-4; Dignāga, *Āryaprajñāpāramitasaṃgrahakārikā*, Dpe bsdur ma, 1377.4-5: *shes rab pha rol phyin gnyis med || ye shes de ni de bzhin gshegs || bsgrub bya don de dang ldan pas || gzhung lam dag la de sgras bstan* [Dpe bsdur ma, *de’i sgra yin*] ||.

<sup>36</sup> The Stog Palace edition of the *Suvikrāntavikrāmipariprcchā Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* reads “the gnosis of the omniscient”; The Hikata edition reads “all the gnosis.”

<sup>37</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*: 153.5-6): *rab rtsal rnam gnun gyis zhus pa las | sangs rgyas kyi ye shes ni theg pa chen po’o ||*; *Phags pa rab kyi rtsal gyis rnam par gnun pas zhus pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa bstan pa*, S, 41.1: *thams cad mkhyen pa’i ye shes ni theg pa chen po’o ||*; *Suvikrāntavikrāmipariprcchā Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*, ed. Hikata 1958: 19.18: *sarvaṃ jñānaṃ mahāyānam*.

<sup>38</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*:153.4-5): *ye shes yin na de nyid theg pa’ang yin te ye shes rtogs byed kyi thabs sam rgyur gyur pa la theg pa zhes brjod de ye shes mthong ba nye ring la ltos nas theg pa che chung rgyu ’bras kyi theg pa so sor phye ba’i phyir |*.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*: 153.6-7: *chos kyi rje’i drang don dgongs pa can gyi gsung la blo dman gzhan gyis nges don du ’khrul bar mi bya bar ji ltar bka’ stsal pa’i don nyid la mnyam par bzhag dgos so ||*. Add: Also see Rnying rgyud *dkar chag lha’i rngā bo che*, A, fol. 112b1-3, p. 224.1-3; B, fol. 260a1-2, p. 521.1; C, fol. 173a3-5, p. 345.3-5; TT, p. 331.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*: 153.7.

**The *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.255**

*Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.255 addresses the position that there is no difference between the view of Madhyamaka and Mantrayāna in the following statement:

If there existed any theory higher than  
the elaborationlessness [*spros bral*] of the Perfections system,  
that theory would become possessed of an elaboration.  
If they are elaborationless,  
They are without difference. (Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>41</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita refutes the position, seemingly articulated in the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, that there is no difference in view between Madhyamaka and Mantrayāna, and holds the position that there is a difference in view between them. This position does not originate with Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, however, but rather constitutes the Rnying ma pas' unbroken position throughout the ages. As Rhoton has noted, Go rams pa makes clear that Rnying ma pas maintain that each one of the Nine Vehicles has its own unique view (*lta ba*).<sup>42</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita explains that although Sa skya Paṇḍita asserted the two meanings of the view in Sūtric and Tantric context respectively, later interpreters failed to see that:

[People] did not understand that the Lord of Dharma asserted the two occasions of how the view is placed: 1) an occasion in which he placed emptiness being the mere freedom from elaboration as the view of the general phenomena, and 2) the other occasion in which he placed the gnosis of reality in [one's own] experience as the view of uncommon Mantra. The later people who were very much accustomed to logic analysed that the view of Sūtra and Mantra are one and the same, having been based on the word of "view" (*lta ba*). Because of that, [they] considered the experiential gnosis (*nyams myong gi ye shes*) to be mere freedom from elaboration of the non-implicative negation (*med dgag gi spros bral tsam*). While the gnosis of empowerment [*de kho na nyid kyi ye shes*] should be directly experienced, they maintained that it should be part of conceptual analysis, having been depending on a mere name of the "view." Therefore, having blocked a little bit the profound vital point of Vajrayāna, [they] did not consider the

<sup>41</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 114-5; Rhoton 2002: 129, 308; Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita also quotes this verse in *ibid.*: 123.4: *dbu ma las lhag lta yod na || lta de spros pa can du 'gyur ||*. The wording of this slightly differs from that of Rhoton's edition, however. In the passage (*ibid.*: 114.5-6) Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita quotes the same wordings of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* as in the Rhoton's edition; *ibid.*: 123.7.

<sup>42</sup> Rhoton 2002: 189, n. 56; in the first chapter of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita explains in detail the Nine Vehicles system, in which each one of the vehicles has its own ultimate truth. He refutes each position in succession as he ascends the scale, until he reaches the highest vehicle, i.e., the Instruction Class of Rdzogs chen.

conceptual analysis to be the means to realize the view.<sup>43</sup>

For scriptural proof, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita cites the *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja*, which states that Vajrayāna is superior in its pith-instruction on the fifteen points, including the view.<sup>44</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita states that as for the “freedom from elaboration” (*spros bral*), only the name is the same in the Causal Vehicle of Sūtra and the Resultant Vehicle of Mantra, while the intention is different between the two.<sup>45</sup> Here again, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita questions the doctrinal content (or intention), but not the word. According to Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *spros bral* in the Sūtric system means not-having any theses at all, or emptiness of non-implicative negation (*stong nyid med dgag*). In the Mantrayāna, however, *spros bral* is great bliss and reflexive awareness (*so so rang gi rig pa*).<sup>46</sup>

This differentiation of the doctrinal content of *spros bral* is a focal point in Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita’s reply to a question about whether the gnosis at the time of empowerment is the same as or superior to the view that arises out of study:

The author of this treatise (i.e., Sa skya Paṇḍita), too taught that the emptiness measured by studying and reflection is the poisonous view of the Causal [Vehicle]. The view of studying and reflection is

<sup>43</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*:114.6-115.2: *chos kyi rjes stong nyid spros bral tsam la chos spyi'i lta bar bzhag pa'i gnas skabs gcig dang | nyams myong de kho na nyid kyi ye shes la gsang sngags thun mong ma yin pa'i lta bar bzhag pa'i gnas skabs gnyis so sor bzhed pa ma rtogs pa dang | phyis kyi rtog ge la ches goms pa dag gis lta ba zhes pa'i tshig 'di la brten nas mdo sngags gnyis ka'i lta ba gcig tu dpyad | des nyams myong gi ye shes kyang med dgag gi spros bral tsam du bsam | lta ba'i ming tsam la brten nas dbang gi ye shes mngon sum nyams su myong byar yod bzhin du rtog dpyod yan lag tu dgos par 'dod pas rdo rje theg pa'i zab gnad la cung zad bsgribs te rtog dpyod de lta ba rtogs pa'i thabs yin pa la ma bsams so | |.*

<sup>44</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 133.3-5; *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja*, Q, fol. 16a3-5; S, fol. 465a2-4, p. 929.2-4. However, the use of the scriptural proof of the *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja* in order to prove the superiority of the view of Mantrayāna does not originate with Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita. Jigs mes gling pa in his *Rtogs pa brjod pa* cites the same passage from the *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja*. Furthermore, the textual evidence suggests the possibility that Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita quoted the citation directly from the *Rtogs pa brjod pa* of Jigs med gling pa, since the cited passage in both scholars differ in the same way from that of the Bka' 'gyur. See Jigs med gling pa, *Rtogs pa brjod pa*, fol. 276a-6, p. 553.4-6. Also see *Rtogs pa rjod pa*, fol. 107b4-108b2, pp. 216.4-218.2. *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja* (Q, fol. 16a3; S, fol. 465a2) reads *nyan thos la sogs theg chen*, whereas *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod* and *Rtog pa brjod pa* read *nyan thos la sogs theg chung*. Also see a parallel in the *Rnying rgyud 'bum dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che* has different enumerations with the seventh difference being the level (*bhūmi*, *sa*) and the eleventh difference being the benefits of oneself and others. See *Rnying rgyud dkar chag lha'i rnga bo che*, A, vol. 7, fol. 47a2-4, p. 95.2-4; B, fol. 44a6-7, p. 87.6-7; C, fol. 77b3-5, p. 154. 3-5; TT, vol.1, 189-190. Also, the term *rdzogs pa chen po* is found in the *Cakrasaṃvaraguhyaścintyatantrarāja*, Q, 15b7; S fol. 464b4-5, pp. 928.4-5: *bskyed dang rdzogs sogs mi gnas shing | | rdzogs pa chen por [po S] gang 'dod pa | |.*

<sup>45</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 124.1-2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*: 123.7-124.1.

not sufficient for the experience, because the view that is to be experienced as the gnosis at the time of empowerment is of the same essence as the gnosis on the level of the Buddha.<sup>47</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita differentiates between the emptiness reached by studying and reflection and the emptiness experienced in meditation, and he believes that Sa skya Paṇḍita would have asserted the same position, even though Sa skya Paṇḍita used the same phrase “freedom from elaboration” for both Sūtra and Mantra.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita further affirms that having abandoned the emptiness of nothingness (*ci yang med pa'i stong pa nyid*), one meditates on the emptiness that is more profound than that. The former is referred to as the self-emptiness that analyses aggregates (*phung po rnam dpyad kyi rang stong*); the latter is “the other mode of emptiness which is more profound than self-emptiness.”<sup>48</sup> The other mode of emptiness applies to the Mantrayāna, where “the secret” or “the great secret,” as the synonym of the ultimate emptiness, is taught by Vajradhara. This ultimate emptiness is not “self-emptiness” (*rang stong*).<sup>49</sup> Although Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita does not explicitly use the word “other-emptiness” (*gzhan stong*) for the “other mode of emptiness,” it is implied in this context. Thus, while the name *spros bral* is shared in both the Causal Vehicle (*rgyu'i theg pa*) and the Resultant Vehicle (*'bras bu'i theg pa*), the intention of the term is different in the two vehicles. This distinction between the meanings of *sprol bral* corresponds to the distinction between the two modes of emptiness (*rang stong* and *gzhan stong*).

### Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's Thesis on the Three Wisdoms (*thos bsam sgom*)

It is of paramount importance for understanding Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita's works to bear in mind his thesis that one can attain the ultimate realization exclusively through meditation practice (*sgom*), and not through studying and reflection (*thos bsam*). This thesis gives a theoretical foundation for the whole practice of the path of Mantrayāna. It might be surprising that in the *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita actually uses the *Sdom gsum*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: 125.1-2: *bstan bcos 'di nyid mdzad pa pos kyang | thos bsam gyis gzhal ba'i stong nyid la rgyu dus kyi lta ba dug can du gsungs nas | des nyams myong gi go ma chod par dbang gi ye shes la nyams su myong bya'i lta ba sangs rgyas kyi sa'i ye shes dang ngo bo gcig par bzhed 'dug pa'i phyir ro | |*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*: 131.3-4: *zhes ci yang med pa'i stong pa de spangs nas slar de las zab pa'i stong pa nyid la goms su yod par gsungs pa'i phyir dang khyad par gsang sngags kyi theg pa bar khas len bzhiin du phung po rnam dpyad kyi rang stong kho na las ches zab pa'i stong pa nyid kyi tshul gzhan mi 'dod pa ltar na ....*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*: 131.7-132.1: *khyad par rdo rje 'chang chen pos rgyud sde rin po che rnams su gsang ba zhes pa dang | gsang chen zhes pa la sogs pas stong nyid mthar thug gi rnam rang gsungs pa gang yin pa rang stong la dgongs pa ni ma yin ....*

*rab dbye* as a scriptural proof to establish his thesis on *thos bsam sgom*. Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita quotes the verses III.127bc and 128 of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* for this purpose:

... and wishes to cultivate the Mantra system,  
 one must unerringly obtain the four initiations.  
 One should cultivate in meditation  
 The two processes without mistake  
 And become well versed in the Great Seal,  
 The gnosis that rises from these. (Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>50</sup>

To that, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita comments as follows:

Since Sa skya Paṇḍita taught thus, he did not accept that the prerequisites of studying and reflection are indispensable with respect to the gnosis of Mantra.<sup>51</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita further argues:

Furthermore, [at the time of the causal vehicle] it is necessary to know that it is intended that the beginners will realize [the innate gnosis (*lhan skyes kyi ye shes*)] in the manner of vague meaning, initially having relied on studying and reflection. It is necessary to accept that the view of general phenomena through studying and reflection is realized in the mode of inference. When one who realized it enters into Mantra, by relying on a means (*thabs*) such as the time of empowerment and so forth, the meditative absorption of the direct experience arises. When the meditative absorption arises, the previous theoretical understanding, which abided in the manner of a seed, jumps up to the experiential wisdom. On the other hand, even though one does not go through studying and reflection, when one enters Mantra, one will be liberated through the direct realization of the wisdom of the unmistaken view through the means of the third empowerment, for example. It is indisputable that this is the distinguished feature of this swift path of Vajradhara, because we can know that through the biography of the *Siddhas* of the noble country such as Indrabhūti and here in Tibet also, the Venerable Mi la ras pa (1052/1040-1135/1123) and Gling ras<sup>52</sup> (1128-1188) together with their followers. The essence of the assertion of this very treatise [i.e. the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*] also is definitive in this regard.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Rhoton 2002: 112.

<sup>51</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*: 126.3-4): ... *zhes gsungs pas sngags kyi ye shes de la thos bsam gyi rgyu tshogs med ka med kyi yan lag tu bzhed pa ma yin no* | |.

<sup>52</sup> TBRC P910.

<sup>53</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita (*ibid.*: 126.5-127.3): *des na dpyad pas gtan la 'bebs par bstan pa thams cad rgyu'i theg pa'i skabs kho na dang de yang las dang po pas thog mar thos bsam la brten nas don 'ol spyi'i tshul du rtogs par 'gyur ba la dgongs par shes dgos | thos bsam gyis chos spyi'i lta ba rjes dpag gi tshul du rtogs pa zhig sngags la zhugs na dbang dus sogs kyi thabs la brten nas mngon su ma nyams myong gi ting nge 'dzin skyes pa'i tshes sngar gyi go yul sa bon gyi tshul du gnas pa de nyid nyams myong gi ye shes su na 'phar ba zhig la 'dod dgos shing | gzhan du thos bsam sngon du ma song ba*

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita argues that Sa skya Paṇḍita affirmed that the gnosis that arises in the practice of the Mantrayāna does not resort to that which arises out of preliminary study and reflection. Therefore one should strictly follow the method of Mantrayāna, such as the empowerments and so forth.

Although Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita does not completely reject studying and reflection for the sake of the beginners, he believes that the best thing to do for the attainment of the ultimate realization is to enter the extraordinary Mantrayāna, as exemplified in the hagiographies of Indrabhūti and Mi la ras pa. This position seems to be in agreement with David Jackson's understanding of Sa skya Paṇḍita as someone who gained "direct experience" and who was "a highly accomplished practitioner of tantric meditation."<sup>54</sup> One can see that Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita is concerned with Sa skya Paṇḍita in the Tantric context, a context which might normally be ignored when studying Sa paṅ's work.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita affirms the same position in his *Khrom thog sprul sku'i dris lan du gsol ba*, where he quotes the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.110:

Thus none of the adepts was liberated  
through singular techniques. They were all  
liberated by the dawning of the gnosis  
that issues from initiation and the two processes. (Trans. by  
Rhoton)<sup>55</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita comments as follows on this verse:

Therefore, since the self-arisen gnosis of the view is generated in mind by relying on the swift path of empowerments and two stages [of creation and completion], the primal cause for accomplishing the supreme accomplishment is not asserted to be only study and reflection.<sup>56</sup>

The *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.111df, also quoted by Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, reads as follows:

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*yang sngags la zhugs pa'i tshes dbang gsum pa lta bu'i thabs kyis lta ba ma 'khrul pa'i ye shes mngon sum du rtogs pas yul bar 'gyur ba rdo rje 'chang gi myur lam 'di'i khyad par gyi chos su rtsod pa med de i ndra bhū ti sogs 'phags yul gyi grub thob rnam dang l bod 'dir yang rje btsun mi la dang gling ras rjes 'brangs dang bcas pa'i rnam thar gyis kyang shes bar nus pa'i phyir bstan bcos 'di nyid kyi bzhed pa'i snying po yang der nges ....*

<sup>54</sup> Jackson 1990: 52, 56, 57-59.

<sup>55</sup> Rhoton 2002: 110, 300; Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Khrom thog sprul sku'i dris lan du gsol ba*: 192.6-7; Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*: 127.3-4.

<sup>56</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Khrom thog sprul sku'i dris lan du gsol ba*: 192.7-193.1.

It is through the sustaining power of initiation and the correlations established in the cultivation of the two processes that one realizes Gnosis and becomes liberated. (Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>57</sup>

To that, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita comments as follows:

Therefore, it is indisputable that [Sa skya Paṇḍita] taught that one can be liberated through relying on only the experience of the primordial wisdom of Mantra.<sup>58</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita further denigrates the emptiness that is realized (as a mere concept) at the time of study and reflection by appealing to Śākya mchog ldan (1428-1507):

Śākya mchog ldan says that “the emptiness at the time of studying and reflection is not the true abiding mode [of the reality], because it is explained that since its subject is nothing other than concepts, its cultivation is poisonous.”<sup>59</sup> Thus, [Śākya mchog ldan] explained that the view to be experienced, which is the self-arisen gnosis (*rang 'byung gi ye shes*), is free from repairment (*bzo bcos bral*).<sup>60</sup>

Thus Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita tries to affirm that the ultimate intention of Sa skya Paṇḍita with respect to gnosis is in accord with his own thesis on *thos bsam sgom gsum*:

Therefore, the view that is analysed through studying and reflection is a mere theoretical understanding, but not the abiding mode [of the true reality] as it is. The view that is experienced at the time of empowerment is the abiding mode [of the true reality] as it is: the self-arisen primordial wisdom. This is the unmistakable assertion of the Venerable Sa skya [Paṇḍita] together with his followers, [and] should be known as the definitive [meaning] by a pure mind straight-forwardly.<sup>61</sup>

### The *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.167-175

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita goes on to discuss *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 167-175 with respect to the Chinese monk Hwa shang's practice and its relationship to Rdzogs chen and Mahāmudrā:

From [stanza] “the present-day Great Seal and the Great Perfection (rDzogs-chen) of the Chinese tradition ...”<sup>62</sup> up to [stanza] “Are

<sup>57</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, 128.4-5; Rhoton 2002: 110, 300.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*: 128.5.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*: 129.6-130.1. The quoted Śākya mchog ldan's text is yet to be identified.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*: 130.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*: 130.3-4.

<sup>62</sup> Translated by Rhoton 2002: 118.

virtually [the same as] the Chinese religious system.” (Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>63</sup>

It is widely understood that Sa skya Paṇḍita rejected Mahāmudrā and Rdzogs chen because of their resemblance to the Chinese monk Hwa shang’s system of practice that was defeated by Kamalaśīla at the Bsam yas debate in the eighth century. To the contrary, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita argues Sa skya Paṇḍita merely reserved the practice of Mahāmudrā and Rdzogs chen to those who are of sharp-faculty. If one does not restrict these practices to select practitioners, then the gradualist path cannot be established as an authentic alternative.

[Sa skya Paṇḍita’s] intention (*dgongs gzhi*) is to establish the followers of the Great Chariot, i.e., the tradition of the gradualist (*rim gyis pa’i lugs*), as authentic. [Sa skya Paṇḍita’s] speech is interpretative (*dgongs pa can*) because although it is unmistakable that what is known as the simultaneist (*cig car ba*) is of definitive meaning, [he] refuted whosoever, be sharp or dull, enters that path, because it is the path of only those of the sharp faculties.<sup>64</sup>

What sometimes goes wrong is an individual’s understanding of (simultaneist) teachings like those of Hwa Shang, but never the teachings themselves, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita continues:

The immature of the later period, who knew only the Tibetan alphabet *ka kha*, and so forth, considered Hwa shang’s teaching wrong and erroneously originated from heretics and barbarians.<sup>65</sup>

In order to dispel this wrong notion, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita investigates whether the teachings of the Chinese *mkhan po* (Hwa Shang) are correct or not in two steps. First, he explains that Chinese Buddhism originated in India and possesses unbroken transmissions of Buddhist doctrines. Second, he explains that there are no faults in Hwa shang’s tradition, specifically.<sup>66</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita accounts for the three traditions of Buddhism (Vinaya, Mantrayāna, and Pāramitāyāna) in China that were

<sup>63</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 155.3-4: *da lta’i phyag rgya chen po dang* || *rgya nag lug kyi rdzogs chen la* | *zhe pa nas* | *phal cher rgya nag chos lugs yin* || *zhes pa’i bar gyis bstan* ||; Sa skya Paṇḍita, *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, III.167bc, III.175bc in Rhoton 2002: 118, 303-4; also see Karmay 2007: 142, 197-200. Also, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita extensively accounts on Rdzogs chen and Hwa shang are found in the *Rnying ma rgyud ’bum dkar chag lha’i rnga bo che*, A, vol. 8, fols. 106a1–113b4, p.211.1–226.4; B, fol. 254b4–261a1, pp. 510.4–523.1; C, vol. 36, fol. 162a6–175a3, p. 323.6–349.3; TT, vol. 2, pp. 306–335. Also see, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Bde gshegs snying po’i rgyan*, p.94.2-3.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*: 155.5-6.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 155.6: *’on kyang phyis su byis pa ka kha shes pa yan chad kyi hwa shang gi chos log ces mu stegs dang kla klo tsam du nor ba’i khungs byed pa zhig ’dug ....*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*: 155.6-7: *thog mar rgya nag mkhan po’i chos de nor ba yang dag pa yin min la dbyang dgos pas* | *chos de’i khungs bshad pa dang* | *de nyid skyon med par bstan pa’o* ||.

transmitted from India as follows. First is the Vinaya tradition that is in accord with the explanation of Dge 'dun go cha and Kumārajīva.<sup>67</sup> Second is the Mantrayāna tradition, with the three lower Tantras (*kriyā-*, *caryā-*, *yoga-*) transmitted to China but not the Highest Yoga Tantra.<sup>68</sup> Third, the Pāramitāyāna traditions, which are further divided into three. First, the lineage of the vast conduct (*rgya chen spyod pa'i brgyud pa*) that follows Maitreya-Asaṅga and the Last Turning of the Wheel of the Teachings, as well as the Chinese translator Xuang zang (玄奘). This lineage corresponds to Yogācāra.<sup>69</sup> Second, the lineage of the profound view (*zab mo lta ba'i brgyud pa*) that follows Mañjuśrī, Nāgārjuna, Bhāviveka, and Candrakīrti, and corresponds to Madhyamaka. The third is the *sgrub rgyud don gyi brgyud pa*.<sup>70</sup>

With respect to the lineage of the profound view in China, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita discusses a Chinese monk of this lineage named Ți ce dashi<sup>71</sup> who classified the Buddha's teachings as the five periods and eight entrances into the teachings (五時八教). This monk composed many treatises on the *Prajñāpāramitā*, the *Lotus sūtra* and so forth. The eight entrances of teachings are 1) the entrance to the simultaneous (頓教, *gcig car 'jug pa'i sgo*), 2) the entrance to the gradual (漸教, *rim gyis 'jug pa'i sgo*), 3) the entrance to the uncommon secret (秘密教, *gsang ba thun mong min pa'i sgo*), 4) the entrance to the indefinite (不定教, *ma nyes pa'i sgo*), 5) the entrance to the Tripiṭakas (三藏教, *sde snod kyi sgo*), 6) the entrance to the common teaching (通教, *rigs pa'i sgo*), 7) the entrance to distinct or gradual teaching (別教, *rnam par dbye ba'i sgo*), 8) the entrance to the total perfection (圓教, *yongs su rdzogs pa'i sgo*). As we see here, Ți ce dashi (and by extension Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita) understands both the simultaneous and the gradual means to be part of the lineage of the profound view of the Pāramitāyāna.<sup>72</sup>

The third lineage of the Pāramitāyāna-traditions, that of the *sgrub rgyud don gyi brgyud pa*,<sup>73</sup> is identified with the following: "practice lineage" (*tsung men*, *zong men* 宗門),<sup>74</sup> the lineage of the Buddha's teaching (*bka' brgyud pa*), the lineage of the blessing of practice (*nyams len phyin brlabs brgyud pa*), and the Mahāmudrā of the unity

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: 156.5.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*: 156.5-6; note that the *Hevajratāntra* (Taisho no.892) translated into Chinese in the mid-eleventh century.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*: 157.1-3.

<sup>70</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*, 158.1.

<sup>71</sup> Ți ce dashi is might be referred to the Chinese Tiantai master Zhiyi (智顛, 538–597), because of the doctrinal affiliation with the category of "the five periods and the eight entrances into the teaching." Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 157.4–158.1; Cf. Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima 2009: 360-362; Yu-Kwan 1993: 1; Liu, Ming-Wood 1994: 197-217.

<sup>72</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 157.3-158.1.

<sup>73</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 156.4-157.1.

<sup>74</sup> See Meinert 2004: 44, n. 86.

of awareness and emptiness (*rig stong phyag rgya chen po*), which is also known in Tibet as *snying po don gyi bstan pa* or *snying po don gyi brgyud*.<sup>75</sup> This teaching lineage is traced back to Nāgārjuna.<sup>76</sup> In this *sgrub brgyud don gyi brgyud pa*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita places Chinese Chan Buddhism, which originated from the Indian master Bodhidharma (ca. 440 CE. - ca. 528 CE.) and included Hwa shang, into this tradition.<sup>77</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita describes how Bodhidharma taught Mahāmudrā to his Chinese disciples and repeatedly stressed the importance of the practice of meditation, disregarding study and reflection:

There was a risk that [Bodhidharma's] way of showing his teaching might not be transmitted (lit. "get lost") to the theoretical understanding of those who are irresponsive (*dred po*). [His way of teaching] was not like [the way of learning] the Tibetan alphabets *ka kha*. The quintessential instruction of Mahāmudrā was bestowed in the way that, to the symbols (*brda*) [a master] shows [students], they reply with answers, by means of which [the master] makes [students] think of the meanings. It is not a mere theoretical understanding of the explanatory *tantra*, in which, when the insight arisen from reflection (*bsam byung gi shes rab*) grows up, [students] enter meditation. [In this *Mahāmudrā* quintessential instruction], having turned inwards, one applies oneself to the only meaning of meditation (*sgom*). This story is in agreement with what Great Lord [Atiśa] taught:

"[One] won't know [the truth of reality] through studying, but will know [it] through meditation."<sup>78</sup>

All discourses risen from the meditation of the Mahāyāna are nothing other than the abiding mode [of the true reality], because the Blessed One taught that this teaching is far beyond words and letters, not the object of speech and logic, not established through examples and reasoning.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.* 158.1-2: *gsum pa sgrub rgyud don gyi brgyud pa 'dir tsung men zhes bya ste | bka' brgyud par bsgyur du rung ba | nyams len phyin brlabs brgyud pa dang | rig stong phyag rgya chen por yang bod chog pa snying po don gyi bstan par grags...*; Cf. Jackson 1994: 11-12, n. 21, where the term *sgrub brgyud* is found; Jackson 1990: 68.

<sup>76</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 158.1-2.

<sup>77</sup> Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802) differentiates Hwa shang's view from that of the general *Zongmen*, although Hwa shang's view is an offshoot of it (Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima 2009: 366). As for the term *sgrub brgyud* or *zong men* (宗門), see Ruegg 1989: 117, n. 224; Meinert 2004: 44, n. 86.

<sup>78</sup> The original passage of Atiśa is yet to be identified. Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 160.2-4.

<sup>79</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 160.5-6.

Bodhidharma gave his teaching on Mahāmudrā through signs (*brda*).<sup>80</sup> However, among his four Chinese disciples, Huike (慧可, 487-593) alone was able to realize the meaning of his teaching.<sup>81</sup> Huike accordingly became the second Patriarch of Chinese Chan Buddhism. With this story, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita illustrates that this way of teaching Mahāmudrā (via signs, *brda*) is not intended for everybody, but only for those of sharp faculties.<sup>82</sup>

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita asserts that Kamalaśīla, Hwa shang's opponent at the Bsam yas debate, took issue with certain of Hwa shang's teachings, such as his advocacy of mental non-engagement (*yiḍ la mi byed*) and his disregard for the two accumulations (of merit and wisdom), as developed in the perfections (*pāramitā*).<sup>83</sup> In defense of Hwa shang's teachings, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita explains that what Hwa shang means by mental non-engagement and the disregard of the two accumulations is to practice with "no references" (*dmigs med*). For Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, there should be no trace of attachment in the ultimate realization. Even the practice of the *pāramitās* such as generosity and so forth should not, at the ultimate level, entail any referential objects.<sup>84</sup> Hwa shang's emphasis on practicing with "no references" was mistakenly understood to mean "disregarding the two accumulations" *in toto*.

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita explains that Hwa shang's advocacy of mental non-engagement is meant to be a teaching on non-attachment to emptiness:

Meditation holding onto emptiness, thinking that "all phenomena are emptiness" through the mental consciousness, is not free from the mind clinging to emptiness and possessing the continuum of the five aggregates. Therefore, there is no chance to have awareness of genuine reality.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>80</sup> It seems that Bodhidharma's way of teaching resembles Zen Kōans (公案).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*: 160.6.

<sup>82</sup> There are various examples of teachings transmitted through the symbolic signs (*brda*): Guenther 1996 on Padmasambhava's teachings; Sanderson (2007) finds a teaching through *saṅketa*, which is a Sanskrit equivalent of *brda* (*Mahāvīyutpatti* 2776), in a much later Kashmirian Śaivite source. The Chapter thirty-six of the *lo rgyus chen mo* of the *Mañi bka' 'bum* says that the Tathāgata's intention cannot be illustrated by means of words and letters, but is experienced through signs (*brda*) or means (*thabs*) (Sde dge ed., f. 66b3, kept at the Library of École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris): *rigs kyi bu de bzhin gshegs pa'i dgongs pa rnam tshig dang yi ges mtshon par mi nus so | | brda'am thabs kyis nyams su myong bar 'gyur bas |*; see His Eminence Trizin Tsering Rinpoche 2007: 175.

<sup>83</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 163.6-164.4; Cf. Seyfort Ruegg 1989: 93-95.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. for example, there are three kinds of compassion (*snying rje*) such as compassion focused on sentient beings (*sems can la dmigs pa'i snying rje*), compassion focused on phenomena (*chos la dmigs pa'i snying rje*) and compassion without referential objects (*dmigs pa med pa'i snying rje*).

<sup>85</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 168.2-3: *yiḍ kyi rnam par rig pas chos thams cad stong pa nyid do snyam nas de la 'dzin pa dang bcas sgom par byed pa ni stong 'dzin gyi blo dang ma bral zhing phung po lga'i rgyun dang ldan pas gnyug ma'i chos nyid la rig pa'i skabs med....*

It is in this context that Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita says that one should not engage in analytical meditation (*dpyad sgom*)<sup>86</sup> in meditative equipoise (*mnyam gzhag*).<sup>87</sup> Those who propound that conceptual analysis is a necessary component of the meditative equipoise of the noble (*'phags pa'i mnyam gzhag*) deviate from the Buddhist tradition, he argues.<sup>88</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita then quotes Saraha's view, which, for him, is equal to Hwa shang's teaching of mental non-engagement.<sup>89</sup> In this context, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita also points out that the very reason why logicians generate a mistaken view about Rdzogs chen and Mahāmudrā is grounded in their own clinging to concepts (*rnam rtog*).<sup>90</sup>

He also quotes the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III.174-175:

... some, who based themselves solely  
on texts of the Chinese master's tradition,  
changed the name of his system secretly to Great Seal. (Trans. by  
Rhoton)<sup>91</sup>

In response to this accusation, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita comments that later opponents of Hwa shang simply followed what was written in the *Rba bzhed* (namely this accusation), and repeated the words of the *Rba bzhed* like an echo even without seeing Hwa shang's texts.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>86</sup> As for the Dge lugs pa's *dpyad sgom* being equated with insight meditation (*vipāṣyanā*, *lhaḡ mthong*), see Geshe Lhundup Sopa 1987: 184-187. According to Guy Newland, the Dge lugs way of approaching emptiness is that "Realization of emptiness depends not only upon prior training in ethics, but upon conceptual mastery of what "emptiness" is and how logic can be used to approach it" (Newland 1996: 204). This approach is what Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita tries to invalidate.

<sup>87</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 169.2-3: *chos nyid ji lta ba mngon sum du mjal bar byed pa ni sgom byung rtog bral gyi shes rab nyid yin pas man ngag rig pa rnams kyis mnyam gzhag la dpyad sgom mi mdzad pa ni man ngag gi gnad gsang bla na med pa mkhyen pa yin....*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*: 169.3-4: *kha cig 'phags pa'i mnyam gzhag la'ang rtog dpyod dgos par smra ba ni sangs rgyas pa'i lugs las gzhan du gyur pa.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*: 170.1-2: ... *zhes pa 'dis ni bsam gtan mkhan po'i dgongs pa la shin tu 'jug cing tshad mar byed pa'i phyir ro | |.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*: 170.2-3: *gzhan yang phyis kyi rtog ge pa mngon pa'i nga rgyal can 'ga' zhig gis rdzogs chen dang phyag chen gyi man ngag gi dgongs par 'das pa'i rjes mi bcaḡ | ma 'ongs pa'i mdun mi bsu | da ltar gyi shes pa bzo bcos med par rang babs su 'jog | | ces 'byung ba 'di la dus gsum gyi yid kyi las bkag go snyam pas ha shang chen po'i phyogs su 'khirul ba'i rgyu yang rnam rtog thugs zhen gyis ma thongs pas lan ....*

<sup>91</sup> Rhoton 2002: 118-119.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*: 171.1-3. Cf. Wangdu and Diemberger 2000: 78-88.

<sup>98</sup> Rhoton 2002: 162, 321.

**The *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 507 and 508**

*Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 507 is concerned with the *gter ma* (revealed texts) as follows:

To trace back to Vajradhara  
volumes originating from treasure-caches,  
teachings pilfered from other systems, (III. 507)  
teachings that have been composed [as apocrypha],  
those that somebody dreamed,  
or those that have been obtained through memorization. (III. 508)  
(Trans. by Rhoton)<sup>98</sup>

As for the *gter ma* (revealed texts) of the Rnying ma, some scholars claim that *gter mas* are only discovered and accepted by the Rnying ma. In order to refute this allegation, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita shows the authenticity of *gter mas* by referring to Indian sources,<sup>99</sup> other Tibetan schools such as the Bka' brgyud pa, and even to a Dge lug pa scholar.<sup>100</sup> Thus, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita states:

Through any stories of the *gter mas* like these, it would be very absurd that one asserts that all teachings of treasure texts, all Rnying ma pas and *gter stons* are frauds.<sup>101</sup>

**Other Rnying ma commentators  
on the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* before Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita**

Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita is not the first Rnying ma pa to comment on the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*. Sog bzlog pa (1552–1624),<sup>102</sup> for example, comments on the following verses of the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*: III. 167, 253, 254, 255, 256, 260, 275, 276, 277, 280, 281, 282, 283, 381, 507, 508, 509, 604, 405, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610.<sup>103</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, in contrast, comments on the following verses: III. 110, 111, 127, 128, 167, 174, 175, 257, 258, 259, 260, 276, 277, 280, 281, 282, 283, 381, 507, 508. Therefore, only the following ten verses: 167, 260, 276, 277, 280, 281, 282, 283, 381, 507, and 508 are commented upon by both Sog bzlog pa and Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita.

Sog bzlog pa understands that the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* sees contaminated teachings in both the Gsar ma and the Rnying ma.<sup>104</sup> He also points out that past commentators on the *Sdom gsum rab*

<sup>99</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *ibid.*: 184.7.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*: 186.4-6.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*: 186.6.

<sup>102</sup> I thank Professor Matthew Kapstein for introducing me to Sog bzlog pa; cf. Karmay 1975: 150-151.

<sup>103</sup> Sog bzlog pa, *Nges don 'brug sgra*, 493.4-500.3.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*: 493.3-4.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*: 500.2-3: *sdom gsum gyi 'grel mdzad mkhan po dag gis dgongs pa 'di ltar du cung ma bkral kyang phyag rdzogs kyi gzhung lugs la nan tan du ma gzigs pa nyid du*

*dbye* have given little examination to the actual textual traditions of Mahāmudrā and Rdzogs chen.<sup>106</sup>

‘Jigs med gling pa (1729/1730–1789) likewise defends the Rnying ma pa from criticisms originating in the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*.<sup>107</sup> In his *Log rtogs bzlog pa’i bstan bcos*, ‘Jigs med gling pa elaborates the extent to which the Bka’ brgyud pas, including Karma pas such as Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–1193), Karma Pakshi (1204–1283), and Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339), practiced the Rnying ma teachings.<sup>109</sup> In this way, ‘Jigs med gling pa faults the exclusive criticism of the Rnying ma pa.

### Conclusion

This essay has tried to show how Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita interprets the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* in order to uphold both the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* and the Rnying ma tantric practices as authentic teachings. Having said that, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita’s portrayal of Sa skya Paṇḍita demands some contextualization. In the *‘Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita attempts to interpret Sa skya Paṇḍita’s Tantric view as supportive of Rnying ma tantric teachings. Yet in his *Bde gshegs snying po’i rgyan*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita opposes scholars including Sa skya Paṇḍita who do not consider the original state (*gshis lugs*) to be virtuous.<sup>111</sup> Further, in his *Rnying ma rgyud ‘bum dkar chag lha’i rnga bo che*, Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita disagrees with “some Tibetan scholars” who say that there is no difference in the view between the Pāramitāyāna and Mantrayāna.<sup>112</sup> By “some Tibetan scholars,” Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita is likely pointing, albeit implicitly, at Sa skya Paṇḍita, without explicitly naming him. It seems that what Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita attempts to draw an attention to in the *‘Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod* is Sa skya Paṇḍita in the tantric context, where he is concerned with achieving

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*mngon no* ||.

<sup>107</sup> See *Rtogs pa brjod pa*, p. 219.3-5.

<sup>109</sup> ‘Jigs med gling pa, *ibid.* p. 684.3; Karma Pakshi received the Rnying ma teachings such as Great Perfection from Kaḥ thog pa Byams pa ‘bum (1179-1252) (*ibid.*: 684.3); Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Rnying rgyud dkar chag lha’i rnga bo che*, in A, (vol. 8), fol. 120a5-6, p. 239.5-6; B, fol. 266b2-3, p. 534.2-3; C, fol. 186a3-4, p. 371.3-4.

<sup>111</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Bde gshegs snying po’i rgyan*: 83.2-3: *gshis lugs dge bar bshad mod de tshul la* || *sa paṅ la sogs bka’ bkyon mdzad mkhan mang* ||.

<sup>112</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Rnying ma rgyud ‘bum dkar chag lha’i rnga bo che*, A, fol. 47b5, p. 96.5; B; fols. 44b6-45a1, pp. 88.7-89.1; C, fol. 78b5, p. 156.5; TT, 192.

gnosis through experience. Generally speaking, however, Sa skya Paṇḍita is a *rang stong pa* in the sūtric context.<sup>113</sup>

## Appendix

An outline (*sa bcad*) of the *'Dus ma byas kyi gan mdzod*

1. bstan bcos mkhan po'i dgongs pa brtag pa [111.1-114.3]
2. bstan bcos kyi tshig la brten nas gzhan gyi log rtog rnam par sel ba
  - 2.1. bstan bcos kyi tshig la brten nas gzhan gyis dogs pa bslangs pa [114.4]
    - 2.1.1. dngos su gsal ba'i dgag sgrub yod par 'dod pa [114.4-155.2]
      - 2.1.1.1. dbu ma dang gsang sngags lta ba khyad par med par 'dod pa ['i skyon spong] [114.5-132.4] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 255 [114.5-6, 123.4]; III. 127, 128 [126.2-3]; III. 110 [127.3-4]; III. 283 [127.7-128.1, 128.3]; III. 111 [128.3-5];
      - 2.1.1.2. lta sgom shan ma phye bar 'dod pa ['i skyon spong] [132.4-145.2] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 257-260 [132.4]; III. 258 [132.4-5]; III. 259 [132.5]; III. 260 [132.6-7]
        - 2.1.1.2.1. rje btsun 'khrul pa'i dri ma spangs pa grags pa rgyal mtshan [142.1-143.3]
        - 2.1.1.2.2. Chos kyi rje [Sa skya paṇḍita] [143.3-143.6]
    - 2.1.1.3. rgyud sde gong ma gsum theg pa'i rim par mi 'dod pa'i skyon spong
      - 2.1.1.3.1. zhung gis ston tshul [145.2-146.5] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 280, 281, 282 [145.3-5]; III. 275, 276, 277 [146.2-3]
      - 2.1.1.3.2. skyon de spyong ba
        - 2.1.1.3.2.1. spyir theg pa dgu'i grangs la klan ka mi 'jug
        - 2.1.1.3.2.2. bye brag a nu a ti gnyis theg pa dang rgyud
- 2.1.2. zur gyis phog pa yod par 'dod pa sel ba [155.2-181.7]
  - 2.1.2.1. rdzogs chen la hwa shang chen po'i chos lugs 'dres par 'dod pa [sel ba][155.2-181.1] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 167-175 [155.3-4];
    - 2.1.2.1.1. chos de'i khungs bshad pa [155.7-162.2]
      - 2.1.2.1.1.1. rgya chen spyod pa'i brgyud pa [157.1-3]
      - 2.1.2.1.1.2. zab mo lta ba'i brgyud pa [157.3-158.1]
      - 2.1.2.1.1.3. sgrub rgyud don gyi brgyud pa [158.1-162.2]
    - 2.1.2.1.2. de nyid skyon med par bstan pa [162.2-181.1] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 174, 175 [171.4]
  - 2.1.2.2. 'bras bu'i mthar thug 'od gsal du mi 'thad par 'dod pa [sel

<sup>113</sup> Dge rtse Mahāpaṇḍita, *Bde gshegs snying po'i rgyan*: 97.1-3: *sa paṇ ngo bo nyid med 'rang stong smra ba'i dbu ma | bzhed na yang || rang bzhed mthar thug bdag med | snying po'i ye shes kyi bzhugs tshul rgyas par gsung pas 'khor lo tha mthar mthun | bstod 'grel te || gzhan du brtag gnyis rdo rje snying 'grel dang || rgyud 'grel lam skor lam 'bras bcas rnam kyis || rgyu rgyud lam rgyud 'bras rgyud dbye ba dang || sbyang gzhi sbyong byed sbyangs 'bras rnam gsum dang || rgyu yi rdor 'dzin dang po'i sangs rgyas sogs || rang bzhed sngags kyi bskyed rdzogs smin grol lam || ma lus gzhan stong dbu ma las mi gnyis ||.*

- ba] [181.1-6] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 381 [181.1-2]  
 2.1.2.3. gter nas byung ba'i chos kyi brgyud pa rdo rje 'chang la  
 snyeg pa mi 'thad par 'dod pa'i dogs spong  
 [181.6-186.6] *Sdom gsum rab dbye* III. 507, 508 [181.6-7]  
 2.2. de lung dang rigs pas sel bas

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NOTHING TO TEACH: PATRUL'S PECULIAR PREACHING  
ON WATER, BOATS, AND BODIES<sup>1</sup>

Joshua Schapiro

**D**za Patrul Rinpoche (Rdza dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po, 1808-1887), the famed author of *Words of My Perfect Teacher* (*Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*), was renowned during his life in Eastern Tibet for his brilliant oratory and matchless skill at imparting Buddhist ethical teachings. He delivered these teachings to a wide variety of audiences: personal disciples, monks of all four Tibetan traditions, aristocrats and government officials, nomads and villagers.<sup>2</sup> Amongst a series of such teachings that appear in his collected works, one finds a particularly peculiar and mysterious composition.<sup>3</sup>

The work, entitled *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* (*Chu gru lus kyi rnam bshad*), is a short narrative, running all of nine pages long. It takes the form of a conversation between a group of old

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<sup>1</sup> At the outset I would like to thank the many people who have aided me in this project. Janet Gyatso, Tulku Thondup, Lobsang Shastri, Jann Ronis, and Kalsang Gurung all helped me to read passages from the text that I will be discussing. I also benefited immensely from conversations with Gene Smith, Zagsa Paldor, and Alex Gardner at the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center and Rubin Foundation, as well as Marc-Henri Deroche, Pierre-Julien Harter, Daniel Berounsky, and many others at the Second International Seminar of Young Tibetologists in September, 2009. Additional thanks to Janet Gyatso, Heather Stoddard, and Marc-Henri Deroche for their comments on earlier drafts of this essay. While many of these scholars' insights have found their way into the paper, I take full responsibility for the certain interpretive errors and hermeneutic missteps that I have made in working with the challenging material at hand.

<sup>2</sup> For English renditions of Patrul's life, see the following: Thondup 1996; Thubten Nyima 1996; Nyoshul Khenpo 2005; and Schapiro 2010. For Tibetan biographies, see: Rdo grub chen 2003; Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003; and Thub bstan nyi ma 2003. For Patrul as a brilliant orator, see Mi pham 2003. For examples of Patrul teaching nomads and commoners, see Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003: 197-98, 202. For an example of Patrul teaching an aristocrat, see his *Padma tshal kyi zlos gar*, written for Bkra shis dge legs, in Rdza dpal sprul 2003 (vol. 1). On teaching the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to monks from all four of Tibet's major traditions, see Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003: 208.

<sup>3</sup> The composition appears in the first volume of Patrul's collected works, together with other miscellaneous works (*gtam tshogs*), some of which are works of ethical advice. Patrul's collected works were assembled by his disciple and attendant Gemang Ōn Rinpoche (Dge mang dbon rin po che O rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu, b. 1851) and published under the auspices of Kenpo Shenga (Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba, 1871-1927) at Dzogchen monastery. For this paper, I have consulted two editions of the collected works, listed in the bibliography. Subsequent references will be to the edition published in Chengdu, in eight volumes, in 2003.

people and a group of younger ones. Their dialogue concerns the meaning of a colloquial phrase used by the youth that the elders do not understand. After the youth provide the elders with a multifaceted explanation of the term's meaning, the old people respond with a scathing criticism of the youth's exposition. The text concludes with the youth defending their explanation.

The table of contents to the Gangtok publication of Patrul's collected works labels the composition as a "laughter-discourse" (*bzhad gad kyi gtam*).<sup>4</sup> True to its billing, the work contains funny moments, witty turns of phrase, and playful manipulations of its audience's expectations. Patrul's interests go beyond entertaining his audience, however. His text is didactic, skillfully transmitting esoteric philosophical and ethical content through the use of multivalent allegory; it is stylistically diverse, making use of multiple rhetorical styles such as narrative, polemic and counter-polemic, and hymnal praise; and it is creative, surprisingly placing its author, Patrul himself, into the narrative as if he were a character in the story.

Above all, the text presents us with a series of puzzles. Who do the characters of the youth and the old men represent? What does the youth's seemingly allegorical explanation of "water, boats, and bodies" actually teach us? Why does Patrul appear as a character in his own composition? What is Patrul ultimately trying to achieve in this playful composition?

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<sup>4</sup> The full title of the work as it appears in the table of contents to the Gangtok edition is "Ngo mtshar bskyed pa bzhed gad kyi gnas chu gru lus kyi rnam bshad" ("A Humorous Chapter that Generates Amazement: The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies"). The *bzhed gad* in the title should read *bzhad gad*. See the table of contents to *Rdza dpal sprul 1970* (vol. 1). At this point in my research, I would hesitate to call *bzhad gad kyi gtam* a genre, though Patrul does mention this form of discourse in an informal taxonomy that he lays out in the introduction to a short historical work of his that I will discuss later in the paper (see: "Chos 'byung 'bel gtam nyung ngu" in *Rdza dpal sprul 2003*: vol. 1, 290-291). Given the nature of the composition in question, I would recommend thinking of the text as a "playful" discourse. I have yet to find comparable *bzhad gad kyi gtam* attributed to Buddhist teachers, though they certainly exist. Already in the twelfth-century, for example, Lama Zhang makes reference to using humor (*bzhad gad*) in service of Buddhist teaching. See Yamamoto 2009: 164. The most likely place to find these kinds of texts would be *gtam tshogs* and *bslab bya* collections—collections of instructions that address wide varieties of audiences. Many thanks to the late Gene Smith for his suggestions on this front. There are a number of contemporary *bzhad gad*, *dgod gtam*, or *mtshar gtam* collections of humor, though these all seem to be "secular," in that they are composed and edited by non-lamas. They include humorous skits and dialogues, as well as speeches for public occasions (*bras dkar*). See, for example, Bsod nams tshe ring 1994. My preliminary research suggests that these materials are significantly different in tone and content from Patrul's composition. One obvious place to look for the intersection of Tibetan ethical advice and playful narratives are the ubiquitous A khu ston pa stories. A few of these are reproduced in contemporary *dgod gtam* collections such as the one listed above.

### Water, Boats, and Bodies: The Story Begins

One day, a group of old men (*rgan pa dag*) are resting on the side of the road, when some young people (*gzhon pa dag*) walk past. Some time later, the young folks return, having attended to some business.<sup>5</sup> The old folks, presumably recognizing the youngsters from earlier on, stop them to have a chat.

Young men, what have you heard, what have you understood, what is there for you to explain?<sup>6</sup> . . . Elders, we haven't heard anything, understood anything, there is nothing to be explained, not even "water-boats-bodies."<sup>7</sup>

According to several native speakers, the phrase "water-boats-bodies" (*chu gru lus*) is a colloquial idiom used in the Derge (Sde dge) region of Eastern Tibet, meaning something like "nothing at all."<sup>8</sup> In the text, Patrul has decided to transcribe this purely oral idiom (pronounced *chu-dru-lu*) using the three words "water" (*chu*), "boat" (*gru*), "body" (*lus*). When the youth declare that "there is nothing to be explained, not even 'water-boats-bodies,'" they are therefore simply saying "there is nothing to be explained—nothing at all."

The older men respond to the youth, explaining that while they understand that the youth have not heard anything or understood anything, they do not know what the youth mean by the phrase "water-boats-bodies" (*chu gru lus*). Here I want to pause to call attention to Patrul's portrayal of the older men. Patrul has them communicate with the youth in a manner suggestive of a word-commentary (*tshig 'grel*) to a canonical text. Rather than simply asking what "water-boats-bodies" means, the older men launch into a lengthy commentary on the youth's claim not to have heard anything, understood anything, or have had anything to explain. So, for example, the old men give a long-winded explanation of what they had meant when they asked whether the youth had "heard" anything: namely they had been asking whether the youth had

<sup>5</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 342: *gzhon pa dag . . . song nas rang gi don dang bya ba 'ga' zhis gi don gang yin pa de bsgrubs nas slar ong ba*. My English rendering of the narrative is a close paraphrase of the text, though I often will provide the Tibetan in footnotes such as these for reference purposes. All direct translations are either placed in quotation marks or (more often) are indented to signal a block quotation.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 342: *a bu dag/ lo brgya dag/ ci zhis ni thos/ ci zhis ni go/ bshad par bya ba ni ci zhis yod/* I have chosen not to translate the respectful addresses the old men use for the youth. Loosely, "*a bu dag/ lo brgya dag*" translates as "youngsters, ones who should live many years."

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*: 342: *sku tshes lags/ dgung lo lags/ thos pa dang/ go ba dang/ bshad par bya ba ni chu gru lus kyang med do/* Again, I chose not to translate literally the honorific forms of address used here for the elders (*sku tshes lags/ dgung lo lags*).

<sup>8</sup> Sincere thanks to Tulku Thondup, Thupten Phuntsok, and Zagtsa Paldor for identifying and confirming the meaning of this phrase.

“heard in their ear passages any conversations resounding in the various places” to which the youth had traveled.<sup>9</sup>

By having them speak in this formal way, Patrul identifies the old men as well-educated. In fact, this is only the first of a number of moments in the narrative wherein Patrul emphasizes the elders’ formal, literal, and intellectually conservative approach to communication. Patrul will later suggest that these old men are monastic elites who are obsessed with the scholastic activities of commentary, composition and debate, traditional responsibilities of Tibetan monastic-scholars.<sup>10</sup> He will also have them raise quite literalistic complaints about the sermon that youth deliver later in the story.<sup>11</sup> Patrul deliberately positions the youth, and ultimately himself, in opposition to these old men and their intellectual habits.

By structuring *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* as a conversation between old men and young men, Patrul is also playing with our expectations. We are conditioned to expect from Buddhist morality tales that the older men will be the wise teachers, tasked with showing the youth how to live in accordance with Buddhist teachings. In fact, Patrul composed just such a text, called the *Responses to the Questions of the Boy Loden* (*Gzhon nu blo ldan kyi dris lan*), wherein an old wise man educates a young, troubled boy about worldly and religious ethics.<sup>12</sup>

But in *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*, things are not as we might expect. It is the youth, and not the elders, who are the wise distributors of knowledge, as becomes clear in the youth’s response to the elders’ question about “water-boats-bodies.” It is playful twists like this one that qualify this treatise as a humorous, playful discourse (*bzhad gad kyi gtam*). Such twists signal to Patrul’s audience that he is engaging in a verbal performance, meant to both educate and entertain.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 342: *thos pa zhes bya ba ni/ phyogs dang phyogs su grags pa’i skad cha khyed kyi rna lam la thos pa cung zad yod dam zhes dris pa la de med do zhes zer ba lte de ni go’o/*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*: 349. The most famous Tibetan discussion of these three scholarly responsibilities is Sakya Paṇḍita’s (Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan, 1182-1251) *Mkhas pa ’jug pa’i sgo* (*The Entrance Gate for the Wise*). For studies of the work see Jackson 1987, Gold 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 348. I will review these complaints later in the essay.

<sup>12</sup> See Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 1, 31-55. For English translations, see Tulku Thondup 1997 and Acharya Nyima Tsering’s translation in Dza Patrul Rinpoche 2006.

<sup>13</sup> For anthropological theorizations of how performers across cultures signal to their audiences that they are engaging in “verbal art” (modes of communication where speakers assume the responsibility of communicative competence subject to evaluation by an audience), see Bauman 1984 and Babcock 1984.

### Water, Boats, and Bodies: Take One

After the old men finish asking the youth what they had meant by “water-boats-bodies,” the youth respond with a five-page long etymology of the phrase. This etymological performance is the explanation of “water-boats-bodies” suggested by the title of the work.

The youth proceed to explain the phrase “water-boats-bodies” (*chu gru lus*) by offering interpretations of each of its three syllables. The youth's performance stands in sharp contrast to the literal unpacking of the words “heard” and “understood” that the older men just presented. The creativity and elegance of the youth's interpretation of “water-boats-bodies” call attention to the literal-mindedness and conservativeness of the old men's contribution.

The youth's interpretation of water (*chu*) goes as follows:

Water, which comes from the Great Ocean for the purpose of eliminating the stains and the thirst of the world, goes from place to place. Ultimately, it flows and falls back into the Great Ocean, which is the resting place for all water. Still, that water has nothing at all added or taken away from it, nor is it sullied or stained. Just as it is when it leaves the Great Ocean, so too it is when it later returns again to the Great Ocean. And yet, on its way, different people drink it, bathe with it, transform it, and so on. So it appears. In the same way, we [the youth] leave our homes for various purposes, go to different places, meet different people in these places, talk about things, enjoy ourselves, and so on. Nevertheless, there is nothing that we newly understand that we have not heard, understood, or known before. It is just like the example of rivers.<sup>14</sup>

The youth draw a connection between the term water (*chu*) and their own activities. Water, which the youth interpret as “rivers” (*chu klung dag*),<sup>15</sup> comes from a single source—the great ocean (*rgya mtsho chen po*). (This is a traditional Tibetan conception of the path of rivers: from the Ocean, to the Ocean).<sup>16</sup> The water from these rivers

<sup>14</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 343–44: *chu ni 'jig rten gyi dri ma dang skom pa sel ba'i phyir rgya mtsho chen po nas 'ong ste phyogs nas phyogs su 'gro zhing/ mthar chu thams cad kyi gnas rgya mtsho chen po der gzhol zhing 'bab pa yin mod kyil chu de la ni phyogs dang phyogs nas bsnon pa dang bri ba dang rnyogs pa dang dri mar gyur pa cung zad med de/ sngar rgya mtsho nas ji ltar song ba ltar phyis kyang rgya mtsho chen por slar 'ong mod kyil chu bo chen po dag 'gro ba'i lam de dang de dag tu ni gzhan 'ga' zhig gis btung ba dang/ bkru ba dang/ bsgyur ba la sogs pa byed pa ltar ni snang ngol de bzhin du kho bo dag rang gi khyim nas don dang bya ba 'ga' zhig gi phyir phyogs dang phyogs su 'gro zhing/ de dang de dag tu'ang/ 'ga' zhig dang 'phrad pa dang/ gtam bya ba dang/ dga' bar bya ba la sogs pa ni yod mod kyil/ sngar ma thos pa dang/ ma go ba dang/ ma shes pa dag gsar du go ba dang thos pa ni ci yang med de dper na chu klung dag bzhin nol.*

<sup>15</sup> The Tibetan word *chu* means “water,” but it can also refer to a “river.” Towards the end of their etymology of *chu*, the youth explicitly identify their example as referring to “rivers” (*chu klung dag*).

<sup>16</sup> Per a personal communication with Lobsang Shastri, August 2011.

accomplishes the aims of others: water quenches thirst, for example. And yet, according to the youth, river-water always returns to its source without ever changing. In just the same way, the youth go from and return to their homes, without changing—without gaining any new knowledge—yet are still able to accomplish things along the way, such as talking to people that they meet.

The youth then continue on to the next syllable: boats (*gru*). Like river-water, a boat is something that accomplishes its aims without changing at all, the youth explain.

For the purpose of transporting others, boats go from one side of a river to the other, and come back again, going and returning continually. Sometimes these boats transport merchants, sometimes other guests, sometimes women, monks, gurus, *brahmans*, thieves, butchers, and so on. But when they come back again, however they were before, they are still that way: they are not filled [with anything new] nor are they depleted . . . In the same way, we leave our homes and go to others' homes and later come back to our own homes . . . sometimes meeting and seeing men, sometimes women, and sometimes children. Still, we never understand or hear anything new from them that we had not understood or heard previously.<sup>17</sup>

Boats go places and accomplish things without changing in any meaningful way, just as the youth go places and meet people without learning anything new.

The same pattern holds for the third syllable, “bodies” (*lus*): bodies accomplish things without changing in any meaningful way. As the youth explain, bodies enter into the boats that cross rivers and ride them to the far shore. But, along the way, the passengers (with their bodies) never gain anything or change in any way—they never leave any remains behind in the boat, for example. Yet the passengers and their bodies do accomplish something: they make it to the other side of the river.

In this third example, the youth pun on the word “body” (*lus*). *Lus*, in its nominal form, means a body. But, in verbal form (*lus pa*) it means to leave something behind as a remainder. *Lus* refers to the body that enters into the boat, and it refers to the fact that nothing is left as remains in the boat after each successive trip across the river.

<sup>17</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 344-45: *gru ni gzhan dag sgrol bar bya ba'i phyir tshu rol nas pha rol du 'gro ba de las kyang slar 'ong ste de ltar 'gro ba dang ldog pa rgyun yang mi chad la/ gru des ni res 'ga' tshong pa/ res 'ga' 'gron po gzhan/ res 'ga' bud med dang/ dge slong/ bla ma/ bram ze/ rkun po/ shan pa la sogs pa bsgral te 'gro yang/ gru de slar 'ong ba'i tshu na ni sngar ci 'dra ba de 'dra ba las/ bri ba yang med/ gang ba yang med do/ . . . de bzhin du kho bo yang rang gi khyim nas kyang khyim gzhan du 'gro de nas kyang slar rang gi khyim du 'ong ste . . . res 'ga' skyes pa dang/ res 'ga' bud med dang/ res 'ga' byis pa dang 'phrad pa dang/ mthong ba dag yod mod kyi de dag las bdag gis cung zad sngar ma go ba'am/ ma thos pa/ gsar du go ba dang thos pa ni cung zad kyang med do/ .*

In the same way that bodies enter into and depart from boats without gaining anything or leaving anything, so too do the youth enter into and depart from other people's homes without gaining anything or leaving anything. Still, like the boat-passengers who accomplish their goal of crossing the river, so too do the youth accomplish their aims.<sup>18</sup>

We thus find the youth presenting a narrative etymology of "water-boats-bodies" that justifies their use of the idiom in the context of their activities. "Water-boats-bodies" means "nothing at all" because each element of the word refers to things that, according to their interpretation, do not change at all (despite their efficacy). The colloquial expression and its meaning ("nothing at all") match the youth's usage perfectly, as they insist that they have traveled around accomplishing things without being changed in the sense of hearing or learning anything new.

The youth's etymology is not only successful, but it is also elegant, as the youth themselves point out.

Furthermore, because water [or rivers] are the base, boats enter into rivers, and bodies enter into boats ... the three are presented ... in order of support and thing supported thereby.<sup>19</sup>

The proud performers inform us that there is a tidy systematicity to the "water-boats-bodies" etymology that they have just offered. Water is explained first because it is the material support for boats. That is to say, boats float on water. Boats come next because they are the material support for the bodies that enter into them. Water supports boats, which support bodies. This short statement shows the youth (and thereby Patrul) calling attention to their own eloquence, making sure that the audience of *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is well attuned to the elegance of the etymology that they have just heard.

### Water, Boats, and Bodies – Take Two

Despite the proficiency and elegance of their etymology, the youth do not stop at just one explanation.

For the purpose of temple ceremonies, or for the purpose of virtuous kindness towards people from different places who have become sick or who have died, we continually attend gatherings of the monastic community, where we recite mantras, chant, meditate and so on. Sometimes, we also set out for some small purpose of

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*: 345.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*: 345-6: *de yang chu ni gzhi yin la/ gru ni chu la 'jug/ lus ni grur 'jug pa'i phyir . . . de dag gi snga phyi rten dang brten pa'i go rim gi dbang gis . . . dpe gsum po rim bzhi tu bzhaq pa yin no/.*

our own. We will therefore set forth three examples, in order, in relation to these pursuits.<sup>20</sup>

Thus begins a second interpretation of “water-boats-bodies,” this time related to the details of the purposeful activity of the youth. As it turns out, in yet another twist, the youth are no mere children, but are full members of society who dedicate themselves to the needs of others by participating in religious rituals to heal the sick and aid the deceased. Patrul again plays with our expectations. When we originally meet the youth at the outset of the narrative, the text leads us to believe that they were simply attending to their personal business, giving us no hints that there was anything special about them. “For the purpose of some business and affairs (*don dang bya ba*) a group of youth went to various places,” it informs us.<sup>21</sup> But, as the youth now reveal, their business entails participating in religious gatherings and serving others.

The youth connect their purposeful activities to water (or here rivers) in the following manner:

Just as rivers accomplish various benefits like eliminating stains [1] and thirst [2], maintaining the life-force [3] and then finally entering into the Great Ocean [4], in the same way. . .<sup>22</sup>

The youth draw parallels between the beneficial activities of water and their own beneficial participation in temple ceremonies, which:

. . . accomplish various benefits like eliminating the stains of illness [1] and activating the power of medicine and so on to get rid of the harm of demons which is comparable to the thorn-like pain of thirst [2], and in addition cause [the sick] to stay for a long time [3], and, at the end of all of that, by means of making a final dedication, cause the [merit of this activity] to fall into the Ocean of Omniscience [4].<sup>23</sup>

How does this comparison work? The following paraphrase summarizes the argument.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*: 346: *phyogs gzhan dang gzhan gyi mi zhig na ba dang shi bar gyur pa de dang de dag gi sku rim mam dge rtsa'i phyir yang nas yang du dge 'dun gyi tshogs su 'gro ste der ni kho bos bzlas pa dang/ klog pa dang/ sgom pa la sogs pa gzhan la phan pa 'ga' zhig gi phyir zhugs pa yin la/ res 'ga' ni rang gi don phran bu dag gi phyir yang 'gro zhing 'ong ba de dag gi phyir yang dpe gsum du rim pa bzhin bzhag pa ste/.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*: 342: *don dang bya ba 'ga' zhig gi phyir gzhan pa dag phyogs phyogs su song ngo.*  
<sup>22</sup> The numbers in brackets are my own additions for the purpose of pointing out how this round of interpretation is structured. *Ibid.*: 346: *chu klung gis 'gro ba dag gi dri ma dang skom pa sel zhing phan pa du ma byed de srog gnas par byed cing mthar rgya mtsho chen por 'jug pa bzhin du . . .*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*: 346: *nad kyi dri ma sel zhing/ gdon gyi gnod pa skom pa'i zug rngu lta bu med par byed la sman gyi mthu bskyed pa la sogs phan pa du ma byed cing thog yun ring du gnas par byed de bya ba de dag mjug bsngo bas rgyas 'debs pa'i phyir rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa'i rgya mtshor 'bab pa.*

1. Water washing away stains is analogous to youth participating in ceremonies that eliminate illness.
2. Water eliminating thirst is analogous to the youth participating in ceremonies that eliminate the pain caused by demons.<sup>24</sup>
3. Water maintaining one's life force is analogous to religious ceremonies keeping people alive for a long time.
4. Water finally returning to the great ocean, its source, is analogous to monks sending the merit of their activities back into the "ocean" of omniscience by means of the traditional prayers for dedicating merit that close Buddhist ceremonies and meditation sessions.<sup>25</sup>

The youth display their interpretive prowess by analogizing the virtuous activity of healing the sick, described in four points, to four characteristics of water. The youth simultaneously demonstrate to the old men (and to the audience) their altruistic intention to benefit others.

How do boats (*gru*) relate to the youth's selfless activities? Boats are used to cross over a river, when one is trying to get from one side to the other, because one cannot cross on one's own. In a parallel way, the youth, together with monks, rely on the Buddha's teachings to transfer the consciousness of the dead, who are just like people stuck in the middle of a river, over to the dry land of liberation.<sup>26</sup> In this interpretation the youth employ the common Buddhist trope of the Buddha's teachings acting as the raft that takes suffering beings across to the far shores of liberation. Here, the youth actually analogize the river-to-be-crossed to the realm in between death and rebirth called the *bar do*. The idea is that by reciting special instructional texts after someone has died, one is able help lead that person out of the *bar do* realm and on to a preferable rebirth. The teachings that one recites in order to help the recently deceased are comparable to boats that take people across rivers.

And what of bodies?

One does not enter into a boat for the good of the river. Nor does one enter the boat for the good of the boat. Nor for anyone else.

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<sup>24</sup> In Tibetan culture, negative spirits are sometimes credited with causing physical maladies.

<sup>25</sup> Tibetan Buddhism recognizes that religious practitioners generate positive karmic merit by participating in religious rituals, offering prayers, visiting holy sites, and so on. It is common for a ritual or a meditation session to conclude with a dedication prayer that expresses the wish that all of the positive merit accrued during the practice ultimately benefit all beings. The "ocean of omniscience" is a standard metaphor referring to the all-knowing, all-pervasive wisdom of enlightenment.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*: 347.

Rather, one puts one's body into the boat only for the sake of oneself and for the sake of the hat and clothing that one is wearing. In this way, when I go out for the purpose of some small provisional business, I exclusively go out for purpose of the small tasks of mine and of those friends of mine, like you, who depend on me.<sup>27</sup>

Here, in a particularly humorous moment of the work, the youth explain that one enters into a boat in order to get oneself to the other side—not in order to help out anyone else (and certainly not for the good of the river nor for the good of the boat). So too, the youth explain, do they periodically leave their homes in order to accomplish their own tasks or to attend to their own business. While the humor of this passage may not translate well, I can attest to the fact that this line caused one Tibetan with whom I read the text to laugh out loud. The humor lies in the absurd suggestion that one would ever cross a river in a boat for the benefit of either the river or the boat.

Having delivered two intricate, creative, and extensive etymologies of “water-boats-bodies,” the youth conclude their oration with a moment of heightened bravado. The youth declare in verse:

If you were to write down the meaning of “water-boats-bodies”  
 You could use up all of the paper that there is in a store  
 And all of the ink in the possession of a scholar  
 Yet you would never use up our intelligence  
 Nor would you use up the meaning of “water-boats-bodies.”<sup>28</sup>

The youth's capacity to interpret the meaning of “water-boats-bodies” is inexhaustible, they playfully boast. All of the paper or ink that one could possibly find would still be insufficient to document the interpretations that they are capable of spinning about “water-boats-bodies.” The youth's subject material—the etymology of “water-boats-bodies”—is so rich that its (hidden) meaning (*don*) can never be exhausted. The youth themselves are so smart that their intelligence (*blo gros*)—namely their capacity to offer skillful interpretation—will never run out.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*: 347: *lus ni chu'i don du'ang grur 'jug pa min/ gru'i don du'ang ma yin/ gzhan su'i don du'ang ma yin te lus ni rang nyid dang rang la brten pa'i zhwa gos tsam chu las sgrol ba 'ba' zhig gi phyir 'jug pa de dang 'dra bar kho bo yang gnas skabs kyi don phran bu dag gi phyir 'gro ba'i tshe rang dang rang la brten pa'i grogs khyed cag gi bya ba cung zad de'i phyir 'gro bar zad /*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*: 348: *chu gru lus kyi don 'di bri na yang/ tshong khang ji snyed shog bu zad 'gyur zhing/ mkhan po ji snyed snag tsha zad 'gyur gyil kho bo'i blo gros zad par mi 'gyur tel chu gru lus kyi don kyang mi zad do /*

### Critique & Response

So how do the old men respond to the youth's eloquent outburst? Well, they are not impressed. The old men begin by chanting a "maṇi" (the six-syllable mantra *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*) and offer a prayer to the bodhisattva of compassion Avalokiteśvara, which signals the beginning of a formal response on their part. The old men then offer a critique, in verse, of the exposition that they have just heard. I mentioned earlier that Patrul depicts these old men as highly educated, formal and rigid, having had them articulate unnecessary, pedantic definitions of "heard" and "understood" earlier in the story. Patrul now continues with his portrayal of the old men as formally rigid and obsessed with scholastic modes of teaching. The overarching concern in their critique is that the youth's creative etymologies of "water-boats-bodies" do not live up to the standards of a traditional word-commentary, such as a commentary one might find to a Tantric root text.<sup>29</sup>

Over the course of their short, terse, versified response, the old men criticize the youth for the following faults:<sup>30</sup>

1. Unlike tantric commentaries (*rgyud 'grel*), the youth's "water-boats-bodies" commentary does not add grammatical notes, like adding a final Tibetan "sa" particle, in order to make the grammar of a root text more clear. Nor does the "water-boats-bodies" commentary add ornamental words to fill out the meaning of the root text. [The fundamental argument is that the "water-boats-bodies" etymology cannot be a legitimate teaching because it does not look the way that a proper word-commentary should look.]<sup>31</sup>
2. The "water-boats-bodies" commentary does not use authoritative quotations or evidence from the Buddhist canon.
3. The "water-boats-bodies" commentary, while having been written in a way that is easy to follow, does not properly connect the commentary to the root text (where the root text is simply the phrase "water-boats-bodies"). Consequentially, it contains many contradictions. [The old men offer this critique without citing any examples].
4. The "water-boats-bodies" interpretation suffers from the fault of not having been subjected to debate.

<sup>29</sup> A Tantric root text is a text whose composition is attributed to an enlightened Buddha and which authorizes a wide variety of practices centering on one specific, enlightened deity. The "cycles" that surround these root texts include commentaries (such as glosses of the words of the Tantra), practice instructions, and ritual manuals related to the deity in question.

<sup>30</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 348-349.

<sup>31</sup> Adding grammatical particles and clarificatory glosses are practices typical of Tibetan inter-linear commentaries.

Patrul has the old men set forth various possible formal criteria for evaluating a sermon, all of which they find lacking in the youth's discourse. They mention the use of grammatical analysis and ornamentation, the use of evidence from the Tibetan Buddhist Canon (the *bka' 'gyur* and *bstan 'gyur*), the consistency of the teaching with its source material, and the subjection of teachings to debate. These principles of evaluation recall Sakya Paṇḍita's (Sa skya paṇ ḍi ta, Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, 1182-1251) normative criteria for the scholarly activities of composition, exposition (teaching), and debate. Sapaṇ's *Mkhas 'jug* argues for the importance of mastering grammar and the ornamental figures of Sanskrit poetics in training scholars to compose and comment on Buddhist treatises (skills represented by critique number 1, above). He also advocates for appealing to scripture (*lung*) (item 2 above) and reasoning (*rigs*) to identify the flaws of false tenets (item 3). Finally, he identifies debate (item 4) as a means whereby properly trained scholars can preserve and defend the Buddhist tradition.<sup>32</sup> Whether or not Patrul intentionally presents the elder monks as voices for Sapaṇ, these characters nonetheless embody the scholastic model of discursive production that Sapaṇ came to represent in Tibet.

The youth's subsequent response is everything we might expect it to be: confident and creative. Perhaps as a signal to the scholastically minded old men that they won't be out-done, the youth likewise deliver their response in verse. They begin:

In general, since engaging in explanation, debate, and composition is indispensable for leaders of monasteries, you too have composed this polemical critique.<sup>33</sup>

Here, the youth explicitly identify the old men as leaders of a monastery, ones who have received training in the three scholarly disciplines of exegesis, debate, and composition. Mention of these three disciplines explicitly links them to Sapaṇ's model of scholarly activity, as articulated in the *Mkhas 'jug*.

The contrast that Patrul is constructing between the old men and the youth is becoming increasingly clear. Patrul presents the old men as caricatures of monastically educated scholars who have strict, formal expectations about what an authentic teaching should look like. In this case, they expect the youth's exposition to look like a word-commentary to a root-text, complete with canonical citations, and expect the interpretation to be subjected to formal debate. The youth, with their eloquent performance, embody a more open-minded model of discursive production, one better tuned to the needs of a broader, non-monastic audience, as they will soon suggest.

<sup>32</sup> Jackson 1987: 97-103. See, also, Gold 2007; Jackson 1984.

<sup>33</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 349: *spyir na 'chad rtsod rtsom pa gsum/ dgon sde'i mgo 'dzin byed pa la/ med thabs med pa de lags pas/ khyed kyang rtsod pa'i 'byams yig 'di/*.

This contrast situates *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* within a longstanding debate in Tibet over the form of authentic (and therefore trustworthy) teachings. Jonathan Gold has argued that Sakya Paṇḍita established strict criteria for scholastic training, composition, and evaluation of Buddhist teaching in order to establish the scholastically trained monk as a protector (a “gatekeeper”) of Buddhism—someone who could prevent the erosion of the teachings at the hands of those Tibetans who faultily transmit Buddhist knowledge by adding their own inauthentic innovations.<sup>34</sup> For Sapaṅ, it was not enough to cite one’s personal lama’s teachings when explaining the provenance of one’s practices.<sup>35</sup> Sapaṅ’s criticisms, we might note, targeted teachers (Gampopa) and practices (the “singly efficacious white remedy,” treasure revelations, Nyingma tantric practices) with which Patrul had great affinity.<sup>36</sup>

Sure enough, the youth respond to the elder’s criticisms by doing just what Sapaṅ criticized—appealing to the authority of their teacher. But their appeal brings with it yet another surprise:

This explanation of “water-boats-bodies” is well known to scholars of superior monasteries. The composer, Gewai Pal (*Dge ba’i dpal*)...<sup>37</sup>

Gewai Pal is none other than Patrul himself.<sup>38</sup> The youth continue to describe him as follows:

. . . Gewai Pal is one whose intelligence gained from meditation is entirely clear . . . It is not possible that he would be without the confidence of knowing that he can never be trampled in debate, nor is it possible that he would ever speak nonsense. The composer of the commentary, Palgi Gewa, has the understanding gained from opening hundreds of texts and has the confident eloquence

<sup>34</sup> Gold 2007.

<sup>35</sup> Jackson 1994: 100.

<sup>36</sup> For Sapaṅ’s critiques of Gampopa (Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen, 1079-1153), Lama Zhang (Zhang tshal pa Brtson ’grus grags pa, 1122-1193), and the “singly efficacious white [remedy]” (*dkar po gcig thub*) method of introducing students to the empty nature of their own minds, see Jackson 1994 and Yamamoto 2009 (Chapter Two). For more on Sapaṅ’s criticism of Rnying ma tantras, see Tomoko Makidono’s article in the present volume. Patrul, of course, taught and practiced Nyingma treasures (*gter ma*) and tantras (in particular *Guhyaagarbha*). But Patrul’s writings also speak to his close connection with Gampopa’s teachings. He cites Gampopa multiple times in *Words of My Perfect Teacher* and makes reference to the idea of *dkar po gcig thub* in his *zhal gdams* compositions. See Dza Patrul 1998: 12, 208; Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 284.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*: 349: *chu gru lus kyi rnam bshad ’di/ dgon stod mkhas pa mang la grags/ gzhung bshad dge ba’i dpal ba khong/ . . .*

<sup>38</sup> Patrul (*Dpal sprul*) is an abbreviation of the title Palge Tulku (*Dpal dge’i sprul sku*), meaning “the Palge incarnation.” Patrul was recognized at a young age as the incarnation of the Palge Lama Samten Puntsho (*Dpal dge’i bla ma Bsam gan phun tshogs*). Gewai Pal (*Dge ba’i dpal*) is simply an inversion of Palge (*Dpal dge*).

(*spobs pa*) of speaking hundreds of words. If he were to be the defendant in a debate, he would propose a firm thesis and would display the intelligence to prove his assertion. If he were the opponent, he would engage in sharp debate, using knowledge to destroy the assertions of the other . . . He is the master of one-thousand disciples. He is like the condensation of many scholars.<sup>39</sup>

This is a spectacular moment in the text, to be sure. Up until this point, the text reads as a narrative, describing an interaction between a group of youth and a group of older men. Now we learn that the etymological exposition that seemed to come spontaneously from the youth is in fact a teaching of Patrul's—who we, as the readers, (unlike the old men in the story) know to be the actual composer of the work. Patrul has placed himself into the narrative world of the composition and effectively made his own eloquence and authority as a teacher the subject matter of the composition! Such unabashed self-praise is seemingly quite rare in Tibetan religious writing.<sup>40</sup>

This rhetorical move is particularly sophisticated, and I should add a bit confusing, because I believe Patrul to be speaking playfully and even somewhat ironically. He claims, for example, that the “water-boats-bodies” teaching is well known to many scholars.<sup>41</sup> And while the work itself did eventually become well known to trained Nyingma (*rnying ma*) scholars, I do not believe Patrul to be saying with a straight face that the creative etymology the youth have just performed was actually famous in its day.<sup>42</sup>

Still, despite his playfulness, Patrul is making a very serious claim: the authority of a given teaching *can* be based on the authority of the teacher giving that teaching. In effect, Patrul is defending the legitimacy of creative teaching performances, as long as such performances are delivered by capable teachers. Patrul implies that he himself is just such a teacher because of his confidence, erudition, the sharpness of his intellect, and the breadth of his influence. Patrul, in the guise of the youth, thus rejects the

<sup>39</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 349: *dge ba'i dpal ba khong/ bsgom pa'i blo gros gting na gsal/ . . . nam phug rgol bas mi brdzi ba'i/ gdengs shig sems la ma thob par/ ma brtags ca cor gsung mi srid/ 'grel byed dpal gyi dge ba de/ gzhung brgya 'byed pa'i rnam dpyod yod/ tshig brgya smra ba'i spobs pa yod/ sna rgol byas na dam bca' brtan/ rang 'dod bsgrub pa'i blo gros yod/ phyi rgol byas na rtsod rigs rno/ gzhan 'dod bshigs pa'i rnam rig yod/ . . . blo gsal stong gi slob dpon yin/ mkhas mang 'du pa'i 'du sa yin/.*

<sup>40</sup> For an exception, see Sakya Paṇḍita's *Nga brgyad ma*, his praise of himself for possessing eight superior qualities. See Kun dga' rgyal mtshan 1992: 681-710.

<sup>41</sup> Lobsang Shastri suggested to me that this may be Patrul's way of saying that the “water-boats-bodies” etymology is nothing new, special, or particularly difficult. The statement that “this explanation of ‘water-boats-bodies’ is well known to scholars” would thereby mean that scholars perform this kind of explanation all of the time. It is as if to say that the formal old men are taking the “water-boats-bodies” entirely too seriously.

<sup>42</sup> While I am hardly prepared to offer a reception history of the *Explanation of Water Boats and Bodies*, I can report that scholars such as Thupten Phuntsok and Zagtsa Paldor were quite familiar with it.

criteria that the monastically trained old men propose, instead arguing that it would be impossible (*mi srid pa*) for someone as intelligent and well-read as Patrul to have composed a meaningless, or improper teaching. Patrul also cites his own eloquence as justification for the legitimacy of the teaching, noting the confident eloquence he has gained from extensive practice in preaching.<sup>43</sup>

Thus far, Patrul has the youth defend the “water-boats-bodies” explication by appealing to the brilliance of its author. But the argument is not finished. The youth continue with their retort, now taking each element of the old men’s critique one by one, beginning with a discussion of the *maṇi* mantra (*Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*) that the old men had chanted in the opening of their polemical critique.

The six-syllabled *maṇi* is said to be the essence of the dharma. As for its spreading, it has spread throughout Tibet. As for being known, even old women know it. As for being recited, even beggars recite it. As for being written, even children know how to write it. For scholars who compose treatises [however] there is no entry way to the *maṇi*.<sup>44</sup>

Patrul, via the youth, reminds his audience that there are profound Buddhist teachings beyond scholastic commentaries, teachings such as the *maṇi* mantra, that are accessible to the masses and yet just as potent as the scholastic treatises to which the old men are so attached. This is an understated argument suggesting that scholarly monks, who do not properly value chanting the *maṇi*, are not the only purveyors of meaningful Buddhist teachings. In fact, the youth suggest that the *maṇi* (as the essence of the dharma), is superior to the treatises that the old men produce.

The composition concludes with the youth offering a flurry of rebuttals that dismiss each of the old men’s critiques, in turn. So, for example, in reference to the fault of lacking quotations from the canon, the youth declare that “knowledge” (*rig pa*)—probably meaning here some combination of learning and intelligence—is that which edits or corrects scripture (literally purifies scriptures, *lung gi dag byed*).<sup>45</sup> Because Patrul’s intelligence and knowledge is

<sup>43</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 349: ‘*grel byed dpal gyi dge ba ‘del/ gzhung brgya ‘byed pa’i rnam dpyod yod/ tshig brgya smra ba’i spobs pa yod/*.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: 349-50: ‘*bru drug ma ṇi padme ‘di/ chos kyi snying po yin pa skad/ dar ba bod yul yongs la dar/ shes pa rgad mo rnam kyang shes/ ‘don pa sprang po rnam kyang ‘don/ bri ba byis pa rnam kyang bri/ mkhas pas bstan bcos rtsom pa la/ ma ṇi’i ‘gros sgo yod rab med/*.

<sup>45</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 250: *bka’ bstan yongs la rlung rtar grags/ lung gi dag byed rig pa ni*. “The *kanjur* and *tanjur* are renown everywhere, like the wind. Knowledge is that which edits scripture.” The term scripture (*lung*) in the second sentence refers to the *kanjur* and *tanjur* (the two collections of the Tibetan Buddhist canon) from the first sentence, thus implying that knowledge is what is necessary for understanding the canon. This couplet includes yet another case of Patrul’s clever punning. Patrul states that knowledge is that which corrects scripture. Knowledge is, literally, the “purifier” of scripture. The term for

well attested to, no quotations from canonical scriptures are necessary. But were they necessary, the youth add, Patrul would be able to provide quotations, regardless. And with these pithy arguments, the *Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* ends.

### A Discourse about Discourse

What are we to make of this curious composition? Why would Patrul compose an explanatory interpretation of something as mundane as a colloquial idiom? Why would he place himself as a character into his own narrative? What concerns of Patrul's might be hidden within this playful work?

Patrul hints at his intentions in the very first words of the composition—the opening homage to the “Gentle Protector,” the bodhisattva *Mañjunātha*. The verse introduces what I interpret to be the primary theme of the entire composition: confident eloquence. Confident eloquence—*spobs pa* in Tibetan (Skt.: *pratibhāna*)—refers to some combination of preparedness, fearlessness, confidence, and eloquence in speech. Confident eloquence is one amongst a set of four “thorough, perfect knowledges” (Skt.: *pratisaṃvid*; Tib.: *so so yang dang par rig pa*) that appear in Sanskrit and Tibetan Buddhist literature as a way of categorizing the pedagogical skills of advanced bodhisattvas, those Buddhist practitioners dedicated to progressing towards enlightenment in order to rid all beings of suffering.<sup>46</sup> The set of four, often translated as “the four discriminations,” appears in numerous places in Sanskrit Buddhist literature, including the *Prajñāparamitā* in one-hundred thousand verses, the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, the *Dharmasaṅgīti* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, with some sources placing this grouping of skills at the ninth of ten stages of bodhisattva training, as articulated in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*.<sup>47</sup>

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“purifier” (*dag byed*) is also a figurative term for the wind, where the more common term for the wind (*rlung*) is used in the first half of the couplet. *Lung* (scripture) and *rlung* (wind) are also homonyms. It is difficult to translate *rig pa* in this context. When combined with *lung*, *rig* (more correctly *rigs*) specifically refers to logical reasoning. As a translation of Sanskrit *vidyā*, *rig pa* can mean intelligence, learning, or knowledge more broadly. As I will discuss in a moment, *rig pa* also figures in a traditional set of four “knowledges” attributed to *bodhisattvas*, where “knowledge” means pedagogical skill. Within Patrul's Rnying ma tradition, *rig pa* refers to the foundational awareness that is the condition for all experience. Patrul's use of *rig pa*, here, probably carries with it all of these connotations at once.

<sup>46</sup> For more on *pratibhāna* see Dayal 1970: 260-267, 282; MacQueen 1981; MacQueen 1982; Braarvig 1985; Nance 2004 (Chapter 3); Nance 2008: 142-143.

<sup>47</sup> Dayal 1970: 261, 282. While the four *pratisaṃvid* in question are intimately connected to bodhisattva training, slightly different renditions of four *pratisaṃvid* do appear in non-Mahāyāna Abhidharma sources, such as Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. See, for example, Makransky 1997: 26.

The four thorough, perfect knowledges receive different interpretations in the Sanskrit sources and their commentaries. Briefly, however, they are as follows: the knowledge of phenomena (Skt.: *dharmapratisaṃvid*; Tib.: *chos so so yang dag par rig pa*), which can mean knowing all things' names and identifying qualities or knowing all Buddhist texts; the knowledge of their meaning (Skt.: *arthapratisaṃvid*; Tib.: *don so so yang dag par rig pa*), entailing understanding how to categorize these phenomena or how to teach given the specific requirements of the pedagogical situation at hand; the knowledge of the etymology of words (Skt.: *nirukti-pratisaṃvid*; Tib.: *nges pa'i tshig so so yang dag par rig pa*), which refers to knowing how to speak about all phenomena using human or non-human languages; and finally the confident preparedness and skill to actually preach—what I am calling confident eloquence—which Nance describes as teaching in a fluid and inexhaustible way (Skt.: *pratibhānapratisaṃvid*; Tib.: *spobs pa so so yang dag par rig pa*).<sup>48</sup>

These four categories are well known to Patrul, who was steeped in theorizations of the bodhisattva path, having written commentaries on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, and even an independent work on the stages of accomplishment of bodhisattvas.<sup>49</sup> In fact, the opening, dedicatory verse actually incorporates all four knowledges into its homage. The underlined text below identifies these four knowledges as they appear in the opening verse:

Reverence to you, Gentle Protector, sun of the heart; who possesses the thorough and perfect knowledges of phenomena and their meaning, confident eloquence and the etymology of words.<sup>50</sup>

It is no coincidence that Patrul chooses to include these “knowledges” in his opening verse. Patrul means to use the narrative that follows to model what a confidently eloquent performance by a bodhisattva looks like, and then to debate what criteria are capable of authenticating the quality of such a performance.

As is common in Tibetan compositions, the opening verse serves a dual function. First, it fulfills Patrul's responsibility as a composer to pay respect to his teacher, to one of his spiritual ancestors, or to an enlightened hero (here, he has chosen the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī). Second, it implicitly establishes the general topic of the discourse, which I have identified as the pedagogical skills of bodhisattvas, in general, and confident eloquence, in particular. Patrul also carefully chooses the language within the verse to foreshadow the more

<sup>48</sup> Compare Dayal (1970: 160-167), Lopez (1988: 202), and Nance (2004: 178-179). The *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa* parses confident eloquence (*pratibhāna*) as “coherent and free speech” (*yuktamuktābhilāpita*). See Dayal 1970: 18.

<sup>49</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vols. 2, 3, 4, 6.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*: vol. 1, 342: *chos dang don spobs nges pa'i tshig/ so so yang dag mkhyen ldan pa/ 'jam mgon snying gi nyi ma la/ btud de.*

specific content of his treatise. The phrase “thorough and perfect knowledge of the etymology of words”<sup>51</sup> refers to the skill of being able to communicate proficiently using any language, one of the four “thorough, perfect knowledges” just discussed. But Patrul plays with the meaning of this phrase, which literally translates as knowledge of “the etymology of a word” (*nges pa'i tshig*). The Tibetan term for etymology that appears here, *nges pa'i tshig*, as translation of the Sanskrit word *nirukti*, is best understood as a creative etymology, one that neither tries to capture the historical derivation of a word nor explain the word's literal meaning. Rather, a creative etymology comments on the word's meaning by looking at its constituent parts.<sup>52</sup> Sure enough, the sermon about “water-boats-bodies” enacted by the youth is just such an etymology—a commentary that dissects the term in question into its constituent syllables and thereby unearths its hidden resonances.

There is an additional allusion to Sanskrit theories about skillful speech hidden within *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*. When the elders ask the youth whether they have heard anything, understood anything, or have anything to explain, I believe them to be alluding to a three-fold set of requirements for preaching that appear in Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*.<sup>53</sup> According to Vasubandhu, those who wish to teach Buddhist sūtras should have heard a lot (*thos pa mang po*), understood what they have heard (literally “be endowed with the basis of hearing,” *thos pa'i gzhi can*) and have retained what they have heard (literally “accumulate what has been heard,” *thos pa bsag pa*). While the Tibetan rendering of Vasubandhu's three requirements does not map on exactly with the questions that the older folks ask of the youth, their meaning is very close. If we interpret Vasubandhu's third criteria to mean that one has sufficiently retained what one has learned such that one is capable of explaining it, then we can understand Vasubandhu to be requiring Buddhist preachers to have heard something, to have understood it, and to be capable of explaining it—the very three things that the elders ask of the youth.

The subtext of the dialogue between the monastic elites and the youth now begins to fall into place. The elites are challenging the youth to deliver a sermon by citing preparatory requirements that would be familiar to scholastically trained monks. The youth, however, reject these traditional requirements (there is “nothing to

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 342: *nges pa'i tshig so so yang dag par mkhyen*.

<sup>52</sup> Jeffrey Hopkins, for example, translates *nges tshig* as a “creative etymology,” in contrast to the more straightforward *sgra bshad* (explanation of a word). The *Tshig mdzod chen mo* defines *nges pa'i tshig* as an explanation of a term which is itself constructed by joining multiple words. See the entry for *nges tshig* in the Hopkins Tibetan Sanskrit English Dictionary available via the Tibetan Himalayan Digital Library Translation Tool, <http://www.thlib.org/reference/translation-tool> (accessed 2 April, 2010) and the entry for *nges pa'i tshig* in *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* 1993: 657.

<sup>53</sup> Skilling 2000: 319; Nance 2008: 141-2.

be explained" they boast) and implicitly reject the elite monks' authority to determine who is capable of delivering legitimate teachings.

Patrul uses a performative strategy to address the questions of what constitutes creative eloquence and who is capable of delivering a successful Buddhist sermon. Rather than deconstructing the idea of "confident eloquence" in the abstract, or commenting upon passages from Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti*, Patrul instead chooses to make characters in his narrative—namely the young people—perform a confident and eloquent etymology—a discourse which constitutes more than half of the work. In lieu of composing an analytical treatise about skillful preaching, Patrul chooses to show us what a masterful discourse looks like.

What makes the youth's discourse so skillful? First, their interpretation is successful on the most literal level: it offers an explanation of the colloquialism "water-boats-bodies" and why it means "nothing" in the semantic context within which they have used it. They articulate succinctly how the etymology of the phrase coincides with their usage of the term. On this level, the commentary is an enactment of skillful speech that is able to articulate the connection between a linguistic phrase and its meaning.

One might wonder, however, why Patrul would choose to have his characters model bodhisattva skills, such as confident eloquence, by interpreting an obscure colloquialism. Surely, bodhisattva's preaching skills are best used to spread teachings that help sentient beings overcome suffering. How could an etymology of a local Tibetan colloquialism act as such a teaching?

From one perspective, Patrul's choice of subject matter is what makes *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* a playful, humorous discourse. The very idea that an etymology of a colloquialism could stand in for a bodhisattva's teaching is unexpected and even a bit funny.

From another perspective, however, the youth's capacity to hint at profound meanings where we least expect them to, to allegorize profound Buddhist ideas through the use of mundane examples, is itself strong evidence for their masterful teaching skills. That is to say, the fact that the youth can transmit powerful teachings even when talking about seemingly mundane matters is a testament to their brilliance as orators, and, by extension, Patrul's brilliance as a composer.

This latter argument is predicated on the assumption that the etymology of "water-boats-bodies" is, in fact, profound. But is it? How so?

### A Dzogchen Allegory

I would argue that Patrul does indeed intend for the youth's performance to hint at profound philosophical meanings, even while these meanings remain oblique. Many others with whom I have discussed this work, native-Tibetan speakers and scholars of Buddhism alike, have shared the intuition that the youth's etymology functions as a philosophical allegory. I will preliminarily suggest one way to interpret the youth's story about how water, boats, and bodies go places in the world without ever being changed; how, despite the fact that water is drunk, and boats and bodies cross rivers, nothing is ever added to or taken away from any of the three. Still, as I will subsequently argue, the youth's performance is fundamentally about the *possibility* of creating a philosophically and ethically rich teaching, more than it is about delivering a teaching with a single, fixed meaning.

I tentatively suggest that we think about "water," "boats," and "bodies" as metaphors for the functioning of our mind (*sems*), and the empty nature of that same mind (*sems nyid*).<sup>54</sup> We might then read Patrul's allegory as follows. Our mind engages with the world of our experiences, what Patrul will sometimes call appearances (*snang ba thams cad*): visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, or mental (thoughts and emotions, however subtle).<sup>55</sup> One might say that our mind goes out to meet these appearances, just as rivers depart from the "great ocean" in the youth's description of the journey of water; or as boats depart one shore on their way to the other, as human bodies travel on rivers on these same boats, or even as the youth depart their homes to attend to their business.<sup>56</sup>

Even while diverse, changing appearances arise for the mind, however, the nature of the mind (*sems kyi rang bzhin*) itself never changes. That is to say, the mind (*sems*) continually experiences new, impermanent, and ultimately delusive appearances, but the underlying empty nature of the mind is always the same: empty yet capable of awareness. The distinction between the changing mind

<sup>54</sup> Patrul uses a variety of terms for "the nature of mind:" *sems kyi rang bzhin*, *sems kyi chos nyid* and *sems nyid*, which could all be translated as "the nature of mind." Related terms that appear in Patrul's writings include *sems kyi gnas lugs* ("the manner in which mind abides") and *sems kyi rang zhal*, "mind's own-face." He equates this empty nature of mind with *dharmakāya* (*chos sku*), as well. See Patrul's *Thog mtha' bar gsum du dge ba'i gtam lta sgom spyod gsum nyams len dam pa'i snying nor*, Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 133, for one example of this equation.

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion of appearances and their empty status, see Patrul's *Theg chen lta khrid bden gnyis rab tu gsal ba*, Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 3, 293. For a statement on how all of our experiences are merely appearances, see the *Thog mtha' bar gsum du dge ba'i gtam*, Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 131.

<sup>56</sup> Of course, according to Tibetan Buddhist philosophies of mind, the mind, with its habitual tendencies, is at least partially responsible for these appearances in the first place. That is to say, the appearances do not come about on their own, separate from the mind.

and the unchanging nature of the mind parallels the familiar distinction between the ever-changing conventional reality of appearances and the never-changing ultimate reality of the emptiness of those appearances.<sup>57</sup> Patrul's compositions, we might note, consistently emphasize the importance of looking at one's own mind (*rang gi sems la blta*) in order to identify its empty and aware nature.<sup>58</sup>

The "departures" of water from the Great Ocean in the form of rivers, for example, is an image for the way in which specific instances of water function in the world—some specific batch of water is drawn from rivers for some particular human use, like drinking. Yet, in this metaphorical rendering of where water comes from, water ultimately returns to the Great Ocean. In this state of return, the particular river-water that was used by humans is now undifferentiated from all other water in the Ocean. When the specific river-water has returned to the Great Ocean, it is just water as such, water in its nature as water, not some specific water serving a specific function. Our minds are like this water. They manifest as appearances, as individual moments of awareness wherein one has specific experiences, whether these experiences are perceptions, thoughts, or otherwise. But these instances of mind always return to their state of simply being empty, non-locatable, undifferentiable mind.

But to recognize the nature of one's mind as empty is also to recognize that the nature of mind is non-arisen and therefore unchanging—nothing can ever be added to it or taken away from it. Mind is "non-arisen" in the sense of not being something that has come about as an independent entity. As Patrul sometimes mentions, mind is entirely devoid of location, smell, or color – it is empty of existence as an independent, identifiable entity.<sup>59</sup> And because it has never arisen as an independent entity, because it has never come about as a substantial, identifiable thing in the first place, it can never change or become something new.

Mind, as awareness, is like the water, boats, and bodies that are described in the youth's sermon in their tendency to interact with the world, again and again. But, mind, in its empty nature, is just like water, boats and bodies in that ultimately nothing is ever added to it or taken away from it that would change its nature.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Patrul explicitly identifies these appearances, which our mind manifests, as conventional truth in the *Theg chen lta khrid bden gnyis rab tu gsal ba*, in Dpal sprul 2003: vol. 3, 298.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 1, 276-277; Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 289, 369. Patrul's *Mkhas pa shri rgyal po'i khyad chos* is his most famous instruction on encountering the true nature of one's mind. See Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 5, 206-225.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Patrul's *Theg chen lta khrid bden gnyis rab tu gsal ba*. Dpal sprul 2003: vol. 3, 298.

<sup>60</sup> In a related vein, Patrul also speaks about the "unchanging clarity of the ground," where the ground (*gzhi*) is mind in its undifferentiated, empty state.

One helpful source for interpreting the “water-boats-bodies” allegory is Patrul’s meditation instruction “The Final Great Perfection’s Profound Method for Becoming Enlightened: Enlightened-Mind That Liberates Itself” (*Mthar thug rdzogs pa chen po’i sangs rgyas pa’i thabs zab mo dgongs pa rang grol*).<sup>61</sup> In this work, Patrul gives meditators practical instructions (from the Rdzog chen tradition) on how to rest in the nature of mind, without trying to alter or control the way that mind manifests itself. The following passage touches upon the dual quality of mind from the perspective of a meditator—mind’s tendency to unpredictably manifest itself in appearances and yet to always return to its fundamentally unchanged, restful, empty nature.

Although you try to fix [the mind], it goes unimpeded without any set focus  
 But if you focus on not fixing it, it returns to its own place [on its own].  
 Although it has no limbs it runs everywhere,  
 But if you send it, it will not go, returning to its own place [on its own].  
 Although it has no eyes, it is aware of everything,  
 [and these] appearances of innate awareness go to being empty [they are empty].  
 This so-called essence of mind does not exist;  
 While it does not exist, various [instances of] mindful awareness manifest.  
 [In so far as] it is not existing, it goes to being empty.  
 [In so far as] it is not not-existing, mindful awareness appears.<sup>62</sup>

This passage captures some of the (*Rdzog chen*) vocabulary that Patrul uses to describe the nature of mind. Mind goes out (*’gro*) unimpeded (*zang thal*) and “runs everywhere” (*kun tu rgyug*) in so far as it manifests (*’char*) awareness and is capable of being aware of everything (*thams cad rig*). Yet mind also returns on its own accord (*rang sar ’khor*) to its fundamentally empty nature; it “goes” to emptiness (*stong par ’gro*). In being empty, it does not exist (*med; yod par ma yin*). This passage is thus a good example of how Patrul

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This relates to the recognition that all mental experience, no matter what it is, has as its nature the simultaneous purity and manifest clarity of innate awareness. See, for example, Patrul’s instructions on recognizing one’s innate awareness (*rig pa*) in the *Mkhas pa shri rgyal po’i khyad chos*. Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Rdza dpal sprul (unknown publication date): 633-653. For an English translation of the work, see “Self-Liberating Understanding, Being the Profound Method for Gaining Enlightenment via the Great Perfection,” in Low 1998.

<sup>62</sup> Rdza dpal sprul [unknown date]: 643: *bzhag kyang gtad med zang thal ’gro/ ma bzhag btang yang rang sar ’khor/ rkang lag med kyang kun tu rgyug/ btang yang mi ’gro rang sar ’khor/ mig ni med khyang thams cad rig/ rig pa’i snang pa stong par ’gro/ sems kyi ngo bo ’di zhes med/ med kyang dran rig sna tshogs ’char/ yod par ma yin stong par ’gro/ med pa ma yin dran rig snang/.*

appeals to metaphors of movement—coming and going—when talking about the nature of mind.

For Patrul, the nature of mind never changes, of course. It is always both empty and aware. As he states in the line just preceding this passage, mind's empty and aware qualities are undifferentiated (*dbyer med*). Mind thus never changes in its nature—nothing is ever added to it or taken away from it. Nonetheless, Patrul chooses to *describe* the experience of awareness as a departure, as a going (*'gro ba*) and returning (*rang sar 'khor*).

### Generating Meaning Out of “Nothing”

Regardless of how one interprets the opaque meaning of the youth's “water-boats-bodies” interpretation, I would argue that *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is first and foremost about “confident eloquence”—what it looks like and the criteria for evaluating it. In this way, the youth's etymology is about the *possibility* of creating a philosophically pregnant allegory, more than it is about one specific interpretation of that allegory.

After offering the philosophically suggestive etymology of “water-boats-bodies,” Patrul never returns to this allegory in order to clarify its meaning. Quite to the contrary, he has his youth launch into a second set of etymological explanations of “water-boats-bodies,” this time addressing the youth's altruistic activities, thereby deemphasizing the importance of the first interpretation. When the old men respond to the youth's sermon, they never take issue with the specifics of the interpretation of “water-boats-bodies,” nor do they ask for clarification about the philosophical or religious consequences of the etymology. Rather, they offer criticisms about *the form* of the etymology, challenging its status as a legitimate teaching in the first place. What is at stake for the elders is the status of interpretations that do not fall within the formal, rigid framework that they expect from a treatise.

It is therefore sufficient for Patrul to *suggest* that it is possible for him to devise an elaborate allegory, without having to be explicit about how the code of the allegory should be cracked. Patrul succeeds as long as his audience believes there to be profound philosophical or ethical guidance contained in his eloquent exposition, regardless of exactly how his audience chooses to interpret the sermon. The brilliance of the etymology is its capacity to infer profundity without ever spelling out its meaning.

The conclusion of the youth's creative etymology of “water-boats-bodies” supports my reading of *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* as a reflexive inquiry into the skillful production of teachings—a discourse primarily about discourse. The youth conclude their sermon by boasting that their capacity to interpret

“water-boats-bodies” can never be used up.<sup>63</sup> I read their boast to be a statement about the skills of someone who embodies confidence eloquence. Their implicit argument seems to go as follows: even something as seemingly inconsequential as a phrase in Derge slang is an opportunity for a skillful teacher to tease out meaning and deliver an eloquent teaching. Because of their (meaning Patrul’s) unlimited intelligence, their capacity to provide meaningful teachings on even the most unlikely subjects is inexhaustible.

Patrul’s choice of the phrase “water-boats-bodies” for his etymology is loaded with irony, of course, making it a perfect selection for a playful, humorous discourse. “Water-boats-bodies” is a colloquial phrase and thereby mundane, making it an unlikely source for profound teachings. The fact that Patrul can generate meaning out of such a seemingly insignificant idiom testifies to his interpretive talents. Not only is the colloquialism “water-boats-bodies” surprisingly mundane subject matter, but the phrase itself means “nothing.” By commenting so extensively on “water-boats-bodies,” Patrul is subtly telling us that he is capable of generating meaning, inexhaustible meaning even, out of literally “nothing.”

### The Challenge of Skillful Teaching

When Patrul eventually identifies himself as someone who has “the confident eloquence (*spobs pa*) of speaking hundreds of words,” he explicitly acknowledges his ambition to embody the bodhisattva skill of confident eloquence. Another composition from Patrul’s collected works confirms his fascination with the question of how to compose and deliver skillful teachings. In an introduction to a short history of the dharma in Tibet that he wrote, entitled *A Short Discourse on the Origin of the Dharma* (*Chos ’byung ’bel gtam nyung ngu*),<sup>64</sup> Patrul devotes some time to discussing the principles behind different modes of public speech—whether these discourses be ones that teach worldly ethics or practices aiming at liberation; whether they be ones intended to generate feelings of wonder and devotion, or certainty about the nature of reality; whether these compositions be humorous (like *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*), historical in focus, or otherwise.<sup>65</sup> The details of this discussion confirm what *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* already suggests, that Patrul is exceedingly concerned with the proper ways to deliver teachings.

In this introduction, Patrul lists various requisite elements of successful discourse. With regard to discourse concerning worldly aims and ethics, one should speak powerfully, one should

<sup>63</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 348.

<sup>64</sup> *Chos ’byung ’bel gtam nyung ngu* in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 1, 290-325.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 290-293.

incorporate a sense of humor, and one should generate certainty in one's audience about the truth.<sup>66</sup> These observations, but the first of many in this passage, display Patrul's interest in a range of performative desiderata: the quality of one's delivery (speaking powerfully), one's choice of rhetorical strategy (sense of humor), and one's goals for teaching in the first place (generating confidence or certainty in one's audience). Patrul also recognizes a connection between these performative components and the specific mode of discourse to which they apply—here noting how these strategies are particularly relevant for discourse about worldly ethics, called “people's dharma” (*mi chos*).

Patrul is also sensitive to the mistakes that public speakers make in their rhetoric and their performance. Egotistic, pseudo-scholars, for example, deliver discourses that, despite being filled with lots of material, have no relevance or connection to the goals of its audience, include examples that contradict the points that it is trying to make, and are burdened by many superfluous examples.<sup>67</sup> Other discursive mistakes follow in Patrul's discussion: discourses filled with endless deception, discourses with no structure, and long talks with no practical relevance. These are all qualities that characterize what Patrul playfully calls the speech of stubborn old folks.<sup>68</sup> And if one isn't properly learned about one's subject matter, Patrul later remarks, one will not be able to cover enough ground in one's talk and will be unable to answer questions about what one has spoken about.<sup>69</sup> Patrul thus displays a keen sensitivity to the preparatory, performative, rhetorical, structural, and substantive components of discourse. Patrul, it should be emphasized, is someone who spends a lot of time reflecting on how to be an effective orator and teacher.

A survey of Patrul's collected works also teaches us something about his concern with how to deliver effective teachings: his fascination with different modes of discourse and different techniques for composing confidently eloquent dharma. As we know from his biographies, Patrul taught the same material over and over throughout his life to audiences of vastly different educational backgrounds. He famously taught Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* to everyone whom he met. He also regularly taught Karma Chagme's (Gnas mdo Karma chags med, 1613-1678) *Dechen Monlam*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*: 290: *ngag gi sgrub pa spangs pa la 'byung ba shes chel brjid la non dang ldan pa/ mtshar la bzhad gad 'byin pa/ bden la nges shes bskyed pa de/ mi chos kyi phu thag chod pa la 'byung/*.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: 290: *mang la 'brel ba med pa/ dpe dang don du 'gal ba/ dpe mang khur du lus pa de/ mi mkhas nga rgyal che ba la 'byung/*.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*: 290: *zob la zad dus med pa/ lus med yan lag mang ba/ 'brel med gtam gzhung ring ba de/ rgan po u tshug can la 'byung/* I do not think that the old people spoken of here are comparable to the old people in *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*. The scholars whom Patrul picks on in the latter show no signs of making these mistakes (speaking impractically, or with no structure).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*: 291: *thos pa'i mtha' rgya ma bcad na/ chos bshad khol bus sa mi chod de slar la dris na yang lan mi 'byung/*.

(*Bde chen smon lam*) prayer for rebirth in the Sukhāvati heaven, the *Mani Kambum* (*Maṇi bka' 'bum*), and the chanting of Avalokiteśvara's six-syllable mantra.

The great proliferation of compositions in Patrul's collected works about the graduated path to liberation (*lam rim*) also speak to his unflinching dedication to coming up with different ways to communicate the same subject material. Patrul's compositions dealing with the structure of the path to enlightenment are plentiful and diverse: formal commentaries to classic works, pedagogically-driven outlines to these works, free standing explorations of path-related themes, his own rendition of the path in the *lam rim* ("graduated path") genre, and dozens of life-advice compositions.<sup>70</sup>

These "life-advice" works (*zhal gdams*)<sup>71</sup> accentuate Patrul's perpetual experimentation with structure and rhetoric in his path-related discourses. In many of his forty some odd life-advice compositions, most of which are in verse and fewer than four pages in length, he repeatedly teaches the same material. He offers an introductory guide to the path to enlightenment, with a focus on devotion to one's teacher, taking refuge and generating the altruistic attitude of a bodhisattva, chanting Avalokiteśvara's six-syllable mantra, and repeatedly examining the nature of one's mind no matter the context. Yet Patrul generates a wide variety of compositions from this common subject matter by changing his tone and meter, and by employing witty schemes to capture the attention of his audience.

To be sure, *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is hardly the only text of Patrul's wherein he challenges himself to creatively

<sup>70</sup> Patrul's formal commentaries on classic Sanskrit Mahāyāna treatises include works on the *Abhisamayalāṅkāra* and the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*. See his *Mdo sde rgyan gyi don bsdus 'phags pa'i dgongs rgyan*, *Sher phyings mngon rtogs rgyan gyi 'bru 'grel*, and *Sher phyings mngon rtogs rgyan gyi spyi don*, in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vols. 3, 5, and 6, respectively. For various analytical outlines (*sa bcad*) to path-related works such as the *Abhidharmakośa*, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, Mnga' ris paṅ chen's (1487-1542) *Sdom gsum rnam nges*, and 'Jigs med gling pa's (1729/30-1798) *Yon tan mdzod*, see Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 2. For free standing explorations of path-related themes such as the three vows and the stages of the path, see, for example, the *Sdom pa gsum gyi gnad bsdus pa* and the *Rgyal sras byang chub sems dpa'i sa lam gyi rnam grangs mdor bsdus*, in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 4. Patrul's own *lam rim* work is his famed *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 7.

<sup>71</sup> Patrul's collected works contain over forty *zhal gdams*, a great many of which offer condensed versions of the path, often emphasizing simple yet all-encompassing "essential points" of the practice. See the many *zhal gdams* that follow the *Thog mtha' bar gsum du dge ba'i gtam* in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 140-173, as well as those gathered together under the title *Mtshungs don man ngag rdo rje'i thol glu spros bral sgra dbyangs* in Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 260-371. For other *zhal gdams*-like instructions, see Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 1, where, for example, is found Patrul's famous *Padma tshal gyi zlos gar*, a drama consisting of dharma instructions to a bee who is overcome with sorrow at the death of his lover.

structure his instructions.<sup>72</sup> *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is a particularly strong example of Patrul challenging himself, however, because of the range of discursive modalities that appear within its nine pages. Patrul opens with a multivalent, pun-filled homage, sets forth a narrative introduction, composes a creative etymology, counters that performance with a formal, polemical criticism, and finally closes with a self-congratulatory rebuke of the criticism. In addition to including a confidently eloquent exposition of the hidden meaning of “water-boats-bodies,” the entire text of *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* reads like an oratorical performance, showcasing Patrul's capacity to compose in a wide variety of genres.

*The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is a reflexive work in that it is a skillful discourse about skillful discourse—one that addresses the topic of creative eloquence by having its characters model a creatively eloquent discourse and then debate its merits. The work thereby displays Patrul's self-consciousness about his own work as a composer of Buddhist sermons and showcases his proclivity to challenge himself to compose rhetorically diverse and sophisticated teachings.

### A Composition about its Composer

*The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* is also reflexive in another sense. By casting himself as the hero of his own story, Patrul places his own status as a skilled teacher at the center of the composition. Once the youth introduce Patrul as the originator of their creative etymology, it becomes clear that the composition is not just a discourse about discourse, but is also a composition about its composer.

Patrul's creative treatment of his own status as author, his imaginative use of the “author-function,” is actually a hallmark of a number of his compositions.<sup>73</sup> In each case, Patrul calls attention to his own status as author by creating a unique persona for himself as the person delivering the instructions. For example, in his *Discourse on Dharmic and Worldly Knowledge, The Ladder of Liberation* (*Chos dang 'jig rten shes pa'i gtam thar pa'i them skas*), Patrul portrays himself as a solitary ascetic who is periodically visited by students who request teachings from him. Patrul then presents the content of the discourse in the form of sophisticated answers to the basic questions

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, the just mentioned *Padma tshal gyi zlos gar*. The *Thog mtha' bar gsum du dge ba'i gtam* finds Patrul creating a lyrical instruction, in verse, on the entirety of the path through the prism of the six-syllable mantra. See Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 127-140.

<sup>73</sup> For a classic discussion of the variety of ways in which the status of the author functions in a text, see Foucault 1998.

about the Buddha's teachings that these visitors pose to him.<sup>74</sup> In his *Responses to the Questions of the Boy Loden*, Patrul presents himself as an old man delivering ethical instructions to a troubled young man. The instructions only begin, however, after the old man has proven his wisdom to the young man by trading witty insults with him.<sup>75</sup> Finally, in one untitled life-advice composition, Patrul delivers practice advice to himself, calling himself names and pointing out his own faults.<sup>76</sup>

Patrul's technique of calling attention to his own position as author functions slightly differently in each of the examples just listed. But what does he accomplish by calling attention to himself as author of *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*? I would argue that Patrul appears in the composition in order to represent, for his audience, the ideal social position of an eloquent teacher.

Patrul paints a flattering portrait of himself as a confident, eloquent, and authoritative teacher who is both capable of engaging with educated elites on their own terms, yet also adept at teaching a wide audience in a way that the elites cannot match. Patrul articulates his dissatisfaction with the discursive ideals of the conservative-minded old monks by juxtaposing their staid explanations of the words "heard" and "understood" with the youth's creative etymology of "water-boats-bodies." He likewise contrasts the elites' ineffectual critique of the "water-boats-bodies" etymology with the youth's colorful defense of Patrul's brilliance. In each case, Patrul positions himself as vastly superior in wit and skill to the old men.

One issue at stake in Patrul's criticism of these monastic elites, obsessed as they are with scholastic pursuits of formal composition and debate, is their incapacity to reach a wide audience with their teachings. Patrul's interest in reaching the widest possible audience is evident in his treatment of the popular six-syllable mantra of Avalakiteśvara, "*Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*," in the composition.

Patrul has the youth introduce the *maṇi* in order to draw a parallel between the six-syllable *maṇi* (*oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*) and the three-syllable "water-boats-bodies" (*chu gru lus*). In a brilliant sleight of hand, having just discussed the "six-syllabled *maṇi*" and its fame in Tibet, the youth jump right into a discussion of the "three-syllabled" "water-boats-bodies" teaching. The youth refers to the *maṇi* as: "*'bru drug ma ṇi padme 'di*" (this six-syllabled "mani peme"), then, only a few lines later, refers to the phrase "water-boats-bodies" as: "*rtsa ba tshig 'bru gsum po de*" (that root word or root phrase in three syllables).

And what of this "three-syllabled" root teaching, "water-boats-bodies"? Well, the youth claim it to have been transmitted from ear to ear in the past, just like the *maṇi*. So, while the old men might not

<sup>74</sup> See Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 1, 272-289.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*: 31-55.

<sup>76</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 140-143.

have heard of the “water-boats-bodies” teaching prior to meeting the youth, this teaching has nonetheless traveled far and wide, much like the *mani*. Far from being just a phrase of youthful slang, the youth talk about the phrase “water-boats-bodies” as if it were itself a mantra, or a secret teaching of some sort.

In a pattern that should now be familiar, Patrul's parallel treatment of the *mani* and “water-boats-bodies” is both playful and serious. There is clearly some irony in Patrul's assertion that his “water-boats-bodies” teaching has spread from ear to ear like the *mani* has. A colloquial expression meaning “nothing” is hardly the religious equivalent of the renowned mantra of the Bodhisattva of compassion. In this regard, Patrul's comparison of the two, the three-syllabled “water-boats-bodies” and the six-syllabled mantra, is a witty joke, appropriate for a humorous discourse (*bzhad gad kyi gtam*).

But Patrul is also asserting something quite important about the value of a good teaching. While scholars may be too busy writing arcane commentaries to be bothered by popular practices such as chanting the mantra of compassion, the majority of Tibetans are engaged in just these kinds of practices. Furthermore, these popular practices are no less profound than scholastic commentaries. In fact, as the youth assert, the *mani* is the very essence of all of the Buddha's teachings. This section establishes that Patrul, unlike the scholastic elites represented by the old men, is capable of creating teachings like the *mani* that are accessible to the majority of Tibetans. Teachings that resemble the etymology of “water-boats-bodies,” he seems to suggest, are the kinds of teachings that are capable of mass appeal—they are accessible, easy to remember, yet filled with hidden profundity.

Patrul's concern for teaching all types of people is a common, if oblique, theme throughout *The Exposition of Water, Boats, and Bodies*. During their explication of the meaning of “boats” (*gru*), the youth state that boats ferry all kinds of people: merchants, women, monks, gurus, brahmans, thieves, butchers, and so on. And when drawing out the parallel between boats' function and their own activities, the youth mention that they meet all sorts of different people on their travels, sometimes men, sometimes women, and sometimes children.<sup>77</sup> Boats, on a figurative level, and the youth, on a literal level, engage with all segments of the population. I interpret this motif as evidence for Patrul's concern that confident and eloquent teachings be accessible to a wide variety of audiences. In this way Patrul is modeling himself after some of his heroes, such as Karma Chagme and Shabkar (Zhabs dkar Tshogs drug rang grol, 1781-1851), both of whom were known for their popular teachings to audiences of all educational levels.<sup>78</sup> The conservative scholars, on

<sup>77</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 344-5.

<sup>78</sup> Patrul composed a prayer for the quick rebirth of Shabkar that appears in his collected works. See “Zhabs dkar sprul sku myur 'byon” in Rdza dpal sprul

the other hand, are depicted as people who are too concerned with scholastic practices (like formal word-commentaries to canonical scriptures) to value accessible instructions.

Yet Patrul is very careful in his critique of the elders in *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies*. Patrul maintains the importance of various capacities of educated monks, specifically their skill in debate and their knowledge of scriptures, both skills that one develops through monastic study. One might say the same of Patrul's attitude towards Sakya Paṇḍita, whose conservative legacy appears to be an object of some ridicule in this text (though Sapaṇ is never named). Patrul clearly does respect Sapaṇ's high standards for monastic learning, however. Patrul is quoted in his biography praising Sakya Paṇḍita for his skill in the five traditional fields of learning, for example.<sup>79</sup>

Patrul also portrays the common activities of educated monks in a positive light. His protagonists, the youth, perform some of the social duties of monks, such as participating in rituals to benefit benefactors and praying for the recently deceased. For Patrul, it seems, the ideal teacher must be at once scholastically trained,

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2003: vol. 8. Patrul's biography also tells of how Patrul set out to meet Shabkar, intent to learn from this highly reputed master, before learning on the road that Shabkar had died. Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003: 197.

<sup>79</sup> See Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003: 193. This section of the biography also alludes to Patrul's non-sectarian approach, here noting the respect he held for Longchenpa (Rnying ma), Sapaṇ (Sakya), and Tsong Khapa (Geluk). A note about Patrul and non-sectarianism is in order. Contemporary English descriptions of Patrul are quick to (problematically) identify Patrul as a member of the nineteenth-century non-sectarian movement (*Ris med*) in Eastern Tibet. See, for example, Dza Patrul Rinpoche 1998: xxxviii; and Reynolds 1996: 297. Patrul was, in fact, a close colleague of two of the three figures most frequently associated with this "movement." Khyentse Wango ('Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, 1820-1892) composed a hymn in honor of Patrul and consecrated a major religious construction project that Patrul oversaw, and Chogyur Lingpa (Mchog gyur gling pa, 1829-1870) gave Patrul the responsibility of overseeing the distribution of one of his treasure revelations. There is, to my knowledge, no evidence in the biographical archive that Patrul had a relationship with Kongtrul ('Jam mgon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas, 1813-1899). Kongtrul does not appear in Patrul's biographies, nor does Patrul appear in Kongtrul's autobiography. Given the biographical record, I thus personally see no compelling reason to place Patrul within a *ris med* "movement," if one wants to call Kongtrul, Khyentse Wangpo, and Chogyur Lingpa's activities, as significant as they were, a movement. With that said, Kun bzang dpal ldan uses the phrase "*ris med*" a number of times to describe Patrul's activity, which was, by all accounts, non-sectarian in so far as he taught students from all different lineages and used source materials from all different lineages. One might justifiably understand *Ris med* to be, *de facto*, an informal lineage formed by spiritual descendants of Kongtrul's and Khyentse's, those who trace their lineage through Kongtrul and Khyentse's students and incarnations. In so far as members of such an informal lineage emphasize a non-sectarian attitude in the construction of their self-identity as a lineage, it makes perfect sense for them to include Patrul in their accounts of the "origin" of the *ris med* lineage. For an investigation of *Ris med* along somewhat different lines, see Alexander Gardner 2006: Chapter 3.

socially engaged, and capable of communicating confidently and skillfully to a wide audience.

Patrul's approach is to thus present himself, the supposed originator of the "water-boats-bodies" creative-etymology, as enjoying the best of both worlds. He represents himself as someone who is not limited by the constraints of scholastic discourse yet is still capable of operating within the world of monastically trained scholars. So, for example, he claims to be beyond the requirements of quoting from scripture or engaging in debate. Because of the genius of his confidently eloquent preaching and the thoroughness of his education, these requirements do not apply to him. Still, were he to choose to support his teachings with scriptural quotations or participate in debate, he could do so with ease.<sup>80</sup>

Patrul also presents himself as occupying a privileged position with respect to the social world—living neither an ordinary, mundane life nor abandoning all connections to his fellow people. The protagonists of his story, the youth, perhaps represent his students. They do, after all, spread his teaching about "water-boats-bodies." And how do these ideal students behave in the world? They are at once full participants in the social world and yet entirely unaffected by it. The youth are engaged with their neighbors, traveling amongst commoners, conversing with them, and healing them. Yet, as the "water-boats-bodies" allegory so elegantly expresses, the youth are capable of interacting with the world without being changed by it. Like water, they accomplish their aims without being stained or diminished.

Patrul's concern for respecting the elite education of monks while nonetheless criticizing their conservative approach to public discourse reflects the complex nature of Patrul's own real-life status as a religious figure in nineteenth-century Eastern Tibet. Patrul's career was multi-faceted, even conflicted. He was recognized as an incarnate lama at an early age and thereby inherited a monastic estate, privileged social status, and the guarantee of an elite religious education. Yet, as a young man, he rejected his monastic inheritance, leaving his monastery to lead the life of a wandering ascetic (at least for a short time).<sup>81</sup>

But Patrul also spent much time traveling to the major monasteries of Eastern Tibet as both student and later teacher, and thereby retained strong institutional connections to a number of important monasteries in Eastern Tibet. He received a traditional monastic education at Dzogchen monastery, for example, and

<sup>80</sup> Rdza dpal sprul 2003: 349-50.

<sup>81</sup> Patrul was recognized at an early age as the incarnate lama of Palge Samten Ling monastery (*Dpal dge bsam gtan gling*) in the Dzachuka (*Rdza chu kha*) region of Khams, though he abandoned the monastery around the age of twenty. For an account of his rejection of his inherited role of head lama of Palge Samten Ling, see: Kun bzang dpal ldan 2003: 195-6. General references for accounts of his life appear in note 2.

studied with many of the great scholars of his day. Later he even became a scholastic instructor and the abbot of a monastic college at Dzogchen, where he assembled analytical outlines of canonical treatises meant for use in scholastic study.<sup>82</sup> Yet he nonetheless frequently wrote of his skepticism of a life devoted to scholastic study and composition.<sup>83</sup>

Patrul was a friend and consoler to the elite in Derge, having composed advice for some of them, yet was also a populist teacher to nomads and villagers throughout Khams. He was, at times, both a forest-dwelling hermit and an administrator at a major monastery, a self-effacing renunciant and an iconoclastic performer. Patrul's career was, to say the least, a never-ending negotiation within a network of conflicting social positions.

Perhaps, then, we should read *The Explanation of Water, Boats, and Bodies* as a statement of Patrul's personal aspirations as a teacher—his desire to embody the pedagogical skills of a bodhisattva, to employ his considerable education, training, wit and creativity in the service of creating accessible yet profound teachings for beings of all capacity, while all the while remaining inoculated from the dangerous and harmful emotions, the hopes and the fears that characterize worldly life.

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<sup>82</sup> Patrul was educated at Dzogchen monastery (*Rdzogs chen dgon*) outside of Derge, spent many years in retreat caves surrounding the monastery, and later taught at Dzogchen's monastic college and affiliate monasteries. Patrul's accomplished teachers included Rdzog chen rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas (1800-1855), Rdzogs chen Mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje (1793-1870), and Zhe chen dbon sprul Mthu stobs rnam rgyal (b. 1787). For Patrul's analytical outlines, see Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 2.

<sup>83</sup> Patrul's "life-advice" compositions are replete with rhetoric declaring the uselessness of scholarly pursuits and criticism of all-talk but no-substance monks, though these statements often appear in sections that strive to motivate the audience to renounce all worldly pursuits and escape to a cave for solitary retreat practice. These passages would therefore demand careful interpretation with attention to the context of Patrul's loaded rhetoric. See for example, however, Rdza dpal sprul 2003: vol. 8, 128, 275, 278.

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ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་གྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དང་ད་ལྟོ་བཞུགས་ཚུལ་རོབ་ཅམ་གྱིང་ག།

འབྲུག་མོ་མཁམ།

ནང་དོན་གནད་བསྟུན།

དུས་རབས་བརྒྱ་གསུམ་པའི་ནང་དུ་ས་སྐུ་བས་ཤོད་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་སྲིད་དབང་བཟུང་བའི་སྐབས་སུ་མདོ་  
སྐད་ཤར་སྤོགས་ཀྱི་ས་ཆའི་ཁ་གྲུའི་མི་ཚོ་དེ་ཚོ་དུག་ལ་དབང་བསྐྱུར་བའི་ཁ་གྲུའི་བོ་དུའི་བཀའ་དང་།  
ཡུལ་མིས་སྤྱིན་བདག་བྱས་ཏེ། ས་དེ་གའི་སློམ་སྤྱད་མང་དག་གཅིག་བསྟུན་མཛད་ནས་གོང་ཁྱིམ་  
གཙོས་ཁོངས་གཏོགས་ཁ་གྲུ་སྐད་ཀྱི་གྲུ་ཆའི་ཐང་དུ་འགྲུང་གན་སྐྱེས་པའི་དང་པོ་གྲུར་དམར་གསེར་ཏོག་  
ཅན་གྱིས་དཔོན་པ་བཏབ་<sup>1</sup>ཅིང་གསང་སྤྲུལ་གསུམ་མའི་སྐབས་སུ་སྤྱད་སྤེལ་བ་སྟེ། དཔོན་པ་འདི་ལ་ད་  
ལྟོ་བར་དུ་ལོ་རྒྱུས་བསྐྱེད་བསྐྱུག་གི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཡོད་ལ་སྐྱེས་སྐྱུལ་སྐྱེས་སྐྱུལ་གསུམ་ཆེན་གང་མང་ཟམ་མ་ཆད་  
པར་གྱོན་སྤོང་། དཔོན་པ་འདིར་ཞིབ་འཇུག་གི་རིན་ཐང་གཏོར་དུ་རྩོགས་ལ་སྤོན་ཆད་ཞིབ་འཇུག་བཞིས་  
སྤོང་མཁམ་མང་པོ་མེད་པས་སྤོང་ཆ་ལྟ་བུར་ལུས་ཡོད། ཁོ་མོས་དཔུང་ཚོམ་འདི་འདི་ནང་དུ་གཙོ་བོ་དཔོན་  
པ་དེའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དང་། ལྷ་སྐྱེལ་རིམ་གྱི་མཛད་ནས། ཉེན་དང་བརྟེན་པའི་གནས་ཚུལ། འཇུགས་སྐྱེན་  
གྱི་བཀོད་པ། ལྷ་སྐྱེལ་འཛོལ་དང་ཚོས་ལུགས་ཀྱི་ལས་འགུལ། དཔོན་པའི་དོ་དམ་སྤྱི་གཞི་དང་  
དཔལ་འབྱོར་ཡོང་འབབ། དཔོན་པས་གནས་དེའི་མཐའ་འཁོར་གྱི་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་ལ་ལུགས་སྐྱེན་ཐབས་  
ཚུལ་སོགས་དཔོན་པའི་གནས་དེང་གི་གནས་ཚུལ་དོ་སྤོང་པ་ཅམ་གྱི་ཚུལ་དུ་བྲིས་ཡོད།

དང་པོ། ཁ་གྲུ་སྲིད་རྩོམ་སུ་ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་གྱི་བྱང་བ་བརྗོད་པ།

ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་དགའ་ལྷན་བཤད་སྐབས་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་གྱིང་ནི་དག་སྐྱེན་དུ་སྐྱེས་ལ་འགྲུང་གན་  
ཚང་གིས་བཏབ་པར་གྲགས་ཤིང་། གོང་ཁྱིམ་གཙོས་ཀྱི་ཁོངས་གཏོགས་ཤོད་སྐྱེད་ནང་བསྟན་དཔོན་

<sup>1</sup> དག་སྐྱེན་དང་མདོ་སྐད་ཚོས་འབྲུང་སྐྱེད་ན་འགྲུང་དོགོང་མ་ཞིག་གིས་བཏབ་པར་གྲགས།

པའི་ཆ་འཕམ་གཅིག་ཡིན། དེ་ཡང་ཁ་གྲུ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་འདི་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རིགས་རྩམ་འབྲུང་ཁྲུང་ས་ནི། བོད་ཀྱི་རྩམ་  
 ཆེན་བཞིའི་ཡ་གྲུལ་ལྗོངས་དང་། དེ་ཡང་ཆ་ཆེན་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ཡོད་པའི་ནང་ཆོན་གཡི་ཆའི་ཁོངས་སུ་གཏོགས་  
 ཏེ། བློ་རལ་པ་ཅན་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༤༠༢ནས་སྤྱི་ལོ་༤༡༧བར་)ཀྱི་དུས་སུ་རྒྱ་ཡུལ་དུ་དམག་ལ་འབྱོན་སྐབས་  
 དམག་དཔོན་དུ་བསྐོས་པས་གཡི་ཆ་དམག་དཔོན་ཐོགས་ཏེ། དེའི་མི་རྒྱུད་མ་རྒྱུའི་པར་ཁའི་བླ་ཡན་  
 རྩོགས་ན་ཡོད་པ་ལས་སྤྲོན་གསུམ་རྩོགས་འདིར་ཡོད་ནས་ཡུལ་བཟུང་ཞིང་གཞིས་ཆགས་ཤིང་། ཆེན་  
 རྒྱན་གསུམ་ཡོད་པའི་རྒྱན་མའི་བྱ་པ་ཞེས་རྒྱུད་པ་ཁ་གྲུ་ཡིན།<sup>2</sup> དེ་ཡང་སྤྱི་ལོའི་དུས་རབས་གསུམ་པར་  
 བོད་ཡུལ་དུ་དམག་པའི་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱ་བརྟེན་ཤིང་རིམ་གྱིས་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ཕྱིན་ནས་སྤྲུག་སྤྱིང་མའི་དབེན་  
 གནས་སྐོམ་ཕྱག་དང་སྐོམ་བྲ་མང་དུ་བྱུང་བ་ནམས་གཅིག་བརྟེན་སྐོམ་སྤྲུག་སྤྱིང་མའི་རྒྱུད་པ་སྤེལ་  
 ཞིང་རིག་སྤྲུགས་འཛིན་པའི་རྒྱུས་བྱ་སྤྲུགས་པའི་རྒྱུད་པ་མང་དུ་བྱུང་། དུས་རབས་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་ནང་  
 ས་སྐྱ་བས་བོད་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་སྲིད་དབང་བཟུང་བའི་སྐབས། མདོ་སྐད་ཤར་རྩོགས་ཀྱི་སའི་ཆ་ཁ་གྲུ་ཆོ་དྲུག་  
 གི་ནང་ཆོན་ཁ་གྲུ་མི་ཚོ་དྲུག་ལ་དབང་བསྐྱར་པའི་མངའ་བདག་ཁ་གྲུའི་བེ་རུའི་བཀའ་དང་ཡུལ་  
 མིས་སྤྱིན་བདག་མཛད་དེ། ས་དེ་གའི་སྐོམ་ཕྱག་ནམས་གཅིག་ཏུ་བརྟེན་ནས་བྲ་ཆའི་ཐང་དུ་དཔོན་པ་  
 བཏབ་ཏེ་སྤྲུགས་གསར་མའི་སྐབས་རྒྱུད་སྤེལ། བར་སྐབས་ཤིག་ལ་དགོ་འདུན་སྤོང་སྤྲུག་གི་བྱངས་ལས་  
 བཀལ་བར་བྲགས་<sup>3</sup>ལ་དེའི་རྗེས་སུ་བརྟེན་པ་ཡུན་རིང་དུ་གནས་ཤིང་བཤད་སྐབས་ཀྱི་བརྟེན་པ་ཉ་ཅང་  
 དར། བྲ་ཆའི་ལྷང་པ་ལས་རྒྱ་ལོག་བཅོལ་བའི་རང་བྱུང་གི་གཞོན་པས་རྒྱུན་བྲས་ནས། དཔོན་ས་གྲུང་  
 དུ་ལེགས་པར་བསྐྱུན་ཅིང་འདྲུ་ཁང་ཆེན་པོ་ཀ་རིང་བཅུ་གཉིས་ཅན་ཅིག་བཞེངས། གངས་ལྗོངས་སུ་  
 རི་མོ་དགོ་ལྷན་པའི་རིང་ལུགས་ཡུལ་དབྱས་ནས་རིམ་གྱིས་འཕེལ་པའི་སྐབས། རྩམ་འབྲུང་ཅན་གྱི་  
 ལྷུང་ཆེན་འབྲུང་རོ་ཨ་ལགས་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༢༢ནས་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༩༥བར་)གྲགས་པ་ཞིག་བྱུང་བའོང་ཡུལ་

<sup>2</sup> ལྷུང་དཔོན་པ་དཔོན་མཚོག་བརྟེན་པ་རབ་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་བརྟེན་པའི་མདོ་སྐད་ཆོས་འབྲུང་། ལྟ་༧༧ནང་གསལ།  
<sup>3</sup> བསེ་སྐྱ་སྤོང་གཉིས་པ་སྐྱ་བྱང་དཔོན་ནས་མ་བཞུགས་པར་རྩོགས་འདིར་ཕེབས་སྐབས་སྐོམ་མ་ལུ་བརྒྱུ་ཁོང་གི་རྗེས་སུ་  
 ཕེབས་པ་དང་དཔོན་འདིར་ཡང་གཞིས་སྤོང་གི་བྲ་བརྟེན་ལུ་བརྒྱུག་ཡོད་པས་སྤོང་སྤྲུག་ལས་བཀལ་ཡོད།

དབུས་དང་སོག་ཡུལ་བརྒྱུད་དེ་ཕལ་ཆེར་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༠ལོར་ཕྱོགས་འདྲིར་སེབས་ནས་སྐྱམ་ཐང་ལ་ཁར་  
 གྲུ་སྐྱར་བརྒྱུད་བས་གྲུར་དམར་གསེར་ཏོག་ཅན་དུ་གྲགས། རྗེས་སུ་བོ་དུ་དཔོན་པོའི་བ་སེའི་ཐམ་ཀ་  
 ལ་སོགས་བདོག་པའི་དངོས་པོའི་འབྲུལ་བ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་བྱས་པ་ནས་བརྒྱུད་རྗེ་ཉིད་ཁ་གཏེན་ཆོས་སྲིད་རྒྱུད་གི་  
 བདག་པོར་གྲུར་ཅིང་ད་ལྟོ་བའི་བར་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་པོར་ཉེ་ལུགས་གཉིས་ཀྱི་བཀའ་དྲིན་བརྒྱུད་ས། དགོན་  
 འདྲིར་མཚན་ཉིད་བརྒྱུད་ཚུགས་དེ་བསེ་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་པོར་གཉིས་པ་འཇམ་དབྱེད་ས་བཀྲ་ཤིས་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༢ལོར་སྤྱི་  
 ལོ་༡༤༧༩བར་)པར་ལྷན་ཏེ་དགོན་པ་འདི་འཛིན་བདག་གིས་གཏན་ཆགས་སུ་བཞུགས་གནས་མཛད་དེ་  
 བཀའ་པོད་ལྗེའི་བཤད་བྲལ་མཐར་སོན་པ་ཞིག་འཇུགས་སྤྱིའི་བཀའ་དྲིན་སྲོད་དགོས་ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་ནན་  
 ཆེར་བཏབ་པ་ཞལ་གྱིས་བཞེས་ཏེ་འཆད་ཉན་གྱི་དབུ་ཚུགས་ཤིང་རྗེ་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་འཛིན་བྲལ་སོ་སོར་བཅི་  
 བཞག་གནང་། ཞབས་མྱིར་འབྲིད་པའི་དགོས་ལྷན་པོར་འཛིན་བྲལ་སོ་སོའི་དགོས་ཆུང་དུ་བསྐྱོབ་ཞུས་  
 གནང་བས་དཔེ་མཛན་དོགས་གཅོད་སོགས་དོན་དུ་གང་འགྱུར་མཛད་པས་རིགས་ལམ་དེ་མ་མེད་པའི་  
 གསང་ཚིག་ཐུགས་སུ་རྒྱུད་པའི་ཉེས་གཏེ་སྐྱོབ་གསལ་མང་དུ་འཕེལ་བ་དང་། རྒྱུན་འཇུག་ཆོས་སྲོད་  
 སོགས་སྐྱོམ་ནང་ནང་ལྷན་ལྷན་དུ་དགོས་ཚུལ་གྱིས་བཀོད་ཁྲུབ་དང་བཅས་བཅའ་ཡིག་འཛོག་པའང་གནང་  
 སྟེ་དགོན་པའི་མཚན་ལ་དགའ་ལྷན་བཤད་སྐྱེད་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་སྤིང་ཞེས་བཏགས། ལྷིས་སུ་འགྲུང་རིའི་  
 ཆ་སྐྱམ་དཔོན་པོ་སོགས་མ་འཆམ་པར་ནང་འབྲུགས་བྱུང་ནས་སྐྱར་ལུང་གཉིས་གཉིས་སུ་གྱིས། ལྷིས་  
 བསྟན་པ་ཡང་དར་སྐབས་པམ་ཆེན་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་པོར་པ་མཚོག་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༤ལོར་མདོ་སྐད་དུ་ཆིབས་བསྐྱར་  
 གནང་སྐབས་དགོན་པའི་ཆོས་སྐོ་ལྷིས་ཏེ་པམ་ཆེན་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་པོར་བཟང་ཡེ་ཤེས་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༦ལོར་སྤྱི་  
 ལོ་༡༩༧༩བར་)ལུང་བསྟན་གྱི་དུས་ལ་བབ་ཏེ་དགོན་གནས་སྐར་ཞིང་སྐར་གྱི་ཉེན་བཅེན་པ་རྣམས་རིག་  
 གནས་གསར་བརྗེ་སོགས་གཡོན་ཐལ་སྐོད་མེད་བརྒྱུག་ཏུ་ཤོར་བ་རྣམས་གསར་བཞེད་ཀྱིས་ད་ལྟོ་པལ་  
 ཆེར་སོར་རྒྱུད་དེ་དཔལ་ལྷན་གྱི་སྐད་བྲལ་གྱི་ཆོང་གི་ཕུག་བཞེས་ཇི་ལྟ་བུ་བཞེན་མ་ཉམས་པར་གནས་སོ།

གཉིས་པ། ལྷ་སྐྱུལ་རིམ་བྱོན་གྱི་མཛད་པ་དང་དགོན་བདག་ལྷ་མའི་སྐོར།

དེ་ཡང་མདོ་སྐྱོད་ཚེས་འབྲུང་དུ། “ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐྱར་ནི། བེ་སེར་དུ་བྱུང་བའི་དགོན་རྫོང་ཞིག་ཡིན་ལ།  
 འགྲུང་རོ་གོང་མ་ཞིག་གིས་བཏབ་ཅིང་ཁོང་འཁྲུངས་རབས་བཅུ་གསུམ་མོང་ཟེར། དང་བོ་རྩ་བ་ནས་  
 འཁྲུངས་པ་འགྲུང་རོ་སྐྱོད་བདུན་པ། རུས་འགྲུང་། དེའི་རྗེས་མ་འགྲུང་རོ་ཨ་ལགས།”<sup>4</sup> ཞེས་གསུངས་  
 གྲུང་རྒྱུས་ཡོད་མི་སྐྱུའི་བཤད་རྒྱུ་ལྟར་ན། འགྲུང་རོ་ཨ་ལགས་ནི་དུས་རབས་བཅུ་བདུན་པའི་དུས་རྒྱུད་  
 ནས་ད་ལྟའི་བར་དུ་འཁྲུངས་རབས་བདུན་དུ་ངོས་འཛིན་ཏེ། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༩༠འོའི་སྤོན་ཅམ་ན་རུས་འགྲུང་  
 ཅན་གྱི་གྲུབ་ཆེན་ཞིག་བྱོན་པ་དེར་འགྲུང་རོ་ཨ་ལགས་དང་དེས་སྐྱམ་ཐང་ལ་ཁའི་གྲུང་སྐྱར་བཟུང་བ་ལ་  
 གྲུང་དམར་གསེར་ཏོག་ཅན་ཞེས་བྲགས། ཁ་གྲུའི་དཔོན་པོ་ཨུམ་རིང་ཐའི་རི་(ཡལ་ཆེར་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༢༠  
 ནས་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༩༤)གཙོས་སྐྱུ་སེར་བུན་མོང་གིས་ལྷ་མ་འདི་དགོན་པའི་གཙོ་བོར་བཀྲུང་བ་མ་ཟད་རྗེས་སུ་  
 བོ་རུ་དཔོན་པོའི་བ་མོའི་ཐམ་ཀ་སོགས་བདོག་འབྲུལ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་སྐོས་ཚོས་སྤིང་བུ་གི་བདག་པོར་མཛད་དུ་  
 བཅུག། གཞན་ཡང་སྐྱམ་ཐང་དང་ཐག་ཉེ་བའི་སྤེ་བ་ལ་སྤིང་གྲུང་ཕུ་ཟེར་ཏེ་སྤེ་བ་དེའི་དགྲིལ་ན་ཁོང་  
 གིས་བཞེངས་པའི་སྐྱུ་འབྲུམ་ཆེན་པོ་ཞིག་ཡོད་ལ། སྐྱམ་ཐང་ལ་ཁར་རྗེ་ཉིད་གྱིས་བཞེངས་པའི་དུས་  
 གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་གྱི་ལྷ་ཁང་གི་རྟེན་འགའས་ཅན་ཉན་ཐོས་ཆེན་པོ་ལྟ་རིའི་དུས་སྐུ་སྐྱར་བཞུགས་པར་  
 གྲགས་ཤིང་། དེའི་ནང་རྟེན་དུས་གསུམ་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་ལོག་རིས་ནི་དམ་ཅན་གྱི་སྐྱུ་བསྐྱེད་རང་  
 བྱོན་དུ་བྲགས། འགྲུང་རོའི་གྲུང་དམར་གསེར་ཏོག་ཚང་འདས་རྗེས་ཆེད་དུ་སྐྱུ་གཤུང་མ་ཚོད་རྟེན་  
 བཞུགས་པའི་བུམ་ཁང་ཚུ་ཐོག་ཅན་བཞེངས་ཤིང་རྒྱ་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་ཚོས་ཉེར་དགྲུང་བོ་རུ་ཡབ་ཡུམ་  
 གྱི་གོས་ལྷ་དེ་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་ཡབ་ཡུམ་གྱི་འཆམ་གོས་སུ་གསོལ་བའི་ཚོས་སྐྱོང་དག་གི་འཆམ་རྒྱུགས་སོ།

འགྲུང་རོ་སྐྱུ་སྤྱང་གཉིས་པ་ངག་དབང་བསྟན་འཛིན་ཞེས་པ་དེ་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་མི་བྱི་སྤེ་སྤྱི་  
 ལོ་༡༦༩༦ ལོར་རྩ་བའི་ཡུལ་དུ་སྤྱོད་ཆོག་ཅེས་པའི་རུས་སུ་སྐྱུ་འཁྲུངས། རྗེ་མ་ཁི་བ་ཤེས་རབ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་

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<sup>4</sup> གྲགས་དགོན་པ་དགོན་མཚོག་བསྟན་པ་རབ་རྒྱས་གྱིས་བཅུམས་པའི་མདོ་སྐྱོད་ཚེས་འབྲུང་། ལྟ་ལྟ་ནང་གསལ།

(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༧ལོའི་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༩)ཀྱི་མཛུགས་ནས་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་ཞིང་དགོ་ཚུལ་བསྐྱབས། བཟ་ཤིས་  
 འབྲིལ་དུ་འཛིན་གྱི་སྐྱོར་དཔོན་དང་ཚོགས་ཚེན་ཞལ་ངོ་དང་རྒྱུད་པའི་སྐྱེས་དབུ་མའོད་བཞུགས།  
 མཚན་མོར་ཙོག་པུའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་ཁོན་དང་ཕྱི་དྲོའི་ཁ་ཟས་སྤངས་ཏེ་མདོ་སྐྱེས་མཁུལ་རྒྱ་ཆེ་ཞིང་ཞི་དུལ་  
 ཀྱུན་སྲོད་ཀྱིས་ཕུག་པས་བགྲམ་གཞོན་ཀྱུན་གྱིས་བརྗེ་འཇོག་ཆེ་ལ། སྐྱེས་མཁོན་གཉིས་པ་འཛིན་གས་  
 མེད་དབང་བའི་ཡོངས་འཛིན་དང་བཟ་ཤིས་འབྲིལ་བའི་ཚོགས་ཚེན་སྤྱི་བར་མངའ་གསོལ། དེ་དག་  
 ལས་འཇམ་དབྱུངས་བཞུད་ཀྱི་དང་བསེ་སྤྱི་རྒྱ། སྤྱི་རྒྱ། འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་ཞེས་སོགས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེས་གྲགས་  
 ཐོབ་པ་སྟེ། འགྲུང་རོ་ཨ་ལགས་ལ་འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་ཞེས་པའི་མིང་འདི་ནས་ཐོགས་ཤིང་། སྐྱེས་དཔོན་པའི་  
 འཆད་ཉན་དང་འཇུགས་བསྐྱེད་སོགས་ཀྱི་ཐད་ལ་མའོད་རྗེས་མི་དམན་པ་བཞུགས། གཞན་ཁ་གྲུ་ལྷན་  
 རྒྱུ་དཔོན་གྱི་བཅའ་ཡིག་ཀྱང་རྗེ་འདི་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གཏམ་ཁེལ་བྱས། མཐར་དགྲུང་ལོ་རིམ་དུ་ལོ་རྒྱུད་  
 བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྒྱ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༩ལོ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ལོ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤྱི་ལོ་དང་བཞུངས་པ་སྐྱེས་དཔོན་པའི་ཚོགས་  
 ཚེན་འདྲུ་ཁང་ཚེན་མོར་བཞུགས་སོ།།<sup>5</sup>

འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་སྤྱི་བཅའ་གསུམ་པ་འཛིན་མེད་འཕྲིན་ལས་ནི་རབ་ཏུ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྒྱ་སྤྱི་ལོ་  
 ༡༩༧༩ལོར་མའོད་དགོན་ནས་སྐྱེས་འབྱུངས་ཤིང་། གདན་སར་བཞོད་དེ་མི་རིང་བར་དགྲུང་ལོ་བཅུ་པ་  
 ལུགས་ཡོས་ཏེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༩ལོར་གཞུགས་སོ།།<sup>6</sup>

འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་སྤྱི་བཅའ་གསུམ་པའི་ཚོགས་ཚེན་མེད་འབྲུན་པའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ཞེས་པ་ཐང་དཀར་ནང་གི་སྤྱི་ལོ་  
 ལུང་དུ་བོད་རབ་ཏུ་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྒྱ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ཏེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༧༩ལོར་སྐྱེས་འབྱུངས། མི་རིང་བར་གདན་སར་

<sup>5</sup> དབལ་མང་པའི་སྤྱི་ལོ་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤྱི་ལོ་གྲུ་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་གྱི་གདན་སར་སྤྱི་ལོ་ལོ་ལྔ་པ་ ༢༡་ལོར་  
 གསལ།

<sup>6</sup> སྤྱི་བཅའ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤྱི་ལོ་ལོ་ལྔ་པ་ལྷན་སྐྱེས་ལྷན་གྱི་གདན་སར་བཞོད་མེད།

བཀོད་དེ་ཚོས་སྲིད་ཀྱི་བྱ་བ་ཡུན་རིང་མཛད་ཅིང་སྐྱབས་དཔོན་པའི་ཁྲི་རབས་༢༦པར་བཞུགས། མཐར་  
དགུང་ལོ་དོན་བརྒྱུད་པ་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་བཞི་བའི་ལྷ་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟེ་སྟེ་ལོ་༡༤༡༠ལོར་སྐྱ་གཤེགས།<sup>7</sup>

འགྲུང་ཚན་སྐྱབས་ལྷ་པ་འཇམ་དབྱངས་བསྟན་འཛིན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལ་པར་རྒྱ་རྩེ་ཞེས་པ་བོད་རབ་བྱུང་  
བཅུ་བཞི་བའི་ལྷ་གསུམ་གྱི་སྟེ་སྟེ་ལོ་༡༤༡༠ལོར་མཚོ་སྟོན་སོག་པོ་རྒྱལ་པོ་མང་ཚང་ལ་སྐྱ་འཁྲུངས་ཤིང་  
གདན་སར་བཀོད། ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་དང་ཁ་གྲུ་སྟེ་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཞེས་པ་ལས་ཇི་འདི་ཉིད་སྐྱ་  
ནར་སོན་ཇིས་ཀུན་མཁུན་བཞི་པ་ཐར་འདོད་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་དྲུང་ནས་རབ་བྱུང་ཞིང་མཚན་འཇིགས་མེད་རྒྱ་  
མཚོར་གསོལ་<sup>8</sup>ཡང་བཞེད། སྐྱབས་བཀུ་ཤིས་འཁྲིལ་གྱི་ཚོས་ལྷ་གསུམ་ནས་པར་ཕྱིན་གྱི་དམ་བཅའ་  
བཞག་ནས་མཁུ་གྲུབ་གྱི་མཚན་སྟན་ཐོབ་པ་དང་། དགུང་ལོ་ཉི་ཤུ་ལྷ་གསུམ་གྱི་དུས་སུ་ཀུན་མཁུན་  
ཉིད་གྱི་ཞལ་གདམས་བཞིན་སྐྱ་སར་པར་བྱ་བཅུག་པའི་མཚན་ལ་པར་རྒྱ་རྩེ་ཞེས་གནང་། ཇི་འདི་བས་  
བཀུ་ཤིས་འཁྲིལ་གྱི་ནད་ཡམས་སྐྱར་དུ་བསལ་བ་དང་རང་དཔོན་དུ་ལྷ་འཆམ་བཅུགས། རབ་བོད་བར་  
གྱི་འཁོར་འགས་ཞི་བར་བསྐྱུམས། སྐྱ་ཚོ་སྐྱད་དུ་འགྲུང་རོ་ཆ་སྐྱམ་དཔོན་པོ་དང་སྐྱ་ཞབས་དཔོན་པོ་ཀོང་  
པོའི་བན་དེ་ཕྱོགས་གཉིས་མ་འཆམས་པས་གཡུལ་ལས་དྲག་པོ་ལོ་གཉིས་རིང་བྱུང་། ཀུན་གྲོ་བཟང་  
འཕྲིན་ལས་དང་ཡ་ཙཱི་ཐེ་ཡེ་བཅས་པས་གྲོད་ཁ་བསྐྱུམས་མཐར་ཤོག་པ་བཞི་པོར་ནང་ཁུལ་དཔོན་པ་  
འདིའི་ཁར་རྟོད་དུ་གསར་བ་ཞིག་འདེབས་རྒྱ་བྱས་པ་ལ། སྟེ་ལོ་༡༤༢༢ལོར་གསེར་ཁ་སྐོ་བཟང་དོན་

7 ཇི་འདི་ཉིད་གྱི་འཁྲུངས་འདས་ལོའི་སྐོར་ལ་ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་དང་ཁ་གྲུ་སྟེ་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཞེས་པ་ལས། འགྲུང་  
ཚན་སྐྱབས་ལྷ་གསུམ་པ་འཇིགས་མེད་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ནི་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་ཤིང་འབྲུག་(སྟེ་ལོ་༡༧༤༠)  
ལོར་འཁྲུངས་པ་དང་། དགུང་ལོ་རི་གཅིག་པ་མེ་རྩ་(སྟེ་ལོ་༡༤༠༦)ལོར་སྐྱ་གཤེགས་ཞེས་པ་ནོར་ཉེ། དགུང་ལོ་རི་  
གཅིག་རྗེས་སྐྱ་གཤེགས་པ་ཡིན་ན་ཕྱིར་འབྲུག་ལོ་ཞིག་ཡིན་པ་ལས་མེ་རྩ་ཡིན་མི་སྲིད། དུང་དཀར་ཚོག་མཛོད་སོགས་  
ལས་སྟེ་ལོ་༡༧༧༢ནས་སྟེ་ལོ་༡༤༡༠ཞེས་པ་ལེགས་སོ།

8 སྐོ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོས་བརྗམས་པའི་ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དཔོན་དང་ཁ་གྲུ་སྟེ་ལོ་རྒྱུས། ཤ ༢༣པ་ནང་གསལ།

བྱུང་པས་ཁ་བྱ་སྡོད་དགོ་སྟེ་བསྟན་འཕེལ་གྱིང་ངམ་ཁ་བྱའི་སྐར་གསར་ཞེས་པ་དེ་བཏབ་པའི་ཚུལ་  
 ལྟར། མཐར་དགྲང་ལོ་བརྒྱད་ཅུ་བ་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་དྲུག་པའི་ས་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༢༩ལོར་སྐྱབས་ལོགས།<sup>9</sup>  
 འགྲང་ཚན་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་པ་འཇམ་དགྲངས་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ཞེས་པ་བོད་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་དྲུག་  
 པའི་སྐབས་ཏེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༣༠ལོར་མཛོད་དགོ་ཏེ་སྡོད་མའི་དོ་མ་ཆེ་ཚང་གི་ཡབ་བསྐལ་བཟང་སྐབས་  
 དང་ཡུམ་གྱུ་ཏེ་འཛོལ་སྐུ་ལྷ་ལྷུ་འཇུངས། སྐྱེ་མིང་དུ་མི་འགྲུར་སོང་འོད། དགྲང་ལོ་བརྒྱད་སྟོང་  
 གདན་སར་བཀོད་རྗེས་བཀྲ་ཤིས་འཁྲིལ་བའི་ཚོས་གྲུ་ལྷགས་ཤིང་ལྷ་མོའི་རྒྱལ་ཁྲིམས་ལས་བསྟེན་  
 རྗེས་ཀྱི་སྡོམ་པ་མཚོས་ཤིང་པའི་ཚེ་ལོངས་འཛིན་བསང་ལོག་འཇིགས་མེད་དང་ས་དམར་དཔལ་  
 བཟང་ཡོངས་འཛིན་དུ་བསྟེན། དགྲང་ལོ་ཉེར་དྲུག་པ་ཤིང་ལུག་སྟེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༣༣ལོར་ཡར་ལྷན་གྱི་དམ་  
 བཅའ་བཞག དགྲང་ལོ་ཉེར་དྲུག་པ་ས་ཁྲི་སྟེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༣༤ལོར་དུས་ཟིང་གི་དབང་གིས་ལོ་ངོ་བཞིའི་  
 རིང་ལ་བཅོན་དུ་བཞགས་དགོས་བྱུང་། དེའི་རྗེས་ནས་ཡང་ལོ་བཅུའི་གོད་ཆག་གི་དབང་གིས་ངལ་རྩོལ་  
 གྱི་ལས་ལ་ཞུགས། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༣༤ལོར་སྲིད་ཅུས་ཇི་བཟང་དུ་སོང་བ་ནས་རྗེ་ཉིད་སྐར་དགོན་པའི་ཚོས་  
 སྲིད་ཀྱི་འགན་བཞེས་ཏེ། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༤༣ལོར་པའི་ཚེ་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་ལ་ཁྲིམས་ལྷན་གྱི་ལྷན་པོ་ལ་  
 སོགས་སྐབས་ཆེན་གྱི་བྱ་གཞག་མི་ཉུང་བ་མཛད། མཐར་དགྲང་ལོ་བཅུ་དྲུག་པ་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་དྲུག་པའི་  
 ཤིང་སྤང་ལོ་སྟེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༤༣ལོར་སོང་འགྲིང་སྐབས་ཀྱིས་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་ལ་སྐྱབས་ལྷན་གྱི་ལྷན་པོ་ལ་  
 ཁང་དུ་བཞགས་སོ།།

<sup>9</sup> རྗེ་འདིའི་རྣམ་ཐར་སྐོར་ལ་ཁ་བྱའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དགོན་དང་ཁ་བྱ་སྡོལ་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཞེས་པ་ལས། འགྲང་ཚན་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་པ་  
 འཇིགས་མེད་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ལ་པར་དུ་རྗེ་མཚོག་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་བཞི་བའི་མི་ལུག་སྟེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༢༧ལོར་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་པ་  
 མཐར་དགྲང་ལོ་བྱ་གཉིས་པ་མེ་ལོས་ཏེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༢༧ལོར་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་ཞེས་པ་ནོར་ཏེ། དགྲང་ལོ་བྱ་གཉིས་སྟོང་སྐྱབས་  
 ལོགས་པ་ཡིན་ན་ལ་འགྲུག་ཡིན་པ་ལས་མེ་ལོས་མིན་པ་དང་། རྗེ་འདི་ཉིད་སྐྱབས་ལོགས་ལ་བཏོད་གི་མཚན་ལ་མང་ཆེ་  
 ལོས་འཇམ་དགྲངས་བསྟན་འཛིན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཟེར་བ་ལས་འཇིགས་མེད་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཟེར་བ་དགོན།



ས་ལུང་བསྟན་”<sup>10</sup>ལྟར། མདུན་དུ་བརྗེད་ཉམས་གྱིས་ཁེངས་པའི་ཨ་མེས་རྗེ་དང་། རྒྱལ་ཏུ་ཨ་མེས་  
 དུང་ཡག་དང་། གཤམས་སྤོགས་སུ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ལུང་པ་སྟེ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ནི་དར་གྱིས་མཚོན་པས་ན་རྗེ་དར་  
 དུང་གསུམ་འཛོམས་ཏེ་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་འབྲིག་ཡོད་པ་རེད། གཞན་ཡང་། རྒྱལ་རིལ་བདེ་གསང་འཛིགས་  
 གསུམ་གྱི་སྒྲིབ་རི་དང་དེའི་མདུན་སྤོགས་སུ་ཞོར་སྤངས། དེའི་ཕུན་ཕུན་ལག་བརྒྱད་ལྡན་གྱི་རྒྱ་བོ་ཞིག་  
 བརྒྱུ་བཞིན་པ་ནི་ཁ་བྱའི་གཡོན་རྒྱ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་དེ་ཡིན། མདོར་ན་ས་བརྒྱད་གྱི་གཡང་མ་ཡལ་བ་དང་  
 རྒྱ་བོའི་མདངས་མ་ཤོར་བའི་བཀྲ་ཤིས་རྟགས་མཚན་དུ་མས་མདོན་ཡོད་དེ། “རྒྱལ་རིའི་གཤམས་བདེ་  
 མཚོག་ཡབ་ཡུམ། རྒྱལ་རིའི་གཡོན་གསང་འབྲས་ཡབ་ཡུམ་བཅས་གྱི་གནས་རི་དང་དགོ་བའི་བཤེས་  
 གཉེན་གྱི་སྒྲིབ་རི་ཡིད་བཞིན་ཞོར་བུ་ཆ་དགའི་རྒྱལ་དང་། མདུན་རི་འཛིགས་བྱེད་ཡབ་ཡུམ་ནི་གཙུག་  
 ལག་ཚོས་གྱི་ཤོ་ཏེ་བརྗེད་པས་འདྲ་དགོས་འདོད་ཞོར་བུ་ཆ་གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་དང་། བྲམ་པ་ཚལ་གྱི་འདབ་  
 ལྡན་སྟོན་ཤིང་འཛིགས་པ་མདོངས་ལྡན་མ་བྱའི་གདན་དང་། ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་ལྡན་གྱི་རྒྱ་བོ་ལྟུ་  
 སྤོགས་སུ་དལ་གྱིས་འབབ་ཅིང་གཤམས་སུ་འབྲེལ་བ་གཡུ་འབྲུག་སྟོན་མའི་གདན་དང་། མི་འཛིག་རྗེ་  
 ཁམས་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་གཤམས་འོག་གི་བྲག་ཐེམ་མ་ཉ་རུས་སྤལ་སེལ་ཤིང་གདན་བཅས་གདན་ཁྲི་གསུམ་  
 འཛོམས་དང་། བཅོན་པའི་མཁར་ཁ་ཞེས་པའི་བྲག་རི་སྤེལ་གསུམ་ལྡན་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བྲུ་དམར་པོ་དང་། སེང་  
 བོ་གནམ་མཚོང་གི་བྲག་རི་གཉེན་ལ་མཐོ་བ་ཤར་གྱི་སྤྲུག་སྐྱུ་བོ་དང་། ས་དཀར་ཕུང་བོས་བྱུང་བའི་  
 ལུག་མགོའི་མཇུལ་སྤང་། བྲུང་གི་རུས་སྤལ་སེལ་པོ། བྲུ་མ་ཕུག་གི་གསོམ་དཀར་རྒྱུང་འབྲུང་གི་ཚོགས་  
 འཛིགས་པའི་ནགས་ཚལ་སྤྲུག་པོ་ཡོད་པ་སྟེ་གཡུ་འབྲུག་སྟོན་མའི་སོགས་མདོར་ན་ས་པརྒྱ་འདབ་  
 བརྒྱད། གནས་འཁོར་ལོ་རྒྱུ་བསྟན། ལོགས་བཀྲ་ཤིས་རྟགས་བརྒྱད་བཅས་ས་ཡི་དགོ་བའི་བརྒྱ<sup>11</sup>

10 བྲག་དགོན་པ་དགོན་མཚོག་བསྟན་པ་རབ་རྒྱས་གྱིས་བརྗེད་པའི་མདོ་སྤྲོད་ཚོས་འབྲུང་། འཕྲ་ཡུལ་གསལ།  
 11 ཁང་ས་ཐབས་ས་ཡི་དགོ། ཁང་ཤིང་བྲུང་ཤིང་ཤིང་གི་དགོ། ཕྱི་གཏོ་ཐབས་རྗེ་ཡི་དགོ། གས་འབྲོག་རྒྱུང་འབྲོག་རྒྱ་  
 ཡི་དགོ། འབྲུང་རྒྱ་ཕུར་རྒྱ་ཡི་དགོ།

རྩོགས་པ་སོགས་ཀྱི་ལོ་ས་བརྗོད་དབྱེད་ཀྱི་ང་རོས་ས་ཆེན་ཁྲུབ་པར་མཛད་པ་སྐྱེས་དགུའི་ན་བ་བདུད་  
རྩིའི་བང་མཛོད་དུ་གྲུར་པར་མཛད་དོ་ཞེས་པ་ལོ།།<sup>12</sup>

དེ་ཡང་དགོན་པ་སྤྱིའི་ཆགས་ཚུལ་གྱི་ཐད་ནས་གྲུང་ན། དགོན་པའི་མདུན་ཕྱོགས་མ་ཆི་འཁོར་ལོས་  
ལེགས་པར་བརྒྱན་ཅིང་གཡས་གཡོན་དུ་དབྱེན་ལྷུ་མཛོད་རྟེན་དང་བདུད་འདུལ་མཛོད་རྟེན་གྱིས་  
བརྒྱན་པ་དང་། བདུད་འདུལ་མཛོད་རྟེན་གྱི་གཞོགས་སུ་ད་དུང་སེང་གོ་སྤྱིའི་འཁོར་ལོ་བདུད་རྩི་རང་  
འབབ་བཞུགས་པའི་མ་ཆི་ཁང་ལེགས་པར་བཞེངས་ཡོད་པ་རེད། དགོན་པའི་ནང་དུ་སྤྱིབས་མ་ཐག་  
ཐོག་མར་མིག་ལམ་དུ་མངོན་པ་ནི་བ་གམ་མངོན་པར་མཐོ་བའི་རྟ་མགིན་ལྷ་ཁང་ཡིན། ལྷ་ཁང་འདིའི་  
རྒྱབ་ཕྱོགས་ས་འཛིན་བརྟན་ཅིང་མདུན་ཕྱོགས་སུ་ཕྱིན་ན་རི་དུགས་ཆོས་འཁོར་གྱིས་མཛོས་པར་བརྒྱན་  
པའི་ཚོགས་ཆེན་འདུ་ཁང་ཡོད་ཅིང་། དེའི་གཡས་གཡོན་དུ་གསེར་གྱི་རྒྱ་ཕིབས་གྱིས་སྤྱིབས་པའི་ཆོས་  
ར་དང་རུང་ཁང་སྟེང་ཁང་ཡོད། གཞན་ད་དུང་འདུ་ཁང་གི་གཡོན་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་རི་འདབས་སུ་ཨ་ལགས་  
འགྲུང་གན་གྱི་ནང་ཆེན་དང་ཉེ་སར་གོས་སྐྱ་བཤམས་སའི་གནས་སོགས་ཡོད།

ཁ། འདུ་ཁང་།

ཀ་རིང་བརྒྱད་དང་ཀ་ཐུང་བཞི་བཅུ་ཅན་གྱི་འདུ་ཁང་ཆེན་མོའི་ནང་རྟེན་ནི། འདུ་ཁང་ནང་གི་དབུས་  
སུ་རྒྱན་དུག་མཚོག་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཕྱེབས་རིས་དང་། དེའི་མདུན་དུ་བཞུགས་ཁྲི། བཞུགས་ཁྲིའི་གཡས་སུ་  
ལྷ་ཀ་ཐུབ་གྱི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ་དང་འཇམ་དབྱེད་ཀྱི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ་ཁྲི་རྒྱབ་ཡོལ་དང་བཅས་པ། གཙང་སྒོ་གཡས་ཀྱི་  
ཀུན་དགའ་ར་བར་བསྟན་འགྲུར་དང་སྐྱེས་ཆེན་མང་པོའི་གསུང་འབུམ། སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ་བདེ་གཤེགས་བརྒྱད་  
གྱི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ། གཡོན་དུ་ཇོ་བའི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ་དང་རྗེ་ཙོང་ཁ་པའི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ། གཙང་སྒོ་གཡོན་གྱི་ཀུན་དགའ་  
ར་བར་རྒྱལ་དབང་སྐྱེད་བཅུ་གསུམ་པ་ཐུབ་བསྟན་རྒྱ་མཚོས་དཔར་འདེབས་མཛད་པའི་བཀའ་འགྲུར།  
ཀུན་རིག་གི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ། འགྲུམ་གཡས་ནས་རིམ་བཞིན་ཕྱག་རྩོར་འཁོར་ཆེན་གྱི་སྐྱོན་སྐྱུ། སྐྱེབས་འགྲོའི་

<sup>12</sup> ལྷོ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོས་བརྩམས་པའི་ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐྱར་རྩིང་དགོན་དང་ཁ་གྲུ་སྤྱིའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས། ༡༩༠ནས་༡༩༡ན་གསལ།

ཚོགས་ཞིང་། བདེ་མཚོགས་གཏེན་གསལ་དཀར་། ལྷག་རྩོད་འཁོར་ཆེན་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས། འདྲུ་ཁང་ནང་གི་  
ལོགས་གཉིས་གྱི་བརྗིད་ལྷེ་བས་སུ་རིམ་པ་བཞེན་སེང་གཏོང་མ་དང་། ཀུན་རིག་ འཛིགས་བྱེད་ལྷ་  
བཅུ་གསུམ་མ། གསང་འདུས། ལྷ་མཚོད་ཚོགས་ཞིང་གི་གྲུན་ཐང་། ཇོ་མ་བླ་ལའི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱུ། འཛིགས་  
བྱེད་ལྷ་བཅུ་གསུམ་མའི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱུ། ལོ་རྒྱུ་བཅས་ཡོད། ལྷོ་ཆེན་ནང་ལོགས་ཞལ་ཡར་འཁོར་གྱི་གཡམས་སུ་  
རྟེན་གཙོ་སྤྲེ་ལྷ་མོ་བསའི་ལོ་ཞལ། ཚོས་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་ཡོད་ལ་དེའི་མཛུན་དུ་དག་བསྐྱོས་གྱི་མི་  
བཞུགས། གཡོན་དུ་རིམ་བཞེན་མགོན་པོ་ལྷག་དུག་པ། རྣམ་སྲས། རྟ་མ་གྱིན་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་སོགས་  
བཞུགས།

གཙང་ཁང་གཡམས་པའི་ནང་གཙོ་སྤྲེ་རྒྱ་རྒྱལ་བ་བྱམས་པ་དགུང་ལོ་བརྒྱད་གྱི་ཚད་ཅན། མཐོ་ཚད་ལ་  
གཞུ་འདོམ་བཞེ་ཡོད་པ་ཁྲི་རྒྱབ་ཡོལ་དང་བཅས་པ། དེའི་གཡམས་གཡོན་དུ་ཉེ་བའི་སྲས་ཆེན་བརྒྱད་  
དང་། མིའི་རྗེ་གཏོས་སུ་བྱམས་པ་སྟོང་སྟེ་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་དང་། བྱམས་སྐྱེད་མཛུན་གྱི་བརྗིད་ལྷེ་བས་  
སུ་བྱམས་པའི་ཞིང་བཞོད་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་གཉིས། ལྷོ་ལྷོ་དུ་སྐྱོལ་ལྷུང་དང་རྣམ་སྲས་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་  
བཞུགས། བྱམས་ཁང་གི་གཡོན་དུ། མགོན་ཚོས་གྱི་ཞལ་ཐང་གི་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་བས་ཅན་བཞུགས་པའི་མགོན་  
ཁང་དང་། དེའི་དམུས་སུ་འཛིགས་བྱེད་གྱི་ཐང་ཀ་གཅིག་དང་མགོན་ཆེན་ལྷ་ཡི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་སོགས་  
བཞུགས། དེ་ནས་གཙང་ཁང་གཡམས་པ་སྤེ་སྐྱུ་གཏུང་ཁང་དུ་ཨ་ལགས་འགྲུང་ཆེན་སྐྱེད་དུག་པའི་  
སྐྱུ་གཏུང་མཚོད་རྟེན་དང་དེའི་རྒྱབ་སྟོགས་སུ་འགྲུང་ཆེན་ཚང་གི་འཁྲུངས་རབས་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་དང་།  
མཚོད་ཁྲིར་དུང་འགྲུང་ཆེན་སྐྱེད་དུག་པའི་ལྷག་མེད་གིས་བྱམས་ལུལ་གསལ་བའི་རོ་ལེ་བཅིག་  
བཞུགས་ཡོད། སྐྱུ་གཏུང་མཚོད་རྟེན་གྱི་གཡམས་སུ་མི་འཁྲུགས་པའི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱུ་ཉིས་ཐོག་ཅན་དང་འོད་  
དཔག་མེད་གྱི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱུ། གཙང་ཁང་གཡམས་སྟོགས་སུ་སྐྱོལ་མའི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱུ་དང་ཀུན་དགའ་རབས་སྐྱོལ་  
མའི་སྟོང་སྐྱུ་བཅས་བཞུགས་ཡོད། སྐྱུ་གཏུང་མཚོད་རྟེན་མཛུན་གྱི་བརྗིད་ལྷེ་བས་སུ་སྐྱོལ་མ་འཛིགས་  
པ་བརྒྱད་སྐྱོབ་མ་དང་འོད་དཔག་མེད་གྱི་ཞིང་བཞོད་གྱི་ལྷེ་བས་རིས་སོགས་བཞུགས་སོ།།

ག༽ ལྷ་མ་འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་གྱི་ནང་ཆེན།

ལྷ་མ་འགྲུང་རྒྱུ་གྱི་ནང་ཆེན་ལ་ཁང་མིག་བདུན་ཡོད་པ་དང་བདེ་ཡངས་ཁང་མིག་གསུམ་ཡོད།  
དེའི་ནང་དུ་ཆོ་ལྷ་རྣམས་གསུམ་གྱི་སྐྱེན་སྐྱེ་དང་བཀའ་བརྟན་སོགས་གསུང་འབྲུམ་མང་པོ་ཡོད། གཡམས་  
གཡོན་དུ་མགོན་ཁང་དང་མགོན་ཁང་ཁང་མིག་གཉིས་རེ། བཞུགས་གཟིམ་ཁང་གཡམས་གཡོན་གྱི་ཁ་  
གཏད་དུ་ཁང་མིག་གསུམ་རེ་བཅས་ཡོད། གཤམ་གྱི་གཡོན་དུ་དགོན་པའི་དོ་དམ་ཚོགས་པའི་ཁང་  
བའང་མིག་གསུམ་ཅན་དང་། གཡམས་སུ་དགོན་པའི་སློབ་ཁང་ཁང་མིག་གཉིས་ཅན་བཞུགས།

ང༽ ཏྲ་མ་གྲིན་ལྷ་ཁང་།

ལྷ་ཁང་འདི་གསར་དུ་སྐྱེན་བཞེན་པའི་སྐྱེད་ཡིན་ལ། རང་རྟེན་གཙོ་བོར་ཐོག་བཅུགས་གཉིས་ཅན་  
གྱི་བྱུང་བ་དང་། ཏྲ་མ་གྲིན། ཡུལ་རྫོང་། འོད་དཔག་མེད་སོགས་དང་། རང་རྟེན་སོ་སོའི་སློབ་སྐྱེ་  
བཞུགས་ཡོད།

ཅ༽ སེང་གོ་སྐྱེའི་འཁོར་ལོ་བདུད་རྩི་རང་འབབ།

འཁོར་ལོ་འདི་ནི་ས་ཆ་མང་པོའི་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡིད་གྱི་དང་བ་འབྲེན་པར་བྱེད་པ་བཞུགས་དང་མི་  
མཚུངས་པ་ཞིག་སྟེ། པཎ་ཆེན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སོགས་སྐྱེ་བུ་ལ་གྲགས་ཅན་མང་པོས་རབ་གནས་མཛད་སྲོད་  
ལ། དེ་བསྐོར་ན་སྐྱེ་བུ་ལགས་གྱི་ནད་སོགས་ལས་ཡོངས་སུ་ཐར་པར་ངེས་པ་རོ་མཚར་ཆེ་བས། ཡུལ་གྲུ་  
མང་པོའི་དད་ལྡན་པ་དག་གི་མཇལ་བའི་གནས་སུ་གྱུར་ཡོད།

བཞི་པ། དགོན་པའི་སྐྱིག་གཞི་དང་བདག་གཉེར་ལམ་ལུགས།

ག༽ སྐྱིག་གཞི།

ཁ་གྲུའི་སྐར་རྩིད་དགོན་གྱི་སྐྱིད་སྐྱིག་གཞི་ལ་དེ་སྟོན་སྲིད་འཛིན་གྱི་རྩ་འཛུགས་དང་ཚོས་ལུགས་གྱི་  
རྩ་འཛུགས་གཉིས་སུ་དབྱེ་ཚོགས་མོད། ད་ཆ་སྲིད་འཛིན་གྱི་རྩ་འཛུགས་དེ་ཕལ་ཆེར་མེད་པར་གྱུར་ཏེ་  
དགོན་པར་དམངས་གཙོ་བདག་གཉེར་ལུ་ཡོན་ལྷན་ཁང་བཅུགས་པ་དང་། དེའི་ལས་སྐྱེར་གྲུའུ་རིན་  
(主任)དང་། གྲུའུ་རིན་གཞོན་པ་(副主任)གཉིས་། ལུ་ཡོན་(委员)གཉིས་བཅས་མི་ལྔ་ཡོད།

ཀུན་རིན་གྱིས་སྲོག་ལོངས་ཀྱི་ལས་འགན་དང་། ཆབ་སྲིད་སྲོལ་སྲོན་པ་བཅས་ཀྱི་འགན་འཁུར་གྱིན་པོ་ཡོད། ཀུན་རིན་གཞོན་པ་གཅིག་གིས་ཚོས་སྲོག་ལོངས་ནས་དབྱ་མཛད་བྱེད་པ་དང་དགོན་པའི་ཚོགས་ལུགས་ལེན། དགོན་པའི་རིག་དངོས་རྟེན་དང་བརྟེན་པ་ལ་དོ་དམ་བྱེད་པ། བཞུགས་གཅིག་གིས་དགོན་པའི་འཕྲུགས་སྐྱེད་དང་བདེ་འཇགས། སྤྱི་འབྲེལ་སོགས་ཀྱི་ལས་དོན་འགན་འཁུར། ལྷུ་ཡོན་གཅིག་གིས་དགོན་པ་སྤྱིའི་རིག་གནས་ལས་དོན་ཏེ། ལྷ་བྱང་བཟུ་གིས་འབྲེལ་སོགས་དགོན་ཆེན་དག་ནས་རང་དགོན་དུ་བཞུགས་ཆེན་བཀའ་པོད་ལྗེའི་འཆད་ཉན་གྱི་དགོ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་གདན་ཞུ་དང་། ལྷུ་ཡོན་དུ་འདས་པའི་ལོ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྲོལ་སྲོན་གྱི་ཞེས་བཅས་ལོད་པ་དེའི་བྱ་བཞག་དག་བདག་གཉེར་བྱ་རྒྱ་སོགས་ཡིན། ལྷུ་ཡོན་གཞན་དཔེ་ཆ་སྲོལ་སྲོན་ཀྱི་འགན་འཁུར་པ་དང་། ལྷུ་ཡོན་གཞན་གཅིག་གིས་དགོན་པའི་དབྱེད་ལ་གཉེར་གྱི་འགན་འཁུར་བཞིན་ཡོད། དམངས་བདག་གི་སྤྱི་གཞི་དང་གྲུ་ཚང་གི་སྤྱི་གཞི་གཞི་གཉིས་དེ་བོ་གཅིག་དུ་འདྲེས་ནས་ཡོད་ཅིང་མི་གཅིག་གིས་ཚོ་ལོ་དང་ལས་འགན་མི་འདྲ་བ་མང་པོ་ཞིག་འཁུར་དགོས་ཀྱི་ཡོད། དགོན་པའི་གྲུ་ཚང་ངམ་ཚོགས་ཆེན་གྱི་རྩ་འཕྲུགས་ཏེ། དགོན་བདག་ལྷ་མའམ་ལྷ་མ་ཁྲི་པ་དང་། དགོན་སྐོས། དབྱ་མཛད། དཀོར་གཉེར་བཅས་ཀྱིས་སོ་སོའི་ལས་དོན་འཁྲུངས་པར་བྱས་ཡོད་པས་ད་ལྟོ་སྤྱི་བཞིན་གནས་ཤིང་དགོན་པའི་ཚོས་ལུགས་ཀྱི་བྱ་བ་དུར་ཐག་ངང་སྐྱབ་བཞིན་ཡོད་དོ།།

### ཁ། བདག་གཉེར།

པོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་པའི་བདག་གཉེར་ལམ་ལུགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ཚང་གཞི་ནི་བཅའ་ཡིག་<sup>13</sup>དང་སྤྱི་གཞི་ཡིག་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཡིན་པ་དང་། དགོན་པ་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་གང་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཡིན་གྱིང་ཚང་མར་བཅའ་ཡིག་དེ་ཡོད། ཁ་གཏེན་

13 “བཅའ་ཡིག་ཅེས་པ་ནི་དགོན་པའི་ནང་གི་མཁས་གྲུབ་གཉིས་འཛོམས་ཀྱི་དགོ་བཤེས་དམ་པའམ་རྒྱལ་བ་པའི་ཆེན་ལྷ་བྱའི་སྐྱེས་ཆེ་གོ་སོ་ཞིག་གིས་འདུལ་བའི་གཞུང་ལྷན་དགོ་འདུན་གྱི་སྤེའི་ཀྱན་སྲོད་དང་སྲོལ་གཉེར་བྱེད་སྐབས་སོགས་ཀྱི་ཐད་ཞུས་བཅས་པའི་ཡི་གེ་ལ་བྱ་ཞིང་། དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་དགོ་འདུན་པའི་ཉེས་སྲོད་ཐེར་འདོན་དང་དགོན་པའི་





བཅུ་བཞི་ཉིན་མགོན་ཆེན་ལྷའི་གཏོར་ཚོག་གསུངས་པ་དང་འཆམ་ཆེན།      ཆོས་བཅུ་གསུམ་ཉིན་འོད་  
 དཔག་མེད་ཀྱི་གོས་སྐྱ་ཆེན་པོ་བཤམས་པ།      ཆོས་བཅོ་ལྷའི་ཉིན་བྱམས་སྐོར་དང་ཕྱོགས་བཞི་ནས་  
 ལྷུས་གསོལ་དང་བཅས་སོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་གཉིས་པའི་ཆོས་བཅུ་གཅིག་ནས་བཅུ་བདུན་བར་དུ་བཀའ་འབྲུང་  
 གསུངས་པ་དང་བཅོ་བརྒྱད་ཉིན་ལ་ལྷུང་བཤམས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་མཚོད་འཚོགས་པའོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་བཞི་པའི་  
 ཆོས་བཅོ་ལྷ་ནས་ལྷའི་ཆོས་བརྒྱད་ཉིན་བར་དུ་དབྱར་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་པ་ནི།      ཀྱུན་  
 རིག་གི་ཚོག་དང་།      གསང་འདུས་བདག་འཇུག་སྤྲོད་སྲིད་ཆོག་འཇིགས་བྱེད་ལྟ་བུ་གསུམ་མའི་ཚོག་  
 མགོན་ཆོས་ལྷའི་གཏོར་ཚོག་སྐོལ་མའི་མཇུག་བཞི་བ།      རྒྱན་དང་འཇུག་པ།      ཆོ་སྤྲོད་ནས་གསུམ་  
 ཀྱི་སྐོར་ནས་ཆོ་སྐྱབ་དང་ཆོས་སྐྱོད་སོགས་སོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་དུག་པའི་ཆོས་གསུམ་ནས་ཆོས་བཅུའི་བར་དུ་  
 མ་ཁེའི་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་པ་ལ་ཕུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་འཁོར་བ་དབྱིངས་སྐོལ་གྱི་ཚོག་གི་སྐོར་ནས་མ་ཁེ་  
 རིལ་སྐྱབ་བྱ་བའོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་བདུན་པའི་ཆོས་བརྒྱད་ཉིན་མི་ལ་རས་པའི་འཆམ་སྟེ་ཤ་འཆམ་ཡོད་དོ།།  
 རྒྱ་བ་བརྒྱད་པའི་ཆོས་བཅོ་ལྷ་ནས་ཉིན་བཅུ་བཞི་ལ་སྟོན་ཆོས་ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་པ་ནི་དབྱར་ཆོས་ལྟར་ཡིན།  
 རྒྱ་བ་དགུ་པའི་ཆོས་བཅོ་བརྒྱད་ནས་ཉིན་བདུན་གྱི་བར་དུ་དགུ་བའི་བདག་འཇུག་ཏེ་ས་དཀར་ཆོས་ཐོག་  
 ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་པ་ནི་གསང་འདུས་བདག་འཇུག་དང་།      སྤྱིན་སྟེག་ས་ཚོག་གྲུ་ཚོག་གོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་བཅུ་པའི་  
 ཆོས་ཉེར་ལྷ་ནས་ཉིན་ལྷའི་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་པ་ནི་ཀྱུན་རིག་གི་ཚོག་དང་  
 ཆོས་སྐྱོད་སོགས་སོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་བཅུ་གཅིག་པའི་ཆོས་བཅོ་ལྷ་ནས་ཉིན་བདུན་ལ་དགུན་ཆོས་ཡིན་ཏེ།      འདོན་  
 པ་ནི་དབྱར་ཆོས་ལྟར་འོ།།      རྒྱ་བ་བཅུ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་བཅོ་ལྷ་ལ་སྟོན་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཏོར་དང་།      ཉེར་ལྷ་ནས་  
 ཉིན་ལྷ་ལ་ལོ་རྒྱུད་སྐྱེ་རིམ་གྱི་ཆོས་ཐོག་ཡིན་ལ།      འདོན་པ་ནི་མགོན་ཆོས་ལྷའི་གཏོར་ཚོག་དང་སྟོན་ཆོས་ཐོག་  
 ཚོག་ཏོར་འོ།།      ཆོས་ཉེར་དགུའི་ཉིན་ལ་ཆོས་སྐྱོད་བཅུ་དང་བྱ་རིག་གི་འཆམ་ཡོད་པ་དང་བཅས་སོ།།

མཇུག་སྟོན།

མོད་མདོ་སྐྱོད་ས་ཡི་ལྟེ་བར་ཆགས་པའི་ཁ་བྱའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དགའ་ལྡན་བཤམ་སྐྱབ་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་སྤྱིང་  
 ལ་ཆ་མཚོན་ན།      གཅིག་ནས་སྤུ་མ་སྤུ་མའི་དགོན་ཕུག་དང་སྐོམ་གྲུ་མ་གྲུང་བའི་རྒྱང་གཞིའི་སྤོང་དུས་

རབས་བཅུ་གསུམ་པར་རྒྱས་པར་བཏབ་པ་ནས་བཟུང་། ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་འཕེལ་འགྲོས་དང་སྤྱི་ཚོགས་  
 ཀྱི་འགྲུང་བ་རབ་དང་རིམ་པ་ཞིག་བརྒྱུད་དེ་བོད་ཀྱི་ཚོས་ལུགས་གྲུབ་མཐའ་ཁག་མི་འདྲ་བའི་དུས་རབས་  
 དག་ཏུ་འང་མ་ཉམས་པར། བོད་གངས་ཚན་གྱི་དགོན་པའི་སྡེ་རུ་འབྲིང་ཅེས་བཞུགས་པས་ན། ལོ་རྒྱུས་  
 ཀྱི་རིམ་ཐང་ངེས་ཚན་ཞིག་ལྷན་པ་སྤྲོ་མི་དགོས་ཤིང་། གཉིས་སུ་དགོན་པ་དེ་གའི་ལྷ་སྡེ་ཁ་གཤམ་འཕྲོ་ལྷོ་སྐར་  
 བཞེལ་མཚོན་ནའང་། བོད་བཙན་པོའི་རྒྱལ་རབས་ཀྱི་དུས་ནས་མདོ་སྐད་དུ་དར་བའི་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་སྐར་རྒྱུད་  
 འཁྲུལ་མེད་དུ་ངེས་པ་དང་། ཀན་སུ་ཏུ་ས་ཁུལ་དུ་གནས་པའི་བོད་ཀྱི་དུས་རྒྱུད་ཆེས་སྤོ་ལོས་སུ་རྒྱུ་  
 ཚོགས་པས་ན། ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཞིབ་འཇུག་དང་རིག་གནས་རྟོག་དཔྱད་ཀྱི་རྒྱ་ཆ་གལ་ཆེན་དུ་གྱུར་ཡོད། དེ་མིན།  
 དགོན་པ་དེས་འདས་པའི་དུས་རབས་ནང་དུ་རྒྱ་སྤྲུལ་མི་ཉུང་བ་ཞིག་བོད་མཁས་མང་གི་གྲུལ་དཔུང་དུ་  
 རྒྱུད་པ་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་ལྷུག་པ་ལུང་རྟོགས་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་དང་ལྷན་པ་མང་པོ་བསྐྱེད་ཡོད་པ་དང་།  
 ད་ལྟ་དུང་ཡང་མདོ་སྐད་སྤྲུལ་རིག་པའི་གཞུང་ལུགས་སྤྱི་དང་། ལྷན་པར་དུ་བཅུ་ལྷག་རིག་པའི་ཡན་  
 ལག་གྲིབ་གཤམ་པ་སོ་སོ་ལའང་ཉ་མོ་རྒྱ་དང་རྟོད་པོ་མཁའ་ལ་ཇི་བཞིན་འཇུག་གིན་བདོག་པས་ན། འཛམ་  
 སྐྱིང་རིག་པའི་རྟོག་དུ་གྱུར་པ་ནང་པ་སངས་རྒྱས་པའི་ཚོས་འདི་ཉིད་གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་སྤེལ་ཅིང་། རྒྱུད་  
 འཛིན་དང་རྟོག་དཔྱད་བྱེད་པར་ལག་རྩེས་མི་དམན་པ་བཞག་ཡོད་ལ། མི་རིགས་རིག་གནས་རྒྱུད་འཛིན་  
 དང་སྤོལ་རྒྱུན་རིག་གནས་ལས་ཉམས་པ་སོར་རྒྱུད་དང་མ་ཉམས་པ་གོང་སྤེལ་ལའང་རིན་ཐང་ལེགས་  
 པོ་བསྐྱུན་ཡོད་ལ། བོད་ལུགས་གསོ་རིག་གི་སྤོལ་རྒྱུན་ཡང་མ་ཉམས་པར་བཟུང་ནས། ད་ལྟ་འདྲི་བོད་  
 ལུགས་གསོ་རིག་གི་ཞིབ་འཇུག་དག་པར་མཛོད་དེ་སྤྲུལ་ཁང་དང་སྤྲུལ་བཟོ་ཁང་བཅུ་གསུམ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཟད།  
 དེ་གར་གསར་དུ་བཟོས་པའི་བོད་ལུགས་སྤྲུལ་རིགས་སྤྲུལ་པོ་རྒྱལ་ནང་གི་ས་ཆ་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཙོངས་ཏེ་  
 སྤྲུལ་པ་ཆེར་རྒྱས་ཡོད་པ་ཤིང་། ཚོས་ལུགས་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཅན་དང་། དཔལ་འབྱོར་ཚོང་རུ་འཛུགས་རྒྱུ།  
 སྤྱི་ཚོགས་འཕེལ་འགྲུང་བཅས་ཀྱི་དབང་གིས་བོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་པ་སོ་སོའི་གྲུབ་འདེད་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་སྐར་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་འཕྲོ་ལྷོ་  
 རྒྱུད་དགོན་པའི་སྤོལ་གསོ་ཉམས་དམས་སུ་འགྲོ་བཞིན་པའི་དུས་རབས་འདིར། ཁ་གཤམ་སྐར་རྒྱུད་དུ་

དགོན་པའི་འདུལ་བྱིས་པ་དང་སློབ་གསོ་ལ་ལྷན་པོ་ཆེར་སློན་བཞིན་འདུག་ལ། དུས་རབས་གསར་ཆེད་  
 དང་ལྷན་པོ་གསར་ཆེད་གི་འགལ་འདྲའི་འོག་དེད་རབས་སློབ་གསོའི་ཐབས་ལམ་སྲུང་ཅིང་སློབ་ཆོག་ལ་  
 མཁོ་བའི་བོད་རྒྱ་དབྱེན་གསུམ་གྱི་ཡིག་རིགས་ཁྲིད་སའི་སློབ་གྲྭ་འཇུགས་རྒྱུའི་འཆར་འགོད་གནང་ཡོད་  
 པ་རེད། སློབ་བོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་པ་དག་གིས་རང་རེའི་སྲོལ་རྒྱུན་ཅི་ལྟ་ཅི་ལྟར་རྒྱུད་འཛིན་དར་སྲིལ་གནང་བ་  
 དེ་བཞིན་དུ། དགོན་པ་འདིས་ཀྱང་མི་ལོ་མང་པོའི་རིང་ལ་རིག་གནས་ཡན་ལག་བརྩའི་ཆུ་རྒྱུན་ནམ་ཡང་  
 མ་ཆད་པ་བྱས་བདོག་པ་དང་། ཉེ་བའི་རིང་ཡང་བོད་མི་རིགས་སྐད་ཡིག་ཉམས་དམས་ཀྱི་ཉེན་གནས་  
 ལ་དམིགས་ཏེ། བོད་ནང་གི་སློབ་གསུངས་ལ་ཉམས་མེད་ཀྱི་ལོ་བཟང་དང་རིན་ཐང་དེས་ཅན་གྱི་དུས་དེབ།  
 ལྷ་སྲོག་ཅེས་པ་ས་ཁུལ་མང་པོར་བཀམས་ཤིང་ལྷན་པོ་ལེགས་པོ་ཞིག་ཐོན་བཞིན་ཡོད་དེ། འདི་ནི་  
 དགོན་པ་གང་དེས་ས་དེ་གར་ཐོན་པའི་རིག་གནས་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཀྱི་གོ་བབ་དང་རིན་ཐང་དུ་ཅི་ཆོག་ལ། དེས་  
 ཀྱང་ཡུལ་དའི་སློབ་གསུངས་ལ་ཉམས་མེད་ཀྱི་གོ་བབ་དང་རིན་ཐང་དེས་ཅན་གྱི་བསྐྱེད་ཡོད་པ་དཔེར་ན།  
 དད་ལྡན་མང་ཆོག་ཀྱི་རྒྱུ་རྐྱེད་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི་འཚོ་བ་ལེགས་སྲོགས་སུ་འབྲེན་པ་དང་། མི་ནམས་  
 ལ་ཀུན་རློན་འཚོ་བ་ལེགས་པོ་ཞིག་བསྐྱེད་ཏེ་ས་དེ་གའི་སྤྱི་ཁམས་ཁོར་ཕྱག་སྲུང་སློབ་ཀྱི་ཐང་ལ་ལྷན་པོ་  
 ཆེན་པོ་ཐོབ་པ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཟད། མི་རིགས་ནང་ཁུལ་དང་མི་རིགས་གཞན་བར་གྱི་མཐུན་སྦྲིལ་ལའང་རྣམས་  
 པ་གལ་ཆེན་ཐོན་ཡོད་པ་རེད། དགོན་པའི་སློབ་ཁང་དང་ཚོང་གཉེར་གྱིས་ས་དེ་ག་དང་དགོན་པ་དེ་གའི་  
 དཔལ་འབྱོར་ཡོང་འབབ་ཇེ་མང་དུ་སོང་བས། ས་གནས་དཔལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་འཕེལ་རྒྱས་ལའང་འག་དེ་  
 ཅོམ་ཞུགས་ཡོད་པ་དང་། མ་མཐའ་ཡང་དགོན་པ་རང་གི་འགོ་བོན་ཁག་ཐེག་བྱ་བྱུང་གྱི་ཡོད་པ་རེད།

དེ་བས། ཕན་གྱི་ལྷ་རྩེ་ལ་ལ། དེད་གི་དུས་འདིར་བོད་ཀྱི་ས་ཁུལ་མང་པོར་འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི་སློབ་གསོ་  
 ལྷ་སློབ་མའི་སློབ་གསོ་འདི་གལ་ཆེ་བར་འཛིན་པ་ལས། དགོན་སྡེའི་སློབ་གསོའི་སྐོར་ལ་ལྷན་པོ་ཆེར་  
 རྒྱག་གི་མེད་པ་དང་། མང་པོ་ཞིག་གིས་བོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་སྡེ་དང་ཆོས་ལུགས་སྐོར་ལ་གཏམ་ཚན་རིག་དང་  
 མི་མཐུན་པ། ལུགས་མེད་མང་པོ་ཞིག་ལ་བསྟེན་དགོན་སྡེའི་སློབ་གསོ་མཐོང་ཆེན་མི་བྱེད་པར་དམིགས་  
 རས། རྒྱལ་ཁབ་སྤྱི་ནང་བོད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་ཡོན་པ་སུ་དང་སུ་ཡིན་ནའང་། མཁས་བླུང་མང་པོའི་གདན་སའི་

ལྷུང་པའི་བོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་པའི་སློབ་གསོ་འདིའི་རིག་ཐང་དང་རྣམ་པར་བརྩི་མཐོང་དང་གཅིག་གསུམ་འཛིན་མཛད་དེ། རང་རེའི་ཚོས་ལུགས་ཀྱི་གཞི་མར་ལྷུང་པའི་དགོན་སྡེ་དང་དགོན་སྡེའི་སློབ་གསོ་འདི་ཉིད་ལ་གཤམ་པོ་ཆེར་གནང་རྒྱུ་དང་། བོད་ཀྱི་དགོན་པའི་དེང་རབས་ཅན་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཅན་གྱི་གོ་རིམ་ཁོད་དགོན་པའི་སློབ་གསོ་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་དང་དར་བར་བྱ་རྒྱ། མ་འོངས་པར་ལམ་ལག་པོ་གོ་ལ་མེད་ཅིག་ཏུ་བགྲོད་ཐུབ་མིན་ལ་ཞིབ་འཇུག་དང་རྟོག་དཔྱད། རོགས་རམ་དང་གྲོས་བསྟུན། ལུགས་ཁུར་གནང་རྒྱུ་བཅས་ནི་ཀུན་གྱིས་ཐུགས་ལ་དམ་དུ་འཛིན་དགོས་པ་ཞིག་ཏུ་འདོད་དོ།།

ཟུར་བཀོད།

༡༽ དགོན་པའི་སློབ་གསོ་ཚུལ་ཅམ་དགོན་པའི་དོ་དམ་པས་སྐྱོན་ལ་གནངས་པའི་རྒྱ་ཆ་ལས་བཏུས་པ་ལྟར་ན། ཁ་བྱ་དགོན་པ་འདི་ཞང་སྲིད་གཞུང་དང་བར་ཐག་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༣་དང་རྒྱ་ཁྲིན་སྤུ་༣༠ ཡས་མས། ལྷ་ལག་བཞི་བཅུ་ཞེ་བརྒྱད་དང་ནང་ཆེན་གཅིག་དང་། ཚོགས་ཆེན་འདུ་ཁང་ཆེན་མོ་དང་། ལྷ་ཁང་། མ་ཞི་ཁང་བཅས་ཀྱིས་གྲུབ། དགོན་པ་ཡོངས་ལ་ད་ལྟོ་དངོས་ཡོད་ལྷ་བཙུན་བརྒྱད་བཅུ་གྲ་དགུ་དང་གྲ་མ་བཞི། དགོན་པའི་དོ་དམ་ལུ་ཡོན་ལྷན་ཁང་གི་མི་སྣ་ལྟ་དང་རྒྱོ་འདྲི་ས་གཅིག་བཅས་ཡོད། ལོ་༡༤་མན་གྱི་ལྷ་བཙུན་བཅུ་དྲུག་དང་དགུང་ལོ་༦༠་ཡན་གྱི་ལྷ་བཙུན་བརྒྱད། འདི་ལས་ལོན་ཆེས་རྒྱན་པ་ལོ་༤༡་ཡིན་ལ་ཆེས་རྒྱུང་བ་ལོ་༧་ཡིན། རིག་གནས་རྒྱ་ཚད་ཀྱི་ཆ་ནས། འབྲིང་རིམ་ནས་ཆེད་སྤྱོད་རྒྱ་ཚད་ལོན་པ་ཉེར་གཅིག་དང་། སློབ་རྒྱུང་ནས་མཐོ་འབྲིང་རྒྱ་ཚད་ལོན་པ་དྲུག་བཅུ་རེ་གཉིས་ཡོད།

༢༽ འགྲུང་རོ་སྤྱོད་སྤོང་རིམ་བྱོན་འཁྲུངས་འདས་ཀྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ལྟར་ལྟོ་ལོ་ལོ་

སྤྱི་ཚུལ།	མཚན།	འཁྲུངས་འདས་ལོ།	འཁྲུངས་ལུ་ལ།	དགུང་གྲངས།	ཐོབ་ཐང་།
དང་པོ།	རུས་འགྲུང་ཅན་ནམ་གུར་དམར་གསེར་རྟོག་ཅན།	ཕལ་ཆེར་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༢༢ ནས་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༦༩༣་བར།	རྩ་བ།	ཕལ་ཆེར་༧༢	

གཉེས་པ།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་མེ་བྱི་བསྟན་འཛིན།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་མེ་བྱི་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྩ་རྟུ་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་འཁོར་བར།	རྩ་བ།	༤༧	
གསུམ་པ།	འཛིགས་མེད་འཕྲིན་ལས།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྩ་རྟུ་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་ལྷགས་ཡོས་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་འཁོར་བར།	མཛོད་དགེ	༡༠	
བཞི་པ།	འཛིགས་མེད་བསྟན་པའི་རྩལ་མཚན།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་རྩ་རྟུ་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་བཞི་པའི་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་འཁོར་བར།	ཐང་དཀར་ནང་གི་སྤྱི་ལུང་།	༧༤	ཐང་དཀར་དགོན་པའི་བློ་སྦྱོར་འཕྲིན་ལས་བཞུགས།
ལྔ་པ།	འཛིན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་འཕྲིན་ལས་ལྷན་ཚོགས།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གཉིས་པའི་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་གསུམ་པའི་སྤྱི་ལུང་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་འཁོར་བར།	མཚོ་སྤོན་སོག་རྒྱུ་།	༤༠	
དྲུག་པ།	འཛིན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་འཕྲིན་ལས་ལྷན་ཚོགས་པའི་རྩལ་མཚན།	རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་དྲུག་པའི་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་དྲུག་པའི་ཤིང་མཚན་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་འཁོར་བར།	མཛོད་དགེ་རྩལ་མཚན་།	༡༧	
བདུན་པ།	ཐོ་བཟང་དགེ་ལེགས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།	བོད་རབ་བྱུང་བཅུ་བདུན་པའི་མེ་ལོས་(སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩)ལོ་ནས་སྤྱི་ལུང་།	སྤྱི་ལུང་ལས་ལྷན་ཚོགས་།		

ཁ་བྱའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དགོན་གྱི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་དང་ད་ལྟོ་བཞུགས་ཚུལ།

དབུད་གཞིའི་ཡིག་རིགས།

དང་པོ། བོད་ཡིག་གི་བརྒྱམས་ཚེས་རྟོག་པ།

དུང་དཀར་གློ་བཟང་འཕྲིན་ལས། དུང་དཀར་ཚོགས་མཛོད་ཆེན་མོ། པ་ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུན་ཁང་།

སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༩ལོའི་དཔར་མ།

བྲག་དགོན་པ་དགོན་མཚོག་བརྟན་པ་རབ་རྒྱས། མདོ་སྐད་ཚོས་འབྲུང་། ལན་གོ་ཏུ། ཀན་སུ་ཅུ་མི་

རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུན་ཁང་། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༨ལོའི་དཔར་མ།

གློ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོ། ཁ་བྱའི་སྐར་རྩིང་དགོན་དང་ཁ་བྱ་སྤྱིའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས། ལན་གོ་ཏུ། ཀན་སུ་ཅུ་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་

སྐྱུན་ཁང་། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༡ལོའི་དཔར་མ།

དབལ་མང་པལྟེ་ཏ། ལྷ་བྲང་བཀྲ་ཤིས་འབྲིལ་གྱི་གདན་རབས་ལྷ་འི་རྩེ་ཆེན། ལན་གོ་ཏུ། ཀན་སུ་ཅུ་མི་

རིགས་དཔེ་སྐྱུན་ཁང་། སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༩༡ལོའི་དཔར་མ།



### List of contributors

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