

Clapping hands in sKyid grong? Logical and contextual aspects of a famous debate narrative

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*“The rock of the heretics, as high as the Sumeru, was reduced to dust by the lightning of the
thunderbolt of logic issued from the palace of the thunder of omniscient mercy.”*

*mkhyen brtse'i dbyar skyes khang bzang las // rigs tshul rdo rje'i me char gyis //
mu stegs brag ri rab mtho ba // rdul phran lta bur phyer brlag ste //
(Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan,
Chos kyi rje sa skya pandi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan gyi
rtogs pa brjod pa dri za'i glu dbyangs)*

Abstract

Debate narratives found in biographical and historical materials constitute a promising source for the study of the actual practice of debate both in the Indian and Tibetan traditions. This paper investigates the account of a debate opposing the renown Tibetan Buddhist master Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) to a group of Indian non-Buddhist teachers based on the biography composed by one of Sa skya Paṇḍita's disciples, lHo pa kun mkhyen. The argumentative statements attributed to Sa skya Paṇḍita are analyzed from a rhetorical and a logical point of view — the paper traces a plausible source for the core argument in the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* and *Tarkajvālā* — and evaluated in view of Sa skya Paṇḍita's theory of argumentation. In the conclusion, we discuss the likelihood that lHo pa's narrative relates a historical event, and to what extent his account can be deemed representative of face-to-face debate in thirteenth-century Tibet.

1. Introduction

Debating is a conspicuous aspect of Tibetan Buddhist scholarly practices and handclapping undoubtedly belongs, in Western perception, to the trademarks of Tibetan monasticism. While the religious and institutional background, as well as the form and the function of modern Tibetan debate have been the object of several studies,¹ the origin and development of such a practice, whether used in actual philosophical confrontation or for didactic purposes, remains to be clarified.

Debate has played an important role in Tibetan Buddhism since the early days of the Earlier Diffusion (*snga dar*). Indian visiting scholars certainly were influential in this regard. It is revealing for instance that Śāntarakṣita,

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¹ See notably Dreyfus 2003, Liberman 2007 and Onoda 1992.

who visited Tibet twice under the reign of King Khri srong lde btsan, is depicted in the *dBa' bzhed* as incarnating the “logical force” in the establishment of Buddhism, working in pair with Padmasambhava’s “magical” one.² As for his student Kamalaśīla, his involvement in the Great Debate of bSam yas speaks for itself. In addition to the direct influence exerted by such living examples of Indian scholarship, Tibetan scholars became acquainted with the rules of debate propounded by Indian Buddhist thinkers as Dharmakīrti’s *Vādanyāya* and its commentary by Śāntarakṣita were translated into Tibetan.³ As Tibetan epistemological scholarship significantly developed in the early centuries of the Later Diffusion (*phyi dar*), notably around the monastery of gSang phu Ne’u thog, Tibetan scholars were elaborating theories of argumentation, in particular in connection with Dharmakīrti’s discussion of “inference-for-others” (*parārthānumāna*, *gzhan don rjes dpag*) in his *Pramāṇaviniścaya*. They appear to have also been active in its applied aspect, debate. One learns for instance from Śākya mchog ldan that Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169), whose name is closely associated in the Tibetan tradition with the development of an indigenous epistemological system and the elaboration of new methods of argumentation, entered a debate on Madhyamaka interpretation with the visiting Kāśmīrī scholar Jayānanda, with the translator Khu mdo sde ’bar acting as an intermediate between the two.⁴ The *Blue Annals* mention scholars going on “debating tours” (*rtsod pa’i grwa skor*).⁵ Also, the practice of using debate for pedagogical purpose, as a tool for studying, had developed by the thirteenth century.⁶

The epistemological treatises by gSang phu authors that have become available to us in recent years include, as mentioned, considerable discussion on argumentation. They do not, however, shed much light on the

² In the *dBa' bzhed*, Śāntarakṣita addresses King Khri srong lde btsan in the following terms at the time of his second visit: “We will compete against all the Tibetan non-Buddhists (*mu stegs*); in logic (*gtan tshigs*) they will have to vie with me, in magic they will have to vie with the mantrin from U rgyan, Padmasambhava” (folio 12a3–4: *bod kyi mu stegs kun dang gtan tshigs ni bdag dang ’dran la; rdzu ’phrul ni u rgyan <gyi> sngags mkhan pad ma sam bha ba dang ’dran te ...* Transl. mine; for Wangdu and Diemberger’s translation see *dBa' bzhed* p. 55).

³ The *Vādanyāya* is already included among the “translations in progress” in the lHan kar catalogue. It was translated and revised around the middle of the eleventh century, while Śāntarakṣita’s commentary was translated around 1100. Sa skya Paṇḍita and Rigs pa’i ral gri mention a second commentary, by Śaṅkaranandana, which would have entered Tibet thanks to Dānaśīla (see Hugon forthcoming). On the influence of the *Vādanyāya* on Tibetan argumentation theories in the early centuries of the Later Diffusion, see *ibid.* Previous works on *vāda*, by Vasubandhu and Dignāga, were not translated into Tibetan.

⁴ See *dBu ma’i byung tshul* 13b5–6: *phya pa dbu ma rang rgyud la bshad nyan byed pa’i dus su / zla ba’i zhabs kyi brgyud ’dzin paṇḍi ta dza ya a nanta zhes pa zhis bod du byon / dbu ma la ’jug pa’i ’grel bshad mdzad / de’i dus su phya pas dngos su brtsad cing...* (cf. Seyfort Ruegg 2000: 37 n. 68) and *dBu ma rgya mtsho, le’u gnyis pa*, pha 53b2–4: *thog mar slob dpon phya pa’i drung du rang rgyud kyi tshul la legs par sbyangs pa dag go // de’i tshes kha che’i paṇḍi ta dza ya ā nanda / bod du byon nas... zla ba’i gzhung lugs gsal bar mdzad pa yin la / de’i tshes slob dpon phya pa dang / kha che ā nanda gnyis khu lo tstsha ba bar du brgyud pa’i rtsod pa byas pas phya pa rgyal lo zhes bya ba’i gtam du bya ba dag kyang snang...* (cf. van der Kuijp 1993b: 193). Śākya mchog ldan provides in the following folios a summarized account of Phya pa’s arguments involving nine points (three threefold arguments).

⁵ See Hugon forthcoming, n. 2.

⁶ It is criticized by Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182–1251); see notably *mKhas ’jug* ad III.15 and ad III.34.

question of actual debating practices in this early period.⁷ Indeed, the models of argumentation presented in these works are prescriptive rather than descriptive and their authors adopt a perspective on debate that concentrates on argumentative statements rather than on debate as a global event. One can, at most, reconstruct for some of them the sequence that these statements are supposed to follow.

It is thus necessary to turn to different sources in order to satisfy our curiosity regarding the more practical aspects involved in face-to-face debates in the early centuries of the Later Diffusion. In this regard, I was greatly inspired by two recent studies addressing this question with regard to India. The first, by Johannes Bronkhorst (Bronkhorst 2007), examines the modes of debate in classical and medieval India by considering a twelfth-century inscription, found near Sravana Belgola, that makes references to situations of debate involving patriarchs of the Digambara branch of Jainism. The second is an essay by José Cabezón (Cabezón 2008) based on Tibetan and Chinese debate narratives involving great Indian Buddhist thinkers. These two studies demonstrate how factual information about actual debating practices can be collected from these sources, but also, especially for the material studied by Cabezón, the heavy symbolism and conventions that lay behind narrative structures. As Cabezón points out, the account of arguments in historical and hagiographical literature, in epics and in drama, have received little scholarly attention, but are likely to constitute, when considered with due care, a promising source of information for us to gain some sense of the circumstances and processes of actual debates.

Following these scholars' lead, I examine in the present paper the narrative of a debate involving a Tibetan master, who is no other than the famous Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251), alias Sa paṇ. The debate between Sa skya Paṇḍita and non-Buddhist masters that allegedly took place in sKyid grong constitutes an especially interesting case of study. First, it is a very rare instance of a debate opposing a Tibetan thinker to a non-Buddhist scholar at the time of the Later Diffusion — actually the only one I could find so far.⁸ Even though non-Buddhist thinkers remained opponents of choice in Tibetan literature, by the time of the Later Diffusion, there must have been few occasions for Tibetan Buddhists to debate with Indian non-Buddhists, and virtually none in Tibet proper. Secondly, Sa paṇ ascribes to debating an important place in Buddhist scholarship and identifies it, along with composition (*rtsom*) and exposition (*'chad*), as an essential competence that scholars should master. The third section of his *mKhas 'jug*, where he deals with this ideal program, is accordingly devoted to the question of correct debating, and includes elaborate discussions concerning the proper way to debate with Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist opponents. We thus have here an ideal opportunity to

⁷ On the argumentation theories of these early logicians see Hugon forthcoming.

⁸ According to Glo bo mkhan chen, this is a unique case (*mKhas 'jug rnam bshad* 24a4–5: *nge na bod kyi paṇḍi tas phyi rol mu stegs byed kyi rgol ba bzlog pa ni / chos rje 'di kho nar zad do //*). The *Deb sngon* (285–286) relates a debate between Buddhists and Indian non-Buddhists when listing the “four wonderful spectacles” related in the life story of Lha rje zla ba'i 'od zer (1123–1182). But it is not Lha rje, but his teacher Jayasena who gets involved in this debate opposing, in Nepal, for the New Year festival, 2000 *jaṭila* (*ral pa can*) and 2000 Buddhist paṇḍitas and yogins. Chogay Trichen Rinpoche's modern biographical account (Chogay 1983: 18) claims that “Sakya Pandita was the first Tibetan to defeat Indian scholars in debate.”

examine a theoretician in action by assessing the kind of argumentative strategy that is attributed to him by the authors of the various sources that mention the event. By the concluding section, we will discuss the plausibility of the encounter itself and evaluate to what extent the narrative considered gives us an accurate picture of an actual debate or of a debate as it could have taken place in these days.

2. The sKyid grong debate – sources and scenarios

2.1 Sources

Sa paṅ's debate against a group of Indian non-Buddhist opponents is quite famous and provides a popular motif in pictorial representations of Sa paṅ.⁹ Accounts of the debate — varying from a few sentences to several folios — occur in various types of sources that deal with Sa skya Paṅḍita's life: *rnam thar* by his students (contemporaneous and posthumous), biographies by authors of later generations, genealogical and religious histories, political and general histories, as well as biographical sketches found in commentaries on his works.¹⁰ The earliest extant material includes biographies by lHo pa kun mkhyen Rin chen dpal and Zhang rgyal ba dpal, that cover Sa paṅ's life up to his departure to Ködan's court, and a posthumous account authored, according to its colophon, by Yar klungs pa Grags pa rgyal mtshan.¹¹ Unfortunately, a number of other early biographies by Sa paṅ's

⁹ For an example, see <http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/356.html>.

¹⁰ The main accessible accounts of Sa paṅ's life have been listed by Jackson (1987: 23). For a list of the sources used in this paper, see the references preceded by a star in the bibliography.

¹¹ Mekata (2009) contests this attribution and suggests that the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* was instead composed by Yar klungs pa Byang chub rgyal mtshan. Her conclusion is based on the study of an anonymous biography (*terminus ad quem* fourteenth century) that cites repeatedly from two works identified respectively as the “rNam thar rgyas pa” and the “rNam thar bsdus pa” in the text. Mekata shows in her paper that the quotations from the first are literally identical to the text of the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* published in the *Lam 'bras slob bshad*, and suggests that the *rNam thar rgyas pa* (or *rNam thar tshigs bcad ma rgyas pa* as it is called in the colophon) is none other than the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring*. The colophon of the manuscript studied by Mekata attributes the *rNam thar tshigs bcad ma rgyas pa* to Yar lung pa Byang chub rgyal mtshan. Mekata shows that the second text cited in this anonymous biography, identified as the “rNam thar bsdus pa,” is the *Chos kyi rje sa skya paṅḍita chen po'i rnam par thar pa mdor bsdus pa*, or *Chos rgyal ma*. The colophon of the manuscript states that the biography is “extensive compared to the *rNam thar tshigs bcad ma* composed Yar lung pa Grags pa.” Mekata identifies this “rNam thar tshigs bcad ma” with the short title “rNam thar bsdus pa” used in the text, and on this basis ascribes to Yar klungs pa Grags pa rgyal mtshan the authorship of the *Chos rgyal ma*. Mang thos and gSang rgyas phun tshogs Ngor chen attribute a “rNam thar tshigs bcad ma rgyas pa” to Byang chub rgyal mtshan and a “rNam thar bsdus pa” to Grags pa rgyal mtshan, but some evidence would be needed in addition to the similarity of terminology to establish conclusively that, by these descriptions, they mean, respectively, the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* and the *Chos rgyal ma*. Zhu chen attributes the “Chos rgyal ma chung” to Yar klungs pa Byang chub rgyal mtshan. On the attributions to the two Yar klungs pa, see also Jackson 1987: 33, n. 5 and 6. As Mrs Mekata kindly informed me, there is no mention of the debate in the anonymous biography she studied. The *Chos rgyal ma* praises Sa paṅ for his capacities as a logician but without a specific mention of the debate in sKyid grong (*Chos rgyal ma* 71,7–10: *rtog ge ngan pa'i rgo ba thams cad bzlog // rloms pas khengs pa'i rtog ge zil gyis gnon // mkhas pa'i grags pas sa steng thams cad khyab // 'jigs bral khyod la spyi bos phyag*

students are lost, such as a biography by 'U yug pa Rigs pa'i seng ge,¹² as well as biographies by Bi ji Rin chen grags,¹³ Dam pa Kun dga' grags and Bar ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan that were known to the author of the *gSung sgras ma*, a biography of Sa paṇ included in the collected works of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456).¹⁴

Apart from works that include an account of Sa paṇ's life, references to this debate are also found in texts related to the region the debate took place, namely sKyid grong.¹⁵

There is, in addition, a versified composition found among Sa paṇ's works that bears the title "Verses of the subduing of the six non-Buddhist teachers" (*Mu stegs kyi ston pa drug btul ba'i tshigs bcad*).¹⁶ These verses themselves occur in several biographies (see below 3.V). Most of the sources that only mention the event in a very brief way¹⁷ actually do not give more information than what is found in the colophon of this work.

'tshal lo //). 'Phags pa's biography of Sa paṇ does not mention the debate either. Another early account by dMar ston Chos kyi rgyal po (ca. 1198–1259), also a student of Sa paṇ, is found along that of other *Lam 'bras* masters in his *Zhib mo rdo rje*. dMar ston's account covers Sa paṇ's life from his birth up to his studies with Spyi bo lhas pa following his ordination. It ends on the mention of Sa paṇ's mastering of the five sciences and of the three scholarly competences of the wise. It does not mention a debate in sKyid grong.

¹² See Jackson 1987: 18, who indicates that this biography is mentioned in the *A mdo chos 'byung* of dKon mchog bstan pa seng ge.

¹³ The latter's biography also appears to have been known by the author of the biography studied in Mekata 2009, for in the colophon, the author states that his biography is smaller than the one by 'Bri 'tshams pa rin chen dpal (=IHo pa kun mkhyen) and "Bi ci rin chen grags pa."

¹⁴ See Mekata 2006 for a study of this biography, and Jackson 1987: 19 and Mekata 2006: 63–64 on the attribution of authorship to Ngor chen. Mekata questions this attribution, pointing out that in his *Thob yig rgya mtsho*, Ngor chen refers to Grags pa rgyal mtshan's *Bla ma rgyud pa bod kyi lo rgyus*, Bla ma dam pa's *Bla ma brgyud rnam thar*, and a *Bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar zhib mo* of unidentified authorship, but does not mention the seven biographical works listed in the colophon of the *gSung sgras ma*. The *gSung sgras ma* is sometimes attributed to 'Phags pa, as is the case for instance in the list of hagiographies of *Lam 'bras* teachers compiled by Lama Choedak T. Yuthok (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/tib/sakya-la.htm>). The account of the debate found in the *gSung sgras ma* repeats the one from the biography by Zhang rgyal ba dpal (*Zhang rnam thar*), a work also mentioned in its colophon.

¹⁵ See notably the texts mentioned in n. 38.

¹⁶ The *Mu stegs tshigs bcad* consists of 12 lines of 15 syllables, and of 8 lines of 8 syllables, followed by a colophon in prosa (see appendix 2). The verses themselves are non-specific; they represent a colorful description of Indian representatives of various non-Buddhist currents, and claim the superiority of the Buddhist teaching and that of Sa paṇ as a subduer of non-Buddhist teachers. It is the colophon that specifies: "In the center of Tshong dus*, at a place near the temple of the Āryavati in sKyid grong, Mang yul, the six non-Buddhist teachers, 'Phrog byed dga' ba, etc., having been vanquished, converted to Buddhism [lit.: entered into the Buddha's teaching]; this was composed at the time of their ordination." *Mu stegs tshigs bcad* 220b2–3: *mang yul skyid grong 'phags pa wa ti'i gtsug lag khang dang nye ba'i sa'i cha / tshong dus kyi dbus su / 'phrog byed dga' ba la sogs pa / mu stegs kyi ston pa drug pham par byas nas / sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa la bcug ste / rab tu byung ba'i dus su sbyar ba'o //*.

* I take "Tshong dus" to be an orthographic variant of Tshong 'dus, that is, a toponyme. Tucci translates literally "in the middle of the market place" (Tucci 1949: 680 n. 36).

¹⁷ They are, in the sources consulted, the accounts by Zhang rgyal ba dpal (*Zhang rnam thar*), sTag tshang rdzong pa (*rGya bod yig tshang*), Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (*gSung sgras ma*, which repeats the account of *Zhang rnam thar*), sTag tshang Lo tsā ba, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs Ngor chen (*Ngor chos 'byung*), Zhu chen (*lDe mig*), Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma (*Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*). Śākya mchog ldan's brief account (*Chos 'khor rnam gzhag*),

2.2 Place and time

The sources agree on the location of the debate, sKyid grong,¹⁸ and some locate it more precisely in the village of Tshong 'dus (sometimes spelled Tshong dus), in Mang yul, in the vicinity of the Āryavati temple.¹⁹ sKyid grong (the name designates a district as well as a town) is situated near the present border of Nepal, about 200km north of Kathmandu (ca. 28°, 85°). Invaded by the kingdom of Ya rtse (south-west of sPu rang) in the late 30s of the thirteenth century,²⁰ in 1267 it became part of the Mang yul gung thang kingdom, which was under Sa skya pa jurisdiction during the Sa skya-Yuan rule of Tibet.²¹ Since 1960, sKyid grong (吉隆) has been included in the gZhis ka rtse prefecture of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The Āryavati temple, or 'Phags pa lha khang, was, until 1959, the home of the Āryavati bzang po figure, one of the four or five "brothers Ārya[-Avalokiteśvara]," which is nowadays kept in Dharamsala.²²

The event precedes Sa paṅ's departure to Ködan's court in 1244. A few biographers specify a date for it: Sa paṅ's 51st year (i.e., 1232) according to Zhu chen Tshul khri ms rin chen (1700–1769?); Sa paṅ's 59th year (i.e., 1240) according to Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho (1523–1594/96) and Sangs rgyas phun tshogs Ngor chen (1649–1705).²³

That Sa paṅ visited sKyid grong is confirmed by local sources that mention the members of local families who received teachings from him; some of these sources also mention Sa paṅ's victory over a non-Buddhist but do not appear to provide a date for it.²⁴

on the other hand, provides original details not found elsewhere. He states for instance that the debate was held in Sanskrit (see n. 133).

¹⁸ Spelt "sKyid rong" by lHo pa kun mkhyen (*lHo rnam thar* 53a6), "sKyid grong" by Bla ma dam pa (*Bla ma brgyud rnam thar* A 41a4; B 36b6), "Kyid grong" by Bo dong Paṅ chen (*Lam 'bras lo rgyus* 70b6), and "Khyid rong" by sTag tshang rdzong pa dPal 'byor bzang po (*rGya bod yig tshang* 323,3). Śākya mchog ldan (*Chos 'khor rnam gzhag* 5b4) locates the event in "sKyid pa'i grong khyer" ("the town of happy people"). According to Vitali (2007: 287, n. 3), the name sKyid grong seems to be an abridgement of "sKyid pa'i grong khyer," or of "sKyid mi grong bdun" ("the seven villages of happy people").

¹⁹ These four indications pertaining to the location of the debate occur together in the early biography of lHo pa kun mkhyen and in the "Verses of the subduing of the six non-Buddhist teachers." Some later sources mention only the temple (*bsTan rtsis*, *Ngor chos 'byung*), some only sKyid grong (*Bla ma brgyud rnam thar*, *sDom gsum legs bshad*, *rGya bod yig tshang*, *sTag tshang gdung rabs*, *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*).

²⁰ Vitali (2003: 74) situates the first war between the Ya rtse and Gung thang kingdoms between 1235 and 1239. According to Everding (2000: 373–374), the invasion of the Ya rtse troops in Gung thang must be dated with 1238 as *terminus post quem*.

²¹ On the early history of sKyid grong, see Everding 2000 on the kingdom of Mang yul Gung thang from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century and the chronology of mNga' ris skor gsum from the tenth to the fifteenth century in Vitali 2003. Vitali 2007 deals with the history of two noble families of sKyid grong.

²² See Ehrhard 2004.

²³ Mang thos's account is found in *bsTan rtsis* 304,11–16. Cf. Everding 2000: 354, n. 903. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs's account (*Ngor chos 'byung* 316,6–7) is literally identical to it. Zhu chen's account (*lDe mig* 41b3–6) is possibly based on the one by Sang rgyas phun tshogs, but it is somewhat more developed, and proposes a different date for the event.

²⁴ See Vitali 2007: 301–302. Vitali cites from the *rTen gsum gzhengs pa'i dkar chag*, a text from the 17th century that mentions the debate in sKyid grong in connection with Sa paṅ's meeting with Bla chen Nyi ma, also known as "Jam dpal gling pa." The debate is mentioned also in the *Byams pa phun tshogs kyi rnam thar*, in connection with Sa paṅ's invitation to gNas Byang chub gling bya Khang ston 'Od zer rgyal mtshan and his brother

It remains a moot point whether the debate coincided with the visit to sKyid grong of Sa paṅ's nephew, 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–1280). According to Zhu chen, who situates the debate in 1232, 'Phags pa accompanied his uncle to sKyid grong in his fourth year, i.e., in 1238; according to Mang thos, 'Phags pa came with him in his sixth year, i.e., in 1240. Everding argues in favor of the coincidence of 'Phags pa's visit with the debate on the basis of Mang thos's account, but rejects the date of 1240 and instead proposes the year 1238 in view of historical sources that mention the meeting of Sa paṅ with rGyal ba Yang dgon pa on his way to Khab Gung thang in 1237.²⁵ The debate would thus have happened before the invasion of the Ya rtse troupes in Gung thang, which Everding situates in 1238 or 1239.

2.3 Actors

The sources also agree on the identity of Sa paṅ's opponent: a group of six non-Buddhist teachers, one of whom is identified by name as 'Phrog byed dga' bo or 'Phrog byed dga' ba.²⁶ None of the Tibetan sources I consulted suggest a Sanskrit equivalent, but *Harinanda is a likely reconstruction, often met with in modern secondary literature.²⁷

According to some versions, a few disciples of Sa paṅ — including 'U yug pa Rigs pa'i seng ge — were also present at this occasion.²⁸ The latter's biography of Sa paṅ is unfortunately not extant. Considering the inglorious role attributed to him in the versions that mention his presence at sKyid grong ('U yug pa and others are said to flee as the debate becomes heated), it would have been interesting to hear his side of the story.

rDo rje rgyal mtshan. Vitali relies on Mang thos's dating of the event and does not provide evidence from the local sources in this regard.

²⁵ Everding 2000: 353–354, n. 903. See also *ibid.*, p. 373–374, n. 951.

²⁶ One finds for the group of opponents the expressions *mu stegs kyi ston pa drug*, *phyi rol pa'i ston pa drug*, *phyi rol pa'i mkhas pa chen po drug*, *phas kyi rgol ba ngan pa drug*. Some sources (such as Śākya mchog ldan's *Chos 'khor rnam gzhag* and Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho's *Dalai lama glu dbyangs*) do not specify the number of the opponents. Yar klungs pa specifies that they are “clotted-hair followers of the god Brahmā” (*Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* 34b1: *dbang phyug tshangs pa'i rjes 'brang ral pa can*). Śākya mchog ldan considers 'Phrog byed dga' bo to be the teacher of the others (*Chos 'khor rnam gzhag* 5b5: *phrog byed dga' bo slob ma'i tshogs dang bcas pa*).

²⁷ Das (1882: 19) suggests the Sanskrit *Śaṃkharadhvāja. Bosson (1969: 28 n. 18) cites a Mongol source dating to the end of the eighteenth century, the *Subhasidi-yin tayilburi čindamani-yin tülkigür kemegdekü* (Bosson describes this text as a revised version of Rin chen dpal bzang po's Tibetan commentary of the *Subhāṣitaratnanidhi*, composed by Blo bzang tshul khriṃs), that renders his name phonetically as “Nantihari.”

²⁸ The *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* 32b2–3 mentions “'U yug bzang rings la sogs,” which might refer on the one hand to 'U yug pa bsod nams seng ge (/rig[s] pa'i seng ge) (?–1253) and on the other hand to bZang rings. The latter name is mentioned together with that of 'U yug pa among the “nine sons of gNyal zhig (=gNyal zhig po 'jam pa'i rdo rje)” (*gnyal zhig gi bu dgu*) in the *Deb sngon* (407,12), which adds that he taught at Khro phu. Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, who probably relies on Yar klungs pa or some similar account, mentions a variant of the same names (*Chos rje glu dbyangs* 4b6: *'Od yug bzang ring la sogs pa*). Rin spungs pa mentions “<O yug pa> rig pa'i seng ge la sogs” (*'Jam dbyangs legs lam* 105a1; note: words appearing within pointed brackets are interlinear notes). “O yug pa” appears to be a common variant for “'U yug pa,” found also for instance in *rGya bod yig tshang* 323,14.

2.4 Scenarios

While being remarkably consistent regarding the location of the event and the identification of the opponents, the sources at our disposal display, on the other hand, a range of distinct scenarios in the narration of the debate and of its outcome. Sources of later date show a combination of elements that can, for the most part, be traced back to the earliest accounts from the thirteenth century. The sources that give a substantial account of the event can be distinguished in two groups based on the narrative lines they follow:

1. A first type of scenario, which will be fleshed out in the next section, finds its earliest portrayal in the biography composed by lHo pa kun mkhyen. lHo pa's narrative is repeated with a few changes by Bla ma dam pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375) when dealing with Sa paṅ's life in a series of lives of *Lam 'bras* teachers, and Bla ma dam pa's version is repeated in a work of the same type included in the collected works of Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451).²⁹ lHo pa's version also appears to be the source of the biographical accounts by sPos khang pa Rin chen rgyal mtshan (fl. early 15th c.) and Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429–1489) (in an abbreviated version for the latter) that are included in these authors' respective commentaries on Sa paṅ's *sDom gsum rab dbye*.³⁰ Glo bo mkhan chen's (1456–1532) account in his commentary on the *mKhas 'jug* (*mKhas 'jug rnam bshad* 22a3–24a4) constitutes an almost literal repetition of lHo pa's text. Glo bo mkhan chen's account is, in turn, repeated quasi verbatim by A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1659) in his *Sa skya* chronicles (*A mes gdung rabs* 108–110).³¹ Many elements of this first scenario are also reflected in the lengthy versified biography by Rin spungs pa Ngag dbang 'jig rten dbang phyug grags pa/'jigs med grags pa (1542–1625?) composed in 1579, whose author seems to have known also the second scenario.³²

2. The second type of scenario is found at the earliest in the versified biography by Yar klungs pa (Grags pa rgyal mtshan?) (*Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring*), but Yar klungs pa's account is to my opinion observably a summarized version of a more elaborate one.³³ Characteristic of this alternative

²⁹ See *Bla ma brgyud rnam thar* A 41a2–b5, B 36b4–37a6, and *Lam 'bras lo rgyus* 70b3–71b4. In what follows, I will speak of the second work as a work by Bo dong even though its author is not identified (see Jackson 1987: 20).

³⁰ See *sDom gsum legs bshad* 9b4–11a3 and *sDom gsum dgongs gsal* 16a('og ma)6–17a4.

³¹ See the appendix 1 for an edition of the text recording the variants in these versions.

³² *'Jam dbyangs legs lam* 101b5ff. This manuscript includes many small explanatory notes that often refer to a "*rab rtog gi rgyan*," possibly an earlier work used as a source by the author.

³³ On the authorship of this work, see the discussion in n. 11 above. The *Lam 'bras slob bshad* introduces this seven-folio text as a "medium biography" (*rnam par thar pa 'bring po*). The colophon, which is maybe not from the hand of the author (see Jackson 1987: 33, n. 6), also specifies that it is a version of medium length (*bstod pa bar pa*). Jackson (ibid.) notes that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs credits Yar klungs pa Grags pa rgyal mtshan with a short version (*bsdus pa*), but according to Mekata 2009, this would refer to the *rNam par thar pa mdor bsdus pa* or *Chos rgyal ma*, not to the *rNam par thar pa 'bring po*. Mekata argues that in spite of the term "*'bring po*" that suggests the existence of another, lost work of greater length, the fact that all the citations whose source is identified as "*rNam thar rgyas pa*" in the anonymous manuscript she studied are found in the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* speaks against the existence of a larger version. This is, to my opinion, not a conclusive argument. On the one hand, the description "*rNam thar rgyas pa*" may hint to the relative size of the work (in comparison with the "*rNam thar bsdus pa*") rather than to its original title. Also, one must leave open the option that there is indeed a larger version, but that it does not differ from the medium one as far as the passages cited in the anonymous manuscript are

scenario are (i) the length of the debate, which is said to last thirteen days, twelve days during which the non-Buddhist debaters prevail, followed by a reversal on the thirteenth day; (ii) supernatural elements, in particular the intervention of Mañjuśrī to support Sa paṇ; (iii) the gory death of 'Phrog byed dga' bo when, following his defeat and conversion, he attempts to follow Sa paṇ into Tibet.³⁴ All or some of these elements are found also in the versified account by the First Paṇ chen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570–1662),³⁵ in the shorter prose version by the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) in his *Annals of Tibet*,³⁶ as well as in 'Jigs med nam mkha''s (1768–1822) *Hor chos 'byung*.³⁷ This scenario, in particular the gruesome death of 'Phrog byed dga' bo, is also reflected in works associated not with Sa paṇ, but with the Jo bo of sKyid grong.³⁸ The modern Sa skya pa compilation by Sherab Gyaltzen Amipa (Amipa 1987) also favors this second type of scenario.³⁹

concerned. The contents of the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring*, in particular the depiction of 'Phrog byed dga' ba's death, strongly suggests that one is dealing with a summarized version, or at least that the author has knowledge of a more extensive account.

- ³⁴ While *Yar klungs pa* merely states that "'Phrog byed dga' ba died in pain" (*Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* 34b4: 'phrog byed dga' ba mya ngan zhabs su shi), the Fifth Dalai Lama provides the key-phrase: "he spat blood from his mouth and died" (*Dalai lama glu dbyangs: kha nas khrag skyugs te shi ba*). His death was, according to these sources, caused by the bsTan ma, protector divinities of the Buddhist teaching acting on the behalf of Padma-sambhava. A triggering factor was, according to the First Paṇ chen and the Fifth Dalai Lama's version, that 'Phrog byed dga' ba had not removed his non-Buddhist emblems.
- ³⁵ In his *Paṇ chen glu dbyangs* Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan adds the intervention of Phrin las lha mo (probably Tārā, also mentioned in Rin spungs pa's 'Jam dbyangs legs lam 105b1: myur skyob <kyi> lha mos <sgrol ma>). He states that 'Phrog byed dga' ba could not proceed into Tibet and explains why, but does not portray his death.
- ³⁶ This episode from the *Dalai lama glu dbyangs* is translated in Tucci 1949: 626. The Fifth Dalai Lama mentions the intervention of the master 'Da' 'phyar (=mDar/'Dar/'Dar 'phyar ba Rin chen bzang po) to bring back 'Phrog byed dga' bo as he flies off in the air. The presence of this siddha in the region of Mang yul is mentioned by Brag dkar rta so sPrul sku; see Ehrhard 2004: 284, and pp. 416–417 n. 184 for further references. 'Da' 'phyar is also mentioned by the third Paṇ chen Bla ma Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes (1738–1780) in his list of the previous incarnation of Emperor Qianlong in the 'Khrongs rab gsol 'debs (see Uspensky 2002: 220 and 224–225). See also Tucci 1949: 680, n. 36.
- ³⁷ The *Hor chos 'chung* (76,11–77,11; transl. in Huth 1896: 123–124) includes the intervention of Mañjughoṣa and of the siddha 'Dar 'phyar, as well as 'Phrog byed dga' ba's claim that Mañjuśrī was the one responsible for his defeat; the wording of this claim is identical to that in *Yar klungs pa's Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring*, repeated with a few minor variants in *Paṇ chen glu dbyangs*. It does not mention 'Phrog byed dga' ba's death.
- ³⁸ The death of 'Phrog byed dga' bo on the model of the Fifth Dalai Lama's account is recounted for instance in the *Grub pa'i gnas chen brag dkar rta so'i gnas dang gdan rabs bla ma brgyud pa'i lo rgyus mos ldan dad pa'i gdung sel drang srong dga' ba'i dal gdam* composed in 1816 by Chos kyi dbang phyug Brag dkar rta so sPrul sku (1775–1837) (the author of the *rNam thar* of the Jo bo of sKyid grong). The relevant passage is quoted and translated by Ehrhard (2004: 420, n. 193), who also mentions a parallel formulation occurring in the *Bya bral ba chos kyi dbang phyug gi rang 'tshang lhug par brjod pa 'khrul snang sgyu ma'i rol rtsed* composed in 1836 by the same author.
- ³⁹ Amipa 1987 mentions the intervention of Mañjuśrī, 'Phrog byed dga' ba's claim that Mañjuśrī was the one responsible for his defeat and his flight into the air, but does not allude to his death. Amipa mentions the existence in the lHa chen temple of a statue of Mañjuśrī as he appeared during the debate ("Mañjushri Vainqueur en Controverse"). Another modern Sa skya pa work by Chogay Trichen Rinpoche (1983: 18) keeps, on the other hand, to a mere succinct account mentioning that "Sakya Pandita silenced each of them in turn through his skill in dialectical logic based on the three *Pramanas*."

3. lHo pa Kun mkhyen's narrative

The present paper concentrates on the scenario presented in the earliest available biography of Sa skya Paṇḍita, that by lHo pa Kun mkhyen Rin chen dpal. It is indeed the most relevant for our present purpose insofar as it provides an explicit account of a verbal exchange between the two parties, an account that narratives that opt for a scenario involving supernatural events commonly leave out.

lHo pa, who was born in the twelfth or thirteenth century, has been a student of Sa skya Paṇḍita, but also of Śākyaśrībhadrā, Khro phu lo tsā ba Byams pa dpal, and bKa' gdams pa masters such as 'Brom gzhon nu blo gros.⁴⁰ He seems to have been particularly active in the field of epistemology: Glo bo mkhan chen lists him as one of the "commentators of the purport" (*don gyi 'grel byed*) of the *Tshad ma rigs gter* and author of a work entitled *sDe bdun gsal ba'i rgyan*.⁴¹ He also mentions his views on several topics in his own commentary on the *Rigs gter*.⁴² Śākya mchog ldan indicates for his part that lHo pa was well-known among Sa paṇ's direct students who specialized in the *Pramāṇavārttika*.⁴³

lHo pa's biography of Sa skya Paṇḍita entitled *dPal ldan sa skya paṇḍita'i rnam thar* (hereafter: *lHo rnam thar*) has been published as part of a collection of biographies of the masters included in the Sa skya pa lineage of *Lam 'bras* teaching. It was composed while Sa paṇ was still alive, before his departure for Ködan's court in 1244, and after the debate, which, as discussed above, is probably to be situated between 1232 and 1240, possibly in 1238. lHo pa's text ends with brief allusion to a meeting with Sa paṇ while the latter is residing at the hermitage (*dben gnas*) of dGa' ldan, in dBus.⁴⁴ Even though lHo pa might not have been an eye-witness to the debate, his narrative provides us with a version that is close in time to the event and by someone who was close to Sa paṇ. One cannot assume that Sa paṇ read and approved lHo pa's biography based on the allusion to their encounter in dBus, although the very allusion might well constitute an attempt at providing authenticity to the text by suggesting that he did.

The sKyid grong debate is introduced towards the end of lHo pa's biography (53b4–54a3), after the account of Sa paṇ's studies. It follows a

⁴⁰ Information from TBRC (ref. P6145).

⁴¹ Cf. van der Kuijp 1986: 54. This mention is found in *gSal byed* 298,23–24: ... *kun mkhyen lho pa sde bdun gsal ba ste // don gyi 'grel byed rmad byung rnam gsum byung //*. The full title of lHo pa's work, *sDe bdun gsal ba'i rgyan*, is mentioned for instance in *Rigs gter nyi ma* 256,7–8. According to van der Kuijp (1986: 55), this work could have been, rather than a commentary on the *Rigs gter*, an independent work of epistemology along the same line.

⁴² See for instance on the topic of *mānasapratyakṣa* (*Rigs gter* 231ff.) in *Rigs gter nyi ma* 188–189. Glo bo mkhan chen cites lHo pa kun mkhyen's views twice on this occasion. The first quote is a literal citation in verses; it is uncertain whether the second quote, in prose, is a citation or a paraphrase. Glo bo mkhan chen also gives a longer citation in verse on the topic of *prasaṅga* in *Rigs gter nyi ma* 256.

⁴³ *Chos 'khor rnam gzhag* 7a4–5: *te ra pa byams mgon dang / ldong ston shes rab dpal dang / dkar shākya grags dang shar pa shes rab 'byung gnas / nags phug pa shes rab 'od zer dang / lho pa kun mkhyen la sogs dngos kyi slob ma rnam 'grel mkhas par mkhyen pa dag yin zhes grags la /*

⁴⁴ *lHo rnam thar* 56b6–57a1: *chos kyi rgyal po nyid dbu ru'i klungs kyi shod kyi dben gnas dga' ldan na bzhugs pa'i tshe / de las byang phyogs su cung zad cig bgrod pa'i sa'i char / shākya'i dge slong 'bring mtshams kyi btsun pa rin chen dpal gyis bsdebs pa'o //*. Jackson (1987: 32, n. 2) transcribes "klungs skyi shod" and states on this basis that "Sa paṇ was staying at sKyid shod dGa' ldan" (ibid, p. 28). On the reading "dbu ru'i klungs kyi shod kyi dben gnas dga' ldan," "Klungs kyi shod" could refer to the location of the hermitage in dBus.

summarized presentation of Sa paṅ's realizations and is included among the detailed accounts of his accomplishments.⁴⁵ The debate of sKyid grong is not included in a chronological list of events, nor is it presented as an explicit illustration of Sa paṅ's capacities as a debater. It is rather introduced as an episode in the long-lasting struggle of Buddhism against non-Buddhist opponents of various affiliations. lHo pa enumerates followers of the great sage Kapila (i.e., the Sāṃkhyas), the ṛṣi Vyāsa (i.e., the adepts of the Veda), Kaṇāda (i.e., the Naiyāyikas/Vaiśeṣikas), and adepts of dBang phyug (Īśvara = Śiva), Tshangs pa (Brahmā), Nor lha'i bu (Vāsudeva = Viṣṇu), sByin za (Agni), and of the yet unidentified Nyin mo long pa (lit. "sunrise," i.e., Sūrya? or one of the Aśvin?). These non-Buddhist forces at work, among which Sa paṅ's opponents are to be included, are said to be "roaming and wandering about in the southern regions" — that is, as Go rams pa specifies, "India."

Structure of lHo pa's narrative

One can distinguish several steps in lHo pa's narrative: I. a prelude that precedes the actual meeting of the opponents; II. the meeting of the two parties; III. the debate proper; IV. the unfolding of the dispute; V. the citation of the "Verses of the subduing of the six non-Buddhist teachers."

I. Prelude

The prelude informs us about (i) the identity of Sa paṅ's opponents — the six "outsider" teachers (*phyi rol pa'i ston pa drug*), 'Phrog byed dga' bo, etc.; (ii) the location of the meeting — Tshong 'dus, in the vicinity of the Āryavati-temple situated in sKyid (g)rong, Mang yul;⁴⁶ and (iii) the circumstances or motivation that led the debaters to be present. No reason is given for Sa paṅ's presence in sKyid grong, but the non-Buddhist teachers are said to have come on account of a specific resolution:

Let us go to the Land of Snow, and there we will overturn those who live there who, while pretending to be Buddhist practitioners,⁴⁷ have taken up practices involving women (*bud med kyi brtul zhugs*)⁴⁸ and adhere to bad views and conducts.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ *lHo rnam thar* 53a2–3: *de ltar na de dag gis ni bdag cag gi ston pa 'dis gang zhig mngon du mdzad pa'i shes bya'i gnas mdo tsam zhig brjod nas / da ni de'i phrin las kyi bye brag cung zad smod na / ...*

⁴⁶ lHo pa situates the place in relation to Bodhgayā (*byang chub kyi snying po rdo rje gdan*), namely 6 yojanas (*dpag tshad drug*) to the north. This measure should be corrected to the more plausible "60 yojana" (*dpag tshad bcu phrag drug*) found in the parallel versions of Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs (see appendix 1), as well as in Rin spungs pa's version (*Jam dbyangs legs lam* 102b6–103a1).

⁴⁷ Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs read "dge slong," i.e., "Buddhist monks."

⁴⁸ This expression most likely hints at sexual practices. sPos khang pa's version adds drinking to women (*sDom gsum legs bshad* 10a3: *chang dang bud med kyi brtul zhugs can*). In an oral commentary on the *History of the Sa skya sect* (www.thlib.org/avarch/mediaflowcat/framesets/view_transcript.php?stylesheet=2&transcriptId=1797), the expression "*bud med kyi brtul zhugs*" is glossed as "*spyod pa smad du byung*" (*bud med kyi brtul zhugs de ni rbad de bod kyi dper na / dge bshes dge slong de gas de gang yin zer na / dper na spyod pa smad du byung ba de / de ni zhi zhung dul ba de 'dras red pa /*). The expression also occurs in the *Vinayakārika*

In IHo pa's version (as well as the parallel versions of Bla ma dam pa, Bo dong and sPos khang pa), the addressee of this criticism bears the explicit mark of the plural.⁵⁰ There is no suggestion that the non-Buddhist teachers were specifically looking to have a discussion with Sa paṇ as other biographies are hinting at.⁵¹

II. The meeting

The meeting of the debaters is described briefly:

When the previously mentioned six teachers arrived, all of them paid homage neither to the Dharma-master [i.e., Sa paṇ] nor to the image of the Sugata; they took seats, having uttered a very few blessings and praiseworthy verses.

The first encounter takes the form of an informal confrontation in which the opponent's behavior, i.e., the six teachers' lack of respect for the image of the Buddha anticipates their subsequent statement that "they have not taken refuge in the Buddha's teaching" (see below).⁵² This depiction of the opponent exhibiting conspicuous pride (an attitude repeatedly attributed to him in the various narratives) may serve a particular function in the context of the narrative: as pointed out by Cabezón (2008: 80), the pride of an opponent is generally a rhetorical sign that he is about to be defeated.

It is not clear whether this first encounter signifies the beginning of a formal debate acknowledged as such by both parties. The events that follow, however, are interpreted as such by the author of the narrative.

(ACIP TD10165, 129b5: 'dul ba tshig le'ur byas pa) in a passage instructing that "one who is seized by desire upon seeing one engaged in a practice involving women, or one who has taken vows and, upon seeing a woman, is seized by desire, should not stay there longer; they should leave as soon as possible" (*gang na bud med kyi brtul zhugs can la mthong nas chags par byed dam/ gang na brtul zhugs can gyis bud med la mthong nas chags par byed na der yang yun ring du gnas par mi bya ste // myur ba kho nar de nas 'gro bar bya'o*).

⁴⁹ See appendix 1 for the Tibetan text of this and subsequently translated passages from IHo pa's biography.

⁵⁰ Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs have "de" instead of "de dag."

⁵¹ Some sources indeed present the coming of the non-Buddhists as a consequence of Sa paṇ's reputation in India. sTag tshang Lo tsā ba (1405–after 1477?) attributes it even more specifically to Sa paṇ's criticism of non-Buddhists in the *Rigs gter* (or more specifically, in the introductory verses), which, according to him, had been translated into Sanskrit (*sTag tshang gdung rabs* 18b1–2: *rigs gter bod skad las rgya skad du bsgyur te rdo rje gdan du phebs pa'i mchod brjod kyi tshig la ma bzod pas rkyen byas nas rtsod du yongs pas*; cf. van der Kuijp 1993a: 150). Rin spungs pa, as reported in Rhoton 2002: 15, similarly attributes their coming to the *Rigs gter* having been translated into Sanskrit by students of Śākyaśrībhadrā. Cf. *Jam dbyangs legs lam* 102a1–3: *khyad par paṇ chen <shā kya shrī'i> slob ma mchog rnam kyis // rtoḡ ge'i 'khrul <pa> 'joms <par byed sa paṇ> nyid <kyi> gsung <tshad ma> rig pa'i gter <zhes bya ba de> // 'chi med <lha'i> grong gi yi ger <la űtsa na> 'khrungs pa'i <'am bkod pa> skyes <bzang po> // rna <rgya gar ba rnam kyis> ba'i rgyan du yun ring <po'i bar la> mdzes par byin <no> //*. In the modern compilation by Amipa (1987: 59), the *Rigs gter* is said to have been translated in Sanskrit by Sa paṇ himself.

⁵² sPos khang pa's account sets the first meeting in a friendly atmosphere: "As they came to sKyid grong, none of the other Tibetan "Three-basket-holders" (*tripitakadhāra*) felt up to it. It was thus the Dharma-master himself [i.e., Sa paṇ] who made the opportunity of a debate. They said sincerely to one another "Have you been well? Welcome!" and sat down smiling." (Tib. text in appendix 1.)

III. The debate proper

One can distinguish three steps in the process of the debate as recounted by lHo pa: [III.1] First, a dialectical exchange whose contents lHo pa makes explicit, which includes a statement by Sa paṅ's opponent and a reply by Sa paṅ. This part of the debate will be dealt with in detail in section 4 below. This explicit argument is followed by two sequences of arguments that are merely suggested:

[III.2] As those [non-Buddhist] teachers were overwhelmed and depressed, it was the occasion for an elaborate speech: he [i.e., Sa paṅ] refuted and defeated the bad teachers individually,⁵³ leaving them speechless. [III.3] Then, once more, he removed the filth of the pride of all the bad views.

The first sequence [III.2] is described with terms that relate to a formal debate: refutation (*sun phyung*)⁵⁴ and defeating (*pham par mdzad*).⁵⁵ The second [III.3] does not suggest a dialectical exchange, but rather a one-sided argumentative explanation by Sa paṅ.

IV. The outcome of the debate

In lHo pa's text and other biographies that follow this first scenario, the debate ends with the conversion of Sa paṅ's opponent, symbolized by the ritual shearing of his clotted hairs (*ral pa'i khur bregs nas nyid kyi thad du rab tu byung*).⁵⁶ The parallel versions of sPos khang pa, Go rams pa, Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs all add that the hairs were kept in a temple in Sa skya, and were still there at the time of writing (*lta da yang yod*), but as these authors repeat each other (almost literally in the case of A mes zhabs), this does not guarantee that the later ones had themselves ascertained the presence of the hairs.⁵⁷ The same caution applies with regard to similar mentions by the Fifth Dalai Lama in the seventeenth century⁵⁸ and in 1818 by 'Jigs med nam mkha'.⁵⁹ In the description of a block print representing Sa paṅ debating with 'Phrog byed dga' bo, Jeff Watt — who I assume speaks on the basis of his own experience or of an eye-witness testimony — mentions that "Until 1959, the braid of Harinanda was kept before an image of Manjushri in the Utse Nying Sarma temple in the town of Sakya."⁶⁰

⁵³ In sPos khang pa's version, the Brahmins set forth to establish their scriptures by putting forward whatever logical reasons come to their mind, and Sa paṅ defeats them with logic, leaving them speechless.

⁵⁴ lHo rnam thar reads *phyung*, but all the parallel versions read *sun phyung* (see appendix 1).

⁵⁵ sPos khang pa uses the expression *tshar bcad* (see appendix 1).

⁵⁶ The cutting of 'Phrog byed dga' bo's hair is omitted in Bo dong's parallel version (see appendix 1).

⁵⁷ Das (1882: 20) and Bosson (1969: 4) have it that the *head* of 'Phrog byed dga' bo was tied to the pillar in the great temple of Sa skya.

⁵⁸ *Dalai lama glu dbyangs: shi ba'i ral pa'i cod pan dpal ldan sa skya'i ka ba'i mdzes byed du yod do /*

⁵⁹ *Hor chos 'byung 77,9–11: ral pa rnams rgyal ba'i bstan pa la bya ba mdzad pa'i snyan grags kyi dril rnga sgrog pa'i rten du / da lta yang dpal ldan sa skya'i gtsug lag khang gi ka rgyan la yod do//.*

⁶⁰ See <http://www.himalayanart.org/image.cfm/356.html>.

V. Verses composed by Sa skya Paṇḍita

IHo pa's narrative ends with the citation of verses that, as mentioned above (see "3.2 Sources"), also constitute an independent work among Sa paṇ's writings.⁶¹ The verses cited by IHo pa, as well as Go rams pa, Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs correspond, with a few shared variants (see the appendix 2), to the ones found in the text of the verses published in the *Sa skya bka' 'bum*.

IHo pa introduces the quotation by saying:

Having thought 'should there arise any discouragement pertaining to the teaching of this King of the Śākya, it should be disciplined once more,' he said the following...

4. The debate

The part of the debate that I will focus on in this section is the verbal exchange that includes a statement by the non-Buddhists and a reply by Sa skya Paṇḍita.

4.1. The opponent's statement

The opponent's statement is presented as follows:

They haughtily declared: 'Our entire caste started from the guru Brahmā.⁶² Until these days we have not relied on the teaching of Gautama, we have not taken refuge in the Three Jewels. We are the perfectly pure breed of the ṛṣis.'⁶³

By this statement, Sa paṇ's opponent makes a claim as to (i) a genetic dependence on Brahmā; (ii) rejection, or non-reliance on Buddhism and the Buddha; (iii) the purity of his own lineage. The third claim provides, to some extent, an echo to the main theme of the non-Buddhists' "motivation

⁶¹ These verses are omitted in Bo dong and sPos khang pa's parallel versions. They are also not found in biographical accounts that adopt the second type of scenario, an exception being 'Jigs med nam mkha's *Hor chos 'byung* (77,4–7), which cites the first verse (in the variant form of two pāda: *rgya mtsho'i gos can rgya mtsho'i mtha' / sa chen 'di na lha chen po /*) and the last four pādas. Huth understands the verses to be spoken by 'Phrog byed dga' ba.

⁶² I follow here Glo bo mkhan chen and A mes zhabs's reading "*nged kyi rigs thams cad ni...*" Bla ma dam pa and Bo dong read "*nged kyi rigs thams cad kyi bla ma...*," namely "our caste started from the universal guru, Brahmā." The term "*rigs*" that occurs twice in this statement was translated here by "caste" and "breed." It could be read, at least in the first case, in the sense of "philosophy," considering that Sa paṇ's answer addresses the worthiness of Brahmā as a teacher. However, I deemed it more likely that the first sentence is referring to the Puranic myth of the origination of the Brahmins' caste from Brahmā's mouth.

⁶³ A similar versified account is found in the *rnam thar* by Rin spungs pa ('Jam dbyangs legs lam 103b6–104a2): *de nas 'phrog byed 'di skad lo // brtan g.yo'i byed po gcig pu par // srid pas bskos ba'i <lha> tshangs chen las // lhag pa'i skyabs gzhan dmigs su med // <mes po> de nyid nas brtsams <te> drang srong <gi> rgyud // gtsang ma'i rigs 'dzin <pa> kho bo cag // <dkon> mchog gsum <gyi> skyabs <gnas> dang gau ta ma'i // ring lugs dag la ltos ma myong <ngo zhes> //*.

statement” (see I) in which they invoked the impure conduct of Tibetan Buddhist practitioners.⁶⁴ The second claim expresses a rejection of Buddhism both in terms of refuge and teaching. Combined with the reference to Brahmā in the first claim, one can draw an opposition both in terms of the teacher one should rely on (Śākyamuni Gautama vs. Brahmā) and the teaching to follow. In a nutshell: the pure Brahmins that originated from and rely on Brahmā are opposed to the impure Tibetan Buddhist practitioners who take refuge in the Buddha and follow his teaching.

4.2. Sa paṅ’s argument

Sa paṅ’s reply immediately follows:

At this moment, the Dharma-master [i.e., Sa paṅ] said:

[1] However clean this Brahmā may be, [2] he himself has much respect for [our] teacher; [3] but is he not overcome by slumber due to great mental confusion?

[4] As it is said:

The excellent four-armed one, whose faces are turned in the twice-halved-sixteen [= four] directions,

Recitator of the Ṛgveda, knowing the rituals of [Mantra-]recitation and expiation,⁶⁵

This Brahmā, whose birth-place is the spotless lotus, he, too, slumbers.

[5] But our teacher, possessor of the ten powers, is always shining forth(/awake) like/in a beautiful dawn’.⁶⁶

[1] I read the beginning of this sentence (*ci tshangs pa de ni*) as a pun on the word *tshangs pa*, which is not only the Tibetan name of Brahmā but also an adjective meaning “pure.”⁶⁷ The allusion to Brahmā’s (etymologically grounded) purity echoes here the opponent’s claim as to the purity of the Brahmins issued from Brahmā.

[2] I base my understanding of this sentence on the parallel in sPos khang pa’s version: “This Brahmā, he has much respect for our teacher and he took refuge in him.”⁶⁸ Episodes of interaction between Brahmā and Śākyamuni that might be relevant to this reference are for instance the gods’ visit to the newborn Śākyamuni, or Brahmā’s request to Śākyamuni, following his

⁶⁴ sPos khang pa, who introduces the notion of purity in the first sentence already (“our perfectly pure caste”), repeats it in the last sentence (“is specifically pure”).

⁶⁵ I follow here the reading of the stotra in D (see below n. 72), i.e. *nyes pa* instead of *nges pa*.

⁶⁶ The parallel versions only have minor variants. They notably differ in identifying what belongs to the verse cited by Sa paṅ and what is Sa paṅ’s own expression. sPos khang pa does not render the cited verse in a metrical form.

⁶⁷ Another possibility is to attribute to the initial “*ci*” an interjective/interrogative meaning pertaining to the sentence as a whole. Bo dong and sPos kang pa omit the construction with “*ci*” and simply have “*tshangs pa de ni*” as the subject.

⁶⁸ See also Rin spungs pa’s versified version, which expands on this sentence as follows (*Jam dbyangs legs lam* 104a4–5): *khyod kyi rnam ’dren <tshangs pa> gdong bzhi pa // nges par thub pa mchog la dad <pa yin te> // des na <tshangs pa> gang gi mgon po <r gyur pa’i sangs rgyas de> la // <khyod> ci-<i> phyir dad <pa dang> ’dun <pa> lhod par byed <pa yin nam> //*; “Your spiritual preceptor, the four-faced one <Brahmā>, certainly has faith in the excellent Muni. Thus, why <are you> lacking faith and devotion towards one <this Buddha> who is superior to him <Brahmā>?”

awakening, to teach what he has understood in order to help other people. A famous episode where Brahmā recognizes Śākyamuni's superiority as a teacher is found in the *Keṅvaddha Sutta* (*Dīghanikāya* 11). In this text, Brahmā is asked a question about the cessation of fundamental elements. Brahmā boasts about being the creator of the world, but must concede that he is unable to provide an answer and ends up sending the questioner to ask the Buddha.

This part of Sa paṅ's statement brings to the fore a contrast between the Brahmins' attitude towards the Buddha (their lack of respect is made clear both in their initial statement [see 4.1] and their behavior at the beginning of the meeting [see II. The meeting]) and Brahmā's attitude towards the same. One can also, as does Rin spungs pa (see n. 68), identify a faulty lack of "transitivity" on the part of the opponent: the Brahmins show respect and rely on Brahmā; Brahmā himself shows respect and relies on the Buddha; but the opponent refuses to show respect and rely on the Buddha.

[3] The interrogative form of this sentence is merely rhetorical. Indeed, this statement constitutes a central point of Sa paṅ's refutation of the opponent (the consequence to be drawn from this argument will be discussed below): Brahmā sleeps, and this slumber is caused by a state of mental confusion, or ignorance (*gti mug*, *moha*), one of the three basic afflictions (*nyon mongs*, *kleśa*).⁶⁹ The connection between the two will be inquired into further in section 5 ("The slumber argument").

[4] A citation is adduced at this point, whose role appears to be the support of the claim [3] that "Brahmā slumbers."⁷⁰ This passage enumerates well-known attributes of Brahmā: the four arms, the four faces (from which he emits the four Vedas), his birth from the lotus (which itself arises from Viṣṇu's navel). As for Brahmā sleeping, one can trace this feature to accounts, such as the one from the *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, of the world's dissolution at the end of a cosmic era (*kalpa*) or "day of Brahmā," followed by its recreation after a "night of Brahmā" during which "Brahmā, who is one with Nārāyaṇa, satiate with the demolition of the universe, sleeps upon his serpent-bed — contemplated, the lotus born, by the ascetic inhabitants of the Janaloka."⁷¹

One could have imagined that this citation would find its source in Brahmanical literature — Sa paṅ would thus be adducing support from the opponent's own scriptures. One is, however, dealing here with a Buddhist

⁶⁹ sPos khang pa adds "*da dung*" between *gti mug che bas* and *gnyid kyis*, meaning that Brahmā is overcome both by mental confusion and slumber, without suggesting a relation between the two.

⁷⁰ In the biography by Yar klungs pa, the *Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring*, the enumeration of the "great qualities of Lord Brahmā" is considered to precede the actual debate (*Yar klungs rnam thar 'bring* 34b2: *dbang phyug tshangs pa'i yon tan che ba brjod // de nas bla ma chos rje slob ma'i tshogs // 'phrog byed ral pa can dang rtsod par brtsam //*). Yar klungs pa does not provide an account of the argument and adopts a scenario of the second type, where magical events prevail.

⁷¹ *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 1,3.24–25, translation by H. H. Wilson (1840: 25). See also 6,4.44ff, translated *ibid.* p. 634. I am grateful to Tomohiro Manabe for pointing out the *Viṣṇupurāṇa* to me as a source for Brahmā's sleep.

source. The stanza that Sa paṅ is citing in this narrative can be identified as a verse from the **Suprātaprabhāstotram*.⁷²

The **Suprātaprabhāstotra*

The **Suprātaprabhāstotram*⁷³ (Tib. *Rab tu snga bar nam lang pa*) is a hymn of praise to the Buddha composed by the King of Kaśmīr Śrīharṣadeva (ruling maybe from 1113–1125). It was translated into Tibetan by the Indian paṇḍit Rājaśrījñānamitra and the Tibetan translator Ke'u brgad yon tan dpal before the middle of the thirteenth century.⁷⁴

In this hymn, the author praises the Buddha by way of contrast with a number of figures of the Brahmanical pantheon, such as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the sun and moon, etc. These figures are, for the most part, not identified by name (Brahmā is one of the exceptions), but supposedly recognizable by the audience via the characteristic features mentioned in the first three pādas of each stanza.

Sixteen verses of the work follow a common model: the description of the non-Buddhist figures ends, in the third pāda (in one case the second pāda) with the mention that the figure in question sleeps (*gnyid log gyur*, *gnyid log*, *gnyid mthug log par gyur*, *nyal ba gyur*) — in one occasion, is drunk (*myos par gyur*). The author of the hymn is obviously well acquainted with the various stories linked to the characters he describes and thus might have in mind specific passages (that I fail to identify) where they are described as sleeping.

The slumber attributed to each Brahmanical deity provides the basis for the contrast introduced in the fourth pāda: there, the Buddha, qualified in each stanza by the feature of the “ten powers” (*stobs bcu*, *daśa[tathāgata] balāni*),⁷⁵ is praised as being always, as the title of the hymn states, “*rab tu*

⁷² Among the narratives that cite this verse, Bla ma dam pa and Bo dong (who obviously bases himself on Bla ma dam pa's account) are the only ones who actually provide an identification of its source. The stanza in the canonical version (D239b4–5) reads: *rab mchog lag pa bzhi pa bcu drug phyed phyed phyogs kyi gdong pa can // bzlas dang nyes pa'i cho ga shes shing nges brjod rig byed 'don pa po // dri med padma'i skye gnas tshang pa de yang rab tu gnyid log 'gyur // stobs bcu mnga' ba khyod ni rtag tu rab tu snga bar sad pa'o //* The citation in *lHo pa rnam thar* is almost literal, but the omission of the expression “*rab tu*” in the third pāda makes this line non-metrical. Another difference is the reading “*nges pa'i cho ga*” shared by biographies that cite this verse, whereas sDe dge has “*nyes pa'i cho ga*”.

⁷³ Both the sDe dge (D1167, *bsTod tshogs*, Ka 239a4–240b5) and Peking (P2056, 280a1–281b7) versions give the Sanskrit phonetic equivalent “*su pra bha ta pra bha ta sto tram*”.

⁷⁴ This hymn is included by bCom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri (1227–1305) in his survey of Buddhist literature that was probably written in the late 1260s or early 1270s (van der Kuijp and Schaeffer 2009: 51; this text figures under the No 28.28 in *ibid*: 247). I am currently unable to present any hypothesis pertaining to its popularity and diffusion.

⁷⁵ A list of the ten powers of the Tathāgata (*daśatathāgatabalāni*), each of which consists of a special knowledge, is provided in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*, No. 120–129: (1) knowledge of what is established and non-established (*sthānasthānajñāna*); (2) of the maturation of deeds (*karmavipākajñāna*); (3) of the various inclinations (*nānādhimuktijñānabala*); (4) of the world with its various realms (*nānādhatujñāna*); (5) of the highness and lowness of the faculties (*indriyavarāvarajñāna*); (6) of the path wherever it goes (*sarvatragāmanipratipajñāna*); (7) of the affliction, purification, and establishment of meditations (*dhyāna*), liberation, contemplation (*samādhi*) and equalisations (*sarvadhyanāvīmokṣasamādhisamāpattisamkleśavyavadānavyutthānajñāna*); (8) of memory of previous lives (*pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna*); (9) of death and birth (*cyutyutpattijñāna*); (10) of the destruction of streams/defilements (*aś[ī]dravakṣayajñāna*). This rendering of the terms is based on the French translation in Renou and Filliozat 1996: 537 (§ 2278). Anacker (1998 : 277 n. 12) lists the ten powers as follows (with slight modification of their order): “(1) one knows with insight, as it is, what can be as what can be, and what can't be as what can't be, (2) one knows with insight as

snga bar nam langs pa" (in 2 of these 16 verses, as well as in 2 other verses), or "*rab tu snga bar sad pa*," (in 13 verses).⁷⁶ As the Sanskrit version is no longer extant, it is not possible to know whether the original version used different terms, or if the translator took the initiative to make variations on the probable Sanskrit expression **suprātaprabhāta*. While "*sad pa*" literally connotes awakening from sleep, "*nam langs pa*," which describes the break of dawn, can consequently be associated either with "awakening" or with "radiance." In view of the contrast intended with "slumber" by the author, the first option is more appropriate. Although the expressions "*sad pa*" and "*nam langs pa*" are not lexically connected to "awakening" taken in a spiritual sense, one can surmise that this type of association was intended by the author, in particular if one recalls that the traditional account of the Buddha's awakening has him attain the perfect enlightenment at dawn, in the last hours of the night.⁷⁷

[5] One can recognize in the last sentence of Sa paṅ's argument the fourth pāda of the stanza from the **Suprātaprabhātastotram* cited in [4]. But in the debate, this statement is not a praise addressed to the Buddha: lHo pa's text thus has "*de ni*" where the original hymn has "*khyod ni*."⁷⁸ One can note that the final expression in the fourth pāda of lHo pa's version is "*rab tu mnga' ba nyid du nam langs pa*," which should be corrected to "*rab tu snga ba nyid du nam langs pa*" (as in the parallel versions), whereas in the version of the hymn preserved in the canon, this particular verse uses the expression "*rab tu snga bar sad pa*."

With [4] and [5], Sa paṅ brings to the fore a contrast between a slumbering Brahmā and an awakened Buddha.

5. The "slumber argument"

The short statement [3] "Brahmā sleeps due to great mental confusion" constitutes an argument which I will refer to as the "slumber argument." It is supplemented, in lHo pa's narrative, with the citation of the stanza from the **Suprātaprabhātastotra* [4] together with the adaptation of its last pāda [5].

they really are, the karmic results of past, future, and present actions, (3) one knows with insight, as they really are, the various elements in the world, (4) one knows with insight, as they are, the various dispositions of other beings, (5) one knows with insight, as they are, practices and the processes of afflictions and alleviations, (6) one knows with insight as they are, the faculties of sentient beings, (7) one knows with insight, as it is, the Path that leads everywhere, (8) one recollects one's various previous lives, (9) one sees the decrease and rebirth of beings as it is, (10) one realizes the end of the all distress."

⁷⁶ The expression *rtaḡ pa nyid du gnyid sad* occurs in the last of the sixteen verses (that lacks the expression *stobs bcu mnga' ba*), and *rab tu nam langs* in the following one where it is not opposed to "sleep."

⁷⁷ This is found in various sūtras in the *Majjhimanikāya* (for instance the *Bhayabherava-sutta*, *Bodhirajakumara-sutta*, etc.) and repeated in the *Lalitavistāra* as well as in Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita* (xiv.86 "At the moment of the fourth watch when the dawn came up and all that moves or moves not was stilled, the great seer reached the stage which knows no alteration, the sovereign leader the state of omniscience" [transl. in Johnston 1995]). Note that the Buddha is also held to enter *parinirvāṇa* at dawn (cf. *Dīghanikāya*, *Mahāparinibbana-sutta*).

⁷⁸ As this last sentence, although based on the same source as [4], is not a direct quotation, one can understand why other authors distinguish it from the preceding three pādas, adding "*zhes dang*" or "*ces pa dang*" between [4] and [5] (see appendix 1).

Before we investigate what type of effect may have been intended by these statements, it is worth taking a closer look at statement [3]. There is indeed an Indian source which offers a relevant precedent for the association of slumber and mental confusion in an argument against non-Buddhist opponents: Bhāviveka's *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* (MHK) and its commentary, the *Tarkajvālā* (TJ), attributed to the same author by most Tibetans.⁷⁹ Consideration of the place and role of this argument in these texts will help us drawing out a number of implications that are not explicit in the debate narrative under consideration.

5.1 The "slumber argument" in the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā* and *Tarkajvālā*

In the ninth chapter of the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā*, commented upon in the corresponding chapter of the *Tarkajvālā*, Bhāviveka takes up to criticize the Mīmāṃsā.⁸⁰ When answering to the *pūrvapakṣa* stated in MHK 9.11, which presents the "way favored (*juṣṭa*) by gods and seers" as being old, good and reasonable (*yuktam*), Bhāviveka presents a series of arguments that arrive at the ironical conclusion that what is reasonable (*yuktam*) is, rather, to reject it.⁸¹ The first of these arguments, expressed in MHK 9.59, targets specifically

⁷⁹ Since the authorship of the *Tarkajvālā* is of no relevance in the present discussion, I will, for simplicity's sake, adopt the Tibetan ascription and speak of both MHK and TJ as the works of Bhāviveka. For a detailed discussion of this as yet unsettled issue, see notably Seyfort Ruegg 1990 and Krasser forthcoming.

⁸⁰ The ninth chapter of the *Madhyamakahrdayakārikā*, entitled *Mīmāṃsātattvanirṇayāvatāra*, has been edited in Kawasaki 1976 (together with a translation of the *pūrvapakṣas*) and 1987, and translated in Lindtner 2001. The commentary thereupon is found in TJ D271a2–320b5 (*dpyod pa can gyi de kho na nyid gtan la dbab pa la 'jug pas le'u dgu pa'i rab tu byed pa brtsam par bya ste*). Kawasaki (1974) summarized the *pūrvapakṣas* of the Mīmāṃsakas presented in the first 17 verses (commented upon in TJ D271a2–278a1) into seven points: i) the primary importance of sacrificial rites for deliverance; ii) the Vedas are the exclusive authority for the rites prescribed in the śāstras; iii) the Vedas are not a human production (*apuruṣakartṛtva*), and were revealed by the ancient seers and uninterruptedly transmitted, hence they are free from error; iv) the eternal validity of the Vedas is based on the eternity of the word; v) the Vedas give access to knowledge of matters that are beyond human perception and cannot be inferred; vi) Scriptures are an independent means of knowledge that is never infirmed by reasoning; vii) there is no omniscient being – human beings are not free from error and cannot know suprasensorial matter.

⁸¹ MHK 9.11 reads: "This old, good and reasonable way, favored by the gods and the seers, [while] accepted by the wise, this threefold [way] is rejected by women and śūdras who are alien to the contents of the Vedas." (*devarsijuṣṭaṃ śiṣṭeṣṭaṃ purāṇaṃ vartma śobhanam / vedārthabāhyaiḥ strīśūdrair yuktam yat tyajyate trayī //*). As noted by Krasser (forthcoming), five arguments, presented in MHK 9.59, 9.94, 9.120, 9.127 and 9.139, mirror the *pūrvapakṣa* in using the words "*yuktam yat tyajyate trayī*," but, "*yuktam*" being used as an adverb, the phrase now has the meaning "it is reasonable that the threefold [way] should be rejected." In 9.94 Bhāviveka argues that it should be rejected because the Vedas contain bad logic, in 9.120 because they contain erroneous prescriptions (for instance, that sins can be washed away with water), in 9.127 because they contain detrimental prescriptions (for instance, that one can attain Brahmā's world by jumping into a fire or, the TJ expands, by jumping off a cliff or fasting), in 9.139 because they contain erroneous teachings (such as the teaching that trees have a soul). The *uttarapakṣa*-section pertaining to MHK 9.11 goes on until MHK 9.151.

these gods that favor the way of the Vedas and, first of all, points to their vicious conduct:⁸²

Having observed the corrupt conduct of the promulgators of the threefold way (*trayīmārgapraṇetr*), Brahmā, Keśava (= Viṣṇu), Śūlin (= Śiva), it is reasonable to reject the three [Vedas].⁸³

In the verses that follow — cum TJ and a number of supplementary verses in the Tibetan version — the author proceeds to illustrate these gods' corrupt behavior and to make explicit the logical link that enables one to go from the observation of such conduct to the conclusion that the Vedas should be rejected.

5.1.1. Illustration of the gods' corrupt conduct

“Corrupt conduct” (*kleśātmikā caryā*), as the expression itself makes clear, is linked with and revealing of the presence of afflictions (*nyon mongs, kleśa*). According to the Buddhist model, the three major afflictions are included in the triad of lust/desire (*'dod chags, rāga*), hatred (*zhe sdang, dveṣa*), and mental confusion, or ignorance (*gti mug, moha*). To exemplify how the three gods adopt behaviors that instantiate these three, Bhāviveka draws from numerous Vedic, Puranic, and epic sources.⁸⁴

For instance, in order to demonstrate Brahmā's affliction by lust, Bhāviveka recalls Brahmā's incestuous attraction for Prajāpati's daughters, hence his own granddaughters, which led him to ejaculate as they were pulling him, some by the hand, some by a tuft of his hair, towards the place where Prajāpati's sacrifice was taking place — Brahmā's semen, poured into the sacrificial fire, gave birth to Bṛghu, Āṅgira, etc.⁸⁵ MHK 9.63 further mentions Brahmā and Śiva's passion for Tilottamā, the beautiful nymph (*apsarā*) that caused Śiva to grow four heads, and Brahmā five, in order to be able to contemplate her as she circumambulated them.⁸⁶

Śiva's hatred is illustrated by his arson of Tripura, the Asuras' capital city, and his plucking out Pūṣṇa's teeth and Bhaga's eyes for, respectively,

⁸² Further arguments targetting the gods address the question of the unity of nature of Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu (MHK 9.90–91ab), the contradiction between their respective statements, as each claims to be the sole creator of the world (MHK 9.89), or the mere possibility of a god that is cause of the universe (MHK 9.95ff.).

⁸³ MHK 9.59: *trayīmārgapraṇetrāṇi brahmakesavaśūlinām / drṣṭvā kleśātmikāṇi caryāṇi yuktāṇi yat tyajyate trayī //*.

⁸⁴ Brahmā's affliction with desire is dealt with in the additional Tibetan verses 14–19 (TJ D291a5–7). Further examples involving Viṣṇu and Śiva occur in the course of subsequent discussions, for instance in MHK 9.63, 9.67, etc. Hatred is illustrated principally in MHK 9.64 (TJ D293a2–6), while Brahmā's murderous activities are recounted in TJ D291b6–7. Mental confusion, according to TJ, is the object of MHK 9.65 (TJ D293a6); see n. 89 below.

⁸⁵ TJ D291b1–4. The extra Tibetan verse 19 concludes the enumeration of Brahmā's lustful activities (transl. Kawasaki 1992: 134): “The sexual act of dog and ass is disdainfully treated by the sacred gods. But, what is their difference from such beasts, in case they also have incestuous relations?”

⁸⁶ We are dealing here with another incestuous passion of Brahmā, as, according to the *Skanda Purāṇa*, Brahmā actually qualifies as Tilottamā's father insofar as he is said to have created her.

laughing and winking at him.⁸⁷ Viṣṇu’s affliction by hate is demonstrated by the evocation of actions (such as destroying entire armies) perpetrated at the time of his incarnation as Kṛṣṇa,⁸⁸ Brahmā’s hatred by the murder of various demons (TJ D291b6–7). We will come back to the issue of the “killing of enemies” below (see under 5.1.2.2.i).

Slumber as revealing of mental confusion

Lust and hatred receive significantly more attention than mental confusion. Indeed, when it comes to provide illustrations for this affliction, Bhāviveka lacks vivid anecdotes. According to the TJ, this third affliction is dealt with in MHK 9.65⁸⁹:

Slayer of Brahmā, drinker of intoxicating drinks, libidinous, this is the Lord who supposedly sees the truth; what should one say of those who do not see the truth, who follow his path!⁹⁰

In this verse, aside from lust and slaughter (the paragon of hateful behavior), we find the mention of the drinking of alcohol, which might be intended as an illustration of (or a metaphor for?) mental confusion. A more explicit illustration of this third affliction is provided in the TJ in a passage meant to summarize the three afflictions pertaining to Viṣṇu. One finds there, first, a list of the three afflictions (the expression “complete stupidity” [*kun du rmongs pa nyid*] replaces here mental confusion) and their associated behaviors:

He is subdued by lust, because he stole other people’s wives and riches.

He is subdued by hate, because he killed the Asuras Hayagriva, Sunda, Upasunda, Hiranyakaśipu, Kaṃsa, etc.

He is completely stupid, because he is a follower of the Vedas who deceived Bali, was regaled by Kucela, and stole *bsil byed ma* (=?) (or let it be stolen?).⁹¹

Three illustrations of mental confusion are alluded to in this passage. The first one refers to the episode in which Viṣṇu tricks the Asura Bali (Tib. *gtor*

⁸⁷ MHK 9.64. According to the gloss in TJ D293a4–6, Pūṣṇa’s and Bhaga’s amusement was due to Śiva’s appearance as he showed up late at a sacrifice “his head decorated by a garland of cranes, his body anointed with ash, holding cranes in his hands, and acting infuriated.”

⁸⁸ See notably the extra Tibetan verses 30–31.

⁸⁹ TJ introduces this verse with the words “*gti mug drag po can yang yin te*” (TJ D293a6).

⁹⁰ MHK 9.65: *brahmahā madyapaḥ kāmī dṛṣṭatatto* yadīśvaraḥ / kā kathadrṣṭatattvānām** tatpaddhatyanugāminām //* (* Kawasaki °*tatto*; ** Kawasaki °*tatvānām*). The expression *brahmahā* means here “slayer of Brahmā,” as the Tibetan translation “*tshangs bsad*” suggests, and not, as translated by Lindtner, one who can “kill a priest.” This is confirmed by MHK 9.90 and TJ D295b5–4, where this epithet of Śiva is explained by the fact that the latter cut off one of Brahmā’s heads.

⁹¹ TJ D294a2–4; P332b2–5: *de la gzhan gyi bud med dang nor 'phrog par byed pa'i phyir chags pas zil gyis mnan pa nyid kyang yin par 'gyur ro // rta mgrin dang sun da (P 'da) dang / nye ba'i sun da (P 'da) dang / hi ra ṅu ka shi bu dang / kang sa la sogs pa'i lha ma yin bsad pa'i phyir zhe sdang gis zil gyis mnan pa yang yin no // gtor ma bsil pa dang / gos ngan gyis (em.; D gyis; P gyi) mgron (P 'gron) du bos pa dang / bsil byed ma phrogs (P 'phrogs) pa la sogs pa rig byed pa nyid kyi phyir kun du rmongs pa nyid kyang yin no //*.

ma) at the time of his fifth incarnation as a dwarf (*Vāmana*). The second could refer to the meeting of *Kṛṣṇa* with his former fellow student *Kucela* (Tib. *gos ngan pa*, lit. “poorly clothed”) or *Sudāman*. Although the latter and his family are starving, *Kṛṣṇa* eats the rice brought by *Kucela* as a gift and sends him back without food. The story ends on a happy note: when *Kucela* comes home, he finds a palace offered by *Kṛṣṇa* in place of his hut. I am unable to identify a source for the third example.⁹²

Immediately following this list, *Bhāviveka* introduces what appears to be a citation:

One could also say:

Nārāyaṇa is endowed with lust, because he ravished 16,000 wives, like a bad king;⁹³ or because he was enamored with herdswomen and he enjoyed their erotic games (**rasalilā*), like any herdsman.

Nārāyaṇa is also endowed with hatred, because he constantly engages in killing, like hunters and fowlers, etc.

Nārāyaṇa is endowed with mental confusion, because he sleeps during four moons, like frogs and snakes.⁹⁴

In this second passage we find mental confusion illustrated by slumber (*gnyid log*). Everyone is familiar with *Viṣṇu*'s cosmic sleep. However, here, the specification “four moons” hints to another event: *Viṣṇu*'s seasonal yogic-sleep (*yoganidrā*) during the monsoon period, a four-month period accordingly called *Caturmāsa* that runs from the last week of July to the last week of November. The comparison with frogs and snakes (which, in itself, is probably not very flattering) certainly refers here to the hibernating habits of these animals, although, contrary to *Viṣṇu*, frogs hibernate during the dry season (and for more than four months) and wake up at the beginning of the monsoon, as pictured in the famous “Frog-hymn” of the *Ṛg-Veda*.⁹⁵

Why associate slumber with mental confusion? There is more to this than the simple popular association of a slow mind or lesser intelligence with slumber, a figurative association also reflected in the Buddhist context by

⁹² In the third illustration, *bsil byed ma*, literally “the cooling one,” could be the name of someone (“*ma*” possibly indicates a feminine figure) or something (such as a jewel). TJ D295a7–b1 states that *Viṣṇu* created “*Marana*” (i.e., “Death”), who ravished *bsil byed ma*, and that at some point of the story *bsil byed ma* had “entered into the earth” (*sa'i nang du zhugs par gyur pa*).

⁹³ This is an allusion to the 16,000 girls enraptured by the demon *Nāraka*, which *Viṣṇu* (as *Kṛṣṇa*) married, supposedly to protect the reputation that they had remained virgins. The story is recounted for instance in the *Mahābhārata*.

⁹⁴ TJ D294a4–6; P332b5–7: *sred med kyi bu ni 'dod chags dang bcas pa yin te / bud med stong phrag bcu drug 'phrog par byed pa'i phyir rgyal po ngan pa bzhin zhes bya ba'am / phyugs rdzi (D rji) mo dang lhan cig kun du chags (P cig tu chags) shing 'dod pas rtse ba nyams su myong bar byed pa'i phyir ba lang rdzi gzhān bzhin no // sred med kyi bu ni zhe sdang dang bcas pa yang yin te / rtag tu srog gcod pa la zhugs pa yin pa'i phyir / rñgon pa dang / bya ba (D pa / ba) la sogs pa bzhin no // sred med kyi bu ni gti mug dang bcas pa yin te / zla ba bzhi'i bar du gnyid log pa'i phyir sba la dang sbrul la sogs pa bzhin no /*. It is possible that this passage, like many others in this section, is issued from a non-Brahmanical source criticizing the gods and refuting the Vedas. TJ (D290b3–4) names the **Barhaspatitantra* (*lHa'i bla ma phur bus bstan pa'i rgyud*) as being one such source.

⁹⁵ See Bender 1917: 187ff. on the frogs' hibernation habits. Bender notes (ibid., p. 188) that “In the *Harivaṃśa*, *Viṣṇuparvan* 95.23=8803 the frogs croak after having slept eight months. In *RV.7.1031,8*, and 9 the frogs raise their voices after having lain silent for twelve months.”

expressions such as *mohanidrā* (“the sleep of mental confusion”).⁹⁶ Sleep is also found in association with mental error in Buddhist philosophical texts: the mental states that take place in sleep are delusive insofar as what appears as their object is in fact not existent. Dharmakīrti explains for instance in PVin 1.29 that people who sleep — just like people deluded by lust, fear, etc. — see things that do not exist as if they were there.⁹⁷ For philosophers of idealist persuasion, the dream provides an analogy par excellence as a state where objects seem to appear that do not exist in reality.⁹⁸ Moreover, in addition to constituting pseudo-perceptions in this sense, dream-states also do not allow an awareness of the objects that are actually present, for sleep prevents the unobstructed sensorial perception of these objects. Hence, one who is “sleeping,” whether he is dreaming or lethargic, is one who does not apprehend reality correctly.

There is, however, a difficulty with regard to this explanation. To anticipate our discussion of the rationale behind the slumber argument, one can note already that the relation that is postulated by Bhāviveka between the three afflictions (*kleśa*) and the corresponding corrupt conduct (*kleśātmikā caryā*) is a causal one. The presence of afflictions causes one person to act in a certain way, and from the observation of a certain type of conduct, one can infer the presence of the relevant affliction that is its cause. This premise, as we will see, is not unproblematic. In the case of mental confusion and its illustration by the state of slumber, one can raise the question whether some slumber-states might not have another source than mental confusion. Unfortunately, neither the MHK nor the TJ venture an explanation. The *Abhidharmakośa* (AK) does provide some ground for the association of certain kinds of states comparable to slumber with afflictions and further with a lack of understanding. In particular, *styāna* (apathy, torpor) and *middha* (sloth, languor) are classified among the “manifestly active defilements” (*pariyavasthāna*) in AK 5.47–48a. Both *styāna* and *middha* have the same action, namely, making the mind lackadaisical, and are nourished by the same five factors: tiredness (*tandrā*), dullness (*arati*), yawning (*viṅmbhikā*), drowsiness after eating (*bhakte 'samatā*), mental languidness (*cetaso līnatva*). In AK 5.59 and *Bhāṣya*, both are described as obstacles (*nīvaraṇa*) among the defilements (*kleśa*) and secondary defilements (*upakleśa*), insofar as they destroy the element of discrimination (*prajñāskandha*) and thereby generate doubt about the Truths. The *Bhāṣya* specifies that *middha* can be good, bad or neutral (but it is either bad or neutral in the Kāmadhātu), and is only a manifestly active defilement in the second case.⁹⁹

There is thus a background in Buddhist literature for treating slumber as a negative state associated with the absence of mental clarity. Whether a

⁹⁶ For instance, the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (D133a1–2) explains the “sangs” of *sangs rgyas* (*buddha*) in terms of awakening from the sleep of mental confusion (*gti mug gi gnyid sangs pa, mohanidrāprabuddhatva*). David Higgins, whom I thank for this reference, also informed me that many rNying ma sources build on the association of sleep/ignorance and waking/wisdom; an illustration can be found for instance in Klong chen Rab 'byams's *Theg mchog mdzod* (I, 1026.6): *kun gzhi gnyid lta bu 'khrul snang gi rmi lam thams cad 'char ba'i rten du gyur pa las sangs par byed dgos...*

⁹⁷ PVin 1.29=PV 3.282: *kāmaśokabhayonmādacaurasvapnādyupaplutāḥ / abhūtān api paśyanti purato 'vasthitān iva*. See further PVin 1.32=PV 3.283 and PVin 1.29,1–5 (Tib. 76,3–10).

⁹⁸ See as an example the analogy with sleep in Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā*.

⁹⁹ The various sorts of *middha* are discussed in AK 2.30cd and 5.52cd with reference to the Kāmadhātu.

non-Buddhist opponent would be ready to accept this association is another matter. An investigation of the value attributed to sleep in non-Buddhist systems would exceed the scope of the present paper, but let us just note that if sleep is on occasion negatively connoted in the Brahmanical tradition,¹⁰⁰ it may also constitute an opportunity to access higher truths.¹⁰¹

5.1.2. *The rationale behind the Madhyamakahrdayakārikā / Tarkajvālā's argument*

5.1.2.1 *Ad personam accusation*

The observation of a lustful, hateful, or mentally confused conduct certainly provides the ground for an ad personam accusation. Such an accusation may be used per se, in order to discredit the person. For instance in the case under consideration, Viṣṇu's sins certainly undermine his reputation of "Great man" (*puruṣottama*).¹⁰² But there is usually more at stake behind an ad personam accusation. Such accusations, in a form termed "ad hominem argument," are often used in disputation as a means to dismiss the opponent's thesis, attacking the person of the opponent rather than the thesis that she professes or the evidence that she presents.¹⁰³ In the case under consideration, the direct opponent of Bhāviveka are the proponents of the Mīmāṃsā, but the target of the accusation are the gods that they recognize as teachers and leaders. By undermining the truth of these gods' teaching, one can expect that the implicit thesis of the direct opponent, namely, that these gods' teaching should be followed, is refuted as well.

Ad hominem arguments are generally classified as argumentative fallacies. They are rhetorically advantageous for sidetracking the opponent, leading him to a self-justification process that has nothing to do with the matter at hand. They are especially effective in influencing the subjective perception that the audience has of the speaker, for they cast doubt on the credibility of the opponent. They often do so by way of putting doubt on the opponent's respectability rather than on his intellectual capacities — accusations or insinuation thus frequently bear on conducts that deviate from social or legal norms of morality (sexual practices, consumption of drugs, alcohol abuse, etc.). From a logical point of view, however, the assumption that a person's statements are incorrect on account of this person's actions, immoral as they may be, is unfounded. Still, in informal logic, criticism of the person is deemed appropriate if the accusation directed to the person establishes either a biased disposition towards the issue at

¹⁰⁰ The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (2.6.29) mentions for instance that sleeping during the day may lead religious students to fall into hell. But this unhappy fate is not linked so much with sleep itself than with its side-effects, namely, the emission of seminal fluid amounting to an involuntary breach of their vows of chastity. Parallel passages are found in the *Garuḍapurāṇa*, *Brahmapurāṇa* and *Vāyupurāṇa* (I thank Marc Tiefenauer for this information).

¹⁰¹ For instance, Śaṅkara states in the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* that the nature of Brahman is experienced in deep sleep (Potter 1998: 173).

¹⁰² See MHK 9.73 (*rāgadveśadīśavalaṃ kim idṛkcaritaṃ hareḥ / anāryacaritaś caivaṃ kathaṃ sa puruṣottamaḥ //*) and TJ D295a3–4.

¹⁰³ Cf. Groarke 2008.

hand, linked with a possible willingness to deceive, or the lack of capacity to make a correct statement regarding the subject matter of the discussion.¹⁰⁴

In the religious context, the question is whether the accusation of immoral conduct is pertinent insofar as the subject matter touches precisely morality itself, a vast issue that the present paper does not intend to unravel. In the Indian context, one must take into consideration the important concept of “person of authority” (*āpta*) attached to persons who promulgate or reveal religious truths, who are characterized by a number of qualities, notably moral ones.¹⁰⁵ One can mention for instance¹⁰⁶ the five epithets with which Dignāga qualifies the Buddha in the salutatory verse (*maṅgalaśloka*) of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, and Dharmakīrti’s commentary thereon in the *Pramāṇasiddhi*-chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika*¹⁰⁷; the characteristics of the *āpta* described by Vātsyāyana in the *Nyāyabhāṣya*¹⁰⁸; or the discussion on the “good man” (*sad, sādhu*) in Kumārila’s *Tantravārttika*.¹⁰⁹ Personal authority established on this basis generally serves as a ground to derive scriptural authority.¹¹⁰ In such a model, ad hominem argumentation is thus especially

¹⁰⁴ Groarke (2008) summarizes: “One may, for example, reasonably cast doubt on an arguer’s reasoning by pointing out that the arguer lacks the requisite knowledge to make appropriate judgments in the area in question, or by pointing out that the arguer has a vested interest.”

¹⁰⁵ On this topic, see Eltschinger 2007: 75ff. Eltschinger points out three aspects of the *āpta*’s qualities shared across philosophico-religious schools: knowledge, moral purity, compassion (ibid. p. 79).

¹⁰⁶ For more references, see Eltschinger 2007: 76 n. 28.

¹⁰⁷ The interpretation of these five epithets and their relation has given rise to many discussions. See for instance Franco 1997: 15–43. A list of earlier publications on the subject is provided by Franco on p. 15, n. 2.

¹⁰⁸ Those are discussed in Franco 1997: 30–31, who surmizes an influence of this text on Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇasiddhi*-chapter. Franco also points out the similarity of Vātsyāyana’s argument with that of the Tantric author Sadyojyoti for Śiva’s reliability.

¹⁰⁹ Although the Mīmāṃsā ascribes authority to scriptures devoid of an author, they share in the discussion on persons of authority when it comes to the *smṛti* and to practical issues of carrying out rituals not described in Vedic texts by calling to the example of the “good men.” For a discussion of the “good man” by Kumārila (in the section of the *Tantravārttika* [TV] commenting on *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* I.3.5–7 [transl. Jhā 1998: 169–203]) and in the *Manusmṛti* and Medhātithi’s commentary, see Ganeri 2004: 214–216. I am extremely grateful to Jonardon Ganeri for pointing out to me that Kumārila is facing an ad personam accusation targetting the putative “good men,” an accusation that draws from evidence of vicious conduct that recalls (but without replicating them) the examples given by Bhāviveka. Eleven cases of alleged transgressions of the *dharma* (*dharmavyatikrama*) are enumerated in TV 124,15ff. (transl. Jhā 1998: 182–183). The last one concerns “people of our own days”; the first ten episodes relate to famous figures: Prajāpati, Indra and Nahuṣa, Vasiṣṭha and Purūruvas, Viśvāmitra, Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana, Bhīṣma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Vāsudeva (Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa) and Arjuna. After a general answer to the issue that “among good men also, we find some behaving contrary to the Law, just like Doctors leading unhealthy lives” (TV 126,11; transl. Jhā 1998: 184ff.), Kumārila answers each of the eleven cases individually (TV 129,20ff.; transl. Jhā 1998: 189–201). In TV 129,16 (transl. Jhā 1998: 189) Kumārila distinguishes four ways to deal with the problematic passages, invoking linguistic ambiguities and the possibility of re-interpretation, and drawing out the specificity of Vedic rules with regard to the subject of the prohibition. A full comparison of the models presupposed by Kumārila and Bhāviveka is beyond the scope of the present article, but I intend to return to it on another occasion.

¹¹⁰ As noted by Eltschinger (2007: 92ff.), Dharmakīrti distantiates himself from the other schools by reversing the attribution of authority: the authority of the person cannot be established on the basis of her mental properties (those cannot be apprehended by common sentient beings) and must be derived from the authority of the scriptures, which is itself to be established via a number of criteria and tests of coherence, etc.

pertinent, and one that targets morality is bound to be effective.¹¹¹ Bhāviveka's argument goes yet one step further, for it suggests that the relation between the nature of the teacher and the rejection of the teaching can be established logically. His resort to an *ad personam* accusation against the gods, who both profess and personify the Vedic teaching, thus aims at a conclusion that necessarily follows from the evidence.

5.1.2.2 Logical grounding

Commenting on MHK 9.59, Bhāviveka sets out to present the logical grounding of the argument:

What is said by one who is endowed with undefiled wisdom precisely on account of being devoid of afflictions, this corresponds to reality. But the words of those who indulge in desires endowed with afflictions, having fallen under the influence of negative forces, those words do not correspond to reality. Since it is the deed of someone endowed with afflictions, it is only correct, not incorrect, that the triple view should be discarded.¹¹²

Let us unpack this explanation, which introduces the central element of Bhāviveka's argument: the notion of wisdom. Bhāviveka's essential claim is that (i) afflictions prevent wisdom, in other words, correct apprehension of reality, and (ii) a correct teaching requires that the teacher has a correct understanding of what he teaches.

i. Afflictions and wisdom

The presence of afflictions is repeatedly presented as a ground for rejecting someone's wisdom. For instance in MHK 9.63, Brahmā and Śiva's passion for Tilottamā is invoked as a ground to refute that their mind is one that sees the truth (*tattvārthadarśanī buddhiḥ*); in the same way, Viṣṇu's thefts and murders mentioned in MKH 9.66 and 9.67 contradict the notion that he is one who sees the truth (*dr̥ṣṭatattva*). The relation between the lack of afflictions and wisdom and the converse relation between the lack of wisdom and the presence of afflictions (or corrupt conduct) is mainly

¹¹¹ Eltschinger (2007: 80) illustrates the feature of the *āpta*'s eradication of moral faults in a variety of texts: "Y'āpta de la Y{ukti}D{īpikā} est «affranchi [des passions] de concupiscence, etc. » (*rāgādiviyukta*), «possède un esprit [moralement] immaculé» (*aduṣṭamanas*); celui de Kundakunda et de Candrakīrti est dénué de toutes les fautes morales sans exception; le Brahmā du P{adārtha}Dh{arma}S{aṅgraha} est "pourvu de dépassement" (*vairāgya...sampanna*); le Vyāsa du M{ahā}Bh{ārata} « "possède une âme purifiée» (*bhavitatman*); Y'āpta de la C{araka}S{aṃhitā} est immaculé (*adoṣa*), affranchi du *rajas* et du *tamas*, a vu disparaître peur (*bhaya*), concupiscence (*rāga*), haine (*dveṣa*), convoitise (*lobha*), hébété/erreur (*moha*) et orgueil (*māna*)."
(Additions within curly brackets are mine.)

¹¹² TJ D291a3–5; P329a3–5 *nyon mongs pa dang bral ba nyid kyis sgrub pa (P la) med pa'i ye shes dang ldan pa'i gsung ni don ji lta ba (P ji ltar) bzhin yin par 'gyur gyi // gang yang gdon gyis zin pa bzhin du nyon mongs pa dang bcas pa'i 'dod pa'i rjes su zhugs pa rnams kyi tshig gi don ji lta ba bzhin ma yin te / nyon mongs pa (P om. pa) dang bcas pas byas pa yin pa'i phyir lta ba gsum po nyid ni spang bar rigs pa kho na yin gyi mi rigs pa ma yin no /*.

described in terms of positive and negative concomitance. For instance in TJ's commentary on MHK 9.65:

For those who are not stupid, there do not arise lust, hate, and mental confusion.¹¹³

Or when commenting on MHK 9.66 that describes Viṣṇu's corrupt conduct:

On the one hand, due to such manners he is not one who understands the ultimate, and on the other hand if he did see the ultimate, it wouldn't be correct that he is endowed with such a behavior.¹¹⁴

The relation that afflictions might have with wisdom is transparent in the case of the affliction of mental confusion. It seems undisputable indeed that ignorance is incompatible with wisdom. But what about lust and hate? The only hint of an answer that Bhāviveka provides is when commenting on MHK 9.87; there he mentions that afflictions are "obfuscators" or "defilements" (*sgrib par byed pa, āvaraṇa*) of wisdom,¹¹⁵ which is reminding of the discussion in the *Abhidharmakośa* about primary and secondary afflictions that are obstacles (*nīvaraṇa*) to understanding the truth,¹¹⁶ and more generally of the notion of *kleśāvaraṇa*. This matches the contrapositive formula that we have seen in the commentary on MHK 9.59, namely "endowed with undefiled wisdom precisely on account of being devoid of afflictions."

This claim must be put into relation with the notion of wisdom that is considered here. In MHK 9.87 cum TJ, wisdom is explained in terms of knowledge of the cause of *samsāra* (i.e., the afflictions) and of liberation (i.e. the cutting of the afflictions).¹¹⁷ But Bhāviveka's understanding of wisdom also involves the idea that wisdom is the result of a change in the mental continuum. In MHK 9.61 Bhāviveka characterizes a "learned man" by his capacity to burn away the afflictions (*kleśadahana*); this is, comments TJ, precisely what it means to have wisdom: not to collect afflictions, or if one has collected them, to have pacified them.¹¹⁸ We can note in addition that it is not wisdom, and in particular the understanding that afflictions are the cause of *samsāra*, that prompts the wise to pacify his afflictions; on the contrary, the pacifying of afflictions is presented as a condition for wisdom. This excludes the option that a teacher would have wisdom, and thus satisfy the conditions for providing a correct teaching, and still would be demonstrating a corrupt behavior.

¹¹³ TJ D293a7; P331b6: *rmongs pa ma yin pa la ni 'dod chags dang / zhe sdang dang / gti mug 'byung bar mi 'gyur ro //*.

¹¹⁴ TJ D293b2–3, P332a1–2: *lugs 'dis don dam pa rtogs par 'gyur ba yang ma yin la don dam pa mthong na ni 'di lta bu'i spyod pa dang ldan par yang rigs pa ma yin no /*.

¹¹⁵ TJ D298b3; P338a4–5: *don dam pa'i ye shes la sgrib par byed pa 'dod chags dang / zhe sdang dang / gti mug rnam yod par gyur pa grol bar lta ga la 'gyur /*.

¹¹⁶ See under 5.1.1 our discussion of the background for the association of slumber with mental confusion.

¹¹⁷ TJ D298b3–4; P338a5–6: *des na 'dod chags la sogs pa ni 'khor ba'i rgyu yin la / 'dod chags zad pa la sogs pa ni thar pa'i rgyu yin no zhes bya ba'i rgyu la rmongs pa ni khyed kho na yin gyi kho bo cag ni ma yin no //*.

¹¹⁸ TJ D293b3–4; P330a7: *gang nyon mongs pa rnam sog par (P gsog par) mi byed cing / nyon mongs pa bsags pa rnam kyang zhi bar byed pa yin pas.*

Afflictions and corrupt conduct are often used interchangeably by Bhāviveka in this context. As mentioned in the previous section, the relation between the two is conceived as a causal one. This is made clear in MHK 9.61 cum TJ: a learned man — one who is endowed with wisdom — does not commit evil acts (*pāpa*) because he lacks the cause of the latter, namely the three afflictions.¹¹⁹

If it could be accepted that some evil acts result from the presence of afflictions, it is questionable to identify all sins — killing being a prototypic example — as the effects of afflictions. In MHK 9.68, an opponent argues that killing, in some cases, is not even a sin; for instance, the gods' killing of their enemies is in fact prompted by their desire to protect the dharma (*dharmagupti*). This suggests that killing might have another cause than the affliction of hatred. Bhāviveka's answer consists in showing that the gods cannot in fact qualify as "protectors of the dharma." In MHK 9.69, he argues that the gods' alleged "desire to protect the dharma" would be in conflict with other corrupt actions that they perform, such as theft, adultery, deceit, etc., so many actions that cannot be explained to be for the benefit of the dharma. In MHK 9.68, he characterizes the "protection of the dharma" in terms of either realizing the true dharma oneself or teaching it to others. The first option is denied to the three gods precisely by the argument that refutes that there can be correct understanding, or wisdom, when afflictions are present. As TJ ad MHK 9.87 concludes: "Therefore, the claim that 'These [gods] know the truth' is to be negated: Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva do not understand the ultimate, because one observes that their behavior is lustful, etc. (*rāgādisamudācāra*), like gangs of robbers and hunters, etc."¹²⁰ The second option, as we will see below (ii.), is refuted as well for it relies on the first.

In summary, afflictions both cause corrupt behaviors and prevent wisdom. In view of the relationship between these terms, one could thus characterize the logical model that Bhāviveka is suggesting along the lines of these logical reasons that Dharmakīrti assimilates to logical reasons qua effect insofar the logical reason and the probandum, although they are not properly speaking cause and effect, both result from the same sufficient complex of causes.¹²¹ In the case under consideration, since corrupt behavior and defiled wisdom are the result of the same sufficient complex of causes — the presence of afflictions — one can legitimately infer the second from the observation of the first.

¹¹⁹ See MHK 9.61cd: *nātaḥ prakurute pāpam jñānī taddhetvasambhavāt* / and TJ D292a4–5; P330a7–8: *shes pa dang ldan pa rnams ni srog gcod pa la sogs pa'i sdig pa'i las mi byed de / 'dod chags dang / zhe sdang dang / gti mug ces (P zhes) bya ba'i sdig pa'i rgyu rnams med pa'i phyir ro // 'dod chags sam / zhe sdang ngam / gti mug gis ni sdig pa'i las byed par 'gyur te...*

¹²⁰ TJ D298b4–5; P228a6–7: *de'i phyir 'di dag nyid de kho na nyid rig pa yin no zhes zer ba de dgag par bya ba yin te / tshangs pa dang / khyab 'jug dang / dbang phyug chen po ni don dam pa rig pa ma yin te / 'dod chags la sogs pa kun du spyod pa mthong ba'i phyir // ri brags pa dang rgon pa la sogs pa'i tshogs bzhin no /*

¹²¹ See Iwata 1991. This case is otherwise illustrated by the inference of taste from shape, or of rain from the fidgeting of the ants. Note that Bhāviveka himself does not attempt to characterize his argument as a specific type of inference relying on a specific logical reason.

ii. *Wisdom and teaching*

The second part of Bhāviveka’s reasoning relies on the premise that to be correct a teaching must be the verbal expression of a correct understanding, thereby excluding an ignorant teacher professing what are merely “lucky guesses” or parroting someone else’s words without personal understanding. Lack of correct understanding prevents one from giving a true teaching, and therefore to lead others in a meaningful way. In MHK 9.93, an ignorant teacher is thus compared to a guide attempting to lead others while having himself fallen into a precipice.¹²² On the contrary, someone who knows the truth is able to guide others.¹²³ Teaching on liberation, thus, can only come from someone who is liberated, and whose behavior testifies to their liberated state. In brief, true religious teachers necessarily practice what they preach.

From i. and ii., there is only one conclusion to be reached: the gods’ teaching should be rejected, as should be the teaching of any putative teacher who does not see the truth, for these cannot lead one to liberation.

5.2 The “slumber argument” in lHo pa’s narrative of the sKyid grong debate

Let us go back to sKyid grong. As seen in our analysis of Sa paṅ’s statement, the notion of “slumber” appears twice: first associated with mental confusion in the short statement [3] “Brahmā slumbers because of great mental confusion,” then in the third pāda of the verse from the **Suprāta-prabhāstatotra* [4], where it stands in contrast to being awake.

The two statements certainly support each other rhetorically. The force of the argument from the hymn is one of contrast and depreciation: contrast, as it opposes Brahmā and the Buddha in terms of slumber vs. awaken state; depreciation, because this contrast presupposes a positive pole — being awake — and a negative one — slumbering. Statement [3] provides a justification for this polarization by associating slumber with the affliction of great mental confusion (*gti mug chen*, **mahāmoha*). Reciprocally, the hymn provides support to the argument in [3] by implying that Brahmā’s slumber is a fact that is well-established in the opponent’s Scriptures from which the author of the hymn draws his descriptions.

The specificity of the association of “slumber” with “mental confusion” strongly suggests that the author of the argument is relying on a precedent for this type of argumentation. MHK/TJ would then appear as a likely

¹²² The same conclusion is pointed out in TJ D293b1 (P331b7–8) ad MHK 9.65: *de’i phyir na re zhig de nyid la yang de kho na nyid mthong ba yod pa ma yin na yang de’i nye bar bstan pa’i lam nas ’jug pa la lta grol ba yod par ji ltar ’gyur te mi ’gyur ro’*. See in parallel the passage cited in n. 115, and TJ D298b6 (P338b1) and MHK 9.88: *de dag ni bdag nyid kyang phyin ci log tu sgrub pa la gnas pa yin na (P om. na) / ji ltar gzhan dag yang dag pa’i sgrub pa la ’god (P dgod) par nus par ’gyur’*.

¹²³ His lack of afflictions, one could add, would guarantee that he has no motivation for lying or deceiving his audience. Bhāviveka, who concentrates on the case of the one who does not know the truth, does not address the question whether one who knows the truth would not, due to the absence of afflictions, also lack the motivation to teach at all. For a recent treatment of Dharmakīrti’s discussion of the question whether the Buddha, if devoid of desires, could still have the motivation to teach, see Pecchia 2008.

candidate.¹²⁴ If one presumes that the association of slumber and mental confusion in [3] is indeed intended as in Bhāviveka's argument against the Mīmāṃsā, Sa paṇ's statement goes beyond the ad personam contrastive and depreciative effect, as it now implies a logical argumentative structure leading to its conclusion — the rejection of the opponent's teaching — by way of an inferential process.

One can wonder, in such a case, why the enunciator of the argument chose to concentrate on "slumber," which is, after all, not very spectacular in terms of corrupt behavior. Also, as discussed in the preceding section, slumber is one of the illustrations of corrupt conducts whose connection with the intended corresponding affliction, mental confusion, is disputable. Aside from this difficulty, one can see two advantages for this choice. First, mental confusion is the affliction whose connection with the absence of correct understanding is the most readily acceptable. Second, in combination with the **Suprātaprabhāstotra*, the argument from slumber gains both support for its premise (the fact that Brahmā sleeps) and rhetorical efficacy as its intended logical impact is combined with an informal type of argumentation.

The hypothesis that the author of the argument is indeed intending a MHK/TJ-like line of argumentation has further implications for the way this statement stands in regard to the opponent's "motivation statement" (I in section 3) and initial statement (4.1).

For one thing, the claim that Brahmā is guilty of some type of corrupt behavior works as a *tu quoque* against the claim that Tibetan Buddhists adopt depraved conduct.¹²⁵ It is true that slumber and sexual practices do not exactly generate the same shock-effect when discussing morality, but for someone familiar with the line of argumentation used by Bhāviveka, the mention of slumber would probably recall the associated accusations pertaining to lust and hate. If this is assumed, it is not only the authority of Brahmā and of the Vedic teaching that is discarded by this argument; Brahmā's purity, and thereby indirectly the purity of the Brahmins of his descent, also becomes an implicit target.

As analyzed in section 4.2, the slumber argument is only one part of Sa paṇ's argument. Parts [1] and [2], as I have argued, can also be read as informal arguments that address respectively the question of purity and that of the respect due to the Buddha. Taken as a whole, these statements constitute a multifaceted attack on Brahmā and a defense of the respect due to the Buddha. The statements representative of the slumber argument can be taken without presupposing a formal structure, or on the contrary by supposing an elaborate logical background. The argument attributed to Sa paṇ may actually have served precisely such a double role of confronting non-Buddhist masters with a formal logical argument, while providing also an effective way to address an audience of non-specialists, maybe including some arrogant passing-by Indian Brahmins failing to pay respect to the renowned Jo bo of sKyid grong.

¹²⁴ The question whether this text itself could have been used as a source is discussed in section 6.2. So far I have not been able to find a similar argument in another Indian or Tibetan source predating lHo pa's narrative.

¹²⁵ The depraved aspect of promiscuity with women touches in particular practitioners who have taken monastic vows.

5.3 Theory and practice

As discussed above, one can distinguish in Sa paṅ's argument layers of formal and informal arguments. What needs to be investigated in view of our initial questioning is whether the form of these statements matches a known type of proof-statement. In particular, can the steps of the narrative that we have detailed in section 3 be mapped onto Sa paṅ's prescriptions concerning the correct unfolding of a debate and the presentation of a correct argument?

The model of debate that Sa paṅ presupposes in the *mKhas 'jug*¹²⁶ relies on the one hand on Dharmakīrti's discussion of "inference-for-others" in the *Pramāṇavārttika* and *Pramāṇaviniścaya* and on the other on his discussion of points of defeats in the *Vādanyāya*. According to Sa paṅ, a proper philosophical debate also requires two debaters who affirm tenets worthy of examination and disagree with each other.¹²⁷ One of them, the proponent, presents a proof-statement that enunciates a triply characterized reason, while the other, the respondent, attempts to refute him by pointing out faults pertaining to the probans. According to Sa paṅ, Dharmakīrti's texts would support the idea of an additional step between the presentation of the logical reason by the proponent and the respondent's refutation, namely, the proponent must "remove the thorns," that is, he must show that the three characteristics are indeed established.¹²⁸

In the narrative of the dialogue between Sa paṅ and his opponent, it is possible to map their respective statements with a *pūrvapakṣa/uttarapakṣa*-model. Namely, the non-Buddhists' initial claim constitutes their *pūrvapakṣa* (as discussed in 3.1, a threefold claim), which Sa paṅ attempts to refute by means of an argument (*uttarapakṣa*).

What is the form of a correct proof-statement according to Sa paṅ? Sa paṅ's opinion is that the proponent should make explicit the triply characterized reason by expressing its pervasion by the property to be proven ("whatever is R is Q, like E") and the fact that it qualifies the subject ("S is indeed qualified by R"). Following Dharmakīrti, Sa paṅ denies that the statement of the thesis (or conclusion of the argument) should be part of the proof. Indeed, as it does not contribute as a means of proof, it would count as a superfluous expression and make the proof statement fallacious. While any supplement to the expression of the pervasion and the *pakṣadharmatā* (the qualification of the subject by the logical reason) is ruled out, Sa paṅ concedes, on the other hand, that it is not always necessary to state both these members. Relying on a passage from Dharmakīrti's *Svavṛtti*,¹²⁹ Sa paṅ defends the idea that when the opponent is "knowledgeable" or "learned"

¹²⁶ Note that in this text Sa paṅ only discusses problematic issues, without presenting the steps of debate in a systematic way. For a sketch of the later Sa skya pa system based on Śākya mchog ldan's explanation, see Jackson 1987: 197–199.

¹²⁷ *mKhas 'jug* III.34–42 (Jackson 1987: 340–344).

¹²⁸ *mKhas 'jug* III.56–58 (Jackson 1987: 357–358).

¹²⁹ PV 1.27 cum *Svavṛtti* PVSV 17,13–19,22 (translated in Steinkellner 2004: 238ff., where the verse is numbered k.29): "Surely in the example (the fact) is conveyed to (someone) who does not know (either of) these (two facts), (namely) that [the property to be proven] is [in reality nothing but] that (reason) or (its) cause. To those, on the other hand, who are already familiar with (the fact that that which is to be proven) is [in reality] this (reason) or (its) cause, (i.e.,) For to those who know (this), only the mere reason needs to be mentioned. The purpose for which an example is stated, that is (already) achieved. Thus, of what avail is its formulation then?"

(*mkhas pa*), the statement of the pervasion is not required.¹³⁰ For instance, to prove that sound is impermanent to a knowledgeable opponent, one who is well aware that whatever is produced is impermanent, it would suffice to state: “Sound is produced.”

Considered in this light, statement [3] can be interpreted as the presentation of a logical reason — “slumber” — to a knowledgeable opponent. The proponent, in this case, only expresses the *pakṣadharmatā*, namely “Brahmā sleeps,” and presumes that the opponent does not need to be reminded of the pervasion, namely, that slumber entails that the teaching of such a teacher ought to be rejected. This entailment, as discussed in section 5.1, can be made to rely on the idea that the affliction of mental confusion — which is hinted at since the full statement reads “Brahmā sleeps because of great mental confusion” — is both the cause of slumber and the sufficient cause for an incorrect understanding of reality, and hence the incapacity to give a teaching relevant to liberation. In short, it is possible to interpret Sa paṅ’s statement as a proof-statement following rules he himself prescribes. But to do so, a background similar to the one found in MHK/TJ is to be presupposed.

If “Brahmā sleeps” is a proof-statement (in the short version that is appropriate for knowledgeable opponents), what is the role of the citation from the **Suprātaprabhātastotra*? This citation may be interpreted as an attempt to remove the thorns pertaining to the *pakṣadharmatā*, that is, here, to counter the eventual objection that Brahmā does not sleep. The passage cited by Sa paṅ is not actually a scriptural passage taken from the opponents’ scripture. It refers, however, to a feature that is indeed associated with Brahmā in the opponents’ literary corpus (Brahmā sleeps inbetween the dissolution and the re-creation of the world), and would thus play a role equivalent to a citation from a Brahmanical source.

This brings up, however, another issue: even if the opponent recognizes the source as genuine (i.e., as repeating elements from his own scriptures), scriptures are not accepted in Buddhist logic as a valid means of cognition. They can be invoked, however, when it comes to suprasensorial matters. This appears to be case here, for how could one ascertain the state of affairs “Brahmā sleeps” if it was not for the scriptures giving us this information? One could wonder, in this case, if the logical reason of the argument would not in the first place qualify as an appeal to scriptures, namely: “your scriptures state that Brahmā sleeps.” When commenting on *mKhas ’jug* III.37ff., Sa paṅ qualifies debate on the scriptural teachings in a way that would indeed match the stakes of the sKyid grong disputation:

When debating on the scriptural teachings, it is proper to inquire and it is not an occasion for laughter if one asks questions ... about [completely] hidden phenomena not taught in the Sūtras or Tantras concerning places of refuge other than the Three Jewels, such as Īśvara, or concerning [theories] different from the [four] “seals” which are the marks of the doctrine for theory, such as a theory of a

¹³⁰ See *Rigs gter* XI.31d (*mkhas pa la ni gtan tshigs nyid*) cum *rang ’grel*. Sa paṅ’s position on this theme and the difference with that of his predecessors are discussed in Hugon forthcoming.

self or person, or concerning modes of conduct different from the Middle Way, such as physical pleasures and mortifications.¹³¹

If one takes for granted that Sa paṅ and his opponents are thus discussing “completely inaccessible” matters — such as Brahmā as a place of refuge — what kind of argument is considered proper? Sa paṅ prescribes two kinds of answers when debating on scriptures: “One should refute that [argument] by means of [quotations from] scripture or by means of reasoning based on scripture.”¹³² The example Sa paṅ deals with in the *mKhas 'jug* (III.20ff.) is the famous Vedic claim that “who performs ablutions on the shore of the Ganges will not be born again.” Insofar as followers of the Veda agree with the Buddhists on the cause of Cyclic existence — actions produced from desire, hatred and confusion — and its cessation — freedom from these evils — such a passage reveals an internal contradiction because the washing of the body is unrelated to the mental factors that the three poisons imply. Citing this passage provides a suitable argument in this context.

In the case of the sKyid grong debate, the citation from the hymn, which states that “Brahmā sleeps,” is not directly revealing of an internal contradiction. However, once the link between afflictions and the incapacity of seeing the truth is assumed (and in the case of the affliction of mental confusion, the link is obvious), the opponent is placed in the self-defeating position that he accepts scriptures that themselves present their teacher as showing signs that he is unworthy of being a teacher.

We have thus so far identified two ways to make sense of the argument in lHo pa's narrative: (i) it consists in the statement of the *paḥṣadharma* of the logical reason “slumber” for the subject “Brahmā,” a *paḥṣadharma* which is, if not formally established, presumed to be accepted by the opponent on account of his own scriptures; (ii) it consists in an appeal to scriptures whose contents include the claim that “Brahmā sleeps,” to demonstrate the contradiction, for the opponent, to accept both these scriptures and Brahmā as a teacher. Both these interpretations presuppose an argument addressed at a knowledgeable opponent, one who is aware of the causal relation between the three types of afflictions and corresponding behaviors, and of the way afflictions prevent the understanding of the truth.

If the opponent's *pūrvapakṣa* is summarized as “Brahmā should be followed as a teacher,” the formal aspect of the slumber argument provides an adequate reply, as the inference leads to the conclusion that Brahmā is not worth as a teacher, and that his teaching should hence be rejected. As to the other aspects of the opponent's claim, in particular the claim of purity, we have seen in 5.2 that it is indirectly addressed by the association, in the original argument, of slumber with the other illustrations of vicious conduct.

6. Conclusion – from narrative to facts

We can, at this point, address the question whether lHo pa's narrative provides us with anything like a factual account, be it of an actual debate between Sa paṅ and a non-Buddhist in sKyid grong, or a plausible picture of

¹³¹ Transl. in Jackson 1987: 336.

¹³² *mKhas 'jug* III.30, Jackson 1987: 338.

what a debate might have looked like at that time. One question that is obviously linked with this one, although secondary in view of the purpose of the present enquiry, is whether the sKyid grong debate is a historical event. Its occurrence is taken for granted in the Tibetan tradition and, so far I know, has not been questioned by modern scholars who, at most, argue on its date. The reason I pose the question is not that there is strong evidence that the sKyid grong debate did not take place. There are, on the other hand, good reasons that can be invoked for the insertion of such an event in Sa paṅ's biography even if it did not take place. I suggest, therefore, that rather than readily accept any of the related accounts at face value, one should examine carefully what stands in favor of its actual occurrence.

6.1 Did the sKyid grong debate ever take place?

Why would biographers recount such an event if it did not take place? One has to take into account the fact that the earliest sources that mention the event belong to the genre of "*rnam thar*." Although loosely translated as "biography" or "biographical account," Tibetan *rnam thar* are often better described, as the Tibetan term connotes, as accounts of an exemplary life leading to liberation. Sa paṅ was a renowned logician, and also a theoretician who ascribed an important place to debating among the competences expected of a learned scholar. The mention of a debate to illustrate Sa paṅ's embodiment of the very qualities he put forward in his program therefore does not come as a surprise. One can even note that several biographers (for instance Zhang rgyal ba dpal, Bla ma dam pa, Go rams pa, Bo dong, etc.) precisely organize their description of Sa paṅ's deeds and qualities according to the triad of exposition, composition and debate, the three skills of the wise according to the *mKhas 'jug*.

Why would Sa paṅ be made to debate with a *tīrthika*? Two reasons could be invoked: first, being exhaustive. For instance, Zhang rgyal ba dpal has Sa paṅ vanquishing in debate both Buddhists — among whom Tibetans and non-Tibetans — and non-Buddhists. Another reason is Sa paṅ's specific dedication to refute *tīrthika* views, principally in his epistemological work, the *Rigs gter*. Additionally, Sa paṅ's knowledge of Indian languages and of non-Buddhist treatises are also put to the fore in Sa paṅ's biographies — a live debate against a *tīrthika* provides a perfect event combining these elements.¹³³

Why, then, locate such a debate in sKyid grong? One can find, as well, several good reasons to do so. First, it is a plausible place for the encounter. Sa paṅ's presence in the region, on several occasions, is attested by sources that describe the people he met and the teachings he gave at these times. The location of sKyid grong and the function of this township as a market-place on a trade-road coming from the Kathmandu valley make it a likely place for Tibetans to meet *tīrthikas* of Nepalese or Indian origin. There are, additionally, layers of symbolism that are associated with sKyid grong as a frontier location, both in religious and lay history, that make it an especially

¹³³ Śākya mchog ldan mentions in his biographical account that Sa paṅ debated with his opponents in Sanskrit. Cf. *Chos 'khor rnam gzhag* 5b4: *sam skri ta'i skad kyis de dang brtsad pa na*.

suitable place for a confrontation with an opponent who is neither Tibetan nor Buddhist.¹³⁴

One can add to these considerations that several accounts of the debate, principally those following the second type of scenario, include a number of events that a modern reader is bound to classify as poetic elaboration. But even a down-to-earth account of the event as in lHo pa's narrative contains elements that bear too much symbolic significance to be entirely trusted at first sight. For instance, the number "six" given for Sa paṅ's opponents immediately brings to mind the famous six non-Buddhist teachers (whose views are presented for instance in the *Samaññaphalasutta*) whom the Buddha defeated in Śrāvastī, as recounted in the *Prātihāryasūtra* of the *Divyāvadāna*. It is also curious that the name of the chief disputant, 'Phrog byed dga' ba/bo, is not given in a phonetic adaptation of the original Indian name, whereas other Indian names usually are (for instance the names of the Indian paṇḍits Sa paṅ studied with). This leaves the impression of a customized name, if not a customized opponent.

The mention of a debate involving Sa paṅ in the latter's biography is thus something that is expected by the reader, and is likely to be inserted by a biographer even if the latter has neither witnessed the event himself nor heard about it from a reliable source. One cannot say that the author commits thereby an intended historical lie; rather, he is making pious additions of facts that are so likely to have happened that they can just as well be considered to have happened.

What, then, speaks in favor of the debate as a historical fact? The best argument, it appears, is that of the proximity of the redaction of the earliest biographies that mention the event to its presumed date of occurrence, and the proximity of their authors to Sa paṅ. There is, however, no indubitable indication that Sa paṅ would have read and approved their account. As for local sources that mention Sa paṅ's stay in sKyid grong and the debate, their late date of composition (Vitali mentions seventeenth-century works) raises the question whether their authors rely on a local tradition or mix several sources, among which biographical accounts of Sa paṅ of external origin. The "Verses for the subduing of the non-Buddhist teachers" would be a pertinent support provided that the part in prose that follows the verses, which identifies the occasion of their composition, was indeed written by Sa paṅ. As for the clotted hairs hanging on a pillar in Sa skya, that have been claimed to be seen from the early fifteenth to the twentieth century, they can hardly be taken as material evidence for the sKyid grong debate, although the presence of such an item in Sa skya is certainly telling about the importance of this episode associated with Sa paṅ for the Sa skya pa collective memory.

¹³⁴ I intend to deal in a forthcoming study with this aspect of the location of the debate, which becomes especially relevant when one considers narratives that follow the second type of scenario. One can mention, among the points that can be taken into consideration, that the temple of Byams sprin in sKyid grong belongs to the border temples whose construction is attributed to Srong btsan sgam po; the region, more precisely mTshams (lit. "border"), north of sKyid grong, was also declared a border-place by Padma-sambhava; further, the invasion of Mang yul gung thang by the Ya rtse kingdom took place in the same period, leading to the death of the king of Mang yul in mTshams.

As I will argue in the next section, the position one adopts on the issue of the historicity of the debate does not prevent one from drawing some conclusions as to debating practices based on lHo pa's narrative.

6.2 What can one learn from lHo pa's narrative?

There are, I would suggest, three main options to take into consideration to evaluate lHo pa's narrative:

- a. A debate involving Sa paṅ and a non-Buddhist did take place, in sKyid grong or at another location. lHo pa may have witnessed it himself or have heard about it from an eye-witness or a secondary source.
- b. lHo pa is not aware of any contemporaneous debate of Tibetan scholars against non-Buddhists.
- c. A less likely alternative is that no such debate involving Sa paṅ took place, but lHo pa witnessed or heard about some debate involving another Tibetan scholar and a non-Buddhist teacher.¹³⁵

Although we are not in the position to determine which of these options is the correct one, there is, I suggest, one fact that can help us answering our initial questions — how debates were conducted in these days and whether lHo pa's account gives us a plausible account of such practices. This fact is that lHo pa was both Sa paṅ's disciple and an expert in epistemology (see section 3). He was thus certainly aware of the theoretical aspect of argumentation rules as discussed in epistemological works, and in particular Sa paṅ's model in the *Rigs gter* and *mKhas 'jug*. One can also expect that he had some experience of what debates actually were like in the practice.

In the first case of possibility (a), the basis for lHo pa's narrative would be an actual event. As lHo pa was well-versed in logic, he was in a position to understand the unfolding of the argument conveyed by the various statements of the debaters.¹³⁶ That lHo pa was recounting a real event does not preclude that the author arranged the facts when putting it in writing. No account is ever purely objective and exhaustive. Abbreviation and paraphrase must be presupposed, reformulation as well, for there was little chance that the non-Buddhist opponent would have been conversant in Tibetan. In other words, even in lHo pa's account is based on a real event, we are still dealing with a narrative. The rhetoric of debate narrative must thus be taken into consideration when evaluating the status of the various statements. For instance, the opponent's "statement of intention" is more likely an addition of the author than a reflection of something that was said before or during the debate. It is also conceivable that the alleged conversion of the opponent following his defeat is simply a literary convention.

In the case of figure (b), as lHo pa would be attributing an argument to Sa paṅ in order to illustrate his skills in debate, one can expect that he would

¹³⁵ This option is less likely in view of the apparent rarity of debates between Tibetan Buddhists and Indian non-Buddhists; see n. 8. The inclusion of such an episode in Sa paṅ's biography in cases (b) or (c) can be explained in view of the reasons discussed in 6.1.

¹³⁶ I come back below to the question of the plausibility of lHo pa's familiarity with MHK/TJ's line of argumentation.

take special care to put into the mouth of his teacher an argument that is not only pertinent, but also formally valid. In brief, he would construct or recycle (in case c) an argument suitable to be attributed to the renowned Sa paṅ, and that would have been recognized as a clever logical argument against non-Buddhists by contemporaneous readers familiar with debates. One would, in this case, presume that lHo pa addresses a readership who is familiar with the argument from MHK/TJ cryptically hinted at and would possibly recognize the citation of the hymn, and that the form of the reported argument matches quite precisely the prescriptions of theoretical treatises. The form of the argument found in lHo pa's narrative — a one-member proof-statement — shows that even if lHo pa constructed the argument, he did not settle for a stereotyped version of a proof-statement.

Whichever of the above three options prevails, we can draw the conclusion that lHo pa's narrative is representative of debate argumentation as it did or could have taken place in these days, but that his narrative is not a mirror-account of actual events.

An unsettled question in both cases is that of the familiarity lHo pa might have had with the line of argumentation developed in MHK/TJ and thereby recognized (in case a) or put forward (in case b) the mention of slumber as a pertinent and logically grounded argument.¹³⁷ That Sa paṅ might have drawn from this source is plausible. Sa paṅ certainly knew MHK and TJ, which had been available in Tibet since the eleventh century (they were translated on the request of rNgog legs pa'i shes rab by Atiśa and the translator Nag tsho). They are not mentioned by Sa paṅ's biographers among the texts enumerated when accounting for his studies,¹³⁸ but Sa paṅ refers to TJ for instance in the *mKhas 'jug* when enumerating the various kinds of non-Buddhist views.¹³⁹

The "slumber argument" in the sKyid grong debate is composed of the association of slumber with mental confusion, presumably based on a MHK/TJ-like background, in combination with the contrastive claim of the **Suprātaprabhāstotra*. It remains a question whether one is dealing with an original combination — by Sa paṅ, by lHo pa, or by another scholar — or if Sa paṅ or lHo pa is drawing from a pool of well-known ready-made arguments against non-Buddhist opponents that the learned audience, respectively readership, would be expected to recognize. In such a case, one could expect the slumber argument to surface in other Tibetan works when it comes to refuting non-Buddhists. I have not as yet identified any such instance. The only possible echo to the MHK/TJ argumentation that I have

¹³⁷ The mention, in lHo pa's narrative, of subsequent steps in the debate [5] is not in itself a decisive element. It may admittedly indicate that lHo pa himself considered that Sa paṅ's explicit statement was not the best way to illustrate Sa paṅ's capacity as a logician, and that this addition was meant to secure Sa paṅ's status of renowned logician by mentioning a follow-up, involving logical arguments, to the first exchange. But on the other hand, it is quite plausible that the debate did not stop at this first exchange of views and that the discussion went further, maybe in a less remarkable way; i.e., the first argument was held as most representative of a logician's prowess, which then did not need further exemplification. Zhu chen mentions that the opponent is defeated by "logic and scriptures" (*IDe mig* 11b4: *lung rigs kyis tshar bcad*), which is not in itself indicative of his perceiving the first argument as "scriptural" insofar as the formula pairing the two is a locus classicus. Several biographers only mention logic.

¹³⁸ They also do not appear in the list of Madhyamaka works studied by earlier Sa skya pas. See Jackson 1985.

¹³⁹ *mKhas 'jug* ad III.43. See Jackson 1987: 344.

found so far (apart from lHo pa's narrative and other narratives adopting the same scenario) occurs in annotations to the biography of Sa paṅ composed in 1579 by Rin spungs pa Ngag dbang 'jigs med grags pa, although not in the chapter where this author deals with the debate of sKyid grong.¹⁴⁰ In the fourth chapter (pp. 179–190) that deals with Sa paṅ's studies with Indian and Tibetan masters, Rin spungs pa mentions the three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Anonymous annotations added to the versified text associate each god with one of the "three poisons" (*dug gsum*, the expression occurs in the following verse) or basic afflictions: Brahmā with mental confusion, Viṣṇu with hatred, and Śiva with lust.¹⁴¹ No mention is made there of behaviors associated with these afflictions, but these annotations strongly suggest knowledge of the passage of MHK/TJ that we discussed.

As for the citation from the **Suprātaprabhāstrottra*, Bla ma dam pa, writing a century after lHo pa (his work dates from 1344), identifies it by name; so does Bo dong (who obviously bases himself on Bla ma dam pa).¹⁴² But in sPos khang pa's account (dating from 1427), although the author mainly repeats the elements of lHo pa's version (or of a like version), his rephrasing of Sa paṅ's statement suggests that he did not recognize it as a citation from the **Suprātaprabhāstrottra*. sPos khang pa does not, either, reproduce the logical articulation between the notion of "slumber" and that of "mental confusion."

What can we learn from lHo pa's narrative about the practice of debate in Tibet? In spite of lHo pa's down-to-earth approach, there is not much that we can learn from his text pertaining to the practical aspects of a debate in the broad sense of the term. lHo pa's narrative hints at the possibility that one party, that of the non-Buddhists, is seated at the beginning of the debate (see section 3, II). It is explicit about the consequence of defeat, namely, the conversion of the opponent, but, as indicated above, such an outcome may reflect the rhetoric of debate narratives rather than what actually transpired. In his study of the third chapter of the *mKhas 'jug*, Jackson notes that if this treatise would appear at first sight to be a practical guide to debating, it actually deals with quite particular theoretical or technical points. The reason for this, Jackson suggests, is that "the basic steps of debating were apparently so well known that he considered them not to require a detailed separate exposition."¹⁴³ We might be facing a similar phenomenon when it comes to debate narratives: by the simple evocation of a "debate," familiar images and situations would come to the mind of the readers, making the description of well-known practical details superfluous.

As far as the form of proof-statements is concerned, it is interesting that the argument (insofar one agrees to interpret it as a formal proof-statement)

¹⁴⁰ Note that Rin spungs pa also has a version of the sKyid grong debate involving a slumber argument, which is stated as follows: *tshangs <pa de nyid kyi> kyang rmongs <pa> chen <po> 'khor ba yi // mingal gyi rgya las thar <par> ma gyur <pa de'i phyir> // gti mug mun pa'i dra ba che<n po>s // bcings nas mnal <pa ste gnyid do song> ba ma yin nam //* ('Jam dbyangs legs lam 104a5).

¹⁴¹ 'Jam dbyangs legs lam 90b3–4: *bram ze'i slob dpon dpal 'dzin sdes // phyed ba'i 'grel par bcas pa dang // <gti mug can> tshangs dang <zhe sdang can> khyab 'jug <'dod chags can> nam mkha'i skra can <te dbang phyug> gyi // rkang sen zla ris spyi bor blangs pa'i mod // dug gsum rgya mtshor 'phyur ba byang grol nyid // thob byed nyer len rgyu ru khas 'ched pa //*

¹⁴² See n. 72. I take the dates of composition from Jackson 1987: 23.

¹⁴³ Jackson 1987: 196–197.

constitutes an instance of a one-member proof-statement, a form that is acceptable in Sa paṅ's system, but rejected by several other thirteenth-century authors. If lHo pa is reporting faithfully this aspect of the debate, this would indicate that such "short versions" of proof-statements were indeed used in debates and not a mere theoretical possibility. If he is customizing an argument, the fact that he chose a one-member proof statement rather than a two-member one might be indicative that this form was not exceptional.

If the present study may not have elicited any definitive answers to our questions pertaining to the details of debating processes — despite the allusion contained in the title of this paper, we still do not know whether debaters clapped hands when debating in sKyid grong¹⁴⁴ — it did reveal an original argument that was deemed effective against Indian non-Buddhists, however rare their presence would have been in thirteenth-century Tibet.

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TJ

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Śrīharsadeva. Tib. in D1167, *bsTod tshogs*, Ka 239a4–240b5; P2056, 280a1–281b7.

¹⁴⁴ The only clapping of hands that is mentioned takes place in Amipa's version. It causes 'Phrog byed dga' ba to fall back from his escape in the sky. Amipa 1987: 59: "Le SakyaPandita frappa dans ses mains et Harinanda retombe au sol."

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Appendix 1

This appendix contains the portion of IHo pa's biography dealing with the sKyid grong debate, supplemented by variants and parallels in later biographies that adopt this version of the event.

Abbreviations:

Lho=IHo pa kun mkhyen. *dPal ldan sa skya paṇḍita'i rnam thar*.

Bla=Bla ma dam pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan. *Bla ma brgyud rnam thar*.

Bla A = *gSung 'bum* version; **Bla B** = *dbu med* mss.

sPos=sPos khang pa Rin chen rgyal mtshan. *sDom gsum legs bshad*.

Bo=Bo dong Paṇ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal. *Lam 'bras lo rgyus*.

Go=Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge. *sDom gsum dgongs gsal*.

Glo=Glo bo mkhan chen bSod nams lhun grub. *mKhas jug rnam bshad*.

A=A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams. *A mes gdung rabs*.

Text:

Bla, Bo add: de'ang chos rje nyid skyi (Bo: kyi) grong na bzhugs pa'i tshe

Glo, A add: 'di nyid rig (A: rigs) pa'i dbang phyug (A add gam) chen por gyur pa'i (A: par) grags pa'i 'od dkar rgya mtsho'i mtha' yas (A: mthas) klas pa'i sa'i dkyil 'khor kun du 'phro bar gyur pa na /

sngon skye dgu rnam ky'i tshe lo bsam gyis mi khyab pa thub pa'i dus su byung ba /

Bla, Bo, sPong, Go, Glo, A om.

thub pa chen po ser skya dang / drang srong rgyas pa dang / gzegs zan la sogs pa'i rjes su 'brang ba (Glo: 'brang ba'i; A: 'brangs pa'i) grangs can dang / rig byed pa (A om.) dang / rigs pa can zhes grags shing / dbang phyug dang / tshangs pa dang / nyin mo long (Glo: longs) pa dang / nor lha'i bu dang / byin (Glo: spyin) za la sogs pa (Glo, A add cher) mgu ba (Glo, A add dang) / lho phyogs ky'i rgyud du kun du (Glo, A om.) rgyu zhing rnam par 'phyan pa /

Bla, Bo: dbang phyug dang tshangs pa la (Bla B om. la) lhar byed pa'i drang srong rgyas pa dang ser skya dang gzegs zan la sogs pa'i rjes su (Bla B om. su) 'brang ba'i

sPos: chos rje 'di'i snyan pa'i grags pas 'phags pa'i yul du khyab par gyur te / lho phyogs bram ze'i rigs tshangs pa dbang phyug dang khyab 'jug dang nor lha'i bu la sogs pa skyabs su 'dzin par rig byed bzhi dang / grangs can dang rig pa can gyi grub pa'i mtha' la mkhas par sbyangs shing lta ba log par 'dzin pas sems khengs pa /

Go: 'gro ba'i bla ma 'di nyid ky'i stan pa'i grags pas rgya gar shar nub kun tu khyab pa'i tshe /

[I] 'phrog byed dga' bo (Bla, Bo, Glo: ba) la sogs pa'i phyi rol pa'i ston pa drug gis dam bcas pa ni (Glo, A om. ni; Bla, Bo om. dam bcas pa ni) /

u bu cag (Bla, Bo, Glo, A: kho bo cag) *kha ba can gyi ljongs su song la / de na gnas pa'i skye bo (Bla A, Bo: bu) gau (Bla, Glo: go'u; Bo: go) *ta ma'i dge sbyong* (Glo, A: dge slong) *du khas* (Glo add du) '*che ba / bud med ky'i brtul zhugs 'dzin zhing* (Bla, Bo, A: cing) *lta ba dang spyod pa ngan pa la zhen pa de dag* (Glo, A: de) *bzlog* (Bo: zlog) *par bya'o zhes**

sPos: 'phrog byed dga' ba la sogs pa'i phyi rol pa'i ston pa drug gis / 'di skad ces kho bo cag rnam byang phyogs kha ba can gyi ljongs su song la / de na yod pa'i skye bo dge sbyong go'u ta ma'i slob mar khas 'che zhing / chang dang bud med kyi brtul zhugs can de dag sun dbyung bar bya'o zhes

Go: rgya gar lho phyogs pa 'phrog byed dga' bo la sogs pa phyi rol pa'i ston pa drug gis rtsod par brtsoms te

glengs (A: gleng) te mthar gyis (Glo, A om.) song ba dang /

sPos: glengs nas mthar gyis 'ongs te

Bla, Bo, Go om.

bdag (Glo, A: bdag cag) gi bla ma rgol ba ngan pa'i khyu mchog gi spyi gtsug rnam par gnong pa'i seng ge 'di byang chub kyi snying po rdo rje gdan las byang phyogs su dpag tshad bcu phrag drug (Glo, A; lHo: drug) bgrod pa na (Glo, A om.) /

Bla, Bo, sPos, Go om.

mang yul skyid grong (lHo: rong) (Go add gi) 'phags pa wa ti'i gtsug lag khang dang 'dab (Go, Glo: 'dabs) 'byor ba'i tshong 'dus (Go: dus) kyi grong (Go, Glo, A om. kyi grong) na bzhugs pa'i tshe /

Bla, Bo, sPos om.

sngar smos pa'i ston pa drug po der lhags pa na /

Bla, Bo: dam bcas pa de dag der lhag nas

sPos om.

Go: ston pa drug po dag lhags pa na

[II] de thams cad (Go, Glo om. de; Bla, Bo, A om. de thams cad) chos kyi rje (Glo, A: chos rje) nyid dang / bde bar gshegs pa'i rten (Bla, Bo: sangs rgyas pa'i rten (Bo: brten) dang chos rje nyid) la phyag mi 'tshal bar bde legs dang bsngags (Bo: sngags) par 'os pa'i tshigs su bcad pa (Bla, Bo: tshigs bcad) re re tsam btong (Bo: gtong; Glo, A: brjod) nas gral la 'khod pa nas (Bla A: nas; Bla B: pa la; Bo, Glo, A: pa na; Go: de)

sPos: mang yul skyid grong du 'ongs pa'i tshe / bod yul gyi sde snod 'dzin pa gzhan su yang spro bar ma gyur te / de'i tshe chos rje nyid kyis rtsod pa'i skabs phye nas phan tshun bde bar byon rnam (read nam) 'ongs pa legs so zhes gsong por smra zhing bzhin 'dzum pas 'khod pa dang /

[III] 'di skad smra (Bla B, Bo, A: smras) ste /

sPos: ral pa can dag na re

Go om.

[III.1]

nged kyi rigs thams cad ni (Go, Glo, A; Bla, Bo: thams cad kyi; lHo: thams cad kyis) *bla ma tshangs pa* (sPong add nyid) *nas brtsams* (Bo: rtsams) *te deng sang* (Bla A, Bo: ding sang; Go: deng song) *gi bar du gau* (Bla, Bo, Go: go'u; Glo: gau'u) *ta ma'i bstan pa* (Bo om.) *la mi ltos* (Glo: bltos) / *dkon mchog gsum la skyabs su 'gro ma myong bas* (Bo: ba'i; Glo: ba) *drang srong gi* (Bla B: gyi) *rigs rnam par dag pa kho bo cag* (Glo: dag pa kho na; Go: dag pa'o) *yin no* (Bla, Bo, Go om.) //

zhes dregs shing (Bla, Bo, Go om.) smra bar byed do //

sPos: nged cag gi rigs rnam par dag pa 'di ni bla ma tshangs pa nyid nas ding sang gi bar du go'u ta ma'i lugs dang ma 'dres shing de la skyabs su 'gro ma myong ba'i gtsang ma khyad par can yin no zhes zer ro /

de'i dus su (Bla: de dus; Bo: de du; Glo, A om. su) chos kyi rje 'dis (Bla, Bo: chos rje) gsungs pa ni /

sPos: de la chos rje nyid kyis

Go: de'i tshe chos rje 'dis

[1] ci (Bla, Bo om.) *tshangs pa de ni* **[2] ston pa la shin tu** (Lho, Go, A; Glo: shin du; Bla, Bo om.) *gus pa yin na* (Go: no) /

sPos: tshangs pa de ni kho bo'i ston pa la shin du gus shing skyabs su song ba yin mod kyi

[3] 'on kyang de (sPos, Bo om.) *gti mug che bas* (sPos add da dung) *gnyid kyis non pa ma yin* (Bla, Bo, A: min) nam /

[4] *ji* (sPos: 'di; Go: ci) *skad du* /
 rab mchog lag pa bzhi pa bcu drug (Bla B add ni) phyed phyed phyogs (Bla B om.) kyi gdong pa can //
bzlas (Bo: zlas) dang nges pa'i cho ga shes shing nges brjod (Bo: rjod) rig byed 'don pa po (Bla B: pas so) //
 dri med padma'i skye (Bla B: skyes) gnas tshangs (Bla B om.) pa de yang (Bla B, Glo: de'ang) gnyid log gyur /
 sPos: rab mchog lag pa bzhi pa bcu drug phyed phyed gdeng bas rig byed 'don mkhas nges brjod smra ba po / gser gyi mngal dang dri med padma'i skyes gnas tshangs pa de yang da dung gnyid log gyur pa yin /
 Go: rab mchog bzhi pa zhes sogs kyi tshigs bcad gsungs pas

Bla, Bo, Glo, A: zhes dang

sPos: ces pa dang

[5] *kho bo'i* (Bo: kho bo) *ston pa stobs bcu mnga' ba de ni rtag tu* (sPos: rtag par; Bo: brtag tu) *rab tu* (Bla B om. tu) *snga* (Bla, Bo, sPos, Glo, A; lHo: mnga') *ba nyid du* (Bla B: ba nyid tu; sPos: bar) *nam langs* (sPos: rnam langs gyur) *pa'o* // zhes gsungs pas /
 sPos: zhes smras pa dang /
 Bla, Bo: zhes rab tu snga (Bo: mnga') bar nam langs pa'i bstod pa las phyung (Bla B: 'byung; Bo: byung) ba'i tshig de dag (Bo tshig de) gsungs pas
 Go om.

[III.2] de dag (Go, Glo, A add shin tu; Glo add shin du) ma bzod cing ma rangs pas 'bel ba'i gtam gyi skabs nyid du (Go, A: rnyed de; Glo: rnyed) rgol ba ngan pa de (Go, A add thams cad) re re nas phyung (Go, Glo, A: sun phyung) zhing pham par mdzad de / mi smra ba'i brtul zhugs la bkod nas /
 [III.3] slar yang de thams cad kyi lta ba ngan pas (A: pa'i) bsnyems (Go, Glo, A: snyems) pa'i dri ma med par mdzad de

Bla, Bo: de dag ma rangs nas rtsod pa'i gtam (Bo om. gtam) rgya cher byed pa'i skabs de nyid du rgol ba de dag re re nas sun phyung bas mi smra ba'i brtul zhugs la (Bo: las) bkod de (Bla B, Bo: pas) khengs pa (Bo: khongs) drungs nas phyung ste lta ba ngan pa'i sems kyi dri ma bsal nas

sPos: shin tu ma bzod par grub pa'i mtha' gzhung 'dzugs pa la zhugs te rang rang gi blo la nus pa ci yod pa'i gtan tshigs kyis gtan la phab pa'i mjug tu lta ba log pas dregs pa'i bram ze de dag yang dag pa'i rigs pas tshar bcad cang (read: cing) mi smra ba'i brtul zhugs la bkod nas

[IV] ral pa'i khur bregs nas nyid kyi thad du rab tu byung ste /

Bla, Bo: bstan (Bo: stan) pa la rab tu byung ste (Bla B: phyung ste; Bo: phyung te)

sPos: ral pa'i khur rnam bregs shing rab tu byung bar mdzad do //

nges par 'byung ba rin po che'i (Glo: chena'i) 'byor ba dang ldan par (A: pa) mdzad (Go om. par mdzad) pa'i skabs su / shākya'i rgyal po de'i bstan (Go, Glo, A; lHo: brtan) pa la rma 'byin pa gang dag byung ba na slar yang (Go, Glo, A add de bzhin du) dul (Go, A: gdul) bar bya'o zhes dgongs te (A: snyam du dgongs nas) 'di gsungs pa /

Bla, Bo, sPos om.

[VI]

rgya mtsho'i ... 'dzin par shog {=the "verses of the subduing of the six non-Buddhist teachers"; see Appendix 2}

ces gsungs te 'di rgyas par mdzad do (Go, Glo, A om.) //

Bla, Bo, sPos om.

sPos add: ral pa dag 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi lha khang du phul nas da lta yang yod do //

Go add: de'i ral pa'i khur bregs nas rab tu byung ste / ral pa rnam dpal ldan sa skya'i gtsug lag khang na da lta yang yod do //

Glo, A add: de dag gi ral pa dpal ldan sa skya'i dbu rtse rnying ma na da lta'ang (A: yang) yod do //

Bla, Bo add: slar rgya gar du log pas rgya gar shar nub kun du chos kyī rje la (Bo om. la) smra ba'i mchog tu grags so //

Appendix 2

The text belows is based on the sDe dge edition of Sa paṅ's works (see *Mu stegs tshigs bcad* in the bibliography). Variant readings from the biographies where these verses are cited are given in footnotes (see appendix 1 for the abbreviations).

Mu stegs kyī ston pa drug btul ba'i tshigs bcad bzhugs

om svasti siddham

rgya mtsho'i gos can rgya mtsho'i¹⁴⁵ mthas¹⁴⁶ klas sa chen 'di na lha chen po //
 'phrog byed dran¹⁴⁷ byed de dag mchod¹⁴⁸ byed thub pa drang srong garga¹⁴⁹ sogs //
 rgyas pa grog mkhar ba dang gzegs zan¹⁵⁰ rkang mig ser skya'i rjes 'jug pa //
 thor tshugs¹⁵¹ shing shun lo ma 'i gos can thal ba dbyu¹⁵² gu ku sha thogs //
 ral pa'i khur 'dzin muñdzas¹⁵³ legs dkris ri dags¹⁵⁴ g.yang gzhi'i stod g.yogs can //
 so¹⁵⁵ ris gsum mtshan rtse mo can mchod tshangs skud mchod phyir thogs pa 'chang //
 rig byed kun sbyangs¹⁵⁶ nges brjod 'don mkhas sgra dang sdeb sbyor mthar son pa //
 bdag tu lta ba'i lta ba la lta¹⁵⁷ rgyun tu dka' spyad¹⁵⁸ nga rgyal can //
 de lta'i tshul can mu stegs glang chen rtag tu¹⁵⁹ myos pa'i glad¹⁶⁰ 'gebs¹⁶¹ pa //
 dpal ldan smra ba'i seng ge blo gros stobs ldan rigs¹⁶² pa'i mche ba can //
 brda sprod byed gzhung yan lag rab rdzogs bde gshegs bstan pa'i ral pas brjid //
 legs sbyar nga ro snyan tshig¹⁶³ gad rgyangs ltag chod¹⁶⁴ sun 'byin mig bgrad¹⁶⁵ pa //
 de lta'i ri dags¹⁶⁶ rgyal po de //
 dpal ldan sa skya'i gangs rir gnas //
 blo gsal rnam kyis¹⁶⁷ ri dags¹⁶⁸ skyong //

¹⁴⁵ Glo: mtsho.

¹⁴⁶ IHo, Go, Glo: mtha'.

¹⁴⁷ IHo: dregs; Go, A: bran.

¹⁴⁸ IHo, Go, Glo, A: lhar.

¹⁴⁹ Go: skar dga'; Glo: garka; A: karka.

¹⁵⁰ Go: gzeg gzan.

¹⁵¹ A: gtsug.

¹⁵² Glo: dbyu(g); A dbyug.

¹⁵³ IHo: mun dzas; Glo: mañtsas ; Go: mu dzas.

¹⁵⁴ IHo, Go, A: dwags.

¹⁵⁵ IHo, Glo: sor.

¹⁵⁶ IHo: sbyang.

¹⁵⁷ IHo: blta.

¹⁵⁸ IHo, Go, Glo, A: spyod.

¹⁵⁹ IHo, Go, Glo, A: rab tu.

¹⁶⁰ IHo, Glo, A: klad.

¹⁶¹ IHo, Go, Glo, A: 'gems.

¹⁶² IHo: rig.

¹⁶³ Go, A: gtan tshigs.

¹⁶⁴ IHo: rtag chad; Go, Glo: lhag brjod, A: rtag brjod.

¹⁶⁵ Go: bsgrad.

¹⁶⁶ Go, A: dwags.

rgol ba ngan pa'i wa tshogs 'joms //
 da dung du yang mu stegs byed //
 thams cad chos kyis pham byas nas //
 bde bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i tshul //
 kun dga'i rgyal mtshan 'dzin par shog //

mang yul skyid grong 'phags pa wa ti'i gtsug lag khang dang nye ba'i sa'i
 cha / tshong dus kyis dbus su / 'phrog byed dga' ba la sogs pa / mu stegs
 kyis ston pa drug pham par byas nas / sangs rgyas kyis bstan pa la bcug ste /
 rab tu byung ba'i dus su sbyar ba'o //



¹⁶⁷ lHo, Go, Glo, A: kyis.

¹⁶⁸ Go, A: dwags.