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A Bout with Smallpox in Beijing: Personal Accounts of the Tibetan Statesman — Dga' bzhi pa Bsod nams bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor (1761–after 1810) and his Struggle with Smallpox*

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t is a truism that disease can potentially be and indeed often is a political, a sociological, an economic, and, in warfare, a strategic game-changer. Especially the virulent ones that rage as epidemics and wreak havoc among populations, change the make-up of societies, cause economic calamities, and can negatively impact military campaigns and thus turn the tide on the warring parties, and turn to naught every well- or ill-intended plan, crushing or raising hopes and aspirations, however low or lofty. Smallpox was one of those horrific diseases that raised its nasty head time and again in human history.¹ E. Fenn, A.M. Becker and others² have shown that it was smallpox that almost cost George Washington the American

* An earlier incarnation of this essay was first presented during the "Sino-Tibetan Buddhism: Interactions within Buddhist Traditions in China Proper and Tibet" conference that was held at Renmin University, Beijing, from July 26-27, 2016. The authors would like to thank Prof. Shen Weirong and Ms. Hillary Yao for having organized this meeting. We also wish to thank Prof. Yudru Tsomu for her help in understanding a few knotty passages, Dr. Li Zhiying for the identification of two Chinese names that were given in Tibetan transcription, and Mr. Sun Penghao for his help in identifying some of the Chinese place names that occur in the Tibetan text of note 79. Unhappily, other issues and problems that remain are our own.

¹ First published in 1983, Hopkins 2002, and now Kotar and Gessler 2013 are the best introductions to smallpox and its impact on human history in general.

² Fenn 2001 and Becker 2004. Never mind the shameful words of John Winthrop (1597–1649), the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and of course a devout Christian, who, in 1634, wrote in cruel ignorance: "For the natives, they are near all dead of the smallpox, so the Lord hath cleared our title to what we possess." Lord Jeffry Amherst (1717–1797), his fellow countryman and an equally devout Christian, was one among several others to use smallpox as a WMD in his campaigns against native Americans.

revolutionary war of independence, and it was smallpox that played a key role in the decimation of the native populations of the Americas. Its historic ramifications have been studied for Europe and the Americas. There are several studies of the occurrence of smallpox in the Indian subcontinent, among the Mongols, and we have monographs and scores of articles on the subject for the Ming and Qing dynasties in China.³

That said, smallpox has barely been studied in connection with the Tibetan cultural area that was also regularly visited by this scourge. And this paper aims marginally to ameliorate this situation by drawing attention to a fearsome episode in the life of the aristocrat Dga' bzhi pa Bsod nams bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor [tshe ring] (January 7, 1761–after 1810), who is usually referred to as Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor.⁴ Groomed in his youth to become a competent administrator, the Dga' ldan pho brang government in Lhasa appointed him cabinet minister (*bka' blon*) in 1783. However, he lost his official post in late 1792 at the order of the Qing court, because of his involvement with the second Nepalese-Tibetan-Qing war of 1791–1792.⁵ In his youth, his main teachers were Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793),⁶ who was among other things the tutor (*yongs 'dzin*) of Dalai Lama VIII 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1758–1804), his co-father Rdo ring [Gung < Ch. *gong* 公] Paṇḍita Mgon po dngos grub rab brtan (1721–1792) and himself a high-ranking *bka' blon*,⁷ and Lama Chos rdzong pa,⁸ Rdo ring Paṇḍita's aged teacher from Smin grol gling monastery. Dga' bzhi pa is also known as Mtsho byung dgyes pa'i lang tsho, a name he was given after he had successfully absolved a course in a branch of "linguistic" studies, in this case the poetic theories of Daṇḍin's (7th c.) *Kāvyaḍarśa*, at Smin grol gling.⁹ And he figures once in the oeuvre of one of his teachers, Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan, who, in the wood-female-sheep year [1775], wrote a little celebratory piece for him in the Jo khang temple on the occasion of him having been a bright light during a course on Buddhist

³ For the Mongols, see, for example, Serruys 1980, and for the Ming and the Qing dynasties, see, for example, Chang 1998, 2004, and Norov 2019: 3-4, 9-10. As far as we are aware, there exists no study of the actual *history* of smallpox in the Indian subcontinent, let alone of its earliest occurrence.

⁴ DGA' 1988: 73, DGA'1 2006: 82.

⁵ For the first war from 1788–1789 and its concluding treaty in which Dga' bzhi pa had played a prominent role, see now Komatsubara 2017.

⁶ DGA' 1988: 132 ff., DGA'1 2006: 149 ff.

⁷ What is meant by "co-father" will become clear below.

⁸ DGA' 1988: 148-151, DGA'1 2006: 166-169.

⁹ He was one of many aristocrats who received a humanistic education at this monastery; see Townsend 2021.

stages-on-the-path (*lam rim*) philosophy he conducted in Lhasa.¹⁰

In her fine dissertation, Li Ruohong 李若紅 studied the life of this scion of one of the most prestigious eighteenth century families of Central Tibet in some detail by making judicious use of his large autobiography that Dga' bzhi pa completed in 1806.¹¹ There are two different editions of this work, one published in Lhasa and the other in Chengdu, and there is also a Chinese translation by Tang Chi'an 湯匙案.¹² The full Tibetan title of this massive work is *Dga' bzhi pa'i mi rabs kyi byung ba brjod pa zol med gtam gyi rol mo*, which translates as *A Narrative of the Rise of the Dga' bzhi pa Family: A Melody of Straightforward Talk*. We may presume that Tshe ring phun tshogs, the editor of the Lhasa edition, abbreviated this by *Dga' bzhi pa'i rnam thar, Biography of Dga' bzhi pa*. First published in 1986 under the editorial hand of Rin chen tshe ring and supervised by Tang Chi'an who, we believe, at the time headed the Sichuan Nationalities Publishing House in Chengdu, the Chengdu edition is wrongly titled *Rdo ring pañḍi ta'i rnam thar, Biography of Rdo ring Pañḍita*, and Tang's translation follows suit, albeit

¹⁰ Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan 1974–1977a; the letter in Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan 1974–1977b that is addressed to Bka' blon chen po Dga' bzhi Gung Pañḍita had of course nothing to do with Dga' bzhi pa himself, but rather with his co-father Gung or Rdo ring Pañḍita Mgon po dngos grub rab brtan.

¹¹ Li 2002. The autobiography is not dated, but the last date given in DGA' 1988: 1090, DGA'2 2006: 1213. And Tang 1995: 574 is July 17, 1806, the occasion on which his eldest son Tha'i ji (< Mon. *taiji* < Ch. *taizi* 太子) Mi 'gyur bsod nams dpal 'byor (1784–1834) was elevated to the rank of *bka' blon*, albeit not without controversy. DGA' 1988: 822–823, DGA'2 2006: 913, and Tang 1995: 433 indicate that the court had awarded his son the title of Tha'i ji of the first class (*rim pa dang po*) sometime during the fifth lunar month [June 9–July 8] of 1793. Petech 1973: 50–64 has given us important details about this prominent family and about Dga' bzhi pa in particular. Petech, it should be mentioned, did not have access to Dga' bzhi pa's autobiography when writing his survey and based himself on contemporary Tibetan sources. More recently, using his autobiography, Phun rab pa Bstan 'dzin dpag bsam 2010: 54–77, 118 ff. contains a summary of his life together with a series of songs that he is said to have composed.

¹² See, respectively, DGA' 1988, DGA'1,2 2006, and Tang 1995. For an initial discussion of the extant Tibetan manuscripts of this work and the editions, see Li 2002: 8–11. DGA' 1988 is based on a comparison of two manuscripts, a manuscript in *khyug yig* of the Tibetan Archives, Lhasa, and a manuscript in *kham yig* that belonged to Mr. Ma gcig of the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences; see the *Afterword* of this edition. A reprint of the earlier 1986 printing, DGA'2 2006: 1222–1227, 1228–1265 contains an editor's note—this includes an at times misleading notice on some Mongol terms used in the autobiography—and a reprint of an important assessment of the autobiography that had been published earlier in Dbang phyug rnam rgyal 1984, albeit under a slightly different title. Shakabpa 2010: 507 ff. used another manuscript of this work for his brief narrative of the Gorkha war. Neither publication of this work is completely reliable although it would seem that the readings of the Lhasa text are often better. This also has consequences for Tang Chi'an's translation which is solely based on the Chengdu recension.

by adding the subtitle *History of the Dga' bzhi Family*. To be sure, in the secondary literature, Dga' bzhi pa is often referred to as Rdo ring Paṇḍita, but this is plainly wrong.¹³ Rdo ring Paṇḍita was the nickname of his co-father, even if he was not really entitled to bear the Paṇḍita title!¹⁴

While Dga' bzhi pa himself states that "our birth mother" (*kho bo'i skyed ma*) was Rin chen skyid 'dzoms (1740–?)— she was the daughter of minister Mdo mkhar ba Tshe ring dbang rgyal (1697–1763)—, he acknowledges that Pa sangs tshe ring (1745–1792) was "our birth-father" (*kho bo'i skyed pha*), that is to say, Pa sangs tshe ring was his biological father.¹⁵ He explains why he has two fathers in the following passage that of course has everything to do with, on one hand, the fact that already in an entry for 1753 Pa sangs tshe ring is said to have become feeble-minded and that he was induced to take the vow of celibacy and, on the other hand, the practice of fraternal polyandry¹⁶:

*kho bo'i lus skyed kyi ma ni ga zi'i rigs las bltams pa gong bzhin
dang skyed byed kyi pha ni mdzes lam kun rdzob drang don ltar na
zhabs drung bde ldan sgrol ma'i rigs sras tha'i ji pa sangs tshe ring
dang / don dam gnas lugs nges don ltar na mi rje bka' drin can
gung paṇḍi ta de nyid yin par sngon du rag shag gi sras mo rnam
gnyis khab bzhes dus kyi lo rgyus las shes par bya /*

That my mother who gave birth to my body was, as stated above, born in the Ga zi family and that my father who gave birth to me was, on a relative level, Tha'i ji Pa sangs tshe ring, the son of Zhabs drung Bde ldan sgrol ma, and, on an ultimate, ontological level the kind Lord Gung Paṇḍita himself, should be known from the account when both had earlier wedded the daughter of Rag shag.

To explain: The house of Mdo mkhar is also known as Ga zi and Rag shag. Dga' bzhi pa speaks of the two Rag shag sisters, that is, the two daughters of Mdo mkhar ba, his mother and his aunt (*sru mo*) Bu khrid

¹³ This mistake is continued in the otherwise very rewarding essay in Erhard 2019.

¹⁴ For the title *paṇḍita* in Tibet, see van der Kuijp [forthcoming].

¹⁵ DGA' 1988: 82, 74, DGA'1 2006: 93, 84. Earlier, in DGA' 1988: 23, DGA'1 2006: 26, he uses the honorific for father, *yab*, in connection with Tha'i ji Pa sangs tshe ring. For Mdo mkhar ba, see Mdo mkhar ba Tshe ring dbang rgyal 1981 and now also Hartley 2011.

¹⁶ DGA' 1988: 56, DGA'1 2006: 64 and DGA' 1988: 74-75, DGA'1 2006: 84. Chinese sources were also confused about the relationship among the three, but the issue was clarified and resolved in Li 2002: 68-78, and Li 2002: 364 charted the family's genealogy, as did Tang 1995: 584.

rgyal mo (1745–?).¹⁷ Zhabs drung Bde ldan sgröl ma was the daughter of prime minister Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas (1689–1747)¹⁸ and the mother of both Pa sangs sangs rgyas and Rdo ring Paṅḍita.

A monument of Tibetan letters, the autobiography contains, aside from a biography of his co-father Rdo ring Paṅḍita, a wealth of information about not only Nepal and the workings of the local Tibetan government and the overarching Qing administration, but also, in a more general sense, about how an eighteenth-century Tibetan nobleman and administrator coped with the affairs of state. It contains a number of observations on the Nepalese and Chinese landscapes through which he traveled, about life in the cities he visited or passed through, and the appearance and apparel of the officials with whom he had come in contact. In addition, it also goes to show to what degree Tibetan society had absorbed Chinese and Mongol customs. For example, there are references to Chinese funerary traditions in the passages that mention the passing of Rdo ring Paṅḍita's elder brother Gung Rnam rgyal tshé brtan, who died in 1745, and Mdo mkhar ba, who passed on in 1763.¹⁹ Dga' bzhi pa himself had a smattering of some Chinese words and, as it turned out, was also somewhat able to converse in Mongol with the Qianlong emperor.²⁰ Speaking of an excursion he and his friend and fellow-minister G.yu thog Bkra shis don grub made in Beijing, he makes the following observation about the eunuchs they encountered in the Gdugs dkar lha khang, a chapel dedicated to the goddess Sitātapatrā²¹:

*rgya gar rgyal po rnam kyī lugs srol ltar na btsun mo bsrung mi
nyug rum pa zhes pa dang don gcig rgya nag skad du lū kong zhes
chung dus nas pho rtags bcad pa'i ma ning mtshan med lta bu kha
shas lha khang de'i nang du rgyu 'grul byed pa...*

¹⁷ DGA' 1988: 58, DGA'1 2006: 66. Curiously, Mdo mkhar ba Tshé ring dbang rgyal 1981 does not once mention his daughters; Dga' bzhi pa refers to Mdo mkhar ba's autobiography in DGA' 1988: 59, DGA'1 2006: 68.

¹⁸ On him and his era, recently see Sperling 2012 and the literature cited therein.

¹⁹ DGA' 1988: 25, DGA'1 2006: 28 and DGA' 1988: 98, DGA'1 2006: 111.

²⁰ DGA' 1988: 789, DGA'2 2006: 875; see also Bsam gtan 1986: 85 and Sperling 1998: 331–332. The Chengdu edition used by Sperling was first published in 1987 and not in 1986. The history of Mongol presence in Tibet during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century still needs to be fully inquired into, let alone written. There is evidence that, in the first half of the seventeenth century, the chancellery at Sa skya monastery had at least one bilingual or trilingual secretary who was able to write official letters in Mongol; see the Mongol document sent by Sa skya's twenty-eighth abbot A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1659) to Emperor Hong Taiji (1592–1643) in Oyunbilig and Shi 2014: 411 ff.

²¹ DGA' 1988: 793, DGA'2 2006: 879 wrongly has *srung* and *bcas* for DGA' *bsrung* and *bcad*. For this goddess, see now Liao Yang 廖陽 2016 and the literature cited therein.

We visited inside the chapel with a few individuals called *lā'u kong* (< *laogong* 老公)²² in Chinese, who had no sexual organs, eunuchs-neuters without gender identifiers, whose male genitals had been cut off at a young age, who were identical to the *mi nyug rum pa*, guardians of the queen, in accordance with the tradition of Indian kings...

He also on occasion and no doubt with an eye to his expected audience glosses Mongol and Chinese words. Thus he explains the Mongol-Sog term *noyon* as Tibetan *dpon po*, "official," and states that Chinese *gtsang tsor* (< *zangzao* 藏枣), the Tibetan jujube or date, is the equivalent of Tibetan *kha sur pa ni*.²³

Aside from his autobiography, two other products from his pen have been published to date. The first is a print of his study of the two famous treatises on Tibetan grammar that he had written in 1810; the printing blocks were housed in the Gzims khang Rdo ring, that is, the Dga' bzhi residence.²⁴ The second is an allegorical tale on the theme of the war between Nepal and Qing China titled *Bya sprel gtam rgyud*, *Tale of a Bird and a Monkey*.²⁵ To our knowledge as yet unpublished, Dga' bzhi pa also authored the *Rgyal bu grags pa'i mu khyud kyi bstan bcos* [1779], which is a literary piece on Prince Indra, the *Snyan ngag gi bstan bcos legs par bshad pa sde bzhi sgo 'phar rab tu 'byed pa'i gtam* [1785], which is a collection of gnomes, the *Blo gsal yid dbang 'dren byed rnam dpyod gser gyi shing rta* [1795], a work on poetics, and the *Char sprin rma bya'i zlos gar* [1801], the title of which does not inform us as to its genre or subject matter, but which apparently was a devotional work on masters of the stages-of-the-path (*lam rim*) literature. Aside from being a man of letters, Dga' bzhi pa was also a musician and Gar pa Mgon [po] tshe [ring] was his teacher of the subject. He thus learned how to play the Mnga' ris lute (*sgra snyan*), the two-stringed fiddle (*pi wang*), and

²² This seems to be an unusual term. The usual words for eunuch are *huanguan* 宦官, *taijian* 太监, and *yanren* 阉人. However, another one is *lao gonggong* 老公公.

²³ DGA' 1988: 25, 826, DGA'1 2006: 29, DGA'2 2006: 917, and Tang 1995: 18, 434.

²⁴ Dga' bzhi pa Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor 1979 and for the location of these blocks, see Anonymous 1970: 239.

²⁵ Dga' bzhi pa Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor 1991 is but one of many editions of this little, allegedly anonymous work. Bsam gtan 1986: 83-92 discusses the problem of the allegory's authorship since there was quite a bit of confusion about this slight co-nundrum. He compares several passages of Dga' bzhi pa's narrative of the Gorkha war with the allegory and concludes that Dga' bzhi pa was its author. For very interesting notes on this little piece, see also Martin 2008. The dates for some of Dga' bzhi pa's writings that follow are taken from Bsam gtan 1986: 85-86. Some eighteen stakholders that were written at this time among the Tibetan, Nepalese, and British stakeholders were studied and published in Diskalkar 1933. For the Gorkha wars, see most recently Erschbamer 2018 and Theobald 2020, and the cited literature.

the flute (*gling bu*). In late 1793, he was responsible for introducing the hammered dulcimer (*yang chin* < Ch. *yangqin* 扬琴) into the Tibetan musical repertoire.²⁶

In early 1793, Dga' bzhi pa had contracted smallpox when he and G.yu thog Bkra shis don grub together with their attendants were in Beijing.²⁷ The reason for their appearance in that grand cosmopolitan city was that the imperial court had summoned them to account for the actions that they had and had not taken during the second Nepal-Tibetan-Qing war and, in particular, to explain how they had come to be imprisoned by the Nepalese Gorkha army in 1791. Li has detailed Dga' bzhi pa's involvement with the Gurkha War, so that there is no need for us to dwell on it here; the same holds for Xie Guangdian recent contribution with respect to his trip to Beijing.²⁸ What had apparently really irked the high-ranking official Fuk'anggan (1754–1796)²⁹ and no doubt the court in general was that neither Dga' bzhi pa nor G.yu thog had committed suicide in the face of their defeat, the result of a glaring shortcoming on their part. And this point was made abundantly clear to him.³⁰ Thus, following the routing of the Gorkha forces in 1792, Dga' bzhi pa and his colleague G.yu thog Bkra shis don grub were escorted from Central Tibet to Chengdu, where they stayed for three days and were received by the governor's office with rather unexpected fanfare.³¹ Among other diversions, they were apparently also entertained by a performance of song and dance, a musical (*phrang* [g]zhi < Ch. *changxi* 唱戏) of sorts.³² That Dga' bzhi pa and his party

²⁶ DGA' 1988: 816, DGA'2 2006: 905-906; see also Tang 1995: 429, Li 2002: 227 and Dbang phyug rnam rgyal 1999.

²⁷ This episode of his life was studied in Sperling 1998, who, however, does not mention that he fell seriously ill with smallpox. Sperling sheds significant light on the ways in which a Tibetan aristocrat and high local government official dealt with and acknowledged that Tibet was part of Qing China. Li 2002: 227-230 briefly touched on the general issue of smallpox in Qing China and Dga' bzhi pa's encounter with this disease.

²⁸ Li 2002: 144 ff. and Xie 2018.

²⁹ On him, see Li 2002: 195-206 and now also Jagou 2007.

³⁰ For this episode, see DGA' 1988: 755-756, DGA'2 2006: 838-839 and Li 2002: 203-204. Earlier, Bajung (Ch. Bazhong 巴忠), *amban* of the Qing court in Lhasa from 1788-1789, had committed suicide because of his failure to report the true state of affairs where the Gorkhas were concerned; see DGA' 1988: 789, DGA'2 2006: 876; see also Sperling 1998: 332, n. 1, and Li 2002: 222-223. Jagou 2017: 330, n. 65, notes that Bazhong was a Lifanyuan 理藩院 Vice-Minister, Department of Affairs, from 1785 to 1791 and *amban* only from December 30, 1788 to January 21, 1789.

³¹ For a narrative of this trip, see Li 2002: 206-227.

³² DGA' 1988: 778-779, DGA'2 2006: 860; see Tang 1995: 410. DGA' 1988 has *phrang gzhi*, whereas DGA'2 2006 has *khurang zhi* – *phrang gzhi* and *khurang zhi* are homophones. A trifling quibble: Sperling 1998: 328, n. 2, suggests that Tibetan *khurang* [g]zhi reflects *jingxi* 京戲 [or *jingju* 京劇], that is, Beijing opera. And Li 2002: 181-182 also holds

traveled to Beijing via Chengdu is of course owing to the fact that Central Tibet fell under the jurisdiction of Sichuan's governor. From there they went north to Gzan shi/Shan shi (< Ch. Shaanxi 陝西) and crossing the "great Rma river", the Yellow River, they arrived in the great city of Sing nga hū (< Xi'an fu 西安府 = Xi'an 西安), "the capital of ancient China" (*rgya nag rnying khungs kyi rgyal sa*). He adds for his Tibetan readership that this was the place that was associated with Srong btsan sgam po's (7thc.) Chinese wife. In Xi'an, they were again entertained by a performance of *khrang* [*g*]zhi song and dance.³³ From there the party traveled to Mount Wutai (Wutai shan 五臺山), the small mountain range in Shanxi Province and a sacred site for Tibetan, Mongol, Manchu and Chinese Buddhists,³⁴ after which they finally arrived in Beijing on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth *hor*-month, October 11, 1792. This occasioned him to memorialize the impression that Beijing and the imperial palace had made on him in a series of verses from Shong ston Lo tsā ba Rdo rje rgyal mtshan's *circa* 1270 Tibetan translation of Kṣemendra's (11thc.) large poetic work, the *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*, that began with the mention of an immeasurable mansion (*gzhal yas khang, vimāna*), a notion that, we can assume, he intended to resonate with the presence of its principal deity of a maṇḍala and, indeed, with the idea of the Qianlong emperor as Mañjuśrī and his palace.³⁵

In Beijing, they first stayed in a private home in the vicinity of the court house (*shing spug yā mon* < Ch. *xingbu yamen* 刑部衙門) and the next day they were taken to the military office (*cun ci yā mon* < Ch. *junji*

that the Tibetan term points to Beijing opera, but the latter had its inception in 1790 at the court of the Qianlong emperor and was apparently kept private for some years! However, earlier in Li 2002: 111, n. 19, she rightly pointed out that the Tibetan term suggests Chinese *changxi*.

³³ DGA' 1988: 778-779, DGA'2 2006: 864. The first has *khrang gzhi*, the second the homophone *khrang zhi*. The expression *khrang zhi'i* occurs in an entry for the year 1724 in Lcang skya (< Ch. Jiangjia 章嘉) III Rol pa'i rdo rje's (1717-1786) biography that Thu'u bkwan (< Ch. Tuguan 土觀) III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802) completed in 1794; see Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma 1989: 86. It occurs in the context of the celebrations that were held when the young Lcang skya III had fully recovered from smallpox. During the celebrations, officials headed by the two great generals (*cang jun* < *jiangjun* 將軍) – these were Nian Gengyao 年羹尧 (1679-1726) and Yue Zhongqi 岳鍾琪 (1686-1754) – held a Chinese-style feast (*rgya lugs kyi ston mo*) that included some kind of an operatic drama (*zlos gar gyi gzugs mo*) called *khrang zhi'i*.

³⁴ See the special volume devoted to this range and its cultural and religious significance in the on-line *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies* 6 (2011) and now also Ding Yi 丁一 2019.

³⁵ Bstan 'gyur dpe sdur ma 1994-2008: 95, 4; for an exceptional study of Kṣemendra's work, see Lin 2011.

yamen 军机衙门) where they were interrogated about their involvement in the recently concluded war with the Gorkhas. The interpreters who were used during this time were two of his very own former students in Lhasa whom he had taught the second chapter of Dandin's (7thc.) *Kāvyaṅdarśa*, Lord Thā (*thā lo ye* < Ch. *Da Laoye* 达老爷) and Lord Thu (*thu lo ye* < Ch. *Tu Laoye* 图老爷). They then finally ended up staying at the Yellow Monastery, the Lha khang ser po (Ch. Huangsi 黄寺, Mon. Sira süme) that had been built on the occasion of Dalai Lama V Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho's (1617–1684) trip to and stay in Beijing in 1652–1653.

The long and short of the events that transpired at the capital was that while both men lost their ministerial offices of *bka' blon* of the Dga' ldan pho brang government in Lhasa because of their unintentional mistakes, they were generally exonerated of willful wrongdoing. Dga' bzhi pa reports a private conversation between him and the Qianlong emperor in which the latter had told him in part:³⁶

*khyod nas bod gor 'khrug gzhi'i skor la snga phyir las don 'thus
sgo ma tshang ba sna tshogs byas tshul gyi [read: gyis?] bod sdod
blon po rnam nas rgyu mtshan rim par byung bar brten / 'di
phyogs ched du bkug nas rtsa ba zhib tu dpyad par / khyod rang gi
ngos nas lo na dang stobs shugs chung ba'i babs [bab] kyis gzugs
po dgra lag tu shor ba [876] sogs 'on ma sang ba'i nyes pa tsam las
gzhan byas nyes che ba gang yang mi 'dug [/]*

Since you did various inappropriate things during the Tibeto-Gurkha troubles, you were specially summoned on account of this for a detailed inquest on the basis of what has been reported by the ministers³⁷ who resided in Tibet. For your part, due to your youth and being of little strength, you (*gzugs po*) fell into the hands of the enemy, etc. You have committed no greater offense than the offense of simple inattentiveness.

To the eighty-one-year-old emperor, the thirty-one-year-old Dga' bzhi pa was evidently a "youth." To be sure, Dga' bzhi pa was by no means an unknown quantity for him. To the contrary, as indicated in M. Oidtmann's partial translation of a letter the emperor had written to Heliyen, he was very well-informed about him and his family's

³⁶ DGA' 1988: 789, DGA'2 2006: 875-876; with some modifications, I adopt the translation in Li 2002: 222-223; see also Sperling 1998: 332-333.

³⁷ We wonder why he would use here "ministers" (*blon po rnam*) and not *amban*-s, a word that he freely used before and afterwards.

multiple connections to the powers that were in Central Tibet.³⁸

Around the Chinese New Year of 1793, which fell on February 11, Dga' bzhi pa was about to return to Central Tibet were it not for having unexpectedly contracted smallpox. The passages in which he addresses his encounter with smallpox offer a poignant documentation of one who contracted this virulent disease and lived to write about it, even if the distance provided by hindsight, amounting to some thirteen years, had no doubt somewhat tempered his memory of this horrific experience. The coda of this brief paper, the thrust of which is expository, offers slightly annotated translations of these narratives. Before doing so, it will be well to make some prefatory remarks on the typology and aetiology of smallpox,³⁹ and on the identities of a few of its known victims in the Tibetan cultural area.

To begin, at first biomedicine distinguished between two different kinds of smallpox that are caused by two varieties of the variola virus, namely, the variola major and the variola minor. In recent years, a third was added, the variola tanzania or intermedius.⁴⁰ Only the first two appear to have been recognized by Tibetan sources, even if they identify several sub-types. The type of smallpox caused by the variola major virus is also known as the black pox, that caused by the variola minor virus form of smallpox is known as the white pox. The most severe cases of smallpox with a greater likelihood of being fatal are due to a contraction of the variola major virus; having been infected by the variola minor results in immunity from the variola major disease. Highly infectious and transmitted through face-to-face encounters or by one or the other fomite such as clothing, etc., the incubation period of the disease is between twelve to roughly twenty-one days. Thereafter, the disease progresses in three stages:

- [1] The prodromal or the pre-eruptive stage, the earliest stage of the disease, is similar to the flu or a cold and is characterized by general discomfort, nausea, and fever;
- [2] After roughly three days there is the onset of small, reddish lesions in the mouth, tongue, and palate;
- [3] A day or two thereafter, there is the onset of the formation of macules that begin on the forehead and then spread over large parts of the body.

³⁸ Oidtmann 2018: 71-72. Heliyen (Ch. Helin 和琳) was the younger brother of the infamous Hešen (1755-1792), and he was promoted to *amban* in Lhasa on July 7, 1792; see Oidtmann 2018: 263, n. 45.

³⁹ We would be remiss, were we not to acknowledge the use of the outstanding entries for smallpox and the smallpox vaccine in the *Wikipedia*.

⁴⁰ Rao 1972: 3.

According to the classification proposed by Rao,⁴¹ the variola major infection can follow four different courses. One of the most famous, earliest, and informed descriptions of smallpox and its treatment was given by the Persian physician Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyā Rāzī (854–925), who also made a distinction between varieties of smallpox ranging from mild to fatal ones.⁴² The phases and symptoms of the disease that these sources describe will be helpful in a future identification of the phases of the disease that are isolated in the Tibetan medical literature.

Effective immunization against smallpox can proceed in two ways. The first of these is variolation or inoculation. No longer practiced, this consists of introducing material from smallpox pustules by way of an incision into the skin or by blowing dried smallpox scabs into the nose. The second is vaccination—*vacca* is Latin for "cow"—, a method discovered and perfected in the 1690s by the English physician E. Jenner (1649–1723).⁴³ Jenner had used cowpox, a virus *similar* to smallpox to create immunity, rather than variolation/inoculation of smallpox to create the same. There is an Indian tradition that maintains that vaccination against smallpox was discovered before Jenner's time. D. Wujastyk has fully discredited this claim through some very impressive sleuthing, so that it can now be laid to rest.⁴⁴ As far as China is concerned, J. Needham has provided us with the details of the discovery of variolation or inoculation—the Chinese term is *zhongdou* 种痘, "to plant smallpox postules,"—in the sixteenth century by Wan Quan 萬全 (1495–1585), who first published his findings in 1549.⁴⁵ And the inimitable B. Laufer published a few notes on a Japanese color print (*ukiyo-e* 浮世絵) that was in the possession of Chicago's Field Museum, which he attributes, with some reservations, to Katsukawa Shuntei 勝川春亭 (1770–1820). The print contains a long inscription by a certain Sōsai Setto (?)⁴⁶ and has as its subject the introduction of vaccination in Japan. In his brief notice, Laufer added a few observations on the practice of inoculation against the disease in the Far East.

But let us now turn to the Tibetan cultural area. In Tibetan, smallpox is termed *'brum nad*. The disease was traditionally classified among the so-called *gnyan* diseases, that is, epidemic diseases caused by a *gnyan*-sprite, of which *inter alia* 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (1789–

⁴¹ Rao 1972: 6-8.

⁴² Rāzī 1848: 34-35, 71-73.

⁴³ For a slightly different account, see Francis 2019: 15-16; see also Riedel 2018.

⁴⁴ Wujastyk 1987.

⁴⁵ Needham 1980. Van der Kuijp should like to thank his former student Dr. Li Ruohong for long ago drawing his attention to this important paper.

⁴⁶ Laufer 1911: 526-529.

1838), the well known author of a treatise on global geography, conveniently isolated a number of different types.⁴⁷ The words *thor ba* and *'brum [bu]* can mean macule or pustule and *'brum nad* should of course not be confused with *gzhang 'brum*, which refers to hemorrhoids, even if *'brum [bu]* is also sometimes used in the sense of a hemorrhoid. A condition that must have afflicted the sedentary monk accustomed to sitting for a long time, the Buddha himself is said to have pronounced on hemorrhoids and their cure in the so-called *'Phags pa gzhang 'brum zhi bar byed pa'i mdo* or the *Noble Hemorrhoids-Soothing Sutra*; the *circa* 800 Tibetan rendition of this text is contained in the tantric literature section of the Tibetan Buddhist canon.⁴⁸ Although it usually does, it would appear that the word *'brum nad* does not necessarily imply smallpox. Rather, it can refer to any variety of viral diseases that are characterized by pustules.

Among the oldest extant Tibetan treatises on medicine, the more or less anonymous *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po* (?9thc.), the *Khu tshur 'bum* iatrosophion, a compendium of short medical tracts—it is attributed to a certain Bha ro Phyag rdum (11thc.) but contains post-eleventh century tracts as well⁴⁹—, G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po's (12thc.) *Rgyud bzhi*,⁵⁰ and the anonymous Bon po inspired *'Bum bzhi*,⁵¹ to name but four treatises on medicine, all contain chapters on smallpox and its treatment. We do not propose to study these here, let alone engage with the contents of these tracts in a comparative manner, but suffice it to say that the *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po* distinguishes between three distinct types of the disease: minute smallpox (*'brum phran*),

⁴⁷ 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las 1997: 183-331; see also below for his significant contribution to inoculation against smallpox that was first signaled by Lobsang Yondan 2016. We are informed in the colophon on pp. 794-795 that a certain physician (*em chi* < Uighur/Mongol *emči*) Dpal 'byor of the Lha khang ser po, the Yellow Monastery, in Beijing, had printing blocks prepared for it. It is not clear when the Uighur/Mongol loanword *emči* entered the Tibetan lexicon as *em chi*.

⁴⁸ See Bka' 'gyur dpe sdur ma 2006-2009: 603-607.

⁴⁹ For some preliminary notes on the *Khu tshur 'bum* and its authorship, see van der Kuijp 2010: 39 ff.

⁵⁰ See *Grwa thang rgyud bzhi* 2005: 270-273. For the author and his work, see Yang ga 2010 and van der Kuijp 2010: 23 ff. A rare and a yet unstudied manuscript of a biography of G.yu thog that was written by a distant descendant was published in G.yu thog Bkra shis 2013. The text consists of seven chapters. The first deals with his previous re-births, the second with the particulars of his family line, the third with his birth, the fourth with him becoming a *bla sman*, a royal physician, the fifth with his compositions, the sixth with his trips to the realm of the gods, and the seventh with his offspring and students. We are told, on p. 199/1, that he was born in the water-female-serpent year and later that he was a contemporary of Khri srong lde btsan (742–7800) and Śāntarakṣita. This would mean that he was allegedly born in 753! The use here of the sexagenary, sixty-year cycle for the designation of the year is at best suspicious.

⁵¹ See *Gso rig 'bum bzhi* 2006: 339-342.

black [?or hemorrhagic] smallpox (*'brum nag*), and large white smallpox (*'brum dkar chen*).⁵² On the other hand, the *Rgyud bzhi* and the *'Bum bzhi* identify only two main types, black and white smallpox, and they subdivide these into three subtypes each. The narratives of the *Rgyud bzhi* and the *'Bum bzhi* are strikingly similar and they are indeed on occasion so identical that there can be no doubt that, with a few changes, one either adopted the other's narrative or, what is perhaps less likely, that both borrowed from a common source. My preliminary study of these two treatises strongly suggests that the *'Bum bzhi* is posterior to the *Rgyud bzhi*. What distinguishes these two from the *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po* is that their chapters deal with smallpox and its cure (*bcos pa*) and not merely with the disease itself, as is the case with the latter. The *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po*'s very succinct account of the disease ends on an ominous but realistic note: "He/she will die (*de ni 'chi bar 'gyur ba'o //*)."⁵³

The treatise attributed to Bha ro Phyag rdum inserts a further variable into the equation in that the first of its two chapters on the disease is titled *Rgya nag gi 'brum bcos 'phags pa 'jam dpal gyis mdzad pa*, *Curing Chinese Smallpox, Composed by the Holy Mañjuśrī*.⁵⁴ We learn from its preamble that when the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī was actually residing on Mount Wutai, which has been associated with this Bodhisattva since at least the sixth century, many people of China had contracted and died of smallpox, which the text calls "the king of disease." The Chinese king/emperor Tsakra (< ?Skt. Cakra!) had also fallen victim to the disease and after a consultation with his ministers agreed to request of Mañjuśrī a cure. Having collected a full *bre*-measure of gold dust and fine brocade or silk (*gos bzang po*),⁵⁵ they dispatched three colleagues to him. Mañjuśrī then transformed himself into a seer (*drang srong*, Skt. *ṛṣi*)⁵⁶ and began teaching them about [1] the means to protect themselves from smallpox, [2] its diagnosis, and [3] its therapy. An early indication of smallpox having possibly visited Central Tibet is the notice in this work to the effect that Mu ne btsan

⁵² *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po* 1989: 137 [= *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po*[1], 94b-95a, *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po*[2], 67a-b, *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po*[3], 60a-b]. For some preliminary text-historical remarks on this work, see Rin chen rgyal 2011 and van der Kuijp 2015/2016: 82 ff. See now also McGrath 2017.

⁵³ *Sman dpyad zla ba'i rgyal po* 1989: 137 reads: *'chi bar 'gyur ba dag yin no //*. Like most chapters of this work, this chapter, short as it is, is beset with bedeviling text-critical problems.

⁵⁴ *Khu tshur 'bum* 2006: 534-539.

⁵⁵ This is followed by the phrase *mtheb zho rib a gsum*, which we cannot explain.

⁵⁶ Already several early works ascribed to G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po in the *Cha lag bco brgyad* compendium are replete with references to Indic physicians, many of whose names are prefixed by the term "seer", as is indeed G.yu thog himself; see G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po 1999a: 19-20 and 1999b: 690-694.

po (?762–?799), the second son of the Mighty One (*btsan po*) Khri srong lde btsan had contracted this disease, specifically, so it would appear, he had contracted smallpox of the black variety.⁵⁷ We read there that after Emperor Cakra had given Zhang po Ti li ka ma, who placed it in a lacquered amulet box (*bse yi ga'u*) and wrapped it in a piece of satin (*dar zab*).⁵⁸ Zhang po carried it to Tibet and handed it over to Khri srong lde btsan in Bsam yas monastery. The Tibetan ruler promptly hid it and said a prayer: "May it meet with a person of great kindness and compassion of these evil times!" Then...⁵⁹:

*dus phyis lha sras mu tri [ne] btsan po la 'brum pa byung bas / bod
kyi lha rje mkhas pa mi dgu'i rgyud 'dzin rnams bsogs [tshogs] pas
/ mkhas pa mi nyag gis / lha sa la zhabs bskor mdzad pas [536] lha
sa'i sgo gong na / bse yi ga'o dar zab kyis dril ba mthong nas / lag
tu blangs nas kha phyé bas / 'brum pa 'chos pa'i srung thabs / brtag
thabs / gso thabs rnams gter nas gdan drangs nas / rgyal po bcos
pas drags [drag] nas / mkhas pa mi dgu'i nang nas kyang mkhas pa
mi nyag mkhas par grags pa yin /...*

...later, because the Divine Son Mu ne btsan po⁶⁰ had contracted smallpox, a meeting of the followers of the nine Mkhas pa-royal physicians (*lha rje*) of Tibet⁶¹ was convened. Thus, Mkhas pa Mi nyag made a circumambulation (*zhabs bskor*) in Lhasa and seeing a small ivory box wrapped in satin (*dar zab*) atop the Lhasa gate, he took it in his hands and, opening it, he withdrew from the treasure a protective means for curing smallpox, a means for diagnosis, and a means for healing. And having cured the king, from among the nine wise ones (*mkhas pa*), Mkhas pa Mi nyag, too, became known as a wise one.

To be sure, this narrative is not a little muddled! We read in the colophon of this work that after a long series of transmission, ultimately, a certain Phyag sman Shāk yes [Shākya ye shes] hid the text

⁵⁷ The manuscript had Mu tri btsan po; the date of Mu ne btsan po's birth is given in Sørensen 1994: 404, n. 1384. Truth be told, we have so far found no corroborating evidence in the relevant Tibetan chronicles that he died of smallpox.

⁵⁸ For *dar zab*, see Karsten n.d.: 3, which we consulted on-line. Karsten also surmized that *dar* is a loanword, whereas *zab* or *zab mo* has the sense of "fine [quality]".

⁵⁹ *Khu tshur 'bum* 2006: 535-536.

⁶⁰ The editors changed his name to Khri srong lde btsan's eldest son Mu tri [or: khri] btsan po (b. 760). Not a trace of this narrative is found in the major Tibetan chronicles.

⁶¹ On the "nine royal physicians from surrounding countries" and the "nine wise Tibetan physicians," see Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's (1653–1705) 1704 *Khog 'bugs* history of medicine in Kilty tr. 2010: 164, 168. A Mkhas pa Mi nyag is indeed mentioned among the "nine wise Tibetan physicians."

in the "balled fist (*khu tshur*)."

The second is titled '*Brum pa bcos pa'i man ngag bdud rtsi'i thigs pa, Instruction for Curing Smallpox, A Drop of Ambrosia*.⁶² In the fairly lengthy colophon of this work, we are told that that "this instruction of eliminating the path, that is, the development of smallpox was based on the experience of me, Mkhas pa Rin [chen] rgyal [mtshan]." The colophon contains several important passages that begin with indicating that a summary of various instructions, this "little tract of personal experience" (*nyams kyi yig chung*), was owed to Skyes bu Me lha (*Puruṣa Agnideva)⁶³ who in turn had given (*gnang*) it to "me, Mkhas pa Mi nyag." We then learn that it should be kept hidden from those who are not one's disciples and that a portion of this instruction was given (*sbyin*) "to me by G.yu thog Mgon po." Furthermore, not even a part of the instruction should be passed on to anyone who is willing to pay for it with a gift.

The Tibetan terms for variolation or inoculation are '*brum 'debs* and '*brum 'dzugs*, "to plant smallpox," which would seem to be a calque of Chinese *zhongdou* 种痘 and the evidence so far suggests that this calque makes its appearance in the Tibetan literature of the eighteenth century. Drawing attention to the oeuvre of 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las, alias Btsan po Nom-un han (< Mon. *nom-un qan*), Lobsang Yongdan recently published an informative essay in which he addressed the Btsan po's notices on inoculation.⁶⁴ In conversation, he also added that he may have found Tibetan references to inoculation that predate Wan Quan's mid-sixteenth century notice.⁶⁵ This would indeed be an important discovery and we await his deliberations.

Tibetan writings that deal with history, biographies and autobiographies do not always specify what kind of smallpox is at stake when they mention that someone had fallen ill with the disease or when an epidemic of sorts was at issue—the usual term is simply '*brum nad*. We have not encountered this term in the fragments of Tibetan medical texts that were found in Dunhuang.⁶⁶ More than three and a half centuries later, Gtsang pa Rgya ras pa Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211), the first 'Brug chen hierarch, is said to have contracted black smallpox ('*brum nag*) when, as a young man in his early twenties, he was studying with a certain Dge bshes Jo dar. His biographies do not provide any additional details but suffice it to say that he was a smallpox survivor. Some

⁶² *Khu tshur 'bum* 2006: 545-551.

⁶³ For the possible implication of the prefix *puruṣa*, see van der Kuijp 2010: 42.

⁶⁴ Yongdan 2016: 580 ff.; see also 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las 1997: 286-319. We thank the author for sending us a copy of his valuable contribution in July of 2017.

⁶⁵ Yongdan 2016: 579 and n. 10.

⁶⁶ For these documents, see the studies in Luo Bingfen 罗秉芬 et al. 2002.

sources such as Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's (1309–1364) *Deb ther dmar po* and Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal's 1446 *Lho rong chos 'byung* are fairly laconic when it comes to providing information about Karma pa IV Rol pa'i rdo rje's (1340–1383) life.⁶⁷ On the other hand, the Karma pa's biographies by his disciple Zhwa dmar II Mkha' spyod dbang po (1350–1405) and Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566) relate the following: When the Karma pa stayed in Gam chu/Kam chu (< Ch. Hezhou 河州) during his travels in northwestern China in the early 1360s, he received an invitation and gifts from Tho lug thi mur (< Mon. Tuγluγ Temürn, 1329–1362), the Qan of the Western Mongols (*stod hor gyi rgyal po*), that is, of Moghulistan.⁶⁸ Several ominous omens occurred, and he fell somewhat ill. Soon a [smallpox] epidemic (*nad yams*) erupted in the area as well as in Go ra dgon mo che where he was staying at the time. Go ra dgon mo che must be located somewhere between Hezhou and Tsong kha. He was lucky and did not succumb to the disease. This may have been the same outbreak of a smallpox epidemic in Nyag rong that is noted in the autobiography of Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa (ca. 1350–after 1415),⁶⁹ a somewhat frustrating but always interesting work in which its author never tires of pointing out that he was visited by dreams and visions with extraordinary frequency. It would appear that he himself had also fallen ill, but that he was healed through the good offices of his protector deity! Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa met Karma pa V De bzhin gshegs pa (b. 1384) several times in person as well as in a variety of visions.⁷⁰ A traveler to the court of the Yongle 永樂 Emperor (r. 1402–1424), the Karma pa himself contracted smallpox and passed away on September 18, 1415. Many other instances of outbreaks of smallpox in the Tibetan areas can be cited. For example, Zur mkhar ba Blo gros rgyal po (1510–after 1572) and 'Brug chen IV Padma dkar po (1527–1592) both suffered from smallpox, the latter from the "black" variety, and lived to talk about it. But it was especially during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that Central Tibet was again in the throes of a recurring series of smallpox epidemics.⁷¹ It was no doubt one of the byproducts of the civil war that raged over several decades during the first half of the

⁶⁷ Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje 1981: 115-121, for the years 1359 to 1363, and Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal 1994: 246-250, for the years 1359 to 1383.

⁶⁸ This narrative is found in Zhwa dmar II Mkha' spyod dbang po 1978: 282-283 and Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba 1986: 964.

⁶⁹ Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa 2005: 133. A manuscript of his autobiography can be found in Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa No date(a).

⁷⁰ Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa 2005: 270. Mi nyag 'Jam dbyangs grags pa No date(b) is a manuscript of his biography of the Karma pa.

⁷¹ For outbreaks of smallpox in Central Tibet during the seventeenth century, see the preliminary report in Czaja 2013: 354-356.

seventeenth century in which competing Mongol forces were also involved.⁷² These recurrences are mentioned in several sources, important ones of which are the biographies of the Sa skya pa scholars of the period who make their appearance in Sngags 'chang Kun dga' blo gros' (1729–1784) work on Sa skya monastery and its ruling families of 1781.⁷³ In the middle of 1643, emissaries of the Manchu emperor Hong Taiji [*<* Ch. Huangtaiji 皇太极] (r. 1626–1643) arrived in Central Tibet to invite the five major players of the area to the court at Mukden [= Shenyang 沈阳], among them the twenty-eighth abbot of Sa skya monastery A mes zhabs. But the emperor passed away shortly after the invitations were sent and naught came of them. In 1636, A mes zhabs was infected with the disease, but recovered from it.⁷⁴ Hong Taiji was succeeded by his son the Shunzhi 顺治 Emperor (b. 1638), who himself appears to have succumbed to smallpox on February 5, 1661. His son, who was to become the Kangxi 康熙 Emperor (1654–1722), too, contracted smallpox, but survived it.

The eighteenth century also had its large share of well and lesser-known victims of smallpox. For one, it is reputed that both the Zhwa nag Karma pa XII Byang chub rdo rje (1703–1732) and Zhwa dmar pa VIII Dpal chen chos kyi don grub (1695–1732) of the Karma Bka' brgyud sect fell ill with the disease and died while en route to Beijing; the former on December 18, the latter on December 19/20, 1732.⁷⁵ While that is an oft repeated scenario, it does not quite square with what we read in Thu'u bkwan III's 1771 biography of his predecessor Thu'u bkwan II Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho (1680–1736), namely, that the latter had taken part in their "ritual murder" through violent rituals, by soliciting the aid of the deity Dam can chos kyi rgyal po [*Yama Dharmarāja], "the lord of death," and by casting various *gtor ma*-effigies.⁷⁶ It so happened that Yunli 允禮 (1697–1738), the seventeenth son of Kangxi and the Yongzheng 雍正 emperor's (1678–1735) half-brother, was particularly interested in the Rnying ma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Both hierarchs had been privy to a bevy of Rnying

⁷² Blaming the Mongols for the spread of smallpox in Central Tibet goes back some three centuries. In his *Blon po bka'i thang yig* of 1368-1393, O rgyan gling pa (1324-?) implicates the Mongol conquest of the Tibetan area with the spread of black smallpox, an inflammatory skin disease (*me dbal*) and unnamed epidemics (*rims nad*); see O rgyan gling pa 1986: 515.

⁷³ Sngags 'chang Kun dga' blo gros 1991: 92, 316, 359.

⁷⁴ Byams pa bsam gtan rgya mtsho 2012: 330 ff.

⁷⁵ Si tu Pañ chen VIII Chos kyi 'byung gnas and 'Be Lo Tshe dbang kun khyab 1972: 443, 448. Neither capsule biography has anything to say about the causes of their deaths.

⁷⁶ Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma 1969-1971: 598-599. For Yunli, see Uspenski 1997; he is of course the subject of a host of essays published in China.

ma doctrinal entities, theoretical and practical, so that it was not odd that Yunli should have invited them to the court in Beijing. Thu'u bkwan III writes:

*rgyal sras bcu bdun pa keng zi ching wang zhes bya ba gsung rab
la blo gros kyi 'jug pa yangs shing / rnying ma la shin tu mos pa
zhig yod pa des g.yo 'phrul gyis dge lugs pa ming tsam yang mi
grags pa zhig byed rtsis kyis / rgyal po la zhus nas / bod dbus gtsang
nas zhwa dmar nag gi bla ma karma pa'i rang lugs las rnying ma
la lhag par sbyangs pa gnyis gdan [599] drangs pa la / rje 'dis dam
can chos kyi rgyal po las la bskul zhing / mngon spyod kyi las 'ga'
zhig kyang mdzad par grags la / gang ltar yang mi ring bar bla ma
gnyis kyi gcig zi ling dang gcig zhi nan phu nas grongs / de dus rje
'di pa la dam can chos kyi rgyal pos las grub pa'i rtags mtshan gsal
bar mnal lam du byung 'dug /*

The seventeenth son [of Kangxi], called Keng zi ching wang (< Ch. Kangsai qinwang 康赛亲王), with a widely developed intellect and quite devoted to the Rnying ma tradition, deceitfully considered to reduce the reputation of the Dge lugs pa traditon to a mere name and, having petitioned the emperor, invited from Dbus and Gtsang in Tibet the Zhwa dmar and Zhwa nag Lamas who had studied the Rnying ma more than their own Karma pa tradition. To that end, it is known that this Lord [= Thu bkwan II] requested Yama Dharmarāja for his activity and performed some ritual activities to do them harm (*mngon spyod kyi las*, **abhicārakarma*). Whatever the case, not long thereafter, one of the two Lamas died in Zi ling [Xining 西宁] and the other one in Zhi nan phu [??付]. At this time, a sign and indication of the karma that the Yama Dharmarāja had accomplished for this Lord clearly occurred to him in a dream.

Thu'u bkwan III continues by saying that had the two Karma pa hierarchs arrived in Beijing great harm would have befallen China and the Dge lugs pa church (*gzhung bstan*) and, not altogether unselfservingly, states that Thu'u bkwan II had essentially and by himself saved the life of the Dge lugs pa (*bla ma 'di gcig pus dge lugs pa'i bstan pa srog bzung bar 'dug /*). The information given by him about this episode in his 1794 biography of Lcang skya III sheds but a sliver of additional light on its background. There we read that the young Lcang skya III had aided his teacher with the performance of these rituals and thus had taken part in enhancing the degree to which the Dge lugs pa establishment was ensured of the continuance of the monopoly it enjoyed with its

connections in Beijing and the Manchu court.⁷⁷

Turning to the principal biographies of the Zhwa nag and Zhwa dmar hierarchs in the co-authored compilation of the history of this sect that was compiled by their contemporaries, we do not have one whiff of the alleged "metaphysical" cause of their passing or that they had died from smallpox. Rather, without any indication why this happened, both are said to have "collapsed" (*thor pa*) at or in the vicinity of Kwan gzhan gsi monastery (Guanyinsi < 觀音寺), located not far from the Great Wall without providing any reasons for these fatal collapses; we read⁷⁸:

zla ba bcu pa'i tshes gcig la zi ling nas bteg / tshes bzhir kyong myar [myang] du bzhugs / tā tsang tsha zer ba'i dmag dpon zhig byung / tshes bdun la lan jur phebs rma chu'i gram gyi lha khang gzigs / de nas / cu'u cu'i / tshang sho'i yi / tshang kho'i yi / da na ting shan / ho tsang shan / cing ning je'u / lung to shan sogs brgyud / cing ce'u zhes par brag la brkos pa'i lha khang thub sku yod pa zhig mjäl / nyer gnyis la sing ce'u zhes par brag la brkos pa'i sangs rgyas sku shin tu che ba'i lha khang mjäl / nyer drug nyin lcags ri'i nub byang gi zur du kwan gzhan gsi zer ba'i sgrol ma lha khang / rgya yi spyän ras gzigs dang / gnas bcu / pu tas hwa shang sogs kyi lha khang 'ga' re mjäl / de nyin nas rgyal ba'i dbang po thor pa byung 'dug de'i gnam gang gi nam langs skabs rgyal ba'i dbang po zhing khams gzhan du gshegs /...

They left Xining on the first day of the tenth lunar month [November 18]. On the fourth day [November 21], they stayed at Kyong myar [??]. A military commander named Tā tsang [?大將 *dajiang*] Tsha [?曹] arrived. On the seventh day [November 24], they arrived in Lanzhou and witnessed a temple on the banks of the Yellow River. From there, they traveled to Cu'u cu'i, Tshang sho'i yi, Tshang kho'i yi, Da na ting shan (??山), Ho tsang shan (??山), Cing ning je'u (< Jingningzhou 靜寧州), Lung to shan (< ?Longtoushan 龍頭山) etc. and in Cing ce'u (< Jingzhou 涇州) they encountered a temple with a statue of the Muni [= Buddha] that was rock-hewn. On the twenty-second day [December 10], in Sing [read: Ping⁷⁹] ce'u (< *ping ce'u* < Binzhou 邠州), they encountered a temple of a very large statue of the Buddha that was rock-hewn. On the twenty-sixth day [December 14], they

⁷⁷ Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma 1989: 136.

⁷⁸ Si tu Pañ chen VIII Chos kyi 'byung gnas and 'Be Lo Tshe dbang kun khyab 1972: 443, 448.

⁷⁹ We do not have the original text of this passage that must have been written in one or the other *dbu med* script. There, the *s[a]* and *p[a]* graphs are sometimes not easily distinguishable, the more so when foreign terms are being transcribed.

came across several temples such as the Sgrol ma/Tāra temple of Kwan gzhan gsi (Guanyinsi 觀音寺) at the Northwestern corner of the Great Wall, the Chinese Avalokitésvara (*Guanyin), the Sixteen Sthaviras/ Arhats, and the Pu tas hwa shang (< Budai Heshang 布袋和尚, the Chinese Maitreya), etc. After that day, the Rgyal ba'i dbang po [Karma pa] collapsed. At daybreak of the new moon day of that month [December 18], the Rgyal ba'i dbang po departed for another realm....

And Zhwa dmar followed him two days later.

The highly rewarding diaries of Si tu VIII Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1774) bring to the fore the prevalence and fear of smallpox and at the same time underscore his personal engagement with the disease as a practicing physician, even to the extent that he betook it upon himself to translate and excerpt still unidentified Chinese medical texts on the disease.⁸⁰ It is as yet not clear to me when he may have done so. Was it before or after he himself was inoculated against the disease? We learn from his diaries⁸¹ that he was inoculated (*me tog 'dzugs*) on December 2, 1739, together with the royal siblings (*lcam dral*) of the Sde dge king and others, presumably under a watchful eye of a Chinese physician (*rgya yi sman pa*) and was considered immune from smallpox (*'brum pa thar*) some three weeks later. Later, the monks at his see of Dpal spungs were inoculated on New Year's Day, January 29, 1740, but some seven passed away while a hundred and ten survived, having become immune to the disease.

Si tu Paṅ chen's nephew Karma nges legs bstan 'dzin (1732–?) included a lengthy chapter on the treatment of smallpox in his large compendium of 1756 titled *Si tu sman bsdus e vam* or [*Dpal ldan rgyud bzhi la sogs gso ba rig pa'i man ngag kun gyi gnad bsdus*] *Phan bde'i bzil zer spro ba'i zla gsar*.⁸² Of interest is a sentence towards the very end of this

⁸⁰ See the notes in Garrett 2013: 289-290, which must be read together with his work on smallpox that is Indo-Tibetan and being mainly based on the and his Tibetan translation of Chinese medical texts on smallpox in Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas 1990: 211-220. Culled from various Chinese medical texts, pp. 216-220 were apparently written at Li kyang hu (< ?Ch. Lijiang hu 麗江湖), that is, at ? Lake Lijiang. On the other hand, pp. 211-216 is an untitled short tract that he wrote at the behest of "7 Sa dbang chen mo", that is, Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyal (1689–1747), while residing in the vicinity of his encampment on the shores of the Turquoise Lake (*g.yu mtsho*) in Yam 'brog. On p. 213, he refers to the 'Bri gung school of medicine of which Rig 'dzin Chos kyi grags pa (1595–1669) was the primary representative.

⁸¹ The relevant entries are found in Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas 1968: 188-190.

⁸² The section on smallpox in his main compendium of 1756 occurs in Karma Nges legs bstan 'dzin 1973: 177-204—the passage referred to in Garrett 2013: 290 is found

section. It contains a colophon in which it is stated that this exposition was not entirely written by Karma nges legs bstan 'dzin himself, let alone by Si tu Paṅ chen, but rather by a physician from Gtsang; the colophon states in part that this work was...

*...sman pa ā yu vi dzas rang lo lnga bcu nga drug pa me pho byi
ba'i lo chu stod kyi zla ba'i yar tshes bzang po la lugs gnyis kyi
'dun sa chen po rgyal khab bsam grub rtser sbyar ba'o ||*

...written in Bsam grub rtse, the capital [of the Gtsang pa Sde srid government], the meeting place of the two systems, the religious and the secular, on July 7, 1636, my fifty-sixth [= fifty-fifth] year, by the physician A yu vi dza (< ? Skt. Āyur+vidyā = Tib. Tshe rig [pa]) (1581/-?)...

The section then closes with a citation of verses by Gling stod Chos rje who may be identified as Blo bzang rgya mtsho, a teacher of medicine of No mon han Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan (1639–?1688), a re-embodiment of Rje dpon/dbon Legs tshogs lhun grub, and a student of the physician Byang ngos Nang so Dar rgyas (17th c).⁸³ Even if there are some curiosities associated with the exact circumstances and causes of his passing, Paṅ chen Lama III/VI Dpal ldan ye shes (1738–1780) ostensibly died in Beijing after having contracted smallpox.⁸⁴ His senior contemporary Lcang skya III also fell ill with the disease when he was a seven year old boy, but survived it, as his biographer Thu'u bkwan III reported in the biography of his senior.⁸⁵

The *Wikipedia* has an entry for "smallpox survivors" in which some fifty names of notables, all European or American, are listed. To this dossier we can now add Gtsang pa Rgya ras pa, Zur mkhar ba, Padma dkar po, A mes zhabs, the Kangxi emperor, Lcang skya III, and Dga' bzhi pa. And there are no doubt scores more!

on p. 203—and the very same section is of course also contained in Karma nges legs bstan 'dzin 1997: 174-200—this volume is designated by 'e' of 'e vam'. For a capsule biography of him, see Byams pa phrin las 2000: 386-389. It is perhaps surprising that he nowhere overtly refers to his uncle Si tu Paṅ chen's translation of a Chinese dossier on the subject, a circumstance that may indicate that his uncle had translated these after 1756.

⁸³ Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan 2007: 3. For a capsule biography of Byang ngos Nang so, who was in part responsible for the 1662 printing of the *Rgyud bzhi* and is also quoted by Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705) in his *Vaidurya sngon po* of 1688, see Byams pa phrin las 2000: 295-299.

⁸⁴ For the stories surrounding his death, see Chen-Wang 2012 and Yongdan 2021. It is a poignant irony that he himself authored, at some unknown time, a short tract on curing smallpox using traditional methods; see Paṅ chen Lama III/VI Dpal ldan ye shes 1975-1978.

⁸⁵ Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma 1989: 86.

Dga' bzhi pa first mentions smallpox in his autobiography when what appears to have been an epidemic swept through Central Tibet, according to *his* reckoning, from the autumn of 1771 to the following spring of 1772.⁸⁶ He refers to it as a *rdo rje tsher ma* epidemic.⁸⁷ Used euphemistically, the exceedingly rare expression "adamantine bramble" (*rdo rje tsher / 'tsher ma*) indicates the actual pustule or pox and then by extension it can also point to the disease smallpox. The Sanskrit equivalent of this expression is the equally rare *vajrakaṇḍaka*, which is found in Puṇḍarīka's (early 11th c.) *Vimalaprabhā* commentary *ad Laghukālacakratantra* II: 128.⁸⁸ In Chinese, the pox is called *dou* (痘) and smallpox is again euphemistically named "heavenly flower" (*tianhua*, 天花) and one wonders whether Si tu Paṇ chen's use of *me tog* that we saw above was based on his study of Chinese sources on smallpox variolation; the same holds for 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las' use of the expression. To be sure, I cannot explain why Dalai Lama VIII 'Jam dpal rdo rje (1758–1804) did not mention the occurrence of smallpox in the region during the relevant time period in his 1794 of his tutor (*yongs 'dzin*) Ye shes rgyal mtshan.⁸⁹ In this instance, 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje II Dkon mchog 'jigs med bang po's (1728–1791) detailed study of Paṇ chen Lama III/VI Dpal ldan ye shes of 1785–1786 is the more rewarding resource.⁹⁰ While Dga' bzhi pa does not supply any precise dates, it is different with the latter. Most probably basing himself on the Paṇ chen Lama's diaries, Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po writes that at the onset of an epidemic (*rims nad*), on June 8, 1771, the Paṇ chen Lama performed fulfilling and restoring liturgies (*bskang gso*) for and entrusting what one desires to ('*phrin chol*)⁹¹ the goddess (*lha mo*), that is, Dpal ldan lha mo [Śrī Devi] or possibly Gtsug tor rnam par rgyal ma [Uṣṇīṣavijayā]. And the last entry that deals with the disease is dated shortly after November 23, 1772.

⁸⁶ DGA' 1988: 140-142, DGA'1 2006: 158-159.

⁸⁷ 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las 1997: 286 uses it as well in the third verse of his work in which he petitions Shi ta la (< Śītālā) for protection against it. The first and second verses are addressed to Sna tshogs yum [Viṣvāmātā], the consort of the deity Kālacakra, and Remati, that is, a form of Śrī Devi.

⁸⁸ Upadhyāya 1986: 237. Bu ston counts the passage as commenting on *Laghukālacakratantra* II: 122; see Bu ston Rin chen grub 1965a: 167; see also his annotated edition of the *Laghukālacakratantra* II in Bu ston Rin chen grub 1965b: 75. These differences are obviously due to the different editions of the Sanskrit and Tibetan translations of these texts.

⁸⁹ Dalai Lama VIII 'Jam dpal rdo rje 2009: 121-125.

⁹⁰ 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa'i rdo rje II Dkon mchog 'jigs med bang po 2002: 513-547; pp. 514, 541.

⁹¹ This must be variant of '*phrin bcol*, which also occurs sometimes in a *dvandva* compound *bskang 'phrin*.

There are few autobiographical reminiscences and even fewer descriptions of this disease by or about those who lived to tell about their experiences of having suffered through it. We can now add to these reminiscences the remarks made by Dga' bzhi pa in his autobiography. What follows is a lightly annotated and an at times free translation of the five excerpts taken from his autobiography in which he details his encounter with smallpox. The two publications of his work occasionally offer different readings, many but not all of which can be readily identified as typographical errors, and we did our best to navigate our way through them. The diction and lexicon, including Chinese and Mongol loanwords, that Dga' bzhi pa uses is heavily indebted to the administrative language (*gzhung skad*) used by a high-ranking bureaucrat that, from the late seventeenth century, had become a characteristic feature of the official language used by the Dga' ldan pho brang government of Tibet. It is therefore not always clearly understandable to us, so that a percentage of the translation remains tentative. In addition, we have sometimes added pertinent details in the translation that are not explicitly provided by the texts. The timeline in which the following narratives need to be placed is February to May of 1793; the entry that follows closely to the first excerpt is dated the 29th day of the 12th lunar month of the water-hen year, that is, February 9, 1793, and the first date that occurs immediately before the narrative of his homecoming is dated the 11th day of the 8th lunar month of the water-ox year, namely, September 11, 1793.⁹²

Excerpt One⁹³

...the Zhwa dmar X Chos grub rgya mtsho's (1742–1792)⁹⁴ Master of Hospitality (*mgron [gnyer]*) Ye shes rgyal mtshan arrived in Beijing and died. Apart from it having been said that the others were exiled to a place called Kong thung (< Ch. Guangdong 广东) in China,⁹⁵ they had not been killed. And at this time, I had no one aside from my children's teacher the honorable Mkhas mchog, manager (*gnyer pa*) Bkra shis don

⁹² DGA' 1988: 809, 857, DGA'2 2006: 897, 951, and Tang 1995: 424, 449.

⁹³ DGA' 1988: 808-809, DGA'2 2006: 895-896, Tang 1995: 423-424; there were a few immaterial variant readings between the two Tibetan texts.

⁹⁴ For the role played by him in the Gurkha war that led to his demise, the cessation of his re-emodiment lineage, and the confiscation of his monastery and landed property, see now Ehrhard 2007 and Schwieger 2015: 175-183, and the cited literature.

⁹⁵ Tang translates *rgya nag* by *neidi* 内地, which, next to *handi* 汉地, is the usual translation in Chinese Tibetology when a Tibetan work has *rgya nag*, but see the remarks on *rgya nag* in Li 2002: 179-180, n. 8, and van der Kuijp 2015: 65, n. 2.

'grub, and Rdo rje rab brtan [as my three servants] and from that group, excepting only Bkra shis don grub, the other two were not immune to smallpox ('brum pa ma thar). Thus, I feared that I would have a shortage of servants were they to become infected and die. Previously, when I stayed in Nepal, General (*lcang jun* < Ch. *jiangjun* 將軍) Nga'o⁹⁶ sent my assistants Bkra shis, Phun tshogs, and Sri gcod tshe ring to China. I was unsure whether they had arrived there [in Beijing]. If they had arrived, I was uncertain if they were in good health. If they were, then because both I and G.yu thog were no longer guilty of any crime (read: *nyes pa mi 'dug pas*), we would be allowed to return home to Tibet. And our servants would no longer be guilty of anything either. Due to the lack of servants, I requested the above three people to be delivered to me, so that we could return to Tibet together. This request was passed on to Lord Chen (Qin 秦老爷) of the Reception Bureau (*sne shan sbyor sgo che*, Ch. *binke si* 宾客司).⁹⁷ Just as it was being investigated, Phun tshogs and Bkra shis both died of smallpox, but Sri gcod tshe ring survived smallpox ('brum pa thar), had not died, and was returned to me.

Excerpt Two⁹⁸

We wandered (read: '*khyams nyul mang byas*) about the temples and markets in and outside the city wall of the capital city Beijing and although we were a bit apprehensive to observe or hear whether anyone or any animal might have been infected by smallpox, it did not come to pass. Previously, when I was in Nepal for over a year, I stayed in the same room with a Gorkha soldier whose smallpox scabs ('brum pa'i thor skugs) had just begun to fall off. The likelihood of infection for G.yu thog, myself, and the other servants was great, but none of us contracted smallpox. During the Chinese New Year [February 11, 1793] celebration banquets, among the attending Qing court officials such as the ambans, etc. and some of my personal Tibetan monk friends, one was likely ill with smallpox and carried the infection; it is likely that I was infected by Bkra shis rgyal po, G.yu thog's servant, who passed away with smallpox on the eve before New Year.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ According to Tang this refers to General Ehui 鄂輝 (?-1798), on whom and his connection with the Gorkha war, see Deng 2008.

⁹⁷ This bureau is part of the Lifanyuan 理藩院 department, for which see the essays in Schorkowitz and Ning 2017.

⁹⁸ DGA' 1988: 823-832, DGA' 2 2006: 914-924; Tang 1995: 433-437.

⁹⁹ The incubation period of smallpox is anywhere between seven to nineteen days and is completely asymptomatic during this time. This means that we can discount Dga' bzhi pa's surmise as to by whom he may have infected.

...in any case, on the 15th day of the second Mongol-month [March 27, 1793] in conjunction with a visit to the Beijing sandalwood statue of the Buddha,¹⁰⁰ I requested a hearing of teachings on the *Dga' ldan lha brgya ma* of the *Dben sa snyan brgyud* system¹⁰¹ in the Sandalwood Residence from Rgya nag Sprul sku Rin po che,¹⁰² the abbot [on the golden/imperial throne] of Tsan dan monastery.¹⁰³ As I walked about, my head and the joints in my arms and legs began to ache and because I was burning with fever. Doctor Zam gdong Blo bzang gzhon nu carefully checked my pulse and my urine and said: "It is most likely smallpox." Even though I received the Buddhist religious practice as described above, my pain intensified, so I decided to return [to my chambers]. Rgya nag Sprul sku said: "Your sickness will get worse if you ride in an open carriage that is pulled by a horse or mule. It is better were you carried en route by human labor in a sedan chair (*'do li < dolī*) that is shaded from the sun and shielded from the wind." I followed his advice, and four workers carried my sedan chair to my living quarters in the Yellow Monastery (*sha ra su mi < Mon. śara sume*).

.....because G.yu thog and his servant and my two servants the old teacher Mkhas mchog and Rdo rje rab brtan were all not immune to smallpox, I was isolated from them. In the past, the supreme precious Dalai lama VI Tshangs dbyangs rgya mtsho (1683–1706) was escorted to China and en route dissolved his physical body into the sphere of reality at a place called Kun dga' nor. His companion De mo Rin po che¹⁰⁴ and other servants arrived in Beijing and had rented a place near the Yellow Monastery where De mo Rin po che had displayed his magical powers; it is now called the De mo Inn (*chang khang*). I still lived in my old apartment inside the Yellow Monastery. My attendants were Bkra shis don grub and Sri gcod tshe ring, who were immune to smallpox. The Yellow Monastery's Tā Lama Sangs rgyas don 'grub and doctor Zam gdong Blo bzang gzhon nu also lived in this place.

During the health care I received, the smallpox pustules did not appear on my head or my body, but my skin took on a purple red color, they swelled (*skrangts nyams*), dried up, and I was in much pain and

¹⁰⁰ For the literature on the famous sandalwood statue, see van der Kuijp 2016: 57 ff. and Kudara 2004. We thank J. Silk for alerting us to the last article.

¹⁰¹ This is a prayer cum petition to Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), the founder of what became the Dge lugs pa school; for the text, see *Dge lugs pa'i chos spyod phyogs bsgrigs* 1995: 122–126. For the *Dben sa snyan brgyud* precepts, see Jackson 2020.

¹⁰² He may be identified as Khri chen Rgya nag pa'i sprul sku Ngag dbang thub bstan dbang phyug dpal ldan 'phrin las rgya mtsho (1773–?), who is referred to in Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan 1974–1977: 13, 138.

¹⁰³ Only DGA'2 2006: 915 has *si* 寺, "monastery."

¹⁰⁴ This was De mo VI Ngag dbang 'jam dpal bde legs rgya mtsho.

very ill. Because Manager Lord Qin of the Reception Bureau memorialized the emperor of my illness through the Office of the Prime Minister (*krung thang* < Ch. *zhongdang* 中堂), etc., the divinely appointed emperor immediately sent Oljolthu (< ?Mon. Öljeitü) Lord Da to visit me together with two Chinese doctors. Both doctors checked my pulse and my urine, observed my sick condition, and said: "Smallpox can infect a patient in three different ways: the white, the black, and the multi-colored types; your current illness seems to be the intermediate multi-colored one and if you are not carefully looked after with nutrition and rest, you will not recover. First, drink this medicine to push for the pustule to grow. Your body should not be exposed to sun light and wind, kept warm, and do not wear soft woolen clothing after the pustules have surfaced. Besides rice, chicken soup, and Tibetan date soup called *gtsang tsor* in Chinese, do not eat or drink anything else." Consequently, I was given seven red medicine pellets that resembled the *Ma ni 'bum sgrub*¹⁰⁵ together with boiled water. After I had taken the medicine, I was covered tightly from head to toe (*mgo bstums 'jug* [read: *mjug*] *bstums*); my fever and dryness almost all disappeared. My entire body was covered with smallpox pustules, and I lost consciousness and became completely delirious for seven entire days.

At this time, the following hallucinations (*'khrul snang*) occurred: The great emperor had issued an imperial decree, and a Chinese monk (*rgya mi ser mo*) carried this Chinese language decree by hand; standing in front of me, he told me the reason and said: "During your stay in China, your body, speech, and mind were not set free. So, when you travel a little to the east from here, there is a great ocean. Set sail on a boat to visit the holy Avalokiteśvara and the White Wish-fulfilling Wheel Tāra who reside on Mount Putuo.¹⁰⁶ Respect the decree by the great emperor and depart immediately! Here is the travel permit (*lam yig*)." Thereupon, he handed me a document that was written in Chinese. I immediately arrived at the seashore with four of my servants who were in China, plus the Dga' bzhi financial manager Tshe dbang don grub, who had been sent to me by my family in Tibet. There was an old Chinese monk (*hwa shang rgad po*) who looked like the owner of the boat and only allowed me and my servants Bkra shis don grub and Sri gcod tshe ring to get on board; he refused to let the Dga' bzhi financial manager Tshe dbang don grub, Lama Mkhas mchog and

¹⁰⁵ This is medicine that is prepared through the incantation of "one hundred thousand" Avalokiteśvara-oriented mantras that are aimed at the appropriate medicinal substance. See also Garrett 2009.

¹⁰⁶ Sacred to Guanyin/Avalokiteśvara, this mountain is located on Putuoshan 普陀山 island in southern Zhejiang Province; see Bingenheimer 2016.

Rdo rje rab brtan onto the boat. I showed him my travel permit from the great emperor and insisted that I must travel together with my servants, but he still did not budge. So, the Dga' bzhi financial manager Tshe dbang don grub, Lama Mkhas mchog and Rdo rje rab brtan, the three of them, all sadly returned without getting on the boat. A strong gust of wind suddenly pushed the boat and it landed downstream of the Skyid River in front of the Brag lha Klu sgug¹⁰⁷ of Lhasa, the very center of Tibet. In the center of the Klu sgug's grassland, many serpentine-*nāgas* with human bodies and snake tails gathered everywhere, and in unison they said to me many verses:

"The principal life-tree of the Teaching of Tibet,
The golden statue of the Protector, Śākyamuni,
From earlier times down to the present in the human world,
A place of worship as well as a field of merit,
The example/allegory (*dpe*) of a familiar child and a tiger,¹⁰⁸
Now, you are invited to the netherworld, the land of the serpentine-*nāgas*,
Though you wished to meet [?the golden statue], you are just too late."

And so forth; it is possible that I replied with several verses as well, but besides the verses I literally cited above, I can no longer remember the rest.

Then, immediately thereafter I had another hallucination: I thought my residence (*sdod mal*) was in the communal residence of Beijing's Yellow Monastery. The same Chinese monk (*rgya mi'i grwa pa*) of the above, a bearded (*rgya bo*) *ācārya* whose naked body was covered with ashes, together with a young woman, in the prime of her life and seemingly of Mon pa ethnicity, wearing a flower sash and an outfit with large red flowers, came to me, and the monk spoke first: "While the three of us traveled from 'On Chos sding[s],¹⁰⁹ the see of the lama, to deliver a letter to you, Skyabs mgon Rgyal sras Rdo rje 'chang¹¹⁰ sent

¹⁰⁷ See Bshes gnyen Tshul khriims 2001: 21-23 for this locale.

¹⁰⁸ Van der Kuijp does not understand this "example." In an email, Mr. Lobsang Shastri very tentatively suggested this might be a reference to the famous *jātaka*-tale of the Buddha who, in an early re-embodiment as a young man, sacrificed himself to a hungry tigress (*stag mo lus sbyin*).

¹⁰⁹ This must be Dga' ldan chos sdings monastery that is mentioned immediately below. It is located in 'On, the name of a valley that is located to the southeast of Lhasa across the Gtsang po river.

¹¹⁰ He must be identified as Bskal bzang thub bstan 'jigs med bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1743–1811), whose biography prefaces his name by Rgyal sras Rdo rje 'chang. The lengthy biography in two volumes was written in 1818 by Blo bzang 'phrin las rnam rgyal—see Blo bzang 'phrin las rnam rgyal 1842—, himself the author of

us and made the following admonishment (*bka' mngag gi don rdor*): "Because a religious retreat for the teaching of the Transference of consciousness upon death (*'pho ba*) was arranged when in the past you traveled to Dga'ldan chos sding[s] to request the religious cycle of the *Nā ro mkha' spyod ma*,¹¹¹ this was somewhat inauspicious and problematic (*rten 'brel cung zad 'chug dwogs 'dug pa bcas*). Now, if you still want to request oral instructions in the Illusory Body (*sgyu lus*) and Radiant Light (*'od gsal*) teachings, please come." To that I answered with urgency: "Since, I went my own way, it is not appropriate to meditate without a human master to teach me the oral instructions, so what I am to do?" Thereupon the monk somewhat smiled at me and said: "I am the master; it is a pity that you still have not recognized that. Saying that the oral instruction of the Illusory Body should be practiced like so, he took from his sleeve a piece of paper with the figure of a person with a head, arms, legs, etc., and he held this paper person in his left hand. In his right hand, he carried burning incense and he lit up the paper person, and the fire burned slowly. The paper turned into ash, but the shape of the person remained, and then disappeared immediately. Further, as for the instruction of Radiant Light, he showed me a very clear mirror and said that I should look at its defining feature. I thought to myself how can I, without any books, oral transmission (*lung*), or practical guidance (*khrid*), understand the instructions in the Illusory Body by watching the burning of paper or the profound Radiant Light; how can one comprehend the profound instructions by looking into a mirror? At this moment, the monk disappeared.

The *ācārya* and the woman who looked like a Mon pa woman secretly discussed together and went outside of the room. They inserted a long bamboo tube through the paper that was pasted on the window frame; the *ācārya* was holding one end in his mouth and the woman put the other end in my mouth. He blows into it, and I tasted the flavors of crystal sugar, honey, and cane sugar inside the bamboo tube; so sweet, I had never tasted anything like this before. After they had given me a milky white drink, the *ācārya* held the bamboo tube in his mouth like before, and the woman took the other end of the bamboo tube from my mouth and inserted it into my right ear. To keep my servants from hearing, the *ācārya* told me in secrecy through the bamboo tube: "Your personal attendant, Tā Lama Sangs rgyas don 'grub of the Yellow Monastery is King Bhinayaka of the obstructing spirits (*bgegs*), your manager Bkra shis don grub is the reincarnation of

several important biographies. Printing blocks for this capacious work were carved in 1842.

¹¹¹ This is a cycle of teachings concerning a typically Sa skya pa school form of the goddess Vajrayoginī.

the servant Rab brtan dbang who killed his master the old minister Rag shag Bsod nams dbang rgyal nas (1756–1788),¹¹² the doctor Zam gdong a local demon-deity (*gzhi bdag rgyal btsan zhig*) of Beijing's Yellow Monastery. The three of them are using the Black 'Jigs byed [= Bhairava] to curse you. Therefore, your fundamental master (*rtsa ba'i bla ma*)¹¹³ requested the two of us to think of a method to counter it.

... Boy! You, in the resting place of saṃsāra,
Being tormented by the conflicting emotions and disease
[or: disease of the conflicting emotions],
Drink this gnosis-nectar!
A ho ma tā [read: hā] su kha ho!¹¹⁴

As he was speaking, I again tasted a milk-like drink in my mouth. He said: "If you do not believe they are not real, you must carefully reconsider!"

At this time, in reality, my pustules (*thor ba*) were by now festering. I lost all my senses, could not lie still in my bed, and only wished to go outside. The Yellow Monastery's Tā Lama Sangs rgyas don 'grub held my right and Bkra shis don grub grabbed my left arm, and doctor Zam gdong Blo bzang gzhon nu stood in front of me and fed me porridge. But in my hallucination, Yellow Monastery's Tā Lama Sangs rgyas don 'grub who was standing to my right was wearing a Chinese monk's vestment and a red colored religious-Thang zhu (< Ch. *tangxu* 唐徐) hat with an eye design. On my left, Bkra shis don 'grub wore a shirt (*bcam / cam rtse* < ?Mon. *čamčā*) of black felt (*re ta nag po*) and donned a yellow hat that resembled a pig's head with a mouth, eyes, tusks and bristles. In front of me, doctor Zam gdong's attire and hat are all in the tradition of a Chinese monk, and he has a Chinese white rabbit (*rgya'i ri bong dkar po*) on his right and a black rabbit on his left shoulder. My four limbs and neck are all restricted with iron chains, the chains are rubbing my skin into a blue color. And I was laid on a triangular shaped cushion that was made of thick black-haired cow leather with a rough cotton cloth, but I saw that my pustules were shaped like peach blossoms with but five or seven petals. I yelled to my companion-nurses: "You are all pretending to be my nurses, but, in reality, you are involved in cursing me with the black Bhairava. As a deity of the non-Buddhists,¹¹⁵ there is a lot of purpose to the symbolism of him being trampled under the feet of Bde mchog [Cakrasamvara]

¹¹² He is noted in Petech 1973: 73-74, where, however, we learn that he died by suicide.

¹¹³ This is most likely a nod to Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan.

¹¹⁴ 'Tibskrit' *ma tā* [read: hā] *su kha* is *mahāsukha*, "great bliss."

¹¹⁵ He is usually the fierce aspect of Śiva.

and Mkha' spyod ma [= Vajrayoginī], etc. And, especially, because I am a person who has maintained the practice of the evocation process (*bskyed rim*, *utpattikrama*) and fulfillment process (*rdzogs rim*, *niṣpannakrama*) of the *Bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma*, the *Dpal chen rta mchog rol pa gsang sgrub*, the *'Khor lo sdom pa lha lnga*, together with the *Nā ro mkha' spyod ma*,¹¹⁶ I am unafraid of the black Bhairava's destructive activities. Now, you have wished me ill, but look, all the lesions on my body have turned into a rain of flowers through the power of the blessing (read: *byin mthus* and not *byin mthur*) of my Lama¹¹⁷ and the tutelary deity!" I was out of control; I plucked (read: *gtogs*) the dry pustules with my fingernails and stuffed them into the mouths of the three of them. From outside of the room, the woman who looked like a Mon nationality waived her arms right and left and yelled with some urgency: "Come here!" I heard her and dashed outside immediately. The three of them could not catch me, but at the precise moment when they had come out, I became conscious. I had already walked close to the gate of the apartment and was pulled back by the three of them. After that, I never lost my reasoning again.

.....The smallpox pustules began to fall off slowly and in terms of getting well, my failed physical strength increased day by day; after recovery, I would be alive for a long time! One can imagine living through such a devastation. I assume that hallucinations come to all in the case of a severe illness, but my experientially initiated delusions (*bag chags nying 'khrul*) as described above were not normal. That being so, it is a clear and certain sign that my great fundamental tantric master Bla ma, who possesses three kinds of grace,¹¹⁸ acted as the protector of this life of mine and would be as a guide to my next life.

Especially during my hallucinations (*'khrul pa'i nyams snang*), my servants Bkra shis don grub and Sri gcod tshe ring who together with me came aboard the boat, did not die en route to Tibet (*bod*) from China (*rgya nag*), and safely returned. Both teacher Mkhas mchog and Rdo rje rab brtan who did not get on the boat simply died en route. At this

¹¹⁶ The first involves the practice anent Vajrabhairava—he is the fierce aspect of Mañjuśrī—who is accompanied by thirteen goddesses, the second revolves around practices anent a form of Hayagriva as in the eighteen Mahāyoga tantras, the third involves practices around Cakrasamvara, who is accompanied by five deities, and the fourth involves practices on a form of Vajrayoginī.

¹¹⁷ It is unclear to whom he refers here.

¹¹⁸ The types of the lama's kindness in a tantric context, which is certainly the case here, are his/her kindness of [1] bestowing empowerment[s], [2] explaining the tantra, and [3] providing oral instructions regarding practice.

time because Lord (*mi rje*) Dar han Gong Paṇḍita¹¹⁹ had passed away, the children in his family had not yet reached majority, and I myself had been forced to roam about in remote regions of China and Nepal, the financial manager (*mdzod pa*) of the Dga' bzhi estate Tshe dbang don 'grub, too, after he had his "wind-sustaining life-force" (*srog* ['*dzin*] *rlung*) carried off by a *gdon*-spirit and had become insane, passed away soon after I had returned to Tibet. What had clearly manifested itself as an hallucination in an ordinary person like me, had become true and accurate (read: *thig par*).

Excerpt Three¹²⁰

I was concerned about infecting G.yu thog, his servant (*g.yog*), and my own assistants (*zla bo*) who were not immune to smallpox, so that after my recovery I immediately washed myself and all my clothes. Even so, maybe due to the strength of the disease, right after my recovery, the children's teacher (*slob dpon*) Mkhas mchog caught the infection and became ill. His smallpox was unlike mine. The pustules were white like pearls and in size large, covering his entire head and body with no

¹¹⁹ Tibetan *dar han* is a Mongol loanword *darqan* and means "tax exempt"; see Atwood 2004: 133-134. If Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis (ca.1495–ca.1577) was really its author, then his 1536 *Li shi gur khang* lexicon on archaisms (*brda rnying*) and their updates (*brda gsar*) is the first lexicographic treatise in which the lexeme *dar rgan* occurs. The *Li shi'i gur khang* is not a complete work. It is but a series of notes, a *reg zig*—this word is itself an archaism and has *zin bris* as an update—and begins with a perfunctory line of homage, after which it then anomalously continues with *de yang*, "moreover." The work exists in several incarnations. Among these, there is a Sde dge xylograph of which the Sde dge king Bsod nams phun tshogs (d. ?1714) sponsored the printing blocks; its lengthy colophon is reproduced in Nourse 2016: 435, n. 18, and it states in part that the text is based on several other specimen, including a xylograph from the Po ta la (*po ta la'i par yig*). There is the new Lhasa Zhol xylograph, the printing blocks for which were prepared in 1944 at the behest of Stag brag Paṇḍita Ngag dbang gsung rab mthu stobs (1874–1952). And we have the bilingual Tibetan/Mongol xylograph that dates from 1742; see Taube 1978: 169-175 for particulars. A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1659) created an edition of the text with many Sanskrit equivalents that is based on five dissimilar manuscripts, some of which were annotated; see A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams 2012. And lastly Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba 1981 is a modern edition that is based on several unspecified texts. The entry for *dar rgan* occurs in the context of Mongol words that were thought to be Tibetan archaisms: "Some appear as Mongol expressions as well; many such as *pag shi* for *btsun pa*, *dar kha che* for *dbang che ba*, *dar rgan* [for] *byin*, etc." (...*la la hor gyi brdar yang snang ste / btsun pa la pag shi dang / dbang che ba la dar kha che dang / dar rgan byin sogs mang la / ...; ...yarim-ud mongyul-un ajalyu-ber bui biüü . toyin ba siluyun-i baysi kiged : yeke erketii-yi darayači kiged : darqan öggiüsen terigiüten olan bui : ...*); see Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba 1742: 23a [note the absence of the particle *la / ber* between *dar rgan* and *byin / öggiüsen*].

¹²⁰ DGA' 1988: 834-836, DGA' 2006: 925-927; Tang 1995: 438-439.

less than fifty of them, and he became quite ill. He had been kind and caring towards me while in Nepal, was skilled in the classical scriptures and, with a gentle temperament, was a well-qualified teacher. My son Mi 'gyur bsod nams dpal 'byor was still a child and needed to complete his studies. It would be a pity were he to die and it would be difficult to find another teacher to replace him. I, G.yu thog, Bkra shis don grub and other people who were immune to smallpox did our best to care for him, and because his illness was less severe, he slowly recovered.

Bkra shis lhun po monastery's envoy Mkhan po, master and servant, the government's Gos sgrub pa¹²¹ Blo bzang dpal 'bar, I, and someone's traders in Beijing were all planning to depart from Beijing to travel back to Tibet, but teacher Mkhas mchog had not yet fully recovered, so he wished to stay in the Yellow Monastery. I entrusted Tā Lama Sangs rgyas don 'grub and the Zam gdong doctor Blo bzang gzhon nu to try their best to settle his provisions, [after his full recovery] later he can travel to Tibet together with Sba yer Mkhan po, the Dga' ldan Khri Rin po che Blo bzang bkra shis (1739–1801).¹²² We discussed this. But he said the same as he told me earlier when we were leaving Nepal en route to China: "I will not have peace, if I am not going with you." So, he did not listen to me. Even after I explained the circumstances, he did not comply in the end.

Smallpox had left me with sequelae of swollen legs. It was difficult for me to walk and to sit down. I could not travel by riding a horse nor by being carried by a mulecart and I succeeded in getting a travel permit (*lam yig*) from the [Mongol] administrative office (*sbyor khang*) that allowed me to be carried by a sedan chair that is pulled by mule from Beijing through each relay station to Tibet. I thought about asking for the same sedan chair for teacher Mkhas mchog but was afraid to make this request for a servant, so I did not, and only hired a palanquin. On April 19, we left Beijing, China (*rgya nag pe cing*), to return to my homeland Tibet (*rang yul bod*). En route, teacher Mkhas mchog was exposed to the weather with sun and wind, plus other factors, and he died upon the arrival of the place where we stayed overnight. So, I wrote the Yellow Monastery's Tā Lama and doctor Zam gdong to use his entire possessions as an offering in front of the sandalwood statue of the Buddha and at China's sacred sites such as Mount Wutai, to recommend the spirit of the deceased.

¹²¹ See also DGA' 1988: 849, DGA' 2 2006: 941.

¹²² He is mentioned proleptically as Dga' ldan khri pa since he was [the sixty-fourth] abbot of Dga' ldan monastery from 1794 to 1801.

Excerpt Four¹²³

...because the traders were not ready to resume the journey to Tibet, the physician from Li thang told me that my swollen legs needed a hot spring's treatment to heal. There was a hot spring located in the area of the government-controlled monastery (*gzhung sde*) of Mtsho lo mo. There is a story that says that the all-knowing supreme victor the Great Fifth [= Dalai Lama V] stopped and bathed there on his visit to China's Imperial Palace;¹²⁴ the hot springs thus had magical powers. Not only that, but because it was not very far from Stong 'khor¹²⁵ and the traders from Xining were not finished with their buying and selling, I took the time that was available and went to the hot springs for treatment as well as for a complete cleansing of my body and possessions. Were I not to have given myself and my things a good scrubbing as in the saying 'Do important things now!', it would be very bad if I were to allow smallpox to spread in Central Tibet.

.....

During my three-week sojourn at the hot springs and receiving treatments, my personal servant Rdo rje rab brtan suddenly (*glo bur*) fell ill and died of smallpox. Besides Bkra shis don grub and Sri gcod tshe ring there were no other servants left.

Excerpt Five¹²⁶

As for me, at this time, in addition to my face being sun-drenched of having been on the road, with the scars (*thor rjes*) left by smallpox (*rdo rje 'tsher ma'i rims nad*), my facial features were not the same as before. Some of the people of my inner and outer circles did not immediately recognize me, and there were some who even thought that I was an imposter.

*

And thus ends Dga' bzhi pa's poignant narrative of his harrowing ordeal with smallpox and its immediate aftermath. The last case of smallpox was apparently registered in Somalia in 1977 and, in 1980, the WHO officially declared that smallpox as a public health menace

¹²³ DGA' 1988: 847-848, DGA'2 2006: 940-941; Tang 1995: 444.

¹²⁴ Mtsho lo ma does not figure in the fifth Dalai Lama's long autobiography, let alone in the narrative of his trip to and from Beijing in 1652-1653; see Yang 1994: 61-69 and Karmay 2014: 261-292, 311-322.

¹²⁵ This must refer to Stong 'khor dga' ldan chos 'khor gling that is located not far from Xining in Qinghai Province. For this monastery, see Martin 2007 and Smith 2013: 311-313.

¹²⁶ DGA' 1988: 858, DGA'2 2006: 952; Tang 1995: 449. This passage deals with how he felt when he and G.yu thought arrived in Lhasa.

was eradicated from the world. Strains of the variola virus that cause smallpox survive in various laboratories around the world. Just in case!

Abbreviations:

BDRC	Buddhist Digital Research Center
DGA' 1988	Dga' bzhi pa Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor. <i>Dga' bzhi pa'i rnam thar</i> . Ed. Tshe ring phun tshogs. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang.
DGA'1 2006	Dga' bzhi pa Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor. <i>Rdo ring Paṇḍita'i rnam thar</i> . Stod cha [vol. 1]. Ed. Bsod nams dpal 'byor with Luo Runchang. Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa / Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang.
DGA'2 2006	Dga' bzhi pa Bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor. <i>Rdo ring Paṇḍita'i rnam thar</i> . Smad cha [vol. 2]. Ed. Bsod nams dpal 'byor with Luo Runchang. Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa / Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

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A Brief History of the Tibetan Alphabetical Order

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Since the modern Tibetan alphabetical order is the only one encountered in the dictionaries in use today, it can be tempting to consider it to be an original feature of the Tibetan language. In this article,¹ I test that idea by exploring the different structures of Tibetan lexicons², from the imperial period to today's computers. As it turns out, throughout history there have in fact been various types of lexicographical organization, with the alphabetical order starting to be used only in the 15th century. The initial variety of alphabetical orders then settle into the order we use today, which became prevalent in the 20th century.

1. Introduction

The order of Tibetan consonants and vowels seems to have been established from the very early days of the written language: the 7th c. grammar *Sum cu pa*³ contains a presentation of consonants and vowels that is still adhered to today. But Tibetan orthography is quite complex, and a complete alphabetical ordering system must take into account interactions between the prefixes, superscript letters, main letters, etc. For instance sorting འག, རྐ and འལྐ requires layers of arbitrary conventions on top of the simple order of consonants. This is what we're going to explore here.⁴

¹ This article is an edited passage of a blog post on the website of the Buddhist Digital Resource Center:

<https://www.bdrcenter.org/blog/2021/10/29/sorting-out-tibetan-alphabetical-order/> (accessed November 3rd 2021). We would like to thank Jann Ronis, Luran Hartley and Tenzin Dickie who reviewed the style and content.

² See Walter 2006 for an overview.

³ *Lung du ston pa'i rtsa ba sum cu pa*.

⁴ We will solely focus on the general aspects of the alphabetical order (the order of prefix, superscript and main letter) and not on the many details (wasur, long vowels, loan words, etc.) that would make this study more tedious.

2. Early lexicons (8-15th c.)

In the first centuries of Tibetan literature, lexicons were ordered semantically. An early example is the classic 9th century *Mahāvvyutpatti*, created for the purpose of standardizing Tibetan translations from Sanskrit. Its contents are arranged in lists of synonyms, ordered by sanctity, beginning with the epithets of the Buddha and concluding with a list of diseases.

The semantic ordering (e.g. synonymic and thematic) found in early Tibetan lexicons followed the dominant conventions of traditional Indian lexicography.⁵ Another example is the Sanskrit lexicon *Amarakośa*, translated twice into Tibetan and highly influential with Tibetan specialists of the literary arts.⁶ Indeed, the *Amarakośa* and its Indian commentary inspired⁷ a genre of synonymic lexicons in Tibet such as the popular *mNgon brjod rna rgyan*⁸ in the 16th c.

In a different context, the Chinese imperial bureaucracy compiled in the 14-16th century a short Tibetan-Chinese lexicon for their diplomats, the *Xifan Yiyu*, also using a semantic order.⁹ Two earlier Tibetan-Chinese lexicons were circulating in Dunhuang,¹⁰ one following no discernible order and the other following the order of appearance of words in a particular text.

Another type of lexicographic organization is used in the genre of numerical categories, *chos kyi rnam grangs*.¹¹ While modern versions present lists ordered by size,¹² early instances of the genre are ordered semantically.¹³ This semantic order in lists is also an Indian convention, used for instance in the *Dharmasaṅgraha* attributed to Nāgārjuna, translated into Tibetan very recently.

⁵ See Vogel 1979.

⁶ See Chandra 1965.

⁷ According to Chandra 1965.

⁸ *mNgon brjod kyi bstan bcos mkhas pa'i rna rgyan*.

⁹ Although different styles of alphabetization were in use in Chinese lexicography, see Xue 1982.

¹⁰ See Apple 2017. The two lexicons are available on the *Gallica* platform of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France:

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8307869r>

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b83034694>

¹¹ Lexicons of that genre enumerate the lists commonly found in Buddhist texts (the two truths, the three worlds, etc.).

¹² For instance Phur bu tshe ring 1994, primarily ordered by size (all the lists of two elements, then all the lists of three elements, etc.), then each section is ordered alphabetically.

¹³ For instance sKa ba dpal brtsegs (8th c.) starts by listing the five aggregates in his *chos kyi rnam grangs*.

3. Orthographic lexicons (15-17th c.)

Another category of texts relevant for research is *dag yig*, a label that covers different genres of lexicons or didactic verses on orthography. Around the 15th century, many *dag yig* texts began to utilize alphabetical ordering to arrange their contents. Due to the orthographic complexity of Tibetan, different alphabetical orders are possible, and these texts evince a variety of them with no obvious popular standard.

The *dag yig*-s are usually versified and intended to be memorized in full, not used as reference dictionaries; for this reason they don't need to adhere to a very strict order and can be difficult to follow for unfamiliar readers. Three famous early examples (15-16th c.):

- the *Dag yig bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun* uses the order ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྐ བརྐ ལྐ རྐ བརྐ
- the *Dag yig ngag sgron* by dPal khang lo tsA ba uses what became the prevailing modern order ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྐ ལྐ རྐ བརྐ བརྐ¹⁴
- the *Dag yig za ma tog* has ཀ ལ ག ... བཅའ བཏའ ... བསའ བསྐ བཟྐ བརྐ

The genre continues to use a variety of alphabetical orders, for instance the famous 20th c. grammarian Tseten Shabdrung uses the order ཀ རྐ ལྐ རྐ དཀ བཀ བརྐ བརྐ in his *Dag yig thon mi'i dgongs rgyan*.

A note must be made on an important 15-16th c. lexicon of archaic terms, the *Dag yig li shi'i gur khang*, in which we were not able to find an order; this is also the case for earlier instances of *dag yig*-s such as the one by bLo ldan Shes rab¹⁵.

4. Early bilingual dictionaries (18th century)

The 18th century saw the compilation and publication of several bilingual lexicons that were nearly unprecedented for using a thoroughly alphabetical order. These were commonly meant to be used as reference dictionaries and not learned by heart. The advent of this genre can be ascribed to three factors:

¹⁴ The order is oddly not recognized in Goldstein 1991, which cites Palkhang as an example of lexicon with no alphabetical order.

¹⁵ rNog blo ldan shes rab (1059-1109). The *Dag yig nyer mkho bsdus pa* is one of the first (if not the first) instance of *dag yig*, focusing on the distinction of homophones.

- a renewed interest in Sanskrit from Tibetan scholars¹⁶, and a desire to produce Sanskrit renderings of Tibetan proper names and text titles;¹⁷
- a change in the way the Qing dynasty considered non-Chinese languages, leading to the compilation of the Pentaglot Dictionary; the translation of many Tibetan texts into Mongolian, etc.¹⁸
- Christian missionary work in Tibet.¹⁹

The lexicons of this era again use a variety of alphabetical orders, for instance:

- *Bod rgya shan sbyar ngo mtshar nor bu'i do shal*, a popular Tibetan-Sanskrit lexicon, uses the order ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྐ བརྐ ལྐ སྐ བསྐ;
- the first original Tibetan-Mongolian lexicon²⁰, a part of the *Ming gi rgya mtsho*,²¹ has an order that is difficult to follow, but goes something like ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྐ བརྐ ལྐ སྐ བསྐ;
- *Rang blo gsal ba'i me long las mngon brjod kyi bstan bcos bsam 'phel nor bu*, a Tibetan-Sanskrit lexicon from Bhutan, and the *Bod kyi brda yig rtogs par sla ba*, a Tibetan-Mongolian lexicon of 1737²² use what became the prevailing modern order;
- the Tibetan-Italian dictionary of 1732²³ sorts according to the first letter.²⁴

A noteworthy exception is the 1742 lexicon devised by lCang skya rol pa'i rdo rje to translate the Tengyur into Mongolian,²⁵ which uses a semantic order.

¹⁶ Situ Panchen (1700-1774) is a prominent figure of the movement.

¹⁷ See Ruegg 1998.

¹⁸ See Maurer 2018.

¹⁹ See Bray 2008.

²⁰ See Burnee 2007.

²¹ *Dag yig chung ngu gdul bya'i snying mun sel byed nyi ma stong gi 'od zer*. This is the *nyis 'od* section of the *Ming gi rgya mtsho / Nere yin dalai*. See Yakhontova 2005 about the *Ming gi rgya mtsho*.

²² It cites *Dag yig ngag sgron* as one of the main source of inspiration (see Burnee 2021) and we hypothesize that it is the inspiration for its alphabetical order.

²³ Della Penna 1732, 386 pages. Made while he was staying at Sera Monastery; based on an analysis of the Padma Thang yig. Only one known copy held in a private collection, described in Lo Bue 2001.

²⁴ Irrespective of the function of the first letter in the syllable (prefix, superscript or root letter). Therefore the word བཀའ, whose root letter is ཀ, is placed in the བ section because the character that first appears is བ, in that case a prefix. If sorted by root letter it would be in the ཀ section.

²⁵ *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas*.

5. *Convergence towards a common order (19-20th c.)*

In the 19th century, the use of alphabetical orders in lexicons and dictionaries became increasingly systematic, and their orders started converging towards ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྒྱ རྒྱ བཞྱ བཞྱ.

Some examples for Tibetan-Mongolian lexicons are *brDa yig ming don gsal bar byed pa'i zla ba'i 'od snang* (1830), sorted ཀ དཀའ བཀའ རྒྱ བཞྱ རྒྱ བཞྱ and *brDa yig ming don gsal ba'i sgron me*,²⁶ sorted according to the prevailing modern order.

The early Tibetan-English dictionaries Csoma 1834 and Schröeter 1826 follow della Penna 1732 and sort by first letter.²⁷ Schmidt 1841 was the first Western dictionary to use what became the prevailing modern order. It was based on previous Western dictionaries and two Tibetan-Mongolian lexicons including the *Bod kyi brda yig rtogs par sla ba*, which we hypothesize was the source of inspiration for the alphabetical order.²⁸ The order in Schmidt has had a lasting legacy as it was subsequently used in Jäschke 1881, followed by the very influential dictionary by Chandra Das in 1902, and seemingly all later Tibetan-English dictionaries.²⁹

Between Tibet and China, several Tibetan-Chinese lexicons were compiled in the 1930s.³⁰ The *gSar bsgrigs rgya bod ming gi rgya mtsho* of 1932³¹ surprisingly cites Das 1902 as one of its main sources,³² and it is

²⁶ *Terminus post quem* 1742 since it cites the *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas* in its colophon. It also cites the *Bod kyi brda yig rtogs par sla ba* which is probably the source of the alphabetical order.

²⁷ In the case of Csoma it is possible to hypothesize an influence of the Ladakhi pronunciation of his collaborators (See Maurer 2018 for this hypothesis, see Terjek 1976 and Viehbeck 2016 about his collaborators). But in our opinion the most simple explanation remains an imitation of his predecessors and of the Western alphabetical order, sorting by characters from left to right.

²⁸ The other one is the *Ming gi rgya mtsho* which uses very different alphabetical orders.

²⁹ For instance Goldstein 1984.

³⁰ See Tuttle 2007 and Tuttle 2009 for the context.

³¹ This dictionary seems undocumented in previous scholarship in English. It was created by the Research Society for Tibetan Texts in Xining (青海藏文研究社), that also published a Tibetan-Chinese version of the *Mahāvīyutpatti* in the same year, the *sGra bye brag rtogs chen mo'i rgya gar gyi skad dor nas bod yig dang rgya nag gi yi ge gnyis gsar bskrun pa*. The first page of the BDRC scans has a handwritten note "Presented to Ven. Chi by V. G. & Ruth L. Plymire, Dec. 5, 1933, Huangyuan, Jinghai". Victor and Ruth Plymire were American missionaries based in Dankar (sTong 'kor). See Horlemann (forthcoming) for more about this dictionary.

³² Cited as 達氏英藏字典 ("*Da Shi* Tibetan-English Dictionary") on pages 5, 8 and 12. The text suggests that Das 1902 was given to Li Dan and Yang Zhifu by Ouyang Jingwu (歐陽竟無) in Nanjing in 1927. Other cited sources are *Ye Shi* (Jäschke?) Tibetan-English dictionary, an unnamed Tibetan-Mongolian lexicon and

likely the inspiration for its alphabetical order. Two other lexicons of primary importance are Zhang Yisun 1937 and 1939, which are likely the source of the alphabetical order used in Zhang Yisun 1985 and then in computers. Even if we are not certain about the sources Zhang Yisun used, we hypothesize that he too took inspiration from Das 1902 for the alphabetical order.³³

In Tibet an important step was the publication of the Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary by dGe bshes Chos grags,³⁴ a Buryat who became a monk in Lhasa. Its most striking feature is its format: a bound book with a two column layout, likely the first of its kind created in Tibet. These features and the (modern) alphabetical order he used are likely inspired by Dorje Tharchin's dictionary—that dGe bshes Chos grags collaborated on—, itself inspired by Das 1902.³⁵ A Chinese gloss was added to the dictionary in 1957.³⁶

The prevailing modern order was then also used in the still authoritative *Dayig Sardrik* in 1979,³⁷ and in the famous *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*.³⁸ The latter is the only dictionary taken as the reference in scholarly literature about alphabetical order in China.³⁹ Since its system is the same as the one used in Tibetan-English dictionaries

the 四體合璧文鑑 (a Manchurian-Mongolian-Tibetan-Chinese lexicon). I would like to thank Bianca Horlemann for highlighting this information.

³³ We were not able to find a clear source of inspiration for the alphabetical order in the introduction of these lexicons, nor by looking into Zhang Yisun's collaborators. I would like to thank Fabienne Jagou, Gray Tuttle and Sonam Tsering Ngulphu whose help was crucial in that research. We can nonetheless consider some clues found in biographies available on the Internet. For instance the Baidu Baiké page (<https://baike.baidu.com/item/张怡荪/1180276>, accessed February 14th, 2022) states that he worked as an English teacher, used Tibetan-English dictionaries and was inspired by Chen Yinke (陈寅恪), who was hired by the University of Oxford. We know that Das 1902 was circulating in China in that period because it inspired the *gSar bsgrigs rgya bod ming gi rgya mtsho* (itself a possible source of inspiration, perhaps through Yang Zhifu?), and we also know that *Bod kyī brda yig rtogs par sla ba* had been printed in Beijing (where Zhang Yisun was based at the time); all using the same alphabetical order. We thus hypothesize that the alphabetical order used by Zhang Yisun was inspired from one of these lexicons, with a strong preference for Das 1902 considering the information given in his biography. More research should be done about Zhang Yisun to confirm this hypothesis.

³⁴ Chos kyī grags pa 1949.

³⁵ See Viehbeck 2016.

³⁶ Tseten Shabdrung's *dag yig* was translated in that same year as well, see Tuttle 2007 about these publications.

³⁷ Padma rdo rje 1979.

³⁸ Zhang 1985. Tseten Shabdrung and other Tibetan grammarians were part of the editorial board of this dictionary.

³⁹ Nyima Tashi 2018, Jiang 2004 and Jiang 2006.

since Schmidt, and is the same used for Dzongkha,⁴⁰ it has been used as the model for the alphabetical order used by computers today.⁴¹

6. Conclusion

While the order of letters has been fixed from the very beginning, the alphabetical order was not used in Tibetan lexicography until the 15th century. This chronology has parallels in the Western context, where alphabetical order was widely adopted only in a surprisingly recent time.⁴² Specific to Tibetan, however, is the variety of alphabetical orders used throughout history and their convergence into today's prevailing standard. The reasons behind the adoption of this specific standard as the dominant one remain to be studied, but are probably linked to certain rational advantages.

If the hypotheses we made are correct, we can trace the origin of the order used in the 21st century to dPal khang lo tsA ba (15-16th c., Tibet), through mGon po skyabs (1737, Mongolia & China), Schmidt (1841, Netherlands & Russia), Jäschke (1881, Germany & India), Das (1902, India) and Zhang Yisun (1937, 1985, China). We can see a pattern here that is similar to the one described by Viehbeck 2006, where what could be thought of as local lexicographical features are instead rooted in a multi-cultural network.

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⁴⁰ See Geylek.

⁴¹ See the original BDRC blog post about the Tibetan alphabetical order in computers: <https://www.bdrc.io/blog/2021/10/29/sorting-out-tibetan-alphabetical-order/>.

⁴² See Flanders 2020.

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Parody and Pathos: Sexual Transgression by “Fake” Lamas in Tibetan Short Stories

by Holly Gayley and Somtso Bhum

Rumors and talk about fake lamas and monks abound. This is how Tibetans refer to disreputable figures who wear Buddhist robes while pursuing illicit aims, whether traveling to distant Chinese cities to attract patrons under false pretense or chasing women in the name of tantric practices. The phenomenon is not new. A song condemning phony and lecherous lamas in the Gesar epic warns, “By the day he delivers corrupt teachings before his patrons, / By night he sneaks like a dog around girls’ pillows” (Jabb 2015: 66). As Tsering Shakya points out, “Tibetans have always been well aware that there are people who wear the mask of religion to dupe the faithful” (1980: 81), and traditional Buddhist texts have recognized this possibility (Kapstein 2002, Jabb 2015: 60–62). Nonetheless, attention to distinctions between “fake” (*rdzun ma*) and “genuine” (*tshad ldan* or *rnam dag*)¹ lamas and monks has intensified since the revitalization of Buddhist institutions in Tibetan areas of China during the post-Mao era (Makely 2007: 266, Caple 2019: 61–64).

From the 1980s forward, towering Buddhist figures on the Tibetan plateau like the Tenth Pañchen Lama and Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok endeavored to reform monasticism and publicly voiced their disapproval of monks who fraudulently posed as lamas without the proper qualifications. For example, in a speech given in Serta in 1985, the Pañchen Lama warns monastics against “pretending to recite scriptures” or “pretending to teach Dharma in a fraudulent way” and likewise reprimands nomads for being naïve in treating lamas too reverently so that “monks will say they are lamas even if they are not” (Terrone 2021: 14). Fifteen years later, as Tibetan Buddhism was attracting a growing number of Han Chinese followers in the 2000s, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok complained of the proliferation of “more and

¹ With respect to terms for “genuine,” *rnam dag* denotes that a lama or monk is “completely pure” with impeccable conduct, whereas *tshad ldan* implies a standard of authenticity, meaning someone who is properly qualified. Both are used in the sources under consideration in this article. Other terms in contemporary usage include *tshul mthun*, which has a more legal and ethical valence, and *dngos ma* (alt: *ngo ma*), meaning “real” or “actual,” also used for goods that are considered authentic.

more phoney tulkus and khenpos" who travel around China and Tibet to gather disciples, touting construction projects at their home monasteries to raise funds (Smyer Yu 2011: 113). As part of wider concerns with monastic purification and ethical reform in Tibetan regions under Chinese rule (Germano 1998, Gayley 2013, Capple 2019), the discourse about "fake" lamas and monks provides a way to rhetorically distance "genuine" monasticism and tantric practice from instances of deception that otherwise threaten the reputation of Buddhist institutions altogether.

Yet critiques of named lamas and monks engaged in sexual misconduct remain largely taboo in Tibetan society outside the domain of gossip. In 2017, the #MeToo movement exposed sexual and other forms of abuse among Tibetan Buddhist lamas operating in Europe and North America (Gayley 2018, Gleig 2019). However, Tibetan women have been reluctant to engage, although other issues such as domestic violence have recently come to the fore in social media forums (Robin 2019).² Through print journals and efforts on the ground by NGOs like Machik and the Demoness Welfare Association for Women, a range of feminist expression is emerging on the Tibetan plateau that advocates for women's education, health care, and legal rights (Robin 2015, Hall 2019). Yet, as Hamsa Rajan has pointed out, this type of advocacy work involves a "contradiction [that] results from activists' attempts to improve women's status while at the same time attempting to preserve Tibetan culture, defend Tibetan culture against accusations of backwardness, and maintain Tibetan social unity and cohesiveness" as an ethnic minority in China (2015: 130). Nowhere is navigating the contradiction more precarious than with respect to Buddhist institutions, one reason that Tibetan nuns (even in exile) are more reticent than their ordained Western counterparts to associate with feminism (Gyatso 2010, Padma 'tsho 2021).

Perhaps because of this, a significant venue for critiquing fake lamas and sexual transgressions has been contemporary Tibetan-language fiction.³ The favored style of social realism is particularly well-suited to delve into the messiness of human failings and call

² WeChat provides a venue for Tibetan women to share information and narratives, especially Jamyang Kyi's "Today's Women" (*Deng gi skyes ma*), a women-only forum which took off after reports in October 2019 of a nomad women's stabbing by her adulterous husband when she refused to take him back. As Françoise Robin relays, "The sharing of this piece of news opened the floodgates of online expression of grief in the usual forms of poems, but also with opinions, testimonies and reports about domestic violence and murder of one's wife" (2019).

³ This essay focuses on Tibetan-medium short stories from Tibetan areas of China with reference to the wider context of contemporary literature by and about Buddhist women in Tibetan and Himalayan regions composed in Tibetan, Chinese, and English languages.

attention to exploitative social relations.⁴ While not necessarily feminist in intent, short stories about such sexual transgressions—as a form of social critique of male depravity and the mistreatment of women—provide an important complement to more direct advocacy work for women's rights and access to education and health care. Indeed, a major concern of third wave feminism lies precisely in the performance and parody of gender roles as well as representation practices as important sites for the negotiation and subversion of gender norms.⁵ In line with this orientation, in this article, we do a close reading of Tibetan-medium short stories that depict lamas engaged in sexual misconduct and abuse, comparing fictional accounts by celebrated male authors Döndrup Gyal and Tsering Döndrup with those by less well-known women writers, Tashi Drönma (abbreviated Tredrön) and Tsedrön Kyi.⁶

In particular, we analyze two main literary strategies in these stories: *parody*, which serves to delegitimize the behavior of errant lamas, and *pathos*, which recovers female victims as objects of compassion rather than gossip and scorn. For example, in Tsering Döndrup's "The Disparaging Laughter of the Tsechu River" (*Rtse chus khrel dgod byed bzhin*), the deceptive antics of a lama named Alak Drong Tsang is lampooned as the Tsechu River bears witness, laughing in condemnation. In this case, a male author focuses on the lama as protagonist in order to expose and mock his fraudulence, thereby delegitimizing him in a way that would normally be inconceivable given the respect accorded to Buddhist teachers. By contrast, when female authors write about sexual transgression, they center the experience of young women who are victims of the lama's deception and misconduct. Accordingly, the tone shifts to pathos. Take the protagonist of "Sister Dechen Tsomo" (*A shel bde chen mtsho mo*), a short story by Tashi Drönma that we recount and analyze in more detail below. After being sexually assaulted under a bogus tantric pretext, Dechen Tsomo is left pregnant and alone. But that's not all. She also bears the shame of thinking that she is at fault for defiling a "holy man" (*skyes bu dam pa*) and will be punished by rebirth in hell. In this way, she suffers from a double-stigma: first the assault itself, which the author explicitly depicts as against her will, and second the

⁴ On trends in contemporary Tibetan fiction, starting in the 1980s, see Tsering Shakya 2008.

⁵ See, for example, Butler 1990 and critiques by Mahmood 2005 and Xie 2014.

⁶ We are indebted to Françoise Robin for consulting on this topic as we were gathering source material. Her mention of the short stories by Tsering Döndrup and Tashi Drönma in her essay on "'Oracles and Demons' in Tibetan Literature Today: Representations of Religion in Tibetan-Medium Fiction" (2008: 151) was a crucial starting point.

religious taint of imagining that she will bear the karmic retribution. The tragedy of the situation is palpable, and it is narrated in a way that evokes compassion and thereby counters a tendency in Tibet and elsewhere for women to bear the stigma for sexual transgressions by men and the unintended pregnancies that may result.

It is important to note that there are, in fact, esoteric practices that employ sexual union (*sbyor ba*) in Buddhist tantra. Such practices involve manipulation of the subtle body for specific religious aims, such as longevity and liberation, in addition to a distinctively Tibetan type of scriptural revelation.⁷ Practiced mostly by non-monastic religious specialists in the Nyingma tradition, the tantric rite of sexual union routinely takes place in the context of longtime partnerships as evidenced in prominent twentieth-century examples (Jacoby 2014, Gayley 2016). However, this has not always been the case, and for that reason tantric practices involving sexuality have been controversial at different times and places in Tibetan history.⁸ Part of the problem is, of course, their potential misuse in pursuit of mundane sexual gratification. The power differential between the young women who are sought out for these practices and the older male lama seeking to extend his longevity raises the issue of consent, even if the actual tantric rite is performed, let alone when invoked dubiously.

Despite the existence of tantric practices involving sexuality, the short stories we analyze in this essay portray circumstances in which such practices are deceptively invoked as a pretext for sexual gratification by men who claim to be lamas. The Tibetan term *lama* (*bla ma*), which means “teacher” and translates the Sanskrit *guru*, can refer to anyone who has completed the traditional three-year retreat, but more often connotes an accomplished Buddhist master who can guide disciples on the tantric path, such as the abbot of a monastery, a tantric adept and lineage holder, or a reincarnate lama or tulku (*sprul sku*). However, in these short stories, with the exception of Alak Drong Tsang, it is never clear whether those claiming to be lamas are associated with any specific monastery or religious lineage at all, let alone qualified to be teachers.⁹ Instead, in charlatan fashion, they appear out of nowhere like the unnamed lama who appears one day in a mountain village in Döndrup Gyal’s contemporary classic “Tulku” (*Sprul sku*) or Lama Nyima who operates in the urban setting of Xining in Tsedrön Kyi’s more recent “My Sunset” (*Nga yi nyi ma nub song*). In the latter, a man dressed in monastic robes named Nyima

⁷ See Sarah Jacoby, 2014: chapter 3.

⁸ For a prominent early example, see Samten Karmay 1998.

⁹ Traditional Tibetan texts have much to say about what to look for in a qualified teacher, especially one who transmits teachings and practices associated with Buddhist tantra. See, for example, Jamgön Kongtrul 1999.

simply introduces himself as a lama to Özer Tso, a prospective university student whom he meets in a restaurant in Xining and later seduces. In creating these dubious characters, contemporary Tibetan writers show a savvy awareness of the potential for misuse of a lama's privilege and authority. More importantly, they open a public space for social critique.

Fake Lamas in Contemporary Tibetan Literature

The efflorescence of contemporary Tibetan literature began in the 1980s as economic and cultural liberalization spread across China in the post-Mao era and the first Tibetan literary journals were created. *Tibetan Art and Literature* (*Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal*) was founded in 1980 by the Tibetan Autonomous Region Writers' Association, quickly followed by *Light Rain* (*Sbrang char*) the next year under the auspices of the Qinghai Writers' Association, and numerous others ensued (Shakya 2008). While some of the earliest works were composed in Chinese, a new Tibetan-medium fiction began to flourish from this time onward. Tsering Shakya notes that, in the caution of those early years, the short stories published in journals tended to replicate Communist rhetoric and focus on "the evils of the old society" (67). For this reason, in her survey of representations of religion in Tibetan fiction, Françoise Robin regards the 1980s as a time that fostered a "derogatory stance toward Buddhism and the Tibetan clergy" (2008: 150).

That said, probing works by prominent writers who emerged in this time, like Döndrup Gyal and Tsering Döndrup, are not merely traces of a short-lived anti-clerical trend. Lama Jabb calls attention to the "overlooked Tibetan tradition of social criticism" in both classical and oral Tibetan literature, highlighting Tibetans' skeptical attitudes toward rapacious and hypocritical religious figures, whether lamas, ritualists, or spirit mediums. Proverbs such as "Medium, diviner and astrologer / Are the three great liars of the world" and "It's the Lama who advises not to eat meat / Yet, the fattiest meat is eaten by the Lama" illustrate a degree of skepticism among ordinary Tibetans (2015: 64). Citing such instances, Lama Jabb forges a vital link between the oral tradition of social critique and modern literature. In addition, beyond the formative stages of contemporary Tibetan literature, there has been a sustained discourse among secular Tibetan intellectuals questioning the role of religion in modern society (Hartley 2002, Wu 2013).

Needless to say, short stories by Döndrup Gyal and Tsering Döndrup, such as "Tulku" and "The Disparaging Laughter of the Tsechu River" respectively, reveal skepticism about the power and

privilege accorded to Buddhist lamas in Tibetan society that remains salient today. The enduring popularity of these authors and works attest to their literary merits and the penetrating nature of their social critique. Yet publishing on such topics has its risks, namely the danger of being perceived by Tibetans as undermining cultural revitalization efforts that began in earnest in the 1980s and continue today, including the rebuilding of Buddhist institutions across the plateau. In fact, ground-breaking Tibetan authors like Döndrup Gyal received death threats for some of his short stories, including "Tulku" (published in *Light Rain* in 1981), which critiques blind faith (*rmongs dad*) in reincarnate lamas, and "The Narrow Footpath" (*Rkang lam phra mo*) that questions Tibetan's conservative adherence to the pathways of the past, published in the same journal three years later (Shakya 2008: 80). Matthew Kapstein notes that Döndrup Gyal was further "accused of harboring perverse views (*log lta*) and of being a destroyer of the teaching (*bstan bshig*)," apparently even becoming the object of sorcery by tantric communities (2002: 99).

"Tulku" was the first Tibetan short story to deal with fake lamas and sexual transgression. The tulku of its title remains nameless throughout, and no one knows anything about him in the mountain village where he arrives one day, travelling with the son of a respected household. The father, the devout old man Aku Nyima, is thrilled to have a tulku stay with them, despite the stranger's apparent uneven knowledge of the dharma. The elders in the village likewise seem enthusiastic to make offerings, and the longer he stays, the more their faith grows. However, early on, Döndrup Gyal leaves clues in the reader's path that the tulku is not the real deal, such as when he sizes up, from head to toe, the daughter-in-law of the household, Jakmo Cham, and searches through drawers in their home. The plot thickens when Jakmo Cham recommends the tulku to her friend Drukmo and suggests that he perform prayers for her ill mother. After mumbling prayers incomprehensibly all day, slipping in a few recognizable words like "lama" and "Buddha," the supposed tulku takes the opportunity to proposition Drukmo, first by suggesting that sex together will help heal her mother and finally by promising to marry her. Depicted as a beauty past her prime, Drukmo succumbs to the seduction, imagining that she will secure a tulku for a husband.

The situation begins to unravel after the tulku tries to pull Jakmo Cham into his room. She already had started to become suspicious of him, but now she is enraged. Fighting her way free, Jakmo Cham wakes up the next day, ready to warn her friend, only to find the tulku gone and herself the object of gossip, accused of stealing Drukmo's coral necklace which the stranger took with him. Döndrup Gyal stages a *deus ex machina* moment to set the record straight. The identity of the

imposter is revealed when a police officer comes to the village and reports, "The tulku you've placed your hopes in is currently under arrest at the Public Security Bureau in the county's capital. There's no question that he's not a real tulku. He's a criminal who has been going all over the place swindling and wreaking havoc. He's accustomed to committing these crimes that break the law and contradict tradition. It's a real shame that you all fell for his scam."¹⁰ The blind faith of the villagers is thereby exposed in what is the most explicit and direct revelation of a fake lama in stories involving sexual transgression.

Other short stories leave it to the reader to figure out the lama's deception on their own, while still offering plenty of clues. During the 1980s, Tsering Döndrup crafted the iconic character Alak Drong or "Wild Yak Rinpoche" (A lags 'brong), which translator Christopher Peacock hails as "the foremost symbol" of his "wide-ranging and unflinching critique of corruption and hypocrisy in the modern-day practice of Tibetan Buddhism" (2019: 8). The name was regarded as an abomination by some, for it signaled imposture, if not for the institution of tulkus (Alak is the honorific used in Amdo) then at least for any character so named (Robin 2008: 150). Tsering Döndrup could thereby critique certain excesses and human failings among lamas by invoking his fictional character. For example, in "The Disturbance in D— Camp,"¹¹ Alak Drong is behind a fundraising campaign to rebuild the local monastery that ends up impoverishing the surrounding nomad communities. Each time the chief of the encampment raises funds for one building, Alak Drong sends him back for more—until finally the nomads move elsewhere and the chief goes mad.

In this and other stories, Tsering Döndrup is masterful at showing the ironic dilemmas of monks and lamas who are held to a high standard despite "the flaws, desires and contradictions of all human beings" (Peacock 2019: 8–9). In "The Handsome Monk,"¹² for example, the protagonist Gendun Gyatso finds himself caught in paralyzing self-doubt about remaining a monk, and this drives him to despair and serious breaches of his monastic vows. Unable to confess his dilemma to his elder brother, and afraid of being conscripted into a clan battle over access to grasslands if he disrobes, instead Gendun turns to liquor for solace and eventually an affair with a Chinese prostitute. Ironically, by the end of the story, he is recognized as a tulku despite his protests about violating his monastic precepts. Much to his chagrin, the search party excuses his behavior and replies that the previous holders of their monastery's tulku line "had always had consorts... [and]

¹⁰ Our thanks to Lowell Cook for sharing his translation of "Tulku" (Don sgrub rgyal 1997) prior to its publication. The translation of this passage is his.

¹¹ This story can be found in Döndrup 2019, translated by Christopher Peacock.

¹² This story can also be found in Döndrup 2019, translated by Christopher Peacock.

partaken of the elixirs" (Döndrup 2019: 146–147). Here tantric tropes are marshalled to entrap the ambivalent monk.

The Antics and Abuse of Wild Yak Rinpoche

The use of parody by male authors to critique fake lamas, specifically in relation to sexual violation, is most clear in another work by Tsering Döndrup. In "The Disparaging Laughter of the Tsechu River" (*Rtse chus khrel dgod byed bzhin*),¹³ the charlatan Alak Drong Tsang foists himself on a seventeen-year-old girl, employing tantric language to explain away his assault. The story, first published in 1988, is set in a fictional town in Amdo along the Tsechu River in the post-Mao era as local communities were beginning to rebuild monasteries out of the rubble and debris of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). The head of the monastery is Alak Drong Tsang, depicted as a bald lama with hair growing around his neck, and no distinguishing qualities other than his large, thick ears. Yet as the head of the monastery, he is accorded much respect and devotion by the local community. Each day, when villagers visit the monastery, the monks emerge to see if they might be the recipient of alms, yet get passed over by those eager to receive the lama's blessing.

An old devout woman Ama Gonkyi and her daughter Lutso make a humble offering of yogurt when they can. Once when Lutso had a toothache, her mother sent her to the monastery with yogurt and encouraged her to get a blessing from Alak Drong Tsang as a cure. In the case of illness, blessings are often given by the lama by blowing on the affected area. And this provided the opportunity for much more than a cure, though the outcome is left to the reader's imagination:

Alak Drong Tsang had just woken up upon Lutso's arrival. She prostrated to him three times and then mentioned how she couldn't sleep last night because of a sudden toothache. At seventeen years old, appealing but not especially beautiful, Lutso had a full-grown body with rounded breasts, large eyes, and a small mouth. Staring at her breasts protruding from under the chuba, Alak Drong Tsang thought, "I haven't performed my secret practice for a long time." Swallowing his saliva, he said, "Come here, let me see!" He held her cheeks with his hands and pulled her toward his lap, saying "open your mouth... let me bless you."¹⁴

¹³ Tshe ring don sgrub 2012.

¹⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, the translations from short stories analyzed in this article were translated by Somtso Bhum and edited by Holly Gayley. Tshe ring don sgrub 2012: 47. *klu 'tsho thon dus a lags 'brong tsang mal las lang ma thag yin/ mos kho*

The rest of the scene is left to the reader's imagination. In this passage, the reference to "secret practice or conduct" (*gsang ba'i mdzad pa*) signals something tantric, although it is neither a technical term nor the appropriate context for such a practice. Clearly, Alak Drong Tsang is using the teenage girl's toothache and invoking a tantric reference as a pretext to take advantage of her. This first section of the story ends with the refrain, "The Tsechu River laughs disparagingly."

Throughout the story, the Tsechu River serves as the satirical witness to unfolding events, and each section ends with the same refrain as the antics and abuse of Alak Drong Tsang remain a secret. When Gonkyi tries to send her daughter to take yogurt to him again, she stubbornly refuses, and the Tsechu River again laughs, understanding all too well the reason for her refusal. When Lutso is forced to go the following year, Alak Drong Tsang can see that she is pregnant. Fortunately for him, the girl has not told anyone who the father is. In order to provide support for the child, without having to acknowledge paternity, he hatches a plan to recognize the child as the reincarnation of a wealthy old lady who recently passed away. Again the Tsechu River laughs disparagingly. After that, a few years pass, and the little boy comes to the monastery to meet the wealthy lady's family. Alak Drong Tsang whispers to him, "Be a good boy and reach for the rosary on uncle Tsedon Gyal's neck. Say it's yours and ask him to return it back. If you do that, you're a good boy and, if you don't, you're a bad boy."¹⁵ If it wasn't clear that Alak Drong Tsang was a fraud previously, this moment leaves no doubt. The boy does as he's told and the uncle is moved by the gesture, imagining that the boy has recognized the old lady's rosary around his neck, because he is her reincarnation. Even Lutso is won over by the gesture, suddenly regaining faith in the lama and thinking that his "secret conduct" was meritorious. The story closes as the Tsechu River laughs one last time. Alak Drong Tsang has managed to fool everyone else.

Tsering Döndrup's use of parody artfully undercuts the legitimacy

la phyag gsum 'tshal rjes mdang dgong glo bur du rang gi 'gram so na nas gnyid kyang ma khugs pa de ji ma ji bzhin du bshad/ kho mo da lo mo lo bcu bdun yin la shin tu mdzes sdug ldan pa zhig min yang lus po dar zhing nu zung rgyas pa/ mig gnyis che zhing mchu sgras chung la blo la 'bab pa zhig 'dug/ a lang 'brong tshang gis klu 'tsho'i ras lwa thar rkyang gi 'og na tshur la 'bur ba'i brang khar lta bzhin sems la "rang gis gsang ba'i mdzad pa ma gnang bar yun ring 'gor song' bsams nas yang yang mchil ma mid zhor "'o na khyod tshur shog dang/ ngas gcig blta" zer zhor lag pa gnyis kyang klu 'tsho'i 'gram pa bskyor nas mgo rang gi pang la blang te "kha gdongs shig" zer... "ngas shal phu zhig gnang"/

¹⁵ Tshen ring don sgrub 2012: 54. *khyod kyang a khu tshen brtan rgyal gyi ske yi 'phreng ba de bzung nas 'di ni nga'i yin pas nga la byin shes bshad thub na a ma'i bu bzang po yin pa dang ma thub na bu ngan pa yin nges red/*

of the lama who takes advantage of Lutso, thinly disguising his assault as an esoteric or “secret” practice. This is not to deny the existence of genuine instances of tantric couples engaged in this practice in the post-Mao era.¹⁶ Rather it calls attention to the slippage between esoteric practices and the license accorded to lamas out of respect and devotion. Since lamas are presumed to be benevolent, their actions are regarded as “skillful means” (*thabs*) even when executed in unconventional ways. Hence Lutso reflects at the end of “The Disparaging Laughter of the Tsechu River,” that if Alak Drong Tsang could recognize the old lady’s reincarnation, he must have been correct in saying, “each lama has secret conduct but an ordinary person never understands even a fraction of it.”¹⁷ In this story, the lama protagonist is rendered as devious and debauched, while the mechanisms for mystification are illuminated. In this vein, with respect to Wild Yak Rinpoche as a stock character, Françoise Robin remarks, “Tsering Döndrup’s hallmark sense of irony and delight in human ridicule must be interpreted in his case, it seems, not so much as an indictment of the institution of *tulku* or as a condemnation of the belief in rebirth per se, but as a reminder to readers that all human power systems are prone to mishaps and mishandling” (2016: 118). There is a palpable skepticism and ambivalence, one that invites reflexivity and distances the reader, if only for the moment, from a devotional impulse.

An ambivalent stance toward reincarnate lamas is not restricted to authors who began their literary careers in the 1980s, nor to issues of abuse. It can also be found in more recent Tibetan fiction, such as the Sinophone work “Enticement” (Ch: *Youhuo*, Tib: *Bslu brid*), by Pema Tseden (published in 1995)¹⁸ and the Tibetan-medium story “Entrusted by the Wind” (*Rlung la bcol ba*) by Lhakshamgyal (published in 2009),¹⁹ which offer indeterminate explorations of reincarnation and leave it up to the reader to decide on the validity of

¹⁶ For example, see Gayley 2016 about a tantric couple who played a significant role in revitalizing Buddhism in the region of Golok during the post-Mao era.

¹⁷ Tshe ring don sgrub 2012: 54. *bla ma re la gsang ba'i mdzad pa re yod pas gang zang rang ga ba zhig gis de'i zur tsam yang mi rtogs.*

¹⁸ This story was initially published in *Literature from Tibet (Xizang wenxue)* in 1995 and recently included in a 2018 compilation of Pema Tseden’s fiction, titled *Enticement: Stories of Tibet*, translated by Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani and Michael Monhart.

¹⁹ This story was initially published in *Light Rain (Sbrang char)* in 2009 and was translated in 2016 in *Himalaya Journal* 36.1 by Françoise Robin. Robin analyzes the story in her essay, “Souls Gone in the Wind? Suspending Belief about Rebirth in Contemporary Artistic Works in the Tibetan World” for the same special journal issue on *The Secular in Tibetan Cultural Worlds*, edited by Holly Gayley and Nicole Willock.

their protagonists' conscription as tulkus. In this way, contemporary Tibetan fiction is able to address the human fallibility of lamas and reservations about religious institutions in ways that the devotional tenor of much Buddhist literature does not permit. As such, it makes a contribution to contemporary discourses wrestling with the tension between preserving Buddhism as a central feature of Tibetan culture and imagining a Tibetan modernity in secular terms (Hartley 2002, Shakya 2008). Urban intellectuals like Shokdung and the so-called "new thinkers" regard religion as a regressive force hampering the development of Tibetan modernity (Wu 2013), while progressive Buddhist leaders articulate a vision of Tibetan modernity aligned with Buddhist values (see Gayley 2013, 2021). Tibetan-medium fiction has a special contribution to make by calling attention to possible corruption and abuse within otherwise revered Buddhist institutions. In this regard, short stories by Tibetan women who are less well known, such as Tashi Drönma and Tsedrön Kyi, offer another significant vantage point on this issue.

From Scorn to Sympathy: "Sister Dechen Tsomo"

What changes when a female writer depicts the sexual transgressions of a fake lama? In our sample of stories, the most significant shift has to do with the protagonist—from male perpetrator to female victim. As a result of centering women's experiences and perspectives, the emotional tenor of the narrative correspondingly shifts from parody to pathos. Rather than focusing on the so-called lama's hypocrisy and deception, with all its attendant ironies, female-authored stories call attention to the plight of women whose faith is taken advantage of and whose lives are ruined in the process. Instead of the distancing effect of parody as a form of social critique, these stories depict the suffering of women in intimate terms in order to elicit sympathy and compassion. In this sense, just as the legitimacy of the lama is subverted through parody, the tendency to blame and spurn victims is challenged by offering a personal portrait of young women's experience before, during, and after being lured or forced into sexual relations with a lama. The reader is thereby confronted with the impact of sexual violation on women: the sense of shock and powerlessness, the breach of trust and faith, the enduring wound that is both psychological and spiritual, the discourses that prevent her from calling the lama to accountability, and the uncertain future of a life derailed.

A short story by Tashi Drönma, "Sister Dechen Tsomo" (*A shel bde*

chen mtsho mo),²⁰ opens with elaborate, poetic language depicting the sunset along the Kyichu River in Lhasa. The bucolic scene is interrupted by the cries of a baby and shouts of a mother, who in a fit of frustration, says to her one-year-old son: “You are my karmic retribution! Why do you keep making trouble? I don’t know how to live anymore.”²¹ The other women along the river are aghast, exchanging glances of shock and disgust. They chastise Dechen Tsomo for scolding her baby so harshly and for being headless in getting pregnant in the first place. One says, “How can you say that to a child? You should have given it some thought first. Don’t scold your baby, have mercy!”²² Others on the shore call attention to her heedlessness (*bsam med*) as the cause of her own predicament. This is a classic scene of public shaming and blaming the victim by others who do not know the woman’s story and presume her own reckless passion as the source of her troubles. Only one, a young woman named Lhakyi, recognizes her, and it is this moment of recognition that shifts the tenor of the story and paves the way for a sympathetic response.

The scene has resonances with contemporary fiction by Tibetan and Himalayan women writing in Chinese and English as well. For example, scenes of rape, domestic violence, monastic seduction, and adultery in the Sinophone short story “An Old Nun Tells Her Story” by Geyang²³ and the Anglophone novel *The Circle of Karma* by Kunzang Choden²⁴ showcase the real-life dilemmas of Tibetan and Himalayan women in bearing the burden for male violence and sexual violation. Whether in Tibetan, Chinese, or English, women’s writings are part of a new trend in Tibetan and Himalayan literature to use narrative fiction as a potent way to call attention to the challenges and injustices faced by women.

In “Sister Dechen Tsomo,” author Tashi Drönma challenges the typical reaction of gossip and scorn by providing the backstory to the protagonist’s frustrated attempt to raise a child on her own. The scene at the Kyichu River gives way to an extended flashback recounting

²⁰ Bkras sgron 1988. This short story was published in the Lhasa-based journal *Tibetan Literature and Art (Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal)* in 1988.

²¹ Bkras sgron 1988: 2. *lan chags kyi bu lon khyod/ nga 'gro stangs sdod stangs mi shes par gyur tshar song/ khyod da dung rnyog dra shod rgyu ci yod/*

²² Bkras sgron 1988: 2. *phru gur lan pa gang yod/ khyod kyis dang thog nas bsam blo yag po gtong dgos red/ da gzod phru gur gshe gshe ma gtong snying rjel/*

²³ This short story originally appeared in *Listening to Tibet (Lingting Xizang)* in 1999. It was translated by Herbert Batt and published in a special issue of *Manoa* 12.2 (2000), *Song of the Snow Lion*, featuring translations of Tibetan short stories from Tibetan and Chinese.

²⁴ *The Circle of Karma* (2005) is a contemporary classic of Bhutanese literature by the prominent woman writer Kunzang Choden. For a discussion of gendered representation and social critique in this novel, see Gayley 2020.

Dechen Tsomo's journey to Lhasa and what happened in the ensuing years. The narrative thereby centers her experience and perspective as a young woman from eastern Tibet who ventures to Lhasa on pilgrimage with dreams of a good life. The story is set in 1982 and was published in 1988 in the journal *Tibetan Arts and Literature* (*Bod kyi rtsom rig sgyu rtsal*). This is early into the post-Mao era, and few of that generation from eastern Tibet had likely ever been to Lhasa. To Dechen Tsomo and her friends who accompanied her, in this new era of promise, Lhasa was a "dharmic pure land" (*chos ldan gyi zhing khams*) replete with pilgrimage sites, plentiful shops and goods, as well as cars and cinemas. It promises them "a lifetime of happiness and merit accumulation" as the preeminently sacred and modern city in Tibet,²⁵ where the young women sought spiritual nourishment and economical benefit. The author makes a point to depict Dechen Tsomo and her friends as innocent, pious young women on pilgrimage. Of course, life in Lhasa was not as easy as expected, and the group must disperse to find work.

Tashi Drönma spares no ink in crafting Dechen Tsomo as a virtuous character throughout her ups and downs in Lhasa in order to render her a suitable object of compassion. The mother of Lhakiyi, who the reader encounters in the opening scene, takes pity on the beautiful Dechen Tsomo, who wears the dress and jewelry of an undisclosed region of eastern Tibet, and gives her shelter. The turquoise and amber woven into her black braids and her large silver earrings signal that she is from a good family, and it is made clear on several other occasions that she left home out of piety rather than poverty. Once she found a factory job, she made for an excellent worker, another sign of her good character, so much so that the factory boss took notice and tried to help her. Depicted as an amicable and good-hearted boss, Yangchen refers her to a job tending the home of an old pious lady and a lama visiting from Kham in eastern Tibet. Touting him as an "eminent" (*rtsa chen po*) lama, Yangchen assures the young woman of two things: the work will be easier and by serving the lama she will "purify her karmic obscurations in this life" and "gain benefit in the next life" through merit-making. Being "someone with genuine faith in the dharma," as the narrator affirms, Dechen Tsomo was enthusiastic about the opportunity.²⁶

Two months into her new domestic job, Gyaltsen, the purported lama, began to take an interest in her. The ordeal begins innocuously enough. One day, as she is cleaning, Gyaltsen comments on the

²⁵ Bkras sgron 1988: 4. *mi tshe gcig gi bde skyid dang tshogs bsags.*

²⁶ Bkras sgron 1988: 7. *rang gi tshe 'di'i las sgrib dag pa, tshe phyi mar yang phen, and chos la dad pa rnam par dag pa byed mkhan.*

turquoise Dechen Tsomo wears around her neck. She relays that it was her late grandmother's turquoise "soul stone" (*bla g.yu*) which she had received as a child. The lama takes the opportunity to touch her, first reaching to examine the turquoise and then clasping her checks to pull her toward him and touch foreheads in a gesture of respectful intimacy. Dechen Tsomo felt confused by the gesture, but offers him the turquoise anyway, saying: "Rinpoche, please take this turquoise and guide my deceased grandmother upwards [to a favorable rebirth]. Please confer your blessing to purify my karmic obstructions in this life and the next and to enable me to repay the kindness of my parents."²⁷ Gyaltzen took her hands in his and accepted the gift, but the narrator adds a hint of suspicion, stating that he did this primarily in order to gain her trust. Thereafter, when the old lady would leave to do her daily circumambulation, Gyaltzen would seek out Dechen Tsomo for conversation and began to teach her the dharma, ingratiating himself to her and creating opportunities to hold hands.

Several weeks later, when Dechen Tsomo undoes the top of her dress in the kitchen to wash her hair, the lama hastily rises from his meditation to take a closer look. Here's how Tashi Drönma depicts the scene:

While she was about to wash her hair, Gyaltzen got up from his seat and came out to meet her. As soon as he saw Dechen Tsomo's upper body, in the full spender of youth with soft skin and large breasts, he paused in his tracks. With two bulging eyes, he stared at her. Clutching his robes with both hands, he stuttered, "Now it's time to lead the dead upwards." Gyaltzen embraced Dechen Tsomo against her will and kissed her all over like a madman.²⁸

Despite Gyaltzen's reference to "lead[ing] the dead upwards" (*gshin po'i yar 'dren*), there is no tantric sexual practice that has to do with guiding or liberating the dead. Within the context of the story, this appears to be a reference to Dechen Tsomo's request that he guide her grandmother to a favorable rebirth, and he offers it as an excuse for his assault. But it may also function to show how little he knows about

²⁷ Bkras sgron 1988: 10. *rin po che/ g.yu 'di khyed gyis bzhes nas nga'i rmo bo dam pa yar 'dren dang/ rang nyid kyi 'di phyi gnyis ka'i las grib* (elsewhere: *las sgrib*) *dag pa dang tshe 'dir pha ma'i drin lan gso thub pa bcas yong ba'i skyabs 'jug gnang rogs/*

²⁸ Bkras sgron 1988: 11. *skra 'khru grabs byed skabs rgyal mtshan gdan las langgs te phyir thon yong ba dang 'phrad pas rgyal mtshan kyis dkar la 'jam sha dod pa dang rab tu rgyas pa'i nu 'bur la sogs lang tshos yongs su phyag pa'i bde chen mtsho mo'i stod khog mthong ma nyid gom pa spo mtshams bzhag ste 'bur du don pa'i mig chen po gnyis pos kho mor sdiig cing/ lag gnyis pos rang gi gos nas shugs gang yod kyis 'then pa dang sbrags kha nas "gshin po'i yar 'dren byed ran song" zhes shod bzhin par rang dbang med par bde chen mtsho mor 'khyud de smyo ba ltar mchu sgras gang sar bsnun/*

Buddhist tantra.²⁹

Regardless, it is clear to any reader that this is not a religious act. Instead, Gyaltsen is transfixed by her beauty, with eyes bulging at the sight of her youthful breasts and hands clutching at his robes in an attempt to control himself. Moreover, the author makes it clear, in no uncertain terms, that Dechen Tsomo did not consent or reciprocate. When the lama embraces her, mad with desire, she is depicted as powerless (*rang dbang med pa*) to resist. Kissing all over is used here as a euphemism for sex. The rest is not depicted, but soon we learn that Dechen Tsomo is pregnant.

After that, she is tormented by the thought that she has “accumulated grave misdeeds and faults in this life by staining the lama.”³⁰ While Dechen Tsomo blames herself for what happened, feeling remorse and engaging in purification rituals, Gyaltsen remains in predatory mode, speaking sweetly to her while “looking for opportunities to enjoy the fullness of her youth.”³¹ When she confronts him, the exchange is telling:

With intense remorse, Dechen Tsomo made an anguished plea: “I am a woman with impure karma, isn’t that so? Since I have stained you, a holy man, of all the thousands of men in the world, I will plummet down to the depths of vajra hell and won’t have the opportunity even to speak of benefiting beings in future lives.”

Gyaltsen replied, “This is not at all impure behavior. I am overwhelmed by your meritorious gift. You will certainly obtain a male body in the next life. In the past, many qualified lamas have taken consorts (*rig ma*), and when I saw your signs and marks, I took you as my consort.”³²

Here we can see a pernicious rhetoric around gender and sexuality.

²⁹ In addition, the phrase may have a sexual valence as suggested by male Tibetan colleagues when workshoping this passage at the Kayden Translation Symposium on “Buddhist Women & the Literary in Tibet” held at the University of Colorado Boulder on October 22, 2021.

³⁰ Bkras sgron 1988: 11. *tshé 'dir sdig nyes chen po bsags te bla ma brdzad song*.

³¹ Bkras sgron 1988: 11. *kho mo'i lang tsho yongs rdzogs longs su spyod gang thub byas*.

³² Bkras sgron 1988: 11. *bde chen mtsho mos "skyes dman nga ni las ma dag pa ji lta bu zhig ma red dam/ 'jig rten 'di'i thog tu skeyes pa khri stong du ma bzhas ste khyed skeyes bu dam pa bdzad pas (elsewhere: brdzad) dmyal ba rdo rje gting du lhung rgyu las phyi ma'i 'gro don zhes pa gleng yul bsad ma song" shes 'gyod sems drag pos gdungs pa'i gtam rgyal mtshan la shog skabs rgyal mtshan gyis "'di ni las dag min gyi bya ba zhig gtan nas ma red/ khyod kyi bsod nams kyi bzi sbyin gyis nga gnön pa zhig yin pa dang tshé phyi mar khyod la skye bo pho lus thob nges yin/ sngon byod tshad ldan bla ma mang pos rig ma bzhes myong yod pas khyod kyang mtshan ma dang dpe byad bzang bar mthong nas nga'i rig mar blangs pa zhig yin/*

Dechen Tsomo understands herself to be the one to bear the karmic retribution as a woman—here the Tibetan term for woman used is literally “lowly birth” (*skyes dman*). Even though Gyaltsen is the one who assaulted her, Dechen Tsomo still believes that she is the one who “stained” (*brdzad*) him, since he is purportedly a “holy man” (*skyes bu dam pa*).

Of course, this is not how karma is supposed to work. Doctrinally, individuals are responsible for their own actions and bear the results in kind. However, anthropologists of South Asia have shown that karma is often marshalled as an explanation of last recourse to make sense of one’s own misfortune (Keyes and Valentine 1983). In Himalayan contexts, this can translate into women imagining a husband’s infidelity, domestic violence, or worse to be the result of their own bad karma (Gayley 2020). In addition, this story echoes a discourse on the inferiority of the female body that is longstanding in auto/biographical literature in Tibetan and Himalayan regions. The voices of eminent female tantric masters, from Yeshe Tsogyal to Sera Khandro, stand out for their recurring laments about the female body, doubting their own capacities for spiritual attainment despite authoritative affirmations to the contrary (e.g. Jacoby 2010).

In “Sister Dechen Tsomo,” Gyaltsen counters that there is no cause for worry, since he engaged in tantric practice with her, taking her as his spiritual consort. Moreover, he placates her by quoting a poem by the Sixth Dalai Lama, known for his romantic dalliances, followed by the stock phrase, “Since the actions of a bodhisattva are an inconceivable secret, how can they be understood by ordinary people?”³³ When he attempts to legitimize his abuse by stating that many qualified lamas have taken consorts in the past, his deceit is obvious to the reader, who has been clued into his lust and manipulation. What’s more, once Gyaltsen finds out that she is pregnant, he suddenly decides to leave for his homeland, claiming that he needs to supervise repairs on his monastery, never to return. She waits in vain, hoping at the very least to have a father around to help support the child.

This is a devastating account of deception and abuse. Not only is Dechen Tsomo subjected to sexual assault by a trusted religious figure, she is left to raise a child alone, imagining her grim circumstances as the fault of her own negative karma. In a more than twenty-page review, titled “The Call from the Heart of a Female Author,”³⁴ literary critic Lhakpa Phuntsok links the fate of Dechen Tsomo to the real-life

³³ Bkras sgron 1988: 11. *byang chub sems pa’i mdzad pa ni gsang ba bsam gyis mi khyab pa zhiig yin pas phal pas ci la rtogs.*

³⁴ Lhag pa phun tshogs 1994.

experiences and concerns of Tibetan women, past and present. He takes a special interest in her anguish around the karmic outcome of her contact with Gyaltsen in relation to the searing question with which the story ends: “Alas! In this human life, am I experiencing such difficulties as the result of my lack of merit accumulated in past lives? Even if this is the case, my karmic obstructions should be purified. Or do I have such a miserable fate?”³⁵ This haunting question illustrates how abuse by clergy damages its victims both psychologically and spiritually. Perhaps in order to redeem the narrative from unrelenting pathos, Lhakpa Phuntsok takes it upon himself to respond to her question, stating emphatically that Dechen Tsomo, in the end, does indeed purify her karma.

However, this seems to miss the point and legitimize Gyaltsen as a genuine lama. In the narration itself, Tashi Drönma leaves subtle cues that Gyaltsen is not what he pretends, referring to him as an ordinary man (*skyes pa*) throughout, rather than lama, and eschewing honorifics except when characters in the story speak about him. Lhakpa Phuntsok understands what happened in conventionalized terms—that Dechen Tsomo “offered” (*phul*) her body to the lama as something meritorious and purifying, despite what appears in the story as assault: he embraced her; she was helpless to resist. This reading seems contrary to the thrust of the story itself. Apart from the reverential attitude of Yangchen and the old lady, no other information or evidence for the lama’s exalted status is given, such as lineage, teachers, or home monastery. Beyond that, it misconstrues the nature of their encounter, which was forced rather than consensual, if there can be consent in situations with such a differential in power.

Nonetheless, we agree with the reviewer that Dechen Tsomo deserves compassion. Beyond that, we suggest that the story enacts a powerful transformation of Dechen Tsomo from an object of scorn by the women at the banks of the Kyichu to someone pitiable as the victim of sexual abuse. As we have shown, Dechen Tsomo’s virtue and religious faith is emphasized by the author throughout the story, while Gyaltsen’s deception is revealed in manifold ways: when he decides to accept the gift of turquoise, when his eyes bulge at the sight of her breasts, when he thrusts himself on her, when he claims that their sexual encounter was tantric in nature, and when he abandoned her with a promise to swiftly return. This juxtaposition of their characters is part of what creates pathos in the story and vindicates Dechen Tsomo as an innocent victim, worthy of compassion. Lhakpa Phuntsok

³⁵ Bkras sgron 1988: 14. *kye hud/ na'i mi tshe 'di ni tshe sngon tshogs dang bsod nams ma bsags pa' i rnam smin gyis sdug po 'di dag myang du bcug pa yin nam/ gal te de ltar na' ang nga' i las sgrib dag po yod pas yang na las dbang dman pa yin nam/*

reads the ending as an affirmation that Lhakyi, the bystander in the opening scene, responds with “affection and sympathy” (*sha tsha snying rje*) to Dechen Tsomo’s plight. Yet despite the drawing that accompanies the story in publication—of two women side by side looking at a baby in one of their arms, an image that would suggest such care and concern—the story concludes without a sense of resolution. In the end, the two barely interact. Lhakyi looks toward Dechen Tsomo and sighs, shaking her head back and forth, and Dechen Tsomo lowers her gaze and returns to an uncertain future.

Shattered Dreams in “My Sunset”

Unlike the black-and-white portrait of sexual transgression in the story above, a female writer from the next generation, Tsedrön Kyi, offers a more complex and cosmopolitan portrait of sexual transgression set in urban Xining, capital of Qinghai Province, set in the early 1990s. The female protagonist and narrator of “My Sunset” (*Nga yi nyi ma nub song*),³⁶ Özer Tso, is a prospective student at Qinghai Nationalities University who is seduced into an affair with a purported lama named Nyima after the initial surprise and shock of his sexual advances. In the end, she falls in love with him despite the string of scantily-clad Chinese women who come and go from his life. Despite what appears as a consensual relationship, the story suggests that Nyima exploited her naiveté as he romanced her, engaged in a two-year relationship with her, and ultimately left her pregnant and alone. While Özer Tso is portrayed as a starry-eyed youth with dreams of success as a university student, Nyima’s character is dubious from the start even though he is depicted as being kind and handsome. In addition to his liaisons with other women, Nyima routinely shifts in and out of religious attire, sometimes putting on a black wig and suit to travel. These various guises become a metaphor for the hypocrisy he embodies.

“My Sunset” was published in 2011 in a collection of short stories within the *Contemporary Tibetan Women’s Book Series* (*Deng rabs bod rigs bud med kyi dpe tshogs*), edited by the writer and activist Palmo. This series and others edited by Palmo includes anthologies of poetry, essays, and research as well as novels by women writers, representing a new trend in Tibetan literature to elevate women’s voices in concerted publication efforts. Parallel publication efforts have been spearheaded in recent years by Tibetan nuns at Larung Buddhist Academy, including the women’s journal *Gangkar Lhamo* or *Goddess of the Snowy Range* (founded in 2011) and 53-volume collection *The*

³⁶ Tshe sgron skyid 2011.

Dākinī's Great Treasury (published in 2017) containing writings by, about, and for Buddhist women from India, Tibet, and China (see Padma 'tsho and Jacoby 2020 and 2021).

Similar trends of burgeoning publications by women writers can be found in other Himalayan contexts. In 2003, Zubaan was founded in Delhi as an outgrowth of the feminist publishing house Kali for Women, making women's fiction and non-fiction from across South Asia more widely available. In Himalayan regions, Nepali authors like Manjushree Thapa and Sita Pandey and Bhutanese authors like Kunzang Choden and Chador Wangmo explicitly address violence against women in short stories and novels—from rape and domestic violence to prostitution and sex trafficking. The realm of fiction gives voice to social dynamics on the ground which may otherwise be taboo, due to silencing within communities and personal attacks on women who dare to speak up. With respect to the ongoing challenges that Tibetan women on the plateau face, Tse-drön Kyi reports, "Even though the overall situation and fate of Tibetan women has changed, there are still a lot of unimaginable and depressing things that happen. For that reason, through creating characters in my stories, I have grappled with, both consciously and unconsciously, profound sentiments of sympathy, respect, and concern for women's lives."³⁷

In this vein, "My Sunset" returns to the issue of sexual transgression by fake lamas in Tibetan literature from the 1980s and reimagines it within the world that most young literate Tibetan women have passed through: the urban minority university (Ch. *minzu daxue*). The story opens by evoking a sense of pathos: Özer Tso views herself as the bearer of "miserable karma" due to the "secrets and deception" of a supposed lama that leaves her feeling "disgusted and depressed."³⁸ She asks the reader to have affection and compassion (*sha tsha snying rje*) for her as a consolation for all that she has been through. From that opening, Tse-drön Kyi takes the reader back in time to witness her dreams and aspirations as a girl from nomadic regions of the Tibetan plateau. Like others, Özer Tso dreamed of getting a university degree and good job in the city. When she failed to pass the entrance exams, she became dejected and briefly entertained the idea of becoming a nun instead. Arriving in Xining by bus, on her way to Achung Namdzong nunnery, she went to a restaurant in the nearby Tibetan

³⁷ Interview of Tse-drön Kyi by Döndrup Tsering (2019). *spyir bod rigs skyes ma'i gnas babs sam las dbang la 'gyur ba byung yod kyang/ da dung nyam thag pa'i gnas tshul blo las 'gongs pa mang du mchis/ de bas/ brtsams sgrung gi mi sna 'bri bzhengs las skyes ma'i 'tsho bar bsam bzhin dang bsam bzhin ma yin par gdung sems skyes pa dang/ brtsi mthong dang/ gces skyong byed 'dod kyi brtse dungs zab mo yang bcangs yod nges/*

³⁸ Tshe sgron kyid 2011: 225–226. *las ngan, sba gsang dang g.yo zol, and skyug bro ba dang ya nga ba.*

neighborhood for lunch. There she meets an apparently “genuine monk” (*grwa pa rnam dag*) wearing the Buddhist robes who strikes up a conversation with her. He is charismatic with a round face, prominent nose, thick dark eyebrows and long eyelashes curled upward, wearing an ivory mala or rosary. At first, Nyima is a positive influence, encouraging her to try again on the university exams, giving her some basic Buddhist teachings, and engendering her trust. Özer Tso returns home with her spirits uplifted.

When Özer Tso passes the entrance exams the following year, she attributes it to “Lama Nyima who blessed her fate and world of darkness,”³⁹ and her faith in him grows stronger. After returning to live full-time in Xining to attend Qinghai Nationalities University, she visits him, arriving unannounced. Özer Tso is greeted at the door by a Chinese lady in a low-cut shirt and tight red pants. Nyima makes excuses: the Chinese lady is a disciple and patron, helping him raise funds for his monastery in Kham, and he refers to Özer Tso as his sister, giving her money to help with school supplies. The next time, when she returns and another Chinese lady opens the door, she begins to feel uncomfortable. The apartment smells of alcohol, incense and perfume. After the lady leaves, Nyima tries to soothe her, taking Özer Tso in his arms and telling her that she is his precious jewel. For a moment, she struggles to get free, protesting that he is a lama. With a smile, he counters, “Lamas are also human beings and, among lamas, some have wives (*bdag mo*). Their wives are *dākinīs*.⁴⁰ If they can have love, why can’t you?”⁴¹ Here the premise of consorts in tantric practice is marshalled as an excuse to cover for the lust—and in this case the playboy lifestyle—of a supposed lama. Though initially confused and scared, as Nyima lovingly (*brtse dung ldan*) kissed her head, face, and lips, she reports feeling love and desire welling up involuntarily as an intoxication. Unlike the stories from the 1980s previously discussed, in “My Sunset,” Özer Tso gives in and falls in love.

Tsedrön Kyi does not dwell on their two-year affair. The story fast forwards to the moment Özer Tso discovers she’s pregnant and decides to drop out of university. She goes to tell Nyima, but finds the apartment empty. When he returns, accompanied by a glamorous Chinese woman whom he refers to as his patron, Nyima promptly

³⁹ Tshe sgron kyid 2011: 231. *bla ma nyi mas nga’i mun nag gi ’jig rten dang nga’i las dbang la byin rlabs.*

⁴⁰ The *dākinī* is a class of female tantric deity originally from India. The Tibetan epithet *Khandro* (*mkha’ ’gro*) is a translation of the Sanskrit term and can refer to a realized female master or the female consort of a high lama.

⁴¹ Tshe sgron kyid 2011: 236. *bla ma yang mi yin/ bla ma’i nang na bdag mo bzhes mkhan yang yod/ bdag mo de dag mkha’ ’gro ma red... mkha’ ’gro ma la yang brtse dung yod nal khyod la ci’i phyir yod mi chog/*

announces he must accompany her to Hong Kong the next day and stay for an indeterminate amount of time. In a flurry of activity, he changes out of his monastic robes into a blue suit and puts on a black wig, dark sunglasses, and a red scarf, telling Özer Tso not to wait for him and to study well in school. After rushing around to gather a few more things, he and the other woman leave without so much as a backward glance. This is the moment where the double entendre of the story's title, "My Sunset" becomes clear. Since the lama is named after the "sun" (*nyi ma*), the title could also be rendered "the disappearance of my Nyima" (*nga yi nyi ma nub song*). Nyima abandons her without knowing that she is pregnant.

In the end, Özer Tso gives her baby up for adoption, delivering the boy at the house of a friend of the family in another village, and returns to Xining to look for work. When she tries to visit Nyima, a blond foreign man answers the door instead, and she realizes that Nyima has left her for good. Yet she still maintains her faith in and love for him, thinking to herself, "How is an inept woman like me able to judge whether a lama's conduct is good or bad? Absolutely not. Yet Lama Nyima left with my love, my hope, my laughter, my happiness, my youth, and my future. He went far away. Is he engaged in benefitting beings in that distant land?"⁴² Here it is clear that her hopes and dreams for the future have been dashed, yet she still does not question Nyima's identity nor does she feel adequate to judge his actions. Even so, she waits for him for ten years, unwilling to date other men despite their interest and invitations. When she is working in a fancy restaurant with a bar and performance space, she finally sees Nyima again. Dressed in western attire with a beautiful Chinese lady on his arm, he does not recognize her. The story closes with Özer Tso words, "My sun has set, and my small world is covered by darkness."⁴³

In this story, as with "Sister Dechen Tsomo," the anonymity of an urban context allows a supposed lama to materialize from nowhere with claims to a monastery somewhere else. There is no real proof of his identity apart from the outer appearance of monastic robes and/or the testimony of others. To apply the words of Tenzin Repa from the seventeenth century, these characters are "dharma imposters [who] just turn the wheel of deceit" (Schaeffer et al 2013: 578). Nyima's status as a charlatan is highlighted in a final encounter, no longer wearing

⁴² Tshe sgron kyid 2011: 241–242. *bla ma'i mdzad pa la nga lta bu'i rang mgo mi thon pa'i bud med cig gis bzang ngan gyi kha tshon gcod ga la nus te gtan nas mi nus so/ yin na yang/ bla ma nyi mas nga'i brtse dung dang/ nga'i re ba/ nga'i dgod sgra/ nga'i bde skyid/ nga'i lang tsho/ nga'i mdun lam bcas khyer nas phebs song/ ha cang rgyang ring du phebs song/ ha cang rgyang ring ba'i gnas de ru khong nyid kyis 'gro don mdzad bzhin yod dam /*

⁴³ Tshe sgron kyid 2011: 244. *nga yi nyi ma nub song/ nga'i 'jig rten chung chung mun nag gis g.yogs song.*

monastic robes and no longer even recognizing his young lover of years past. Pathos is evoked, both for the protagonist and her shattered dreams and for the state of contemporary Buddhism in which such deception is so readily possible.

Pregnant in the Buddhist Robes

Let us conclude by considering the special case of nuns. In Buddhist canonical sources, the rape of a nun is depicted as a serious offense and cause for rebirth in hell. Perhaps the most dramatic example is the realized nun Uppalavaṇṇā whose story reports her rape by a lust-filled cousin while residing in a forest hermitage.⁴⁴ Not only is she exonerated in the story with respect to her vow of celibacy, but the earth cracks open and her assailant falls instantly down to Avīci hell. By contrast, in the gendered politics of Tibetan areas during the post-Mao era, Charlene Makley reports that nuns are the subject of gossip and disdain that (re)sexualizes them as opposed to their male monastic counterparts. As Makley puts it, with respect to northern Amdo, “nuns had to be extremely careful in their public comportment because one mishap among nuns would be the talk of the town for a long time to come” whereas “young monks in Labrang... were publicly visible indulging in once forbidden (or at least hidden) leisure activities” (2005: 279). This double-standard leaves nuns more vulnerable to scrutiny and blame in cases of sexual misconduct.

Another short story by Tsedrön Kyi illustrates the ways that nuns bodies can be (re)sexualized despite their vows of celibacy and determined attempts at modesty. A scene in “Offering of Youth” (*Lang tsho'i mchod pa*)⁴⁵ depicts a group of mischievous monks (*grwa pa pra chal*) teasing young nuns at a large empowerment in northern Amdo, while the nuns attempted to shelter their breasts and cover their heads. The beautiful young nun Tendrel Drolma was fortunate to be protected by a monk Tenpa Rabgye sitting next to her, and they kept in touch by cell phone afterwards. There is a strong hint of romance in their friendship, but she leaves the area where she had been a nun at Achung Namdzong to study Tibetan medicine. Without access to a rigorous education at the nunnery, Tendrel Drolma felt that studying medicine would give her a way to benefit others, while maintaining her status as a nun.

⁴⁴ This story can be found in *Buddhist Legends* V.10, translated by Eugene Burlingame 1921. It is also discussed in Alice Collett 2016: 80. In *Sexuality in Classical South Asian Buddhism*, José Cabezón provides other examples of how canonical sources treat male sexual impropriety and the torments of hell that result of serious offenses, such as the rape of a nun (2017, 45–73).

⁴⁵ Tshe sgron skyid 2016a.

Tragically, the doctor she chose to study with—who she calls Aku Phakpa in deference to his age and role as a teacher—ends up taking advantage of her one day over tea. At first he attempts to seduce her, telling her how much he admires her beauty, compassion, and diligence as a student. Oddly enough, in his seduction, he draws on the discourse of fake lamas and monks, stating: “These days, how many of those wearing the red garments remain celibate and keep their vows authentically? How many monks and nuns? What’s the difference between being religious and lay?”⁴⁶ With this, he insinuates that if the monastic robes are just a pretense, then why should she resist his advances? However, Tendrel Drolma does actively resist and attempts to dissuade him, appealing to her status as a nun. Even as she concurs that the state of nuns leaves her without much training, she casts him as an “uncle” to her, the literal meaning of Aku, a role that should elicit his protection. Despite her appeals, he forces himself on her. As she tries to shake herself free, Phakpa’s body is depicted as a heavy boulder pinning her down and immobilizing her like a corpse. This is a devastating image to depict rape.

Not long thereafter, Tendrel Drolma realizes she is pregnant. Although Phakpa had initially promised to take care of her, he is already married with children and so, after expressing regret, he puts some money under her pillow and leaves. Tendrel Drolma finds herself in a predicament that Tse-drön Kyi calls “pregnant while wearing the Buddhist robes” (*ston pa'i na bza' mnabs bzhin du mngal sbrum pa*). In an interview, the author discusses the poor conditions of nuns, who mostly stay at home or find abandoned hermitages where they can practice, rather than live at a nunnery—which are few and far in between. Without proper facilities or training, nuns are vulnerable to having their labor or bodies exploited. Tse-drön Kyi states:

I have heard many stories involving the sad fate of contemporary Tibetan nuns. There are numerous nuns in the Yushu area; some are able to practice in monasteries and the rest of them herd livestock for their families. Among those who neither stay at a monastery nor travel beyond their homeland, there are plenty of nuns who get pregnant while wearing the Buddhist robes. I have actually witnessed three daughters within a single household who were ordained as nuns but ended up becoming mothers.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Tshe sgron skyid 2016a: 5. *da lta'i dus 'dir/ pho mo'i lus 'brel med pa dang na bza' dmar lheb lheb cig gon yod pa las pho mo'i lus 'brel med pa dang sdom khrims ngo ma yod pa'i grwa pa du yod/ jo mo du yod/ ser skya gnyis la khyad par ci 'dug/*

⁴⁷ Interview of Tse-drön Kyi by Döndrup Tsering (2019). *da lta'i bod kyi jo mo dag gi las dbang skyo bo'i gtam rgyud mang po zhig ngas go myong/ gzhan yang yul shul du jo mo ha cang mang po 'dug/ gnas de ru dgon par song nas sgrub pa nyams len byas te 'dug pa'i*

Another story by Tsedrön Kyi with a nun protagonist, “A Lonely Soul” (*Kher rkyang gi rnam shes*),⁴⁸ likewise depicts the hardships of nuns, who have to wander from place to place, eking out a subsistence. They attempt to engage in practice alongside traveling to receive teachings, cooking at monasteries, finding and repairing hermitages in which to stay, and relating to patrons and family. Though “A Lonely Soul” does not contain explicit references to sexual misconduct, it depicts a number of questionable behaviors by monastics that highlight human fallibility and throw into question their religious motives.

The discourse on fake lamas and monks hovers in the background of “A Lonely Soul” but takes explicit, if surprising, shape in “Offering of Youth.” Retracing our steps, the story opens with Tenpa Rabgye, the steadfast monk friend, as he sits in the rain waiting for Tendrel Drolma. She is getting an abortion at the hospital, and he risks scandal to bring her there and then deposits her safely in a nearby hotel to recover. From there, the rest is a flashback that provides the backstory. While the reader at first may anticipate that the two monastics had an illicit affair, soon it is clear that Tendrel Drolma had been raped. As she recalls attempting to dissuade her assailant Phakpa, curiously she refers to herself as a “fake nun” (*jo mo rdzun ma*).⁴⁹ However, it is clear that she deems herself inauthentic not because her virtue or purity was compromised at that point, but because she did not have access to an adequate religious education. As such, the statement points more to a social critique regarding the lack of institutional support for nuns than to a failure of her own character. After getting an abortion, she refers to herself as a “demonness” (*bdud mo*) and fears retribution in hell.⁵⁰ Like Dechen Tsomo, she is left alone to feel the guilt and shame of what has happened to her. Although her friend Tenpa Rabgye promises to return, the story ends on an ambiguous note with Tendrel Drolma in the hotel on her own, flooded by memories and dreams.

Conclusion

“Desire in saṃsāra is very strong—like a flaming fire,” muses the nun Detung Wangmo, founder of the nunnery Dechen Sherab Tharchin

jo mo cung mang la/ rang gi pha ma'i gam du zog rdzi byas te bsdad yod pa'ang gang mang 'dul/ dgon par ma bsdad la yul phyogs gzhan du 'grim ma myong ba'i jo mo dag las ston pa'i na bza' mnabs bzhin du mngal sbrum pa mi nyung ba zhig yod 'dul/ khyim tshang gcig nas bu mo gsum jo mo byas pa dang mthar jo mo gsum po bu skyes kyi a mar gyur yod pa'ang ngas dngos su mthong/

⁴⁸ Tshe sgron skyid 2016b.

⁴⁹ Tshe sgron skyid 2016a: 5.

⁵⁰ Tshe sgron skyid 2016a: 2.

Ling in Guinan County, Hainan Prefecture. For that reason, to her, it is hardly surprising that “many ordained monks and nuns are breaking their vows to enjoy worldly pleasures.”⁵¹ Emphasizing the difficulty of maintaining celibacy in contemporary life, she marvels at the merit of those who can uphold their vows. Nonetheless, she acknowledges the devastating impacts of sexual harassment on nuns and especially sexual assault, which can deprive them of the chance to remain in robes and lead a religious life. The most appalling incident that Detung Wangmo shared in an interview had to do with a nun and student of hers who was an incest survivor. Even after she became a nun, her stepfather continued to abuse her on visits home, and eventually she had to leave the nunnery after getting pregnant. Compounding the tragedy, such events rarely are publicly acknowledged and redressed.

As illustrated in this article, fiction is becoming a potent vehicle for exposing sexual violence endured by Tibetan and Himalayan women including Buddhist nuns. While stories by male authors like Tsering Döndrup use parody to lampoon fake lamas and monks, creating the stock character Alak Drong who engages in various types of abuse of power under the guise of religion, the female writer Tsedrön Kyi is more interested in capturing the pathos and predicaments of actual women. During an interview, she reflected on the “unbearable sadness of women’s fate” (*bud med kyi las dbang skyo ba sems kyi bzod bka’ ba*) which she was exposed to while working as a secondary school teacher in Yushu.⁵² Her examples from the Tibetan plateau are “countless including a number of young women sent into prostitution by their parents, nuns who become pregnant while wearing the saffron robes, female students away at school confronting the deception of fake lamas, young and dedicated wives suffering from domestic violence by their husbands, and the social practice of polygamy.”⁵³

In her artistic process, Tsedrön Kyi constructs stories based on the general fate of Tibetan women (*bod kyi bud med spyi’i las dbang*) and actual oral testimony (*gtam rgyud dngos byung*) with which she is familiar. Two of her short stories discussed in this article, “My Sunset”

⁵¹ The material in this paragraph comes from an interview with Detung Wangmo by Somtso Bhum in August 2020.

⁵² Yushu is known as Jyekundo in Tibetan and lies on the border of Qinghai and Sichuan Provinces.

⁵³ Interview with Tsedrön Kyi by Somtso Bhum in August 2020. *na chung bu mo mang po rang gi pha mas ’phyon ma’i khang du skyel ba dang/ ngur smrig na bza’ mnabs pa’i jo mo’i mngal la phru gu sbrum pa/ bu mo slob ma slob grwar ’grims pa’i skabs su bla ma rdzun ma’i mgo skor thebs pa/ lus kyi lang tsho dang sems kyi brtse ba yongs su phul ba’i chung ma bzang mor khyo gas mnar gcod gtong ba/ shug gcig khyo gnyis kyi gnyen srol la sogs bgrang gis mi lang/*

and “A Lonely Soul,”⁵⁴ were based on women she knew personally, a former student of hers taking the college entrance exams and a nun friend, respectively. Even so, Tse-drön Kyi describes feeling pained by not being able to fully capture the depth of their suffering and thereby move the reader. This shows a specific concern with affect. Tse-drön Kyi is writing in order to convey the despair (*skyo ba*) experienced by victims of sexual abuse and thereby “touch the hearts of readers” (*klog pa po’i sems pa sgul*). Thus, while parody can subvert an unquestioning reverence and authority accorded to Buddhist lamas, depicting women’s plight is intended to elicit sympathy and, by extension, undermine the tendency to blame the victim. In this way, female writers shift the focus from the dubious character of fake lamas to how his behavior can ruin the lives of pious young women. Eventually, this shift in perspective may help create a receptive field into which Tibetan women’s first-person accounts of sexual transgression, whether harassment or assault, can eventually be shared in public forums such as social media.

Among Tibetan communities in the diaspora, it is already becoming more acceptable to speak publicly about sexual assault. In her Anglophone memoir, *A Hundred Thousand White Stones*, Kunsang Dolma candidly articulates the impact of sexual violence on the direction of her own life, first in Tibet and later in exile (2013). Himalayan nuns are also starting to speak out. In her 2017 dissertation, Tenzin Dadon, a Bhutanese nun living in Malaysia, articulates her own experiences of sexual harassment and analyzes the structural factors prohibiting nuns from coming forward with allegations, such as lack of education and institutional power (Langenberg 2018). Tibetans living within China face much different constraints. While the #MeToo movement initially gained traction in China, feminist voices have been driven underground by censorship and arrests.⁵⁵ In such a climate, it would be too risky for Tibetan women to speak out, not only out of fear of reprisals, but also because any criticism of their own culture—and revered religious figures within it—could be weaponized against them.

Female writers are crucial to making visible the conditions and experiences of Tibetan and Himalayan women. As more Tibetan

⁵⁴ Tse-drön Kyi describes the latter as a work of “documentary prose” (*don brjod lhug rtsom*).

⁵⁵ On the #MeToo movement in China, see Simina Mistreanu, “China’s #MeToo Activists Have Transformed a Generation: A small group of feminists has shifted attitudes—and prompted harsh pushback,” *Foreign Policy*, January 10, 2019 (<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/10/chinas-metoo-activists-have-transformed-a-generation/>) and Yaqui Wang, “#MeToo in the land of censorship,” *Human Rights Watch*, May 8, 2020 (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/08/metoo-land-censorship>).

women are able to access higher education within and beyond China, and nuns have more opportunities for accessing rigorous dharma training, their advanced education can help other women to make sense of socio-cultural issues within a wider framework and also position them to voice their concerns and experiences in a legible way. Tibetan women's active engagement in public affairs has made it possible for them to open spaces through advocacy groups and publication efforts in order to raise awareness and discuss long-silenced social issues, such as domestic violence and sexual assault. Moreover, having greater access to both monastic and modern education will allow women to question wayward lamas or religious practitioners from an informed viewpoint and help address abuse.

In conclusion, the trope of fake lamas and monks in Tibetan short stories has allowed for the issue of sexual abuse to come into public discourse without threatening to destabilize Buddhist institutions. Yet it has limitations. What happens when a Tibetan woman comes forward to accuse a respected Buddhist lama or monk of sexual abuse? Tenzin Dadon chronicles a chilling case of a Bhutanese nun who got expelled from her monastic institution because the senior monk to whom she reported an incident of abuse was himself engaged in illicit behavior and feared exposure (Langenberg 2018). Needless to say, the institutional obstacles are daunting, and social reprisals against victims often accompany revelations of abuse. One ironic effect of the discourse on fake lamas in contemporary Tibet is that it may unwittingly foreclose the possibility in public discourse that actual lamas, ones who hold a genuine lineage and teaching credentials, could go astray.

The topic of sexual transgression by lamas and monks is now being discussed on Tibetan social media by secular intellectuals, albeit without calling out specific figures. Thubten Phuntsok, a professor at Southwest University for Nationalities in Chengdu, angrily responded to a poem "A Plea to Beautiful Women" (*Bud med mdzes ma rnams la re zhu*) on WeChat.⁵⁶ The poem was written by Khenpo Rigdar of Larung Buddhist Academy and asked young Tibetan women to stop seducing ordained monks. Thubten Phuntsok publicly queried the traditional monastic position of blaming Tibetan women for the failings of lamas and monks (*bla grwa*): "Do women seduce lamas or do lamas chase after women and thereby go astray?"⁵⁷ While he concedes that some Chinese women might seduce Tibetan lamas and monks in big cities,

⁵⁶ Thubten Phuntsok's response (2020), in the form of an eight-minute audio critique, circulated in WeChat groups such as "Today's Women" (*Deng gi skyes ma*). The poem by Khenpo Rigdar is included in the post.

⁵⁷ Thub bstan phun tshogs 2020. *ngas skad cha shig 'dri ya la bla ma tshos bu mo tsho phar bdas nas bla ma log gi yod red dam bu mos bla ma tshur bda' gi yod red/*

he denies this possibility among Tibetan women. In response to his own rhetorical question, he states:

Placing your faults on women's shoulders is such a shameless deed. Forget about shame, you basically disregard karmic cause and effect... Don't put the blame on women for breaking your vows. It's your own fault, isn't it? In deceiving women, if there's rebirth in hell, you need to go to hell, not women. Since women have been serving you with a pure heart, how could they end up reborn there?⁵⁸

In this way, he expresses disgust at the behavior of monks and lamas, who deceive women with threats of hell if they don't comply and then blame them for the seduction when they do. He concludes by suggesting that the more Tibetan women are educated, the less likely they are to fall for the subterfuge of illicit lamas or monks. Thubten Phuntsok's words serve as a poignant response to the realistic predicaments portrayed in "Sister Dechen Tsomo" and "My Sunset." As this response illustrates, in social media venues like WeChat, sexual abuse by lamas and monks may now be emerging in public discourse as a serious social issue for Tibetans within China.

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⁵⁸ Thub bstan phun tshogs 2020. *khyed rang gi nag nyes de bud med mgo la bkal bar ngo ma tsha ba ha las dgos pa de 'dra red/ ngo tsha phar zhog/ las rgyu 'bras rtsa ba nas yod ni ma red... sdom pa log pa'i nyes pa bud med steng la phar bkal/ nyes pa khyed rang la yod pa ma red dam/ bud med de tsho la mgo skor btang nas dmyal ba mmar med kyi gnas la skyes dgos na khyed rang tsho skyes kyi red ma gtogs bud med tsho skyes kyi ma red da/ ga la skyes srid/ kho tshos lhag bsam rnam dag gis khyed rang tshor zhabs 'degs zhu gi yod pa red pa/*

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Early Developments in Snying thig Practice: The Eighth Topic of Zhang Nyi ma 'bum's *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*

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In a 2018 paper on “Signification and History in Zhang Nyi ma 'bum's *rDzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*,” the present authors offered some preliminary reflections on the overall structure of Nyi ma 'bum's influential text. More specifically, we focused on the work's unusual treatments of language, history, and time vis-a-vis those of later Great Perfection authors such as Klong chen pa and 'Jigs med gling pa. In the present paper, we focus on the same work's eighth topic (*tshig don*) on Great Perfection practice (*nyams su blangs ba*), the longest and most complex of the work's eleven topics. In our analysis of the topic, we offer observations on how Nyi ma 'bum's treatment compares to those of later authors, particularly Klong chen pa and Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem, both of whom incorporated large portions of Nyi ma 'bum's ground-breaking treatise into their own writings.

I. Introduction to the Text

In 2001, Alak Zengkar Rinpoche negotiated an agreement with Dpal spungs, whereby his organization would pay for new bookshelves in exchange for access to the famous monastery's library. Subsequently, in March 2002, Karma Delek, head of dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, discovered a manuscript containing the long-lost that is the focus of this paper: The *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa* by the late-twelfth-to-early-thirteenth-century author, Zhang Nyi ma 'bum (1158–1213). This attribution is claimed by the colophon that closes the text:

For those in these times who have an understanding [born] of study, contemplation, and meditation, this clarification of the “words and meanings” (*tshig don*) from the Seventeen Tantras of the Great Perfection, which is the realization of the nine vehicles, has been composed

by him who has the name of “scholar,” Nyi ‘bum. May fortunate beings of later times complete the two goals. May there be virtue and auspiciousness!¹

To this is added a secondary colophon, apparently added to an earlier copy of the text:

This distillation of all the vehicles, a clarification of the “words and meaning,” written by the yogin of the most profound Great Perfection, Nyi ‘bum himself, was precisely copied by the Śākya monk Sangs rgyas bkra shis. Through the virtue of that, may sentient beings equal to space, starting with one’s father and mother, attain the realm of Amitābha.²

The identity of this earlier scribe, Sangs rgyas bkra shis, remains unknown to us.³

Still a further, tertiary colophon is appended to the text in cursive (*khyug yig*). This one may be specific to our received manuscript:

This extraordinary treatise on the Great Perfection Pith Instruction Class is written by the son of Zhang ston Bkra shis rdo rje, the Zhang scholar Nyi ‘bum, who is prophesied in the *Root Tantra of Unimpeded Sound* and gained knowledge and accomplishment in the path of the Luminous Great Perfection. This text is exceedingly rare, and it is renowned that the Omniscient Dharmarāja [i.e. Klong chen pa] relied on this scripture in composing his own works such as the *Tshig don mdzod*.⁴

The larger manuscript within which our text appears is actually a collection of six texts. We may learn still more about the manuscript’s origins from a yet further colophon note found at the end of the entire

¹ *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 96b.1-3: *deng sang dus ‘dir thos bsam sgom pa’i blo gros can/ theg pa rim dgu’i dngongs pa rdzogs chen gyi/ bcu bdun rgyud las tshig don gsal ba ‘di/ mkhas pa’i ming can nyi ‘bum nyid kyis bkod/ phyi rabs skal ldan don gnyis mthar phyin shog/ dge zhing bkra shis par gyur cig.*

² *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 96b.3-5: *yang zab rdzogs pa chen po’i rnal ‘byor nyi ‘bum nyid mdzad pa/ theg pa kun gyi don bsdus pa/ tshig don gsal bar bris pa ‘di/ shAkya’i dge tshul sangs rgyas bkra shis kyis/ lhag chad med par ‘di bris dge ba des/ pha mas gtso byas mkha’ myyam sems can rnams/ ‘od dpag med pa’i gnas rab thob par shog.*

³ The passage’s final phrase, *‘od dpag med pa’i gnas rab thob par shog*, is from the *Ārya-Bhadracaryāpranīdhānarāja* (Toh. 1095), but this tells us nothing about the possible dates of our scribe.

⁴ *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 96b.5-97a.1: *rdzogs pa chen po man ngag sde’i bstan bcos khyad par can ‘di zhang stong bkra shis rdo rje’i sras zhang mkhas pa nyi ‘bum zhes sgra thal ‘gyur rtsa ba’i rgyud las lung bstan cing/ ‘od gsal rdzogs pa chen po’i lam la mkhas shing dngos grub brnyes pa de nyid kyis mdzad pa dpe rgyud shin tu dkon pa stel kun mkhyen chos kyi rgyal pos kyang tshig don mdzod sogs gzhung ‘di brten nas mdzad par grags so.*

collection. The whole manuscript consists of 135 folios (270 sides), the first 97 folios of which contain Nyi ma 'bum's work, after which the remaining 35 folios (75 sides) contain five short works on the Anuyoga class of Rnying ma teachings. Appended to the final text in the collection (that being a short work by Kaḥ thog Dam pa bde gshegs on chapter 61 of the *Dgongs pa 'dus pa'i mdo*), is a note that reads as follows:

This too Jamgön Vajradhara Khyentse Wangpo ordered to be correctly copied from Kaḥ Dam pa bde gshegs' Collected Works. Accordingly, I believe that my understanding is correct. Together with the numbering system and interlinear notes, this was penned by the treasure student Karma 'Dul 'dzin Matiratna.⁵

Here, the initial “this too” (*'di yang*) might suggest that the note references not only the last text but the entire collection. Assuming this is correct, we may conclude that the whole manuscript was penned at the request of 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang po (1820–1892), probably in the late nineteenth century.

While there is little in terms of content to link Nyi ma 'bum's work with the five Anuyoga texts accompanying it, their coexistence within a single manuscript may be explained by their shared status as rare books. Four of the five Anuyoga texts are attributed to early masters of the Mdo dbang tradition, the first three to Indian masters held to have lived at the very beginnings of that tradition. The five Anuyoga works are: (1) *Lung a nu yo ga 'dus pa mdo'i rgyud kyi gsang ba'i don bsdus pa* by Dharmabodhi, perhaps corresponding to the *Don bsdus chung ba* mentioned by Dam pa bde gshegs in his *Mdo phran khog dbub*;⁶ (2) the *Skabs 'grel bye brag tu bshad pa*, attributed to Sthiramati, found in some of today's *bstan 'gyur* collections, e.g. Q. 4752; (3) *Byang chub sems dpa' kyi ljon shing*, also attributed to Sthiramati and corresponding to Q.4753; (4) the *Lung a nu yo ga'i dam tshig bye brag pa cung zad gsal bar bshad pa'i le'u tshan*, unidentified; (5) the *Mdo le'u drug bcu rtsa gcig pa'i rnal 'byor pa'i sgron me'i rnam 'byed rgyu skar phreng ba*, unidentified but attributed to Kaḥ thog Dam pa bde gshegs. All qualify as rare texts within the tantric corpus of the Rnying ma school, like the *Eleven Topics*.

Turning to Nyi ma 'bum's text, as the title suggests, it provides a

⁵ *Mdo le'u drug bcu rtsa gcig pa'i rnal 'byor pa'i sgron me'i rnam 'byed rgyu skar phreng ba* (TBRC WID: W3CN607), 3b.2-4: *'di yang 'jam mgon rdo rje 'chang mkhyen brtse'i dbang po'i zhal snga nas ka: dam pa bde gshegs kyi gsung 'bum las byung ba'i 'di yi ge dag par gyis la bris shig ces bka' stsal phebs pa ltar rang gi go tshod dag par rlom ste ang 'gi'i grangs dang mchan bu'i dbye ba dang bcas te gter slob kar+ma 'dul 'dzin ma ti rat+na bris pa.*

⁶ See Dalton 2016, 180 n. 31.

discussion of eleven topics that seem to be unique to the Snying thig.⁷ The earliest references to these topics appear in two of the Seventeen Tantras. In chapter two of the *Sgral thal 'gyur*, they appear embedded within a larger list of twenty-eight questions that structure the chapter. They appear again, this time in the form used by Nyi ma 'bum, at the very end of the *Mu tig phreng ba*. Their position within this tantra suggests they *may* have been appended after the work's initial composition, but this remains speculative. In any case, both the *Sgra thal 'gyur* and the *Mu tig phreng ba* are cited by Nyi ma 'bum as his sources for his elevenfold scheme.⁸

The eleven topics constitute a comprehensive roadmap to awakening that begins with the primordial ground and traces its history (*lo rgyus*) through the separation of this ground into *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*, the subsequent contemplative practices required to return, and the final rejoining of the fully awakened state. The eleven topics thus offer a master narrative for Snying thig thought and practice, a structure that Klong chen pa and other later Rdzogs chen masters draw upon, making it one of the earliest comprehensive codifications of Snying thig cosmology, philosophy, doctrine, and practice.⁹

Nyi ma 'bum's text, like the Snying thig tradition itself, seems to have been a relatively minor tradition through the thirteenth century. The biographies of the early Snying thig lineage holders, many of which are found in the volume four of the *Bi ma snying thig*, portray their subjects as often poverty-stricken and lacking institutional support. All this changed with the fourteenth century, when the Third Kar ma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339) and others drew attention to the tradition. Nyi ma 'bum's text soon enjoyed a renaissance and was copied by numerous authors, being incorporated into Klong chen pa's *Tshig don mdzod*, copied almost verbatim as a Vimalamitra-attributed treasure text by Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem (1337–1409), and closely relied

⁷ The Tibetan term *tshig don* translates the Sanskrit *padārtha*, which usually means something like "topic." In Tibetan, as in Sanskrit, the word is a compound literally meaning "words and meanings." In our earlier article, we showed how Nyi ma 'bum makes use of these two elements in his interpretations of Great Perfection writings, playing on a circular relationship between word and meaning, a relationship that mirrors the larger circularity of the eleven topics as a whole. In the present paper, however, for simplicity's sake, we translate *tshig don* as "topic".

⁸ See *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 14-15.

⁹ The other somewhat comprehensive presentation of Snying thig practice (more than theory) appears in the introduction to the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, though even there it is not as systematic as Nyi ma 'bum's discussion.

upon by Sangs rgyas gling pa (1340–1396) as a Padmasambhava treasure.¹⁰ Still another, more abbreviated version appears in volume four of the *Bi ma snying thig* under the title, *Tshig don bcu gcig pa*. Again attributed to Klong chen pa, it is a more-or-less verbatim copy of Nyi ma 'bum's work but without the many quotations.¹¹

In incorporating Nyi ma 'bum's text, all of these later authors went to some lengths to clean up his quotations and bring them more strictly into line with the early Snying thig's *Seventeen Tantras*. As we noted in our first article, Nyi ma 'bum is remarkably loose in his approach to quoting from the *Seventeen Tantras*. He often cobbles together his passages using lines drawn from different parts of a given tantra. Sometimes he puts the passages he cites to new ends; sometimes he shortens passages, apparently to make his point more succinctly. As we suggested in our first article, this may reflect Nyi ma 'bum's closeness to the *Seventeen Tantras* and the fact that they were still very much alive for him and open to reinterpretation.¹² The fourteenth-century authors who borrowed from Nyi ma 'bum preferred a more conservative approach, treating the *Seventeen Tantras* as a more closed canon.

II. Structural Analysis of the Eighth Topic

With the beginning of Nyi ma 'bum's eighth topic comes an important transition in his text. Immediately preceding the section break, the coming shift is explained in these terms:

Up to now I have been teaching the goal to be realized, that is, the natural way. The first [topic] and the first half of the second topic taught the natural way of the primordial ground. From the second half of the second and the third [topics] through the seventh [topic]

¹⁰ Rig 'dzin Rgod Idem's text has been translated by Smith 2016. Sangs rgyas gling pa placed Nyi ma 'bum's work alongside Zhang ston's *Lo rgyus chen mo* in his *Rdzogs chen snying po gser gyi yang zhun gyi rgyab chos spyi sdom dgongs don 'dus pa*. A Bon po rendition of Nyi ma 'bum's text is also found in the *Dgos 'dod gsal byed bshad gzhi'i mthong*. The colophon to this work attributes it to Sprul sku Lung ston lha gnyan (sometimes Lung bon lha gnyan), whom others have dated to the eleventh to twelfth centuries (see, e.g., Karmay 1977, 11; Achard 1999, 230). A quick comparison suggests, however, that the Bon work probably postdates Nyi ma 'bum's. We understand that Jean-Luc Achard is working on a fuller study of this text and its relationship to Nyi ma 'bum's work, and we look forward to learning more from Achard.

¹¹ The work hews more closely to Nyi ma 'bum's text than the *Tshig don mdzod*, in which Klong chen pa departs from Nyi ma 'bum on numerous points, as discussed below. For more on this text, see Scheidegger 2004. It is the only text attributed to Klong chen pa in the *Bi ma snying thig*. Note too that the work is absent from the *Bi ma snying thig* catalogue (*Bi ma snying thig gi dkar chag nyin mor byed pa*) made by Zhe chen dbon sprul 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal (1787-1854).

¹² See Yeshe and Dalton 2018, 270-71.

taught the natural way of persons who constitute the supports [for that realization]. The means for realizing that are [taught in] the three [topics] of the eighth, ninth, and tenth. The actualization of the realization, which is the liberation of the final fruition, is taught in the eleventh [topic].¹³

The eighth topic thus marks the beginning of Nyi ma 'bum's discussion of the main contemplative practices of the Śnying thig tradition. What follows is by far the longest of the topics, filling nearly a third of the whole text (44 of the 131 pages in the modern book format). Nyi ma 'bum is interested in organizing his tradition, and he arranges his discussion of the eighth topic around a complex structure that is not always made explicit. Only careful analysis reveals the full structure, which we provide here in outline form to help others understand the chapter more easily:

Eighth Topic: The means for how to practice (*nyams su ji ltar blangs ba'i thabs*)

I. The initiation that is a method for ripening the extraordinary practitioner (*rten khyad par can sgrub pa po smin par byed pa'i thabs dbang*)

A. The necessary characteristics of the teacher and the student

1. Analyzing the teacher
2. Analyzing the student

B. Four initiations

1. Elaborated (*spros bcas*)
2. Unelaborated (*spros med*)
3. Very unelaborated (*shin tu spros med*)
4. Utterly unelaborated (*rab tu spros med*)

C. Samaya vows

II. Practicing the lama's instructions which offer the means for liberation (*sgrol bar byed pa'i thabs bla ma'i gdams ngag nyams su blangs pa*)

A. How the person should act while practicing (*gang zag gi spyod pa ji lta bus nyams su blangs pa*)

1. Acting like a beggar
2. Acting like a deer

¹³ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 54: *de yan chad kyis rtogs par bya ba'i don ngos po'am gnas lugs bstan te/ dang po dang gnyis pa'i stod kyis thog ma gzhi'i gnas lugs ston pa ni/ gnyis pa'i pad+mo dang gsum pa nas bzung ste/ bdun pa'i bar gyis rten gyi gang zag gi gnas lugs bstan no/ de rtogs par byed pa'i thabs brgyad pa dgu pa bcu pa gsum yin no/ rtogs pa mngon du gyur pa mthar thug 'bras bu'i grol ba ni/ bcu gcig par bstan pa yin no.*

- B. The actual means for practice (*nyams su blangs pa'i thabs dngos*)
1. The supportive conditions for accomplishing that [practice] (*de grub par byed pa'i grogs*)¹⁴
 2. Practicing the means for liberating in two stages (*grol bar byed pa'i thabs rim pa gnyis su nyams su blangs pa*)
 - a. The generation stage of the path (*lam bskyed pa'i rim pa*)
 - i. Generation stage of wisdom (*shes rab skyed pa'i rim pa*)
 - ii. Generation stage of means (*thabs skyed pa'i rim pa*)
 - b. The perfection stage of the path (*lam rdzogs pa'i rim pa*)
 - i. Practice by those with a mind for referential objects (*dmigs yul gyi blo can gyis nyams su blangs ba*)
 - (I) The five sections of practicing the conduct continuously (*spyod pa la rgyun du byed pa'i rnal 'byor*),
 - (A) The yogin who practices continuously performs mastery over appearances.
 - (1) The conduct of beginners is to practice unerringly the sequence of the ten conducts.
 - (2) The conduct of distinguishing samsara and nirvana
 - (3) The seven *vratas* for controlling the winds:
 - (a) Bee-like conduct
 - (b) Swallow-like
 - (c) Deer-like
 - (d) Mute-like
 - (e) Crazy-like
 - (f) Dog- and Pig-like
 - (g) Lion-like
 - (B) The pith instructions (*man ngag*) that [offer] a method for settling that nakedly settles appearances (*snang ba gcer bzhag*).
 - (C) What sort of realization (*dgongs pa*) arises? It is a realization of appearances and existence emerging as the ground.
 - (D) So where do those abandoned afflictions (*nyon mongs*) go? They transform.
 - (E) The person (*gang zag*) at that time "enters the dharma."
- (II) The five sections of teachings on continuously *meditating* (*sgom pa*):
 - (A) The meditations that unify day and night (*sgom pa nyin mtshan kha sbyor*),
 - (1) The bodhisattva dhyānas (*byang chub sems dpa'i bsam*)

¹⁴ Here we reverse 1. and 2. for the clarity of our outline, though Nyi ma 'bum introduces them in the opposite order. He does, however, likewise go on to explain #2 first.

gtan),

- (a) The natural *dhyāna*
- (b) The *dhyānas* of dwelling on the levels
- (c) The customized *dhyānas* are for two kinds of dangers to yogins.
 - (i) Doses of *dhyāna* for attachment to food
 - (ii) Doses of *dhyāna* for attachment to clothing,
 - (iii) The doses of *dhyāna* for dreams
 - (iv) In the doses of dhyana for *vāsanās*.

(2) The meditation of the profound Secret Mantra (*gsang sngags zab mo'i sgom pa*),

- (a) The yoga of winds (*rlung gi rnal 'byor*)
- (b) The treatment of channels (*rtsa'i sbyor ba*),
- (c) The yoga of seminal drops (*thig le'i rnal 'byor*).

(3) The mental concentrations of gods and humans (*lha dang mi sems 'dzin pa*),

- (a) Training with supporting focus
- (b) Training without support

(4) The realization (*dgongs pa*) of tathāgatas (*bde bar gshegs pa'i dgongs pa*).

(B) The pith instructions on that have the intention of immediately settling the ocean (*de'i man ngag rgya mtsho lcog bzhag gi dgongs pa*),

(C) At that time, the realization (*dgongs pa*) is the realization of appearance and existence settling into the ground (*de'i dus na dgongs pa snang srid gzhir bzhag gi dgongs pa*),

(D) At that time, the afflictions are sealed off (*de'i tshe nyon mong pa rgyas gdab song ba*),

(E) The person at the time of "dwelling in dharma" (*gang zag chos la gnas pa'i dus*).

(III) The five sections of the yoga of continuously practicing the view (*lta ba la rgyun du byed pa'i rnal 'byor*)

(A) The view that severs the stream into the city (*lta ba grong khyer rgyun gcod*)

(1) Outer views (of the other vehicles)

(2) Our own view (*rdzogs pa chen po bya bral klong chen gyi lta ba*)

(B) Pith instructions on immediately settling the mountain

(*mang ngag ri bo lcogs bzhag*)¹⁵

(C) The realization of complete liberation from the three realms (*dgongs pa khams gsum yongs grol*)

(D) The afflictions are purified in place (*nyon mongs pa gnas dag*)

(E) The time when the person discards the dharma (*gang zag chos bor ba'i dus*)

(IV) The five sections of the yoga of continuously practicing the result (*'bras bu la rgyud du byed pa'i rnal 'byor*)

(A) The naturally pure result (*rang bzhin rnam dag gi 'bras bu*)

(B) The pith instructions that immediately settle awareness (*man ngag rig pa lcogs bzhag*)

(C) The realization of all three cyclic existences being pure (*dgongs pa srid gsum ka dag*)

(D) The afflictions are innately liberating (*nyon mongs rang grol du song ba*)

(E) The person who has transcended phenomena (*gang zag chos las 'das pa*)

ii. Practice by those with a mind for awareness' own appearance (*rig pa rang snang gi blo can gyis nyams su blangs pa*)

(I) Seven crucial points that make this superior to the ordinary ones

(A) The crucial point of there being no sharper nor duller faculties,

(B) ... of there being no awakening through words,

(C) ... of there being no good nor bad karma,

(D) ... of there being no merit nor sin,

(E) ... of other vehicles being [mere] conceptual analysis,

(F) ... of being established by sense faculties,

(G) ... of the three bodies being appearances on the path.

(II) The instructions (*gdams ngag*)

(A) The practice of cutting through (*khregs chod du nyams su blangs pa*)

(1) Establishing mind's natural way (*gnas lugs*) that is to be realized,

(2) The crucial points for realizing that, i.e. the lama's pith

¹⁵ For some reason, when he first introduces this topic, Nyi ma 'bum lists it as *mang ngag ngo sprod lcogs bzhag* (p. 80), despite using that title nowhere else. Both Klong chen pa (*Tshig don mdzod*, 196) and Rig 'dzin Rgod Idem (*Bi ma la'i snyan brgyud 'grel tig chen mo*, 68a.2) correct the line to *ri bo cog bzhag*. Seeing no significant reason for the anomalous reading, we follow the later authors.

instructions.

(B) The practice of direct transcendence (*thod rgal du nyams su blangs pa*)

(1) Preliminary practices (*sngon 'gro*)

(a) Guiding the three bodies

(b) Guiding the mind

(c) Guiding awareness

(2) The main practice (*dnegos gzhi*)

(a) Targeting the crucial points of body, speech, and mind (*lus ngag yid gi gnad gzir ba*),

(b) Establishing in itself the immediacy of reality (*chos nyid mngon sum rang thog du dbab pa*),

(c) How the four appearances dawn (*snang ba bzhi ji ltar 'char ba*),

(d) Supporting pith instructions (*mtha' rten gyi man ngag*)

(i) The three immobilities (*mi 'gul ba gsum*),

(ii) The three stillnessness (*sdod pa gsum*),

(iii) The three attainments (*thob pa gsum*).

III. Preparatory Practices

Already by Nyi ma 'bum's time, the Snying thig tradition had its own set of initiations. Like any other tantric system, its practitioners were required to receive these initiations before embarking on its path. Nyi ma 'bum opens his discussion of the eighth topic with these initiations, first addressing the necessary characteristics of the teacher and student and then the initiations proper. Inappropriate teachers are described first, being those who have not properly received initiation and so on. Of note is Nyi ma 'bum's suggestion that any teacher who "restricts [their student] to his own place and does not let him go to others' places" should be avoided.¹⁶ What exactly Nyi ma 'bum means here is unclear. It may be that early Snying thig teachers, or Nyi ma 'bum at least, did not demand exclusive allegiance of their students and even encouraged a certain degree of eclecticism. The ideal teacher allowed his students to travel and study multiple systems under different teachers. This mirrors Nyi ma 'bum's own biography, where he is said to have studied not only the Snying thig under his father but other teachings with numerous Sakya and other lamas. At eighteen, for ex-

¹⁶ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 55: *rang gi sar bcings nas gzhan gyi sar mi stong [gtong] pa'o*.

ample, he received “higher initiations” (*dbang gong ma*) from an unnamed vajra-master. At twenty, he studied the new translation *tantras* and pith instructions under Rngog Rgyal tsha rdor seng. At twenty-seven, he studied the Mal gyo tradition of *Cakrasaṃvara* with Sa skya Grags pa rgyal mtshan and Bla ma Stag so ba. At thirty, he studied the A phyi tradition of *Cakrasaṃvara* and other new translation tantric teachings under Bla ma Skyi ston grags pa.¹⁷ Such eclecticism was likely relatively common in the later dispensation period of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries.

Klong chen pa, on the other hand, prefers a different reading of Nyi ma ‘bum’s line. The parallel passage in his *Tshig don mdzod* describes the teacher who should be rejected as, “one who teaches this-worldly chores and housekeeping and, restricting [his student] to his own place, who closes the intelligence of his student’s eyes and makes him lose the path to liberation.”¹⁸ Here, Klong chen pa seems less interested in the ideal teacher allowing his student to study elsewhere and more concerned about teachers who keep their students busy with worldly chores that keep them from actual practice. While it is possible this is what Nyi ma ‘bum meant, there may be a difference here, one that suggests that, by the time of Klong chen pa, the idea that a disciple could find everything he needs in the Snying thig tradition alone made more sense.

Turning to the qualities a teacher should have, Nyi ma ‘bum makes a related point:

One who is endowed with faith [should look to]: one who is open-minded and learned in the tantras, who in general understands much of the tantric classes of Secret Mantra and who in particular understands how to perform the tantric Phur pa [rites], one who knows how to put the words of the tantras into practice. Even that is not enough. Regarding his achievement of familiarity and habituation, he [should be] one who knows how to practice the four branches of propitiation and accomplishment, who has the power of expertise in protecting and expelling by means of mantras for inciting, sending forth, and killing. Even that is not enough. [He should be] one who has realized and who is expert in the view, one who understands and has realized the outer views, i.e. of the nine vehicles, and who is expert in our own view, who has seen reality directly.¹⁹

¹⁷ Zhang nyi ma ‘bum gyi rnam thar, 133. For a translation of this biography, see Achard 2018, 235ff.

¹⁸ *Tshig don mdzod*, 154: *tshé ‘di’i bya ba dang so tshigs slob cing rang gi sar bcings nas slob ma blo gros kyi mig zum thar ba’i lam stor bar byed pa ste.*

¹⁹ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 55: *bdag dad pa ldan pa gcig gis blo yangs shing rgyud la mkhas pa/ spyir gsang sngags kyi rgyud sde mang po shes pa/ khyad par rgyud kyi phur pa ‘don shes pa/ rgyud tshig rnams lag len du ston shes pa/ des kyang mi chog ste/ goms shing ‘dris pa sgrub pa la/ bsnyen bsgrub yan lag bzhi’i lag len ston shes pa/ rbed*

Klong chen pa includes a passage that similarly requires the ideal teacher to be familiar with other tantric vehicles, but he does not mention the wrathful practices of Phur pa nor the practices of “inciting, sending forth, and killing” (*rbod rbad gsad*). It seems Nyi ma ‘bum felt these were foundational to Snying thig practice. His specificity is somewhat unusual from a later perspective but perhaps again reflects the extent to which his early Snying thig tradition (which was inaugurated only one generation earlier, by his father Zhang ston Bkra shis rdo rje) was enmeshed with other tantric practices, and how local the tradition still was. In any case, Nyi ma ‘bum’s instruction fits with his interest in the proper teacher being one who encourages his students to study other traditions as well.

Nyi ma ‘bum explains that the student should request the initiations many years in advance (a request accompanied with *maṅḍalas* of jewels). “Please grant me initiation in seven, five, or three years from now,” he has them say.²⁰ For reasons that are not entirely clear, Klong chen pa does not include this detail, nor does he specify that *gaṇacakra* feasts should be offered after each of the four Snying thig initiations, i.e. the elaborated, unelaborated, very unelaborated, and the utterly unelaborated. Rather, he has a single feast to be offered at the end of all four. Even so, both authors agree that the initiations may be granted all at once or spread out across several months or even years.²¹

According to Nyi ma ‘bum, the first, elaborated initiation involves a series of nine initiations, one for each of the nine vehicles, from the Śrāvakayāna to Atiyoga. For this last vehicle, he mentions granting the “great perfection dynamism of awareness initiation (*rdzogs pa chen po rig pa’i rtsal dbang*). More-or-less the same series of initiations is described in the Vimalamitra commentary to the *Sgra thal ‘gyur*. There, we also learn that the dynamism of awareness initiation, at least in that context, refers to a series of eighteen initiations, each with its own *maṅḍala*. It is likely that these correlate to the eighteen root tantras of the Mind Class (*sems sde*).²² In later centuries, the name of the dynamism

[sic for *rbod*] *rbad gsad pa’i sngags kyis srung zlog la mkhas pa’i nus pa thon pa/ des kyang mi chog ste/ rtogs shing lta ba la mkhas pa/ phyi’i lta ba theg rim pa dgu rnam shes shing rtogs pa dang/ rang gi lta ba la mkhas pa chos nyid mngon sum du mthong ba’o.*

²⁰ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 57. *lo bdun nam lnga’am gsum na dbang bskur bar zhu.*

²¹ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 59; *Tshig don mdzod*, 161.

²² *Pan chen dri med bshes gnyen gyi dgongs nyams sgron ma snang byed ‘bar ba’i gsang rgyud sgra thal ‘gyur rtsa ‘grel*, 141a. *de nas rdzogs pa chen po’i rig pa rtsal gyi dbang bcwo bryad la dal zhal mi ‘dra ba bcwo bryad du bskur zhing/ zhag bcwo bryad kyi bar du bskur ro.* The fourteenth-century author, G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal bzang authored a text on these eighteen initiations called: *Sems sde ma bu bco bryad kyi dgongs pa ngo sprad pa’i thabs rig pa rtsal gyi dbang bco bryad bskur ba’i chog khrigs bla*

of awareness initiation came to be used in different contexts.²³

For the second, unelaborated initiation, the master relies on a *maṅḍala* and vase to grant initiation using verses (*tshigs su bcad pa*). For the third, very unelaborated initiation the disciple performs “distinguishing *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*” (*’khor ’das ru shan*) as a preparation for receiving the initiation. The initiation itself still relies on a *maṅḍala* and is granted using encoded language (*brda*; referred to as *brjod pa’i brda* in the Vimalamitra commentary to the *Sgra thal ’gyur*).²⁴ Finally, the fourth, utterly unelaborated initiation relies only on a “mind *maṅḍala*” and involves teaching the postures and gazes for *thod rgal* practice.

After a discussion of the *samaya* vows (which is roughly triple the length in Klong chen pa’s *Tshig don mdzod*), Nyi ma ’bum now turns to the practices proper. He first divides the topic into two: how the practitioner should behave and the actual practice. He names two forms of behavior: behaving like a beggar or like a wild herbivore (*ri dwags*). Like a beggar, one wanders in a state of complete humility, though secure in one’s own accomplishments. Like a wild herbivore, one lives in isolated places, not talking, and giving up all work, so that the body, channels, and conceptualizing mind relax.

IV. Practice by Those with Minds for Referential Objects

In introducing the actual practice, Nyi ma ’bum frames his discussion with several layers of outline (*sa bcad*), most of which are not adopted by Klong chen pa. First, he distinguishes the supportive conditions for practice (*grub par byed pa’i grogs*), which he does not really address, pointing his reader instead to the *Sgra thal ’gyur*. Second, he divides the methods for liberation into the stages of generation and perfection. Having introduced these, however, he once more passes over the generation stage in silence, noting only that it may be further divided according to wisdom and means. Instead, he devotes the rest of the chap-

ma’i zhal gdams, found today in volume 31 of the *Rnying ma bka’ ma shin tu rgyas pa*, in the *sems sde* section of that collection.

²³ By the time of Klong chen pa’s *Mkha’ ’gro yang tig*, for example, we see a *rig pa’i rtsal dbang* being added to the four Snying thig initiations (which there are correlated with the four tantric initiations of vase, secret, wisdom-gnosis, and word) to make a fifth Snying thig initiation; see *Mkha’ ’gro yang tig*, p. 346-47, and the following discussions of each initiation on pages 347, 363, 366, 393, and 395, respectively. The same fivefold system is adopted by Tshé dbang nor bu (1698-1755), in his *Khrid yig ’chad thabs ’od kyi ’khor lo*, a practice manual for the *Dgongs pa zang thal*, as noted by Arguillère 2018, p. 240.

²⁴ In addition to the further details offered by the *Sgra thal ’gyur* commentary, manuals for granting these initiations appear in the *Bi ma snying thig*, volumes three and four.

ter to the perfection stage, which he further subdivides into: (1) Practice by those with minds for referential objects (*dmigs yul gyi blo can gyis nyams su blangs ba*), and (2) Practice by those with minds for awareness' own appearance (*rig pa rang snang gi blo can gyis nyams su blangs pa*). These two categories are further divided into a set of "four yogas of continuous practice" (*rgyun du byed pa'i rnal 'byor bzhi*), and the two contemplations of cutting through and direct transcendence, respectively.

The two subdivisions of those with minds for referential objects and those with minds for awareness' own appearance are seen in the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Mu tig phreng ba*, specifically where it comments on the tantra's closing list of the eleven topics. The tantra lists the eighth topic as, "the practice consists of cutting through and direct transcendence" (*nyams blangs khregs chod thod rgal lo*), while the commentary explains that the topic includes practices for those with minds for referential objects and for awareness' own appearance. "Here," it says, "the practice of those with minds for awareness' own appearance has two [types], the practice of cutting through and the practice of direct transcendence." Despite cutting through and direct transcendence being central to Rdzogs chen practice, Nyi ma 'bum devotes more of his discussion to the *first* subdivision, i.e. for those with minds for referential objects (21 pages vs. 14 pages on the second subdivision), apparently so as to incorporate all the many assorted kinds of practices found throughout the *Seventeen Tantras*, especially in the *Sgra thal 'gyur*.

This begs the question, which was written first, the *Mu ti phreng ba's* Vimalamitra commentary or Nyi ma 'bum's treatise? The colophon to the commentary ends with the statement: "At the meditation hermitage that was like Akaniṣṭha, I, the Turkic Jo 'bum, like Vajrapāṇi, received the *Mu tig phreng ba* that introduces reality from the Guru Jo 'ber, who was like Vajradhāra... This is the sacred dharma of the Turkic monk Dbus pa Jo 'bum."²⁵ Gu ru Jo 'ber (1196–1255) is said to have

²⁵ *Rdzogs pa chen po mu tig phreng rgyud gsal byed*, 490.3-5. 'og min gnas 'dra bsgoms la dgon pa ru/ rdo rje 'chang 'dra gu ru jo 'ber las/ gsang bdag dang mtshungs gru gu'i jo 'bum ngas/ chos nyid rang nga sprod pa mu tig 'phreng ba zhus... gru gu'i ban d+he dbus pa jo 'bum gyi dam chos so. Note that the colophon to the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Sgra thal 'gyur* appears to say it was composed by "myself, a minor monk" (*Pan chen dri med bshes gnyen gyi dgongs nyams sgron ma snang byed 'bar ba'i gsang rgyud sgra thal 'gyur rtsa 'grel*, 338a, 6: *ban chung bdag gis*), but it remains unclear whether this *ban chung* is the same person as Gru gu'i ban d+he. (In the latter colophon, we understand its emphasis on the extreme care its author took in writing the text to suggest that it is talking about his composition and not mere copying: *ban chung bdag gis gus pa'i sems bzung nas rang ris nag nog cal bcol la sogs spangs/ shes pas mi gtong sems pa'i thul tshul bor/ legs pa'i yid dang gus pa'i sems kyis bsgrims*.)

been Nyi ma 'bum's closest disciple and his nephew. It is therefore at least likely that the Vimalamitra commentary and Nyi ma 'bum's treatise emerged from the same close circle. In comparing Jo 'ber's meditation hermitage to Akaniṣṭha, Jo 'ber to Vajradhāra, and himself to Vajrapāṇi, Jo 'bum is drawing a clear parallel between his reception of the text and the mythic encounter between Vajradhāra and Vajrapāṇi in which the tantras were first taught in the heaven of Akaniṣṭha. In the myth, Vajrapāṇi writes down Vajradhāra's teaching in the role of the "reciter" or "compiler" (Skt. *saṃgītikāra*; Tib. *sdud pa po*).²⁶ The comparison drawn here suggests that Jo 'ber was the author of the commentary, while his disciple, Jo 'bum, served as his scribe. If this interpretation is accurate, it would mean the *Mu tig phreng ba* commentary was composed by Jo 'ber, i.e. one generation after Nyi ma 'bum.

As stated above, the practices for those with minds for referential objects are categorized into four "yogas of continually practicing," yogas that focus on the familiar foursome of conduct, meditation, view, and result. Each of these is addressed, in turn, according to five subsections. The first section changes according to each of the four yogas. Thus, for practice (*nyams su blangs ba*), the first subsection is on conduct (*spyod pa*), for meditation, it is on meditation, and so on. After this, the remaining subsections are addressed: (2) pith instructions (*man ngag*), (3) realization (*dgongs pa*), (4) afflictions to be abandoned (*nyon mongs*), (5) the person who results from practicing that yoga (*gang zag*). In what follows, for the sake of what we hope is clarity (and we recognize this is getting complicated), we have broken from the order followed in Nyi ma 'bum's text (and thus represented in the outline above) and chosen instead to address all of the first subsections for each of the four yogas first, then all of the second subsections (on the pith instructions for each of the four yogas), then all the third subsections (on the realizations), then all the fourth subsections (on the afflictions), and finally all the fifth subsections (on the person achieving each yoga).

The first subsection for the first yoga, of continually practicing conduct, is also called "mastery over appearances" (*snang ba dbang bsgyur ci* [sic for *gyi*] *spyod pa*). This involves the seven kinds of behaviors (*brtul zhugs*; Skt. *vrata*).²⁷ One checks different teachings like a bee testing holes in a cliff-face for her nest; one becomes decided like a swallow swooping straight into her nest; one flees alone to isolated places like a wounded wild herbivore. The behavior of a mute is then missing from Nyi ma 'bum's list, probably the result of a copying error, since

²⁶ Szántó 2012, 201.

²⁷ Nyi ma 'bum cites the *Nyi zla kha sbyor* as the source for these behaviors, but there twenty-one are listed. He explains that he focuses only on the main seven. Klong chen pa does the same.

it does appear in Klong chen pa's discussion.²⁸ The behavior of a crazy person focuses mostly on speech, involving uncontrolled, incoherent jabberings. Behaving like a dog or a pig, one is unconcerned with what is pure or impure. Finally, one behaves like a lion, unafraid, with mastery over the world and magical powers.

The first subsection of the second yoga, of continually practicing meditation, also called "meditation day and night" (*sgom pa nyin mtshan kha sbyor*), at eleven pages (67-78) in Nyi ma 'bum's book, is the longest of the twenty subsections that together comprise his discussion of the practice by those with a mind for referential objects.²⁹ Nyi ma 'bum divides his discussion of meditation here into four types: (1) the bodhisattva *dhyānas*, (2) the meditation of profound Secret Mantra, (3) the mental concentrations of gods and humans, and (4) the realization of *tathāgatas*. Within the bodhisattva *dhyānas*, after quickly covering natural *dhyāna* and the *dhyānas* of dwelling of the levels, he devotes more time to the "customized *dhyānas*" for avoiding two kinds of dangers to yogins, i.e. the situational dangers of (i-ii) food and clothing, and the deeper dangers of (iii-iv) one's dreams and latent dispositions (Tib. *bag chags*; Skt. *vāsanās*). For the former, he provides teachings on (i) *bcud len* (Skt. *rasāyana*) and (ii) a combination of breathing practices with eating certain compounds. For the latter, one works with one's dreams in order, ideally, to make them cease, or at least to recognize and achieve lucidity, or failing that, at the very least to make one's dreams related to the dharma. Then one purifies one's latent dispositions through a practice that closely resembles the Rdzogs chen technique of cutting through.

Regarding the session of *dhyāna* for purifying latent dispositions and cutting off craving, one should not intentionally reject what is present, nor run after what is not present. Nor should one cling to what is present. Don't seek the footprint of the past, nor invite expectation of the future. In the present, don't [allow] habitual tendencies and their antidotes any support in one's mental continuum. Thereby, appearances are liberated as they appear, so clinging to the *bardo* as substantial is purified in its own place. Furthermore, since appearances themselves are liberated in the immediacy of their appearing, it will be like a little bird [flying through space] being snatched by a falcon. The movements of consciousness are liberated in the immediacy of their moving, like a breeze wafting through space. Since appearance and the consciousness [of that] are liberated as one (*gnyis med du*), [one's experience] is like water dissolving into water. Because it trans-

²⁸ *Tshig don mdzod*, 175.

²⁹ The subsection is also long in Klong chen pa's *Tshig don mdzod*, filling pages 176-195 in the 2009 publication.

cends the realm of deluded latent dispositions, egoic clinging is severed.³⁰

The presence of this passage at this point in the text is somewhat unexpected, since Nyi ma 'bum only addresses Snying thig proper later, under the heading of "practice by those with a mind for awareness' own appearance." Moreover, more-or-less the same passage also appears in the Vimalamitra commentary to the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, and there it is presented as part of *Rdzogs chen*, specifically as distinct from the teachings of other "ordinary" vehicles (*theg pa thun mong*).³¹ Here one sees how, even when writing about lower practices, such as those for people with minds for referential objects as he is here, Nyi ma 'bum's discussions are nonetheless colored by his Snying thig interests. His blurring of doxographical lines may also be a result of the *Seventeen Tantras'* own tendency to include all sorts of practices, from *bcud len* to *rtsa rlung*, though often with a Snying thig spin. Even as Nyi ma 'bum works to organize all this into distinct doxographical categories, he remains part of the world of the *Seventeen Tantras* and their more wholistic (not to say grab-bag) approach.

Continuing his discussion of "meditation day and night," Nyi ma 'bum next turns to the meditation of profound Secret Mantra. Here, he presents the yogas of channels, winds, and drops. Though he lists them in this order, he addresses the winds first. Klong chen pa corrects this and adds a longer quotation about the channels from the *Sgra thal 'gyur*. Nonetheless, both authors' discussions of all three elements are brief and consist primarily of quotations from the *Sgra thal 'gyur* with little explanation. Beyond this, Nyi ma 'bum writes, the reader "should learn about the methods for practicing such things from elsewhere."³²

³⁰ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 72. *Bag chags sbyang zhing zhen pa bcad pa bsam gtan gyi thun ni/ yod pa tshad du mi spang/ med pa thad du mi btsal/ yod pa la mngon par zhen par mi bya'ol de yang 'das pa'i rje ma bcad/ ma 'ongs pa'i sngon mi bsul da ltar bag chags gnyen po dang bcas pa rgyud la ma brten pas/ snang ba snang ba nas grol bas bar do dngos por 'dzin pa rang sar dag/ de yang snang ba nyid snang thog tu grol bas bye'u khras khyer ba lta bu 'byung ngo/ 'gyu ba 'gyus thog du grol bas bar snang gi bser bu lta bu'ol snang shes gnyis med du grol bas/ chu bo la chu bo thim pa lta bu'ol de ni bag chags 'khrul pa'i yul 'das pas/ bdag tu lta ba'i zhen pa bcad pa'o.*

³¹ Compare *Pan chen dri med bshes gnyen gyi dgongs nyams sgron ma snang byed 'bar ba'i gsang rgyud sgra thal 'gyur rtsa 'grel*, 154a3-4. The passage appears immediately after the commentator's discussion (on 151a.1-153b.5) of "the special way that is superior to the common vehicles" (*theg pa thun mong ba las ji ltar 'phags lugs khyad par can*).

³² *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 74. *nyams su blang pa'i thabs ni/ gzhan du shes par bya'o*. It is in this section that the folios in the original manuscript have been switched. Unfortunately, the book version follows this scrambled order. Thus, from (book 73.6) *bar chad sel ba'i yi ge phaT...* down to... *de nas skya sang seng du gyur pa dang* (74.6), needs to be moved down to right after: *skye med bsam blo dang bral ba'i nyams su myong pa mi skye mi srid do* (76.7), i.e. just before *de ma mos na*.

In fact, he repeats this admonition four times in the brief space of this section. Here at least, then, he maintains a stricter boundary between Rdzogs chen and ordinary tantric practice.

Next, he turns to the third type of “meditation day and night,” i.e. the mental concentrations of gods and humans, which he divides into those meditations with supports and those without (*dmigs pa rten can dang rten med*). Klong chen pa refers to the same distinction using slightly different terms, so that both kinds of meditations have supports, the former with coarse supports and the latter with subtle (*dmigs rten rags pa dang phra ba*). The former are drawn, once more, from the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, and consist of a series of meditations on sensory experiences such as music, smells, and so on. Klong chen pa adds some helpful instruction that is not present in Nyi ma 'bum, explaining that the practitioner should meditate with eyes open and focus on the sensory experiences while remaining in the present moment, without past or future. Here again, Nyi ma 'bum prefers to direct his reader to “other tantras and pith instructions” for more detail. He does go into greater depth on the meditations without support, noting that the *Nyi zla kha sbyor* lists twenty-one different practices that are relevant, but that he here condenses them into seven. Thus, Klong chen pa provides the entire *Nyi zla kha sbyor* quotation, but Nyi ma 'bum chops it up, selecting just seven out of the twenty-one practices (nos. 1, 4-7, 15, and 16). Nyi ma 'bum also mentions that the *Snying gzer chen po* offers more specifics on the techniques, a fact that Klong chen pa excludes. This work may no longer be extant but does appear in the catalogues of the “119 Pith Instructions” (*Man ngag brgya bcu dgu*) of the *Bi ma snying thig*.³³ Oddly, when Nyi ma 'bum proceeds to discuss his seven practices in more detail, he follows an order that is yet different from the one offered in his chopped-up quotation (nos. 1, 7, 6, 5, 4, 15, 16). Each practice involves a brief meditation, combining movements of the breath and body, focusing on syllables, or deconstructing reality into emptiness, finally resulting in some sort of non-conceptual state.

The fourth and final type of “meditation day and night” involves a short discussion of meditating day and night without distinction. Because it is the realization of *tathāgatas*, there is apparently not much to say.

Now we turn to the first subsection of the *third* yoga, of continuously practicing the view: “the view that severs the stream into the city” (*lta ba grong khyer rgyun gcod*). (The city is that of the womb and thus of rebirth.) Nyi ma 'bum begins with a brief mention of the “gen-

³³ See, for example, *Man ngag nges pa'i kha byang ming rnam par bkod pa*, in *Bi ma snying thig* (Dpal brtsegs), vol. 2, p. 240.

eral views" (*phyi yi lta ba*) of the eight vehicles beneath Atiyoga. Having dispensed with those, he focuses his attention on the view of the ninth vehicle of the Great Perfection. What follows is a discussion of the view in which all things are seen as empty, illusory, dream-like, and so on. The discussion is divided according to outer, inner, and secret views. In the context of the latter, he mentions seeing the linked chains (*lu gu rgyud*) of awareness. In doing so, Nyi ma 'bum again blurs the line between other practices (for those with minds for referential objects) and Snying thig-specific ones (for those with minds for awareness' own appearance). The discussion is notably removed by Klong chen pa, perhaps because he preferred not to address such visions until the section on practices for those with a mind for awareness' own appearance (see below).

Next we have the first subsection of the fourth, and last yoga, of continuously practicing the result, also called "the naturally pure result" (*rang bzhin rnam dag gi 'bras bu*). Nyi ma 'bum's central concern in this section is to clarify that the result of these practices by "those with a mind for referential objects" is irreversible. He compares it to Bhallātaka nut, which is used to draw permanent marks on things. He also compares it to a king's irreversible rule after he takes over a country and kills or imprisons all opposition.³⁴ In explaining these metaphors, Nyi ma 'bum says that "the true result does not revert to being a cause."³⁵

At this point, we have finished explaining the first subsection for each of the yogas of continuous practice. Now we turn to the second subsection of the pith instructions for each. These four instructions correspond to the well-known four kinds of direct settling (*cog bzhag rnam pa bzhi*), also referred to by Nyi ma 'bum as nakedly settling ((g)cer bzhag).³⁶ In later times, this foursome would be extracted from Nyi ma 'bum's wider discussion of the practices by those with minds for referential objects and made central to the practice of cutting through.³⁷

³⁴ While not with the same wording, a similar metaphor of a new king imprisoning the old ministers is also seen in the *gsang skor* tantra, the *Thig le kun gsal chen po'i rgyud*, 145.6-146.2. For more on this text, see below, n. 59.

³⁵ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 83: *don gyi 'bras bu bsgyur mi 'dogs pa*, which we correct to: *don gyi 'bras bu rgyur mi ldog pa*, following *Tshig don mdzod*, 198, and *Bi ma la'i snyan brgyud 'grel tig chen mo*, 70b.2-3. Regarding the metaphor of the Bhallāka nut, see also *Dgos 'dod gsal byed bshad gzhi'i mchong*, 258, where he writes that its color does not change, though he has the fruit as a jackfruit (*pa na se'i 'bras bu*).

³⁶ See *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 66; Klong chen pa follows suit--see *Tshig don mdzod*, 176.

³⁷ See, for example, Klong chen pa's *Gnad gsum chos nyid kyi 'khor lo*, in *Bla ma yang thig*, vol. 10, 126-28, a teaching on the four settlings that ends with the summary statement, "In this way, all that is taught here liberates without trace immediately upon contact and gathers within the state of resting naturally without hopes and

In his *Tshig don mdzod*, Klong chen pa draws on the same foursome in discussing direct transcendence.³⁸

The first settling, which forms the pith instructions of the yoga of continuously practicing the conduct, is called "the nakedly settling appearances" (*snang ba gcer bzhang*). Nyi ma 'bum distinguishes two kinds. In the first, by training in the various qualities of one's fragmented experience (*chos can dum bu*), allowing them to come and go, one purifies these reflections of awareness. In the second, by training more generally in the shared aspect of those qualities (*chos can spyi'i rnam pa*), one purifies their nature. The second settling, belonging to the yoga of meditating, is "the immediately settling ocean" (*rgya mtsho lcog bzhang*). This is a meditation for settling the eyes (which are commonly associated with the ocean, because of their watery nature) and the visual consciousness so that they no longer chase after visual experiences, just as the ocean remains unperturbed by the reflections of the stars and moon on its surface. The third settling, which constitutes the second sub-section of the yoga of the view, is "immediately settling the mountain" (*ri bo lcog bzhang*). Here, the view is compared to a mountain, both in the sense of its stability (*mi 'gyur ba*) and in that one can comprehend all the lower vehicles from on high. Finally, the fourth settling for the result is immediately settling awareness (*rig pa lcog bzhang*), whereby awareness accompanies any appearances that occur. In this way, the four settlings map a progression from how to relate to appearances, through settling one's eyes, then realizing the view, and finally seeing all appearances as the play of awareness.

The remaining three subsections--of realization, afflictions, and kinds of person--are short and quite clear, so we have chosen not to address them here. With this, then, our discussion of the practices for those with minds for referential objects comes to an end.

V. Practices by Those with Minds for Awareness' Own Appearance

Nyi ma 'bum turns next to the central practices of the Snying thig tradition, i.e. cutting through and direct transcendence, which he terms practices for those with minds for awareness' own appearance. He

fears. These are the means for practicing the essence of cutting through, which [constitutes] the foundation" (*de ltar bstan pa thams cad kyang thugs phrad rjes med du grol nas/ sor gzhag re dogs med pa'i ngang du 'dus tel/ gzhi khregs chod kyi ngo bo nyams su blang thabs so*).

³⁸ *Tshig don mdzod*, 253-56. There, however, he lists them in a slightly different order and describes them more in terms of the four visions. He lists them as: (1) *ri bo cog gzhag*, (2) *rgya mtsho cog gzhag*, (3) *rig pa cog gzhag*, (4) *snang ba cog gzhag*. Closely following the *Yi ge med pa'i rgyud* (226-27), he also associates each with *lta ba*, *dgongs pa*, *man ngag*, and *thabs*.

opens his discussion with a list of seven crucial points (*gnad bdun*) that distinguish Rdzogs chen from the “common” (*tha mal pa*) practices addressed above:

- The crucial point of there being no difference between those of sharp or dull faculties.
- The crucial point of not attaining buddhahood through words.
- The crucial point of awareness having nothing positive nor negative.
- The crucial point of karma having no virtue nor sin.³⁹
- The crucial point of the other vehicles being [nothing but] conceptual fabrications.
- The crucial point of determining by means of the senses.
- The crucial point of the three [awakened] bodies already being the appearances of the path.

Following this list, Nyi ma ‘bum proceeds to his presentation of cutting through, which he divides into (1) establishing that which is to be realized and (2) the lama’s pith instructions on how to realize that. Klong chen pa opts instead to follow Śrī Siṃha by dividing the topic into three teachings that play on the very Tibetan image of a travelling caravan passing through mountainous terrain: (i) resolving (lit. “cresting the pass”) the exhaustion of phenomena as the great primordial purity, (ii) confining (lit. “restricting to the gorge”) non-action to naked unimpededness, (iii) tightly binding (lit. “cinching down”) total liberation within the great equality.⁴⁰ In fact, Klong chen pa’s entire discussion of cutting through, largely consisting of a series of long quotations, represents a significant break from his usual pattern of copying Nyi ma ‘bum.

In his treatment of direct transcendence, Klong chen pa again breaks from Nyi ma ‘bum by inserting a long introductory discussion of the practice’s superiority to cutting through. He begins with a list of seven differences between the two practices. More-or-less the same list also appears in his *Theg mchog mdzod*, though in a different order, and it is perhaps significant that Rig ‘dzin Rgod ldem inserts the same list into his *Bi ma la’i snyan brgyud ‘grel tig chen mo*, though following the

³⁹ Here, the manuscript (at 61b.6-62a.1) appears to be corrupt due to a scribal copying error. Following Rig ‘dzin Rgod ldem’s *Bi ma la’i snyan brgyud ‘grel tig chen mo* (71b.5), we read the lines as: [*rig pa*] *las la bzang ngan med pa’i* [*gnad*] *las la dge sdig med pa’i gnad*.

⁴⁰ *Tshig don mdzod*, 202.

order in the *Theg mchog mdzod*.⁴¹ This raises the question of the relationship between Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem's work and the writings of Klong chen pa, who was his senior by twenty-nine years, but this issue is beyond the scope of the present article.

Nyi ma 'bum has no such sevenfold list and turns instead to a set of preliminary practices specific to direct transcendence. He categorizes them as the three guidings (*sna khrid pa gsum*): "guiding the three bodies," "guiding the mind," and "guiding awareness." The three guidings also appear in the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, but they are not seen in any of the *Seventeen Tantras*. This said, the practices that comprise each guiding do appear in the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, scattered across its first chapter.⁴² Guiding the three bodies involves training in the sounds of the four elements; guiding the mind involves the preliminary purifications of body, speech, and mind; guiding awareness involves the practice of separating *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* (*'khor 'das ru shan*). In the *Sgra thal 'gyur* itself, only the second of these sets of practices, i.e. the purifications of body, speech, and mind are termed "preliminary practices" (*sngon du 'gro ba*); the practices comprising the other two sets are simply discussed as particular Great Perfection practices. The *Sgra thal 'gyur* commentary, however, frames all three sets as preliminary practices.⁴³ Therefore, both the commentary's author and Nyi ma 'bum appear to have extracted training in the sounds of the elements and separating *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* from the tantra and repackaged them, alongside the *Sgra thal 'gyur* tantra's own threefold preliminary practices, under the labels of the three guidings *qua* three sets of preliminaries for direct transcendence. In this way, certain practices that were central to the *Sgra thal 'gyur* (particularly training in the sounds of the elements) appear to have been

⁴¹ Compare *Tshig don mdzod*, 231, *Theg mchog mdzod*, 229-230, and *Bi ma la'i snyan brgyud 'grel tig chen mo*, 336.

⁴² For the passages corresponding to the three guidings in the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, see: the answer to question twenty-five (54.2-55.2), on the *sku gsum ngo bo ci ltar bslab* (= *sku gsum gyi sna 'khrid pa*); the answer to question twenty-nine (60.2-61.2), on *sems 'dul bsgom pa gang la bgyi* (= *sems gyi sna 'khrid pa*); and the answer to question fifty-eight (92.1-93.5), on *'khor 'das ru shan gang gis phyed* (= *rig pa'i sna 'khrid pa*).

⁴³ See, for example, *Pan chen dri med bshes gnyen gyi dgongs nyams sgron ma snang byed 'bar ba'i gsang rgyud sgra thal 'gyur rtsa 'grel*, 84b-85a (e.g.: *sngon du 'gro ba'i gnad chen po lugs gsum yod de...*). Note that on 8a, the same text correlates the three guidings to those preliminary practices for oneself (= *'khor 'das ru shan*), others (training in the sounds of the elements), and those that do not distinguish oneself and others (i.e. guiding the mind), implying that guiding the mind was still held in the highest regard. Elsewhere again (4b), the commentary presents the preliminaries as composed of the purifications of body, speech, and mind, with no mention of the other guidings. Still another approach to the three guidings is seen on 23b.

downgraded to preliminary practices soon after the tantra's composition. By the time of 'Jigs med gling pa's *Khrid yig ye shes bla ma*, all three sets of preliminary practices were being presented as the preliminaries for not just direct transcendence but all of the Great Perfection.⁴⁴ In the same passage, 'Jigs med gling pa goes on to explain that in his day training in the sounds of the elements was no longer practiced, so despite its presence in the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, it could now be ignored.

In turning to the main topic of direct transcendence, we should first note a possibly significant difference between Nyi ma 'bum and Klong chen pa in their initial presentation of cutting through and direct transcendence. Just after listing the seven crucial points that distinguish Rdzogs chen (see above), Nyi ma 'bum writes:

Regarding these extraordinary instructions, there is [i] the practice of cutting through in which the lazy attain buddhahood immediately, without meditation, and [ii] the practice of direct transcendence in which the diligent attain buddhahood gradually with meditation.⁴⁵

When we turn to the parallel passage in Klong chen pa's *Tshig don mdzod*, we see that he largely follows Nyi ma 'bum's lead but removes all mention of the sudden and gradual approaches:

Furthermore, cutting through is a path that effortlessly self-liberates, the practice of naked awareness without relying on visions (*snang ba*), the crucial points for those of sharp faculties, in which the lazy attain buddhahood without meditation. Direct transcendence is that which liberates with effort, in which, through relying on visions of clear light, the diligent attain buddhahood in this life, purifying one's corporeal body into a body of light.⁴⁶

It seems that Klong chen pa may have resisted framing direct transcendence as a gradual path. That he specifies that direct transcendence grants buddhahood in this very life may reflect his view of it as a supremely transformative practice. Following his discussion of cutting through, when Klong chen pa introduces the subject of direct transcendence, he refers to it as a practice for "the diligent to be liberated

⁴⁴ *Khrid yig ye shes bla ma*, 309-310.

⁴⁵ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 84. *Khyad par du 'phags pa'i gdams ngag 'di la le lo can ma bsgom par lam cig char du sangs rgyas par byed pa khriigs chod du nyams su blangs par byed pa dang/ brtson 'grus can sgoms te lam rims kyis sangs rgyas par byed pa thod rgal du nyams su blangs pa'o.*

⁴⁶ *Tshig don 'dzod*, 201. *de yang khregs chod ni lam 'bad med du rang grol ba snang ba la ma ltos par rig pa rjen pa nyams su len pa le lo can ma bsgoms par 'tshang rgya ba dbang po rnon po'i gnad yin la/ thod rgal ni 'bad bcas su grol ba 'od gsal gyi snang ba la ltos nas brtson 'grus can tshe 'di nyid du rdos bcas 'od lus su dag nas 'tshang rgya ba ste.*

right on the path."⁴⁷ It is at this point that Klong chen pa also inserts his list of seven differences between cutting through and direct transcendence. Taken together, these seven differences imply direct transcendence's superiority to cutting through. All this may be a reflection of the growing centrality of direct transcendence in the Snying thig tradition.

When we look even further back, before Nyi ma 'bum and even his father, Zhang ston, into the texts of the so-called Secret Cycle (*gsang skor*), we see indications that a visionary practice like that of direct transcendence was still considered somehow inferior to a simpler cutting through-like meditation. First, we read: "For those yogins with wisdom of little power, it is taught that without meditation there will be no awakening."⁴⁸ Then, a few pages later, chapter forty-two opens as follows:

Then again the Lord of the Guhyakas asked:
"O Bhagavan Vajradhara! Please teach the [practice] with meditation."

The teacher replied:
"Vajrapāṇi, attend carefully!
I will teach meditation for those of different minds [i.e. practice with meditation].

If you do not understand the [practice] without meditation,
You will be mentally engaged without awareness, and
Not realize that which is beyond deliberate action.
You will not reach the meaning through continual concentration.

If you do not understand the [practice] with meditation,
You will be no different from normal people.
You will stray into mediocrity.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ *Tshig don mdzod*, 231. brtson 'grus can lam thog nas grol bar byed pa.

⁴⁸ *Thig le kun gsal chen po'i rgyud*, 140.1. Rnal 'byor shes rab rtsal chung la/ ma bsgoms sangs mi rgya bar bstan.

⁴⁹ *Thig le kun gsal chen po'i rgyud*, 144.4-6. *De nas yang gsang ba'i bdag pos zhus pa/ kye kye bcom ldan rdo rje 'chang/ bsgom du yod pa bshad du gsol/ zhes zhus sol/ ston pas bka' sstal pa/ rdo rje 'dzin pa nges zung zhig/ blo gzhan rnams la bsgom pa bstan/ bsgom du med par ma shes na/ ma tshor yid la byed pa dang/ bya rtsol 'das par mi rtogs tel rgyun gyi ting nge 'dzin gyis don mi rnyed/ bsgom du yod par ma shes na/ skye bo rnams dang khyad par med/ tha mal rang rgyud gol bar 'gro.* The same passage also opens chapter fifty-nine in the closely related (and in many parts largely identical) *Spros bral don gsal chen po'i rgyud* (see 141.6-142.2). Higgins 2013, 19 n. 6, inconclusively wonders which of these two works might be earlier. Regarding this question, it may be notable that the *Thig le kun gsal*, which is classified in the Rnying ma rgyud 'bum as a *gsang skor* work, includes a colophon that reads: "One like me, this humble practitioner Bdud 'dul, endowed with the residue of earlier karma, encountered this king of tantras, [*Thig le kun gsal*] (*bdag 'dra ban chung bdud 'dul 'di/ sngon gyi las*

The chapter proceeds “to teach the topic of [practice] with meditation,” and it is here that we find a description of a practice very much resembling direct transcendence, with three lamps (instead of the four or more known in the later Snying thig) and so on.⁵⁰ From this, we may extrapolate that, in the Secret Cycle at least, the practice with meditation corresponds to direct transcendence and is for those inferior yogins who are unable to achieve buddhahood without meditation.

VI. Exhaustion of reality: Appearance or Disappearance?⁵¹

Apart from Klong chen pa’s list of the seven differences between cutting through and direct transcendence, his discussion of the latter largely mirrors Nyi ma ‘bum’s. He does insert many more quotations from various Snying thig tantras, but his interpretations remain similar. Until, that is, he reaches the final fourth vision of exhaustion of reality. On this point, Nyi ma ‘bum is quite brief, introducing the topic with a short but intriguing line: “Through the exhaustion of those [visions’] increase, those appearing experiences [are seen to] have no essence of appearing whatsoever. This is termed, ‘the vision of the exhaustion of reality.’”⁵² Beyond this, Nyi ma ‘bum only quotes a few tantras and adds that “when the four visions are completed, the fortunate one will definitely attain buddhahood without the appearance of defiled aggregates.”⁵³

Taken together, the two statements raise the question of the place

‘phro ldan pa yis/ rgyud rgyal kun gsal ‘di dang ‘phrad). Similar language is seen in the colophon to the *Rdo rje rtse mo*, another *gsang skor* tantra, where Lce btsun Seng ge dbang phyug is named more explicitly as, “I, Lce btsun Seng ge, endowed with the fortunate residue of karma,...” (*las ‘phro skal bar ldan pa’i lce btsun seng ge bdag*). Given the similar language, we would suggest that the *Thig le kun gsal* may have also been “revealed” by Lce btsun, which would match the *Rdzogs pa chen po snying tig gi lo rgyus chen mo*’s account that the Secret Cycle was revealed and held by Lce tsun and Lce sgom nag po prior to Zhang ston and the formation of the Nying thig/Yang *gsang bla na med pa’i skor*.

⁵⁰ Here we understand the three lamps to be the eyes, the external space, and the *thig le*, though only two are listed on p. 146. On p. 147, however, the three are listed separately, though named “the triad of appearances” (*snang ba gsum sbyor*). Note that here, in this tantra of the Secret Cycle which therefore is likely prior to Zhang ston’s formalization of the Snying thig (*gsang ba bla na med’i skor*), the lamps (*sgron ma*) and the appearances/visions (*snang ba*) seem to be used interchangeably.

⁵¹ James Gentry has an excellent forthcoming article (see Bibliography for details) on differing opinions regarding the status of appearance in the fourth vision. Our observations below build on, and benefit from, his insights.

⁵² *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 98: *de dag gi ‘phel ba zad pas snang ba’i nyams de dag gang du snang ba’i ngo bo med pa ni/ chos nyid zad pa’i snang ba zhes tha snyad du bya ba’o/*

⁵³ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 98: *de ltar snang ba bzhi mother phyin pa’i dus nal skal ldan de zag pa dang bcas pa’i phung po mi snang par sangs rgya bar nges so.*

of appearances in the final fourth vision. Here it is significant that Nyi ma 'bum understands that which is exhausted to be the *increase* in visions, i.e. the increase that characterizes the two previous stages of direct transcendence (*nyams gong 'phel* and *rig pa tshad phebs*).⁵⁴ This, then, would appear to be not an exhaustion of all appearances but only of their continued development.⁵⁵ The rest of Nyi ma 'bum's first line offers the paradoxical statement that, within this state, any meditative appearances still may appear yet they have "no essence of appearing"-the usual nature of appearance is missing; in some sense, appearance finds no purchase. This can be read two ways. It may say there are no appearances, or that appearances are imbued with essencelessness. Nyi ma 'bum seems not to foreclose either reading. His second sentence on the results of direct transcendence provides further clarification: "When the four visions are completed, the fortunate one will definitely attain buddhahood without the appearance of defiled aggregates." Here, he says there is no appearance of defiled forms within buddhahood, however, this still allows for the possibility of pure appearances. To support such a view, Nyi ma 'bum cites two passages from the *Unimpeded Sound Tantra*. First: "This vision of exhaustion of reality, having emptied experiential appearances, also exhausts the body and the sensory objects. Having freed one from erroneous thoughts, it is beyond expressible words." Second: "In that way, having severed the continuum of the elemental body, without the defiled aggregates appearing, buddhahood is attained in this very life."⁵⁶ Both of these sentences allow for the possibility of pure appearances continuing.

It may be said, however, that Nyi ma 'bum seems to have "cherry-picked" these two lines to support his reading, for other parts of the *Unimpeded Sound Tantra* suggest a very different interpretation of the result. Take, for example, this passage on the final result of Great Perfection practice:

⁵⁴ In doing so, he agrees with many other authors, including the *Bu gcig gi gsang 'grel*, *Sangs rgyas sras gcig*, *Bi ma snying thig*, vol. 1, p. 140: *zad pa'i zhes pa gong du 'phel rgyu*.

⁵⁵ The exhaustion of increase is mentioned in other works too; see, for example, the *Mkha' 'gro thams cad kyi snying khrag klong gsal 'bar ma nyi ma'i gsang rgyud*, 274.4-5, and the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Sgron ma 'bar ba* (*Gser gyi me tog mdzes pa rin po che 'bar ba'i rgyud don gsal bar byed pa mu tig phreng ba brgyus*, 264.1-2).

⁵⁶ *Rdzogs pa chen tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 98: *chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba 'di/ nyams kyi snang ba stongs nas ni/ lus zad dbang po'i yul kyang zad/ rtog tshogs 'khrul pa las grol nas/ brjod pa'i tshig dang bral ba'o*. And: *de ltar 'byung lus rgyun chad nas/ zag bcas phung po mi snang bar/ tshe 'di nyi la sangs rgya'o*. Earlier, when Nyi ma 'bum first introduces the four visions of direct transcendence, he quotes another line from the *Sgra thal 'gyur* that supports his more positive reading of essenceless visions; see p. 93: *chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba yis/ khams gsum 'khor ba'i rgyun thag bcad*.

Though the result is inexpressible,
 When one reaches the stage of the exhaustion of phenomena,
 One's own tenet system collapses.
 At this point, the lama's pith instructions fade away.
 The ways of view, meditation, and action are voided,
 So there are no phenomena to appear.
 The continua of buddha-bodies and gnosis cease,⁵⁷
 So there is no buddha and no sentient being.
 In short, nothing at all remains.
 Since nothing has gone before, nothing is to come.⁵⁸

Such a passage takes a far more extreme position vis-a-vis appearances within buddhahood, allowing for nothing, not even gnosis, buddha-bodies, nor buddhas.

Right at the end of Nyi ma 'bum's text, he addresses more directly this question of appearances within the fourth vision. There, we encounter the following detailed discussion of his complex position:

Some people, out of mistaken understanding, [claim] that after exhaustion of reality (*chos nyid zad*), it is not reasonable for there to be appearances. This should be refuted, saying, if that were true, then how would buddhas, bhagavans, bodhisattvas, empty luminosity, and so forth be reasonable? Some others assert that nothing whatsoever appears. Then there would be an absolute⁵⁹ void--the exhaustion of causes and the exhaustion of conditions; that would be nihilism, or a total void.⁶⁰

Regarding the line, 'liberation is the beginning,' [some say this means] there is a place to return and a returner, or that there is something like a dissolution [into buddhahood]. This is not the case. [Liberation is just] a realization of the way of abiding, as explained above.⁶¹ Some others posit that, because the final [result] is Vajradhara, it cannot be an exhaustion

⁵⁷ This line is relevant to our discussion of the presence (or lack thereof) of the three bodies and the five gnoses within the final result; see below.

⁵⁸ *Sgra thal 'gyur*, 97.1-3. 'bras bu brjod par mi nus kyang/ chos rnam zad sar phyin pa dang/ rang gi grub pa'i mtha' yang 'jig/ 'di dus bla ma'i man ngag nub/ blta sgom spyod pa'i mtha' stongs pas/ chos su snang ba yod ma yin/ sku dang ye shes rgyun chad pas/ sangs rgyas med cing sems can med/ mdor na gang yang gnas pa med/ song ba med pas 'ong ba med pa'o.

⁵⁹ *stong pa lhang ba med par 'gyur*: Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem reads *lhang ba* as *ldang ba*, while Sangs rgyas gling pa prefers *snang ba*.

⁶⁰ Here we follow both Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem and Sangs rgyas gling pa in correcting *sems stong* to *bem stong*.

⁶¹ In Yeshi and Dalton 2018, 266, we translated this same passage. Since that time, we have revised our understanding of its significance. We now take the *slar zlog bya* to be referring to the return to the original ground upon liberation, rather than a "relapse" into *samsāra* following liberation. The central point, that Nyi ma 'bum is insisting on there being no change upon liberation, remains intact.

of reality. If that were the case, then there would come the faults of [i] it following that the [other] buddhas become non-buddhas and of [ii] the three buddha-bodies being separate and [the buddhas would be ranked according to] better or worse. Alternatively, there would come the many faults of [those other buddhas] being absolutely non-existent. Furthermore, even when others assert that [the final result] consists of four or five buddha-bodies, they are [just] differentiating the qualities of the *dharmakāya*, but there is no [real] difference in [the buddhas'] knowing nor realization. As it is said: "The essence of total non-conceptuality itself is the unchanging vajra body."

Still others say the three bodies and the five gnoses are the path but not the result.⁶² Regarding the three bodies and the five gnoses being the path, [this is valid, because] the entirety of Secret Mantra asserts that the result is taken as the path. Regarding the claim that they are not the result, [such a statement] is only intended to free one from a fixated clinging that is attached to the result being the three bodies, or alternatively to refute those who assert that the ultimate has six--the three bodies plus the three interiors for a total of six.⁶³

This is a rather dense passage. In line with his cherry-picking of quotations above, Nyi ma 'bum begins by critiquing the view that there are no appearances in the final state of exhaustion of reality. Such a view, he writes, would entail there being no buddhas nor luminosity and would result in nihilism. This said, he then turns to other views

⁶² Here we follow *Bi ma la'i snyan brgyud 'grel tig chen mo*, 397.5, which corrects Nyi ma 'bum's *lam gyi 'bras bu ma yin to lan yin gyis 'bras bu ma yin*.

⁶³ *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*, 127-28. *gang zag kha cig gis log par rtog pas/ chos nyid zad nas snang ba mi rigs so zhe na/ de ltar na sangs rgyas dang/ bcom ldan 'das dang/ byang chub dang/ stong gsal la sogs pa yang ci la rigs zhes zlog par bya 'o/ yang kha cig nas cir yang mi snang zer na rgyu zad rkyen zad kyi stong pa lhang ba med par 'gyur ba ni/ mu stegs par 'gyur la/ yang na sems stong du 'gyur ro/ yang kha cig na re/ grol ba thog ma 'o zhes gsungs la/ slar zlog bya dang zlog byed du yod pa'am/ thim pa lta bu cig yod pa lta bu ni ma yin stel/ gnas lugs rtogs par gong du bshad/ kha cig mthar rdo rje 'dzin par bzhad pas/ chos nyid zad par mi 'gyur ro/ zhes zer nas/ de ltar na sangs rgyas kyang sangs rgyas ma yin par thal ba dang sku gsum kyang tha dad dam bzang ngan du 'gyur ba 'i skyon dang/ yang na chang chad du 'gyur ba 'i skyon du ma zhig 'byung bar 'gyur ro/ yang kha cig sku bzhi dang lnga la sogs pa 'dod na'ang chos sku nyid kyi yon tan so sor phye ba yin gyil/ mkhyen cha'am dgongs pa la khyad par yod pa ni ma yin te/ kun tu mi rtog ngo bo nyid/ 'gyur ba med pa rdo rje 'i sku/ zhes gsungs pa lta bu 'o/ yang kha cig sku gsum ye shes lnga lam gyi 'bras bu ma yin zhes bya ba yang/ sku gsum ye shes lnga lam yin pa ni/ gsang sngags mtha' dag 'bras bu lam du byed pa zhes bya bar 'dod pa yin/ 'bras bu ma yin zhes zer ba ni/ 'bras bu sku gsum du zhen pa 'i mthar 'dzin bral ba la dgongs pa'am/ yang sku gsum nyid las sbubs gsum mthar thug drug 'dod pa de 'gengs pa'o. The last sentence here may be corrupt; see Klong chen pa's corrections below. Regarding the three interiors mentioned at the end here, see Klong chen pa's *Zab mo yang tig*, vol. 12, 277, where he lists them as: *rin chen sbubs*, 'od kyi sbubs, and *bag chags sbubs*. The triad maps roughly onto the three bodies or *ngo bo-rang bzhin-thugs rje*.*

that posit a more reified buddhahood. Referencing the line that summarizes the eleventh topic, “liberation is the beginning,” he insists that awakening involves no place nor person.⁶⁴ He considers a prevalent claim that final awakening is identical with the *dharmakāya* buddha Vajradhara alone. Such a claim makes no sense, he writes, as it would create a hierarchy of buddhas with Vajradhara at the top, or else entail that all other buddhas cease to exist. It would also separate the *sambhogakāya* and *nirmāṇakāya* from the *dharmakāya*, relegating them to an inferior status. Here, despite just having criticized the nonexistence of buddhas within exhaustion of reality, in these sentences Nyi ma ‘bum now implies that all buddhas are exhausted. All that is left is “the essence of non-conceptuality.” Finally, having thus highlighted the problems with saying either that there are no appearances or that there are appearances, Nyi ma ‘bum ends with an unexpected discussion of the three bodies and the five gnoses. He accepts claims that the three bodies and five gnoses are integral to the path, noting that taking the result as the path is central to much of tantric Buddhism. He then addresses claims that the three bodies and the five gnoses are not present within the result. While he accepts such statements, he is careful to clarify that they are intended only for severing possible attachments to the three bodies and five gnoses; such statements do not mean, he insists, that the bodies and the gnoses are not present within the result.⁶⁵ In the end, then, Nyi ma ‘bum concludes with a somewhat more positive position, though one that eludes any conceptualization. Such a position is in line with his discussion of the exhaustion of reality outlined above (“those appearing experiences have no essence of appearing whatsoever”).

Nyi ma ‘bum’s claim that the three bodies and the five gnoses are present within the result is specifically targeted by Klong chen pa. In his *Theg mchog mdzod* he writes:

Suppose an opponent says that [claiming there is no appearance in the result] contradicts the explanation of the three bodies appearing as the path. Some lamas of earlier generations claim: “Regarding the claim that [the three bodies] are not the result, [such a statement] is only intended to free one from a fixated clinging that is attached to the result being the three bodies, or alternatively to refute those who assert that, apart from the three bodies, the three interiors are in the ultimate.” In resolving those contradictions, [this person] posits that in reality [the three bodies] are the result. However, this shows that

⁶⁴ For more on Nyi ma ‘bum’s interpretation of this line, see Yeshe and Dalton 2018.

⁶⁵ Note that the Dga’ rab rdo rje-attributed commentary to the *Sangs rgyas sras gcig* agrees with this assessment; see *Bu gcig gyi gsang ‘grel*, 140.

he has not understood the essence of primordially pure inner expanse, so this is extremely wrong and not good.⁶⁶

For Klong chen pa, then, it is a terrible mistake to believe that the three bodies are the result. That the quotation he provides matches so closely to Nyi ma 'bum's discussion translated above suggests he is criticizing Nyi ma 'bum in particular. Klong chen pa proceeds to explain that, though the form bodies emerge from the result to help beings, they are not identical with that result. "Apart from the aspect of intrinsic appearance, the *sambhogakāya* and *nirmāṇakāya* arise in the perception of beings and thereby benefit them. They may be the same in being the [outward] play of awareness, but there remains a difference between the intrinsic appearance [of awareness], which is not seen by beings, and [the form bodies] that arises from that, which are [commonly] seen. Therefore, it is taught that one should distinguish between these two [i.e. intrinsic and outward appearance] that are so similar."⁶⁷ In these arguments, then, Klong chen pa goes to considerable lengths to preserve the result, or reality (*chos nyid*), as different from the realm of the appearances of buddhahood. We shall return below to this vehement disagreement the Klong chen pa has with Nyi ma 'bum.

Turning to Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem's version of Nyi ma 'bum's text, we find an approach to the exhaustion of reality that is far more positive. Whereas Rgod ldem tends to copy Nyi ma 'bum on most topics, when it comes to the end of our eighth topic and exhaustion of reality, he makes a significant intervention. He follows Nyi ma 'bum in suggesting that what is exhausted is any further increase, thus leaving open the question of the exhaustion of appearances themselves. However, in place of Nyi ma 'bum's brief statement about appearances being without essence, Rgod ldem offers these lines:

At this time [at the end of the third vision], since awareness has been optimized, not practicing is permissible. However, to liberate [ordinary] forms as gnosis-bodies, one strives at practice, whereby those gnosis-bodies gradually increase. Then, eventually, those increasing signs become exhausted; all appearances are illuminated as the un-

⁶⁶ *Theg mchog mdzod*, vol. 2, 479: *sku gsum lam snang du bshad pa dang 'gal lo zhe na/ bla ma snga rabs pa dag na re/ 'bras bu ma yin zhes zer ba ni/ 'bras bu sku gsum du zhen pa'i mthar 'dzin dang bral bar byed pa la dgongs pa'am/ skor [sic for sku] gsum sbubs gsum mthar thug tu 'dod pa de dgag pa la dgongs pa'o zhes 'gal spong mdzad nas/ don la 'bras bur 'jog pa'ang/ ka dag gi nang dbyings kyi ngo bo ma dgongs pa'i rnam 'gyur yin pas shin tu nor te mi legs so.*

⁶⁷ *Theg mchog mdzod*, vol. 18, 480: *rang snang gi cha las gdul bya'i snang ngor longs sprul 'char bas don mdzad pa'ang/ rig pa'i rol par gcig kyang/ rang snang gdul byas mi mthong la/ de las shar ba de mthong ba'i khyad yod pas 'dra gnyis shan phyed par bstan pa.*

wavering, unmoving spontaneously present *maṇḍala*. Because the increase of reality is exhausted within that [*maṇḍala*], that is called “the vision of the exhaustion of reality.” The signs of gnosis are perfected, so it is also called “abiding in the state of the Great Perfection.”⁶⁸

Here it becomes apparent that Rig ‘dzin Rgod ldem understands the fourth vision as a time to continue one’s practice.

All this is quite unlike Klong chen pa’s treatment of the exhaustion of reality, at least in his *Tshig don mdzod*. There we read statements of this sort: “Furthermore, external appearances dissolve into the expanse, whereby appearing phenomena dissolve into reality, a reality of which there is absolutely nothing to think or say. That is called exhaustion of reality.”⁶⁹ For the most part, Klong chen pa follows such an interpretation, with no appearances possible within the fourth vision. A more detailed, step-by-step account of the exhaustion of reality appears just two pages later, where Klong chen pa traces the process through a series of external, internal, and secret dissolutions. First, externally, all elemental objects—both other objects and one’s own body—cease. Then, internally, one’s mental activities collapse, and finally the secret appearance of clear light dissolves:

As for that [i.e. the vision of exhaustion of reality], by tuning in the crucial points of body and speech, the winds are purified right where they are, whereupon the aspect of the mistaken appearance of external elemental objects and the mind and mental arisings of internal mistaken concepts cease by themselves. As the appearance of the secret clear light increases, all the movements of wind are purified [i.e. cease]. At that time, even the appearance of clear light reaches the point of exhaustion of reality and is liberated into the primordially pure *dharmakāya*. Thus it is said, “all appearing forms are *nirvāṇa*.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ *Bi ma la’i snyan brgyud ‘grel tig chen mo*, 348.1-4: ‘*di yi dus su tshad la phebs pas nyams su ma blangs kyang chog la/ ‘on kyang gzugs ye shes kyi sku ru grol bar bya ba’i phyir/ nyams len la brtson par byas pas/ [snga ma] ye shes kyi sku de dag rim par ‘phel bas nal de’i dus su ‘phel ba’i rtags zad de/ snang ba thams cad g.yo ‘gul med par lhun gyis grub pa’i dkyl ‘khor du gsal lo/ de la chos nyid kyi ‘phel zad pas/ chos nyid zad pa’i snang ba zhes kyang bya/ ye shes kyi rtags rdzogs pas rdzogs pa chen po’i ngang la gnas pa zhes kyang bya’o*. Note that the Nechung edition of this passage (vol. 3, 127.2-5) adds *snga ma* to the line: *snga ma ye shes kyi sku de dag*. While this does not disturb our interpretation of line, since it is not present in the Adzom edition, we suspect it to be a later addition so do not translate it. Note too that Rgod ldem’s interpretation of the fourth vision requires us to change our translation from “exhaustion of reality” to “exhaustion of reality.”

⁶⁹ *Tshig don mdzod*, 269. *de’ang phyir snang dbyings su thim pas snang ba chos can chos nyid la thim nas chos nyid gang du’ang bsam brjod med pa la chos nyid zad pa zhe bya’o*.

⁷⁰ *Tshig don mdzod*, 271. *de la lus ngag gi gnad gcun pas rlung rang sar dag nas phyi byung yul ‘khrul snang gi cha dang/ nang ‘khrul rtog sems sems byung rang ‘gags te/ gsang ba ‘od gsal gyi snang ba gong du ‘phel bas rlung gi g.yo ba thams cad dag dus ‘od gsal gyi*

In his *Tshig don mdzod*, then, which represents Klong chen pa's primary response to Nyi ma 'bum's work, all disappears in the exhaustion of reality, even the clear light of gnosis.

Strangely, however, in his *Bla ma yang thig*, Klong chen pa allows for a somewhat more positive approach in a passage that seems to parallel the quotation above:

Regarding the fourth vision of exhaustion of reality: external and internal physical matter, as well as mistaken mental concepts, along with the increase of appearances, are exhausted. Thus, "reality" is the space-like nature of awareness. "Exhaustion" is the nonexistence of appearances, from external earth, stones, rocks, and mountains, to internal matter such as the illusory body, to the secret oscillations of concepts. As for the "vision," the appearance of compassionate gnosis appears unceasingly, like a sun free of clouds, self-illuminating.⁷¹

Here, Klong chen pa offers quite a different account of the dissolutions, starting from "external" physical matter, to one's "internal" illusory body, and finally one's "secret" mental activities. (Note that the "illusory body" (*sgyu lus*) here is not the special body achieved in dream or meditation but the ordinary physical body.) Whereas in the *Tshig don mdzod*, the secret dissolution exhausted even the clear light, here it exhausts only conceptual thinking, leaving a kind of "vision" of compassionate gnosis continuing to manifest. While this "vision" has no specificity in terms of "appearances," it would seem, at the very least, to correspond to the clear light mentioned in the earlier passage. Such an approach seems different, then, from the one Klong chen pa takes in his *Tshig don mdzod*. The reason for this difference remains unclear, but it seems Klong chen pa changes his opinions across different texts or perhaps times in his life.

VI. Conclusions

This paper offered some analysis of the eighth topic of the *Rdzogs pa chen po tshig don bcu gcig pa*. The outline provided represents an initial contribution toward the study of this important chapter, and we hope it helps others to read this crucial work more easily. Nyi ma 'bum's

snang ba yang chos nyid zad sar thug nas ngo bo ka dag gi chos skur grol tel/ gzugs snang thams cad mya ngan las 'das pa zhes bya'o

⁷¹ Dngos gzhi 'od gsal snying po'i don khrid (in the *Bla ma yang tig*, vol. 9), p. 202. *bzhi pa chos nyid zad pa'i snang ba ni/ phyi nang gi rdo bcas sems kyi 'khrul rtog snang ba'i 'phel dang bcas pa zad pa'ol/ de'ang chos nyid ni rig pa'i gshis nam mkha' lta bu'ol/ zad pa ni/ phyi sa rdo ri brag/ nang sgyu lus rdo bcas/ gsang ba rnam rtog 'phro 'dus'i snang ba med pa'ol/ snang ba ni nyi ma sprin dang bral ba rang gsal ba bzhin du/ thugs rje ye shes kyi snang ba rgyun mi 'chad par snang ba'o.*

text may represent the earliest comprehensive treatise on the Snying thig tradition as a whole. While Nyi ma 'bum worked very much within the world of the *Seventeen Tantras*, and especially the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, there are occasional moments where his text parts from the tantras to produce a more coherent system. One particularly clear example comes in his treatment of the preliminary practices, which he organizes into the "three guidings" (*sna khrid pa gsum*), a triad cobbled together from practices found scattered throughout the *Sgra thal 'gyur*. The same triad does also appear in the Vimalamitra-attributed commentary to the *Sgra thal 'gyur*, and it remains unclear whether that work was composed before or after Nyi ma 'bum, but in any case, we can see developments within a generation or two of the *Seventeen Tantras* being codified.

As each section was examined herein, some key differences between Nyi ma 'bum's work and the approaches of later authors were highlighted, revealing further points of change within the tradition. For example, where Nyi ma 'bum often blurs the lines between the practices "by those with minds for referential objects" and the classical practices of Rdzogs chen Snying thig, i.e. cutting through and direct transcendence, Klong chen pa clarifies the dividing line, moving elements such as the four immediate settlings out of the section on practices for those with minds for referential objects and into his discussions of cutting through proper.

Finally, some observations are offered on the differences between Nyi ma 'bum's treatment of the result of Snying thig practice, the fourth vision of exhaustion of reality. While Nyi ma 'bum generally resists making a definitive statement, his sympathies seem to lie with the possibility of continued appearances within final buddhahood. Such a view is similar to that of Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem, though this later figure states the case for continued appearances still more clearly. Both authors differ from Klong chen pa in this regard, especially from his earlier writings as represented by the *Tshig don mdzod*. Some of Klong chen pa's other writings, however, such as the *Bla ma yang thig*, show some evidence of a shift in his thinking toward a more positive view of luminous appearances within the final state. Further work is needed on this question and the many other issues involved in the historical development of the rich tradition of Rdzogs chen Snying thig.

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The Second dPa' bo, gTsong lag phreng ba (1504–1566): Life and Works of the Great Sixteenth-Century Historian

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1. Introduction¹

The Tibetan Buddhist master dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba is best known for his extraordinary contribution to Tibetan historiography, his *Religious History: A Feast of the Wise* (*Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*).² Lokesh Chandra states that he “stands out among Tibetan historians by his unusual and accurate use of the ancient inscriptions and archive materials in the monasteries” (Chandra 1959, vii). In addition to this, dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba composed a number of other works that are still in use today.

The life and works of this interesting and significant Tibetan master have not gained the scholarly attention they deserve. With this paper, we wish to remedy this unfortunate situation to some extent by providing a summary of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life and a brief characterization of his best-known works.

His life is to be explored based on translation and comparison of “spiritual biographies” (*rnam thar*) as well as dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng

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² gTsong lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byun mkhas pa'i dga' ston. A detailed history of the development of Buddhism in India and Tibet*. For an introduction into and outline of this work, as well as an overview of the available editions, see Dell 2021c.

ba's fascinating "spiritual autobiography," *The Mirror Reflecting the Illusory Countenance* (*Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa 'khrul pa'i bzhin ras 'char ba'i me long zhes bya ba*).³ Through this philological and historical research on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life, we intend to provide some previously unknown historical information about his name and title, birthplace and family lineage, scholastic education, and passing away.

Furthermore, some historical information on a few of his most famous works are provided: the *Religious History: A Feast of the Wise* (hereinafter *Feast of the Wise*), the *Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra* (*sPyod 'jug gi 'grel pa*), the *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury* (*rTsis kyi btsan bcos rin chen gter mdzod*), and the *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]* (*Phag mo'i rnam bshad chen po*).⁴ All these compositions became influential works and are still preserved and read today.

1.1 Outline

In this paper the historical-philological method shall be applied, i.e., we aim at understanding the primary sources within their historical context.

First, in the remainder of the introduction, a brief survey of the literary genre of *rnam thar* or "spiritual biography" is provided, and it is highlighted in which way this genre is distinct from what is known as "biography" in the Western literary tradition. Section 2 aims at providing an overview of the different sources on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life. These include three spiritual autobiographies, a spiritual biography from the eighteenth century, and a number of twentieth-century compilations. Moreover, the state of academic research on his life is summarized. In section 3, the historical background of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life is summarized. An assessment of the political situation and the religious movements of his time is provided. From a methodological point of view, this is important as it helps to understand the sources and thereby also dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life much better. In section 4, some significant events of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life are to be evaluated based on translations of the different sources. It is mentioned that all these spiritual biographies without exception treat of certain standard events of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life. These standard events are his birthplace and family lineage, name and title, ordination, education, travels, and passing away. Among those, this paper takes a closer look at dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's birthplace and lineage, name and title, education, and his passing away. In the fifth section, some remarks on dPa'

³ For the different textual witnesses, see section 2.1.

⁴ For references to the Tibetan texts of these works, see their presentation in section 5.

bo gTsug lag phreng ba's most influential works are made. In all cases, information was extracted from the colophons of these works, as well as from the different biographical sources. Section 6 presents the conclusion of this paper, while the Appendix contains the Tibetan text of the colophons used.

Wherever possible, references to Tibetan texts also include a reference to the database of the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (hereafter BDRC) for the reader's convenience. Tibetan names and titles mentioned in this paper are transliterated according to the Wylie transliteration system (Wylie 1959).⁵

1.2 *The Literary Genre of Spiritual Biographies (rnam thar)*

One of the most popular genres of Tibetan literature is the genre of *rnam thar*. This is short for *rnam par thar pa* meaning "complete liberation" or in this context rather "[story of a person's] complete liberation." There is quite a variety of English renderings of this term, all stressing different aspects of it.⁶ In this paper the term "spiritual biography" will be used to render the Tibetan term *rnam thar*.⁷

Unlike ordinary biographies aiming at establishing historical information and expounding the life and career of certain individuals, the *rnam thar* genre found in Tibetan literature narrates the spiritual activities and achievements of a Buddhist master.⁸ On the one hand, the *rnam thar* genre functions as a guide on the path for the Buddhist practitioner, but on the other hand, *rnam thars*, of course, also comprise a great deal of historical information and in many cases form an indispensable source for the historian. *rNam thars* help us to understand the

⁵ Deviating from this, some popular Tibetan terms already common in the English language (especially names), were rendered in their established phonetic transcription, such as Dalai Lama (*ta' la'i bla ma*) and Milarepa (*mi la ras pa*). Similarly, all Tibetan place names were transcribed phonetically with Wylie transliteration in brackets.

⁶ For instance, "biography," "spiritual biography," "sacred biography," "life story," "liberation story," "spiritual story," "life example," "hagiography," "(hagiographic) life writing," "soteriography," and others. For enumerations and discussions of different English renderings, see also Roesler 2014, 117, as well as Rheingans 2014, 69–70, and Rheingans 2010, 252–53.

⁷ Spiritual biographies share traits with hagiographies, but they are different in that they are concerned with the complete liberation of a Buddhist master, a concept that is foreign to the Western or Judeo-Christian tradition from which the term hagiography arises. The aspect of liberation from the two obscurations forms the very core of the definition; see also Yísün 1985, "*rnam thar*" and "*rnam par grol ba*."

⁸ For a detailed analysis of the biography genre found in the Western traditions, see, e.g., Egeland 2000 and Keener 2001. For an excellent work on English biographies in the seventeenth century, see Pritchard 2005. For the comparative dimension of hagiographies within different religious contexts, see Conermann and Rheingans 2014.

life and works of historical persons, and provide insight into particular historical events and periods, geographical places, and much more.⁹ However, the provision of historical information in *rnam thars* is rather a side effect and has to be assessed critically. Willis has argued for a twofold function of *rnam thar*, firstly to inspire the reader, and secondly to provide instruction (Willis 1995, 5).

The genre of *rnam thar* has been classified in various ways. The most prominent classification is probably the following threefold division into outer, inner, and secret spiritual biographies.

1. Outer spiritual biographies (*phyi'i rnam thar*), i.e., the biographies proper.
2. Inner spiritual biographies (*nang gi rnam thar*), i.e., the list of teachings, empowerments etc. received (also *thob yig* or *gsan yig*).
3. Secret spiritual biographies (*gsang ba'i rnam thar*), i.e., mystic events, miraculous dreams, and various supernatural phenomena.¹⁰

In many cases, single representatives of the genre do not fall clearly into one of the categories in their entirety, but different passages can be attributed to different categories. In this paper, we are primarily interested in the outer and inner levels, as the aim is to collect biographical and historical data, as well as to get an idea of the education and teachings that dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba received from his different teachers. What has been said about spiritual biographies can also be applied to spiritual autobiographies to a certain extent.¹¹

2. Tibetan Sources and Previous Research

In the following, an overview of the Tibetan sources relevant to dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life is provided. To some sources, three-letter *sigla* will be assigned for easier reference. Other Tibetan texts that will be less referenced in this paper will just be referred to using the author-

⁹ However, there are also some accounts that are more legendary in nature and certainly do not contribute much historical information, such as the life stories of King Srong btsan dGam po (in the *Ma ni bka' 'bum*) and Padmasambhava (*Padma bka' thang*).

¹⁰ Vostrikov 1994, 186–87. This classification is ascribed to sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705). For a brief and accessible explanation of the three levels, see also Choegyal Gyamtso Tulku 2000, 21–22. Interestingly, Willis (1995, 5) has reinterpreted the three levels as “historical”, “inspirational”, and “instructional” dimension.

¹¹ Gyatso sheds light on the above categories from the viewpoint of autobiography (*rang rnam*); see Gyatso 1998, 4–10, 283 notes 20–21, 104–5. For some interesting considerations on Tibetan autobiographical writing, see also Roesler 2019.

title system. There are three different autobiographies, one short spiritual biography that was composed in the seventeenth century, and a number of twentieth-century summaries. Finally, there is some work on his life by Western scholars. All of this is to be presented in the section at hand.

2.1 *Autobiographies*

ML1, ML2, ML3, ML4: Mirror Reflecting the Illusory Countenance

The text called *dGe slong gtsug lag phreng ba rang nyid kyi rtogs pa brjod pa 'khrul pa'i bzhin ras 'char ba'i me long zhes bya ba bzhugs so* (*The Monk gTsug lag phreng ba, Account of My Own Realization, The Mirror Reflecting the Illusory Countenance*) is an autobiography of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, consisting of twenty-three folios in the block print edition. It is written in verses of nine syllables. We were able to identify two different prints from the same printing blocks at BDRC, neither of which are very pleasant to read due to poor printing quality (ML1; ML2). Apart from that, there are two modern book editions of this text. One was published by the Vajra Vidya Institute Library in forty pages in 2010 (ML3); the other covers forty-three pages and is contained in dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's *Collected Works* published by dPal rtseg in 2019 (ML4). For the reader's convenience, we will mostly refer to the Vajra Vidya edition, as it is both legible and easily accessible (BDRC).¹² For our translations and summaries, we additionally consulted the block print edition to clarify spelling differences. In the following, this autobiography will be referred to with the brief title of the *Mirror*. When referencing, we will use the *siglum* assigned to the respective edition.

According to the colophon (Appendix A), dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba composed this text in Tsāri¹³ in the female iron-ox year (1541), when he was thirty-nine years old.¹⁴ It had been requested by the sister of Bying pa Chos kyi rje kun spangs pa and his own root lama, the Eighth

¹² It also has an e-text version, which is sometimes useful for searching, but as it is produced from OCR (optical character recognition), spelling in it should be treated with care; see BDRC: W1KG6291.

¹³ Tsāri is a mountain located in southern Tibet and is one of the most important pilgrimage sites (*Treasury of Lives*, "Tsāri"). Huber (1999) dedicated a book to this pilgrimage site.

¹⁴ At first glance, this does not fit with his accepted year of birth, which is 1504. However, taking into account that thirty-nine years in Tibetan counting corresponds to only thirty-eight years in Western counting, and that Tibetan years do not overlap fully with Western years (i.e. about two months of the iron-ox year reach into 1542), it fits again.

Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1574).¹⁵ The *Mirror* will be one of the main sources used in this paper to summarize dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life.

NS1, NS2: Nine Sections

The text called *dPal gTsong lag phreng ba'i rang tshul mdor bsodus pa don tshan dgu pa'o* (*Concise Autobiography of the Glorious gTsong lag phreng ba, The Nine Sections*) is a short autobiography of gTsong lag phreng ba.¹⁶ In the block print edition, the text counts twenty-five folios of relatively short width at five lines and is written in verses of mostly eight, occasionally nine syllables (NS1). The text is also contained in dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's *Collected Works* published by dPal rtseg in 2019 and counts twenty-six pages in this modern book edition (NS2). In this paper, this text will be referred to in short as *Nine Sections* or for referencing by its siglum (NS1, NS2).

According to the colophon (Appendix A), dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba completed this autobiography at his seat, at Gro bo lung monastery in Lho brag, more specifically in the Hevajra room of the famous Milarepa tower.¹⁷ The year of completion is indicated as the male iron-dog year (1550); this is at about age forty-six. It was originally published by gNas nang bsam gtan chos gling and produced in the printing house lHo brag lha lung dgon gyi par khang. As the ornamental title indicates, the text is divided into nine sections, which are listed in the colophon as:

¹⁵ The colophon of the *Mirror* seems to have been written by dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba himself, as it does not use honorific terms. For the Tibetan text see Appendix A. Bying pa Chos kyi rje kun spangs pa could not be identified clearly. BDRC has no exact match but there are several people with similar titles. It could be bSod nams ye shes dpal bzang po, who also had the title Kun spang chos kyi rje. He was a student of the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524), and lived around the fifteenth/sixteenth century, which could fit (BDRC, P2GS1031). The Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rDo rje (1507–1554), is not explicitly referred to by his name. Only the title *rgyal ba* is used. However, *rgyal ba* appears as an epithet of the Eighth Karma pa throughout the whole text. Hence, there can be no doubt that it refers to him. For extensive information about the Eighth Karma pa, see Rheingans 2017.

¹⁶ gTsong lag phreng ba, *dPal gtsug lag phreng ba'i rang tshul mdor bsodus pa don tshan dgu pa'o*, BDRC: W4CZ41808.

¹⁷ In the colophon (Appendix A), the place name is given as sPrul pa'i pho brang chen po sras mkhar dgyes pa rdo rje'i gzhal med khang, lit. "the immeasurable room of Hevajra in the [nine-story] tower for the son [=Milarepa's famous tower; sras mkhar dgu thog] in the great palace of the emanation." Sras mkhar dgu thog literally means "nine-story tower" (BDRC, G3429) and is part of the Gro bo lung dgon, the monastery which was the seat of the dPa' bo Rin po ches from their first to their fifth incarnation (BDRC, G3618).

1. How [I] attained auspicious circumstances (*dpal 'byor thob tshul*).
2. How [I] studied and contemplated (*thos bsam mdzad tshul*).
3. How [I] went on pilgrimages undergoing hardships (*dka' ba spyad de gnas bskor tshul*).
4. How [I] requested teachings on ripening empowerments and liberating instructions (*smin grol gyi gdams pa zhus tshul*).
5. How [I] practiced meditation (*sgom sgrub mdzad tshul*).
6. How [I] practiced the [secret] mantra [vehicle] (*sngags spyod mdzad tshul*).
7. How [I] met [my] special deity (*lhag pa'i lha gzig tshul*).
8. How [I] recollected former lives (*skye ba dran tshul*).
9. How [I] benefitted others (*gzhan don mdzad tshul*).

The *Nine Sections* comprises slightly more than half of the length of the *Mirror* and was written about nine years later.¹⁸ In this paper, this text was not used, in order to keep the scope within a reasonable size. Nevertheless, it is a valuable source to be assessed to explore dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life in future research.

VH1: Very Hidden Talk

There is a secret autobiography called *Rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa zab gsal gi gter mdzod rab tu sbas pa'i gtam mo* (*Account of My Own Realization, The Profound and Clear Treasury: The Very Hidden Talk*). The block print consists of twenty folios. We could not locate this text in BDRC and it is not included in dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's collected works published by dPal rtsegs either.¹⁹ It is, however, available via the Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP).²⁰ When referring to this text the ornamental title, *Very Hidden Talk*, will be used; for referencing we use the siglum assigned to it (VH1). In order to illustrate the nature of this text, a translation of the author's colophon is presented here:

In this way, I have clarified some of my experiences. I have not expounded common talk here, such as travels to many regions, wealth and non-wealth, fame and non-fame [and] experiences of joy [or] suffering. Compared to that, this talk is more profound and vast [...]. Furthermore, except for those with the eye of experience, there is no need to tell this to others, [i.e.,] to those without the eye of experience, in order for them to abandon fear and dread. This is profound and very

¹⁸ Comparison of page numbers between ML4 and NS2, as both texts are contained in volume 11 of the dPal rtseg edition and are therefore in the same format.

¹⁹ gTsong lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*.

²⁰ For the NGMCP catalogs, see <https://catalogue.ngmcp.uni-hamburg.de//content/index.xml> (access July 23, 2021).

profound so keep it hidden! [I] hand over [and] entrust [these teachings] to the retinue of protecting māras such as bKa' drung gNod sbyin bzhi po and dPal ldan Dud pa'i sol ba ma. Protect [it]! Hide [it]! Defeat the obstacles and fulfil the wishes of those who take hold of these teachings. May supreme pure goodness pervade in this world. [I], the vajra yogi, dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba have clarified a few of my experiences [in this text] and it is very secret.²¹

This text is clearly a secret spiritual autobiography (*gsang ba'i rang rnam*). It is certainly an interesting source to study, but as the focus of this paper is more on the outer events of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life, it was not taken into account.

2.2 Eighteenth-Century Source

Apart from dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's autobiographies, no contemporary spiritual biography could be identified. The earliest such text that was found was compiled in the eighteenth century, which is roughly two hundred years after his death.

BT1: History of the Karma Kagyu School

In the famous *History of the Karma Kagyu School*, called *sGrub brgyud karma kani tshang brgyud pa rin po che'i rnam par thar pa rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel gyi phreng ba* by the Eighth Situ, Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699/1700–1774), also known as Si tu Pañ chen, and his student 'Belo Tshe dbang kun khyab (b. 18th cent.), there is a section about dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba comprising about four folios.²² It is included in volume 2, which was written entirely by 'Belo Tshe dbang kun khyab in order to complete the work of this teacher. Apart from the block print reproduction used in this paper (BT1), there are a number of both modern book versions and manuscripts available at BDRC. In this paper this work is referred to by the shortened title *History of the Karma Kagyu School*. It seems to be the most widely referenced source for his life, presumably due to its brevity and accessibility. This work constitutes the second main source for our summary of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng's life.

2.3 Twentieth-Century Compilations

There are a number of twentieth-century Tibetan compilations that also contain entries on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba. Some of them

²¹ For the Tibetan text of the colophon, see Appendix A.

²² BT1, vol. 2, 55–63. BDRC: W23435.

shall be mentioned here briefly. However, as they are mere summaries of earlier sources (mostly of the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*), the analysis of his life presented in this paper will not primarily be based on them, though occasional references to them are made for the sake of comparison.

BD1: mKhas btsun bzang po

The *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism (rGya bod mkhas grub rim byon gyi rnam tha)* by mKhas btsun bzang po (1920–2009) in twelve volumes contains an entry about dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba of about seven pages.²³ It is basically a summary of the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*.

TK1: Shes bya'i gter mdzod

There is a work in three volumes with the short title *Treasury of Knowledge (Shes bya'i gter mdzod)*, published by Mi rigs dpe mdzod khang between 1984 and 1997. It contains many short life stories of Tibetan masters. The third volume (*smad*) contains an entry on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's collected works (four pages) and his life (two pages).²⁴

GC1: Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdus

Another similar work in two volumes, published between 1996 and 2000, is called *Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdus* ("Short Life Stories of the Succession of Scholars of the Land of Snow"). It contains an entry of five pages in volume 1.²⁵ It seems to be a mere digest of the entry in the *Shes bya'i gter mdzod*.

MD1: Ming mdzod

Another well-known work about Tibetan masters is the *Biographical Dictionary (Ming mdzod)*, which has the long title *Gangs can mkhas sgrub rim byon ming mdzod*. It was published in 1992 and contains an entry

²³ BD1, vol. 9, 51–57. BDRC: W1KG10294.

²⁴ TK1, vol. *smad*, 170–74. BDRC: W19837. Despite the English rendering of the title "Treasury of Knowledge", this work is not related to the well-known *Shes bya (kun khyab) mdzod*, "The (All-encompassing) Treasury of Knowledge" by 'Jam mgon kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–1899), which was translated into English and published in several book as "Treasury of Knowledge: ..."; see, e.g., Jamgön Kongtrul 2010.

²⁵ GC1, vol. 1, 237–242. BDRC: W25268.

on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba (two pages).²⁶

Blo bzang 'phrin las

There is also a short modern biography of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba that is not part of a dictionary. It was composed by Blo bzang 'phrin las (1927–1997) in 1985. It is contained in different books published by Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, and, depending on the edition, comprises two to four pages. It bears the title “Biography of the author of the ‘Religious History: Feast of the Wise’” (*Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston rtsom pa po'i lo rgyus*). It is contained in volume *nya* of Blo bzang 'phrin las' collected works²⁷, but also at the end of the editions of the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* published by Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.²⁸

Thub bstan 'od zer

At the beginning of the first volume of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's Collected Works edited by dPal rtsegs, there is a short biography called *dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba'i mdzad rnam mdor bsdus* (*Short Biography of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba*) written by Thub bstan 'od zer (b. 20th cent.).²⁹ The first page consists of a personal data sheet and is followed by about seven pages of chronological biography written in full sentences with indication of Western years.

2.4 Previous Research on His Life

Research about dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life is still in its infancy. There is an article about him on *Treasury of Lives*.³⁰ Apart from that, he received some attention in the context of the study of contemporaries of his. The following paragraph intends to give a brief overview.

Chhosphel (2010) compiled a concise and useful summary of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life on *Treasury of Lives*. The Tibetan sources he mentions are the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1) and the *Mirror* (ML3). Furthermore, among the twentieth century sources, he refers to the *Ming mdzod* (MD1) and the *Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdus* (GC1).

²⁶ MD1, 995–96. BDRC: W19801.

²⁷ Blo bzang 'phrin las, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston rtsom pa po'i lo rgyus*. BDRC: W28948.

²⁸ E.g., gTsong lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol. 2, 1528–31. BDRC: W7499.

²⁹ Thub bstan 'od zer, “dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba'i mdzad rnam mdor bsdus”. BDRC: W3CN25711.

³⁰ “The Treasury of Lives, A Biographical Encyclopedia of Tibet, Inner Asia, and the Himalaya”, accessed July 25, 2021, <https://treasuryoflives.org/>.

Rheingans analyzes the life and works of Karma 'Phrin las pa (1456–1539), who was one of the main teachers of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba. In this context, he uses the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1) as a source to describe the relationship between Karma 'Phrin las pa and dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, but also summarizes gTsug lag phreng ba's life in general.³¹ Though comparably short, his summary unearths interesting aspects and has clear references to the sources used (Rheingans 2021, 93–95). In his book about the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1574)—gTsug lag phreng ba's root lama—Rheingans also occasionally touches on aspects of his life (Rheingans 2017, 44, 67, 95, 101, 110).

The entry on dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba on BDRC also contains some chronological biographical information in bullet points, as well as some references to Tibetan sources.³²

Dell presents an extensive introduction to dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's main opus, the *Feast of the Wise* (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston*). In this context, he also summarizes his life in about two pages (Dell 2021c, 118–20). His summary is based on the secondary sources mentioned here and an earlier unpublished version of this paper.

3. Historical Context

In order to fully appreciate the exposition of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's life, it is crucial to get acquainted with the historical context of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's place and time.

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba lived in an era of political turmoil and religious growth. Following the death of Phag mo gru Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–1364), rivalry arose within the rLangs ruling family concerning the succession to the political seat. As the seat was eventually given to the young nephew of Byang chub rgyal mtshan called Grags pa 'byung gnas (1414–1446), a member of the rLangs family, tension arose between the rLangs and Rin spungs families. In 1435, the Rin spung duke, Don grub rdo rje (early fifteenth cent.) took control over the fortress (*rdzong*) of Shigatse (*gzhis ka rtse*), and later on, his son Don yod rdo rje (1463–1512) succeeded him. Don yod rdo rje quickly entered into a patronage alliance with the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524), and with time this rule became the doom of

³¹ To be more precise, apart from the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1), in one case Rheingans also uses the section about Karma 'phrin las pa in the *Feast of the Wise* (gTsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol. 2, 1164–65). This source was omitted in our presentation of Tibetan sources about dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's life, as he does not make much mention of himself there. He only describes one dream (see section 4.4 of this paper).

³² BDRC, P319, accessed July 25, 2021.

the Phag mo gru government still existing at that time in Lhasa. This government is sometimes also referred to as the Sne'u rdzong administration, which since the time of Byang chub rgyal mtshan supported the growing dGe lugs pa school.³³

In 1488, Don yod rdo rje conquered even more territory, namely the fortress of Gyantse (*rgyal rtse*), which dominated the southern route from Shigatse to Ü (*dbus*), and in 1490, he decided to build Yangpachen (*yangs pa can*) monastery in sTod lung valley, which became the main seat of the Zhwa dmar tulkus (*sprul sku*). Then, in 1498, Don yod rdo rje and his forces attacked the Lhasa region and won. The Sne'u rdzong administrators were forced to leave and fled to the dGe lugs pa monastery sKyor mo lung near Drepung (*'bras spungs*). Thereafter, from 1498 to 1517, Don yod rdo rje and the Rin spungs pas controlled Central and West Tibet. During this period the dGe lugs pa monks of Sera (*se ra*) and Drepung were not allowed to participate in the great wishing prayer festival (*smon lam chen mo*) initiated by Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) in 1409.³⁴ In this way, especially the dGe lugs pa settlements were severely threatened during the rule of Don yod rdo rje and the Rin spungs pas. The Karma Kagyu school, however, had good alliances and was able to grow greatly in this period. Also in the specific case of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, Don yod rdo rje seemed to have played an active role in supporting the livelihood of him and his family in his youth and in recognizing him as a reincarnation of the first dPa' bo lama.³⁵

In the years after Don yod rdo rje's rule, many disputes arose between Ü and Tsang (*gtsang*), and in 1565, a new power emerged, when Tshe brtan rdo rje (sixteenth cent.) took control of Central Tibet and Shigatse and became the ruler of Tsang. Tshe brtan rdo rje was succeeded by his son Karma bsTan srung dbang po (sixteenth cent.), who

³³ Paragraph summarized based on Richardson 1976 and Wylie 1980. For a more extensive treatment of the rLangs Phag mo gru pa during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Czaja 2013, chapters 4 and 5. Rheingans also provides a digest of the political background of that time (Rheingans 2021, 34–41).

³⁴ For two decades the dGe lugs pa monks were banned from the great wishing prayer festival; for further details, see Wylie 1980, 327. Jackson (1989, 48–49, endnote 64) mentions that in the 1490s the Seventh Karma pa, Chos grags rgya mtsho (1453–1505), was attacked by a group of dGe lugs pa monks and he was forced to seek refuge in the Jo khang temple in Lhasa. Jackson also notes that in contrast to the politically active Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos grags ye shes, the Seventh Karma pa was a peaceful figure, who did not engage much in political affairs. He strictly forbade violence among his followers and did not allow any kind of retaliation for the attack from the dGe lugs pa monks.

³⁵ ML3, 232: *de nas sa skyong don yod rdo rje yis/ bla nas bdag cag (bdag dang bdag gi ma bur rdzi bla ma bsam 'grub dge slong grub pa dang dge slong chos dbyings pa sde rim gro pa gnyis rnam yin/ mchan) du ma'i 'tsho ba sbyar/*.

was a supporter of the Karma Kagyu school as well. He became a student of the Karma pa hierarchs and managed to overthrow the Rin spungs pas.³⁶ In this way, the Karma Kagyu school won approximately 150 years of religious patronage, described by Richardson (1976) as the age of the Karmapas. Therefore, even though the political rivalry was fierce and bitter and the different noble family lines took turns in exercising control over the central areas of Tibet, the spiritual leaders of the Karma Kagyu school managed to make good alliances. This secured their religious growth throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In terms of religious and scholastic development, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were characterized by a widespread scholastic activity and intellectual efflorescence. Dreyfus (2003, 143ff.) labels this time as the “high scholastic” period where monastic settlements grew, and scholarship was institutionalized.³⁷ In this epoch, academic circles focussed more on maintaining a certain interpretation of the teachings according to their own Buddhist tradition than in the previous centuries. Smith (2001, 241) also mentions that from the fourteenth century onward, a process of doctrinal systematization was set into motion and the various teaching and transmission lineages became more and more unified, which brought about the establishment of distinct religious schools.

It is, however, noteworthy to mention that particularly within the Kagyu traditions a counter-reaction to this standardization and homogeneity occurred, namely the *smyon pa*, “mad yogi” phenomenon. These practitioners emphasized an independent lifestyle of solitude and meditation and never established their own schools. They more or less returned to the old values of the Kagyu tradition and had role models such as Milarepa, who had devoted his whole life to meditation in solitude, had a close connection to his guru, and relied mainly on oral instructions. One of the most well-known yogis of this movement was gTsang smyon He ru ka, “the madman of Tsang,” (1452–1507), who put into writing the life story of Milarepa (1052–1135) and also authored the life story of Marpa.³⁸ Another yogi of this kind was dBus smyong Kun dga' bzang po, “the madman of Ü,” (1458–1532), whom dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba met and from whom he received

³⁶ For further details on the rule of Tshes brtan rdo rje and later political changes, see Richardson 1976.

³⁷ For much more material about this period, see Caumanns and Sernesi 2017.

³⁸ For further details on the *smyon pa* movement and gTsang smyon He ru ka, see Smith 2001, 59–79. In the “Treasury of Lives” project, Larsson (2011a) provides a concise summary of his life. For an extensive presentation of gTsang smyon He ru ka's life, see his book (Larsson 2012); for his early years, see also Larsson 2011b; for the school of gTsang smyon, see Sernesi 2021. For Milarepa's life, see Tsangnyön Heruka 2010 and Lhalungpa 1977; for Marpa's life, see Ducher 2017.

teachings.³⁹ This event is mentioned both in dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's spiritual autobiography, the *Mirror*, as well as in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*. As this event seems to have been very significant for dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, it shall be described in section 4.4 of this paper.

In this way, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba lived in an epoch where the scholastic environment became more and more systematized. The political turmoil had somewhat cooled down at his time, and through strong "patron–priest" (*mchod yon*) ties with local rulers such as Don yod rdo rje and Karma bsTan srung dbang po, the Karma Kagyu school benefited greatly and their activity was able to flourish for quite a few decades.⁴⁰

4. Standard Events in dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's Life

In this section, the predominant events of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's life are described, primarily based on translations and summaries of the *Mirror* (ML3) and the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1). Occasionally, comparisons to the twentieth-century compilations are drawn.

4.1 Title and Previous Incarnation

According to the *Mirror*, the title "dPa' bo" can be traced back to his previous and first incarnation. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba writes:

In my previous life, [I] was an eminent mighty one of the yogis [and] my name was Chos dbang lhun grub. [I] obtained higher perception and accomplished yogic discipline and therefore others called [me] by the name "dPa' bo".⁴¹

Hence, according to dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, his descriptive name "dPa' bo" came about due to his spiritual accomplishments already demonstrated in his previous incarnation. More information on the origin of the title is found in the life stories of the First dPa' bo, Chos dbang lhun grub (1440/1455–1503):

³⁹ For the relationship between the madman of dBus and gTsang and the movement in general, see DiValerio 2011 and 2015, and for his life, DiValerio 2016. For an annotated summary of his life, see Erhard 2010.

⁴⁰ For more insight into that period, see also Jackson 1989 and Rheingans 2017, especially the chapter about the Eighth Karmapa's life, 71–122.

⁴¹ ML3, 230: *sngon tshe rnal 'byor dbang phyug dam pa cig/ mtshan ni chos dbang lhun grub ces bya ba/ mngon shes thob cing brtul zhugs grub pa byung/ de la gzhan gyis dpa' bo'i mtshan du bsgrags/*.

[He] performed miracles, such as walking on water and leaving foot- and hand-prints in rock. [...] Some people thought he was crazy (*smyo ba*), but most said he was like a [celestial] 'hero' (*pa'wo, dpa' bo*). This latter name was given to him and stuck, and would be the sobriquet by which his next incarnation [...] would be known.⁴²

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, furthermore, writes in the *Mirror* that this title followed him already when he was conceived in the womb of his future mother. The text reads that after the first dPa' bo had passed away, on the fourth day of the ninth month (*gro bzhin zla*) in the water-pig year (1503), the people of the region were gathered in order to make offerings and do circumambulations. During this time, the following event took place:

At noon on the eighth day, my [future] mother, who was performing a *gaṇacakra* ritual, was crying and suffering and making wishes to meet [me] face to face. When [she] passed by [my body] and touched the top of my head, it was clear that [I] had shifted from my absorption of luminosity, and therefore, it was determined that [I] would be born from this [woman]. Then [she] was given the instructions, such as to avoid contaminated food. This story was narrated many times in a line from one [person] to another. Then nine months later, [...] I was born from that woman, and therefore, all proclaimed that [I] was the rebirth of that lama.⁴³

With this unusual story, we are informed about how dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba took rebirth and was recognized by the public as the incarnation of the first dPa' bo, Chos dbang lhun grub. According to the same text, he was officially recognized a few years later by two disciples from his previous incarnation called Sha kya dhan dza (sixteenth cent.) and Sangs rgyas blo gros (sixteenth cent.) as well as the ruler Don yod rdo rje (section 3).

⁴² DiValerio 2011, 369. For a similar summary of this story with slightly different details, see also Rasmussen 2014a, who provides a brief overview of Chos dbang lhun grub's life. A somewhat longer overview of his life is found in DiValerio 2011, 368–73. Both authors also mention the Tibetan sources they used, which do not completely coincide.

⁴³ ML3, 231: *tshes brgyad nyin gung dus la bab pa'i tshe/ bdag gi ma yis tshogs 'khor khyer nas ni/ ngu zhing gdung zhal mjal bar gsol btab nas/ yol ba'i bar nas spyi bos gtugs pa'i mod/ thugs dam 'phos pa'i rnam pa gsal byung bas/ 'di las sku skye 'byung zhes kha tshon bcad/ grib zas sogs la 'dzems ces ngag yang bsgos/ gcig nas gcig brgyud mang gis glengs bar gyur/ de nas zla dgu ngo bcu 'das pa yi/ [...] bdag ni bu med de las btsas gyur pas/ kun gyis bla ma de yi sku skyer bsgrags/*. Khenpo Ngedon mentioned in a personal interview on April 8, 2007, Malaga, that it was clear for the people that the First dPa' bo lama had shifted from his absorption of luminosity (*lhugs dam 'phos pa'i rnam pa gsal byung bas*), because he released his meditation posture when the woman touched him.

In general, when the system of incarnation titles was established in Tibet, many of the masters received their incarnation titles retrospectively, like, for example, the first Dalai Lama incarnations, and the primary function of the titles was to bring about spiritual and political influence for both the lama and the one bestowing the title.⁴⁴ Snellgrove and Richardson (2003, 182) write that “[d]espite the mystique with which some Westerners like to regard the whole practice of reincarnating lamas, the custom was clearly adopted and maintained primarily for reasons of statecraft.”⁴⁵ In the case of dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba, it might also have been true that Don yod rdo rje gave dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba authority and significance by connecting him with the respected previous yogi called Chos dbang lhun grub, but at present we have no direct evidence proving this assumption.⁴⁶ According to dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba himself, the history of his reincarnation line is not explained as a “political move” or the like, and in fact, this seems to be quite an important point for him, because he expounds the abilities of his previous incarnation on several occasions in his text. Nevertheless, nothing can be determined with certainty at this point, and perhaps it is more interesting to look at what function this information has in the text and why it is so important for dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba to clarify it.

Here, as mentioned before, it is important to remember that the “spiritual autobiographies” were written for an inner circle of followers in order to generate trust and devotion. Therefore, when dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba writes about his previous incarnation as a great yogi, he strengthens his authenticity as a genuine Buddhist master and thereby, most likely, accomplishes this devotional aspect of the genre. A second point that is important to consider is the expectation that close students would have had when reading his spiritual biography. The narration of previous lives forms a literary topos that is often

⁴⁴ Snellgrove and Richardson (2003, 182) write that dGe ’dun rGya mtsho (1476–1542) was treated as the successor and reincarnation of dGe ’dun grub (1391–1474) and was only retrospectively regarded as the Second Dalai Lama. For an explanation on the Dalai Lama title and its significance, see Snellgrove and Richardson (2003, 184). The Third Karma pa, Rang ’byung rdo rje (1284–1339), was the first to establish the reincarnation system in Tibet (Schwieger 2015, 18–22). The First and Second Karma pas only got the title retrospectively. With the Karma pas, the role of the *bar do’i rnam thar* in this context is particularly interesting (Berounský 2010, 8; Gamble 2018, 78–80; Dell 2020, 43).

⁴⁵ For an analysis of how the Tibetan reincarnation system worked, see, e.g., Wylie 1978. For a more recent and extensive analysis of the circumstances that led to the development of the reincarnation system, see Schwieger 2015.

⁴⁶ DiValerio (2011, 372) presents Don yod rdo rje as one of the most important patrons of Chos dbang lhun grub, but whether he supported gTsong lag phreng ba in order to take political advantage of this cannot easily be concluded from that circumstance.

found in the *rnam thar* genre, and even more so in spiritual autobiographies. This is not surprising, as these Tibetan genres evolved from the Indian genres of Āvadānas and Jātakas.⁴⁷

4.2 Birthplace and Family Lineage

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba was born in spring, on the thirteenth day of the fourth month (*sa ga zla ba*) in the male wood-bird year (of the eighth cycle, 1504) when the moon and the Narma⁴⁸ (*snar ma*) star arose at the same time.⁴⁹ He was born in Urü Nyethang (*dbu ru'i snye thang*) in Central Tibet, south-west of Lhasa, in what is nowadays Chushyl (*chu shul*) county.⁵⁰ In the *Mirror*, the names of his parents are not mentioned, but in most of the other sources the father is designated as Bla ma dar and his mother as Lam rnyed sgrol ma.

It is consistently stated in all the sources, including the *Mirror*, that his paternal family clan (*rus*) was called the "Eastern Nyag" (*shar gyi snyags*) lineage. This clan's lineage descends directly from a royal family lineage (*rigs*) at the time of the Tibetan king gNya' khri btsan po, but at the time of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, this family lineage had degenerated to a secondary royal lineage. According to the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*, his family line (*gdung*) descends from one of the twenty-five legendary disciples of Guru Padmasambhava called gNyags dza nya Ku mā ra (eighth cent.), also known as gNyags Lo tsā ba.⁵¹

According to the *Mirror*, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba was born with his eyes wide open, and not much time passed before he said to various people: "May I benefit beings."⁵² These two early events are also

⁴⁷ For the relationship between autobiographies and cognate genres, see Roesler 2019, 7–8.

⁴⁸ In Sanskrit, this star is called *rohini*, while its Western name is Aldebaran (Duff 2009, *snar ma*).

⁴⁹ ML3, 231: *shing pho byi ba dpyid tha sa ga'i zla/ zla ba snar ma lhan cig spyod pa'i dus/ bdag ni bud med de las btsas gyur pas/*. BT1, 55: [...] *shing pho byi ba lo dpyid tha sa ga'i tshes bchu gsum gyi nyin yum la gnod pa med par sphyan hrig ge gzigs bzhin par 'grungs/*.

⁵⁰ For further geographical information, see Dorje 2004, 158–59, map 2.

⁵¹ ML3, 230: *bdag yul dbu ru'i snye thang zhes bya stel/ rus ni shar gyi snyags ches bya ba yin/ rigs ni rgyal rigs rgyal srid nyams gyur nas/ rje'ur lhung ba zhig yin pha ma gnyis/ dbul po chos ldan dad can zhig yin nol/*. BT1, 55: *sprul pa'i sku rgyal ba gtsug lag phreng ba ni/ sku ba ltams pa'i gnas dbu ru snye thang gi sgang rgyud bya bar gnyags dza nya'na ku ma'ra yi gdung rigs yab bla ma dar dang/ yum lam rnyed sgrol ma'i sras su [...]*. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's spelling of the family lineage "sNyags" seems to be an ancient spelling or misspelling of "gNyags" which is found in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* and in most available Tibetan–English dictionaries as well as in the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (e.g., Yisün 1985, *gnyags*; Duff 2009, *gnyags*).

⁵² ML3, 231: *mig ni ma zum bye bar skyes ces grag ring por ma lon ngag yang bye gyur stel/ ngag du sems can rnam pa sna tshogs la/ byis pas 'gro don nus par shog zhes pa/ 'di ni*

copied by the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1), by mKhas btsun bzang po (BD1), and in all the twentieth-century spiritual biographies presented in section 2.3 Twentieth-Century Compilations with almost the same wording. This event is evidently also an important element of a spiritual biography serving as an indication of high spiritual rank due to great amounts of positive residual karma. It also serves to inspire and bring about confidence and devotion in the minds of his followers.

4.3 Ordination Name

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received the name "gTsug lag phreng ba" from the Eighth Karmapa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, when he was twenty-nine years old (see section 4.4.), but of course, before this event, he received several other personal names.⁵³ He received one of his most renowned names when he obtained the *upāsaka* (*dge bsnyen*) and the *śrāmaṇera* (*dge tshul*) vows from the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos kyi grags pa, at the age of nine in Lhagyé Gangkyi Rawa (*lha brgyad gangs kyi rwa ba*).⁵⁴ However, there seems to be some confusion as to exactly what name he received at this point. An attempt to clarify this is made in the following section.

In the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*, one learns that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's full ordination name was "dPal Mi pham chos kyi rgyal po don thams cad yong su grub pa". dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba uses the abbreviation "Chos rgyal don grub" in the *Mirror*. The *Treasury of Knowledge* and the *Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdu*s render another abbreviation, namely "Mi pham chos kyi rgyal po."⁵⁵ A different, albeit similar, abbreviation is used in some modern works: In the *Bibliographical Dictionary* and another compilation work called *Gangs can mi sna grags can gyi 'khrungs 'das lo tshigs*

gtam gyi thog ma yin no skad/. See also the quote from the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* in the previous footnote (BT1, 55).

⁵³ It goes beyond the scope of this paper to explain all his personal names in detail. For example, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received the name sPrul sku Kun bzang dzam gling nyi ltar grags pa from Kun dga' bzang po when he was twelve years old (see section 4.4). Surprisingly enough, none of the sources mention that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received any new ordination name when he obtained the full *bhikṣu* ordination (*dge slong*); see, e.g., ML3, 232, and BT1, 57.

⁵⁴ Unfortunately, the place *lha brgyad gangs kyi rwa ba* could not be located; however, BDRC mentions a similar place name, *kaṃ po gangs kyi rwa ba* (BDRC, G2CN11114).

⁵⁵ The description of this account in the *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism* (BD1, vol. 9, 52) is completely identical to that in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1, 56), and the passage in the *Gangs can mkhas dbang* (GC1, 238) is identical with the passage in the *Treasury of Knowledge* (TK1, 173).

*re'u mig*⁵⁶ the authors provide “Mi pham chos kyi rgya mtsho” as an alternative name. This designation of “rgya mtsho” instead of “rgyal po” is probably a misspelling, as we have never seen it in any of the above-mentioned sources nor in his colophons. In the colophons, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba frequently mentions two personal names, namely “Mi pham chos kyi rgyal po don yongs su grub pa” and “gTsug lag phreng ba,”⁵⁷ but we have never seen the term “rgyal po” replaced with “rgya mtsho”.

4.4 Education

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's education is an extensive topic and cannot be dealt with in detail in this paper. In order to make it more manageable, only a few events where dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba met with some of his most influential teachers shall be depicted here. These events are his meetings with the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, dPal Chos kyi grags pa (1453–1524),⁵⁸ also known as Chos grags ye shes, and Karma 'Phrin las pa (1456–1539)⁵⁹ when he was nine years old, his meeting with dBus smyon Kun dga' bzang po (1458–1532)⁶⁰ when he was twelve years old, and lastly his meeting with his root lama, the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554),⁶¹ when he was twenty-nine years old.

The Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, dPal Chos kyi grags pa, has to be acknowledged here, because he was one of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's main lamas and acted as khenpo (*mkhan po*) when dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received his *upāsaka* and *śrāmaṇera* vows in 1512. After his ordination, he attended the Zhwa dmar pa for almost half a year and received explanations on The Four Dharmas of sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (*dwag po'i chos bzhi*) and the transmission on the special method for practicing mahāmudrā (*phyag chen*) according to the Drikung Kagyu tradition (*'bri gung bka' brgyud*) called *Inga ldan*.⁶²

⁵⁶ bSod nams don grub, *Gangs can mi sna grags can gyi 'khrungs 'das lo tshigs re'u mig*, 80. This compilation was not included in the overview in section 2.3, as it only contains tables with one row dedicated to dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba providing birth and death dates as well as the alternative name.

⁵⁷ For example, in the author's colophon of the *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* both names are used (see gTsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byun mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol. 2, 707; for a translation, see Dell 2021c, 148–49).

⁵⁸ BDRC, P317. For an extensive treatment of his life and works, see Mojzes forthcoming.

⁵⁹ BDRC, P815. For an extensive treatment of his life and works, see Rheingans 2021.

⁶⁰ BDRC, P814. For a short biography, see DiValerio 2018.

⁶¹ BDRC, P385. For an extensive treatment of his life and works, see Rheingans 2017.

⁶² ML3, 238: *dge tshul yongs su rdzogs pa'i bslab pa nos/ gnas ni lha brgyad gangs kyi rwa ba'i dbus/ 'brang rgyas ri zhol yangs ldan gtsug lag khang/ mkhan po don gyi slad tu mtshan smos pa/ rgyal ba zhwa dmar dbang gi cod pan can/ chos kyi grags pa ye shes dpal*

After this event, dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba went to Lhasa in Central Tibet where he met with the fifty-seven year old Karma 'Phrin las pa in the abbot quarters (*gzims khang*) of Thub chen.⁶³ This was indeed a very important encounter and for the next nineteen years dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba would attend and receive teachings from Karma 'Phrin las pa.⁶⁴ To begin with, he received the initiation of the "Buddha of Limitless Life" (Amitāyus) called *Tshe dpag med mgon lha dgu ma dze ta ri'i lugs*, and he got the daily practice of Nāropa's consort called Niguma (Grub rgyal ma) and the practice of an Indian master called Te bu. He also received permission-empowerments (*rjes gnang*) on many tantric deities (*yi dam*) and Dharma protectors (*chos skyong*), such as the various types of white and black Manjushri (*'jam dbyangs dkar nag mi g.yo dkar po*), the Hayagrīva ritual according to the tradition of master Zla ba rgyal mtshan (*'Byung 'dul rta mgren zla ba rgyal mtshan lugs*), the four protectors called *Zhwa na bzhi* and a Vajrayoginī practice. He also obtained many transmissions and instructions (*lung khrid*), such as the oral transmission lineage of the yogi Ngan rdzong ras pa Byang chub rgyal po (*Ngan rdzong snyan rgyud*), the oral transmission lineage of sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (*sGam snyan rgyud*) and the instructions on the Six Yogas of Mi tra (*Karma chos drug mi tra'i khrid drug*). He also received both complete and partial initiations and transmissions (*dbang lung tshang dang kha 'thor*) on the works of the Third Karma pa,

bzang nyid/ dge tshul nyid kyi las kyi slob dpon ni/ snar thang gdan sa sdom brtson shes pdal yin/ chos rgyal don grub ces par ming du btags/ mkhan po'i drung du spyang snga phyag chen dang/ lnga ldan dwags po'i chos bzhi'i rnam bshad thob/. According to Scheuermann (2015a, 122) the "Four Dharmas of Sgam po pa [...] is traditionally considered to be a short teaching of the stages of the path (*lam rim*) genre comprised of four concise formulations. [...] it is understood as a summarization of Sgam po pa's doctrinal system and described as the union of the Bka' gdams monastic system and the *mahāmudrā* meditation tradition." For an in-depth treatment of the subject, see also Scheuermann 2015b. For further information on the *lnga ldan* practice, see Sobisch 2003 and 2011. Sobisch has also, interestingly, pointed out (private communication, April 17, 2007, Copenhagen) that there is a *khrid yig* of the *lnga ldan* practice by the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa preserved in the *gDams ngag mdzod*, the treasury of instructions collection compiled by 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas; see dKon mchog yan lag, *Nyams rtogs nor bu'i 'byung gnas lnga ldan khrid yig rgya mtsho*.

⁶³ ML3, 238: *slar yang dbu ru lha ldan yul grur phyin/ dgung 'bring rgyal gyi zla ba'i tshes lnga la/ tub chen chos kyi 'khor lo'i sde chen por/ rgyal ba karma'i phrin las 'dzin pa'i zhabs/ dgung lo nga bdun bzhes pa cig mjal stel/*. According to Roerich (1996, 46) "lHa ldan" is equivalent to "lHa sa". BT1, 56: *lo de'i rgyal zla'i dkar tshes lnga la thub chen gzims khang du rje karma 'phrin las pa dang thog mar mjal te dgung lo dgu nas nyer brgyad bar du gtso cher rje de nyid bla mar bsten nas dam pa'i chos mtha' yas pa gsan nol/*.

⁶⁴ mKhas btsun bzang po (BD1, 52) writes that dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba stayed with Karma 'Phrin las pa until he was twenty-five, i.e., for only sixteen years, but this must be a mistake, as all other sources, including dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba himself, write that he stayed with Karma 'Phrin las pa until he was twenty-eight, i.e., for nineteen years.

Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339), the works of the Fourth Karma pa, Rol pa'i rdo rje (1340–1383), the works of the Sixth Karma pa, mThong ba don ldan (1416–1453) and others. Finally, he received many instructions based on Karma 'Phrin las pa's own experience (*nyams khrid*), such as the full summary of the one-taste (*rog cig*) teachings found in the mahāmudrā text *lHan cig skyes sbyor* and some instructions on Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's text called *sKu gsum ngo sprod*.⁶⁵ From the *Mirror*, it is not at all clear when and where dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received all these teachings and transmissions, as he mentions them all in one page. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba concludes this section by expressing his discontentment with his poor abilities and unfortunate circumstances during his time with Karma 'Phrin las pa:

Generally, I in fact adhered to this authentic [teacher], nevertheless, because [my] karmic lot was inferior, my diligence weak [and] the necessities for paying respect and serving [the teacher] was little and because [I adhered to this teacher] in connection with the time of [my general] studies [I] drank the Dharma-broth, the drops that [I got] during the other [studies], but I had no chance to drink from the deep and vast treasure of the Dharma-nectar.⁶⁶

Hence, even though dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba was not satisfied with his own abilities and the circumstances at the time of his studies, Karma 'Phrin las pa was a very significant teacher for him and accompanied him throughout his entire education. As mentioned by Rheingans (2021, 95), Karma 'Phrin las pa had a strong impact on dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's development, a fact that has not received the

⁶⁵ Among all the sources used, it is only the *Mirror* that briefly summarizes the teaching and transmissions dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba actually received from Karma 'Phrin las pa. Since the full Tibetan text of this passage is too long for a footnote, it is provided in Appendix B. It is noteworthy that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba did not receive the transmission of the Fifth Karma pa, De bzhin gShegs pa's (1384–1415) collected works. This may be because the Fifth Karma pa did not manage to compose many texts during his short lifetime. For information about the Fifth Karma pa's life, see, e.g., Sperling 1980, the short biography in the *Bibliographical Dictionary* (BD1, 21–22), and Douglas and White 1976, 61ff. For some brief information about the *Ngan rdzong snyan rgyud*, see Smith 2001, 41 and 61. For more information on the *sKu gsum ngo sprod* (*Direct Introduction into the Three Embodiments*), see Draszcyk 2018. This text is often attributed to the Third Karma pa, Rang byung rdo rje, as it mentions Rang byung rdo rje as its author. However, Rang byung rdo rje is also one of the names of the Second Karma pa, most commonly known as Karma Pakshi. Draszcyk (2018, 147–52) puts forward some convincing arguments why Karma Pakshi is the likely author of this text. For the text itself, see Karma Pakshi, *sKu gsum ngo sprod*.

⁶⁶ ML3, 239: *phal cher dam pa 'di la bsten mod kyang/ shas cher skal pa dman zhing brtson 'grus zhan/ bsti bstang sri zhu'i yo byad dman phyir dang/ klog pa'i dus dang 'brel ba nyid kyi phyir/ gzhan zhor zags ma'i chos khu 'thung ba las/ chos kyi bdud rtsi chu gter gting yangs la/ ji tsam 'dod par btung du ma byung ngo/.*

acknowledgment or appreciation it deserves. One illustration of this, for example, is the dream that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba had about Karma 'Phrin las pa when he was in retreat in Gro bo lung in a house called O rgyan bde chen rtse from 1526 to 1529. In this dream, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba sees geese flying from the southern direction to the north. One of the geese is bigger than the others and flying lower. When it approaches, he sees that it is in fact Karma 'Phrin las pa riding a red lion and holding a red sword.⁶⁷ He asks for Karma 'Phrin las pa's blessing and Karma 'Phrin las pa thereafter places his two hands and head on dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's head and tells him "Son, whatever you wish for today I will truly grant. [I] will make long life wishes for you to live a hundred years".⁶⁸ After this dream dPa' bo gTsug la phreng ba received various Dharma teachings and offerings from Karma 'Phrin las pa. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba writes that he took it as a sign and decided to enter into a long life retreat in sMyug la.⁶⁹

Another important event was dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's encounter with Kun dga' bzang po, also known as dBus smyon He ru ka chen po, the great madman of Ü.⁷⁰ This event is mentioned in the *Mirror* (ML3, 241), and in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1, 56), as well as in Kun dga' bzang po's life story.⁷¹ According to the spiritual autobiography, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba met with Kun dga' bzang po when he was twelve years old and they only stayed together for one week in Yerpa (*yer pa*), but it, nevertheless, made a lasting impression on him.⁷² When they met, Kun dga' bzang po told dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba that "In [my] past life, I was worthy of being your student and now I'm worthy of being your lama. I will bestow [on you]

⁶⁷ In the *Mirror* (ML3, 248–49) Karma 'Phrin las pa is not explicitly mentioned, but only referred to using the term *bla ma*. However, we can learn from the context and from other biographies, such as Karma 'Phrin las pa's biography authored by dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, that it was in fact Karma 'Phrin las pa whom he met. The same dream is also described in the section about Karma 'Phrin las pa's life in the *Feast of the Wise* (gTsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol. 2, 1163–64). Rheingans (2021, 152–52) translated this episode. It seems to be the only passage in the *Feast of the Wise* where dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba grants autobiographical insight (apart from the colophon).

⁶⁸ ML3, 249: *bu khyod de ring gsol ba gang 'debs pa/ de ni bdag gis dam par sbyin no gsung/ khyod nyid lo brgya'i bar du zhabs brtan pa/ de ni gsol 'debs ces brjod pa'i*.

⁶⁹ According to BDRC (G2CN11100), the Karma Kagyu monastery sMyug la legs bshad gling is associated to Karma 'Phrin las pa.

⁷⁰ Ehrhard 2010 provides a thoroughly annotated summary of the life of Kun dga' bzang po from the main Tibetan source in his article, while DiValerio 2016 provides a complete translation of it in his book. The main Tibetan source about his life is Ngag dbang grags pa and bShes gnyen rnam rgyal, *Kun dga' bzang po'i rnam thar ris med dad pa'i spu long g.yo 'byed*.

⁷¹ Ngag dbang grags pa and bShes gnyen rnam rgyal, *Kun dga' bzang po'i rnam thar...*, 635.

⁷² Yerpa is situated in Central Tibet; see Ferrari 1958, 43, and 103–104.

all instructions completely".⁷³ Hereafter, Kun dga' bzang po bestowed various pith instructions (*smar khrid*) such as the mahāmudrā teachings called *Phyag chen yig bzhi lnga ldan*,⁷⁴ the four different texts on the mahāmudrā, a text called *lHan cig skyes sbyor shog dril bzhi pa* (*The Four Scrolls of Co-emergence Yoga*),⁷⁵ the oral transmission lineage of Ras chung pa (*Ras chung snyan rgyud*), secret conduct teachings of Nāropa (*Na ro gsang spyod*) and long life instructions (*Grub rgyal tshe khrid*). Thereafter, Kun dga' bzang po made continuous wishes, gave a special scarf to dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba to wear when obstacles would occur in the future, and he also bestowed on him the name sPrul sku Kun bzang dzam gling nyi ltar grags pa.⁷⁶

Also, Kun dga' bzang po's spiritual biography contains a section about his meeting with dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba:

On one occasion, the reincarnation of Gampopa [the Second Pawo, Tsuklak Trengwa] came with his students to visit the Master. When he was received at the window to the Master's sealed retreat, the Master said that it was like when Gampopa Daö Zhönnu, "Youthful Moonlight," first went before noble Milarepa. [...] After welcoming the boy in that way, they cut his hair. The Master gave him all the profound Dharma teachings that he needed, including the *tummo* practice as transmitted by glorious Galo. After finishing the instructions, the Master gave the boy a deerskin rug, a mother-of-pearl ladle, a horn made from an antler, and other things, thereby establishing many avenues of dependent connection between them. Carrying those objects, and bearing within his heart the honey of great respect for the Master, the young Pawo went back to Dakpo in the Kongpo area.⁷⁷

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's meeting with Kun dga' bzang po indeed gives us significant information. Based on this encounter we learn that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba in his first incarnation, i.e., as the master Chos dbang Lhun grub, was the teacher of the well-known dBus smyon Kun dga' bzang po. Interestingly, this information is only

⁷³ ML3, 241: *sngon tshe kho bo slob ma'i 'os yin la/ da ni kho bo khyod kyi bla mar 'os/ gdams pa thabs cad rdzogs par sbyin no bsungl*. This quote is identical in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1, 56).

⁷⁴ For the *Phyag chen yig bzhi lnga ldan*, see the comment on *lnga ldan* in footnote 62.

⁷⁵ *lHan cig skyes sbyor* is a "practice for realizing [...] co-emergent wisdom" in the mahāmudrā system (Duff 2009, *lhan cig skyes sbyor*). For more information, see Schiller 2014 and Scheuermann 2015b.

⁷⁶ ML3, 241: *rten 'brel yod pas kho bos ming 'dogs ces/ sprul sku kun bzang dzam gling nyi zla ltar/ grags pa ces byar bdaq gi ming du btags/ nyid kyi sku las pus 'khyud phud nas ni/ re zhig 'di ni dad pa'i rten du chongs/ ma 'ongs 'cham pa'i dus su lus la gon/ rtsa rlung thabs kyi rten 'brel yod to gsungl*.

⁷⁷ DiValerio 2016, 172–73. His translation is from Ngag dbang grags pa and bShes gnyen rnam rgyal, *Kun dga' bzang po'i rnam thar...*, 635.

found in the *Mirror*, but not in Kun dga' bzang po' spiritual biography.⁷⁸

Hence, we can furthermore deduce that Chos dbang Lhun grub and also dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba must have had a noteworthy connection to the *smyon pa* tradition.⁷⁹ In relation to this, it is also interesting to note that dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba in the *Mirror* refers to his first dPa' bo incarnation as being a "powerful master of the yogis" (*rnal 'byor dbang phyug*). According to Rheingans (2004, 29), this was also a term that the disciples of the Seventh Karmapa frequently used to designate the *smyon pas*. Chos dbang Lhun grub was a contemporary to both the Seventh Karma pa and many of his students and therefore this information may also prove a link between the first dPa' bo master and the *smyon pa* tradition.

The last encounter that had a great influence on dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life was his meeting with the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje in his twenty-ninth year when he was travelling through Central Tibet on his way to Kong po. In dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's spiritual autobiography, this event is expressed with a lot of sentiment and devotion. He writes that his body hair stood on end, he could not stop crying, and forceful devotion developed in his mind.⁸⁰

After this first meeting, great renunciation arose in dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba and he decided to give all his worldly belongings to the Karmapa.⁸¹ After this point, the Karma pa asked dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba to draw an astrological chart and because the dPa' bo lama had done it very well, he bestowed upon him the new name "gTsong lag phreng ba" meaning "marvellous Dharma activities".⁸² The meeting with the Karmapa indeed seems to have been a turning point for

⁷⁸ In the translation of his life story by DiValerio (2016) no hint of Chos dbang Lhun grub being a teacher of Kun dga' bzang po is found.

⁷⁹ In the case of Chos dbang Lhun grub, evidence for playing a role in the *smyon pa* movement is also found elsewhere, see, e.g., DiValerio 2011, 368–73.

⁸⁰ ML3, 254: *bod yul lte ba dbus ri nag po'i rgyud/ kong yul bla med gsang sngags phyod pa'i zhing/ theng po 'bum pa sgang zhes bya ba ru/ sangs rgyas dngos su mjal ba'i skal ba thob/ rgyal ba'i pho brang chen po ring mo nas/ mthong ba tsam gyi lus kyi ba spu g.yos/ mig nas mchi ma'i char rgyun bzlog ma nus/ dad pa'i shugs drag rab tu rgyas pa'i sems/[...] dus gsum sangs rgyas kun gyis sku gsung thugs/ gcig du bsdus pa 'jig rten gsum gyi mgon/ bka' drin mtshungs med sphyan ras gzigs dbang gi zhal kyi dkyil 'khor zla ltar gsal ba mthong/*. Rheingans also occasionally touches aspects of their relationship in his monograph about the Eighth Karma pa (Rheingans 2017, 44, 67, 95, 101, 110).

⁸¹ Concerning dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba giving up all his worldly belongings, he writes (ML3, 254): *zang zing yo byad bdog pa ci mchis pa/ chags thogs med par mchod pa'i slaad du phul/ ngon tshe 'jig rten che thabs zang zing kun/ 'dor 'dod blos gtang shes pa rtag yod kyang/ rtsa na chod nyid tu 'dor bar ma nus mod/ bka' drin chen po mjal ba'i mod nyid la/ tshe 'di'i mdud pa rtsa na grol nyid tu song/*

⁸² ML3, 255: *rtsis kun bsdus pa'i ri mo thob cig gsung/ legs par btob pas gzigs pa'i tshul du mdzad/ gtsug lag phreng ba zhes byar ming du btags/*. In relation to the name "gTsong

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba and it makes one wonder why it happened so late in his life, but, unfortunately, the sources do not mention anything concerning this.

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received many teachings and transmissions from Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje, both when they met for the first time and also later on in the years to come. For example, he received the four initiations (*dbang bzhi*) of the Chakrasaṃvara ('*Khor lo sdom pa*) tradition of the Indian Siddha Ghantapāda (Dril bu), the four initiations of Hevajra with consort (*dGyes pa'i rdo rje yab bka' yum bka'*), cycles of Mahāmāyā (*sGyu ma chen po*), Kālacakra (*Dus kyi 'khor lo*) and Catuḥpīṭha with consort (*gDan bzhi yab bka' yum bka'*). He also received the bodhisattva vow many times according to both the tradition of Nāgārjuna (Klu sgrub) and Asaṅga (Thogs med), and much more.⁸³ Mi bskyod rdo rje requested him to be the scribe (*zin bris*) for Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje's explanations on the view (*lta*), practice (*sgom*) and conduct (*spyod pa*) according to the *Same Intention* (*dGongs pa gcig pa*) by 'Jig rten mGon po (1142–1217). Furthermore, the Karma pa asked him to compose the introductory chapter (*gleng gzhi*) and to make the final compilation of the *Same Intention* in order for Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje to put it all in his collected works.⁸⁴ This information

lag phreng ba," the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* states (BT1, 58): "*gtsug lag* is the general name of all the teachings of the *piṭaka* and all fields of knowledge and hence [it] does not mean *gtsug lag khang* which translates *vihāra* [in Sanskrit]. *Vihāramālā* [i.e., *gtsug lag phreng ba* in Tibetan] therefore means 'marvellous Dharma activities'". The Sanskrit etymologizing here seems somewhat inconsistent: Tibetan *gtsug lag* indeed means either "temple" or "field of knowledge" (*rigs gnas*), but the Sanskrit *vihāra* never comes to mean "field of knowledge". In that sense, it is strange to put his name into Sanskrit as *vihāramālā* after having said that it does not mean "temple" (*gtsug lag khang*). Our translation of *ches rmod pa'i las* (literally "activity of ploughing greatly") as "marvellous Dharma activities" is somewhat free, but tries to incorporate the preceding explanation of how *gtsug lag* is to be understood. He does an immense job in "ploughing" the fields of knowledge and the teachings of the *piṭaka*. The Tibetan text reads: *gtsug lag ni sde snod dang rigs gnas thams cad kyi spyi ming yin pas/ bi ha ra bsgyur ba'i gtsug lag khang gi don ni min pas bi ha ram a la bri ba rnams ni ches rmod pa'i las so/*.

⁸³ ML3, 255: *rgyal ba nyid kyi sku yi dkyil 'khor du/ 'khor lo sdom pa dril bu pa yi lugs/ dbang bzhi yongs su rdzogs par legs par btsal/ klu sgrub zhabs dang thogs med las brgyud pa'i/ smon pa dang ni 'jug pa'i sems skyed ste/ byang chub sems sdom lan grangs du mar gnang/*. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received a great number of transmissions and instructions from the Karmapa, which cannot all be mentioned here. Similarly to the situation with Karma 'Phrin las pa, also in the case of Mi bskyod rdo rje it is somewhat difficult to determine exactly when he received the different teachings and transmissions.

⁸⁴ ML3, 258: *dam chos dgongs pa gcig pa'i rgyas bshad bstal/ lta sgom sphyod pa'i tshoms la bdag nyid kyis/ gsungs las ji tsam nges pa zin bris bgyis/ lhag ma dka' ba'i gnas kyi 'gral pa tshal/ rgyal ba nyid kyis thog mar bsdu mdzad ste/ legs par btsal nas de nyid gleng gzhi dang/ bar gyi mtshams sbyor tha ma'i mthun 'gyur bcas/ zin bris nyid kyi tshul du gyis cig gsung/ de ltar bgyis ste bka' 'bum nang na bzhus/*. The "Same Intention" (*dgongs*

given by dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba is certainly interesting, as the status and history of the Eighth Karma pa's commentary was previously unknown. Through the documented interest of the Eighth Karma pa and the Sixth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos kyi dbang phyug (1584–1630), this text amounts to one of the most influential Kagyu texts on the “view, practice and conduct” (*lta sgom spyod pa*) topic.

dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba was one of the two main disciples of the Eighth Karmapa (the other being the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag) and he also wrote the most extensive extant spiritual biography of him, which is contained in his *Feast of the Wise*.⁸⁵

4.5 *Passing Away and Closest Students*

Another standard event that is depicted in all the spiritual biographies, except the spiritual autobiography (for obvious reasons), is dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's passing away. The *History of the Karma Kagyu School* describes that when dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba reached the sixtieth year he was not ill, but his physical strength had declined and he told his disciples: “Now, this is what my activity amounted to.”⁸⁶ He then dictated his testament to his secretary, but because he was requested to stay alive until the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag, had returned with the new incarnation of the Eighth Karma pa, he told the secretaries to keep his testament hidden and stayed for a little while more. As soon as Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag, had returned with the new incarnation, they met all together in Tsurphu (*mtshur phu*) monastery and the young Karma pa incarnation received the *śrāmaṇera* vows and got the name dPal Mi pham Chos kyi dbang phyug (1556–1603). Shortly after this event dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba passed away at the age of sixty-three at dawn on the sixteenth day of the tenth month in the male fire-tiger year of the ninth cycle (1566). The *History of the Karma Kagyu School* holds that before he passed away

pa gcig pa or short *dgongs gcig*) is a text consisting of vajra utterances of the 'Bri gung bka' bryud founder, 'Jig rten mgon po rin chen dpal (1143–1217), collected by his disciple Shes rab 'byung gnas (1187–1241). Sobisch (2002, 329–35, and 335–39) provides a summarized biography of both. He also provides an outline of Shes rab 'byung gnas' *dgongs gcig* work and lists several commentaries of it, among them one from the Eighth Karmapa (Sobisch 2002, 339–41); he recently published a book where he dives deep into the subject based on a translation of Shes rab 'byung gnas' text and several commentaries (Sobisch 2020).

⁸⁵ Rheingans 2017, 67. For the spiritual biography, see gTsong lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, vol. 2, 1206–1334.

⁸⁶ BT1, 60: *de nas dgung lo drung cu'i skabs zhig sku zhed chung ba tsam ma gtogs bsnayun gzhi gzhan med kyang da ni kho bo'i bya ba de tsam yin/ gsungs tel*. The description of the following events is also based on the *History of the Karma Kagyu School* (BT1, 60–61). dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba acted as scribe for the Eighth Karmapa for several of his works (Rheingans 2017, 44).

his students persistently requested him to give further instructions on where he would take rebirth, but dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba just said: "It will not be difficult for you, the spiritual son will see the teacher". Furthermore, later on the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag, also said that "the reincarnation of the Dharma master will come as a Buddhist monk and [we] will be certain without disputes."⁸⁷

In dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's lifetime, some of his main students were the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag (1525–1583), and the Fourth rGyal tshab, Grags pa don grub (1550–1617).

5. Some Notes on His Works

dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba spent a great deal of his life composing texts. However, until recently, his collected works were not easily available. Erwan Temple compiled a *dkar chag* of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's collected works, which he published on the internet (Temple 2006). BDRC holds a work called *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung phyogs bsdus* (*Collection of the Teachings of dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba*). It consists of four volumes and contains a number of different texts of his, most of which are written in *dbu med*.⁸⁸ In 2019, the printing house Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying khang published his collected works in a modern book version comprising fourteen volumes. The texts were collected and edited by the research institute dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. The full text of this dPal brtsegs edition is also available via BDRC.⁸⁹

All three sources about dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's collected works differ in terms of which titles are included. The attribution of texts to authors can sometimes be tricky. It exceeds the scope of this paper to present the complete *dkar chag* of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's collected works or to analyze and discuss the differences mentioned above, though this is certainly a worthwhile undertaking for the future. Instead, only some of his most extensive and famous works shall be introduced here briefly:

1. *Religious History: Feast of the Wise* (*Chos byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*)
2. *Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra* (*sPyod 'jug gi 'grel pa*)

⁸⁷ BT1, 60: *khyed rang tsho la dka' las mi yong ste yab sras kyis gzigs yong gsungs pa'i bka' phebs tsam las ma byung ba phyis phyis rje dkon mchog yan lag gig sung las chos rje rin po che'i sku skye ban dher byon pa de rtsod med nges 'drons rang yin gsung byung ba [...]*. According to BDRC, P1385, the new incarnation, called dPa' bo gTsug lag rgya mtsho, was born in 1567/1568. For a short summary of his life, see Rasmussen 2014b.

⁸⁸ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung phyogs bsdus*. BDRC: W3CN17900.

⁸⁹ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*. BDRC: W3CN25711.

3. *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury* (rTsis kyi btsan bcos rin chen gter mdzod)

4. *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]* (Phag mo'i rnam bshad chen po)⁹⁰

5.1 *Feast of the Wise*

A Feast of the Wise is a milestone in Tibetan religious history.⁹¹ dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba composed this extensive work, comprising five parts, over approximately two decades. The first part contains a general description of the external world, the second part includes a history of the origin and development of Buddhism in India, the third and most extensive part comprises a history of Tibet. Part 4 presents the history of Khotan, Early China, Tangut, Mongolia, and Later China, and the fifth part covers the five fields of knowledge. The opus has a strong focus on the history of the Karma Kagyu school and especially on the Karma pas life stories, which make up about one third of the whole text. A second focus is on the imperial period, where his work is highly praised for its accurate use of sources such as edicts and inscriptions. dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba writes in his colophon that the writing of this work was inspired by his own wishes as well as the persistent encouragement of the great ruler (*sa skyong ba chen po*) bSod nams rab brtan (sixteenth century).⁹² He started to compose the work in the female wood-snake year (1545) when he was forty-two years old and finished the composition when he was sixty in the second month of the male wood-bird year (1564) in the large temple dPal sangs rgyas mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa.⁹³ In the dPal brtsegs edition, the *Feast of the*

⁹⁰ For references to the Tibetan text of all four works, see the respective sections below; for the colophons in Tibetan, see Appendix A.

⁹¹ For referencing, the following block print reproduction is used: gTsong lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byun mkhas pa'i dga' ston. A detailed history of the development of Buddhism in India and Tibet*. There are a number of other editions not included in our bibliography. For an overview of these and an extensive outline and introduction of the work, see a recently published article in this journal (Dell 2021c). There is no comprehensive translation of this work, but many scholars refer to it, and some have translated comparatively short passages of it (e.g., Rheingans 2021, 149–55, and Dell 2020, 48–51; 2021a, 86–89; 2021b; forthcoming).

⁹² The identification of bSod nams rab brtan is not completely certain. It could be Karma mi pham bsod nams rab brtan. According to BDRC, he was the “ruler of the *yar stod* principality; a supporter of the *karma kaM tshang* tradition” (BDRC, P10352). For further discussion of the sponsors of this work, see Dell 2021c, 113–14.

⁹³ Lit. “the big temple where the unchanging [state of] the glorious Buddha is accomplished spontaneously”. This is the name of the temple of bSams yas monastery given by BDRC (G287) as dPal lugs gsum mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khang. On the importance of this place for dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba, see Dell 2021c, 149, footnote 104.

Wise covers four of the fourteen volumes.⁹⁴

5.2 Commentary to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*

In the colophon of the *Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra*,⁹⁵ one learns that this work comprises a coarse explanation of the "word meaning" (*tshig don*) of Shantideva's commentary, a division explaining the difficult points, and a full explanation of the general points of the treatise. Furthermore, he renders the special differences found in all Indian and Tibetan commentaries, and he has in particular taken as witness the teachings of the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje.⁹⁶

Brunnhölzl (2004) has taken the first steps with his publication of the translation of the ninth chapter of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's commentary to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. According to him (Brunnhölzl 2004, 613–14), dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's commentary is, together with the Eighth Karma pa's *Chariot of the Tagpo Siddhas*,⁹⁷ the standard presentation of Madhyamaka in the Kagyu school. In addition to this, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba also quotes a number of earlier Tibetan commentaries written by masters such as Sabsang Mati Panchen Jamyang Lodro (1294–1376) and the Kadampa master Tsonaba Chenpo Sherab Sangpo (fourteenth cent.). The *History of the Karma Kagyu School* also briefly comments on this work and writes that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba composed the *Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra* in order to preserve Mi bskyod rdo rje's position on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.⁹⁸

According to the colophon, dPa' bo gTsug la phreng ba started the composition in Southern Tibet, in the meditation hut of spontaneous accomplishment [of] the empowerment of the female noble one, at the mountain of accomplishment (*gangs can gyi lho'i cha grub pa'i ri bo 'phags ma'i skur lhun gyis grub pa'i bsam gtan gyi khang bu*). He completed it in the fire-dragon year (1556), when he was fifty-three years old. The place of completion is indicated as his seat, at Gro bo lung monastery in Lho brag, more specifically in the famous Milarepa tower (*stras*

⁹⁴ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*, vols. 1–4.

⁹⁵ For referencing, the dPal brtseg edition is used, gTsug lag phreng ba, *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam par bshad pa theg chen chos kyi rgya mtsho zab rgyas mtha' yas pa'i snying po zhes bya ba*. There are a number of other editions not included in our bibliography, see e.g., BDRC, W7500 (block print), W3CN21622 (block print), W1KG23091 (book), and W30014 (part of a book).

⁹⁶ The text contains three rather extensive colophons: one by dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba himself, one colophon by the sponsors of the compilation and printing of the original work, and one last colophon by the supervisor of the actual printing. Here, only the colophon by dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba himself is considered (Appendix A).

⁹⁷ Mi bskyod rdo rje, *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad dpal ldan dus gsum mkhyen pa' zhal lung dwags brgyud grub pa'i shing rta*.

⁹⁸ BT1, 62: *rje brgyad pa'i bzhed pa skyong ba'i spyod 'jug gi rgyas 'grel [...]*.

mkhar).⁹⁹ In the dPal brtsegs edition, the *Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra* makes up two of the fourteen volumes.¹⁰⁰

5.3 *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury*

In the colophon of the *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury*,¹⁰¹ dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba writes that the text contains the teachings of all the commentaries on astrology in only one volume. By “all the commentaries,” dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba might refer to “all the commentaries by the Third Karma pa” because in the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*, it is explicitly written that it “[...] contains all the astrological teachings of the Third Karmapa Rang byung rdo rje.”¹⁰² This work thus forms a specific Karma Kagyu commentary providing the astrological tradition of the Third Karma pa. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba composed the first two chapters when he arrived at Nagpu (*nags phu*) in his thirty-third year in the fire-monkey year (1536).¹⁰³ He finished the composition in the summertime, when he was thirty-four years old, staying in the mountains surrounding Samye (*bsam yas*). In the dPal brtsegs edition, the *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury* makes up about one of the fourteen volumes.¹⁰⁴

5.4 *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]*

The *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]*¹⁰⁵ explains the esoteric meditation practice on Varjayoginī according to the Kagyu tradition.¹⁰⁶

⁹⁹ In the colophon (Appendix A), the place name is given as *gDan sa chen po dpal gro bo lung sras mkhar sprul pa'i pho brang*. For further discussion of the place, see also footnote 17.

¹⁰⁰ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*, vols. 5 and 6.

¹⁰¹ For referencing, the block print edition is used: gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i man ngag rtsis kyi bstan bcos kun las btus pa chen po'i rgyas 'grel rin po che'i gter mdzod*. There are a number of further editions, some of which are found at BDRC, e.g., W1CZ1984, W30023.

¹⁰² BT1, 62: *rang byung ba'i rtsis kun bsdus pa'i 'grel par in chen gter mdzod*/. With respect to this, it is also interesting to note that according to the *Mirror* (ML3, 245) dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba receives teachings on the Third Karma pa's astrology from Karma 'Phrin las pa when he is around twenty-four or twenty-five.

¹⁰³ For further information on Nagpu, see Roerich 1996, 493–94.

¹⁰⁴ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*, vols. 8.

¹⁰⁵ For referencing, the dPal brtseg edition is used: gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPal rje btsun rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i gsang ba'i sgrub thabs kyi rnam par bshad pa zab mo rnam 'byed*. There are a number of other editions, some of which are found at BDRC, e.g., W26626 (block print), W8LS31174 (block print), W30282 (*dbu med*), W3CN1539 (*dbu med*), W4CZ355757 (*dbu med*).

¹⁰⁶ For further details on the Vajrayoginī ritual, see, e.g., English 2002.

In the colophon, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba mentions that he completed this text in Tsāri (*tsā ri tra*).¹⁰⁷ Supplementing the colophon, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's spiritual autobiography, the *Mirror*, provides some information on the text. There, one learns that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba received instructions on the Vajrayoginī practice at an early age, and that it seems that he had a special connection to this deity. One event that illustrates this quite well is the second time when dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba meets his teacher Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, at the seat of rTa bar rgyal 'dzin tshal gung. dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba writes that Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje said the following to dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba:

“The activity of the supreme siddhis is no other than yoginī practice. When you came here, there was the good ripening of dependent arising that my nectar [pills] turned into camphor and therefore you should do the yoginī practice!” [Then Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje] gave the instructions on the Vajrayoginī sādana.¹⁰⁸

In this way, he received a specific instruction by Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje to do the Vajrayoginī practice and also to make the nectar pills. According to the *History of the Karma Kagyu School*, great signs appeared when they made the ritual, and the nectar pills turned into camphor. Furthermore, it is written there that the pills were inserted into a physical representation of enlightened body, speech or mind (*rten*; e.g., a statue or a stūpa) in Zur mang, and he had even seen them himself.¹⁰⁹ dPa' bo's *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]* is the central Karma bKa' brgyud text for this practice, used in the three-year retreat programs of this lineage.¹¹⁰ In the dPal brtsegs edition, the *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]* makes up most of one of the fourteen volumes.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ For the colophon, see Appendix A. Tsāri is a mountain located in southern Tibet and is one of the most important pilgrimage sites (Treasury of Lives, “Tsāri”). Huber (1999) dedicated a book to this pilgrimage site.

¹⁰⁸ ML3, 255: *mchog gi dngos grub sgrub pa'i nye rgyu ni/ rnal 'byor ma yi sgrub pa las zhan med/ khyod nyid phyin tshe kho bo'i bdud rtsi ni/ ga bur gyur pa'i rten 'brel yang 'grig pas/ rnal 'byor ma yi sgrub pa gyis cig gsung/ phag mo'i sgrub thabs man ngag bcas pa gnang/*.

¹⁰⁹ BT1, 58: *dpon slob lngas bsgrub pa nar tags khyad par can mang byung/ bdud rtsi ga pur du gyur pa ni zur mang pa'i rten khrod du bzhugs pa bdag gis kyang mjal/*. The same event is described in greater detail in the *Mirror* (ML3, 255). For the location of Zur mang, see Dorje 2004, 535–36.

¹¹⁰ Personal interview with Khenpo Ngedon on April 8, 2007, Malaga.

¹¹¹ gTsug lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*, vols. 7.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, some hitherto unknown aspects of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's life and works have been elucidated. Through translation and comparative analysis of a number of spiritual biographies and autobiographies, it has been determined that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba was born in 1504 in Central Tibet into the paternal family lineage called the Eastern Nyag. He received the *upāsaka* and *śrāmaṇera* vows in 1512 from the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, dPal Chos kyis grags pa, and received the name dPal Mi pham chos kyi gyal po don thams cad yongs su grub pa. Some of his main teachers were the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Karma 'Phrin las pa, dBus sMyon Kun dga' bzang po, and the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rDo rje. From them, he received an inconceivable amount of teachings and transmissions. From the accounts explaining his scholarly education we learn, among other things, that especially Karma 'Phrin las pa had a huge impact on dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba, as the young dPa' bo met him at the early age of nine and studied under him for nineteen years. Furthermore, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's strong connection to dBus smyon Kun dga' bzang po is significant because it indicates his bond to the sMyon pa tradition, both in his first and second incarnation. Lastly, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's meeting with the Eighth Karma pa was a major event in his life, and in his spiritual biography he expounds extensively on his devotion to and trust in him. During their first encounter, the Karma pa gave him the name "gTsug lag phreng ba," and later on he entrusted him with important tasks such as being the scribe for his *Same Intention* teachings, writing the introduction, and making the final compilation of the text. He was also deemed one of his key disciples, next to the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa.

Lastly, we have contributed with a few remarks on some of his most famous writings based on the colophons and passages found in the spiritual biographies. Through these text passages, we learn that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba spent almost twenty years composing his *Feast of the Wise* and finished it in 1564, only a couple of years before he died. Furthermore, it has become clear that dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's commentary to the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is an extensive work where he makes references to both early Indian and Tibetan commentaries. In the composition of this work, he particularly relied on the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje's teachings, and composed them into a text in order to preserve the Karma pa's position on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. We also learn that his famous work the *Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury* is a one-volume text comprising all the astrological teachings of the Third Karma pa, Rang 'byung rdo rje. He composed it within one year and finished it in the area of Samye in 1537.

Furthermore, we learn that he completed his *Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [practice]* text in Tsāri. It is clear from the spiritual biographies that he had a very close connection to this practice. He already started to recite the Vajrayoginī ritual at the age of six, and received various teachings on this practice from the Eighth Karma pa and others.

With this paper, we have shed some new light on the life and works of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba and taken further steps in exploring this interesting and influential Karma Kagyu master. Further research on his life and works will be of immense value in terms of our understanding of Tibetan historical and philosophical writing, as well as Buddhist practice in the Karma Kagyu lineage in the sixteenth century. An important contribution could, for example, be to further investigate his *Nine Sections* and his *Very Hidden Talk*. The *Mirror* also contains several interesting passages that belong to the secret level, such as dreams and visions, which have been left out of this paper. It could be interesting to analyze those that appear not only in the *Mirror* but also in his other spiritual autobiographies. Last but not least, dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba's works definitely deserve a more detailed study, especially now that his collected works have recently become easily available in the dPal brtsegs edition.

Appendix A: Colophons

In Appendix A, the colophons of the three different autobiographies of dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba (section 2.1) are presented, as well as the colophons of his works presented in section 5. For an English summary of the information from the colophons, see these mentioned sections. Here only the Tibetan text is included for the interested reader.

Mirror (Reflecting the Illusory Countenance)

rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa 'khrul pa'i bzhin ras 'char ba'i me long zhes bya ba
 'di ni/ lugs gnyis kyi yon tan rgya chen po mnga' ba bying pa chos kyi rje kun
 spangs pa lcam sring gis thog mar nan tan ches chen pos bskul bar mdzad pa'i
 rgyu dang/ lho gnas mchog dpal gyi ts'a ri tra'i gtsug gi nor bu rdo rje 'dzin
 pa kun dga' rnam par rgyal ba'i gsung gis 'phral du bskul ba'i rkyen lhan cig
 pa las bcom ldan 'das mi skyod zhabs snying gi dbus su 'dzin pa bsod snyoms
 pa gtsug lag phreng ba rang nyid kyi rang lo so dgu pa lcags mo glang gi lo
 nag pa'i zla ba la lho gnas mchog dpal gyi ts'a ri tra/ bde chen rigs bsod kyi
 pho brang/ kun snang sgyu 'phrul gyi zhing khams chen po'i cha/ yul smad
 mkha' 'gro'i pho brang gi bye brag/ dpal ldan lha mo re ma ti'i pho brang/

*nags tshal stug po'i dbus rong chung bsam gtan gyi khang bur sbyar ba'o'*¹¹²

Nine Sections

/bsod snyoms pa gtsug lag rgya mtsho'i phreng ba can ming gzhan mi pham chos kyi rgyal po yongs su grub pas nyang stod 'brug phu gser khang gi gdan sa pa ston sgom kirt'i zhwa ras rje btsun mar pas byin gyis brlabs pa'i dpal shar kha ras chen gyi rnam thar nyid kyis mdzad pa/

dpal 'byor thob tshul/ thos bsam mdzad tshul/ dka' ba spyad de gnas bskor tshul/ smin grol gyi gdams pa zhus tshul/ sgom sgrub mdzad tshul/ sngags spyod mdzad tshul/ lhag pa'i lha gzigs tshul/ skye ba dran tshul/ gzhan don mdzad tshul/

*te don dgur bsodus pa zhig bstan nas khyad nyid kyi tshe 'di'i tshul 'di lta bur bsodus pa zhig dad pa'i rten du dgos zhes bskul ba don dang ldan par bya ba'i phyir don tshan dgu pa de nyid gzhir byas te rnal 'byor dbang phyug dam pa de lta bu'i yon tan bdag la mi ldan pas gser gyi mdun du lcags nag po bzhin du ngo tshar zad mod kyang tshe 'di ci dgar btang nas cung zad lon pas ngo tsha ba med pa'i phyir ji lta bar sprul pa'i pho brang chen po sras mkhar dgyes pa rdo rje'i gzhal med khang du lcags pho khyi lo sku mkhar gser thog gi dus thun mtshams gnyis su bkod pa'o'*¹¹³

Very Hidden Talk

*de ltar bdag gi ngang tshul 'ga' zhig ni// gsal rab byas mod yul du ma ru// bgrod dang de tshe brnyed dang ma rnyed dang// grags dang ma grags bde sdug myong ba sogs// phal pa'i sgrung gtam brjod par ma byas so// 'di dag rnams las zab cing rgya che'i gtam//[...] 'on yang nyams su myong ba'i mig med pa// de dag skrag dang dmod pa spong ba'i phyir// 'di ni bdag la sems dang nyams myong gi// mig ldan mchod pa dam pa 'ga' zung las// gzhan la nam yang bstan par mi bya ste// zab cing rab tu zab pa sba bar byos// rdo rje'i bka' drung gnod sbyin bzhi po dang// dpal ldan dud pa'i sol ba ma dang ni// bdud ngon chen po traksha 'khor bcas la// gtad to gnyer ro srungs cig sba bar gyis// chos 'di gang gis 'dzin par byed pa de'i// mi mthun tshar chod 'dod dgu sgrub par mdzod// mchog gi dam pa'i dge legs snang ba ni// dzam gling khyab par rab du brdal gyur tsam// rdo rje rnal 'byor pa gtsug lag phreng bas rang gi tshul cung zad gsal bar byas pa de rab tu gsang//*¹¹⁴

Feast of the Wise

dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur pa rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya [...] rang gi dad pa'i blo dang/ sa skyon pa chen

¹¹² ML3, 264–65.

¹¹³ NS1, fols. 23r.5–24r.3.

¹¹⁴ VH1, fols. 20–21.

po bsod nams rab brtan gyis bskul bar mdzad pa'i rkyen las/ shakya'i dge slong
 dus gyi dbang gis chos smra ba'i re mos su son pa mi pham chos kyi rgyal po
 don yongs su grub pa ming gzhan gtsug lag gi phreng ba 'dzin pas rang lo
 zhe gnyis pa la skabs dang po gsum pa brtsams shing/ phyis rang lo drug bcu
 pa'i skabs ci rigs par le'u lhag ma rnams bris shing re gcig pa shing pho byi
 ba'i lo hor zla gnyis pa' tshes gcig la dpal sangs rgyas mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub
 pa'i gtsug lag khang chen po grub par bgyis pa dge bar mthar phyin to//¹¹⁵

Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra

byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i gzhung don rnam par bshad pa
 theg pa chen po'i chos kyi rgya mtsho zab rgyas mtha' yas pa'i snying po/ zhes
 bya ba 'di ni gzhung bsod don du bcings/ tshig don rags par bshad/ dka' ba'i
 gnas bya brag tu phye/ med du mi rung ba'i spyi'i don rnams kyang gtan la
 phab/ rgya bod kyi 'grel pa mtha' dag gi khyad par tha dad pa brjod/ gtso bor
 rgyal ba'i gsung rab chen po rnams dang shing rta'i srol gnyis kyi bstan bcod
 kho na'i ched du rig pa'i gnas dang/ sde snod dang rgyud sde'i phyogs tsam
 'jin pa dus kyi dbang gis chos smra ba'i re mos su son zhing gangs can gyi
 dbus 'gyur tshal lha ldan gyi ljongs su byung ba shakya'i dge slong du khas
 'che ba mi pham chos kyi ryal po don thams cad yongs su grub pa ming gzhan
 gtsug lag rgya mtsho'i phreng ba can gyis gzhan la phan pa'i lhag pa'i bsam
 pa kho nas gangs can gyi lho'i cha grub pa'i ri bo 'phags ma'i skur lhun gyis
 grub pa'i bsam gtan gyi khang bur mgo brtsams de/ gangs can gyi ljongs 'dir
 bka' brgyud du grags pa thams cad kyi chu rgyud gyi 'byung gnas ri bo gangs
 can lta bur gyur pa/ gdan sa chen po dpal gro bo lung sras mkhar sprul pa'i
 pho brang du/ rang lo lnga gsum pa me 'brug gi lo la sangs rgyas mi 'gyur
 lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khangs chen po legs par grub pa dang lhan gcig
 par tha skar gyi zla ba'i dkar tshes bcu gnyis kyi snga dro legs par grub pa'ol
 sems can thams cad la phan bde rgya chen po 'byung la dar zhing rgyas par
 gyur cig//¹¹⁶

Treatise on Astrology: The Precious Treasury

rtsis kyi bstan bcos kun las btus pa chen po'i rgyas 'grel rin po che'i gter
 mdzod kun nas kha yongs su bye ba zhes bya ba bstan bcos thams cad kyi glegs
 bam gcig tu nye bar gnas pa 'di ni mang du thos pa'i dge slong bsod snyoms
 pa gtsug lag phreng ba ming gzhan mi pham chos kyi rgyal po don yongs su
 grub pas gdong ngan nam me spre'i lo ston zla ba rang lo so gsum pa'i dus

¹¹⁵ gTsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byun mkhas pa'i dga' ston. A detailed history of the development of Buddhism in India and Tibet*, vol. 2, 706–7. For a translation of the colophon, see Dell 2021c, 147–49.

¹¹⁶ gTsug lag phreng ba, *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam par bshad pa theg chen chos kyi rgya mtsho zab rgyas mtha' yas pa'i snying po zhes bya ba*, vol. 6, 499–500.

*sgar chen 'dzam gling gi rgyan chen po dpal ldan nags phu'i ri bor gdan phab pa'i tshe klog pa'i grar rtogs pa phyi ma'i le'u gnyis pa yan grub par bgyis cing slar rang lo so bdun pa kun ldan gyi lo dbyar zla tha chung gi dkar po'i phyogs la chos 'khor bsam yas dang nye ba'i ri bo'i mgul du rdzogs par sbyar ba'o*¹¹⁷

Detailed Exegesis on the Vajrayoginī [Practice]

[...] *dpal lhan cig skyes ma'i gsang ba'i sgrub thabs zhal gdams dang man ngag gis brgyan te gsal bar phye ba 'di ni rdo rje'i slob ma'i don du rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug gtsug lag phreng bas grub pa'i pho brang tsā ri tra ye shes kyi 'khor lor sbyar ba bde legs su grub bo*//¹¹⁸

Appendix B: Teachings Received from Karma 'phrin las pa

The teachings received from Karma 'phrin las pa as enumerated in the *Mirror* were summarized in English in section 4.4. However, the Tibetan text was too long for a footnote. Therefore, it is presented here.

rgyal ba karma'i phrin las 'dzin pa'i zhabs/ dgung lo nga bdun bzhes pa cig mjal ste/ thog mar tshe dpag med mgon lha dgu ma/ dze te ri yi lugs kyi dbang bskur mdzad/ grub rgyal ma dang te bu'i rgyun khyer gnang/ 'jam dbyangs dkar nag mi g.yo dkar po dang/ 'byung 'dul rta mgrin zla ba rgyal mtshan lugs/ shwa na bzhi bskor phag mo 'dbang bka' dang/ ber nag lcam dral chos skyong phran lngar bcas/ tshogs bdag dmar chen ku ru kulle dang/ gur zhal dur khrod bdag po la sogs pa'i/ yi dam chos skyong du ma'i rjes gnang ni/ sgrub thabs yig snar bcas pa du ma dang/ ngan rdzong snyan rgyud sgam po snyan rgyud dang/ karma chos drug mi ta'i khrid drug sogs/ lung khrid mang zhig gzhan zhor tsam du thob/ phyi dus klog pa kha thon byed tshe yang/ sbyong dkyil bcu gnyis dbang rgyud 'grel par bcas/ dus mkhyen rol pa'i zhabs dang de bzhin gshegs/ don ldan zhabs kyi bka' 'bum tshang ba dang/ rang byung bka' 'bum po ti gnyis la sogs/ dbang lung tshang dang kha 'thor mang zhig thob/ lhan cig skyes sbyor ro snyoms sgang dril dang/ sku gsum ngo sprod la sogs khrid kyi tshigs/ mang nyams khrid lta bu'i tshul du gnang/ lo dgu nas ni rang lor nyer brgyad bar//¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ gTsong lag phreng ba, *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i man ngag rtsis kyi bstan bcos kun las btus pa chen po'i rgyas 'grel rin po che'i gter mdzod*, fol. 209r.

¹¹⁸ gTsong lag phreng ba, *dPal rje btsun rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i gsang ba'i sgrub thabs kyi rnam par bshad pa zab mo rnam 'byed*, 512.

¹¹⁹ ML3, 238–39. For the English rendering, see section 4.4.

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The Buddhist Practice of Mindfulness and its Adoption in Non-Religious Settings

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Introduction

In the context of impacts of Buddhist ideas and practices on international cultural notions I would like to look at some of the ways in which the practice of mindfulness which originated in Buddhism has entered various areas of secular society in many parts of the world, in particular in the fields of healthcare, education, stress management, and psychological self-care. In fact, this is a dynamic movement which started approximately fifty years ago and has been accompanied by ongoing scientific research in the areas of neuroscience and psychology.

I would like first of all to look at certain perspectives on mindfulness in Buddhism with the intention of highlighting some of the reasons why certain of its aspects meet with such strong interest internationally. Secondly, I would like to point to some of the conditions which contributed to Buddhist notions of mindfulness coming into the focus of secular societies worldwide. Finally, I would like to share some of my thoughts concerning the question whether, and if so, to which extent nowadays secular applications of mindfulness still mirror original Buddhist notions of it.

The Buddhist Practice of Mindfulness, some perspectives

To begin with, I would like to quote the German Bhikkhu Nyanaponika Thera (1901–1994), one of those early Western Buddhist practitioners whose translations of Pāli sources had a lasting impact on the perception and adoption of Buddhism in the West. Regarding mindfulness, he wrote in his book *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* published in 1954:

Right Mindfulness is, in fact, the indispensable basis of Right Living and Right Thinking—everywhere, at any time, for everyone. It has a vital message for all: not only for the confirmed follower of the Buddha and his Doctrine (Dhamma), but for all who

endeavor to master the mind that is so hard to control, and who earnestly wish to develop its latent faculties of greater strength and greater happiness (...) for that vast, and still growing, section of humanity that is no longer susceptible to religious and pseudo-religious sedatives, and yet feel, in their lives and minds, the urgency of fundamental problems of a non-material kind calling for solution that neither science nor religions of faith can give.¹

At the time Bhikkhu Nyanaponika may not have anticipated to which extent in the 21st century, Buddhist based mindfulness practice has, in fact, become quite easily accessible in many parts of the world and outside of Buddhist communities.

Let us now have a short look at mindfulness, which is the common English term for what is called *sati* in Pāli, *smṛti* in Sanskrit, and *dran pa* in Tibetan. In fact, mindfulness lies at the core of Buddhism in that the spiritual development encouraged by the Buddha essentially depends on a differentiating and reflective type of introspection by means of which one is able to perceive one's own conditioned impulses and to learn how to deal with them in wholesome ways. This makes it possible to eventually counteract habituated tendencies of desire, aversion, and ignorance which otherwise perpetuate pain and suffering. From this perspective, mindfulness is what weaves together the moral conduct, the philosophical view, and the training in meditation—and thus all aspects of the entire fabric of Buddhist practice. How would an adept be able to engage in wholesome ethics without mindful awareness of his or her feelings, thoughts and actions? How would an adept be able to develop and integrate right views in the absence of mindful awareness of his or her concepts and conditioned ways of thinking? And how would an adept be able to engage in meditation if he or she would not maintain mindful awareness?

The sequential path of Buddhist practice is often explained by way of the “thirty-seven factors conducive to awakening” in which mindfulness plays a dominant part.² In fact, the first four of these thirty-

¹ Siegmund Feniger (1901–1994), Nyanaponika 1965, 7–9.

² This is already evident from the fact that it occurs eight times within the broader landscape of these thirty-seven “factors conducive to awakening” (Skr.: *bodhipakṣadharmāḥ*; Tib.: *byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun*). They consist of seven sets: (1) the fourfold presence of mindfulness (Skr.: *catuḥ-smṛtyupasthāna*; Tib.: *dran pa nye bar bzhaḡ pa bzhi*); (2) the four genuine restraints (Skr.: *catvāri samyakprahāṇāni*; Tib.: *yang dag par spong ba bzhi*); (3) the four bases of miraculous powers (Skr.: *caturrddhipāda*; Tib.: *rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi*); (4) the five faculties (Skr.: *pañcendriya*; Tib.: *dbang po lnga*); (5) the five strengths (Skr.: *pañcabala*; Tib.: *stobs lnga*); (6) the seven elements for enlightenment (Skr.: *saptabodhyaṅga*; Tib.: *byang chub kyi yan lag bdun*); (7) the noble eightfold path (Skr.: *āryaṣṭāṅgamārga*; Tib.:

seven comprise the fourfold presence of mindfulness, i.e., mindfulness with respect to the body, sensations, mind states, and the *dhar-mas/dhammas*.

At this point it might be helpful to point to the terms “presence of mindfulness” or “attending with mindfulness” as the translation of the Sanskrit *smṛtyupasthāna*, the Pāli *satipaṭṭhāna*, and the Tibetan *dran pa nye bar bzhag pa*. The Pāli *satipaṭṭhāna* as a compound can either be understood as *sati + paṭṭhāna* or as *sati + upaṭṭhāna* (with the *u* of the latter term being dropped by vowel elision). The first interpretation, i.e., *satipaṭṭhāna* as *sati + paṭṭhāna*, is found in a number of commentaries on these four aspects of mindfulness practice associated with Pāli sources. With *sati* meaning “mindfulness” and *paṭṭhāna* meaning something like “aiming at” or “starting point”, it led to translations in English such as “foundations of mindfulness”. Nevertheless, this reading of the compound seems unlikely, since in the discourses contained in the Pāli canon the corresponding verb *paṭṭhāna* is not found at all. The second possible reading of the compound, i.e., *satipaṭṭhāna* as *sati + upaṭṭhāna*, is also substantiated by the Sanskrit *smṛtyupasthāna* (where due to the sandhi rule the combination of *i + u* turns into *yu*). Again, with *sati* (or the Sanskrit *smṛti*) meaning “mindfulness”, and *upaṭṭhāna* (or the Sanskrit *upasthāna*) meaning something like “placing near” or “being present” / “attending”, the compound can be understood as “presence of mindfulness”, “attending with mindfulness”, or “attending mindfully.”³ The Tibetan translators who rendered the Sanskrit *smṛtyupasthāna* in Tibetan as *dran pa nye bar bzhags pa* also interpreted the compound in this way, i.e., as “presence of mindfulness” or “attending with mindfulness”.

Moreover, Buddhaghosa (4th c.), the author of the famous *Visud-dhimagga, The Path of Purification*, attributes three basic meanings to the term *satipaṭṭhāna*:

1. *satipaṭṭhāna* as the domain of mindfulness (*sati-gocara*),
2. *satipaṭṭhāna* in the sense that teachers are beyond expectations and partiality with regard to their students, and
3. *satipaṭṭhāna* simply in the sense of mindfulness. In this case, the compound is not understood as a *tatpuruṣa* compound (i.e., the presence of mindfulness), but as a *karmadhāraya* compound (i.e., a presence which as such is mindfulness).⁴

'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad pa). For details on this sequential path toward awakening see for example Gethin 2001, 22–23.

³ For details see Anālayo 2006, 27–28.

⁴ Gethin 2001, 33–35.

In Pāli based Buddhism the fourfold presence of mindfulness is often referred to with the term *ekāyano maggo*, the “direct” path⁵ toward liberation from suffering. In sutric Mahāyāna Buddhism, the practice of mindfulness is additionally interwoven with the altruistic attitude of *bodhicitta*, both on the conventional and ultimate levels, aiming at accomplishing wisdom imbued with limitless compassion, the central vision of this path⁶. Tantric Mahāyāna Buddhism also incorporates mindfulness in general and the fourfold presence of mindfulness in particular, which is, for example, evident in that certain parts of the pure palace in deity-*maṇḍalas*, such as the columns, symbolize the perfection of these practices. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to go into all of these most interesting details of mindfulness, I would like to point out a few of its essential features:

In Pāli Abhidhamma sources, the word *sati* appears as a mental formation (Pāli: *saṅkhāra*; Sanskr.: *saṃskāra*) in the section dealing with wholesome states of mind, and is invariably called “right mindfulness” (*sammā sati*). Terms that are listed in this context in order to illustrate its nature are recollection (*anussati*), recall (*paṭissati*), remembrance (*saraṇatā*) and absence of forgetfulness (*asammussanatā*)—i.e. representing the literal meaning of the term *sati*—, but also keeping in mind (*dhāraṇatā*), and absence of wandering (*apilāpanatā*).⁷

In a general sense, mindfulness is considered essential for being able to lead an ethical life and maintaining essential principles such as appreciating the Three Jewels. In the context of meditation, mindfulness is closely associated with the quality of clear knowing⁸ (Pāli: *sampajañña*, Sanskr.: *samprajanya*, Tib.: *shes bzhin*). All in all, *sati* or *smṛti* is not understood as a self-sufficient, isolated practice⁹, but seen as one factor among wholesome states of mind required for cultivating those qualities that will finally enable a practitioner to realize the state of awakening.

In the Sanskrit Abhidharma literature of the northern Indian Sarvāstivāda Vaibhāṣika and the Mahāyānist Vijñānavādins, *smṛti* as a *saṃskāra* or mental formation is not defined as “right mindfulness”

⁵ On this term, see Gethin 2001, 32ff., 66 and Anālayo 2006, 27–28.

⁶ See, for example, the particular passages in the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, H 10, vol. 28, and the *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, H 12, vol. 30.

⁷ Gethin 2011, 270.

⁸ For explanations regarding the choice of “clear knowing” or “clearly knowing” see Anālayo 2006, 39–41. Alternative translations are: vigilance, introspection, and awareness. In non-religious versions of mindfulness training (for example in MBSR) these two aspects, i.e., mindfulness and clear knowing, are usually not differentiated linguistically. Mindfulness became the umbrella term for both, which already occurred in certain Buddhist contexts, too. See in this regard for example Callahan (tr.) 2019, 202.

⁹ Cox 1992, 72.

(as in the Pāli Abhidhamma), but is presented as a neutral factor. Here, *smṛti* appears in the enumeration of those five mental formations that determine the object at hand (*vinīyata-dharmas*), along with intention (*chanda*), interest (*adhimokṣa*), concentration (*samādhi*), and insight (*prajñā*).¹⁰ In this context, mindfulness is understood as that which allows for the non-loss (*asampramoṣa*) of the object, and the fixing or noting (*abhilapana*) of it by the mind.¹¹ Mindfulness (*smṛti*) is defined as that which sustains the object-support and thereby provides the circumstance in which the object at hand can be analyzed allowing for insight to arise.¹² In this way, mindfulness is understood as a mental factor of attentive observation and cognitive noting that occurs with other mental activities. It functions as the condition for staying with the present object, the present recollection, as well as for subsequent recollection and as the condition for knowledge and investigation.¹³

In both Pāli and Sanskrit based Buddhist sources, mindfulness is considered a main criterion for generating calm abiding (Pāli: *samatha*; Sansk.: *śamatha*) and deep insight (Pāli: *vipassana*; Sansk.: *vipaśyanā*)—the latter in particular through the above mentioned fourfold presence of mindfulness.¹⁴

All in all, one may say that in Buddhist sources on mindfulness—from Pāli based Buddhism through Sanskrit based sūtric and tantric scriptures—mindfulness is understood to be closely associated with recollection, recognition, discernment, awareness and attentiveness in various perspectives, providing the condition for wholesome, virtuous and wise choices, for the generation of faith in the Three Jewels, and for calmness and deep insight to arise. Mindfulness is generally understood as one of several qualities that need to be balanced for enabling a practitioner to overcome the reactive patterns of delusion, aversion, and desire. It is therefore seen as the capacity for preventing distraction—whether in form of outer situations or in form of inner states and experiences—which in turn is an indispensable condition for meditation to yield its desired results.

In this general context and in the framework of sutric Mahāyāna Buddhism, I would like to quote Śāntideva (8th cent.) who says in his famous *Bodhicāryāvatāra* in verse V.3:

¹⁰ Kunsang 1997, 24.

¹¹ Cox 1992, 83.

¹² Cox 1992, 83.

¹³ Cox 1992, 86–87.

¹⁴ It is therefore not surprising that both certain Asian as well as Western Buddhist meditation teachers simplified the wording of this approach to *vipassanā* qua mindfulness practice. See for example Nyanaponika, Goenka, Gunaratana, Goldstein, Kornfield etc.

If the roaming elephant, the mind, is tethered on every side by the cord of mindfulness, every danger subsides, and complete prosperity ensues.¹⁵

And, in *Bodhicāryāvātāra* V.23, he states:

I make this salutation with my hands to those who guard their mind.
With all your effort, guard both mindfulness and clear knowing.¹⁶

To provide just one example from the context of tantric Mahāyāna Buddhism, let's have a look at a quote from the *Śrī Vajramaṇḍālaṃkāra*:

The one who continuously meditates on the supreme wisdom of nonduality
equals all the Buddhas who are beyond compare.
Meditating with the supreme abode of the fourfold presence of mindfulness
—by virtue of this supreme yoga—, one will soon become like the *vajra*-holder.¹⁷

Finally, let's have a look at two statements from Sgam po pa (1079–1153), one of the main pioneers of the Bka' brgyud traditions in Tibet. He says in his *Synopsis of the Practice of Sūtra and Mantra* in the context of mahāmudrā practice:

Never be separate from the *samādhi* of continuous mindfulness.
By virtue of not being separate from the experience of the con-
nate, body [and] mind unfold as being uncontaminated and the
qualities of purification will be obtained.¹⁸

¹⁵ See Crosby and Skilton (tr.) 1995, *The Bodhicāryāvātāra*, 34. See also Bhattacharya 1960, 53₁₋₂, *Bodhicāryāvātāra* V.3: *baddhaśceccittamātāṅgaḥ smṛtirajoḥ samantataḥ | bhayamastāṅgataṃ sarvaṃ kṛtsnaṃ kalyāṇamāgatam | |*. Translation slightly adapted only for terminology reasons.

¹⁶ See Crosby and Skilton (tr.) 1995, *The Bodhicāryāvātāra*, 36. See also Bhattacharya 1960, 58₁₋₂, *Bodhicāryāvātāra* V.23: *cittaṃ rakṣitukāmanānāṃ mayaiṣa kriyate'ñjaliḥ | smṛtiṃ ca samprajanyaṃ ca sarvayatnena rakṣata | |*. Translation slightly adapted only for terminology reasons.

¹⁷ *Śrī Vajramaṇḍālaṃkāra Mahātantrārājā* (Tib. *Dpal rdo rje snying po rgyan ces bya ba'i rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po*), H 459, vol. 86, 104b₆: *gnyis su med pa'i ye shes mchog | | gang gis rtag tu sgom pa ni | | mnyam med sangs rgyas kun dang mtshungs | | dran pa nye bar gzhaḡ pa bzhi | | mchog gi gnas kyi bsgoms na ni | | rnal 'byor mchog gis mi ring bar | | rdo rje 'dzin pa lta bur 'gyur | |*.

¹⁸ *Mdo sngags kyi sgom don bsduṣ pa*, see Sgam po pa in Gampopa, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, 205–306₁: *dus rtag tu dran pa rgyun chags kyi ting nge dzin dang mi 'bral bar bya |*

And, in his *Presentation of the Three Trainings*, he says:

The wisdom [that arises] from meditation is beyond words and the intellect. If one wonders how to bring this on the path, [the reply is that] it is brought on the path through mindfulness.¹⁹

Which conditions contributed to Buddhist mindfulness coming into the focus of secular societies worldwide?

A first step through which mindfulness became accessible via an English translation of *sati*²⁰ was taken in 1845. Daniel J. Gogerly (1792–1862), a British missionary active in the then Ceylon, rendered *sammā-sati* in the context of the eightfold noble path with “correct meditation”.²¹ In 1850, Robert S. Hardy (1803–1868), another British missionary, translated *sati* with “conscience”, defining it as “the faculty that reasons on moral subjects; that which prevents a man from doing wrong, and prompts him to do that which is right”. He also rendered *sati* as “mental application”.²² The fourfold presence of mindfulness he explained as the “four subjects of thought upon which the attention must be fixed, and that must be rightly understood”. In 1871, Henry Alabaster (1836–1884), who was one of the first British diplomats in Thailand, published *The Wheel of the Law* where he goes, among others, into the eightfold noble path and renders the Pāli term *sati* consistently with *mindfulness*.²³ Ten years later, in 1881, Thomas W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922) continues to use this English translation for *sati*.²⁴ Since then, this term has been used in the Anglophone world of Buddhist

lhan cig skyes pa'i nyams dang mi 'bral ba'i sgo nas | zag pa med par lus sems phab ste sbyangs ba'i yon tan thob par bya |.

¹⁹ *Bslab gsum rnam gzhas*, see Sgam po pa in Gampopa, *Collected Works*, vol. 3, 383: *sgom pa'i shes rab ni tshig dang blo las 'das pa yin | 'o na lam du ji ltar 'khyer na | dran pas lam du 'khyer te ...*

²⁰ The word *sati* or *smṛti* in Sanskrit as such simply means “recollection, remembrance.” Still, as will become clear below, “mindfulness” turned out to be an excellent choice in English. To compare the literal meaning of *sati* with the one of mindfulness in English, the following entry in the Oxford English Dictionary supports the choice of this English term “mindfulness” as: “the state or quality of being mindful; attention; memory, intention, purpose”.

²¹ Lopez 2012, 94. Hardy’s publication appeared in a paper presented at the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asian Society.

²² Lopez 2012, 94.

²³ Shaw 2020, 11. The complete title of Alabaster’s publication was: *The Wheel of the Law: Buddhism Illustrate from Siamese Sources by the Modern Buddhist, A Life of Buddha, and an Account of the Phrabat*.

²⁴ Rhys Davids 1891, 107. The collection *Buddhist Suttas* appeared in the *Sacred Books of the East* series edited by Max Müller. See also Gethin 2011, 1 and Lopez 2012, 94. In his publications, Rhys Davids called the seventh element of the eightfold noble path “right mindfulness, the watchful, active mind”, see Rhys Davids 1891, 58.

studies and practice²⁵ and, as a consequence of this, in secular applications of mindfulness.

As pointed out earlier, mindfulness has certainly always been at the core of Buddhist practice. Yet, in the wake of the many political and sociocultural changes in Southeast Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries, its application was strongly emphasized or even revived by a number of Buddhist teachers. In Burma, for example, after the overthrow of the Burmese king by the British in 1885, the Burmese *saṅgharāja* who was traditionally appointed by the king lost his status as well. Individual monks, fearing the collapse of Buddhism in Burma, committed themselves to preserving the teachings by spreading them as widely as possible. They reached out to laypeople, teaching them meditation, which up till then had not been the norm. In particular, one monk called U Nerada (1870–1955) chose the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* as a representative text, simplified the method and highlighted the technique of mindfulness of the breath. As a result the practice now called *vipassanā* based on the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the so-called “Burmese method”, became common practice in Burma. Naturally, the instructions focused on were anchored in the Pāli canon and its commentaries.

One of the Westerners, who, as early as 1954, came into contact with this Burmese method when he traveled to Burma for a meeting of Buddhist scholars, was the above-mentioned German Bhikkhu Nyanaponika Thera (Siegmond Feniger, 1901–1994). Having already learned and practiced mindfulness meditation in Sri Lanka, he received further instructions from Burmese meditation teachers such as Mahāsi Sayādaw (1904–1982).²⁶ Nyanaponika was very enthusiastic about this technique, probably being the first Western teacher to consider it universal, applicable not only by followers of the Buddha, as pointed to already in the beginning of this paper.

For Nyanaponika, mindfulness in general is mainly about relating to an object of perception when having “brought it to the mind,” or having “paid attention” (*manasikāra*) to it—features which are understood to be present in every cognitive act. In particular, Nyanaponika understands mindfulness as a kind of “bare attention”.²⁷ This he contrasts with the habit of judging what is perceived. Habitually what is perceived is related to through the lens of subjective judgments

²⁵ See, for example, Chalmers in his partial translation of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (1926), Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids and F.L. Woodward in their translation of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (1917–1930), E.M. Hare and F.L. Woodward in their translation of the *Anguttara Nikāya* (1932–1936), and Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli in his translation of Buddhaghosa’s *Viśuddhimagga* (1956).

²⁶ Gethin 2011, 266.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

triggered by preconceived ideas and personality²⁸. Relating to what is perceived with bare attention, i.e. mindfulness as understood by Nyanaponika, counteracts this automatic process; one learns to see things differently. For Nyanaponika, mindfulness in the sense of this bare attention presents an elementary aspect of the entire practice of right mindfulness as one constituent of the eightfold path. Nyanaponika's translations and teachings had a strong impact on the Buddhist Theravāda communities in the West.

Another prominent example of a Buddhist teacher who focused on the so-called Burmese method and was also an important teacher for many of the first-generation Western mindfulness teachers, was the Indian *vipassanā* teacher Satya Naraya Goenka (1924–2013) who was born in Burma and received his training from the Burmese teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin. He was a lay person and a businessman. The initial reason for him turning to meditation was his wish to become free of his severe migraine. In 1969, after moving to India, he started his worldwide 10-day non-commercial *vipassanā* retreats, emphasizing that the Buddha's path to liberation from suffering is non-sectarian, universal, and scientific in character. On account of his activities, he was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 2012, the third highest civilian honor in India for social work. He was also invited to speak at the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations in New York City—on the occasion of the “Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders”—and lectured worldwide, among others at the influential “World Economic Forum” in Davos, Switzerland. In the Huffington Post he was once called “The Man who Taught the World to Meditate”.²⁹

The publications and activities of teachers such as Nyanaponika and Goenka and the English translation of Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli³⁰ as well as their respective teachers from Burma, Thailand, and Sri Lanka, decisively influenced a number of prominent modern Western teachers of Buddhist meditation such as Jack Kornfield (b. 1945), Joseph Goldstein (b. 1944), and Sharon Salzberg (b. 1952). Of course, there are a number of differences in the precise ways of meditating depending on the emphasis of the particular teachers. Yet, a common theme in their presentation of mindfulness is that it is considered as a non-judgmental direct observation of the mind and the body in the present moment and that this bare attention is identified with insight (*vipassanā*).³¹ In the West, these approaches are nowadays often subsumed under the term Vipassanā Buddhism or

²⁸ Ibid., 32.

²⁹ Jay Michaelson (30 September 2013). “S.N.Goenka: the Man who Taught the World to Meditate.” Huffington Post.

³⁰ See Ñāṇaponika 1965. First published in 1956 and reprinted many times.

³¹ Gethin 2011, 267.

simply vipassanā. And to be sure, those listed above are just some prominent examples among many others.

Moreover, one scholar bhikkhu who, in the last decades, with both his teaching activities and his numerous publications, has contributed tremendously to the Western perception and adaptation of mindfulness is the German Bhikkhu Anālayo (b. 1962).

All in all, due to the above mentioned emphasis on the fourfold presence of mindfulness in Buddhist traditions anchored in the Pāli canon and associated commentaries in the 19th and 20th centuries as well as due to the strong interest of Western Buddhist practitioners therein, mindfulness, at least in the Western hemisphere and since the 20th century became mainly associated with the corresponding Pāli sources and the way these scriptures inform Buddhist practice in different South Asian and Southeast Asian traditions. The various Mahāyāna aspects of the practice of mindfulness, however, appear to have been somewhat neglected.

Instrumental in adapting the Buddhist practice of mindfulness in secular circumstances—for the sake of reducing suffering here and now, yet without the explicit orientation toward enlightenment—was Prof. (emeritus) Jon Kabat-Zinn (b. 1944). He had been practicing Buddhism in a Korean Zen tradition as well as according to Pāli based sources for decades before becoming active in 1979 as a mindfulness teacher at the University of Massachusetts, Medical School. In this environment, i.e. a university hospital, and accompanied by scientific research, he established a mindfulness-based training with the intention and hope that this would enable “mainstream Americans” to better cope with stress, pain, and illness or, in other words, to alleviate suffering. In his various publications he stresses that mindfulness-based interventions have to be grounded in a universal understanding of dharma that is congruent with the Buddha Dharma but not constrained by its historical, cultural and religious manifestations associated with its countries of origin and their unique traditions. Kabat-Zinn’s concern was and is to present this type of mind training in a commonsensical and evidence-based way, so that it would become a natural and legitimate element of regular health care instead of being considered applicable only in specific religious contexts³². From this perspective and with this intention, he developed the so-called MBSR, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, an 8-week training program incorporating Buddhist mindfulness-based meditation and hatha yoga.

The definitions of mindfulness found in modern secular literature on mindfulness-based interventions emphasize its attentive, intentional, present-centered, and non-judgmental character. In this

³² Kabat-Zinn 2011, 282.

context, the aspect of being non-judgmental is, in general, interpreted as learning to refrain from a conditioned affective reactivity which allows for more adequate responses to what a situation calls for. Being present-centered is understood as the required capacity to counteract the habitual tendencies of drifting away in conceptualizations regarding the past or the future and getting lost therein, instead of being in touch with the present experience itself.

Moreover, Kabat-Zinn himself states that he is using the term mindfulness as a synonym for pure awareness and says:

The operational definition that I offered around the work of MBSR and the intentional cultivation of mindfulness (or access to mindfulness) is that mindfulness is the awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. Non-judgmentally does not mean that there will not be plenty of judging and evaluating going on—of course there will be. Non-judgmental means to be aware of how judgmental the mind can be, and as best we can, not getting caught in it or recognizing when we are and not compounding our suffering by judging the judging.

He declares that from the start, this mindfulness training, which, as mentioned above, originated within a hospital, intended to follow both the Hippocratic Oath and the Bodhisattva Vow which are both oriented to supporting others with all one's energy, putting the alleviation of other people's suffering above one's own.³³

Kabat-Zinn's model of MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) became the inspiration for adapting this basic principle of an 8-week training program to particular requirements. Examples for that are the so-called MBCT (Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy) which is used in psychotherapeutic circles to prevent relapses in depression, and MBSL (Mindfulness Based Selflove), to name just two of a number of specific applications. The focus yet remains the same, namely to reduce stress reactivity in its various forms and to enhance a person's capacity to cope with and recover from the allostatic load of suffering.

Monitored by medical researchers and neuro-scientists such as for example Richard Davidson who is also instrumental in the "Mind and Life" programs associated with the Dalai Lama, these types of trainings in mindfulness have been tested for their benefits in health issues both physiological as well as psychological. As a result, in the last decades numerous, in fact at least 60, universities have started to include mindfulness in their curricula and research fields. Examples for this are, in the US, the "Langer Mindfulness Institute" at Harvard University, the "Contemplative Studies Initiative" at Brown University in

³³ Kabat-Zinn 2017, 1127.

Providence, Rhode Island, or the “Center for Healthy Minds” at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with its vision “to cultivate well-being and relieve suffering through a scientific understanding of the mind.” Examples in Europe are the “Oxford Mindfulness Centre” at Oxford University, the “Center for Mindfulness Research and Practice” at Bangor University in Wales and the “Mindfulness and Compassion” program at the *Kirchliche Pädagogische Hochschule* in Austria, which offers a Master of Science curriculum in mindfulness training.

Jon Kabat-Zinn remarked in one of his papers in 2017 regarding the numerous studies focusing on mindfulness:

Academic volumes may not change the world all that much, but they sometimes put their finger on the pulse of emergent possibilities in science and medicine that can augur transformative changes in planetary culture.³⁴

Apart from these academic mindfulness trainings and associated research, general mindfulness programs are offered to children and students at schools and universities, in companies, in medical hospitals, psychosomatic institutions, prisons etc. etc. and, of course, for individuals on a private basis as well. And, internationally, there are a number of mindfulness teachers other than those mentioned above, who—during the last decades—contributed a lot toward making the practice of mindfulness accessible in secular circumstances through books, seminars and online courses.³⁵

Furthermore, besides the growing number of research papers concerning the application of mindfulness and its effects, as well as the growing number of general publications on mindfulness in various contexts, during the last decade a number of apps have been created which offer guided meditations and practical instructions for mindfulness. Examples in this regard are: “insight timer”, “headspace”, “breathe” etc. etc. And, one should also point to the fact that the more popular mindfulness becomes, the more one can observe rather superficial ways of relating to it as well as commercializing it, by reducing mindfulness to a technique for relaxation and general wellness.

All that said, I certainly do not want to suggest that mindfulness training has become a so-called mainstream in secular societies. If one were to ask people on the streets of New York, London, Paris, Berlin, or Vienna whether they know about mindfulness practice, a large

³⁴ Kabat-Zinn 2017, 1126.

³⁵ To mention just a few more names, for example Alan Wallace, Mark Williams, Jack Kornfield, Tara Brach and others.

percentage would not know what one is asking about. Nevertheless, one can certainly say that through all of the above-mentioned developments, Buddhist based mindfulness training has become easily accessible in many countries on this globe, both in the West as well as in Asia and outside the framework of Buddhist religious institutions.

In this context, it should also be mentioned that there are a number of critical voices regarding this development as well. They range from those who consider this training as too superficial, lacking the depth, context, and vision of mindfulness as practiced in Buddhism, to those who consider this training as some kind of Buddhism in disguise. Others again criticize the training for being too self-centered and even for indirectly contributing to making people refrain from standing up against injustice and discrimination in neoliberal consumer societies, even referring to it as a new capitalist spirituality. Criticism is also raised with regard to the objectivity of research on the effects of mindfulness applications. However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to go into these critical voices in detail.

Do these secular applications of mindfulness still mirror original Buddhist notions of mindfulness and if so, to which extent?

While, at least to myself, it is evident that training in mindfulness in nonreligious circumstances can be of substantial benefit for those engaging in it, the question remains whether the associated understanding and application of mindfulness still reflect the meaning and application of mindfulness as taught in classical Buddhist texts.

As pointed out above, the Buddhist notion of mindfulness, i.e., *sati/smṛti/dran pa* involves, among others, keeping in mind, not being absentminded and forgetful, being focused and present-centered, being face to face with an object of awareness. Up to here, it appears that modern mindfulness-based interventions tread the same path. However, the Buddhist notion of mindfulness also involves recollecting the value of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha which is not at all part of secular mindfulness applications. As well, in Buddhism, an essential aspect of mindfulness is discerning what is unwholesome and wholesome and cultivating the latter. This is part of the explicit training in moral and ethics which, as commonly known, is the foundation of the Buddhist path. Most secular mindfulness applications, however, do not teach ethics explicitly but choose to appeal indirectly to the conscience of the individual, encouraging the trainees to become more aware of their behavior.

Moreover, in the context of meditation there is a common Buddhist consensus that mindfulness is an essential quality for a meditator to achieve tranquility and that it provides the ground for discerning reality so that deep insight can develop and affliction driven reactivity

that inevitably results in an increase of suffering can be released. Again, up to here, there are strong similarities. Yet, in the Buddhist framework, both tranquility and deep insight are oriented toward overcoming ignorance and self-clinging so that suffering can be completely eradicated. Based in renunciation, the aim of practicing Buddhists at large is to transcend cyclic existence by realizing impermanence, suffering, and selflessness. This soteriological vision has virtually and quite naturally disappeared from modern mindfulness applications outside the Buddhist setting.

However, while the issue of selflessness or essencelessness is not made explicit, modern nonreligious mindfulness-based interventions (maybe not all, but a number of them) strongly emphasize the fleeting nature of phenomena, thereby encouraging practitioners to reduce their over-identification with the body as well as with thoughts and emotions. Indirectly—though not explicitly—they thus point to impermanence, suffering, and selflessness and encourage the trainees to experience the constant flux of change, moment by moment. It is from this perspective that mindfulness-based interventions can support trainees in letting go of the largely subconscious pattern of holding on to the notion of permanence and everything which goes along with it.

Moreover, most Buddhist schools would consider the spiritual path of liberation from suffering that evolves through the thirty-seven factors conducive to awakening to take a longer period of training, usually stretching through more than one lifetime. Modern mindfulness-based interventions do not take issue with this at all, but adapt mindfulness to a non-soteriological paradigm which emphasizes the benefit of mindfulness right here and now, instead of applying it with the aim to attain liberation from cyclic existence. It appears that this emphasis on the benefits of mindfulness on one's well-being at present understandably appeals to a growing number of people worldwide.

In short one might say that secular interpretations of mindfulness retain ideas of focusing, of non-distraction and discernment from the Buddhist tradition but adapt them to a non-soteriological paradigm which emphasizes this-worldly benefits to the virtual exclusion of trans-worldly aims. In the modern world where chronic distraction appears to be the norm, modern mindfulness-based interventions thus mainly support people to refocus their attention to the present moment which enables them to be more in touch with life as it unfolds moment by moment.

All in all, I would say that the secular applications of mindfulness offer a vast scope for beneficial use in various areas of society. At the same time, however, there is obviously the danger of it becoming superficial and commercialized. From my point of view a general

judgement of the secular application of mindfulness regarding the question whether it still reflects original Buddhist notions is not really possible in that whether it does, and if so to which extent, mainly depends on the particular teachers conveying the practice of mindfulness to trainees. The benefit which can go along with teaching and practicing mindfulness in this non-soteriological sense thus mainly depends on the intention, the knowledge, the experience, and the integrity of the particular teachers as well as on the intention, the aims and the practice of the trainees.

All in all, there is, for sure, a substantial potential of benefit involved. And it is from this perspective that I would like to end this paper with another quote from Jon Kabat-Zinn:

... the mainstreaming of mindfulness in the world has always been anchored in the ethical framework that lies at the very heart of the original teachings of the Buddha. Sila, meaning “virtue” or “moral conduct” in the Pāli language, is represented by the third, fourth, and fifth factors of the Eightfold Path (the fourth of the Four Noble Truths): wise/right speech, wise/right action, and wise/right livelihood. While MBSR does not, nor should it, explicitly address these classical foundations in a clinical context with patients, the Four Noble Truths have always been the soil in which the cultivation of mindfulness via MBSR and other mindfulness-based programs (MBPs) is rooted, and out of which it grows through ongoing practice.³⁶

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³⁶ Kabat-Zinn 2017, 1125.

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Enduring Impermanence: Buddhism and Documentation in the Time Practices of Tibetan Migrants

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*The world is essentially like paper. It is impermanent and alterable.
Real freedom exists in the mind, he tells me.*
— Tsering Wangmo Dhompa³

Registering Impermanence

An outer world thin as paper and inscribed with the erasable ink of time allows for little freedom. Only the inner world of the mind has truly liberating potential as it offers space to see through impermanence. This is what an elderly uncle of a young Tibetan migrant tells her when she visits home. Their conversation concerns his request for her to interrogate the freedoms she enjoys on paper. She reflects that her migrant “aspirations are toward building structures of permanence.” Yet she continues to be “surrounded by fear” while living abroad. “Fear precedes the way I plan for the future,” writes Dhompa.⁴

The question addressed in this article is whether the contemplation of impermanence may help migrants cope with lacking documentation. It is based on over a year of ethnographic fieldwork with Tibetan migrants in Nepal and Switzerland. Freedom House⁵ rated Tibet as the territory with the very lowest Global Freedom Score at the time of writing. Yet ruthless border control measures have not

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³ Dhompa 2016: 243.

⁴ Dhompa 2016: 244.

⁵ Freedom House 2021.

prevented well over a hundred thousand Tibetans from fleeing across the Himalayas since the Chinese authorities intensified their violent occupation of Tibet in 1959. The most recent official survey among Tibetan exiles suggested that 94,000 of them were residing in India while Nepal was the country where about 13,500 people found themselves.⁶ North America and to a lesser extent Europe have increasingly emerged as destinations of onward migration. Around 4,000 Tibetans were residing in Switzerland and Liechtenstein according to one relatively recent estimate.⁷

Their encounters with various documentation regimes often amount to senses of enduring impermanence. Tibetans in Nepal have been issued with documents known as “Refugee Cards” in ways that can at best be called erratic. A growing unwillingness on the part of the Nepal government to provide them with either residence or travel permits and its increasing repression of Tibetans have resulted in what Mikel Dunham calls “temporal entrapment.”⁸ Many people have nonetheless found ways to move beyond an impasse of time by migrating onward. But the reality of being faced with ever more rigid documentary regimes in countries like Switzerland has involved an all too familiar volatility.

“Our present is our future!” exclaimed a sporadically documented young Tibetan man called Samdrub⁹ during my fieldwork in Switzerland. “Life is quite *egal* to us.” My companion included the German expression for “not caring” about something in an otherwise English sentence. He then mentioned the importance of remembering the Buddhist teachings on *mi rtag pa* or “impermanence.” I interpret the seemingly careless way of experiencing time described by him as a means to endure a volatile reality. Impermanence defines life to the extent that the present is as much marked by it as the future will be. It was as though Samdrub and his peers synchronized with its reality in order to temper their expectations of being granted papers. Their experiences have led me to suggest the concept of “documentary impermanence.”

The meanings implicit in this term allude to the philosophical notion of impermanence itself. A helpful way of gaining insight into its significance is to consider the attempt at “engaging Buddhism” by the eclectic thinker Jay Garfield.¹⁰ He explains that those adhering to any Buddhist philosophical system understand all phenomena as

⁶ Central Tibetan Administration 2010.

⁷ Bentz and Dolkar 2010: 280.

⁸ Dunham 2011: 14.

⁹ I have replaced the names of my companions with pseudonyms to protect their identities.

¹⁰ Garfield 2015.

impermanent. They regard the whole of the phenomenal world as consisting in momentary appearances.¹¹ I myself engage with philosophical notions fundamental to the Buddhist world view throughout the present article. Samdrub as well as some other companions of mine often mentioned such concepts during my fieldwork. My own initial steps on the Buddhist path were certainly also instrumental in the decision to adapt the idea of impermanence into a central analytical lens.

A clarification of the view expressed in this foundationally important concept is needed here. The telling last words of Gautama Buddha immediately testify to its centrality in his teachings. "All formations are impermanent; work out your liberation with diligence." This instruction encapsulates the Buddhist emphasis on the "law of incessant change." Philip Novak compellingly describes impermanence as "an unspeakably intimate awareness of the temporality of all psychic and somatic events."¹² It represents the principal *mtshan nyid* or "mark of existence" and opens the way for gaining insight into the other two. This is to say that its contemplative perception ushers in meditations on both the "absence of self-subsistence" and the "lack of lasting satisfaction." There emerges a profound understanding involving nothing less than "a transformation of the human time-sense."¹³ This allows a person to internalize the reality that all identity over time represents a fiction.¹⁴

These reflections help me to delineate the meanings of documentary impermanence. I propose this term to represent the phenomenological essence of the everyday experiences encountered by my companions. Selecting the pivotal mark of existence as a way to describe a specific matter may seem odd. The phenomenon that we call "documentation" is as much marked by impermanence as anything else. But I think its chimeric emergence as a literally paper-thin yet reportedly durable matter evokes the momentariness of appearances in particularly stark terms.

This is suggested by both the ethnographic findings of other anthropologists and my own. Note has been taken of the ambiguity surrounding the registration processes confronting Tibetans in Nepal¹⁵ and India.¹⁶ Jessica Falcone and Tsering Wangchuk¹⁷ are among the scholars to critically examine how Tibetan migrants experience the

¹¹ Garfield 2015: 40.

¹² Novak 1996: 269.

¹³ Novak 1996: 274.

¹⁴ Garfield 2015: 41.

¹⁵ Frechette 2004.

¹⁶ Bentz 2012; Falcone and Wangchuk 2008; Hess 2006; Lewis 2019; McConnell 2013.

¹⁷ Falcone and Wangchuk 2008.

“technologies of differentiation” employed by the Indian authorities and their own Central Tibetan Administration alike. One of the questions they ask remained with me throughout my doctoral research. “What, if anything, is lost if nationality, Tibetan or otherwise, is as thin as paper, if citizenship is for sale, and if they are all just documentation nations?”¹⁸ My hope is for documentary impermanence to be a term useful in addressing this question.

Ethnographies of Time

Migrations extend not only across spaces inhabited and traversed. They equally stretch over times endured and anticipated. This is why it is necessary to review the scarce ethnographic work that has so far been done on Tibetan engagements with time. But a seminal anthropological outlook on time in general needs to be considered first of all. Johannes Fabian’s¹⁹ book *Time and the Other* makes an invaluable contribution to both the anthropology of time and the discipline in general by directing attention inward. He explains that “typological time” serves to bridge the gaps between socioculturally meaningful events. Its enactment is apparent in the unequal ascription of qualities like “modernity” to human populations.²⁰ An article by Claes Corlin²¹ provides a textbook example of such ethnocentric approaches to time. The anthropologist describes the Tibet in which the first generations of migrants to Switzerland were born as “a static and technologically ‘backward’ society.”²² He speaks of a change in world view “from a mainly cyclical conception of time (the yearly cycle, life cycle, reincarnation cycle), to the mainly linear time dimension of the West, including the concept of progress.”²³ The few other anthropologists whose work has included explorations of Tibetan engagements with time seem to have constructed less essentialist typologies.

Some of them emphasize cosmologies that they deem to be instrumental in time perceptions. A seminal work by Rebecca French²⁴ on the legal aspects of the Buddhist world view predominating in Tibet before 1950 includes noteworthy references to time. She describes the temporal framework prevalent in this context as one according to which each of myriad ever-present realms has its own time. It encompasses simultaneously existing sequences ranging from linear

¹⁸ Falcone and Wangchuk 2008: 178.

¹⁹ Fabian 1983.

²⁰ Fabian 1983: 23.

²¹ Corlin 1991.

²² Corlin 1991: 112.

²³ Corlin 1991: 114.

²⁴ French 1995.

time to spiral-cyclical time but also non-time or static time. So time has a diffuse and multivariant as well as an ambiguous quality. And the incorporation of manifold time dimensions means that linearity plays a peripheral role. All this entails an underemphasis on the question of when something happened in the Tibetan legal system described by French.²⁵

A few other anthropologists shed light on how the cosmologies that are currently invoked in exile revolve around the distinction of different eras. Ana Lopes²⁶ addresses this question in a chapter of her book *Tibetan Buddhism in Diaspora*. She discusses the contemporary meanings accorded by Tibetan migrants to the Tantric Buddhist system known as *Kālacakra* or the “Wheel of Time.” Some interpret the distress they have faced since the invasion of their homeland as a pointer to a degenerate period preceding a liberating era.²⁷ Lau²⁸ likewise mentions the invocation by Tibetan migrants of the Buddhist cosmological notion of *kalpa* or “aeon.” His companions linked their current circumstances in India with “bad times” while relating the moral conditions of a bygone Tibet to “good times.”²⁹ Bentz similarly describes how exiled Tibetan historians view the past as a reminder of nationhood to be used in securing a better future.³⁰ Lopes summarizes these migrant orientations to time in terms of a simultaneous engagement in “historical temporality” and “mythic atemporality.”³¹ She is inspired by Claude Lévi-Strauss³² to suggest that *Kālacakra* opens the way for “the suspension of the ‘normal’ course of time.”³³

A shift in emphasis from cosmologies to practices of time is offered by other studies. Barbara Gerke’s³⁴ ethnography on how Tibetans in the Darjeeling Hills of India orient themselves to the life-forces that affect longevity exemplifies such work. This anthropologist engages with a chapter by Martin Mills³⁵ on the ritually “fractured temporalities” afflicting Buddhist households in Ladakh. Its author suggests two related concerns with regard to the anthropology of time. One is about “the intellectual expression of a particular temporal ideology (cyclic, linear or whatever) as a generally valid way of

²⁵ French 1995: 72-73.

²⁶ Lopes 2015.

²⁷ Lopes 2015: 185.

²⁸ Lau 2010.

²⁹ Lau 2010: 976.

³⁰ Bentz 2008: 66-67.

³¹ Lopes 2015: 186.

³² Lévi-Strauss 1995.

³³ Lopes 2015: 188.

³⁴ Gerke 2012.

³⁵ Mills 2005.

interpreting the world.”³⁶ Another consideration deals with “*the embodied practices by which people do time*—how they orientate themselves towards particular temporal/calendrical ideologies, and thereby integrate themselves into wider ideologically-structured communities.”³⁷

The second of these concerns is the focus adopted in the ethnography mentioned above. Gerke specifically uses the term “practices of temporalization” to indicate the activities through which ritual specialists mediated between their clients and temporal frameworks.³⁸ She highlights how they drew on time markers derived from dominant physiological and cosmological ideas while interpreting them in their own ways.³⁹ Gerke makes the important proviso that none of these temporal frameworks “should be interpreted as a proof for the existence of a particular Tibetan variety of time, or as the base for an argument on the autonomy of ‘cyclical time’ compared to ‘linear time.’”⁴⁰ Some scholars have conversely adopted a purist linearity by framing transnational dilemmas in line with the agenda of the Central Tibetan Administration. Emily Yeh and Kunga Lama write that this involves such questions as “Will Tibetan youth in the USA be able to ‘preserve their culture’?”⁴¹ Some anthropologists have recently come to explore time perceptions cultivated by Tibetan migrants in more innovative ways.

Two scholars leave preservation aside and instead focus on orientations to impermanence. Dawa Lokyitsang⁴² draws on this notion to challenge the ways in which some of her fellow exiles assert cultural “purity.” The anthropologist suggests that Tibetans do not need postmodern thought to realize the fictitiousness of this construct. She considers them to be capable of recognizing their histories as fluid and diverse since “impermanence in Buddhism argues against the existence of purity in the physical world.”⁴³ Sara Lewis’⁴⁴ work suggests that Tibetan migrants also engage with this and related Buddhist views on time in the context of psychological trauma.

A process of familiarization with impermanence may be instrumental in dealing with a traumatic past. Lewis⁴⁵ worked with Tibetans living in Dharamsala who had encountered severe spatial and

³⁶ Mills 2005: 360.

³⁷ Mills 2005: 350, emphasis in original.

³⁸ Gerke 2012: 6.

³⁹ Gerke 2012: 37.

⁴⁰ Gerke 2012: 35.

⁴¹ Yeh and Lama 2006: 814.

⁴² Lokyitsang 2018.

⁴³ Lokyitsang 2018: 207.

⁴⁴ Lewis 2019; 2021.

⁴⁵ Lewis 2019.

temporal uncertainties. Many of them eased their distress about experiences such as being refused permanent residency in India “by pointing out that *life itself* is insecure, unstable and impermanent.”⁴⁶ Lewis tellingly describes their active cultivation of a capacity to alleviate suffering as “resisting chronicity.” They endeavoured to abstain from solidifying their emotions into fixed narrative by recognizing them as changing and shifting but also illusory in nature.⁴⁷

My own ethnography can be described as developing along converging trajectories of time and space. The various environments framing my encounters with Tibetan migrants were fluid constellations of intertwined temporal and spatial dynamics relating to two countries. Focal points in space were a neighbourhood centred around a monument skirting an urban area in Nepal and a Swiss city as a whole. My fieldwork revolved around cycles of walking and waiting along with my companions. The English word “cycle” is as evocative of these practices as its Tibetan equivalent *skor* since temporal and spatial meanings coalesce in both. Jo Lee and Tim Ingold have blazed a trail in recognizing ethnographic walking as “a practice of understanding.”⁴⁸ They aptly suggest that “temporality in walking can be shifting and unsettled: thinking and perceiving the past, present and future, and combining them in references to routes.”⁴⁹

Fieldwork takes place and comes to pass through settings that are always already grounded in flux. The anthropologist Chris Vasantkumar⁵⁰ helpfully reminds us of the need to recognize just how thoroughly place is immersed in time. A long look at the area surrounding the Tibetan monastery of Labrang leads him to contemplate this impermanence. “The physical apparatuses of place, its materiality, if you like—mountains, buildings, infrastructure, habitual public habits—all of which appear lasting and even normative, are all in process.”⁵¹ This contemplation dovetails not only with my own experiences as an ethnographer but also with those of my companions themselves. The two ethnographic vignettes that now follow illustrate how they sought to both contemplate and cut through the impermanence they experienced as sporadically documented migrants.

⁴⁶ Lewis 2019: 97, emphasis in original.

⁴⁷ Lewis 2019: 97.

⁴⁸ Lee and Ingold 2006: 83.

⁴⁹ Lee and Ingold 2006: 75.

⁵⁰ Vasantkumar 2017.

⁵¹ Vasantkumar 2017: 80.

Severance

One morning found me walking towards a magnificent symbol of awakening mind. This was the Buddhist monument around which my fieldwork in Nepal was centred. A young Tibetan man called Jinpa had proposed to have breakfast in a nearby eatery and then walk to his friend Sherab's house. Our final destination was relatively far and difficult to access from the centre of the neighbourhood. Jinpa explained that this would make it harder for the police to find Sherab. The first thing I did once we had arrived was to look around Sherab's room for a little while. I noticed that there were many images and statues of the eleventh-century Tibetan *yoginī* Machig Labdron. She was depicted performing her dance of empty bliss with one leg lifted and the other bent in motion. The *yoginī* is renowned for systematizing means of *gCod* or "severing" the afflictive tendency to grasp at a self. Sherab was a *gCod pa* or practitioner of these methods.

He was also an activist who wanted to show me photos and newspaper clippings first of all. Some of these related to his protests for human rights in Tibet while others concerned the times he had been detained. Sherab recalled how he and his fellow inmates had been unable to sleep because of being bitten by invasive insects. This was only one of the ways in which their bodies had been marked by persecution. And the fact that Sherab was among the few young Tibetans to have obtained a Refugee Card had not made any difference in terms of rights. A friend of his who had arranged for a counterfeit passport was now confronted with an even more difficult situation.

"When he came to the airport for his flight," recounted Sherab, "he was arrested." "He was in debt and in jail," added our companion. "And this is the kind of frustration of trying to escape. We don't have any legal process. Now they will try to do it illegally like that."

"You will see the smiles," Sherab went on to tell me. "Of course we have an internal, like some kind of Buddhist culture. And that means we can carry on suffering everything. You know, suffering is nothing. It's like, sometimes we meditate on emptiness."

"Do you actually draw on Buddhism?" I asked. "Do you draw strength from Buddhism in facing your situation?"

"You know what?" he responded. "Buddhism is not about the religion that we practice. It's about *practice*."

"Okay," continued Sherab, "'me,' 'I' is the biggest problem, right? 'I need this, I need that. This is my hand,' and like that. But if you come to reality, there is no 'I.' It's all flesh and blood. And one day, it will go."

"The only thing is your *rig pa*, mind," our companion elucidated. "Mind exists." "My mind is like the sky," he added. "You can say your mind is the sky."

“The only thing is your mind,” Sherab reiterated. “Do you know that? And that mind should not be like attachment, attached to anything. It should be free like the sky, emptiness. And that mind comes to understand the kindness of those sentient beings who’ve once been your mother, once in a life. We had so many lives, like five hundred, four thousand, like that. So in all those lives, we were born and grew up in the care of a mother. So that love of a mother should be in you. And you should consider all sentient beings like your mother. And that is the practice.”

“But how does your practice relate to the fact that you are undocumented,” I asked, “that you are in a difficult situation here in Nepal?”

“So that’s what I’m saying!” came a spirited response. “You know, there is nothing that exists. Like I said, this house and all these things, personally, for me, it’s nothing. You know, I regularly do my practice. I do my *gCod* thing, you know?”

“And these small subjects like life and all these things,” continued our companion, “they don’t matter. And that makes your heart, that makes you very happy in the sense that your mind won’t go through sufferings like that.”

“And there is nothing permanent,” Sherab went on to say. “So this will take you away from those sufferings.”

“Suffering comes only from the mind,” added our companion. “Like, ‘I don’t have an RC. Now I have to do something. I have to earn that. Now I don’t have it.’ If the mind is not happy, if your mind remains attached, then you are not happy at all. Like that. So through my practice, I have to leave all these things behind. The only things are emptiness and remembering your parents. If you have something with which you can help, you can help others. And that’s it. But one sad thing is that in Nepal, we don’t have the opportunity to serve others. Even though we have talent, we don’t have rights to serve others properly.”

“If I want to become a teacher in like monasteries and all these things,” said Sherab by way of example, “we don’t have rights, because we need an identity card and it’s blocked.”

“I have good things to eat,” he described what his mindset nonetheless meant for himself. “If not today, tomorrow we can have good food. If not today, it’s okay. It goes like that.”

“And I do *pūjā*,” our companion continued. “Sometimes people call me.” “And they give some money. That’s it. It goes like that.”

“Hahahaha,” laughed Sherab, “I’m a beggar and I’m proud of that, hahahaha!”

“And at present,” I asked him, “what does an everyday day look like for you?”

"Hahaha! What a day looks like?" he laughingly responded. "From the morning, when I wake up, I do my own practice, I offer my whole body and I live in emptiness. You know emptiness?"

"There is a practice that I'm not different from Machig Labdron, this Yum Chenmo" our companion went on to tell me, "and my lama. And I have the whole *bodhicitta*. My mind is Machig Labdron. My body, my voice, and my heart, all are Machig Labdron. And I have the compassion of her. I have the power of her. And I have to act like that. And that is my life. I don't have day, I don't have night. It's all the same! Hahaha!"

"If I've got time," Sherab returned to my question, "I go to retreats, go to cemeteries, do *pñjā* sincerely, offer the whole body, again visualize, and then come back with emptiness, without expectation. Doubt and expectation: the worst things. We have to get free from doubt and expectation. And that is the free mind. Freedom! Freedom! What is freedom? You don't have freedom without being free from these two."

The spatial severance to which our companion had resorted could not have been more symbolic. Persecution by the authorities of his reluctant host country had compelled him to remain cut off from central spaces. This displacement had coincided with an imposed rupture in time. Sherab was no longer able to manifest a spirit of solidarity with his oppressed compatriots back home. His overt activism had itself been broken off from the present and relegated to the past. Traces of it could nonetheless be found in discursive as well as affective memories. Both the press and the body had documented our companion's past moments of protest.

Such expressive practices mirrored tacit ones in desperately relying on paper transformations. Sherab had experienced first-hand that a Refugee Card did not offer any relief from insecurity when its owner refused to keep a low profile. He had previously managed to obtain this document and still found himself imprisoned for merely expressing his views. The plan made by a friend of his to evade the authorities in question had not yielded any security either. What he termed the "frustration of trying to escape" had involved both detention and indebtedness. All efforts appeared to be futile whether confrontational or evasive in nature.

It seemed to our companion that this predicament of time could be severed only by inner means. What he so tellingly described as the "internal culture" of Buddhism enabled Tibetan migrants to "carry on suffering everything" in his view. Such an approach revolves around practising rather than professing religion owing to a concern with the inside and not the outside of the mind. Sherab specifically devoted his

life to an inner practice called *bDud kyi gCod Yul* or the “Severance of Demonic Objects.” Michael Sheehy⁵² sheds further light on what is known simply as *gCod* in a perceptive account of its contemplative dynamics. The practice revolves around recognizing “that the ‘demons’ to be severed are one’s own fixations upon reified perceptions of self and phenomena as intrinsic absolute realities.” It encompasses methods for cultivating a more pliable mind by overturning the reactive tendency to bring about hope and fear in the face of inevitable adversity.⁵³

Severance involves an inward turn that serves to shed light on the emptiness of phenomena. This interiorization is oriented to becoming aware of *rig pa* or what Sherab translated as “mind.” It involves undoing attempts at *bdag ’dzin* or “self-grasping” along with the ways in which such habits contribute to perpetuating experiences of separateness and suffering.⁵⁴ Our companion emphasized the importance of meditating on emptiness as a means to unhook from reifying tendencies. He explained that mind is revealed to be “free like the sky” insofar as ego and its sense of need are recognized as void in nature. The view of emptiness mentioned by him is the one found within the *Prajñāpāramitā* or “Perfection of Wisdom” literature. It can be summarized as the recognition that neither the self nor the world have an essence. Sherab sought “to discern and sever every inclination to reify self and objects” on this basis.⁵⁵

The view that he put into practice allowed him to loosen the inner grip of outer constraints. Our companion directly applied his insights into emptiness and impermanence to the affective pressures of sporadic documentation. He felt that a sense of having “to do something” about lacking a Refugee Card was ultimately afflictive as it emerged from attachment. All suffering originates in the mind and equanimity towards impermanence represents the only lasting antidote to it. Sherab engaged in cultivating this attitude by not only contemplating emptiness but also recognizing all sentient beings as his mothers. The potential infinity of rebirths means that any living being may have nurtured us at a certain point in time. So there is a need to practice all-encompassing compassion and loving-kindness.⁵⁶ The young Tibetans with whom Sharapan⁵⁷ worked in Nepal referred to similar Buddhist principles and practices as did Sherab. A belief in *karma* and non-violence had led her companions “to apply gentle

⁵² Sheehy 2005.

⁵³ Sheehy 2005: 38.

⁵⁴ Sheehy 2005: 41.

⁵⁵ Sheehy 2005: 38.

⁵⁶ Adams 1998: 90.

⁵⁷ Sharapan 2016.

moral pressure" when they were beaten or arrested by the police. They also meditated on impermanence and emptiness to "feel peaceful in the difficult circumstances" confronting them. One of them said "the spiritual" allowed some Tibetans to be "even happier than the local people" even though they experienced "no more freedom and so much pressure" in Nepal.⁵⁸

Yet the documents that would be conducive to benefiting other people were in short supply. Sherab deplored the denial of the papers required for taking up helpful vocations like teaching in monasteries. His undocumented peers lacked the rights necessary "to serve others properly" and so their aspirations were blocked. Swank notes that such *zhabs zhu* or "service" to fellow Tibetans is a politicized phenomenon entailing an evaluation of worthiness in the exile community.⁵⁹ But our companion was largely concerned about the inner impact of restrictions on young people's ability to benefit others.

It is important to note that he took the conventional reality of these constraints very seriously. An aloof modality of severing would have made his commitment as an activist impossible for one thing. And the ways in which he as a *gCod pa* engaged with the phenomenal world were themselves not aimed at "undermining the relative appearances of provocations." These practices instead revolved around "destabilizing their ultimate influence."⁶⁰ Sherab cultivated this inner disposition by generating a mindset within which he took on the persona of a disciplined beggar who lived from day to day.

A focus on emptiness emerged in structured time through practices of both body and mind. Our companion would perform the key ritual of offering his flesh on waking up in the morning. Sheehy explains that as the *gCod pa* "realizes emptiness through the practice of confronting death, and the compassionate expression of emptiness through offering one's body, the mind settles into natural equilibrium."⁶¹ Sherab would also engage in identifying his mind with that of Machig Labdron. This *yoginī* is credited with turning the instructions she received from the Indian adept Padampa Sangye into a body of practices.⁶² Machig is an emanation of Yum Chenmo or the "Great Mother" who personifies *Prajñāpāramitā*. Our companion felt that the temporal markers of day and night made no sense when embodying her timeless wisdom.

Moments and places of darkness at the same time served as avenues for transformation. Cemeteries were among the environments where

⁵⁸ Sharapan 2016: 10.

⁵⁹ Swank 2014: 82.

⁶⁰ Sheehy 2005: 44.

⁶¹ Sheehy 2005: 43.

⁶² Sheehy 2005: 40.

Sherab would go to cut through the demons of reactivity and fixity as a “roaming yogi.” Entering such terrifying places represents a helpful step in the practice of *lam du khyer* or “taking as the path.”⁶³ “To take adversity as the path” is also the motto with which a seminal text used for guidance on *gCod* summarizes “the teaching of the mother-lady” Machig.⁶⁴ But our companion above all seems to have aimed at letting doubt and expectation *rang sar grol* or “dissolve into themselves.”⁶⁵ Living in emptiness allowed him to let go of these mental states and glimpse what he called “the free mind.” Yet such moments of mental freedom did not prevent either minds or bodies from being afflicted by impermanence.

Lightning between Clouds

It was common for my companions to be in two minds about the places of their imagination. A young Tibetan man called Samdrub was among those who often expressed mixed feelings when walking with me through a Swiss city. He was a friend of Sherab’s and had recently migrated from Nepal to Switzerland. Samdrub had been granted a preliminary residence permit. My companion cheerfully remarked that he liked the main station in which we had met up. The young people to be found there were “free-minded” in his view. Yet he soon proposed to leave the station and take the main street leading away from it. This was one of the most expensive and exclusive shopping avenues in the world. Both of us looked in awe at the extravagant commodities on display there.

“This lust has brought me here!” my companion suddenly exclaimed.

“What lust?” I asked.

“This lust for material happiness!” came an anguished reply. Samdrub then told me that his spiritually active senior friend Sherab had understood why he had wanted to migrate abroad. There were simply far too few opportunities for young Tibetans to make a living in Nepal. But Sherab had simultaneously urged Samdrub to act in accordance with “morality.” Then my companion recalled that Sherab had recently started training another young Tibetan man in the practice of *gCod*.

“I would be his student if I were still in Nepal,” he sighed.

We met again in the bustling main station of the city about a week after our walk along luxury. The two of us bought some provisions and

⁶³ Sheehy 2005: 42.

⁶⁴ Sheehy 2005: 41.

⁶⁵ Sheehy 2005: 46.

strolled to a river boulevard. There we sat down on a public bench inviting passers-by to enjoy the serenity of a place secluded from trade and traffic. I wondered how my companion felt about his present life. It turned out his contentment with the support he received from the authorities did not prevent him from missing places of pilgrimage. He blamed his desire to earn money for his absence from such sanctuaries. Sherab regularly contacted him from Nepal with the advice to keep engaging in the practice of *gCod* while living his new life. But Samdrub remained “confused” about the many alternative options open to him. And yet my companion felt that his bewildering materialist experiences were themselves conducive to valuing the spiritual life he had left behind.

He later told me about his resolute ways of putting into practice the moral advice given him. Samdrub did sigh that his abilities to make comprehensive efforts in this regard were limited. His social position was far removed from that of those to whom he referred in Tibetan as *bla che mi che tshong che* or “the great lamas, the great people, and the great merchants.” These elites certainly did not include provisionally documented migrants like himself. But he was still able to pursue morality in his interactions with young compatriots who lacked papers altogether. The minimal maintenance allowances they received covered only a fraction of their everyday expenses. This meant they were unable to afford the habit of travelling around the country that was so popular among young Tibetan migrants in Switzerland. Yet their inclusion could sometimes be secured through the generous solidarity of peers like Samdrub.

Differences in the fortunes of individual migrants turned out to be reason for reflection too. Samdrub came to talk about how he perceived the relative chances of obtaining documentation about a week later.

“Getting papers is also about *karma*,” said my companion.

“Did you try to influence your *karma*?” I asked him.

It turned out he had actually used to offer prayers while still in the process of applying for asylum. Samdrub explained that Buddhists commonly prayed for all sentient beings. And yet what he referred to as a “hidden self-centredness” would appear in times of crisis. This led people to pray for themselves. My companion’s own invocations had centred on both the Dalai Lama and meditation deities such as Jetsun Dolma or Arya Tara. One of the key prayers he had offered was *Bar chad Lam Sel*. This supplication to the enlightened being Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava is important in “Clearing the Obstacles of the Path.” The way had actually been opened for Samdrub to be granted preliminary papers. Yet the benefits of this worldly attainment now struck him as quite limited in scope.

"I have seen so much material development," reflected my companion, "but this is not giving lasting happiness."

The sense of disillusionment he had come to develop re-emerged a few weeks later. Samdrub and I had sat down on a bench in a park as we often did. A long silence preceded a question that had just come to my mind. I wondered whether my companion ever felt bored. My companion replied he often did feel this way due to the small number of weekly language classes offered by the Swiss authorities. Opportunities for practising Buddhism were in even shorter supply.

"There's no *dharmic* friends here," sighed Samdrub. It seemed to him that fellow Buddhists were far and few between in Switzerland. All he could do was spend his days exchanging what he called "nonsense talk" with fellow Tibetans apathetic towards spiritual practice.

Such indifference had a bearing on the extent to which he felt there was solidarity with others. Samdrub used the German adjective *egal* while condemning what struck him as a tendency "not to care" about less fortunate migrants. He shared this criticism with me when we were waiting for a tram several weeks later.

"Some Tibetans with F or B papers are thinking about those with *shog bu nag po*," said my companion. "But others are *egal*." This Tibetan neologism translates as "black papers" and was used by Tibetans in Switzerland to describe negative asylum decisions.

"But you are concerned!" I objected.

"Yes, I am concerned," confirmed Samdrub, "but what can I do? I am *gsar 'byor*." This is the Tibetan word for "new arrival."

Then my companion told me about a friend of his still waiting to be interviewed by officials. He was doing his best to support her in preparing for an interrogation that had not yet been scheduled. I asked him whether his friend was feeling anxious.

"There is *samsāric* suffering," he indirectly answered my question. "And we are in it."

"The Lord of Mercy is looking at us and crying," added Samdrub. My companion was referring to Chenrezig or the "One who Sees."

Then he recited a passage about a woman severing her bonds with society to find liberation. The lines Samdrub shared with me came from a translation of a Tibetan drama about the eleventh-century *yoginī* Nangsa Obum:

*Life is as brief as lightning between clouds.
Even if you friends do not want to practice the Dharma,
I am going.
Our life is like a drop of water on the grass,
Which can evaporate from little heat.*

*Even if you friends do not want to practice the Dharma,
I am going.*⁶⁶

Taking the mind off certain spaces of time served to recognize them as being solid only on paper. Samdrub contemplated how places having the air of being substantial were in fact subject to evaporation. His focus in this regard was on exclusive hotspots where sporadically documented migrants like himself were at best mere spectators. These contrasted starkly with relatively open areas such as the main station of the city. Moving among the “free-minded” strollers found there was quite unlike visiting the bourgeois shopping street that extended from it. And yet walking along this thoroughfare was conducive to my companion’s meditations.

It served as an avenue for contemplating both the causes of and alternatives to the present. One step in this process involved Samdrub’s reflection that what he called a “lust for material happiness” was the root of his current existence as a migrant. His here and now had originally resulted from the afflictive mental state referred to in Tibetan as *’dod chags* or “desire.”⁶⁷ Vincanne Adams traces this concept to the Tantric Buddhist teaching that “the sense body is responsible for one’s feelings of attraction to material forms.”⁶⁸ Samdrub had felt drawn to the physical abundance located abroad. The paucity of opportunities for meeting even basic material needs in Nepal had been deemed an understandable push factor by his mentor Sherab.

Yet mental pictures of what could have been had he not migrated tormented my companion. His departure from Nepal now struck him as the tragic moment at which he had diverged from training on the *gCod* path with Sherab and encountered a spiritual impasse. Samdrub attributed both this missed opportunity and his absence from pilgrimage places to materialist desires. His quest for a lifeworld resembled the one pursued by Michael Jackson’s migrant companions in suggesting “that a gap always exists between what is given and what is imagined.”⁶⁹ Aspiring to a future in a desirable place which simultaneously represented *ou-topos* or “no-place” left him “haunted by the thought that utopia actually lies in the past.”⁷⁰ And yet what he shared with me gives an inkling of a contemplative orientation to the present.

Making up his mind about bewildering spaces of time came down to taking them as the path. It was true that being reminded of *gCod* by

⁶⁶ Allione 2000: 264.

⁶⁷ McRae 2015: 104.

⁶⁸ Adams 1998: 85.

⁶⁹ Jackson 2013: 219.

⁷⁰ Jackson 2013: 221.

Sherab did not prevent Samdrub from being confused about which trail to follow. But I think it is at the same time crucial to recognize the significance of a particular reflection he shared with me. The contemplation in question revolved around how a spiritual void itself reminded him of an uplifting fullness that had ostensibly slipped his mind. And this is reminiscent of the engagement in *'dod chags lam khyer* or "taking desire as the path."⁷¹

Morality all the while remained an integral stepping stone on the path trod by my companion. This was the word he used to describe the ethical advice Sherab had given him in respect of his life abroad. Emily McRae explains that Buddhist teachings on morality revolve around "caring about the well-being of others" as well as cultivating "feelings of respect and benevolence."⁷² Samdrub had resolved to put these instructions into practice despite his exclusion from the documented world of "the great people." His moral course of action manifested as a commitment to practical solidarity with those among his peers who lacked papers altogether.

This aim continued to be precarious unless fixation on a self had been cleared from the path. My companion had cherished what he called a "hidden self-centredness" by praying to be granted papers of his own. McRae notes in a similar vein that Buddhist teachers describe cultivating morality as first and foremost a process of removing emotional obstacles to caring for others.⁷³ Samdrub felt that "times of crisis" like the long periods in which migrants were forced to wait for an asylum decision kept people from cultivating altruistic aspirations. Both *karma* and devotion had nonetheless opened the way for him to be granted a preliminary document by "Clearing the Obstacles of the Path."

He had since realized that the only lasting way of dissolving barriers was to turn inward. Boredom and the absence of *chos grogs* or "Dharma friends" amounted to one level of outer obstruction in this process.⁷⁴ But Samdrub regarded the widespread failure of migrants to care about those less fortunate than themselves as the most entrenched obstacle. His own endeavour in life resembled that of someone training the mind "who has given up the idea of happiness in the cycle of *samsāra*, but remains attached to his or her own well-being." The prescribed remedy is to cultivate compassion and loving-kindness.⁷⁵ Samdrub engaged in this moral practice while contemplating life as lightning between clouds.

⁷¹ McRae 2015: 119.

⁷² McRae 2015: 103.

⁷³ McRae 2015: 103.

⁷⁴ Cf. Kukuczka 2016.

⁷⁵ Van Schaik 2016: 52-53.

Synchronization

Simultaneously inner and outer steps on the path went some way to cutting through documentary impermanence. It is worthwhile to recall that Novak tentatively defines impermanence as “an unspeakably intimate awareness of the temporality of all psychic and somatic events.”⁷⁶ I specifically propose the term “documentary impermanence” to represent the phenomenological essence of my companions’ everyday experiences. One of the meanings I ascribe to it concerns the ways in which papers are temporally conditioned. Another sense relates to the transience displayed by the very distinction between the permanence and impermanence of documents.

The ethnographic focus adopted in this article is on sensations of registering impermanence. My companions had such experiences in several senses of the verb “to register.” Its most obvious significance entailed that their details were bureaucratically chronicled with or without the conferment of documents. But they themselves experienced paperwork in much more affective registers. Disconcerting situations such as being sent a letter announcing the eventual denial of a residence permit registered in their minds. They also registered their concern about such issues with trusted others like me.

Yet the affective resonances of oppressive impermanence registered above all on their bodies. Spinoza puts forward for consideration the compelling view that “no one has yet determined what the body can do.”⁷⁷ So knowing it cannot but remain a matter of having yet to determine its affective capacities.⁷⁸ An esoteric system serves as a metaphorical language capturing the embodied practices through which my companions developed these faculties. *Kālacakra* or the “Wheel of Time” can be read as an analogy in which “time” signifies knowledge and the “wheel” the knowable.⁷⁹ Walking adds meaning to this metaphor by embodying mobility in its most primordial form.

Practices of both the body and the mind were vital in cutting through documentary impermanence. My companions performed *gCod* but also contemplated their situations by means of walking. These embodied practices helped them to release the mental grip of the impermanence with which they found themselves confronted while seeking the ephemeral documents needed for travel and settlement outside their homeland. They cultivated “not a retreat but an advance of the body-mind sensorium into the fundamental reality

⁷⁶ Novak 1996: 269.

⁷⁷ Spinoza 1994: 155.

⁷⁸ Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 3.

⁷⁹ Hammar 2005: 80.

of temporality, the utter impermanence and momentariness of every mental and physical phenomenon.”⁸⁰ Their practices resembled those described in the quotation from Dhompa⁸¹ with which this article opened. The compelling paradox is that they endeavoured to liberate their minds from an impermanent world whose foundations were literally made of paper by synchronizing their bodies with its reality.

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⁸⁰ Novak 1996: 277.

⁸¹ Dhompa 2016: 243.

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Tombs of the Tibetan Emperors: Divine Descent and Mortal Remains in the Chongye Valley

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1. Introduction

There are a considerable number of burial fields scattered across Tibet (Feiglstorfer 2018; Hazod 2009, 2013, 2016, 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Ryavec 2015, map 13). In the Yarlung and Chongye valleys southeast of Lhasa, alone, there are at least a dozen burial grounds (Hazod 2013, map 1). Most contain small round-shaped tumuli. A few, however, include large rammed-earth and stone mounds.

Situated in the Chongye Valley, the Mura Mounds are among the most impressive burial mounds found anywhere in the world (Figures 1 and 2). The mounds are massive. What makes the Mura Mounds special, however, is that they hold the mortal remains of Tibet's first historic emperors (*btsan po*)— i.e., emperors of the Yarlung (*sPu rgyal*) dynasty (c. AD 620–AD 842) (Hazod 2013; Richardson 1963; Tucci 1950).

Although the existence of the Mura Mounds has been known for centuries, very little archaeological investigation has been done. There are a few tantalizing references to the mounds in the ancient literature, a few inscriptions in stone, and some oral traditions; but to date, no modern excavation reports, no LiDAR data, no detailed ground surveys, and no geophysical studies. One of the interesting things about the mounds, however, is that although situated in a tight group, they are not oriented in the same direction.

The orientation of ancient structures can be influenced by any number of factors including earth, sky, and water variables (e.g., Romain 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021). Topography, climate, aesthetics, defense, astronomic phenomena and even random chance can influence orientation. Additionally, structures can be oriented to more than one phenomena.

Knowing from earlier work (Romain 2021) that Tibetan temples and other structures are sometimes oriented to the cardinal

directions, or sacred mountains, my hypothesis was that perhaps similar design protocols were used in the orientation of the royal burial mounds. The results of that inquiry are presented here.

Several mounds in the Mura group are found oriented to mountains associated with myths concerning the founding of the Yarlung dynasty. One or more mounds are oriented to mountains considered manifestations of powerful mountain deities known as *yul lhar*. Several are oriented to the cardinal directions. Based on these findings it is proposed that through orientation of their burial mounds, Tibetan emperors sought to affirm, even in death, their legitimate right to rule through divine lineage.

The paper begins with background information relative to the Mura Mounds. A methods section follows. In the next section, topographic analyses and ethnohistoric data are provided for each mound in the Mura Group. The paper ends with a discussion and a few concluding remarks.



Fig. 1 — Map of the Tibetan Empire at its greatest extent between the 780s and the 790s CE. Map by Javierfv1212, CC BY 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons. Location for Royal Burial Mounds added by present author.

2. The Royal Burial Mounds

The Royal Burial Mounds are located on the east side of the Chongye River, southeast of Chongye village (*Phyong rgyas*¹) about 88 kilometers (55 mi) southeast of Lhasa.

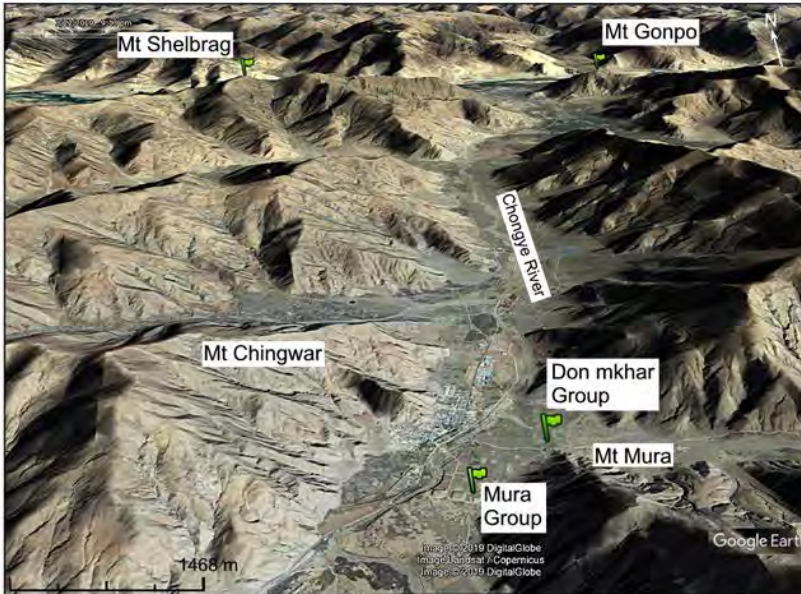


Fig. 2 — Google Earth view looking north along Yarlung Valley. Image date 11-30-2014, eye altitude 8.5 km. Annotation by author.

The Royal Burial Mounds consist of two groups: the Mura Group and the *Don mkhar* Group. Both are situated across the river from Chongye village. The Mura Group mounds are the largest in Tibet. They also hold the remains of most of the Yarlung dynasty emperors. Ten mounds can be identified with certainty (Figure 4). Originally there may have been more (see e.g., Wang *et al.* 2005, 229–230). The Mura mounds are the focus of the present paper.

¹ For the benefit of non-specialist readers I have elected to use transcriptions based in the THL Simplified Phonetic Transcription system, with the addition of the Wylie transliteration in parentheses where the name or place is part of an original quote or might otherwise be useful for reference purposes. Where the phonetic transcription is unknown to me I have used the transliteration as provided in the source document.



Fig. 3 — Google Earth view of the Mura mounds with presumed identity of burials as noted. Image date 1-5-2011, eye altitude 5.3 km. Mound 1: Songtsen Gampo; Mound 2: Mangsong Mangtsen; Mound 3: Tridu Songtsen; Mound 4: Namde Osung; Mound 5: Tride Tsugtsen; Mound 6: Trisong Detsen; Mound 7: Mune Tsenpo; Mound 8: Trimalö; Mound 9: Langdarma; Mound 10: Tride Songtsen. Annotation by author.

The *Don mkhar* Group is also situated across the river from Chongye village (Figure 3). This group is at the entrance to the *Don mkhar* Valley. Hazod (2018a, Royal Tombs 1, annotated satellite photo) shows 12 mounds in this group. The *Don mkhar* Group is briefly considered in the Discussion section.

The Mura Mounds are constructed of rammed earth and stone. Circular depressions in some of the mounds are the result of looting during the 10th century (Hazod 2013, 106) and 18th century (Richardson 1963, 77) and also, possibly, to provide access for ceremonial purposes (Vogliotti 2019).

As to who is buried in which mound, a useful list of Tibetan rulers is provided by Haarh (1969, 45–60). His list delineates thirty-two mythical and quasi-mythical Yarlung kings and a historic line of ten Tibetan emperors. Historic emperors are counted from Songtsen Gampo (Wylie: *Srong btsan sgam po*), making Songtsen Gampo the 33rd ruler in the lineage. The first twenty-six rulers are usually considered mythical. Numbers 27 through 32 were actual Yarlung

regional kings; number 33 (Songtsen Gampo) through number 42 (Langdarma) were emperors, ruling all of Tibet.

The exact number of historic rulers differs among researchers, depending on whether or not certain princes and regents are included in the count. With reference to Figure 3, sources agree that Songtsen Gampo is buried in mound number 1. The identities of persons buried in mound numbers 2 and 3 are also generally agreed upon. As to who might be buried in the others, opinions differ based on local oral traditions, inscriptions on pillars found in the area, and ancient texts that describe locations in vague terms. (For a useful discussion see Vogliotti 2019.)

For the purposes of discussion I have followed the burial identifications proposed by Hazod (2013, 2018a). His work results from a multi-year on-site project in collaboration with Tibetan archaeologists. In any case, relevant research suggests that persons buried in the Mura tombs were members of the royal lineage or their entourage and for that reason, had cause to assert genealogic connections to the special places noted below.

Dates provided for the emperors' reigns follow McKay (2003, Appendix: The Historical Lineage of the Yarlung Kings). Approximate mound dimensions (dims) as provided by Wang *et al.* (2005) are included in the summaries below in the format: length/width/height. (Also see Chan 1994.)

3. Methods

The Mura Mounds are of interest because they hold the mortal remains of Tibet's first historic emperors. In their design, orientation, and associations the mounds have the potential to inform us about Yarlung dynasty beliefs. As explained by Zang (2020, 146): "Tomb orientation is a very serious matter in almost every cultureBy placing and positioning the dead, human societies map out and express their relationships to the ancestors, land, and the living." Fortunately for the present inquiry, the Mura Mounds are also relatively intact, and again, they are, by far, the largest burial mounds in Tibet.

To establish the orientation of the mounds a GPS or total station survey would have been ideal. Unfortunately the day before my planned departure from Lhasa to the Yarlung Valley, my permit to visit the area was revoked without explanation.

My next best research option was to make use of satellite imagery. Using *Google Earth Pro* (ver. 7.3.3), the Mura Mounds were located. Google Earth (GE) offers a series of satellite photos taken at various dates. From these photographs the highest quality image was

selected-for based on spatial resolution, cloud cover, and ground shadows, with preference given to photographs pre-dating what appear to be several instances of recent erosion mitigation work along the edges of a couple of mounds.

Preliminary assessments involved extending the forward azimuths (initial bearings) for the major and minor axes of each mound to see how they might relate to the lay of the land, astronomic targets, surrounding mountains, or other features. These azimuths were plotted using the GE ruler tool. Initial assessment resulted in the identification of likely alignments to mountain summits for seven mounds, with three additional mounds oriented to the cardinal directions.

For a more precise assessment, azimuths were next calculated using an online program that uses inputted latitude and longitude coordinates (<https://www.movable-type.co.uk/scripts/latlong.html>).

Using coordinate data the program provides azimuth results referenced to Great Circle as well as rhumb line plots. In this case the azimuths between mound centers (for mounds 1 – 7) and mountain summits were calculated. Of interest is that the earlier GE ruler azimuths were identical to the program calculated (Great Circle) azimuths.

Once the mound center-to-mountain summit azimuths for mounds 1 – 7 were known, either a square, rectangle, or other quadrilateral figure was drawn onto the GE image for each mound. (Several mounds—i.e., mounds 3, 4, 7, and 9 are trapezoidal in shape.) Each quadrilateral figure was then rotated so its axis of symmetry (not mound edge) matched the calculated mound-to-mountain azimuth. For mounds 8, 9, and 10 superimposed quadrilaterals were oriented along a north-south meridian. Although not ideal, I believe this procedure allows for a good visual estimate of how close each mound is aligned to either mountain targets or cardinal directions. We need to keep in mind, however, that Western standards of precision may not have been the objective of ancient tomb builders. ‘Close enough may have been good enough.’ And there are other factors that come into play. For example, establishing the precise centers or edges of eroded and slumped earthen mounds, more than one thousand years old, using satellite imagery is not an exact science. Without knowing original dimensions it is not possible to determine how close modern-day images are to the original. The problem is exacerbated by sheet wash which has partially buried the base of most mounds (Vogliotti 2019, 575).

Less problematic but still an issue is image resolution. Specific resolution data are not provided by GE; however, it appears that the resolution for images taken in years 2014 and 2019 was 1.5 meters.

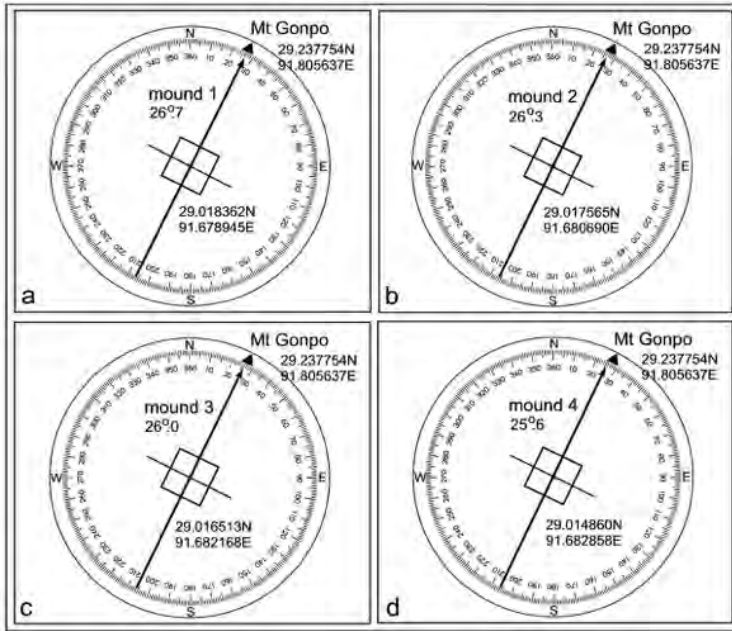
Spatial resolution is not especially problematic for plotting azimuths between mound centers and mountain peaks. At the distances involved, an error in plotting beginning or end points by a few meters will not materially affect calculated azimuths. Spatial resolution does need to be considered, however, with regard to the superimposition of ideal geometric shapes on to satellite images. Given a spatial resolution of 1.5 meters (panchromatic) the GE azimuth of a mound edge having a length, for example, of 130 meters (i.e., Songsten Gampo's tomb) has a potential range of error of $\pm 1^\circ.3$ (Romain 2020).

Having tentatively established the mound orientations—with no illusions as to their accuracy, the next step was to investigate what might have motivated the orientation for each mound. Alignment data do not provide those kinds of answers. One way forward, however, is by review of ethnohistoric and other literature (e.g., Chan 1994; Dorje 1999; Dowman 1988; Haar 1969; McKay 2003; Sørensen and Hazod 2005). The results of those inquiries are presented below.

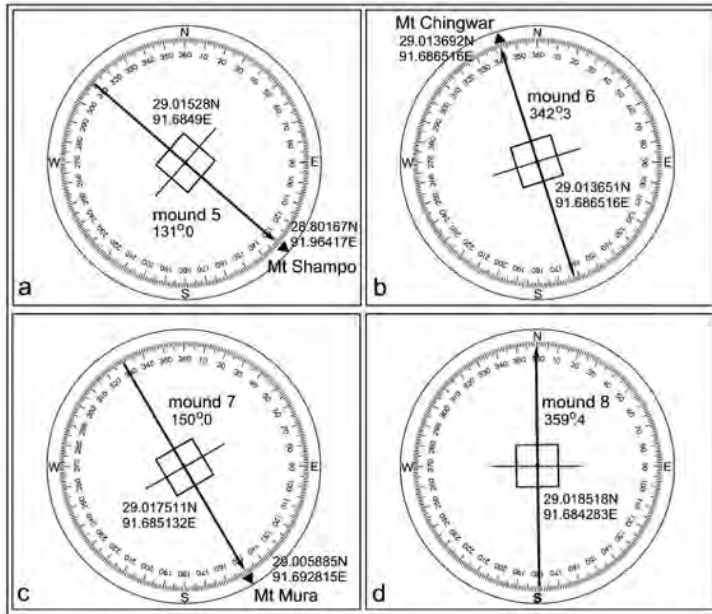
That said, there is a further caveat with regard to use of ethnohistoric legends. Their age is not known with certainty. Most are found in texts written or discovered after the Yarlung dynasty (e.g., *The Clear Mirror* (Sørensen 1994 [1368]; *Mani Kabum* (Trizin Tsering 2007 [mid-12th to mid-13th century]); *Butön's History* [14th century]). This was a time when accounts were often written or 'discovered' as previously hidden treasure texts (*gter ma*) by Buddhists who had their own interpretations of the imperial dynasty and earlier events. Materials written or discovered after the Yarlung dynasty may have oral traditions as their source and may in some cases be based in actual events; but without contemporaneous records, we will likely never have an entirely accurate and unbiased representation of those times.

4. Results

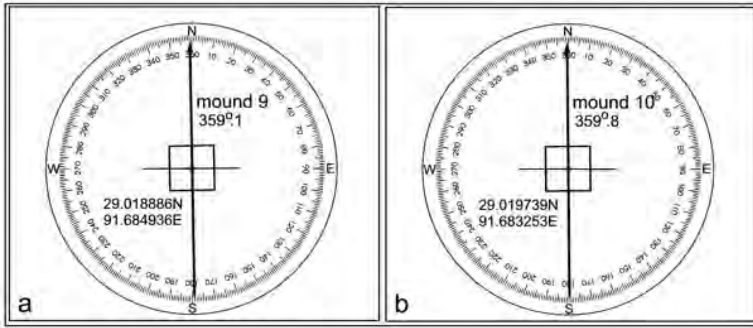
When looking at a square mound of earth, without any external clues, it is not possible to determine what was intended as the front, back, or sides (if indeed there was ever an intention to explicitly designate orientation in that manner). Consequently, the orientations for both major and minor axes for each mound were plotted and again, the azimuths between mound centers and mountain summits determined using latitude and longitude coordinates. Figures 4 – 6 show the results. Four mounds are aligned to Mount Gonpo; one mound is aligned to Mount Shampo; one mound is aligned to Mount Mura; one mound is aligned to the castle on Mount Chingwar; three mounds are oriented to the cardinal directions.



Figs. 4a-4d — Orientations of mounds 1 – 4 plotted relative to target mountains. Latitude and longitude data are for centers of mounds and mountain summits. Drawing by the author.



Figs. 5a-5d — Orientations of mounds 5 – 8 relative to target mountains or cardinal directions. Latitude and longitude data are for centers of mounds and mountain summits. Drawing by the author.



Figs. 6a-6b — Orientations of mounds 9 and 10 relative to cardinal directions. Latitude and longitude data are for centers of mounds. Drawing by the author.

With reference to Figures 4 and 5, if each of the four target mountains has a lateral spread of about 6° then the statistical likelihood that a mound having four directional trajectories will point to one of these mountains by chance is 1 in 15 (i.e., $360^\circ/6^\circ = 60$; $60/4 = 15$).

5. Individual Cases

Mound 1 (Figures 7 and 9) (dims: 130/124/18 meters)

Mound 1 is traditionally considered the burial mound of Emperor Songtsen Gampo (Srong btsan sgam po) (Tucci 1950, 32). Songtsen Gampo reigned from c. AD 629–AD 649 except for six years c. AD 640–c. AD 646 when his son Gungsong Gungtsen briefly ruled but unexpectedly died young. A reconstructed 13th century temple presently occupies the top of the mound.



Fig. 7 — Burial mound of Emperor Songtsen Gampo. Photo by Erik Törner, CC BY-NC SA 2.0.

Analysis of Google Earth imagery finds that Songtsen Gampo's burial mound faces Mount Gonpo (*Gong po ri*), roughly 27 km distant (Figures 7–9).



Fig. 8 — View of Mount Gonpo from Tsetang city street. Photo courtesy of Sonam Jamphel, www.exploretibet.com.

Mound 2 (Figure 9) (dims: 149/135/15 meters)

This is the tomb of Emperor Mangsong Mangtsen (*Khri mang slon rtsan*, r. AD 649–AD 676). He was Songtsen Gampo's grandson and succeeded to the throne after Songtsen Gampo's death in AD 649 (Dotson 2009, 143). Mangsong continued to consolidate the Tibetan Empire and began to expand into Chinese Tang territories.

This burial mound faces Mount Gonpo, roughly 27 km distant.



Fig. 9 — Google Earth images showing how mounds 1 and 2 face Mount Gonpo. Imagery date 12-1-2014. Annotation by author.

Mound 3 (Figure 10) (dims: 92/85/7 meters)

This is the tomb of Emperor Tridu Songtsen (*Khri 'dus srong btsan*, r. AD 676–AD 704). Tridu Songtsen became emperor upon the death of his father Mangsong Mangtsen. Mound 3 faces Mount Gonpo, roughly 27 km distant.

Mound 4 (Figure 10) (dims: 67/66/5 meters)

Sources differ as to who is buried in this tomb. According to Hazod (2013, 110) this is the tomb of Tri Osung (*Khri 'od srung*; also known as Namde Osung). Namde Osung was one of Langdarma's sons. (Langdarma briefly reigned as emperor from c. AD 838–AD 841.) Civil war erupted when Namde Osung and his brother, Tride Yumten, disagreed over who would rule certain areas. Namde Osung died c. AD 905. Tibetan tradition holds that Namde Osung was the last of the royal family to be buried at Chongye (Hazod 2013, 110).

According to Chan (1994, 356-357) the tomb is that of Mune Tsenpo (*Mu ne btsan po*, r. c. AD 797–AD 798). Mound 4 faces Mount Gonpo, roughly 27 km distant.



Fig. 10 — Google Earth images showing how mounds 3 and 4 face Mount Gonpo. Imagery date 12-1-2014. Annotation by author.

The alignments to Mount Gonpo are clear. The question then becomes: what is it about Mount Gonpo that made it so important that Yarlung dynasty tombs might be oriented to that mountain?

One possible answer is that Mount Gonpo is a protective deity. In the Tibetan language Mount Gonpo is known as *mGon po ri*. In Tibetan, *mgon po* means “protector” and *ri* means mountain (<http://www.thlib.org/reference/dictionaries/tibetan-dictionary/translate.php>). Hence Mount Gonpo means ‘protector mountain.’ In Tibetan belief, mountain gods were territorial protectors and guardians of the royal lineage.

The second reason Mount Gonpo is important is that it is the genesis place for the Tibetan people. The story is known as the monkey myth.

Mount Gonpo and the Cave of the Monkey God

According to the monkey myth, Mount Gonpo is the legendary birthplace of the Tibetan people. This resulted from a union between a monkey bodhisattva and rock ogress. With minor variations the story appears in several ancient texts, including the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Sørensen 1994) and *Mani Kabum* (Trizin Tsering 2007). The story illustrated in Figure 11 can be summarized thusly:

Long ago there was a monkey bodhisattva named Pha Trelgen Changchup Sempa. The monkey was sent to Tibet by Avalokiteśvara (Tib.: *Chenrezi*) to meditate. The monkey settled on Mount Gonpo. There the monkey led a life of asceticism and chastity. At some point, however, the monkey caught the attention of a *brag srin mo*, or rock demoness. The demoness tried to seduce the monkey but failed. The monkey explained that he wished to live the life of a chaste monk. Not satisfied with that answer, the she-demon threatened the monkey, saying that if he did not marry her, she would mate with a demon and from that union she would have many small monster children who would destroy all living beings. Faced with this dilemma, the monkey consulted Avalokiteśvara and was told to marry the rock-demon. Months later, six monkey children were born. The monkey children went on to produce more offspring. The monkey children lived and played in the valley below Mount Gonpo. Hence the town below Mount Gonpo is today called *Tsethang*, meaning ‘playground.’ Eventually the monkey children ate all of the fruit in the valley and so the monkey father taught them how to plant wheat, barley, and lentils. Once they learned agriculture and as years went by, they lost their monkey tails and hair and became human. Thus the original six monkey-children are considered the progenitors of the founding clans of the Tibetan people.

It is difficult to know how old the monkey myth is. Gyalbo, Hazod and Sørensen (2000, fn. 40, p. 51) offer the following opinion: “Originally an oral tradition...it evidently permutated into a proper



Fig. 12 — View of Mount Gonpo Monkey Cave. Cave is 3 meters high, 7 meters wide, and 15 meters deep. Photo by “Jack” Phuntsok, used with permission.

Victor Chan (1994, 520) describes the cave thusly: “The Monkey Cave, at a height of 4060 m, is located some 70 m below Gonpo ri’s summit. A sheer drop of 500 m falls from the cave mouth to the floor of the Yarlung Valley. Just within the entrance, on the surface of a crack, is an image of the monkey. This ‘self-manifesting’ figure is much venerated by pilgrims. On the southeast wall is a colored painting of the monkey sitting on rhododendron flowers. Next to this is another painting of a baby monkey. Nearby are a few stone slabs, each carved with figures of divinities. Prayer flags and carvings of the Six Syllables [i.e., the mantra *Oṃ Maṇi Padme Hūṃ*] are everywhere.”

I suggest that the location for the monkey story on Mount Gonpo is sufficient reason for the tomb of Songtsen Gampo and other emperors to be aligned to that special place. Orientation to Mount Gonpo and the monkey cave affirmed the emperors’ divine lineage.

Claims to divine descent are furthered by the understanding that the monkey god and emperor Songtsen Gampo are manifestations of the same entity. As explained by Guise (1988, 15), “Tibetan Buddhists have long recognized incarnations of Avalokiteśhvara’s essential being in, variously: the legendary monkey to whom they trace their ancestry; the king who unified their country; and the Dalai Lamas who were and are the living embodiment of their own religious

spirit.” Indeed, as the 14th Dalai Lama has stated: “There is no doubt that Songsten Gampo was a manifestation of Chenrezi” (quoted in Laird 2006, 29).

Mound 5 (Figures 13 and 14) (dims: 110/92/9 meters)

Sources disagree on who is buried in this mound. Hazod (2013, 109) and Chan (1994, 158) claim Emperor Tride Tsugtsen (*Khri lde gtsug brtsan*; also known as Me Agtsom, r. AD 704–c. AD 754) is buried in the mound. Tride Tsugten was murdered during a revolt led by two of his ministers.

According to Wang *et al.* (2005, Table 1) Emperor Tridu Songtsen is buried in the mound.

Mound 5 faces Mount Shampo, located 37 km to the southeast (Figures 13 and 14).

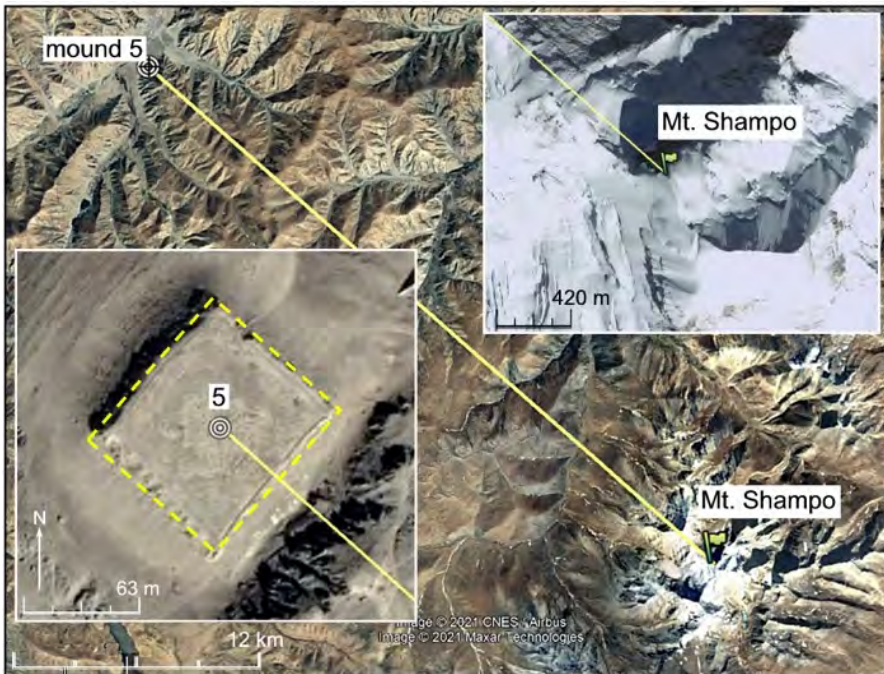


Fig. 13 — Google Earth images showing how mound 5 faces Mount Shampo. Imagery date 10-17-2014. Annotation by author.



Fig. 14 — View of Mount Shampo. Photographer not identified. From <http://www.chinatravelpage.com/eight-holy-mountains-in-tibetan-areas>.

Mount Shampo is one of the most visually impressive mountains in the Yarlung region. It is also the source of the Yarlung and Chongye rivers, which provide water for the fertile Yarlung Valley. There are two additional factors, however, that help explain why an emperor might want to align his tomb to the mountain.

First, there are myths claiming that the first quasi-mythical king of Tibet, Nyatri Tsenpo (Wylie: *gNya' khri btsan po*), descended from heaven on to Mount Shampo (Sakyapa Sönam Gyaltzen 1996 [1368], 82; Tucci 1949 vol. 2, 728). Other accounts claim he descended on other mountains—e.g., Mount Shelbrag (Sørensen 1994, 139) or Mount Gyang to (Kirkland 1982); or even that he came from India (Butön 2013 [14th century], 278). We cannot give countenance to any one myth in particular because all are fictions. But if the emperor buried in mound 5 believed that Nyatri Tsenpo descended onto Mount Shampo, then by aligning his tomb to Mount Shampo he presumably affirmed his divine lineage.



Fig. 15 — Seventeenth century mural painting in Potala palace showing the descent of Nyatri Tsenpo from heaven. After Ryavec, 2015: Figure 10.3, with permission.

Second, Mount Shampo is one of the “four chief mountain-god[s]” of pre-Buddhist as well as imperial times (Xie 2001, 343; also see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 203). Specifically, Mount Shampo is the personification of the mountain god Yarlha Shampo. Of considerable importance, Dotson (2012, 190) describes Yarlha Shampo as “...the tutelary divinity (*sku bla*) of the Tibetan lineage.” Jisheng Xie (2001, 345) explains that “the mountain god *yar lha sham po* is often called the royal god, and represents the power of the royal family.” Pommaret (1996, 20) explains, there exists an “...ancient Tibetan concept that mountain and local deities are totally linked to a territory, well defined geographically, which they protect, and that the **rulers of this territory have a personal relationship with them**” (emphasis added by present author).

Given that Yarlha Shampo is the most powerful mountain deity in the region as well as the tutelary deity of the Tibetan royal lineage, it follows that in death an emperor might wish to make explicit his

association with the deity. Arguably, the alignment of mound 5 affirmed the emperor's relationship to the mountain god and provided spiritual protection for the emperor, even in death.

Mound 6 (Figures 15 and 16) (dims: 136/118/36 meters)

Hazod (2013, 109) and Chan (1994, 358) propose that Emperor Trisong Detsen (*Khri srong lde btsan*) is buried in this mound (r. c. AD 754–AD 797). Trisong Detsen is considered the second great Dharma emperor of Tibet. Under the rule of Trisong Detsen, Tibet expanded to its greatest geographic extent, controlled the northern Silk Road and became a major Asian power.

Burial mound 6 faces the ruins of an ancient castle on a ridge of Mount Chingwa (*Phying ba*) about 2 kilometers distant. The castle (and mound 6) overlook the town of Chongye (Figures 16 and 17). Chongye was an important political center from where early local kings ruled (Chodag 1988, 58). Six successive palaces were built on the ridge. The castles are connected by a wall that follows the ridge line. Collectively they are known as the “Six Palaces of Chingwar Taktse” (Chodag 1988, 59). Legend claims that the Chingwar Taktse fortress was built by one of the early mythical kings — i.e., Ru la skyes (*sPu de gung rgyal*) (Tarthang Tulku 1986, 154). Notably, King Ru la skyes is described as “a magical child” born from the union of Queen Klu srin mer lcam and the mountain deity Yarla Shampo (Tarthang Tulku 1986, 154).

Chodag (1988, 60–61) makes the point that, “Even the later Tsanpos who lived in Lhasa dared not forget that their ancestors had originated from the Yarlung Valley, and they frequently came back to reside so as to never forget their ancestors’ heroic deeds and meritorious services. The Princesses Wencheng and Jincheng of the Tang court also often spent time there after their marriage with the Tubo Tsanpos.”

The alignment of mound 6 to Chingwar Taktse connects the emperor's final resting place to the spiritual center of his homeland. That the emperor intended his tomb to be oriented in this manner is explained by Henss (2014, vol. 1, 316): “we know from historical texts that Trisong Detsen's tomb was built during his lifetime, ‘raised by the [king] himself before [he] passed away.’” The historical text that Henss refers to is *The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogy*.



Fig. 16 — Burial mound 6 for Emperor Trisong Detsen. Person walking on path provides a sense of scale. Photo by Erik Törner, CC BY-NC SA 2.0.



Fig. 17 — Google Earth images showing how mound 6 is oriented to Mount Chingwar ridge and Chingwar Taktse. Date of images 1-20-2011. Annotation by author.



Fig. 18 — Chingwa Taktse (Tiger Peak castle). Licensed-use photo, Alamy photo # APG31W. Structure on south side on the mountain slope (lower left corner in image) is the 15th century Riwo Dechen monastery.

By aligning his tomb to Chingwa Taktse, the emperor asserted his connection to the earliest ancestor kings (seven of whom were said to have descended from heaven – see Tarthang Tulku 1986, 145). Presumably by means of this alignment the emperor made clear his right to rule based on divine affiliation.

Mound 7 (Figure 19) (dims: 38/37/6 meters)

According to Hazod (2013, 109) this is the tomb of Muné Tsenpo (*Mu ne btsan po*, r. AD 797–AD 798). Chan (1994, 359) claims this is the tomb for Namde Osung. Namde Osung was a son of Langdarma. Civil war erupted when Namde Osung and his brother Tride Yumten disagreed over who would rule certain areas. Namde Osung died c. AD 893.



Fig. 19 — Google Earth image showing alignment of mound 7 to Mount Mura. Imagery date 12-1-2014. Annotation by author.

Although upper edges of mound 7 are eroded, enough remains of the northwest edge and corner to establish the likely orientation for this mound. Mound 7 is oriented to the summit of Mount Mura, 1.5 km distant.

I have not found any special status documented for Mount Mura. It does, however, separate the Chongye Valley from the Don mkhar Valley.

Mound 8 (Figure 20) (dims: 42/33/5 meters)

Hazod (2013) indicates this is the tomb for Empress Trimalö (*Khri ma lod*). Empress Trimalö was married to Mangsong Mangtsen (second emperor of Tibet). Due to a combination of circumstances the empress ruled Tibet as regent from AD 675 to AD 689 and again from

AD 705 to AD 712 (Dotson 2009, 143); hence she is given the title *tsemmo*, meaning female emperor.

Chan (1994, 359) believes this is the tomb of Prince Jangtsa Lhabon. Jangtsa Lhabon was the son of Tride Tsugten.

Figure 20 shows the mound. Due to erosion, the edges of mound 8 are difficult to discern. The superimposed square shows what I believe to be the best fit. If correct, then mound 8 is oriented to the cardinal directions.

Mound 9 (Figure 20) (dims: 22/19/3 meters)

According to Hazod (2013, 110) this is the tomb of Langdarma (*Glang dar ma*, r. c. AD 841–AD 842). Langdarma seized the throne by having his brother, the emperor Tri Ralpachen, assassinated. Ralpachen is best known for his efforts to eradicate Buddhism from Tibet (Laird 2006, 65-69).

Wang *et al.* (2005, Table 1) posit that the occupant of this tomb is Mune Tsenpo (r. AD 797–c. AD 800).

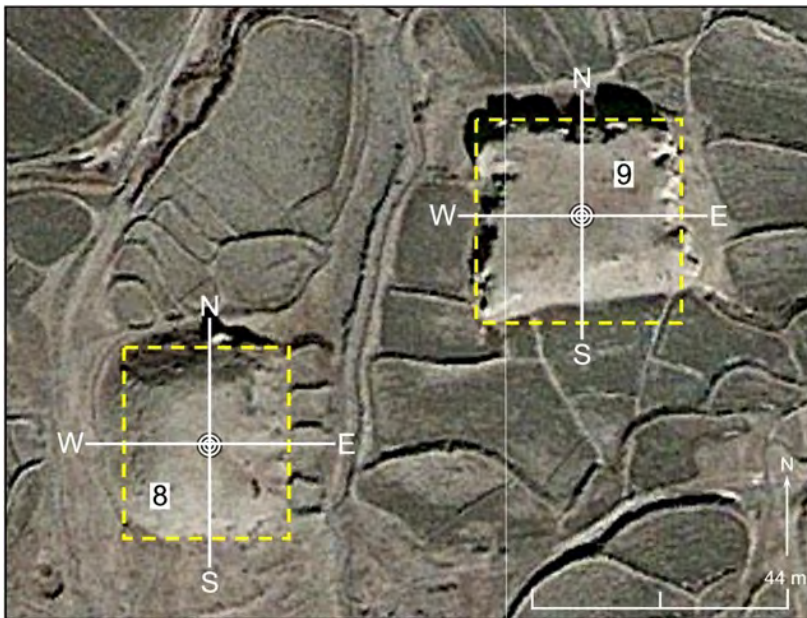


Fig. 20 — Google Earth images showing the cardinal orientation for mounds 8 and 9. Imagery date 1-6-2011. Annotation by author.

Figure 20 shows mound 9. The south side of the mound is badly eroded or may have been cut into in order to increase agricultural area. Assessment using the other mound edges, however, suggest that mound 9 is oriented to the cardinal directions.

Mound 10 (Figure 21) (dims: 99/90/11 meters)

Hazod (2013), Wang *et al.* (2005), and Chan (1994) agree this is the tomb of Tride Songtsen (*Khri lde srong btsan*; r. c. AD 798–AD 800 and c. AD 802–AD 815). A stone pillar extolling Tride Songtsen's accomplishments is located near the southeast corner of the mound (Tucci 1950, 37–39).

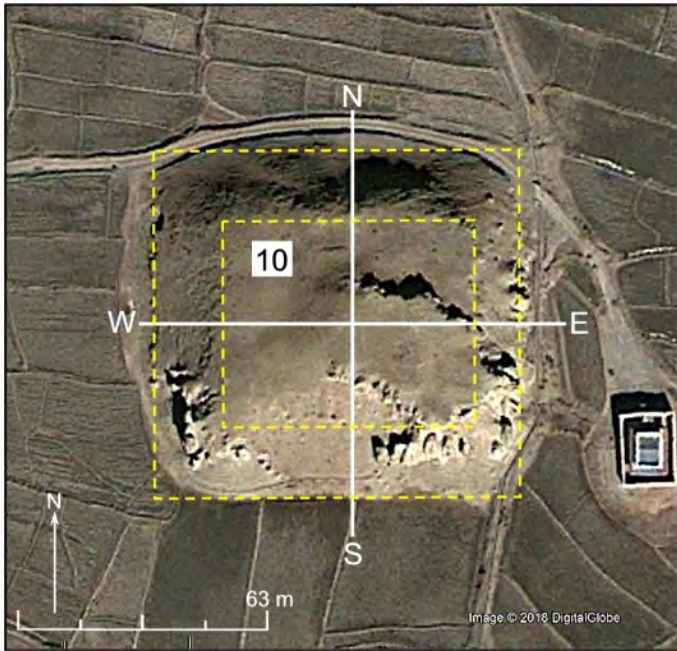


Fig. 21 — Google Earth image showing cardinal orientation of mound 10. Image date 1-6-2011. Annotation by author.

Of interest is what the pillar states regarding the first king. The inscription reads: “The king, divine son, *O lde spu rgyal*, from (the condition of being a) God of heaven, (as he was), came (down upon earth) to be a prince of men” (Tucci 1950, 36–37). (*O lde spu rgyal* later came to be called Nyatri Tsenpo (Wylie: *gNya' k'ri btsan po* — see Wylie 1963). This inscription, presumably written around the time of Tride Songtsen's death, ca. AD 815, provides contemporaneous affirmation that during the Yarlung dynasty, it was asserted that the royal lineage had divine origins.

As noted, tombs 8, 9, and 10 are oriented to the cardinal directions. The reason(s) for the cardinal alignments is lost to time. Perhaps relevant, however, is the following description concerning the burial of early kings. The description is from a mid-fourteenth century

revealed treasure text known as the *bKa' thang sde Lnga* (Five Chronicles): "The body of the dead king was first anointed with gold dust and then placed in the center of nine enclosures" (Tarthang Tulku 1986, 156). Given that the description is from the mid-fourteenth century we cannot be certain that it reflects burial practices during the Yarlung dynasty. Nevertheless it provides a certain sense of what might have been. Instructive in this regard is the placement of the emperor's body at the center (also see Heller 2003 regarding the cruciform chamber at the center base of the recently excavated 8th century, Dulan-Reshui M1 tomb). Commenting further, Giuseppe Tucci (1950, 9) offered the opinion that "These partitions represented the universe, displayed round the central point, nine being the sacred number of the Bon po and the king being then buried in the middle of the tomb, ideally transferred into and identified with the pole of the universe of which the tomb itself was supposed to be a magical projection." We will return to this in a few moments.

First though, we turn to the Jokhang temple. Situated in Lhasa, the Jokhang is Tibet's most revered temple. It was built by Tibet's first emperor, Songsten Gampo. At its core, the Jokhang is a square structure built at the center of a filled-in lake. Like tombs 8, 9, and 10, the Jokhang is precisely oriented to the cardinal directions (Figure 22a). Legend has it that the future location for the Jokhang temple was identified when, after a ring toss, a stupa magically appeared in Lake Otang. As explained by Tibetologist Gyurme Dorje (2010, 50) "The foundations of the stone walls were actually secured at the center of the Milk Plain Lake, a power place perceived as the core or axis of a stone stupa, the very fabric of which is said to have materialized from the self-manifesting pristine cognition of buddha-mind." Figure 22b shows the stupa with its radiating rainbow rays. Foundation timbers are shown laid across the lake in a square shape.

Ancient texts such as *The Clear Mirror* (Sakyapa Sönam Gyaltzen (1996 [1368],174) recount how Songsten Gampo incorporated Indian, Chinese, and Bon architectural elements into the design of the Jokhang. Chinese influence on construction of the temple is well-documented. Indeed the geomantic recommendations of Chinese Princess Wencheng (consort to Songsten Gampo) were central to the layout of the Jokhang. For comparison purposes, Figure 22c shows the plan of the ideal Chinese city. The square city is oriented north-south with the emperor's palace in the center. The significance of the north alignment is that celestial north was where the Supernal Lord (*Tian* or *Shangdi*) was located (Pankenier 2013). In China, the emperor was considered the Son of Heaven (Wheatley 1971, 431). In fact, as Pankenier (2013, 93) points out. "With the inception of the imperial

system [Qin dynasty, 221 BC] the emperor also came to be titled *Di*, as in Shangdi or Supernal Lord."

Looking to Tibetan beliefs, the square mandala in Figure 22d shows the bodhisattva *Avalokiteśvara* (Tib.: *Chenrizi*) at its center. Recall that according to Tibetan Buddhist accounts (e.g., *Mani Kabum*), Songsten Gampo was an emanation of Avalokiteśvara (Halkias 2017; Kapstein 2013, 89).

In summary, what Figures 22a-22d have in common is the idea that the Supernal One is situated at the center of a cardinally-aligned square. From this we can speculate that perhaps tombs 8, 9, and 10 are microcosmic symbols of the universe, with the emperor at the mound centers. (Also see Tucci 1950, 9; Wheatley 1971, 430–431). Indeed, if, as Haahr (1969, 391) said of Songtsen Gampo's tomb, "the actual tomb is a microcosm, a horizontal projection in the form of a *re'u mig* [mandala] of the universe," then what more fitting place could there be for an emperor than at the center of that universe? In this understanding, through the orientation of their tombs to celestial north, the emperors were forever connected to the pivot point of the heavens and Supernal Lord, around which all things revolve.

Perhaps supportive of this interpretation is that a photograph of the pillar adjacent to tomb 10, shows right-facing and left-facing swastika symbols engraved on its surface (Tucci 1950, Figure 2). Most often, right-facing swastikas are considered to be Buddhist symbols whereas left-facing swastikas are associated with the Bon religion (although exceptions are sometimes found). In the present context perhaps the swastikas represent the rotation of the Northern Dipper around the celestial north pole. If that is the case then the left-facing swastika symbols in particular might reflect not only Bon influence (as suggested by Tucci 1950, 36) but also reiteration of the significance of north.

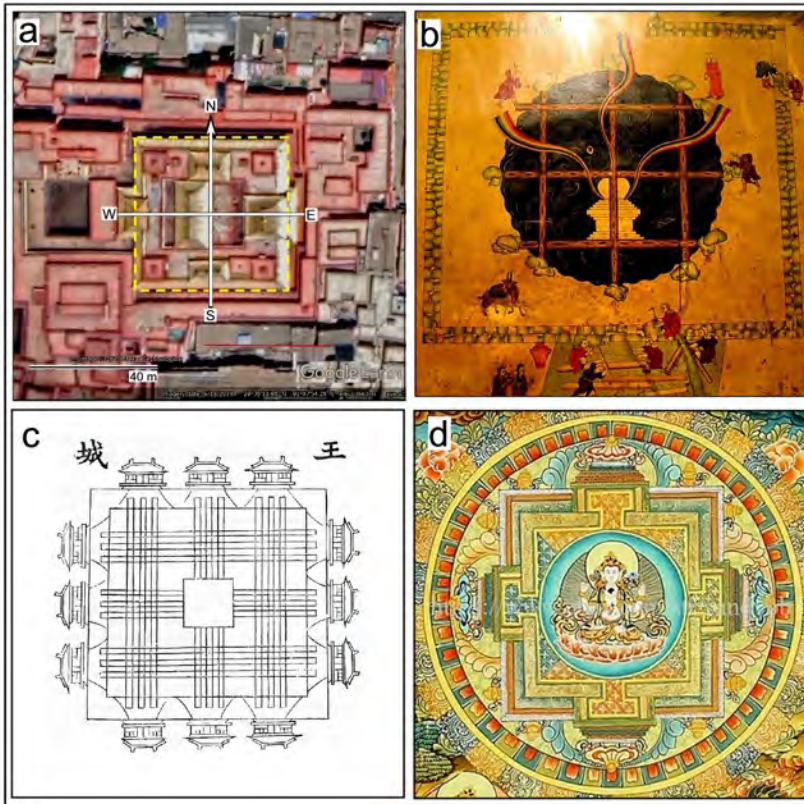


Fig. 22a — Google Earth view of Jokhang temple.

Fig. 22b — Detail of mural in Jokhang temple. Photo by author.

Fig. 22c — Plan of ideal Chinese city from the Record of Trades, Kao Gong Ji, in the Rituals of Zhou (Zhou Li, c. 1066-221 BC). After Needham 1971, Figure 712.

Fig. 22d — Detail of Tibetan mandala with Avalokitesvara at the center. Printed on paper, 51 cm x 36 cm. Author's collection. Photo by author.

7. Discussion

While the intentionality of the alignment scenarios just presented seems compelling, it is important to consider other possibilities. The wide range of orientations exhibited by the Mura Mounds argues against alignments to the Chongye River, or the lay of the land. Astronomic targets, however, are always a possibility. The vast number of possibilities provided by the Sun, Moon, stars and planets assure that at some point in time, one out of four mound axes will line-up something in the sky.² For assessing the possibility of celestial

² With reference to possible alignments to stars or asterisms Hazod (2018a, 2019) raises to two interesting points. First Hazod (2019, 21) states, “what we find are

alignments it is useful to calculate declinations (for explanation of declination see Ruggles 1999, 18, 22–23). Two pieces of data are needed for calculating declination: 1) the azimuth of the mound axis; and 2) the altitude (in degrees) where the plotted azimuth intersects the horizon. Once the declination for the horizon intersection point is calculated that value can be compared to the declinations for various celestial bodies. The closer the match, the closer a potential alignment. (For solar and lunar declinations see Ruggles 1999, Astronomy Box 6; for planetary declinations see Westin 1999; for stellar declinations see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_stars_for_navigation).

For the present case, horizon altitudes were determined using the online program, HeyWhatsThat (<https://www.heywhatsthat.com/>). Those data as well as azimuth data for each axis were then inputted into an online declination calculator provided by Ruggles (<https://www3.cleveruggles.com/index.php/tools/declination-calculator>).

The resulting declinations are shown in Table 1. Column headings in Table 1 (e.g., North-facing, South-facing, etc.) indicate the quadrant that either a major or minor axis points to.

indications that point to a different alignment of the burial chamber and the outer trapezium....the question of whether or not certain heavenly orientations are responsible for this asymmetry is to be part of the second phase of the TTT project [Tibetan Tumulus Tradition project]." Certainly, different alignment schemes for internal and external features are possible, (e.g., astrological-related alignments for internal features based on death horoscopes [see e.g., Mumford 1989, 198-204] or Bonpo traditions and mountain alignments for external mound orientations). As Hazod (2019, 21) also points out, however, data regarding internal mound features are, unfortunately, "rather poor." Data for the Mura Mounds are limited to interpretations by Haahr (1969) based on generalized descriptions found in the *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Sørensen 1994) and *Mani Kabum* (Trizin Tsering 2007) (also see Tucci 1950) and very limited assessments of extant visible features of looted tombs (i.e., Feiglstorfer 2015). As to the exterior shape of the mounds, the trapezoidal shapes resemble alluvial fans. It may also be the case, however, that the shape of certain tombs were modelled after celestial asterisms. In particular, trapezoidal shapes are suggestive of the 'bowl' or 'scoop' of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major) and/or Little Dipper (Ursa Minor). In Chinese thought, for thousands of years, these asterisms have been associated with the location for the Supreme Emperor of Heaven (e.g., *Taiyi*) (Chang 2000).

*Table 1. Apparent Horizon Declinations
for Burial Mound Major and Minor Axes*

Mound	North-facing	East-facing	South-facing	West-facing
1	+52° 33' 48"	-16° 30' 11"	-44° 52' 28"	+29° 58' 06"
2	+52° 56' 16"	-15° 25' 55"	-44° 40' 20"	+29° 21' 23"
3	+54° 24' 23"	-13° 40' 23"	-44° 35' 44"	+28° 39' 09"
4	+53° 52' 56"	-10° 48' 21"	-39° 17' 05"	+28° 10' 21"
5	+42° 43' 38"	-20° 31' 28"	-35° 00' 35"	+43° 28' 44"
6	+20° 00' 40"	-34° 48' 26"	-12° 46' 32"	+60° 28' 33"
7	+30° 46' 43"	-32° 36' 05"	-23° 31' 50"	+54° 51' 56"
8	+65° 06' 45"	+03° 57' 17"	-49° 06' 33"	+03° 34' 53"
9	+65° 02' 56"	+04° 20' 13"	-47° 44' 37"	+03° 19' 57"
10	+65° 24' 57"	+03° 38' 11"	-52° 16' 07"	+04° 06' 29"

Looking at the compass-rose orientations in Figures 4a – 4d, one might suspect that mounds 1 – 4 are aligned to the winter solstice sunrise. However, due to the height of the mountains to the east, horizon altitudes range from 12° – 21°. This moves the apparent sunrise azimuths to the south, well-beyond the mound azimuths. Further, the data in Table 1 show no convincing matches to lunar, stellar or planetary declinations.

As to alignments to the lay of the land, Hazod (2016, 3) makes the interesting observation that, “one gets the impression that they [trapezoidal-shaped mounds] were simply an adaptation to the existing topography; composed as hills and situated at the edge of the hillside or within the trapezoidal shaped alluvial fan, the tombs actually merge with the environs and even larger structures are often times almost indiscernible from some distance.” Hazod is commenting on a mound group located in eastern Tibet. However, to a certain extent his observations are true for the Mura Mounds.

Mounds 5 and 6 in particular, blend into Mount Mura (Figure 3). And the mounds are situated in an alluvial fan; but that does not account for their orientations.

In summary, of the ten burial mounds in the Mura Group, four mounds are oriented to Mount Gompo, one to Mount Chingwa castle, one to Mount Shampo, and one to Mount Mura. The remaining three tombs are oriented to the cardinal directions.

Four tombs are oriented to Mount Gonpo, the legendary birthplace of the Tibetan people. As S. G. Karmay (1994, 97) has commented, “The version of the origin myth....conveyed the idea of the sacred nature of the king, thereby contributing to the formation of the notion of kingship and royal power. It was the foundation of Tibet’s royal lineage through which later descendants in the line could claim the legitimacy of being the ruler...” Indeed, the connection between the emperors’ tombs and Mount Gonpo was a powerful statement attesting to the emperor’s role (in the guise of the monkey) in the creation of the Tibetan people. Based on belief in that seminal mythical event, Tibetan people owe their very existence to the self-sacrifice of the Monkey God. And, as noted, the emperor was understood as a manifestation of the Monkey God.

Further connecting the emperors and their tombs to the mountains is that most of the Mura tombs have ‘secret’ names. Henss (2014, 316) explains: “In most cases, the secret name of each burial mound includes the word *ri*, ‘mountain’, as for example, in the ‘brown Mu mountain’ [or Purple Mu *ri* Mountain] (*rMu ri smug po*) of Songtsen Gampo, which is based on a symbolic analogy between the sacred tomb (and the sacred character of the king, whose personal deity was identified with a mountain) and the sacred mountain — and between the celestial spheres of the World Mountain — from where the divine ruler had descended to earth.” Other secret tomb names include “Apparitional Mountain” (*Phrul ri gtsug snang*; tomb of Dusong Mangpoje), “Heaven Mountain” (*Gung ri sogs ka*; tomb of Namri Songtsen), “God Mountain” (*lHa ri gtsug nam*; tomb of Tride Tsugtsen), and “Corpse Mountain” (*sKya ri ldem bu*; tomb of Muné Tsenpo) (Haarh 1969, 392–393; Wang *et al.* 2005, 231).

Of course when one reads of posited alignments to mountains as far away as 27 kilometers a legitimate question is how such alignments could have been accomplished. We have no textual information in that regard. What is known, however, is that, as early as 200 BC, the Chinese were building long roads straight across difficult terrain (Pankenier 2020, 224).

Elsewhere (Romain 2021) I have explained how Tibetan designers could have used simple sighting tubes and range poles (already known for centuries to the Chinese) for laying out long sightline

lines. And it is possible that long sightlines across mountainous terrain could have been laid-out using signal mirrors, or heliotropes. A heliotrope is a simple device. As explained by Herbert M. Wilson (1912, 506), the heliotrope “is an instrument designed to reflect sunlight from the station sighted upon to that occupied by the observer.” In the 1800s many large-scale land surveys in North America were carried-out using heliotropes. A heliotrope signal from a square-shaped mirror having sides equal to “0.92” inches is capable of being seen at a distance of “20 miles” (Wilson 1912, Table 32). In 1878, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey assistant B.A. Colonna (1880) successfully used heliotropes to signal from Mount Shasta to Mount Helena across a distance of 309 kilometers.

Also worth noting is that as early as the Han dynasty, the Chinese had many kinds of mirrors including convex, concave, and flat, as well as T-mirrors, fire-starter mirrors and so-called ‘magic mirrors’ (Needham 1962, 87–97). It would be naïve to think that mirror technology was unknown to the Yarlung dynasty.

Given the foregoing, several points can be made:

1. Analysis of satellite imagery shows that seven out of ten mounds are oriented to mountains having legendary importance.
2. Cross-culturally, people place great importance on creation myths to include how people came into existence (e.g., Leeming and Leeming 1994). Four out of ten mounds are oriented to the mythic place of origin for the Tibetan people—i.e., Mount Gonpo. An additional mound is oriented to the fortress built by the founders of the Yarlung dynasty. One mound is oriented to the mountain where the first king descended from heaven. In short, a minimum of six mounds are oriented to mountains associated with ancestral origins.
3. The manner in which mounds are aligned to target mountains is suggestive of intentionality. Although the mounds face different directions, all are oriented to target mountains along an X or Y axis rather than, for example, along diagonal axes. Consistency in alignment protocol suggests intentionality.
4. Alignments to mountains are not only expressed in the same manner; they are also expressed in the same way over hundreds of years. The Yarlung dynasty spanned hundreds of years. The tradition of mound orientation using the axis of a mound was maintained over hundreds of years.
5. The ‘secret’ names for individual burial mounds that include the Tibetan word for *mountain* indicates that in ancient Tibetan belief, the Mura Mounds were considered analogous

to mountains. The physical alignment of individual mounds to real mountains furthered that notion and provided confirmation of the connection between burial mound and mountain.

6. Other structures in this region of Tibet are also oriented to special mountains. The Samye monastery, 38 km northwest of the Mura Mounds is simultaneously oriented to Mount Shampo and Mount Nyenchen (Romain 2021). So too, the Tradruk temple in the Yarlung Valley is oriented to Mount Gonpo (Romain 2021). These alignments provide independent data supporting the hypothesis of mountain alignment.

Considered together, the preceding analyses support the notion that the Mura Mounds were intentionally aligned so their orientations reinforced ideas of divine lineage. For comparative purposes it would be interesting to assess potential alignments at other burial fields in Tibet.

We need to keep in mind, however, that the Mura Mounds are unique. First, they hold at least 80% of the Yarlung dynasty's emperors. And, only in the Chongye and Yarlung valleys do we find the unique combination of emperors, Monkey God cave, Tiger Peak castle, and so on. Except perhaps for cardinal alignments, we cannot expect other burial fields to have the same alignment protocols as identified here. Rather, other burial fields will likely reflect beliefs associated with unique landscape features and local myths.

That said, the closest burial field that might be considered similar to the Mura group is the Don mkhar Group (Figure 23). Most of the mounds are considerable smaller than the Mura Mounds; and they have been heavily impacted by erosion. They are difficult to identify in aerial imagery. Several mounds, however, are of interest. Mound VI seems oriented to Mount Gonpo and maybe mound iv.1, as well (numbering per Hazod 2018a). Mounds IV and XV appear aligned north-south through their corners. Ground-truthing and additional analyses are needed; but these preliminary findings seem promising.



Figure 23. Google Earth view looking east showing location of Mura and Don mkhar group mounds. Image date 2-27-21, eye altitude 5.1 km. Annotation by author.

8. Concluding Remarks

Contrary to what some might believe, imperial Tibet was not a paradisaical Shangri-la. Even cursory review of the Yarlung emperors' biographies reveals that "the entire duration of the imperial period...was marked by internal power struggles, marital alliances and territorial disputes among and within the Yar lung Dynasty and other local polities and major families of Tibet" (Doney 2019, 18). Contributing to this instability was a tension between supporters of the indigenous Bon religion and newly introduced Buddhist religion. As a result and as J. Russell Kirkland (1982, 269) has pointed out, "Like virtually all rulers, they [Yarlung emperors] required legitimizing support of an affective or ideological nature in order to withstand real or potential internal and external challenges. Since the tradition of divine ancestry had already become closely associated with the apotheosized founder of the state, it was a simple extension for each emperor in turn to claim a sacred status based upon descent from the traditional ancestor."

Even before Songsten Gampo, "The Tibetan kings of old [i.e., the mythical kings] were exalted as the 'son of the gods' (*lha sras*) and came from heaven..." (Halkias 2017, 138). From this it followed that "The sovereignty of the Tibetan emperors was fortified by a claim of descent from heavenly deities" (Kirkland 1982, 257).

I believe the preceding has shown how the narrative of divine lineage was furthered, even in death, by alignments of the royal tombs to special places associated with divine lineage founders, indigenous protector deities, and in several instances connections to the Supernal Lord at the center of the heavens. These alignment prerogatives appear to have been exclusive to the emperors (or selected members of the royal lineage). In this the Yarlung emperors reinforced their pre-eminent status. For all practical purposes, they were, 'Sons of Heaven.'

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The Tsadra Lotsawa Workbench: Collaborative Lexicographical Tools for the Translation of Tibetan Buddhist Texts

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 sadra Lotsawa Workbench is a suite of lexicographical resources for translators and researchers engaging in Tibetan Buddhist literature, canonical or autochthonous. This knowledge base includes a set of corpus-driven solutions. It is embedded in a website designed to facilitate a collaborative approach to the development of lexicographical resources for the Tibetan language. In order to support the translators' and researchers' work, the Workbench is structured according to the translation workflow. The initial phase of the project consists in linking available resources to the collaborative platform to support the activities of translators and researchers interested in Tibetan Buddhist Literature. Possible areas for future development include mapping complex semantic relations, integrating other languages, collaborating to develop curated spaces and educational tools.

1. Introduction

Project Overview

The Lotsawa Workbench¹ is an initiative of the Tsadra Foundation research department. On the most basic level, the Workbench is a suite of practical lexicographical tools for translators and researchers reading Tibetan Buddhist literature, canonical or autochthonous. The main components of the Workbench are dictionaries (Tibetan-Tibetan, Tibetan-Sanskrit, Tibetan-English) and glossaries (Tibetan-English).

¹ https://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page. Accessed on September 22, 2021. I would like to thank Marcus Perman and Jeremi Plazas at Tsadra Foundation for their wonderful collaboration. My gratitude also goes to Jonathan Silk and Ralf Felbur (Open Philology - University of Leiden) and to Ngawang Trinley and Tenzin Topjor (Open Pecha Project - Esukhia) for their comments and suggestions.

These resources are complemented by a set of corpus-driven tools that are embedded on each term page, which allows (1) active collaboration to further develop the available resources and (2) easy navigation to access the available information. Through this corpus-driven lexicological approach, the Lotsawa Workbench complements traditional philological methods and offers practical solutions to challenges translators and researchers encounter in their work.

A modified MediaWiki platform represents the backbone of the user interface, while the content is mainly produced through data aggregation.² In order to support the translators' work, the Workbench was designed as a knowledge base structured according to the translation workflow. This environment makes full use of the power of this open source software through the implementation of links to datasets from collaborators as well as content hosted on the site itself, while providing opportunities for collaborative editing and open data sharing. Through intelligent design and use of detailed forms for adding to term pages, a balance is being struck between allowing for editing and contributions from authorized persons and the spirit of open collaboration inherent in the MediaWiki platform.

In addition to glossaries and dictionaries, other tools are also made available to assist the translation process, such as corpus exploration, word usage data, and so on. These added functionalities together with the collaborative nature of the platform aim at providing practical solutions to translators and researchers in their quest to better understand the semantic complexity of specialized terminology or rare words, when existing lexicographical resources do not allow for a quick resolution of a translation problem.

This approach is made possible by the digitization of Tibetan texts and the availability of Tibetan corpora that include the variety of Tibetan Buddhist textual environments translators and researchers engage in. Additional resources related to secondary sources and specialized scholarship are linked to dictionary headwords. Through the Lotsawa Workbench, translators and researchers have immediate access to a wealth of lexicographical resources, philological data, and existing scholarship on the search term they want to know more about.

² For examples of online dictionaries based on data aggregation, see: <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/>, <https://www.lexilogos.com/index.htm>, <https://dictionnaire.reverso.net/>. Accessed on June 14, 2021. Another interesting project in the field is the Sambhota Dictionary Search in which Tibetan lexicographical resources are also aggregated. See <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>. Accessed on January 31, 2022.

Project Development

In 2005, an open collaborative website was created by Eric Colombel, President of Tsadra Foundation to host Erik Pema Kunsang's Rangjung Yeshe Dharma Dictionary.³ This dictionary includes entries by several translators and scholars, including Ives Waldo, Erik Pema Kunsang, Jim Valby, Richard Barron, Gyurme Dorje, Matthieu Ricard, Cortland Dahl, Richard Babcock, and Jeffrey Hopkins.

In 2006, Erik Pema Kunsang wrote a letter to invite translators and scholars to further develop the website to include "lineage histories, short biographies of our teachers and their teachers, descriptions of texts, what has been and has yet to be translated, the locations and descriptions of sacred places, indices, notes and other backmatter from you published books that you want to share."⁴ Erik Pema Kunsang's vision was to turn what was essentially at the time a glossary into a full-fledged knowledge base containing all the information translators would need to accomplish their task. His appeal did not go unheard. Over the course of more than twenty years, other translators contributed to the continuous growth of the Dharma Dictionary to the point where it now includes roughly 182,500 entries.⁵ In addition to specialized glossaries such as Gyurme Dorje's Glossary to Tibetan Elemental Divination Paintings catalogues or Matthieu Ricard's Geographical Glossary, it also includes Tibetan texts and catalogues (e.g., Andreas Doctor's Catalogue of the New Treasures of Chokgyur Lingpa).

In 2021, as Erik Pema Kunsang expressed his wish to further develop the Dharma Dictionary, Eric Colombel asked the Tsadra research department to reflect on the evolution of the website. Over the past twenty years there has been an exponential rise in the number of resources and tools that are available for the translation of Tibetan texts produced by academic research initiatives and independent organizations such as BDRC. This major change in the field of Tibetan Buddhist Studies led the Tsadra team to develop the idea of a Lotsawa Workbench in which a broad scope of translation tools would be made available from one location.

What Are Translators' and Researchers' Needs?

The Tsadra research team took great care to define the user group of the Workbench during the inception of the project.⁶ "Translators"

³ See http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page. Accessed on June 6, 2021.

⁴ See http://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/invitation_letter. Accessed on June 6, 2021.

⁵ As of July 3, 2021.

⁶ For a discussion of various methodological approaches and important issues to

refers to a broad range of persons reading Tibetan texts and transferring their meaning to a target culture. These persons include scholars, academics, Dharma translators, Himalayan teachers, and Tibetan language students. Beyond the practical benefits a reliable bilingual Tibetan-English Dictionary can offer, one of the main aims of the Workbench is to contribute to the transmission of knowledge across generations of scholars, translators, and Dharma practitioners.

Practically, Tibetan Studies researchers and Dharma translators as a user group need reliable and comprehensive resources to unravel the web of semantic meaning through which textual composition is made possible. On the most concrete level, translators have to find answers to some basic questions while translating a Tibetan Buddhist text, such as:

- What does this word mean in this passage? Is it a technical term?
- Is this word always used in that sense in canonical texts?
- What does the word usage of this term in native Tibetan works reveal about its meaning?
- Is the occurrence of the term in question part of a typical grammatical construction?
- Is this group of words a common collocation for a stock phrase, a Sanskrit compound, or a technical term?
- Did anyone publish anything on this technical term?

While designing the contours of the Lotsawa Workbench, special attention was given to the capacity the platform should have to find answers to these questions in the shortest possible amount of time. To achieve this, it quickly became clear that the Workbench could not just be a Tibetan-English glossary. It should also contain or link to an extensive array of information to cover the entirety of the translation task, particularly when the searched words could not be documented by existing lexicographical resources. From the perspective of practical lexicography,⁷ the following list of fields commonly found in bilingual dictionaries provided a template for the information the Workbench should either contain or link to:

- Word meaning in context and across semantic fields including Tibetan definitions, sense description, subsense, polysemy,

consider with regard to the dictionary-making process, see *inter alia* Atkins and Rundell 2008, Fontenelle 2010, Sterkenburg 2006, Yong and Peng 2007.

⁷ For a detailed presentation of the methods, tools, and objectives of practical lexicography, see *inter alia* Atkins 2008 and Fontenelle 2010.

- semantic clusters, synonyms and near-synonyms, antonyms, semantic fields, diachronic semantic evolution
- Grammatical information (part of speech) and lexical information (cognates, etymological relations, diachronic and dialectal phonetic or morphological variations)
 - Sanskrit, Chinese, and English equivalents (plus other languages as a future development)
 - Corpus attestation in historical texts (Mahāvvyutpatti, sūtras, etc.), corpus frequency
 - Relational word usage (collocations, stock phrases, technical terminology, proverbs, idioms, Sanskrit compounds, etc.)
 - Dictionary examples illustrating general patterns with regard to word usage (citations, words in context)
 - Word sketches: corpus-driven summaries of a word's grammatical and collocational behavior complemented by concordance tables
 - Relevant scholarship (articles, dissertations, monographs)

As the Tsadra team listed the amount and type of information the Lot-sawa Workbench should ideally offer, we realized that corpus-driven datasets produced from Tibetan corpora of text would be of paramount importance to provide the quality of lexicographical information we wanted to offer through the Workbench.⁸

2. Challenges

As explained by Ligeia Lugli,⁹ “lexicography requires titanic efforts and enormous resources.”¹⁰ The most significant Tibetan lexicographic work in a European language at the moment is the *Wörterbuch der tibetischen Schriftsprache*, a Tibetan-German dictionary project at the Bavarian Academy of Science (Munich, Germany). So far six volumes of the dictionary containing forty-six fascicles have been published in

⁸ One of our main concerns was to provide a tool that would be detailed but also practical and efficient. We thus tried to pay attention to efficiency criteria and looked at reviews of online dictionaries. Some online reviews were useful in defining these criteria, see for example the webpage *Comparative review of dictionaries for English learners* by Tomasz p. Szynalski: <http://www.anti-moon.com/how/learners-dictionaries-review.htm>. Accessed June 14, 2021.

⁹ Ligeia Lugli together with her team at Mangalam Research Center has been working on the development on the Buddhist Translators Workbench, a digital dictionary of Buddhist Sanskrit. She published several seminal articles on Buddhist lexicography (see bibliography).

¹⁰ Lugli 2019, 198.

paper by the Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie. der Wissenschaften.¹¹ Apart from this notable exception, Tibetan has long been a low-resource language for which the availability of computational and human resources was quite limited.¹²

One of the problems in the development of the Workbench is inherent to the fact that the macrostructure of the Dharma Dictionary was derived from various glossaries throughout time, mainly due to the lack of available resources to produce a dictionary according to lexicographical methods. The headwords of these glossaries did not follow any pre-established structure. Each semantic unit would be listed independently of any lemma or other headword. As a consequence, collocations including lemmas appearing as entries would not appear as sub-entries of these lemmas but as headwords. This feature of the Dharma Dictionary explains the fairly high number of entries it contains. This point is problematic insofar as related headwords might remain invisible to users when they consult a specific entry for which a number of related collocational headwords are available.

In addition, with regard to the microstructure of the Dharma Dictionary, no distinction is made between words and technical terms. In the absence of any standardized Dharma terminology for the translation of Buddhist texts, English equivalents have thus been lumped into dictionary entries without any additional definition of the term. From a practical standpoint, this might be an issue since technical terminology requires translation consistency whereas translational equivalents are irrelevant in the case of words that do not express a well-defined (and often technical) concept.¹³

To conclude on this point, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the original dataset is problematic in terms of structure, but also with regard to content itself in the absence of any review process at the time when the dictionary was produced. At the level of the dictionary microstructure, the definitions of the Dharma Dictionary are simply given in the form of unstructured data in which word meanings are usually not organized in categories according to senses. In some rare cases, the quality of entries suffers from orthographic issues at the level of the headword or the definition. As a consequence of all these issues pertaining to the structure, format, and content of the original dataset, one should not underestimate the serious challenges we are facing to develop the Workbench on the basis of the Dharma Dictionary.

¹¹ <https://wts.badw.de/en/the-dictionary/faszikel.html>. Accessed on June 14, 2021. For the online dictionary, see <https://wts.badw.de/en/dictionary-database.html#c16560>. Accessed on June 14, 2021. Only headwords with the root letter *d* have been made accessible on the online dictionary database.

¹² For a definition of “low-resource language,” see Lugli 2019, 199.

¹³ On this topic, see Lugli 2021.

It therefore appeared more realistic in the present case to rely on available corpus-driven datasets while suggesting a template for the envisioned microstructure, at least as a first step. In the context of Tibetan studies, a computational corpus-driven approach to lexicography has simply not yet been applied to the dictionary-making process.¹⁴ The lack of annotated datasets in the form of tagged corpora has long represented an obstacle to the implementation of corpus-driven lexicographic methods. Although such corpora have become available and made possible the automatization of some of the tasks incumbent to lexicographers, human supervision and curation remain a necessity. As Lugli suggests, “ambitious microstructures” can delay the production of lexicographic resources, whereas the availability of annotated resources can quickly produce annotated databases that can be used as “proto-dictionaries.”¹⁵

A practical approach in the present case is to suggest a relatively simple microstructure that could be actualized through a wiki-based collaborative approach to the writing of dictionary entries. While this may sound overly optimistic, one should keep in mind that we might not have a choice in this matter. For some of the most complex words or terms, we simply need the input of “specialists” to clarify rare forms or specialized Buddhist terminology. It is doubtful that trained lexicographers will necessarily be conversant in a variety of Himalayan dialects or trained in the abundance of doctrines and practices of the many Tibetan Buddhist lineages and schools. From this perspective, collaboration with scholars and Himalayan teachers is a must in the case of obscure lemmas for which translators actually need lexicographic resources the most.

The task at hand is in a sense formidable. To penetrate the web of meaning of interrelated concepts, one needs to have an overview of an entire semantic space, often across several literary genres or language

¹⁴ Markus Viehbeck gives a detailed account of Tibetan dictionaries based on an alphabetical macrostructure in an article on the scholarly networks that produced them (Viehbeck 2016). For an exhaustive list of Tibetan monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, see Walter 2006. This article is in the form of an annotated bibliography.

¹⁵ See Lugli 2019, 199–200. As someone whose PhD thesis focused on the concept of *zung ’jug* (*yuganaddha*) in the works of Mipham, I became quite aware of the amount of work involved on the level of lexicography. I used word embeddings for the semantic mapping of Mipham’s understanding of important terms he uses in the contexts of Madhyamaka and Dzogchen to clarify the meaning of technical terms. In this process, I realized that task automatization through algorithms does not necessarily lead to faster translation as the resulting insights can add new layers to the complexity of the original problem the researcher wished to solve. As paradoxical as it may sound, this operation can actually increase the amount of information one has to consider to come to a “provisionally definite” conclusion. See Forgues t.p.

registers. In addition to this, a methodological back and forth between the macro and micro level of language, between the general and the specific levels of word usage, is necessary to understand the various conceptual levels a lemma can refer to. One of the main challenges to producing a good dictionary entry is therefore to have a sense of both general patterns in the sense of regularities and idiosyncrasies as irregularities.¹⁶ While lexicographers trained in corpus-linguistic methods would have a good understanding of how to document the former, philologists and Dharma translators could have some valuable insights to share regarding the latter, particularly in the case of terminology related to specific doctrinal content and practices.¹⁷

The question thus remains: What should a collaborative lexicographic platform for the translation of Tibetan Buddhist texts look like?

3. Exploring New Possibilities For Collaborative Lexicography

The Lotsawa Workbench As A Means To An End

As noted by Miloš Jakubíček, dictionaries have become “tools to be used while doing something else.”¹⁸ For publishers of print dictionaries, this might be seen as a negative evolution. However, this change opens new perspectives for the development of online lexicographic resources conceived as support tools within the broader context of a specific activity, such as translating. In the case of the Lotsawa Workbench, the Tsadra team’s objective is clearly identified. We would like to provide a knowledge base to help solve actual translation problems in the shortest possible amount of time. It is possible that computer-aided translation (CAT) tools will be efficient to the degree that consulting Tibetan-English dictionaries will become less of a necessity. However, the efficiency of these CAT tools will be dependent on the data they rely upon. This data will have to be structured and reliable. From this standpoint, the Workbench represents a step forward, even in the advent of machine translation.

Specialized high-quality platforms supporting translation as an activity through an encyclopedic and philological approach already

¹⁶ See also Lugli 2019: 201 on this point.

¹⁷ To further build the case for collaboration, one simply has to look at Étienne Lamotte’s excellent translation of the *Śaṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*. In the Maitreya Chapter on meditation, it is obvious that Lamotte was not conversant with Buddhist methods of contemplation. His choice of terminology comes in the way of understanding the topic dealt with in this chapter. This shows, I believe, why a collaborative approach can increase the quality of translations.

¹⁸ Jakubíček 2017, 14.

exist, for example, Paratext, Accordance, or Logos for Bible studies.¹⁹ Looking at such knowledge bases, one cannot help think that there is definitely a need for more sophisticated translation tools in the field of Tibetan and Buddhist Studies. An important project aiming at bridging this gap is the Buddhist Translators Workbench (BTW) at the Mangalam Research Center, which focuses on developing Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit lexicographic resources.²⁰ The approach of the BTW is quite ambitious as one of its objectives is to offer users the option to query the lemma database on the basis of word-senses and to display results in a visual way. The BTW represents a significant contribution to Buddhist lexicology and it will be interesting to follow its development in the coming years, as there will certainly be much to learn from the technological environment the project team is building up.

Unfortunately, there is currently no such one-stop platform for translators working on Tibetan Buddhist literature. While our vision is more modest than that of the BTW team, we agree with Jakubíček's remark: Online lexicographic resources make sense only as components of a larger project. In the present case, if translation remains the main objective, it follows that the Lotsawa Workbench should not just be an online dictionary, but a suite of tools providing practical solutions to concrete problems one encounters while performing translation activities. Some of these problems evade the scope of simple glossaries or dictionaries. They might include issues regarding word usage in relation to syntax, registers of speech, or religious contexts depending on a specific interpretation of doctrines and practices. In this case, corpus-driven solutions are particularly relevant and should be included in the Workbench.

The Centrality Of Corpus-driven Lexicography And Related Methods

Arguments have been made in favor of corpus-driven lexicography on more than one occasion. While there are obvious limits to what these methods can bring, there is no debate any longer about the efficiency of information technology to identify common lexical and syntactic patterns across vast corpora of texts.²¹ Large repositories of Tibetan texts in a digital format are now available, making the use of corpus-linguistic tools possible.²² Some tasks that would have taken weeks or

¹⁹ See the following links: <https://www.accordancebible.com/>; <https://paratext.org/>; <https://www.logos.com/product/195537/logos-9-academic-professional#overview>. Accessed on June 6, 2021.

²⁰ See Lugli 2015, 2019.

²¹ For a presentation of the impact of corpus-driven methods on lexicography, see for example Hanks 2012.

²² See the following online databases: Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies (rKTs -

months can now be automated in order to provide an overview of regularities and continuities at the macro level of language. From this perspective, it has become easier to adduce linguistic evidence in support of translation choices. According to this methodological approach, the Workbench should include tools to support a better understanding of what constitutes a linguistic pattern in contradistinction to a discontinuity. In the case of highly technical Tibetan texts, translators could undeniably benefit from accessing large corpora of relevant literature to make sense of the linguistic context of a complex term or to refine their terminological choices.

This corpus-driven approach to lexicography produced ambitious methods to maximize the use of resources through automatizing some of the lexicographer's tasks. Tools, such as GDEX, are now available to accomplish specific tasks, such as producing typical dictionary examples for a given lemma,²³ while others are designed to draft complete dictionary entries.²⁴ The emerging field of post-editing lexicography embraces this technological development whose benefit is essentially to automatically pre-populate the lexicographic database with suggested word sense clusters, definitions, or examples, before editing dictionaries entries "manually" through human intervention.²⁵

In the case of the Workbench, having access to corpus-driven information is essential to improve the translator's work. However, insofar as dictionary drafting still requires human intervention, a collaborative approach appears to be useful to tap into another rare commodity: the expertise in the doctrines and practices of Tibetan Buddhism.

*The Benefits Of A Mediawiki Platform For Data Aggregation
And Information Retrieval*

Tsadra Foundation has extensive experience using the open source MediaWiki platform²⁶ with Semantic MediaWiki²⁷ to manage several

University of Vienna) <https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/sub/index.php>, Buddhanexus (University of Hamburg) <https://buddhanexus.net/>, Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC) <https://library.bdrc.io/>, Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae (TLB - University of Oslo) <https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=library&bid=2>. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

²³ See Kilgariff et al. 2008.

²⁴ See the tools developed by the European program Elexis, such as the OneClick Dictionary: <https://elex.is/tools-and-services/>; <https://github.com/elexis-eu/ocd>. Accessed June 14, 2021.

²⁵ To measure the fast-paced evolution of lexicography as well as related challenges, opportunities, and academic debates, see for example, Bergenholtz et al. 2009, Caruso 2013.

²⁶ <https://www.mediawiki.org/wiki/MediaWiki>. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

²⁷ https://www.semantic-mediawiki.org/wiki/Semantic_MediaWiki. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

knowledge bases available online.²⁸ Wikis are well-known for the collaborative framework they offer, but, from the perspective of the Lotsawa Workbench, they also represent an ideal and powerful solution for data management through features facilitating interlinked data, data aggregation, and data analysis through semantic queries.

Some practical problems related to the lack of structured data in the available datasets of the digital dictionaries and glossaries can be solved by linking wiki pages to establish a network of cross-references throughout the entire wiki. This feature can solve the problem of the lack of well-defined macrostructure of the original Dharma Dictionary in which both lemmas and related lexemes (including collocational and compound lexemes) are headwords. In the Lotsawa Workbench, each headword has hyperlinks to related entries, which enables in the context of a specific query to obtain an overview of entries that are related to the one headword in question. For example, on the page for the headword *dgongs pa*, all headwords containing this semantic unit are listed, such as *dgongs pa zang thal*, and hyperlinks will take users to the corresponding wiki page.

With regard to the microstructure of the Workbench, the use of semantic MediaWiki enables a “remodeling” of the available lexicographic information in the form of a more structured knowledge base through data aggregation. Information drawn from Tibetan-Tibetan dictionaries can be found in the field *Tibetan Definition(s)*, likewise with Tibetan-Sanskrit datasets or examples taken from translation memories to illustrate word usage. Since corpora of Tibetan texts are available online in a digital format, linking headwords to corpus evidence becomes easy.²⁹ Evaluating whether a term is attested in a specific corpus (e.g., Kanjur) or can be found in a source text is facilitated by linking headwords with the wealth of available corpora, catalogues, and scholarship that can be found online. An additional benefit of the wiki approach is the powerful search function this environment offers through the extension Semantic Mediawiki, which enables translators and researchers to query the entire database and quickly gain access to linguistic and textual evidence.

²⁸ In addition to the Dharma Dictionary and Lotsawa Workbench, Tsadra’s wikis include the Digital Research Library (https://library.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page), the Tsadra Wiki Commons (https://commons.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page), Buddha Nature (https://buddhanature.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page), Śāntideva (<https://shantideva.tsadra.org/>), the Damngak Rinpoché Dzö (https://gdamsngagmdzod.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page), Rinchen Terdzö Chenmo (https://rtz.tsadra.org/index.php/Main_Page). Accessed on June 14, 2021.

²⁹ See the following online databases mentioned above: Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies (University of Vienna), Buddhanexus (University of Hamburg), Buddhist Digital Resource Center.

Another objective of the project is to increase the content of lexicographic information both in quantity and quality. Integrating 84000's translation memories (TMs) and glossaries to the wiki would be the most efficient way to integrate quality data to the Workbench. The content of these datasets has been reviewed by 84000 editors. It is of much higher quality than available translators' glossaries that did not go through a peer-review process.³⁰ To contribute to the development of the Workbench, Tsadra Foundation also decided to produce tmx files by aligning the many translations the foundation supported over the years with their respective Tibetan source text.³¹ The first Tsadra TM will be based on Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé's Treasury of Knowledge (*Shes bya mdzod*), an encyclopedic work on the main doctrines and practices of Tibetan Buddhism.³² Since 84000's translations are based on canonical texts and Tsadra's on Tibetan autochthonous literature, the TMs integrated to the Workbench will cover a broad scope of genres and works.

*A Case For The Wiki-based Collaborative Approach
And "Relational Lexicography"*

The idea behind data aggregation and post-editing lexicography is to embrace the present digital evolution of the field in order to maximize the use of our limited resources. In this spirit, we designed the Workbench to facilitate human supervision and intervention through a wiki-based collaborative approach. Different user groups can access the database, some of them having the possibility to edit the data by means of user-friendly interfaces and forms. Several online encyclopedia or dictionary projects have been successfully developed in the course of time.³³ The notion of open access online dictionaries has been a topic for elaborated academic discussions in the past decade.³⁴ We are aware that there are pros and cons to having a community-based approach to lexicography, but we believe that by structuring data input and information as explained above and accepting high-quality contributions, we will be in a position to benefit from the best of both worlds: (1) peer-reviewed or academic information; (2) users' expertise in specialized areas of Tibetan Buddhism.

³⁰ <https://github.com/84000>. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

³¹ Tmx files are computer files in the tmx format in which bilingual segments of texts are stored. For a complete list of Tsadra publications, see https://research.tsadra.org/index.php/Tsadra_Publications_List. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

³² 'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas, 1813–1899.

³³ <https://www.wiktionary.org/>; http://www.omegawiki.org/Meta:Main_Page; <https://www.wikipedia.org/>. Accessed on June 6, 2021.

³⁴ See for example Abel and Meyer 2013.

The quality of the collaborative content is indeed a major concern for the Workbench project team. The Workbench contributors will be members of the academic community, Himalayan scholars, and senior translators. This approach is essential to guarantee the quality of users' contributions, a central point in collaborative projects. In addition, to ensure that these contributions can be evaluated and discussed, there will be a space for discussion for each headword. This will allow users to share comments and improvement suggestions.

We have no doubt that under these conditions collaborative platforms have many benefits. To illustrate this point, on account of the diversity of registers and usages in Tibetan (vernacular, religious, regional, and diachronic), it seems hardly possible to imagine that a team of just a few lexicographers could account for all possible linguistic forms translators and researchers face in their work. The growth of knowledge is cumulative. By integrating layers of specialized knowledge in a way that is evolutive and traceable, the Lotsawa Workbench provides a solution to the transmission of quality information. Fuertes Olivera makes a distinction between "institutional Internet reference works" and "collective free multiple-language Internet reference works."³⁵ The former are compiled by professional lexicographers and usually accessible online through an institution for a fee. The latter are the work of non-professional lexicographers and are in free access. The ambition of the Lotsawa Workbench is to combine these two models by making quality content accessible to all through a collaborative approach involving scholars and translators of Tibetan Buddhist literature.

Another factor that pleads for a wiki-based solution is that there is simply no central authority to decide upon definitions and standard translations as was the case in Imperial Tibet, even regarding highly technical Buddhist terms. In the present post-colonial era, it is important to offer living communities, Buddhist or academic, the possibility to document and preserve their understanding of meanings in relation to concepts without superimposing unnecessary restrictions. By making both curation and participation possible, the Lotsawa Workbench preserves translation choices produced through academic research or through social conventions and interactions within Buddhist communities for which texts are translated. A similar wiki-based knowledge base is developed by the project "Relational Lexicography" at the University of British Columbia (UBC) whose aim is to provide lexicographical resources to speakers and researchers of indigenous languages in Canada:

Traditional lexicography was established by speakers of dominant

³⁵ See Fuertes-Oliveira 2010: 196.

languages. Our project will develop approaches to dictionary-making that are focused on the needs of under-resourced languages. Working together, speakers, learners, teachers and researchers of Indigenous languages need guidelines that address the specific requirements and goals of community-informed lexicography.³⁶

There is some merit in the present context for what the UBC project team calls a “relationally-engaged lexicography” given that Buddhist terminology is used by living and practicing communities.³⁷ These communities make their own terminological choices in relation to Buddhist doctrines and practices they engage in on a daily basis. The Lotsawa Workbench aims at integrating this important and often neglected aspect of Tibetan Buddhist lexicology in the English language. As stressed above, though, guidelines are necessary to produce quality content. This is why the Tsadra research team will offer user-friendly forms to help users add information to the knowledge base.

4. Workbench Description

One of the main advantages of a wiki-based platform is that datasets can be interconnected through hyperlinks. The first step to implement this approach is to restructure the available datasets with the idea of improving user experience. Then, by building bridges across the available lexicographic resources, the various datasets can be integrated into the Workbench in a way that mirrors the translator’s workflow.

A dictionary entry should include a broad range of information translators and researchers need in the course of their work:

- Headword (Wylie transliteration/Unicode Tibetan script)
- Semantic information (semantic fields, definition in English and Tibetan if available, synonyms/near-synonyms, etc.)
- Grammatical information (POS)
- Lexical information (etymology, forms, verb forms if applicable)
- Sanskrit and Chinese corresponding word(s)

On the Lotsawa Workbench, this information is accessed by clicking on tabs located at the top of the wiki page (Fig. 1):

³⁶ Regarding the project “Relational Lexicography” at the University of British Columbia (UBC), see <https://dictionaries.arts.ubc.ca/> and [https://wiki.ubc.ca/Relational Lexicography Knowledgebase](https://wiki.ubc.ca/Relational_Lexicography_Knowledgebase). Accessed on June 14, 2021.

³⁷ On this important notion of relational lexicography, see <https://dictionaries.arts.ubc.ca/our-goals/>. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

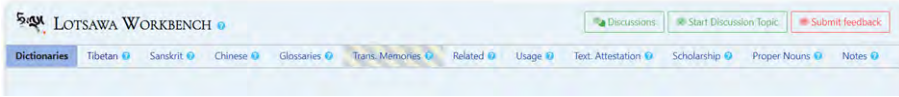


Fig. 1 – *Lotsawa Workbench tabs*

Tabs are the most practical way to display all this information in a user-friendly way. They allow the Workbench users to easily find the type of information they need without being overwhelmed by the amount of data. The list of Workbench tabs include:

- Dictionaries
- Sanskrit
- Chinese
- Glossaries
- Translation Memories
- Related
- Usage
- Textual Attestation
- Scholarship
- Proper nouns
- Notes

Most lexical queries are quite simple and the information displayed on the first tab should be more than enough. However, in the case of more complex, technical, or rare expressions, users might want to check the vast scope of information available in the knowledge base. More complex components of the dictionary microstructure (e.g., synonyms, word usage, dictionary examples, textual attestation) are therefore included in the tabs mentioned above.

Moreover, if users want to contribute to the content of the Workbench, they will have immediate and complete access to all the information they need to write a dictionary entry. Each tab displays or leads to available resources related to the headword through an array of hyperlinks, so that users do not have to type in any query. This aspect of the Workbench makes possible and relatively easy deep searches about complex Tibetan semantic units across a large number of resources.

Dictionaries

Most dictionary queries are usually about simple Tibetan

expressions. As a consequence, we simplified the display of the first tab to speed up information retrieval and to improve user experience. The essential information displayed on the first tab is divided into five sections to provide a quick overview of the search word:

- Term info
- English resources
- Verb forms
- Tibetan and Sanskrit resources

Term info (Fig. 2) contains information about the headword that will be provided manually by the Workbench editors and collaborators. There is no original dataset for this section as it will be developed as a wiki-based collaborative project. Future English definitions of the headword provided by editors and contributors will thus be included in this section.



Term Info	
དགོངས་པ་	
Wylie	dgongs pa
Part of Speech	n
Semantic Fields	Hermeneutics; Mind
Etymology	v. dgongs

Fig. 2 – The Dictionaries tab - Term info

The second section lists all Tibetan-English dictionaries for which comprehensive datasets are already available (Fig. 3). At the present development stage, this section includes the Rangjung Yeshe Dharma Dictionary, Hopkins & 84000 glossaries, as well as the entries corresponding to Richard Barron's glossary as an example of a dataset based on the work of a translator.

English Resources		
Rangjung Yeshe Dictionary	dgongs pa. dgongs pa. dgongs pa. dgongs trans. v. (h) (Of bsam pa. 1) mind, frame of mind, attitude, intention, thought, consideration, viewpoint, idea. 2) [to emphasize the honorific] enlightened intent, wisdom mind, realization, insight, vision, wisdom, meditation, deep experience. 3) to think, consider, concentrate upon, reflect, understand, give thought to, care for, feel, regard, realize, know, decide, intend. 4) meaning, intent, implication, understanding, cognizance, necessity, intimation, interpretation; <i>kyi dgongs pa</i> enlightened intent behind. 5) implicative, meant for, intended to be. 5) deepest sense, primordial condition, deep structure <i>dgongs pa sangs rgyas kun dang dbyer med par bzhu</i> g his wisdom mind is inseparable from that of all the Buddhas: [for Dzogchen] enlightened intention [for lower approaches] enlightened perspective/ outlook ... <i>kyi dgongs pa</i> - enlightened intention behind/ perspective/ outlook concerning ...	169 fuzzy match(es)
Hopkins Glossary 2015	thought; thinking; thinking of hidden meaning; intention; notion consideration; exalted consideration; thought; thought behind it; standpoint; intent; perspective	50 fuzzy match(es)
Hopkins Others' English 2015	[C]intent[ion]; desire; purpose; attempt (to hurt); veiled; indirect; with hidden meaning; grace(?) [C]hidden intent; with hidden meaning	11 fuzzy match(es)
84000 Glossary	No direct match.	2 fuzzy match(es)
Richard Barron's glossary	... <i>kyi dgongs pa</i> - enlightened intention behind/ perspective/ outlook concerning ... [for Dzogchen] enlightened intention [for lower approaches] enlightened perspective/ outlook	6 fuzzy match(es)

Fig. 3 – The Dictionaries tab - English resources

The next section documents verb forms related to the headword, if relevant. This dataset is drawn from Hill 2010 (*A Lexicon Of Tibetan Verb Stems As Reported By The Grammatical Tradition*). It contains essential information regarding present, past, future, and imperative stems, syntax (e.g., transitivity, ergativity, etc.), meaning, and usage (Fig. 4).

Verb Forms	
Verbicator	
dgongs	<p>Present: dgongs LZ, CD, ND, DK, DS, TC.</p> <p>Past: dgongs LZ, ND, DK, [DS], TC.</p> <p>Future: dgongs LZ, DK, [DS], TC.</p> <p>Imperative: dgongs LZ, DK, TC.</p> <p><i>Voluntary:</i> TC, (Hoshi 2003).</p> <p><i>Transitive:</i> DS, TC.</p> <p>Syntax: [Erg, Obl] (Hackett 2003).</p> <p>Characteristic Example: <i>thugs la</i> LZ.</p> <p>Meaning: 1. To think, to reflect, to contemplate, to consider. 2. (usually with terminative of the infinitive) To purpose, intend CD. To think, to reflect, to contemplate</p>

Fig. 4 – The Dictionaries tab - Verb forms

In addition to this, a Tibetan definition from the Monlam dictionary is displayed in the Tibetan section of the page (Fig. 5). This definition is accompanied by tags in Tibetan regarding the POS and semantic field of the headword.

Tibetan Resources	
<p>སྤྲོན་ལམ་ཚོག་མཛོད་ཆེན་མོ།</p> <p>དགོངས་པ་ ལུགས་ལ་སྤྲོད་པའི་དགོངས་པ་ནི་རྣམས་འཛོམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་ལ་བྱུ་ལྟེ། མནར་གཟུ་སྤེངས་ཀྱི་འགྲེལ་པ་ལས། དགོངས་པ་ནི་རྣམས་འཛོམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་དེ། རིང་གསར་སྤྲོད་པའི་དགོངས་པ་ལ་མཁུ་ལུས་པའི་གཞི་བཅས་ཏེ་བསྟན་པའི་ལྗོངས་ཏེ། འདི་ལྟར་ནིར་སྤྲོད་པའི་སྤྲོད་པའི་ལྗོངས་ལས་མཛུགས་ཀྱི་བཀོད་པའི་རྒྱུར་གྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཛོམས་ལ་འཇུག་པའི་གཞི་བཅས་ཏེ། རྣམས་འཛོམས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་ལ་འཛོམས་པའི་མཛུགས་ལྟེ་བསྟན་པའི་གཞི་བཅས་ཏེ། །ཞེས་གསུངས།</p>	<p>Part of Speech མིང་རྒྱུག</p> <p>Domain ཚོགས་ལུགས།</p>

Fig. 5 – The Dictionaries tab - Tibetan resources

Finally, the first page includes an entry drawn from Negi 1993 showing possible Sanskrit equivalents for the Tibetan headword (Fig.6). The Negi dictionary contains detailed examples with references for each word meaning. These references are easily accessible by hovering over

Word sketches are provided by SketchEngine.³⁹ They are extremely detailed corpus-linguistic presentations of lexical and syntactic patterns illustrating the way the headword is used across a corpus. The reference corpus for Tibetan on SketchEngine is The Annotated Corpus of Classical Tibetan (ACTib 2.0).⁴⁰ It is POS-tagged and lemmatized, and includes the main genres of Classical Tibetan literature. Word sketches document the grammatical and collocational behavior of words. This information is not relevant in the case of common words, but it is essential to better understand complex terms. Through word sketches, users can quickly get a sense of the lexical and grammatical relationships involving the searched word. This is a very important tool for any serious lexicographical work (see Fig. 12) since it can drastically increase the quality of dictionary entries.

The screenshot displays the 'WORD SKETCH' interface for the Tibetan word 'ལྷོ་མེད་' (as noun 48,290). The interface is organized into six columns, each representing a different grammatical category. The categories are: 'Cases with "ལྷོ་མེད་" as HN', 'Terminative of "ལྷོ་མེད་"', 'Agent of "ལྷོ་མེད་"', 'Recipient of "ལྷོ་མེད་"', 'Head of the relative clause', and 'Determiners with "ལྷོ་མེད་" as HN'. Each column contains a list of example sentences in Tibetan script, with the word 'ལྷོ་མེད་' highlighted in blue. The interface also includes a search bar at the top and a search button.

Fig. 12 — Word sketches (SketchEngine)

Dictionaries usually provide “dictionary examples” in the form of short sentences or clauses illustrating a regular pattern typical of the word usage. SketchEngine allows the automatic extraction of good dictionary examples (GDEX), a feature that we are considering to implement in the future. Until then, examples found in available datasets (e.g., Hopkins - Examples) will be integrated into this tab.

The wiki-based collaborative approach at the core of the Lotsawa Workbench also allows users to add their own examples if they wish

³⁹ <https://www.sketchengine.eu/>. Accessed on June 14, 2021.

⁴⁰ See Meelen, Roux, and Hill t.p.

to illustrate any idiosyncratic or noteworthy usage of the headword. This part of the tab will include collocations and stock phrases, specialized usage, proverbs, and idioms.

Textual Attestation

In the many exchanges we had while developing the Workbench, several translators expressed the wish to look at texts in which the headword occurs to get a sense of the register and genre of some complex expressions. This feature is particularly useful when the source language is specific to a topic or a time period. We designed this tab in order to facilitate this kind of textual analysis (see Fig. 13).



Fig. 13 — *The Textual Attestation tab*

The hyperlinks on this page automatically take users to repositories where they can have a look at the headword in its own textual environment.⁴¹ The rKTs is one of the best resources online for Tibetan canonical literature. The query performed through the hyperlink immediately gives a sense of the type of literature the searched expression belongs to (e.g., *sūtra*, *tantra*, *śāstra*, etc.).

The TLB can provide equivalent expressions in Chinese and Sanskrit for Tibetan words. It is a massive translation memory including central Buddhist texts. When the Tibetan source text is unclear, the TLB can provide the Sanskrit, if extant, or a Chinese translation that can help unravel the meaning of the Tibetan text. Buddhalexus is an invaluable resource to detect underlying intertextual patterns. This tool is thus very interesting when translating a versified root text that is elucidated in various commentaries. Through Buddhalexus, users can for example quickly identify texts that gloss the meaning of a

⁴¹ See links and abbreviations in footnote 22 above.

technical term. Although BDRC etexts cover canonical and non-canonical texts, its repository of Tibetan autochthonous digital texts is unparalleled. The UI includes the possibility to filter results by author, time period, or genre. This feature is extremely useful for a diachronic analysis of a semantic unit.

It is obvious that such sophisticated queries are not necessary when dealing with common Tibetan words. However, they are important resources to understand and document complex multi-word semantic units, a task users should be able to perform if they translate difficult passages or write dictionary entries.

Scholarship

This tab includes hyperlinks to Google searches based on the headword. These links are useful to find secondary literature or online scholarship about complex expressions through automatic queries of Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, Cinii, Academia.edu. The page also offers a few links to specialized knowledge bases or proper nouns, if users are interested in checking names of persons or places containing the headword. In addition to those, various online sites offering useful lexicographical and textual resources are accessible through hyperlinks (see Fig. 14).

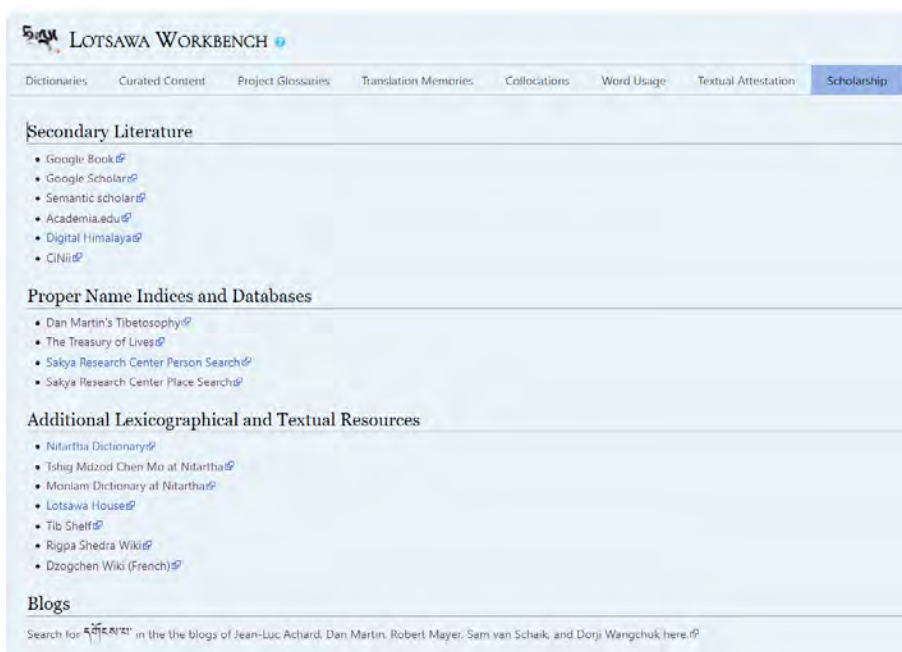


Fig. 14 — The Textual Attestation tab

Proper Nouns

The Proper Nouns tab links to online resources such as The Treasury of Lives (TOL) and BDRC (Fig.15) and to the People page within the knowledge base where additional information (e.g., TOL & BDRC identification numbers) about queried proper nouns can be found (Fig.16).

Page	Wylie	Other Names	BDRC	TOL
Lachen Gongpa Rabsel (TOLID 2816)	bla chen dgongs pa rab gsal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dgongs pa rab gsal (Primary Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • Gongpa Rabsel (Primary Title, Library of Congress, English) • Gewa Rabsel (Personal Name, Library of Congress, English) • dge ba rab gsal (Personal Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • mu zugs gsal 'bar (Personal Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • Muzuk Salber (Personal Name, Library of Congress, English) 	BDRC	TOL

Fig. 15 – The Proper Nouns tab

People/Treasury of Lives/Lachen Gongpa Rabsel (TOLID 2816)

< People

Treasury of Lives ID#	2816 TOL Link
Bdrc RID#	P1523 BDRC Link
Epithet	
Primary Name	Lachen Gongpa Rabsel
Wylie Epithet	
Wylie Name	bla chen dgongs pa rab gsal
Phonetic Display Name	Lachen Gongpa Rabsel
Wylie Display Name	bla chen dgongs pa rab gsal
Name Variants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dgongs pa rab gsal (Primary Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • Gongpa Rabsel (Primary Title, Library of Congress, English) • Gewa Rabsel (Personal Name, Library of Congress, English) • dge ba rab gsal (Personal Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • mu zugs gsal 'bar (Personal Name, Extended Wylie, Tibetan) • Muzuk Salber (Personal Name, Library of Congress, English)

Categories: [People](#) | [People Pages from Treasury of Lives](#)

Fig. 16 – The People page

Notes

The last tab displays scholarly notes about the headword. It is

designed to keep track of any information not included in other tabs (Fig.17). This data can be either mass imported from available datasets (e.g., footnotes from Tsadra publications) or manually entered into the knowledge base by editors and contributors.

Submitted Notes

Add/Edit Notes

Gregory Fogues

The translation of the title of the *Samdhinimocanasūtra* (Tb. *sdongs pa nges pa'i gret pa'i zhes bya ba theg pa'i chen pa'i mdo*) is the object of several discussions among scholars regarding the meaning of the Sanskrit words *samdhi* and *nimocana* following Lamotte's first complete translation of the text. Among the various translations into English of this Sanskrit compound, I opted for simplicity and translated the Sanskrit *samdhinimocanasūtra* with "The Sūtra Unraveling the Inters," which I believe renders accurately the meaning and structure of the text. Various interlocutors indeed ask the Buddha repeatedly to explain difficult points in order to clarify the purpose of his seemingly contradictory or complex doctrines on the nature of reality. On this point, see Lamotte 1935, p. 126; Ware 1937; Edgerton 1937; Edgerton 1953, p. 336; and later Keenan 1985, p. 126; Powers 1991a and Powers 1993b, p. 288.

Reference Notes from other Works (i.e. Footnotes/Endnotes)

Book	Author/Translator	Note
Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy	Jam mgon kong sprul Calahan, E.	14 This includes such sūtras as the Decent into Earth Sūtra (<i>Samdhivastūtrasūtra</i> , Long ter gzhag pa'i mdo). Sūtra Unraveling the Intention (<i>Samdhinimocanasūtra</i> , <i>sdongs pa nges pa'i gret pa'i mdo</i>). Genuine Golden Light Sūtra (<i>Svaminiprabhāvatīnīyasūtra</i> , <i>gṣar 'od abam pa'i mdo</i>). Note that the designations of texts as belonging to one of three turnings of the dharma wheel is thematic rather than based on historical chronology.
Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy	Jam mgon kong sprul Calahan, E.	280 <i>Thub pa sdongs pa'i</i> . This may be <i>Thub pa sdongs pa'i rab gsal</i> by Sakya Pandita, Kunga Gyaltsen (Kun dge'i rgyal mtshan) (1182–1251); however, I was unable to locate this comment in that text.
Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy	Jam mgon kong sprul Calahan, E.	038 Inherent absence (<i>shvashābha</i> , <i>nga be nyid med pa'i</i>) is presented in the Sūtra Unraveling the Intention (<i>Samdhinimocanasūtra</i> , <i>sdongs pa nges pa'i gret pa'i mdo</i>). Chapter 7: see Powers 1999, 96–105. It is also found in Keenan's <i>Compendium of Abhidharma</i> , Chapter 8: see Bon-Wald 2001, 193. This term is also translated as "non-nature," "absence of non-being," or "lack of nature." See also Kheigo Tashim Gyampo 1986; Mathes 2000, 215–7; Hopkins 2002, 103; and Burnhholz 2004, 470. Imagined characteristics do not exist by way of their own characteristics. The nature that they do not have is to be existent by way of their own characteristics.

Fig. 17 — The Notes tab

5. Future Development

The Lotsawa Workbench is a work in progress. The first phase of the project consists in linking available resources to the collaborative wiki platform to support the activities of translators and researchers interested in Tibetan Buddhist Literature. The second phase would be to develop the content of the knowledge base with regard to both quantity and quality on the basis of the information displayed on the Workbench tabs. This next step requires a collaborative approach to write or rewrite entries, if available resources are not entirely satisfactory. This is an ambitious project that will require organizing and training teams of lexicographers in order to improve the current knowledge base over time.

Possible areas for future development therefore include a variety of points that would keep adding value to the Workbench from the perspective of both users and researchers.

Turning translation memories into an encyclopedic knowledge base

An interesting development for the Workbench would be to link head-words with longer essays pertaining to a specific topic. For example, some chapters of the Treasury of Knowledge could be used to document Buddhist technical terms such as *rkyen* and *rgyu* by linking Kongtrul's explanation of various doctrines of causality and

dependent arising to these headwords. By integrating into the knowledge base a corpus of short specialized essays by different authors on a variety of key topics, it would be easy to add an encyclopedic component to the Workbench. From a technical perspective, this could be easily achieved if translation memories (TM) of these texts are available. A simple TF/IDF (Term Frequency/Inverse Document Frequency) algorithm run on the Tibetan text of the TM would allow us to evaluate how important a headword is in relation to a text belonging to a corpus. All we would have to do then is to link the headword to all the documents to which the word in question is particularly relevant. This approach would be a fast and reliable way to turn the Workbench into an encyclopedic knowledge base of Buddhist terms according to primary sources. The same process could theoretically also be applied to information retrieval and document clustering of open access secondary sources.

Semantic mapping of complex expressions

The mapping of words in relation to their semantic environment could contribute to improve sense description at the microstructure level of the dictionary, particularly in the case of more complex expressions. On the most basic level, the semantic distribution of words can be assessed through word clouds. But more sophisticated options exist to achieve this such as word embeddings, or distributional word representations, a powerful way to explore the semantic space of some technical or rare expressions. Through a detailed analysis of relations of synonymy, antonymy, and semantically related lemmas, lexicographers are in a position to produce more accurate information while maximizing their resources. Some word-embedding tools have been recently developed to assist the lexicographer's task with regard to the dictionary-making process. Glossary extraction tools such as MGiza⁴² could also be used to provide a simple bilingual alignment from available translation memories to complement the data produced through word embeddings. Computational lexicography as a whole is currently fast evolving. It is an area we intend to explore further in the future.⁴³

Definition and citation extraction

The availability of NLP tools for Tibetan theoretically makes possible the automated extraction of definitions of technical Buddhist terms or

⁴² See <https://github.com/moses-smt/mgiza>. Accessed on November 19, 2021.

⁴³ For an application of word embeddings to investigate a complex term (*zung 'jug* in the works of Mipham), see Forgues t.p.

frequent citations across a corpus. This approach would allow us to automatically populate the Workbench with quality content. Various strategies are possible here. Frequency across a large corpus could be one way to go in the case of important citations, although it could also be interesting to proceed with several specialized corpora (e.g., abhidharma treatises) from which it should be relatively easy to extract core definitions. These citations and definitions could then be included in the relevant entries to increase the content of the dictionary. To achieve this, we would have to train a model on a tagged-corpus or representative work, the idea being to minimize extraction time and post-processing work. Implementing this approach on the basis of a bilingual corpus (Tibetan-English) would offer the additional benefit of having definitions and citations in both languages.

Integration of other languages and resources

Pali and Sanskrit resources could be integrated into the Workbench. This feature would be particularly useful for translators working on canonical texts. When translating this type of literature, identifying the Indic term from which the Tibetan translation was made significantly increases the quality and accuracy of the English translation. A number of resources are available through the Cologne Sanskrit Dictionaries project. Including them into the wiki platform and linking them to Sanskrit equivalents for Tibetan headwords through hyperlinks would significantly speed up the process of checking the Sanskrit.

Regarding Tibetan words, it would be theoretically possible to integrate multimedia materials by linking to videos or by integrating images to the database. This feature would be extremely useful to document vernacular usages of the language for objects or places, as well as for religious symbols and practices. Furthermore, Tibetan displays some dialectal variations that could be better understood through this functionality. This kind of information would be particularly important for the translation of terms belonging to social or historical aspects of Tibetan culture, as often found in *rnam thars*.

In addition to this, it would be theoretically possible to include more target languages into the Workbench (e.g., French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, etc.).

Collaborations to develop curated spaces

Another development avenue worth exploring is the collaboration with academic departments or translation teams to work on a specific semantic space or topic. The idea is to provide extensive lexicographic coverage of specialized or obscure terminology. Topics under

consideration include scholastic subjects (e.g., Pramāṇa), teachings (e.g., Dzogchen, Mahāmudrā), Sanskrit-Tibetan literature (e.g., sūtra collections with Leiden University "Open Philology" project).

Collaborations of this kind could be essential to build up curated spaces for which a team of scholars would be in charge of supervising and contributing to the content by adding definitions, information, or even bibliographical resources.

The Workbench as an educational tool

The Workbench can be used as an educational tool to teach how to read Tibetan texts or to train translators. This could be done on the basis of developing curated spaces as mentioned above, or by looking at words that have been chosen for their pedagogical value. The platform structure is based on the various steps translators and researchers have to go through, when working on a text. With the Workbench, it becomes easy to walk students and junior translators through the entire translation process. This can be best done with more complex expressions where some specific issues have to be considered, such as Sanskrit Buddhist terminology or intertextuality. We plan to produce a few videos to explain this workflow for both canonical texts and Tibetan autochthonous compositions.

Integration into CAT (computer-aided translation) and AW (augmented writing) tools

A large number of CAT and AW platforms have been developed that could be used for the translation of Buddhist texts.⁴⁴ From this perspective, the Lotsawa Workbench represents an important first step to structure the Tibetan-English lexicographical resources. Many applications could then be derived from this work, such as quick access to word meaning by hovering over words while reading Tibetan unicode texts.

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⁴⁴ On the technological innovations of AW tools, see Köhler Simonsen 2020.

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Tsadra Translation Memories

Below is a list of translations sponsored by Tsadra Foundation that we would like to convert into bilingual alignments (Tibetan-English). These translation memories could be gradually integrated into the Lotsawa Workbench. This broad selection of treatises covers a wide range of specialized topics ranging from Abhidharma to tantric instructions:

Asaṅga, Maitreyaṅgātha, Gzan-phan-chos-kyi-snañ-ba, and Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho. 2014.

Ornament of the Great Vehicle Sūtras: Maitreya's Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra with commentaries by Khenpo Shenga and Ju Mipham. Boston: Snow Lion Publications.

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Datasets

We would like to thank the following persons and project teams for having shared with us the data we aggregated into the Lotsawa Workbench or linked to our platform:

Christian Steinert
<https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/#home>

84000 - Translating the Words of the Buddha
<https://84000.co/>

Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies (rKTs, University of Vienna)
<https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/sub/index.php>

Buddhanexus (University of Hamburg)
<https://buddhanexus.net/>

Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC)
<https://library.bdrc.io/>

Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae (TLB, University of Oslo)
<https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=library&bid=2>.

Indo-Tibetan Lexical Resource (ITLR, University of Hamburg)
<https://www.itlr.net/test.php?md=view>

Cologne Digital Sanskrit Dictionaries (University of Cologne)
<https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de>

Esukhia

<https://github.com/Esukhia>

The idea of developing a platform that would connect relevant knowledge bases in a way that is user friendly for scholars interested in Tibetan literature and translation would have been impossible to implement without all the work accomplished by these projects. We would like to express our gratitude to all the project teams and scholars who are partners of the Tsadra Lotsawa Workbench.

As mentioned above, the Tsadra research team will add new resources to the Lotsawa Workbench, such as specialized translation memories produced from available translations supported by Tsadra Foundation. In addition to the lexicographical data we contributed to produce, we integrated the following datasets to our website:⁴⁵

From Christian Steinert's github repository:⁴⁶

Berzin, Alexander.

English-Tibetan-Sanskrit Glossary.

www.berzinarchives.com

Blo mthun bsam gtan. 2008.

Dag yig gsar bsgrigs. Delhi: Sherig Parkhang, Tibetan Cultural & Religious Publication.

Das, Sarat Chandra, Graham Sandberg, and Augustus William Heyde. 2005.

A Tibetan-english Dictionary: With Sanskrit Synonyms. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Dharma Drum Buddhist College.

Mahāvīyutpatti Digital Edition.

<http://buddhisticinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/glossaries/>

Dung dkar blo bzang 'phrin las. 2002.

Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang.

⁴⁵ Some of these datasets might still be in the process of being included in the knowledge base at the time of this publication.

⁴⁶ <https://github.com/christiansteinert/tibetan-dictionary>. The online links corresponding to the dataset available on Christian Steinert's github repository are listed here as mentioned on <https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/#home> (accessed on August 12, 2021).

Gäng, Peter and Sylvia Wetzel, eds. 2004.
Buddhist Terms. Multilingual Version. Buddhist Academy Berlin Brandenburg.

<http://www.buddhistische-akademie-bb.de/pdf/Buddhist-Terms.pdf>

Hill, Nathan Wayne. 2010.

A Lexicon Of Tibetan Verb Stems As Reported By The Grammatical Tradition. München: Kommission für Zentral- und Ostasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Hopkins, Jeffrey, ed. 2015.

The Uma Institute for Tibetan Studies Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary.
www.uma-tibet.org

Kunsang, Erik Pema, ed. 2003.

Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan-English Dharma Dictionary 3.0.

<http://rywiki.tsadra.org>⁴⁷

Lin, Chung-An, ed. 2008.

Common Chinese-Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Buddhist Terminology.

www.insights.org.tw

Mahoney, Richard, ed. 2004.

Tibetan-Sanskrit Buddhist Terminology Based on the Mahāvīyutpatti and Yogācārabhūmi. Oxford: Indica et Buddhica.

<http://indica-et-buddhica.org/repository/dictionaries/tibetan-sanskrit-terms>

Monlam, Karma, ed. 2013.

Tibetan Terminology Project: Glossary of Standardised Terms. Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration (India).

<https://tibterminology.net/>

Monlam, Lobsang. 2017.

Mon lam tshig mdzod chen mo (Monlam Dictionary). Monlam IT Research Centre.

Project site: <https://monlamit.com/node/156>

Dataset: <https://github.com/Esukhia/bo-pos/tree/master/rc>

⁴⁷ This entry includes all related dictionaries and glossaries included in the Rangjung Yeshe Dharma Dictionary.

Negi, J. S. 1993.

Bod dan legs sbyar gyi tshig mdzod chen mo: Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary.
Sarnath: Dictionary Unit, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies.

Rangjung Yeshe editors.

Glossary for Mipham Rinpoche's Gateway to Knowledge, Vol. 1. Rangjung Yeshe Publications.

www.rangjung.com/gateway/KJ-main.htm

Rigzin, Tsepak. 2013.

Nan don rig pa'i min tshig Bod-Dbyin san sbyar = Tibetan-English dictionary of Buddhist terminology. Dharamsala : Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Zhang, Yisun. 1985.

Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo. Peking: Minsu.

From the Cologne Digital Sanskrit Dictionaries project (University of Cologne):

Edgerton, F.1953.

Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary. New Haven, Yale University Press.

From 84000 - Translating the Words of the Buddha:

84000 Glossary.

<http://www.84000.co/>

84000 Translation Memories.


<https://github.com/84000/translation-memory-resources>



The Translation Endeavours of Shes rab grags Revisited: An Investigation of Translations Done by Pu rang lo chung Shes rab grags and 'Bro lo tsā ba Shes rab grags

Orna Almogi (Hamburg)*

1. Introductory Remarks

he present article is yet another part of my ongoing study of the formation of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon in general, and of dBus pa blo gsal's catalogue to the Old sNar thang *bsTan 'gyur* (forthcoming) in particular. One aspect of my studies surrounding the Tibetan Buddhist Canon has naturally been identifying the persons involved in its making, including not only editors and patrons, but also authors, *lo tsā bas*, and *paṇḍitas* who collaborated on the translations. More specifically, the wish to explore the Buddhist intellectual networks behind the formation of the individual works and the canonical corpora active both within and outside the Indic cultural sphere, and the ensuing collaborative BuddhaNexus project, increased the need for a further investigation concerning the persons involved in the formation of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon in general, and the Tibetan translators and their collaborating *paṇḍitas* in particular. For this purpose, the Authors and Translators Identification Initiative (ATII) was launched at the beginning of 2021, which involves collaboration among several institutions and individuals.¹ In the

* I would like to thank Prof. Dorji Wangchuk (Universität Hamburg) for his assistance in clarifying some ambiguous passages. I would likewise like to thank Philip Pierce (Kathmandu) for proofreading my English. Thanks are also due to Nicola Bajetta, Prof. Dorji Wangchuk, and Prof. Harunaga Isaacson for their help in eliminating persisting typos and the like. For the editorial policies followed in the present article, see the Technical Note found at the end. For the abbreviations, special signs, sigla, and abbreviated titles employed, see the Abbreviations & Special Signs, Sigla, and Bibliography, respectively.

¹ ATII consists of a group of students and scholars based at the Universität Hamburg—including Nicola Bajetta, Ryan Conlon, Sebastian Nehrdich, Marco Hummel, and myself—and Élie Roux, a software developer at the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC), whose support of the project in various ways has been indispensable. In addition, further assistance and input have been provided by

course of these joint efforts, our attention was drawn to the intriguing case of the Tibetan translator(s) named Shes rab grags. Ulrich Timme Kragh published in 2010 an article titled “On the Making of the Tibetan Translation of Lakṣmī’s **Sahaḥasiddhipaddhati*: ‘Bro Lotsā ba Shes rab Grags and His Translation Endeavors. (Materials for the Study of the Female Tantric Master Lakṣmī of Uḍḍiyāna, part I),”² in which, as made clear by the title, he has attempted to identify ‘Bro Shes rab grags’s translations alongside a discussion of his *paṇḍita* collaborators and some of the circumstances under which these translations were done, including the hitherto undetermined places in which the translations were made and a chronology of the translations. Since a number of Kragh’s identifications, as some of the methods employed by him, were ostensibly doubtful, it seemed that in order to either corroborate or disprove his identifications, a systematic investigation was called for. This task was taken up, the result being the present article.

In his article, Kragh identifies thirty-one works as having been translated or revised by ‘Bro Shes rab grags—twenty-eight in collaboration with various *paṇḍitas* (thirteen altogether), one in collaboration with another Tibetan translator, and two alone. Moreover, basing himself on the form of the name provided in the colophons, Kragh also suggests a chronology of the translations, namely, first those with the simplest form, Bod kyi lo tsā ba Shes rab grags, then those where the name includes the clan name ‘Bro, then those that include the title *dge slong* (“fully ordained monk”), followed by those with both the clan name and the title *dge slong*, and finally what Kragh considers the “most elaborate epithet,” containing all elements of the name just mentioned, namely, Bod kyi lo tsā ba ‘Bro dge slong Shes rab grags.³ It is not the proper occasion to discuss this suggested chronology, but two points should be perhaps stated here in this regard: (i) Kragh’s assumption that the colophons were authored by ‘Bro Shes rab grags himself remains unproven (and seems indeed unfounded, as the colophons are often formulaic),⁴ and (ii) the methodology suggested by him for determining the chronology is highly questionable, for the only element that could suggest a chronology, would be the designation *dge slong*, but also in this case the underlying assumptions, namely, that the colophons were authored by ‘Bro

Bruno Laine of the Resources for Kangyur and Tengyur Studies (rKTs) project, University of Vienna. Moreover, for identifications in connection with the Chinese Buddhist Canon, ATII enjoys collaboration with Michael Radich and Jamie Norrish of the Chinese Buddhist Canonical Attributions database (CBC@). Special thanks are due to Prof. Dorji Wangchuk and the Khyentse Center, Universität Hamburg for providing financial support.

² I thank Nicola Bajetta for drawing our attention to Kragh’s article.

³ See Kragh 2010: 206–208.

⁴ See Kragh 2010: 198 n. 9.

Shes rab grags himself and that the omission of *dge slong* necessarily means that the translations were done before his full ordination, are likewise questionable.

Another major methodological shortcoming is Kragh's assumption that since *shes rab grags* is a rendering of *prajñākīrti*, the translator Prajñākīrti must be 'Bro Shes rab grags. Moreover, in order to explain the employment of these two names, Kragh also assumes that Prajñākīrti is the form used by 'Bro Shes rab grags during his stay in Nepal. Based on this assumption, Kragh also suggests the location where 'Bro Shes rab grags did each of his translations: those in whose colophon the name Prajñākīrti is employed were, with some exceptions, done in Nepal, and those in whose colophon the name Shes rab grags is employed, likewise with some exceptions, were done in Tibet.⁵ Kragh, however, does not corroborate these suppositions with any substantial evidence beyond the fact that *prajñākīrti* is what one would expect the Sanskrit for *shes rab grags* to be. Moreover, the practice of (systematically) employing one's Tibetan name while in Tibet and the Sanskrit equivalent while in one of the regions of the Indic cultural sphere seems, to the best of my knowledge, not to have been reported in the literature. As we shall see below, two main points have not been taken into consideration by Kragh, namely, (i) that the name Prajñākīrti was extensively employed by another Tibetan translator who was active at the same period as 'Bro Shes rab grags, and (ii) that it in fact reflects not only the Tibetan name Shes rab grags but also other semantic variants of it.

Before discussing each of the translations ascribed by Kragh to 'Bro Shes rab grags in detail, I shall first briefly present a list of the works in question, grouped according to the *paṇḍita* with whom the translations or revisions were done (as was outlined by Kragh, though occasionally in a slightly different order). Kragh's extensive discussions of each of the *paṇḍitas* will be considered below only if they are directly relevant to the present discussion. In the following brief presentation, the *paṇḍitas* will merely be mentioned along with their place of origin, and occasionally with their relation to each other whenever applicable (in both cases as indicated by Kragh). In order to avoid repetition, the works in question will be recorded in the following summary on the basis of their sDe dge (D) and Peking (P) catalogue numbers alone. The translations listed by Kragh may thus be presented in fifteen groups as follows:

(1) Ten works in collaboration with the Kashmiri **Somanātha**, namely, nine Kālacakra-related works, including D361/P3, D362/P4, D1347/P2064, D1353/P2070, D1355/P2072, D1357/P2074, D1371/P2087, D1372/P2088, DØ/P4609, and one non-Kālacakra

⁵ See Kragh 2010: 210, 217 n. 57, and *passim*.

work, namely, D2260/P3107, the **Sahajasiddhi* (referred to by Kragh as the "SS root-text," its commentary, the **Sahajasiddhipaddhati*, being Kragh's point of departure for the article in question).

(2) Five works, called by Kragh "minor works," translated in collaboration with the Nepalese **Sumatikīrti**, including D1764/P2633, D3127/P3948, D3139/P3960, DØ/P4619, and D1536/P2247.⁶ As noted by Kragh, the translator's name employed in the translation colophons of these works is Prajñākīrti, and thus, according to him, these translations were done in Nepal.

(3) One work in collaboration with the Kashmiri **Jñānavajra**, namely, D486/P118, assumed by Kragh to have been done before or after his stay in Nepal, given the employment of the Tibetan name in the colophon.⁷

(4) One work with the Indian **Mañjughoṣa**, namely, D1206/P2336, likewise assumed by Kragh to have been done before or after his stay in Nepal for the same reason.⁸

(5) One work in collaboration with the Nepalese **Kanakaśrīmitra**, namely, D3900/P5868. Following his above-mentioned suppositions and methodology, or what he called his "guiding principle," Kragh argues that the fact that the name employed in the colophon is Shes rab grags and not the Sanskritized name Prajñākīrti is a hint that 'Bro Shes rab grags's collaboration with Kanakaśrīmitra was one of the first he had in Nepal, and thus the translation in question was one of the first he did there. Kragh adds that although Shes rab grags has not yet started using his Sanskritized name at the early stage of his stay in Nepal, he nonetheless "changed his Tibetan epithet *dge slong* [...] to the corresponding Nepalese word *bande*." It is, however, unknown to me that employment of the term *bande* in the colophon has any significance in connection with the place in which the translation was done, and Kragh does not provide any himself.⁹

(6) One work in collaboration with the Nepalese **Jayākara**, namely, D4123/P5625, at a point, according to Kragh, where he was already using the name Prajñākīrti.¹⁰

(7) Two works in collaboration with the Nepalese **Varendraruci**, namely, D1903/P2767 and D1904/P2768, also at the stage when he had already started using the name Prajñākīrti.¹¹

⁶ See Kragh 2010: 213–214. Note that Kragh states in the main text that six minor works were translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Sumatikīrti, but only five are actually listed by him (n. 49). Also note that Kragh erroneously has D1535 instead of D1536 (as the equivalent for P2247).

⁷ See Kragh 2010: 208–209.

⁸ See Kragh 2010: 208–209.

⁹ See Kragh 2012: 211.

¹⁰ See Kragh 2012: 211–212.

¹¹ See Kragh 2012: 212–213.

(8) A translation of the second instalment (chaps. 6–11 of the first *kalpa* and the whole of the second *kalpa*, which consists of chaps. 1–12) of Vajragarbha's Hevajra commentary, namely, D1180/P2310, after having studied it under **Maitrīpāda**. The name employed in the colophon is Bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge long Shes rab grags, and thus is unambiguous. The colophon explicitly names the place of translation as Tibet, which well suits Kragh's theory of the employment of the Tibetan versus the Sanskritized name. In addition, according to Kragh, he also revised the first part (chaps. 1–5 of the first *kalpa*), this time in collaboration with **Prince Śrī Abhayadeva** (with whom he collaborated on the translation of other works, for which see the following entry). As he goes by the name Prajñākīrti in the intermediate colophon (found after chap. 5 of the first *kalpa*) and in the report on the translation and two revisions of this first instalment, this revision was, according to Kragh, done in Nepal.¹²

(9) Apparently two works in collaboration with **Prince Śrī Abhayadeva**, namely, D1544/P2252 and very probably also D3703/P4527. In these cases, too, since the translator goes by the name Prajñākīrti, Kragh suggests that the place of translation is Nepal.¹³ According to Kragh, these two translations are in addition to the collaboration on the revision of the first instalment of D1180/P2310 just mentioned.

(10) One work in collaboration with a student of Maitrīpāda known in Tibet as **The Indian Pāṇi** (i.e., **Vajrapāṇi**; 1017–ca. 1080), namely, D2139/P4838. As the name used in the colophon is Prajñākīrti, the translation was, according to Kragh, likely done in Nepal.¹⁴

(11) One work in collaboration with **Nālandāpāda** (spelt there Nālandapāda), namely, D2139/P4838. Nālandāpāda has been identified by Kragh as a minor student of Maitrīpāda, who, to judge from his name, was affiliated with Nālandā monastery in North India. The translator in this case likewise goes by the name Prajñākīrti.¹⁵

(12) One work in collaboration with one ***Digīśānandana**, namely, D1908/P2770, likewise under the name Prajñākīrti.¹⁶

(13) One work in collaboration with (or, alternatively, after having studied it under) the Indian ***Mānavihārāpa**, namely, D2261/P3108, the **Sahajasiddhipaddhati* (referred to by Kragh as SSP), which was, together with the above-mentioned **Sahajasiddhi* (translated in collaboration with Somanātha), Kragh's point of departure for the article

¹² See Kragh 2010: 218–222.

¹³ See Kragh 2010: 218–219, particularly n. 63.

¹⁴ See Kragh 2010: 222–223.

¹⁵ See Kragh 2010: 223.

¹⁶ See Kragh 2010: 223–224.

under discussion. This translation, too, done under the name *Prajñākīrti*, was, according to Kragh, probably done in Nepal.¹⁷

(14) One revision without any collaboration with a *paṇḍita*, but together with **Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug** (1042–1136; BDRC: P3814), namely, D368/P16, where again the name *Prajñākīrti* is employed, and thus, according to Kragh, was more probably done in Nepal.¹⁸

(15) And finally, two **solo translations** (*rang 'gyur*), namely, D2121/P2972 and D1452/P2169, which, in the light of the Tibetan name *Shes rab grags* in the colophon, were, according to Kragh, done in Tibet.¹⁹

As I shall show in the following, a number of the works believed by Kragh to have been translated by 'Bro *Shes rab grags* were actually not translated by him, for there were several translators that went by the name *Shes rab grags* (or a semantically similar name), some of whom were confused with one another and thus conflated by Kragh into one person. What certainly added to the confusion is the fact that at least some of these translators employed several variants of their name. Moreover, all of them were active in the eleventh century, which offers no opportunity to eliminate certain cases on account of, for example, the floruit of the collaborating *paṇḍitas*. I shall begin the discussion with these other translators and the works translated by them, and shall conclude with 'Bro *Shes rab grags* and the works that were indeed translated by him. In those few cases in which the identity of the translator could not be determined with utmost certainty after taking all factors into consideration, the most plausible identification was opted for (such entries are marked by a ?).

2. Translations by **Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags**

Pu rangs (/rang/hrang) **lo chung Shes rab grags** was a translator from Southern sTod in mNga' ris who has been active in the second half of the eleventh to first half of the twelfth century and is known to have worked closely with **Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug**. Most important for our discussion is the fact that, as we shall see from the cited sources below, he went under several Tibetan names, or more precisely several semantic variants of his Tibetan name, including *Shes rab grags* (pa), *Grag pa shes rab*, *Grag 'byor shes rab*, and *Grag mchog shes rab*,²⁰ and under the Sanskrit name *Prajñākīrti*,

¹⁷ See Kragh 2010: 224–227.

¹⁸ See Kragh 2010: 216–218.

¹⁹ See Kragh 2010: 209 n. 38.

²⁰ It appears that the name variant *Grag mchog shes rab* was used less than *Grag 'byor shes rab*. For example, in *Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho's "chronology,"* where *Grag mchog she[s] r[ab]* is mentioned in the context of what is known as

which can in fact serve as the Sanskritized form for all the Tibetan name variants just mentioned. Due to the fact that both 'Bro lo tsā ba and Pu rangs lo chung went by the name Shes rab grags, a number of the works listed by Kragh as having been translated by 'Bro lo tsā ba are in fact translations by Pu rangs lo chung. Accordingly, the *paṇḍitas* who collaborated on these translations are to be associated with the latter and not with the former, as done by Kragh. Apart from the translator's name(s), two other important factors are to be taken into consideration in determining the identity of the translator: (i) the circle(s) in which the translator in question worked, that is, mainly the *paṇḍitas* under whom he studied and with whom he collaborated on the translations in question, but also his fellow Tibetan translators, and (ii) the literary-cum-doctrinal areas in which he specialized.

According to the *Blue Annals*, Pu rangs lo chung studied under the same Indian and Nepalese teachers as Mar pa do ba, and later under **Prince (Rājaputra) Bhīmadeva**.²¹ Mar pa do ba's teachers in India are stated in the same source as being **Nāropa's** disciples **Manakaśrī**, **Prajñārakṣita**, the **Kashmiri Bodhibhadra**, and **Pramudavajra**, and in Nepal **Pham thing pa** (i.e., the second of the four Pham thing brothers who was known as A des pa chen po in Nepal and as 'Jigs byed grags pa in Tibet), the latter's younger brother (i.e., the third one) **Vāgīśvara(kīrti)**, **Kanakaśrī**, [**Vajra**]pāṇi, **Kṛṣṇapāda**, and **Sumatikīrti**.²² A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–

sTod 'dul ba ("the Vinaya of sTod") tradition, the name is glossed as Grags 'byor shes rab. See the *bsTan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed* (71.20–72.4): *stod 'dul ba'i gtso bo Zhang chung rGyal she'i slob ma ni | dPal 'byor shes rab dang | Tshul khirms blo gros la sogs pa yin | dPal 'byor shes rab 'di ni Pu rangs lo chung Grags* ^(byor shes rab) *mchog sher dang | lo tsā ba gZhon nu mchog gi slob ma yin | Pu rang lo chung 'di ni | Shrī Khang dmar gyi gad logs su | sku lus 'di nyid kyis mkha' spyod du phebs | khong dang lo chen lo chung ngu sdebs pa'i lo chen ni | Mar pa do pa Chos kyi dbang phyug yin |*. Of relevance is also the mention of him as the assistant translator of Mar pa do ba, who are thus respectively considered *lo chung* and *lo chen*, and the mention of his death place as the cliff of **Shrī Khang dmar**. Both details are also reported (with some variation) in other sources (see, for example, the following note). See also Stearns 2001: 189–190 n. 227, where the story of his death ("ascending to Khecara") is told. Also note that Stearns equates Pu rangs lo chung with Pu rangs lo tsā ba gZhon nu shes rab, who, according to some Tibetan authors, studied under Gayadhara and was in fact responsible for one of his visits to Tibet (*ibid.*: 51–52).

²¹ See the *Deb sngon* (469.8–14): **Mar pa do pa'i lo chung Grags pa shes rab kyis ni | Mar dos gsan pa'i bla ma rnam la yang rGya gar dang Bal por gsan pa mdzad la | phyi ni rGyal po'i sras Bhī ma de ba la yang mang du gsan pa mdzad de | chos Lo chen pas Lo chung che'o zhes grags pa des kyang | slob ma mang du bsdu nas bDe mchog gi bshad pa ring zhig tu mdzad pa'i 'phro de nyid la | Las stod lho'i Shrī'i phug par mtshams mdzad de | de'i mod la mkha' spyod du gshegs so |** . For an English translation, see Roerich 1947: 388.

²² See the *Deb sngon* (465.5–14). For an English translation, see Roerich 1947: 383–384. The problems surrounding the identification of the Pham thing brothers have been discussed in Lo Bue 1997: 643–652. The present paper is not the suita-

1659/1660; BDRC: P791), in his history of Cakrasaṃvara, describes Pu rangs lo chung, called there Grags 'byor shes rab, as being the lone one from among numerous other Tibetan translators all of whom are known to have studied under **Sumatikīrti** (including Mar pa do ba, rNgog lo, Mal lo, and Klog skya) to receive the complete instructions from him. A mes zhabs adds that he is called Pu rangs lo chung because he accompanied Mar do to Nepal as his assistant. He further states that Pu rangs lo chung studied there under numerous masters—including the **Prince**, that is, obviously the Rājaputra Bhīmadeva mentioned in the *Blue Annals*, and the **White Haṅdu** (“White Māntrika”), who has been previously identified as **Varen-draruci**²³—numerous Tantric doctrines such as Cakrasaṃvara, while on his way back to Tibet under **Bhadanta** he studied and then practised the Cakrasaṃvara, along with other doctrines associated with Nāropa. Of particular interests is A mes zhabs's identification of **Sumatikīrti** (Tib. Blo gros bzang por grags pa) with the Nepalese **Bhadanta**.²⁴

The main area of specialization of Pu rangs lo chung in terms of doctrinal cycles and their related works was clearly the Cakrasaṃvara, but he is also reported to have studied and translated various works specifically associated with Nāropa's tradition and works of other doctrinal cycles including the Guhyasamāja and the Kālacakra. It is also to be noted that Pu rangs lo chung is mentioned in several lineages of the Sa skya school. He was a teacher of Sa chen Kun dga'

ble occasion to readdress this issue, but it should be perhaps merely stated that A mes zhabs, in his history of Cakrasaṃvara, seems to have different identifications than those offered by Lo Bue and the *Blue Annals* (as interpreted/translated by Roerich). The identification offered here follows that of A mes zhabs, namely, Pham thing pa seems to be an epithet of the second of the four brothers who was known as A des pa chen po or *Abhayakīrti ('Jigs med grags pa), while Vāgīśvara(kīrti) (Ngag gi dbang phyug (grags pa)) is identified as the third brother. See the 'Khor lo sdom pa'i chos byung (153.11ff.).

²³ See Lo Bue 1977: 635.

²⁴ See the 'Khor lo sdom pa'i chos byung (159.12–15): *de lta bu'i dpal Pham mthing pa chen po 'Jigs med grags pa zhes mtshan yongs su grags pa des dbang bskur zhing rgyud byin gyis brlabs pa'i slob ma'i tshogs mang du yod pa'i nang nas | bal po Bha danta ni | Su ma ti kirti ste Blo gros bzang por grags pa 'di gong du bstan pa ltar yongs rdzogs ste paṅḍi ta chen po | ...; and ibid. (159.13–20): de la Mar pa do pa | rNgog lo | Mal lo | Klog skya sogs bod kyi lo tsā ba'i slob ma mang yang | gdams pa rdzogs pa ni Pu hrangs lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab yin la | 'dis dang po lho Bal du byon pa'i dus su Mar do dang dpon g.yog yin pas | Pu hrangs lo chung du grags | spyir 'dis rGyal po'i sras dang Ha ngu dkar po la sogs pa bla ma mang po la bDe mchog sogs gsang sngags mang du gsan | khyad par Bha danta la Bod du byon pa'i gTsang lam du bDe mchog gi chos skor gsan nas sgrub pa mdzad cing | khyad par Nā ro pa'i man ngag bskyed pa'i rim pa Phag mo mkha' spyod | rdzogs pa'i rim pa rTsa dbu ma | thun mong gi man ngag gNod sbyin mo dbang du bya ba la sogs pa sgrub pas grub ste | See Stearns 2001: 190 n. 227, where Bhadanta is likewise equated with Sumatikīrti.*

snying po (1092–1158; BDRC: P1615) through whom several of his teachings have been further transmitted within the school. In his Lam 'bras instruction notes, sNgags 'chang Grags pa blo gros (1367–1446?; BDRC: P3611), for example, reports that Sa chen studied various doctrines including those associated with Cakrasamvara, Guhyasamāja, and Kālacakra systems under Pu rangs lo chung, sKyu ra a skyabs,²⁵ the Nepalese Padmaśrī, Jñānavajra, and the Indian Bhoṭarāhula.²⁶ In the following, I shall discuss all works that could be located in the Tibetan Buddhist Canon that were translated by Pu rangs lo chung, grouping them according to the collaborating *paṇḍita*.

(A) Translations and Revisions in Collaboration with Sumatikīrti

Sumatikīrti, also known simply as Sumati, was involved in the translation of numerous works in collaboration with several Tibetan translators active in the second half of the eleventh and first half of the twelfth century, but as we shall see none of them was 'Bro Shes rab grags.²⁷ He, however, extensively collaborated with Pu rangs lo

²⁵ IDan sKyu ra a skyabs is, according to David Jackson, one of the greatest early Sa skya masters. See Jackson 2003: 528, 535, where he is briefly mentioned. He appears to have been active in the second half of the eleventh to first half of the twelfth century, and is mentioned in several transmission lineages of the Sa skya tradition. For a mention of him as one of Rwa lo tsā ba rDo rje grags's (1016–1128?; BDRC: P3143) disciples (including a reference to his mention in that master's biography), see Cuevas 2015: 61 n. 25.

²⁶ See the *Lam 'bras 'khrīd yig* (357.4–6) ... **IHo stod du Pu rang lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab | sKyu ra a skyabs | bal po'i slob dpon Padma shrī dang | Dznyā na badzra | rgya gar gyi rnal 'byor pa Bho ṭa ra hu la rnam las bDe mchog gSang 'dus | Dus 'khor sogs chos bsam gyis mi khyab pa gsan te |**

²⁷ Apart from Pu rangs lo chung, he is known to have collaborated with the following translators:

(1) Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug: numerous works from the rGyud section: D1271/P2393, D1435/2152, D1437/P2154, D1441/P2158, D1443/P2160, DØ/P2164 (R), D1448/P2166, D1450/P2167 (R), D1482/P2199 (R), D1571/P2279, DØ/P2286, D1887/P2751 (together with gZhon nu 'bar), D1925/P2788, D2710/P3534 (together with rNgog Blo ldan shes rab), D3663/P4486, DØ/P4675, D3872/P5273 (chaps. 1–6; chaps. 7–11: by Dar ma grags). For a nearly identical list, see Kragh 2010: 2015 n. 51.

(2) Blo ldan shes rab: rGyud: D1433/P2150 (R), D1465/P2182, D1466/P2183, D1467/P2184, D1468/P2185, D2710/P3534 (together with Chos kyi dbang phyug), D1433/P4624 (R, explanation according to the lineage of Pham mthing pa), D1836/P4791 (in collaboration with the Nepalese Saudita; see Lo Bue 1997: 649, where Saudita is identified with Sumatikīrti); Sher phyin: D3795/P5193; dBu ma: D3871/P5272 (R), D3968/P5363 (dupl. D4493/P5406 (*JoCh*)); Tshad ma: D4226/P5723, D4231/P5730 (R), according to Kramer possibly also D1469/P2186. See Kramer 2007: 124 (and *passim*) for a detailed discussion of these translations. See also Kragh 2010: 216 n. 57.

(3) gNyan Dar ma grags, on one text from the rGyud section: D3872/P5273 (chaps. 7–11; chaps. 1–6: by Chos kyi dbang phyug). Cf. Kragh 2012: 216 n. 53,

chung, particularly on translations of Cakrasaṃvara related works. The following is a list of the works on whose translation or revision the two collaborated, along with their respective colophons, references to traditional catalogues, with an assessment of the information provided therein regarding the translation ascription, corroborated, whenever necessary, on the basis of further sources and discussions.

(1) D1579/P2290. Nāropa's *rDo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs* (*Vajrayoginīsādhana*). Colo: **Las dang po pa'i sgom pa mdor bsdus pa dpal Nā ro pa'i zhal gyi brgyud pa rjes su gnang ba rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Su ma ti kīrti'i zhal snga nas dang | bod kyī lo tsā ba dge slong Pradnyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |**. Tr: R-KC(Ø); *U-TK* (including dupl. in MS A), *BCh*, *Zh-TK*: Shes rab grags; *T-TK*, DP: Prajñākīrti.²⁸ For reasons that are unclear this work is not listed by Kragh.

(2) D1764/P2633: Piṇḍapātika's *dPal mgon po nag po bsgrub pa'i thabs* (*Śrīmahākālasādhana*). Colo: **dPal nag po chen po'i sgrub thabs byin rlabs dang bcas pa | slob dpon chen po bSod snyoms pas mdzad pa rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Su mā ti kīrti dang | lo tsā ba dge**

where also the translation of D3124/P3945 is listed (see also point 6 below).

(4) Zha ma Seng ge rgyal mtshan (b. 11th cent.; BDRC: P4402): *rGyud: DØ/P4620; dBu ma: D3943/P5339* (together with Klog skya gZhon nu 'bar). See also Kragh 2010: 216 n. 54.

(5) Klog skya gZhon nu 'bar: *rGyud: D1887/P2751; dBu ma: D3943/P5339* (together with Zha ma seng rgyal). See also Kragh 2010: 216 n. 55.

(6) ? Dharmakīrti, one work from the *rGyud* section: D3124/P3945. Cf. Kragh 2012: 216 n. 53 (see also point 3 above). The identity of this Dharmakīrti will be discussed below. Kragh ascribes the translation of only two works to Pu rangs lo chung (referred to by him as Lo chung Grags mchog shes rab) in collaboration with Sumatikīrti, namely, D1411/P2127 and D1451/P2168. He rightly notes that in the latter case the translator goes by the name Grags pa shes rab, "which seems to refer to Grags mchog shes rab." See Kragh 2010: 215 n. 52. Also notable is that Kragh (2010: 216–217), besides falsely ascribing the revision of the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra* (D368/P16) to 'Bro Shes rab grags (i.e., instead of to Pu rangs lo chung) in collaboration with Mar pa do ba, also wrongly considers the revision done by Mal gyo Blo gros grags (11th cent.; BDRC: P3088) and transmitted in the Phug brag *bKa' 'gyur* (F438), to have been undertaken in collaboration with Sumatikīrti, although there is no mention in the colophon of the latter (or of any other *paṇḍita* for that matter) having collaborated in either of the revisions. See Kragh 2010: 216 n. 56. For the colophon of F438, see below (§2.G.1) and Jampa Samten 1992: 159.

²⁸ See the *U-TK* (A, 15a3; B, 11a3 = *U*_{1s}237): **Las dang po pa'i bsgom** [bsgom A, sgom B] **pa mdor bsdus pa Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |**; *ibid.* (dupl. A, 75b3; BØ): **Las dang po pa'i bsgom pa** [pa em.; ba Ms.] **mdor bsdus pa Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba** The record in the *BCh*: [Bc2473] is similar to those of the *U-TK*. *Zh-TK* (436.6–7): *rDo rje rnal 'byor ma'i las dang po pa'i sgom pa mdor bsdus pa zhes bya ba paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti dang | lo tsa ba Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur 'di Nā ro mkha' spyod ma'i gzhung yin |; *T-TK* (23a1–2): [T0456] **Las dang po pa'i bsgom pa mdor bsdus pa rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i bsgrub thabs Na ro pa'i zhal snga nas mdzad pa Pra dnyā kir ti'i 'gyur |**. T0456 is found in section II, Nyi(39), 289a2–b3. Its colophon is similar to those of the DP versions. The record in the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 360a6–7) reflects the D colophon.*

slong **Pradzn̄yā kīrtis** bsgyur ba'o | | . Tr: R-KC(Ø); *I*-TK, *BCh*: Shes rab grags; *T*-TK, *Zh*-TK, DP: Prajñākīrti.²⁹ This is one of the “minor works” whose translation Kragh erroneously ascribed to 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(3) ? D3124/P3945: Buddhajñāna/Sumatikīrti's *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i bsrung ba* (*Mahāpratisarāraksā*). Colo: **So sor 'brang ma chen po'i**³⁰ **srung ba** | slob dpon **Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyis mdzad pa** | gdams ngag dus da lta byed pa'i tshul paṅḍi ta **Su ma ti kī rti**³¹ zhal snga nas gzhung du bsdebs pa rdzogs so | | | lag pa reg cing dza³² zhes brjod pas gshegs su gsol lo | | lo tsā ba chen po **Dharma kīrtis** bsgyur ba'o | | . Tr: R-KC(Ø), *I*-TK(Ø); *BCh* (Bc1592): (1) Ba ri, (2) Nyi ma rgyal mtshan; (= ?) *Zh*-TK(viii), *Gl*-TK_T(vii), DP: Dharmakīrti; *T*-TK (T1233): Prajñākīrti. As will be argued below (see the discussion in the following entry in general, and Bc1592 in particular) the translator's name Dharmakīrti provided in the *Zh*-TK, followed by the DP colophons, and probably also *Gl*-TK_T(vii), may have slipped in erroneously for Prajñākīrti. Kragh identifies this Dharmakīrti with gNyan Dar ma grags, who, according to Kragh, “also wrote under the Sanskritized name Dharmakīrti.”³³ Nonetheless, it appears that most, if not all, translation ascriptions to a Tibetan translator called Dharmakīrti refer to Ba ri lo tsā ba, who is well known to have gone by this name. Whether gNyan Dar ma grags also did so is rather uncertain (for more on this issue, likewise see the discussion in the following entry, particularly under Bc1592). Indeed, in the case of the other work Kragh noted as having been translated by gNyan Dar ma grags in collaboration with Sumatikīrti (D3872/P5273) the name Dar ma grags is used. (For the Tibetan text of the catalogue records, see the following entry.)

(4) D3127/P3948. Jitāri's *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i 'khor lo bri ba'i cho ga* (*Mahāpratisarācakralekhanavidhi*). Colo: **So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i 'khor lo bri ba'i cho ga** slob dpon **Dze ta ris mdzad pa** rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po **Su ma ti kī rti**³¹ zhal sngar dge slong **Pradzn̄yā kī rti**s bsgyur ba'o | | . Tr: R-KC(Ø), *I*-TK(Ø); *BCh* (Bc1590): (1) Ba ri, (2) Nyi ma rgyal mtshan; *Gl*-TK_T(xv): Ba ri; *Zh*-TK(xii): Shes rab grags; *T*-TK (T1232), DP: Prajñākīrti. To be noted is that the pertinent pas-

²⁹ See the *I*-TK (A, 64a1–2; B, 51b1–2 = *I*_{JS}1367): slob dpon **bSod snyoms pas** ^(Piṅḍa ti ka) mdzad pa **Nag po chen po'i sgrub thabs Shes rab grags** kyi 'gyur | . The record in the *BCh*: [Bc2659] is similar to that of the *I*-TK. *T*-TK (68b2–3): [T2001] **Nag po chen po'i bsgrub thabs slob dpon bSod snyoms pas mdzad pa Pra dznyā kir ti'i 'gyur** | . Unfortunately, T2001 could not be accessed. *Zh*-TK (461.5): *mGon po nag po'i sgrub thabs slob dpon bSod snyoms pas mdzad pa | paṅḍi ta **Su ma ti kirti dang** | lo tsā ba **Pra dznyā kirti**³¹ 'gyur | ; *D*-TK (vol. 2: 368a6–7).*

³⁰ mo'i] P, po'i D

³¹ rti'i] D, rti' P (one *i* vowel is erroneously missing)

³² dza] P, ja D

³³ See Kragh 2010: 216 n. 53.

sages—that is, those recording works relating to the “five protectors” (*srung ba lnga*)—found in the various catalogues differ from each other in terms of both the titles listed and the respective translations, and occasionally also the authorship ascriptions. Since the pertinent passages, in addition to demonstrating various stages of the compilatory work towards the formation of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon, concern two works directly relevant to the present discussion (the present and previous ones), I shall cite them here in their entirety in chronological order in order to allow better comparison between the bibliographical information included therein: first the *I-TK* (the first TG catalogue), then the *T-TK* followed by the *BCh*, both of which relied on the *I-TK* (i.e., on the revised and enlarged version as presented in MS A), and finally the *Zh-TK*, which in various ways presents a revision by Bu ston of the passage found in the Title Index included in the *BCh* and which also served as the basis for the mainstream TG editions (here represented by DP). In addition, I shall present the respective passage in the *Gl-TK_T*, whose first part is similar to the *Zh-TK* and second part records works that either are not found elsewhere or are possibly duplicates consisting in different translations. The cited passages will be followed by a discussion concerning the identification of the individual works recorded.

The *I-TK* merely records five such works, four successively, and the fifth after two other, unrelated records. Of interest is perhaps also the fact that the passage underwent a rather substantial revision in the later version (i.e., MS B vs. MS A), as follows (A, 29b4–30a1; B, 23b4–6):

[I_{JS}618 = Bc1582; D3118/P3939] *slob dpon Shān*³⁴ *ti bas* ^{Rin chen 'byung gnas zhi ba} *mdzad pa*³⁵ *So sor*³⁶ *'brang ma'i 'khor lo bri thabs* | [BØ; I_{JS}618.1 = Bc1583; D3125/P3946] *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i rig pa'i cho ga Nyi ma rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* | [BØ; I_{JS}618.2; = Bc1584; DØ/PØ] *slob dpon Dze tā ris* ^{dGra las rgyal} *mdzad pa'i Grwa lnga'i sgrub thabs* | [I_{JS}619 = Bc1594; D3126/P3947] *slob dpon Shān ti pas*³⁷ ^{Rin chen 'byung gnas zhi ba} *mdzad pa'i Srung*³⁸ *ba lnga'i cho ga bKra shis rgyal mtshan dang Chos rje dpal gyi 'gyur* | [...] [I_{JS}622 = Bc1595; DØ/PØ] *So sor*³⁹ *'brang ma chen mo'i sgrub thabs* |

The bibliographical data can be summarized as follows:

³⁴ shān] A, shan B

³⁵ pa] A, pa'i B

³⁶ sor A, so B

³⁷ shān ti pas] A, dze tā ris B

³⁸ srung] A, bsrung B

³⁹ sor A, so B

	Author	Translator
I _{JS} 618	Ratnākaraśānti	Ø
MS BØ I _{JS} 618.1	Ø	Nyi ma rgyal mtshan
MS BØ I _{JS} 618.2	Jitāri	Ø
I _{JS} 619	MS B: Jitāri MS A: Ratnākaraśānti	bKra shis rgyal mtshan & Chos rje dpal
I _{JS} 622	Ø	Ø

The *T-TK* records altogether eleven related titles (note, however, that Jampa Samten counts nineteen works due to what I believe to be false interpretation), of which eight are not recorded in the *I-TK*, while two of the titles recorded in the latter are omitted in the former. The passage reads as follows (MS 48b1–5):

[T1222–T1226 = I_{JS}618.2] *bSrung ba lnga'i bsgrub thabs 'Dze ta ris mdzad pa Dar ma grags kyi 'gyur* | [T1227 = IØ] *sTong chen mo* | [T1228 = IØ] *rMa bya chen mo* | [T1229 = IØ] *gSang sngags rjes su 'brang ma* | [T1230 = IØ] *bSil ba'i tshal* | [T1231 = IØ] *So so 'brang ma rnamso so so'i bsgrub thabs 'Dze ta ris mdzad pa Dar ma grags kyis bsgyur ba la Chos kyi dbang phyug gis bcos pa* | [T1232 = IØ] *So so 'brang ma'i 'khor lo 'bri ba'i cho ga 'Dze ta ris mdzad pa Pra dznyā kir ti'i 'gyur* | [T1233 = IØ] *So so 'brang ma'i bsrung pa'i cho ga Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyi gdams⁴⁰ ngag Pra dznya kir ti'i 'gyur* | [T1234 = I_{JS}618] *So so 'brang ma'i 'khor lo bri ba'i thabs Shan ti bas mdzad pa* | [T1235–T1239 = I_{JS}619] *bSrung pa lnga'i cho ga Shan ti bas mdzad pa Blo ldan shes rab kyi 'gyur* | [T1240 = IØ] *So so 'brang ma'i 'khor lo'i sems sbyang⁴¹ Klu grub kyis mdzad pa Nam mkha' rdo rje'i 'gyur* |

The pertinent passage in the *BCh* records a total of fourteen titles, including all five recorded by the *I-TK*. Of the remaining nine records, seven are found in the *T-TK* and two are entirely new (while one record found in the *T-TK* is missing in both the *I-TK* and *BCh*). The passage in the *BCh* reads as follows:

[Bc1582] *slob dpon Shanti pas mdzad pa'i So sor 'brang ma'i 'khor lo bri thabs* | [Bc1583] *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i rig pa'i cho ga Nyi ma rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* | [Bc1584] *slob dpon Dzai*

⁴⁰ gdams] *em.*, gdam Ms

⁴¹ sbyang] *em.*, byang Ms

tā ris mdzad pa'i (= Bc1584–Bc1591) *Grwa lnga'i spyi sgrub* |
 [Bc1585–Bc1589] *IHa mo so so'i sgrub thabs lnga* | [Bc1590]
 'Khor lo bri ba'i cho ga | [Bc1591] *IHa mo lnga la bstod pa* |
 [Bc1592] **Su ma ti kīrtis mdzad pa'i Grwa lnga'i cho ga** | *gzhan*
yang [Bc1593] *Mo gsham gyi srid sgrub* | *de rnam*s (= Bc1584–
 Bc1593) *sngar Ba ri dang* | *phyis Nyi ma rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* |
 [Bc1594] *slob dpon Shānti pas mdzad pa'i Srung ba lnga'i cho ga*
bKra shis rgyal mtshan dang Chos rje dpal gyi 'gyur | [Bc1595]
So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i sgrub thabs |

As correctly noted by Nishioka, “*rnam*s” in the phrase ... *rnam*s *sngar Ba ri dang phyis Nyi ma rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* refers to Bc1584–Bc1593, which means that all these ten works were translated twice, first by Ba ri [lo tsā ba] (1040–1112; BDRC: P3731) and later by [Thar pa lo tsā ba] Nyi ma rgyal mtshan (fl. 13th cent.; BDRC: P2147). It should be added that the name at the beginning of record Bc1584, namely Jitari, is the author of Bc1584–Bc1591.

The identification of some of the works recorded in the three above-cited passages is at times rather complex. Nonetheless, although the passage in the *T-TK* is somewhat different from the one in the *BCh*, both in terms of the phrasing of titles and the translation ascriptions (and in one case of the authorship), its similarity in terms of the works and the order in which they are recorded cannot be ignored. This raises the question as to the connection between the *BCh* and the *T-TK*, for thus far no direct influence of the latter on the former has been known, and indeed Bu ston has not listed it among his sources.⁴² In the table below, I shall first present the bibliographical information found in the three passages in comparison to one another, including an identification of what—despite discrepancies—are equivalent records. These identifications will be individually discussed in the following, along with an identification of each record with the respective versions in the D and P editions.

Bc	I	T
Bc1582 A: Ratnākaraśānti Tr: Ø	I _{JS} 618 A: id. Tr: Ø	T1234 A: id. Tr: Ø
Bc1583 A: Ø Tr: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	I _{JS} 618.1 A: Ø Tr: id.	TØ
Bc1584	I _{JS} 618.2	T1222–T1226

⁴² For the sources used by Bu ston for the Title Index in the *BCh*, see Almogi (forthcoming-a): n. 16.

A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	A: id. Tr: Ø	A: id. Tr: Dar ma grags
Bc1585–Bc1589 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	IØ	T1227–T1231 A: id. Tr: Dar ma grags R: Chos kyi dbang phyugs
Bc1590 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	IØ	T1232 A: id. Tr: Prajñākīrti
Bc1591 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	IØ	TØ
Bc1592 A: Sumatikīrti Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	IØ	? T1233 A: Buddhajñānapāda Tr: Prajñākīrti
Bc1593 A: Ø Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	IØ	TØ
Bc1594 A: Ratnākaraśānti Tr: bKra shis rgyal mtshan & Chos rje dpal	I _{JS} 619 A: Jitāri Tr: id.	T1235–T1239 A: Ratnākaraśānti Tr: Blo ldan shes rab
Bc1595 A: Ø Tr: Ø	I _{JS} 622 A: Ø Tr: Ø	TØ
BcØ	IØ	T1240 A: Nāgārjuna Tr: Nam mkha' rdo rje

Of particular interest is the discrepancy between the *BCh* and the *Zh-TK*, for Bu ston considerably revised the passage, particularly the translation ascriptions in it. In the *Zh-TK* Bu ston records twelve titles altogether in the passage that he explicitly names “The Cycle of the

Five Protectors" (*Sprung ba lnga'i skor*), comprising what seem to be eleven out of the fourteen recorded in the *BCh* (two of the eleven are uncertain) and one additional title, which is equivalent to one recorded in the *T-TK* but missing in the other two sources (*I-TK* & *BCh*). Since the *Zh-TK* has not been edited thus far, the records are numbered (i)–(xii), while the catalogue numbers of the D equivalents—followed by those of the *BCh* as identified by me, that is, despite the discrepancies (on which, see below)—are provided within square brackets. The passage reads as follows (541.2–7):

Sprung ba lnga'i skor la | (i) [= D3117 = BcØ] **So sor 'brang ma'i 'khor lo'i sems sbyong slob dpon 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Chos kyī sde dang | lo tsā ba Nam mkha' rdo rje'i 'gyur** | (ii) [= D3118 = Bc1582] **So sor 'brang ma'i 'khor lo bri thabs Ratna ā ka ra shāntis mdzad pa |** (iii) [= D3119 = Bc1585] **So sor 'brang ma'i sgrub thabs |** (iv) [= D3120 = Bc1586] **rMa bya chen mo'i sgrub thabs |** (v) [= D3121 = Bc1587] **sTong chen rab tu 'joms pa'i sgrub thabs |** (vi) [= D3122 = Bc1588] **gSang sngags rjes su 'dzin ma'i sgrub thabs |** (vii) [= D3123 = Bc1589] **bSil ba'i tshal gyi sgrub thabs |** (viii) [= D3124 =? Bc1592] **So sor 'brang ma'i srung ba slob dpon Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyī gdams ngag pañḍi ta Su ma ti kirtis gzhung du bsdebs pa | pañḍi ta de nyid dang | lo tsā ba Dharma kirti'i 'gyur** | (ix) [= D3125 = Bc1583] **So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i rig pa'i cho ga | pañḍi ta Pu ru ṣotta ma dang | lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i 'gyur** | (x) [= D3126 = Bc1594] **Sprung ba lnga'i cho ga slob dpon Rin chen 'byung gnas zhi bas mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Mu ti ta shrī dznyā na dang | lo tsā ba bKra shis rgyal mtshan gyis bsgyur ba la | Chag Chos rje dpal gyis bcos pa |** (xi) [= DØ =? Bc1595] **Sprung ba lnga'i sgrub thabs dang | mdo klog pa'i cho ga mdzad byang med pa zhig bal po'i dpe las mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal gyis bsgyur pa |** (xii) [= D3127 = Bc1590] **So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i 'khor lo bri ba'i cho ga slob dpon Dze ta ris mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Su ma ti kirti dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |**

Interestingly, the catalogue to the Ngam ring TG edition, which is based on the Old sNar thang edition but arranged and supplemented according to Bu ston's Zhwa lu edition-cum-catalogue, reproduces the above-cited passage from the *Zh-TK* almost verbatim, except that it omits record no. (xi), which was excluded from later TG editions.⁴³ As pointed out earlier, the first part of the respective passage in the *Gl-TK_T* resembles the list in the *Zh-TK*, whereas the second part con-

⁴³ See the *Ng-TK* (103.16–104.3). See also the discussion of Bc1595 below.

tains either unknown works or what seems to be duplicates, as follows (265.17–266.10):

- (i) *So 'brang gi 'khor lo bri thabs Shānti pas mdzad pa* | = Zh-TK(ii)
- (ii) *So 'brang* | = Zh-TK(iii)
- (iii) *rMa bya chen mo* | = Zh-TK(iv)
- (iv) *sTong chen rab 'joms* | = Zh-TK(v)
- (v) *gSang sngags rjes 'dzin* | = Zh-TK(vi)
- (vi) *bSil ba'i tshal rnams kyi sgrub thabs chung ngu re re* | = Zh-TK(vii)
- (vii) *So 'brang gi cho ga Su ma ti kīrtis mdzad pa Dharmā kīrti'i 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(viii)
- (viii) *So 'brang gi 'khor lo bri tshul* | *paṇḍi ta Pu ru ṣotta ma las nyan te* | *Nyi ma rgyal mtshan gyis bsgyur ba* | = Zh-TK(ix)
- (ix = dupl. of x) *Srung ba lnga'i cho ga Shānti pas mdzad pa bKra shis rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(x), with a revision by Chag Chos rje dpal
- (x = dupl. of ix) *Srung ba lnga'i cho ga Shānti pas mdzad pa Nam mkha' rdo rje'i 'gyur* | *'di dang gong ma gnyis 'gyur khyad tsam ma gtogs gcig par snang ngo* | |
- (xi + xii) *So 'brang gi cho ga gzungs las btus pa gong 'og gnyis* | = Zh-TK(∅) = T∅/D∅/P∅
- (xiii) *Srung ba lnga'i sgrub thabs Dze tā ris mdzad pa Seng ge rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(∅) = ? T1222–T1226, with a translation by Dar ma grags = D∅/P∅
- (xiv) *Srung ba lnga'i cho ga phyed dang nyis brgya pa Dze tā ris mdzad pa Seng ge rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(∅) = T∅/D∅/P∅
- (xv) *So 'brang gi 'khor lo bri tshul Dze tā ris mdzad pa Ba ri ba'i 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(xii), with a translation by Shes rab grags
- (xvi =? dupl. of i) *So 'brang gi 'khor lo bri tshul Shānti pas mdzad pa* |
- (xvii) *So 'brang gi 'khor lo bri tshul Ye shes zhabs kyi mdzad pa Nam mkha' rdo rje'i 'gyur* | = Zh-TK(∅) = T∅/D∅/P∅

Now let us turn to the identification of the individual titles, for which I shall take, for various reasons, the records in the *BCh* as the point of departure:

Bc1582. The identification of this record with $I_{JS}618$, T1234, Zh-TK(ii), Gl-TK_T(i), and D3118/P3939 is straightforward. All of them provide the same title, name Ratnākaraśānti as the author, and record no translator. Neither the T nor the DP versions have a translation

colophon.⁴⁴ The *Gl-TK_T*(xvi) appears to be a duplicate, although no explicit statement in this regard has been made.

Bc1583. The identification of this record with *I_{JS}*618.1, *Zh-TK*(ix), *Gl-TK_T*(viii), and D3125/P3946 is likewise straightforward. The title and the name of the translator are identical in all three cases, and none names an author. No equivalent in the *T-TK* could be located. According to the translation colophon of D3125/P3946, [Thar pa] Nyi ma rgyal mtshan translated the text in the great Temple of Thar pa gling after having studied it under Puruṣottama in Vārāṇasī.⁴⁵

Bc1584. The identification of this record with *I_{JS}*618.2, T1222–T1226, and *Gl-TK_T*(xiii) is rather certain, despite the fact that the title in both the *BCh* and *I-TK* reads *grwa lnga*, whereas that in the *T-TK* and *Gl-TK_T* reads *bsrung ba lnga*, for both terms refer to what is known as the “Five Protectors” (Pañcarakṣā).⁴⁶ It is clearly omitted in the *Zh-TK*, and accordingly is not found in DP. Both Nishioka and Jampa Samten have interpreted the respective records as referring to five different works. Although Nishioka assigned the record only one catalogue number, he suggests a possible identification (marked by a ?) as P3940–P3944, while Jampa Samten, orienting himself by the titles of T1227–T1231, assigned it five catalogue numbers, and identifies the works in a similar fashion as P3942/D3121, P3941/D3120, P3943/D3122, P3944/D3123, P3940/D3119, respectively.⁴⁷ An examination of the text found in T, however, shows that it is certainly one single work and not five, which thus clearly neither corresponds to T1227–T1231 (on which see the following entry), as implied by Jampa Samten, nor is equivalent to D3119/P3940–D3123/P3944, as suggested by both him and Nishioka.⁴⁸ The work is clearly not found in DP, at least not this translation of it. As we have seen, while all three sources

⁴⁴ T1234 is found in section II, Tse(78), 156a1–157b6.

⁴⁵ D3125/P3946. Colo: **rGya gar yul Vā rā ṇa sīr paṇḍi ta Pu ru ṣotta ma'i zhal snga nas legs par mnyan te | lo tsā ba dge slong Nyi ma rgyal mtshan dpal bzang pos | gtsug lag khang chen po Thar pa gling du bsgyur ba'o | |**

⁴⁶ The phrase *bsrung lnga*, as in *T-TK*, is indeed closely related to [gzungs] *grwa* (often *sde*) *lnga*, as in *BCh*, both referring to five protecting deities. See also Jampa Samten 2016: 109 n. 1, where the phrase *bsrung lnga* is understood as synonymous with *gzungs sde lnga*. For a list of these five deities (Skt & Tib), see the *Dharmasaṃgraha* (p. 3, §5).

⁴⁷ Jampa Samten (2016: 109 n. 1) holds that the *T-TK* records the same work, or more precisely the same five works, twice: one record for the translation by Dar ma grags comprising all five works jointly (and thus assigned five catalogue numbers, T1222–T1226), and five records, each listed separately (T1227–T1231), for their revision by Chos kyi dbang phyug.

⁴⁸ T1222–T1226 is found in section II, Tse(78), 137b1–143a6.

name Jitāri as the author, they vary regarding the information on the translation ascription: the *U-TK* names no translator, the *BCh* reports one translation by Ba ri lo tsā ba and another by Thar pa lo tsā ba, whereas the *T-TK* ascribes the translation to Dar ma grags and the *Gl-TK_T* to Seng ge rgyal mtshan. Unfortunately, since the T colophon discloses no further details regarding this Dar ma grags (e.g., his clan name or birthplace), and since it does not name the collaborating *paṇḍita* either, a decisive identification of the Tibetan translator is impossible. The first candidate that comes to mind is gNyan Dar ma grags (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P2614). However, we need perhaps to keep in mind that Ba ri lo tsā ba had several aliases—including Rin chen grags, Chos kyi grags (along with the Sanskritized and hybrid forms Dharmakīrti and Dharma (/Dar ma) grags) and simply Khams pa lo tsā ba—which makes one wonder whether there is here a confusion between two persons named Dar ma grags, gNyan and Ba ri; we shall return to this issue below.

Bc1585–Bc1589. The next five works, whose titles, unlike in the *BCh*, are spelt out in the *T-TK* (T1227–T1231), *Zh-TK*(iii–vii), and *Gl-TK_T*(ii–vi), while being missing in the *U-TK* altogether, are clearly to be identified with D3119–D3123/P3940–P3944 (in a slightly different order in D & P), despite, that is, the bibliographical discrepancies: Both *BCh* and *T-TK* ascribe the authorship to Jitāri, whereas the *Zh-TK* and *Gl-TK_T* mention no author. Moreover, the *BCh* records two translations, an earlier one by Ba ri and a later one by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, whereas the *T-TK* names Dar ma grags as the translator and [Mar pa do ba] Chos kyi dbang phyug as the reviser. Both the *Zh-TK* and *Gl-TK_T* name neither an author nor a translator. These discrepancies seem to have been the reason why these works could not be properly identified by previous cataloguers. Nishioka marks these titles as having no equivalents in P (the only edition he uses for his identification), whereas Jampa Samten directs the reader to compare the first four titles with D3253/P4076, D3252/P4075, D3254/P4077, D3255/P4078, respectively, and marks the fifth as having no equivalent in DP. However, as has already been pointed out, the equivalent five works are D3119–D3123/P3940–P3944. An examination of the works in the T TG shows that three of them have no colophons, whereas the fifth and last one (T1231) is the only one that has an authorship colophon naming Jitāri as the author, and the fourth one (T1230) is the only one that has a translation colophon naming Dar ma grags as the translator and Mar pa [do ba] Chos kyi dbang phyug as the

reviser.⁴⁹ While the authorship colophon can justifiably be regarded as a collective colophon for all five, the placement of the translation colophon at the end of the fourth work certainly raises a question, but considering how the work is recorded in the *T-TK*, its placement there appears to have been due to a transmissional error. As will be shown below, the five works are found elsewhere in the TG, where they are arranged in a slightly different order, which might offer an explanation for the unusual placement of what appears to be a collective translation colophon. As for the DP versions, only the fifth and last work has what could be considered as a collective authorship colophon, naming Jitāri, but unfortunately none of them has a translation colophon. Nonetheless, the translation contained in the DP versions is nearly identical with that of the T version, ascribed to Dar ma grags with a revision by Chos kyi dbang phyug. Now, particularly as Bu ston omits the name of the translator in his *Zh-TK*, could this again be possibly a confusion between the two translators named Dar ma grags, namely, Ba ri and gNyan? Of some relevance is perhaps also the fact that the translation of the following work in the mainstream TG editions, that is, D3124/P3945 (on which, see below), is ascribed to Lo tsā ba chen po Dharmakīrti, which is the full Sanskritized form of Dharma (/Dar ma) grags. Moreover, this set of five works is found in the TG four times (occasionally arranged in a slightly different order), each set being apparently a different translation of what seems to have been virtually the same (or a very similar) Sanskrit original. To be noted, however, is that some of the translations bear a partial resemblance to each other. None of the works in the other three sets has an authorship colophon. Apart from the set just discussed (T1227–T1231; D3119–D3123/P3940–P3944), a second set (T1323–T1327; P4197/D3376, P4199/D3378–P4202/D3381) is found within the *sādhana* collection known as the *Ba ri brgya rtsa*, which was translated by Ba ri lo tsā ba in collaboration with Amoghavajra.⁵⁰ A third set (T1575 (cf. T1577), T1578–T1581; D3583/P4405 (cf. D3585/P4407), D3586–D3589/P4408–P4411) is found within another *sādhana* collection known as the *sGrub thabs rgya mtsho*, which was translated by Yar lung (/lungs/klung) lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1242–1346?; BDRC: P2637) after having received the transmission from Kīrticandra.⁵¹ A fourth set (TØ; D3251–D3255/P4074–P4078) is found in yet another *sādhana* collection, the *sGrub thabs brgya rtsa* translated by Pa tshab Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan in collaboration with

⁴⁹ The five works are found in section II, Tse(78), 144a1–4; 144b1–6; 145a1–4; 145a5–b5; 146a1–b3.

⁵⁰ For the *Ba ri brgya rtsa*, see Almogi (forthcoming-a), §3.1.

⁵¹ For the *sGrub thabs rgya mtsho*, see Almogi (forthcoming-a), §3.3.

Abhayākaragupta (not included in the Tshal pa edition).⁵² Although it is not entirely impossible that the *BCh* is referring in this passage to these translations (i.e., at any rate those by Ba ri, whereas the ones by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan still remain unidentified), this seems unlikely considering the parallel passage in the *Zh-TK* and the fact that these *sādhana* collections are recorded as separate units elsewhere, so that the possibility that there was a confusion between two Dar ma grags-s remains an option (at least regarding the reference to Ba ri).

Bc1590. The identification of this record with T1232, *Zh-TK*(xii), *Gl-TK_T*(xv), and D3127/P3948 is likewise rather straightforward. Nonetheless, while all five name the author as Jitāri, there are some discrepancies regarding the name(s) of the translator(s). Again in the case of this title the *BCh* records two translations, one by Ba ri and one by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan (Nishioka, disregarding the discrepancies, correctly identifies the record with P3948). The translation by Ba ri is also recorded in the *Gl-TK_T*. The *T-TK* names Prajñākīrti, with (according to the colophon) Sumatikīrti as the collaborating *paṇḍita*.⁵³ The *Zh-TK* names Shes rab grags (as we have seen, one possible rendering of Prajñākīrti and one of Pu rangs lo chung's several Tibetan names), likewise in collaboration with Sumatikīrti. The colophons of D3127/P3948, the point of departure of the current entry, name Prajñākīrti and Sumatikīrti. This work, too, is one of the "minor works" whose translation Kragh erroneously ascribed to 'Bro Shes rab grags.

Bc1591. This record, which likewise names Jitāri as the author and a translation by Ba ri and another by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, has no equivalent, neither in the *U-TK*, *T-TK*, *Zh-TK*, or *Gl-TK_T*, nor in DP (as pointed out by Nishioka).

Bc1592. The identification of this record (indicated by Nishioka as not found in P) is somewhat complex. Nonetheless, despite the discrepancies, I would like to tentatively suggest identifying it with T1233, *Zh-TK*(viii), *Gl-TK_T*(vii), and D3124/P3945. While the latter four are quite certainly the same, there are various discrepancies between them and Bc1592 regarding the bibliographical details, which, however, could be explained with the help of both the rec-

⁵² For the *sGrub thabs brgya rtsa*, see Almogi (forthcoming-a), §3.4.

⁵³ T1232 is found in section II, Tse(78), 146b4–148b5. Colo: *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i 'khor lo bri ba'i cho ga' slob dpon Dzai ta ris mdzad pa|| rdzogs s.ho|| || rgya gar gyi mkhan po Su ma ti kīr ti'i zhal sngar| dge slong Pra dznya kīr tis bsgyur ba'o||*.

ord in the *Zh-TK* and the TDP colophons.⁵⁴ The first discrepancy concerns the title, which in the *BCh* is stated as *Grwa lnga'i cho ga*, and in the other four sources as *So sor 'brang ma'i* (/ *ma chen mo'i*) *bsrung ba* / *cho ga* (or the like). As has already been pointed out in the context of the titles of T1222–T1226 (*bSrung pa lnga'i (cho ga yi)* *bsgrub pa'i thabs*) and what seems to be its equivalent, Bc1584 (*Grwa lnga'i spyi sgrub*), the terms *grwa lnga* and *srung ba lnga* can be regarded as synonymous in the present context (while *So sor 'brang ba/ma (chen mo)* is one of the five, commonly named first in the list). Also notable is the homage in T1222–T1226, which reads *rig pa'i rgyal mo chen mo so sor 'brang ma la phyag 'tshal lo | |*, and the title found at the beginning of T1233, which, reading *Rig pa'i rgyal mo so sor 'brang ma chen mo'i chog ga*, differs from the title in the colophon, which reads *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i bsrung ba'i chog ga*. Another discrepancy concerns the authorship, ascribed to Sumatikīrti by the *BCh* and *Gl-TK_T* and Buddhajñānapāda by the other sources. Although they all have slightly different formulations, the cause of some ambiguity, they all (except the *Gl-TK_T*) seem to be saying that the text in question consists of instructions (*gdams ngag*) by Buddhajñānapāda that were compiled by Sumatikīrti into a work (*gzhung*) so as to, according to the colophons, make them suitable for “the present time” (i.e., 11th cent.). The T colophon, however, seems to suggest that Sumati did so in the course of the translation rather than actually first compiling a work for this purpose and only then collaborating on its translation. The situation regarding the identity of the translator is more complex. In this case, too, the *BCh* reports two different translations, by Ba ri and Nyi ma rgyal mtshan. In his *Zh-TK* Bu ston names the translator as Dharmakīrti in collaboration with Sumatikīrti.⁵⁵ The DP colophons are rather ambiguous in this regard. They refer to the translator as the “Great Translator Dharmakīrti,” but do not explicitly name Sumatikīrti as his collaborator (but only as the compiler of the work). Zhu chen Tshul khirms rin chen

⁵⁴ For the Tibetan text of the *Zh-TK*, see the passage cited above. T1233 is found in section II, Tse(78), 149a1–155b6; Colo: *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i bsrung pa'i cho ga slob dpon chen po Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyi gdams ngag dus da lta byed pa'i tshul paṇḍi* [erroneously *add. ti*] *ta Su ma ti kīr ti'i zhal snga nas dang dge slong Prad jñā kīr tis bsgyur ba | | rdzogs s.ho | |*. D3124/P3945. Colo: *So sor 'brang ma chen po'i* [po'i D, mo'i P] *srung ba | slob dpon Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyi mdzad pa | | gdams ngag dus da lta byed pa'i tshul paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti'i zhal snga nas gzhung du bsdebs pa rdzogs so | | lag pa reg cing dza* [dza P, ja D] *zhes brjod pas gshegs su gsol lo | | lo tsā ba chen po Dharma kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |*. P has an additional passage, though it is not part of the colophon and has no relevance to our discussion.

⁵⁵ Note that the MS version of the *Zh-TK* (MS, 762.6) likewise reads Dharmakīrti, as do the *Ne-TK* (478.3–4) and the *Ng-TK* (103.20–23), which makes the possibility of a scribal transmissional error in this regard less likely.

(1697–1774; BDRC: P801) in his *D-TK*, however, explicitly states that the two collaborated on the translation (while omitting the statement regarding Sumati’s role in the compilation of the work).⁵⁶ The *Gl-TK_T*, which also names Dharmakīrti as the translator, does not mention the collaborating *paṇḍita*. The T colophon, in contrast, explicitly ascribes the translation to Prajñākīrti in collaboration with Sumatikīrti. As already presented above, the information concerning the Tibetan translator can be summarized as follows: *R-KCØ*, *U-TK(Ø)*; *BCh* (Bc1592): (1) Ba ri, (2) Nyi ma rgyal mtshan; (= ?) *Zh-TK* (viii), *Gl-TK_T*(vii), DP: Dharmakīrti; *T-TK* (T1233): Prajñākīrti. A comparison of the T version with those of DP reveals that, apart from minor negligible differences, the translation is identical, so that one of the reports concerning the identity of the Tibetan translator must be erroneous. We have seen that the *BCh* names two translations, by Ba ri and by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, and also that Dharmakīrti is one of the aliases of Ba ri, but we have also seen that there could have been a confusion on the part of Bu ston between Ba ri and gNyan lo tsā ba, as both are called Dar ma grags (= Dharmakīrti), so that the information provided by the *BCh* and *Zh-TK* in this regard is rather shaky. Moreover, since the respective DP colophons and catalogues are, as a whole, based on the *Zh-TK*, they cannot be seen as independent/additional evidence. Moreover, the similarity between the passage in the *Gl-TK_T* and the *Zh-TK* hints on a common source as well. The only thing that could assist us here is perhaps the identity of the members of the translation team. A collaboration between Sumatikīrti and a translator named Dharmakīrti is only known in connection of the work under discussion. As pointed out earlier, Sumatikīrti collaborated with various Tibetan translators of the eleventh/twelfth century, but none of them was Ba ri lo tsā ba, so that we can, with a high degree of certainty, eliminate the possibility that he is the Dharmakīrti we are looking for. Moreover, gNyan Dar ma grags is only known to have collaborated with Sumatikīrti on the translation of the second part of D3872/P5273 (i.e., chaps. 7–11, while chaps. 1–6 were translated by Mar pa do ba in collaboration with the same *paṇḍita*). This means that theoretically gNyan could be our translator, as was indeed understood by Kragh (see above, §2.A.3). It must be, however, noted that, unlike Ba ri, gNyan seems to have used neither the full Sanskritized form Dharmakīrti nor the full Tibetan form Chos kyi grags pa, but rather apparently always the hybrid Dar ma grags, which makes this theoretical possibility less likely. Nonetheless, in order to exclude

⁵⁶ See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 414b7): *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i srung ba slob dpon Sangs rgyas ye shes zhabs kyi mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti dang | lo tsā ba chen po Dharma kīrti'i 'gyur |*.

with certainty that gNyan Dar ma grags also went by the name Dharmakīrti, all occurrences of this name in the colophons (and elsewhere) referring to the/a Tibetan translator should be systematically examined. In contrast, Pu rangs lo chung aka Prajñākīrti extensively collaborated with Sumatikīrti, which makes the credibility of the T colophon more likely. Moreover, the preceding work in the T edition (T1232), like its equivalent *Zh-TK*(xii) and its corresponding DP versions, has the same translator team (i.e., Prajñākīrti and Sumatikīrti), which demonstrates that this team collaborated on the translation of works related to the “Five Protectors.” Although no decisive conclusion can be drawn, taking the above presented evidence, it appears that the colophon of the T version, and the corresponding *T-TK* record, seems more likely to be the authentic/correct one, so that the translator of this work is Pu rangs lo chung aka Prajñākīrti, in collaboration with Sumatikīrti.

Bc1593. It appears that the work recorded under Bc1593, the last of the group stated in the *BCh* as having two translations, by Ba ri and by Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, was not included by Bu ston in his *Zh-TK*, and is thus not found in the DP TG editions either. Judging from the *T-TK* and *Gl-TK_r*, it also seems not to have been included in either the T or Gl TG editions.

Bc1594. The identification of this record with D3126/P3947 is straightforward, all bibliographical details being in agreement in naming Ratnākaraśānti as the author, bKra shis rgyal mtshan as the translator in collaboration with Muditaśrījñāna, and a revision by Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1263/64; BDRC: P1025). The equivalent version in the T TG is clearly T1235–T1239 (Jampa Samten again erroneously interprets the record to be referring to five works and directs the reader to compare them with D3587/P4409, D3586/P4408, D3588/P4410, D3589/P4411, D3585/P4407, respectively), despite naming [rNgog] Blo ldan shes rab as the translator. An examination of the text of the T version,⁵⁷ whose colophon identifies rNgog’s collaborator as *Amaragomin, with whom rNgog is known to have collaborated on the translation of several works, most significantly the *Abhisamayālamkāra*

⁵⁷ T1235–T1239 is found in section II, Tse(78), 158a1–162b2. Colo: *bSrung pa lnga’i cho ga zhes bya ba’i dkyil ’khor gyi bsgrub thabs | slob dpon Rin chen ’byung gnas zhi ba’i zhal snga nas mdzad pa’o | | rdzogs s.ho | | rgya gar gyi pañ ṭi ta Go mi ’chi med dang | bod kyi lo tsha ba dge slong Blo ldan shes rab kyi bsgyur cing gtan la phab pa’o | |*.

(D3786/P5184) and related works,⁵⁸ shows that it is indeed a translation different from the DP versions (with merely minor overlaps). The *Gl-TK_T* records the work twice and explicitly states that the two records refer to two different translations of the same work, *Gl-TK_T(ix)* records a translation by bKra shis rgyal mtshan (without a revision by Chag Chos rje dpal) and *Gl-TK_T(x)* one by Nam mkha' rdo rje.

Bc1595. The identification of this record with *Zh-TK(xi)* is uncertain, due to several discrepancies: the title in the *BCh* reads *So sor 'brang ma chen mo'i sgrub thabs*, and in the *Zh-TK* *Srung ba lnga'i sgrub thabs dang | mdo klog pa'i cho ga*. A possible equation/substitution of *srung ba lnga* and *so sor 'brang ma chen mo* in the title has been discussed above, but particularly remarkable in this case is the addition of a "sūtra recitation ritual" in the title provided in the *Zh-TK*. Neither the *BCh* nor the *Zh-TK* provides the name of the author, the latter explicitly stating that the work lacks an authorship colophon (*mdzad byang med pa*). While the *BCh* names no translator, the *Zh-TK* ascribes the translation to mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal, who is said to have based himself on a Nepalese manuscript (*bal po'i dpe*).⁵⁹ The work is not included in the T TG edition, nor is it found in the DP TG editions. As has already been stated above, the *Ng-TK*, while reproducing the entire passage from the *Zh-TK*, omits this record. Zhu chen, in contrast, does reproduce the record from the *Zh-TK* in his catalogue to the D TG edition (between the records for D3127 and D3128), and inserts an annotation

⁵⁸ For a list of works on the translation of which rNgog collaborated with *Amaragomin (Go mi 'chi med), see Kramer 2007: 124 and passim. For a short note on *Amaragomin, see *ibid.*: 41.

⁵⁹ The identity of mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal is unclear. Zhu chen lists (between the records of D2639 and D2640) another work said to have been translated by him, which, he goes on to say "not available/found." See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 401b6): *Ngan song sbyong ba'i sgrub pa'i thabs zhes bya ba pañdi ta 'Gro kun bzang pos mdzad pa | dpal ldan Byang chub rtse mo'i bka' drin las lo tsā ba mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal gyis bsgyur ba |* ^(ma byung). This record, too, is based on the *Zh-TK*, which reads, however, slightly differently, most importantly the translator's name being given as mNga' ris pa rDo rje grags (i.e., *grags* instead of *dpal*), but again in this case no identification has been possible. See the *Zh-TK* (518.1–2): *Ngan song sbyong ba'i sgrub thabs zhes bya ba pañdi ta 'Gro Kun dga' ba bzang pos byas pa | dpal ldan Byang chub rtse mo'i bka' drin las brda sprod pa'i tshul la blo'i snang ba cung zad 'jug pa mNga' ris pa rDo rje grags kyi 'gyur |*. The apparent mention of Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo (1303–1380; BDRC: P2388), however, allows us to place him in the fourteenth century. Moreover, given that the *Zh-TK* was completed in 1335, the translation in question must have been done before 1335 (and his floruit can probably be narrowed down to approximately the first half to middle of the fourteenth century).

stating “not available/found (*ma byung*).”⁶⁰ Indeed, the work appears to have been excluded rather early, since already the *Ne-TK* merely notes (likewise after the record equivalent to D3127) the title in an annotation, including Bu ston’s remark, which is followed by the question “should this be added?”⁶¹ The *Gl-TK_T* seems not to have a record of the work.

Note that no certain identification of any of these works in the *R-KC* has been possible.⁶² The above bibliographical details can be summarized in a tabular form as follows (of immediate relevance to our discussion are D3127/P3948 & D3124/P3945):

D3118/P3939. A: Ratnākaraśānti, Tr: Ø				
Bc1582 A: Ratnākara- śānti Tr: Ø	<i>Zh-TK</i> (ii) A: id. Tr: Ø	T1234 A: id. Tr: Ø	<i>Gl-TK_T</i> (i) A: id. Tr: Ø ? <i>Gl-TK_T</i> (xvi) A: id. Tr: Ø	U _{js} 618 A: id. Tr: Ø
D3125/P3946. A: Ø, Tr: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, Coll: Puruṣottama				
Bc1583 A: Ø Tr: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	<i>Zh-TK</i> (ix) A: Ø Tr: id. Coll: Puruṣot- tama	TØ	<i>Gl-TK_T</i> (viii) A: Ø Tr: id. Coll: id.	U _{js} 618.1 A: Ø Tr: id.
DØ/PØ				
Bc1584 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	<i>Zh-TK</i> (Ø)	T1222– T1226 A: id. Tr: Dar ma grags	<i>Gl-TK_T</i> (xiii) A: id. Tr: Seng ge rgyal mtshan	U _{js} 618.2 A: id. Tr: Ø
D3119–D3123/P3940–P3944. A: Jitāri, Tr: Ø				
Bc1585– Bc1589	<i>Zh-TK</i> (iii– vii)	T1227– T1231	<i>Gl-TK_T</i> (ii–vi)	UØ

⁶⁰ See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 415a3): *Srung ba lnga’i sgrub thabs dang mdo klog pa’i cho ga bal po’i dpe las mNga’ ris pa rDo rje dpal gyis bsgyur ba* | ^[ma byung].

⁶¹ See the *Ne-TK* (478.5–6): [... ‘dī bśnan dgos sam |].

⁶² Cf., however, the *R-KC*: [Rr18.136] *Dus mchod spyi’i sham* [sham R, bsham N] *thabs* | | [Rr18.137] *Pra ti sa ra’i mchod pa’i cho ga* ^[so sor ‘brang ma] | |, which could theoretically correspond to Bc1593 and Bc1583, respectively. To be noted, however, is that these records are found within the section of Early Translations, which makes such an identification less likely.

A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	A: Ø Tr: Ø	A: id. Tr: Dar ma grags R: Chos kyi dbang phyugs	A: Ø Tr: Ø	
D3127/P3948. A: Jitāri, Tr: Prajñākīrti, Coll: Sumatikīrti				
Bc1590 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	Zh-TK(xii) A: id. Tr: Shes rab grags Coll: Su- matikīrti	T1232 A: id. Tr: Prajñākīrti	Gl-TK _T (xv) A: id. Tr: Ba ri	IØ
DØ/PØ				
Bc1591 A: Jitāri Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	Zh-TK(Ø)	TØ	Gl-TK _T (Ø)	IØ
D3124/P3945. A1: Buddhajñāna, A2 (compiler): Sumatikīrti, Tr: Dharmakīrti (apparently erroneous for Prajñākīrti), Coll: Sumatikīrti				
Bc1592 A: Sumatikīrti Tr1: Ba ri Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan	? Zh- TK(viii) A1: Bud- dhajñāna- pāda (<i>gdams ngag</i>) A2: Suma- tikīrti (<i>gzhung du bsdebs pa</i>) Tr: Dhar- makīrti (apparent- ly erro- neous for Prajñākīr- ti) Coll: Su- matikīrti	? T1233 A: Bud- dhajñānapā da Tr: Prajñākīrti Coll: Su- matikīrti	Gl-TK _T (vii) A: Sumatikīr- ti Tr: Dhar- makīrti (see the remark to Zh-TK(viii))	IØ
DØ/PØ				
Bc1593 A: Ø Tr1: Ba ri	Zh-TK(Ø)	TØ	Gl-TK _T (Ø)	IØ

Tr2: Nyi ma rgyal mtshan				
D3126/P3947. A: Ratnākaraśānti, Tr: bKra shis rgyal mtshan, Coll: Muditāśrījñāna, R: Chag lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal				
Bc1594 A: Ratnākaraśānti Tr: bKra shis rgyal mtshan & Chos rje dpal	Zh-TK(x) A: id. Tr: bKra shis rgyal mtshan Coll: Muditāśrījñāna R: Chos rje dpal	T1235–T1239 A: id. Tr: Blo ldan shes rab	Gl-TK _T (ix) A: id. Tr: bKra shis rgyal mtshan Gl-TK _T (x) A: id. Tr: Nam mkha' rdo rje	I _{JS} 619 A: id. Tr: id. Bc
DØ/PØ (D-TK: ^{ima 'byung!}) [A: Ø, Tr: mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal]				
Bc1595 A: Ø Tr: Ø	? Zh-TK(xi) A: Ø Tr: mNga' ris pa rDo rje dpal	TØ	Gl-TK _T (Ø)	I _{JS} 622 A: Ø Tr: Ø
D3117/P3938				
BcØ	Zh-TK(i) A: Nāgārjuna Tr: Nam mkha' rdo rje Coll: Dharmasena	T1240 A: id. Tr: id.	Gl-TK _T (Ø)	IØ

(5) D3139/P3960. Sumatikīrti's *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga* (*Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*). Colo: *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga thun mong pa paṇḍi ta dpal Su ma ti kīrtis mdzad pa rdzogs so | | mkhas pa de nyid dang lo tsā ba Pradnyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |*. The title as recorded in the various catalogues differs slightly: R-RC: [Rr27.120] *Su ma ti kir tis byas pa'i Rab gnas mdo' lugs*; I-TK (A30b5–6; B24b2–3 = I_{JS}641) & BCh (Bc2852): *dpal Su ma ti kīrtis* ^(Blo bzang grags pa) *mdzad pa'i rTen 'brel rab gnas Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; Zh-TK (542.3): *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga'i tshul paṇḍi ta Su*

ma ti kirtis mdzad pa | de nyid dang | lo tsā ba Pra dznyā kirti'i 'gyur.... While it seems rather certain that all the above-cited records refer to the work in question, the identification of the title in the T-TK as T0418 is unsure (on which see the following entry). The name of the translator is recorded as follows: R-KC: Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags; U-TK, BCh: Shes rab grags; Zh-TK, DP: Prajñākīrti. The translator is thus clearly Pu rangs lo chung, though also in this case Kragh identifies him as 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(6) DØ/P4619. Sundarīnanda's *dPal 'khor lo sdom pa'i rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga* (*Śrīcakrasaṃvarapratiṣṭhāvidhi*). Colo: *slob dpon mDzes dgas mdzad pa'i Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga zhes bya ba rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po pañ ti ta chen po | Su ma ti kir ti dang | bod kyi lo tsa ba dge slong Prad dznyā⁶³ kir tis bsgyur ba'o | |*. In this case, too, the identification of the title in the T-TK is uncertain. Notable is, however, the following record in the T-TK (21b4–5): [T0418] *'Khor lo sdom pa'i rab gnas kyi cho ga thun mong pa Su ma ti kir tis mdzad pa |*, which seems to be a conflation, apparently due to a skip of the eye, of two titles, the translation of both of which is ascribed to Prajñākīrti in collaboration with Sumatikīrti: the present item (which is associated with Cakrasaṃvara and ascribed to Sundarīnanda) and the previous one (which is characterized as *thun mong pa* or *mdo lugs* and ascribed to Sumatikīrti). Unfortunately, the pertinent volume in the T TG could not be examined, so that it could not be determined whether both texts are included therein. Although there are no other references (R-KC(Ø), U-TK(Ø), BCh(Ø), Zh-TK(Ø)) to the work in question that would allow a better identification of the Tibetan translator Prajñākīrti, since he translated this work in collaboration with Sumatikīrti, with whom Pu rangs lo chung widely collaborated under this name, it seem rather reasonable to assume that this Prajñākīrti is again to be identified with Pu rangs lo chung rather than 'Bro Shes rab grags, as understood by Kragh.

(7) D1411/P2127. Sumatikīrti's *sDom pa'i rgyud chung ngu'i mtshams sbyor* (*Laghusaṃvaratantrapāṭalābhisandhi*). Colo: *sDom pa'i rgyud chung ngu'i mtshams sbyor⁶⁴ dpal Nā ro ta pa'i rjes su 'brangs pa mkhas pa Su ma ti kīrti'i zhal snga nas mdzad pa rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po de nyid dang | lo tsā ba dge slong Grags mchog shes rab kyi bsgyur to | |*. Tr: BCh(Ø); U-TK, T-TK, BCh: Grags 'byor shes rab; TDP: Grags mchog shes rab.⁶⁵ As we have seen above, these are two further

⁶³ dznyā] *em.*, nydzā Ms

⁶⁴ sbyor] P, sbyor ba D

⁶⁵ U-TK (A, 65a1–2; B, 52a7 = U_{TS}1392): *slob dpon Su ma ti kīrtis* [^{Blo bzang grags pa}] *mdzad pa sDom pa 'byung ba'i rgyud chung ngu'i mtshams sbyor Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur |*. The record in the BCh: [Bc2377] is virtually identical to that in the U-TK. T-TK (18a3): [T0326] *sDom pa'i rgyud chung ngu'i mtshams* [mtshams *em.*, mtsham Ms.] *sbyor Su ma ti kir tis mdzad pa Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur |*.

variants of Pu rangs lo chung's name, both of which are possible renderings into Tibetan of Prajñākīrti. To be noted, however, is that the colophons read Grags mchog shes rab in contrast to their respective catalogue entries, all of which read Grags 'byor shes rab. Since the Tibetan name used here is different from Shes rab grags, Kragh correctly identifies the translator of this work (to which he alludes in passing) as Pu rangs lo chung.⁶⁶

(8) D1451/P2168. Kṛṣṇacārin's *Rim pa bzhi pa* (**Ālicatuṣṭaya*). Colo: *de bzhin gshegs pa'i gsung rab chos kyi phung po brgyad khri bzhi stong las bstan pa'i Rim pa bzhi po'i don 'di ni sPyod pa'i brtul zhugs pa slob dpon Nag pos mdzad pa'o* | | *Rim pa bzhi pa rdzogs so* | | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Su ma ti kīrti'i zhal snga nas dang* | *dge slong Grags pa shes rab kyi sbsgyur te* | *Yul dbus kyi dpe dang gtugs pa'o* | | (followed by a dedication verse). There have been at least two translations of this work, which is also known in the tradition under the title *O la pa ti* (a corruption of the Sanskrit title, which in Tibetan is phonetically transcribed as *O li tsa tu ṣṭa ya*, or similarly). The *R-KC* records it twice, in both cases with the title *Rim(s) pa bzhi pa*: under (i) Rr26.89 with a translation ascription to 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P3458; the author is mentioned under Rr26.88 as Nag po spyod pa), and (ii) Rr27.108 with a translation ascription to Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug and Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags.⁶⁷ The *I-TK* records it three times (apparently overlooking that the title *O la pa ti* refers to the same work?), as follows: under (i) N_{JS}163 (as *Rim pa bzhi pa*) and (ii) N_{JS}208.2(BØ) (as *O la pa ti*), both with a translation ascription to Shākya ye shes, and (iii) N_{JS}1412 (as *Rim pa bzhi pa*) with a translation ascription to Grags pa shes rab. The *BCh* records it only once, under Bc2409 (as *O la pa ti*), with a translation ascription to Shākya ye shes.⁶⁸ The *Zh-TK*, however, records it (as

T0326 is found in section II, Khi(33), 326a3–327b6; its colophon is virtually identical to those of DP. *Zh-TK* (425.1–2): *sDom pa'i rgyud nyung ngu'i mtshams sbyor* | *paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kirtis mdzad pa* | *paṇḍi ta de nyis dang* | *lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur* | ; 5th-TK (19a5); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 352b6).

⁶⁶ See Kragh 2010: 215 n. 52.

⁶⁷ See the *R-KC*: [Rr26.89] *Rims pa bzhi pa la sogs pa dang* | | ; *ibid.* [Rr27.108] *Rim pa bzhi pa ste* | | .

⁶⁸ See the *I-TK* (A, 11b5–6; B, 8a7 = N_{JS}163) *slob dpon Nag po zhabs* ^[Kṛiṣṇa pā dal] *kyis mdzad pa'i Rim pa bzhi pa Shākya ye shes kyi 'gyur* | ; *ibid.* (A, 14a2; BØ = N_{JS}208.2) *O la pa ti Shākya ye shes kyi 'gyur* | (the author is given on fol. 14a1 as *slob dpon Nag po pa*) ; *ibid.* (A, 65b5; B, 53a2 = N_{JS}1412): *slob dpon Nag po pas mdzad pa'i Rim pa bzhi pa Grags pa shes rab* ^[gyis? kyang? yod] | | ^[*] *kyi 'gyur* | ^[*] A gloss in MS B (though not entirely clear) seems to indicate that the record in question is a duplicate. The record in the *BCh*: [Bc2409] resembles the second record in the *I-TK*.

Rim pa bzhi pa) with a translation ascription to Grags 'byor shes rab.⁶⁹ The T-TK records it under T0376 (as *Rim pa bzhi pa*) and presents it as a revision by Mar pa do ba to Shakyā ye shes's translation.⁷⁰ The colophon of the T version is of additional bibliographical value and is thus worth citing here: 'di ni de bzhin gshegs pa'i gsung rab chos kyi phung po brgyad khri bzhi stong gis bskul pa | slob dpon sPyod pa'i brtul zhugs can Nag pos mtshon pa yin no | | **Rim pa bzhi pa rdzogs s.ho** | | | 'di ni rgya gar gyi mkhan po **Gha ya dha ra dang dge slong Sha kyā ye shes** kyi bsgyur ba las | slad nas bod kyi lo tsha mkhas pa chen po **Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyug** gis bcos te gtan la phab pa yin no | | 'di la rgya dpe nyid kyang mi mthun pas⁷¹ | | mang por snang yang som nyi mi bya ste | | 'di ni rNam par gnon pa'i ngang tshul gyi⁷² | | mkhas pa chen po'i dpe' la gtugs pa yin | | .

According to the T colophon, Shākya ye shes's collaborator on the translation was the Indian Gayadhara, and Mar pa do ba apparently did the revision without any assistance. Moreover, it also curiously states that one should have no doubts regarding this translation, although it features numerous discrepancies with the Sanskrit manuscript (obviously referring to a manuscript other than the one used for the revision, perhaps one that was widely circulated in Tibet), for the revision was done by comparing the text with a manuscript belonging to the Great Scholar of Vikramaśīla (apparently a reference to Abhayākaragupta).

A brief examination of the T version shows that the translation contained therein is similar to that of the DP versions, though with some differences. Provided the colophons are authentic, this means that in contrast to the impression gained by the Rr27.108 record, Mar pa do ba and Pu rangs lo chung did not work on the translation of the text together but independently of one another. However, given the obvious similarity of the two translations, the colophon of Pu rangs lo chung's version cannot be entirely authentic; he either likewise revised Shākya ye shes's or Mar pa do ba's. One cannot of

⁶⁹ See the Zh-TK (429.1): *Rim pa bzhi pa Nag po spyod pa pas mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti dang | lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur te* | . Note that the D-TK (vol. 2: 355a7) erroneously (in contradiction to the colophon) appears to ascribe the translation of both the basic text and its auto-commentary to 'Bro Shes rab grags: [D1451] *Rim pa bzhi pa dang* | [1452] *Rim pa bzhi pa'i rnam par 'byed pa zhes bya ba ā tsārya Nag po nyid kyi mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur te Nag po chos drug tu grags so* | | .

⁷⁰ T-TK (20a3–4): [T0376] *Nag po pas mdzad pa'i Rim pa bzhi pa Shakyā ye shes kyi bsgyur ba las Mar dos gtan la phab pa* | . T0376 is found in section II, Ji(38), 253b1–257a3.

⁷¹ pa] em., pas Ms

⁷² gyi] em., gyis Ms

course completely dismiss the possibility that the colophon of the T version is the inauthentic one, though this scenario seems less likely. And indeed, Tāranātha, in his commentary on the *Rim pa bzhi pa*, states in this regard the following:⁷³

... *Rim pa bzhi pa rdzogs so* || || *rgya gar gyi paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kitti dang bod kyi lo tsa ba Pradznyā kritti bsgyur zhing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o* || **Pradznyā kitti ni Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags te** | *mtshan gzhan Grags 'byor shes rab ces bya'o* || *'gyur byang la de tsam las med kyang gzhung 'di yang 'Brog 'Gos gyi 'gyur la 'gyur bcos pa yin no* || .

... [herewith] the *Rim pa bzhi pa* ends. [It] was translated, proof-read, and finalized by the Indian *paṇḍita* Sumatikīrti and the Tibetan translator Prajñākīrti. As for Prajñākīrti, [this is] Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags, [also known under his] other name Grags 'byor shes rab. Although there is no other [information] than that in the colophon, this [version of the] treatise is a revision of the translation(s) done by 'Brog [mi Shākya ye shes and] 'Gos [Khug pa lhas btsas].

It is unclear whether Tāranātha implies that 'Brog mi and 'Gos jointly translated the text, which was then revised by Pu rangs lo chung, or whether Pu rangs lo chung used two independent translations by these two *lo tsā bas* for his revision. A catalogue record for a joint translation of this work by 'Brog mi and 'Gos has, however, not been located. The information regarding the translator of the *Rim pa bzhi pa* can be thus summarized as follows: *R-KC(i)*: 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas; *U-TK(i + ii)*, *BCh*: Shākya ye shes; *R-KC(ii)*: Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug and Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags; *U-TK(iii)*, *DP*: Grags pa shes rab; *Zh-TK*: Grags 'byor shes rab; *T-TK*: Shakyā ye shes, *R*: Mar pa do ba. Regardless of the accuracy of the colophons, it is clear that the Shes rab grags reported to have done a translation of this work in collaboration with Sumatikīrti is Pu rangs lo chung. Kragh (who only alludes to it in passing together with the work discussed in the previous entry) suggests identifying the Grags pa shes rab mentioned in the DP colophons with Grags 'byor shes rab (i.e., Pu rangs lo chung).⁷⁴ There should be a number of extracanonical versions of this work, a thorough examination of which (going beyond the scope of the present article) might shed further light on the history of its translation and transmission. For the translation of Kṛṣṇacārin's autocommentary, see the section on 'Bro Shes rab grags below (§4.F.1).

⁷³ *Rim pa bzhi pa'i gzhung 'grel chen* (88.9–14).

⁷⁴ See Kragh 2010: 215 n. 52.

(9) D1536/P2247. Manakaśrī's *dPal 'khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pu'i sgrub thabs* (*Śrīcakrasaṃvaraikaṅtrasādhana*). Colo: *dPal 'khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pu'i*⁷⁵ *sgrub thabs paṇḍi ta dpal Ma na ka shrīs mdzad pa rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po mkhas pa Su ma ti'i spyan sngar dge slong Pradznyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |. The *U-TK* records the work twice, once in chapter 19 (both MSS A & B) and once in chapter 21 (only MS A), both of which contain works from rare manuscripts that were obtained at a later point in time. Since the two records are similar (both ascribe the translation to Shes rab grags), the reason for the duplication is unclear. The record in the *BCh* is virtually identical.⁷⁶ It is notable that whereas the *Zh-TK* and 5th-*TK* also refer to the translator as Shes rab grags, the *D-TK* has Prajñākīrti as in the colophon.⁷⁷ Likewise notable is the revision by Mar pa do ba recorded by the *T-TK*.⁷⁸ According to the T colophon, the revision, too, was done in collaboration with Sumatikīrti. Colo: *dPal 'khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo cig pu'i bsgrub thabs | | paṇ ḍi ta*⁷⁹ *dpal Ma na ka shrīs mdzad pa rdzogs s.ho | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po Su ma ti'*⁸⁰ *spyan sngar | | dge slong Prad nya kir tis bsgyur ba | slad nas paṇ ḍi*⁸¹ *ta Su ma ti kir ti'i zhal sngar | a tsa rya Mar pa Chos kyī dbang phyug gis zhus dag byas pa'o | | |*. A brief comparison of the two versions shows that they are quite similar, and the extent of Mar pa do ba's revision is yet to be determined. The information regarding the translator can be summarized as follows: *R-KC*(Ø), *U-TK*(i + ii), *BCh*, *Zh-TK*, 5th-*TK*: Shes rab grags; *D-TK*, *DP*: Prajñākīrti; *T-TK*: Prajñākīrti, *R*: [Mar pa do ba] Chos kyī dbang phyug. It has by now become clear that this Shes rab grags aka Prajñākīrti is none other than Pu rangs lo chung. Kragh erroneously identifies this work, too, as one of the five "minor works" translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Sumatikīrti.*

⁷⁵ pu'i] D, pu P

⁷⁶ See the *U-TK* (A, 64b1; B, 51b7 = *U*_{js}1380): *slob dpon Ma na ka shrīs* (Yid byed dpal) *mdzad pa 'Khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pa'i sgrub thabs Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |*; and *ibid.* (A, 73b4–5; BØ): *paṇ ḍi ta Ma na ka shrīs* [^{Nor bu dpal}] *mdzad pa'i 'Khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pa'i sgrub thabs Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |*; *BCh*: [Bc2426].

⁷⁷ See the *Zh-TK* (433.7–434.1): *'Khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pa'i sgrub thabs paṇḍi ta Ma na ka shrīs mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kirti dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |*; 5th-*TK* (23b3); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 358b4–5): *dPal 'khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo gcig pa'i sgrub thabs paṇḍi ta dpal Ma ni ka shrīs mdzad pa | rgya gar gyi mkhan po paṇḍi ta Su ma ti kīrti'i spyan sngar dge slong Pradznyā kīrti'i 'gyur |*.

⁷⁸ See the *T-TK* (21a6–7): [T0408] *'Khor lo sdom pa dpa' bo cig pa'i bsgrub thabs Ma na ka shrīs mdzad pa Pra dznyā dznyā na kir tis bsgyur ba la Chos kyī dbang phyug gis bcos pa |*. That the reading *Pra dznyā dznyā na kir ti* is erroneous is confirmed by the T colophon, which reads *Prad nya kir ti* (for the T colophon, see below). T0408 is found in section II, *Nyi*(39), 86b4–91b2.

⁷⁹ ḍi ta] *em.*, ṭi Ms

⁸⁰ su ma ti'i] *em.*, u ma di'i Ms

⁸¹ ḍi] *em.*, ṭi Ms

To sum up this section, all five “minor works” identified by Kragh as having been translated by ‘Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Sumatikīrti were in fact translated by Pu rangs lo chung, one of whose several aliases was indeed Shes rab grags.

(B) Translations in Collaboration with Jayākara

There appears to be only one translation on which Pu rangs lo chung, going by the name Prajñākīrti, collaborated with Jayākara, and it was likewise considered by Kragh as a translation by ‘Bro Shes rab grags.

(1) D4123/P5625. Viśākhadeva’s ‘*Dul ba’i tshig le’ur byas pa* (*Vinayakārikā*). The translation is stated as having been later slightly revised by Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449; BDRC: P431) in collaboration with Vānaratna. Colo: ‘*phags pa gzhi thams cad yod par smra ba’i ‘Dul ba tshig le’ur byas pa | me tog gi phreng rgyud ces bya ba | | ‘dul ba ‘dzin pa chen po ‘phags pa dGe ‘dun ‘bangs* (Samghadāsa) *kyi slob ma | dpal ‘phags pa Sa ga’i lhas* (Viśākhadeva) *mdzad pa rdzogs so | | bal po’i paṇḍi ta Dza yā ka ra dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba dge slong Pra dznyā kīrtis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa’o | | rgya gar shar phyogs Sa dan ga ra’i* (*Sadhagara) *paṇḍi ta Ba na ratna ma hā sthi bī ra la gtugs te | sgra’i don la mkhas pa Rong ston Shes bya kun rig gis | ‘gyur cung zad bcos te gtan la phab pa’o | |*. The identification of the title in the R-KC is not obvious, but it is certainly the one recorded under Rr27.121: *dGe slong gi ka ri ka*, the translation of which is ascribed to Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags. This identification is supported not only by the work’s content, but also by a line of verse found toward the end of the work that alludes to the work’s title, as follows (D, 63a1–2; P, 67a2–3): *dge slong chos ‘dul thig ler byas mdzes me tog phreng rgyud legs brgyus las | |*. This identification is further supported by the *Blue Annals*, which likewise refer to the work as *dGe slong gi kā ri kā* and ascribe its translation to Prajñākīrti in collaboration with Jayākara.⁸² The *U-TK* names no translator. The *BCh*, which correctly indicates that the text is 6 *bam po* long, names Byams pa’i dpal as the translator, which may refer to Khro phu lo tsā ba Byams pa dpal (1172/1173–1236; BDRC: P4007), whereas the *Zh-TK*, erroneously asserts that the text is 5 *bam po* long, names Prajñākīrti.⁸³ The *T-TK*

⁸² See the *Deb sngon* (vol. 1: 116.11–13): *dGe slong gi ni kā ri kā | | ne pa la yi paṇḍi ta | | lung dang rtogs pa’i bdag nyid can | | mkhas pa Dza ya ā ka ra las | | dge slong Pradznyā kīrttis bsgyur | |*. For an English translation, see Roerich 1949: 87. See also Lo Bue 1997: 635, where this passage is referred to and where Lo Bue silently identifies Prajñākīrti as sNye’or Shes rab grags, an identification that we shall encounter again below in the context of yet another translation.

⁸³ See van der Kuijp 2013: 186–189 n. 156, where the translation colophon of the *Vinayakārikā* and some of the pertinent catalogue entries are discussed, including the discrepancy in the reports concerning the number of *bam pos*. See also my dis-

names Shes rab grags.⁸⁴ The translator-related information may thus be summarized as follows: *U-TK*: Ø; *BCh*: Byams pa'i dpal; *R-KC*: Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags; *T-TK*: Shes rab grags; *Zh-TK*, *DP*: Prajñākīrti. Given the record in the *R-KC* and the fact that Pu rangs lo chung often went by the name Prajñākīrti in the colophons, the identification of our translator seems rather certain. Kragh, however, identifies him with 'Bro Shes rab grags, again merely on the assumption that Prajñākīrti is the name 'Bro Shes rab grags used while in Nepal. As noted by Kragh, Jayākara is known to have collaborated with a translator referred to simply as Mar pa (who, Kragh suggests, is Mar pa do ba) on the translations of three works, all related to Vajrapānyanalajihva (Phyag na rdo rje lce dbab; D2185/P3029, D2186/P3030, D2188/P3031). This identification is supported by the fact that, as we have seen above, Mar pa do ba and Pu rangs lo chung studied under and worked with the same circles of *paṇḍitas*, but further research is certainly needed in this regard.

(C) Translations in Collaboration with Varendraruci

Kragh lists two works translated by Prajñākīrti (whom he believed to be 'Bro Shes rab grags) in collaboration with Varendraruci, one in collaboration with *Digīśanandana, and one in collaboration with *Nālandāpāda. These four translations will be treated here together for two reasons, namely, (i) the translations of the two works done in collaboration with the Indian Varendra and one work done in collaboration with the Indian *Digīśanandana, all related to Guhyasamāja, are listed in the *BCh* together, their translator undoubtedly being considered to be one and the same person, and (ii) as I shall argue below, **Varendra(ruci)**, ***Digīśanandana**, and ***Nālandāpāda** are likewise one and the same person.

Kragh suggests that the Indian Varendra with whom Prajñākīrti is said to have collaborated on these two translations “is highly likely” the “famous Nepalese scholar Varendraruci.” As already noted by Lo Bue, Varendraruci, also known as “White Haṅdu” (Ha mu/ngu dkar po) or “White Māntrika,” is sometimes referred to as a Nepalese and

cussion of the attribute sNyel cor (and its variants) below (§2.D.4), where the pertinent passage in van der Kuijp's discussion is readdressed.

⁸⁴ See the *U-TK* (A, 48a1–2; B, 38b2–3 = *I*_s1037) *dgra bcom pa Sa ga'i lhas* ^[bi shā khā de wa] *mdzad pa'i 'Dul ba me tog gi phreng rgyud ...*; *BCh*: [Bc0460] *dgra bcom pa Sa ga'i lhas mdzad pa 'Dul ba me tog phreng brgyud 6 bp. Byams pa'i dpal gyi 'gyur* |; *Zh-TK* (612.4–5): *'Dul ba tshig le'ur byas pa me tog phreng rgyud dpal 'phags pa Sa ga lhas mdzad pa | bam po lnga pa | paṇḍi ta Dza ya ā ka ra dang | lo tsā ba Pra dznyā kirti'i 'gyur* |; *T-TK* (86b6): [T2462] *'Dul ba me tog gi phreng brgyud dgra bcom pa Sa ga'i lhas mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba...* T2462 could unfortunately not be accessed, so that the name of the translator found there remains unclear.

sometimes as an Indian (though it is unclear whether he was a Nepalese associated with India or the other way around).⁸⁵ Moreover, the attribute “Indian” is often used as a generic term for all scholars hailing from the Indic cultural sphere (including Kashmir and Nepal), so that the fact that our Varendra is referred to in the colophons as Indian should not pose much problem with Kragh’s suggested identification. I shall, however, return to the identity of our Varendra.

The identification of this Prajñākīrti with Pu rangs lo chung is supported by the fact that Pu rangs lo chung is well known to have worked with Varendraruci. Apart from the above-cited passage from the *Blue Annals*, one may add here a reference to Chos rgyal ’phags pa’s (1235–1280; BDRC: P1048) Records of Teachings Received, where Pu rangs lo chung is explicitly called (if in the context of another lineage) a disciple of Varendraruci, named there Ha ngu dkar po.⁸⁶

(1) D1903/P2767. Bhānucandra’s *Argha’i cho ga* (*Arghavidhi*). Colo: **Argha’i cho ga snying po bsdus pa zhes bya ba slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Ba rendra ba’i zhal snga nas dang | lo tsā ba dge slong Pradznyā kīrtis bsgyur ba’o | |**. The R-KC seems not to have a record of this work. Both the *I-TK* and *BCh* name Shes rab grags as the translator. The *T-TK* and the *Zh-TK*, followed by the *D-TK*, in agreement with the colophon, have Prajñākīrti. To be noted is that while the *Zh-TK* reads Wa rendra ka for the *paṇḍita*’s name, the *D-TK* has Wa rendra pa.⁸⁷ The colophon of the T version is virtually identical with those of DP and thus does not offer any different or additional information. The translator information can thus be summarized as follows: R-KC(Ø); *I-TK*, *BCh*: Shes rab grags; *T-TK*, *Zh-TK*, *D-TK*, DP: Prajñākīrti.

(2) D1904/P2768. Bhānucandra’s *Rab tu gnas pa’i cho ga* (*Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*). Colo: **Rab tu gnas pa’i cho ga ye shes snang ba zhes bya ba slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Ba rendra pa’i zhal snga nas dang | lo tsā ba dge slong Pradznyā kīrtis bsgyur ba’o | |**. The R-KC seems not to have a record

⁸⁵ See Lo Bue 1977: 635. See also Kragh 2010: 212–213 n. 47, where works translated by various translators in collaboration with Varendraruci are listed, including their colophons.

⁸⁶ See the Chos rgyal ’phags pa’i gsan yig (529.3–4): yang bal po’i paṇḍi ta Ha ngu dkar po yan chad ni ’dra la | de’i slob ma Pu rangs lo chung Grags mchog shes rab |

⁸⁷ See the *I-TK* (A, 66b2–3; B, 53b4–5 = *I*_{JS}1431): slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa Arga’i cho ga snying po bsdus pa dang | [...] gnyis Shes rab grags kyi ’gyur |; *BCh*: [Bc2049] slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa’i Arga’i cho ga snying po bsdus pa dang | ... Bc2050 & Bc2051...] gsum Shes rab grags kyi ’gyur |; *T-TK* (12b5): [T0183] Arga’i cho ga sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa Pradznyā kir ti’i ’gyur |. T0183 is found in section II, Tsha(19), 440a1–449b2. *Zh-TK* (474.2–3): [= D1903] gSang ba ’dus pa’i rgyud la brten pa’i Arka’i cho ga snying po bsdus ba zhes bya ba dang | [= D1904] [...] dang gnyis slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Wa rendra ka dang | lo tsā ba Pra dznyā kirti’i ’gyur |; *D-TK* (vol. 2: 375a4–5).

of this work. Both the *U-TK* and *BCh* name Shes rab grags as the translator. The *T-TK* and the *Zh-TK*, followed by the *D-TK*, in agreement with the colophon, have Prajñākīrti.⁸⁸ In this case, too, the colophon of the T version is virtually identical with those of DP and thus does not offer any different or additional information. The translator information can be summarized as follows: *R-KC*(Ø); *U-TK*, *BCh*: Shes rab grags; *T-TK*, *Zh-TK*, *D-TK*, DP: Prajñākīrti.

(3) D1908/P2770. [Śūnyatā]samādhivajra's *Tha ma'i mchod pa'i cho ga* (*Anteṣṭavidhi*). Colo: **Tha ma'i cho ga'i ming gi rnam grangs gshin po bde bar gshegs pa'i gnas la 'god pa zhes bya ba paṇḍi ta dpal Ting nge 'dzin rdo rjes mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Phyogs dbang dga' byed kyi zhal snga nas dang | lo tsā ba dge slong Pradznyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |**. The *R-KC* seems not to have a record of this work. Both the *U-TK* and *BCh* name Shes rab grags as the translator. The *T-TK* and the *Zh-TK*, followed by the *D-TK*, in agreement with the colophon, have Prajñākīrti.⁸⁹ The translator information can be summarized as follows: *R-KC*(Ø); *U-TK*, *BCh*: Shes rab grags; *T-TK*, *Zh-TK*, *D-TK*, DP: Prajñākīrti. To be noted is that the colophon of the T version is nearly identical with those of DP, the main difference being the spelling of the collaborating *paṇḍita*'s name as mChog dbyang dga' byed (i.e., *mchog* instead of *phyogs*). As for the identity of the collaborating *paṇḍita* *Digīśanandana, it has been pointed out by Kragh that little is known about him. Kragh, considering the fact that the author Śūnyatāsamādhivajra (aka Divākaracandra) was a contemporary of Vajrapāṇi (both considered among the "four great disciples" of Maitrīpāda) and that he lived in Nepal,⁹⁰

⁸⁸ *U-TK* (A, 66b2–3; B, 53b4–5): [I_{JS}1431] *slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa [...]* dang | [I_{JS}1432] *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga Ye shes snang ba gnyis Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *BCh*: [Bc2049] *slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa'i [...]* [Bc2050] *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga ye shes snang ba dang |* [Bc2051] [...] *gsum Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *T-TK* (12b6): [T0184] *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga ye shes snang ba slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa Pradznyā kir ti'i 'gyur....* T0184 is found in section II, Tsha(19), 449b3–460b2. *Zh-TK* (474.2–3): [= D1903] [...] dang | [= D1904] *gSang ba 'dus pa'i rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga ye shes snang ba zhes bya ba dang gnyis slob dpon sNang byed zla bas mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Wa rendra ka dang | lo tsā ba Pradznyā kīrti'i 'gyur |*; *D-TK* (vol. 2: 375a4–5).

⁸⁹ See the *U-TK* (A, 66b4; B, 53b6 = I_{JS}1434): *dpal Ting nge 'dzin rdo rjes* ^[shri Sa mā dhi badzra] *mdzad pa Tha ma'i cho ga gshin po bde bar gshegs pa'i gnas la 'god* ['god A, dgod B] *pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *BCh*: [Bc2051] *dpal Ting nge 'dzin gyi rdo rjes mdzad pa Dus tha ma'i cho ga gshin po bde bar gshegs pa'i gnas la 'god ba dang gsum* (= Bc2049–Bc2051) *Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *T-TK* (33b4–5): [T0753] *Tha ma'i cho ga gshin po bde bar gshegs pa'i gnas la 'god pa Ting nge 'dzin bzang pos mdzad pa Pra dznyā kir ti'i 'gyur |*. T0753 is found in section II, Ce(66), 66a1–70a6. *Zh-TK* (474.4): *Dus tha ma'i cho ga gshin po bde bar gshegs pa'i gnas la 'god pa zhes bya ba dpal Ting nge 'dzin rdo rjes mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta dpal Phyogs dbang dga' byed dang | lo tsā ba Pradznyā kīrti'i 'gyur....*; *D-TK* (vol. 2: 375a7–b1).

⁹⁰ For a brief discussion of Śūnyatāsamādhivajra aka Divākaracandra, see Lo Bue 1997: 636, 637–638.

suggests that *Digīsanandana must have been active no earlier than the mid eleventh century and possibly lived in Nepal. As we have seen, while the DP colophons give his name in Tibetan as Phyogs dbang dga' byed, reconstructed by previous cataloguers as *Digīsanandana,⁹¹ the T colophon has mChog dbang dga' byed. A confusion between *phyogs* and *mchog* could be easily explained as an error resulting from the two syllables being homophones, so that the actual question would be which is the preferable reading. I would like to suggest that *mchog* is the correct reading, with *mchog dbang* being the Tibetan rendering for *varendra* and *dga' byed* for *ruci* (though admittedly *dga' ba* would have probably been more adequate). It is worth noting that the name Varendraruci appears not to have usually been translated into Tibetan, except, it seems, in this present case. Notable in this regard, too, is the explanation of the name Varendraruci in the *Blue Annals* as meaning *mchog tu dbang po gsal ba* (where *mchog tu dbang po* stands for *varendra*, which very much tallies with the aforementioned *mchog dbang*, and *gsal ba* for *ruci* in the sense of radiant/bright).⁹² Moreover, such an identification of the *paṇḍita* in question as Varendraruci makes sense not only from a linguistic point of view. The above three works are thematically related, and that Prajñākīrti translated them on the same occasion in collaboration with the same *paṇḍita* is a reasonable assumption. To be likewise noted is that no reference to a *paṇḍita* named *Digīsanandana (or Phyogs dbyang dga' byed for that matter) seems to exist, except for the DP colophons (and their equivalents) and references to them in the respective catalogues, all of which appear to go back to Bu ston's Zhwa lu edition and its catalogue (while the reading mChog dbang dga' byed in the T version may go back to the Old sNar thang edition and thus be the original one).

(4) D1545/P2253. Indrabhūti's *Grub pa'i rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub pa'i thabs* (*Siddhivajrayoginīsādhana*). Colo: *dPal ldan rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i gsang ba snyan nas snyan zhal nas zhal du brgyud pa'i rjes su gnang ba'i gzhung lugs* | | *slob dpon chen po dpal O dyan gyi mi dbang Indra bhū tis mdzad pa rdzogs so* | | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Na lendra pa dang* | *lo tsā ba dge slong Pradznyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o* | |. The R-KC seems not to have a record of this work. The *I-TK* names Shes rab grags as the translator, as do both the *BCh* and the *Zh-TK*, followed by the *Ng-TK* and the *5th-TK* (i.e., unlike the respective colophon) as well. The *D-TK*, in agreement with the colophon, has Prajñākīrti.⁹³ Judging from its catalogue, the work seems not to have

⁹¹ The reconstruction *Digīsanandana was probably first suggested in Cordier 1909–1915, vol. 2: 157 no. 4 and adopted by later scholars.

⁹² See Roerich 1947: 394.

⁹³ See the *I-TK* (A, 15a4; B, 11a4 = *I*_{js}239): *In dra bhu tis* ^(dBang po 'byor pa) *mdzad pa'i Grub pa'i rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |; *BCh*:

been included in the T TG edition. The information regarding the translator can thus be summarized as follows: *R-KC*(Ø), *T-TK*(Ø); *U-TK*, *BCh*, *Zh-TK*, *Ng-TK*, *5th-TK*: Shes rab grags; *D-TK*, *DP*: Prajñākīrti.

One may ask why the T TG edition has not included the work despite the fact that it was included in the *U* TG edition, which served as its basis. The reason for this exclusion must have been the fact that it is a duplicate (if a different translation), the other version being transmitted under the editorial title *dPal rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs* (*Śrīvajrayoginīsādhana*; D1550/P2258), whose translation is ascribed to rMa Chos 'bar (1044–1089; BDRC: P4CZ10557) in collaboration with the Indian *Punṣākārabhadra, who appears to be none other than Varendraruci.⁹⁴ The colophons of this version do not, however, provide either the title nor the author's name, but merely mention that the teaching originated in Oḍḍiyāna and has been transmitted orally. Colo: *dpal dang ldan pa'i rab*⁹⁵ *tu sngags pa'i gnas O ḍyaṅ nas byung ba'i dgongs pa bla na med pa dpal rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i gsang chen rna ba nas rna ba ru*⁹⁶ *zhal nas zhal du*⁹⁷ *brgyud pa'i rim pa rdzogs so* | | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po* **sDod nams 'byung gnas bzang po'i zhal snga nas dang** | *bod kyi lo tsā ba* **rMa**⁹⁸ **ban Chos 'bar gyis bsgyur ba'o** | | .

This duplication has its origin in the *U-TK* and appears to have been retained in most other catalogues and TG editions, except for the T and the *Gl* (Mustang) editions and their respective catalogues, which excluded the equivalent of D1545/P2253 with which we are mainly concerned here. D1550/P2258 is often recorded together with D1551/P2259—*Śūnyatāsamādhi's dPal de kho na nyid ye shes grub pa* (*Śrītatvajñānasiddhi*), translated by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab in collaboration with Varendraruci—under their alternative titles *Zhal gnyis ma chung ba* and *Zhal gnyis ma che ba*.⁹⁹

[Bc2474] **I ndra bhū tis mdzad pa'i Grub pa'i rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur** | ; *Zh-TK* (434.3–4): **Grub pa'i rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs rgyal po Indra bo dhis mdzad pa** | *paṅḍi ta Na lendra pa dang* | *lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* | ; *Ng-TK*: (25.8–9); *5th-TK* (23b7); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 359a2–3): **Grub pa'i rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sgrub thabs slob dpon chen po dpal Au ḍyaṅ gyi mi dbang Indra bhū tis mdzad pa** | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal Nā lendra pa dang* | *lo tsā ba dge slong Pradznya kīrti'i 'gyur* | .

⁹⁴ See Roerich 1947: 394, where *Punṣākārabhadra is asserted to have been the real name of Varendraruci. See also Lo Bue 1997: 635.

⁹⁵ rab] P, rub D

⁹⁶ rna ba nas rna ba ru] D, rna ba ru P; testimonia: T Colo.

⁹⁷ zhal nas zhal du] D, zhal du P; testimonia: T Colo.

⁹⁸ rma] D, sma P

⁹⁹ See the *R-KC*: [Rr25.61] **Zhal gnyis ma chung ba dang** | | , with a translation ascription rMa Chos 'bar, and [Rr27.61] **Zhal gnyis ma chen mo dang** | | , with a translation ascription rNgog; *U-TK* (A, 14b1–2; B, 10b4–5 = *U*_{1s}219 & *U*_{1s}220): **Zhal gnyis ma che chung Chos 'bar gyi 'gyur** | (note the translation ascription Chos 'bar in both texts); *BCh*: [Bc2453] **slob dpon Sha wa ri la sogs pas mdzad par grags pa'i Zhal gnyis ma chung ba** rMa ban gyi 'gyur | [...] [Bc2457] **sTong nyid ting nge 'dzin gyis mdzad pa'i Zhal gnyis ma che ba dang** | [...] *lnga* (= Bc2455–Bc2459) rNgog

To return to the identity of our translator, the identity of *Nālandāpāda (as reconstructed by Kragh) or *Nālendrapā(da) (as reconstructed in the Tōhoku and Ōtani catalogues) is uncertain, and he is known to have collaborated only on this one translation (at least in the mainstream canonical editions). Kragh appears to consider two possibilities as to the identity of *Nālandāpāda. Since my understanding of some of the sources referred to by Kragh in this regard slightly differs, I shall briefly discuss them here again. The *Blue Annals* refer to a *paṇḍita* with the name Nālandāpā(da) in two different contexts. In one context a scholar named Śrī Nālandāpa is listed as one of the “ten lesser disciples” of Maitrīpāda.¹⁰⁰ The other occasion on which a Nālandāpāda is referred to is in the context of the Kālacakra. There Nālandāpāda is asserted to be a disciple of Kālacakrapāda the Younger, and it is also said that there appear to be some accounts according to which, among other things, he once came to Tibet. Kālacakrapāda the Younger, in turn, is supposedly the son of Bhadrabodhi, who ‘Gos gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481; BDRC: P318) suggests is apparently the one to have collaborated with Gyi jo lo tsā ba (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P8129) on the translation of the *Kālacakratantra*.¹⁰¹ To be noted is also that several paragraphs earlier, while discussing Nāropa (also in the context of the *Kālacakratantra*), the *Blue Annals* state that the father of Kālacakrapāda the Younger was an *upāsaka* called Bodhi, who in turn is said to have been the lineage holder of Kālacakrapāda [the Elder], under whom both Nāropa and Kālacakrapāda the Younger studied.¹⁰² Tāranātha, in his History of

‘gyur | (note the authorship ascription for Bc2453); T-TK (22b3–5): [T0446] *dPal rdo rje rnal ‘byor ma’i bsgrub thabs dgongs pa bla na med pa Au rgyan nas byung ba rMa ban Chos ‘bar gyi ‘gyur* | [T0447] *rDo rje rnal ‘byor ma’i bsgrub thabs de kho na nyid ye shes yang dag par grub pa sTong nyid ting nge ‘dzin gyis mdzad pa Blo ldan shes rab kyi ‘gyur* |. T0446 is found in section II, Nyi(39), 261b1–264a4, and T0447 in section II, Nyi(39), 264a5–268a5; their colophons are similar to those of the DP version. Zh-TK (434.5–7): [= D1550] *rDo rje rnal ‘byor ma’i sgrub thabs zhal gnyis ma chung ba Ri khrod dbang phyug gis mdzad par grags pa | paṇḍi ta bSod nams ‘byung gnas bzang po dang | lo tsā ba rMa ban Chos ‘bar gyi ‘gyur* | [= D1551] *Phag mo’i sgrub thabs de kho na nyid ye shes yang dag par grub pa zhes bya ba Zhal gnyis ma che bar grags pa paṇḍi ta sTong nyid ting nge ‘dzin gyis mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Ba rendra ru tse dang | lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab kyi ‘gyur* |. The bibliographical information provided by the D-TK (vol. 2: 359a5–6; the translators of the second title are named in 359a7–b1) is similar to that found in the Zh-TK.

¹⁰⁰ See Roerich 1949: 843.

¹⁰¹ See the *Deb sngon* (899.7–10): *de la Dus zhabs pa chung ba’i yab shri Bha dra bo dhi ni Gyi jo dang lhan du Dus ‘khor bsgyur ba po nyid yin pa ‘dra la | Dus zhabs pa chung ba’i slob ma Nā lendra pa zhes bya bas Bod du yang yug cig byon zhes bya ba la sogs pa’i gtam snang ngo | |*. For an English translation, see Roerich 1949: 766.

¹⁰² *Deb sngon* (890.5–10): *des (= Nāropa) slob dpon Dus zhabs pa la chos gsan pas thams cad kyang lan res ‘dzin nus par gyur te | de’i brgyud pa ‘dzin pa ni dge bsnyen Byang chub ces bya ba ste | ‘di la sras paṇḍi ta shin tu che ba zhig yod pa las | des ni yab kyi*

Kālacakra Literature, to which Kragh refers as well, depicts a slightly different picture, however: The real name of Kālacakrapāda the Elder, he claims, is Mañjuśrīvajra; that of Kālacakrapāda the Younger, Śrībhadrā (and he himself is said to have hailed from the Vaiśya class, and to have been an *upāsaka*); and *Nālandāpa is said to have been the son of Kālacakrapāda the Younger (and his real name to have been Bodhibhadra).¹⁰³ At any rate, as this is the only colophon where *Nālandāpāda is mentioned as having collaborated on a translation, it is practically impossible to determine his intellectual milieu (or the identity of the Tibetan translator in question) and thus to be able to judge whether he is either of these two Nālandāpāda-s or whether he is some other person who shared the same epithet (referring to someone associated with the monastery of Nālandā).

On the one hand, the two aforementioned Nālandāpāda-s are not known to have collaborated on any translation. On the other hand, both the duplicate of D1545/P2253 (i.e., D1550/P2258) and the other work related to it (i.e., D1551/P2259) appear to have been translated in collaboration with Varendraruci. The works in question belong to the Vārāhī cycle, whose main transmitter to Tibet was Varendraruci. Moreover, the Vārāhī cycle is related to the Cakrasaṃvara, which was one of Pu rangs lo chung's main areas of specialization. Now, could our *Nālandāpāda be Varendraruci? The first question to be asked in this regard is whether *Nālandāpāda is indeed the Sanskrit epithet behind the Tibetan transliteration *na/nā lendra pa*, as suggested by Kragh? I believe that the answer is no. One option that comes to mind is that *na/nā lendra* is a corruption of Narendra, but there seems to be no *paṇḍita* with this name that would fit our context. I believe that *na/nā lendra* is, rather, a corruption of Varendra, which is the short form of Varendraruci that we have already encountered in other colophons. As an additional support for this hypothesis I may

mched po dGon pa ba la yang zhus shing | Nā ro pa dang stabs shig tu Dus zhabs pa chen po la mnyan pas Dus zhabs chung ngu zhes kyang grags te | For an English translation, see Roerich 1949: 758.

¹⁰³ *Dus 'khor gyi 'byung khungs* (336.6–8) 'Phags pa'i yul du gShin rje gshed kyi rnal 'byor pa zhig gi sras | **Dus 'khor zhabs chen por grags pa de ni | mtshan dngos Manydzu badzra | ...**; *ibid.* (336.20–337.1): **Dus zhabs pa chung pa kho nas chos 'di dar bar mdzad de | mtshan dngos ni Shrī bha dra | rigs ni rje rigs | rten dge bsnyen |**; *ibid.* (337.11–12): **Dus zhabs pa chung ba de nyid kyi sras Nā len dra pa ni | mtshan dngos Bo dhi bha tra | Nā lendra zhes bya ba'i gnas gzhi'i bdag po mdzad | ...** Cf. Kragh (2010: 200 n. 17), who, referring to the last passage, understands "Bodhibhadra (a.k.a. Nālandapāda), i.e., Kālacakrapāda the Younger, who in turn is presented as a student of Kālacakrapāda Senior." Note that several other Tibetan sources appear to present an understanding of these figures and the relationship between them that are yet different from the two sources presented here. In particular, it appears that some sources seem to imply that there were several masters with the epithet Kālacakrapāda the Younger, but this issue requires a further discussion, which cannot be undertaken here.

draw attention to the transliteration of the name Varendraruci in the translation colophon of T0447 (the equivalent of D1551/P2259), which reads: *bal po'i a rtsar rya Bha len tra ru rtse*,¹⁰⁴ where we observe a confusion between the consonants *r* and *l*. In fact, we also find the same transliteration in the colophons of the following three works.¹⁰⁵ It does not need much imagination to see how a scribe or, in this case more likely, an editor “corrected” *bha len tra* to *na len dra*, particularly when it stands alone (i.e., without *ru tse/tsi*). Provided the hypothesis that our *paṇḍita* is none other than Varendraruci, with whom we now know that Pu rangs lo chung has collaborated on several translations, and given that the work under discussion belongs to the Cakrasaṃvara cycle, I would like to suggest that our Prajñākīrti is none other than Pu rangs lo chung and not 'Bro Shes rab grags as suggested by Kragh.

(D) Translations and Revisions in Collaboration with Prince Bhīmadeva

Kragh records one work translated by Prajñākīrti (identified by him as 'Bro Shes rab grags) in collaboration with **Prince Śrī Abhayadeva**, and adds one more that was possibly translated by the same team. He also notes one revision undertaken by the team. In accordance with his “name–place correspondence theory” Kragh suggests that the place of translation was either in India or Nepal. He also briefly discusses the identity of the Abhayadeva in question, maintaining that he is unlikely to be either Abhayākaragupta or Abhayakīrti (i.e., one of the Pham thing pa brothers mentioned above) since none of them seems to have been referred to as Avadhūtipa (an epithet attached to Abhayadeva in one of the colophons).¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, as I shall argue below, this “Prince Abhayadeva” is most likely none other than Prince (Rājaputra) Bhīmadeva, under whom, as pointed out earlier, Pu rangs lo chung is reported to have studied. In the following, I shall discuss altogether four works (i.e., the three pointed out by Kragh and an additional one that was overlooked by him), focusing on the identities of both the Tibetan translator and his collaborating *paṇḍita*. I shall first present the four works along with bibliographical information relating to them, which will serve as the basis for the discussion.

¹⁰⁴ T0447 is found in section II, Nyi(39), 264a5–268a5.

¹⁰⁵ T0448 (= D1552/P2260) is found in section II, Nyi(39), 268a5–269a6; T0449 (= D1553/P2261) in section II, Nyi(39), 269b1–272a6; and T0450 (= D1554/P2262) in section II, Nyi(39), 272b1–273b6, all translated by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab in collaboration with Varendraruci.

¹⁰⁶ Kragh 2010: 218–219.

(1) D1534/P2245. Prince *Bhīmadeva's *Lam gyi dbang bskur ba'i rab tu bya ba* (*Mārgābhīṣekaprakaraṇa). Colo: *grong khyer Sum bha ri'i rGyal po'i sras* | *dpal 'Jigs byed lha'i zhal snga nas bstan pa* | *rGyal po Seng ge gdan gyi nam par dag pa'i lam gyi dbang bskur ba'i rab tu bya ba rdzogs so* | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po de nyid kyi spyang sngar* | *bod kyi lo tsā ba shākya'i dge slong Grags 'byor shes rab kyi bsgyur ba'o* | | . Notable is the specification of *Bhīmadeva ('Jigs byed lha) as the son of the king of the city of *Sumbhari(?). The Tibetan name 'Jigs byed lha was reconstructed in previous catalogues as *Bhairavadeva. Nonetheless, I suggest identifying this Prince 'Jigs byed lha with Prince Bhīmadeva ('*jigs byed* being a possible rendering of both *bhīma* and *bhairava*), who is said to have been a teacher of Pu rangs lo chung (as shown in the citation above, the name is provided in the *Blue Annals* in its transliterated Sanskrit form). This reported master–disciple relationship between Prince Bhīmadeva and Pu rangs lo chen already offers a rather certain identification of our Grags 'byor shes rab (which, as we shall see below, was also the name of yet another translator) as Pu rangs lo chung. But, as will be shown, if one considers all four works, there are several other pieces of evidence for this identification. Moreover, the epithet rGyal po Seng ge gdan (“Lion-Throned King”) appearing in the title as recorded in the colophon (but omitted in those recorded in modern catalogues) is apparently—that is, if one considers its occurrence in the colophon of the work discussed in the following entry—a reference to Viṣṇugupta, the seventh of the twenty-five Kalki kings of Śambhala known to have sat on a “lion-throne” (**simhāsana*). At any rate, the mention of this rGyal po Seng ge gdan here and in the colophon of the work discussed in the following entry is particularly relevant to the identification of the “prince” mentioned there as the collaborating *paṇḍita*. The T-TK names the translator as Prajñākīrti instead of Grags 'byor shes rab,¹⁰⁷ in accordance with the T colophon, which features several other differences (underlined) as follows: *grong khyer Sam ba ra'i rGyal po'i sras* | *dpal 'Jigs med lha'i zhal snga nas bstan pa* | *rGyal po Seng ge'i gdan gyi nam par dag pa'i lam gyi dbang gyi bya ba rdzogs s.ho* | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po mkhas pa de nyid kyi spyang sngar* | *dge slong Prad nya kir tis bsgyur ba'o* | | . Most notable is the reading 'Jigs med lha (*Abhayadeva) instead of 'Jigs byed lha (*Bhīmadeva / *Bhairavadeva), an issue to which we shall return, and perhaps also the name of the city as *Sambara / *Saṃvara instead of *Sumbhari, which, however, cannot be discussed further in the present article.¹⁰⁸ The work seems to be recorded neither in the *I-*

¹⁰⁷ See the T-TK (18b5–6): [T0339=P2245] *rGyal po seng ge'i gdan gyi nam par dag pa'i lam gyi dbang gi bya ba Pradznyā kir tis bsgyur* [bsgyur em., sgyur Ms] ba | . T0339 is found in section II, Chi(37), 172a5–181a1.

¹⁰⁸ The variant reading *dbang gi bya ba* instead of *dbang bskur ba'i rab tu bya ba* in the title is of no significance.

TK nor in the *BCh*. It is, however, recorded by the *R-KC*: [Rr27.117] under the title *dKyil chog rgyal sras ma* (whereas *rgyal sras* is obviously a reference to its author) with a translation ascription to Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags, and in the *Zh-TK*, followed by the *Ng-TK*, under the title *bDe mchog gi dkyil chog*, with a translation ascription to Grags 'byor shes rab.¹⁰⁹ The information regarding the translator team can be thus summarized as follows: *I-TK*(Ø), *BCh*(Ø); *R-KC*: Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags; *T-TK*: rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs med lha (Rājaputra *Abhayadeva), Prajñākīrti; *Zh-TK*, *Ng-TK*, *D-TK*, *DP*: rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs byed lha (Rājaputra *Bhīmadeva), Grags 'byor shes rab. To be also noted is that the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524; *BDRC*: P317), in his *Dus 'khor dkyil chog rnam bshad* in the context of discussing the empowerment articles/substances (*dbang rdzas*), also refers to the author as rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs byed lha.¹¹⁰

(2) D1544/P2252. The Lion-Throned King (**simhāsana*; previously reconstructed as **Simhamukha*/*Simhānana* based on the erroneous reading *gdong*) Viṣṇugupta's *dPal rdo rje phag mo sgrub pa'i thabs* (*Śrīvajravārahīsādhana*). Colo: *dpal rgya nag byang phyogs lam gyi rim pa | rje btsun rdo rje phag mo sgrub pa'i thabs byang chub sems dpa' rGyal po Seng ge'i gdan*¹¹¹ *can Khyab 'jug sbas*¹¹² *pas nges par sbyar ba rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal A wa dhū tī pa*¹¹³ *chen po | rGyal po'i sras*¹¹⁴ *'Jigs med lha'i zhal sngar shākya'i dge slong rje btsun Pradznya kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | |*. The title does not seem to be recorded in either the *R-KC* or the *I-TK*. It is, however, recorded in the *BCh* with no mention of the translator.¹¹⁵ The *T-TK* ascribes the translation to Prajñākīrti.¹¹⁶ Apart from the two variant readings in the *DP* colophons mentioned in the apparatus, the colophon of the *T*

¹⁰⁹ See the *Zh-TK* (433.6): *bDe mchog gi dkyil chog rGyal po'i sras dPal 'Jigs byed lha'i zhal snga nas mdzad pa | pañdi ta de nyid dang | lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur |*; *Ng-TK* (24.20–22). The *D-TK* (vol. 2: 358b3) has a record with a similar bibliographical information, following the colophon more closely though.

¹¹⁰ *Dus 'khor dkyil chog rnam bshad* (314.9–11): *grong khyer Sum pa ri'i rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs byed lha'i zhal snga nas bstan pa | rGyal po Seng ge'i gdan gyi rnam par dag pa'i lam gyi dbang bskur ba'i rab tu bya ba las | ...*

¹¹¹ *gdan*] *em.*, *gdong DP*. The reading *gdan* is supported by the *T* colophon, by the colophon of the work discussed in §2.D.1, and other sources, such as the *Zh-TK* (434.3) and the *Ng-TK* (25.6–8).

¹¹² *sbas*] *P*, *spangs D*. The reading *sbas* is supported by the sources mentioned in the previous footnote.

¹¹³ *pa*] *D*, *P om.*

¹¹⁴ *rgyal po'i sras*] *D*, *rgyal sras P*

¹¹⁵ See the *BCh*: [Bc2389] *Khyab 'jug sbas pas mdzad pa'i Phag mo lha bcu*^[1] *gsum ma'i sgrub thabs |*. [1] Note that Nishioka erroneously reads *gcu* instead of *bcu*.

¹¹⁶ See the *T-TK* (23a2–3): [T0458] *rDo rje phag mo'i bsgrub thabs byang chub sems dpa' rGyal po seng ge'i gdan Khyab 'jug sbas pas nges par sbyar pa Prad dznyā kir tī'i 'gyur |*. T0458 is found in section II, Nyi(39), 314a5–323b2.

version features a couple more variant readings, but they do not appear to be of much significance to our discussion.¹¹⁷ The *Zh-TK*, followed by the *Tg-TK*, names the translator Shes rab grags.¹¹⁸ The *D-TK*, whose record is similar to that of the *Zh-TK*, names the translator Prajñākīrti and attaches the syllable *zhabs* to the collaborating *paṇḍita*'s name.¹¹⁹ The reports regarding the translator team can be thus summarized as follows: *R-KC*(Ø), *U-TK*(Ø); *BCh*: Ø; *Zh-TK*, *Tg-TK*: Paṇḍita 'Jigs med lha (*Abhayadeva =? *Bhīmadeva), Shes rab grags; *TDP*: Mahāvadhūtipa rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs med lha (Rājabputra *Abhayadeva =? *Bhīmadeva), Prajñākīrti.

(3) ? D3703/P4527. Śaṅku's *mKha' lding grub pa'i bstan bcos* (*Siddhagaruḍāśāstra*). Colo: *dPal mkha' lding grub pa'i bstan bcos*¹²⁰ *bram ze Shang kus mdzad pa rdzogs so | | [...] rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal bram ze A ba dhū ti pa*¹²¹ *chen po dPe med kyi zhal sngar | lo tsā ba bande Pradnyā kīrtis bsgyur ba'o | | [...]*. The title does not seem to have been recorded in the early catalogues, including the *R-KC*(Ø), *U-TK*(Ø), *T-TK*(Ø), and *BCh*(Ø), the earliest record appearing to be the one in the *Zh-TK*, where the collaborating *paṇḍita* is merely named *Anupamakīrti (*dPe med grags*)—or perhaps better “one known as *Anupama (*dPe med*; the Matchless One)”, which seems to be supported by both the colophons and later bibliographical sources—and the Tibetan translator as Shes rab grags. A similar record is found in the *Ng-TK*.¹²² It appears that the record in the *Ne-TK* is the first to refer to the collaborating *paṇḍita* as the “Brahmin Mahāvadhūtipa *Anupama” (or, “the Matchless One”) and to the Tibetan translator as Prajñākīrti, in agreement with the colophons of the DP versions and the catalogue records in the *D-TK* and *5th-TK*.¹²³ Unfortunately, the work is not recorded in the *Gl-TK*_T either. The information can

¹¹⁷ The T colophon has some variants in the phrase referring to the collaborating *paṇḍita*, reading as follows (variants underlined): *rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal dang A ba 'dus ti pa chen po* | | rGyal po'i sras 'Jigs med lha'i zhal sngar. Whereas *dang* seems not to pose particular problems (though unusual), the ergative in *chen po* is clearly infelicitous.

¹¹⁸ See the *Zh-TK* (434.3): *dPal rdo rje phag mo'i sgrub thabs | rGyal po sengge'i gdan can | khyab 'jug sbas pas mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta 'Jigs med lha dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *Tg-TK* (25.6–8).

¹¹⁹ See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 359a2): *dPal rdo rje phag mo'i sgrub thabs byang chub sems dpa' rGyal po seng ge'i gdan can Khyab 'jug sbas pas mdzad pa | 'Jigs med lha'i zhabs dang | lo tsā ba rje btsun Pradnyā kīrti 'gyur |*.

¹²⁰ *bstan bcos* | D, om. P

¹²¹ pa | P, om. D

¹²² See the *Zh-TK* (563.5): *mKha' lding grub pa'i bstan bcos bram ze Shangkus mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta dPe med grags* (or: *dPe med grags*) *dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur...*; *Ng-TK* (120.9–11), which adds a gloss “this is incomplete” {*di ma tshang*}.

¹²³ See the *Ne-TK* (498.5–6): ... *rgya gar gyi mkhan po dpal bram ze A ba dhū ti pa chen po dPe med kyi zhal sngar lo tsā ba bande Pradnyā kīrti 'gyur |*; *5th-TK* (86a8–b1), *D-TK* (vol. 2: 426b6).

thus be summarized as follows: *R-KC(Ø)*, *I-TK(Ø)*, *T-TK(Ø)*, *BCh(Ø)*, *Gl-TK₁(Ø)*; *Zh-TK*, *Ng-TK*: *Anupama(kīrti), Shes rab grags; *Ne-TK*, *DP*: Brahmin Mahāvadhūtipa *Anupama, Prajñākīrti. I have not been able to locate any reference testifying to a collaboration (or any other connection) between a *paṇḍita* having this name/epithet with Pu rangs lo chung. While Kragh's suggestion that this Mahāvadhūtipa is the Mahāvadhūtipa from the colophon of D1544/P2252 (discussed in the previous entry)—in other words, our Prince *Bhīmadeva (/ *Abhayadeva / *Bhairavadeva)—cannot be entirely rejected, for lack of strong evidence it cannot be entirely endorsed either. The identity of this Prajñākīrti therefore remains uncertain, but the employment of the name Prajñākīrti generally hints at our Pu rangs lo chung rather than 'Bro Shes rab grags. Nor can an identification of the Brahmin Mahāvadhūtipa *Anupama with Maitrīpa be entirely rejected either. Such an identification would support an identification of our Prajñākīrti as 'Bro Shes rab grags, who certainly studied under Maitrīpa (see the following entry and §4). In that case the name Prajñākīrti in the colophons could be explained as a miscorrection by later editors of the Canon. Unless more evidence comes to light, this latter option seems less likely.

(4) D1180/P2310. Vajragarbha's *Kye'i rdo rje bsdus pa'i don gyi rgya cher 'grel pa* (*Hevajrapaṇḍārthaṭīkā*). The work was translated in two instalments. The first instalment consists of chapters 1–5, commenting on the respective chapters of the first *kalpa*, and is reported to have been revised three times. The second instalment consists of chapters 6–11, commenting on the corresponding chapters of the first *kalpa*, and chapters 1–12, commenting on the second *kalpa*. Accordingly, there are two translation colophons, one at the end of each of the two instalments.¹²⁴ As pointed out earlier, Kragh considers 'Bro Shes rab grags to have done one of the revisions (i.e., the second one) of the first instalment and the translation of the second instalment. Kragh, who considers this undertaking as “one of the most significant transmissions that ['Bro] Shes rab grags received in Nepal,” discusses it at length, including offering an English translation of the second colophon.¹²⁵ As I shall show in the following, however, whereas Kragh is correct regarding 'Bro Shes rab grags translating the second instalment, the second revision of the first instalment was done by Pu rangs lo chung in collaboration with Prince *Bhīmadeva.

Colo. I (1st *kalpa*, chaps. 1–5; D, 46a4–7; P, 52b5–53a3): *dPal kye'i rdo rje*¹²⁶ *bsdus pa'i don gyi*¹²⁷ *'grel pa rdzogs so | | rje btsun byang chub*

¹²⁴ Note that whereas P continues with chapter 6 right after the colophon, D inserts an editorial title: *rDo rje snying po'i 'grel pa bzhugs | |*.

¹²⁵ See Kragh 2010: 218–222.

¹²⁶ rje D, rje'i P

¹²⁷ gyi] D, gyis P

sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po **rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa'o** | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po **Dā na shī la dang** | lo tsā ba 'Bro Seng dkar Shākya 'od kyis bsgyur ba | slad kyis¹²⁸ rgya gar gyi mkhan po **Su bhū ti shrī shānti dang** | lo tsā ba **Cog gru Ting nge 'dzin bzang pos zhus so** | | yang slad kyis¹²⁹ rgya gar gyi mkhan po **rGyal po'i sras** | dPal 'Jigs¹³⁰ med lha'i zhal sngar lo tsā ba **sNyel**¹³¹ cor dge slong Pradnyā kīrtis Yul dBus 'gyur gyi dpes gtan la phab pa | slar yang dpal ldan **Shong ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan** gyis legs par bshad pa la sogs pa'i mthu las | brda sprod pa'i tshul rig pa'i **dPang lo tsā ba dpal ldan Blo gros brtan pas** | **Byang chub sems dpa'i 'grel pa skor**¹³² gsum gyi tshul la shin tu dad cing blo'i¹³³ snang ba rgyas pa'i dge ba'i bshes gnyen **Ra lung pa Chos grags dpal bzang pos** | slob dpon chen po **Zhi ba 'tsho'i zhabs dpon slob kyis mdzad pa'i** | dbu ma'i gzhung lugs chen po **De kho na nyid bsdus pa rtsa 'grel gyi glegs bam bris te yon du gnang nas yang dang yang du bskul ba'i ngor**¹³⁴ legs par bcos te bsgyur cing zhus nas gtan la¹³⁵ phab pa'i yi ge pa ni **mDzad ston Kun dga' rgyal mtshan zhes bya'o** | | | 'dis sems can mang po dpag tu med pa la phan par gyur cig | |.¹³⁶

The details regarding the translation and revisions provided in the DP colophons (1st kalpa, chaps. 1–5) can be summarized as follows: Tr: Dānaśīla, 'Bro Seng dkar Shākya 'od (11th cent.; BDRC: P2554); R1: Subhūtiśrīśānti, Cog gru Ting nge 'dzin bzang po (11th cent.; BDRC: P4CZ10524); R2: rGyal po'i sras dPal 'Jigs med lha (Rājaputra Śrī *Abhayadeva =? Bhīmadeva), sNyel cor Prajñākīrti; R3: dPang Blo

¹²⁸ kyis] P, kyi D

¹²⁹ kyis] P, kyi D

¹³⁰ 'Jigs] D, 'jig P

¹³¹ sNyel] em., sNyal D, sNyol P (the vowel *e* in D is missing, apparently due to damage in the block)

¹³² skor] D, bskor P

¹³³ blo'i] P, blo' D (the vowel *i* in D is missing, apparently due to damage in the block)

¹³⁴ ngor] P, dor D

¹³⁵ la] D, las P

¹³⁶ Note that the passage (underlined) reporting on the revision by dPang Blo gros brtan pa, including the dedication, is virtually identical with the passage reporting the revision of Nāropa's *rDo rje'i tshig gi snying po bsdud pa'i dka' 'grel* (Vajrapadaśārasaṃgrahaṇajikā). D1186/P2316. Colo: kha che'i pañdi ta chen po **Shākya shrī bzang po'i zhal snga nas** | bod kyi lo tsā ba **dPyal Chos kyi bzang pos dpal bkra shis gser sdings kyi gtsug lag khang du legs par zhus shing bsgyur te gtan la phab pa'o** | | | slar yang dpal ldan **Shong ston** [ston D, om. P] **rDo rje rgyal mtshan** gyi legs bshad la sogs pa'i mthu las | brda sprod pa'i tshul rig pa'i **dPang lo tsā ba dpal ldan Blo gros brtan pas byang chub sems dpa'i 'grel pa skor** [skor D, bskor P] gsum gyi tshul la shin tu dad cing blo'i snang ba rgyas pa'i dge ba'i bshes gnyen **Ra lung pa Chos grags dpal bzang pos** | slob dpon **Zhi ba'i tsho'i zhabs dpon slob kyis mdzad pa'i dbu ma'i gzhung lugs chen po De kho na nyid bsdus pa rtsa 'grel gyi glegs bam bris te yon du gnang nas** | yang yang du bskul ba'i ngor legs par bcos te bsgyur cing zhus nas gtan la phab pa'i yi ge pa ni **mDzad ston Kun dga' rgyal mtshan zhes bya'o** | | | 'dis sems can mang po dpag tu med pa la phan par gyur cig [doubled underlined passage] P, pa'o D] | |.

gros brtan pa (1276–1342; BDRC: P2085). Of some interest are perhaps the specific terms used for each of these undertakings. For the initial translation merely the verb “translated” (*bsgyur ba*) is used, for the first revision the term “proofread” (*zhus pa*), for the second one “finalized” (*gtan la phab pa*), and for the third one a longer phrase that includes several terms and reads “[it] was [re]translated after having been properly corrected, and finalized after having been proofread” (*legs par bcos te bsgyur cing zhus nas gtan la phab pa*). As already discussed on a previous occasion, the phrase *bcos te bsgyur* appears to hint at a (perhaps major) revision rather than an entirely new translation.¹³⁷ The terms and formulations employed give the impression that the revisions were not done independently of one another but rather that the second revision was based on the first, and the third on the second. To be also noted is that while the initial translation and the first two revisions were done in close succession to one another, the third revision was carried out about two decades later. The fact that the passage reporting on this (major?) revision by dPang Blo gros brtan pa (and on the dedication) is identical with the passage reporting the revision of Nāropa’s *rDo rje’i tshig gi snying po bsdud pa’i dka’ ’grel* (*Vajrapadasārasaṃgrahapañjikā*) is certainly of significance for our understanding of this colophon. One wonders whether the passage found in the colophon of D1180/P2310 was mechanically copied (by an editor?) from the colophon of D1186/P2316 (the other way around is also a possibility, but seems less likely), and whether the fact that D omits the sentence regarding the scribe and the dedication is an attempt to make the passage look authentic (and not a mere mechanical copying). Our main concern is, however, the identity of the team responsible for the second revision, Prince *Abhayadeva (=? Bhīmadeva) and sNyel cor Prajñākīrti, who are said to have finalized the translation with the help of a manuscript from Magadha,¹³⁸ an issue we shall return to below.

Colo II (1st *kalpa*, chaps. 6–11 & 2nd *kalpa*, chaps. 1–12; D, 126a5–7; P, 139b2–6): *rgya gar gyi mkhan po bla ma chen po Mai tri zhabs la | bod kyi lo tsā ba ‘Bro dge slong Shes rab grags pas mang du gsol ba btab nas | legs par mnyan¹³⁹ te bsgyur ba’o | | | Kye’i rdo rje’i bsdus pa’i rgyud kyi rgya cher bshad pa | Byang chub sems dpa’ rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa | rnyed par dka’ ba ‘di sngon De kho na nyid kyi le’u yan chad kyi ‘grel pa las ma ‘gyur ba las | slad kyi Bal po’i yul gyi grong khyer chen po rol pa zhes bya ba nas | ‘Bro dge slong lo tsā bas | pa*

¹³⁷ See Almogi 2020: 211.

¹³⁸ Note that Kragh understands Yul dBus ‘gyur as Madhyadeśa. Nonetheless, while Yul dbus is indeed Madhyadeśa (the “Middle Region”), dBus ‘gyur is the Tibetan rendering of Magadha.

¹³⁹ mnyan] D, bsnyen P

*ñdi ta Mai tri zhabs las*¹⁴⁰ *rnyed de | Bod yul du dpe spyan drangs nas | dge slong rNal 'byor spyod pa*¹⁴¹ *dBang phyug grags pas gsol ba btab ste bsgyur ba'o | | | rGya gar yul du dka' las cher mdzad | dge bshes*¹⁴² *lo tsā ba la | Yul dbus su byon nas | bdag gis gsol ba btab nas | dka' las bgyis te Byang chub sems dpa'i 'grel pa bsgyur | zhal ngo che nas nyid la brdzangs pa lags te dgyes par dgongs | | |*.¹⁴³

This colophon consists of three parts: (i) A mere translation colophon of the second instalment, stating that 'Bro Shes rab grags translated it, after having thoroughly studied (lit. "listened to") it under the great Indian master, the *upādhyāya* Maitrīpāda, from whom he had repeatedly requested the teachings.¹⁴⁴ (ii) A passage explaining why the translation of the work was done in two instalments. It states that a Sanskrit manuscript (of the entire work) was previously hard to obtain, so that at first only the portion up to the *Tattva* chapter was translated. Later on 'Bro Shes rab grags obtained it (i.e., a complete manuscript? one containing the missing portion?) in *Lalitapura/paṭṭana (i.e., today's Lalitpur/Pattan) from Maitrīpāda and brought it to Tibet, where he translated the second instalment upon the request of the fully ordained monk Yogin dBang phyug grags pa (whose identity remains unclear, but see below, §4.B.3). (iii) A passage that is found only in P (and equivalents), one presenting itself as having been authored by the petitioner dBang phyug grags pa himself. Since my understanding of this third passage somewhat differs from Kragh's, I offer here a translation: "The *kalyāṇamitra*-translator (i.e., 'Bro Shes rab grags), who underwent great hardship in the Land of India, upon my (i.e., dBang phyug grags pa) request to him after

¹⁴⁰ las] D, la P

¹⁴¹ pa] D, pa dang P

¹⁴² bshes] *em.*, shes P

¹⁴³ underlined text] P, *om.* D

¹⁴⁴ Kragh, while translating the phrase *gsol ba btab pa* as "to make a request," in the context of discussing the plausibility of 'Bro Shes rab grags meeting Maitrīpāda in Nepal, also offers the alternative translation "to pray," which would mean that 'Bro Shes rab grags "only prayed to Maitrīpāda, without meeting him in person." This translation-cum-interpretation seems, however, unlikely in my view. To be remarked is that, as noted by Kragh, there seems to be no other mention in the literature of Maitrīpāda having ever visited Patan. See Kragh 2010: 220, 221 nn. 70, 71. According to Iain Sinclair (email communication, April 8, 2022), it is plausible that Maitrīpāda stayed in the Mānavihāra in Patan, probably in the 1040s–1050s (there appears to be some unpublished material that might corroborate this). Nonetheless, the Mānavihāra being a Nepalese royal monastery, he must have stayed there as a guest rather than as a resident, and his stay might have possibly been financed by giving teaching to disciples such as 'Bro Shes rab grags. Moreover, although the Mānavihāra was not founded as a Tantric monastery, there is evidence that by the second half of the eleventh century, it adopted some Tantric praxis (Sinclair 2016: 223–224). I thank Iain Sinclair for sharing with me his thoughts in this regard and also the passage from his unpublished PhD thesis that concerns the Mānadevavihāra.

his return to Central Tibet translated, with great effort, Bodhisattva's (i.e., Vajragarbha's) commentary. The esteemed one (*zhal ngo che*,¹⁴⁵ i.e., 'Bro Shes rab grags), having sent [me the translation], was well disposed towards me."¹⁴⁶ The details regarding the translation and revisions provided in these DP colophons (1st *kalpa*, chaps. 6–11 & 2nd *kalpa*, chaps. 1–12) can be summarized as follows: Tr: 'Bro Shes rab grags pa (in Tibet) after receiving the teaching from Maitrīpāda (in Nepal); Petitioner: dBang phyug grags pa.

Of great interest is the T version, recorded in the T-TK with a translation ascription of the first instalment to Shākya brtson 'grus (11th cent.; BDRC: P4243), and the remaining portion to Shes rab grags.¹⁴⁷ This accords with the respective colophons, which are much shorter than their DP counterparts. Colo I (1st *kalpa*, chaps. 1–5; 233a2): **rGyang gtsug lag khang gi khang mar sngags kyi chos grwar**¹⁴⁸ | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po rGyal ba mchog gi zhal snga dang* | *bod kyi lo tsha ba dge slong Shag kya brtson 'grus kyi bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa* | | |. According to this colophon, Shākya brtson 'grus translated the first instalment in collaboration with the Indian master *Jinavara (with whom he is known to have collaborated on the translation of two other works found in the mainstream canonical editions¹⁴⁹). The team Shākya brtson 'grus and *Jinavara are not men-

¹⁴⁵ My translation of *zhal ngo che* as “the esteemed one” is tentative and is based on the meaning of *zhal ngo* as referring to a “head/ chief” of some sort. Another option would be perhaps to understand it as “he himself” (i.e., “this great [master] himself, having sent...”). At any rate, the subject of the sentence in question appears to be 'Bro Shes rab grags and not dBang phyug grags pa, as understood by Kragh (see also the following note).

¹⁴⁶ For Kragh's translation, see Kragh 2010: 221 n. 69: “When I had requested the Kalyāṇamitra Lotsā ba, who had accomplished difficult things in the land of India and who had come to Central [Tibet] (*yl dbus*, or is the Indian Madhyadeśa meant?), [the Lotsā ba] did what is difficult to do and translated [this] commentary by the bodhisattva [Vajragarbha]. Letting go of my bashfulness, I think [of it] with joy.” Note that Kragh erroneously reads *zhal ngo tsha nas nyid brdzangs pa lags te* instead of *zhal ngo che nas nyid la brdzangs pa lags te*, resulting in his translation “Letting go of my bashfulness....” Moreover, his translation of the phrase *dgyes par dgongs* as “I think [of it] with joy” is problematic since using the honorific (*dgongs*) in the first person is highly unlikely. Although rather insignificant for our discussion, it might be added that Kragh's suggested intended pun in this last phrase—*dgyes* also being a part of the Tibetan name for Hevajra, *dgyes pa rdo rje*, and hence the last phrase could also be translated as “I intend it for He[vajra]”—seems somewhat farfetched.

¹⁴⁷ See the T-TK (24b2–3): [T0502] *dPal kye'i rdo rje nges pa'i don gyi rgya cher bshad pa* | **Byang chub sems dpa' rDo rje rnying pos mdzad pa le'u lnga pa yan chad Shakya brtson 'grus kyi 'gyur** | *gzhan rnams Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |. T0502 is found in section II, Ti(40), 171a!–342b6.

¹⁴⁸ grwar | *em.*, drar Ms

¹⁴⁹ Shākya brtson 'grus also collaborated with *Jinavara on the translation of Bhavyakīrti's *Rim pa lnga pa'i dka' 'grel* (*Pañcakramapañjikā*; D1838/P2696) and

tioned in the DP colophons. A comparison of the translation with that transmitted in DP shows that these are indeed two different translations. However, since the DP translation of this portion has undergone three revisions (the extent of which is unclear) it is hard to tell how different the initial translation by 'Bro Seng dkar Shākya 'od in collaboration with Dānaśīla was from that of Shākya brtson 'grus in collaboration with *Jinavara. The place of translation is specified as the Tantric Religious Seminary of Khang mar of the rGyang temple. I was unable to identify the exact location of this seminary, but one wonders whether this is the same Khang dmar near which Pu rangs lo chung is said to have died (see above, n. 20), and if so, whether there is any connection between Shākya 'od's translation and Pu rangs lo chung's revision of this text. Colo II (1st *kalpa*, chaps. 6–11 & 2nd *kalpa*, chaps. 1–12; 342b5–6): *Kye'i rdo rje'i nges pa'i don kyī rgya cher bshad pa* | *sa bcu'i dbang phyug chen po Byang chub sems dpa' rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa* | *rdzogs so* | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po bla ma chen po Me tri pa'i zhabs la bod kyī lo tsha ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis mang du gsol nas* | *legs par mnyan te bsgyur ba'o* | |. This colophon of the second instalment is a combination of the first sentence of the second part of the corresponding DP colophons (naming the work's title and the author) and the "basic" translation colophon that constitutes the first part of the DP colophons, ascribing the translation to 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Maitrīpāda. A brief comparison of the translation of this portion with that transmitted in DP confirms that these are indeed identical. However, it appears that the DP colophons of the second instalment have been reworked and enlarged (particularly that of the larger TG editions, here represented by P). Moreover, as we have seen earlier, the DP colophons of the first instalment also appear to have been subjected to editorial scrutiny, which mainly concerned the report regarding the revisions (particularly that of R3).

Now let us turn to the pertinent records found in the various catalogues. The R-KC appear to have three records in total: (i) a translation of the first instalment (*stod*) ascribed to 'Bro (there 'Brom) Seng dkar Shākya 'od, which corresponds with the DP colophons of the first instalment; (ii) a translation (with no notation of a specific instalment) ascribed to rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, which has no correspondence in either the DP or the T colophons; and (iii) a translation (with no notation of a specific instalment) ascribed to 'Bro Shes rab grags, which corresponds with the DP and the T colophons of the

*Bhāviveka's *sGron ma gsal bar byed pa'i dka' ba btus pa'i 'grel pa* (*Pratīpoddyotanav-iṣamapadapañjikā*; D1792/P2657).

second instalment.¹⁵⁰ The *U-TK* identifies the translator simply as Shes rab grags and with no reference to a specific instalment.¹⁵¹ The *BCh* names the translator as 'Bro.¹⁵² The record in the *Zh-TK* basically offers a summary of the two colophons as reflected in the DP versions.¹⁵³ In fact, considering the records in the *U-TK* and the *BCh*, and the T colophons as well, it appears that Bu ston was the first to formulate these detailed DP colophons. The references to the translator as Shes rab grags or as 'Bro must be based on the second colophon alone, which probably was originally formulated as in the T version. This formulation gives the impression that it refers to the entire work, which is likely why Bu ston saw a reformulation necessary. He was obviously also the one to formulate the colophon of the first instalment (though the origin of the third part of the colophon found only in the larger TG editions remains unclear). To be also noted is that the *Gl-TK_T* names the translator as 'Brog, but this might be an error for 'Bro.¹⁵⁴

Interestingly, the *Ng-TG* edition contained, as attested by its catalogue, the first instalment twice: It was written once in gold in a cluster of altogether six works (stretched over four volumes)—including the *Laghukālacakratantra* (D362/P4), *Hevajratantra* (D417/P10), the first chapter of the *Laghusaṃvaratantra* (i.e., *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*; D368/P16; translated by Shong lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa and revised by Blo gros rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po¹⁵⁵), and what is known as the “three Bodhisattva commentaries.”¹⁵⁶ The bibliographical details regarding the translation provided here by the *Ng-TK* are identical with those provided by the *Zh-TK* for the first instalment, and

¹⁵⁰ See the *R-KC*: [Rr25.100] **rDo rje snying po'i dGes rdor stod 'grel dang | |**; *ibid.* [Rr27.64] **dGes rdor 'grel pa rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa dang | |**; *ibid.* [Rr28.40] **rDo rje snying po'i dGes rdor 'grel pa dang | |**.

¹⁵¹ See the *U-TK* (A, 10a3–4; B, 6b6 = U_{js}109): **rNal 'byor ma'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal kye'i rdo rje'i 'grel pa rDo rje snying pos** ^[Badzra garbha] **mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |**.

¹⁵² See the *BCh*: [Bc2250] **rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa** ^{(i Kye'i rdo rje'i rgyud kyi 'grel pa |} **'Bro 'gyur |**.

¹⁵³ See the *Zh-TK* (438.3–4): **Kye rdo rje'i 'grel pa Byang chub sems dpa' rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa'i le'u lnga pa yan chad | paṅḍi ta Dā na shī la dang | lo tsā ba 'Bro Seng dkar Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur la | paṅḍi ta Su bhū ti shrī shānti dang | lo tsā ba Cog gru Ting nge 'dzin bzang pos zhus te gtan la phab pa las | slad kyi paṅḍi ta 'Jigs med lha dang | lo tsā ba sNyel cor Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur la | dPang Blo gros brtan pas bcos pa dang | le'u drug pa man chad 'Bro'i 'gyur |**. The *D-TK* (vol. 2: 341b1–5) has a longer entry, reproducing the two colophons nearly verbatim.

¹⁵⁴ See the *Gl-TK_T* (242.3–5): **brTag gnyis kyi 'grel pa Byang chub sems dpa' rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa yongs su rdzogs pa 'Brog gi 'gyur |**.

¹⁵⁵ Note that the canonical version is asserted to have been translated by Rin chen bzang po in collaboration with Padmākara and revised by the Tibetan translators Prajñākīrti and Mar do Chos kyi dbang phyug (on which, see below).

¹⁵⁶ For a brief note on the “three Bodhisattva commentaries,” along with further references, see Almogi 2021: 41 n. 42.

thus apparently only this part was included.¹⁵⁷ It was written down a second time together with the second instalment (obviously in a plain style) for the sake of completeness, as explicitly stated in the catalogue (lit. “in order to have [it from] top (‘head’) [to] bottom (‘foot’) in one place”). The bibliographical details provided here are rather brief, merely mentioning that the first instalment was revised by dPang Blo gros brtan pa and the second one translated by ‘Bro.¹⁵⁸

The information regarding the translators and revisers provided above can be summarized as follows: R-KC: (i) ‘Bro Seng dkar Shākya ‘od, first instalment, (ii) rNgog Blo ldan shes rab, (iii) ‘Bro Shes rab grags; U-TK: Shes rab grags; BCh: ‘Bro; T-TK: Shākya brtson ‘grus, first instalment & (‘Bro) Shes rab grags (pa), second instalment; Gl-TK_r: ‘Brog (=‘Bro); Zh-TK, DP: ‘Bro Seng dkar Shākya ‘od, R1: Cog gru Ting nge ‘dzin bzang po, R2: sNyel cor Prajñākīrti, R3: dPang Blo gros brtan pa, first instalment & ‘Bro Shes rab grags pa, second instalment. What concerns us here most is the identity of sNyel cor Prajñākīrti, who, it is stated, did the second revision of the first instalment in collaboration with Prince *Abhayadeva (=‘ Bhīmadeva), whom we have already encountered as a teacher of Pu rangs lo chung and collaborator with him on several translations. Kragh identifies him as ‘Bro Shes rab grags (ignoring the attribute sNyel cor), again merely based on the assumption that Prajñākīrti is the Sanskritized name of ‘Bro Shes rab grags, an assumption that, as we have already seen, is entirely unfounded. I suggested above that Prince ‘Jigs med lha is most probably none other than Prince Bhīmadeva (‘Jigs med being a corruption for ‘Jigs byed). This collaboration with the Prince (whether his name is Abhayadeva, Bhairavadeva, or Bhīmadeva) clearly supports an identification of sNyel cor Prajñākīrti as Pu rangs lo chung, but the attribute sNyel cor needs nonetheless to be addressed, if only briefly. A translator called sNyel cor Shes rab grags is, to the best of my knowledge, mentioned only in this colophon, and nearly all occurrences of the name in the Tibetan literature appear to be in this very same context (apparently relying, directly or indirectly, on the colophon or the pertinent catalogue records). I was

¹⁵⁷ See the Ng-TK (13.12–14.4): Ka Kha Ga Nga bzhi la [...] *Kye’i rdo rje’i ‘grel pa Byang chub sems dpa’ rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa’i le’u lnga pa yan chad paṅḍi ta Dā na shī la* [dang] lo tsā ba ‘Bro Seng dkar Shākya ‘od kyi ‘gyur la | paṅḍi ta Su bhū ti shrī shānti dang lo tsā ba Cog gru Ting nge ‘dzin bzang pos zhus te gtan la phab pa las | slad kyi paṅḍi ta ‘Jigs med lha dang | lo tsā ba sNyel cor Shes rab grags kyi ‘gyur la | dPang Blo gros brtan pas bcos pas dang | ... rnam sger las bzheng pa bzhugs so | |.

¹⁵⁸ See the Ng-TK (28.9–13): *Kye rdo rje’i ‘grel pa Byang chub sems dpa’ rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa’i le’u lnga pa yan chad ‘gyur rnying la dPang Blo gros brtan pas bcos pa dang | le’u drug pa man chad ‘Bro’i ‘gyur | le’u lnga pa yan chad kyi ‘grel pa ‘di gong du rin po che gser las bzhengs pa yod na’ang ‘grel pa dbu zhabs tshang ba phyogs gcig tu sdeb pa’i phyir ‘di yang bris so | |.*

not able to determine the exact reference of the attribute sNyel cor, and it is unclear whether it refers to a clan or a place name. To be noted is that various spellings of this attribute are found in the literature, including mainly *mnyel*, *gnyel*, or *bsnyel* for the first syllable, and *tsor*, *tser*, or *'or* for the second one. There is only one more translator who has this attribute attached to his name, namely, mNyel cor dge slong dByig gi rin chen, but he is rather unknown and is mentioned in the canonical colophons only once as a reviser, so that unfortunately this does not help us any further with our investigation.¹⁵⁹

My impression is that the identity of sNyel cor Shes rab grags has been a cause for confusion within the tradition as well. He has been (implicitly) identified by several authors as Pu rangs lo chung, but several sources (again only implicitly) give the impression that this is not the case. One of the sources that undoubtedly supports an identification of him as Pu rangs lo chung is the *Blo gsal mig thur*, which is a text consisting of a collation and edition made by A mes zhabs of notes written by Chos rje dPal gyi rgyal mtshan (= ? 'U yug dpal, 13th cent; BDRC: P3940), which represent a supplement to the *rGyud sde spyi'i rnam gzhag* (genre?) primarily focusing on the *Hevajratantra*. The passage in question deals with the controversy surrounding the authorship of the *rDo rje snying 'grel*, which is not really our concern, but I shall nonetheless cite it here in full for the sake of completeness:¹⁶⁰

*dang po la Byang chub sems dpa'i rDo rje snying po'i 'grel pa
sogs bcu gnyis tsam byung ba las | rDo rje snying 'grel la | sTod
'grel dang | sMad 'grel gnyis su grags pa las | dang po ni le'u lnga
pa yan te rDo rje snying pos mdzad pa yin no | | gnyis pa ni le'u
drug pa man chad kyi 'grel pa'o | | dang po ni | Dus 'khor rGyal
bas gsungs pa'i bka' ma yin zhing | Sems 'grel skor gsum Byang
sems kyis byas pa min zer ba ma gtogs gzhan phal che bas tshad mar
khas len no | | gnyis pa ni | snga rabs pa rnam na re | gang phyir
bcu drug cha med pas | | 'bad pas kun gyi lhag ma spangs | | zhes pa'i
bshad pa Dus 'khor dang mi mthun pa'i phyir | rDo rje snying pos
byas pa min zer ba ni don la gnas te | sMad 'grel mdzad mkhan de
nyid rDo rje snying po dang mtshan gcig pa yin nam | gang ltar
yang rtsa rgyud gzigs pa'i pañdi ta gcig yin gyis | sTod 'grel mdzad
mkhan dang mi gcig ste | de dang grub mtha' mi mthun pa du ma*

¹⁵⁹ See the colophon to Vāgbhāṭa's *Yan lag brgyad pa'i snying po zhes bya ba'i sman dpyad kyī bshad pa* (*Aṣṭāṅghṛdayabhāṣya*; D4311/P5799), according to which the work was translated by Shākya blo gros in collaboration with Dharmasrīvarman, and revised-cum-finalized (*tshad la phab pa*; lit. "brought to the standard") by Shākya blo gros, Mar lo dge slong Rig pa gzhon nu, and mNyel/sNyel cor dge slong dByig gi rin chen.

¹⁶⁰ *Blo gsal mig thur* (3.4–5.4).

snang zhing | **sTod 'grel** du rtsa rgyud 'bum phrag lnga pa'i don de nyid le'u lnga pa yan chad du bsdus nas 'chad ces dam bcas kyis | le'u drug pa man chad kyi 'grel pa byed ces ma gsungs pa'i phyir ro | | de la **sTod 'grel** la | **Pu hrang lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab dang** | **sMad 'grel** la '**Bro dge slong Shes rab grags** kyi 'gyur yod do | | **sTod 'grel** gyi bshad srol rje btsun gong ma rnams la **Pu hrang lo chung** nas brgyud pa yin zhing | **Dus 'khor** gyi bshad srol yang de nas brgyud pa yin te | rje **Sa chen gyis Pu hrang lo chung dang** | des **mDzod kyi 'grel bshad mdzad mkhan slob dpon rGyal po'i**¹⁶¹ **sras dang** | des **Dus zhabs pa chung ba** la gsan pa yin no | |

With regard to the first point (i.e., “[works concerning] the ‘content-aspect’ (*arthāṃśa*) of the *Hevajra[tantra]*”; *kyai rdo rje'i tshig don gyi cha rnams*), approximately twelve [works], such as Bodhisattva Vajragarbha's commentary (i.e. the *rDo rje snying 'grel*), arose. Of these, the *rDo rje snying 'grel* is known to [have two parts], the *sTod 'grel* (“commentary on the upper part”) and the *sMad 'grel* (“commentary on the lower part”). Of these, the first is up to chapter five, and is composed by Vajragarbha. The second is the commentary from chapter six onwards. Regarding the first, except that [some] allege that the *Kālacakra[tantra]* is not the Word spoken by the Victorious One and the “three Bodhisattva commentaries” were not composed by [the three] Bodhisattvas, most other [scholars] accept [it] as authoritative. Regarding the second one, scholars of the past objected as follows: “The claim that [it] was not composed by Vajragarbha is correct because the explanation of [the verse] ‘because there is no sixteenth phase, the one that is left over (i.e., the sixteenth) should be diligently abandoned’¹⁶² is not in agreement with the *Kālacakra[tantra]*. The author of the *sMad 'grel* is either a namesake of [Bodhisattva] Vajragarbha or [he] must have at any rate been a *paṇḍita* who had access to the *mūlatantra* (i.e., the 500,000-verse-long Urtantra of the *Hevajratantra*), but [he] is not the same person who composed the *sTod 'grel*, for many [elements in it] do not conform to the [*sTod 'grel*'s] philosophical position. Moreover, while it is pledged in the *sTod 'grel* that the 500,000-[verse]-long *mūlatantra* will be expounded by condensing its meaning/content into five chapters, it does not state that it will be commented upon in chapter six onwards.” In this regard, for the *sTod 'grel* there is a translation by Pu hrang lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab, and for the *sMad 'grel* one by 'Bro

¹⁶¹ po'i] *em.*, pos Print

¹⁶² See *Hevajratantra* II.iv.25cd: *sarvaśeṣāṃ tyajed yatnāt ṣoḍaśī na kalā yataḥ* | |; Snellgrove 1959, Part 1: 104 (annotated English translation), Part 2: 64 (Sanskrit), 65 (Tibetan); Tib.: D, 20a7; P, 251a3.

dge slong Shes rab grags. The expositional transmission of the *sTod 'grel* was passed on to the [Sa skya] patriarchs by Pu hrang lo chung, and the expositional tradition of the *Kālacakra[tantra]* was also passed on [to them] through him. The lord Sa chen Kun dga' snying po studied [it] under Pu hrang lo chung, the latter under the master Prince, the author of the commentary on the [*Abhidharma*]kośa(!), and the latter under Kālacakrapāda the Younger.

Of particular interest is the lineage of this teaching provided in the last passage. The identification of the prince in question as the author of an *Abhidharmakośa* commentary is based on a clearly erroneous confusion with Yaśomitra, who is likewise referred to as a “prince,” and who indeed composed the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkā* (*Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel bshad*; D4092/P5593). The prince meant here is no doubt Prince Bhīmadeva. Of further interest is the statement that the prince studied the teachings under Kālacakrapāda the Younger. The identity of this Kālacakrapāda the Younger is unclear, for, as pointed out earlier, several sources seem to indicate the existence of more than one master with this epithet. One nonetheless wonders whether there is some connection between the Kashmiri Bodhibhadra, under whom both Mar pa do ba and Pu rangs lo chung are reported in the *Blue Annals* to have studied, and the Bodhibhadra who according to Tāranātha is Nālandāpāda, the son of Kālacakrapāda the Younger. As we have just seen, however, the historicity and/or accuracy of these reports are at times doubtful, so that a thorough study of all relevant sources would be needed before a conclusion could be arrived at.

Yet another source that implicitly identifies sNyel cor Shes rab grags with Pu rangs lo chung is Tāranātha's *History of Buddhism in India*, where sNyel tsor [= cor] Shes rab grags is mentioned as the translator of the *Vinayakārikā*.¹⁶³ The identity of its translator has been discussed above and was securely concluded to be Pu rangs lo chung. However, as has already been noted by van der Kuijp, Rong ston Shes bya kun rig's commentary on the *Vinayakārikā*, when discussing the identity of its translators toward the end of it, states the following:¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ See the *rGya gar chos 'byung* (143.4–7): 'phags pa **Sa ga lha yang 'di dus byung bar mngon tel** **Me tog phreng brgyud lo tsā ba sNyel tsor** [= cor] **Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba na** | 'phags pa **dGe 'dun 'bangs kyi slob ma 'phags pa Sa ga lhas mdzad pa zhes 'byung bas so** | |. For an English translation, see Chimpa & Chattopadhyaya 1970: 197.

¹⁶⁴ See the *Me tog phreng rgyud kyi rnam 'grel* (749.9–15). Cf. the translation (only of the verses) in van der Kuijp 2013: 188:

“By which translators and paṇḍitas the text was translated:
I translated the text after I was petitioned,

lo paṅ gang gis bsgyur ba ni |
'phaḡs pa'i pho brang byang phyogs su | |
IHa rgyal bla ma Zhi ba 'od | |
dam chos skyong mdzad sku ring¹⁶⁵ la | |
Chos dbyings gtsug lag khang chen du | |
mkhas pa Dza yā a ka ra | |
snyegs tshul Pra dznyā kīrti yis | |
gsol ba btab nas dag bdag gis bsgyur | |
dges des thub bstan rgyas par shog | |

By the scholar Jayākara and Snyegs tshul Prajñākīrti.
 In the great Chos dbyings [Dharmadhātu] temple,
 During the lifetime of the divine king, Bla ma Zhi ba 'od,
 The pretector (sic) of the holy religion,
 In the citadel of the Noble Avalokiteśvara, in the northern region,
 May the Sage's Teaching spread by the virtue engendered through this work."
 In regard to his translation, van der Kuijp comments the following:
 "Obviously, there is something awry here. We probably have to read *sku ring la*
 instead of *sku drin la* and I have translated this line accordingly. The notion that
 Jayākara and Snyegs Prajñākīrti had requested this translation is contradicted by
 all the entires (sic) of this translation in the early catalogs and the identity of 'me'
 rests quite obscure. In short, I am not in the position to suggest a solution to this
 problem. The verse is then followed by a statement in prose to the effect that the
 text was first translated by the Indian Mūlasarvāstivādin monk-*paṅḡita* Jayākara-
 gupta and Lo tsā ba Bsnyel 'or Prajñākīrti — note the variant clan affiliation of
 the Prajñākīrti in the verse! Then, the Nepalese *paṅḡita* Jayākara and the Tibetan
 translator Prajñākīrti subsequently revised the earlier translation. The colophon
 of the Sde dge print suggested that Rong ston and Vanaratna later revised the re-
 vised translation." The passage, particularly the versified part, is indeed prob-
 lematic in various ways. As suggested in my translation, I understand *bdag* ("I")
 to be referring to Rong ston, who apparently claims to have actually translated
 the text anew rather than having only revised it, as suggested by the canonical
 colophons. (A careful comparison of the basic text imbedded in the commentary
 and the existing canonical versions might shed light on this matter, but this un-
 dertaking clearly goes beyond the scope of the present paper.) This understand-
 ing is not only logical in terms of the wording, but it is also supported by the
 dedication of merit in the following line (unless of course one understands the
 verse to be a citation—as implied by van der Kuijp's translation—but there is no
 linguistic evidence for this). We would have indeed liked to have the verb *bsgyur*
 in connection with Prajñākīrti as well, but the text merely has the ergative *yis*.
 This, however, could be interpreted as an elliptical answer to the introductory
 question *lo paṅ gang gis bsgyur ba* ("by which translator and *paṅḡita* [the *Vina-*
yakārikā] was translated"), namely, "by Prajñākīrti in collaboration with Jayāka-
 ra" (this formulation might have been opted for for metrical reasons). Another
 major difference in my translation is that I do not understand *snyegs tshul* to be
 Prajñākīrt's clan name—the clan (or place) name, as pointed out by van der
 Kuijp, being given in the following prose passage as *bsNyel 'or*—but rather as
 "following," and thus I see no discrepancy in the attribute referring to the clan or
 place name. I also take the introductory question to be prose (which is also sup-
 ported by the version I used, and other versions that have been silently consulted
 for that matter, all of which have a single *shad* at the end of this phrase), but this
 has no real impact on the translation.

¹⁶⁵ ring] *em.*, *drin* Text

rgya gar gyi mkhan po 'phags pa gzhi thams cad yod par smra ba'i
 dge slong paṇḍi ta **Dza yā a ka ra gupa ta'i** zhal snga nas dang |
 sgra sgyur gyi lo tsā ba **bsNyel 'or Pra dznyā kīrtis** bsgyur | slar
 yang bal po'i paṇḍi ta **Dza yā a ka ra dang** | bod kyi lo tsā ba dge
 slong **Pra dznyā kīrtis** bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o | | |

As regards [the question of] which translator and *paṇḍita* [the *Vinayakārikā*] was translated by:

[It was translated] by Prajñākīrti, following
 The learned Jayākara (i.e., in collaboration with him)
 In the great Chos dbyings temple
 In the northern palace (i.e., Tibet) of the Noble One (i.e.,
 Avalokiteśvara)
 During the time of lHa rgyal bla ma Zhi ba 'od,
 The protector of the Sublime Doctrine.
 Having been requested, I (i.e., Rong ston) translated [it
 again].

May the Sage's Teaching spread by the virtue [brought
 about by my translation].

The Indian *upādhyāya paṇḍita* Jayākaragupta, [who is] a *bhikṣu*
 of the Ārya-Mūlasarvāstivāda, and the "ad verbum translator"¹⁶⁶
 bsNyel 'or Prajñākīrti translated [the work]. In addition, [it]
 was translated, proofread, and finalized by the Nepalese
paṇḍita Jayākara and the Tibetan translator, the fully ordained
 monk Prajñākīrti.

Leaving aside the question whether Rong ston actually translated the text anew or merely revised it, what is remarkable in this passage is that, whereas in the verse the translators are named as Prajñākīrti in collaboration with Jayākara, in the prose Rong ston records two translations, namely, one by the Indian Jayākaragupta and bsNyel 'or Prajñākīrti and a second by the Nepalese Jayākara and Prajñākīrti. This seems very unlikely for two main reasons: firstly, no other source records such two translations, and secondly, it is hard to believe that the members of the two teams had nearly identical names. It is in my view an attempt on the part of Rong ston to deal with the attribute bsNyel 'or (= cor) attached to the name Prajñākīrti in some of the sources, which he then so interprets as implying that there were two Tibetan translators called Prajñākīrti who were responsible for two different translations.

The impression that sNyel cor Prajñākīrti and Pu rangs lo chung are two different persons is given (implicitly) by several sources. One of them is the *Blue Annals*, which in one and the same passage list Pu

¹⁶⁶ On the term "ad verbum translator," see Almogi 2020: 50.

hrangs lo chung as one of the translators of the *dBang mdor bstan pa* (*Sekoddeśa*)¹⁶⁷ and gNyel cor Shes rab grags as one of the translators of the *rDo rje snying po'i 'grel pa*,¹⁶⁸ which may simply be a result of mechanically reproducing the names provided in the respective catalogue records. This passage in the *Blue Annals* might have been the source for several similar passages found in the literature. One such passage is found in sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's (1653–1705; BDRC: P421) *Baidūrya g.ya' sel*.¹⁶⁹ Another one is found in the recent history of the Kālacakra by Na lendra'i mkhan po Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan (1933–2002; BDRC: P6677).¹⁷⁰ One more instance that should be mentioned here is a passage by Tāranātha, in which he combines the attributes gNyel tser (= sNyel cor) and 'Bro, resulting in the name 'Bro lo tsā ba gNyel tser Shes rab grags, whereas further down in the list he mentions Pu rangs lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab. This seems, however, to be based on an error, for as we have seen, elsewhere Tāranātha names sNyel cor Shes rab grags as the translator of the *Vinayakārikā*, who is undoubtedly to be identified as Pu rangs lo chung. Moreover, as far as I can see, this is the only occasion where a combination of these two attributes is found.¹⁷¹ To sum up, despite some remaining ambiguity and some conflicting records and confusion found in Tibetan sources, it appears that there is sufficient evidence to support the assumption that sNyel cor Prajñākīrti is Pu rangs lo chung, at least so long as no new evidence proving otherwise comes to light.

¹⁶⁷ Pu rangs lo chung's translation of the *Sekoddeśa* (*dBang mdor bstan pa*), called by him *dBang nyer bstan*, has not been transmitted in the mainstream *bKa' 'gyur* editions (cf. D361/P3), and seems not to have survived. It is, however, recorded in various sources. For more details, see below §2.1.1.

¹⁶⁸ See the *Deb sngon* (978.18–979.4): *dBang mdor bstan la* 'Bro | Rwa | Man lung pa | sGra tshad pa Rin rgyal | dPang lo tsā ba | Yar klungs lo tsā ba *rnams kyi 'gyur yod cing* | Pu hrangs lo chung *gis bsgyur ba la mtshan dBang nyer bstan zer ro* | | *rDo rje snying po'i 'grel pa ni Cog gru ting 'dzin bzang po* | gNyel cor Shes rab grags | Khyung po chos brtson | Yar klungs lo tsā ba | dPang Blo gros brtan pa *rnams kyi bsgyur ro* | |. For an English translation, see Roerich 1949: 838.

¹⁶⁹ For this passage from the *Baidūrya g.ya' sel*, see below, note 213.

¹⁷⁰ See the *Dus 'khor lo rgyus* (67.21–24): *dBang mdor bstan la* 'Bro | Rā | Man lung pa | Lo grags pa | dPang lo | sGra tshad pa Rin rgyal *rnams kyi 'gyur* | Pu hrang lo chung *gis bsgyur ba la mtshan dBang nyer* [nyer em., mdor Text] *bstan zhes zer* | *rDo rje snying 'grel ni* | Cog gru Ting 'dzin bzang po | gNyer cor Shes rab grags | Khyung po Chos brtson | Lo grags pa | dPang *rnams kyi bsgyur to* | |.

¹⁷¹ See the *Dus 'khor bskyed rim rnam bshad* (13.18–14.4): *de nas rMa dGe ba'i blo gros* | 'Bro lo tsā ba gNyel tser Shes rab grags | gNyan lo tsā ba Dar ma grags | Mang 'or Byang chub shes rab | 'A zha rGya gar brtsegs | Rwa lo tsā ba Chos rab | sTeng pa lo tsā [ba] Ga rong Tshul khriims 'byung gnas | Pu rang lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab | *grags pa'i ming gi mtha' can bzhi ni* | Tsa mi Sangs rgyas grags | sPong zho gSal ba grags | Kher rgang 'Khor lo grags | lDing ri chos grags so | |.

**(E) Translations in Collaboration
with Vajrapāṇi aka The Indian Pāṇi**

Kragh lists one work he believes to have been translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags pa in collaboration with Vajrapāṇi—known in Tibet as The Indian Pāṇi—which I would likewise suggest is a translation by Pu rangs lo chung.

(1) D2139/P4838. Jālaṃdhara's *dPal thugs rje chen po'i dbang bskur ba'i man ngag rab tu byed pa* (*Śrīmahākāruṇikābhīṣekaprakaraṇopadeśa). Colo: *sPyan ras gzigs kyi rgyud padma zab pa dang | padma rgyal po'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur pa'i rab tu byed pa 'di | dpal Dzā landha ra pas mdzad pa'o | | mnga' bdag Mai tri pa'i phyag dpe las | rGya gar Phyag na'i zhal snga nas dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba Pradnyā kīrtis bsgyur zhing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o | |*. The work seems to have been missing in practically all earlier editions and catalogues, so that the only evidence we have is the colophons of the work as transmitted in the mainstream TG editions and the respective catalogue records. Since it is contained in both D and P TG editions, the work must have been admitted into the collection in one of the later editions that, on the one hand, was based on the Zh TG edition and, on the other hand, was included in the lines of transmission of both the D and P editions. To be noted, however, is that the records in the 5th-TK and D-TK differ in their formulation.¹⁷² Of interest is perhaps also the information that the translation was done on the basis of a manuscript belonging to Maitrīpa. The information regarding the translation team can be summarized as follows: R-KC(Ø), U-TK(Ø), T-TK(Ø), BCh(Ø), Zh-TK(Ø), Ne-TK(Ø), Ng-TK(Ø), Gl-TK₁(Ø); 5th-TK, D-TK, DP: The Indian Pāṇi, Prajñākīrti. Although the bibliographical evidence is scarce, we know that Vajrapāṇi is said to have been one of the teachers under whom Pu rangs lo chung studied, and as it seems that he, not 'Bro Shes rab grags, was the one to often go under the name Prajñākīrti, I suggest identifying the translator of the work under discussion as Pu rangs lo chung.

(F) Translations in Collaboration with Kanakaśrī(mitra)

Kragh lists one work as translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collabo-

¹⁷² See the 5th-TK (98a8–b1): *Thugs rje chen po'i rgyud padma zab pa dang padma rgyal po'i dkyil 'khor du dbang bskur ba'i rab byed*^[1] *Dza landha ras mdzad pa | rGya gar Phyag na dang | Pradnyā kīrti'i 'gyur |* ^[1] The vowel *e* is missing, apparently due to damage in the block; D-TK (383b2–3): *dPal thugs rje chen po'i dbang bskur ba'i man ngag gi rab tu byed ba zhes bya ba'am | Padma zab pa dang padma rgyal po gnyis kyi dbang chog sbyin sreg dpal Dzā landha ras mdzad pa | mnga' bdag Mai tri pa'i phyag dpe las rGya gar Phyag na'i zhal snga nas dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba Pradnyā kīrti'i 'gyur | |*

ration with Kanakaśrīmitra, which he believes to have been done at the beginning of his stay in Nepal, for he is still using the name Shes rab grags and not Prajñākīrti. As we shall see, the bibliographical information regarding the work in question is rather scanty, but the little evidence we have hints at Pu rangs lo tsā ba rather than 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(1) D3900/PØ; DØ/P5868. Jitāri's *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i bshad pa* (*Sugatamatavibhaṅgabhāṣya*). Colo: **bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i bshad pa** | byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la gcig tu gzhol ba'i slob dpon **dGra las rgyal bas mdzad pa rdzogs so** | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po **Ka na ka shrī mi tra dang** | bod kyi lo tsā ba ban de **Shes rab grags** kyi bsgyur cing zhus pa'o¹⁷³ | | | |. This work is considered to be an autocommentary by Jitāri on his versified work *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (*Sugatamatavibhaṅgakārikā*), which was translated by Shākya 'od in collaboration with Śāntibhadra. As has already become clear from the respective catalogue numbers provided above, in the smaller TG editions the autocommentary is found in the dBu ma section (D3900), whereas in the larger editions it is found, notably, in the section of Newly Added [Translated Works] (P5868).¹⁷⁴ The basic text is found once in the dBu ma section (D3899/P5296), a second time as a duplicate in the *JoCh* (D4547/P5461), and in the larger TG editions a third time together with the autocommentary in the Newly Added [Translated Works] section (P5867). This state of affairs is a clear indication that the basic text and the autocommentary had a different history of transmission.

The *R-KC* seems to record both the basic texts and its autocommentary under Rr25.102 and Rr25.103: **'Dze ta ri'i bDe gshegs**

¹⁷³ zhus pa'o] P, zhus te gtan la phab pa'o D

¹⁷⁴ Note that the Ötani catalogue labels several sections, from P5832 up until P5962, as Ngo mtshar. However, the Ngo mtshar section, which includes works by early Tibetan masters, starts from P5832 and ends with P5863 (i.e., the end of vol. Jo). As explicitly stated by the *5th-TK*, volumes Nyo (starting with P5864) to Bo (ending with P5915) contain the section Newly Added [Translated Works]. See the *5th-TK* (139a1): *da ni gsar bcug mdo dang rig gnas la sog pa'i bstan bcos sna tshogs kyi skor la* | ...; and *ibid.* (140b2–3): ... *gsar bcug mdo dang rig gnas la sog pa'i bstan bcos sna tshogs kyi skabs lnga pa'o* | | | |. The following section contains Newly Added Works by Early Tibetan Masters (P5916–P5923). See the *5th-TK* (140b3): *da ni gsar bcug bod snga rab pas mdzad pa'i bstan bcos kyi skor la* | ...; and *ibid.* (141a3): ... *gsar bcug bod snga rab pas mdzad pa'i bstan bcos kyi bskor te skabs drug pa'o* | | | |. The very last section contains the Dedications, Aspirational Prayers, and Maṅgala (P5924–P5962). See the *5th-TK* (141a3–4): *da ni las byas pa don yod par bya ba'i phyir* | *bsngo ba dang* | *smon lam dang* | *bkra shis kyi skor la* | ...; and *ibid.* (142a2): ... *thun mong du bsngo ba smon lam gyi skabs te bdun pa'o* | | | |. The equivalent section in the D TG edition, which goes under the header *sNa tshogs*, has similar subdivisions (or their contents), but they occasionally differ from the above described subsections in the P TG in terms of both the texts contained therein and their order.

*gzhung*¹⁷⁵ *gi nam par dbye ba che chung*,¹⁷⁶ where *chung* refers to the versified basic text and *che* to the autocommentary. The records are found there in the section listing works translated by 'Brom (= 'Bro) Seng dkar Shākya 'od. Both the *I-TK* and the *BCh* are somewhat ambiguous as to whether they are merely referring to one of the two works or to both of them, but like the *R-KC* they ascribe the translation(s) to Shākya 'od.¹⁷⁷ The record in the *Zh-TK* undoubtedly refers to the versified basic text, and makes no mention of the autocommentary (which is a sign that this was probably also the case with the *I-TK* and the *BCh*).¹⁷⁸ The *Ne-TK* and *Ng-TK* followed suit.¹⁷⁹ It appears that neither the basic text nor its autocommentary was included in the Glo bo (Mustang) TG edition, as testified to by the *GI-TK_s* (Ngor chen's catalogue to its non-Tantric part). In contrast, however, the T TG edition, as is clear from its catalogue, contained both the basic text, with a translation ascription to Shākya 'od, and the autocommentary, with a translation ascription to Shes rab grags.¹⁸⁰ Unfortunately, the T versions remain inaccessible, so that the colophons cannot be examined for possibly additional information.

It is unknown when the autocommentary entered the mainstream TG editions. Nonetheless, the fact that in the larger editions it is included in the Newly Added [Translated Works] section (with a third duplicate of the basic text preceding it) may be a sign that the Fifth Dalai Lama edition was the first to include it, probably via the T TG edition. Its inclusion in the smaller TG editions in the dBu ma section (following the basic text) may well have been an editorial decision made by Zhu chen while editing the D TG edition. To be also noted is that whereas the records of both works in the *D-TK* tally with the respective colophons,¹⁸¹ the records in the *5th-TK* refer to them collec-

¹⁷⁵ *gzhung*] *em.*, *bzhung* NR (as recorded by van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009)

¹⁷⁶ Note that, as reported by van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009 nn. 68 and 69, R omits *bde gshegs* and adds *gnyis dang* at the end of the phrase.

¹⁷⁷ See the *I-TK* (A, 43a1–2; B, 34a4 = *I_{JS}921*) *slob dpon Dzai tā ris* [^{dGra las rgyal}] *mdzad pa'i bDe gshegs gzhung gi rab dbye Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur* |; *BCh*: [Bc589] *slob dpon Dze ta ris mdzad pa'i gZhung gi rab byed Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur* |.

¹⁷⁸ See the *Zh-TK* (582.1): *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa slob dpon Dze ta ris mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Zhi ba bzang po dang | lo tsā ba Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur* |.

¹⁷⁹ See the *Ne-TK* (515.5); and the *Ng-TK* (130.20–21), which, however, does not mention a translator.

¹⁸⁰ See the *T-TK* (74b7–75a1): [T2167] *bDe gshegs gzhung gi rab dbye'i tshig le'ur byas pa shu lo ka bryad pa 'Dze ta ri dGra las rgyal bas mdzad pa Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur* | [T2168] *de'i rang 'grel Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba* |.

¹⁸¹ See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 438b4–6): *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa Bhangga lar 'khrungs pa'i mkhas pa chen po Dzai tā ri pas mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Shānti bha dra dang | lo tsā ba Shākya 'od kyi 'gyur* | *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i bshad pa byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la gcig tu gzhol ba'i slob dpon dGra las rgyal bas mdzad pa | rgya gar gyi mkhas pa chen po Ka na ka shrī mi tra dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |.

tively as *rtsa bshad* and ascribe the translation of both to Shes rab grags in collaboration with Kanakaśrīmitra (i.e., in contradiction to the colophon of the basic text (P5867)).¹⁸² The information regarding the translator of the autocommentary can be summarized as follows: R-KC: 'Bro Seng dkar Shākya 'od; U-TK(?) BCh(?): Shākya 'od(?); Zh-TK(Ø), Ne-TK(Ø), Ng-TK(Ø), Gl-TK_s(Ø); T-TK, 5th-TK, D-TK, DP: Shes rab grags.

Now let us return to our main concern, the identity of this Shes rab grags. As we have seen, the sources provide us with very little evidence as to his exact identity. The only hint we have is that, as already pointed out, Pu rangs lo chung is known to have been a disciple of Kanakaśrī, who in turn is said to have mastered the Cakrasaṃvara doctrine, a topic that was probably among the main teachings Pu rangs lo chung (together with Mar pa do ba) received from him.¹⁸³ To the best of my knowledge, there is no evidence for such a master–disciple relationship between Kanakaśrī and 'Bro Shes rab grags. We have indeed no evidence that Pu rangs lo chung also studied Madhyamaka-related topics under Kanakaśrī, but we do know that he was involved in the translation of a minor work of Jitāri (§2.A.4) in collaboration with Sumatikīrti.

(G) Revisions in Collaboration with Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug

Kragh ascribes to 'Bro Shes rab grags one revision in collaboration with Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug, namely, that of the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*. This too, however, is a false ascription as the translator in question is undoubtedly Pu rangs lo chung.

(1) D368/P16. *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal bde mchog nyung ngu* (*Tantrarājaśrīlaghusaṃbara*). Colo: *dPal he ru ka'i nges par brjod pa zhes bya ba mnal 'byor ma chen mo'i rgyud kyi rgyal po las le'u lnga bcu rtsa*¹⁸⁴ *gcig pa rdzogs so | | grags pa yid 'ong rgyal mtshan mtho*¹⁸⁵ *ldan pa'i | | rin chen dang mtshungs Rin chen bzang po yis | | mkhas pa Padmā ka ra'i zhal sngar ni | | rig pa'i 'byung gnas kha che'i dpe las bsgyur*¹⁸⁶ *| | lhag pa'i tshul khrims dri yis bsgos gyur cing | | dri med bka' don 'thad pa dang bcas par | | rtogs*¹⁸⁷ *pa dang ldan grags pa'i zhal sngar ni | | sgra sgyur dge slong Pradnyā kīrti dang | | Mar pa sgra bsgyur Chos*

¹⁸² See the 5th-TK (139a2–3): *bDe bar gshegs pa'i gzhung rnam par 'byed pa'i rtsa bshad | slob dpon dGra las rnam par rgyal bas mdzad pa paṇḍi ta Ka na ka shrī mi dra dang lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*.

¹⁸³ On Kanakaśrī, see Templeman 1995: 22–23; Lo Bue 1997: 652.

¹⁸⁴ rtsa] D, om. P

¹⁸⁵ mtho] D, mthong P

¹⁸⁶ bsgyur D, sgyur P

¹⁸⁷ rtogs D, rtog P

kyi dbang phyug *gis* || *mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas Yul dbus dpe dang gtugs*¹⁸⁸ ||. Tr: Padmākara, Rin chen bzang po; R: Prajñākīrti, Chos kyi dbang phyug.

The *R-KC* clearly records a revision by the team Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyugs and Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags. The *BCh* merely mentions Rin chen bzang po as the reviser.¹⁸⁹ Of particular interest are the colophons of the two versions found in the Phug brag KG edition. The first version (F437) is identified in its colophon as a translation by Rin chen bzang po in collaboration with Padmākara, which was later revised by Blo gros grags in collaboration with Sumatikīrti. The colophon then adds that the present volume (i.e., rGyud, vol. Nga (102)) contains a second version, which is a revision of the translation by Padmākara and Rin chen bzang po done by *paṇḍita* Prajñākīrti (obviously thought to be the collaborating Indian scholar) and Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyug. It employs the verb *sgyur* also for the revision, appearing to imply a retranslation done on the basis of the earlier one. There is indeed an editorial remark that there are considerable differences between the two versions, both having felicitous and infelicitous formulations. As noted by Jampa Samten, this version is not transmitted in the mainstream KG editions. Colo: *rgya gar gyi mkhan po Pad ma kā ra bar ma dang* | *zhu chen gyi lo tstsha ba ban de Rin chen bzang pos bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab bo* || | *slad kyi pan ti ta chen po Su ma ti ka ri ti dang* | *lo tstsha ba ban de Blo gros grags kyis zhus te gtan la phab pa'o* || | *po ti 'dir* | *'gyur 'di dang lo chen Rin chen bzang po'i 'gyur la pan tri ta Prad dznyā kirti dang* | *Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyug gis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa dang* | *'dir bris pa'i 'gyur gnyis ka bris yod cing* | *don gcig nyid la tshig phan tshun brjod pa bde mi bde ba'i khyad par snang ngo* || |.

The second version (F438) is, as noted by Jampa Samten, the one transmitted in the mainstream KG editions. Its colophon is similar to those of the DP versions, and it contains in addition an editorial remark similar to one found in the colophon of F437, the main difference being a specification of the reviser of the first version as Ma (= Mal) lo Blo gros grags (11th cent.; BDRC: P3088). Colo: [...as in DP...] *po ti 'dir* | *lo chen Rin chen bzang po'i 'gyur la* | *Ma lo Blo gros grags kyis zhus te gtan la phab pa dang* | *'dir bris pa'i 'gyur gnyis ka bris yod cing* | *don gcig la* | *tshig phan tshun brjod pa bde mi bde'i khyad par snang ngo* || |.

The identification of our Prajñākīrti as Pu rangs lo chung is certain. In addition to the fact that he is known to have intensively engaged with the Cakrasaṃvara literature and teachings, he is known

¹⁸⁸ gtugs D, btugs P

¹⁸⁹ See the *R-KC*: [Rr27.100] *rtsa rgyud kyi 'gyur bcos* || | (*rtsa rgyud* refers to *bDe mchog* mentioned in the previous record); *BCh*: [Bc1477] *bDe mchog rtsa rgyud Rin chen bzang po'i 'gyur* |.

to have worked with Mar pa do ba extensively. Moreover, the *R-KC* unmistakably ascribes to the duo the revision of the *Cakrasaṃvara*. Additional evidence is provided by Ngor chen, who names Pu rangs lo chung in this very context as Grags 'byor shes rab. Interesting is also his specification of the manuscript used by the duo for the revision as belonging to Nāropa.¹⁹⁰

(2) There appear to have been numerous translations and revisions jointly done by Mar pa do ba and Pu rangs lo chung, the latter having been at the beginning of his career an assistant of the former. Most of these joint translations seems to have been lost. It is possible, however, that the name of the mere assistant Pu rangs lo chung was omitted from the colophons. The list of their joint translations provided by the *R-KC* will be discussed below (§2.I.2).

(H) Translations Transmitted Only in the Tshal pa TG

There are five works recorded in the *T-TK* that are of interest for the present investigation concerning the translation activities of the translators under discussion. These works were either not transmitted at all in the mainstream TG editions or were transmitted therein with a different translation ascription, and these I shall briefly discuss here as well for the sake of completeness. Of these five, two translations are ascribed to Shes rab grags and will be discussed below under the section dealing with the translations of 'Bro Shes rab grags (§4.E.1 & §4.G.2). The remaining three translations, which are recorded successively in the *T-TK*, all deal with “cardinal transgressions” (*rtsa ba'i ltung ba; mūlāpatti*) or “gross transgressions” (*sbom po'i ltung ba; sthūlāpatti*), are ascribed to Prajñākīrti, who I suggest is Pu rangs lo chung.

- (1) *T-TK* (67a7): [T1970] *rDo rje theg pa'i rtsa ba'i ltung pa'i dka' 'grel Pra dznya kir ti'i 'gyur* |
- (2) *T-TK* (67a7–b1): [T1971] *rTsa ba'i ltung pa dang sbom po gnyis ka'i mtshan nyid Pra dznya kir ti'i 'gyur* |
- (3) *T-TK* (67b1): [T1972] *lTung pa sbom po rTa dbyangs kyis mdzad pa Pra dznya kir ti'i 'gyur* |.

The *U-TK* appears to record merely the first and the second of these, with what seems to be an authorship ascription to Aśvagoṣa, but

¹⁹⁰ See the *mKhan chen gyi rang myong rtogs brjod* (184.10–14): *bDe mchog rtsa rgyud 'bum pa chen po las btus pa rtsa ba'i rgyud bDe mchog nyung ngu'i rgyud du grags pa le'u lnga bcu rtsa gcig pa | paṇḍi ta Padmā ka ra dang lo tsā ba Rin chen bzang po'i 'gyur | phyis lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab dang | Mar pa do pa Chos kyi dbang phyug gis bla ma Nā ro pa'i phyag dpe la gtugs nas dag par bcos pa gnyis* |.

with no translation ascription.¹⁹¹ The *BCh* records the same two titles with neither an authorship nor translation ascription, whereas the *Zh-TK* names Aśvaghōṣa as the author of both, but still with no specification of the translator.¹⁹² The *R-KC*, notably, has among the translations of Pu rangs lo chung one relevant entry, namely, Rr27.119: *sBom po'i ltung ba dang* | |. It is, however, not entirely clear whether this entry refers to one single work (perhaps equivalent to the third title) or is rather a collective description for several works on the topic. Regrettably, I have not been able to gain access to the respective three works in the T TG, and thus an examination of the texts has not been possible. Nonetheless, based on the parallel records in the *U-TK*, *BCh*, and *Zh-TK*, an identification of the first and the third seems rather certain. The first record (T1970) corresponds to D2478/P3303, namely, Aśvaghōṣa's *rDo rje theg pa rtsa ba'i ltung ba bsdus pa* (*Vajrayānamūlāpattisaṃgraha*), which has no translation colophon, and the third record (T1972) to D2479/P3304, namely, Aśvaghōṣa's *lTung ba sbom po* (*Sthūlāpatti*), which has likewise no translation colophon. Whether the DP versions contain the same translations as those transmitted in the T TG edition remains unclear. Unfortunately, I am not able to make any informed suggestion for the second record (T1971). Since no examination of the T colophons has been possible, the identity of the collaborating *paṇḍita* remains unknown. Nonetheless, apart from the fact that, as we have by now seen numerous times, the name Prajñākīrti nearly always refers to Pu rangs lo chung, the record in the *R-KC* also supports an identification of the Prajñākīrti in question as Pu rangs lo chung.

(I) Lost Translations

Several other translations that are ascribed to Pu rangs lo chung in the Tibetan literature appear to have been lost, and I shall briefly mention them here for the sake of completeness.

(1) We have thus far discussed four of the five titles recorded in the *R-KC* as translations by Pu rangs lo chung (i.e., Rr27.117–Rr27.121; Rig ral, however, signals that his list is not exhaustive with the phrase *la sogs pa*). The record still missing is the one concerning his translation of the *Sekoddeśa* (*dBang mdor bstan pa*; D361/P3), listed under Rr27.118: *dBang nyer bstan dang* | |, which is probably the

¹⁹¹ See the *U-TK* (A, 32b4–5; B, 26a3–4); [I_{js}686] *slob dpon rTa dbyangs* ^[A shwa gho sha] *la sogs pas mdzad par grags pa'i* [...] [I_{js}687] *rTsa ba'i ltung ba bsdus pa* | [I_{js}688] *lTung ba sbom po* | [...].

¹⁹² See the *BCh*: [Bc2835] *rTsa ba'i ltung ba bsdus pa* | [Bc2836] *lTung ba sbom po* |; *Zh-TK* (505.4–5): *rDo rje theg pa'i rtsa ba'i ltung ba bsdus pa dang* | *lTung ba sbom po bsdus pa gnyis slob dpon rTa dbyangs kyis mdzad pa* |.

most important among his lost translations. The translation of the *Sekoddeśa* that has been transmitted in the mainstream KG editions is the one by 'Bro Shes rab grags, which will be discussed below. Here, I should perhaps draw attention again to Pu rangs lo chung's peculiar translation of the title, *dBang nyer bstan*, which is often pointed out in traditional literature.¹⁹³

(2) The R-KC lists twelve items under the heading "Translations by Mar pa do ba Chos kyi dbang phyug and Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags" (i.e., Rr27.99–Rr27.111,¹⁹⁴ whereas here, too, the list is not exhaustive, as made clear again by the phrase *la sogs pa* in item no. 4 and by the phrase in item no. 12, which reads "numerous small doctrinal works of the *yab* and *yum* categories of the *Cakrasamvara*"). It is, however, unclear whether these are translations jointly done by the two or whether each of them was responsible for independently translating these texts on his own, or whether the list is a mixture of both:

- de dag dang dus mnyam par* | **Mar pa chos kyi dbang phyug dang** | **Pu rangs lo chung Shes rab grags** *gnyis rim pa bzhin dpon slob yin te* | *de gnyis kyiis*
- (1) Rr27.99: *bDe mchog rdo rje mkha' 'gro'i 'grel pa dang* | | [= D?/P?].
 - (2) Rr27.100: *rTsa rgyud kyi 'gyur bcos* | | [= D368/P16; Tr: Rin chen bzang po, Padmākara; R: Prajñākīrti, Chos kyi dbang phyug (see §2.G.1).
 - (3) Rr27.101: **Lu'i pa'a dang** | | [= D1443/P2160 & D1444/P2161; Tr: Chos kyi dbang phyug, Sumatikīrti].
 - (4) Rr27.102: **mTsho bskyes** *la sogs pa'i sGrub thabs dang* | | [= D?/P?].
 - (5) Rr27.103: **Nag po spyod pa ba'i bDe mchog gi bskyed rim dang** | | [= D1445/P2162; Tr∅].
 - (6) Rr27.104: **dKyil chog**¹⁹⁵ *dang* | | [= (1) D1446/P2163; Tr: Rin chen bzang po, Buddhaśrīśānti, R: IHa btsas, Gayadhara.; (2) dupl. D∅/P2164]; Tr: Rin chen bzang po, Dharmaśrībhadrā, R: Chos kyi dbang phyug, Sumatikīrti].

¹⁹³ See, for example, the passage from the *Blue Annals* cited above under note 168.

¹⁹⁴ Note that the assignment of a catalogue number (Rr27.109) to the descriptor *Nag po'i chos drug dang* is erroneous, for it merely offers a collective designation for the six titles just recorded (i.e., Rr27.103–Rr27.108). This is also supported syntactically by the preceding semi-final particle, and hence my counting of merely twelve items. This descriptor is also found at the end of the list of these six works in other catalogues, including for example the *Zh-TK* (429.1–2), and hence my identification of the six works in question as D1445–D1451.

¹⁹⁵ *chog*] *em.*, *mchog* Text

- (7) Rr27.105: *sByin bsreg dang* | | [= D1447/P2165; Tr: Rig pa gzhon nu, Dharmabhadra; T0373: Tr: Chos kyi dbang phyug, Vāgīśvarakīrti¹⁹⁶].
- (8) Rr27.106: *rDzogs rim dbyid kyi thig le dang* | | [= D1448/P2166; Tr: Chos kyi dbang phyug, Sumatikīrti].
- (9) Rr27.107: *gSang ba'i de nyid gsal ba dang* | | [= D1450/P2167; Tr: lHa btsas, Gayadhara, R: Chos kyi dbang phyug, Sumatikīrti].¹⁹⁷
- (10) Rr27.108: *Rim pa bzhi pa ste* | | [= D1451/P2168; Tr: Grags pa shes rab, Sumatikīrti (see §2.A.8)].
- Rr27.109: *Nag po'i chos drug* (= Rr27.103–Rr27.108) *dang* | | (see note 194).
- (11) Rr27.110: *Byang chub sems 'grel dang* | | [= D1800/P2665; dupl. D4556/P5470 (*JoCh*); on which, see the following discussion].
- (12) Rr27.111: *bDe mchog yab yum gyi chos phran mang po dang* | | [= various].

Of the above twelve items, merely two (nos. 2 & 10) were transmitted with a translation or revision ascription to Pu rangs lo chung, both of which have been discussed above. Item no. 11, Nāgārjuna's (ascribed) *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* (*Byang chub kyi sems kyi rnam par bshad pa*), is an interesting case, for it was transmitted as a conflation of various translations including one by Pu rangs lo chung. The *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* is found in the TG twice, one time in the rGyud 'grel section (D1800/P2665) and another within the *JoCh* (D4556/P5470). The colophons of D1800/P2665 read as follows: *Byang chub sems kyi 'grel pa slob dpon bdag nyid chen po 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa rdzogs so* | | | *rgya gar gyi mkhan po Gu ṅa a ka ra dang* | *lo tsā ba Rab zhi bshes ngyen gyis bsgyur cing zhus* | *slad kyi rgya gar gyi mkhan po Ka na ka warma dang* | *bod kyi lo tsā ba Pa tshab Nyi ma grags kyis bcos pa'o* | | ; Tr: Rab zhi bshes ngyen, Guṅākara; R: Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, Kanakavarman. The colophon of the *JoCh* duplicate found in the P

¹⁹⁶ T0373 is found in section II, Ji(38), 226a5–232b4.

¹⁹⁷ Note that at the end of his commentary on Kṛṣṇapāda's *Guhyatattoaprakāśa* (*gSang ba'i de nyid gsal ba*), Tāranātha, after citing the translation colophon, comments that although there were many revisers to the translation by 'Gos Khug pa lha btsas and Gayadhara, including among others Grags 'byor shes rab, obviously referring to our Pu rangs lo chung, their revisions do not seem to greatly differ from 'Gos's translation, but that there seems to be a big difference between the first translation by 'Brog mi and the one by 'Gos and its revisions. See the *gSang ba'i de kho na nyid rab tu gsal ba'i 'grel pa* (357.3–8): *'di la lo tsā ba Shes rab brtsegs dang* | *Rwa lo rDo rje grags pa dang* | *Mal gyo Blo gros grags pa dang* | *rje btsun Grags 'byor shes rab la sogs pa* | *'Gos 'gyur la 'gyur bcos mdzad pa po mi 'dra ba byung* [byung em., ma byung Text] *yang* | *'Gos 'gyur nyid las 'gyur khyad cher mi snang la* | *gzhung de thog mar bsgyur ba po 'Brog mi'i 'gyur dang* | *'Gos sogs kyi 'gyur gzhan rnam la 'gyur khyad cher snang ngo* | | .

TG (P5470)¹⁹⁸ reads as follows: *Byang chub sems kyi nmam par bshad pa slob dpon 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | | chos 'di mdzad pa po che ba dang | brjod bya bzang ba dang | rjod byed dbyings su gyur pa'i stobs kyis rtsal phyung zhing bsgyur ba mang du snang ba las lo tsā ba Rab zhi Chos kyi bshes gnyen gyi la gzhi byas te | Gu rub¹⁹⁹ Chos kyi shes rab dang | Seng dkar Shākya 'od dang | Shes rab grags dang | Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyug dang | Pa tshab Nyi ma grags dang | Mang nad Grags 'byor shes rab kyis 'gyur bdun las | don gang bzang ba rnam bris pa yin no | |*. This version is stated by the colophon as being a conflation of seven translations, namely, ones by Rab zhi Chos kyi bshes gnyen, Gu rub Chos kyi shes rab, Seng dkar Shākya 'od, Shes rab grags, Mar pa Chos kyi dbang phyug, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, and Mang nang²⁰⁰ Grags 'byor shes rab, whereas the one by Rab zhi Chos kyi bshes gnyen was taken as the basis, whatever readings that made “good sense” (*don bzang ba*) in the other translations being adopted. It is notable that the colophon counts Pu rangs lo chung's and Mar pa do ba's as two translations rather than one done jointly. The *R-KC* also records all other five translations mentioned in the colophon of the *JoCh* duplicate, namely, by Rab zhi bshes gnyen (Rr23.53), Gu rub Chos kyi shes rab (Rr25.83), Seng dkar Shākya 'od (Rr25.111), Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab (Rr25.118), and Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (Rr28.6).²⁰¹ The *U-TK* merely records one translation and names both Rab zhi bshes gnyen and Pa tshab as the translators, which means, according to the *U-TK* convention, that the former is the translator and the latter a reviser. The *T-TK* likewise records only one translation, with a translation ascription to Rab zhi bshes gnyen and a revision by Pa tshab. The *T* colophon, though, only names Rab zhi bshes gnyen. A thorough comparison of the text would be needed to determine whether it differs from D1800/P2665. The *BCh* ascribes the translation to Pa tshab alone, whereas the pertinent *Zh-TK* has a record similar to the colophons of D1800/P2665, ascribing the translation to Rab zhi bshes gnyen and the revision to Pa tshab, and this is followed by the *5th-TK* and *D-TK*. The records for the *JoCh* duplicate (D4556/P5470) in both the *Zh-TK* and *5th-TK* tally with the pertinent *P* colophon just cited, presenting it as a conflation of the above-mentioned seven translations. The *D-TK* has no

¹⁹⁸ I was not able to view the colophon of D4556 before the paper went to the press, but it is expected to read like that of its counterpart P5470.

¹⁹⁹ rub] *em.*, rug P

²⁰⁰ For variants of the attribute Ma snang, see below (§2.J).

²⁰¹ See the *R-KC*: [Rr23.53] *Byang chub sems 'grel la sogs pa'ang bsgyur ro | |*; [Rr25.83] *Klu sgrub kyi^[1] Byang chub sems 'grel | |*; [Rr25.111] *Klu sgrub kyi^[1] Byang chub sems 'grel dang | |*; [Rr25.118] *Klu sgrub kyi^[1] Byang chub sems 'grel | |*; [Rr28.6] *Byang chub sems 'grel dang | |* ^[1] Text reads *gyi*.

records for the *JoCh*.²⁰² To sum up, although Pu rangs lo chung's translation is said to have flowed into the version transmitted within the *JoCh* (if unclear to what extent), his actual translation seems to have been lost (as have the other reported independent translations; the T version is yet to be examined in this regard).

(J) Possible Confusion with Ma nang Grags 'byor shes rab

In conclusion of this section, I would also like to briefly refer to another translator who likewise shares Pu rangs lo chung's name and with whom it appears that there has occasionally been a confusion in Tibetan literature, namely, Ma nang Grags 'byor shes rab. (Note that the attribute to his name has several variants, including Ma nang, Mang snang, Mang sna, Ma snang, Mang nad, among other variants.) As such, there should not have been much ground for confusion between the two, for Ma nang Grags 'byor shes rab mostly translated Madhyamaka- and Pramāṇa-related works, and his intellectual milieu (i.e., comprising both collaborating *paṇḍitas* and Tibetan colleagues) was palpably different. Indeed, given that he served as an assistant translator for Rin chen bzang po (958–1055; BDRC: P753), his floruit must have been earlier (at least half a century, if not more) than that of Pu rangs lo chung, who was Mar pa do ba's (1042–1136) assistant. Nonetheless, the fact that he shares Pu rangs lo chung's name and probably also the fact that, having served as an assistant translator for Rin chen bzang po, he was also referred to as *lo chung*, have been sufficient reasons for occasional confusion even among renowned scholars like Bu ston, as the following passage from the *BCh* demonstrates:²⁰³

de'i (i.e., Rin chen bzang po'i) **Lo chung Grags 'byor shes rab**
kyis kyang **bDe mchog dang Phag mo dang Tshad ma la sogs pa**
bsgyur zhing mkha' spyod du gshegs so | |.

Any description of Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab as one who was an assistant translator for Rin chen bzang po along with being a transla-

²⁰² See the *ITK* (A, 17a5; B, 13a2–3 = *I*_{JS}280): *Byang chub sems kyi 'grel pa tshigs bcad ma Rab zhi bshes gnyen dang Pa tshab*²⁰² *kyi 'gyur |*; *T-TK* (10b1–2): [T0126] *Byang chub sems 'grel Klu grub kyis mdzad pa Rab zhi bshes gnyen gyis bsgyur zhing Nyi ma grags kyis gtan la phab pa |*. T0126 is found in section II, Ta(10), 228a1–234a3. Colo: *Byang chub sems kyi 'grel pa | | slob dpon bdag [bdag em.; dbag Ms (pc!)] nyid chen po 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa | | rdzogs s.ho | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po 'Gu na a ka ra shri bha tra dang | lo tsha ba Rab zhi bshes gnyen gyis bsgyur cing zhus | |*; *BCh*: [Bc1986] *Byang chub sems kyi 'grel pa tshigs bcad ma Pa tshab kyi 'gyur |*; *Zh-TK* (464.4–5); *5th-TK* (37b5–6); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 370a3–4); dupl. *Zh-TK* (595.4–6); *5th-TK* (120a2–4); *D-TK* (∅).

²⁰³ See the *BCh* (202.6–7).

tor of Pramāṇa-related works represents a proper identification. Any mention of him as a translator of works related to Cakrasaṃvara and Vārāhī clearly signals that he is being confused with Pu rangs lo chung. Further confusion may have been caused by the fact that in many of the colophons the translator is simply called Grags 'byor shes rab, that is, without the attribute Ma snang. In order to eliminate any doubts, I shall provide below a tentative list of the works whose translation or revision is ascribed to Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab. I shall confine the list to such works as are found in the DP TG editions, without, that is, further discussing or consulting other sources. In some cases, a further investigation indeed appears necessary, but this will be undertaken elsewhere (Almogi forthcoming-b). For a better orientation, I shall group the works according to the collaborating *paṇḍita*, and also specify the section they belong to.

- (I) Translations and Revisions by Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab in Collaboration with Ānanda
- (i) D3826/P5226 (dBu ma). Nāgārjuna's *Zhib mo rnam par 'thag pa zhes bya ba'i mdo* (*Vaidalyasūtra*).
 - (ii) D3834/P5234 (dBu ma). Nāgārjuna's *Yi ge brgya pa* (*Akṣaraśā-taka*). Revision. No colophon, but see the pertinent record in the *Zh-TK*.²⁰⁴
 - (iii) D3835/P5235 (dBu ma). Nāgārjuna's *Yi ge brgya pa zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa* (*Akṣaraśātakavṛtti*). Revision.
 - (iv) D3838/P5238 (dBu ma). Nāgārjuna's *Ma rtogs pa rtogs par byed pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa* (*Abodhabodhakaprakaraṇa*).
 - (v) D4551/P5465 (JoCh). Nāgārjuna's *Theg pa chen po nyi shu pa* (*Mahāyānaviṃśaka*). Cf. D3833/P5233 (dBu ma); Tr: Shākya 'od, Candrakumāra.

Note that the Tōhoku catalogue names this team as being also responsible for the translation of D3837, but this must be based on the *D-TK*, which adds the plural *rnam*s to the record of D3838, which, being missing in the respective record of the *Zh-TK*, seems erroneous.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ See the *Zh-TK* (576.4–5): [= D3834] *dBu ma yi ge brgya pa 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis*^[1] *mdzad pa dang* | [= D3835] *de'i Rang 'grel gnyis* | *gZhon nu shes rab kyis bsg-yur ba la* | *paṇḍi ta Ā nanta dang* | *lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyis bcos pa* | ^[1] The vowel *i* is missing, apparently due to damage in the block.

²⁰⁵ See the *D-TK* (435a2–3): [D3836; dupl. D4553 (JoCh)] *rTen cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i snying po'i tshig le'ur byas pa* | [D3837; dupl. D4554 (JoCh)] *rTen cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i snying po'i rnam par bshad pa* | [D3838] *Ma rtogs pa rtogs par byed pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa rnam*s slob dpon 'phags pa *Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa* | *paṇḍi ta Ā nanda dang* | *lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur* | . Cf. the *Zh-TK* (576.5–6), which does not have *rnam*s. The plural *rnam*s in the *D-TK* actually also refers to D3836, for which the Tōhoku catalogue does not record any

- (II) Translations by Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab in Collaboration with Śrīratha
- (i) D4160/P5660 (sPring yig); dupl. D4555/P5469 (JoCh). Nāgārjuna's *rMi lam yid bzhin nor bu'i gtam* (*Svapnacintāmaṇiparikathā*).
 - (ii) D4161/P5661 (sPring yig). Nāgārjuna's *sByin pa'i gtam* (*Dānaparikathā*); no colophon, but see the record in the Zh-TK.²⁰⁶
 - (iii) D4162/P5662 (sPring yig); dupl. D4558/P5472 (JoCh). Nāgārjuna's *Srid pa las 'das pa'i gtam* (*Bhavasamkrāntiparikathā*). Cf. D3840/P5240 (dBu ma); different translation, no colophon.
- (III) Translations by Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab in Collaboration with Vināyaka
- (i) D4174/P5674 (sPring yig). Rāmendra's *Mi rtag pa'i don gyi gtam* (*Anityārthaparikathā*).
 - (ii) D4254/P5752 (Tshad ma). Muktākalaśa's *sKad cig ma 'jig pa grub pa'i rnam par 'grel pa* (*Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhivivaraṇa*).
- (IV) Translations by Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab in Collaboration with Devendrabhadra
- (i) D4267/P5765 (Tshad ma). Kamalaśīla's *De kho na nyid bsdus pa'i dka' 'grel* (*Tattvasamgrahapañjikā*).
- (V) Lost Translations by Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab
- (i) Cf. D1800/P2665 (rGyud 'grel); dupl. D4556/P5470 (JoCh). Nāgārjuna's (ascribed) *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*. See above (§2.I.2).

translators. The Ōtani catalogue does not record a translator for P5236 either, but does record Ye shes sde, Dānaśīla, Jinamitra, and Śilendrabodhi as the translators of P5237. Indeed, both D3836/P5236 and D3837/P5237 are Ancient Translations recorded in both the *IDan/IDhan dkar ma* and *'Phang thang ma*. See L596A/K548 and L596B/K549, respectively. However, both D3836/P5236 and D3837/P5237 should be compared with their respective duplicates (D4553/P5467 and D4554/P5468) found in the *JoCh*, which commonly contains New Translations, in order to exclude that they are identical. If it turns out that they are identical, the ascription to Ma snang Grags 'byor shes rab might be correct (i.e., at least as one responsible for a revision if not for a new translation). To be noted is that according to the pertinent records in the *T-TK*, the T edition has contained the Ancient Translation. See the *T-TK* (73b3–4): [T2125 & T2126] *dBu ma rten 'brel snying po rtsa 'grel Klu grub kyis mdzad pa Ye shes sde la sogs pa'i 'gyur* |. Unfortunately, the T version could not be accessed, so that a comparison of it with the DP versions has not been possible.

²⁰⁶ See the *Zh-TK* (616.4–5): [= D4161] *sByin pa'i gtam 'phags pa Klu sgrub gyis mdzad pa dang* | [= D4162] *Srid pa las 'das pa'i gtam slob dpon 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa | paṅḍi ta Shri ra tha dang | lo tsā ba Grags 'byor shes rab kyi 'gyur* |.

3. Translations by 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmābhi

Kragh lists two works as solo translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags, namely, D2121/P2972 and D1452/P2169. The identity of the translator of the latter will be discussed below under 'Bro Shes rab grags (§4.F.1), but that of the former Kragh undoubtedly confused with another translator of the 'Bro clan, one with the unusual name *Dharmābhi (/ *Dharmapa). D2121/P2972 is the last of a group of thirteen/fourteen works found in the section of “the *Nāmasaṅgīti* according to the Yoganiruttaratantra system” (*mTshan yang dag par brjod pa rNal 'byor bla med kyi lugs*); their authorship is ascribed by cataloguers to Saṃvarabhadra, and their translation to 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmābhi. Not much is known about either Saṃvarabhadra or 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmābhi, and these works are the only ones in the TG that are associated with either of them. Saṃvarabhadra is asserted by some sources to be a disciple of Dārika and a teacher of *Adhīśa Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna. Padma dkar po (1527–1592; BDR: P825), for example, in his Records of Teachings Received, within the section on “records of teachings received concerning various works of the cycle relating to *siddhis* associated with Cakrasaṃvara, one of the five *sādhana* cycles of the glorious 'Brug pa school” (*dpal 'brug pa'i sgrub thabs skor lnga las bde mchog dngos grub kyi skor kyi yig sna'i gsan yig*)—refers to the “Jo bo tradition” as based on works composed by *Adhīśa, who studied the topics treated in it under the Brahmin Saṃvarabhadra, who in turn was a disciple of Dārika.²⁰⁷ The Fifth Dalai Lama, in his Records of Teachings Received, presents the same relationship between the three in the context of another lineage.²⁰⁸ Of greater significance to our discussion is another lineage recorded by the Fifth Dalai Lama, namely, that of “special instructions recorded by the *rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rlung gi 'khor lo,*” which he states came down from Saṃvarabhadra to 'Bro lo tsā ba Shes rab grags. The numerous works listed there are yet to be identified, but of most relevance for our discussion, apart from the fact that the teachings came down from Saṃvarabhadra, is the phrase towards the end of the list: “[works] ending with ‘translated by 'Bro lo’” (**'Bro los bsgyur ba'i mtha' can**), which, as we shall see below, is indeed how the last in the above-mentioned list of thirteen/fourteen works (i.e., D2121/P2972) ends.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ See the *Pad dkar gsan yig* (314.2–3): **Jo bo A ti shas mdzad pa'i gzhung | des Dha ri ka'i slob ma bram ze sDom pa bzang po la gsan pa Jo bo lugs |**. See also TPNI, s.v.

²⁰⁸ See the *lNga pa chen po'i thob yig* (vol. 1: 251.10–14) **bka' babs brgyad pa sbal spang sna lugs kyi brgyud pa ni | [...] Dha ri ka pa | bram ze sDom pa bzang po | Jo bo rje A ti sha | de la lo chen Rin cen bzang po dang Nag tsho lo tsā ba gnyis kyi gsan |**....

²⁰⁹ See the *lNga pa chen po'i thob yig* (vol. 2: 326.14–327.21) **rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rlung gi 'khor lo'i man ngag khyad par can bram ze sDom pa bzang po nas 'Bro lo tsā ba Shes rab grags la bka' babs pa'i gdams skor la | [...] dang bcas pa 'Bro los bsgyur ba'i**

Not all works in question have colophons naming Saṃvarabhadrā as the author and 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmābhi as the translator. As can be seen in the list provided below, eight of them have an authorship colophon naming Saṃvarabhadrā as the author (nos. 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13), three have no authorship colophon but connect the work to Saṃvarabhadrā (nos. 1, 2, 6), and the remaining three have no authorship colophon (nos. 5, 7, 14). Similarly, four have a translation colophon naming *Dharmābhi (nos. 1, 2, 6, 8), one a translation colophon naming 'Bro lo tsā ba, that is, without specifying his personal name (no. 14), and eight have no translation colophon (nos. 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13):

- (1) D2108/P2959. *'Phags pa 'jam dpal gyi mtshan yang dag par brjod pa'i sgrub thabs (Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṃgītisādhana)*; author colophon: X (sDom pa bzang po'i *thugs dam*); translation colophon: ✓ ('Bro lo tsā ba Dar ma bhi).
- (2) D2109/P2960. *'Jam dpal khro bo'i sgrub thabs (Mañjuśrīkrodhasādhana)*; author colophon: X (sDom pa bzang po'i *thugs dam*); translation colophon: ✓ (P: Bla ma lo tsā ba Dar ma (D: Dharmā bhi).
- (3) D2110/P2961. *rGyud kyi rgyal po 'jam dpal gyi dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga (*Mañjuśrītantrarājamaṇḍalavidhi)*; authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (4) D2111/P2962. *sKyabs 'gro sems bskyed dbang bzhi'i gdams pa (*Śāraṃgatacittotpādacatuḥsekāvavāda)*; authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (5) D2112/P2963. *rDo rje glu'i gdams ngag (*Vajragītāvavāda)*; authorship colophon: X; translation colophon: X.
- (6) D2113/P2964. *Khrus kyi cho ga (*Snānavidhi)*; author colophon X (sDom pa bzang po'i *lugs*); translation colophon: ✓ ('Bro lo tsā ba Dharmā bhi).
- (7) D2114/P2965. *gTor ma'i cho ga (*Balividhi)*; authorship colophon: X; translation colophon: X.
- (8) D2115/P2966. *bDun tshigs kyi cho ga (*Saptaparvavidhi)*; authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: ✓ ('Bro lo tsā ba Dharmā bhi).
- (9) D2116/P2967. *Ro sreg pa'i cho ga (*Śmaśānavidhi)*; authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.

mtha' can | 'Khor lo btsugs nas dngos grub myur du bskul ba dang bcas pa rnam
 kyi phyag len zhal shes dmar 'khrid du thob pa'i brgyud pa ni | [...] 'phags pa **Klu**
 sgrub snying po | bram ze sDom pa bzang po | 'Bro lo tsā ba Shes rab grags |

- (10) D2117/P2968. *Tsha tsha gdab pa'i rim pa* (**Sācchanirovapaṇakrama*); authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (11) D2118/P2969. *Rab tu gnas pa'i cho ga* (**Pratiṣṭhāvidhi*); authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (12) D2119/P2970. *sByin sreg gi cho ga* (**Homavidhi*); authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (13) D2120/P2971. *Thun mong gi dngos grub sgrub pa'i thabs kyi man ngag* (**Sāmānyasiddhisādhanopadeśa*); authorship colophon: ✓; translation colophon: X.
- (14) D2121/P2972. *Bla ma'i maṅḍal yi dam gyi cho ga* (**Gurumaṅḍalasamādānavidhi*); authorship colophon: X; translation colophon: ✓ ('Bro lo tsā ba).

To be noted is that the translation colophon of the last work is quite probably a collective colophon for the last six very short works (nos. 9–14), as can be expected when authored and/or translated by the same person. The same applies to the authorship colophon of the previous work (no. 13), which probably pertains to five works (nos. 9–13). This group of works is found in nearly none of the earlier catalogues (*R-KC*(Ø), *U-TK*(Ø), *T-TK*(Ø), *BCh*(Ø), *Gl-TK₇*(Ø)). The first catalogue to record them is the *Zh-TK*, which merely lists thirteen works (i.e., omitting no. 3: D2110/P2961). The number thirteen is also explicitly written at the end of the list, so that a transmissional error is unlikely. What is particularly interesting is Bu ston's concluding comment, which states the following:²¹⁰

... *bcu gsum po rnams ni | bram ze sDom pa bzang pos mdzad cing | 'Bro lo tsā ba Dharma pa'i 'gyur | 'di dag la the tshom za bar snang yang rgya gar mar byed kyi 'dug pas bris so | |*

... These thirteen [works] were composed by Saṃvarabhadra and translated by 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmapa. Although there seem to be doubts in regard to these [works], [they are] considered [by others] to be Indian, and [I] have thus written [them down].

The reason for Bu ston's doubts is not entirely clear, but it appears that he questions either the authorship or the translation ascriptions (or both). This is in a way not surprising, since, as already pointed out, no other works or translations associated with either of the two have been transmitted in the Tibetan Buddhist Canon. The *Ng-TK* reproduces the same list together with Bu ston's remark, the main difference being that whereas the *Zh-TK* calls the translator Dhar-

²¹⁰ See the *Zh-TK* (486.6–487.2, including the list).

mapa, the *Ng-TK* has Dharmā.²¹¹ Both the *D-TK* and *5th-TK* list fourteen works (in line with the *D* and *P* editions, as listed above), but they reproduce the concluding remark from the *Zh-TK* which includes the number thirteen. And whereas the *5th-TK* calls the translator *Dharmapa (spelt there Dharmma pa), and thus following the *Zh-TK*, the *D-TK* refers to him as *Dharmābhi, following the colophons.²¹²

Now, it has become clear that the 'Bro lo tsā ba in question is not 'Bro Shes rab grags. One could argue that *Dharmābhi is an epithet used for him (which Kragh does not do); there seems, however, to be no evidence for this thus far. The only source that might be hinting in this direction is the passage from the Fifth Dalai Lama's Records of Teachings Received reported above. Although there is no certainty that it refers to the works under discussion here, it seems to indicate that the translation colophon(s) identify merely 'Bro lo as the translator, whereas the actual name "Shes rab grags" is supplemented by the author himself, which would be then a misidentification on his part. This question, however, requires an investigation of the lineage and the works transmitted therein, which goes beyond the scope of the present paper.

4. Translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags

Finally, I shall briefly present and discuss the works whose translation was undertaken by 'Bro Shes rab grags, which was Kragh's actual concern. As is well known, 'Bro Shes rab grags was instrumental in the transmission of the Kālacakra teachings in Tibet as received by him from his Kashmiri teacher, Somanātha. The transmissions associated with him form a distinct tradition known as the 'Bro Tradition ('Bro lugs). I do not wish to discuss 'Bro Shes rab grags's contribution in this regard, but would nonetheless like to refer to a passage by sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705; BDRC: P421) found in his *Baidūrya g.ya' sel* (alluded to above). There, in discussing the transmission of the Kālacakra system in Tibet he provides lists of the translators involved in the translation of Kālacakra-related works. After reporting on the invitation of Somanātha to Tibet and the subsequent translation of the *Laghukālacakratantra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho lists the twenty-five Tibetan translators involved in the twenty-four translations that followed ('gyur 'og) these initial two translations, a list that includes, needless to say, 'Bro Shes rab grags. Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho continues with another list of some of the translators involved in other Kālacakra-related works

²¹¹ See the *Ng-TK* (62.22–63.6).

²¹² See the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 382b2–4) and the *5th-TK* (48a1–4).

(*dum bu gzhan*), among them, notably, Pu rangs lo chung and gNyel cor Shes rab grags, whom he clearly considers to be two different persons (on which issue, see above §2.D.4). He then concludes with a clarification regarding what is known as the 'Bro Tradition, stating that one should not mistakenly believe that this tradition started from the very first translations, for this designation only refers to the translations done during Somanātha's second visit.²¹³ The questions as to where 'Bro Shes rab grags learnt Sanskrit and during which visit of Somanātha he collaborated with him on which translations cannot be addressed within the framework of the present article. I wish nonetheless to merely point out that Kragh's conclusion, based on a passage from Bu ston's History of the Kālacakra he has (only partially) cited, that "[t]his passage may indicate that 'Bro Shes rab grags learnt the craft of translating Sanskrit in Tibet under Somanātha at this time, if the expression 'had become a translator' (*lo tstsha byas*) can be taken as carrying this implication and if it does not simply mean 'hired as a translator,'" is rather unfounded, for the expression *lo tsā ba byed pa* simply means "acting as a translator/interpreter" (usually for someone, in this passage for Somanātha) and not 'had become a translator' (*lo tstsha byas*) and certainly not "hired as a translator." With "at this time" Kragh is referring to Somanātha's first visit to Tibet, but again, that this was the time and occasion on which 'Bro Shes rab grags "learnt the craft of translating Sanskrit" is not necessarily a natural conclusion from this passage.²¹⁴ The passage, which is concerned with the translation of the *Vimalaprabhā*, will be briefly readdressed below (see §4.A.3).

(A) Translations in Collaboration with Somanātha

Kragh identifies ten works translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Somanātha: nine Kālacakra-related works and one non-Kālacakra work (the latter being what he refers to as the "SS root-text"). Kragh's identifications in this case are mostly correct. I shall nonetheless list all translations (eleven altogether) for the sake of completeness, and whenever possible provide some additional relevant information.

²¹³ See the *Baidūrya g.ya' sel* (88b5–89a4): ... 'gyur 'og nyi shu rtsa bzhi lo tsā ba nyi shu rtsa lnga byung ba yin te rjes su 'gyur 'go dang lo tsā ba ni | [...] (89a1) **'Bro shes rab grags** | [...] *dum bu gzhan tsam bsgyur pa'i lo tsā ba'i rnam grangs ni de bas kyang mang zhing* | [...] (89a2–3) **Pu hrang lo chung** | [...] **gNyel cor Shes rab grags** | [...] (89a3–4) **'Bro lugs kyi brgyud par Zla ba mgon po nas** | **'Bro lo Shes rab grags zhes 'byung bas thog ma'i lo tsā bar dogs pa mi bya ste** | **Zla mgon Bod du phyi ma byon dus** | **'Bro los 'gyur phyi ma mdzad pa'i brgyud lugs yin pa'i phyir zhes bya'o** | |.

²¹⁴ See Kragh 2010: 204 n. 26.

(1) D361/P3. *dBang mdor bstan pa* (*Sekoddeśa*). Colo: ... *'Jig rten khams kyi le'ur le'u lnga pa'i mchog tu mi 'gyur ba'i dbang gi sgrub thabs mdor bstan pa rdzogs so | | | 'di ni kha che'i paṇḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags pas bsgyur zhing zhus te gtan la phab pa las | slar yang sGra tshad pa Rin chen rgyal mtshan gyis dpal Nā ro pa'i 'grel bshad dang mthun par bsgyur zhing zhus te dag par byas pa'o |* . Revised by sGra tshad pa Rin chen rgyal mtshan (fl. 13th cent.; BDRC: P4284) in line with Nāropa's commentary. 'Bro Shes rab grags's translation is recorded in the *R-KC* under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags. The *BCh* also ascribes the translation to him.²¹⁵

The colophon of the Phug brag version (F412), notably, records two different revisions, neither of which is by sGra tshad pa, as follows: *'Jig rten gyi khams kyi le'u la sogs pa las | | le'u lnga pa mchog tu mi 'gyur ba'i dbang gi sgrub pa mdor bsdus pa'i le'u zhes bya ba rdzogs s.ho | | | rgya gar gyi paṇḍi ta Zla ba mgon po dang | bod kyi lo tstsha ba dge slong Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur nas gtan la phab pa'o | | slad nas paṇḍi ta mkhas pa chen po Sa manṭe shi'i zhal snga²¹⁶ nas dang | | lo tstsha ba dge slong Chos rab kyi zhu chen legs par bgyis pa'o | | | yang phyi Puṇye śrī De shantras rgya dpe la btugs shing 'grel pa dang btun nas chad pa bsabs zur nyams²¹⁷ pa rnams bsos te dag par byas pa'o |* . R1: [Rwa] Chos rab (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P3146) in collaboration with Samantaśrī (BDRC: P8141); R2: Puṇyaśrī-**Deśāntara*(?), having consulted numerous Sanskrit manuscripts and in line with the commentary, restored the lacunas and emended the corrupt readings. Both the name and identity of Puṇyaśrī-**Deśāntara* is uncertain. It is also unclear whether he is a *paṇḍita*—in which case he could perhaps be Puṇyaśrī (BDRC: P3850)—or a *lo tsā ba* (in which case I can offer no learned suggestion). According to Jampa Samten, the Phug brag version differs considerably from the versions transmitted in the mainstream editions.²¹⁸ Note that the Phug brag edition contains a duplicate with a virtually identical colophon (F485). As has already been alluded to, several translations of the *Sekoddeśa* are reported by the *Blue Annals* to have existed (see above, note 168), including ones by 'Bro Shes rab grags, Rwa Chos rab (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P3146), Man lungs pa Shākya 'od (fl. 13th cent.; BDRC: P5197), sGra tshad pa Rin rgyal, dPang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (1276–1342; BDRC: P2085), Yar klungs lo tsā ba, probably a reference to Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1242–1346?; BDRC: P2637), and Pu rangs lo chung. The one by Pu rangs lo chung has been discussed above. The one by Rwa lo tsā ba

²¹⁵ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.38] *dBang mdor bstan |*; *BCh*: [Bc1546] *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu dbang mdor bstan pa 'Bro Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*.

²¹⁶ snga] *em.*, mnga' Ms

²¹⁷ nyams] *em.*, mnyam D

²¹⁸ See Jampa Samten 1982: xii no. 6, 148 n. 1.

seems to have survived (at least partly) in the Phug brag KG edition, while the one by sGra tshad pa Rin rgyal must be a reference to his revision, transmitted in the mainstream KG editions. Also to be noted is that the colophon of the gTsang rong version (Cx10.4) only records the translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Somanātha, that is, with no reference to any revision. This latter, in any case, needs to be compared with the other extant versions in order to assess the degrees of the revisions reported in the colophons of the other versions.

(2) D362/P4 (dupl. TG D1346/PØ). *mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyung ba rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo* (Paramādibuddhod-dhritaśrīkālacakratantrarājā aka Laghukālacakratantra). Colo: *mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyung ba rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo zhes bya ba rdzogs so || || kha che'i paṇḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa las | dus phyis yon tan phul du byung ba dpag tu med pas spras pa'i Bla ma dam pa Chos kyi rgyal po'i bka' lung dang | dPon chen Shākya bzang po'i gsung bzhin du | mkhas pa chen po Zhang ston mDo sde dpal dang | Dus kyi 'khor lo'i tshul khong du chud pa'i dge slong Tshul khriṃs dar gyis don gyi cha la legs par dpyad cing bskul te | legs par sbyar ba'i skad kyi brda sprod pa'i bstan bcos rig pa'i dge slong Shong ston gyis | dPal Sa skya'i gtsug lag khang chen por Yul dbus kyi rgya dpe gnyis la gtugs shing legs par bcos te gtan la phab pa'o ||*. Revised by Shong ston [rDo rje rgyal mtshan] (b. 1235/1245?; BDRC: P1046) after consulting two Sanskrit manuscripts from Madhyadeśa in the Great Temple of Glorious Sa skya, at the behest of Zhang ston mDo sde dpal (b. 13th cent.; PORK1531) and Tshul khriṃs dar,²¹⁹ both of whom investigated the text upon the request of Chos rgyal [Phags pa] (1235–1280; BDRC: P1048) and dPon chen Shākya bzang po (d. 1270; BDRC: P2220). The identification of this Shong ston as rDo rje rgyal mtshan (and not as Blo gros rgyal mtshan, b. 13th cent.; BDRC: P1052) is based on several external sources.²²⁰ 'Bro Shes rab grags's translation of the *Laghukālacakratantra*

²¹⁹ Cf. Kragh 2010: 206 n. 33, item no. (ii): "Later revised by Zhang ston Mdo sde Dpal, Tshul khriṃs dar, and the monk Shong ston."

²²⁰ One such a source is the record in the *Zh-TK* cited below, note 223. Another source is the Fifth Dalai Lama's Records of Teachings Received. I shall cite it here despite the fact that it erroneously refers to the *Sekoddeśa* instead of the *Vimalaprabhā*—whose colophon indeed provides details regarding the first revision similar to those found in the colophon of the *Laghukālacakratantra*—for it sheds some more light on the circumstances of the first revision, stating that 'Phags pa was acting in accordance with Sa paṇ's final instructions. See the *INga pa chen po'i gsan yig* (vol. 4: 456.11–18): *dang po ni* (= gNyis su med pa'i rgyud) | **Ka pa la dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud stong phrag bcu gnyis pa las byung ba rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu dbang mdoṣt bstan** (erroneous for the *Vimalaprabhā*) *zhes bya ba kha che'i paṇḍi ta So ma nā tha dang 'Bro lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba dus phyis 'jig rten gyi mig gcig pu Shong ston lo tsā ba rDo rje rgyal mtshan gyis*

is recorded in the *R-KC*, together with the *Vimalaprabhā*. The *BCh* ascribes the translation to Rwa Chos rab, and notes that in general there exist fourteen translations of this *tantra*!²²¹ It is notable that Ngor chen in his *Gl-TK_T* ascribes the translation (and not merely the revision) to Shong ston.²²² He does so also in regard to the commentary (for which, see below).

The version of the *mūlatantra* found in the smaller editions of the TG (D1347) is identical with that transmitted in the DP KG editions, and its inclusion there goes back to Bu ston, who in his *Zh-TK* justifies its inclusion in the TG as follows: “[...] As for this (i.e., the *Laghukālacakratantra*), I wrote it down here because I thought that it would be of great merit to put together the basic text and the commentary in one place and that it would be of great benefit for the current propagation of [its] exposition and study, and it is not that I wrote this *tantrarāja* down [here] because it is classified as *śāstra*.”²²³

The colophon of the version contained in the Phug brag KG edition (F411) is virtually identical. It, however, adds an interesting remark at the end, namely, that this version was proofread on the basis of the block print prepared by U rgyan pa: *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud 'di grub chen U²²⁴ rgyan pas dpar du mdzad pa las zhal zhus pa'o* | |. This early print, which according to Kawa Sherab Sangpo, was very likely made in 1293, is certainly one of the earliest existing witnesses of the *tantra* in Tibetan translation.²²⁵ Also to be noted is that the *R-KC* records a revision of both the *Laghukālacakratantra* and its commentary (i.e., the *Vimalaprabhā*) by sTeng pa lo tā ba [Tshul khrim s 'byung gnas] (1107–1190; BDRC: P3849), Gro lung pa's (b.

dag par bcos pa | *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo zhes bya ba'i bsdus pa'i rgyud le'u lnga pa pañdi ta So ma nā tha dang lo tsā ba 'Bro lo Shes rab grags kyiis bsgyur ba las dus phyis 'Jam mgon Sa skya pañ chen gyi mtha' ma'i gsung bzhin Chos kyi rgyal po 'Phags pa rin po che'i bdag rkyen la brten nas Shong lo tsā ba rDo rje rgyal mtshan gyis zhus pa | slar yang lo tsā ba Blo gros rgyal mtshan dang Blo gros dpal gnyis kyiis rgyud dang 'grel ba'i rgya dpe mang po la gtugs nas dag par bcos pa* |.

²²¹ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.31 & Rr28.32]: *Dus 'khor* ['khor em., mkhor NR] *rtsa 'grel dang* | |; *BCh*: [Bc1547] *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus Rwa Chos rab kyi 'gyur* | *spyir 'di la 'gyur bcu bzhi yod* |.

²²² See the *Gl-TK_T* (245.15): *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus pa'i rgyud Shong gi 'gyur* |.

²²³ See the *Zh-TK* (419.2–4): *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po* | *kha che'i pañdi ta So ma nā tha dang* | *bod kyi lo tsā ba chen po 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyiis bsgyur ba las* | *mkhas pa chen po Shong ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan gyis bcos shing gtan la phab pa'o* | | *'di ni* | *rtsa 'grel phyogs gcig tu bsdebs na bsod namis che zhing* | *deng sang bshad nyan dar ba'i phyir phan che ba la bsam nas 'dir bris pa yin gyi* | *rgyud kyi rgyal po 'di bstan bcos kyi khongs su gtogs nas bris pa ni ma yin no* | |. See also the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 348b6–349a1), where Bu ston's justification is reproduced.

²²⁴ u] em., dbu Ms

²²⁵ On this print, see Kawa Sherab Sangpo 2013: 205–207.

11th cent.; BDRC: P3465) student.²²⁶ Both these versions are yet to be located.

(3) D1347/P2064 (dupl. KG D845/PØ). Puṇḍarīka's *bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu pa bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od* (*Vimalaprabhā-mūlatantrānusārīṇīdōādaśasāhasrikālaghukālacakratantrārājaṭikā*). Colo: *bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad*²²⁷ *rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od ces bya ba rdzogs so | | | kha che'i paṇḍi ta chen po So ma nā tha dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba chen po 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa las | dus phyis yon tan phul du byung ba dpag tu med pas spras pa'i Bla ma dam pa Chos kyi rgyal ba'*²²⁸ *bka' lung dang | dPon chen Shākya bzang po'i gsung bzhin du mkhas pa chen po Zhang ston mDo sde dpal dang | Dus kyi 'khor lo'i tshul khong du chud pa'i dge slong Tshul khriṃs dar gyis don gyi cha la dpyad cing*²²⁹ *legs par bskul te legs par sbyar ba'i skad kyis brda sprod pa'i bstan bcos rig pa'i lo tsā ba dge slong Shong ston gyis | dPal Sa skya'i gtsug lag khang chen por Yul dbus kyi rgya dpe gnyis la gtugs shing legs par bcos te gtan la phab pa'o |*²³⁰ *[...] slar yang dpal ldan bla ma dam pa chos kyi rje thams cad mkhyen pa dang | dPal ldan dus kyi 'khor lo pa chen po Dha rma kī rti shrī bha dras | 'di'i don rnam legs par dgongs shing bka' yis bskul nas de dag gi gsung bzhin du | paṇḍi ta chen po Sthi ra ma ti'i bka' drin las legs par sbyar ba'i tshul rig pa lo tsā ba shākya'i dge slong Blo gros rgyal mtshan dang | Blo gros dpal bzang pos | rgyud dang 'grel pa'i rgya dpe mang po la gtugs nas dag pa rnam dang mthun par bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o | | [...]*²³¹

The first part of the colophon, which is found in both D and P and includes information regarding the translation and the first revision, is literally identical with that of the *Laghukālacakratantra* (see the previous item). This is confirmed by the *Zh-TK* record, though apparently only for two chapters.²³² The colophon of D adds a passage regarding a second revision done at the behest of the glorious sublime

²²⁶ See the R-KC: [Rr28.68 & Rr2869] *Dus 'khor rtsa 'grel la sog pa la zhu dag byas | | .*

²²⁷ 'grel bshad] P rgyas 'grel D

²²⁸ ba'i] P, po'i D

²²⁹ cing] D, shing P

²³⁰ P has an editorial note regarding the proofreading (*lan gcig zhus | | bkra shis |*), but lacks the passage regarding the second revision (underlined), including the verses (which are not cited here).

²³¹ underlined passage] D, om. P

²³² See the *Zh-TK* (419.4–5): *bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel bshad rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od ces bya ba | 'phags pa sPyan ras gzigs dbang phyug gis mdzad pa'i phyi 'jig rten khams kyi le'u dang | nang sems can khams kyi le'u gnyis 'gyur rgyud dang 'dra ba.... Cf., however, the *Gl-TK*₇ (245.17), which refers to three chapters: *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus pa'i rgyud Shong gi 'gyur | 'jig rten khams le'u 'grel pa | nang le'u 'grel pa | dbang gi le'u'i 'grel pa | Shong gi 'gyur |**

teacher, the omniscient Lord of the Dharma and of the great [master] of the *Śrī-Kālacakra*[*tantra*] Dharmakīrti-Śrībhadrā by [Sa bzang ma ti paṅ chen] Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1294–1376; P151) and Blo gros dpal bzang po (1299–1354; BDRC: P153), thanks to the kindness of the great *paṇḍita* Sthiramati, on the basis of several Sanskrit manuscripts. While the identity of the translators seems rather clear, a few words should be said regarding the identity of the other three persons mentioned. Although at first glance it appears that “the great *paṇḍita* Sthiramati” is an Indic master, I suggest that this is a reference to dPang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa aka Sthiramati, who was the teacher of both Blo gros rgyal mtshan and Blo gros dpal bzang po. In this case, the word “kindness” should be understood as an expression of this teacher–disciple relationship. As for “the glorious sublime teacher, the omniscient Lord of the Dharma” and “the great [master] of the *Śrīkālacakra*[*tantra*] Dharmakīrti-Śrībhadrā,” I would like to suggest that this is a reference to Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1306–1386; BDRC: P152) and his disciple Kun spangs Chos grags (dpal) bzang po (1283~1310–1363~1385; BDRC: P6861), respectively.²³³ The fact that this second revision is not mentioned in the *Zh-TK* might suggest that it was done after 1335, the year in which the *Zhwa lu* edition was completed.

As has already been pointed out, 'Bro Shes rab grags's translation is recorded in the *R-KC* under the section listing his translations. The *I-TK*, in contrast, names [Rwa lo tsā ba] Chos rab. The *BCh* reports on the existence of more than ten different translations by Rwa [lo tsā ba Chos rab] and others.²³⁴ The *T-TK* records the work with a translation ascription to Sangs rgyas grags, who is clearly rTsa mi lo tsā ba (fl. 11th/12th cent.; BDRC: P5169).²³⁵ This identification is supported by the colophon, where it is stated that his birthplace is Mi nyag, that he stayed for a long time in India, and that the translation was done by him (referred to as bSod snyoms pa chen po) in the Tārā Temple of Nālandā: *byang phyogs Mi*²³⁶ *nyag yul du skyes kyang ni | | yun ring 'Phags pa'i yul du gnas bcas nas | | bla ma dam pa sangs rgyas kun mchod*

²³³ The suggestions made here regarding the identity of the three persons in question are tentative and need further corroboration, which goes beyond the present paper. Cf. Kragh 2010: 206 n. 33, item (iii): “Later, revised again by Dharmakīrti Śrībhadrā, the great *paṇḍita* Sthiramati, and the translators Blo gros Rgyal mtshan and Blo gros Dpal bzang po on the basis of several Indian manuscripts.”

²³⁴ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.32] (cited above, note 221); *I-TK* (A, 22a2; B, 17a4 = I_{js}395): *dPal Dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgya cher 'grel pa dri ma med pa'i 'od stong phrag bcu gnyis pa Chos rab kyi bsgyur ba...*; *BCh*: [Bc2605] *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus rgyud kyi 'grel pa dri med 'od Rwa la sogs pa'i 'gyur bcu lhag yod |*.

²³⁵ See the *T-TK* (7a5–6): *KA pa la* [T0057] *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel pa sPyan ras gzigs kyi mdzad pa Dri ma med pa'i 'od stong phrag bcu gnyis pa'i stod bzhugs | KHA pa la de'i smad Sangs rgyas grags kyi bsgyur ba dang |*. T0057 is found in section II, Ka(2), 1b1–321a5 & Kha(3), 1b1–291b4.

²³⁶ *mi] em., me Ms*

pa'i || dge slong **Sangs rgyas grags pa zhes bya ba** || rgyud rnams kyi ni rdo rje'i tshig bshad pa || **dPal ldan dang po'i sangs rgyas rgyud chen las** || bton pa **dPal ldan dus 'khor nyung rgyud kyi** || **rgyud dang rGyas 'grel Bod yig bris pa yis** || de yis bsod nams cung zhig skyes pa 'dis || 'jig rten gsum du gnas pa'i skye bo kun || mchog tu mi 'gyur bde chen po ni || myur ba nyid du de yis thob par shog || || rig pa'i 'byung gnas yul **Ma ga dha'i dPal Na len drar rje btsun ma sgröl ma'i lha khang du** | pan ñi ta chen po dge slong rdo rje 'dzin pa dpal **bSod snyoms pa chen pos** || skyes bu rnams kyi don du bsgyur ba'i **dPal dus kyi 'khor lo** || rdzogs s.ho || ||. As noted earlier (see the previous entry), the R-KC records a revision of the *Vimalaprabhā* by sTeng pa lo tā ba Tshul khriims 'byung gnas, which is yet to be located.

Of relevance is perhaps also the passage from Bu ston's History of Kālacakra found in the context of explaining the 'Bro Tradition, including the circumstances under which the *Vimalaprabhā* was translated. According to this passage, Somanātha came to Tibet and the teachings were first imparted to Kha rag gnyos (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: PORK1047), with whom he seems to have begun to translate the *Vimalaprabhā*. Nonetheless, expecting a hundred gold coins more than what was actually offered, the *pañḍita* was displeased and thus only translated half of the commentary. Taking with him the remaining half, he went to 'Phan yul grab, where Zhang Pho chung appointed him as his teacher (which appears to imply his financial support). He then completed the translation, having 'Bro [Shes rab grags] acting as his *lo tsā ba*. This passage seems thus to entail that 'Bro Shes rab grags was involved in the translation of only the second half of the text.²³⁷

(4) D1353/P2070. Kālacakrapāda's *dBang mdor bstan pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa* (*Sekoddeśaṭikā*). Colo: **Dang po'i sangs rgyas kyi**²³⁸ **rgyud las bkol ba** | **dBang mdor bstan pa zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa** | rnal 'byor pa **Dus kyi 'khor lo**²³⁹ **zhabs kyis mdzad pa rdzogs so** || || **kha che'i pañḍi ta Zla ba'i mgon po dang** | **lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba'o** || ||. The identification of the translator in this case is rather straightforward. 'Bro Shes rab grags's translation is unmistakably recorded in the R-KC under the section listing his translations. Both the *U-TK* and the *T-TK* name the translator as Shes rab grags (i.e., without the attribute 'Bro), whereas the *BCh* does offer a clear identi-

²³⁷ See the *Dus 'khor chos 'byung* (31a2): **dang po ni** (i.e., '**Bro pa'i lugs**) | **de nas kha che Zla mgon Bod du byon Kha rag gnyos la babs** | '**grel pa Dri ma med pa'i 'od bsgyur** | **gser srang brgya rdzong bar chad** | **pañḍi ta ma ngu bar 'grel pa phyed las ma bsgyur** | '**gyur byed 'phro ba bsnams nas 'Phan yul grab tu byon** || **Zhang Pho chung bas bla mar bzung** | '**Bros lo tstsha ba byas nas yongs su rdzogs par bsgyur** |. Similar passages are found in other sources, all of which, however, cannot be recorded here.

²³⁸ kyi] D, kyis P

²³⁹ lo] P, lo'i D

fiction.²⁴⁰ Interestingly, the colophon of the T version, which is generally similar to those of the DP versions, does not mention Somanātha as the collaborating *paṇḍita*: *Dang po'i sangs rgyas kyi rgyud las bka' sstal pa | dBang mdor bstan*²⁴¹ *pa zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa | rnal 'byor pa Dus kyi 'khor lo pa'i zhabs kyi mdzad pa rdzogs s.ho | | lo tshtsa ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur*²⁴² *ba'o | |*.

(5) D1357/P2074. *Kālacakrapāda's dPal ldan rgyu skar gyi dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs yan lag bcu gcig pa (Śrī(mad)nakṣatramāṇḍalasādhana-ekādaśāṅga)*. Colo: *dKyil 'khor rgyas pa'i sgrub thabs | slob dpon Dus 'khor zhabs kyi mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | kha che'i paṇḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba dge slong Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba'o | |*. The R-KC includes this translation under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags. The *I*-TK and *T*-TK name Shes rab grags as the translator, while the *BCh* simply has 'Bro. The *Zh*-TK (followed by later catalogues) has a record resembling the colophon.²⁴³

(6) D1371/P2087. *Mañjuśrīrājakīrti's rNal 'byor gsum gyi snying po gsal ba (Triyogahṛdayavyākaraṇa)*. Colo: *rNal 'byor gsum gyi snying po gsal ba zhes bya ba | byang chub sems dpa' 'Jam dpal rgyal po grags par gdul bya la dgongs nas skye ba bzhes nas mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | paṇḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | lo tsā ba 'Bro Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba'o | | |*. The work does not seem to have been recorded in the R-KC. The records in the *I*-TK, *BCh*, and *T*-TK mention no translator.²⁴⁴ The *Zh*-TK appears to be the first to mention 'Bro Shes rab grags and Somanātha as the translation team, an ascription that was adopted by

²⁴⁰ See the R-KC: [Rr28.39] *de'i* (i.e., *dBang mdor bstan gyi*) *'grel pa Dus zhabs kyi byas pa*; *I*-TK (A, 22a3; B, 17a5 = *I*_{JS}396): *Dus 'khor zhabs* ^[Ka la tsakra pā da] *kyi dBang mdor bstan gyi rgya cher 'grel Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *T*-TK (7b1): [T0061] *dBang mdor bstan gyi rgya che 'grel pa slob dpon Dus zhabs kyi mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*. T0061 is found in section II, Ga(4), 205a1–241b5. *BCh*: [Bc2608] *dBang mdor bstan gyi 'grel pa Dus 'khor zhabs kyi mdzad pa 'Bro Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*.

²⁴¹ *bstan*] *em.*, *stan Ms*

²⁴² *bsgyur*] *em.*, *sgyur Ms*

²⁴³ See the R-KC: [Rr28.35] *Dus zhabs kyi byas pa'i sGrub thabs dang | |*; *I*-TK (A, 37b6–38a1; B, 30a2–3 = *I*_{JS}820): *slob dpon Dus 'khor zhabs* ^[Ka la tsakra pā da] *kyi mdzad pa'i dPal ldan rgyu skar gyi dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs yan lag bcu cig pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *T*-TK (7b4): [T0065] *dPal ldan rgyu skar gyi dkyil 'khor yan lag bcu cig pa Dus zhabs kyi mdzad pa le'u bcu cig pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*. T0065 is found in section II, Nga(5), 30a1–49b6. Its colophon resembles those of the DP versions. See also the *BCh*: [Bc2618] *slob dpon Dus 'khor zhabs kyi mdzad pa'i dPal ldan rgyu skar gyi dkyil 'khor gyi sgrub thabs yan lag bcu cig pa gnyis* (i.e., Bc2617 & Bc2618) *'Bro 'gyur |*; *Zh*-TK (420.4–5); *Ng*-TK (14.20–21); *Gl*-TK_T (245.19–20). On Bc2617, see below (§4.H.1).

²⁴⁴ R-KC(Ø); *I*-TK (A, 22a6–b1; B, 17b1–2 = *I*_{JS}403): *'Jam dpal* ^[Madzū śrī] *gyis mdzad pa'i rNal 'byor gsum gyi snying po gsal ba |*; *BCh*: [Bc2624] *'Jam dpal gyis mdzad pa'i rNal 'byor gsum gyi snying po gsal ba |*; *T*-TK (8a1): [T0073] *sNying po gsum gsal ba rGyal po grags pa bshes gnyen gyis mdzad pa dang |*. T0073 is found in section II, Nga(5), 108a1–109a3, and as expected has no translation colophon.

later cataloguers.²⁴⁵ The *GI-TK_T* seems not to have recorded the work at all.

(7) ? D1372/P2088. *Kālacakrapāda*'s *sByor ba yan lag drug gi man ngag rje dus 'khor zhabs kyis mdzad pa'i snyan rgyud zhal gyi gdams pa* (*Ṣaḍaṅgayogopadeśa*). Colo: ***sByor ba yan lag drug gi man ngag rje***²⁴⁶ ***Dus 'khor zhabs kyis***²⁴⁷ *mdzad pa'i snyan rgyud zhal gyi gdams pa*²⁴⁸ *rdzogs so || || paṅḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | lo tsā ba 'Bro Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba'o | |*. The *R-KC* seems not to have a record of this work. The *I-TK* contained at first a record of the work with no translation ascription, as in both the earlier (MS B) and later (MS A) versions. The later version contains another record in chapter 21 (found only in MS A) with a solo translation (*rang 'gyur*) ascription to Vibhūticandra (fl. 12th/13th cent.). Both records are also found in the *BCh*.²⁴⁹ The *T-TK* contains only the record with the translation ascription to Vibhūticandra, which is confirmed by the T colophon:²⁵⁰ ***Dus 'khor zhabs kyis gsungs pa'i sByor ba drug gi man ngag rdzogs s.ho | | | | shar phyogs Dzā ga ta la'i paṅḍi ta chen po Bi bhu ti tsan dras rang 'gyur du mdzad pa'o | | | |***. Nonetheless, a comparison of the T and DP versions reveals that they are practically identical. For his Zhwa lu edition, Bu ston has only one record with a translation ascription to 'Bro Shes rab grags and Somanātha. Later editions followed suit.²⁵¹ It is hard to tell what the reason for the conflicting information in the colophons was, and there seems to be no explanation either as to why Bu ston, who obviously recognized that the two versions were identical, ascribed it to 'Bro Shes rab grags and Somanātha and not to Vibhūticandra. For lack of further evidence, we shall for now follow Bu ston in this regard.

²⁴⁵ See the *Zh-TK* (421.4–5): *rNal 'byor gsum gyi snying po gsal bzhes bya ba 'Jam dbyangs grags pas mdzad pa | paṅḍi ta So ma nā tha dang | lo tsā ba 'Bro Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |*. See also the *Ng-TK* (15.23–16.1); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 350b1–3).

²⁴⁶ rje] P, om. D

²⁴⁷ kyis] D, kyī P

²⁴⁸ gdams pa] P, man ngag D

²⁴⁹ *R-KC*(Ø); *I-TK* (A, 22b1; B, 17b2 = *I_{JS}404*): ***Dus 'khor zhabs*** [*Kā la tsakra pā da*] *kyī sByor ba yan lag drug gi man ngag |*; *I-TK* (A, 75b1; BØ): *slob dpon Dus 'khor zhabs kyis gsungs pa'i sByor [drug] gi man ngag Bi bhu ta tsan tra'i rang 'gyur |*; *BCh*: [Bc2625] ***Dus 'khor zhabs kyī sByor ba yan lag drug gi man ngag |***; *BCh*: [Bc2636] ***Dus 'khor zhabs kyī sByor drug gi man ngag dang |*** [...] *gnyis* (= Bc2636 & Bc2637) ***Bi bhu ti tsandra'i rang 'gyur |***.

²⁵⁰ See the *T-TK* (8a2–3): [T0077] *sByor ba drug gi man ngag Dus 'khor zhabs kyis gsungs pa Bhi bu ta tsantra'i 'gyur |*. T0077 is found in section II, Nga(5), 153a5–156a6.

²⁵¹ *Zh-TK* (421.5–6): *sByor ba yan lag drug gi man ngag dus zhabs snyan brgyud ces bya ba | paṅḍi ta So ma nā tha shrī dang | 'Bro Shes rab grags kyī 'gyur |*. See also the *Ng-TK* (16.2–3), which erroneously reads *Samantaśrī* instead of *Somanātha śrī*, and the *D-TK* (vol. 2: 350b2–3).

(8) DØ/P4609 (dupl. KG D365/P7). *dBang gi rab tu byed pa* (*Sekaprakriyā*). Colo: ***dBang gi rab 'byed pa*** *rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po* ***Zla ba dgon po dang | bod kyi lo tsa ba*** ***Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur te gtan la phab pa'o | |***. This version bears annotations by an unknown author. The work is also found in the KG (D365/P7). This version bears the same title but its translation, which is indeed different, is ascribed to Rwa lo tsā ba Chos rab in collaboration with Samantaśrī. Moreover, the translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags has also been transmitted in the Phug brag KG edition (F413), where it has a slightly different title and lacks the annotations. Colo: ***dBang gi rab tu dbye ba*** *rdzogs s.ho | | | kha che'i paṇḍi ta* ***So ma nā tha dang | bod kyi lo tstsha ba*** ***'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba'o | |***. As pointed out by Jampa Samten, this version differs greatly from the one transmitted in the mainstream KG editions (D365/P7). Jampa Samten also points out that the catalogue of the Phug brag edition erroneously ascribes the translation to Rwa Chos rab, oblivious of the version actually transmitted in the edition.²⁵² There is still another version in the Phug brag edition (F486), one which lacks a translation colophon and which, according to Jampa Samten, is not recorded in the Phug brag catalogue. Nonetheless, Jampa Samten's claim that this version is the same as the one asserted to be by 'Bro Shes rab grags and Somanātha (i.e., F413) cannot be entirely endorsed, for although it resembles it, it is not entirely the same, some of the formulations found there being indeed noticeably different, so that further scrutiny of the text and a careful comparison of it with the other version are required.²⁵³ The translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags is recorded in both the *R-KC* and the *BCh*.²⁵⁴ It appears, however, not to be recorded in either the *U-TK* or the *T-TK*, possibly because it was regarded as a KG work.

(9) D2260/P3107. *IHan cig skyes grub* (*Sahajasiddhi*). Colo: ***IHan cig skyes grub*** *rdzogs so | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po* ***Zla ba mgon po***²⁵⁵ *dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba* ***Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba'o | | |***. Neither the *R-KC* nor the *U-TK* nor the *BCh* seems to have a record of the work.²⁵⁶ The *T-TK* records the work and its commentary together and names the translator of both as Prajñākīrti. To be noted, however, is

²⁵² See Jampa Samten 1992: xiii no. 7 & 148 n. 2. Note that Jampa Samten fails to identify the parallel version in the P TG edition.

²⁵³ See Jampa Samten 1992: 179 n. 2.

²⁵⁴ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.36] ***dBang rab byed | |***, under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags; *BCh*: [Bc1449] ***dBang gi rab tu byed pa 'Bro 'gyur |***. Note that Nishioka erroneously identifies Bc1449 as P7, while for P4609 no equivalent is given.

²⁵⁵ po] D, om., P

²⁵⁶ The possibility suggested by van der Kuijp & Schaeffer that the work is being referred to under Rr18.39/Rr18.39: ***rDo rje chos phyag na pad mo'i sgrub thabs gnyis | |*** is rather low.

that whereas the colophon of the commentary indeed calls the translator 'Bro dge slong Prajñākīrti—which, as we have seen by now, is a rather unusual combination of the name—the colophon of the basic text is very similar to those of the DP versions, and thus likewise provides the name Shes rab grags.²⁵⁷ Later TG catalogues contain records that reflect the colophons.²⁵⁸ Although we do not find any explicit identification of the translator as 'Bro Shes rab grags, it is to be assumed that this is the case, for the translation was done in collaboration with Somanātha. The identity of the translator of the commentary will be discussed below (see §4.B.3).

The R-KC records under the section of works translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags altogether eleven works, while indicating that the list is not exhaustive (by way of the phrase *la sogs pa* at the end of the list). Six of these could be identified as translations in collaboration with Somanātha and have been accordingly discussed above. Another three could be identified as translations done in collaborations with other *paṇḍitas* and will be discussed below. Here I would like to briefly consider the remaining two and suggest that, although they have been transmitted in the TG as solo translations by Somanātha, 'Bro Shes rab grags may have been involved alongside him in making them.

(10) ? D1348/P2065. Puṇḍarīka's *dPal don dam pa'i bsnyen pa* (*Śrīparamārthasevā*). Colo: *dpal 'jig rten dbang phyug gi*²⁵⁹ *sprul pa'i sku Padma dkar pos mdzad pa rdzogs so* | | | *kha che'i paṇḍi ta Zla ba'i mgon pos bsgyur nas gtan la phab pa'o* | | *'di la 'gyur byang gcig kyang 'gyur mi 'dra ba gnyis yod pa las* | *'di nyid 'gyur cung bde bar snang ngo* | |²⁶⁰ The colophons of both the DP versions state that it is a solo translation by Somanātha. Interestingly, the P colophon adds that there exist two translations of it, even though their translation colophons are identical. It concludes by stating that "this one" (i.e., the one included) is a slightly better translation. Another version has in fact been transmitted in the gTsang rong KG edition. This version (Cx10.6) is an entirely different translation, but it has no translation

²⁵⁷ See the T-TK (63a3): [T1815] *IHan cig skyes grub slob dpon In tra bo dhis mdzad pa dang* [T1816] *de nyid kyi gzhung 'grel lHa lcam dPal mos mdzad pa Pra dznya kir ti yis 'gyur ba...* T1815 is found in section II, We(81), 346b1–349b1.

²⁵⁸ See the Zh-TG (496.4–5): *IHan cig skyes grub rgyal po Indra bhū tis mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Zla ba'i mgon po dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |; D-TK (vol. 2: 388a5). See also the Ng-TK (70.17–18), which adds an annotation, yielding the reading "[I wonder whether [it] is actually] a commentary of] the *IHan cig skyes grub* composed by Indrabhūti" (*IHan cig skyes grub* ^[kyi 'grel pa yin nam snyam] *rgyal po Indra bhūtis mdzad pa* |).

²⁵⁹ gi] D, gis P

²⁶⁰ underlined passage] P, om. D

colophon.²⁶¹ As already alluded to, the *R-KC* lists it under translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags.²⁶² The situation in the *U-TK* is more complex, for the earlier version (MS B) names 'Bro as the translator, whereas the later version (MS A) names Somanātha as a solo translator.²⁶³ Both the *BCh* and *T-TK*, which, as already discussed elsewhere, are based on the later version of the *U-TK*, also ascribes the translation to Somanātha, as do later catalogues.²⁶⁴

(11) ? D1350/P2067. *Padma can zhes bya ba'i dka' 'grel* (*Padminī nāma prañjikā*). Colo: *rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i ye shes kyi le'u las mdor bsdus pa'i bshad pa' 'Grel bshad padma can zhes bya ba rdzogs so | | | | kha che'i pañdi ta So ma nā thas bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o | | | |*. The *R-KC* records the work under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags. All later catalogues, however, name Somanātha as a solo translator, as does the colophon of the T version.²⁶⁵

(B) Translations in Collaboration with Maitrīpāda

Kragh has recorded one translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Maitrīpāda. Here I would like to suggest two more translations done by this team, namely, one which Kragh suggested was perhaps translated in collaboration with **Somanātha**, and another, which was listed by Kragh as having been done in collaboration with ***Mānavihārapa**.

²⁶¹ The duplicate Cx05.9 appears not to have a colophon either, but I have not been able to see the scans.

²⁶² See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.34] *Don dam bsnyen* [bsnyen *em.*; sten? N; bsnye R] *pa dang | |*.

²⁶³ See the *U-TK* (B, 17a2–3 = I_{JS}393): *rgyal po Pad ma dkar pos mdzad pa'i Don dam bsnyen* [bsnyen *em.*, snye Ms] *pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *ibid.* (A, 21b6–22a1): *rgyal po Pad ma dkar pos* ^[Puñda ri ka] *mdzad pa'i Don dam bsnyen pa Zla ba mgon po'i* ^[So ma nā tha] *rang 'gyur |*.

²⁶⁴ See the *BCh*: [Bc2607] *rgyal po Pad ma dkar pos mdzad pa'i Don dam bsnyen pa Zla ba mgon po'i rang 'gyur |*; *T-TK* (7a6–7): [T0058] *Don dam pa'i bsnyen pa Pad ma dkar pos mdzad pa Zla ba mgon po'i 'gyur |*. T0058 is found in section II, Kha(3), 292a1–316b1. Its colophon resembles those of the DP versions. See also the *Zh-TK* (419.6–7); *Ng-TK* (14.12–14); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 349a4).

²⁶⁵ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.33] *'Grel chung padma can* [N: *'Grel pa pad dkar*] *dang | |*; *U-TK* (A, 21b5–6; B, 17a1–2 = I_{JS}391) *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus rgyud kyi dka' 'grel pad ma can So ma nā tha'i* ^[Zla ba mgon po] *rang 'gyur |*; *T-TK* (7a7–b1): [T0060] *Pad ma can zhes bya ba'i 'grel pa So ma na tha'i 'gyur |*. T0060 is located in section II, Ga(4), 1b1–204b6. The colophon of the T version is similar to those of the DP versions. See also the *BCh*: [Bc2606] *de'i* (i.e., *Dri med 'od kyi*) *go sla'i 'grel pa Pad ma can So ma nā tha'i 'gyur |*; *Zh-TK* (419.7–420.1) *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud kyi rgyal po'i dka' 'grel padma can zhes bya ba | dpal Dus 'khor zhabs chen pos mdzad pa | kha che'i pañdi ta So ma nā thas bsgyur ba dang |*; *Ng-TK* (14.15–17); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 349a5); *Gl-TK_T* (245.18–19).

(1) D1180/P2310. Vajragarbha's *Kye'i rdo rje bsdus pa'i don gyi rgya cher 'grel pa* (*Hevajrapañḍārthaṭīkā*). As has been discussed above in detail (§2.D.4), 'Bro Shes rab grags translated the second instalment of the work in collaboration with Maitrīpāda.

(2) In one case, the name of the collaborating *pañḍita* is not mentioned in the colophon, which merely states that 'Bro Shes rab grags translated the text after he had studied (lit. "listened to") it under "the teacher" (*bla ma*), who Kragh suggests is "probably" Somanātha.²⁶⁶ Following a closer examination of the material and in the light of new evidence, I believe that this identification should be called into question.

D1355/P2072. *Dārika-pa's rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i dbang gi rab tu byed pa'i 'grel pa rdo rje'i tshig 'byed pa* (*Śrīkālacakratantrarājasyasekaprakriyāvṛitti-vajrapadodghaṭi*). Colo: **dBang gi rab tu byed pa'i 'grel pa | rdo rje'i tshig 'byed pa zhes bya ba | dge slong mkhas pa chen po Dā ri ka pas mdzad pa | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro**²⁶⁷ **dge slong Shes rab grags pas Bla ma las mnyan nas bsgyur pa rdzogs so | |**. Notable is the omission of the attribute 'Bro in the P version. The R-KC allows an accurate identification of the translator, for it records the work under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags. The *U-TK*, followed by the *T-TK*, provides the mere name, Shes rab grags. The *BCh* only gives the attribute 'Bro, whereas the *Zh-TK*, followed by later catalogues, provides the full name, 'Bro Shes rab grags.²⁶⁸

None of the catalogues provides information as to the identity of the "teacher" (*bla ma*) under whom 'Bro Shes rab grags studied the work. Luckily, the colophon of the T version does provide the names of two *pañḍitas* who collaborated on the translation, namely, Maitrīpa, with whom, as we already know, 'Bro collaborated on the translation of the second instalment of Vajragarbha's *Hevajrapañḍārthaṭīkā* (D1180/P2310), and a Kashmiri named Vinayaśrī. Colo: **dPal dus kyi 'khor lo zhes bya ba bsdus pa'i rgyud byang chub sems dpa' 'Jam pa'i dbyangs kyi sprul par grags pa rgyal po grags pa zhes bya bas bsdus pa 'di la | de'i 'grel pa dge slong Dha ri ka pas mdzad pa rdzogs s.ho | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po Me tri zhabs dang | kha che'i slob dpon Bi na ya**

²⁶⁶ See Kragh 2010: 207 n. 33, item (v).

²⁶⁷ 'Bro] P, om. D

²⁶⁸ See the R-KC: [Rr28.37] *de'i* (i.e., **dBang rab byed kyi 'grel pa dge slong Da ri ka pas byas | |**; *U-TK* (A, 22a1–2; B, 17a3 = *I*_{JS}394): **dBang rab byed kyi 'grel pa slob dpon Dā ri ka pas** ^[Bud med can] *mdzad pa rDo rje'i tshig 'byed pa Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur ba...*; *T-TK* (7a7): [T0059] **dBang gi rab tu byed pa'i 'grel pa Dha ri ka pas mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyi bsgyur pa...; *BCh*: [Bc2611] **dBang rab byed kyi 'grel pa rdo rje'i tshig 'byed pa slob dpon Dā ri ka pas mdzad pa 'Bro 'gyur |**; *Zh-TK* (420.3–4): **dBang rab byed kyi 'grel pa rdo rje'i tshig 'byed pa zhes bya ba slob dpon Dā ri ka pas mdzad pa | 'Bro Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |**; *Ng-TK* (15.1–2); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 349b2–3). The *Gl-TK*_T does not seem to have recorded this work.**

shri dang | bod kyi lo tsha ba 'Bro Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur pa lags s.ho | |.²⁶⁹ I have not been able to locate information concerning the collaboration on this translation in other sources. The fact that Maitrīpāda is also referred to as *bla ma* (or more precisely *bla ma chen po*) in the colophon of the second instalment of Vajragarbha's *Hevajrapañḍārthatīkā*, whereas Somanātha seems not to have been designated thus in any of the colophons, may support the identification of the "teacher" in question as Maitrīpāda. Further evidence that supports this identification will be presented in the following entry. The exact identity of the second collaborator named in the T colophon, the Kashmiri Vinayaśrī, remains unclear.

(3) Kragh lists one work translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with *Mānavihārapa. The work in question is the *Sahajasiddhipaddhati* (SSP), which is Kragh's point of departure for his article, and thus accordingly discussed by him in detail. This is the only work in the Tibetan Buddhist Canon stated as having been translated in collaboration with this *paṇḍita*, about whom practically nothing is known. Kragh, who discusses the issue extensively, including the reconstruction/meaning of the name, suggests that the name should be understood as referring to Mānavihāra, the ancient Nepalese monastery founded by the Licchavi king Mānadeva (5th/6th cent.) and identified by Sylvain Lévi with the present-day Cakravahāra in Patan. Kragh, having emended the original reading *la* to *pa*, proposes that *Mānavihārapa means "the one from Mānavihāra." I shall return to Kragh's reconstruction-cum-proposition below.²⁷⁰

D2261/P3108. Lakṣmī(mṅkarā)'s *IHan cig skyes grub kyi gzhung 'grel* (*Sahajasiddhipaddhati*). Colo: *dpal U rgyan gyi yul du sku 'khrungs*²⁷¹ *pa'i rgyal po Indra buddhi zhes bya bas mdzad pa'i IHan cig skyes pa grub pa'i gzhung 'grel IHa lcam rje btsun ma dPal mos mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po Ma nā bi ha ra*²⁷² *la dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba dge slong Pradnyā kīrtis legs par mnyan nas bsgyur ba'o*²⁷³ | |. Our main concern here is obviously the identity of the translator Prajñākīrti. Since *Mānavihārapa, who according to Kragh (and the Ōtani and Tōhoku catalogues as well) is the collaborating *paṇḍita*, is not known otherwise, his collaboration is of little help in identifying our Prajñākīrti, so that we must resort to other sources. Nonetheless, before doing so, it should first be noted that there is a problem with the syntax of the translation colophon resulting from

²⁶⁹ T0059 is found in section II, Kha(3), 316b2–360b1.

²⁷⁰ See Kragh 2010: 224–225, where this reconstruction is discussed in detail, along with other possibilities.

²⁷¹ 'khrungs D, khrungs P

²⁷² ra] D la P

²⁷³ ba'o] D, ba lags so P

the particle *dang* that follows the *paṇḍita's* name, on the one hand, and the verbal phrase *legs par mnyan nas* ("having thoroughly studied") that follows the *lo tsā ba's* name, on the other hand, because with the verb *mnyan* one expects the particle *la* (or *las*) and not *dang*, which does not yield any proper sense here. But we shall return to this problem below.

As has already been pointed out, the *R-KC* does not seem to record either the commentary or its basic text, the *Sahajāsiddhi* (SS), either under the section listing translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags or elsewhere. The *I-TK* and the *BCh*, in contrast, although they lack a record of the basic text, do record the commentary (in an identical fashion), naming Shes rab grags as the translator.²⁷⁴ As already pointed out, the *T-TK* records the work and its commentary together and names the translator of both works as Prajñākīrti. To be noted is, however, that although the *T-TK* clearly considers the translator of the two works to be one and the same person, the colophon of the commentary names the translator as 'Bro dge slong Prajñākīrti, and that of the basic text names him as Shes rab grags.²⁷⁵ Now, the name recorded in the colophon of the T version, 'Bro dge slong Prajñākīrti, consists of a rather unusual combination of the attribute 'Bro and the Sanskritized name Prajñākīrti, which we have thus far not encountered in connection with 'Bro Shes rab grags. Moreover, the translation colophon of the T version has several other variant reading that might shed some light on the syntactical problems in the DP colophons pointed out above, and it also contains an additional passage (marked below with an underline), which has no equivalent in the colophons of the DP versions and is of much significance for our discussion. Colo: *dpal Ur rgyan gyi yul du sku 'khrungs pa | rGyal po chen po In dra bu dhi zhes bya bas dPal dgyes pa rdo rje'i rgyud kyi gdams*²⁷⁶ *ngag rgyud kyi don ji lta bar mdzad pa'i snyan rgyud rang grol Phyag rgya*²⁷⁷ *chen po dngos kyi don*²⁷⁸ *IHan cig skyes pa grub pa'i gzhung 'grel | IHa lcam rje btsun ma chen dPal mos mdzad pa rdzogs s.ho | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po Ma na bhi ha ra dpal las | bod kyi lo tsha ba 'Bro dge slong Prad dznya kir tis legs par mnyan nas bsgyur*²⁷⁹ *ro | | IHo brag pa dGe slong gnas brtan chen po rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug 'Or ston Sangs rgyas grags pas bod kyi lo tsha ba dge*

²⁷⁴ See the *I-TK* (A, 34b5–6; B, 27b7 = I_{JS}750): *dPal mo'i* ^(La ksmi) *IHan cig skyes grub gzhung 'grel Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur |*; *BCh*: [Bc2748].

²⁷⁵ *T-TK* (63a3): [T1815] *IHan cig skyes grub slob dpon In tra bo dhis mdzad pa dang* [T1816] *de nyid kyi gzhung 'grel IHa lcam dPal mos mdzad pa Pra dznya kir ti yis 'gyur ba...* T1815 is found in section II, We(81), 346b1–349b1 and T1816 in section II, We(81), 349b1–377b6.

²⁷⁶ *gdams*] *em.*, *gdam* Ms

²⁷⁷ *rgya*] *em.*, *brgya* Ms

²⁷⁸ *don*] *conj.*, *de na* Ms

²⁷⁹ *bsgyur*] *em.*, *rgyur* Ms

slong Shes rab grags pa la gus pas gsol ba btab nas bsgyur ba'i thugs dam gyi snying po'o | |.

Both the commentary and the basic text are also found in the dPal spungs xylograph edition of the *Phyag rgya chen po'i rgya gzhung*,²⁸⁰ where the colophons are similar to those found in the T versions, except for some slight variant readings (to which I shall refer whenever they are of relevance for the discussion). The first significant variant in the T colophon in comparison with the DP colophons is the reading **Ma na bhi ha ra dpal las** |, which undoubtedly makes better sense than **Ma nā bi ha ra/la la dang** | found in the DP versions. The colophon of the dPal spungs version reads **Ma na bi ha ra pa la dang** |, which likewise makes little sense syntactically. First, both the T and dPal spungs versions support the reading *ra* (as in D) rather than *la* (as in P), and we shall adopt it here. Now, among the readings *la dang* (DP), *pa la dang* (dPal spungs), and *dpal las* (T), which follow the *paṇḍita*'s name, T's seems to be the only one that makes sense, with *dpal* (*śrī*) as an attribute attached to the presumed *paṇḍita*'s name and *las* as the grammatical particle that goes along with the verb *mnyan* (even if *la* is more common). The reading *la dang* (DP) makes no sense, even if we accept Kragh's emendation of *la* to *pa*—or the alternative emendation of *la* to *lāla*, yielding *Mānavihāralāla, which Kragh considers less likely—since the syntactical problem with the particle *dang* (which is not addressed by Kragh) still persists. The same is true in the case of the reading *pa la dang* (dPal spungs). While it is obvious that the T and dPal spungs versions are related to each other, it is unclear in what way, so it is hard to tell which of the two readings is earlier or which one better reflects the original reading. In any case, if we follow the reading in T and accept Kragh's suggestion regarding Mānavihāra, we would read "having thoroughly studied [the work] under the great Indian *upādhyāya* *Mānavihāraśrī, the Tibetan *lo tsā ba* Prajñākīrti, the fully ordained monk of 'Bro, translated [it]." However, there is yet another way to read this passage, which I would like to suggest is not only the better option but in fact the correct one, namely, taking only the phrase "the great Indian *upādhyāya*" as referring to the *paṇḍita* and understanding Mānavihāraśrī—or better, Śrī-Mānavihāra, as the temple is occasionally referred to—to be the location and not the name/epithet of the *paṇḍita*, thus reading "having thoroughly studied [the work] under the great Indian *upādhyāya* at Śrī-Mānavihāra, the Tibetan *lo tsā ba* Prajñākīrti, the full ordained monk of 'Bro, translated [it]," with *las* ideally emended to *la*. The reading *la*, which is indeed found in all other colophons (in combination with *dang* though), would not only go better

²⁸⁰ The basic text is found in the *Phyag rgya chen po'i rgya gzhung*, vol. 1: 108b4–112a1, and the commentary in *ibid.*: 112a1–140a2.

with the verb *mnyan* but would also serve here as a locative. The question that remains is who this “great Indian *upādhyāya*” is, a question that takes us to the additional passage found in the colophons of both the T and dPal spungs versions. The passage found in the T version can be translated as follows:

[This work], which was translated by the Tibetan *lo tsā ba*, the fully ordained monk Shes rab grags after having been respectfully requested by the fully ordained monk of lHo brag, the Mahāsthavira, Yogīśvara 'Or ston Sangs rgyas grags pa, is the quintessence of [the latter's] cherished objects.

What is most striking about this additional passage is its great similarity to a passage found in the colophon of the second instalment of Vajragarbha's *Hevajrapinḍārthaṭīkā* (D1180/P2310) discussed above (see §2.D.4). Of significance in this regard are some of the variant readings found in the equivalent passage in the dPal spungs version, which include the omission of the attribute lHo brag pa and the reading rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dBang phyug grags pa instead of rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug 'Or ston Sangs rgyas grags pa as in the T version, thus yielding a reading that is even more similar to the ones found in the colophons of D1180/P2310. This seems, by the way, to be a sign that the reading of the dPal spungs version is closer to the original one, whereas that of the T version is the result of some editorial reworking. At any rate, what is likewise of relevance for our discussion is the actual translation colophon of the second instalment of D1180/P2310, which reads (as edited above): *rgya gar gyi mkhan po bla ma chen po Mai tri zhabs la | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags pas mang du gsol ba btab nas | legs par mnyan te bsgyur ba'o | | |*, where the reference to Maitrīpa as *rgya gar gyi mkhan po bla ma chen po* and the phrase *legs par mnyan te bsgyur ba'o* are to be noted. To be kept in mind is also that, according to the additional passage found in that colophon, 'Bro Shes rab grags obtained the Sanskrit manuscript from Maitrīpa in *Lalita-pura/paṭṭana and brought it to Tibet, where he translated the second instalment upon the request of the aforementioned dBang phyug grags pa. We may also be reminded of the above-discussed Dārika-pa's *Sekaparakriyāṅgīti* (D1355/P2072; see the previous entry), where the translation colophons of the DP versions read *bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags pas Bla ma las mnyan nas bsgyur pa rdzogs so | |*, whereas the T version's colophon, which is significantly different, reads *rgya gar gyi mkhan po chen po Me tri zhabs dang |*, identifying the collaborating *paṇḍita* simply referred to in the DP version as “the teacher” (*bla ma*), as Maitrīpāda. In short, we witness a striking similarity in the reference to Maitrīpa as “the great *upādhyāya*/teacher” or simply as “the teacher,” the re-

curing phrase *mnyan nas bsgyur* in all three cases, and a reference to the same petitioner in two cases. It is likewise notable that the location where 'Bro studied the work under Maitrīpa is revealed in the colophons of D1180/P2310 to be *Lalita-pura/paṭṭana (i.e., today's Patan) and in the colophons of the work under discussion (D2261/P3108) as Śrī-Mānavihāra, which, as already noted by Kragh, was identified by Sylvain Lévi as the present-day Cakravahāra in Patan. These four bits of evidence clearly support the purport of the colophon as: "having thoroughly studied [the work] under the great Indian *upādhyāya* [Maitrīpāda] at Śrī-Mānavihāra," The opacity of the Tibetan formulation obviously caused problems for Tibetan editors and cataloguers alike, which explains the discrepancies in the reading of the phrase *ma na bi/bhi ha ra/la la dang / pa la dang / dPal las*. It may also be that Tibetan editors and cataloguers of the TG, judging from the pertinent records, understood the translator of the basic text (Shes rab grags) and that of the commentary (Prajñākīrti) to be two different persons. Somewhat confusing is also the record in the Zh-TK (followed by later catalogues such as the Ng-TK and the D-TK), which describes Prajñākīrti's translation as a "solo translation" (*rang 'gyur*), a description that does not fit the overall formulation of the Zh-TK record (which in turn reflects the colophon).²⁸¹ One possible explanation for the expression *rang 'gyur* in this case would be that, as in that of Vajragarbha's *Hevajrapañḍārthaṭīkā*, 'Bro Shes rab grags first studied the work under Maitrīpa in Nepal and did the actual translation, by himself, only later back in Tibet. This scenario could also be read out of the translation colophon of D1355/P2072 discussed in the previous entry. To be emphasized is that the colophons of the work under discussion seem to be the only case in which 'Bro Shes rab grags is referred to as Prajñākīrti, and one wonders whether this is the result of an editorial intervention rather than that it was the name used by the translator himself. As already noted, both the *I-TK* and *BCh* name the translator as Shes rab grags. This is also the case with the *GI-TK*.²⁸²

(C) Translations in Collaboration with Jñānavajra

As noted by Kragh, 'Bro Shes rab grags did one translation in collaboration with the Kashmiri Jñānavajra.

²⁸¹ See the Zh-TG (496.4–5): *IHan cig skyes grub rgyal po Indra bhū tis mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Zla ba'i mgon po dang | lo tsā ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur | IHan cig skyes grub kyi gzhung 'grel lHa lcam btsun ma dPal mos mdzad pa | pañḍi ta Ma nā bi ha la la dang | lo tsā ba Pra dznyā kirti'i rang 'gyur |*; Ng-TK (70.17–20); D-TK (vol. 2: 388a5–6).

²⁸² See the *GI-TK* (261.4–5): *IHan cig skyes grub kyi gzhung 'grel lCam dPal mos mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur....*

(1) D486/P118. *Rab tu gnas pa mdor bsdus pa'i rgyud* (*Supratīṣṭhātana-trasaṅgraha*). Colo: **Rab tu gnas pa mdor bsdus pa'i cho ga'i rgyud**²⁸³ rdzogs so | | | | kha che'i paṅḍi ta chen po **Dznyiā na badzra dang** | lo tsā ba **'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags pas bsgyur ba'o** | | . There seems to be no conflicting information regarding the translation team. Of some interest perhaps is that some of the versions, including sNar thang (N437), sTog (S444), and Shel dkar (Z457), have no translation colophon (the translation, however, is the same). To be noted here in passing is also that in the Phug brag version (F483) there is a remark after the translation colophon discussing the classification of the *tantra*, but this should not concern us here.²⁸⁴ Early catalogues, such as the *R-KC* and *BCh*, likewise name 'Bro Shes grags as the translator.²⁸⁵

(D) Translations in Collaboration with Mañjuḥoṣa

Kragh lists one translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with the Indian Mañjuḥoṣa, which he says was done before or after his stay in Nepal. At any rate, as pointed out by Kragh, the colophon explicitly states the translation site was the secluded locale Yer pa.

(1) D1206/P2336. Nāgārjuna's (ascribed) *dGongs pa'i skad kyi 'grel pa* (*Samdhibhāṣāṭīkā*). Colo: **rDo rje mkha' 'gro ma nam kyis bshad pa nam grangs bdun gyi le'u slob dpon 'phags pa Klu sgrub kyis mdzad pa rdzogs so** | | | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po **Manydzu gho ṣa dang** | bod kyi lo tsā ba **'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis Yer pa'i dben gnas su bsgyur ba'o** | | . The work, which is classified as belonging to the Hevajra section, does not seem to have been recorded in the *R-KC*. It is, however, recorded in the *I-TK*, which names the translator as Shes rab grags. The *I-TK* is followed by the *T-TK* and *BCh* with identical records. The colophon of the *T* version is identical with those of the *DP* versions, which, as we have seen, offer a clear identification of the translator as 'Bro Shes rab grags.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ rgyud] D, mdo P. Note that also the gTsang rong version (Cx09.4) reads *mdo*. This variant reading is, however, of no great significance.

²⁸⁴ See F487. Colo: **Rab gnas kyis cho ga rdzogs so** | | | | kha che'i paṅḍi ta **Dznyiā na badzra dang** | **'Bro lo tstsha ba'i 'gyur** | | 'di ni phyi yis de nyid bcu'i bar du byas pa'i phyir **rNal 'byor gyi rgyud bskor du gtoḡs so zhes mkhas pa 'ga' zhiḡ gsung ba ltar bris so** | | **rGyud 'bum phal che ba las ni Rab gnas kyis rgyud 'di** [rgyud 'di em., 'di rgyud Ms] **Bya rgyud kyis nang du bris 'dug go** | | The passage continues with a discussion regarding the classification of other *tantras* in the volume (i.e., rGyud, vol. Da (109)).

²⁸⁵ See the *R-KC*: [Rr28.41] **Rab gnas mdor bsdus kyis rgyud...**; *BCh*: [Bc1249] **Rab gnas mdor bsdus pa'i rgyud 'Bro Shes rab grags kyis 'gyur** | .

²⁸⁶ See the *I-TK* (A, 11a6; B, 8a1-2 = I_{js}149): **dGongs pa'i skad kyi 'grel pa slob dpon Klu sgrub** ^[Nā gā rdzu na] **kyis mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyis 'gyur** | ; *BCh*: [Bc2305]; *T-TK* (25b7-26a1 = T0533). T0533 is found in section II, Mi(47), 250a4-256a2.

(E) Translations in Collaboration with Samantabhadra

I have been able to locate one translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with the Indian Samantabhadra, which is found only in the T TG.

(1) T1963. *rNam pa lnga mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa*. Colo: *rNam pa lnga mngon par byang chub pa'i rim pa rdzogs s.ho | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po shri Sa man ta bā tra dang bod kyi lo tsa ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur*²⁸⁷ | |.²⁸⁸ Neither the colophon nor the record in the *T-TK* mentions the name of the author.²⁸⁹ I was not able to locate this work in the DP TG editions, and it appears that it has not been recorded in any of the catalogues except for the *T-TK*. The colophon explicitly identifies the translator as 'Bro Shes rab grags, and Samantabhadra could well be the same *paṇḍita* who collaborated with Nag tsho lo tsā ba on the translation of two works (D1264/P2420 & D2253/P3098), but there is no concrete evidence to support this assumption.

(F) Solo Translations

Kragh lists two cases of solo translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags. One of them I have discussed above (see §3), showing that it is actually a translation by 'Bro lo tsā ba *Dharmābhi, who was misidentified by Kragh as 'Bro Shes rab grags. The other translation does not seem to be an entirely straightforward case, and the work itself appears to be somewhat doubtful. Nonetheless, in want of decisive evidence to prove otherwise, it will be discussed here as a possible solo translation by 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(1) ? D1452/P2169. Kṛṣṇa(cārin)'s *Rim pa bzhi'i rnam par 'byed pa* (*Ālicatuṣṭayavibhaṅga*). Colo: *dPal rim pa bzhi pa'i 'grel pa ā tsārya Nag po nyid kyis mdzad pa rdzogs so | | | bod kyi lo tsā ba 'Bro dge slong Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba'o | |*. There are several particulars that raise questions regarding the origin (and thus authenticity) of this work. First, the work does not seem to have been recorded in most of the early catalogues consulted for the present investigation (i.e., *R-KC*(Ø), *U-TK*(Ø), *BCh*(Ø), *Zh-TK*(Ø)²⁹⁰), the only exception

²⁸⁷ *kyis bsgyur*] *em.*, *kyi sgyur* ? Ms (The post- and prescribed °s and *b*° may have been added by the scribe as a correction, but due to excess of ink the spot is illegible.)

²⁸⁸ T1963 is found in section II, Ye(85), 346a1–351a6.

²⁸⁹ See the *T-TK* (67a3): [T1963] *rNam pa lnga mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa Shes rab grags kyis bsgyur ba...*

²⁹⁰ Notable, too, is that it is not found in the catalogue to the *sNe'u gdong* TG edition composed several decades after the *Zh-TK*. See the *Ne-TK* (369.1–2), where one would expect the record to be found. The *Ng-TK* does not record it either. See the *Ng-TK* (21.2–4), where the record would be expected. It also seems to be missing

being the *T-TK*, which likewise ascribes the translation to 'Bro Shes rab grags. The colophon of the T version is identical with those of the DP versions,²⁹¹ and it is very likely that the work found its way into the mainstream TG editions via the T TG edition (or one akin to it). Second, the colophons do not mention any *paṇḍita* as having collaborated with 'Bro Shes rab grags on the translation, which is not impossible but certainly noteworthy. Third, Tāranātha, in his commentary on the *Rim pa bzhi pa*, mentions its three Indian commentaries, referring to the work under discussion as being falsely regarded as an autocommentary, though it is not entirely clear whether he actually considered it to be a pseudepigraph of Indic or Tibetic origin.²⁹² Moreover, provided that the work was indeed translated from Sanskrit, then given that Pu rangs lo chung is known to have specialized in the translation (and transmission) of Cakrasaṃvara-related works, including the basic text *Rim pa bzhi pa*, one wonders whether he was the Shes rab grags who translated this presumed autocommentary (this scenario would also partly explain a solo translation without the collaboration of a *paṇḍita*). If this is the case, the ascription of the translation to 'Bro Shes rab grags should be regarded as a confusion between the two translators. For lack of further evidence, however, we must for now follow the colophons, which name 'Bro Shes rab grags as the translator.

(G) Ambiguous Translation Ascriptions

There are two works the identity of whose translator is uncertain. I shall nonetheless tentatively list them here as possible translations by 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(1) ? D3703/P4527. Śaṅku's *mKha' lding grub pa'i bstan bcos* (*Siddhagaruḍaśāstra*). Among the works Kragh lists as translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags in collaboration with Prince Abhayadeva (all these translations have been discussed in §2.D., under the section discussing translations by Pu rangs lo chung in collaboration with Prince *Bhīmadeva), he includes one work that was possibly likewise translated by this team. Due to the uncertain identity of both the Tibetan translator and his collaborating *paṇḍita*, it is listed here as well. As already pointed out above (§2.D.3), regardless of the identity of the collaborating *paṇḍita* (who may well have again been Maitrīpa), a

from the *GI-TK*. It is further striking that the *5th-TK* (like the *Zh-TK*) omits the record corresponding to P2169, although the work was quite likely contained therein. See the *5th-TK* (21a3–4), where the record would be expected.

²⁹¹ See the *T-TK* (20a4): [T0377] *Rim pa bzhi pa'i 'grel pa Nag po pa nyid kyis mdzad pa 'Bro Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur*! . T0377 is found in section II, Ji(38), 257a3–269a3.

²⁹² See the *Rim pa bzhi pa'i gzchung 'grel chen* (89.11–12): *gzhan rang 'grel du kha 'phangs pa'i bsdus pa zhig dang*!....

decisive identification of the translator, Prajñākīrti, has not been possible, but we cannot entirely exclude that he is to be identified with 'Bro Shes rab grags.

(2) ? T0607. Durjayacandra's *mKha' 'gro lnga'i bsgrub thabs*. Colo: ... **Mi thub zla bas spras pas gyur pa'i ngag** | | [...] **mKha' 'gro'i lnga'i bsgrub thabs rnam spyod pa** | rdzogs s.hyo | | rgya gar gyi mkhan po paṇḍi ta **Nī la badzra dang** | bod gyi lo tsha ba dge slong **Shes rab grags pas** bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o | | **mKha' 'gro ma rdo rje gur gyi rigs bsdu pa'i bsgrub pa'i thabs** zhes bya ba | rdzogs s.ho | | |.²⁹³ According to the colophon, this translation, which has been transmitted only in the T TG, was done by Shes rab grags (with no exact identification) in collaboration with Nīlavajra. The record in the T-TK does not provide any further information that could help in identifying this Shes rab grags.²⁹⁴

The work in question, which belongs to the genre of "spiritual songs" (*gur*) and is associated with the Hevajra literature, has also been transmitted in the mainstream TG edition under the title *mKha' 'gro ma rdo rje gur gyi mkha' 'gro rnam pa lnga'i sgrub pa'i thabs* (*Dākinīvajrapañjarapañcaḍākasādhana*; D1321/P2453) with a translation ascription to Se rtsa/tsha bSod nams rgyal mtshan (b. 11th cent.; BDR: P4180)²⁹⁵ in collaboration with Līlavajra. Colo: **Mi thub zla bas rnam par spras pa'i mKha' 'gro lnga'i sgrub**²⁹⁶ **pa'i thabs zhes bya ba** rdzogs so | | | rgya gar gyi²⁹⁷ mkhan po **Li la badzra dang** | bod kyi lo tsā ba²⁹⁸ **bSod nams rgyal mtshan gyis** | rang gi dam chos gsal bar byed pas na | rang dang gzhan gyi don du legs par bsgyur | |. The version transmitted in the DP TG editions is indeed a different translation from the one transmitted in the T TG edition, which is ascribed to Shes rab grags. No *paṇḍita* named Nīlavajra (T version) is known to have collaborated on any other translation. Could this be a corruption of the name Līlavajra, the *paṇḍita* who collaborated with Se rtsa/tsha bSod nams rgyal mtshan on the translation of the DP version? Or could it be a corruption of the name Anīlavajra, a *paṇḍita* stated as having collaborated with 'Gos Khug pa lhas btsas (b. 11th cent.; BDR: 3458) on the translation of one work (D1629/P2501)? At any rate, none of these options brings us any closer to identifying the Shes rab grags in question.

Of relevance for our discussion is that the work is recorded in the

²⁹³ T0607 is found in section II, Tshi(49), 102b5–110b4.

²⁹⁴ See the T-TK (28a5): [T0607] *mKha' 'gro lnga'i bsgrub thabs Mi thub zla bas mdzad pa Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |.

²⁹⁵ See the Zh-TK (448.1–2) cited below (note 299), where an exact identification of the translator as Se rtsa pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan is provided.

²⁹⁶ sgrub] D, bsgrub P

²⁹⁷ gyi] P, om. D

²⁹⁸ ba] P, om. D

I-TK twice, one time in the Hevajra section with a translation ascription to bSod nams rgyal mtshan and another time in chapter 19—which contains rare works that thematically belong to various sections and that were located and added to the *I* TG edition at a later stage (found in both MSS A & B)—with no mention of the translator. This latter record is probably a reference to the version that was admitted into the T TG edition, where it is ascribed to Shes rab grags, whose exact identity remains unclear. The *BCh* merely includes the former record, and so does the *Zh-TK*, followed by later catalogues.²⁹⁹ Notable is that the *Gl-TK_T* ascribes the translation of this and four other works by Durjayacandra to 'Brog mi [Shākya ye shes].³⁰⁰

(H) Erroneously Ascribed Translations

One work recorded by both the *I-TK* and *BCh* as having been translated by 'Bro Shes rab grags at first glance seems to have been lost. As I shall, however, argue below, this translation ascription appears to be erroneous.

(1) The translation in question is recorded in the *I-TK* with the title *sGrub thabs kyi cho ga rim par phye ba*, whose authorship is ascribed to Sādhuputra and the translation of which to Shes rab grags (i.e., with no further attributes that would allow an exact identification). The record, which has no equivalent in the *R-KC*, is also found in the *BCh* with no authorship ascription and a translation ascription to 'Bro, which is clearly a reference to 'Bro Shes rab grags.³⁰¹ At first

²⁹⁹ See the *I-TK* (A, 12a3–4; B, 8b4 = *I*_{JS}172): *slob dpon Mi thub zla bas* (Dham ka da sha) *mdzad pa'i Gur gyi mkha' 'gro lnga'i sgrub thabs bSod nams rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur* |; *ibid.* (A, 63a6; B, 51a1 = *I*_{JS}1354): *slob dpon Mi thub zla bas* (A dzi ta tsandra) *mdzad pa Gur gyi mkha' 'gro lnga'i sgrub thabs* |; *BCh*: [Bc2321]; *Zh-TK* (448.1–2): *gur rigs bsdus [pa?] mkha' 'gro lnga'i sgrub thabs Mi thub zla bas mdzad pa* | **Li la badzra dang** | **Se rtsa ba bSod nams rgyal mtshan gyi 'gyur** |; *Ng-TK* (35.6–7); *D-TK* (vol. 2: 347b4–5). On the different Sanskrit reconstructions of the name Mi thub zla ba offered by the glosses found in MS A of the *I-TK*, see Almogi 2020: 191.

³⁰⁰ See the *Gl-TK_T* (243.13–17): *Kye rdo rje'i dkyil mchog bzang po yongs bzung* (= D1240/P2369) *dang* | *Yan lag drug pa'i sgrub thabs* (= D1239/P2369) *dang* | ***bDag med ma'i sgrub thabs*** (= D1306/P2436) *dang* | ***rDo rje gur mkha' 'gro lnga'i sgrub thabs*** (= D1321/P2453) *dang* | *'Byung po thams cad pa'i gtor ma'i cho ga* (= D1241/P2370) *rnams slob dpon Mi thub zla bas mdzad pa 'Brog mi'i 'gyur* |. Indeed, all translations but the one of the work under discussion (underlined) have been transmitted in the mainstream TG editions with a translation ascription to 'Brog mi Shākya ye shes.

³⁰¹ See the *I-TK* (A, 38a2; B, 30a3–4): *paṇḍi ta Sā dhu pu tras* (Legs pa mdo sde) *mdzad pa'i* [... *I*_{JS}821...]| [*I*_{JS}822] *sGrub thabs kyi cho ga rim par phye ba Shes rab grags kyi 'gyur* |. That the authorship ascription to Sādhuputra refers to both *I*_{JS}821 and *I*_{JS}822, as suggested here, is not obvious from the formulation in the *I-TK* and is based on the corresponding entries in later TG catalogues and the respective col-

glance, the record seems to be missing from the *Zh-TK* and from later TG catalogues. Accordingly, the work also seems to be missing from the TG. Nonetheless, it is undoubtedly to be identified with D1358/P2075, namely, Sādhuputra's *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i sgrub pa'i thabs* (*Śrīkālācakraśādhana*), whose translation is ascribed to [Rwa lo tsā ba] Chos rab (fl. 11th cent.; BDRC: P4136) in collaboration with Vāgīśvaragupta. This identification is supported by the DP colophons, which provide the same title as recorded in the *I-TK* and *BCh* (which is different from the title found at the beginning of the text, and thus also in modern catalogues): *bCom ldan 'das dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i sgrub thabs kyi cho ga'i rim par phye ba rdzogs so || || Dus kyi 'khor lo pa chen po paṇḍi ta Sā dhu pu tra yis*³⁰² *paṇḍi ta chen po Dharma ā ka ra*³⁰³ *shānti'i don du mdzad pa | rgya gar gyi paṇḍi ta chen po Wā gī shwa ra gupta pa dang | sgra bsgyur gyi lo tsā ba dge slong Chos rab bdag gis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o |. The confusion in the *T-TK* (followed by the *BCh*) may have arisen due to the syllable *bdag* attached to the translator's name in the DP colophons, which makes little sense, but it may have well been the reading in the colophon of the *I* TG edition. This could have led to the erroneous reading *Shes rab grags* in the *I-TK* (i.e., a miscorrection). This error has been corrected in both the *T-TK* and in the respective T colophon, both of which read *Chos rab* (i.e., without the syllable *bdag*).³⁰⁴ The collaboration of *Chos rab* with Vāgīśvaragupta is known from other translations, whereas such a collaboration is not attested in the case of 'Bro *Shes rab grags*. Bu ston has likewise corrected the translation ascription in the *Zh-TK*, which was followed by later catalogues.³⁰⁵*

5. Concluding Remarks

The above investigation has aimed at identifying translations done by a translator (or translators) named *Shes rab grags*, *Prajñākīrti*, and

ophons. See also the *BCh*: [Bc2617] *sGrub thabs kyi cho ga rim par phye ba dang |* [...] *gnyis* (= Bc2617 & Bc2618) 'Bro 'gyur |. For Bc2618, see above (§4.A.5).

³⁰² tra yis] tras D

³⁰³ dharma ā ka ra] dharmā ka P

³⁰⁴ See the *T-TK* (7b6–7): [T0070] *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i sku gsung thugs yongs su rdzogs pa'i bsgrub thabs Sā dhu pu tras mdzad pa Chos rab kyi 'gyur |*. T0070 is found in section II, Nga(5), 66b1–100a5. The colophon is virtually identical to those of the DP versions, the main variant being the omission of the syllable *bdag*.

³⁰⁵ See the *Zh-TK* (420.5–6): [= D1358] *dPal dus kyi 'khor lo'i sgrub pa'i thabs dang |* [= D1359] *dKyiil 'khor gyi cho ga gnyis slob dpon Sā dhu pu tras mdzad pa | paṇḍi ta Wā ge shwa ra gupta dang | lo tsā ba Rwa Chos rab kyi 'gyur |*; Ng-TK (15.6–9); D-TK (vol. 2: 349b4–5). The *Gl-TK_T* appears to record only the latter work (= D1359). See the *Gl-TK_T* (246.4–5): *Dus 'khor gyi dkyil chog Sa dhu pu tras mdzad pa Chos rab kyi 'gyur |*.

other similar names, the point of departure having been an article by Ulrich Timme Kragh published in 2010, which discusses the “translation endeavors” of ‘Bro Shes rab grags. I have shown that many (if not most) of the translations claimed by Kragh to be by ‘Bro Shes rab grags are actually translations by Pu rangs lo chung, while one of them is by a rather unknown translator named ‘Bro *Dharmābhi. In addition, I attempted to identify, hopefully accurately and convincingly, some of the *paṇḍitas* listed by Kragh as having collaborated on the translations in question, but whose identity has thus far not been entirely clear. Moreover, I also attempted to locate works that were not discussed by Kragh but have been (possibly) translated by either ‘Bro Shes rab grags or Pu rangs lo chung in order to offer a comprehensive overview of the translation activities of the two translators so that similar confusion might be avoided in the future. Despite my attempts to be as comprehensive as possible, I am aware that there may be further sources that could shed more light on some of the remaining unclear cases, and it is hoped that this gap will be closed in the future. I have likewise pointed out that there has been some confusion concerning the identity of the translators ‘Bro Shes rab grags and Pu rangs lo chung in the traditional sources as well, and similarly also between ‘Bro Shes rab grags and ‘Bro *Dharmābhi, on the one hand, and between Pu rangs lo chung and Ma snang Grags ‘byor shes rab, on the other hand, all of which made the investigation even more complex. Nonetheless, I have the impression that Tibetan scholars have been aware of this problem, and I suspect that editors and cataloguers of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon in particular attempted to reduce the risk of confusing ‘Bro Shes rab grags and Pu rangs lo chung as much as possible by replacing the name Shes rab grags with Prajñākīrti whenever it referred to Pu rangs lo chung. I believe that the catalogue records and the colophons presented above support this hypothesis. One issue that I have not discussed at all is Kragh’s attempt to determine the dates of some of the *paṇḍitas* involved in the translations and of ‘Bro Shes rab grags’s travels. In the light of the fact that many of the translations Kragh suggests are by ‘Bro Shes rab grags turn out not to be by him, and considering the suggested identification of some of the *paṇḍitas* in the present study, Kragh’s proposed dates are clearly questionable and must therefore be entirely reconsidered.

Technical Note

Efforts have been made to critically edit all Tibetan texts provided in the present article. To be noted, however, is that accidental variants in the Tibetan texts, such as those concerning segmentation marks, orthographic variants (such as *pa/ba*, *lo tsā/tsha/tshtsha*), and the like

have not been recorded unless they are of significance. Orthographic abbreviations (*skung yig*) have been commonly silently expanded. Unless of particular significance, scribal or editorial corrections found in the cited manuscripts and xylographs have, as a rule, not been reported, the corrected reading being silently adopted. No attempt has been made to correct/emend Sanskrit names/words in Tibetan transliterations unless this had implications for the reading. Moreover, variants of transliterated Sanskrit names/words have not been recorded, the reading closest to the Sanskrit having generally been opted for. The correct or reconstructed Sanskrit names or terms are offered in the respective English translation or discussion. Moreover, apart from a few exceptions, the Sanskrit titles of Indic works in Tibetan translation are given in accordance with the modern catalogues of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon. Only in some obviously doubtful cases they have been marked as reconstructions by way of an asterisk. Sanskrit and Tibetan short titles are employed without an asterisk.

Colophons have been cited without verses of dedication and the like unless these were relevant to the discussion. Glosses and inter-linear or marginal notes found in the cited sources are recorded only if they are of relevance, and are given within raised curly brackets ^[...] (those found in MS B of the *U-TK* within double ones ^{[[...]]}). Passages cited from the Title Index of the *BCh* follow as a rule Nishioka's reading (L). In cases in which variant readings provided by him in the apparatus (DTS) appeared preferable, they have been in most cases silently adopted. The same practice has been applied in the case of the *R-KC* (van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009). Also note that for the *R-KC*, *BCh*, *U-TK*, and *T-TK* records, references have been made to the catalogue numbers assigned in van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009, Nishioka 1980–1983, Jampa Samten 2015, and Jampa Samten 2016, respectively, also in cases where the identifications given are different from those offered by these catalogues.

An attempt has been made to take all relevant traditional catalogues (*dkar chag*) of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon into consideration, whereas the two smaller "mainstream *bsTan 'gyur* editions—sDe dge (D) and Co ne (C)—are represented by sDe dge in terms of both edition and catalogue, and the three larger ones—Peking (P), sNar thang (N), and Golden (G)—are represented by Peking in terms of the edition and by the catalogue to what I refer to as the Fifth Dalai Lama's edition (i.e., the one prepared to make it seem that the Fifth Dalai Lama was still alive, the compilership of whose catalogue was likewise disingenuously ascribed to him), because it served (as did the edition itself) as the basis for all three. (I refrain from referring to this edition as the 'Phyong rgyas or Phying bar stag rtse edition in order to differentiate it from another edition prepared there earlier.) An

overview of the catalogues employed in the current study is found in Almogi 2020: 112ff. Note that Jampa Samten's edition of *dBus pa blo gsal's* catalogue of the Old sNar thang *bsTan 'gyur* (I) is solely based on MS B, which contains considerably fewer records and in fact lacks the whole of chapter 21 (for more on this issue, see Almogi 2021), and that as a result records found only in MS A currently lack catalogue numbers (an edition based on both MSS is currently under preparation). Whenever such a record was cited, it was assigned a number by taking the preceding catalogue number assigned by Jampa Samten (I_{JS}) and adding a serial number to it, for example, $I_{JS}618.1$ and $I_{JS}618.2$ for two additional records following record $I_{JS}618$. Records cited from chapter 21 have been cited without a catalogue number.

Abbreviations & Special Signs

A = author.

add. = adds.

Coll = collaborator (i.e., *paṇḍita* collaborating on the translation).

Colo = colophon.

conj. = conjecture.

dupl. = duplicate.

em. = emendation.

id. = idem/identical.

JoCh = *Jo bo chos chung*.

KG = *bKa' 'gyur*.

∅ = no record.

om. = omits.

R = reviser, revision.

TG = *bsTan 'gyur*.

Tr = translator.

! = title page (i.e., when following a page/folio number)

Sigla

Bc = See *BCh*; Nishioka 1980–1983.

Cx = gTsang rong (Charang, Mustang) Golden Manuscript Edition. 97 vols. [rKTs; BDRC: W3CN1302]. Catalogue nos. according to rKTs.

D = sDe dge KG & TG Xylograph Edition. KG: 102+1 vols. [BDRC: W22084]; TG: 212+1 vols. [BDRC: W23703]. Catalogue nos. according to Ui et al. 1934.

F = Phug brag KG Manuscript Edition. 119+1 vols. [BDRC: W1KG13607]. Catalogue nos. according to Jampa Samten 1992.

- H = IHa sa Xylograph Edition. 99+1 vols. [BDRC: W26071]. Catalogue nos. according to Members of Staff 1998.
- K = See *'Phang thang ma*; Kawagoe 2005.
- L = See *lDan/lHan dkar ma*; Lalou 1953.
- N = sNar thang KG Xylograph Edition. 101+1 vols. [BDRC: W22703]. Catalogue nos. according to Members of Staff 1998.
- P = Peking KG & TG Xylograph Edition. KG: 107+1 vols. [BDRC: W1KG26108]; TG: 224+1 vols. [BDRC: W1KG13126]. Catalogue nos. according to Suzuki 1961.
- Rr = See *R-KC*; van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009.
- S = sTog Manuscript KG Edition. 108+1 vols. [BDRC: W22083]. Catalogue nos. according to Skorupski 1985.
- T = Tshal pa TG Manuscript Edition. 240 vols. [Could be viewed only in part]. Catalogue nos. according to Jampa Samten 2016.
- Z = Shel dkar (= Shey) KG Manuscript Edition. 105 vol. [rKTs; BDRC: WA1PD127393 (4 vol. missing)]. Catalogue nos. according to rKTs.
- II = Old sNar thang TG edition (not available); see *II-TK*.
- II_{js} = Old sNar thang TG edition (not available). Catalogue nos. according to Jampa Samten 2015 (Ms B); see *II-TK*.

Bibliography

1. Tibetan Language Catalogues

- 5th-TK* = *lNga pa chen po bstan dkar* = Dalai Lama V Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (disingenuously ascribed), *bsTan bcos 'gyur ro cog gi dkar chag 'jig rten gsum gyi bde skyid pad tshal bzhad pa'i nyin byed*. In *The Tibetan Tripitaka. Peking Edition*. Ōtani University, Tokyo–Kyoto, 1955–1961, vol. 151, 61-4–119-1 (fols. 1–144).
- BCh* = *Bu ston chos 'byung* = Bu ston Rin chen grub, *bDe bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod*. (On the cover: *Bu ston chos 'byung*). Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1991 (second edition); Title Index part as edited in Nishioka 1980–1983 (= Bc).
- D-TK* = *sDe dge bstan dkar* = Zhu chen Tshul khriims rin chen, *Thams cad mkhyen pa chen po nyi ma'i gnyen gyi bka' lung spyi dang bye brag gi dgongs don rnam par 'grel pa'i bstan bcos gangs can pa'i skad du 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi chos sbyin rgyun mi 'chad pa'i ngo mtshar 'phrul gyi phyi mo rdzogs ldan bskal pa'i bsod nams kyi sprin phung rgyas par dkrigs pa'i tshul las brtsams pa'i gtam ngo mtshar chu gter 'phel ba'i zla ba gsar ba*. 2 vols. D4569. [BDRC: W1KG10093] (= D).
- GI-TK_s* = *Glo bo bstan dkar (Sūtra Section)* = Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, *bsTan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag thub bstan rgyas pa'i nyi*

- 'od. In *E waṃ bka' 'bum*. 20 vols. Mes po'i shul bzhag 132–151. Compiled by dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009–2010, vol. 7: 270–304. [BDRC: W1KG8320].
- Gl-TK_T = *Glo bo bstan dkar (Tantra Section)* = Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po, *rDo rje theg pa'i bstan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag*. In *E waṃ bka' 'bum* = *E waṃ bka' 'bum*. 20 vols. Mes po'i shul bzhag 132–151. Compiled by dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009–2010, vol. 7: 241–269. [BDRC: W1KG8320].
- Ne-TK = *sNe'u gdong bstan dkar* = bSod nams dpal bzang po, Shākya 'od pa, Byang chub rgyal mtshan (wrongly ascribed to sGra tshad pa Rin chen rnam rgyal), *bsTan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che'i za ma tog*. In *The Collected Works of Bu-ston (zhol par ma)*. Edited by Lokesh Chandra from the collections of Raghu Vira. 28 vols. Śāta-piṭaka Series Indo Asian Literatures 41–68. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1965–1971, vol. 28 (Sa), 343–573. [BDRC: W22106].
- Ng-TK = *Ngam ring bstan dkar* = Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal, *bsTan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag dri med 'od kyi phreng ba*. In *bsTan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag dang dus 'khor sgrub thabs sogs*. (On the cover: *bsTan 'gyur dkar chag*). Jo nang dpe tshogs 23. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2010, 1–177. [BDRC: W1KG9028].
- R-KC = *Rig ral dkar chag* = bCom ldan rig pa'i ral gri, *bsTan pa rgyas pa rgyan gyi nyi 'od*. In van der Kuijp & Schaeffer 2009: 101–277 (= Rr).
- T-TK = *Tshal pa bstan dkar* = dGe ba'i bshes gnyen dGe 'dun rin chen, *bsTan 'gyur gyi dkar chag sna tshogs nor bu'i phung po*. dBu med Ms. 99 fols. [scans]. (= T, see also Jampa Samten 2016).
- Zh-TK = *Zhwa lu bstan dkar* = Bu ston Rin chen grub, *bsTan 'gyur gyi dkar chag yid bzhin nor bu dbang gi rgyal po'i phreng ba*. In *Bu ston gsung 'bum*, A: vol. 26 (La): 401–643 (Xy); B: vol. 26 (La): 569–896 (MS, consulted occasionally).
- U-TK = *dBus pa blo gsal bstan dkar* = dBus pa blo gsal, *bsTan bcos kyi dkar chag*. A: MS, dBu med, 81 fols. [BDRC: W2CZ7507] (= U); B: MS, dBu med, 58 fols., in *dBus pa blo gsal gyi gsung phyogs bsdus*, 2 vols., s.l., s.n., n.d., vol. 2, separate foliation (PDF, 107–222). [BDRC: W2PD17520] (= U_{js}, see also Jampa Samten 2015: 1–118).

2. Other Sources in Tibetan Language

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Blo gsal mig thur = 'Jam mgon A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (collated & edited), *dPal kyai rdo rje'i rgyud 'chad pa'i sngon du 'gro ba rgyud sde spyi'i rnam gzhag la nye bar mkho ba'i legs bshad rje rdo rje 'chang gi gsung la chos rje dpal gyi rgyal mtshan gyis zin bris su mdzad pa'i gsung rab ngo mtshar can gyi ma dpe tshig sna ring thung sogs cung zad mi 'dra ba gsum la sa skya pa sngags 'chang ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams kyis 'dra bsdur zhus dag bgyis pa'i legs par bshad pa blo gsal mig thur*. In *dPal sa skya pa chen po sngags 'chang thams cad mkhyen pa ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams kyis gsung 'bum*. 29 vols. [Kathmandu]: Sa skya rgyal yongs gsung rab slob gnyer khang, 2000, vol. 21, 1–82. [BDRC: W29307].

bsTan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed = Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho, *bsTan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed*. Gangs can rig mdzod 4. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987. [BDRC: W10247].

Chos rgyal 'phags pa'i gsan yig = Chos rgyal 'phags pa, *Lung dang brgyud pa sna tshogs thob pa'i gsan yig*. In *Sa skya gong ma rnam lnga'i gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma*. 'Gro mgon chos rgyal 'phags pa'i gsung. 4 vols. Compiled by dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2007, vol. 4 (/22), 519–561. [BDRC: W2DB4571].

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3. Indic Sources

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5. Digital Resources

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- BUDA = The Buddhist Digital Archives by the BDRC, at <https://library.bdrc.io/>. [The research conducted within the framework of the present paper consulted both the BDRC and BUDA websites. The references provided by way of BDRC RID are valid for both.]
- BuddhaNexus = BuddhaNexus at buddhanexus.net.
- rKTs = Resources for Kanjur Tanjur Studies, at <https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/>.
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TPNI = Dan Martin, Tibetan Proper Name Index, at
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