


**Sorcerer of the Iron Castle:
The Life of Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas,
the First Brag dkar sngags rams pa of A mdo
(c. 1647-1726)**

Bryan J. Cuevas
(Florida State University)

he period between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was a momentous one in Tibetan history, witnessing among other consequential movements the surge of Dge lugs pa power throughout the whole of Tibet. In A mdo specifically (those northeastern areas of Tibet that are now in Qinghai, Gansu, and northern Sichuan), it was also a period dominated by native-born A mdo monks who spent time in central Tibet training in some of the most celebrated Dge lugs pa institutions in and around Lhasa, later to return home to establish their own important monasteries and religious centers.¹ This was, of course, the story of the foundation of Bla brang Bkra shis 'khyil (est. 1709),² as well as many other major Dge lugs pa monasteries in A mdo that maintained strong ties to central Tibet. The stories of those institutions and the lives of the monks who founded them are generally well-known and have received abundant attention by scholars in our field. Less well-known is the story of the figure I want to introduce here, Brag dkar sngags rams pa Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas. His life, for the most part, fits the basic pattern of this historical period, although the main institution he founded in the early eighteenth century, called Me long brag dkar in the northern A mdo province of Khri ka (Ch. Guide), certainly never rose to the illustrious stature of a Bla brang, or Dgon lung, or Sku 'bum.³ But his eventful activities in central Tibet at the end of the seventeenth century, the contacts he made there, and his ties at home to some of A mdo's most prominent personalities and institutions makes his story worth telling. At the very least, such is the viewpoint of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's eighteenth-century biographer.

¹ On this as a characteristic pattern in the periodization of A mdo's history from roughly 1673 to 1709, see Tuttle 2012: 137-138.

² Nietupski 2011.

³ For the history of Dgon lung, see Sullivan 2013; on Sku 'bum, see Karsten 1996.

[1] *The Biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa*

We now have available to us a short biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa in 11 folios, which is included in a collection of his writings preserved in a two-volume set of blockprints edited and produced in 1990 at Rong bo dgon chen, scans of which have only recently been published online at the TBRC.⁴ The biography is entitled *Drops of Nectar Nourishing the Faith of Devoted Disciples: The Life of the Supreme Lord of Siddhas Brag dkar Rin po che, [from] the Lama's Own Words (Grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa brag dkar rin po che'i rnam thar bla ma nyid kyi gsung sgros dad ldan gdul bya'i dad pa'i gso byed bdud rtsi'i zegs ma)*.⁵ By the literary standards of traditional Tibetan Buddhist hagiography, the text is a rather ordinary and fairly modest piece of sacred biography. As is typical, it promotes Brag dkar sngags rams pa as a virtuous Buddhist monk and powerfully effective tantric master. In particular, the text is persistent in what appears to be one of its primary goals: to demonstrate Brag dkar sngags rams pa's special relationship to Vajrabhairava, his personal chosen deity (*yi dam*), and to the fearsome protectors Gshin rje Chos kyi rgyal po (Yama Dharmarāja) and Dpal ldan lha mo, in her wrathful form as Dmag zor rgyal mo. I will say more about his special relationship to Vajrabhairava and the rituals associated with this deity in the next section. But first a few additional details about the biography itself.

Stylistically, the text is an interesting patchwork of biographical and autobiographical narrative vignettes in a mix of voices, somewhat loosely organized, and semi-chronological, but with no specific dates provided. Consequently, the dates I have come up with were calculated from the few precise dates recorded in the colophons of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's own works and by corroborating various events and individuals mentioned in the biography with information that is more securely established in the historical record. Nonetheless, all my dates remain tentative. The text appears to be have been compiled from the author's personal conversations with the subject, as well as Brag dkar sngags rams pa's own recollections, notes, and letters. The colophon indicates that the text's author was the monk Drung yig pa Blo bzang rgya mtsho. This is an individual who would later rise to become the fourteenth abbot

⁴ *Brag dkar gsung 'bum*. For a table of contents see Appendix 3 below. According to the publisher's *par byang*, the collection was compiled from original texts procured in 1949 from the holdings at Me long brag dkar.

⁵ *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *ga*. A translation of the biography is given below in Appendix 1; a transcription of the Tibetan is reproduced in Appendix 2. I am grateful to Cameron Foltz, Roland Mullins, and Tracy Stilerman for their valuable insights and observations on the text and translation of this work.

of the Tantric College (*rgyud grwa*) at Rong bo.⁶ The project was supported by Mkhan chen Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1679-1765), who at the time was the sitting abbot of Rong bo dgon chen.⁷ This would mean the biography was most likely written sometime between the years 1732 and 1735, just a few years after Brag dkar sngags rams pa's death in c. 1726. Alternatively, it could have been written a bit later, between 1755 and 1759, during the tenure of Dge 'dun rgya mtsho's second term as abbot of the monastery. But, given the evidence, I find the later dates less compelling.

I have included a translation of the entire biography in Appendix 1, but here in this introduction I would like to highlight three historical events that are alluded to or mentioned directly in the text, and that I hope will contribute something valuable to the history of A mdo in general, but more specifically, to the neglected stories of significant individuals and institutions in this region that have yet to be duly explored.

Brag dkar sngags rams pa, as one might expect, was born in Brag dkar, a small village in Reb kong (Ch. Tongren) just north of Rong bo, likely in the year 1647.⁸ At the age of thirteen he took his novice

⁶ See *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 378-379. No dates are given for him, but note that his predecessor, the thirteenth throne-holder of Rong bo Rgyud grwa, was Mkhargong Sangs rgyas tshang who is mentioned by name in the biography (*Brag dkar rnam thar*, 47.4-48.2). The twelfth throne-holder Dge 'dun mkhas grub (1742-1811) assumed office in the iron-bird year 1780 and served in that post for several years. His predecessor, the eleventh throne-holder, was Dge 'dun mkhyen rab (1736-1815), who in 1781 was appointed the seventeenth abbot of Rong bo dgon chen. Drung yig Blo bzang rgya mtsho was a student of the famous Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po, the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (1728-1791). Among Drung yig pa's own students are listed Skyabs mchog rin po che, Mkhan chen Don yod rgya mtsho (1778/79-1825, nineteenth abbot of Rong bo), our own Brag dkar sngags rams pa, [Bis pa Ngag dbang] Mi pham zla ba (1767-1807, seventeenth throne-holder of Rong bo Rgyud grwa), Rje Dge 'dun mkhas grub (1742-1811), A khyung Ngag dbang mkhyen rab, Sku mche Rdo rje 'chang Bsod nams rgya mtsho, and Rje Dge 'dun mkhyen rab (1736-1815). Drung yig pa's successor, the fifteenth throne-holder of Rong bo Rgyud grwa, was Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (d. 1808), who would be recognized as the first reincarnation of Brag dkar sngags rams pa and hence the First Brag dkar sprul sku (see below).

⁷ This is Klu 'bum Dge 'dun rgya mtsho, who twice served as abbot of Rong bo dgon chen, as the ninth (appointed in 1732) and as the twelfth two decades later (r. 1755-1759), serving a grand total of seven years (*Rong bo gdan rabs*, 206-210 and 214; also *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 312-315). He was a student of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (1648-1722), with whom he began studying in 1704. He left central Tibet and returned to A mdo in 1722. The biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa was probably composed during Dge 'dun rgya mtsho's first stint as abbot, when Drung yig Blo bzang rgya mtsho was still a junior monk.

⁸ One recent summary of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's life by Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 261-265) gives his birthdate as 1653. The date is plausible but, in my

vows at the hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil and became one of many students there of the renowned Shar Skal ldan rgya mtsho (1607-1677), the visionary songsmith and Dge lugs pa reformer of Rong bo.⁹ It has been well-documented that throughout Skal ldan rgya mtsho's illustrious career as monastic leader of Rong bo, he worked diligently to expand Dge lugs pa influence among the Khoshud Mongols and Tibetans in northern A mdo and was profoundly successful in that endeavor. By the time the young Brag dkar rin po che had entered Bkra shis 'khyil under Skal ldan rgya mtsho's tutelage, the elder leader had begun to pull back from his official duties and soon retired from his post at Rong bo to spend his remaining years at the remote hermitage he had founded two

opinion, seems a few years too late, especially given certain other events that are alluded to in the original text whose dates are more secure, e.g. the turmoils at Bya khyung and its abbatial succession (see discussion below). The discrepancy appears, in part, to have been the result of a misreading of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's age in the original blockprint on fol. 34.1, where clearly it says he studied under Skal ldan rgya mtsho at Bkra shis 'khyil until he was 29 years old (*lo nyer dgu*), which by my rendering would have been in the year c. 1676/77. Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 262), however, gives his age incorrectly here as 24 (*dgung lo nyer bzhi*). According to the 1653 birthdate proposed by Dge 'dun dpal bzang, this too would have been around 1676/77. So the year is more or less accurate, but the age is mistaken. I suspect this misreading may be the reason the rest of Dge 'dun dpal bzang's dates in his summary are off by five or six years. With that in mind, note also that he gives 1729 as the year of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's death. This is more difficult to verify, or to dispute, and is thus a slightly more reasonable date to accept, at least tentatively. However, I still suggest an earlier date of 1726, which is the year a small set of prayers and supplications to Brag dkar sngags rams pa was compiled by his student and friend, the Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nam rgya mtsho (1684-1752) at the behest of one Sngags rams pa Dpal ldan rgya mtsho (see *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *nga*). It is reasonable to presume that these prayers could have been written in memoriam to the lama shortly after his death. For what it is worth, the last of the dated texts authored personally by Brag dkar sngags rams pa and contained in his *Gsung 'bum* was completed in the first month of the earth-pig year 1719 (see *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *pha*).

⁹ A brief account of the life of Skal ldan rgya mtsho can be found in *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 305-308. For a detailed study of his life and songs in English, see Sujata 2005. The hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil was founded by Skal ldan rgya mtsho in 1648. On its early history and later developments, see *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 402-423. According to Sujata (2005: 372), in the time of Skal ldan rgya mtsho, the congregation hall was called Bka' gdam pho brang, where "instruction in both scriptures and rituals evoking protective deities, initiations, textual transmissions and tantric rituals was given to mountain hermits, and practices such as year-long retreats and month-long retreats were established for them. The number of mountain hermits studying there increased, later reaching as many as two hundred." The hermitage was Skal ldan rgya mtsho's primary residence for the last seven years of his life, which for the most part is the period described at the start of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's biography.

decades earlier in 1648. It was during these years, and in this setting at Bkra shis 'khyil, that Brag dkar sngags rams pa became a fully ordained monk and received from Skal ldan rgya mtsho his initial religious training. He would remain at Bkra shis 'khyil with his teacher until he was thirty years old, which I surmise was likely the year of Skal ldan rgya mtsho's death in 1677 or shortly before.

[2] *Lhasa and the Great Iron Castle*

At the age of thirty (c. 1677), following the directives of his teacher, Brag dkar sngags rams pa traveled to Lhasa and took up residence in the famous Tantric College of Rgyud smad,¹⁰ and for the next nine years he furthered his education in the tantras and practices of the distinctive Dge lugs pa triumvirate: Guhyasamāja, Cakrasamvara, and Vajrabhairava, under the leadership of the twenty-seventh abbot of Rgyud smad, Ngag dbang blo gros rgya mtsho (1635-1688), who in 1682 would rise to become the forty-fourth Dga' ldan khri pa (r. 1682-1685).¹¹ The biography, in fact, identifies him by his official title Khri Rin po che. Incidentally, Ngag dbang blo gros originally hailed from Klu 'bum in A mdo and was also the teacher of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (1648-1722) and the Second Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan (1642-1714), both of whom make a brief appearance in our text.¹²

In describing Brag dkar sngags rams pa's activities in central Tibet, the biography focuses mainly on establishing his special affinity with Vajrabhairava and, in turn, his intimate familiarity with the teachings of Rwa lo tsā ba Rdo rje grags, the infamous eleventh-

¹⁰ Rgyud smad grwa tshang was established in 1433 by Tsong kha pa's disciple Rje Shes rab seng ge (1382-1445) in the southern district of Lhasa known as Nor 'dzin rgyal mtshan (later moving north of the city to the Lcang lo can). It is, of course, one of the two main Tantric Colleges of the Dge lug pa tradition and has enjoyed historical ties with the Tantric Colleges of Se ra and 'Bras spungs monasteries. For a concise history of the institution and a list of its early abbots, see Lodrö 1974: 287-292.

¹¹ Brief sketches of Khri chen Ngag dbang blo gros rgya mtsho's life and career can be found in *Dga' ldan chos 'byung*, 93; *'jigs byed chos 'byung* v2: 399-405; *'Bras spungs sgo mang chos 'byung* v1: 52-57; *Hor gyi chos 'byung* v1: 226-229. Dates for his tenure as abbot of Rgyud smad are not given, but he must have stepped down from his position around 1680, which is the year his successor Bsam blo Sbyin pa rgya mtsho (1629-1695) assumed the office.

¹² It may be significant to add here that Khri chen Ngag dbang blo gros and his two students, Lcang skya and 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, were holders of the special Sras rgyud lineage of Vajrabhairava transmissions in the Dge lugs pa tradition. See *'jigs mdzad zhal lung*, 7a.6-8a.2 (513-515). For a history of the Sras rgyud tradition in English, see Champa 1999.

century translator and promoter in Tibet of the tantras and fierce rites of Vajrabhairava. The biography only hints at this, but in other sources, such as Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas's *Oceanic Book* (*Deb ther rgya mtsho*) written in 1865, Brag dkar sngags rams pa is explicitly identified as the reincarnation of Rwa lo tsā ba.¹³ This is also confirmed in one of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's own compositions, in which he refers to himself as "Rwa chen gnyis pa," the second Great Rwa.¹⁴ If we browse the records, we find that the first Rwa lo incarnate (in A mdo at least) was a figure by the name of Blo bzang bsam grub (d. 1708), a contemporary of Brag dkar sngags rams pa and the twenty-sixth abbot of Bya khyung monastery. He was born in central Tibet at Rgya mkhar phu in Gtsang and assumed the abbatial throne in the year 1696.¹⁵

¹³ *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 319.

¹⁴ *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v2, text *khi*: 209.3. Here in the colophon it is also stated that Brag dkar sngags rams pa compiled this text from the authorized words of Rje btsun Tshar pa *yab sras*, which he described as an "account of the advent of the deities and *dākinīs*'s portents of unrest" (*lha dang mkha' 'gro'i 'tshub cha byung ba'i lo rgyus*). Tshar pa *yab sras* is a reference to the celebrated Sa skya duo of Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho (1502-1567) and his principal disciple 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang phyug (1524-1568). Both were leading patriarchs in the sixteenth century of the Eastern Rwa tradition (*rwa shar lugs*) of Vajrabhairava. See Cuevas 2015b: 73-75. A transmission lineage is provided earlier in the text (*ibid.*, 182) as follows: Grub chen Padmavajra, Bla ma Bal po Bha ro, Rwa che Rdo rje grags, Rwa Chos rab, Rwa Ye shes seng ge, Rwa 'Bum seng, Rwa Dharma seng ge, Rwa Dkon mchog seng ge, Rwa Shes rab rgyal mtshan, Rgyal [Rgya] ston Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan, Rgya ston Kun dga' brtson 'grus, Mkhas grub Brtson 'grus byang chu, Bshes gnyen Kun dga' rgyal po, Bla ma dbus stod pa Yon tan chos rin, Yer ba Brtson 'grus rgyal mtshan, Grub chen Chos skyong rgyal mtshan, Bla chen Yon tan rgya mtsho, Rdo rje 'chang [Tshar chen] Blo gsal rgya mtsho, 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang phyug, Grub mchog Bsod nams chos 'phel, Mkhas grub Ngag dbang chos grags, Dgon gsar ba 'Jam dbyangs bstan 'dzin, and *drin can rtsa ba'i bla ma* [=Shar Skal ldan rgya mtsho].

¹⁵ *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 137-140. It would appear that a number of disparate individuals over the centuries, in different regions of Tibet and belonging to diverse sectarian lineages, have been identified as reincarnations of the notorious Rwa lo tsā ba. To cite just two examples from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there is Rgya ston Kun dga' brtson 'grus (named in the lineage listed in the previous note), who is acknowledged to have been the fourth Rwa lo incarnate in no less a source than the *Rwa lo rnam thar* itself (p. 308; trans. Cuevas 2015a: 277). His standing in this regard is uniquely accepted also among certain Sa skya historians, such as 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs (1597-1659; see Cuevas 2015b: 74). In view of the discussion that follows, it is also worth noting that Tāranātha (1575-1634) identifies Kun dga' brtson 'grus and his father, Ru mtshams kyi [r]gya Dbang phyug grags pa [=Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan], as first patriarchs of what he calls the "Rwa Iron Castle" lineage (*rwa lcags mkhar ba*) issuing forth from Rwa 'Bum seng (see *Gshin rje gshed chos 'byung*, 114.3-4). As for other Rwa incarnations, there is also Dge ba rgyal mtshan (1387-1462), third

In line with this special identification with Rwa lo tsā ba, the biography describes in some detail a noteworthy event that occurred during Brag dkar sngags rams pa's tenure at Rgyud smad. The text relates that an official order had come down from the then acting Regent, Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705), requesting the skills of a tantric specialist familiar with the unique Dge lugs pa rites of the so-called "Great Iron Castle" (*lcags mkhar chen mo*). Brag dkar sngags rams pa, of course, was the one chosen for this task and the text describes the elaborate preparations he undertook to perform the rite, as well as the various dreams and omens that forecast his success.¹⁶

The Sde srid's official decree stated that these rites were to be deployed against the 'Brug pa, by which we must assume were meant certain followers of the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud. Where these followers were located and under what circumstances and why they were to be ritually attacked is not mentioned in the text. However, if we consider the approximate timing of the Regent's decree, which was issued at some point during Brag dkar sngags rams pa's residence in central Tibet, between the years c. 1677 and c. 1686, and if we also link this to what we already know about the historical events of the period, then I would suggest that this is likely an oblique reference to the war of 1679-1683 between the Dge lugs pa government in Lhasa and allies of the 'Brug pa in Ladakh. Shortly after Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho became Regent in the summer of 1679, the Dga' ldan pho brang and its Khoshud Mongolian allies, with the approval of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682), had begun to launch a war against Ladakh. Historians sympathetic to the Dge lugs pa explain that this was a justified response to unprovoked harassments from the Ladakhis, who were largely 'Brug pa adherents. The Ladakhi ruler was accused also of having sided with the Bhutanese in the previous war of 1675-1679.¹⁷ In early 1680, the sources tell us, Ladhaki troops surrendered to the Tibetans and their

abbot of 'Phan po Na lendra (r. 1459-1462; see Jackson 1989: 10-11) who is identified in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Thob yig* (v1: 275.3 and 298.3) as the second Rwa lo (*rwa lo gnyis pa*)—just like Brag dkar sngags rams pa two centuries later (!). It is clear from these few examples that an official line of Rwa lo *sprul skus* was never formally coordinated among the various Gsar ma schools. Moreover, to my knowledge, such a line was never granted an institutional foundation anywhere in Tibet.

¹⁶ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 35.3-37.2.

¹⁷ On the war with Ladakh from 1679-1683, see Petech 1977: 70-77 and 1990: 19-44. On the earlier war of 1675-1679 with Bhutan, see Ardussi 1999: 65-66. See also Wangdue 2012 v1: 140-141. A more recent assessment of the Ladakhi conflict is offered in Jinpa 2015: 113-150. Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 262) misidentifies the 'Brug pa in this episode as referring to the Bhutanese (*lho 'brug pa*).

Mongolian forces without resistance, and in 1683, when the Mughals stepped in to defend the Ladhaki king, they too withdrew before a disastrous war ensued. As Luciano Petech has noted, the Tibetan sources claim that the sudden withdrawal of the Mughals, and presumably also the earlier submission of the Ladakhi troops, was the direct result of “magic tricks and witchcraft worked from the distance by the Dalai Lama”¹⁸—though more accurately this would have been executed by the Sde srid, since the Fifth Dalai Lama had already died the year before. For the Dge lugs pa at this time, these so-called “magic tricks and witchcraft” would have most certainly included the fierce rituals of Vajrabhairava, like those of the Great Iron Castle.¹⁹ And, if we accept the account provided in his biography, Brag dkar sngags rams pa was one of the Lhasa government’s chief Vajrabhairava sorcerers engaged in this hostile effort.

The Great Iron Castle is a Vajrabhairava rite following in the tradition of Rwa lo tsā ba, though the symbolism of the Iron Castle goes back much earlier, originating in the canonical cycle of the Vajrabhairava tantras themselves. In the foundational myth of Vajrabhairava’s subjugation of Yama described briefly, for example, in the *Tantra’s Legend Chapter* (*Gtam rgyud kyi rtog pa*), Yama and his minions are said to dwell in “sixteen gateless iron castles,” which Vajrabhairava trampled with his sixteen legs. The Great Iron Castle at the center he then flattened with his “*liṅgam* of single-pointed pristine wisdom,” and thereby succeeded in vanquishing the Great Māra and his demonic forces.²⁰ In the *Three Chapter Tantra* (*Rtog pa gsum*), these sixteen gateless iron castles are identified as the “city of Yama,” which according to the liturgical program outlined in this tantra is to be constructed as an impenetrable iron trap to capture and subdue the spirit of one’s enemies, human or demonic.²¹

¹⁸ Petech 1990: 34.

¹⁹ Curiously, this war of 1679-1683 in western Tibet may actually be alluded to in the biography of Rwa lo tsā ba, where it gives a brief account of Rwa lo performing the “repelling rite of the sixty-four sacrificial cakes” (*drug cu rtsa bzhi’i gtor bzlog*) to subdue the “armies of upper Hor” at Lake Manasarovar. Fittingly, the text relates that after being bombarded by these *gtor ma* missiles, the Hor armies surrendered without putting up a fight. See *Rwa lo rnam thar*, 135; trans. Cuevas 2015a: 124-125. On the likelihood that the *Rwa lo rnam thar* as we now have it was compiled or embellished by certain Dge lugs pa sympathizers in the late seventeenth century, see Cuevas 2015b: 71-76.

²⁰ Siklós 1996: 137: *mi bzad zhabs ni bcu drug gis / lcags mkhar sgo med bcu drug brdzis / ye shes rtse gcig mtshan ma yis / dbus kyi lcags mkhar chen po brdzis / de tshe baud chen las rgyal nas.*

²¹ Siklós 1996: 140: *sgo med lcags mkhar bcu drug bya / ‘di ni gshin rje’i grong khyer ste / srid pa gsum gyi ‘jug pa yin.* This city is then described as follows: *de yi phyi rim mu*

A version of this ritual of the Great Iron Castle is to be found in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's *Gsung 'bum*, in a text entitled *Emissary of Violent Action: A Supplement to "The Magical Device of Blazing Weapons that Ends the Life of Vow-Breakers: An Exposition on the Sixty Great Gtor mas."* (*Gtor chen drug cu pa'i rnam bzhag dam nyams kyi srog gcod mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor zhes bya ba'i zur 'debs 'phrin las drag po'i pho nya*).²² The colophon states that Brag dkar sngags rams pa composed the text in the tenth month of the wood-bird year 1684 at Chu lam sding gsum in the Stod lung valley south of Lhasa. The date of the text, therefore, corresponds roughly to the timing of the episode described here in the biography, just a year or so after the fact. As the title indicates, Brag dkar sngags rams pa's text is a supplement to an earlier work; a text composed by the Fourth Pañchen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570-1662). The Pañchen's work was inspired by a much earlier set of root verses simply called *Drug cu pa*, "The Sixty," that were written by Tsong kha pa's disciple Zhwa lu pa Legs pa rgyal mtshan (1375-1450), the Fourth Dga' ldan khri pa.²³ I should add here that the Pañchen Lama's text was sealed in secrecy and is thus excluded from all modern editions of his *Gsung 'bum*, but in its place Zhwa lu pa's root verses are usually included.²⁴ In more recent times, the Great Iron Castle rites were again the subject of a few works by the Tenth Pañchen Lama Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1938-1989), and these by contrast are readily available in the various editions of his own *Gsung 'bum*.²⁵

khyud gsum / kun tu lcags ris bskor ba ste / mu khyud de dag re re la / khang pa sum cu gnyis dang ldan.

²² Brag dkar *gsung 'bum* v2, text *ci*. As a testament to the enduring value of this text and the ritual it describes, note that the work is included among a collection of common liturgies practiced in exile by the monks of Rgyud smad in contemporary South India. In the *Dkar chag*, however, Brag dkar sngags rams pa is not mentioned as the author of the work. See *Smad rgyud chos spyod* v2: 349-399.

²³ The Fourth Pañchen Lama had received the transmission of these root verses from his teacher Dben sa pa Sangs rgyas ye shes (1525-1590/91). See *Thob yig* v1: 315.6-316.2; note also *Dukūla I*, 196 (trans. Karmay 2014: 150), where in the midst of war between Dbus and Gtsang in 1640, the Fifth Dalai Lama, upon being requested to perform hostile rites, mentions having received the *Drug cu pa* from the Pañchen Lama.

²⁴ See *Drug cu pa'i rtsa tshig zha lu pa chen pos mdzad pa* in *Pañchen Lama IV(a)* v2: 885-889; also *Pañchen Lama IV(b)* v2: 638-640. The *Dkar chag* of the former edition (v2: 3.3-4.1) gives a list of sealed works (*bka' rgya*) that have been excluded from the collection; the *Gtor chen drug cu pa'i rnam bzhag dam nyams kyi srog gcod mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor* is the sixth title in the list.

²⁵ Titles include *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi gtor chen drug cu pa'i rnam gzhang dam nyams kyi srog gcod mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor bka' rgya can sngags khang dus gtor mdzad pa bzhin nag po 'gro shes su bris pa* in *Pañchen Lama X(b)*: 128-171; *Lcags mkhar mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor gyi sngon 'gro bkras lhun rgyud grwa'i phyag*

[3] *Founding of Me long brag dkar*

Brag dkar sngags rams pa left central Tibet and returned to A mdo in c. 1686, residing for a number of years again at the hermitage of Bkra shis 'khil. Later, having moved north to Khri ka, he founded his own modest hermitage, called Me long brag dkar, known today simply as Me long dgon (Ch. Meilong si).²⁶ The biography indicates that he established this institution at the behest of many faithful disciples, including the Mongolian overlord Baatur Taiji. This was Dalai Khung-Taiji Dashi-Baatur (1632-1714), the youngest son of Gūūshi Khan (1582-1655), who at that time was chief of the Kōkenuur Mongols.²⁷ Much could be said about this famous Mongol chieftain and the prominent Dge lugs pa leaders he supported in those years, but suffice it say that Baatur Taiji likely did more than petition Brag dkar sngags rams pa to build his hermitage; he almost certainly secured the land for him and much of the necessary financial resources.

Nine texts in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's *Gsung 'bum* were written at Me long brag dkar. Of those that are dated in the colophons, the two earliest ones were completed in the water-sheep year 1703.²⁸ These consist of high eulogies to the institution and fumigation rites

bzhes ltar bkod pa in *Pañchen Lama X(a)* v2: 415-445 (this text concludes with a brief history of the transmission, 438.4-446.3); *Lcags mkhar mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor gyi ngag 'don zhal yig bka' rgya can* in *Pañchen Lama X(a)* v2: 447-518. Here the full name given to these rites is significant: *Lcags mkhar gtor chen drug cu pa*, which further reinforces that the *Drug cu pa* ritual and the so-called "Great Iron Castle" referred to in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's biography are one and the same. I wonder if the number "sixty" (*drug cu pa*) here might originally have been an orthographic reversal of Tibetan "sixteen" (*bcu drug pa*), which is the actual number of Yama's iron castles identified in the canonical texts.

²⁶ This monastery is known by several names: *Mkha' spyod dpal gyi gur khang*, *Kun bzang me long brag dkar*, and *Me long dgon mkha' spyod dpal gyi gur khang*. For its history, see the brief account in *Mtsho lho khul gyi dgon sde lo rgyus*, 238-251, which includes also a short biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa (pp. 240-245) drawn almost verbatim from our present text.

²⁷ See Sullivan 2013: 134 n. 628. Atwood (2004: 574) notes that in 1697 Dalai Khung-Taiji Dashi-Baatur, along with the Kōkenuur nobility, "submitted to Kangxi in a personal audience at Xi'an, receiving rich titles and gifts." In the context of that submission, Dashi-Baatur also had official contacts with the Second Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan. For details, see Sullivan 2013: 133-139. The Second Lcang skya makes a brief appearance in *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 39.5-6, where it is said that he invited Brag dkar sngags rams pa to his encampment to perform a series of consecrations. On this event, see note 64 below.

²⁸ See *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *cha* and text *sha*. There are two other dated texts in the collection authored at this site: one composed in the fire-pig year 1707 (*Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *kha*) and another composed in the earth-dog year 1718 (*Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *ma*).

for subjugating the hostile local spirits of Khri ka. It is plausible, then, that Me long brag dkar was founded around the same time, in 1703 or shortly before that year. Again, in this section, the biography emphasizes Brag dkar sngags rams pa's close personal affinity with Vajrabhairava and relates that he used Me long brag dkar as a primary site for Vajrabhairava retreats.

[4] *Protecting the Abbatial Seat at Bya khyung*

The third historical episode I wish to highlight here involves Brag dkar sngags rams pa's dramatic activities at Bya khyung, one of the oldest and most renowned Dge lugs pa monasteries in A mdo, founded in 1349 by Tsong kha pa's teacher, Don grub rin chen (1309-1385).²⁹ The biography alludes to a tumultuous period in the abbatial succession of this institution between the years 1713 and 1716.³⁰ The text notes that Bya khyung was being plagued by an evil spirit and, as a result, the abbots were dying off at an untimely pace.³¹ A petition letter is said to have been sent to the Fifth Pañchen Lama Blo bzang ye shes (1663-1737), requesting that he appoint a skilled ritualist who could protect the abbatial throne and vanquish the threatening demon. A list of five candidates were offered for consideration: (1) the Third La mo zhabs drung dkar po Ngag dbang blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1660-1728), founder of La mo bde chen monastery in A mdo,³² (2) the Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1684-1752),³³ (3) the Second Chu bzang Blo bzang bstan pa

²⁹ For an extended account of the life of Don grub rin chen and his founding of the monastery, see *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 10-63.

³⁰ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 40.3-43.6.

³¹ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 40.4.

³² For a brief biography of the Third La mo zhabs drung dkar po, see *Bras spungs sgo mang chos 'byung* v1: 603-606. He was born in the A mdo region of Khri ka, recognized by the Fifth Dalai Lama, and later participated in the search for the Seventh Dalai Lama (1708-1757). He founded La mo bde chen in 1682.

³³ The Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho is mentioned frequently by name in our biography and in the colophons of several of the texts in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's *Gsung 'bum*. The two lamas appear to have been very close companions. He was born in A mdo in the region of Gcan tsha (Ch. Jianzha) and was a student of the aforementioned La mo zhabs drung dkar po, who served as his ordination preceptor. Though he remained a champion of the Dge lugs pa and an avid proponent especially of the legacy of teachings followed at Rgyud smad and Se ra smad in central Tibet, he also trained under a number of prominent Rnying ma teachers. The Stong 'khor incarnation line, to which Bsod nams rgya mtsho belongs, has a peculiar history in both A mdo and Khams and is deserving of a thorough study. Short biographies of several prominent figures

(1652-1723);³⁴ (4) the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, founder of Bla brang Bkra shis 'khyil;³⁵ and finally, (5) our own Brag dkar sngags rams pa. I suppose readers can guess who was chosen for the task.

The text notes that Brag dkar sngags rams pa initially refused to take the job, citing the urgent pleas of his devoted disciples from Reb kong and Khri ka who, because of his old age (he was sixty-nine at the time), worried for his safety. He was eventually persuaded and made his way to Bya khyung. The biography then recounts a bizarre series of events.³⁶ When Brag dkar sngags rams pa arrived at the monastery, he was informed that a hostile criminal who had been repeatedly plundering the premises—an emanation of a demon named Rkun po nag ral (Black-Maned Thief)—was recently apprehended and executed by an angry mob. Brag dkar sngags rams pa requested that the corpse of this criminal be flayed and dismembered and the parts brought to him. After this was done, he used the skin as a ritual mat and burned the remaining body parts as sacramental substances in a fierce *homa* rite, deploying as well the *yantras* of Vajrabhairava. According to the biography, several signs occurred indicating that the rite was successful and that the evil demon was properly bound and subjugated. Soon thereafter he witnessed “the head of a lama shoot up from below the ground and then sink back down into the earth.” Thinking that this might be a former lama of Bya khyung, he performed a ritual to liberate the restless spirit from the monastery. He was then able to establish a protection circle around the abbatial throne and peace was restored to the monastery. The biography then relates that Brag dkar sngags rams pa temporarily assumed leadership of Bya khyung, serving as abbot for one month, before appointing a more suitable candidate, a monk by the name of Ngag dbang nor bu (1688-1758), who then

in the lineage are contained in *Ming mdzod*, 769-782 (on Bsod nams rgya mtsho, see 772-773).

³⁴ On the life and career of the Second Chu bzang, see Bsod nams rgya mtsho 2001: 14-17. He was ordained under the Seventh Dalai Lama and later served as nineteenth abbot of Dgon lung from 1680 to 1687, and as the eighteenth throneholder of Sku 'bum from 1696 to 1713. Like Brag dkar sngags rams pa, his contemporary, he also enjoyed the patronage of the Kōkenuur ruler Dalai Khung-Taiji Dashi-Baatur, as well as a few other prominent Mongolian leaders. He was assassinated in 1723 by the army of Nyan kwan yo (Ch. Nian Gengyao, d. 1726) during the tragic uprising of the Mongol prince Blo bzang bstan 'dzin (1692-1755) against the Qing; on which, see note 53 below.

³⁵ Much has been written about this pivotal figure, see, for example, Maher 2006; Nietupski 2011: 17-21, *passim* and sources cited therein.

³⁶ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 42.1-43.3.

became the thirty-first abbot of Bya khyung in c. 1716. He held that position for five years, stepping down in c. 1721.³⁷

The untimely deaths in this period of Bya khyung's sitting abbots, the twenty-eighth, twenty-ninth, and thirtieth to be precise, can be corroborated in the *Abbatial Succession of Bya khyung (Bya khyung gdan rabs)*.³⁸ That source tells us that the twenty-eighth abbot, Blo bzang bkra shis (1647-1713), assumed the throne in 1712 but died a year later.³⁹ The next in line, the twenty-ninth abbot, Ye shes rgya mtsho left his post at Bya khyung after less than a year because of inauspicious omens.⁴⁰ He must have assumed the office in 1713, shortly after the death of his predecessor. The thirtieth abbot, 'Jam dbyangs bkra shis, only served in that post for half a year before becoming deathly ill. Healing rituals were conducted but he was unable to recover. He left the monastery to convalesce at the hermitage of Stag sdong dkar po where he was to consult with one of Bya khyung's retired abbots, the twenty-fifth abbot Blo bzang chos dbyings, but along the way he died tragically after falling from his horse.⁴¹

[5] Reply to the Questions of the Fifth Stong 'khor Rin po che

At this point in the biography there occurs a small division break.⁴² In this second and final section of the text, the narrative opens with Brag dkar sngags rams pa's reply to the questions of the Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho concerning Brag dkar rin po che's previous incarnations, the levels of spiritual realization he had achieved, and the yogic powers he had acquired.⁴³ Brag dkar sngags rams pa responds with characteristic Buddhist humility, but admits that he had been told by his teacher Skal Idan rgya mtsho and a few others close to him that he was the reincarnation of the great Indian mahāsiddha Kṛṣṇācārya,⁴⁴ in addition to the eleventh-century Rnying ma translator and Rdzogs chen pioneer Rong zom chos kyi

³⁷ On Ngag dbang nor bu, see *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 151-155.

³⁸ *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 142-158. Note that this section also includes a brief sketch of the life of Brag skar sngags rams pa (pp. 146-151) based for the most part on our biography.

³⁹ *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 142-144.

⁴⁰ *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 144-145.

⁴¹ *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 145-146. The twenty-fifth abbot Blo bzang chos dbyings assumed the throne in 1645 (*ibid.*, 135-137).

⁴² *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 45.4.

⁴³ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 45.4-47.2.

⁴⁴ On the life of this celebrated *caryāgīti* singer composed by Tāranātha, see Templeman 1989.

bzang po (1042-1136),⁴⁵ and more recently, in the sixteenth century, Rtses thang Byang ma pa Dpal 'byor bsod nam lhun grub (b. 1553), scion of the ancient Zur clan and thirteenth abbot of Se ra byas.⁴⁶ There is no mention here that he might also have been the reincarnation of Rwa lo tsā ba, but he does declare in his reply that Rwa lo appeared to him in a dream and entrusted him with certain unique instructions on the magical devices or *yantras* of Vajrabhairava.⁴⁷

The biography concludes with a very brief but intimate deathbed exchange between Brag dkar sngags rams pa and his student Tshis ka tshang, in which Brag dkar rin po che reports experiencing a premonition of Yama Dharmarāja pacing back and forth outside in the courtyards of Bkra shis 'khyil, waiting to take him away. He died shortly thereafter. This student of his, identified here and throughout the text as Tshis ka tshang or Tshis ka'i sngags rams pa tshang, is more widely known by the name of Lha ri sngags rams pa Blo bzang 'byung gnas (b. 1684), who in 1725 founded the monastery of Lha ri bsam gtan gling in the neighboring province of Gcan tsha (Ch. Jianzha).⁴⁸ Today, Lha ri bsam gtan gling (Ch. Lari si) is a bipartisan Rnying ma institution predominately adhering to the popular Sngags mang tradition. The monastery was originally a small mountain hermitage and in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's *Gsung 'bum*, we have his short exposition of precepts for retreatants of this site, written in the earth-ox year 1709.⁴⁹

[6] *The Incarnation Line of Brag dkar sngags rams pa*

In closing, one final comment about the *sprul sku* line that was instituted after Brag dkar sngags rams pa's death. We have very scant information about this particular line of incarnations and frustratingly little has been recorded about the lives and dates of the

⁴⁵ On Rong zom, see Almogi 2002: 67-80 and references cited therein.

⁴⁶ Biographical information on Rtses thang Byang ma pa is disappointingly sparse. A few details are provided in a short entry in Tre hor lha rams pa 2009 v1: 286. There he is said to have been a teacher of 'Khon ston Dpal 'byor lhun grub (1561-1637), the early mentor of the Fifth Dalai Lama who had been the first to initiate him into the teachings of Rdzogs chen.

⁴⁷ *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 46.2-4.

⁴⁸ On the life of Blo bzang 'byung gnas and his founding of Lha ri bsam gtan gling, see Blo bzang dar rgyas 2010: 208-243 (pp. 220-222 in this section of the work is quoted almost verbatim from Brag dkar sngags rams pa's biography).

⁴⁹ *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *ra*. An updated contemporary manual is reproduced in Blo bzang dar rgyas 2010: 632-645, entitled *Lha ri'i ri khrod pa rnam kyī bca' khrims legs lam gsal ba'i sgron me*.

individuals in the series. What we do know is that the first two incarnates were seated at Rong bo monastery, where they each held institutional positions of the highest rank. We also know that from the mid-eighteenth century until the present day there have been seven of them total.

In the beginning, the first to be recognized as the rebirth of Brag dkar sngags rams pa was Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (d. 1808). During the course of his life, he held the abbatial seat of all three of Rong bo's main colleges. He was the fifteenth throne-holder of Rong bo's Tantric College, the sixth throne-holder of the Kālacakra College (*dus grwa*), and at the very end of his life, in 1807, he became the twenty-third abbot of Rong bo dgon chen.⁵⁰ He died the next year. The second incarnation was Don yod bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, who served as thirteenth throne-holder of the Kālacakra College, but died young, around the age of forty.⁵¹ I have not been able to locate the identities of the next several in the lineage, but the seventh and current Brags dkar sngags rams pa *sprul sku*, who to my knowledge is still with us, is 'Jigs med bstan pa rab rgyas (b. 1937). There is a short biography of him in a recent gazetteer of the Kōkenuur region.⁵² That source states that at the time this survey was published in 1996, 'Jigs med bstan pa rab rgyas was presiding lama (*bdag skyong*) of the monasteries of Seng ge gshong ya mgo dgon and Seng ge gshong ma mgo dgon. These are the two renowned art schools in Reb kong and, in fact, Ma mgo dgon is another of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's practice centers that he purportedly founded in the early eighteenth century (1706 to be exact).⁵³ In addition to these two, it is

⁵⁰ *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 233, 379, 391, and 395-396.

⁵¹ *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 396; *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 320.

⁵² *Mtsho sngon po'i rkang tsha'i lo rgyus*, 185-189.

⁵³ For a brief note about these two famous painting schools, see Dorje 1996: 595; histories of the institutions can be found in Dge 'dun dpal bzang 2007: 259-285. In *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 403, it states that Brag dkar sngags rams established several practice centers (*sgrub sde*) near Bkra shis 'khyil, one of them being Seng ge gshong ma mgo dgon. This fact is not mentioned in the biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa. According to Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 259), his gazetteer of Reb kong and surrounding regions, Seng ge gshong ma mgo dgon Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling was established in 1706 when Brag dkar sngags rams pa first erected the assembly hall (*'du khang*) with its shrines and sacred objects on the ruins of the older Buddhist temple at the site, the Dus gsum sangs rgyas kyī lha khang, which had been built sometime in the twelfth century. Alternative sources say, according to the author, that the institution was officially founded in 1647 by the Fourth Stong 'khor Mdo rgyud rgya mtsho (d. 1683). Later, the Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho gave the monastery its name and installed the goddess Dpal ldan lha mo as its dharma protector. The two other centers founded by Brag dkar sngags rams pa listed in the *Rong bo gdan rabs* are Bde ldan brag dkar [=Me long brag dkar] and Thig mo [bkra shis rab brtan dgon]. The

stated that 'Jigs med bstan pa rab rgyas was also in charge of the monasteries of Phyug nor dgon and Me lung dgon, which I suspect is actually Me long brag dkar.⁵⁴

In the end, I think Brag dkar sngags rams pa's consequential links to Bya khyung, Rong bo, Rong bo Bkra shis 'khyil, Me long brag dkar, Seng ge gshong, Lha ri bsam gtan gling, and perhaps even Stong 'khor are illuminating and stand as testament to the wider influence this Lhasa-trained monk and Vajrabhairava master from Reb kong exerted on some of A mdo's most prominent institutions and personalities in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. His legacy, though modest, persists today throughout northern A mdo in the regions of Reb kong, Khri ka, and Gcan tsha, and at the monasteries of Rong bo, Seng ge gshong ma mgo dgon, and Lha ri bsam gtan gling especially.

latter is identified in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's biography as the hermitage of Tho'u mo, Bde ldan bkra shis rab brtan (see *Brag dkar rnam thar*, 49.2). On its founding, see also Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 126), where he states that Brags dkar sngags rams pa newly erected the temples and sacred objects of the Maitreya temple (*byams khang*), assembly hall, and Mañjuśrī temple (*'jam dbyangs khang*) at Thig mo and inaugurated its dharma programs, including the Great Prayer festival. Dge 'dun dpal bzang (2007: 259-260) also mentions that Brag dkar rin po che installed Dmag zor rgyal mo as the institution's main protector. Over time, Thig mo fell into ruin and its most sacred objects were divided up between the two institutions in Seng ge gshong. The monks at Thig mo then joined the community at Ma mgo dgon, where the unique monastic traditions of Thig mo were preserved. Both traditions continued to be maintained by the line of Brag dkar sngags rams pa incarnates. Finally, in this same section, Dge 'dun dpal bzang adds an intriguing detail to Brag dkar sngags rams pa's biography, which I suspect is likely based on oral tradition at Seng ge gshong. He writes (p. 265) that, following the disastrous 1723-1724 uprising against the Qing led by the Mongol prince Blo bzang bstan 'dzin, Brag dkar sngags rams pa and the Fifth Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho together performed the sorcery rites of Vajrabhairava and Dpal ldan lha mo aimed at the Qing commander Nyan gung lo (Ch. Nian Gengyao, d. 1726), the Imperial army's "general-in-chief for the pacification of distant lands" (*fuyuan dajiangzhun*). With these rites, it is claimed, the two allegedly succeeded in killing the general. Both lamas were richly rewarded for their service to the Buddha's teaching and to the people of the Kökenuur region. Today, the (magical) sword they deployed to end the life of the Chinese commander is now kept as an object of veneration at Ya mgo dgon and the painted image (*bsnyen thang*) of Dpal ldan lha mo, which they also used in these rites, is held at Ma mgo dgon. For background to the tragic 1723-1724 uprising and an account of the events, see Katō Naoto 2013: 411-436; also Sullivan 2013: 321-341, which focuses especially on the destruction of Dgon lung monastery. On the career of Nian Gengyao and his actual fate on January 13, 1726, see Hummel 1943-44 v1: 587-590 (Nien Kêng-yao).

⁵⁴ *Mtsho sngon po'i rkang tsha'i lo rgyus*, 189. Phyug nor dgon is in the region of Rkang tsha (Ch. Gangcha xian), west of Xining. For a brief history of the institution, see *ibid.*, 61-69; also *Mtsho byang khul gi dgon sde lo rgyus*, 159-168.

**Appendix 1: Translation of
the Biography of Brag dkar sngags rams pa**

*The Drops of Nectar Nourishing the Faith of Devoted Disciples
The Life of the Supreme Lord of Accomplished Masters Brag dkar rin po che
[from] the Lama's Own Words*

BIRTH AND VOWS OF RENUNCIATION⁵⁵

[32] *Nama guru Mañjuḥṣa*

*Blo bzang, the kind-hearted, lily patch of the Victor's Teaching,
Rab tu rgyas mdzad, the eminent propagator, daylight guardian
of the master siddhas,
His life story, the moonlight that clarifies all,
Radiates forth to flower the water-lily of intelligence among
the faithful.*

This is a brief account of the life of Brag dkar rin po che Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas dpal bzang po, lord of scholars and siddhas, from his own mouth, entitled *Drops of Nectar Nourishing the Faith of Devoted Disciples*. The birthplace of this holy lord of siddhas was called Brag dkar, near Thos bsam rnam par rgyal ba'i gling, the great dharma center of Rong bo,⁵⁶ in the region of Reb kong, the Golden Valley. [33] Born the son of the mighty sorcerer and mantra-holder Tshe gzungs 'bum and his faithful and devoted wife Bol bza' rdo rje sman, he was raised by both parents. When he reached the age of thirteen, as entry into the Buddha's Teaching, he very purely and properly received the vows of renunciation at the feet of the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po, after which he took up the victory banner of a saffron-robed monk.

⁵⁵ Section titles have been added.

⁵⁶ This is the central monastic college of Rong bo, one of three colleges within the institution. For its history, see *Rong bo dgan rabs*, 140-356. The other two are tantric colleges: Rgyud grwa gsang chen chos kyi bang mdzod (ibid., 357-381) and Dus grwa gsang sngags dar rgyas gling, the so-called "Kālacakra College" (ibid., 382-401). A fourth college is the retreat and meditation center Sgrub grwa gnas mchog Bkra shis 'khyil (ibid., 402-423), first established by Shar Skal Idan rgya mtsho.

EARLY YEARS AT THE HERMITAGE OF BKRA SHIS 'KHYIL

At the age of seventeen, he entered retreat at the sacred hermitage of Gnas mchog Bkra shis 'khyil, and when he was twenty years old, he took full ordination in the presence of Rgyal sras sprul ba'i sku rin po che [Blo bzang bstan 'dzin].⁵⁷ He served at the lotus feet of the Venerable Holy Lama, [34] Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po. Until he was twenty-nine, the fine vase of his mind was well-filled with profound and extensive instructions, including initiations, reading transmissions, practice authorizations, guiding instructions, and so forth. Once when he was doing several sealed retreats at the hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil, he saw, as if in a meditative vision, many sentient beings appear outside his retreat cell circumambulating and shouting "Namo Vajrabhairava!" like the roar of a thousand rolls of thunder.

On another occasion, when the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po was staying there in the Gzim khang rab dga' of Bkra shis 'khyil, he saw in the distance this holy lord of siddhas himself arrive to listen to his oral teachings on the dharma. [The Lama] asked one of his attendants there [beside him], "Who is that down there?" The attendant responded, "He's a fully ordained monk from Brag dkar." And [the Lama], looking directly into the monk's future, at the reality of what would come, among other things, remarked, "What sort of elder teacher will he become?"

STUDIES AT RGYUD SMAD AND ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL TIBET

Later, when [this holy lord of siddhas] was thirty years old, following the orders of the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po, he traveled to Dbus and took up residence at the Glorious College of Smad rgyud, the source of many scholars and accomplished masters. For nine years he received and practiced in great detail the general instructions of the extensively profound mantra tradition, and in particular the instructions on the sūtras and tantras, such as those of *Cakrasaṃvara*, *Guhyasamāja*, *Vajrabhairava*, the *Five Stages*, and so forth. In addition, [35] he received many initiations, reading transmissions, practice authorizations, and guiding instructions, and, in turn, he also bestowed [his own]

⁵⁷ Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan 'dzin was a teacher also of Skal Idan rgya mtsho. See *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 306.

dharma teachings. Thereafter, he requested permission to leave the Glorious College of Smad rgyud. For three years he traveled from place to place in order to receive numerous teachings on dharma, and the excellent vase of his mind was well-filled with very rare and precious streams of dharma. Having resided at the Glorious College of Smad rgyud, this holy lord of siddhas had grandly and without delay traversed an ocean of learning, [all] the fields of study.

[Once during his time at Smad rgyud], an official order had come down from the lord of scholars, the regent Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, which stated: “For the sake of the Victor’s Teaching, [both] general and specific, the Great Iron Castle (*lcags mkhar chen mo*), unique to our own superior Dge lugs pa tradition, must be built up against the ‘Brug pa and others.”⁵⁸

In deciding who among the many scholars and accomplished masters assembled within the halls of Glorious Smad rgyud would benefit the Buddha’s Teaching and living beings if elected the [officiating] Vajra Master [*vajrācārya*], [the Sde srid] performed a divination (*thugs dam brtag pa*) and the fine face of this holy lord of siddhas himself appeared. Based on this, [the Sde srid] said that the very face of this holy lord of siddhas appeared [to him] as the one who, if selected Vajra Master, would [most] benefit the Buddha’s Teaching and living beings, and so he appointed him Vajra Master.

After that, [the Sde srid] asked this holy lord of siddhas, “Do you have certainty about the sequence of guiding instructions and ritual practices of the Iron Castle and so on?” And he replied, “When I [lived] in Mdo smad, in the presence of the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po, [36] I obtained the blessed sequence of guiding instructions on the magical devices, the Iron Castle, and so forth. However, I do not possess the divine pride of the chosen deity [i.e. Vajrabhairava], but I do possess the pride of [my] lama.”

Thereafter he made preparations for constructing the Great Iron Castle and while staying in retreat, he had a dream in which extremely terrifying storm clouds appeared and, with deafening thunder, a violent hail began to fall. When the hailstorm came above the holy lord’s own head, a woman adorned with ornaments appeared in the sky, spread out a large flying black cloth [above him], and prevented the hail from falling upon the holy lord of siddhas. In regard to this, he said, “That adorned woman was certainly the goddess Dpal Idan lha mo.” And, “Dpal Idan lha mo is our own divine tantric guardian.” Afterward, he went to [Chos ‘khor] Rgyal

⁵⁸ On this event, see introduction above.

me tog thang⁵⁹ and extensively trained in the practices of dispatching the [New Year's] Day *gtor ma* offerings (*tshes gtor*) of Dpal ldan lha mo. When [years later] he returned to Mdo smad, he gave the [New Year's] Day *gtor ma* offerings repeatedly.

Then, while preparing the [rites of the] Iron Castle, this holy lord of siddhas had a dream in which he saw many thickly bearded blacksmiths doing various types of forging at Se ra theg chen gling. He asked them, "Why is that necessary?" And they responded, "It is especially necessary this year, and must be continued from now on." When this holy lord of siddhas finally completed the Great Iron Castle and cast the *gtor ma* in the direction of the enemy, [37] a flower blossom broke off from the tip of the *gtor ma* and went off to the land of the 'Brug pa. In a roar⁶⁰ it fell upon some of the enemies of the Buddha's Teaching and smashed them into dust. Afterward, upon receiving word of this, he said that his earlier dream was an omen of that [victory].

During the time Khri rin po che Blo gros rgya mtsho was acting as lineage lama and Vajra Master, the tantra [students of Smad rgyud] went to Chu mig lung.⁶¹ One time when a dharma session was being held there, within the assembly, this holy lord of siddhas, covering his head with his shawl, entered meditative equipoise for a bit on the generation stage of Guhyasamāja. At that moment Khri rin po che was standing at a window above the assembly hall. When he looked down at the assembly, he saw a mass of white light radiating from a monk's body. In sparkling white brilliance [the light] spread in all directions, including the spot where [Khri rin po che] himself was standing. To one of his attendants he said, "Look there! Who is the monk down there in the assembly whose head is slightly covered? A mass of white light is radiating from his body." The attendant looked down and replied that it seemed to be this holy lord of siddhas himself. [Khri rin po che] responded with great joy, "Such a magnificent and mature tantra [student] I have here in this Tantric College of mine!"

⁵⁹ The personal monastery of the Dalai Lamas established in western Dwags po in 1509 by the Second Dalai Lama Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1476-1542). In the mountains behind the monastery is the famous lake Lha mo bla mtsho, the *bla gnas* of the Dalai Lamas, customarily used to divine the future incarnations of that office. The monastery is a sacred site of Dmag zor rgyal mo, ferocious emanation of Dpal ldan lha mo.

⁶⁰ Correct *chem* for *chems*.

⁶¹ Chu mig lung, west of Lhasa, was the site of the annual summer retreat for the monks of Rgyud smad. The site was chosen as an alternative to Yangs pa can in the seventeenth century during the wars between Dbus and Gtsang.

Another [time], this lord of siddhas said that he had a spiritual vision that [in a past life] he was himself the holy one Rtse thang Byang ma pa Dpal 'byor bsod noms lhun grub and that some of his like-minded peers told him that as well. [38] On the basis of that [identification], he developed a strong desire to visit Rtse thang Byang ma pa's birthplace. In the past, [long] before he had visited there, [Rtse thang] possessed an abundance of wealth, but in later times its fortunes and such had deteriorated.⁶² Consequently, the conditions were not suitable for the lord of siddhas to stay for even one day. He said that, as a result, he reflected on there being nothing stable and reliable with respect to worldly affairs, prosperity and poverty, high and low [status], joy and sorrow, and the like, and an immeasurable revulsion [for this world] was born in him. "That Rtse thang Byang ma pa was an incarnation of Gung thang lo tsā ba,"⁶³ the Great Accomplished One Skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po [once] said.

This holy lord of siddhas remarked, "These days, all I know are the complete instructions of the Great Venerable Rwa [lo tsā ba] Vajrakīrti." And he added, "From time to time I felt a sort of satisfied pride [with respect to the practice of those instructions]. I thought that during my stay in Dbus I would not be busy with work and other such things, and that if and when the time was right I would [find] an excellent scribe and compose a volume of teachings on Glorious Vajrabhairava, which I would call *The Complete Teachings on Glorious Vajrabhairava [according to] the Virtuous Pronouncements of the Superior Dge ldan pa Tradition*. But because I was overwhelmed with work and other such things, there was never a proper time for such activities."

During his stay in Dbus, he erected, among other things, an especially sublime three-dimensional meditation *maṇḍala* (*blos bslangs*) of Glorious Vajrabhairava in accordance with the tantra and the intentions of the great accomplished masters, and he worked extensively for the welfare of the Buddha's Teaching and of living beings. When he was heading out on his journey back to Mdo smad,

⁶² Rtse thang at this time was still a Bka' brgyud stronghold and had been devastated during the civil wars in the previous century. It was not until the Seventh Dalai Lama (1708-1757) in the middle of the eighteenth century that the area was transformed and converted to the Dge lugs pa.

⁶³ This may be a reference to Mal gyo lo tsā ba Blo gros grags pa (eleventh century), who is sometimes referred to as Gung thang lo tsā ba. He was the patriarch of the Mal tradition (*mal lugs*) of Vajrabhairava and was a teacher of Sa skya Kun dga' snying po (1092-1158), among other hierarchs of the Sa skya 'Khon family. Tāranātha gives a brief history of the Mal tradition in *Gshin rje gshed chos 'byung*, 126.6-127.6.

he said that he had a vision of the upper portion of the figure of Glorious Vajrabhairava in splendid clarity and that, for some reason, the lower portion [39] was obscured. He remarked, "I saw that clear upper portion of the figure [as representing] my earlier life when I served at the lotus-feet of the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po. And I saw that lower portion of the figure, which had been obscured for some reason, [as representing] my later life when I was greatly distracted by village rituals and the like. This is what I saw. Not only that, but while serving at the lotus-feet of the Venerable Holy Lama, Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po, many extraordinary degrees of experiential realization and [blissful] heat arose within me when I practiced meditation. Later on, when I visited the regions of Dbus and Gtsang, I put aside such [meditation practices] and thereafter all the tantric spiritual qualities I had previously possessed vanished like a fading rainbow. For most of my life, when I had practiced meditation at the sacred hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil, positive things would occur, but [later] my mind, in a state of laziness, was disturbed by the demons of distraction and that created obstacles for me."

RETURN TO A MDO AND FOUNDING OF ME LONG BRAG DKAR

From Dbus he traveled back here to Mdo smad and resided for some years at the sacred hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil. During this period, the Supreme Incarnate known as Ho thog thu [Qutuqtu]⁶⁴ invited him to his encampment to place *dhāraṇī*, relics, and the like inside numerous sacred objects of the enlightened body, speech, and mind

⁶⁴ This is the Second Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan (1642-1714). He had left Lhasa and returned to A mdo in 1683 at the age of 42 and spent that year in solitary retreat at a hermitage attached to Dgon lung monastery called Byang chub gling, after which he visited Thang ring and Sku 'bum. On Lcang skya's activities in A mdo, see Sullivan 2013: 116-149. I suspect this meeting with Brag dkar sngags rams pa must have occurred during one of Lcang skya's extended retreats in A mdo, either between the years 1683-1687 or between 1688-1693, the latter after he had returned from his first meeting with the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661-1722) in Beijing. By my calculations, Brag dkar sngags rams pa left Lhasa and returned to A mdo in c. 1686, so the dates seem to correspond to the first period. Perhaps the consecration ceremony referenced here may have been requested for Lcang skya's Byang chub gling hermitage. Note that Brag dkar sngags rams pa composed a text for the Second Lcang skya Qutuqtu on the ritual deployment of *gtor zor*, which is reproduced in *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v2, text *chi*. No date is given in the colophon.

[of the buddhas], to consecrate them, and other such things. He performed the consecrations and so on and made elaborate offerings. The overlord of that country, named Bā dur the'i ji [Baatur Thaiji], venerated the Lama and stayed on for some years. At the behest of many devotees, including Bā dur the'i ji, [this holy lord of siddhas] also founded an exceptional practice center, which was called Me long brag [40] dkar. At that sacred place, there were three large boulders in the shape of a [three-pointed] *dharmodaya*.⁶⁵ Atop [those three boulders] a hermitage (*gzim khang*) was raised, wherein many Vajrabhairava retreats were held. The lord of siddhas also personally offered many praises to that hermitage, particular expressions such as:

Glory is that sacred place, spontaneous, uncontrived dharma source (*dharmodaya*);
Joy, self-originated, exists there within its hollows (*phug pa*).

He also said, "That sacred place is exceptional. On the right side of that *dharmodaya* is a rock that has a naturally-arisen [image of Yama] Dharmarāja."

ACTIVITIES AT BYA KHYUNG

On another occasion, at the great dharma center of Bya khyung, source of the superior Dge ldan pa teaching, whichever holy lama was in residence there, each sat on the [abbatial] throne for only a short while—at best, [presiding] for a single year, or for half a year, or in the worst case, for just a month. Having been harmed beyond their control [by] an evil ghostly spirit (*gshegs 'gro ba'i gdon ngan*), at least five prominent holy lamas [of Bya khyung] passed away, departing for other realms. Many religious services and ritual ceremonies for repelling [that demon] were performed again and again, but to no avail. [Some] wondered whether at this point there was a special holy lama, a scholar and accomplished master who could help. A petition letter was written to the Omniscient Pañchen Blo bzang ye shes dpal bzang po, listing five names: La mo'i zhabs drung Dkar po tshang, Stong skor rin po che, Chu bzang dpon slob, Kun mkhyen 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, and this holy lord of siddhas [Brag dkar rin po che].⁶⁶ [41] [The letter] stated: "Who among these

⁶⁵ The common triangular form of the thread-cross (*mdos*), usually combined to make a diamond. For illustrated examples, see Beer 1999: 323-324.

⁶⁶ On the identities of these figures, see introduction above.

[five candidates] can subdue that evil demon and, in doing so, bring benefit to the Buddha's Teaching and to living beings?"

A divination was requested and signs appeared indicating that this holy lord of siddhas himself was the one who could help. On account of that, [some officials from the monastery] came repeatedly to invite this holy lord of siddhas [to Bya khyung], but many monks and laypeople, noble and lowly, from the regions of Reb gong and Khri ka pleaded over and over again that it would be ill-advised (*mi nyan tshul*) for him to go, and as a result of their appeals, he did not go. Later again, he was invited [to Bya khyung] with much insistence, persuading [him] that the monastery was an exceptional sacred site, comparable to the source of the Dge lugs teaching.

In response, he said, "Now that I'm an old monk, having at this point reached the age of sixty-nine, were I to be harmed in bringing benefit [to Bya khyung], then [so be it] I'll be harmed." Thereafter, he would not listen to [the people's] objections and such, and convinced to take leave, he accepted [the invitation].

"Now I must go into retreat for the sake of living beings," he said, and for one month he practiced in retreat [focusing on] Glorious Vajrabhairava. At its conclusion, the master, accompanied by twenty attendants, traveled to the great dharma center of Bya khyung. Along the way, the lord of siddhas experienced the vision of a white [Yama] Dharmarāja leading the reins of his own horse. As [he and his entourage] traveled by boat across the Rma chu River, the image of the Victor Śākyamuni appeared sitting atop each one of the ripples of the water.

"Is this the apparition of a demon?" he wondered, and then intently visualized the repelling of demons. Looking again [at the water], he concluded, "This is not the apparition of a demon." [42]

Later, when [he and his entourage] were welcomed at the great dharma center of Bya khyung, there at the monastery was an extremely hostile criminal (*mi nag*), an emanation of a demon called Rkun po nag ral, who earlier had been brutally assaulting the monastery again and again. On one occasion, when [this criminal] came to plunder [the monastery], he was surrounded by a crowd of people and apprehended; his life-force was then destroyed. The lord of siddhas himself, having heard [about this], ordered, "Flay the skin of that vow breaker and make it a pelt (*g.yang gzhi*). Bring me his five sense organs, flesh, blood, fat, hair, and all the rest!"

Having done as he had ordered, [these items] were offered up [to him]. He then told them to tan (*mnyes*) the skin, after which he indicated his satisfaction. Then the master, in the company of his twenty attendants, went into strict retreat [focusing on] the Glorious Victor Vajrabhairava. Just as he was about to leave [the retreat], he

performed the fourfold burnt offering rites of pacification, enrichment, subjugation, and fierce destruction. As he was performing the burnt offering of fierce destruction, he laid out the sacramental materials for the wrathful [rites] on top of the mat of skin. For the main part [of the rite], he used the flesh, fat, and the rest as the sacramental substances to be burned. He used the hair for the binding cord (*thun thag*) of the *linga* effigy. When he offered the burnt sacramental substances to the fierce deity, a large and extremely terrifying black poisonous spider fell from the pillars of the assembly hall into the fire pit and burned. This was accompanied by many other peculiar signs of that sort. The evil demon of that place was bound under oath and smashed into dust. At that moment, [this holy lord of siddhas] had a vision in which he saw the head of a lama shoot up from below the ground and then sink back down into the earth.

“Who is that?” [43] he wondered, and then quickly he thought that it might be one of the former lamas [of the monastery], so he performed the method for liberating [him] from that place. Afterward, for seven days, he accomplished the magical device of the Glorious Victor Vajrabhairava, and then established a magic circle of protection around the house of the [abbatial] throne. For three years no one had been able to unlock the door of the temple of the ferocious spirit (*btsan khang*) of that place, [but] he struck that [door] with his hand two or three times and the door then opened on its own accord. Inside the protector’s temple, he dispelled the obstructing spirit and afterward consecrated and blessed [the temple].

After that, he sat on the [abbatial] throne of the great dharma center of Bya khyung for about one month, [temporarily] serving as abbot. Thereafter, upon petitioning Ngag dbang nor bu, who was chief [spiritual advisor] to the regent (*rgyal tshab*), he appointed him as [thirty-first] lama [of the monastery].⁶⁷ The latter acted as abbot for five years. Then, having received permission, the spiritual advisor (*bla ma*) to the regent Gdung/Gdong gzhug tshang was appointed as [thirty-second] lama [abbot].⁶⁸ Both lamas invited the holy lord of

⁶⁷ This likely occurred around 1716 when Ngag dbang nor bu was 28 years old.

⁶⁸ This abbot, unnamed in the text, was Ngag dbang chos grags (alias ‘On ‘ja’ tshang and Mtsher mo che yang) who ascended to the throne in 1721 and served in that post for about five years (c. 1726). As a young boy, he had entered Bya khyung as a novice, then went to central Tibet and was educated at Se ra byes. His reincarnation was named Blo bzang chos grags. See *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 155-157. Both he and Ngag dbang nor bu are mentioned by name in the colophon of Brag dkar sngags rams pa’s *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa’i dam khrid ‘jam*

siddhas back again to Bya khyung monastery, requesting many dharma teachings, including the initiations of Glorious Guhyasamāja and Vajrabhairava [as] Solitary Hero, as well as the practice authorizations of Sitātapatra, Vaiśravaṇa, the outer, inner, and secret [forms of Yama] Dharmarāja, and [Beg rtse] Lcam sring. As an offering of gratitude, they presented him with thousands of gifts, including ten horses, gold, silver, clothing, and much more.

RETURN TO ME LONG BRAG DKAR AND BKRA SHIS 'KHLIL

From there, he went to Me long brag dkar, where he gave many dharma teachings to numerous visitors from various places, such as Dpon slob 'Ja mo tshang⁶⁹ and Tshis ka'i sngags ram pa tshang.⁷⁰ These teachings included the complete initiations of the trio of Cakrasamvara, Guhyasamāja, and Vajrabhairava, [44] the Six Doctrines of Nāropa, the guiding instructions on Mahāmudrā, among others. Later, the one addressed as Zhabs drung tshang of Mi nyag⁷¹ invited him to be the group leader of a [band] of *maṇi* [practitioners] and received some practice authorizations and many dharma teachings. Dpon slob 'Ja mo tshang extended an invitation to him as well and he too received many dharma teachings, such as the [sādhana] of Amitāyus and Hayagrīva conjoined, the secret *sādhana* of Hayagrīva, the cycle of Hayagrīva with his four dog-faced [attendants], the practice authorization of Black Mañjuḥṣa, and so on.

From Me long brag dkar, he then traveled to the sacred hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil, as if his grounding [was now] complete.⁷² To

dpal zhal lung ba'i snying po bdud rtsi gser zhun yang gsal sgron me (see *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *ta*).

⁶⁹ This is the First 'Ja' mo grwa tshang Ngag dbang grags pa (1678-1745), who appears by name in the colophon to a text written for him by Brag dkar sngags rams pa at Me long brag dkar (see *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text 'a). According to *Deb ther rgya mtsho*, 296, he was a devotee and practitioner of Vajrabhairava. He was also a student of Ngag dbang 'phrin las rgya mtsho (1678-1739), the fifth abbot of Rong bo dgon chen who in 1734 re-established Rong bo Rgyud grwa. See *ibid.*, 308 and *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 364-369.

⁷⁰ Blo bzang 'byung gnas, founder of the monastery of Lha ri bsam gtan gling. See introduction and note 48 above.

⁷¹ This may be the same Mi nyag zhabs drung to whom Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (1728-1791) once wrote a letter (his personal name was Tshul khrims nyi ma). See *Zhabs drung tshul khrims nyi ma la gnang ba'i springs yig* in *Dkon mchog gsung 'bum* v10: 72-73.

⁷² Tib. *gzhi rdzogs lta bu* (lit. "as if it were the fulfillment/perfection of the foundation") might be better translated idiomatically as "as if he had come full

those who were in retreat there at the sacred hermitage, he gave some dharma teachings, including guiding instructions on *The Easy Path: Stages of the Path [to Enlightenment]*,⁷³ the initiation of the thirteen-deity [*maṇḍala* of] Vajrabhairava, the practice authorization of the dharma cycle of Mañjuḥṣa, and other instructions. Besides that, in A mdo, Dbus, and other places, this holy lord of siddhas gave and received so many initiations, reading transmissions, practice authorizations, guiding instructions, dharma teachings, and the like that it is beyond the comprehension of [someone] like me—so then how can I describe [it all]?

To continue, when [this holy lord] was traveling here to Reb gong from Khri ka, he stopped for a day on the banks of the No'u rung River. That night, he distributed the *gtor ma* for the departure of the protectors, the sixty,⁷⁴ the white *gtor ma*, and so on. The next day, as he proceeded to teach, the territorial spirit (*gzhi bdag*) of Khri ka, a cannibal demon (*srin po*), said to him, "I had come to escort [you] to this site." And [this holy lord replied], "Now you [must] go back." He said that the upper torso [of this spirit] was that of a man and his lower half was that of the coiled tail of a snake, like Mañjuḥṣa Nāgarakṣa.⁷⁵

Also, on another occasion, he said that during his stay in Dgon rong,⁷⁶ [45] he saw the territorial spirits from the region of Khri ka traveling to the region of Reb gong. Wondering why [they were doing this], he entered [a state of] meditative tranquility. Afterward, he learned that 'Dul ba tshang of Chu ma⁷⁷ had departed for another realm and that was the reason [the spirits were traveling to Reb gong]. He said that ['Dul ba tshang] was a great holy being.

And on yet another occasion, [this holy lord] said that when he was in retreat in his private quarters (*gzim gur*), there was a cook

circle" or "like he had fulfilled what he had begun" or something to that effect. Or, alternatively, "as if perfected [he had now returned to his] foundation."

⁷³ Reference to a popular *lam rim* work written by the Fourth Pañchen Lama, entitled *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i dmar khrid thams cad mkhyen par bgrod pa'i bde lam*. An edition from Bku 'bum byams pa gling is available at TBRC (W9810).

⁷⁴ This likely refers to the *gtor ma* rites of the Great Iron Castle mentioned earlier in the text.

⁷⁵ A protector form of Mañjuśrī that helps those who have *nāga* diseases, among other afflictions. For an image, see Willson and Brauen 2000: 305, illustration no. 236.

⁷⁶ Dgon rong brag skya rdo rje rdzong in Khri ka, founded in 1646. See *Mdo smad lo rgyus chen mo* v5, 276. There is one text in Brag dkar sngags rams pa's writings that eulogizes this institution, written in the earth-ox year 1709 (see *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text *cha*, part one).

⁷⁷ I have not been able to identify this figure, but Chu ma is probably 'Khyog chu in Ba yan mkhar, modern day Hualong county, in the same province Bya khyung is located.

who was boiling tea for him. Just before [the cook] had picked up the tea, he saw a dark-skinned nomad with dark brown braided hair hunched down in front of [the holy lord]. Then when he [turned] to serve him his tea, [that nomad] was gone. In disbelief, he asked, "Who was that just here?" [The holy lord] replied, "That was the great regional spirit (*yul bdag chen po*) of Khri ka."⁷⁸

REPLY TO THE QUESTIONS OF STONG SKOR RIN PO CHE
AND MISCELLANEOUS RECOLLECTIONS

The Fifth Stong skor Mañjuśrī Ngag dbang bsod nams rgya mtsho asked this holy lord of siddhas, "Which lama was your former incarnation? Which chosen deity and dharma protector's faces have you beheld? What levels of experiential realization and types of spiritual qualities did you attain?" He asked these questions repeatedly and with great insistence. And accordingly, [this holy lord of siddhas] politely responded in a formal letter as follows:

"How can you ask a person like myself to remember his [past] lives and [provide] an unmistakable and authentic [account] of the stages of spiritual qualities of experiential realization [and] the special deities and protectors that have revealed themselves [to me]? When I was young, I relied upon the kindness of the Venerable Lama Skal ldan rgya mtsho, from whom I took the vows of renunciation. I entered [the path] by way of study and reflection. That lama himself [46] was chief among thirty-five tutors [to whom I] respectfully paid reverence and [from whom I] kindly requested the dharma. In some of my lama's statements, and [from] a few like-minded dharma [peers], I heard it said that I was [formerly] the great siddha Nag po spyod pa [Kṛṣṇācārya], Rong zom chos bzang, and Rtse thang Byang ma ba Dpal 'byor bsod nam lhun grub. With my experience how could I have the direct perception and valid visionary cognition of an accomplished practitioner? In [my] dreams, delusions, and the like, Vajrabhairava revealed himself to me and the one who was blessed by that [deity], the Great Rwa [lo tsā ba] Vajrakīrti, entrusted [to me] his series of magical devices, among other things. I beheld the forms of each of our own dharma protectors and heard their words. Once or twice the [lineage] lamas appeared and revealed their faces [to me], [gave] teachings, displayed [themselves], and so on, but I was unsure about whether they were real or not. Moreover, I did not

⁷⁸ See Buffetrille 2002 for a fascinating discussion of the legends of the great *yul lha* of Khri ka and his local identification with the Chinese warrior god Guan Yu and also Wenchang, Chinese god of literature.

accomplish very much study and reflection. But when I was twenty years old, I took full ordination in the presence of Rgyal sras sprul ba'i sku [Blo bzang bstan 'dzin] and thereafter served at the lotus feet of the Venerable Holy Lama Skal Idan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po at the hermitage of Bkra shis 'khyil. Every day I diligently practiced the common and unique experiential instructions for twelve or thirteen years. I believe that serves as a substitute (*dod po*) for divine visions and prophecies.

Following the kind advice of my lama, I traveled to Dbus and for nine years I respectfully served at the lotus feet of the two [teachers] named Rje Blo gros and Rā na at the Glorious College of Smad rgyud. Under them I studied the meaning of the Glorious *Guhyasamāja Tantra*, the king of [all] tantras. [47] At Chu mig lung in Stod lung, for eight or nine years, I established karmic tendencies in the practical instructions on the *Five Stages of the Whispered Lineage*. During those years, the ambrosia of words of the sacred beings reached my ears, but besides achieving familiarity with the objects of the mind, the spiritual qualities never came to me."

Again, according to the words of this holy lord of siddhas, he said that once when he was maintaining the guiding instructions at Chu mig lung, he beheld the face of the Glorious Dmag zor rgyal mo. A vision appeared to him of multiple rays of light emanating from her heart [and] on the tips of each light ray were many buddha realms. "Did you all [see] that?" He asked the great mantra-holder Mkharsong Sangs rgyas tshang,⁷⁹ who took his question to mean that it was a divine vision and that, even though [this holy lord] had previously obtained the practice authorization of Dmag zor ma from the lama Rtis tshang *mañi pa rin po che*,⁸⁰ she was actually the unique dharma protector of this lord of siddhas himself. After that, [Mkhar

⁷⁹ This is likely Rig sngags grub pa Mkhargong dge 'dun bstan pa rab rgyas, the thirteenth throne-holder of Rong bo Rgyud grwa. See *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 378. He was born in Chu dmar and was educated at Rong bo dgon chen. A practitioner of Vajrabhairava, he was widely renowned for his powerful sorcery (*nus mthu*).

⁸⁰ Rtis tshang *mañi pa* is the alias of Shes rab bkra shis (1647-1716), the sixth abbot of Rong po dgon chen, who ascended the throne in 1708. He too was a student of Shar Skal Idan rgya mtsho. See *Rong bo gdan rabs*, 200-204. In 1666 he went to Lhasa and was educated at Sgo mang College at 'Bras spungs and received full ordination from the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1672. In 1683 he established Rdzong dkar bka' gdams pho brang bkra shis gling in Rdzong dkar. He was famous for promoting the practice of *mañi* recitation among the lay communities in A mdo, which earned him his title. His reincarnation was Blo bzang mkhas mchog (1719-1791). One of Brag dkar sngags rams pa's songs (*mgur*) was written at a retreat site in Rdzong dkar called Dben gnas Rdzong dkar yang dben bsam gtan khang bu. This song is the first in the collection composed in the fire-horse year 1666 at the behest of his spiritual friend Skyid shod zhabs drung Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (1639-1682). See *Brag dkar gsung 'bum* v1, text ja: 88-91.5.

sgong Sangs rgyas tshang] requested the practice authorization [from him]. In [the holy lord's] own words, he said, "After I asked Chu bzang dpon slob for the practice authorization, I decided from that point on that I would not grant the practice authorization of Lha mo [Dmag zor ma] to anyone, but now you are in need of the authorization." So then, with pleasure, he granted the authorization to Mkhar sgong Sangs rgyas tshang. He also bestowed upon him the reading transmission of his notes [on Dmag zor ma].

That night, [Mkhar sgong] Sangs rgyas tshang [48] dreamed that a lama, who was identified as the Glorious Noble Lord Atiśa, bestowed upon him the practice authorization of Dmag zor ma. During the *gtor ma* empowerment, when [Atiśa] placed the *gtor ma* upon his head, he said, "Until you attain enlightenment, may all the adverse circumstances that prevent you from practicing the sacred dharma, like a body accompanied by its shadow, be dispelled. May all favorable circumstances be achieved." This and other such statements were spoken [by Atiśa] clearly in his dream.

And again, from the lord of siddhas own words, he said, "Previously, I practiced Six-Armed Mahākāla as my chief dharma protector, but from the moment I beheld the face of Dmag zor ma, I took her as my principal protector.

Moreover, on another occasion when this holy lord of siddhas was continuously reciting the *Madhyamakāvātāra*, he dreamed that an especially exalted tree with extremely beautiful branches and fruits grew in the middle of that text of the *Madhyamakāvātāra* he was reciting from. On top of each and every branch was the buddha realm of Mañjuḥṣa in full display. He said, "My lama, the Learned and Accomplished, Sunlight of Speech Skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po sat at the foot of that [tree], so this treatise of mine possesses these sorts of spiritual qualities."

Another time, when this holy one was [still] a small child, while sleeping one evening in his father's lap, an evil spirit attacked a woman next door. A caller (*'bod mi*) arrived and said to his father, "Since you are a lay tantric priest, you must perform an exorcism (*bka' bsgo!*)" His father [49] replied, "It would be irresponsible (*mi nyan*) of me to go this evening. If this boy of mine wakes up and finds that no one is here, he'll become frightened." But [the caller] was insistent and so [the father] went. Soon thereafter, when the boy woke up and there was no one around, he became frightened and began to cry. But on his pillow [appeared] a white [Yama] Dharmarāja, who said to him, "Boy, don't be afraid!" Later on, after his father had returned, [this holy child] told him the reason [he was not afraid] and his father said, "Keep quiet [about this] and don't tell anyone!"

On another occasion, after a remarkable image of Venerable Mañjughoṣa was erected within the hermitage of Tho'u mo, Bde ldan bkra shis rab brtan,⁸¹ all eighteen practice centers in the region of Reb kong invited him to perform the A RA PA TSA NA⁸² vase consecration of Mañjughoṣa. After he performed this for one month, he presided over a communal feast to its conclusion. He then set out for his residence (*gzim khang*). In the midst of the large crowd that had gathered [in] the main marketplace, his horse was startled and many people were unable to rein him in, but the holy one himself said to them, "Let go of my horse's reins! Let him loose!" They released the reins and peacefully, without distress, he traveled to his residence.

Later on, his nephew (*dbon po*) Blo gros was carrying [the holy lord's] tea, but the master Tshis ka tshang was sitting in front of him [and] that suddenly caused [his nephew] to spill a little bit [of tea]. Afterward, [the holy lord] said to his nephew Blo gros, "You must leave. You need to arrange my pillows in the sleeping quarters (*gzim khang*)." When his nephew went out, he thought the master and his attendant, the two of them, were going to have a secret conversation, [50] so he hid [behind] the door and listened. [The holy lord] asked Tshis ka tshang, "Is there no one here?" And he replied that there was no one. [The holy lord then] said, "Now, because you are a worthy vessel, you are a student [I can] tell [this to]. Awhile back, when my horse was startled, I had a vision that [Yama] Dharmarāja was leading my horse by its reins."

And again, [this holy lord] said that when he was residing at Rgyud smad, there was a demoness coiled around a tree directly across from the Tantric College. Occasionally, from the top of the tree, that demoness would gaze down upon the dharma community and repeatedly inflict harm on the [monks]. One time, the holy one himself, always inwardly reciting Vajrabhairava, consecrated [with mantra] many small pebbles, pelted the tree [with them], and invoked fierce visualizations. Thereafter, [the demoness] no longer stayed in that tree and no more harm came to the [monks].

PREMONITION OF DEATH AND DEPARTURE TO THE BUDDHA REALM

Furthermore, in the year he departed to the buddha realm, when he was staying in the *Gzim khang* [rab dga'] of *Bkra shis 'khyil*, Tshis ka

⁸¹ This is Thig mo, one of three centers founded by Brag dkar sngags rams pa. See note 53 above.

⁸² The five-syllable abbreviated mantra of Mañjuśrī, which in its full form consists of forty-two syllables. A RA PA TSA (CA) NA are the first five letters of the complete syllabary. For references, see Gyatso 1992: 198 n. 8.

tshang stood before him and [the holy lord] said, "My friend, it seems that I'm going to die this year. In these courtyards of mine, a white-horned [Yama] Dharmarāja is pacing back and forth. That white-horned [Yama] Dharmarāja is facing me." He then later became ill. On the verge of departing to the buddha realm, he made sign gestures to Ri khrod pa Mdo ba tshang⁸³ and to the steward (*gnyer ba*) of Khri ka, saying to them, "Place the first morning tea (*ja phud*) inside the tea vessel." After they had done so, he did six long recitations of HŪM, the Protector's [syllable], and announced, "Now, accompanying this black man, I must go."

AUTHOR'S COLOPHON

[51] That being so, recorded here is only a small portion of what I, an inferior intellect, had heard with my own ears about the life and liberation of this holy lord of siddhas himself.

The life story [of this] master siddha, a garden [of Mount]
Malaya,
Permeates like a fine fragrance, profoundly enriching
All realms of good fortunate disciples without exception, who
Inspired by the winds of faith, [lead] lives without bias.

Upon the golden ground of precious faith and veneration,
Grows justly the wish-fulfilling tree of spiritual qualities,
whereupon
Atop the branches and leaves of study, reflection, and
meditation in full bloom,
The sweet fruits of the three embodiments of a buddha are
produced.

From the ocean of whichever of the three mysteries of his life
story [could be told]

⁸³ This may be Mdo ba Ngag dbang don grub (c. 1671-1748), the thirty-sixth throne-holder of Bya khyung. On whom, see *Bya khyung gdan rabs*, 164-165. He was a student of both the fifty-fourth Dga' ldan khri pa Ngag dbang mchog ldan (1677-1751; assumed office in 1739) and the thirty-fifth throne-holder of Bya khyung, Bde khang ba Blo bzang rab brtan (1683-1766). Mdo ba Ngag dbang don grub was appointed abbot of Bya khyung in the water-dog year 1742 and served for seven years until his death, which must have been in 1748, the year the thirty-seventh throne-holder Brag lung Ngag dbang mkhas grub rgya mtsho (1711-1773) took office. The text says he lived for 77 years, hence the suggested birth date of 1671.

Only a few drops are compiled here – yet to all the learned scholars,
This will be unsatisfactory to their tastes, but nonetheless,
In my own mind arose a simple wish to tell [his story].

My efforts here, gathering an ocean of accumulated merits for myself and others,
I dedicate to all sentient beings as vast as the sky [who have been our] benevolent old mothers,
And lovingly cared for by genuine spiritual friends,
So that they may all obtain the rank of the Omniscient Victors.

This [testament entitled] *The Drops of Nectar Nourishing the Faith of Devoted Disciples: The Life of the Supreme Lord of Accomplished Masters Brag dkar rin po che* [from] *the Lama's Own Words*, was very generously repeated on written scroll (*thang skur skyar ba*) by Drung yig pa Dge slong Blo bzang rgya mtsho, with the kind support of Khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang Dbang mkhan chen Dge 'dun rgya mtsho dpal bzang po. In so doing, moreover, may the authentic spiritual advisors, in accordance with their joy, [52] lovingly take care of me and others throughout our successive rebirths.

Sarva maṅgalaṃ. Oṃ svasti.

PRINTER'S COLOPHON

From the ocean of Skal ldan rgya mtsho's altruistic aspirations,
This blockprint was set at Rong bo dgon chen,
The great dharma community, wherein the melodies of scripture and reasoning are broadcast
By myriads of youthful ochre[-robed] monks.

Appendix 2: Transliteration of Tibetan Text

[31] grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa brag dkar rin po che'i rnam thar bla ma nyid kyi gsung sgros dad ldan gdul bya'i dad pa'i gso byed bdud rtsi'i zegs ma zhes bya ba bzhugs so //

[32] na mo gu ru mañju gho ṣa ya / blo bzang rgyal ba'i bstan pa'i sa mos tshal / rab tu rgyas mdzad grub dbang nyin mo'i mgon / gang de'i rnam thar kun gsal 'od dkar can / dad ldan blo gros ku mud bzhad phyir spro / de la 'dir mkhas shing grub pa'i dbang phyug

dam pa brag dkar rin po che blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas dpal
 bzang po'i zhal snga nas kyi rnam par thar pa dad ldan gdul bya'i
 dad pa'i gso byed bdud rtsi'i zegas ma zhes bya ba cung zad brjod pa
 ni / de yang grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid kyi sku 'khrungs ba'i yul ni
 reb kong gser mo ljongs kyi sa'i cha rong bo'i chos sde chen po thos
 bsam rnam par rgyal ba'i gling dang khad nye ba brag dkar zhes par
 yab mthu [33] stobs kyi dbang phyug sngags 'chang tshe gzungs
 'bum dang / yum dad gus sogs dang ldan pa bol bza' rdo rje sman
 gnyis kyi sras su 'khrungs / yab yum gnyis kyis sked bsrings te /
 dgung lo bcu gsum bzhes pa'i tshe rje btsun bla ma dam pa mkhas
 grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po'i zhabs
 drung du bstan pa'i 'jug sgor rab tu byung ba'i sdom pa rnam par
 dag pa legs par mnos nas ngur smrig gi rgyal mtshan bzhes / dgung
 lo bcu bdun bzhes tshe dben pa'i gnas mchog bkra shis 'khyil du
 sgrub pa la zhugs shing / dgung lo nyi shu pa'i tshe rgyal sras sbul
 ba'i sku rin po che'i drung du bsnyen par rdzogs te rje btsun bla ma
 dam pa mkhas [34] grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan rgya mtsho'i
 zhabs pad bsten te lo nyer dgu'i bar du dbang lung rjes gnang khrid
 sogs zab rgyas kyi gdams pa'i bdud rtsis thugs kyi bum bzang legs
 par gtams / dben gnas bkra shis 'khyil du mtshams kyi bcad rgya
 mang po gnang ba'i skabs shig nyams snang lta bur gzim khang gi
 phyi ru sems can mang pos / na mo vajra bhairava ya zhes pa'i sgra
 'brug stong ldir ba ltar sgrog cing bskor ba byed pa'i snang ba shar /
 yang skabs shig rje btsun bla ma dam pa mkhas grub smra ba'i nyi
 ma skal ldan rgya mtsho rin po che bkra shis 'khyil gyi gzim khang
 rab dga' na bzhugs yod pa la / grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid gsung
 chod nyan phyir thag rang po na phebs pa mthong nas ma gi su red
 gsungs pas / nye gnas zhig yod pa des de brag dkar dge slong
 tshang red zhugs pas khong ma 'ongs ba'i gnas tshul sogs mngon
 sum gyis gzigs stabs kho la bla rgan ji 'dra zhig yong ngam gsungs /
 de nas dgung lo sum cu bzhes tshe rje btsun bla ma dam pa mkhas
 grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po'i bka' ltar
 dbus su phebs te / mkhas pa dang grub pa du ma'i 'byung gnas dpal
 ldan smad rgyud grwa tshang du bzhugs te / sngags zab mo'i zab
 rgyas kyi gdams pa spyi dang / khyad par bde gsang 'jigs gsum rim
 lnga sogs mdo sngags kyi gdams pa rgya mtsho lta bu la lo dgu'i bar
 du gsan sbyong zhib tu gnang / zhor la dbang lung rjes gnang khrid
 [35] sogs mang po gsan / phar la yang gsung chos mang po gnang /
 de nas dpal ldan smad rgyud grwa tshang du dgongs khrol zhus te
 lo gsum gyi ring la phyogs phyogs su gsung chos mang po gsan
 phyir phebs shing chos rgyun shing chos rgyun shin tu dkon po sogs
 kyis thugs kyi bum bzang legs par bkang / grub dbang dam pa 'di
 nyid dpal ldan smad rgyud grwa tshang du bzhugs nas cher ma 'gor
 ba'i skabs su rig gnas rgya mtsho'i pha rol tu son pa mkhas pa'i

dbang bo sde srid pa sangs rgyas rgya mtshos rgyal bstan spyi dang
 bye brag gi ched du 'brug pa sogs 'ga' zhig la ri bo dge lugs pa'i rang
 lugs thun mong ma yin pa'i lcags mkhar chen mo zhig brtsig dgos
 zhes bka' phebs shing / dpal ldan smad rgyud pa'i nang nas mkhas
 grub gnyis 'doms mang po'i nang nas rdo rje slob dpon gang gis
 gnang na bstan 'gro la phan dgongs nas thugs dam brtag pa gnang
 bas grub dbang 'di nyid bzang po'i ngo shar bar brten / grub dbang
 dam pa 'di nyid kyes rdo rje slob dpon gnang na bstan 'gro la phan
 pa'i ngo shar gsungs nas rdo rje slob dpon du mnga' gsol / de nas
 grub dbang dam pa 'di la lcags mkhar sogs kyi khrid rgyun dang /
 phyag len nges 'drongs yod dam zhus tshe ngas mdo smad du rje
 btsun bla ma dam pa mkhas grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan rgya
 mtsho dpal bzang po'i drung nas 'khrul [36] 'khor dang lcags mkhar
 sogs kyi khrid rgyun byin rlabs can thob yod pas nga la yi dam lha'i
 nga rgyal med kyang / bla ma'i nga rgyal yod gsungs nas lcags
 mkhar chen mo brtsig pa'i gra bsgrigs gnang ste sgrub pa la zhugs
 pa'i skabs der mnal lam du char sprin shin tu 'jigs su rung bar 'brug
 sgra drag po dang bcas pa'i ser ba drag po babs pas grub dbang dam
 pa rang gi dbu'i thad du sleb tshe nam mkha' nas bud med rgyan can
 zhig gis dar nag gi phyar ba chen po zhig nam mkhar bting bas grub
 dbang dam pa rang gi steng du 'bab tu ma bcug pa rmis shing / de
 lta bu'i bud med rgyan can de ni dpal ldan lha mo yin par nges
 gsungs shing / dpal ldan lha mo 'di nged rang tsho'i rgyud kyi lha
 srung yin gsungs nas rgyal me tog thang du phebs dpal ldan lha
 mo'i tshes gtor gtong rgyu'i phyag len sogs zhig rgyas bslab cing /
 mdo smad du phebs phyin lha mo'i tshes gtor chag med du gnang /
 de nas lcags mkhar gyi gra bsgrigs gnang ba'i skabs grub dbang dam
 pa 'di'i mnal lam du se ra theg chen gling na mgar pa sma ra dang ag
 tshom can mang pos mgar sna tshogs byed kyin 'dug bas de ci la
 dgos zhes dris tshe 'di da lo yang dgos / da phyin chad kyang dgos
 zer ba rmis / byis lcags mkhar chen mo'i sgrub pa thon pa'i skabs su
 grub dbang dam pa 'dis gtor ma dgra phyogs su brdab tshe gtor ma'i
 [37] rtse nas me tog cig chad nas 'brug pa'i yul phyogs su song bstan
 dgra 'ga' zhig chems la phabs shing thal bar brlag[s] / physis su de lta
 bu gsan pas sngar gyi mnal lam de de'i ltas yin par 'dug gsungs /
 khri rin po che blo gros rgya mtsho brgyud pa'i bla ma rdo rje slob
 dpon gnang yod pa'i skabs rgyud pa rnams chu mig lung du phebs
 te chos thog tshugs yod dus shig chos grwa nas grub dbang dam pa'i
 'dis sku gzan gyis dbu btums te dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i bskyed rim la
 cung zad mnyam par bzhug yod tshe / khri rin po che khong 'du
 khang steng gi rab gsal na bzhugs yod pas chos grwa la gzigs pas de
 na grwa ba zhig gi lus las 'od zer dkar po'i tshogs phyogs kun dang
 khri rin po che rang gi bzhugs sa sogs su dkar phrom phrom 'phro
 bar 'dug pa gzigs pas / nye gnas zhig la chos grwa na dbu cung zad

btum nas bzhugs yod pa'i grwa ba ma gi su yin ltos dang / ma gi'i
 lus las 'od zer dkar po'i tshogs 'phro gin 'dug gsungs / nyes gnas
 kyis bltas pas grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid yin tshul zhugs pas /
 nga'i rgyud grwa 'di na 'di 'dra ba'i rgyud rgan zhed po rang yod
 gsungs te thugs mnyes tshul mdzad / yang grub dbang 'di nyid rtse
 thang byang ma pa dpal 'byor bsod nams lhun grub yin par dam pa
 rang gi nyams snang dang / grogs chos mthun 'ga' zhig gis kyang
 yin gsung bar [38] brten / rtse thang byang ma pa'i 'khrungs yul der
 'byon 'dod drag po skyes / der phebs pa'i sngon 'byor ba chen po
 dang ldan pa yin yang phyis su 'byor ba sogs nyams dma' ru song
 stabs grub dbang rang zhag gcig tsam yang bzhugs pa'i cha rkyen
 ma 'grigs par brten 'jigs rten gyi bya ba 'byor rgud mtho dma' skyid
 sdug sogs la yid brtan mi 'dug snyam pa'i skyo shas dpag med
 'khrungs gsungs / rtse thang byang ma de ni gung thang lo tsa ba'i
 yang sprul yin zhes grub chen skal ldan rgya mtshos gsungs / grub
 dbang dam pa 'dis rje btsun rwa chen vajra kirti'i gdams pa ma lus
 par shes pa da lta nga tsam gsungs nas thugs khengs pa'i nga rgyal
 lta bu skabs skabs su gnang zhing / da dbus phyogs der 'dug ring la
 brel ba sogs med cing / drung yig legs po zhig gi stabs 'grigs na ngas
 dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi chos skor cha tshang ba ri bo dge ldan pa'i
 lugs kyi dge bod zer ba'i dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed yi chos skor zhig
 rtsom snyam yod kyang brel dbang sogs kyis de 'dra'i stabs ma 'grigs
 gsungs / dbus su bzhugs ring la dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi blos
 bslangs rgyud dang grub chen gyi dgongs pa ltar gyi khyad 'phags
 zhig kyang bzhengs pa sogs bstan pa dang 'gro ba'i don rgya chen po
 mdzad nas slar mdo smad du chibs bsgyur gnang ba'i lam skabs shig
 tu dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed sku stod shin tu gsal bor 'dug cing / sku
 smad rkyen zhig gis [39] bsgrub 'dug pa zhig zhal gzigs shing / de'i
 sku stod gsal bor 'dug pa de nga'i tshe stod la rje btsun bla ma dam
 pa mkhas grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan rgya mtsho'i zhabs pad
 bsten pa la bltas shing sku smad rkyen zhig gis bsgrubs pa de tshe
 smad la grong chog sogs kyis g.yeng ba che ba 'di la bltas 'dug / der
 ma zad ngas rje btsun bla ma dam pa mkhas grub smra ba'i nyi ma
 skal ldan rgya mtsho dpal bzang po'i zhabs pad bsten nas sgom
 sgrub byed tshe nga la nyams rtogs dang drod tshad khyad par can
 mang po byung zhing / rjes nas nga dbus gtsang phyogs su song rjes
 de lta bu phar la zhog rgyud kyi yon tan sngar yod rnam kyang 'ja'
 yal ba ltar song / nga'i mi tshe hril bor dben gnas dam pa bkra shis
 'khyil nas sgom sgrub cig byas na legs po zhig yong rgyu la blo le lo
 ngang rnam g.yeng gi bdud kyis bskyod de bar chad byas gsungs /
 dbus nas mdo smad 'dir phebs shing dben gnas dam pa bkra shis
 'khyil nas lo 'ga' zhig bzhugs / de skabs gong ba'i sku skye ho thog
 thu zer bas gong ba'i sgar du sku gsung thugs rten mang po la
 gzungs gzhus 'bul ba dang rab gnas sogs kyi ched du gdan drangs te

rab gnas sogs byas shing 'bul ba rgya chen po phul / yul di'i mi
 dpon bā dur the'i ji zer bas bla mar bkur zhing lo 'ga' zhig bzhugs /
 bā dur the'i ji sogs dad ldan mang pos bskal ma byas te me long brag
 [40] dkar zhes pa'i sgrub sde khyad 'phags zhig kyang btab / gnas
 der pha bong chen po gsum chos 'byung gi dbyibs su yod pa de'i
 steng du gzim khang zhig phub ste / de'i nang du rdo rje 'jigs byed
 kyi mtshams mang po gnang zhing / de lta bu'i gzim khang der
 bsngags brjod kyang mang po gnang / khyad par du / dpal chos
 'byung ma bcos lhun grub gnas / skyid rang byung phug pa de na
 yod / ces sogs gsungs / de grub gnas khyad par can yin zhing /
 chos 'byung de'i g.yas phyogs kyi brag zhig la chos rgyal rang byon
 yod ces grub dbang rang gis gsungs / yang skabs shig ri bo dge ldan
 pa'i bstan pa'i 'byung khungs chos sde chen po bya khyung du bla
 ma skyes bu dam pa gang bzhugs rab lo re'am / 'bring lo phyed /
 tha ma'ang zla ba re tsam las khirir bzhugs dbang med par gshegs
 'gro ba'i gdon ngan zhig gnod nas bla ma skyes bu dam pa 'gangs
 can lnga tsam zhing gzhan du phebs song / de la bzlog thabs kyi sku
 rim dang rim gro tshabs chen mang po yang yang byas kyang phan
 pa ma byung ba la da bla ma skyes bu dam pa shing grub pa thob
 ba'i khyad par can zhig gis phan e thogs bas ma nas / pan chen
 thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes dpal bzang po'i zhabs
 drung du / la mo'i zhabs drung dkar po tshang / stong skor rin po
 che / chu bzang dpon slob / kun mkhyen 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa /
 grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa 'di dang lnga'i mtshan zhu shog tu
 bris te / [41] de rnam's kyi nang nas gang gis gdon 'dre ngan pa de
 thul nas bstan 'gro la phan thogs zhes thugs dam brtag pa zhus pas /
 grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid kyi phan thogs pa'i thugs dam brtag pa
 babs par brten / grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid yang yang gdan 'dren
 du 'ongs kyang reb gong phyogs dang khri ka'i phyogs kyi skya ser
 dag zhan mang pos phebs mi nyan tshul yang yang zhus par brten
 ma phebs / rje nas nan chen pos gdan 'dren zhus pa la dge lugs kyi
 bstan pa'i 'byung khungs lta bu'i dgon gnas khyad par can yin gshis
 / de la phan thogs na nga ban rgan gyi tshe de skabs dgung lo re
 dgu bzhes la gnod na yang gnod gsungs nas bshol btab pa sogs la
 ma gsan par phebs chog par zhal bzhes gnang / da nga 'gro ba la
 mtshams shig byed dgos gsungs nas zla ba gcig gi ring la dpal rdo
 rje 'jigs byed kyi mtshams shig gnang / mtshams grol rjes dpon
 g.yog nyi shu skor chos sde chen po bya khyung du phebs par lam
 skabs su chos rgyal dkar po zhig gis grub dbang rang gi chibs kha
 nas khrid 'gro ba'i nyams shar zhing / rma chu la gru steng nas
 phebs tshe yang chu bo'i gnyer ma re re'i steng na thub pa sangs
 rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi sku re bzhugs yod pa'i nyams shar bas
 bdud kyi cho 'phrul 'dra yin nam dgongs nas bdud bzlog pa'i thugs
 dmigs drag tu gnang ste slar bltas bas bdud kyi cho 'phrul ma yin

par 'dug ces [42] gsungs / de nas chos sde chen po bya khyung du
 phyag phebs tshe dgon pa de la shin tu gnag pa'i mi nag bdud sprul
 rkun po nag ral zer ba zhig yod pa des sngar yang yang dgon pa la
 gnod tsha bas chen po byas / de skabs yang rku 'phrog byed du 'ong
 ba mi mang pos bskor nas bzung ste srog dbang bkum pa grub
 dbang rang gis gsan pas / dam nyams de'i pags pa shus la g.yang
 gzhi gyis / dbang bo rnam lnga dang sha khrag tshol dang ral ba
 sogs 'dir khyer la shog gsungs / de ltar byas nas phul bas pags pa
 mnyes gsungs nas thugs mnyes stabs mdzad / de nas dpon g.yog
 nyi shu skor gyis bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyī mtshams
 dam bor gnang nas grol khar dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyī zhi rgyas
 dbang drag bzhi'i sbyin sreg gnang zhing / drag po'i sbyin sreg gi
 skabs su mi lpags kyī g.yang gzhi'i steng du drag po'i rdzas rnams
 bshams / don snying sha tshil sogs bsreg rdzas su byas / ral pa
 lingga'i thun thag byas / drag po'i lha la bsreg rdzas 'bul ba'i tshe 'du
 khang gi gdung ma'i steng nas dug sdom nag po 'jigs su rung ba shin
 tu che ba zhig thab nang du lhung ste tshig pa la sogs pa'i ltas khyad
 par can mang po dang bcas gnas de'i gdon 'dre ngan de dam la btags
 shing thal bar brlags / de skabs khong gis gzigs snang la sa 'og nas
 bla ma zhig gi dbu yar la bud nas de rjes phyir sa 'og tu nub 'gro ba
 gzigs pas / de su yin [43] dgongs tsa na bla ma snga ma zhig yin par
 'dug dgongs nas gnas de nas grol thabs gnang / de rjes bcom ldan
 'das dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyī 'khrul 'khor zhag bdun du bsgrub pa
 gnang nas de khri khang du srung 'khor kyī tshul du bzhag / gnas
 de'i btsan khang gi sgo lo gsum du sus kyang 'byed ma thub pa de la
 phyag gis brdungs stabs lan gnyis gsum gnang bas sgo yang rang
 phye la song / mgon khang nang du bgegs bskrad byas nas rab gnas
 gnang zhing byin gyis brlabs / de nas chos sde chen po bya khyung
 gi khrir zla ba gcig tsam bzhugs shing mkhan po gnang / de rjes
 khong gi rgyal tshab tu rtsa ba'i ngag dbang nor bu zhu ba de bla
 mar bskos / des lo lnga'i bar du bya khyung gi mkhan po gnang /
 rjes nas dgongs khrol zhus te rgyal tshab tu bla ma gdung gzhug
 tshang zer ba mkhan por bskos / bla ma de gnyis kyis grub dbang
 dam pa 'di nyid slar bya khyung dgon sder spyān drangs te / dpal
 gsang ba 'dus pa'i dbang / 'jigs byed dpa' bo gcig pa'i dbang / gdugs
 dkar dang / rnam sras / chos rgyal phyi nang gsang gsum / lcam
 sring rnams kyī rjes gnang sogs bka' chos mang po zhus / gtang rag
 gi ched du rta bcu / gser dngul gos sogs 'bul pa'i rnam grangs stong
 phrag lhag tsam phul / de nas me long brag dkar du phebs / dpon
 slob 'ja' mo tshang dang / tshis ka'i sngags ram pa tshang sogs
 phyogs phyogs nas phebs pa mang po la bde gsang 'jigs gsum kun
 tsheg sogs kyī dbang / [44] nā ro chos drug dang / phyag chen gyī
 khrid sogs bka' chos mang po gnang / de rjes mi nyag zhabs drung
 tshang zer bas ma ṅi zhig gi tshogs dbur gdan 'dren byas shing / rjes

gngang 'ga' zhig dang / bka' chos mang po gsan / dpon slob 'ja' mo
 tshang gis yang gdan 'dren zhus te / tshe rta zung 'brel / rta mgrin
 gsang sgrub / rta mgrin shwa na bzhi bskor / 'jam dbyangs nag po
 rnams kyi rjes gngang sogs bka' chos mang po gsan / de nas me long
 brag dkar nas gzhi rdzogs lta bur dben gnas dam pa bkra shis 'khyil
 du phebs / dben gnas der ri khrod pa rnams la lam rim bde lam gyi
 khrid / 'jigs byed lha bcu gsum ma'i dbang / 'jam dbyangs chos skor
 gyi rjes gngang sogs bka' chos 'ga' zhig gngang / gzhan yang grub
 dbang dam pa 'dis mdo dbus sogs su dbang lung rjes gngang khrid
 sogs bka' chos mang po gngang tshul dang gsan tshul sogs bdag lta
 bu'i blo yul las 'das pas brjod par ga la nus / yang khri ka'i phyogs
 nas reb gong 'dir phebs skabs shog no'u rung chu khar zhag bzhugs
 gngang / de nub mgon po'i gshegs gtor dang / drug chu pa / dkar
 gtor sogs pa sngos / phyi nyin zhal gsung phebs par khri ka'i gzhi
 bdag srin pos nga gnas 'di ru bskyal 'ongs shing / da nang phyir
 phebs / khog stod mi la smad sbrul mjug tu 'khyil ba 'jam dbyangs
 nā ga rakṣa lta bu zhig red gsungs / yang dgon rong na [45] bzhugs
 pa'i skabs shig khri ka'i phyogs kyi gzhi bdag rnams reb gong
 phyogs su 'gro ba gzigs pas de ci yin de la mnyam par 'jog rgyu zhig
 yod gsungs / de rjes chu ma'i 'dul ba tshang zhing gzhan du phebs
 pa gsan pas de'i rkyen yin par 'dug / de skyes chen dam pa zhig red
 gsungs / yang skabs shig gzim gur zhig tu mtshams gngang yod pa la
 gsol ja skol ba'i ja ma zhig yod pa des gsol de ma len du song tshe
 mdun na mi 'brog pa sha mdog smug pa ral ba smug shar re ba cig
 mdun du tsog pur bsdad yod pa mthong / de rjes gsol ja 'dren du
 song tshe mdun du mi 'dug / kho rang yid ma ches par de lta bu su
 yin zhus tsa na / de khri ka'i yul bdag chen po de red gsungs // ! //
 yang grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa 'di la / stong skor mañjuśrī
 lnga pa ngag dbang bsod nams rgya mtshos / bla ma khyed kyi sku
 skye ba snga ma la bla ma gang yin / yi dam lha dang chos skyong
 gang gi zhal gzigs / nyams rtogs dang yon tan ci lta bu mnga' zhes
 nan cher yang yang zhus pa la 'di lta / lags bka' phebs don zhu lan
 la bdag lta bu'i gang zag la skye ba brgyud tshul gyi rjes dren dang /
 nyams rtogs kyi yon tan lhag pa'i lha dang srung ma'i zhal bstan pa'i
 rim pa 'khrul med tshad ldan ga la yod / chung du nas rje btsun bla
 ma skal ldan rgya mtsho'i bka' drin la brten nas rab tu byung / thos
 bsam gyi sgor zhugs / bla ma de nyid [46] kyis gtso byas pa'i yongs
 'dzin sum cu so lnga tsam gyi zhabs la gtugs nas chos kyi bka' drin
 zhus / bla ma'i gsung sgros dang chos mthun 'ga' zhig gi gsung
 'phros la / grub chen nag po spyod pa dang / rong zom chos bzang
 dang rtse thang byang ma pa dpal 'byor bsod nams lhun grub rnams
 yin zer ba thos / rang gi myong bas grub pa'i mngon sum dang /
 nyams snang tshad ma ga la yod / rmi lam nying 'khrul sogs la vajra
 bhairava zhal bstan pa dang / de nyid kyis byin gyis brlabs ba'i

rwa chen vajra kirtis 'khrul 'khor gyi rim pa sogs gtad pa dang /
 rang re'i chos skyong rnams kyi sku mthong pa dang / gsung thos
 pa sogs dang / bla ma rnams kyis zhal bstan gsung bkod sogs byung
 ba lan re lan gnyis byung yang de la nges pa med med bsam pa yod
 / gzhan thos bsam rgya chen po ma grub kyang lo nyi shu'i skabs /
 rgyal sras sprul ba'i sku'i zhabs drung du bsnyen par rdzogs nas
 dben gnas bkra shis 'khyil du rje btsun bla ma dam pa skal ldan rgya
 mtsho'i zhabs kyi padmor bsten nas thun mong dang thun mong ma
 yin pa'i nyams khrid nyin re bzhin du nyams su len pa'i brtson pa lo
 bcu gnyis bcu gsum bar du byas la / de ni zhal gzigs dang lung
 bstan gyi dod po yin bsam / bla ma'i bka' phebs pa la brten nas dbus
 su phyin nas dpal ldan smad rgyud grwa tshang du lo brgyad dgu'i
 bar du rje blo gros mtshan can dang / rā na'i mtshan can gnyis kyi
 zhabs pad brten nas rgyud kyi rgyal po [47] dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i
 rgyud don la sbyangs ba byas / stod lung chu mig lung du lo brgyad
 dgu'i bar du snyan brgyud rim lnga'i dmar khrid la bag chags bzhag
 / de dag gi skabs su dam pa'i skyes bu rnams kyi gsung gi bdud rtsi
 yang ma ba'i lam du son pa dang / yid kyi yul du goms par byas pa
 las lhag pa'i yon tan bdag la ma mchis lags / zhes gsungs / yang
 grub dbang dam pa 'di nyid kyi zhal gsung la / khong gis chu mig
 lung du khrid skyong gin yod pa'i skabs shig dpal ldan dmag zor
 rgyal mo'i zhal gzigs / de'i thugs ka nas 'od zer mang po 'phros pa'i
 'od zer re re'i rtse mor sangs rgyas kyi zhing mang po mthong ba'i
 snang ba shar / khyed tsho la de lta bu'i song gi gsungs / sngags
 'chang chen po mkhar sgong sangs rgyas tshang zhu bas sngar bla
 ma rtis tshang ma ni pa rin po che'i sku phyogs nas dmag zor ma'i
 rjes gnang thob kyang / grub dbang 'di nyid kyi chos skyong thun
 mong ma yin pa yin tshul dang / zhal gzigs byung tshul gyi gsung
 sems la bzung nas rjes sor rjes gnang zhus pas khong gi zhal gsung
 la / ngas chu bzung dpon slob la rjes gnang zhus nas phyin chad su
 la yang lha mo'i rjes gnang byed pa rtsis med kyang / da khyod la
 rjes gnang byed dgos pa po yin gsungs nas mkhar sgong sangs rgyas
 tshang la rjes gnang dgyes bzhin byas / yig chung rnams kyi lung
 yang gnang de nub sangs rgyas tshang rang gi [48] rmi lam du jo bo
 rje dpal ldan a ti sha yin zer ba'i bla ma zhig gis bdag la dmag zor
 ma'i rjes gnang byas / gtor dbang skabs gtor ma mgo thog tu bzhag
 nas dus da nas bzung ste byang chub ma thob kyi bar du lus dang
 grib ma bzhin du 'grog nas dam pa'i chos sgrub pa'i 'gal rkyen
 thams cad sol / mthun rkyen thams cad sgrubs shig ces sogs gsung
 ba'i rmi lam gsal bo byung gsungs / yang grub dbang rang gi zhal
 gsung las / ngas snga sor mgon po phyag drug pa chos skyong gi
 gtso bor byed kyin yod pa la / dmag zor ma'i zhal gzigs byung
 phyin chad la dmag zor ma gtso bor byas pa yin gsungs / yang grub
 dbang dam pa 'dis dbu ma la 'jug pa dus rgyun du zhal 'don gnang

gin yod la skabs shig mnal lam du dbu ma la 'jug pa'i zhal thon gyi
dpe de'i dbus su ljon shing khyad par du 'phags pa yal ga dang lo
'bras shin tu legs pa zhig skyes shing / yal ga re re'i steng na rje
btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi zhing gi bkod pa tshang ba re yod pa /
de'i rtsa ba na nga'i bla ma mkhas grub smra ba'i nyi ma skal ldan
rgya mtsho rin po che bzhugs pas / nga'i bstan bcos 'di la yon tan 'di
'dra yod gsung pa zhig rmis gsungs / yang dam pa 'di chung ngu
byis pa'i dus pha'i pang na nub mo nyal yod pa la khyim mtshes kyi
bud med cig la 'dres gdon gyis gnod pas pha sngags pa dge bsnyen
zhig yin stabs bka' bsgo zhig byed dgos zhes 'bod mi byung bar phas
[49] nga do nub 'gro mi nyan / nga'i bu 'di sad na 'di na su med stabs
skrag par 'dug byas kyang nan ches pas song / de rjes bu gnyid sad
tshe su yang med pas skrag cing bshum pa la sngas mgor chos rgyal
dkar po zhig gis bu ma 'jigs shig gsungs / de rjes pha yong nas de la
rgyu mtshan bshad pas khyod kha rog sdod dang su la yang ma
bshad ces smras / yang skabs shig tho'u mo'i dben gnas bde ldan
bkra shis rab brtan nas rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi 'dra khyad
'phags zhig bzhengs nas / reb kong phyogs kyi sgrub sde bco
brgyad thams cad gdan drangs te 'jam dbyangs a ra pa tsa na'i bum
sgrub zla ba gcig gi ring la gnang nas tshogs grol khar tshogs dbur
phebs shing / de nas gzim khang la phebs khrom chen po tshogs
yod pa'i gseb nas chibs pa 'drog nas mi mang pos chibs kha ma thub
pa la dam pa rang gis nga'i chibs kha nas ma 'dzin par thongs la shog
gsungs / chibs kha btang ba dang ma 'dog par bde bar gzim khang
la phebs / rjes nas gsol ja dbon po blo gros kiyis khyer ba la / mdun
na dpon slob tshis ka tshang bzhugs 'dug / de skabs char en tsam
bab pa la rkyen byas nas dbon po blo gros la khyod song la nga'i
sngas mgo'i thad kyi gzim khang la thigs cag byed dgos gsungs nas
/ dpon po phyir song tshe dpon g.yog gnyis kiyis gsang gtam zhig
gnang rgyu [50] red bsam nas sgo phag nas nyan pas / tshis ka
tshang la 'di na su mi 'dug gam gsung ba la su yang med zhus pas /
da khyod slob ma snod ldan yin pas bshad pa yin / da ci nga'i chibs
pa 'dog pa'i tshe nga'i chibs kha nas chos rgyal gyis khrid 'gro ba'i
nyams shar gsungs / yang rgyud smad na bzhugs tshe rgyud pa'i
chos grwa'i thad so'i phar ga de na sdong po zhig yod pa de la 'dre
mo zhig 'khril nas skabs skabs su 'dre mo des sdong po'i rtse nas
tshur chos grwa bltas nas khong rnam la rgyun du gnod pa skyel
bar 'dug pa la / skabs shig dam pa rang gis nang snga mo nas rdo rje
'jigs byed gsungs nas rde'u mang po bsngags te sdong po da la brab
cing thugs dmigs drag po gnang bas phyis su sdong po de la mi gnas
shing khong rnam la yang ma gnod par song gsungs / yang zhing
la phebs pa'i lo de la bkra shis 'khyil gzim khang na bzhugs skabs /
mdun du tshis ka tshang bzhugs pa la a rog da lo nga shi 'gro ba 'dra
/ nga'i gzim khang khyams 'di tsho na chos rgyal rwa dkar po can

zhig phar 'gro tshur 'gro byed par 'dug / chos rgyal gyi rwa dkar po
 yin pa de mdun ngo yin gsungs / yang sku snyung nas zhing la
 gshegs khar ri khrod pa mdo ba tshang dang / khri ka'i gnyer ba la
 phyag brda' gnan / ja phud kyi snod nang du ja phud cig zhog
 gsungs nas phud bzhag rjes mgon po'i hūṃ ring po lan drug gsungs
 nas / da nga mi nag po 'di la 'grogs nas 'gro dgos gsungs / [51] de
 ltar grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa nyid kyi rnam par thar pa blo
 dman bdag gi sgra 'dzin lam du son tshul ni re zhid de tsam mo /
 smras pa / grub dbang rnam thar ma la ya skyes tshal / dad pa'i
 rlung gis bskul tshe phyogs med kyi / skal bzang gdul bya'i zhing
 kun ma lus pa / rab tu 'ged byed dri ngad 'di 'dra 'thul / dad gus rin
 chen gser gyi sa gzhi la / yon tan dpag bsam ljon shing legs 'khrungs
 nas / thos bsam sgom pa'i yal 'dab rab rgyas rtser / sku gsum 'bras
 bu mngar bo 'byin phyir yin / gang gi rnam thar gsang gsum rgya
 mtsho las / chu thigs tsam zhid brdong 'dis mkhas rnam kun / mgu
 ba'i gnas min 'on kyang bdag nyid kyi / yid kyi brjod 'dod spro ba
 skyes las byung / 'dir 'bad rang gzhan dge tshogs rgya mtsho'i
 tshogs / mkha' mnyam drin can ma rgan sems can rnam / mtshan
 ldan dge ba'i bshes kyis rjes bzung nas / kun mkhyen rgyal ba'i go
 'phang thob phyir bsngo / zhes grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa brag
 dkar rin po che blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas dpal bzang po'i rnam
 par thar pa bla ma nyid kyi gsung sgros dad ldan gdul bya'i dad pa'i
 gso byed bdud rtsi'i zeg ma zhes bya 'di ni / khyab bdag rdo rje
 'chang dbang mkhan chen dge 'dun rgya mtsho dpal bzang po'i bka'
 drin gyis 'tsho ba drung yig pa dge slong blo bzang rgya mtshos dā
 na'i mtha' thang skur skyar ba 'dis kyang bdag gzhan rnam tshe
 rabs kyi phreng bar mtshan ldan dge ba'i bshes kyis dgyes bzhin [52]
 rjes su 'dzin pa'i rgyur gyur cig / sarva mangga lam / om sva sti /
 skal ldan rgya mtsho'i thugs bskyed rol mtsho las / nyer 'khrungs
 dge 'dun ngang mo 'bum phrag gis / lung rigs dbyangs snyan spel
 ba'i chos grwa che / rong bo dgon chen zhes byar spar 'di bsgrubs
 //

Appendix 3: The Collected Works of Brag dkar sngags rams pa

Volume 1

(Ka) *Rje btsun bla ma'i rnal 'byor 'dod dgu'i 'byung gnas dbang gi rgyal po*,
 1-18. Written at the earnest behest of Dge slong ri khrod pa
 chos 'phel at Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar mkha'
 spyod gur khang.

- (Kha) *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi bla ma'i rnal 'byor 'dod dgu'i mchog stsol*, 19-30. Date: *me phag* (1707), first month, fifth day. Written at the behest of Dge slong blo bzang rnam rgyal and others at Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar mkha' spyod gur khang.
- (Ga) *Grub pa'i dbang phyug dam pa brag dkar rin po che'i rnam thar bla ma nyid kyi gsung sgros dad ldan gdul bya'i dad pa'i gso byed bdud rtsi'i zegs ma*, 31-52. Author: Drung yig pa dge slong blo bzang rgya mtsho with the support of Khyab bdag rdo rje 'chang dbang mkhan chen dge 'dun rgya mtsho dpal bzang po.
- (Nga) *Mkhas shing grub pa'i dbang phyug chen po rdo rje 'dzin pa blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas dpal bzang po'i gsol 'debs smon lam dang bcad pa*, 53-58. Author: Rig pa 'dzin pa'i char gtogs ngag dbang bsod nams rgya mtsho (=Fifth Stong 'khor). Date: *me rta* (1726). Written at the behest of Sngags rams pa dpal ldan rgya mtsho and others at Gdan sa bkra shi rab brtan.
- (Ca) *Rje btsun blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas kyi gsung las gsol 'debs dang ja mchod 'ga' zhid bcas*, 59-73. Date: first part [fol. 68.6], *shing 'brug* (1664), seventh month, second day. Written at Dben gnas bkra shis 'khyil ba'i yang dben nyi 'od 'khyil ba; second part [fol. 73.4] handwritten by [Brag dkar sngags rams pa] Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas and produced in book form (*glegs bam bzhengs*) by Dge slong bsam gtan mchog grub.
- (Cha) *Dgon rung brag skya rdo rje'i rdzong gi gnas bstod bsngags brjod me tog phreng mdzes dang kun bzang me long brag dkar mkha' spyod gur khang gi gnas bstod bde legs gzhi 'dzin*, 75-85. Date: first part [fol. 81.2], *sa glang* (1709); second part [fol. 85.3], *chu lug* (1703).
- (Ja) *Rdo rje 'chang chen po blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas kyi mdzad pa'i mgur ma le tshan 'ga' lags so*, 87-104. [Includes five songs]. Date: first song [fol. 91.5], *me rta* (1666), fourth month. Written at the behest of Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las [=Skyid shod zhabs drung] at Dben gnas rdzong dkar yang dben bsam gtan khang bu; second song [94.2] written at the behest of Blo bzang don grub; third song [98.2] written at the behest of Ri khrod pa ngag dbang rgya mtsho [=Fifth Stong 'khor?] at Dben gnas rab dga' mthon po'i ri sul. No dates or petitioners mentioned for songs four and five.

- (Nya) *'Phags pa phung po gsum pa'i dmigs rim sdig sgrub sbyong bar byed pa'i gaṅgā'i chu rgyun*, 105-118. Written for the retreatants (*ri khrod pa*) of Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar, including notes recorded by Dge slong ri khrod pa chos 'phel dar rgyas.
- (Ta) *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i dam khrid 'jam dpal zhal lung ba'i snying po bdud rtsi gser zhun yang gsal sgron me*, 119-243. Includes notes written for Ngag dbang chos grags and Ngag dbang nor bu.
- (Tha) *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i don bsod nas tshigs su bcad pa shin tu legs pa*, 245-254. Written at Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar.
- (Da) *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i bskyed rim gyi khrid yig skal bzang 'jug ngogs*, 255-308.
- (Na) *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i rdzogs rim rim pa lnga'i dmar khrid rdo rje 'chang dbang bla ma'i zhal lung snyan brgyud rgyud sde'i yang snying*, 309-362.
- (Pa) *Dpal gsang ba 'dus pa nas bshad pa'i spyang ras gzigs 'jig rten dbang phyug gi sgo nas ma ni ril bu sgrub bya ba'i cho ga*, 363-370. Date: *sa glang* (1709). Written at the earnest behest of Dge slong ngag dbang mkhas btsun and others.
- (Pha) *Thugs rje chen po gsang sgrub kyi dmar khrid tshe gcig sangs rgyas sgrub pa'i lam mchog nyams len gsal ba'i sgron me*, 371-401. Date: *sa phag* (1719), first month, first day. Written in accordance with the intentions of Er ti ni bo shog thu [=Erdeni Boshogtu] at Gong dgon dga' ldan skyed tshal gyi bla brang bkra shis mthong sngon with Dge slong ye shes skal bzang as scribe.
- (Ba) *Thugs rje chen po gsang sgrub kyi rdzogs rim sbyang don zhal shes ngag gis rgyas btab pa zung 'jug gzhal med khang du bgrod byed rin chen them skas 'od 'bar nor bu*, 403-436. Date: first month, second day [*sa phag*, 1719?]. Written at Gong ba'i dgon gсар dga' ldan skyed tshal gyi bla brang bkra shis mthong sngon with Dge slong ye shes skal bzang as scribe.
- (Ma) *Thugs rje chen po rgyal ba rgya mtsho'i sbyin sreg byed tshul lag len du dril ba mun sel gsal ba'i sgron me*, 437-455. Date: *sa khyi* (1718), tenth month, second day. Written at the behest of Er ti

ni [=Erdeni] at Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar mkha' spyod gur khang.

(Tsa) *'Pho khrid gser gyi sgo 'byed kyi yang snying snyan brgyud 'chi med bdud rtsi mkha' spyod pa'i them skas rig 'dzin grub pa'i bcud len*, 457-483. Written at Se ra chos sdings kyi 'jam dbyangs phug.

(Tsha) *'Pho ba'i khrid yig rig 'dzin grub pa'i pho nya*, 485-494.

(Dza) *Gcod kyi gdams pa skal ldan re skong dbang gi rgyal bo*, 495-580. Date: *shing glang* (1685), tenth month, second day. Written as a gift to Dka' bcu ba ngag dbang sbyin pa at Chos sde chen po dpal ldan 'bras spungs kyi ldong sog po khang with Bka' bcu smra ba as scribe.

(Wa) *Gcod kyi dmigs khrid gdan thog gcig ma tshogs gnyis gter mdzod*, 581-605. Written for the retreatants (*ri khrod pa*) of Dben gnas dge ldan chos gling.

(Zha) *Thabs shes gcod kyi snying po'i don nyams len rgyun 'khyer du dril ba*, 607-620. Written for Dka' bcu blo bzang phan bde and others.

(Za) *Gcod kyi nyams len gdan thog gcig ma*, 621-629. Written on the banks of the Blue Lake (*mtsho sngon 'gram*).

('A) *Chos drug yid ches gsum ldan gyi yang snying dmar khrid sku gsum nor bu'i gling du bgrod pa'i gru gzings*, 631-665. Written for Zhabs drung ngag dbang grags pa (= 'Ja' mo grwa tshang) and A jo sku skyes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho blo gros at Kun bzang Me long brag dkar mkha' spyod gur khang.

(Ya) *'Khrul snang mun sel gsal ba'i sgron me*, 667-676.

(Ra) *Dben gnas lha ri bsam gtan gling gi ri khrod pa rnam la khrims su bca' ba'i yi ge phan bde'i 'byung gnas*, 677-687. Date: *sa glang* (1709), ninth month. Written at Phun tshogs dar rgyas gling.

(La) *Dpal ldan lha mo'i gnyer gtad dang khri ka'i lha gnyan gyi gsol kha*, 689-693.

(Sha) *Khri ka srin po ri bdud 'dul gtum po 'phrog byed la bsang mchod 'bul ba'i cho ga bsam don lhun grub*, 695-704. Date: *chu lug* (1703), seventh month, first day. Written at the behest of Nye char

dge slong bsam gtan and Bsod noms dar rgyas at Dben gnas kun bzang Me long brag dkar mkha' spyod gur khang.

Volume 2

- (Sa) *Mkhas grub khyung po rnal 'byor gyi zhal gdams mgur brgyad du grags pa'i nang tshan ā li ka li'i gdams pa nyams su len tshul byin rlabs nyer 'jug*, 1-5.
- (Ha) *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi lam rim pa gnyis nyams su len tshul bshad pa zung 'jug gi sar bgrod pa'i them skas*, 7-97.
- (A) *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi rdzogs rim zung 'jug gi sar bgrod pa'i them skas*, 99-130. Written at Se ra theg chen gling, based on the instructional texts of multiple scholars, such as Blo gros rgyal mtshan and Blo bzang phan bde.
- (Ki) *Dus dgra'i dbang po'i bsnyen yig lag len gsal ba'i nyi ma dngos grub sprang rtsi'i 'byung gnas*, 131-163. Written at the behest of Blo bzang bstan 'dzin and his students.
- (Khi) *'Dir rwa chen rdo rje grags kyi thun mong ma yin pa'i rim pa dang po'i lam la slob tshul 'khrul med bla ma dam pa'i zhal las byung ba zin thor bkod pa gsang chen myur lam*, 165-209. Compiled by Rwa chen gnyis pa Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas dpal bzang po [=Brag dkar sngags rams pa] from the authorized teachings of Rje btsun Tshar pa and his spiritual son. Text transmitted by Bse rdo rje 'chang.
- (Gi) *Chos rgyal nang sgrub kyi mngon rtogs thun mong ma yin ba*, 211-216. Written at the behest of Chos 'phel dar rgyas at Kun bzang Me long brag dkar.
- (Ngi) *Rdo rje 'chang sngags rams pa blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas kyis gnang ba'i phyag len ltar chos rgyal gtor sgrub thun mong ma yin pa'i zin bris*, 217-228. Transcription by Bse'i sprul ba'i sku rin po che [=Bse rdo rje 'chang?] of the handwritten notes of Dge glong chos ldan rgya mtsho, the lama's principal disciple and attendant.
- (Ci) *[Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed chen po'i lam tshogs] gtor chen drug cu pa'i rnam bzhang dam nyams kyi srog gcod mtshon cha 'bar ba'i 'phrul 'khor zhes bya ba'i zur 'debs 'phrin las drag po'i pho nya*, 229-283. Date: *shing byi* (1684), tenth month. Written upon

urgent request by the orders of Rje shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros sbas ba'i gdan sa pa sha san dha ra sa mu dra at Bod yul byang phyogs stod lung phu'i dgon pa Chu lam sding gsum du grags pa'i dang po'i gnas.

- (Chi) *Gtor zor 'phen skabs kyi dmod bcol spu gri dar ma dug gi mde'u thung zhes bya ba bka' rgya ma*, 285-291. Written for Lcang skya hu thog thu [=Second Qutuqtu] and others at Dben gnas dam pa kun bzang Me long brag dkar.
- (Ji) *'Jam dpal gshin rje'i gshed kyi 'phrin las la brten nas dgra bgegs sgröl ba'i las gtad drag sngags 'bar ba'i thog mda'*, 293-313.
- (Nyi) *Sri gnon gyi bca' gzhi bla ma'i man ngag yi ger bkod pa*, 315-325. Notes taken by several of the lama's students.
- (Ti) *Liŋga'i dpe ris skor*, 327-338. Calligraphed by 'Jigs med brtson 'grus in the presence of Khri chen blo bzang 'jigs med 'phrin las rgya mtsho following the directives of Kha so sngags rams pa'i sprul rabs bdun pa chen po. [Several of these *liŋga* images are reproduced and discussed in Cuevas 2011: 83-84.]
- (Thi) *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi sgo nas gshed 'dul bya tshul gnam lcags 'bar ba'i thob*, 339-355.
- (Di) *Dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed kyi cho ga'i skabs su mkho ba'i man ngag zhal shes rdo rje 'chang blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas kyi gsung ngag ji ltar ma nor ba dharma pha las bkod pa*, 357-368. The words of [Brag dkar sngags rams pa] Blo bzang bstan pa rab rgyas handwritten by Śākya'i dge slong dharma pha la exactly as spoken.
- (Pi) *Ye shes kyi mgon po gur gyi gtor ma la brten nas zhi ba'i las sgrub tshul mdor bsdus lag len snying por dril ba*, 369-375. Written at the behest of the teachers of Bya khyung brag.
- (Phi) *Rnam sras mdung dmar can gsang ba gshin rje ltar bsgrub pa'i gtor chog lags*, 377-385.
- (Bi) *Gnod sbyin yab yum gyi 'khor lo sgrub pa'i tshul rdo rje 'chang kyi mgo bde bar bkod pa*, 387-392.

- (Mi) *Brag dkar sngags rams pa'i gsung 'bum gyi par byang*, 393-398. Collection reproduced from copies of texts preserved at Brag dkar me long mkha' spyod dpal gyi gur and presented to Kha so sngags rams pa'i mchog sprul in the earth-ox year 1949. Restored, edited, and printed in the iron-horse year 1990 at [Rong bo] Thos bsam rnam par rgyal ba'i gling.

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