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Tāranātha on the Emergence of the Tantric Cycle of Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka: Writing a Tibetan Buddhist Historiography in Seventeenth-Century Tibet¹

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Introduction

The buffalo-headed wrathful tantric deity Vajrabhairava (and its alter ego Yamāntaka) flourished in India in the middle of the 8th century during the ‘mature’ phase of tantric Buddhism. The most important textual source for his practice in India is the *Vajrabhairavatantra* (henceforth VBT), attributed to Lalitavajra (aka Līlavajra), *ācārya* at Nālandā Mahāvihāra, who is said to have retrieved it from the mythical land of Oḍḍiyāna. The transmission of the VBT from India to Tibet took place during the Later Dissemination (*phyi dar*) when it was classified as a scripture belonging to the *yoganiruttara* class. Within several decades of its emergence in the 8th century, Vajrabhairava became one of the most revered deities of Tibetan Buddhism. In spite of Vajrabhairava’s popularity and considerable impact on the formation of religious praxis in the medieval Buddhist world, the cult of Vajrabhairava has still not received sufficient scholarly attention.

This article deals with a hitherto unstudied account on the emergence of the tantric cycle of Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka in India through the eyes of the Tibetan Buddhist historiographer, Tāranātha (1575-1643). Through the textual analysis of Tāranātha’s *Gshin rje chos ’byung*, a text that has not received any scholarly attention to date, this article examines the strategies employed to legitimize the origins of the tradition as well as the literary tropes, modes of emplotment, and ethical concerns adopted by Tāranātha in the broader context of writing the emic historiography of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka

¹ I am grateful to Prof. Ulrike Roesler, the Late Prof. Stefano Zacchetti, and Dr. Franz Xaver Erhard for their helpful critical comments on the earlier version of this article. I am very much indebted to the Late Gen-la Tsering Gonkatsang who taught me Tibetan.

cycle. Together with the question about the validity of using Tāranātha as a source of historical knowledge, I will attempt to examine whether his perception of the socio-historical reality behind the advent of tantric Buddhism in India aligns (and, if so, to what degree) with various etic models that have been formulated by scholars in recent years.

Tāranātha's interest in writing the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka historiography or the Triple Cycle of Black Bhairava (*nag 'jigs skor gsum*), as it is categorized in Tibet, could have been personal. It is known that Tāranātha belonged to the hereditary lineage of Rwa lotsāwa Rdo rje grags (b. 1016),² the famous Vajrabhairava "sorcerer" who established the Rwa transmission (*lugs*) of the Vajrabhairava (*rdo rje 'jigs byed*) in Tibet. The Rwa lugs—without any doubt the most popular Vajrabhairava lineage among those existing in Tibet—was transmitted through various teachers in the Sa skya, Dge lugs pa, and Jo nang tradition (Tāranātha's own).³ By engaging in the task of writing a Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka historiography, Tāranātha also had a chance to fulfill his personal mission of disseminating the 'Indianness' of Tibetan Buddhism—for, as Templeman⁴ has demonstrated, Tāranātha perceived himself as an Indian, born in Gtsang by mistake. Tāranātha was certainly no stranger to the wrathful tantric practices advocated by the VBT and other scriptures, such as the *Guhyasamāja* and the *Hevajra*, and did not shun away from propagating their usage for the protection of the Buddhist state. In his autobiography, Tāranātha refers to the notion of the "ten fields of liberation" (*bsgral ba'i zhing bcu*), enumerating the category of people, the so-called "harmers of the Three Jewels", against whom the employment of wrathful tantric rituals is justifiable.⁵ In so doing, he follows the scriptural definition of the 'enemy' to whom the early Buddhist tantras often refer, while emphasizing at the same time the altruistic context of tantric rituals performed for the "benefit of others".

Besides the specific ideological purpose that may have motivated its author, the significance of Tāranātha's *Gshin rje chos 'byung* can be fully appreciated only when we look at it as a particular case study of Tibetan Buddhist historiography that builds up out of 'native' cate-

² Stearns 2008.

³ For the Vajrabhairava transmission lineages in Tibet and their impact on the Sa skya and Dge lugs traditions, see Wenta 2020. In his *Gshin rje chos 'byung* (pp. 125-126), A mes zhabs reports that Bsod nams grags pa (1280–1352), an important master of the Jo nang tradition belonged to the Western Rwa Tradition of the Black Cycle, which was founded by Rwa Ye shes seng ge, the son of Rwa lotsāwa's nephew, Rwa Chos rab.

⁴ Templeman 2009: 231.

⁵ Dewey 2020.

gories considered significant, real, and appropriate for the Buddhist audience for whom it is intended. In this regard, rather than concentrating on the question of why Tāranātha wrote this account, the present article focuses on the ‘how’ he did it, with the aim of highlighting certain aspects of the emic perception of an important Buddhist tradition, especially in relation to the constituent elements of historiography as narrative. In discussing various ramifications of Tāranātha’s *chos ’byung* project, the following questions are raised: First, in what manner does Tāranātha use factual data in his construction of medieval Indian history? Second, what are the legitimization and authentication strategies through which he validates the origins of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cycle? Finally, what are the characteristic topoi he uses to construct historical narrative and to what extent they derive from Buddhist and Indian culture?

1. *Gshin rje chos ’byung*:
Tibetan Buddhist Historiography as Narrative

The authorship of the *Rgyud rgyal gshin rje gshed skor gyi chos ’byung*, or simply *Gshin rje chos ’byung*, is attributed in the colophon to the Jo nang master Tāranātha, who composed it in the year 1631. Tāranātha, commonly known as the “Venerable” (*rje btsun*), was one of the most prolific historians in 17th century Tibet and the leading exponent of the Jo nang tradition of Tibetan Buddhism in his time. Among his most important works is the celebrated *Rgya gar chos ’byung* (“History of Buddhism in India”⁶), written in 1608, which until now serves as one of the very few premodern textual sources for reconstructing the history of tantric Buddhism in India. It is obviously important to determine what sources Tāranātha himself employed, and over this question there is considerable controversy. It is in principle possible (as Tāranātha himself claims) that he wrote his *Rgya gar chos ’byung* on the basis of three Sanskrit sources, now considered lost.⁷ If the *Rgya gar chos ’byung* is based on Sanskrit chronicles intended to record the most important facts about the ruling dynasty of the Pālas at the time when the *siddhas* and tantric Buddhism took a stronghold at

⁶ Chattopadhyaya 1970.

⁷ The first is a massive, 2000-verse unnamed work by Sa dbang bzang po (Kṣemendrabhadra or Dharaṇābhadrā) that covers the history up to the Pāla king, Rāmapāla (r.1072-1126) (Sanderson 2009: 89). The second, titled the *Bud-dhapurāṇa*, is a work of 1200 verses by Dbang pos sbyin (Indradatta) that also includes the history under the Senas (*ibid.*). The third is an unnamed source penned down by a Brahmin scholar referred to by Tāranātha as Bhaṭṭāghaṭī, a corrupted name, which Sanderson corrected to Vandyaghāṭīya; this work primarily records the succession of Nālandā *ācāryas* (*ibid.*).

Nālandā and Vikramaśīla, the same must be true in the case of the *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, for the biographical material on the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka *siddhas* is similar in both sources. Other scholars⁸ have found it implausible that Tāranātha would have resorted to sources other than the oral histories transmitted to him by various Indian gurus he reportedly met during his lifetime. One of them was Buddhaguptanātha, from whom Tāranātha learnt a lot about the geography and history of South and Southeast Asia.⁹

In spite of his general scholastic orientation that allegedly relied upon Indian sources, whether written or oral, Tāranātha's writings are by no means unaffected by more conventional Tibetan genres. This is certainly visible in the way in which he emulates the general features of traditional Tibetan Buddhist historiography (*chos 'byung*, lit. "Origin of dharma"). Tāranātha's endeavour to write a historiography of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cycle was a reflection of the common tendency represented by the *chos 'byung* genre to place doctrinal cycles in historical perspective in an effort to legitimize them.¹⁰ Among the Tibetan genre classification, *chos 'byung* is classified as one of several types of Tibetan historiographical writing;¹¹ nevertheless, this typology escapes specific formal criteria, for it freely draws upon various Tibetan literary categories, including biographies, geographical accounts, etc.¹² Tāranātha's *Gshin rje chos 'byung* is especially good an example of a multi-genre work, for it records the history of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cycle through biographical accounts of the *siddhas*, more commonly associated with the *rnam thar* genre. Similarly, an aspect of chronology, usually expected from the historiographical writing, is suspended in favour of a focus on the geographic context, which leads to the semanticization of space.

One of the most important features of traditional Tibetan Buddhist historiography, also discernible in Tāranātha's *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, is that the presentation of events takes the form of a narrative governed by the principles of emplotment, shared literary tropes, repetition of motifs, and multi-layering, all bound up with culture-specific models of action, ethics, ideologies, etc. In this regard, Schweiger¹³ has point-

⁸ Templeman 2009.

⁹ Tāranātha did not merely listen to Buddhaguptanātha, but also took notes that functioned as a mnemonic device for his writing: "I wrote notes, I wrote addenda lists to my notes and I ensured that these were not fragmentary or careless. Whatever teachings he [Buddhaguptanātha] gave me I wrote them all down on paper" (Templeman 2009).

¹⁰ van der Kuijp 1996: 46.

¹¹ For an overview of various genres of Tibetan historiography, see van der Kuijp 1996.

¹² Vostrikov 1970: 39.

¹³ Schweiger 2013: 68.

ed out that Tibetan historiography in general draws from a “toolbox of literary forms”, which most of the time reduces the events of history to simple binaries, such as friend-enemy, giver-receiver, Buddhist-non-Buddhist, etc. Schweiger¹⁴ argues further that the modes of emplotment recurrent in Tibetan historiography, such as for example the story of a main protagonist, unfold in repeated patterns “giving a static quality to history as narrative”. These repetitive and static aspects of historiographical narrative enable certain models of conduct to persevere through the centuries in essentially unchanged form, also providing a framework for the basic storyline of biographies.¹⁵ The act of repetition, not only with regard to the adoption of common literary devices and shared tropes found in Tibetan Buddhist literature at large (see below), but also as a practice of textual recycling, is attested in various historiographies written by Tāranātha. The *Gshin rje chos 'byung* contains the same biographical material (albeit with some minor changes) on the *siddhas* associated with the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cycle as the one narrated in the *Rgya gar chos 'byung*. It is quite evident that Tāranātha reuses the same material throughout the corpus of his works, an example of which is attested in yet another of his books, the *Bka' babs bdun ldan* (“Seven Instruction Lineages”), where the account of the Buffalo-headed *siddha* Śrīdhara matches exactly the story narrated in the *Gshin rje chos 'byung*.¹⁶

In terms of its basic structure, ‘narrative’ unfolds in a certain sequence marked by a specific beginning, middle, and end. An ‘end’ is distinguished from other two segments of the sequence by its moralizing import, implicit in the outcome of events.¹⁷ In other words, there is a moral lesson to be learnt at the conclusion of the story, which accounts for its moral teleology. Tāranātha’s *Gshin rje chos 'byung* in many ways ascribes to the moral teleology paradigm and it does so in two different ways. The first is the way in which Tāranātha textually represents and codifies a certain “*siddha* ideal” and depicts them as moral exemplars. The events surrounding the *siddhas* are often evaluated in moral terms and they are framed as simple dichotomies of ‘good’ and ‘evil’. The *siddhas* are often positioned against the evil “other”, which, in the context of proselytizing praxis, entails conversion of evil non-Buddhists into the dharma. The second way in which moral teleology underpins Tāranātha’s historiographical project relates to establishing an ethical framework for the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka’s magical technology specializing in the wrathful rituals of subduing, paralyzing, killing, etc. Tāranātha is especially

¹⁴ Schweiger 2013: 71.

¹⁵ Schweiger 2013: 72.

¹⁶ See *Bka' babs bdun ldan* (Templeman 1983: 66).

¹⁷ White 1987: 23.

concerned with the immoral abuse of wrathful magical technologies by people in power, whom he labels “harm-givers” (*gnod pa can*). In addition, he warns about karmic retribution for those who exploit wrathful magic for selfish needs, and gives the specific conditions in which the “double moral standard” for tantric practitioners using Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka technologies can be applied. This topic will be discussed in more detail below.

One of the reasons for adding a moralizing conclusion to the historiographical narrative may be the important role played by traditional historiographers in society, which Schweiger¹⁸ understands to be the task of “conserving the culture”. In Tibetan context, this mission is implicitly related to the function of traditional historiography, attempting as it does to legitimize the tradition through establishing its link with sacred origins. An ability to depict all events in continuity with the “authority of the past,” thereby authenticating what constitutes a proper memory, has been regarded as the core of traditional historiography.¹⁹ The return to the Ur-event “by means of retelling, replicating, reviving and actualizing origin-myths, the very act of recounting became a crucial ritual act of confirmation and legitimization”.²⁰ Tāranātha’s approach to the notion of origins as the means of establishing the authority of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cycle will be discussed next.

2. The Origins of Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka

Tāranātha’s *Gshin rje chos 'byung* may serve as an example of a historiographical narrative that, in the words of Per Sørensen, “is seeking to account for the [tradition’s] origin and meaning”.²¹ For Tāranātha, this search does not only entail transforming plain titles of the scriptures and lifeless names of the *siddhas* into structured historical narrative characterized by continuity and meaningful moral message, but it also creates a necessity to establish different approaches to the concept of origin²² understood as anchor points that legitimate the tradition. The discussion that follows tries to delineate two different narrative and conceptual frameworks adopted by Tāranātha, in which

¹⁸ Schweiger 2013: 68.

¹⁹ Breisach 1987: 4025.

²⁰ Sørensen 1994: 2.

²¹ Sørensen 1994: 2.

²² In this regard, I am influenced by the distinction of the two types of origin delineated by Gyatso (1993) in the *gter ma* tradition: the one is the “origin account”, which legitimizes the treasure through locating it in the already established timeless authoritative tradition, such as the word of the Buddha; the other is the “revelation account”, which is conveyed through the biography of the treasure-revealer established in the present time.

the notion of origin as a strategy of authenticating the tradition can be discerned. The first approach to origins that can be distinguished in Tāranātha's work can aptly be referred to as "the root-text account", which "is demonstrated by placing the cycle's origin within the parameters of traditions already established as authoritative".²³ In this regard, the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka tradition acquires its legitimacy through the claim that the text existed in the world since time immemorial and was proclaimed by the historical Buddha Śākyamuni. The second approach to origins focuses on the "rediscovery narrative" in which the *siddha* Lalitavajra proceeds to the mythical land of Oḍḍiyāna and retrieves the texts guarded by the ḍakinīs, thereby initiating the textual tradition of the Vajrabhairava per se. Since here Tāranātha's approach to the question of origins is structured around the biography of the retriever, it could be named "the rediscovery account".

2-1. The Root-Text Account

In his influential study on the *Cakrasaṃvaratantra*, Gray²⁴ has delineated two models of establishing textual authenticity adopted by tantric Buddhist scriptures. The first is the so-called "*nidāna* model", in which the opening verse (*nidāna*) of the tantra begins with the characteristic "Thus, I have heard, at one time" (*evaṃ māya śrutam ekasmin samaye*), followed by an indication of the specific place where the revelation took place. In this model, the claim of authenticity lies in the adherence to the oral dimension of the text, which was 'heard', as well as in the physical presence of the revealer located in the same spatiotemporal reality as the revealed text itself. The earliest tantra that follows the "*nidāna* model" is the *Guhyasamāja*.²⁵ The second is the "*athātaḥ* model", in which the tantra begins with a simple "now" (*athātaḥ*). The *athātaḥ* indicates that a specific tantra is considered to be a part of the lost original (the mythical Ur-text) usually referred to as the "root-text" (*mūlatantra*). The root-text, typically of great length (e.g., hundreds of thousands of verses), is said to have contained the full exposition of the intricacies of a particular tantric *sādhana*, of which the part that has come down to us is just a small fragment. The VBT adopts the second model, for it starts with: "Now, I shall describe the means of mastering (*sādhana*) [the deity] Vajrabhairava"

²³ Gyatso 1993: 111.

²⁴ Gray 2007.

²⁵ Among the famous Buddhist tantras belonging to this model is the *Hevajratantra* (1.1): "Thus have I heard: at one time the Lord dwelt in bliss with the Vajrayoginī who is the Body, Speech and Mind of all the Buddhas" (trans. Snellgrove 1959: 46), and the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra* (1.1).

(*athātaḥ sampravakṣyāmi vajrabhairavasādhanam*). The alleged existence of a hypothetical inherited root-text is, indeed, mentioned in the final colophon of the VBT, the Sanskrit version of which reads as follows:

Here ends the seventh chapter concerned with the testing [of the disciple] and the accomplishment of visualization procedures in this *yogatantra* of *Mahāvajrabhairavacakra*, called *Mañjuśrī*. The fragment of the *kalpa* which is successful just by being recited (*pañḥitasiddhaḥ*)²⁶ was extracted from that *tantra*, which is characterized as *Mahāvajrabhairavacakra*, and which has come forth from the *yoginīpīṭha* of Oḍḍiyāna.²⁷

The above passage indicates that the VBT, referred to here with the alternative name of *Mahāvajrabhairavacakra*, is just a fragment of the collection of rituals (*kalpa*) extracted from the root-text, called the *Mañjuśrītantra*. The commentaries on the VBT by **Ṣoṇaśrī* and **Vajrasiddha* further clarify that the *tantra* was extracted from the *Eighteen Thousand [Verses] Mañjuśrītantra*.²⁸

A somewhat different colophon is attested in the Tibetan version of the VBT, which gives the following reading:

Completed is the *kalpa* on obtaining *siddhis* of the glorious Buffalo-headed Vajramahābhairava, which is a fragment of the *kalpa*, successful just by being recited, extracted from the *One Hundred Thousand Tantra* of the cycle of the glorious Vajramahābhairava.²⁹

²⁶ The concept of *pañḥitasiddhaḥ* as the way of referring to a particularly powerful mantra is a common feature of the proto-tantric material of the *Mahāyānasūtras*. See, for example, the *Amoghapaśāhṛdaya-dhāraṇī* (Meisezahl 1962) or the *Hayagrīvaśāhī* found among the Gilgit manuscripts (Kakas 2011). The concept of *pañḥitasiddhaḥ* permeated also the Buddhist tantras. It is found in the early *kriyātantra* *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* (chap. 52, p. 438) in the context of the mantra of Krodharāja Yamāntaka. The placement of the *pañḥitasiddhaḥ* at the end of the *tantra* is found in the *Cakrasaṃvara* (see Gray 2007: 382), in the *Samvarodayatantra* (Tsuda 1970: 36, 312), and in the *Hevajratantra* (2.9.6, Tripathi and Negi's edition, p. 196).

²⁷ *etasmīn mañjuśrīyākyamahāvajrabhairavacakrayogatantra dhyānakarmasiddhiparīkṣākalpaḥ saptanah/ śrīoḍḍiyānayoginīpīṭhāt śrīmahāvajrabhairavalakṣaṇaṃ tantrodḍhṛtaḥ kalpaikadeśaḥ pañḥitasiddhaḥ/ Vajrabhairavatāntra* f.16v

²⁸ Both **Ṣoṇaśrī* (p. 393) and **Vajrasiddha* (p. 412) attest to this fact as follows: 'jam dpal gyi rgyud grangs stong phrag bco brygad pa las 'jigs byed chen po sgrub ba'i thabs kyi rjes las rgyud 'di phyung ba ste/

²⁹ The Tibetan text (Siklós 1996: 113) reads: *dpal rdo rje 'jigs byed chen po'i khor lo rgyud 'bum pa nas btus na phyung ba rtog pa'i phyogs bkags pas 'grub pa*. My translation differs from that of Siklós 1996: 49: "The is the end of ritual procedures, on achieving powers by means of the glorious Buffalo-headed Vajramahābhairava, obtained by reading those sections which appeared after selection from the *One Hundred Thousand Tantra Chapter* of the cycle of the glorious Vajramahābhairava". Siklós mistranslates both *phyung ba rtog pa*, which reflects the Skt. *kalpadeśa*, and

The end of the Vajrabhairava-tantra, the great king of tantras, arisen from the *Mañjuśrī-tantra*, revealed by the glorious Lalitavajra, the master of the *maṇḍala* of the holy masters, from the great and glorious land of Oḍḍiyāna (trans. Siklós 1996: 49).

Here, alongside the reference to the *Mañjuśrītantra*, we also find the name of another root-text, namely, the *One Hundred Thousand Tantra*, conceived of as a mythical root-text from which the condensed version of the VBT in seven chapters has been extracted.³⁰ Gray³¹ has made a considerable headway in understanding the construction of tantric textual authenticity by pointing out that the myth of the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Root Tantra* conceptualized as a massive root-text that could no longer be accessed became a common trope and a convenient means of justifying the production of “new” tantric scriptures that privileged the notion that “the tantric canon was unrealizable in the present”.³² The consequent displacement of the loci of authority to the unavailable Ur-text dehistoricized the very idea of a tantric canon and at the same time afforded an opportunity to account for the “transhistorical locus of a tradition” understood as an ongoing and timeless revelation continuing, even though only fragmentarily, from the beginningless time to the present.³³ Some tantric exegetical writers, such as Bhavyakīrti, carried out the idea of transhistoricity even further by claiming, for example, that the *Cakrasaṃvatantra* “exists without interruption in inexpressible Buddha lands, and it is experienced through meditative states, and so

phyogs bklags pas 'grub pa, which reflects the Skt. *paṭhisiddhah*; the latter is a technical term (see above, fn. 26). Siklós's translation of *btus* is also inaccurate as it reflects the Skt. *uddhṛtaḥ*, “extracted”, i.e., from the *One Hundred Thousand Chapter Tantra*, that is *Śrīmahāvajrabhairavacakra*.

³⁰ As it is difficult to establish with any certainty the relation between the *Mañjuśrītantra* and the *One Hundred Thousand Tantra* as the root-texts of the VBT, this topic remains a desideratum. The *One Hundred Thousand Tantra* cannot be a synonym of the *Mañjuśrītantra*, because, according to *Śoṇasrī and *Vajrasiddha, the *Mañjuśrītantra* is much shorter text of 18,000 verses. The reference to the *One Hundred Thousand Tantra* is not found in the Sanskrit colophon and no mention of it is found in the Indian commentaries on the VBT preserved in the Bstan 'gyur, which may indicate that it is a later addition. On the contrary, the *Mañjuśrītantra* as the root-tantra is also mentioned by another commentator of the VBT, Lalitavajra (f. 20), who says: “*di ni 'jam dpal zhes bya ba ni 'phags pa 'jam dpal gyi rtsa ba'i rgyud de*”, “As for ‘Mañjuśrī’, it is the root-tantra of Āryamañjuśrī”. *Kumāracandra (p. 288) also mentions the VBT's indebtedness to the *Mañjuśrītantra* in the following gloss: “*di nyid ni 'jam dpal rgyud chen por gsungs pa'o*” “As for this [place] itself, it has been explained in the great *Mañjuśrītantra*.”

³¹ Gray 2009.

³² Gray 2009: 14.

³³ Gray 2009: 6.

forth, by the heroes and heroines..."³⁴

Tāranātha's approach to the issue of the VBT's root-text and its "transhistorical locus" in many ways defies the aforesaid paradigm. Despite the fact that Tāranātha acknowledges the tantra's root-text as a timeless revelation taught by "the newly accomplished heroes, *yoginīs*", and others located in the realm of indefinable space, he also makes an attempt to anchor the text in the historicity of scriptural revelation that goes back to the historical Buddha Śākyamuni. Tāranātha makes an attempt to reinstate the Buddha Śākyamuni's role as the "voice of authority" in tantric context and he does so in defiance of the commonly accepted tendency of tantric authors, who preferred to reformulate a pan-Buddhist strategy of legitimizing the authority of "new" tantras claiming that the text was the "word of the Buddha" (*buddhavacana*) spoken, however, not by the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, but by the "new" tantric Buddha, called Vajradhara, etc.³⁵ The adherence to the 'old' framing of textual authenticity provided Tāranātha with an opportunity to shift the attention away from the notion of revelation occurring in the "beginningless time" to the specific historical moment of revelation that placed the VBT's root-text at the centre of the tradition already established as authoritative. Tāranātha reports as follows:

Those newly accomplished heroes, *yoginīs*, buddhas, bodhisattvas taught the extensive root-tantra [of the VBT] in the assembly that fills up the entire space. This extensive [root-]tantra worked for a long time for the immeasurable number of sentient beings. The *siddhis* were achieved by limitless number of people. Then, after some time, having realized that the tantra could no longer benefit people, the tantra was sealed and stayed in the land of Orgyan in the place called the "Treasury of dharma" (*dharmagañja*), it is said. This [tantra] had the power of *siddhi* since the beginningless time. Even though the story of the root-tantra existing before in the past is indeed like that, nevertheless, the Tathāgata Śākyamuni proclaimed it again. Because of that reason, it is clearly evident that [the tantra] was sealed in Orgyan after it was taught [by the Tathāgata Śākyamuni].³⁶

³⁴ Gray 2009: 7.

³⁵ Gray 2009: 8.

³⁶ *gsar du thob pa'i dpa' po rnal 'byor ma dang/ sangs rgyas byang sems nam mkha' gang ba'i bdus su rtsa ba'i rgyud rgyas pa gsungs/ rgyud rgyas ba des dus yin ring mor sems can dpag tu med pa'i don mdzad/ skyes bu mtha' yas pa zhig gis dngos grub thob bo/ de nas bar skabs su mi rnam kyi don du mi 'gyur par mkhyen nas/ orgyan gyi gnas dhar ma gnya dza chos kyi mdzod du rgyas btab nas bzhugs ces 'gyur na/ rgyud 'di gdod nas grub pa'i dbang du byas te/ sngon byung rtsa ba'i gleng gzhi de bzhin yin mod/ ston pa de bzhin gshegs pa sha kya thub pas kyang/ slar bzlos te gsungs pa yin dgos pas/ de rjes*

The above passage is interesting not only to understand Tāranātha's effort to authenticate the VBT's root-text as the "word of the Buddha", but also to recognize how the literary tropes derived from Tibetan traditions shape historiographical narrative. In the above passage, the VBT's root-text's appearance in the world and its subsequent concealment in Orgyan (i.e. Oḍḍiyāna) becomes imagined in many ways in parallel to the Tibetan treasure tradition (*gter ma*),³⁷ where important scriptural revelations and other artifacts are hidden only to be rediscovered in future times. For Tāranātha, the category of a "hidden text" entails the notions of continuity and transhistoricity, as well as the idea of Oḍḍiyāna as sacred land of tantric revelation, all of which came to underpin his conceptualization of origins. More importantly, the "hidden text" trope provides ramifications for the narrative of the *siddha* Lalitavajra who, in the manner of a treasure revealer (*gter ston*), reinstates what has already become a forgotten tradition.

One may say that the trope of the "Treasury of dharma" is employed to perform an archival function. Although the Treasury's existence is imagined as an unchanging repository of tradition, separated from the ravages of history, the act of hiding the text is contingent upon the changing contexts of passing time. The fact that the tantra was sealed because it could no longer benefit people is not purported to exemplify the text's deprivation of power (*siddhi*), but rather to highlight the progressive degeneration of people and their morals. For Tāranātha, the loss of propensity to receive the teachings is symptomatic of a gradual decline of humankind as a whole. It is significant that in order to explain the moral degeneration of people, Tāranātha adopts a concept of time imagined as a series of four cosmic cycles (*bskal pa*) that, propelled by their descending trajectory, pull people in a downward spiral. The distinctive feature of the rhythm of the cosmic cycles, often formulated in terms of loss of perfection, is that it requires different adaptations of dharma teaching that are appropriate for different time-cycles. Tāranātha explains as follows:

The manner in which the [Vajrabhairava] teaching appears in various cosmic cycles such as the Golden Age, the Second Age, etc., may also occur with different purport. Even though there is one tantra text and one time and space, the miraculous manifestation of the Buddha is inconceivable, that's why it [the appearance of tantra in

orgyan du rgyas btab po zhes brjod na legs par mngon no/ Tāranātha's Gshin rje chos 'byung, p. 43.

³⁷ With regard to the traditional division of *gter ma*, a 'hidden text' would belong to the category of "earth treasures" (*sa gter*) concealed in a physical location: see Doctor 2005: 27.

different ages] is not a contradiction.³⁸

The correspondence between the manner in which the VBT's teaching manifests in the world and the various cosmic cycles is formulated by Tāranātha through the concept of purpose or import (*dgongs pa*). However, Tāranātha does not use this term in any of the technical senses³⁹ it had in Buddhist hermeneutics, but rather in conformity with the doctrine of "skillful means", as the Buddha's capacity to adjust the dharma teachings to fit the temper of different time-cycles. In other words, the purport of the dharma appropriate for the Golden Age, symbolic of a highest level of human moral perfection, may not be suitable for the people living in the Second or Third Age, when moral degeneration had already progressed exponentially. Although the above passage merely alludes to the readjustment of the purport of the dharma to suit the moral quality of people living in different eons, in other place Tāranātha shows in more detail how the purpose of the Yamāntaka dharma changes in accordance with a specific zeitgeist, i.e., from the "Golden Age" of the *vidyādhara*s to the "Degenerate Age of the Harm-Givers", etc.⁴⁰ The underlying sense of decline

³⁸ *rdzogs ldan gnyis ldan la sogs pa dus skyabs tha dad du/ bstan pa byung tshul so so la dgongs pa yang srid/ gnas du gcig dang rgyud gzhung gcig yin yang/ sangs rgyas kyi rnam par 'phrul pa bsam gyis mi khyab pas 'ga' ba ni ma yin no/* Tāranātha's *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 43.

³⁹ The concept of *dgongs pa* (Skt. *abhiprāya*) is generally understood as a hermeneutical device in reference to the canonical utterances of the Buddha in which the meaning is intended, rather than explicitly stated: see Ruegg 1985; Brodroid 1984.

⁴⁰ In this regard, Tāranātha (*Gshin rje chos 'byung*, pp. 45-52) introduces the concept of four *kalpas* divided in accordance with the character of practice (*spyod pa*). The first *kalpa*, of unknown inception, lasted for one hundred thousand years and it was the age of the *vidyādhara*s characterized by the accomplishment of all desired *siddhis*. Tāranātha narrates five unrelated stories of the kings situated in the four cardinal directions of the world, i.e., King Vijayasimha in the south; "King of fish" Jwaśaswami in the east of Bharendra (Bengal); King Paraśamarāja in the country of poison (*ha la'i yul*) in the west; King Nagendradeva in the city of barbarians (*kla klo*) in Yavana in the north; and, also in the north, King Harihara of Kashmir. The main narrative plot repeated again and again depicts the king and his retinue consisting of one hundred servants, who after practicing the *vidyāmantra* of Yamāntaka bestowing various *siddhis* attain the status of the *vidyādhara*. This narrative plot was probably based on the story of King Indrabhūti receiving the tantric canon by the *ācārya* Kū[k]kura preserved in Jñānamitra's commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitānayaśatapañcāśatikā*, now available only in Tibetan translation (Davidson 2002: 242). In this narrative, which is important for its early date (no later than 800 C.E.), Jñānamitra affirms that after being initiated into the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala, King Indrabhūti along with his retinue consisting of thousand members attained the status of *vidyādhara* (Davidson 2002: 243). This story is one of the earliest accounts of the king and his court depicted as the recipients of the esoteric tantric scriptures that also became "the most widely accepted of the *siddha* transmission stories" (Davidson 2002: 242). The second *kalpa*, which lasted for

and misappropriation of the Yamāntaka dharma, aligned with the cosmic cycles of devolution, triggers the act of hiding the teachings in order to rediscover them at the more appropriate time when they can make a difference.

2-2. *The Rediscovery Account: Lalitavajra and the Retrieval of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka Corpus*

The second approach to the issue of origins that we can distinguish in Tāranātha's *chos 'byung* is an attempt to consolidate the tradition's authenticity in the human world of the Degenerate Age by legitimizing the authority of its revealer, around which the identity of the tradition can crystalize. There are several narratives associated with the rediscovery of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka corpus presented by Tāranātha. All of them revolve around the figure of Lalitavajra and his journey to the mythical land of Oḍḍiyāna. One of these narratives that comes from the oral tradition of Bari lotsāwa narrates the rediscovery account as follows.

The followers of Bari lotsāwa explained [the story of Lalitavajra] in these words: The master called Lalitavajra [*sgeg pa'i rdo rje*] achieved a little bit of power because he meditated on the Black Yamāntaka. In the southern region, he performed ascetic observances (*vrata*). When he competed with a *tīrthika*, even though [the *tīrthika*] could not withstand him, [his] male and female retinue were turned into goats and sheep. Thinking that it was too early for him to practice [the Black Yamāntaka], he prayed to Khasarpāṇi, (an esoteric form of Avalokiteśvara). In a dream, he received a prophecy. He went to the illustrious Oḍḍiyāna and met a *yoginī* in accordance with the prophecy. He acted as her servant for three years, performing austerities. After that, she said: "What do you want?" He said: "I do not want anything. I do services for you because of devotion, Madam". It was the same at the end of six and nine years. At the end of twelve years, she said to him: "What *siddhi* do you wish for?" He made a request: "I wish for a method to instantly annihilate Māras

three hundred years, brings to a forefront a basic structure of Yamāntaka *sādhana*, such as the importance of the *maṇḍala*-initiation, the repetition of the *mantra* in front of the Yamāntaka-*paṭa*, and an emphasis on secrecy. The overall purport of the Yamāntaka praxis extends beyond the goal of the *vidyādhara* of the first *kalpa* to include soteriological and apotropaic goals. The latter becomes conveyed through the story of Ara, who by merely remembering the Yamāntaka-*mantra* is able to escape from the captivity of the bandits who attacked him. The third *kalpa*, which lasted for five hundred years, marks the age of the harm-givers (*gnod pa can kyi dus*), which brings with itself the emergence of those evil people in whose hands the practice is misused (see below, p. 43). The fourth *kalpa* begins with the rediscovery of the cycle by Lalitavajra.

and *tīrthikas* without violating the Buddha's teachings". She conferred to him a tantric initiation of Bhagavān Vajrabhairava and gave him the [Vajrabhairava] tantra in seven chapters. The name of that *yoginī* was "Sukhacakṣuḥ". Thereafter, he wrote down the seven chapters [of the VBT] on a white silk cloth using goat's milk and took it with him. Even though the *ḍakinīs* thought of drawing his heart's blood, they were unable to catch him, since the master had obtained the *siddhi* of swift-footedness and already arrived at his own place. He annihilated all those former *tīrthikas*, so it is said.⁴¹

The aforementioned legend narrating Lalitavajra's rediscovery of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka corpus in Oḍḍiyāna seeks to explain the reasons for the emergence of the cycle specializing in wrathful rituals at that particular point in time. In fact, the rationale behind its reappearance points to the historical context of interreligious struggle between the Buddhists and the *tīrthikas*⁴² (non-Buddhists). The enemy, depicted above as a religious "other", is regarded as a threat to the existing status quo that needs to be eradicated or at least disciplined for the sake of collective welfare. The process of othering and stigmatizing the difference between the Buddhists and the non-Buddhists takes on a strategy of demonizing the religious other through the concept of Māra that follows a common way of representing evil in Buddhism in general.⁴³

⁴¹ *ba ri lo tsā ba ' i rjes ' jug rnams ni ' di skad ces ' chad de/ slob dpon sgeg pa ' i rdo rje zhes bya bas/ gshin rje gshed nag po bsgoms pas nus pa cung zad grub nas/ lho phyogs kyi yul du brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa byas/ mu stegs gcig dang ' gran pas khong rang la ma tshugs kyang/ ' khor pho mo rnams ra lug tu gyur pas/ spyod pa sngas so snyam kha sa rpa nir gsol ba btab pas/ rmi lam du lung bstan byung nas/ dpal o rgyan du phyin/ lung bstan dang mthun pa ' i rnal ' byor ma dang mjal nas/ de ' i khol po lo gsun byas te dka ' ba spyad pa las/ khyod ci ' dod gsung/ ' dod pa med de/ bdag khyed la gus pas bkur bsti byed pa lags ces zhuis/ de bzhin du lo drug dang dgu ' i mthar yang de dang ' dra/ lo bcu gnyis kyi mthar/ khyod dangos grub ci ' dod gsung ba la/ sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa dang mi ' gal zhing/ bdud dang mu stegs mod la tshar gcod pa ' i thabs cig zhu byas pas/ bcom ldan ' das rdo rje ' jigs byed kyi dbang bskur zhing rgyud rtoḡ pa bdun pa gñang ngo/ rnal ' byor ma de ' i mtshan ni bde ba ' i spyan ldan zhes zer/ de nas rtoḡ bdun dar dkar po la ra ' i ' o mas bris te bsnams/ mkha ' ' gro ma rnams kyis snying khrag phyung ba snyam byed kyang/ slob dpon rkang mgyogs grub pas rjes ma zin par rang gnas su sleb/ sngar gyi mu stegs de dag thams cad tshar bcad/ ces zer rol Gshin rje chos ' byung, p. 67.*

⁴² The references to *tīrthika*, a word whose semantic range is not well understood, and the problems associated with translating *tīrthika* as a 'heretic', have been investigated by Christopher V. Jones in his recent paper (2021), where he argues that the English term 'heretic' refers to someone within one's own tradition, whereas *tīrthika* is someone outside one's one system. Scherrer-Schaub (1991: 71) and Eltschinger (2013: 12, n. 38) prefer the term "allodox".

⁴³ Boyd 1971.

One of the critical issues that emerges from scholarly deliberations on the origins of tantric Buddhism in general is the extent to which the employment of a “violent dharma” against the religious other reflects Hindu/Śaiva-Buddhist dynamics in the actual social reality. According to some scholars, accounts of the violent subjugation of *tīrthikas* and their gods should be read allegorically and have little to do with actual hostility between Śaivas and Buddhists.⁴⁴ Another opinion is advocated by those who adhere to the ‘agonistic view’, stating that textual and iconographical representations of interreligious violence are a mirror that reflects a hostility between Śaivism and Buddhism in real life.⁴⁵ One of the most vocal proponents of the agonistic view is Giovanni Verardi, whose recent publications (2011; revised 2018) claim that the main reason for the emergence of tantric Buddhism was a desire to subdue the non-Buddhists. Verardi theorizes a long-standing social crisis caused by Brahmanical hatred and persecution of ‘heretical’ (*pāśaṅḍinah*) Buddhists,⁴⁶ which intensified during the Gupta period, and was the main reason for the emergence of tantric Buddhist ritual. According to Verardi, *abhicāra* technologies propounded by Buddhist tantras during the Pāla period were directed against two enemies: Brāhmaṇas/Śaivas (*tīrthikas*) and Muslim invaders, who from the eleventh century onwards began to raid the Indian subcontinent.⁴⁷ Even though it is not impossible that the narratives of growing influence of the *tīrthikas* threatening Buddhist survival may reflect a period of ‘Buddhist hiatus’ caused by the decline of the Pāla empire from approximately 850 C.E. to 977 C.E., which could have had a negative effect on the royal support for the *mahāvihāras* at Nālandā and Vikramaśīla⁴⁸, it is also possible that

⁴⁴ In this regard, Iyanaga (1985), Linrothe (1990), and Seyfort Ruegg (2008) adhere to the allegorical interpretation, and consider the theme of violence not as ‘expression of (sectarian and secular) antagonism between two great religions of India but, rather, a structured opposition between two levels, namely the worldly/mundane (*laukika*) and the supramundane/trans-mundane (*lokottara*)’ (Seyfort Ruegg 2008). Linrothe (1990: 20) perceives Maheśvara to be the symbolic representation of the ‘Indestructible Person’ (*akṣarapuruṣa*), who stands in opposition to the Buddhist notion of the illusory self, and the act of violence inflicted upon Maheśvara by Trailokyavijaya as an allegory for the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness and the absence of self in all dharmas (*sarvadharmānairātmya*).

⁴⁵ Davidson (2001: 215) is another vocal exponent of this agonistic view. Davidson says that the myth of Maheśvara’s subjugation indicates a real tension between Buddhist and Śaiva factions, in particular the Kāpālikas.

⁴⁶ Verardi’s interpretation of *pāśaṅḍa*—with reference to those outside of the Vedic fold, primarily Buddhists and Jains—has been criticized by Sanderson (2015), who demonstrated that in fifth century India *pāśaṅḍa* had a wider application that also included Śaiva sects and Pāñcarātra Vaiṣṇavas.

⁴⁷ For the Pāla patronage of both Śaivism and Buddhism, see below, p.35.

⁴⁸ Sanderson 2009: 96-97; Aciri 2016: 19.

these narratives merely emulate common literary tropes found in Buddhist literature at large. If we, therefore, suspend historical frames and examine the narratives only through its value as literature⁴⁹, we will notice that the theme of the fight against adversary forces assuming the garb of the *tīrthikas* and Māras was inspired by a widespread narrative of the conquest of Māra (*māravijaya*) that proliferated into many different versions in Indian and Chinese sources.⁵⁰

The placement of the *tīrthikas* on equal footing with Māra is a common literary trope of Buddhist literature, an early instance of which can be traced back to the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* where the arrival of the Mahāyāna is depicted as the Buddha's act of saving countless beings from Māra and his people, the *tīrthikas*.⁵¹ In the same *sūtra*, the Buddha tells Kāśyapa: "700 years after my death, the devil Māra Pāpīyas will gradually destroy my True Dharma"⁵². The appearance of Māra⁵³ in the garb of the non-Buddhist other is often conceptualized within the Buddhist prophesy of a gradual decline of the "True Dharma" (*saddharma*) and the strengthening of the 'counterfeit dharma', i.e. non-Buddhist false paths⁵⁴.⁵⁵ In the *Gaṇḍīsūtra*, the decline of the dharma is coterminous with the appearance of discordant monks who fall ill, while the non-Buddhists and Māras are empowered and come to the fore.⁵⁶ The same trope of the damaging effects of the Kali Yuga bringing to the forefront the false *dharma* of the *tīrthikas* who—as the followers of Śiva—are labeled "the perpetrators of the conduct of Māra" (*māracaryāsamāratāḥ*) is found in the *Guṇākāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*⁵⁷, an expanded version of the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, composed by the Buddhist Newars in the 15th century.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ Flores 2008.

⁵⁰ Anderl and Pons, forthcoming.

⁵¹ The *Prajñāpāramitāśāstra* was preached by the Buddha on the Gṛdhra-kūṭa in Magadha where he "destroyed Māra and his people, the *tīrthikas*, and saved innumerable beings" (Lamotte 2001: 43ff).

⁵² Chappell 1980: 139; Nattier 2011: 38.

⁵³ One the plurality of Māras, see Boyd 1971. For the overview of the *māravijaya* as a widespread Buddhist narrative, see Schmidt-Leukel, forthcoming; Nichols 2019.

⁵⁴ Schmidt-Leukel, forthcoming.

⁵⁵ Similarly, the prophesy of the **Āryacandraḡarbhaparipṛcchāsūtra* warns that "the party of those who obstruct the Dharma—the party of Māra and so on—will arise, and their power and strength will increase. Kings, ministers, and so on will decline in faith they will no longer perceive the distinction between virtue and vice, and they will do harm to the True Dharma" (Nattier 2011: 241).

⁵⁶ *Gaṇḍīsūtra* (Toh. 298; 1.13-1.14), see, trans. by Annie Bien 2020: 10. <https://read.84000.co/translation/toh298.html>.

⁵⁷ *Guṇākāraṇḍavyūhasūtra* 4. 79ab in Sinclair 2015: 467.

⁵⁸ Douglas 1998, online resource: <http://www.aioyama.net/lrc/papers/cbhnmppr-8.htm>; Sinclair 2015.

The literary trope of Māra and *tīrthikas* that threaten the survival of the “True Dharma” is posed as a point of reference indicating that fight against evil is believed by the tradition to be an important part of the Buddha’s or bodhisattva’s struggle in the quest of spiritual perfection. In other words, since the Buddha’s awakening was construed vis-à-vis conflict and victory over Māra, the portrayal of other Buddhist protagonists had to adhere to the same laws of emplotment structured along the basic binary categories of ‘good’ and ‘evil’, thereby emulating, as it were, the already established *māravijaya* narrative. Lalitavajra’s journey to Oḍḍiyāna to retrieve the tantras capable of destroying Māras and *tīrthikas* replicates the archetype of the Buddhist conquest of evil by constructing its tantric identity *via* and *against* the religious other. As we shall see below, especially in the context of the *siddha*-narratives, the issue of ethics and moral obligation plays crucial role in theorizing about the ‘enemy’. The enemy consolidates the notion of evil, which is not a static idea, but a crudely empirical reality in needs of transformation that prompts a person who took tantric vows to act compassionately by engaging in violent ritual against the evil-doer for the benefit of those whom he harms, and also for his own sake.

3. Lalitavajra at Nālandā and Moltāna: Narratives of Magical Debate

The article has so far examined two different approaches to the question of origins as a validating source of the “new” corpus of tantric revelation. First, the “root-text account” showed how Tāranātha relocates the notion of origins away from the timeless revelation to the historical moment, “spoken by the Buddha Śākyamuni”. Second, the “rediscovery account” concentrated on the biography of the *siddha* Lalitavajra as the *gter ston*, who is guided by prophecies and aided by the *ḍakinīs* to the ‘treasure-site’ of Oḍḍiyāna, at the same time justifying the reasons for the cycle’s rediscovery in the present time. In the following section, I will examine the factors that shape patterns of Buddhist tantric authority in the context of the “narrative of debate as a literary form”⁵⁹.

From Oḍḍiyāna, Lalitavajra proceeds to Nālandā Mahāvihāra, his home-institution, carrying the “new” corpus of Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka teachings. After arriving there, he is challenged to a debate by the *ācāryas* who look with suspicion at his new textual production, questioning its alleged efficacy. The proof or evidence of the new cycle’s credibility lies in the attestation of Lalitavajra’s authority,

⁵⁹ Cabezón 2008: 73.

which rests on his capability to win the challenge / debate and display his acquired *siddhis*. The story goes as follows:

Then, he [Lalitavajra] went to Magadha. When he arrived at Śrīnālandā, the *ācāryas* [at Nālandā] challenged him: “You brought the [Vajrabhairava]tantra and claim to have attained [supernatural] powers, so before the dawn rises tomorrow morning, show us your visible power”. He [Lalitavajra] responded: “Alright, in that case, I am going to summon the retinue of King Pañcasimha⁶⁰ here.” At that time the king and his retinue were in Gaurana (Bengal?). The fastest route from Nālandā to Gaurana in the east would take half a month. Lalitavajra meditated and used his powers. One of the ministers of the king Pañcasimha, was called Mutāripradhāna (Murāripradhāna⁶¹), he was a *tīrthika*. He felt an urge to go to Magadha and having loaded the chariot with many goods, he took on a journey together with the king’s retinue. This journey, which normally takes half a month, he covered in a few hours. On the stroke of midnight, he arrived at the enclosure of Nālandā. Mahāsāṃghika Dāsapada informed that the minister had arrived. As soon as the day broke, he asked the monks for religious instruction and gave them a lot of gifts. Then, the minister came with the retinue and promised to practice Buddhism. They gained faith in the *ācārya* and were amazed.⁶²

⁶⁰ Pañcasimha was the king of Magadha, a son of King Bhaṣara, who served both Brāhmanical and Buddhist clergies (see Sum pa mkhan po 1908). Tāranātha and Sum pa khen po both refer to Sāntideva as the minister to King Pañcasimha. Sāntideva, the author of the manual of Buddhist ethics *Bodhicāryāvatāra*, was a 7th century Nālandā *ācārya*. If he were the minister to King Pañcasimha, it would have meant that Pañcasimha was his contemporary, which would place Mutāripradhāna in the 7th century as well. The account of Candragomin, however, places Pañcasimha a century later, in the 8th century (Tatz 1972: 70). That would mean that both Mutāripradhāna and Lalitavajra lived in the 8th century.

⁶¹ *Pradhāna* means here “one whose chief object is Kṛṣṇa/Viṣṇu”, probably indicating the adherent of Vaiṣṇavism.

⁶² *de nas ma ga dhar byon te/ dpal na lan dar song pa na/ pa ndit ta rnams na re/ khyed kyis rgyud kyang spyang drangs/ nus pa yang thob ces zer na/ nang bar nam langs pa tshun chod la/ dngos su mthong ba ’ i nus pa zhig ston cig zer ba la/ o na rgyal po seng ge lnga pa ’ i ’ khor zhig ’ dir dug gi byas/ de la rgyal po seng ge lnga pa ’ khor bcas ni/ yul gau ra na yod de/ na lan da nas shar phyogs su mgyogs par song yang zla phyed tsam ’ gro dgos pa la/ slob dpon gyis ting nge ’ dzin gyi las sbyor mdzad pas/ rgyal po seng ge lnga pa ’ i blon po mu tā ri pra dhā na bya ba mu stegs la dang pa zhig/ yul ma ga dhar ’ gro ’ dod skyes nas nyi ma phyi phred kyi dus su yo byad mang po dang bcas shing ’ khor dang bcas pa lam du zhugs pas zla ba phyed kyi lam chu tshad ’ ga ’ zhig la bgrod nas/ nam phyed pa na dpal na la nda ’ i lcags ri ’ i nang du sleb/ dge ’ dun gyi zhal ta pa la skad btang ste/ nam langs ma thag dge ’ dun rnams la chos ston gsol/ nor mang po phul/ phyin chad sangs rgyas pa byed par khas blangs pas/ slob dpon la thing yid ches shing ngo mtshar skyes so// Gshin rje chos ’byung, pp. 59-60.*

In the next story (narrated also in a shorter version and with slight alternations in Tāranātha's *Rgya gar chos 'byung*), Lalitavajra proceeds to the city of Moltāna in the west where he is ordered by King Naravarman to compete with the *tīrthikas* skilled in the tantra of poison (*viṣatantra*):

Then, in the province of Moltāna in the west, there was a king [known as] Naravarman. In that place, there were many non-Buddhists (*mu stegs pa*) who were experts in the *viṣatantra*. The king ordered Lalitavajra to compete with the non-Buddhists [to prove his magical powers]. The *mu stegs pas* swallowed one poison each at one time. The *ācārya* [Lalitavajra] took twice the measure of the poison that could be carried by ten men. He expelled it and again consumed it, but remained unharmed. *Ghela* is the name of a large clay pot for keeping beer. He drank two such [*ghelas*] of mercury, but remained unharmed. In that way, he was swallowing poison and mercury for seven days. Because of that, his body assumed an immensely lustrous complexion. He shook the palace of the king with one hand. All the people were scared and offered innumerable gifts. They brought whatever the *bhikṣus* and poor people liked.⁶³

Both of the above narratives adhere to the traditional measures of establishing Buddhist authority, endorsing the idea that a proven ability to win a debate establishes the master's authority. The "narratives of great debates" between the Buddhists and their non-Buddhists opponents reflect "a broader literary theme that we might call the *contest*"⁶⁴, that became a popular element of Buddhist self-identity in biographical and historiographical sources.⁶⁵ The theme of contest, whether as a skill of philosophical argumentation, or as a display of supernatural powers in a magical battle, is a common literary motif that purports to dramatize the very function of Buddhist

⁶³ *de nas nub phyogs kyi yul mol tā na zhes pa na/ rgyal po na ra va rma zhes bya ba yod del/ gnas de na mu stegs byed dug gi rgyud la mkhas pa mang po dag yod pa las/ rgyal pos bskul te de dag dang nus pa ' gran pa las/ mu stegs de rnames kyi [recte *kyis] dug bre bo re re dus gcig tu thos [recte *zos]/ slob dpon gyis dug mi khur bcu btags te/ de ' i tshad nyis ' gyur gyi phyos [recte *myos]/ byed la btab ste gsol yang gnod pa med/ ghe la zhes pa chang [lacuna] stol ba ' i snod rāza ma shin tu che ba cig gi ming yin/ de ' dra gnyis dngul chus gang ba gsol yang gnod med/ de ltar dug dang/ dngul chu de zhag bdun gyi ring la gsol bas/ sku bkrag mdangs gzi brjid dpag tu med par gyur tel/ rgyal po ' i pho brang yang phyag gcig gis bsgul bas/ thams cad skrag ste yo byad dpag tu med pa phul/ de thams cad dge slong dang phongs pa rnames kyis ci bder khyer/ Gshin rje chos ' byung, folio 58-59.*

⁶⁴ Cabezón 2008: 73.

⁶⁵ For different narrative of debates in Buddhist tradition, see Cabezón 2008; for the magical and philosophical debates in the Vedānta hagiographies, see Granoff 1985.

dialectics, which aims at eradicating the non-Buddhist wrong views,⁶⁶ both in a “tuitional” sense, as removing the wrong notions that carry undesirable karmic consequences for the opponent, and also in an “apologetic” sense, as a defensive strategy against the attacks from those inside and outside the *saṅgha*.⁶⁷ The popularity of the theme of contest in narratives is not surprising taking into account that debate was instrumental to the formation of Buddhist monastic culture and the educational curriculum and was also a means of gaining social status and receiving patronage.⁶⁸ For Buddhist culture, however, debate was imagined primary a tool of conversion.⁶⁹ It is especially against this proselytizing backdrop that debate became one of the most common literary leitmotifs.

Among all the Buddhist institutions, Nālandā Mahāvihāra is always portrayed as the renowned centre of debate that used philosophical and magical contests as the principal machinery for the suppression of the *tīrthikas*. Not only historiographical writings, but also Chinese travelogues, like that of Yijing—the Chinese missionary who studied at Nālandā in 671-695 C.E.—praise Nālandā masters as those who “oppose the heretics as they would drive beasts in the middle of a plain and explain away disputations as boiling water melts frost”.⁷⁰ The *siddha*-narratives very often contain a story of the master’s successful debate with the *tīrthikas* at Nālandā, making it a mandatory ‘rite of passage’ in the *siddha*’s biography. For example, in the biography of the *mahāsiddha* Tilopa by Mar pa Cho kyi bo bro, we learn

⁶⁶ Jenkins (2016) shows how Buddhist narratives of debate conceive wrong views as a form of slander, which is related to sin that threatens the very survival of Buddhist institutions.

⁶⁷ Eltschinger 2013: 238.

⁶⁸ Jenkins 2016: 138.

⁶⁹ Debate became also a part of the legal system, which entailed serious consequences. The loser in debate was subjected to a wide array of punitive measures, ranging from death penalty to exile from the country. Xuanzang reports in his *Sī Yu Kī* that whoever was defeated in debate had to die as a proof of his inferiority (see Beal 1906:99). The losers were also forced to “renounce their religion—which after all had been proven false—and convert to the other side” (Taber 2005:vii). We do not know whether the conversion was a choice that the loser could take himself or whether it was forced upon him by the judicial body together with more serious types of punishments, such as death. We do know, however, that Brahmins, upon losing the debate, were eligible to convert to Buddhism and still remain Brahmins (see Bronkhorst 2011:172-175), but Buddhists who lost the debate and were not already Brahmins could not convert and become Brahmins since one is a Brahmin by birth, not by conversion. In this view, it appears that Buddhists must have been more interested in obtaining the necessary skills in the art of debate than Brahmins, as that was their only opportunity to de-authorize and destabilize Brāhmaṇical hegemony and change the power structure in favour of the Buddhists.

⁷⁰ Takakusu 1896:181.

that Tilopa subdued a non-Buddhist, later named Nag po Dge ba at Śrīnālandā.⁷¹ Debates often took place in the presence of the king who typically becomes a Buddhist convert and bestows on the *saṅgha* wealth and property.⁷² This principle is emulated in the narrative of Abhayakīrti, who at Nālandā in the presence of the king Digvarman defeated all the *tīrthikas*, thus securing royal patronage.⁷³

Lalitavajra's portrayal as a debater follows the conventional narrative framework of the *siddha*-narratives, thereby emulating a customary practice of debate aiming at the conversion of the non-Buddhists prevalent in Buddhist culture at large. In both stories, Lalitavajra engages in a debate in an apologetic sense, against the challenge posed by those inside and outside the *saṅgha*. At the same time, the stories modify the contest's constitutive elements to fit into the 'tantric' narrative. In the first story, Lalitavajra has to perform magical feasts to convince others about the *siddhis* he had acquired through the mastery of the contents of the tantras. By physically summoning the king's retinue from a long distance he validates the efficacy of the specific magical procedure, i.e., summoning people from a long distance, prescribed in the VBT. In the second story, Lalitavajra is challenged by King Naravarman to take part in the contest with the competing tantric sect in Moltāna.⁷⁴ The *tīrthikas* designated by Tāranātha

⁷¹ Torricelli and Naga 1995: 48-49.

⁷² Jenkins 2016: 139.

⁷³ Guenther 1995: 21-22.

⁷⁴ In his *Rgya gar chos 'byung* (pp. 121-122), Tāranātha identifies Moltāna (Maulasthāna) in the west and its city, Ba ga da (Baghdad) as the place ruled by the Persian-Tartar (*stag gzigs*) King Ha la lu (Hajjaj ibn bin Yusuf Sakafi)—the early eighth-century C.E. administrator of the easternmost provinces of the Umayyad Caliphate—wherefrom the *mleccha* army invaded India for the first time. When analyzed against historical facts, we come to realize that Tāranātha's knowledge of ethnic categories and world-history reveals serious gaps. The Umayyads, including the Governor Hajjaj ibn bin Yusuf Sakafi, were not Persian-Turks, but Sunni Arabs. We also know that Baghdad was built only in 762 C.E by the Abbasids, after the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate (Berzin n.d). Moltāna (Maulasthāna) was known for the Sun Temple of Multān dedicated to a Hindu deity, Sūrya. The cult possibly emerged through the religious contacts with the Persian worship of the solar-deity, Mithra (MacLean 1989:18). The existence of the temple is attested since the medieval period, when it was recorded by the Arab geographer Al-Muqaddasi (Habib 2011:42). When Xuanzang visited the temple in AD 641, he noticed idols of Śiva and Buddha installed in the temple. Even after the takeover of Moltāna by the Umayyads, the sun-temple was protected by the local rulers as a great source of wealth acquired through the "gifts donated by pilgrims who came from all over Sind and Hind to the great idol of the sun-temple at Multān" (Wink 1996:187). Nowhere in Tāranātha's works, however, does Moltāna appear in the context of a sun-temple. We know that Tāranātha's guru, Buddhaguptanātha also visited Mūltān "where most of the people were Mongols of the Tajik race of the *mlecchas* (Persians) living in the area of Upper

as experts in *viṣatantra* ('Treatise on Poison') would normally refer to the Śaivas trained in the twelve canonical *Gāruḍa-tantras* dealing with poisons, snakes, and poisonous insects.⁷⁵ However, the practice of swallowing mercury, which Tāranātha describes as the repertoire of the *viṣatantra* specialists, actually points to another sect, the Nāth Siddhas, also known as Nāth Yogis,⁷⁶ who in the 13th-14th became institutionalized as the Nāth *samprādaya* by Goraknāth/Gorakṣanātha.⁷⁷

The Nāth Siddhas were identified with the practice of swallowing mercury as a method of bodily transmutation into the perfected body of the *siddha* and means of gaining various *siddhis*, found in Hindu alchemy (*rasāyana*)⁷⁸ as well as in haṭhayogic scriptures, such as *Amanaska Yoga*.⁷⁹ This practice was ideologically grounded in the portrayal of mercury as Śiva, Lord Rasa (*rasesvara*),⁸⁰ who leads to victory over disease and death.⁸¹ The practice of swallowing mercury could have been known to Tāranātha through his guru, Buddhaguptanātha, who belonged to the Nāth *samprādaya*.⁸² Tāranātha seems to have confused the adherents of the *viṣatantra* with the Nāth Siddhas and erroneously allocated to them the custom of swallowing mercury. Another evidence in support of the argument that Tāranātha was referring to the Nāth Siddhas' practice is his mention of eating poison (*viṣāhār*), which is indeed included in Gorakṣanātha's *Amarauḡhaśāsana*.⁸³ That Tāranātha understood alchemy as a part of the Śaiva repertoire is also attested in the *Bka' babs bdun ldan*⁸⁴, in the story of the *tīrthika* yogin Asitaghana, who after practicing the *sādhana* of Mahe-

Hor, first they ridiculed and harmed him, but after he started to use fierce mantras, they started paying respect to him." See Tāranātha's *Grub chen Buddha gup-ta'i rnam thar*, p. 543, trans. Templeman 2009. The Persian travelogues, such as *Chachnāma* refer to Moltāna as the place ruled by the governor under the Rāi dynasty. None of these rulers, however, bear the name 'Naravaraman'.

⁷⁵ The *Gāruḍa-tantra* canon is comprehensively discussed in a recent monograph by Slouber (2017).

⁷⁶ The Nāth Siddhas were a conglomerate of different sects, such as the Pāsupatas, Kāpālikas, Śāktas, Māheśvaras and Rasa Siddhas, just like the Buddhist *siddhācāryas* (White 1996: 99).

⁷⁷ White 1996: 90.

⁷⁸ The meaning of *rasāyana* as a Śaiva path to immortality is preserved in Mādha-vācārya's 14th century *Sarvadarśanasamgraha* in the chapter of the "Rasesvara Darśana" (White 1996: 102).

⁷⁹ White 1996: 315-316.

⁸⁰ Treloar 1972.

⁸¹ White 1996: 187-188.

⁸² Huber 2008: 205-206.

⁸³ White 1996: 477. Gorakṣanātha's *Amarauḡhaśāsana* is the post-Haṭhapradīpikā text on the classical yoga, which draws upon the *Netratantra* and *Siddhasiddhāntapaddhati*, but omits the verses of the Haṭha Yoga corpus (Mallinson 2011: 773).

⁸⁴ Templeman 1983: 52.

śvara obtained the *siddhi* of quicksilver. The fact that Lalitavajra is ordered by the king to engage in the alchemico-yogic practices of the rival Śaiva sect gives us some indication of the Śaiva-Buddhist dynamics of that period. This may reflect a tantric Buddhist attempt to gain influence as newcomers within the religious marketplace dominated by the Śaivas as the primary recipients of royal patronage. As Alexis Sanderson⁸⁵ has demonstrated, during the “Śaiva Age” tantric Buddhist traditions competing for patronage went to great lengths to adapt and integrate the practices of the Śaiva orders into a Buddhist ‘package’ that would make them more competitive in the royal environment. King Naravarman (aka Naravarmadeva, r. 1094-1133), the son of Udayāditya and a Śaiva king of the Paramāra dynasty (that ruled the west-central regions of India between the 10th and 14th centuries) could have been particularly interested in the *rasāyana*, since he patronized tantric forms of worship as attested by inscriptions found in Ujjayinī (i.e., Ujjain in present-day Madhya Pradesh). Those inscriptions record the restoration of the tantric temple of Mahākāla Bhairava, the wrathful form of Śiva, by Naravarman.⁸⁶ According to Tāranātha, however, when Buddhaguptanātha visited Ujjayinī, he stayed at the temple of Vajrabhairava consecrated by Dīpaṅkarabhadra⁸⁷ himself; but as Tāranātha reports, nowadays “the local folk practices belief of that country and this temple is celebrated with blood sacrifice”.⁸⁸ Thus, in Tāranātha’s eyes, the temple of Mahākāla Bhairava in Ujjayinī was initially dedicated to Vajrabhairava, and was later reappropriated by the Śaivas. Despite the fact that the characterization of Moltāna as the land of the *viśatantra* specialists and its association with the historical name of the Śaiva King Naravarman is subservient to the consolidation of Lalitavajra’s image as the challenger of the Śaiva-*tīrthikas* within the spatial continuum of the narrative, it gives us some hint at what Tāranātha thought to be the socio-historical reality of that period. The theme of active competition between the tantric forms of Śaivism and Buddhism highlighted in Tāranātha’s narrative reflects a thriving religious environment in which different tantric sects receive royal patronage from the rul-

⁸⁵ Sanderson 2009: 44-45.

⁸⁶ The event of restoration was celebrated by a hymn to the deity written in the serpentine graph (*sarpabandha*) allegorically referred to as the “magical sword of the worshippers of Śiva” (Pollock 2006:177).

⁸⁷ Dīpaṅkarabhadra was one of the twelve tantric teachers of Vikramaśīla (to which Śrīdhara and Līlavajra also belonged) during the reign of the King Devapāla just after Buddhajñānapāda (Chattopadhyaya 1990:18). According to Tāranātha’s *Gshin rje chos ’byung*, he was a direct disciple of Lalitavajra and features in the Indian lineage of the Vajrabhairava Zhang transmission lineage (see Wenta 2020).

⁸⁸ Tāranātha’s *Buddha gupta’i rnam thar*, p. 543.

ers leading to what Alexis Sanderson⁸⁹ has described as the Indian states' propagation of "tolerance in matters of religion", characterized by the "balance of influence" in which one religious tradition was not in a position to diminish the other. At least, in this specific case, Tāranātha's account and the academic theories on the emergence of tantric Buddhism would seem to align.

4. *Lalitavajra at Varendra:
Nāgas, Mlecchas and "Compassionate Violence"*

Lalitavajra's activities at Varendra illustrate a shift in Tāranātha's conceptualization of the notion of the enemy. It is no longer a *tīrthika*, with whom Lalitavajra has to compete or whom he has to convert to Buddhism, but an evil-doer antagonistic towards the Buddhists. In the first story, Lalitavajra performs *abhicārahoma* against the *nāga* called Vikṛta, inhabiting a lake in Bhaṅgala (Bengal):⁹⁰

In the east, there was a place called Bagala, which was a part of Varendra. Regarding this, Bhaṅgla and Bagala must be understood as separate.⁹¹ In that region, there was a lake inhabited by a *nāga* called Vikṛta. He was very violent and harmful, and he would help the 'Outsiders' (*phyi pa*, i.e. non-Buddhists) and *kla klo* (Skt. *mlecchas*). He was very hostile towards the Buddhists. [Lalitavajra] surrounded the lake with a mantric cord and performed *homa* rituals. The *nāga*, along with its retinue, were burnt. The lake dried up in seven days. In the wake of that, Lalitavajra erected a stone stele and placed the image of Mañjuśrī at the top of it.⁹²

Lalitavajra's encounter with the *nāga* is representative of a wider trend seen in many Buddhist accounts, which points to Buddhist en-

⁸⁹ Sanderson 2015: 159.

⁹⁰ This story is also recounted in *Rgya gar chos 'byung* where Tāranātha mentions *tīrthikas*, *pārasikas* (*stag gzigs*) and wicked sub-human beings performing *abhicāra* against sentient beings, who are obliterated by Lalitavajra, see Chattopadhyaya 1990: 244.

⁹¹ Tāranātha appears to be confused with regard to the proper spelling of Bhagala. According to his *Rgya gar chos 'byung* (Chattopadhyaya 1990:121), Bhagala and Bhaṅgala are synonyms.

⁹² *de nas shar phyogs ba re ndra'i bye brag/ [lacuna]ba ga la zhes bya ba cig yod/ de yang bhañ ga la dang ba ga la so so yin par go dgos/ yul de na mtsho gcig la klu vi kri ta zhes bya ba/ gdug rtsub che zhing/ phyi pa dang kla klo'i grogs byed/ nang pa la shin tu gnod pa zhig yod do/ mtsho'i mtha' rnam su sngags kyi srad bus bskor nas/ der sbyin sreg mdzaā pas klu 'khor dang bcas pa tshig/ mtsho yang zhag bdun bskams/ de'i shul du rdo ring chen po bcugs/ rdo ring gi rtse mo la 'jam dpal gyi sku gzugs cig byas so/ Gshin rje chos 'byung, p. 60.*

agement with the local *nāga* cults.⁹³ As such, a *nāga* is a metaphorical index pointing to a much larger cluster of meanings, which includes the “insider-outsider” distinction, the Buddhist re-appropriation of the local *nāga* sites and the destruction of the water-bodies through *homa* ritual. The reappropriation of the *nāga* sites for Buddhist purposes is widely attested in the textual corpus. The conversion of a *nāga*, a dangerous spirit difficult to control and possessing the powers of nature such as rainmaking, was a common trope employed in the narratives about the establishment of Buddhist monasteries.⁹⁴ In these stories, the monastery is built at the exact same location as the *nāga*-site and it is purported to pacify and control a troublesome *nāga*.⁹⁵ The subordination of the *nāga* sites under Buddhist institutions has been “viewed as a crucial element of the *saṅgha*’s ‘localization’ in new areas”.⁹⁶ Interpreted from the perspective of “cultic integration”, the *nāga* cult, as a representative of local/folk traditions, was incorporated into a wider Buddhist religious framework.

In Lalitavajra’s narrative, the principle of religious conversion of sacred sites is evident in the way in which the *nāga*-lake as a contested place of evil ‘other’ becomes reappropriated and reconsecrated as a Buddhist site dedicated to Mañjuśrī, of whom Vajrabhairava is a wrathful manifestation. This reappropriation, however, goes hand in hand with the total obliteration of the *nāga*-deity through the tantric ritual of *homa* and not with its integration into the Buddhist fold. Although Lalitavajra follows the footsteps of Padmasambhava in that he controls physical landscape through the act of taming wild aspects of nature⁹⁷ he neither creates springs or streams as a part of irrigation technology⁹⁸, nor is he interested in securing water-harvesting and agrarian production for the *saṅgha*.⁹⁹ On the contrary, Lalitavajra dries up the lake, thereby destroying the access to the water-bodies in that area. In order to explain the reasons for this crucial difference, we should first look at another “*nāga*-narrative” given in Tāranātha’s *Gshin rje chos ’byung*, this time, concerning the famous tantric sorcerer Rwa lotsāwa’s meeting with the *nāga*-demon (*klu bdud*) of Thog bar

⁹³ Normally, *nāgas* are local folk deities associated with the powers of nature, such as rainmaking, which are paramount to the agricultural cycle. Already in the 6th C.E., Chinese travellers to India report that due to their water symbolism, especially in Northern India, *nāga* sculptures were often found near water-tanks or pools and depicted them “with right hand raised as if ready to strike, and left hand holding a cup or a jar”, a symbol of wealth (Bloss 1978: 38).

⁹⁴ DeCaroli 2004: 61.

⁹⁵ DeCaroli 2004: 61.

⁹⁶ Cohen 1998: 377-378, quoted in Shaw 2004: 50.

⁹⁷ Dalton 2004:764

⁹⁸ Wangdu & Diemberger 2000: 14.

⁹⁹ Shaw 2004: 51.

and evil female *nāgas* called “Five Sisters Causing Leprosy”. In Rwa lotsāwa’s story, the *nāga*-demons insist that all the travellers passing through the valley must pay respect and make offerings to them. Anybody who does not comply with this order will become a victim of mischievous tricks resulting in that person’s disappearance. As the years pass, many travellers vanish without a trace. At one time during his journey through that region, Rwa lo stops close to the *nāga* site for refreshments. Since he does not bow down to the *nāgas*, they kill one of his animals. In retaliation, Rwa lo performs *homa*-ritual that causes a thick fog of black darkness to descend from all directions. As a result, all the *nāga*-demons together with their retinue are burned down. Soon after, the water-bodies in that area are dried up. Tāranātha concludes the story saying that this is just one example of a taming narrative aiming at the subjugation of non-humans harmful towards the Buddhist dharma.¹⁰⁰

Both of the “*nāga* narratives” follow the patterns of emplotment that concentrate on three focal points: 1) employment of the magical technology of *abhicārahoma* (*sbyin sreg*); 2) burning down (*tshig*) the *nāgas*; and 3) drying up (*bskams*) the lake. The move away from securing the water-bodies paramount to the agricultural subsistence linked to the water-magic of Padmasambhava, and even their total destruction by Lalitavajra and Rwa lotsāwa, is predicated upon the reconfiguration of the *nāga*-figure along the lines of the tantric enemy *par excellence*. In Tāranātha’s narratives, a *nāga* is no longer linked to the powers of fertility and agricultural growth¹⁰¹, but he is first and foremost the evil-doer hostile towards the Buddhists. As such, he meets scriptural requirements of the type of target against whom the use of wrathful *abhicārahoma* is justifiable. By consolidating the image of the *nāga* as the evil-doer, Tāranātha seems to emulate injunctions prescribed in the VBT and other early Buddhist tantras such as the *Susiddhikara* and the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*, which authorize the use of *abhicāra* against those who harm the three jewels, i.e., who are antagonistic towards Buddhist teachings and institutions.¹⁰² This principle is also mimicked in the next story. This time, however, it is not a *nāga*, but the *mlecchas* (*kla klos*) that conform to this characteristic:

At the time of the kingdom of Varendra, there was a township of the *kla klos*, called Hetsali. [Regardless of the fact] that there were no other *kla klos* there, Lalitavajra saw (in his vision) that they were going to grow powerful and harm the whole kingdom. [To prevent

¹⁰⁰ *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, pp. 104-105.

¹⁰¹ Bloss 1978: 37-38.

¹⁰² On the conceptualization of the tantric ‘enemy’ in early Buddhist tantras, see Wenta, forthcoming.

this from happening,] he performed *homa* rituals close to that town. One day, having used a *yantra*, he created a zombie (*ro langs*) called “Fiery” and brought the sun near to the earth. Then, the whole town of Hetsali burnt down instantly. The *kla klo-gurus* called Kātī and Sayita, all of them died. Starting from that time, for five hundred years, no *kla klos* had ever appeared in the Varendra kingdom, it is said.¹⁰³

This story is interesting because it concerns future events that have not yet taken place. The threat, more imagined than real, are the *kla klos* (Skt. *mlecchas*), which *The Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture*¹⁰⁴ defines as “barbarian, savage, primitive, tribesmen, uncivilized, foreigner, hunter, Moslem”¹⁰⁵ etc. Despite the fact that the *mlecchas*¹⁰⁶ described in the above narrative are not explicitly said to be hostile towards Buddhism, it is plausible to assume that such specific characterization was indeed intended here. In the *Rgya gar chos 'byung*¹⁰⁷, Tāranātha is very clear about the fact that the arrival of the *mlecchas* was coterminous with the start of the decline of dharma that had begun during Nāgārjuna’s life. He is also precise in identifying the first *mleccha* invasion as the arrival of the Bagdad-

¹⁰³ *skabs der yul va ren dra he tsa li zhes pa kla klo'i grong zhig yod/ gzhan kla klo med dol de rnams stobs dang ldan par 'gro ba dang rgyal khams thams cad phung bar byed pa'i ltas gzigs nas/ de dang nye bar sbyin sreg kyang cher mdzad/ nyi ma gcig 'khrul 'khor bskor nas/ ro langs me ldan zhes bya ba/ nyi ma khos pa la btad pas [recte *khos sa la btad pas] de ma thag he tsa li'i kla klo'i grong thams cad tshig ste/ kla klo'i bla ma kā tci dang/ sa yi ta thams cad shil/ de nas brtsams [recte *mtshams] lo lnga brgya'i bar du va re ndra kla klo ye ma byung skad/ Gshin rje chos 'byung, pp. 60-61.*

¹⁰⁴ *The Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture* vol.3, p. 59.

¹⁰⁵ *The Rangjung Yeshe Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist Culture* (vol.3, p. 59) defines the word *kla klo* as “Islam, those who live in the thirty-two border countries such as loknatha, and all those who consider harming others an act of faith or whose savage beliefs see taking life as good.” In Tibetan literature, these are often either Muslims or people from the southern borderlands of Tibet (i.e. ‘tribal’ people).

¹⁰⁶ The identification of the *mlecchas* with the Muslims invading the northwestern part of India was a common trend established in tantric literature since the compilation of the *Kālacakratāntra*, a text written as a response to the Islamic presence in India. The tantra was completed between 1025-1040, at the exact time when Maḥmud of Ghaznī began his invasions of northwestern India (Newman 1998). The *Kālacakra* literature extended the meaning of the *mleccha* to refer not only to such foreigners as Yavanas, Śakas, Kūṣāṇas and Hūnas, which were known as foreign invaders of northern India before 7th century, but also to Muslims. Since the time of the *Kālacakra* onwards, the usage of the word *mleccha* to designate specifically Muslims permeated virtually all genres of Tibetan literature; therefore, it is plausible to argue that Tāranātha too had this ethnic and religious group in mind, especially since the Jo nang tradition holds the *Kālacakra* as its main teaching.

¹⁰⁷ Chattopadhyaya 1990: 121-122.

based Persian-Tartar king, Ha la lu.¹⁰⁸ At the time of Lalitavajra, *mlecchas* are just a minority group, but in the future, they are going to grow powerful and bring destruction to the whole kingdom. The *homa* and *yantra* rituals employed as Lalitavajra's tantric repertoire are envisioned as preventive rather than defensive methods, which have only limited effect on the shape of the future that would last "for five hundred years". Ultimately, they cannot stop the onslaught of the future *mleccha* invasion. Lalitavajra's vision of the upcoming havoc brought by the *mlecchas* positions him at the centre of eschatological concerns where tantric rituals offer a chance to take temporary control of inevitable destruction, a chance to control the uncontrollable. The reference to the "five hundred years" as a fixed period of time during which the tantric rituals will have an effect on Varendra is concomitant with the specific timetable for the duration of *dharma* attested in the earliest Buddhist traditions. In this regard, the *Nikāyas* agree that the Buddhist *dharma* will endure only for five hundred years after the Buddha's demise, and this shorten lifespan is due to the presence of women in the *saṅgha*, whose effect on the Buddhist community is compared to that of "mildew on a field of rice, or rust on a sugarcane plant".¹⁰⁹

Tāranātha's depiction of Varendra as a land inhabited by *nāga* and *mlecchas* plays an important role in the ethical framework of the *sid-dha*-narratives. We have already seen that by having Lalitavajra requesting the *yoginī* in Oḍḍiyāna teachings that could defend the Buddhist *dharma* without violating the Buddha's teachings,¹¹⁰ Tāranātha makes it clear that these new dharma teachings have to fit into an overall ethical framework of Buddhism. After all, the first of the five ethical rules (*pañcaśīla*) of Buddhism is abstinence from harming living being. Tantric Buddhist ethics have resolved this conundrum by postulating a double moral standard for the tantric practitioners exemplified by the principle of "compassionate violence".¹¹¹ Lalitavajra kills the evil ones through the use of the *abhicārahoma* and, thus, does them a service by preventing them from accumulating bad karma. Interpreted from a tantric (as well as Mahāyānist) point of view, he does not act motivated by anger, but merely actualizes the exercise of compassion to liberate those beings from the torments of hell that surely await them for their evil deeds. By liberating evil ones from the retribution of bad karma and by securing a violence-free zone for the future inhabitants of Varendra, Lalitavajra makes sure

¹⁰⁸ Chattopadhyaya 1990: 122. The term *stag gzigs* seems to be a conflation of *hor* (Turks from Central Asia) and *sog* (Mongols).

¹⁰⁹ Nattier 1991: 28-29.

¹¹⁰ See p.17.

¹¹¹ Gray 2007.

that the compassionate *bodhisattva* ideal, one of the distinguishing features of the Mahāyāna, secures its place as the ultimate tantric goal. The consolidation of the image of Varendra as the place of cultural conflict that becomes the stage for Lalitavajra's exercise in "compassionate violence" is also a strategy to ensure that scriptural injunctions, delineating the categories of beings against whom the use of *abhicāra* is justifiable, is brought to life in a story by giving them a narrative context. By making Varendra a place inhabited by violent *nāgas* and *mlecchas* who are hostile towards the Buddhists, Tāranātha does not only construct an accursed site and an appropriate setting for internecine violence, but, more importantly, he makes it possible for Lalitavajra to act for the welfare of sentient beings and Buddhist *saṅgha*, and make the double standard of tantric Buddhist ethics manifest in 'real' life.

5. Tāranātha as a Historian?
Vikramaśīla and the Siddhas of the Raktayamāritantra

The article so far has examined Tāranātha's *Gshin rje chos 'byung* from the perspective of its value as a historiographical narrative that employs shared literary tropes, established motifs, and modes of emplotment of the *siddha*-stories. In this section, the discussion will turn to the question of using Tāranātha as the source of historical knowledge, or what Robinson¹¹² calls a "horizontal dimension" of the *siddha*-narratives. The "horizontal dimension" focuses on establishing the *siddha*'s historicity insofar that it is usually connected to a particular historical timeframe that allows the reader to navigate the events anchored in a specific time-space continuum. As such, the "horizontal dimension" is based on factual information that anchors the great religious master in the historical continuity and, at the same time, links him to the 'history-bound humanity'.¹¹³ In this regard, the question arises how authentic and reliable is Tāranātha's presentation of historical facts¹¹⁴. In order to determine the factual accuracy of Tāranātha's 'history', we turn to the historical facts behind the life-stories of *Śrīdhara (*dpal 'dzin*) and Kamalarakṣita at Vikramaśīla, the *siddhas* associated with the *Raktayamāritantra*.

¹¹² Robinson 1996: 67.

¹¹³ Robinson 1996: 67.

¹¹⁴ In this regard, Templeman (1981) noted that the historical data provided by Tāranātha is full of inconsistencies, and that his comprehension of India is thin and shallow: "it comprises at best, a surface familiarity with some dynastic events and names, and a basic, but often unrealistic geography."

5-1. *Śrīdhara and the Pāla kings

The propagation of the *Raktayamāritantra* is associated with the *siddha* *Śrīdhara. *Śrīdhara was a Brahmin, born in Magadha around the end of the life of King Dharmapāla (r. 775–810/812).¹¹⁵ According to Tāranātha, he was trained in grammar, logic and epistemology, and became ordained in the Oḍantapuri Mahāvihāra. *Śrīdhara was trained in the Tripiṭaka and received transmissions from a certain *Dīpaṅkarabhadra (*mar me mdzad bzang po*). He sought and relied on the teaching of Dpal sde (Śrīvarga?), who was a disciple of the *ācārya* *Jñānapāda (Buddhajñānapāda), from whom he mastered the *Guhyasamāja-* and *Yamāntaka-tantras*.¹¹⁶ According to Tāranātha, *Śrīdhara was invited by the Pāla King Mahīpāla I (r. 977-1027) to become an abbot at the tantric Vikramaśīla Mahāvihāra established by the earlier king of the Pāla dynasty, Dharmapāla. This invitation was due to the impressive obliteration of the *tīrthikas* that *Śrīdhara had accomplished in South India, known in Tibetan sources as 'Bedarwa' [Skt. Vidarbha] or 'The Land of the Palm Trees'. Tāranātha reports as follows:

Also another King Narapaticala (Nārāyaṇapāla, r. 865-917), after hearing amazing accounts [about Śrīdhara] came and bowed down to him. Later, as his fame spread, he was invited by the king of Magadha. He became a tantric master of Vikramaśīla. At that time, the king [of Magadha] was Mahīpāla, it appears. There [i.e. in Vikramaśīla], he wrote many treatises.¹¹⁷

It appears that in the later part of his life—which coincides with holding a position at Vikramaśīla—*Śrīdhara was mainly engaged in scholarly work, as well as the subjugation of minor spirits and display of *ḥṣudrasiddhis*, such as transformation of alcohol into milk and poison into *amṛta*. However, the event that led to his appointment by the king Mahīpāla I is directly connected with his proselytizing activities. Tāranātha says that due to *Śrīdhara's magical feats "there was not a single *tīrthika* left in South India" (*phyogs der re shig mu stegs rmeḡ med par song*; p.71).

Tāranātha's attempt to establish *Śrīdhara's historicity is enacted by means of his association with the Pāla kings that ruled Magadha

¹¹⁵ *de la slob dpon dpal 'dzin ni rgyal po dhar ma pa la'i sku tshe'i 'jug gi cha tsum la/ yul ma ga dha bram ze'i rigs su 'khrungs/ Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 70.

¹¹⁶ *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 70.

¹¹⁷ *rgyal po na ra ba ti tsa la zhes pa cig gis kyang gdam de thos nas zhabs la btud do/ phyi nas de lta bu'i snyan pa'i grags pas khyab pas/ yul dbus kyi rgyal pos spyang drangs te/ bi kram ma sila'i sngags pa slob dpon mdzad/ de skabs kyi rgyal po ni ma he'i pa la yin pa 'dra'ol/ der bstan bcos kyang mang du mdzad/ Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 71.

from the 8th century onwards. Needless to say, there are serious chronological discrepancies with regard to *Śrīdhara's lifespan. If he was indeed born at the end of Dharmapāla's life (d. 812), as Tāranātha reports, then at the time of his appointment by Mahīpāla I (r. 977-1027), he would have been at least 155 years old, which is impossible. As far as the Pālas' support of Buddhism is concerned, Tāranātha's account is confirmed by historical evidence. Nevertheless, the story of Mahīpāla's appreciation of *Śrīdhara's proselytizing magic feasts seems far-fetched. Inscriptional evidence and manuscript colophons demonstrate a strong Pāla patronage of Śaivism, despite the fact that these rulers are identified as *paramasaugataḥ* 'a devotee of the Sugata (i.e. the Buddha)'. For example, the Bhāgalpur copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla (r. 860-917) refers to him as a *paramasaugataḥ* but also records him founding numerous temples to Śiva and granting a village to the Pāsupatācāryas, one of the sects of the Śaiva Atimārga.¹¹⁸ The title *paramasaugataḥ* was also born by Mahīpāla I, who despite his uniquely Buddhist title, built temples to Śiva, his consort and other Śaiva deities.¹¹⁹ On the basis of this evidence, Sanderson¹²⁰ has concluded that Śaiva-Buddhist interactions during the Pālas were characterized by symbiosis, and that through their acts of generous endowments and royal support of Buddhist institutions the Pālas made sure that Buddhism "was in no position to oust or diminish Śaivism".¹²¹ In this view, Tāranātha's version of 'history' in which Mahīpāla I extends his invitation to *Śrīdhara as an award for his successful eradication of the non-Buddhists from South India seems to be merely an example of a Buddhist agenda highlighting the proselytizing activities of the *siddhas* rather than historical fact.

5-2. Kamalarakṣita and the Invasion of Karṇa of the West

Another story that unfolds in Tāranātha's 'history' of the *Raktayamāri* cycle in India is connected to yet another Vikramaśīla *ācārya*, Kamalarakṣita. The biographical summary places him one generation after *Śrīdhara. He was born in Magadha, in the family of a businessman, but was himself a monk. Although he was mainly known for attaining the *siddhi* of the *Kṛṣṇayamāri* cycle, he was also skilled in logic, *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Guhyasamāja*, and *Yamāntaka*. His *siddhi* over the Yamāntaka cycle came after a twelve years long retreat in Andagiri

¹¹⁸ Sanderson 2010:3.

¹¹⁹ Sanderson 2010:3.

¹²⁰ Sanderson 2009:116.

¹²¹ Sanderson 2009:116.

located in the South.¹²² Initially, Kamalarakṣita encountered many hardships and obstacles, but through the gradual meditation on *śūnyatā* and various deities, the difficulties subsided and he had a vision of Yamāntaka.¹²³ According to Tāranātha, Kamalarakṣita served as the tantric master at Vikramaśīla at the time of King Śambupāla, whose name does not feature in the historical list of the Pāla kings.¹²⁴ Perhaps, Tāranātha's Śambupāla [Śambhupāla?] is a misspelling of Śūrapāla II (r. 1071-1072). Tāranātha recounts a competition in debate that took place between Kamalarakṣita and eight heretic Brahmins from which Kamalarakṣita came out victorious "having suppressed their voices", through the power of *vāc-stambhana* or 'speech paralysis'.¹²⁵ He was also successful against sixteen adepts skilled in black magic whom he annihilated (*bsgral ba*)¹²⁶ using mantras and *homa*. The most interesting part of the account is, however, the story in which Kamalarakṣita attended the *gaṇacakrapūjā* in a cremation ground at the outskirts of Magadha at the time when the army of the *mleccha* king allegedly attacked the region looting temples and villages. The story goes as follows:

Once he [Kamalarakṣita] wished to do the *gaṇacakrapūjā* at the cemetery on the borders of the region of Magadha. At that time, in the country of Karṇa of the West, there was a king of the barbarians (*kla klo*). One of his commanders, with his cavalry and five hundred military elephants, came to attack and loot Magadha. When, after robbing a few areas and temples, the commander was returning back, he encountered the master [Kamalarakṣita] and a few of his disciples coming back from the *gaṇacakrapūjā* carrying various ritual paraphernalia. The soldiers beat their hot brass [drums] and shot many weapons [at the monks]. When they were ready to overcome them, the master smashed his pot on the ground, and instantly, a huge dark storm arose. All the soldiers, horses and elephants were knocked down. [To the enemy] it seemed as if there were dark warriors carrying swords coming to get them. The commander instantly died vomiting blood. Other soldiers too were struck with epidemics, and except for one, none of them reached their homeland, it is

¹²² *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 73.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Sircar 1975: 209-210.

¹²⁵ *gzhan yang chos 'khor bi kra ma la rtsod pa byed pa'i mu stegs pa'i pa ndi ta brgyad kyi ngag mnan/ byad ma byed pa bcu drug tsam sngags dang sbyin sreg gis bsgral ba sogs/ Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p. 73.

¹²⁶ For *bsgral ba/sgrol ba* as the rite of "liberative killing" that reenacts the killing of Rudra by Vajrapāṇi and constitutes the archetype for all wrathful tantric rituals in Tibetan Buddhism, see Dalton 2013.

said.¹²⁷

In the *Rgya gar chos 'byung*, the *mleccha* king Karṇa of the West is identified as a Turuṣka king, who invades Magadha along with an army of five hundred Turuṣkas.¹²⁸ Verardi¹²⁹ takes Tāranātha's account at face value and repeats the same story to justify his argument about the tantric Buddhists during the Pāla reign "fighting on two fronts", against the Brahmins and the Muslim invaders. However, the historical basis for this story is not the Turuṣka invasion, but the 11th century raid of Magadha by an Indian ruler, the (Śaiva?) Lakṣmīkarṇa (r. 1041-1073), known also as Karṇa of the Kālacuri dynasty of Tripuri in central India. From the evidence of the Siyān stone slab inscription from the reign of Nayapāla (r. 1038-1053), which states that Lakṣmīkarṇa was defeated,¹³⁰ and other inscriptions found in the Birbhum district, historians concluded that Lakṣmīkarṇa did invade the Pāla-ruled Magadha. The invasion of Magadha by Lakṣmīkarṇa was well known in Tibet due to Atiśa's (a.k.a. Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, 982-1054) alleged role in ensuring the peace-treaty between Lakṣmīkarṇa and Nayapāla.¹³¹ Atiśa's biography, available in several Tibetan versions, reports this story as follows:

During Atiśa's residence at Vajrāsana a dispute had arisen between the two, Nayapāla, king of Magadha and the *tīrthika* king of Kārṇya of the west; the latter made war upon Magadha. Failing to capture the city his troops sacked some of the sacred Buddhist institutions and killed altogether five hundred (men), out of whom four were ordained monks and one *upāsaka*. When a good deal of church furniture was carried away as booty (from the possession of the clergy), Atiśa did not show any kind of concern or anger at it, but remained quiet, meditating on the *bodhicitta*, love for humanity and compassion. Afterwards when victory turned towards Nayapāla and the troops of Kārṇya were being slaughtered by the armies of Magadha, he took the king of Kārṇya and his men under his protection and

¹²⁷ *lan cig ma ga dha'i yul mtha' dur khrod cig tu tshogs 'khor rgya chen po mdzad par bzhed/ de'i dus na nub phyogs ka rna'i yul na kla klo'i rgyal po zhig yod/ de'i dmag dpon gcig 'khor rta pa dang/ glang po pa lnga brgya tsam dang bcas dmag zag la 'ongs/ yul dang lha Khang 'ga' zhig bcom ste log 'ongs pa dang/ slob dpon 'khor bcas tshogs 'khor gyi yo byad du ma dang bcas te byon pa phrad/ de dag gis rol [recte *rag] me brdungs/ mtshon mang 'phangs/ 'joms pa brtsams pa la/ slob dpon kyis bum pa sa la brdabs pas skad cig la rlung nag byung mi rta glang po rnams bsgyel/ mi nag po ral gri thogs pas brdog pa'i snang ba shar/ dmag dpon ni de nyid du khrag skyugs te shi/ gzhan rnams la yang rims nad kyis btab stel/ gcig ma gtogs yul du ma sleb skad/ Gshin rje chos 'byung, p. 73.*

¹²⁸ The same story is repeated by Sanderson 2009: 107, ff. 224.

¹²⁹ Verardi 2011:366.

¹³⁰ Sircar 1972/73:78-80 quoted in Huntington 1984:75.

¹³¹ See also Eimer 1982, 2; Mochizuki 2016:75.

sent them away. The king of Kārṇya revered Atiśa and became devoted to him. He invited him to his country, which was in Western India and did his honour. Atiśa also caused a treaty to be concluded between the two kings.¹³²

It seems quite obvious that Tāranātha must have known the story of Kārṇa's invasion of Magadha and he simply adopted it as the historical framework for Kamalarakṣita's tantric feasts. This adoption exposes the general pattern of making 'history' by Tāranātha, which can be called 'patchwork'. Tāranātha's way of gathering historical data follows the 'patchwork' technique in which he utilizes the names of famous historical figures and events and making ad-hoc associations between them, he arranges a 'history'. In both life-stories of the *siddhas* *Śrīdhara and Kamalarakṣita, Tāranātha interweaves disparate fragments of historical facts and figures and makes them fit into the narrative in order to convey the image of the *siddhas* "causing terror in the hearts of barbarians and 'non-Buddhists'."¹³³

6. Buddhist Tantrics at the Royal Courts: Towards the Moral Teleology of Tibetan Buddhist Historiography

As the previous pages have demonstrated, the engagement of the *siddhas*— the very progenitors of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka cults—in their tenacious journeys throughout the Indian subcontinent set the terms for regular social interactions, not only with the proponents of the *tīrthika* systems, but also with royals. In this context a question arises: in what capacity did the *siddhas* participate in the wider network of politics and power?

According to Sanderson¹³⁴, one of the defining features of the "tantric repertoire" was the institutionalization of the officiating priests, called *rājagurus*, who provided a personal assistance to the ruling monarch with regard to spiritual and worldly matters. While the spiritual matters revolved around providing the king with an initiation (*dīkṣā*) and special consecrations (*abhiṣeka*), the worldly aspect of the *rājagurus* focused on personally assisting kings in the matters of the state. With regard to their worldly function, *rājagurus* subsumed the role of Atharvavedic *rājapurohitas*, who as Brāhmaṇical sorcerers employed a whole array of apotropaic rituals specifically designed to kill the enemies, protect the kingdom, and ensure victory in battles. Historical sources provide evidence of Śaiva *gurus* acting as the royal

¹³² Chattopadhyaya 1996:97.

¹³³ *kla klo dang mu stegs can thams cad shin du skrag par mdza!* *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, p.73.

¹³⁴ Sanderson 2004.

preceptors (*rājagurus*) to the Pāla kings; for instance, the *Bāṅgarh praśasti* of Mūrtiśiva records that Nayapāla had as his royal preceptor the Saiddhāntika Guru Sarvaśiva.¹³⁵ There is also strong evidence in support of Rāmapāla having as his royal preceptor a Saiddhāntika priest, called Dharmasambhu (Dharmaśiva).¹³⁶ The strong position of Śaiva sects at the royal court must have appealed to the Buddhists, who from the early 7th century onwards began to remodel the Mahāyāna along Śākta-Śaiva lines in order to make it more attractive to the royals. The emergence of the early tantric scriptures containing rituals meant to defeat military opponents and secure protection for the kings would make this point valid. For example, two important tantric scriptures written by the *vajrācāryas* of Vikramaśīla during the early Pālas, the *Sarvavajrodaya* of Ānandagarbha and the *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi* of Dīpaṅkarabhadra, contain protective rituals for warding off the dangers for the king.¹³⁷ We also know that Buddhajñānapāda, the *vajrācārya* of Vikramaśīla and the founder of the Jñānapāda school of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* exegesis, regularly performed *homa* rituals to protect the reign of the Pālas at a cost of 902,000 *tolas* of silver.¹³⁸ Similarly, the 51st “Yamāntaka chapter” of the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa* (51.36-40) is explicit in its enemy-conquering purpose, where the enemy is stated to be a king and his army, thus pointing to the sphere of royal politics and statecraft. The VBT gives two *vāśīkaraṇa* recipes meant specifically for the subjugation of the king and his minister under the tantrika’s own will. In this view it seems plausible to assume that tantric magic was being used for military purposes and that magical rituals against the enemies would reflect the need of those in power for such recipes. This argument is substantiated by Tāranātha, who besides being aware of the alliance between Brāhmaṇical sorcerers and kings also gives instances for the use of tantric magic not merely for defensive and protective reasons, but for the sheer greed for power and political conquest.

In narrating the history of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka tantric cycle in India in the period before Lailtavajra’s rediscovery of the VBT in Oḍḍiyāna, Tāranātha refers to the story of the Brahmin *Susiddhā (*bram ze legs grub*) initiated into Yamāntaka. After proving his *siddhis* and converting many *tīrthikas* to Buddhism, *Susiddhā becomes a guru (*bla ma*) of the local king and makes him powerful. The king is able to conquer Saurāṣṭra (Gujarat), which was inhabited by Śaivas. The *tīrthika*-master Somācārya (which is a popular name among Śaivas) becomes jealous and envious seeing that Buddhism is

¹³⁵ Sircar 1972-74: 34-56, quoted in Sanderson 2004:4.

¹³⁶ Sanderson 2004: 4.

¹³⁷ Sanderson 2009:106.

¹³⁸ Tāranātha, *Rgya gar chos ’byung* (see Chattopadhyaya 1970: 274, 278).

spreading in Saurāṣṭra and plans a plot to assassinate *Susiddhā. He offers 100,000 gold coins to anyone who succeeds in killing the Brahmin.¹³⁹ The story is an interesting example in support of Sander-son's argument that the tantric Buddhists follow the Śaiva model in assuming the role of *rāja*gurus to the monarchs.

In another example, Tāranātha gives a tantric spin on the famous legend of the Brahmin-minister to the Maurya King Bindusāra, named Canaka (or rather Cāṇakya) who uses *abhicāra* for territorial conquest of neighboring kingdoms. The story goes as follows:

In the country of Gauḍa of the king Bindusāra, there was a Brahmin-minister, called Canaka Devaputra. Canaka had a vision of Yamāntaka and, using *abhicāra*, he killed around three thousand people. He caused much harm: about ten thousand of them he rendered mad; he created discord among them, expelled them, paralyzed them, and weakened their senses, etc. He annihilated sixteen kings in all directions. On the account of his negative karma, he was reborn in hell. This is foretold in the *Mañjuśrīyamūlakalpa*: "In the future he will become Yamarāja". Even though I have not heard the details of this story, I shall give a sample: In the country of Dili, there was a king of the barbarian race, called Hatshrāla. Below the city of Mathura, there was the territory of King Bindusāra. While these two kings had a battle and were fighting each other, the Brahmin (Canaka) sent a pigeon into the sky on which he had cast a spell (*mantra*). When that pigeon was merely touching the heads of the Dili soldiers, they were lifted up, and the wind of their wings sounded like thunder. All the soldiers looked up to the sky, but the pigeon had gone beyond their sight. The ordinary soldiers remained in their normal state; however, the king and five hundred knights looked up to the sky and fell unconscious or became mad. While they were left paralyzed, the army of the king Bindusāra took over the Dili kingdom.

Moreover, while King Haharāja of the Sirota country and King Bindusāra had a dispute, there was a festival in that country. The Brahmin Canaka disguised himself as a beggar and went to the city to attend the festival. On his way, he met an old lady and recognized she was a *mantradhāriṇī*. He said to her: "Please be my partner in accomplishing ritual activities". She agreed and they went together. When they reached the festival place, they saw the heaps of *kakoti* fruits. People were eating them, so the Brahmin put a spell on them and also the *ḍākinī* cast a gaze to make them magically potent. During the festival, the fruit was brought in a chariot to the king, ministers and leaders. Each one of them ate. They thought about eating all [the food] to the last [that was brought] by the stewards; when the fruit was cut with a small knife, the king and three hun-

¹³⁹ *Gshin rje chos 'byung*, pp. 51-53.

dred members of his retinue had their heads cut off and the heads fell to the ground. The kingdom was taken over by King Bindusāra.¹⁴⁰

The story of Cāṇakya/Kauṭilya,¹⁴¹ although probably not based on historical facts¹⁴², forms the well-known narrative of the Brahmin-minister who played a prominent role in the establishment of the Maurya Empire in ancient India serving as the royal advisor to King Candragupta Maurya (r. 321-287 BCE) and his son Bindusāra (r. 297-273 BCE). The legend emphasizes Cāṇakya's exceptional skills in the matters of *realpolitik* that resulted in founding the largest empire that had ever existed in the Indian Subcontinent. The principles of *realpolitik* that led to this military success were allegedly penned down by Cāṇakya/Kauṭilya himself in the Sanskrit manual on statecraft, economics and military strategy, the *Arthaśāstra*.

The *Arthaśāstra* gives us a hint of at least three different categories of “magic specialists” employed by the king for various purposes. In this regard, the text speaks about “*siddha*-ascetics” (*siddhatāpasi*), “magicians” (*māyayogavid*), and “experts in the *Atharvaveda*” (*atharvavedavid*). The difference between these three distinct groups of

¹⁴⁰ *yul gauda'i rgyal po snying po thig le'i blon po bram ze ca na ka lha bu yin/ des gshin rje gshed kyi zhal mthong/ mngon spyod kyi las kyis mi sum stong tsam ni bsad/ stong phrag bcu tsam smya bar byas/ dbye ba/ bskrad pa/ rengs pa/ dbang po nyams pa sogs kyi gnod pa 'ang ches mang/ phyogs kyi rgyal po'i srid bcu drug tsam stongs par byas/ de'i sdig pas dmyal bar skyes so/ 'di 'jam dpal rtsa rgyud las lung bstan/ ma 'ongs pa na gshin rje chos kyi rgyal por 'gyur bar bshad do/ 'di'i gtam rgyud mtha' dag mi thos kyang/ dper mtshan pa la/ yul dilir kla klo'i rigs kyi rgyal po/ ha tshra la zhes bya ba yod do/ grong khyer bcom rlag man chad rgyal po snying po thig le'i yul yin/ rgyal po de gnyis 'thabs tag yul bshams pa'i skabs su/ bram ze des sngags kyis btap pa'i bya thi ba zhis nam kha' la spyar te btang pas/ di li'i dmag mi rnams kyi mgo la reg pa tsam du phar zhing/ gshog pa'i rlung gi sgra 'brug sgra tsam byung/ dmag mi thams cad kyis nam mkha' la bltas so/ bya de thag ring por mi snang bar song pa na/ dmag mi phal pa rnams rnal mar 'dug kyang/ rgyal po dang dpa' bo'i rigs lnga brgya tsam mig nam kha' la blta tshul gyis dran med du brgyal zhing myos/ de ka la lus pas snying po thig le'i dmag gis di li'i yul mtha' dag blang so/ yang yul si ro ta'i rgyal po ha ha ra ja dang snying po thig le [lacuna] rtsod par gyur ba'i skabs shig yul der dus ston chen po zhis byung/ bram ze ca na ka song mo bar brdzus te blta bar song ngol lam du bud med rgan mi zhis dang phrad pa/ de yang sngags 'chang ma yin par shes nas/ bdag cag las tshogs sgrub pa'i grogs gyis shig byas nas/ de dang sde bas te song song ba las/ mthar dus ston byed sa na/ shing ka rkota'i 'bras bu phung po shin tu che bar 'dug nas/ mi rnams kyis mchod par/ de la bram zes sngags kyis btap ste bzhag mkha' 'gro mas kyang lta stangs kyis mnan nol de nas dga' ston gyi skabs/ shing thog rgyal po dang blon po dang gtso bo thams cad la drangs/ rang rang so sos de nas thos (recte *zos) so/ thams cad kyi tha ma phyag tshang ba des za bar bsams tel chu gris shing thog phyed mar btu ba pas/ rgyal po 'khor bcas sum rgya tsam gyi mgrin pa dus gcig tu chad de mgo sa la lhung ngol de nas yul de yang snying po thig les blang so/ zhes grag go/ Gshin rje chos 'byung, pp. 50-51.*

¹⁴¹ For the identification of Cāṇakya with Kauṭilya, see Burrow 1968.

¹⁴² Bronkhorst 2011:67.

magic specialists is difficult to determine. In one verse (4.3.37) the “experts in the *Atharvaveda*” are specifically said to perform the *abhiçāra* rites and the “*siddha*-ascetics” are twice referred to as those engaged in the pacification rites (*śāntika*, 4.3.13, 4.3.25) and expiatory rites (*prāyaścitta*, 4.3.12). Besides this noticeable difference in the intent of magic activity, the *siddha*-ascetics are the only group of magical specialists used as decoys by official royal spies (*sattrins*). It was a common feature for the *sattrins* to disguise as *siddha*-ascetics for the purpose of espionage. Due to their expertise in the magical lore that was meant to ward off various calamities, “magic specialists” were supposed to reside within the borders of the kingdom and be respected by the king himself.¹⁴³ This seems to be a significant detail, which indicates that they held a fairly high social status and performed magic on the king’s behalf. In the arena of internal affairs, magic specialists seem to have had two fields of function, i.e. averting dangers and prosecution of criminal offences.¹⁴⁴ Insofar as foreign affairs are concerned, they were responsible for “blitzkrieg” attacks designed to create disorientation among the enemy forces by releasing large groups of birds with poisoned tails to the enemy-fort, setting fire to the enemy-fortress with the “human fire” or a fire produced with human bones¹⁴⁵, and implementing various kinds of magical recipes to cause enemy’s blindness, coma, madness, disease, fever and paralysis, to poison water, or to make people and animals invisible for the purpose of effortless infiltration into the enemy’s territory.¹⁴⁶ These magical recipes, which resemble the recipes included in Buddhist and Śaiva tantras,¹⁴⁷ are included in the last book of the *Arthaśāstra*, called ‘Secret’ (*aupaniṣadika*).

In relating a tantric version of Cāṇakya’s legend, Tāranātha makes an interesting reuse of the *Arthaśāstra* and tantric material. Cāṇakya emerges as the tantric minister who empowered by the vision of Yamāntaka uses *abhiçāra* and more precisely *unmatta-karaṇa* (‘rendering mad’), *uccāṭana* (‘expulsion’), *vidveṣaṇa* (‘separation’) and *stambhana* (‘paralysis’) against thousands of people, killing sixteen kings of neighboring kingdoms. He also uses ‘bird-magic’, which seems to be lifted directly from the *Arthaśāstra*, and impersonates a beggar, which echoes the conduct of *Arthaśāstra* *sattrins* who disguise themselves as *siddha*-ascetics for the purpose of espionage and

¹⁴³ *māyāyogavidas tasmād viṣaye siddhatāpasāḥ | vaseyuh pūjitā rājñā daivāpat pratikāriṇaḥ*
// *Arthaśāstra* 4.2.44ab-44cd

¹⁴⁴ *Arthaśāstra* 5.80.

¹⁴⁵ *Arthaśāstra* 14.2.38.

¹⁴⁶ *Arthaśāstra*, book 14.

¹⁴⁷ See Goodall and Isaacson (2016) on the shared ritual syntax attested in early Śaiva and Buddhist tantras.

infiltration into enemy territory. By combining materials from two seemingly unrelated sources, namely the *Arthaśāstra* tradition and tantric *abhicāra* practices, Tāranātha inadvertently points towards continuity with regard to the political role of those specialists in magic whose practical skills, at least from the time of *Arthaśāstra*, were seen as indispensable in political matters. But Tāranātha seems to be more interested in this legend's propaedeutic function insofar that Cāṇakya's use of *abhicāra* is intended to teach a lesson about the dangers of wrathful rites, if these are performed merely with the intention of harming others. Tāranātha seems to condemn the use of *abhicāra* employed for the purposes motivated by the ambition of territorial conquest as unethical and likely to rebound on a person engaging in it. Cāṇakya's legend is used to highlight the issue of misappropriation of the Vajrabhairava practices that took place during the time-period of harm-givers, which Tāranātha defines as follows:

The meaning of 'harm-giver': various mantras were not just [used] for the taming through deeds that brought merit, but they could also spread to those who had strong propensity of receiving the *vidyā* (i.e., mantra). The power could [be misused to] harm people. If the *abhicāra* rites were performed in a wrong place and time, the practitioner himself could also suffer. It is said, many such accidents happened in this period, but at the same time, there were also many others who attained *siddhis*. It is not true they did nothing for the sentient beings; they also did countless good deeds [for others].¹⁴⁸

The harm-givers are those in whose hands the practice of mantra gets out of control. The misuse of mantras can be potentially fatal and the *abhicāra* performed with intention of harming others rebounds on the doer. Among the most common consequences of this misuse is rebirth as hell-beings,¹⁴⁹ which, as Tāranātha reports, happened to Cāṇakya. The moral lesson intended here is that the retributive punishment for the employment of *abhicāra* against those who do not come under the category of the "harmer of the Buddhists and sen-

¹⁴⁸ *gnod pa can gyi don ni/ skal ldan ched du bya ba'i gdul bya rang yang ma yin mod sngags ci rigs pa 'grub nus pa'i las shugs chen po yod pa rnam la 'ang dar bas nus pa'i sgo nas sems can la gnod pa dang/ yul dang dus ma yin par mngon spyod byas pas/ sgrub po rang la'ang sdig pa 'byung ba'i don yin/ dus kyi stobs kyis de 'dra 'ang mang du byung ces pa tsam yin gyi/ skabs der yang skal ldan dngos grub thob pa 'ang mang du byung zhing/ sems can gyi don rgya cher ma byas pa yin ma yin no/ de dag kyang mtha' yas pa zhig yod mod/ Gshin rje chos 'byung, p. 48.*

¹⁴⁹ In this regard, *Jñānākara, the 11th century (probably Kashmiri) tāntrika warns about unauthorized performance of *abhicāra* as follows: "Likewise, those who perform unauthorized destructive magic rites (*mngon spyod*) motivated by past anger, and those who delight in killing etc. will be reborn as hell-beings, or as bloodthirsty demon, or as a *yakṣa*, etc." See Wenta 2018.

tient beings" is severe and entails dire consequences. Thus, the ethical core of the dharma against the enemy as envisioned by Tāranātha cannot bow down to the political elites who want to misuse its power for worldly purposes rather than for self-defense.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to present Tāranātha's account on the emergence of the Vajrabhairava-Yamāntaka tantras in India by focusing on the literary tropes, modes of emplotment, and constellation of meanings, which have come to characterize the *siddha* narratives in the broader context of Tibetan Buddhist emic historiography. From the legitimizing strategies of the tradition's origins as "root-text" and "rediscovery narrative", through the attestation of religious authority in the context of interreligious debates with the *tīrthikas*, to the conceptualization of the enemy as a *tīrthika*, *māra*, *mleccha*, and *nāga*, we have seen the manner in which Tāranātha draws from the "toolbox of literary forms" found in Tibetan Buddhist literature at large. At the same time, Tāranātha's *chos 'byung* sanctions a particular interpretation of historical narrative where the recounted stories of the *siddhas* identify paradigmatic models of tantric conduct in the pursuit of "compassionate violence" for the benefit of sentient beings and Buddhist *saṅgha*, unjustly tormented by the evil-doers and, perhaps, also for the benefit of the evil-doers themselves, who would otherwise keep accumulating bad karma. In so doing, Tāranātha follows the scriptural definition of the enemy against whom the use of wrathful tantras is justifiable, attested in earliest Buddhist tantras. Similarly, having normative value of his *chos 'byung* in mind, Tāranātha acknowledges the use of tantric magic as a means of political aggression and perhaps inadvertently points out towards the continuity of the practice to employ magical specialists at the royal courts; by condemning such practices as immoral and dangerous, he brings to the forefront the aspect of moral teleology of Tibetan Buddhist historiography.

Despite the fact that Tāranātha's 'patchwork history' should not be taken at face value and adhered to uncritically, his account of the socio-historical reality in medieval India does sometimes align with contemporary academic theories on the emergence of esoteric Buddhism in India. This raises the question as to what extent the etic theories produced by the historians of religion do actually rely on the emic accounts put forward by traditional historiographers. At least in this particular case study, the emic and etic perspectives in writing 'history' would seem to coalesce at times.

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L'Allemagne au-dessus de l'Himalaya : des SS sur le toit du monde

Charlie Caron-Belloni

(EPHE – CRCAO),

Cn 1938, cinq scientifiques allemands s'embarquèrent vers une quête extraordinaire. Ils risquèrent leur vie en franchissant les montagnes les plus hautes du monde afin d'atteindre l'un des royaumes les plus interdit d'accès : celui du Tibet. Officiellement, l'expédition scientifique avait pour mission de faire des recherches sur la zoologie et l'anthropologie du pays. Mais jour après jour, les données collectées pour les SS¹ servirent un objectif bien plus sombre. Leur mission secrète était de découvrir les origines de la race aryenne, et les vestiges de cette civilisation qui aurait disparue sur le *Toit du monde*. Cette tentative devait permettre aux nazis de réécrire l'Histoire, de se forger un nouveau passé, leur permettant de légitimer le nouveau monde qu'ils prétendaient mettre en place à l'époque : celui d'un Reich pur prévu pour durer 1 000 ans.

Les SS ont été créés pour protéger Hitler mais avec le temps, ils devinrent les garants de la nouvelle Histoire voulu par l'Allemagne nazie. Ils se la réapproprièrent en utilisant les vestiges et les restes d'une culture nordique ancienne afin de rebâtir un passé germanique idéalisé. Pour Christopher Hale dans *Himmler's crusade, The true story of the 1938 Nazi expedition into Tibet* :

L'expédition allemande au Tibet fut un évènement très important dans l'histoire du III^e Reich. Beaucoup de gens voyaient la SS comme une organisation purement politique, chargée d'épurer l'Europe des personnes considérées comme indésirables par les nazis (juifs, communistes, homosexuels, tziganes...). Néanmoins, envoyer une expédition scientifique à l'autre bout du monde, dans un royaume aussi inaccessible que celui du Tibet, assurait à la

¹ Abréviation de *Schutzstaffel*, escadron de protection, organisation paramilitaire et policière nazie fondée en 1925 pour assurer la protection personnelle d'Adolf Hitler dans un premier temps, et qui devint rapidement l'un des instruments les plus efficaces et les plus meurtriers de la terreur nazie. Voir Steinert Marlis, *L'ordre noir de la SS*, L'Histoire, janvier 1989, n°118.

*SS un immense prestige auprès de ses partisans en Allemagne*².

L'organisation SS, dirigée par le *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler (1900-1945) était traversée par de profondes rivalités internes et se retrouva en conflit permanent avec d'autres organisations du régime, comme celle de la *Wehrmacht* (armée)³. A terme, la branche armée de la SS, la *Waffen-SS*, bien connue pour sa ténacité au combat et son extrême cruauté (de nombreux massacres furent commis par ses combattants, dont le plus tristement célèbre en France est celui d'Oradour-sur-Glane), devait remplacer l'armée régulière allemande (la *Wehrmacht*) renforçant d'avantage le pouvoir de son chef, Himmler, au sein du régime nazi.

Le 30 janvier 1933, Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) fut nommé chancelier du Reich par le maréchal Hindenburg (1847–1934), président de la République de Weimar. Un nouveau drapeau allemand flottait désormais dans le ciel allemand, frappé de la *svāstika*, la croix gammée. Cette croix était le reflet des croyances nazies dans les traditions pangermaniques. Pour les nazis, les allemands étaient les dignes représentants d'une race suprême disparue : les Aryens. Cela leur donnait le droit de dicter aux peuples, considérés comme moins purs, les règles à suivre ainsi que celui de se réapproprier les terres sur lesquelles leurs prestigieux ancêtres avaient vécu : le *Lebensraum*, l'espace vital⁴. Le chef de la SS, Himmler, était un passionné de cette mythologie aryenne. Ses SS étaient les défenseurs d'une nouvelle aristocratie raciale : leurs quêtes d'éléments scientifiques pouvant conforter leurs thèses, dans l'instauration d'un nouvel ordre mondial, devinrent donc nécessaires.

Le 1^{er} juillet 1935, Himmler fit installer dans une villa du quartier Dahlem de Berlin le bureau de l'*Ahnenerbe Forschungs und Lehrgemeinschaft*, c'est-à-dire la « Société pour la recherche et l'enseignement sur l'héritage ancestral ». Cet institut de recherches pluridisciplinaires avait pour objet d'études « la sphère, l'esprit, les hauts faits et le patrimoine de la race indo-européenne nordique », avec comme outils la recherche archéologique, l'anthropologie raciale et l'histoire culturelle de la race aryenne. Son but était de prouver la validité des théories nazies sur la supériorité raciale des Aryens sur les races supposées inférieures, ainsi que de germaniser les peuples suffisamment purs qui occupaient le *Lebensraum* nazi. Même pour les plus hautes autorités nazies, l'existence de ce bureau était tenue secrète. Pour renforcer les

² Hale Christopher, *Himmler's Crusade, The true story of the 1938 Nazi expedition into Tibet*, Introduction, p.8.

³ Voir Bartov Omer, *L'Armée d'Hitler : la Wehrmacht, les nazis et la guerre*, Paris, Hachette Littératures, coll. « Pluriel. Histoire. », 1999.

⁴ Voir Browning R. Christopher, *Les Origines de la Solution finale*, Les Belles lettres, coll « Histoire », Paris, 2007.

liens entre l'histoire réécrite voulue par les nazis et le passé germanique européen, Himmler créa de nouveaux sites comme celui de *Sachsenhain*, un mémorial nazi du massacre de Verden an der Aller au cours duquel le roi franc Charlemagne ordonna en 782 l'exécution de 4 500 Saxons afin d'obtenir la suzeraineté sur la Saxe. Par ailleurs, le site devint un haut lieu de rencontre pour les membres de la SS. Charlemagne *le Boucher* fut la source de nombreuses controverses en Allemagne dans les années 1930⁵ : tantôt dénigré, tantôt réhabilité par le *Führer* lui-même, les nazis considérèrent ces exécutions saxonnes comme une solution finale mise en place par les chrétiens pour réduire au silence des païens. Himmler en voulut profondément à la chrétienté et désirait ramener les allemands sur le chemin des vraies traditions. Pour lui, « les Allemands pouvaient vivre heureux dans le présent et envisager l'avenir tant que le Reich leur permettait de se rappeler de leur passé et de leurs glorieux ancêtres » : tel était le rôle que devait remplir l'*Ahnenerbe*.

Hitler s'était fixé pour objectifs de permettre à toute une génération de prendre un nouveau départ, il voulait un retour aux sources du sang, que le peuple allemand retrouve sa voie et déterre de son sol la force qui s'y trouvait enterrée depuis 2 000 ans⁶.

La science du passé apporta par ailleurs le symbole d'un âge nouveau. L'ancien signe allemand de la victoire, venu de l'alphabet runique, daté du II^e siècle de notre ère, lettre appelée *Sōwilō*, caractérisée par deux éclairs côte-à-côte, a été réutilisée pour devenir le symbole de la SS par excellence. En plus d'être un système d'écriture, les premières traces épigraphiques de l'âge de fer romain prouvèrent que les runes furent utilisées à des fins magiques⁷. Aussi appelée *Sigel* ou *Sól*, cette rune était la personnification du Soleil, *Sól*, dans la mythologie nordique. Cette mystique *völkisch*⁸ a été reprise par le régime nazi sous le nom de *Sieg rune* (rune de la victoire) : doublée, cette dernière était l'insigne de la SS. Seule, elle était l'emblème de la SA (*Sturmabteilung*

⁵ Voir Brose Alain, *Charlemagne dans l'idéologie national-socialiste*, Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire, Persée, 2015, pp. 811-842.

⁶ Stengers Jean, *Hitler et la pensée raciale*, revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire, 1997, n°75, p. 435.

⁷ Voir Perrin Jackson Erik, *Les runes germaniques sacrées et magiques*, Éditions EJP, 2015.

⁸ Courant intellectuel, antisémite et raciste allemand de la fin du XIX^e siècle qui avait pour projet de donner à l'ensemble des Allemands une spiritualité païenne. Le dictionnaire allemand Duden le traduit par « national » dans un sens désuet. La revue Heimdall parle d'un « germanisme pur et pour la réunion de tous les Germains ». Voir Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *Les racines occultes du nazisme : les sectes secrètes aryennes et leur influence sur l'idéologie nazie*, Rosières-en-Haye, Camion blanc, 2010.

— section d'assaut — organisation paramilitaire du parti nazi) et des jeunesses hitlériennes. Également utilisée sur le blason des divisions SS *Leibstandarte* et *Hitlerjugend*, elle a été reprise dans la mosaïque de la tour nord du château de Wewelsburg voulue par Himmler et représentant le soleil noir, l'un des symboles mystiques les plus connus du régime nazi et réutilisé régulièrement par les groupuscules néo-nazis actuels. Himmler, *Chef der Deutschen Polizei* (Chef de toutes les polices allemandes), l'organisateur de la Solution finale, était devenu mystique. La SS devint un nouvel ordre noble de guerriers dont les membres étaient liés par serment à Hitler, à l'exemple des chevaliers teutoniques du Moyen-Âge, liés à leur chef par l'impôt du sang. Le site de Wewelsburg, devenu quartier général de la SS à partir de 1934, devint le nouveau *Camelot* de l'Allemagne nazie. Himmler se voyait lui-même comme le prêtre suprême d'un ordre secret, impliqué dans une nouvelle version du passé. De Stonehenge au Moyen-Âge, les preuves restaient à trouver pour offrir au peuple allemand et au monde une histoire mondiale réécrite totalement. Sa position en tant que *Reichsführer-SS* lui permit d'avoir les moyens nécessaires pour entreprendre ses projets. Les savants de l'*Ahnenerbe* étaient donc là pour lui fournir les preuves historique et scientifique (existence d'une race humaine pure) du mythe auquel Himmler croyait. Cependant, la destruction du bâtiment à la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale entraîna avec elle la disparition de l'ensemble de ses archives. Dans *L'Ahnenerbe des SS 1935-1945. Une contribution à la politique culturelle du Troisième Reich*, l'historien allemand Michael Kater nous décrit un Himmler déterminé à assouvir sa soif scientifique personnelle en créant le Dieu des SS et donc de l'Allemagne nazie. Dans un premier temps, il chargea les scientifiques de l'*Ahnenerbe* de retrouver les traces archéologiques du passé glorieux des Allemands. Ces fouilles ont été faites en Allemagne, mais également dans les différents pays européens occupés, afin de retrouver les traces préhistoriques et de prouver la supériorité de la race aryenne, et donc des Allemands, à tous les niveaux⁹. Hitler ne montra jamais plus que du mépris pour les idées d'Himmler :

Comme si cela ne suffisait pas que les Romains construisaient de grands bâtiments quand nos ancêtres vivaient encore dans des huttes de boue, maintenant Himmler commence à les déterrer. En réalité, nous avons toutes les raisons de

⁹ Bettina Arnold, Hassman Henning, *Archaeology in Nazi Germany: The Legacy of the Faustian Bargain*, in Philip L. Kohl, Clare Fawcett (ed.), *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 70-81.

garder le silence sur ce chapitre de notre passé¹⁰.

C'est donc seuls, du milieu des années 1930 à la fin de la guerre, que les scientifiques d'Himmler parcoururent le monde à la recherche des derniers vestiges de la race aryenne. Ce dernier basa ses croyances sur les écrits de l'autrichien Guido von List (1848–1919), dont les ouvrages romanesques sur fond de néo-paganisme germanique furent à l'origine de l'ésotérisme nazi si cher à Himmler. Le racisme étant à la base de sa réflexion, ses travaux constituèrent donc l'un des socles de la pensée raciale du régime¹¹. Von List prétendait également que dans des temps très anciens, la gravité terrestre avait attiré de nombreuses planètes qui avaient fini par entrer en collision avec la Terre, entraînant des catastrophes majeures et amenant à la disparition de la cité mythique de l'Atlantide, cité légendaire qui aurait abrité les Atlantes, ancêtres des Aryens. Les survivants de la catastrophe se seraient alors éparpillés sur l'ensemble du globe : telle était la théorie qu'Himmler voulait que l'*Ahnenerbe* défende.

Ce fut en partant de ce postulat que les scientifiques de l'institution pensaient que le Tibet était le berceau de la race aryenne. En 1938, l'équipe de l'*Ahnenerbe*, sous la direction du zoologiste Ernst Schäfer (1910-1992), partit donc en expédition dans les montagnes tibétaines, où, en plus d'accomplir des tâches scientifiques, rechercha les traces d'hypothétiques descendants aryens voire atlantes. Les scientifiques de l'*Ahnenerbe* pensaient que ces derniers existaient encore et se cachaient au fond des grottes du Tibet. Il était clair que malgré l'aide des moines bouddhistes, ils ne retrouvèrent guère l'entrée de ces grottes. Qu'à cela ne tienne, une nouvelle théorie fut élaborée selon laquelle il existait une porte dérobée vers les grottes tibétaines, et qu'elle se trouvait dans le Caucase¹². C'est la raison pour laquelle en 1942, en pleine invasion de l'URSS, Himmler envoya la division alpine d'élite de la Wehrmacht au sommet du mont Elbrous dans le nord du Caucase, provoquant la colère du Führer :

Ces crétins d'alpinistes auraient dû passer en cour martiale. Au point culminant de la guerre, ils suivent des ambitions idiotes, s'occupent de pics idiots,

¹⁰ Voir : Chapoutot Johann, *Le national-socialisme et l'Antiquité*, PUF, 2008; Olivier Laurent, *Nos ancêtres les Germains, Les archéologues au service du nazisme*, Paris, Tallandier, 2012 et Pringle Heather, *Opération Ahnenerbe, Comment Himmler mit la pseudo-science au service de la Solution Finale*, Presses de la Cité, Paris, 2007.

¹¹ Voir Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *Les racines occultes du nazisme : les sectes secrètes aryennes et leur influence sur l'idéologie nazie*, Rosières-en-Haye, Camion blanc, Coll. « Camion noir », 2010.

¹² Sinelchtchikova Ekaterina, *Quand les occultistes nazis cherchaient secrètement des vestiges atlantes en URSS*, 6 mars 2020, Russia Beyond.

*alors que je leur avais ordonné de concentrer toutes les forces sur la percée vers Soukhoumi*¹³.

La culture germanique, antérieure à Stonehenge et à tous les autres grands bâtiments du passé, aurait ainsi inspiré l'architecture des plus grandes civilisations antiques grecque et romaine. Les recherches de l'*Ahnenerbe* visèrent à prouver cette théorie partout dans le monde. Plusieurs expéditions ambitieuses furent mises sur pied afin de trouver d'autres preuves de la disparition des aryens en Islande, en Amérique du Sud et en Asie, notamment sur les contreforts de l'Himalaya, au Tibet.

I. Expédition Allemande Ernst Schäffer au Tibet, sous le patronage du Reichsführer-SS Himmler et en rapport avec l'Ahnenerbe

I.A. Les préparatifs de l'expédition

D'abord persuadé de retrouver les vestiges de l'Atlantide en Amérique du Sud, Himmler envoya une expédition scientifique SS dans les Andes. Dirigée par l'archéologue SS Edmund Kiss (1886–1960), ils retrouvèrent des ruines de la civilisation Tiwanaku (civilisation pré-incas datant du V^e siècle). Pour Kiss, seul un peuple largement supérieur aux indigènes locaux pouvait être à l'origine de ces ruines et avança l'idée que des Thuléens du Nord les auraient construites il y a 17 000 ans¹⁴. Ses affirmations rejetaient les découvertes scientifiques de l'époque mais cela ne gêna en rien Kiss qui n'était pas un scientifique mais un romancier populaire. En Allemagne, ses théories étaient les bienvenues et prouvaient que les ancêtres de la race aryenne ne s'étaient pas réfugiés uniquement sur les hauts plateaux des Andes, mais également dans l'Himalaya. Le *Toit du monde* aurait servi d'abri lors de la dernière catastrophe cosmique... Cette terre lointaine et interdite aux voyageurs nourrissait les nombreuses illusions nazies sur leurs origines. C'est alors qu'une petite équipe de scientifiques fut composée pour partir à la recherche du mystère final tant espéré.

Avant la Grande Guerre en Allemagne, le voyageur suédois Sven Hedin (1865-1952) avait déjà réussi à ramener en Europe le récit de son extraordinaire périple jusqu'au Tibet. Son exploit fut accueilli avec beaucoup d'intérêt et d'admiration par la population allemande¹⁵.

¹³ Propos recueilli par Albert Speer (1905–1981), ministre de l'armement du Reich et proche d'Hitler, *Au cœur du Troisième Reich*, Paris, Fayard, Pluriel, 2011.

¹⁴ Kater Hans Michael, *L'Ahnenerbe des SS 1935-1945. Une contribution à la politique culturelle du Troisième Reich*, Étude sur l'histoire contemporaine, De Gruyter, n°6, 1974.

¹⁵ Voir son livre, *Le Tibet dévoilé*, Hachette, 1910.

Dans les Annales de Géographie de 1907, Maurice Zimmermann relate :

Mr SVEN HEDIN vient ajouter une nouvelle série de travaux à sa féconde carrière de découvreur. Pour se rendre au Tibet, but de son voyage, il a traversé la Perse dont il a exploré quelques uns des déserts les plus mal connus, rectifié la carte, effacé certaines chaînes de montagnes pendant qu'il en précisait d'autres, et opéré, à ce qu'il semble, des levés très importants. (...) Du Séistan, Mr SVEN HEDIN se rendit par un itinéraire au sujet duquel nous n'avons pas de renseignements, à Leh, capitale du Ladak, d'où il aborda sa nouvelle exploration du Tibet. (...) le 21 janvier, et espérait être à Chigatsé à la fin du mois. Attaquant le Tibet dans son angle Nord-Ouest par le désert d'Ak-saï-tchin, il déclare avoir effectué un magnifique voyage en diagonale à travers les parties les plus mystérieuses du Tibet et exploré 1 350 km de pays inconnu. (...) Le 11 janvier, les Tibétains firent mine de lui barrer la route puis se ravisèrent et le laissèrent continuer. C'est, termine Mr SVEN HEDIN, le plus admirable voyage que j'aie fait en Asie¹⁶.

En 1901, Hedin tenta de se rendre à Lhasa, ville alors interdite. Il laissa Abdal, franchit l'Arka-tag aux tourments glaciales et enneigés, passa par des pentes raides, des défilés, le long de lacs et torrents. Sa caravane, composée de chameaux, s'enlisa dans la boue produite par la pluie sur la neige. Son expédition passa ensuite par les pâturages proches des monts Dang-la où il campait. Il arriva près de Lhasa déguisé en Mongol, accompagné d'un lama mongol et d'un cosaque bouriate. Repéré par des chasseurs tibétains, ils furent signalés comme se dirigeant vers le Sud. Neuf jours plus tard, en atteignant le Tengri-Nor, ils furent arrêtés à la tombée de la nuit par des guerriers tibétains. Étroitement surveillé, le *bombo*, gouverneur de Naktchoun, vint les rencontrer. Cependant, sur ordre du Dalai-lama, l'explorateur et ses compagnons d'infortune, qui avaient été traités avec égards, furent reconduits sous escorte à leur caravane le 21 août¹⁷.

Durant ce périple, il remplit 1149 feuilles, notant la flore, la faune, la géologie, la géographie, la météorologie et l'étude des lacs de ces régions. Hedin fut le premier à réaliser la carte de grandes parties du pays de montagne tibétain et à superviser la cartographie et la recherche météorologique au Turkestan oriental et en Mongolie.

Il fut l'un des premiers explorateurs scientifiques européens à employer, dans ses expéditions, des savants et des assistants de recherche indigènes, les traitant à égalité avec ses collègues européens selon leur

¹⁶ Zimmermann Maurice, *Nouvelle exploration de Mr Sven Hedin en Perse et au Tibet*, Annales de Géographie, t. 16, n°86, 1907. pp. 188-189.

¹⁷ Regelsperger Gustave et Moreau, *Voyage du Dr Sven Hedin dans l'Asie centrale (1899-1902)*, Revue universelle : recueil documentaire universel et illustré, t.3, 1903, p. 179.

responsabilité et leur expérience. Toujours plein de curiosité, il continua ses expéditions asiatiques jusque durant ses années de retraite, bravant les guerres et les conflits, nombreux sur les routes de Chine et d'Asie centrale. Cependant, comme Nikolai Przhevalsky avant lui, Hedin n'a jamais atteint son objectif ultime : la ville interdite de Lhassa.

A la veille de sa mort, Sven Hedin put rencontrer Heinrich Harrer (1912–2006), alpiniste et explorateur autrichien, en 1952. Harrer était le personnage principal de l'épopée *Sept ans au Tibet*, directement inspirée de son récit de voyage lorsque, après avoir été interné aux Indes britanniques à la déclaration de guerre entre l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne en 1940, il réussit à s'enfuir au Tibet où il y vécut sept ans et devint un proche du Dalai-lama. Pour lui exprimer sa gratitude après cette rencontre, Sven lui écrivit : « Vous avez atteint la ville de mes rêves... », alors que lui-même, en 1907, avait été contraint de mettre un terme à son expédition et ne pu jamais pénétrer la capitale interdite du Tibet¹⁸. Dans *Himmler's Crusade* de Christopher Hale¹⁹, on apprend que Sven Hedin se prit à détester l'empire britannique en même temps que grandit la vénération qu'il éprouvait pour l'Allemagne, surtout après 1933. Il devint le défenseur tenace et impénitent du Troisième Reich et usa de son aura pour obtenir la libération de déportés ou encore la grâce de condamnés à mort norvégiens.

Cependant, ce fut bien l'expédition nazie au Tibet conduite par Ernst Schäfer en 1938 qui permit à des Allemands de pénétrer pour la toute première fois de l'Histoire à Lhassa. Dans *Tibet in 1938-1939. Photographs from the Ernst Schäfer Expedition to Tibet* d'Isrun Engelhardt, les en-têtes du papier à lettre de Schäfer pour ses demandes de subventions en Allemagne portaient la mention « Expédition Schaefer 1938/1939 »²⁰. Cet en-tête a par la suite été changé sur demande de l'*Ahnenerbe* en « Expédition allemande Ernst Schäfer au Tibet, sous le patronage du Reichsführer-SS Himmler et en rapport avec l'*Ahnenerbe* »²¹. Schäfer, avant d'arriver en Inde, abandonna la deuxième partie du titre, afin d'éviter tout quiproquo avec les autorités britanniques. Bien qu'il aurait préféré que son expédition soit placée sous le patronage du Département culturel des affaires étrangères du Reich ou sous

¹⁸ Harrer Heinrich, *Retour au Tibet*, Arthaud, 1985, p. 68.

¹⁹ Hale Christopher, *ibid*, p 422.

²⁰ Voir Engelhard Isrun (dir.), Bianca Herleman, Clare Harris et Claudius Müller, *Tibet in 1938-1939. Photographs from the Ernst Schäfer Expedition to Tibet*, Chicago, Serindia, 2007.

²¹ Rose Detlev, revue *Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, n°3, 2006.

celui de la Communauté scientifique allemande (DFG)²², ce n'est pas pour autant que le scientifique s'éloigna d'Himmler, qui restait le parrain de l'expédition et apportait donc un soutien de taille pour obtenir des financements d'État²³. La dénomination « SS-Tibet-Expedition » fut celle qui devint la plus courante à la fin du second conflit mondial et reprise généralement par la communauté des historiens d'après-guerre souhaitant travailler sur la période²⁴.

Ernst Schäfer, devenu nazi en 1933²⁵ et SS en 1934²⁶, était déjà connu dans l'Allemagne des années 1930 pour ses nombreuses expéditions en Chine et au Tibet dès 1931, sous l'égide de l'Académie d'histoire naturelle de Philadelphie et conduite par le naturaliste américain Brooke Dolan II²⁷. En 1934, Schäfer participa à la seconde expédition scientifique de Brooke en Chine et au Tibet oriental : il y rencontra le 9^e panchen-lama²⁸. De retour aux États-Unis en 1936, Schäfer reçut un télégramme du gouvernement allemand l'invitant à revenir en Allemagne. En reconnaissance de son succès, Himmler le nomma *Unters-turmführer* (sous-lieutenant) SS. Dès 1937, Schäfer s'attela à publier ses expériences tibétaines dans *Tibet inconnu*, appelant le gouvernement allemand à envoyer une expédition scientifique au Tibet. Souhaitant profiter de sa réputation pour la propagande nazie et fasciné par le mysticisme asiatique, Himmler le prévint qu'il parrainerait sa prochaine expédition dans le cadre de l'*Ahnenerbe*. Après un court passage au British Museum en 1936 pour étudier les oiseaux tibétains et himalayens, Himmler le chargea de constituer une équipe de savants en vue de sa prochaine expédition. En 1937, Schäfer publia *Dach der Erde* (*Le Toit du monde*) et aida l'explorateur britannique Frank Wallace à organiser la partie asiatique du Salon international des trophées à Berlin. Il eut l'honneur de faire visiter l'exposition à Hermann Goering (1893-1946), numéro 2 du régime nazi et à Himmler en novembre 1937. La

²² Mierau Peter, *Nationalsozialistische Expeditionspolitik. Deutsche Asien-Expeditionen 1933-1945*, Munich, 2006 (thèse de doctorat de l'Université de Munich, présentée en 2003), p. 327, note n°2.

²³ Hale Christopher, *ibid*, p. 186.

²⁴ Rössler Mechtild, « *Probably the best known expedition was the SS Tibet expedition* », *Geography and Area Planning under National Socialism*, in Margit Szöllösi-Janze (ed.), *Science in the Third Reich*, Oxford and New York: Berg Publishers, 2001, pp. 59-79.

²⁵ Levenda Peter, *Unholy alliance : a history of nazi involvement with the occult*, New York, Continuum, 2^e édition, 2002, p. 193.

²⁶ Engelhardt Irun, *The Ernst-Schaefer-Tibet-Expedition (1938-1939): new light on the political history of Tibet in the first half of the 20th century*, in McKay Alex (ed.), *Tibet and Her Neighbours : A History*, Edition Hansjörg Mayer, London, 2003.

²⁷ Engelhardt Irun, *ibid*.

²⁸ Deuxième plus haut chef spirituel du bouddhisme tibétain derrière le Dalai-Lama.

même année, il obtint le grade d'*Obersturmführer* (lieutenant)²⁹.

Par ailleurs, le chef de la SS souhaitait que Schäfer développe ses recherches autour de la théorie de la glace éternelle de l'idéologue autrichien Hans Hörbiger (1860–1931). Selon les travaux d'Hörbiger au sein de l'*Ahnenerbe*, l'ensemble de la voie lactée était composée de blocs de glace. Ce serait ces blocs de glace qui provoqueraient la pluie et la grêle en entrant dans l'atmosphère terrestre. Pour lui, la Lune était également un immense bloc de glace. Originellement, trois lunes glacées entouraient la Terre. Ces lunes seraient entrées en collision avec notre planète provoquant un cataclysme majeur, ayant poussé notamment les Atlantes à se réfugier dans la cité andine de Tiahuanaco (travaux de E. Kiss) mais également dans l'Himalaya. Soucieux de sa conscience scientifique, Schäfer refusa de travailler pour cette théorie et refusa d'incorporer le romancier Edmund Kiss, adepte des travaux d'Hörbiger, dans son équipe. Dans un premier temps, l'*Ahnenerbe* refusa donc de subventionner la nouvelle expédition pour le Tibet, mais Himmler trouva un compromis : ce dernier acceptait tout de même que Schäfer aille au Tibet à la condition que tous les membres de l'expédition appartiennent à la SS.

Ayant tourné le dos aux scientifiques de l'*Ahnenerbe*, c'est Schäfer lui-même qui se chargea de trouver des financements. Le *Werberat der deutschen Wirtschaft* (Conseil publicitaire de l'économie allemande), sous l'égide du ministère de la propagande dirigé par Goebbels (1897-1945), contribua à hauteur de 40 000 Reichsmark (RM), tout comme la maison d'éditions du *Voelkischer Beobachter*, le journal officiel du régime nazi. La firme *I.G. Farbenindustrie*, qui fournissait en gaz Zyklon-B les camps de concentration nazis, contribua à hauteur de 35 000 RM. La *Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft* (Société de recherche du Reich) offrit 10 000 RM et les *Reichsforschungsdienst* (Services de recherche du Reich) 6 000 RM. Enfin, de nombreuses autres petites sociétés et associations contribuèrent au budget de l'expédition, comme par exemple l'Académie des sciences naturelles de Philadelphie, grâce à laquelle Schäfer avait déjà pu se rendre en Chine (1 000\$) ou encore l'usine de son père à Hamburg (3 000 RM). Ces donateurs enthousiastes et généreux avaient été séduits par la passion et l'engagement des participants, surtout de Schäfer. Dans ses mémoires, Beger raconta :

Les instruments scientifiques, les appareils, les équipements photographiques, cinématographiques, sanitaires, presque tout nous a été prêté et même donné »³⁰.

²⁹ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid.*

³⁰ Beger Bruno, *L'expédition allemande au Tibet d'Ernst Schäfer 1938/39 à Lhassa*, Wiesbaden, 1998, page 8 (notes de voyages de Bruno Beger).

Certes, l'*Ahnenerbe* ne contribua pas directement³¹ (seul le vol retour fut payé par les amis d'Hitler) mais le financement par diverses autres organisations officielles du Reich prouva l'appui du régime nazi dans le projet. C'est même Goering, qui fut chargé de trouver les 30 000 RM en devises étrangères, à la demande d'Hitler, afin de permettre à l'expédition de partir. Le coût total de l'expédition s'élevait à environ 120 111 RM (soit 3 millions de dollars actuels).

Sur la chaîne télévisée *History International*, Heinrich Harrer raconte dans le documentaire *Nazi Expedition to Tibet 1938 - 1939*³² :

Dans l'Entre-deux-Guerres, un officier anglais a prononcé un discours de la Société royale de Géographie à Londres : l'avion a été inventé, le monde est maintenant connu. Il n'existe plus de point d'ombre sur la carte, il n'y a plus rien à découvrir. Mais un dernier mystère demeure : celui de la terre du Toit du monde, régit par un Dieu en or et par 100 000 moines, où les gens peuvent voyager hors de leur corps, où ils méditent dans des bosquets et se marient à de nombreuses femmes et hommes à l'abri des regards, dans des bosquets.

Les préparatifs de l'expédition s'échelonnèrent ainsi de janvier à avril 1938³³.

I.B. Le choix des membres de l'équipe

Un an avant de partir pour le Tibet, Schäfer publia des articles dans la revue SS *Das Schwarze Korps* (« Le Corps noir ») et dans d'autres périodiques nazis afin d'en faire connaître les buts scientifiques et le rôle qu'allait jouer une telle expédition dans l'expansion du nazisme sur le globe.

L'expédition était composée de cinq membres : Edmund Geer (*Untersturmführer*³⁴), directeur technique de l'expédition, Bruno Beger (*Untersturmführer*) anthropologue, ethnologue, géomagnétologue et géographe, Karl Wienert (*Untersturmführer*) géophysicien et météorologue, Ernst Krause (*Untersturmführer*) botaniste, entomologue³⁵, cameraman et photographe et Ernst Schäfer (*Obersturmführer*) zoologue

³¹ Kater Hans Michael, *ibid*, p.79.

³² Documentaire DVD, *Die Expeditionen der Nazis. Abenteuer und Rassenwahn*, ZDF Enterprises & Polarfilm, 2004.

³³ United States Forces - European Theater, Military Intelligence Service Center, APO 757 Final Interrogation Report (OI-FIR), *The Activities of D' Ernst Schaefer*, 12 février 1946.

³⁴ Sous-lieutenant dans la SS.

³⁵ Spécialiste des insectes.

spécialisé en ornithologie. Initialement, Krause et Wienert n'appartenaient pas à la SS mais furent nommés d'office à leur intégration dans l'équipe de l'expédition³⁶.

Schäfer n'en était pas à sa première expédition au Tibet et son parcours académique fut l'une des raisons, en plus de celles évoquées précédemment, qui poussa Himmler à porter son choix sur lui pour mettre sur pied la première expédition officielle allemande au Tibet. Né le 14 mars 1910 à Cologne, Ernst Schäfer était le fils d'un grand industriel allemand, directeur de la compagnie de pneus Phoenix³⁷. Quand ses parents s'installèrent à Hambourg, où son père était devenu président de la chambre de commerce et d'industrie, le jeune garçon se mit à négliger l'école au profit d'excursions dans les environs et de chasse aux rats dans la cave familiale. Pour remédier à ses mauvais résultats scolaires, ses parents le placèrent dans un pensionnat privé à Heidelberg. C'est là, à l'âge de 15 ans, qu'il découvrit la chasse, le directeur du pensionnat l'emmenant avec lui dans ses expéditions cynégétiques³⁸ dans les forêts de l'Odenwald dans l'ouest de l'Allemagne³⁹. Après l'obtention de son Abitur (diplôme de fin d'études secondaires) à Mannheim en 1929, Schäfer entreprit des études universitaires de zoologie⁴⁰, géologie, botanique et géographie à l'université de Göttingen, en Basse-Saxe.

En 1930, le naturaliste américain Brooke Dolan II, fils de milliardaire, vint en Allemagne recruter des scientifiques pour une expédition zoologique. Le professeur Hugo Weigold, directeur d'un musée d'histoire naturelle où Schäfer avait fait un stage, l'avait proposé à Dolan parce qu'il le savait excellent chasseur⁴¹. Schäfer interrompit donc ses études pour rejoindre, en 1931, la première expédition de Brooke Dolan en Chine occidentale et au Tibet⁴². Financée par l'Académie d'histoire naturelle de Philadelphie en Pennsylvanie et conduite par Brooke, chasseur de gros gibier à ses heures, cette expédition gagna le Tibet oriental, au milieu des escarmouches entre le gouvernement nationaliste chinois, les seigneurs locaux et l'armée tibétaine⁴³.

³⁶ United States Forces - *ibid.*

³⁷ Levenda Peter, *ibid.*, p. 193.

³⁸ Hale Christopher, *ibid.*

³⁹ Meier-Hüsing Peter, *Nazis in Tibet : Das Rätsel um die SS-Expedition Ernst Schäfer*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (Theiss Verlag), Darmstadt, 2017, p. 31

⁴⁰ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid.*

⁴¹ Kaufmann Wolfgang, *Le Troisième Reich et le Tibet : la maison de la « croix gammée orientale »*, dans *le champ de vision des national-socialistes*, 4. Édition, Ludwigsfelder Verlagshaus 2014 (Thèse de doctorat, université de Hagen, 2008), p. 205.

⁴² United States Forces - *ibid.*

⁴³ Reilly J. John, *Compte rendu du livre de Christopher Hale, Himmler's Crusade*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken (NJ), 2003.

En 1932, Ernst Schäfer revint en Allemagne pour reprendre ses études. Il savait qu'il se retrouverait dans une impasse s'il ne finissait pas son *Doktorarbeit* (doctorat).

En reconnaissance de ses nombreuses contributions scientifiques, il fut élu membre à vie de la National Academy of Sciences de Philadelphie en 1932⁴⁴. À peine âgé de 23 ans, il publia un premier livre, *Berge, Buddhas und Bären. Forschung und Jagd in geheimnisvollem Tibet* (Montagnes, Bouddhas et Ours. Recherche et chasse dans le mystérieux Tibet), où il racontait sa participation à cette première expédition⁴⁵. L'ouvrage lui valut un début de notoriété⁴⁶. Dans l'ouvrage de Christopher Hale, Schäfer serait revenu de cette première expédition non sans éprouver de la méfiance vis-à-vis du « lamaïsme », affirmant que les Tibétains, « un peuple puissant, sain » (...) « étaient sous le joug de leur religion, laquelle les privait de toute possibilité de développement »⁴⁷.

I.C. Le grand départ

Ernst Schäfer s'occupa seul des préparatifs politique et diplomatique du voyage. Il persuada Himmler qu'aux vues de la situation internationale de l'époque, le chemin vers le Tibet ne pouvait se faire qu'à partir de l'Inde, alors sous domination britannique : il fallait donc obtenir l'autorisation de la Grande-Bretagne. Grâce à son habileté diplomatique, il obtint des lettres de recommandation de la part de diverses personnalités : Sir Francis Sykes, Sir John Anderson, Lord Zetland, J. E. Pryde-Hughes, Sir Francis Younghusband, Lord Astor (chef de proue du *Cliveden Set*, un club aristocratique germanophile), Frank Wallace ou encore Saunolt Kaulback⁴⁸. Leur soutien était primordial pour faire pression sur le gouvernement britannique et obtenir le précieux sésame autorisant les membres de l'équipe à débarquer en Inde. Les membres de l'expédition ne savaient pas s'il allait leur être possible d'entrer au Tibet, alors indépendant, que ce soit au début de leur voyage ou pendant les premiers mois de leur séjour en Inde.

Ce n'est qu'en novembre 1938, après de longues négociations et grâce à ses bons travaux préparatoires, que Schäfer reçut une invita-

⁴⁴ *Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Asienkunde, Asiatische Studien : Études asiatiques*, Volume 58, Numéros 1 à 2, Éditeur A. Francke., 2004 p. 63.

⁴⁵ United States Forces - *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Brewis Kathy, *Quest of the Nazis*, The Sunday Times, 20 juillet 2003 (sur l'expédition SS au Tibet et sur la carrière de Schäfer, d'après le livre de Christopher Hale, *Himmeler's Crusade*).

⁴⁷ Hale Christopher, *ibid.*, p. 95.

⁴⁸ United States Forces - *ibid.*

tion du gouvernement tibétain, comprenant également une autorisation à séjourner dans la Cité interdite de Lhassa. Au départ, cette autorisation de séjourner à Lhassa ne devait durer que deux semaines, mais elle fut sans cesse prolongée, si bien que les chercheurs allemands finirent par y rester deux mois. Ils étaient en outre les premiers Allemands à pouvoir pénétrer dans Lhassa.

Ce résultat, impressionnant vu les difficultés de l'époque, fut principalement dû au travail et à la persévérance personnelle d'Ernst Schäfer et de ses compagnons plutôt qu'à l'action hypothétique des SS et de l'*Ahnenerbe*.

*Ernst Schäfer, quand il organisa cette expédition, mit toujours l'accent sur son indépendance et sur ses initiatives personnelles; il voulut toujours mettre cette entreprise en branle de ses propres forces, pour autant que cela ait été possible. Dans ces démarches, il jouait aussi, bien sûr, la carte de ses contacts SS, les utilisait et les mobilisaient, tant que cela pouvait lui être utile ou se révélait nécessaire*⁴⁹.

Le 20 avril 1938, les cinq scientifiques allemands embarquèrent à Gènes sur le *Gneisenau*, un navire rapide qui faisait les liaisons avec l'Extrême-Orient. Il passèrent par Colombo puis Calcutta où ils arrivèrent le 13 mai. La presse allemande saisit alors l'occasion pour rompre le secret, jusque-là bien gardé, sur l'expédition. Apprenant le patronage de la SS, la presse anglo-indienne fit paraître des articles hostiles à cette dernière. Schäfer obtint cependant le soutien du ministre des Affaires étrangères anglais, Sir Aubrey Metcalfe et du Vice-roi des Indes, Lord Linlithgow⁵⁰, et la permission d'adresser au gouvernement de Lhassa une demande pour entrer au Tibet⁵¹. Schäfer reçut un télégramme du Consul général de Calcutta, l'informant que le gouvernement tibétain refusait à l'expédition l'autorisation d'entrée au Tibet⁵².

En effet, le gouvernement anglais avait toutes les raisons de s'inquiéter de la venue d'une expédition allemande dans l'une de ses colonies. En 1938, la politique agressive d'Hitler avait déjà commencé à déstabiliser l'Europe et les accords de Munich des 29 et 30 septembre 1938 permirent au premier ministre anglais Chamberlain (1869-1940) et au président du Conseil français Daladier (1884-1970), de sauver la paix *in-extremis*. Hitler obtint la Tchécoslovaquie et l'annexion des Sudètes (tchèques germanophones), et le climat d'apaisement voulu par

⁴⁹ Mierau Peter, *ibid*, p. 331.

⁵⁰ United States Forces - *ibid*.

⁵¹ Beger Bruno, *The Status of Independence of Tibet in 1938/39 according to the travel reports*, Mémoires, site du gouvernement tibétain en exil, tibet.com, 1996.

⁵² Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid*, p. 189.

l'Angleterre et la France permit à l'expédition de Schäfer d'être sauvée : les nazis étaient désormais devenus bien trop puissants pour être contrariés dans leur projet européen d'annexions.

II. Déroulement de l'expédition

II.A. Séjour au Sikkim et passage de la frontière tibétaine

Arrivée au Sikkim, État semi-indépendant du nord-est de l'Inde bordant l'Himalaya, l'expédition nazie se retrouva bloquée et ne pouvait plus continuer son périple vers le Tibet voisin. Malgré les lettres de recommandation, le gouvernement britannique interdit Schäfer et son équipe d'entrer au Tibet (qui était pourtant un État indépendant à l'époque). Afin de contourner cet interdit, Schäfer suivit les conseils de Francis Younghusband (1863-1942), lieutenant-colonel de l'armée britannique et explorateur, décrit dans le livre de Christopher Hale comme étant l'ambassadeur anglais au Tibet⁵³ :

Sir Francis Younghusband a été l'une des plus grandes figures de l'aventure impériale britannique, et l'une des plus paradoxales. Au premier abord, il était un ardent impérialiste avec ses yeux bleus frappants et sa longue moustache à la Kitchener. Younghusband avait mélangé sa vie de soldat avec ses exploits intrépides d'exploration. Le plus célèbre d'entre eux a été un voyage pénible de Pékin à Hunza, en traversant le col non cartographié de Muztagh, à la frontière entre l'Inde et la Chine. Younghusband s'était battu à 5 800 mètres à travers la neige et la glace en utilisant des turbans noués et des rênes en guise de corde. (...) En 1903, Lord Curzon, vice-roi des Indes, s'était inquiété des informations selon lesquelles les Russes avaient réussi à infiltrer Lhassa afin de contrôler davantage la politique menée par le 13^e Dalai-Lama. Curzon écrivit à Lhassa afin d'obtenir davantage d'informations sur cette situation dans un pays qui était normalement interdit aux étrangers. Ne recevant pas de réponse, il dépêcha le colonel Younghusband sur place afin de reprendre la situation en main mais cette dernière s'envenima : de nombreux tibétains furent abattus et le Dalai-Lama dû se réfugier en Mongolie. Younghusband profita alors de la situation afin d'imposer un traité aux autorités tibétaines. A son retour en Angleterre, il fut accueilli comme un héros (...)⁵⁴.

En octobre 1938, Younghusband conseilla à Schäfer de « *traverser furtivement la frontière* »⁵⁵. Schäfer réussit alors à la passer discrètement et établit sur place des liens étroits avec les autorités locales. Il se rendit

⁵³ Hale Christopher, *ibid*, p. 149-151.

⁵⁴ French Patrick, *Younghusband : The Last Great Imperial Adventure*, Penguin, UK, 2011.

⁵⁵ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid*, pp. 189-190.

notamment à la résidence estivale du roi de Tharing à Doptra-Dzong, Rja Taring (aussi connu sous le nom de Tsotra Namgyal, demi-frère de Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963), roi du Sikkim de 1914 à 1963) afin d'obtenir les recommandations nécessaires auprès des autorités de Lhasa pour que l'équipe puisse pénétrer légalement au Tibet et dans sa capitale. Ces dernières parvinrent jusqu'à Lhasa. Dans sa lettre, Schäfer rappelait qu'il connaissait le 9^e panchen-lama et qu'il souhaitait être le premier allemand à visiter la capitale interdite. Quelques semaines plus tard, les membres de l'expédition reçurent une lettre officielle du *Kashag*⁵⁶ autorisant les cinq Allemands à rester deux semaines à Lhasa⁵⁷, leur permettant d'assister aux festivités du nouvel an.

L'expédition put ainsi continuer sa route vers le nord : composée d'une caravane de dix autochtones et d'une cinquantaine de mulets, de nombreux obstacles se dressèrent sur leur route à cause de la mousson, de la boue et des éboulements. Sur le chemin, l'expédition s'arrêta plusieurs fois comme à Thanggu (4 500m) ou encore à Gayokang, aux pieds du Kanchenjunga (8 585m), deuxième plus haut sommet du monde. A chaque fois, ces haltes permettaient à l'équipe d'établir un camp de base duquel partaient diverses missions de recherche pendant une quinzaine de jours généralement⁵⁸.

Schäfer joua également sur les symboles et notamment la *svastika*. Apparue aux alentours du VI^e siècle, aux origines de la religion bouddhique, la croix gammée (*yung-drung* en tibétain, signifiant « éternel »), possédait différentes significations. Celle qui nous intéresse ici est celle des bouddhistes tibétains qui portent le bonnet jaune (titre donné aux écoles bouddhiques dont sont issus les dalaï-lamas et les panchen-lamas). Pour cette école, la *svastika* possède un mouvement dextrogyre, c'est-à-dire qu'il tourne dans le sens des aiguilles d'une montre. Ce mouvement symbolise la renonciation ainsi que la course visuelle du soleil⁵⁹. Ce caractère sacré pluriséculaire et repris par la plupart des grandes religions mondiales (y compris chrétienne) sur les cinq continents possède une dimension universelle. Cette croix composée de quatre potences prenant chacune la forme d'un *gamma* grec en capitale (Γ) — d'où son nom de croix gammée — symbolise de nombreuses choses, toutes aussi vénérables les unes que les autres : Ganesh chez les hindous, l'éternité chez les chinois ou encore le cœur de Bouddha

⁵⁶ cabinet des ministres du gouvernement tibétain.

⁵⁷ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid*, p.190.

⁵⁸ Mutti Claudio, *Les SS au Tibet*, claudiomutti.com, 10 octobre 2005.

⁵⁹ Voir Van Grasdorff Gilles, *Opération Shambhala / Des S.S. au Pays des Dalaï-lamas*, Presses du Châtelet, 2012.

chez certains bouddhistes. Elle est même reprise sur les cartes des villes japonaises pour symboliser les temples bouddhiques. Son étymologie en dit long sur sa signification première : venant du sanskrit, langue sacrée par excellence en Inde, — svasti peut être traduit par « bonne santé, bonne fortune » et le suffixe — ka par « bon ».

Chez les Slaves, la svastika était un signe magique manifestant de la puissance et la majesté du soleil et du feu. Elle était dédiée au dieu du soleil Svarog.

On l'aura compris, le sens originel et universel de la svastika était donc particulièrement noble.

Dans l'Entre-deux-guerres, tout changea. Dans les années 1920, la Société de Thulé, groupuscule du mouvement *völkisch*, loge munitoise de l'Ordre des Germains à laquelle était apparenté le Parti ouvrier allemand (DAP) devenu le Parti National des Travailleurs Allemands (NSDAP) d'Hitler, utilisait la croix gammée. Un membre de cette société, Friedrich Krohn, proposa dès mai 1919 qu'elle devienne l'emblème du DAP. Hitler choisit lui-même la croix dextrogyre⁶⁰ et l'inclina à 45°. Dans *Mein Kampf*, il présenta le débat qui entoura l'élaboration de l'insigne nazi et l'importance de son choix. En plus du symbole, les couleurs étaient importantes car elles reprenaient délibérément celles du drapeau de l'Allemagne impériale (1871-1918), toujours présente dans l'esprit des nombreux Allemands qui rejetaient la démocratie et la République de Weimar. On apprit que le *Führer* joua lui-même un rôle dans la conception du drapeau nazi, adopté définitivement le 20 mai 1920 (15 septembre 1935 en tant que drapeau national du Reich) :

Moi-même, cependant, après de nombreuses tentatives, je m'arrêtai à une forme définitive : un rond blanc sur fond rouge, et une croix gammée noire au milieu. Après de longs essais, je trouvai aussi une relation définie entre la dimension du drapeau, la grandeur du rond blanc, la forme et l'épaisseur de la croix gammée. Et c'est resté ainsi.⁶¹

C'est alors que la svastika, symbole d'éternité et de vie, devint celui de la mort et de l'horreur en Occident. En 1945, la croix gammée était tabou, et la forte connotation politique la liant aux crimes contre l'humanité allemands (Shoah), poussa de nombreux pays tel que l'Allemagne à en limiter l'usage voire l'interdire (article 86a du Code pénal allemand)⁶².

Sachant que les Tibétains voyaient dans la svastika un signe de

⁶⁰ Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *ibid*, pp. 260- 261.

⁶¹ Hitler Adolf, *Mein Kampf*, Tome 2, chap. VII.

⁶² Voir Petitfrère Ray, *La mystique de la croix gammée*, Paris, France-Empire, 1962.

bonne fortune éternelle, Schäfer, pour s'attirer les bonnes grâces de ses contacts, fit donc valoir auprès d'eux que son expédition était la rencontre de la svastika orientale et de la svastika occidentale⁶³ dans l'amitié et la paix.

Fin septembre 1938, l'équipe de Schäfer revint à Gangtok pour assister à l'annuelle « *danse de la guerre des dieux* ». Parmi les nombreuses légendes tibétaines, certaines évoquaient des relations de mariage entre deux divinités locales (parfois deux montagnes) tandis que d'autres racontaient des luttes et des combats de deux montagnes sacrées. Chaque communauté tibétaine, habitant un site donné, se reconnaissait ainsi dans son ancêtre et dans son lieu saint. Le caractère guerrier des montagnes sacrées et leur lien avec le clan et leurs ancêtres s'exprimait ainsi au travers de fêtes consacrées comme celle de « *la danse de la guerre des dieux* », pendant laquelle des guerriers non masqués, divisés en deux groupes, chantaient alternativement. Leurs chants exaltaient la lignée du souverain ou de la famille noble et leurs ancêtres⁶⁴.

Une fois la fête passée, l'équipe de Schäfer se scinda en deux : Wiener et Beger allèrent jusqu'aux pieds de l'Himalaya pendant que Krause et Geer terminèrent leurs prises cinématographiques et leurs recherches zoologiques dans la zone du Gaoykang⁶⁵. C'est alors que depuis leur camp de base établi aux pieds du Kanchenjunga, les scientifiques de l'expédition entreprirent une série de recherches dans le territoire de Lachen et grimpèrent sur la paroi du *Pipo Kanchen*.

Le 1^{er} décembre 1938, une missive provenant de Lhasa leur parvint : le régent du Tibet invita Schäfer et son équipe à le rejoindre dans la capitale interdite du pays. Pour la toute première fois de l'Histoire, des allemands purent enfin y mettre les pieds.

II.B. Séjours à Lhasa, à Gyantsé et à Shigatse

Le 19 janvier 1939, Schäfer et son équipe arrivèrent enfin à Lhasa : ils s'y établirent au départ pour deux semaines, mais réussirent à y séjourner plus de deux mois grâce au renouvellement de leurs autorisations⁶⁶. Pendant deux mois, les SS furent fêtés par les élites tibétaines⁶⁷. Sur place, Schäfer put rencontrer le 5^e Réting Rinpoché (Lama principal du monastère de Retin au nord de Lhasa) ainsi que le régent du Tibet, qui gouvernait le pays en attendant que le 14^e Dalai-Lama, âgé

⁶³ United States Forces - *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Stein A. Rolf, *La civilisation tibétaine*, L'Asiathèque, 2010.

⁶⁵ Mutti Claudio, *ibid.*

⁶⁶ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid.*, p.190.

⁶⁷ Hale Christopher, *ibid.*

de 4 ans, atteint sa majorité (par ailleurs, c'est toujours l'actuel Dalai-Lama, Tenzin Gyatso)⁶⁸.

Au cours de l'un de ces entretiens, le régent aurait demandé à Schäfer, à son grand étonnement, si l'Allemagne serait intéressée de vendre des armes au Tibet⁶⁹.

Sur place, les membres de l'équipe nouèrent de nombreuses relations d'amitié avec les élites locales, dont la famille du 14^e dalai-lama, la famille Phala et le moine Möndro, responsable de la police municipale⁷⁰. Cependant, il était impossible qu'il ait pu rencontrer la famille du dalai-lama à Lhasa, car l'expédition allemande prit le chemin du retour dès août 1939 afin de rejoindre Simla (Himachal Pradesh) en Inde, lorsque la famille de *Sa Sainteté* ne revint de sa province natale, l'Amdo⁷¹, qu'en octobre 1939⁷².

L'expédition s'avéra un succès, tant par la quantité de matériels collectés que par l'amélioration des relations diplomatiques entre l'Allemagne et le Tibet. Cette amélioration s'expliqua par plusieurs raisons, au nombre desquelles le fait que Bruno Beger, l'anthropologue de l'expédition, avait reçu une courte formation médicale qui lui permit de soigner efficacement des membres de l'aristocratie tibétaine (notamment leur dentition). Tous les matins, des Tibétains faisaient la queue à l'entrée de la maison d'hôte gouvernementale où les membres de l'expédition logeaient. Voilà pourquoi ces derniers étaient fréquemment invités chez la noblesse tibétaine. En contrepartie du traitement médical des familles, dont la famille Phala, ils reçurent une copie complète du *Kangyur* (textes canoniques tibétains relatant les paroles de Bouddha) de Lhasa⁷³.

En réalité, le choix de se rapprocher des élites du pays n'était pas anodin. Les officiers SS de l'expédition n'oublièrent pas leur mission première : collecter les preuves que les germains et les tibétains pouvaient avoir des origines communes et, dans une moindre mesure, pouvoir influencer les décisions politique et militaire de Lhasa. Pour Bruno Beger, SS fasciné par les théories raciales, il était temps de s'intéresser aux tibétains à proprement parler. En échange des soins qu'il leur dispensait (distribution de médicaments ou encore, soins contre

⁶⁸ Blondeau, Buffetrille, Robin, Stoddard, *Réponse sur les liens entre le dalai-lama et les nazis*, Libération, 6 mai 2008.

⁶⁹ Reilly John J, *ibid*.

⁷⁰ Beger Bruno, *The Status of Independence of Tibet in 1938/39 according to the travel reports*, Mémoires, site du gouvernement tibétain en exil, tibet.com, 1996.

⁷¹ Goodman Harris Michael, *Le Dernier Dalai-Lama ?*, Claire Lumière, 1999, pp. 55-56.

⁷² Barraux Roland, *Histoire des Dalai-Lamas - Quatorze reflets sur le Lac des Visions*, Albin Michel, 2002.

⁷³ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid*, p.191-192.

les maladies vénériennes des moines), il prit les mensurations de 376 individus et fit des moulages de la tête, du visage, des mains et des oreilles de 17 autres, et releva les empreintes digitales et les empreintes de main de 350 autres. Preuve de son professionnalisme, lors de son premier moulage de crâne, Beger omit de faire les trous pour permettre au patient de respirer : ce dernier fut victime d'une crise de panique et fut sauvé de la mort par suffocation au dernier moment. Beger continua de s'efforcer à conserver les faveurs de l'aristocratie tibétaine en distribuant des médicaments et en soignant des moines ayant une maladie vénérienne, en échange de la possibilité d'effectuer ses recherches⁷⁴. Au total, ce furent plus de 2 000 tibétains qui participèrent à la collecte de ces données, mais aucun d'entre eux ne put se douter que ces expériences scientifiques alimenteraient l'un des meurtres de masse les plus importants de l'Histoire quelques années plus tard.

Tout le monde a une idée claire sur l'arianisme telle que perçue au travers de la culture nazie : des grands blonds aux yeux bleus à la musculature dessinée. Cette description semble complète, jusqu'au jour où les nazis commencèrent à vouloir retrouver les ancêtres de ces aryens en Asie, sur le Toit du monde et au milieu du Tibet. C'était alors le but premier de l'expédition : trouver les liens qui pouvaient connecter le peuple allemand au peuple tibétain, pourtant si différent. Derrière cette recherche, se dégageait une théorie très complexe : les nazis croyaient que de magnifiques civilisations nordiques et aryennes avaient réussi à construire un immense empire à travers le monde, de l'Europe à l'Asie, jusqu'aux confins du Japon. Lorsque cet empire s'est effondré, ses habitants laissèrent des traces dans les régions les plus reculées du monde⁷⁵.

Parmi ces régions reculées du monde se trouvait le Tibet. Pour Beger, les nobles du pays étaient les seuls qui pouvaient avoir conservé le patrimoine aryen le plus pur, d'où le grand intéressement de l'équipe nazie pour constituer des liens étroits avec l'aristocratie tibétaine. L'ensemble des mesures anthropométriques collectées furent comparées aux mesures prises sur des nord-européens, supposés être les descendants les plus colossaux des Aryens, ainsi que sur des déportés dans les camps de concentration issus de différents types ethniques, afin de servir aux expériences raciales nazies. Conformément aux standards objectifs des méthodes anthropologiques nazies, Beger réduisit les tibétains à des nombres en les classant en fonction de leur teinte de peau ou de la couleur de leurs yeux.

De son côté, Schäfer perçut le Tibet comme l'endroit où pratiquer sa passion pour la chasse, la collecte de vraies plantes et d'animaux. Il découvrit ainsi la *Schapi*, une chèvre sauvage jusqu'alors inconnue et

⁷⁴ Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Documentaire DVD, *ibid.*

traqua une autre créature légendaire de la région : le Yéti. Il fut le premier à émettre l'hypothèse que l'*Abominable homme des neiges* était en réalité une espèce d'ours : cette théorie fait d'ailleurs encore consensus parmi les scientifiques spécialisés sur le sujet.

Schäfer était également particulièrement intéressé par les légendes tibétaines noires qui faisaient le récit de monstres violents et de démons assoiffés de sang. Dans les nombreux films tournés sur place par l'équipe, la figure de *Mahakala* est récurrente, avec sa coiffe composée de crânes⁷⁶. Alors que Schäfer y percevait un monstre assoiffé de sang se tenant sur une montagne de cadavres⁷⁷, *Mahakala*, signifie *grand noir* et est appelé *Gonpo* en tibétain, à savoir « seigneur / protecteur ». Il s'agissait en réalité d'une divinité paisible (malgré les représentations que l'on trouve d'elle) qui symbolise la puissance de Bouddha, dans son dernier nirvâna, avant d'avoir atteint l'éveil. De plus, sa couronne de cinq crânes ne symbolise pas la représentation absolue de la vie sur la mort, mais les cinq *kleshas*, les cinq afflictions dans les *Cinq sagesse de Bouddha*. Il s'agit des cinq peines qui empêchent les individus d'atteindre la libération : à savoir l'ignorance, l'égoïsme, la passion, l'aversion et la peur de la mort⁷⁸. La symbolique des crânes de la couronne de *Mahakala* était ainsi à mille lieux de la représentation de la tête de mort, le célèbre *Totenkopf*, devenu un insigne célèbre de la SS sur leurs casquettes dès les années 1930⁷⁹. Cette tête de mort descendait largement des régiments de hussards noirs prussiens du milieu du XVIII^e siècle plutôt que des confins du Tibet.

En mars 1939, l'expédition quitta Lhasa et se rendit jusqu'à Gyantsé, ville où le colonel Younghusband défia les 500 soldats tibétains qui tenaient la forteresse. Après avoir exploré les ruines de l'ancienne capitale *Jalung Phodrang*, inhabitée depuis 1 000 ans, et après une marche de 600 kilomètres jusqu'au lac Yamdrok, le 25 avril les explorateurs gagnèrent Shigatsé, ville de résidence des panchen-lama. L'accueil fut chaleureux et toute la population accourut pour souhaiter

⁷⁶ Film *Geheimnis Tibet / Lhasa-Lo - Di verbotene Stadt* (*Les secrets du Tibet / Lhasa, la cité interdite*), 1943. Voir Trimondi Victor et Victoria, *La connexion Nazis-Tibet*, Débat Culturel Critique et Créateur, Trimondi Online Magazine, <http://www.trimondi.de/francais/Tribune%20Juive.htm>.

⁷⁷ Propos à nuancer, la thèse de Christopher Hale ayant été critiquée par d'autres historiens, comme Isrun Engelhardt ou Detlev Rose dans *L'expédition allemande au Tibet de 1938-39 : Voyage scientifique ou quête de traces à motivation idéologique ?*, Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Bruxelles-Munich-Tübingen, Synergies européennes, n°3, novembre 2006.

⁷⁸ Voir Ladrang Kalsang (auteur), Pema Thinley (traducteur), *The Guardian Deities of Tibet*, Delhi, 1996.

⁷⁹ Voir Knopp Guido, *Les SS, Un avertissement de l'histoire*, Paris, Presses de la Cité, 2006.

la bienvenue aux allemands. Le panchen-lama aurait reçu officiellement la mission nazie et signa un document d'amitié avec le Troisième Reich⁸⁰. C'est en réalité le « régent pro-allemand de Shigatsé » qui aurait reçu l'équipe allemande, le 9^e panchen-lama étant mort depuis 1937 et son successeur n'ayant été désigné qu'en 1951⁸¹.

Le 19 mai, Schäfer et son équipe décidèrent de retourner à Gyantsé qu'ils atteignirent trois jours plus tard. De là, furent négociées avec les fonctionnaires anglais présents sur place les modalités de leur trajet retour vers l'Inde puis l'Europe, ainsi que du transport du matériel⁸².

II.C. Communication médiatique en Allemagne et principaux objectifs de l'expédition

Dans les mémoires de Bruno Beger, l'anthropologue de l'expédition, la population était prévenue de leur arrivée dans les différentes étapes de leur parcours tibétain, permettant aux membres de l'équipe de rester parfaitement approvisionnés et leur assurant un accueil des plus chaleureux partout où ils se rendaient :

le long de la vallée de Chumbi (vallée ralliant le Sikkim, l'Inde, le Bouthan et le Tibet), puis de Gyantsé à Lhassa, puis de là en passant par Samye dans la vallée du Yarlung jusqu'à Shigatse et enfin de retour à Gangtok en passant par Gyantsé. À Lhassa même, ils furent reçus avec des démonstrations d'amitié et entretenirent des rapports étroits avec des responsables gouvernementaux et d'autres personnes influentes⁸³.

Pendant toute la durée de leur séjour, l'équipe de Schäfer resta en contact avec l'Allemagne via le courrier postale mais également grâce à la radio de la Légation chinoise qui avait été mise gracieusement à leur service⁸⁴. En effet, la Chine avait envoyé une délégation à Lhassa dès 1934 à la suite du décès du 13^e dalaï-lama. Réting Rinpoché, régent du Tibet, autorisa à ce moment l'installation par des responsables chinois d'une station de radio permanente à Lhassa en même temps que la création d'une mission chinoise sur place. En 1939, Chang Wei-pei, technicien radio de la légation et alors représentant par intérim de la République de Chine au Tibet, salua à l'extérieur de Lhassa Ernst Schäfer ainsi que les autres membres de l'expédition allemande au Tibet.

⁸⁰ Mutti Claudio, *ibid.*

⁸¹ United States Forces - *ibid.*

⁸² Mutti Claudio, *ibid.*

⁸³ Beger Bruno, *The Status of Independence of Tibet in 1938/39 according to the travel reports*, Mémoires, site du gouvernement tibétain en exil, tibet.com, 1996.

⁸⁴ Reilly J. John, *ibid.*

C'est lui qui permit à Schäfer d'entrer en contact avec l'Allemagne nazie⁸⁵. C'est également par ce biais qu'Himmler pouvait suivre l'expédition avec enthousiasme et put également souhaiter un joyeux Noël 1938 à toute l'équipe grâce aux ondes courtes⁸⁶. Par ailleurs, cette délégation chinoise au Tibet fut expulsée dès 1949, avant de voir ses membres rallier le nouveau gouvernement communiste de Mao.

De plus, bien qu'Himmler tenta à maintes reprises de rallier à sa cause les scientifiques de l'expédition — à savoir partir sur les traces que les ancêtres des aryens avaient pu laisser dans les grottes tibétaines — Schäfer continua à refuser d'entrer dans ces considérations mystiques et lui, ainsi que les autres membres de l'expédition, mirent toujours en avant leur formation scientifique pour expliquer les raisons de leur entreprise. Dans *SS au Tibet* de Mutti, on apprend que les buts officiels de l'expédition étaient d'étudier les régions tibétaines sur les plans géographique, géologique, zoologique, anthropologique, botanique, culturel et de contacter les autorités locales en vue d'établir une représentation allemande dans le pays⁸⁷. Dans son article du *Sunday Times*, Kathy Brewis affirma que :

les membres de l'expédition recueillirent une énorme quantité de plantes et d'animaux. Wienert prit des mesures géomagnétiques. Krause étudia les guêpes tibétaines. Schäfer observa les rituels tibétains, dont les funérailles célestes. Ils photographièrent et filmèrent des manifestations folkloriques⁸⁸.

Dans ses mémoires, Bruno Beger relata ces funérailles, qui durent être particulièrement déroutantes pour un européen. C'est ce qui fait dire à Hale, dans son livre *Himmler's Crusade*, que Bruno Beger était fasciné par la mort au Tibet :

Sur la face de de la pierre de l'Ours, trois cadavres féminins nus tentaient de franchir la frontière (vers l'au-delà). En un rien de temps, les plus gros membres des cadavres se détachèrent du reste du corps. Tout autour, sur le plateau des montagnes, des centaines de vautours affamés et gourmands rodaient. Au lever du jour, les vautours firent de ces restes un repas copieux : ce fut l'une des expériences les plus impressionnantes qui nous fut offertes.

Les funérailles célestes sont une méthode employée afin d'éliminer un corps humain après la mort, pratiquée dans les pays de la région (Tibet, Chine, Bhoutan, Népal, Inde, Mongolie), et qui consiste à exposer

⁸⁵ Hsiao-Ting Lin, *Tibet and Nationalist China's Frontier : Intrigues and Ethnopolitics, 1928-1949*, Archives, p.82

⁸⁶ United States Forces - *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Mutti Claudio, *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

le cadavre d'un défunt à l'air libre afin qu'il soit dévoré par des vautours. Au Tibet, une fois le corps déposé dans l'herbe, le moine chante en tournant autour du défunt et en brûlant de l'encens. Le corps est ensuite découpé par le *Rogyapa* (littéralement *coupeur de corps*), puis la chair est mélangée à de la farine d'orge, du thé et du lait de yak, avant d'être donnée aux vautours⁸⁹.

En dehors de ce récit de voyage peu conventionnel, Joseph Goebbels, ministre de la propagande du Reich, décrit l'expédition en ces termes :

*la tâche principale de l'expédition est de nature politique et militaire (...) et n'avait pas grand-chose à voir avec la résolution de questions scientifiques*⁹⁰.

Aujourd'hui, le débat est houleux et divise les historiens sur les réelles motivations du gouvernement allemand de l'époque d'envoyer une expédition, chapeauté par la SS, dans un pays interdit et aussi lointain que le Tibet. Quatre raisons principales se dégagent : politique, raciale, militaire ou scientifique.

D'un point de vue politique, Claudio Mutti avançait la volonté que pouvait avoir Himmler d'entrer en contact avec le régent du Tibet, Réting Rinpoché, ce que l'équipe de Schäfer réussit à faire⁹¹. Il fut rejoint dans cette idée par Laurent Dispot, qui y vit la possibilité de faire de Lhassa un noeud stratégique sur l'axe Berlin-Rome-Tokyo⁹². Cette possibilité a été rapidement réfutée par quatre tibétologues, comme Anne-Marie Blondeau, Katia Buffertrille, Heather Stoddard ou encore Françoise Robin qui y virent un mythe relayé par le gouvernement chinois pour décrédibiliser davantage un gouvernement tibétain en exil depuis l'annexion du Tibet à la République Populaire de Chine en 1951⁹³. Gary Wilson, journaliste au *Workers World*, y vit même

*le partage du monde asiatique entre l'Allemagne nazie, qui aurait récupéré le Tibet, l'Inde et le Népal et le Japon, qui se serait contenté de la Chine*⁹⁴.

D'un point de vue militaire, dans l'hebdomadaire autrichien *Wochenpresse*, paru entre 1955 et 1993, la tâche première de l'expédition était

⁸⁹ Voir Mullin Glenn H, *Living in the Face of Death : The Tibetan Tradition*, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 1998.

⁹⁰ Propos recueillis dans une note secrète aux journaux en 1940, dans le livre de Christopher Hale.

⁹¹ Mutti Claudio, *ibid.*

⁹² Dispot Laurent, *Le dalaï-Lama et l'horreur nazie*, Libération, 6 mai 2008.

⁹³ Blondeau, Buffertrille, Robin, Stoddard, *ibid.*

⁹⁴ Wilson Gary, *It was so Shangri-La : Hollywood Hides Tibet's True History*, Workers World newspaper, 1997.

d'étudier la possibilité de faire du Tibet une base d'où attaquer les troupes britanniques stationnées en Inde. Sa deuxième mission était de vérifier la thèse raciale de Himmler selon laquelle un groupe d'Aryens de sang pur s'était installé au Tibet⁹⁵. Le journaliste américain Karl E. Meyer au New York Times poussa plus loin la réflexion en considérant le but de l'expédition comme le moyen d'établir des cartes et de faire le relevé des cols susceptibles d'être utilisés pour envoyer depuis le Tibet des guérilleros sur le territoire des Indes britanniques⁹⁶. Pour Nico Hirtt, professeur spécialisé dans les systèmes éducatifs européens, les autorités tibétaines pourtant neutres, ont objectivement soutenu l'axe Berlin-Tokyo pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale en empêchant l'approvisionnement des armées chinoises par la route, à partir de l'Inde⁹⁷. Thomas Laird, journaliste américain spécialisé sur le Tibet, considérait la réticence tibétaine à autoriser l'approvisionnement en Chine en raison de sa crainte d'une invasion chinoise⁹⁸. C'est finalement le Ministère des affaires étrangères des États-Unis qui a clos le débat en publiant un télégramme du Foreign Office britannique daté du 15 août 1942 : Lhasa autorisa finalement l'ouverture temporaire de cette voie de communication, ayant reçu des assurances que ni la Chine ni la Grande-Bretagne n'exerceraient de juridiction au Tibet par l'intermédiaire des ayants droit à la libre circulation⁹⁹.

D'un point de vue eugénique, l'anthropologue français Édouard Conte, directeur de recherches au CNRS en 1995, affirma que la mission de Schäfer avait pour objectif idéologique de chercher à prouver certaines thèses racialistes sur l'origine de la race aryenne. Les mensurations du crâne de Tibétains et le moulage de leur visage effectués par Bruno Beger avaient ce but principal. Cette interprétation de l'expédition fut remise en cause dès 2006 par Rose Detlev, historienne allemande spécialisée sur la démystification des liens supposés du nazisme avec des sociétés secrètes¹⁰⁰.

C'est donc d'un point de vue scientifique que les raisons de l'expédition nazie au Tibet semblent les plus plausibles. Rose Detlev suggère dans son ouvrage *L'expédition allemande au Tibet de 1938-39 : Voyage scientifique ou quête de traces à motivation idéologique ?* une démarche rigoureusement scientifique de la part de l'expédition et de Bruno Beger,

⁹⁵ Yanshi Ren, *Nazi Author's Seven years in Tibet*, site de l'Ambassade de Chine en Israël, 2008.

⁹⁶ Meyer Karl E., *Nazi Trespassers in Tibet*, The New York Times, 1997.

⁹⁷ Hirtt Nico, *Quand l'ordre religieux régnait au Tibet*, site de J-C. Cabanel.

⁹⁸ Laird Thomas, Dalai-Lama, Merci Christophe, *Une histoire du Tibet : Conversations avec le dalai lama*, Plon, 2007.

⁹⁹ *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1942, Chine*, Washington, 1956.

¹⁰⁰ Voir Delpha François, *Une histoire du Troisième Reich*, Perrin, 2014, p. 253-254.

lequel a réalisé des mesures anthropomorphiques en respectant les critères médicaux et biologiques de l'époque. Elle s'appuie également sur le fait que les écrits de Beger n'emploient pas les mots employés par les nazis tel que celui d'aryens¹⁰¹.

L'article de Rose Detlev dans la revue *Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, n°3, 2006 est d'ailleurs très clair à ce sujet. Schäfer publia un essai dans la revue *Asienberichte*¹⁰² intitulé *Espace de recherche : Asie intérieure*¹⁰³ dans lequel il expliqua quels furent les motifs de son expédition. Après les recherches pionnières effectuées dans le cœur du continent asiatique, lors des premières expéditions qui y furent menées, il voulut procéder à des recherches plus systématiques en certains domaines et fournir une synthèse des résultats obtenus dans diverses disciplines.

Tel était l'objectif de ma dernière expédition au Tibet en 1938-1939; (...) Elle visait à obtenir une vue d'ensemble, après avoir tâté la réalité sur le terrain à l'aide de diverses disciplines scientifiques, ce qui constitue la condition première et factuelle pour que des spécialistes en divers domaines puissent travailler main dans la main, en s'explicitant les uns aux autres les matières traitées, de façon à compléter leurs savoirs respectifs ; toujours dans le but de faire apparaître plus clairement les tenants et aboutissants de toutes choses. La tâche principale, qu'il s'agissait de réaliser, était la suivante : saisir de manière holiste¹⁰⁴ l'espace écologique exploré, raison pour laquelle la géologie, la flore, la faune et les hommes ont constitué les objets de nos recherches¹⁰⁵.

Obtenir une synthèse globale et scientifique de ce qu'était le Tibet dans sa totalité, tel a donc été le but de l'expédition allemande au Tibet en 1938-1939. Il n'existait aucun indice quant à d'autres motivations ou objectifs dans les rapports rédigés par les membres de l'expédition, qui décrivaient leurs faits et gestes au Tibet de manière exhaustive et détaillée¹⁰⁶. L'image qu'ils donnèrent du Tibet se termina par un résumé

¹⁰¹ Rose Detlev, *L'expédition allemande au Tibet de 1938-39 : Voyage scientifique ou quête de traces à motivation idéologique ?*, *Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Bruxelles-Munich-Tübingen, Synergies européennes, n°3, novembre 2006.

¹⁰² *Asienberichte*, n°21, avril 1944, pp. 29 - 53.

¹⁰³ Schäfer Ernst, *Forschungsraum Innerasien*, *Asienberichte*. Vierteljahresschrift für asiatische Geschichte und Kultur, n°21, avril 1944, pp. 3-6.

¹⁰⁴ Théorie selon laquelle l'homme est un tout indivisible qui ne peut être expliqué par ses différentes composantes (physique, physiologique, psychique) considérées séparément.

¹⁰⁵ Schäfer Ernst, *Forschungsraum Innerasien*, *Asienberichte*, *ibid*, page 4.

¹⁰⁶ Schäfer Ernst, *Geheimnis Tibet. Erster Bericht der Deutschen Tibet-Expedition Ernst Schäfer 1938-39, Schirmherr : Reichsführer SS, München 1943* dans Beger Bruno, *L'expédition allemande au Tibet d'Ernst Schäfer 1938/39 à Lhasa*, Wiesbaden, 1998, page 6 (notes de voyages de Bruno Beger).

des résultats obtenus par leurs recherches, accompagné d'une liste méticuleuse de toutes leurs activités et des échantillons prélevés, ainsi que le texte d'un exposé, prononcé par Schäfer à Calcutta. Leurs résultats étaient composés par des rapports sur le magnétisme tellurique, sur les températures, sur la salinité des lacs, sur les plans des bâtiments visités, sur la cartographie relative aux structures géologiques, sur les échantillons de pierres et de minéraux, sur les fossiles découverts, sur les squelettes d'animaux, sur les reptiles, les papillons et les oiseaux, sur les plantes séchées, les graines de fleurs, de céréales et de fruits, auxquels s'ajoutaient divers objets à l'attention des ethnologues tels des outils et des pièces d'étoffe. À tout cela s'ajoutaient également 20 000 photographies en noir et blanc et 2 000 photographies en couleurs, ainsi que 18 000 mètres de films¹⁰⁷ (soit plus de cinquante heures), dont les explorateurs tirèrent, après leur retour, un documentaire officiel¹⁰⁸.

In fine, l'expédition nazie au Tibet a exacerbé tous les fantasmes et n'a pas fini de faire couler de l'encre. Journalistes, professeurs, essayistes, écrivains sont autant d'acteurs qui tentent de trouver une explication aux raisons qui poussèrent les Allemands à envoyer l'expédition de Schäfer au Tibet en 1938. Là où les explications viennent à manquer, c'est l'imaginaire humain qui prend le relais. L'homme a besoin de réponse à ses questions, c'est l'essence même de toute religion. Il convient donc de prendre avec beaucoup de recul les informations que l'on peut trouver sur l'expédition au Tibet et qui ne sont pas appuyées par des archives concrètes exploitées par des professionnels de l'Histoire. Il semblerait qu'il y ait pu avoir des raisons politiques. Des raisons militaires, on peut en douter : Isrun Engelhardt, se fondant sur de nombreuses sources, a affirmé que le but de l'expédition n'était ni ésotérique ni politique et que la lettre écrite par le Réting Rinpoché, transmise à Schäfer et destinée à Hitler, n'était qu'une lettre de politesse :

*Puissiez-vous être béni et vous porter bien physiquement. Que vos bonnes actions vous permettent de trouver la paix. Salutations du Souverain divin au Führer de Berlin*¹⁰⁹.

De plus, les membres de l'expédition, malgré toute la curiosité qu'ils purent susciter au sein de la population tibétaine, n'étaient sûrement pas assez pour pouvoir rallier l'ensemble du gouvernement de Lhasa

¹⁰⁷ Mierau Peter, *ibid*, page 6.

¹⁰⁸ Film réédité par Marco Dolcetta, *Nationalsozialismus und Okkultismus*, 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Buffetrille Katia, *Tibet and Her Neighbours : A History*, McKay Alex, 2003, Londres, n°36/37, 2006.

à leur cause et à celle de l'Allemagne nazie. En ce qui concerne les raisons eugéniques et scientifiques, ces dernières semblent être les plus probables. En respectant les méthodes utilisées en anthropologie à l'époque, le SS Bruno Beger amassa de nombreuses mesures qui furent par la suite comparées sur des prisonniers de camp de concentration. A la fin de la guerre, ce dernier n'en fut pour autant jamais inquiété et seul le chef de l'*Ahnenerbe*, Wolfram Sievers (1905-1948), fut pendu pour crime contre l'Humanité en raison des nombreuses expériences médicales qu'il autorisa ou réalisa lui-même sur des déportés des camp de concentration et d'extermination nazi. C'est par ailleurs sous sa direction qu'August Hirt (1898-1945), professeur à la *Reichsuniversität Straßburg*, se constitua une collection de squelettes sur 86 juifs gazés spécialement pour l'occasion, au camp d'extermination de Natzweiler-Struthof en Alsace¹¹⁰.

Appréhender une telle expédition qu'à partir d'une approche nazie, scientifique ou politique n'est pas chose aisée, puisque ses membres étaient des SS, mais également des scientifiques convaincus, qui travaillaient avec les méthodes de l'époque. Aujourd'hui, les mystères nazis n'ont pas fini d'alimenter les romans et le cinéma mais il est évident que les retombées du retour de l'expédition en Allemagne en 1939 furent grandes. Les archives sont loin d'avoir livrées tous leurs secrets.

III. Des retombées plurielles en Allemagne

III.A. Un retour en grandes pompes

En août 1939, l'expédition quitta le Tibet, munie de deux lettres de courtoisie du Régent pour Hitler et pour Himmler. Ils repartirent également en emportant un habit de lama et un chien de chasse pour le Führer¹¹¹ ainsi que des objets précieux, des animaux rares et le *Kangyur* (Bible tibétaine) qui leur avait été offert à Lhassa, en échange des bons soins dispensés auprès de la population par l'anthropologue Beger¹¹². Une fois arrivée à Calcutta, l'équipe de Schäfer s'embarqua à bord d'un

¹¹⁰ Dans un communiqué du 18 juillet 2015, la municipalité de Strasbourg annonce que des « préparations contenant des restes des victimes de l'anatomiste nazi August Hirt » ont été découvertes le 9 juillet dans les collections (non accessibles au public) de l'Institut de médecine légale de la ville par Raphaël Toledano et Jean-Sébastien Raul, directeur de l'Institut. Ces restes, contenus dans un bocal et deux éprouvettes étiquetés avec le numéro matricule 107969 correspondant à celui attribué par les nazis à Menachem Taffel, rejoindront ceux des victimes inhumées au cimetière israélite de Cronembourg. Voir *Découverte de restes de victimes de l'anatomiste nazi August Hirt*, dna.fr, 18 juillet 2015.

¹¹¹ United States Forces - *ibid.*

¹¹² Hale Christopher, *ibid.*

hydravion qui gagna l'aéroport de Berlin Tempelhof via Bagdad. Au pied de la passerelle les attendait Heinrich Himmler, heureux de pouvoir les saluer en personne.

Une fois rentrés en Allemagne, le devenir des membres de l'expédition varia : Wienert (météorologue), Krause (botaniste) et Geer (directeur technique) retournèrent à la vie civile et l'histoire ne retint pas leur nom¹¹³.

En revanche, pour Schäfer et Beger, le régime nazi leur permit de continuer leurs recherches. En 1942, Schäfer fut promu *Sturmbannführer* (major)¹¹⁴ dans la SS et se vit confier la direction du tout nouvel institut des études asiatiques *Sven Hedin Institut für Inner Asien und Expeditionen* (Institut Sven Hedin pour l'Asie centrale et les expéditions) en hommage à l'explorateur suédois. En 1943 sortit également le film *Geheimnis Tibet (Tibet secret)*, réalisé à partir des pellicules rapportées du Tibet. Il fut projeté à l'occasion de l'inauguration officielle de l'Institut Sven Hedin le 16 janvier 1943, en présence de l'explorateur suédois lui-même. Ce dernier, sous le coup de l'enthousiasme, s'écria : « Grandiose, merveilleux, ce que nous avons vu ici ! », et se tournant vers Schäfer : « Vous êtes l'homme qui devait continuer mes recherches et qui doit les continuer¹¹⁵ ».

En 1938, le représentant de la Grande-Bretagne au Sikkim, Sir Basil Gould, dit pourtant au sujet de Schäfer :

C'était un personnage intéressant, énergique, versatile, érudit, vaniteux à un degré frisant la puérilité, insensible aux règles sociales et aux sentiments d'autrui, et avant toutes choses, un nazi dans l'âme¹¹⁶.

Il était également « sujet à de violents emportements », affirme l'écrivain britannique Patrick French¹¹⁷.

Kathy Brewis¹¹⁸ émit l'hypothèse que Schäfer photographia les expériences médicales menées au camp de concentration de Dachau. Quant à lui, Peter Levenda supposa qu'il fut le destinataire d'une partie de la collection de crânes asiatiques en plâtre prélevés sur des prisonniers tibétains par Bruno Beger¹¹⁹. Schäfer passa les dernières an-

¹¹³ Cummins Joseph, *History's great untold stories*, National Geographic, 2006, p. 333.

¹¹⁴ Levenda Peter, *ibid*, p. 193.

¹¹⁵ Trimondi Victor et Victoria, *La connexion Nazis-Tibet*, Débat Culturel Critique et Créateur, Trimondi Online Magazine, <http://www.trimondi.de/francais/Tribune%20Juive.htm>.

¹¹⁶ French Patrick, *The master race in mountains*, The Telegraph, 2003.

¹¹⁷ French Patrick, *ibid*.

¹¹⁸ Brewis Kathy, *ibid*.

¹¹⁹ Levenda Peter, *ibid*, p. 193.

nées de la guerre à la tête de l'Institut Sven Hedin mais aussi d'un institut d'étude et de recherche sur la génétique des plantes et d'une fondation d'étude et de recherche sur l'élevage chevalin, tous deux liés à l'*Ahnenerbe* également¹²⁰. A la fin de la guerre, il serait parti à la recherche de la dernière folie d'Hitler : retrouver les origines mythiques d'un cheval roux à crinière blanche¹²¹.

En 1945, Schäfer tomba aux mains des Alliés à Munich. Étant officier d'une organisation criminelle, la SS, il fut interné trois ans, dans le cadre du processus de dénazification de l'Allemagne, avant d'obtenir un *persilschein* (certification d'exonération : un nazi pouvant être disculpé par des déclarations de victimes ou d'anciens ennemis et ainsi acquérir une réputation suffisamment bonne pour satisfaire aux exigences des Alliés pour être libéré). Schäfer minimisa ses liens avec le régime et prétendit que ni la politique, ni l'idéologie, n'étaient entrées en ligne de compte dans ses recherches scientifiques. Il affirma qu'il était devenu SS, uniquement mû par le désir d'obtenir les moyens d'effectuer ses recherches et qu'il s'était retrouvé « pris dans une toile d'araignée » à son insu. Il s'en tira donc qu'avec une simple amende¹²².

En 1949, Schäfer parti au Vénézuéla afin d'y fonder un parc animalier et en 1956, il accéda au corps professoral de l'Université centrale de Caracas en tant que chef de la station biologique de Rancho Rio Grande. En parallèle, il devint le conseiller scientifique de l'ancien roi des Belges Léopold III (1901-1983) et entreprit un voyage de recherches au Congo belge afin de réaliser un film sur les gorilles *Herrscher des Urwalds* (Les seigneurs de la jungle), sorti en 1958. En 1959, il prit sa retraite de l'Université de Caracas et entra au musée d'État de Basse-Saxe à Hanovre en tant que conservateur dans la section d'histoire naturelle¹²³ de 1960 à 1970.

De son côté, l'anthropologue de l'expédition, Bruno Beger, prit un tournant beaucoup plus sombre à son retour en Allemagne. En décembre 1941, il proposa au chef de l'*Ahnenerbe*, Wolfram Sievers, de constituer une collection de crânes juifs dans le cadre de ses recherches anthropologiques¹²⁴. Les deux hommes n'arrivant pas à se mettre d'accord sur le dépositaire de la macabre collection, c'est Heinrich Himmler qui leur demanda de sélectionner 150 juifs pour récupérer leur squelette. Beger s'exécuta, choisissant des déportés de différents types

¹²⁰ Compte-rendu de l'interrogatoire d'Ernst Schäfer fait par les alliés en 1946 : United States Forces - *ibid.*

¹²¹ Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

¹²² Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

¹²³ Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

¹²⁴ Janouin-Benanti Serge, *Si ce sont des hommes... - Les médecins du Struthof*, 3^e éditions, 2016, p. 112.

ethniques afin de fournir au médecin Auguste Hirt les corps sur lesquels il pouvait mener à bien ses expériences au camp de Natzweiler-Struthof en Alsace. 115 déportés furent ainsi envoyés d'Auschwitz à Natzweiler pour y être gazés puis transférés à la *Reichsuniversität* où Hirt les dépeçait, pour transformer les dépouilles en squelettes, et créer une collection servant à l'identification de la race juive¹²⁵. Si les individus en question furent bien gazés, l'*Ahnenerbe* omit toujours, à la fin de la guerre, sa paternité dans leur transformation en squelette¹²⁶. Sur ces 115 déportés, Beger s'en aurait réservé quelques-uns pour son usage personnel et les fit envoyer au château de Mittersill en Autriche, siège de l'Institut Sven-Hedin¹²⁷. L'anthropologue affirma, dans une lettre adressée à Himmler en avril 1943, son approbation de « liquider les Juifs en Europe et, au-delà, dans le monde entier si possible »¹²⁸.

A la fin de la guerre, aucun tribunal ne sut collecter suffisamment de preuves concordantes permettant l'incarcération de Bruno Beger : seul le chef de l'*Ahnenerbe*, Wolfram Sievers, fut condamné à être pendu pour crime contre l'humanité¹²⁹. En 1960, une enquête réalisée sur la collection de squelettes juifs d'Auguste Hirt entraîna l'incarcération de Beger pour quatre mois, dans l'attente de son procès qui se tint dix ans plus tard, en 1970. Au cours de son procès, Beger affirma qu'il ignorait le sort qu'attendaient les juifs qu'il sélectionna en fonction de leurs mensurations à Auschwitz. Le tribunal le reconnut coupable de complicité dans le meurtre de 86 juifs dans les camps de concentration mais ce dernier ne fut condamné qu'à trois ans de prison, la peine minimale, commuée en appel à trois ans de prison avec sursis¹³⁰.

En 1986, Beger publia *Meine Begegnungen mit dem Ozean des Wissens* (*Mes rencontres avec l'océan de sagesse*) qui relate ses nombreuses rencontres avec le Dalai-Lama, notamment celle de Londres où il co-signa, avec Heinrich Harrer, un document affirmant que le Tibet était bien

¹²⁵ Voir Hilberg Raoul, *La destruction des Juifs d'Europe*, Fayard, 1988.

¹²⁶ Reilly J. John, *ibid.*

¹²⁷ Janouin-Benanti Serge, *Si ce sont des hommes... - Les médecins du Struthof*, 3^e éditions, 2016, p. 182.

¹²⁸ Croston Roger, Critique de *Le Secret d'histoire du docteur Bruno Beger : L'Expédition nazie*, Channel 4, 2004, Ofcom.

¹²⁹ Pringle Heather, *The Master Plan : Himmler's Scholar and the Holocaust*, Hyperion, 2006.

¹³⁰ Buffet Charlie, *Polémique autour du héros du film de Jean-Jacques Annaud. Un nazi au Tibet, Heinrich Harrer, l'alpiniste autrichien incarné par Brad Pitt dans « Sept ans au Tibet », fut un SS, non pas de circonstance, comme il s'en défend, mais de conviction*, Libération, octobre 1997.

un État pleinement souverain en 1950¹³¹. Beger mourut finalement paisiblement le 12 octobre 2009 en Allemagne.

Malgré ces faits, les débats entre les historiens pour savoir si Schäfer ou encore Beger étaient des nazis par conviction ou par opportunité, restent ouverts. Les témoignages d'époque, alors que l'Europe connaissait une montée croissante des tensions entre l'Allemagne nazie et les démocraties voisines, poussaient naturellement des personnalités tel que Sir Basil Gould, représentant de la Grande-Bretagne au Sikkim en 1938 ou encore, Hugh Richardson, diplomate britannique se trouvant à Lhasa en 1939, à considérer respectivement Schäfer comme étant « avant toutes choses, un nazi dans l'âme »¹³² pour l'un et « d'un nazi jusqu'au bout des ongles » pour l'autre¹³³. Aujourd'hui, des historiens comme l'allemande Irun Englehardt ou encore le néozélandais Alex MacKay, tendent à alimenter le débat sur le véritable nazisme de Schäfer. MacKay considère, dans l'introduction de son livre, *Tibet and her neighbours : a history (Le Tibet et ses voisins : une histoire)*, Schäfer comme étant un scientifique sérieux et apparemment un nazi réticent¹³⁴. En effet, dès 1932, Schäfer fut élu membre de l'Académie nationale des sciences américaines, et il garda cette distinction à vie. Malgré son interrogatoire menée par les forces alliées en Allemagne en 1946, ainsi que les archives retrouvées sur l'expédition au Tibet de 1938 dans les ruines du Reich, Schäfer ne fut jamais condamné et ses compétences de zoologue et d'explorateur ne furent jamais remises en question. Les États-Unis auraient pourtant pu le faire, étant donné que Schäfer ne faisait pas partie de ces scientifiques allemands, emmenés de l'autre côté de l'Atlantique pour leurs travaux, en échange de l'oubli des expériences qu'ils avaient pu mener pendant la guerre.

Par conséquent, on peut considérer que la question du nazisme pour Schäfer peut être sujette à débat. Dans ses mémoires, il relata dans une conversation au cours de laquelle Himmler lui aurait demandé « *s'il avait vu au Tibet des hommes aux cheveux blonds et aux yeux bleus* », il aurait répondu non. Par la suite, il explicita, à l'assemblée réduite des intimes d'Himmler, tout son savoir sur l'histoire phylogénétique des hommes de là-bas. Himmler se serait révélé à l'explorateur, ce jour-là, comme un adepte de la doctrine des âges de glace d'Hans Hörbiger. Il aurait également fait part à Schäfer qu'il supposait qu'au Tibet « l'on pourrait trouver les vestiges de la haute culture de

¹³¹ Bureau du Tibet, Gouvernement tibétain en exil, *Statement by Westerners who visited Tibet before 1949*, Londres, 2011.

¹³² French Patrick, *ibid.*

¹³³ Hale Christopher, *ibid.*

¹³⁴ MacKay, *Tibet and her neighbours : a history*, Londres, Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 2003, Introduction.

l'Atlantide immergée »¹³⁵. Ernst Schäfer n'a pour autant jamais cédé : son expédition avait des buts essentiellement scientifiques et aucun autre. Schäfer n'accepta pas l'exigence première d'Himmler d'ajouter à l'équipe un runologue, un préhistorien et un chercheur en questions religieuses. Il n'a pas davantage accepté de rencontrer Karl Maria Wiligut, pourtant très apprécié d'Himmler, pour que celui-ci fasse part de ses théories aux membres de l'expédition¹³⁶. Schäfer ne voulait apparemment rien entendre des théories et doctrines occultistes et « mythologisantes » d'Himmler et n'a jamais omis de le faire entendre et savoir¹³⁷.

En revanche, en ce qui concerne Beger, le débat de son supposé nazisme n'a plus lieu d'être. La justice allemande le reconnut coupable, mais en raison de son grand âge et afin d'avancer face à un passé infamant, ce dernier put vivre sa fin de vie paisiblement.

Finalement, l'héritage scientifique et culturel de l'expédition nazie au Tibet a été entaché par la pensée nationale-socialiste, qui motivait certains membres de l'équipe. Aujourd'hui, les archives ne permettent pas de tirer des conclusions hâtives et une opinion trop tranchée, qui excluraient tout autre point de vue sur le fait que seule l'idéologie motivait Schäfer et son équipe dans cette extraordinaire épopée.

III.B. Les legs scientifique et culturel de l'expédition

L'un des héritages les plus importants rapporté par l'expédition allemande d'Ernst Schäfer au Tibet est une compilation de plus de 60 000 photographies et 50 heures de film tournées sur place entre 1938 et 1939. Cette compilation, qui constitue la collection de documents photographiques la plus considérable qui existe sur le Tibet à la veille de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, permet de graver à jamais les traces de ce qu'était la vie au Tibet, pays interdit aux étrangers, dans les années 1930. Par ailleurs, ce fond photographique a fait l'objet d'un ouvrage, dirigé par Isrun Engelhardt¹³⁸.

L'expédition a également permis la collecte d'une énorme quantité de plantes (notamment des céréales comme l'orge, le blé ou encore

¹³⁵ Schäfer Ernst, *Aus meinem Forscherleben (De ma vie de recherche, autobiographie non publiée)*, 1994, p. 168 et suivantes.

¹³⁶ Voir Süner Rüdiger, *Schwarze Sonne. Entfesselung und Missbrauch der Mythen in Nationalsozialismus und rechter Esoterik (Soleil noir. Libérer et abuser des mythes du national-socialisme et de l'ésotérisme de droite)*, Fribourg, 1999, p. 48. et Mierau Peter, *ibid*, p. 335-342.

¹³⁷ Voir Kater Hans Michael, *ibid*, p.79.

¹³⁸ Engelhardt Isrun (dir.), Bianca Herleman, Clare Harris et Claudius Müller, *Tibet in 1938-1939. Photographs from the Ernst Schäfer Expedition to Tibet*, Chicago, Serindia, 2007, 300 pages.

l'avoine) et d'animaux (dont des spécimens vivants comme le petit bharal - *Pseudois schaeferi* en latin -, nom d'une petite chèvre sauvage himalayenne découverte par Schäfer). Les semences furent conservées à l'Institut de génétique des plantes des SS à Lannach, près de Graz (Autriche), organisme dirigé par le botaniste SS Heinz Brücher (1915-1991)¹³⁹. Celui-ci espérait pouvoir tirer de cette collection, ainsi que d'une autre obtenue sur le front de l'Est, les moyens de sélectionner des plantes résistantes au climat de l'Europe orientale, considérée comme partie intégrante du *Lebensraum* (espace vital) nazi, et ce, afin d'atteindre l'objectif de l'autarcie.

Wienert, le géophysicien de l'équipe, s'occupait de relever des mesures géomagnétiques pendant que Krause, le spécialiste des insectes, étudiait les guêpes tibétaines. Krause prit également d'innombrables photographies et des films qui permirent d'immortaliser les manifestations folkloriques comme le nouvel an à Lhassa¹⁴⁰ ou encore la *danse de guerre des Dieux* de Gangtok.

Outre les travaux anthropologiques de Beger avec les relevés d'empreintes en plâtre déjà évoqués, Schäfer s'employa à consigner méticuleusement ses observations sur les moeurs religieuses et culturelles des Tibétains de l'époque, depuis les fêtes lamaïstes jusqu'aux attitudes des habitants vis-à-vis du mariage, du viol, de la menstruation, de l'accouchement, de l'homosexualité et même de la masturbation. Ainsi, dans le compte rendu qu'il donna de l'homosexualité au Tibet, il alla jusqu'à décrire les diverses positions prises par les moines avec les jeunes garçons puis se mit en devoir d'expliquer le rôle important que joua l'homosexualité dans les hautes sphères politiques tibétaines. Les archives de l'expédition contiennent également des pages d'observations minutieuses sur les habitudes sexuelles des Lachung et d'autres peuples himalayens¹⁴¹.

On l'aura compris, même si Himmler aurait aimé convaincre Schäfer d'aller rechercher au Tibet les traces d'une antique haute culture aryenne disparue, il n'y parvint pas. Les membres de l'expédition se posaient tous comme des scientifiques et comme rien d'autre. Ainsi, quand Bruno Beger photographia et prit les mesures anthropomorphiques, crânologiques et chirologiques, ainsi que les empreintes digitales de sujets appartenant à divers peuples du Sikkim ou du Tibet, quand il examina leurs yeux et leurs cheveux, quand il procéda à une quantité d'interviews, il agit toujours en scientifique, en respectant les

¹³⁹ Wieland Thomas, *Autarky and Lebensraum. The political agenda of cadmic plant breeding in Nazi Germany*, Host, Journal of Science and Technology, vol.3, 2009.

¹⁴⁰ Brewis Kathy, *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Levenda Peter, *ibid.*, p. 194.

critères médicaux et biologiques de l'époque, appliqués à l'anthropologie et à la raciologie, sans jamais faire intervenir des théories farfelues¹⁴². En 1944, Beger publia dans la revue *Asienberichte*¹⁴³ les connaissances scientifiques collectées lors de l'expédition. D'après le résultat de ses recherches :

les Tibétains étaient le produit d'un mélange entre diverses races de la grande race mongoloïde (ou race centre-asiatique appelée sinide). Quelques rares éléments de races européïdes étaient également répertoriés. Beger rapporta que ces derniers avaient une : « Haute stature, couplée à un crâne long, à un visage étroit, avec retrait des maxillaires, avec nez plus proéminent, plus droit ou légèrement plus incurvé avec dos plus élevé ; les cheveux étaient lisses ; l'attitude et le maintien étaient dominateurs, indice d'une forte conscience de soi¹⁴⁴.

Il expliqua la présence de ces éléments européïdes, qu'il découvrit, par des migrations et des mélanges ; il évoqua ensuite plusieurs hypothèses possibles pour expliquer :

les rapports culturels et interraciaux entre éléments mongoloïdes et races européïdes, surtout celles présentes au Proche-Orient.

Il remarqua, avec surprise, la présence :

de plusieurs personnes aux yeux bleus, des enfants aux cheveux blonds foncés et quelques types aux traits européïdes marqués¹⁴⁵.

Pour Rose Detlev, cette présence était sans doute due aux reflux des civilisations et royaumes indo-européens d'Asie centrale et de culture bouddhiste après les invasions turco-mongoles. Aujourd'hui, cette présence est attestée par les recherches archéologiques autour des fameuses momies du Tarim (du nom du fleuve traversant le désert du Taklamakan dans le sud du Xinjiang en Chine).

C'est la raison pour laquelle des historiens comme Isrun Engelhardt continuent de souligner la nature purement scientifique de la mission en indiquant que l'intérêt des Nazis pour les images occultes, qui firent la renommée du Tibet en Occident, fut largement exagéré¹⁴⁶.

De son côté, Christopher Hale y voyait la représentation de l'éventail de la science allemande dans les années 1930¹⁴⁷, des sciences pas si

¹⁴² Rose Detlev, *ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Asienberichte*, n°21, avril 1944, pp. 29 - 53.

¹⁴⁴ *Asienberichte*, n°21, avril 1944, p. 45.

¹⁴⁵ *Asienberichte*, n°21, avril 1944, p. 47.

¹⁴⁶ Engelhardt Isrun, *ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁴⁷ Voir Olf-Nathan Josiane, *La Science sous le Troisième Reich*, Seuil, 1993.

innocentes que cela, réutilisées à des fins anthropologiques et médicales par le régime nazi¹⁴⁸.

Dans une lettre du 6 octobre 1936 destinée à Himmler, Schäfer affirma que la région du Haut Plateau tibétain pouvait être considérée comme « *un refuge de peuplades aryennes ancestrales* » et qu'elle était donc « *d'une importance fondamentale pour nous autres allemands* ». C'est pourquoi il pria le *Reichsführer-SS* de « *se charger du commandement suprême et du patronage de cette expédition* »¹⁴⁹. Dans sa thèse, Kaufmann balaye ainsi les affirmations ultérieures de Schäfer, prétendant que la collaboration avec l'organisation scientifique des SS lui avait été imposée, se trouvant ainsi démenties par les documents et les faits. C'est alors que les affirmations proposées par Anne-Marie Blondeau, Katia Buffetrille, Heather Stoddard ou encore Françoise Robin, toutes quatre tibétologues, selon lesquelles c'était le *Reichsführer-SS* qui « *proposa son aide à Ernst Schäfer* », tandis que lui, brave homme et chercheur irréprochable, « *refusa les pseudo-chercheurs que Himmler voulut lui imposer et l'expédition ne fut finalement pas financée par les SS* »¹⁵⁰ s'avèrent fausses.

En effet, tous les membres de l'expédition étaient des officiers SS. Avant de partir, ces derniers durent s'engager à respecter le code de conduite SS et mener à bien leur mission « *dans l'esprit de la Schutzstaffel et du Reichsführer-SS* » et à transmettre tous les objets rapportés ainsi que les résultats scientifiques obtenus ultérieurement à l'*Ahnenerbe*¹⁵¹.

Deux camps historiographiques s'affrontent donc sur la question : l'un qui considère l'expédition d'Ernst Schäfer au Tibet comme étant scientifique, dénuée de tout intérêt politique, qui a pour chef de file l'historienne allemande Isrun Engelhardt et l'autre, qui considère au contraire l'expédition comme ayant un but principalement politique, avec des membres qui restaient des officiers SS avant tout, à la recherche des origines de la race aryenne, et aux ordres d'Heinrich Himmler. Enfin, le livre de Christopher Hale fait figure d'exception puisqu'il évoque d'avantage les thèses ésotériques et mystiques voulues par Himmler pour expliquer qu'une telle expédition put être envoyée sur les contreforts de l'Himalaya.

Le parrainage de l'expédition par Himmler, et l'intégration de ses membres à la SS, permettaient à chacun d'y trouver son compte, qu'il soit politique, scientifique ou mystique. Mais étaient-ils réellement à la recherche des origines de la race aryenne : la réponse est non. Le mys-

¹⁴⁸ Hale Christopher, *ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Kaufmann Wolfgang, *ibid.*, p. 211.

¹⁵⁰ Blondeau, Buffetrille, Robin H. Stoddard, *ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Kaufmann Wolfgang, *ibid.*, p. 223.

ticisme d'Hitler lui était propre et les scientifiques, en premier desquels Schäfer, tâchèrent de conserver la dimension scientifique de leurs recherches au premier plan.

III.C. La recherche d'un mysticisme nazi à nuancer

Schäfer décrit dans ses mémoires les principales sources d'inspiration des théories occultistes d'Hitler : la *doctrine des âges de glace* d'Hörbiger, exposée précédemment, *La doctrine secrète* de Madame Blavatsky paru en 1888 ainsi que *Bêtes, hommes et dieux* de Ferdinand Ossendowski paru en 1923.

Tous ces écrivains influencèrent la société secrète allemande de Thulé¹⁵², qui influença à son tour grandement les pendant mystiques de l'idéologie nazie. Dans *La doctrine secrète*, Helena Blavatsky, philosophe russe puis américaine, vint réconcilier l'ancienne sagesse orientale à la science moderne du début du XX^e siècle. Cette vérité lui aurait été révélée par des *Mahâtmas* tibétains, l'équivalent de nos saints chrétiens. Dans certains passages de l'ouvrage, qui comportait en réalité six volumes, Blavatsky y exposa le concept de « race-racine ». A l'origine de la Terre, il y aurait eu sept races humaines, divisées elles-mêmes en sept sous-races. La quatrième race étant celle des Atlantes, apparue il y a 4,5 millions d'années en Afrique et de laquelle découla la cinquième race, dite Aryenne, qui aurait commencé il y a 100 000 ans en Atlantide. C'est ainsi que Blavatsky considérait « *les Arabes comme des Aryens récents - dégénérés au point de vue spirituel et perfectionné au point de vue matériel* »¹⁵³. Dans son ouvrage, elle alla plus loin en affirmant que « *tous les êtres humains étaient les membres d'une fraternité spirituelle devant vivre dans l'unité* »¹⁵⁴ et précisa que ses travaux visaient à « *constituer un noyau de Fraternité Universelle de l'Humanité sans distinction de race, de couleur, de croyance ou de religion* ». Elle était ainsi fermement opposée au système de castes en Inde et Gandhi (1869-1948) dit à son sujet que sa « *mission de libération de l'Inde [lui] a été révélée lors de [sa] rencontre avec Helena Blavatsky* » qu'il avait faite à Londres. Les nazis reprirent à leur compte son concept de « race-racine » mais en partant du principe que seule la race des Aryens devait être préservée, en évitant le mélange avec d'autres races moins pures.

Quant à Ossendowski, dans *Bêtes, Hommes et Dieux, à travers la Mongolie interdite, 1920-1921*, ce dernier conta son aventure russe, au cours de laquelle il fuit le communisme de la jeune URSS en traversant à pied

¹⁵² Voir François Stéphane, *Les mystères du nazisme : aux sources d'un fantasme contemporain*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 2015, 195 pages.

¹⁵³ Blavatsky Helena, *Abrégé de la Doctrine Secrète*, Editions ADYAR, 1996, p. 453.

¹⁵⁴ Tyson Joseph Howard, *Madame Blavatsky Revisited*, iUniverse, 2006, p. 347.

la Sibérie, la Mongolie et le Tibet afin de rejoindre l'Inde anglaise.

Dans son ouvrage, Christopher Hale reprit à son compte ces théories et ces histoires pour rappeler que l'idée de fonder un grand empire aryen, comme le voulaient les nazis, remontait finalement à la nuit des temps, comme aimaient le rappeler les *Ariosophes*. Le chef de file de ce mouvement, le moine défroqué Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels (1874-1954), souhaitait fusionner le christianisme et le racisme germanique. Au début du XX^e siècle, il présenta la raison de la disparition des Aryens : le mélange racial. Ses travaux furent repris par Guido Von List qui préconisait la fondation d'une société paysanne, patriarcale et esclavagiste dirigée par les Aryens. Comble de l'ironie, les membres de la société de Thulé n'hésitaient pas à lire la Talmud, bible juive par excellence, afin d'y trouver des théories occultistes qu'ils auraient pu réutiliser à leur compte pour justifier leur antisémitisme. Ses membres diffusaient leurs idées par un journal, le *Thule-Gesellschaft*, qui devint rapidement le *Völkischer Beobachter*, le journal officiel nazi.

D'autres théoriciens, comme Hans Günther (1891-1968), vinrent compléter les travaux de ces intellectuels pétris d'ésotérisme et de mystique, alors très en mode au début du XX^e siècle. Günther était l'un des plus ardents défenseurs de l'idée de race nordique¹⁵⁵ et ses écrits tendirent à rechercher les différentes origines possibles de la race aryenne. Protestant, il se convertit au paganisme *Völkisch* dès 1935 et tomba sous l'influence du théoricien nazi le plus important : Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946). Pour lui, le paganisme allemand puisait sa source dans la paysannerie du pays, l'une des principales forces nationales, comme aimait le rappeler Adolf Hitler dans *Mein Kampf*.

Finalement, il paraît difficile de prendre au sérieux la thèse de Christopher Hale dans son livre *Himmler's crusade* lorsque ce dernier prétend que le Troisième Reich a pu être possible en partie grâce à des thèses occultistes ou conspirationnistes¹⁵⁶. Peter Mierau l'expliqua en ces termes dans sa thèse de doctorat :

Dans les années qui viennent de s'écouler, la double thématique du national-socialisme et du Tibet a été dans le vent dans plusieurs types de cénacles. Les activités de chercheur de Schäfer, dans l'entourage de Heinrich Himmler, sont mises en rapport avec des théories occultistes, ésotéristes de droite, sur l'émergence du monde, avec des mythes germaniques et des conceptions bouddhistes ou lamaïstes de l'au-delà. Pour étayer ces thèses, on ne trouve aucun indice ou argument dans les sources écrites disponibles¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁵ Conte Édouard et Essener Cornelia, *La Quête de la race : Une anthropologie du nazisme*, Paris, Hachette, 1995, p. 71.

¹⁵⁶ Rose Detlev, *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Mierau Peter, *ibid.*, pp. 144-173.

Et pourtant, il s'avère particulièrement difficile de prouver ou de réfuter les raisons qui poussèrent la SS à envoyer une expédition dans les confins du Tibet, et expliquer de façon tranchée les véritables raisons qui la motivèrent. Même si les explorateurs appartinrent aux SS et s'ils eurent des rapports étroits avec, dès leur retour en août 1939, notamment dans le cadre de l'*Ahnenerbe* (au département des recherches sur l'Asie intérieure), l'expédition proprement dite ne poursuivit aucun objectif d'ordre idéologique, comme l'affirmèrent les participants eux-mêmes. Bruno Beger, dans son rapport, écrivit¹⁵⁸ :

Tous les objectifs et toutes les tâches effectuées dans le cadre de nos recherches ont été déterminés et fixés par les participants à l'expédition, sous la direction de Schäfer. Objectifs et tâches à accomplir avaient tous un caractère scientifique sur la base des connaissances acquises dans les années 30.

Certes, les SS espéraient que les résultats scientifiques de l'expédition auraient permis une exploitation d'ordre idéologique, mais cela, c'était une autre histoire. Himmler était sans nul doute le seul à espérer que les explorateurs découvrent au Tibet des preuves capables d'étayer ses théories. Par conséquent, la leçon à tirer de cette expédition allemande au Tibet entre 1938 et 1939, est qu'elle constitua un exemple évident que même dans un État totalitaire, comme voulait l'être l'appareil national socialiste et le « *Führerstaat* » (*État du Führer*), où les décisions du parti et la volonté du chef s'imposaient à l'ensemble des activités des citoyens, la force de caractère et l'habileté politique, chez un homme comme Schäfer, permettaient malgré tout de se donner une marge de manœuvre autonome et des espaces de liberté.

Bien que l'hypothèse occulte est désormais à mettre de côté, la volonté d'Himmler de retrouver les ancêtres atlantes de la race aryenne allait bien au-delà d'un désir d'étancher une curiosité personnelle. Dans un Reich prévu pour durer 1 000 ans, c'était toute la société qui était à germaniser de nouveau. Le processus de *Gleichschaltung* (*mise au pas*) a été mis en œuvre par Hitler et le parti nazi dès son accession au pouvoir en 1933. Il s'agissait alors d'imposer un pouvoir total sur l'Allemagne afin de concrétiser le mythe de la *Volksgemeinschaft* (*communauté populaire*). Il suffit de comparer la nomenclature des grades militaires de l'armée allemande sous la République de Weimar (1919-1933) et le Troisième Reich (1933-1945) pour s'en rendre compte. Le but idéologique était de faire table rase du passé et de reconstruire une histoire germanique, qui aurait servi de socle à la nouvelle société allemande.

¹⁵⁸ Beger Bruno, *L'expédition allemande au Tibet d'Ernst Schäfer 1938/39 à Lhassa*, Wiesbaden, 1998, p. 278.

Cette mise au pas a affecté l'ensemble de la société, y compris la sphère religieuse. Le régime national-socialiste ne pouvait accepter un établissement autonome dont la légitimité ne provenait pas du gouvernement et souhaitait la subordination de l'Église à l'État¹⁵⁹. C'est la raison pour laquelle la campagne de *Kirchenkampf* fut une préoccupation prioritaire pour les anti-cléricaux les plus agressifs du régime comme Joseph Goebbels (ministre de la propagande), Martin Bormann (conseiller d'Hitler) ou encore Heinrich Himmler. Le ministre de la propagande, Joseph Goebbels, considérait le christianisme comme une « *opposition insoluble entre la vision chrétienne du monde et une vision allemande héroïque* »¹⁶⁰. Hitler lui-même avait des instincts radicaux par rapport au conflit avec les Églises en Allemagne. Bien qu'il ait parfois voulu retarder la lutte de l'Église et était prêt à limiter son anti-cléricalisme pour des raisons politiques, il rejetait avec passion toute idée de fonder une religion. Il n'avait pas l'intention de devenir prêtre. Son seul rôle exclusif était celui d'un politicien »¹⁶¹. Hitler était convaincu que sur le long terme :

*La science aurait détruit facilement les derniers vestiges de superstition. (...) L'Allemagne ne pouvait tolérer l'intervention d'influences étrangères telles que le pape (...) Les prêtres étaient des « insectes noirs », des avortements en soutane noire*¹⁶².

Sous la dictature d'Hitler, ce furent plus de six mille ecclésiastiques, accusés d'activités traîtresses, qui ont été emprisonnés ou exécutés.

Cependant, malgré la position officielle qu'était celle du Führer, le nazisme possédait de nombreux éléments qui étaient de nature quasi-religieuse. Le culte de la personnalité autour d'Hitler en tant que Führer, les « *énormes congrégations, les bannières, les flammes sacrées, les processions, un style de prédication populaire et radical, les prières et les réponses, les mémoriaux et les marches funèbres* » ont été décrits par des historiens de l'ésotérisme tels que Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke comme « *des accessoires essentiels pour le culte de la race et de la nation, la mission de l'Allemagne aryenne et sa victoire sur ses ennemis* »¹⁶³.

Ces différents aspects religieux du nazisme laissèrent à penser que

¹⁵⁹ Hamerow Theodore, *On the Road to the Wolf's Lair*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 196.

¹⁶⁰ Kershaw Ian, *Hitler a Biography*, W.W. Norton & Co, Londres, 2008, pp. 381-382.

¹⁶¹ Traduction des agendas de Goebbels par Fred Taylor, 1939-1941, Hamish Hamilton, Londres, 1982, p. 76.

¹⁶² Evans Richard, *The Third Reich at War*, Penguin press, New York, 2009, p. 547.

¹⁶³ Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *Soleil noir : cultes aryens, nazisme ésotérique et politiques de l'identité*, Rosnières-en-Haye, Camion blanc, coll. « Camion noir » n°7, 2007, p. 1.

certaines personnalités importantes du régime, comme Heinrich Himmler, avaient pour ambition de fonder une véritable « religion politique »¹⁶⁴. Le projet d'Hitler, par exemple, d'ériger une nouvelle capitale à Berlin (*Welthauptstadt Germania*), fut décrit comme sa tentative de construire une version de la Nouvelle Jérusalem¹⁶⁵. L'architecte en chef d'Hitler, Albert Speer, écrit dans ses mémoires qu'Hitler lui-même avait une vision négative des notions mystiques poussées par Himmler et Alfred Rosenberg. Speer cite Hitler comme ayant dit de la tentative de Himmler de mythifier la SS :

Quelle absurdité ! Nous avons enfin atteint une époque qui a laissé derrière elle tout le mysticisme, et maintenant [Himmler] veut recommencer. Nous aurions tout aussi bien pu rester avec l'église. Au moins, elle avait une tradition. Penser que je pourrais un jour être transformé en saint SS ! Pouvez-vous l'imaginer ? Je me retournerais dans ma tombe...¹⁶⁶.

Cependant, face au zèle que pouvait avoir Himmler dans sa traque des juifs d'Europe, pour purifier le territoire allemand, et sa volonté de créer une armée de surhommes avec la *Waffen-SS*, Hitler n'aurait rien eu à gagner que de remettre en place l'un de ses plus proches fidèles, surtout pour des questions aussi futiles en comparaison à la guerre qui se préparait.

Le livre de Goodrick-Clarke sur *Les racines occultes du nazisme* fut, dans ce sens, l'ouvrage pionnier sur l'Ariosophie. Les Ariosophes réussirent à intégrer des idées occultes dans l'idéologie *völkisch* en s'appuyant sur la notion de « races-racines », postulant des lieux tels que l'Atlantide, Thulé (du nom de la ville dans laquelle les Grecs et les Romains pensaient que le dieu Apollon venait passer une partie de ses vacances d'hiver) et Hyperborée (signifiant « au-delà des souffles du vent du nord », ville considérée par Blavatsky comme étant le point de départ de la deuxième « race-racine ») comme patrie originelle de la race aryenne (et sa branche la plus pure, les Teutons ou les Peuples germaniques).

C'est donc à partir de là qu'Heinrich Himmler devint le fondateur

¹⁶⁴ Voir les travaux d'Emilio Gentile, notamment *La Religion fasciste*, Perron, coll. « Terre d'histoire », 2002 ou encore *Les Religions de la politique. Entre démocraties et totalitarismes*, Seuil, avril 2005. Le terme de « religion politique » renvoie ici à l'idée que l'Allemagne, par son idéologie, la communication du parti nazi ou encore l'exercice du pouvoir par Hitler, revêt un certain nombre de propriétés généralement associées aux religions (croyances, dogmatisme, autoritarisme), et devient ainsi la source de l'asservissement du peuple allemand au régime.

¹⁶⁵ Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *ibid*, p. 203.

¹⁶⁶ Speer Albert, *Au coeur du Troisième Reich*, Paris, Fayard, Pluriel, 2011, p. 94.

de « l'hitlérisme ésotérique »¹⁶⁷, et une figure d'importance majeure dans la pratique du mysticisme nazi. Il consultait régulièrement des astrologues¹⁶⁸, tenta de réformer le calendrier des fêtes religieuses chrétiennes pour ses SS, en leur imposant de nouveaux rites tribaux allemands comme le solstice d'hiver, appelé *Yuletide*, et célébré autour d'un *Allach Julleuchter* (*lumière de Noël*), sorte de petite lanterne en grès dans laquelle les officiers SS plaçaient une bougie décorée de symboles païens germaniques anciens. Himmler était également fasciné par la doctrine de l'obéissance et par le culte de l'organisation¹⁶⁹ des Jésuites. Celui qu'Hitler aurait appelé « *mon Ignace de Loyola* »¹⁷⁰, tenta justement de créer une doctrine cohérente pour ses SS, qui se distinguait de l'idéologie nationale par sa volonté de s'inspirer d'une histoire pétrie de tradition germanique¹⁷¹.

En arrivant au Tibet, Schäfer vit dans l'organisation du système politique du pays un modèle pour l'Allemagne :

*Ils avaient une longueur d'avance sur tous les dirigeants de cette Terre et c'étaient de vrais rois. Des chefs de file violents mais généralement justes, avec un mode de vie fier et viril*¹⁷².

En voyant les hordes de cavaliers tibétains, il vit un modèle pour les unités d'élite SS, non sans rappeler la volonté d'Himmler de faire de ses SS de véritables chevaliers, comme au temps des Croisades, avec notamment leur retraite au flambeau et leur initiation secrète avant d'intégrer l'organisation. Dans une interview télévisée qu'il donna à la fin de sa vie, Schäfer rapporta une anecdote mystique. 50 ans plus tard, il se souvenait ce qu'un chaman tibétain lui avait dit :

*C'était un dimanche. La visage du chaman était jaune mais vira au rouge sang. Il dansait frénétiquement et s'effondra sur le sol. Tous les lamas vinrent pour le ramener au palais (de Lhassa). Après un court repos, j'allai lui parler. Le chaman était pleinement conscient et me dit : « il y aura une vaste destruction. L'étincelle électrique viendra à Lhassa (éclairs, symbole de la SS) et effacera notre religion. Des choses terribles arriveront dans votre pays, aux Anglais et aux Allemands. En Angleterre et en Allemagne*¹⁷³.

¹⁶⁷ Expression de Serrano Miguel, *Le Cordon Doré - L'Hitlérisme ésotérique*, 1978. Voir également Mosse George, *Les Racines intellectuelles du Troisième Reich : La Crise de l'idéologie*, Calmann-Lévy, 2006.

¹⁶⁸ Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *ibid*, p. 165.

¹⁶⁹ Höhne Heinz, *L'Ordre du chef de la mort : l'histoire des SS d'Hitler*, Martin Secker et Warburg, 1969, p. 135.

¹⁷⁰ Höhne Heinz, *ibid*, p. 64.

¹⁷¹ Höhne Heinz, *ibid*, p. 146.

¹⁷² Documentaire DVD, *ibid*.

¹⁷³ Documentaire DVD, *ibid*.

Le 1^{er} septembre 1939, cinquante divisions allemandes déferlaient sur la Pologne : c'était le début de la Seconde Guerre mondiale qui fit en six ans, soixante millions de morts.

Avec ce témoignage, on se rend compte que Schäfer accordait tout de même de l'importance à des événements qui auraient très certainement attirés l'attention d'Himmler. De plus, bien qu'il n'ait jamais fait partie de la société de Thulé, Himmler possédait plus de tendances occultes que tout autre dirigeant nazi¹⁷⁴.

Par ailleurs, dans cette période d'entre-deux-guerres, l'Allemagne était alliée avec l'Italie fasciste de Benito Mussolini (1883-1945). Hors, l'Italie comptait dans ses rangs un Schäfer : l'explorateur Guiseppe Tucci (1894-1984). Ce tibétologue organisa huit expéditions dans l'Himalaya indien, au Tibet ainsi qu'au Népal entre 1928 et 1954. Ce dernier ne cachait en rien son ambivalence vis-à-vis du fascisme et ses récits de voyages rapportés en Europe purent tout à fait inspirer Himmler dans sa volonté d'envoyer une expédition au Tibet. Alors que l'Italie ne fut ni raciste ni antisémite jusqu'à son rapprochement avec l'Allemagne nazie en 1936¹⁷⁵, Himmler tenta d'apporter cet aspect à l'expédition, non seulement en incitant les membres de l'équipe, rattachés au corps de la SS à l'occasion, de rechercher les traces des ancêtres aryens mais également de prouver, par la science, qu'il existait bien une race supérieure destinée à gouverner le monde. Schäfer, Beger et les autres membres de l'expédition étaient les seuls à connaître véritablement leurs motivations personnelles pour participer à une telle expédition. Aussi sombres étaient-elles, le climat d'après-guerre ne leur aurait jamais permis de s'exprimer, même cinquante ans après, et bien que la justice soit intervenue afin de juger certains de leur culpabilité, aucun d'entre eux n'aurait pu émettre l'idée même d'avoir été un vrai nazi de convictions et non de circonstances.

Une fois n'était pas coutume, c'est vraisemblablement Hitler qui était le plus pragmatique au sujet des questions religieuses. Bien trop occupé par les affaires politiques et militaires qui se préparaient en 1939, il y a fort à parier que le régime nazi, s'il avait existé plus longtemps, n'aurait toléré plus qu'une seule religion, contrôlée par l'État, appelée le « christianisme positif »¹⁷⁶, et que tout autre forme de religion aurait été interdite. Comme l'avait fait l'Italie fasciste, on pourrait comparer la situation religieuse de l'Allemagne de l'époque avec celle

¹⁷⁴ Goodrick-Clarke Nicholas, *ibid*, p. 201.

¹⁷⁵ Voir Matard-Bonucci Marie-Anne, *L'Italie fasciste et la persécution des Juifs*, Paris, PUF, 2012.

¹⁷⁶ Voir Harvill-Burton Kathleen, *Le nazisme comme religion. Quatre théologiens déchiffrèrent le code religieux nazi (1932-1945)*, Presses Université Laval, 2007.

qui existe en Chine aujourd'hui au sujet des chrétiens, qui sont divisés entre l'Église officielle de Chine, contrôlée par le parti communiste chinois, et l'Église souterraine, qui reste encore fidèle à Rome.

Parallèlement aux considérations du Führer, Himmler envisageait donc d'avantage de mettre en place une nouvelle religion d'État, sur les bases des différentes croyances germaniques anciennes, et qui aurait permis à terme non seulement de légitimer davantage le destin politique du Reich, mais également de garantir à Hitler la fidélité jusqu'à la mort de son peuple au nom de la pureté de la race.

Entre ces deux personnages clés du régime, l'expédition nazie au Tibet d'Ernst Schäfer illustra parfaitement la différence existante entre les deux hommes. Ses membres se retrouvèrent face à deux choix : celui de la science et celui de l'occulte. Étant SS, ils n'auraient eu aucune raison de se mettre à dos Heinrich Himmler, qui représentait un soutien politique et financier de taille. Néanmoins, en temps que scientifiques et à l'aune des découvertes et des méthodes employées dans les années 1930, il semblerait que la science soit restée la véritable raison qui expliqua l'expédition.

En comparant les différences hypothèses d'historiens professionnels et de curieux, on se rend compte que l'expédition nazie au Tibet est loin d'avoir livré tous ses secrets. Chacun reste libre de se forger sa propre opinion sur la culpabilité plus ou moins importante des différents membres de l'équipe. Les parts d'ombres qui l'entourent restent difficile à expliquer sans des preuves matérielles dans les archives, et font l'objet de nombreuses spéculations, aussi mystiques ou ésotériques soient telles, qui sont aujourd'hui à la source de nombreux romans et œuvres de fiction cinématographiques.

Quoiqu'il en soit, il reste particulièrement difficile d'entrer dans la tête, normalement cartésienne, d'un scientifique allemand de cette époque, étant donné le contexte politique de l'Allemagne en 1938. Si cette expédition avait été envoyée par la République de Weimar, ces débats n'auraient pas eu lieu d'être. Mais parce que ses membres étaient des SS et qu'ils continuèrent, pour certains d'entre eux, leur carrière, aussi funeste soit elle, dans l'Allemagne nazie après 1939, ces questionnements se doivent d'être posés.

*Ce que voulait la populace, c'était d'accéder à l'histoire, même au prix de l'auto-destruction*¹⁷⁷. Hannah Arendt résuma à la perfection ce que les nazis et les principaux dirigeants du régime avaient essayé de faire : voler à tout un peuple son histoire, ses racines, ses croyances, pour les réécrire, les transformer et s'accaparer sa culture, pour l'obliger à repartir de zéro en supprimant ses repères et sa mémoire.

L'expédition nazie au Tibet réussit à moitié sa mission, puisqu'elle

¹⁷⁷ Arendt Hannah, *Les origines du totalitarisme : Le système totalitaire*, Seuil, 1998.

ramena en Allemagne un formidable témoignage de tout ce que l'on pouvait trouver dans le pays dans les années 1930, mais priva Himmler des preuves scientifiques irréfutables que la race aryenne descendait bien des Atlantes, ce peuple dont la supériorité raciale leur aurait permis inéluctablement de dominer le monde. Sur le plan religieux, il semblerait qu'Himmler fut relativement isolé dans son projet de créer une religion politique, propre au Troisième Reich. A la veille de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, la préoccupation prioritaire du régime était de s'assurer de l'absence de résistants parmi ses rangs et de la parfaite mise au pas de l'Église, notamment protestante, qui restait sûrement l'une des organisations les plus influentes auprès des masses. A l'heure où les archives du Vatican tendent à être ouvertes, c'est bien l'inaction de ses membres qui fut majoritairement de mise, face aux représailles que pouvaient connaître les religieux dissidents du régime.

Sur le long terme, deux possibilités s'offraient au Reich allemand : l'éradication pure et simple de la religion, pour ne laisser la place qu'au régime nazi et à sa propagande - la plus plausible - ou la création d'un nouveau dogme, d'une religion politique, dont le seul but aurait été de servir le régime. Basé sur les considérations d'Himmler, ce dogme aurait alors été créé de toutes pièces à partir de contes et de légendes issus des croyances nordiques et germaniques les plus anciens. L'importance capitale de ce dogme aurait été érigée à partir de preuves scientifiques irréfutables, d'où les nombreuses expéditions allemandes dans le monde entier pendant l'entre-deux-guerres. Les repères chrétiens de la société auraient été annihilés au profit d'une nouvelle idéologie païenne, dirigée par le *Führer*. Toute une nouvelle symbolique aurait été créée (fêtes, lieux de pèlerinage, personnages historiques) afin de redonner aux hommes des éléments dans lesquels ils pouvaient croire. Et la SS n'était pas la seule à le vouloir, puisque toute l'Allemagne commençait à prendre ce chemin. A partir de 1933, les nazis imposèrent la commémoration des *Blutzeuge* (*martyrs*) de novembre, en souvenir des membres du NSDAP tués lors du Putsch manqué de la Brasserie les 8 et 9 novembre 1923. Par la suite, la cérémonie du *Blutfahne* (*drapeau de sang*) fut également créée, pendant laquelle Adolf Hitler consacrait les nouveaux drapeaux et les fanions du parti et des SS, avec le drapeau tâché du sang des putschistes mort en 1923. Ce drapeau acquit le rang de relique et était religieusement gardé dans la *Fahnenhalle* de la Maison brune, quartier général munichois du parti nazi de 1920 à 1945.

Toutes ces croyances s'inscrivirent dans une époque marquée par l'orientalisme, cet intérêt curieux des européens pour les pays du couchant (Maghreb), du Levant (Moyen-Orient) et plus largement, pour les contrées lointaines d'Asie colonisées, de l'Inde au Népal, en passant

par la Chine et le Tibet, jusqu'à l'Empire japonais. Malgré l'enthousiasme de découvrir l'inconnu, le milieu du XX^e siècle était en proie à une vague importante d'antisémitisme et de xénophobie qui existait déjà au siècle précédent. Preuve en est : l'expédition nazie au Tibet reçut de nombreux soutiens étrangers, y compris de la part d'aristocrates anglais germanophiles, ainsi que des élites coloniales en poste dans la province indienne du Sikkim. Cette sympathie idéologique perdura jusqu'aujourd'hui, et nourrit encore les discours hindous les plus radicaux de l'extrême-droite indienne, comme ceux du *Rashrtiya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)*, soutenu par le parti politique actuellement au pouvoir, le *Bharatiya Janata Party*, dont le dirigeant est le premier ministre de l'Inde : Narendra Modi. Dans *RSS, School Texts and the Murder of Mahatma Gandhi: The Hindu Communal Project*¹⁷⁸, Aditya Mukherjee, professeur d'histoire à l'université Jawarhalal Nehru de New Delhi, identifia des passages menaçants dans des ouvrages distribués par le RSS depuis les années 1990 dans les écoles primaires indiennes :

*Partout où va l'Islam, ses pratiquants arrivent avec une épée dans une main et le Coran dans l'autre. Des rivières de sang coulent partout où arrive l'Islam*¹⁷⁹.

D'autres manuels scolaires, distribués au collège, font quant à eux l'apologie du nazisme, reflet de l'intérêt des nationalistes hindous de l'époque pour les théories européennes sur la pureté de la race. Pour beaucoup, la mise en application de cette théorie suprémaciste hindoue fut illustrée par la loi sur la citoyenneté, adoptée le 11 décembre 2019 par le parlement indien. Celle-ci facilite la naturalisation d'immigrés illégaux venus de trois pays voisins mais en exclut les musulmans. La nationalité est ainsi pour la première fois attribuée sur des bases religieuses, ce qui semble inconstitutionnel dans ce pays laïc. Et pourtant, le RSS continue de garder une grande influence au sein du ministère de l'Éducation nationale indien et n'hésite pas à intervenir lors des manifestations récentes contre cette loi sur la citoyenneté, en menant des représailles violentes à l'encontre des manifestants, avec la complicité de la police. Le RSS s'inspire directement du parti nazi allemand pour son projet politique, avec pour ambition première la suppression de toutes velléités séparatistes musulmanes en Inde. A l'époque de l'occupation britannique, certains militants du RSS n'hésitèrent pas à

¹⁷⁸ Mukherjee Aditya, *RSS, School Texts and the Murder of Mahatma Gandhi: The Hindu Communal Project (Response Books)*, Sage Publications, 2008.

¹⁷⁹ Farcis Sébastien, *Inde : aux racines du nationalisme hindou*, France culture, 24 février 2020.

collaborer avec l'administration impériale pour lutter contre les musulmans et depuis les années 2000, ses membres élargirent leurs actions violentes contre les chrétiens, les communistes et s'inspirèrent directement de la politique du *Lebensborn* (*Fontaine de vie*) nazie pour mettre en place un programme médical spirituel pour aider des couples indiens à donner naissance à des enfants « parfaits, grands et à la peau claire (...) avec d'importantes capacités mentales »¹⁸⁰.

Quatre-vingt-deux ans auparavant, en 1938, la science allemande de l'époque soutint l'expédition au Tibet dans sa recherche de preuve qu'il existait un lien physique entre deux peuples, avec des caractéristiques physiques en moyenne très différentes. L'expédition fut un triomphe, et ses données permirent d'alimenter les théories raciales dans lesquelles croyaient le parti nazi et la SS. Au lendemain de l'expédition, l'*Ahnenerbe* se reconcentra sur ses recherches en Europe et notamment dans le Tyrol du Sud, dans la région du Haut-Adige, à la frontière italienne, où de nombreux germanophones appelèrent à l'aide Hitler, face au régime de Mussolini qui tentait de les italianiser par la force. Naturellement, Hitler fit la sourde oreille pour s'assurer du soutien du dictateur italien dans ses projets de conquête. Le Troisième Reich trouva finalement un compromis puisqu'il autorisa ces italiens germanophones à immigrer dans les nouveaux territoires de la Pologne occupée. Jusqu'en 1943, la grande majorité d'entre eux restèrent sur place et seule la proclamation de Badoglio du 8 septembre 1943, qui entérina l'armistice entre l'État italien et les États-Unis, changea la donne. Pour aider Mussolini à rester au pouvoir, la Wehrmacht engagea les combats en Italie et l'administration allemande géra directement la province du Haut-Adige, permettant aux germanophones de venir gonfler les rangs de la SS et de la Gestapo dans le pays, traquant avec zèle tous les juifs et les soldats italiens qui désertaient en grand nombre.

En 1943, les armées allemandes, victorieuses d'hier, reculaient désormais sur tous les fronts, embrigadant au sein des *Volkssturm* (*Tempête du peuple*) vieillards et adolescents pour faire face au rouleau compresseur russe et à l'avancée des forces alliées. En 1944, la politique du *carpet bombing* (*tapis de bombes*) mise en place par les États-Unis et l'Angleterre noyait l'Allemagne sous un amas de flammes et de ruines. Au printemps 1945, le Reich millénaire mourant tenta de résister dans un dernier sursaut dans les Ardennes. Assailli de toute part, Hitler se suicida dans son bunker le 30 avril 1945 et la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale fut entérinée par la signature des armistices des 8 mai (Reims) et 9 mai (Berlin) 1945. S'en suivit la traque des bourreaux, en premier lieu desquels Heinrich Himmler, retrouvé à Bremervörde,

¹⁸⁰ Sankari Lina, *Inde. Modi rêve d'une race supérieure*, L'Humanité, 30 juillet 2017.

près de Hambourg. Déguisé en sergent-major de police, il fut reconnu et se suicida en mordant dans une capsule de cyanure. Le chef de l'*Ahnenerbe*, Wolfram Sievers, qui avait déménagé l'institution dans le sud de l'Allemagne, fut jugé pour crime contre l'humanité et pendu. Quant à Schäfer et Beger, ils connurent un destin évoqué précédemment.

Dans l'effondrement du Reich, l'administration nazie tenta de faire disparaître les preuves de ses expériences monstrueuses et de son meurtre de masse. La très grande majorité des archives de l'*Ahnenerbe* furent brûlées, d'où la difficulté d'étudier les sources concernant l'expédition nazie au Tibet, afin d'étoffer les témoignages et les récits, souvent subjectifs, des membres qui composaient l'équipe, tous morts aujourd'hui. Ces sources furent envoyées aux États-Unis au lendemain de la guerre et constituent aujourd'hui un fond important sur l'expédition d'Ernst Schäfer¹⁸¹. Le rôle que put jouer l'organisation d'Himmler disparut dans les flammes, et sa mémoire s'éteignit avec la disparition de ses membres. La mort de l'alpiniste Heinrich Harrer en 2006, qui avait rencontré Sven Hedin en 1952, marqua le point final de ces épopées tibétaines du XX^e siècle, qui restent la source de nombreuses réflexions contemporaines, à bien des égards.

Aujourd'hui, l'expédition nourrit encore bien des fantasmes et l'éсотérisme nazi, qui constitue une part d'ombre fort difficile à expliquer et à comprendre, alimente toujours les romans d'aventures comme *Le poids d'un ange* d'Eugen Uricaru¹⁸² ou encore *Opération Shambhala, des SS au pays des dalai-lamas* de Gilles Van Grasdorff¹⁸³.

La Seconde Guerre mondiale faillit exterminer toute une génération. Des milliers de maisons furent rasées, mais les gens réussirent à les rebâtir. En revanche, Hitler et ses complices tentèrent de détruire la mémoire allemande, faire comme si l'Histoire n'avait jamais existé. C'est la raison pour laquelle des hommes et des femmes combattirent le nazisme et ses alliés, *parce qu'un homme sans mémoire est un homme sans vie, parce qu'un peuple sans mémoire est un peuple sans avenir*¹⁸⁴.

¹⁸¹ United States Forces - *ibid*.

¹⁸² Uricaru Eugen, *Le poids d'un ange*, Noir sur Blanc, 2017.

¹⁸³ Grasdorff Van Gilles, *Opération Shambhala - Des S.S. au pays des dalai-lamas*, Presses du Châtelet, 2012.

¹⁸⁴ Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929), maréchal français victorieux de la Première Guerre mondiale.

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“Feast of the Wise”: Author, Structure and Textual Witnesses of the 16th Century Religio-Historical Work *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* by the Second dPa' bo, gTsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566)


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1. Introduction¹

[In] dPa' bo gTsug lag's Chos 'byun we have something of exceptional value. Detailed examination of the whole work is likely to provide a wealth of information, some of it, perhaps, quite new, on many aspects of Tibetan studies.

Hugh E. Richardson, 1959²

he *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, composed by the Second dPa' bo, gTsug lag phreng ba³ (1504–1566), has often been praised for its fidelity to historical documents in its presentation.⁴ In particular, it is considered a valuable source for the imperial period of Tibetan history, and at the same time contains extensive materials about the history of the bKa' brgyud, and particularly the Karma bka' brgyud, tradition of Tibetan Buddhism for the period before the mid-sixteenth century. gTsug lag phreng ba is called “the great sixteenth-century historian” by van der Kuijp (1996, 41) and Lokesh Chandra says that he “stands out among Tibetan historians by his un-

¹ I would like to thank Jim Rheingans for his high-level feedback and advice on this paper, which I very much appreciated. I am deeply indebted to Bruno Galasek-Hul for his detailed comments and especially for challenging my translations. Last but not least, I am grateful to Paul Partington for his English copyediting. All three have contributed in complementary ways to raise the quality of this article.

² Richardson 1959, x–xi.

³ Depending on the source, both spellings, gTsug lag phreng ba and gTsug lag 'phreng ba, are found. In this paper, the first variant is applied throughout, apart from direct quotes that use another variant.

⁴ For instance, according to Richardson (1980, 62), it “has unique value among Tibetan histories in recording what are generally accepted as copies of original documents from the time of the early kings which had been preserved at Bsam-yas”.

usual and accurate use of the ancient inscriptions and archive materials in the monasteries” (Chandra 1959, vii).

The Italian Orientalist, Guiseppe Tucci (1894–1984), and the British Tibetologist, Hugh E. Richardson (1905–2000),⁵ were probably the first Western scholars to thoroughly work with the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (e.g. Tucci 1950; Richardson 1958; 1959; 1980; 1987). A significant number of scholars have used this religio-historical oeuvre for their research since—referencing passages here and there. Only a few, mostly short, passages have been translated.⁶ However, altogether, to date the majority of the work remains untranslated and still deserves more research. For this reason, this article aims at providing some material to facilitate access to this sixteenth-century work.

In the introduction, I will briefly touch upon the *chos 'byung* genre, before entering into some discussion on the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (CKG)⁷ itself. This is followed by a section about the author of the CKG, the Second dPa' bo, gTsug lag phreng ba, where I provide a brief overview of the state of research about his life, as well as a very short summary of some of the main events of his biography. Section 3 outlines the structure of the CKG based on the table of contents and the length of the different chapters. In section 4, the different textual witnesses and editions available—xylographs, manuscripts and modern book editions—are characterized. There are five appendices. Appendix A provides Tibetan text and annotated translation of the beginning of the CKG. More precisely, it covers the title page, the expression of worship (*mchod brjod*), and the declaration of intent for the exposition (*bshad par dam bca' ba*). Appendix B, likewise, translates the colophon at the end of the work, which is split into the author's epilogue, an outline of the structure of the work, the author's colophon, and the printer's colophon. Appendix C provides a table of the structure of the work according to the block print edition, while Appendix D presents a detailed table of contents in Tibetan, together with English translation and indication of length of the different sections based on one of

⁵ For a short biography, see Freeman 2006.

⁶ It goes beyond the scope of this article to provide a bibliography of translations and research done based on the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*. Nevertheless, it would be desirable to compile such a bibliography in the future. For instance, translations of passages of the oeuvre are found in Rheingans (2021, 149–55), and Dell (2020, 48–51; 2021a, 86–89; 2021b; forthcoming).

⁷ In the remainder of this article, I will use the acronym CKG in order to refer to the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* in general. When referring to a specific edition of the CKG, a three-letter *siglum* will be used. Those *sigla* are defined in the bibliography. The first letter is always “P” and stands for the author (dPa' bo ...), the middle position takes the letters “X” (xylograph), “M” (manuscript), or “B” (modern book), respectively. The last position takes a number to distinguish the editions or textual witnesses of the respective type, e.g. “PX1”, PB3” etc. Other Tibetan texts will be referred to using the author-title system.

the modern book editions (PB3). Finally, Appendix E uses this granular table of contents to assign the respective page numbers to any of the textual witnesses available to me, which should be a useful tool for quickly locating content.

1-1. *The Genre of chos 'byung*

Tibetan historiography knows quite a number of genres. Among them the more famous ones are *lo rgyus* (records, chronicles), *rgyal rabs* (royal genealogy, royal chronicle), and *chos 'byung*.⁸ Literally, *chos 'byung* means “emergence/arising of the Dharma”. It has been rendered into English using different terms, such as “history of religion or the doctrine” (Vostrikov 1994, 139), “history of the origin of religion (= Buddhism)” (Sørensen 2015, 157), “religious chronicle” (van der Kuijp 1996, 42), or “origin of Buddhism” (ibid., 46). Other valid candidates are “Dharma history”, “doctrinal history”, “history of Buddhism”, “Buddhist history” or “religious history”.

According to Sørensen (2015, 157) the earliest known representative of this genre dates back to the eleventh century, and *chos 'byung* became “by far the most dominant” among the various historiographic genres. “In a sense, it reflects what we would term ‘religious historiography’, a (quasi-)historical narrative model that merges the modes of ecclesiastical and doctrinal historiography” (ibid.).

As a possible motivation out of which this genre developed, van der Kuijp suspects that due to “the proliferation of various doctrinal cycles a need was felt to place these in historical perspective and thereby legitimate them” (van der Kuijp 1996, 46).

According to Vostrikov (1994, 39), works of this genre may contain one or more of the following topics:

- History of Tibet,
- History of Buddhism in Tibet,
- History of the spread of Buddhism in China/ India/ Mongolia,
- Secular and ecclesiastical history of all or some peoples of these countries,
- History of some Buddhist sect or monastic school,

⁸ For an overview on Tibetan historical genres and historiography, see the articles by Sørensen (2015) and van der Kuijp (1996), as well as the monograph by Vostrikov (1994). Vostrikov also characterizes some more historiographic genres, apart from the ones mentioned here. Particularly, for a more in-depth discussion of the *chos 'byung* genre, see Vostrikov 1994, 139–79, van der Kuijp 1996, 46–47, and Sørensen 2015, 157–58.

- History of Buddhist mystic cults.

Oftentimes, *chos 'byungs* are compiled from materials of other types of historical and related works such as *lo rgyus*, *rgyal rabs* or *rnam thar*. Therefore, the borders between the different genres are somewhat fluid.

1-2. Feast of the Wise

The *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, as it is called by its short title, was composed by the Second dPa" bo, gTsug lag phreng ba, over a period of nineteen years between 1545 and 1564.⁹ He finished it only about two years before his death. The work is also referred to as the *IHo brag chos 'byung*, "in reference to the author's principal seat in the region of Lho brag in southern Tibet" (Buswell and Lopez 2014, 189). According to the author's colophon (Appendix B), gTsug lag phreng ba wrote the CKG due to his own wishes and the request of the great ruler (*sa skyong ba chen po*) bSod nams rab brtan (b. 16th cent.).¹⁰

Wooden printing blocks were produced from the manuscript. The printer's colophons at the end of (almost) every volume of the CKG provide some information on the circumstances of production of the printing blocks. The printing blocks were obviously not produced in one go, since the printer's colophons of the different volumes indicate different sponsors and places of production.¹¹ The information provided there points to the ruling families of Bya yul¹² and sKu rab¹³ as sponsors, who are both known as supporters of the Karma bka'

⁹ See author's colophon, translated in Appendix B.

¹⁰ Identification is not completely certain. It could be Karma mi pham bsod nams rab brtan. According to the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC) (www.tbrc.org), he was the "ruler of the *yar stod* principality; a supporter of the *karma kaM tshang* tradition" (BDRC, P10352).

¹¹ There are fourteen printer's colophons (PX1, vol. 1, 84, 102, 149, 459, 503, 531, 661, 750, 871, vol. 2, 506, 528–29, 555, 605, and 707).

¹² Bya yul is a region situated east of IHo brag (Powers and Templeman 2020, 461). The name of the Bya yul ruler most frequently mentioned is Nor 'dzin dbang mo Tshogs gnyis grub (e.g. in PX1, vol. 1, 531, 661), where Nor 'dzin dbang mo seems to be a "title of queens or princesses" (Monlam 2016, *nor 'dzin dbang mo*). Other names possibly pointing to Bya yul are gNam gshegs dpal 'byor bzang mo and Chos kyi rgyal po khu dbon. For some information on the Bya yul rulers, see Czaja 2013, 473–80.

¹³ sKu rab is a principality of Dwags po located in Southern Tibet. The name of a ruler from sKu rab is mentioned in the printer's colophon of volume *pa as g.Yul rgyal bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan* (PX, vol. 1, 871). For more background on sKu rab rulers and their support of the Karma bka' brgyud tradition, see also Ehrhard (2013, 72–73) and Rheingans (2021, 89, 102, *passim*).

brgyud.¹⁴ The year of production of the different volumes is not indicated explicitly, but in some cases, conclusions can be drawn from the wishes or dedications at the end of the colophons. For instance, in volume *tha*, there is a wish for the long life of the glorious lama (*dpal ldan bla ma*), which might indicate that this volume's printing blocks were still completed during the lifetime of gTsong lag phreng ba. In contrast, in volume *pa*, it is stated that the virtue of producing the printing blocks shall be dedicated to complete the intent of the glorious lama (*dpal ldan bla ma'i dgongs pa rdzogs phyir bsngo*), an indication that gTsong lag phreng ba had already passed away at the time of completion.¹⁵

The ornamental title of the work is *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, which has been translated as "Feast for Scholars", "Feast for the Wise", "Scholars' Feast" and the like. It seems that everyone agrees on the rendering of *dga' ston* as "feast",¹⁶ while there are two fractions for the translation of *mKhas pa*. In order to find out which rendering of the term *mKhas pa* fits best, one has to ask to whom it refers. Here, I see three possibilities: (1) the author, (2) the readership, or (3) the protagonists of the work. Option (1) can be deemed unlikely, as Tibetan authors tend to be humble and would not praise themselves in their own book title.¹⁷ Option (2), the readership, is a possibility, which can be and has been argued for, resulting in renderings such as the "Feast for Scholars". In this paper, I will rather argue for option (3), the protagonists. My argumentation will be supported by an analysis of the long title of the CKG and by the author's epilogue (Appendix B), his expression of worship, and declaration of intent (Appendix A).

Who are the protagonists of the CKG? As will be shown in more detail in section 3 of this article, the protagonists are various figures who play a crucial role in propagating Buddhism, starting with the

¹⁴ For instance Karma 'phrin las pa (1456–1539)—one of gTsong lag phreng ba's teachers—was involved in block printing projects using funds from Bya and sKu rab (Rheingans 2021, 89).

¹⁵ I would like to thank Franz-Karl Ehrhard who provided me with some useful hints for my analysis of the printer's colophons and especially for the identification of the different names mentioned there (e-mail communication in April 2021). A detailed analysis of all printer's colophons is beyond the scope of this paper, as the printing circumstances appear somewhat complex and there is enough material to dedicate a separate article to it.

¹⁶ *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* provides the following definition: "yid dga'ba'i ston mol dga' ston rten brell ming gi rnam grangs la dgyes ston dang/ mchod ston/ nyer dga' ha gsol bcas sol" (Yisün 1985, *dga' ston*). Hence, it has the connotation of some kind of celebration with good food involved and of joy (*dga' ba*), entertainment (*mchod ston*), and delight (*nyer dga'*). The English "feast" bears a similar connotation.

¹⁷ There is a social norm to refer to oneself with humility. Roesler has analyzed this in the context of autobiographical life writing, since there this social norm creates a tension with the need to present oneself in a positive way as a Buddhist teacher and example to be followed (Roesler 2020).

Buddha, to the Dharma kings (especially Srong btsan sgam po (617–649) and Khri srong lde btsan (742–796)), and up to various Buddhist masters of different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, especially the Karma pas.¹⁸ If they are referred to by *mkhas pa*, the standard translation “scholar” does not fit very well. Looking up *mkhas pa* in the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, one finds the following definition: “to be extremely knowledgeable or to fully understand”.¹⁹ The first part is well translated with “scholar”. The term *rtogs pa* in the second part can refer to both conceptual (“scholar”) and non-conceptual understanding (“fully realized”) depending on context. I am not aware of an English word that would fully convey all connotations, but given the protagonists, that is what one should be looking for. In my opinion, “wise” or “sage”, comes at least reasonably close.

We find support for this interpretation when looking at the non-abbreviated title of the work: *Dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba'i legs par bshad pa*. My attempt at a translation would be this: “The excellent exposition elucidating the history of the ones who ruled²⁰ through the wheel of the authentic Dharma, called the ‘Feast of the Wise’”. This is the title as found on the title page (Appendix A) and in the colophon (Appendix B). The title in the incipit (Appendix A) differs in one syllable. Instead of *bsgyur ba rnams*, it reads *bsgyur rgyal rnams*, which in my opinion helps to make the intended meaning even clearer. In terms of translation, this would just replace “the ones” by “the victorious ones” making it more specific, and more evident that it refers to the protagonists. On the one hand, *rgyal* can be short for *rgyal ba*, an epithet of the Buddha, but also an honorific title often used to refer to high lamas, for instance the Karma pas. On the other hand, *rgyal* can also be short for *rgyal po* (“king”), thus referring to the Dharma kings (*chos rgyal*). Summing up, the descriptive title of the CKG clearly puts the protagonists to the fore. The ornamental title—*mKhas pa'i dga' ston*—likely aims at expressing the same meaning in more poetical and abbreviated language. Hence, *mkhas pa* likely refers to the protagonists.

The focus on the protagonists is also confirmed when looking at the

¹⁸ This idea of Tibetan historiography mainly consisting of a succession of hagiographies also matches the analysis brought forward by Schwieger (2013). A brief summary of some of Schwieger’s findings is provided below in this section.

¹⁹ Yísün 1985, *mkhas pa: rab tu shes pa'am legs par rtogs pa*.

²⁰ Tib. *chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams*. The expression seems to be an allusion to the worldly *cakravartin* (*'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po*), “the king who rules by means of the wheel”, here referring to the Dharma counterpart. In the context at hand, the (nominalized, transitive) verb is a past stem (*bsgyur ba*). Both—the *cakravartin* allusion and the variant of the title in the incipit discussed in the main text hereafter—support the interpretation that this refers to persons rather than to a thing (“that which ruled” or “that which caused changes”), hence, “the ones who ruled...”.

“expression of worship” (*mchod brjod*), where the author says “[we bow down] to the Supreme Teacher and his sons and students”, a reference to the protagonists (Appendix A). Likewise, the author’s epilogue refers to the protagonists as “the innumerable assembly of authentic great beings who elucidate the excellent teachings of the lion of the Śākyas” (Appendix B).

I deliberately gave some room to the analysis of the title, as the descriptive part of the title—*dam pa’i chos kyi ’khor los bsgyur ba/rgyal rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa*—can be understood as an extension of the term *chos ’byung*, thus, providing a definition of the genre or at least illuminating gTsong lag phreng ba’s understanding thereof. His work seeks to elucidate the history of great beings or bodhisattvas who ruled or caused changes through the application of the Dharma. Hence, he sees Dharma history (*chos ’byung*) (1) as accounts of great beings’ lives, (2) as an active process (great beings have the power to influence and steer history through their actions, as opposed to a view where events just occur without being able to influence them), (3) as application of the Dharma, and (4) as a means to generate trust to great beings in the reader. The last point can be derived from the declaration of intent (*bshad par dam bca’ ba*) at the beginning of the work, where gTsong lag phreng ba clearly states: “... only through trust, the highest mind will be drawn toward the qualities of the authentic ones, and in order to bring benefit also to others [who are] of similar kind to myself, [I] write [about] the excellent way of acting of the victorious ones of the Dharma”²¹ (Appendix A).

The fact that gTsong lag phreng ba sets out to generate trust in the reader toward the Dharma and the authentic beings presented in the CKG is indeed formative for his work. Here, it is fundamentally distinct from a mere historical work based on facts. Nevertheless, gTsong lag phreng ba also states in the declaration of intent that in all passages the text “relates to reliable sources (*ngeś pa’i khungs*)” (Appendix A). This may coincide with the much-praised faithful adherence to original sources of the work, but it is not automatically the same as adherence to facts according to Western understanding. The source might contain information that we would consider non-factual, as happens often in spiritual biographies (*rnam thar*), when miraculous or visionary events are described. From an emic point of view, such accounts might very well be considered true, as Buddhists often think in the category of the two truths: the conventional and the ultimate truth. The conventional truth or reality is perceived by “normal individuals”, while “at the same time the very same world and conventional reality

²¹ Tib. *chos rgyal rnams*, lit. “Dharma kings”, here probably to be understood in a wider sense as also including the Buddhist masters he writes about, therefore rendered as “victorious ones of the Dharma”.

by any advanced master or saint [is] seen and perceived of as being 'unreal', a reality that constituted the 'ultimate reality or truth'. The interplay between 'these realities' seems to permeate much biographical and historical writing" (Sørensen 2015, 162).

Schwieger (2013) goes into even more depth with his analysis of Tibetan historiographical writing. He examines history as "myth" in the sense "that history has been assigned the role of conferring meaning and that normative claims have been derived from it" (ibid., 65–66). Historiographies are written by the clergy with the aim of conserving the culture, drawing an "unbroken connection" to its Indian origins. The perspective taken by the historiographers is the one of the institution they are affiliated with (ibid., 68). Historiographies are mostly built according to a genealogical structure, which "divides history into a series of biographies linked by the principle of hereditary succession" (ibid., 69). Both the starting point of history and the role model for all following hagiographies that history consists of is the life of Buddha Śākyamuni. Consequentially, "the actions and protagonists take center stage, while social, economic, and political structures take a back seat" (ibid., 70–71). The depiction of the life of the protagonists is limited to certain topoi, such as a life crisis resulting in the search for a spiritual teacher, "receipt and granting of initiations and religious instructions", "foundation of monasteries", "the setting up of religious images, pilgrimages, and travel by groups of students" (ibid., 72). In this respect, the historiography of gTsong lag phreng ba perfectly mirrors the general patterns derived by Schwieger.

2. Author

Of course, when looking at a work such as the "Feast of the Wise", it is important to also consider the person of the author. One might ask questions such as: Who was he? When did he live and under which circumstances? What was his lineage affiliation? By which (historical) characters was he influenced? Who were his teachers? Under which circumstances did he write this work? Did he have a certain agenda when writing this work?

Not all of these questions can be answered fully here, and research on his life is still in the fledgling stages. This section aims at providing a brief overview of the research about his life, and summarizes its key aspects very briefly.²²

²² An overview of the original Tibetan sources goes beyond the scope of this article, but can be found in Bjerregaard 2007, 3–4.

2-1. *Western Research about His Life*

One of the most extensive and well-founded summaries of gTsong lag phreng ba's life, based on several Tibetan sources, seems to be an unpublished BA thesis by Maria Bjerregaard from Copenhagen University (Bjerregaard 2007). She provides some historical background, before summarizing what she calls "the most predominant events" in his life in about ten pages, where she also translates snippets of the source texts (Bjerregaard 2007, 10–20).

Rheingans analyzes the life and work of Karma 'Phrin las pa (1456–1539), who was one of the main teachers of gTsong lag phreng ba. He also dedicates a passage to gTsong lag phreng ba's life (Rheingans 2021, 93–95; 2004, 75–77). Though comparatively short, his summary unearths interesting aspects and has clear references to the sources used. In his book about the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1574)—gTsong lag phreng ba's root lama—Rheingans also occasionally touches on aspects of his life (Rheingans 2017, 44, 67, 95, 101, 110).

Chhosphe (2010) compiled another useful summary of gTsong lag phreng ba's life based on Tibetan sources.

The entry on gTsong lag phreng ba on the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC) also contains some biographical information and some references to Tibetan sources.²³

2-2. *Brief Summary of His Life*

It goes beyond the scope of this article to provide a comprehensive summary of dPa' bo gTsong lag phreng ba's life. Due to limitations of space, such an attempt would not add anything new to the work done by the scholars mentioned in the previous section. Nevertheless, I would like to briefly highlight some key aspects of his life, as it seems that a little bit of context is helpful before directing focus again to his main work, the "Feast of the Wise".

The incarnation lineage of the dPa' bo Rin po ches belongs to the Karma bka' brgyud tradition and therefore is closely connected with that of the Karma pas. The First dPa' bo Rin po che, Chos dbang lHun grub (1440/1455–1503),²⁴ was born in the middle of the 15th century and was a student of the Seventh Karma pa, while the Second dPa' bo Rin po che was the second main student²⁵ of the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje,²⁶ after the Fifth Zhwa dmar pa, dKon mchog yan lag

²³ BDRC, P319, accessed March 16, 2021.

²⁴ BDRC, P818, accessed March 23, 2021.

²⁵ Rheingans 2010, 259.

²⁶ For the life and works of the Eighth Karma pa, see Rheingans 2017.

(1525–1583).²⁷

The Second dPa' bo Rin po che, gTsug lag phreng ba, was born in dBus ru sNye thang,²⁸ Central Tibet, in 1504. His paternal family lineage was called the Eastern Nyag (*shar gyi snyags*).²⁹ He was already recognized as the incarnation of the First dPa' bo Rin po che when his mother was pregnant. After his birth, Rin spungs Don yod rdo rje (1463–1512),³⁰ who was one of the most powerful aristocrats in Tibet at that time, took care of him and his mother.³¹ At the age of five, gTsug lag phreng ba was enthroned in the Sras mkhar dgu thog tower at Gro bo lung monastery in lHo brag.³² He obtained the *upāsaka* (*dge bsnyen*) and the *śrāmaṇera* (*dge tshul*) vows from the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, Chos kyi grags pa (1453–1524),³³ at the age of nine. From him he received the name Mi pham chos kyi rgyal po don thams cad yongs grub pa.³⁴ At the same age, he met Karma 'Phrin las pa, who acted as a mentor and took care of his education for nineteen years.³⁵ Only at the age of twenty-nine, in 1532, did he meet his root lama, the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, who then started to train him further. From him he received the name under which he has been most well known: gTsug lag phreng ba. From the age of thirty-seven (1540), he did several meditation retreats at different holy sites and attained realization.³⁶ After the Eighth Karma pa's death in 1574, he acted as the de facto regent of the Karma bka' brgyud lineage, while the Fifth Zhwa dmar Rin po che, dKon mchog Yan lag (1525–1583)³⁷ and the Fourth

²⁷ BDRC, P1426, accessed March 23, 2021.

²⁸ BDRC, G1477, accessed March 23, 2021.

²⁹ Bjerregaard 2007, 28.

³⁰ BDRC, P375, accessed March 23, 2021. For more information about this Rin spungs ruler, who was a patron of the Fourth Zhwa dmar Rin po che, Chos grags Ye she (1453–1524), and of the Seventh Karma pa, Chos grags rGya mtsho (1454–1506), see Tuttle and Schaeffer 2013, 269–71, and Shakabpa 2010, 273–78. For a brief overview of the Rin pungs government, see Schaeffer 2011.

³¹ Bjerregaard 2007, 8–9.

³² Lho brag is a region in Southern Tibet close to the Bhutanese border. Sras mkhar dgu thog literally means "nine-story tower" (BDRC, G3429) and is part of the Gro bo lung dgon, the monastery which was the seat of the dPa' bo Rin po ches from their first to their fifth incarnation (BDRC, G3618). The Fifth dPa' bo changed his seat to gNas nang dgon in sTod lung, which the Fifth Dalai Lama had confiscated from the Zhwa dmar pa lineage and given to him in 1673/74 (BDRC, G194).

³³ BDRC, P317, accessed March 23, 2021. For the life and work of the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa, see Mojzes forthcoming.

³⁴ Bjerregaard 2007, 28–29.

³⁵ Rheingans 2021, 94.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

³⁷ BDRC, P1426, accessed March 23, 2021.

rGyal tshab Rin po che, Grags pa Don grub (1550–1617),³⁸ were searching for the Ninth Karma pa, dBang phyug rDo rje (1556–1601/1603)³⁹, whom he recognized shortly before his death.⁴⁰

Apart from “The Feast of the Wise”, on which he worked for about nineteen years (1545–1564) until shortly before his death, there are other famous works of his that have come down to us. Among them are a commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva (*sPyod 'jug gi 'grel pa*) and an exegesis of the Vajravārāhī practice (*Phag mo'i rnam bshad chen po*).⁴¹

3. Structure

The block print edition of the CKG is divided into two volumes for printing, one of 435 folios and one of 353 folios. As for the internal structure, there are five different parts (*yan lag*) of greatly varying length, some of which have explicitly mentioned sections (*le'u*). There is another layer of structure, which divides the work into seventeen volumes designated with Tibetan letters *ka* to *tsa*. Volumes *ka*, *ma* and *tsa* correspond to parts 1, 4 and 5, respectively, while each of the remaining fourteen volumes corresponds to a section of parts 2 and 3, respectively. A detailed table of the outline and the respective titles is provided in Appendix C (Table 4).

For further outline of the content of the CKG in this section (and in Appendix D), I will draw from the table of contents as provided in one of the modern book editions (PB3). The reason for this is its higher granularity compared to the block print, which is useful to gain a quicker insight into the content. I also provide translations of the titles of parts and sections.⁴² Nevertheless, in the tables provided in this section, I will also indicate the number of folios based on the IHo brag xylograph edition, together with a percentage indicating what share of the whole work it represents.

³⁸ BDRC, P5684, accessed March 23, 2021.

³⁹ BDRC, P889, accessed March 23, 2021.

⁴⁰ BDRC, P319, accessed March 23, 2021.

⁴¹ Rheingans 2021, 95. For a *dkar chag* of his collected works see gTsong lag phreng ba, *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum*.

⁴² This is only an extract. In Appendix D the full table containing all section titles as used in PB3 is provided. Pirie and Manson (2017, 2–3) also provide a translation of parts of the table of content of PB3. Their focus is mostly on part 3, and there especially on section 3.2 (royal genealogy of Tibet) with its subsections.

Part	Vol.	Title	Fo- lios	Per- cent
1	<i>ka</i>	Overview of the world <i>'jig rten gyi khams spyir bstan pa/</i>	13	2%
2	<i>kha – ca</i>	The chapter ⁴³ about India <i>rgya gar kyi skabs/</i>	38	5%
3	<i>cha – ba</i>	The chapter about Tibet <i>bod kyi skabs/</i>	662	84%
4	<i>ma</i>	The chapter about Khotan, Earlier China, Tangut, Mongolia and Later China <i>li yul dang/ rgya nag snga ma/ mi nyag/ hor/ rgya nag phyi ma bcas kyi skabs/</i>	25	3%
5	<i>tsa</i>	History of the five fields of knowledge—the overall subjects and principal objects of knowledge <i>yul spyi dang shes bya'i gtso bo rig gnas lnga byung tshul/</i>	50	7%

Table 1: Overview of the Different Parts

The first four parts are organized according to historical period and geographical region, and are complemented in part 5 by the five fields of knowledge. The structure implies the coverage of a large share of the (historical) knowledge of the time. However, when comparing the sizes of the parts, the chapter on Tibet is clearly predominant, comprising 84% of the work. In the following, the single parts shall be treated in more detail, with a stronger focus on part 3.

3-1. Parts 1 & 2: World and India

Part 1 only comprises one volume of thirteen folios in the xylograph edition. At the beginning of the text there is a paragraph of “expression of worship” (*mchod brjod*) followed by the “declaration of intent for the exposition” (*bshad par dam bca' ba*).⁴⁴ Only afterward does the actual content commence, which is the world as understood by Tibetan tradition, based on Buddhist ideas originating from India. Part 1 covers

⁴³ The term *skabs* appears several times in the table of contents. I would like to point out that here it does not mean “time”, in the sense of “the Indian period”, but it really refers to a logical division of the book, which can be inferred from the usage of the term in the section outline contained in the colophon (see Appendix B). There it is used as a synonym for both *yan lag* and *le'u* (which I rendered as “part” and “section” in this paper). In order to distinguish it, I render *skabs* as “chapter”.

⁴⁴ For a translation of *mchod brjod* and *bshad par dam bca' ba*, see Appendix A.

less than 2% of the whole work and therefore plays rather a subordinate role. It might have been included for the sake of completeness, as a kind of starting point for the history.

Part 2 covers different aspects related to Indian Buddhist history, as shown in the following table. It comprises thirty-eight folios, which account for about 5% of the CKG. It fills the gap in the storyline between the exposition of the world in part 1 and the Buddhist history of Tibet as presented in part 3, and can certainly be seen as a crucial base on which the latter unfolds.

Section	Vol.	Title	Folios	Percent
2.1	<i>kha</i>	Exposition of the Buddha's actions <i>ston pa'i mdzad pa bshad pa</i>	13	1.6%
2.2	<i>ga</i>	Exposition of the coverage of the Buddhist Councils <i>bka' bsdu ba khyab par du bshad pa</i>	10	1.4%
2.3	<i>nga</i>	History of the representation of the Three Jewels <i>dkon mchog gsum gyi rten byung tshul</i>	6	0.8%
2.4	<i>ca</i>	Royal genealogy of India <i>rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs</i>	9	1.1%

Table 2: Sections of Part 2 (India)

Interestingly, parts 1 and 2, i.e. the first five volumes, are organized under one common heading in the block print edition of the CKG (see Appendix C). This is an exception, inasmuch as all subsequent volumes bear their own title. Volumes *ka* to *ga* have a sentence indicating that the respective part or section ends here, but otherwise are written continuously. Even the beginning or end of the sections does not always precisely match the volume. For instance, section 2.2 already starts on the last page of volume *kha* (PX1, 52). The end of volume *nga* seems to be the only place where the name of a scribe is mentioned—Tshe dbang bstan pa (PX1, 84). This might indicate that the first four volumes were written by this scribe, and it might imply that everything else was written by one or more other scribes, who did not follow the style of mentioning their name at the end of their portion of the text. Volume *nga* is also the first volume that exhibits a printer's colophon. It is followed by volume *ca*, which completes part 2, and also has its own printer's colophon, as does every other volume in the remainder of the CKG.

3-1. Part 3: Tibet

Part 3 can undoubtedly be seen as the core of the work, and contains the parts for which it is most relevant and outstanding. With its 662 folios, part 3 accounts for 84% of the CKG. It is divided into ten sections of greatly varying length as shown in the following table.

Section	Vol.	Title	Folios	Per-cent
3.1	<i>cha</i>	How the Great Compassionate One [Avalokiteśvara] took possession of Tibet <i>thugs rje chen pos bod bdag gir mḍad tshul</i>	24	2.9%
3.2	<i>ja</i>	Royal genealogy of Tibet <i>bod kyi rgyal rabs</i>	155	21.0%
3.3	<i>nya</i>	Account of the history of the Vinaya teachings <i>'dul ba'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	22	2.7%
3.4	<i>ta</i>	History of Buddhist translators and paṇḍitas <i>lo paṇ chos 'byung</i>	14	1.6%
3.5	<i>tha</i>	Account of the doctrinal history of the rNying ma [tradition] of the secret mantra <i>gsang sngags rnying ma'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	65	7.7%
3.6	<i>da</i>	Account of the history of the bKa' gdams [tradition] <i>bka' gdams kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	44	5.4%
3.7	<i>na</i>	Account of the general doctrinal history of the bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>bka' brgyud spyi'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	60	7.8%
3.8	<i>pa</i>	Account of the doctrinal history of the Karma Kam tshang [tradition] <i>karma kam tshang gi chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	253	32.4%
3.9	<i>pha</i>	Account of the history of the 'Bri gung bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>'bri gung bka' brgyud kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	12	1.3%
3.10	<i>ba</i>	Account of the doctrinal history of various transmission lineages <i>chos brgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	13	1.4%

Table 3: Sections of Part 3 (Tibet)

There are two sections that clearly stand out from the rest due to their mere length—the royal genealogy of Tibet (3.2) and the doctrinal history of the Karma Kaṃ tshang tradition (3.8).

The royal genealogy of Tibet (*bod kyi rgyal rabs*) comprises 155 folios and accounts for 21% of the CKG. It briefly touches on the mythological kings of the pre-imperial period (about eight folios), but puts its main focus on the Tibetan Empire (7th–9th century CE) starting with King Srong btsan sgam po (617–649). The section covers a long list of kings and devotes at least some sentences to each of them.⁴⁵ However, most folios are clearly dedicated to two characters, the two most famous Dharma kings. The subsection about King Srong btsan sgam po comprises about fifty-seven folios (8% of the CKG), and the subsection about King Khri song lde btsan counts fifty-one folios (7% of the CKG). The section about the Tibetan Empire has been praised many times for its historical accuracy, as pointed out in the introduction (e.g. Chandra 1959, vii; Richardson 1980, 62).

The other outstanding section in part 3 is the one about the Karma Kaṃ tshang tradition (3.8). It comprises 253 folios and accounts for more than 32% of the CKG. It contains the life stories (*rnam thar*) of the Karma pas reaching from the First Karma pa, Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110 – 1193), to the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554). This focus is natural, as the author himself is affiliated to the Karma bka' brgyud lineage headed by the Karma pa hierarchs and was a contemporary and student of the Eighth Karma pa (see section 2). All Karma pas' life stories are of considerable length, but two of them stand out: the Seventh Karma pa, Chos grags rgya mthso (1454–1506), with about ninety-four folios (12% of the CKG), and the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, with about seventy folios (9% of the CKG).⁴⁶ One reason for the relative extensiveness might be the contemporariness and easy access to sources and first-hand accounts. All of gTsong lag phreng ba's Karma pa life stories also contain information about their respective students at the end of the text. These accounts about his students sometimes take the extent of small life stories in themselves, which is particularly interesting when it comes to students of whom no other life story has come down to us.⁴⁷

Another section of part 3 that should be highlighted is the general doctrinal history of the bKa' brgyud tradition (3.7). It precedes the section on the Karma pas both within the CKG, and also with respect to

⁴⁵ PB3 divided the section into seventeen subsections, whose titles shed more light on the content and are provided and translated in Appendix D.

⁴⁶ For the length of the life stories of all Karma pas, see Appendix D.

⁴⁷ Among the editions of the CKG, PB5 is very useful in this respect. Its *dkar chag* has been enhanced to such a degree of detail that it even provides the names and page numbers for the students mentioned in the text (PB5, vol. 3, *dkar chag*).

the content and time period covered, as it describes the predecessors of the Karma pas, who are common to all branches of the bKa' brgyud transmission. It starts with the Indian masters and then goes over to Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012?–1097), the famous Mi la ras pa (1040–1123), sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen (1079–1153), and others.⁴⁸

Part 3 also contains sections on other schools of Tibetan Buddhism such as rNying ma (3.5), bKa' gdams (3.6), 'Bri gung bKa' brgyud (3.9), and various other transmission lineages (3.10; notably Zhi byed, Sa skya, gCod, and Shangs pa bKa' brgyud). Certainly, the religio-historical works of the respective lineages themselves provide more information about them than the CKG. Nevertheless, when studying the reception of those lineages within the Kar ma bka' brgyud tradition, the CKG can be a relevant source.

3-1. Parts 4 & 5: Other Regions and Five Fields of Knowledge

Part 4 covers the doctrinal history of regions other than India and Tibet. The outline in the block print does not devise any explicit section for this part, however the text can logically be divided into five sections according to regions (and periods)—Khotan, Earlier China, Tangut, Mongolia and Later China.⁴⁹ All in all, it comprises twenty-five folios and accounts for less than 3% of the whole work.

Part 5 shifts the focus from history to the five fields of knowledge (*rig gnas lnga*). Though not split into sections explicitly, the natural division of this part would be into those five fields of knowledge—the science of inner development (*nang don rig pa*), the science of valid cognition (*tshad ma rig pa*), the science of language (*sgra rig pa*), the science of fabrication (incl. arts and crafts) (*bzo rig pa*), and the science of healing (*gso ba rig pa*).⁵⁰ With fifty folios and a share of almost 7% of the whole work, this part seems not to be completely insignificant. Among those five, particularly the section about the inner development stands out due to its length (thirty-seven folios).

According to the author's colophon, parts 4 and 5 were written eighteen years after parts 1 to 3 had been started.⁵¹ This information and the relative conciseness of the two parts give ground to conjecture that they were rather meant to round off the whole work.

At the end of part 5 an epilogue, an outline of the structure of the work, as well as the author's colophon and a printer's colophon are

⁴⁸ Here again PB5 has to be mentioned, as for this section it meticulously lists all personal names in its table of contents (PB5, vol. 2, *dkar chag*).

⁴⁹ This division into sections has been made in the table of contents of PB3, see Appendix D.

⁵⁰ Division according to PB3, see Appendix D.

⁵¹ For the Tibetan text of the colophon together with a translation, see Appendix B.

found, all of which are provided and translated in Appendix B.

4. Textual Witnesses

In this section the different textual witnesses and editions that I could identify shall be described. In order to identify them, I used different databases and catalogs—both online and in print. Among them are the Buddhist Digital Resource Center (BDRC),⁵² the Tibetan Book and Manuscript Catalog of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA),⁵³ the Library of Congress Catalog (LOCC),⁵⁴ WorldCat,⁵⁵ various university library catalogs, the catalog of the Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP),⁵⁶ the catalog of the Tucci collection,⁵⁷ and the catalog of the library of Ogyen Chöling in Bhutan.⁵⁸ In addition, general search engines, as well as online book stores and publisher's websites (for the modern editions) have been consulted. Several block prints, (partial) manuscripts and modern book editions have been identified and will be presented in the following subsections.

4-1. Block Prints and Their Reprints

All textual witnesses described in this subsection are based on the lHo brag printing blocks. There are prints of those printing blocks in different libraries worldwide. BDRC has also scanned some of the available textual witnesses of this kind. Most of them are incomplete and only cover parts of the whole work. Some are not very legible. There are a number of reprints of block prints by certain publishing houses. Those are very close to the block prints proper, but usually more legible and complete.

Before characterizing the different block prints and reprints of block prints, some features they all share are to be described. When it comes to orthography, these block prints exhibit some non-standard spellings—applied, however, in a consistent way. Most obvious are the frequent use of the verb form *gsung* instead of *gsungs*, omission of *wa zur* where one would expect it, and use of the variants of the *lhag bcas* particle not according to the usual rules with respect to the preceding let-

⁵² <https://www.tbrc.org/>.

⁵³ <https://tibetanlibrary.org/tibetan-book-and-manuscript-catalog/>.

⁵⁴ <https://catalog.loc.gov/>.

⁵⁵ <https://www.worldcat.org/>.

⁵⁶ <https://catalogue.ngmcp.uni-hamburg.de/>.

⁵⁷ Rossi Filibeck 2003.

⁵⁸ Karmay 2003.

ter. The same applies to the *la don* particles *du* and *tu*. These observations are mainly based on my work with vol. *pa*—the Karma pas’ life stories—but likely also apply to other sections.⁵⁹ Another common feature is an image of the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rDo rje, at the beginning of vol. *pa*. Otherwise, there are no images contained in this work.

I will start with the description of the reprints and then continue with the block prints proper. Sigla, which are also referred to in the bibliography of this article, are given to all textual witnesses for quicker reference.

*PX1: Xylograph reprint by Dehli Karmapa Chhodhey
Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang*

In 1980, an edition of the CKG in two volumes was published by Dehli Karmapa Chhodhey Gyalwae Sungrab Partun Khang. The title and description on the title page read *Chos ’byuñ mkhas pa’i dga’ ston. A detailed history of the development of Buddhism in India and Tibet by the Second Dpa’-bo of Gnas-nañ, Gtsug-lag-’phreñ-ba. Reproduced from prints from Lho brag blocks from Rumtek Monastery.* This edition was scanned by BDRC and is available as a PDF download (BDRC: W28792).

After the first two pages, the edition starts with folios in *dpe cha* format reproduced from a block print. The *dpe cha* title page bears a three-line title identical to the one seen in the block prints proper (e.g. PX3, PX4, PX6). However, there are differences. On the right-hand side of the title box, it features the emblem of the Karma pa lama (with the words *dpal rgyal pa karma pa in dbu can* script, two deer and a scepter with a Dharma Wheel in the middle),⁶⁰ which is not the case in the block prints proper. Since this reproduction is based on a block print which originates from Rumtek monastery, the seat of the Sixteenth Karma pa, Rang byung rig pa’i rdo rje (1924–1981), at the time of publication, the emblem might have been added to their copy by the monastery, possibly as a stamp, but this is hard to discern in the black-and-white reproduction. The reproduction retains pagination as well as folio numbering and volume indication in *dbu can* letters at the left-hand side (usually) at the front page of each folio. However, an additional page numbering in Arabic numerals is added on the right-hand side of each page.

⁵⁹ Dell 2020, 2021a, 2021b, and forthcoming. Rheingans (2021, 134) made similar observations for another section of volume *pa*.

⁶⁰ The image can be viewed on “Martin’s Ecclesiastical Heraldry”, section “Buddhism”, <https://ecclesiasticalheraldry.weebly.com/buddhism.html>, accessed on 21 Feb 2021.

PX2: Xylograph reprint by mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang

In 2010, mTsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang published a collection called *Bod kyi lo rgyus rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs* ("History of Tibet, Collection of Life Stories"), consisting of thirty-one volumes in *dpe cha* format. Volumes 16 and 17 contain an edition of the CKG as a block print reproduction. The whole collection was scanned by BDRC and is available as a PDF download (BDRC: W1KG10687).

The title page contains the collection title and volume number in Arabic numerals. Moreover, it indicates that this text was compiled (*bsgrigs*) by dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang and produced in print by the printing house mentioned above. The second folio says that this is vol. *ma* or *tsa*, respectively, of the collection and shows a *dkar chag* just showing that this is vol. *stod* or *smad*, respectively, of the CKG. These first two folios are in modern type setting. Then follows the reproduction, which is very much like the one described in PX1. Its title page also features the emblem of the Karma pa lama at the same position. Not only does it have the same layout, it also shows the same characteristics of print, such as bold face due to too much ink and spots of ink at the same places. This gives ground to conjecture that the reproduction is not only produced from the same block print, but that it is the same reproduction re-used in this collection thirty years after its initial publication. Nevertheless, there is one notable difference. While PX1 has an additional Arabic page numbering on the left-hand side of each page, PX2 exhibits it on the right-hand side.

*PX3: Block print from the collection
dPe rnying rtsa chen par ma'i skor phyogs bsdus*

BDRC (W2PD20323) digitized a collection of seventy volumes called *dPe rnying rtsa chen par ma'i skor phyogs bsdus* ("Collection of Prints of Important Old Pechas") and made it available for download. Volume 46 (*mi*) contains the first volume (*stod*) of the CKG. The second volume (*smad*) is not present. All scanned pages exhibit a vertical measuring tape, some also a horizontal one. The appearance of the paper is somewhat grayish and in some places the print is hardly legible or illegible, mostly due to lack of ink. The title page bears a stamp with the words "UGYEN CHOLING" in Roman script and "*o rgyan chos gling*" in *dbu can* script. This, most likely, points to O rgyan chos gling library in the sTang valley of Bum thang in Bhutan (Pommaret 2008, 7). Formerly, this place had been called "The Messed-Up Books" by the locals, until Samten Karmay cataloged the collection of 957 texts between 1999 and

2002 (Karmay 2003, 19–20). The catalog is organized according to religious schools. Item C.060 in the bKa' rgyud section is listed as the CKG (Karmay 2003, 176–77). A comment indicates that volumes *ka* to *na* are contained therein. This matches with the text at hand. The bKa' rgyud section in the catalog contains seventy texts, the same number of texts contained in the collection at hand. Hence, it is likely that all bKa' rgyud texts were just put together to make one collection. If so, however, the order of volumes in the collection is different from the order in the catalog. Pommaret describes the process of cataloging and mentions that “[each] of the books was given a number and the stamp of Orgyan chos gling, made specially for the occasion, applied to them” (Pommaret 2008, 9). This must be the stamp observed on the title page. Bum thang, the place where this text has been stored, is an area in Bhutan just south of the Tibetan border, which is close to the lHo brag region on the Tibetan side of the border, where the printing house producing the CKG block prints is located. They are geographically close and share a common history.⁶¹ Therefore, it is not surprising that this text was found in Bum thang.

*PX4: Incomplete block print with middle part missing
and unknown location of preservation*

This textual witness of the block print edition was scanned by BDRC on their premises in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and made available for download (BDRC, W3CN22702). Apart from this meta-information giving ground to conjecture that the physical text might be preserved in the United States, the *dpe cha* itself does not exhibit any hints as to its location of storage, such as a library stamp or the like. The paper has a brownish appearance and on many folios there are blurs showing that the paper had gotten wet at some point. In some places the text is difficult to read, mostly due to lack of ink, in a very few cases due to damage of the paper. The text is incomplete. Volumes *cha* to *tha*, *na*, and *pha* are missing. The remaining text only contains 434 folios. Hence, almost half of the work has been lost.

*PX5: Incomplete block print with different sections missing
and containing an unrelated text*

This textual witness of the block print edition was scanned by BDRC on their premises in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and made available for download (BDRC, W3CN15295). Apart from this meta-information giving ground to conjecture that the physical text might be preserved

⁶¹ For their common history, see Pommaret 2003.

in the United States, the *dpe cha* itself does not exhibit any hints as to its location of storage, such as a library stamp or the like. The paper has a brownish appearance and on many folios there are blurs showing that the paper had gotten wet at some point. With few exceptions, the print is legible. It starts with a folio, which seems not to belong there. It has some cloth with a flower pattern on the left-hand side, *dbu med* script on the back side, and the paper looks different from the rest. Following this, there comes the first folio bearing the title of vol. *cha*. Then again, there is one damaged folio, which does not belong there, bearing some hardly legible *dbu med* notes. After vol. *cha*, another text (block print) is inserted, which does not belong to the CKG. It comprises eighty folios and its title is *mNgon brjod kyi bstan bcos mkhas pa'i rna rgyan*. The Library of Congress Catalog lists a modern book edition of this text and describes its content as "Tibetan synonyms dealing with animate and inanimate phenomena of heaven, subterrestrial world (bhutala), and earthly world".⁶² Obviously, this textual witness of the CKG not only contains additional material, but also with respect to the content it is supposed to have, it is rather incomplete. Volumes *ka* to *ca*, *ja* to *na*, and *ba* to *tsa* are missing. Hence, more than half of the work has been lost.

PX6: Incomplete block print with colored Eighth Karma pa

This textual witness of the block print edition was scanned by BDRC on their premises in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and made available for download (BDRC, W1KG15897). Apart from this meta-information giving ground to conjecture that the physical text might be preserved in the United States, the *dpe cha* itself does not exhibit any hints as to its location of storage, such as a library stamp or the like. The title page bears a note affixed to its left-hand side with transparent adhesive tape. Written on it are the following words in *dbu can* script: *chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston shing par rnying pa ldeb ring pod gcig bar bar du ma tshang/ agro'i dpe cha/* (CKG, old xylograph print, long folios, volume one, occasionally incomplete, *dpe cha* of *agro*⁶³). On the same note, there is a text of equal length in Chinese letters, presumably of the same content, and the Arab numeral "6". The text on the note describes the state of the *dpe cha* quite well. It might be added that the paper has a brownish appearance and many folios have rips and missing pieces of paper

⁶² <https://lccn.loc.gov/99949078>, accessed 25 Feb 2021. This edition is also available at BDRC, see Ngag dbang 'jigs med grags pa 1999.

⁶³ This word is not found in any dictionary. Given the context, it could be a name meaning that this *dpe cha* belongs to the person called by this name. Only *a gro* is found in dictionaries, meaning "high quality wheat", but it does not really fit here, unless it possibly were to describe the color of the folios.

at the corners and edges, some of which are fixed with adhesive tape. Many folios also exhibit blurs of humidity. On some folios legibility is rather poor. Occasionally, single folios are missing in the different volumes. The digitized version indicates this by putting empty placeholder folios with the text “Missing folio”. Apart from these single missing folios, the following volumes are missing as well: parts of *ja* (from section 3.2.7 onward), *nya*, *ta*, *da*, and *tsa*. On the title page of vol. *pa*, the section containing the Karma pa’s life stories, short notes in an Indian script resembling Gujarātī script have been added in handwriting in three places. The back side of this folio exhibits the image of the Eighth Karma pa, which has been colored by paint (red robes, etc.). Likewise, the space between the lines framing the text has been colored in gray on this folio. The start of each Karma pa’s life story is marked with a gray spot for the reader’s convenience. The last page (i.e. the end of vol. *ma*) bears some handwritten annotations in *dbu med* script at the bottom margin.

*PX7: Partial block print reproduction (vol. ja) by Nang bstan shes rig
'dzin skyong slob gnyer khang*

In 1965 a reproduction of vol. *ja* of the block print edition was published by Nang bstan shes rig 'dzin skyong slob gnyer khang in sBag sa. I was not able to get hold of a copy of this edition, but it was mentioned by Martin and Bentor (1997, 89) and also has entries in the catalogs of the LOC (LCCN: 89915066) and the LTWA (D01866 & D01867). Its title is *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod kyi skabs le'u bcu las skabs gnyis pa bod kyi rgyal rabs*, which coincides with the title of section 3.2 (vol. *ja*) in the block print edition. It covers the chapter about the “Royal genealogy of Tibet” (*bod kyi rgyal rabs*).

PX8/PX9: Block print from the Tucci collection

In the catalog of the Tucci collection, preserved by the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente (IsIAO) in Rome, there are different entries for textual witnesses of the block print edition (nos. 775–79; Rossi Filibeck 2003, 353–55). The catalog provides the volume numbers (in Tibetan from *ka* to *tsa*) contained in each entry, as well as some section titles and sometimes information about the sponsor of the respective volume (extracted from the respective colophon). Obviously, nos. 775–77 and nos. 778–79 add up to complete textual witnesses, respectively. It is not clear to me why they are once split across three entries and once across two entries, but the catalog entries of nos. 778–79 refer to the nos. 775–77. Hence, though not stated very clearly, it can be assumed

that they are textual witnesses of the same printing block.⁶⁴ I could not get hold of either of these two textual witnesses, but Rheingans worked with a copy of vol. *pa* of catalog no. 778 and he describes it as follows: “The block print is slightly worn out and its legibility is problematic; at times it is hardly possible” (Rheingans 2021, 134).

PX10: Incomplete block print preserved by the LTWA

The Tibetan Book and Manuscript Catalog of the LTWA contains nine different entries for presumably one textual witness of the IHo brag block print edition (the “Publisher” field contains the words *bod par*) preserved in Dharamsala. The title of the first entry (D01913) indicates that it contains sections 1 and 2 (vols. *ka-ca*). Furthermore, an addition to the title indicates that vols. *ja* (3.2), *na* (3.7), *ba* (3.10) are missing (*ja/na/ ba/ gsum ma tshang*). Accordingly, the other entries’ (D01914–D01921) titles indicate that they contain vols. *cha* (3.1), *tha* (3.5), *da* (3.6), *pa* (3.8), *pha* (3.9), *ma* (4), *tsa* (5), and *nya* (3.3) in that order. Thus, apparently, apart from the three missing volumes *ja*, *na* and *ba* mentioned in the first entry, vol. *ta* (3.4) is also missing.

4-2. Manuscripts

A number of partial manuscripts could be identified, some of them in *dbu med*, and others in *dbu can* script. From the information available, it was not possible to date the manuscripts. A clear statement as to whether they are mere handwritten copies of the xylograph edition or date back to an original manuscript cannot be made at this point. Further content and text critical analysis would have to be undertaken to shed more light on this question.

*PM1: Incomplete (vols. pha–tsa)
dbu med manuscript in very good condition*

BDRC (W3CN17900) digitized a collection of the works of dPa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba (*dPa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba’i gsung phyogs bsdus*) in four volumes and made it available for download. It was scanned by BDRC on their premises in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Apart from this meta-information giving ground to conjecture that the physical text might be preserved in the United States, the *dpe cha* itself does not exhibit any hints as to its location of storage, such as a library stamp or the like. The collection mainly contains texts written in *dbu med* script. It can be considered incomplete in the sense that more works which

⁶⁴ Rheingans (2021, 134) comes to the same conclusion.

are attributed to *dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba* are known than those contained here.⁶⁵ Volume 4 contains an incomplete edition of the CKG handwritten in *dbu med* script. It contains only volumes *pha* to *tsa*, i.e. the end of the work. Each of the four volume title pages bears a section title like the corresponding title in the block print edition, with a rectangular double stroke frame in red ink surrounding it. The first one or two pages of each volume usually also exhibit this kind of complete double stroke frame, while the further pages only have double strokes on the left and right margins of the text block. An exception to this is volume *ba*, which exhibits these margin double strokes on all pages. All fully filled pages have six lines, but in volume *ba*, the face of the script is thinner than in volumes *pha*, *ma* and *tsa*. Moreover, the letters are smaller and the number of syllables per page is clearly higher. This gives ground to conjecture that volume *ba* was written by a different scribe. Generally, in all volumes the paper is in very good condition. Neither damage nor blurs are visible. The script is very clearly written in black ink and very legible (disregarding the sometimes tricky identification of ligatures in *dbu med* script). Occasionally, there are annotations on the upper and lower margins and between the lines written with red ink in *dbu med* script. Especially, on the last few folios of volume *ma*, there are many such annotations. The face of the script of these annotations is not very clear (as opposed to the actual text). When comparing the colophons of the four volumes with their counterparts in the block print edition, the author's colophons are identical, but the printer's colophons (the ones which indicate the sponsor of the printing and the names of the carvers of the wooden printing blocks etc.) are missing, which is expected, as there was no printing involved. The good condition of the *dpe cha* gives ground to conjecture that this manuscript is not very old. Hence, it is either a handwritten copy of an older manuscript or of the block print edition (not copying the printer's colophons). Further analysis might shed some light on this question.

PM2: Incomplete (vol. ka–ja)
dbu can manuscript from Tucci collection

The catalog of the Tucci collection, preserved by the ISIAO in Rome, contains an entry for an *dbu can* manuscript (no. 780; Rossi Filibeck 2003, 355). The entry is divided into three sections. Section three refers to no. 775/1 of the catalog (the beginning of the block print edition), which probably means that it comprises the same content. Hence, this

⁶⁵ See e.g. the *dkar chag* of a recently published modern edition of his collected works in fourteen volumes (*gTsuḡ lag phreng ba, dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba'i gsung 'bum, dkar chag*).

would be volumes *ka* to *ca* (or sections 1 and 2) of the CKG. According to the catalog, the folio pagination is “1a–92b” (the corresponding part of the block print edition counts fifty-one folios). If folio 92 is the last one of volume *ca*, the manuscript uses almost twice as many folios as the block print for the same content. Section 1 of the catalog entry refers to volume *cha* (section 3.1). The folio pagination is “1a–5b” (twenty-four folios in the block print edition). Comparing these numbers, apparently, a great number of folios must be missing. Section 2 of the catalog entry refers to volume *ja* (section 3.2). The folio pagination is “1a–3b” (compared to 155 folios in the block print edition). Here also, most of the folios of volume *ja* must be missing. All three catalog sub-entries indicate their respective part of the CKG as “incomplete”. It is not further differentiated if the folios are only missing at the end of the respective text or also in between. I could not get hold of this manuscript and I have no information to infer if it is a partial copy of the block print edition or if it constitutes a parallel textual transmission. Further text-critical and colophon analysis might answer this question.

PM3: dbu med manuscript of volume ja
(“Richardson manuscript”)

The University of Washington Libraries hold an *dbu med* manuscript of volume *ja* of the CKG as microfilm (Worldcat OCLC No. 860914911). It comprises 205 folios, which are out of order according to the catalog entry. The entry also says “known as the Richardson ms”. The famous scholar Hugh E. Richardson, who travelled Tibet before the Chinese invasion, states that when he was in Lhasa a manuscript copy of volumes *ka* to *ja* was lent to him (Richardson 1959, x). The catalog entry seems to imply that the cataloged text is the one used at that time by Richardson. Either volumes *ka* to *cha* have been lost or, since the folios are described as out of order, it can very well be that those volumes have not been recognized when cataloging it (in the block print edition volumes *ka* to *cha* only count seventy-five folios, while volume *ja* counts 155 folios). Richardson does not explicitly say that his manuscript was copied from the block print edition, but the passage where he writes about it seems to imply that.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ “A manuscript copy of vols KA to JA was lent to me when I was at Lhasa [...] I set about enquiring about other copies. It appears from the colophon that the book was printed at gNas bZis, a bKa’ rgyud pa monastery, in Lho brag ...” (Richardson 1959, x). Obviously, the manuscript contained the printer’s colophon—a rather clear indication that it had been copied from the xylograph edition.

PM4: Manuscript of extracts of volume ja

The University of Washington Libraries hold a manuscript containing extracts of volume *ja* of the CKG as microfilm made by the British Museum Photographic Service in London in 1962 (Worldcat OCLC No. 859573214). It counts thirty-one pages and must therefore be incomplete (the complete volume *ja* in the block print edition counts 155 folios). It is not stated in the catalog entry whether the manuscript is written in *dbu med* or *dbu can*.

PM5/PM6: Manuscripts of volume ja (NGMCP)

The Nepalese German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) holds two different microfilms of manuscripts of volume *ja* of the CKG, both of which bear the section title as known from the xylograph edition.

The first of these manuscripts (PM5) is cataloged under the reel number E 755/20-756/1. It counts 204 folios (the xylograph counts 155 folios) and the owner is indicated as Gyaltzen from Kathmandu. The folio size is 9.5 cm x 51 cm. It is attributed to gTsong lag phreng ba as author.

The second manuscript (PM6) has the reel number L 593/3 and counts 106 folios. It is indicated as incomplete. According to a remark, the folios 80, 82, 83, 86, 87, 90, 106 and 107 are missing. Folio size is 8.3 cm x 47.8 cm. It belongs to lCags phug sPrul sku from Phole, Tapeljung. Interestingly, the catalog gives the author's name as Blo gros yangs pa referring to the colophon. This does not seem to be a name of gTsong lag phreng ba, but given the exact match of the volume title, it is still likely that it is a fragment of the CKG.

PM7/PM8: Manuscripts of volume ma (NGMCP)

The NGMCP holds two different microfilms of manuscripts of volume *ma* of the CKG (part 4, about the regions other than India and Tibet), both of which bear the section title as known from the xylograph edition.

The first of these manuscripts (PM7) is cataloged under the reel number DD 32/6. It counts twenty-five folios (which matches the number of folios in the block print) and the owner is indicated as Chetsang Rinpoche from Byang chub gling. The folio size is 9.4 cm x 55.5 cm. Interestingly, the catalog provides the author according to the colophon as Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, the Fifth Dalai Lama, which is unlikely given the exact match of the volume title with gTsong lag phreng ba's volume *ma*.

The second manuscript (PM8) has the reel number E 3071/2 and counts forty-two folios. The folio size is 7.2 cm x 42.5 cm. It belongs to Lachen Rinpoche from Lachen, Sikkim. The catalog does not provide any author information.

4-3. *Modern Book Editions*

A number of different modern book editions of the CKG could be identified. Unfortunately, I could not get hold of all of them. It seems very likely that all of them are based on a textual witness of the xylograph edition. Most notable are probably the Lokesh Chandra edition (PB1), as it was already published in 1959 to 1965 and was a very valuable contribution at that time, and the different editions by rDor rje rgyal po (PB2, PB3, PB4), for their clear editorial statement of standardizing spelling to contemporary orthography. The very recent edition by dPal brtsegs (PB5) is very useful inasmuch as the table of contents has been enhanced compared to the block print and exhibits at times a very high granularity.

PB1: Lokesh Chandra edition

In the years 1959 to 1965, Lokesh Chandra published an edition of the CKG in four volumes in New Delhi. It is based on a block print he had borrowed and reproduced from one Lopsang Phuntshok Lhalungpa. This block print was incomplete inasmuch as volume *ja*, the chapter about the Tibetan imperial period, was missing (Chandra 1959, vii–viii). Therefore, it was omitted in the first three volumes, which have been copied in handwriting in *dbu can* script. Volume 4 of Chandra's edition then contains a reprint of the block print edition of volume *ja*. The handwritten reproduction mostly retains the non-standard spellings of the block print described above, such as *gsung* instead of *gsungs* or the specific variant of the *lhag bcas*. However, *wa zur* is usually added where one would expect it; also the *la don* particle *tu* is sometimes changed to *du* according to the preceding letter, but not consistently. This observation is based on extracts of volume *pa* I have worked with. In other sections it might be different, especially since Chandra mentions that the text was copied by at least three different scribes.⁶⁷ It is not stated if these emendations follow any systematic principle, or if the scribes just did them occasionally where they felt the spelling was incorrect, or maybe even unwittingly.

The handwritten reproduction follows the division of the block print edition into volumes *ka* to *tsa* (apart from volume *ja*) and uses the

⁶⁷ See Chandra 1959, viii, and Chandra 1961. In each of the prefaces to volumes 1 and 2, two scribes are mentioned, where one of the names overlaps. Volume 3 has no preface, hence names or number of scribes are not mentioned.

same section titles. The page numbering at the bottom of each page uses numerals in Devanāgarī script and is continued over the first three volumes. The handwriting occasionally exhibits corrections, where missing letters or syllables are written between the lines above or below the place they belong to. In volumes 2 and 3, folio numbers of the original block print edition are indicated at the left or right margins, respectively. In volume 1 there is no such reference. As described above, in the block print edition there is an image of the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, at the beginning of volume *pa*. Even in this respect, Chandra tried to provide a faithful reproduction of the block print by inserting an illustration of Mi bskyod rdo rje right before volume *pa* (PB1, vol. 2, 425). The name and location of the artist are provided in the preface (Chandra 1961).

All four volumes are available for download from BDRC (W1KG24245).

PB2/PB3/PB4: Beijing edition by rDo rje rgyal po

Mi rigs dpe skrun khang published a modern book edition of the CKG in two volumes in Beijing in 1986 (PB2). It was edited by rDo rje rgyal po. Two more editions, this time in one volume, were published by the same publishing house and editor in 2006 (PB3) and 2015 (PB4). The first two editions are available for download at BDRC (W7499; W1PD9606). The 2015 edition has an entry in the BDRC database, but is not available for download (W8LS19006).

The 1986 edition is split into two volumes in the same place as the block print edition, i.e. after volume *na*. The page numbering of the first volume (*stod cha*) continues in the second volume (*smad cha*). The first volume contains a table of contents (*dkar chag*) referring to both volumes. The separation into volumes *ka* to *tsa* is not used here. Instead, the division into five *yan lag* and a number of *le'u* as subdivisions is used. The information for this structure is contained in the volume titles of the block print and, alternatively, in the colophon. The titles in the table of contents do not always match the wording from those sources exactly, but are at least similar with respect to their meaning. The first volume contains a publisher's preface (*dpe skrun gsal bshad*) of a bit more than one page. According to this preface, the text that the book edition is based on is a print of the Lho brag blocks (*lho brag gi par ma*, PB2, 2). Further, it is stated that spellings that were not in accordance with contemporary orthography were modified, but otherwise the original text is retained.⁶⁸ It also gives examples, which

⁶⁸ PB2, 1: *deng skabs kyi yig srol dang gtan nas mi mthun pa rnams bcos pa las/ de byings tshig dang don rnams ma yig sor bzhag tu bsgrigs yod lags/*.

mainly cover changes of the *lhag bcas* particle according to the preceding letter, as well as changes of the phrase connector *cing* and its variants. When comparing the text of this edition to the block print edition, this is confirmed. The irregularities in orthography described above for the block print are emended according to contemporary orthography (this also includes the emendation of *gsung* to *gsungs* etc.).

In the second edition, the one from 2006 (PB3), the original preface is reprinted and additionally, there is a publisher's preface to the second edition (*par gzhi gnyis pa'i gsal bshad*, PB3, 2–5). It mainly contains a summary of the content of the CKG. However, at the end, it is also said that there has been some editing (*zhus dag*) with respect to mistaken letters (*yi ge nor ba*), mistakes in case markers (*rnam dbye'i phrad*) and in verb tenses (*dus gsum bya byed kyi tshig*), as well as with respect to missing and additional letters (*yi ge chad lhag*).⁶⁹ It is also mentioned that despite the fact that this book is published in its second edition, some mistakes will certainly still remain. This gives ground to conjecture that the editing process described above refers not only to what had already been done for the first edition, but also to another round of editing and proofreading that seems to have taken place. In the few paragraphs that I compared, I could not find any difference in spelling and the like between the two editions. Hence, the changes due to re-editing seem to be minor. The preface of the second edition also mentions that additional titles (*sa bcad*) for chapters (*le'u*) and subsections (*don tshan*) were inserted. This can indeed be witnessed in the table of contents and within the text. Much to the reader's convenience, this feature facilitates the quick localization of information within the text and goes clearly beyond the outline of the original block print.⁷⁰

Apart from the orthographic standardization and few occasional errors, the book versions are very faithful to the block print. There is one exception: when looking at the printer's colophons at the end of each volume, there are sometimes significant differences, ranging from replacement of syllables and words to replacement of several clauses.⁷¹ It is not clear to me where this comes from. The printer's colophon is usually carved in smaller letters on the printing block and therefore a bit more difficult to read. However, in the textual witness of the block print edition I have seen, legibility of this part was still acceptable.

I could not get hold of a copy of the third edition of the book published in 2015 (PB4). However, it seems reasonable to me to assume that the changes made to the 2006 edition are very minor, if extant at all.

⁶⁹ PB3, 5.

⁷⁰ For this reason, I used this outline in Appendix D of this paper.

⁷¹ One of the more striking examples is the colophon of volume *nya*. Compare PB3, 262, with PX1, 503.

PB5: Lhasa edition by dPal brtsegs

Only recently, dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang gathered the available works of dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba. All texts were typed in on computers and published as his Collected Works in a modern book format in fourteen volumes in 2019. There is a record of this work in the BDRC database (W3CN25711), but its text cannot be accessed. I was able to obtain a copy of the *dkar chag* of all volumes.⁷² The first four volumes contain an edition of the CKG. I have no information as to any principles of editing applied to the text. However, what is remarkable about this edition is that it comes with a very detailed table of contents, which goes far beyond that of the original block print edition. In some places its granularity lags the table of contents of rDo rje rgyal po's 2006 edition (PB3), while in other places it exceeds it. In volume *ja*, which covers the royal genealogy of Tibet (*bod kyi rgyal rabs*), rDo rje rgyal po dedicates a separate entry to most of the kings presented in the text, adding up to seventeen subsections, while dPal brtsegs only divides the volume into eight subsections. For volume *na*, the account of the general doctrinal history of the bKa' brgyud (*bka' brgyud spyi'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa*), the situation is opposite. rDo rje rgyal po does not provide any subsections, while dPal brtsegs is extremely granular here. An entry is dedicated to every single person appearing in this volume, even if the subsection sometimes covers less than one page. It starts with eighteen characters of the Indian part of the lineage and continues with the Tibetan protagonists (such as Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, sGam po pa etc.), for which it even exhibits entries for sub-subsections. For volume *pa*, the account of the doctrinal history of the Karma Kam tshang (*karma kam tshang gi chos kyi byung ba brjod pa*), the situation is somewhat similar, though less extreme. rDo rje rgyal po provides an entry for each of the Karma pas (from the First to the Eighth Karma pa), while dPal brtsegs is more granular. Very often, at the end of a *nam thar* a list of the students of the respective master is provided. Sometimes, the students are not only mentioned, but a short description of their lives, which may comprise up to a couple of pages, is included. This is also the case for the Karma pa life stories contained in the CKG. dPal brtsegs dedicates entries to those students in the table of contents, which is very useful information, especially if the students are less prominent and other accounts of their lives have not come down to us. As for volume *ba*, the doctrinal history of various transmission lineages (*chos brgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos kyi byung ba*), the tables of contents of both books provide the same level of additional granularity, a division of subsections into four different schools. Similarly,

⁷² I would like to thank Jörg Heimbel for providing this to me.

for volume *ma*, the chapter about Khotan, Earlier China, Tangut, Mongolia and Later China (*li yul dang/ rgya nag snga ma/ mi nyag/ hor/ rgya nag phyi ma bcas kyi skabs*), both books divide the chapter into five subsections according to the regions. As for volume *tsa*, the history of the five fields of knowledge (*yul spyi dang shes bya'i gtso bo rig gnas lnga byung tshul*), it is divided into five subsections by rDo rje rgyal po, while dPal brtsegs does not add granularity. Since the dPal brtsegs edition forms a part of the collected works of dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba, the remainder of volume 4 is filled up with texts that are not part of the CKG.

PB6: Lhasa edition by Tshe ring rdo rje

According to the Library of Congress Catalog, there is an edition of the CKG in two volumes edited by Tshe ring rdo rje and published by Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang in Lhasa in 2014.⁷³ It appeared in a series called *Gangs can gtsug lag rin chen phreng ba* as volume 9. I have no further information about this edition.

PB7: Varanasi edition by Vajra Vidya Institute

According to the Tibetan Book and Manuscript Catalog of the LTWA, there is an edition of the CKG in two volumes published by Vajra Vidya Institute in Sarnath, Varanasi, in 2002 and 2003 (D29446 & D29447). I have no further information about this edition.

PB8: Karma Lekshey Ling edition

There is a purely electronic edition of the CKG published by the Karma Lekshey Ling Institute in Kathmandu in 2014. It counts 1031 pages and is available for free download.⁷⁴ The table of contents lists titles according to the seventeen volumes of the block print and additionally provides the section numbering, but there is no additional granularity (PB8, 1–2). Folio numbers of the block print, as well as volume and front or back side, are indicated in the text in brackets at each change-over using Tibetan letters and numerals. The book pages themselves bear Arabic numerals for pagination. At the end of the book, after the colophon, verses of good wishes (*par byang smon tshig*) have been added (PB8, 1031). Principles of editing are not mentioned in the book, but it seems that some standardization to contemporary orthography has been applied, e.g. *gsung* has been changed to *gsungs* in the samples

⁷³ <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017323915>, accessed 6 March 2021.

⁷⁴ http://www.dharmaownload.net/pages/english/Texts/texts_0095.htm, accessed March 19, 2021.

I looked at.

4-4. Summary

I leave it to the reader to decide which editions to use, and, of course, it depends very much on the purpose to be served. Nevertheless, I would like to try a summary to provide some orientation. All prints and published reprints of prints from the wooden printing blocks should be equivalent, if no restoration of the printing blocks took place between the prints. Therefore, for most purposes, it should be sufficient to use one representative of this class. Due to their legibility and completeness, PX1 or PX2 should be a most convenient choice. Concerning the manuscripts, the question of whether they are mere handwritten copies of the xylograph edition needs to be approached, e.g. through text-critical analysis. However, depending on which part of the *CKG* is to be studied, the manuscripts that have come down to us might be irrelevant, as they are all partial manuscripts, and even taken together do not cover the whole *CKG*. As for the modern book editions, they are helpful at times. The rDo rje rgyal po editions (PB2, PB3, PB4) use the approach of standardizing the block prints' archaic spelling to contemporary orthography, but otherwise are faithful to the original. Their emendations should, of course, not be consumed uncritically, but can be considered as valuable suggestions for a better understanding of the text. The newer rDo rje rgyal po editions (PB3, PB4) and for some sections, especially the dPal brtsegs edition (PB5) can be very valuable for finding information quickly due to their at times very granular table of contents. Based on the current state of analysis, it seems that the differences between the editions are mostly limited to minor spelling variants. Therefore, depending on the purpose to be served, it can also be justified to just pick up any of them.

5. Conclusion

In this article, an introduction into the *chos 'byung* genre and the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* by the Second dPa' bo, gTsug lag phreng ba, have been provided. The state of research on the author's life has been highlighted and a brief summary of his life has been compiled. The structure of his much-praised religio-historical oeuvre has been outlined. Finally, different textual witnesses and editions of the *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* have been identified and described.

To date, it seems not much of this oeuvre has been translated and only parts have been researched to a certain extent. Hence, there is much work left for future research. A next useful step could be to compile a bibliography of research and translations based on the *Chos*

'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston. Likewise, research on gTsug lag phreng ba's life is still in its infancy, given the extent of available biographical sources.

Referring to the quote by Hugh Richardson presented at the beginning of the paper ("Detailed examination of the whole work is likely to provide a wealth of information [...] on many aspects of Tibetan studies"), my feeling is that this wealth of information is still far from having been explored fully, even more than sixty years later. I hope this paper helps to draw some, certainly deserved, attention to gTsug lag phreng ba's *chos 'byung*, as well as to his life.

Appendix A: Title, Worship, Declaration of Intent

In this appendix, first, the Tibetan text of the title page and the beginning of volume *ka* of the xylograph edition is provided according to PX1. Variant readings according to the modern book edition PB3 are supplemented in the footnotes. However, here the variant readings are mostly limited to spelling standardization. Afterward, a translation is provided. The paragraph presented here can be divided into the title page, the expression of worship (*mchod brjod*, partly in verse), and the declaration of intent for the exposition (*bshad par dam bca' ba*, in verse).

Tibetan Text

[Title page]

(PX1, vol. 1, p. 1)

dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba'i legs par bshad pa la yan lag chen po lnga las yan lag dang po 'jig rten gyi khams spyir bstan pa dang/ yan lag gnyis pa rgya gar gyi skabs la le'u bzhi las dang po ston pa'i mdzad pa bshad pa/ gnyis pa bka' bsdu ba khyad par du bshad pa/ gsum pa dkon mchog gsum gyi rten byung tshul bzhi pa rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs rnams bzhugs so//

[Expression of worship (*mchod brjod*)]

(PX1, vol. 1, p. 2, l. 1)

dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur rgyal rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba'i legs par bshad pa/ thams cad mkhyen pa sras dang slob mar bcas pa la phyag 'tshal lo/

*/don kun rab grub skye 'gro'i rten gnas gcig po gang/
/theg gsum dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los mnga' sgyur ba/
/ston pa mchog dang de sras slob mar bcas kun la/*

/byang chub bar du spyi bos 'dud to⁷⁵ rab 'dud to⁷⁶/

[Declaration of intent for the exposition (bshad par dam bca' ba)]

(PX1, vol. 1, p. 2, l. 3)

/rab mchog gtso bo rnams kyi ngo mtshar gtam/

/thos tshe bdag 'dra gyi na'i skye bo yang/

/lus kyi spu ldang mchi ma khong nas 'khrug

/dad pa'i shugs drag zlogs⁷⁷ par dka' gyur na/

/skal bzang blo gsal dpyod ldan skye bo rnams/

/ci phyir dad pa'i dbang stobs rgyas mi 'gyur/

/mtshan thos tsam yang don chen ldan 'gyur na/

/mos cing⁷⁸ gus par gyur rnams lta ci smos/

/de phyir dam pa rnams kyi yon tan la/

/gcig du⁷⁹ dad pas yid rab drang ba dang/

/bdag dang skal mnyam gzhan la'ang phan bya'i phyir/

/chos rgyal rnams kyi mdzad pa'i tshul bzang 'bri/

/rgya mtsho'i chu bo sngon nas mang bcus mod/

/da dung su yis blangs kyang mi zad ltar/

/'di tshul sngon rabs mkhas pas mang sbyar mod/

/da dung legs (PX1, p. 3) bshad mkhas pa'i spyi nor yin/

/'on yang⁸⁰ don rgyas tshig nyung mtha' rgya chod/

/kun la gzur gnas nges pa'i khungs dang 'brel/

/chos nyid la 'jug mtshan mar mi smra ba/

/de ni legs bshad 'di yi khyad chos ste⁸¹/

/de bas blo ldan rnams kyis mnyan par gyis/

Translation

[Title page]

In "The excellent exposition elucidating the history of the ones who ruled through the wheel of the authentic Dharma, called the 'Feast of

⁷⁵ do PB3.

⁷⁶ do PB3.

⁷⁷ zlog PB3.

⁷⁸ shing PB3.

⁷⁹ tu PB3.

⁸⁰ kyang PB3.

⁸¹ te PB3.

the Wise”⁸², among the five major parts the first part [is] the “Overview of the world”. In the second part, the “Chapter on India”, among the four sections, the first [one is] the “Exposition of the Buddha’s actions”, the second [one is] the “Exposition of the coverage of the Buddhist Councils”, the third [one is] the “History of the representation of the Three Jewels” [and] the fourth [one is] the “Royal genealogy of India”.⁸³

[Expression of worship (*mchod brjod*)]

“The excellent exposition elucidating the history of the victorious ones who ruled through the wheel of the authentic Dharma, called the ‘Feast of the Wise’⁸⁴. [We] pay homage to the sons and students of the Omniscient One, to [all of them] together.

Until enlightenment [we] bow down with the crown of [our] head to the one who controls the three vehicles by means of the wheel of the authentic Dharma, [the one] who [is] the only place of support of all sentient beings [for] the full accomplishment [of] the benefit of all. [We bow down] to the Supreme Teacher and his sons and students, to all [of them] together. [We] bow down fully.

[Declaration of intent for the exposition (*bshad par dam bca’ ba*)]

When [they] hear the accounts of the miracles of the highest, the supreme, the principal ones, even the hair of the body [of] beings of a level similar to ours stand on end [and they have] tears of being touched inside.

If it will be difficult to repel the great force of trust [once developed], why have beings with good fortune [and] an analytical clear intellect not developed [this] strong power of trust?

If [one] will be endowed with great benefit, even if [one] only hears the name, what is there to say [about] the view [of] those who became respectful and oriented toward [it]?

For that reason, only through trust, the highest mind will be drawn toward the qualities of the authentic ones, and in order to bring benefit also to others [who are] of similar kind to myself, [I] write [about] the excellent way of acting of the victorious ones of the Dharma.⁸⁵

The rivers, which [became] the ocean, previously collected lots of

⁸² Identical to title in colophon, but different from title in incipit. An analysis and discussion of the translation of the title is found in the introduction of this paper.

⁸³ Tib. *rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs*. In the colophon, this section is called *rgyal po byon tshul* instead (“Royal history”).

⁸⁴ Differs from title on title page and in colophon by one syllable. An analysis and discussion of the translation of the title is found in the introduction of this paper.

⁸⁵ Tib. *chos rgyal rnams*, “Dharma kings”, here probably to be understood in a wider sense as also including the Buddhist masters he writes about, therefore rendered as “victorious ones of the Dharma”.

water, but still: “By whom has [it] been taken, although [it is] inexhaustible?”

In this way, the scholars [of] previous generations composed a lot, but still an excellent exposition is the overall wealth of a scholar.

Nevertheless, the little [number of] words puts a limit [to] an extensive presentation.

In all passages, [the text] right in front relates to reliable sources. The entering into the very Dharma cannot [be] expressed in conceptual structure. As for that, the divisions of this excellent exposition [are] Dharma: Therefore, intelligent ones listen!

Appendix B: Epilogue, Colophon

In this appendix, first, the Tibetan text of the end of volume *tsa* of the xylograph edition is provided according to PX1. Variant readings according to the modern book edition PB3 are supplemented in the footnotes. However, here the variant readings are mostly limited to spelling standardization. Afterward, a translation is provided. The paragraph presented here can be divided into an epilogue (in verse), an outline of the structure of the work (in prose), the author’s colophon providing the circumstances of composition (in prose), and the printer’s colophon providing the circumstances of printing (in verse).

Tibetan Text

[Epilogue]

(PX1, vol. 2, p. 705, l. 7)

*de ltar bskal pa bzang po 'di nyid kyi/
/bzhi pa shAkya seng ge'i bstan pa mchog
(PX1, 706) gsal bar mdzad pa'i skyes chen dam pa'i tshogs/
/grangs med kun du⁸⁶ khyab par byon pa las/
/'phags yul rgya nag hor dang li yul dang /
/byang phyogs bod kyi yul du byon pa rnam/
/ngo mtshar gtam gyi cha shas dpag med las/
/cung zad tsam re bdag gis dad pas brjod/
/'dir 'bad dge bas bod kyi rgyal khams 'di'i/
/dus 'khrug yams nad thams cad rgyun chad cing/
/'gro kun dal 'byor don dang ldan byed pas/
/dam pa'i chos kyi snod tu⁸⁷ rung bar shog
/tshe rabs kun tu snying po'i bstan la 'jug*

⁸⁶ tu PB3.

⁸⁷ tu PB3.

*/sangs rgyas dngos kyi bla mas rjes su 'dzin/
/legs pa'i rten 'brel mtha' dag lhun grub pas/
/rang gzhan don gnyis cig char 'grub gyur cig*

[Outline]

(PX1, vol. 2, p. 706, l. 3)

*/dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnam kyi byung ba gsal bar byed
pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba'i legs par bshad pa las yan lag dang po'i
'jig rten gyi khams spyir bstan pa'i skabs/*

*yan lag gnyis pa rgya gar gyi skabs la ston pa'i mdzad pa bshad pa/ bka'
bsdu ba khyad par du bshad pa/ dkon mchog gsum gyi rten ji ltar byung tshul
rgyal po byon tshul ste nang tshan du le'u bzhi/*

*yan lag gsum pa bod yul gyi skabs la dang por spyan ras gzigs kyi bod
bdag gir mdzad tshul/ gnyis pa chos rgyal gyi rgyal rabs/ gsum pa 'dul ba'i
chos byung/ bzhi pa lo pañ ji ltar byon pa/ lnga pa gsang sngags snga 'gyur
gyi chos byung/drug pa bka' gdams kyi chos byung /bdun pa bka' rgyud spyi'i
chos byung/ brgyad pa karma kaM tshang gi chos byung/ dgu pa 'bri khung
bka' rgyud kyi chos byung/ bcu pa chos rgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos byung ste
nang tshan le'u bcu/*

yan lag bzhi pa rgya nag sogs su chos byung tshul/

*yan lag lnga pa spyir rig gnas ji ltar byung tshul ste skabs chen po
lnga/nang tshan le'u bcu bdun gyis (PX1, 707)/legs par grub pa ste/*

[Author's colophon]

(PX1, vol. 2, p. 707, l. 1)

*rang gi dad pa'i blo dang/ sa skyong ba⁸⁸ chen po bsod nams rab brtan gyis
bskul bar mdzad pa'i rkyen las/ shākya'i dge slong dus kyi dbang gis chos
smra ba'i re mos su son pa mi pham chos kyi rgyal po don yongs su grub pa
ming gzhan gtsug lag gi phreng ba 'dzin pas rang lo zhe gnyis pa la skabs
dang po gsum⁸⁹ brtsams cing⁹⁰/ phyis rang lo drug bcu pa'i skabs ci rigs par
le'u lhag ma rnam bris cing⁹¹ re gcig pa shing pho byi ba'i lo hor zla gnyis
pa'i tshes gcig la dpal sangs rgyas mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag
khang chen por grub par bgyis pa dge bar mthar phyin to//*

[Printer's colophon]

(PX1, vol. 2, p. 707, l. 4)

*//rig gnas lnga yi chos kyi byung ba 'di/
/gnam gshegs dpal 'byor bzang mo'i dgongs rdzogs phyir/
/lho brag gnas kyi gzhis khar par du bsgrubs/*

⁸⁸ pa PB3.

⁸⁹ gsum pa PB3.

⁹⁰ shing PB3.

⁹¹ shing PB3.

/yig rkos⁹² gnyis ka byed po g.ye pa⁹³ yin/
 /dge 'dis 'gro kun thams cad mkhyen thob shog/ //

Translation

[Epilogue]

With regard to that [text], [the bodhisattvas⁹⁴] came to form⁹⁵ completely the innumerable assembly of authentic great beings who elucidate the excellent teachings of the lion of the Śākya,⁹⁶ the fourth [Buddha] of our own “good kalpa”.

From among unfathomably [many] pieces of amazing episodes [of] those who came to the Noble Land [India], China, Mongolia, Khotan and to the North, to the land of Tibet, I faithfully described only a few [for] each [of them].

Through virtuous effort, during the period of this Tibetan kingdom, all contagious diseases were stopped and all beings were endowed with the benefit of [the eight] freedoms [and the ten] circumstances [which turn the human body into a precious one].⁹⁷ Therefore, may [they] be suitable vessels for the excellent Dharma!

[May they] practice the essential teachings in all lifetimes!

[May they] be guided by the lamas who are the real buddhas!

Through spontaneous accomplishment [of] the excellent connections in [their] entirety, may the two-fold benefit for oneself and others be accomplished at once!

⁹² *brkos* PB3.

⁹³ *ba* PB3.

⁹⁴ The first part of the sentence, the temporal clause ending in *byon pa las*, which I made into a separate sentence in English, has no subject mentioned. It only appears in the main clause as *yang phyogs bod kyi yul du byon pa rnam*s, but using it in the first clause does not sound good in English due to doubling and length. Therefore, I inserted a subject according to meaning, “the bodhisattvas”, which refers to the different lamas and teachers described in this work. Given the context of Mahāyāna and the fact that many of them are described to have descended from a heavenly realm, as would a bodhisattva incarnating in this world, the term “bodhisattva” seems appropriate to be used here.

⁹⁵ Tib. *khyab pa*. It might be a rather free translation to render it with “to form”, but it appears to me that the meaning is not that there is one group that permeates another group, but that they actually make up this group.

⁹⁶ Tib. *shAkya seng ge*. Skt. Śākyasiṃha, epithet of Buddha Śākyamuni.

⁹⁷ Tib. *dal 'byor* refers to the two aspects of the precious human body (*mi lus rin po che*)—“the eight freedoms” (*dal ba brgyad*) and “the ten connections” (*'byor pa bcu*). The eight freedoms refer to being free from the eight unfree states, in which beings cannot practice the Dharma. The ten connections are the circumstances which make a human existence suitable for practicing the Dharma. The person has connected with these ten circumstances through previous accumulated merit (Duff 2009, *dal 'byor, dal ba brgyad, 'byor pa bcu*).

[Outline]

[In] “The excellent exposition elucidating the history of the ones who ruled through the wheel of the authentic Dharma, called the ‘Feast of the Wise’⁹⁸ the first part [is] the chapter on the “Overview of the world”.

In the second part, the “Chapter on India”, [there is] a division into four sections: [2.1] “Exposition of the Buddha’s actions”, [2.2] “Exposition of the coverage of the Buddhist Councils”, [2.3] “History of the representation of the Three Jewels”, [and 2.4] “Royal history”.⁹⁹

In the third part, the “Chapter on Tibet”, [there is] a division into ten sections: [3.1] “How Avalokiteśvara took possession of Tibet”, [3.2] “Royal genealogy of Dharma kings”, [3.3] “Doctrinal history of the Vinaya teachings”, [3.4] “History of translators and paṇḍitas”, [3.5] “Doctrinal history of the early translation of the secret mantra”, [3.6] “Doctrinal history of the bKa’ gdams [tradition]”, [3.7] “General doctrinal history of the bKa’ brgyud [tradition]”, [3.8] “Doctrinal history of the Karma Kam tshang [tradition]”, [3.9] “Doctrinal history of the ‘Bri gung bKa’ brgyud [tradition]”, [and 3.10] “Doctrinal history of various transmission lineages”.

The fourth part [deals with] the [4.] “Doctrinal history of China and other [countries]”.

The fifth part [deals with] the [5.] “History of the [five] fields of knowledge in general”. [The work] has been well accomplished through five major parts [and] an inner division [into] seventeen¹⁰⁰ sections.

[Author’s colophon]

Out of the circumstances of being encouraged by my own faithful wishes¹⁰¹ and by the great ruler bSod nams rab brtan,¹⁰² [and since] the Dharma has come down [to us] through time [from] the fully ordained monks of [Buddha] Śākya[muni] via alternations of [re]telling, [I], Mi pham chos kyī rgyal po don yongs su grub pa, also bearing the name of gTsug lag gi phreng ba, started¹⁰³ the first three chapters at the age

⁹⁸ Identical to title on title page, but different from title in incipit. An analysis and discussion of the translation of the title is found in the introduction of this paper.

⁹⁹ Tib. *rgyal po byon tshul*. On the title page this section is called *rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs* instead (“Royal genealogy of India”).

¹⁰⁰ The five parts are mentioned here. The seventeen sections correspond to the number of volumes (*ka* to *tsa*) the work is organized into.

¹⁰¹ Tib. *rang gi dad pa’i blo*, lit. “my own faithful mind”.

¹⁰² On his identity, see the discussion in the introduction.

¹⁰³ Here the past stem of the verb *rtsom* is used, which has two meanings: “to compose” and “to start”. Hence, it is not clear, if he composed those parts within that year or if he started to write them. Given the mere extent of part 3 and its being based on various sources, it seems unlikely to have been written within one year

of forty-two [1545]. Afterwards, when [I was] sixty years old, [I] wrote the remaining sections of various kinds. [At the age of] sixty-one, at the first day of the second month of the male wood-mouse year (1564), in the big temple dPal sangs rgyas mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa,¹⁰⁴ [I] finally completed [this] virtuous undertaking.

[Printer's colophon]

This doctrinal history of the five fields of knowledge¹⁰⁵ was produced in printing at the lHo brag gnas kyi gzhis kha [printing house]¹⁰⁶ in order to complete the intent of gNam gshegs dpal 'byor bzang mo.¹⁰⁷ The one who did both writing and carving is [called] g.Ye pa. May all beings attain omniscience through this virtue!

Appendix C: Structure of Block Print Edition

The following table presents the structure of the xylograph edition in terms of volumes, volume titles and sections. This also corresponds to the structure devised originally by the author, as it is also described in this way in the author's colophon (see Appendix B). The modern book editions do not necessarily refer to the seventeen volumes, but they use the section structure and sometimes enhance its granularity.

Print Volume	Volume	Folios	Section	Title
1/ stod	ka	13	1	<i>dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba'i legs par bshad pa</i>
	kha	13	2.1	<i>la yan lag chen po lnga las yan lag dang po 'jig rten gyi khams</i>

(unless all the information had been gathered and extracted before). Also Bjerregaard (2007, 29) concludes from his biographies that he was working on the CKG for almost twenty years.

¹⁰⁴ Lit. "the big temple where the unchanging [state of] the glorious Buddha is accomplished spontaneously". This is the name of the temple of bSams yas monastery given by BDRC (G287) as dPal lugs gsum mi 'gyur lhun gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khang. For gTsug lag phreng ba, bSams yas was one of the most important places for writing this work, as "copies of original documents from the time of the early kings [...] had been preserved" there and he copied many of them himself and included them in the CKG (Richardson 1980, 62). An example of an edict copied by him is found in Richardson (1980, 64), where gTsug lag phreng ba explicitly mentions the temple of "bsams yas lhun gyis grub pa" (PX1, vol. 1, 366).

¹⁰⁵ While the paragraphs before referred to the work as a whole, this paragraph only refers to the last volume (*tsa*), since each volume bears a printer's colophon.

¹⁰⁶ Full name of the printing house as given in BDRC, G3JT12590: lHo brag gnas kyi gzhis kha'i par khang. As explained in the introduction, it seems that not all printing blocks were produced in the same location and at the same time.

¹⁰⁷ For possible sponsors, see the discussion in the introduction.

	<i>ga</i>	10	2.2	<i>spyir bstan pa dang/ yan lag gnyis pa rgya gar gyi skabs la le'u bzhi las dang po ston pa'i mdzad pa/ bshad pa/ gnyis pa bka' bsdu ba khyad par du bshad pa/ gsum pa dkon mchog gsum gyi rten byung tshul bzhi pa rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs rnams bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>nga</i>	6	2.3	
	<i>ca</i>	9	2.4	
	<i>cha</i>	24	3.1	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod kyi skabs la le'u bcu las dang po thugs rje chen pos bod bdag gir mdzad tshul bzhugs/</i>
	<i>ja</i>	155	3.2	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod kyi skabs la le'u bcu las skabs gnyis pa bod kyi rgyal rabs bzhugs//</i>
	<i>nya</i>	22	3.3	<i>dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba las yan lag gsum pa bod kyi skabs la le'u bcu las gsum pa 'dul ba'i chos 'byung bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>ta</i>	14	3.4	<i>dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston zhes bya ba las yan lag gsum pa bod kyi skabs la le'u bcu las bzhi pa lo pañ chos 'byung bzhugs//</i>
	<i>tha</i>	65	3.5	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod yul gyi skabs la le'u bcu las skabs lnga pa gsang sngags rnying ma'i chos 'byung bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>da</i>	44	3.6	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi bod yul gyi skabs la le'u bcu las drug pa bka' gdams chos 'byung bzhugs//</i>
	<i>na</i>	60	3.7	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod gyi skabs las bdun pa bka' brgyud spyi'i chos 'byung bzhugs//</i>
2/ <i>smad</i>	<i>pa</i>	253	3.8	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod gyi skabs las brgyad pa sgrub rgyud karma kam tshang gi chos 'byung rgyas pa bzhugs//</i>
	<i>pha</i>	12	3.9	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod gyi skabs las dgu pa 'bri gung bka' rgyud kyi rnam thar snying po bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>ba</i>	13	3.10	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag gsum pa bod gyi skabs la le'u bcu las bcu pa chos rgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos 'byung bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>ma</i>	25	4	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston las yan lag bzhi pa la li yul/ rgya nag snga ma/ mi nyag/ hor/ rgya nag phyi ma rnams su rgyal po dang chos ji ltar byung ba rnams bzhugs so//</i>
	<i>tsa</i>	50	5	<i>chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston gyi yan lag lnga pa yul spyi dang bye brag ma phye bar shes bya'i gtso bo rig gnas lnga ji ltar byung tshul bshad pa bzhugs so//</i>

Table 4: Structure of Block Print Edition

Appendix D: Table of Contents—Translated

The outline of the different sections in the colophon was translated in Appendix B. Here, I chose to translate the table of contents of the modern book edition PB3. It coincides with the block print in structure and content, but exhibits a higher granularity, and thus sheds more light on the content. As an edition-independent measure, the table provides the number of syllables¹⁰⁸ (instead of folios or pages). Additionally, the lengths of the different entries have been related to the total length of the opus expressed as a percentage, in order to provide an intuitive idea of the significance of the different paragraphs.¹⁰⁹

Section	Title	Syllables	Percent
	Expression of worship <i>mchod brjod</i>	87	0.0%
	Declaration of intent for the exposition <i>bshad par dam bca' ba</i>	193	0.0%
1.	Overview of the world <i>'jig rten gyi khams spyir bstan pa</i>	8186	1.6%
2.	The chapter about India <i>rgya gar kyi skabs</i>		
2.1.	Exposition of the Buddha's actions <i>ston pa'i mdzad pa bshad pa</i>	8265	1.6%
2.2.	Exposition of the coverage of the Buddhist Councils <i>bka' bsdu ba khyab par du bshad pa</i>	7091	1.4%
2.3.	History of the representation of the Three Jewels <i>dkon mchog gsum gyi rten byung tshul</i>	3893	0.8%
2.4.	Royal genealogy of India <i>rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs</i>	5829	1.1%
3.	The chapter about Tibet <i>bod kyi skabs</i>		
3.1.	How the Great Compassionate One [Avalokiteśvara] took possession of Tibet <i>thugs rje chen pos bod bdag gir mdzad tshul</i>	14616	2.9%
3.2.	Royal genealogy of Tibet <i>bod kyi rgyal rabs</i>		
3.2.1.	History of human population in Tibet <i>bod yul du mi'i 'gro ba byung tshul</i>	2219	0.4%

¹⁰⁸ Based on some samples, average syllable amounts for full pages and lines have been determined and used to estimate the length of all parts and sections.

¹⁰⁹ Pirie and Manson (2017, 2–3) also provide a translation of parts of the table of contents of PB3. Their focus is mostly on part 3 and there especially on section 3.2 (royal genealogy of Tibet) with its subsections.

3.2.2.	About the twelve minor king[dom]s amongst other things <i>rgyal phran bcu gnyis sogs kyi skor</i>	348	0.1%
3.2.3.	About the seven heavenly kings <i>gnam gyi khri bdun gyi skor</i>	1370	0.3%
3.2.4.	About the two superior kings of the upper sphere <i>stod kyi steng gnyis kyi skor</i>	1653	0.3%
3.2.5.	About the six excellent kings of the terrestrial sphere and the eight lDe kings of the intermediate sphere <i>sa yi legs drug dang bar gyi lde brgyad skor</i>	196	0.0%
3.2.6.	About the five inferior kings <i>'og gi btsan lnga'i skor</i>	2936	0.6%
3.2.7.	About the king Srong btsan sgam po <i>rgyal po srong btsan sgam po'i skor</i>	40433	7.9%
3.2.8.	About the king Mang srong mang btsan <i>rgyal po mang srong mang btsan gyi skor</i>	305	0.1%
3.2.9.	About the king 'Dus srong mang po rje <i>rgyal po 'dus srong mang po rje'i skor</i>	283	0.1%
3.2.10.	About the king Khri lde gtsug brtan <i>rgyal po khri lde gtsug brtan gyi skor</i>	1131	0.2%
3.2.11.	About the king Khri srong lde btsan <i>rgyal po khri srong lde btsan gyi skor</i>	34496	6.8%
3.2.12.	About the king Mu ne btsan po <i>rgyal po mu ne btsan po'i skor</i>	2849	0.6%
3.2.13.	About the king Khri lde srong btsan <i>rgyal po khri lde srong btsan gyi skor</i>	2436	0.5%
3.2.14.	About the king Khri gtsug lde btsan Ral ba can <i>rgyal po khri gtsug lde btsan ral ba can gyi skor</i>	1979	0.4%
3.2.15.	About the king 'U dum btsan <i>rgyal po 'u dum btsan gyi skor</i>	3524	0.7%
3.2.16.	About [the kings] gNam lde 'od srung, Khri lde yum brtan and others <i>gnam lde 'od srung dang khri lde yum brtan sogs kyi skor</i>	5829	1.1%
3.2.17.	About Ra sa [lHa sa], bSam yas and other [places] <i>ra sa dang bsam yas sogs kyi skor</i>	4807	0.9%
3.3.	Account of the history of the Vinaya teachings <i>'dul ba'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	13898	2.7%
3.4.	History of Buddhist translators and paṇḍitas <i>lo paṇ chos 'byung</i>	8135	1.6%
3.5.	Account of the doctrinal history of the rNying ma [tradition] of the secret mantra <i>gsang sngags rnying ma'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	39063	7.7%
3.6.	Account of the history of the bKa' gdams [tradition] <i>bka' gdams kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	27449	5.4%

3.7.	Account of the general doctrinal history of the bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>bka' brgyud spyi'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	39911	7.8%
3.8.	Account of the doctrinal history of the Karma Kam tshang [tradition] <i>karma kam tshang gi chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>		
3.8.1.	[First] Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa <i>karma dus gsum mkhyen pa</i>	7243	1.4%
3.8.2.	[Second Karma pa] Karma pakshi Chos kyi bla ma <i>karma pakshi chos kyi bla ma</i>	13159	2.6%
3.8.3.	[Third] Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje <i>karma rang byung rdo rje</i>	10940	2.1%
3.8.4.	[Fourth] Karma pa Rol pa'i rdo rje <i>karma rol pa'i rdo rje</i>	14290	2.8%
3.8.5.	[Fifth] Karma pa De bzhin gshegs pa <i>karma de bzhin gshegs pa</i>	12528	2.5%
3.8.6.	[Sixth] Karma pa mThong ba don ldan <i>karma mthong ba don ldan</i>	1936	0.4%
3.8.7.	[Seventh] Karma pa Chos grags rgya mtsho <i>karma chos grags rgya mtsho</i>	60596	11.9%
3.8.8.	[Eighth] Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje <i>karma mi bskyod rdo rje</i>	44131	8.7%
3.9.	Account of the history of the 'Bri gung bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>'bri gung bka' brgyud kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>		
3.9.1.	The teachings [on] the origin of the transmission lineage <i>chos brgyud kyi khungs bstan pa</i>	1436	0.3%
3.9.2.	Spread of the 'Bri gung bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>'bri gung bka' brgyud dar tshul</i>	5111	1.0%
3.10.	Account of the doctrinal history of various transmission lineages <i>chos brgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	283	0.1%
3.10.1.	About the Zhi byed [tradition] <i>zhi byed pa'i skor</i>	479	0.1%
3.10.2.	About the Sa skya pa [tradition] <i>sa skya pa'i skor</i>	2784	0.5%
3.10.3.	About the [tradition of the] gCod [practice] <i>gcod kyi skor</i>	805	0.2%
3.10.4.	About the Shangs pa bKa' brgyud [tradition] <i>shangs pa bka' brgyud kyi skor</i>	2893	0.6%
4.	The chapter about Khotan, Earlier China, Tangut, Mongolia and Later China <i>li yul dang/ rgya nag snga ma/ mi nyag/ hor/ rgya nag phyi ma bcas kyi skabs</i>		

4.1.	Account of the kings and the doctrinal history of Khotan <i>li yul gyi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	1958	0.4%
4.2.	Account of the kings and the doctrinal history of Earlier China <i>rgya nag snga ma'i rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	6612	1.3%
4.3.	Account of the kings and the doctrinal history of Tangut <i>mi nyag gi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	1566	0.3%
4.4.	Account of the kings and the doctrinal history of Mongolia <i>hor gyi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	3502	0.7%
4.5.	Account of the kings and the doctrinal history of Later China <i>rgya nag phyi ma'i rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa</i>	305	0.1%
5.	History of the five fields of knowledge—the overall subjects and principal objects of knowledge <i>yul spyi dang shes bya'i gtso bo rig gnas lnga byung tshul</i>	174	0.0%
5.1.	About the science of inner development <i>nang don rig pa'i skor</i>	24012	4.7%
5.2.	About the science of valid cognition <i>tshad ma rig pa'i skor</i>	1675	0.3%
5.3.	About the science of language <i>sgra rig pa'i skor</i>	1718	0.3%
5.4.	About the science of fabrication [incl. arts and crafts] <i>bzo rig pa'i skor</i>	783	0.2%
5.5.	About the science of healing <i>gso ba rig pa'i skor</i>	4328	0.9%
	Epilogue, colophon	544	0.1%

Table 5: Translated Section Titles

Appendix E: Page Numbers for Available Sources

The table provided in Appendix E is meant as a practical resource, which can save a lot of time when working with the different sources. It shows directly which sections are present in which source and on which page or folio number they start.¹¹⁰ The incipit of all sections is also provided. Apart from quickly finding the exact place in editions where the new section is not set apart in a new paragraph, the incipit is also useful when working with the e-text search of PB2 in BDRC (W7499) to locate passages in the text.

¹¹⁰ Some of the block prints exhibit both Western page numbering as well as traditional folio numbering. In these cases, the presentation in the table gives preference to the Western page numbering.

In order to save space, the notation in the table is highly abbreviated and adheres to the following conventions. “Volume” is abbreviated to “v.”. Page and folio are without any indication, in case of folios the number is followed by r for *recto* (front side) or v for *verso* (back side). In some cases, the line number is indicated (especially when the paragraph is not set off by layout); the line is separated from the folio or page number by a dot. For the user’s convenience the electronic page number of the PDF file, as obtained from BDRC, is indicated in brackets. The word “missing” is abbreviated to “m.”.

Section	Title	Incipit	PX1	PX2	PX3	PX4	PX5	PX6	PM1	PB1	PB2	PB3
(1)	<i>mchod brjod/</i>	<i>dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor los sgyur rgyal rnams</i>	v. 1/ka, 2.1 (6)	v. 16/ka, 2.1 (10)	v. 1/ka, 1v.1 (4)	v. ka, 1v.1 (4)	m.	v. ka, 1v.1 (4)	m.	v. 1, 3.1 (19)	v. 1, 3 (13)	3 (19)
(1)	<i>bshad par dam bca' ba/</i>	<i>rab mchog gts'o bo rnams kyi ngo mtshar gnam</i>	v. 1/ka, 2.3 (6)	v. 16/ka, 2.3 (10)	v. 1/ka, 1v.3 (4)	v. ka, 1v.3 (4)	m.	v. ka, 1v.3 (4)	m.	v. 1, 3.5 (19)	v. 1, 3 (13)	4 (20)
1	<i>yan lag dang po/ 'jig rten gyi khams spyir bstan pa/</i>	<i>chos kun rang bzhin gzod nas rnam dag nyid</i>	v. 1/ka, 3.2 (7)	v. 16/ka, 3.2 (11)	v. 1/ka, 2r.2 (5)	v. ka, 2r.2 (5)	m.	v. ka, 2r.2 (5), m. fols. 2, 3, 10, 11, 13	m.	v. 1, 3.15 (19)	v. 1, 5 (15)	5 (21)
2	<i>yan lag gnyis pa/ rgya gar gyi skabs/</i>	<i>da ni ston pa'i mdzad pa brjod par bya</i>	v. 1/kha, 26.8 (30)	v. 16/kha, 26.8 (34)	v. 1/kha, 13v.8 (28)	v. kha, 13v.8 (28)	m.	v. kha, 13v.8 (28), m. fols.	m.	v. 1, 23.1 (39)	v. 1, 29 (39)	18 (34)
2.1	<i>le'u dang po/ ston pa'i mdzad pa bshad pa/</i>	<i>da ni ston pa'i mdzad pa brjod par bya</i>	v. 1/kha, 26.8 (30)	v. 16/kha, 26.8 (34)	v. 1/kha, 13v.8 (28)	v. kha, 13v.8 (28)	m.	v. kha, 13v.8 (28), m. fols. 13, 15	m.	v. 1, 23.1 (39)	v. 1, 29 (39)	18 (34)
2.1	<i>le'u gnyis pa/ bka' bsdud ba khyab par du bshad pa/</i>	<i>gang tshe mchog zung mya ngan 'das pa'i tshes</i>	v. 1/ga, 51.7 (55)	v. 16/ga, 51.7 (59)	v. 1/ga, 26r.7 (53)	v. ga, 26r.7 (53)	m.	v. ga, 26r.7 (53)	m.	v. 1, 42.2 (58)	v. 1, 53 (63)	31 (47)
2.3	<i>le'u gsum pa/ dkon mchog gsum gyi rten byung tshul/</i>	<i>bskal bzang sangs rgyas bzhi pa shi'akya'i tog</i>	v. 1/nga, 73.3 (77)	v. 16/nga, 73.3 (81)	v. 1/nga, 37r.3 (75)	v. nga, 37r.3 (75)	m.	v. nga, 37r.3 (73)	m.	v. 1, 58.14 (74)	v. 1, 73 (83)	42 (58)
3.4	<i>le'u bzhi pa/ rgya gar gyi rgyal rabs/</i>	<i>ston pa mchog la slar yang gus btud nas</i>	v. 1/ca, 85.1 (89)	v. 16/ca, 85.1 (93)	v. 1/ca, 43r.1 (87)	v. ca, 43r.1 (87)	m.	v. ca, 43r.1 (85)	m.	v. 1, 67.17 (83)	v. 1, 84 (94)	48 (64)
3	<i>yan lag gsum pa/ bod kyi skabs/</i>	<i>rgyal dang rgyal sras kun gyi brtse chen ni</i>	v. 1/cha, 104.1 (108)	v. 16/cha, 104.1 (112)	v. 1/cha, 1v.1 (106)	m.	v. cha, 1v.1 (108)	v. cha, 1v.1 (104)	m.	v. 1, 83 (99)	v. 1, 103 (113)	57 (73)
3.1	<i>le'u dang po/ thugs rje chen pos bod bdag gir mdzad tshul/</i>	<i>rgyal dang rgyal sras kun gyi brtse chen ni</i>	v. 1/cha, 104.1 (108)	v. 16/cha, 104.1 (112)	v. 1/cha, 1v.1 (106)	m.	v. cha, 1v.1 (108)	v. cha, 1v.1 (104)	m.	v. 1, 83 (99)	v. 1, 105 (115)	59 (75)
3.2	<i>le'u gnyis pa/ bod kyi rgyal rabs/</i>	<i>na mo ke shwa ra ya/ 'de ltar rgyal</i>	v. 1/ja, 152.1 (156)	v. 16/ja, 152.1 (160)	v. 1/ja, 1v.1 (154)	m.	m.	v. ja, 1v.1 (152)	m.	v. 4/ja, 1v.1 (15)	v. 1, 149 (159)	81 (97)
3.2.1	<i>dang po/ bod yul du mi'i 'gro ba byung tshul/</i>	<i>na mo ke shwa ra ya/ 'de ltar rgyal</i>	v. 1/ja, 152.1 (156)	v. 16/ja, 152.1 (160)	v. 1/ja, 1v.1 (154)	m.	m.	v. ja, 1v.1 (152)	m.	v. 4/ja, 1v.1 (15)	v. 1, 149 (159)	81 (97)
3.2.2	<i>gnyis pa/ rgyal phran bcu gnyis sog's kyi skor/</i>	<i>de tshes rgyal phran sil ma bcu gnyis dang</i>	v. 1/ja, 158.6 (162)	v. 16/ja, 158.6 (166)	v. 1/ja, 4v.6 (160)	m.	m.	v. ja, 4v.6 (158)	m.	v. 4/ja, 4v.6 (20)	v. 1, 155.12 (165)	84 (100)

Section	Title	Incipit	PX1	PX2	PX3	PX4	PX5	PX6	PM1	PB1	PB2	PB3
3.2.3	<i>gsun pa/ gnam gyi khri bdun gyi skor/</i>	<i>'phags pa'i thugs rjes byin gyis brlabs pa yis</i>	v. 1/ja, 159.5 (163)	v. 16/ja, 159.5 (167)	v. 1/ja, 5r.5 (161)	m.	m.	v. ja, 5r.5 (159)	m.	v. 4/ja, 5r.5 (21)	v. 1, 156.12 (166)	85 (101)
3.2.4	<i>bzhi pa/ stod kyi steng gnyis kyi skor/</i>	<i>de yi btsun mo sa btsun klu rje'i sras</i>	v. 1/ja, 163.2 (167)	v. 16/ja, 163.2 (171)	v. 1/ja, 7r.2 (165)	m.	m.	v. ja, 7r.2 (163)	m.	v. 4/ja, 7r.2 (29)	v. 1, 160.12 (170)	87 (103)
3.2.5	<i>lnga pa/ sa yi legs drug dang bar gyi lde brgyad skor/</i>	<i>rgyal po de sho legs dang thi sho legs</i>	v. 1/ja, 167.3 (171)	v. 16/ja, 167.3 (175)	v. 1/ja, 9r.3 (169)	m.	m.	v. ja, 9r.3 (167)	m.	v. 4/ja, 9r.3 (33)	v. 1, 165.9 (175)	90 (106)
3.2.6	<i>drug pa/ 'og gi btsan lnga'i skor/</i>	<i>btsan lnga'i thog ma to re long btsan yin</i>	v. 1/ja, 167.7 (171)	v. 16/ja, 167.7 (175)	v. 1/ja, 9r.7 (169)	m.	m.	v. ja, 9r.7 (167)	m.	v. 4/ja, 9r.7 (33)	v. 1, 165.21 (175)	90 (106)
3.2.7	<i>bdun pa/ rgyal po srong btsan sgam po'i skor/</i>	<i>de yang 'phags mchog spyan ras gzigs dbang gis</i>	v. 1/ja, 175.5 (179)	v. 16/ja, 175.5 (183)	v. 1/ja, 13r.5 (177)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 13r.5 (41)	v. 1, 174.11 (184)	95 (111)
3.2.8	<i>brgyad pa/ rgyal po mang srong mang btsan gyi skor/</i>	<i>mang srong bcu gsun bzhes pas rgyal sa mdzad</i>	v. 1/ja, 288.5 (292)	v. 16/ja, 288.5 (296)	v. 1/ja, 69v.5 (290)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 69v.5 (154)	v. 1, 291.21 (301)	155 (171)
3.2.9	<i>dgu pa/ rgyal po 'dus srong mang po rje'i skor/</i>	<i>yab 'das zhag bdun lon pa chu byi'i lor</i>	v. 1/ja, 289.5 (293)	v. 16/ja, 289.5 (297)	v. 1/ja, 70r.5 (291)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 70r.5 (155)	v. 1, 292.20 (302)	155 (171)
3.2.10	<i>bcu pa/ rgyal po khri lde gtsug brtan gyi skor/</i>	<i>de sras khri lde gtsug brtan zhes bya ba</i>	v. 1/ja, 290.5 (294)	v. 16/ja, 290.5 (298)	v. 1/ja, 70v.5 (292)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 70v.5 (156)	v. 1, 293.15 (303)	156 (172)
3.2.11	<i>bcu gcig pa/ rgyal po khri srong lde btsan gyi skor/</i>	<i>de nas chos rgyal khri srong lde btsan</i>	v. 1/ja, 293.7 (297)	v. 16/ja, 293.7 (301)	v. 1/ja, 72r.7 (295)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 72r.7 (159)	v. 1, 297.1 (307)	158 (174)
3.2.12	<i>bcu gnyis pa/ rgyal po mu ne btsan po'i skor/</i>	<i>de nas lha sras mu tig btsan po yis</i>	v. 1/ja, 394.7 (398)	v. 16/ja, 394.7 (402)	v. 1/ja, 122v.7 (396)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 122v.7 (261)	v. 1, 398.11 (408)	209 (225)
3.2.13	<i>bcu gsun pa/ rgyal po khri lde srong btsan gyi skor/</i>	<i>de nas khri lde srong btsan rgyal sar bskos</i>	v. 1/ja, 403.5 (407)	v. 16/ja, 403.5 (411)	v. 1/ja, 127r.5 (407)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 127r.5 (270)	v. 1, 406.21 (416)	213 (229)
3.2.14	<i>bcu bzhi pa/ rgyal po khri gtsug lde btsan ral ba can gyi skor/</i>	<i>rgyal po de la sras lnga ste lha sras gtsang ma</i>	v. 1/ja, 411.3 (415)	v. 16/ja, 411.3 (419)	v. 1/ja, 131r.3 (415)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 131r.3 (278)	v. 1, 414.4 (424)	217 (233)
3.2.15	<i>bcu lnga pa/ rgyal po 'u diim btsan gyi skor/</i>	<i>de nas bod yul 'gro ba'i bsod nams ni</i>	v. 1/ja, 417.3 (421)	v. 16/ja, 417.3 (425)	v. 1/ja, 134r.3 (421)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 134r.3 (284)	v. 1, 419.23 (429)	220 (236)
3.2.16	<i>bcu drug pa/ gnam lde 'od srung dang khri lde yun brtan sogs kyi skor/</i>	<i>phyi lo me mo yo las btsun mo chun ma</i>	v. 1/ja, 427.7 (431)	v. 16/ja, 427.7 (435)	v. 1/ja, 139r.7 (431)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 139r.7 (294)	v. 1, 430.8 (440)	225 (241)
3.2.17	<i>bcu bdun pa/ ra sa dang bsam yas sogs kyi skor/</i>	<i>de yang bstan pa phyi dar gyi nam gzhag gzhag du</i>	v. 1/ja, 445.3 (449)	v. 16/ja, 445.3 (453)	v. 1/ja, 148r.3 (449)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 4/ja, 148r.3 (312)	v. 1, 447.9 (457)	234 (250)
3.3	<i>le'u gsun pa/ 'dul ba'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>bod du thub bstan phyi ma dar tshul yang</i>	v. 1/nya, 462.1 (466)	v. 16/nya, 462.1 (470)	v. 1/nya, 1v.1 (466)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 1, 120 (136)	v. 1, 465 (475)	242 (258)
3.4	<i>le'u bzhi pa/ lo pan chos 'byung/</i>	<i>sprul pa'i chos rgyal dan pa de rnam kyi</i>	v. 1/ta, 506.1 (510)	v. 16/ta, 506.1 (514)	v. 1/ta, 1v.1 (512)	m.	m.	m.	m.	v. 1, 156 (172)	v. 1, 509 (519)	263 (279)
4.5	<i>le'u lnga pa/ gsang sngags rnying ma'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>dpal ldan bla ma'i zhabs la phyag 'tshal lo</i>	v. 1/tha, 534.1 (538)	v. 16/tha, 534.1 (542)	v. 1/tha, 1v.1 (540)	m.	m.	v. tha, 1v.1 (180)	m.	v. 1, 178 (194)	v. 1, 537 (547)	276 (292)

Section	Title	Incipit	PX1	PX2	PX3	PX4	PX5	PX6	PM1	PB1	PB2	PB3
3.6	<i>le'u drug pa/ bka' gdams kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>sngon tshe rgyal sras gtsa bo bzang skyong ni</i>	v. 1/da, 664.1 (668)	v. 16/da, 664.1 (672)	v. 1/da, 1v.1 (672)	v. da, 1v.1 (105)	m.	m.	m.	v. 2, 279 (15)	v. 1, 655 (665)	335 (351)
3.7	<i>le'u bdun pa/ bka' brgyud spyi'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>rgyal bas bstan pa'i chos kyi rnam grangs kun</i>	v. 1/na, 752.1 (756)	v. 16/na, 752.1 (760)	v. 1/na, 1v.1 (760)	m.	m.	v. na, 1v.1 (310); only fols. 1, 3-8	m.	v. 2, 348 (84)	v. 1, 739 (749)	376 (392)
3.8	<i>le'u brgyad pa/ karma kam tshang gi chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>dpal karma bka' brgyud kyi rnam thar gyi</i>	v. 2/pa, 2.1 (6)	v. 17/pa, 2.1 (10)	m.	v. pa, 1v.1 (194)	v. pa, 1v.1 (218)	v. pa, 1v.1 (324)	m.	v. 2, 427 (163)	v. 2, 859 (9)	436 (452)
3.8.1	<i>dang po/ karma dus gsum mkhyen pa/</i>	<i>dpal karma bka' brgyud kyi rnam thar gyi</i>	v. 2/pa, 2.1 (6)	v. 17/pa, 2.1 (10)	m.	v. pa, 1v.1 (194)	v. pa, 1v.1 (218)	v. pa, 1v.1 (324)	m.	v. 2, 427 (163)	v. 2, 859.1 (9)	436 (452)
3.8.2	<i>gnyis pa/ karma pakshi chos kyi bla ma/</i>	<i>rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thams cad kyi ngo bo</i>	v. 2/pa, 24.7 (28)	v. 17/pa, 24.7 (32)	m.	v. pa, 12v.7 (216)	v. pa, 12v.7 (240)	v. pa, 12v.7 (346)	m.	v. 2, 440.25 (176)	v. 2, 880.9 (30)	447 (463)
3.8.3	<i>gsum pa/ karma rang byung rdo rje/</i>	<i>de la grub thob chen po karma ba nyid kyiis</i>	v. 2/pa, 65.4 (69)	v. 17/pa, 65.4 (73)	m.	v. pa, 33r.4 (257)	v. pa, 33r.4 (281)	v. pa, 33r.4 (387)	m.	v. 2, 464.14 (200)	v. 2, 918.12 (68)	466 (482)
3.8.4	<i>bzhi pa/ karma rol pa'i rdo rje/</i>	<i>de la rje rol pa'i rdo rje ni</i>	v. 2/pa, 98.4 (102)	v. 17/pa, 98.4 (106)	m.	v. pa, 49v.4 (290)	v. pa, 49v.4 (314)	v. pa, 49v.4 (420)	m.	v. 2, 484.15 (220)	v. 2, 950.1 (100)	483 (499)
3.8.5	<i>nga pa/ karma de bzhin gshegs pa/</i>	<i>dpal karma pa na rim nga pa ni</i>	v. 2/pa, 142.1 (146)	v. 17/pa, 142.1 (150)	m.	v. pa, 71v.1 (334)	v. pa, 71v.1 (358)	v. pa, 71v.1 (464)	m.	v. 2, 510.22 (246)	v. 2, 991.18 (141)	504 (520)
3.8.6	<i>drug pa/ karma mthong ba don ldan/</i>	<i>na rim drug pa rje mthong ba don ldan ni</i>	v. 2/pa, 179.3 (183)	v. 17/pa, 179.3 (187)	m.	v. pa, 90r.3 (371)	v. pa, 90r.3 (395)	v. pa, 90r.3 (501)	m.	v. 2, 533.22 (269)	v. 2, 1027.2 (177)	522 (538)
3.8.7	<i>bdun pa/ karma chos grags rgya mtsho/</i>	<i>de la sprul pa'i sku bdun pa ji ltar byon pa'i tshul ni</i>	v. 2/pa, 184.7 (188)	v. 17/pa, 184.7 (192)	m.	v. pa, 92v.7 (376)	v. pa, 92v.7 (400)	v. pa, 92v.7 (506)	m.	v. 2, 537.19 (273) - v. 3, 654	v. 2, 1032.14 (182)	526 (542)
3.8.8	<i>brgyad pa/ karma mi bskyod rdo rje/</i>	<i>dus gsum sangs rgyas thams cad dang</i>	v. 2/pa, 371.1 (375)	v. 17/pa, 371.1 (379)	m.	v. pa, 186r.1 (559)	v. pa, 186r.1 (588)	v. pa, 186r.1 (693)	m.	v. 3, 654.17 (44)	v. 2, 1206.6 (356)	616 (632)
3.9	<i>le'u dgu pa/ 'bri gung bka' brgyud kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>khyad par du 'bri gung bka' rgyud ni</i>	v. 2/pha, 508.1 (512)	v. 17/pha, 508.1 (516)	m.	m.	v. pha, 1v.1 (725)	v. pha, 1v.1 (830)	v. 4/pha, 1v.1 (4)	v. 3, 742 (132)	v. 2, 1337 (487)	682 (698)
3.9.1	<i>dang po/ chos brgyud kyi khungs bstan pa/</i>	<i>khyad par du 'bri gung bka' rgyud ni</i>	v. 2/pha, 508.1 (512)	v. 17/pha, 508.1 (516)	m.	m.	v. pha, 1v.1 (725)	v. pha, 1v.1 (830)	v. 4/pha, 1v.1 (4)	v. 3, 742 (132)	v. 2, 1337 (487)	682 (698)
3.9.2	<i>gnyis pa/ 'bri gung bka' brgyud dar tshul/</i>	<i>mar mi dwags gsum phag gru pa rnam thar</i>	v. 2/pha, 513.4 (517)	v. 17/pha, 513.4 (521)	m.	m.	v. pha, 4r.4 (730)	v. pha, 4r.4 (835)	v. 4/pha, 5r.4 (11)	v. 3, 744.19 (134)	v. 2, 1341.7 (491)	684 (700)
3.10	<i>le'u gcu pa/ chos brgyud sna tshogs pa'i chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>de ltar chos rgyal rnam kyi bka' drin las</i>	v. 2/ba, 532.1 (536)	v. 17/ba, 532.1 (540)	m.	v. ba, 1v.1 (695)	m.	v. ba, 1v.1 (854)	v. 4/ba, 1v.1 (40)	v. 3, 756 (146)	v. 2, 1359 (509)	693 (709)

Section	Title	Incipit	PX1	PX2	PX3	PX4	PX5	PX6	PM1	PB1	PB2	PB3
3.10.1	<i>dang po/ zhi byed pa'i skor/</i>	<i>de yang gsang sngags snga 'gyur ni</i>	v. 2/ba, 533.3 (537)	v. 17/ba, 533.3 (541)	m.	v. ba, 2r.3 (696)	m.	v. ba, 2r.3 (855)	v. 4/ba, 2r.3 (41)	v. 3, 756.15 (146)	v. 2, 1359.19 (509)	693 (709)
3.10.2	<i>gnyis pa/ sa skya pa'i skor/</i>	<i>lam 'bras kyi man ngags gsung ba po</i>	v. 2/ba, 535.3 (539)	v. 17/ba, 535.3 (543)	m.	v. ba, 3r.3 (698)	m.	v. ba, 3r.3 (857)	v. 4/ba, 3v.3 (44)	v. 3, 757.24 (147)	v. 2, 1362.1 (512)	694 (710)
3.10.3	<i>gsun pa/ gcod kyi skor/</i>	<i>dam chos bdud kyi gcod yul zhes bya ba ni</i>	v. 2/ba, 543.7 (547)	v. 17/ba, 543.7 (551)	m.	v. ba, 7r.7 (706)	m.	v. ba, 7r.7 (865)	v. 4/ba, 9v.6 (56)	v. 3, 763.7 (153)	v. 2, 1369.17 (519)	699 (715)
3.10.4	<i>bzhi pa/ shangs pa bka' brgyud kyi skor/</i>	<i>rgya mthso'i bar du khyab pa'i shin tu</i>	v. 2/ba, 546.4 (550)	v. 17/ba, 546.4 (554)	m.	v. ba, 8v.4 (710)	m.	v. ba, 8v.4 (868)	v. 4/ba, 11v.3 (60)	v. 3, 764.20 (154)	v. 2, 1371.23 (521)	700 (716)
4	<i>yan lag bzhi pa/ li yul dang/ rgya nag snga ma/ mi nyag/ hor/ rgya nag phyi ma bcas kyi skabs/</i>	<i>da ni 'dzam gling gi yul gru gzhan las</i>	v. 2/ma, 558.1 (562)	v. 17/ma, 558.1 (566)	m.	v. ma, 1v.1 (722)	m.	v. ma, 1v.1 (880)	v. 4/ma, 1v.1 (76)	v. 3, 772 (162)	v. 2, 1381 (531)	707 (723)
4.1	<i>le'u dang po/ li yul gyi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>da ni 'dzam gling gi yul gru gzhan las</i>	v. 2/ma, 558.1 (562)	v. 17/ma, 558.1 (566)	m.	v. ma, 1v.1 (722)	m.	v. ma, 1v.1 (880)	v. 4/ma, 1v.1 (76)	v. 3, 772 (162)	v. 2, 1383 (533)	707 (723)
4.2	<i>le'u gnyis pa/ rgya nag snga ma'i rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>gnyis pa rgya nag gi rgyal rabs la</i>	v. 2/ma, 564.4 (568)	v. 17/ma, 564.4 (572)	m.	v. ma, 4v.4 (728)	m.	v. ma, 4v.4 (886)	v. 4/ma, 6v.6 (86)	v. 3, 775.22 (165)	v. 2, 1389 (539)	711 (727)
4.3	<i>le'u gsun pa/ mi nyag gi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>gsun pa mi nyag rgyal po'i lo rgyus ni</i>	v. 2/ma, 584.4 (588)	v. 17/ma, 584.4 (592)	m.	v. ma, 14v.4 (748)	m.	v. ma, 14v.4 (906)	v. 4/ma, 24v.5 (122)	v. 3, 788.12 (178)	v. 2, 1408 (558)	721 (737)
4.4	<i>le'u bzhi pa/ hor gyi rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>hor gyi rgyal rabs ni de yang gsung</i>	v. 2/ma, 589.3 (593)	v. 17/ma, 589.3 (597)	m.	v. ma, 17r.3 (753)	m.	v. ma, 17r.3 (911)	v. 4/ma, 29v.2 (132)	v. 3, 791.17 (181)	v. 2, 1412 (562)	724 (742)
4.5	<i>le'u lnga pa/ rgya nag phyi ma'i rgyal po dang chos kyi byung ba brjod pa/</i>	<i>rgya nag phyi ma ni tha'i ju rgyal pos</i>	v. 2/ma, 604.4 (608)	v. 17/ma, 604.4 (612)	m.	v. ma, 24v.4 (768)	m.	v. ma, 24v.4 (926)	v. 4/ma, 43r.1 (159)	v. 3, 801.16 (191)	v. 2, 1427 (577)	732 (748)
5	<i>yan lag lnga pa/ yul spyi dang shes bya'i gtsa bo rig gnas lnga byung tshul/</i>	<i>rgyal bas mdo rgyud mang por lung bstan pa</i>	v. 2/tsa, 608.1 (612)	v. 17/tsa, 608.1 (616)	m.	v. tsa, 1v.1 (772)	m.	m.	v. 4/tsa, 1v.1 (164)	v. 3, 804 (194)	v. 2, 1431 (581)	735 (751)
5.1	<i>le'u dang po/ nang don rig pa'i skor/</i>	<i>de yang snying rje chen po pad dkar las</i>	v. 2/tsa, 608.5 (612)	v. 17/tsa, 608.5 (616)	m.	v. tsa, 1v.5 (772)	m.	m.	v. 4/tsa, 2r.1 (165)	v. 3, 804.10 (194)	v. 2, 1431.12 (581)	735 (751)
5.2	<i>le'u gnyis pa/ tshad ma rig pa'i skor/</i>	<i>bstan 'gyur na dus khor gyi skor po ti lnga</i>	v. 2/tsa, 680.5 (684)	v. 17/tsa, 680.5 (688)	m.	v. tsa, 37v.5 (844)	m.	m.	v. 4/tsa, 69v.3 (296)	v. 3, 849.5 (239)	v. 2, 1501.15 (651)	771 (787)
5.3	<i>le'u gsun pa/ sgra rig pa'i skor/</i>	<i>sgra'i rig pa ni/ sngon sum bcu rtsa gsun</i>	v. 2/tsa, 685.5 (689)	v. 17/tsa, 685.5 (693)	m.	v. tsa, 40r.5 (849)	m.	m.	v. 4/tsa, 74r.5 (305)	v. 3, 852.1 (242)	v. 2, 1506.11 (656)	773 (789)
5.4	<i>le'u bzhi pa/ bzo rig pa'i skor/</i>	<i>bzo rig pa la spyir rnam par ma gyur ba sems</i>	v. 2/tsa, 690.6 (694)	v. 17/tsa, 690.6 (698)	m.	v. tsa, 42v.6 (853)	m.	m.	v. 4/tsa, 80r.1 (315)	v. 3, 855.3 (245)	v. 2, 1511.13 (661)	776 (792)

Section	Title	Incipit	PX1	PX2	PX3	PX4	PX5	PX6	PM1	PB1	PB2	PB3
5.5	<i>le'u lnga pa/ gso ba rig pa'i skor/</i>	<i>sman mchog byang chub sems kyi bdud rtsi yis</i>	v. 2/ tsa, 693.1 (697)	v. 17/ tsa, 693.1 (701)	m.	v. tsa, 44r.1 (857)	m.	m.	v. 4/ tsa, 82r.2 (319)	v. 3, 856.12 (246)	v. 2, 1513.19 (663)	777 (793)
(5)	Epilogue, colophon	<i>dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur pa rnam</i>	v. 2/ tsa, 706.3 (710)	v. 17/ tsa, 706.3 (714)	m.	v. tsa, 50v.3 (870)	m.	m.	v. 4/ tsa, 94.2 (344)	v. 3, 864.9 (254)	v. 2, 1526.8 (676)	784.10 (800)

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The Sum-pa – nomads of the northern plateau. On the issue of the Sum-pa tribes' settlement area

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During the 7th–9th centuries, Tibet was one of the largest states in Central Asia. The emergence of the powerful Tibetan Empire was made possible by the unification of all the tribes inhabiting the Tibetan plateau under the rule of the Yarlung dynasty kings. The extant portion of the preamble to the Old Tibetan Annals – the oldest Tibetan historical chronicle – begins with a report on the Sum-pa tribes.¹ In order to understand the role played by the Sum-pa in the formation of the empire, as well as the significance of these tribes in the Tibetan history and culture, it is necessary to determine their territorial location. The article attempts to analyze the currently available data on the "geography" of the Sum-pa tribes and, by generalization, to identify the most probable boundaries of their former settlement.

Information regarding the location of the Sum-pa can be found in the following sources: 1) Old Tibetan documents from Dunhuang and the Tarim Basin; 2) the works of Tibetan historians of the 13th–18th centuries, based on earlier, often not preserved sources; 3) texts of the Bon religious tradition; 4) materials of archaeological research on the territory of the Tibetan plateau; 5) Chinese dynastic chronicles.

The only source that directly delineated the borders of the Sum-pa territory is the *New Book of Tang*, a Chinese historical chronicle. This dynastic history mentions the **Su-p'i**, who were a branch of the Western Qiang and the greatest among the tribes; after annexation by the Tibetans, they were called **Sun-po**.² The French Sinologist P. Pelliot showed that the Chinese word **Sun-po** corresponds to the Tibetan **Sum-pa**. He believed that the Chinese form **Su-p'i** implies the local word ¹***Su-bi** or ²***Su-vi**, which is not found in written sources.³ Therefore, ¹***Su-bi** or ²***Su-vi** could be the self-name of these tribes.

Regarding the habitat of the **Su-p'i**, the *New Book of Tang* reports that to the east they bordered on the To-mi, and to the west they reached Hu-mang-hsia (the Hu-mang Gorge). The territory of the To-mi (Tibetan name: Nan-ma), a tribe of Qiang origin, apparently extended from north of Lakes Skya-ring and Sngo-ring and the sources

¹ Dotson 2009: 81.

² Chavannes 1900: 169.

³ Pelliot 1920-21: 330-331.

of the Huang He to the southwest to the left bank of the 'Bri-chu – the upper reaches of the Yangtze River; to the east of the To-mi lived another Qiang tribe – Pai-lan.⁴ It follows that the **Su-p'i** occupied the area between the right bank of the 'Bri-chu River in the east and the Hu-mang Gorge in the west. H. Sato, having analyzed the route from Lake Koko-nor to the valley of the Skyid-chu River in Central Tibet, cited in the *New Book of Tang* and dated to the 8th century, came to the conclusion that the Hu-mang Gorge (where the Hu-mang station was located, where the envoys of the Tang empire were usually welcomed on behalf of the Chinese princess) corresponds to the Bayan-dkar-mo area between the Sog-chu and Shag-chu rivers.⁵ The Shag-chu River had a certain strategic significance: one of the Tibetan border outposts was located on it, which was met by the Mongolian embassy on its way to Lhasa in 1927.⁶ In 1720, the Dzungarian forces resisted the Qing army with a defence based on this area.⁷ Thus, according to the *New Book of Tang*, the Sum-pa tribes occupied the territory approximately between the 'Bri-chu River in the northeast and the Shag-chu in the southwest.

The archaeological research materials suggest somewhat different limits of the Sum-pa's settlement area. According to J.V. Bellezza, the western border of the Sum-pa tribes was in the vicinity of the 90th meridian, to the west of it was the country of Zhang-zhung.⁸ This, in particular, is evidenced by the terraced funerary structures characteristic of the eastern Byang-thang and almost never occurring west of the 90th meridian.⁹

Terraced burials are actually limited to the area north of Lake Gnam-mtsho. Large-scale tombs in Dam-gzhung County southeast of Gnam-mtsho¹⁰ bear similarities to the terraced funerary structures in more northern territories and indicate cultural contacts of the Sum-pa tribes with the local population. In ancient times, the Lake Gnam-mtsho territory was one of the most important cultural centers of the Tibetan plateau; archaic cave hermitages and rock paintings, vestiges appear all around Gnam-mtsho,¹¹ and the Tashi Do peninsula is a large rock art theatre.¹² J.V. Bellezza noted that there are many pictographs of stepped shrines at Tashi Do – the same as at rock art sites in Ruthok

⁴ Pelliot 1963: 690, 704.

⁵ Sato 1975: 11-12.

⁶ Kychanov, Melnichenko 2005: 235.

⁷ Sato 1975: 12.

⁸ Bellezza 2014c: 141.

⁹ Bellezza 2014b: sites D-74, D-75, D-77, D-79, D-80, D-81, D-82, D-97, D-98.

¹⁰ Bellezza 2014b: sites D-99, D-101.

¹¹ Bellezza 2014c: 37.

¹² Ibid: 173.

in the far west of Tibet.¹³ Ancient sanctuaries and rock paintings of Lake Gnam-mtsho are very similar to those of Zhang-zhung. Therefore, we can conclude that Zhang-zhung had a significant cultural influence on the western part of the Sum-pa tribes.

This influence was carried out primarily through the Bon religion. The Sum-pa's adherence to Bon is reflected in the writings of the Bon religious tradition. According to the *Treasury of Good Sayings*, a fundamental work on the history of Bon, Sum-pa was one of the first languages into which Bon teachings were translated; moreover, in the process of spreading the teaching, some sacred texts were translated into Tibetan from the Sum-pa language.¹⁴ According to tradition, the Sum-pa territory was among the countries from which the Bon religion spread to the south of Central Tibet. Buddhist historians also regard the Sum-pa country as a stronghold of Bon. The *Red Annals*, Bu-ston's *History of Buddhism* and the chronicle of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag speak of a certain Bon-po from the Sum-pa country named A-yons rgyal-ba during the reign of Nyag-khri Btsan-po, the first legendary king of Tibet. Sum-pa mkhan-po in his historical treatise *Dpag-bsam Ljon-bzang* states that the Bon of Sum-pa appeared during the time of Nyag-khri Btsan-po.¹⁵ Bon, in the mind of the Tibetans, was the primordial Sum-pa religion that existed from the very beginning of Tibetan history.

Among the numerous monuments of the Byang-thang described by J.V. Bellezza, the island of Se-mo Do on Lake Gnam-mtsho is of particular interest for studying the history and culture of the Sum-pa tribes. One of the largest prehistoric residential complexes in the Sum-pa territory has been discovered on this island – almost every cave facing south has been adapted for habitation.¹⁶ The scale of the ruins gives the impression that in ancient times up to several hundred people lived on Se-mo Do. Life on the island, extremely poor in natural resources, required constant economic injections from the mainland: food, clothing, handicrafts could only be obtained from the coast. Only the social elite of the area could organize a regular supply of products in such quantities.¹⁷ It is possible that the island of Se-mo Do was once the political core of the Gnam-mtsho area: in this isolated bastion island settled the rulers of the clans surrounding the lake, as well as the Bon-po priests associated with them. The Bon Mother Tantras make it clear that the island was the divine heart of Lake Gnam-mtsho and the main center of religious rituals.¹⁸

¹³ Ibid: 190.

¹⁴ Karmay 1972: 16–17, 22.

¹⁵ Haahr 1969: 104–105.

¹⁶ Bellezza 2014c: 137

¹⁷ Bellezza 2014a: sites B-126, B-127.

¹⁸ Ibid: B-126.

Probably, it was the sacredness of the island that led to the settlement of the local elite, who attributed their successes to the magic rituals of the Bon-po priests. At present, only fragments of walls and foundations remain from the solid ancient structures of the island. Such a destruction cannot be explained solely by natural causes. J.V. Bellezza suggests two historical scenarios for the destruction of the ancient infrastructure of Se-mo Do: 1) during the annexation of this territory by the Yarlung dynasty in the 7th century; 2) during the period of internecine religious conflicts between 800 and 1000 CE.¹⁹

It seems most likely that Se-mo Do, as one of the important political centers of the Sum-pa tribes, was first destroyed during the annexation of the Gnam-mtsho area by the Tibetan state at the turn of the 7th century, then during the suppression of the Sum-pa uprising against the Yarlung dynasty in the late 620s – early 630s (however, the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* says that the subjugation of the Sum-pa passed without serious violence).²⁰ Later, after the collapse of the empire, Se-mo Do, given the importance of the island for adherents of the Bon religion, could once again become the fighting arena – this time on a religious basis.

The itinerary from China to Nepal, cited in the 7th century Chinese Buddhist gazetteer, mentions the kingdom of **Kam** north-northwest of the Tibetan state on the way to it.²¹ Most likely, this refers to the territory near Lake Gnam-mtsho, which is partly confirmed by the itinerary of the *New Book of Tang*: heading to the center of the Tibetan Empire – the Skyid-chu River valley, the Chinese envoys passed through the Gnam-mtsho area, having skirted the lake from the eastern side.²² The kingdom of **Kam** of the former route appears as an independent state formation southwest of the Sum-pa. On the other hand, the *Royal Genealogy* – a part of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* – speaks of **Kam** as one of the ministerial clans of the ancient principality **Sum-yul gyi Ya-sum**,²³ which apparently corresponds to the Sum-pa tribes' country. This means that the clans inhabiting the vicinity of Lake Gnam-mtsho were closely related to the clans living in the main settlement area of the Sum-pa, but possessed autonomy and cultural identity.

The *List of the Administrative Chiefs* in Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag's chronicle, presumably dated to the mid-630s, reports that the administrative center of the Sum-pa tribes within the Tibetan state, at least initially, was **Nam-ra Zha-don**,²⁴ which may be associated with the sacred mountain Nam-ra northeast of Gnam-mtsho. Two ancient fortresses and very

¹⁹ Bellezza 2014a: B-126.

²⁰ Dotson 2009: 38, fn. 50.

²¹ Pelliot 1963: 709–710.

²² For the map of the Tang route, see Sato 1975.

²³ Hazod 2009: 174.

²⁴ Uray 1972: 32–33, 45.

large cemeteries have been discovered in the vicinity of Mount Nam-ra.²⁵ The wide valley of Bar-tha located here appears to be one of the ancient political centers of the eastern Byang-thang. It should be noted that the lists of possessions "Eighteen Shares of Power" in the chronicle *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston* and "Administrative Arrangement of Territory" in the historical work *Rgya bod-kyi chos-'byung rgyas-pa*, which reflect the first attempts to carry out the administrative territorial division of the Tibetan state, by securing the various clans' dominance in certain territories, indicate Nam-ra Cha-gong / Nam-ra Tshadgong (possibly identical to **Nam-ra Zha-don**) as the possession of the 'Bring / 'Bri and Chag clans.²⁶ The 'Bring clan seems to be related to 'Bring-mtshams, the "border territory of the Bring", a *stong-sde* of Central Horn directly south / southeast of Gnam-mtsho.²⁷ The population of the territories south of Gnam-mtsho, as mentioned above, maintained such intense contact with their northern neighbors that this influenced their burial traditions. Due to the geographical proximity of the territory north of Lake Gnam-mtsho to Central Tibet, stable control over it was established earlier than over the main part of the Sum-pa, and the administration of this area was carried out separately, despite the probable kinship of the local population with the tribes to the east of it. In the 730s–740s, Ngam-ru'i phag, a *stong-sde* of Central Horn, was located here.²⁸

The separate administration was carried out against the background of the cultural heterogeneity of the territories to the north and east of Gnam-mtsho. In the area north of Gnam-mtsho, most of the antiquities of the eastern Byang-thang have been discovered. Unfortunately, we have no data on the existence of significant archaeological sites east of Gnam-mtsho, however, rather scanty archaeological evidence still suggests that the far eastern Byang-thang and the adjacent Salween river valleys system had a different cultural configuration than the main part of the Byang-thang²⁹ including the Gnam-mtsho area. The difference is explained by the strong influence that the population to the north of Gnam-mtsho experienced from the neighboring Zhang-zhung with its more developed statehood and religious culture, and the lack of such an intense influence in the territories to the east. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that at a certain period of time the Sum-pa tribal union included groups living north of Gnam-mtsho, since after joining the Tibetan state, it was there that the administrative center of the Sum-pa tribes was located, and earlier – the kingdom of

²⁵ Bellezza 2014c: 107.

²⁶ Dotson 2006: 364-366.

²⁷ Hazod 2009: 195, 200, 202.

²⁸ Ibid: 204.

²⁹ Bellezza 2014c: 142.

Kam, bearing the same name as one of the Sum-pa aristocratic clans.

The question of whether Zhang-zhung exercised political power over the Sum-pa remains open. The *Treasury of Good Sayings*, referring to the text *Zhang-zhung snyan-brgyud*, states that the Sum-pa country was under the rule of Zhang-zhung and a small Zhang-zhung regiment was stationed there.³⁰ After the assassination of King Lig Myirhya and the annexation of Zhang-zhung to the Tibetan state, "the thousands of Zhang-zhung communities were separated from the thousands of Sum-pa communities".³¹ In the Bon tradition, this event is perceived as a tragedy, which confirms the close connection of the Sum-pa tribes with the Zhang-zhung state. The remnants of this connection can be traced in the toponymy of the Gnam-mtsho area: the northern continuation of the Gnyan-chen thang-lha mountain range is called the "Shang-shung ridge", the key pass on the way from Nag-chu to Lha-sa is the Shang-shung pass.³² *Dbā 'bzhed* mentions that Zhang-zhung owned the fortresses of **Rtse-mtho** and **Rgod-lting**.³³ Meanwhile, in the *stong-sde* catalogues of the chronicles *Sngon-gyi gtam me-tog phreng-ba*, *Rgya bod-kyi chos-'byung rgyas-pa* and *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa 'i dga'-ston* **Rtse-mthon** is listed as one of the Sum-pa thousand-districts within the Tibetan Empire.³⁴ The catalogue of the thousand-districts of the "Sum-pa land" in the chronicle *Sngon-gyi gtam me-tog phreng-ba*, which reflects an earlier situation than the lists of the other two named chronicles, also contains the district of **Rgod-lding**.³⁵ Perhaps, before the subjugation of the Sum-pa to the Tibetan Empire, Zhang-zhung exercised authority over the territories where the **Rtse-mthon** and **Rgod-lting** districts were later formed as part of the Tibetan state. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine that all the Sum-pa, which, according to the *New Book of Tang*, were the greatest among the tribes³⁶, were subordinate to Zhang-zhung. Rather, the matter is in the undoubted cultural and probable political impact exerted, first of all, on the western part of the Sum-pa tribes by neighboring Zhang-zhung; at the same time, it is natural that the Bon tradition strives to exalt Zhang-zhung in all respects as the cradle of the Bon religion.

Bon texts say that the "gateway to Zhang-zhung", the border of Zhang-zhung was the area of **Sum-pa glang-gi gyim-shod**. *Padma than-yig*, a Tibetan Buddhist text on the life of Padmasambhava, and

³⁰ Karmay 1972: 86.

³¹ Ibid: 97.

³² Roerich 2012: 412, 449; Uray 1972: 44, fn. 95.

³³ Gonkatsang, Willis 2021: 154-155.

³⁴ Dotson 2006: 96, 162, 169.

³⁵ Ibid: 96.

³⁶ Chavannes 1900: 169.

Srid-pa rgyud-kyi kha-byang,³⁷ a Bon manuscript, mention that this territory was inhabited by "grass-people" and "tree-people." Bu-ston's *History of Buddhism and the Ladakh Chronicles* place "grass-people" and "tree-people" in the east, and Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag in the east or north of Tibet.³⁸ The *Treasury of Good Sayings* points to the location of **Sum-pa glang-gi gyim-shod** between Tibet in the west and China in the east.³⁹ Consequently, it can be the eastern border of the Sum-pa's settlement area, regarding which we have only the data from Chinese sources that in its northern part it ran along the southern (right) bank of the 'Bri-chu River. In the Bon tradition, **Sum-pa glang-gi gyim-shod** is considered one of the ancient centers of the Bon religion; during the persecution of Bon under Khri Srong-lde-brtsan, some of the sacred texts were hidden there⁴⁰. According to Bon sources, **Sum-pa glang-gi gyim-shod** corresponds to Khyung-po Ri-rtse-drug – "the Mountain with six peaks of the Khyung country" in Steng-chen County.⁴¹ The Khyung-po area is an ancient stronghold of the Bon religion. Drawing the eastern border of the Sum-pa along Steng-chen would be geographically justified, since this territory straddles the boundary between the northern Nag-chu highlands and the meridional alpine mountain ranges and valleys of Kham.⁴² In this case, the area of **Sum-pa glang-gi gyim-shod** would be the border of the Upper Tibet civilization, the undisputed cultural leader of which was Zhang-zhung.

There are other data on the eastern border of the Sum-pa's settlement area: at least one of the Sum-pa clans – **Rlangs (Sum-pa Glang)** – is associated with Glang-thang in 'Dan-ma,⁴³ which is far northeast of Steng-chen in predominantly nomadic Gser-shul County southeast of Yushu.

To clarify the issue of the geographical location of the Sum-pa, it is necessary to consider the location of **Sum-ru** – the Horn of Sum-pa, a large administrative territorial unit within imperial Tibet, which included at least a part of the territory occupied by the Sum-pa tribes. The *Old Tibetan Annals* inform that the great administration of **Sum-ru** was carried out at the council of the **Mdo-smad** region in the winter of 702-703.⁴⁴ At **Mdo-smad** council in 759, "many from **Sum-ru**" were awarded the insignia of rank.⁴⁵ Thus, the **Sum-ru** territory was

³⁷ Ms. Bibl. Nat. No. 493.

³⁸ Stein 1961: 72, fn. 206; Uray 1972: 60.

³⁹ Karmay 1972: 96.

⁴⁰ Karmay 1972: 41, 95-96.

⁴¹ Thar 2009: 27.

⁴² Bellezza 2014c: 141.

⁴³ Stein 1961: 79.

⁴⁴ Dotson 2009: 101-102.

⁴⁵ Ibid: 131.

associated with the **Mdo-smad** region. The great administration of the **Mdo-smad** region took place later than that of **Sum-ru**, in 715-716,⁴⁶ which does not allow us to speak about the complete identity of **Sum-ru** and **Mdo-smad**. In 730-731 in Gtse-nam-yor (the place where the Mdo-smad council was convened seven times from 709 to 727) the Chief minister of Tibet 'Bro Cung-bzang 'Or-mang carried out the administration of Mtong-sod.⁴⁷ The only thing known about the location of Mtong-sod is that in 755, the serfs of the rebel ministers Lang and 'Bal were sent into exile there as punishment,⁴⁸ which means that this area was located far from Central Tibet, perhaps even on the borders of the empire. The possible connection between Mtong-sod and the Mthong-khyab tribes inhabiting the area of Mount Amnye Machen and the upper reaches of the Yellow River⁴⁹ cannot be ruled out. Apparently, **Sum-ru**, like Mtong-sod, was considered by the Tibetans to be within the large **Mdo-smad** region. The entry in the *Annals* for 756-757 states that there were many new subjects in Mdo-smad.⁵⁰ Consequently, the Mdo-smad region was changing its borders during the territorial expansion of the Tibetan Empire, gradually including various tribes. The places of the Mdo-smad council are recorded in the *Annals* since 692-693, with the first council being associated with the Sum-pa;⁵¹ no other regional councils are mentioned in the *Annals*, demonstrating the importance of the region for the central Tibetan government.

When considering the location of Mdo-smad, the following facts should be taken into account. In 708-709 at the Mdo-smad council, many gold taxes were collected from the subjects.⁵² While the Sum-pa are associated with iron,⁵³ Chinese sources note the presence of large gold deposits in the land of the To-mi, their eastern neighbors.⁵⁴ The upper reaches of the Yangtze were called by the Chinese the "River of Golden Sands".⁵⁵ Perhaps the To-mi tribes, who lived on the lands from the headwaters of the Yellow River to the left bank of the 'Bri-chu, were part of the Mdo-smad region of the Tibetan Empire and paid taxes in gold. In 710-711 the Mdo-smad council was convened by Zhang Rgya-sto, probably corresponding to 'Bro zhang Brtan-sgra Ya-sto – the great

⁴⁶ Ibid: 109.

⁴⁷ Ibid: 118.

⁴⁸ Ibid: 128.

⁴⁹ For Mthong-khyab location, see Rong 1990-91: 255-256.

⁵⁰ Dotson 2009: 129.

⁵¹ Ibid: 97-98.

⁵² Dotson 2009: 105-106.

⁵³ Sato 1975: 8.

⁵⁴ Chavannes 1900: 169.

⁵⁵ Sato 1975: 8.

Mdo minister mentioned in the *Annals of 'A-zha Principality*, which suggests a connection between the Mdo-smad region and the 'A-zha,⁵⁶ Xianbei tribes who occupied the territory near Lake Koko-nor within the Tibetan Empire. At the beginning of the 8th century, the 'A-zha khagan became related to the Cog-ro clan of Tibet;⁵⁷ according to the *List of the Administrative Chiefs*, as early as the 7th century a representative of this clan – Cog-ro Rgyal-mtshan G.yang-gong – was appointed the head of the Mthong-khyab, the tribes of the upper Yellow River.⁵⁸ Apparently, the Cog-ro clan was actively involved in the administration of northeastern Tibet. From 711 to 728 Cog-ro Khri-gzigs Gngang-khong has convened the Mdo-smad council six times.⁵⁹ The fact that a person from the Cog-ro clan has repeatedly held the Mdo-smad council suggests that the Mdo-smad region included territories of northeastern Tibet. In 755-756, ministers who had previously convened the Mdo-smad council earlier that year led a military campaign to the Tao He River, a tributary of the Yellow River, bordering northeastern Tibet. Among them was Minister Mdo-bzher, who appears to be the same person as Zhang Mdo-bzher, that was proclaimed as general of the military government of the upper Yellow River. Subsequently, Minister Mdo-bzher convened at least two more Mdo-smad councils.⁶⁰ In 756-757 after the campaign against China, undertaken jointly with the state of Nanzhao southeast of Tibet, Minister Mgos Khri-bzang Yab-lag convened the Mdo-smad council.⁶¹ This minister, along with Zhang Stong-rtsan, who held the Mdo-smad council in 757-758 and 758-759, led military operations along the entire Tibetan-Chinese border, including the campaigns to Tsong-kha and Liangzhou.

Thus, the Mdo-smad region reveals connections with both northeastern and southeastern Tibet. It definitely included the upper reaches of the Yangtze and Huang He rivers. The position of "the great Mdo minister" (Mdo-lon chen-po) and the regular fixation of the places of the Mdo-smad council in the *Old Tibetan Annals*, without mentioning any other councils except the central one, testify to the extremely great importance of the region for the government of the empire. The above facts allow us to conclude that in the second half of the 7th – first half of the 8th centuries (the period covered by the *Annals*) the word **Mdo-smad** denoted all of eastern Tibet. The immediate neighbors of the Mdo-smad region were the 'A-zha, who enjoyed some autonomy within the Tibetan state and lived near and west of Lake Koko-nor.

⁵⁶ Dotson 2009: 104, fn.226, 106-107.

⁵⁷ Rong 1990-91: 254.

⁵⁸ Uray 1972: 33.

⁵⁹ Dotson 2009: 107-116.

⁶⁰ Ibid: 128, 130, 131.

⁶¹ Ibid: 129.

Confirmation that the word **Mdo-smad** in the *Annals* meant the whole of eastern Tibet controlled by the government of the empire can be found in the *Section on Law and State* in the chronicle *Chos-'byung chen-po bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan* of the 13th century. This chronicle, in its description of Tibet, placed before the catalogues of the *stong-sde* of the four Horns, calls entire eastern ("lower") Tibet **Mdo-smad Khams-gsum**,⁶² i.e. "The three territories of Mdo-smad", by analogy with western ("upper") Tibet, which is called **Mnga'-ris Skor-gsum** – "The three divisions of Mnga'-ris." The same source places Sum-pa Ru'i yan-lag ("The additional Horn of Sum-pa") in the middle of Tibet, along with the four Horns of Central Tibet and the Gnam territory north of Lake Gnam-mtsho.⁶³

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that **Sum-ru** was located in the western part of the **Mdo-smad** region; as the imperial power strengthened its position in eastern Tibet, it gradually carried out administrative transformations there, moving from west to east, therefore Sum-ru was first formed, and then, as new territories in the east were incorporated into the empire, administrative arrangement spread to new areas.

Sum-ru, like the other Horns in the empire, was made up of military administrative units *stong-sde* – thousand-districts, each comprised of approximately one thousand households. Analysis of the Sum-ru boundaries and the names of its *stong-sde* in Tibetan historical chronicles with the use of the Old Tibetan documents from the Tarim Basin shows that the central part of the Horn was located in modern 'Bri-ru County of Nag-chu Prefecture.⁶⁴ It was here that the sub-thousand-district Nags-shod (one of the Sum-ru *stong-sde*) was located, which was the chief of the twelve districts on the lands, from where the famous "Middle Regiment of Heroes" of the Tibetan army was recruited⁶⁵, apparently consisting of soldiers from the Sum-pa tribes. So far, a number of the Sum-ru thousand-districts have not yet been determined, but there is no doubt that the southern border of the Horn was in Lhari County, while a part of the *stong-sde* was located far to the north – in the Nob region⁶⁶. On the territory of the ancient kingdom of Shanshan on the southern route of the Silk Road, the Sum-pa soldiers performed the function of guarding the borders of the empire. Inscriptions on woodslips from the fort of Miran show that the watchmen in the area were entirely recruited from the Sum-pa.⁶⁷ According to *The Chronicle*

⁶² Dotson 2006: 90, 93.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Hazod 2009: 169.

⁶⁵ For the narrative of the middle regiment of heroes, see Dotson 2006: 378-379.

⁶⁶ For the brief outline of the Sum-ru thousand-districts, see Hazod 2009: 169.

⁶⁷ Takeuchi 2004: 53.

of the Kings (*Rgyal-po bka'i thang-yig*), the Sum-pa tribes were responsible for guarding the borders with China in northeastern Tibet.⁶⁸ As can be seen from the document PT 1089, Mkharr-tsan military district, corresponding to modern Liangzhou in Gansu Province and located at the eastern end of the Hexi corridor at a distance of about 1200 km from Miran, also included Sum-pa *stong-sde*.⁶⁹

The consequence of the Sum-pa's stay in the extreme northeast of Tibet may be one of the main incarnation lineages in Dgon-lung byams-pa gling monastery in Huzhu Tu Autonomous County of Qinghai Province, its representative was Sum-pa mkhan-po, an outstanding scholar of the 18th century. The name of the tulku lineage – "Sum-pa" – is associated with the influential local clan of the same name, which played a key role in the foundation of the monastery. Sumpa mkhan-po noted that the Sum-pa clan was called **Be'i kya** in Chinese. In the modern list of Tibetan clan names in Huzhu Tu Autonomous County and neighboring Tianzhu Tibetan Autonomous County of Gansu Province, one can find a **Baizha'er / Beizha'er** clan, which may be closely related to **Be'i kya**.⁷⁰

Most probably, the clan name "Sum-pa" reflected the presence in these places of the Sum-pa units sent to guard the borders in Mkharr-tsan military district. T. Takeuchi assumes that Tibetan soldiers in Central Asia were accompanied by their families; in their off-duty time, the soldiers lived with their families – this is how settlements arose where people were engaged in cattle breeding and farming,⁷¹ thereby facilitating the food supply of the army. The border Sum-ru *stong-sde* were, in fact, military settlements in the recently conquered strategically important territories, since in the 7th–9th centuries the Tibetan Empire actively participated in the struggle between the main forces of Central Asia to control the movement of caravans along the Silk Road and to collect tribute from the city-states of the oases of the Tarim Basin. It is no coincidence that the chronicles *Rgya bod-kyi chos-'byung rgyas-pa* and *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston*, listing the thousand-districts of Sum-ru, state: "These are eleven *stong-sde* of Sum-pa'i-ru, which include the Ltong-khyab (Stong-khyab) and the Chinese"⁷². The Sum-pa carried out military service on the borders alongside other nomads of the Tibetan plateau – the Mthong-khyab – and in the occupied territories they coexisted with the Chinese population.

As can be seen, the borders of Sum-ru and the boundaries of the Sum-pa tribes' settlement area didn't coincide, because Sum-pa's Horn

⁶⁸ Dotson 2006: 82.

⁶⁹ Dotson 2009: 71–73.

⁷⁰ Kim 2020: 250–251.

⁷¹ Takeuchi 2004: 53.

⁷² For the Tibetan text, see Dotson 2006: 162, 169.

was the result of the administrative activities of the imperial government and reflected the government-imposed population resettlement to the borders of the growing state. It is possible that some of the tribal groups of the Sum-pa were not included in Sum-ru and were part of other administrative units of the Mdo-smad region and the four Horns of Central Tibet. At the same time, Sum-pa's Horn must have included the residence area of the main part of the Sum-pa tribes – apparently, modern 'Bri-ru County of Nag-chu Prefecture and the surrounding territories.

In the vast territory between the upper reaches of the Yangtze and the Salween, where the Su-p'i tribes of the *New Book of Tang* lived and the core of Sum-ru was located, during the reign of the Dalai Lamas stretched the pastures of Nub-Hor and Nang-chen nomads, the largest pastoralist regions of Tibet. The eastern edge of the Nub-Hor region in the first half of the 20th century was the area of Steng-chen, which could have been the eastern limit of the Sum-pa tribes' settlement; in the south, Nub-Hor, as well as Sum-ru did in its time, reached Lha-ri.⁷³ From the north, the nomadic state of Nang-chen adjoined Nub-Hor, occupying the upper reaches of the Rdza-Chu (Mekong) and 'Bri-chu rivers.⁷⁴ The harsh climatic conditions and high-mountain terrain definitely indicate that most of the Sum-pa, like the Hor-pa and Nang-chen-mi of the 20th century, were engaged in nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralism. The proof is the attribute of the Sum-pa in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* – **mdzo**,⁷⁵ i.e., yak hybrid. According to a Nepalese text entitled *Pha-rabs mthong-ba kun-gsal*, which represents an ancient tradition, the Sum-pa's totemic animal was a female dzo (**mdzo-mo**) with long iron horns,⁷⁶ which is not surprising if cattle played a key role in these tribes' way of life.

Societies conducting the same economic activities often have a similar political structure. The thirty-nine tribes of Hor in the early 20th century were a federation of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, headed by the symbolic figure of the king; each tribe had its own leader, whose power was hereditary as well as the power of the king.⁷⁷ Something similar took place in Nang-chen, where the power was distributed among a network of hereditary leaders, in which the king was a *primus inter pares*,⁷⁸ being an important symbol of local unity. The extant part of the preamble to the *Old Tibetan Annals* begins with the

⁷³ See Tawa 2011: 35, 39.

⁷⁴ Turek 2019: 459-460.

⁷⁵ Dotson 2006: 60.

⁷⁶ Bellezza 2005: 204, 206.

⁷⁷ Karmay 2014 [2005]: 182.

⁷⁸ Turek 2019: 454, 469.

message that "all the Sum-pa" were brought to submission.⁷⁹ The words "all the Sum-pa" probably refer to various groups of nomads. Most likely, the Sum-pa tribes were organized on the same principle as the nomadic communities "Thirty-nine tribes of Hor" and "Twenty-five tribes of Yushu", forming something like a federation under the leadership of a king. From the *New Book of Tang*, we learn that the reforms carried out by the central government to integrate the Sum-pa into the Tibetan Empire, including the establishment of Sum-ru, did not eliminate the institution of the king: in 742-755 Mo-ling-tsan, the king of the Su-p'i, wanted to join the Tang empire, but was killed by the Tibetans.⁸⁰ In 755, during the turmoil in Tibet, his son Hsi-no-lo fled to China, where he was received with great honor, which, however, did not cause a mass defection of the Sum-pa to the Tang empire.⁸¹

Despite the active resettlement of the Sum-pa to the military districts on the outskirts of the Tibetan state, part of the population of the historical and cultural regions of Nub-Hor and Nang-chen, coinciding with the settlement area of the Sum-pa tribes of the 7th-9th centuries, must be the Sum-pa's direct descendants and cultural heirs. Of great interest is the fact that the majority of the Hor-pa are adherents of the Bon religion, like their territorial predecessors, the Sum-pa. The nine Nag-shod tribes of the Hor tribal federation⁸² lived in what was once the center of Sum-ru territory.

In a number of sources, the word **Hor** is used in the context of the Sum-pa: for example, in the already mentioned Bon text *Srid-pa rgyud-kyi kha-byang*⁸³ it is said that the "grass people" and the "tree people" of **Hor** live in the country Sum-pa glin-gi gyim-shod.⁸⁴ The *List of the Administrative Chiefs* reports that Srong-btsan Sgam-po appointed **Hor Bya-zhu ring-po** to the administrative head of the Sum-pa.⁸⁵ The question arises about the nature of connection between the concepts of **Hor** and the **Sum-pa**: what kind of Hor people inhabited the same territories as the Sum-pa, and why did one of them become the head of the Sum-pa within the Tibetan state? Bu-ston's *History of Buddhism*, listing the conquests of Srong-btsan Sgam-po, states: "in the north **Hor** people ... were gathered under the rule of the king".⁸⁶

V.P. Vasiliev in his translation of the geographical work written by

⁷⁹ Dotson 2009: 81.

⁸⁰ Chavannes 1900: 169.

⁸¹ Ibid; Pelliot 1963: 704-705.

⁸² Karmay 2014 [2005]: 209.

⁸³ Ms. Bibl. Nat. No. 493

⁸⁴ Stein 1961: 72.

⁸⁵ Uray 1972: 32-33.

⁸⁶ Ibid: 60.

Minchzhul-Khutuktu makes an important remark that there are two words in the Tibetan language: **Hor** and Sog, both the Mongols and the Turks are constantly called by these names, "but these are not specific designations".⁸⁷ A review of the meanings of the word **Hor**, carried out by Tunzhi, H. Suzuki and D. Roche, with reference to Japanese researcher T. Moriyasu,⁸⁸ shows that in the past this word meant non-Tibetan ethnic groups that lived in the north (this principle is still valid in our time, taking into consideration that in Ladakh the word **Hor** denotes the Uighurs and Uzbeks and in Amdo it refers to the Monguors). In different historical periods, these were groups of different ethnic origins. During the Tibetan Empire, the word **Hor** was used in relation to the Turkic tribes, mainly the ancient Uighurs, as can be seen from the document PT 1283, describing the events of the 8th century.⁸⁹ The narrative of the "Upper regiment of heroes" in the chronicles *Rgya bod-kyi chos-'byung rgyas-pa* and *Chos-'byung mkhas-pa'i dga'-ston*, dated to the end of the 7th century, uses the ethnonym **Hor**, referring to the wife of the Turkic leader⁹⁰.

G. Uray believes that **Hor Bya-zhu ring-po** is a Tibetan folk-etymological form of a similar-sounding Sum-pa name;⁹¹ this version is supported by the meaning of the word ring-po – "tall, long." On the one hand, the indication of the clan or tribal affiliation of a representative of the Sum-pa as **Hor** is quite logical, since the Sum-pa for the Tibetans of Central Tibet were foreigners living in the north, which corresponds to the semantics of the word **Hor**. On the other hand, there is evidence that the concepts of "**Hor**" and "**Sum-pa**" were differentiated during the imperial period: for example, in the sutra *The Prophecy of Goshringa*, created in Khotan during the Tibetan Empire, the Western Turks (Drug-gu / Grug-gu), the **Sum-pa** and the **Hor** (apparently, this is how the ancient Uighurs are denoted in this case) are listed among the military forces that threatened Khotan.⁹² *The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies*, a historical work of the 14th century, referring to the source of the imperial period *Thang-yig chen-mo*, names a man from **Hor** – Zhang-po Rgyal gyi khram-bzang among the ministers of the interior under Srong-btsan Sgam-po;⁹³ his relation to the aforementioned Hor Bya-zhu ring-po, the *khos-dpon* of the Sum-pa province, is unknown, but it can be unequivocally stated that neither the Turks nor the Mongols are meant here. According to the *Illuminating Mirror*, the

⁸⁷ Geografiya Tibeta 1895: 5.

⁸⁸ Tunzhi et al. 2019: 24–27.

⁸⁹ Venturi 2008: 4.

⁹⁰ For the narrative of the upper regiment of heroes, see Dotson 2006: 375-377.

⁹¹ Uray 1972: 42.

⁹² Thomas 1935: 24, 28.

⁹³ Sorensen 1994: 178.

construction of the Tshangs-pa Rlung-gnon temple in the northern direction was supervised by Sba Dpal-dbyangs from **Hor**.⁹⁴ This means that the Sba / Dba's clan, the leading clan of the Tibetan ministerial aristocracy, may have been associated with the Hor region. Interestingly, the Sba were a branch of the Rlangs, one of the Sum-pa ministerial clans.⁹⁵

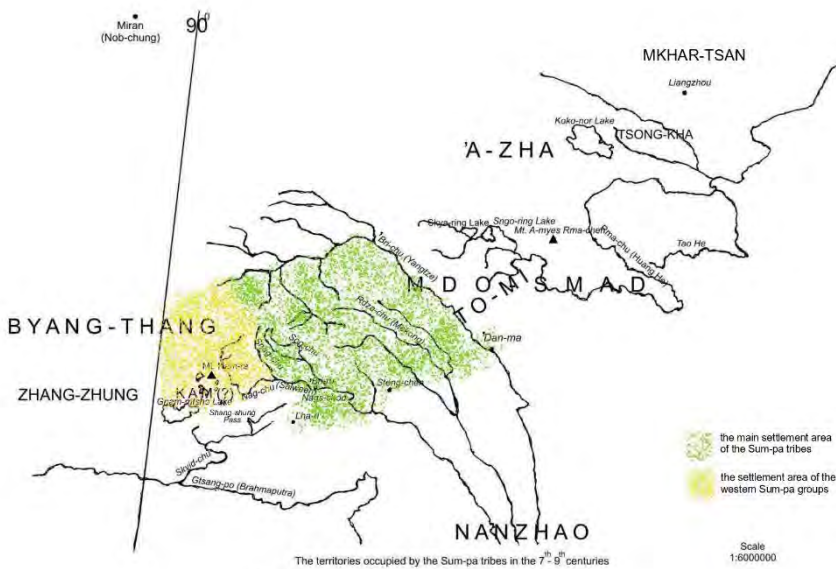
The origin of the word **Hor** requires further study. Probably, already during the empire, **Hor** was somewhat synonymous with the word **north**, and already then, the Tibetans called the northern inhabitants of the Byang-thang **Hor**. Later, during the reign of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in the 13th–14th centuries the ethnonym **Hor**, obviously, became widespread in Tibet, denoting the Mongols. The Hor-pa people of Nub-Hor associate their self-name with the statement that in the 14th century they were ruled by a Mongol prince, a brother of the Yuan dynasty emperor Tugh Temur.⁹⁶

Summarizing the data regarding the Sum-pa tribes' settlement area, the following conclusions can be drawn. The Sum-pa inhabited a vast area of highland pastures between the upper Salween and upper Yangtze in northern and western Kham, including the entire territory of the historical and cultural region of Nub-Hor and part of the former kingdom of Nang-chen. The Sum-pa led a nomadic and semi-nomadic life, only cattle breeding as livelihood organically fits into the harsh natural conditions of the eastern Byang-thang and Nang-chen, and it is difficult to talk about any exact boundaries of the settlement area of these tribes. In the west, some groups of the nomads reached the 90th meridian, attracted by sacred Lake Gnam-mtsho: in this area, under the significant influence of Zhang-zhung, a distinctive culture was formed, in which the Bon religion took the central place. The eastern extremity of the Sum-pa's settlement was, apparently, the Steng-chen area, where the plateau passes into the meridional mountain ranges. Certain Sum-pa groups reached the 'Dan-ma area southeast of Yushu, most probably moving downstream the 'Bri-chu River. In the 8th century, Sum-ru was formed on a part of the Sum-pa territory, on the one hand, it was connected with Central Tibet, on the other, with the eastern region of Mdo-smad. The Sum-pa, nomadic tribes of north, played an important role in the campaigns of conquest and the protection of the borders of the Tibetan Empire. During the military campaigns of the 7th–9th centuries, a significant part of the Sum-pa was relocated to serve in the recently conquered territories – in the Nob region and the Hexi corridor.

⁹⁴ Ibid: 279.

⁹⁵ Hazod 2009: 167, 174.

⁹⁶ Karmay, 2014 [2005]: 184.



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rDo rje Sems dpa' Nam mkha' che'i rGyud An Analysis of the Tantra of the Total Space of Vajrasattva

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Introduction

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* or *The Total Space of Vajrasattva*, which according to tradition was recited spontaneously by dGa' rab rDo rje when he was seven years old, is one of the main *lung* or 'essential texts' of rDzogs chen *Sems sde*,¹ and also one of the first five translations (*snga' 'gyur lnga*) by the great Tibetan translator Vairocana in the eighth century. Arranged in fifty-five quatrains subdivided into twenty-seven topics (*skabs*) and based upon the principle of the 'six spheres' (*thig le drug*), this text appears also as the thirtieth chapter of the *Kun byed rgyal po*, and in other Tantras, either in literal or paraphrased form. Several Tantras bearing the name *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* exist in the various editions of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* and of the *bKa' ma* collections, but apparently only one Tantra, the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud ces bya ba* contains all fifty-five quatrains of the original text.²

The Text

The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud ces bya ba*, whose Indian title is given as *Vajrasatvāgagasamemāhatanāma*, is found exclusively in the mTshams brag edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* (vol. 3, pp. 165.3–191). Chögyal Namkhai Norbu identifies it with one of the main Tantras of rDzogs chen *Sems sde* originally taught by the primordial teacher gZhon nu Rol pa rNam par brTse ba.³

It contains thirty-three chapters in the form of a dialogue between Vajrasattva (rDo rje Sems dpa') and Samantabhadra (Kun tu bZang po) according to a structure that is common to many *Sems sde* Tantras. The

¹ For an historical introduction to the rDzogs chen *Sems sde* series of teachings see Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente, *The Supreme Source: The Fundamental Tantra of Dzogchen Semde Kunjed Gyalpo*, Ithaca NY: Snow Lion Publications 1999.

² For a translation of the original *lung* together with the *lCags 'grel* commentary, see Dorje Sempa Namkha Che. *The Total Space of Vajrasattva*. Arcidosso: Shang Shung Edizioni 2016. For a list of the Tantras and other related texts see the Bibliography.

³ Norbu and Clemente, *op. cit.*, 1999: 14.

peculiar element is that the fifty-five quatrains, preceded by a question that puts them into context, are not given in the usual order, and only start with chapter six up until chapter thirty-two.

Chapter One (165,3 –166,4) is called The Introductory Chapter (*gleng gzhi'i le'u*), and after the homage to Vajrasattva, explains the setting of the teaching with Samantabhadra, nondual from Samantabhadrī, in the 'Og min dimension surrounded by Vajrasattva and the other Tathāgatas of the five families, including bodhisattvas and wrathful manifestations.

Chapter Two (166,4 –167,3), The Chapter on the Beginning of the Conversation (*gleng bslang ba'i le'u*), starts with Vajrasattva and other Tathāgatas asking Samantabhadra which is the way to generate the self-perfected maṇḍala of the total state (*bdag nyid chen po lhun gyis grub pa'i dkyil 'khor*). Samantabhadra explains that it is generated instantly in the pure dimension of the space of the *yum*, and that two kinds of this maṇḍala exist: the self-perfected maṇḍala (*lhun gyis grub pa'i dkyil 'khor*) and the body-maṇḍala of the total state (*bdag nyid chen po lus kyi dkyil 'khor*).

Chapter Three (167,3 –168,2), The Chapter on the Self-Perfected Maṇḍala of the Total State (*bdag nyid chen po lhun gyis grub pa'i dkyil 'khor gyi le'u*), explains the self-perfected maṇḍala as being naturally present in the state of instant presence (*rig pa skad cig ma*) as the five Tathāgatas, the eight bodhisattvas, the eight wrathful manifestations, and so forth. The body-maṇḍala of the total state contains all deities in the channels of the body.

Chapter Four (168,2 –169,4), The Chapter on the Channels (*rtsa'i le'u*), explains the nature of the subtle channels in the body, also in relation to the function of the senses and their consciousnesses.

Chapter Five (169,4 –170,4), The Chapter on the Nature of the Channels as Letters (*rtsa rnams yi ge'i tshul du gnas pa'i le'u*), explains how the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet are related to the various channels listed in the previous chapter.

Chapter Six (170,4 –171,2), The Chapter on How it Exists by Nature (*rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, "What is the nature of all sentient beings" (*sems can thams cad kyi rang bzhin ji lta bur gnas pa lags sam*), whereupon Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:⁴

'byung ba chen po bcom ldan 'das (4,1)
chub par gnas pas bcom ldan 'das

⁴ All verses of the Tantra corresponding to the original *lung*, here given according to the version and the spellings contained in the Tantra, are followed by the number of its position in the *lung*, for example 4,1 means fourth quatrain, first line.

'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas (4,2)
 ye nas rgyal ba'i dkyil 'khor nyid
 phyin ci log tu rnam btags kyang (4,3)
 grol ba rang byung gzhan las min (4,4)

The great elements are Bhagavan,
 The Bhagavan, already perfected,
 That exists by nature in all beings.
 It is the primordial maṇḍala of the victorious ones:
 However wrongly it may be conceived,
 Liberation originates from oneself and not elsewhere.

Of these six lines, four correspond to the fourth quatrain of the *lung*, and to the second topic, “the section on how it exists by nature” (*rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i skabs*), which corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Seven (171,2 –172,3), The Chapter on Manifest Enlightenment (*mngon par byang chub pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Which is the way to understand the meaning of total perfection?” (*rdzogs pa chen po'i don thabs gang gis rtogs par bgyi*). Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

rtog med mnyam nyid chos kyi sku (18,1)
 chos sku nam mkha' lta bu las
 'ja tshon lta bu'i skur bzhengs pa
 gzung ba ma zin chu zla 'dra (18,2)
 thabs dang shes rab rtsa gnyis la
 ā li kā li yi ge gsal
 'khor lo bzhi yang gsal ba las
 gnyis su med par gyur pa las
 kun tu bzang po'i rol pa yis (18,3)
 ā li kā li zab tu bstan (18,4)
 de ni a dang mdzes pa'i ta (19,1)
 pa dang yan lag spros pa bzhin (19,2)
 'jig rten yongs kyi spyod yul la (19,3)
 sangs rgyas gsung gi zab mo 'byung (19,4)
 e ma'o sangs rgyas spyod yul 'di (20,1)
 btsal bas rnyed pa'i gnas med do (20,2)
 drug gi chos bzhin mi 'grub pas (20,3)
 ldongs pas nam mkha' bsnyegs pa bzhin (20,4)
 gong nas gong du tshangs pa'i lam (21,1)
 bya bral chos dang mthun pa min (21,2)
 ci ste lam las bgro 'gyur na (21,3)
 nam mkha'i mtha' bzhin 'thob pa med (21,4)

Thought-free equality is the dharmakāya:
 From the sky-like Dharmakāya
 A rainbow-like body manifests
 Like the moon's reflection in water, it cannot be grasped.
 In the two channels of method and *prajñā*
 The *ā li kā li* letters appear.
 With the manifestation of the four cakras
 They become nondual:
 Through the energy manifestation of Samantabhadra
 The *ā li kā li* are profoundly displayed.
 Through the A and the beautiful TĀ,
 The PĀ and the emanated branches,
 In the sphere of experience of the whole world
 The profound Voice of the Buddha arises.
 Wonderful! This sphere of experience of the Buddhas
 Is not a place to be found by searching,
 And like phenomena of the six senses, it is not an object:
 Those who search for it are like the blind reaching for the sky.
 The path of purity that leads higher and higher
 Does not correspond with the nature beyond action.
 Were there really a path to tread,
 Just like the boundaries of the sky, one would never arrive.

Here we have the four quatrains of the *lung*, respectively the eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first, that form the tenth topic known as “the section on the way of uniting with the consort-energy” (*gzungs kyi sbyor thabs kyi skabs*), which does not literally correspond to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Eight (172,3 –173,1), The Chapter on How it is Perfectly Complete (*yongs su rdzogs pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “How does total perfection arise from the energy manifestation of Samantabhadra?” (*kun tu bzang po'i rol pa las /rdzogs pa chen po ji ltar byung*), and Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

ci yang mi gnas mi rtog pa
ā li kā li las byung ba
de ltar de bzhin de yi phyir (22,1)
de la de bstan de yang thob (22,2)
de ni snying po de bas na (22,3)
de las de byung ngo mtshar che (22,4)
sngon gyi de dang da lta'i de (23,1)
de bzhin de yi gnas su che (23,2)
de ltar de yis lam 'dra bar (23,3)
de ni de yi rang bzhin no (23,4)
de dang 'dra ba yongs kyi lam (24,1)
zla ba las byung rten dang bcas (24,2)

kun gyi mnyam nyid yin pa la (24,3)
phyogs su bltas pas mthong ba med (24,4)
gdod nas rang bzhin rnam par dag.

The state that does not abide and does not conceptualize
 Manifests from the *āli kāli*
 The authentic condition being thus,
 By being shown as it is, it is attained.
 As it is the very essence,
 Its manifestation arises from it: marvelous!
 Likewise, its path is the same,
 This is its very nature.
 The universal path that is the same as that
 Is like the moon and the support for its reflection.
 As it is the absolute equality of all,
 It is not realized with a limited view.
 Nature is utterly pure from the beginning.

Here we have the three quatrains of the *lung*, respectively the twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth, that form the eleventh topic known as “the section on how it is perfectly complete” (*yongs su rdzogs pa'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Nine (173,1 –173,5), The Chapter on How it Exists as Natural Greatness (*rang bzhin che ba la gnas pa'i le'u*) begins with the question, “If it is naturally pure from the beginning, how does it depend on method and *prajñā*?” (*gdod ma nas rang bzhin gyis rnam par dag pa la /thabs shes rab la brten pa ji ltar lags*), and Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

che ba'i ye shes rnyed dka' ba (5,1)
shes rab thabs la brten pas 'grub (5,2)
ming tsam gzhan la bstan 'dra yang (5,3)
mngon sum bde ba rang las 'byung (5,4)

The wisdom of greatness, difficult to find,
 Is realized through *prajñā* and method.
 Though it could be said to depend on something else,
 Real bliss originates from oneself.

In this short chapter we have the fifth quatrain of the *lung*, which also forms the third topic known as “the section on how it exists by nature as greatness” (*rang bzhin gyis che ba la gnas pa'i skabs*), and also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Ten (173,5 –175,6), The Chapter on How it is Free from

Action and Searching (*bya btsal dang bral ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, "What is the meaning of (total) perfection beyond action and searching?" (*rdzogs pa bya btsal dang bral ba'i don ji ltar lags*), and Samantabhadra replies that it means that self-originated wisdom arises by itself since the beginning, therefore it has always been free from effort. Then Vajrasattva and the other Tathāgatas wonder from where, if this nature is beyond effort, all the qualities of a Buddha, such as the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, and so forth, arise. Samantabhadra explains that they arise without any effort as a natural manifestation of this nature of total perfection once it is realized. Once again they ask how yogins in the future should meditate on this nature, whereupon Samantabhadra explains that yogins in the future should meditate by relaxing their unborn mind in the primordially unborn *dharmatā* (*rdzogs pa chen po'i don ma 'ongs pa'i rnal 'byor pas sgom na chos nyid gdod ma nas ma skyes pa la rang gi blo ma skyes pa bzhag nas sgom pa yin no*). Once again they ask, "But if one relaxes in the unborn *dharmatā*, how do the great miraculous capacities, the powers, fearlessnesses, and so forth, arise?" (*chos nyid ma skyes par bzhag pa las /cho 'phrul chen po stobs dang mi 'jigs pa la sogs pa ji ltar 'byung ba lags*). The following verses are given as reply:

cho 'phrul chen po dka' ba min (6,1)
yon tan kun dang stobs kyi rnams (6,2)
ji bzhin rtog pa phra ba yis (6,3)
de ma thag tu rang las 'byung (6,4)
snang ba med pa'i chos nyid la (7,1)
ma btsal bzhag na bsgom pa yin (7,2)
de dang der ni rnam btsal na (7,3)
de las de bzhin de mi 'byung (7,4)

The great miracle is not difficult.
 All qualities and capacities,
 Through subtle understanding of the authentic condition,
 Immediately arise from oneself.
 Meditation is relaxing without seeking
 In the *dharmatā* that does not appear visibly.
 If one searches for it and for something in it,
 The natural condition will never manifest.

Here we have the two quatrains of the *lung*, respectively the sixth and the seventh, that form the fourth topic known as "the section on how

it is free from searching" (*btsal ba dang bral ba'i skabs*),⁵ which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Eleven (175,6 –176,5), The Chapter on How the *Dharmatā* Exists by Nature (*chos nyid rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, "What does it mean that the *dharmatā* exists by nature?" (*chos nyid rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i don ji ltar lags*), whereupon Samantabhadra replies:

rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che (1,1)
kun bzang yangs pa chos kyi dbyings (1,2)
rnam dag lam chen kun sgrol phyir (1,3)
mi skye mi 'gags cir mi dgongs (1,4)
byams pas don nyid rnam sbyang phyir (2,1)
snying rje chen po cir mi mdzad (2,2)
che ba che ba'i zab mo nyid (2,3)
yon tan cir yang bsngags pa med (2,4)
don rnams ji bzhin mi bskyed de (3,1)
bya ba med pas grol ba dgrol (3,2)
rang byung ye shes btsal med pas (3,3)
grol nas grol ba'i lam yang ston (3,4)

The total space of Vajrasattva
 Is the ever-good and immense ultimate dimension of phenomena.
 Being the pure, total path that liberates all,
 It does not arise or cease, and is beyond any thinking.
 Being love, the very aim is accomplished,
 Thus great compassion does not act in any way.
 Being great, the profound qualities of greatness
 Need not be praised.
 Phenomena do not move the authentic condition,
 Which is liberation because it self-liberates without action.
 Since self-originated wisdom is beyond searching,
 In liberating itself it also shows the path of liberation.

Here we have the first, second, and third quatrains of the *lung*, that form the first topic known as "the section on the *dharmatā*" (*chos nyid kyi skabs*), which also corresponds in meaning to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twelve (176,5 –177,2), The Chapter on the Ineffability of One's Pure and Perfect Mind (*rang gi byang chub sems brjod pa dang bral ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, "What does it mean that the one's pure and perfect mind (*bodhicitta*) is ineffable?" (*rang gi byang chub kyi sems brjod pa dang bral ba'i don ji ltar lags*), whereupon Samantabhadra

⁵ Most versions have *rtsol ba dang bral ba'i skabs* or *brtsal ba dang bral ba'i skabs*.

explains that it means that the *dharmatā* of the all-ground is un-originated since the very beginning, then continues with the following verse:

mchog tu gsang ba'i chos nyid ni (8,1)

rna dbang gzhan la thos mi 'gyur (8,2)

de bzhin lce yi dbang pos kyang (8,3)

de la brjod du rdul tsam med (8,4)

This supremely secret reality
Cannot be heard through the sense of hearing.
Likewise, it cannot be expressed by the tongue,
Not even in the slightest.

In this short chapter we find the eighth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the fifth topic known as “the section on how it is ineffable” (*brjod pa dang bral ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Thirteen (177,2 –177,7), The Chapter on How Beings as Pure and Perfect Mind are not Subject to Karma (*byang chub kyi sems 'gro ba las kyis mi 'khol ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Is one’s pure and perfect mind subject to karma, or it is not?” (*rang gi byang chub sems las kyis 'khol ba lags sam/mi 'khol ba lags*). Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

'gro ba'i sdug bsngal byang chub sems (9,1)

kun tu chub pas rnam par rol (9,2)

de la bskyed pa med bzhin du (9,3)

nam mkha'i mtha' dang mnyam par gnas (9,4)

khyad par cir yang mtshungs pa la (10,1)

las so zhes ni rnam par btags (10,2)

ci ste las kyi dbang 'gyur na (10,3)

rang byung ye shes yod ma yin (10,4)

rgyu nyid rdo rje rkyen dang 'dra (11,1)

ma skyes pas na 'jig pa med (11,2)

gdod nas snying po byang chub la (11,3)

rtsal ba'i bsam pas dbyings mi bskyod (11,4)

The suffering of beings is the pure and perfect mind
That fully manifests while pervading all.
Without ever being moved,
It abides equal to the reaches of space.
That which is the equality of all distinctions
Is conceived by saying “It is karma!”
Were it really under the power of karma,

Self-originated wisdom would not exist.
 The cause is the vajra, as are the secondary conditions.
 Never having been born, it cannot be destroyed.
 Since bodhi-essence exists from the beginning,
 The ultimate dimension is not moved by the effort of thought.

Here we have the ninth, tenth, and eleventh quatrains of the *lung*, that form the sixth topic known as “the section on the how beings are not subject to karma” (*'gro ba las kyis mi 'khol ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Fourteen (177,7–178,5), The Chapter on How Pure and Perfect Mind is Free from Mental Effort (*byang chub kyi sems rtsol sems dang bral ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Can the pure and perfect mind which is free from mental effort be involved in placing a hope or dwelling in an aspiration?” (*byang chub kyi sems rtsol sems dang bral ba de re ba 'jog pa dang smon lam gnas lags sam*).⁶ Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

yon tan chen po'i bsam gtan ni (12,1)
bsam gtan nyid pas bsam du med (12,2)
ma bsam ma sbyangs chos bzhin du (12,3)
rnam rtog nyid las ye shes skye (12,4)
'phra ba'i sgo mor ming btags shing (13,1)
sems kyi dben pas lam tshol zhing (13,2)
dgon pa'i rgyud du dben 'dzin zhing (13,3)
btags na rnam par rtog 'gyur bsgom (13,4)
rgyu dang 'bras bur ming btags shing (14, 1)
dge sdig gnyis ka rnam par sel (14,2)
'jig rten 'di la 'byung ngo zhes (14,3)
blang dor brod pa mchog tu bskyed (14,4)

Meditative stability of supreme quality,
 Being real meditative stability, is beyond thought.
 Without applying thought or purifying, in accordance with nature,
 From thought itself wisdom springs forth.
 Coining the expression “gate to the subtle”,
 They seek the path by isolating the mind,
 Maintaining isolation in a secluded place:
 If we examine well, this is conceptual meditation.
 They coin the terms “cause and effect”,
 (But) both virtues and negativities dissolve completely.

⁶ See the *ICags 'grel* commentary (*Vai ro rgyud 'bum*, vol. nga, p. 409,2) for an identical explanation.

They say, "We will get out of this world",
And nurture supreme complacency in accepting and rejecting.

Here we have the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth quatrains of the *lung*, that form the seventh topic known as "the section on the how it is free from mental effort" (*brtsal sems dang bral ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Fifteen (178,6 –179,2), The Chapter on How Pure and Perfect Mind is Free from the Defect of Nonduality (*byang chub kyi sems gnyis su med pa'i skyon dang bral ba'i le'u*),⁷ begins with the question, "Is the pure and perfect mind, which is free from mental effort and thinking, free from the defect of nonduality, or it is not?" (*byang chub kyi sems rtsol sems dang bral ba/bsam du med pa de nyid gnyis su med pa'i skyon dang bral ba lags sam ma lags*). Samantabhadra replies with one verse:

chags dang ma chags tshig gi lam (15,1)
dbu ma bzhin te brag cha 'dra (15,2)
bde dang sdug bsngal rgyu mthun zhes (15,3)
*bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' stsal to*⁸ (15,4)

Attachment and non-attachment are the path of words,
And the same is something in the middle, like an echo.
"Happiness and suffering have the same cause",
Said the Bhagavan.

In this short chapter we find the fifteenth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the eighth topic known as "the section on how it is nondual and free from defects" (*gnyis su med pa skyon dang bral ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Sixteen (179,3 –179,6), The Chapter on How Total Wisdom Arises from Oneself (*ye shes chen po rang las byung ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, "Pure and perfect mind being the total state, does wisdom arise from oneself, or it does not?" (*byang chub kyi sems bdag nyid*

⁷ This is a literal translation of *gnyis su med pa'i skyon dang bral ba'i le'u*, since we have the genitive particle connecting *gnyis su med pa* (nonduality) with *skyon* (defect). This title corresponds to the eighth *skabs* which is variously spelt as *gnyis su med pa'i skyon dang bral ba'i skabs* as well as *gnyis su med pa skyon dang bral ba'i skabs* (the section on how it is nondual and free from defects), and the commentaries explain its meaning according to the latter spelling. If the former spelling should be considered the right one, we would have to read *gnyis su med pa* in the sense of *dbu ma*, or "middle", according to the meaning of the fifteenth quatrain that shows the error of the Mādhyamika. However, I have not found explanations in the commentaries that corroborate this interpretation.

⁸ This last line is usually found as *'gro ba'i mgon po sems dpas gsungs*: "said Vajrasattva, Lord of Beings."

chen po de/rang las ye shes byung ba lags sam ma lags). The reply is given with one verse:

'dod chags zhe sdang gti mug kyang (16,1)
byang chub chen po'i lam las byung (16,2)
kun spyod yon tan rnam lnga yang (16,3)
*chos nyid ma skyes nyid kyi rgyan*⁹(16,4)

Attachment, anger, and ignorance
 Arise from the path of the total bodhi.
 The five objects of enjoyment, too,
 Are the ornament of the unborn *dharmatā*.

In this short chapter we find the sixteenth quatrain of the *lung* that forms, together with the seventeenth included in the next chapter, the ninth topic known as “the section on how wisdom arises from oneself” (*ye shes rang las 'byung ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Seventeen (179,6–180,2), The Chapter on the Way of Uniting with Perfect Completeness (*yongs su rdzogs pa dang sbyor thabs kyi le'u*), begins with the question, “Which is the view of the nonduality of method and *prajñā*, and which is the principle of perfect completeness?” (*thabs dang shes rab gnyis su med pa'i lta ba dang/ yongs su rdzogs pa'i dgongs pa'i don ji lta bu lags*). Also in this case the reply is given in one verse:

nam mkha'i rtog pa skye med cing (17,1)
rtog pa de nyid nam mkha' 'dra (17,2)
ma chags nam mkha' sngo ba lags (17,3)
rang don chen po nam mkha' 'byung (17,4)

Space as a thought is without origination,
 And thought itself is like space.
 Without attachment, from space-dedication
 One's great aim manifests as space.

Here we have the seventeenth quatrain of the *lung* that forms, together with the sixteenth included in the previous chapter, the ninth topic known as “the section on how wisdom arises from oneself” (*ye shes rang las 'byung ba'i skabs*), though it does not correspond to the title of

⁹ This last line is usually found as *chos nyid dbyings kyi rgyan zhes gsungs*: “are said to be the ornament of the ultimate dimension of the *dharmatā*.”

the chapter.

Chapter Eighteen (180,3–180,5), The Chapter on How it is Free from Attachment (*chags pa dang bral ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Is the way of uniting method and prajñā free from attachment, or it is not?” (*thabs dang shes rab kyi sbyor thabs chags pa dang bral ba lags sam ma lags*). As a reply, the following verse is given:

da lta'i bde dang phyi ma'i bde (25,1)
mngon sum pa dang rgyab la 'byung (25,2)
de yang rnam pa'i skyon yin pas (25,3)
de la brten par mi bya'o (25,4)

Present bliss and later bliss

Are what is directly experienced and what ensues from it.

Since they imply the defect of an aspect,

One should not rely on them.

In this short chapter we find the twenty-fifth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the twelfth topic known as “the section on how it is free from attachment” (*chags pa dang bral ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Nineteen (180,6–181,2), The Chapter on How the Essence of Primordial Greatness Exists by Nature (*gdod ma nas che ba'i snying po rang bzhin gyis gnas pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Does this pure and perfect mind that is free from attachment exist naturally as the essence of greatness, or it does not?” (*chags pa dang bral ba'i byang chub kyi sems de gdod ma nas che ba'i snying po la rang bzhin gyis gnas pa lags sam ma lags*). As a reply, the following verse is given:

dus gsum gcig ste khyad par med (26,1)
sngon med phyis med gdod nas 'byung (26,2)
chos skus khyab pas gcig pa'i phyir (26,3)
che bas chen po rang bzhin gnas (26,4)

The three times are one, without distinction.

Without past or future, it exists from the beginning.

Since all, pervaded by the dharmakāya, is the same,

It abides in nature as total greatness.

Here we find the twenty-sixth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the thirteenth topic known as “the section on the essence of primordial greatness” (*gdod nas che ba'i snying po nyid kyi skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty (181,3–181,7), The Chapter on How it is Totally

Free from Aspirations (*kun tu smon lam dang bral ba'i le'u*), begins with the question, "Is this pure and perfect mind, naturally unoriginated from the beginning, beyond aspirations, or it is not?" (*rang bzhin gyis gdod ma nas ma skyes pa'i byang chub kyi sems de smon lam dang bral ba lags sam ma lags*). Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

srid pa gsum na sbyor ba yang (27,1)
ming tsam sgyu mar snang ba ste (27,2)
'khor los sgyur ba'i gnas chen yang (27,3)
sgyu ma sbyor ba'i bsti gnas yin (27,4)
rnam spyod dus la bltas pa rnams (28,1)
dus 'di 'byung bar mi 'gyur te (28,2)
*bya bral smon pa spyod pas na*¹⁰ (28,3)
stong pa'i mtshan nyid gsungs pa bzhin (28,4)

Finding oneself in the three realms of existence
 All is just a name and a magical illusion.
 Even the great status of a Cakravartin,
 Being a magical illusion, is an abode to purify.
 For those whose attitude depends on time
 It does not manifest in time.
 If one practices with an aspiration toward the state free from action,
 The saying on the characteristic of emptiness applies.

Here we find the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth quatrains of the lung that form the fourteenth topic known as "the section on how it is totally free from aspirations" (*kun tu smon lam dang bral ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty-One (181,7–182,5), The Chapter on How the Pure and Perfect Mind Cannot be Expressed in a Teaching (*byang chub kyi sems la lung bstan du med pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, "Can this pure and perfect mind which is free from aspirations be expressed in a teaching, or can it not?" (*byang chub kyi sems smon lam dang bral ba de la lung bstan pa mchis sam ma mchis*). Samantabhadra replies with these verses:

gcig ste rnam pa yongs kyi med (29,1)
rnal 'byor nam mkha' bya lam gnas (29,2)
ma byung ma skyes snying po la (29,3)
sgro btags chos kun ga la yod (29,4)
phyi nang gnyis ka phyi nyid nang (30,1)

¹⁰ This version is a significant change instead of the usual *ma bral smon pa spyod pas na*: "if one practices with an aspiration, without being free."

zab mo'i cha shes rtogs yul med (30,2)
srid pa'i ming tsam log pa'i stobs (30,3)
de bas ting 'dzin mnyam dang bral (30,4)
*de la tha tshig snga phyi dang*¹¹ (31,1)
rang bzhin phung po khams bzhin gnas (31,2)
dus gsum de dang mi 'bral bas (31,3)
tha tshig ming du btags pa med (31,4)

It is one, totally beyond an aspect.

The yogin dwells in the pathways of birds in the sky.

In the essence that never occurred and never originated

Where are all phenomena supposed to exist?

Outer and inner are both: the outer is the inner.

The profound is not an object of understanding, not even a part of it.

Existence is only a name, the power of mistake;

Thus one remains separate from the equality of contemplation.

In it the earlier and later samayas

Abide in the nature of the aggregates and of the sense bases.

Since in the three times one is never separate from it,

There is no need to use the word “*samaya*”.

In this chapter we find the twenty-ninth, thirtieth, and thirty-first quatrains of the *lung* that form the fifteenth topic known as “the section on the revelation of the teaching” (*lung ston pa'i skabs*), which, although it does not correspond literally to the title of the chapter, shows its real meaning.

At the end of the chapter, just as at the end of the corresponding section of the *lung*, we find *ye shes chen po'i thig le*, the sphere of total wisdom, which is fourth of the six spheres (*thig le drug*) that form another subdivision of the *lung* besides the twenty-seven topics.¹²

Chapter Twenty-Two (182,5–183,2), The Chapter on How Absolute Equality is not Something to Govern (*mnyam pa nyid la dbang sgyur du med pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Can the absolute equality of the pure and perfect mind be governed, or it cannot?” (*byang chub kyī sems mnyam pa nyid la dbang sgyur du mchis sam ma mchis*). As a reply,

¹¹ Instead of the usual *de la tha tshig phyi dang nang*: “in it the outer and inner samayas”.

¹² The six spheres are: 1) *chos nyid kyī thig le*, the sphere of the *dharmatā*, at the end of the first section; 2) *dbyings kyī thig le*, the sphere of the ultimate dimension, at the end of the fifth section; 3) *dbyings rnam par dag pa'i thig le*, the sphere of the utterly pure ultimate dimension, at the end of the ninth section; 4) *ye shes chen po'i thig le*, the sphere of total wisdom, at the end of the fifteenth section; 5) *kun tu bzang po'i thig le*, the sphere of Samantabhadra, at the end of the twenty-first section; 6) *lhun gyis grub pa'i thig le*, the sphere of self-perfection, at the end of the twenty-seventh and last section. However, the other ‘spheres’ are not mentioned in this tantra.

the following verses are given:

mi g.yo ba ni sku yi rgya (32,1)
mi bskyod pa ni ye shes te (32,2)
mi len pas na bdag med cing (32,3)
mi bde¹³ tshig bral mnyam nyid do (32,4)
gang dang gang gi yul du yang (33,1)
kun 'khol kun spyod bdag las byung (33,2)
'di la skyes pa 'am bud med (33,3)

Immovable, it is the symbol of the Body.

Unshakeable, it is wisdom.

Not taking hold of anything, it has no self.

Not rejecting anything, it is the equality that transcends words.

Notwithstanding what, whose, and where,

All that one uses and enjoys arises from oneself.

Here, of "males and females"

[The king of equality has never spoken.]

Here we find the thirty-second and the first three lines of the thirty-third quatrains of the *lung* that form the sixteenth topic known as "the section on absolute equality" (*mnyam pa nyid kyi skabs*), which partially corresponds to the title of the chapter.¹⁴ The last line of the thirty-third quatrain, *mnyam pa'i rgyal pos yongs ma gsungs*, is missing.

Chapter Twenty-Three (183,2–184,3), The Chapter on How the Absolute Equality of the Pure and Perfect (Mind), is Beyond Rejecting and Accepting (*byang chub mnyam pa nyid la spong len med pa'i le'u*) begins with the questions, "Can the absolute equality of the pure and perfect mind be empowered, or can it not? Is it involved in rejecting and accepting, or is it not?" (*byang chub kyi sems mnyam pa nyid la dbang bskur du mchis sam ma mchis lags/spong len mchis sam ma mchis*). The reply is given in the following verses:

'di la sdug bsngal drag shul gyis¹⁵ (34,1)
gnas par bya ba'i gzhi med de (34,2)
a dang par ni rnam ldan na (34,3)
sgyu ma bde ba bskyod par 'dod (34,4)

¹³ Apparently a misspelling for *mi 'dor*.

¹⁴ See the *lCags 'grel* commentary, *Vai ro rgyud 'bum*, vol. Nga, p. 429, 5, where we the corresponding section is introduced with the words *da ni mnyam pa nyid kyi chos la dbang sgyur ba'i skabs 'chad de*: "now the section on how it governs the nature of absolute equality will be explained."

¹⁵ Usually this line is given as *'di la brtul zhugs drag shul gyis*: "by means of a resolute, fierce conduct."

de yang 'dzin pa'i skyon yin te
rang bzhin gcig tu ma nges pas (35,1)
ji ltar bltas pa de ltar snang (35,2)
snang 'dod rtsol sems bde ba yang (35,3)
de ni sgrib pa'i skyon chen yin (35,4)
byang chub yan lag kun gyi sgo (36,1)
cha lugs bsgoms pas chu zla bzhin (36,2)
ma chags ma gos 'byung 'gyur yang (36,3)
bsgoms pas byis pa'i spyod yul bzhin (36,4)
dkyil 'khor khro gnyer cha lugs kyi (37,1)
khro bdag chen po'i gzugs bzung nas (37,2)
yi ge mngon du gyur na yang (37,3)
zhi ba de nyid mthong ba min (37,4)
ta la'i mgo bo bcad pa dang (38,2)
sa bon me yis bsregs pa yang (38,3)
de yi dbang du mi 'gyur gyi (38,4)
rnam grangs brgya stong mtha' yas pa (39,1)
gang ltar bskyed kyang me tog skye (39,2)
mtshan ma med pa'i dbang gis na (39,3)
bsti gnas de las 'byung mi 'gyur (39,4)

Here there is no mention of something to establish
 By means of a forceful tribulation;
 But it is deemed that, by possessing the A and the PA,
 The bliss of magical illusion arises.
 This is also a defect caused by grasping:
 Since nature cannot be defined in one single way,
 It appears according to how one looks at it.
 Even the bliss from the effort and wish for its manifestation
 Is a great hindrance and a defect.
 In all the secondary methods for bodhi
 One meditates on attributes as the moon's reflection in water.
 But even if something untainted and without attachment results,
 Such meditation is like a child's sphere of activity.
 Although by identifying with the body of the Great Wrathful One
 With its man. d. ala and wrathful grimaces and attributes
 The letter can be concretely realized,
 The authentic condition of the quiescent state is not seen.
 [Because of the power of emotions,]
 Just as the top of a palm tree is cropped
 And just as a seed is burnt by fire,
 These have been taught to prevent their dominion.
 All the hundreds and thousands of methods,
 According to what one practices, bear their specific flowers.

But since it is beyond conceptual characteristics,
It does not manifest from these abodes.

In this chapter we find the thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth, thirty seventh, three lines of the thirty-eighth, and the thirty-ninth quatrains that form the seventeenth topic known as “the section on how it transcends attachment to the bliss of the great *siddhi*” (*dnagos grub chen po bde ba la chags pa spong ba'i skabs*), which does not correspond literally to the title of the chapter. The first line of the thirty-eighth quatrain, *nyon mongs pa yi dbang gis ni*, is missing.

Chapter Twenty-Four (184,3–184,7), The Chapter that, Although the Pure and Perfect Mind is Beyond Rejecting and Accepting, Shows the Way for Obtaining Total Bliss as Mere Magical Illusion (*byang chub kyi sems spong len med pa las / sgyu ma tsam du bde ba chen po thob par bya ba'i thabs bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Since the pure and perfect mind is beyond rejecting and accepting, is there a way to obtain total bliss, or there is not?” (*byang chub kyi sems spong len med pa la bde ba chen po thob par bya ba'i thabs mchis sam ma mchis*). Samantabhadra replies with the following verse:

gleng bral 'di la gnas pa yi (40,1)
rnal 'byor de nyid skal ba bzang (40,2)
bdag dang gzhan du mi 'byed pas (40,3)
sgyu ma lhun grub yul la rol (40,4)

Good fortune has the yogin
Who abides in this ineffable state.
As he does not discriminate between self and others,
The magical illusion of self-perfection manifests.

Here we find the fortieth quatrain of the lung that forms the eighteenth topic known as “the section on how it is free from effort” (*rtsol ba dang bral ba'i skabs*), which does not correspond with the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Five (184,7–185,4), The Chapter on How All beings are Enlightened by Nature (*'gro ba thams cad rang bzhin gyis sangs rgyas pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “If there is a way to obtain total bliss as a mere magical illusion, are all beings enlightened by nature?” (*sgyu ma tsam du bde ba chen po thob par bya ba'i thabs mchis nal'gro ba thams cad la rang bzhin gyis sangs rgyas pa mchis sam*). Samantabhadra replies:

go ba'i yul na bde ba che (46,1)
'di nyid rnam dag 'jig rten yin (46,2)
de la phyogs kyi 'od 'dus pas (46,3)

phyogs bzhi mtshams dang bla 'og 'grub (46,4)
ma nges 'ja' tshon kha dog las (47,1)
rigs kyi khyad par mngon du snang (47,2)
de bzhin g.yo rdul mi g.yo bar (47,3)
'byung ba lnga las gtso chen yin (47,4)

In the domain of understanding is total bliss:
 That itself is the utterly pure world.
 When light concentrates from all sides,
 The four directions, the intermediate ones, and the above and below
 are produced.
 From the indefinite colors of the rainbow
 The features of the families manifestly appear,
 And likewise, the moving particles and the unmoving environment,
 But it is superior to the five elements.

Here we find the forty-sixth and forty-seventh quatrains of the *lung* that form the twenty-first topic known as “the section that shows how all beings are enlightened” (*'gro ba yongs la sangs rgyas par bstan pa'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Six (185,5 –186,4), The Chapter that Shows how the Accumulated Offerings are Naturally Self-Perfected and Thoroughly Complete (*tshogs rang bzhin gyis lhun gyis grub pa dang yongs su rdzogs par bstan pa 'i le'u*), begins with the question, “If all beings are enlightened by nature, is the making of accumulated offerings naturally and thoroughly complete, or it is not? (*'gro ba thams cad rang bzhin gyis sangs rgyas pa la/tshogs dbul ba dang rang bzhin gyis yongs su rdzogs pa mchis sam ma mchis*). Samantabhadra replies with the following verses:

'das dang ma byon da ltar gyi (48,1)
tha snyad ming la mi gnas te (48,2)
skye 'gag med pa rnam brtags na (48,3)
'di ni dus gsum chen por sbyor (48,4)
*mnyam pa'i rig pas bkod pa med*¹⁶ (49,1)
gcig pa'i phyogs su bsno dang bral (49,2)
tshogs kyi rgyan du dgram pa yang (49,3)
rang bzhin gnas pas 'drim pa med (49,4)
lhun gyis gnas pas mi bsngo zhing (50,1)
gdod nas dag pas bdud rtsi yin (50,2)
*'du byed*¹⁷ *bcu gnyis khyad par du* (50,3)

¹⁶ I take this to be a scribal error instead of the usual *mnyam pas rim par bkod pa med*.

¹⁷ In the various editions of the *lung* we usually find *'du mched*.

rang bzhin lhun gyis grub pa la
sku gsum ye shes shar bas na
lhag pa'i bsam pas gzung du med (50,4)

It does not abide in the designations
 Of past, future, and present:
 Understanding that it has no arising or ceasing,
 That itself is the integration of the three times in the total state.
 Being equal, there is nothing to arrange gradually.
 Being one, it is beyond dedicating something in a direction.
 Although the ornaments of accumulated offerings are arrayed,
 Since they exist by nature, there is nothing to array.
 Being spontaneously present, it is beyond dedicating.
 Pure from the beginning, it is nectar.
 The twelve sense bases, in particular,
 Being self-perfected from the beginning
 Manifest as the wisdom of the three *kāyas*, and thus
 Are not to be focused upon with special intention.

Here we find the forty-eighth, forty-ninth, and fiftieth quatrains of the *lung* that form the twenty-second topic known as “the section on making accumulated offerings” (*tshogs dbul ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds, although not literally, to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Seven (186,4 –187,1), The Chapter that Shows how the Donor and the Ornaments of the Accumulated Offerings Are Naturally Self-Perfected (*tshogs kyi bdag po dang rgyan rang bzhin gyis lhun gyis grub par bstan pa 'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Are the donor and the ornaments of the accumulated offerings naturally existing, or they are not?” (*tshogs kyi bdag po dang rgyan rang bzhin gyis grub par gnas pa mchis sam ma mchis*). The reply is given with the following verses:

yid kyi bsam pa yon bdag ste (51,1)
bltas pas'i stobs ni bkram pa'o (51,2)
mthong bar gyur pa dngos gyur la (51,3)
de ni mnyam gzhas rdzogs pa'o (51,4)
yud tsam bzung bas sbyor ba yin (52,1)
dga' bar 'gyur pas dam tshig ste (52,2)
thabs kyi gar bstab bskyod pa yis (52,3)
gnyis med sbyor bas phul ba yin (52,4)

The intention of the mind, the donor,
 Arrays all through the power of perception.
 In the *siddhi* that arises from seeing
 Equanimous contemplation is perfected.

Keeping it for an instant is union,
 Experiencing pleasure is *samaya*.
 Performing the dance movements of method
 The union of non-duality is offered.

In this chapter we find the fifty-first and the fifty-second quatrains of the *lung* that form respectively the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth topics. The former is known as “the section on how the ornaments of accumulated offerings are naturally self-perfected” (*tshogs kyi rgyan rnams rang bzhin lhun gyis grub pa'i skabs*) and the latter as “the section on how it is self-perfected” (*lhun gyis grub pa'i skabs*). Therefore, unlike the other chapters, here we have two topics in one chapter, whose title also corresponds, although not literally, to the titles of the sections of the *lung*.

Chapter Twenty-Eight (187,2 –187,5), The Chapter that Shows how the *gTor ma* and the Rest of the Ocean of Activities are Accomplished by Relaxing in Contemplation Without Doing any Action (*gtor ma las sogs pa'i las rgya mtsho bya mi dgos par mnyam par bzhag pas 'grub par bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question: “Are the *gtor ma* and the rest of the ocean of activities accomplished by relaxing in contemplation, or they are not?” (*gtor ma las sogs pa'i las rgya mtsho la mnyam par gzhag pas grub pa mchis sam ma mchis*). The reply is given with the following verse:

mi gzung gtong bas gtor ma yin (53,1)
bya ba med pas las rnams zin (53,2)
mi rtog ye shes bgegs bsal nas (53,3)
mi gsung mnyam bzhag sngags tshig go (53,4)

Giving without holding is the *gtor ma*.
 Being beyond action, all activities are completed.
 Since non-conceptual wisdom eliminates obstructors,
 Equanimous contemplation without speaking is the mantra.

Here we find the fifty-third quatrain of the *lung* that forms the twenty-fifth topic known as “the section on the ocean of activities” (*las rgya mtsho'i skabs*), which also correspond, although not literally, to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Twenty-Nine (187,6 –188,2), The Chapter that Shows the Great Emotional Bondage of Being Involved in the *gTor ma* and Other Activities (*gtor ma la sogs pa'i las byas na nyon mongs 'ching ba chen por bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “Do emotions arise from being involved in the *gtor ma* and the rest of the activities, or they do not?” (*gtor ma la sogs pa'i las byas pas nyon mongs par 'gyur ba mchis sam ma*

mchis). Samantabhadra replies with the following verse:

bla ma mchod dang gtong ba dang (54,1)
de bzhin bsod nams thams cad dang (54,2)
ma chags mi g.yo'i sems med na (54,3)
byas na 'ching ba chen por 'gyur (54,4)

Making offerings to the Guru, generosity,
 And all the other meritorious deeds,
 Without the power of detachment and imperturbability,
 Become a great bondage.

Here we find the fifty-fourth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the twenty-sixth topic known as “the section on the bondage of giving with a self” (*bdag dang bcas pa'i gtong ba 'ching ba'i skabs*), which also correspond in meaning to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Thirty (188,3 –188,5), The Chapter on How it Exists Spontaneously by Nature (*rang bzhin lhun gyis gnas pa'i le'u*) begins with the question, “Is (this state) self-perfected by nature?” (*rang bzhin lhun gyis grub pa lags sam*). Samantabhadra replies with the verse:

de la de byar sgrib par 'gyur (55,2)
ji ltar de la de rtogs na (55,3)
de la de nyid grub pa med (55,4)

[Therefore, that which is expressed in this teaching]
 Becomes obscured when one tries to act towards it.
 Being thus, if it is conceptualized
 It will never be realized.

These are the last three lines of the fifty-fifth quatrain of the *lung* that forms the twenty-seventh and last topic known as “the section on how the explanations of this teaching are revealed as mere symbolic words” (*lung 'brel pa ming tsam brdar bstan pa'i skabs*). This does not correspond to the title of the chapter. The first line, *de bas de lung de nyid la*, is missing.

Chapter Thirty-One (188,6 –189,4), The Chapter that Shows How the Dharmatā is Totally Immutable (*chos nyid kun tu mi 'gyur bar bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “How is it that, being naturally self-perfected, it exists without ever changing?” (*rang bzhin gyis lhun gyis grub pa mi 'gyur bar gnas pa'i don ji ltar 'gyur ba lags*). Samantabhadra replies with the verses:

lhag ma med pas yongs su rdzogs (41,1)

'gyur ba ma yin drang por gnas (41,2)
 nam mkha' bzhin du mnyam 'gyur zhing¹⁸ (41,3)
 gzhan las stobs 'gyur chos ma yin (41,4)
 mtshungs pa med pa'i ye shes kyi (42,2)
 lhun gyis gnas pa'i bde chen de (42,1)¹⁹
 rang gi mthu yis rig pa las (42,3)
 chos ni gzhan nas 'byung mi 'gyur (42,4)
 sla zhing dka' la sla phyir dka' (43,1)
 mngon sum mi gnas kun tu khyab (43,2)
 mngon sum 'di zhes brtan par ni²⁰ (43,3)
 rdo rje sems dpas mtshon du med (43,4)

As nothing is excluded, it is perfectly complete.
 It is unchanging and remains straight.
 Equal like space,
 It is not a phenomenon that depends on something else.
 The spontaneously existing total bliss
 Arises from one's recognition through the very power
 Of incomparable wisdom:
 Reality does not originate from anything else.
 It is easy and it is difficult, difficult because easy.
 It does not manifest directly but it is all-pervading.
 Not even Vajrasattva can point it out concretely, Saying "This is it!"

In this chapter we find the forty-first, forty-second, and forty-third quatrains of the *lung* that form the nineteenth topic known as "the section on the totally immutable dharmatā" (*chos nyid kun tu mi 'gyur ba'i skabs*), which also corresponds to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Thirty-Two (189,4 –190,1), The Chapter that Shows How Being Attached to the Pleasure of Thought²¹ Becomes a Defect (*rnam par rtog pa'i dga' ba la chags na/skyon du 'gyur bar bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, "If one is attached to the pleasure of thought, does this become a defect?" (*rnam par rtog pa'i dga' ba la chags na skyon du 'gyur ba mchis lags sam*). Samantabhadra replies with the verses:

ngo mtshar rmad byung rol pa 'di (44,1)

¹⁸ Instead of the usual *nam mkha' bzhin du mtha' mnyam zhing*: 'boundless like space'.

¹⁹ Usually this line occurs as the first of the quatrain.

²⁰ Instead of the usual *ming tsam 'di zhes bstan par ni*: 'can point it out with a name'.

²¹ The *lCags 'grel* (*Vairo rgyud 'bum*, vol. nga, 439,1, commenting on the section related to this chapter has *rnam par mi rtog pa'i dga' la chags pa'i skyon*: 'the defect of being attached to the pleasure of nonthought'. Nevertheless, the expression is repeated twice in this chapter, and we cannot be sure that it is a copying mistake.

bya bral nam mkha' ji bzhin te (44,2)
cir yang mi dmigs gti mug las (44,3)
de ma thag tu rang las 'byung (44,4)
'di ni sems can mtshungs pa'i lam (45,1)
'gro ba kun la rang bzhin gnas (45,2)
byis pas bslad pa'i 'khrul pa'i phyir (45,3)
sman nyid sman pa 'tshol ba bzhin (45,4)

This amazing, marvelous manifestation of energy
 Is beyond action and equal to space.
 From the ignorance that does not conceptualize anything
 It immediately arises within oneself.
 This is the path equal for all
 That naturally abides in all beings.
 But since ordinary people are deluded due to defilement,
 It is like when a doctor has to find the medicine.

Here we find the forty-fourth and forty-fifth quatrains of the *lung* that form the twentieth topic known as “the section on how it is not produced by causes and conditions” (*rgyu rkyen las mi 'grub pa'i skabs*), which does not correspond to the title of the chapter.

Chapter Thirty-Three (190,1–191,2), The Chapter that Shows How Yogins of the Future Should Practice the State of rDzogs pa Chen po (*ma 'ongs pa'i rnal 'byor pas rdzogs pa chen po'i don nyams su blang bar bstan pa'i le'u*), begins with the question, “How should yogins of the future practice the state of rdzogs pa chen po?” (*ma 'ongs pa'i rnal 'byor pa rnams kyis rdzogs pa chen po'i don nyams su ji ltar blang bar bgyi*). Samantabhadra replies that the state of rdzogs pa chen po does not depend on any causes, conditions, and results. It is the primordially self-perfected dharmatā, and one should abide in it without searching and without being distracted: this is the realized state of enlightenment (*rdzogs pa chen po'i don ni / rgyu dang / rkyen dang / 'bras bu gang la yang mi ltos te / ye nas lhun gyis grub pa'i chos nyid la / ma btsal ma yengs par ni gnas par bya'o / de nyid mngon du gyur pa sangs rgyas yin*). Then he continues with several verses that expand on the same subject, until the conclusion of the Tantra (191,3): *rdo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud rdzogs so*.

If other editions of this important Tantra will be found in the future, we are able to ascertain whether the three missing lines were not included originally or whether they were left out in the process of copying the text. It is very difficult, at the present stage of research, to confirm whether the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che'i rgyud* is the original Tantra from which the *lung* was extracted, or whether they both derive from a source that never made its way into Tibet. Nevertheless the

structure and the contents of this Tantra certainly shed new light on this extremely important and essential Ati Yoga scripture.

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NGBT = *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* (mTshams brag edition in 46 volumes), Thimphu 1982.

VGB = *Vai ro rgyud 'bum* (eight volumes), Leh 1971.

Lungs

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rDo rje sems dpa'i rang bzhin mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan gyi le'u, in *Chos thams cad rdzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po*, NGBT, ka: 106–113.

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rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che rgyal po rgyas pa'i rgyud, NGBT, ga: 119–165.

Commentaries

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bCom ldan 'das lung thams cad kyi rang bzhin zhes bya ba, VGB, kha: 205–239.

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Comparing Historical Tibetan Population Estimates with the Monks and Nuns: What was the Clerical Proportion?

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A. Introduction

This study estimates Tibet's historical population based on potential farmland and grain yields to determine what the proportions of monks and nuns were according to a list of clerics residing in the Buddhist monasteries of U-Tsang (i.e., Central Tibet) during the Ganden Podrang period of the eighteenth through mid-twentieth centuries. A particular focus of this study is the construction of a spatial model of the clerical proportion of Tibetan society during recent centuries before the large-scale destruction of this traditional socioeconomic system after China's incorporation of Tibet into the new Peoples' Republic during the 1950s. Before this time, the occupational structure of Tibet's economy included a large proportion of Buddhist monks and nuns. Faced with the dearth of historical monastic census data, scholars have only guessed what these clerical proportions of the Tibetan population were. These 'educated guesses' tend to focus exclusively on the monks, ranging from about 10 to 25 percent of the male population (Goldstein 2010; Jansen 2018). This study finds monks comprised about 18 percent of the male population or about 9 percent of the total Central Tibetan population, while nuns comprised about 6 percent of the female population or close to 3 percent of the total population, which is more significant than previous studies indicate (Table 1). Furthermore, these clerical patterns exhibited unique geographic characteristics, with more males drawn to the large teaching centers in core regions such as Lhasa and Shigatse, leaving female nuns to actually outnumber monks in some peripheral regions.

Data on the numbers of Tibetan monasteries, and the monks and nuns resident at each site, were compiled into a spreadsheet from historical archives in Lhasa by the late Tibetan scholar Tsering Gyalpo

(1961-2015) who gave me a copy. Based at the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences (TASS) in Lhasa, Gyalpo served as director of its Religious Studies Department from 1995 up to his untimely passing in Berlin (Hazod 2015). He adopted the prefix Guge denoting a historical name for his home region in Western Tibet; hence some of his works are attributed to Guge Tsering Gyalpo as the author. This list of the monks and nuns will be described in detail in the data section below, but suffice it to say here that 81,998 monks are listed in 1,413 monasteries arranged by the *Dzong* (Tib. rdzong; i.e., forts or districts, hereafter dzong) of Central Tibet under the jurisdiction of the Lhasa-based Ganden Podrang government (Map 1). Also, 6,525 nuns are listed in 326 monasteries for a part of this region. No data are provided for monasteries in the eight forts and estates of Tsang supervised by the Panchen Lamas of Tashilhunpo monastery until 1923, which indicates these figures pertain to some period before then. Also, no data are provided for areas of religious estates of particularly elite status, namely Sakya in Tsang and the valleys of Thurphu (of the Karmapas) and Drigung in U (i.e., the eastern part of Central Tibet). And the districts of Phari and Dromo (Chin. Yadong) are also excluded from this study because the data is incomplete for these areas.

In contrast to detailed historical records of the numbers of monasteries and clerics, there did not seem to be similar needs by indigenous Tibetan bureaucracies for the collection and recording of demographic data for the overall Tibetan population. The well-known Mongol Census of Tibet from the thirteenth century merely estimated the number of households in thirteen local divisions of Central Tibet, but the data is not accurate enough to reconstruct key demographic indicators from, such as for fertility and growth rates, let alone the numbers of monks. And, surviving archival demographic data from Tibet is too small scale, only covering the persons connected with particular local estates such as servants and tenant farmers, thus preventing any accurate historical reconstruction of the overall Tibetan demographic situation (Childs 2000). Mention should also be made of the often-cited history of the Gelukpa sect (*Dga' ldan chos 'byung*; "History of Ganden") by the Fifth Dalai Lama's Regent Sanggye Gyatso (1653-1705), which includes lists of the more important monasteries (from this sectarian point of view) as well as the numbers of monks resident at each site. But being a partial listing for only one sect, these data are not sufficient for providing an accurate model of the historical clerical proportions of the Tibetan population.

Table 1: Ratios of Monks and Nuns ca. 18th and 19th Centuries by Dzong.

Dzong	Model Pop.	1990 Pop.	Change	Monks	Nuns	Monk Ratio	Nun Ratio
Total/mean%	1,208,255	1,311,144	144%	82,106	6,525	9%	3%
Lhasa	42,833	265,044	619%	19,315	117	45%	-
Lhundrub	15,323	18,679	122%	4,750	-	31%	-
Lhagyari	6,685	23,255	348%	1,983	45	30%	1%
Gyamda	3,994	17,295	433%	1,121	-	28%	-
Gongkar	11,593	24,800	214%	3,042	1,410	26%	12%
Chokhorgyal	7,009	5,166	74%	1,559	601	22%	9%
Kunam	2,595	11,558	445%	450	478	17%	18%
Dzongka	8,977	11,178	125%	1,522	-	17%	-
Drjau	5,557	6,988	126%	934	107	17%	2%
Olkha	4,468	8,460	189%	689	215	15%	5%
Zadam	11,406	28,926	254%	1,740	-	15%	-
Chushur	16,270	27,932	172%	2,453	-	15%	-
Tagtse	18,039	18,575	103%	2,540	-	14%	-
Tsona	5,933	6,645	112%	826	-	14%	-
Shigatse	57,269	66,601	116%	7,365	-	13%	-
Gyatso	1,889	9,606	508%	241	-	13%	-
Khartse	5,091	4,008	79%	620	-	12%	-
Chongye	23,377	27,712	119%	2,264	-	10%	-
On	13,679	10,272	75%	1,250	35	9%	-
Riupung	13,227	20,183	153%	1,174	-	9%	-
Kyirong	5,156	3,408	66%	448	-	9%	-
Lhumtse	28,046	26,335	94%	2,333	1,033	8%	4%
Zhokha	5,712	8,505	149%	476	107	8%	2%
Nedong	36,456	33,534	92%	2,575	386	7%	1%
Lingkar	5,029	10,705	213%	345	-	7%	-
Lhabu	4,174	7,861	188%	275	-	7%	-
Tsegang	25,825	16,231	63%	1,686	402	7%	2%
Nakhartse	31,402	20,048	64%	1,772	-	6%	-

Samye	19,680	16,489	84%	1,058	-	5%	-
Tingkye	18,746	7,569	40%	937	-	5%	-
Gyangtse	98,729	59,913	61%	4,539	-	5%	-
Malgung	34,914	37,022	106%	1,601	-	5%	-
Namling	28,520	19,408	68%	1,220	-	4%	-
Dowa	19,057	10,851	57%	560	480	3%	3%
Darma	11,735	7,885	67%	316	509	3%	4%
Langtang	8,407	11,919	142%	225	-	3%	-
Dol	29,813	34,896	117%	749	-	3%	-
Jomo	10,708	21,608	202%	259	272	2%	3%
Panam	48,313	39,017	81%	1,106	-	2%	-
Nyemo	29,803	32,367	109%	683	-	2%	-
Kyimtong	6,577	13,509	205%	142	223	2%	3%
Lhakhang	5,213	2,534	49%	107	51	2%	1%
Senge	7,153	3,620	51%	147	54	2%	1%
Nyamang	11,388	5,853	51%	229	-	2%	-
Phari	6,996	13,064	187%	-	-	-	-
Shelkar	162,813	42,412	26%	2,372	-	2%	-
Ciblung	39,749	14,603	37%	-	-	-	-
Gampa	18,680	8,417	45%	-	-	-	-
Rinchetse	20,536	23,485	114%	-	-	-	-
Sakya	29,653	11,018	37%	-	-	-	-
Lhunrab	31,856	25,245	79%	-	-	-	-
Lhatse	27,388	22,618	83%	-	-	-	-
Puntsokling	9,239	24,847	269%	-	-	-	-
Shetongmon	26,750	24,267	91%	-	-	-	-
Tanak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rinchetse	17,077	13,050	76%	-	-	-	-
Ngamring	11,746	24,148	206%	-	-	-	-

B. Defining Tibetan Economy and Monasticism

Given the unique historical situation in Tibet that supported large numbers of non-agricultural occupations at monasteries, it can be argued that the larger monasteries also be considered urban centers even though they do not fit traditional Eurasian models of cities (Ryavec 2020). The sparse resources of the Tibetan Plateau did not permit as

many urban centers to develop as in lowland cultures. But the larger Tibetan monasteries filled the same role as the city in lowland agrarian societies in providing centers of political authority, safe places for markets, and storage for products and livestock, and thus functioned in an urban-like role in the traditional economic system. In particular, these resource-based limitations may help to explain how and why the Tibetan clergy grew to such a significant proportion of the population and provided the labor for a great many occupations. For example, according to Cabazon and Dorjee (2019), the large monastery of Sera on the outskirts of Lhasa housed according to tradition approximately 5,500 monks (listed with 5000 monks in this dataset). This number rose to 9,224 by 1959, but only about 25 percent of the monks of the philosophical colleges (which comprised most of the monks) were actively studying. The rest were involved in various other occupations concerning the administration of the monastery, such as cooking and overseeing agricultural estates that provided grain and other products.

These occupational categories should be more clearly articulated and not lumped together into a generic monk or nun category if we are to better understand Tibet's economic history and how it was able to support a larger proportion of its population in educational institutions without and prior to industrialization, unlike other human societies. Not only were there numerous religious specializations such as chant leader, meditation master, oracle, and so forth, but monks also worked as doctors, astrologists, grain keepers, painters, and so forth. But numerous academic arguments positing that Tibet's traditional economy functioned as a Medieval feudal serf-based system until its demise during the 1950s, such as by Goldstein (1998) and Ma (1998), create major obstacles to better understanding historical Tibetan socio-economic systems in comparative historical perspective. These arguments, however, do not hold-up in comparison with Medieval European economies, where religious occupations merely comprised about 1.6 percent of the total population, or no more than 3 percent of the male population (Russel 1944). Also, usury was not prohibited in Tibet, and the monasteries earned profits on their loans, unlike the proscriptions against usury in Medieval Christian societies. Furthermore, to define Tibet's economy by the modern period ca. 1500-1950 as Medieval would need to assume that Tibet was some sort of "living fossil" in a land where time stood still, clearly an absurd idea not worthy of serious consideration. Instead, many aspects of the Modern Capitalistic World System constructed around the Columbian Exchange affected Tibetan society and economy, too, such as the introduction of the important New World crops of potato and maize and their contributions to population growth and the circulation of New World silver. For example, in Goldstein's (1971 a) study of taxation in a Tibetan village in

Central Tibet during the Ganden Podrang period, several tax-in-kind items (such as leather rope and grain) listed in early documents had actually been converted to payment in silver coinage by the nineteenth century if not earlier.

Despite the great differences between Tibetan and European economic systems historically, what could be termed “The Mobility Fallacy”, articulated in an early influential study by Goldstein (1971 b) about restrictions on movement in Central Tibetan society, gave supporters of the Feudal School of Tibetan economic history one of their main lines of argument. According to this view, however, the contemporary Chinese economy would also be defined as a feudal serf-based system because most peoples’ movements are similarly restricted by state actors. Tibetans now require official permission to travel both internally (such as within Central Tibet or between Amdo and Central Tibet), and internationally which is extremely curtailed by the confiscations of passports (mostly since 2008) and refusals to issue new ones in most cases.

C. Explanation of Terms

There are numerous works in the Tibetan Studies field that define in great detail what Buddhist monasteries and nunneries were and who qualified as a monk or nun. Jansen's (2018) recent study of Buddhist monastic organization in pre-modern Tibet based on monastic guidelines or *chayik*, for example, adequately covers these topics. This present study instead breaks new ground by focusing on all the monasteries of Central Tibet instead of individual case studies as has been the norm up to now. These monasteries ranged from small single shrine caves and buildings with just one resident cleric to massive multi-structure complexes with numerous shrines, assembly halls, and dormitories housing thousands of monks studying in specific colleges. Even the Bonpo religious establishments of Tibet, while adhering to a non-Buddhist religion, could still be considered monasteries within the purview of this study because the Bonpo actively sought enlightenment and generally followed a Buddhist-like curriculum. However, the data on monks and nuns utilized in this study does not include any Bonpo monasteries because they do not cover areas in Tsang where some Bonpo monasteries still existed in Central Tibet by the Ganden Podrang period. These areas may have been under the jurisdiction of Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse or relatively independent, but they were not covered in the districts administered from Lhasa.

D. The Tibetan Census of Monks and Nuns

The numbers of monks or nuns listed for each monastery were entered into a spreadsheet format by Tsering Gyalpo from his handwritten entries in notebooks based on historical archival sources according to 48 dzong in Central Tibet under the administration of the Lhasa-based Ganden Podrang government ca. 1642-1959. Data for monasteries with nuns, however, are only included for 18 dzong in a largely contiguous region of U. Phari dzong was excluded because only two monasteries are listed, while no data is included for Dromo to the south in the Chumbi Valley. It is also important to note that data for Tsona dzong includes monasteries to the south in the Ta-wang Tract now administered by the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.

There are many secular handwritten government documents that only survive in closed archives in Tibet and China that offer invaluable information about Tibetan social and economic history. This dearth of historical records dilemma partly explains why the Tibetan studies field is largely focused on Buddhist studies because religious texts were often mass-produced, mainly by wood-block printing, to meet the needs of large numbers of adherents and are thus relatively easier to access, while government tax and related records only required one or several hand-written documents for the needs of the small largely noble run state bureaucracy. It is likely these figures on the monasteries in each dzong and the numbers of clerics would have been recorded for the administrative needs of each dzongpon (i.e., governor), such as for promoting religious observances and offerings to various deities, as well as ensuring the physical needs of the monks and nuns were provided for considering the *raison d'être* of the Ganden Podrang government was to ensure as many people as possible could attain enlightenment.

The spatial coverage of these clerical numbers is complex due to the way the data are arranged. Some districts are combined under a single heading, such as that for Shigatse and Rinchentse, though both district areas are approximated in our spatial analysis for greater accuracy in estimating historical farmland, population, and clerical proportion. While the opposite situation applies to the districts of Nedong and Sreng Dzong – E Khul represented with one combined district area. It was not clear where this dzong was located, but the area of coverage southeast of Nedong is clear due to some well-known monasteries listed, such as the destroyed large Gelukpa monastery of Riwo Choling that once housed 221 monks, and the still surviving famous Yumbu Lhakhang (Yam bu glang mkar) listed as a Nyingma establishment with eight monks.

Data are also provided for monasteries in parts of Ngari (western Tibet) and Kham (eastern Tibet) that were also administered by Ganden Podrang, but these data are not included in this present study. These excluded data for parts of Kham are listed under Nagchu, Lhari, and the combined headings of Khyung po khul - Khams khul (which also includes data for Powo), while for parts of Ngari, the data are listed under Ngari Korsum. It is hoped to analyze the historical clerical proportions of the populations in these regions and compare them to Central Tibet in future studies.

This Excel spreadsheet has been placed in a Dataverse for all students and scholars to freely access, given how important these data are in providing the most accurate historical listing of the monasteries and numbers of monks and nuns in Tibet (<https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/DUGC7Z>). Except for a field titled Dzong and listing a Romanized phonetic transcription of each Dzong or district for ease in viewing and sorting, the spreadsheet file is original and complete as Tsering Gyalpo created it.

The first field in the file is titled Sa gnas (place name) and lists the Tibetan name of 51 dzong or estates. The second field is titled Dgon pa' mtshan (monastery name) and lists the names of 1739 monasteries. The third field is titled Chos lugs (religious method) and lists the sectarian affiliation of each monastery. Tibetans use the term luk (Lugs), which may be roughly translated as "method," as in a specific method or way to achieve enlightenment for the English concept of sect or denomination. In addition to the four main sects (since Bon sites are not included) of the Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, and Gelukpa, some minor traditions are listed, and some establishments are listed as teaching various combinations of traditions. Specifically, there are 406 Nyingma, 204 Sakya, 386 Kagyu, and 636 Gelukpa monasteries. Also, 55 Chod (i.e. severance tradition), 13 Bodong, 4 Ras (i.e. cotton; denoting the ascetic white cotton-clad followers of Milarepa), and 1 Jonang sites are listed. An additional 31 monasteries are listed as establishments that practiced both Nyingma and Gelukpa traditions, and two that practiced Nyingma, Sakya, and Gelukpa traditions. Of course, the actual historical situation was more complex than this simple listing. For example, in Medrogungkar dzong (i.e., Malgung in Gyalpo's file) east of Lhasa there was a Sakya college, listed as a Sakya sectarian establishment named Gyama Dratsang with 62 monks, attached to the large Gelukpa monastery of Rinchengang with 110 monks. But this site is not listed as a combined Sakya-Gelukpa monastery; instead, each site is listed separately in this dzong, and the fact that they were located in the same overall complex was ascertained from talking with a former monk.

The fourth field is titled *Gra ba' grangs 'bor* (number of monks), and the fifth field *btsun ma' grangs' bor* (number of nuns). The final syllable, 'bor, is the one used in the term population (*mi 'bor*); when turned into a verb means "to enumerate," as in a census. Thus, the term may imply the monks and nuns were actually enumerated once (Geoff Childs personal communication). Again, it is regrettable that Tsering Gyalpo did not leave a detailed record of which archival document(s) he consulted in compiling these data before his untimely passing. It is possible he did or confided in someone who may later hopefully elucidate more. But it was clear from official collaborative research projects with him and the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences in Lhasa during the 1990s and early 2000s that Gyalpo was consulting historical archival data closed to foreigners, and while internal Chinese workers are generally not permitted by the government to copy or photograph such materials on their own, there are often allowed to take notes. And this appears to be what happened, someone re-wrote down these five key variables of place, name, sect, and numbers of monks and nuns, thus providing the most accurate and complete listing of these data ever available for contemporary academic research.

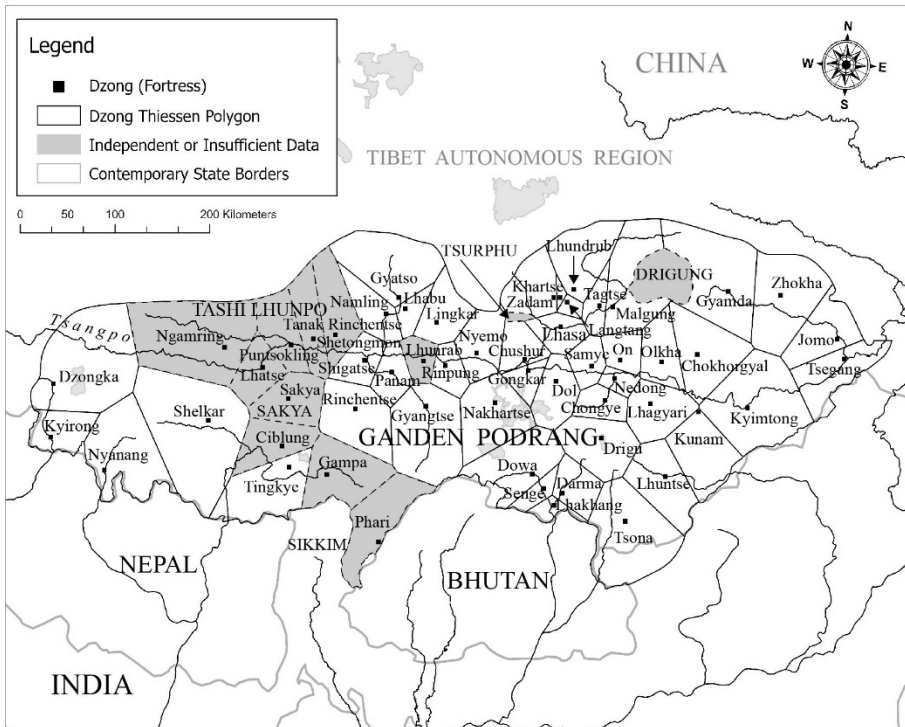
E. Methods

Arriving at a population estimate to compare the clerical population found in the census required preprocessing the census data, modeling potential farmland, and conducting various calculations relating to grain yields and calorie intake. The researchers preprocessed data and performed most geospatial operations via Python 3.8 scripts in or out of QGIS 3.10. Geospatial modeling was performed within the QGIS interface.

Preparing census data

Several organizational operations were necessary to prepare the tabular census data for a join to available spatial data. The census contains nearly 2000 entries of localities where a monastery or nunnery existed and its respective count of clergy members. While the dzong is specified, no individual marker denotes where each monastery was within its area. Directly mapping each monastery is currently impossible without detailed and complete gazetteers or maps that currently do not exist. Instead, each central Tibetan dzong's known fortress locations within the study area helped demarcate rough, sub-regional areas. Thiessen polygons, or spatial shapes representing the area to each

point relative to all other points, were generated to stand in for undefined census areas (Map 1). Although aggregation is not ideal when more nuanced data is present, the scheme used adheres to how the data was initially collected or summarized even at the dzong level and is still more disaggregated than anything at present. Thus, the tabular data was primarily kept in its original form, yielding a sum of clerics. This data was then joined to the Thiessen polygons by matching dzong.



Map 1: The study area in Central Tibet ca. 1642-1923, exhibiting dzong point distribution and Thiessen polygon coverage. Grey polygons indicate a lack of data or political affiliations outside the scope of the study.

Modeling farmland

Modeling potential arable land that existed across the study area was crucial to estimating adequate population data. Regional information for arable land exists for the study area, but any data set has its drawbacks. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) created the Global Land Cover data set using satellite-derived

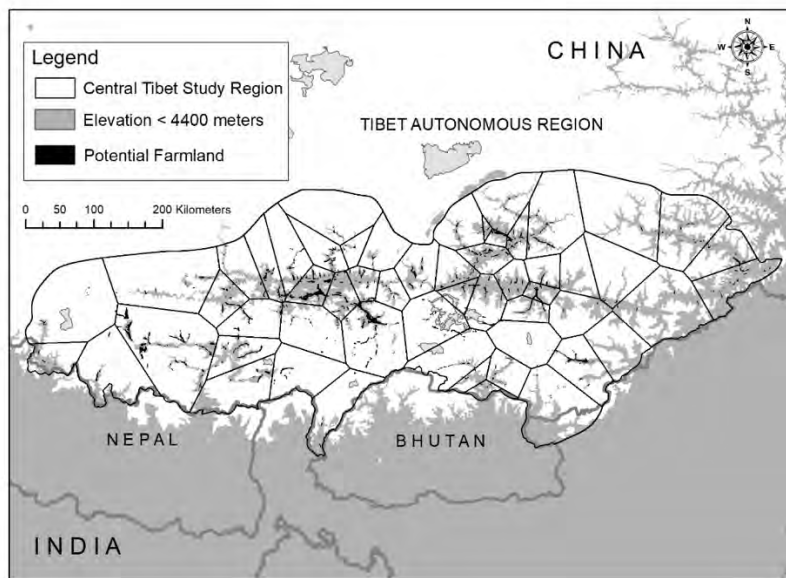
data and algorithmic derivation. While convenient and useful, the researchers found that this data set often failed to detect farmland, especially in Himalayan areas where arable land is patchy in narrow river valleys. In addition, the one-kilometer resolution is coarse and often overestimates how much farmland is present as spatial markers are quite large.

Human-digitized data also exists. Farmland in Central Tibet was digitized from the *1:1,000,000 Land-use Map of China* (Wu 1990). These data conform more to the contours of valleys and rivers. At the outset, these data were useful in establishing a spatial distribution and providing an expectation that most farmland occurred along the broad valley of the Tsangpo River. Closer inspection using modern satellite imagery reveals there are some discrepancies, especially in the region around Shelkar. However, either more or less farmland existed historically than exists today after several decades of significant change. For this reason, we rely primarily on these data. The researchers also supplemented these data with hand-digitized coverage based on satellite imagery to fill in where potential historical farmland was missing around Nakhartse and the southeast in general.

Some assumptions are made to simplify a regional model within which variability exists at different scales. First, satellite imagery captures contemporary and not historical land use. Given that demographics, total population, and agricultural techniques have changed since historical periods, modeling based on modern imagery is likely to inflate the amount of cultivated land, though to what extent is difficult to predict. Thus we focus on "potential" cultivated land rather than any "actual" known land use. Besides, precisely how much land was cultivated as barley is unknown. Estimates going back to 1953 assume barley made up around 70% of cultivated land and was the largest source of calories (Laurent 2015; Tashi, Yawei, and Xingquan 2013; Ma 1995). Certainly, as a staple crop, it helped people the Plateau since the Neolithic (Witze 2014). Millet, and most recently winter wheat, are also cultivated, though barley contains more calories per grain (Bates, Petrie, and Singh 2018) and has a longer history. Therefore, we reduced the total area of our modeled farmland by 70% to reflect diversified cultivation strategies. However, our estimates are still anchored in the cultivation of barley which remains a necessary component. Given the historical importance and persistence of barley cultivation on the Plateau and thermal niches that have endured for many centuries (d'Alpoim Guedes, Manning, and Bocinsky 2016), even modern imagery reveals much of the distribution of arable land, which is comparable to recent history.

Elevation constraints

Elevation, especially in high-altitude environments like the Tibetan Plateau, sets hard limits on what can be cultivated and where. The FAO's Global Land Cover dataset indicates that a vast majority (up to 99%) of barley cultivation occurs below 4000 meters above sea level. However, our sample suggests that the FAO dataset misses some farmland up to 4200 meters in western and south-western parts of the Plateau as well as the area around Lake Yamdrok Yumtso up to 4500 meters. A great majority of the arable land exists under 4400 meters with a few exceptions, and this became our upper limit.



Map 2: Distribution of digitized, potential farmland in relation to elevation under 4400 meters above sea level. While much of the model remains within the 4400-meter limit, some farmland is still found above this limit in special niches, especially in the center of the study area.

Quantifying grain yields

The amount of barley that could be reasonably cultivated and harvested from each hectare of potential farmland is an important variable for the estimation of carrying capacity and established a foundation for further calculations. Today, barley fields can produce from five to six

tons of barley per hectare (Tashi, Yawei, and Xingquan 2013). Historically, before the use of chemical fertilizers, this figure was around 1.5 to 2.2 tons per hectare without fallowing, according to Henry Osmaston (Osmaston 1995). The latter estimate is preferred as it reflects traditional agricultural yields. Even so, how yields varied over space and time are unknown and likely depended on local differences in climate, resources, and knowledge. Both 1.5 and 2.2 tons per hectare were entered as parameters in the calculation, with an average taken at the end under the assumption that most yields achieved some value within this range.

Counting calories

A final parameter to estimate carrying capacity is caloric intake or, more generally, energy need related to barley harvests. Not only did people need barley to eat but also to store for the following year's seed, pay taxes, and conduct rituals. Similar to spatially estimating potential farmland over a large area, estimating caloric intake is multiplicative and can significantly affect model output. Studies estimating population tend to rely on FAO, WHO, or other national health organization recommendations for caloric intake—roughly 2000 calories for women and 2500 calories for men—but we believe this is more appropriate for modern, urbanite populations and less than what historical, predominately subsistence farmers would have needed. For example, grain rations in both ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt provided roughly 3000 calories per person on average, assuming one kilogram of barley provides around 3,600 calories (Ellison 1981; Miller 1991).

Based on fieldwork, Henry Osmaston estimated that the average person required 225kg of barley per year for basic subsistence, which amounts to around 74% of our model caloric requirements (assuming 3600 calories per kg) but around 89% of the total intake for a man and up to 111% of a woman's intake if using contemporary measures of caloric needs. While barley-based meals were very common in traditional Tibet, where Tsampa (barley flour) was the staple food, an entire diet comprised of barley is unsustainable from a nutritional standpoint. Additionally, after the beginning of direct Chinese control, barley and other grain rations for workers were considered very low by Tibetans at around 218 kg per year (2150 calories per day if used exclusively for food) in Lhasa during the 1960s through the 1970s and around 181 kg in Dingri (1,785 calories per day if used exclusively for food) on the Tibet-Nepalese border (Rumbold 1980). If 2,150 calories per day were considered low, then a 3000-calorie budget is not unreasonable in a high altitude, relatively cold environment. Therefore, we use Osmaston's estimate of grain consumption, rounding up to 75% of

an individual's daily calories. Besides direct consumption, planting and animal fodder consumed an additional 92kg of barley. In sum, the model assumes 320 kg of barley needed per person, per year.

Estimating Population

The output of the proposed model is a sum of each Thiessen polygon's population calculated using the aforementioned parameters. Farmland coverage is aggregated within each polygon, provided area calculations in hectares which are then multiplied by high (2.2) and low (1.5) grain yields and caloric value then divided by the energy needed from barley. The result is a total population value for the respective polygon.

Stated formally for all 56 Thiessen polygons, for total population P , let A be areas in hectares of potential farmland observed for a polygon i in the series multiplied by 70% to reflect barley's share of cultivation. Let Y represent grain yield in tons, and C represent the number of calories provided by one ton of barley. Under the division line, let F be barley needed as food multiplied by D or share of an individual's diet. Finally, let O be other uses of barley not related to immediate consumption but still necessary.

$$P = \sum_{i=1}^{56} \frac{(A_i * 0.7) * Y * C}{(F * D) + O}$$

F. Results

Carrying Capacity Potential and Population Yields

The maximum potential yields of barley grain given the range between 1.5 and 2.2 tons per cultivated hectare are 979,667 and 1,436,844 people, respectively, with a mean Central Tibetan population of 1,208,255 (Table 1). The modeled total population average falls below the total population found in China's 1990 census of 1,311,144. Specifically, the Central Tibetan population increased 144 percent by 1990. This particular census was utilized for two reasons: 1) Sub-county township-level data are available, allowing comparisons with historical dzong areas. 2) The total figures largely reflect the settled farming population before China's relaxation of internal immigration controls by the increase in massive economic growth and social change starting in the 1990s. Also, security concerns excluded the inclusion of Chinese immigrants already in Tibet by 1990, especially large numbers of police and military

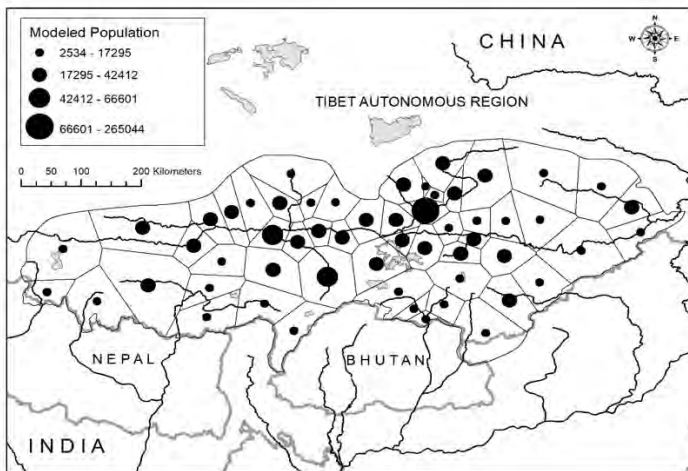
personnel. Therefore, the historical, modeled population sits comfortably as a maximum potential for the 18th and 19th centuries. Again, this is a maximum potential without considering other variables such as trade—though there was likely no significant bulk trade in grain—mortality, births, and other demographic factors. Long-distance trade across Tibet historically was based on items not locally available and thus of greater value, such as tea from China and salt from dry lake beds distant from most farming communities. Historical records do indicate a small amount of rice was imported from India and Nepal as a luxury, not a staple item for some wealthy elites, while long-distance trade in large amounts of barley would not have been profitable given its weight and local availability. However, the smaller, wholly nomadic populations in high altitude pockets of Central Tibet and especially on the Changtang to the north relied on Tsampa as a staple food item. So in the Changtang case, some small amount of ground barley was exported each year from the core Central Tibetan farming region, but we do not know how much. Additionally, the modeled estimate becomes less accurate the further one moves back in time as available labor shrinks.

Spatializing results generally confirm the population distribution historically and currently, with a majority of the population clustered in the ecoregions of U, centered around Lhasa, and Tsang, centered around Shigatse (Map 3). Himalaya-adjacent and more rugged ecoregions (Himalayan and Lhoka) in the eastern and southern sections of the study area contain less arable land and thus a lower carrying capacity. Yamdrok Yumtso is not as large as other ecoregions but makes for a unique catchment in the center of the study area, exhibiting a carrying capacity of about 30,000 people despite almost all of the area being above 4400 meters. The model produced a greater population here than what is found in the 1990 census. Drigu, a predominant pastoralist district, received the least population and gained only a nominal amount of population between the model and the 1990 census. The regions of U and Dokpo/Kongpo also gained population between the model and 1990, while other regions were modeled with higher populations, especially in the Himalayan region.



Map 3: Modeled populations for each ecoregion in the study area. U and Tsang are expectedly the cores of population density.

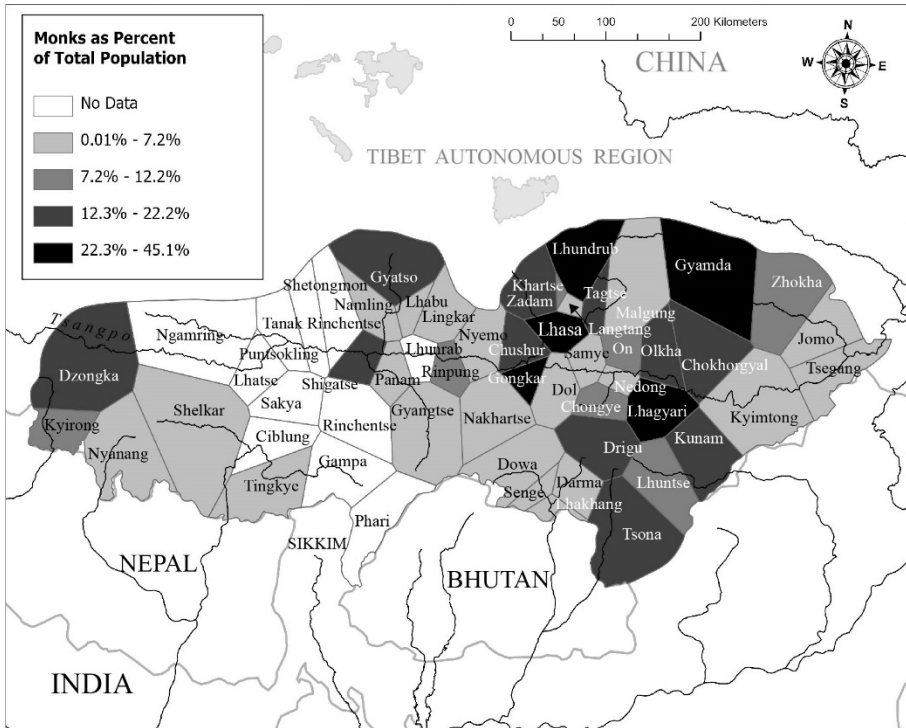
When the historical estimated population data are visualized at the dzong level, those districts in the U and Tsang regions hold much of the population of the entire area (Map 4). One seeming outlier is Shelkar in the southwest, which receives a large amount of potential farmland from available coverage and thus a high population estimate. However, the polygon for this dzong is the largest and thus captures a large modeled estimate.



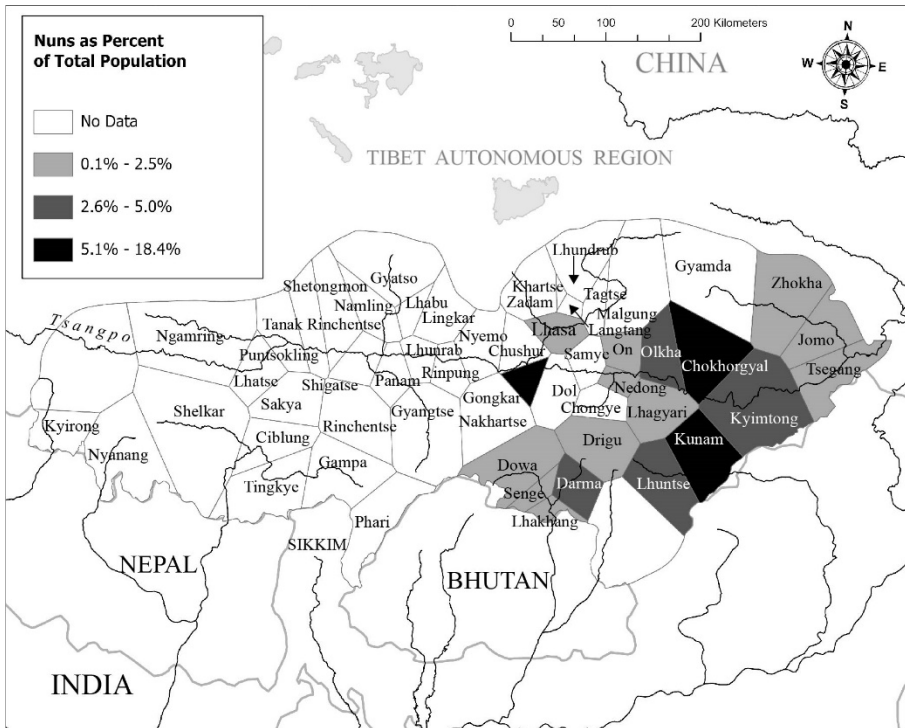
Map 4: Population estimates for each dzong.

How Large was the Clerical Proportion?

Results of the model indicate that, at the time of the census, clerics may have constituted a significant proportion of the total Central Tibetan population. A total of 88,523 clerics are listed in the census. In relation to the modeled population, clerics constitute about 12% of the total population. However, spatial disaggregation reveals that this mean ratio hides significant geographic variability. When investigating the monk proportions, sub-regional areas exhibited a range of estimates from 2% - 7% to as high as 45% of the entire population for the central district of Lhasa where of course many monks came to study from other parts of Tibet such as Amdo and from other countries such as Mongolia (Map 5). Findings on the nun proportions, as mentioned above, are limited to data available for 18 dzong in the southeast (Map 6).



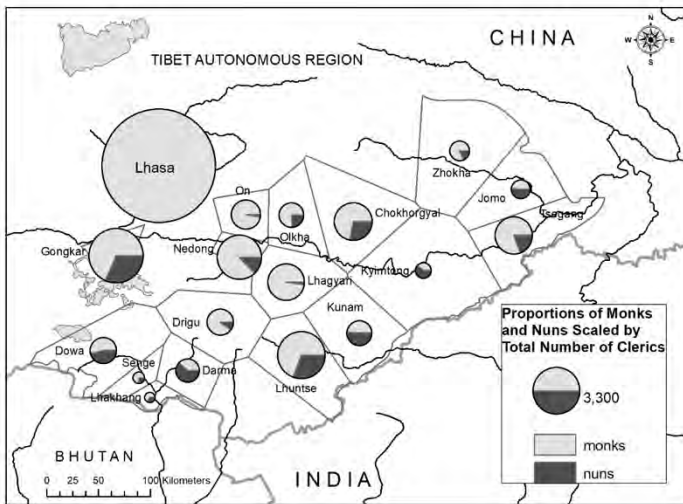
Map 5: Ratios of male monks to historical modeled population estimate.



Map 6: Ratios of female nuns to historical modeled population estimate.

These ratios of monks and nuns reveal significant geographic variation. Where population levels are higher, in and around Lhasa and Shigatse, the ratio of monks is relatively high, above 10 percent of the population. Surprising results include Dzongka in the far west, which has 1522 monks compared to its total population of 6100, indicating monks comprised about a quarter of the population. Drigu exhibits a high monk ratio due to its very low carrying capacity. However, the model is based on barley cultivation, and therefore the pastoral economy is not captured here. It is also important to understand if a few larger monasteries in an area did more to increase local monk and nun ratios than numerous small monasteries and hermitages; however, it is still impossible to locate each of the 1413 monasteries documented for most of Central Tibet, so this important question still remains unanswered. Four monasteries housed over 1000 monks, namely the Three Seats (Sera with 5000, Drepung with 6000, and Ganden with 2800), as well as Taklung monastery in Lhundrub dzong with 3340 monks. And, 185 monasteries housed over 100 monks each, or about ten percent of the total sites.

A particularly important finding of this study shows that nuns actually outnumbered monks in four peripheral dzong along the Himalaya; in Darma, Jomo, Kunam, and Kyimtong (Map 7). This situation has not been noted or discussed in the Tibetan studies field to date and is potentially of groundbreaking significance, and while more historical records and research is required to fully ascertain this phenomenon, it does seem plausible considering how many boys were drawn to the larger teaching monasteries in core areas such as Lhasa, especially when they already had an uncle or older brother there to sponsor them. Girls, however, were far less likely to have this option in becoming a nun and likely needed to find a nunnery closer to home and these local sites tended to be smaller. There were far fewer large nunneries in these 18 dzong of Central Tibet than monasteries, but where some larger nunneries existed there were, of course, correspondingly larger ratios of nuns. Though only four nunneries housed over 100 nuns each. The largest was Moling (Mo gling), a Drukpa Kagyu convent in Gongkar dzong with 215 nuns. To the east in Nedong dzong the convent of Sheldrakpa (Shal brag pa), a Nyingma establishment, housed 117 nuns. And further east in Chokhorgyal two Geluk establishments also housed relatively large numbers, one with 124 nuns (Sger dga' ldan dgon), and one with 106 nuns (Bkra shis gling).



Map 7: Comparable ratios of monks and nuns in the 18 dzong with available nun figures. Interestingly, in the four peripheral dzong of Darma, Jomo, Kunam, and Kyimtong nuns outnumbered monks.

Limitations

The model presented here was designed to add geographic variability and test the widely assumed monk ratio being one-quarter of the male population. Unfortunately, accurate and precise reconstructions of Tibet's population and economy during the historical period are lacking, let alone in useable data sets. Farmland was generalized here using modified, available data but does not reflect all types and distributions of crops that existed pre-1950. Also, backcasting potential populations is always subject to ignoring historical trends and large events. Still, without detailed demographic data, other attempts to estimate population, especially for more remote areas, are equally fraught with data problems.

G. Discussion

Tibet stands as a unique case of social complexity and stratification in world history. Throughout much of its history, Tibet supported a large clerical class dedicated to education and enlightenment without colonial extraction. Qualitatively, what Marx called the "primitive accumulation" of capital through the exploitation of the "lower classes" occurred in Tibet as it did in Europe; however, something underlying these politico-religious systems created a divergence. Whereas Feudalism and Manorialism perhaps could have, but did not, allow a significant proportion of Europe's population to move from agricultural work into academic pursuits, Tibet's mass monasticism did and remained sustainable over the long-term and resilient in the face of centuries of trade and political contacts with other cultures. In this sense, we should consider Tibet the "First Divergence" in human history supporting a relatively large non-agricultural proportion of its total population in educational pursuits. Even worker monks could usually attend an educational event each day, such as the first prayer session, or a daily prayer-tea, depending on their work schedule (Cabazon and Dorjee 2019).

The Western model of social development contends that mass education only follows industrialization yet Tibet was able to employ up to about twelve percent of its population as academics, effectively skipping the interim step. The governmental ideology of the Ganden Po-drang government under the Dalai Lama's ca. 1642 -1950 was to support as many people as possible to study Buddhism in the attempt to gain enlightenment. One possible reason why this was economically feasible was that many of the wage or profit-seeking occupations of Medieval Europe such as grain lenders and artistry were functionally performed by Tibetan clerics. For example, some monks worked as

grain keepers who strove to accrue profits for their corporate-like religious orders with interest-bearing loans in grain while taking a commission. The monasteries and the individual orders functioned in place of a stable, secular government, training and preparing individuals in crafts, arts, and religious rites that might have escaped them had they stayed on the family farm. A broad net was cast for talent and those talents cultivated for the financial stability and political legitimacy of their orders.

The elucidation of how Tibet developed in such ways is complex and beyond the scope of this paper to completely unravel; however, confirmation of the relatively large ratio of clerics compared to the population in Tibet and understanding of spatial demographic distributions begs the question of how Tibet achieved large-scale education and why the same phenomenon is not seen anywhere else before the 19th and 20th centuries. Theories of linear social development should be expanded to include several possibilities or bifurcation points that reflect adaptations such as mass monasticism in Tibet. The variables and dynamics that led to demographic and economic stability through monastic life on the Plateau will be better understood through such further research.

H. Conclusion

This paper presented a land-use and consumption model that estimated the historical population of Tibet by sub-region and replicated the assumption that clerics constituted a historically significant proportion of the Tibetan population as compared to a recovered clerical census. Modeled population distribution largely matched China's 1990 census distribution though some differences were detected. Further, the spatial model disaggregated the results and revealed geographic variation, clustering, and special cases where population density was not clearly synonymous with clerical populations.

Most importantly, this study revealed significant geographic variation to the proportions of monks and nuns in Tibet historically. The often guessed-at figure in scholarship that monks comprised a quarter of the males or about 12 percent of the total population should now be generalized at 9 percent. And, it should be recognized nuns also comprised a significant percentage of the total population at about 3 percent. Furthermore, in some peripheral regions, nuns actually outnumbered monks. In fact, it would be more accurate for studies to acknowledge the large role women played in Tibet's religious life too and refer instead to a general clerical proportion of both nuns and monks that comprised about 12 percent of the total population.

Confirmation of a large clerical class focused on study and enlightenment seems at first glance to be incredibly taxing for a pre-modern society and raises questions about how such a divergence from the rest of the world in terms of social organization was possible or sustainable. However, traditional cultural practices and social norms led to the Tibetan population remaining relatively stable while supporting mass monasticism. Adaptively, clerics took on functional roles in the economy, whether it be labor or investment, and therefore supported agricultural sustainability and growth while also performing their religious duties and pursuing advanced education. And, this socioeconomic system clearly functioned across Tibetan society as a whole as seen in comparably high levels of monasticism in all parts of Tibet, such as Ngari, Kham, and Amdo, and it would be highly informative for both Tibetan studies and world history to expand this study's methodology to these regions based on the clerical census data for parts of Ngari and Kham not examined in this present study, and also similarly detailed historical listings of monasteries and monks in other parts of Kham and also for Amdo, to provide more regional comparisons.

Supplementary Materials

Replication data and the Python scripts used to prepare data and perform calculations can be found on Harvard Dataverse:
<https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/C7ZKCD>.

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The Newly Identified Saint Petersburg Manuscript of the Collection of Songs by the 6th Dalai Lama: the Text

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Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg)

Ghis paper presents, for the first time, the entire text of the unique manuscript Tib. 1000 kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM RAS), that contains a previously unknown version of the collection of songs ascribed to the 6th Dalai Lama. To be more precise, we have a fragment that covers a little more than one half of the original harmonica-style book of a small size (ca 19,5×9,5 cm) with the text written on both sides. A description of this manuscript and its contents is available in the paper Zorin 2020. I will only repeat here a few sentences that relates to codicological and textological aspects of the work with the manuscript.

The manuscript is made of paper that is presumably Tibetan. Only 23 folios are found, being added with one more separate folio that can be defined as a cover. Both the recto and the verso sides of the book start with the title that clearly defines the text as a biography of the 6th Dalai Lama, they are marked with words *mdun* (recto) and *rgyab* (verso), respectively. The text is neatly written in *dbu med* script. Most of the pages are numbered with Tibetan numerals written to the left of the text. The recto side of the fragment has 23 pages: pp. 1–11 + an unnumbered page¹ + pp. 12–21² + pp. 23; p. 22 is missing. The verso side also has 23 pages: an empty page³ + the title page without a number + pp. 38–53⁴ + an unnumbered page⁵ + pp. 54–55 + two unnumbered pages⁶ + p. 57; one page before p. 57 is missing⁷. Since the

¹ In the transliteration it is marked as 11bis. This page has the number 47 written mistakenly to the right of the text.

² On p. 21 the number 56 is also written to the right of the text; this wrong number is crossed out. Note that both numbers 47 and 56 are missing in the pagination of the book.

³ On the other side the title page of the recto side of the book is found.

⁴ Except number 47 which was skipped over (see the no. 2 on this page).

⁵ In the transliteration it is marked as 53bis.

⁶ In the transliteration the first of them is marked as 55bis, the second one as [56].

recto side lacks 13 pages (22, 24–36), we can tentatively assume that the verso side lacks corresponding 13 pages. If such a calculation is correct the complete manuscript consisted of 37 folios (36 + the cover) of which we have three fifths now. However, we do not know if the verso side had the text written up to its final page.

It is necessary to note that Tib. 1000 is only the third authentic record of the 6th Dalai Lama's songs found so far. The first of such records is the well-known block print produced by the Zhol Printery, in Lhasa, in the 19th century or even earlier. A copy was bought in Lhasa by Gombojab Tsybikov in 1900 or, more likely, in 1901 (Savitsky 1983: 103)⁸. The latter brought it to Saint Petersburg among numerous other books which were passed to the Asiatic Museum (currently, IOM RAS). The first full edition of the block print was made by Lev Savitsky (Savitsky 1983), although its text had been initially used by Yu Daoquan and Zhao Yuanren for their edition of the 6th Dalai Lama's songs (Yu Daoquan, Zhao Yuanren 1930)⁹. An earlier edition made by S. Ch. Das (Das 1915) could be based on another authentic source but, regretfully, the editor left no description of it and it is not yet discovered anywhere. Yu Daoquan and Zhao Yuanren combined the fifty-eight songs of the block print with additional seven songs found in the Das edition and one more song received from some Tibetan informants of the Chinese scholars. According to their enumeration, however, there were sixty-two pieces: nos. 15 and 17 were used twice and no. 50 thrice. Savitsky kept the order of songs suggested by Yu Daoquan and Zhao Yuanren but refused their complicated enumeration. Thus, he came to the number of sixty-six songs and it was later repeated by Per Sørensen (Sørensen 1990). However, since we do not have an authentic source for the added eight songs this last block should be regarded as just an appendix to the collection represented with the block print.

The second authentic record is a big manuscript found in Beijing and entitled simply as the *Collection of songs* (*Gsung mgur*). It is thanks to Sørensen that the manuscript that contains an introduction and 459 songs was largely introduced to the academia, although the Chinese scholars had known about it from the works by Zhuang Jing such as Zhuang Jing 1981. Using a poor quality copy of the manuscript,

⁷ The page is missing because p. 57 corresponds with p. 23 and we know that p. 22 is missing. In the transliteration this page is marked as [56bis].

⁸ In his travel journal Tsybikov wrote on April 13, 1901: "These days I count the pages of the bought books. Damned typographers. Many folios are missing" (Semichov 1957: 39). Savitsky interprets it as an evidence that he probably purchased the books not long before this record (Savitsky 1983: 103).

⁹ Yu Daoquan received a copy of the block print from some Tibetan who had come to Beijing from Lhasa.

Sørensen published its first full transliteration, but it is certainly desirable that the facsimile of the manuscript be published.

Tib. 1000 is closer to the Beijing manuscript than to the block print in regard of its contents but it is far from being identical with it, either. It has a completely different introduction (composed as an acrostic), much fewer songs (originally, no more than two hundred) and a series of additional songs among them. Thus, it is no exaggeration to call this manuscript a great textual monument, important for all scholars and lovers of the Sixth Dalai Lama's songs. I am planning to present a critical analysis of its contents later in a separate paper.

The following edition of the text consists of two parts.

1. The facsimile and diplomatic edition of each page of the manuscript. The latter intends to reflect all the details of the written text and does not correct it in any way.

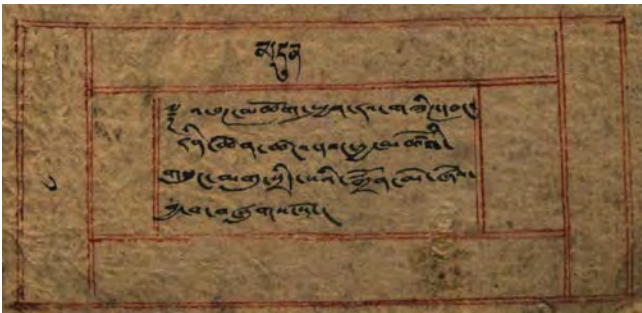
2. The simplified version where the introduction and each of the songs are arranged separately, all special signs omitted, abbreviated words replaced with their full forms, some obvious mistakes corrected. In addition, the discrepancies with the Beijing manuscript and the Lhasa block print are provided. However, it is not a critical edition. My suggestions concerning the further corrections of the text are to be presented in the next paper since they are inseparable from the analysis of the contents of the manuscript.

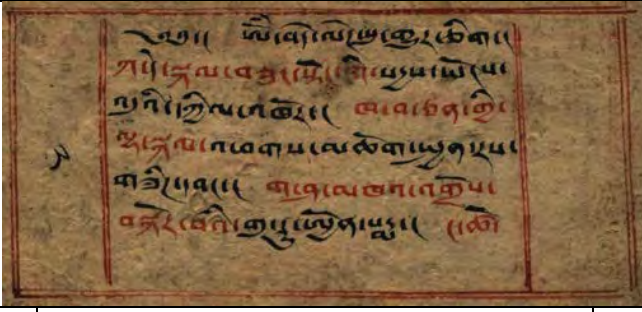
1. The facsimile and diplomatic edition

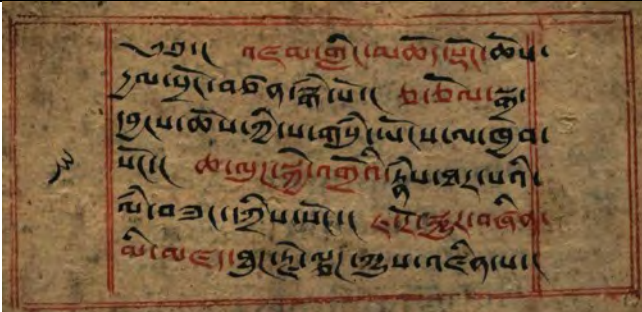
The transliteration here is based on Wylie system, with the following additions:

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@#	yig mgo
·	tsheg
	shad
—	blank space within the text area
-	abbreviation (bsdus yig)
‡	inverted ta
ṃ	ma written as a diacritic
⋮	dotted lines that highlight letters added above or below the line
{ }	such brackets contain letters added above or below the line
" "	quotes contain wrong letters highlighted with dots
?	illegible letters

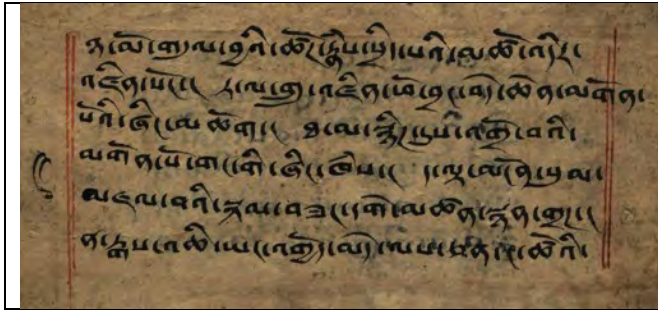
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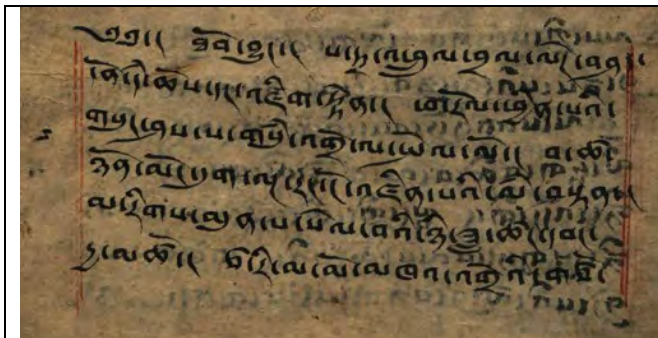
		
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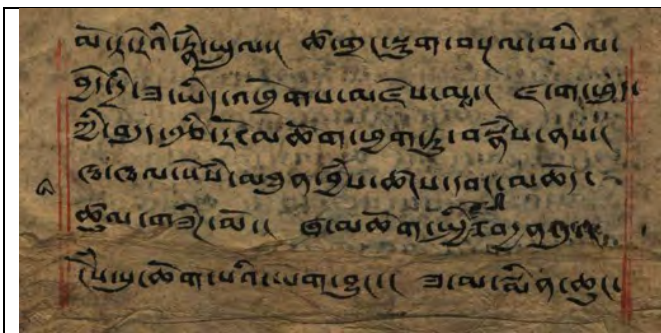
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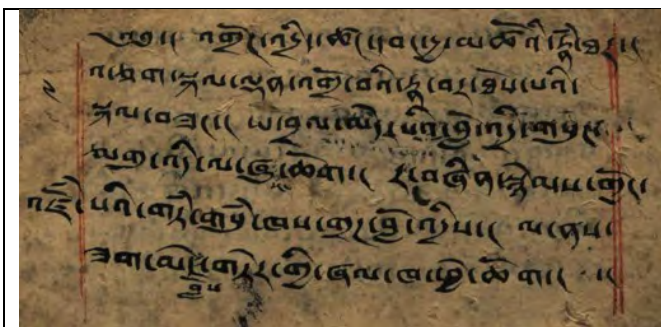
4	nya·mo·gdul·bya'i·tshoṭ·rnams·srid·pa'i·mtsho·dir· 'dzin·song _ta·la·glu·dzin·pho·byang·bde·chen·mgon· po'i·zhing·mchog _tha·ma·snyiṭ·dus·gro·ba'i· mgon·po·gang·gi·zhing·khamṣ _da·lta·mgon·sum· mjal·ba'i·skal·bzang·dge·mtshan·snyan·grat na·rgas·chi·yang·gyod·med·las·can·da·tsh'e'i·	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]



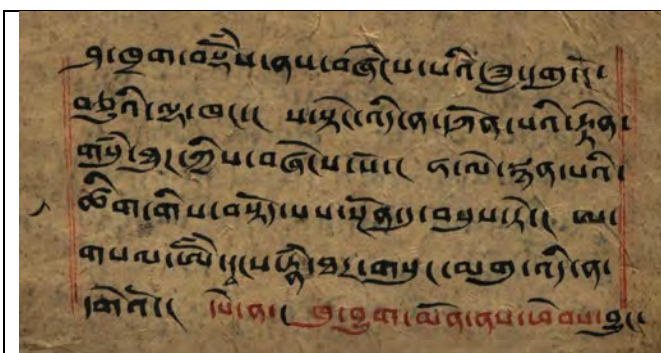
5	@# _thob·byung _pa·tra·phrul·bral·leṭ·bshad· don·dam·chos·dang·jig·rten _pha·rol·phyin·pa'i· gsung·shas·sa·gsum·gro·la·spel·lo _ba·tsha· nyon·mong·dug·lnga·tang·nge·dzin·pa'i·lam·bstan ma·rigs·mun·pa·sel·ba'i·nyi·zla·tshang·dbang· rgya·mtsho _tsa·ri·ma·mo·mkha'·gro'i·gtso·	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]



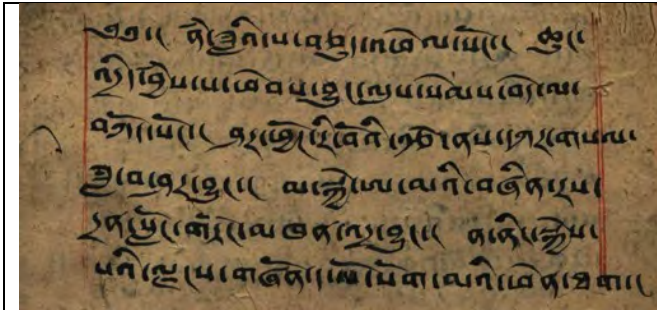
9	mo-ta-re'i-rnam-sprul _tsha-grang-sdug-bsngal-bsil-	[1]
	byed-dri-za-yid-'phrogs-mdzes-ma(s) _dza-ga-phud-	[2]
	kyi-bdud-rtsi-ro-mchog-phyag-tu-bsnams-nas	[3]
	wa-wal-sems-mthun-byams-tshangs-dbang-mchod-	[4]
	tshul-gziṅ-mo _zha-mchog-spyi:'i-brgyan-du-	[5]
	doms-su-chog-pa'i-lag-byung _za-ma-smin-chung-	[6]



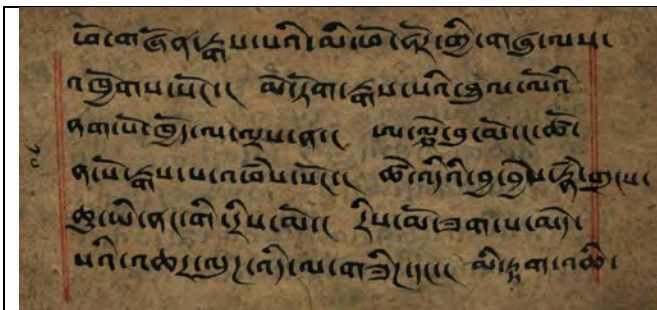
7	@# 'groṭ-'drid-tshang-dbang-rgya-mtsho'i-rnam-thar	[1]
	'a-cag-skal-ldan-'gro-ba'i-rna-bar-thos-pa'i-	[2]
	skal-bzang _ya-bral-med-pa'i-blo-'dri-gsung-	[3]
	mgu-'di-la-zhu:'s-chog _ra:'ng-bzhin-snyems-gyong-	[4]
	'dzom-pa'i-gtam-gsum-khas-graṭ-blo-'dris _la-nas-	[5]
	zag-med:(blos)-gter-gyi-zhal-kha-phye-chog _	[6]



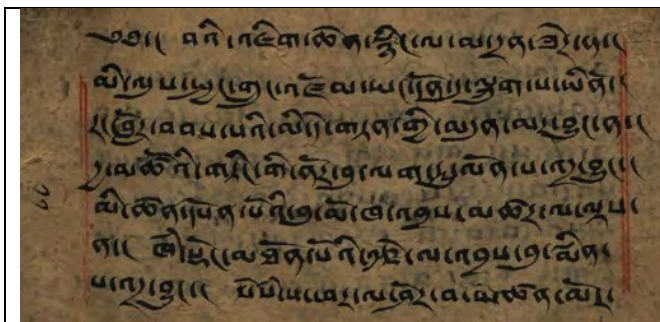
8	sha·khrag·bsdoms·nas·bzhengs·pa'i·zla·dgu·de· bcu'i·lha·khang _sa·steng'·di·na·dkon·pa'i·rten· gsuṃ·thuṭ·kyis·bzhengs·so _ha·le·snyan·pa'i· tshig·gis·bstod·pas·sngon·du·bsus·te _a· gsal·om·dwangs·rnam·thar·gsung·mgu'·di·na· dge'o _dpe·na _khu·byug·mon·nas·phebs·byung·	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]



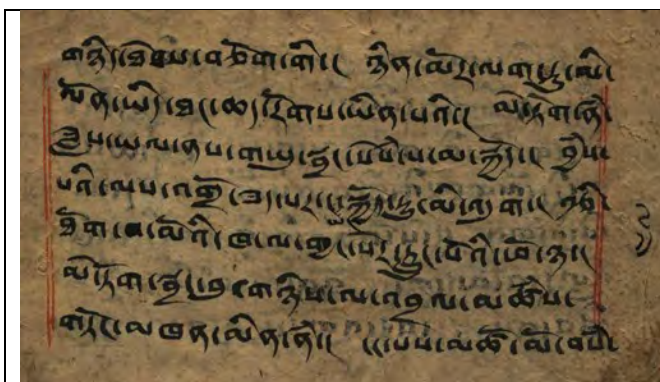
9	@# _nam·zla'i·sa·bcud'·phel·song _chung· 'drid·byams·pa·phebs·byung·lus·sems·bde·la· bkod·song _shar·phyoṭ·ri·bo'i·rtse·nas·dkar·gsal· zla·ba·shar·byung _ma·skyes·a·ma'i·bzhin·ras dran·slong·gtong·mkhan'·dra·byung _na·ning·skyes· pa'i·ljangs·gzhon·da·lo·sog·ma'i·phen·thag	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]



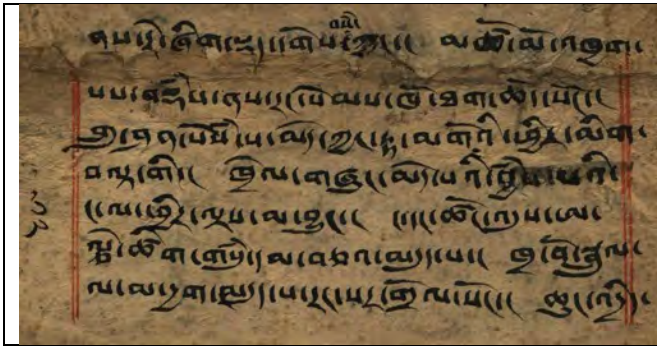
10	pho·gzhon·rgas·pa'i·mi·pho·hor·gyi·gzhu·las· 'khyogs·song _me·tog·rgas·pa'i·thul·lo'i nag·po·khyod·la·ltas·na _a·lce·bu·mo·nga·tsho· na·so·rgas·pa'·phams·song _tshe'·di'i·bya·byes·rnam· grangs· chu·yi·nang·gi·ris·mo _ris·mo·zag·pa·med· pa'i'·char·luṭ'·di·la·gzit·dang _mi·rtag'·chi·	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]



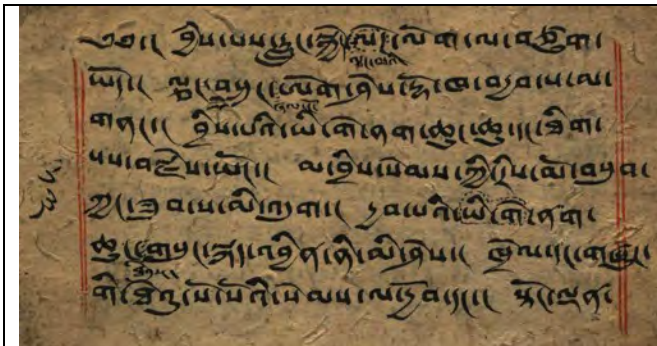
11	@# _ba'i'jig-chen-snying-la-ma-dran-zer-na	[1]
	mi-lus-spyang-grung'dzom-yang-don-du-lkug-pa-yi-no	[2]
	rang-blor-babs-pa'i-mi-de-gtan-gyi-mdun-mar-byung-na	[3]
	rgya-mtsho'i-gting-gi-nor-bu-lag-tu-lon-pa'dra-byung	[4]
	mi-chen-dpon-po'i-bu-mo-kha'bras-mtshar-la-ltas-na	[5]
	_kham-sdong-mthon-po'i-rtse-la'bras-bu-smin-pa'dra-byung	[6]
	_sems-pa-phar-la-shor-ba-mtshan-mor-	[7]



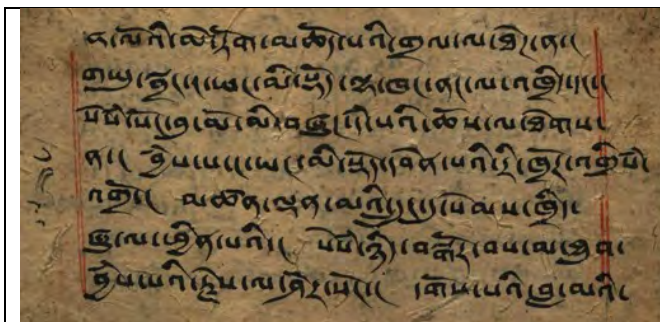
[1bis]	gnyid-thebs-bcog-gi _nyin-mor-lag-tu-mi-lon-yid-thang-chad-rogs-yin-pa'i	[1]	47
	_me-tog-nam-zlas-yal-nas-g.yu-sbrang-sems-pa-ma-skyod	[2]	
	_byams-pa'i-las'gro-zad-par-nga: {yang}-skyod-rgyu-mi'dug	[3]	
	_rtsi-thog-ba-mo'i-kha-la-gyang-ser-rlung-po'i-pho-nya	[4]	
	me-tog-sbrang-bu-gnyis-la'bral-mtshams_gtong-mkhan-min-nam	[5]	
	_ngang-pas-mtsho-mo-bsam-	[6]	
		[7]	



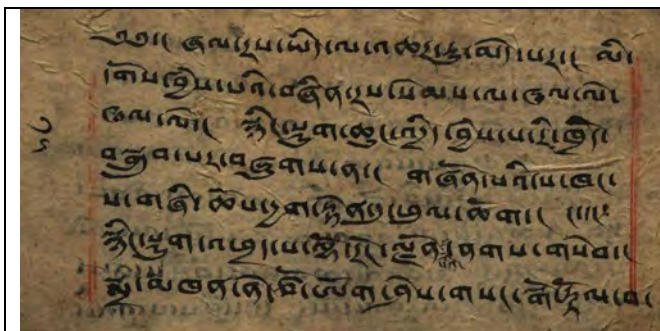
12	nas-re-zhig-sdad-dgos-{:bsam-}kyang _mtsho-mo-'khyag-	[1]
	pas-bsdams-nas-rang-sems-kho-thag-chod-song	[2]
	gru-shan-sems-pa-med-kyang-rta-mgo'i-phyir-mig-	[3]
	blta-gi _khrel-gzhung-med-pa'i-byams-pa'i-	[4]
	nga-la-phyir-ltas-ma-byung _nga-dang-tshong-'dus-a-	[5]
	lce-tshig-gsum-dam-bca'mdud-pa _khra-bo-sbrul-	[6]
	la-ma-rgyag-mdud-pa-rang-sar-grol-song _chung'drid-	[7]



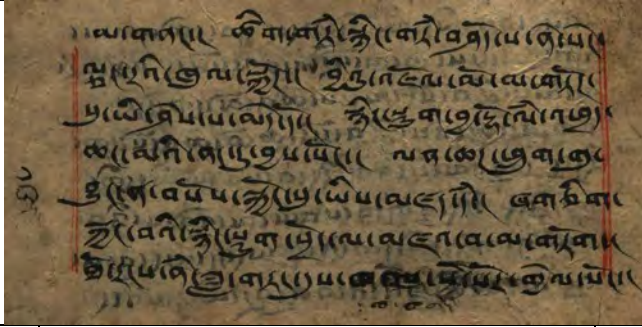
13	@# _byams-pas-rlung-skyed-'leṅ-{:lcam-ma'i-}log-la-	[1]
	btsug-	[2]
	yod _lcam-bsrung-{:zhal-ngo-}og-shes-rdo-kha-brgya	[3]
	b-pa-ma-	[4]
	gnang _bris-pa'i-yi-ge-nag-chung-chu-dang-thig-	[5]
	pas-brdzes-yod _ma-bris-sems-kyi-ris-mo-bsub-	[6]
	kyang-zub-sa-mi-'dug _rgyab-pa'i-'yi-ge-'nag- chung-{:thi'us-}gsung-skad-'byin-ni-mi-shes _khrel-	[7]

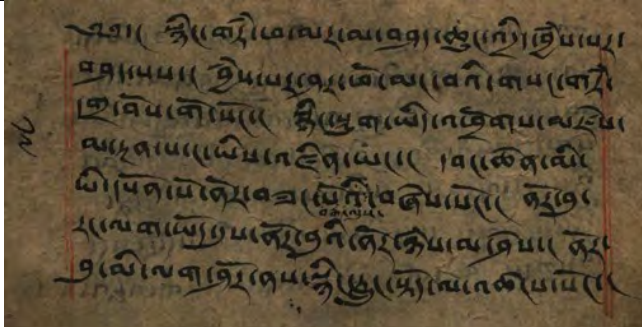


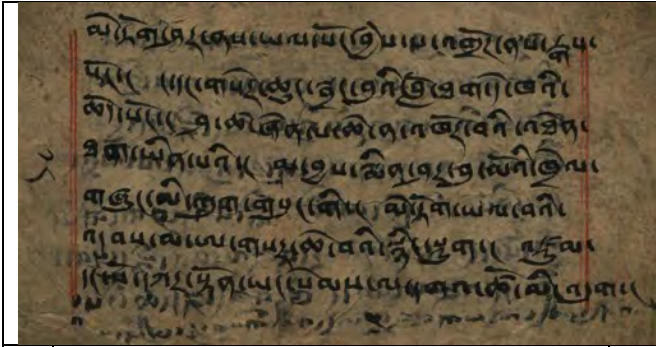
14	ha-lo'i-me-tog-mchod-pa'i-gral-la-thet-na _	[1]
	g.yu-sbrang-nga-yang-mi-sdod-lha-khang-nang-la-khrid-	[2]
	dang	[3]
	sems-song-bu-mo-mi-bzhuṭ-dam-pa'i-chos-la-thegs-	[4]
	na _byams-pa-nga-yang-mi-sdod-dben-pa'i-ri-khrod-	[5]
	'grims-	[6]
	'gro _mtshan-ldan-ma'i-drung-du-sems-khrid- _	[7]
zhu-la-phyin-pa'i _sems-nyid-bsgor-bas-ma-thub-		
byams-pa'i-rjes-la-shor-song _dgos-pa'i-bla-ma'i-		



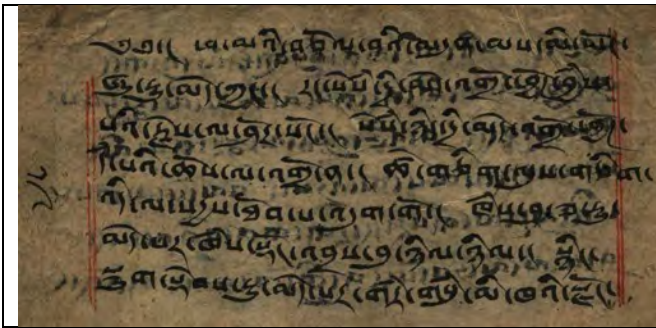
15	@# _zhal-ras-yid-la-'char-rgyu-med-par _mi-	[1]
	dgos-byams-pa'i-bzhin-ras-sems-la-wal-le-	[2]
	wal-le _snying-sdug-chung-'drid-byams-pa-ri-khrod- _	[3]
	bsgrub-par-bzhugs-na _gzhon-pa'i-sa-khang-	[4]
	sa-gzhi-chos-rgyag-rten-du-phul-chog _nga-dang- _	[5]
	snying-sdug-'phrad-pa-lho-rong-ljon-{:pa'i}nags-gseb	[6]
	smra-mkhan-ne-tso-og-shes-gsang-sgo-rtol-ba-	[7]

		
16	ma-gnang _tshig-gtam-snying-gtam-bshod-sa-ne-seng- lcang-ra'i-khul-skyoṭ _byi'u-'jol-mo-ma-gtoṭ- su-yi-shes-pa-med-do _snying-sdug-bya-rdo-lam- 'phrad-	[1]
	chang-ma'i-nang-du-byas-song _lan-chaṭ-phrug-gu- byung-na-bsos-skyong-su-yis-mdzad-dam _zhag-cig- skyang-ba'i-snying-sdug-srod-la-mja'-'ba-ma-gtog	[2]
	tho-rangs-nam-zla-gtang-dus-??:[kha-cags]-so-sor-gyel- song	[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]
		[7]

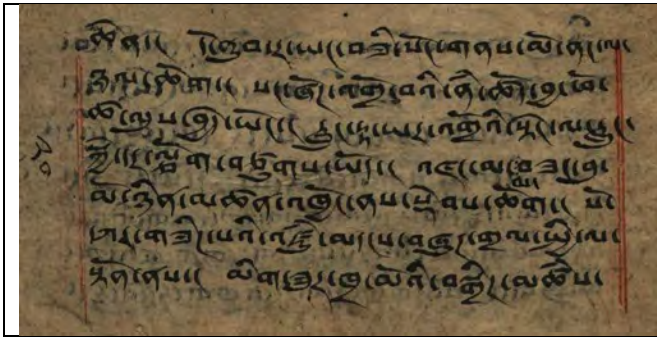
		
17	@# _snying-gtam-pha-mar-ma-bshad-chung-'drid- byams-par- bshad-pas _byams-par-shar-pho-mang-ba'i-gsang-gtam- dgra-bos-go-song _snying-sdug-yid-'phrogs-mdzes- ma-rngan-pa-nga-yis-'dzin-yang _dbang-chen-mi- yi-dpon-po-nor-bzang-"po'i" (brgya-lus-):bzhes-song _ nor-bu- rang-lag-yod-dus-nor-bu'i-nor-nyams-ma-shes _nor- bu-mi-lag-shor-nas-snying-rlung-stod-la-'tshangs-song	[1]
		[2]
		[3]
		[4]
		[5]
		[6]
		[7]



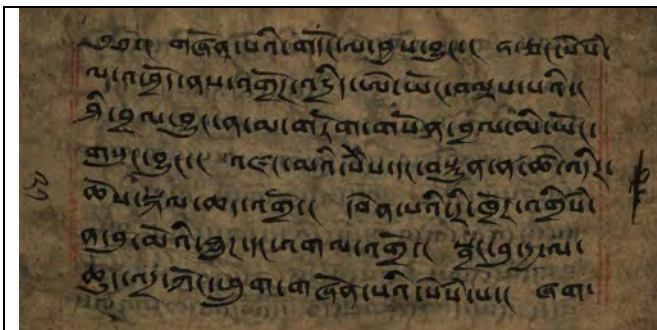
18	me-tog-shar-nas-yal-song-byams-pa'groṭ-nas-rgas-	[1]
	song _nga-dang-gser-chung-sbrang-bu'i-blo-thag-	[2]
	de-kha'i-	[3]
	chod-song _sha-tsha-zhen-pa-che-na'khor-ba'i'then-	[4]
	thag-yin-pa'i _ma-byas-rmin-shar-bu-mo'i-khrel-	[5]
	gzhung-mi'dug-gsung-gis _me-tog-yal-ba'i'_	[6]
	'dabs-ma-a-gsar-che-ba'i-snying-sdug _dzum-	[7]
dang-so-dkar-ston-yang-sems-la-dga'tsho-mi'dug		



19	@# _pha-ma'i-bcol-ba'i-mdun-mas-mi-yong-	[1]
	zhu-rgyu-med-kyang _rang-sems-dri-med'gro-phyot-	[2]
	byams-	[3]
	pa'i-rjes-la-shor-song _sems-nyid-dri-med'gro-phyot-	[4]
	dam-pa'i-chos-la'gro-na _tshe-gcig-lus-gcig-	[5]
	'di-la-sa-rgyas-thob-pa'dug-go _khaṃs-bu-za-rgyu-	[6]
	med-par-khaṃs-sdong'bras-bu-nyil-nyil _snying-_	[7]
sdug-sdebs-rgyu-med-par-gtam-gsum-mi-kha'i-rdzod-		

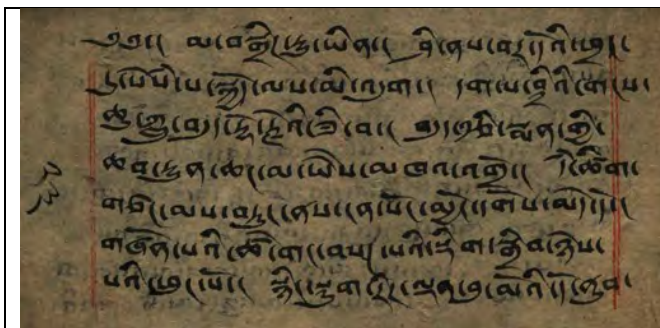


20	chen _do-nub-ra-yang-bzi-song-gnas-mo-nang-la-	[1]
	nyal-chog _sang-zhot-'gro-ba'i-nam-tshod-bya-pho-	[2]
	tsha-lus-byed-yong _lung-rta-yar-'gro'i-steng-la-rlung-	[3]
	skyed-dar-lcog-btsugs-yod _dzang-ma: {ma-}bzang-bu	[4]
	mo-nyin-mtshan-'khyong-nas-sdebs-chog _so-	[5]
	dkar-gzit-pa'i-'dzum-mdangs-bzhuṭ-gral-spyi-la-	[6]
	ston-nas _mig-zur-khra-mo'i-bsgrit-mtshams	[7]



21	@# _gzhon-pa'i-gdong-la-byas-byung _ha-cang-sems-	[1]	56
	la-'phrod-nas-'groṭ-'drid-e-yong-bltas-pa'i	[2]	
	shi-bral-byung-na-ma-gtog-gson-bral-mi-yong-	[3]	
	gsung-byung _dzang-ma'i-sems-dang-bstun-na-tshe-	[4]	
	'dir-	[5]	
	chos-skal-chad-'gro _dben-pa'i-ri-khror-'grims-	[6]	
	na-bu-mo'i-thuṭ-dang-'gal-'gro _sbrang-bu-rgya-la-	[7]	
chung-'dra-kong-phrug-gzhon-pa'i-sems-pa _zhag-			

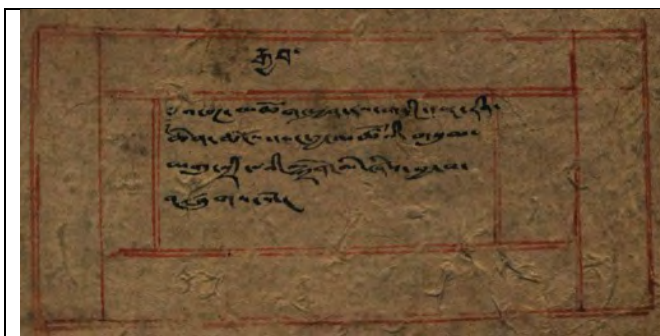
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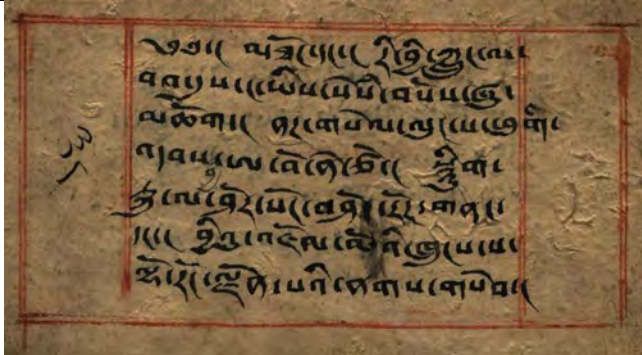
23	@# _ma-bsgrit·rgyu-yin _shi-nas-bar-do'i-phrang-	[1]
	du-sems·pa-skyod·las-mi-'dug _dag·pa-b-ri'i-gangs-	[2]
	chu-klu-bdud-rdo-rje'i-zi-ba _bdud-rtsi-smang-gyi-	[3]
	chab·rgyun-chang·ma-ye-es-mkha'-'gro _dam-tshig-	[4]
	gtsang-mas-btung-nas-ngan-song·myong·dgos-med·dol	[5]
	gzhon-pa'i-tshe-gang·bsaṭ·pa'i-sdig·sgrib-nyes-	[6]
	pa'i-phung·po _snying·sdug·rit·ldan-bu·mo'i-do-nub-	[7]

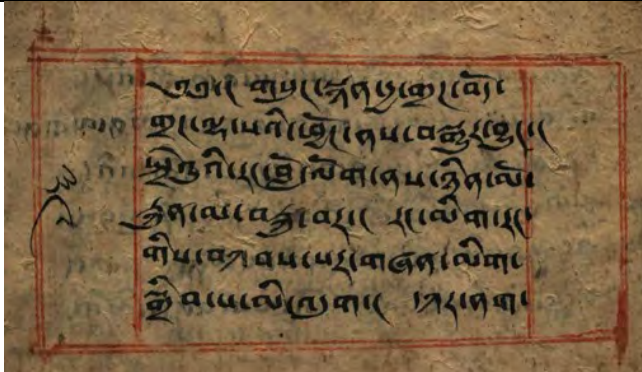
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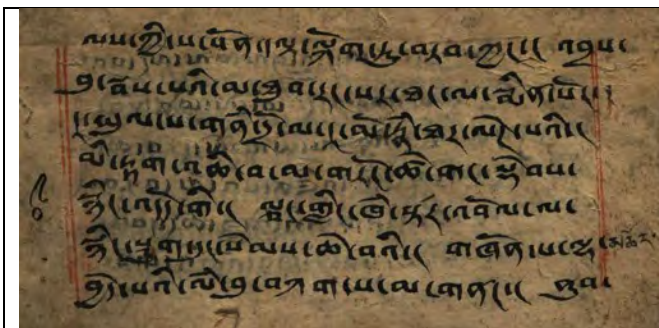
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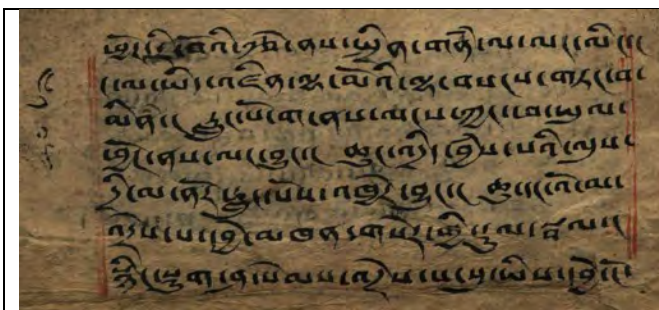
	rgyab	[0]
	&'phaṭ·mchog·spyas-ras-gziṭ·dbang-rin-	[1]
	chen-tshangs-dbang-rgya-mtsho'i-gsum(!)-	[2]
	mgu-srid·pa'i-sgron-me-zhes-bya·ba-	[3]
	bzhugs-so _____	[4]
		[5]

<p>38</p>		
	<p>@# _mthong-dang _ri-byi-klung-la-</p>	<p>[1]</p>
	<p>bab-dus-nga-yis-sems-bsos-zhu-</p>	<p>[2]</p>
	<p>mchog _naṅ-gsel-lung-pa-phu-gi-</p>	<p>[3]</p>
	<p>'dabs-ṡ[bya]a-be-ne-tso _snyi-ug-</p>	<p>[4]</p>
	<p>rku-la-shor-song-bshod-rot-gnang-</p>	<p>[5]</p>
	<p>dang _byi'u-'jol-mo'i-khrungs-sa- lho-rong-ljon-pa'i-nags-gseb </p>	<p>[6] [7]</p>

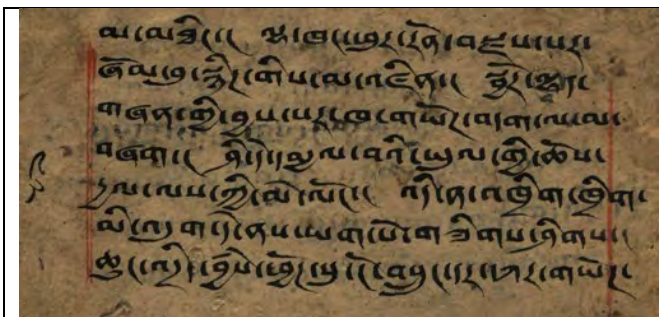
<p>39</p>		
	<p>@# _gsung-snyan-rgya-graṡ-bod-</p>	<p>[1]</p>
	<p>graṡ-lha-sa'i-phyogs-nas-bsgyur-byung </p>	<p>[2]</p>
	<p>spre'u'i-rang-blo-log-nas-nyin-mo-</p>	<p>[3]</p>
	<p>rkun-ma-brku-bar _rang-mig-rang-</p>	<p>[4]</p>
	<p>gis-bkabs-par-gzhan-mig- sgrib-pa-mi-'dug _dkar-nag-</p>	<p>[5] [6]</p>



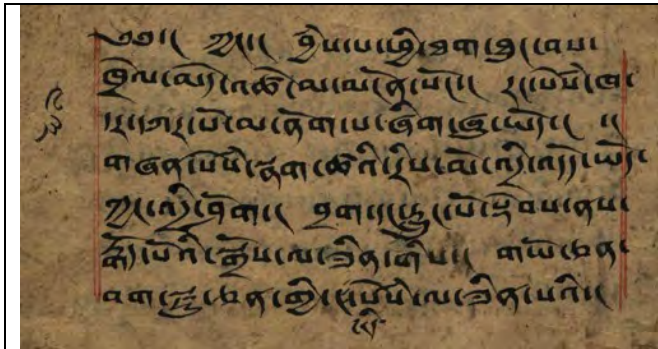
40	las-kyi-sa-bon-da+lta-lkog-tu-btab-kyang _'bras-	[1]
	bu-sbas-pa'i-ma-thub-rang-sar-thang-la-smin-song	[2]
	ra-yul-sa-gnam-dro-la-ra-mo-rnam-thar-let-pa'i	[3]
	mi-rtag-'chi-ba-ma-gtong-tshe-gang-stobs-	[4]
	snying-'dod-gi _lcang-gling-kham-l(?)tar-'bol-la-	[5]
	snying-sdug-dung-sems-che-ba'i _gzhon-pa-lha-mchod-	[6]
	byed-pa'i-lam-bu-bkag-pa-ma-gnang _nub-	[7]



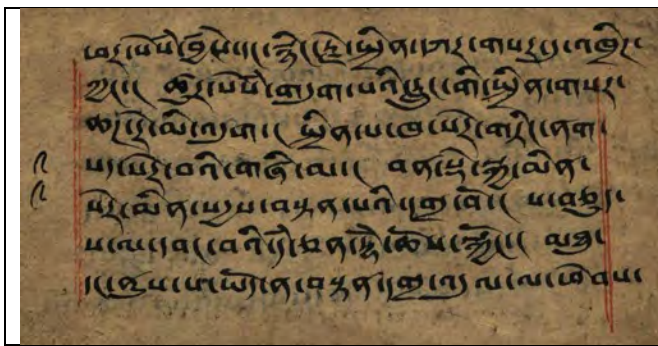
41	phyot-ri-bo'i-rtse-nas-sprin-gnam-la-lang-ling	[1]
	nga-la-yid-'dzin-lha-mo'i-lha-bsangs-gtang-ba-	[2]
	min _rlung-po-ga-nas-langs-kyang-pha-yul-	[3]
	phyot-nas-lang-byung _chung-'drid-byams-pa'i-lus-	[4]
	dri-ma-nor-rlung-pos-'khyer-byung _chu-dang-'o-ma-	[5]
	'dres-pa-dbye-mkhan-gser-gyi-rul-sbal	[6]
	snying-sdug-sha-sems-'dres-pa-su-yis-dbye-do-	[7]



42	mi·mthing _lha·khang·phur·ron·brdzas·par·_	[1]
	zhom·bu·snyit·gis·ma·'dzin _sbyor·"lha"d{ba}·	[2]
	gzhan·gyi·byas·par·kha·g.yoṭ·bdag·la·ma·	[3]
	bzhag _shi·de·dmyal·ba'i·yul·gyi·chos·	[4]
	rgyal·las·kyi·me·long _'di·na·'khrig·khrig·	[5]
	mi·'dug·de·nas·yag·po·gzigs·shigs	[6]
	chung·'drid·byams·phyogs·su·ngo·bsrung·dar·dkar·g.yoṭ·	[7]



43	@# _kyang _byams·pa·phyi·thag·thung·bas·_	[1]
	khrel·med·'tshé·ma·mngon·song _rang·sems·kha·	[2]
	dar·dkar·po·ma·nog·pa·zhig·zhu·yod _	[3]
	gzhan·sems·snag·tsha'i·ris·mo·'dri·'dod·yod·	[4]
	kyang·'dri·shog _brag·dang·rlung·po·stobs·nas·	[5]
	rgod·po·'i·sgros·la·zin·gis _g.yo·can·	[6]
	bag·rdzu·can·gyi·nga·: {yi}sems·la·zin·pa'i _	[7]



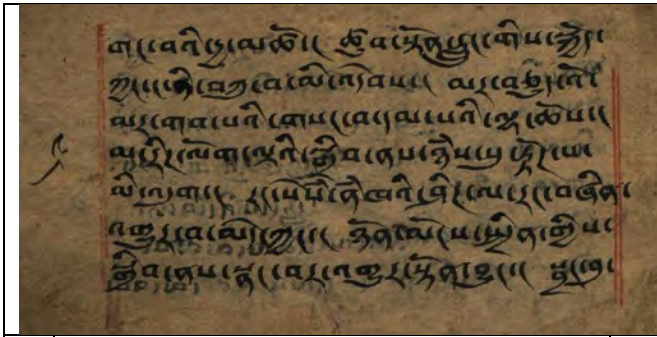
44	phar·sems·byams·dang·snying·rje·sprin·dkar·gsar·du·	[1]
	'khrīṭ·	[2]
	kyang _tshur·sems·gdug·pa'i·rlung·gi·sprin·gsar·	[3]
	chat·re·mi·'dug _sprin·pa·kha·ser·gting·nag·	[4]
	sad·ser·ba'i·gzhi·ma _ban·sde·skya·min·	[5]
	ser·min·sa·rgyas·bstan·pa'i·dgra·bo _sa·bcud·	[6]
	sa·la·dbang·ba'i·dam·can·rdo·e·chos·skyong _mthu·	[7]
dang·nus·pa·yod·na·bstan·dgra·'dul·la·phebs·	[7]	

45
 །། ལྷུ་ཡི་ཤེས་པ་ལོ་ཡུལ་རྒྱུ་ལོ་ཤིང་།
 ལེ་ལུ་མེ། ལི་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 འཇིག་པོ་ལོ་ལེ་ལེ། ཡུ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ཡུ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལྷུ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།

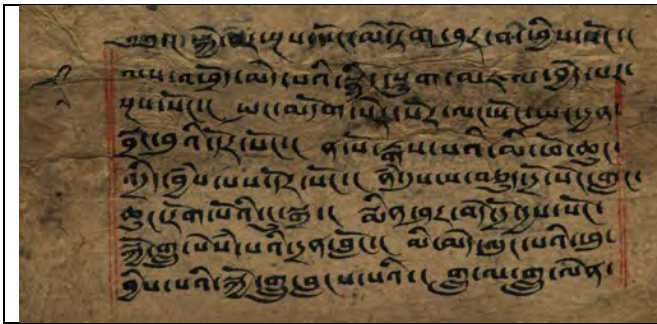
45	dang _rlung-po-nang-nas-langs-par-sgo-cha-phyi-	[1]
	la-ma-rgyag _mi-kha-thal-ba'i-bu-yug-sang-	[2]
	ba'i-dus-ni-mi-'dug _dus-gsum-tham-d-mkhyen-	[3]
	pa-drin-can-rtsa-ba'i-bla-m _spyi-gtsug-nyi-zla'i-	[4]
	gdan-la-'bral-med-brtan-par-bzhut-shigs	[5]
	chu-lbu-mig-ngor-shar-ba'i-ma-dag-snang-ba'i-dri-	[6]
	ma _'gal-'khrul-nongs-pa-ci-mchis-	[7]

46
 །། ལྷུ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།
 ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ། ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ་ལེ།

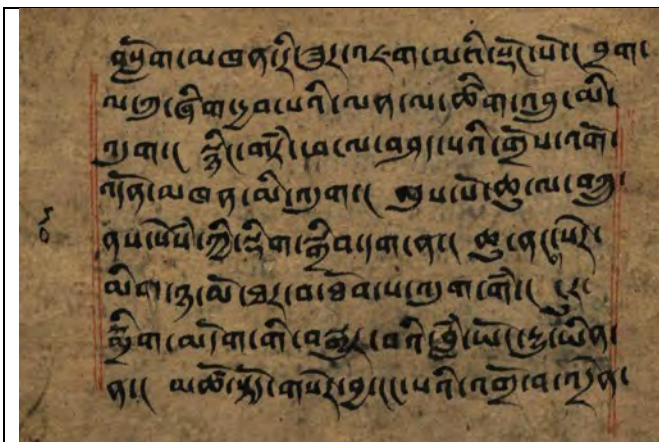
46	@# _ye-es-spyan-lam-bshaṭ-so _gangs-dkar-	[1]
	shel-la-skyes-pa'i-seng-lce-dkar-mo-'o-ma _	[2]
	ro-bcud-che-na-grag-nas-snod-kyi-ma-mchun-	[3]
	zer-gyis _gnas-gsum-zhing-na-bzhugs-	[4]
	pa'i-ma-dang-ye-es-mkha-'gro _snying-nas-	[5]
	gsol-ba-btab-po-thuṭ-rje-lcaṭ-kyus-bzung-	[6]
	zhig _yon-tan-sbas-pa'i-gang-zag-nor-bu-	[7]



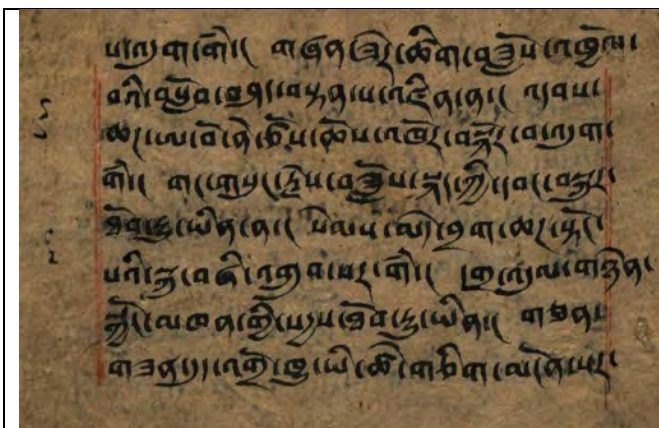
48	gang·ba'i·rgya·mtsho _tshub·ston·rlung·gis·skyod·	[1]
	kyang·nga·ni·bku·ba·mi'·debs _mar·bcud'·o·	[2]
	mar·gab·pa'i·gsang·ba·dam·pa'i·lha·chos	[3]
	ma·rit·log·lnga'i·sgrib·nas·nyams·su·rtot·pa·	[4]
	mi'·dug _rang·sems·nam·kha'i·shit·la·rang·bzhin·	[5]
	'gyur·ba·med·kyang _nyon·mongs·sprin·gyis·	[6]
	sgrib·nas·snang·bar'·gyur·ston·byung _sbrang·bu·	[7]



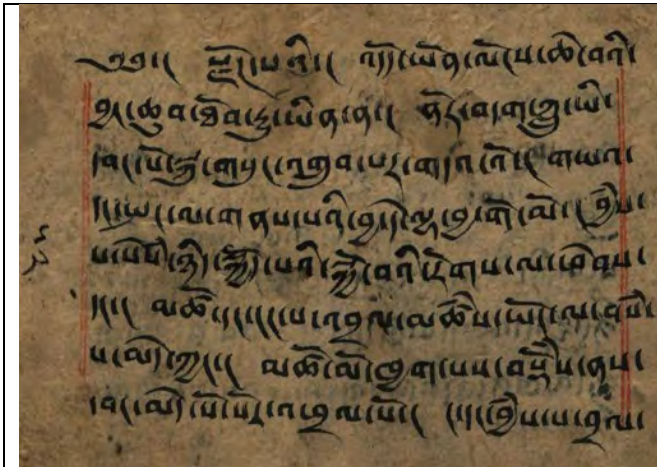
49	@# _skye·bar·sngas·song·me·tog·shar·ba·phis·song	[1]
	las'·phrod·med·pa'i·snying·sdug·mjal·byed·par·	[2]
	sngas·song _spang·mdog·ser·por·lang·song·spang·	[3]
	rgyan·	[4]
	sbrang·bu'i·dor·song _na·so·rgas·pa'i·mi·pho·chung·	[5]
	'drid·byams·pas·dor·song _nam·dus·sa·bcud·dro·song·	[6]
	glang·	[7]
	chung·rog·po'i·ngu·sgra _smin·shar·bde·dro·rgyas·	[8]



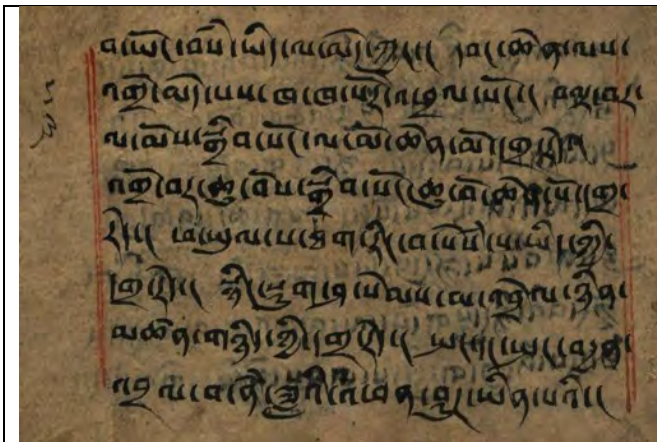
50	bslog-mkhan-ri-zur'jag-ma'i-sdong-po _brag-	[1]
	la-ku-zhig-rgyab-pa'i-lan-la-tshig-'bru-mi-	[2]
	'dug _snying-gtam-pha-la-bshad-pa'i-gros-'go-	[3]
	'don-mkhan-mi-'dug _lus-po-chu-la-bkru-	[4]
	nas-sems-kyi-sdig-sgrib-dag-na _chu-nang-{:g}ser-	[5]
	mig-nya-mo-thar-ba-thob-pa-'dug-gam _ngur-	[6]
	smrig-mdog-gi-bsgyur-ba'i-bla-m-yong-rgyu-yin-	[7]
	na _mtsho-stod-gser-bya-ngang-pa'i-'gro-ba-'dren-	[8]



51	pa-'dug-gam _gzhan-zer-tshig-bzlos-'khyol-	[1]
	ba'i-bslob-bshad-bstan-pa-'dzin-na _'dabs-	[2]
	chaṭ-a-bo-ne-tsos-chos-'khor-bskor-ba-'dug-	[3]
	gam _gang-gsung-rjes-bzlos-skad-kyi-dbang-bskur-	[4]
	thob-rgyu-yin-na _sems-med-brag-chaṭ-stong-	[5]
	pa'i-sku-bzhi-'grub-par-gam _dgra-'dul-gnyen-	[6]
	skyong-mkhan-gyi-sa-rgyas-thob-rgyu-yin _gcan-	[7]
	gzan-dud-'gro-khyu-yi-tshe-gcig-mngon-par-	[8]

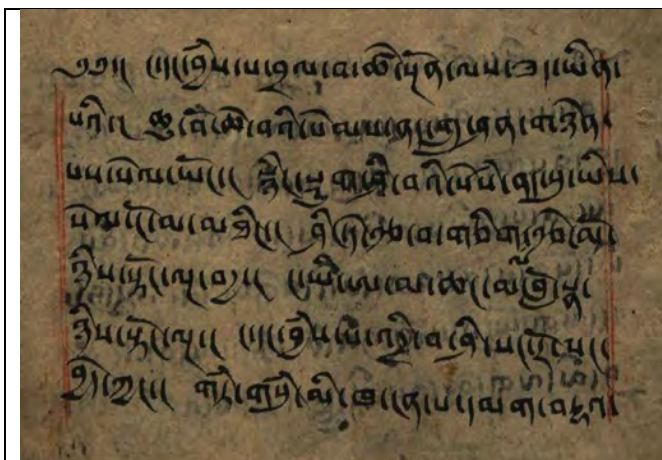


52	@# _rdzot·pa'i _'dod·yon·longs·che·ba'i·	[1]
	byang·chub·thob·rgyu·yin·na _nor·bdag·klu·yi·	[2]
	dbang·po·sku·gsung·'grub·par·gda·'o _g·ya·'	[3]
	dang·spang·la·gnas·pa'i·bya·de·lha·bya·go·mo byams·	[4]
	pa·sems·nyid·skyod·pa'i·skyo·ba'i·rogs·la·phebs·	[5]
	dang _mtsho·dang·ngang·pa·'bral·mtshams·yod·la·	[6]
	bsam·	[7]
	pa·med·kyang _mtsho·mo·khyag·pas·bsdoms·nas dbang·med·so·sor·'phral·song _nga·dang·byams·pa· bral·	[8]

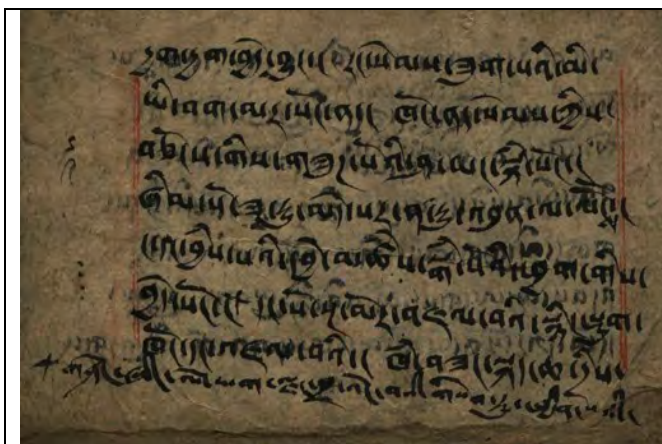


53	ba·yong·bsam·yid·la·med·kyang _dbang·chen·las·	[1]
	'gro·med·pas·kha·kha·sa·ro·'phral·song _blta·bar·	[2]
	la·mos·sgrib·song·la·mo·chen·mo·dgra·red _	[3]
	'gro·bar·chu·bos·sgrib·song·chu·bo·chen·po·dgra·	[4]
	red _pha·yul·sa·thag·ring·ba·sems·pa·yid·kyi·	[5]
	dgra·red _snying·sdug·sha·sems·ma·'brel·nyin·	[6]
	mtshan·gnyid·kyi·dgra·red _spang·dang·spang·brgyan·	[7]
		[8]

'bral-ba-naṃ-zla'i'-phan-b-duṭ-yin-pa'i _	[8]
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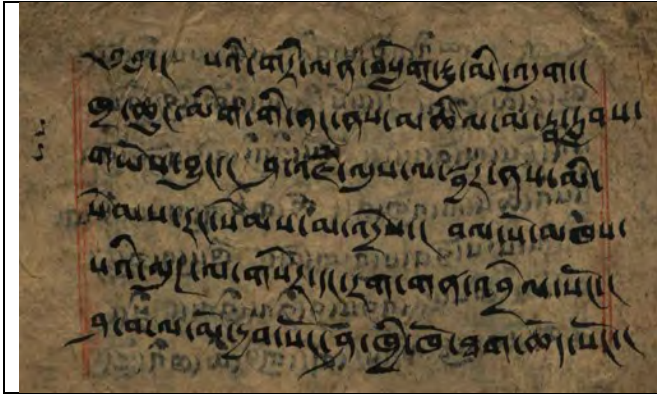


53bis	@# _nga·dang·byaṃs·pa·bral·ba·tshe·sngon·las·zad·yin·	[1]
	pa'i _chu·bo·che·ba'i·sems·nad·gru·shan·gnyen·	[2]
	pas·sel·yong _snying·sdug·shi·ba'i·sems·nad·su·yis·	[3]
	sel·ngo·ma·mthing _shing·de·rtsa·ba·gcig·: {la}rtse·mo·	[4]
	nyis·stong·lnga·brgya _nga·yi·a·ma·chang·ma·blo·sna·	[5]
	nyis·stong·lnga _nga·dang·byaṃs·pa·'dri·ba·shi·sang·	[6]
	ro·sang· byed·kyang _gtam·gsum·mi·kha·ngan·pa·dmag·brta·'	[7]

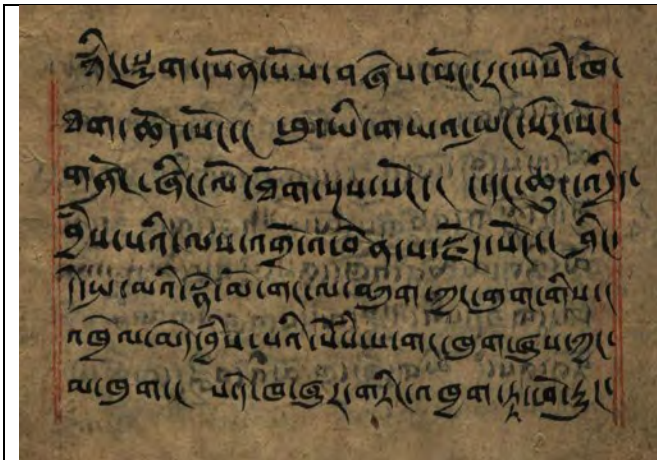


54	rgyag·rgyag·byed·byung _rang·sems·zug·pa'i·mi·_	[1]
	yi·bag·mar·song·na _khong·nad·sems·kyis·	[2]
	bcongs·gis·gzut·po'i·sha·yang·skam·song _	[3]
	zhim·po·za·rgyu·med·par·na·rgyu·'bun·la·long·s-o	[4]
	nga·dang·byaṃs·pa'i·dbye·mtshaṃs·sgam·po'i·phyag·gis·	[5]
	byed·song ×dang·po·snga·mor·'jal·ba'i·snying·sdug·	[6]

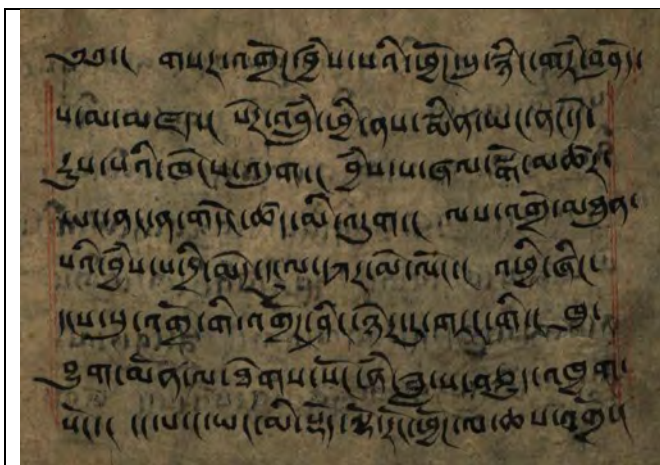
	khong·dang·'jal·ba'i _kham·bzang·skad·cha·dris·	[7]
	xgshong·zhing·lo·yag·ljang·sra·'ong·ba'i·gseb·tu·phyin·pa'i	[8]



55	@# _pa'i·gtam·lan·bslog·tu·mi·'dug	[1]
	khra·chung·mig·gi·nang·nas·mchil·ma·rba·rlabs·	[2]
	g·yos·byung _sha·'jam·lus·la·sbyar·nas·mi·	[3]
	sems·dang·sems·ma·'dres _bal·po·mkhas·	[4]
	pa'i·lut·la·gser·dang·rag·gan·'brel·song	[5]
	sha·ba·la·mo·rgyab·song·sha·khyi·kho·thag·chod·song	[6]

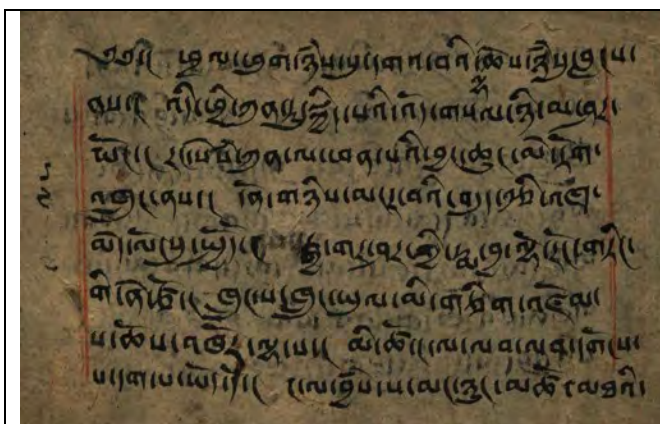


55bis	snying·sdug·dpon·pos·bzhes·song·rang·sems·kho·	[1]
	thag·chod·song _phu·yi·g·ya·'spang·por·song·	[2]
	gshong·zhing·lo·thog·sngas·song _nga·dang·chung·	[3]
	'drid·	[4]
	byams·pa'i·las·'gro·phen·pa·rjod·song _shing·	[5]
	de·spa·ma'i·sne·mo·gang·la·bkug·kyang·gug·gis	[6]
	'khrel·med·byams·pa'i·sems·pa·gang·khug·zhus·kyang·	[7]
ma·khug _sa·de·kha·zhur·gting·'khyag·rta·pho·rgyut·		



[56]	@# _gsar'groṭ-byams-pa'i-phyoṭ-su-snying-gtam-bshod-	[1]
	sa-ma-mdzad _ser'brum-phyi-nas-smin-yang-nang-	[2]
	de_	[3]
	rus-pa'i-khengs' dug _byams-pa-zhal-sgo-mtshar-	[4]
	yang-nang-na-gdong-tshad-mi'dug _las'gro-mthun-	[5]
	pa'i-byams-pa-dri-med-dngul-dkar-me-long _'phyi-	[6]
	zhing_	[7]
	dangs-su'gro-gi'groṭ-shing-nyer-du-gtang-gi _khu_	[8]

<Missing p. [56bis]>



57	@# _phral-phug-nyams-su-dga'ba'i: [ha]chos-nyam-	[1]
	su-blang-s-	[2]

nas | | _'di-phyi-kun-tu-skyid-pa'i'od-gsal-nyi-ma-shar-

yong _rang·sems·kun·la·phan·pa'i·byang·chung·me·tog·	[3]
'khrung·nas _don·gnyis·mngar·ba'i·bdud·rtsi·'dzad·	[4]
med·long·su·spyo·do _rgya·gar·shar·gyi·rma·bya·lho·	[5]
rong·gting·	
gi·ne·tso _khrung·sa·khrung·yul·mi·gcig·'dzom·	[6]
sa·chos·'khor·lha·sa _mi·tsho·nga·la·lab·lab·dgongs·	[7]
pa·dag·pa·yod·do _nga·la·byams·pa·mang·nyung·	[8]
mtsho·mtha'i·	

<Missing pp. 58–71?>

2. The simplified edition of the text supplied with lists of discrepancies with the other authentic sources

Abbreviations

- B Beijing manuscript according to Per Sørensen's edition¹⁰
 L Lhasa block print¹¹
 S additional songs borrowed from Sarat Das's edition, according to Lev Savitsky's enumeration

When two or more syllables in the text of Tib. 1000 have discrepancies with the other sources these syllables are italicized.

[The title]

[1] & 'phags mchog spyan ras gzigs dbang rin chen tshangs dbang rgya mtsho'i gsung mgu srid pa'i sgron me zhes bya ba bzhugs so | |

[The introductory acrostic]

[2/1] @# | | om bde legs su gyur cig | |

[2/2] ka de skal bzang stong gi sangs rgyas yongs [2/3] 'du'i dkyil 'khor | |

kha brtsan gyi [2/4] lha skal 'phags mchog spyan ras [2/5] gzigs dbang | |

ga sha mkha' 'gros [2/6] bskor ba'i gu ru o+rgyan pa+dma | |

nga tsho [3/1] 'dzam gling mchod sdong chos [3/2] rgyal srong btsan sgam po | |

ca col sgra [3/3] dbyangs chos kyi sa gsum yongs la khyab [3/4] song | |

¹⁰ In few points it is desirable that this edition be checked against the original manuscript.

¹¹ This edition has many orthographical mistakes which I do not correct in my notes. Its Buryat or Mongolian manuscript copy kept at the IOM RAS and fully published in Savitsky 1983 is free of most of them.

cha lugs skye 'gro'i rnam thar pa'i [3/5] lam bzang dkris song | |
 ja ro skyur bzhin [3/6] mi mdzad thugs rje lcags kyus 'dzin pa | |
 [4/1] nya mo gdul bya'i tshogs rnam srid pa'i mtsho 'dir [4/2] 'dzin
 song | |
 ta la glu 'dzin pho byang bde chen mgon [4/3] po'i zhing mchog | |
 tha ma snyigs dus 'gro ba'i [4/4] mgon po gang gi zhing khams | |
 da lta mngon sum [4/5] mjal ba'i skal bzang dge mtshan snyan
 grags | |
 [4/6] na rgas 'chi yang 'gyod med las can da tshe'i [5/1] thob
 byung | |
 pa tra 'phrul bral legs bshad [5/2] don dam chos dang 'jig rten | |
 pha rol phyin pa'i [5/3] gsung shas sa gsum 'gro la spel lo | |
 ba tsha [5/4] nyon mong dug lnga t[i]ng nge 'dzin pa'i lam bstan | |
 [5/5] ma rigs mun pa sel ba'i nyi zla tshang dbang [5/6] rgya
 mtsho | |
 tsa ri ma mo mkha' 'gro'i gtso [6/1] mo ta re'i rnam sprul | |
 tsha grang sdug bsngal bsil [6/2] byed dri za yid 'phrogs mdzes
 mas | |
 dza ga phud [6/3] kyi bdud rtsi ro mchog phyag tu bsnam nas | |
 [6/4] wa wal sems mthun byams¹² tshangs dbang mchod [6/5] tshul
 gzigs mo | |
 zha mchog spyi'i brgyan du [6/6] doms su chog pa'i lag byung | |
 za ma smin chung [7/1] 'grogs 'drid tshang dbang rgya mtsho'i rnam
 thar | |
 [7/2] 'a cag skal ldan 'gro ba'i rna bar thos pa'i [7/3] skal bzang | |
 ya bral med pa'i blo 'dri gsung [7/4] mgu 'di la zhus chog | |
 rang bzhin snyems gyong [7/5] 'dzom pa'i gnam gsum khas grags blo
 'dri | |
 la nas [7/6] zag med blos¹³ gter gyi zhal kha phye chog | |
 [8/1] sha khrag bsdoms nas bzhengs pa'i zla dgu de [8/2] bcu'i lha
 khang | |
 sa steng 'di na dkon pa'i rten [8/3] gsum thugs kyis bzhengs so | |
 ha le snyan pa'i [8/4] tshig gis bstod pas sngon du bsus te | |
 a [8/5] gsal om dwangs rnam thar gsung mgu 'di na [8/6] dge'o | |
 dpe na | |

[The songs]

[No. 1]

khu byug mon¹ nas phebs byung² [9/1] nam zla'i³ sa bcud 'phel⁴ song |
 chung⁵ [9/2] 'drid⁶ byams pa phebs byung⁷ lus sems bde la [9/3] bkod⁸
 song |

¹² One syllable is missing.

¹³ One syllable is missing.

B: No. 1; L: No. 46. ¹ L: chug mun; ² B: yong dus, L: yongs pa'i; ³ L: nam la'i; ⁴ B/L: phebs; ⁵ L: nga; ⁶ B: 'dris, L: dang; ⁷ B: 'phrad pas, L: phrad nas; ⁸ B/L: lhod por lang.

[No. 2]

shar phyogs ri bo'i rtse nas dkar gsal [9/4] zla ba shar byung |
ma skyes a ma'i bzhin¹ ras [9/5] *dran slong gtong mkhan 'dra byung*² |

B: No. 2; L: No. 1. ¹ B/L: zhal; ² B: dran long la 'dug[g]o, L: yid la 'khor 'khor byas byung.

[No. 3]

na ning skyes [9/6] *pa'i¹ ljangs gzhon² da lo sog³ ma'i ph[o]n thag⁴ |*
[10/1] pho gzhon rgas pa'i *mi pho⁵ hor gyi gzhu las* [10/2] *'khyogs song⁶ | |*

B: No. 3; L: No. 2. ¹ L: stabs pas; ² L/B: ljang zhon; ³ L: sog; ⁴ B: chog, L: lco; ⁵ B/L: lus po; ⁶ B: hor gzhu las skyo ba, L: lho gzhu las gyong ba'i.

[No. 4]

me tog rgas *pa'i¹ thul lo'i²* [10/3] *nag po khyod³ la ltas na⁴ | |*
a lce *bu mo nga tsho⁵* [10/4] *na so rgas pa 'phams song⁶ | |*

B: No. 4; L: —. ¹ yal ba'i; ² thu lu; ³ [de]; ⁴ bltas pas; ⁵ rgan mos sman shar; ⁶ bu mo [de] yang los byas.

[No. 5]

tshe 'di'i¹ bya byes² rnam grangs [10/5] *chu yi³ nang gi ris⁴ mo | |*
ris⁵ mo zag⁶ pa med [10/6] *pa'i 'char⁷ lugs 'di⁸ la gzigs dang | |*

B: No. 5; L: —. ¹ 'di; ² byed; ³ [yi]; ⁴ ri; ⁵ ri; ⁶ zad; ⁷ cha; ⁸ [de].

[No. 6]

mi rtag 'chi [11/1] *ba'i¹ 'jig chen² snying la³ ma dran⁴ zer na | |*
[11/2] *mi lus⁵ spyang grung⁶ 'dzom yang⁷ don du⁸ lkug pa yin no⁹ | |*

B: No. 6; L: —. ¹ ba; ² —; ³ nas; ⁴ +dang; ⁵ —; ⁶ lchang drung; ⁷ kyang; ⁸ la; ⁹ dang 'dra byung.

[No. 7]

[11/3] rang blor¹ *babs pa'i² mi de gtan³ gyi mdun mar byung na | |*
[11/4] *rgya mtsho'i gting gi⁴ nor bu lag tu⁵ lon pa⁶ 'dra⁷ byung | |*

B: No. 7; L: No. 3. ¹ B/L: sems; ² B: zug pa'i, L: song ba'i; ³ L: stan; ⁴ B/L: nas; ⁵ B/L: —; ⁶ B/L: +dang; ⁷ L: mnyam.

[No. 8]

[11/5] *mi chen dpon po'i bu mo kha 'bras mtshar la ltas* [11/6] *na | |*

kham sdong mthon po'i rtse la 'bras bu smin [11/7] pa 'dra byung | |

B: —; L: —.

[No. 9]

sems pa phar la shor ba¹ mtshan mor² [11bis/1] gnyid *thebs bcog gi*³ | |
nyin mor⁴ lag tu mi [11bis/2] lon yid thang chad rogs⁵ yin pa'i⁶ | |

B: No. 9; L: —. ¹ kyang; ² mo'i; ³ theb cog gis; ⁴ mo; ⁵ rog; ⁶ pa.

[No. 10]

me tog nam [11bis/3] zlas¹ yal nas² g.yu sbrang sems pa ma skyod³ | |
byams [11bis/4] pa'i las 'gro⁴ zad par⁵ nga yang⁶ skyod⁷ rgyu mi
'dug | |

B: No. 10; L: No. 7. ¹ B/L: zla; ² B/L: song; ³ B/L: skyo; ⁴ B/L: 'phro; ⁵
B: pa; ⁶ B/L: ni; ⁷ B/L: skyo.

[No. 11]

rtsi [11bis/5] thog ba mo'i kha la gyang¹ ser rlung po'i² pho³ nya | |
[11bis/6] me⁴ tog sbrang bu⁵ gnyis la⁶ 'bral mtshams⁷ [11bis/7] gtong⁸
mkhan *min nam*⁹ | |

B: No. 11; L: No. 8. ¹ B/L: rkyang; ² B: gi, L: gis; ³ L: po (sic); ⁴ L: ma
(sic); ⁵ B: ma; ⁶ B/L: kyi; ⁷ L: 'tshams; ⁸ B/L: byed; ⁹ B/L: los yin.

[No. 12]

ngang *pas mtsho mo bsam*¹ [12/1] nas re zhig sdad² dgos bsam³
kyang | |
mtsho mo 'khyag⁴ [12/2] *pas bsdams*⁵ nas *rang sems*⁶ kho thag chod
song | |

B: No. 12; L: No. 9. ¹ B: mo 'dam la chag, L: pa 'dam la chags; ² B/L:
sdod; ³ L: bsams; ⁴ B: khyag, L: dar; ⁵ L: kha bsgrigs; ⁶ B: re zhig.

[No. 13]

[12/3] gru shan sems¹ pa med kyang rta mgo'i² phyir³ mig [12/4]
blta⁴ gi⁵ | |
khrel gzhung med pa'i byams pa'i⁶ [12/5] nga la *phyir ltas ma*
*byung*⁷ | |

B: No. 13; L: No. 10. ¹ B: bsam; ² B/L: mgos; ³ B/L: phyi; ⁴ L: ltas; ⁵ B:
gis, L: byung; ⁶ B/L: pas; ⁷ B/L: phyi mig mi blta (L: lta).

[No. 14]

nga dang tshong 'dus a [12/6] *lce*¹ tshig gsum dam bca'² mdud³ pa | |
khra bo⁴ sbrul⁵ [12/7] la ma rgyag⁶ *mdud pa*⁷ *rang sar*⁸ grol song | |

B: No. 14; L: No. 11. ¹ B: bu mo, L: bu mo'i; ² B: pa'i, L: bca'i; ³ B/L: 'dud; ⁴ B: mo'i, L: bo'i; ⁵ L: 'grul; ⁶ L: rgyab; ⁷ B/L: —; ⁸ B: rang sa la, L: rang rang sa la.

[No. 15]

chung 'drid¹ [13/1] byams pas² rlung skyed³ lchang ma'i⁴ log⁵ la⁶ btsug⁷
[13/2] yod | |
lchang bsrung⁸ zhal ngo⁹ og shes¹⁰ rdo¹¹ kha¹² brgyab¹³ pa ma [13/3]
gnang | |

B: No. 15; L: No. 12. ¹ B: 'dris, L: 'bris; ² B/L: pa'i; ³ L: bskyed; ⁴ B: skye legs; ⁵ L: logs; ⁶ B: nas; ⁷ B: gtsug, L: btsugs; ⁸ B/L: srung; ⁹ L: a jo; ¹⁰ B: dba' shes, L: zha ngos; ¹¹ B: sdong; ¹² L: ka; ¹³ B/L: rgyag.

[No. 16]

bris pa'i¹ yi ge nag chung chu dang thig [13/4] pas brdzes yod² | |
ma bris sems ky³ ris⁴ mo bsub⁵ [13/5] kyang zub sa⁶ mi 'dug | |

B: No. 16; L: No. 13. ¹ L: pas; ² B: 'jig 'gro, L: 'jig song; ³ L: kyis; ⁴ B/L: ri; ⁵ B: bsrub, L: sub; ⁶ B: zubs (zub sa?), L: zub rgyu.

[No. 17]

rgyab pa'i¹ nag [13/6] chung thi'us² gsung skad 'byin³ ni mi shes | |
khrel dang gzhung [13/7] gi the'u⁴ so so'i sems la rgyob⁵ dang | |

B: No. 17; L: No. 14. ¹ L: pas; ² B: the'us; ³ B/L: 'byon; ⁴ B: the'us; ⁵ L: skyon.

[No. 18]

stong¹ ldan [14/1] ha lo'i me tog mchod pa'i² gral la thegs³ na | |
[14/2] g.yu sbrang nga yang mi sdod⁴ lha khang nang⁵ la 'khrid⁶
dang⁷ | |

B: No. 18; L: No. 15. ¹ B/L: stobs; ² B/L: —; ³ B: khang la thad, L: rdzas la phebs; ⁴ B/L: gzhon nu nga yang; ⁵ B/L: —; ⁶ B/L: khrid; ⁷ B: mdzod.

[No. 19]

[14/3] sems song bu mo¹ mi bzhugs dam pa'i² chos la thegs³ [14/4]
na | |
byams pa⁴ nga yang mi sdod dben pa'i⁵ ri khrod 'grims⁶ [14/5] 'gro | |

B: No. 19; L: No. 16. ¹ L: —; ² L: lta; ³ B: thad, L: phebs; ⁴ B/L: pho gzhon; ⁵ L: —; ⁶ B: la btang, L: la theg.

[No. 20]

mtshan ldan [bla]¹ ma'i drung du sems khrid² [6] zhu la³ phyin
pa'i⁴ | |

sems *nyid bsgor bas*⁵ ma⁶ thub [14/7] byams pa'i rjes⁷ la shor⁸ song | |

B: No. 20; L: 17. ¹ B/L: bla; ² L: 'khrid; ³ B/L: bar; ⁴ B/L: pas; ⁵ B: la sgom pas, L: pa sgor kyang; ⁶ L: mi; ⁷ L: phyogs; ⁸ B: langs

[No. 21]

*dgos pa'i*¹ bla ma'i [15/1] zhal ras yid la 'char² rgyu med par³ | |
mi [15/2] *dgos*⁴ byams pa'i bzhin⁵ ras sems⁶ la wal le [15/3] wal le⁷ | |

B: No. 21; L: No. 18. ¹ B: bsgom pa, L: sgom pa; ² L: char; ³ B/L: mi 'dug; ⁴ B/L: ma sgom; ⁵ B/L: zhal; ⁶ B/L: yid; ⁷ B: 'a le 'u le, L: wa le wa le.

[No. 22]

*snying sdug*¹ chung 'drid² byams pa ri khrod [15/4] *bsgrub par bzhugs*³
na | |

gzhon pa'i sa khang⁴ [15/5] sa gzhi⁵ chos rgyag rten du⁶ phul chog | |

B: No. 22; L: —. ¹ —; ² 'gris; ³: sku mtshams [de] la thad; ⁴ gang; ⁵ gzhis; ⁶ [de] la.

[No. 23]

nga dang [15/6] *snying sdug*¹ 'phrad² pa³ lho⁴ rong ljon⁵ pa'i nags
gseb⁶ | |

[15/7] smra⁷ mkhan ne tso⁸ og shes⁹ gsang sgo rtol ba¹⁰ [16/1] ma
gnang¹¹ | |

B: No. 23; L: No. 50. ¹ L: byams pa'i; ² B: phrad, L: sdebs; ³ L: —; ⁴ L: lhos¹⁴; ⁵ L: mun; ⁶ L: nal bseb; ⁷ L: smas; ⁸ long; ⁹ B: a shes, L: ma tog; ¹⁰ L: su dang gang gis; ¹¹ L: shes.

[No. 24]

tshig gtam¹ snying gtam bshod² sa ne seng³ [16/2] lchang ra'i khul
skyogs⁴ | |

byi'u 'jol mo ma gtogs⁵ [16/3] su yi shes pa med do⁶ | |

B: No. 24; L: —. ¹ gsum; ² bshos; ³ ne'u [g]sing; ⁴ sbug skyog; ⁵ rtogs; ⁶ dang gang gis mi shes.

[No. 25]

snying sdug¹ bya rdo lam 'phrad [16/4] *chang ma'i nang du byas*
song² | |

lan chags phrug gu³ [16/5] byung na bsos⁴ skyong su yis mdzad
dam⁵ | |

¹⁴ Perhaps, the letter *sa* had to be carved before *lho* to compose the word *sdebs sa* and complete the first verse (*rkang pa*).

B: No. 25; L: No. 28. ¹ L: thub; ² B/L: a ma chang mas sbyar byung; ³ B: phru gu, L: bu lon; ⁴ B: gso, L: 'tsho; ⁵ B: khye ras snang zhu, L: khyed ras gnang zhu.

[No. 26]

zhag [g]cig [6] *skyang ba'i*¹ snying sdug srod la mja'² ba ma gtoḡ³ | |
[16/7] tho rangs nam zla gtang⁴ dus *kha cags so sor gyel song*⁵ | |

B: No. 26; L: —. ¹ brkyangs pa'i; ² 'ja'; ³ gnang zhu; ⁴ btang; ⁵ 'bral mtshams byed pa los yin.

[No. 27]

[17/1] snying gdam *pha mar*¹ ma bshad chung 'drid² byams par [17/2]
bshad pas | |
byams par³ shar⁴ pho mang ba'i⁵ gsang⁶ gdam [17/3] dgra bos go
song | |

B: No. 27; L: No. 29. ¹ B: gzhan la; ² B: 'dris, L: 'br[i]s; ³ B/L: pa; ⁴ L: sha; ⁵ B/L: nas; ⁶ B: snying, L: bsang.

[No. 28]

snying sdug¹ yid 'phrogs² *mdzes* [17/4] *ma*³ rngan⁴ pa nga *yis 'dzin yang*⁵ | |
dbang chen mi [17/5] yi⁶ dpon po nor bzang brgya⁷ lus bzhes⁸
song | |

B: No. 28; L: No. 30. ¹ L: thub; ² B/L: 'phrog; ³ B/L: lha mo; ⁴ B/L: rngon; ⁵ B/L: ras zin kyang; ⁶ L: yis; ⁷ B/L: rgya; ⁸ B/L: 'phrog.

[No. 29]

nor bu [17/6] *rang lag yod*¹ dus nor bu'i nor nyams ma shes² | |
nor [17/7] bu mi lag³ shor nas⁴ snying rlung stod la 'tshangs⁵ song⁶ | |

B: No. 29; L: No. 31. ¹ B: lag nas yong, L: rang la yod; ² B/L: chod; ³ B/L: la; ⁴ B/L: dus; ⁵ B/L: tshang; ⁶ L: byung.

[No. 30]

[18/1] me tog shar nas yal song byams pa 'grogs¹ nas rgas [18/2]
song | |
nga dang *gser chung sbrang bu'i*² blo thag de kha'i³ [18/3] chod
song | |

B: No. 30; L: —. ¹ 'grog[s]; ² [g]ser byung bung ba'i; ³ khas.

[No. 31]

sha tsha zhen pa *che na*¹ 'khor ba'i 'then² [18/4] thag yin pa'i³ | |

ma byas rmin⁴ shar bu mo'i⁵ khrel [18/5] gzhung mi 'dug gsung
gis | |

B: No. 31; L: —. ¹ ches nas; ² then; ³ pa; ⁴ dman; ⁵ mos.

[No. 32]

me tog yal ba'i [18/6] 'dabs¹ ma a *gsar che ba'*² snying sdug | |
'dzum [18/7] dang³ so dkar *ston yang*⁴ sems la dga' tsho[r]⁵ mi
'dug | |

B: No. 32; L: —. ¹ 'dab; ² [g]sar zad pa'i; ³ [m]dang[s]; ⁴ bstan kyang; ⁵
tshor.

[No. 33]

[19/1] pha ma'i¹ bcol ba'i mdun mas mi yong [19/2] zhu rgyu med
kyang | |
rang sems *dri med 'gro phyogs*² byams [19/3] pa'i rjes la shor³ song | |

B: No. 33; L: —. ¹ mas; ² phra mo chung 'dris; ³ lang[s].

[No. 34]

sems *nyid dri med*¹ 'gro phyogs² [19/4] dam pa'i chos la 'gro³ na | |
tshe gcig lus gcig [19/5] 'di⁴ la sangs rgyas thob pa 'dug go | |

B: No. 34; L: No. 19. ¹ B/L: pa 'di la; ² B/L: 'gro; ³ B: song, L: phyin; ⁴
B: rang, L: nyid.

[No. 35]

khams bu za rgyu [19/6] med par¹ khams² sdong 'bras bu³ nyil
nyil⁴ | |
snying [19/7] sdug sdebs⁵ rgyu med par⁶ gtam gsum mi kha'i *rdzod*
[20/1] *chen*⁷ | |

B: No. 35; L: —. ¹ pa'i; ² kham; ³ bu'i; ⁴ nil nil (?); ⁵ 'grig; ⁶ pa'i; ⁷ rdzag
rdzag.

[No. 36]

do nub ra yang bzi¹ song gnas mo² nang³ la [20/2] nyal chog | |
sang zhogs⁴ 'gro ba'i nam tshod bya pho [20/3] tsha⁵ lus byed⁶
yong | |

B: No. 36; L: —. ¹ gzi; ² mo'i; ³ phrag; ⁴ zhog[s]; ⁵ [m]tsha[']; ⁶ gngang.

[No. 37]

rlung rta yar 'gro'i steng¹ la rlung [20/4] skyed² dar lcog btsugs³
yod | |
'dzang ma ma bzang⁴ bu [20/5] mo⁵ *nyin mtshan 'khyong nas sdebs*
*chog*⁶ | |

B: No. 37; L: —. ¹ thog; ² bskyed; ³ gtsug; ⁴ sangs; ⁵ mo'i; ⁶ mgron po la bos byung.

[No. 38]

so [20/6] dkar gzigs¹ pa'i 'dzum mdangs bzhugs gral spyi la [20/7] ston nas² | |
mig zur khra³ mo'i bsgrigs⁴ mtshams [21/1] gzhon pa'i gdong la *byas byung*⁵ | |

B: No. 38; L: —. ¹ lpags; ² bstan kyang; ³ phra; ⁴ sgril; ⁵ blta gis.

[No. 39]

ha cang¹ sems [21/2] la 'phrod² nas 'grog³ 'drid³ e yong bltas pa'i⁴ | |
[21/3] shi bral byung⁵ na ma gtog⁶ gson bral mi yong⁷ [21/4] gsung byung⁸ | |

B: No. 39; L: —. ¹ can (?); ² 'phros; ³ 'grog 'dris; ⁴ pas; ⁵ byed; ⁶ rtogs; ⁷ thub; ⁸ gis.

[No. 40]

'dzang ma'i sems¹ dang bstun na tshe 'dir² [21/5] chos skal chad 'gro | |
dben pa'i ri khro[d]³ 'grims⁴ [21/6] na bu mo'i thugs dang 'gal⁵ 'gro | |

B: No. 40; L: No. 24. ¹ L: thugs; ² B: 'di; ³ B/L: khrod; ⁴ B: 'grim; ⁵ L: 'ga'.

[No. 41]

sbrang bu rgya¹ la [21/7] chung² 'dra kong phrug³ gzhon pa'i sems pa⁴ | |
zhag <...>

B: No. 41; L: No. 25. ¹ B/L: brgya; ² B: zin, L: bcug; ³ B: 'phrug; ⁴ L: blo sna.

<Two songs are missing; most probably they correspond with nos. 42 and 43 of B.>

[No. 44]

[23/1] <...> ma bsgrigs¹ rgyu yin² | |
shi nas bar do'i phrang³ [23/2] du⁴ sems pa *skyod las mi 'dug*⁵ | |

B: No. 44; L: —. ¹ 'bral; ² +na; ³ [']phrang; ⁴ la; ⁵ skyo rog[s] yin pa.

[No. 45]

dag pa¹ [r]i'i² gangs³ [23/3] chu klu bdud⁴ rdo rje'i⁵ zi ba⁶ | |

bdud rtsi sman gyi⁷ [23/4] chab⁸ rgyun chang ma ye [sh]es mkha'
 'gro | |
 dam tshig [23/5] gtsang mas⁹ btung nas¹⁰ ngan song myong¹¹ dgos
 med do¹² | |
 [23/6] gzhon pa'i tshe gang bsags pa'i sdig sgrib nyes [23/7] pa'i
 phung po¹³ | |¹⁴

B: No. 45; L: 20. ¹ B: +shar, L: +shel; ² L: ri; ³ L: sgang; ⁴ L: 'dud; ⁵ B/L: rje; ⁶ B/L: zil pa; ⁷ B/L: gyis; ⁸ B/L: phab; ⁹ B: nas, L: mas; ¹⁰ B: gtung na, L: bstung na; ¹¹ L: myang; ¹² B/L: mi 'dug; ¹³ zhor la dag 'gro; ¹⁴ L: the entire last line is missing.

[No. 46]

snying sdug rigs ldan bu mo'i do nub <...>

B: —; L: —.

<About forty songs are missing; the number 86 found below was calculated the following way: thirteen pages, 24 to 36, are missing, almost all extant pages contain three songs each, hence 39 numbers were added to 46; needless to say, it is nothing but a hypothetical speculation.>

[No. *86]

[38/1] <...>mthong¹ dang | |
 ri byi klung² la [38/2] bab³ dus nga yis⁴ sems bsos zhu [38/3] mchog⁵ | |

B: No. 82; L: —. ¹ thong; ² byil rlung; ³ babs; ⁴ ras; ⁵ bso btang chog.

[No. *87]

nags gsel¹ lung pa² phu[gl] gi³ [38/4] 'dabs bya⁴ a be⁵ ne tso | |
 snyi[ng] [sd]ug [38/5] rku la shor song 'bshod rogs⁷ gnang [38/6]
 dang⁸ | |

B: No. 83; L: —. ¹ gseb; ² pa'i; ³ phu yi; ⁴ 'dab chags; ⁵ bar; ⁶ +ga[r] song; ⁷ rog[s]; ⁸ zhu.

[No. *88]

byi'u 'jol mo'i khrungs¹ sa [38/7] lho rong ljon pa'i nags gseb² | |
 [39/1] gsung snyan rgya grags³ bod [39/2] grags⁴ lha sa'i phyogs nas
 bsgyur⁵ byung | |

B: No. 84; L: —. ¹ 'gro; ² [g]seb; ³ [b]srag[s]; ⁴ [b]srag[s]; ⁵ skyur.

[No. *89]

[39/3] spre'u'i¹ rang blo log² nas nyin mo³ [39/4] rkun ma brku bar⁴ | |
 rang mig rang [39/5] gis bkabs par⁵ gzhan mig [39/6] sgrib⁶ pa mi
 'dug | |

B: No. 85; L: —. ¹ spre'u; ² lang[s]; ³ par; ⁴ rkus pas; ⁵ sbar mos bkab kyang; ⁶ khebs.

[No. *90]

dkar nag [40/1] las kyi sa bon da lta lkog tu btab kyang | |
'bras [40/2] bu sbas pa'i ma² thub rang *sar thang* la³ smin song⁴ | |

B: No. 86; L: —. ¹ pas; ² mi; ³ rang so sor; ⁴ gis.

[No. *91]

[40/3] ra¹ yul sa *gnam dro*² la ra³ mo nram thar legs pa'i⁴ | |
[40/4] mi rtag 'chi ba *ma gtong*⁵ tshe gang *stobs* [40/5] *snying 'dod*
*gi*⁶ | |

B: No. 87; L: —. ¹ dwags; ² nrams gro; ³ dwags; ⁴ pa; ⁵ med na; ⁶ [b]sdad kyang [b]sdad chog.

[No. *92]

lcang gling kham ltar 'bol la¹ [40/6] *snying sdug dung*² sems che
ba'i³ | |
gzhon pa lha mchod⁴ [40/7] byed pa'i lam bu bkag pa ma gngang | |

B: No. 88; L: —. ¹ ba; ² [g]dung; ³ ba; ⁴ chos.

[No. *93]

nub [41/1] phyogs ri bo'i rtse nas sprin¹ gnam la *lang ling*² | |
[41/2] nga la yid 'dzin *lha mo*'³ lha *bsangs gtang*⁴ ba [41/3] *min*⁵ | |

B: No. 89; L: —. ¹ +dkar; ² long long; ³ dbang mos; ⁴ bsang[s] btang; ⁵ los yin.

[No. *94]

rlung po ga¹ nas *langs kyang*² pha yul [41/4] phyogs nas lang³
byung | |
chung 'drid⁴ byams pa'i lus [41/5] dri⁵ ma nor rlung pos 'khyer
byung | |

B: No. 90; L: —. ¹ gang; ² lang[s] lang[s]; ³ lang[s]; ⁴ 'dris; ⁵ po.

[No. *95]

chu dang 'o ma [41/6] 'dres pa dbye¹ mkhan gser gyi rul² sbal | |
[41/7] *snying sdug sha sems 'dres pa su yis dbye do*³ [42/1] mi
mthing⁴ | |

B: No. 91; L: —. ¹ 'byed; ² rus; ³ dbye mkhan su yang; ⁴ 'dug.

[No. *96]

lha khang *phur ron brdzas*¹ par [42/2] *zhom bu snyigs gis*² ma 'dzin³ | |

sbyor ba [42/3] gzhan gyi⁴ byas par⁵ kha g.yogs bdag⁶ la ma [42/4]
bzha⁷ | |

B: No. 93; L: —. ¹ 'un khus rdzas; ² zhim mi snyi la; ³ zin; ⁴ gyis; ⁵ pa'i;
⁶ mi kha nga; ⁷ mi 'jog.

[No. *97]

shi de dmyal ba'i yul gyi chos [42/5] rgyal las kyi me long | |
'di na¹ 'khrig khrig² [42/6] mi 'dug de nas yag po gzigs shigs³ | |

B: No. 94; L: —. ¹ nas; ² krig krig; ³ gzigs pa gnang zhu.

[No. *98]

[42/7] chung 'drid byams phyogs su¹ ngo bsrung dar dkar g.yogs [43/1]
kyang² | |
byams pa phyi thag thung bas³ [43/2] khrel med 'tshe ma mngon⁴
song | |

B: No. 95; L: —. ¹ 'dri byams pa'i phyogs[s]u; ² gyi[s] gyog pas; ³
'chi bdag 'thung nas; ⁴ gzhung [']tsher mas bshad.

[No. *99]

rang sems kha [43/3] dar¹ dkar po ma nog² pa zhig³ zhu⁴ yod | |
[43/4] gzhan⁵ sems snag tsha'i ris⁶ mo 'dri⁷ 'dod yod [43/5] kyang
'dri⁸ shog | |

B: No. 96; L: —. ¹ btags; ² nogs; ³ [cig]; ⁴ zhus; ⁵ mi; ⁶ ri; ⁷ 'bri; ⁸ na bris.

[No. *100]

brag dang rlung po stobs¹ nas [43/6] rgod po'i sgras² la zin³ gis⁴ | |
g.yo can [43/7] [rdzu bag]⁵ can gyi⁶ nga yi sems la zin pa'i⁷ | |

B: No. 97; L: No. 38. ¹ B: 'thab, L: sdebs; ² B: sgro, L: dgro; ³ B: gzan,
L: zan; ⁴ L: byung; ⁵ B/L: rdzu bag; ⁶ B: des, L: gyis; ⁷ B: la gzan po byas
byung, L: la zan pos byas byung.

[No. *101]

[44/1] phar sems byams dang snying rje¹ sprin dkar² gsar du 'khrigs³
[44/2] kyang | |
tshur sems gdug⁴ pa'i rlung gi⁵ sprin gsar [44/3] chags re mi 'dug⁶ | |

B: No. 98; L: —. ¹ rjes; ² phung; ³ 'khrig[s]; ⁴ sdug; ⁵ pos; ⁶ yang nas
yang du gtor byung.

[No. *102]

sprin pa kha ser gting nag [44/4] sad¹ ser ba'i² gzhi³ ma | |
ban sde⁴ skya min⁵ [44/5] ser min⁶ sa[ngs] rgyas bstan pa'i dgra bo | |

B: No. 99; L: No. 39. ¹ B: +dang; ² L: ra'i; ³ zhi; ⁴ B: ba+nde, L: ban dhe; ⁵ L: spya man; ⁶ L: man.

[No. *103]

sa bcud [44/6] sa la dbang ba'i¹ dam can rdo [r]je chos skyong | |
mthu [44/7] dang nus pa yod na bstan dgra 'dul la phebs [45/1]
dang² | |

B: No. 100; L: —. ¹ bcu'i steng na gnas pa'i; ² pa'i dgra bo sgrol mdzod.

[No. *104]

rlung po nang nas langs par sgo¹ cha phyi [45/2] la ma rgyag² | |
mi kha thal ba'i bu yug sang [45/3] ba'i dus ni³ mi 'dug | |

B: No. 101; L: —. ¹ go; ² nas bsdam[s] song; ³ tshod.

[No. *105]

dus gsum tham[s ca]d mkhyen [45/4] pa drin can rtsa ba'i bla m[a] | |
spyi gtsug nyi zla'i [45/5] gdan la¹ 'bral med brtan par bzhugs
shigs² | |

B: No. 102; L: —. ¹ steng du; ² shig.

[No. *106]

[45/6] chu lbu¹ mig ngor shar ba'i ma dag snang ba'i dri [45/7] ma | |
'gal 'khrul nongs pa ci mchis² [46/1] ye [sh]es spyan lam bshags so³ | |

B: No. 103; L: —. ¹ bur; ² nyams chag 'dug na; ³ dbyings nas bshags[
s]o.

[No. *107]

gangs dkar [46/2] shel la skyes¹ pa'i seng lce² dkar mo³ 'o ma | |
[46/3] ro bcud che na grag⁴ nas snod kyi⁵ ma mchun⁶ [46/4] zer
gyis⁷ | |

B: No. 104; L: —. ¹ gnas; ² chen; ³ mo'i; ⁴ rang grag[s]; ⁵ kyi[s]; ⁶ chun;
⁷ na.

[No. *108]

gnas gsum zhing na bzhugs [46/5] pa'i¹ ma dang ye [sh]es mkha'
'gro | |
snying² nas [46/6] gsol ba btab po³ thugs rje⁴ lcags kyus bzung [46/7]
zhig⁵ | |

B: No. 105; L: —. ¹ rgyu ba'i; ² dbyings; ³ bshags pa 'bul[l]o; ⁴ rje'i; ⁵
gzigs shig.

[No. *109]

yon tan sbas pa'i gang zag nor bu [48/1] gang ba'i rgya mtsho | |
*tshub ston*¹ rlung *gis skyod*² [48/2] kyang nga ni bku³ ba mi 'debs | |

B: No. 106; L: —. ¹ mchod rten; ² gi[s] bskyod; ³ bskur.

[No. *110]

mar bcud 'o [48/3] *mar gab pa'i*¹ gsang ba dam pa'i lha chos | |
 [48/4] ma rigs² log lnga'i³ sgrib nas⁴ *nyams su rtogs pa* [48/5] *mi*
*'dug*⁵ | |

B: No. 107; L: —. ¹ mas gang ba; ² rig; ³ pas; ⁴ na; ⁵ snying nas 'gyod
 pas bshags[s]o.

[No. *111]

rang sems nam [m]kha'i shigs¹ la rang bzhin [48/6] 'gyur ba² med
 kyang | |
 nyon mongs sprin *gyis* [48/7] *sgrib nas*³ snang *bar*⁴ 'gyur⁵ ston
 byung | |

B: No. 108; L: —. ¹ gshis; ² mdog; ³ ltar 'khrugs pa'i; ⁴ ba'i; ⁵ +mdog.

[No. *112]

sbrang bu [49/1] skye bar¹ sngas song me tog shar ba phyis song | |
 [49/2] las 'phrod² med pa'i snying sdug mjal³ byed *par* [49/3] *sngas*⁴
 song | |

B: No. 110; L: —. ¹ ba; ² 'phro; ³ +'dzom[s]; ⁴ pa 'gyang[s].

[No. *113]

spang mdog¹ ser por lang² song spang³ rgyan [49/4] sbrang bu'i⁴ dor
 song | |
 na so rgas pa'i mi pho chung [49/5] 'drid⁵ byams pas *dor song*⁶ | |

B: No. 111; L: —. ¹ mgo; ² lang[s]; ³ [spang]; ⁴ bus; ⁵ 'dris; ⁶ skyur
 byung.

[No. *114]

nam dus¹ sa bcud dro² song glang [49/6] chung rog³ po'i *ngu sgra*⁴ | |
 smin⁵ shar bde dro⁶ rgyas song⁷ [49/7] skyo glu sems pa'i⁸ dran
 blong⁹ | |

B: No. 112; L: —. ¹ zla; ² dros; ³ [g]rog[s]; ⁴ ngur sgra[s]; ⁵ dman; ⁶
 drod; ⁷ pa'i; ⁸ la; ⁹ byung.

[No. *115]

mi med lung pa'i phu¹ [49/8] byis pa'i skyo glu *blangs pa'i*² | |
 glu la glu *len* [50/1] *bslog*³ mkhan ri zur 'jag *ma'i sdong po*⁴ | |

B: No. 113; L: —. ¹ +la; ² lhan lhan; ³ lan slog; ⁴ ma sbub stong.

[No. *116]

brag [50/2] la ku zhig¹ rgyab pa'i² lan la tshig 'bru mi [50/3] 'dug | |
snying gтам pha³ la bshad pa'i⁴ gros 'go⁵ [50/4] 'don mkhan mi
'dug | |

B: No. 114; L: —. ¹ gcig; ² pas; ³ phar; ⁴ pas; ⁵ mgo.

[No. *117]

lus po chu la bkru¹ [50/5] nas sems *kyi sdig sgrib*² dag na | |
chu nang gser [50/6] mig nya mo³ thar ba⁴ thob pa 'dug gam⁵ | |

B: No. 115; L: —. ¹ yi[s] dkrus; ² pa'i sgrib pa; ³ mos; ⁴ pa; ⁵ 'dug[g]o.

[No. *118]

ngur [50/7] smrig mdog gi¹ bsgyur ba'i bla m[a] yong rgyu yin
[50/8] na | |
mtsho stod gser bya ngang pa'i² 'gro ba 'dren [51/1] pa 'dug gam³ | |

B: No. 116; L: —. ¹ gi[s]; ² pas; ³ 'dug[g]o.

[No. *119]

gzhan zer tshig *bzlos 'khyol* [51/2] ba'i¹ bslob bshad² bstan pa 'dzin
na | |
'dabs³ [51/3] chags a bo⁴ ne tsos chos 'khor bskor ba 'dug [51/4]
gam⁵ | |

B: No. 117; L: —. ¹ zlos khyer bas; ² bslab gsum; ³ 'dab; ⁴ bar; ⁵ 'dug[g]o.

[No. *120]

gang gsung rjes *bzlos skad kyi*¹ dbang bskur [51/5] thob rgyu yin na | |
sems med brag chags² stong [51/6] pa'i³ sku bzhi 'grub *par* ['dug]
gam⁴ | |

B: No. 118; L: —. ¹ zlos gsung bas; ² cha; ³ pas; ⁴ pa 'dug[g]o.

[No. *121]

dgra 'dul gnyen [51/7] skyong *mkhan gyi*¹ sa[ngs] rgyas thob rgyu
yin² | |
gcan [51/8] gzan dud 'gro³ khyu yi⁴ tshe gcig mngon par [52/1]
rdzogs pa'i⁵ | |

B: No. 119; L: —. ¹ 'dzom[s] pas; ² +na; ³ 'gro'i; ⁴ yi[s]; ⁵ pa.

[No. *122]

'dod yon longs¹ che ba'i² [52/2] *byang chub*³ thob rgyu yin na | |

nor bdag klu yi⁴ [52/3] dbang po⁵ sku gsung 'grub par gda' 'o⁶ | |

B: No. 120; L: —. ¹ +spyod; ² bas; ³ dbang bskur; ⁴ yis; ⁵ pos; ⁶ gsum rnyed pa 'dug[g]o.

[No. *123]

g.ya' [52/4] dang spang la gnas¹ pa'i bya de lha bya go² mo | |
byams [52/5] pa sems nyid skyod pa'i³ skyo ba'i rogs la⁴ phebs [52/6]
dang | |

B: No. 123; L: —. ¹ skyes; ² gong; ³ pa skyo ba'i; ⁴ skyo rog[s] la [ni].

[No. *124]

mtsho dang ngang pa 'bral mtshams yod la bsam¹ [52/7] pa med
kyang² | |
mtsho mo khyag³ pas bsdoms⁴ nas [52/8] ⁵dbang med so sor 'phral⁶
song | |

B: No. 124; L: —. ¹ byed snyam [snyam]; ² de; ³ [']khyag; ⁴ [b]sdam[s];
⁵ +[rang]; ⁶ la lang[s].

[No. *125]

nga dang byams pa bral [53/1] ba¹ yong bsam yid la² med kyang³ | |
dbang chen las [53/2] 'gro med pas⁴ kha kha sa ro 'phral⁵ song | |

B: No. 125; L: —. ¹ 'bral mtshams; ² byed snyam [snyam] pa; ³ de; ⁴
dpon pos phral nas; ⁵ khag khag [rang] la lang[s].

[No. *126]

blta bar¹ [53/3] la mos sgrib song² la mo chen mo³ dgra red | |
[53/4] 'gro bar⁴ chu bos sgrib song⁵ chu bo chen po⁶ dgra [53/5] red | |

B: No. 126; L: —. ¹ ba; ² ma mthong; ³ che ba; ⁴ ba; ⁵ mos mi thar; ⁶ mo
che ba.

[No. *127]

pha yul sa thag ring ba sems pa yid¹ kyi [53/6] dgra red | |
snying sdug sha sems ma 'brel nyin² [53/7] mtshan³ gnyid kyi dgra
red⁴ | |

B: No. 127; L: —. ¹ lus sems gnyis; ² byams pa byes la song ba; ³
+mo'i; ⁴ theb[s] lcog gis.

[No. *128]

spang dang spang brgyan¹ [53/8] 'bral² ba nam zla'i 'phan dug³ yin
pa'i⁴ | |
[53bis/1] nga dang byams pa bral⁵ ba tshe sngon las zad⁶ yin
[53bis/2] pa'i⁷ | |

B: No. 130; L: —. ¹ rgyan; ² 'brel; ³ dus tshod; ⁴ pa; ⁵ 'bral; ⁶ 'phro; ⁷ pa.

[No. *129]

chu bo¹ che ba'i sems nad gru shan gnyen² [53bis/3] pas sel yong³ | |
snying sdug shi ba'i *sems nad*⁴ su yis⁵ [53bis/4] sel ngo ma mthing⁶ | |

B: No. 131; L: —. ¹ mo; ² gnyan; ³ song; ⁴ mya ngan; ⁵ gas; ⁶ rog[s]
byed pa.

[No. *130]

shing de rtsa ba gcig la rtse mo [53bis/5] *nyis stong lnga brgya*¹ | |
nga yi a ma chang ma² blo sna [53bis/6] nyis stong lnga [brgya]³ | |

B: No. 132; L: —. ¹ sum brgya drug cu; ² ba byams par; ³ brgya.

[No. *131]

nga dang byams pa 'dri ba¹ shi sang² ro sang [53bis/7] *byed kyang*³ | |
gtam gsum mi kha ngan pa⁴ dmag brta' [54/1] *rgyag rgyag byed*
*byung*⁵ | |

B: No. 135; L: —. ¹ pa'i lkog grib; ² gsang; ³ gsang byas pas; ⁴ pas; ⁵ sa
steng kun la khyab song.

[No. *132]

rang *sems zug pa'i*¹ mi [54/2] *yi bag mar song na*² | |
khong nad *sems kyis* [54/3] *bcongs gis*³ *gzugs po'i*⁴ sha yang skam
song | |

B: No. 136; L: —. ¹ la dga' ba'i snyung sdug; ² mig gi bar la lang[s]
song; ³ dang byams pa'i lcong gi[s]; ⁴ lus kyi.

[No. *133]

[54/4] *zhim po za rgyu med par*¹ na rgyu 'bun la longs [s]o² | |
[54/5] nga dang byams pa'i dbye mtshams sgam po'i *phyag gis* [54/6]
*byed*³ song | |

B: No. 137; L: —. ¹ po'i bza' btung skyug pa; ² nang ro'i bun long yin
pa; ³ bu chag[gi]i[s] bkod.

[No. *134]

[54/8] *gshong zhing lo yag ljang sra 'ong* ba'i gseb tu phyin pa'i | |
dang po snga mor 'jal ba'i snying sdug [54/7] khong dang 'jal ba'i | |

B/L: —.

[No. *135]

kham bzang skad cha dris [55/1] pa'i gtam lan bslog tu mi 'dug | |

[55/2] khra chung mig gi nang nas mchil ma rba rlabs [55/3] g.yos
byung | |

B/L: —.

[No. *136]

sha 'jam lus la sbyar nas mi [55/4] sems dang sems ma 'dres | |
bal po mkhas [55/5] pa'i lugs la gser dang rag gan 'brel song | |

B/L: —.

[No. *137]

[55/6] sha ba la mo rgyab song sha khyi kho thag chod song | |
[55bis/1] snying sdug dpon pos bzhes song rang sems kho [55bis/2]
thag chod song | |

B/L: —.

[No. *138]

phu yi g.ya' spang por song [55bis/3] gshong zhing lo thog sngas
song | |
nga dang chung 'drid [55bis/4] byams pa'i las 'gro 'phen pa rdzod
song | |

B/L: —.

[No. *139]

shing [55bis/5] de spa ma'i sne mo gang la bkug kyang gug gis | |
[55bis/6] 'khrel med byams pa'i sems pa gang khug zhus kyang
[55bis/7] ma khug | |

B/L: —.

[No. *140]

sa de kha zhur gting 'khyag¹ rta pho rgyugs² ¹⁵
[56/1] gsar 'grogs³ byams pa'i phyogs su snying gdam *bshod*⁴ [56/2] sa
ma mdzad⁵ | |

B: —; L: No. 40. ¹ khyag; ² gtong... +sa ma red; ³ sang sgrogs; ⁴ shos; ⁵
red.

[No. *141]

ser 'brum phyi nas smin yang nang de [56/3] rus pa'i khengs 'dug | |
byams pa zhal sgo mtshar [56/4] yang nang na gdong tshad mi
'dug | |

¹⁵ The end of the line is not written.

B/L: —.

[No. *142]

las 'gro mthun [56/5] pa'i byams pa dri med dngul dkar me long | |
'phyi zhing [56/6] dangs su 'gro gi 'grog shing nyer du gtang gi | |

B/L: —.

[No. *143]

khu [56/7] byug mon la thegs song nam zla sa bcud 'khyag [56/8]
song | |
ngang pa nga yang mi sdod lho rong phyogs la chas 'gro | |

B/L: —.

<Three songs are likely to be missing.>

[No. *147]

[57/1] phral phug nyams su dga' ba'i :{lha}chos nyam-su blangs
[57/2] nas | |
'di phyi kun tu skyid pa'i 'od gsal nyi ma shar [57/3] yong | |

B/L: —.

[No. *148]

rang sems kun la phan pa'i byang chung me tog [57/4] 'khrung
nas | |
don gnyis mngar ba'i bdud rtsi 'dzad [57/5] med long-su spyo-do | |

B/L: —.

[No. *149]

rgya gar shar gyi rma bya lho rong gting [57/6] gi¹ ne tso | |
khrung² sa khrung³ yul mi gcig 'dzom⁴ [57/7] sa chos 'khor lha sa | |

B: No. 447; L: —; S: 60. ¹ B/S: kong yul mthil gyi; ² B/S: 'khrungs; ³ B/S:
'khrungs; ⁴ B/S: 'dzoms.

[No. *150]

mi tsho nga la lab lab¹ dgongs [57/8] pa² dag pa yod do³ | |
nga la byams pa mang nyung⁴ mtsho mtha'i⁵ <... | |>⁶

B: No. 450; L: —; S: 61. ¹ B/S: pa; ² B: —, S: dgongs su; ³ B: khas theg,
S: khag theg; ⁴ mtsho kha'i; ⁵ sbrang ma... +[de] las mang ba; ⁶ S: the entire
line is completely different: o lo'i gom gsum phra mo gnas mo'i... +nang la
thal song.

<The final thirteen pages, 58 to 71, are missing but we do not know if all of them contained the text; if they did, about forty songs can be missing since almost all extant pages contain three songs each.>


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Tibetan Buddhist Vanguard among the Mongols and Manchus, 1576-1638¹

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his essay investigates the eastward journeys of eight Tibetan Buddhist vanguards between 1576 and 1638. The eight Buddhist monks introduced in this essay did not share sectarian, regional, and ethnocultural backgrounds. In what follows, we show that the earlier missionary peregrinations were spatially expansive and not centrally organized. In this essay, we identify the shared patterns of their travels and by shifting the focus away from the political epicenters of Beijing or Lhasa, we hope to study the developing efforts of Tibetan Buddhists to seek converts and financial resources.² The handful of Tibetan Buddhist vanguards under discussion here did not share a clearly Gelukpa inspired mission, but rather came from a range of traditions. While they may have been devoted to a particular Mongol patron for a time, they would court other supporters if their patron were defeated in war or otherwise lost power. These early missionaries established patterns for political maneuvering that inspired both the Dalai Lama's Buddhist government and the Manchu Qing court well into the eighteenth century.

The temporal scope under study was period of political reconfiguration that has had a long-lasting impact on the geopolitical history in Inner Asia ever since. Within Tibet, it was not until 1642 that the Dalai Lama line of reincarnations was able to consolidate a powerful political position and establish the Ganden Podrang Buddhist government in Lhasa. This was achieved largely through the military support of

¹ To render Tibetan names, we use the THDL Transliteration system, except citations of published works for which we retained the original spellings. We use Pinyin to Romanize Chinese names. All translations are ours unless otherwise noted.

² Li Wang, *Ming mo Qing chu Dalai Lama xi tong yu Menggu zhu bu hu dong guan xi yan jiu* (Studies of Interactions between the Dalai Lama Lineage and Various Mongol Tribes in the Ming-Qing Transitional Era), Beijing: Nationality Press, 2011. Söng-su Kim, *Ming-Qing zhi ji Zangchuan Fojiao zai Menggu di qu de chuan bo* (Tibetan Buddhist Dissemination in Mongolia during the Ming-Qing Transition), Beijing: Social Science Bibliography Press, 2006; Hoong Teik Toh, "Tibetan Buddhism in Ming China," Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2004; Dora C. Y. Ching, "Tibetan Buddhism and the Creation of the Ming Imperial Image," in ed. David Robinson, *Culture, Courtiers, and Competition: the Ming Court (1368-1644)*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008, 321-364.

Gushri Khan (1582–1655), an Oirat Khoshut Mongol prince. The fifth Dalai Lama (1617–1682) began to use the term Geluk consistently in defining his particular group of Buddhists in his *A History of Tibet, The Song of the Spring Queen*, written in 1643. The followers of Tsongkhapa (1357–1419)—posthumously recognized as the founder of the Geluk School—were commonly referred as Gandenpa in the *New Red Annals*, a Tibetan chronicle written in 1538. Even in the fifth Dalai Lama’s historical account, he acknowledged that the Tibetan Pakmodru dynasty “did honor to all sects without partiality.”³ The Pakmodru rulers rose to power in Central Tibet in 1350, which went hand in hand with the decline of the Mongol power and its close allies, the Tibetan Buddhist Sakya hierarchs.⁴ By 1364, the Sakya estate was split into four parts, each ruled by a member of the Khön family. This division led to internal political and economic struggles that contributed to the rise of the Pakmodru.⁵ The Sakya School developed new sub-sects, each with its own monastic bases.⁶ The Sakya’s internal division of both family estates and monastic institutions weakened their ability to counteract the emerging Geluk School. But the Geluk School’s dominance of the Tibetan Plateau needed more than the backing of Pakmodru rulers, whose patronage diminished over time. The Gelukpa were opposed first through the rise of the Rinpungpa family and later the Tsangpa kings.⁷ The followers of Tsongkhapa were left no choice but to seek additional patrons far afield in Mongol lands and further east.⁸

Beyond Tibet, political turmoil similarly shifted geopolitical dynamics. To the east, the Wanli emperor (r. 1572–1620) saw Ming-dynasty China rapidly declining in front of him; to the north, a series of Mongol strongmen hoped to reunite the Mongols, whose leadership had disintegrated after they retreated north in the post-Mongol Yuan years; to the northeast, Nurhaci (1559–1626) united various Jurchen tribes and founded the Jin state, the predecessor of the Manchu Qing. In 1644, the Manchus crossed the Shanhai Pass and took over Beijing.

³ The fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lozang Gyatso, trans. Zahiruddin Ahmad, *A History of Tibet*. Bloomington, Indiana University: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1995, 147, 156

⁴ *Ibid.*, 137–139, 145–8. Schwieger, *The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China: A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2015, 27.

⁵ Personal communication with Leonard van der Kuijp, Nov. 1994.

⁶ David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, Boston: Shambhala, 1995, 178–9.

⁷ Both families were allied with the Red Hat Karma-pa incarnations. See the fifth Dalai Lama Ngawang Lozang Gyatso, 1995, 163 and Ahmad, 1970, 101.

⁸ Zahiruddin Ahmad, “Sino-Tibetan Relations in the Seventeenth Century,” *Serie Orientale Roma*, vol. 40. Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1970, 96–7.

This was the beginning of Qing rule of China that would extend for the next two and a half centuries. Our goal here is to reveal the persistent effort undertaken by Tibetan Buddhists as the political turmoil unfolded in Inner Asia to demonstrate their active agency in engaging with the Mongol leaders, and then the Manchu rulers. Their missionary endeavors paved the way for more systematic and rigorous exclusively Gelukpa missionary enterprises in the eighteenth century. The later development, however, ought not to overshadow the foundation built by these earlier diverse Buddhist vanguards in the preceding two centuries with the Mongols and Manchus.

The notion of a lama's familial sectarian orientation was an attribute of consequence in this period. For example, Sonam Gyatso—the future third Dalai Lama—might in fact have come from “a distinguished family, connected with the Sakya and the Pakmodru rulers.”⁹ The fifth Dalai Lama did not shy away from mentioning the third Dalai Lama's alleged familial connection to both the Sakya and the Pakmodru reign in his *History of Tibet*. Perhaps to him, the multiple connections legitimated Geluk power as a righteous successor to the Mongol Yuan-Sakya and then the Pakmodru dynasty in Tibet. The fifth Dalai Lama himself came from a prominent Nyingma family and courted relations with powerful Nyingma monks, whom he supported at Mindroling and Dorjedrak monasteries.¹⁰



Map 1 Important Sites under discussion, created by Shreena Pyakurel

⁹ Snellgrove and Richardson, 1995, 183.

¹⁰ Dominique Townsend, *A Buddhist Sensibility: Aesthetic Education at Tibet's Mindröling Monastery*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2021.

Beyond the political realm, the Geluk School was in debt to other philosophical traditions. Tsongkhapa embraced a range of traditions in his training; one of his two principal teachers was the Sakya lama Rendawa (1348/9-1412).¹¹ It was not until the enthronement of the fourth Dalai Lama (1589-1617), a Mongol, as the abbot of the Drepung monastery in 1603, with the military support that it entailed, that the Geluk School began to have any forceful political presence in Central Tibet.¹² To the Mongols, the institution of Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation also provided them with a means to exercise certain power over monastic and political contestations in Tibet; ultimately, they used it to sever deep-seated familial ties between the Tibetan aristocracy and Tibetan Buddhist monastic estates.¹³ Thus, it was only in 1621 that an uneasy truce was established between the opposing parties of the Tsangpa allied with the Red Hat Karmapa Lama and the Mongols allied to the Ganden School.

In tandem with the rise of Geluk power, other schools' ability to influence affairs, especially outside of Central Tibet, dwindled after the fall of the Mongol Yuan (1279-1368). Four Sakya temples from the Mongol Yuan time continued to function until at least 1579 in the western Mongolian region of Liangzhou (modern Wuwei, Gansu Province), a town with a glorious past at the crossroads of Tibetan, Chinese, and Mongolian cultures.¹⁴ But it was the Ming emperors Xuande (1426-1436) and Chenghua (1465-1488) who issued decrees to repair and maintain them. Owing to their geopolitical position, the Liangzhou temples welcomed both Han Chinese monks and Tibetan monks in much of their later history. The situation started to shift gradually with the rise of the Geluk hegemony. A cluster of Geluk monasteries replaced existing Sakya ones in Liangzhou. Tellingly, the fifth Dalai Lama did not expunge the Sakya from his historical account. Rather, he glossed over their sectarian affiliations.¹⁵ Indeed his treatment of their involvement may be an indication that Geluk dominance was still not established as late as 1643 when he completed his account of

¹¹ Ibid., 180 and 197. For more on this figure, Samten Chhosphel, "Rendawa Zhonnu Lodro," *Treasury of Lives*, accessed June 23, 2021, <http://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Rendawa-Zhonnu-Lodro/8571>.

¹² Personal communication with Leonard van der Kuijp, April 1996.

¹³ Schwieger, 2015, Chapter 2; Gray Tuttle, "The Role of Mongol Elite and Educational Degrees in the Advent of Reincarnation Lineages in 17th Century Amdo," eds. by Karl Debreczeny and Gray Tuttle, *Tibet's Turbulent 17th Century and The Tenth Karmapa*, Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2016, 235-262.

¹⁴ Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, *Brgyud pa yid bzin nor bu'i rtogs pa brjod pa no mtshar rgya mtsho*, Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1992, 546.

¹⁵ Wangqian Duanzhi and Jiang Zengli, "Saban yu Liangzhou sida fosi (Sa-Pan and the Four Liangzhou Temples), *Xizang yanjiu huixun* (Newsletter on Tibetan Studies), 15 (1993), 13.

Tibetan history, the *Song of the Spring Queen*.¹⁶ At the time, internal competition was not limited to struggles between Tibetan Buddhists of different schools. Mongolian leaders were similarly consumed by contests for authority. In 1607, the death of Altan Khan (1507-1582)'s successor brought about internal rivalry for power.¹⁷ The succession crisis that accompanied this turmoil did not end for some years.¹⁸ In the meantime, Ligdan Khan (1588-1634) was also trying, unsuccessfully, to assert authority over his own people. For extra support, he turned to Tibetan Buddhism to solidify his legitimacy.¹⁹

In chaos lies opportunity. Two Buddhists from Tibet set out to meet Mongol leaders in the decade leading up to 1578 when the Altan Khan met Sonam Gyatso, the soon-to-be third Dalai Lama.²⁰ What brought the two groups together was an attack by Khutughtai Sechen Hungtaiji's troops on the Tibetans in northeastern Tibetan region of Amdo in 1566. Khutughtai Sechen Hungtaiji negotiated a surrender in which the "Three River Tibetans" submitted on the condition that the Mongols would accept Tibetan Buddhism as their religion.²¹ The life stories of Sonam Gyatso and Altan Khan both mention a Buddhist monk, variously known as Aseng or Arigh, who allegedly came to explain the Buddhist religion and its benefits to Altan Khan in his court.²² While hosting

¹⁶ Kurtis R. Schaeffer, Matthew Kapstein, and Gray Tuttle, *Sources of Tibetan Tradition*, New York: Columbia University, 2013, 538-540.

¹⁷ Henry Serruys, "Sino-Mongol Relations: The Tribute System and Diplomatic Missions (1400-1600)," *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques*, vol. 14, part 2, Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1967, 111.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 102-3.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 111. We leave out the Oirat communities to focus on Buddhists' activities to the east in this essay.

²⁰ Lin Chiu-yan, "Research on Emperors' Policies toward Mongols regarding Religion in the High-Qing," (M.A. Thesis, National Normal, 2000). Page 24-27, here Lin discusses how Altan Khan's nephew might have met with three lamas in 1566. But Lin could not find any sources on what sectarian affiliations the three lamas had. Altan Khan's meeting with the future third Dalai Lama was noted and source confirmed.

²¹ Henry Serruys, "Early Lamaism in Mongolia," *Oriens Extremus*. 10, no. 2. (1963): 182.

²² Hirehiro Okada, "The Third Dalai Lama and Altan Khan of the Tümed," ed. Per Kvaerne, *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, vol. 2. (Narita, 1992), 645-6. Johan Elverskog, "Whatever Happened to Queen Jönggen?" in *Buddhism in Mongolian History, Culture, and Society*, ed. Vesna A. Wallace (New York, N.Y: Oxford University Press, 2015), fn. 6, 18-19. Jiaye Chepai and Shuang Bao, "A Sheng Lama kao" (Studies of A Sheng Lama) in *Qinghai Min zu yan jiu* (Research on Nationality in Qinghai), vol 23, No. 1. (Jan. 2012): 80-85. Leiyi Wang, *Zang chuan Fojiao si yuan Meidai zhao Wudang zhao diao cha yu yan jiu* (Research on Tibetan Buddhist Temples: Meidai Temple and Wudang Temple), Beijing: China Tibetology Press, 2009. 28, n.1. Serruys mentions that Altan Khan went to Amdo to fight the Black Tibetans and brought back Aseng Lama. Serruys, 1963, 182.

Aseng in his encampment, Altan Khan continued his fight with the “Black Tibetans” in Amdo. This monk, of unknown sectarian affiliation, may well have been responsible for brokering Altan Khan’s meeting with Sonam Gyatso, the soon-to-be Dalai Lama.²³

Even though his meeting with the future third Dalai Lama was of paramount importance, it was not Altan Khan’s first meeting with a Central Tibetan Buddhist prelate. Shortly before this meeting, Altan Khan welcomed the sixteenth abbot of the Taklung Order, a sub-sect of the Kagyü School.²⁴ Impressed by Taklung Kunga Trashi (1536–1605)’s religious power, Altan Khan made countless offerings of gold, silver, silk and cotton cloth, tea, horses, mules, and camels. Altan Khan also invited him to visit Chakhar Mongol land in 1576, but the Taklung abbot was too ill to travel and did not leave Central Tibet until after the new year in 1578.²⁵ A 1579 entry of the abbot’s spiritual biography indicates a cognizance of the meeting between Altan Khan and Sonam Gyatso: for the first time, Altan Khan’s name is preceded by the title bestowed by Sonam Gyatso: “Chos gyi rgyal po (Dharma King).”²⁶ At this point, the record of donations from Altan Khan becomes much more specific. Similar to Sonam Gyatso, the Taklung abbot simultaneously received a silver seal and a title: Tathagata (Tib. Dezhin Shekpa).²⁷ This title may have been intended to evoke that of the fifth Karmapa (1384–1415), who was called Dezhin Shekpa, a title received from the Ming Yongle emperor (r. 1402–1424).²⁸ In addition to the

²³ Ahmad, 1970, 87.

²⁴ Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, 1992, 544. Elliot Sperling, “Notes on References to Brigung-pa—Mongol Contact in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” ed. Per Kvaerne, *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, vol. 2. (Oslo, Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1992), 748, n. 29. Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp and Gray Tuttle. “Altan Qayan (1507–1582) of the Tümed Mongols and the Stag lung Abbot Kun dga’ bkra shis rgyal mtshan (1575–1635),” In *Trails of the Tibetan Tradition: Papers for Elliot Sperling*, edited by Roberto Vitali, with assistance from Gedun Rabsal and Nicole Willock, Amnye Machen Institute: Dharamshala (H.P.), India. 2014, 461–482. *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 31 (February 2017): 461–482.

²⁵ Ibid, 545. Johan Elverskog, “An Early Seventeenth-Century Tibeto-Mongolian Ceremonial Staff,” *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, no. 3 (December 2007): 2.

²⁶ Ahmad, 1970, 90.

²⁷ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa bsod nams rgya mtsho’i rnam thar dngos grub rgya mtsho’i shing rta*. Delhi: Jayyed Press, 1982, 192.

²⁸ Leonard van der Kuijp pointed out the connection of this Taklung abbot’s new title with the fifth Karmapa, Dezhin Shekpa. See Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp and Gray Tuttle. “Altan Qayan (1507–1582) of the Tümed Mongols and the Stag lung Abbot Kun dga’ bkra shis rgyal mtshan (1575–1635),” In *Trails of the Tibetan Tradition: Papers for Elliot Sperling*, edited by Roberto Vitali, with assistance from Gedun Rabsal and Nicole Willock, Amnye Machen Institute: Dharamshala (H.P.), India. 2014,

official recognition, the abbot also received official documents, hats, and clothing, as well as a large sum of silver, which again was reminiscent of the established Mongol Yuan practice with regards to monks.²⁹ His last meeting with Altan Khan was in the autumn of 1579, when the khan gave him a kettle made of 1,500 *srangs* of silver and other unspecified offerings.³⁰ This spiritual biography also reveals the active involvement of this region's Chinese officials with Tibetan Buddhism and suggests that Buddhist (probably Taklung) clerics may have had some, possibly long-term, relationship with these figures. For instance, the text lists the official of Xining along with Jina nangso and Drati nangso as having made offerings to the abbot at a place called Taklung lasar.³¹ While this text provides no further details of their interactions, the Mongolian biography of Altan Khan relates that a person called Taklung nangso was one of the main envoys to Sonam Gyatso.³² The presence of this figure at the court of Altan Khan may help to explain some of the respect shown to the Taklung abbot. It is also interesting to note that his role as an envoy to Sonam Gyatso indicates a fairly fluid relationship between differing schools—especially for monks who served at the court of the Mongols. The Taklung order appears to have been on neutral, if not friendly, terms with the Geluk School at this time. A former abbot of Taklung received the future third Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso in 1558, and the Geluk requested the Taklung lama handle the mediation when the fourth Dalai lama's monastery was under attack by the Tsang king in 1610.³³ Sectarian conflicts exhibited later on often distorted the earlier history of mutual support and protection of mutual interests.

What was so appealing about Sonam Gyatso to Altan Khan? Among the many Tibetan Buddhist hierarchs in contact with the Mongols, Sonam Gyatso's singularity lies in his manifold familial and doctrinal associations. For the Mongols, it was paramount to allude to the patron-priest model that Qubilai Khan (1215-1294) and Pakpa (1235-1280) established. Many Mongol leaders viewed this model as a vital legitimating tool as they attempted to recreate the Mongol empire. As is well-known, Altan Khan's meeting with Sonam Gyatso was

461-482. Also available for download as an issue of *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 31 (February 2017) 461-482. http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret_31_27.pdf

²⁹ Serruys, 1963, 203-4.

³⁰ Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, 1992, 546.

³¹ Ibid, 545-6. For details about the title of nangso, see Kam, 1994, 128. "Taklung lasar" seems to refer to the "new" pass of Stag lung, but its location is unknown.

³² Okada, 1992, 648 and 650. By the 1630s the role of those holding the title of nangso as envoys was apparently well established in Ming China and was being adopted by the Manchus as well, see Kam, 1994, 129.

³³ Sperling, 1992, 747. Snellgrove and Richardson, 1995, 193.

explicitly linked in narratives of the event to the earlier religio-political connections in the Mongol Yuan period.³⁴ The fifth Dalai Lama was to further elaborate on this ideological parallel in his own relations with Gushri Khan; interestingly, he omitted the third Dalai Lama's versatile connection with the Sakya tradition.³⁵ This omission perhaps reflects how the fifth Dalai Lama consolidated his power at a time when the Sakya tradition was significantly weakened and their patrons, the Mongols, defeated. The fifth Dalai Lama perhaps saw no need to allude to the third Dalai Lama's association with the Sakya School.

1578-1585: Amdo Buddhists at the Court of Tümed's Altan Khan in Southern Mongol Lands³⁶

A descendant of the Mongol's ruling Borjigin clan, Altan Khan (r. 1542-1582) was an ambitious leader in the southern Mongolian community known as Tümed. Geluk-dominant historical narratives of early Tibetan Buddhists and their missionary undertakings in Mongol lands marked the meeting between Altan Khan and Sonam Gyatso, the third Dalai Lama *avant la lettre*, in 1578, as the beginning of a more substantial communication between the two. At their meeting in Amdo, Altan Khan requested the Dalai Lama send a representative to return with him to Köke Khota (present-day Hohhot). In response, Tongkhor (Tibetan: Stong'khor, 1557-1587) Yonten Gyatso spent four years in Altan Khan's territory until 1582. During his stay, Yonten Gyatso was regarded as "the highest of the spiritual leaders there."³⁷ He was probably the first recorded Buddhist to represent the Geluk power in Mongol lands.³⁸ Yonten Gyatso was recognized as the second trülku of the Tongkhor line of reincarnations. This line continued to grow in influence as the Geluk School continued to consolidate power within Tibet and recruit more patrons to the east. By the time of the fifth Tongkhor

³⁴ Ahmad, 1970, 89-90.

³⁵ Ibid, 130 and 137.

³⁶ Some of the figures are listed in Coyiji, *Neimenggu Zangchuan Fojiao si yuan* (Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Inner Mongolia), Appendix I, Lanzhou: Gansu Minzu Chubanshe, 2014, 205-252.

³⁷ For a more detailed biographical account, see Sonam Dorje, "The Second Tongkhor, Yonten Gyatso," Treasury of Lives, accessed May 16, 2019, <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Second-Tongkhor-Yonten-Gyatso/3708>; Hurcha, Coyiji, and Wuyun, *Zangchuan Fojiao Zai Menggu Diqu de Chuanbo Yanjiu* (Research on the Tibetan Buddhist Dissemination in Mongolia), (Beijing: Nationality Press, 2012), 66-69. Walther Heissig, *A Lost Civilization: the Mongols Rediscovered*, New York: Basic Books, 1966, 29.

³⁸ W. D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, New York: Potala, 1984, 96. Ahmad, 1970, 90 states that a diplomatic office was set up at Tongkhor to maintain the relationship between the Gelukpa and the Mongols.

Ngawang Sonam Gyatso (1684-1752), the lineage had successfully maneuvered the selection of the second Jamyang Shepa and asserted its powerful position in the Amdo religious realm in the eighteenth century.³⁹ In a later account of the rise of the Tongkhor lineage, the posthumously recognized first Tongkhor actively transformed a Bon monastery in Kham into a Geluk monastery that came to be known as the Tongkhor Tashi Lhunpo.⁴⁰

Another key power-broker in the Tibetan-Mongolian interaction was Tsoknyi Gyatso, later known as the first Zhapdrung Karpo. He represented the third Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso in Mongol lands.⁴¹ He was highly venerated among the Mongols and perhaps received estates from Holochi, a Mongol leader who recouped his strength in Amdo after being forced out of the Tümed region by Altan Khan.⁴² Holochi's son was recognized as the second Zhapdrung Karpo in 1613 and given the name Lodro Gyatso (1610–1659). Lodro Gyatso received the title of Chahan nominhan from the fifth Dalai Lama for his mediation between the Khalkha and Oirat Mongols, and a "Jasak" title from the Qing Shunzhi emperor in 1648.⁴³ A oft-overlooked diplomatic endeavor of the Zhapdrung Karpo line of reincarnation was a curious mission in the fall of 1639. That is, a figure named Chahan Lama of Köke Khota joined a mission sent by Hong Taiji (1592-1643), but the mission was recalled before it left Köke Khota.⁴⁴ The presence of the Chahan Lama of Köke Khota in the aborted mission suggests that the

³⁹ Sonam Dorje, https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Ngawang-Sonam-Gyatso/TBRC_P1468. Accessed June 20, 2019.

⁴⁰ The Tongkhor lineage produced two lines of reincarnation. One is in Kham and the other is in Amdo. The Tongkhor Tashi Lhunpo is in Kham (TBRC G1552), recorded in the Chinese-language texts as Donggu si. It was converted into a Geluk monastery by the posthumously recognized first Tongkhor Trülku.

⁴¹ Tsehua, "The First Zhabdrung Karpo, Tsoknyi Gyatso," *Treasury of Lives*, accessed November 06, 2017, <http://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/First-Zhabdrung-Karpo-Tsoknyi-Gyatso/6670>. Date unavailable, but the second Zhabdrung Karpo was recognized in 1613, which indicates that the First Zhabdrung Karpo Tsoknyi Gyatso died some years before then.

⁴² Holochi was variously recorded as Ho lo chi, Kho lo chi, Kholochi. W. W. Rockhill, "The Dalai Lamas of Lhasa and their Relations with the Manchu Emperors of China, 1644-1908," *T'oung Pao*, 11. (Leiden, Brill, 1910), 5. Rockhill states that he was known as the the Manjusri Hutuktu of Köke-Khota in Mongolia, Ahmad, 1970, 157.

⁴³ Tsehua, "The Second Zhabdrung Karpo, Lodro Gyatso," *Treasury of Lives*, accessed May 16, 2019, <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Second-Zhabdrung-Karpo-Lodro-Gyatso/6667>

⁴⁴ Kam, 1994, 81. David Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in The Governance of The Ch'ing Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38, no. 1 (1978), 19-20; Samuel Grupper, "The Manchu Imperial Cult of the Early Ch'ing Dynasty: Texts and Studies on the Tantric Sanctuary of Mahākāla at Mukden," Ph.D. Dissertation, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1980, 147-148.

second Zhapdrung Karpo Lodro Gyatso was active among the Tümed Mongols in 1639. If this is not the case, then the first Zhapdrung Karpo propagated religion in Mongol lands with a separate lineage sharing the same epithet. The latter possibility is less likely because the title of Chahan nominhan was granted to Lodro Gyatso, the Amdo-originated Zhapdrung Karpo line. A local Mongolian line of reincarnation different from the first Zhabdrung Karpo would not likely have received the same title from the Dalai Lama. In any case, this line of reincarnation played an important mediating role in the Qing's Inner Asian politics. The second Zhapdrung Karpo Lodro Gyatso took another trip (or resumed the aborted mission?) to Tibet and returned east before 1646, shortly after the Manchus moved their capital to Beijing, having defeated the Ming troops.⁴⁵ Both Buddhist vanguards continued their legacy through the institution of reincarnation and laid the foundation for a cluster of Amdo-based Geluk prelates in negotiations between the Geluk Buddhist government and the Manchu Qing in later centuries. The institution of reincarnation enabled the Mongol patrons to refashion their identity within the Buddhist realm. Meanwhile, it also helped sustain the growth of Geluk School with patrons whose familial genealogy and religious genealogy converged.

At the time of the third Dalai Lama's death in 1588, Geluk Tibetan Buddhism under these new Mongolian patrons' auspices had established a firm base among the southern and eastern Mongols, having its center in Köke Khota and translation work on-going there and among the Kharachin, with temples further afield in Khalkha and Khorchin territory.⁴⁶ Before his death in 1582, Altan Khan had sponsored many temples and translations at Köke Khota, the capital of his region, and this work was to flourish under his sons and grandsons.⁴⁷ In 1585, the third Dalai Lama came to the Ordos and Tümed regions at the request of Altan Khan's son. Apparently, translation work continued in Köke Khota and in the Kharchin territory under the leadership of Siregetü guosi chos rje and Ayusi guosi respectively, probably to the end of the century and possibly beyond.⁴⁸ These nodal points attracted all walks of life in Mongol lands, whose continuous interest and support for Tibetan Buddhism further contributed to the growth of Geluk School in Inner Asia.

⁴⁵ Ahmad, 1970, 164.

⁴⁶ Heissig, 1966, 28-32.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 28-9.

Farther East to Chakhar Mongol Ligdan Khan's and the Manchu Courts

In this section, we will situate the relocation of particular Tibetan Buddhists within specific geopolitical contexts. Although these individuals played important roles in Ligdan Khan (1588-1634)'s court in the southern Mongolian region of Chakhar, each of them eventually left for the nascent Manchu Jin power further east in Mukden (modern-day Shenyang, Liaoning Province). The shifting location of their bases illustrates the historical contingency of the growth of Geluk power.

Shortly after coming to Tibet in 1603, the fourth Dalai Lama sent "the re-incarnation of Chamba-gyats'o, who became known among the Mongols as Maitri [Maitreya] Hutuketu" to be his representative in Köke Khota.⁴⁹ Sometime around the turn of the seventeenth century, a certain Maidari [Maitreya] from the Tümed Mongols went to Tibet in the hope of bringing a learned Buddhist teacher back to Mongol lands to recite Tibetan canonical texts in the Tibetan language; it is unclear whether this was the same person, called the Maidari Hutuktu, who turned up in Mongol regions in the first decade of the seventeenth century and was actively involved with various Mongol leaders.⁵⁰ In 1614, an Ordos prince exchanged titles with Maidari Hutuktu, who was thereby granted the title: "Yekede Asarakchi nom-un khaghan" (Tibetan: Rgya chen Byams pa chos rje).⁵¹ In addition, later Mongolian sources also record that a lama with the title of Maidari Nomun [Tib. chos rje] Khaghan consecrated Ligdan Khan sometime between 1604 and 1617.⁵² This initiation suggests that either the khan himself or the lama representative (which is more likely) was, even before the fourth Dalai Lama's death, moving between the Tümed capital of Köke Khota

⁴⁹ Rockhill, 1910, 6. This name refers to Maitreya, the future Buddha; "Byams pa" in Tibetan also refers to Maitri, as in Maitreya. We are aware of the confusion and complexity centering on the Maitreya in a Buddhist's title, and we hope to contribute to the debate on the political implication of this title. See Heqiyeletu, "Zangchuan Fojiao Hutuketu Zhi Xian Kao Shi (A Study of the Kutuktu Title in Tibetan Buddhism)," *China Tibetology*, Beijing: China Tibetology Center, 1997, vol. 3, 37-44.

⁵⁰ Zhaqisichen and Haier Baoluo, *Yi wei Huofo de zhuan ji: Mo dai Ganzhuerwa Hutuktu de zi shu* (An Autobiography of the Last Kangyurwa), Taipei: Lianjing Press, 1986.

⁵¹ Samuel Grupper, "Manchu Patronage and Tibetan Buddhism during the First Half of the Ch'ing Dynasty," *The Journal of the Tibet Society*, vol. 4. Bloomington, 1984, 66. Source: *Erdeni yin tobchi*.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 109-110. Grupper's source is the anonymous seventeenth century *Sira tuquji*. For another source, see Grupper, 1984, 81-3: *Altan kürdün mingkhan gegesütü bichig*, which was written by Siregetü Guosi Dharma in 1739. It must be remembered in this context that the author of the text was a Geluk Buddhist writing in the time of his school's triumph in Mongolia. Nevertheless, this initial contact is mentioned without emphasis and is followed by a clear reference to a Sakya monk who was prominent at Ligdan Khan's court.

(modern Hohhot) and the Chakhar region to the northeast.⁵³ If these sources may be trusted, then Ligdan Khan's first recorded contact with Tibetan Buddhism was with a representative of the fourth Dalai Lama.⁵⁴

The colophon of a text that Walther Heissig discovered credits the translation of the text to a Maidari da yigung dayun güding guoshi, elsewhere called Daigüng sikü guoshi. As this translator is described as a contemporary of the aforementioned companion of the third Dalai Lama, Siregetü guosi chorji (last mentioned in 1620⁵⁵) it is chronologically possible that Maidari Hutuktu and this translator are one and the same person.⁵⁶ If this identification is accurate, then we may begin to answer questions raised by Heissig's explorations of the colophons of early Mongolian translations of the Tibetan canon. Although his research does not reveal the definite presence of any single monk in both settings, Heissig demonstrates that the names of translators active at the Tümed court of Köke Khota through the beginning of the seventeenth century appear (again) in the colophons of works that were attributed to Ligdan Khan's sponsorship in 1628–9.⁵⁷ If the later Mongolian sources that record the meeting between Maidari Nomun Khaghan and Ligdan Khan in the early part of the seventeenth century can be trusted, their evidence helps pose part of an answer to Heissig's questions by establishing a connection between the Tibetan Buddhists in

⁵³ Serruys, 1967, 102-3, 111. If this Lama and his companion Joni Corji (Tibetan: chone chos rje), were moving among the Chakhar Mongols prior to 1617, this would be the first firm date attested for envoys of the Dalai Lama to be moving so far north and east since the third Dalai Lama's visit to this region. The 1631 reappearance of "the Darkhan Chos-rje of Co-ne" as a pilgrim in the company of a huge group of Mongols visiting central Tibet does much to confirm the above association, see Ahmad, 1970, 110. Darkhan is a Mongolian term for a person free of taxes, such as a clergy member, see Kam, 1994, 127. Thus, this additional title marks the intimacy of his interaction with the Mongols.

⁵⁴ It is possible that the third Dalai Lama may have had close enough association with some Sakyapa to merit him entrusting them as his representatives. However, as Sakyapa affiliation is often clearly marked in Mongol sources, it may be safe to assume that he was Gelukpa, given his mission. Further research would have to consider Richardson's description of the relations between the Geluk School and Ligdan Khan. However, his research is quite outdated and obviously erroneous about many details of the Mongol affiliations with Tibetan schools, Hugh Richardson, "The Karma-pa Sect. a Historical Note," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, parts 3 & 4. [1958]: 157

⁵⁵ Heissig, 1966, 130-1. Also see András Róna-Tas, "The Mongolian Version of the Thar-pa chen-po in Budapest, ed. Louis Ligeti, *Mongolian Studies*, Amsterdam, B. R. Grüner, 1970, 457-9. This also places him at the capital of Altan Khan's successors, Köke Khota, modern Hohhot.

⁵⁶ The connection is unfortunately based only on the name of a Buddha, Maitreya, which might have been shared by many people. See Heqiyetu, 1997, 41.

⁵⁷ Heissig, 1966, 130-1.

Köke Khota and those at Ligdan Khan's court. In addition, this meeting and the possibility of Maidari's later participation in Ligdan's project complicate the relations that may have existed between Sakyapa and the Dalai Lama's representative in the entourage of Ligdan Khan.

These translation activities were to be crucial in the extension of Tibetan Buddhism to Mongolian regions.⁵⁸ During his tour of Mongolia, the Dalai Lama apparently sent images of the Buddha to Abudai of the Khalkha, which were enshrined in the Erdene Juu, one of the earliest known Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Mongolia (est. 1585). In 1586, Lozang Zangpo—a Sakya lama—was sent by the third Dalai Lama to consecrate this temple in his stead.⁵⁹ With him came Siregetü guosi chorji, who was involved with the translation school founded in Köke Khota. The next year, the Dalai Lama extended his visit into the domain of the Kharchin further east, where another school for translation was set up.⁶⁰

How did Tibetan Buddhism come to the Manchu's capital near Mukden, present-day Shenyang in northeastern China? An inscription, dated 1630, registers the building of a stupa to honor the first recorded Manchu court contact with a Tibetan lama active in Mongol regions. The Uluk Darkhan Nangso Lama submitted to Nurhaci in 1621, along with his dependent Khorchin Mongols.⁶¹ The Uluk Darkhan Nangso Lama passed away shortly after arriving in the Manchu court. In 1630, a stupa was built to house Uluk Darkhan Nangso Lama's remains at the request of a certain "Bai Lama."⁶² The 1620s are a significant yet under-explored decade in pre-conquest Manchu history. Even though Ligdan Khan was credited with sponsoring the translation and printing of the Buddhist canon Kangyur, the Kharachin and Bagharin Mongol communities—the very locations of the costly project—had deserted

⁵⁸ Heissig, 1966, 130-1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 27. He does not cite his source for this specific detail. This may well be the result of some later Geluk School's reinterpretation of history.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 28. In 1586 the third Dalai Lama went even further afield to the region of the Khorchin Mongols, north of the Liao River and east of the Khinghan range, to consecrate a temple at the invitation of their khan (32).

⁶¹ A document in the *Manwen laodang* (The Old Manchu Chronicles) dated 1622 records that this lama had visited twice before 1621, see Yuxin Zhang, *Qing Zhengfu yu Lama Jiao* (Qing Government and Tibetan Buddhism), Xichang: Xizang Renmin chubanshe, 1988, 208-209; Eveline Yang, "Oluk Darhan Nangso," *Treasury of Lives*, accessed June 10, 2019, <https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Oluk-Darhan-Nangso-/13075>.

⁶² Zhang, 1988, 105. Tak-Sing Kam, "The dGe-lugs-pa Breakthrough: The Uluk Darhan Nangso [Nangso] Lama's Mission to the Manchus," *Central Asiatic Journal*, vol. 44, no. 2 (2000): 161-176. Li Qin-Pu, "B-a Lama and the Establishment of Buddhism from Tibet in the Ch'ing Dynasty," *Journal of the Institute of Modern History*, Taipei: Academia Sinica, Issue 30 (Dec., 1998): 65-100.

Ligdan Khan.⁶³ In fact, the Kharachin had officially concluded an alliance with the Manchus by 1628.⁶⁴ Ligdan Khan's downfall received little sympathy in Geluk historical writings. One widely-known account portrayed his fall from grace as the repercussions from his defying the established ruling practice, antagonizing allies, and ultimately collaborating with those persecuting the Geluk Buddhists.⁶⁵ Indeed, the Geluk sources possess a certain bias, since Buddhists across sectarian boundaries suffered from the loss of sponsorship in the political turmoil.

Ligdan Khan was close to Sharba Hutuktu, who was his religious advisor and perhaps involved in the Buddhist canon translation and printing project. But his name was not recorded in the editions of the Ligdan Khan-sponsored translations of Buddhist canons. The omission of this leading figure puzzled scholars, who concluded that Ligdan Khan fell into dissension with his close confidants like Sharba Hutuktu.⁶⁶ The Uluk Darkhan Nangso and Bai Lama's flight to the Manchu power was no doubt caused by Ligdan Khan's ambition of unifying and reviving the Mongol power under his leadership.⁶⁷ The incorporation of Tibetan Buddhism into the Manchu state was thus historically contingent but its legacy, the adaptations by both Tibetan Buddhists and Manchu rulers, remained versatile for several centuries.

The possible connection between a Tibetan lama originally present in Tümed territory with the Chakhar Ligdan Khan detailed above may well have another parallel in the person of Kunga Ozer (Kun dga' 'od zer) Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita. This figure's personal name supports a connection with the Sakya School because the personal name of one of the school's most distinguished scholars, Sakya Pandita, was Kunga Gyeltsen (Kun dga' rgyal mtshan). This possible link to the Sakya School indicates a contested process of establishing patronage for Tibetan Buddhists among the Mongols. Much about the Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita remains unknown. His positionality may shed light on the relations of Tibetan Buddhists with the Manchu rulers in Mukden after the fall of Ligdan Khan in 1634. This period was most difficult to account for the continued presence of the Tongkhor Mañjuśri Hutuktu, as the appearance of a Kunga Ozer Mergen

⁶³ Heissig, 1966, 122-123.

⁶⁴ Johan Elverskog, 2006, Chapter 1, "The Mongols on the Eve of Conquest," 14-39. Heissig, 1960, 28. But Heissig's assessment of the state of Tibetan Buddhism among the Kharachin seem contradictory.

⁶⁵ Ho-Chin Yang, *The Annals of Kokonor*, Bloomington, Indiana University, 1969, 32-3.

⁶⁶ Heissig, 1966, 123. Róna-Tas, 1970, 479 n. 97. Heissig and Róna-Tas disagreed on whether Sharba Hutuktu was a special case, but both suggested there was broad resentment towards Ligdan Khan in his court.

⁶⁷ Walther Heissig, "A Mongolian Source to the Lamaist Suppression of Shamanism in the 17th Century," *Anthropos*, 48 (1953), 495.

Mañjuśri Pandita at the court of Ligdan Khan can only very tentatively be linked with the earlier Köke Khota figure describe above. Nonetheless, the institution of Buddhist reincarnation remained a dynamic mechanism in the Qing's Inner Asian politics. The break of a single incarnational lineage in this period did not remove powerful Buddhists from the political maneuverings.

Although the sons and grandsons of Altan Khan are said to have continued to patronize Tibetan Buddhism, their support may have become too unstable after the crisis in 1607 described above, which would leave another decade unaccounted for in this turbulent period. The only active support on record for the period beginning in the 1620s is the inscription from the Chakhar imperial complex at Chaghan Suburga from 1626.⁶⁸ For the decade between 1617 and 1626, the context of Tibetan Buddhism at the Chakhar court can be accurately characterized as Sakya in its sectarian orientation.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, when the translation work for which Ligdan Khan is so famous for sponsoring took place, no distinction between sectarian affiliation is evident. The translation of the 1,100 texts attributed to Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita and his team of thirty-five scholars is said to have been the result of just two years of work, from 1628 to 1629. Heissig's queries as to the role of certain Köke Khota translators in this process are pertinent here: "How had these learned monks and translators come to work for Ligdan Khan in eastern Mongolia lands twenty or thirty years later? Or did he simply take credit for their work?"⁷⁰ Heissig clearly suspects the latter, and demonstrates some instances of the process, but he hesitates to say anything definitive.⁷¹ The meeting of Maidari Hutuktu and Ligdan Khan, discussed above, suggests that contacts between the Tümed Tibetan Buddhists and the Chakhar were indeed ongoing. Thus, the possibility remains that the Tongkhor Mañjuśri Hutuktu from Köke Khota is the same as Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita of the Chaghan Suburga translation project's colophons.

The fact that the association with Tongkhor is not attested in the colophons is not surprising, given the length of time that had passed since his first arrival in Mongolian country and the altered situation. After the death of the fourth Dalai Lama, there is no further mention of the Tongkhor lama as an important juncture of communication between the Mongols and Tibetans. The Tibetan Buddhists in Mongol regions may well have been on their own through these years, especially the

⁶⁸ Grupper, 1984, 65.

⁶⁹ A.M. Pozdneyev, *Mongolia and the Mongols*, vol. 1. (Bloomington, Indiana University, 1977), 238-63.

⁷⁰ Heissig, 1966, 131.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 132.

followers of Tsongkhapa, as there was fighting in Central Tibet from 1610 to 1621, and at least between 1634 to 1637 Amdo (and Kham) were controlled by rulers hostile to the Geluk School.⁷² In any case, the use of the proper name (Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita) rather than an associated place name (Tongkhor Mañjuśri Hutuktu) may just reflect the different contexts in which the name was preserved. The colophon would be more likely to preserve the personal name, while common usage often seems to have been more oriented to place names and titles.⁷³ So, although the association with the bodhisattva Mañjuśri is the only obvious similarity in the names, there are other indications that these two names might refer to a single figure or incarnations in the same lineage.

The 1638 inscription of the Shisheng (“Real Victory”) Temple includes the story of the movements of the famed Mahākāla statue to its destination in Mukden. How and when did the cult of Mahākāla worship become a Geluk practice? This is perhaps the least understood aspect of sectarian contestations in the sixteenth century.⁷⁴ Many of the seventy plus forms of Mahākāla were established by the Sakya school, but later became important protective deities (dharmapālas; chos skyong) of the Geluk school.⁷⁵ The institutional transformation of this cult of Mahākāla worship remains largely unexplored. But its association with the Geluk school likely started at the time of the third Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso. In 1558, he granted a Mongol official living north of Lhasa (in ’Dam) with “the authority of entrance into the Mahākāla tradition, at which time his appearance was wild, and he appeared in the form of Mahākāla to the official himself.”⁷⁶ Moreover, some twenty years later when Sonam Gyatso met with Altan Khan, he destroyed the shamanistic images of the Mongols with a ritual fire in the presence of Mahākāla.⁷⁷ Given the centrality of the Mahākāla Cult to the Mongols and the Manchus, it is important to point out that the Shisheng Temple was the first one built in the so-called “Mahākāla Complex” in Mukden. Even though the Shisheng Temple’s inscription does go into some detail as to the origins of the Mahākāla image, the statue is hardly central to the monastic complex named after the deity. Architecturally, the building housing the Mahākāla statue is smaller than the main hall, and

⁷² Ahmad, 1970, 101-17.

⁷³ Other examples of this form of nomenclature are abundant in the Mongol sources, for example in the biography of Altan Khan: Stag lung (place name) *nang so* (title).

⁷⁴ On Shisheng Temple, see Yumiko Ishihama, “A Comprehensive Study of Imperially Sponsored Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries in Early Qing,” *Manzokushi Kenkyū* (*Journal of Manchu and Qing Studies*) 6 (December 2007): 1–39.

⁷⁵ De Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet: The Cult and Iconography of the Tibetan Protective Deities*, (Kathmandu, Tiwari’s Pilgrims Book House, 1993), 38.

⁷⁶ Sperling, 1992, 742.

⁷⁷ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, 1982, 192, n. 2.

off the central axis. Other temples within the Mahākāla complex were each associated with a particular deity, all of which were doctrinally distinct from Mahākāla, rather than being part of an entourage to complement the monastic complex.⁷⁸

This temple was built, possibly under the direction of a monk who had been at Ligdan Khan's court, to commemorate the Manchu success over the Chakhar Mongols and to house the Mahākāla statue brought by Mergen lama.⁷⁹ The latter part of the inscription reads as follows, "At the request of Sharba Hutuktu, it was transferred to the realm of Chakhar's Ligdan Khan, the descendant of [the Mongols] of the Great Yuan Empire, and was worshipped [there]. After the benevolent Magnanimous Harmonious Holy Khan of the Great Qing Empire subjugated the Chakhar nation, its tribesmen all came to surrender. At this juncture, the Holy Emperor heard of Mergen lama's coming to submit with the Mahākāla [statue], [he] made the lamas welcome [Mergen] with protocol and had [the statue] installed west of Mukden city."⁸⁰ Since his former patron Ligdan Khan had turned against his own family and people and driven away his lamas, Mergen lama (likely Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita), who maintained possession of this important image, turned to the victors, the Manchus, for patronage. It stands to reason that an imminent figure would possess such an image and seek to use it to his own advantage and for those he represented, just as did the son and widow of Ligdan Khan, who are said to have tendered the Yuan seal as a token of their loyal submission to the Manchus. Although the name Mergen, a Mongol epithet of Mañjuśri,⁸¹ is again the only obvious connection with Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita, the circumstantial evidence for the identity of this Mergen lama with Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita is reasonable and certainly possible.

To understand his position at the Chakhar court, a brief review of the prominent lamas and translators at the Chaghan Suburga is helpful. Sharba Hutuktu became Ligdan Khan's court chaplain in 1617 when he first consecrated the khan. At this time, "he founded a temple and a monastery and consecrated an image of Śākyamuni and other [images],

⁷⁸ Zhang, 1988, 201.

⁷⁹ The satellite temple designs, started in 1643, were entrusted to Biligtü Nangso. Mergen Lama was welcomed, by order of the Khan, by Biligtü Nangso, for more see Grupper, 1980, 141. Grupper seems to imply that this Biligtü Nangso was present at Chaghan Suburga with Sharba Hutuktu and Mañjuśri Pandita, but he does not indicate his sources, see Grupper, 1980, 95.

⁸⁰ Kam, 1994, 139. Later Chinese sources interpret Mergen Lama's arrival as due to his understanding that the "fortune of Heaven" was shifting to the Manchu nation.

⁸¹ Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in the Governance of the Ch'ing Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*. vol. 38, no. 1. Cambridge, MA Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1978, 12-13, n. 21.

and assembled translators headed by Gūngge oser (Kun dga' 'od zer) to translate with ease the *Kanjur*.⁸² Heissig further describes the situation as, "Thirty-five Mongolian and Tibetan scholars and monks under the leadership of Kunga Ozer are reported to have translated the 1,100-odd works from Tibetan into Mongolian."⁸³ Róna-Tas goes into some detail on the extensive colophon references to Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita, including his Tibetan origins and the fact that he worked on these translations together with Sharba Hutuktu.⁸⁴ All of these details support the assessment that this figure was of major importance at the Chakhar court and a close associate of Sharba Hutuktu. Thus, when a "Mergen lama" is designated as responsible for the transfer of the Mahākāla statue to the Mukden court, it is plausible to conclude that this is the same person that figured so prominently at the Chakhar capital. In addition, the 1638 inscription reveals, for the first time, that the image was first brought to Ligdan Khan by Sharba Hutuktu. As Kunga Ozer Mergen Mañjuśri Pandita worked closely with this person and is the only other prominent figure mentioned at the Chakhar court, it is likely that the responsibility for leadership of its Buddhist community would fall to him.

Conclusion

These Tibetan Buddhist vanguards discussed here showcase the diversity and complexity of this period. This short list of eight names is by no means complete. But we hope to stress the gradual and contested process through which the Tibetan Buddhists gained a foothold in Mongol regions and eventually were embraced by the Manchu court in Mukden. The process had a long-lasting impact on how the Manchu Qing imperial rulers envisioned a multicultural empire within which Tibetan Buddhism played an important role. By focusing on the period between 1576 and 1638, we show the origins of the presence of Tibetan Buddhists that were influential in shaping Qing imperial policies. Furthermore, we hope to call into question the notion of rigid sectarian boundaries in this early period and raise questions regarding assumed tensions between different schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Such tensions became crystallized as the Geluk Ganden Podrang grew increasingly powerful in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But in spite of this, political engagements went beyond sectarian

⁸² From the anonymous *Sira tughuji*, see translation in Grupper, 1980, 110.

⁸³ Heissig, 1966, 125.

⁸⁴ Róna-Tas, 1970, 477 and 479; Grupper's translation of *Altan kirdün mingghan gesüitiü bichig* 1980, 83,

boundaries.⁸⁵

The years between 1576 and 1638 were marked by a matrix of Buddhist missionaries, the decline of Mongol political power, and the rise of the Manchus. We hope to rekindle a discussion of the multifaceted interaction among all these groups and to expand the temporal scope of research to an earlier time so as to reconsider the shifting geopolitical history of Inner Asia beyond the purview of Qing China. The sporadic individual-driven journeys to the east by these eight Buddhist vanguards took place under specific historical circumstances that preceded the rise of the Manchu Qing and the Gelukpa hegemony. In the post-conquest phase of the Qing, it was upon this foundation that Qing emperors and the Ganden Podrang developed their imperial and religious agenda.

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⁸⁵ For a Nyingma envoy of the Geluk's fifth Dalai Lama in Nepal, see Michael Monhart, "Seeing All as One, Mediating between Gods, Humans, and Demons: The Travels of Katok Tsewang Norbu 1749-1751" (MA. Thesis, Columbia University, 2011).

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Game Changers of the Tibetan Buddhist Political Order in Central Asia in the Early Eighteenth Century¹

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Introduction

 To comprehend the way Tibet's Buddhism shaped the political structure and diplomacy in Asia in the early 18th century, it is indispensable to go back to the developments during the late 17th century and explore the leading political figures and their visions and governing strategies. Therefore, this article will begin with a brief historical sketch of this turbulent period, outlining the power dynamics and leadership competition between the Mongols, the Manchus, and Tibet. The relations between these three entities during that time were described by those involved in terms of "preceptor-patron"² (*mchod yon*), "son of heaven and barbarians who are his subjects",³ and

¹ The author wishes to thank Professor Ulrike Roesler from the University of Oxford and self-trained researcher Angela Clyburn for their insightful comments and corrections. I am deeply grateful to these two wonderful scholars, who are always there, ready to help and offer academic guidance.

² The notion of preceptor-patron or *mchod yon* relations is a centuries-old Tibetan Buddhist approach to international relations in the Tibetan Buddhist world order. In the beginning, the idea was just about the relationship between religious leaders/institutions and their political/financial patrons in Tibet. However, in the 13th century, Sakya lamas introduced the concept to explain their relationship with the Mongol Khans of the Yuan dynasty, which broadened the scope of this terminology to describe the relationship between a Tibetan Buddhist master (*mchod gnas* or preceptor) and a foreign political leader (*yon bdag* or patron). This became the standard approach of the Tibetan Buddhist government to their foreign relations policy. Throughout Tibet's medieval history, the government managed their ties with other states through preceptor-patron relations, in which the patron was not only a financial supporter but also a protector. "*Rang rnam du ku la'i gos bzang*" by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama (2014, Vol-I, pp. 67-73) explains in detail Tibet's spiritual relationship with the Mongols and the Qing based on this Buddhist worldview. See further Cüppers (ed) 2000 and Norbu 2001.

³ The concept of Son of Heaven (*Tiān zǐ*) originated with the ancient Zhou dynasty, and it became the sacred title for the Chinese emperors throughout history. The Mandate of Heaven (1997) explains how the idea of "Son of Heaven" empowered rulers and legitimised his rule in China and barbaric regions. Regarding the Chinese classical texts, there are Four Barbarians (*sì yí*), referring to various non-Chinese people bordering China: Eastern Barbarians (*dōng yí*), Southern Barbarians

the “dual system of politics and religion”.⁴ In practice, these multi-faceted relations can also be interpreted in terms of mutual interest-oriented relations. This article will discuss how these relations played out in the late 17th century and how this set the scene for the developments in the early 18th century.

Upon the victory in the Tibetan civil war, Gushri Khan offered the thirteen territories (*khri skor*) of Tibet and his entire family lineage to the great Fifth Dalai Lama at bSam 'grub rtse palace in gZhi ka rtse, the capital city of the gTsang pa dynasty. The great Fifth Dalai Lama, previously merely a leading figure of a religious school among several others, suddenly became Tibet's real head.⁵ In the following years, the Dalai Lama gradually became the sole authority in terms of both spirituality and temporal influence in Tibetan and Mongolian societies. Gradually, Buddhism became more and more popular among the Manchus and northern Chinese people as well. The Kangxi emperor did not exclusively adopt Tibetan Buddhism, but he acknowledged the Dalai Lama's authority, “considering the fact that all the Tibetans and Mongols obeyed the words of the Lama [the great Fifth Dalai Lama]”,⁶ and thus began to build Buddhist diplomatic relations with Tibet. During that period, Tibet-Mongol relations were different from Tibet-Qing relations, which were again different from Qing-Mongol relations, as will be demonstrated.

The Tibetan government, which was mainly run by spiritual leaders, enjoyed high influence in neighbouring countries because the Tibetan Buddhist soft power created a new legal and diplomatic order of international relations in Central Asia and beyond.⁷ This Tibetan Buddhist order of governance was beneficial in solving various social

(*nán mán*), Western Barbarians (*xī róng*), and Northern Barbarians (*běi dí*). These four barbarians are the distant subjects of the Chinese emperors, who are born to serve the Chinese emperors. Erica Brindley has explored this notion in the article, “Barbarians or Not? Ethnicity and Changing Conceptions of the Ancient Yue (*Yuè*) Peoples, ca. 400–50 BCE” (Brindley 2003). Throughout the centuries, the imperial Chinese foreign policy remained rooted in this old notion of “the Son of Heaven and the barbarians, who are the subjects.” See further Pamela Crossley's article in “Sacred Mandates” (2018).

⁴ Generally, a dual governing system of religious and secular rule is familiar in many parts of the world. However, there are always variations from one system to another when it comes to the practical approach. In the Tibetan context, the dual system (*chos srid zung 'brel*) has three broad implications. First: a government, which is administered based on Buddhist principles. Second: a government, its spiritual and temporal head is one Buddhist person. See further information Dung dkar Rin po che's work “*Chos srid zung 'brel skor la dpyad pa*” (2014) and David Seyffort Ruegg's article about *yon mchod* (1995).

⁵ Karmay 2003, p. 72.

⁶ Rockhill 1910, p. 14.

⁷ Boltjee and Praag 2020, pp. 59-62.

and political conflicts peacefully: the Mongols negotiated major internal conflicts through Tibetan lama-mediators, and the Manchus pacified the Mongols at their northern border with the help of Tibetan Lamas. The dGa' ldan pho brang government at the time was still working on unifying the remaining Tibetan territories under their rule and making peace with other political and religious rivals. However, their unique dual governing system was adopted in many countries, which changed central Asia's political landscape.⁸

The political leaders involved in this Tibetan Buddhist political world order in Asia contributed significantly to the developments of the social, cultural, and political events in the early 18th century in Tibet. This article, therefore, analyses these game-changers of the central Asian political world.

Mongol Leaders Under the Wing of dGe lugs School

The Khoshut Mongols

Regarding the Khoshut Mongols in central Tibet and Amdo Kokonor regions, Gushri Khan (1582-1654), the founder of the Khoshut-Tibetan army, who had died three years before, was succeeded by his elder prince bsTan 'dzin rdo rje in 1658 and the Dalai Lama gave him the title of Tenzin Dayan Khan.⁹ Some scholars argue that Gushri Khan alone had real power, but his descendants "had been the King of Tibet in name only"¹⁰ except lHa bzang Khan. After Gushri Khan, the Khoshut Mongol kings' influence in Tibet had, indeed, begun to decline rapidly and finally disappeared. According to the 18th-century scholar Sum pa mkhan po, there are several reasons: first, Tenzin Dayan Khan had neither charisma nor legacy like his father. Second, unlike during his father's time, the great Fifth Dalai Lama's prestige surpassed that of other leaders such as the Khoshuts. Third, the Khoshut leaders were facing constant internal conflict regarding hierarchy and territory both in Central Tibet and in Amdo Kokonor areas.¹¹ Tenzin Dayan Khan, unfortunately, untimely passed away in 1667.

In 1671, four years after Dayan Khan's death, dKon mchog bstan 'dzin, the younger prince of Gushri Khan, became the Mongol Tibetan Khan with the title of dKon mchog bstan 'dzin Dalai Khan.¹² Conversely, some Tibetan government documents, dKon mchog bstan

⁸ Brook, Praag and Boltjee 2018, pp. 99-100.

⁹ Shakabpa 2010, p. 361, and lNga ba Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 2014, P. 433.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 359.

¹¹ Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1994, p. 67, and Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1989, pp. 89-103.

¹² Shakabpa 2010, p. 378.

'dzin Dalai Khan was the oldest prince of Tenzin Dayen Khan and Gushri Khan's grandson.¹³ Regarding the general tradition of Mongolian throne succession, dKon mchog bstan 'dzin should be the biological son of Dayen Khan, but that is not always the case for Mongol Khans in Tibet, which may have caused deviations from the regular system of father-to-son succession. Like his predecessors, dKon mchog bstan 'dzin Khan "did not interfere in political matters at all, but provided leadership for the Mongolian army, in case the Tibetan government needed them."¹⁴ Since 1683, after the great Fifth Dalai Lama's death, the sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705) dominated the power of Tibetan government, and the Mongol-Tibetan Khan did not have much space to exercise his influence. After almost three decades in the position, dKon mchog bstan 'dzin Khan became sick in 1700 and passed away at the end of the same year.¹⁵ The Khan did not have any strong political alliance among the Tibetan aristocrats. However, during his last years in the position, he built a good relationship with the purist dGe lugs pa leader 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. This relationship with the purist leader became the backbone of the power struggle for his son and successor lHa bzang Khan.

The Eastern Mongols

For the Khalkhas, Chahars and Kokonor-Khoshut Mongols, Tibet was a sacred land and a political power source. Whoever had better support from the dGa' ldan pho brang was able to enjoy a higher status in Mongolian society. The Mongols, especially those from the Kokonor and Khalkha regions, developed a custom of paying a visit to Central Tibet at least once a year to make donations to Tibetan Lamas, politicians, and monasteries, to earn both religious merits and political benefits. Keeping a high status in the Tibetan political hierarchy was extremely important for Mongol chieftains for their status back home. The 18th-century scholar, Thu'u bkwan Chos kyi nyi ma, vividly narrated the catastrophic revolt of Qingwang Blo bzang bstan 'dzin in 1723 that caused the massacre of an entire Dzungar tribe because of a seating arrangement discord between the Mongols and Manchu officials in 1720.¹⁶

Moreover, Mongolian aristocrats had a popular tradition to send their sons, even sometimes daughters, to Tibet to study Buddhism and build a relationship with Tibetan Lamas and political leaders. The

¹³ bKa' drung nor nang pa 1981, f. 35a.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 359.

¹⁵ bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, f. 77a.

¹⁶ The'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma 1911, ff. 36b-48b and the work of Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1989, PP. 67-78.

great Fifth Dalai Lama explained in *the biography of the Third Dalai Lama* that the ruthless and wild Mongols converted into faithful and compassionate people under the Buddha's blessing.¹⁷ Knowing this phenomenon, the 19th-century Russian scholar and explorer Nikolai Przewalski argued, "Buddhism to be a religion that sapped vitality and hindered progress" of the Mongols.¹⁸ However, famous Dzungar leaders such as dGa' ldan Khan and Tse ring don drub studied and were trained in Buddhism at bKra shis lhun po monastery in Tibet but they later became aggressive leaders of historical importance. Gushri Khan was also a well-known religious practitioner and undefeated military leader at the same time. Tibetan Buddhism Perhaps did not "sap the vitality" or "hinder the progress" of the Mongols, but it brought some changes in Mongolian society, as the Tibetan Buddhist dual system replaced the existing political-legal order in Mongolia.

In the late 1690s, certain Manchus and Dzungars attempted to create discord between the eastern Mongols and the Tibetan government under the leadership of sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho because of the rumours created by the purist dGe lugs followers.¹⁹

The Biography of the Sixth Dalai Lama says:

"You [Manchus/Dzungars] have to fight with us first if you want us to go against Tibet. We [the Mongols] and the Tibetans are the same Lama's adherents. Thus, if we break our spiritual bond, the protector deities will punish us."²⁰

Despite the attempts of the Manchus and Dzungars under the influence of the purist dGe lugs followers, the Mongols generally never betrayed Tibet and Tibetan Lamas because of the deeply rooted cultural, spiritual and political relationship between Tibet and the Mongols. Tibet thus enjoyed an unmatched position of dominance among the Mongols both in terms of politics and spirituality.

¹⁷ INga ba ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 2014, pp. 78-82. The Great Fifth Dalai Lama elaborated the Third Dalai Lama's work and how he re-converted the "wild Mongols" into faithful Buddhist followers. Also see "*Mu li chos 'byung*" (1992, PP. 126-132) by the 18th-century historian, Ngag dbang mkhyen rab, who narrated the same story to praise the influence of the Dalai Lama.

¹⁸ Perdue 2005, p. 104.

¹⁹ Purist dGe lugs followers believe in the purity of the dGe lugs tradition and maintain that it should be an exclusive and dogmatic school because they regard the dGe lugs school as superior to the other Buddhist traditions in Tibet. There were influential figures in both political and religious spheres of dGa' ldan pho brang who belonged to this group.

²⁰ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1989, p. 723.

The Oirat Mongols

According to early European scholars such as Peter Simon Pallas (1741-1811) and I. Ia. Zlatkin (1635-1758), most of the Oirats were unified under the Dzungar leader Erdeni Batur, but recent scholars such as Miyawaki Junko argued that the true unification of the Oirats as a Khanate occurred only in 1678 under the charismatic leader dGa' ldan dpal bzang Khan (1644-1697),²¹ the fourth son of Erdeni Batur. He had studied Buddhism in Tibet, but upon hearing the assassination of his elder brother Sangs rgyas (Sengge) in 1670, dGa' ldan abruptly renounced his monastic vows and went back to Dzungaria. At home, dGa' ldan quickly took charge of the Dzungar leadership and killed Ochirtu Chechen Khan, the murderer of his brother Sangs rgyas. For the Oirat Mongols, the most difficult challenge was that they could not claim the title of Khan because in the Mongolian tradition, only patrilineal biological offspring of Chinggis Khan could assume this title.²² However, in 1678, the great Fifth Dalai Lama conferred Boshotktu Khan's title on dGa' ldan, which made him the undisputed Khan of the Dzungars. During that time, only the great Fifth Dalai Lama had the power to confirm or rearrange the hagiarchy of Mongol leadership. Gradually, dGa' ldan Khan expanded the Dzungar state into the most significant empire in Central Eurasia in the late 17th century.

While the Manchus were busy fighting against the last Ming forces, the three factions of feudatories in southern China, dGa' ldan Khan rapidly rose in power. He began to extend his influence from the Western to the Eastern Mongols. In the beginning, the relationship between the Kangxi emperor and dGa' ldan Khan was friendly and respectful – they exchanged lavish gifts and made a special concession for each other in terms of trade. The two influential leaders had several small quarrels since the 1670s. However, the direct confrontation began to develop only later because of two incidents during the time of conflict between Tusiyetu Khan and Jasaktu Khan, the leaders of two powerful tribes from eastern Mongolia: First, in 1686, the rje btsun dam pa Khutukhtu had disrespectfully sat directly across the Dalai Lama's representative at the Kuleng Barqir meeting and dGa' ldan Khan strongly criticised the behaviour of the Khutukhtu. Secondly, Tusiyetu Khan, the brother of the Khutukhtu, launched a surprise attack on the army of dGa' ldan's allies in eastern Mongolia and killed dGa' ldan's younger brother.²³

During those occurrences, Kangxi openly supported Tusiyetu Khan

²¹ Perdue 2005, p. 104.

²² Perdue 2005, p. 104.

²³ *Ibid*, pp. 144-151.

and the Khutukhtu, which led to a direct clash between Kangxi and dGa' ldan Khan. Some Qing documents treat those encounters as dGa' ldan's strategy of dominating all Mongol people.²⁴ However, the Jesuit Jean-François Gerbillon (1654–1707) who had travelled widely in Mongolia and Manchuria and was an eyewitness to this clash, argued that dGa' ldan's main motive was simply to take revenge for his brother's death.²⁵ Unlike the above two arguments, dGa' ldan himself repeatedly claimed that his actions were taken to protect the Dalai Lama's prestige.

dGa' ldan's personal letter to the Dalai Lama and the Kangxi emperor raised the claim:

"Since Gush Nomun Khan, we four Olod [Oirats] have also been patrons of the Dalai Lama. We[Mongols] have each lived peacefully and separately in our lands. We have not waged war against the Jebzongdanba Khutukhtu or Jasaktu Khan. They [r]Je btsan dam pa] failed to respect the Dalai Lama's representative, causing great turmoil."²⁶

In the Qing-Dzungar war, the Kangxi personally led massive military campaign to fight against dGa' ldan Khan and his Dzungar followers. In the beginning, Kangxi did not have confidence that he could win the war. Thus, he appealed to the Dalai Lama repeatedly to advise dGa' ldan and act as a mediator between the two rivals and attempted to invite the Fifth Panchen Lama to Peking. At the same time, the Qing diplomatically persuaded the other Mongols and Muslim leaders from the oasis towns of Hami and Turfan to support their fight.²⁷ Furthermore, Kangxi also signed treaties with the Russian emperor to make

²⁴ Ibid, p. 149.

²⁵ Gerbillon 1735, pp. 121–134. Gerbillon's travel accounts are compiled in "*A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese-Tartary*", edited by Du halde.

²⁶ *Dà qīng lìcháo shǐlù* 2012, Vol-5, p. 67. For the translation from Chinese, Perdue's translated work was used (2005, p. 197). This vital collection of official documents, short title *Qīng shǐlù* (Veritable records of Qing dynasty) is a chronologically arranged collection of so-called "veritable records", the essential proclamations, issued during the Qing period (1644-1911), through 11 reigns, and in 12 parts including the *Mǎnzhōu shǐlù* (the veritable records of Qing people).

²⁷ The Muslims from oasis towns such as Hami and Turfan are originally Turkic Muslims who had arrived there in the 9th to 10th centuries from the Middle East. In the 13th century, they were integrated into the Mongol Empire and thus became a part of Chagatai Khanate for centuries. When the Dzungar Empire became dominant in this region, many Muslim rulers such as king Afaq Khoja became puppets of the Dzungars. However, during the Dzungar-Qing war, the Muslims supported Kangxi and submitted under Manchu's power. Later they launched a few rebellions to free themselves from the Qing but failed. See further the work of the 18th Century scholar Wèiyuán's work "Shèng wǔ jì", Vol-IV and James Millward's work (Millward 2007).

Russia as an ally and to weaken Russia's close relationship with the Dzungars. Finally, the Manchu Qing court even convinced the rival Dzungar leader Tshe dbang rab brtan, the nephew of dGa' ldan, to back up the Qing military campaign against dGa' ldan Khan. However, as discussed before, the Qing desperately failed to terminate Tibet's close relationship with dGa' ldan Khan because dGa' ldan Khan's relationship with Tibet and Tibetan leaders were deeply rooted in culture and intimate connections.

On 4 April 1697, dGa' ldan Khan suddenly died at Aca Amtatai, a land between Kara Usu Lake and Khobdo.²⁸ Both Danjila, a brother and the best general of dGa' ldan, and Cembu Sangbu, dGa' ldan's trusted doctor, confirmed that dGa' ldan died of natural causes. But the Kangxi emperor insisted on keeping his own prediction that dGa' ldan would commit suicide because it was "Heaven's Will", the ideal narrative of Confucianism. Qing court historians, thus, had to fabricate the suicide narrative to support their emperor.²⁹ The short-time relief of the Qing empire was disrupted again when two new leaders of the Dzungars formed another Dzungar empire. The first leader was the above-mentioned Tshe dbang rab brtan (r. 1697–1727), head of the new Dzungar empire who allied himself with the Qing court to destroy dGa' ldan. The second leader was Tshe ring don grub, the foremost general of the new Dzungar military force, who also happened to be a former monk from bKra shis lhun po monastery in Tibet. The new Dzungar leaders were very close to the purist dGe lugs lamas in Tibet who caused a catastrophic political disaster in Tibet in the early 18th century.

IHa bzang Khan and the Purist dGe lugs followers

IHa bzang klu dpal (c.1660-1717) was the second prince of bsTan 'dzin Dalai Khan, and later became the 4th Mongol Tibetan Khan in central Tibet. He also had an elder brother called bsTan 'dzin dbang rgyal. IHa bzang studied in Lhasa with other aristocratic children and became a learned scholar in classical Tibetan studies.³⁰ Petech said that "IHa bzang was a man of character and energy, who was ambitious for

²⁸ Wēn dá 1994, Vol-II. p. 66. These Qing official historical records were published in two volumes, as they had been in their original form. They include documents related to Kangxi's military campaigns in north-west China such as Dzungaria and eastern Mongolia.

²⁹ Wēn dá 1994, Vol-II. p. 66-67.

³⁰ bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, ff. 26a-31b. *The biography of the 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa* reported some occasions while the sDe srid and IHa bzang Khan had intellectual debates about Buddhist philosophical doctrines. Like many other Mongol elites, IHa bzang was a highly learnt scholar.

power and position"³¹ and Peter Schwieger³² supported the claim, but there is no efficient evidence to prove this narrative. However, the purist dGe lugs pa leaders strategically supported lHa bzang Khan and made him a potential competitor of the sDe srid,³³ which caused the Khan became more ambitious and greedier for political power. At that time, sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho was still the dominant leader of Tibet and his government had a very inclusive policy toward all religious traditions in Tibet including Bon, unlike the exclusive idea of the purist dGe lugs pas. Therefore, the purist dGe lugs followers desperately wanted to destroy the sDe srid by allying with the Mongol Tibetan leader lHa bzang Khan and form an exclusive dGe lugs pa government.

In 1699, a family quarrel between bsTan 'dzin dbang rgyal and lHa bzang klu dpal, the two princes of bsTan 'dzin Dalai Khan, for inherited family property became more and more confrontational. The sDe srid, as the leader of Tibet, initiated the negotiation: He diplomatically settled the conflict and divided the family estate among them. lHa bzang was then sent to the Kokonor region with the share of his estate and tax revenues.³⁴ During that time, the Qing just defeated dGa' ldan Khan and attempted to establish their permanent influence in Amdo Kokonor region. Thus, the Amdo Khoshut leaders found themselves in a position of uncertainty about their future. lHa bzang seemed critical of the Kokonor Mongol leaders visiting the Kangxi emperor when the latter invited Amdo Mongol leaders.³⁵ lHa bzang had almost faced civil war with Kokonor Mongol leader mGon po over their argument on the relations between the Qing and Amdo Kokonor Mongols.³⁶ Because of all these reasons, lHa bzang failed to build a bridge of trust and friendship with his relatives who were leaders in Amdo Kokonor region.³⁷

In 1700, King bsTan' dzin Dalai Khan became ill, and passed away approximately on 13 December 1700 in his home, Lhasa but this date is attested in the early 18th-century biography of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa.³⁸ Petech, on the other hand, recorded the date as January 1701, which is based on Qing documents,³⁹ it is because the Qing court

³¹ Petech 1972, p. 10.

³² Schwieger 2015, p. 116.

³³ bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, ff. 90ab-92a.

³⁴ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1989, p. 611.

³⁵ Petech 1966, pp. 268-269.

³⁶ Petech 1966, pp. 268-269.

³⁷ Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1992, pp. 215-220 and see further Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1989, p. 68.

³⁸ bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, ff. 56b-57a.

³⁹ Petech 1966, P. 270.

perhaps did not receive the information of the Khan on time. Regarding the succession, Zha sgab pa claims that since the elder prince bsTan' dzin dbang rgyal was in Mongolia as an adopted prince, lHa bzang, the younger prince was invited from Amdo Kokonor region and formally enthroned him as the 4th Mongol Tibetan Khan in central Tibet in 1703.⁴⁰ Contrarily, Petech and Tucci claim that bsTan' dzin dbang rgyal, the elder prince of Dalai Khan, became the Khan after his father's demise in 1701, but was poisoned by his younger brother lHa bzang klu dpal in 1703.⁴¹ However, according to primary Tibetan materials, it is clear that bsTan' dzin dbang rgyal had nothing to do with either the poisoning or the adoption narrative.

The Biography of the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, written in the early 18th century, vividly recorded:

"In the Iron Dragon year [1700], the prince bsTan' dzin dbang rgyal was seriously ill for a long time due to an evil spirit. He was completely paralysed and could neither speak nor move soon after; the prince passed away."⁴²

The First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad himself visited the sick prince and performed rituals for his recovery⁴³ but the former was died of sickness in 1700. Besides, by comparing the biographies of the Fifth Panchen Lama and the 'Jam dbyangs zhad pa, it became clear that the prince, bsTan' dzin dbang rgyal, had died earlier than his father, Dalai Khan, who died in the December of 1700. Thus, the title of Mongol Tibetan Khan was naturally bestowed on lHa bzang who had recently returned from Amdo Kokonor region. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that lHa bzang formally became the Khan only in 1703, after three years of his father's demise. *The Autobiography of the Fifth Panchen Lama* notes, "this year [1703] I sent my chamberlain [to Lhasa] to take part in the celebration of the prince lHa bzang's enthronement to become the king."⁴⁴ In most cases, Mongol Tibetan khans were formally entitled as Khan only after several years of each predecessor's passing, depended on the sDe srid or the Dalai Lama who had to lead enthronement ceremony.

Most of the modern Tibetan scholars have general perspective that, from the beginning of 1700, lHa bzang "did not intend to tolerate any

⁴⁰ Zhwa sgab pa 1976, 473. I quoted from both Tibetan and English(translated) versions of Shakabpa's history book because there are interesting differences between two. I have referred him as Shakabpa for his English version and Zhwa sgab pa for the Tibetan one.

⁴¹ Petech 1966, p. 270. and Tucci 1980, p. 77.

⁴² bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, ff. 76a-77b.

⁴³ bSe ngag dbang bkra shis n.d, ff. 76a-77b.

⁴⁴ PaN chen blo bzang ye shes 1999, p. 340.

longer the powerless state to which the Qoshot [Khoshut] chiefs had sunk. At once, he began to show activity and interest in Tibetan affairs, which portended a revival of the almost absolute paramountcy of his family."⁴⁵ However, the argument is problematic because there had no record of lHa bzang's activities against the sDe srid before the former joined with the purist dGe lugs pas. lHa bzang seemed to know well that he did not have any reliable supporters in central Tibet. Moreover, many aristocrats in Lhasa wanted to get rid of Mongol influence from central Tibet. Elliot Sperling argued that "the relatively few Mongols in Tibet, like the relatively few British in India, were highly dependent on personnel."⁴⁶ lHa bzang initially relied heavily on good relations with the Tibetan government, but he became increasingly aggressive in the power struggle against the sDe srid after the purist dGe lugs pas began to support him. lHa bzang was the first Mongol Tibetan king who fought against the existing dGa' ldan pho brang power and the last Mongol Tibetan Khan in Tibet descended from Gushri Khan, who enjoyed the highest political power.

Kangxi's relationship with the Tibetan Buddhist lamas

In the 1670s, with his grandmother's help, Dowager Xiao Zhuang, Kangxi (1654-1722) was successful in gaining power from four regents. Kangxi grew up with the Shamanic culture brought to Peking by his ancestors, but he learnt the Chinese language and culture and mastered the Confucian classics. Kangxi began to rule China by using Chinese institutions and Confucian ideology, but he remained faithful to his Manchu culture. Shamanic rituals were essential to the Qing rulers for maintaining their ethnic roots and separate identity, but Confucian ideology helped the Kangxi emperor to administer the empire and gave him legitimacy among the Chinese. Kangxi also had a close connection with Tibetan Buddhism, which helped him dealing with the Mongols and Tibetans, and recent scholars have argued that he gradually became devoted to Tibetan Buddhism.⁴⁷ In addition to his mili-

⁴⁵ Petech 1972, p. 10.

⁴⁶ Sperling 2014, p. 197.

⁴⁷ According to *the biography of the lCang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan*, he explains the devotion of the Kangxi emperor in Tibetan Buddhism, and Buddhist philosophy and tantric empowerments. Also see the brief biography of lCang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan in *Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdu*. pp. 359-363.

tary talents, Kangxi was also a liberal cultural man who brought cultural diversity to the Qing empire.⁴⁸

Generally, Kangxi was an open-minded and dynamic leader; he was interested in various scholarly fields such as geometry, mechanics, astronomy, cartography, optics, medicine, music and algebra from other civilisations, and the emperor sponsored many scholarly and professional projects in the country.⁴⁹ He highly admired Christian Jesuits and their specialised skills, and he offered them various levels of positions with different tasks at his court. Jesuit cartographers were encouraged to draw China's first map, and Jesuit physicians became Kangxi's personal doctors. Moreover, some Jesuit astronomers worked at the imperial calendrical bureau, and Jesuit fathers with linguistic skills became imperial interpreters.⁵⁰ Kangxi, however, did not tolerate the attempts of Christian missionaries to dominate Manchu and Chinese culture, and he firmly rejected the proposal of the Pope in Rome to appoint an emissary to Peking. Kangxi also opposed the Jesuits' attitude of refusing to offer respect to Manchu and Chinese traditions, and he commanded Jesuits and other missionaries to agree with "the definition of Confucian and ancestral rituals" he himself had formulated.⁵¹ The emperor had a similar approach toward Muslim chieftains and Russian Orthodox leaders; he was happy to accommodate them in his empire as long as they were respectful to the local traditions and norms.⁵² Personally, there is no record that the emperor embraced any of these religions.

Regarding the Tibetan Buddhism, Kangxi personally wrote many copies of, among others, the Heart Sutra, Diamond Sutra, Medicine Sutra and Lotus Sutra for over 30 years. He often visited Mount Wu Tai Shan and built temples because he was described as the manifestation of lord Manjushri and Chakrasamvara.⁵³ Tibetan Lamas at the court gave him such perspective of himself and of the Tibetan Buddhism.⁵⁴ Kangxi exchanged titles with Buddhist Lamas from Tibet and Mongolia, such as the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama and rJe btsun dam pa Khutukhtu. Peter Perdue argued that Kangxi had no genuine commitment to Tibetan Buddhism beyond his political engagement

⁴⁸ Spence 1974, p. XX. During the early period of the Qing dynasty, they adopted the classical Chinese philosophies and traditions, and embraced selective outside traditions such as central Asian shamanistic traditions and Tibetan Buddhist studies for, perhaps, both religious and political purpose.

⁴⁹ Spence 1974, p. XVIII.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. XVIII.

⁵¹ Spence 1974, p. XIX.

⁵² Elliott 2001, pp. 120-121.

⁵³ ICang skya ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan n.d, ff. 19a-20b and from the same author ff. 34a-36a.

⁵⁴ ICang skya ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan n.d, ff. 15b-16a.

because: firstly, he had a sceptical approach toward the Mongols' obsession with Tibetan Lamas and offering of their whole family wealth to Tibetan Lamas and monasteries.⁵⁵ Secondly, Kangxi mercilessly massacred many high Lamas in the Chahar revolt in 1675 and executed Ilagukesan, the head Lama of the Dzungars, by slow slicing.⁵⁶ However, Kangxi spent fortunes to produce the woodblock print of Buddhist canons and volunteered to build significant temples in many places in China. Kangxi also employed many Tibetan Buddhist lamas to perform rituals for his royal family and to dispel his personal misfortunes. Most importantly, he had a Buddhist royal priest to whom he offered great respect. Kangxi never had such an intimate relationship with any other religions at Peking.

Some scholars, however, have argued that Kangxi's relationship with the Tibetan Buddhism was just for diplomacy because he kept many Buddhist lamas at the Qing court and let them perform various rituals to improve his imperial image and influence among Tibetan and Mongolian people.⁵⁷ Knowing the influence of lamas, Kangxi often sent his royal court lamas as mediators to solve conflicts among the different Mongol tribes. V. Uspensky argued that "it was the policy of Qing ... to communicate with each group [of the Mongol tribes] in a manner that was meaningful to them."⁵⁸ For example, the Tibetan scholar Sum pa mkhan po described how in 1697, Kangxi used the Tibetan lCang skya Lama to summon Amdo Kokonor Mongol leaders and built political alliance with them by offering titles and gifts.⁵⁹ There are many such examples where Tibetan lamas played crucial role in empowering the influence of Kangxi. Without examining this unseen power dynamics, some scholars such as Petech jumped to the conclusion that "this audience of 1697, followed by another in December 1703, meant the establishment of Qing suzerainty over the Kokonor Qosots",⁶⁰ but this is obviously an overestimated claim. Apart from giving titles and seals, it appears that Qing had no actual authority over the Mongols in Amdo Kokonor in the late 17th century. This becomes clear from the fact that after meeting with the Kangxi emperor, the Mongols from Amdo Kokonor dispatched their representatives to Lhasa to consult with Tibetan leaders whether they should

⁵⁵ *Qing sheng zǔ shǐlù* 2008, Vol-5. p. 25. This is one of the most elaborate collections of Qing official documents ever recorded in history. The original documents are compiled in hundreds of volumes, but later all the documents were published in 60 volumes. These books contain the records of almost everything about the Qing court and Qing emperors throughout their dynasty.

⁵⁶ Perdue 2005, P. 204.

⁵⁷ Schwieger 2015, pp. 113-114.

⁵⁸ Uspensky 2003, p. 107.

⁵⁹ Sum pa ye shes dpal 'byor 1989, pp. 836-837.

⁶⁰ Petech 1966, p. 269.

continue the direct relations with the Qing court.⁶¹ Thus, in spite of the attempts of the Qing court, the influence of the Tibetan Buddhist government was still more powerful, and the Kokonor Mongols sought approval from Tibet to continue Mongol-Qing relations.

Throughout the Qing and Dzungar war, both Kangxi and dGa' ldan Khan consistently tried hard to keep Tibet's support and the Dalai Lama on their side. The emperor dispatched several envoys to invite the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama to Peking to increase the Qing's soft power among the Mongols and reduce Tibet's relations with the Dzungars. Kangxi personally appealed to the Dalai Lama:

"My goal is to dissolve the contention between Khalkha and Olod [Oirat] and create peace. If you [the Dalai Lama] can send Lamas to Galdan[dGa' ldan Khan], urging him to make peace, he will follow your orders."⁶²

At the same time, the Dzungar leader, dGa' ldan Khan, repeatedly claimed that he was fighting "for the Dalai Lama's soul by destroying their [Manchu's] devils",⁶³ and for protecting Buddhist faith. dGa' ldan was very close to the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. In return, the Lamas also treated him specially. The 17th-century Chinese scholar Liang Fen remarked that the Dalai Lama "was very fond of him [dGa' ldan] although the Lama [the Dalai Lama] has so many close students. People are not allowed to stay around when the Dalai Lama and dGa' ldan are in private conversations."⁶⁴

Therefore, both sides were keen to bring the Dalai Lama, the sDe srid and other high-ranking Buddhist leaders on their side to legitimize their interventions and secure the support of more Mongol leaders for their mission. However, neither side succeeded in drawing the sDe srid entirely to their side and the Dalai Lama died at the time without the knowledge of the Dzungars and the Manchus. The Qing court often complained that "the Dalai Lama appeared to diverge from Qing emperor's goals",⁶⁵ but neither the Qing nor the Dzungars had the power to give a command or influence the Dalai Lama and the Sde srid. In 1697, dGa' ldan Khan suddenly died, and Kangxi finally prevailed but the sDe srid still kept a balanced diplomatic approach between the Qing and the Dzungars without becoming the Qing empire's puppet.

⁶¹ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1989, pp. 312-313.

⁶² *Dà qīng lǐcháo shǐlù* 2012, Vol-II. p. 62. For the translation from Chinese, the translated work of Perdue was used (2005, pp. 150-151).

⁶³ *Wēn dá* 1994, p. 20. Translation is mine.

⁶⁴ *Liáng fèn* 1782, p. 519.

⁶⁵ Perdue 2005, P. 152.

The sDe srid and His Political Strategy

sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705) was the sole political leader of the Tibetan dGa' ldan pho brang government from 1679 to 1705. The Dzungars, under the leadership of Tshe dbang rab brtan, had spread slander accusing the Dalai Lama of being "the natural father of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho."⁶⁶ Alexander Csoma de Koros and Giuseppe Tucci were the first western scholars to agree with the Dzungar narrative of the father-son biological relationship between the Fifth Dalai Lama and the sDe srid.⁶⁷ Early Chinese scholars also agreed this claim.⁶⁸ However, Elliot Sperling and 'Jigs med bsam grub accurately dismissed the claims by using both Tibetan and Qing official sources.⁶⁹ They explained that the great Fifth Dalai Lama embarked on his journey to Peking on 15 March 1652, and he arrived back in Lhasa on 8 October 1653. In total, the journey of the Dalai Lama took nineteen months. The mother of Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho never left Lhasa and gave birth to Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho in July 1653.⁷⁰ Thus, the claimed biological relationship would only have been possible if the baby had stayed in his mother's womb for nineteen months!

However, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho grew up in the circle of dGa' ldan pho brang aristocrats and became a charismatic leader and versatile scholar. He became the Fifth sDe srid (regent) of Tibet by order of the great Fifth Dalai Lama at the age of twenty-six in 1679.

The Autobiography of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama records the Dalai Lama saying:

"I am now becoming older and older and cannot handle both religious and political matters. Apart from you, I do not have hope and belief in anyone to carry out my legacies. Thus, you do not have permission [to avoid this responsibility] unless you decide to ignore me."⁷¹

Then, the great Fifth Dalai Lama declared in a public proclamation that all "my followers and adherents should respect and listen to sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho as you have been doing to me."⁷² For Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, the great Fifth Dalai Lama's endorsement became the backbone of his power for the next twenty-six years of his political

⁶⁶ sLe lung bzhad pa'i rdo rje 1985, ff. 183a-183b.

⁶⁷ Koros 1834, p. 191 and Tucci 1980, p. 77.

⁶⁸ Wáng yáo 1980, pp. 191-192.

⁶⁹ Sperling 2014, p. 214, and 'Jigs med bsam grub 2016, and see via online.tibet3.cn.

⁷⁰ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1990, p. 819.

⁷¹ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1990, p. 201.

⁷² lNga ba ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 2014, Vol-3. p. 201.

reign as a Tibetan leader.

The great Fifth Dalai Lama passed away on the 2nd April 1682, three years after Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho was appointed as the political leader of Tibet in 1679. On his deathbed, the Dalai Lama gave his final advice to the sDe srid and other top leaders of the dGa' ldan pho brang government. The sDe srid later recalled this event in his biography of the great Fifth Dalai Lama:⁷³

"We were kindly advised on how we [the Tibetan government] were to maintain the relations with the Mongols and Qing. The compassionate one [the great Fifth Dalai Lama] also signified the vitality of keeping his death in confidentiality. Thus, we were strictly guided to do the daily chores and duties as if he was still alive ... He also permitted us that for uncertain [government] decisions, we could consult the prophecies of the La mo oracle⁷⁴."

Most of the contemporary Tibetan sources, such as the autobiographies of the Fifth Panchen Lama⁷⁵ and Sle lung Bzhad pa'i rdo rje⁷⁶ and the biography of the 48th abbot of the dGa' ldan monastery⁷⁷ agreed with the sDe srid's narrative, which suggests that hiding the great Fifth Dalai Lama's death was his own guidance. However, official Qing documents⁷⁸ several times accused the sDe srid of fabricating the story for his own political benefit. Some early scholars, such as Sarat Chandra Das⁷⁹ and Rockhill⁸⁰ follow Qing's narratives and blame the sDe srid. Observing the whole context, it is clear that the events were complex and the motivations of the sDe Srid could have been mixed. Thus, it is obviously hard to describe the occurrences in black and white.

Due to the conflicting narratives, scholars of Tibetan Studies have voiced different opinions regarding this matter: Ahmad⁸¹ and Goldstein⁸² argued that the sDe srid concealed the death of the great Fifth

⁷³ Ibid, Vol-3. p. 45.

⁷⁴ During the 17th to 18th centuries, the Lamo oracle was the Tibetan government's primary deity oracle. The Tibetan government and the Dalai Lama often received official consultations or advice from the Lamo Oracle. The Great Fifth Dalai Lama himself composed ritual prayers for the Lamo oracle and wrote the history of Dpal ldan lHa mo and her historical relationship with Tibet. See his book "*Cho ga dang bskang gso'i skor bzhuvs so*" printed as a block print by rNam rgyal Monastery.

⁷⁵ PaN chen blo bzang ye shes 1999, pp. 58-60.

⁷⁶ sLe lung bzhad pa'i rdo rje 1985, ff. 78b-79a.

⁷⁷ Grags pa mkhas grub 1945, ff. 17b-18a.

⁷⁸ *Dà qīng lǐcháo shǔlù* 2012, Vol-II. p. 98.

⁷⁹ Chandra 1905, p. 89.

⁸⁰ Rockhill 1910, pp. 26-27.

⁸¹ Ahmad 1970, p. 76.

⁸² Goldstein 1997, p. 10.

Dalai Lama to prevent possible disturbances among the Mongols and the Tibetans. Van Schaik viewed the event as a strategy to "protect his [the sDe srid's] own power position."⁸³ Tucci remarked that the sDe srid used the plan to allow "Tibet to choose its future alliance between Qing and the Dzungars."⁸⁴ Schwieger claims that the sDe srid applied this strategy to unite all the Mongols and Tibetans under a dual government system.⁸⁵ Of course, each of these scholars has made their own share of assessment to prove their claims. However, it still remains difficult, or perhaps impossible, to verify the authenticity of the sDe srid's claim and his real intention. Regarding this matter, two things are very clear: Firstly, if the great Fifth Dalai Lama did not give him the advice, the sDe srid made the most dangerous decision of keeping the great Fifth Dalai Lama's death secret to keep stability in either his power or Tibet's relations with the Mongols and the Manchus. Secondly, it is remarkable that the sDe srid was able to persuade the top Tibetan officials to keep the secret of the great Fifth Dalai Lama's death for the last 14 years.

In the 1690's, the Qing court repeatedly complained about Tibet's support for the Dzungars under dGa' ldan Khan⁸⁶ and also about the fact that Kangxi's invitations to the Fifth Panchen Lama and the Sixth Dalai Lama to visit Peking were repeatedly declined.⁸⁷ The problem was that the Qing invited the Panchen Lama through the dGa' ldan pho brang instead of contacting the Panchen Lama's office directly. Indeed, for more than a decade, the Qing court did not know two basic facts about Tibetan internal politics or the significance of the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy: Firstly, the foreign diplomacy of the Tibetan Buddhist government was based on a non-aligned approach, which helped them to maintain their influence on both parties, such as the Mongols and the Manchus. Secondly, Tibet's internal political power structure was different from that of the Qing empire or the Mongols; Tibet had a nominal head of the state but very flexible internal autonomous governance structures and leaders who were, at many levels, ruling their territories.

Kangxi became restless and angry about the sDe Srid's deeds when he heard the rumour of the Dalai Lama's death from captured Dzungar soldiers.⁸⁸ Richardson argued that the subterfuge surrounding the

⁸³ Schaik 2011, p. 129.

⁸⁴ Tucci 1980, p. 76.

⁸⁵ Schwieger 2015, p. 220.

⁸⁶ Perdue 2005, pp. 140-201.

⁸⁷ Rockhill 1910, p. 26.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 26.

great Fifth Dalai Lama's death "was a diplomatic discourtesy and perhaps unnecessarily secretive."⁸⁹ As a result, Sperling claimed that "[the relations between] the Tibetan administration in Lhasa and Qing court was irreparably damaged"⁹⁰ due to concealing the death of the great Fifth Dalai Lama. However, these arguments do not provide a complete picture of the story. Indeed, the concealing of the Dalai Lama's death and the refusal of Kangxi's invitations for Tibetan Lamas created suspicion,⁹¹ but the underlying problem was the sDe srid's non-compromising foreign policy toward the Qing and the Mongols. The Qing official documents repeatedly complained about Tibet's foreign policy and distrust of the Qing⁹² because, as mentioned before, they simply did not comprehend the non-aligned foreign diplomacy of the Tibetan Buddhist government.

However, in 1696, the sDe srid diplomatically disclosed the death of the great Fifth Dalai Lama to Qing and Mongol leaders to secure their support,⁹³ followed by a public announcement of both the great Fifth Dalai Lama's death and the birth of the Sixth on the same day. The 18th century autobiography of Sle lung Bzhad pa'i rdo rje recorded Lhasa people's praise to the sDe srid:

"Through all the years that the omniscient great Fifth Dalai Lama has not been alive, the suffering of people on earth and the political and religious burdens of the world have been placed on the shoulder of the Desi. Without knowing that the sun had set, we have seen its dawn."⁹⁴

According to the Manchu official documents, the angry Kangxi emperor dispatched his main messenger Pao Chu, who had just returned from Lhasa to Tibet to investigate the Dalai Lama's death and his incarnation matters.⁹⁵ However, not even single record was mentioned in both Tibetan and Manchu primary sources that the Qing officer Pao Chu conducted any sort of investigation in Tibet. More importantly, before completing the investigation, Kangxi again dispatched lCang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan, a Peking based Tibetan Head

⁸⁹ Richardson 2003, p. 559.

⁹⁰ Sperling 2003, p. 130.

⁹¹ *The biography of the Sixth Dalai Lama and the biography of the Fifth Panchen Lama* stated four invitations for the Panchen Lama and one for the Dalai Lama by the Kangxi emperor were refused in the late 17th and early 18th century due to various social and political reasons. Thus, neither of the Sixth Dalai Lama nor the Fifth Panchen Lama ever visited Qing court in Peking.

⁹² Rockhill 1910, pp. 24-26.

⁹³ sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1989, p. 567.

⁹⁴ sLe lung bzhad pa'i rdo rje 1985, ff. 56b-57a.

⁹⁵ *Dà qīng lǐcháo shǐlù* 2012, Vol-I. pp. 14-15.

Lama, to represent the emperor at the Sixth Dalai Lama's enthronement ceremony along with the Mongol representatives.⁹⁶ The reason was that both the Mongols and the Qing knew very well that the Tibetan authorities would organise the succession of the great Fifth Dalai Lama, whether outsiders had approved the new Dalai Lama or not. And once the new Dalai Lama was announced, all Tibetans and the Mongols would respect him as the great Fifth Dalai Lama's successor. Therefore, apart from its official claim, it is highly suspect that the Qing had done any actual investigation in Tibet. For the Qing, the claim is perhaps a political gesture of the empire to exaggerate their sphere of power influence. Many dynasties in China, especially Ming and Qing have a long culture of pretension to enlarge their power and achievements in the official documents.

Conclusion: Dramatis Personae in the Central Asia

The politics of Tibet and its relations with the Mongols and the Manchus in the late 17th and early 18th centuries were mainly centred around the leaders of the Mongols, the Manchus, and Tibetans. For the Mongols, the relationship with Tibet was not purely based on politics but was intertwined with culture and Buddhist religion. For the Manchus, the ties with Tibet were mainly from the top Manchu leaders, mainly for political strategy. The Mongols wanted the Dalai Lama and Tibetan leaders to solve their internal conflicts as mediators and confirm their titles and rankings because they did not have a single ruler who could command all the Mongols. The Manchus found the unmatched influence of Tibetan Lamas to pacify and negotiate with the Mongols advantageous, as the latter had often brought problems to the northern border regions of the Qing Empire. Qing emperors also used Tibetan lamas to recreate their divine images as Manjushri or Chakrasamvara to legitimise their rule among the Mongols and elsewhere.

The Tibetan Buddhist government, under the leadership of the sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, strategically maintained a balance in its relations with the Mongols and the Manchus to enhance their influence in both societies. The sDe srid's government used the great Fifth Dalai Lama's influence to ensure Tibet's power among the Mongols, and it managed to maintain relationships with Mongol leaders through both politics and religion. Regarding the Qing empire, the sDe srid's government retained the same mutually respectful relations that had been built between the great Fifth Dalai Lama and emperor Shunzhi. While Kangxi's influence began to increase among the eastern

⁹⁶ Petech 1972, p. 9.

Mongols and other periphery territories of Tibet, the sDe srid kept Tibet at a distance from the Qing and managed to maintain the eastern Mongols' loyalty toward Tibet.

The Dzungar Mongols played a huge role in complicating the relations between the dGa' ldan pho brang and the Qing empire in the late 17th and early 18th centuries for various political and religious reasons. dGa' ldan Khan's unwavering loyalty toward Tibet and his intimate relationships with Tibetan leaders such as the sDe srid made the Manchus suspect that Tibet might back up the Dzungars in the Dzungar-Manchu war in the 1690s. Nevertheless, in the numerous diplomatic correspondences with both Dzungars and the Manchus, Tibet firmly kept their non-aligned foreign relations position, which avoided provocations as well as close alliances with both neighbouring countries.

The dGa' ldan pho brang government's political power structure during that period was solely dependent on the internal power balance among the leaders of the dGa' ldan pho brang. Knowing the supporters of Lha bzang Khan and sDe Srid, it is clear that the major political decisions were highly dependent on the big dGe lugs monasteries such as 'Bras spung and Sera and their monastic leaders. Despite the visibility of Qing and the Mongols on the international stage, Tibet's Buddhist politics during that time was equally crucial in the power mechanism between these three worlds to shape the central Asian political landscape.

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Remarks on the term *tshad ma'i skyes bu* and the notion of novelty of valid cognition in the bKa' brgyud tradition

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The definition of valid cognition is usually explained in terms of the philosophical system it is a part of. This is however, not the only approach. Analyzing the bKa' brgyud tradition, I would like to show another approach, which throws some new light on our understanding of the definition of *pramāṇa* and the related notion of *tshad ma'i skyes bu*. I rely mainly on two texts that, so far, were not the object of any academic research in the West: the *Tshad ma rigs gzhung rgya mtsho*, the commentary to Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*, written by the 7th Karma pa Chos grags rgya mtsho, and the *sKye dgu'i bdag po la rigs lam* by rNam rgyal grags pa, who was the principal teacher [*yongs 'dzin*] of the 9th Karma pa dBang phyug rdo rje.¹

Buddha as *pramāṇa*

The Tibetan term *tshad ma'i skyes bu* has already attracted a lot of scholarly interest, it was however analyzed mainly within the dGe lugs tradition.² In the bKa' brgyud tradition, the term can be found in the *sKye dgu'i bdag po la rigs lam gsal byed*, which dates back to the second half of the 16th century. The book was written by Yongs 'dzin rNam rgyal grags pa for the 9th Karma pa dBang phyug rdo rje (1555–1603), as an introduction to the *pramāṇa* system, which in this tradition is to a large extent based on the *Tshad ma rigs gter*. Thus appearing in such a book the term must have been quite popular outside the dGe lugs system. Already, much earlier — at the end of the 15th century — it was also used by the 7th Karma pa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506) in his

¹ Between these two authors there is a gap in *tshad ma* literature in the bKa' brgyud tradition, which anyway was never interested in elaborating on *tshad ma*. A bit later the 6th Zhwa mar, Chos kyi dbang phyug (1584–1630), who wrote a short *tshad ma* text, meant as an easy to memorize introduction into Buddhist epistemology entitled *bsDus sbyor gyi snying po kun bsdus rig pa'i mdzod*.

² Cf. van der Kuijp 1999 and Steinkellner 1983 where it is shown that the term was introduced for the sake of combining *lam rims* theory with *tshad ma* theory. Jonathan Silk elaborated a lot on possible Indian sources of this term, cf. Silk 2002.

fundamental commentary to *Pramāṇavārttika* as a synonym of *pramāṇabhūta* [*tshad mar gyur pa*].³

At the beginning of the *blo rigs* chapter in his handbook, rNam rgyal grags pa puts the term *tshad ma'i skyes bu* in the context of an interesting division of *pramāṇa*. Thus he says:

Generally, concerning that *pramāṇa* there are the two: essential *pramāṇa* and exemplary *pramāṇa*. Essential *pramāṇa* is the embodiment of *pramāṇa* [*tshad ma'i skyes bu*]. Exemplary *pramāṇa* is direct perception and inference.⁴

The opening word “generally”, suggests that he considers this division quite common and for him as a follower of the bKa' brgyud tradition, the source of it is most probably the *Tshad ma rigs gzhung rgya mtsho* by the 7th Karma pa. Embodiment of *pramāṇa* – as I decided to translate the term *tshad ma'i skyes bu* for the reasons explained further – is literally called the essential *pramāṇa*. This essential *pramāṇa* is contrasted with an exemplary *pramāṇa*, which is just a copy, simile or exemplification of the original, real *pramāṇa*. The above statement that the embodiment of *pramāṇa* is the very *pramāṇa* or *pramāṇa* in itself, suggest that the genitive construction *tshad ma'i skyes bu*, should not be read so much as a phrase, where valid cognition is attributed to a person as his/her quality or feature, even though this is the most natural reading. We should rather understand it the same way as, for example, the genitive construction: *shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa* meaning the *pāramitā*, which is knowledge or the knowledge which is *pāramitā*. General *paramita*, that was specified with the term *shes rab*, turns out to be the knowledge itself and similarly a person is classified as somebody who literally is *pramāṇa*, no matter how strange it seems at first sight. Being quite a normal construction in Tibetan, *tshad ma'i skyes bu* however sounds a bit strange when translated into European languages: how can a man be called a means of valid cognition or even valid cognition itself? What can be easily said in Tibetan seems unnatural in translation, and that is probably why Ernst Steinkellner proposes to translate it not even as “a person of *pramāṇa*” but as “a person of authority”, even though he admits that a person is literally *pramāṇa*:

The genitive characterizing the compound is simply attributive; the word literally means, therefore, that the person (*skyes bu*) is a means

³ See quotation given later in the text from Karma pa (1999), p. 20. Go rams pa - also in the quotation given below - treats these two terms as synonyms as well.

⁴ rNam rgyal grags pa (2009), p. 88: *spyir tshad ma de la don gyi tshad ma dang dpe'i tshad ma gnyis/ don gyi tshad ma ni/ tshad ma'i skyes bu la byed/ dpe'i tshad ma ni/ mngon sum dang rjes dpag gnyis la byed.*

of valid cognition (*tshad ma*), and I translate the term as "a person of authority". The word designates the Buddha, of course, the authority par excellence and thus the final source and judge of any validity and usefulness in any kind of cognition.⁵

The text of rNam rgyal grags pa says even, that Buddha is not only a person who literally is *pramāṇa*, thus being *tshad ma'i skyes bu*, but also this embodiment of *pramāṇa* is again the very *pramāṇa*. Thus, the person of *pramāṇa* becomes less and less a person and more and more *pramāṇa* itself. In comparison to that very *pramāṇa* in itself, direct perception and inference are only lesser *pramāṇa*, an exemplary *pramāṇa* being just a reflection or mere shadow of the essential *pramāṇa*. What is usually considered to be *pramāṇa*, namely *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*, turn out to be mere resemblance of the original *pramāṇa* Buddha embodies. The text of rNam rgyal grags pa insists on taking Buddha as *pramāṇa* as literally as possible, not even as the source of the two types of *pramāṇa*, not even as an authority or point of reference, but as a real *pramāṇa* in itself (which unenlightened beings can only imitate imperfectly by way of *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*).

The approach of rNam rgyal grags pa (as a bKa' brgyud scholar) is most probably rooted in *Tshad ma rigs gzhung rgya mtsho* by the 7th Karma pa. Here we find a similar division in similar context with the explanation of the relation between the two types of *pramāṇa*. The 7th Karma pa says:

With the essential *pramāṇa* which is to be achieved there is associated a conventional *pramāṇa* as a means of achieving it. The particular case of faultless eye cognition grasping a form shows what is *pramāṇa*, since it is non-deceptive cognition [grasping] a form for the first time.⁶

The essential *pramāṇa* is contrasted here with a conventional one. In the case of the latter, the 7th Karma pa uses also the term *mtshan gzhi* having in mind a particular object referred to by the definition. That is probably the origin of the epithet "exemplary" referred by rNam rgyal grags pa to *pramāṇa* understood as *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*. The 7th Karma pa continues with the following description of Buddha as the ideal *pramāṇa*:

He knows directly all dharmas as objects to be cognized in what they are and how they are. Determining that one can successfully liberate all beings without exception because of having the unique

⁵ Steinkellner (1983), p. 276.

⁶ Karma pa (1999), p. 23: *bsgrub bya don gyi tshad ma de nyid sgrub byed tha snyed pa'i tshad ma dang sbyar na/ gzugs 'dzin mig shes ma 'khrul ba mtshan gzhi tshad mar mtshon/ gzugs la dang por bslu ba med pa can gyi shes pa yin pas so.*

consciousness which is non-erroneous, is the reasoning establishing that Bhagavān is valid cognition being the non-erroneous refuge. Or else, Bhagavān is *pramāṇa* [for the following reason:] he does not let beings make errors because of being familiar with great compassion that works for the benefit of all beings; he has abandoned two veils and showed the path to higher rebirths and unquestionable perfection which is the method of achieving the state of Sugata [which was not known before] recognizing the very nature. He obtained the unique cognition that has the power to protect from perversion from [the above mentioned states] and through diverse states of mind he acts for the temporal and ultimate benefit of beings. Having the ability to achieve the goal through the cause which is the path in its abundance, he is the stable and non-erroneous refuge.⁷

The term “essential *pramāṇa*” the 7th Karma pa used before refers, of course, to Buddha himself. In the non-erroneous way Buddha leads beings directly to the ultimate goal and thus is literally *pramāṇa*, which is essential and much higher than exemplary or conventional *pramāṇa*. Buddha is a perfect state of mind showing compassionately the way things ultimately are. Both *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* are mere similitudes of that state, thus not essential. Buddha as the essential *pramāṇa* is described by the 7th Karma pa as: full recognition of the Four Noble Truths that were not known before; he then continues “Here one has to add also the exemplary *pramāṇa* which shows what should be shown.”⁸ What should be shown is ultimately the state of Buddha. Exemplary *pramāṇa* leads to that state showing all that is needed for achieving it and once that state is achieved, the Four Noble Truths are revealed through the act of essential *pramāṇa* Buddha is capable of.

When the 7th Karma pa gives the whole list of the qualities that make Buddha *tshad ma'i skyes bu* and thus essential *pramāṇa*, none of them are an ideal form of *anumāna* and *pramāṇa*. This is in fact the approach of Dignāga, which is very different form that of Dharmakīrti (stressed very often in Tibetan commentaries):

⁷ Karma pa (1999), p. 23: *shes bya ji lta ba dang ji snyed pa'i chos thams cad mngon sum du mkhyen pa la bslu ba med pa can gyi shes pa khyad par can dang ldan pas na 'gro ba ma lus pa 'khor ba las sgröl ba'i don byed nus pa dngos po'i gnas tshul la grubs pa de ni bcom ldan 'das mi bslu ba'i skyabs gnas tshad mar sgrub pa'i rigs pa yin no/ yang na bcom ldan 'das ni tshad ma yin te/ 'gro na thams cad la phan par bzhed pa'i thugs rje chen po goms pa'i dbang gis 'gro ba rnam bslu ba med par rang nyid gyis sgrub gnyis spangs shing gnas lugs rtogs pa'i bde bar gshegs pa de thob pa'i thabs mngon mtho nges legs kyi lam bstan nas de'i mi mthun phyogs las skyob par nus pas can gyi shes pa khyad par can dang ldan cing bsam pa phun sum tshogs pa'i sgo nas 'gro ba'i gnas skabs dang mthar thug gi don thams cad byed/ lam sbyor ba phun tshogs kyi rgyu las don de thob nus par gnas pa de ni gtan du mi bslu ba'i skyob par grub pa'i phyir.*

⁸ Karma pa (1999), p. 30: *'di ni mtshon bya mtshon byed dpe'i tshad ma la yang sbyor bar bya ste.*

Generally according to the tradition of texts on reasoning [*rtog ge*] it means that first after identifying what is known as valid cognition for those that have a philosophical system and those who do not have one, there comes the moment for proving that the teacher similar to that is the embodiment of valid cognition; because after identifying that [valid cognition as] non-erroneous [*mi bslu*] clarifying of the object not known before, later it is said [by Dharmakīrti] that “Bhagavān that has it is valid cognition itself.”⁹

Here, Go rams pa summarizes the approach of Dharmakīrti from the *pramāṇasiddhi* chapter, where he first describes valid cognition and then claims that Buddha having the above mentioned qualities can be called *pramāṇa* (PV II 7 a). This is also the reason for Go rams pa to call him *tshad ma'i skyes bu*. Dignāga, however, gives another reason for calling Buddha *pramāṇa* or, as the 7th Karma pa would say, the essential *pramāṇa*:

Because of His perfection in cause (*hetu*) and effect (*phala*), is to be regarded as the personification of the means of cognition (*pramāṇa-bhūta*).¹⁰

And it is noteworthy that no type of *pramāṇa* is referred to in the explanation of this statement, in Dignāga's autocommentary which runs as follows:

‘Cause’ means perfection of intention (*āśaya*) and perfection in practice (*prayoga*). Perfection of intention means the [Buddha's] taking as His purpose the benefit of [all] living beings (*jaḡad-dhitaṣitā*). Perfection in practice means [His] being the [true] teacher (*śāstṛtva*) because He teaches all people. ‘Effect’ means the attainment of his own objectives (*svārtha*) as well as those of others (*parārtha*). Attainment of His own objectives is [evidenced] by [His] being *sugata* in the following three senses: (i) that of being praiseworthy (*praśastatva*), as is a handsome person (*surūpa*), (ii) the sense of being beyond a return [to *saiṃsāra*] (*apunar-āvṛtṭy-ārtha*), as one who is fully cured of fever (*sunāṣṭa-jvara*), and (iii) the sense of being complete (*niḥśeṣārtha*), as is a jar wholly filled (*supūrṇa-ghaṭa*). [...] Attainment of the objectives of others is [seen from His] being a protector (*tāyitva*) in the sense of [His] saving the world.¹¹

⁹ Go rams pa (2006), p. 45: *spyir rtog ge'i gzhung lugs las/ dang po grub mtha' la zhugs thams cad la grags pa'i tshad ma ngos bzung nas/ de dang 'dra ba'i ston pa tshad ma'i skyes bur bsgrub pa skabs kyi don yin te/ mi bslu ma shes don gsal ngos bzung nas/ de'i 'og tul de ldan bcom ldan tshad ma nyid ces gsungs pa'i phyir.*

¹⁰ Hattori (1968), p. 23.

¹¹ Hattori (1968), p. 23.

As we can see, there are many reasons for calling Buddha *pramāṇa*, but none of them is *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*. None of the two *pramāṇas* makes Buddha the embodiment of *pramāṇa*. What makes Buddha a person who is *pramāṇa* is his intention to realize the benefit of all beings, his being a perfect teacher, and his attainment.¹² According to these characteristics *pramāṇa* is impartial and universal, in the sense that it aims at realizing the benefit of all beings and that it can be a guidance for all people (the perfect teacher is the one who can teach everybody), and guarantees the attainment of the goal (here defined as one's own objectives and others' objectives).

In the light of the above considerations we can thus distinguish two approaches:

1. Buddha as embodiment of valid cognition explained in terms of valid cognition.
2. Valid cognition is explained in terms of Buddha as essential valid cognition or *pramāṇabhūta*.

These two approaches are very important when analyzing the definition of valid cognition. In the first approach, the question about definition of valid cognition, namely why valid cognition has two essential qualities of non-erroneousness and novelty, can be answered only in terms of the epistemological system in which they play a crucial role. And then, as a consequence, Buddha is called *pramāṇabhūta*, since he has two types of *pramāṇa*: *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*.

In the second approach, valid cognition as *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* is actually defined in terms of Buddha himself as essential *pramāṇa*. If the Buddha as essential *pramāṇa*, was explained in terms of *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* (as in the first approach), thus in terms of exemplary *pramāṇa*, he would not be essential *pramāṇa* anymore. The primal category would be *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* thus becoming essential *pramāṇa*, in light of which one can understand Buddha as *tshad ma'i skyes bu*. Thus, in the second approach the definition of valid cognition - as the copy of Buddha as essential *pramāṇa* - is the way it is because Buddha as the original, essential *pramāṇa* is the way he is. That is why in this approach the explanation of novelty in the definition of valid cognition should primarily refer not to the epistemology of *pramāṇa* system but to the Buddha himself.

¹² Here we have strong premises to take Buddhist *pramāṇa* system as a part of Buddhist eschatological project. Cf. Jackson (1994).

Novelty of *pramāṇa* in Western research

In the Western research on *pramāṇa*, the notion of novelty was so far either taken for granted as obvious or explained only according to the first above mentioned approach, as a kind of necessary requirement of the *pramāṇa* system.

In 1975, Satkari Mookerjee's *The Buddhist philosophy of Universal Flux* wrote:

The function of an accredited instrument of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is completed when the object is apprehended. The volitional urge and the attainment follow as necessary consequences. It follows, therefore, that an instrument of knowledge fulfils itself by making known an object which is not cognized before.¹³

Despite the claim of the author, from the fact that knowledge is completed when the object is apprehended, it does not follow at all that the object mentioned must be the one and only the one that is not known before. Every next proper apprehension of the object presents the very same content and in this sense is equally informative and equally correct. If you do not know something more and new but you comprehend the same, you are not misled and still you know. This was actually the line of argument of Akalaṅka from *Tattoārtharājavārtika* refuting the requirement of novelty, by giving the example of a lamp illuminating again the same object – the lamp remains the same and does exactly the same; so should be the case with *pramāṇa*.

And the fact that cognition can be considered valid not only when it is non-erroneous, but also when the object grasped was not cognized before, is quite surprising for the Western reader. As in Western philosophy, as long as cognition presents an object properly without mistakes, it is considered valid no matter how many times the same object is grasped.

Professor Katsura in his *Dharmakīrti's Theory of Truth* suggests that the origin of the idea of novelty can be just common sense or, as a Buddhist philosopher would say, worldly opinion:

According to Dharmakīrti, the object of *pramāṇa* should be something new. This idea is probably derived from a sort of common sense belief that knowledge is meaningless unless it contains some new information.¹⁴

¹³ Mookerjee (1975), p. 273.

¹⁴ Katsura (1984), p. 224.

With conjecture however, it is hard to discuss and unfortunately, Professor Katsura does not offer any hint supporting this hypothesis. Since the above mentioned Akalañka criticized the idea of novelty with such a common sense example, as a lamp again and again illuminating the same thing, maybe equally probable would be the conjecture that the opposite is the case.

And even though novelty could be a kind of common idea concerning cognition, it still does not explain introducing this kind of common view into any philosophical system, which is very often counter-intuitive for common sense (like vijñānavāda for example). If, however, a philosopher decides to follow some common-sense intuitions anyway, he must have some philosophical reasons to introduce them into his philosophical system. It also seems improbable that such a strict philosopher as Dharmakīrti follows common sense to such extent that he nonchalantly introduces a second – obvious – definition of *pramāṇa* (as cognition presenting the object unknown before) that has caused so many problems for interpreters.

When Georges B.J. Dreyfus addresses the question of novelty in Dharmakīrti's system he explains novelty as a necessary requirement of that *pramāṇa* system. He says:

The requirement of novelty as stated by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti was not meant to exclude the second moment of perception from being valid but the conceptual judgments that follow perceptions. The Nyāya take such judgments to be perceptual. Hence, their exclusion from validity is important for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti in maintaining the integrity of their system. The definition of *valid cognition* as newly nondeceptive cognition and the discussion of whether the second moment of perception should be excluded from being valid are new developments not directly related to the refutation of the Nyāya view.¹⁵

The requirement of novelty is shown by Dreyfus to be justified in terms of the role it plays in the Buddhist *pramāṇa* system; this notion was thus introduced for strictly philosophical purposes, being exclusion of conceptual judgments following perceptions. And later for some philosophers, it became the argument for refuting the second moment of perception. Thus, Dreyfus interpreting the definition of valid cognition, does not refer to Buddha as the essential valid cognition. He takes a systematic approach restricted to the analysis of the philosophical system of *pramāṇa* and concludes:

¹⁵ Dreyfus (1997), p. 304.

For Dharmakīrti, however, novelty is not part of the definition of valid cognition. It is simply a consequence of his view of perception. We find confirmation that Dharmakīrti requires novelty in *Drop of Reason*, where he also defines *valid cognition*: “With respect to this, valid cognition is only that which first sees an uncommon object.” Dharmakīrti further states that “Because [a recollection] apprehends an [already] completely seen aspect, it is not a valid cognition. [This is so for the following reason:] having seen the uncommon [real thing] one states ‘ [this is] an uncommon thing’ [but such a judgment] does not realize any previously unrealized object.” As we saw while examining Dharmakīrti’s ontology, real things are individual objects that fulfill strict identity conditions explained in terms of spatio-temporal location and entity. These are the objects perception apprehends, a process that in turn induces perceptual judgments. These judgments realize already perceived objects and do not bring any new information to the cognitive process. Hence, they are not valid. Thus, there is clear evidence that for Dharmakīrti validity entails novelty, although novelty is not a definitional requirement for validity.¹⁶

Therefore, according to Dreyfus novelty was a result of developing the system of *pramāṇa*, and it had to be introduced as an important factor in defining validity. Novelty is thus explained in terms of the system it is a part of – the outline and aim of the *pramāṇa* theory required introducing the notion of novelty in order to refute Nyāya. However, the quotation from Dharmakīrti given above by Dreyfus saying “valid cognition is only that which first sees an uncommon object”, looks very much just like defining *pramāṇa* in terms of novelty. The fact that novelty is very much connected with validity or even that validity entails novelty, does not necessarily prove that novelty was introduced as a consequence of the concept of validity. It is also possible that assuming novelty at the outset, Dharmakīrti could formulate his theory of validity the way it includes novelty.

The systematic approach, as that of Dreyfus,¹⁷ showing novelty as a result of developing the system of *pramāṇa*, is philosophically

¹⁶ Dreyfus (1997), pp. 303-4. The same is claimed by Dunne: “This way of defining an instrumental cognition later comes under attack, for subsequent commentators, probably including Śākyabuddhi, maintaining that since only novel cognitions are trustworthy, an explicit statement of novelty is not necessary. Without going into details of such arguments, we need only to note that such interpretations do not abandon the criterion of novelty; they simply subsume it under trustworthiness.” Dunne (2004), p. 309.

¹⁷ Similar approach to Dreyfus’ one is taken up by Dunne who also tries to justify novelty by showing it as necessary part in *pramāṇa* system: “Thus, if we can combine Devendrabuddhi’s interpretation with what we know of Dharmakīrti’s soteriology, novelty plays a crucial role in Dharmakīrti’s theory of instrumentality, for it preserves the instrumentality of a class of inferences that are central to his soteriology. This is certainly Devendrabuddhi’s opinion, and for him the overall

consistent, but ignores certain historical determinants of development as highlighted by the 7th Karma pa. And the obvious historical determinant was the understanding of situation of Buddha himself as *pramāṇabhūta*.

Novelty in the 7th Karma pa's commentary

In his commentary, the 7th Karma pa gives another reason for introducing the requirement of novelty. The reason is a historical one and so far has not been discussed in Western literature. It is explained when the 7th Karma pa discusses the problem of two definitions of *pramāṇa*. Contrary to the Sa skya tradition (that was the main inspiration for the bKa' brgyud *pramāṇa* system), the 7th Karma pa maintains two definitions of valid cognition and shows its historical background:

The meaning and intention of giving the two definitions by learned [Dharmakīrti] is as follows. The followers of Śiva say that Śiva is permanent and is self-arisen *pramāṇa*; that is why in order to refute them [Dharmakīrti] said that our Bhagavān is the one who possesses the valid cognition that clarifies the object previously unknown. He talked about clarifying the object [previously] unknown to show that that our teacher is the embodiment of *pramāṇa* since by the power of meditation he recognized for the first time the nature of the Four [Noble] Truths that were the object unknown at the time when he was an ordinary being. By way of these teachings he showed that Bhagavān is particularly higher than Śiva described as the permanent and self-arisen knowledge, since they do not claim that Śiva can cognize for the first time the nature of things not known before. A statement of non-erroneousness [of cognition] can not undermine this kind of wrong conceptions, since they claim that Śiva is without error.¹⁸

definition of an instrumental cognition therefore has two aspects: first, an instrumental cognition is a trustworthy awareness; this warrants the claim that an instrumental cognition is 'what makes one obtain' (*prāpaka*) one's aim. And second, an instrumental cognition must 'reveal what has not been known (*ajñātārthaprakāśa*); this warrants the claim that an instrumental cognition is what "motivates action" (*pravartaka*)." Dunne (2004), pp. 308-9.

¹⁸ Karma pa (1999), pp. 19-20: *dbang phyug pa dag dbang phyug rtag pa rang byung gi tshad mar 'dod pas/ de dag sun dbyung bar bya ba'i phyir du nged kyi bcom ldan 'das ni sngar ma shes pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i tshad ma dang ldan pa'ang yin tel/ sngar so so skye bo'i dus na ma shes pa'i don bden pa bzhi'i gnas lugs sgom stobs kyi gsar du shes pa'i phyir na kho bo cag gi ston pa tshad ma'i skyes bu'o zhes bstan pa'i phyir na shes don gsal smos la/ de ltar bstan pas dbang phyug rang byung gi rtag pa'i tshad mar 'dod pa las bcom ldan 'das khyad par du 'phag par bstan par 'gyur tel/ dbang phyug gis de kho na nyid ma shes pa gsar du shes par mi 'dod pa'i phyir ro/ blus med can smos pas ni de lta bu'i log rtog sel bar mi nus tel/ dbang phyug kyang bslu ba med par 'dod pa'i phyir ro.*

The reason for introducing the notion of novelty into the definition of *pramāṇa* is rooted in the polemical situation Buddhism found itself in.¹⁹ Buddha and later Buddhist masters did not teach in a philosophical vacuum, but within a strong philosophical-religious culture, this situation made it necessary to show his teachings as a new development. In his first teachings in Sarnath, Buddha repeats quite a few times that his teachings are the ones that were not heard before, which obviously is the first hint for introducing the notion of novelty into Buddhist epistemology. It seems that novelty was probably even more important in this particular historical situation, since every serious philosophical tradition cannot do without an obvious claim to non-erroneousness. Thus Buddhist teachings must have been not only non-erroneous but also new.

Giving the first formula in order to eliminate everything which is not relevant [to the concept of *pramāṇa*], he proved that valid cognition is non-erroneous, and since this is the opinion widespread all over the world, he gave the definition which is relevant to worldly opinion. Giving the second formula in order to eliminate wrong conceptions, he gave the definition relevant to the etymology of the term *pramāṇa*, since it means: first appraisal. That is why each of them can demonstrate [what is the valid cognition itself].²⁰

It is worth noticing that it is not the notion of novelty that is referred to here as a common sense widespread concept, but the idea of non-erroneousness. Novelty is what makes Buddhist *pramāṇa* so exceptional among all epistemological systems claiming non-erroneousness, and it is novelty that in the end makes Buddhist epistemology real *pramāṇa*. For, as the 7th Karma pa says, novelty was introduced for the sake of eliminating wrong conceptions [*log rtog*], which at first sight seems a more fitting description of non-erroneousness. Novelty is thus shown to be an argument for non-erroneousness. What is at play here is probably a kind of philosophical rhetoric aimed at showing that non-Buddhist philosophical systems are erroneous, because of following wrong conceptions that can be eliminated by *pramāṇa* incorporating novelty. For if Śivaist *pramāṇa* was as perfect as Buddhist, it would proclaim the Four Noble Truths. Buddhist *pramāṇa* is non-erroneous,

¹⁹ In Western literature I found only one mention about it in the footnote in Hattori (1968), p. 74, where he refers to Jinendrabuddhi's interpretation of the term *pramāṇabhūta*.

²⁰ Karma pa (1999), p. 20: *snga ma ni rigs mi mthun sel ba'i dbang du byas nas/ tshad ma tshad ma ni bslus ba med pa can du rigs pas grub cing/ 'jig rten du yang grags pa'i phyir 'jig rten grags pa dang mthun pa'i mtshan nyid bstan pa yin la/ phyi ma ni log rtog sel ba'i dbag du byas nas/ pra ma Na dang por 'jal ba la 'jug pas sgra bshad dang mthun pa'i mtshan nyid bstan pa yin pas gang rung re res kyang mtshon par nus so.*

since it discovered the Four Noble Truths for the first time; and it discovered the Four Noble Truths for the first time because in fact it is first non-erroneous *pramāṇa*. We can see that novelty and non-erroneousness are in fact two interconnected notions, but the reason for that is more the historical situation. Thus, the systematic relationship of these two notions in the definition of valid cognition does not seem to be the result of purely philosophical speculation. At least this is the picture shown in the bKa' brgyud tradition.

The 7th Karma pa's approach to the definition of *pramāṇa*

Such an approach also throws some light on the approach to the two definitions of *pramāṇa* given by Dharmakīrti. The 7th Karma pa agrees with Sa skya Pa76ita, that having two different definitions would amount to having two different objects defined. Nevertheless, he follows Devendrabuddhi with his two definitions - against Prajñākara-gupta²¹ - claiming that:

There is no fault in Devendrabuddhi's claim, since firstly, non-erroneous knowledge and clarifying the object not cognized before are not definitions of different meaning.²²

For the 7th Karma pa both definitions have the same meaning, one cannot even treat them as two formulas, being parts of one definition, since this is also the view he rejects. In the historical approach they were shown to be inseparable. Thus, each of them can demonstrate *pramāṇa* which is a quite obvious view, when we remember that the real *pramāṇa* is Buddha himself as *tshad ma'i skyes bu*. He is simply one and the same person, who essentially cognizes non-erroneously the Four Noble Truths for the first time. Since *pramāṇabhūta* is this way, how could *pramāṇa* be the other way round?

Buddha as the essential *pramāṇa* determines the shape of any exemplary *pramāṇa* as possessing two crucial qualities of non-erroneousness and novelty. To say that Buddha is the *pramāṇa* because of characteristics of non-erroneous cognition and making clear the object not cognized before, is not so much proof of him being a *pramāṇa*, but more explanation of what is meant by that. The real proof of Buddha being the *pramāṇa* is described by the 7th Karma pa as follows:

²¹ Analysis of *pramāṇa* definitions given by them cf. Dreyfus (1991).

²² Karma pa (1999), p. 19: *slob dpon lha dbang blo'i bzhed pa de la skyon med de/ dang por mi bslu ba'i rig pa dang/ ma shes don gsal gyi rig pa gnyis mtshan nyid don gzhan ma yin pa'i phyir dang.*

Determining that one can successfully liberate all beings without exception because of having special consciousness which is non-erroneous, is the reasoning establishing that Bhagavān is the valid cognition being non-erroneous refuge. Or else, Bhagavān is the *pramāṇa* [for the following reason:] he does not let the beings make errors because of being familiar with great compassion that works for the benefit of all beings; he has abandoned two veils and showed the path to higher rebirths and unquestionable perfection which is the method of achieving the state of Sugata [which was not known before] recognizing the very nature.²³

The reason why Buddha has two characteristics of non-erroneousness and novelty so crucial for the exemplary *pramāṇa* as *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna*, is the fact that he is the essential *pramāṇa* in the first place. Thus, explaining the definition of *pramāṇa* solely in terms of a philosophical system does not give the whole picture. It can be non-erroneous when it is coherent with Dharmakīrti's philosophical presuppositions, but is not complete, since it ignores other determinants that can be traced when analyzing *tshad ma'i skyes bu* as essential *pramāṇa*. That is probably why only by joining the two approaches discussed here can one acquire a proper point of departure for fully understanding the Buddhist *pramāṇa* system. This is at least the view taken by the 7th Karma pa at the beginning of his commentary:

Since he has those two characteristics of *pramāṇa*: non-erroneous cognition and making clear the object not cognized [before], he is established as the very *pramāṇa*. Adding here the essential *pramāṇa* which is to be achieved, since he taught the most perfect path to temporary higher rebirths and the ultimate because of the reason that he developed the rich motivation of benefitting non-erroneously all beings, he provides refuge from lower rebirths, samsara and misery. Showing an abundance [of methods] to the ones who didn't cognize this path before, he made disciples newly cognize Sugata [state] not known before. That is why having two characteristics of *pramāṇa* Bhagavān is established as the *pramāṇa*. *The Ornament*²⁴ puts it as follows:

²³ Karma pa (1999), p. 23: *bslu ba med pa can gyi shes pa khyad par can ldan pas na 'gro ba ma lus pa 'khor ba las sgröl ba'i don byed nus pa dngos po'i gnas tshul la grub pa de ni bcom ldan 'das mi bslu ba'i skyabs gnas tshad mar sgrub pa'i rigs pa yin no/ yang na bcom ldan 'das ni tshad ma yin te/ 'gro ba thams cad la phan par bzhed pa'i thugs rjes chen po goms pa'i dbang gis 'gro ba rnams bslu ba med par rang nyid kyi sgrub gnyis spangs shing gnas lugs rtogs pa'i bde bar gshegs pa de thobs mngon mtho nges legs kyi lam bstan.*

²⁴ The text meant here is *Tshad ma ste bdun rgyan gyi me tog* by bCom ldan rig pa'i ral gri (1250–1330). Confirming quotation from bCom ldan rig pa'i ral gri is just one of many proofs of strong influence of the *Sa skya* tradition on the *bKa' brgyud pramāṇa* system, even though there are places in the Karma pa's commentary where he criticizes Sa skya Pa76ita himself. The study of these differences would

Bhagavān also perceives impeccably these two characteristics, since giving the teachings he made [disciples] see the path to higher rebirths, purification and liberation, and he showed only what was not seen by Viṣṇu, Śiva etc.²⁵

Starting with both: explaining Buddha himself in terms of *pramāṇa* and explaining *pramāṇa* in terms of Buddha as the essential *pramāṇa* seems to be a vicious circle. Modern hermeneutics teaches, however, that this kind of situation is sometimes not only unavoidable, but also fruitful. It can bring us not only to a better understanding of the very definition of valid cognition, but also of Buddhist epistemology with its eschatological commitments.²⁶

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be probably much more interesting research than tracing points of convergence. Cf. Przybyslawski (2016).

²⁵ Karma pa (1999), p. 31: *dang por bslu ba med pa'i shes pa dang ma shes don gyi gsal byed de tshad ma'i mtshan nyid de gnyis dang ldan pas na bcom ldan 'das tshad ma nyid du grub bo/ bsgrub bya don gyi tshad ma la sbyar nas 'gro ba thams cad la bslu ba med par phan par bzhed pa'i bsam pa phun sum tshogs pa'i rgyu las gnas skabs mngon mtho dang/ mthar thug nges par legs pa'i lam gsungs pas/ sngon 'gro dang srid pa dang dman pa las skyob par mdzad pa'i phyir dang/ sngar lam de lta bu ma shes pa sbyor ba phun sum tshogs pa ston pas rang nyid kyiis dang por mkhyen pa'i bde bar gshegs pa gdul bya la gsar du gsal bar shes par mdzad pas tshad ma'i mtshan nyid de gnyis ka dang ldan pa'i phyir bcom ldan 'das tshad ma nyid du grub bo/ ji skad du rgyan las/ mtshan nyid gnyis po 'di ni bcom ldan 'das la yang ma god par snang stel/ ji ltar nye bar bstan pas mtho ris dang byang grol gyi lam mthong bar mdzad pa'i phyir dang/ khyab 'jug dang dbang phyug la sogs pas ma mthong ba de kho na ston par mdzad pa'i phyir rol/ zhes so.*

²⁶ Cf. Jackson (1994).

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Naming the empire: from *Bod* to *Tibet*—A philologico-historical study on the origin of the polity¹

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Introduction

n Old Tibetan (OT) documents one can find terms such as *bod yul*, *bod khams*, *bod rgyal khams*, *bod ljoñs*, or *bod čhen po*, all denoting the polity founded and ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty. Some of these terms co-occur in one text, suggesting they belonged to the same historical period. In OT historical documents there is not *one* term that could be reasonably understood as an equivalent of English ‘Tibetan Empire’. Instead, plurality of names prevails. This begs the following questions: if the ‘Tibetan Empire’ did not have an official term to refer to itself, what was ‘Tibetan’ about it? Does this mean that one was not able to think about and speak of one’s own polity, community, and locality in more general or abstract terms? The question leads to another: who was this ‘one’?

A word presumed capable of being the equivalent of Eng. *Tibet(an)* has early on been identified as *bod*, as in the designations quoted above. *bod* received great attention from western scholars who concentrated much of their efforts on providing a sensible etymology for it.² What has often been overlooked, however, are the changing references of *bod* in Old Literary Tibetan (OLT). The quest for the etymological meaning of *bod* has suppressed the question of its actual meaning in the given historical contexts. Constantly changing historical circumstances triggered changes in *bod*, determining the right of individuals and groups to be included in it or not. Therefore, who was ‘one’ entails the following question: ‘when?’.

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² See Appendix A for some examples.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the oldest occurrences of the proper noun *bod* and to track its semantic development in OLT. The paper is a first attempt to answer the questions: why and how did the local (!) name *bod* come to be used as endonym for <Tibet>? This study relies on the assumption that a meticulous investigation of OT texts can positively contribute to our understanding of the socio-linguistic processes underlying the shift.

The historical value of the earliest uses of the term *bod* can be elucidated only when one has reconstructed the earliest period of the expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty and chronologically arranged the prehistorical events for which no contemporary historical documents have been preserved. Only after reconstructing the chronology of the expansion, can one look at the way *bod* was understood in various periods. As the deep prehistory of the region and its polity/polities remains vastly obscure, the paper focuses on the late prehistory that begins with the Yar-luñs dynasty's rise to power. The temporal framework of the study encompasses the period from the first conquests outside of the Yar-valley to the subjugation of all regions and peoples that were later included in Four Horns. The conquests of the Žań-žuń or the Ya-ža are treated only to the extent that they can help an understanding and ordering of the sequence of other events.

2. The paper consists of three major parts. Part I is historical in character and aims at reconstructing the chronology of the expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty beyond the Yar-valley. It commences with political alliances of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs, built presumably in the first half of the 6th century, and ends with the final conquest of the Ya-ža by Khri Mań-slon Mań-rcań in 663. The last section of this part seeks to establish a few rough dates for events prior to 634 – the date of the first documented encounter with Tang China. The consecutive phases of the expansion are illustrated on four maps that should help to visualise the spatial dimension of the conquests. In addition, Appendix C summarises all the conquests in a tabular form. The historical survey of Part I provides important background information that allows for the philological analyses of Part II. Here the usage of *bod* in OT texts is scrutinised with special consideration being paid to chronological variation. Broadly discussed hypotheses that early European and Chinese sources could mention 'Tibetans' are examined in the last section of Part II against the backdrop of the analyses presented in the paper. Part III puts forward a new etymology of the toponym *Tibet* that relates Old Turkic, Middle Chinese and medieval

European terms to each other and traces them back to an Old Tibetan common noun. Finally, Appendices A and B discuss etymologies of *bod* and *Tibet* that have been put forward in previous studies, whereas Appendix C provides chronological ordering of the events discussed.

3. Several technical remarks regarding terminological and typographical conventions used in the paper are due. Since the paper is based solely on OT documents, all proper names are spelt following the orthography of OLT. I deliberately avoid the ethnonym *Tibetan* or the toponym *Tibet* throughout the paper, unless justified by the context. The decision is motivated by two considerations: 1. ethnic affiliation of certain groups discussed in the paper cannot be established or is debatable; and 2. in the historical reality of the early medieval Tibetan Plateau the reference of the toponym *Tibet* is far from clear. As will be discussed below, the beginnings of the Yar-luñs dynasty were humble but later it grew to control Samarkand, Kabul, Turfan and even the Chinese capital of Chang'an. Rather than speculating whether the name *Tibet* should apply to all these places and their inhabitants, I decided to use the contemporary OLT terms of the examined documents, such as *bod* "Bod", *ru gsum* "Three Horns", *ru bži* "Four Horns" etc. Most frequently, however, I will speak of the 'Yar-luñs dynasty' or the 'Yar-dominion' to refer to the political power and the polity of the royal house whose home territory was located in the Yar-valley.³ If a term is used anachronistically, it is enclosed within angle brackets. For instance, <Four Horns> refers to the territory of Four Horns as defined from 733/4 although the discussion concerns a period preceding this date; the same concerns toponyms that are only known from post-imperial sources. Titles characteristic of the flourishing empire, such as *bcan po*, are used with respect to the rulers of the Yar-luñs dynasty only if attested in the sources. The frequently used phrase 'Old Tibetan documents/sources/texts' refers to non-translatory records that were composed during the Tibetan Empire. They are written in the language called 'Old Literary Tibetan' that should be distinguished, on the one hand, from Classical Tibetan and, on the other hand, from Old Tibetan. The latter was a spoken language dated approximately to the period

³ In OLT, Yar-čhu (HON Yar-čhab) was the name of the river and Yar-luñs the name of the valley. Yar-mo seems to have denoted the territory of the ruling family in the Yar-valley.

640s–800 (Bialek 2018b).⁴

For historical documents such as the *Old Tibetan Annals* (OTA) or OT inscriptions, it is assumed the time of narration equals the time of the texts' composition.⁵ The semi-historical *Old Tibetan Chronicles* (OTC) narrate events that had happened long before the text, as we have it, was composed. As it is well-known, the events are not recorded chronologically in the OTC. It was therefore necessary to de-construct the preserved version of the text in order to re-construct the sequence of the relevant events. This might at first be surprising or even confusing to those who are used to read the text linearly, but I believe the results obtained justify this procedure.⁶

I. Early expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty and the formation of the Tibetan Empire

4. The primary objective of this part is to establish a relative chronology of the events pertaining to the early (mostly prehistorical) territorial expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty. Much of our knowledge of this period comes from OT historiographical narratives, foremost the *Old Tibetan Chronicles* (PT 1144, PT 1286, PT 1287, ITJ 1375). Since one event is sometimes recounted twice or even thrice in the OTC,

⁴ OLT differs from CT first of all in its phraseology and the coherent use of titles characteristic to the epoch of the Tibetan Empire.

⁵ The *Old Tibetan Annals* is a collective title used for texts preserved in manuscripts with the shelf-marks PT 1288, ITJ 750 (OTA-I), Or.8212/187 (OTA-II), and Dx 12851v (OTA-III). In Bialek (2021: 20) I propose a slightly changed chronology of OT inscriptions: Khri Lde-gcug-rcañ (704–54): Dgay; Khri Sroñ-lde-brcañ (742–97): Žol, Bsam, Bsam B, Rkoñ, Yphyoñ, *Brag A; Khri Lde-sroñ-brcañ (797–815): Khra, Žwa W, Skar, Žwa E, *Ldan 2, *Ybis 2; Khri Gcug-lde-brcañ (815–41): Khri, ST Treaty, Lčañ S, Khrom F, Khrom R, Dun 365, Lho. The dating of the inscriptions marked with an asterisk remains uncertain.

⁶ Apart from the above listed records, likewise OT ritual texts speak of *bod* or its derivatives. However, there the name belongs to mythical geography and as such is only of limited value for historical studies.

The Tibetan script is transliterated according to the principles put forward in Bialek (2020b). Tibetan proper names are hyphenated in order to enhance their readability in the text flow. Passages quoted from OT sources have been transliterated on the basis of scans made available on the IDP and Gallica. The OT orthography is strictly followed. The 'reversed *gi gu*' is transliterated as *i*. No distinction is made between a single and a double *cheg* in the transliteration. Reconstructed verb roots (√) are quoted in IPA transcription.

but each time from a different perspective, it was necessary to treat the contents of the narratives independently of the transmitted division of PT 1287 into chapters. Needless to say, the majority of the events predating 640 cannot be dated absolutely (however see § 16). The only exceptions concern several events that have also been documented in Chinese sources. The situation changes for the last years of Khri Sroñ-rcan's reign that are related in the *Preamble* to the OTA. The regular annual entries start in 650/1, providing precise dates for over one hundred years.

The events reconstructed below for the prehistorical period demonstrate that, as the time passed, personal relations between neighbouring families led to strategic alliances. The Yar-luñs dynasty succeeded in politically subordinating some of the families, thus extending its influence zone beyond the Yar-valley. With each conquest new families were introduced into the politics of the Yar-luñs dynasty. In this period, allied families were rewarded for joining the confederation. This ranged from receiving the post of grand councillor (or rather its precursor) to the offer of territories or the right to become bride-givers. The sources available suggest that the Yar-luñs dynasty controlled the amount of power ceded to single families by preventing a family from both becoming a bride-giver *and* obtaining the office of grand councillor.⁷ Whatever the mutual relations between the families within the confederation might have been, it is apparent that during the reigns of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs and his successors it was the Yar-luñs dynasty who had the monopoly on the allotment of territories and thus alone decided over the political status of other families.

The temporal frame relevant to the present investigation encompasses the period from the first expansions beyond the Yar-luñs valley during the reign of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs until the conquest of all the territories that were later included into Four Horns. As can be expected, various parts of <Four Horns> came under the sway of the Yar-luñs dynasty in different times, with the western and south-western territories the last to be subjugated. The reconstruction seeks to present known events in a chronological order, taking into account

⁷ The sole exception to the rule in the early phase of the Yar-luñs polity was the Moñ family. The rule was first revoked in the 8th c. when Ybro Čuñ-bzañ Yormañ became a grand councillor in 728/9 (ITJ 750: 249–50) even though he came from a bride-giver family. Afterwards, other bride-giver families such as Mčhims and Sna-nam also held the office of grand councillor.

not only historical information, but also geographical data that can be obtained from the sources.

I.1 Stag-bu Sñā-gzigs

5. The earliest phase of the expansion beyond the Yar-valley is not attested in any historical document of the time and is rarely retold in later records. The Yar-luñs dynasty maintained contacts with other local ruling families along the Rcañ-po (LT Gcañ-po) river, with intermarriage between the dynasty and families occurring (see Hazod 2019: 10f.). On three occasions OT historiographical sources provide lists of such families: 1. *gnay gñen* “ancient affinal relatives” (PT 1286: 1–3); 2. families from which prehistorical Yar-luñs rulers took brides (PT 1286: 59–61); and 3. ‘grand councillors’ (PT 1287: 64–74).⁸ Table 1 lists the names of the respective families up to the reign of Stag-bu Sñā-gzigs.⁹

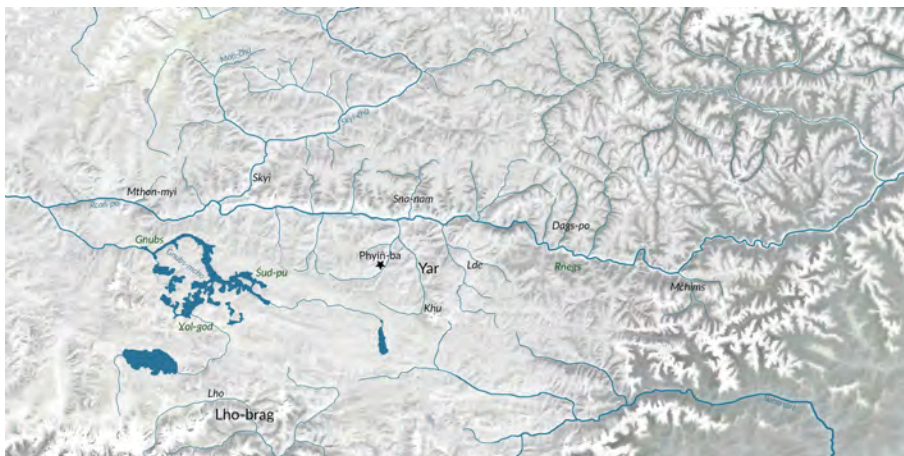
<i>gnay gñen</i>	bride-giver families	councillors	
		Family	Given name
Lde	<i>Ru-yoñ</i>	<i>Ydayr</i>	Stoñ-dañ-rje
Skyi	<i>Gnoy</i>	Rñegs	Dud-kyi-rje
Dags	<i>Ybro</i>	Khu	Lha-bo Mgo-gar
Mčhims	Mčhims	Lho	Thañ-ybriñ Ya-steñs
	Yol-god	Rñegs	Thañ-yoñ Thañ-rje
		Gnubs	Smon-to-re Sbuñ-brcan
		Mthon-myi	Ybriñ-po Rgyal-bcan-nu
		Sna-nam	Ybriñ-tog-rje
		Gnubs	Khri-do-re Mthoñ-po
		Gnubs	Khri-dog-rje Gcug-blon
		Gnubs	Mñien-to-re Ñan-snañ
		Šud-pu	Rgyal-to-re Ña-myi

Table 1. Families in affinal and/or political relationships with the Yar-luñs dynasty

⁸ The application of the title *blon che* “grand councillor” to these officials is certainly anachronistic (Hazod 2019). Richardson (1998 [1977]: 57) described the list as “fanciful and unreliable where it relates to personages before the seventh century”. This verdict might be too harsh but certainly special caution is required when dealing with records that narrate prehistorical events.

⁹ Famous lists or ‘catalogues’ of principalities (see, e.g., Lalou 1965; Hazod 2009: 170ff.) fall rather under the category of ‘mythologised history’ or ‘state-formative narratives’ as they disregard the time depth of single political units they amalgamated (see also Stein 1972: 47; Dotson 2012: 169ff.).

The homelands or contemporary seats of the families marked in italics could not yet be established for the period in question, but the remaining ones have been localised as illustrated in Map 1.¹⁰



Map 1. Families in affinal and/or political relationships with the Yar-luñs family in the mid-6th century (Image Landsat / Copernicus 01.2021)¹¹

The families whose seats could be located are found in a restricted area either south or north of Rcañ-po but in the latter case in its immediate vicinity. This confirms the local dimension of the Yar-dominion in its beginnings; in PT 1286: 1, the affinal relatives Lde, Skyi, Dags, and Mčhims are described as *mthay bži* “of four borders”, i.e. the seats of the four families marked the extent of the dominion at

¹⁰ If not otherwise stated, the identification of the sites follows Hazod (2009 & 2019); some places were already identified by Beckwith (1977: 222ff.). Hazod tentatively identified OLT Lde with later G.ye/Qe on the basis of the toponym Gañs-bar (PT 1286: 1) attested as Gañs-ybar in G.ye (Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 220 & 230). For the Rñegs family Hazod suggested a location “close to ancient Dags-yul (Dwags-po) [...] somewhere between Mčhims and G.ye” (2019: 66). The home territory of Gnubs has been tentatively located in the modern Roñ district (Hazod 2018: 21), but since the Yar-ybrog lake is known in OLT as Gnubs lake (*gnubs mcho*, see ex. (1) below; modern: Nubs-mcho, Hazod 2009: 172), I suggest that the original location of the family was closer to the lake. In PT 1144 (see ex. (1)) the Yol-god family is said to reside in Yar-ybrog. Presuming this Yar-ybrog is in the vicinity of the Gnubs *alias* Yar-ybrog lake (Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 231), the region is still too vast to suggest any concrete location. The same concerns the location of Šud-pu in Yar-ybrog (Hazod 2019: 68).

¹¹ Legend: Yar = region name; *Sna-nam* = family name; *Rñegs* = approximate location of a family; *G.ye* = toponyms from post-imperial sources; * Bre-snar = residence.

that time. The last 'grand councillors' listed in Table 1 came from the Gnubs, Mthon-myi, Sna-nam, and Śud-pu families. Apart from Sna-nam, the other three families had their seats in the westernmost part of the area controlled by the Yar-luñs dynasty and therefore one may conclude they were the last ones to join the confederation. The same concerns the Yol-god family who was the bride-giver of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs. From this, a clear picture of expansion from Yar-luñs towards the west emerges.

Textual sources begin to be more concrete in the reign of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs. And so the relation between Stag-bu Sña-gzigs and the Yol-god family is confirmed in a partly damaged passage from PT 1144:

(1)

(v3) *bcan po khri stag bu dañ / yol god yar ybrog gī bdag [p]o[s]*¹² // *gnubs mchoyi glañ [---]ug [---] bres cham bsd[al?]*¹³ *nas* (v4) *yol [g]od kyis rgyal stag bu bzuñ ste // lho brag gi [r]gyal klu ñur la phul nas // rgyal klu ñur gi[s] [bcan] po khri stag bu* (v5) *[---] bañ [g]ī nañ du bčug go // yuñ nas rgyal stag buyi bcun mo // yol god za s[t]oñ[cun] [---]n po dañ gco [---]*

After *bcan po* Khri Stag-bu and Yol-god, the lord of Yar-ybrog, [---] of the Gnubs lake¹⁴ [---], Yol-god, having seized king Stag-bu, gave [him] to Klu-ñur, the king of Lho-brag. Then, king Klu-ñur put *bcan po* Khri Stag-bu into a [---]-store-house (i.e. imprisoned). Thereafter, the queen of king Stag-bu, lady Stoñ-[cun] from the Yol-god-[family] together with [---].¹⁵

The incident with the Yol-god lord displays the political weakness of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs and therefore must have preceded his plans to conquer Nas-po as narrated in PT 1287: 147–64 (see next section).¹⁶ Some time after the incident Stag-bu Sña-gzigs joined a plot to overthrow Ziñ-po-rje Khri-pañ-sum, the lord of Nas-po, despite the fact that his sister was married to the latter (PT 1287: 159). However, he died before the plans, conspired at Phyiñ-ba, could be implemented.

¹² Dotson (2013a: 404) read *[p]o[r]* but terminative after a proper name at the beginning of a clause is improbable.

¹³ Dotson amended *bsdal* with *bsnal* (2013a: 403).

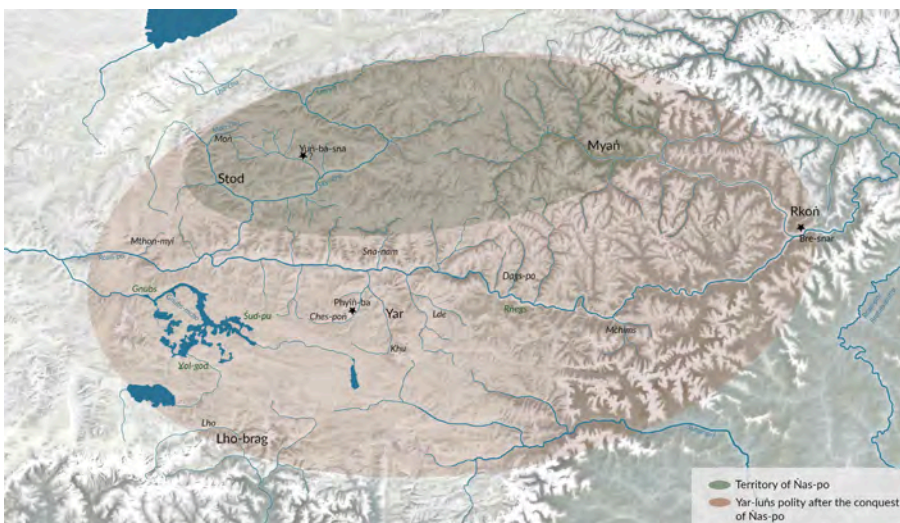
¹⁴ This passage indicates that in the mid-6th century Yar-ybrog was a territory in the immediate vicinity of the Gnubs lake that was later renamed as Yar-ybrog lake (LT *yar ybrog mcho*).

¹⁵ The complete document has been translated by Dotson (2013a: 403f.). A later version of the story as narrated in *Rgyal rabs bon kyi ybyuñ gnas* of Khyuñ-po Blo-gros Rgyal-mchan is quoted in Uray (1972: 37f., fn. 91).

¹⁶ A reversed order of the events was presumed by Richardson (1998 [1989]: 130) who maintained that Stag-bu Sña-gzigs "did not survive" the abduction.

I.2 Khri Slon-mchan¹⁷

6. *Nas-po* conquest. The conquest of *Nas-po* (renamed as *Yphan-yul*) was prepared during the lifetime of Stag-bu *Sña-gzigs* and so, one can presume it was carried out at the very beginning of the reign of his son Khri Slon-mchan. The conquest can be dubbed the cornerstone of the Tibetan Empire. With it, Khri Slon-mchan is said to have had the territories from *Yuñ-ba-sna* of Phag to *Bre-snar* of *Rkoñ* in his possession (PT 1287: 183–4; see Map 2).¹⁸



Map 2. Yar-luñs polity after the conquest of *Nas-po* (Image Landsat / Copernicus 01.2021)

Little is known about the status of *Rkoñ* prior to the conquest. From the history of *Nas-po* (PT 1287: 118–72), one learns that before the conquest the *Myañ* family was serving under *Ziñ-po-rje* Stag-skya-bo and after his defeat under *Ziñ-po-rje* Khri-pan-sum. Subse-

¹⁷ Two variants of the name are attested in OLT: *slon bcan* and *slon mchan*. One finds arguments to support both: 1. *slon bcan* > *slon mchan* (progressive assimilation *b- > m- / -n_*); but 2. *mchan* is a *lectio difficilior* and could have been replaced by *bcan* as the latter better connoted a connection with royal names. In the paper I decided in favour of *slon mchan*.

¹⁸ According to Kriz and Hazod (2020), *Yuñ-ba* was a region within *Yphan-yul*, i.e. former *Nas-po*. The phrase *phagī yuñ ba sna* and the following *rkoñ bre snar* rather suggest that *Yuñ-ba-sna* was a centre of a region called Phag. The latter remains unidentified, but we may indicate that a certain *Yphags-rgyal* (variant spelling *Phar-kyañ*) is listed in later sources as a *yul sde* “administrative district” of Central Horn (see Hazod 2009: 204).

quently, it became subject to the Yar-luñs dynasty. It seems therefore that Ņas-po extended as far as Myañ.¹⁹ The territories between the Yar-valley and Rkoñ (including Dags-po and Mčhims) must have come under the control of the Yar-luñs dynasty during the reign of Stag-bu Śña-gzigs at the latest.²⁰ The conquest of Ņas-po was of paramount strategic importance; it secured Khri Slon-mchan the control over the Skyi-valley and, most notably, paved the way for the conquest of the Sum-pa.²¹ At this point Upper Stod and the valley of the Mthon-myi family seem to have been the westernmost territories controlled by the Yar-luñs dynasty. Map 2 provides an overview of the lands and families controlled after the conquest of Ņas-po.

7. Rcañ-Bod conquest.²² For tactical and logistic reasons the subjugation of the Rcañ-Bod must have followed the conquest of Ņas-po.²³ Here are the relevant passages:

(2)

de yi yog du moñ / (75) khri do re snañ chab kyis byaste // yyañs kyi chad nī / rcañ bod kyi jo bo mar mun brlags te / (PT 1287)

Thereafter, Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab served [as grand councillor]; as for the measure of [his] wisdom, [he] conquered Mar-mun, the lord of the Rcañ-Bod.²⁴

¹⁹ Beckwith (1993: 14) speculated that Ņas-po might have also included Rkoñ. This is not implausible but the hypothesis lacks support from the sources.

²⁰ His mother Klu-rgyal Nan-mo-mcho was from the Mčhims family (PT 1286: 59–60) and so this might have brought about the control over the Mčhims' territories. Under unknown circumstances the neighbouring Dags-po was also subordinated to the Yar-luñs dynasty although it retained partial autonomy throughout the 7th century.

²¹ Ņas-po is called *ra yul* (PT 1287: 242) "region of Ra", which I interpreted as referring to Ra-sa (2018a: 2.520).

²² I interpret *rcañ bod* as a synonymic compound (Bialek 2018: 1.185ff.), consisting of two demonyms: *Rcañ-pa "inhabitants of Rcañ" and Bod "Bod-people". This interpretation is discussed in more detail in § 17 below.

²³ Since the conquest of Ņas-po started the reign of Khri Slon-mchan, the Rcañ-Bod must have been subjugated later, as against Uray's analysis (1972: 40).

²⁴ Denwood (2009: 149) maintained that (2) does not attribute the conquest of Mar-mun explicitly to Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab but only relates its occurrence during his incumbency as grand councillor. The passage is indeed ambiguous, but because Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab is included in the agent of the following verb *blod* "to discuss" he must be at least co-agent of *brlags* for the following clause does not mark subject-switch (see also Dotson's translation in 2013a: 271). Furthermore, since the conquest took place during the incumbency of Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab as grand councillor, it seems more than likely that he had his share in its success (see below for further arguments).

(3)

rgyal po ydī yi riñ la // khyuñ po spuñ sad kyis / (199) rcañ bod kyi rjo bo mar mun mgo bčhad de // rcañ bod khyim ñi gri // bcan po yi pyag du pulte / zu ce glo ba ñe yo // (200) yuñ nas / bcan po slon bcan gyis // rcañ bod khyim ñi gri // zu ce glo ba ñe ba yi bya dgayr scal to // (PT 1287)

During the reign of this king (i.e. Gnam-ri Slon-mchan), Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad [Zu-ce], having cut off the head of Mar-mun, the lord of the Rcañ-Bod, offered twenty thousand households [of] the Rcañ-Bod to the *bcan po*. Zu-ce was loyal. Thereafter, *bcan po* [Gnam-ri] Slon-bcan presented the twenty thousand households [of] the Rcañ-Bod as Zu-ce's reward.

(4)

bcan po za sñar khyuñ po spuñ sad kyis gsol pay / (319) sñon bcan po yi yab gnam rī yi riñ la // bdaḡis rcañ bod ybañs su bkug pa lta žig // yab kyis spyān gyis ma gzigs // žabs (320) kyis ma bčhags na // bcan po sras kyis spyān gyis gzigs // žabs kyis bčhagste // bdaḡi sdum pa khri bomsu // dgyes skyems / (321) ston mo gsol du ži gnañ žes gsol nas // (PT 1287)

Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad [Zu-ce] made a request to *bcan po* [Khri Sroñ-rcañ]: "Previously, during the reign of Gnam-ri [Slon-mchan], the *bcan po*'s father, the father did not regard (lit. watched with [his] eyes) me who had subjected the Rcañ-Bod; [he] did not pay [me] a visit (lit. walked with [his] feet). If that's so, would [you] allow [me] to offer delicacies and beverage at Khri-boms, a residence of mine, [if] the *bcan po* the son, regarded [me and] paid [me] a visit?"

The first two passages are in accord when stating that the Rcañ-Bod were ruled by lord Mar-mun. However, (2) attributes the victory over Mar-mun to Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab, whereas (3) and (4) to Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce.²⁵ Despite their seeming contradictoriness, the two views do not have to exclude each other as suggested by Dotson (2013a: 334, n. 20) and explicitly stated in Bialek (2016: 118). Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce is said to have had his residence in Khri-boms (PT 1287: 320; see Map 3); various OT sources connect the Khyuñ-po family with the Žañ-žuñ. Alternatively, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce might have previously served Mar-mun and changed the sides to join the Yar-luñs rulers (cf. Hazod 2009: 190). The original seat of the Khyuñ-po family might have been located elsewhere and was moved to Khri-boms after the subjugation of the Rcañ-Bod.²⁶

²⁵ Also in PT 1287: 221–3, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce praises himself for killing a vulture of Rcañ-brañ (see ex. (5)), which is an apparent allusion to his conquest of Rcañ.

²⁶ Hazod convincingly argued that Khri-boms shall be identified with the district Khri-bom (other names: Khri-goñ, Khri-dgoñs, Khri-goms, Khri-som) in the area around Glañ-mcho lake (29°12'12.69"N, 87°23'30.21"E) in Nam-riñ County (2009:

The residence of the Moñ family was situated in Moñ of Upper Stod (Hazod 2019: 27); cf. OLT *stod gyī moñ* “Moñ of Stod” (ITJ 750: 136). The fact that Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab held the office of grand councillor under Khri Slon-mchan (PT 1287: 74–8) evinces the importance of his family. He might have been granted the office for his contribution to the conquest of Ānas-po.²⁷ Moñ-čhu, the name of a river in Upper Stod (Hazod 2019: 120, Fig. 3), suggests that the valley was the original seat of the family from which the family took its name.

If we look at Map 3, it becomes apparent that prior to the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod (whatever their exact locations) the region between Moñ/Mthon-myi and Khri-boms had no documented connection to the Yar-luñs dynasty. I think that the territory of the Rcañ-Bod must be sought in this region (for its concrete location see §§ 19 & 20 below).²⁸ The conquest of Mar-mun’s territories might have pro-

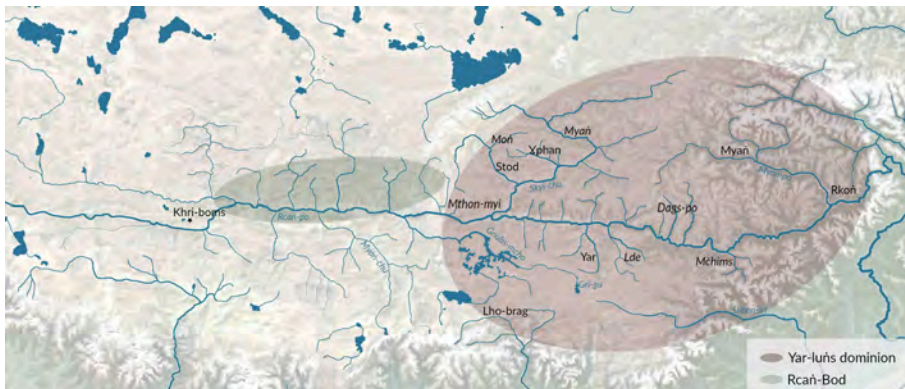
206b and Map 6.1a). On the seat of the Khyuñ-po family, see also Richardson (1998 [1977]: 59) and Hazod (2009: 190).

Zeisler (2021: 328) suggested that the Rcañ-pas might have been vassals of the Žaň-žuñ prior to their conquest by Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce. If so, then Bod must have also been subjects of the Žaň-žuñ (as indeed assumed by Beckwith (1993: 16)), for both were ruled by Mar-mun. The conquest of the Rcañ-Bod from the Žaň-žuñ would have brought the Yar-luñs dynasty in an open conflict with the latter, of which there is no information available.

²⁷ It is conceivable that he was the first ever grand councillor; the office might have been created after the conquest of Ānas-po as the first step to consolidate the political power of the Yar-luñs dynasty. This break is indicated in PT 1287: 73 with the statement that the councillors who preceded Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab were endowed with transformational powers (*yphrul*), as opposed to the later ones (see also Hazod 2019: 6). The break is confirmed by PT 1144 where Śud-pu Rgyal-to-re Āna-myi (enlisted as grand councillor in PT 1287) is referred to as *guñ blon* of Stag-bu Sña-gzigs. The office of *guñ blon* might have been replaced by that of *blon čhen* by Khri Slon-mchan for in OT sources the former is mentioned only in connection with Stag-bu Sña-gzigs’s reign (cf. also PT 1287: 257).

²⁸ For the Rcañ-Bod, Richardson suggested a location “around and north-west of Śaňs and Shigatse” (1998 [1989]: 131). Beckwith (1993: 8 & 16) identified the region with modern Dbus-Gcañ but in an earlier work he speculated that Bod “referred to Dbus and the region adjoining it to the northeast” (Beckwith 1977: 232). Denwood (2009: 149) suggested identifying the Rcañ-Bod with Lower Rcañ, whereas Hazod (2009: 171, Map 3) placed the Rcañ-Bod to the west of Rcañ. The latter author understood *rcañ bod* to be a determinative compound, lit. “Bod of Rcañ” (p. 190). This interpretation (apparently also accepted in Zeisler 2021: 324ff.) is not supported by other examples from OLT; on the contrary, whenever an area formed part of a greater region this was expressed with a determinative phrase ‘X+GEN Y’, lit. “Y of X”. In the latter construction, Y customarily denoted a concrete place and not a region. Moreover, Hazod’s interpretation is based on the

ceeded from two directions: from the west he could have been attacked by Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce and from the east by Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab. In this way the information from (2) and (3) can be reconciled, providing an important bridging link to later conquests further to the west, like that of the Žaň-zuñ.



Map 3. Tentative location of the Rcañ-Bod (Image Landsat / Copernicus 01.2021)

8. Žaň-zuñ alliance. Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce describes his contribution to the polity of Khri Slon-mchan in the following song:

(5)

<i>mon ka yī ni stag čhig pa /</i>	A lone tiger of Mon-ka –
<i>stag bkum nī zu ces bkum / [...]</i>	[One] killed the tiger. Zu-ce killed [it]. [...]
<i>rcañ brañ nī ya stod kyī</i>	In Rcañ-brañ, ²⁹ of the heights
<i>thañ prom nī rgod ldiñ bay //</i>	A white-winged one, a soaring vulture –
<i>rgod bkum nī zu ces bkum // [...]</i>	[One] killed the vulture. Zu-ce killed [it]. [...]
<i>tī se ni gañs druñ nas //</i>	From the foot of the Ti-se glacier,
<i>ša dañ nī rkyañ byer bay //</i>	Deer and wild asses that fled,
<i>šam po nī rca la byer // [...]</i>	Fled to Šam-po. [...]
<i>ma pañ nī mcho ygram nas /</i>	From the shore of the Ma-pañ lake,
<i>ñañ dañ nī nur byed ba //</i>	Geese and ducks that fled,
<i>dañ ko ni mcho la byer //</i>	Fled to the Dañ-ko lake. (PT 1287: 221–6)

assumption that *rcañ bod* was a toponym, but in fact it consisted of two demonyms (see fn. 22 and §§ 19 & 20 below) that are also independently attested in the sources.

²⁹ Beckwith interpreted *rcañ brañ* as “palace of Rcañ”, adding that it must have referred to the seat of Mar-mun (1977: 236). Although in itself plausible, there are two problems with this interpretation: 1. in OLT a seat of a ruler was commonly referred to as *mchar* (see the catalogues of principalities); and 2. Mar-mun ruled over the *Rcañ-pa and Bod.

Little is known about the conquest of Mon-ka (tiger), but that of Rcañ (vulture) is confirmed in other passages and texts as well (see § 7). The animal metaphors continue with deer and wild asses of Ti-se and geese and ducks of Ma-pañ. They are not killed but brought into the vicinity of the Yar-valley, to the Śam-po mountain and the Dañ-ko lake.³⁰ Therefore, due to Zu-ce's activities and apparently without a military intervention, the peoples from the far west were made subjects of the Yar-luñs dynasty. The marriage of Sad-mar-kar, the sister of Khri Sroñ-rcañ, with the Žaň-žuň ruler Lig-myi-rhya (PT 1287: 398–9; see § 11) confirms the latter's close relations to the Yar-luñs house and might have in fact resulted from the subordination of the peoples from Ti-se and Ma-pañ alluded to in (5). Thus, following the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod, peoples inhabiting regions further to the west also became subjects of Khri Slon-mchan, possibly instigated by Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce.

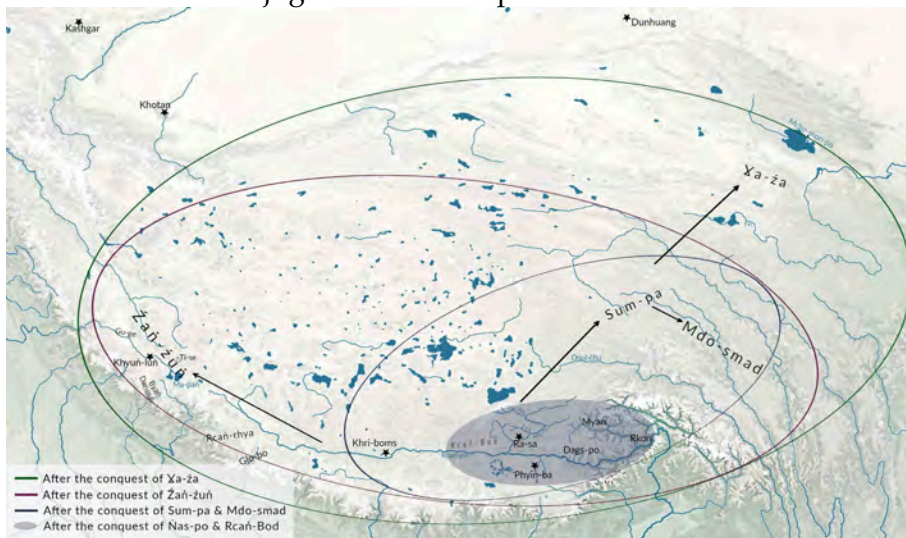
9. Revolt. Towards the end of Khri Slon-mchan's reign the Žaň-žuň, Sum-pa, Ņag-ñi,³¹ Dags-po, Rkoñ-po, and Myañ-po revolted (PT 1287: 300). This information confirms that all these peoples were considered subjects of Khri Slon-mchan albeit the character of the fealty might have varied for single groups. For instance, Dags-po, Rkoñ, and Myañ have already occurred in the context of previous conquests by Khri Slon-mchan, whereas Lig-myi-rhya, the ruler of the Žaň-žuň, was married to Sad-mar-kar, the sister of Khri Sroñ-rcañ, and his subjects were considered subjects of the Yar-luñs dynasty (see ex. (5)).³² Yet no information whatsoever is available on the political status of the Sum-pa. If the extension of the Rcañ-Bod as reconstructed in the paper is correct, the first conquest of the Sum-pa must have followed that of the Rcañ-Bod so to prevent the attack from Mar-mun via the corridor of Upper Stod and the Upper Lha-čhu valley. Alternatively, the lord of the Sum-pa might have been married to another Yar-luñs princess. Now taking into account Map 4, it appears

³⁰ Beckwith (1977: 236f.) identified Dañ-ko with the modern-day Gri-gu lake (see Map 3) about thirty kilometres as the crow flies southwest from the Yar-lha-śam-po mountain. Beckwith's identification has been accepted by Gyalbo, Hazod, and Sørensen (2000: 204) and Sørensen and Hazod (2005: 257, fn. 60).

³¹ For the reading of Ņag-ñi as a toponym, see Uray 1988. As far as I am aware, it remains unidentified, although it must have been located in close vicinity of Dags-po.

³² On the occasion of the revolt the Žaň-žuň are called *gñen* (PT 1287: 300) "affinal relatives", confirming the existence of matrimonial contacts with the Yar-luñs dynasty (see also Uray 1988: 1503).

that whatever the exact location of the *Žaŋ-zuŋ* and *Sum-pa*, they must have been subjugated after *Nas-po* and the *Rcaŋ-Bod*.³³



Map 4. *Yar-dominion* (Image Landsat / Copernicus 01.2021)

Shortly before his death Khri Slon-mchan appointed Myaŋ Maŋ-po-rje *Žaŋ-snaŋ* a grand councillor (PT 1287: 259). The appointment might have been related to the revolt and Myaŋ Maŋ-po-rje *Žaŋ-snaŋ*'s role in re-gaining of the Myaŋ family (and maybe also *Dags-po* and *Rkoŋ*) for Khri Slon-mchan.³⁴

I.3 Khri Sroŋ-rcan

10. 2nd *Sum-pa* conquest. Khri Slon-mchan died a violent death (PT 1287: 300–1). His son Khri Sroŋ-rcan was young and therefore did not have children yet (PT 1287: 301), but he was old enough to indepen-

³³ For the location of the *Rcaŋ-Bod* on Map 4, see §§ 18–20 below. Denwood, referring to the Tang itinerary of 734–8 (see Satō 1975), established the territory inhabited by the *Sum-pa* as bordering to the northeast on *Ybri-ču* and to the southwest on the *Humang Gorge* located between the *Sog-ču* and *Śag-ču* (2008: 12). Although this location might be roughly correct (it partly overlaps with Tibetan data from post-imperial sources), the itinerary itself does not even allude to the *Sum-pa*, so that the foundation of Denwood's identification remains a mystery.

³⁴ According to PT 1288: 4–7, Myaŋ Maŋ-po-rje was killed and his residence *Sdurbu* destroyed before the first conquest of the *Ya-za*, whereas in PT 1287: 305–16 the order of the events is reversed.

dently take over the rule immediately after the death of his father (PT 1287: 301–2). Hence the assumption can be made that he might have been fifteen to twenty years old. His first goal must have been to re-subdue the Sum-pa and the *Žaň-žuň* after the revolt (§ 9). Grand councillor Myaň Maň-po-rje *Žaň-snaň* was entrusted with the subjugation of the Sum-pa (PT 1287: 84–5). PT 1287: 266–7 preserves the following song sung by Khri Sroň-rcan not long after the conquest of the Sum-pa by Myaň Maň-po-rje *Žaň-snaň*:

(6)

<i>yar mo ni čhu thuňgs kyis //</i>	Because the rivers of Yar-mo were short,
<i>mdo nas nī rcaň du / (267) bsrin /</i>	[They] were extended from Mdo-[smad] to Rcaň.
<i>yar mo ni žeň čhuňgs kyis //</i>	Because the expanse of Yar-mo was small,
<i>lho nas nī byaň du bskyed //</i>	[It] was enlarged from south to north.

Since the dominion under the sway of the Yar-luňs dynasty extended from Mdo-smad in the east to Rcaň in the west, one has to assume that Mdo-smad was conquered immediately after the Sum-pa, although the sources do not mention its conquest. That the territory of the Sum-pa was adjacent to Mdo-smad can be inferred from the following passage:

(7)

mdo smad gyi dgun ydun nam ldoň prom du khu maň po rje lha (141) zuň daň / blon maň rcaň ldoň žis bsduste / sum ruyi mkos čhen po bgyis / (ITJ 750)
The winter council of Mdo-smad, convened by Khu Maň-po-rje Lha-zuň and councillor Maň-rcan Ldoň-ži at Nam-ldoň-prom, made a great administration of Sum-pa Horn.

It has generally been assumed that the territory of Mdo-smad was located to the east of the Sum-pa, partly overlapping with the latter (see Hazod 2009: 166, Map 2). On the other hand, if the Sum-pa lived between Central Horn and Mdo-smad, it is difficult to explain why they should have been administered from the latter and not from Central Horn.

11. 1st *Žaň-žuň* conquest. From (6), it can be inferred that after Khri Sroň-rcan took over the reign, there was a period in which the Yar-luňs dynasty ruled over the Sum-pa and extended its territories as far east as Mdo-smad but did not yet militarily control the *Žaň-žuň*. I think that the famous passage on the conquest of the *Žaň-žuň* ruler

Lig-myi-rhya (PT 1287: 398–434) narrates events that followed the revolt (see § 9). By veiling the story as a matrimonial narrative trope (Dotson 2013b: 211ff.), the narrator wants the reader to believe that it was Sad-mar-kar who instigated the conquest, but the incentive for the attack seems to have come from outside of the royal house:

(8)

bchan pho źa śnar spuñ sad zu ce dañ / stañ rye mun glo ba ñe ste mčhis nas / (44) lig myi rya la čhab srid mjad nay / rgyal lam myi rgyal źes bthab nay [...] mo bzañ rab / (PT 1047: 43–6)

If [one] threw [a lot asking]: “If, after [Khyuñ-po] Spuñ-sad Zu-ce and Stañ-rye-mun, being loyal to the *bcan po*, came, [they] would enforce policy against Lig-myi-rya, would [they/we] be victorious or not?” [...] the lot would be very good.

The passage reveals that it was Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce and Stañ-rye-mun who initiated the military action against Lig-myi-rhya. Stañ-rye-mun might have been subject of the *Žaň-žuň* at that time, whereas Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce had already proved his loyalty to the Yar-luñs house through the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod.

As can be inferred from the passages narrating the life of Sad-mar-kar (PT 1287: 402–3 & 408–12), the core of *Žaň-žuň*’s polity was centred around Gu-ge, the lake Ma-p(h)añ, and the mountain Ti-se (see also (5)), i.e. in the Upper Sutlej valley, with Rñul-mkhar of Khyuñ-luñ being its ‘capital’. On two occasions Lig/Leg/Lag-sña-śur is called “lord of Dar-ma/pa”: *dar pa yī rjo bo* (PT 1286: 7) and *źaň źuň dar mayi rje bo* (PT 1290: v5); PT 1290: r3 reads *mayi rje bo leg sña śur* which has been correctly amended as **dar ma* on OTDO. This Dar-pa/ma is to be identified with Darma Valley in the eastern part of the Uttarakhand state (Martin 2013: 188), just to the southwest from the Ma-pañ/Manasarovar lake (see Map 4 and Map 2 in Willis Oke (2019: 4)). Nowadays Darma Valley is inhabited by a group which identifies itself and the language they speak as Darma (ibid., p. 2). Darma, Byangkho, and Bangba/Chaudang form a “single ethnic tribe called Rung”³⁵ (ibid., p. 3; Darma, Byangkho and Bangba languages are classified as West Himalayish, Bodic, Trans-Himalayan). Byang-

³⁵ The name Rung [rəŋ] (Willis Oke 2019: 3) can be historically identical with *žuň* in *Žaň-žuň* and *tóng* in Yáng-tóng 羊同 (*tóng*: LH *doŋ*/OCM **dōŋ*, Schuessler (2007); MC *duwng*/OC **l’oŋ*, Baxter and Sagart (2014)). Beckwith reconstructed the name of the polity as **rängrüng* (2011: 167).

kho live in Byans/Kuthi Valley,³⁶ the valley neighbouring Darma Valley to the east (see Map 4). I believe that this Byang/Byan is identical with Byañ in *byañ gi žañ-žuñ* (ITJ 1375: r3). It appears that during the same campaign that led to the 1st conquest of the Žañ-žuñ, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce conquered To-yo-čas-la, which is described as *byañ gi žañ-žuñ* and ruled by a certain Bor-yon-ce (ITJ 1375: r3).³⁷

12. 1st Ya-ža conquest. Around 637/8 Tibetans under the command of Khri Sroñ-rcan attacked the Ya-ža (Beckwith 1993: 22). This first conquest of the Ya-ža is documented in Tibetan (PT 1288: 6–7; PT 1287: 305–7), as well as Chinese sources (Bushell 1880: 443f., Pelliot 1961: 3–4), although it might not have brought about any kind of political subordination to the Yar-luñs dynasty.

13. 2nd Žañ-žuñ conquest. Against the opinions of scholars who previously investigated the early history of the Yar-luñs dynasty, I hold that Lig-sña-śur, the ruler of the Žañ-žuñ conquered in 644/5 (PT 1288: 13–4), must have been a person distinct from Lig-myi-rhya.³⁸ Little is known for certain about the reasons for the second

³⁶ The form Byang seems to be a preferred endonym while Byan is more often used as exonym.

³⁷ For different localisations of Byañ see Hazod (2009: 172) and Denwood (2008: 10). The reconstructed extent of the Žañ-žuñ polity as including Darma and Byang valleys suggests that the language of the polity could be the last common ancestor of this group of Eastern West Himalayish languages. Likewise Widmer (2017: 52f.) included the Žañ-žuñ language within this sub-branch, although he connected it to the central sub-group that encompasses Bunan, Rongpo, and Sunam spoken further to the northwest from the region under consideration. In an earlier paper Martin (2013) related the Žañ-žuñ language more specifically to the modern Darma language.

³⁸ See Uray (1968: 296f.), Macdonald (1971: 109f.), Uray (1972: 35 & 40), but also Blezer (2010: 19, & esp. 26f.) who elsewhere mentions the possibility of the two being distinct persons (p. 41). This identification has led to a number of misinterpretations concerning the events but also biographies of persons involved.

Lig-myi-rhya was married to Sad-mar-kar, a sister of Khri Sroñ-rcan. The latter must have been around fifty-sixty years old at the time of the second conquest in 644/5 (PT 1288: 13–4). As Khri Slon-mchan died prematurely when Khri Sroñ-rcan was still a minor, his sister could not have been more than 15 years younger, if at all. Thus, in 644/5 she would have been around forty, which is not the best age for a woman to give birth. Furthermore, later Bon historiographical sources call Lig-myi-rhya “father” (*Rgyal rabs bon kyi ybyuñ gnas* 48.4; *apud* Uray 1968: 293). It is apparent that he was the father of Lig-sña-śur.

The distinctness of Lig-myi-rhya and Lig-sña-śur might also find confirmation in later Bon sources that relate two conquests of the Žañ-žuñ, dating the second one, however, to the reign of Khri Sroñ-lde-brcan (Blezer 2010: 19).

conquest but it seems to have followed the death of Guñ-sroñ Guñ-rcan; Bialek (2021 Forthcoming b) tentatively dated his reign to 641–4 (or less probably 645–7). Since a change on the throne is always a good occasion for a revolt and in this case the official heir to the throne, Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcan, was about six years old, the Žaň-zuñ might have seized the opportunity to throw off the yoke of the Yar-luñs rule. On the other hand, the contemporary ruler of the Žaň-zuñ, Lig-sña-śur, is referred to as a “lord of Dar-pa/ma” (see § 11). This designation might indicate that after the 1st conquest Tibetans gained control over a vast part of the once Žaň-zuñ territory but there were still remote regions, into which the ruling house could withdraw. Accordingly, the 2nd conquest aimed at the final defeat of the Žaň-zuñ now centred in Darma Valley. As a confirmation, PT 1288: 13 reads: *žaň zuñ thams čad ybañsu bkug* “all the Žaň-zuñ were subjugated”.³⁹

I.4 Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcan

14. Conquest of Glo-bo and Rcañ-rhya. In 652/3 grand councillor Mgar Stoñ-rcan Yul-zuñ subjugated Glo-bo and Rcañ-rhya (PT 1288: 21–2). Their exact locations are not known but one can make the following educated guesses: 1. the two regions or people were neighbours; 2. Rcañ-rhya designated a region/people living near Rcañ-po; and 3. Glo-bo is evocative of Glo-bo/Mon-thañ (Dotson 2009: 84, fn. 134), Tibetan name for Mustang, a district in the Gandaki province of Nepal bordering on Tibet. The logical conclusion seems to be that Rcañ-rhya was located somewhere between Rcañ-po and Glo-bo (see Map 4).

15. 2nd Ya-ža conquest. From 663/4 to 666/7 grand councillor Mgar Stoñ-rcan Yul-zuñ stayed in the land of the Ya-ža and completed its conquest (PT 1288: 43–47). In 669/70 the Ya-ža paid homage to the *bcan po* who took hostages, most probably from the Ya-ža elites (PT 1288: 50).

³⁹ The geographically restricted localisation of various OLT toponyms related to the Žaň-zuñ (Gu-ge, Mi-pañ, Ti-se, Dar-ma, Byañ) and the fact that Lig-sña-śur had his seat in Dar-ma (why not further away from <Four Horns>?) raises the question about the real extent of the Žaň-zuñ polity at the time of its 1st conquest. Namely, it does not appear to be a power stretching over Byañ-thañ (up to Gnam-mcho and Gdañ-la range in the east) and bordering on Dru-gu (cf. Denwood 2008: 9ff.).

1.5 Absolute dating of the conquests

16. The preceding sections have provided a relative chronology of the early expansions as they can be reconstructed on the basis of OT sources. This section shall now attempt to reconstruct a basic absolute temporal frame within which the conquests took place. Since there are no historical sources for the events prior to 634 on which to base calculations, rough estimation by means of generation counting has been used. Table 2 provides the known dates of birth of four *bcan pos* together with the dates of their first-born sons.

<i>bcan po</i>	Date of birth	First-born son	Heir to the throne	Age
Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcan	638 ⁴⁰		676	38
Khri Ydus-sroñ	676		704	28
Khri Lde-gcug-rcan	704	739	742	35
Khri Sroñ-lde-brcan	742	760 ⁴¹	?	18
Average age				29,75

Table 2. Dates of birth of *bcan pos*

The Age-column calculates the age of a *bcan po* when his first son was born. As the information in this respect is clearly limited, I surmise that whatever factors determined the relative late age of the *bcan pos* at the time of birth of the heir to the throne (high birth/child mortality, female children, infanticide by vying families etc.), they were also in force in previous times. Thus, according to the data a *bcan po* fathered an heir on average at the age of thirty. Table 3 presents estimations of the dates of birth of the Yar-luñs rulers who preceded Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcan. I have made three distinct calculations, taking the length of a generation to be 25, 30, and 35 years on average (i.e. 30 ± 5 years). The starting point for the calculation is the birth year 638 of Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcan (Bialek 2021 Forthcoming b).

⁴⁰ This date has been reconstructed in Bialek (2021 Forthcoming b).

⁴¹ This son died young and the actual heir to the throne, Khri Lde-sroñ-brcan, was born some time later, but we don't know exactly when (Bialek 2021 Forthcoming b).

<i>bcan po</i>	25	30	35
Guñ-sroñ Guñ-rčan	613	608	603
Khri Sroñ-rčan	588	578	568
Khri Slon-mčan	563	548	533
Stag-bu Sña-gzigs	538	518	498

Table 3. Statistically calculated birth years

These rough calculations do not permit even approximate dating for the early conquests of the Yar-luñs dynasty, but one can make some educated guesses based on them.

The Moñ family became bride-giver owing to its contribution to the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod. Accordingly, by the time of the conquest Khri Sroñ-rčan must have already been born.⁴² He took over the reign as a youth, which means not more than fifteen years after the conquest. Thus, according to my calculation (Table 3) the conquest could be dated to ca. 570s or 580s.

Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce conquered the Rcañ-Bod and allegedly contributed to the defeat of Ziñ-po-rje Khri-pañ-sum. Thus, he must have been an adult when Khri Slon-mčan took over the reign. Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce died a violent death in the 630s after his plot against Khri Sroñ-rčan had been revealed by Mgar Stoñ-rčan Yul-zuñ, who was subsequently offered the office of grand councillor.⁴³ Had the subjugation of the Rcañ-Bod taken place in the 570s, then Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce would have reached an age of over 80 years. This is not impossible but rather improbable considering that none of the dated *bcan pos* aged to much over 60.⁴⁴ Accordingly, the date of the conquest and the birth of Khri Sroñ-rčan can be now shifted to 580s at the earliest.

All post-imperial historiographical sources agree that Khri Sroñ-rčan was born in an ox year (Bialek 2021 Forthcoming b) which could only be 569, 581, or 593, following Table 3. The year 569 is too early

⁴² Political marriages were arranged by parents when the children were still young, as can be seen in the case of Khri Lde-gcug-rčan and the Chinese princess Kim-šañ-khoñ-čo. The latter came to Ra-sa in 710/11 (ITJ 750: 176–7) when Khri Lde-gcug-rčan was seven years old.

⁴³ It can be reasonably argued that Mgar Stoñ-rčan Yul-zuñ was the highest official of the polity already in 640 when he set out for China to escort the Chinese princess Mun-čañ-koñ-čo (see also Uray 1972: 33ff.).

⁴⁴ The longest living *bcan po*, Khri Sroñ-lde-brčan, might have been 62 (Bialek 2021 Forthcoming b).

considering the years of Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce's life, whereas 593 would yield the average age of 22,5 for Khri Sroñ-rcañ and his son to become fathers, not impossible but much below the calculated standard.

Towards the end of Khri Slon-mchan's reign, the Žaň-zuñ and the Sum-pa had revolted (see § 9) and were subjugated by his successor Khri Sroñ-rcañ. The 'revolt' of the Žaň-zuñ apparently concerned the refusal of Lig-myi-rhya to beget an heir to the throne with Sad-mar-kar (PT 1287: 399–400). This means that the latter was married to Lig-myi-rhya during the reign of Khri Slon-mchan (see § 8). In 653/4 Spug Gyim-rcañ Rma-čuñ was appointed a *mñan* of the Žaň-zuñ (PT 1288: 25). The same person is said to have acted as messenger between Khri Sroñ-rcañ and his sister Sad-mar-kar while the latter was married to Lig-myi-rhya (PT 1287: 402, 427–8). Logically, Spug Gyim-rcañ Rma-čuñ must have been an adult at that point. Considering the age of Spug Gyim-rcañ Rma-čuñ, the 1st conquest of the Žaň-zuñ (after the revolt) must have taken place in the 610s or 620s. I prefer the latter date for it seems unreasonable to assume that Chinese chroniclers would have remained silent on the military expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty (including the conquest of the Sum-pa and the Žaň-zuñ) for a very long period. If they became interested in the new growing power on the Tibetan Plateau around 630 (as suggested by the Tang chronicles), it might indicate that the expansion did not start much earlier than in the 620s. An earlier date is less probable if the words of PT 1287: 433–46 is to be believed, where Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zuñ (only a councillor, l. 440) celebrated with Khri Sroñ-rcañ the conquest of Lig-myi-rhya. Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zuñ died in 667/8 (PT 1288: 48) so must have been born around 600.

From the discussion it follows that Khri Slon-mchan died around 610 and was succeeded by Khri Sroñ-rcañ who thus must have been born in the ox year 593. The conquest of the Rcañ-Bod now shifts to the 590s. For the topic of the present paper, the most important conclusion is that the Rcañ-Bod came under the control of the Yar-luñs dynasty not earlier than in the 580s or even 590s. Needless to say, all the calculations are nothing more than approximations for which no guarantee can be given.

II. Bod

II.1 *bod* as a demonym

17. In OLT demonyms could form the basis from which names for regions or polities were coined customarily by adding *yul* “land, region” to a demonym; for example, *ya źa* “the Ṽa-źa people” > *ya źa yul* “the Ṽa-źa land” or *mywa* “the Mywa” > *mywa yul* “the Mywa land”. The historical primacy of demonyms over names of lands is the direct outcome of the economy based on manpower; in pre-modern times it was human labour (not territories) that secured a major economic and therefore also military advantage over other polities (Scott 2017: 171). Accordingly, to have a name for a people was more relevant for controlling human and natural resources than to have a name for a place they inhabited and could change at any time. This cross-linguistic tendency is also confirmed by the fact that OLT did not have other terms to denote peoples as collectives. The morpheme *-pa*, or more seldom the noun *myi* “human”, added to a demonym or a toponym had an individuating function; they formed plural forms as against simple demonyms such as *ya źa* and *mywa* that were collective terms. For instance, *rcañ čhen pha* (ITJ 750: 106) denoted inhabitants (*-pha*) of the region called Rcañ-čhen, but *bod pa* was a person affiliated to the Bod-people (see below).

In its earliest attestations *bod* is used as name of a people and not as toponym. This can be inferred from phrases and clauses like: *rcañ bod khyim ñi gri* (PT 1287: 199, 200) “twenty thousand households [of] the Rcañ-Bod”; *rcañ bod ybañs su bkug* (PT 1287: 319) lit. “to summon the Rcañ-Bod as subjects”; *bod kyis phu dud bya* (Treaty W 46) “respect was shown by the Bod”; *bod mgo nag po* (Žol E 14–5, S 12–3) “black-headed Bod”; *bod gyīs dmag drañ* (Žol S 54) “Bod are leading the army”; *bod gyīs g.yul bzlog* (Žol S 60–1) “Bod won the battle”; *bod las* official+TERM *bskos* (PT 1089 *passim*) “appointed as official from among Bod”, just to mention the most obvious ones. The compound *rcañ bod khyim* can be compared with *bran khyim* in PT 1287: 191–7, in which *bran* has a human referent. Moreover, phrases like *mal tro pyogs nas bran khyim stoñ lña brgyay* (PT 1287: 192) “one thousand five hundred households from the area [of] Mal-tro” and *yon kyī smon mkhar nas bran khyim sum brgyay* (PT 1287: 194) “three hundred households from Smon-mkhar in (lit. of) Ṽon” prove that the region from which households were counted was expressed in relative (*nas*).

Accordingly, it is not possible to render *rcañ bod khyim* as !“households from Rcañ and Bod [regions]”.

Commonly attested derivative *bod yul* “Bod-land” indicates that *bod* alone did not have geographical denotation for otherwise there would be no need to add *yul* “land” to it in order to refer to the region. What’s more, formations such as *bod pa* nor *bod myi* are not known in OLT at all! It is also not obvious that *bod čhen po* “great Bod” in the ST Treaty inscription (*passim*) should be understood as toponym; it is certainly modelled after Chinese *dà táng* 大唐, lit. “Great Tang” (ST Treaty S 1–3, N 1–3; cf. Richardson 1998 [1978]: 84). The same text has another telling passage: *bod bod yul na skyid* (W 58; see also ex. (20) below) “Bod [people] are happy in the Bod-land”, in which *bod* and *bod yul* occur side by side.

The later shift from a demonym “Bod-people” towards a toponym “Bod-land” follows universal trends with cross-linguistic parallels worldwide. On the other hand, in OLT the shift “Bod-land” > “Bod-people” would have necessitated the addition of the nominal particle *-pa* “somebody affiliated to the Bod-land”, i.e. “Bod-inhabitant”.

II.2 *bod* as a local demonym

18. The earliest use of *bod* in conjunction with a population inhabiting the southern part of the Tibetan Plateau is attested in a series of narratives from PT 1287 that relate events from the reign of *bcan po* Gnam-ri Slon-mchan and his son *bcan po* Khri Sroñ-rcañ (see exx. (2)–(4)). The events concern the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod under the leadership of Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce and Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab.

For his contribution to the conquest, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce received twenty thousand households of the Rcañ-Bod (see ex. (3)). The Rcañ-Bod with their twenty thousand households must have inhabited a large area as in comparison Myañ Smon-to-re Ceñ-sku, Dbays Phañs-to-re Dbyi-chab, and Mnon Pañ-sum Ydron-po received one thousand five hundred households each for their contribution to the conquest of Ñas-po, whereas Ches-poñ Nag-señ was rewarded with only three hundred households (PT 1287: 190–4).

Though no territorial gain is documented for Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab he was likewise rewarded: his family became the bride-giver to the Yar-luñs dynasty. A certain Khri-mo-mñen Ldoñ-sten from the Moñ family became the first queen of Khri Sroñ-rcañ (falsely called Sroñ-lde-brcañ) and later also the mother of *bcan po* Guñ-sroñ

Guñ-rčan (PT 1286: 62–4). Therefore the claim seems justified that Khri-mo-mñen Ldoñ-sten was a daughter of Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab. The decision of making the Moñ family a bride-giver instead of granting it territories and households (as with Myañ, Dbays, Mnon, and Ches-poñ) might have been strategically motivated; it secured the Yar-luñs dynasty direct access to trade routes towards Central Asia via Upper Stod and Upper Lha-čhu.

The proposed location of the Rcañ-Bod (see Map 4) is supported by other considerations as well. To note, after the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod several new families came to the fore in the politics of the Yar-luñs dynasty, most notably the Mgar family. After Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab, PT 1287: 79–104 lists the following grand councillors from the first half of the 7th century: Mgar Khri-sgra ʋji-rmun, Myañ Mañ-po-rje Žañ-snañ, Mgar Mañ-žam Sum-snañ, Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce, and Mgar Stoñ-rčan Yul-zuñ. I believe that the ‘over-representation’ of grand councillors from the Mgar family is not a coincidence. On the basis of post-imperial sources, Hazod (2019: 29f.) identified the homeland of the Mgar family in the Sñe-mo valley and especially in the place called Ba-gor (other spellings: Spa-gor, Sa-gor, Pa-gor; Hazod 2009: 206). As shown on Map 5 (p. 368), Sñe-mo lies in the easternmost part of the area presumably previously controlled by Mar-mun, although the toponym itself is not attested in OT sources.⁴⁵ Apparently, shortly after the subjugation of the Rcañ-Bod the Mgar family gained in importance. OT sources remain silent about the reasons for its rise but, considering the historical context, it seems that the family was rewarded for its contribution to the conquest with the office of grand councillor.

19. The syllable *rcañ* recurs in various OT names connected with the western part of <Four Horns>. The simple name Rcañ is mentioned only once in the OTA where it refers to a region that included the council site Gliñ-kar-chal (ITJ 750: 106). Mig-dmar identified the latter with the post-imperial castle (*rjon*) of Gliñ-dkar in Upper ʋo-yug (LT ʋu-yug; 2005: 86). In the winter 690/1 the council convened at Gliñ-kar-chal of Rcañ prepared tallies for Great Rcañ (ITJ 750: 105–6). Presuming that Mig-dmar’s identification is correct, by the end of

⁴⁵ According to later lists of administrative districts (*yul sde*), Sñe-mo was either the easternmost or second easternmost district of Right Horn; see Hazod (2009: 209, Table 2). But there are also indications suggesting that still earlier, maybe before the administration reform of the 730s, Sñe-mo might have belonged to Central Horn (Hazod 2009: 197).

the 7th century Ḃo-yug, being part of Rcañ, must have been located close enough to Great Rcañ, allowing for an effective administration of the latter.

Between 684/5 and 731/2 the OTA repeatedly mention Great Rcañ (*rcañ čhen*). Bialek (2018a: 1.536–7, fn. 4) argued that Great Rcañ was an administrative unit distinct from Ru-lag and Three Horns, but integrated into Four Horns in 732/3 or 733/4 (the earliest mention of Four Horns comes from the year 733/4; ITJ 750: 267).⁴⁶ Uray (1972: 52f.) drew attention to an interesting pattern in the reports of the OTA: the preparation of sheaves of Great Rcañ is preceded by the same means carried out for Three Horns, cf.:

718/9: *ru gsum gyī rje žiñ gliñs gyī pyiñ rīlđañ sog {ma} bgyīs* (ITJ 750: 208–9)

719/20: *rcañ čhen gyī rje žiñ gyī pyiñ rīl btab* (ITJ 750: 213–4)

In the winter 684/5 certain administrative means for Great Rcañ were carried out from Śañs (ITJ 750: 89). In comparison, in the winter 686/7 preparation of sheaves *up to* Śañs (seen from the perspective of Central Horn) was undertaken, whereas in the winter of the following year the same means are recorded for Great Rcañ (ITJ 750: 95–8). I agree with Uray's conclusion that Śañs was the westernmost area of Three Horns and so demarcated the border between Three Horns and Great Rcañ. This border might be alluded to in 690/1 when a census of border guards was carried out at Cha-steñs of Ḃo-yug (see Map 5), maybe in connection with a revolt in Great Rcañ reported in 687/8 (ITJ 750: 99). It follows that Rcañ encompassed Śañs and Ḃo-yug, and bordered on Great Rcañ west of Śañs.⁴⁷ Seen in this perspective the assumption seems justified that after the reform of the 730s Rcañ became <Lower Right Horn> (*g.yas ru smad*) and Great Rcañ –

⁴⁶ Uray (1972: 53) identified Great Rcañ with Ru-lag, without however explaining the independent occurrences of both in the OTA.

⁴⁷ This position of Rcañ also matches better the course of ritual journeys recounted in PT 1285r. In Dotson's map of the territories, Rcañ (number 1) is located to the far west of all the other places with a large gap in-between (2008: 54). If instead we agree on the suggested location of Rcañ as encompassing Śañs and Ḃo-yug we obtain a map with a cluster of contiguous territories along the Rcañ-po river. As an aside, the territories listed in PT 1285r indicate that the text is based on a tradition that goes back to the early period of Three Horns – no territories conquered after Rcañ are mentioned in the text.

<Upper Right Horn> (*g.yas ru stod*) with the border between them located west of Śaṅs.⁴⁸

Concerning other toponyms with the syllable *rcañ*, according to PT 1288: 21–2, grand councillor Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zuñ subjugated Glo-bo and Rcañ-rhyayin 652/3 (see Map 4). Last but not least, Rcañ figures in the OT name of the Gcañ-po river: Rcañ-ču (PT 1287: 20) or Rcañ-po (PT 1287: 32). Thus, in OLT demonyms and toponyms the syllable *rcañ* is strongly associated with the western part of <Four Horns>.

20. What about Bod? Here the information is far more sparse. Since the households of the Rcañ-Bod were counted together (see ex. (3)), I presume that the groups were immediate neighbours. According to (6), not long after Khri Sroñ-rcañ had taken over the reign the dominion under the sway of the Yar-luñs dynasty extended from Mdo-smad in the east to Rcañ in the west. Apart from the fact that it did not include the Žaṅ-zuñ yet, Rcañ apparently denoted its westernmost regions.⁴⁹ It follows that Bod must have been located to the east of Rcañ. Likewise in the eastern part of Rcañ-Bod was Sñe-mo, the homeland of the Mgar family. I venture the hypothesis that *Bod originally referred to the population that inhabited the eastern part of the Rcañ-Bod's territories and included Sñe-mo* (see Map 5). If Rcañ encompassed Śaṅs and ʸo-yug (see § 19), the territories of the Bod must have been restricted to Sñe-mo and its immediate vicinity. Since the name Sñe-mo is not attested in OT sources, one can speculate that it replaced the earlier local endonym based on the name Bod.

21. Now, the pertinent question is: how did the name of a population subdued first during the reign of Khri Slon-mchan manage to become the general name for Tibetan-speaking inhabitants of the Tibetan Empire? I believe the Mgar family played a central role here.

Around the mid-7th c. Lower Lha-valley (Hazod: Dbu-ru-luñ) played an important role in the life of Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zuñ (Hazod 2019: 50), the fact confirmed by the OTA: he was staying in ʸgor-ti (655/6) and Sñiñ-druñ (657/8, 658/9), and died in Ris-pu

⁴⁸ For the internal division of Right Horn according to later sources, see Hazod (2009: 197–9 & Map 5).

⁴⁹ The song is sung again in PT 1287: 437–8 but there it seems to be misplaced since it follows after the defeat of the Žaṅ-zuñ which extended far beyond Rcañ (see Map 4).

(667/8; see Map 5).⁵⁰ In a song sung by Khri Ṽdus-sroñ to deplore Mgar's disloyalty forty years later, in the last years of the 7th c., the dominion of the Mgar family is compared with that of Khri Ṽdus-sroñ:

(9)

<i>skyi ču nī sñon mo</i> (469) <i>dañ /</i>	The blue Skyi-river and
<i>yar čhab nī čhu bo čhe /</i>	The Yar-river of vast waters –
<i>gar riñ ni gañ thuñ ba //</i>	Which one is longer, which one is shorter
<i>thañ lha nī ya bžur mkhyen //</i> (PT 1287)	Thañ-lha-ya-bžur knows.

The honorific *čhab* in *yar čhab* as opposed to *ču* in *skyi ču* highlights the superiority of the topography of the Yar-valley. The song identifies the Skyi-river with Mgar's dominion, leaving no doubt that at the end of the 7th century the seat of the Mgar family was located somewhere on the Skyi-river. The song contains other analogous similes: small rock (*bra gu*) Ceñ-ldeñ vs Yar-lha-śam-po, many islands (*gliñ dgu*) of the Gnubs lake vs island glebe (*le goñ*) of the

⁵⁰ According to later sources, the Mgar family likewise possessed territories in Upper Stod (Hazod 2019: 29f.). The association of the Mgar family with the Stod-valley (see Hazod 2019: 30) might postdate the disgracing of the Moñ family, following the accusation of a certain Moñ Sñon-po by Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zu-ce (PT 1287: 201–2). The Moñ family might have lost its territories in the Stod-valley in favour of the Mgar family that was gaining in importance. This would also explain the fact that Mgar Stoñ-rčan Yul-zuñ convened the council of 654/5 in Sral-γjoñ of the upper Moñ valley (PT 1288: 27–8; Sral-γjoñ's location in Map 5 is only approximate). The Mgar family might have been interested in moving closer to the political centre of the burgeoning empire and so changed its old seat in Sñe-mo for the more central Stod-valley.

PT 1286: 11 lists Mgar and Mñan as councillors of Nas-po under the ruler Dgu(g)-gri Ziñ-po-rje Khri-pañs-sum. Whereas a certain Mñan Ṽji-zuñ Nag-po is said to have been a councillor (*blon*) of Ziñ-po-rje Stag-skya-bo (PT 1287: 129) and a subject of Ziñ-po-rje Khri-pañs-sum, the Mgar family is not mentioned in this context. The formulaic character of 'catalogues of principalities' can be made responsible for combining data from different temporal frames; the ruler of Nas-po is the one whom Khri Slon-mchan conquered, one councillor (Mñan) was a councillor of Ziñ-po-rje Stag-skya-bo and Mgar was the 'administrator' of the region during the reign of Khri Sroñ-rčan. The catalogues project a contemporary political situation onto the political situation from the time of the conquest. This explains their almost ritualistic lists providing two councillors for each region; a situation not known from any historical sources. It is conspicuous that the name Mgar is missing from OT catalogues of principalities other than the one included in PT 1286 and, in general, it only surfaces in the OTA and OTC. Neither do similar catalogues from the post-imperial period mention the name (cf., e.g., the lists provided in Dotson 2012: 176f.).

Grañ-po lake,⁵¹ grey house of Pya-mday vs Stag-rce of P(h)yiñ-ba, the small valley of Bya-pu vs the valleys of Yar and P(h)yiñ, barren subjects of Mgar vs prolific Lho and Rñegs (PT 1287: 468–72). Judging by its name, the small rock (*bra gu*) Ceñ-ldēñ (probably a hill) must have been located near the monastery Ceñ-ldēñ-sgon-pa, *alias* Gnam-rce-sdiñ-mgon-pa (BDRC G2CN11075), not far away from the Rwa-sgreñ monastery (Dotson 2013a: 350, n. 10; Nyima 2009: 493, n. 1572 and p. 627). I believe that Pya-mday, where the main seat of the family was located at that time, can be identified with the later Bčom-mdo in the lower Smri-ti valley (N 30 17'19.79", E 91 25'4.38"; see also TTT: 0196, Fig. 1).⁵² In OLT *mday* was a near-synonym of CT *mdo*; cf. Zrid-mday (PT 1288: 47; ITJ 750: 78 & 123). The change from Pya-mday to Bčom-mdo can be reconstructed as follows: *pya mday* *[pjamda] > *[pjamdo] (replacement of the old *mday* by a better connoted *mdo*) > *[tɕamdo] (palatalisation [pj] > [tɕ]) > *[tɕomdo] (vowel assimilation) > *bčom mdo* (folk etymology by analogy with *bčom* as in *bčom ldan ydas*). Less certain is the identity of Bya-pu whose first syllable can be preserved in the name of the village Ĵa-rca (Ch. Jiǎzhā 甲扎; N 30 17'6.96", E 91 30'28.29"). If so, the valley west of Ĵa-rca could be the Bya valley of the OTC.

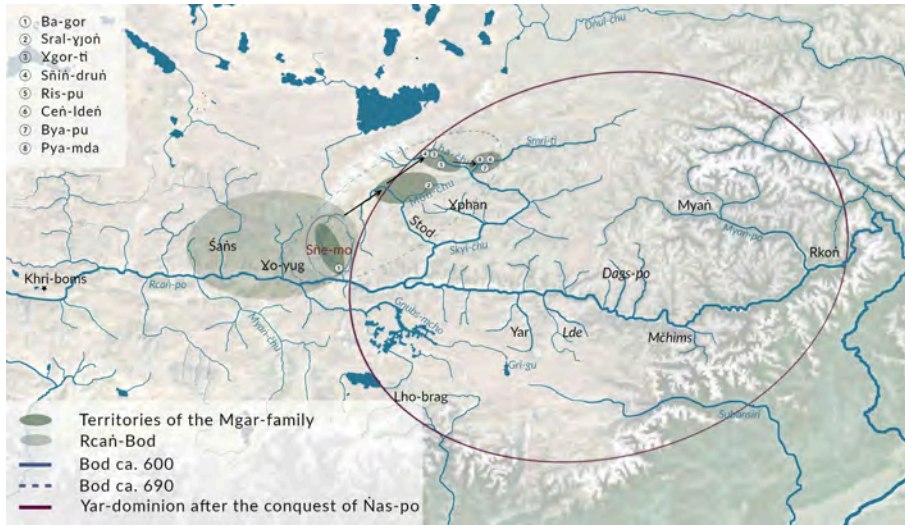
Thus, the Mgar family seems to have systematically extended its territory towards the northeast during the incumbencies of its grand councillors. It seems plausible that with the spread of the Mgar family and the growth of its political power the denotation of *bod* broadened to likewise include populations of the territories that the Mgar family newly acquired. From originally referring to the eastern Rcañ-Bod population, it had now been generalised to also cover populations of Upper Stod, Lower Lha-čhu, and Lower Smri-ti.

It therefore transpires that Bod was originally a demonym, referring to a population that inhabited the eastern part of the territory ruled by Mar-mun. The group included the Mgar family

⁵¹ The main seat in Sñe-mo would be an ideal starting point for the expansion of Mgar south towards the Gnubs lake (maybe via Bar-thañ, see Map in Kriz and Hazod 2020).

⁵² The river referred to here as Smri-ti (see Map 5) is nowadays locally known as Rwa-sgreñ River (*rwa sgreng gcañ po*), after the name of the famous monastery founded in the 11th century (see Map 5; Guntram Hazod p.c. 01.03.2021). The presence of the Čog-ro family in Lower Smri-ti (TTT: 0196) postdates the Mgar family in this region; the first mention of the Čog-ro family in the OTA comes from 711/2 (ITJ 750: 180).

whose homeland in Sñe-mo bordered on the territory controlled by the Yar-luñs dynasty after the conquest of Nas-po. With the instalment of Mgar Khri-sgra ʅji-rmun as grand councillor the Mgar family entered the interregional politics and began to enlarge its zone of influence, gradually extending its sphere of political control and territorial possessions from west to Upper Stod, Lower Lha, and finally Lower Smri-ti. The Mgar family brought its social affiliation with the Bod to its new homeland, thus extending the scope of the term's application to the population of the Stod-Skyi region. These socio-historical processes are illustrated in Map 5.



Map 5. The expansion of the Mgar family (Image Landsat / Copernicus 01.2021)

II.3 *bod* in the OTA

22. In the OTA *bod* only occurs in the compound *bod yul*. The compound has a remarkable distribution in the OTA-I and OTA-II: it is exclusively used in entries that relate a Mdo-smad council.⁵³ The following quotations illustrate the usage of *bod yul* in the extant OTA:

⁵³ For the sake of conciseness I omit the fragments concerning the Mdo-smad councils. This information can be obtained from Dotson (2009). In Bialek (In Preparation a) I argue that a considerable part of the OTA is a patchwork, consisting of at least two versions of the text: one composed in the central chancelleries of the empire, the other being a local version written in Mdo-smad, so-called *Mdo-smad Annals*.

(10) 703/4

{bo}d yul gyī dgun ydun skyī {bya<r>} li[---] (Dx 12851v: 3)

The winter council of the [Bo]d-land [convened] at [Byar]-li[ñs-cal] of Skyi.

(11) 704/5

{bod} yul gyi dbyar (6) *{ydun}* (Dx 12851v)

The summer [council] of the Bod-land [---].

(12) 727/8

bod yul gyi dgun ydun skyī lhas gañ chal du / źaň ybriň rchan khyī bus bsdus (ITJ 750: 246)

Žaň-ybriň-rchan Khyi-bu convened the winter council of the Bod-land at Lhas-gañ-chal of Skyi.

(13) 728/9

ybrugī lo la / bcan po dbyard mcho bgoe bol gaňs na bźugs pa las / slar bod yul du gśegste / (ITJ 750: 248)In the dragon year, in the summer, the *bcan po*, upon abiding in Bol-gaňs of Mcho-bgo, came back to the Bod-land.

(14) 739/40

yos buyī lo la / bcan po dbyard čhab sřid la beg du gśegste / [...] *bcan po yab dgun bod yul du slar gśegs* / (ITJ 750: 281–2)In the rabbit year, in the summer, the *bcan po* went to Beg for a military campaign. [...] In the winter, the *bcan po*, the father, returned to the Bod-land.(15) 743/4⁵⁴*bod yul gyi pha los gyi [rcis] mg{o} mjad* / (Or.8212/187: 1)

[One] prepared an initial account of the populace of the Bod-land.

(16) 758/9

blon čhe snaň bźer bod yul du slar mčhīs (Or.8212/187: 30)

Grand councillor Snaň-bźer came back to the Bod-land.

(17) 762/4

(51) *źaň rgyal zīgs daň źaň stoň rcan las scogs / pas / bum liň lčag zam rgal te // dra čen dran[s] ste* / (52) *ybu śiň kun daň zīn ču daň ga ču las scogs pa / rgyaγī mkhar maň pho phab / ste / źaň rgyal zigs* (53) *slar bod yul / du / mčhis te* / (Or.8212/187)

Žaň-rgyal-zigs and Žaň-stoň-rcan, among others, having crossed the branch bridge [of] Bum-liň, drew a great expeditionary force [and] conquered many strongholds of the Chinese: Ybu-śiň-kun, Zin-ču, and Ga-ču, among others. Žaň-rgyal-zigs went back to the Bod-land.

⁵⁴ This is the only entry with *bod yul* which does not mention Mdo-smad. However, the entry is incomplete.

(10) and (12) state explicitly that *bod yul* denoted a region that included Skyi.⁵⁵ The remaining passages refer to *bod yul* either as a destination to travel to when one was abroad, such as in (13)–(14) and (16)–(17),⁵⁶ or as a goal of a census (15). The latter is interesting as the next entry of the same document speaks of the administration of Four Horns (*ru bži mkhos*; Or.8212.187: 3) where the OTA-I has *dmag myi mkhos*, “administration of soldiers” (ITJ 750: 299). Furthermore, the compound *bod yul* occurs in the OTA-II and OTA-III in passages where the OTA-I has no *bod yul*:

	OTA-I (ITJ 750)		OTA-II (Or.8212/187)	
743/4	<i>pha los gyi byañ bu bor /</i>	l. 294	<i>bod yul gyi pha los gyi</i> {rcis} <i>mg{o} mjad /</i>	l. 1
	OTA-I (ITJ 750)		OTA-III (Dx 12851v)	
703/4	-		{bo}d yul gyi dgun ydun skyi { <i>bya<r></i> } li[-]	l. 3
704/5	<i>ydun ma brag sgor ydus /</i>	ll. 147–8	{bo}d yul gyi dbyar {ydun}	ll. 5–6

Table 4. *bod yul* in the OTA

If Skyi was included in Three/Four Horns *and* in the Bod-land, the question arises as to the mutual relation of the terms ‘Three/Four Horns’ and ‘Bod-land’. Three Horns (*ru gsum*), Dependency of Three Horns (*ru lag*), and Great Rcañ (*rcañ čhen*) were converted into Four Horns in 732/3 or 733/4 as a consequence of an administrative reform. In the OTA, these terms are used in connection with a wide range of administrative means carried out by councils. They are endonyms applied to the respective regions from within the polity. The compound *bod yul*, on the other hand, seems to have had the same denotation but was applied from outside of the polity. It was used in local *Annals* (like the *Mdo-smad Annals* or the OTA-III) to refer to the territory internally covered by Three/Four Horns. This explains why *bod yul* only occurs in those entries that also relate the Mdo-smad councils – they were composed in Mdo-smad, i.e. outside of Three/Four Horns.

Furthermore, the compound is attested in other OT texts where it

⁵⁵ Prior to the conquest of the Rcañ-Bod, the territories of the Bod certainly did not include Skyi.

⁵⁶ *bod yul* has the same connotation in the *Preamble* to the OTA-I (PT 1288: 11–2).

is clearly used in the context of international relations.⁵⁷ (18) and (19) stem from a song sung by Khri Lde-gcug-brcan in the presence of Dwan-čuñ-kog, a councillor of the Mywa king Kag-la-boñ (PT 1287: 345), whereas (20) and (21) come from the ST Treaty inscription.

(18)

yul mtho ni sa gcañ bas //

Because the land was high, the ground pure,

bod yul nī gśaṅ (read: (g)śoṅ) *du gśegs //* [The divine son] came to the dales of the Bod-land.
(PT 1287: 353)

(19)

yul dañ nī sder bčhaste /

Together with lands and districts,

bod yul ni thil du bgyis / (PT 1287: 361) [The divine son] made the Bod-land [their] middle.

(20)

bod bod yul na skyid // (59) *rgya rgya yul na skyid paṅyī srid čhen po* (60) *sbyar nas* (ST Treaty W)

The great domains, in which the Bod-people in the Bod-land [and] Chinese in the China-land are happy, have been united.

(21)

bod (61) *yul du nī // pho brañ lha sayī śar phyogs sbra stod chal du // bod čhen poṅi* (62) *loṅi myiñ skyid rtag lo brgyad // rgya čhen poṅi loṅi myiñ čaṅ keñ lo* (63) *[g]ñis // čhu pho stag gī loṅi dbyar sla ṅbrīñ po ches drug la // dkyil* (64) *ṅkhor la ṅjags te // bod kyis gcīgs bzūñ ño //* (ST Treaty E)

In the Bod-land, [at] the court, in Sbra-stod-chal to the east of Lhasa, on the sixth day of the middle summer month of the male water-tiger year (the name of the year of Great Bod: the eighth year Skyid-rtag; the name of the year of Great China: the second year Čaṅ-keñ), having ascended the central circle, the Bod accepted the edict.

23. The above analysis, although limited owing to the scarcity of textual sources, has demonstrated that the same polity ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty was referred to by two different sets of terms depending on the perspective taken by the author: ‘Three/Four Horns’ in the internal discourse, but ‘Bod-land’ conceived of either from outside or in the context of international relations. This divergence requires an explanation.

I believe that the special usage of the compound *bod yul* comes

⁵⁷ Uray (1978: 567) reconstructed *bod yul* in ITJ 1368: 29 (OTDO: *čuñ bul*), but the reconstruction seems problematic on palaeographical and syntactic grounds.

from the connotation of *bod* with the region of the Lha-čhu valley. In the preceding section I have argued that with the growing importance of the Mgar family and its extending influence zone the demonym Bod (originally restricted to populations around the Sñemo valley) started to be used for communities that inhabited the new territories of the Mgar family as well. These were the Lha-čhu valley, but also the Upper Stod-valley, and later the Lower Smri-ti valley (Map 5). It happens that due to the exceptional topography of the region, the Lha-čhu valley forms the main gate to <Four Horns> for anybody who travels from Central Asia.⁵⁸ The territories to the north and northeast of the Skyi-region were the first outside of <Three Horns> subjugated by the Yar-luñs dynasty. Consequently, anybody who was travelling from the Sum-pa territory, Mdo-smad, or Central Asia, be it an 'insider' or a foreigner, first entered the territory of Bod (*bod yul*). It was therefore convenient to indicate *bod yul* as the direction of a journey even though the exact destination might have been strictly-speaking located outside of the Bod-land. As the time passed and the Skyi-region continued to gain in importance due to the shift of the politico-administrative centre from Phyiñ-ba to Ra-sa (later Lha-sa), *bod yul* underwent metonymy to denote the whole polity whose centre was in the Bod-land.⁵⁹

24. The 'appropriation' of *bod* for the whole population of <Four Horns> ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty seems to have occurred first in the second half of the seventh century during the reign of Khri Ydusroñ (676–704). (9) describes the Skyi-region as a dominion of the

⁵⁸ The main travel route during the Tang dynasty led through the valley as attested by an anonymous itinerary dated to 734–8 (Satō 1975, esp. 13f. & 17). Nowadays the Qinghai-Tibet Highway 109 takes the same way along the Upper Lha.

⁵⁹ The shift of the political centre of gravity to Ra-sa was most probably related to the establishment of Three Horns as the basic administrative units. Otherwise it would be difficult to account for the Skyi-region as the core of *Central Horn*, with Left and Right Horns to its left and right ordered from the perspective of the Skyi-region looking down the Skyi-river. It was the topography of the region that underlay the conceptualisation of the polity in space rather than the symbolism of the royal centre as suggested by Stein (1972: 44). The shift to Ra-sa was most probably initiated during the reign of Khri Sroñ-rcan, whose person has been strongly associated especially with the Rgya-ma valley (see Hazod 2002, Hazod 2014, and Sørensen 2018) referred to in imperial sources as Mnong (Hazod 2009: 216). With its highest number of royal residences, places of council (Hazod 2009: 213, Map 7.1), and tumuli (Kriz and Hazod 2020), the Skyi-region *alias* Central Horn constituted the administrative, political, and cultural core of the Tibetan Empire.

Mgar family, but the same text uses the title *bod kyi lha* for Khri ṽdus-sroñ (PT 1287: 519). This is historically the oldest attestation of the title that recurs only once more in OT sources in the Dgay inscription (l. 1) with reference to *bcan po* Khri Lde-gcug-brcan (Lhamchog-rgyal 2011: 2). A survey of official titles that include the syllable *lha* has revealed that they must have been introduced during the reign of Khri ṽdus-sroñ, for none of the previous *bcan pos* bears the title *lha*.⁶⁰ Thus, the shift in the meaning of *bod* from a local demonym to an endonym for Tibetan-speaking subjects of the *bcan pos* must have been completed during the reign of Khri ṽdus-sroñ. On the other hand, the extant OT documents do not contain any indication that in the Tibetan Empire *bod* was ever used for areas outside of Four Horns.⁶¹

II.4 *bod* in early foreign sources

25. In connection with the prehistorical period, which is the focus of this paper, two groups of non-Tibetan sources have been discussed in the literature: classical European and pre-Tang Chinese historiographies. Both groups have already been sufficiently scrutinised and do not need to be commented upon in detail here.⁶² This section attempts to evaluate the conclusions drawn in previous works against the background of the analysis that has been undertaken in the present paper.

26. Ptolemy's *Geography*, written in the 2nd century CE, mentions Central Asian people *βαῖται* (other variants: *βαται*, *βαεται*, *βᾶται*) who are assumed to have lived in the vicinity of the Bautisos (*βαυτισος*, *βαῦτις*, *βαυτης*) river (Róna-Tas 1985: 27). Furthermore, Ptolemy's work also mentions other similar names: the mountain range Baition which, however, lies further to the west and south from Bautisos, and the people Batai or Batoi occurring in a chapter on India (*ibid.*, p. 27).

⁶⁰ For a detailed analysis, see Bialek (2021 Forthcoming a). In this context it seems logical to assume that the topos of Tibetan *bcan pos* as coming down from the sky also dates to the second half of the 7th century.

⁶¹ The compound *bod sum* in PT 1083 and PT 1089 indicates that the Sum-pa were not included in Bod.

⁶² The most important studies remain Beckwith (1977) and Róna-Tas (1985: 23ff.). Most recently the European sources have been examined by Zeisler (2021). Bushell (1880) and Pelliot (1961) provide translations of chapters related to <Tibet> from chronicles of the Tang dynasty.

In a work written in the 4th century by Ammianus Marcellinus the people are called Baetae and the river is Bautis (ibid., p. 28). The identification of the Greek demonyms with Tibetans goes back to Richthofen who located Bautae around Lha-sa (Richthofen: Lāssa; 1877, vol. 1, Map opp. to p. 500), whereas Laufer identified the name *βαῖται* more concretely with *bod* (1914a: 86–7, fn. 2 and 1914b: 118). Notwithstanding the scepticism expressed by Stein (1972: 30; and recently Zeisler 2021), this identification was accepted by Beckwith (1977: 29–30 & 60–1 and 1993: 7, and earlier by Hermanns 1949: 10).

Although it seems possible that words like Indian *bhauṭṭa*/*bhāt-ṭa*/*bhuṭṭa*, Arabic *bhatta*, and Central Asian *bhaṭa* in *bhaṭa hor* are linguistically related to each other, they cannot be brought in any connection with *bod* (even though in later times *bod* seems to have been identified by Indians with *bhauṭṭa* or rendered as *bhoṭa*; Stein 1972: 30).⁶³ As demonstrated above, as late as in the 580s *bod* was a local demonym. It was used by a relatively small population surrounded from all sides by other Trans-Himalayan (TH) speaking groups with apparently *no direct contact* to Central Asian or Indian peoples, from whom they might have taken over their endonym (Zeisler 2021: 285) or who might have had any knowledge of the Bod which they could have given further to the Greeks in the 2nd century CE (Beckwith 1977: 61). Likewise Róna-Tas' hypothesis that the Tibetan-speaking people calling themselves *bod* (*bhauṭṭa* in Indian languages) might have originally inhabited what later became Baltistan and Ladakh (1985: 30) cannot be accepted for it overlooks the existence of other groups in the western and southwestern parts of the Tibetan Plateau that spoke TH languages. Moreover, languages most closely cognate with Tibetic (e.g., East Bodish and Tshanglic) are nowadays spoken south of Central Tibet, suggesting that their last common ancestor language is to be located in this area as well.⁶⁴

⁶³ de la Vaissière rightly observed that Greek *βαῖται*, *βαται*, *βαεται*, *βᾶται* cannot be historically related to *βαυτισος*, *βαῦτις*, *βαυτης*, but only the latter could be compared on linguistic grounds with OLT *bod* (2009: 532). He located the river Bautisos in eastern Tarim Basin (see ibid., Fig. 1 on p. 529).

⁶⁴ By way of an intellectual exercise the following scenario can be imagined: in the 1st and 2nd century CE a population with the endonym *bod*, living around the Sñe-mo valley, was controlling trade routes from northern India to Central Asia (via Sñe-mo and Upper Lha). Owing to its monopoly on trade in this region, it became powerful and therefore famous enough to go down in history as *βαῖται* or similar. Some time later, due to unknown circumstances, its influence decreased and the group impoverished, becoming one of many small groups on the Tibetan

27. Table 5 presents Chinese terms that are sometimes believed to have referred to either the presumed ethnic group of Tibetans or the polity ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty. Along with the sources, modern reconstructions of the terms are provided.

Term	Schuessler (2007)	Baxter and Sagart (2014)	Source
<i>fā</i> 發 (in: Fā-qīāng 發羌)	LH <i>puat</i> OCM *pat	MC <i>pjot</i> OC *Cə.pat	<i>Hou Han shu</i> (5th c.)
<i>fù guó</i> 附國	LH <i>buo^c</i> OCM *boh	MC <i>bjuH</i> OC *N-p(r)oʔ-s	<i>Sui shu</i> (656) <i>Bei shi</i> (659)
	LH <i>kuək</i> OCM *kwək	MC <i>kwok</i> OC *[C.q]wək	
<i>tǔ fān</i> 吐蕃		MC <i>thuX</i> OC *thʰaʔ	<i>Jiu Tang shu</i> <i>Xin Tang shu</i>
	LH <i>puan</i> OCM *pan	MC <i>pjon</i> OC *par	

Table 5. Alleged Chinese names for <Tibet>

Examining Chinese sources on Fùguó, Beckwith (1977: 113) concluded: “Fu-guo is simply the name given to the early Tibetan state when it was first encountered during the Sui dynasty (581/589–618)”. The *Suishu/Beishi* describes the polity as the following:

There are Jia-liang barbarians there, who are tribes living in its eastern part. [...] The king of Fu-guo is styled *yi-zeng*. His kingdom is eight hundred *li* from South to North, and a thousand five hundred *li* from East to West. [...] The country had over twenty thousand families. [...] In the fourth year of the *da-ye* period (608 A.D.), their king sent the envoys Su-fu and others, a total of eight persons, to go to court. The next year, he again sent his servant Yi-lin to lead sixty Jia-liang barbarians to give tribute. [...] The Jia-liang have a river sixty *zhang* wide. Fu-guo has a river over a hundred *zhang* wide, and they both flow (or “together they flow”) south. [...] To the south of Fu-guo there are the Bo-yuan barbarians whose customs are also the same; to the west there is the “Women’s Kingdom”. [...] and here and there are Qiang

Plateau. This scenario is not completely impossible but it certainly lacks support in known historical facts. What’s more, due to the scarcity of written sources, only archaeological excavations could throw light on the respective period.

(tribes). [...] some [Qiang tribes – JB] are subject to the Tuyuhun, some depend on Fu-guo. (Beckwith 1977: 105–10)

On the grounds of other Chinese sources that mention rivers which flow through the assumed territory of Fùguó and Jia-liang, Beckwith (1977: 144) identified the river which flowed through Fùguó's territory with Upper Ybri-čhu *alias* Yangtze, and that of Jia-liang (i.e. Rgyalrong; Beckwith 1977: 148) with Ńag-čhu *alias* Yalong. This identification cannot hold for it is based on a circular argument: because other sources state that Tǔfān (Tang Chinese name for <Tibetans>) lived on river X, river Y from *Suishu/Beishi* must be identical with river X. At the basis of this argument lies the premise that Fùguó was identical with the polity of later Tǔfān, which however is yet to be proven.

According to the calculations presented above (§ 16), Khri Sroñ-rcan conquered the Sum-pa and Mdo-smad in 610s. It is therefore feasible that he acquired some sort of control over territories as far east as Ybri-čhu. If the conquest occurred a few years earlier instead, it is conceivable that after the victories over the Sum-pa and Mdo-smad he would have sent envoys to the Chinese court in 608 and 609, introducing his person on the international scene.⁶⁵ But it cannot be proved that he ever did so and the Chinese sources on Fùguó do not provide any ground to believe that Fù was the people ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty at that time; *fù* in *fù guó* (see Table 5) cannot be a transcription of Tibetan *spu* as claimed by Beckwith (1977: 120). It might have been a local polity that sought for Chinese help fearing the approaching armies of Khri Sroñ-rcan.

Notwithstanding their distinct initials, Beckwith (1977: 119ff.; 1993: 7) considered *fā* 發 (see Table 5) a transcription of *bod*,⁶⁶ whereas *fù* 附, in his opinion, rendered “an early Old Tibetan name for Tibet”, namely *spu* (1977: 119ff.).⁶⁷ Without stating it explicitly Beckwith (1977: 120 & 215) equated *fù* 附 with the Tang Chinese transcriptions of *spu*: *fú* 弗 and *bù* 不 as in *fú-yè* 弗夜 and *bù-yè* 不夜.⁶⁸ Table 6 provides their reconstructions.

⁶⁵ Beckwith (1977: 221) presumed that the king was Gnam-ri Slon-mchan.

⁶⁶ Róna-Tas (1985: 35) and Hill (2006: 88) apparently shared this opinion.

⁶⁷ According to Yamaguchi, *fù* 附 was a transcription of *phywa* (1980: 332).

⁶⁸ Beckwith understood *fú-yè* and *bù-yè* as transcriptions of the OLT title *spu rgyal*.

	Schuessler (2007)	Baxter and Sagart (2014)
<i>fú</i> 弗	LH <i>put</i> OCM *pət	MC <i>pjut</i> OC *p[u]t
<i>bù</i> 不	LH <i>pu</i> OCM *pə ONW <i>pu</i>	MC <i>pjuw</i> OC *pə
<i>yè</i> 夜	LH <i>ja^c</i> OCM *jah	MC <i>yaeH</i> OC *[ɕ]Ak-s

Table 6. Alleged Chinese transcriptions of *OLT* *spu* and *rgyal*

It is apparent that the MC pronunciation of *fù* 附 differed considerably from those of *fú* 弗 and *bù* 不.⁶⁹ Consequently, whereas the latter two could theoretically have transcribed the OT *spu*, *fù* 附 certainly had a distinct basis not related to *spu*. In fact, neither *fā* 發, *fù* 附, nor *fān* 蕃 could have been transcriptions of either *bod*, *spu*, or, for that matter, any other term demonstrably used to refer to the subjects or polity of the Yar-luñs dynasty. If the polities were indeed the same, it is also not clear why the Chinese in the 630s should have coined a new term instead of reviving *fù* 附 that was used ca. twenty years earlier. Accordingly, the earliest verifiable information on the polity ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty supplied by Chinese sources comes from the chronicles of the Tang dynasty. The identity of the people(s) referred to as *fā* 發 or *fù* 附 remains unknown but they can hardly be associated with the Bod who in the first decades of the 7th c. were still a local community and the term was not used self-referentially for the inhabitants of the Yar-luñs polity.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ See also critical remarks in Róna-Tas (1985: 36f.).

⁷⁰ Similarly problematic is the frequent statement in the literature that <Tibetans> originated from Qiang (see also Beckwith 1993: 8). Chinese sources attest only that at a certain point (most probably at the beginning of the 7th century) the former lived on a territory that was previously inhabited by Western Qiang (Bushell 1880: 439; Pelliot 1961: 12). What follows in the Tang chronicles is a summary of the history of the Western Qiang combined with a story of their descent. The story was quoted with the sole aim to justify the Chinese name for the Yar-luñs polity, i.e. *tǔ fān* 吐蕃, by relating it to its alleged founder *Fán-ní* 樊尼 (*fán*: LH *buan*, OCM *ban; Schuessler 2007). That this origin story dates from a post-Middle Chinese period is demonstrated by the reconstructions *fān* 樊 < LH *buan* vs *fān* 蕃 < LH *puan*; 蕃 could be explained by 尼 first when their pronunciations converged. It is known that after the conquest of the Sum-pa and Mdo-smad the Yar-luñs polity extended far to the east, most probably also comprising the former territories of the Western Qiang. Finally, in Chinese sources Qiang are

III. *tVpVt endo- or exonym?

28. This section begins with a few facts on historical phonetics of EOT.⁷¹ When OT was for the first time written down, i.e. in the 630s or 640s, the pronunciation was rather precisely reflected in the script and *bod* was pronounced as [bod]. Soon thereafter the first sound changes occurred, two of which are most relevant for this discussion:

1. Devoicing of plain consonants in onset in MOT: *dru gu* (~ OTurk. *türk/türük*) attested in 675/6 (ITJ 750: 64); *ga tun* (~ OTurk. *xa:tun*) attested in 708/9 (ITJ 750: 170); *dur gyis* (~ OTurk. *Turgiš*) attested in 732/3 (ITJ 750: 263);
2. Fronting of *o* before alveolar *-n* (and by analogy also before *-d* and *-s*): *bölvn* < OLT *blon* in the Köl Tegin inscription (N 12) from 732.⁷²

Any foreign term for <Tibet> coined before ca. 650 and based on OLT *bod* must have had a voiced bilabial in onset and a back rounded vowel.

29. Predecessors of the European toponym *Tibet* are attested as early as in the 8th c. Table 7 presents the earliest forms in chronological order.⁷³

Form	Date	Language	Source
<i>twpt</i>	7 th ⁷⁴	Sogdian	Afrāsiyāb, norther Samarkand
<i>tū fān</i>	~ 730	Chinese	Hyecho's <i>Memoir</i> ⁷⁵
<i>tūpwāt</i>	732 & 734	Old Turkic	Köl Tegin/Bilge Khagan inscriptions
<i>töpüt</i>		Old Uyghur ⁷⁶	

repeatedly described as pastoralists (Beckwith 1993: 5; Róna-Tas 1985: 35), whereas inhabitants of <Four Horns> seem to have been agriculturalists (Stein 1972: 22ff.; Beckwith 1977: 260f.).

⁷¹ See Bialek (2018b: 29ff.) for a more detailed discussion.

⁷² Róna-Tas (1985: 47); Aydın (2018: 93).

⁷³ If not otherwise stated, the data is quoted after Róna-Tas (1985: 35ff.). Bazin and Hamilton (1991) cite further forms attested in later times.

⁷⁴ The inscription has been dated on archaeological grounds to the second half of the 7th century (Bazin and Hamilton 1991: 28), although in a more recent publication Livšić counted it among inscriptions “drawn by the visitors in the period, when the building had obviously been left by its dwellers” (2006: 66). This means that the inscription must be much younger than originally assumed.

⁷⁵ Han-Sung et al. 1984: 14ff.

⁷⁶ Aydın (2018: 91).

<i>tūptâjê</i>	792 & 795/8	Old Syrian		
<i>twp'yyt</i>	825/6 ⁷⁷	Sogdian		
<i>twp't</i>	2nd half of the 9th c.			
<i>t'γwt</i>				
<i>twpyt</i>	9th	Pahlavi	<i>Bahman Yašt</i>	
<i>twft</i>	9th ⁷⁸	Persian	<i>Bahman Yašt</i>	
<i>ttāgutta</i>		Khotan-Saka ⁷⁹		
<i>tāgutta</i>				
<i>tāha'tta</i> ⁸⁰				
<i>ttāgutta</i> ⁸¹	925			Stäel-Holstein roll
<i>ttāgatta</i>				Bailey 1937–9
<i>tū fān</i>	945 / 1060	Chinese	<i>Jiu Tang shu / Xin Tang shu</i>	
<i>twbwt</i>	1075	Arabic	al-Kāshgarī	

Table 7. Ancestors of the European toponym Tibet

The data clearly demonstrates that the original form of the name had three consonants but there are two points of disagreement which concern the quality of the middle and the final consonants. On this basis the sources can be roughly divided into three groups:

1. Middle Chinese (MC) *tVpVn;
2. Old Turkic (OTurk.) *tVpVt;
3. Khotan-Saka (KS) *tVgVtV.

Two observations can be made: 1. the forms appear to be historically related to each other; and 2. all the other names listed in Table 7, as well as later appellations of Tibet in European languages, go back to OTurk. *tVpVt.⁸² Should the latter have been the original form, the deviations in MC and KS would have to be accounted for taking

⁷⁷ Dated to 841–2 by Bazin and Hamilton (1991: 10).

⁷⁸ Róna-Tas (1985: 43) dated both Pahlavi and Persian texts to ca. 551–637, which is impossible. The texts were edited in the 9th century (Bazin and Hamilton 1991: 10).

⁷⁹ Bailey (1940) also quotes other variants: *ttāguttaa-*, *tāgittāna-*, *tāha'tta*, *ttāhatta*.

⁸⁰ *[toyat] or *[toχat] (Bailey 1940: 904).

⁸¹ *[togut] or *[toγut] (Bailey 1940: 604). Róna-Tas (1985: 58) suggested that the form could have represented *taγut*, although Tanguts are normally called *ttamḡatta* in Khotan-Saka. The transcription of Tib. *bod* as *pātta* (see Róna-Tas 1985: 58) indicates that the written *ā* was pronounced as *o* (see also Bailey 1940: 604) and therefore the first vowel in *tāhatta*/*ttāgatta* should be read as *o*.

⁸² See Róna-Tas (1985: 83ff.) and Georg (2018) for reconstructions of the history of the word in European languages.

OTurk. as starting point. However, this brings about the question: why should Türks be the first to name <Tibet>? Did any historical circumstances enable an encounter between the two before the Chinese entered the scene?

When the Yar-luñs dynasty started its expansion beyond the valleys of the Rcañ-po and Skyi rivers, its first conquests were directed towards the north and northeast (see Map 4). These territories are known from OT sources as inhabited by the Sum-pa. Further to the east and southeast there was the area termed Mdo-smad whose inhabitants are not addressed in OT documents. The exact ethnic or linguistic affiliation of the inhabitants of these areas at the time of the conquests are not known but judging from the contemporary Chinese chronicles the areas seem to have been home to Trans-Himalayan (preponderantly (proto-)Qiangic) speaking groups. Further to the north there were various groups speaking Proto-Mongolic or related language(s) who established their own polities after the disintegration of the Xianbei Empire. Thus, at the beginning of the 7th century there was no direct contact between Türks and <Tibetans> as societies. What's more, *tVpVt was a toponym, a name of a land, to be specific.⁸³ This fact likewise supports the assumption that OTurk. *tVpVt was not coined in a direct encounter.

30. As opposed to OTurk. *tVpVt, MC *tVpVn (*tǔ fān* 吐蕃) was a demonym.⁸⁴ The latter was certainly a new term coined during the Tang dynasty with no direct predecessors attested in Chinese sources. Scholars who previously analysed the term concurred that *tVpVn

⁸³ See OTurk. passages quoted in Aydın (2018: 90f.).

⁸⁴ The oldest dated use of *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 with reference to <Tibet> seems to come from 往五天竺國傳 *Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India* (Mair 1996: 79f.) written by a Korean monk Hyecho after his return to China in 727. Its manuscript has been discovered by Paul Pelliot in Dunhuang in 1908 (Han-Sung et al. 1984: 14). The text refers to <Tibet> as 土蕃國 (3b6) and 吐蕃國 (5a1 twice), and to <Tibetans> as 吐蕃 (4b12, 5a11) and 土蕃 (9a4; see Han-Sung et al. 1984). The variation could be perhaps ascribed to Hyecho's minor skills in Chinese (Han-Sung et al. 1984: 20).

Pulleyblank (1991: 19f.) argued for the reading *tǔ fān* to be older than *tǔ bō*. This was also suggested by Pelliot (1915: 18) who ascribed the introduction of the latter into western Sinology to Abel Rémusat. A plausible explanation for the growing popularity of the reading *tǔ bō* was put forward by Coblin (1994). Pulleyblank's note initiated a discussion in *Sino-Platonic Papers* where Mair (1991: 38f.; later also Mair 1996) argued the contrary but his arguments were convincingly refuted by Pulleyblank (1992). A critique of Mair's arguments from the Tibetological point of view can be found in Appendix B of this paper.

cannot be etymologised in Chinese,⁸⁵ therefore it must be a transcription of a foreign word. They were also consensual in their attempts to reconstruct or suggest a reconstruction of the underlying Tibetan word as consisting of two syllables. However, another Chinese practice of transcribing monosyllabic words of OT with two characters is well known; namely, syllables with a complex onset were commonly transcribed with two distinct characters, the first of which transcribed the first consonant, with the second transcribing the second consonant and the rime (Li 1979: 235ff.). This was still practised in the 9th century as confirmed by the bilingual ST Treaty inscription (see Preiswerk 2014, esp. 144ff.).⁸⁶ Accordingly, *tǔ fān* *tVpVn might have been a transcription of a syllable with a complex onset, consisting of an alveolar and a bilabial consonant. The consonant cluster !tp- is not attested in OLT, but can be reconstructed for the written *dp-* owing to the fact that in EOT prefixes assimilated to the voice quality of the root consonant, in this case the voiceless *p* (Bialek 2018b).

This being said, I propose tracing MC *tVpVn to OLT *dpon* “master, lord, leader” < * “the head of a unit”, ultimately derived from *pho* “man; male” (Bialek 2018a: 1.544). As it seems, in earlier times *dpon* denoted an official position, to which one had to be appointed, cf.:

(22)

dpon du bčug nay / (295) ybañs so čhog la sñiñ sñoms par myī ychal re // (PT 1287)
If [one] has appointed [us] as leaders, [we] shall wish to level [our] hearts with those of [our] subjects.

⁸⁵ Beckwith (1977: 122ff.; 2005: 8) followed Chinese sources in assuming that *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 was a corrupted form of *tū fā* 秃發, a name of an ancient Xianbei tribe. However, he proposed no historical context or reason for the ‘confusion’. Early on the second syllable in *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 was identified with OT *bod* (Laufer 1914a: 94–5, fn. 1) but this was already rejected by Pelliot (1915: 18f.) on linguistic grounds.

⁸⁶ This practice makes all attempts to identify the first syllable of the MC *tVpVn futile but it explains the alternation between the standard *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 and the variants *tǔ fān* 土蕃 (in *Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India*), *dà fān* 大蕃 (ST Treaty; Beckwith 2011: 178), or *tè fān* 特蕃 (in P 2762 dated to ca. 900; Pelliot 1912: 522 & 1915: 20). Alternatively, after *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 became established and the Tibetan Empire proved to be a military and political power to be respected, one might have felt uncomfortable with *tǔ* 吐 “to spit” in its name and sought to replace it with a more suitable word.

This passage comes from an oath that Dbays Phañs-to-re Dbyi-chab, among others, swore to Khri Sroñ-rcan. The event can be dated to an early period of the latter's reign but it followed the killing of Myañ Mañ-po-rje Žañ-snañ (PT 1287: 258–61)⁸⁷ and so also the second conquest of the Sum-pa (see Appendix C). In (22) *dpon* is presented as a counterpart of *ybañs*. In later OT texts the former has been replaced by *rje* so that *rje* is commonly paired with *ybañs* and *dpon* is relegated to be a counterpart of *g.yog* (see OTDO).⁸⁸ This terminological shift can be sketched as:

dpon “leader” : *ybañs* “subjects”
>
rje “lord” : *ybañs* “subjects” ~ *dpon* “master” : *g.yog* “servant”

The shift was apparently related to the growing hierarchisation of the society and social changes that must have occurred following the expansion of the Yar-luñs dominion.

In the ST Treaty inscription *dpon* in *mñan pon* (N 32) is transcribed as *bēn* 奔 (Preiswerk 2014: 145) that can be reconstructed as:

Schuessler (2007)	Baxter and Sagart (2014)
LH <i>pən</i>	MC <i>pwon</i>
OCM *pên	OC *p ^r ur
<i>Shijīng</i> *pûn < *plun	

Table 8. MC reconstruction of 奔 *bēn*

The transcription indicates that the vowel underwent fronting but the final *-n* was still pronounced. The vocalic difference between the transcription of *pon* and that of *dpon* in *tũ fān* *tVpVn can be therefore explained by sound changes that are documented for OT (see § 28).

31. The international career of *dpon* alias *tVpVn was only possible after the conquest of the Sum-pa and Mdo-smad and the subjugation of local peoples to the Yar-luñs dynasty. The meaning of OLT *dpon* “leader” was locally generalised from denoting representatives of the new power to naming the ruling class as such and subsequently the

⁸⁷ On unknown grounds, Richardson dated the execution of Myañ Mañ-po-rje Žañ-snañ to about 636 (1967: 10).

⁸⁸ Compare hereto Dzongkha [pōn] “king, lord” (CDTD: 4856).

ruling people in general. The term can be reconstructed as *tVpon.⁸⁹ It might have been coined in a local language and borrowed into Chinese or was a Chinese innovation.⁹⁰

OTurk. *tVpVt is an inflected form with the plural suffix *-t*; the final *-n* is regularly elided (Tekin 1968: 122; Erdal 2004: 158). Georg (2018: 20) noted that the suffix is restricted to OTurk. and is frequently used in loanwords, especially titles. This perfectly fits the proposed reconstruction. Apparently the borrowed form *tVpVn, perceived as singular, was changed to plural *tVpVt because the word already had collective meaning. In OTurk. both vowels were front and rounded, therefore the transliteration *tǔpǔt* (see Table 7). The vowel *ö* does not occur in non-first syllables in Orkhon Turkic (Tekin 1968: 56; Erdal 2004: 45–6), but this could be attributed to the limited linguistic material provided by the inscriptions (Stefan Georg, p.c. 11.03.2021). Accordingly, one can reconstruct OTurk. *tVpüt or *tVpöt (Bazin and Hamilton (1991: 11) reconstructed *töpüt). Unfortunately, the options for tracing the origins of the vowels are limited for there is no information on either the time of the borrowing or, even more importantly, the Chinese dialect from which OTurk. might have borrowed *tVpVn. Neither can a transmission via yet another language or even languages be excluded.

Deriving the OTurk. form from the MC one rather than the other way round is preferable for two reasons. First of all, historically the Chinese seem to have come into contact with <Tibetans> as a people earlier than the Türks and we have assumed that the MC, OTurk., and KS forms are related to each other. Secondly the shift MC *tVpVn > OTurk. *tVpVt is greatly motivated by OTurk. inflectional morphology, whereas the change OTurk. *tVpVt > MC *tVpVn would be difficult to account for because the finals do not match.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Pelliot (1915: 19, fn. 1) remarked that MC vowel *a* preceded by the labiovelar approximant [w] in closed syllables could transcribe foreign *o*. This is exactly the case with the MC form of *fān* 蕃. The reconstruction of the vowel *ä* instead (see Bazin and Hamilton 1991: 11) seems impossible. The authors put forward the reconstruction with the sole aim to support their assumption that Chinese *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 derived from OTurk. *töpä/töpü* “hill” (ibid., pp. 11f.).

⁹⁰ Tibetic languages are noted for their complex onsets not documented in this form in other TH languages. Accordingly, whatever language was first to borrow *dpon*, it must have added a vowel to split the cluster *dp-*.

⁹¹ The reversed has been maintained by Bazin and Hamilton (1991: 18f.) who argued that *tVpVt/*tVpVn was first coined by the Ya-za from whom it independently reached the Türks and the Chinese (ibid., pp. 19ff. & 27). However, the Ya-

32. As remarked by Róna-Tas (1985: 78), in P 2782 (l. 75), a Tibetan letter written in KS script and orthography (Bailey 1973: 224), *pātta kī skatṭa* transcribes OT *bod kyi skad*. However, the commonly used demonym for <Tibetans> was *tāgutta* reconstructed as *toyat by Bailey (1940: 604f.). The multitude of its variants (see Table 7) confirms that it was not a native term. Bailey (ibid., p. 605) considered it possible for *y* to have developed from *w* < *b*. On the other hand, two cases of alternation between a bilabial and a velar sound in foreign names are quoted by Hamilton (1977: 519, fn. 61), strengthening the hypothesis that KS *tVgVt might indeed have come from *tVpVt. This hypothesis was not pursued by Hamilton who instead suggested that *tāgutta* might be related to *taṅut* (1977: 519f.). In later times the name Tangut was used to refer to Tibetans but the source and the date of the shift remain unknown (Róna-Tas 1985: 78). Considering that in KS: 1. a bilabial consonant could be replaced by a velar one; 2. *ā* could represent Turkic *o*, *u*, *ö*, *ü* (Hamilton 1977: 519f.); and 3. all neighbouring languages of the 7th to 10th c. possessed a term for <Tibet> that could be traced to *tVpVt (see Table 7), I think it possible that *tVgVt [toyut] was borrowed from a Turkic language.

33. By way of summary, Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate two possible paths of development from OLT *dpon* “leader” to the predecessors of *Tibet*. Needless to say, the transmission from one language to another did not have to be direct but with the present state of knowledge one is unable to reconstruct all the intermediary chain links between OLT *dpon* and OTurk *tVpVt.

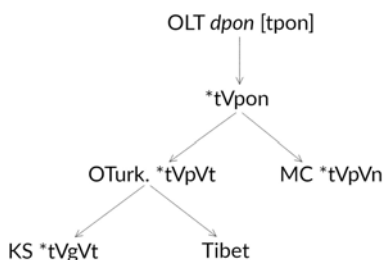


Fig. 1.

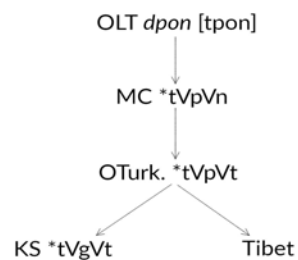


Fig. 2

ža were conquered later than the Sum-pa and the Yar-luṅs dynasty established diplomatic relations with China before attacking the Ya-ža (Bushell 1880: 443f.; Pelliot 1961: 3f. & 82f.).

Conclusions

34. To the best of my knowledge the paper is the first attempt to reconstruct the (pre-)history of the proper name *Bod* on the basis of OT records. The study has revealed that it was primarily a local demonym used by a community that in the 6th century inhabited the area around the Sñe-mo valley. The word started its career as an interregional demonym with the rise to power of the Mgar family that moved from its homeland in Sñe-mo to Lower Lha and Lower Smri-ti valleys, transplanting its endonym to the new socio-spatial environment. From the perspective of the Yar-valley, these were border regions at that time but even after the conquest of the Sum-pa and Mdo-smad they were still perceived as gates to <Three Horns>. This location apparently triggered the formation of the compound *bod yul* originally used in the restricted context of coming from abroad to the Bod-land and, by extension, in international relations. From the title *bod kyi lha* it can be inferred that not later than by the reign of Khri Ṳdus-sroñ the demonym was adopted or even ‘internalised’ by the Yar-luñs dynasty.

Regarding the origin of the proper name *Tibet*, I have ventured the hypothesis that it reconstructs to OLT *dpon* [tpon] “leader” and was generalised in conquered territories to denote first the ruling class, then the ruling people, i.e. <Tibetans>. As more attentive readers might have noticed, I have abstained from proposing any etymology for *bod*. Apart from the clear reason of not having a one, I may offer two arguments against any attempt to explain its etymology: 1. from its oldest attestations *bod* has been a proper name and as such is unanalysable or at least escapes common methods of historical analysis; and 2. there is little evidence that the community, who in the 6th century referred to itself as ‘Bod’, spoke a Tibetic language. The Tibetic-speaking communities in those days did not live in a social vacuum; they were surrounded by other peoples, but it would be simplification to state that their neighbours to the south were India, to the west Iranian-speaking peoples, to the north Türks, and to the east the Chinese. Their immediate neighbours were speakers of other TH languages today identified as Qiangic (east), Bodic (south, southwest, and west), Himalayish (south), but also Proto-Mongolic speakers (north and northeast), and most probably others as well, of which no knowledge has survived to the present times. Moreover, owing to the main trade route India–Central Asia

that led through <Four Horns>, the areas and peoples in the focus of the paper never lived isolated from the outside world, despite the demanding topography of their homeland.⁹²

Finally, I have to frankly acknowledge that as with everything related to the prehistory of <Tibet> the hypotheses presented in the paper must also be deemed as tentative. They are based on a scrupulous philological examination of OT written sources but as long as no archaeological excavations have been carried out much of the assumptions and analyses remain uncorroborated by material facts.

Abbreviations

*	reconstructed form
!	historically/logically impossible form
√	reconstructed verb root
[b]	letter reconstructed by JB
[tpon]	phonetic transcription
Ybis 2	Ybis-khog 2 inscription
Yphyoñ	Yphyoñ-rgyas inscription
Brag A	Brag-lha-mo A inscription
Bsam	Bsam-yas inscription
Bsam B	Bsam-yas Bell inscription
Dgay	Dgay-lدان-byin-čhen inscription
Dun 365	Dunhuang cave no. 365 inscription
E	east-facing inscription
Eng.	English
EOT	Early Old Tibetan
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
ITJ	IOL Tib J
Khra	Khra-ybrug inscription
Khri	Inscription at the tomb of Khri Lde-sroñ-brtsan
Khrom	Khrom-čhen inscription
KS	Khotan-Saka
Lčañ	Lčañ-bu inscription
Ldan 2	Ldan-ma-brag 2 inscription
LH	Later Han Chinese
Lho	Lho-brag inscription
LT	Literary Tibetan

⁹² One remarkable example is certain Mañ-po-rje Sum-bu, a person otherwise unregistered in the sources, who fled to Dru-gu (i.e. Western Türks) after the defeat of Nas-po by Khri Slon-mchan (PT 1287: 183).

MC	Middle Chinese
MOT	Middle Old Tibetan
N	north-facing inscription
OC	Old Chinese
OCM	Minimal Old Chinese
OLT	Old Literary Tibetan
ONW	Old Northwest Chinese
OT	Old Tibetan
OTA	<i>Old Tibetan Annals</i>
OTC	<i>Old Tibetan Chronicles</i>
OTurk.	Old Turkic
PT	Pelliot tibétain
Rkoñ	Rkoñ-po inscription
S	south-facing inscription
Skar	Skar-čuñ inscription
ST Treaty	Sino-Tibetan Treaty inscription
TERM	terminative
TH	Trans-Himalayan
W	west-facing inscription
Žol	Žol inscription
Žwa	Žwayi lha-khañ inscription

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Zeisler, Bettina. 2021. "The Call of the Siren: Bod, Baúttis, Baítai, and Related Names (Studies in Historical Geography II)." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 60: 282–397.

Appendix A: Previous etymologies of *bod*

The first attempt of western scholars to etymologise the endonym *bod* comes probably from Schiefner, who related it to *phod* "to be able", in his view, a synonym of *thub* (1852: 332–3, fn.). He formed a synonymic compound *!thub phod/bod* to explain the European name *Tibet* via Mongolian *tubed* (ibid.). Needless to say, every single element of this 'etymology' is of questionable value.

Among etymologies put forward in later times one can distinguish between two groups: 1. *bod* ~ *bon* hypothesis; and 2. *bod* ~ *bhāṭṭa* hypothesis. I shall present them in this order.

1. *bod* ~ *bon* hypothesis

The hypothesis was introduced to the western scholars most probably by Lalou who construed the two words as another case of the *-d* ~ *-n* alternation (1953) known from such OLT pairs as *čhed* ~ *čhen*, *blod* ~ *blon*, *rkud* ~ *rkun* etc.⁹³ She suggested that the words are variants of the once uniform final *-nd*, the split of which (arbitrarily) yielded once *-d*, once *-n* forms. Lalou did not comment on the semantics of

⁹³ Stein reported on the use of the word *bon* instead of the expected *bod* in *Rgyal rabs bon gyi ybyuñ gnas* (1961: 11 & fn. 28; see also Tucci and Heissig (1970: 235, fn. 1)), whereas Uray described it as "a learned etymology on the analogy of the doublets *-n/-d* for purposes of Bon propaganda" (1964: 325, fn. 5). The alternation is also attributed to Bon-po authors by Dge-γdun Čhos-γphel (4r3) who, according to Dan Martin, was probably the first Tibetan scholar to present a coherent argument for the etymology of *bod* (p.c. 17.03.2021). Dge-γdun Čhos-γphel supported the hypothesis that the name Bod replaced the earlier *Bon by referring to Chinese sources. He transcribed Ch. Tūfān as Tuγu-phan (3v5) and argued that the Chinese called <Tibet> *phon* (sic; 4r5), presumably alluding to *phon* < *bon*. However, in order to determine which arguments provided by Dge-γdun Čhos-γphel come from the Tibetan tradition, which can be attributed to western scholars, and which were his own contribution a detailed study would be necessary. The fact that he quoted *stod bod* as a designation of Tibet (3v6; see Appendix B.1) indicates that he was acquainted with certain western works devoted to the topic. I wish to thank Dan Martin for this valuable reference to Dge-γdun Čhos-γphel's contribution to the discussion (p.c. 17.03.2021).

bod ~ *bon*. The hypothesis has found proponents who developed it further. It was Haarh who connected *bon* and *bod* to the verb root $\sqrt{\text{bo}}$ *"to call, cry out, swear" (1969: 289f.), adding *bro* and *bos* (v2 of *ɣbod*) to the collection. He interpreted *bod*, *bon*, and *bos* as verbal nouns, whereas *ɣbod*, **ɣbon*, and *ɣbos* as denoting verbal action, "*bod* stressing the aspect of the action itself, and *bon* stressing the aspect of the subject and aim of the action. *Bos* stresses the aspect of the end, and result of the action" (ibid.). This analysis has led him to the etymological meanings *bod* "those who invoke" (> "invokers") and *bon* "that which is connected with invocation, the invocations" (> "those of the invocations = invokers"); note that the meanings proposed overtly contradict the semantics as described in the quotation above. This hypothesis explains Bod-people as believers of the Bon religion, which itself is apparently perceived as a religion of invocations. Beyer, ascribing to the hypothesis, enlarged the group of 'cognates' by $\sqrt{\text{po}}$ "to change place", $\sqrt{\text{spo}}$ "to remove", *dbon/sbon* "descendant", $\sqrt{\text{ypjo}}$ "to range" (1993: 17, fn. 13). In a 'weak' version of the *bod* ~ *bon* hypothesis, Zeisler speculated that *bod* could have been derived from the verb root $\sqrt{\text{bo}}$ to designate certain group of people as "speakers" (2021: 325, fn. 149).⁹⁴

The implausibility of the *bod* ~ *bon* hypothesis becomes obvious when one takes into account that *bon* is derived from the verbal stem $\sqrt{\text{bon}}$ "to give",⁹⁵ whereas the root of the verb *ɣbod* was $\sqrt{\text{bo}}$ "to call", -*d* being an inflectional suffix of v1-stems (Bialek 2020a: 318ff.). The derivation of *bod* from $\sqrt{\text{bo}}$ by means of the nominal -*d* suffix encounters semantic problems because the latter is known to have derived abstract nouns that expressed themes of an action (see Bialek 2020a: 318f.). Accordingly, the meaning of *bod* could be !"call; invocation", but the word could never have denoted a human being or a collective of humans.

⁹⁴ Zeisler proposed seven different, albeit sometimes related, hypotheses on the origin of *bod* and its relation to other names from early foreign sources (2021: 352).

⁹⁵ See Uray (1964) for a thorough examination of the verb *ɣbon*. Bialek (2021 Forthcoming a) derives *bon* "worship; Bon religion" from *ɣbon* "to give (gifts); to worship". Beckwith's derivation of the obviously native Tibetan word *bon* from Chinese *fān* 蕃 (Beckwith's reconstruction **buan*; 2011: 181f.) contradicts the basic linguistic facts that *bon* primarily denoted a form of worship and not humans. Moreover, it overlooks that various *bon* traditions have been practised in the Himalayas and are apparently much older than G.yuñ-druñ Bon.

2. *bod* ~ *bhātṭa* hypothesis

The hypothesis has been raised following the identification of the Bod-people with some or all the peoples that occur in early sources under various names, like Greek *βαῖται*, Indian *bhauṭṭa/bhātṭa/bhuṭṭa*, Arabic *bhatta*, and Central Asian *bhaṭa* in *bhaṭa hor* etc. (see § 26). Zeisler (2021: 284f.) is right in stating that, in terms of phonetics, Tibetan *bod* could have been borrowed from any of the terms, but not the other way round. However, the *bod* ~ *bhātṭa* hypothesis stands in contradiction to the historical facts that have been established about the prehistory of the Yar-luñs dynasty. ‘Borrowing’ of a name could have happened only in consequence of colonisation or a conquest but Indian names *bhauṭṭa/bhātṭa/bhuṭṭa* are used with reference to a people or peoples inhabiting Pamirs. Quite far away from <Four Horns>. Why should a people, even if an important chain link in the trade between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, have borrowed a name from a people with whom they could not have any direct contact at the time of the borrowing? It is, however, conceivable that Tibetan *bod* was later identified with Indian *bhauṭṭa/bhātṭa/bhuṭṭa* of earlier written sources and the new term *bhoṭa* was coined.

Appendix B: Previous etymologies of *Tibet*

Since Tibet became the object of scholarly interests in the 19th century various hypotheses have been put forward to explain the origin of the name. The two most commonly repeated in literature are presented below with critical notes that show their historical and/or linguistic implausibility.

1. Tibet < OLT *bod*

It seems most tempting to relate the European *Tibet* and its Asian predecessors to *bod*; its second syllable *-bet* sounds almost like *bod* and if one considers fronting of *o* before the final *-d* in some modern dialects (see CDTD: 5566), the name almost appears to be explained. The first syllable poses more problems and so there was less agreement on its origin; in earlier writings it was identified with either *mtho*, *thub*, or *stod* (see Laufer 1915: 94–5, fn. 1); the latter is the only

one that persists until today. The 'etymology' has been accepted by Rockhill (1891: 5), Hermanns (1949: 9f.), Gruschke (2001: 1.13), Mair (1990, 1992: 21 & 1996), Scharlipp (1995: 48), and Tong (2008: 2, fn. 1). Stein (1972: 19) accepted the derivation of *Tibet* from *bod* but remained silent on the origin of the first syllable. Here I shall list arguments against any relation between *bod* and *tVpVt.⁹⁶ My hope is that this will close the discussion on this unfortunate 'etymology':

- I. Neither !*mtho bod* nor !*stod bod*, not to mention !*thub bod*, are attested in Tibetan sources. There is a good reason for that: they are ungrammatical at least when it comes to toponyms. This argument actually suffices to reject the 'etymon' !*stod bod*.⁹⁷ Mair (1992: 21) mentioned the dichotomy *stod/smad* but failed to notice that the two could only be *postposed* to a toponym; cf. Snam-stod, Sbra-stod, Rcañ-stod, Mdo-smad, Rcañ-smad, to quote just a few OLT examples (see OTDO). His assertion that *stod* is found in OLT as "an adjectival prefix before an ethnonym" (Mair 1996: 80) is plainly incorrect. It has never been used with toponyms in this position and is simply out of the question with ethnonyms. *stod phyogs*, lit. "region of the upper part", is an exceptional formation in so far as only the whole compound is a toponym but none of its constituents when considered separately; *stod* does not modify an independent toponym *phyogs* (Bialek 2018a: 1.473, fn. 2).
- II. The reconstruction of !*stod bod* as underlying *tVpVt projects modern pronunciation back to the times of OT. Chinese transcriptions in the ST Treaty inscription demonstrate that the syllable-final *d* was still pronounced in OT at the beginning of the 9th c. (Preiswerk 2014: 144ff.). Why then should only the final of the second syllable have been preserved in the transcription? For all that is known about compounding in Tibetic languages, compounds tend to preserve final consonants in word-internal rather than final position (Bialek 2018a), so that one would expect !tVtpV rather than !tVpVt and in any case !tVtpVt.

⁹⁶ Some of the arguments were already raised in previous studies; cf. Laufer (1915: 94–5, fn. 1) and Bazin and Hamilton (1991: 13 & 26).

⁹⁷ Hermanns' reconstruction of the Amdo pronunciation !*tö wöd* (1949: 10) is fictitious as is Rockhill's assumption that "Tibetans from Central Tibet have at all times spoken of that portion of the country as *Teu-Peu (stod bod)* or 'Upper Tibet'" (1891: 5).

III. There is no data suggesting that when the Chinese or Türks coined their terms for <Tibet> *bod* was already used for the whole territory ruled by the Yar-luñs dynasty; rather it was still a local demonym used in the Skyi-region.⁹⁸

Yet another hypothesis was presented by Haarh (1969: 290f.). He interpreted *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 (in his transcription: Tu-bo) as “the Bod of Tu’, i.e. ‘the Bod of Tu-fa,’ indicating *the Tibetans under the rule of the Tu-fa clan*” (ibid., p. 291; emphasis in original). Tu-bo should have given rise to OTurk. *töböt* from which the European *Tibet* stems. Tū-fā 秃发 was a branch of the Xianbei confederation. Haarh tacitly identified *tǔ* 吐 with *tū* 秃 and passed over in silence their completely different pronunciations in MC. Moreover, he ascribed to *fān* 蕃 a MC reconstruction of *fān/bō* 番. It goes without saying that his ‘reconstruction’ violates all rules of historical linguistics and is nothing more than a folk etymology based on modern transcriptions of Chinese characters.

2. Tibet < OTurk. *töpü/töpä* “hill”

Róna-Tas (1985: 89f.), followed by Bazin and Hamilton (1991: 13), proposed relating the name *Tibet* to OTurk. *töpü* “hill”, with the plural suffix *-t*: **töpüt* “hills”. However, nobody has challenged the question of how “hills” (> “Tibet”) came to denote a people (> “Tibetans”). An additional shortcoming of Bazin and Hamilton’s hypothesis is that it explains OTurk. **tVpVt* as plural and MC **tVpVn* as collective of *töpü/töpä* or its cognate in the language of the *Ÿa-ža* (1991: 17f. & 26f.) but fails to account for the fact that *tǔpǔwǔt* was a toponym whereas *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 a demonym. The hypothesis is also silent on the matter of the historical circumstances under which the *Ÿa-ža* (Bazin and Hamilton) or the Türks (Róna-Tas) should have given <Tibet> its name; it was <Tibetans> who conquered Central Asia and not the *Ÿa-ža* who conquered <Tibet> and subsequently coined the name “hills” for it. Historical facts speak against the tacit assumption made by these authors that **tVpVt* was coined *in situ*.

⁹⁸ Mair went so far as to assert that Chinese *tǔ fān* 吐蕃 (his Tu-bo) is a transcription of *!stod bod* which he translated as “Greater Fan (i.e., Bod)” (1992: 21). Neither did he explain why the same OLT rime *-od* should be transcribed with two syllables of distinct rimes in Chinese. Strangely enough, Chinese *fān* has also been traced back to *bod* by Stein (1972: 31).

A position combining the 'bod-hypothesis' and the 'töpe-hypothesis' is represented by Georg (2018) who suggested the etymon !tepe-bod, presumably coined in OTurk. The author put much effort in reconstructing the sound shifts required to arrive at the European *Tibet* but did not remark on the existence of the apparently related MC *tũ fān* 吐蕃 and, most importantly, did not present any reasonable semantic analysis of the 'compound'.⁹⁹ Like the other 'töpä'-hypotheses, this hypothesis suffers from the 'historical vacuum'; it lacks an explanation of the historical context under which the compound might have been coined.

Appendix C: Chronological table

The table presents the most important historical events related to the early territorial expansion of the Yar-luñs dynasty. The dates are based on the analyses presented in the paper. The order of the grand councillors corresponds to that of the *Succession of grand councillors* (PT 1287: 63–117) but their tenures are only approximate.



⁹⁹ In a kind of epilogue to the paper the author described a dream in which the meaning "Berg-Bod" (Eng. "hill-Bod") is mentioned. The author has left that without a comment.

Naming the empire

Date	Event	Source	Reign	' <i>zai'</i> -family	Grand councillor
	Political alliances with Rñegs, Khu, Lho, Gnubs, Mthon-myi, Sna-nam, Śud-pu, Ybro, Mñhims, Yol-god, Dags-po		Ybro Mñen-ldo-ru	Ybro	Gnubs Mñen-to-re Nan-snañ
	Affinal alliance with Nas-po	PT 1287: 159			
	Political alliance with Myañ, Dbays, Mron, and Ches-poñ	PT 1287: 157–63			
	Plans to conquer Nas-po	PT 1287: 147–64	Stag-bu Sha-gzigs	Mñhims	
	Death of Stag-bu Sha-gzigs	PT 1287: 164			Śud-pu Rgyal-to-re Na-myi
	Conquest of Nas-po	PT 1287: 180–3	Khri Slon-mchan	Yol-god	
	Political alliance with Khyuñ-po Spun-sad Zu-ce				
580s<	Conquest of the Rcan-Bod	PT 1287: 75 & 198–9			Moñ Khri-do-re Snañ-chab
	Affinal alliance with Moñ				
	1st conquest of Sum-pa				
593	Birth of Khri Sroñ-rcean				Mgar Khri-sgra Yi-mmun
600s	Affinal alliance with Zaiñ-zuñ (Sad-mar-kar)	PT 1287: 398–9			
	Revolt of the Zaiñ-zuñ, Dags-po, Sum-pa, Rkoñ, and Myañ-po	PT 1287: 300			Myañ Mañ-po-rje Zaiñ-snañ
	Poisoning of Khri Slon-mchan	PT 1287: 259 & 300–1			

Date	Event	Source	Reign	' <i>zai'</i> -family	Grand councillor
610s	2nd conquest of the Sum-pa	PT 1287: 84-5 & 303-5 PT 1288: 2			
	1st conquest of the <i>Žai-žui</i>/Gur-ge	PT 1287: 398-434			
620s	Conquest of To-yo-<i>thas-la</i> in Byañ	IIJ 1375: r3-4			
	Disloyalty of Myañ and Čog-ro	PT 1287: 250, 254 & 259	Khri Stoñ-rcañ	Ches-poñ	Myañ Mañ-po- <i>ŕje</i> <i>Žai-snai</i>
	Killing of Myañ Mañ-po- <i>ŕje</i> <i>Žai-snai</i> /destruction of Sdur-ba	PT 1287: 312-5 PT 1288: 4-5			
634	Tibetan embassy to Tang China				Mgar Mañ-šam Sum-snai
637/8	1st conquest of the <i>Ya-ža</i>	PT 1288: 6-7 PT 1287: 305-6			Khyuñ-po Spuñ-sad Zur-ce
638	Birth of Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcañ				
641/2	Arrival of Mun- <i>thañ-korñ-čo</i>	PT 1288: 11	Guñ-sroñ Guñ-rcañ	Moi	Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zui
644	Death of Guñ-sroñ Guñ-rcañ				
644/5	2nd conquest of the <i>Žai-žui</i>	PT 1288: 13-4	Khri Stoñ-rcañ	Ches-poñ	Yo-ma- <i>lde</i> Lod-bcañ
649/50	Death of Khri Stoñ-rcañ				
652/3	Conquest of <i>Glo-bo</i> and <i>Rcañ-thya</i>	PT 1288: 21-2	Khri Mañ-slon Mañ-rcañ	Khon-čo	Mgar Stoñ-rcañ Yul-zui
663	2nd conquest of the <i>Ya-ža</i>	PT 1288: 43			

A Tibetan History of Lesser Knowledge: The Coming of Poetry in The Five Minor Fields of Learning

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Introduction

In an intellectual tradition that is deeply grounded in Buddhist philosophy and spiritual practices, philological pursuits like the study of poetics, prosody, and poetry, particularly from a medieval perspective, might appear mundane and distraction to one's spiritual life and rhythm. However, Tibetan polymath like Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltsen (hereafter, Sapaṅ, 1182-1251) introduced a wide range of texts and treatises on Indic rhetorical arts that were held as models of classical antiquity to be emulated in literary Tibetan. This turn to Indic rhetorical tradition in Tibet left an indelible mark on Tibetan writing, literature and literary theory. Indic poetic forms, meters, and figures of speech, gave birth to an Indic-inspired genre of writing ornate poetry and prose known widely in Tibetan as *snyan ngag* or *nyé ngak* ("pleasant speech")—a term, which has later come to associate with the entire genre of poetry.

The whole scholarly engagement with Indic literary arts is elevated in Tibetan scholasticism as the five minor fields of learning (*rig gnas chung ba lnga*), following the Indic tradition of classifying knowledge such the five major sciences, eighteen sciences, and sixty-four different 'arts' and 'crafts.' While much has been written about the five major and other categories of knowledge, a discussion on the history and development of the five minor fields of learning has not been closely studied.¹ There is no extensive analysis either on the overall historiography of the five minor fields of learning or on each of the subjects of

¹ My initial inquiry on this topic was a result of my interests in Tibetan commentarial literature on Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaṅdarśa*. Since most of these Tibetan commentaries open with a discussion on various forms of knowledge categories in the Indic tradition, I felt the need to provide a historiography of the five minor fields of learning with a focus on the emergence of poetry in this knowledge category. I would like to thank Jonathan Schlesinger, Gedun Rabsal, and Stacy Van Vleet for their contribution to this paper. I presented this article at the Association for Asian Studies conference held in Denver, Colorado, March 21-24, 2019, and I would like to thank

the five minor categories. This paper, therefore, traces the origin of the five minor fields of learning with a specific focus on how “poetry” or *nyé ngak* as a form of knowledge emerged in this Tibetan Buddhist classification of knowledge. Using eighteenth century Khamtrul Tenzin Choekyi Nyima’s (Khams sprul bstan ‘dzin chos kyi nyi ma, 1730-1779/1780) argument that instead of “poetry” (*nyé ngak*) it should be “poetics” (Tib. *tshig rgyan*; Skt. *alaṃkāra*)² in the five minor fields of learning, I argue that the enumeration of the five minor fields of learning underwent several iterations before arriving at what we now know as: *snyan ngag* (poetry, *kāvya*), *sdeb sbyor* (prosody, *chandaḥ*), *mngon brjod* (lexicography, *abhidhāna*), *skar rtsis* (astrology, *jyotiṣa*), and *zlos gar* (dramaturgy, *nāṭaka*).³ Although, Tibetans attribute Sapaṇ as the founder of the five minor fields of learning, there is no philological reference in Sapaṇ’s works about the comparative category of five major and minor fields. From what I have found, Pang Lotsāwa’s (1276-1342) classification of the five minor fields of learning is the earliest—and probably closest to the original Indian classification. Later Tibetan intellectuals from the post-Pang restructured and reformulated these five minor fields of knowledge starting from Narthang Lotsāwa’s (15th century), who excluded “poetics” and included “poetry”. In this essay, I first discuss secondary scholarship on the five minor fields of learning in English that shows the different enumeration of the five minor fields of learning, and then explore when exactly did this comparative category of the five major sciences and minor fields of learning appear in the Tibetan intellectual tradition by going through some of the earliest works on the historiography of Tibetan literary arts (*rig gnas*, hereafter, *rikné*) by Taktsang Lotsāwa (Stag tshang lo tsā ba shes rab rin chen, 1405-1477), Dartod (‘Dar stod dgra ‘dul dbang po, date unknown but active in the 16th-17th century), and Kālapāda (Dus ‘khor zhabs drung, 17th century), and bringing these texts in conversation with the Tibetan commentarial literature on Indic poetic treatise *Kāvyaḍarśa* (hereafter, *The Mirror*).

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² I am translating *alaṃkāra* as poetics for the Tibetan word *tshig rgyan*, but traditionally poetics in the Indic tradition was known by several different names at several different times, such as *kriyākalpa* or *kāvyaḍarśa*. See Warder 1989:9. A more detailed analysis on the Tibetan word *tshig rgyan* or *tshig gi rgyan* remains to be done.

³ In the five minor fields of learning, the term is commonly used as a Tibetan equivalent of the Sanskrit term *nāṭaka* (drama or play). Different characters in classical Sanskrit drama speak different Prakrit dialects as opposed to the protagonists who speak the “refined” Sanskrit language. See K. Mishra and Kapstein 2009. For more on the term *zlos gar* see Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy 2017.

Rikné: The Domains of Knowledge

The Tibetan classification of knowledge springs from the Indic knowledge system commonly known as *Vidyāsthana Pañcavidyā* (*rig pa'i gnas lnga*); the actual provenance of this knowledge category, whether in Hinduism or Buddhism is not clear to me.⁴ The Tibetan term *rig gnas* (*rikné*) is commonly used as a contraction of the phrase *rig pa'i gnas*, which means the domain or location or seats (*gnas*) of 'knowledge' (*rig pa*), and it is a direct rendering of the Sanskrit term *Vidyāsthana*. This term *rikné* first appeared in Tibetan sources in the eighth century lexicography *Mahāvvyutpatti* (*Bye brag tu rtoqs par byed pa chen po*)⁵ that was compiled to help standardize Tibetan translations of the Sanskrit Buddhist texts:

- 1) The science of language (*śabda vidyā* Tib. *sgra rig pa*) 声明⁶
- 2) The science of logic (*hetu vidyā* Tib. *tshad ma rig pa*) 因明
- 3) The science of medicine (*cikitsā vidyā* Tib. *gso ba rig pa*) 医方明
- 4) The science of fine arts and crafts (*śilpa-karma-sthāna vidyā* Tib. *bzo rig pa*) 工巧明
- 5) The science of spirituality (*adhyātma vidyā* Tib. *nang don rig pa*) 内明

While talking about the five sciences, authors in this tradition often quote the Sanskrit Buddhist text *Mahāyāna Sūtrālamkāra kārīkā*, where Asaṅga (fl. 4th century C.E.) wrote that the three purposes for the study of these five sciences are: a) to refute others (by studying grammar and logic), b) to help others (by studying medicine and fine arts and crafts), and c) to achieve omniscience (by studying Buddhism).⁷ In the Tibetan tradition, the first four sciences is also referred to as a 'common fields of learning' (*thun mong rig gnas*) i.e. to be studied across various

⁴ According to Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, the classification of Five Major Sciences is a uniquely Mahayana Buddhist tradition of classifying knowledge. See, Rinpoche 2012:116–17.

⁵ This lexicography contains 285 topics with more than nine thousand entries.

⁶ The Chinese translation was added along with the Mongolian and the Machu entries in the late eighteenth century under the auspices of the Third Changkya Rolpai Dorjee (Lcangs skya Qutugtu Lcangs rgya rol pa'i rdo rje, 1717-1786) at the Qing court. It is interesting to note that the Chinese word *ming* (明) is used for the translation of the Tibetan term *rig pa*, instead of *xue* (学). See *Bstan 'gyur las sgra bye brag rtoqs byed chen mo bod rgya shan sbyar ma*. 藏汉对照丹珠尔佛学分类词典 Anon 2001:93, 217.

⁷ For a more detailed discussion on this five major sciences, see Gold 2007:15.

Indic religious traditions while the fifth is 'exclusive' (*thung mong min pa'i rig gnas*) to the Buddhist tradition.⁸ It is generally believed that there are no forms of 'knowledge' that lie outside the domains of the five major sciences (*rig gnas che ba lnga*); as a matter of fact, all branches of traditional knowledge including the five minor fields of learning, eighteen sciences, fall under the umbrella of the five major sciences.⁹ Entries on the five sciences, and the eighteen sciences (*rig pa'i gnas bco brgyad*) in this Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicography¹⁰ makes the earliest reference of the *rikné* category in Tibetan literary tradition. However, with regard to the five minor fields of learning there was no mention of it in this Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicography, if this classification of knowledge was in practice in the Indic tradition. In fact, none of these major or minor classifications can be found in this eighth-century lexicography. So, when did this comparative category emerge? Who was the first Tibetan scholar to introduce this term the five minor fields of learning? Did Tibetans invent this classification of knowledge? And most importantly what is the historiography of the five minor fields of learning? These questions enrich our understanding about the history and development of this knowledge category in Tibet, and shed light on how Tibetan intellectuals set out to reconfigure and, later, attempt to formalize this knowledge category. Before going into the primary Tibetan sources let us take a quick look at the secondary scholarship on the five minor fields of learning in both English and secondary Tibetan sources.

Western scholarship on various aspects of Tibetan civilization peaked in the last several decades but there is no scholarship dedicated to the historiography of five minor fields of learning. Furthermore, when it comes to the enumeration of the five minor fields of learning, scholars have simply reproduced the following enumeration and there are very few discussions on what constitutes as the five minor fields of learning and how it changed over time. From Giuseppe Tucci up to now, Tibetan and Buddhist studies scholars listed slightly different enumeration of the five minor fields of learning:

⁸ KUN-SHES, p. 2.

⁹ ZHU-CHEN-RIG-GNAS, p. 8.

¹⁰ See *Bye brag tu rtogs par byed pa chen po* in the miscellaneous volume 115 of the Tibetan Canon. Anon 2004:66, 150–52.

Table 1.1 Five Minor Fields of Learning as listed in English Sources

	Giuseppe Tucci ¹¹	David Jackson ¹²	Lhundup Sopa, José Cabezón and Roger Jackson ¹³	Ekaterina Sobkovyak ¹⁴
1	Grammar (sgra)	Grammar (sgra)	Grammar (sgra)	Poetics (<i>snyan ngag</i>)
2	Rhetoric (<i>snyan ngag</i>)	Poetics (<i>snyan ngag</i>)	Poetics (<i>snyan ngag</i>)	Synonyms (mngon brjod)
3	Lexicon (mngon brjod)	Lexicography (mngon brjod)	Lexicography (mngon brjod)	Metrics (sdeb sbyor)
4	Drama (zlos gar)	Drama (zlos gar)	Drama (zlos gar)	Drama (zlos gar)
5	Astrology (skar rtsis)	Metrics (sdeb sbyor)	Metrics (sdeb sbyor)	Astrology (skar rtsis)

These enumerations differ because enumeration in the primary Tibetan tradition changed over time. In English, Tucci was probably the first western scholar to enumerate the five minor fields of learning in the context of various subjects the Fifth Dalai Lama studied. David Jackson, Geshe Lhundup Sopa, José Cabezón and Roger Jackson used the sixteenth century Sakya master Panchen Shakya Chogden's (Mchog ldan dri med legs pa'i blo gros) enumeration given in his commentary of Sapaṅ's *The Entrance Gate for the Wise*, this is probably closest to the original enumeration of the five minor fields of learning that was quoted by early Sakyapa scholars like Pang Lotsāwa.¹⁵ Sobkovyak listed what Longdol Lama (Klong rdol bla ma, 1719-1794) mentioned that was based off Palkhang Lotsāwa's (1456-1539) enumeration that included 'astrology' in place of 'grammar' which is currently taught across various Tibetan schools, universities, and monasteries. And this

¹¹ Tucci translated *rig gnas chung ba lnga* (five minor fields of learning) as "ancillary sciences," see Tucci 1980:94.

¹² Jackson and Sa-skya Panḍi-ta Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan 1987.

¹³ Lhundup Sopa, Cabezón, and Jackson 1996.

¹⁴ Sobkovyak 2015.

¹⁵ Taktsang (KUN-SHES, 10) and Dartod (THA-SNYAD, 458) listed *snyan ngag* (poetry) instead of *tshig rgyan* (poetics).

version is most likely the enumeration that was formulated and standardized during the Fifth Dalai Lama's time: *snyan ngag* (poetry), *mngon brjod* (synonyms), *sdeb sbyor* (prosody), *skar rtsis* (astrology), and *zlos gar* (drama).

However, one major setback that we encounter in charting the historiography of five minor fields of learning is the lack of original reference in Indic sources. With regard to its origin, both Ulrike Roesler and Sobkovyak highlighted the actual parallels between the five minor fields of learning and the Six Vedāṅga of the Indian Vedic tradition¹⁶ and cited Khar'kova, who traced the origin to the Vedāṅga tradition.¹⁷ Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy suggested that this knowledge category is a Tibetan addition to the five major sciences.¹⁸ Contemporary Tibetan scholars like Samdhong Rinpoche calls for more research to find out whether this category of knowledge originated from India or if it is purely a Tibetan invention.¹⁹ While there are some similarities with the Vedāṅga tradition,²⁰ I argue here that the five minor fields of learning was not adopted from the Vedāṅga tradition. Buddhism in general is known for coming up with a list for everything like the four noble truths, the eightfold paths, and the ten Bodhisattva grounds.²¹ It is therefore crucial to go through some of the earliest literature on Indic literary arts in Tibetan, particularly the Sakyapa scholars.

Sapaṅ and the Five Minor Fields of Learning

In the history of Tibetan literary learning and its curricula there are very few moments of rupture and one such moment is the introduction of Indic rhetorical studies by Sapaṅ. Since the development of Tibetan writing system in the seventh century by Thon mi sam bho ta (Thonmi Sambhota) until the twelfth century, much of Tibetan scholasticism remained within the Buddhist orbit. But, from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, for the first time in Tibetan intellectual history, Sapaṅ introduced, translated, and paraphrased series of treatises and texts on Indic rhetorical arts ushering a golden age of philological studies in Tibet rooted in Indic antiquities. As Mathew Kapstein has suggested Indic branches of learning that Sapaṅ introduced in Tibet

¹⁶ Roesler 2015:37.

¹⁷ Sobkovyak 2015:61.

¹⁸ Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy 2017:190.

¹⁹ Samdhong Rinpoche's commentary of *lvā Na dbus bod kyi gtsug lag slob gnyer khang gi rigs glu rtsa 'grel*. See Rinpoche 2012:120; Naga 2006.

²⁰ They are: 1) śikṣā; phonetics, phonology 2) chandaḥ: prosody 3) vyākaraṇa: grammar 4) nirukta: etymology 5) kalpa: ritual instruction 6) jyotiṣa: astrology

²¹ Gethin 1992:149.

reflects Sapaṅ's "ideals of literary learning."²² Interests on Indic literary arts slowly became ideals of beauty par excellence and Indic poetic forms, meter, and aesthetics were imitated and modelled. Sapaṅ himself certainly did not shy away from expressing his erudition in Indic literary studies in his sixty-quatrains poem *Nga brgyad ma* ("Eight Ego Poem"):²³

I am the Grammarian, I am the dialectician
 Among vanquishers of sophists, peerless I am.
 I am learned in metrics. I stand alone in poetics.
 In explaining synonymics, unrivaled I am.
 I know celestial calculation. In exo- and esoteric science
 I have a discerning intellect equaled by none.
 Who can this be? Sakya alone!
 Other scholars are my reflected forms.
 (Mathew Kapstein, 2000)

Sapaṅ is, therefore, seen here displaying the full spectrum of literary arts that he introduced in Tibet, and, it is not an exaggeration to say that, by introducing these new fields of knowledge, Sapaṅ revolutionized curriculum in Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism just like what Europe had experienced during the Italian Renaissance, when Italian humanists revolutionized the pre-existing curriculum by training students in Latin, rhetoric, and poetry.²⁴ Like any other fields of learning, studies on these Indic rhetorical traditions are also framed within the Buddhist rhetoric of omniscience by Tibetan Buddhist literati²⁵ and gradually became an indispensable part of larger Buddhist curriculum in Tibet. At the beginning, Sapaṅ lamented the lack of interests shown by the Tibetans in studying poetry (Tib. *nyé ngak*);²⁶ however, in the post-Sapaṅ period, his lineage holders like Shong and Pang solidified

²² Kapstein 2003:776.

²³ Mathew Kapstein loosely translated as Eight Ego Poem, see Kapstein 2003; but Mathew Kapstein and Prof. Kameshwar Nath Mishra failed to comment on the strict metrical arrangement of fifteen syllables per line with a pattern of even and odd syllables (2, 2, 4, 2, 2, and 3—every foot ends in odd syllables). A marvelous Tibetan poet, yet unknown until now, Gungthang Dewai Lodoe gave *seng ge rnam par rol ba* (a lion's roar or merriment) as the formal name for this poetic device with fifteen syllables per foot; see *Snyan nga gi tshigs su bcad pa dang bstan bcos la sogs pa brtsam pa la nye bar 'jug pa sdeb sbyor pad ma gyas pa'i dga' tshal*, 179 in Gung thang bde ba'i blo gros 2016:179. Sapaṅ later wrote a self-commentary to the above poem and clarified that the above verse was not composed out of his ego but to invoke interests among his readers on Indic literary arts. See Mishra 2015.

²⁴ See Grendler 1989.

²⁵ Gold 2007.

²⁶ MKH, 408. *bod snyan ngag gi tshul la blo ma 'jug pas*. I would like to thank my friend Ngawang Thokmey at Central University for Tibetan Studies, Sarnath for giving me this citation.

this legacy.

This turn to Indic literary studies marked the beginning and diffusion of Indic influenced literary studies in Tibet. The first detailed historiography of this literary studies in Tibet did not appear almost two hundred years after Sapaṅ. Taktsang Lotsāwa, one of the most important literary figures, Sanskritists, and translators of the fifteenth century, in his versified text KUN-SHES²⁷ summarized that until Sapaṅ “there was no tradition of the five minor fields of learning, and until the thirteenth century translator Tharpa Nyima Gyaltzen (Thar pa lo tsA ba nyi ma rgyal mtshan), there was no translation of Sanskrit grammatical text(s) (*sgra mdo*) in Tibet.”²⁸ This oft-cited assessment of Sapaṅ as the founder of ten sciences was later quoted by Dartod (active in the 16th-17th centuries), and most of the later Tibetan scholars. Dartod in his important text on *rikné* THA-SNYAD added more historical depth to the development and diffusion of *rikné* studies in Tibet with a focus on key historical figures that go back to the beginning of the writing system in Tibet. He consolidated the history of *rikné* into three periods: 1) Thonmi Sambhota and the beginning of the Tibetan grammar; 2) the role of three great translators Ska ba dpal brtsegs (9th century), Cog ro klu’i rgyal mtshan, and Rin chen bzang po (958-1055) in leading the three stages of standardization efforts in translating Sanskrit terminologies into Tibetan; 3) the dissemination of *rikné* by Sapaṅ, Shong, (b. 13th century), and Pang.²⁹ What actually sets this periodization apart from the previous works on *rikné* is Dartod’s ability to adopt a long-term view of the historical developments of *rikné* studies in Tibet. Sapaṅ, and most of the thirteenth-fourteenth century scholars, did not give much importance to Thonmi Sambhota other than a mere reference that he developed the Tibetan alphabet.³⁰ Although, Sapaṅ and Taktsang acknowledged Thonmi’s contribution in developing the Tibetan alphabets, they did not accord any place to Thonmi in the overall development of *rikné* studies in Tibet. Regarding the Taktsang’s claim that Sapaṅ was the founder of *rikné* studies in Tibet, Dartod clarified that this does not mean that there were no *rikné* studies in the pre-

²⁷ Since most of the texts composed by Taktsang have the title *kun shes* (“the all-knowing”), the one that is under discussion here *Rig gnas kun shes*.

²⁸ KUN-SHES, 61; THA-SNYAD, 432.

²⁹ THA-SNYAD, 423.

³⁰ However, for Dartod, Thonmi is equally important and rightfully deserves a place in the historiography of *rikné* in Tibet. THA-SNYAD, 423. As illustrated by Roy Andrew Miller in his important work on Tibetan grammar, it appears that for Sapaṅ and intellectuals around his time, they did not have full access to Thonmi’s works and as a result, Thonmi’s contribution was not acclaimed as it was done by Dartod and later intellectuals. For more on the question of the historicity of Thonmi and the actual authorship of the Tibetan grammatical treatises *Lung ston pa rta ba sum cu pa* and *Rtags kyi ’jug pa* see Miller 1976, Miller 1993.

Sapaṅ era as “some aspects of these studies did exist in Tibet either in the form of translations (*gyur*) or explanations (*bshad pa*), but [what Sapaṅ did was] Sapaṅ explicated extensively on each of these ten sciences.”³¹ Sapaṅ is therefore credited as someone who “started” (*srol che*) the formulation of the “ten” sciences in Tibet, and this was expressed using the simile of a jewelry—a diamond necklace: “just like there were precious stones before, but only Sapaṅ strung those gemstones together without which gods and mortals cannot wear it as necklace.”³²

So, one would naturally assume Sapaṅ had written explicitly about “ten sciences” (five major and the five minor), as he was the first Tibetan intellectual to discuss and introduce subjects such as Sanskrit poetic, poetry, prosody, and dramaturgy. However, browsing through Sapaṅ’s works, one fails to find the term five minor fields of learning (*rig gnas chung ba lnga*); in fact, Sapaṅ only used the term ‘five sciences’ (*rig gnas lnga*). Sapaṅ was not only silent about the category of five minor fields of learning but this comparative category of major (*rig gnas che ba lnga*) and minor fields of learning (*rig gnas chung ba lnga*) do not have any written sources in Sapaṅ’s writings; although this may very well have been in his mind (as I will show later in this article about the Indic origin of this knowledge category). The following table shows us various enumerations of sciences or fields of learning as they appeared in Sapaṅ’s collected works.

Table 1.2 Various enumeration of fields of knowledge as appeared in Sapaṅ’s collected works

	MKH ³³	MKH 1 ³⁴	NGA-BRGYAD ³⁵	TSIG-GTER ³⁶	METOK ³⁷	LEGS-BSHAD ³⁸
1	grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar	grammar
2	logic	prosody	logic	logic	logic	logic
3	poetry	poetry	prosody	prosody	prosody	prosody
4	prosody	Lexicography and etc.	poetic	poetry	poetry	poetry

³¹ THA-SNYAD, 440-441.

³² *Bod du rig gnas rnam pa bcu'i srol gang zag gcig nyid kyi dang por phye ba ni bdag nyid chen po sa paṅdita kho na ste.* THA-SNYAD, 440-441.

³³ MKH, 2 (v).

³⁴ MKH, 42 (r).

³⁵ NGA-BRGYAD, 16 (r).

³⁶ TSIG-GTER, 15 (r).

³⁷ METOK, 35 (r).

³⁸ LEGS-BSHAD, 25 (r).

5	poetics		lexicography	poetics	poetics	poetics
6	lexicography		astrology	lexicography	<i>tshig rnam par sbyar ba (?)</i>	Buddhist teaching
7	drama		external: crafts and medicine	astrology		
8	medicine		internal: Buddhist philosophy	medicine		
9	crafts			crafts		
10	astrology					
11	Buddhism					

So based on the above table, if we are to extract what constitute as the five minor fields of learning then the enumerations differ greatly. This lack of uniformity is understandable as Sapaṅ presented these in the contexts of various subjects he had studied and mastered and did not mention anything about the categories of five minor fields of learning or for that matter ten sciences. In speaking of 'poetry' (*snyan ngag*) and 'poetics' (*tshig rgyan*), what is unique with the above enumeration is, Sapaṅ enumerated these two subjects as two separate fields of learning. But, later Tibetan intellectuals from Narthang Lotsāwa, and Taktsang, dropped 'poetics' and only included 'poetry' in the five minor fields of learning. Especially in the post-Sakyapa period, Tibetan intellectuals began to treat 'poetry' and 'poetics' as synonyms, and by doing this, perhaps, mistakenly enhanced the usage and domain of poetry (*snyan ngag*) while displacing poetics (*tshig rgyan*).³⁹ It was only in the eighteenth century that Khamtrul pointed out this distinction and argued that treatise on poetic (*tshig rgyan gyi bstan bcos / alaṃkāra śāstra*) like *The Mirror* was mistakenly referred as a treatise on poetry (*snyan ngag gi bstan bcos / kāvya śāstra*)⁴⁰— while *The Mirror per se* is definitely a work of art and poetry, it cannot be called a treatise on poetry, according to Khamtrul. Even in the existing secondary literature, Tibetan and Western scholars have overlooked the actual inclusion of *poetry* (*snyan ngag*) and exclusion of *poetics*, and thus taken for granted that *snyan ngag* (poetry) was there from the very inception of the classification of five minor fields of learning. This intervention by Khamtrul was not simply an eighteenth century invention; actually, if we are to look at the writings of Pang Lotsāwa, one of the greatest Tibetan literary scholars born almost a century after Sapaṅ, we can see Khamtrul was simply reiterating the original enumeration.

⁴⁰ KHAMS-DREL, 21.

Pang and the Five Minor Fields of Learning (*Laghu Vidyā*)

As the five minor fields of learning is deeply rooted in Sanskrit language and learning, Pang's contribution to Sanskrit learning and philological studies in Tibet is unrivalled. Unfortunately, since these literary works are considered auxiliary to the dominant religious texts, not many scholars paid attention to Pang's works on *rikné*, and this is reflected as many of his works were not published onto woodblocks but simply handed down in manuscript form. As Pang did not leave any autobiography, Dartod's brief account of Pang in THA-SNYED becomes one of the important sources on Pang's biography besides Gos Lotsāwa gzhon nu dpal's (1392-1481) *The Blue Annals*.⁴¹ Pang is considered one of the most important figures in the dissemination of *rikné* studies in Tibet. As a scholar, he earned the title 'Great translator' (*lo chen*) and travelled to Nepal seven times to study Sanskrit and Buddhism—one of the last few Tibetans to travel to South Asia in the fourteenth century.⁴² He produced the first Tibetan commentary of *The Mirror* that is widely regarded as one of the most authentic and closest to the original Sanskrit.⁴³ Relying on this commentary and other works by Pang, I have found that Pang seems to be the first Tibetan to explicitly refer or introduce this comparative term 'five major' (*rig gnas che ba lnga*) and 'five minor fields of learning' (*chung ba lnga*) in his commentary of *The Mirror*, PANG-DREL.⁴⁴ According to Pang, this tradition of five minor fields of learning existed in India, as Indian paṇḍitas quote:⁴⁵

if you know the grammar (*sgra*), you will not be ignorant about meaning (*don*)
 if you know lexicography (*mngon brjod*) you will not be ignorant about names (*ming*)
 if you know prosody (*sdeb sbyor*) then you will not be ignorant about verse (*tshig bcad*)
 if you know poetics (*tshig rgyan*) you will not be ignorant about poetry

⁴¹ Both these works recount Pang for his sharp mind and tell an anecdote where Pang piqued that after his mother died, when he was a baby, fools raised him on sheep's milk instead of cow's milk which dimmed his intellect a little bit and earned a nickname 'lug gu' or 'lamb.' THA-SNYED, 446. As pointed out by José Cabezón, George Roerich mistook Pang as the brother of Shong ston rdo rje rgyal mtshan. George Roerich and Gendün Chöphel 1976:786. It is also confusing at times since many of these early Sakya-pa scholars were all uncles and nephews.

⁴² George Roerich and Gendün Chöphel 1976.

⁴³ Pang's commentary was more or less a Tibetan translation of Ratnashri's commentary of *The Mirror*. For more on this, see van der Kuijp 1985; Dragomir Dimitrov 2009.

⁴⁴ Pang uses the term '*rig pa'i gnas chung ngu lnga*.' PANG-DREL, 2 (r).

⁴⁵ PANG-DREL, 2 (r).

(*snyan ngag*)

if you know drama (*zlos gar*) then you will not be ignorant about languages (*skad rigs*)

Based on what Pang was quoting, this tradition of enumerating five minor fields of learning can be traced to Indian origin, and this puts to rest qualms among scholars who believe that this might be a Tibetan invention. According to many contemporary Tibetan scholars, one reason to call these five minor fields of learning a purely Tibetan invention was the lack of philological reference in the Indian tradition. It is true that we do not have any direct textual reference in the Indian sources, but we can reconstruct the term back in Sanskrit since the Tibetan translations still exist. For instance, Narthang Lotsāwa in his commentary of *The Mirror* in the fifteenth century wrote that according to the Indian tradition, *paN chung* (Minor / Assistant / Junior Paṇḍita) is used for someone who had mastered the five minor fields of learning.⁴⁶ Similarly, an important work on *rikné* by the seventeenth century scholar Kālapāda⁴⁷ wrote that the Great or Mahā Paṇḍita (*paN chen*) is used for someone who had mastered the five major sciences; and Minor Paṇḍita⁴⁸ for someone who had mastered the five minor fields of learning. Since there is a tradition in Sanskrit of using the term *laghu*⁴⁹ in comparison to *mahā*, we can reconstruct that the phrase *rig gnas chung ba lnga* is the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term *laghu vidyā*. Going back to the enumeration of the five minor fields of learning, the above verse in PANG-DREL was reproduced similarly by Paṇ chen 'jam dbyangs kha che, (hereafter Jamkha, 14th cent);⁵⁰ but Narthang Lotsāwa (1383-1445),⁵¹ Kālapāda,⁵² and the Fifth Dalai Lama reproduced with a slight variation that swapped *poetics* (*tshig rgyan*) and *poetry* (*snyan ngag*).⁵³ These scholars, wittingly or unwittingly, gave prominence to 'poetry' and since then Tibetan intellectuals began to

⁴⁶ SNAR-DREL, 4 (v).

⁴⁷ Kālapāda was a great Sanskritist and according to Gyen Beri Jigme, Kālapāda declined to be the teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama (personal conversation, 2018). I have not seen this in any sources yet.

⁴⁸ BLO-GSAL-MGUL-RGYAN, 5 (r).

⁴⁹ This comparative category of major and minor is common in classical Indian tradition. Professor Emeritus Kameshwar Nath Mishra of Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, told me that those Paṇḍitas who mastered these minor fields of learning can also be called as Laghu Paṇḍita. There is also a tradition of using the term *laghu* in Sanskrit texts such as Varadarāja's *Laghu Siddhānta Kaumudī* (personal conversation, 2019).

⁵⁰ 'Jam dbyangs kha che 2016:203.

⁵¹ SNAR-DREL, 4 (v).

⁵² BLO-GSAL-MGUL-RGYAN, 5 (r).

⁵³ See (ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 1991:6 (v).) TBRC W2CZ5990.

enumerate 'poetry' instead of 'poetics' in the five minor fields of learning.⁵⁴ As poetry and the image of the poet became important factors among the learned circles in this period, it is possible that intellectuals like Narthang, Kālapāda, and the Great Fifth simply elevated poetry to the five minor fields of learning. However, as mentioned earlier, Khamtrul, in the eighteenth century, corrected the saying by writing instead of "if you know poetry you will not be ignorant about poetics (*sgra rgyan/tshig rgyan*)", it should be the other way around: "if you know poetics then you will not be ignorant in poetry."⁵⁵ For Khamtrul, poetry is the end result of the poetic process and Tibetan scholars mixed up 'the cause' (*rgyu* i.e. poetics) and 'the result' (*'bras bu* i.e. poetry).⁵⁶ Although, Khamtrul only mentioned it was based on Indian Paṇḍitas' saying; this quote is actually available in PANG-DREL, as mentioned above.

The restructuring of the categories of knowledge was not just limited to *poetry* alone, as sixteenth-seventeenth century Tibetan scholars began to see problems in including 'the science of language' or grammar (*sgra rig pa*) in both the categories of five major and minor classifications of knowledge. Kālapāda⁵⁷ captured this mood among Tibetan intellectuals regarding the problem of redundancy:

"For some scholars, the science of language (*sgra rig pa*) is part of the five sciences and cannot be placed with minor fields of learning; [G]enerally, the term major and minor are relative to one another; [once] these categories are created, there is contradiction between the major and minor categories; thus, scholars added "knowing astrology one will not be ignorant about numerology."⁵⁸

Tibetan intellectuals solved the problem of redundancy by excluding grammar (*sgra*) and including astrology (*skar rtsis*) to the list. The Fifth Dalai Lama's commentary of *The Mirror* along with the edited version that contains commentary by Desi Sangyé Gyatso give us clearer information about particular figures who initiated this change. Pang, Jamkha, Narthang Lotsāwa, Rinpung Ngawang Jigdak (Ngag dbang

⁵⁴ Also, Taktsang in his KUN-SHES wrote 'poetry' as one of the five minor fields of learning, 10.

⁵⁵ KHAMS-DREL, 13.

⁵⁶ KHAMS-DREL, 13.

⁵⁷ This text *rig gnas lnga'i rnam dbye cung zad bshad pa legs bshad nor bu'i 'phreng ba blo gsäl mgul rgyan zhes bya ba bzhugs so* (BLO-GSAL-MGUL-RGYAN) was put under the collection of *rikné* texts by Pang Lotsāwa. But the text was by seventeenth century scholar Dus 'khor zhabs drung, known widely by his Sanskrit appellation Kālapāda. TBRC: W00KKG09663.

⁵⁸ BLO-GSAL-MGUL-RGYAN, 5 (r).

'jigs grags, 1482-1542), [and also THA-SNYAD]⁵⁹ classified 'grammar' in both the five major and minor categories in their commentaries of *The Mirror*,⁶⁰ and it is my assumption that Jamkha, Narthang Lotsāwa and Rinpung Ngawang Jigdak simply followed what was in PANG-DREL. The Fifth Dalai Lama further mentions that Palkhang Lotsāwa (Dpal sgang [aka. Karma phrin las phyogs las rnam rgyal, Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho, Dbyangs can snyems pa'i sde,⁶¹ 1456-1539], makes a critical intervention by adding astrology (*skar rtsis*), as per the traditions of Kālacakra Svarodaya tantra (*dbyangs 'char ba'i rgyud*), to the list of five minor fields of learning.⁶² Khamtrul added another figure, Lochen Sonam Dé (Lo chen bsod nams rgya mtsho'i sde, 1424-1482) along with the Palkhang Lotsāwa in their role in introducing 'astrology' (*rtsis*)⁶³ in place of 'grammar'; and according to Khamtrul, this inclusion of 'astrology' was greatly admired by Situ as well.⁶⁴

However, the original formulation of the five minor fields of learning i.e. grammar, lexicon, prosody, poetic, and dramaturgy was treated as a branch of 'the science of language' (*sgra rig pa*) of the five major sciences. Since all five minor subjects deal, in one or another, with Indic languages and rhetorical traditions,⁶⁵ from its very inception, I believe, 'astrology' was never included in the list as it belongs to 'the science of crafts' (*bzo rig pa*). Sapañ, in his autocommentary of NGA-RGYAD, NGA-RGYAD-'DREL also stated that astrology is usually classified under 'the science of crafts' (*bzo rig pa*) but "while writ-

⁵⁹ THA-SNYAD, 2009, 432.

⁶⁰ ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 1991:7 (r) and Sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 1996:16.

⁶¹ Zhu chen wrote Dpal khang dbyangs can snyems pa'i sde in CHU-GTER, 44 (r). He also mentioned that it was Tak-tsang, who first introduced *astrology* in the five minor fields of learning; but in KUN-SHES, Taksang wrote as per what was mentioned by PAND-DREL, 10.

⁶² ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho 1991:7(r).

⁶³ Although, I have translated *rtsis* as astrology; the Tibetan term could mean a range of things from astronomy, calendrical systems (Indian and Chinese), calculation of inner body's wind (*nang gi rlung..rtsis*) to Kalacakra. See, MKH, 2 (v); Gold 2007:155.

⁶⁴ KHAMS-DREL, 13. More research is required by going through the works of Lo chen bsod nams rgya mtsho'i sde to see if he mentioned Pang or names of other scholars, who cast doubts on enumerating 'grammar' in both five major and minor forms of knowledge.

⁶⁵ Contemporary Tibetan scholars like Samdhong Rinpoche expressed another interpretation that *sgra rig pa* in the five major science should be understood as 'the science of language' (*śabda vidyā*) and *sgra* in the five minor fields of learning should be taken as 'grammar' (*vyākaraṇa*)—which can just be a part of the larger science of language (*śabda vidyā*). See Rinpoche 2012:121. However, Tibetan intellectuals in the past have treated *sgra rig pa* and *sgra* as one.

ing this text, he has classified it separately considering the subject matter under discussion."⁶⁶

To sum up, the historiography of the five minor fields of learning is far more complicated and convoluted compared to the five major sciences. As we have discussed, the original enumeration of the five minor fields of learning underwent two major reconfigurations: one in the fifteenth century and another in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. Khamtrul, in the eighteenth century, was the first to highlight that instead of *poetry* it should be *poetics*. For this essay, I have primarily consulted Tibetan commentarial literature on *The Mirror* and a handful important works on *rikné*, but there is a sea of other important literary works that lie beyond the scope of this short essay. A more complete and detailed discussion either on individual subject or altogether as the five minor fields of learning using additional textual sources remains to be done.

ABBREVIATIONS

BLO-GSAL-MGUL-RGYAN: Kālapāda or Dus 'khor zhabs drung. *Rig gnas lnga'i rnam dbye cung zad bshad pa legs bshad nor bu'i 'phreng ba blo gsal mgul rgyan zhes bya ba bzhugs so*, in Blo gros brtan pa's *Rig gnas phyogs bsdebs*. Dharamshala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981. 1-106.

CHU-GTER: *dpal ldan bla ma dam pa rnam las dam pa'i chos thos pa'i yi ge don gnyer gdengs can rol pa'i chu gter*. Kathmandu: Sachen International, 2005.

DGYES-GLU: Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho. Snyan ngag me long gi dka' 'grel dbyangs can dgyes pa'i glu dbyangs zhes bya ba bzhugs in *Gsung 'bum/ Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*. Dharamshala: Nam gsal sgron ma, 2007. 281-543.

KHAMS-DREL: Khams sprul bstan 'dzin chos kyi nyi ma. *Rgyan gyi bstan bcos me long paN chen bla ma'i gsung bzhin bkral ba dbyangs can ngag gi rol mtsho legs bshad nor bu'i 'byung khungs*. Xining: mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004.

KUN-SHES: Stag tshang lo tsa wa shes rab rin chen. *Rig gnas kun shes nas bdag med grub pa'i bstan bcos kyi rnam par bshad pa nyung gsal kun dga'*. *Gsung 'bum shes rab rin chen*. Beijing: Krung go bod rig dpe skrun khang, 2007. 1-92.

LEGS-BSHAD: *Legs par bshad pa rin po che'i gter* in *Sa skya bka' 'bum*. Kathmandu: Sachen International, 2006. 113-261.

METOK : *Sa skya paṇ ḍi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan*. *Sdeb sbyor sna tshogs*

⁶⁶ NGA-RGYAD-'DREL, 20 (v).

- me tog gi chun po in Sa skya bka' 'bum*. Kathmandu: Sachen International, 2006. 567-610.
- MKH : *Sa skya paṅ ḍi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan. Mkhas pa la 'jug pa'i sgo zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos bzhugs so in Sa skya bka' 'bum*. Kathmandu : Sachen International, 2006. 349-478.
- NGA-BRGYAD-DREL : *Sa skya paṅ ḍi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan. Nga brgyad ma'i 'grel pa in Sa skya bka' 'bum*. Kathmandu : Sachen International, 2006. 640-667.
- PANG-DREL : *Dpang blo gros brtan pa. Snyan ngag me long gyi rgya cher 'grel pa gzhung don gsal ba zhes bya ba bzhugs so in Dpang lo tsA ba blo gros brtan pa'i gsung phyogs bsdus*. BDRC W2PD17532. 1-135.
- SNAR-DREL: *Snar thang dge 'dun dpal. Snar thang snyan 'grel*. TBRC W2CZ7881.
- SITU-DRIS-LEN: *Chos kyi 'byung gnas. Dris len sna tshogs nor bu ke tA ka'i phreng ba in Gsung 'bum Chos kyi 'byung gnas*. TBRC W26630. Sansal, Kangra: Palpung Sungrab Nyamso Khang, 1990. 8: 461 – 490.
- THA-SNYAD: *Dgra 'dul dbang po. Tha snyad rig gnas lnga ji ltar byung ba'I tshul gsal bar byed pa blo gsal mgrin rgyan legs bshad nor bu'I phreng ba, in Sa skya'I chos 'byung gces bsdus*. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009. 5: 212 – 248.
- TSIG-GTER: *Sa skya paṅ ḍi ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan. Gtsig gi gter zhes bya ba'I bstan bcos bzhugs in Sa skya bka' 'bum*. Kathmandu: Sachen International, 2006. 539-567.
- ZHU-CHEN-RIG-GNAS: *Zhu chen tshul khirms rin chen. Bod kyi rig gnas lnga'I rnam gzhag*. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1981.

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