

Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences of the Autonomous Region Tibet

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dBa' bzhed

The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing
of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet

Translation and Facsimile Edition
of the Tibetan Text

by Pasang Wangdu
and Hildegard Diemberger

with a Preface by Per K. Sørensen

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ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN
PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE KLASSE
DENKSCHRIFTEN, 291. BAND

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PREFACE

***dBa'sBa bzhed: The dBa'[s]/sBa [Clan] Testimony including
the Royal Edict (bka' gtsigs) and the Royal Narrative (bka' mchid)
concerning the bSam yas vihāra***

The actual extent and nature of scriptural, epigraphic and palaeographic sources dating from Tibet's imperial period that were at the indigenous Tibetan historian's disposal at the outset of the current, now moribund millennium is still largely unclear to modern Tibetological scholarship. It is in this respect doubtless permissible to assert that the downfall of the Yar [k]lung Dynasty in the second part of the 9th century not only paved the way for the abrupt discontinuity in the succession of a centrally governed power in Tibet, but as one of the by-products of this collapse of sovereign rulership, it soon spilled over into a protracted civil war with widespread social anarchy (*kheng log*). The impact of the internecine war was such that it soon ushered in the gradual decentralisation or fragmentation (*sil bu*) of the country into numerous petty chiefships – as this turning-point was later labelled by indigenous historians. From a historian's point of view, one dismal aftermath of the civil and political lawlessness that reigned over those chaotic days in Tibet was, in addition to the extensive looting of royal tombs in the Yar klung Valley and bouts of iconoclastic and architectural vandalism in monasteries and palaces throughout Central Tibet, a deplorable loss of many contemporary dossiers, written records and documents, a scriptural atrophy that arguably ensued in connection with the concomitant demolition and burning of royal archives and monastic scriptoria. This was evidently the situation from the very outset of the *bstan pa phyi dar* period. It certainly seems to be a fact that already from the middle of the 11th century, Tibetan native historians faced considerable difficulties when attempting to reassemble the key pieces in the historical jigsaw puzzle behind Tibet's imperial era; this is evident when we read the earliest surviving attempts made by historians from that period, in the first place by the bKa' gdams pa and Sa skya pa. It should therefore not surprise us that in their attempted reconstruction or rewriting of history they were constrained not only to resort to makeshift guesswork, but also to redactional and compilatory reworkings. In short, it appears that only a minor cluster of historical sources constituted the fundamental authorities for a host of subsequent writings in this field, an

assumption corroborated by the copious quotations of a selective number of sources containing older authoritative materials stemming from the imperial period.

Subjected to such redactional contortions throughout its transmissional history was one of the most celebrated texts within Tibetan historiography and, contrary to the majority of historical tracts with similar or related content, a text which we must assume to have some claim to antiquity. Its exclusiveness and relatively exalted position in the same tradition is thus corroborated by the fact that it is unanimously acknowledged as a basic and authoritative historical source which in its earliest form allegedly dates back to the later part of the dynastic period (around A.D. 800 or shortly after). In terms of its contents too, as mentioned earlier, it belongs to a limited number of sources that were uniformly and repeatedly quoted by almost all subsequent writings, *in casu* not only as an authority on historical events but also as an important authority on doctrinal polemics, for instance concerning the crucial bSam yas Debate which took place in the early 790s A.D., the detailed and verbatim controversy of which has been preserved above all in this source. In fact, the *dBa* '[s]/sBa/rBa/'Ba' *bzhed* (*cum var. lect.*) is considered the history of the bSam yas *vihāra par excellence* (i.e. *bsam yas lta na khyad par du 'di med thabs med; bsam yas bzhengs pa'i gtam rgyud 'di las zhib pa med*), being both detailed and indispensable in this regard because it contained – as the first and most authoritative source on that score – a description of the dramatic and contentious events with the gradual triumph of Buddhadharma in Tibet throughout the 8th century. In particular it narrates the lengthy pre-history and contingencies leading to the erection of bSam yas, the first royally patronised convent temple in Tibet. bSam yas was built in the wake of an alleged Buddhist (*chos*) victory over its contemporary, inner-Tibetan antagonists, the followers of Bon, during a portentous but historically still shadowy Chos-Bon contest or controversy that apparently removed the last obstacles and thus paved the way for its construction. The text then chronicles bSam yas' actual construction, followed, in some versions, by an inventorial description (*dkar chag*) of the Buddhist *vihāra*'s artistic holdings and layout, and culminating in the record of the aforementioned Sino-Indian Buddhist Debate at bSam yas and its aftermath, which were to delimit the theoretical orientation of Buddhadharma in Tibet. A description or presentation that was possibly seen through the idealising eyes of one of the protagonists and eye-witnesses in these events, *dBa*'[s]/sBa gSal snang or other leading members of the *dBa*'[s]/sBa clan or else transmitted down through their hands, a possibility which also accounts for the usual short title of the document: *dBa*'/sBa *bzhed*. In addition, the document, presumably in some original form, may have contained the detailed wording of the royal edict (*bka' gtsigs kyi yi ge zhib mo*) that may have been issued in the wake of the bSam yas Debate,

as well as the wording of the accompanying royal narrative (*bka' mchid kyi yi ge*) that provided the aetiology, the rationale (*gtan tshigs*) and the history (*lo rgyus*) behind the solemn decrees, *in casu* the introduction of Buddhaharma to Tibet. Covering as it did an eventful spell in imperial Tibet, and coming to a close in most versions with the passing of king Khri Srong lde'u btsan (A.D. 742–797?), this document (or merely one of its versions?) was therefore also regularly described (or was supplementarily titled?) by later historians (exclusively? at least from the 12th century onwards) as the king's "testament" or "will" (*bka' chems, zhal chems*), evidently because the lion's share of the text simultaneously delineated the antecedents of this particular king; in other words, it was conceived of as a sort of religious manifesto of this ruler. A cause for frustration is perhaps the fact that a great deal of information and numerous episodes detailed in *dBa'sBa bzhed* can only seldom be verified by contemporary, primary sources, which means that we are barred from judging their historical value in greater depth. Even the question whether the bSam yas debate ever took place, at least in the form of a formal dispute or an officially and royally staged controversy which even assumed the catechetic *vivāda* form known from Indian as well as Chinese history, as the document would have us believe, is still a matter of doubt. Albeit largely unproved, the eventful narrative recorded and its purported information are nevertheless, in their own right, the authoritative content upon which much of *dBa'sBa bzhed's* repute hinges. Adding to its historicity anyway is the fact that the wording of all extant versions bespeaks an archaic diction, containing a number of phrases and idioms which are paralleled or witnessed in documents from Dunhuang and also in inscriptions.

Whatever its reputation, it was probably its apparently non-partisan and historically neutral content that explains why the text was never committed to print. Consequently, the text is known to us only in a number of different manuscript versions, aside from lengthy and extensive quotations in later historical sources, deviating slightly from one another in content and wording. Its concocted constitution is most probably due to the fact that it was extensively copied and recopied, embellished and modified down through time. This, to some extent, would account for the notorious plurality of versions, each different from the others both in length and content, and for its supplementary titles. As surveyed in the Introduction, to which we shall add only little here, a number of scholars have dealt with the text's problematic constitution; based upon the sparse material at their disposal, they have been perplexed by the apparent bewilderment and contradictory information to be gleaned from the extant versions. Any attempt to discuss the transmissional history of *dBa'sBa/rBa bzhed*, made along the heuristic principles of higher criticism, therefore faces a host of delicate and moot problems –

vexata quæstio, as a concerned classicist or mediaevalist would label them. In fact, not only Tibetan historians from the 12th–13th century onwards but also present-day scholars are assailed by a host of questions of which some are seemingly insurmountable, others only to be answered by way of conjecture. Questions like the text’s provenance, its original form(s) and wording, its authorship and so on are largely impossible to answer for lack of conclusive or supplementary original text material. The sad state of affairs is compounded not least by the fact that the titular varieties all appear to be works which apparently represent what constitute *dBa’/sBa bzhed* in some form; however, we do not know the exact content of the individual works in question because, as stated earlier, neither the majority of these nor a proto-version exist. In addition, the different versions of *dBa’/sBa bzhed* may have fulfilled different needs and served different audiences. When looking for answers to the apparently crucial involvement of the *dBa’[s]/sBa* clan in the formation and dissemination of the document, it is not irrelevant to attempt to address a basic question: whereas cogent proof could be cited to the effect that an intense struggle prevailed among the clan factions and their shifting alliances at the court in Tibet – with each clan and coterie such as the powerful *dBa’[s]/sBa*, the Myang and the ’Bro clan and the *mChims* etc. either favouring different religious institutions or pursuing conflicting denominations and creeds out of profane, politico-economical self-interest or out of ideological conviction, such as siding either with the Indian or the Chinese party in the struggle for ideological supremacy during the alleged *bSam yas* debate – it is still difficult to provide direct proof of any entitlement on the part of the *dBa’[s]/sBa* in the wake of the whole affair to commit to writing an apparently royally sanctioned record of the events taking place at *bSam yas*. Aside from the prominent and well-known position and involvement of some pro-Indian members of the *dBa’[s]/sBa* clan, we still do not possess any detailed information of their association with *bSam yas*, contrary to the care of certain members of the *Yum brtan* line who settled down as rulers and “kings” (*brtsad po*) of *bSam yas*. The assessment of the document’s alleged non-partisan content, as indicated above, is in this respect therefore still open to debate. Is it really non-partisan? Or is the *dBa’/sBa bzhed*, at least in the closing part, far more an ill-concealed and unmitigated defence for the position or standpoint (*bzhed pa*, *bzhed lugs*) adopted by one of the protagonists in the alleged dispute, a member of the powerful *dBa’[s]/sBa* clan? The apparent ideological and political conflicts in the affairs leading to and following the establishment of the first convent temple in Tibet were well-known. Perhaps *dBa’/sBa bzhed* should be seen in part as an attempt to rewrite or idealise the course of history in favour of the clan’s standpoint? Further implications: could this account for the pro-Indian tenor in the document and even explain a good part of the putative victory of the latter party in the debate? A closer look at the document allows us to see how prominent a position the

different members of the dBa'[s]/sBa enjoyed in the narrative. Travelling further along the thorny path of speculation, we could easily imagine, a point discussed in the Introduction too, that sometime in an early phase of the civil war or very early into the post-dynastic period (i.e. 10th–11th century?) leading dBa'[s]/sBa clan members felt motivated for reasons of ideology or, rather, driven by purely ancestral concerns to compile such document(s) in which the role of the dBa's/sBa in the struggle was highlighted. Could it even be conceived of as a plaidoyer for their self-staged or factually glorious role in the above events? It is perhaps in this respect no coincidence that the title *dBa'/'sBa bzhed* (at least according to the materials currently at our disposal) remains undocumented, as we shall see, prior to the late 12th century. The latter assumption would probably appear incredible, but the clan would no doubt have a number of reasons to further or to perpetuate precisely this image and role in their struggle for power, legitimation and influence during the earlier years of the post-dynastic times. Tibetan historiography abounds in such attempts to forge documents that legitimised past glories and repute or underpinned bygone prerogatives, whether real or fictitious. In fact, it was considered a wholly legitimate procedure. This feature remains emblematic to Tibetan historiographical literature.

Whatever the text's provenance, indigenous scholars and commentators in the following centuries were at pains to clarify the hermeneutic niceties embedded in the tradition, evidently because they could avail themselves of versions which (by the selfsame scholars?) were labelled as either authoritative (*khungs ma*) or pure (*gtsang ma*), versus a number of texts that were considered embellished (*lhad ma*) and appended (*zhabs btags ma*) versions. Unfortunately, we only possess a fraction of these important chains in the transmissional stemma. The current text witnesses, including the *dBa' bzhed* presented here, therefore do not allow us to draw firm conclusions beyond those hinted at in the Introduction. A certain degree of terminological confusion has therefore been inherited in the material. We not intend here to address in any fashion the minor, but telling differences prevailing between the three extant versions, being collated with the many lengthy quotations in later works. This rewarding task is reserved for another work currently under preparation. Nor do we want to anticipate the lengthy discussions made in the numerous footnotes found in this book. As stated above, what we can adduce is that the short or common title of the work, *dBa'/'sBa bzhed*, i.e. the “testimony (*bzhed pa*) of [minister] dBa'[s]/sBa/rBa [gSal snang/Ratna/Ye shes dbang po] [on the establishment of Buddhадharma, the erection of the temple and the ensuing debate]”, is slightly misleading, since this reference (originally?, possibly not, because this brief title is found reported for the first time in the late 12th and early 13th century) either represents a section of this source or it

may conveniently designate a cover title without any direct bearing on the text itself, if the title is indeed an artificial one deliberately introduced in the post-dynastic period by some members of this particular clan. Yet it is also to be assumed that what constituted *dBa'sBa bzhed*, possibly already in its original form(s?), was most likely a compilation of distinct narratives and edictal elements and topoi. In other words, in terms of composition it may from the very outset have looked much like a motley patchwork with reminiscences of a *chos 'byung*, a *lo rgyus*, and in part a *rgyal rabs*, a fact also reflected in the different titles given to the text tradition.

Taking into consideration that all three text witnesses currently at our disposal contain the same narrative in their core part, and thus display roughly the same episodic and topical sequence would seem to suggest that they all stem from a common proto-version that is no longer extant. This would furthermore suggest that they may all date from the (early) post-dynastic period, with the edition published in Beijing (Gonpo Gyaltzen, 1980) tentatively attributable to the 12th century, the supplemented version (Stein, 1961) on the contrary to be attributed to the mid 14th century (although the *zhabs btags ma* version already contains parallel quotations from the 12th century), and finally the *dBa' bzhed* document, which was apparently quoted for the first time in the early 13th century to be assigned, in our view, to around the 11th century at the earliest. (The version that forms the subject of this book is a revised copy.) This assessment however is tentative. Beyond that, there is not a single clue, internally or externally, in this important document that helps us to date it to any degree of precision. The current *dBa' bzhed* document nevertheless displays a number of highly interesting features: the diction, even in the revised version at our disposal, contains a language laced with a mixture of archaic and pre-classical phraseology, perhaps even more heavily than the parallel versions. Anyway, this suggests that our document is fairly old – codicologically speaking. Signally, it publicly introduces itself as a *bka' mchid*, i.e. a “royal narrative” (specifically on the introduction of Buddhadharma to Tibet, similar to other *bka' mchid*) which usually accompanied a royal edict. This fact assists us in identifying an important component of the original set-up and function of the text. In its original form, the text was conceivably made up of a *bka' gtsigs* accompanied by an elaborating or clarifying *bka' mchid*. In addition, as discussed by the translator duo in the sequel, *dBa' bzhed* too were found in different sizes, a fact that may explain the absence or presence of different narrative and mythographical components (see here again the Introduction); but more relevant perhaps, it contains a number of narrative episodes distinctly idiosyncratic to this particular witness and hitherto not traced in similar literature or quotations. This fact alone makes the *dBa' bzhed* version an important new

source and witness in our gradual understanding of the text's transmission. To assess the significance of these episodes is still premature, but they will surely occupy scholars in the future. Conspicuously, the detailed description of the layout of bSam yas which is embedded in other extant versions, is altogether lacking in this account. On the other hand, as discussed below, the *dBa' bzhed* contains other important sections and additions (see the Synopsis), especially the history of the *Zas gtad*, or the funeral rituals, a document of great significance, yet the reason for and the full impact of its inclusion by way of an appendix to *dBa' bzhed* still remain unclear. It could represent a natural appendix added at a very early stage in the particular text's transmission, or it may constitute an artificial supplement appended for reasons of context by some, possibly early, redactors. Both in content and diction, this section is evidently quite old and there is little doubt that it must be dated to the 9th century. The topic of this particular segment throws revealing new light on the rationale behind the transition of imperial rituals from Bon to Buddhism during the period, and it is sure to receive the undivided interest from scholars in time to come.

The sensational presentation here in facsimile of *dBa' bzhed* must be highly welcomed. Its publication is moreover a fitting and worthy token of the promising collaboration between research institutions in Lhasa and in Vienna; so also is the admirable attempt to translate this celebrated, yet at places arrantly concocted or indecipherable historical document. Doubtless, on more than one score the translation, the accompanying annotation and the discussions offered in this book will be subjected to careful improvement and to judicious modifications by fellow scholars in available time to come. The materials have not allowed the translator duo, Pasang Wangdu of TASS and Dr. H. Diemberger – bringing to fruition here the second major result of their long and rewarding collaboration – to proceed otherwise. As any well-versed historian, Oriental or Occidental, would readily admit if confronted with sources similar to the *dBa' bzhed* and its problematic constitution, the researcher is sometimes compelled to resort to guesswork or the inglorious art of question-begging, and, more than once, to draft rapid generalisations. One therefore need not fear falling foul of the truth, if one asserts that this text must rank high among the thorniest and most difficult to be found within the entire Tibetan historiographical tradition. For that reason alone the present publication is a major contribution to the study of Tibetan history.

Per K. Sørensen

INTRODUCTION

1.0. The tradition of the *dBa' bzhed*

1.1.1. What is the *dBa' bzhed*?

The *dBa' bzhed* is a manuscript of 31 folios, described in the title as the “*dBa'i bzhed pa*, the royal narrative (*bka' mchid kyi yi ge*) concerning the bringing of the Buddha’s doctrine to Tibet.” The short title may be rendered as “the perspective/testimony of the *dBa'*”. The *dBa' bzhed* corresponds to a great extent to the better-known *sBa bzhed*, which constitutes an important historical source concerning the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet, the construction of bSam yas monastery, and the religious and political debates taking place at that time. As such it has been the subject of extensive discussion among scholars dealing with related topics (e.g. TUCCI 1958; STEIN 1961b; MACDONALD 1971: 283, 288–289, 370–371; BLONDEAU 1980: 48–49; VAN DER KUIJP 1984: 149–184; SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989; DENWOOD 1990: 135–148; SØRENSEN 1994: 633–635; MARTIN 1997: 23).

The original core of the narrative is considered to go back to the accounts of *dBa'sBa/rBa gSal snang*, one of the protagonists of these events. The original work has not come to light, and only later versions have been preserved, along with some quotations by various Tibetan historiographers. The extant versions are the following:

a) The version published by STEIN in 1961, which is also the basis of the version published in India. Attributed to the 14th century, it is known as *sBa bzhed zhabs btags ma*, “the supplemented *sBa bzhed*”, because of the numerous additions it contains. In this book this version is referred to as *sBa bzhed A*.

b) The version published in Beijing in 1980, which is a composite of three variant texts edited by GONPO GYALTSEN. The works in question are: a manuscript preserved in the Beijing Mi rigs rig gnas pho brang, a manuscript kept in the Bod ljongs yig tshags las khung (Tibetan Archives) in Lhasa, and one manuscript belonging to Prof. Phuntshog Tshering, former president of the Tibetan Academy of Social Science. This last work is attributed to the 12th century (SØRENSEN 1994: 634) and will be referred to henceforth as *sBa bzhed B*.

c) The extensive quotations that feature in *dPa' bo gtsug lag's mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (293–406), based on a number of versions bearing different names: *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* seems to use “*rBa bzhed*” as a generic form of the title when the various versions correspond or do not

present significant differences, whereas discrepancies among the versions are pointed out and discussed by specifying the particular name of the version referred to. This selection of quotations by dPa' bo gtsug lag is referred to as *sBa bzhed C*.

Apart from numerous misspellings, one of the main problems in the whole tradition of this text arises from the numerous additions, modifications and updatings with which it has been supplemented over the course of time. This is a problem of which Tibetan historiographers were themselves aware. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (304) remarks that “some adulterated (*lhad ma*) *rBa bzhed* have it that one shoe of Hwa shang Mahāyāna was left behind....this is not mentioned in the original (*khungs ma*) *rBa bzhed*, but is a later addition”; concerning the confusion surrounding Sang shi, the same work states that this “stemmed from the proliferation of scribal errors (*yi ge ma dag pa 'phel ba*)”, and cites further examples of mistakes in writing (*yi ge nyams pa*). 'Gos Lo tsā ba feels obliged to say in *Deb ther sngon po* (64) that he is quoting from a “pure” (*gtsang ma*) *sBa bzhed*, and so forth.

As stated in *sBa bzhed A* (91), a number of versions emerged from such a centuries-long process: “There are many histories concerning the origin of the doctrine; some include criticisms, some give a personal point of view, some are very abridged, and some are counterfeit....” *sBa bzhed B* (82) says that there are three basic versions: an extensive, a concise and an intermediate version (*rgyas bsdus 'bring gsum*). The extensive version consists of the intermediate one with added interpolations. However, some of these interpolations specify that “this is according to the tradition of the most extensive version of the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed rgyas chos lugs*).”

Sometimes the various versions disagree on certain events. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* again (358–359): “According to the *rBa bzhed che ba* the *sad mi* were ordained after the celebrations for bSam yas, but according to the *rBa bzhed 'bring ba* the ordination took place after the construction of bSam yas but before the celebrations”.

Although it does not mention any such title as *dBa'/sBa'/rBa bzhed*, *Nyang chos 'byung* (410) cites among its sources a *bka' gtsigs kyi yi ge* of which three copies were made by the bTsan po and respectively preserved in Lhasa, taken to Khams and deposited in the royal treasury. A parallel indication concerning this text is mentioned in *sBa bzhed B* (82) and *sBa bzhed A* (65). The text is defined as the *bTsan po mnga' bdag gi bka' gtsigs kyi yi ge zhib mo* in *sBa bzhed B* (82), and *sBa bzhed A* (92) as *bKa' rtsis (gtsigs) kyi yi ge zhib mo*; because additions were made to the latter it was called *sBa bzhed zhabs btags ma*. The numerous verbatim passages shared by *Nyang chos 'byung* and the *dBa'/sBa'/rBa bzhed* confirm that one or more versions of this text were already circulating by the 12th century.

1.1.2. Limits of the present work

The relationship between the various versions is far from clear, and it is hoped that a forthcoming study by Prof. Per Sørensen will shed light on the tangle of interpretations concerning one of the most important sources for Tibetan historiography. The present work aims simply at providing access to a hitherto unknown version of this text through a facsimile reproduction and an annotated translation. Some of the salient issues raised by this text are discussed in the appendix, but a great deal remains open for further study by specialists.

1.2. The various forms of the name as reported by Tibetan historians

The name of the text itself presents considerable variation, the most common forms being *dBa' bzhed*, *sBa bzhed* and *rBa bzhed*.

1.2.1. *dBa' bzhed*

The form *dBa' bzhed*, which appears in the title of the text presented here, has parallels in a number of Tibetan historical works. This spelling apparently goes back to the famous ancient clan name which appears in inscriptions and Dunhuang documents as *dBa'/dBa's*. *Sa skya paṇḍita* refers to a *dPa' bzhed*, but this is apparently a simple misspelling for *dBa' bzhed*.¹ The form *dBa' bzhed* appears also in *Yar lung chos 'byung* (60, 62, 63). Although he uses the form *rBa bzhed* while quoting, the author of the *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, *dPa' bo gtsug lag*, adds the comment that “as far as the sources are concerned, these are: the *bKa' chems* of *Chos rgyal Srong btsan sgam po*.....the *bSam yas dkar chag chen mo* alias *rGyal rabs dBa' bzhed che 'bring*” (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 460).

In his discussion concerning this text *Tāranātha* affirms that: “*dBa' bzhed* and *rBa bzhed* differ slightly with respect to their written form but are essentially the same”.

1.2.2. *sBa bzhed*

sBa bzhed is the form is given in the published versions (cf. above), except for the passages quoted in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* as well as in numerous quotations of later historical works such as *Deb ther sngon po* (64) and *dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (52, 53, 54, 62, 63, 66).

¹ *Sa skya bka' 'hum*, vol. Na (sDe dge blockprint edition), folio 72b, reports a *rGya bzhed*, a *dPa' bzhed* and a *'Bang bzhed*; whereas vol. Tha, folio 50b, reports a *rGyal bzhed*, a *dBa' bzhed* and a *'Ba' bzhed*.

1.2.3. *rBa bzhed*

rBa bzhed appears in *Bu ston chos 'byung* (138) and *mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* (*passim*). In his discussion of the text Tāranātha mainly uses the form *rBa bzhed*, considered to be equivalent to *dBa' bzhed* (*Yid ches gsum ldan* 256). Here he also mentions that there is an original *rBa bzhed* (*rBa bzhed dngos*). However, as some additions were made by a *bKa' gdams pa bla ma* there are now the various *Bla bzhed*, *rGyal bzhed*, etc. These versions all refer to the same story except for the fact that some are extensive and some are more concise. Finally, Tāranātha reports of having heard of a '*Ba' bzhed* but suggests that this name might be a misspelling for *rBa bzhed*.

1.2.4. Other forms

The historiographical literature contains other forms such as *Bla bzhed*, *rGyal bzhed*, *bSam yas dkar chag chen mo*, *bSam yas bka' thang*, *bKa' gtsigs kyi yi ge* etc. (cf. SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989: 68; SØRENSEN 1994: 633–634; MARTIN 1997: 23)

1.3. *gSal snang*, the *dBa's* clan and the question of authorship

The unusual title – *dBa' bzhed* (but also *sBa/rBa bzhed*) – by which this text is referred to in other sources from at least the early 13th century raises a number of questions concerning the authorship, origin and significance of this text in general. Earlier editors of the extant versions of the text had already been prompted to comment on this. For example, the editor of the Beijing edition noted that the title of the text was derived from the fact that it represents the tradition of the perspective (*bzhed lugs*) of *sBa gSal snang*; according to others the name refers to *sBa Sang shi* – both are in fact protagonists of the narrative.

There are reasons for doubting whether *dBa' gSal snang* is the author. While *sBa/dBa'/rBa gSal snang* is usually considered to be the traditional author, the fact that he is always referred to in the third person, and the inclusion of an account of his death suggest that the text was compiled by somebody else. It is possible that the text is an anonymous compilation, based on a report by *gSal snang*, of a royal edict or a discourse by the king (implied by the very term *bka' mchid*); the compiler may have added material drawn from both his own experiences and from whatever doctrinal texts were available at that time (e.g. *Bhāvanākrama* of Kamalaśīla). This could have constituted the core material which has been transmitted and elaborated over time and could be alluded to in the subtitle “The royal narrative (*bka' mchid*) concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet”. Thus it seems more likely that the name *dBa'*

bzhed, rather than indicating the author, links this text directly to the ancient dBa's clan² clan to which gSal snang belonged. Taken in a broader sense, the title of the text explicitly announces a specific perspective on key events in early Tibetan history: that of one of the dominant clans, the dBa's.

The possibility that the *dBa' bzhed* reflects the perspective of the dBa's clan complies with the general character of Tibetan historiography as outlined by Michael Aris in his introduction to Dan Martin's *Tibetan Histories*, where the *sBa bzhed* is cited as the foremost historical text in the compilation. "These histories ... were written from an exclusively Buddhist viewpoint to celebrate the past glories of clans and principalities, religious schools, cults and monasteries and the Tibetan state itself. The histories met, and continue to meet, the urgent need for legitimising present conditions or aspirations through the vigorous assertions of authority. In their sheer multiplicity they reveal the intensely competitive and diversified world that gave them birth. By providing models to be emulated the histories impose highly selective views of the past on the present views that continue even today to shape a strong sense of local or national identity" (ARIS 1997: 9).

If this attitude characterises the compilation of histories, it also features to a certain extent in the re-presentation and redaction of pre-existing textual materials. Like empowering ritual objects, documents and texts could have been preciously kept and silently handed down for generations until a new context gave them a new relevance, creating the need to put the ancient pieces together into a coherent and topical form. In the case of such a patchwork, however, ideologically oriented elements mingled with a more faithful reproduction of the ancient original material, at times creating discrepancies and contradictions.

Historical and philological research has already shown that the dBa's clan significantly shaped the religious and political discourse of the dynastic period. The Old Tibetan Chronicle of Dunhuang – with which the *dBa' bzhed* shares a number of common features – reflects the perspective of the major ancient Tibetan clans as noted by Louis Ligeti, and further specified by Géza Uray: "... some time during its history the Old Tibetan Chronicle underwent some redaction which served the interests of the Myang and Dba's clans" (cf. URAY 1992: 136–139). The privileged position of the dBa's and the Myang can be also perceived from the inscription at the Zhwa'i lha khang which reports an order of Khri lDe srong btsan: "... Formerly, while the Myang and the dBa's were similar in having been loyal and having made contributions, yet,

² dBa's is the most common form for this clan-name in dynastic sources. In post-dynastic sources we find it only occasionally, as it has usually been transformed into dBa', dBas, sBa or rBa. The form dBa' used in the *dBa' bzhed* is the closest to the ancient form dBa's.

if compared with the corresponding case of the dBa's, the grace (shown) the Myang seems to have been small. Consequently, by my command, it is granted that with regard to decree for Myang a supplement shall be added" (LI and COBLIN 1987: 280). However, it is possible to detect not only the alliance between these two clans and their loyalty to the Tibetan royal house could be perceived – as noted by Uray, confirming his findings about the Old Tibetan Chronicle – but also an implicit potential rivalry regarding material privileges. And this is clearly reflected by the *dBa' bzhed* in the dispute between dBa' gSal snang and Myang Ting nge 'dzin concerning the material support to be given to the newly established monastic community.

The *dBa' bzhed* not only reflects the interests of the dBa' clans but allows us to trace a number of conflicting lines which are well known to have characterised the demise of the Tibetan empire and which were already present when Tibetan power was at its height at the foundation of the bSam yas vihāra. These included a partly political, partly economic dispute over the material support to the monastery.³ The transfer of political power and economic resources to the monastic community was in general one of the critical points which provoked the strong opposition of part of the clan-aristocracy to Buddhist institutions. Another of the issues was the doctrinal debate between followers of the Indian gradual approach to enlightenment and the Chinese school of instantaneous enlightenment. Though the existence of one specific debate (and the relevant outcome) is still disputed, there certainly was a doctrinal field of discussion and there are known to have been respective followers of the opposed parties. Furthermore beyond mere doctrinal aspects more general and political questions seemed to have been implied in the dispute.⁴

³ A specific dispute between dBa' gSal snang and Myang Ting nge 'dzin is described in the *dBa' bzhed* (which differs significantly from the *sBa bzhed*): dBa' gSal snang seemed more moderate and state-concerned in his request for support to the monastic community of bSam yas than Myang Ting nge 'dzin and this was the reason for their conflict. The great monk-minister Myang Ting nge 'dzin later obtained great favours from king Khri lDe srong btsan as we know from the Zhwa'i lha khang inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 280).

⁴ Demiéville suggests: "Qu'un parti sinophobe ait existé alors à la court du Tibet, et qu'il ait soutenu les Bouddhistes de l'Inde, moins suspects de compromissions politiques que leurs confrères Chinois, rien de plus vraisemblable..." (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 182) and "Wang si ... était en butte à la haine du parti tibétain xénophobe des généraux et de ministres hostiles à la Chine les mêmes sans doute qui monterent une cabale contre Mahāyāna..." (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 196). This remark is also consistent with Samten Karmay's discussion of Glang dar ma's policy which he describes as motivated by the king's opposition to the growing political power and economical privileges of the Buddhist institutions, rather than by sheer opposition to Buddhist faith. His concern that the burden imposed by Buddhist institutions could weaken the Tibetan state merged with his anti-Chinese attitude (KARMAY 1988a: 8–9).

Finally there was the opposition between Buddhists and followers of pre-Buddhist beliefs. In fact part of the clan aristocracy, for example the mChims clan, was strongly inclined to keep the ancestral cults as an important source of political strength for the Tibetan state.⁵

These conflicting elements became intertwined and shaped the alliances and the rivalries between clans and their relation to the royal house. The extent to which clan identity and kin-relations were still important in adopting a position – beside other principles more directly linked to the structure of the state⁶ – can be perceived in the *dBa' bzhed* itself: “Then [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang ... [made] the members of the dBa' clan (*pha tshan*) abandon the Bon religion and practise Buddhism. dBa' lHa gzig became the spiritual master (*dge bshes*) of his friend Myang Ros kong. He was thereby taught the doctrine and given the five rules. Ros kong, in his turn, became the spiritual master of his brothers (*phu nu*) and these became [followers of] the White [religion] (*i.e.* Buddhism)” (cf. folio 15a). This feature is also confirmed e.g. by the fact that dBa' gSal snang (Ye shes dbang po) was succeeded by dBa' dPal dbyangs as abbot of bSam yas and by the fact that we find three Cog ro abbots one after another in a Dunhuang document presenting the abbots of bSam yas (KARMAY 1988a: 78). Comparable patterns in the transmission of religious teachings – and relevant conflicts and alliances – can still be found in marginal Tibetan societies where clans still exist and shape social life (cf. e.g. MACDONALD 1980: 141ff.; DIEMBERGER 1997: 318).

Given the role that the dBa's clan played during the disintegration of the Tibetan empire and in the post-dynastic political struggles, we could consider the hypothesis that the *dBa' bzhed* itself could be an early post-dynastic edition of carefully preserved dynastic materials compiled for legitimising purposes. We may see allusions to this not only in the very title “*dBa' bzhed*” but also in the sentence concluding the main part of the narrative: “The Son of God, Khri Srong

⁵ An especially telling example is the speech by a minister of the mChims clan supporting the continuation of ancestral cults as the foundation for political stability and strength of the kingdom given in the final part of this text, the *zas gtad lo rgyus*.

⁶ The Tibetan state presented elements from the ancient kin-based clan confederation side-by-side with new administrative structures which were gradually superseding the clans. Terms like *zhang blon* (uncle-minister) are typical hybrid products of this situation. The coexistence of these contradicting principles featured the Tibetan empire throughout its history: “... a thousand district consisted of members of different clans and ... members of one clan were assigned to different thousand districts... This system of organization was introduced in order to save the stability of the state against the solidarity of both local interests and the Tibetan clans. However the system could not give protection against the danger coming from the great aristocratic clans. In view of the fact that the office of head of thousand-district had become hereditary within these clans and members of these clans used to hold the highest government offices, it proved insufficient. The rivalry of the great aristocratic clans, it is well known, led finally to the decline of the Tibetan empire” (URAY and UEBACH 1994: 915).

lde btsan, Ā tsā rya Bo dhi sa twa, dBa' Ye shes dbang po and 'Ba' Sang shi, these four, established the symbols of the Three Jewels and succeeded in introducing the doctrine which it had not been possible to establish during the five previous generations of kings". In fact, the protagonist of the narrative, a member of the dBa' clan, is here directly associated with the great Tibetan king and with the Indian spiritual master. Furthermore, several details in the text highlight the role of other less prominent figures of this same clan, from the mention of the first Buddhist monk dBa' Khri gzigs, to the appearance of dBa' Rad na in the context of the bSam yas celebrations, to the few additional lines devoted to religious deeds performed by minor members of the dBa's clan after the death of Khri Srong lde btsan.

The legitimising use of the textual material contained in the *dBa' bzhed* could reflect the struggle between the 'Bro and dBa's clans at the end of the Tibetan empire. It could also be related to the moment in which a rBa (dBa') monk, Blo gros dbang phyug, was invited by the rulers – descendants of the Yum brtan line – to take care of bSam yas at the beginning of the 11th century (cf. UEBACH 1987: 143, 149) after the 'Od srung line had lost its influence over it. This suggestion comes close to Per Sørensen's tentative attribution of the *dBa' bzhed* to the 11th century on the basis of its textual features (cf. Preface). It seems also to comply with a preliminary assessment of the paper and the handwriting of the manuscript which, according to Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, can be attributed to a period between the 10th and the 13th century – and more likely towards the earlier part of this period.

2.0. The *dBa' bzhed*

2.1. The manuscript

The manuscript, comprising 31 folios measuring 35.5 cm x 7.5 cm, is kept in Lhasa. The front page is occupied by the title: *dBa' bzhed bzhugs so*. The whole text is written in cursive (*dbu med*) script on yellowish Tibetan paper (*bod shog*). However there are significant differences in the calligraphy between the text of the *dBa' bzhed* proper and that of the glosses, additions and final chapter.

Brief passages of the final part of this text were published by Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs in *Bod kyi lo rgyus rags rim g.yu yi phreng ba*, Lhasa 1989, and are briefly discussed by SØRENSEN 1994: 602–603.

2.2. Title and colophon

The name *dBa' bzhed* appears both on the front page and at the end of the text where it is cited as the “*dBa'i bzhed pa*, the royal narrative (*bka' mchid kyi yi ge*) concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet.” The expression *dBa'i bzhed pa* could be rendered as “the perspective/testimony of the *dBa'*” concerning the events relevant to the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet. No further colophon is given.

bKa' mchid, translated here as royal narrative, in fact indicates a formal discourse by the king but does not imply any oath and seems appropriate to the narrative which follows.

In this respect the *dBa' bzhed* differs from the extant *sBa bzhed* versions and *Nyang chos 'byung*, which use the term *bka' gtsigs*, a word that usually designates an edict implying the taking of an oath (*sBa bzhed* B 82; *sBa bzhed* A 65, erroneously giving *bka' 'tshigs*; *Nyang chos 'byung* 410; not given in *sBa bzhed* C).⁷

2.3. The text

The text comprises three parts of different length: first, the main part, which contains what could be called the *dBa' bzhed* proper, written in one hand (folio 1b–25b3); secondly, a short paragraph on events concerning the daughter of *dBa' gSal snang/Ye shes dbang po* and the death of 'Ba' Sang shi (folio 25b4–26a2); a third part called *Zas gtad kyi lo rgyus*, the history of the *Zas gtad* [rituals] (folio 26a2–31b6) completes the text. The second and third parts seem to be written in a different hand.

2.3.1. The *dBa' bzhed* and its structure

As the conclusion of the text indicates, the *dBa' bzhed* is above all a narrative concerning the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, and presents features of a *chos 'byung*. Differing from the *sBa bzhed*, the *dBa' bzhed* is organised according to the Tibetan kings who are considered to have had relations to Buddhism: *IHa tho do re snyan btsan*, *Khri Srong btsan* [*sgam po*], 'Dus srong mang po rje rlung nam, *Khri lDe gtsug brtan*, *Khri Srong lde btsan* (who is particularly prominent), and *Khri gTsong lde btsan*, who appears in a concluding sentence. The whole narrative therefore seems to have been placed, at least to some extent, within the framework of a *rgyal rabs*. Perhaps one or more versions of this text that may have been at the disposal of *dPa' bo gtsug lag* had this kind of structure, something that would explain why he generally mentions this historical source as *rGyal rabs dBa' bzhed che 'bring* (*mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* 460).

⁷ Cf. also note 1 of the translation.

As in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, the main part of the text is dedicated to the events that took place under Khri Srong lde btsan: obstacles created by an evil anti-Buddhist minister; the deeds of dBa' gSal snang; the first invitation of Śāntarakṣita; the trip to China by dBa' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi in search for the doctrine; the Bon po-Buddhist debate; the second invitation of Śāntarakṣita; the invitation of Padmasambhava, who has to leave the country before the completion of his task; the construction of bSam yas; the bSam yas doctrinal debate; translations of scriptures; death of dBa' gSal snang/Ye shes dbang po; the sorrow and regrets of the old king (cf. 3.0. Synopsis). The biographical accounts concerning Khri Srong lde btsan and dBa' gSal snang intertwine and supply the main thread of the narrative. Numerous corresponding verbatim passages as well as consistent differences in the narrative raise many questions on the relation between *sBa bzhed* and *dBa' bzhed*: does the *dBa' bzhed* predate the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, and therefore represent an earlier stage in the development of this textual tradition? Are *dBa' bzhed* and *sBa bzhed* two parallel developments from a common source? Or is the *dBa' bzhed* a later attempt at organizing the chaotic material of the *sBa bzhed* into a more rigorous and concise framework? The third solution seems to be the least probable one, but only a detailed study of the whole tradition will be able to provide a definitive answer.

2.3.2. The addition

The additional part which follows the *dBa' bzhed* proper consists of four sentences which narrate certain events concerning the daughter of dBa' gSal snang/Ye shes dbang po, who established some religious colleges and *stūpa*, as well as pious deeds performed by members of the dBa' clan at the time of Khri lde srong btsan; the death of 'Ba' Sang shi is also mentioned.

2.3.3. The chapter on the *Zas gtad*

This chapter, bearing the title “history of the *Zas gtad*”, comprises six folios of the manuscript. The title, given only at the end of the text, defines it as a discourse on the reasons why Buddhist *Zas gtad* rituals for funerals were introduced to replace the Bon po rituals. The whole text consists mainly of the discussion, concerning the funeral of Khri Srong lde btsan, between ministers pleading for Bon po cults and Buddhist representatives. Two main speeches are reported: one by minister mChims bTsan bzher legs gzig and one by Vairocana. The king presiding over the debate is the young Mu ne btsan po.

The fact that the *dBa' bzhed* proper is combined with the *Zas gtad* text may suggest the intention of associating this latter with the story of the ritual food distribution called *Tshe*, which is reported in the *dBa' bzhed* to have been introduced by the Chinese consort of Srong btsan sgam po as part of Buddhist funerary rituals. Together these two texts could have been under-

stood to legitimise the *Zas gtad* ritual, which is still practised and can be found, for example, in rNying ma pa ritual texts of the Byang gter tradition.

2.4. Interpolations, corrections and glosses

The numerous interpolations, corrections and glosses are sometimes unclear and their origin is somewhat difficult to ascertain. Sometimes they are real additions and explanations which seem to be juxtaposed to the original text, and sometimes they are corrections which may have been made by the copyist after realizing a mistake in his own work.

In the translation the interpolations are given in smaller characters than the main text and are therefore easily recognisable.

2.5. The problem of dating

No date of compilation is mentioned in the text. The words “this is the end”, which seal the sorrowful atmosphere after the death of Ye shes dbang po, with the old king foretelling the end of his own life and regretting not having translated the scriptures from China, mark the boundary of the central core of the narration. Another ending occurs shortly afterwards following the passage which describes the deeds of Khri lDe gtsug btsan (this seems to fit with the *rgyal rabs* framework of the first part of the text). No later historical events or characters are mentioned in this text. However the fact that the Great Revision is attributed to Khri gTsong lde btsan seems to be consistent with early post-dynastic historiographical tradition (e.g. *Nyang chos 'byung*) rather than with the findings of present historical research, which attribute it to Khri lDe srong btsan. In any case a number of features seem to indicate the antiquity of the text: it has preserved, to a significant extent, both terminology and writing forms that are typical of the dynastic sources, while the accounts of people, places and events are largely consistent with what we know from historical research based on dynastic sources. The very style of the text seems to reflect a transitional stage between archaic dynastic Tibetan (characteristic of Dunhuang material) and early classical/canonical Tibetan. Only a few significant points will be mentioned briefly; further remarks can be found in the footnotes, but there are many more aspects that deserve further study.

2.5.1. Ancient terminology

– *bkyon phab* is an archaic form often used in inscriptions and Dunhuang documents to denote the act of punishing or condemning, particularly with regard to people being executed by royal

order; the case of ministers Lang and 'Bal, whose condemnation in 755 features in the Zhol inscription, is an example. This term appears in the *dBa' bzhed* (cf. folio 4a, note 65) with the same meaning and the same orthography, whereas in the *sBa bzhed* versions and later sources it was transformed into the more modern *skyon phab* (*sBa bzhed* B 18; *sBa bzhed* A 8, 15; *sBa bzhed* C 313).

– *rtsis mgo* is an ancient term given in the *dBa' bzhed* in relation to the good law promulgated by Khri Srong btsan [sgam po] (cf. folio 2b, note 33). In the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 13, 31), in the entry for the year 654 the *rtsis mgo* is mentioned as a census, while in the entry for 690 (BACOT et. al. 1940: 17, 37) it appears to signify accounts. It seems therefore to indicate a general system of accounting and perhaps the standardization of the relevant categories.

– *dar ma* is a term indicating Buddhist scriptures (Dharma) in dynastic sources such as Dunhuang documents and inscriptions (cf. also STEIN 1983: 182–183). This particular form appears in Dunhuang documents (e.g. ms I.O. 370.5, cf. RICHARDSON 1977 and STEIN 1986: 173–174) and inscriptions (e.g. Khrom chen inscription, cf. PA TSHAB PA SANGS DBANG 'DUS 1997). In contrast to the *sBa bzhed* versions that use the form *dharmā* (*sBa bzhed* B 78, 79; *sBa bzhed* C 400), the *dBa' bzhed* has *dar ma* to denote Buddhist scriptures on several occasions (cf. folios 8a, 25a, note 106). The modern Tibetan word *dar ma* means youth.

– *'khor ba'i rkyen dang 'du ba'i tshogs te byung ba'i chos* (18b, gloss) is an expression signifying the elements of existence that are dependent upon the conditions of *samsāra*. This expression has a parallel passage in the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan reported in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (375): *rkyen dang 'du ba tshogs ste byung ba'i yan lag bcu gnyis*, which seems to be an ancient form for defining the twelvefold nexus of interdependent origination (*rten 'brel yan lag bcu gnyis, dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda*).

– *Tshe spong za, 'Bro za, Pho yong za*, etc.: the final syllable of the name of female consorts is always given in the *dBa' bzhed* as *-za*, as in the case of Dunhuang documents (e.g. Dunhuang Chronicle). The *sBa bzhed* versions give the form *bza'*, which is the standard modern orthography. While quoting from *bka' gtshigs kyi yi ge, Nyang chos 'byung* (cf. MEISEZAHN facsimile) reports the form *-za*, whereas in other parts the more modern form *bza'* is used.

Finally, the name of kings (Khri Srong btsan, Khri lDe srong btsan, Khri gTsug lde btsan), clans (particularly *dBa'* and *'Bro*) and titles (*zhang blon, snam phyi ba, rtsis pa chen po, zha 'bring nang pa, gzims mal ba, thugs gnyen* etc.) are generally given in forms which are identical or similar to what is known from dynastic sources.

2.5.2. Historical correspondences with dynastic sources

– Gling gi Khri rtse is mentioned by the *dBa' bzhed* as well as by the *sKar chung* inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318) as having been constructed by Khri 'Dus srong. The Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 18–19) report that this king was in the locality called Khri rtse (in the Gling area, eastern Tibet) in the years 701 and 702; in the year 703 he was still in the Gling area and in the following year he died in battle in Mywa. Mywa (later called 'Jang yul) is located in present-day Yunnan province. It is immediately to the south of Gling, and appears as Nanzhao in Tang dynasty Chinese sources. *Nyang chos 'byung* (270, 271) and *lDe'u chos 'byung* (300) erroneously consider the Khri rtse temple to be one of the five established by Khri lDe gtsug btsan, a mistake that is repeated in later sources (e.g. *Bu ston chos 'byung* 183). To the best of our knowledge no other source attributes this temple to Khri 'Dus srong.

– Khri Srong lde btsan and his succession to the throne: the *dBa' bzhed* reports that Khri Srong lde btsan came to power when he was thirteen, after the death of his father in 754/755, and that immediately afterwards a number of ministers were executed. As the traditional age for ascending the throne was thirteen, this fact, as well as the turmoil following the death of Khri gTsong lde btsan, explain the discrepancy of about one year between our text and the Dunhuang Annals, according to which Khri Srong lde btsan was enthroned in 756. In the *dBa' bzhed* there is no mention of the legendary assumption of power by Khri Srong lde btsan during his childhood, nor of the story that Gyim shang Kong co was the true mother of Khri Srong lde btsan, which are given in the *sBa bzhed* versions.

2.5.3. Lack of legendary material which is not mentioned in dynastic and early post-dynastic sources

On the whole the *dBa' bzhed* presents a simple linear narrative with some ancient mythological elements, which seem to be largely rooted in the late dynastic period or, at the latest, in the immediate post-dynastic period (e.g. the doctrine falling from heaven during the reign of lHa tho tho ri, the account concerning the Khotanese monks and Srong btsan sgam po appearing as an emanation of Avalokiteśvara etc.). A particularly remarkable episode is the treatment of Padmasambhava, who is shorn of his familiar glamour: after subduing some local deities and performing a few water-miracles he is sent back by the king himself because he is suspected of threatening the political status quo. He leaves Tibet without giving special teachings to the king and without concealing any texts, and he does not participate in the construction and consecration of bSam yas. This peculiar narration, consistent in several details with the scanty mention of Padmasambhava in dynastic sources (PT 44), is very different from what we read in

later works; it seems to indicate that this text must have preceded the great mythographical tradition and is likely to have constituted one of the bases from which this tradition developed (cf. BLONDEAU 1980). The portrait of Padmasambhava as mainly concerned with water magic and sheer water technology (for example, when he suggests training rivers and lakes with gabions so that these can be crossed), may even hint at a possible attempt to import into Tibet the sophisticated irrigation systems used in his land of origin. In fact both in northern Pakistan and in further western regions there had been a long tradition of extremely advanced irrigation technology which allowed a very efficient use of springs and even made it possible to cross great expanses of desert with covered channels. Given the political importance of control over water resources, it is not surprising that the Tibetan political leadership felt more threatened than pleased. Padmasambhava's trip was therefore quite unsuccessful. The *dBa' bzhed*'s account both offers a hint in favour of his historicity while also shedding light on the possible reason why ancient sources are so silent about him.

3.0. Synopsis of the *dBa' bzhed*

Title: *dBa' bzhed* (folio 1a)

Title: the royal narrative concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet; sentence concerning the introduction of the doctrine to Tibet under lHa tho do re snyan btsan, Khri Srong btsan, Khri Srong lde btsan, Khri gTsug lde btsan (folio 1b1–1b3)

Reign of lHa tho do re snyan btsan

The very begin of the doctrine and the story of the 'gNyang po gSang ba' (folio 1b3–1b5).

Reign of Khri Srong btsan [sgam po]

After Khri Srong btsan's marriage to Khri btsun, Ra sa Pe har gling and 42 temples for subduing the land were constructed. Tho mi sam bho ta was sent to India and the good law proclaimed. 'Gar (mGar) sTong btsan was sent to China in order to invite Mum shang Ong co. The statue of Śākyamuni was brought to Ra mo che. The story of the two Khotanese monks who came to Tibet in order to see the emanation of Avalokiteśvara follows (folio 1b5–4a2).

Reign of 'Du srong mang po rje rlung nam

Foundation of Gling gi Khri rtse (folio 4a2).

Reign of Khri lDe gtsug brtan

The king took Gyim shang Ong co as his wife and established five temples. Gyim shang Ong co worshipped the statue of her aunt Weng chen Ong co (folio 4a2–4a5).

Reign of Khri Srong lde btsan at its dawn, Buddhism persecuted by Ma zham khrom pa skyes

Khri Srong lde btsan ascended the throne at the age of thirteen and immediately Ma zham khrom pa skyes condemned some ministers and prohibited the practice of Buddhism. The temples of Ra sa 'Khar (mkhar) brag and Brag dmar 'Gran (mgrin) bzang were destroyed, other temples were transformed into slaughterhouses. One Chinese *hwa shang* who used to reside in Ra mo che was sent back to China, but the fact that he left one of his boots behind was interpreted as a prophetic sign for the return of the Buddhist doctrine to Tibet. The unsuccessful attempt at bringing the Buddha statue back to China follows. After numerous bad omens Ma zham khrom pa skyes was buried alive as a ransom (*sku glud*). Finally, the statue of Buddha was sent to Mang yul (folio 4a5–5a2).

The first contacts of dBa' gSal snang with the Buddhist doctrine and Śāntarakṣita

dBa' gSal snang lost two children at the same time, and invited a *hwa shang* to perform Buddhist funerary rituals in secret. The boy was reborn in the realm of the gods, while the girl was reborn one year later as a boy. A pearl, painted red and placed in the mouth of the dead girl, was found in the mouth of the new-born boy. The discovery provided the evidence that this was a case of rebirth. dBa' gSal snang, who was very interested in the Buddhist doctrine, asked the king to send him in search for it. He was appointed as governor of Mang yul. Though Buddhism was still prohibited in Central Tibet, he took the opportunity of going to Nepal and worshipping holy Buddhist places. Śāntarakṣita was invited to Mang yul and was asked to become the spiritual master; he tested dBa' gSal snang by asking for substantial material support, which he obtained and then gave back. He then explained karmic links and prophesied the future construction of bSam yas. Then he returned to Nepal (folio 5a2–6a4).

The return of dBa' gSal snang to Central Tibet

dBa' gSal snang met the king informally in Slungs tshugs palace and gave him a detailed report concerning Buddhism and Śāntarakṣita. The king was worried about the possible reaction of the ministers and advised dBa' gSal snang to retreat to his home village while he tried his best to convince the ministers (folio 6a4–6b2).

A meeting between the king and his ministers; the invitation of Śāntarakṣita

Zhang Nya bzang spoke in favour of continuing the practice of Buddhism that had already been introduced in earlier generations, but had been interrupted owing to the deeds of wicked ministers. The king agreed and invited the ministers to reflect accordingly. A further meeting took place and the king proclaimed his intention of continuing the practice of the doctrine. He would let the statue of the Buddha be brought back to Central Tibet. dBA' gsal snang was urgently summoned and solicited for his opinion on who might be the best representative of Buddhism. He proposed Śāntarakṣita, and was accordingly ordered by the king to proceed to Nepal in order to invite him. Śāntarakṣita accepted the invitation and travelled from Nepal to Mang yul (folio 6b2–7a5).

Śāntarakṣita's voyage to Tibet and audience with the king

Śāntarakṣita was invited to proceed to Central Tibet, where he resided in Ra sa Pe har gling, with Lang 'gro sNang ra acting as his attendant. The king, suspecting the possible presence of black magic in the religion taught by the master, sent three ministers to investigate. In order to carry out their task they engaged a translator, the Kashmiri Ananda. For two months they conducted their enquiries in Pe har gling and finally gave a positive report. A meeting between the king and Śāntarakṣita was accordingly held (folio 7a5–8a5).

The king acquired faith in Buddhism but due to calamities Śāntarakṣita was sent back

Thanks to Ananda's translations, the principles of the Buddhist doctrine were taught to the king and he acquired great faith. Meanwhile a number of calamities occurred: the 'Phang thang palace was flooded and the castle of lHa sa was struck by a thunderbolt; there was a great famine and both people and cattle were affected by epidemics. The uncle-ministers (*zhang blon*) interpreted the calamities as a consequence of the king's adoption of the Buddhist religion. The king consequently had to ask Śāntarakṣita to return to Nepal and to wait for a more propitious moment. Śāntarakṣita left for Nepal accompanied by Lang 'gro sNang ra and dBA' gSal snang (folio 8a5–8b6).

dBA' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi travelled to China

After returning to Central Tibet dBA' gSal snang was sent to China, together with 'Ba' Sang shi and sBrang gTsang bzher, in order to look for the doctrine. At that time Gyim Hwa shang and an astrologer prophesied that two messengers who were emanations of *bodhisattva* would arrive, and they drew portraits of them for purposes of identification. The emperor was

informed, and he gave instructions that anyone matching the description was to be given a magnificent welcome. As soon as dBa' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi arrived in the vicinity of Bum sangs they were recognised and taken to the *dbang po* of Bum sangs. On the way out of his palace they met Gyim Hwa shang. He prostrated to Sang shi and spoke prophetically to him concerning the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet: when the Tibetan king had reached the proper age he should be taught the *Las rnam par 'byed pa*, then the *Sa lu ljang pa* and finally the *rDo rje gcod pa*. After the bTsan po had acquired faith in Buddhism Śāntarakṣita should be invited. Then dBa' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi proceeded with the delegation to Chang an, where they were welcomed by the emperor. gSal snang requested the emperor to be introduced to a *hwa shang* who could give proper religious instructions and Gyim hwa shang was immediately summoned. Before leaving for Tibet they were offered magnificent presents by the emperor (folio 8b6–10b6).

Śāntarakṣita's second visit to Tibet, with Padmasambhava

Meanwhile the king had managed to convince the ministers that the doctrine was to be practised and dBa' gSal snang, who had just come back from China, was sent to Mang yul to invite Śāntarakṣita again. This time Śāntarakṣita came accompanied by Padmasambhava and a Nepalese architect-geomancer. On the way Padmasambhava passed via sNye mo to sNam, where he tamed a place of boiling water. Further on, in Gal ta la he subdued a white *nāga*. At sNying drung he confronted and subdued Thang la and obtained control over the whole area (folio 10b6–11b1).

Padmasambhava's subjugation of deities hostile to Buddhism

Śāntarakṣita introduced both Padmasambhava and the Nepalese architect to the king: at the time of Buddha there was no god or *nāga* which had not been tamed and bound by oath. However Tibet was not under such control and there was nobody with a greater power than Padmasambhava for coping with the situation. He could perform the mirror-divination and identify the spirits that were causing the calamities. If Buddhism was to be introduced into Tibet, the great master of *mantra* could be very useful. In fact wherever Buddhism was first established it had to cope with the opposition of non-Buddhist traditions. Debate was a means for solving such conflicts; if a debate was to take place Padmasambhava would have competed in performing miracles, and Śāntarakṣita in philosophical reasoning. For the construction of the monastery there was nobody better than the Nepalese architect-geomancer. Upon the agreement of the king Padmasambhava performed a mirror-divination in the presence of *gZim mal ba nang chen* Seng mgo lHa lung 'tsho bzher gnyan legs. He pronounced the name of the gods and *nāga* who

had caused the calamities and of all deities in general. After they were summoned and given human bodies they were taught the Buddhist doctrine of cause and effect and bound by oath. According to the instructions of Padmasambhava such a ritual would have to be repeated twice again (folio 11b1–12b3).

Despite his miracles Padmasambhava was sent back by king and ministers

Padmasambhava performed further miracles but did not win general approval: he provided auspicious water for washing the head of the king but this was disapproved by the ministers, who derided it as “mad Mon-water”; he proposed and carried out numerous miracles concerning water: the transformation of the sandy plains of Ngam shod into meadows, the appearance of springs in Dra (Gra), Dol, gZhung and sTag, the creation of many fields and the training of rivers and lakes, the transformation of the lower areas of mTsho mo mgur and Bla ba tshal into woods, and causing water to spurt forth in the arid land of Klu sdings. The ministers perceived Padmasambhava’s activities as a political threat and put a stop to them. In response to mounting political pressure the king, who was himself growing suspicious, expressed his gratitude to the master and politely requested him to return to his own land. Padmasambhava commented bitterly on the position of the king and departed before completing his ritual task (folio 12b3–13b6).

An assassination attempt on Padmasambhava

Frightened by the powers of Padmasambhava, the ministers decided to send a party of killers to eliminate him. Thanks to his prescience and magical skills, however, Padmasambhava immobilised his would-be assassins at the gorge where the gang was waiting for him. Before leaving Tibet, he told his attendants that the completion of his task would have brought long life to the king and prosperity to the country, and would have laid a stable foundation for the practice of Buddhism. He prophesied sadly that the coming disputes would not be between Buddhists and non-Buddhists, but among followers of different Buddhist approaches. Released from his enchantment, the killer who had been sent to murder Padmasambhava went back and reported the event to the king, who felt great sorrow (folio 13b6–14a6).

The Buddhist-Bon po debate

A religious assembly was held at Brag dmar mTsho mo'i gur with dBA' gSal snang being appointed the chief representatives of the doctrine. Later on in the pig year a Buddhist-Bon po debate took place at Zus phug sKyang (rKyang) bu tshal. The competition concerned only

philosophical reasoning and the Buddhists emerged victorious. The only concrete consequence was that Bon po funerals were considered unsuitable (folio 14a6–14b5).

Preparations for the construction of bSam yas and ordination of the first monk

In the hare year before starting the construction of bSam yas, divinatory rituals concerning the land were performed by Śāntarakṣita and the Nepalese expert; the prognosis was encouraging. Even the term “*dge slong*” was previously unknown in Tibet, and when dBa’ lHa btsan took vows he became the first fully-ordained monk. The statue of the Buddha was transferred to Ra mo che again. dBa’ gSal snang established the Glag temple in his village and all members of the dBa’ clan renounced Bon and became Buddhists. dBa’ lHa gzigs also transmitted the doctrine to members of the Myang clan (folio 14b5–15a3).

The beginning of the construction of bSam yas

In the same hare year the construction of bSam yas was started and Śāntarakṣita, the king, ’Ba’ Sang shi and sNyer stag btsan ldong gzigs examined the land from the top of ’Kas (Has) po ri. Geomantic rituals were performed and the omens were auspicious. First the A rya pa lo gling was established and, by using good-looking Tibetan men and women as models, the relevant statues were made by rGyal bu Tshal can. Minor temples and *stūpa* were erected. The central pillar of one of the *stūpa* was miraculously carried and installed by the gods, something that was revealed in a dream of the Nepalese architect (folio 15a3–17a5).

Conclusion of the construction of bSam yas; consecration, royal edict, and training of translators

Queens and ministers established minor temples and the main temple was constructed. Before the consecration, dBa’ gSal snang took his vows and was given the name Ye shes dbang po. Many sons and nephews of uncle-ministers were trained in the language of India. Some of these were successful and translated numerous texts. Among them was the son of dBa’ rMa gzigs, dBa’ Rad na, who was later ordained as a monk by Śāntarakṣita. In the sheep year the great celebrations took place; one hundred people including Jo mo gcen Khri rgyal and Sru bTsan mo rgyal took their vows, with dBa’ Rad na acting as mKhan po. A royal edict was promulgated. All ministers swore an oath that thenceforth they would protect the Buddhist doctrine. An inscribed pillar was erected. The monks were to be granted food and clothing (folio 17a5–17b6).

Request for material support for the monastic community; due to a disagreement Ye shes dbang po/dBa' gSal snang went into retreat in lHo brag

dBa' gSal snang /Ye shes dbang po was appointed as the chief representative of Buddhism. He was ranked higher than the uncle-ministers and the religious assembly was considered to be higher than the restricted assembly of the ministers. Ye shes dbang po requested the king to give two hundred subject-households to each temple and three subject-households to each monk in order to provide for their maintenance. The request was interrupted by Myang Ting nge 'dzin, who expressed his deep disappointment with it. Upset by this clash, Ye shes dbang po left for lHo brag, and dBa' dPal dbyangs was appointed chief representative of Buddhism in his place (folio 17b6–18b5).

Hwa shang Mahāyāna and the doctrinal disputes between Ton mun pa and Tsen men pa

The Chinese Hwa shang Mahāyāna arrived from Dunhuang in Central Tibet and obtained numerous followers. Disputes arose between the followers of the Buddhist tradition preached by Śāntarakṣita and that of Hwa shang Mahāyāna. The king is said to have sought various solutions to the dispute. However, the disappointed followers of Hwa shang Mahāyāna expressed their protests with acts of self-mortification, and threatened to kill their opponents and commit collective suicide. The helpless king sent a messenger to summon Ye shes dbang po from lHo brag in order to seek his advice. Ye shes dbang po reported Śāntarakṣita's prophecy that when disputes among Buddhists occurred his disciple Kamalaśīla should be invited. In preparation for the great debate the followers of Hwa shang Mahāyāna, the Ton mun pa, withdrew into the temple called bSam gtan gling in order to study the doctrine, and Ye shes dbang po explained the theory of Śāntarakṣita and the Tsen men pa to the king (folio 18b5–19b6).

The debate

As soon as Kamalaśīla arrived, the debate was held at Byang chub gling. The king was seated in the centre, with Hwa shang Mahāyāna and his followers to his right, and Kamalaśīla and a few *dge slong* such as dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na to his left. The king introduced the debate, presenting the background to the dispute and expressing the wish that the meeting would settle the conflict. The winner should receive a garland of flowers, but should display no arrogance (folio 19b6–20b1).

Hwa shang argued the case for a quietism in which liberation is achieved by refraining from all action and thought (folio 20b1–20b6).

Kamalaśīla refuted the argument (folio 20b6–22a5).

After the king had invited the other participants of each party to speak, Sang shi gave a speech concerning the Six Perfections and criticised the splitting of the Buddhist traditions. Despite different approaches the fundamental points must correspond (22a5–22b6).

dPal dbyangs gave a discourse on the Ten Stages (*bhūmi*). The Ton mun pa admitted their defeat (folio 22b6–24b2).

The king proclaimed the victory of the Tsen men pa and promoted the translation of scriptures

The king declared that the point of view of Nāgārjuna and the “gradualist” method should be followed. The consequence of this decision was that both translating and religious training were enhanced. Sūtra and Abhidharma were completely translated whereas a selective translation of the tantra took place. Buddhism, which could not be established in Tibet under earlier rulers, might now be successfully introduced to Tibet. The protagonists were Khri Srong lde btsan, Śāntarakṣita, dBa’ Ye shes dbang po and ’Ba’ Sang shi (folio 24b2–25a3).

Death of Ye shes dbang po/dBa’ gSal snang

Before his death, Ye shes dbang po was welcomed by non-human beings and was offered divine food. From then on he took spiritual concentration instead of common food, and at last passed away. The king sorrowfully commented on the death of the spiritual master and considered it an omen of his own mortality. Finally, he regretted that Chinese texts had not been translated in their entirety: the scriptures from India were missing several texts because of a fire in Nālandā. This is the end (25a3–25b1).

Reign of Khri gTsong lde btsan

The king invited numerous Indian scholars for translating what had not yet been translated, promoted the Great Revision and completed the construction of the 108 temples. Conclusion of the *dBa’i bzhed pa* on how the doctrine of the Buddha came to Tibet. Revised copy (25b1–25b3).

TRANSLATION

(1b) The royal narrative (*bka' mchid*)¹ concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet.

During the reign of bTsan po lHa tho do re snyan btsan,² the holy doctrine first appeared (*dbu brnyes*) in Tibet. During the reign of bTsan po Khri Srong btsan,³ the practice of the doctrine was introduced (*srol gtod*). During the reign of Khri Srong lde btsan,⁴ [the doctrine] spread and prospered (*dar shing rgyas pa*). During the reign of bTsan po Khri gTsong lde btsan

¹ *bka' mchid*, translated here as royal narrative, in fact indicates a formal discourse by the king but does not imply any oath and seems appropriate to the account which follows. The term *bka' gtsigs*, used by the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 82; *sBa bzhed* A 65 erroneously giving *bka' 'tshigs*; not given in *sBa bzhed* C) and *Nyang chos 'byung* (410), usually indicates a royal edict implying the formal taking of oath, like the edicts of Khri Srong lde btsan and Khri lDe srong btsan reported in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* where they are referred to by using the term *bka' gtsigs* as well as *gtsigs kyi yi ge* (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 378, 409). Here the term *bKa' mchid kyi yi ge* instead defines the more extensive explanation on the diffusion of the doctrine accompanying the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan. The relevant definition: *Sangs rgyas kyi chos bod yul du | snga phyir ji ltar byung ba'i bka' mchid kyi yi ge gcig kyang zla la bzhag go* (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 372) comes very close to that given at the very beginning of the *dBa' bzhed*: *Sangs rgyas kyi chos bod khams su ji ltar byung ba'i bka' mchid kyi yi ge*. Also the genre of the narration seems to present some correspondence, in fact the *bKa' mchid kyi yi ge* of Khri Srong lde btsan is considered some sort of early *chos 'byung* or *lo rgyus* (cf. RICHARDSON 1980: 62–73, STEIN 1986: 172; SØRENSEN 1994: 6). This was apparently one of the common documents accompanying edicts and inscriptions and giving their rationale (cf. also DENWOOD 1990: 143).

² King lHa tho do re snyan btsan corresponds to king lHa tho do snya brtsan mentioned in the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 82) as the 27th (in later sources as the 28th) Tibetan king. According to the *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (172) this king lived 150 years before Srong btsan sgam po, and therefore probably around the fifth century. The name of this king – mentioned in most historical accounts reported by Tibetan texts – is written in forms which differ slightly from one another. He is traditionally associated with the mythical account concerning the very first appearance of Buddhism in Tibet (cf. nn. 7, 8).

³ Khri Srong btsan (617?–649/650) was the Tibetan king who became famous as Srong btsan sgam po. Khri Srong brtsan was his original name and he appears as such in the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 13, 29) and in records such as the sKar chung inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318, 325). Both in the Dunhuang Chronicle and later in this text there is a passage about how the name sGam po was attributed to him because of the profound and wise nature of his character, cf. n. 35.

⁴ Khri Srong lde btsan (742–797/802?) firmly established Buddhism in Tibet, and the *dBa' bzhed* is mainly dedicated to events taking place under his reign. On the date of his death given by this text see n. 359.

Ral pa can,⁵ [the doctrine] was thoroughly systematised (*shin tu gtan la phab*) by the Great Revision (*sKad gсар bcad*).⁶

As far as the first appearance of the holy doctrine at the time of lHa tho do re snyan btsan is concerned, the six syllables of India – [*Om*] *ma ni pad me [hum]*⁷ – written in gold [and placed] in a casket (*sgrom bu*)⁸ fell from heaven in front of the king (*mnga' bdag*). Without having realised whether this was Buddhist or Bon, this was named 'Secret gNyan po' (gNyan po gsang ba) and *g.yu mngon* – called *rngo*, this is a kind of barley – and *gser skyems*⁹ were offered to it.

⁵ Khri gTsug lde btsan (r. 815–838/841) later became famous for his devotion to Buddhism under the name of Ral pa can, meaning “having long hair”. A legendary account of unclear origins says that he let monks be seated on the silken strips he had fastened to his hair in sign of extreme respect (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 413). The name Ral pa can which was added here in small characters as a kind of gloss does not appear in the historical sources which go back to the time of the kingdom, but occurs in early post-dynastic sources such as *Nyang chos 'byung* (416).

⁶ The *sKad gсар bcad*, the standardization of the criteria and the terminology of the translations by the compilation of the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, is an undertaking which according to post-dynastic historiography is usually attributed to the reign of Khri gTsug lde btsan (Ral pa can). Historical research on the matter suggests that it goes back to his predecessor Khri lDe srong btsan (cf. TUCCI 1950: 14–15; SIMONSSON 1957: 210–233; SNELLGROVE 1987: 441–442; URAY 1989: 3–21). In any case the whole process of creating and applying standards to the translation activity was a longer undertaking which probably started under Khri Srong lde btsan.

⁷ On this popular formula mentioned in the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, the text “fallen from heaven” – which appears in an early translation in the *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 114 (LALOU 1953: 322) – see REGAMEY 1971: 417; IMAEDA 1979: 71–76. According to the study of Imaeda, though the popular use of this formula started in the 11th century, Dunhuang documents give some evidence of the existence of comparable formulas as early as dynastic times.

⁸ The idea that a Buddhist doctrinal text fell from the sky is mentioned briefly in a fragment reported by a Dunhuang document discussed by RICHARDSON (1977: 62–73) and STEIN (1986: 173–174), containing the sentence “*gnam babs kyi dar ma ham po gchig go*”. This is however not more than a hint that the popular mythological account given in later sources could be rooted in beliefs that were already present during the final part of the kingdom. According to this popular mythical account a number of items fell from the sky. The kind and number of these differ in the sources reporting this event. *Nyang chos 'byung* (164) mentions *Rin po che Za ma tog* and *mudrā phyag rgya*; *lDe'u chos 'byung* (249) mentions a *sPang skong phyag rgya* written in gold and a turquoise *stūpa*; *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (166–167) gives a more detailed account mentioning the *sPang skong phyag rgya*, *mDo sde Za ma tog*, a gold *stūpa*, a *mudrā phyag rgya* and a *cintāmaṇi* drinking-bowl. This latter is described as bearing an image of the eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara composed of jewels. *Mudrā phyag rgya* is a precious stone, measuring one cubit and endowed with the six syllables, spontaneously originated. For an overview see STEIN 1986: 188–190.

⁹ *g.Yu mngon* (*sngon*) and *gser skyems* are among the libation rituals performed for the “Secret gNyan po”. These are mentioned by other historical sources as well. The unclear term *g.yu mngon* is explained by the gloss as an offering of barley. It could indicate the barley beer by referring to its colour. NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ (1993: 401) mentions the *gser skyems g.yu sngon*, the “turquoise-blue *gser skyems*” as offering appearing in Bon po texts. *gSer skyems*, the celestial drink, has been one of the most common forms of ritual offering up to the present day. *Nyang chos 'byung* (164) reports: “The rGyu'i Bon po say: ‘Since this is a sign that the Bon will spread widely, it shall be

While [the gNyan po gsang ba] was in the gNyan treasury of Yun bu gla sga[ng],¹⁰ from time to time the bTsan po himself used to open and contemplate it. Thanks to his devotional offerings, the king, who was 80 years old, became like a youth of 16. In his testament, too, he proclaimed: “May my descendants (*dbon sras*) open [and contemplate] it, regardless of whether the kingdom prospers or declines.”¹¹

During the reign of his descendants the kingdom expanded greatly and, after the ‘Secret gNyan po’ had been opened, the *Za ma tog gi snying po yi ge drug pa*¹² written in gold Indian letters and the *Mu tra ‘i phyag rgya gtsug tor dri med*¹³ appeared.¹⁴

Then during the reign of bTsan po Khri Srong btsan, after his marriage with Khri btsun,¹⁵ the daughter of the king of Nepal, the temple (*gtsug lag khang*) of Ra sa Pe har gling¹⁶ was built.

worshipped according to the Bon tradition’, so every night it was worshipped by celebrating *gser skyems* and *g.yu sngon*.”

¹⁰ Yun bu gla sgang indicates the famous ancient castle known variously as Yun bu lha sgang, Yun bu bla sgang, Yum bu bla sgang, ‘Um bu gla mkhar. *IDe’u chos ‘byung* (237) attributes the construction of this castle to gNya’ khri btsan po. The form Yun bu is mentioned by *Nyang chos ‘byung* (164) and *IDe’u chos ‘byung* (249), whereas later sources such as *Bu ston chos ‘byung* (181) and *mKhas pa ‘i dga’ ston* (166) give the form Yum bu, which has become the most widely used. Cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 150.

¹¹ Many historical sources report this mythical account concerning the first appearance of Buddhism in Tibet, referred to as *chos dbu brnyes pa*, which seems to have been developed in the early post-dynastic period on the basis of elements already circulating in the late dynastic period (cf. n. 8). This text, together with *Nyang chos ‘byung* (164) and *IDe’u chos ‘byung* (249), counts among the earliest references on it. *Ne’u chos ‘byung* (14–15) considers this account as a legend created by the Bon po, who were worshipping heaven, in order to give an interpretation of the first contacts with Buddhism. He says that in reality two scholars, Li the se and Blo sems mtsho/’tsho, had come to Tibet and had brought along some texts. The Tibetan king could not read and understand them but worshipped them. The Blue Annals follows this perspective and consider it to be authentic (ROERICH 1988: 29) whereas the Fifth Dalai Lama criticizes it sharply (on the relevant discussion cf. UEBACH 1987: 31).

¹² This text mentions the Six Heart Syllables as being related to the *Za ma tog* and in fact they are mentioned in the *Za ma tog bkod pa* (*Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*) (REGAMEY 1971: 417; IMAEDA 1979: 71–76). Most later texts mention separately the *mDo sde Za ma tog bkod pa* (*Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*) and the *sNying po Yi ge drug pa* (*Hṛdaya Śaḍākṣari*) (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 150). *hKa’ chems ka khol ma* (108) states that Srong btsan sgam po requested the translator Sam bho ta to read this text contained in the “Secret gNyan po”.

¹³ *gTsug tor dri med* added in small characters as a gloss seems to complete *Mudrā phyag rgya* (cf. n. 8). However it could rather indicate the text *gTsug tor dri med gzungs* which is mentioned again later and is known as a tantra text translated by Zhang sNa nam Ye shes sde. It also presents a number of commentaries (*Bu ston chos ‘byung* 257, 267).

¹⁴ This passage is slightly obscure. After lHa tho tho ri, none of the ancestors of Khri Srong btsan is known for Buddhist activity and the events which occurred during the reign of Khri Srong btsan himself are mentioned in the immediately following paragraph. The expansion of the kingdom probably refers to the reign of King gNam ri.

Furthermore, the construction of the forty-two temples of the Ru bzhi¹⁷ was requested and the Brag lha [temple]¹⁸ was built. 'Thon mi gSam po ra¹⁹ was sent by royal order [to India] in order to get the Indian doctrine and the model of the alphabet (*yi ge'i dpe*). [Returning to Tibet] he

¹⁵ Even though the historicity of the Nepalese wife is not ascertained, there are increasing indications supporting this hypothesis. On this discussion cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 25–27, 199–200.

¹⁶ According to this text, Ra sa Pe har gling is an important temple located in Ra sa (lHa sa). Apparently this corresponds to the Ra sa vihāra, alias Ra sa gtsug lag khang. The name Ra sa'i Pe har occurs in the *bka' gtsigs* of Khri Srong lde btsan of 779 reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (373). Insofar as this text is copied from contemporary sources kept in bSam yas, this seems to be the earliest mention of this name (though there is an evident mistake by the copyist in reporting the name of the king). The sKar chung inscription reports that the Ra sa gtsug lag khang was established at the time of the ancestor Khri Srong btsan. The *sBa bzhed* versions give slightly different forms: lHa sa dpe dkar and Heng khang dpe dkar (*sBa bzhed* B 20); sTon khang dPe har (*sBa bzhed* A 16); the version reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* gives Hen khang Bi har (*sBa bzhed* C 314). According to *IDe'u chos 'byung* (284) and *Nyang chos 'byung* (237), when Srong btsan sgam po established the temple which became famous as 'Phrul snang gtsug lag khang, he used as a model a Chinese temple called Heng khang sPe dkar. Heng khang (Chin. *chan shi* or *chan ding shi*) seems to indicate the 'temple' (*khang*) for meditative concentration (Chin. *chan*) and sPe dkar renders the Sanskrit *vihāra*. Accordingly the name Ra sa Pe har could reflect a Chinese form which, in its turn renders the Sanskrit term *vihāra*. This ancient name of the *gtsug lag khang* of lHa sa has already been noticed and discussed by *dGe 'dun chos 'phel* 1990: 119–120. On the name 'Phrul snang in relation to the mythology of the foundation of the temple cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 264ff.

¹⁷ The Ru bzhi are the main units in the subdivision of Central Tibet during the Tibetan kingdom (URAY 1960: 31–57; UEBACH 1987: 19–24). The forty-two temples refer to the account that Srong btsan sgam po established temples for subduing the “demoness” embodied in the land of Tibet. These are generally known according to the scheme of the twelve temples – known from the *Mañi bka' 'bum* and studied in detail by Aris (ARIS 1979: 12–33) – and are subdivided in Ru gnon gtsug lag khang, mTha' 'dul gtsug lag khang, Yang 'dul gtsug lag khang. However, in early post-dynastic sources more extensive lists are to be found, too. Though the number forty-two is explicitly mentioned in *IDe'u chos 'byung* (296), there is no list of exactly forty-two temples. In fact *IDe'u chos 'byung* (284–286) offers in a somewhat unclear way around forty-seven names, with some of them being repeated and some being the names of temples which were built later. *Nyang chos 'byung* (242, 244) and *Ne'u chos 'byung* (16–19) also give extended lists of temples. The extended scheme seems therefore to represent a parallel – and perhaps more ancient – version of that of the twelve temples (on this discussion cf. UEBACH 1987: 32–33; SØRENSEN 1994: 561ff.).

¹⁸ Brag lha is usually known as Brag lha klu sbugs. According to *IDe'u chos 'byung* (281) this temple was established by a queen, a wife of Srong btsan sgam po called Ru yong bza'. She also had a statue of Vairocana, called Brag lha mgon po, placed there. Other texts (*Ne'u chos 'byung* 17) attribute this temple to another queen called Mong bza' Khri lcam (on the discussion concerning the attribution of this temple cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 297).

¹⁹ The 'Thon mi gSam po ra mentioned here is the Thon mi Sambhoṭa of other historical texts. *IDe'u chos 'byung* (298) mentions him simply as Thon mi 'Bring sto re a nu. On the discussion concerning his name cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 167–168. gSam po ra is a form given only by this text and could be an early approximate reconstruction of the Sanskrit term Sambhoṭa/Sambhadra.

was accompanied by Li byin,²⁰ an Indian versed in reading and writing (*yig mkhan*), and took with him some [texts of] the doctrine such as *Chos dkon mchog sprin* (*Ratnameghasūtra*),²¹ *Pad ma dkar po*,²² *Rin po che tog*,²³ *gZugs grwa lnga* and *dGe ba bcu*.²⁴ (2a) As there was nobody to translate them, the [texts of the] doctrine received the royal seal and were placed in the treasury of Phying pa [castle].²⁵ Then [the bTsan po] announced: “In my lineage after five generations there will be a descendant who will spread the doctrine of Buddha, and at that time the casket should be opened.”²⁶ As far as the alphabet is concerned, Li byin and gSam po ra transformed the Indian script into the Tibetan script.²⁷ The alphabet was taught to four attendants in charge of the royal household affairs (*zha 'bring nang pa*). At that time the king himself remained in his palace, in retreat, without even reaching the gate of the palace for four years.²⁸ All subjects used to say: “The bTsan

²⁰ Li byin (Kaṁśadatta) is reported by historical sources as a scholar from Southern India from whom Thon mi Sambhoṭa learnt writing (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 168).

²¹ The text *dKon mchog sprin* is mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 89 (LALOU 1953: 321).

²² *Pad ma dkar po*, the famous White Lotus Sūtra: *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*.

²³ The *Mahāsannipātaratnaketuḍhāraṇīsūtra* cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 173.

²⁴ *Nyang chos 'byung* (174) reports that *Padma dkar po*, *Rin po che 'phreng ba*, *mDo sde dKon mchog sprin* and *Za ma tog* were translated at the time of King Srong btsan sgam po which seems quite unlikely given the state of Buddhism at that time. The *gZugs grwa lnga* appear also as *Gra lnga* in *lDe'u chos 'byung* (298) as texts translated under Srong btsan sgam po. *dGe ba bcu* (*Daśakuśālāni*) seems to indicate one text concerning the Ten Virtues, perhaps the *dGe bcu dang du blang ba 'i mdo* mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 266 (LALOU 1953: 327).

²⁵ Phying pa refers to the ancient royal castle in Yarlung usually known as Phying ba sTag rtse. Dunhuang documents report that sTag bu snya gzigs (grandfather of Srong btsan sgam po) used to reside here (BACOT et al. 1940: 102). *mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* (162) attributes its construction to sPu lDe gung rgyal.

²⁶ This announcement seems to refer to the event reported by the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed B 1*, *sBa bzhed A 1*) in which the testament of king Srong btsan sgam po was disclosed after five generations by king Khri lDe gtsug btsan. The announcement given by the *dBa' bzhed* however also presents a certain parallel character to the announcement reported by *rGyal rabs gsal ba 'i me stong* according to which five generations after lHa tho tho ri snyan shal there would be a king who understood the basket of ‘Secret gNyan po’ (SØRENSEN 1994: 150).

²⁷ The invention of the Tibetan script is merely mentioned here. On parallel passages in early post-dynastic sources and the relevant discussion cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 167ff., 539.

²⁸ This account seems to indicate that the king took some time to learn reading and writing, which is also mentioned in early post-dynastic sources (*Nyang chos 'byung* 172, *mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* 181) together with the fact that during that time he stayed in a kind of retreat (*mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* 184). According to Uray the parallel passage reported in *mKhas pa 'i dga' ston* goes back to the prototype of the Narrative of Legislation and Organization written c. in 718 and reveals the dominant position of the ministers as well as the tensions between king and ministers (URAY 1972: 48). The background for these events seems to be constituted not only by the antagonism between king and clan-aristocracy but also by the gradual transition from a ruling system in which the king had to move his residence regularly in order to be ritually present and to show himself personally to his subjects (cf. also

po does not even come to the gate of the palace; whyever this may be, he seems to have disappeared. There appears to be a minister who is wise [ruling instead of the king].” The bTsan po heard these rumours from the subjects. He therefore held a discussion with his four attendants who had been taught the alphabet and in four months, on the basis of the Ten Virtues, he made the law (*bka' khrims*) and put it into writing.²⁹ [It included] the ‘wergild’ (*stang gsox*) for the taking of human life, compensation (*rku 'jal*) for theft and robbery, the [cutting off of] the nose and the [removing of] eyes for sexual misbehaviour, the taking of oaths for preventing lying, etc.³⁰ One day [the bTsan po] ordered all the subjects to gather and announced: “I have been staying in one site without moving the royal residence (*pho brang*), I have avoided dealing with affairs and the subjects have been relaxed and happy. You said that the bTsan po did not even come to the gate of the palace; that whyever that might be, he seemed to have disappeared and that there appeared to be a minister who was wise [ruling instead of the king]. Was the wise minister appointed by you or by me? [you] subjects do not like this, [you] must act then according to a law which I made in four months! If [you] do not follow this, [it will be] as in the case of the 12 petty kingdoms (*rgyal phran bcu gnyis*)³¹ which lost political power in chaos because of the lack of law. Crimes would therefore increase in future. Even if the law for my descendants, king and subjects, exists, it might be lost. (2b) [For these reasons] the law has been codified in a system.”³² For a

PETECH 1988a: 261–262), to a more stable organization allowed and imposed by the introduction of written laws and a more complex administration of the state, cf. also n. 32.

²⁹ On the idea that the royal law was promulgated according to the Ten Virtues – appearing in early post-dynastic sources (*Nyang chos 'byung* 175, *IDE'u chos 'byung* 254) and perhaps in late dynastic sources – cf. STEIN 1986: 185ff. On the discussion concerning law-making during the time of Srong btsan sgam po cf. URAY 1972: 58ff.; UEBACH 1992: 823–31; SØRENSEN 1994: 181ff.

³⁰ The specific rules added here as a gloss are among those mentioned in *IDE'u chos 'byung* (270–271), in *Nyang chos 'byung* (175), and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (192); on the discussion concerning the sources on the enactment of the laws cf. URAY 1972: 11–68; SØRENSEN 1994: 177ff.; UEBACH 1992: 823–883. Rules similar to these, e.g. cutting off the nose for sexual misbehaviour, have survived in the traditional customs of certain Tibetan ethnic groups of the Himalayas and in remote Tibetan areas such as Amdo.

³¹ *rGyal phran bcu gnyis* is the definition for the petty kingdoms which had been united under the rule of gNam ri srong btsan and his son Srong btsan sgam po, and constituted the core of the Tibetan kingdom. *IDE'u chos 'byung* (225–226) gives a list of twelve names. It is however difficult to identify these names and compare them with the list given in the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 80, LALOU 1965: 189–215), which report petty kingdoms with the relevant castle, ruler and ministers but are obscure in many aspects. A list of names comparing different sources is given in STEIN 1961a: 9–10.

³² *Nyang chos 'byung* (174–175) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (184–185) give similar accounts. The *rgyal phran* mentioned in this context are also reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* whereas *Nyang chos 'byung* refers to *shes pa mkhan bcu gnyis* (the twelve learned people), which seems somewhat out of place in this context and could be the result of a mistake by the copyist. Though the speech itself seems to have a legendary character, it points to a deci-

whole morning the complete *rtsis mgo*³³ and the good law (*chos lugs bzang po*)³⁴ were announced to the assembled subjects without any mistake by law and official order. Then all subjects offered thanks [and said:] “Since nobody is more profound than you, you shall be called by the very name Khri Srong btsan bsgam (sgam) po.”³⁵ The name was thus given to him by his subjects. It was ordered that 'Tho mi gSam po ra and the Indian Li byin teach the alphabet to all people such as the sons and nephews of the *zhang blon*³⁶ and from then on the alphabet was present in Tibet. Later on, [the king sent] messengers of reconciliation (*mjal dum*

sive transition in Tibetan history: the qualitative difference between kingdoms based on orally transmitted rules with arbitrary decision making by the ruler and the stability of a kingdom based on written laws and a well established political structure. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (184–192) provides a narrative concerning legislation at the time of Srong btsan sgam po which finds important correspondences in data stemming from the Dunhuang documents (cf. URAY 1972: 11–68). *lDe'u chos 'byung* (252–276) gives a more detailed account of this topic.

³³ In the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 13, 31), in the entry concerning the year 654 the *rtsis mgo* is mentioned as a census, and in the entry concerning 690 (BACOT et al. 1940: 17, 37) it appears as indicating accounts. It seems therefore to signify a general system of accounting and perhaps the standardization of the relevant categories. This is also mentioned by the Chronicle as part of the legal system introduced by Srong btsan sgam po, cf. MACDONALD 1971: 377.

³⁴ *Chos lugs bzang po*, the good law or good religion cf. MACDONALD 1971: 377; STEIN 1986: 185ff.

³⁵ The story of why Khri Srong btsan was called Srong btsan sgam po appears in the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 118, 161) and in early post-dynastic sources (*Nyang chos 'byung* 175, *lDe'u chos 'byung* 253). The passage given in *Nyang chos 'byung* is very similar to the one reported here.

³⁶ The term *zhang blon*, composed by *zhang* (“uncle”) and *blon* (“minister”), has a double meaning: that of “uncle-minister” indicating the ministers stemming from queen-giver clans and that of “uncles and ministers” indicating the uncle-ministers and the ministers together. The expression *zhang gsum blon bzhi dbus kyi 'dun sa 'dzin* reported by numerous historical sources such as *lDe'u chos 'byung* (254) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (185) indicates that three uncle-ministers and one minister were holding the assembly concerning the central area. The three uncle-ministers represented the three big clans 'Bro, mChims, sNa nam, whereas the minister represented the dBa' clan. These were the most powerful clans under Khri Srong lde btsan and his successors and their members often occupied the position of *blon po chen po* (chief minister). From Khri lDe gtsug btsan to Khri Dar ma 'u dum btsan there were fourteen people holding the position of *blon po chen po*. Of these, according to the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 255), three belonged to the 'Bro family ('Bro Chung bzang 'or mang, 'Bro Khri gzu ram shags, 'Bro Khri sum rje stag snang), one to the mChims (mChims rGyal gzigz shu teng), one to the sNa nam (sNa nam rGya tsha lha snang), six to the dBa's clan (dBa' Khri gzigz zhang gnyer, dBa's Khri sum rje rtsang bzher, dBa's sTag sgra khong lod, dBa's sNang bzher su btsan, dBa's Mang rje lha lod, dBa's rGyal to re stag snang). The *zhang blon* had great power and the king was constantly confronted with this fact, something that is evident from the narrative of the dBa' *hzhed* itself. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (169) states that the origin of the title *zhang* goes back to the marriage between lHa tho tho ri snyan btsan and rNo za mang dkar. Their son, Khri gnyan gzung btsan, called the brother of his mother Zhang (maternal uncle) and this title was extended to the male members of whole clan from which the queen stemmed.

gyi pho nya) to arrange the marriage with Ong co,³⁷ the daughter of the Emperor of China, Ding nga ding btsun.³⁸ 'Gar (mGar) sTong btsan yul zungs³⁹ was appointed as the *khad dpon*,⁴⁰ sNyi ba sNya do re snang btsan as the *spyang dbang*,⁴¹ 'Bro lDe ru gung ston as the 'og dpon.⁴² The messengers carried three boxes containing royal letters (*bka' 'phrin gyi sgrom bu*)⁴³ and were

³⁷ The name Ong co, mentioned as Kong jo in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, derives from the Chin. *gong zhu* meaning "princess". Later in the *dBa' bzhed* she is referred to by her full name Mum shang Ong co, which is close to the name reported by the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 13), Mun chang Kong co, which renders the Chinese Wen cheng Gong zhu. In fact it seems that she was a girl belonging to the imperial lineage but not actually a daughter of the emperor (*Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6074; DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 6–7). She is reported as having been sent to Tibet in 641 and as having died in 680 (*Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6074; *Jiu Tangshu*, XVI, 5221, 5224).

³⁸ This name seems to indicate the emperor Taizong (r. 626–649), the second and most famous emperor of the Tang dynasty (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 83).

³⁹ 'Gar (mGar) sTong btsan yul zungs was the most powerful minister during the reign of Srong btsan sgam po and his grandson Khri Mang slon mang btsan. According to Chinese sources he was sent to the Chinese imperial court to invite the Chinese princess and returned to Tibet in 641 (*Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6074). This event is also recorded in the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 13). Here it is also stated that he was de facto the ruler of the country during the youth of Mang slon mang btsan and that he died in 667 (BACOT et al. 1940: 14). After the death of mGar sTong btsan his two sons, mGar bTsan snya ldom bu and mGar Khri 'bring, became chief ministers one after the other. In 698 mGar Khri 'bring was executed by king Khri 'Dus srong mang po rje (Dunhuang Annals entry for the year 698, BACOT et al. 1940: 18) and Chinese sources report that the younger brother escaped together with numerous members of his clan to China (cf. *Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6080; *Jiu Tangshu*, XVI, 5225–5226). From then on it seems that this clan disappeared from the political leadership.

⁴⁰ The term *khad dpon* indicates the leader of a *khad*. A parallel for this term could be given by the *khod* mentioned in *lDe'u chos 'byung* (270). Here six land subdivisions are mentioned as the six *khod*: Bod, Zhang chung, Mon, Chibs, (fifth missing), mThong khyab. From *mKhas pu'i dga' ston* (185) we know that mGar sTong btsan was appointed *khod dpon* of Central Tibet (Bod). Cf. also n. 367. For a discussion of various forms of this term see VITALI 1996: 277.

⁴¹ *sPyang dbang* is an obscure title which might indicate somebody in charge of private affairs of the king. This title appears again in the context of the delegation sent to China to which dBa' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi participated. sNyi ba is an ancient Tibetan clan originally from southern Tibet.

⁴² 'Bro lDe ru gung ston accompanied mGar sTong btsan to China. This person appears in several sources but the written form of this name presents considerable variations, such as 'Bri Se ru gong ston among others (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 181). *lDe'u chos 'byung* (294) gives the form 'Gro Se ru gong ston. Both 'Bri and 'Gro seem to be erroneous forms for the clan-name 'Bro given by the *dBa' bzhed* which ascribes this person to the great 'Bro clan. Concerning the title 'og dpon, the Dunhuang Annals referring to the year 757 report that a person called sKyes bzang rgyal kong was appointed as 'og dpon under a great minister, so it seems to indicate a leader in a subordinate position (BACOT et al. 1940: 57).

⁴³ *bKa' 'phrin gyi sgrom bu* indicates a specific container with the relevant royal message. According to *lDe'u chos 'byung* (370) there are six specific symbols (*rtags*) called the Six Seals (*phyag rgya*): the *phyag rgya* of the royal order is the *sgrom bu*, the *phyag rgya* of the law are the weapons (*ru mtshon*), the *phyag rgya* of the land is the

accompanied by 300 servants. [Then the messengers] arrived at Keng shi⁴⁴ and handed over one of the boxes containing royal letters to the emperor. The Emperor of China wrote a reply and said: “Take this to the upper [areas] (*i.e.* Tibet), [I am waiting for] what is said regarding this answer.” The messengers replied: “This shall not be sent to the upper [areas].” They handed over the second letter and added: “This is the relevant reply.” Then the Emperor of China said again: “This is the reply concerning this [second letter], take it to the upper [areas]. Until the answering letter arrives, messengers, you can all stay here.” The messengers replied [again]: “This shall not be sent to the upper [areas] either; this is the relevant reply” and handed over the third box. The emperor read this with great amazement and then announced: (3a) “My daughter shall be offered [to the king of Tibet]” and assigned [mGar] sTong btsan the title of Great Minister (*blon po chen po*).⁴⁵ For two months the messengers awaited their departure. Mum shang Ong co together with 300 members of her court were sent to the upper [areas] and 30 imperial nieces were offered to [mGar] sTong btsan [yul bzung] as *mchis brang*.⁴⁶ The Emperor of China instructed [his] daughter: “Consider the bTsan po of Tibet and the Emperor of China as equals” (*'dra bar gyis shig*), then an oath (*bro*) was taken. Mum shang Ong co was entrusted to [mGar] sTong btsan [yul bzung] and once [she had] arrived in the land of Tibet [she] was offered as wife [to the bTsan po]. Afterwards, the bTsan po used to reside in the palace lHan dkar ta mo ra,⁴⁷ while Ong co used to reside in the palace lHa sa Ra mo che.⁴⁸ From China Ong co brought

castle (*mkhar*), the *phyag rgya* of the doctrine is the temple (*lha khang*), and the *phyag rgya* of the hero is the fur of the tiger and the leopard (*stag gzig*), the *phyag rgya* of the sage is the *yig tshang*.

⁴⁴ Keng shi renders the Chinese term *jing shi*, meaning “capital”, and indicates Chang an, the capital of the Tang dynasty (the ruins of which are to be seen in the vicinity of Xian). This name is mentioned in Dunhuang documents and inscriptions. For the various forms given in Tibetan sources cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 215–216.

⁴⁵ According to the *Xin Tangshu* (XIX, 6080) mGar sTong btsan yul bzung was offered the title *you wei da jiang jun*.

⁴⁶ *mChis brang* in general means consort. Thirty consorts seems to be an exaggeration of mythic proportions. According to the *Xin Tangshu* (XIX, 6075) and the *Jiu Tangshu* (XVI, 5223) he was offered one Chinese consort to be taken as a second wife.

⁴⁷ lHan dkar, also known as lDan dkar, was the name of the royal palace where the compilation of the early catalogue of doctrinal texts known as *lDan dkar dkar chag* took place (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 417; *Bu ston chos 'byung* 187; LALOU 1953). This catalogue was attributed to the time of Khri Srong lde btsan but according to Tucci was completed in 812 (TUCCI 1958: 48). The form lHan dkar is given in PT 1085 and PT 1088 (LALOU 1953: 315–316). On this toponym cf. also UEBACH 1987: 79; for the identification of this place with the birthplace of Khri gTsuig lde btsan cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 351.

⁴⁸ Ra mo che is an ancient temple in lHa sa which is reported by the *bka' gtsigs* mentioned in the *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* as rGya btags Ra mo che (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 371). Its construction is traditionally attributed to Wen cheng Gong zhu (*lDe'u chos 'byung* 292), cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 577–578. The name lHa sa, which used to be

a gold statue of Śākyamuni which was carried on the lap of a horseman and placed in Ra mo che.⁴⁹ This is all (*de tsam*) the ancestor Srong btsan sgam po did to introduce the practice of the holy doctrine.⁵⁰

All the people of Li [yul] (Khotan) considered bTsan po Khri Srong btsan to be [an emanation of] Ā rya pā lo. This can be related as follows: the holy doctrine had arrived in Li yul 100 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Buddha. At that time two monks of Li [yul] were longing to see the face of 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs and therefore they were performing offerings and propitiations all the year round. So 'Phags pa 'Jam dpal [dbyangs] appeared and asked: "Blessed sons, what do you need?" [The monks answered:] "We are longing to see the face of 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs." ['Phags pa 'Jam dpal dbyangs] replied: "The king of Tibet is 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs; go to Tibet and you can see the face [of 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs]." Then carrying *sūtra* and monk's staffs [the two monks] from the upper [regions] (*i.e.* Khotan) came down to the palace of the bTsan po in Tibet. (3b) It was the time in which the first law of the bTsan po was being enforced. [They] saw that some people were executed, some were condemned to exile, some were held prisoner within an enclosure of thorns, some had their noses cut off or their eyes removed. The two monks of Li [yul] lost their faith and said: "This cannot be 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs! Let us go back." They were about to set out for their country when the bTsan po came to know this. An order was issued for [servants] from the four gates of the palace to call these two monks and lead them to the presence of the bTsan po in the royal palace. [The two monks] prostrated. [The bTsan po asked]: "Why did you come here?" [They] replied: "We came here because we were longing to see the face of 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs." The bTsan po stood up [from his throne] and said: "Let us go." He took the two monks to a wide lonely plain and he showed them the body of 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs. These two monks were delighted and prostrated. Then [they were] asked "Now what do you wish to do?" and [they] replied, "We beg [you] to let us return to Li yul." They clutched the feet of the king and cried.

called Ra sa in ancient sources, first appears in the 821/822 inscription of the Sino-Tibetan treaty (LI and COBLIN 1987: 51, 99).

⁴⁹ The account that the famous statue of Śākyamuni was invited from China, placed first in Ra mo che and then in the 'Phrul snang gtsug lag khang is given in early post-dynastic sources (*Nyang chos 'hyung* 269, *lDe'u chos 'hyung* 298) and is merely referred to in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 3, *sBa bzhed* A 3).

⁵⁰ The *dBa' bzhed* is rather moderate in ascribing great Buddhist deeds to Srong btsan sgam po and the expression *de tsam* underlines this fact. Except for some ancient legendary material the narrative seems mainly to describe the deeds which are attributed to him by the most ancient available sources such as the sKar chung inscription, which mentions that he established a few temples (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318). It therefore represents an early stage in the

Afterwards they fell asleep in the palace. A warm sunshine woke them up. 'Phags pa [sPyan ras gzigs] had disappeared and the two monks were back in Li yul. [They] said that, before, as [they] were thinking that this was not 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs and [they] were clinging to the idea of going back to Li yul, (4a) they were not able to achieve any further supernatural realization (*dnegos grub gzhan la ma spobs pa*), however [the bTsan po] was certainly 'Phags pa sPyan ras gzigs beyond any doubt. This is correctly reported from the great prophecy (*[Li yul] lung bstan chen mo*).⁵¹

During the reign of bTsan po 'Dus srong mang po rje rlung nam,⁵² [the temple] Glang gi Ri rtse, alias Gling gi Khri rtse,⁵³ is said to have been built in Khams.⁵⁴

During the reign of his son, bTsan po Khri lDe gtsug brtan,⁵⁵ the Chinese princess Gyim shang Ong co⁵⁶ was taken as wife and a temple was erected in [each of the following localities]

gradual construction of the legendary image of Srong btsan sgam po as the great promoter of Buddhism, which seems to have had its origin in the late dynastic period (STEIN 1986: 173; SØRENSEN 1994: 23).

⁵¹ The account of the two monks from Li yul is also reported by *Nyang chos 'byung* (266–268) which explicitly cites it from the *Li'i lung bstan chen mo*, a work that was apparently available at that time. A similar account is also given by *lDe'u chos 'byung* (252, 295) and appears in various elaborations in later sources. The peculiar – and unexplained – fact that the two Khotanese monks were negatively impressed by the draconian law enforced in Tibet could be understood against the background of early contacts between Khotan and Tibet.

⁵² 'Dus srong mang po rje rlung nam (676–704), was the son of Mang slon mang btsan who was the grandson of Srong btsan sgam po. He was more famous for his military deeds, reported in the Dunhuang documents, than for his very limited Buddhist activity, which seems to have consisted merely in the construction of one temple.

⁵³ The Khri rtse temple in Gling is mentioned by the sKar chung inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318) as having been constructed by Khri 'Dus srong. The Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 18–19) report that this king was in the locality called Khri rtse (in the Gling area, eastern Tibet) in the years 701 and 702; in the year 703 he was still in the Gling area and the following year he died in battle in Mywa (later called 'Jang yul) which is immediately to the south of Gling and corresponds to the area called Nan zhao in Chinese during the Tang dynasty (located in present day Yunnan province). *Nyang chos 'byung* (270, 271) and *lDe'u chos 'byung* (300) erroneously consider the Khri rtse temple among the five established by Khri lDe gtsug btsan and comparable versions are found in later sources (e.g. *Bu ston chos 'byung* 183). So far we have not encountered any other sources that attribute this temple to Khri 'Dus srong.

⁵⁴ Up to this point the *dBa' bzhed* gives a concise account of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet from lHa tho tho ri to 'Dus srong mang po rje. The *sBa bzhed* contains no comparable passages. The account differs from later historical sources in a number of aspects: the limited number of legendary accounts which all find correspondences in early post-dynastic sources and partially in the Dunhuang documents; the mention of historical facts such as the construction of Khri rtse of Gling under 'Dus srong mang po rje known only from an inscription; the restrained description of the religious deeds of Srong btsan sgam po, uninfluenced by the later great Buddhist mythological constructions.

'Ching bu nam ra, Kwa chu in Brag dmar, 'Gran bzang, 'Khar brag and sMas gong.⁵⁷ Every year at lHa sa Ra mo che Gyim shang Ong co used to circumambulate the god Śākyamuni in

⁵⁵ Khri lDe gtsug brtan/Khri lDe gtsug btsan (704–754/755), later called Mes Ag tshom. He was the father of Khri Srong lde btsan. The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 1, *sBa bzhed* A 1) cite the legendary account that he found the prophetic testament of Srong btsan sgam po indicating that one of his successors called lDe would spread the doctrine in Tibet. As he thought that he was the prophesied one, he sent two people, Bran ka Mu le ko [sha] (Mūlakośa) and gNyags Jñānakumāra to India to find the doctrine. They heard that two *paṇḍita* were staying in meditation in Gangs Ti se but they did not manage to invite them. They just managed to take along some doctrinal texts and offered them to the king as object of worship. This episode is not mentioned in the *dBa' bzhed*. *Nyang chos 'byung* (486–488) and *lDe'u chos 'byung* (321–322, 334–335) do not mention this story, but report gNyags Jñānakumāra as a translator active later on as a contemporary of Vairocana and Vimalamitra. gNyags Jñānakumāra is also known as one of the disciples of Padmasambhava and as a great master of the rNying ma tradition (*rNying ma chos 'byung* 380). Bran ka Mūlakośa and gNyags Jñānakumāra are mentioned in the list of translators given by *Bu ston chos 'byung* (208).

⁵⁶ Gyim shang Ong co renders the name of the Chinese princess Jincheng Gongzhu (?–739) who was an adoptive daughter of the Chinese emperor Tang zhong zong (r. 705–710) (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 84). She was sent to Tibet in 710, at a time when her husband was only 7 years old (BACOT et al. 1940: 19, 20; DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 2). She is mentioned as Kim shang/sheng Khong co in Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 20, 25) and as Kim sheng Kong co in the Zhol inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 145). A popular account has it that as Khri lDe gtsug btsan was very bad looking and kept under control by the ministers, he wished to have a handsome and strong son to overpower them. When such a son was born to him, it seemed that the only adequate wife was a Chinese princess. However while the Chinese princess Kim sheng Kong co was on her journey towards Tibet, the son of the king died and upon her arrival she had to decide whether to marry the old king or return home. She stayed and Khri Srong lde btsan was born to her. The boy was taken away from her by sNa nam bza' bZhi stengs, the main wife of the king, but during the celebrations for his first steps, he proclaimed that he was Khri Srong lde btsan and that he was the nephew of the emperor of China. This episode is contained in the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 4–5; *sBa bzhed* A 4; *sBa bzhed* C 297–298) whereas it is not mentioned by the *dBa' bzhed*. According to the Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 82) the mother of Khri Srong lde btsan was in fact the Tibetan queen sNa nam za Mang mo tje bZhi steng and Khri Srong lde btsan was born in 742, three years after the Chinese queen had died in 739 (BACOT et al. 1940: 25–26). On the discussion concerning possible historical events behind the legendary narrative of the *sBa bzhed* and the succession to the throne by Khri lDe gtsug btsan cf. PETECH 1988a: 275–277; BECKWITH 1983: 6–10, 1987: 69–70; SØRENSEN 1994: 596–601; UEBACH 1997: 66–67.

⁵⁷ The five temples are also mentioned by the *sBa bzhed*, though with slight variations in the orthography. *sBa bzhed* B (1) gives lHa sa mKhar brag, Brag dmar mGrin bzang, mChims phu na ral, Brag dmar Ka chu, Ma sa gong; *sBa bzhed* A (1) gives lHa sa mKhar brag, Brag dmar 'gran bzang, mChims phu ne ral, Brag dmar Ka chu, bSam yas Ma sa gong; *sBa bzhed* C (294) lHa sa mKhar brag, Brag dmar mgrin bzang, mChims phu Nam ral, Brag dmar Ka ru and Ma sa gong gi gnas. Some differences seem to be significant. 'Gran bzang/mGrin bzang: the form 'Gran bzang appears only in early post-dynastic sources whereas mGrin bzang later became the popular form; 'Ching phu/mChims phu: the form 'Ching phu comes close to the form mChing phu given by the sKar chung inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318) whereas the form mChims phu, which is the most popular form, is linked to a confusion with the name of the mChims clan which had no particular relation to this place; Nam ral/Na ral/Ne ral: the form Nam ral is close to the forms given by *Nyang chos 'byung*, rNam ral and gNam ral, and is pronounced in the same way. Kwa

worship. [She] worshipped the god of her aunt Mum shang Ong co and performed celebrations of the doctrine for thousands of gods and people. For the sake of the virtue of the deceased, [she] did not fail to perform the ritual food sharing called *Tshe*.⁵⁸ This is the extent to which the doctrine was practised during the reign of bTsan po Khri lDe gtsug brtan. Then the bTsan po and Ong co passed away.⁵⁹

During the reign of the son [of Khri lDe gtsug btsan], Khri Srong lde btsan, as soon as he took over the governance of the kingdom at the age of 13,⁶⁰ sNa nam Ma zhang khrom pa skyes,⁶¹ Khri thog rje Thang la 'bar⁶² and Cog ro sKyes bzang rgyal gong⁶³ under the influence of bad karma and the spell of de-

chu/Ka chu: the form Kwa chu is also given by the sKar chung inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318). sMas gong/Ma sa gong: the form Ma sa gong seems to be derived from a simple mistake in transcribing the syllable Mas: the pronunciation of sMas and Mas is similar in modern Central Tibetan. The sKar chung inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 318) only mentions Kwa chu and mChing phu as temples built under the reign of Khri lDe gtsug btsan. The ruins of Brag dmar mgrin bzang are located immediately to the north of bSam yas near to the village of bSam phu and are still identified as such by the local people. On the five temples cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 352–353.

⁵⁸ *Tshe* is the name of funerary rites which also imply the offering of food. *sBa bzhed* B (4), *sBa bzhed* A (3), and *sBa bzhed* C (297) all refer to them as funerary rituals, implying an offering of food to thousands of gods and people. Cf. also MACDONALD 1971: 370–371.

⁵⁹ Khri lDe gtsug btsan died in 754/755 and Jin cheng Gong zhu in 739. Concerning the death of this king the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 8; *sBa bzhed* A 7; *sBa bzhed* C 303) reports that he died while riding in rBa/sBa tshal of Yar 'brog. The Zhol inscription says that he died after he was put in danger by the disloyal ministers 'Bal lDong tsab and Lang Myes zigs (LI and COBLIN 1987: 143). It therefore seems that his death was a consequence of a conspiracy (something other than a mere riding accident?) or that the above ministers were held responsible for an accident.

⁶⁰ According to the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 56) he took over the throne in 756 after the death of his father in 754/755. This coincides with the age of Khri Srong lde btsan given as thirteen. *sBa bzhed* B (8) affirms that he became king at the age of eight after the death of his father. *sBa bzhed* A and *sBa bzhed* C are silent on this detail.

⁶¹ sNa nam Ma zhang khrom pa skyes was a member of the great sNa nam clan to which the mother of Khri Srong lde btsan belonged. He is traditionally infamous as the evil minister who made the law called *Khrims bu chung* to destroy the Buddhist doctrine and as such he is reported in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions. However he is not mentioned in the Dunhuang documents and cannot be identified among the chief ministers. Perhaps he enjoyed great power as a true uncle of the king during the latter's youth (as suggested by UEBACH 1987: 97). On this nebulous yet important figure cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 363.

⁶² Khri thog rje Thang la 'bar is mentioned later in this text (folio 4b) as belonging to the sNa nam clan. *sBa bzhed* B (9) and *sBa bzhed* C (305) name him as Zhang Khri thog rje Thang la 'bar; *sBa bzhed* A (8) and *Bu ston chos 'byung* (184) as sNa nam Khri thog rje Thang la 'bar. *lDe 'u chos 'byung* (301) mentions a mChims Khri thog rje Thang bar as minister during the youth of Khri Srong lde btsan, but there could be a mistake in the clan-name.

⁶³ Cog ro sKyes bzang rgyal gong is reported in all *sBa bzhed* versions. *lDe 'u chos 'byung* (301) mentions him as a minister belonging to the Cog ro clan during the youth of Khri Srong lde btsan. He could be the minister men-

mons discussed [how to annihilate the doctrine]. First sNa nam Ma zham khrom pa skyes had minister Thang la 'bar⁶⁴ executed (*bkyon phab*).⁶⁵ It was said that the misfortunes which had occurred in Tibet were due to the practice of the religion of Śākyamuni, and the idol of China therefore had to be sent back from lHa sa Ra mo che to China. The idol, which had previously been carried easily by one horseman on his lap, was tied up in a net of leather strips and [had to be] thrown out of the door [of the temple] by 300 people. [It took] 1,000 people to pull it directly to Thang grong of 'Khar brag⁶⁶ but they were unable to move it further. So they buried it in a hole and left it there entrusted to 'Bal rje 'khol (*'bal rje 'khol la gtad de bzhas*). (4b) At night it was covered with earth, but the next day the upper part of the body emerged straight [from the ground]. An old Chinese *hwa shang*,⁶⁷ an attendant of Ong jo, used to reside at Ra mo che. [At that time] he was sent back to China. When he arrived at the border between China and Tibet, the *hwa shang* had accidentally left

tioned as sKyes bzang rgyal kong in the Dunhuang Annals referring to the years 756 and 757 (BACOT et al. 1940: 56, 57).

⁶⁴ The sentence *sna nam ma zham khrom pa skyes kyis thang la 'bar la bkyon phab* is apparently an error for *sna nam ma zham khrom pa skyes kyis lang 'bal la bkyon phab*. The copyist erroneously wrote Thang la 'bar – reported by this same text as having died later, cf. folio 4b – instead of Lang 'Bal, i.e. Lang myes gzigs and the chief minister 'Bal lDong tsab (the mistake is apparent because of the shape of the Tibetan characters and the logical inconsistency of the mention of Thang la 'bar in this context). These were the two disloyal ministers who were executed for their part in the death of Khri lDe gtsug btsan. They are reported by the Dunhuang Annals as having been executed in 754/755 (BACOT et al. 1940: 56) and this event is also referred to by the Zhol inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 143). However according to these sources they were condemned by the king who was able to foil the conspiracy thanks to minister Ngan lam sTag sgra klu gong. Perhaps Ma zham khrom pa skyes carried out some tasks but he is not mentioned for that. The Dunhuang Annals report that in 756 [Cog ro] sKyes bzang rgya gong was responsible for the accounts concerning the wealth which had belonged to the executed ministers (BACOT et al. 1940: 56). *sBa bzhed B* (8) and *sBa bzhed A* (8) say that Ma zham khrom pa skyes let two ministers who were in favour of the doctrine be executed, which sounds like a Buddhist interpretation of these events. Here the ministers are mentioned just by their clan name: Mang 'Bal which is an apparent mistake for Lang 'Bal.

⁶⁵ The expression *bkyon phab* is used in Dunhuang documents and in inscriptions to mean “to punish”, particularly in the case of ministers condemned to death by the king, e.g. Dunhuang Annals referring to the years 678, 698, 699, 705, 706, 707, 711, 728 and the Zhol inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 143, 149). In later sources the form *bkyon phab* has often been transformed into *skyon phab*. *sBa bzhed B* (8) and *sBa bzhed A* (8) use the form *skyon phab* whereas the *dBa' bzhed* seems to be more faithful in rendering the language of the ancient kingdom.

⁶⁶ 'Khar/mKhar brag is a locality in which one of the temples of Khri lDe gtsug btsan was reported as having been established cf. n. 57. On this locality in the context of the narrative about the removal of the famous statue cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 593ff.

⁶⁷ *Hwa shang* renders the Chinese term *he shang*, Skt. *upādhyāya*, and indicates Chinese Buddhist monks. The episode of the Chinese monk leaving the boot behind as a prophetic sign appears in other sources in a different context, e.g. after the bSam yas debate. On the possibility of relating this episode to two distinct events cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 402, 595.

behind one of his shoes at a resting place on the previous day's trail and said: "I left one of my shoes at a resting place on yesterday's path, this is a sign that there will again be a spark of the holy doctrine in Tibet." Furthermore the temples of Ra sa 'Khar brag⁶⁸ and Brag dmar 'dran bzangs⁶⁹ were destroyed and the bell [of Brag dmar 'dran bzang], which is now in bSam yas, was buried among the rocks of 'Ching bu.⁷⁰ When Zhang Ma zham [khrom pa skyes] persecuted the doctrine, Ra sa Pe har was transformed into a slaughterhouse, sheep carcasses were hung from the hands of all statues, and entrails were wound around their necks. Then Zhang [Ma zham khrom pa skyes] ordered all the subjects: "From now on, if people die, it is forbidden to perform *Tshe* rituals. If someone practises the doctrine of China,⁷¹ he will be condemned to an unmarried life (*pho reng*). Thus the holy doctrine was persecuted. Not long after, Zhang sNa nam Khri thog rje thang la 'bar was taken (*bskyal*) to the feet of Thang lha⁷² and died screaming for a long time "*kwa, kwa*". Cog ro sKyes bzang rgyal gong died by having his tongue and legs dried out. As far as Zhang Ma zham [khrom pa skyes] is concerned, after

⁶⁸ Ra sa 'Khar/mKhar brag is one of the five temples of Khri lDe gtsug btsan; it is named as lHa sa 'Khar brag in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 1; *sBa bzhed* A 1; *sBa bzhed* C 294), cf. n. 57.

⁶⁹ Cf. n. 57.

⁷⁰ Under Khri Srong lde btsan some bells with and without inscriptions were made but we do not know of the construction of bells under Khri lDe gtsug btsan. According to *sBa bzhed* B (9) and *sBa bzhed* C (304) this is the bell which was then placed in bSam yas dge rgyas temple. However this assertion is contradicted by the fact that the bSam yas dge rgyas bell was made later by the wife of Khri Srong lde btsan, ['Bro bza'] jo mo rgyal mo brtsan (LI and COBLIN 1987: 334). After taking vows she was named Jo mo Byang chub. She is also known for another bell, with an inscription, which is kept in Khra 'brug (LI and COBLIN 1987: 343). Some ancient bells without inscriptions are still kept in bSam yas.

⁷¹ The expression *brgya la chos byed pa cig yod na* can be corrected to *rgya'i chos la byed pa cig yod na* by comparing the passage with the parallel one given in *sBa bzhed* B (9) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (304): *rgya'i lha chos bgyid pa mchis na*. The fact that *rgya'i chos* indicates Buddhism as the doctrine from China and *rgya'i lha* refers to the Buddha statue as the idol from China is suggested not only by the association of the Buddhist religious practices and the statue with the Chinese consort but also by the fact that, in this context, India is called rGya gar, whereas rGya alone seems always to indicate rGya nag, *i.e.* China. The strong Chinese connotation of Buddhism at this stage is also consistent with the perception of Glang dar ma as an anti-Chinese "nationalist" who saw in the Jo bo statue an ominous symbol of Chinese lore and imperialism (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 596; KARMAY 1988a: 4–6). Cf. also n. 421.

⁷² On the mountain deity Thang lha cf. NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1993: 205–209. This ancient mountain deity appears already in Dunhuang documents in the framework of *glud* rituals and is also known as one of the nine mountain gods invoked as witnesses to the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan (KARMAY 1998a: 342). It also appears in the mythology related to the descent of the first Tibetan king from heaven (KARMAY 1994: 417) as well as in the numerous legendary accounts regarding Padmasambhava's subjugation of local Tibetan gods.

receiving great omens of death, female diviners (*mo ma*)⁷³ who were given some reward [by an enemy of Zhang Ma zham khrom pa skyes] said: “The divination for the king is very inauspicious (*bla'i sku phyang ngan no*)”, then [Zhang Ma zham khrom pa skyes] was sent to be buried alive (*gson khung du stsal*)⁷⁴ as a ransom (*sku glud*).⁷⁵ (5a) As the omens and the divinations of the superior and inferior [people] corresponded, it was said that the Chinese idol was threatening or harmful. It is known that the predecessors and original [Buddhist gods] of China first came from India. Thus according to a good divination the god Śākyamuni was to be sent to Nepal, close to India, land of his ancestors. In Mang yul,⁷⁶ when the god arrived carried by two mules, the land was afflicted by great calamities.

It had been ordered that nothing [of the *Tshe* rituals] should be performed for the deceased. So, when the two children, a son and a daughter, of dBa' gSal snang⁷⁷ passed away at the same time, the Bon [ritual] was performed outside, and food was distributed to 1,000 gods and

⁷³ *Mo ma* seems to indicate some female practitioner of divination. The form *mo ma* is given by *sBa bzhed A* (13) and *sBa bzhed C* (311) whereas *sBa bzhed B* (15) gives the form *mo pa*.

⁷⁴ The fact of secluding ministers for life as a kind of ritual sacrifice seems to be an ancient Tibetan custom reported in Tibetan literature. The story of the king 'Bro sNyan lde ru who decided to seclude himself together with his wife and two ministers in order to prevent the spread of leprosy to his descendants is mentioned in *lDe'u chos 'byung* (251) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (170). In the legendary accounts based on ancient historical material given by *bKa' thang sde lnga* (146), it is mentioned that the minister of the interior had to be secluded in the royal tomb in order to protect the treasures it contained. Though still alive he was no longer considered a human being; he was not allowed to meet any living descendant of the king, and except on ritual occasions people and animals were not allowed to approach the tomb.

⁷⁵ The story of Ma zham khrom pa skyes and of how he was buried alive is given in a more detailed way in *sBa bzhed B* (17–18), *sBa bzhed A* (13–15) and in *sBa bzhed C* (311–312): the great minister 'Gos Khri bzang yab lhag manages to convince Ma zham khrom pa skyes to follow him in an act of self-sacrifice for the sake of the king. Then according to his plan, he escapes leaving Ma zham khrom pa skyes in seclusion (on the discussion whether this meant also the death of this minister or only a temporary seclusion cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 365). According to the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 60) Blon po Khri bzang became Chief Minister in 763. He is named as 'Gos Khri bzang yab lhag who was the successor of dBa's sNang bzher zu brtsan and the predecessor of mChims zhang rGyal zigs shu theng (BACOT et al. 1940: 102). The *dBa' bzhed* does not relate the accounts regarding minister 'Gos given in the *sBa bzhed* except for a brief mention in the context of the construction of the minor temples of bSam yas (cf. folio 17a). Furthermore *dBa' bzhed* is the only source to claim that Ma zham khrom pa skyes was ‘buried alive’ in the framework of a ransom ritual.

⁷⁶ Mang yul was the gateway to Nepal and India. During the kingdom (and also afterwards) this was the main avenue of communication as witnessed by the accounts left by people who travelled back and forth, and by the Chinese inscription left there in 657 by Wang xuanze, an envoy of the Tang emperor, on his journey to India (PASANG WANGDU 1996: 56–63).

people inside in a disguised way (*gyod dang bsdos ste*) and the *Tshe* ritual was celebrated in this manner. In Ra mo che an old *hwa shang* was called and was asked to “show the way” (*lam bstan pa*)⁷⁸ to the two children. The *hwa shang* asked: “Do you prefer that both children be reborn as gods or as your sons?” The father replied that they should be reborn as gods. The mother requested that they should be reborn as her own sons. In the mouth of the girl the *hwa shang* placed a pearl the size of a pea of which one half was painted red (*mtshal chu*). Then a ritual was performed. Afterwards the *hwa shang* prophesied with the relevant omens: “The boy has ascended to the gods’ heaven. The girl will be reborn as your son.” In any single bone relics (*rus bu la gdung sha ri ram*)⁷⁹ appeared. One year afterwards, a son was born to dBa’ gSas (gSal) snang. Everybody could see that on his teeth he had a pearl which was half red. Forty days after his birth, [the boy] recognised his aunt and other people. (5b) He called them just as [he/she] used to do before dying. dBa’ gSas (gSal) snang received [religious] instructions from the *hwa shang* and used to practise them secretly. Then [dBa’ gSal snang] requested the bTsan po to be sent as a messenger to India and Nepal in order to look for the doctrine. After a careful evaluation he was appointed as the *so blon*⁸⁰ of Mang yul and proceeded there. Then, in India he worshipped Ma hā bo dhi and Shi le Na len tra and performed offerings, transgressing the former order by Ma zham which prohibited the practice of the holy doctrine. After performing the offerings, rain fell in the middle month of winter and leaves sprouted from the Ma hā bo dhi (*bodhivṛkṣa*) tree. In Nepal *sa rba wang se* (?)⁸¹ was performed. When support and offerings were given in the Hem khang gtsug lag khang a voice resounded from heaven saying: “May virtue be (*dge ’o*)!”. Two temples were built in Mang yul. The relevant maintenance was

⁷⁷ This is the only occasion on which dBa’ gSal snang is named in this form. In numerous later passages he is erroneously mentioned as gSas snang or dBa’ gSas snang.

⁷⁸ The expression *lam bstan pa* refers to the idea of showing the way to the deceased which was widespread at that time in the context of funerary rituals, cf. e.g. the text called *lHa yul du lam bstan pa* discussed by LALOU 1949: 42–48.

⁷⁹ *gDung sha ri ram* is a somewhat obscure expression. As *sha ril* is known to mean relic, in this context we interpret this expression accordingly (cf. also MACDONALD 1971: 371). *Sha ri ram* seems to be related to Skt. *sārīra* [= body], see RAMBLE 1982, MARTIN 1992. A ritual intended to ensure the rebirth of a dead child within the same family is discussed by BLONDEAU 1997.

⁸⁰ *So blon*, like the form *kha blon* given in *sBa bzhed B* (17), *sBa bzhed A* (10) and *sBa bzhed C* (306) indicates the position of governor of Mang yul.

⁸¹ *sBa bzhed B* (11) gives: *bal yul du ston mo srba wa se bgyis*; *sBa bzhed C* (306) gives *bal yul du ston mo sarba wa se bgyis*. *sTon mo* – not reported in the *dBa’ bzhed* – means feast and seems to indicate that the words render the Sanskrit or Newari name of some celebration.

provided for (*rkyen ris bcad*).⁸² The doctrines from all the masters of India and Nepal were learned. Upon request to the king of Nepal, mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa⁸³ was invited to Mang yul. He was offered food and he held his teachings in the house of dBa' gSas (gSal) snang. On being asked what [was demanded by him] for coming to Tibet (*bod yul du gshegs par ci gnang*)⁸⁴ to become the spiritual master of the Tibetan king, [mKhan po Bodhisattva] replied, "Present [me with] gifts [*i.e.* fees]!", whereafter dBa' gSal snang gave him everything, such as cosmetic ointments [*zo rid = zo rig?*], silk, brocade, woollen cloth (*snam gos*) and so on. Still [the mKhan po] demanded, "Grant [me] further offerings!" So, [dBa' gSal snang] offered all that he was wearing, even turban and belt. The mKhan po said, (6a) "Your bTsan po and you have both reached the right age for building a *gtsug lag khang*, to be called bSam yas lhun gyis grub, at Brag dmar, by the river Lo hi ta,⁸⁵ in front of the Khas po ri!⁸⁶ I will be acting as your spiritual master. As far as you are concerned, the fact that we know each other and that the Thought of Enlightenment was generated did not [first] occur in this life. Innumerable lives previously, you were my main disciple generating the Thought of Enlightenment and you were named Ye shes dbang po."⁸⁷ He placed his hand on the top of [dBa' gSal snang's] head and consented to give [him what he requested]. At that time a voice resounded from heaven saying: "May virtue be!" and a light appeared. Afterwards, the mKhan po returned all the offerings [which had been presented to him] without the exception of a single object and went back to Nepal. As [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang had expressed to the mKhan po his wish to see the face of

⁸² *rkyen ris* indicates collectively both land and people which were assigned as an estate in order to provide the means for maintenance. The meaning of this term comes close to that of *lha ris*.

⁸³ mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa is the usual title of Śāntarakṣita (ca. 723–787 A.D.).

⁸⁴ The expression *gshegs par [ci] gnang*, with the same meaning is found in late Dunhuang material, see e.g. PT 960 (1.61), *Li yul chos kyi lo rgyus*, EMMERICK 1967: 85–86. We are thankful to Prof. SØRENSEN for pointing out that this detail, like other features of the language of the *dBa' bzhed*, seems to reflect a transitional stage between archaic dynastic Tibetan and early classical/canonical Tibetan.

⁸⁵ Lo hi ta is reported by all versions and indicates the river Brahmaputra. *sBa bzhed* B (12), *sBa bzhed* A (12) and *sBa bzhed* C (306) indicate this river in connection with the locality called Byan kar/Byad dkar/Byan dkar. Lohita appears in numerous mythographical sources concerning Padmasambhava, e.g. in *Padma bka' thang* (368): Lo hi ta 'gram (the bank of Lohita, *i.e.* Brahmaputra). The river Ma ha lo hi ta also occurs in the biography of sGam po pa (*sGam po ba'i rnam thar* 179) as the river in the Land of Snow to the north of Bodhgayā in the framework of a prophecy generically quoted from *sūtra* and *tantra*. Lohita, meaning "red" probably alludes to the "muddy (red, brown) colour" of the Brahmaputra when flowing through India.

⁸⁶ Khas po ri, a form which is also given several times by *sBa bzhed* A (12 and further), apparently indicates the bSam yas Has po ri. *sBa bzhed* B (12 and further) and *sBa bzhed* C (306 and further) give the form Has po ri.

the bTsan po and [the mKhan po] had agreed, he arrived at the Slungs tshugs⁸⁸ palace. As soon as he prostrated in front of him, the bTsan po said, “If you do nothing else but practising the doctrine, doesn’t he (a powerful anti-Buddhist minister) banish you?” dBa’ gSas (gSal) snang replied: “I have been staying at the gate of Nepal, and this is [already] similar to exile.” Then [dBa’ gSal snang] was offered [by the king] left-over food (*phan = pham phabs gnang ba*). In a secret place [dBa’ gSal snang] explained to him in detail about the faculty of practising the holy doctrine; the reasoning; the positive qualities of the doctrine; the activities [as well as about] the mKhan po from Za hor, rightly called Bo de (dhi) sa twa, who was residing in Nepal. He had extraordinary abilities such as remembering former lives and was therefore requested to become the spiritual master of the bTsan po. So it was suitable to ask to meet him. (6b) The bTsan po said: “If you act like this, the *zhang blon* are likely to come to kill you! Thus the order [to invite the mKhan po] shall be given to [Zhang] Nya bzang⁸⁹ in order to allow you to escape to your home village for a short while.” Accordingly [dBa’] gSas (gSal) snang stayed in his village.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ This is the name which was given later to dBa’ gSal snang when he took his vows and this passage has a prophetic character in linking him to his previous incarnation.

⁸⁸ Slung tshugs is given as Rlung tshugs in *sBa bzhed* B (12), Rlung tshub in *sBa bzhed* A (12) and Rlung tshubs in *sBa bzhed* C (307).

⁸⁹ Nya bzang, mentioned later as Zhang Nya bzang and sNa nam Nya bzang (folio 9b), appears in the *sBa bzhed* versions and later sources as an active pro-Buddhist minister who participated in the elimination of Zhang Ma zham khrom pa skyes; cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 372. He seems to correspond to the minister identified as the translator Zhang rGyal nyen nya bzangs in *Ne’u chos ’byung* (22) and in *Bu ston chos ’byung* (208). Furthermore *IDe’u chos ’byung* (265) mentions a sNa nam rGyal nyer bzangs as a great minister with a deep knowledge of the doctrine, and *mKhas pa’i dga’ ston* (379) names him as sNa nam Khri bzungs nya bzang. They are all probably referring to the same person who belonged to the sNa nam clan and therefore had the title of *zhang*.

⁹⁰ The village of his family is mentioned in *sBa bzhed* B (10) as Ba lam Klags, in *sBa bzhed* A (8) as Ba lam Rlag and in *sBa bzhed* C (305) as Ba lam Glag. These seem to correspond to the Glag mentioned later by the *dBa’ bzhed* as the seat of a temple established by dBa’ gSal snang (cf. folio 15a) which is a locality in Ba lam. This is an area on the bank of the sKyid chu river between Tshal Gung thang and La mo which is still known by this name and belongs to sTag rtse rdzong, east of lHa sa. In the entries for 677 and 678 the Dunhuang Annals mention Ba lam as place where the corpse of the king Mang slong mang brtsan was kept, and in *IDe’u chos ’byung* (257) the place is listed among the *yul tshan* of dBus ru. Ba lam is reported as a locality to the east of lHa sa (*mKhas pa’i dga’ ston* 221); according to *IDe’u chos ’byung* (345) if one crosses a small pass from Ba lam one arrives at bSam yas. Glag also seems to indicate the locality Glag gi Pu chung, which is cited as an assembly place in the Dunhuang Annals’ entries for the years 674, 685 and 694 (BACOT et al. 1940: 15, 16, 17). Cf. also UEBACH 1987: 113.

When the king and the ministers (*rje blon*) gathered for the assembly,⁹¹ Zhang Nya bzang addressed them as follows, “The ancestor Srong btsan and the father [Khri lDe gtsug btsan], Son of God,⁹² introduced the holy doctrine. After [they] passed away, some evil *zhang blon*⁹³ persecuted [the doctrine]. The Chinese Śākyamuni idol had first arrived carried easily by one horseman, but when he was sent back to China 1,000 people tried to carry him in vain. When he was taken to Mang yul he could be carried just by two mules. The *zhang blon* who had persecuted the doctrine died in this life with endless suffering and all kinds of misfortunes occurred. According to the *phyag sbyid*⁹⁴ and the divination omen (*mo ltas*) of superior and inferior [people] which all correspond, the Chinese idol has been angered. Hence, there is a narrow-mindedness harming the body and the authority [of the bTsan po]. The Chinese idol should therefore be retrieved [from Mang yul] and be worshipped. It is propitious to do again as was done when the doctrine was practised by the father [Khri lDe gtsug btsan], Son of God.” The bTsan po commented, “The *zhang* has spoken truly. I think in the same way. *Zhang blon!* Keep this well in mind and discuss it accordingly.” When the king and the ministers (*rje blon*) gathered again, the bTsan po said (7a), “It is extremely unpropitious that Zhang Ma zham khrom pa skyes persecuted the holy doctrine. According to the words of Zhang Nya bzang, the Chinese idol should be brought back. And, as it has to be determined who is an expert of the doctrine in India and Nepal ‘*ben rdol* (?)’⁹⁵ call dBa’ gSas (gSal) snang!” After being called, dBa’

⁹¹ The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 5–8; *sBa bzhed* A 5–7; *sBa bzhed* C 300–302) mention that during the childhood of Khri Srong lde btsan a delegation comprising Sang shi and three other people was sent to find the doctrine in China. The account of the delegation travelling to China and returning to Tibet is related at this point (before the assembly for the rehabilitation of Buddhism) and another trip by sBa gSal snang and sBa Sang shi is given later. The *dBa’ bzhed* mentions only one trip to China later (folio 8b): after the bTsan po had sent back Śāntarakṣita because of the opposition by his ministers, a delegation comprising dBa’ gSal snang and ‘Ba’ Sang shi was sent to China to look for the doctrine. Chinese sources are silent on these events whereas they make extensive mention of the fact that around 730 the Chinese princess Jin cheng Gong zhu had sent a request for classical Confucian texts, and that after long discussions these were sent to Tibet (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 226–227).

⁹² *lHa sras*, *devaputra*. On this epithet of the Tibetan king cf. STEIN 1981: 244.

⁹³ *Zhang blon gdug pa can* is an expression used in this context from a Buddhist point of view to denounce the power of the ministers, which at times turned out to be greater than that of the king, particularly during his minority.

⁹⁴ *Phyag sbyid* is given as *phyag sprin* in *sBa bzhed* A (13) and in *sBa bzhed* C (311). *sBa bzhed* B (16) gives *chab srid*, which seems to be the only form that makes sense but it looks to some extent like a later correction. The expression meant here could correspond to the term *phyag spring* mentioned in the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan in a parallel passage: *phyag spring dang ltas shig ngan te*, perhaps indicating some instructions of divine origin mentioned in the context of the bad omens (*mKhas pa’i dga’ ston* 374).

⁹⁵ ‘*Ben rdol*, a small gloss added here, is quite obscure and has no correspondence in the *sBa bzhed* versions. The fact that here India is mentioned as rGya dkar, together with Nepal, suggests that the expression rGya’i lha denotes

gSas (gSal) snang stood in front of the king and was spoken to [accordingly]. [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang replied, "There is the son of the Za hor king, called Bo dhi sa twa, a learned man who once used to live in India and now stays in Nepal." Then [the bTsan po] ordered: "You cannot avoid calling him! Without going to your home village, set out for Nepal, talk to the king of Nepal, hand over also this letter-case of mine to him, and having managed to call the *mkhan po* of Za hor bring me the [positive] reply!" [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang went directly to Nepal and handed over the case containing the royal letter to the king of Nepal. After the mKhan po was asked to proceed to Tibet, he was invited to Mang yul. Then a messenger was sent to the palace, saying: "The mKhan po is on the way and now is staying in Mang yul". The bTsan po ordered the *nang 'khor* Lang 'gro sNang ra:⁹⁶ "You, together with gSas (gSal) snang, offer great service (*rim gro*) to the mKhan po and come together to lHa sa Pe har." Accordingly, [the mKhan po] came, bringing along a translator from Nepal as a servant. The mKhan po stayed at Ra sa Pe har (= vihāra) together with Lang 'gro sNang ra as his attendant. At that time the bTsan po resided in the Brag dmar palace⁹⁷ (7b). The mKhan po sent a messenger to prostrate in front of the bTsan po and to inquire about whether he should meet him immediately. [He was] asked: "Please, stay at Pe har for a while." The bTsan po suspected that there could be some black magic and evil spirits (*phra men*) from lHo bal⁹⁸ [in the doctrine

China as the place of origin of the statue. On the discussion concerning the interpretation of this term cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 364, 591–596.

⁹⁶ Lang 'gro sNang ra (later also Lang gro sNang ra): according to his title (*nang 'khor*) he was a common official in charge of internal affairs. He was sent to help dBa' gSal snang while the latter was engaged with the invitation of Śāntarakṣita. He met them in Mang yul and is the only person mentioned by name in this context, a difference from the *sBa bzhed*. *sBa bzhed* B (20) mentions Lang gro sNang ra together with sNyer rtag btsan ldong gzigs and sBrang rgyas legs gzigs; *sBa bzhed* A (16) mentions Lang 'gro sNang ra together with gNyer stag btsan ldong gzigs and 'Brang rgya ra legs gzigs; *sBa bzhed* C (314) mentions Lang gro sNang ra together with gNyer stag btsan gdong gzigs. Lang gro is the name of a clan originally from g.Yas ru in gTsang (*bKa' thang lde nga* 185) and appears in the Dunhuang Annals, e.g. for the years 723, 730, 742 (BACOT et al. 1940: 22, 24, 26). From this clan later stemmed the translator Lang gro dKon mchog 'byung gnas. On gNyer stag btsan ldong gzigs, who appears later during the Buddhist-Bon po debate and while starting the construction of bSam yas see n. 191. On sBrang rGyal sgra legs gzigs who is mentioned as one of the investigating ministers see n. 99.

⁹⁷ Brag dmar/mar is the name of the whole area including bSam yas and extending towards the north and north-west. Many ancient toponyms including among others royal residences and temples are to be located in this area. According to the Dunhuang Annals king Khri lDe gtsug btsan had his winter seat in Brag dmar and Brag dmar 'Om bu tshal for all but six years of the period between 707 and 747 (BACOT et al. 1940: 19–27). Khri Srong lde btsan was born here in 742 (BACOT et al. 1940: 26).

⁹⁸ lHo bal: a term appearing in numerous ancient textual sources and inscriptions. In a restricted sense, it might have meant the wild people inhabiting the southern Himalayan slopes (including what is now Nepal) but in a broader

of the mKhan po]” Then [the bTsan po] ordered Zhang blon chen po sBrang rGyal sbra (sgra) legs gzigs,⁹⁹ Seng 'go lHa lung gzigs¹⁰⁰ and 'Ba' Sang shi,¹⁰¹ “You three ministers, go to Ra sa

and more general sense the foreign people inhabiting any border region, according to Stein the “barbarians”. This term was applied even to the Chinese (cf. STEIN 1981: 251; 1983: 205–207; LI and COBLIN 1987: 106).

In this passage this term is associated with mysterious and dangerous local cults. In fact the term *phra men* refers to something related to evil spirits and witchcraft in the word *phru men ma* appearing in PT 443 and translated as “sorcières-déeses” by STEIN 1983: 187.

⁹⁹ sBrang rGyal sbra (sgra) legs gzigs is mentioned by the *sBa bzhed* as one of the people accompanying dBa' gSal snang (cf. n. 96). These sources give the name of other people as being in charge of this task: *sBa bzhed* B (20) sBa Legs gzigs, Seng mgo lHa lung gzigs, sBa Sang shi; *sBa bzhed* A (16) cites Sang shi, Seng 'go lHa lung gzigs, mChims Me lha; *sBa bzhed* C (315) names mChims Me lha, Seng mgo lHa lung gzigs, Sang shi. sBrang rGyal legs gzigs could correspond to the sBrang rGyal sgra leg zigs mentioned in the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 114–115) who led the army in a war towards the upper areas (sTod) under the reign of Khri Srong lde btsan. *IDE'u chos 'byung* (265) mentions the minister sBrang rGyal ra legs gzigs receiving the turquoise and gold insignia of rank. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* identifies him as sBrang g.yu pa rGyas legs gzigs, a minister who has received the gold insignia of rank (379). Both sources mention also that he is one of the seven/nine great ministers of the kingdom. So it seems that this minister had a very high position. The title of *zhang blon chen po* seems to be used here with a general honorific significance and not to identify him as a member of the uncle-minister clans.

¹⁰⁰ Seng 'go lHa lung gzigs is mentioned here as well as in all the *sBa bzhed* (cf. previous note). Differences in the orthography appear only in the syllable 'go/mgo. For the years 701, 719, 723, 731 and 745 the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 18, 22, 23, 24, 26) report ministers belonging to the Seng go clan, and the Dunhuang Chronicle states that Seng go Mi chen was the minister sent by gNam ri srong btsan to suppress the uprising in Dags po (BACOT et al. 1940: 106–107). The *dBa' bzhed* later mentions that he had the title sNam phyi ba. This title is reported by the inscription concerning the 821/822 Sino-Tibetan treaty among the common officials (LI and COBLIN 1987: 61).

¹⁰¹ 'Ba' Sang shi is mentioned in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions as a Chinese boy who was a skilful dancer (*rgya phrug gar mkhan*) and who was the son of a Chinese messenger called 'Ba' De'u. His name is given various forms: sBa Sang shi (*sBa bzhed* B 5, 13; *sBa bzhed* A 4, 5) and rBa Sang shi (*sBa bzhed* C 299, 307, 308). Furthermore he is reported as having been the playmate of Khri Srong lde btsan during his childhood and as having been sent to China in order to search for the doctrine. In a later passage, he is listed as one of the *sad mi* (*sBa bzhed* B 59; *sBa bzhed* A 50; *sBa bzhed* C 360) and in *sBa bzhed* A (50) as one of the participants in the great bSam yas debate. Concerning his name and his identity there is great confusion in the sources (cf. also TUCCI 1958: 11ff.). This person is mentioned as sBa Khri bzher sang shi ta (*sBa bzhed* A 50), Khri gzigs sang shi ta being the son of Khri bzher (*sBa bzhed* B 59) and according to *rBa bzhed che ba* cited by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 360) and 'Ba' Khri bzher sang shi ta (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 186, 208). The *sBa bzhed* and other sources identify Sang shi with dPal dbyangs, saying that he was also named Ratna as he was very precious to the king. However the attribution of a Tibetan clan-name and the identification of him as a Chinese boy seem to be contradictory, as pointed out in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (359–360). *dBa' bzhed* differentiates between 'Ba' Sang shi, dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na. 'Ba' Sang shi appears as a member of the investigating delegation concerning Śāntarakṣita, as a participant in the trip to China with dBa' dPal dbyangs, as one of the people contributing to the construction of bSam yas, as a speaker for the Tsen men pa in the great bSam yas debate and as one of the protagonists in the introduction of the doctrine under Khri Srong lde btsan together with the bTsan po himself, Śāntarakṣita and Ye shes dbang po/dBa' gSal snang. dBa' dPal dbyangs received this name when he was ordained as monk and was previously called dBa' lHa btsan, and he appears as a speaker in

Pe har (vihāra) to meet Ā tsā rya Bo dhi sa twa and prostrate in front of him. Then investigate whether I need to suspect the presence of black magic and evil spirits from lHo bal or not.” The three arrived at Ra sa Pe har (= vihāra). There was no translator. So, in six market-places it was ordered that each chief merchant (*tshong dpon*) had to search for a translator from Kashmir (Ka che) or Yang le.¹⁰² In the lHa sa market three people were found, namely, two Kashmiri lHa byin brothers and the Kashmiri A nan ta.¹⁰³ The two lHa byin brothers were unable to act as translators except for some language of trade. As far as A nan ta is concerned: he was the son of the Brahman sKyes bzang who had committed a serious crime and had been sent into exile to Tibet because according to the law of lHo bal Kashmir (lHo bal kha che) Brahmans could not be executed. [A nan ta] had studied the Brahman sacred scriptures (*gtsug lag*), grammar (*sgra*) and medicine, and was therefore able to translate the [language of the] doctrine. Thanks to the fact that he was translating, the doctrine was examined for two months. The concepts were extensively explained: it is certain that the holy doctrine follows the tradition of the *sūtra*; (8a) as far as all crimes are concerned, there is nothing which does not prevent them; as far as all good deeds are concerned, there is nothing which does not allow them to be done. As far as the benefit of all living beings is concerned, earnest application shall be dedicated to this and so on. And so [’Ba’] Sang shi and the others came to believe. Having arrived before the bTsan po, [they] said, “This mKhan po has not even the slightest proclivity to evil spirits or black magic and there should be no doubt [about this]”. Then Bo dhi sa twa was invited to Brag dmar. After finding a translator, as soon as he met the king the mKhan po said, “Do you know me?” The

the great bSam yas debate. dBa’ Rad na is mentioned as the son of dBa’ rMa gzig among the young people trained in the language of India, as a monk ordained by Śāntarakṣita, and he appears together with dBa’ dPal dbyangs in the row of the Tsen men pa during the great bSam yas debate. Regarding the possibility that ’Ba’ Sang shi could be a Chinese, the form ’Ba’, which is often used to render the Chinese name Ma – cf. PETECH 1988a: 281 – could be consistent with this hypothesis. However, this name also exists as a Tibetan clan and place name (e.g. ’Ba’ ra ba rGyal mtshan bzang po in *Deb ther dmar po* 11, ’Ba’ thang in eastern Tibet) and the text contains no hint that he might be a Chinese.

¹⁰² Yang le seems to indicate Yang le shod, the locality known in Nepali as Pharping, near Kathmandu. This place is mentioned as Yang la shod in PT 44 (BISCHOFF and HARTMAN 1971: 18, 21) in the context of the narrative concerning Padmasambhava.

¹⁰³ Ānanda is mentioned as translator in all the *sBa bzhed* versions. *Bu ston chos ’byung* (184, 185, 206), which names him as Paṇḍita A’ nanta, Ka che A’ nanta and Bram se A’ nanta, considers him as an important scholar and translator and accords him twelfth position in the list of scholars and translators. *lDe’u chos ’byung* (301) says that he was invited from Kashmir to Tibet during the final part of the reign of Khri Srong lde btsan in order to translate doctrinal texts together with other scholars from India, Nepal, etc. In *rGyal rabs gsal ba’i me long*, contrary to the *sBa bzhed/lBa’ bzhed* tradition, he appears in connection with the Bon po-Buddhist controversy (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 366).

bTsan po answered, “We have never met before.” The mKhan po added, “Did you forget that while adorning and guarding (*rgyan srung*) our temple at the time of the doctrine of Buddha 'Od srung, we prayed together that the holy doctrine might be established in Tibet?” [The bTsan po] replied, “After reflecting about my former lives from the very beginning, this is true” (?).¹⁰⁴ At that time, with A nan ta translating, the Ten Virtues and the Eighteen *khams* (*dhātu*) were explained [to the king] without any mistake for half a year.¹⁰⁵ Thus he acquired a firm faith that [the doctrine] was good. [The king] thought about translating many doctrinal treatises (*dar ma*)¹⁰⁶ of India, but then [the royal palace of] 'Phang thang¹⁰⁷ was flooded, the royal castle of lHa sa¹⁰⁸ was struck by lightning and burnt down, great famine as well as epidemics of people and animals occurred. All the great *zhang blon* considered [the calamities] as the consequence of practising the doctrine and [the bTsan po], growing suspicious, decided to abandon it for a short while. (8b) Then [the bTsan po] took Zhang Nya bzang and Seng 'go lHa lung gzigs as

¹⁰⁴ *gDod sngon gyi sku tshe snga ma dag dgongs nas de ltar mad ces gsung ngo*. The passage is rather obscure and the translation proposed here is tentative; the word *mad* [*pa*] in rare cases can mean “true” (*Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* 2056). This passage also appears in a slightly different form in *sBa bzhed* B (21), *sBa bzhed* A (17) and in the *Deb ther sngon po* (*Blue Annals* 1988: 38–39) as quoted from *sBa bzhed gtsang ma*.

At this point the *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 21; *sBa bzhed* A 17; *sBa bzhed* C 315) has Śāntarakṣita making a prophecy to Khri Srong lde btsan: “King! Considering the turban on your head, in the upper areas (sTod) there will be a domain as big as a hat; considering the feet to which people make prostrations, in the lower areas (sMad) there will be a domain as big as [a pair of] shoes; considering the fact that no belt is fastened to your body, the law of the country will soon decline. However as you made a precious offering, you will be able to practise the holy doctrine”. This prophecy is apparently a post-dynastic addition referring to the crisis of the kingdom.

¹⁰⁵ *sBa bzhed* B (21), *sBa bzhed* A (17), and *sBa bzhed* C (316) report that the teaching lasted for four months, that it included also the *dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda* and that it took place at the Rlung 'tshubs palace.

¹⁰⁶ Contrary to the *sBa bzhed*, the *dBa' bzhed* uses the form *dar ma* (cf. also folio 25a). This an ancient form for rendering the Sanskrit term *dharma* and the relevant doctrinal scriptures. It also occurs in Dunhuang documents (e.g. ms I.O. 370.5, cf. RICHARDSON 1977 and STEIN 1986: 173–174) and inscriptions (e.g. Khrom chen inscription, cf. PA TSHAB PA SANGS DBANG 'DUS 1997: 734). Later literature – when this term is not translated – usually gives the form *dharma* except when quoting from ancient material cf. e.g. *Nyang chos 'byung* MEISEZAHN folio 175a. On this term cf. also STEIN 1983: 182–183.

¹⁰⁷ 'Phang thang was one of the royal palaces in upper Yarlung. Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 113) mention the 'Phang thang khang mo che as the palace in which Khri lDe gtsug btsan met a messenger of Kag la pong, king of Mywa (cf. n. 53). A catalogue compiled here under Khri Srong lde btsan (742–802?) was called 'Phang thang dkar chag (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 417). At present this locality is called Pho brang and is located to the south-east of Yum bu bla sgang.

¹⁰⁸ lHa sa'i mkhar (also called lHa sa'i sku mkhar) indicates the castle located on the dMar po ri in lHa sa. In the corresponding passage the *sBa bzhed* mention only the dMar po ri. Legendary accounts report that Srong btsan sgam po had established a great castle on the dMar po ri (*bKa' 'chems ka khol ma* 144–145; *Yar lung chos 'byung* 53).

attendants (*zha 'bring*)¹⁰⁹ and [went to] the tent of mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa, where he prostrated three times towards him while he was staying in meditation. [The bTsan po], carrying one *bre* of gold dust¹¹⁰ offered it to the mKhan po who kept it on his lap and blessed it. [The bTsan po] acted in such a way for three nights and then said to the mKhan po, "I am very unfortunate; the whole of Tibet has been attracted to the Black (*i.e.* the non-Buddhist religion)¹¹¹ for a long time, so it is extremely difficult to reverse this. If the means are too limited, there can't be any success [in establishing the doctrine]. So, please return to Nepal for a short while. Later, as soon as I manage to convince the *zhang blon* by gradual and skilful means that it is not good to prohibit the doctrine, I will send you an invitation."¹¹² The god Śākyamuni, [taken to Tibet by] Mum shang Ong co, and the mKhan po were sent towards Nepal. At that time sNam phyi ba¹¹³ Seng 'go lHa lung gzigs, who had taken the vow of refraining from eating meat, drinking *chang* and even eating butter, accompanied them to Glang sna'i gru tshugs.¹¹⁴ Then Lang gro sNang ra and dBa' gSas (gSal) snang both accompanied the mKhan po to Nepal.

After returning to Tibet, [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang was ordered by the bTsan po to set out for China as a messenger in order to look for the doctrine. He was officially promised that if he had carried out what the bTsan po had in mind he would be granted the *dngrul chen po*

¹⁰⁹ The extant *sBa bzhed* versions report the name of five people accompanying the king. Except for the two people mentioned here the other three are: sBa gSal snang, sBa Sang shi and sNyer rtag btsan ldong gzigs (*sBa bzhed* B 22); sBa gSal snang, 'Ba' Sang shi and sNyer stag btsan ldong gzigs (*sBa bzhed* A 16); rBa gSal snang, Sang shi, gNyer sTag btsan (*sBa bzhed* C 316).

¹¹⁰ Gold seemed to abound in Tibet and it was a common custom to offer gold as a sign of respect to religious authorities. The Dunhuang Annals concerning the year 708 (BACOT et al. 1940: 20) mention that the king received many tributes in gold.

¹¹¹ The opposition black/white is of ancient origin and is still used in Tibet. In this case, of course, white is the Buddhist side and black the Bon po. Black as the non-Buddhist and negative is to be found up to the present day in the interpretations of local rituals and customs as well as in defining certain categories of Bon from the Buddhist point of view.

¹¹² At this point in the *sBa bzhed* there is an account of how Śāntarakṣita commented that during the time of the predecessors of the king the doctrine could not be properly established because the local spirits had not been subdued and had caused all kinds of harm. He therefore suggested that the great master Padmasambhava be invited to carry out this task. In future there would be no fights between Buddhists and non-Buddhists, only debates within the Buddhist community (*sBa bzhed* B 22–23; *sBa bzhed* A 18; *sBa bzhed* C 316–317).

¹¹³ sNam phyi ba is the title of a common official, as mentioned in the Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821/822 (LI and COBLIN 1987: 61). Seng go Mi chen is reported in the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 106) as having this title during the reign of gNam ri song btsan.

¹¹⁴ Glang sna'i gru tshugs seems to be a locality in the border region.

[insignium].¹¹⁵ The bTsan po discussed skilfully with the *zhang blon* the practice of the doctrine and then sent [to China] thirty people, officials and servants. Among them, sBrang gTsang bzher [was appointed] as the *khad dpon*, 'Ba' Sang shi as the 'og *dpon*, dBa' gSas (gSal) snang as the *spyang dbang*.¹¹⁶ (9a) At that time, when they were in Tibet preparing [their trip] and were about to leave, somebody called Gyim Hwa shang¹¹⁷ who was Thi Itag (?) of a lineage of seven Chinese *hwa shang* patriarchs and was residing at Eg chu,¹¹⁸ said, "In four months the *dbang po* of Eg tshe (chu?)¹¹⁹ will be approached by some Tibetan messengers, and among them there will be two emanations of *bodhisattva*. Their features and behaviour will look like this" and [he] drew a picture of ['Ba'] Sang shi and [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang and left [the portrait] there. It is also said that there

¹¹⁵ *dNgul chen po* indicates an insignium of rank. *lDe'u chos 'byung* (266–267) reports a list of six higher insignia indicated by 'letters' written in different precious substances: turquoise, gold, precious stones; each category was further subdivided into big and small. The six lower insignia of rank were indicated by 'letters' written in silver, brass, 'khar ba' (?), copper, iron and wood (*shing skya chu ri*). *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (190) gives six categories with each being subdivided into two subcategories: the highest are gold and turquoise, the middle were silver and precious stones (*phra men*), the lower were copper and iron. Cf. also DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 285; LALOU 1955; STEIN 1984; LI and COBLIN 1987: 175.

¹¹⁶ Like the delegation to China in the time of Srong btsan sgam po (cf. folio 2b), this delegation is headed by a *khad dpon*, a 'og *dpon* and a *spyang dbang*. The *dBa' bzhed* mentions only this trip to China, while according to the extant *sBa bzhed* versions this is the second trip. The members of the delegation are the same, except for sBrang rgya ra legs gzigs mentioned by *sBa bzhed* A (18) instead of sBrang gTsang bzher. The title *spyang dbang* is given as *spyang pa* in *sBa bzhed* B (23) and *sBa bzhed* C (317) and as *spyang sa* by *sBa bzhed* A (18).

¹¹⁷ Gyim Hwa shang has been identified by several scholars with Jin he shang, a Korean Chan master, Musang (Ch. Wu xiang), who lived 694–762 and was residing in Chengdu, cf. SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989: 62; YANAGIDA 1983: 18, 193; DEMIÉVILLE 1978: 47 and 1979: 4–5, 7, 12; YAMAGUCHI 1973. This person is mentioned by the *sBa bzhed* as Kim/Nyi ma/Ki ya hwa shang, the monk possessing the faculty of prescience, during the trip to China by Sang shi while Khri Srong lde btsan was still a child (*sBa bzhed* B 7; *sBa bzhed* A 6; *sBa bzhed* C 307).

¹¹⁸ Eg chu renders a Chinese toponym. Prof. Petech indicated that Eg (chu/tshe) transcribes a Chinese character that is currently read as "i" but was pronounced as "iäk" in the 7th century. The Tibetan term given here seems to render the toponym I-chou which used to define the central district of Sichuan until the Tang dynasty. Eg chu has also been identified with Yi zhou, the ancient name of Chengdu (DEMIÉVILLE 1979: 4) which would be consistent with the identification of Gyim Hwa shang. Perhaps the toponym could also correspond to a Chinese locality called Wei zhou, located to the north-west of Chang an which, according to Chinese sources (*Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6087; DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 171), was seized by the Tibetans in 762 together with a large area to the west of the capital. Today this locality is called Pingliang and belongs to Ningxia Hui Zu Autonomous Region. This alternative is more fitting with a shorter itinerary for the voyage to China but contradicts the identification of Gyim Hwa shang given above.

¹¹⁹ Eg chu dBang po is not mentioned by the *sBa bzhed*. *dBang po* is a Tibetan title mentioned together with that of general (*dmag dpon*) and 'outer' minister (*phyi blon*) in the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 412). According to Uray this term can be glossed as governor. It was also used to indicate the governors of Chinese regions occupied by the Tibetans (URAY 1990: 419–433).

was an expert of the scriptures (*gtsug lag mkhan mkhas pa*)¹²⁰ [concerning astrology] staying with the *dbang po* of Bum sangs¹²¹ and that every day he made astrological calculations according to the scriptures. [The expert] said to the *dbang po* that a group of messengers was on the way from the west and that they would arrive at Bum sangs after a certain number of months and days. Among the messengers there would be two *bodhisattva* emanations with particular features, and he drew a picture of them.¹²² Then the *dbang po* of Bum sangs sent a message to the emperor reporting what had been said by the expert of the scriptures. [The emperor] ordered, “If the two Tibetan messengers who look like the portrait arrive, they are to be given a great reception.” When the Tibetan messengers arrived in China, they were compared with the two portraits as well as the words of Gyim Hwa shang and the scriptural expert. As both ‘Ba’ Sang shi and dBa’ gSas (gSal) snang had the appropriate features and so, they were offered a great reception, and were taken by carriage and assigned dwellings (*lding khang*) of silk [inside the carriage]. The *khad dpon* and the other messengers were riding on horses. They [all] arrived at Eg chu,¹²³ then prostrated to the *dbang po* of Eg chu and spoke [to him]. On the way out [of his residence?] [they] met Gyim Hwa shang. Gyim Hwa shang prostrated to [‘Ba’] Sang shi, touching his feet. [‘Ba’] Sang shi in his turn prostrated to [Gyim] Hwa shang and touched his feet. (9b) [Gyim] Hwa shang prophesied to [‘Ba’] Sang shi, “You are an emanation of a *bodhisattva* called rTa rgod skad, I prostrate to you because you, Bodhisattva, will spread the doctrine of Mahāyāna in the country of Tibet and you will establish the holy doctrine [there].” ‘Ba’ Sang shi in his turn prostrated [to Gyim Hwa shang] and said, “I have it in mind to tell the Son of God about the practice of the holy doctrine in the country of Tibet. If the Emperor of China in Keng shi, upon the relevant request, gives one thousand volumes of Mahāyāna *sūtra* and [these] reach Tibet, it is not [yet] appropriate to talk to the bTsan po who is still too young. When he reaches the age for discussing the practice of

¹²⁰ *sBa bzhed* B (22), *sBa bzhed* A (19), and *sBa bzhed* C (317) report that this person was *ju zhag mkhas pa* which seems to mean an expert in astrology, divination, etc.

¹²¹ *Bum sangs kyi dbang po* indicates the governor (*dbang po*) of a locality called Bum sangs. *sBa bzhed* B (23) and *sBa bzhed* C (317) mention *rGya’i pho nya Bum sangs dBang po*, meaning the Chinese messenger Bum sangs dBang po. *sBa bzhed* A (19) has *rGya rje’i spyan snga na Bum sangs dBang po*, “Bum sangs dBang po at the presence of the Chinese emperor”.

¹²² A parallel account mentioning Bum sangs dBang po and the prophetic portrait occurs in the *sBa bzhed* during the trip of the first delegation to China under the leadership of Sang shi. A further parallel passage mentioning Bum sangs dBang po and a prophetic portrait appears on the occasion of the trip of the second delegation in which both gSal snang and Sang shi participated.

the holy doctrine, shall I already be dead or not?" [Gyim] Hwa shang prophesied, "Your bTsan po is the *bodhisattva* who will give the holy doctrine to Tibet. A few years from now, when he has reached adulthood he will make a proposal (*bka' rmed pa*) concerning the annihilation of the non-Buddhist religion (*mu stegs kyi chos*). In that situation you shall argue accordingly!"¹²⁴ In such a way ['Ba'] Sang shi obtained many prophetic instructions. [Gyim Hwa shang continued:] "sNa nam Nya bzang,¹²⁵ mChims Mes slebs¹²⁶ and Seng mgo lHa lung gzigs,¹²⁷ these three, will become the *gnang chen*. At that time, (10a) since [you have] karmic relations with these three people from former lives, you shall teach them the doctrine first. After the faith is born in the three of them, the four of you shall unite.¹²⁸ When the bTsan po has reached his majority and makes a proposal concerning [the annihilation of] the non-Buddhist religion,¹²⁹ you shall reply [adequately]. You should accordingly first relate [to the bTsan po] the *Las rnam par 'byed pa* (*Karmavibhaṅga*),¹³⁰ at a middle stage the *Sa lu ljang pa* (*Śālistamba*),¹³¹ and finally the *rDo rje gcod pa* (*Vajracchedika*).¹³² After faith is born [in the bTsan po], [the

¹²³ The locality mentioned here as Eg chu is given as Keng shi in *sBa bzhed* B (24) and in *sBa bzhed* C (318) in a parallel passage concerning the trip to China made by the second delegation.

¹²⁴ A parallel prophecy appears in the *sBa bzhed* in a passage concerning the trip of the first delegation, comprising 'Ba' Sang shi, to China (*sBa bzhed* B 7; *sBa bzhed* A 7; *sBa bzhed* C 302).

On the use of the term *mu stegs* in Dunhuang documents for indicating non-Buddhist practices and ritual specialists cf. STEIN 1983: 173.

¹²⁵ See n. 90.

¹²⁶ mChims Mes slebs is mentioned in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions as one of the ministers investigating together with Seng go lHa lung gzigs and Sang shi (*sBa bzhed* A 16, *sBa bzhed* C 315). *sBa bzhed* B (20) mentions his name in the same context but it is not clear whether he participated in the investigation or not.

¹²⁷ See n. 90.

¹²⁸ The passage "sNa nam Nya bzang ... you shall join" is not given in the *sBa bzhed*, whereas a parallel prophecy is mentioned in *sBa bzhed* B (7), cf. n. 117.

¹²⁹ *Mu stegs kyi chos* [*shig*] *bka' rmad pa'i tshé*. This passage is parallel to the previous one and apparently the proposal concerning the non-Buddhist religion implies its annihilation. A parallel prophecy is given in *sBa bzhed* B (7), cf. also n. 117.

¹³⁰ *Las rnam par 'byed pa* is mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 280 as *Las rnam par 'byed pa chung ngu* (LALOU 1953: 325) and is mentioned in the catalogue of Bu ston in the *sūtra* part (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 216). This text is mentioned by NISHIOKA 1980: n. 103 as corresponding to P 1005 and as "a non-extant early translation"; cf. SZERB 1990b: 17.

¹³¹ *mDo Sa lu ljang pa* is mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 180 (LALOU 1953: 323).

¹³² *rDo rje gcod pa* is mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 9 (LALOU 1953: 319) and in the catalogue of Bu ston as having been corrected during the Great Revision (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 216).

situation] will be propitious for the practice of the doctrine. As soon as [the situation] is good, the *mkhan po* of Za hor, called Bo dhi sa twa, who has been residing in Nepal, shall be invited to become the spiritual master of Tibet. This is the *mkhan po* for the conversion of Tibet!" Then the messengers went to Keng shi. It is said that at that time, since the rumour had spread that two [among them] were emanations of *bodhisattva*, all faithful *hwa shang* and Chinese subjects gathered around them like a cloud and offered their worship to the messengers who were staying in the dwelling (*lding khang*) [inside the carriage]. They were warmly welcomed by everybody and accompanied to Keng shi. At that time the Emperor of China [decorated the capital and] had all walls, pillars and roofs covered with silk and received them. Incense was burnt, music was played and the greatest delight was shown. The Emperor of China said [to dBa' gSal snang and 'Ba' Sang shi]: "It is certain that you are both emanations of *bodhisattva*. Even if you had gone to Ke'u li (Korea?), you would not be eaten by [the wild animals of] Ke'u li and you would be honoured.¹³³ You are the two *bodhisattva* who should have arrived around this time according to the expert in scriptures [on astrology] of Bum sangs. (10b) Even Gyim Hwa shang prostrated to you. The Buddha prophesied that a spiritual master for the practice of the holy doctrine would appear in a time close to the last [period of] 500 years¹³⁴ in the country of the Red-faced.¹³⁵ According to your behaviour you are [the prophesied master] without any

The passage referring to the specific doctrines taught to the king is given here as part of the prophecy by Gyim Hwa shang. In the *sBa bzhed* these three texts are offered to 'Ba' Sang shi by the Hwa shang with the faculty of pre-science during his first trip to China.

¹³³ Ke'u li'i glungs (klung?) is mentioned as Ki'u li te gcan zan 'phrang in *sBa bzhed* B (6), as Ki'u li'u yi 'phrang in *sBa bzhed* A (6), and as Ke'u le gcan gzan 'phrang in *sBa bzhed* C (310). Prof. Petech suggests that Ke'u li could indicate Kao-li, i.e. Korea (the pronunciation in the 7th century was "Kau-ljie"), and more specifically the kingdom which comprised north Korea and southern Manchuria (Liao-tung). The wild animals mentioned in the text might have indicated the Manchurian tigers that used to be common in that area.

¹³⁴ *INga brgya tha ma* refers to the five thousand years of existence of the doctrine, subdivided into ten periods of five hundred years, each with a specific name related to the practice of the Buddhist doctrine (cf. *Bu ston chos 'byung* 134–136). This date, established by Buddhaghōṣa and his school in the sixth century in Ceylon and adopted in Pāli chronicles and commentaries, was used as the basis of chronological calculation in Tibetan historical sources (MACDONALD 1963: 63–64; SØRENSEN 1994: 491). It is said that in the last of these periods the doctrine will decline. The last five hundred years are also known in the literature as *rtags tsam 'dzin pa*, i.e. "merely wearing the marks/insignia (of Dharma)", i.e. the period of hypocrisy.

¹³⁵ According to a prophecy given in *Nyang chos 'byung* (165) as quoted from the *IHa mo dri ma med pa'i 'od kyis zhus pa'i mdo*, 2,500 or [2,]800 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Buddha the holy doctrine would first appear (*dbu brnyes*), be introduced (*srol gtod*), prosper (*dar zhing rgyas pa*) and become firmly established in the land of the Red-faced ones. Unfortunately this text has not survived and the version reported in the Canon does not contain the prophecy. On the relevant discussion cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 154.

doubt.”¹³⁶ [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang replied: “I met the emperor in person and was delighted with incomparably beautiful words. As no present is greater than this, I do not ask you for anything but to be introduced to a *hwa shang* who practises meditation.” Gyim Hwa shang was called from Eg chu by sending a quick messenger, riding a *gor bu* (horse?) of the Emperor of China. From him instructions and precepts concerning meditation were obtained. Then [the Emperor of China] presented ['Ba'] Sang shi, [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang and the other messengers with a suit of armour of Chinese *be'u shog* (?), 50 bolts (*yug*) of silk, a tub of 100 *srang* and some birds made of inlaid precious stones (*phra men*), 10 rosaries of pearls measuring 1 'dom¹³⁷ each, 1 great bolt (*yug*) of silk, 1 gold tub some 2 'dom in circumference decorated with the five jewels, and so on. Then the messenger carrying the answer [from the Emperor of China to the bTsan po of Tibet] returned to Tibet.¹³⁸

After the bTsan po had skilfully discussed matters with the *zhang blon*, it was decided that the holy doctrine could be practised. After returning from China [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang prostrated in front of the bTsan po. It was decided that Bo dhi sa twa was to be invited [again], so [dBa' gSal snang] proceeded to Mang yul. (11a) Bo dhi sa twa suggested that Pad ma sa[m] bha ba should be invited to Tibet.¹³⁹ For the foundations of bSam yas and lCe ti sgo mangs,¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ The speech by the emperor is parallel to a similar speech mentioned by the *sBa bzhed* concerning the first trip to China by Sang shi (*sBa bzhed* B 6–7; *sBa bzhed* A 6; *sBa bzhed* C 301). It is further reported that at that time Sang shi received one thousand golden texts of the doctrine.

¹³⁷ A 'dom is a unit of measure of length indicated by the outstretched arms, from the tip of the middle finger of one hand to the tip of the middle finger of the other, *i.e.* one fathom.

¹³⁸ The final part concerning the trip to China is parallel to what is given in the *sBa bzhed* concerning the trip to China by the second delegation (*sBa bzhed* B 10, *sBa bzhed* A 20). There are however some differences in the details: 1 gold tub of some 2 'dom of circumference decorated with the five jewels is given only by the *dBa' bzhed*; *rgya hyi'u gse shog brgya srang* is mentioned instead of the *rgya'i be'u shog khrab* of the *dBa' bzhed*. The *rgya'i be'u shog* (*hya'u gshogs?*) *khrab* could be a coat of mail that gave the appearance of partially superimposed rows of feathers. Armour matching this description is listed in the pentaglot dictionary (Tibetan, Uighur, Manju, Mongolian, Chinese) by WU-TI QING WEN-JIAN (*sKad-lnga shan-sbyar mandzu'i skad gsal ha'i me-long*, 3 vols., Beijing 1957, Vol. I: 1040). Together with the coat of armour the precepts are mentioned a second time; however small marks reveal that this was a simple mistake by the copyist.

¹³⁹ Here Śāntarakṣita suggests the invitation of Padmasambhava in a rather concrete and pragmatic way. Not many words are spent on this. In contrast, the *sBa bzhed* versions mention this suggestion in the context of a prophecy given by Śāntarakṣita before leaving Tibet the first time, cf. n. 112.

¹⁴⁰ *lCe ti* (= *lca ti*) stands for caitya, thus the many-door type of *mchod rten* is indicated here and seems to correspond to the Ca ti sgo mang of bSam yas, considered to have been built in order to suppress a demon, cf. e.g. KARMAY 1972: 160, 162, 164, 178, 320, 322–23.

[Bodhisattva, Padmasambhava and] a *phy[w]a mkhan*,¹⁴¹ these three, were requested by [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang to proceed by water (*rlungs* for *chu klung?*).¹⁴² On his arrival at sNyi mo thod kar,¹⁴³ Pad ma sam bha ba said, "There is a *nyi tshe ba* hell¹⁴⁴ on tomorrow's route, and I have to show compassion for this". Then he arrived at sNam,¹⁴⁵ a place with boiling water. [Padmasambhava] meditated for one morning and threw a *gtor ma* into the water. The water calmed down and the steam stopped for three nights. Then, passing through Gal ta la,¹⁴⁶ the mKhan po (Padmasambhava)¹⁴⁷ said: "There is a wicked white *nāga*-child which does not allow the practice of the doctrine in the country of Tibet. It needs to be subdued and bound by oath. In its vicinity there is a further *nyi tshe ba* hell (Pratyekanaraka),¹⁴⁸ and there too, compassion must be shown." Afterwards, he arrived at sNying drung.¹⁴⁹ All the strong winds said: "Let's see the fight (*thab*) against the mKhan po." The mKhan po boiled the carcass of a bull in a copper cauldron, then he put his foot on top of it and made it disappear. Then, a cloud appeared on the snowy top of Thang lha¹⁵⁰ in the middle month of winter. Wild flashes of lightning and thunder-claps came. Hail and round snowflakes fell [from the sky]. From then onwards, the area in that direction was brought into subjection and, even though they went on fighting, [the

¹⁴¹ *Phya/phywa mkhan* indicates an expert in both construction planning as well as in the relevant divination. The form *phywa mkhan* occurs again later.

¹⁴² *sBa bzhed* B (25) and *sBa bzhed* A (20) say that a channel was made and he travelled by water. According to *sBa bzhed* C (322) a raft was made and he travelled by water. The expression *rlungs la drangs* therefore is likely to stand for *klung la drang*, indicating that he travelled by water or at least that he followed the river.

¹⁴³ sNyi mo thod kar seems to be a locality in sNye mo, an area located in gTsang but bordering on dBus. During the Tibetan kingdom it used to belong to g.Yas ru. Thod kar is an ancient name which is still used to indicate either a person or a geographical feature, e.g. a mountain. In sNye mo we could not identify a corresponding locality.

¹⁴⁴ *Nyi tshe ba'i dmyal ba* are the hells surrounding the hot and cold hell realms that experience happiness and suffering during day and night alternately (TSEPAK RIGZIN 1993: 94).

¹⁴⁵ sNam seems to be a locality to the south-west of lHa sa which is even now called gNam. *sBa bzhed* B (26) and *sBa bzhed* C (322) give gNam.

¹⁴⁶ *sBa bzhed* B (26) and *sBa bzhed* C (323) give Gal te la, *sBa bzhed* A (21) gives Gal ta la.

¹⁴⁷ In this text the title *mkhan po* is not only for Śāntarakṣita but also for Padmasambhava. In later sources Padmasambhava is usually given the title *slob dpon* and Śāntarakṣita that of *mkhan po*. Together with the king (*chos rgyal*), the three of them are called *mkhan slob chos gsum*.

¹⁴⁸ See n. 144.

¹⁴⁹ sNying drung, mentioned by all *sBa bzhed* versions, is located in 'Dam. In fact it is also called 'Dam sNying drung. This locality has kept its name and is still identifiable in the vicinity of present-day Damshung, to the north of lHa sa. It is also mentioned in the Dunhuang Annals in the entry for the year 658 (BACOT et al. 1940: 14).

¹⁵⁰ See nn. 72, 151, 406.

winds] were meeker than before. (11b) Then, in sNying drung he meditated for three days and threw *gtor ma* into the boiling water. The steam stopped and the water calmed down.¹⁵¹ After one month the mKhan po (Padmasambhava) arrived at the royal palace and prostrated to the bTsan po.¹⁵² Then Bo dhi sa twa told the bTsan po: “Once upon a time, when bCom ldan 'das was dwelling in the world, there was no one among all the gods and the *nāga* of 'Dzam bu gling who was not bound by the order of the Buddha. However, in this land of Tibet gods and *nāga* have escaped [from] control and seem to have prevented the bTsan po from practising the holy doctrine. At present, nobody in 'Dzam bu gling possesses greater powers in the use of the *mantra* than the *mkhan po* of U rgyan,¹⁵³ called Pad ma sa[m] bha ba. Last year [calamities occurred] such as the flood in Phang thang, and the royal castle of lHa sa burnt down, and wicked gods and *nāga* have been hindering the practice of the doctrine on the part of the bTsan po. This master of *mantra* can perform the mirror-divination (*pra phab*)¹⁵⁴ of the Four Great Kings (rGyal chen bzhi) and make the relevant interpretation. If most of the wicked gods and *nāga* are subdued, bound by oath and firmly instructed, the land will become peaceful. So, this master of the *mantra* is capable of letting the holy doctrine be practised in future.¹⁵⁵ In ancient times, when the doctrine had [just] arrived in China, during the reign of the Emperor of China, Eg men

¹⁵¹ The account concerning the miraculous trip of Padmasambhava is only mentioned briefly here and seems to culminate in the subjugation of Thang lha. The extant *sBa bzhed* versions give numerous other miracles and relevant localities comprising 'U yug, 'Phan yul, sTod lung, bTsun mo 'phrang, Zung skar 'phrang. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (319–324) adds to the reported *rBa bzhed*'s account some excerpts from the vast mythology concerning Padmasambhava given in other sources, generically cited as *rnam thar* and *lo rgyus*.

¹⁵² The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 27; *sBa bzhed* A 21–22; *sBa bzhed* C 324) report that the king did not accept the prostration of somebody who had taken vows and that it was he who prostrated himself to Padmasambhava. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (321) comments that some sources say that Khri Srong lde btsan did not prostrate to Padmasambhava, but that these must be erroneous additions because the custom of prostrating is very ancient, and that even in India Brahmans do not prostrate to kings. In Tibet it only happened once that monks prostrated to a lay official, in the time of Sa skya dpon chen Śākya bzang po. And even then two monks refused: 'U yug pa and Shar Rin pa. However, Chinese documents from Dunhuang regarding the bSam yas debates report that in both accounts the Hwa shang Mahāyāna shows great respect and prostrates to the king (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 110).

¹⁵³ U rgyan, Oḍḍiyāna, is considered to be the place of origin of Padmasambhava and is now positively identified with the area of Swat in northern Pakistan.

¹⁵⁴ On mirror-divination cf. OROFINO 1994: 612–628; NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1993: 462–464.

¹⁵⁵ The long speech by Śāntarakṣita (including the presentation of Padmasambhava, the debate proposed as a means for solving religious conflicts and a hint concerning the construction of the temple) presents a few parallel features with the comparable speech by Śāntarakṣita, mentioned in a different position in the *sBa bzhed*, cf. n. 112.

te,¹⁵⁶ the three Indian spiritual masters, 'Ba' ting, Bha rlan ta and Kam shang, were preaching the doctrine at Ge g sar (?). (12a) At that time the Chinese followers of non-Buddhist traditions became jealous and therefore competed with all the Indian spiritual masters in performing miracles (*rdzu 'phrul*) and in religious logical reasoning (*chos kyi gtan tshigs*). As they were unable to defeat the Indian spiritual masters in either, all believed in the excellence of the holy doctrine, which has been firmly established in China up to the present day.¹⁵⁷ Now, if the holy doctrine is to be practised in this land of Tibet, [you] should act in the same way. In this case, all people of Tibet will believe and the holy doctrine will be firmly established. I will be able to compete in religious logical reasoning, while the master of the *mantra* from U rgyan will be able to compete with all the Tibetan followers of non-Buddhist traditions in performing miracles. Practising the holy doctrine in such a way, all people, both of higher and lower rank, will believe and the doctrine will be firmly established for ever. In accordance with my decision to act on behalf of the holy doctrine in such a way, a temple shall be built as a symbol of the three jewels. For the construction [of the temple], there is no builder more capable than this Nepalese expert (*phywa mkhan*)¹⁵⁸ who knows about temples and *lce ti (caitya)* with the proper standard characters."¹⁵⁹ This was the subject of the discussion held by the two *mkhan po* and action was taken accordingly. That day the mKhan po (Padmasambhava) performed a mirror-divination to *gZims mal ba nang chen* Seng mgo lHa lung 'tsho bzher gnyan legs¹⁶⁰ and pronounced the name of all the gods and *nāga* which had caused the flood of 'Phang thang, the fire of the lHa sa castle, the epidemics among people and cattle and the famines. Then calling the names and the clans of all the wicked [gods and *nāga*], these were summoned to the presence [of Padmasambhava]. (12b)

¹⁵⁶ The name Eg men te looks like a reconstruction of a Chinese name and seems to indicate the Han emperor Ming-di (ruling A.D. 58–75), who was considered by legends to be the initiator of Buddhism in China. Buddhism seems to have first appeared in China under Guangwudi (A.D. 25–57), the first emperor of the Eastern Han dynasty.

¹⁵⁷ The introduction of Buddhism to China and the fact that debates were used to solve the rivalry with non-Buddhist traditions is given here as a reference and as an example to follow. However, there are no parallel passages in the *sBa bzhed*, and the people and the events mentioned in this context remain obscure.

¹⁵⁸ See n. 140.

¹⁵⁹ At the end of the speech *sBa bzhed* B (28–29) mentions a miraculous story of Padmasambhava performing rituals at [Brag dmar] mGrin bzang in which gods appeared and disappeared. This story is not given in the *dBa' bzhed*.

¹⁶⁰ *gZims mal ba* is the title of the person in charge of the royal private quarters (sometimes translated as chamberlain or as officer of the bed-chamber). The title *gzims dpon* was later used to indicate the monk-official in charge of the private quarters of a high *bla ma*. *Nang chen* is the abbreviated form of *nang 'khor chen po* and indicates the common official in charge of internal affairs. *sBa bzhed* B (29), *sBa bzhed* A (23), and *sBa bzhed* C (325) give *gZims mal ba* lHa lung 'tsho zher/bzher snyan legs.

They were transformed into human beings and severely threatened by Pad ma sa[m] bha ba. With the help of a translator Ā tsā rya Bo dhi sa twa taught them in Tibetan the doctrine of cause and effect and made the truth evident. Afterwards mKhan po Padma sa[m] bha ba told [the bTsan po]: “Henceforth, practise the holy doctrine as you like in the country of Tibet! The gods and *nāga* have been bound by oath but such a ritual for giving orders to the gods and *nāga* and binding them by oath must be performed twice more.”¹⁶¹

Later, as the bTsan po was washing his hair and the mKhan po¹⁶² heard about this, he asked where the water used for washing the head of the bTsan po had been taken from. bZhes zla¹⁶³ answered that it had been taken from the rTsang chab¹⁶⁴ river of 'Om bu tshal. The mKhan po said: “This is of no use. There is a spring called rTa ma¹⁶⁵ on the top of the Ri rab. If the water for washing the bTsan po's hair is taken from there, this will bring him long life and high political authority.” Then mKhan po Pad ma sa[m] bha wa took one empty silver vase shaped like a bird¹⁶⁶ and with the images of the eight auspicious articles (*bkra shis rdzas brgyad*)¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ By means of the mirror-divination Padmasambhava identifies the local gods which are then summoned and subdued by a ritual. According to the *dBa' bzhed* this ritual should be repeated twice again in future. A parallel passage is given in the *sBa bzhed* B (29), *sBa bzhed* A (23–24), and *sBa bzhed* C (325–326). However this mentions that Padmasambhava managed to perform the ritual twice and that he still needed to repeat it once in order to conclude the taming of the local deities. Furthermore the *sBa bzhed* also mentions the taming of the Klu of Zu[r/l/d] phug rKyang bu tshal and Yar lha sham po as well as some *homa* rituals which are not reported in *dBa' bzhed*.

¹⁶² According to the context it is not clear whether the mKhan po is Padmasambhava or Śāntarakṣita. The extant *sBa bzhed* versions report that mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa (Śāntarakṣita) spoke these words whereas Slob dpon Padmasambhava (*sBa bzhed* B 30, *sBa bzhed* A 24) or mKhan po Padmasambhava (*sBa bzhed* C 326) performed the relevant magic action after saying that he could carry it out.

¹⁶³ bZhes zla seems to indicate a close servant of the king.

¹⁶⁴ rTsang chab indicates the Brahmaputra river which is often known as gTsang chab and Yar chab. 'Om bu tshal is the well-known Tamarisk Grove of Brag dmar. This locality is mentioned as a royal residence in the Dunhuang Annals, in the entries concerning year 731, 732, 733, 734, 735 (BACOT et al. 1940: 24–25), cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 561.

¹⁶⁵ *rTa rna*, i.e. “horse-ears”, is known as the Tibetan form for Aśvakaṃṇa, one of the Golden Mountains around Mt. Meru/Ri rab. In this legendary story it has turned into a spring on top of Meru.

¹⁶⁶ In the expression *ngul gyi bya bum* indicating the silver vase, the words *bya bum* seem to mean that the vase had the shape of a bird.

¹⁶⁷ According to *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (84) *bkra shis rdzas brgyad* comprise mirror, yoghurt, conch shell and five plant species. *lDe'u chos 'byung* (298) mentions the *bkra shis rdzas brgyad* as necessary elements for the construction of a temple (On this form of decoration of the *kalaśu* cf. DAGYAB RINPOCHE 1992: 63–91; RONGE 1984: 208). *sBa bzhed* B (30), *sBa bzhed* A (24), and *sBa bzhed* C (326) mention instead an auspicious vase (*bkra shis kyi bum pa*) made of gold.

under his robe and his string (*ga sha*),¹⁶⁸ he recited [some *mantra*] and threw it to the sky. It flew higher and higher and went towards the north. The same morning, while the mKhan po was seated reciting *mantra* after his meal, the vase of good luck returned [to him]. When he opened the vase, he found it full of light milky water. Then he said that this water should be used to wash the hair [of the bTsan po]. (13a) When this was taken to the presence of the great *zhang blon*, their comment was: “This is mad Mon-water¹⁶⁹ which was poured (*lugs* for *blugs*?) from (*la = las*?) the sky and came [here]. There is no need for it, throw it away!” Afterwards, the master of the *mantra* Pad ma sa[m] bha ba made a number of suggestions: the sand of upper and lower Ngam shod¹⁷⁰ should be transformed into a meadow; many springs should appear in upper and lower Grwa, Dol and gZhung and further on up to sTag la;¹⁷¹ thanks to the fields the people should have intensive farming activity for their livelihood; the rivers and lakes should be trained with gabions (*sgrom bu*) and crossed; the barren Tibetan land, becoming fertile, would be happy and so on. As a sign to show whether this was true or false, [Padmasambhava] recited *mantra* and celebrated a half-day-long ritual for the sandy floor of the Zur mkhar valley.¹⁷² Thanks to this, within one morning the sand was transformed into a meadow and a spring appeared. By meditating for one afternoon, [he] transformed the bottom of mTsho mo mgur¹⁷³ and lower Bla ba tshal¹⁷⁴ into woods: water spurted from the arid land called Klu

¹⁶⁸ *Na bza'i ga sha'i 'og tu*. He probably placed the vase under his armpit as the *ga sha* string was often worn as a shoulder belt.

¹⁶⁹ Mon indicates in general the southern border areas. Here this term is used in a particularly pejorative way for the southern border regions as the source of wild and dangerous customs.

¹⁷⁰ Ngam shod is a toponym indicating bSam yas, Gra and their general surroundings.

¹⁷¹ Drwa/Grwa, Dol and Zhung are three close areas on the banks of the Brahmaputra river in the vicinity of bSam yas. sTag la seems to be a locality not far from there.

¹⁷² Zur mkhar is a locality to the south-west of bSam yas. This toponym became famous for the five stone *stūpa* attributed to Padmasambhava. These are mentioned in *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 27; *sBa bzhed* A 21; *sBa bzhed* C 324) whereas no mention of them is made in the *dBa' bzhed*.

¹⁷³ mTsho mo mgur, also called Brag dmar mTsho mo gur (cf. folio 14a), was an important locality in Brag dmar. An assembly and a debate between Buddhists and Bon po are reported by this text as having taken place there. *bKa' thang sde lnga* (139) identifies this locality as the place for the celebrations held after the completion of the construction of bSam yas monastery. This toponym is still used to indicate a locality close to bSam yas monastery.

¹⁷⁴ Bla ba tshal (= Gla ba tshal, cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 256, 267, 350, 536) seems to be a locality close to bSam yas. Tshal is a term indicating some groves or bushy places which often appears in ancient toponyms, e.g. 'Om bu tshal, rGyam bu tshal, Nya sha tshal, and so forth.

sdings.¹⁷⁵ From the restricted assembly (*mdun sa chung*)¹⁷⁶ the ministers did not allow such activity and the practice was stopped. The *zhang blon* reported [to the bTsan po]: “With his great magical powers, this fellow might seize political power.” Therefore the bTsan po grew suspicious. He suspended the above mentioned rituals by the mKhan po and prevented them from being celebrated. These were the rituals for subduing the gods and *nāga* which were still to be repeated twice. The bTsan po presented the mKhan po with many offerings and said: “[Revered] mKhan po! You let the holy doctrine come to the country of Tibet. You have already achieved what was in my mind: (13b) you bound by oath the gods and *nāga* and so on. That is enough. It is not necessary that the sand of Ngam shod be covered with meadows and that springs appear. It is enough that there is the river called Yar khyim in my own land. *Ā tsā rya*, please return to [your] homeland!”¹⁷⁷ *Ā tsā rya Pad ma sa[m] bha ba* commented: “I thought that in the land of Tibet the doctrine could be established very firmly, that the whole country of Tibet could be led to virtue and that it could become a prosperous and happy land. However the bTsan po, being narrow-minded and greatly jealous, suspected that I might seize his political power. I do not even desire universal political power (*'khor los bsgyur ba'i rgyal srid*), so how could I [long] for the political power of such a king?” When the mKhan po was leaving for India, the bTsan po, in order to please him, circumambulated him three times and offered him a large quantity of gold dust. “If I desire gold dust, this is it!” he took a full sleeve of sand and this became gold dust.

¹⁷⁵ Klu sdings is given as Klu rdzings in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 3; *sBa bzhed* A 25; *sBa bzhed* C 327).

¹⁷⁶ During the kingdom general assemblies (*'dun sa*) were held in summer and winter. Dunhuang Annals give a chronological report on these. The restricted assembly seems to have been a gathering which was probably held more often and had a more executive character.

¹⁷⁷ According to the *dBa' bzhed* it seems that the ministers stopped the activity of Padmasambhava, that the king himself became suspicious about the possible political ambitions of the master and that he therefore went to see him and politely request him to leave the country. *sBa bzhed* B (31), *sBa bzhed* A (25), and *sBa bzhed* C (328) give a softer version: when the *slob dpon* said that he wanted to establish new fields the ministers replied that they had enough fields in Yarlung, and after prostrating and offering him a great reward they invited him to leave the country. The king, being unhappy with the position taken by the ministers, offered gold and circumambulated Padmasambhava. Then he is reported to have said something similar to what had been said by his ministers but his speech is completely omitted. Here there is a sharp contrast with the numerous sources on the life and deeds of Padmasambhava which emphasize his great deeds and are silent about or play down the concrete obstacles raised by the Tibetan king and ministers. On the basis of some *rBa/dBa' bzhed* versions and various rNying ma sources Tāranātha speaks of the ministers who tried to get rid of Padmasambhava in numerous ways – for example minister Khyung po sTag tsha tried to set fire to him in Brag dmar 'Gran bzang – and finally induced him to leave (*Yid ches gsum ldan* 269, 270).

Still, in order to please the bTsan po he accepted a handful of gold dust and left for India.¹⁷⁸ Then, after the restricted assembly had been summoned and a discussion held, it was declared, “If Pad ma sa[m] bha ba is not killed, he will harm Tibet,” and assassins were sent.¹⁷⁹ While they were waiting at the gorge of Dong ’phams,¹⁸⁰ the mKhan po said to his escort, “[Somebody] will come to harm me tomorrow.” Then, while he was crossing the gorge of Dong ’phams, the killers prepared their arrows [in their bows ready to shoot]. (14a) The mKhan po performed some *mudrā*, and the twenty odd assassins were duly frozen like paintings, unable to speak and move, and he passed straight through them. Upon his arrival at the border of Mang yul, the mKhan po said: “If gods, *nāga* and evil spirits (*’dre srin*) had been bound by oath three times, the bTsan po would enjoy long life, his descendants would have high political authority, the country of Tibet would avoid conflict and the doctrine of Buddha would flourish for a long time. So, [my] mind is burdened with what is still left [unaccomplished]. In the country of Tibet, approaching the final 500-year period of the doctrine,¹⁸¹ there will be no opposition from the non-Buddhists. There will be disputes among Buddhists themselves. In the country of Tibet, there will still be a great fight.”¹⁸² [So saying] he sent back his escort, gave them some mustard seed and instructed them, “Give this to the people who wanted to shoot me with their arrows, and they will be able to move again.” As soon as they were given the mustard seed, the killers of Dong ’phams, who had been frozen like paintings, were able to move and speak again. When the escort reported the events on its return, the bTsan po felt great sorrow.

¹⁷⁸ *sBa bzhed* B (32), *sBa bzhed* A (25–26), and *sBa bzhed* C (328) mention that before leaving he preached the doctrine in Brag dmar ’Om bu tshal to 21 disciples (*rje ’bangs*) and gave a spiritual testament (*bka’ chems*) to the king and he bestowed on him empowerments and precepts. Then he buried some texts in the rocks for future people bound by karmic links. This account contrasts sharply with the perspective given by the *dBa’ bzhed*, whereas it seems closer to the later narratives concerning the life of Padmasambhava. On the contrary the *dBa’ bzhed* seems to be consistent with the fact that the Buddhist religion was not yet firmly established and that the king himself was likely to have a number of doubts and was in any case unable to impose his will on the ministers.

¹⁷⁹ The attempted murder of Padmasambhava is given in a parallel way by *sBa bzhed* B (33), *sBa bzhed* A (26), and in *sBa bzhed* C (329).

¹⁸⁰ Dong ’phams is mentioned as Dong ’phangs (*sBa bzhed* B 33), Deng babs (*sBa bzhed* A 26), Dong phabs (*mKhas pa’i dga’ ston* 329) and seems to be one of the gorges in Mang yul on the way between Tibet and Nepal.

¹⁸¹ See n. 134.

¹⁸² The prophecy given here as well as in the *sBa bzhed* versions has some parallels with that of Śāntarakṣita, which appears later (folio 19b). *sBa bzhed* B (33), *sBa bzhed* A (27) and *sBa bzhed* C (330) mention in addition to the prophecy that following the failure of his mission Padmasambhava would go for a while to the Srin po land to the south-west, and that he left flying amidst the clouds. This legendary account is not given by the *dBa’ bzhed*, which does however add the detail that the archers were released from their enchantment.

Afterwards, a doctrinal assembly was summoned at Brag dmar mTsho mo'i [m]gur.¹⁸³ gSas (gSal) snang was appointed as the highest religious authority (*chos kyi bla*) in the function of head of the right (*g.yas kyi tshugs dpon*)¹⁸⁴ of the *snam phyi'i sa*.¹⁸⁵ Later, in the pig year¹⁸⁶ the debate between the [Buddhist] doctrine and Bon was held in the palace of Zus phug sKyang (rKyang) bu tshal.¹⁸⁷ The Buddhist speakers were mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa, (14b) Myang Sha mi go cha,¹⁸⁸ Zhang rgyal Nya bzang,¹⁸⁹ Zhang mChims Mes slebs,¹⁹⁰ sNyer sTags btsan ldong

¹⁸³ See n. 173.

¹⁸⁴ *g.Yas kyi tshugs dpon* is an obscure title which seems to indicate the chief of an area who was sitting to the right. This chief is apparently related to the *snam phyi ba* officials.

¹⁸⁵ See n. 113.

¹⁸⁶ According to the dates given in this text this pig year is either 759 or 771 A.D. The later date is supported by the fact that, in his edict, Khri Srong lde btsan affirmed that he started to be mindful of the doctrine only after the age of twenty (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 373–374) – which he attained in 761; it is also clear from the context that the debate took place before the construction of bSam yas monastery, which according to this text lasted 5 years, *i.e.* 775–779 (cf. n. 201). If however the construction of the bSam yas monastery lasted 12 years (763–775), as some sources maintain, and the king became mindful of the doctrine in two steps, *i.e.* at the age of 17 and around 20, then the debate should be situated in 759 (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 605). This would fit well with the assertion of the Dunhuang Annals that the king resided in Zu phug [rKyang bu tshal] in the years 758 and 761 (cf. BACOT et al. 1940: 64–65).

¹⁸⁷ Zus phug rKyang bu tshal is mentioned as Zur phud sKyang/rKyang bu tshal in *sBa bzhed* B (34), *sBa bzhed* A (25), and in *sBa bzhed* C (332). This place is mentioned in the Dunhuang Annals, which describe Zu spug as a royal residence and assembly place in 688 and 694, as well as 758 and 761, and Zu spug gi rKyang bu tshal for the years 713 and 715 (cf. BACOT et al. 1940: 36, 38, 43–44, 64–65). This locality is in Mal gro to the east of lHa sa (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 575). While narrating the deeds of Padmasambhava, Tāranātha reports that when he was residing in Zur phud rKyang bu tshal he subdued the *nāga* Mal gro gZi can (*Yid ches gsum ldan* 264), an act that is described rather elliptically by the *sBa bzhed* (B 29; *sBa bzhed* A 23; *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 326).

¹⁸⁸ Myang Sha mi go cha appears as Myang Sho ma in *sBa bzhed* B (34) and in *sBa bzhed* C (332), and as Nyang Sha mi in *sBa bzhed* A (27). This person might be the follower of Hwa shang Mahāyāna, who is said to have killed himself just before the bSam yas debate. This event is also known from the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 41–42). However, the name was shared by a contemporary of Khri gTsong lde btsan (r. 815–838/841): this was the younger brother of Myang Ting nge 'dzin (one of two monks occupying the position of great minister under Khri lDe srong btsan, r. 800/804–815), who founded several temples (*Ne'u chos 'byung* 27, *lDe'u chos 'byung* 297). It is thus also possible that this name is a later addition (e.g. by a copyist who is trying to identify a name in an unclear original). On the continuing uncertainty about the identity of this figure cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 416.

¹⁸⁹ See n. 90.

¹⁹⁰ mChims Mes slebs was previously mentioned in the prophecy by Gyim Hwa shang as one of the ministers favourable to Buddhism (folio 9b). The extant *sBa bzhed* versions do not have him taking part in this debate, whereas he does appear there in the context of the investigations on Śāntarakṣita, see n. 126.

gzigs,¹⁹¹ Seng mgo lHa lung gzigs¹⁹² and rTsig rMa rma.¹⁹³ The Bon speakers were sTag ra klu gong,¹⁹⁴ rTsis pa chen po Khyung po Dun tsug,¹⁹⁵ Ru dpon chen po Khyung po Tshe the¹⁹⁶ and

¹⁹¹ gNyer sTag btsan ldong gzigs reappears later when the foundations of bSam yas are laid (folio 15a). He is also known, with slight variations in the spelling of his name, as one of the seven wise ministers (e.g. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 378, *Ne'u chos 'byung* 10). According to *Ne'u chos 'byung* (29) gNyer sTag btsan ldong gzigs seems to be a general who established a temple to cleanse the sins of having killed many people during the war against China (a common practice under Khri gTsong lde btsan that is attested in various places, including Dunhuang documents, cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 284ff.).

¹⁹² See n. 100.

¹⁹³ rTsig rMa rma is not mentioned by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions and we have not been able to find any other clear references. Perhaps this name corresponds to that of Co rMa ma, a follower of Hwa shang Mahāyāna mentioned in *sBa bzhed* B (73) and in *sBa bzhed* C (390, 394).

¹⁹⁴ sTag ra klu gong (Ngam sTag ra klu gong in *sBa bzhed* B 34 and *sBa bzhed* C 332, and sTag ra klu gong in *sBa bzhed* A 27) corresponds to Ngam lam sTag sgra klu khong of the Ngam lam clan, which is originally from 'Phan yul. He was the famous general who took part in the occupation of Chang an in 763. The Zhol inscription is dedicated to him (LI and COBLIN 1987: 141–150). The king rewarded the loyalty he showed in the crisis of 755 by granting his clan the command of the “bodyguard chiliarchy” (*sku srung stong sde*) of 'Phan yul. According to Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 102) he succeeded mChims rGyal gzigs shu teng as Chief Minister (*blon chen po*). This must have happened after the consecration of bSam yas in 779, as he is mentioned in second position after mChims rGyal gzigs shu teng in the edict reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (372). According to the extant *sBa bzhed* versions he was sent into exile just after this debate – and before the construction of bSam yas – because he officially affirmed that he would persist in following the Bon (*sBa bzhed* B 37; *sBa bzhed* A 30; *sBa bzhed* C 334). However this event, which is not given by the *dBa' bzhed*, is rather dubious as Ngam lam sTag sgra klu khong is reported as occupying a high position at the time of the consecration of bSam yas, and later on he even became even Chief Minister. As we know from Chinese sources (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 291) that sNa nam zhang rGyal tsha lha snang was Chief Minister in 783, and we know from Dunhuang documents that he was the successor of sTag ra klu khong, we can conclude that he retained this position for a period between the years 779 and 783. In the edict of bSam yas of 779 (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 372) he is reported as swearing that he would protect the doctrine, which is consistent with the fact that we find him among the people directly participating in the construction of bSam yas both in the *dBa' bzhed* and in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions. Ngam lam is the name of an ancient Tibetan clan considered to be one of the nine Ma sangs clans (*IDe'u chos 'byung* 225). It is also mentioned as the name of one of the Yul tshan in dBu ru (*IDe'u chos 'byung* 257), located in 'Phan yul (*Deb ther dmar po* 400, *rNying ma chos 'byung* 259).

¹⁹⁵ rTsis pa chen po Khyung po Dun tsug is mentioned as Khyung po Dum tshugs in *sBa bzhed* B (34) and *sBa bzhed* C (332), and as Dum gtsugs in *sBa bzhed* A (27). He seems also to correspond to the Khyung po Dum tshugs mentioned by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions as a playmate of Khri Srong lde btsan during his childhood (*sBa bzhed* B 5; *sBa bzhed* A 5; *sBa bzhed* C 299–300). He was member of the Khyung po clan who apparently held the position of *rtsis pa chen po*. Correspondence can be found also in Bon sources where Kyung po sTag gra Don gtsug is mentioned as one of the participants in the Bon-Buddhist controversy (cf. KARMA 1972: 26, 42, 89; SØRENSEN 1994: 397). The title *rtsis pa* is mentioned in the Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription of 821/822 among the common officials and indicates the “great comptroller” (LI and COBLIN 1987: 62). Another prominent member of the Khyung po clan was Kyung po sPung zad zu tse, the famous minister under Srong btsan sgam po, who acted as administrative chief of Zhang zhung and killed himself in the framework of a conspiracy against the king (BACOT et al. 1940:

gZims mal ba gTso smon tsa ra¹⁹⁷ and so on. [They] competed in reasoning. [They] did not compete by performing miracles. Still, there was a big difference as the [Buddhist] doctrine had superior reasoning, greater goodness and more profundity, while the Bon turned out to be bad. The deceased whose funerals were celebrated by the Byi Bon po of 'Phan yul¹⁹⁸ became *bse regs* demons. So, it was decided that from then on Bon po should not perform funerals and it was also decided that cattle, horses and other animals should not be slaughtered for the deceased and the meat of these animals offered in sacrifice.¹⁹⁹ The ritual by mKhan po Pad ma sa[m] bha ba, even if performed only once,²⁰⁰ resulted in great benefit. The rain fell at the right time,

106–107, 111–112; URAY 1972: 36–42; BECKWITH 1987: 16–17). Thenceforth the clan produced no powerful ministers. The Khyung po clan is traditionally connected to the Bon po and presents a great number of origin stories, cf. JACKSON 1984: 111–114, 137–138.

¹⁹⁶ Khyung po Tshe the is the commander of one Ru (*ru dpon chen po*). This title is not mentioned in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions. *sBa bzhed* B (34) and *sBa bzhed* A (27) render his name as Khyung po Tshe ba. To this name both the term Tshe mi as well as the name of lCog la sMon lam 'bar are added in a somewhat unclear way. Tshe mi and Cog la are Bon po names for specific traditions and the relevant ritual specialists. lCog la is also a toponym linked to Zhang zhung, cf. PETECH 1988a: 269, 270; UEBACH 1987: 22. *sBa bzhed* C (332) mentions a Khyung po Tshe ba che (tshe) mi followed by lCog la sMon la 'bar. lCog la sMon lam 'bar is also mentioned previously in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions as one of the playmates of Khri Srong lde btsan (*sBa bzhed* B 5; *sBa bzhed* A 5; *sBa bzhed* C 300).

¹⁹⁷ gTso smon tsa ra, who has the title of gZims mal ba (see n. 160), cannot be identified.

¹⁹⁸ Byi Bon po seems to signify a class of Bon po. The frequent references to Bon po in connection with 'Phan yul suggests that this area might have been a centre for the religion (see n. 373).

¹⁹⁹ The controversial practice of slaughtering animals on the occasion of funerals and oaths is considered an ancient Tibetan tradition linked to Bon po practices. It appears in the Dunhuang documents in several ritual texts concerning funerals (LALOU 1952; STEIN 1970) and is mentioned on the occasion of the Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821/822 (LI and COBLIN 1987: 40). *Nyang chos 'byung* (161) reports that at the time of Dri gum btsan po the gods of rocky and snowy mountains were worshipped and if people died sheep and mares had to be sacrificed; if people were sick goats, sheep, chickens and pigs were to be sacrificed as part of a ritual called *yas thag*.

The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 35; *sBa bzhed* A 28; *sBa bzhed* C 333) also state that at that time the Bon po traditions – except for the Tshe mi and the Zhang zhung traditions – were prohibited and the Bon po texts were destroyed. The king tried also to convert minister 'Gos Khri bzang yab lhag, who appears earlier as the person who led Ma zham khrom pa skyes to be buried alive. However, he politely refused on the grounds of his old age and the king accepted (this is followed by the account on how the statue is brought back from Mang yul). Instead of this passage *dBa' bzhed* mentions the paragraph on the beneficial effects of the ritual by Padmasambhava and the auspicious signs concerning the construction of bSam yas.

²⁰⁰ The ritual was performed only once because Padmasambhava's project was interrupted (cf. folios 13a, 14a). According to the extant *sBa bzhed* versions the ritual was performed twice, and only one further performance was required.

epidemics among people and cattle ceased. In the hare year in spring,²⁰¹ *Ā tsā rya Bo dhi sa twa* performed the ritual for the foundation of bSam yas [monastery] together with the Nepalese expert (*phywa mkhan*), and the auspices were examined. There were propitious signs for the introduction of the holy doctrine into Tibet, such as the emergence of precious stones from the ground, and further good omens for the spread of the holy doctrine in Tibet also appeared generally. As not even the term *dge slong* was known in Tibet, dBa' lHa btsan became a monk and was given the name dBa' dPal dbyangs.²⁰² (15a) [The statue of] Shakyamuni which had been taken to Nepal was brought back. It was carried by one horseman and placed in Ra mo che again. Then [dBa'] gSas (gSal) snang built the Glag temple²⁰³ instead of the Bla temple. [He made] the members of the dBa' clan (*pha tshan*) abandon the Bon religion and practise Buddhism. dBa' lHa gzig became the spiritual master (*dge bshes*) of his friend Myang Ros kong.²⁰⁴ He was thereby taught the doctrine and given the five rules. Ros kong, in his turn, became the spiritual master of his brothers (*phu nu*) and these became [followers of] the White [religion] (*i.e.* Buddhism).

²⁰¹ The hare year could be either 763 or 775. According to his edict, Khri Srong lde btsan started to think about the doctrine after reaching the age of 20, *i.e.* 761. However he states that he had to abolish the anti-Buddhist law imposed by ministers, that he had to be trained in the doctrine, and that he had to face numerous doubts and hostilities: Buddhism was considered to be a threat to the ancestral cults and the prosperity of the kingdom. All this took a long time. It seems therefore that construction started in 775 rather than 763, as already suggested by TUCCI 1958: 28–31. This would be consistent with the Bon po - Buddhist debate taking place in 771 (see n. 186). The *dBa' bzhed* states that the building of bSam yas was completed in a sheep year, just before the consecration of the temple in 779. This would mean that the construction took five years. There is no mention of the famous twelve years reported in numerous later sources and in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 54; *sBa bzhed* A 45–46; *sBa bzhed* C 352). However, this hypothesis contradicts the numerous post-dynastic sources which maintain that the king started the construction of the bSam yas monastery at the age of 21, *i.e.* 762/63. On this discussion cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 376, 601–606.

²⁰² dBa' dPal dbyangs seems to be the first *dge slong* in Tibet. However there are disagreements about this claim, cf. n. 263. In any case there is a general consensus that the first monk belonged to the dBa' clan.

²⁰³ The fact that dBa' gSal snang established a temple in Glag, which was his homeland, is also mentioned in *Ne'u chos 'byung* 28. See also n. 90.

²⁰⁴ We have been able to find no other references to Myang Ros kong, which is not surprising as he was given a different name after ordination. He seems to be the first monk from the Myang clan from which the famous monk-minister Myang Ting nge 'dzin stemmed. From *lDe'u chos 'byung* (297) and *Ne'u chos 'byung* (27) we know that some monks of the Myang clan established temples during the dynastic period. The term by which the clan-brothers of Myang Ros khong are defined is an ancient and well-known kinship term closely related to the clan structure. As such it appears also in the Ge sar epic and has been discussed in detail (KARMAY 1995: 303–313).

Later, [still] in the hare year²⁰⁵ a decision was made to build bSam yas.²⁰⁶ When the time came for laying the foundations of the temple, mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa, the bTsan po, 'Ba' Sang shi and sNyer sTag btsan ldong gzigs²⁰⁷ went together to the top of Brag dmar Khas po ri.²⁰⁸ As the mKhan po observed [the site], he saw a plain white with *sgung ba* (?) and *skyang kal ma* (?).²⁰⁹ Then sNyer sTag btsan ldong gzigs was ordered to make heaps of grass saying as a pretext that a corral for horses was being built. According to the disposition of the heaps of grass, the outer perimeter wall was constructed. At the time of celebrating the rituals for geomantic divination and blessing, four sons and nephews of *zhang blon*, who had parents alive and living together, joined the bTsan po who was wearing a gold *nan ti* and was holding a golden hoe. (15b) He dug seven times and then the four sons and nephews of *zhang blon* took turns to dig. When they had dug a square hole to the depth of one cubit, two handfuls (*phul*) of white rice and white barley appeared, whereas no pebbles, bones, bricks and charcoal emerged. The following day, the earth was again soft and with *skya snar* (?) grass. The mKhan po was delighted. Smearing [the earth] on the bTsan po's forehead, he said "Si ti Si ti pha la pha la (*siddhibhalā*), [the work] has been accomplished in an excellent way."

At first, when the *Ā rya pā lo gling*²¹⁰ was built, the bTsan po said: "No maker [of statues] is available". The mKhan po answered: "Honoured divine (dPal lha) bTsan po! Let the instruments be prepared, the maker [of statues] will come!" Then, a certain rGya tshal bu can was called. [He was staying] in Tshong dus ('dus) na ma and used to claim: "If the bTsan po of Tibet decides to build a temple, I am expert in making statues." The mKhan po asked: "Shall

²⁰⁵ See n. 201.

²⁰⁶ After the decision to build bSam yas was taken by the king, *sBa bzhed* (B 35–37; *sBa bzhed* A 29–30; *sBa bzhed* C 333–334) gives an additional account of how minister 'Gos and the king devised various subterfuges for obtaining the consensus of the subjects: the king proposed to the assembled subjects a number of optional great deeds such as the construction of a high castle from which it would be possible to see the residence of the royal uncle, the emperor of China; the construction of a great crystal *stūpa*; to fill the ravine of Wa lung with gold dust, etc. Among these the construction of the bSam yas monastery seemed to be the most reasonable task and was duly approved. sTag gra klu gong however did not agree with the decision and for this reason he was exiled to the north. In contrast to this account, dynastic sources mention him as a supporter of Buddhism, cf. n. 194.

²⁰⁷ See nn. 96, 109.

²⁰⁸ See n. 85.

²⁰⁹ Perhaps these obscure terms indicate specific kinds of grass.

²¹⁰ *Āryapālo* is one of the four temples called *gling* surrounding the central temple of bSam yas. Cf. TUCCI 1956: 279; 1958: 27; 1987: 119; CHAYET 1986: 19–29.

we make them according to the Indian or the Tibetan style?”²¹¹ The bTsan po replied: “I hope that by following the Tibetan style, faith [in Buddhism] will be aroused in all the followers of the Black [religion].” According to royal order, the model was in the style of the Tibetan *zhang blon* [and was chosen] as follows: in order to have a model, the Tibetan subjects were gathered. Among the men the most handsome were Khu sTag tshab, Thag bzang stag lod and rMa gSas kong who acted as models [for gods].²¹² As models for goddesses, the most beautiful among the women was Co(g) ro za lHa bu sman. (16a) Upon the completion of statues, paintings and construction, on the morning of the twenty-ninth day the consecration was celebrated. In the afternoon, at dusk, from the top of the temple a light appeared, which became bigger and bigger and illuminated all of upper and lower Brag dmar, shining like the moon. The mKhan po said: “This is the light of Amitābha’s coming. Tomorrow a temple of Amitābha shall be built as an upper storey (*yang thog*) above the dBu rtse. Immediately the small upper storey temple was built and consecrated (*zhal bsro*). At the time of the great consecration (*zhal bsro*) of Ā rya pā lo [temple], rewards and food were to be offered to rGya tshal bu can, the maker of statues. After a table and a seat had been prepared for him, an invitation was sent, but nobody knew where he had gone. He was accordingly considered a divine emanation.

The mKhan po said: “bTsan po! At first it was the goddess Tārā who let the thought of enlightenment be awakened in you. Once upon a time, when the Buddha was in Bodhgayā it was the goddess Tārā who induced him to turn the Wheel of the Doctrine. Now, in order to avoid obstacles and hindrances to your mind, the goddess Tārā shall be worshipped and prayed to!” After the bTsan po had received authorization from the mKhan po [to propitiate Hayagrīva], he stayed in meditation in the Ā rya pā lo gling. At that time Ārya Hayagrīva neighed three times during the day and three times during the night, and it was actually heard by the attendants (*zha ’bring nang pa*) and caretakers of the temple.²¹³ In the site in which the geomantic divination

²¹¹ *sBa bzhed* B (38; *sBa bzhed* A 31; *sBa bzhed* C 336) reports that the statue-maker first asked Śāntarakṣita about the style to follow. He replied that as the Buddha was from India the Indian style would be appropriate but the king expressed his preference for the Tibetan style. The description of the events given in *dBa’ bzhed* with Śāntarakṣita himself asking the king seems quite reasonable and consistent with the position of the king.

²¹² *sBa bzhed* mentions that the gods Āryāpalo Khasarpaṇi, the Six Syllables and Hayagrīva were made on the basis of these handsome models (which seems somewhat odd in the case of the Six Syllables and of the wrathful god Hayagrīva). The beautiful lady is used as a model for Tārā and an additional lady Cog ro za nu chung, *i.e.* the princess/queen of the Cog ro clan (nu[ma] chung = small breast) is mentioned as a model for ‘Od zer can ma.

²¹³ *sBa bzhed* B (40–42) at this point adds that in the hare year, when the king reached the age of 13, the dBu rtse was established and Śāntarakṣita suggested following Otantapuri as a model for the temple, and further legendary

and the rituals had been performed, the dBU rtse²¹⁴ was built. (16b) Upon completion of the building, the bTsan po was thinking about the appropriate statues that should be made. So, in a dream a white man told him: “King! I will show you to make the form of the Buddha and teach you the relevant skills. [There is a place] which had been formerly blessed by bCom ldan 'das (Bhagvat), let us go there.” Upon arrival at the Khas po ri, [the white man] let [the bTsan po] examine all the rocks and said that this and this were the De bzhin gshegs pa (Tathāgata) with such and such names and the Bodhisattva with such and such names. [He] also showed all the wrathful deities (*khro bo*). As soon as dawn came, [the bTsan po] went [to Khas po ri] and saw [what he had been shown] in his dream. On the rocks there were the shapes of gods which roughly corresponded to [what he had seen in] his dreams, and he rejoiced and called Nepalese stone carvers. As soon as these arrived, they carved all the statues as [they] were [seen in his dreams]. When these were placed on a cart, the earth shook. When it arrived at the threshold of the eastern gate, the earth shook once more. When they were taken inside the Dri gtsang khang²¹⁵ and placed on their seats, the earth shook again. Afterwards they were clothed, a gold belt was tied around them and they were covered with clay [for the finishing touch?] (*'jim pa g.yogs so*).²¹⁶ Then the four *gling*, the eight *gling phran*, the Yag sha lta 'og²¹⁷ and the four *stūpa* were built. The white *stūpa* was built by Shud pu rGya lto re nga mi,²¹⁸ the black one by Ngan lam sTag ra klu gong,²¹⁹

relevant accounts are given (these are mentioned also in *sBa bzhed* A 32–34 and in *sBa bzhed* C 338–339). The age of the king, which is not given by STEIN 1961 and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*, is apparently erroneous.

²¹⁴ dBU rtse is the central temple of bSam yas, situated in the middle of the *maṇḍala*-shaped plan. Cf. TUCCI 1956: 279; 1958: 27; 1987: 119; CHAYET 1986: 19–29.

²¹⁵ Dri gtsang khang is the main chapel in the central temple.

²¹⁶ Extant *sBa bzhed* versions (B 43–50; *sBa bzhed* A 35–42; *sBa bzhed* C 340–345) provide a detailed description on how the main temple was made according to the Tibetan, the Chinese, and the Indian styles. Furthermore the minor temples are mentioned in detail with the relevant statues. The *dBa' bzhed*'s account of the building of bSam yas is remarkably brief.

²¹⁷ Yag sha lta 'og is one of the minor temples. *Nyang chos 'byung* (287) mentions it as one of the residences of Padmasambhava.

²¹⁸ Shud pu rGya lto re nga mi is mentioned in the same context by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 50; *sBa bzhed* A 42; *sBa bzhed* C 346). It is reported that after his death his work was completed by Shud pu Khri 'bring kong btsan (alias Shud pu dPal gyi seng ge, according to the name taken after ordination). On the identification of this figure cf. also SØRENSEN 1994: 387. He is apparently a member of the Shud pu clan, which is considered by later sources as to have common ancestors with the royal clan. The Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 100) mentions one Shud pu rGya lto re nga myi among the ministers with magical powers but referring to the period before gNam ri srong brtsan.

²¹⁹ The fact that Ngan lam sTag ra klu gong is mentioned as establishing one of the *stūpa*, reported also by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, is consistent with the edict in which he swears to protect the doctrine at the consecration

the red one by sNa nam rGyal tsha lha snang,²²⁰ and the blue one by mChims mDo bzhi spre chung.²²¹ (17a) In front of Khas po ri carpenters and smiths made the 'khor lo²²² for the azure-blue *stūpa* to the south. When this was to be carried the following day [to the place of construction], it had disappeared, but after a search it turned out that it had already been installed in the *stūpa*. When he was told about this, the Son of God ordered that carpenters and smiths be sent to examine [the *stūpa* with the 'khor lo]. When checking, [they] saw that it had already been installed and delightedly reported this [to the bTsan po]. The carpenters and smiths were offered great rewards. That night the [Nepalese] divination expert (*phywa mkhan*) had dreamt of four men from Nepal, wearing gold suits of armour, who had carried and installed the 'khor lo in front of him. Those men had said: "It will be best if you build this *stūpa* and seven others. As a reward accept this gold suit of armour. By circumambulating this *stūpa*, all wishes will be fulfilled." At dawn, the men had disappeared, but a suit of armour was really there. When the [Nepalese] expert reported this to the bTsan po, he received great rewards and many servants. It is said that this was done by the Four Great Kings (rGyal po chen po bzhi)²²³ and these were depicted on a vase.

[The temple] was surrounded by a black perimeter wall with four gates, one in each of the four cardinal directions and four places for dismounting from horses (*rta babs bzhi*). The interior [of the temple was walled and floored] with plaster (*zha la = zhal la*) white [and bright] like a mirror. A bean could be thrown straight from the southern to the northern gate. All creatures but birds were prevented from entering the perimeter wall, and everyone

of bSam yas cf. n. 194. It seems therefore that he first had Bon po sympathies but then accepted at least to some extent the Buddhist doctrine. The colour of the *stūpa* might reflect his background, seen from the Buddhist point of view, even though the building of a black *stūpa* is not mentioned in Bon po sources.

²²⁰ sNa nam rGyal tsha lha snang, mentioned also by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, was the Chief Minister who succeeded Ngan lam sTag sgra klu khong (BACOT et al. 1940: 102). He held this powerful position during the final part of the rule of Khri Srong lde btsan. According to Chinese sources (*Xin Tangshu*, XIX, 6093; *Jiu Tangshu*, XVI, 5246) he became Chief Minister in 782. His name is also mentioned in the third position in the royal edict reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (372).

²²¹ mChims mDo bzhi spre chung is named as mChims mDo bzher/rDo rje spre chung in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, and was one of the famed ministers of the mChims clan in dynastic times, cf. UEBACH 1987: 114–15; SØRENSEN 1994: 388. In this position the *sBa bzhed* (B 50–52; *sBa bzhed* A 42–44; *sBa bzhed* C 347–348) adds an extensive account on how according to the instructions of Padmasambhava the holy relics to be placed inside the *stūpa* were obtained from India thanks to an expedition to Magadha. During this expedition the border between India and Tibet was marked by an iron pillar.

²²² The 'khor lo mentioned here seems to be a general indication for the *srog shing*, the central pole, something that is explicitly stated by *sBa bzhed* B (53).

²²³ rGyal po chen po bzhi are the great divine kings protectors of the cardinal directions: Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the east, Virūdhaka in the south, Virūpākṣa in the west and Vaiśravaṇa in the north.

had to wash his feet before entering.²²⁴ The outer temple (*phyi'i lha khang*) Khams gsum²²⁵ [was established] by Tshe spong za,²²⁶ dBu tshal²²⁷ by Pho yong za,²²⁸ dGe rgyas²²⁹ by 'Bro za.²³⁰ Khri bzang yab lhag²³¹ took care of the whole [construction]. The main temple (*gtsug lag khang*), like a turquoise placed on a golden basis, was completed (*grub pa*) in the year of the sheep.²³² At the completion of the three consecrations celebrated by Bo dhi sa

²²⁴ The minor details mentioned in this paragraph are not given in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions.

²²⁵ The founding of Khams gsum [zangs khang gling] is attributed to Tshe spong za by all *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* C 350, *sBa bzhed* A 46) except *sBa bzhed* B (54) where the implication of the omission is that the dBu tshal temple was founded by her. The ancient name of this temple is mentioned as Khams gsum mi ldog sgröl gyi gtsug lag khang in the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 321).

²²⁶ Tshe spong za, who is known from extant *sBa bzhed* versions and later sources as Tshe spong bza' Me tog sgron (*sBa bzhed* A 46; *sBa bzhed* C 350; *Nyang chos 'hyung* 301), was the main consort of Khri Srong lde btsan and the mother of Mu ne btsan po and Khri lDe srong btsan. She belonged to the Tshe spong clan of which the mother of Srong btsan sgam po was also a member.

²²⁷ dBu tshal is a minor temple mentioned in all the *sBa bzhed* versions (given as Bu tshal in *sBa bzhed* C 350). In *Nyang chos 'hyung* (301) the name appears as Bu 'tshal gser khang gling.

²²⁸ Pho yong za, referred to by her full name Pho yong za rGyal mo btsun in two *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* A 46 and *sBa bzhed* C 350), was the youngest wife of Khri Srong lde btsan and had no sons. Concerning her as well as the other queens and the temples attributed to them cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 373, 388–390.

²²⁹ dGe rgyas gtsug lag khang is a minor temple that appears in all the *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 54; *sBa bzhed* A 46; *sBa bzhed* C 350).

²³⁰ 'Bro za rGyal mo btsan (LI and COBLIN 1987: 334) is named as 'Bro bza' Khri rgyal mo btsun in *sBa bzhed* B (54), 'Bro bza' Khri rgyal mang mo btsan in *sBa bzhed* A (46), and 'Bro bza' Khri rgyal mo btsan in *sBa bzhed* C (350). She was one of the five wives of Khri Srong lde btsan. She took Buddhist vows and became a nun with the name of Jo mo Byang chub. She was the patron for the construction of two famous bells with inscriptions which were kept in dGe rgyas and in Khra 'brug. Later in this text (folio 19b) she figures in the row of the followers of Hwa shang Mahāyāna during the great bSam yas debate, which is consistent with her appearance in Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 25) as a prominent disciple of Hwa shang Mahāyāna.

²³¹ Khri bzang yab lhag was the minister 'Gos Khri bzang yab lhag. According to the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 60) Blon Khri bzang became Chief Minister in 763 and he is mentioned as 'Gos Khri bzang yab lhag who was the successor of dBa's sNang bzher zu brtsan and the predecessor of mChims zhang rGyal zigs shu theng (BACOT et al. 1940: 102). The absence of his name from the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan of 779 suggests that he had probably passed away before that time. The *sBa bzhed* versions do not associate him with the construction of temples, whereas they do dwell on his role as the minister who led Ma zham khrom pa skyes to be buried alive, and as someone whom the king was trying to convert to Buddhism (cf. n. 75). On the discussion whether this name was used to indicate two different persons, a father and son, cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 396.

²³² *sBa bzhed* gives the hare year for both the beginning and the completion of bSam yas' construction (*sBa bzhed* B 54; *sBa bzhed* A 45–46; *sBa bzhed* C 350). Like the *dBa' bzhed*, *Nyang chos 'hyung* (357) has five years but displaces the period by one year: a tiger year for the beginning and a horse year for the completion. Similarly, the Fifth Dalai Lama, critically considering the duration of twelve years, suggested a five-year span, from tiger year to horse year (*dPyid kyi rgyal mo glu dbyangs* 59, 61).

twā,²³³ all statues gathered at the dBu rtse, preached the doctrine and went back to their respective places. So, the bTsan po was delighted.

The temple was already constructed. Just before its consecration, dBa' gSas (gSal) snang took the vows and was given the name Ye shes dbang po.²³⁴ In order to let the Symbols of Speech (*gsung gi rten*) increase, many sons and nephews of *zhang blon* such as mChims Legs gzigs,²³⁵ were to be trained in the language of India.²³⁶ (17b) However only Shakya pra bha,²³⁷ son of mChims A nu,

²³³ The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (B 55–57; *sBa bzhed* A 48–49; *sBa bzhed* C 353–354) report in great detail the three consecrations performed by a *slob dpon* who, in *sBa bzhed* C, is identified with Śāntarakṣita even though the biographical accounts of Padmasambhava narrate the numerous miracles he performed on that occasion. It is further reported that there were altogether eight consecrations, and that during the whole period of the construction, which lasted twelve years, the people enjoyed themselves by dancing, singing, holding horse-races, etc. and that all this was depicted in the mural paintings which are still in the temple. This last detail and the fact that this passage seems somewhat juxtaposed to the narration suggests that this could be an addition based upon later paintings.

²³⁴ According to *sBa bzhed* (*sBa bzhed* B 59, *sBa bzhed* A 51) Ye shes dbang po took his vows later with five other people, and they were known as the six *sad mi*. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (358–359) reports that according to the *rBa bzhed che ba* the six *sad mi* took their vows after the consecration of the temple, whereas *rBa bzhed 'bring ba* reports that the six *sad mi* took their vows before it. The name Ye shes dbang po was given to him on the basis of his previous life (cf. folio 6a). For a discussion of the six or seven *sad mi* cf. TUCCI 1958: 18ff.

²³⁵ mChims Legs gzigs is mentioned in the same way by *sBa bzhed* C (361) whereas he is erroneously named as mChims Legs bzang in *sBa bzhed* B (58) and as mChims Long gzigs in *sBa bzhed* A (50). Surprisingly this young offspring of the mChims clan is not mentioned among those who managed to master the language. He seems to be identical with the mChims bTsan bzher legs gzigs who later appears as a powerful minister under Mu ne btsan po and as a passionate defender of ancient religious and political Tibetan customs in a Buddhist-Bon po debate (folio 26a). He seems also to correspond to the mChims rGyal btsan bzher legs gzigs who is second in the list of lay ministers contained in the royal edict of Khri lDe srong btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 412).

²³⁶ *sBa bzhed* B (58) reports that in the first month of the hare year, twelve *dge slong* belonging to the dBu pa bye brag tu smra ba (Vaibhāṣika) of the Thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde (Mūlasarvāstivāda school) were invited from India and taught the language. According to *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (360) this passage is reported in *rBa bzhed che ba* (except for the detail of the year, which is given as the sheep instead of the hare). dPa' bo gtsug lag comments that these *dge slong* were invited so that some Tibetans could take their vows, and that these were then known as the *sad mi* (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 359).

²³⁷ Śākyaprabha is mentioned in the same way in *sBa bzhed* C (359) where he is simply named as Śākya, son of mChims Anu in *sBa bzhed* B (58) and *sBa bzhed* A (50). He appears in the Dunhuang document PT 44 as mChims Śākya who, together with sNa nam zhang rDo rje gnyan, received the instructions concerning the Phur bu practice from Padmasambhava (BISCHOFF and HARTMAN 1971: 19). In later legendary accounts concerning Padmasambhava he is reported as one of the three messengers who were sent to Nepal to invite Padmasambhava ('Dra 'bag chen mo 90). He is mentioned in *Bu ston chos 'byung* (208) in the list of the translators.

Bee ro tsa na,²³⁸ son of Pa 'or Na 'dod, dBA' Rad na,²³⁹ son of dBA' rMa gzigs, Zhang lHa bu,²⁴⁰ son of Zhang Nya bzang, sNa nam bSe btsan,²⁴¹ Shud po Khong slebs²⁴² were able to learn it, the others renounced. The six translators who mastered the language, translated all texts of 'Jam dpal kri ya²⁴³ and *U pa ya*²⁴⁴ available in India. The Chinese mKhan po Me kong,²⁴⁵ the translator lHa lung klu gong,²⁴⁶ 'Go bom lDan ma g.yu gong,²⁴⁷ Bran ka Legs gong²⁴⁸ translated many [texts] such as *mDo sa lu ljang pa*.²⁴⁹

²³⁸ Vairocana is identified as the son of Pa 'or Na 'dod also in *sBa bzhed B* (58), as the son of Pa dkor Na 'dod in *sBa bzhed A* (50) and as the son of Pa gor Hen 'dod in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (359–360). He appears as Ba bor Be ro ca [na] in the Dunhuang document PT 44 where he receives instructions from Padmasambhava (BISCHOFF and HARTMAN 1971: 19). Pa gor Na 'dod is given by the Dunhuang Annals' entry for the year 756 (BACOT et al. 1940: 56) as the name of a messenger sent to the upper areas (sTod phyogs). The ancient clan-name seems to have been Pa gor and the messenger cited above probably corresponds to the father of Vairocana. Pa gor is also a toponym for an area in sNye mo, where there is still a shrine worshipped as the birthplace of Vairocana. The young Vairocana described here as a student of the Indian language was then to become the most famous Tibetan translator and a great spiritual master to whom later sources devote innumerable mythological accounts.

²³⁹ dBA' Rad na, son of dBA' rMa gzigs, is named as Ratna, son of sBa rMa gzigs, also called Khri bzher, in *sBa bzhed B* (58). *sBa bzhed A* (50) mentions instead a sBa Khri zher sang shi ta and *sBa bzhed C* (360) has a Khri gzigs, son of rBa Khri zher (cf. also n. 263).

²⁴⁰ Zhang lHa bu is mentioned by all the *sBa bzhed* versions but *sBa bzhed A*. He was apparently the son of minister Zhang Nya bzang belonging to the sNa nam clan, see n. 90. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (361) mentions that according to some sources he is considered one of the seven *sad mi*.

²⁴¹ *sBa bzhed B* (58) names this name as lHa bSe btsan. *lDe'u chos 'hyung* (302) lists him as Zhang Se btsan lha na among the translators of the time of Khri Srong [lde btsan] defined as the three great (*che ba gsum*) [translators], the other two being rBa Rad na (cf. nn. 239, 263) and Shud pu Khong slebs.

²⁴² Shud po Khong slebs is mentioned by the *sBa bzhed* versions and is apparently a young member of the Shud pu clan which is considered by later sources to share certain ancestors with the royal clan. He is considered by *lDe'u chos 'hyung* as one of the "three great" (*che ba gsum*) translators (cf. previous note).

²⁴³ 'Jam dpal kri ya seems to indicate the *Kriyātantra*. See also following note.

²⁴⁴ *U pa ya* probably signifies *U pa'i rgyud* alias *sPyod rgyud* (*Caryātantra*). The various grades of the Tantra mentioned here seem to correspond to those used in the early period and are corroborated in an ordinance by Zhi ba 'od: "Also those who have taken vows as monks must keep to the monastic rule, and those who have taken up the practice of the Secret Mantras must not be in conflict with adherence to the rule, for in the case of (tantra of) Kriyā, Upa, Yoga class and even the Guhyasamāja and others, one should strive to practise without breaking one's vows..." (SNELGROVE 1987: 475; KARMAI 1980: 17). There is also a further correspondence with the subdivisions mentioned in a text of the tenth century (HACKIN 1924: 5, 31–32; SNELGROVE 1987: 462).

²⁴⁵ The Chinese mKhan po Me kong is mentioned as Hwa shang Ma zhang Ma ke le in *sBa bzhed B* (60), as Chinese Hwa shang Ma zhang Me skol in *sBa bzhed A* (52) and as Chinese Hwa shang Ma ko le in *sBa bzhed C* (363). This person seems to correspond also to rGya Me mgo, mentioned previously as the translator of the texts which were brought from China by Sang shi (*sBa bzhed B* 15; *sBa bzhed A* 10; *sBa bzhed C* 310).

²⁴⁶ lHa lung klu gong appears in all *sBa bzhed* versions, and in *lDe'u chos 'hyung* (302) he is one of the "three middle" (*'bring ba gsum*) translators (the other two being 'Go bong g.yu gong and Bran ka legs gong) at the time of

The translators from the Chinese language²⁵⁰ were lHa lung klu gong, Beg zla gong,²⁵¹ Bran ka Legs gong, mGo 'bom yul gong, 'Dan ma rTse rma²⁵² who was a translator particularly expert in making notes, 'Gag gnyis btsan,²⁵³ Lo khyi chung,²⁵⁴ 'Big khyi'u,²⁵⁵ and Khyi chung.²⁵⁶ They first translated the *Las rnam par 'byed pa*,²⁵⁷ secondly the *Sa lu ljang pa*²⁵⁸ and finally the *rDo rje gcod pa*.²⁵⁹ Most of them were translated by Beg zla gong alone.

Khri Srong lde btsan and Vairocana. lHa lung klu gong also features in *Ne'u chos 'byung* 24, UEBACH 1987: 106, 107 as one of the translators who contributed to the *sKad gсар bcad*.

²⁴⁷ In the name 'Go bom lDan ma g.yu gong, the name lDan ma has erroneously been added in the gloss as part of the name of the translator. In fact 'Go bom g.Yu gong is one person (cf. previous note) and lDan ma seems to indicate lDan ma tse rma/lDan ma rtse mang who is mentioned later on (see n. 252). *sBa bzhed* B (60) gives 'Go gom dbus gong, *sBa bzhed* A (52) has 'Go 'gom dmul gong, while *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (363) renders the name as 'Og gom dbus gong. The clan-name 'Go bom is attributed to a certain rDo rje rgyal po in a Dunhuang document (KARMAY 1988a: 78) that names the lineage of the spiritual masters of bSam yas and 'Phrul snang.

²⁴⁸ Bran ka Legs gong, mentioned by all the *sBa bzhed* versions, is considered to be one of the three middle translators (cf. n. 246). Another member of the clan was the monk Bran ka Yon tan dpal who was Chief Minister under Khri lDe srong btsan and Khri gTsong lde btsan; he played an important part in the Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821/822. He is also mentioned in *Ne'u chos 'byung* 24, UEBACH 1987: 106, 107 where he is reported as one of the translators who contributed to the *sKad gсар bcad*.

²⁴⁹ *mDo sa lu ljang pa* is mentioned in *lDan dkar dkar chag* n. 180 (LALOU 1953: 323).

²⁵⁰ This gloss containing a list of translators from the Chinese language is not given in the *sBa bzhed* versions. However, many names are already given in the previous gloss and do appear in the *sBa bzhed*. Furthermore, no clear mark is given concerning the place for which this gloss is meant.

²⁵¹ Beg zla gong is not mentioned by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions and he appears again in this same gloss. He figures in a list of translators cited in *Ne'u chos 'byung* (24) as contributors to the *sKad gсар bcad*, but more precise identification has not been possible, cf. UEBACH 1987: 106.

²⁵² 'Dan ma rTse rma alias lDan ma rTse rmang was born in lDan ma (Khams) and was famous for his glosses and for his calligraphy. Later sources report that he received many teachings from Padmasambhava and that he used to keep the relevant notes. His name appears as that of the amanuensis who transcribed a number of *gter ma* texts (e.g. *rGyal po bka' thang*). Cf. *rNying ma chos 'byung*, vol. 1, 267–268; *bKa' thang sde lnga* 227; SØRENSEN 1994: 177.

²⁵³ 'Gag gnyis btsan seems to indicate a translator known from *lDe'u chos 'byung* (302) as rGos snya bzangs. In fact lDan ma rTse rmang, rGos snya bzang and Lo khyi chung (the following name in the list) are mentioned there as the “three lesser” (*chung ba gsum*) translators at the time of Khri Srong [lde btsan] and Vairocana.

²⁵⁴ Lo khyi chung, one of the three little translators (cf. previous note).

²⁵⁵ 'Big khyi'u seems to be an extremely corrupted form. 'Big hardly looks like a name.

²⁵⁶ Khyi chung was probably a relatively common name but might also be a repetition of the translator mentioned above as Lo khyi chung. The name Khyi chung can be found in the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan reported by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (373), where it refers to a minister.

²⁵⁷ *Las rnam par 'byed pa*, see n. 130.

²⁵⁸ *Sa lu ljang pa*, see n. 131.

According to the *Sa lu ljang pa*: the elements of existence originate as the aggregation of compounds depending on the conditions of *samsāra* (*rkyen dang 'du ba tshogs te byung ba'i chos*).²⁶⁰ From an extreme point of view, five aspects can be considered: non-permanence (*rtag pa ma yin pa*, **asāśvatadṛṣṭi*, ° - *darśana*), non-nihilism (*chad pa ma yin*, **anucchedadṛṣṭi*, ° - *darśana*), non-changeability (*pho bar ma yin*, **asamkrama*), the theory that a great effect arises from a small cause (*rgyu chung ngu las 'bras chen po byung*, **alpahetoḥ mahāphulam utpād-*), etc.; on such points see the Tantra. At that time bTsan po Khri Srong lde btsan said, as he performed thanksgiving to the sky, "The sky is benevolent, the gods are benevolent, [I could] listen to such a good doctrine. As the words of the ministers 'Ba' Sang shi and dBa' gSas (gSal) snang were true, [we] shall not refrain from practising the holy doctrine (*mi byar [mi] rung ngo*)".²⁶¹

The son of dBa' rMa gzigs had taken the vows from Bo dhi sa twa²⁶² and had been named dBa' Rad na.²⁶³

²⁵⁹ *rDo rje gcod pa*, see n. 132.

²⁶⁰ *rKyen dang 'du ba tshogs te byung ba'i chos* has a parallel passage in the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan reported in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (375): *rkyen dang 'du ba tshogs ste byung ba'i yan lag bcu gnyis*, which seems to be an archaic expression for *rten 'brel yan lag bcu gnyis* (*dvādaśāṅgapratītyasamutpāda*).

²⁶¹ A similar speech by Khri Srong lde btsan is cited by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (B 14–15; *sBa bzhed* A 9–10; *sBa bzhed* C 309–310) on the occasion of the teaching of the doctrinal texts which were taken from China to Tibet by Sang shi. Here this statement is given as a comment to the translation of the same texts. The final expression should mean: "we shall not refrain from practising the holy doctrine" or "the doctrine can be practised." In both cases there is a mistake of one *mi*: either *byar rung ngo* or *mi byar mi rung ngo*.

²⁶² *sBa bzhed* B (58–59) and *sBa bzhed* A (51) mention that after sBa Ratna six further people took their vows and these were known as the six *sad mi* (sBa gSal snang, sBa Khri bzher, Vairocana, Ngan lam rGyal ba'i mchog dbyangs, rMa ācārya Rin chen mchog and La gsum rgyal ba'i byang chub); *sBa bzhed* C (360) states that rBa Ratna together with rBa gSal snang, Vairocana, Ngan lam rGyal ba'i mchog dbyangs, rMa ācārya Rin chen mchog and La gsum rgyal ba'i byang chub were known as the six *sad mi*. Furthermore it is commented that there are numerous discrepancies concerning the six or seven *sad mi* in all sources, and *rBa/sBa bzhed* provides the main reference. *dBa' bzhed* does not mention the *sad mi* at all.

²⁶³ *sBa bzhed* B (58) and *sBa bzhed* C (360) say that sBa/rBa Khri gzigs took his vows and assumed the name dPal dbyangs when he became the first monk of Tibet. The king later named him Ratna on the grounds that he was very precious. However, in the passage where the students are listed *sBa bzhed* B (58) reports sBa Ratna as the son of sBa rMa gzigs. Furthermore, it gives as an alternative name for him Sang shi ta, which is sharply criticised by *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (360). According to *sBa bzhed* A (50), the first monk of Tibet was a certain 'Ba' Khri gzigs who was named 'Ba' Ratna after taking his vows and becoming very precious to the king.

According to the *dBa' bzhed* the original name of dPal dbyangs was dBa' lHa btsan (cf. folio 14b). He is cited as the first Tibetan monk and there is no indication that he was later named Ratna by the king. He is clearly considered a different person from the dBa' Rad na mentioned in the list of the students (folio 17b) as the son of dBa' rMa gzigs. Later on, dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na both appear in the debate, where they are seated in the row of the Tsen men pa (cf. folio 20a).

In the year of the sheep, in the second winter month, when the great *Pra ti* (= *pratiṣṭha*) consecration was celebrated,²⁶⁴ one hundred subjects including Jo mo gcen Khri rgyal²⁶⁵ and Sru bTsan mon rgyal²⁶⁶ took their vows and dBa' Rin po che (alias dBa' Rad na) acted as *mkhan po* [for them]. A great edict (*bka' shog*)²⁶⁷ was promulgated: henceforth, among the subjects under the rule [of the bTsan po]²⁶⁸ men might not have their eyes put out, women might not have their noses cut off, and the subjects should be devoted to the doctrine. All subjects, starting from the great ministers adhering to the leading [persons],²⁶⁹ took the oath. The edict of the sacred law (*chos gtsigs*) was recorded and a pillar was erected.²⁷⁰ From then on, the offerings for the Three Jewels and the food for the *saṅgha* were provided by the *khab so chen po*.²⁷¹ Clothing was completely provided thanks to the wealthy people.²⁷² Every year each monk had to be offered 12 *khal* of barley.

²⁶⁴ The paragraph in which the date of the consecration is given as the second winter month of the sheep year has a parallel passage in the *sBa bzhed* B (59) as a quotation of an opinion (*kha gcig na re*); there is also a similar passage in *sBa bzhed* C (362). The royal edict of Khri Srong lde btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 371) states that the temple was officially established (*rtan gtsugs pa*) on the 17th day of the first spring month of the sheep year (779), which seems consistent with the fact that a great consecration took place the following winter.

²⁶⁵ Jo mo gcen Khri rgyal seems to be the queen 'Bro bza' rGyal mo btsan who received the name Jo mo Byang chub (cf. n. 230). Jo mo gcan seems to be a title indicating a senior wife of the king.

²⁶⁶ Sru bTsan mon rgyal seems to indicate a maternal aunt of the king. Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 mentions that Hwa shang Mahāyāna gave teachings to a maternal aunt of the king (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 33). Alternatively, Sru may also indicate a clan-name. Thus the mother of a certain gNyag dznya' na is reported as Sru gza' (bza') sgron ma skyid (*Deb ther sngon po* 215).

²⁶⁷ The *bka' shog* briefly indicated here (and in all extant *sBa bzhed* versions) seems to be the famous Khri Srong lde btsan edict of 779 which is mentioned in *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (370–377).

²⁶⁸ *Chags 'og gi 'bangs*, "subjects under the sway [of the ruler]" is an expression found in PT 0016, fol. 26a1 and *chags 'og* appears in the Kong po inscription line 8 (cf. e.g. RICHARDSON 1985: 66–68). This expression, like the one mentioned in the following note, are examples which indicate the archaic character of the language of the *dBa' bzhed*.

²⁶⁹ *Blon che man chad sna la gtogs* is an expression similar to *bka' la btags/gtogs* (belonging/adhering to the command/order [of the king] = member of the council, cf. e.g. RICHARDSON 1985: s.v. 159; *sna la gthogs* is attested in Dunhuang PT 1287, line 0395, indicating ministers in leading positions).

²⁷⁰ This is the pillar of bSam yas with the relevant inscription (LI and COBLIN 1987: 186ff.).

²⁷¹ *Khab so* seems to indicate an office and perhaps the corresponding administrative unit. One of the main tasks of this office seems to have been the collection of tributes as suggested by the words in the Kong po pillar inscription: *khab so dpon sna dagis khral gyi sna btsal te*, "the officials of the *khab so* have requested various kinds of taxes" (LI and COBLIN 1987: 198, 221). It also appears in the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 47), in the entries concerning the year 727, in the expression *khab so'i khral pa bskos* which could be rendered as "to appoint the person in charge of the tributes of the *khab so*". According both to Dunhuang documents and the *dBa' bzhed* it seems

Later, Ye shes dbang po became possessed of the faculty of clairvoyance. The bTsan po said: “[This] is the spiritual master of us, king and subjects, and he is equal to the Buddha himself. This is why he was appointed the leader of Buddhism (*bCom ldan 'das ring lugs*), and he shall be bound to the commands of the doctrine (*chos kyi bka' la btags*)! Even in the ranking row, he shall be situated above the great *zhang blon*.²⁷³ As the religious assembly (*chos kyi 'dun sa*) is considered to be superior to the restricted assembly [of the ministers], (18a) the leader of Buddhism shall communicate with the restricted assembly of the great *zhang blon*, even if he has to do so by sending messages (*spring pa*)”. So the order came when the king and the ministers had assembled. Ye shes dbang po said: “Now that I have been appointed leader of Buddhism (*bCom ldan 'das ring lugs*), in order to let the symbols of the Three Jewels become firm and for ever imperishable, given the food requirements for the Three Jewels and the monastic community (*saṅgha*), it will be good in future to decide on [the estates that provide for a] maintenance so that offerings are not indispensable.”²⁷⁴ Therefore concerning [the estates that were to provide] the maintenance, the bTsan po assigned seven subject-households to each

that the *khav so* had different kind of officials (cf. folio 18b and nn. 279, 280) and perhaps the *khav so chen po* indicated the central office in contrast to existing branch offices. The term *khav so* has been subject of considerable discussion (BOGOSLOVSKIJ 1972: 137; URAY 1982: 546; LI and COBLIN 1987: 125; UEBACH 1985: 30) and the use of this term in this text seems to be consistent with the solution proposed by Uebach (“königliches Amt”, royal office) rather than the title of a person. The term *khav so* appears also in the Sino-Tibetan treaty inscription of 821/822 (LI and COBLIN 1987: 61) in the expression *mngan dpon khav so*. The Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 100) contains the phrase *Phyi'i dgra thub| nang gi khav so mtho*: “the enemies outside were subjugated; inside the *khav so* was prosperous.” *Khav so* appears also in PT 1077 (URAY 1982: 546) in the expression *khav so'i mngan chung*, where it denotes the official of a *khav so*.

²⁷² *Na bza' ni 'phan gyi brungs pas sbyor*: the translation is arrived at by amending *phan gyi* to *phan gyis*, “from/out of benefit” and *brungs pas* to *brungs kyis* “all, completely”; the phrase could alternatively be rendered as “clothing was provided by the *brung pa* of 'Phan [yul]”, with *brung pa* indicating holders of district administrative posts (cf. URAY 1962). However the parallel reading in *sBa bzhed*: *na bza' mang ba la 'phan gyis sbyor*, render these suggestions inconclusive.

The 12 *khal* mentioned immediately afterwards are an annual assignment. This is consistent with the small *lDe'u chos 'byung* (131). In *sBa bzhed* B (77) it is said that the 12 *khal* were either per year or per month indicating uncertainty in the basic sources. *Nyang chos 'byung* (131) reports a monthly payment of 12 *khal*.

²⁷³ The superior ranking position of the Buddhist representative is consistent with the hierarchy reported by the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan's son Khri lDe srong btsan (r. 800/804–815) (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 412) and later in the Sino-Tibetan treaty of 821/822 (LI and COBLIN 1987: 59). The particular emphasis given to this fact by Khri Srong lde btsan might indicate that it had just been introduced as a new custom.

²⁷⁴ *dKon mchog 3 dang dge 'dun gyi bshos cha las mi gsol bar rkyen ris su bkum nu slad rjes su legs pa*. The translation is tentative. *Mi gsol bar* indicates, broadly speaking, the fact that dependency upon private offerings was to be avoided. *sBa bzhed* B (63) is more explicit on this point (*rje 'hangs rnam kyis mi gsol bar*). This interpretation is shared by *g. Yu yi phreng ba*, vol. 1, 316.

monk, and the *zhang blon* five subject-households. And as far as the [Buddhist] leader is concerned, his position was as follows: [if this were done] some lineages would disappear, some upper valleys would be deserted, some *gnang chen* would be abandoned by their *sne bran* (serfs?). But considering that nine hundred serf-households (*bran khyim*) can be assigned to the house (lit. “door”) of one person,²⁷⁵ [it is worth it for] this good doctrine of Buddha, endowed with indescribable qualities which would benefit the body [of the bTsan po] and his political authority, establish good relations between king and subjects for ever, and close the doors to the three bad rebirths. [However] if everyone acted according to what was decided by royal order (*i.e.* to assign seven households per monk), the mind [of the bTsan po] would experience major conflicts (*thugs gnod*) one after the other, people and cattle would suffer epidemics, enemies [residing] at the borders would come to the central areas, famines would come in succession. In this case many bad things would happen: [the bTsan po’s] wishes might not be achieved, the symbols of the Three Jewels would cease to exist and the descendants of the king and his subjects would succumb great sins. (18b) For this reason, 200 subject-households were to be assigned to the Three Jewels (*i.e.* one monastery)²⁷⁶ and three subject-households to each monk. After handing over power to the *saṅgha*, [the following] four: the *rgod*,²⁷⁷ the *rang rje ’u*,²⁷⁸ the *khab so gnang chen can*²⁷⁹ and the *thugs gnyen*²⁸⁰ were to be considered appropriate as subjects in charge of the maintenance (*rkyen ris*), and *spu btus bzung* (?).²⁸¹ The royal land (*rje zhing*), as it was considered good [for that purpose], was to be subdivided according to

²⁷⁵ The assignment to one family of high rank could be quite substantial. The Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 106) mentions that Nam ri slong btsan rewarded Myang Tseng sku, dBa’s dByi tshab and mNon ’dron po with one thousand five hundred subject-households each and Tshe spong Nag seng with three hundred. *IDe ’u chos ’hyung* (265) mentions that the minister called Cog ro Khong btsan received nine hundred and ninety subject-households.

²⁷⁶ In a parallel passage *Nyang chos ’byung* (396) says that one hundred subject-households were assigned to one monastery (*rten*).

²⁷⁷ *rGod*, one category of subjects who had to be enrolled in army, cf. URAY 1971: 553–556.

²⁷⁸ *Rang rje ’u* is apparently an official title. It perhaps indicates some local ruler subordinated to the government but having a certain degree of autonomy. *sBa bzhed* B (64) and *sBa bzhed* C (382) mention this term as *rang rje*.

²⁷⁹ *Khab so gnang chen can* seems to indicate some officials of the office called *khab so* (cf. n. 270). *sBa bzhed* B (64) and *mKhas pa ’i dga’ ston* (382) mention this title as *khab so nang yig can*.

²⁸⁰ *Thugs gnyen* seems to indicate some officials of the *khab so*. In the entry referring to the year 722 the Dunhuang Annals (BACOT et al. 1940: 22) mention a *khab so thugs nyen*.

²⁸¹ The meaning of *spu btus bzung* is unclear. *sPu* means hair, *btus* is the past tense of to pick up, *bzung* means to lay hold, to seize, etc. *sBa bzhed* B (67) gives *las su sa bzung*.

the way in which gNang chen 'Bro Khri 'jam gung rton had taken over [his own] land...²⁸² At that time, the monk Myang Ting nge 'dzin²⁸³ and others, feeling upset and without listening any more to Ye shes dbang po, spoke at random. Then Ye shes dbang po said that as Myang and others were not listening he would go to meditate and went to a hermitage in lHo brag.²⁸⁴ Afterwards the bTsan po appointed dBa' dPal dbyangs²⁸⁵ as spiritual master, leader of Buddhism. Ye shes dbang po, when meditating at lHo brag, bound a tiger with a rope and underneath he built a bamboo bridge, making [the place] an inaccessible rock. The mountain birds used to perch upon his body as they did on stones and trees. He could not even associate with his companions of the [same religious] rule.²⁸⁶

At that time a Chinese *hwa shang* called Mahāyāna came from China to Tibet and most monks were taught the doctrine [by him].²⁸⁷ As there was no agreement on the doctrinal point of view, there were disputes [among monks]. Though the bTsan po tried many ways [to settle the disputes], he did not know [the right solution].²⁸⁸ [Among] the disciples of Mahāyāna, Myang Sha mi gashed himself, while gNyags Bi ma la and gNyags Rin po che crushed their own

²⁸² This seems to be a long speech by Ye shes dbang po reported indirectly. *sBa bzhed* B (63) gives the speech in a direct way.

²⁸³ Myang Ting nge 'dzin later became a chief monk minister under Khri lDe srong btsan (the Zhwa'i lha khang inscription was made in his honour, cf. LI and COBLIN 1987: 260ff.). He seems to have been upset by the request of Ye shes dbang po which was inferior to what the king and the ministers had offered.

²⁸⁴ lHo brag, an area to the south of Tibet, was at that time one of the sTong sde belonging to g.Yo ru.

²⁸⁵ See n. 263.

²⁸⁶ *Khrims zla dag la nyer yang mi btub*.

²⁸⁷ Hwa shang Mahāyāna is reported by the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 as having been summoned by Khri Srong lde btsan from Dunhuang just after this area had been seized by the Tibetans in 787 (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 25, 154). In Tibet he taught the Dhyāna system and had a great number of followers – up to 5,000 according to his own claim (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 33, 162). He seems already to have been an experienced and aged person when he arrived in Tibet (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 161).

²⁸⁸ The position of the king seems at this point somewhat neutral and rather awkward, which is consistent with what is reported by the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646: the whole story started when Hwa shang Mahāyāna received an edict from the king asking him to react to the charges made by the “Brahmans”, who wanted the teachings by the Chinese monk stopped (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 39). The Chinese Dunhuang document of course gives the point of view of the Chinese participants: the king appreciated the teachings of Mahāyāna, and when doctrinal disputes emerged and the “Brahmans” turned out to be inferior they devised a scheme to impose their point of view, and the followers of Hwa shang Mahāyāna reacted with self-injury and suicide (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 41). *sBa bzhed*, followed by later Tibetan sources (e.g. *Bu ston chos 'byung* 187–188) that are apparently partial in the opposite direction, says nothing about the “Brahmans” conspiracy and maintains that the king was in favour of the gradual path

genitals. rGya set fire to his own head.²⁸⁹ The others took up knives (*chu gri*) and said [to the bTsan po], (19a) “Let us kill all the Tsen men pa, then all die in front of the palace²⁹⁰”.²⁹¹ [The bTsan po] dispatched a messenger to summon Ye shes dbang po, sending²⁹² a message saying: “Here all monks disagree among themselves and raise disputes. What is to be done?” [Despite this request] he did not come to [the bTsan po]. Then the *nang 'khor gNon Kham[s] pa* was sent for and was ordered: “If you summon the mKhan po [you] will be rewarded with the Great Copper (*zangs chen po*),²⁹³ and if you do not, you will be executed.” [Upon his arrival at lHo brag, the *nang 'khor*] sent the box containing the royal letter (*bka' sgram*) to the *mkhan po* in the cave and delivered the message, that according to the order of the bTsan po, he should go into his presence. Then, after being invited to the cave, [the *nang 'khor* said:] “The royal order is that I should summon [you] or be executed; if [you] do not go I shall commit suicide by jumping from the rock.” [Ye shes dbang po said]: “That would bring forth a demon that would cause me hindrances. Now, as your life shall be saved (*srog gdon*), bring a horse [for me.]” [The *nang 'khor*] was delighted. Then when he proceeded to the palace [of the bTsan po], [the *nang 'khor*] was immediately richly rewarded with *phra men* and *rgya bye'u* (?). With the fifteen horses which were sent to fetch [him], Ye shes dbang po arrived in the presence of the bTsan po and prostrated. The bTsan po asked, “What is to be done about these quarrels among the monks?” Ye shes dbang po replied: “I should not have been summoned here for that! If I had not

of the Indian tradition and duly imposed it. For this reason the followers of Hwa shang Mahāyāna used self-injury and suicide to put pressure on the king.

²⁸⁹ This event is reported by the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 41–42). Two names are given there as *qi shi mi shi pi mo lo* which were separated by DEMIÉVILLE in *Qi shi mi shi* (K'i-chō-mi-che) and *Pi mo lo* (Pi-mo-lo). The second name could be identified with *Vimala* which fits perfectly with the *gNyags Bi ma la* given here, whereas the first name remained unclear. Part of the first name seems to render the Tibetan *Sha mi*, suggesting a reference to *Myang Sha mi*. Furthermore, *Myang Sha mi* seems to correspond to the *Myang Sha mi go cha* mentioned in the Buddhist-Bon po debate (see folio 14b). rGya seems to indicate a Chinese master. The fact that somebody set fire to his own head is also mentioned in the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646.

²⁹⁰ *Phru mi* stands for *phru ma*.

²⁹¹ The threat of collective suicide is also reported by Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646, according to which thirty Tibetan monks announced: “Si la Loi du Dhyāna ne se peut pratiquer, nous demandons, tant que nous sommes, à retirer nos frocs et à vouer nos vies aux ravins et aux fosses” (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 42). The same passage is however silent on the detail of the knives and the suggestion that before taking their own lives they wanted to kill the antagonists. This may be either the understandable omission of a fact or a construction by the pro-gradualist sources, which sought to shed a negative light on their opponents. However, as the Chinese report adds that the “Brahmans” were astonished and frightened the threats may have gone beyond mere suicide.

²⁹² The Tibetan has *hka' ma spring bar*; *ma* is probably an erroneous interpolation by the copyist.

²⁹³ On *zangs chen po* as an insignium of rank see n. 115.

come and my meditation had not been hindered, the life of the Son of God and my own life would have endured a long time. The holy doctrine shall exist until Maitreya arrives, but Tibet has an unlucky destiny; before his death mKhan po Bo dhi sa twa²⁹⁴ had said (19b): ‘In general, wherever Buddhism appears, there is also opposition by non-Buddhist religion. In Tibet, approaching the final 500 years period of the doctrine, there will be no opposition from the non-Buddhists. Buddhists themselves will disagree on the doctrinal point of view and therefore there will be debates.²⁹⁵ If this occurs, invite my disciple Ka ma la shi la,²⁹⁶ dwelling in Nepal, and let him debate. The king shall decide the matter.’ Now, please, act accordingly.” Then [somebody] was sent to summon Ka ma la shi la. The Ton mun pa²⁹⁷ took the *Shes rab 'bum* (*Prajñāpāramitā* in one hundred thousand verses) and studied the subject of the debate in bSam gtan gling,²⁹⁸ behind closed door, for two months. [The Ton mun pa] stepped on the *dGongs pa nges par 'grel pa* (*Samdhinirmocanasūtra*)²⁹⁹ [in contempt] and threw it away.³⁰⁰ At that time, Ye shes dbang po explained [to the bTsan po] the point of view of Bo dhi sa twa and of the Tsen men,³⁰¹ until Ka ma la shi la arrived. The Son of God was duly relieved, and he joyfully touched the forehead [of Ye shes dbang po] with his own [in a sign of great respect] and said: “Ye shes dbang po is my *Ā tsā rya*.” Then he prostrated [to him].

²⁹⁴ According to *sBa bzhed* B (62) he passed away in Tibet and a *stūpa* was built on Has po ri as his tomb.

²⁹⁵ A similar prophecy is attributed to Padmasambhava before his return to Nepal (see folio 13a).

²⁹⁶ Though some of the events surrounding this famous Indian scholar may be legendary, the historical existence of Kamalaśīla – like that of his master Śāntarakṣita – is very well established by their extant works in the bsTan 'gyur.

²⁹⁷ *Ton mun* renders the Chinese *dun men* meaning “instantaneous entrance”.

²⁹⁸ bSam gtan gling is a minor temple in bSam yas. Its name seems very appropriate for the residence of the follower of a Hwa shang Mahāyāna practitioner of Dhyāna.

²⁹⁹ *dGongs pa nges par 'grel pa* is mentioned in the *IDan dkar dkar chag* n.117 (LALOU 1953: 322). A comparable text is mentioned in the *sūtra* part of the Bu ston catalogue which reports that the work was amended at the time of the Great Revision (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 219). Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 reports that Mahāyāna affirmed that he did not base himself on the exegetical commentaries like the “Brahmans” but rather on the *sūtra* handed down by his authoritative masters (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 160).

³⁰⁰ This event is given in *sBa bzhed* B (66), *sBa bzhed* A (56), and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (385). *Bu ston chos 'byung* (188) comments that they acted in such a way because they realised that this text was in sharp contradiction to their approach. The doctrinal reasons behind this act could be linked with the fact that this text particularly insists on the synergic co-ordination of quieting (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*), cf. SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989: 114–115.

³⁰¹ Tsen men renders the Chinese term Jian men meaning “gradual entrance, entrance by stages”.

Then, upon the arrival³⁰² of Ka ma la shi la, [a debate was held].³⁰³ In Byang chub gling³⁰⁴ the bTsan po was seated in the centre (*gung*), Hwa shang and Ka ma la shi la were seated on lion thrones respectively to his right and his left.³⁰⁵ Behind them sat the disciples in [two] rows. The Ton mun pa disciples such as Jo mo Byang chub,³⁰⁶ Sru Yang dag,³⁰⁷ the monk Lang ka³⁰⁸ and so on, were numerous. (20a) The Tsen men pa disciples comprised only a few *dge slong* such as dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na.³⁰⁹ The bTsan po handed over a garland of flowers to both *mkhan po* and to each monk, and announced: "For the sake of all those of my subjects in Tibet who had been attached to the Black, I have invited Bo dhi sa twa, the son of the Za hor king. The symbols of the Three Jewels were established, I let all subjects learn the holy doctrine and several people took their vows. Then Hwa shang Mahāyāna arrived here and most Tibetan monks have been studying with Hwa shang. Others, as they had been disciples of Bo dhi sa twa, could not learn what Hwa shang was teaching, and a dispute arose. I took a decision

³⁰² *sBa bzhed* B (66–67); *sBa bzhed* A (56); and *sBa bzhed* C (385) narrate an anecdote concerning the arrival of Kamalaśīla: when he arrived at the bank of the river Mahāyāna had joined the ministers who went to welcome him in order to test him, and he was deeply impressed by his capacity. This account was taken over by later historical narratives such as *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 401).

³⁰³ According to the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 the whole debate was not a single event – as it is presented by the Tibetan sources – but a long exchange of questions and answers largely in written form. However it is possible that some debates, like the one described here, took place even though no specific sites of particular debates are mentioned (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 39–40).

³⁰⁴ Byang chub gling is a minor temple of bSam yas, cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 384, 402.

³⁰⁵ The right side is traditionally considered to be more prestigious than the left side. It seems therefore that Hwa shang was accorded the higher position (cf. also DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 11, 229).

³⁰⁶ Jo mo Byang chub see n. 70, 230.

³⁰⁷ Sru Yang dag, mentioned by all extant *sBa bzhed* versions (B 67; *sBa bzhed* A 57; *sBa bzhed* C 385) seems to correspond to Shu jia ti (Siu k'ie t'i), the monk who was the son of the king of the Su pi (Sou-p'i), Tib. Sum pa (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 39). He is mentioned in the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646 in the list of the favourite disciples of Mahāyāna in second position after Jo mo Byang chub, which is consistent with the ranking order given here. Though the reconstruction of the name Sru Yang dag is somewhat problematic this could be an attempt to render Sugati/Sugata; from *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (400) we know of the Sum pa monk Rlangs Su ga ta who was active at that time.

³⁰⁸ The monk Lang ka is mentioned by all extant *sBa bzhed* versions (B 67; *sBa bzhed* A 57; *sBa bzhed* C 385).

³⁰⁹ dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na are named here as the two main representatives of the Tsen men pa taking part in the debate. *sBa bzhed* B (67) mentions Vairocana together with sBa dPal dbyangs and sBa Ratna, and *sBa bzhed* A (57) has Vairocana together with dPal dbyangs and Ratna. In fact there is a contradiction in the *sBa bzhed* if dPal dbyangs and Ratna are earlier treated as the same person (cf. n. 263) and presented here as two different people. *sBa bzhed* C (385) mentions rBa dPal dbyangs, Vairocana and Ye shes dbang po.

[concerning it] but all the disciples of Hwa shang were upset.³¹⁰ Myang Sha mi gashed himself and died, rGya set fire to his own head and died, gNyags Bi ma la crushed his own genitals, and the others said that they would kill all the Tsen men pa with their knives and would then die in front of the palace. In order to present this, the left was appointed (*g.yon bskos pa yin?*).³¹¹ Now Ka ma la shi la, a disciple of Bo dhi sa twa, the mKhan po of the Tsen men pa, has arrived. [Ka ma la shi la] and Hwa shang, you two, compare your knowledge. **(20b)** Whoever has better reasoning (*gtan tshigs*) according to the custom (*chos*) shall be presented with the garland of flowers, and no arrogance shall be shown.”³¹²

In the words of Hwa shang: “[Everything is] generated as conceptualisation of the mind (*sems kyi rnam par rtog pa, cittavikalpanā*). Due to the power of [their] virtuous and non-virtuous deeds, sentient beings [continuously] revolve in the round of migration (*samsāra*), experiencing [incessantly] the fruits of [either] higher (*sugati*) or lower (*durgati*) rebirths. Whoever does not think anything, does not do anything, will [automatically] be liberated from *samsāra*. Accordingly, do not think anything. The practising of the Ten Forms of Dharma Activities (*chos spyod bcu, daśadharmacaryā*) such as generosity and so on, is only meant to be taught to vulgar people devoid of karmic relation to virtue, with dull senses and limited intellect. For those who were previously purified and have acute senses, it is as if virtue and sin would obscure [them], too, as white or black clouds obscure the sky. So, do not do anything, do not think anything. Those who are endowed with non-conceptualisation (*mi rtog pa*) and non-

³¹⁰ In the *dBa' bzhed* the king seems somewhat helpless about how to tackle the doctrinal dispute. As the king himself mentions a previous decision, this could refer to a position he had taken previously which in some way might have been seen as unjustly favouring the pro-Indian party. According to the Chinese dossier from Dunhuang the pro-Indian party had raised the issue that the teachings of the Chinese master were not consistent with what was preached by the Buddha. After long studying and debating the pro-Indian side was losing and they used conspiracy allying themselves with some leading figures. “C'est alors qu'abusant certains grands du royaume ils ourdirent le dessin de se les associer et de former une cabale” (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 41). This prompted a reaction by the pro-Chinese who felt unjustly persecuted and threatened to commit suicide. Finally the Chinese system was officially authorised as pure and based upon the *sūtra* (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 39–42).

³¹¹ *g.Yon bskos pa yin* is an obscure phrase which could either indicate that the antagonists were assigned the position to the left or that the title “to the left” was assigned (cf. the title “to the right” assigned previously to Ye shes dbang po, cf. folio 13a). The same passage is given as *gnya' g.yon hskor ba yin* by the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, which is also very obscure and might indicate that the king was saying that he turned his neck (*i.e.* face and attention) to the left.

³¹² Here it seems that the king is trying to show a neutral position and that he is also keen that the ground of the doctrinal dispute is maintained as such without negative emotions being raised. This is consistent with the fact that later, though the gradualists emerged as the winners, there is no mention of concrete measures taken against the Ton mun pa in the *dBa' bzhed*.

apprehension (*mi dmigs pa*), by entering instantaneously (*cig char*), are like those who have attained the ten stages (*sa, bhūmi*).³¹³

Ā tsā rya Ka ma la shi la said: “As regards such a statement about not thinking anything, this amounts to giving up discriminating wisdom (*so sor rtog pa 'i shes rab*). (21a) The root of correct wisdom (*yang dag pa 'i ye shes*) is ultimately discriminating wisdom (*so sor rtog pa 'i shes rab*). Abolishing it also means renouncing the wisdom which transcends the world (*'jig rten las 'das pa 'i shes rab*) by cutting its very root. Without the discriminating wisdom (*so sor rtog pa 'i shes rab*), by what means shall the yogin attain the state of non-conceptualisation (*mi rtog pa*)? In the event that there is no recollection (*dran pa med pa, asmṛti*) of all the elements of existence and no mental concentration (*vid la mi bya ba, amanas(i)kāra*) [as was previously stated by Hwa shang], you will not be able to avoid any remembrance of your [previous] experiences with all the elements of existence and avoid any concentration in your mind. If one thinks of avoiding the recollection of all elements of existence and mental concentration and meditates in such a way, one accordingly meditates that there is no recollection of these. But by this very fact concentration occurs in one’s mind. Even if there could be no recollection and no concentration, what would these two be annihilated by (*gang gis med par 'gyur*) at that time? These two need to be analyzed: absence [of recollection and concentration] cannot become a cause (*rgyu*). Who attains total non-conceptualisation (*rnam par mi rtog pa*) by having no marks (*mtshan ma med pa, ānimitta*) and no mental concentration (*vid la byed pa med pa, amanas(i)kāra*)? In such a way, if you attain total non-conceptualisation (*rnam par mi rtog pa*), [you] end up with the total non-conceptualisation of someone who has fainted.³¹⁴ Lacking perfect discrimination (*so sor rtog pa*), there is no means for [attaining] no recollection (*dran pa med*) and no mental concentration (*vid la byed pa med*) by any other way. Because of the lack of means for attaining no recollection and no mental concentration, emptiness (*sūnyatā*) will not be comprehended (*stong pa nyid rtogs par mi 'gyur*). (21b) Without understanding emptiness (*sūnyatā*), obscurations (*sgrib pa*) will not be shed. If, even without understanding [*sūnyatā*], one were

³¹³ The position of Hwa shang Mahāyāna is given here as in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 68; *sBa bzhed* A 57–58; *sBa bzhed* C 386–387) and is also mentioned in *Bu ston chos 'byung* 188. This corresponds to a large extent to what is mentioned in the Third *Bhāvanākrama* of Kamalaśīla...

³¹⁴ *sBa bzhed* B (69), *sBa bzhed* A (58–59), and *sBa bzhed* C (387) give: *dran pa med pa tsam gyis rnam par mi rtog par 'gyur na | brgyal ba dang | ra ro ba dang | bog pa 'i dus su yang dran pa med pas rnam par grol bar 'gyur ro*, i.e. if one attains total non-conceptualisation just by not remembering, [it is as if] one reaches release [from conceptualisation] by the total lack of remembrance of the state of fainting, intoxication and insanity.

to shed the obscurations, one could be liberated at any time.³¹⁵ Furthermore, if a yogin does not enter recollection and mental concentration because he is obscured (*rmongs pa*) for a declining faculty of recollection (*dran pa nyams pa*) of all the elements of existence, in this case, as he is very obscured, how could he become a yogin? Practising the absence of recollection and the absence of mental concentration without perfect discrimination is like practising stupidity. In fact, the vision (*snang ba*) of the perfect wisdom (*yang dag pa'i ye shes*) turns out to be far reaching (*rgyang ring du bsrings par 'gyur ro*).³¹⁶ If one has no declining faculty of remembrance and is not stupid, in this case, how is one able to attain the absence of recollection and the absence of mental concentration without the perfect discrimination? Not to remember while remembering, not to see while seeing – these are not possible. If the absence of recollection and the absence of mental concentration is practised, how shall things such as former states (*sngon gyi gnas*) be remembered afterwards? It is a contradiction, like the case of one who stays in the cold, which is the opposite of the hot, and does not feel the heat. Therefore, the absence of recollection of the holy doctrine, the absence of concentration and the absence of knowledge of the whole doctrine of Buddha, from the ultimate point of view, need to be preceded by discrimination (*so sor rtog pa*). In fact, absence of remembering and absence of concentration can be achieved only by very perfect discrimination, and not otherwise. **(22a)** If a yogin examines [things] by perfect wisdom, from the ultimate point of view he does not see the elements of existence being generated in the three times (past, present and future). So, how shall he raise [the relevant] recollection in his mind? How should he raise remembrance for something of which he has no experience because it ultimately does not exist in the three times? So, having appeased all activity, he enters the wisdom of total non-conceptualisation (*rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes*). By entering this, he will understand emptiness (*sūnyatā*). Thanks to this understanding, the whole tangle of false views will be abandoned. By examining [things] with the wisdom endowed with skilful means, he will become perfectly expert both in the relative and in the ultimate truth (*kun rdzob dang don dam pa'i bden pa*). In such a way,

³¹⁵ *sBa bzhed* B (69), *sBa bzhed* A (59), and *sBa bzhed* C (387) give: *stong pa nyid ma rtogs kyang dran pa med pa tsam gyis thar pa dang grol bar 'gyur na khams gong ma'i lha thams cad thar par 'gyur ba'o*, “if even without understanding emptiness, one could attain liberation and release just by means of absence of remembrance, all gods of the [higher form and formless realms (*rūpa-* and *ārūpyadhātu*)] could be liberated”.

³¹⁶ *sBa bzhed* B (69) and *sBa bzhed* C (388) give: *de has na yang dag pa'i so sor rtog pa'i shes rab kyis phyin ci log gi snang ba rgyang bsrings ba yin no*, “in such a case, the wrong views are thoroughly rejected by the perfect discriminating wisdom”.

having attained wisdom devoid of any obscuration (*sgrib pa med pa 'i ye shes*), all attributes of the Buddha will be attained.”³¹⁷

Then, the Son of God ordered: “Ton [mun pa] and Tsen [men pa], you may [now] advance your [respective] arguments (*mchid shags*) as you feel like!”

[‘Ba’] Sang shi³¹⁸ spoke: “There are [two systems]: the instant entering of the Chinese and [Indian] gradual application (*rim gyis sbyor ba*).³¹⁹ [As to the system of Ton mun pa] since [they] do not accept the Six Perfections,³²⁰ what is called liberality (*sbyin pa, dāna*) [would be tantamount to] giving completely the three spheres [*i.e.* the whole world] [in charity] and if there is no attachment to [the notion of] self and mine (*bdag dang bdag gir 'dzin pa*), among the forms of generosity it is [considered only] the renunciation of everything. Preventing errors of the three doors (body, speech and mind) is called morality (*tshul khrims, śīla*), if no mistake prevails concerning the [state of] non-conceptualisation (*rnam par mi rtog pa*), (22b) the safeguarding of higher morality (*lhag pa 'i tshul khrims, adhiśīla*) [will] not be faulty (*mi 'tshal = mi 'chal*). Absence of patience (*bzod pa, kṣānti*) and non-patience for any kind of element is [considered] the best patience. Since there is laziness (*le lo*), [its absence] is what is called diligence (or: energy) (*brtson 'grus, vīrya*). Absence of effort and non-effort is [considered] the supreme energy, it is called “indestructible” [and] “hard” (*mi shigs pra ba* [read: *sra ba*] and [therefore] it is the supreme energy [at all]. As there is distraction of the mind (*sems g.yengs pa*), [its absence] is what is called concentration (*bsam gtan, dhyāna*), and if there is absence of distraction of the mind, it is called concentration. As there is no recognition of the ultimate

³¹⁷ The reply by Kamalaśīla corresponds to a great extent to a passage given in the third *Bhāvanākrama* of Kamalaśīla from which it was probably taken, as suggested by numerous verbatim correspondences (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 336ff.; SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989: 63ff.). The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 68–69; *sBa bzhed* A 58–59; *sBa bzhed* C 387–388) present some variations and additions in the wording though the general meaning corresponds.

³¹⁸ *sBa bzhed* A (59) gives Sang shi as does the *dBa' bzhed*. *sBa bzhed* B (70) and *sBa bzhed* C (388) give dPal dbyangs instead, and this corresponds also to what is given in *Bu ston chos 'byung* (189). dPal dbyangs is given as the third speaker by *dBa' bzhed* and *sBa bzhed* A (60) whereas *sBa bzhed* B (70) and *sBa bzhed* C (389) give Ye shes dbang po as the third speaker. Perhaps the confusion was in part due to the erroneous identification of dPal dbyangs with Sang shi.

³¹⁹ Instead of *sbyor ba* there is *sbyong ba* in the extant *sBa bzhed* versions. If *sbyor ba* is just a scribal error the sentence could then be translated as: “There is the instant entering of the Chinese and the [relevant] renouncing of the gradual entering”.

³²⁰ According to the Chinese Dunhuang document PT 4646, the questions concerning the necessity of the Six Perfections and whether they would be overcome according to the transcendent perspective were discussed in detail, cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 85ff.

nature of elements of existence (*dharmatā*), [its recognition] is called by name wisdom (*shes rab, prajñā*). [In fact] if the universal and particular characteristics of phenomena (*chos rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid, svasāmānyalakṣaṇa*) are recognised infallibly, it is [considered] the highest wisdom.³²¹

After Buddha had passed into *nirvāṇa*, for a long time there were no disagreements concerning differing points of view. Later the disagreement among the three approaches of the Indian Madhyamaka doctrine (*dBu ma rnam gsum*)³²² emerged and the Chinese Ton [mun pa] and Tsen [men pa]³²³ appeared at that time. Those who do not comprehend (*ma mjal ba = ma 'jal ba*), became as such because they were prevented (?) from understanding everything.³²⁴ “Although the door of entrances (*i.e.* approaches) can differ, the meaning (or object, *don*) of non-conceptualisation (*mi rtog pa*) and non-apprehension (*mi dmigs pa*) is one and the same. The result, *i.e.* the striving for extinction (*nirvāṇa*) is one and the same. There is general agreement on this.” [Sang shi said].

dBa' dPal dbyangs³²⁵ said: “It is necessary to analyze the definition of the so-called instantaneous entrance (*cig car 'jug*) and gradual approach (*rim gyis sbyor*). If one enters the practice gradually, is there any reason why one should be different from the Tsen men? If one enters instantaneously, what to do then? If you become enlightened right now, what is the fault? (23a)

³²¹ *sBa bzhed B (70)* and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston (388)* attribute a parallel speech to dPal dbyangs, but slightly more concise on the Six Perfections which are described as follows: if one gives up all possessions and every clinging this is called generosity; if attachment concerning the three doors (body, speech and mind) is prevented, this is called morality; if there is no anger, this is the best patience; the avoidance of laziness is defined as effort; if the mind has no distraction, this is concentration; if self and generally characterised phenomena are known, this is wisdom. *sBa bzhed A (60)* attributes the same speech to Sang shi. *Bu ston chos 'byung (189)* gives a summary.

³²² The reference is not completely clear. According to SEYFORTH RUEGG: “if the reference were to the three well-known schools of the Madhyamaka recognised by the later Tibetan doxographers, this passage could hardly be dated before the eleventh or twelfth century when, as a consequence of the activity of Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (said to have been born in 1055) and his associates, the *Prāsaṅgika (Thal 'gyur ba) branch of the Madhyamaka first became established in Tibet in addition to the (Sautrāntika-)Svātantrika and the (Svātantrika-)Yogācāra-Madhyamaka branches already recognized by the ninth century” (SEYFORTH RUEGG 1989: 80).

³²³ An alternative is to consider Ton Tsen as a mistake for Ton mun [pa], in which case the meaning would be: the Chinese Ton mun pa, one [sect], appeared at that time.

³²⁴ *sBa bzhed B (70)* and *sBa bzhed C (388)* give: *da lta ston rtsen gnyis lta bu ma mthun te | ston min pa cig char 'jug ces zer te | yang dag pa ma rtogs ma 'jal bas de ltar gyur*, “now the Ton mun pa and the Tsen men pa do not agree and the Ton men pa affirm that entrance can be reached instantaneously. They became as such due to a lack of correct understanding and studying”.

³²⁵ *sBa bzhed B (70)* and *sBa bzhed C (389)* here give Ye shes dbang po as the third speaker. According to the *dBa' bzhed* Ye shes dbang po did not directly participate in the dispute.

For instance, if one climbs a mountain, to pass [the *bodhisattva*-stages] by way of single steps [in order to reach the top] is extremely difficult and there is no power for jumping at once [to the top]. In a similar way, if it is difficult to attain even the first stage (*sa, bhūmi*), which Buddha reaches instantly the enlightenment? For [you] is required the [relevant] source too which indicates the authoritative tradition (*lung bstan pa'i khungs*), [so it was] said. The Ton [mun] and the Tsen [men] are very different. The Tsen men need to study and acquire expertise in all texts of the doctrine. The whole doctrine has to be understood correctly with reliance upon the three wisdoms (*shes rab rnam pa gsum*),³²⁶ and the unborn patience (*mi skye ba'i bzod pa*) can be attained.

Ultimately, since [patience] is attained on the first stage (*sa, bhūmi*) too by [practising and] meditating with intense devotion [on] the Ten Spiritual Practices (*chos spyod bcu, daśadharmacaryā*), then as far as the [relevant] patience is concerned: having proceeded beyond this stage (*sa, bhūmi*) perfectly, one enters [*i.e.* proceeds] without any faults as to perfect correctness [of wisdom?].³²⁷

Being unable to proceed by acting according to awareness regarding the origin of confusions concerning the slightest downfall (*sūksmāpatti*) [which will exist], if one strives in order to perfectly accomplish [*i.e.* overcome] this (*de yongs su rdzogs par bya ba, *tadparipūrīta*), the second stage (*sa, bhūmi*) [will be] achieved.

[Still] being discontented (*chog mi shes*) with obtaining [merely] all the mundane contemplations (*laukikasamādhi*), absorption (*samāpatti*) or any understanding accruing from scripture and reasoning (*lung dang rang gi [rigs kyi?] rtogs pa*) [only], [still] one learns by requesting for [further] teaching from the Buddhas of the Ten Directions (*phyogs bcu'i sangs*

³²⁶ *sBa bzhed* B (71) and *sBa bzhed* C (389) are more explicit on this point: wisdom acquired through hearing, wisdom acquired through reflection and wisdom acquired through meditation.

³²⁷ *sBa bzhed* B (71), *sBa bzhed* A (60), and *sBa bzhed* C (389) do not mention all the ten stages in detail. There is only a concise passage discussing the first stage and the relevant quality of patience before a sudden jump to the ninth stage and Buddhahood; this corresponds to what is given in *Nyang chos 'hyung* (405). The passage on the first stage given in *sBa bzhed* B (71) is as follows: *Thos bsam sgom gsum gyi shes rab rnam gsum la brien nas don ma nor bar shes te | chos spyod rnam bcu la bslabs te bsgoms pas | sa dang po la bzod pa yang thob | yang dag pa'i skyon med par yang 'jug | de nas sa dgur yang dag pa'i shes rab kyis rim par sbyangs....*, "Based upon the three stages of wisdom, [acquired through] studying, reflection and meditation, one comes to know the meaning in a correct way, and meditating by way of learning the Ten Spiritual Practices, one not only attains the patience on the first stage, but also enters [*i.e.* proceeds] without any faults as to perfect correctness [of wisdom?]. Thereafter, one gradually purifies the [different stages] by way of correct wisdom [up to the] ninth stage".

rgyas), if one strives in order to enhance studying [in such a way] the third stage (*sa, bhūmi*) will be achieved.

[Having obtained that] by studying the [thirty-seven] factors conducive to enlightenment (*byang chub kyi phyogs dang mthun pa'i chos, bodhipakṣadharmā*), one has to cultivate [the path] by way of these, and since [the mind] has [yet] (23b) not entered equanimity (*btang snyoms, upeksā*) as to the strong longing (*mos [pa] lhag par*) in form of craving absorption (*samāpatti*) and the doctrine, if one strives for accomplishing these factors (*yan lag, aṅga*) [of enlightenment] fully the fourth stage will be achieved.

Examining [now] fully the [four] truths, and having made manifest (*mngon sum du byas pa*) that one has not [yet] focused [fully on the fact of] the [ultimate] oneness of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, since one is [still] not able to [contemplate properly] the factors conducive to enlightenment which assist [one properly] by means (*upāyasamgrhītabodhipakṣa*) of extraordinary equanimity, for which reason it is not fully perfect, if one strives for this the fifth stage will be achieved.³²⁸

If one has made manifest (*mngon du byas*) properly (*ci lta ba = ji lta ba ltar na*) the elements of conditioned formations (*'du byed, saṃskāra*), [the mind] is [focusing] a lot [on] weariness (towards) [*i.e. saṃskāra*] and since one is [still] unable to rest in [a state of] mental concentration (*yid la byed pa, manasikāra*) of sign[lessness] [of things] (*mtshan ma [med pa], [a]nimitta*), [if however] one strives one will obtain the sixth stage (*bhūmi*).

Because [the mind on this level] is [still] unable to abide in concentration (*yid la byed pa*) on [the realisation] of the signlessness [of things perceived] without discontinuity and without interruption (*bar chad med pa dang rgyun mi 'chad pa*), [if however] one strives one will obtain the seventh stage (*bhūmi*).

Remaining in the state of signlessness [of things perceived], being fixed in extraordinary equanimity, [still] since [the mind] has no [full] apprehension (*mi dmigs pa*) as to the full control [in the realisation] of the signs [yet], the one who strives achieves the eighth and ninth stages (*bhūmi*).

Since [the mind] is [yet still] unable to see without attachment and without obstruction all the objects of knowledge, if one [attempts] to fully accomplish these factors, the one who strives achieves the level of omniscience, the tenth stage (*bhūmi*).

³²⁸ *hDen pa rnam par dpyad pa dang 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa las gcig tu mi 'jog par mngon sum du byas pa'i rjes la lhag par btang snyoms su gzhas pa'i thabs kyis yongs su zin pa'i byang chub kyi phyogs dang mthun par mi nus pas de yongs su rdzogs pa ma yin te 'bad pas sa lnga pa 'thob bo.*

The ten stages (*bhūmi*)³²⁹ can be attained [only] after practising and proceeding to them. If this is the case, how can you Ton mun pa, who do not know all worldly phenomena as you neither learn nor practise, (24a) have access to the five sciences of omniscient wisdom and know thoroughly all objects of knowledge? If nothing may be done, and really nothing is done, [you] do not even provide for your own food and [you] die of hunger. In this case how can [you] realise the highest Buddhahood? If [you] are not able to take care of yourself, how are you able to take care of others? The *bodhisattva*, having first generated the Thought of Enlightenment, has sympathetically taken care of all living beings and he has thereby accumulated merits (*bsod nams kyi tshogs, puṇyasambhāra*). On the basis of the threefold wisdom (*shes rab, prajñā*), he has accumulated wisdom (*ye shes kyi tshogs, jñānasambhāra*). By means of cleansing the delusive obscurations to liberation and to omniscience (*nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrib pa, kleśāvaraṇa* and *jñeyāvaraṇa*), he does not [yet] give up *samsāra*. Thanks to wisdom (*shes rab, prajñā*), the delusive defilement does not contaminate. Even if he finally becomes enlightened, until *samsāra* comes to an end, he performs unimaginable Buddha deeds for the sake of living beings and leads them through the liberation from *samsāra* up to the level of omniscience. Without learning, without practising, without knowing anything, one does not operate for the sake of oneself and others. So, with a mind which does not think anything, like an egg, will one achieve enlightenment? If one proceeds in a common way, without examining, without watching, one ends up staggering along. Furthermore, wishing to attain enlightenment one needs skilfully to practise mental quiescence meditation (*zhi gnas, śamatha*) and penetrative insight (*lhag mthong, vipaśyanā*). Somebody who practises neither of these two does not comprehend the extremes of phenomena (*dnegos po'i mtha*). When one is enlightened to the fact that all wishes will not be fulfilled, and when the mind has become very clear about the suchness [*i.e.* reality] (*de kho na nyid, tattva*) [of all things], (24b) one has succeeded in the path which combines mental quiescence meditation (*zhi gnas, śamatha*) with penetrative insight (*lhag mthong, vipaśyanā*). For practising meditation, this is the good way.” dPal dbyangs concluded his speech and the Ton mun were unable to refute the Tsen men. Casting down their flowers, they admitted defeat.³³⁰

³²⁹ A number of early translated texts were devoted to the ten stages and are given in *lDan dkar dkar chag*, e.g. *Byang chub sems pa'i sa bcu hstan pa* n. 20, n. 22 (LALOU 1953: 320); *Sa bcu rnam par bcad pa* n. 537, n.538; *Sa bcu pa'i gleng gzhi bcad pa* n.539 and *Sa bcu pa'i don bsod pa* n. 540 (LALOU 1953: 332).

³³⁰ *sBa bzhed B* (72–75) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (393–394) add that according to a different tradition (*yang lugs gcig la*) a Chinese spiritual master was teaching a tradition called *dKar po chig thub* and that this tradition

Afterwards the Son of God ordered: "Following the instantaneous entrance of the Ton mun, the Ten Spiritual Practices (*chos spyod bcu, daśadharmacaryā*) are considered incorrect. This shall not be done. If for oneself and the others, the door to learning is closed, the mind will become obtuse and the doctrine will decline. Hence, as far as theory is concerned, this shall follow the view of Nāgārjuna. As far as cultivation (*sgom pa*) is concerned, mental quiescence meditation (*zhi gnas, śamatha*) and penetrative insight (*lhag mthong, vipaśyanā*) shall be practised on the basis of the three wisdoms." Then, [the bTsan po] decided to follow the method of entrance by gradual approach according to what had been previously proposed by Ye shes dbang po and Bo dhi sa twa.³³¹ A college of translators (*sgra bsgyur grwa*) was established and three colleges for mental training [of the doctrine] (*blo sbyong*), *ltang 'bul*³³² and meditation (*sems 'chos?*)³³³ were established as well. Six translators made translations from the *Tripitaka*, the *Sūtra* and the *Abhidharma* of the Mahāyāna. Concerning the *Ma ha' yo ga Tan tra* there was the doubt that it might be misunderstood by anyone lacking a comprehension of the *dharmadhātu* perspective (*chos kyi dbyings ji lta ba*), which shows the absence of distinction between pure and impure (*gtsang rme med pa*) meant for leading the non-Buddhists to virtue. So, it was not translated. Also because

spread widely in Tibet (JACKSON 1994). Then because of doctrinal differences some disputes emerged and a debate was organised with the participation of Kamalaśīla who was invited to Tibet for that purpose. The Chinese party was defeated and the Indian system was declared as the correct one by law. The texts of *dKar po chig thub* were buried in bSam yas as *gter*, the Chinese spiritual master set fire to his head and died facing towards Sukhāvati, and one of his followers, called gZims mal ba Co rma rma, committed suicide by inflicting injuries on himself.

³³¹ Though the gradualists are considered the winner and their approach is officially approved as the correct one, the only concrete consequence mentioned in this text is the fact that the activity of translation was promoted. No mention is made of any punishing measures taken against the Ton mun pa and of the tragic events considered to have followed the debate by later sources such as *Bu ston chos 'byung* (190): the Chinese *hwa shang* was sent back to China and Co rma rma committed suicide, the texts were buried as *gter* and the system of the Ton mun pa was prohibited; later on, four Chinese assassins sent by the *hwa shang* killed Kamalaśīla. *sBa bzhed B* (75, 77–78) and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (398) mention that the system of the Ton mun pa was prohibited and the texts were buried. Kamalaśīla was killed in his house in [bSam yas] *sgra bsgyur* [gling] by a *mu stegs pa*. *Nyang chos 'byung* (407) rejects the self-immolation of the Chinese spiritual master and his followers as false, and according to this account the Chinese spiritual master was still offered high honours.

³³² In a parallel passage in *Nyang chos 'byung* (396) it is stated that there was the learning of the doctrine (*chos slob*) in the twelve great colleges (*chos grwa*), the performing of *stangs 'bul* in the six places for *stang 'bul*, and the practice of meditation in the five meditation colleges (*sgom grwa*). *IDe'u chos 'byung* (356) mentions: the twelve colleges for *blo sbyong*, the six places for *lhar 'bul ha* and the great meditation colleges. *Ne'u chos 'byung* (24–25) mentions: the twelve colleges for *blo sbyong*, six places for *ltad 'bul* and twelve meditation colleges. According to the explanation given in *Ne'u chos 'byung* the place for *ltad 'bul* was devoted to the examination of monks.

people able to practise Mantrayoga would not appear in Tibet, it was not translated.³³⁴ The *Kriya* [*tantra*] which were preached in order to lead all the Brahmans to virtue and the *U pa ya*³³⁵ were appropriate for Tibet and were translated as requested by Ye shes dbang po. Since the doctrine of cause and effect of the Thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde (Mūlasarvāstivādin) from the 'Dul ba'i lung sde bzhi (*Catvāri vinayāgama*) was originally taught and was considered appropriate to Tibet, it was completely translated. Some *sūtra* of the Nyan thos (Śrāvaka) such as the *Lung ring po*³³⁶ and the *Gang po rtogs pa*³³⁷ were translated. The *mNgon pa ko sha*³³⁸ of the Nyan thos (Śrāvaka) was translated. Everywhere, both in the central areas and at the borders, all subjects had to be taught the holy doctrine. In every village a religious master was appointed for preventing the possibility that virtuous deeds might not be properly carried out. (25a) The *zhang blon* and the queens were all ordered to study the doctrine letter by letter.³³⁹ The Son of God, Khri Srong lde btsan, Ā tsā rya Bo dhi sa twa, dBa' Ye shes dbang po, 'Ba' Sang shi, these four established the symbols of the Three Jewels. [They succeeded in introducing] the doctrine which could not be established for the five previous generations of kings.³⁴⁰ Elsewhere the construction of the temple and so on are mentioned.³⁴¹ In the country of Tibet, the holy doctrine was widely proclaimed.³⁴²

³³³ The small characters of the gloss are hardly identifiable. According to the passage of *Nyang chos 'byung* mentioned in the previous note this seems to indicate the place for the practice of meditation. *Ne'u chos 'byung* (25) uses the same expression: *sems chos kyi sgom grwa*.

³³⁴ *sNgags g.yog nus pa yang bod la mi 'byung nas ma hsgyur*. Apparently *g.yog* is a misspelling for *yo ga*.

³³⁵ *U pa ya* stands for *U pa'i rgyud* alias *sPyod rgyud*, *Caryātantra*. See n. 244.

³³⁶ *Lung ring po* corresponds to the *Dirghāgama* collection.

³³⁷ *Gang po rtogs pa* seems to be the *Gang po la sogs pa'i rtogs pa brjod pa* mentioned in *IDan dkar dkar chag* n. 273 (LALOU 1953: 325) which corresponds to the *Pūrṇapramukhāvādānaśatika*.

³³⁸ *mNgon pa ko sha* seems to refer here to ancient Abhidharma texts and not to the *Abhidharmakośa*, the famous work of Vasubhandu.

³³⁹ In the text the letters are mentioned as *ka ba li* for *ka' li*, the consonants.

³⁴⁰ Though mentioning earlier contacts with Buddhism and some temples established by former kings, this text affirms that Buddhism was firmly established only under Khri Srong lde btsan. This seems consistent with the results of present historical research and differs from later accounts attributing great Buddhist deeds to Srong btsan sgam po. Remarkably Padmasambhava, who appears in this text briefly and with little success, is not mentioned among the protagonists of this process.

³⁴¹ The author of the gloss was apparently aware that there were more detailed descriptions of bSam yas and its construction (cf. Introduction).

³⁴² *sBa bzhed B* (76–77), *sBa bzhed A* (63), and *sBa bzhed C* (392–393) add that the king then requested Kamalaśīla to write the *sGom rim dang po*, *sGom rim bar ma* and *sGom rim tha ma* as well as the *dBu mu snang ba*.

When Ye shes dbang po was about to die he was received by the non-human beings. A pleasant scent and offerings from the sky appeared. When Ye shes dbang po expressed his doubts (*the tsom* = *the tshom*) to 'Phags pa, the Son of God (= the king) came and offered him some rice soup. Ye shes dbang po said: "Having received the food offering of a god, from now on I shall renounce food. I shall take spiritual concentration instead of food. I shall take doctrine instead of bodily components." With these words he passed away. "Reflecting on the fact that this Ā tsā rya has passed away, my own life cannot last long," said the bTsan po with great sorrow. Then all those who had taken their vows did not follow the Ton mun but learned the doctrine. However they were not able to obtain the relevant books. All the Indian doctrinal scriptures (*dar ma*), from the first to the last, were being borrowed and translated, but the work could not be completed because in Shri Na len tra the [texts of] the doctrine had been burnt in a fire. In China the doctrinal scriptures (*dar ma*) had arrived when 1,200 years had passed [from the *nirvāṇa* of Buddha] and the volumes of the word [of Buddha] were completely preserved. So, [the bTsan po] said, "[I] regret the fact that the doctrinal scriptures (*dar ma*) of China were not translated"³⁴³ (25b). This is the end.³⁴⁴

During the reign of the Son of God Khri gTsong lde btsan RaI pa can,³⁴⁵ numerous Indian scholars were invited and the three [translators], Ka, Cog, [sNa],³⁴⁶ translated the texts of the doctrine which had not been translated before. Before translating them, [the manner of translating itself] was also systematised thanks to the Great Revision.³⁴⁷ The temples that had

³⁴³ A parallel passage is mentioned by *sBa bzhed* B (78) somewhat earlier in the narrative, immediately before mentioning the death of Ye shes dbang po.

³⁴⁴ This is the first point to be explicitly mentioned as the end of the *dBa' bzhed*. However, the last paragraph concerning the death of Ye shes dbang po is somewhat juxtaposed to the narrative that concludes with the proclamation of the doctrine, and might originally have constituted the end. The following paragraph concerning Khri gTsong lde btsan and the few notes on the *dBa' bzhed* are apparently an additional passage written by the same hand. Further additions in a different hand follow.

³⁴⁵ The part concerning Khri gTsong lde btsan and the Great Revision is mentioned only in the additional part of *sBa bzhed* A (73). *sBa bzhed* B and *sBa bzhed* C conclude with events of the time of Mu ne btsan po. The very final paragraph of *sBa bzhed* B (82) and *sBa bzhed* A (92) is dedicated to the various versions and names of the *sBa bzhed* (cf. Introduction).

³⁴⁶ According to *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (419) these three famous translators died during the reign of Khri gTsong lde btsan and were buried in *stūpa* constructed on Has po ri. Ruins which can be still seen there are identified with these *stūpa*. On these translators see also n. 380.

³⁴⁷ See n. 6.

yet to be built to complete the set of 108 were constructed.³⁴⁸ The religious law was tied again like a silken knot³⁴⁹ and the holy doctrine was put into a system. The *dBa'i bzhed pa*,³⁵⁰ the royal narrative (*bka' mchid*) concerning the bringing of the Buddha's doctrine to Tibet, is thus completed. Revised copy (*zhus dag*).³⁵¹

After *Ā tsā rya Ye shes dbang po* had passed away, religious training for the merit of the king and his subjects was later held at the request, to *Jo mo Byang chub*,³⁵² of *dBa' za sPyan ras gzigs*, daughter of *Ye shes dbang po*. While [*dBa' za*] *sPyan ras gzigs* was establishing 108 *stūpa* at *Brag dmar ma gong*, the *nāga* raised (*bstang*) a spring and fertile earth, and stones with Indian writing appeared. Then, after the *bTsan po* had passed away, during the reign of his son *Khri lDe srong btsan*, the *Shes rab 'bum* (*Prajñāpāramitā* in 100,000 verses) was fully and meticulously translated thanks to *Ā tsā rya 'Ba' Rad na*³⁵³. At that time 'Ba' Rad na received the following prophecy in his dreams: "Thanks to these blessings, all beings of the worldly spheres will practise only the Mahāyāna and will

³⁴⁸ The story that *Khri gTsong lde btsan's* ancestors wished to establish 108 temples but that only he managed to complete them appears in *lDe'u chos 'byung* (363) and *Ne'u chos 'byung* (24).

³⁴⁹ *Chos khrims dar gyi mdud pa*: the silken knot of the religious law was used together with the golden yoke as a symbol of the religious legal system. It was already used in early post-dynastic sources to characterise the royal government of *Khri Srong lde btsan* and *Khri gTsong lde btsan*, which combined religious and temporal power. A related expression was used to characterise the fall of the kingdom at the time of *Khri dar ma*: the silken knot was torn and the golden yoke was broken (*chos khrims dar gyi mdud pa dra ba grol | rgyal khrims gser gyi gnya' shing chag*), cf. *Nyang chos 'byung* 446.

³⁵⁰ *dBa'i bzhed pa* might be rendered as "the perspective/testimony of the *dBa'*" concerning the events relevant to the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet (see n. 1 and Introduction). In general *dBa'/sBa/rBa gSal snang* is traditionally considered to be the author. However, the text seems to speak about him and his death, and it therefore appears that somebody around him must have collected his account and put it into writing. Except for the first part related to the former kings, the whole narrative is centered on events taking place during his life, and it ends immediately after his death.

³⁵¹ *Zhus dag* indicates that the copy was revised. The words are added in small letters like many of the interpolations and glosses of the text. It might be either that somebody was revising his own work after copying it from an original or – more likely – correcting and explaining the text that had been formerly copied by someone else, as seems to be the case from some of the glosses. The second person could be the copyist of the following paragraphs, which appear to be written in a different hand from the preceding text.

³⁵² See n. 230.

³⁵³ 'Ba' Rad na is mentioned in the former text as *dBa' Rad na*. Given the context it seems that either 'Ba' Sang shi or *dBa' Rad na* is meant. The final paragraph presents further inconsistencies concerning the written forms *sBa*, 'Ba' and *dBa'*.

be born into the pure fields.”³⁵⁴ dBa' mKhan po Mañju³⁵⁵ preached the *Prajñāpāramitā* in 100,000 verses to the Son of God. After saying “thank you for your kindness”, he touched with his forehead [the forehead of the mKhan po] and offered him great rewards. (26a) Jo mo lHa rgyal³⁵⁶ said, “Someone so skilled in preaching the doctrine in this way shall be allowed to eat and drink whatever he wishes.” Later, when 'Ba' Sang shi passed away the goddess Yid bzhin 'khor lo of the 'Gran bzangs temple shed tears,³⁵⁷ and the weeping of non-human beings was heard. This was how the Saddharma was introduced in the beginning (*brnyes*).³⁵⁸

In the horse year in the first spring month the bTsan po Khri Srong lde btsan passed away.³⁵⁹ As he was very young (*sku chung*), [his] son Mu ne btsan po³⁶⁰ had little interest in the practice

³⁵⁴ The whole sentence here is full of corrections and is somewhat uncertain. The extant *sBa bzhed* versions (*sBa bzhed* B 60 and *sBa bzhed* C 363) are much clearer in saying that 'Ba' Rad na received this prophecy in his dreams. However the whole event is attributed to the time of Khri Srong lde btsan, who is mentioned in the same passage as the king to whom the *Prajñāpāramitā* was preached by dBa' bran mkhan po Mañju (*sBa bzhed* B), alias rBa bran mkhan po Mañju (*sBa bzhed* C). However, the *sBa bzhed* versions – like the *dBa' bzhed* – attribute the following comments to Jo mo lHa rgyal; this seems to be a chronological contradiction as Jo mo lHa rgyal was the wife of Khri lDe srong btsan.

³⁵⁵ dBa' mKhan po Mañju seems to be the translator mentioned as dBa' Mañjuśrī in *Bu ston chos 'byung* (208) and as sBas Mañjuśrī in *Nyang chos 'byung* (392).

³⁵⁶ Jo mo lHa rgyal, from the 'Bro clan, was the main wife of Khri lDe srong btsan and the mother of Khri gTsub lde btsan and Khri Dar ma. She is mentioned as 'Bro za lHa rgyal mang mo rje in the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 82). She is also known as 'Bro za Khri mo legs, and is reported in first position in the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 411).

³⁵⁷ The temple mentioned here was probably the small temple which, according to the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, had been established by Sang shi in this locality (*sBa bzhed* B 27; *sBa bzhed* A 22; *sBa bzhed* C 324). Concerning the death of Sang shi *sBa bzhed* B (78) reports the same event, mentioning sBa Sang shi and, in a gloss, dPal dbyangs. *sBa bzhed* C (399) names rBa Ratna, suggesting that it regards these two names as denoting the same person. *dBa' bzhed* differs on this point, as it gives 'Ba' Sang shi, dBa' dPal dbyangs and dBa' Rad na as different persons (cf. also n. 263).

³⁵⁸ A similar account after the end of the *sBa bzhed* proper is given in *sBa bzhed* B (78–79) and in *sBa bzhed* C (399), and more concisely in *sBa bzhed* A (64).

³⁵⁹ The date of the death of Khri Srong lde btsan is still an open issue: from inscriptions we know that his youngest son Khri lDe srong btsan was on the throne in 804. Before him his brother Mu ne btsan po was king for nearly two years (cf. following note) but no dates concerning the succession are clear. Tibetan sources provide a great number of discrepant dates on the death of Khri Srong lde btsan: most sources agree (*Deb ther dmar po* 38; *Yar lung chos 'byung* 62; SØRENSEN 1994: 403) on the ox year, when the king was 56, which corresponds to 797. This finds some corroboration in Chinese sources, which are, however, very confused on this issue (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 232). Nyang ral states that the king was due to die at 56, but thanks to certain rituals performed by Padmasambhava

of the doctrine. When it was to be decided to perform the funeral for [his] father, the Son of God, the black ministers such as mChims mTsan bzher,³⁶¹ sNa nam rGyal tsha lha snang,³⁶² Ngan lam sTag ra klu gong³⁶³ in order to annihilate the Buddhist doctrine,³⁶⁴ and in order to let

he could live for a further 13 years, and reached the age of 69. Another possibility is that the king died at 59, which would correspond to 800 (*IDe'u chos 'hyung* 358; *dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* 66). *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (405) says that the king passed away during the New Year celebrations in an ox year when he was 61; given the birthdate of the king this is impossible, but it provides some interesting hints which correspond to the assertions of the *dBu' bzhed*. According to the dates given here, Khri Srong lde btsan would have died at the beginning of 802 with Mu ne btsan po succeeding him until the end of 803. After this the throne would have been occupied by Khri lDe srong btsan. This seems consistent with reliable Chinese sources (DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 232); according to which a communication was recorded between the 14th and the 23rd of April 804 concerning the death of a Tibetan king. A delegation was sent to Tibet to present the traditional offerings for such an occasion – the *diao ji (tiao tsi)* – but never managed to reach its destination, and some official mourning took place in China.

³⁶⁰ The dates of Mu ne btsan po are also the object of discussion (cf. SØRENSEN 1994: 404). According to the dates given by *dBa' bzhed* he would have taken over the throne in 802 and died at the end of 803. The young age mentioned here would be consistent with *IDe'u chos 'byung* (358), which states that Mu ne btsan po died very young at the age of 17. This would set his birthdate at 786 which is a tiger year, and a tiger year is given by the majority of Tibetan sources as the year of his birth (774 or 786). *sBa bzhed B* ends with Mu ne btsan po being appointed king and no dates are given. In *sBa bzhed A* (65, 68) Mu ne btsan po is reported as ascending the throne at the age of fifteen and passing away at the age of seventeen, after enduring some anti-Buddhist troubles and performing great Buddhist deeds. As in numerous other sources he is said to have married the youngest wife of his father, and because his mother could not stand this fact she poisoned him. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (406) mentions that according to different *rBa bzhed* traditions Mu ne btsan po died either at 17 or at 29, even though these dates are not considered to be reliable (according to the first case he would be born in 786, and according to the latter in 774, as suggested by numerous scholars).

³⁶¹ mChims mTsan bzher, whom we have encountered previously as young student who was trained in the language of India without success, appears here as a powerful minister supporting the Bon po (folio 17a, see n. 235). He is also mentioned as occupying second position among the lay-ministers in the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 412).

³⁶² sNa nam rGyal tsha lha snang was a very powerful Chief Minister in the final part of the kingdom of Khri Srong lde btsan (cf. also n. 220). According to Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 102) sNa nam zhang rgyal [m]tshan lha snang succeeded Ngan lam sTag sgra klu khong. As he was intensively engaged in warfare in the border area between the Tang empire and the Tibetan kingdom his deeds are also narrated by Chinese sources (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 184). *sBa bzhed B* (81–82), *sBa bzhed A* (65), and *sBa bzhed C* (403–404) describe, with some variations, how just before Khri Srong lde btsan passed away the son of this minister, called dBu ring, was killed by prince Mu ti btsan po. The latter was subsequently exiled to lHo brag. In any case, as he does not appear in the inscription and the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan he is likely to have died around this time.

³⁶³ Ngan lam sTag ra (sgra) klu gong was already a protagonist of the Bon po-Buddhist debate under Khri Srong lde btsan (cf. folio 14b). As he already appears in the events of 755, and as a general in 763, by the time of the disputes concerning the funeral of Khri Srong lde btsan he must have been extremely old. As in the case of sNa nam rGyal tsha lha snang, since he does not figure in the inscription and the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan he is likely to

the Bon be honoured they set up (*phub*) a big *re'u*³⁶⁵ at Brag dmar mtsho mo 'gur.³⁶⁶ From Chibs³⁶⁷ [there were] many big horses and quick riders and the place was occupied with stables and tents (?).³⁶⁸ Meanwhile one hundred and twenty-seven Bon po such as A gShen,³⁶⁹ Byi

have died around this time. There is, of course, the possibility that his name was retrospectively included in the scenario of the debate as he is traditionally considered a chief Bon po defender.

³⁶⁴ This could correspond to the problems mentioned in the edict of Khri lDe srong btsan: after the death of his father, some people used the pretext of inauspicious divinations and bad signs from dreams to claim that the practice of the Buddhist doctrine would harm the body of the king and the political authority of his kingdom (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 410). These problems may also be related to the factions and conflicts referred to in the relevant inscription (SNELGROVE 1987: 424). The dispute concerning the funeral does not look like a doctrinal debate but negotiation about an important ritual. In fact it seems that the so-called Bon po ministers, rather than representing religious positions *strictu sensu*, were defending the *raison d'état* in the debate on whether or not to continue the ancestral funerary rituals, and they tried to win the consensus of the Buddhist representatives. For this reason their position is not as contradictory as it seems in relation to their previous oath of supporting Buddhism and to their contribution to the construction of bSam yas. The persistence of ancestral customs up to the fall of the kingdom, the celebration of animal sacrifices which were apparently contradicting Buddhist principles under an extremely religious king like Khri gTsong lde btsan, and the ambivalence of numerous leading characters about so-called Bon and Buddhism seem to indicate that the situation was shaped by the coexistence of pre-Buddhist and Buddhist elements and that the oppositions were much less clear-cut than presented in most later descriptions.

³⁶⁵ The word *re'u* seems to indicate something – probably a tent or a group of tents – which was pitched (*phub*) in the place where the gathering took place. According to *bKa' thang sde lnga* (402) on the occasion of the great festivities for bSam yas a tent of silk was set up in the same place.

³⁶⁶ Brag dmar mtsho mo 'gur (mgur), cf. n. 173.

³⁶⁷ According to *lDe'u chos 'byung* (270) there were six *khod*: Bod, Zhang zhung, 'Mon, Chibs dpon, mThong khyab, and another that is not named. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (185) mentions the following *khos*: Bod, Zhang zhung, Sum pa, Chibs, mThong khyab. All the names in the lists but Chibs can be identified with geographical areas. Chibs may therefore mean some area/office in charge of the cavalry. *Khod/khos* seems to indicate an administrative institution. On the discussion concerning the term *khos* cf. URAY 1972: 18–19.

³⁶⁸ *Chibs las rta bo che dang mgyogs pa mang po dang | chibs kyi rkyen sa ra chas dang | ring gur lags pa'i bzo 'drubs pas gzhi bzung ste.*

³⁶⁹ A gShen – as in the case of Tshe [mi] Cog [la] – could be a contracted form for A [ya/la] [sKu] gshen. In fact A ya and A la are mentioned as Bon priests of the royal ancestors in *Nyang chos 'byung* (163) and are a class of local priests still existing in Tibet (RAMBLE [forthcoming], DIEMBERGER and HAZOD 1997: 271–272); the title *sku gshen* appears again later on. A ya Chab nag is mentioned in *Nyang chos 'byung* (161) as the founder of one Bon po tradition called Chab nag srid pa'i rgyud, considered to be the earliest Gyer bon tradition, *i.e.* combining local and “imported” traditions. A ya Bon po appear as mythological figures and as priests in *bKa' chems ka khol ma* (297–299, 309) where it is reported that two A ya Bon po transformed themselves into hawks in order to protect the Khra 'brug temple, established by king Srong btsan sgam po, from a *nāga* with five snake-heads. A ya Bon po are further mentioned as priests who consecrated the Khra 'brug temple and made the tomb of Srong btsan sgam po when he passed away. Furthermore in a guide to Kong po Bon ri there is a brief reference to the instructions given by the A ya

sPu,³⁷⁰ mTshe Cog,³⁷¹ Ya ngal³⁷² arrived from 'Phan yul³⁷³ in order to celebrate the funeral [of Khri Srong lde btsan]. At that time the son [of the king] Mu ne btsan po communicated to the assembly of the great *zhang blon*: "In my dream of last night bCom ldan 'das dPal rNam par snang mdzad (Śrī Vairocana), Phyag na rdo rje (Vajrapāṇi), 'Jam dpal gzhon nu gyur pa (Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta) together with father Khri Srong lde btsan were residing in the palace called lCang lo can (Aḍakavatī) situated in 'Og min.³⁷⁴ Here they preached [authoritative] sources (*lung khungs*) of the *sūtra* and numerous narrative traditions concerning the doctrinal tradition (*bstan bcos kyi gtam rgyud*). Thinking about this omen, the funeral of my father, the Son of God, cannot be performed according to the Bon po. It must be performed according to the white doctrine (*dkar chos*). The chief representative of Buddhism (bCom ldan 'das ring lugs), the translators and the *zhang blon* participating in the great and the restricted assembly must discuss the issue in detail and find an agreement." (26b) Then 'Khon Klu'i dbang po³⁷⁵

bon bzhi as well as to the worship of the gods of the A ya with the peaceful performance of *phywa* and *gyang* and to the spread of the Bon po in Kong po (*Bon ri dkar chag* 151).

³⁷⁰ Byi sPu seem to be other classes of ancient Bon priests. Byi bon was previously mentioned (cf. folio 14b, n. 198).

³⁷¹ mTshe mi and Cog la are already known as a class of Bon po priests from the Dunhuang document PT 1038 (cf. KARMAI 1994: 425). They figure among the twelve learned Bon po who welcomed gNya' khri btsan po as he descended from the sky (*Nyang chos 'byung* 159; *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 159) and they appear again in the *dBa' bzhed*, in charge of royal cults and bearing the title of *sku gshen*. Furthermore, in a guide to Kong po Bon ri, at the descent from the sky of gNya' khri btsan po on lHa ri gyang thog, Co'u phyag dkar and 'Tshe mi'i sras chung are described as the *gshen po* in charge of the protection of the royal body (*sku srung*). They used to worship the gods and control the evil spirits (*Bon ri dkar chag* 151).

³⁷² Ya ngal indicates both a type of religious specialist and a Bon po lineage which is still to be found in Dol po (cf. *rGyal gshen Ya ngal gdung rabs*), cf. SNELGROVE 1987, RAMBLE 1984. According to the Ya ngal gdung rabs, the ancestral home of the clan was sTag rtse byi ri/bya ri in gTsaṅg. Ya ngal himself went there after putting a spell (?) on a divine wood (or wooden?) bird (*shing lha bya*) and let it fly, intending to settle where it landed. It flew from Yar lung sog kha, where he had been living, to sTag rtse byi ri. "Following the death of king Ral pa can these *sku gshen* increased in gTsaṅg". The bird – and the descendants – then moved on to mNga' ris.

³⁷³ From numerous passages of this text (14b, 26a, 29b) it appears that 'Phan yul was an important centre for various Bon po priests. This finds a correspondence with the definition of the land granted to the *dBa'* clan by gNam ri srong btsan as the land of Za gad gshen given in Dunhuang documents (BACOT al. 1940: 106): Za gad is a locality in 'Phan yul (mentioned also as one of the 16 *yul tshan* of dBu ru in *lDe'u chos 'byung* 274) and *gshen* seems to be the well-known title of ritual specialists. The definition would therefore mean "the land of the *gshen* of Za gad".

³⁷⁴ Akaniṣṭha Buddha field.

³⁷⁵ 'Khon Klu'i dbang po was one of the early monks and translators. Later sources consider him one of the *sad mi* (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 186, *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 361). From the 'Khon clan later came 'Khon dKon mchog rgyal po, the founder of the great Sa skya pa tradition.

and mKhas pa rNa cha,³⁷⁶ the two of them, ran day and night to the land of Tsha ba tsha shod in order to invite Pa gor Vairocana and rGyal mo g.Yu sgra snying po.³⁷⁷

[Afterwards] the Buddhist monks (*ring lugs kyi ban de*), lHa lung lHun gyi dpal,³⁷⁸ Lo tswa ba mChims Shag (Shā) kya pra bha,³⁷⁹ A tsa ra Pa gor Vairocana, sNa nam Ye shes sde,³⁸⁰ etc. were to take part in the discussion (*mchid gros*) [but] the right row of seats was occupied by the Bon po, the left by the ministers, in the centre was the *rgyal bu* (the king's son, Mu ne btsan po), and as no row of seats was assigned to the monks they felt humiliated. As there were no appropriate seats for the Buddhists, the master Vairocana, wearing a big bamboo hat, holding a long stick (*sba gug = sba dbyug*) and wearing a golden cloak, paid deep homage to the *rgyal bu* (Mu ne btsan po). [Then] leaning upon his stick he stood behind mChims bTsan bzher legs gzigs who was seated at the first place of the right row, under [the throne of] the ruler (*mnga' bdag*, Mu ne btsan po). Feeling uneasy, the minister cast a glance behind and saw *khro chung nyung dkar*³⁸¹ crawling around in the beard of Vairocana, and got up with a start. (27a) He was immediately replaced by Vairocana, and lost the whole right row (*g.yas gral shor*). After the assembly had adjusted accordingly, the *rgyal bu* (Mu ne btsan po) said that preparations to read

³⁷⁶ We have been unable to identify mKhas pa rNa cha.

³⁷⁷ Tsha ba tsha shod corresponds to Tsha ba rong in eastern Tibet. According to his legendary biography and other later sources Vairocana is said to have been exiled there under Khri Srong lde btsan by some powerful evil ministers ('*Dra 'bag chen mo* 164, 166). A popular legendary account has it that he was sent there because of an intrigue on the part of queen Tshe spong bza' who had fallen in love with him and had been rejected (*bKa' thang sde lnga* 229–302). rGyal mo g.Yu sgra snying po came from Tsha ba rong and became the main disciple of Vairocana and became later a famous spiritual master. According to his biography ('*Dra 'bag chen mo* 234) Vairocana was invited to return to Central Tibet from Tsha ba rong by Khri lDe srong btsan, the younger brother of Mu ne btsan po, in order to celebrate his funeral according to the Buddhist system.

³⁷⁸ lHa lung lHun gyi dpal has so far not been identified. Perhaps the name corresponds to the translator dPal gyi lhun po mentioned in the list by *Bu ston chos 'hyung* (208).

³⁷⁹ Lo tsa ba mChims Śākyaprabha, one of the young Tibetans trained in the language of India who is included by Bu ston among the translators (*Bu ston chos 'hyung* 208). He also reported by PT 44 as receiving instructions from Padmasambhava on *Phur bu*, as it is also reported by *Nyang chos 'hyung* (485), cf. n. 237.

³⁸⁰ sNa nam Ye shes sde, also known as Zhang sNa nam Ye shes sde, was a famous translator from the time of Khri Srong lde btsan up to the time of Khri gTsug lde btsan. Together with Ka ba dPal brtsegs and Cog ro Klu'i rgyal mtshan, the three of them used to be called Ka Cog Zhang gsum. He translated numerous texts cf. *Bu ston chos 'hyung* 213–222.

³⁸¹ *Khro chung nyung dkar* seem to indicate some peculiar seeds. *Nyung dkar* is in Tibet a not very common vegetable species from the seeds of which oil is obtained. *Khro* may stand for *khra* in which case it would indicate a multicoloured gathering. Perhaps the minister was scared by these seeds looking like parasites. Possibly this ex-

the copper plates of action (*byang bzangs*) should be made. Then [mChims] bTsan bzher legs gzigs said: “Hey (*um la*)! Buddhist representatives and A tsa ra! I won’t speak in detail [but listen]: although links were made at the borders in the four directions and even the secret doors were opened (?),³⁸² the lord of people and gods, sPu rgyal gNya’ khri btsan po,³⁸³ became the ruler of the upright Black Headed Ones (*’greng mgo nag*),³⁸⁴ in our domain, the land of Tibet. He had miraculous properties such as the big and the little white conch shell (*dung dkar chen dkar chung*), the *gnyan g.yu ru lde mdo sa* (?), the rMu helmet (*rmog rmu lugs*), the ornamented rMu suit of armour *zhol mo* (*rmu khrab zhol mo*), the self-shooting bow (*gzhu rang brdungs*), the rMu spear called “good copper” (*rmu mdung zang yag*), the sword “Soul-lake of the *gshen*” (*ral gri gshen gyi bla mtsho*), the multicoloured round rMu shield (*rmu phub gong khra*).³⁸⁵ At that time [the bTsan po] used to live together with attendants (*’bangs zhabs ’bring*) and the Tshe and Cog acted as *sku gshen*.³⁸⁶ The trees used to bow their body, the solid boulders used to jump.³⁸⁷ There was one standard for magical appearance and great miracles.

pression is a euphemism for nits (in which case *khro* = *sro*), and *nyung dkar* could be a polite form for *shig*, i.e. louse (in Mustang the polite term for louse is *lug*).

³⁸² *mTha’ bzhi nyi ’og dang brda’ mjal te gsang sgo phye na ’ang.*

³⁸³ The expression sPu rgyal gNya’ khri btsan po combines the name of the first ancestral king with sPu rgyal, a contraction of sPu lde gung rgyal, who was the eighth king from gNya’ khri btsan po. sPu rgyal became a general title for the Tibetan king; it appears in the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 104) referring to sTag bu snya gzigs and is common in later sources. As a title of the Tibetan king in relation to the royal ancestry it appears also in Chinese sources in the form Xi bo ye (*Jiu Tangshu*, XVI, 5219).

³⁸⁴ Here the minister briefly refers to the famous account of how the ancestral king descended from heaven. The expression *’greng mgo nag* which is mentioned in the relevant Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 99, 100; PT 16 l. 34b1; PT 1287 l. 10061, l. 0367; PT 1038 l.0014) qualifies the Tibetans as the black-headed ones, who stood upright – in contrast to the *dud ’gro*, those walking with their heads towards the ground (the animals). In fact the king is further mentioned as *’greng dud gnyis kyi rje* (BACOT et al. 1940: 114) the ruler of the *’greng* and the *dud*. For further implications cf. URAY 1966: 245–256.

³⁸⁵ According to the *Yo ga lha gyas can*, one of the *can lnga*, when gNya’ khri btsan po descended from heaven he received a number of items from his father as well as some from his mother and maternal uncle who belonged to the rMu clan (cf. *IDE’u chos ’hyung* 234–235). Following the scheme given there the conch shell and the bow came from his father, the turquoise called *gnyan g.yu ru lde mdo sa* from his mother, the *rmu* helmet, the *rmu* suit of armour, the *rmu* spear, the sword and the *rmu* shield came from the maternal uncle (KARMAY 1994: 408ff.).

³⁸⁶ The Bon po Tshe mi and Cog la (cf. also n. 371) are mentioned among the various classes of priests in charge of the protection (*sku bsrungs*) of the Tibetan kings in *Nyang chos ’hyung* (160, 163). *sKu gshen* is here a title indicating a priest in charge of ritual tasks for the king.

³⁸⁷ *Gor pha bong ni ’phar thang thang*. This passage appears corrupt and not transparent. However a segment of the Dunhuang Chronicle PT 1286 l.0032–33: *khri nyag btsan po sa yang dgu’ dud dud | shing sdong yang bang thang thang | chab lu ma yang dngo sil sil | gor pha bong la stogs pa yang mnyed khrung khrung gis ’tshal lo*

(27b) During that time even if a person died no funeral was performed and no tomb was made. When the son [of the bTsan po] had reached the age of being able to ride the father used to pass on to heaven (*dgung du gshegs*).³⁸⁸ Then the [custom of] performing funerals began. lHa tho tho ri snyan shal³⁸⁹ had taken Gung sman of Grang lung³⁹⁰ in marriage and Gung sman of Grang lung performed [his] funeral. [When the funeral was celebrated] for the god (*lha*, i.e. the bTsan po) it was called *lha 'dur* (divine burial). The tradition of celebrating funerals for the subjects began at that time. Since such rituals have begun the castle of bTsan thang sgo bzhi³⁹¹ was built and there have been prosperity and auspiciousness. The *sku lha* worshipped [by the bTsan po] has been Yar lha sham po.³⁹² The tombs of the deceased have been erected in Ra ba thang. Yar lha Sham po is very mighty (*gnyan*) and has great magic powers (*mtshu*). Phyi lugs

presents parallel features with the *dBa' bzhed* passage: *shing sdong...gi dud dud/ gor pha bong ni 'phar thang thang* in giving similar onomata.

³⁸⁸ The famous myth goes that when the son was able to ride the father went back to heaven by the *dmu thag*, and it was said that the tomb was made in the sky. This is reported in the *gSang hu yang chung*, quoted by later sources (*lDe'u chos 'byung* 376; *Yar lung chos 'byung* 42; *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 162). Here we have a very concise account of the origin of royal funerals, with the minister making only an implicit reference to the Dri gum btsan po episode.

³⁸⁹ The form of the name of this ancestral king is given here as lHa tho tho ri snyan shal whereas it appears as lHa tho do re btsan at the beginning of the *dBa' bzhed*. This fact, together with other inconsistencies concerning some names (e.g. *dBa'/sBa*) and the orthography, seems to indicate that two (three?) different people worked at this manuscript, quoting from different texts.

³⁹⁰ According to Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 82) his main wife was gNo' za Mang mo rje who is also mentioned in *lDe'u chos 'byung* (250) as rNo bza' Mang mo rje. However according to *Yar lung chos 'byung* (49) a certain Grang yul gur sman was his first wife and as she had no sons he married rNo bza' Mang po rje.

³⁹¹ bTsan thang sgo bzhi refers to bTsan thang village to the west of Yum bu bla sgang. This place is known in the framework of the account of gNya' khri btsan po's arrival in Yarlung where he met in bTsan thang sgo bzhi the twelve learned Bon po who declared him king (cf. *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 161). According to local oral accounts bTsan thang sgo bzhi means the place of the four original families (*sgo bzhi*) of bTsan thang who received the king (cf. GYALBO, HAZOD, and SØRENSEN 2000: 59). In the *bKu' chems ka khol ma* (84) it is reported that gNya' khri btsan po erected here a residence made of stone and animal furs.

³⁹² On the mountain deity Yar lha sham po cf. NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1993: 203ff. This famous ancestral mountain of Tibetan rulers is closely linked to the royal mythology (especially the Dri gum episode) narrated in the Dunhuang chronicle and in later sources; defined as *sku bla* in ancient sources, he has been the main territorial god of Yarlung up to the present day (cf. MACDONALD 1971: 200, 294–309; HAZOD forthcoming; GYALBO, HAZOD, and SØRENSEN 2000). This ancient mountain deity also appears in Dunhuang documents in the framework of *glud* rituals and is also known as one of the nine mountain gods invoked as witnesses to the edict of Khri Srong lde btsan (KARMAY 1998a: 342).

Ra ba thang³⁹³ is auspicious (*bkra shis ba*). At those times only a small part of g.Yo ru smad was ruled.³⁹⁴ Then the lords of petty kingdoms (*rgyal phran*) such as Zing po rje Khri 'phang gsum³⁹⁵ and the king of Zhang zhung gNya' Zhur lag mig³⁹⁶ were conquered and the kingdom obtained great majesty (*mnga' thang*) and high political authority (*chab srid mtho bo*), and became endowed with the sacred law (*gtsug lag*). The view and practice (*lta spyod*) of Tshe [mi] and Cog [la] acting as *sku gshen*³⁹⁷ seemed good, the funerals of the Pha ba (?) *sku gshen* were great and auspicious. (28a) If there is some misfortune as a result of reversing (*bzlog*) all this, letting the monks perform the funeral and following the religion of India, political authority (*chab srid*) based on the relationship between lord and subjects would certainly decline (*dmas pa*). All the great monastic representatives of Buddhism (*ring lugs*) and the ministers should agree to perform the funeral according to the Bon po tradition."³⁹⁸ Then Vairocana replied: "Since with these words no founded decision can be achieved (*ltang mi chod*), please have a look at the *g.Yas klu po* (?)" He continued: "From the lineage of *bodhisattva*, emanations of *rigs gsum mgon po*, lord of Great Compassion, you are the lord of the people (*mi rje*) and the descendant (*dbon sras*) of gods, you stay at the top as a precious golden yoke."³⁹⁹

Many useless words (*rad pa*) of a subject under your rule shall not be spent, please listen here and there (*sa sa nas*) as I shall speak a little: because of this age of bad *karma* I learnt the language of lHo bal and I wandered in all countries in the four directions under the sun. I was

³⁹³ Phyi lugs (Phying lung) Ra ba thang apparently indicates the area in Phying lung/Phying ba where the great royal tombs are located (close to the present village of 'Phyongs rgyas).

³⁹⁴ The minister is referring here to the time before gNam ri srong btsan when only a limited area comprising Yarlung and its vicinity was ruled by the royal forerunners.

³⁹⁵ The speech refers here to famous events taking place at the dawn of the great Tibetan kingdom. Zing po rje Khri 'phang gsum was the ruler of 'Phan yul at the time of gNam ri srong btsan. The events are narrated in great detail by the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 102–104): the representatives of the Myang, dBa's, mNon and Tshe spong clans revolted against him and made an alliance with gNam ri srong btsan. The latter managed to occupy his kingdom which then became part of the emerging Tibetan kingdom.

³⁹⁶ gNya' Zhur lag mig, king of Zhang zhung, corresponds to Lig mi rhya who was the king of Zhang zhung defeated by Srong btsan sgam po. The account of this event is given by the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 115–117). On the identification of the king of Zhang zhung Lig sNya zhur, mentioned in the Annals as overthrown by the Tibetans during the reign of Khri Srong btsan (Srong btsan sgam po), with Lig myi rhya mentioned in the Chronicle cf. URAY 1968: 292–297, 1992: 129; MACDONALD 1969: 533–534; PETECH 1988b: 310.

³⁹⁷ The Tshe mi and the Cog la acting as *sku gshen*, see n. 371.

³⁹⁸ On ancient funerals involving the sacrifice of animals cf. LALOU 1952: 339–361; STEIN 1970: 155–185.

³⁹⁹ See n. 349.

sent thereby to lousy holes (*shig dong*) and pits of evil snakes (*sbrul gdug pa can gyi dong*).⁴⁰⁰ Thus [my] flesh dried up and [my] senses became dulled. Basing myself upon an extensive learning I shall say just a few words in general.⁴⁰¹ (28b) If one describes how existence (*srid pa*) proceeds in this whole world of 'Dzam bu gling (Jambudvīpa), for example an indestructible boulder (*rdo rje pha bong*) rolling by itself from one place to another in the intermediate space (*bar snang*) does not change, a man going towards the east crosses passes, rivers, plains until the end of his life but will never arrive at the end of villages and people. With reference to the speech of Zhang bTsan bzher, it is false to say that auspiciousness is due to the palace of residence in bTsan thang sgo bzhi, to the worship of sKu lha Yar lha sham po, to the tombs of the deceased raised in Ra ba thang. More auspicious than those is Shri Na len tra gtsug lag khang in India. There thanks to the blessing of great faith in the holy doctrine and devotion towards the white side [of virtuous belief in Buddhism], the son Thu re dza ha ti and the daughter Pa la ni of the king Da na ta lo as well as twenty-five *paṇḍita* lived around 1,500 to 1,300 years. Furthermore, to Dha rma ra' dza' the king of India (29a) and King In tra bhu ti of U rgyan, father and uncles did not die for fourteen generations and the descendants did not interrupt their lineage. Besides, at a time in which all good virtue gathered, a further (*gud pa*) perfect Buddha field appeared.⁴⁰² On the top of Sumeru (Ri rab) in the thirty-third heaven, the dGa' ldan (Tuṣita) abode of the gods, is the celestial palace of Indra (*rnam par rgyal ba'i khang bzang*). Here resides the god Indra sitting at the elevated centre (*gung*), the four *yakṣa* (*gnod sbyin*) are located at four big *cog*.⁴⁰³ The thirty-two retinues (*'khor nye dbang*) are in the thirty-two domes. All enjoy happiness. [They] are seated on the precious inconceivable residence (*gzhal yas khang*, i.e. Sumeru)⁴⁰⁴ springily ceding upon pressure and rising if the pressure is relaxed. Furthermore, it is very auspicious that within the Dharmadhātu palace of 'Og min

⁴⁰⁰ According to his legendary biography he had to endure sixteen hardships in India and Nepal (*'Dra 'bag chen mo* 99–115). As soon as he arrived in the border areas of Tsha ba rong the local ruler kept him secluded in a cave full of lice for twenty-one days and in a cave full of frogs for seven days (*Nyang chos 'hyung* 323; *Padma'i dga' tshal* 306–307).

⁴⁰¹ *'Tshal pa'i sgo chung gis kyang ni thos pa mang po'i sgo nas gzhi blangs te | spyi ched nyung shas tsam gcig gsol na.*

⁴⁰² *Legs pa'i yon tan dus gcig la rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas zhing gud pa ba zhig kyang mchiso.* The common translation of *gud pa* as decline would make no sense. A second meaning of this word is: further, another. An extra Buddha-field could be meant here.

⁴⁰³ *Cog* seems to refer to the dwelling of the *yakṣa*.

⁴⁰⁴ *gZhal yas khang* indicates Vimāna, the inconceivable heavenly mansion as well as Sumeru (Ri rab), *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* 2416.

(Akaniṣṭha), in bDe ba can (Sukhāvātī) or Padma can, the completely pure land of Buddha, there is no birth and no death, no union and no separation. It was said that Yar lha sham po is very mighty, but this is false. More mighty and possessed with great magic than him are the Four Great Kings (rGyal po chen po bzhi), the Protectors of the Three Families (*rigs gsum mgon po*) including Phyag na rdo rje (Vajrapāṇi) who is the lord of magic power, (29b) or Buddha Vairocana possessing great compassion and skilful means, who is indefinable (*sku mdun rgyab mi gsal*), and rules over all the elements of existence; [they are] so mighty and endowed with such magic power.

It was said that the view and practice of the Bon as well as the sacred law (*gtsug lag*) are good. This, too, is false. Khri 'phang gsum, the king of Zing po,⁴⁰⁵ worshipped the compassionless god Thang lha yar lha,⁴⁰⁶ the two Ag gshen⁴⁰⁷ of 'Phan yul killed many animals such as yaks, sheep (*gnag lug*) and horses,⁴⁰⁸ the 'Drid 'grin (?) and gCo (Cog?) mi performed many 'dre gsur 'dod and bon lcags 'dod.⁴⁰⁹ In addition to their previous sins they committed later ones and due to the practice of the illusory religion, his three subjects (*bran*) Nyang, sBas (dBa's), and gNon as well as Tshe spong 'phrin as the fourth, together with the castle mKhar khung lung rgyab bu snang⁴¹⁰ ended under the dominion of sPu rgyal Bod.⁴¹¹ Is this good for *lto che* (big stomach?)⁴¹² and happiness (*zhal bsod pa*)?

⁴⁰⁵ On Zing po rgyal po alias Zing po rje see nn. 395, 411.

⁴⁰⁶ Thang lha yar lha is the famous mountain deity, cf. n. 72. It is located to the north of 'Phan yul the area ruled by Zing po rje.

⁴⁰⁷ See n. 369.

⁴⁰⁸ See n. 199.

⁴⁰⁹ 'Drid 'grin dang gco mi la sogs pa 'dre gsur 'dod dang | bon lcags 'dod mang po bsags. The sentence is obscure but it seems to indicate that certain priests performed certain rituals.

⁴¹⁰ In the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 108) the castle is mentioned as mKhar Yu sna which could correspond to the locality currently called Yung ba nang to the east of lHun grub rdzong in 'Phan yul. On the discussion concerning the identification of this locality cf. also MACDONALD 1971: 233.

⁴¹¹ According to the Dunhuang Chronicle (BACOT et al. 1940: 105–106) at the time of gNam ri srong btsan the subjects of Khri 'Phang gsum called Nyang/Myang Tseng ku, dBa's dByi tshab and mNon 'grom po and Tshe pong phrin made an alliance with gNam ri srong btsan and seized the land of Zing po rje. The name of the land was transformed from Ngas po to 'Phan yul (BACOT et al. 1940: 105, 138). The representatives of these four clans were generously rewarded and became ministers, and gNam ri srong btsan married a girl from the Tshe spong clan who became the mother of Srong btsan sgam po. Later on numerous famous ministers were drawn from these clans.

⁴¹² The expression *lto che* which literally means "big stomach", signifying a large appetite, also appears in Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 104, 136). It is apparently being used here as a metaphor for the satisfaction of material needs.

The king of Zhang chung, gNya' zhur lag mig,⁴¹³ worshipped the compassionless gods Gye gdo and Mu thur⁴¹⁴ and Bon funerals (*bon shid*) were performed in the four systems of the Zhang chung religion. For this reason the Zhang chung kingdom was lost and then [its] castles rTse mtho, rGod lting⁴¹⁵ and so on (30a) passed under rule of sPu rgyal.

The nephew (*dbon*), king of 'A zha ('A zha rgyal po),⁴¹⁶ worshipped the compassionless god Srib dri dkar po⁴¹⁷ and according to the custom of Lord of 'A zha ('A zha rje), black Bon funerals (*bon shid nag po*) were performed. Because of this, the kingdom of 'A zha was lost and passed under the rule of sPu rgyal.

The king of mChims Dwags po⁴¹⁸ performed black Bon funerals, and for this reason the kingdom of mChims was lost and somebody like [mChims] Zhang bTsan [b]zher became an orthodox subject.

⁴¹³ See n. 396.

⁴¹⁴ This could correspond to two of the gods of Zhang chung, named as Ge god and Me dur in *IDe'u chos 'byung* (231) according to the *Yo ga lha gyes can*. They are considered to be two of eight sons of Rong rong rtsol po who was the elder brother of the divine father of gNya' khri btsan po (cf. also KARMAY 1994: 417). On gShen Ge khod cf. also KARMAY 1972: 6, 127, 129.

⁴¹⁵ rTse mtho and rGod lting are apparently names of castles located in Zhang chung which we have not been able to identify.

⁴¹⁶ The king of 'A zha used to rule an area in the vicinity of the Kokonor lake in mDo smad. Srong btsan sgam po subjugated this area. Because of marriage relations with the Tibetan royal family the lords of this area were known as "nephews" of the Tibetan kings (URAY 1963: 208; PETECH 1988a: 277). The relation went both ways as shown by Dunhuang documents (BACOT et al. 1940: 17, 182), which report that Gung ru gung btsan, the son of Srong btsan sgam po, married 'A zha za and the Tibetan bTsan mo Khri bangs married into the family of the 'A zha ruler. When the royal edict of Khri Srong lde btsan was issued the ruler of this area also had to take an oath, and his name was written after the queens and before the ministers (*mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 411–412).

⁴¹⁷ Srib dri (khri) dkar po is apparently the territorial god protecting the land of the 'A zha. From the Annals of this principality we know that the *sku bla* of this country used to be worshipped periodically (just as the relevant territorial deities in the other regions of Tibet). Cf. URAY 1978: 556, 573.

⁴¹⁸ mChims Dwags po refers to the original land of the mChims clan which is mentioned among the twelve petty kingdoms as mChims yul dgu sul and seems to have indicated an area immediately to the east of Dwags po, which is however mentioned separately as another of the twelve petty kingdoms (BACOT et al. 1940: 80). However mChims and Dwags po are often associated as in the case of the mChims za from Dwags po married by 'Bro snyan lde ru (*IDe'u chos 'byung* 230–231; *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* 169). mChims is also mentioned in association with Kong po as Kong po mChims yul (*rNying ma chos 'byung*, vol. 1, 248). It seems therefore that as a toponym it indicated an area in the borderland between Kong po and Dwags po.

The lord Sribts po of sNubs⁴¹⁹ worshipped the compassionless sNubs lha mThon drug. Forbidden (*byar mi btub pa'i*) Black Bon funerals were performed and for this reason the kingdom of sNubs was lost together with the castle sKya mo and passed under the rule of Bod.⁴²⁰

Because of such major sins it is improper to perform funerals according to the Bon system.

As far as the holy doctrine is concerned it is preserved by logical precepts and scriptural authority (*lung tshad ma*). By performing virtuous deeds one achieves higher rebirth and by taking life one falls to a bad rebirth. Like our lord, Khri Srong lde btsan, though he obtained for a moment a human body as a material appearance, [his] mind (*dgongs pa*) is in the state of Buddhahood; 108 image-*maṇḍala* (*gzugs brnyan gyi dkyil 'khor*) were erected and (30b) 108 [volumes of the] of the *Shes rab kyi pha rol du phyin pa'i mdo* (*Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*) were made, so I beg you to act in conformity with what is due to the good emanation of virtuous deeds. Being deluded by the evil practice of illusion – to give an example – is like putting a black saddle on a white horse. Like this, it is certain that there would be a return to the earlier obscurity and would turn into hindrance, and I therefore request that the funeral for the Son of God be performed according to the Buddhist custom.” mChims bTsan bzher legs gzigs said: “Monks! The origin of your arguments (*mchid shags*) came from the empty sky. The time is oriented towards the next life. The decisional power (*kha zin*['*dzin*]) belongs to the king. If our advice is not followed, may [the king] decide what is better! May the monks hold the assembly of the palace! May the monks serve the lord! May the monks protect the land as border-guards (*mtha'i so kha*)!”⁴²¹ and he shook himself in passion. Nobody dared to answer. Vairocana replied again: “We monks can do it!”. So, the Son of God was extremely delighted.

(31a) Then, the monks celebrated the funeral in the white religious system according to the *lHa'i bu dri ma med pa'i mdo*⁴²² and *gTsong tor dri med kyi gzungs*.⁴²³ At that time the *maṇḍala*

⁴¹⁹ The area of sNubs/gNubs was located in the area of the Yar 'brog lake (also called sNubs lake) and Rong Rin spungs. This was one of the twelve petty kingdoms and it is mentioned in Dunhuang documents as sNubs/gNubs kyi gling dgu, and its ruler as Sris pa (BACOT et al. 1940: 80). Sris pa is also mentioned in *lDe'u chos 'byung* 225.

⁴²⁰ When the petty kingdom of sNubs/gNubs was integrated into the Tibetan kingdom at an uncertain time before Srong btsan sgam po. Ministers belonging to the sNubs/gNubs clan appear already under the ancestors of Srong btsan sgam po (BACOT et al. 1940: 100).

⁴²¹ The concrete concern about a weakening of the state due to the increasing influence by Buddhist institutions emerges as one of the main preoccupations in this speech. This kind of feeling might have been widespread in the anti-Buddhist circles of the time together with a general anti-Chinese attitude, which seems to have shaped the anti-Buddhist position of Glang dar ma as well, cf. n. 71.

⁴²² *lHa'i bu dri ma med pa'i mdo* is perhaps the *lHa mo dri ma med pa'i 'od kyiis zhus pa'i mdo* mentioned in *Nyang chos 'byung* (165) concerning the prophecy for the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, cf. n. 135. In the

of rDo rje dbyings (Vajradhātu) was set up and the funeral of the Son of God was celebrated. Vairocana acted as the master of the *mantra* (*sngags bdag*), g.Yu sgra snying po⁴²⁴ celebrated the ritual. Ngan lam rGyal ba mchog dbyangs,⁴²⁵ 'Khon Klu'i dbang po,⁴²⁶ sNubs Nam mkha' snying po⁴²⁷ and so on read the *Shes rab kyi pha rol du phyin pa sras yum* (*Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*, large and concise versions) at length and celebrated the funeral of the Son of God in a magnificent manner. Then mNga' bdag Mu ne btsan po, Vairocana and rGyal mo g.Yu sgra snying po, those three, translated the precepts and the instructions of the true word [of Buddha] from the language of India to Tibetan.⁴²⁸ The son Mu ne btsan po transmitted the profound precepts and instructions of the true word [of Buddha] to those who were eager to learn.

Some [of the precepts and instructions] were hidden in a black leather box (*bse sgrom nag po*) in the dBu rtse zangs khang (the copper palace in bSam yas). Then g.Yu sgra snying po went to the land of Tsha ba. Vairocana practised for a long time in the caves of Ma ga dha in the land of Gyad in the west. Some people said: "Vairocana together with Li za Tshul khriims

IDan dkar dkar chag there are some titles of texts starting with the term *lHa'i bu...* presenting no further correspondence with the one mentioned here (LALOU 1953: 347).

⁴²³ *gTsug tor dri med gzungs* is a tantra translated by Zhang sNa nam Ye shes sde and presents also a number of commentaries (*Bu ston chos 'byung* 257, 267).

⁴²⁴ See n. 377.

⁴²⁵ Ngan lam rGyal ba mchog dbyangs is reported by *sBa bzhed* B (59) as a monk from the Ngan lam clan who was one of the six *sad mi* and *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* (361) mentions him as one of the seven *sad mi*. He appears in a Dunhuang document reporting the lineage of the spiritual masters of bSam yas and 'Phrul snang as one them (KARMAY 1988a: 78).

⁴²⁶ See n. 375.

⁴²⁷ sNubs Nam mkha'i snying po is famous as one of the disciples of Padmasambhava. *Nyang chos 'byung* (310–317) provides an extensive account of his life and his deeds. He took his vows from Śāntarakṣita and was then sent to India in search of the doctrine. Later he became a religious advisor of the king but due to a conspiracy of the ministers he was exiled to lHo brag mKhar chu where he later died. He might correspond also to the Nam mkha'i snying po follower of Dhyāna Buddhism mentioned by the Dunhuang document PT 996. He also appears at the beginning of the *IDan dkar dkar chag* as co-author (LALOU 1953: 319).

⁴²⁸ *Bu ston chos 'byung* (310) mentions a number of texts (e.g. *dGongs pa nges 'grel mdo'i bshad pa*) composed by Mu ne btsan po himself, however this attribution seems to be rather legendary.

mtsho, daughter of the Li rje dKar po, from the Li yul Sher mkhar dkar po⁴²⁹ repaired the northern temple (*byang phyogs kyi lha khang gi sgo can gsos?*).⁴³⁰

Henceforth the funerals were celebrated following the *Ngan song sbyong rgyud*⁴³¹ and on the basis of the Kun rig dkyil 'khor (*maṇḍala* of Buddha Sarvavid Vairocana) and the gTug tor dgu'i dkyil 'khor (nine *maṇḍala* of the Uṣṇīṣa Buddhas). In case of death by sword the funeral was celebrated on the basis of the *maṇḍala* of *Khro bo nyi ma*. [Funerals following death by] *gtad yar* (black magic?), death by the sword, etc. were performed according to the *sūtra*. From that time onwards all the funerals have been celebrated according to the dharma tradition. It is said that the foolish followers of the Bon tradition hid great wealth as *gter*.⁴³² Thinking of the great loss and the minimal benefit, it is said that the masters of the Buddhist tradition established this practice of the *Zas gtad* (ritual “food offering”).⁴³³ The story of the *Zas gtad* is finished.

⁴²⁹ Li yul Sher (Shel?) mkhar dkar po is apparently a castle in Khotan and could not be further identified.

⁴³⁰ In one of the legendary biographies of Vairocana it is mentioned that he was invited by lHa lcam Byang chub sgron ma, the daughter of the king of Li yul, and he preached the doctrine there (*Padma'i dga' tshal* 321–330).

⁴³¹ *Ngan song sbyong bryud*, is probably the abridged title of *Ngan son thams cad yong su sbyong ba gzi brjid kyi rgyal po'i brtag pa*, text of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana Tantra* mentioned as n.323 among the *gsang sngags kyi rgyud la* in *lDan dkar dkar chag* (LALOU 1953: 326). This tantric text aims at the purification of the ways to inferior rebirths, this practice was widespread among the Tibetan Buddhists of the period as revealed by the Dunhuang documents (IMAEDA 1979: 75).

⁴³² The hiding of precious objects by the Bon po could refer to the custom of burying precious items in the tombs.

⁴³³ *Zas gtad* indicates ritual food offerings performed in occasion of funerals. This kind of ritual is still performed nowadays and the relevant texts can be found, for example, among ritual texts of the rNying ma Byang gter tradition. Thanks to our colleague Gabriele Tautscher we have been able to identify a text of this kind still used among Tamang communities in Nepal.

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 Gye god 29b
 dGe rgyas 17a
 'Gran bzangs 4a
 rGod lda'i 29b
 rGya 12a
 rGya gar 1, 5b, 7a, 8a, 11b, 12a, 15b, 17b,
 25a, 28a, 28b
 rGya gar yul 5a, 5b, 7a, 13b
 rGya phran bcu gnyis 2a

rGya yul 4a, 4b, 6b, 8b, 9a, 10b, 11b, 12a,
 18b, 25a
 Ngam shod 13a, 13b
 Chu bo lo hi ta 6a
 mChims 30a
 mChims dags po 30a
 'Ching bu 4b
 'Ching bu nam ra 4a
 sNyi (sNye) mo thod kar 11a
 sNying drung 11a, 11b
 sTag la 13a
 Thang lha [yar lha] 11a 29b
 Dong 'phams kyi 'phrang 13b, 14a
 Dol 13a
 Drwa (Gra) 13a
 gDong dmar gyi yul 10b
 rDo rje gdan 16a
 sNam 11a
 sNubs 30a
 sNubs lha mThon drug 30a
 sPu rgyal 30a
 sPu rgyal Bod 29b
 Phyi lugs (Phying lung) Ra ba thang 27b
 Pho brang lHan (lDan) kar ta mo ra 3a
 Pho brang Zus phug skyang (rkyang) bu
 tshal 14a
 'Phang thang 8a, 12a
 'Phan yul 14b
 Bal po 5b, 7a
 Bal yul 5a, 5b, 6a, 7a, 8a, 8b, 15a, 20a
 Bum sangs 9a, 10a
 Bod 4a, 8b, 9a, 10a, 12a, 13b, 14b, 15b,
 17b, 19a, 20a, 24b, 30a
 Bod kyi rgyal khams 27a
 Bod khams 1, 4a, 9b, 11a, 12a, 12b, 13b,
 14a, 25a, 25b

Bod yul 3b, 4b, 7a, 7b, 9a, 9b, 10b, 11b,
 12a, 13a, 14b, 19b, 25b
 Brag dmar 4a, 6a, 8a, 16a
 Brag dmar Khas po ri 15
 Brag dmar 'Dran bzangs 4b
 Brag dmar Ma ma gong 25b
 Brag dmar mTsho mo'i [m]gur 14a, 26a
 Brag lha 1
 Bla 15a
 Bla ba tshal 13a
 Byang chub kyi gling 19b
 dBu rgyan 11b
 dBu tshal 17a
 Mang yul 5a, 5b, 6b, 7a, 10b, 14a
 Mu thung 29b
 Ma hwa bo rdi 5b
 sMas gong 4a
 bTsan thang sgo bzhi 27b, 28b
 Tsha ba tsha shod 26b
 Tsha ba'i yul 31a
 mTsho mo mgur 13a
 'Dzam bu gling 11b
 Zhang zhung 27b, 29b
 gZhung 13a
 Za hor 6a, 7a, 10a, 20a
 Zur mkhar 13a
 'A zha 30a
 'Om bu tshal gyi rtsang (gtsang) chab 12b
 Yang le 7b
 Yar khyim chu bo 13b
 Yar lha sham po 27b, 28b, 29a
 Yun bu gla sgang 1
 g.Yo ru smad 27b
 Ra ba thang 28b
 Ra mo che 3a, 5a, 15a
 Ra sa 7b
 Ra sa Pe har 4b, 7a, 7b

Ra sa Pe har gling 1
 Ra sa'i sKu mkhar 12a
 Ru bzhi 1
 Li yul 3a, 3b
 Li'i yul Shes 'khar dkar po 31b,
 Shi le Na len tra 5b, 25a
 Shi ri Na len dra 25a
 Srib dri dkar po 30a
 Slungs tshugs pho brang 6a
 bSam gtan gling 18b
 bSam yas 4b, 6a, 11a, 14b, 15a
 Ham khang gtsug lag khang 5b
 lHa sa pe har 7a
 lHa sa Ra mo che 3a, 4a
 lHa sa'i mkhar 8a, 11b
 lHan dkar Ta ma ra 3a, 31a
 lHo bal 7b, 28a
 A rya pa lo'i gling 15b, 16a
 Aeg chu 9a, 10b
 U rgyan 12a, 29a

TEXTS

dKon mchog sprin 1
Gang po [la sogs pa] rtogs pa [brjod pa]
 24b
dGe ba bcu 1
dGongs pa nges par 'grel pa 19b
Ngan song sbyong rgyud 31b
'Jam dpal kri ya 17b
mDo sde Lung ring po 24b
rDo rje gcod pa 10a, 18a
Pad ma dkar po 1
Mu tra' phyag rgya gtsug tor dri med 1
gTsug tor dri med kyi gzungs 31a
Za ma tog gi snying po 1
gZugs grwa lnga 1
Rin po che [phreng ba] 1
Las rnam par 'byed pa 10a, 17b
Shes rab [kyi pha rol du phyin pa] 19b, 31a
Shes rab kyi pha rol du phyin pa 'i mdo 30b
Shes rab 'bum 19b, 25b
Sa lu ljang pa 10a, 17b, 18a
lHa'i bu dri ma med pa 'i mdo 31a

FACSIMILE OF THE *DBA' BZHED* MANUSCRIPT





Handwritten text in a medieval script, possibly Gothic or similar, written on a narrow strip of parchment. The text is arranged in several lines and includes various words and phrases, some of which are partially obscured by the texture of the parchment. The script is dense and characteristic of the late Middle Ages.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in approximately 15 horizontal lines. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but appears to be a form of Gothic or similar medieval hand. There are some larger initials or decorative elements interspersed within the lines of text.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in approximately 15 horizontal lines. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but appears to be a form of Gothic or similar medieval hand. There are some larger initials or decorative elements interspersed within the lines of text.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines, with some lines starting with large, decorative initials. The script is dense and characteristic of the late Gothic or early modern period.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines, with some lines starting with large, decorative initials. The script is dense and characteristic of the late Gothic or early modern period.

Handwritten text in a medieval script, likely a liturgical or legal document. The text is arranged in several columns, with some lines starting with large initial letters. The script is dense and characteristic of the 12th or 13th century.

Handwritten text in a medieval script, similar to the one on the adjacent page. It features multiple columns of text with prominent initial letters. The parchment shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in an ancient script, likely Coptic, on a narrow strip of parchment. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a fragment of a larger document. The script is dense and characteristic of early Christian manuscripts.

Handwritten text in an ancient script, likely Coptic, on a narrow strip of parchment. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a fragment of a larger document. The script is dense and characteristic of early Christian manuscripts.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The text is written on a parchment-like surface that shows signs of age and wear.

13

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The text is written on a parchment-like surface that shows signs of age and wear.

14

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in approximately 15 horizontal lines. The script is dense and characteristic of Gothic or similar medieval hands. There are some larger initials or decorative elements at the beginning of certain lines. The parchment shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in approximately 15 horizontal lines. The script is dense and characteristic of Gothic or similar medieval hands. There are some larger initials or decorative elements at the beginning of certain lines. The parchment shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher without specialized knowledge of the language or dialect. There are some larger, possibly decorative or initial letters at the beginning of certain lines. The parchment shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, similar to the first page. This page also contains a single column of text. The script is consistent with the first page, suggesting it is part of the same manuscript. The text is dense and appears to be a continuation of the list or entries from the previous page. There are some larger, possibly decorative or initial letters at the beginning of certain lines. The parchment shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The parchment is aged and shows some staining.

10

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The parchment is aged and shows some staining.

11

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The parchment is aged and shows some staining.

100

Handwritten initials or a small signature at the bottom of the page.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The parchment is aged and shows some staining.

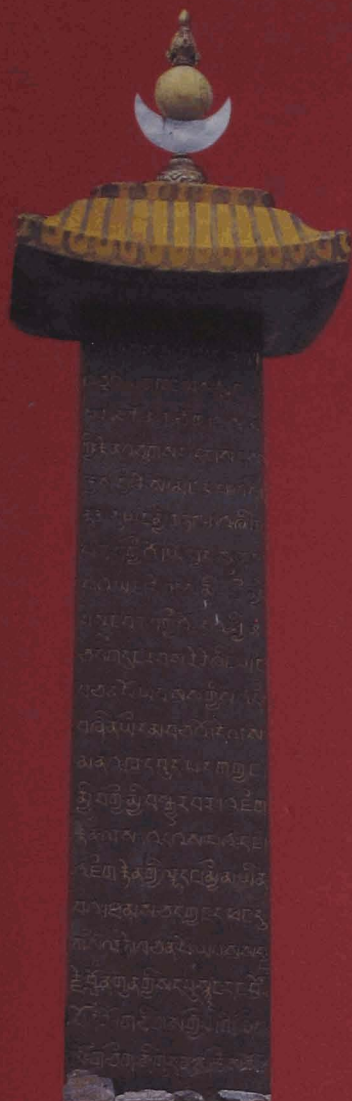
101

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The text is written on a parchment-like surface that shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in a single column and appears to be a list or a series of entries. The script is dense and difficult to decipher, but it shows clear word boundaries and some punctuation. The text is written on a parchment-like surface that shows signs of age and wear.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines across the page. A small number '95' is visible near the top right of the page.

Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a medieval manuscript. The text is arranged in several lines across the page. At the bottom of the page, there is a signature or name that appears to be 'Krook'.



This volume presents the first translation into a western language of the earliest known version of the great Tibetan history known as the *dBa'/sBa bzhed*.

The original version of this famous text, traditionally attributed to sBa/dBa'gSal snang, is believed to have been written in the 9th century. But until now the only extant versions, which are much reworked and which date back to the 12th and 14th centuries, have never been translated into English.

In 1997, in Tibet, as the result of the co-operation between the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences and the Austrian Academy of Sciences, a manuscript of 31 folios came to light in Lhasa bearing the title *dBa' bzhed*, and the telling subtitle: "The Royal Narrative (*bka' mchid*) Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet". This text is now presented as a joint publication by the two Academies in a facsimile edition with an annotated translation.

The outline of the events narrated by the *dBa' bzhed* corresponds to a large extent to the known versions of the *sBa bzhed*: a detailed account of the foundation of the monastery of bSam yas (the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, consecrated in AD 779), the famous doctrinal debate which took place there in AD 792-794 and the political and religious conflicts which relate to the establishing of Buddhism as the dominant religion in Tibet during the reign of Khri Srong lde btsan.

There are, however, considerable differences in the *dBa' bzhed* from the extant *sBa bzhed* versions in the mention of numerous historical details and in the narrative. These elements indicate that the *dBa' bzhed* pre-dates the extant *sBa bzhed* versions, or at least represents an early and different elaboration drawn from the ancient sources of this tradition.

Pasang Wangdu is Professor of Tibetan history and is currently the head of the Nationalities Research Institute of the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences in Lhasa.

Hildegard Diemberger. She is an anthropologist who currently holds a research and lecturing post at the University of Cambridge. She is also a research associate at the University of Vienna.

Per Sørensen is Professor of Tibetan Studies at the University of Leipzig.