

AMONG  
TIBETAN  
TEXTS



E. GENE SMITH ran the Library of Congress' Tibetan Text Publication Project of the United States Public Law 480 (PL480)—an effort to salvage and reprint the Tibetan literature that had been saved by the exile community or by members of the Tibetan-speaking communities of Sikkim, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. Smith wrote prefaces to these reprinted books to help clarify and contextualize the particular Tibetan texts: the prefaces served as rough orientations to a poorly understood body of foreign literature. Originally produced in print quantities of twenty, these prefaces quickly became legendary, and soon photocopied collections were handed from scholar to scholar, achieving an almost cult status. *Among Tibetan Texts* collects these essays, presenting them together for the first time.

The essays span a vast range of Tibetan literature, covering Buddhist texts from all lineages, histories, biographies, and literary arts. They provide historical context for the origins of the various traditions, with helpful lineage charts and overviews of the literature and the great figures that shaped those traditions. The impact of Smith's essays on the academic study of Tibetan literature has been tremendous, both for their remarkable ability to synthesize diverse materials into coherent accounts of Tibetan literature, history, and religious thought, and for the exemplary critical scholarship Smith brought—and continues to bring—to this field.



STUDIES IN INDIAN AND TIBETAN BUDDHISM

# AMONG TIBETAN TEXTS

*History and Literature of the  
Himalayan Plateau*

E. Gene Smith

edited by Kurtis R. Schaeffer  
with a foreword by Jeffrey Hopkins



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Dedicated in humility to the late Deshung Rinpoche  
Kunga Tenpai Nyima. Whatever of value there may be here  
is a result of the learning imparted by him.

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# Contents

Foreword by Jeffrey Hopkins	ix
Preface by E. Gene Smith	xi
Introduction by Kurtis R. Schaeffer	I
I. THE RNYING MA SCHOOL	
1. The Autobiography of the Rnying ma pa Visionary Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang	13
2. Klong chen Rab 'byams pa and His Works	33
II. THE BKA' BRGYUD SCHOOLS	
3. Golden Rosaries of the Bka' brgyud Schools	39
4. The Shangs pa Bka' brgyud Tradition	53
5. The Life of Gtsang smyon Heruka	59
6. Padma dkar po and His History of Buddhism	81
7. The Diaries of Si tu Paṅ chen	87
III. THE SA SKYA SCHOOL	
8. The Early History of the 'Khon Family and the Sa skya School	99
9. Glo bo Mkhan chen and Buddhist Logic in Tibet	III

#### IV. THE DGE LUGS SCHOOL

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 10. The Autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama  | 119 |
| 11. The Life of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje   | 133 |
| 12. Philosophical, Biographical, and Historical Works<br>of Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma | 147 |
| 13. The Life of Ye shes rgyal mtshan,<br>Preceptor of the Eighth Dalai Lama                       | 171 |

#### V. LITERARY ARTS AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 14. Buddhist Literary and Practical Arts According to<br>Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal | 179 |
| 15. A Tibetan Encyclopedia from the Fifteenth Century   | 209 |

#### VI. THE NONSECTARIAN MOVEMENT

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 16. Mi pham and the Philosophical Controversies<br>of the Nineteenth Century | 227 |
| 17. 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and the Nonsectarian<br>Movement                    | 235 |

Notes 273

#### Bibliographies

- |                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| I. Tibetan Works                | 341 |
| II. Secondary Works             | 345 |
| III. The Works of E. Gene Smith | 348 |
| IV. Recent Research             | 350 |

Index 357

## Foreword

**T**HIS COLLECTION OF ESSAYS provides a taste of Gene Smith's encyclopedic knowledge of Tibetan literature. A veritable treasure trove of information and insight about Tibetan culture, he has stood at the gateway for hundreds of us who have approached him for directions throughout the vast region of Tibetan influence, stretching from Tibet itself to Kalmyk Mongolian areas (where the Volga empties into the Caspian Sea), to Outer and Inner Mongolia, to the Buriat Republic of Siberia, to Bhutan, Ladakh, Nepal, and Sikkim. Written in the late 1960s and early 1970s during Gene's tenure in South Asia with the Library of Congress, these essays evince his command of biography, history, doctrine, tantra, ritual, and bibliography. Gene reads both the lines and what is between the lines, putting together fascinating and proactive conjectures, and Kurtis Schaeffer has most ably preserved his legacy here.

As great as his intellectual prowess is, so great is his character. Modest, warmhearted, jovial, kind, and liberal with time and energy, he is a healer, bringing people together, softening their disruptions and encouraging mutual appreciation. I remember his flat in New Delhi during my travels to the region, and how Gene provided an oasis for a whole generation of scholars coming of age at that time. Supremely generous with his knowledge and hospitality, Gene could always be counted upon to provide a new avenue for one's research, and the steady stream of visitors at his home made it a veritable salon, where one could mingle with lamas from the exiled Tibetan community and some of the most fascinating personalities on the subcontinent.

When I recently visited his home in Cambridge I found a House of Book, with each room assigned to an area of Tibetan literature—books on shelves on all four walls of every room, books neatly piled on Tibetan carpets in the center of each. The only room not dominated by books was the kitchen! He led me to the Room of Jo nang, a current focus of my research, where he enthusiastically introduced a myriad of texts. Gene's current efforts to make this wealth available digitally through his Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center will ensure his enormous contributions reach even more eager scholars.



One of the most remarkable aspects of this book is how well these early studies have stood the test of time, the way they still provide countless jumping-off points for further research and reflection. Their publication is long overdue, and we are richer and wiser for it.

Jeffrey Hopkins  
University of Virginia

## Preface

THE STUDY OF TIBET has remained a special passion of mine for over four and a half decades. The papers in this volume, which have been so ably edited and restructured by my good friend Kurtis Schaeffer, were written between 1961 and 1973. There has been much exciting work done in Tibetan studies over the three decades since, and many of the ideas and conclusions herein have had to be modified. Nonetheless, it seems that these introductions played a small part in extending the frontiers of our knowledge.

The introductions were not intended to be finished products. Except for the translation of a passage from the *Rgya bod yig tshang* contained in chapter 8, which I completed in 1961, all of the essays included in this volume were written to introduce and place into context photomechanical reprints of classical texts produced in India, which were then acquired for U.S. research institutions through the Public Law 480 program (hereafter PL480).

I first traveled to India in quest of Tibetan books unavailable in the United States in 1965. Thousands of texts were to be seen in private collections and libraries in India. Tibet House in New Delhi had just opened its doors, and I spent much of my time there or traveling to various centers in India. I joined the Library of Congress in New Delhi as a consultant for Tibetan and Indic languages in 1968, and it was there that I came into contact with the PL480 program.

The Public Law 480 program allowed for the purchase of current publications from the developing world with payment made from blocked foreign currency owed to the U.S. Government. This program was funded from the sale of excess agricultural commodities and allowed the Library of Congress to purchase new impressions from all of the blocks in India, Nepal, and Bhutan and to encourage refugees to print the treasures they had been able to carry from their homeland. The program for the acquisition of Tibetan library materials began in 1961 and eventually resulted in over 4000 Tibetan bibliographic titles, some of which were over 200 volumes. By 1965 the PL480 program in India was well established, and the New Delhi Field Office was acquiring and processing thousands of titles per year in a variety of languages.

The excess rupees were also used for cataloging and shipping these library materials to research institutions in the United States. The only restriction was

that the funds had to be used for publications that had appeared within the two calendar years immediately preceding the date of imprint. Because of the bureaucratic precedent, Tibetan books could be reprinted and copies purchased for U.S. institutions that were a part of the PL480 program. A similar program was administered by the Lal Bahadur Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute for the purchase of South Asian imprints for Canadian research libraries.

The titles had to be cataloged in accordance with the first edition of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules. Tibetan personal names presented special problems, as did subject headings and the classification schedule for Buddhism. The convention of the book in Tibetan culture is very different from that of Western book, a fact that led us to devise various schemes of binding or boxing Tibetan books for a Western library context.

The introductory essays were created so that selections could be made on the basis of the English title pages and the acquisition of these books justified. The introductions also had the mundane intent of providing librarians with the information needed to begin the task of incorporating Tibetan literature into the structure of Western library science. They gave examples for the establishment of the names of Tibetan authors, provided a historical chronology to justify the dates of the lamas who wrote, showed how Tibetan sources could be used by Western scholars and librarians, and provided in the books themselves the means for accessing the facts contained therein.

Due to time constraints and the fact that I was serving as a U.S. Government bureaucrat with other responsibilities, the introductions and prefaces were created in the early morning hours. They reflect personal concerns about where our understanding of textual accessibility was going and the quest for filling in gaps in our knowledge of the field. They had to be written within a day or two since the reproductions had already been completed. There was little time to mull over the ideas and conclusions. There were no specialized libraries that could be used to check the Tibetological facts in Delhi in those years.

In 1972, I joined the Library of Congress as a U.S.-based employee. This brought an end to my efforts to write signed introductions to Tibetan texts, because the official clearance process was long and tedious. In the end I finally decided to abandon signing them. With the increase in bureaucratic responsibilities, we began producing unsigned introductory pieces, title pages, and more detailed tables of contents in order to provide an entree into the treasures of Tibetan literature.

The series involved Lokesh Chandra of the International Academy of Tibetan Culture, Tibet House, Sonam Topgay Kazi, and Ngawang Gelek Demo Rinpoche in the publication of most of the introductions and prefaces



included in this volume. Much of the content of the introductory matter consisted of tables of contents and outlines. All of these have been removed from the materials published here. The tables of contents can now be found incorporated into the outline module of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center website located at [www.tbrc.org](http://www.tbrc.org). Here we have begun to enter searchable contents and topical outlines (*sa bcad*) as a special feature for researchers. One must mention here that some of the texts were written using the differing Library of Congress and American Library Association (ALA) systems of transliteration, as well as a few in Pelliot. It has therefore been a great problem in standardization.

Each of the papers pays tribute to the incredible knowledge of my teacher Deshung Rinpoche Kunga Tenpai Nyima, with whom I had the great privilege of studying on a daily basis from 1960 to 1965. Deshung Rinpoche had an encyclopedic mind. He was interested in the entire range of traditional Buddhist culture, from Tibetan and Sanskrit grammar to Mādhyamika philosophy, from ritual to the arts. Rinpoche had a special interest in history and was an authority on the nonsectarian (*ris med*) movement in which his practice was rooted. Although he was a Sa skya pa and a student of Gatön Ngawang Legpa, clearly in the tradition of the Lam 'bras, he was interested in all of the other wisdom traditions that had come to the Tibetan lands, including Bon. He told stories of Lama Tashi Gyaltzen, the Bon po master who began to phrase Bon teachings in *ris med* terms. This stood me in good stead when I first met the remarkable teachers of this tradition, Sangye Tenzin and Tenzin Namdak. Among Deshung Rinpoche's embodiments were a Rnying ma pa and a Bka' brgyud pa, and he sometimes joked that his next might be a Dge lugs pa. I sat with him most mornings for an hour or two while he was doing his morning prayers and asked him questions. The answers to these childish questions were written in series of blue notebooks in which I still find interesting insights. These notebooks formed the basic content of the forewords, prefaces, and introductions that appeared to the Tibetan books published under the PL480 program and reprinted here.

I would like to thank Tim McNeill and Kurtis Schaeffer for pushing the project forward. I also express my appreciation to David Kittelstrom, the head of the editorial department at Wisdom, to Sara Shneiderman for her care in copyediting, Maria Montenegro for her proofreading, and to Mari Jyvasjarvi for making swift work of the thankless task of indexing.

E. Gene Smith  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
September 2001



## Introduction

ELLIS GENE SMITH was born in Ogden, Utah in 1936 to a traditional Mormon family as the eldest of four siblings. His father was a scientist working in a federal guided missile program, and thus throughout Gene's youth the family moved a great deal. His primary and secondary schooling took place in both California and Utah. Upon completing high school in the early 1950s he received a congressional appointment to the military academy at West Point. During the summer of 1954 he wisely thought better of this career trajectory and fled to the wilds of New York City. After doing undergraduate studies at Adelphi College, Hobart College, the University of Utah, and the University of Washington, he began graduate studies in Seattle—largely to stay out of Vietnam. He took classes in anthropology and Inner Asian studies, with a special interest in Mongolian.

In 1959, after the Chinese invasion of Tibet, 80,000–100,000 refugees fled into exile. The Rockefeller Foundation, seeing the opportunity to promote Tibetan studies, funded the establishment of nine centers throughout the world, one of which was located at the University of Washington. Under the auspices of the Rockefeller grant to the Far Eastern and Russian Institute nine Tibetans were brought to Seattle for teaching and research. These nine included H. H. Dagchen Rinpoche and his wife, Damola Jamyang Sakya, as well as the Venerable Deshung Rinpoche Kunga Tenpai Nyima, tutor to the Sakya Phuntshok Phodrang. From 1960 to 1964 Gene had the good fortune to live with the Sakya family and study Tibetan culture and Buddhism with Deshung Rinpoche and the other Tibetan teachers settled in Seattle. He spent the summer of 1962 traveling to the other Rockefeller centers in Europe to meet with the Tibetan savants there. During this period he was working toward a Ph.D. under the directorship of Turrell Wylie. At this time the library at the University of Washington had very few Tibetan holdings. Deshung Rinpoche provided lists of books he felt the library should have, and Gene set about collecting microfilms of Tibetan texts from European collections. This marked the beginning of his bibliographic career. The



results of these efforts can be seen in Gene's early catalog of the Tibetan holdings at the University of Washington (Smith 1969).

In 1964 Gene completed his Ph.D. qualifying exams and traveled to Leiden for advanced studies in Sanskrit and Pali. In 1965 Deshung Rinpoche suggested that he travel to India to study with Tibetan masters. A Ford Foundation Fellowship made this possible, and for the next year he studied with both Tibetan Buddhist and Bon po scholars and masters. Desiring to learn of the doctrines and practices of each school of Tibetan Buddhism as represented in the *Treasury of Instructional Methods (Gdams ngag mdzod)*, he began his studies in Dge lugs pa thought with Geshe Lobsang Lungtok (Ganden Changtse), Bka' brgyud thought with Drukpa Thoosay Rinpoche and Khenpo Noryang, and Rnying ma thought with H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. After establishing fulfilling connections with these masters, he decided to remain in India to continue in-depth studies of Tibetan Buddhism and culture.

In the next years he traveled extensively in the borderlands of India and Nepal in a continued effort to gain firsthand knowledge of Tibetan life and letters. In 1968 he joined the Library of Congress New Delhi Field Office. He then began a project which was to span the next three decades: the reprinting of Tibetan books which had been brought by the exile community or belonged to members of the Tibetan-speaking communities of Sikkim, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. Using lists of rare books such as that of A khu Shes rab rgya mtsho, he selected works from private libraries for publication. Some of the publications were reproductions of block-prints and old handwritten manuscripts, while many were newly scribed versions of old manuscripts deemed too damaged to reproduce directly. He became field director of the Library of Congress Field Office in India in 1980, a position which he served for five years. In 1985 he was transferred to Indonesia, where he lived in Jakarta running the Southeast Asian programs until 1994, when he was deputed to the Library of Congress Middle Eastern Office in Cairo. Throughout these travels in various cultures and government bureaucracies Gene never left Tibetan studies behind, and by the time he returned to the United States he was in possession of one the most important collections of Tibetan literature in the world.

In 1997 Gene retired from the U.S. Library of Congress and moved from Cairo to Manhattan in order to engage in consulting work for Himalayan and Inner Asian Resources (HIAR), an organization dedicated primarily to preserving and disseminating Tibetan literature. After one year at HIAR Gene moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he helped to found the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC) in 1999 along with Leonard van der Kuijp

## *Introduction*

of Harvard University. The TBRC is a library consisting of Gene's personal collection of Tibetan literature, as well as continuing acquisitions. As of 2001 the collection of Tibetan literature housed at the TBRC is the largest outside of Tibet (excluding canonical collections). The mission of the Center is to make this invaluable collection available to the public in a digital format.

The essays collected in the present volume were written over thirty years ago. With the exception of one (chapter 8) they were all written in New Delhi, without the benefits of a large research library. As Gene has made clear in the preface, they were all created with a very specific goal: to serve as prefaces to Tibetan works purchased by the Library of Congress. They were meant to be neither exhaustive studies of particular subjects, nor conclusively argued contributions to the field of Tibetan studies as it was then practiced in Europe. They were prefaces, introductions to single Tibetan texts, rough orientations to an only poorly understood body of foreign literature. Gene never intended to present a unified overview of the different traditions encountered throughout Tibetan history. That the essays do cover such a wide range of topics is a testament to the broad interests that Gene pursued during the late 1960s and early 1970s, as well as his remarkable ability to synthesize diverse materials into coherent accounts of hitherto unknown areas of Tibetan literature, history, and religious thought.

As the intervening decades have proven, these essays were much more than the circumstances of their origin suggest. Gene's early writings combine exacting philological scholarship, attention to social and cultural history, and a zeal for Buddhist teachings. Not content to present Tibetan Buddhist doctrine as an isolated phenomenon abstracted from human history, Gene sought to understand the growing numbers of Tibetan books at his disposal within historical, cultural, and literary contexts. That he was able to succeed in this effort with relatively few sources makes these essays all the more remarkable. Works that are considered basic reading today in Tibetan studies were only just coming to light as these essays were being composed. Dudjom Rinpoche's history of the Rnying ma pa, a primary source for much of Gene's early writing on that school, had only just been written in the mid 1960s, and was practically unknown outside of India at the time Gene made use of it.

In the years since their limited publication, Gene's essays have developed a sort of cult status among those interested in Tibetan studies. Initially some twenty copies of each bound Tibetan volume produced for the Library of Congress were shipped to libraries in the United States. This of course means that Gene's essays, too, had—for all intents and purposes—an initial run of about twenty prints each in the States. Many of these languished unread in

universities in which there was no Tibetan studies program. But these originals were not to be the primary form in which the prefaces were read; it was as photocopies that they were spread. By the beginning of the 1980s, photocopied anthologies of Gene's prefaces were circulating from Seattle to Charlottesville, Bloomington to Bonn, New Delhi to New York, Hamburg to Kathmandu.



In the present volume the essays have been organized according to the particular school with which they are primarily concerned. The first sections present essays on the Rnying ma pa, Bka' brgyud pa, Sa skya pa, and Dge lugs pa, respectively. For several of the essays, this is really only a convenient approximation of their contents, since they range wide over the literature of Tibetan Buddhism. Chapter 17, for instance, presents a history of the various traditions that were included in the nonsectarian movement of the nineteenth century. Chapter 14 surveys the works by Bo dong Paṅ chen dedicated to the literary arts. Thus, the latter two sections are devoted to literary arts and the nonsectarian movement.

The volume begins with two essays dedicated to the Rnying ma pa school. The first of the two introduces the Rnying ma pa master Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang (1879–1941). The essay originally appeared as an introduction to this master's autobiography. And yet—as with so many of the essays to follow—Gene uses this occasion as an opportunity to provide an historical and doctrinal overview of the tradition preceding the life of Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang. The origins of the great monasteries of the Rnying ma school, the development of the treasure tradition, the major philosophical trends of the great Rnying ma scholiasts—all of these topics are surveyed in this essay. Chapter 2 continues the themes and issues raised in the previous essay by looking more closely at the life of Klong chen Rab 'byams (1308–64) and his *Self-Liberation Trilogy*.

The next five essays each discuss a particular aspect of the history and literature of the various Bka' brgyud schools. Chapter 3, "Golden Rosaries of the Bka' brgyud Schools," surveys the major early lineages of the Bka' brgyud in the context of one example of the golden rosary (*gser 'phreng*) genre of biographical writing. It also includes a brief discussion of the primary compiler of the work, Mon rtse pa Kun dga' dpal ldan (1408–75), and his tradition, the little-known 'Ba' ra Bka' brgyud. Chapter 4 continues this discussion by focusing on a work of the same genre from the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud tradition.

Chapter 5 provides an introduction to the life of the great “Madman of Gtsang,” Gtsang smyon Heruka (1452–1507), and the tradition immediately following him. This is one of the highlights of the volume; it exemplifies Gene’s method, creating a broad and detailed picture of a literary and cultural phenomenon by beginning with a particular text as its focus. The essay begins with a brief discussion of the madman (*smyon pa*) within the Bka’ brgyud schools, and then moves on to a detailed summary of the biography of Gtsang smyon authored by Rgod tshang ras pa Sna tshogs rang grol (1494–1570). It then lists the various printed versions of the work for which Gtsang smyon was justly famous, the *Collected Songs of Mi la ras pa*, as well as the many works composed by Gtsang smyon’s disciples which were subsequently printed at Brag dkar rta so hermitage near Skyid grong in southwest Tibet.

The Fourth ’Brug chen, Padma dkar po (1527–92), and his history of Buddhism (*chos ’byung*) are the subject of chapter 6. This short essay discusses the early development of the ’Brug pa Bka’ brgyud pa school and the ’Brug chen incarnation line. It then provides an outline of the contents of the history.

Chapter 7 takes up the rich diaries of Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas (1699–1776). Ranging from the cultural milieu of Khams in the eighteenth century, to general comments on the life of Si tu, and finally to a discussion of the diaries themselves, the essay evokes a multileveled vision of scholarship, society, and intercultural contact during this period of renaissance in Tibet.

With chapters 8 and 9 the focus turns to the next great tradition, that of the Sa skya school. The early history of the ’Khon family and the genesis of the Sa skya school constitute the focus of chapter 8. This is the earliest essay in the volume, dating to 1961. As a part of the Inner Asian Colloquium at the University of Washington, Gene translated a portion of the *Chronicle of China and Tibet (Rgya bod yig tshang)* dealing with the life of ’Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po (1034–1102) up to the founding of Sa skya in 1073. The copious annotations to this translation include many remarks by Deshung Rinpoche on the early history and geography of Sa skya and environs. Chapter 9 is dedicated to the philosophical writings of the Sa skya master from Mustang, Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456–1532), and to the early history of Buddhist logic and epistemology in Tibet.

Chapters 10 through 13 all focus upon different masters of the Dge lugs school. These four essays all treat biographical literature in one way or another, and together present a detailed sample of this genre of literature among the Dge lugs pa from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Chapter 10 introduces the autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama, Blo bzang

chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570–1662), and by way of this work goes on to discuss the political situation at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Tibet, as well as the development of Tibetan artistic styles at this time. “The Life of Lcang skya Rol pa’i rdo rje,” chapter 11, provides a convenient summary of the biography of the Second Lcang skya Lama, Rol pa’i rdo rje (1717–86), composed by the great scholar Thu’u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737–1802). A selection of various philosophical and historical works by Thu’u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma forms the subject of chapter 12. This essay contains a great deal of information on many masters active in A mdo during the eighteenth century, to whom Thu’u bkwan devoted biographies, as well as a survey of the contents of his most famous work of philosophy, the *Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Tenets* (*Grub mtha’ shel gyi me long*).

Finally, chapter 13 moves from the northeastern reaches of A mdo to the southwestern edges of the Tibetan cultural world, presenting the life of Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–93), teacher of the Eighth Dalai Lama, ’Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1758–1804). This prolific scholar from Gtsang spent much of his career near Skyid grong, the Tibetan area just north of the Nepalese borderlands.

The next two essays depart from a strict emphasis on the major traditions of Tibetan Buddhism to look at the literary arts of medieval Tibet. Chapter 14, “Buddhist Literary and Practical Arts According to Bo dong Paṅ chen” is actually an amalgam of several prefaces to the first volumes of the massive collection of scripture and exegesis collected and authored by Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1375–1451), the *De nyid ’dus pa*. The present essay thus touches on a number of subjects, including the development of the Bo dong pa tradition, the relation between Bo dong Paṅ chen’s *De nyid ’dus pa* and the Tibetan canonical collections, and the secular arts and sciences, including metallurgy, prognostication, Indian and Tibetan grammar, linguistics, and poetics. Chapter 15, “A Tibetan Encyclopedia from the Fifteenth Century,” analyzes the contents of one of the most interesting attempts to categorize knowledge in medieval Tibet, the *Treasury of Explanation* by Don dam smra ba’i seng ge. In this essay Gene pays particular attention to Tibetan place names and names of ethnic groups, providing a heavily annotated outline of the chapters dedicated to these topics in Don dam’s encyclopedic work.

The last two essays, chapters 16 and 17, move to the nineteenth century and the nonsectarian movement. Chapter 16 introduces the prolific scholar ’Jam mgon ’Ju Mi pham (1846–1912). In discussing Mi pham’s commentary on

the *Bodhicāryāvatāra*, the essay also provides a glimpse into the eclectic interests of this master, as well as into the sometimes vitriolic nature of Tibetan polemic literature. The final essay is perhaps Gene's most famous written work. Written as an introduction to 'Jam mgon Kong sprul's encyclopedia, the *Shes bya kun khyab*, the essay is no less than a history of the Tibetan cultural, religious, and literary developments leading to the nonsectarian movement of the nineteenth century. The *Shes bya kun khyab* was one of the most important tools in Gene's scholarly workshop in the late 1960s. Making a virtue out of necessity, Gene used this single source here and in other essays to great effect as a source of understanding a thousand years of Tibetan history and doctrinal development. Today, of course, we have many earlier sources with which to study the long history of Tibetan Buddhism, sources which pre-date the *Shes bya kun khyab* by centuries. Yet we are only slightly closer to understanding the scholarly workshop of Kong sprul himself. Three decades later, this essay remains the most sustained effort to place Kong sprul in an intellectual and historical context, and to understand the wider implications of the nonsectarian movement.

Several bibliographies have been included, among them a complete bibliography of secondary sources referred to in the essays. Tibetan works to which an explicit page-number reference are made in the essays have been included in a bibliography. In some cases these works were published after the essays were written. We have endeavored to make all references accurate and easy to use for contemporary readers. It was not practical to include publication references for every Tibetan work mentioned in the essays, nor references to the many editions of such works published in recent years. Interested readers are directed to the Library of Congress online catalog at [www.catalog.loc.gov](http://www.catalog.loc.gov), and the TBRC database for current references, and to Martin (1997) for more information on historical sources. We have also included a bibliography of recent works relevant to the topics introduced in the essays.



In the winter of 1991, as I was taking my first steps and missteps in the study of Tibetan language at the University of Washington, I would spend hours in the basement library that housed the PL480 collection of Tibetan literature. I would pull down text after text, gaze at them in rapt awe, and wonder what secrets these oddly-shaped boxes, cloth wrappings, and atlas-sized bound volumes no doubt preserved. And yet my initial forays into the archive of Tibetan *dpe cha* first created by Turrell Wylie, Gene Smith, Deshung Rinpoche, and



others thirty years previously were frustrated by the absence of supporting research tools in Tibetan studies.

One day, as I sat staring at a title wondering what on earth the book in my hands could be about, Cyrus Stearns, who was to be a mentor in my early academic life, said in an offhand way, “Well, you know about Gene Smith’s essays.” I replied—in a thinly veiled attempt not to reveal my complete ignorance—that I recalled having heard mention of them, but just hadn’t had the time to look at them. With a series of deft movements through the shelves which bespoke an intimate knowledge of each and every volume, Cyrus pulled some half-dozen Tibetan tomes from their places and opened them up on the desk before me. Here were Gene’s essays, crystal mirrors clearly reflecting the Tibetan texts at whose beginnings they were placed. Here were introductions not only to individual books, but to the world of Tibetan literature. They are also introductions to the methods of Tibetan studies as a modern scholarly discipline, each essay a *mkhas pa la ’jug pa’i sgo* that teaches by example. I have read and re-read these essays in the decade between then and now, each time finding something new to ponder, some previously unnoticed reference that I might follow up, or a historical conjecture that might become the basis for a many-year-long project. I have gone through multiple copies of several of them, discarding a dog-eared, highlighted, red-penned copy of the introduction to the life of the Madman of Gtsang, only to go down to the library and make a fresh copy. If one can speak of a literature of scholarly inspiration, these essays are certainly that. It is my hope that this volume of Gene Smith’s essays will spark the scholarly imagination of others who find themselves in the archive, among Tibetan texts.

Many people have contributed to this project, and deserve thanks: Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp introduced me to Gene, and has provided me with the scholarly inspiration without which I could not have participated in the publication of this volume. John Dunne initially made the connection between myself and Tim McNeill, Publisher of Wisdom Publications, who generously offered to publish the essays. Geshe Michael Roach of the Asian Classics Input Project generously put his organization at our disposal, and the essays were typed into digital files by his team in India. Early in the life of the book, my wife, Heather Swindler, helped shape the essays into a workable format during our stay in Kathmandu in 1998–99. Bryan Cuevas, David Germano, David Jackson, Cyrus Stearns, and Gray Tuttle all read select chapters with a critical eye and made numerous helpful suggestions. Sara Shneiderman copyedited the entire volume, working far and beyond the limits of her appointed task. Finally, I would like to thank Gene Smith himself for allow-

ing us to bring these prefaces of more than three decades past before a new audience. For despite the fact that Gene's own work has long since surpassed the findings presented in these essays, they remain immensely valuable to the field of scholarship that he helped create.

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September 7, 2001



# I. The Rnying ma School

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## CHAPTER 1

# The Autobiography of the Rnying ma pa Visionary Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang and his Spiritual Heritage

### *I. Introduction*

IT IS WITH THE GREATEST ENTHUSIASM that I pen this preface to recommend the *Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab*, a new series of photographic reproductions of important texts from the Rnying ma tradition. The general editor of the series, Mr. Sonam Topgay Kazi, is no stranger to Western students of Tibet. The first work to be reproduced is Bya bral Rin po che's critical edition of the autobiographical reminiscences of his guru, Mkhan po Ngag dga'.

Visionary saint, scholar, and educator, Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang' (1879–1941) belongs to a tradition that is now perilously near to extinction; yet his psychological insights into the nature of reality and his attempt to lead others to those realizations are enshrined in the careers of a few of his immediate disciples in India, authentic gurus like Bya bral himself and Mkhan po Rdo rje of Spo lu. In preparing this *editio princeps*, Bya bral has used two Tibetan xylographic editions (Smar khams Rgyal sras dgon and Lhasa) and a manuscript copy that he himself had made from the original belonging to Mkhan po Ngag dga'.

This work belongs to the *rnam thar* genre,<sup>2</sup> a type of literature that the non-Tibetan will equate with biography or hagiography. Yet while there is often much in a *rnam thar* that is of a biographical nature, a *rnam thar* has for the Buddhist a considerably greater significance. Tibetan Buddhism, especially the Rnying ma pa form, is a highly pragmatic approach toward the development of total awareness of ultimate reality, toward the achievement of results that flow naturally from the unitary resolution of all dualities. The guru is ultimately a standard, a yardstick with which one can measure and test the authenticity of one's psychological insights. The relationship of guru and

disciple, of tutelary deity and practitioner, are time-hallowed methods in the practice of nonduality. As identity fusions of what is called the “I” and tutelary deity occur, and as the unity of the tutelary deity and guru dawns in the awareness, the realization that all gurus are this unity will follow.

Bya bral Rin po che’s statement that Mkhan po Ngag dga’ was the re-embodiment of Vimalamitra and Klong chen rab ’byams pa will cease to puzzle those who keep this connection between disciple, guru, and deity in mind. That there are sentient creatures with vastly differing experience (*karma*), at every conceivable stage in the realization of awareness, is the truth that lies at the heart of the richness of Tibetan liturgy and religious life. There must be some instruction, some metaphor or ambiguity, some compassionate means of exorcism appropriate for subduing the personal demons who run rampant in every heart. The *rnam thar* is ultimately a practical instruction, a guide to the experience, insights, and vision of one developed being. Mkhan po Ngag dga’ was a highly accomplished tantric guru of the Rdzogs chen approach; for the practicing Buddhist, this work is most significant as a source book of authentic Rdzogs chen instructions.

Scholars make a threefold division of *rnam thar* into the external (*phyi*), internal (*nang*), and esoteric (*gsang ba*) aspects. Sometimes, we find a separate treatment of each division as a structural device. More often, as is the case with the work reproduced here, the three divisions, or levels of experience, have been interwoven.

This work was written circa 1933 at the behest of several students of Mkhan po Ngag dga’. Bya bral Rin po che reproduced here the printer’s colophon (*par byang*) to the Smar khams edition, which was composed by Ngag dga’ himself. The last few years and death of Ngag dga’ have been briefly treated in Bya bral Rin po che’s introduction. Traditional Tibetan scholars now seem to be developing an interest in the historical and critical approaches that we so esteem; likewise, I hope that Western Tibetologists might begin to appreciate works of Tibetan literature not simply in terms of biography, history, or liturgy but rather with an esteem for the insights into eternal psychological truths that are often found therein. Then we might see the beginning of a genuine dialogue between two cultures.

## *II. The Rnying ma pa Background*

The Rnying ma pa are “Adherents of the Old,” following the ancient Buddhist traditions introduced to Tibet by the Guru Rinpoche, Padma-



sambhava. They are “the old” because their spiritual ancestors persisted in accepting and practicing the tantras that had been translated during the Royal Dynastic Period (eighth–ninth centuries). They are Rnying ma pa in relation to the Gsar ma ba, “Adherents of the New,” a term that includes, broadly speaking, all of the other Buddhist schools in Tibet. These schools follow tantric tradition whose texts were translated by or after Smṛtijñānakīrti in the East, and by or subsequent to Lo chen Rin chen bzang po (985–1051) in the West. These traditions began as reform movements for the most part, rejecting the tantras that the Rnying ma pa accept and treasure. Without going into detail, we can say that the most important additional differences between these two great divisions center around the question of acceptance or rejection of continuing revelation<sup>3</sup> and of the validity of short-cut techniques<sup>4</sup> in realizing that nameless state that is complete awareness, that which is described by paradoxes like blissless bliss. The Rnying ma pa tradition is the origin, the mother from whom all other sects were born. In what family is there not some degree of jealousy between a mother and her daughters? It would indeed be remarkable if Tibet did not have this generation gap.

The use of this text, even as a historical source, presupposes a superficial acquaintance with certain developments in the intellectual history of the Rnying ma pa.<sup>5</sup> I beg the indulgence of the Tibetologist to whom this background is perhaps well known; I would only hope that this rapid survey will be of some value to the student who would know something of this great tradition. The treatment that the Rnying ma pa have received in Western scholarly literature is largely the product of gullible acceptance of criticism from the school’s most ignorant opponents.

In the introduction of Dr. Lokesh Chandra’s edition of the *Shes bya kun khyab* [chapter 17 of this volume] I have attempted to present a simplified account of the sectarian development in Tibetan Buddhism that led eventually to the nonsectarian movement of the nineteenth century. It seems necessary to add here a few details that will illuminate some of the important trends in the development of Rnying ma pa thought in particular.

The history of the school up to the fourteenth century is characterized by the orderly oral transmission of the continuous (*bka’ ma*) and interrupted (*gter ma*) instruction that had come to Tibet with Padmasambhava and his colleagues. The first rediscovery of concealed troves (*gter*) of teaching and holy objects probably dates from the tenth century. The first of the rediscoverers (*gter ston*) was Sangs rgyas Bla ma. According to Kong sprul, Sangs rgyas Bla ma lived during the earlier half of the long life of Rin chen bzang po (958–1051). Born at La stod Mtsho bar in western Tibet, he worked in the

Nepalese and Indian borderlands.<sup>6</sup> The most important events in Rnying ma pa history before the fourteenth century were the periodic discoveries of these treasures. Although we occasionally find figures of the intellectual caliber of Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po,<sup>7</sup> the Rnying ma pa tradition seems curiously dormant during these almost four hundred years.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries represented a period of analytic thought and scholasticism for most schools. The figure of Klong chen Rab 'byams pa (1308–63)<sup>8</sup> was for the Rdzogs chen school what St. Thomas Aquinas was for Christian scholastic philosophy. In a number of magnificently original treatises like the *Seven Treasuries* (*Mdzod bdun*), Klong chen ordered the philosophical and psychological truths and corollaries of Rdzogs chen into a cohesive system. For stylistic lucidity and structural organization Klong chen has seldom been equaled in Tibetan literature; Rnying ma philosophy is Klong chen Rab 'byams pa.

After this reordering, the Rnying ma pa again fell into a mood of quiescence, a period of defense. The predominant theme was polemic; the most important works of these three and a half centuries, from 1350 to about 1700, are concerned with answering attacks that were mounted by the advocates of other schools. 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481), Mnga' ris Paṅ chen Padma dbang rgyal (1487–1542), the Third Klong chen pa, Ngag dbang bkra shis rnam rgyal (seventeenth century),<sup>9</sup> and Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552–1624) stand out among the great Rnying ma pa names.

'Gos Lo tsā ba was one of the most interesting scholars to appear in the Tibetan tradition. Born into the 'Gos clan, one of the ancient lineages, he studied with most of the great teachers of his time: Rngog Byang chub dpal, the Fifth Karma pa, De bzhin gshegs pa, Tsong kha pa, Paṅ chen Vanaratna, and Sgrol chen Sangs rgyas rin chen. He served as tutor of the three Phag mo gru princes, Grags pa 'byung gnas (1414–45), Kun dga' legs pa (1433–83), and Spyan snga Ngag gi dbang po (1439–91). His *Deb ther sngon po* is one of the masterpieces of Tibetan historical writing. 'Gos Lo tsā ba followed both the "Old" and "New" Tantras. He was the guru of both the Seventh Zhwa nag Karma pa, Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506), and the Fourth Zhwa dmar, Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524). Many of the most important of the Rnying ma pa teachings also passed through him.

'Gos Lo tsā ba presents in the *Deb ther sngon po* a brilliantly reasoned defense of the Rnying ma pa tradition. He criticizes Bu ston, who was largely responsible for the elimination of the Rnying ma pa tantras from the *Bka' gyur*, by noting that this great scholastic had included in his catalog to the *Bstan 'gyur* Vajrahāsa's *Guhyasamājatīka*, which quotes extensively from the

*Guhyamūla Tantra*, a text that he had rejected from the *Bka' gyur* as spurious. He notes that Bu ston had rejected the opinions of his own religious ancestry, including Thar pa Lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan as well as Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri of Snar thang, who had argued that the Rnying ma pa tantras were genuine. In spite of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's influence at the Phag mo gru pa court, his arguments did not prevail over the opposition from disciples of Bu ston and their students. The Rnying ma pa tantras therefore remained largely excluded from the *Bka' gyur*.

Mnga' ris Paṅ chen Padma dbang rgyal is known best for the *Sdom gsum rnam nges*, his treatment of the "three vows" (*trisaṃvara*) from the Rnying ma pa viewpoint. This great treatise has become one of the basic texts for study by Rnying ma pa students. It concisely answers most of the arguments raised by critics of the Rnying ma pa. Padma dbang rgyal was born in Glo bo Smon thang, the son of 'Jam dbyangs rin chen rgyal mtshan, a descendant of the ancient Royal Dynasty. His younger brother, Legs ldan rdo rje, achieved considerable fame as a Rnying ma pa teacher and the immediate predecessor of the Rdo brag Rig 'dzin line of incarnation. He was accomplished not only in the Rnying ma pa system but also in all of the Gsar ma ba traditions.

Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan was a Rnying ma pa scholar of great ability. Born in Gtsang at Gdong khar, he achieved considerable fame as a physician and is often known as Gdong khar 'tsho byed. His teachers included the *gter ston* Zhig po gling pa, Yongs 'dzin Ngag dbang grags pa, and Pad gling Thugs sras Zla ba rgyal mtshan. He bears the epithet Sog zlog pa because he was supposed to have defended his area from a Mongol expedition. His literary works include a history of Buddhism and the *Nges don 'brug sgra*, a brilliant refutation of the critics of the Rnying ma pa sect.<sup>10</sup>

The seventeenth century saw a sudden upsurge in the influence of the Rnying ma pa. With the end of domination of religious life by the Karma pa hierarchs and their Gtsang pa patrons, the fortunes of the Rnying ma pa rose along with those of the Dge lugs pa. Seventeenth-century Tibet yet awaits a detailed study; the complexity of the endlessly shifting patterns of religious and political alliances boggles the imagination. What is clear, however, is that the trends that culminated in the settlement of 1642 and that continued to predominate until 1717 benefited the Rnying ma pa greatly. During this period, four out of the six greatest Rnying ma pa monasteries of Tibet were founded: Rdo rje brag (c. 1610) and Grwa phyi O rgyan Smin sgrol gling (1656) in Central Tibet; Ru dam rdzogs chen o rgyan bsam gtan chos gling (1685) and Zhe chen (c. 1734) in the nomadic area between Khams and Central Tibet; and Kaḥ thog Rdo rje gdan (1656) and Dpal yul Rnam rgyal byang chub gling (1665) in Khams.

Kaḥ thog was originally founded in 1159<sup>11</sup> or 1164<sup>12</sup> by Dam pa Bde gshegs (1122–92). It was the most important monastery of the Rnying ma pa in eastern Tibet and figures prominently in the history of the Khams transmission of the *Bka' ma*. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it fell into decay. In 1656 a new monastery was founded on the Kaḥ thog site by Gter chen Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1615–72) and Klong gsal snying po (1625–92). It had a monastic population of about eight hundred monks and seven lamas on the eve of the Chinese troubles. The monastery propagated the Rnying ma pa tantras and the *Snying thig* cycles, especially the Klong gsal *gter ma*. The son of Rig 'dzin Klong gsal snying po and the immediate reembodiment of Bdud 'dul rdo rje, Rgyal sras Bsod nams lde'u btsan (1673–1723) perpetuated the Kaḥ thog tradition. The chief incarnation of Kaḥ thog is the Zhing skyong line, the rebirths of Bdud 'dul rdo rje, Bsod nams lde'u btsan, and Dri med zhing skyong mgon po. The other great incarnations of Kaḥ thog are Si tu, Dge rtse, Rmor tsha, Dgon rnying, Dbon po, and 'Brug grags dgon lag. This monastery specialized in scholarship, and its abbots (*mkhan po*) and teachers included some of the greatest scholars in Tibetan intellectual history, such as Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755) and Dge rtse Paṇḍita 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub (late eighteenth–early nineteenth century).

Two dates have been put forward for the founding of Dpal yul: 1632<sup>13</sup> and 1665.<sup>14</sup> The founder was Rig 'dzin Kun bzang shes rab, a disciple of Karma chags med and the Fifth Dalai Lama, at whose behest Dpal yul was founded. It boasted about six hundred monks and a total of seven incarnating lamas, chief of which were the Karma sku chen, Grub dbang, Rdzong nang, Gyang khang, and Khang nang. This monastery specialized in the *gter ma* of Ratna gling pa (1403–78) and the remarkable *Gnam chos*, the *dgongs gter* of Sprul sku Mi 'gyur rdo rje (1645–67) set down by the outstanding antiquarian, Karma chags med.

Grwa phyi O rgyan Smin sgrol gling, the main monastery of the Lho gter teaching, was founded in 1676 by Rig 'dzin Gter bdag gling pa Padma gar dbang 'Gyur med rdo rje (1616–1714). 'Gyur med rdo rje was the son of Gsang bdag 'Phrin las lhun grub (1611–62), the scion of the Gnyos lineage of Rnying ma pa teachers. Smin grol gling was closely connected with the Fifth Dalai Lama, the teacher of both Gter bdag gling pa and his younger brother, Lo chen Dharma śrī (1654–1717). When Smin grol gling was destroyed along with Rdo rje brag during the Dzungar war of 1717–18, both Dharma śrī and the Rdo rje brag incarnation, Padma 'phrin las (1641–1717), were done away with. The hereditary Khri chen of Smin grol gling survived. Smin grol gling housed four hundred monks and has three *bla brang*. Until the time of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, Smin grol gling and its numerous affiliated monasteries were

under the authority of hereditary Khri chen of the Gnyos<sup>15</sup> lineage. When the lineage died out at the end of the nineteenth century, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama handed over the hereditary throne to Gter chen Rang rig of Nyang rong and his family. Rang rig was regarded as the rebirth of Gter bdag gling pa. Smin grol gling was highly esteemed for its cultivation of learning, especially in the literary arts. It provided poetry teachers to the school for government officials in Lhasa. Smin grol gling and Gnas chung were also closely associated.

Ru dam Rdzogs chen O rgyan bsam gtan chos gling, founded in 1685, owes its establishment to another associate of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Padma rig 'dzin (1625–97). It was founded under the patronage of Sangs rgyas bstan pa of Sde dge and Mgon po lhun grub of Gling tshang. It was the largest of the Rnying ma pa monasteries, with over 850 monks. There were eleven incarnating lamas, the head of which was the line of Padma rig 'dzin. Like the other great Rnying ma pa monasteries, it was known for the exceptional learning of its teachers. The institutional organization of this settled monastery in the midst of a nomadic region is rather complex.

The circumstances surrounding the founding of the other two monasteries, Rdo rje brag and Zhe chen, are more complicated, but even this evidence would support the theory of a developing Rnying ma pa resurgence in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Rdo rje brag was founded in 1610 by Rig 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po (1580–1639), the last of the ancient princely lineage of Byang Ngam rings, one of the thirteen myriarchs. He was driven from his throne by the Sde srid Gtsang pa. Due to the common persecution that the Rdo rje brag founder and the Dge lugs pa monasteries had shared during the Gtsang pa regime, and to the predilections of the Fifth Dalai Lama, the relations between Rdo rje brag and the Dga' ldan Pho brang were very warm. Rdo rje brag suffered severely during the Dzungar troubles. Finally both Rdo rje brag and Smin grol gling were restored through the efforts of Pho lha Taiji, and their former relationship with the Dalai Lama resumed. Rdo rje brag had a monastic population of about two hundred monks and three incarnations, the chief of which was the Rdo brag Rig 'dzin, rebirth of Ngag gi dbang po and ultimately of Rig 'dzin Rgod kyi ldem 'phru can.

Following the birth of Rdo brag Rig 'dzin Khams gsum zil gnon as the son of Lcags la rgyal po, ruler of Dar rtse mdo (Tachienlu), a new monastery was founded at Dar rtse mdo. This was called Smad Rdo rje brag in contrast with Stod Rdo rje brag, with the ancestral monastery of the Byang princes, and with Bar Rdo rje brag, the main monastery of the complex. These monasteries all followed the *Byang gter*, the Northern Treasure tradition of revealed literature.

Zhe chen (also: Ze chen), the last of the great monasteries, was founded on the eve of a monastic revival in Khams among the Rnying ma pa. The founder, the Second Zhe chen Rab 'byams, 'Gyur med kun bzang rnam rgyal, was interested in pure scholasticism and education. In some respects, he modeled Zhe chen on Smin grol gling; in others, on Rdzogs chen. The monastery housed approximately two hundred monks and nine incarnations. As a supplement to the pure teaching facilities, the Third Rab 'byams, Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho, founded the *sgrub sde*, Padma gling, in 1796. Among the great names connected with Zhe chen we should mention Zhe chen Drung yig Bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan, the famous Sanskrit scholar. Zhe chen Dbon sprul 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal dominated the scene during the first four decades of the nineteenth century as the teacher of Kong sprul, Dpal sprul, and Mkhyen brtse. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the important Zhe chen lamas were Rgyal tshab O rgyan theg mchog rdo rje, alias 'Gyur med padma rnam rgyal, the noted disciple of 'Ju Mi pham, and Zhe chen Kong sprul.

The eighteenth century was a magnificent age for these "Old Believers." In spite of the violent hailstorm of persecution during 1717–20, which was damaging but fortunately of brief duration, the fruits of the Rnying ma pa spiritual renaissance continued to ripen. Smin grol gling and Rdo rje brag reappeared from the ashes. The Tibetan tradition of religious tolerance was restored through the diplomacy of Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas (1689–1747) and Mdo mkhar Tshe ring dbang rgyal (1697–1763), both of whom had studied with the martyred Smin gling Lo chen Dharma śrī.

The greatest name among the first generation of eighteenth-century Rnying ma pa lamas is that of Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu.<sup>16</sup> Tshe dbang nor bu was perhaps the most original mind ever to appear in the Tibetan tradition. The intellectual interest of this antiquarian and traveler knew no limits. Not content simply to repeat what he found in secondary sources considered authoritative by the Tibetan tradition, he sought to go back to the original. Richardson<sup>17</sup> has already brought this remarkable lama's work on the ancient pillar (*rdo ring*) inscriptions to the attention of the scholarly public. Such an approach to history was probably unique among Tibetans of the time. Another of his amazing compositions reexamines Tang dynasty Buddhism and comes to some startling conclusions about its relationships with Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>18</sup>

Tshe dbang nor bu seems to have specialized in the propagation of unpopular philosophies. He revitalized the Gzhan stong doctrine, on which he has written several works of considerable interest.<sup>19</sup> The *Kālacakra Tantra*, from

which the Gzhan stong appeared, was the subject of a number of smaller tracts and rituals; this tantric system and his extensive travels in Nepal led him to write a curious geographical work as well, in which descriptions of fabulous lands like Shambhala occur side by side with an account of the geography of Nepal.<sup>20</sup>

History was one of his greatest loves: we find him reproducing small treatises from the Royal Dynastic period on the pedigrees of lineage claiming descent from the old Lha dynasty and a short account of the princes of Ladakh. He also wrote historical works on the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* and the transmission lineages of Sanskrit poetics and grammar. In Tshe dbang nor bu we can detect an eclectic bent of mind that already foreshadows the nonsectarian movement of the nineteenth century. One of his interesting minor works treats the Mahāmudrā and its various lines of transmission in the hybrid form of a historically oriented *gsan yig*.<sup>21</sup>

The incredible 'Jigs med gling pa<sup>22</sup> (1730–98) dominates the next generation of eighteenth-century Rnying ma pa scholars. In the development of Rdzogs chen as a philosophical system he stands second only to Klong chen Rab 'byams pa. While 'Jigs med gling pa never attained that degree of brilliant organization and style that immediately identifies his predecessor's finer works, there is little doubt that his insights were no less profound and his visions no less genuine. Like Klong chen pa, who appeared to him in trance to inspire him to set down the *Klong chen snying thig* cycle, he had close ties with the minor Bka' brgyud pa traditions. 'Jigs med gling pa sprang from the Rwa 'brug pa, a lineage honored as one of the six great disciple lines of the 'Brug pa lamas of Rwa lung. His only son, Chos kyi rgyal mtshan, was recognized as the twenty-ninth hierarch of the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa, the sect with which Klong chen Rab 'byams pa had had close ties.

The collected works of 'Jigs med gling pa fill nine volumes and include some of the most interesting works of the Tibetan tradition. Both Tucci<sup>23</sup> and Petech<sup>24</sup> have already drawn in attention of the scholarly public to the *Gtam tshogs*. This unusual collection of miscellaneous writings show something of the breadth of 'Jigs med gling pa's intellectual interest. His short investigation on the royal tombs in his native 'Phyong rgyas has already been largely translated by Tucci. In addition, we find descriptive articles of considerable historical interest on the Bsam yas complex, Zhwa lha khang, Dpal ri Theg chen gling, and Rgyal byed tshal. He writes on the geography of India, on the customs of border tribes, on the criteria for judging jewels, and on the design of *stūpas*. Some of the more important letters reproduced here examine the roles, duties, and obligations of the ruler and his subjects. Other



instructions deal with the rich variety of religious life. He addresses himself to the simple monks, to the married tantric priest, to the learned scholar, to the serene contemplative, to the holy madman, to the ascetic dwelling in the place of corpses. He includes delightful little stories and profound explanations of topics, like the difference between the Rdzogs chen and Mahāmudrā conception of the ultimate (*de kho na nyid*).

The *Gtam tshogs* is only one of the remarkable books from the *gsung 'bum* of 'Jigs med gling pa. The first two volumes constitute the verse *Yon tan mdzod* and its autocommentary, the *Shing rta rnam gnyis*.<sup>25</sup> This work can be regarded as a general survey of Buddhism from the Vajrayāna orientation and, more specifically, the Rnying ma pa Rdzogs chen orientation.

The *Rnying ma 'i rgyud 'bum*<sup>26</sup> in the form we now know it is the result of 'Jigs med gling pa's efforts. In the third volume of his works we find his account-cum-index to this collection, a source of special importance for Tibetology. This same volume includes a comparative treatment of Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.<sup>27</sup> The sixth volume is devoted to the *Vajrakīla* cycle, while the seventh and eighth volumes contain the visionary revelations known as the *Klong chen snying thig* or *Snying thig gsar ma*, a cycle that has become an extremely productive approach to Rdzogs chen practice. The ninth and last volume includes the autobiography and collected instructions on Rnying ma pa meditation.

The antiquarian and archaeological interest of both 'Jigs med gling pa and Tshe dbang nor bu have attracted the notice of Western scholars. But these teachers are certainly not unique in the Rnying ma pa tradition, which draws its inspirations from a glorious past: the golden age of Padmasambhava. It is hardly remarkable that the *gter ston* and scholiasts of this school should demonstrate an interest in historical studies. For the historian working on the Royal Dynastic Period the still largely unexplored literature of the Rnying ma pa will prove a vast mine of new information.

The next great Rnying ma pa teacher of the eighteenth century was a monastic reformer, Rdzogs chen Rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas<sup>28</sup> (b. 1800). The Rnying ma pa are often criticized for their neglect of exoteric studies, the vinaya in particular. For the followers of Tibetan Buddhism the apparent conflicts between Mahāyāna and Theravāda cease to exist when one properly understands the concepts of the three vows (*trīsamvara*): the discipline of the monk (*pratimokṣa*), the enlightened discipline of the *bodhisattva*, and the transcendental morality of the tantric practitioner. This provocative theory has given rise to some of the most original works in Tibetan literature, including Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Analysis of the Three Vows* (*Sdom gsum rab dbye*), Mnga' ris

Paṅ chen's *Ascertainment of the Three Vows* (*Sdom gsum rnam nges*), and Kong sprul's *Encyclopedia* (*Shes bya kun khyab*).

Gzhan phan mtha' yas stressed the strict observance of the vinaya rules externally while practicing the higher esoteric teaching internally. In his comparatively short life he brought about a thorough revitalization of Rnying ma pa monastic scholasticism. Gzhan phan mtha' yas and his lineage of disciples became closely identified with Dge mang, a retreat in the Rdza chu kha area belonging to Rdzogs chen Monastery. It was here that Gzhan phan mtha' yas's reforms continued to prosper. From here they spread throughout Khams. Mkhan po Ngag dga' is the most recent figure in this Dge mang movement; his autobiography demonstrates a strong commitment to the principles of pure monastic conduct and education. Rdza Dpal sprul's words to Mkhan po Ngag dga' when he appears to the latter in a vision sum up quite well what the Dge mang movement was all about:

How much greater a service to Buddhism it would be were you to establish one or two schools rather than sitting alone absorbed in dispassionate tranquility! The lustrous appearance of the jewel that is the Buddha's teaching owes to the truly pure observance of the three bases of the monastic discipline. That brilliant radiance will diffuse depending on whether or not there is some instruction and study of the basic sources of the sūtra and tantra. Consequently, what could be more important than upholding the vinaya and education?

The numerous so-called sages who actually know nothing have come as a sign of the degeneration of Buddhist teachings. Regarding these village magic-workers, the proverb that goes to the effect that a single entrance to a den is not sufficient for a large litter of fox pups is apt; even though there would seem to be a multitude of monastic ruins belonging to the Rnying ma pa, there are not many satisfactory monasteries.<sup>29</sup>

In the Dge mang movement this devotion to education and the sincere practice of monasticism was on its way to developing into a theory of social commitment: a realization that the monk had obligations to his society beyond performing rituals and magic, and serving as the recipient of pious offerings that would result in the acquisition of merit. Unfortunately, the movement's healthy shoots were abruptly uprooted in 1959 before they could bring forth fruit.

Perhaps the most profound religious contribution of 'Jigs med gling pa to the Rnying ma pa heritage was the *Klong chen snying thig* practice. His two disciples were Rdo ba Grub chen 'Jigs med phrin las od zer (1745–1821)<sup>30</sup> and 'Jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu.<sup>31</sup> The former spread the new system widely among the 'Gu log tribes of the A mdo badlands. The latter, basing himself at Phra ma dgon, propagated the Rdzogs chen insight of the *Klong chen snying thig* among the nomads of the Rdza chu kha. The commitment of the Dge mang reform movement and the *Klong chen snying thig* teachings came together in Rdza Dpal sprul, of whom we shall have more to say later. The results of this convergence were to have a profound influence on ensuing Tibetan intellectual history.

The great religious trend during the nineteenth century was toward tolerance, understanding, and synthesis. This nonsectarian movement represented a reaction to the religious rivalry and persecution that marred so much of Tibetan history; it sought to reorient Tibetan religious life to the higher ideals and mutual understanding that had been the rule with the greater teachers of the past. The center of the nonsectarian movement was Sde dge, the intellectual and artistic heart of eastern Tibet. One of the primary factors in the movement's development at that particular time and place seems to have been the tragedy in the Sde dge ruling family produced by sectarian hatred. These Sde dge princes, like the majority of the Khams pa aristocracy, were patrons of almost any meritorious activity. The vast majority were without pronounced sectarian conviction, although certain sects came to enjoy the recognized patronage of a particular princely family for several successive generations. The Ngor pa subsect of the Sa skya pa enjoyed such a preferential relationship with the Sde dge royal family and a majority of the aristocracy. At the end of the eighteenth century, the peace was suddenly disrupted.

The fame of 'Jigs med gling pa reached the ears of the young queen of Sde dge. When she met that great guru, an unshakable faith arose in her. 'Jigs med gling pa and his disciple, Rdo ba Grub chen, rapidly became the most influential chaplains of Sde dge. The sudden honors bestowed on the Rnying ma pa could not help but arouse the jealousy of the Ngor pa lamas and their patrons among the aristocracy. In 1790 the king of Sde dge, Sa dbang bzang po,<sup>32</sup> then only twenty-two, died suddenly while undertaking a pilgrimage to Central Tibet, leaving a son and a daughter. The young widow, Tshe dbang lha mo of the Sga rje family, became regent for her infant son. This princess was regarded to be an emanation of Ngang tshul Byang chub, the great Buddhist queen of Khri srong lde btsan and disciple of Padmasambhava. She was a fervent patron of the Rnying ma pa, especially of 'Jigs med gling pa and Rdo ba Grub chen. During her brief eight-year regency, blocks for the twenty-six

volume *Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, the nine-volume *Gsung 'bum* of 'Jigs med gling pa, and a number of the works of Klong chen pa were carved. In 1798 this favoritism led to an open civil rebellion in which the Rnying ma pa faction was defeated. The queen and Rdo ba Grub chen, who was reputed to be her lover, were first imprisoned and later exiled. A number of the Rnying ma pa partisans were executed or forced to flee. These depressing events had a formative influence on the development of the eclectic approach that should not be underestimated.

The twelve-year-old prince became the nominal ruler and was placed under the tutelage of teachers with anti-Rnying ma pa views. The heart of this prince was filled with deep sadness at his mother's fate; but as he grew to maturity, he recognized the very real anxiety that any suggestion of a change in religious policy could engender in the established sect. His Sa skya pa education and his natural inclinations influenced him in the direction of the religious and scholarly life. As soon as he had ensured the succession, he renounced the world to become a monk. This prince became known to later generations as Sde dge Yab chen. His personal name was Tshe dbang rdo rje 'dzin. When he was ordained a monk, he took the name Byams pa kun dga' sangs rgyas bstan pa rgyal mtshan. In addition to the famous *Sde dge'i rgyal rabs*, the *Royal Genealogy of Sde dge*, he is the author of a highly regarded exposition (*rnam bshad*) on the *Hevajra Tantra*.

His family history is a remarkable document: while restating the time-honored special relationship that existed between the Sde dge house and the Sa skya pa sects, he reaffirms that a commitment to tolerance and patronage of all sects should be the basis of the religious policy of Sde dge. This history is, in many ways, the first document of the nonsectarian movement.

Mkhan po Ngag dga' speaks often of the great lamas of the eclectic approach: Mkhyen brtse (1820–92), Kong sprul (1811–99), Mchog gyur gling pa (1829–70), and Mi pham (1846–1912). In the introduction to the *Shes bya kun khyab* I have dealt with the nonsectarian tradition in some detail. Here we should consider the significance of the emanations of 'Jigs med gling pa, the so-called Mkhyen brtse "family" of incarnations, and their impact on later Tibetan generations.

'Jigs med gling pa produced three recognized incarnations, three vastly different specimens of the varieties of lamaist religious life. The physical aspect (*sku'i sprul sku*) was represented by Mdo Mkhyen brtse Ye shes rdo rje (1800–1859),<sup>33</sup> a destroyer of illusion, a tantric hero *par excellence* who manifested the rainbow body upon his death. The verbal aspect (*gsung gi sprul sku*) was the humble saint and holy wanderer, Rdza Dpal sprul. 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen

brtse dbang po was the embodiment of the mental aspect (*thugs kyi sprul sku*).

Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po (b. 1808) is better known to the Tibetan tradition as A bu Rin po che Rdza Dpal sprul and as Rdza Dpal dge.<sup>34</sup> A student of 'Jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu of Phra ma dgon, he received one of the most important teaching lines of 'Jigs med gling pa. There are a number of accounts of Rdza Dpal sprul's renunciation of the life of an incarnate lama<sup>35</sup> for that of a wandering ascetic.<sup>36</sup>

Rdza Dpal sprul specialized in the *Bodhicāryāvātāra*, a text that has received much attention especially from Rnying ma pa scholiasts. This teacher's greatest contribution to Tibetan literature is the *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, an introduction to Rdzogs chen noteworthy as a successful attempt to make the most profound teachings comprehensible to a simple audience. Written in a colloquial Khams pa nomad idiom filled with references to popular sayings and stories, it has continued to delight students of Buddhism for over a hundred years.

Rdza Dpal sprul has written other works intended for the lay audience, such as *Drang srong gdol ba'i gtam* and *Gtam padma tshal gyi zlos gar*. The latter was composed to console Bkra shis dge legs, a young Sde dge aristocrat, after the tragic death of his wife. In this beautiful poem Bkra shis dge legs is represented by a golden bee, while his deceased companion becomes the turquoise bee trapped within a flower that has closed. Dpal sprul's *gsung 'bum* also includes a concise history of Tibet.

Rdza Dpal sprul included among his students<sup>37</sup> Smyo shul Lung rtogs and Dbon po Bstan li O rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu.<sup>38</sup> The latter, grand-nephew of the famed Gzhan phan mtha' yas, had not completed his initiation when Dpal sprul died; he continued his education with Smyo shul Lung rtogs. Li passed on the tradition to the saintly Gzhan dga',<sup>39</sup> the author of a series of annotated editions of the important treatises of Buddhist scholasticism. His notes (*mchan*) reflect only the interpretation of the Indic commentaries found in the *Bstan 'gyur*. These texts became so popular with followers of all of the older sects that they have become part of the obligatory curriculum (*yig cha*) of teaching colleges like the Rdzong gsar Bshad grwa.

### *III. The Autobiography of Mkhan po Ngag dga' and its Significance*

For the pure historian, the autobiography of Mkhan po Ngag dga' will prove a disappointment. Some prominent events are mentioned, though usually

without details. Chronology is sketchy and few dates appear. News of the Younghusband expedition reached Khams, and Ngag dga' writes laconically: "Although a host of foreign enemies appeared about that time, we were spared through the compassion of the protective deities of the esoteric teachings."<sup>40</sup> During the same period there were disturbances in the Nyag rong.<sup>41</sup> In 1909 the Chinese expedition had reached Rdza stod and disrupted the summer retreat.<sup>42</sup> Ngag dga' occasionally mentions the frequent skirmishes between the Tibetan and Chinese forces in Khams.

While this work is not especially interesting history, it provides us with numerous insights into the customs of the Khams pa villagers and herders. As a source for Rnying ma pa bibliography the text has some importance.<sup>43</sup> It also reveals to us the consciousness of a great visionary and mystic. However, it is as a treasury of authentic instruction on the essentials of Buddhism and Rdzogs chen meditation that this work has its greatest significance. Often the simplest principles prove the most difficult for emotional understanding, as the episodes that Ngag dga' has drawn from his own life exemplify.

Once during a period when A stobs Rin po che was inducting his advanced disciples into some of the more profound concepts of Rdzogs chen, such as *thod rgyal*, these students chanced to see a musk deer that had been shot by a hunter. The disciples, feeling revulsion and hatred toward the wicked gunman and moved by their cultivated compassion, hurried to inform their guru what had happened and what they had seen. When they reported their feelings to him, he rebuked them gently:

But you misunderstand compassion. The slain has now experienced the fruit of previous slaughter. Retribution is little by little being exacted. The slayer has now acted so as to establish the basis for future misery. For five hundred eons hence he will experience the sufferings of hell. The retribution of five hundred lives that must be exacted will then begin. If there be compassion, it should be a compassion conceived for him (the hunter).

Although I believed you had a slight understanding, the fact that you have failed to comprehend even compassion has proved you dolts. Alas, it seems that understanding the intricacies of spiritual levels and paths is much more difficult.<sup>44</sup>

Episodes like this should have relevance to all who seek to cultivate insight within their own psychological processes.

Mkhan po Ngag dga' was born to a nomad family of means at Wa shul<sup>45</sup>

Khrong khog in the 'Bri zla Zal mo sgang area of Khams. His father sprang from a group that traced its ancestry to the Smug po Sdong.<sup>46</sup> He tells us that his lineage was the Dkar po gling, which was divided into the Che, 'Bring, and Chung groups. The Chung brgyud produced the "seven bandits of Lha ru" (*lha ru 'jag pa mi bdun*), from one of whom, Gling phrug A bkar, our lama's father, Rnam rgyal of Smyo shul, was descended. His mother, Padma mtsho, came from the 'Gru chu Khams lineage of 'Ju ba in Rdza stod. Ngag dga' was born on the tenth day of the tenth month in the Earth Hare year, during the last days of 1879.

His chief gurus were Smyo shul Lung rtogs<sup>47</sup> and A stobs Rin po che.<sup>48</sup> Among his other important teachers were Gter ston Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin,<sup>49</sup> Gter ston Bsod rgyal,<sup>50</sup> Mkhan po Rgyal mtshan 'od zer, Rdzogs chen Bla ma Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin, Mi nyag Rig 'dzin rdo rje, Ku se Padma bzang chen, Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Blo gsal, Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Bsod nam chos phel,<sup>51</sup> Mkhan po Dkon mchog nor bu,<sup>52</sup> Mkhan po Lha rgyal, Mkhan po Gzhan dga', Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1925), Kaḥ thog Mkhan po Kun dpal, 'Brug pa Bla ma 'Phrin las, Mgo log Bla ma Bsod dpal ldan, Dpal yul Padma nor bu (d. 1932), Gter ston Dri med (d. 1932), Mkhan po Ye shes rgyal mtshan, the Fifth Rdzogs chen, Thub bstan chos kyi rdo rje (b. 1872), 'Brug pa Sku chen Chos dbyings rol pa'i rdo rje, Mtha' yas Bla ma Bcom ldan rdo rje,<sup>53</sup> and Dzi phu Bco brgyad Zhabs drung Blo gros rgya mtsho.<sup>54</sup>

Ngag dga' took his ordination as novice (*dge tshul*) in 1893 and his final vows in 1898. He studied largely at Kaḥ thog until 1900, when it was rumored that 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho was coming to teach at Rdzogs chen. Ngag dga' begged his teacher to allow him to go and hear the great scholar. Mi pham's arrival at Rdzogs chen was delayed, but Ngag dga' availed himself of the opportunities to study with other scholars there until about 1902.

The next few years were occupied with contemplation and the beginning of his career as a teacher, first at Ljon pa lung and later at Rdzogs chen. The Rdzogs chen Sprul sku recognized the talents of Ngag dga' and told him: "Although it is against the custom to select an abbot (*mkhan po*) from outside the monastery, and although Dbon po tshang and Lung rtogs are already serving, I would still like you to succeed after Mkhan po Lha rgyal."<sup>55</sup>

Around 1907, Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho<sup>56</sup> asked Ngag dga' to return to Kaḥ thog. He was selected in 1909 to become abbot there. He served a term of three years before handing over the arduous duties; later he would serve for two additional five-year stretches. He traveled considerably, but in his autobiography he concentrates on his visionary experiences. He tells us little of what he saw in his wanderings. With the help of the Si tu of Kaḥ thog, he founded a

temple at Ljon pa lung that was to become his favorite retreat.<sup>57</sup> He also served at the newly established teaching college (*bshad grwa*) at Dpal yul.<sup>58</sup>

About 1925, Si tu felt his life drawing to close and asked Ngag dga' to return to Kaḥ thog. During the late 1920s Khams was restive. Ngag dga' worked incessantly, urging the bandit chiefs to desist from their attacks on merchant caravans and pilgrim parties. The Tibetan government had established a military camp at Smar khams under the command of the scion of Shel dkar gling pa, the Dbus Mda' dpon, who revered Ngag dga' greatly. Between 1929 and 1932, Ngag dga' traveled widely in this part of Khams. Phyags sprul Rin po che had established a new teaching college at Grwa lag dgon, and he asked Ngag dga' to inaugurate the instruction there.

The year 1933 saw the deaths of Gter chen Dri med<sup>59</sup> and Padma nor bu of Dpal yul.<sup>60</sup> The autobiography ends in that year. Bya bral Rin po che adds in his introduction that Ngag dga' died in 1941 and that his subsequent re-embodiment took place at Kong po Bde skyid khang gsar. The collected writings of Mkhan po Ngag dga' fill some ten volumes. The titles of some of these are mentioned in the autobiography and show his predilection for informal explanation and exegetic outline.<sup>61</sup>

The life of Ngag dga' assumes a place of special interest because it is the first biography of a guru of a generation the included such names as Grub dbang Śākyaśrī (1853–1919), Khu nu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1858–1921),<sup>62</sup> Sga ston Ngag dbang legs pa (1864–1941), Ngag dbang bsam gtan blo gros (c. 1866–1931), Rdza Rong phu Bla ma Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu (1867–1940),<sup>63</sup> Sga ba bla ma 'Jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan (1870–1940), Gzhan dga' Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927), 'Khrul zhig Padma chos rgyal (1876–1958), Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1925), and Wa ra Ri khrod pa Dam chos bstan pa (died c. 1946).<sup>64</sup> The lives of these teachers bear witness to the vitality of a great tradition of scholarship and contemplation.

#### *IV. The Style of the Autobiography*

Mkhan po Ngag dga' wrote in a simple and often colloquial Tibetan. He gives the reader an intriguing glimpse into life as it existed in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Khams. Si tu had asked Ngag dga' to return to Kaḥ thog to work in a new teaching college (*bshad grwa*) that had been set up there. Ngag dga' had tentatively accepted but was postponing his final return while staying at his beloved Ljon pa lung. He writes:



During that summer, the steward of Kaḥ thog, Rig rdor, and attendants were coming to escort [me back to Kaḥ thog]; but they found the Khrom River in flood and so were not able to pass beyond A 'dzom sgar. Si tu Rin po che's message was attached to the tin of the horn of a yak, and the yak was sent to this side. In reply, I wrote a letter in which I definitely committed myself to arrive at Kaḥ thog during the following year of the Ape (1908).<sup>65</sup>

The style is straightforward. An occasional expression like *dkrigs chod*<sup>66</sup> that has not found its way into our dictionaries crops up, but only rarely. The only difficulty is his usage of proverbs drawn from Khams pa folklore. He loves to refer to popular and often off-color sayings that the Khams pas so love, such as *rwa ma lnga la thug le bcu*, "ten billy goats to five nanny goats," meaning roughly the same as our proverb: "too many cooks spoil the soup." When a Khams pa wishes to emphasize the merits and rewards of industry, he says:

*gom re song na kha ra rag //*  
*tog ge sdod na mu ges 'chi //*

If you go out looking, you'll get food;  
If you sit idly, you'll starve to death.

This love of nomadic wisdom and folk stories sometimes presents the foreign reader with difficulties. For instance, see the passage:

*de tshul zhus par de yin rim gyis blo skyed thon dgos sngar zbig tu nyes*  
*kyis gling mda' nor kha ta dpe lta bcug ste nyin gcig ci go'am byas*  
*pas /...<sup>67</sup>*

The allusion of the proverb of the story still escapes me, but it obviously brings out the idea that Rome was not built in a day. The allusion in the following passage, however, is completely clear to anyone who has ever traveled in Tibetan areas:

*nyin gcig khyed nas lta shed khur 'dug kyang da phyin khro bo re*  
*bsnyen dgos / dgos dus kyi khar lag cha med pa dang 'dra lta shed ngas*  
*kyang khur myong ste de 'dras mi phan gsungs //.<sup>68</sup>*

The ultimate in unpreparedness is to arrive in a settlement at night without a stout stick to fend off the ferocious mastiffs.

It will be obvious to the reader of the autobiography that Mkhan po Ngag dga' is an heir to that brilliant literary tradition whose finest flowers are the *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, the *Drang srong gzhol ba'i gtam*, and *Gtam padma tshal gyi zlos gar*. I heartily recommend the life story of Mkhan po Ngag dga' to anyone who wishes to know more of Tibetan culture. To the seeker of insights into his or her own psychological processes, I would recommend even more strongly this account of the making of a Rdzogs chen master.



## CHAPTER 2

# Klong chen Rab 'byams pa and His Works

### *I. The Life of Klong chen Rab 'byams pa*<sup>69</sup>

**K**LONG CHEN RAB 'BYAMS PA (1308–63) was born at a settlement in the upper part of the Grwa Valley in G.yu ru. On his father's side he was descended from the Rog, a lineage with a distinguished role in the religious history of Tibet.<sup>70</sup> Through his mother he was related to the 'Brom, the perhaps even more distinguished lineage that had produced that great disciple of Atiśa, 'Brom ston Rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas (1005–1064). Klong chen pa's teachers included the majority of the great names, both Rnying ma pa and Gsar ma pa, of his day: Bsam grub rin chen,<sup>71</sup> Slob dpon Kun dga' 'od zer,<sup>72</sup> Slob dpon Bkra shis rin chen,<sup>73</sup> Za lung pa,<sup>74</sup> Bstan dgon pa,<sup>75</sup> Bla brang pa Chos dpal rgyal mtshan,<sup>76</sup> Dpang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa, Gzhon nu don grub,<sup>77</sup> Myos Mthing ma ba Sangs rgyas grags pa,<sup>78</sup> Slob dpon Gzhon rgyal,<sup>79</sup> Gzhon rdor,<sup>80</sup> Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339),<sup>81</sup> Slob dpon Dbang tshul,<sup>82</sup> and Sa skya pa Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–75).<sup>83</sup> His chief guru, however, was Rig 'dzin Kumārarāja (1266–1343).<sup>84</sup>

Klong chen pa was intimately involved in the politics of his troubled times. The great Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–64) regarded him as an ally of the 'Bri gung pa. These charges that Klong chen pa was a teacher and supporter of the 'Bri gung pa seem not to be completely without substance. Bdud 'joms Rin po che cites a prophecy of Guru Rin po che that was rediscovered around Klong chen pa's time:

*In the region known as 'Bri,  
(there is) a demon's son by the name of Kun dga'  
(who) bears on his body the mark of the sword.  
When he dies, he will be reborn in hell.*

*From the south, there (will come) an incarnation  
of Mañjuśrī who can bring him under control.*

This passage obviously refers to the Sgom chen of 'Bri gung, Kun dga' rin chen, who was almost successful in throwing Tibet into civil war during the period in which Byang chub rgyal mtshan was struggling to consolidate his regime. Klong chen pa played a part in taming this tiger and preventing open war. The result, however, was that Byang chub rgyal mtshan's advisors portrayed him as a fervent 'Bri gung pa partisan to their lord.

Ultimately Klong chen pa was forced into exile in Bhutan. During this sojourn, he founded the monasteries of Thar pa gling near Bum thang, Shar Mkho thing Rin chen gling, and Bsam gtan gling in Spa gro. He returned to Tibet and was reconciled with the great Phag mo gru prince through the efforts of certain lay patrons.<sup>85</sup> Back in his homeland he was honored by princes like Si tu Shākya bzang po and Rdo rje rgyal mtshan.<sup>86</sup> Si tu Shākya bzang po was the last of the 'Bri gung Sgom chen. He belonged to the Skyu ra lineage but a different branch than that of the hereditary abbots. He allied 'Bri gung with Byang chub rgyal mtshan in his campaign against the ancient enemy, Sa skya. Later he fell out with the prince and ultimately brought great misfortune on 'Bri gung. Si tu Shākya bzang po's patronage of Klong chen pa during this period is another explanation for Byang chub rgyal mtshan's hostility toward this great Rnying ma pa teacher.

## *II. The Self-Liberation Trilogy and Other Works of Klong chen pa*

In the fourth volume of the *Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab*, Mr. Sonam T. Kazi has reproduced a careful manuscript of the *Rang grol skor gsum*, the *Self-Liberation Trilogy*.<sup>87</sup> The most treasured methods of Rnying ma pa contemplation center around the Rdzogs chen system. The Rdzogs chen teachings belong to that broad group known as precepts (*man ngag*, Skt. *upadeśa*),<sup>88</sup> tried and tested instructions bestowed by authentic tantric gurus. The efficacy of these precepts rests in their relevance to any given disciple into three classes: the mental class (*sems sde*), the expanse class (*klong sde*), and the precept class (*man ngag sde*). Klong chen pa himself has characterized his *Rang grol skor gsum* as an introduction to the essential meaning of the precepts belonging to the mental class.<sup>89</sup> The chief canonical sources for the teachings and practice of the mental class (*sems sde*) include the *Kun byed rgyal po*.<sup>90</sup>

This treatise of the immortal Klong chen Rab 'byams pa Dri med 'od zer constitutes the sixth section in most editions of his *Gsung thor bu*. There are xylographic editions of the *Gsung thor bu* from Sde dge in Khams and from Zur khang in Lhasa. The *dkar chag* to the 1901 Zur khang edition of the *Gsung thor bu* edition tells us that this edition was prepared at the instigation of Kun bzang mthong grol rdo rje, the Zhwa de'u Sprul sku of Yar 'brog. It mentions that the chief donors of funds needed to carve the blocks for this edition were the retired lay official (*zhabs zur*) Tshe dbang rab brtan of the house of E Shag byang and his lady, Zla ba sgron ma. The actual responsibility, however, belonged to the house of Zur khang.<sup>91</sup>

The manuscript that has been reproduced in volume four of the *Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab* is apparently a copy of a separate edition of this section prepared through the efforts of one 'Gro 'dul dpa' bo rdo rje, a Rnying ma pa lama. The benedictory verses were penned by Thub bstan snyan grags, the lama's disciple. The blocks themselves seem to date from the last years of the nineteenth century or first decades of the twentieth century. We are not yet able to hazard a guess as to where the blocks might have been carved and preserved.<sup>92</sup>

Klong chen pa's life is a remarkable record of spiritual and miraculous achievement. In his comparatively short life he authored an enormous body of philosophical writing. His own survey of his writing<sup>93</sup> shows that he was aiming at a unitary treatment of Buddhist thought. Unfortunately, this catalog (*dkar chag*) was written while Klong chen pa was still in Bhutanese exile; a number of his important works had yet to be written.<sup>94</sup> It should also be noted that a number of Klong chen pa's works are probably lost.

Mr. Sonam Topgay Kazi is to be highly commended for making available this rare and beautiful source for understanding Rdzogs chen and its philosophical and psychological bases. The next important hurdle that lies before us is rendering the basic Rnying ma pa sources into Western languages. Reproducing the fundamental works should result in developing an interest in Buddhist contemplation in the West.



## II. The Bka' brgyud Schools

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## CHAPTER 3

# Golden Rosaries of the Bka' brgyud Schools

### *I. Introduction*

THE *gser 'phreng* is one of the least studied categories of Tibetan historical literature. An eminent Western Tibetologist has in a recent publication translated *gser 'phreng* as “golden rosary,” a rendering that is rather unilluminating in spite of the exactness of the literal translation. Probably intended to explain a *bla brgyud gsol 'debs*, the reverential petition to the successive gurus in a transmission lineage of an esoteric teaching, such collections of hagiographic writing often enshrine some of the most cherished instructions (*man ngag*)<sup>95</sup> of a tradition. These *gser 'phreng*, like biographies (*rnam thar*) of individual lamas, can also serve as some of our most reliable sources of historical data.

It is probable that the *gser 'phreng* originated among the 'Brug pa and Stag lung traditions within which *bla mchod* (*gurupuja*) and *rnam thar* reached their highest degree of elaboration as liturgical and contemplative practices. *Gser 'phreng*, however, are by no means confined to the Bka' brgyud schools. The Sde dge redaction of the *Lam 'bras slob bshad* collection contains seven volumes of biographies of the gurus in the Lam 'bras transmission lineage of the Sa skya pa sect. Vostrikov<sup>96</sup> has described similar works for the Dge lugs pa Lam rim transmissions. It is undeniable, however, that the one-volume *gser 'phreng* was especially popular with the early Bka' brgyud pa scholars and yogis.

The manuscript reproduced in volume three of the *Smanrtsis Shesrig Spenzod* is a late fifteenth-century *gser 'phreng* of the 'Ba' ra branch of the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa. *Gser 'phreng* of other lineages within the Bka' brgyud pa tradition are known: xylograph editions exist for those of the Lho 'Brug (Rwa lung) and Shangs pa, 'Bri gung pa, and Stag lung pa. It is likely that manuscripts for other lineages will continue to appear.

It may be helpful to present a brief survey of the Bka' brgyud pa schools so that the reader may understand the relationship of the present manuscript to the entire tradition. A note is in order regarding the two forms Dkar brgyud pa and Bka' brgyud pa. The term Bka' brgyud pa simply applies to any line of transmission of an esoteric teaching from teacher to disciple. We can properly speak of a Jo nang Bka' brgyud pa or Dge ldan Bka' brgyud pa for the Jo nang pa and Dge lugs pa sects. The adherents of the sects that practice the teachings centering around the *Phyag rgya chen po* and the *Nā ro chos drug* are properly referred to as the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa because these teachings were all transmitted through Sgam po pa. Similar teachings and practices centering around the *Ni gu chos drug* are distinctive of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa. These two traditions with their offshoots are often incorrectly referred to simply as Bka' brgyud pa.

Some of the more careful Tibetan scholars suggested that the term Dkar brgyud pa be used to refer to the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa, Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa, and a few minor traditions transmitted by Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, or Ras chung but did not pass through Sgam po pa. The term Dkar brgyud pa refers to the use of the white cotton meditation garment by all of these lineages. This complex is what is normally known, inaccurately, as the Bka' brgyud pa. Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma sums up the matter: "In some later 'Brug pa texts the written form 'Dkar brgyud' indeed appears, because Mar pa, Mi la, Gling ras, and others wore only white cotton cloth. Nevertheless, it is fine if [they] are all called Bka' brgyud."<sup>97</sup> At Thu'u bkwan's suggestion, then, we will side with convention and use the term "Bka' brgyud."

The two most basic divisions of the Bka' brgyud pa traditions are the Shangs pa and the Mar pa sects. The first originated with Khyung po Rnal 'byor, who received the profound methods of the *siddhas* of India from the lady Nigumā, spouse of Nāropa, as well as the *dākinī* Sukhasiddhi, Maitripāda, and over a hundred other tantric masters. The lineages emanating from Khyung po Rnal 'byor specialize in the *Phyag chen Ga'u ma* and the *Ni gu chos drug*.<sup>98</sup> Since a *Dkar brgyud gser 'phreng* belonging to a Shangs pa transmission appears in another volume of the *Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod*, we shall move directly to the schools that treasured the esoteric instructions and teachings translated and propagated in Tibet by Mar pa.<sup>99</sup>

## II. The Mar pa Bka' brgyud pa

The esoteric initiations and practical instructions upheld by all the extant Bka' brgyud pa lineages have passed through Tilopa and Nāropa to the Tibetan translator, Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012–1097). Tradition records that Tilopa received four distinct currents (*bka' babs*), which he passed on to Nāropa; unfortunately Tibetan sources differ considerably regarding the lineage and content of these currents.<sup>100</sup>

Mar pa's most famous disciple was Mi la ras pa, through whom the main tradition passed. Another of Mar pa's students, Rngog ston Chos sku rdo rje, who excelled in the exegesis of the tantras themselves, began a tradition that remained for at least five generations a separate and identifiable transmission: the Rngog Bka' brgyud pa with its center at Gzhung Spre'u zhing in southern Tibet.<sup>101</sup> As Mar pa's disciple, Mi la ras pa nevertheless surpassed all in perseverance and the practice of *gtum mo*. His two chief disciples were Dwags po Lha rje (1079–1153) and Ras chung Rdo rje grags (1083–1161). The main tradition passed through Dwags po pa, while Ras chung fostered the *Ras chung snyan rgyud*. Ras chung was sent to India by his guru to seek the esoteric precepts that had not been received by Mar pa. On his return he bestowed the initiations he had received from Ti pu pa (Pārāvatapāda) upon his guru. Mi la ras pa, in turn, conferred them upon Ngan rdzong ras pa Byang chub rgyal po, who began the *Ngan rdzong snyan rgyud*. These systems of oral precepts were ultimately elaborated into the *Bde mchog snyan rgyud* by Gtsang smyon He ru ka (1452–1507). These teachings ultimately penetrated the other Bka' brgyud pa traditions, notably the Stod 'Brug, and the lineages were absorbed, ceasing to have any sectarian identity.

## III. Dwags po Lha rje and the "Four Great" Bka' brgyud Branches

Before he came to Mi la ras pa, Dwags po Lha rje Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen of Dwags po had studied with Bka' gdams pa gurus, exponents of monasticism and the systematic approach. He was, therefore, eminently qualified to become the real founder of the Mar pa Bka' brgyud pa school. It is appropriate that all of the schools collectively are known as the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa. Sgam po pa passed on the monastery that he founded to his nephew, Dwags po Sgom tshul, or Tshul khriims snying po (1116–69). The Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa proper became identified with Sgam po pa's

monastery and lineage. All the founders of the four greater branches (*che bzhi*) of the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa—Tshal pa, Kam tshang, 'Ba' rom, and Phag mo gru pa—were disciples of either Sgam po pa or Dwags po Sgom tshul.

### 1. The Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa

Zhang G.yu brag pa Brtson 'grus grags pa (1123–93), a disciple of Dwags po Sgom tshul, established the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa. The fortunes of this sect reached a peak during the early Yüan period when Tshal Gung thang was the center of an influential myriarchy. But because one of the myriarchs had been an opponent of Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan, the sect fell into the shadows. The discovery by Dung mtsho ras pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan in 1315 of the *Sems khrid*, a *gter ma* alleged to have been concealed by Sgam po pa, brought the sect closer to the Rnying ma pa.

### 2. The Kam tshang or Karma Bka' brgyud pa

What is today the leading sect of these traditions and schools, the Kam tshang or Karma Bka' brgyud pa, was founded by Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–93). The sect became the dominant church of Tibet during the late fifteenth, sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries. It suffered great hardships after the Dge lugs pa theocracy was established with the help of Mongol arms. The leading incarnations of the sect are the Rgyal dbang Karma pa, the Zhwa dmar, the Rgyal tshab, the Si tu, the Dpa' bo, and the Tre bo *sprul skus*.<sup>102</sup>

Two subsects have branched off from the Karma pa, but there have been far fewer divisions than one might have expected. A possible explanation for this may be the well-developed organization of monasteries coupled with the prestige of the great incarnations.<sup>103</sup>

The Zur mang Bka' brgyud pa was founded by Rma se Rtogs ldan Blo gros rin chen, a disciple of the Fifth Rgyal dbang Karma pa, De bzhin gshegs pa (1384–1415). This sect controlled the Zur mang complex of monasteries in Khams. Rma se Rtogs ldan's chief teaching was the *Bde mchog mkha' 'gro'i snyan rgyud nor bu skor gsum*.

The Gnas mdo Bka' brgyud pa began with Mkhas grub Karma chags med, a student of the Sixth Zhwa dmar Gar dbang chos kyi dbang phyug (1584–1630). Karma chags med served as a *gter bdag* for a number of Rnying ma pa *gter ston*; consequently, the Gnas mdo shows strong Rnying ma pa influences. This statement holds true for the Zur mang subsect as well. The Gnas mdo and Zur mang teachings enjoyed a great deal of popularity in Khams.

### 3. The 'Ba' rom Bka' brgyud pa<sup>104</sup>

The third of the *che bzhi* was founded by Dar ma dbang phyug. Among the great names of this sect, one should remember in particular 'Gro mgon Ti shri ras pa. This school was popular in the Nang chen principality of Khams. The 'Ba' rom pa sect and the Tshang gsar dpon family enjoyed a special relationship. During the late nineteenth century, the 'Ba' rom pa tradition was almost completely absorbed by the Rnying ma pa *gter ma* methods discovered by Mchog 'gyur gling pa.

Mention should be made of one other disciple of Sgam po pa who founded a minor sect that has since disappeared: Gsal stong Sho sgom.<sup>105</sup> Kong sprul notes that the descendants of Sho sgom were still to be found as the lamas of G.yel phug in his day. The characteristic precepts seem to have merged with those of the Rnying ma pa.

### 4. Phag mo gru pa and the Eight Small Bka' brgyud Branches

The fourth disciple of Sgam po pa who founded a separate school was Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po (1110–70). The major monastic see (*gdan sa*) quickly became hereditary in the Rlangs family. The main Phag gru Bka' brgyud pa became closely connected with the Gdan sa Thel and Rtses thang complexes. As secular affairs came to outweigh religious concerns, the Phag mo gru pa teachers evolved into patrons rather than practitioners. The teachings transmitted by Sgam po pa to Rdo rje rgyal po continued to be practiced in the sects founded by Phag mo gru pa's disciples. Later Tibetan scholastics enumerated eight lesser branch schools (*chung brgyad* or *zung bzhi ya brgyad*) that had split off from the main Phag gru tradition: 'Bri gung, Stag lung, Khro phu, 'Brug pa, Smar pa, Yel pa, G.ya' bzang, and Shug gseb.

#### A. The 'Bri gung ('Bri khung) Bka' brgyud pa

Founded by 'Bri gung Skyob pa 'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217), the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa remains one of the most interesting sects because of the content of its teaching as well as its contribution to the political chaos that plagued Tibet during Yüan and Ming times. Several sects branched off from the 'Bri gung pa, perhaps the most important of which was the Lha pa Bka' brgyud pa founded by Rgyal ba Lha nang pa (1164–1224). This sect became the chief rival of the 'Brug pa for dominance in Bhutan.

#### B. The Stag lung Bka' brgyud pa

The Stag lung Bka' brgyud pa can be traced back to Stag lung thang pa Bkra shis dpal (1142–1210). Due to intrigue fomented by the Sa skya pa lamas and

chieftains, one of the scions of the Ga zi lineage, Sangs rgyas dbon (1251–96), was forced to flee Stag lung. In 1276 he founded Ri bo che. The Ri bo che branch of the Stag lung Bka' brgyud pa became almost a separate sect. Like the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa, both of the Stag lung traditions have been strongly influenced by Rnying ma pa teachings since the fifteenth century.

### C. The Khro phu Bka' brgyud pa

The Khro phu Bka' brgyud pa traces its origin to Rgyal tsha<sup>106</sup> (1118–95), a student of Phag mo gru pa and Kun ldan ras pa (1148–1217). The nephew of these two masters was the famed Khro phu Lo tsā ba Byams pa dpal who hosted Kha che Paṅ chen's visit to Tibet. The sect had ceased to have an independent identity well before the seventeenth century. Bu ston hailed from this lineage.

### D. The Gling ras Bka' brgyud pa and the 'Brug pa sects

The numerous 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa transmissions passed through Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje (1128–88) to Gtsang pa Rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211). The 'Brug pa sects take their name from the monastery of Gnam 'Brug founded by Gtsang pa Rgya ras. This guru also founded both Klong rdol in Skyid shod and Rwa lung, the monastic complex that was to become the major seat of the Rgya prince-abbots, the hierarchs of the 'Brug pa sects.

The most important teachings peculiar to the 'Brug pa center around the *Ro snyoms skor drug*, a *gter ma* teaching concealed by Ras chung and rediscovered by Gtsang pa Rgya ras. Another of Gtsang pa Rgya ras's productive systems of precepts was the *Rten 'brel*, an esoteric presentation of *pratitya-samutpāda*.

The chief monasteries of Gtsang pa Rgya ras passed to his nephew, Sangs rgyas Dbon ras Dar ma seng ge (1177–1237/38). The Rgya clan continued to preside at Rwa lung until 1616, when Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594–1651), a recognized incarnation of Padma dkar po (1527–92) and the scion of Rgya, was forced to flee to Bhutan due to the enmity of the house of Gtsang. During this period, Rwa lung was the center of the Bar 'brug school over which the hierarchs of the house of Rgya ruled. It was a student of Sangs rgyas Dbon ras, Pha jo 'Brug sgom zhig po, who first introduced the teachings of Gtsang pa Rgya ras into Bhutan.

Following the flight of Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, Rwa lung and its affiliates were seized by the Gtsang authorities and later turned over to Dpag bsam dbang po, a rival of Ngag dbang rnam rgyal for recognition as the rebirth of Gtsang pa Rgya ras and Padma dkar po. The center of the Byang 'brug now

shifted to Padma dkar po's monastery of Byar po Gsang sngags chos gling. Rwa lung fell into decay. The unresolved dispute over the recognition of the rebirth of Padma dkar po is the primary cause for the split of the Bar 'brug into the Northern (Byang 'brug) and Southern (Lho 'brug) branches.

Minor traditions originated from four disciples of Gtsang pa Rgya ras: Spa ri ba Mkhyen pa'i bdag po, Rkyang mo kha pa, Rgya yags pa, and 'Bras mo pa. The only notable one of these was the Rgya yags Bka' brgyud pa.

The two major offshoots of the 'Brug pa tradition were the Stod 'Brug founded by Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258) and the Smad 'Brug established by Lo ras pa Dbang phyug brtson 'grus (1187–1250). The Smad 'Brug need not concern us too much. The Stod 'Brug, however, gave rise to a host of important schools: the Ne rings Bka' brgyud pa, the Mdo bo che ba, and the Yang dgon Bka' brgyud pa, among others.

The Yang dgon school ultimately produced the 'Ba' ra Bka' brgyud pa, a sect that maintained an identity up to 1959. The *gser 'phreng* discussed here belongs to a branch lineage of the 'Ba' ra Bka' brgyud pa sect.

#### E. The Smar pa (Dmar pa) Bka' brgyud pa

Smar pa Grub thob Shes rab seng ge founded Sho dgon in Khams, the mother monastery of the Smar pa Bka' brgyud pa. The sect achieved a degree of influence in eastern Tibet. Among the more famous names associated with the Smar pa tradition, we find Rgyal ba Yang dgon Ye shes rgyal mtshan, Rnal Rin chen gling pa, Smar mkhan chen 'Od zer bla ma of Spang, and 'Gro mgon Shing mgo ras pa. Affiliated monasteries included Ri rgya dgon (founded by Sgi li Chos 'od) and Rgyal thang. Although the sect has since ceased to exist as an identifiable entity, until recently certain of its teachings continued to be practiced at the Rnying ma pa monastery of Dpal yul.<sup>107</sup>

#### F. The Yel pa (Ye phug pa) Bka' brgyud pa

Grub thob Ye shes brtsegs pa, the disciple of Phag mo gru pa from whom the Yel pa Bka' brgyud pa originated, founded the monasteries of Lho Yel phug and Byang Rta rna. After a brief period of influence in the specific localities where its monasteries were located, the sect declined. During the eighteenth century, Si tu Paṅ chen's efforts at restoring the ancient monastery of Rta rna stimulated this all but extinguished tradition. The special teachings of the Yel pa Bka' brgyud pa have now merged with the Kaṁ tshang tradition.

#### G. The G.ya' bzang (G.yam' bzang) Bka' brgyud pa

Zwa ra ba Skal ldan ye shes seng ge (d. 1207) founded the monastic establishment



of Zwa ra in Central Tibet. His chief disciple, G.ya' bzang chos rje (1169–1233), founded the monastery of G.ya' bzang in 1204 and thus began the G.ya' bzang Bka' brgyud pa, a school that enjoyed a period of greatness as the sect predominated in the myriarchy (*khri skor*) of the same name. The ill fortunes that plagued its *khri skor* inevitably plunged the G.ya' bzang sect into a process of gradual decline. Nevertheless, the monastery itself remained a major religious center until at least the sixteenth century.

#### H. The Shug gseb Bka' brgyud pa

Founded by Gyer sgom chen po, the Shug gseb Bka' brgyud pa had for its chief religious establishment the monastery of Shug gseb in Snyi phu. Another of Phag mo gru pa's pupils, Par bu pa Blo gros seng ge, was a significant enough influence on Gyer sgom that the distinctive feature of the Shug gseb school was its exegesis of the *dohā* texts that incorporated the interpretations and insights of a Mahāmudrā transmission passed through Vajrapāṇi, Mnga' ris Jo stan, and Gru shul ba. This tradition later merged with the Karma pa.<sup>108</sup>

Finally, we should mention a tradition partially responsible for the charges that Tibetan tantric teachings are heavily influenced by Kashmiri Śaivism: O rgyan pa Seng ge dpal (1229/30–1309) and the *U rgyan Bsnyen sgrub*. Although O rgyan pa was a disciple of Rgod tshang pa, the essential practices of O rgyan pa were received from a *dākiṇī* in Oḍḍiyāna. Consequently, scholars like Kong sprul have distinguished this tradition from both the Bka' brgyud pa practices and the Kālacakra system. The Karma pa preserve many of the precepts transmitted by O rgyan pa to the Third Karma pa, Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339), but essentially the approaches of the *Phyag rgya chen po* and *Nā ro chos drug* are quite distinct from those of the *U rgyan Bsnyen sgrub*.<sup>109</sup>

### IV. The Bka' brgyud gser 'phreng of the 'Ba' ra Bka' brgyud pa

#### 1. The 'Ba' ra ba Transmission

The *Bka' brgyud gser 'phreng* reproduced in volume 3 of the *Smanrtsis Shesrig Spendzod* was in all probability compiled and calligraphed during the last half of the fifteenth century. This illustrated manuscript belongs to the Kushok of Takna, who has graciously granted permission for its reproduction. Much of the compilation is the work of Mon rtse pa Kun dga' dpal ldan (1408–75?), a guru whose autobiographical reminiscences and mystical experiences fill the

last forty folia of the manuscript. The colophon<sup>110</sup> indicates that the credit for the manuscript redaction should go to one Kun dga' 'brug dpal of the Klong rdol Hermitage in Skyid shod (Central Tibet),<sup>111</sup> who was probably an immediate disciple of Mon rtse pa. If this supposition holds, the manuscript cannot have been written much later than 1500. The artistic flavor of the miniatures and the curious manuscript hand would seem to bear out this dating.

Mon rtse pa belongs to one of the 'Ba' ra transmission lineages of the Yang dgon group of the Stod 'Brug subsect of the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa. Although we know little of the later history of this transmission, we find the famed historian, Padma dkar po (1527–92) writing in 1575:

His [i.e., Yang dgon pa's] disciple, Spyān snga Rin ldan, was born at Ding ri. He heard that an incarnation body was dwelling at Lha gdong, and faith and reverence were born in him. He came as an attendant when he was just eleven years of age. Because he remained an attendant (*spyān snga*) thenceforth until [Yang dgon pa's] death, he was known as Spyān snga.

His disciple was Zur phug pa Rin chen dpal bzang. His [i.e., Rin chen dpal bzang's] student was the Dharmasvāmin 'Ba' ra ba, who was born at Chab lung pa in Shangs as the son of Dpon 'bum. From his youth he served as the cook for Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan. He also attended well to [what Bla ma Dam pa had to teach of] the Dharma. Therefore, a strong revulsion toward the world was manifested, and he fled to seek the Dharma. From Zur phug pa he heard the Dkar brgyud precepts. Through meditation, he achieved an exceptional yogic insight. He founded [this hermitage of] Don grub sdings at 'Ba' ra brag. The teaching lineage that came from him filled the whole of Tibet.

From a disciple's disciple, one called Mon rtse ba, it branched out and spread through the nomadic regions (*'brog*) as well as in Dbus and Kong po, etc. From the 'Madman of Dbus' (Dbus smyon) Kun dga' bzang po [b. 1458] also emerged numerous branches. His seat [i.e., Don grub sdings] was taken over by his nephews and their descendants. Among these there were immeasurable [numbers of] accomplished beings. The [various] strands of the Stod 'Brug came together in the 'Ba' ra ba.<sup>112</sup>

In Mon rtse pa's *gser 'phreng* we find the following lineage:

1. Tilopa
2. Nāropa
3. Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012–1097)
4. Mi la ras pa (1040–1123)
5. Ras chung Rdo rje grags (1083–1161)
6. Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen (1079–1159)
7. Dwags po Sgom tshul (1116–69)
8. Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po (1110–70)
9. Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje (1128–88)
10. Gtsang pa Rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211)
11. Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258)
12. Yang dgon pa Mgon po rdo rje (1213–58)
13. Spyan snga Rin chen ldan (b. 1202?)
14. Zur phug pa Rin chen dpal bzang
15. 'Ba' ra ba Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang (1310–91)
16. Klong chen ras pa Rin chen tshul khrims
17. Glo mkhar ba Kun dga' don grub
18. Mon rtse pa Kun dga' dpal ldan (1408–75)

As more *rnam thar* and similar sources become the focus of scholarly investigation, it is likely that we shall be able to piece together an account of how this tradition developed, and how it either merged with other schools or completely disappeared. The last four biographies in this collection have a certain degree of historical importance; it may be of some interest to note a few of these points in passing.

## 2. 'Ba' ra ba Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang (1310–91?)<sup>113</sup>

The biography of 'Ba' ra ba affords an excellent example of how hagiography (*rnam thar*) functions as a commentary on a reverential petition (*gsol 'debs*). It has already been suggested that the *gser 'phreng* as a genre originated as an attempt to explain in comprehensible prose the import of the various liturgical petitions to the gurus in a transmission lineage of a specific esoteric precept. An illustrative example is the description of 'Ba' ra ba's literary activities:

*I bow at the feet of the precious Dharmasvāmin,  
who, in order to deliver the sundry candidates from [the wheel of]  
existence,  
has explained the intention of sūtra, tantra, śāstra, and precept,  
elucidating in great detail the various vehicles.<sup>114</sup>*

This verse is elucidated (with verse words underlined>):

I bow down at the feet of the precious Dharmasvāmin, this defender of refuge for beings, endowed with a great compassion, who, in order to deliver candidates of sundry faculties from the [the wheel of] existence, this ocean of suffering, has elucidated in great detail the various vehicles, including treatises such as the *Thar pa'i gru bo che*, instructions such as the Mahāmudrā and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, songs of intentional meaning such as the *Bsam mno bcu gsum* and the *Bdag med gnas lugs ma*, and songs of definitive meaning such as the *Sems mtha' 'bral ma* and the *Gtad med bzhi*. With eyes that understand selflessness he has given his insight fully; he has explained clearly the intention of sūtra and tantra without omission.

'Ba' ra ba's teachers included, beside Zur phug pa, many of the greatest names of the time: the Third Karma pa, Rang byung rdo rje, Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364), Rgyal sras Thogs med (1295–1369), and Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nam rgyal mtshan. In this text one can see how far the concept of the recognized rebirth (*yang srid*) had progressed by the middle of the fourteenth century. 'Ba' ra ba was regarded as the re-embodiment of Yang dgon pa (1213–58). Rgyal sras Thogs med of Dngul chu in 'Jad was hailed as the emanation of Bodhisattva Zla ba rgyal mtshan, while the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa guru, Mkhas grub Tshul khri ms mgon po, had been recognized as the emanation of Khyung po Rnal 'byor.<sup>115</sup>

### 3. Klong chen ras pa Rin chen tshul khri ms

'Ba' ra ba's immediate disciple, Klong chen ras pa, was born at Dol Lha sna in southeastern Tibet. He studied with both 'Ba' ra ba and Ri pa Gzhon nu rgyal mtshan (1311–90), the other of Zur phug pa's two chief disciples. Klong chen ras pa spent time at both Sna phu and at Lhasa, where he met 'Ba' ra ba. He meditated for a long time at Dmar rtse, the monastery with which his name is now most commonly associated.

He traveled extensively throughout the borderlands into which Tibetan peoples had begun to settle: Mang yul and the Nepal Valley, Rtsib ri, Glo bo, Gung thang, Spu hrangs, Tsā ri, and Spa gro<sup>116</sup> in Bhutan. The account of the epidemic in which Klong chen ras pa almost perished gives a vivid picture of the perils that highlanders faced when they descended into the lowlands in quest of religious teachings. That the author draws a connection between the fever epidemic and "bad" water is rather interesting.<sup>117</sup> Klong chen ras pa

received new teachings connected with the *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra* from a Nepalese master, Mahābodhi.

The manuscript notes that Klong chen ras pa attended on the thirteen-year-old Karma pa Rol pa rgyal mtshan on the occasion of the latter's travels in Dbus.<sup>118</sup> This must certainly be the Fifth Rgyal dbang Karma pa, De bzhin gshegs pa (1384–1415), but the statement that he was born in Kong po is puzzling. Most sources give his birthplace as Nyang 'Dam.

#### 4. 'Khrul zhig Glo 'khar ba Kun dga' don grub<sup>119</sup>

Kun dga' don grub, the disciple of Klong chen ras pa, was born in south-eastern Tibet. He belonged to the Bdog clan. His father, Bla ma Sher gzhon, came from a family of village tantric priests, the Bdog lun pa of Sbus ri. His mother was a nun. Kun dga' don grub received his early education at Ra ma dgon in Gzhung. Although he did meet 'Ba' ra ba at least on one occasion, he did not have the good fortune to receive the 'Brug pa precepts *in toto* from him. His studies were rather eclectic; he requested Jo nang pa and Sa skya pa teachings as well as those of many different Bka' brgyud pa traditions.

#### 5. Mon rtse pa Kun dga' dpal ldan (1408–75?)

With the autobiographical and mystical writings of Mon rtse pa we come to the most interesting and significant portion of this compilation. Mon rtse pa's style is graceful and his verse demonstrates a mastery of the idiom of folk poetry. He often succeeds in making his reader feel what fifteenth century Tibet must have been like. His song lamenting the civil war of 1434<sup>120</sup> is an exquisite example of his poetic style:

*In the Tiger year (1434) when I was twenty-seven,  
the Phag mo gru pa troubled times erupted.  
The levies of the armies of Dbus and Gtsang  
in a large sense divided Dol and Gzhung in two.  
The route of march for both the Great Army  
and the Gtsang Army came through Ba ri sgang.*

*All the houses and homesteads were put to the torch;  
the farming settlements were turned into cattle enclosures.  
All the subservient were slaughtered on the knife;  
ordinary folk were turned into beggars.*

*The powerful slew and were slain by the sword;  
the weak perished upon the knife of hunger.  
Villager was thrashing villager. At such a time,  
ties of father and son and brother and brother were of no consequence.*

*Back and forth raged bitter feuds and defiling vendettas.  
No wergeld was extracted for the slaughter of men;  
no pursuit was organized to follow the looted property.  
Time passed in looting, banditry, and murder.*

*Who cared whoever wandered and strayed?  
The pasturage dried up; the fields became drying weeds.  
Whatever small fortune there had been in the sun in the center [Dbus]  
at that time was bleeding out.*

*When I think of the suffering experienced  
by sentient creatures at that time,  
even now the memory of it almost makes me weep.<sup>121</sup>*

Mon rtse pa belonged to the southeastern borderland. He was born at Khang dmar gling in Ba ri sgang between Dol and Gzhung. In his autobiographical account he tells us a good deal about his beloved native land, the character of his father and mother, and the background of his lineage. He is able to draw us into his world, to make us feel his spiritual experiences.

A certain amount of time is required to get accustomed to the handwriting and orthography of this manuscript. Unfamiliar contractions (*bsdu yig*) abound. Unusual spellings turn up frequently. *Gha* in place of 'ga', "some," is a regular feature of the latter part of the manuscript. The little effort that is required is amply rewarded not only in the new insights into life in Tibet over five hundred years ago, but also in the understanding gained about the evolution and development of the *rnam thar* as a literary form and as a summary of profound spiritual precepts.



## CHAPTER 4

# The Shangs pa Bka' brgyud Tradition

### *I. Introduction*

IT IS A PLEASURE to present the fifteenth volume of the *Smanrtsis Shes-rig Spendzod* series, a collection of hagiographies of gurus belonging to the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa tradition. The print reproduced belongs to the Venerable Kalu Rinpoche of Sonada (Darjeeling, West Bengal). The blocks for printing this edition were carved through the efforts of Kalu Rinpoche at the Tsa 'dra retreat of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul at Dpal spungs.<sup>122</sup> It is marvelously fitting that the new edition of this *gser 'phreng*, which includes some of the most profound esoteric instructions (*man ngag*) of the tradition, should now appear through the benevolent efforts of Kalu Rinpoche.

Although the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa has now almost vanished as an independent school, it enjoyed considerable importance in times past, and its teachings spread throughout the majority of the great Tibetan sects of today. In his tireless quest for rare instructions, the incomparable 'Jam mgon Kong sprul accorded the Shangs pa teachings a place of importance in the *Treasury of Instructions (Gdams ngag mdzod)*.

Just as the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa was named for the locality where Sgam po pa established the monastery that became the acknowledged center to which all of his spiritual descendants continued to look for spiritual inspiration, so the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa takes its name from the valley where Khyung po Rnal 'byor founded the monastery of Zhong zhong.<sup>123</sup> This extraordinary eleventh-century Tibetan master had heard the Rdzogs chen teachings of both the Bon and Rnying ma pa traditions as well as the Mahāmudrā precepts of Nāropa before he set out for Nepal and India to find the accomplished tantric adepts who were destined to be his gurus. The teachings and practices of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa cluster around the *Ni gu chos drug* and the *Phyag chen Ga'u ma*. The *dākiṇī* Nigumā, sister of Nāropa, had



received direct inspiration from Vajradhara himself. As we can see from the description of that great nineteenth-century savant 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyaen brtse'i dbang po (1820–92), the *Ni gu chos drug* are completely parallel to the *Nā ro chos drug*; only the phraseology and imagery vary.<sup>124</sup>

## II. *The Shangs pa Bka' brgyud School and Its Subsects*

Khyung po Rnal 'byor is reputed to have founded over one hundred monasteries besides Zhong zhong. Except for Jog po 'Chad dkar in 'Phan yul, little is known of these other monasteries. The six main disciples of Khyung po Rnal 'byor were: Rme'u ston, G.yor po Rgya mo che, Rngul ston Rin dbang,<sup>125</sup> La stod pa Dkon mchog mkhar, Zhang sgom Chos seng, and Rmog lcog pa Rin chen brtson 'grus.

The last of these disciples received the complete esoteric precepts that Vajradhara had granted to Niguma. Rmog lcog pa passed these teachings on to Dbon ston Skyer sgang pa, who in turn transmitted them to Gnyan ston Ri gong pa. Gnyan ston's chief disciple was Sangs rgyas ston pa, the last of the "Seven Jewels of the Shangs pa" (*Shangs pa'i rin chen rnam bdun*). The entire list of seven is as follows: (1) Vajradhara, (2) Niguma, (3) Khyung po Rnal 'byor, (4) Rmog lcog pa Rin chen brtson 'grus, (5) Dbon ston Skyer sgang pa Chos kyi seng ge, (6) Gnyan ston Ri gong pa Chos kyi shes rab, and (7) Sangs rgyas ston pa Brtson 'grus seng ge.

The earliest subsect of the Shangs pa would appear to have been the Gnas rnying Bka' brgyud pa founded by La stod pa Dkon mchog mkhar. There exists a *Gnas rnying chos 'byung* that gives a detailed account of this subsect.

Rmog lcog pa founded the monastery Rmog lcog, from which he took his name. It was here that a *sprul sku* lineage continued to propagate Shangs pa teachings until about 1940. Skyer sgang pa had close connections with his ancestral monastery of 'Bal, which followed the Zhi byed tradition. There was a considerable blending of Shangs pa and Zhi byed teachings as a result of such connections. Gnyan ston's hermitage was Ri gong, which he passed on to Sangs rgyas ston pa.

Sangs rgyas ston pa,<sup>126</sup> the last of the "Seven Jewels," had two disciples: Mkhas grub Shangs ston (1234–1309) and Mkhas btsun Gzhon nu grub (d. 1319). The first was the founder of 'Jag Chung dpal and the 'Jag pa Bka' brgyud pa; the second established Nyang smad Bsam sdings and the Nyang smad bsam sdings transmission of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa.

'Jag became famous as the seat of Rgyal mtshan 'bum (1261–1334) and his

nephew, 'Jag chen Byams pa dpal (1310–91). 'Jag chen was one of the gurus of Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), through whom the Shangs pa teachings entered the Dge lugs pa school. The Shangs pa traditions continued at Yol phu, and its affiliates stemmed from Gser gling pa Bkra shis dpal (1292–1365), a disciple of Mkhas btsun Gzhon nu grub.

The master *siddha*, Thang stong rgyal po Brtson 'grus bzang po (1361–1464),<sup>127</sup> received the Shangs pa teachings in an unbroken transmission that passed through Mus chen Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang. This oral transmission (*snyan brgyud*) is called the Ri gong stod brgyud. In addition, supplementary precepts were conferred in three separate visions by the *dākiṇī* Niguma.<sup>128</sup> This complex of teachings together with the Ri gong stod brgyud is called the Thang lugs of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa.

The great Jo nang pa master, Rje btsun Tāranātha, was heir to the oral transmission that passed through Khyung po Tshul khriṃs mgon po, a disciple of Mkhas grub Shangs ston, the founder of 'Jag, to Kun dga' grol mchog. Kun dga' grol mchog received both 'Jag pa and Bsam sdings pa precepts as well as the results of Thang stong rgyal po's visions. To these he added precepts he had received directly from the *dākiṇī* Niguma. This system, elaborated by Tāranātha, is known as the Jo nang pa lugs of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa.

Another Shangs pa subsect was headed by the lineage of Rta nag Rdo rje gdan. The last of this line was Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1432–1481), the father of the Second Dalai Lama, Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475–1542). The teachings of this line fused with those of the Dge lugs pa. The *Shangs pa gser 'phreng* includes not only biographies of a single lineage of Shangs pa masters, but includes sketches of the lives of gurus from four separate transmissions. At least two of these lineages converged with 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–99). The last text in this collection is a brief historical account of Mgon po Phyag drug pa, the six-armed form of Mahākāla,<sup>129</sup> an important protective deity shared with the Dge lugs pa. This text was written by Tāranātha but does not appear in the list of contents (*dkar chag*) to his collected works.<sup>130</sup>

### III. Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa Transmissions

To make the arrangement of biographies in this *gser 'phreng* more comprehensible, it might be helpful to list the transmission lineages of the Jo nang lugs, Thang lugs, 'Jag pa, and Nyang smad Bsam sdings pa, together with the pages on which the treatment of a particular guru might be found in the text.

I. Jo nang pa Transmission<sup>131</sup>

1. Chos sku Rdo rje 'chang (pp. 1–36)
2. Ye shes mkha' 'gro Niguma (pp. 37–58)
3. Mkhas grub Khyung po Rnal 'byor (pp. 59–143)
4. Rmog lcog pa Rin chen brtson 'grus (pp. 145–221)
5. Dbon ston Skyer sgang pa Chos kyi seng ge (pp. 223–95)
6. Gnyan ston Ri gong pa Chos kyi shes rab (pp. 297–333)
7. Sangs rgyas ston pa Brtson 'grus seng ge (pp. 335–420)
8. Mkhas grub Gtsang ma Shangs ston (1234–1309) (pp. 421–89)
9. Khyung po Tshul khriims mgon po (pp. 605–15)
10. Ri khrod ras chen Sangs rgyas seng ge (pp. 617–30)
11. Shangs dkar ba Rin chen rgyal mtshan (1353–1434) (pp. 631–39)
12. Mnyam med Sangs rgyas dpal bzang (1398–1465) (pp. 641–55)
13. Grub chen Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan
14. Rgya sgom Legs pa rgyal mtshan
15. Grol mchog Sems kyi mdud grol or Kun dga' grol mchog (1507–66) (pp. 671–73)
16. Chos sku Lha dbang grags pa
17. Rje btsun Tāranātha (b. 1575) (pp. 675–715)
18. Rje btsun Ye shes rgya mtsho
19. Byams pa Yon tan mgon po
20. 'Ja' lus Mgon po dpal 'byor
21. Grub mchog Mgon po grags pa
22. Khyab bdag Mgon po rnam rgyal
23. Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshes dbang nor bu (1698–1755)
24. 'Brug chen VII Bka' brgyud phrin las shing rta (1718–66)
25. Rmog lcog pa Kun dga' dge legs dpal 'bar
26. Kun dga' lhun grub rgya mtsho
27. Grub mchog Bka' brgyud bstan 'dzin
28. Mchog gzigs Karma lhag mthong
29. Karma Gzhan phan 'od zer
30. Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–99)

II. Thang lugs Transmission<sup>132</sup>

7. Sangs rgyas ston pa of Yol phu Brag rtsa dgon (pp. 335–420)
8. Gtsang ma Shangs ston (1234–1309) of 'Jag Chung dpal dgon (pp. 658–61 and 421–89)
- 9a. Mus chen Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang of Mus Mtha' gong (pp. 661–63)

- 10a. Rdo rje gzhon nu of Brag rtsa dgon (pp. 663–64)
- 11a. Mus chen Nam mkha'i rnal 'byor of Mus Sdi lung (pp. 664–67)
- 12a. Byang sems Sbyin pa bzang po of Byang Rdo rje gdan
- 13a. Grub chen Thang stong rgyal po
- 14a. Mang mkhar Dgon gsar brgyud 'dzin Blo gros rgyal mtshan
- 15a. Mkhas grub Dpal ldan dar po of Pu rong
- 16a. Rje btsun Bsod nams rtse mo of Zhe dgon
- 17a. Bskal bzang 'Gyur med bde chen of Grub ri E wam dga' 'khyil (pp. 669–70)
- 18a. Bla brang rdzong pa Mkhan chen Ngag dbang chos grags
- 19a. 'Jam dbyangs bsod nams rgyal mtshan of Dge 'phel chos kyi pho brang
- 20a. Ngag dbang bstan pa dar rgyas of Gtsang sngags bde chen
- 21a. Mang thos Bsod nams chos 'phel of Sgro mo lung dben pa
- 22a. Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas of Bkra shis chos sde
- 23a. 'Jam dbyangs bsod nams dpal bzang of Mdog zhe dgon
- 24a. Bsam rdzong chos sde pho brang pa 'Phags mchog Chos nyid ye shes
- 25a. Ye shes rgyal mchog of Mus
- 26a. Sa skya chos grwa chen po Yongs 'dzin Ma ti
- 27a. 'Jam mgon Rdo rje rin chen of Rdo rje brag rdzong
- 28a. 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po
- 29a. Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas

### III. 'Jag pa Transmission<sup>133</sup>

7. Sangs rgyas ston pa (pp. 335–420)
8. Shangs ston (1234–1309) (pp. 421–89 and 658–61)
- 9b. 'Jag pa Rgyal mtshan 'bum (1261–1334) (pp. 563–604)
- 10b. 'Jag chen Byams pa dpal (1310–91)
- 11b. Grub thob Chos 'byung rin chen (1351–1408)

### IV. Nyang smad bsam sdings Transmission<sup>134</sup>

7. Sangs rgyas ston pa (pp. 335–420)
- 8c. Mkhas btsun Gzhon nu grub (d. 1319) (pp. 491–561)
- 9c. Gser gling pa Bkra shis dpal (1292–1365) of Yol phu Gser gling
- 10c. Brag po che ba Rdo rje dpal
- 11c. Chos sgo ba Chos dpal shes rab



## CHAPTER 5

# The Life of Gtsang smyon Heruka

### *I. Gtsang smyon and His Tradition*

MANY RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS besides Hinduism and Buddhism have holy madmen. Many of the great Sufi devotees would be immediately identified by Tibetans as *smyon pa*, madmen. A citizen of medieval Lhasa would easily have recognized the mad monk begging in the streets of old St. Petersburg or the desert anchorite of the fifth century. The lines between the tantric yogi of India and the Tibetan *smyon pa* are somewhat blurred. Perhaps the difference lies in the apparently greater discipline exercised by the yogi. The *smyon pa* may be the yogi *par excellence*, the jewel among gurus; or he may be a demented soul wallowing in ordure, the filthiest of beggars. Within this religious context Tibetans are prepared to suspend judgment upon those who have completely forsaken the conventions of society. Snellgrove and Richardson describe this attitude clearly:

Those of weak intent might invoke the mercies of the “Lord of the World” in his gentler aspects, but those of stronger disposition would resolutely take the bull by the horns. Abandoning the conventions and make believe of ordinary human life, they fearlessly accept existence in its most fearful and repulsive forms, and so reach the stage where there is nothing to reject or accept. It is interesting to observe that Indian and Tibetan society have never abandoned those who reject their social norms. A place of honor and respect is accorded to the mendicant and the yogin, once it is judged that his intentions are sincere, and if he has teachings to impart, he will soon have disciples.<sup>135</sup>

The *smyon pa* is a phenomenon that suddenly flowered during the fifteenth

century during an age of fervent religious reform and doctrinal systematization. The *smyon pa* is the antithesis of the scholastic monk; yet to view the phenomenon simply as a reaction against monastic reforms and Dge lugs pa rationalism misses much of the point. The *smyon pa*, too, represented a force for reform. Just as the movement of Tsong kha pa attempted to reorient the Bka' gdams pa tradition toward the fundamental contribution of Atiśa—the Graduated Path (Lam rim), with its emphasis on the exoteric as an indispensable foundation for the esoteric—so the *smyon pa* represents an attempt to re-dedicate the Bka' brgyud pa sects to old truths and insights that were being forgotten.

The emphasis on oral transmission, individual solitary contemplation, and intensely personal bonds between guru and disciple mitigated against the formation of a unified Bka' brgyud pa sect. The very nature of the Bka' brgyud pa teachings promoted constant fission. Gradually, however, noted gurus attracted large numbers of followers and disciples to their isolated hermitages, and thus Bka' brgyud pa monasteries came to exist. Often, a favorite nephew of these charismatic teachers would inherit his uncle's meditation hut at the center of the clustered huts of followers. If the nephew was intelligent, he would have an excellent chance of being acknowledged as his uncle's chief disciple and successor. Gradually, the lineage as an institution would come to be regarded as blessed, and would acquire a share of the prestige and charisma that had been previously been commanded only by individual members of the lineage. In this way a hereditary religious nobility<sup>136</sup> emerged in the Bka' brgyud pa sects. While this pattern was not solely confined to the Bka' brgyud pa, it was in this tradition that the system of diverging hereditary lineages developed to its fullest.

The evidence is fairly conclusive that the *smyon pa* phenomenon was at least in part a reaction against the great prestige and wealth of the hereditary lineages. It was an attempt to re-invest the Bka' brgyud pa tradition with some of its former religious fervor, to re-ignite the incandescent spirituality of the early yogis. The chief symbol for this movement was Mi la ras pa: a mystic poet who had founded no monastery or school and had never been a monk, a saint who remained a legend.

Tibetan tradition has singled out three great representatives of the *smyon pa* tradition: Gtsang smyon Heruka (1452–1507), 'Brug smyon Kun dga' legs pa (1455–29),<sup>137</sup> and Dbus smyon Kun dga' bzang po (1458–1532). Biographies or autobiographies and collections of mystical poems (*mgur*) exist for all. The evidence suggests that there were a host of other *smyon pa* whose biographies or *mgur 'bum* have either not survived or have not yet come to light. Gtsang

smyon's biographers note that there were several *smyon pa* besides Kun dga' bzang po who styled themselves Dbus smyon. A Stag lung smyon pa is mentioned briefly as a disciple of Gtsang smyon. A member of the regency council of 1491 at the Phag mo gru capital of Sne'u gdong was Phag smyon pa of Skyid shod. There are a dozen or so others whose names still mean little to us.

Gtsang smyon is perhaps the most significant of the three well-known *smyon pa* as an example of the phenomenon as an agent of reform and innovation. His biography (*rnam thar*) and collected poems (*mgur 'bum*) of Mi la ras pa are among the great masterpieces of Tibetan and world literature. These were works that would continue to inspire the entire Tibetan cultural world down to the present day. His example fostered a whole school of Bka' brgyud pa biographical works.<sup>138</sup> These writings glorified the great Bka' brgyud pa ascetics and yogis who lived and practiced in wilderness retreats, and called for an emulation of this way of religious life.

Another of Gtsang smyon's contributions to the religious literature of Tibet was the twelve-volume *Snyan brgyud*<sup>139</sup> collection. Gtsang smyon and his guru, Sha ra rab 'byams pa, belonged to the Ras chung Bka' brgyud pa, a subsect of the Bka' brgyud pa that has now completely disappeared as a separate entity. The chief teaching of this tradition is the *Ras chung snyan rgyud* of the *Bde mchog mkha' 'gro snyan rgyud*, a teaching now widely practiced by the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa, especially by the Stod subsect. For this reason, Gtsang smyon is now considered to belong to the 'Brug pa, a branch of the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa. Gtsang smyon is responsible for arranging these teachings into a coherent collection.

This group of esoteric oral teachings connected with the *Cakrasamvara Tantra* represented lineages that had been transmitted through a series of obscure yogis and yoginis such as Ras chung and Ngan rdzong pa as well as Sgam po pa, instead of through aristocratic lineages of scholar abbots. During the fifteenth century, the institution of incarnate lamas that had first appeared two centuries earlier at Mtshur phu had begun to capture the Tibetan imagination. Gtsang smyon and his students glorified their gurus by proclaiming them incarnations of the Indian and Tibetan yogis who had practiced and passed on the Bka' brgyud pa teachings. Although Gtsang smyon was hailed variously as the incarnation of Tilopa, Mar pa, and Ras chung, he took this flattery with a degree of skepticism. To him emulating the lives of the great masters of the past was more important than the incarnation lineage to which a teacher belonged. When Chos rje G.yam spyil ba announced that he had dreamt that Gtsang smyon was the incarnation of Tilopa, Gtsang smyon replied: "That may indeed be your vision. I am [indeed] one who



upholds the tradition of Tilopa. I have no idea whether I am an incarnation or not.”<sup>140</sup>

The tradition of the *smyon pa* continued in Tibet until 1959 and probably persists in India today. The mention of G.yag chos smyon pa, the well-known madman of Bkra shis lhun po, will certainly evoke a smile from contemporary Tibetans who remember the madcap.

## II. Biographies of Gtsang smyon

The text reproduced here is a print from the sixteenth-century blocks that were probably preserved at Ras chung phug. The colophon states that the biography was written in 1547; the blocks were most likely carved during the same year. I was successful in tracing two other biographies<sup>141</sup> and a *mgur 'bum* of Gtsang smyon during my stay in India. This biography is the latest, having been compiled some forty years after Gtsang smyon's death. It is, however, the largest and most detailed of the three.

The author of this work is Rgod tshang ras pa Sna tshogs rang grol (1494–1570). He met Gtsang smyon in the last years of the latter's life and became his disciple. Rgod tshang ras pa mentions in the biography his first meeting with Gtsang smyon, an event that must have occurred in 1503–4. We know that he is the author of a biography of Ras chung and that he was connected with the hermitage of Ras chung phug. He seems to have followed the *Ras chung snyan rgyud* since we have a number of small works dealing with this system that are signed by him. I know little else about him.

The dimensions of the xylograph print measures 5.5–6.0 cm. x 43.5–44.5 cm. The total number of folia is 146.<sup>142</sup> The title page (p. 1) and the reverse of the last folio (p. 292)<sup>143</sup> are brown with age and are almost illegible in the reproduction. The title reads: *Gtsang smyon he ru ka phyogs thams cad las rnam par rgyal ba'i rnam thar rdo rje theg pa'i gsal byed nyi ma'i snying po bzhugs so.*<sup>144</sup>

## III. The Architecture of the Biography

Rgod tshang ras pa has divided this biography into fifteen chapters (*le'u*) and forty-three sections or topics (*skor*) of uneven length. Dated events are rare, although the narrative seems to follow a chronological order, and the passage of seasons and years is often mentioned. Establishing even the simplest chronological outline of Gtsang smyon's life has not been attempted; but I

have no doubt that such a compilation will be possible if we compare the three biographies and *mgur 'bum* with biographies of Gtsang smyon's contemporaries. We have only two fixed dates for Gtsang smyon besides the years of birth and death: 1488 when the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mi la ras pa were completed, and 1504 for the restoration of Swayambhunāth.<sup>145</sup> I hope that the following annotated architectural outline of the work will draw the attention of historians to this fascinating document and might stimulate further research. The biography begins with the usual introductory material and a list of the contents (pp. 2–12).

Chapter 1. Birth and early childhood (pp. 12–16).

1. Birth (pp. 12–14). Gtsang smyon was born on the day of the full moon of the Fifth Hor month of the Water Monkey year (1452) at Mkhar dga'<sup>146</sup> in Upper Myang<sup>147</sup> in Gtsang. His lineage (*gdung*) was Myang, a line that had produced such famous Tibetans as Myang Nyi ma 'od zer.<sup>148</sup> His father was a village lama, Sngags 'chang Sangs rgyas dpal ldan; his mother was the lady Sangs rgyas 'dren. He was the second of three brothers, all destined to become well-known religious personages of their time.<sup>149</sup> The fame of Gtsang smyon, then known as Chos rgyal lhun po, completely eclipsed that of his brothers. Rgod tshang ras pa regarded Gtsang smyon to be the incarnation of Mi la ras pa.<sup>150</sup>
2. Childhood (pp. 14–16).

Chapter 2. Ordination as *dge tshul* (pp. 16–20).

3. At the age of seven, Gtsang smyon received his ordination as *dge tshul* from Mkhan chen 'Jam dbyangs Kun dga' sangs rgyas, who bestowed upon Gtsang smyon the name Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan.

Chapter 3. Meeting with the tantric guru (pp. 20–22).

4. At the age of eighteen, Gtsang smyon had a vision of fifteen strange girls urging him to journey to Tsā ri, a famed place of pilgrimage for the Bka' brgyud pa, via Dwags po. Recognizing this as an important omen, he set out in the company of three nuns. At La bar Zur mkhar in Dwags po, he met the famous physician, A pho chos rje Mnyam nyid rdo rje,<sup>151</sup> who offered the young wanderer food and shelter for as long as he cared to stay. During his stay, he met his guru, Sha ra Rab 'byams pa of Lhun grub sman gling, who had been invited by A pho chos rje to perform some ceremonies. Sha ra Rab 'byams pa noticed the youth, and a boundless faith was born in Gtsang smyon; the bonds of guru and disciple were forged.

Chapter 4. Esoteric studies with his own guru (pp. 22–26).

5. Sha ra rab 'byams pa favors Gtsang smyon with the profoundest teachings of the Bka' brgyud pa and bestows upon him the name Chos kyi grags pa. Gtsang smyon goes forth to practice these teachings in the solitary retreats where the ancient Bka' brgyud pa yogis had meditated. His guru also instructs him first to receive further esoteric instruction from other teachers.

Chapter 5. Studies with other teachers (pp. 26–27).

6. He returned to Gtsang and enrolled in the Gur pa college (*grwa tshang*) of the Dpal 'khor lo bde chen chos sde.<sup>152</sup> Here, he studied the tantric teachings of the Hevajra and the 'Khon Vajrakāla, in which the Sa skya pa specialized, under G.yu lung pa Yon tan rgya mtsho, Slob dpon Kun dga' nyi ma, and Paṅ chen Don grub grags pa.

Chapter 6. The first manifestations of the holy madness (pp. 27–36).

7. Parting with monastic life (pp. 27–30). Gtsang smyon realized that the monastic life of scholarship would probably not lead him to higher realization. He was one of the monks who enjoyed the patronage of the princes of Rgyal rtse and their ministers. He began behaving strangely, chattering aimlessly, laughing madly. His break with the monastery and its stifling discipline was spectacular. On the day that the prince<sup>153</sup> and his court paid a visit to the monastery, Gtsang smyon behaved in the wildest and most insulting manner. His monastic career was at an end. He returned to Mkharkha and, while drinking beer, invited his brother, Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan, to accompany him on a journey to the holy wilderness of Tsā ri.
8. Patronage of the Bya<sup>154</sup> myriarch (pp. 30–36).

Chapter 7. Mystical experience (pp. 36–37).

9. Gtsang smyon received the secret name (*gsang mtshan*) of Khrag 'thung rgyal po from the tutelary deities and their attendants.<sup>155</sup>

Chapter 8. Wandering as a madman in Lho kha and Dbus (pp. 37–49).

10. This is the first chapter of great historical interest. After spending some three years<sup>156</sup> at Tsā ri, Gtsang smyon travels through Gnyal and Bya, where there is a civil war raging, to meet his patron, Bya nang so Bkra shis dar rgyas. He goes to Mkharkhu in Lho brag, where he meets 'Brug chen Rgyal dbang Kun dga' dpal 'byor (1428–76), from whom he requests some teachings. He meets with many of the great nobles of Tibet: the wife of the lord

of Yar 'brog, Bsam sde rgyal po Grags pa mtha' yas,<sup>157</sup> Sne'u rdzong pa Dpal 'byor rgyal po,<sup>158</sup> and Nam mkha' stobs rgyal. At Dpal chen Ri bo che in La stod Byang, he meets the famed Thang stong rgyal po (b. 1361). Exorcism of the zombie (*ro lang*s) at Chu 'bar. First visit to Swayambhu in Nepal.

Chapter 9. Return to Tibet (pp. 49–52).

11. Great earthquake while he meditates in Tibet. Writes the *Dgyes pa rdo rje'i mngon rtogs tshigs bcad ma zin bris*.

Chapter 10. Activities at the holy places where Mi la meditated (pp. 52–137).

12. Meditation at La phyi in the Bdud 'dul phug (p. 52). Patronage of the Sde pa Tsha 'da' ba.

13. Stay at Gnya' nang (pp. 52–57).

14. Second trip to La phyi (pp. 57–61). Patronage of the myriarch of Byang, Rtsa na. Rin chen dpal bzangs, later Thag chos mdzad, becomes his student.

15. To Ti se (pp. 61–67). Strife over the Byang myriarchy. The wicked prince Nam mkha' rdo rje.

16. First visit to Glo bo Smon thang (pp. 67–68). The principalities of Smon thang and Gu ge were at war. The ruler of Smon thang at this time was Bkra shis mgon.

17. Return from the Ti se area (pp. 68–72). Patronage of the Gung thang king. Meeting with Dbus smyon.

18. Contemplation in the Rkang tshugs phug (pp. 72–88). Meeting with Mon rtse Rtogs ldan Kun dga' legs bzang. Patronage of the King of Rdzong kha and his sons, Nor bu sde and Bsam 'grub sde. Quarrel between Gung thang and Lho.

19. Meditation in the Ron 'Od gsal phug (pp. 88–93).

20. Meditation at Skog dkar brag in Mang yul (pp. 93–99). List of Gtsang smyon's early disciples.

21. Visits to Mdo bo che and the capital of Gung thang (pp. 99–108). Spends three years in meditation in the famed caves of the area. Goes to visit Gung thang. Meeting with Kun dga' gzi brjid of Mdo bo che. Meets with Grag shos Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan, the ascetic of La phyi, who had been blessed with visions (*dag snang*).

22. To Mgo dha wa ri (Kodari) (pp. 108–15).

23. Rtsa ri revisited (pp. 115–30). Revelation of the *Snyan rgyud rdo rje'i tshig rkang*. Composes a number of texts connected with the *Bde mchog snyan rgyud*. The political situation in Dbus and Lho kha.

24. To La phyi (pp. 130–37). Begins the biography of Mi la ras pa.

- Chapter 11. The edition of the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mi la (pp. 137–53).
25. Meeting with his female partner (*gsang yum*) (pp. 137–42). The blocks for the *mgur 'bum* and *rnam thar* begun at La stod Lho Shel phug. More troubles between the Lho and Byang myriarchies.
  26. Many students arrive at La stod Lho Shel phug (pp. 142–51). The carving of the blocks progresses.
  27. Consecration of the blocks (pp. 151–3).

Chapter 12. *The Snyan rgyud yig cha* (pp. 153–208).

28. Second visit to Mustang (pp. 153–58). To Mustang with his students to collect alms. Falling out with princes of Gnya' nang over suspicions of poisoning. Visit to Gtsang and patronage of Don yod rdo rje of Rin spungs.
29. Three-year stay at La phyi Gangs ra (pp. 158–64.) During this period, Gtsang smyon begins to write the *Snyan rgyud yig cha*, a compilation of the *Ras chung snyan rgyud*, *Ngan rdzong snyan rgyud*, and *Dags po snyan rgyud*. Thangkas based on the biography of Mi la ras pa sent to the princes and monasteries of Tibet.
30. Stay at Chu 'bar (pp. 164–71). The lord of Gla 'khor Dpon ne Grags dpal orders the casting of 108 statues of Gtsang smyon for the monastic seat of Pha Dam pa. Jealousy of the abbot, a follower of the Bo dong pa tradition.
31. Summer at Shel Phug (p. 171).
32. To Mkhar dga' (pp. 171–72). Decision to go to the Kathmandu Valley.
33. Visit to Nepal (pp. 172–76). Fascinating ethnological data. Continues writing the *Snyan rgyud* collection. Reception by the king and nobles of Nepal.
34. Meditation at Ti se (pp. 176–94). Another visit to Mustang at the invitation of Bde legs rgya mtsho, the ruler. War between Mustang and Spu hrangs. Spu hrangs connections. The Smon thang army defeated and many of the soldiers killed. Uneasy peace.
35. Stay at Chu 'bar (pp. 194–208). Building of the golden *lha khang* at Mustang. Gtsang smyon invited for the consecration. Attempt at reconciliation. Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal, Prince of Gung thang, is studying at Bkra shis lhun po. Later becomes the student of Gtsang smyon. More works of the *Mkha' 'gro snyan rgyud* written.

Chapter 13. Restorations at Swayambhunāth (pp. 208–35).

36. Beginnings of the restorations (pp. 208–9). Patronage of Ratna Malla and his minister 'Dza' drag.
37. Gtsang smyon to Nepal (pp. 210–29). Troubles between the 'Bri gung pa, Kho brag pa, and Phag mo gru pa over the meditation spots of Mi la ras pa.

- Poem of praise to Gtsang smyon from the Karma pa Chos grags rgya mtsho. Data of great interest on Nepal during the early sixteenth century. *Dkar chag*<sup>159</sup> of the restorations completed in 1504 quoted verbatim (pp. 220–26).
38. The war between Rin spungs pa and Rgyal rtse (pp. 229–35). Gtsang smyon's role. Fear of Rin spungs pa invasion of Lho. Gtsang smyon's prayers avert the danger.

Chapter 14. Gtsang smyon's last years (pp. 235–68).

39. His last literary efforts (pp. 235–59). Writes the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mar pa. Completes the compilation of the *Snyan rgyud yig cha*. The manuscript in gold of the *Snyan rgyud yid bzhin nor bu* in thirteen volumes corrected by Gtsang smyon. Signs of impending death. Suspicion of poisoning. Meeting with Don yod rdo rje. Conflicts between Rdzong dkar ba of Mnga' ris and the Sde pa Gzhis dga' ba.
40. Gtsang smyon's students (pp. 259–68).

Chapter 15. Death and funeral rites (pp. 268–82).

41. Miraculous signs before his death at Ras chung phug (pp. 268–71).
42. Death (pp. 271–75).
43. Funeral rites (pp. 275–82).
- Colophon of the author (pp. 282–84).
- Benediction and printer's colophon (pp. 284–92).

#### IV. Style and Orthographic Peculiarities

While this is the largest and the most historically significant of the three biographies of Gtsang smyon, it is the most difficult linguistically. Rgod tshang ras pa, the author, is remarkable in his disdain for the rigid conventions of literary Tibetan style and orthography.

The orthographical substitutions found in the text are numerous enough to be the subject of a special study in itself. There is the common alternation of the pre-initial 'a chung and m,<sup>160</sup> e.g., 'dor bsdus for mdor bsdus, 'jal for mjal, mtshon in place of 'tshon. There is chaotic substitution of the other pre-initials g, d, and sometimes m, and r, l, and s: Sde rgyam for Bde rgyam, Dkar sdams pa instead of Bka' gdams pa, Ro snyoms bgang dril for Ro snyoms sgang dril, 'Bras dpungs for 'Bras spungs, Mnya' nang for Gnya' nang, etc. Indic loan-words have been atypically Tibetanized: mdo' ha instead of do ha, Skar ma pa for Karma pa, bha ri ma in place of the standard bram ze, pu rtsa for pūjā.

There are unexpected substitutions such as *sla brang* for *bla brang*, *Sman lha* for *Sman bla*, *btsun 'grus* for *brtson 'grus*. Finally, there is the odd form apparently unsanctioned by the classical linguistic manual, the *Sum cu pa*, e.g., *lhrul po* for *hrul po*.

The prose style is for the most part highly colloquial. At times, however, Rgod tshang ras pa attempts to wax poetic and uses language that approximates classical literary Tibetan. His description of Gtsang smyon's rescue of four Indian women enslaved by a party of Ma nang pa traders is an example of this type of language, in which the author has even attempted some of the traditional *kāvya* embellishments:

When he came to Bar sgo, he met a multitude of people from Snyi shang who were returning from a trading expedition to India. They had a mother and three daughters whom they were taking back [to Nepal] to sell. Father the mahāsiddha asked them where they were going. They replied: "We are on our way to sell these [women]."

Although Father the mahāsiddha had firmly implanted in his heart the principle that misery and liberation are one, he was moved by compassion. Out of the lotuses of his eyes moved an unstoppable rosary of tears, individual pearls, like the current of a mighty river. Drenched was the *maṇḍala* of his countenance.

He said: "Sell them to me. I shall give you whatever price you wish." He gave the traders the price they desired, unsparing even of gold itself. He provided the women with a good companion to escort them to their own country, with clothing and provisions, freeing them from all miseries and causing them to obtain a happy state. Thus did he establish them in happiness.<sup>161</sup>

The greater part of Rgod tshang ras pa's prose, however, is colloquial and unadorned. The report of an episode at Smon thang is a typical example:

At that time, the Lord [i.e., Gtsang smyon] and his disciples had gone to Klo bo Smon thang. The Smon thang people had attached the heads of many slain men of Gu ge to the beams of the city gates. The Lord took into his hands the brains, crawling with maggots and rotting, that had fallen to the ground and ate the flesh and brains. Thereupon, he said to the many people gathered about: "If you wish miraculous realization, I shall give it to you." Those who ate the spoonful of brains he offered became wealthy. The ruler,

Bkra shis mgon, treated him with great honor and respect. A monk called Grags mchog was sent to guide the master and disciples along the road. At that time, Klo bo and Gu ge were mutually hostile; and there was great fear for the safety of the road. At Mdo krag of Bye ma g.yung drung, many horsemen were approaching....<sup>162</sup>

Usages like *sbyin gyi* as a first person future and *yong zhing 'dug* to express progressive action are seldom used by authors with literary pretensions.

Poetic passages do occur, but never with the rigid syllable count of the classical *śloka*. Instead, the poetical aesthetic is based on the parallel structure and metric pattern found in folk and epic literature. Gtsang smyon's reply to certain arrogant and contentious Dge lugs pa logicians who sought to discredit him begins with this sort of verse but blossoms quickly into moving prose:

After [the lay patrons] had spread out a magnificent show of hospitality and veneration, some *dge bshes* of 'Bras spungs and Se ra wanted to engage him in logical dispute. These *dge bshes* said: "We have never heard that such a manner of appearance and behavior is the word of Buddha. It is not a custom that has appeared previously. Whose method is this manner of appearance and behavior of yours?"

The master of yoga replied:

The ant cannot see the mountain.

The frog in the well cannot find the end of the sea.

The hand of a child cannot cover the sky.

"There are many Dharmas and much knowledge of which you have not heard. If this appearance [of mine] is not traditional custom, would you say that the tantric deities and the eighty siddhas of India are not in accord with tradition? Haven't you ever seen the representations in paintings? My appearance and behavior is what is explained in general in the highest tantras of the esoteric teachings of Vajradhāra and in particular in the concise basic tantra of the Hevajra, the splendid *Brtag pa gnyis pa*."<sup>163</sup>

The lack of punctuation or linking particles between the three separate utterances in the direct discourse of the first paragraph is typical of the style found in this text.

Rgod tshang ras pa uses a number of rare words often unattested in the lexicons. An example is *gab le* in the paragraph cited above. From context, it



should mean something like “custom” or “tradition.” I have not yet been able to confirm this hypothesis from the dictionaries. It is also difficult to know whether a form is merely an incorrect spelling of a known word or is a word unknown in the dictionaries. One hopes that through the careful linguistic study of texts like this one, Tibetan philology will one day attain the degree of maturity that one takes for granted in fields like Sinology.

### *Appendix I*

#### *Editions of the Rnam thar and Mgur 'bum of Mi la ras pa*

##### Fifteenth Century

1. La stod Lho Shel phug, c. 1488–95. *Rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*.<sup>164</sup>

Print colophon (*par byang*) by Gtsang smyon himself. No example of this edition is available in Delhi for description.

##### Sixteenth Century

1. Brag dkar rta so,<sup>165</sup> c. 1550. *Rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*.

Blocks carved through the efforts of Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal (1473–1557). *Par byang* by Rin chen rnam rgyal. This is the edition upon which the Spo (De Jong's C) and the Peking are based. No example of this edition is available<sup>166</sup> in Delhi for description.

##### Eighteenth Century

1. Spungs thang Bde ba can (Punakha). *Rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*.

I have never seen a print from this edition. The blocks were destroyed in the second great fire of Spungs thang (1796). Also destroyed were an edition of the *gsung 'bum* of Padma dkar po in ten volumes, the *Bka' brgyud gser 'phreng*, and biographies of Dwags po Lha rje by Sgam po Paṅ chen sprul sku Nor bu rgyan pa, of Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal by Gtsang Mkhan chen, and of Mar pa by Gtsang smyon. These were replaced during the time of 'Brug rnam rgyal (see below).

2. Sde dge, c. 1750. The *rnam thar* of Mar pa, *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* paged continuously.

*Rnam thar*: *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dam pa rje btsun Mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston*. ff. 1–102 (ff. 75–176 of the volume). Margin: (r) *Mi la*; (v) (e.g., 75–176) 6.5 cm. x 48.5 cm.

*Mgur 'bum*: *Rje btsun Mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum*. ff.

103–346 (ff. 177–420 of the volume). Margin: (r) *Mi la*; (v) (i.e., 177–420) 6.5 cm. x 48.5 cm.

This edition was prepared under the patronage of the king of Sde dge, Phun tshogs bstan pa, alias Bla chen Kun dga' phrin las rgya mtsho, and his chaplain, Ngor Phan khang Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–59). The colophon to this volume contains the only clear statement that I have ever seen attributing the works to Gtsang smyon: *grub dbang dombi'i rnam 'phrul sgra sgyur mchog // lho brag pa dang rje btsun mi la yi // rnam thar rgyas bstan go rims ji lta bar // gtsang smyon he ru kas bsgrigs glegs bam 'di /*.

3. Peking, c. 1750.<sup>167</sup> *Gsol 'debs, rnam thar, and mgur 'bum.*

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje btsun Mi la ras pa'i rnam thar / thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 139+1 ff. (printer's colophon).

Margin: *Kha.* 6.5 cm. x 44.5 cm.

*Mgur 'bum:* A print of this edition is not available in Delhi for examination. De Jong notes that it contains 342 ff. This edition was produced under the patronage of Harchin E phu (Qarcin Efü) Blo bzang don grub (fl. 1743–56); the *par byang* was composed by Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86). This edition repeats the printer's colophon to the sixteenth-century Brag dkar rta so edition upon which it is based.

4. Peking, 1756 (Mongolian).<sup>168</sup> *Rnam thar and mgur 'bum.*

*Rnam thar: Yogazaris-un erketü degedü getülgegči Milarasba yin rnam tar nirvan kiged qamuy i ayiladuyci yin mör üjegülügsen kemegdekü orošiba.* 237+2 ff. (printer's colophon). 8.5 cm. x 37.5 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Getülgegci Milarasba yin tuyuji: Egešiglegsén mgur bum.* 280+2 ff. (printer's colophon). 14.5 cm x 52.5 cm. Edition prepared under the patronage of Har chin E phu Blo bzang don grub, with a *par byang (mgur 'bum)* by Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje.

## Nineteenth Century

1. Spungs thang (Punakha), c. 1799–1803. *Rnam thar and mgur 'bum.*

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 107 ff. Margin: *Ka.* 6.5 cm x 43 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen pa rje btsun bzhad pa rdo rje'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum.* 258 ff. Margin: *Kha.* 6.5 cm x 43 cm.

This edition was prepared at the order of 'Brug rnam rgyal, the Twenty-second Sde srid of Bhutan (reigned 1799–1803) to replace the blocks of an

older edition destroyed in the second great fire of Punakha (1796). The elegant *par byang* is unsigned. De Jong's Edition A.

2. Bstan rgyas gling (Lhasa), c. 1875–95.<sup>169</sup> *Mar Mi Dwags gsum gyi rnam thar, gsol 'debs, rnam thar and mgur 'bum.*

*Mar mi dwags gsum gyi rnam thar: 'phags yul grub pa'i dbang phyug dpal tai lo na ro gnyis dang / dgyes mdzad mar pa lo tsā / rje btsun bzhad pa rdo rje bcas kyi rnam thar mdor bsdus dang / mkhas grub dwags po lha rje'i rnam thar snyan pa'i ba dang 'dzam gling mtha' gru khyab pa'i rgyan bcas /.* 82 ff. Margin: *Ka.* 6 cm x 47.5 cm. Author: Kong sprul Karma ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho Blo gros mtha' yas pa'i sde (1813–99).

*Gsol 'debs: Gangs can grub pa'i gtso bo'i ngo mtshar gtam // thos na ya mtshan dad pa'i mig 'byed pa'i // mthong na ngo mtshar 'od 'phreng 'gyed pa 'dis // skal ldan dad gus can gyi dga' ston mdzod /.* 7 ff. Margin: *Ka.* 6 cm x 47.5 cm. Author: Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan (fifteenth century). Written in 1448 at Bkra shis lhun grub chos grwa.

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 116 ff. Margin: *Kha.* 6 cm x 57.5 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum.* 290 ff. Margin: *Ga.* 6 cm x 47.5 cm. The *par byang* to this edition was composed by Kong sprul. De Jong's Edition B.

### Century Unknown

1. Spo. *Rnam thar and mgur 'bum.*

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dam pa rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 119 ff. 7 cm x 41 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum.* 245 ff. 7 cm x 41 cm.

This edition repeats the printer's colophon to the sixteenth-century Brag dkar rta so edition upon which it is based. De Jong's Edition C. This edition probably dates from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

2. Bkra shis lhun grub cho grwa.<sup>170</sup> *Gsol 'debs, rnam thar, and mgur 'bum.*

*Gsol 'debs: Gangs can grub pa'i gtso bo'i ngo mtshar gtam // thos na ya mtshan dad pa'i mig 'byed pa'i // mthong na ngo mtshar 'od 'phreng 'gyed pa 'dis // skal ldan dad gus can gyi dga' ston mdzod /* 7 ff. 6.5 cm x 46 cm. Author: Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan.

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dam pa rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 121 ff. 6.5 cm x 46 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum.* 292 ff. 6.5 cm x 46 cm. De Jong's Edition D.

De Jong considers Bkra shis lhun grub chos grwa to be Bkra shis lhun po.<sup>171</sup> I am inclined to doubt this equation. The colophon to the *Gsol 'debs* states that Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan wrote this work in 1448 (*sa pho 'brug*), 314 years after the death of Mi la ras pa. It must be kept in mind that Bkra shis lhun po was founded only in 1447. My Tibetan friends inform me that there were Gtsang editions of the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* from Snar thang, Bkra shis lhun po Sngags pa grwa tshang,<sup>172</sup> and Nyang stod Skyid sbug.<sup>173</sup> I am inclined to believe that this edition belongs to the eighteenth century.

## Twentieth Century

1. La stod Ding ri Bde skyid khang gsar, Lhasa, 1929. *Rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*.<sup>174</sup>

*Rnam thar: Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug dam pa rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston.* 149 ff. Margin: (v) *Mi la'i rnam thar*; (r) *Ka*. 6 cm x 35 cm.

*Mgur 'bum: Rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum.* 319 ff. Margin: (v) *Mi la'i mgur 'bum*; (r) *Ka*. Edition prepared by Ding ri ba Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1897–1956?). The *par byang* was composed by the famous grammarian and *kāvya* teacher, 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros (died c. 1948).

2. De Jong's critical edition of the *rnam thar*, 1959.

*Mi la ras pa'i rnam thar: texte tibétain de la vie de Milarépa.* 's-Gravenhage, Mouton, 1959. (Volume IV of the *Indo-Iranian Monograph* series). The romanized text is based upon four editions: Spungs thang (A), Bstan rgyas gling (B), Spo (C), and Bkra shis lhun grub chos grwa (D). See this edition for the bibliography of translations of Mi la ras pa into other languages.

## Appendix II

### *Bka' brgyud pa Hagiographic Works by Gtsang smyon and His School*

A. Gtsang smyon He ru ka Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (1452–1507).

1. The *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mi la ras pa (1040–1123).<sup>175</sup> See Appendix I above. Written in 1488.

2. The *rnam thar* of Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012–1097). *Sgra bsgyur Mar pa lotsha'i rnam par thar pa mthong ba don yod*. Written about 1505.
  - a. Place unknown, sixteenth century.<sup>176</sup> 84 ff. Margin: *Na*. This appears to be the first edition. The patron of this edition was the yogi Bsod nams blo gros. The *par byang* seems to have been written by Gtsang smyon himself: *rnal 'byor du ma'i ming can kho bo la...*
  - b. Spungs thang/Dpal ri Rdo rje gdan, c. 1740–50.<sup>177</sup> ff.? Blocks carved through the efforts of Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal, Tenth Lho 'Brug Mkhan chen (1700–67).
  - c. Sde dge, c. 1740–50. 101 ff. Blocks carved through the efforts of Phun tshogs bstan pa, alias Bla chen Kun dga' phrin las rgya mtsho, the king of Sde dge, and his chaplain, Ngor Phan khang Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–59); issued and paged continuously with the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mi la ras pa. See Appendix I above.
  - d. Place unknown. Perhaps late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.<sup>178</sup> 93 ff. Issued with Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan's biographies of Tilopa and Nāropa.
  - e. Lhasa Bstan rgyas gling, late nineteenth century. 91 ff. This edition was probably prepared during the regency of De mo Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las rab rgyas (regent 1886–95). The *par byang* was written by Kong sprul Karma ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho Blo gros mtha' yas pa'i sde (1813–99).
  - f. La stod Ding ri Khang gsar/Lhasa, 1929. 105 ff. This edition was produced by Ding ri ba Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1897–1956?).
  - g. Partial translation into French and romanized text in Bacot (1937).

B. Rab 'byams pa Dngos grub dpal 'bar.<sup>179</sup>

1. A *rnam thar* of Gtsang smyon He ru ka.<sup>180</sup>

*Rje btsun gtsang pa he ru ka'i thun mong gi rnam thar yon tan gyi gangs ril dad pa'i seng ge rnam par rtse ba*. Written in 1508 at La stod Rgyal gyi śrī Bsam gtan gling. 31 ff. Margin: *Ka*. Edition: Rtsib ri?, sixteenth century?

2. A *mgur 'bum* of Gtsang smyon He ru ka.

I have it on reasonably good authority that Dngos grub dpal 'bar compiled a small (c. 50 ff.) collection of his guru's songs. This is marked with *Kha* and belongs to the same edition as the *rnam thar*. I think that it will eventually turn up.

C. Lha btsun<sup>181</sup> Rin chen rnam rgyal (1473–1557).

Lha btsun was the son of Lha sras Khri rnam rgyal sde, the ruler of Gung thang Rdzong kha.<sup>182</sup> He was considered to be the rebirth of Kun dga' rgyal mtshan of Sgang dkar ba, a disciple of Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451) and abbot of the famed Mtho lding in Gu ge. His teachers included representatives of all of the important intellectual and religious currents of the century: So mas chos rje 'Jam dpal ye shes, Glang ri dka' bcu pa Dkon mchog skyabs, the Ngor pa teacher Slob dpon Kun mkhyen Chos 'byor dpal bzang, Bo dong Nam mkha' bzang po and his son Grags pa byang chub of Shangs Zur khang, 'Bri gung chos rje Kun dga' rin chen, 'Brug pa lha btsun of Shangs Stag lung, and Rab 'byams pa Dngos grub dpal 'bar. His most important guru, however, was Gtsang smyon, and Lha btsun, for a number of reasons, can in turn be regarded as the most significant student of Gtsang smyon.

Lha btsun built a small but important monastery at Brag dkar rta so near Skyid grong. During his lifetime, he carried on Gtsang smyon's hagiographic activities and authored or edited a significant number of Bka' brgyud pa biographical materials. I have seen two biographical works that treat Lha btsun's life. I have not yet been able to identify the author or authors of these two works:

- a. *Rnal 'byor dbang phyug lha bstun chos kyi rgyal po'i rnam thar gyi smad cha*. 32 ff. Margin: *rnam thar*. Edition: Brag dkar rta so?, sixteenth century. Perhaps we must regard this anonymous compilation as the second part of the *rnam mgur*. I am inclined to the opinion that the *rnam mgur* is separate from the *rnam thar* and that the *stod cha* (part 1) of the *rnam thar* exists but has not yet been described.
- b. *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa mkhas grub lha bstun chos kyi rgyal po'i rnam mgur blo 'das chos sku'i rang gdangs*. 54 ff. Margin: *rnam mgur*. Edition: Brag dkar rta so?, sixteenth century. This work lacks a clear statement of authorship. It may be a compilation by Lha btsun himself that has undergone considerable editing and rewriting.

The literary works and xylograph editions of Brag dkar rta so prepared by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal include the following works. All editions are to be regarded as Brag dkar rta so, sixteenth century, unless otherwise stated.

1. A *rnam thar* of Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258) by Rgyal thang pa Bde chen rdo rje; edited and considerably expended with songs (*mgur*) of Rgod tshang pa by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal. *Rje rgod tshang pa'i rnam*

*thar rgyal thang pa bde chen rdo rjes mdzad pa la mgur chen 'gas rgyan pa.*<sup>183</sup>  
Compiled and committed to blocks in 1503 at Brag dkar rta so. 42 ff.

2. A *rnam thar* of Nāropa (1016–1100). *Mkhas grub kun gyi gtsug rgyan / pañ chen na ro pa'i rnam thar / ngo mtshar smad 'byung.*<sup>184</sup> Undated; written by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal at Brag dkar rta so. 46 ff. Margin: *Ka*. English translation and commentary in Guenther (1963). Guenther errs when he says: “This work thus belongs to the late twelfth century. It is likely that this text is the first authoritative account of Nāropa’s life that has been written.” On historical grounds there are no reasons to prefer Lha btsun’s life of Nāropa over that of Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan—Lha btsun’s contemporary—although for philosophical and literary reasons there may be.

3. A *rnam thar* with many songs (*mgur*) of Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje, alias Sna phu pa (1128–88). *Grub thob gling ras kyi rnam thar mthong ba don ldan.*<sup>185</sup> Undated; edited by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal at Brag dkar rta so. 61 ff. Margin: *Ka*.

4. A *rnam thar* of Gtsang smyon He ru ka (1452–1507). *Grub thob gtsang pa smyon pa'i rnam thar dad pa'i spu slong g.yo ba.*<sup>186</sup> Written in 1543. 65 ff. Margin: *Ka*.

5. *Rnam mgur* of Tilopa. *Sangs rgyas thams cad kyi rnam 'phrul rje bstun ti lo pa'i rnam mgur.*<sup>187</sup> Written in 1550. 24 ff.

6. Supplementary collection of mystic songs (*mgur*) of Mi la ras pa (1040–1123). Edition: La stod Ding ri Khang gсар /Lhasa, 1932. This Edition was undertaken by Ding ri ba Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1897–1956?). *Rje bstun mi la ras pa'i rdo rje'i mgur drug sogs gsung rgyun thor bu 'ga'.*<sup>188</sup> 160 ff. Margin: (r) *Mi la'i*; (v) *Mgur sna tshogs*. There is a copy of the Brag dkar ta so edition in the Cambridge University library. Unfortunately, I have no copy of this edition for description in Delhi at the moment. Compilation completed and blocks prepared at Brag dkar rta so in 1150 by Lha btsun. According to Tibetan scholastic tradition, there were originally 2800 separate songs (*mgur*) of Mi la ras pa. Of these, only 800 are extant. The other 2000 songs were taken away by the *dākiṇī*, who occasionally reveal one to ascetics they favor.

The present *mgur 'bum* was culled by Gtsang smyon from the older biography by the Bu chen bcu gnyis (Twelve Great Sons) and other sources, and

arranged to form the present *mgur 'bum* and *rnam thar*. Later, Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal made this supplementary compilation to complement the work of his teacher.

7. A *mgur 'bum* of Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros (1012–1097). *Sgra bsgyur mar pa lo tstsha'i mgur 'bum bzhugs*.<sup>189</sup> The blocks for this edition were carved in 1552. Lha btsun has abridged Gtsang smyon's biography of Mar pa, retaining all of the mystic songs (*mgur*) and largely deleting the narrative passages. 40 ff.

8. A *rnam thar* of Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po (1110–70). *Bde gshegs phag mo gru pa'i rnam thar*.<sup>190</sup> By Chos sgo ba Bsod nam dpal; edited by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal. The blocks for this edition were carved in 1552. 18 ff.

Lha btsun's biographer enumerates a list<sup>191</sup> of other works, the xylograph blocks of which were carved through the efforts of Lha btsun. Some of these works may have also been written by Lha btsun.

9. *Rgyal ba rdo rje 'chang yab yum gyi rnam thar*.
10. *Rdo rje 'chang gi gsungs pa: Rdo rje'i tshig rkang*.
11. *Sangs rgyas kyi 'khrungs rabs slob dpon dpa' bos mdzad pa'i kha mdo sde nas bkang ba*.
12. *Bram ze chen po sogs rgya gar gyi sgrub chen 'ga'i rdo rje'i glu*.
13. *Ti lo pas mdzad pa'i rdo rje'i gzhung chung*.
14. *Rje bstun ras chung pa'i rnam mgur*.
15. *Mnyam med sgam po pa'i bstan bcos lung gi nyi ma*.
16. *Rgyal ba yang dgon pa'i bar do phran sgrol*.
17. *Snying po don gyi gter mdzod*.
18. *Rje ko brag pa'i mgur 'bum*.
19. *Spu to ba'i dpe chos rin chen spungs rtsa 'grel dang bcas pa*.
20. *Rje sna phu pa'i mdzad pa'i bla ma mchod pa la rje nyid kyi sa bcad sbyar ba*.
21. *Phyag rgya chen po'i 'grel bshad gnyug ma'i gter mdzod*.

D. Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan.<sup>192</sup>

1. A *rnam thar* of Tilopa. *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje bstun ti lo shes rab bzang po'i rnam thar zab gsal rin chen gter mdzes mthong bas yid smon*. Written in 1523 at Rdza ri Bsam gtan gling. 39 ff (incomplete).<sup>193</sup> Margin: *Ka*. Apparently, this print is from a very old edition. Another edition:<sup>194</sup> *Rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje bstun ti lo shes rab bzang po'i rnam thar rab gsal rin chen gter mdzes mthong ba yid 'phrog*. 50 ff. Issued with the author's biography



of Nāropa and Gtsang smyon's biography of Mar pa. Place unknown. Perhaps late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

2. A *rnam thar* of Nāropa (1016–1100). *Mkhas mchog nā ro paṅ chen gyi rnam par thar pa dri med legs bshad bde chen 'brug sgra*. Undated; probably written circa 1523 at Rdza ri Bsam gtan gling. 49 ff. Issued with the author's biography of Tilopa and Gtsang smyon's biography of Mar pa. Place unknown. Perhaps late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Romanized edition with a translation into German in Grünwedel (1933). Guenther mentions that the author belongs to the fifteenth century.

E. Śrī Lo paṅ ras pa 'Jam dpal chos lha.<sup>195</sup>

1. A *rnam thar* of Yang dgon pa Rgyal mtshan dpal alias Lha dgon pa (1213–58). *Rgyal ba yang dgon chos rje'i rnam thar yid bzhin nor bu*.<sup>196</sup> Based on the biography written by Spyan snga Rin chen ldan (b. 1202); the blocks were prepared for this edition at Rtsib ri (Rgyal gyi śrī ri) during the sixteenth century. 77 ff. Margin: *Ka*.

F. Rgod tshang ras pa Sna tshogs rang grol.

1. The *rnam thar* of Gtsang smyon He ru ka outlined in the present essay. *Gtsang smyon he ru ka phyogs thams cad las rnam par rgyal pa'i rnam thar rdo rje theg pa'i gsal byed nyi ma'i snying po*. Written in 1547. 146 ff.

2. A *rnam thar* of Ras chung Rdo rje grags pa (1083–1161). *Rje bstun ras chung rdo rje grags pa'i rnam thar rnam mkhyen thar lam gsal ba'i me long*. 48 ff. Ras chung phug, sixteenth century?

G. Sangs rgyas dar po.<sup>197</sup>

1. A *rnam thar* of Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258). *Rgyal ba rgod tshang ba mgon po rdo rje'i rnam par thar pa mthong ba don ldan nor bu'i 'phreng ba*.<sup>198</sup> This biography was compiled in 1540 at 'Broḡ La phyi Gangs ra. 117 ff? (last folio, no. 117, missing). Sangs rgyas dar po gives a list of eight earlier biographies that he had used in writing his opus:

1. *Slob dpon byang dpal gyis mdzad pa'i rtsag ris chen mo*.
2. *Slob dpon dbang phyug rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad pa'i gnad btus sgron me dang mya ngan 'das chung*.
3. *Slob dpon byang chub 'od kyis mdzad pa'i dgos 'dod kun 'byung*.
4. *Byang sems ser gzhon gyis mdzad pa'i khyad 'phags bdun ma*.

5. *Lha bstun bsod nams stobs kyis mdzad pa'i yon tan sgo 'byed kyi bzhung gsal byed sgron me.*
6. *Sprul sku mkha' spyod dbang pos mdzad pa'i rnam thar.*
7. *Rgyal thang bde chen rdo rjes bkod pa'i rnam thar.*
8. *Rtse brgya pas mdzad pa'i rnam thar.*

Rtsib ri (Rgyal gyi śrī ri)?, c. 1540. The printer's colophon tells us that the chief patrons for carving the blocks for this edition were Chos rje Nam mkha' dkon mchog, who is referred to as a descendant of Spang (read: Dpang) Lo tsā ba, Rgod tshang gdan sa pa Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan, Sde pa Tsham mda' ba, and his lady, and the Ngos chu bla brang. The postface was authored by Lo paṅ ras pa 'Jam dpal chos lha.



## CHAPTER 6

# Padma dkar po and His History of Buddhism

### *I. The Life and Times of Padma dkar po*

**P**ADMA DKAR PO was born in 1527 in Kong po in southern Tibet. He was ultimately recognized as the rebirth of 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi grags pa (1478–1523). The details of the political relationships within the 'Brug pa sect are extremely complicated. The general outline is, however, fairly clear and important in understanding why his famous history of Buddhism, the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa school in particular, was written.

Perhaps the most important development in Tibet during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the gradual acceptance of the priority of the rebirth (*yang srid*) lineage over familial claims in the transmission of accumulated religious prestige and wealth. The previous pattern in Tibetan society was one of religious aristocracy passing both religious and secular power from father to son or from paternal uncle to nephew. The religious wars beginning around the thirteenth century produced a new class of administrators who were in origin ordinary monks. These monks readily abandoned their robes and vows in the political interest of their sects. Gradually, this class evolved into a new aristocracy, independent of their spiritual and temporal overlords in all but name. As these lords became more powerful, they sought a share of the religious prestige. The complicated doctrine of incarnation (*sprul sku*) was adapted gradually to that of the *yang srid*, or recognized rebirth.

The 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa began with Gtsang pa Rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211) of the clan of Rgya. This great meditative ascetic founded, among others, the monasteries of Gnam 'Brug Se ba Byang chub chos gling and Rwa lung in Gtsang. The small cloister of Gnam 'Brug was founded by Gtsang pa Rgya ras in 1189. Located in the upper part of the Gnam valley in Dbus, it was inhabited until 1950 by about twenty nuns and four to five monks. This monastery is also called Gnam phu 'Brug dgon. It is from this

cloister that the 'Brug pa subsect and the kingdom of Bhutan take their names.<sup>199</sup> Before his death, Gtsang pa Rgya ras named his nephew, Dbon ras Dar ma seng ge (1177/78–1237), as his heir. Thus began the House of Rgya, or 'Brug, which established its administrative headquarters at Rwa lung. Over time the religious estates, wealth, and monastic establishments of the family multiplied.

In the tenth generation descended from Gtsang pa Rgya ras was Rgyal dbang Kun dga' dpal byor (1428–76). This teacher claimed to be the rebirth of Gtsang pa Rgya ras, of the great Nāropa, and ultimately of Avalokiteśvara. It is upon his model that the Fifth Dalai Lama based the theory that the Dalai Lamas were incarnations of that bodhisattva. The 'Brug of Rwa lung were merely attempting to reinforce the holiness of their family lineage by adapting the idea of rebirth. The 217 years between the death of Gtsang pa Rgya ras and the birth of Rgyal dbang rje were conveniently explained by the theory that the rebirths had indeed occurred within the 'Brug pa lineage but had never been recognized.

Unfortunately, there was no male birth in the 'Brug lineage for a number of years after the death of Rgyal dbang rje. The family also suffered severe political and military defeats that damaged its prestige. The abbots and important monks eventually recognized the son of a prince of Bya in southern Tibet as the immediate rebirth of Rgyal dbang rje. The little incarnation was given the name of 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi grags pa. The 'Brug family ultimately recognized him as the rebirth of Rgyal dbang rje but politely refused to invest him with the religious holdings and property belonging to his previous rebirth. Eventually the princess of Bya built the monastery of Bkra shis mthong smon for the little lama. After the death of 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi grags pa, monks found the rebirth in the house of a minor aristocrat of Kong po, to the disappointment of both the families of Rwa lung and Bya. This child, the *sprul sku* Ngag dbang nor bu, was to be the great Padma dkar po.

Padma dkar po was one of those rare renaissance men. The breadth of his scholarship and learning invites comparison with the Fifth Dalai Lama. It was Padma dkar po who systematized the teaching of the 'Brug pa sect. It is no wonder that the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa always refer to him as Kun mkhyen, the Omniscient, an epithet reserved for the greatest scholar of a sect. Padma dkar po was a shrewd and occasionally ruthless politician. His autobiography is one of the most important sources for the history of the sixteenth century. Padma dkar po was a monk and insisted on adherence to the vinaya rules for his monastic followers. He also held that in the administration of church affairs the claims of the rebirth and the monastic scholar took

priority over those of the scion of a revered lineage. Although he preached often at both Rwa lung and Bkra shis mthong smon, the seats of his two immediate predecessors, he never exercised actual control over these monasteries and their estates. He founded his monastery at Gsang sngags chos gling in Byar po, north of Mon Rta dbang, which became the seat of the subsequent Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa incarnation. The Northern 'Brug pa recognize the following list of Rgyal dbang 'Brug chen incarnations:

1. Gtsang pa Rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211)
2. Rgyal ba'i dbang po Kun dpal 'byor (1428–76)
3. 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi grags pa (1478–1523)
4. Kun mkhyen Padma dkar po alias Ngag dbang nor bu (1527–92)
5. Dpag bsam dbang po (1593–1641)
6. Mi pham dbang po (1641–1717)
7. Bka' brgyud 'phrin las shing rta (1718–66)
8. Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba (1768–1822)
9. 'Jigs med mi 'gyur dbang rgyal (1823–83)
10. 'Jigs med mi pham chos dbang (1884–1930)
- 10a. A dzom 'Brug pa 'Gro 'dul dpa' bo rdo rje (1885–1924?)
11. Bstan 'dzin Mkhyen rab Dge legs dbang po (1931–60)
12. 'Jigs med dbang gi rdo rje (1963–)

Padma dkar po died in 1592. The recognition of his rebirth was the subject of a bitter dispute; the majority of the monks advocated for the son of the prince of 'Phyong rgyas, while the house of Rwa lung and their supporters laid claim on behalf of the heir of 'Brug. The long and heated struggle led to a decision by the Sde srid Gtsang pa in favor of the 'Phyongs rgyas candidate, Dpag bsam dbang po (1593–1641), and the flight to Bhutan in 1616 of the Rwa lung candidate, Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594–1651).<sup>200</sup>

## II. Padma dkar po's History of Buddhism

Padma dkar po's famous Tibetan historical work bears a long and elegant title that can be translated *The History of the Dharma Called the Sun that Causes the Lotus of the Teaching to Open*. It is commonly referred to as simply the 'Brug pa'i chos 'byung, the religious history of the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa sect. The *History* of Padma dkar po was written in 1575 at the behest of the Gong dkar Sde srid Ngag gi dbang phyug grags pa rnam rgyal and revised in 1580.

Unlike the histories of 'Gos Lo tsā ba, Dpa' bo Gtsug lag 'phreng ba, and Stag lung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, it is not arranged into sections or chapters; it is a continuous work following a progressively expanding outline format. The author's purpose was to emphasize his own spiritual lineage and its claims to authority. He ends his history with brief biographical sketches of his immediate predecessor in the 'Brug pa incarnation series and his immediate teacher. He subtly emphasizes the primacy of incarnation and learning over family lineage. The architecture of the work can be diagrammed roughly as follows:

- I. How the Buddha came into the world (2r–11r)
- II. How the Buddha preached the Doctrine (11r–20r)
- III. How the masters who have cherished and transmitted the Doctrine appeared (20r–309v)
  - A. How the words of the Buddha were collected (20r–26r)
  - B. The immediate successors of the Buddha (26r–31v)
  - C. How Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna were spread (32r–309v)
    1. Mahāyāna (32r–61r)
    2. Vajrayāna (61r–309v)
      - a. How Vajrayāna was spread in the world (61r–157r)  
(Śambhala and the *Kālacakra Tantra*) (103r–113v)
      - b. How the Doctrine appeared in Tibet (157r–309v)
        - 1'. The "former spread of the Doctrine" (157r–169v)
        - 2'. The "latter spread of the Doctrine" (169v–309v)
          - a'. How the dying fire of the Doctrine was rekindled from the East (*smad*) (169v–174r)
          - b'. How the flames were fed from the West (*stod*) (174r–186r)
          - c'. How the Doctrine blazed in Central Tibet (186r–216r)
            - 1". The other sects of the "New" Tantras (186r–216r)
            - 2". The Bka' brgyud pa (216r–309v)
              - Mar pa and his lineages (216r–236v)
              - Mi la ras pa and his lineages (236v–256r)
              - Sgam po pa and his lineages (256r–269r)
              - Phag mo gru pa and his lineages (269r–283r)
              - Gling ras pa and his lineages (283–286v)
              - Gtsang pa Rgya ras and the minor lineages (286v–292r)
              - Lo ras pa and the Smad lineages (292r–295r)
              - Rgod tshang pa and the Stod lineages (295r–301v)
              - The 'Brug of Rwa lung (Bar lineages) (301v–308v)
              - 'Jam dbyangs chos grags and his disciples (308v–309v)

This history contains material that is not found in any of the other available *chos 'byung*, especially information on the special esoteric teaching of the Bka' brgyud pa sects. It throws light on the origins of Vajrayāna and its tradition as particularly well preserved by the Bka' brgyud pa. A detailed investigation of this Tibetan literature preserved outside the *Bstan 'gyur* translations is a task deserving the utmost attention of scholars.

Padma dkar po was an accomplished practitioner of elegant Tibetan *kāvya*; yet his prose style (and the *Chos 'byung* is largely prose) is extraordinarily terse. It is characterized by short utterances with frequent ellipses and colloquial usages of grammatical particles. Describing the career of the great Stag lung thang pa (1142–1210), he writes:

*/ khong gi dgung lo nyi su rtsa bzhi'i bzhes pa'i dus phag mo grur  
phebs / lo drug phag grur bzhugs / nye gnas mdzad / bla ma'i thugs su  
byon / chos gsung ba thams cad ma brjed par yi ger btab / gdams ngag  
che / ... (fol. 247r.)*

This passage demonstrates the unusual use of genitive particles, uncommon idioms like *bla ma'i thugs su byon*, and a total absence of conjunctive and subordinating particles. What first appears to be a simple style is, however, complicated by the all too frequent usage of words and expressions from the author's native Kong po dialect. Such peculiarities of dialect are seldom attested in dictionaries; the meaning can only be determined from context or by consulting an informant from southern Tibet.

### III. Editions of Padma dkar po's Collected Works

Dr. Lokesh Chandra has reproduced a clear print of the *History* from the Se ba Byang chub chos gling blocks of the collected works (*gsung 'bum*) of the author. The background of this edition is known.<sup>201</sup> The project of preparing a new edition of Padma dkar po's *Gsung 'bum* was begun in 1920 through the efforts of Bsod nams thabs mkhas rgya mtsho, the treasurer (*phyag mdzod*) of the Tenth Rgyal dbang 'Brug chen. The work was finally completed in 1928.

The editors have rearranged the contents of previous editions of the *gsung 'bum* in nine, ten, or twelve volumes into fourteen volumes. There was an attempt to arrange the individual works by topics to facilitate printing selected pieces from the works dealing with a particular subject. A complete analytical



list of the contents (*dkar chag*) was composed in 1927 by the Eighth Bde chen chos 'khor Yongs 'dzin.<sup>202</sup>

There have been a number of previous editions of the *gsung 'bum*. I have personally seen prints from three or four:

1. Bya yul Sngags grwa; probably early seventeenth century, nine volumes.
2. Spungs thang Bde ba can (Punakha, Bhutan); late seventeenth century, ten volumes, blocks destroyed by fire in 1780.
3. Spungs thang Bde ba can; blocks carved during the period 1780–88, ten volumes, destroyed by fire in 1796.
4. Spungs thang Bde ba can; blocks carved between 1799 and 1805, ten volumes, destroyed by fire in early-mid twentieth century.

At least the last two Bhutanese editions differ from the Tibetan editions in that the supplement to the autobiography of Padma dkar po written by the First Bde chen chos 'khor Yongs 'dzin, Lha rtse ba Ngag dbang bzang po<sup>203</sup> (covering his life from 1575 to his death in 1592) is replaced by the supplement written by Yon tan mtha' yas (1724–83). The Bhutanese supplement compiles the evidence supporting the claims of Ngag dbang rnam rgyal to be the rightful rebirth of Padma dkar po. Other differences in the two redactions will probably emerge.

A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho mentions in his list of rare books the *gsung 'bum* of Padma dkar po in twelve volumes.<sup>204</sup> This edition may be of eastern Tibetan origin. I have also seen prints from a Bhutanese edition that appears to differ from the Punakha editions. Other Bhutanese editions may indeed have existed.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Diaries of Si tu Paṅ chen

#### *I. Introduction—Scholastic Studies Before Si tu Paṅ chen*

LOKESH CHANDRA has noted that Si tu was the last of the great Tibetan translators: “It is remarkable that when the art of the lotsāva was a matter of history, yet there lingered in Si-tu the aura of the lotsāva.”<sup>205</sup> Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas (1699–1774) was unusual for his time in that he sought a return to the sources of Tibetan learning, the Sanskrit tradition of India. While one can cite isolated cases of Sanskrit scholars visiting Tibet and Tibetan scholars setting out from their native land in search of learning after the beginning of the fifteenth century, the impact of the Indic tradition had largely been spent by 1400. Tibetans may have lost the motivation and persistence to master Sanskrit and its taxing scholastic discipline. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, Tibetans already possessed an enormous corpus of translated scholastic and esoteric literature. The overwhelming majority of Tibetan scholars were content to study existing translations and bilingual editions with Sanskrit rendered in Tibetan letters. *Raṅjana*, *vartula*, and a few other Indian scripts continued to be studied, but these scripts were largely confined to ornamental uses in book titles and works of art. The systematic study of Sanskrit as a language had been replaced by rote memorization of Tibetan commentaries. The glorious spark ignited by contact with Indian culture had dwindled. Tucci has examined some of the Sanskrit verses composed by the Fifth Dalai Lama and has come to the conclusion that, whatever other subjects the Great Fifth may have known, Sanskrit was not one of them.<sup>206</sup>

For the Indian scholars the chaos and persecution of Muslim invasions was largely over. There was no longer the compelling stimulus to flee from probable slaughter at Muslim hands to an uncertain fate in the mountains of Tibet. The second and greatest transmission of Indic civilization to Tibet during

the eleventh through fourteenth centuries resulted from a coincidence: Hindu civilization was faced with a monumental crisis at a time when Tibet was at the beginning of a period of maximum cultural receptivity. It was this fortunate accident that produced modern Tibetan civilization.

The fifteenth through seventeenth centuries saw a period of considerable stagnation of Indic studies in Tibet. In the eighteenth century, however, we find clear signs of a revival of interest in Sanskrit.<sup>207</sup> The evidence explaining this renewed interest is still insufficient. One factor may have been the Newar artisan-merchant community resident in Tibet. The Sanskritization of Newar culture was in process for several centuries. One of the more important developments had been the imposition of caste on Buddhist Newar society and the relegation of the artisan-merchant groups to a position in the hierarchy not only ritually but also socially inferior to that of their traditional family priests.

Gradually certain members of these artisan-merchant Newars, then known as the Uray castes, with business interests in Tibet came to favor the Tibetan forms of Buddhism, which gave them greater scope for religious activity than the more rigid Newar forms. We find a number of cases in eighteenth-century biographical materials where Uray Newars were ordained as Buddhist monks in Tibet. This would have been impossible in Nepal, where the religious establishments and monasteries were the hereditary domain of the upper caste Gubhajas and Bares. In Tibet, however, the Uray Newars were often honored and courted by great lamas as much for their talents as craftsmen as for their sometimes not inconsiderable wealth.

Si tu's relations with his Newar students and friends is a case in point. As such relationships developed, one notices a realization on the part of sensitive lamas that these Newar Buddhists with their older heritage of Sanskrit learning might have something more than craftsmanship to offer. One of Si tu's lifelong interests was *śilpasastra* and the techniques of painting and casting, an area in which these Newar artisans were unrivaled. He probably realized quickly that these Newars also had something to offer him in the field of linguistic and literary studies. Si tu gave as well as took: we find him encouraging a friend and student to translate some works from Tibetan into the Newar language. When Si tu and his contemporaries traveled outside Tibet for studies, they almost invariably went to the Kathmandu Valley, where they found a considerable number of learned scholars. Si tu, for all his interest in India, never fulfilled his dream of visiting that country.<sup>208</sup>

## II. The Intellectual Climate of Si tu's Age

The diaries of Si tu are important sources for the intellectual history of the eighteenth-century Tibetan cultural world. While his anthologized work is certainly not unique, it is one of the clearest pieces of evidence demonstrating the intricate intellectual relationships that existed between the important scholars who were Si tu's close contemporaries. These thinkers gave birth to a splendid cultural renaissance that reached its fullest flower in nineteenth-century Khams. Unlike their intellectual descendants, who were largely from Khams, the associates of Si tu came from Mongolia and Bhutan, from western Tibet and the farthest Tibetan villages of eastern Tibet.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the great savants of Si tu's time were born within the space of a little more than a decade between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century: Zhu chen Tshul khrim rin chen and Mdo mkhar Tshe ring dbang rgyal were both born in 1697. Zhu chen Tshul khrim rin chen was the editor of the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur* (1744). He was one of the great masters of Tibetan poetics. Mdo mkhar Tshe ring dbang rgyal was an important political figure of his time. A close associate and biographer of Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas (1689–1747), he was one of the four members of the first Tibetan council of ministers instituted in 1751. He is the author of a Sanskrit dictionary as well as a number of literary works like the *Gzhon nu zla med kyī rtogs brjod*.

Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu<sup>209</sup> was born in 1698, and two years later, in 1700, both Si tu and Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal were born. Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal (1700–1767) was the Tenth Rje mkhan po of Bhutan. He was the author of several biographies of eminent Bhutanese lamas and of the *Lho chos 'byung*, a history of Buddhism in Bhutan. He also composed literary renderings of the Buddha's life and of the collective biographies of the Sixteen Elders. These two works guarantee him a place among the best Tibetan stylists.

Dpal ldan chos skyong was born in 1702, Gnas gsar Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas in 1704, and the Seventh Dalai Lama in 1708. Dpal ldan chos skyong (1702–59) was the thirty-third or thirty-fourth abbot of Ngor and the founder of the Phan khang (Phan bde khang gsar) bla brang. His autobiography is one of the most important sources for the religious life of Tibet in the eighteenth century. Gnas gsar Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas (1704–60) was a famous Sa skya pa scholar connected with the printing activities of Sde dge.

The dates for Mgon po skyabs of the Üjümüjin and Zhe chen Drung yig are as yet unknown, but it would appear that they too were born during this

period. Mgon po skyabs was a Mongol scholar interested in lexicography. He is reputed to have known four languages: Mongol, Tibetan, Chinese, and Sanskrit. His most famous work is the *Rgya nag chos 'byung*, a history of Buddhism in China. Zhe chen Drung yig Bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan (fl. 1759–71) is best known for his Sanskrit lexicon, the *Prajñā*.

There was considerable contact between these great scholars. We find Si tu completing his famous treatise of Tibetan grammar at the behest of Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung, and Mgon po skyabs dispatching a manuscript of his *Rgya nag chos 'byung* to Tibet for criticism by Si tu and Kaḥ thog. There was not yet that degree of scholarly collaboration that would in time make possible the great compilations like the *Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, the *Rin chen gter mdzod*, the *Sgrub thabs kun btus*, and the *Rgyud sde kun btus*; but one can already detect the beginnings of such collaboration. Si tu remained at the center of Tibetan scholastic life for almost fifty years. His influence on the following three or four generations was enormous; Kong sprul, Mkhyen brtse, Dpal sprul, and Mi pham were all in some way Si tu's heirs.

Because Si tu was converted to the “emptiness of other” (Gzhan stong) doctrine of the Jo nang pa through the efforts of Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu, that teaching spread throughout eastern Tibet, effectively reversing the trend of the previous century. During the seventeenth century the Gzhan stong position had been branded as heresy, the great monasteries of the Jo nang pa confiscated and turned into Dge lugs pa establishments, and books by Gzhan stong philosophers prohibited and placed under government seal by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Now the Gzhan stong took a new lease on life because Si tu espoused the position. The prohibition against copying and printing Jo nang pa books would continue for a hundred years after Si tu's death until, in 1871, the Zhwa lu Ri sbug Sprul sku Blo gsal bstan skyong was granted permission to reopen the printery at Dge ldan Phun tshogs gling for printing the Jo nang books. Nevertheless, during the eighteenth century, the doctrine spread and its following increased.

Si tu's monastery at Dpal spungs produced an entire school of philosophers, as well as a generation of talented physicians who would dominate the medical field in Tibet for a generation to come. The renewed interest in the grammatical sciences, in history, in technology, and in Chinese and Indian systems of astronomy and astrology are some of Si tu's most important legacies to Tibet.

What made Si tu so influential? Besides his innate genius, one of the factors was his birth in Sde dge during the golden age of that principality.<sup>210</sup> A second factor was the death of both the Zhwa nag and Zhwa dmar leaders in

the same year, 1732; this left Si tu the highest ranking and most influential lama of the Karma pa sect.

### III. The Life of Si tu

Si tu was born on the seventeenth day of the eleventh month of the Earth Hare year, which probably corresponds to 1700.<sup>211</sup> He was recognized as the Si tu<sup>212</sup> incarnation by the Eighth Zhwa dmar, Dpal chen chos kyi don 'grub (1695–1732), who bestowed upon him the name Chos kyi 'byung gnas phrin las kun khyab ye shes dpal bzang po. When Si tu received the vows of an *upāsaka* from the Zhwa dmar, he was given the name Karma bstan pa'i nyin byed gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba. In his literary works he uses these names or components of them with seemingly little method. This could result in confusion in the attribution of his literary works.

In 1712, he left Sde dge for studies in Central Tibet and did not return to Khams until 1715. Si tu continued his studies in Khams during the period 1715–21. In 1720, Si tu and Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu first met. This event was the beginning of a fruitful friendship that would continue until Kaḥ thog's death.

Si tu returned to Central Tibet in 1721<sup>213</sup> and spent the year 1722 traveling there. The following year, he accompanied the Zhwa nag and Zhwa dmar to Nepal.<sup>214</sup> The Zhwa dmar had been born in the Helambu area of northern Nepal. En route to Nepal, Si tu visited the former seat of Tāranātha, Rtag brtan phun tshogs gling, as well as Jo nang.<sup>215</sup> This visit was obviously a formative experience for the young Si tu's intellectual development. He returned to eastern Tibet in 1724 via western Tibet. After his return to Khams, he enjoyed the favor of the king of Sde dge, Bstan pa tshe ring (1678–1738). This king built for him the monastery of Dpal spungs, which became the new seat (*gdan sa*) of the Si tu line.

The years 1731–33 were taken up with the enormous task of editing and correcting the sheets for carving the Sde dge edition of the *Bka' 'gyur*. The reputation that this edition enjoys for critical work is a testament to Si tu's careful scholarship. He completed the *dkar chag* to this edition in 1733, and the first copies were then printed. After the tedium of editing the *Bka' 'gyur* was finished, Si tu turned to a project that was to occupy him for the rest of his life: the re-examination and revision of all existing translations of the Sanskrit grammatical, lexicographic, and poetic treatises that constitute the basis for Tibetan philological studies. It was an ambitious project fraught

with considerable difficulties. The fact that Si tu accomplished as much as he did is truly remarkable. His diaries are filled with tales of his quest for Sanskrit manuscripts. The results of his philological work fill the majority of the volumes of his *gsung 'bum*. His interests in Sanskrit translation were not confined only to philological works: he tried his skill at translating or revising a few important tantric works as well.

In 1735 and 1736, Si tu visited Lhasa to examine some Sanskrit manuscripts and was received cordially by Pho lha nas and Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung. Meanwhile, the great publication project of the House of Sde dge continued, but the honor of chief editorship had fallen into other hands. The edition of the *Sa skya bka' 'bum* was completed in 1737. In 1741, the first copies of the new edition of the *Bstan 'gyur* were printed. Zhu chen Tshul khrim rin chen was responsible for editing and correcting the sheets for printing. He wrote the *dkar chag*, which remains one of the finest treatments of the contents of the *Bstan 'gyur* ever produced.

It must have been Si tu's intention that the awkward and often erroneous translations of the philological and literary works of the *Bstan 'gyur* would ultimately be replaced by his new translations, which demonstrate a more profound knowledge of Sanskrit and a critical use of later commentaries not available to translators in times past. Alas, the great design of Si tu was not to be realized. Most of his *gsung 'bum*, which contains the new translations, editions, and interlinear annotations, is marred by careless editing and checking of the sheets from which the blocks were carved. Si tu's numerous nephews, who came to power at Dpal spungs after his death, allowed the sheets to be passed on to the printer without even a superficial reading. The result is that much of Si tu's work was negated by the carelessness of his heirs. This is one of the famous ironic stories of the Tibetan tradition; in some cases the *Sgra mdo* section of the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur* that Si tu had hoped to correct and to replace contains better readings than one finds in Si tu's work.

After his return to the East, we find Si tu very much on the move. He had gained a considerable reputation as a successful physician and was in great demand at the courts of the princes and clerics of the Khams pa states. He had become interested in Chinese traditions of astronomy and astrology, and he seems to have attempted some translations on this topic. It is not impossible that he learned Chinese. Si tu also appears to have been an accomplished painter; his paintings were highly prized by his disciples and patrons.

In 1748, Si tu had the opportunity to pay another visit to Nepal.<sup>216</sup> He may have been entrusted with an official commission from the Tibetan government.<sup>217</sup> He was received warmly by Jayaprakāśamalla of Kathmandu

(1736–68). Raṅajitamalla (1722–69) of Bhatgaon (modern day Bhaktapur) presented him with a manuscript of an *Amarakośa* commentary. His account of meeting with Pṛthvinārāyaṇa Śāha at the Gorkhā fortress is fascinating, yet distressing because of its brevity.<sup>218</sup> During this stay in Nepal he was able to complete a translation of a short edition of the *Svayambhūpurāṇa*.<sup>219</sup> In 1750, he returned to Khams via Central Tibet.

He again visited Lhasa for the last time in 1762;<sup>220</sup> the following year he set out for home. The last decade of his life was spent traveling in eastern Tibet. He visited Mi nyag, Rgyal mo rong, and even 'Jang Sa tham. He was constantly busy with his literary and scholarly activities. We find him writing in 1769<sup>221</sup> the print colophons (*par byang*) for the new Sde dge editions of the *Sman gzhung cha lag bco brgyad*<sup>222</sup> of G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po, the *Bye ba ring bsrel*<sup>223</sup> of Zur mkhar A pho chos rje, and the *Bka' gdams glegs bam*.<sup>224</sup> The diaries treat these last years with the most detail. On the twenty-fourth of the second Tibetan month of the Wood Sheep year (1774), Si tu passed away. His life had been extraordinarily rich, and the list of his students contains many of the greatest minds of the next generation.

#### IV. The Diaries of Si tu and Their Importance

The diaries are included in the last volume of Si tu's *gsung 'bum*.<sup>225</sup> The first part<sup>226</sup> covers the period from his birth to his twenty-fourth year (1723) and was written by himself at the behest of the Eighth Zhwa dmar, the Twelfth Zhwa nag, and Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu. This section can be considered an autobiography proper, for it was composed as a coherent work by Si tu. It is almost entirely chronological in arrangement, and thus integrates almost seamlessly with the diary entries that follow.

The diary<sup>227</sup> covers the period from 1724 to the author's death in 1774, spanning almost exactly half a century. It was edited and arranged from the informal notations by Si tu in his yearly almanacs. In the diaries Si tu mentions the day-to-day happenings that he wanted to remember, natural occurrences such as earth tremors and eclipses, his dreams, initiations received and bestowed, his correspondence, medical patients treated, literary works finished, and occasionally longer passages that enable one to see a little of the human Si tu. One example relates to Si tu's reception at the fortress of Gorkhā. There he met Jayamaṅgala, a scholar from Benares, with whom he had a lengthy discussion on Sanskrit grammar. The scholar praised Si tu's learning profusely, noting that a scholar of Si tu's accomplishments would rate



seven parasols in India. After quoting the compliments of the Indian scholar, he wryly adds that he shouldn't be singing his own praises so much.<sup>228</sup>

The editor of the diaries was a disciple of Si tu, Bai lo Tshe dbang kun khyab.<sup>229</sup> Bai lo was relatively careless in his editing, and his knowledge of orthography leaves much to be desired. In at least two cases, he gives the element designation in the year headings incorrectly.<sup>230</sup> Since he had only to copy the year designation from each diary after arranging them, we have no choice but to suppose that many of the other orthographical and grammatical mistakes should not be blamed on the copyists and block makers, but on Bai lo himself. At the end of the diaries<sup>231</sup> the editor has written an account of the death and funeral ceremonies of Si tu and appended a list of the Si tu's teachers and students.

The importance of this work as a historical source derives from Si tu's remarkable powers of observation and recording. To demonstrate some of the possibilities of this autobiography as a primary historical source, I would like to draw the reader's attention to the light that it throws on the history of Nepal. The references to Nepal are scattered throughout the volume, and many of these passages seem interesting enough to warrant calling them to the notice of students of Nepalese history. I will treat only two of them here.

During Si tu's first visit to Nepal in 1723, he was received by Jagajjayamalla of Kathmandu (reigned 1722–36).<sup>232</sup> A lasting friendship was formed between Si tu and the Kathmandu king that endured until the death of Jagajjayamalla. The diaries give ample evidence of an exchange of letters and gifts between the two. We observe Si tu receiving Sanskrit manuscripts that gladden his heart, apparently as gifts sent by his royal friend.

The picture of Jagajjayamalla that emerges is quite different from the shadowy figure of Newar chronicles. We see a warm and shy scholar-king; Si tu even mentions a commentary on the *Amarakośa* written by his friend. This portrait of Jagajjayamalla calls to mind Bhūpatīndramalla of Bhatgaon (reigned 1696–1722), a gifted Maithili poet. A diary entry in 1736<sup>233</sup> records the arrival of a messenger to inform Si tu of his royal friend's demise, and to ask for the performance of rituals for the benefit of the departed king.

Another interesting passage describes Si tu's visit to Patan in Rgyal zla of the Water Hare year (1723/24), when he received an audience with the infant king.<sup>234</sup> The biography gives the name of this ruler quite clearly as Viṣṇuprakāśamalla. According to the chronicles, the king of Patan at this time should, however, have been Yogaparakāśa (reigned 1722–29); Viṣṇumalla did not ascend the throne until 1729. Could Si tu have made a mistake? According to Regmi, there are coins in the name of Yogaparakāśa dated N. S. 842 (1722)

and inscriptions dated N. S. 844 (1724), 845 (1725), and 848 (1728). He does, however, mention in passing a published inscription of Yogamati in which “the name of the ruling authority is absent unlike in others where as a rule it is always preserved. But Viṣṇumalla who followed Yogaparakāśa is profusely landed.” Could it possibly be that Viṣṇumalla was placed on the throne for a short time in 1723/24 and was again replaced in 1724 by Yogaparakāśa? Could it be that the inscription that Regmi mentions dates to this period? There are a number of such puzzling and intriguing statements in these diaries. Perhaps, in time, we shall be able to identify some of the personages discussed, such as Bachur Ojā, alias Viṣṇupati, the Tirhutiya Brahmin who taught Si tu Sanskrit.

Si tu’s account of his visit to Jo nang and Rtag brtan in 1723<sup>235</sup> is another intriguing addition to our knowledge. He notes that even though Rtag brtan Phun tshogs gling had been converted into a Dge lugs pa teaching college in 1658, there were a number of older monks who seemed to be secretly practicing the Jo nang pa heresies. He relates the circumstances of the campaign against the Jo nang pa carried out by the Fifth Dalai Lama. The villain according to Si tu was Smon gro pa, the poetry teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Smon gro pa apparently had received certain Jo nang pa teachings, but he held some irrational jealousy against his former teaching. He methodically slandered the Jo nang pa to the Fifth Dalai Lama, urging him to confiscate their estates and monasteries and to destroy the great silver reliquary that contained the remains of Tāranātha.

At the time when Si tu visited Rtag brtan, all the manuscript and xylograph prints of the Jo nang pa were under seal. With few exceptions, such as the *Sgrub thabs rin ’byung*, printing from the numerous blocks at Rtag brtan Phun tshogs gling was prohibited. Si tu laments this tragedy that had befallen the Jo nang pa traditions. When he arrived at the Sku ’bum of Jo nang, however, he was amazed to find a colony of about five hundred nuns who still adhered to the old tradition.

The style of the work is very terse, probably due to the limitation of space in the actual diaries in which he was making his notes. Bai lo, as we have previously pointed out, leaves much to be desired as an editor. Spelling mistakes abound, especially in place names,<sup>236</sup> and there are a number of non-literary grammatical structures. All things considered, however, this work must be regarded as one of the more unusual and important Tibetan historical documents.<sup>237</sup>

*Appendix**The Si tu of Lho Karma dgon and Later Dpal spungs*<sup>238</sup>

- A. 'Gro mgon Sangs rgyas ras chen (1088–1158)
- B. Rnal 'byor Ye shes dbang po (1220–81)
- C. Ri 'go ba Ratna bha dra (1281–1313)
- D. Si tu drung che Sa ta'i zhing chen (1345–76)
  - 1. Si tu Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1377–1448)
  - 2. Bkra shis rnam rgyal (1450–97)<sup>239</sup>
  - 3. Bkra shis dpal 'byor (1498–1541)
  - 4. Chos kyi go cha (1542–85)
  - 5. Chos kyi rgyal mtshan Dge legs dpal bzang (1586–1632)
  - 6. Mi pham phrin las rab brtan (1658–82)
  - 7. Legs bshad smra ba'i nyi ma (1683–98)<sup>240</sup>
  - 8. Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1774)<sup>241</sup>
  - 9. Padma nyin byed dbang po (1774–1853)
  - 10. Padma kun bzang (1854–85)
  - 11. Padma dbang mchog rgyal po (1886–1952)
  - 12. Padma don yod nyin byed dbang po (1954–)

### III. The Sa skya School

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## CHAPTER 8

# The Early History of the 'Khon Family and the Sa skya School

### *I. Introduction*

THE MONASTERY of Sa skya was founded by 'Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po in 1073. Although the Sa skya sect takes its name from this monastery, the Sa skya religious system developed only with the doctrinal reforms and systematic reinterpretations of Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, the son of Dkon mchog rgyal po. Thus we cannot properly speak of a Sa skya sect prior to the early decades of the twelfth century. The set of religious practices, the nucleus of which is purported to have been transmitted from Padma-sambhava to 'Khon Nāgendrarakṣita and Rdo rje Rin po che, and which was then passed on with certain modifications within the 'Khon family, is best referred to as the 'Khon-system Rnying ma pa.

Considerable information dealing with the house of 'Khon from its legendary origins to the time of Sa chen Kun dga' snying po is available; however, this, like so much Tibetan historical information, is an intricate fusion of fact and pious mysticism. Perhaps, in this case, the fusion is too complete. What can be extrapolated with some degree of certainty? It is probable that the 'Khon appeared on the scene as local chieftains in the northwestern portion of G.yas ru in Gtsang at some time during the early years of the Royal Dynastic period (seventh–tenth centuries). This area was a land of nomads. Perhaps it was a part of the tantalizingly mysterious empire of Zhang chung. Even up to the present time, the Sa skya sect has enjoyed particular popularity among the nomadic groups of Gtsang, Khams, western Tibet, and the edge of the Byang thang. The Sa skya achieved its brief moment of historical greatness through the patronage of the nomadic Mongols. Certainly, the Sa skya *chos skyong*, Lord of the Tent (Gur gyi mgon po, Pañjaraṇātha), is compatible with nomadic culture, regardless of the fact that its origins are to be found in India.

These 'Khon chieftains gradually came into contact with the rising Tibetan

empire. At least one of them, Dpal po che, became a functionary at the court of Khri srong lde btsan. This was at the time when the great Padmasambhava was in Tibet, working miracles and propagating the Buddhist faith. Dpal po che was probably a supporter of the Buddhist party in the Tibetan court. Although the tradition that places the son of Dpal po che among the first seven Tibetans to be ordained as Buddhist monks is confined to a limited number of historical sources and is, perhaps, a later pious fabrication, it is clear that at some time in the three centuries prior to the founding of Sa skya, the 'Khon discovered the utility of a religious system in expanding and extending their political influence. Such a union of religious prestige and political power is, of course, the keynote of the sectarian period (post-eleventh century) which began with the death of Glang dar ma and the collapse of central authority. The 'Khon lords enjoyed considerable success in their activities. By about 1073, they were in a position to purchase the larger part of the fertile river valley of Grum (or Grom) in Gtsang for the purpose of building a new and more permanent headquarters.

The Sa skya religious system is an amalgamation of diverse traditions. Both Dkon mchog rgyal po, the founder of Sa skya, and his elder brother 'Khon Rog shes rab tshul khirms, felt the need for thorough reforms and a purge of the corrupt practices that had crept into the doctrine. This cry for reform would be a burning issue for some three more centuries. Dkon mchog rgyal po, like Mar pa, the great guru of the Bka' rgyud pa, was sent to study with the great teacher 'Brog mi. From 'Brog mi he received the *Three Tantras of Hevajra* (*Kye rdo rje'i rgyud gsum*)—the *Hevajra*, *Vajrapañjara*, and *Samputa Tantras*—and the initiations of the New Tantras. These new doctrines he skillfully grafted on to the mantric practices of his ancestors, to whom they had been transmitted by Padmasambhava. This fact explains the particular reverence the Sa skya have for Gu ru Rin po che. It was not, however, until the organization of these various elements into a doctrinal system by the great Sa chen Kun dga' snying po that we can speak of a Sa skya sect. Indeed, Sa chen is the one most important religious figure for the Sa skya and stands in the same relationship to the Sa skya sect as Tsong kha pa does to the Dge lugs.

## *II. Literary Sources Concerning the 'Khon*

The 'Khon lineages and the rise of the Sa skya sect have been the subjects of several historical works. Deshung Rinpoche Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1906–86) states that the three basic and most authoritative works are:

1. *Sa skya'i gdung rabs chen po rin chen bang mdzod* by 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs Ngag dbang Kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1662).<sup>242</sup>
2. The supplement (*kha skong*) to the above, *Rin chen 'dzad med*, by the Sa chen Kun dga' blo gros (1729–83).
3. The supplement (*kha skong*) to the above by Sa skya pa Drag shul phrin las (1871–1935), the *Sa skya'i gdung rabs ngo mtshar rin chen kun 'phel*.

The *Sa skya gdung rabs ya rab kha rgyan* by Mkhas pa'i dbang po Dkon mchog lhun grub is, according to Deshung Rinpoche, identical to the first section in verse of the aforementioned work of 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs. He notes that histories were written by the Dam pa Kun dga' grags, Shes rab rdo rje, (Mu srad pa) Gtsang byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, Chos rje Nyi lde pa Nam mkha' bzang po, and Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen.

Tucci has several biographies (*rnam thar*) of Sa skya abbots that contain relevant historical information. Perhaps the most interesting is the biography of Kun dga' rin chen (1517–84), again by 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs.<sup>243</sup> Another extremely valuable source is the collection of biographies of the principal lamas of the Sa skya and Ngor sects edited by Tshul khirms rin chen and printed in three volumes at Sde dge.<sup>244</sup>

The 'Khon lineage and Sa skya sect are treated in numerous Tibetan histories. The Fifth Dalai Lama gives the Sa skya a rather extensive treatment in his chronicles.<sup>245</sup> Tucci has translated this passage and compared it with the Sa skya chronicles (*Sa skya'i gdung rabs chen po rin chen bang mdzod*) of 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs.<sup>246</sup> 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal also presents a certain amount of information on the 'Khon in the *Deb ther sngon po* (1476–78).<sup>247</sup>

The Sa skya lineage is given extensive and detailed treatment in the *Rgya bod yig tshang*, composed by Stag tshang rdzong pa in 1434.<sup>248</sup> Two things become readily apparent when one compares the treatment of the Sa skya in this work with those found in the works of the Fifth Dalai Lama and 'Gos Lo tsā ba. First, the *Rgya bod yig tshang* contains interesting and detailed information not found in the other two sources. Secondly, however, this manuscript is quite corrupt and extremely unreliable in terms of orthography; centuries of copying by semi-literate scribes have taken their toll. In all probability, this work has circulated only in manuscript form. This would explain why many Tibetan scholars seem to be unaware of its existence. Deshung Rinpoche had never seen or heard of the existence of this history until he was shown a copy by Ariane Macdonald in India. He speculates that the lack of knowledge concerning this history is due to the small numbers and decline of



influence of the Stag tshang pa. Indeed, he is uncertain even as to the doctrines and sect affiliations of the Stag tshang pa.

The *Rgya bod yig tshang*, to the best of my knowledge, was first mentioned in Western writings in Sarat Chandra Das's *Tibetan-English Dictionary* in 1904 and used by the same author in his article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* in the same year. The copy at the University of Washington is reputed to be a copy of the copy Das used in Lhasa; but it is more probable that it is a copy made from Rai Bahadur Densapa's copy of Das's copy. The colophon of our manuscript of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* states:<sup>249</sup>

The writer, the Stag tshang pa [of] G.yas ru, the Śākya'i dge bsnyen, by the name of Śrī bhu ti bha dra, composed [this work] in the Wood Male Tiger [year] at Stag sna don rtse.

From internal evidence, I have dated this work to 1434. If this dating is correct, the *Rgya bod yig tshang* becomes one of the older Tibetan historical works, antedating the *Blue Annals*, the *Lho brag chos 'byung*, the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicles*, and Sum pa Mkhan po. Because of its somewhat radical departure from the *chos 'byung* genre, which was soon to become the dominant form for historical writing, and its emphasis on the events of the previous action-packed three centuries, this work assumes tremendous importance. The *Rgya bod yig tshang*, in many instances, preserves a more accurate historical tradition and can help rectify certain errors engendered by generations of unabashed plagiarists from not-so-accurate original works. The value of the *Rgya bod yig tshang*, critically used, should not be underestimated. Indeed, it seems worthwhile to provide a series of working papers on the history of the Sa skya sect consisting of annotated translations of relevant portions of the *Rgya bod yig tshang*. In the remainder of this essay we shall present an annotated translation of the section of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* (University of Washington manuscript, ff. 184a–190a) describing the 'Khon lineage up to the birth of Sa chen Kun dga' snying po.<sup>250</sup>

### III. Translation from the *Rgya bod yig tshang*

[184a] [Herein] is contained a concise summary of the lineage of the illustrious Sa skya pa and an elucidation of the major events [in their history]. [I] pay respectful homage to the lama and to the protector Mañjuṣa. I bow at the feet of the successive teachers of Mkhon,<sup>251</sup> who, having joined together

the infinite wisdom of all the victorious ones, have acted on behalf of wandering creatures by various means toward the subduing of the manifold illusions. Out of boundless wonder for the way in which the pure lineage has successively come forth and for their deeds, I will compose a rosary of their amazing biographies, the manner in which they have illuminated the teachings of the Buddha and have led all creatures toward [spiritual] maturity and deliverance.

This same precious lineage of Mkhon, the holy representatives of our teacher, the Buddha, in origin, are said to have descended from the gods of light. The eldest of the three heavenly brothers (*lha mched gsum*) who, in the beginning, came forth from heaven to the high place [and] pure land, the region of La stod mnga' ris<sup>252</sup> was the *gnam lha* Snyi rings.<sup>253</sup> The middle [brother] was the *gnam lha* G.yu ris.<sup>254</sup> The youngest was the *gnam lha* Dbu se.<sup>255</sup>

Because a ruler of men had been requested of them, the youngest brother remained in the land of men and acted as lord of men. The four sons that came forth to him were called the four Si ji li brothers.<sup>256</sup> It is said that they entered into conflict with the eighteen great Ldong<sup>257</sup> clans. [184b] It is said that after the *gnam lha* G.yu ris came as an ally, the eighteen great Ldong clans were subdued and enslaved.

Further, if [you] wish [to know] from whence came this lineage, the *gnam lha* G.yu ris took as wife the girl of Smu, Smu bza' ldem bu;<sup>258</sup> seven sons appeared and were called the seven Ma sangs brothers.<sup>259</sup> The six elder brothers, together with their father, ascended to the land of the gods by means of the *rmu thag* and *rkyang thag*.<sup>260</sup>

The youngest son [i.e., Ma sangs spyi rje]<sup>261</sup> married the daughter of Thog lha 'od chen, called Thog tsam 'ur ma.<sup>262</sup> To this alliance the son Thog tsha dpa'o stag<sup>263</sup> came forth. He<sup>264</sup> [i.e., the latter] married the daughter of a nāga (*klu*), Klu lcam bra ma.<sup>265</sup> The son Klu tsha rta so 'od chen<sup>266</sup> came forth [to this union]. He [i.e., the latter] took as wife Mon bza' mtsho mo rgyal. That one son who came forth, because he was born on the border between the slate scree (*g.ya'*) and the grassy slope (*spang*), was given the name G.ya' spang skyes.<sup>267</sup>

Because the demon (*srin*) called Skya rings khrag med<sup>268</sup> had an exceptionally remarkable wife by the name of G.ya' bum si le ma,<sup>269</sup> he [i.e., G.ya' spang skyes] killed the demon Skya rings khrag med; and having abducted G.ya' 'bum si le ma, he took her as a wife. The one son that came forth [to the union] was named Mkhon bar skyes,<sup>270</sup> because he originated in the interval of the struggle (*mkhon pa*) with the demon. [185a] Hence, the clan (*gdung rus*) is known as Mkhon.

He [Mkhon bar skyes] took Gtsan sa lcam bu smon<sup>271</sup> as a wife. From this union came forth a son. That same [son] was possessed with great magical powers and transformations. He was suitably endowed with mental ability. Even seeing [such] a combination of youth and good appearance captivated the mind. Because he was so handsome, they said that he was the most rare one like that [ever] to come forth in the world of men. Consequently, he was given the name Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan.<sup>272</sup> That youth was sent out by his father to investigate which lands were good [for acquisition]. He recognized that Ya 'phyang la mul of La stod snyan rtse thang<sup>273</sup> had all of the eight good signs, and he seized that territory. That was the first territory of the Mkhon.

At that time, the Emanation Body, the King of the Law, Khri srong lde btsan was in Tibet. In his lifetime, the *mkhan po* of Za hor, Śāntarakṣita, was invited. His disciples were the first Tibetan ordained monks (*btsun pa*) and were famous as the seven men on trial (*sad mi mi bdun*).<sup>274</sup> The three elder ones of these, which included three elder, three younger, and one intermediate one, altogether making seven, were:

1. Da was Ratna rakshi ta or Rin chen bsrung pa;<sup>275</sup>
2. Rba Dznyāntrai ta or Ye shes bsrung pa,<sup>276</sup> who was Rta dbyangs;<sup>277</sup>
3. Ran Rad nentra rakṣi ta [185b] or Rin chen dbang po bsrung pa.

The three younger ones were:

1. Pa gor Bai ro tsa na or Rnam par snang mdzad bsrung ba;
2. Mkhon Na ga entra rakṣi ta or Klu'i dbang po bsrung pa;
3. Gtsang Rde bente rakṣi ta or Lha'i dbang pos bsrung pa.

The intermediate one was Rlangs Khom pa Lotstsha Su ga ta warma rakṣi ta, called in Tibetan, Bde bar gshegs pa bsrung pa.

Because this Dkon pa rje Gung stag was endowed with a vast intellect and skill in the affairs of the perishable world, he served long as a great inner [counselor] of the Tibetan king. At that time, because there arose the fulfillment of [his] glory, he became famous, taking the name of Dpal po che. Thus, there arose a great fame to Mkhon through its [participation in] secular affairs (*mi chos*). He married the sister<sup>278</sup> of Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba,<sup>279</sup> Rlangs gza' Sne chung.<sup>280</sup> The eldest of the two sons<sup>281</sup> born to that union took the monastic vows (*rab tu byung ba*) in the presence of Sba Ye shes dbang po

bsrung pa<sup>282</sup> and his own maternal uncle and was known as Mkhon Klu'i dbang po bsrung pa.<sup>283</sup>

[186a] He was the most gifted in wisdom among those three younger translators and was endowed with a mastery of the accomplishments of mantra and metaphysics. Because he requested many [initiations] like the *Rdo rje phur pa*<sup>284</sup> and the *Yang dag* from Master Padma[sambhava], he performed the propitiation (*sgrub pa*) at the rock cliffs of Yer pa [i.e., Yer brag]<sup>285</sup> and achieved success. Hence, great fame came to the Mkhon through its [participation in] clerical affairs (*lha chos*).

His younger brother was called Rdo rje Rin po che.<sup>286</sup> He, too, received many initiations and instructional precepts from Master Padmasambhava and his own elder brother; and he was known as [being] learned. Indeed, the practice of the Rnying ma [pa] secret mantra began almost with him. Formerly, in Tibet in general and among the Mkhon in particular, there did not arise any distinction [difference in meaning]<sup>287</sup> between the mantrist (*sngags pa*) and the ordained monk (*rab tu byung pa*).

Mkhon Rdo rje Rin po che married the daughter of 'Bro dgra 'dul<sup>288</sup> named 'Gro g.yang lon skyid.<sup>289</sup> [Seven] sons called the seven 'Bro tsha brothers were born.<sup>290</sup> During the observance of a three-day *gson gshid*<sup>291</sup> celebration in Snyan rtse<sup>292</sup> of 'Bro,<sup>293</sup> the seven brothers, each day, engaged in wagering<sup>294</sup> on the various horses, bodies [i.e., feats of bodily strength and skill], and personal effects; and through their strength and horse races,<sup>295</sup> they were judged victorious.<sup>296</sup>

After they understood that evil intentions<sup>297</sup> [were] in the mind of 'Bro, [they discussed the matter among themselves]. [186b] To the [youngest brother's] proposal to collect an army and do battle, [the other six brothers] said: "First, because he is our maternal uncle, and secondly, because we have been allied for a long time, we will not fight. There is no purpose in engaging in extensive jealous strife in [such] a vast realm."

The eldest of the Seven 'Bro tsha Brothers went to Mang yul;<sup>298</sup> the next, to Gung thang;<sup>299</sup> the next, to Gad;<sup>300</sup> the next, to Gnya' ro;<sup>301</sup> the next, to Nyang shab;<sup>302</sup> the next, to Grom pa g.ya' lung.<sup>303</sup> The youngest remained in the land of his father and did battle against 'Bro. [The lineage] from him, which divided [into three branches], was known as the Three Ma 'khrigs sde [i.e., unconfederated authorities]<sup>304</sup> in Snyan rtse reng.<sup>305</sup>

The name of the next to youngest, who went to Grom pa, was Shes rab yon tan. The eldest of the two sons that were born to him was Tshul khrims rgyal po. The youngest went to Khab po stag thog.<sup>306</sup> There, too, to some extent, the 'Khon spread. There were, indeed, many chieftains (*sde pa*) of the Mkhon who derived from his [lineage] in the north of G.yas ru.<sup>307</sup>

The eldest of the three sons born to Mkhon Tshul khrim s rgyal po was Gtsug tor shes rab. The youngest resided in G.ya' lung itself. The middle son went to Rdal chang tshang.<sup>308</sup> [187a] The seven sons that came forth to Gtsug tor shes rab, together [with their father], were in G.ya' lung. The fifth of the seven sons was Mkhon Dge skyabs.<sup>309</sup> He went to Shab. Of the two sons that were born to him, the eldest was called Mkhon Dge mthong. It is said that the Mkhon people of Shab stod<sup>310</sup> are derived [from the progeny born] to the younger son.

To Dge [m]thong a single son was born: Mkhon ston Bal po. He labored at the propitiation of *Yang [dag]* and [*Rdo rje*] *phur [pa]* at the cliff of Tsha mo rong glang.<sup>311</sup> Because [of these efforts] he achieved success and emerged as one possessed with the ability and power of pressing into service the twelve Stan ma.<sup>312</sup>

A son called Śākya blo gros was born to him [Mkhon ston Bal po]. He resided for a long time in Bya ru lung pa<sup>313</sup> and in Shab Stod and Smad; later, in the latter part of his life, he went to G.ya' lung mkhar thabs,<sup>314</sup> the land of his ancestors.<sup>315</sup>

The eldest of his two sons that came forth was called Mkhon Rog Shes rab tshul khrim s. That same one trained himself in the tantra according to the religious system of his ancestors. After he had achieved the successful propitiation of *Rdo rje phur pa*, he became endowed with an incomprehensible [power of] magic and illusory transformations. In his youth [187b] he became a *go mi'i dge bsnyen*<sup>316</sup> in the presence of Zhus ston Gzhon nu brtson 'grus,<sup>317</sup> who acted as the abbot (*mkhan po*) of Shab bya ru<sup>318</sup> and 'Phrang<sup>319</sup> [or] Brag dmar,<sup>320</sup> and who was the teacher (*mkhan po*) of Lo ston Rdo rje dbang phyug.<sup>321</sup> Because he was so very reverent and assiduous in observing his vows, he was fine in appearance and he acquired wide fame for learning and goodness. This one, because he was a *gong mi'i dge bsnyen*,<sup>322</sup> did not sire offspring.

Before that, all of the 'Khon who came forth in succession were especially learned in the doctrines of exoteric philosophy (*phyi mtshan nyid*) such as the *Prajñāpāramitā*, in the Vajrayāna, and in the Old Tantras such as the six classes of the *gsang pa*,<sup>323</sup> the five early translations (*snga 'gyur*),<sup>324</sup> the thirteen later translations (*phyi 'gyur*), and the twenty-one *phra mo*.<sup>325</sup> They made *Yang [dag]* and [*Rdo rje*] *phur [pa]* their central tutelary deities (*yi dam*) and achieved the requisite propitiation. They made the Dkar mo nyi zla lcam sring<sup>326</sup> the protector of their doctrine (*chos skyong*); complete efficacy resulted.<sup>327</sup>

The younger brother of Mkhon Rog shes rab tshul khrim s was called Mkhon Dkon mchog rgyal po. This same lama was born in the Wood Male

Dog year (1034). From his youth, he requested many initiations and instructions from his father and elder brother. Through diligent study, he became very learned in the religious system of his ancestors. [188a] He also had an inclination toward the New Tantras.

At that time, when a great religious feast (*lung ston*)<sup>328</sup> of 'Bro was held, Bla ma Dkon mchog rgyal po also went [to participate]. From among those present at this mass spectacle [of] competitive sports (*rtsed*) and jumping into the air (*'phyo*),<sup>329</sup> several mantrists (*sngags pa*) came forth with the masks<sup>330</sup> of the twenty-eight women [of] Dbang phyug.<sup>331</sup> They carried various ritual instruments (*phyag mtshan*).<sup>332</sup>

The one who danced<sup>333</sup> as Ma mo Ral pa can<sup>334</sup> with the drum and [appropriate] gestures (*stabs*)<sup>335</sup> was judged to be the victor at that same great spectacle. When [Dkon mchog rgyal po] returned, he reported what had happened to his elder brother.

His elder brother said: "There has arisen the time of corruption of the secret mantra (*gsang sngags*).<sup>336</sup> Henceforth, in Tibet, there will not come forth among the Rnying ma [pa] any who will have attained perfection in the philosophical (*mtshan nyid*) teaching. Because all that we have, the books and religious objects (*lha rten*) of [me, your] old brother (*a po rgad po*),<sup>337</sup> are now in your complete power and also, because 'Brog mi Lo tsā ba in Mang mkhar<sup>338</sup> is [very] learned, go to study with him." After he had said [this], he concealed all the Rnying [ma pa] books as *gter [ma]*.

An emanation (*rnam 'phrul*)<sup>339</sup> of the protector of their religious doctrine (*chos skyong*)<sup>340</sup> appeared there. Then, the entire Dharma cycle (*chos bskor*)<sup>341</sup> of [*Rdo rje*] *phur pa*,<sup>342</sup> the manner (*cho ga*) of [making] *gtor ma*, [188b] the two-part (*cha gnyis*) *Seng ldan gyi phur pa bco lnga pa*, and the *Dkar mo nyi zla* manifested themselves in person to Mkhon Rog Shes rab tshul khirms. After they had shown him the type of *gtor [ma]* to make, [he] granted it to his younger brother. It was necessary that those of the lineage of Mkhon should uninterruptedly make regular *gtor ma* [offerings]<sup>343</sup> in like manner.

After that, Bla ma Dkon mchog rgyal po [went] to Mang mkhar myu gu lung,<sup>344</sup> but he was not accepted into the presence of 'Brog mi. [Therefore,] he [went] to G.ya' lung dur 'khrod [and] heard the *Hevajra Tantra* (*Brtag gnyis*) from 'Khyin Lo tsā ba. That [expounding of the *Hevajra*] was almost finished, and Bla ma 'Khyin died. In his last testament, he said: "Continue the [study of the] doctrine and request [instruction] from 'Brog mi in Mang mkhar."

Then, he went into the presence of 'Brog mi. ['Brog mi] said: "Since your father [i.e., 'Khyin Lo tsā ba] has died, you must come to the grandfather

[’Brog mi Lo tsā ba, because he was the teacher of ’Khyin Lo tsā ba], or you will deviate from your course of progress.”

After he had offered seventeen horses, together with their loads, [which he had obtained by] trading throughout the countryside,<sup>345</sup> and a lady’s jeweled rosary, [which he had obtained] as a price [for] grass,<sup>346</sup> [all] those [things] that he had brought, he requested the precious instruction. By degrees, it was granted. Furthermore, because he heard and studied diligently the mass of Doctrine of the New Translations, he became a great master of the Doctrine.

[189a] After that, he erected the monumental reliquary<sup>347</sup> of his father and elder brother at Zhal lung ’jag bshongs.<sup>348</sup> One set of the blessing bestowing *phur pa*<sup>349</sup> dwelt inside of that [reliquary]. The other set of the *phur pa* was consecrated to his *yi dam* whenever he should pass on.<sup>350</sup> It is said that it would be at Sa skya at a later time.

He also resided at G.ya’ lung chos skyar. He founded a small monastery at Bra’o lung. He resided there a few years. It is known as the “Ruined Sa skya” (Sa skya gog po).

At that time, [one day] the master and students in a small party went on an outing.<sup>351</sup> When they looked down from a mountain peak, they beheld, on the edge of Spom po ri,<sup>352</sup> [a place] where the earth was white and fatty, [where] a river flowed down on the right, [a place that] was perfect in the many signs of good fortune.<sup>353</sup>

[Dkon mchog rgyal po] thought: “If a monastery were to be built here, it would be of benefit to the teaching of the Buddha and to many creatures.” Because he requested [permission] from Jo bo Gdong nag pa,<sup>354</sup> it was granted.

He said to the private owners of that place, the Zhang zhung Gu ra ba,<sup>355</sup> four communities of monks (*bandhe*), and the so called seven Lha mi communities:<sup>356</sup> “If you are not in opposition to our building a small monastery on this spot, [we] will indeed pay [your] price.” [189b] They said: “[We] do not ask any price whatsoever; [we] beg you to build a monastery.” However, he said: “At a later time, [there might be] disagreement.” [Therefore,] he paid a price consisting chiefly of a white mare, a woman’s garment, a rosary of jewels, and a coat of mail. They said that the lama should be the landowner (*sa bdag*) of the territory from the Mon ravine up to the Bal ravine.

At the time when this lama had reached age forty, it was 3,207 years<sup>357</sup> since the *nirvāna* in the Earth Female Pig year of Śākyamuṇi, who was born in the Earth Male Dragon year and attained the age of eighty. In that Water Female Ox year [1073, when Dkon mchog rgyal po was forty], he laid the foundation of the seat (*gdan sa*) of the excellent Sa skya pa. He made the center of the monastic residence (*bla brang*) on the very spot of [the present]

eastern monastic residence (*bla brang shar*).<sup>358</sup> He made twenty-eight iron encircling walls (*lcags ri*).

This same lama held the seat for thirty years and performed extensive works [on behalf] of the teaching. He died in his sixty-ninth year, on the fourteenth day of the ninth month (*dbyugs pa*) of the Water Male Horse year (1102).

From that Water Female Ox year (1037) of the founding of the great seat [190a] down to the [present] Wood Male Tiger year (1434), when the eighth white *sme ba*<sup>359</sup> is in the center (*dbus*), [this year] when there has arisen a great conflict (*bde sdug chen mo*) in Dbus and Gtsang out of *gong dkar bzhi 'dzom la skyes*,<sup>360</sup> 361 years have elapsed.

When Bla ma Dkon mchog rgyal po had attained the age of fifty-nine in the Water Male Ape year (1092), a son was born to the youngest of his two wives, the daughter<sup>361</sup> of Gu ra ba, named Jo mo Zhang mo.<sup>362</sup> That son who was born was [to be] called Sa chen Kun dga' snying po.





## CHAPTER 9

# Glo bo Mkhan chen and Buddhist Logic in Tibet

### *I. Glo bo Mkhan chen*

AS PART OF THE *Ngagyur Nyidingmay Sungrab* series of Tibetan literature, Mr. Sonam Topgyay Kazi has reproduced an exceedingly rare treatise on Buddhist logic: a commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Tshad ma rigs gter*<sup>363</sup> by Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456–1532). This manuscript was obtained from the Venerable Chopgye Trichen (Bco brgyad Khri chen) and is probably now unique. Because of the importance of this commentary for Sa skya pa scholars, Chopgye Rinpoche was most anxious that the text should appear as quickly as possible. Mr. Kazi has kindly agreed to issue the text in his series.

Although this work is clearly a product of the glorious Sa skya pa tradition, Glo bo Mkhan chen exemplifies the eclecticism that flourished in the Nepalese borderlands during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>364</sup> Along with the *Tshad ma rigs gter* commentary, for instance, one finds a brief work devoted to the famed Bka' brgyud pa poet-saint, Mi la ras pa.<sup>365</sup> Glo bo Mkhan chen was one of a group of eminent Buddhist scholars connected with the former principality of Glo Smon thang (Mustang) in Nepal, a list that includes such names as Glo bo Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (thirteenth century),<sup>366</sup> Mnga' ris Paṇ chen Padma dbang rgyal (1487–1542), and Rig 'dzin Legs ldan rdo rje (b. 1512), Mnga' ris Paṇ chen's younger brother. Under the first few generations of successors to A mes dpal, Buddhism flowered in Mustang. Glo bo gained a reputation as a center of artistic and literary creative energy. The cause of Mustang's decline is a complicated problem. Undoubtedly, two important factors were the bitter and constant warfare that plagued the western Tibetan states for almost two centuries and the rise of the Gorkha state. The unsettled conditions led to a redirection of trade to the eastern

passes. As the Kathmandu Valley and later Solu grew prosperous, Mustang and its western neighbors fell upon hard days.

Glo bo Mkhan chen belonged to the late fifteenth century, an era in which the princes of Mustang reached the apogee of their power. Unfortunately we know very little of the events of his life. His chief gurus included Rgyal tshab Dam pa Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–78),<sup>367</sup> Gu ge Paṅ chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan (d. 1486),<sup>368</sup> the Third Ngor Mkhan chen 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho (1396?–1474), Yongs 'dzin Dkon mchog 'phel,<sup>369</sup> and perhaps also Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge (1429–89). Although Kong ston Dbang phyug grub pa fails to mention him among the students of Go rams pa in his biography of that teacher,<sup>370</sup> I do not think we can entirely rule out the possibility that Glo bo Mkhan chen might have studied with the great scholar. This question is critical for determining Glo bo Mkhan chen's relationship to the various Sa skya pa schools of logic. It is especially relevant for understanding where Glo bo Mkhan chen's work stands with reference to Go rams pa's *Tshad ma rigs gter gyi dka' 'grel sde bdun rab gsal*.

Since he is also the author of biographical works about Bla ma Dmar ston Rgyal mtshan 'od zer (fifteenth century)<sup>371</sup> and Grub thob Yon tan dpal, one would assume that Glo bo Mkhan chen had also studied with these masters. All of these gurus belong to the Sa skya pa Ngor pa tradition. Yet the fact that in 1511 Glo bo Mkhan chen presided at the final monastic ordination of the Rnying ma pa reformer, Mnga' ris Paṅ chen,<sup>372</sup> would seem to indicate that the relations between the Rnying ma pa and Sa skya pa were then—as they are now—especially cordial in these border areas.

Glo bo Mkhan chen's *Collected Works* contains four volumes and was apparently never xylographed. He was an author with broad interests and considerable versatility. Of special interest is his history of the Shar pa lineage. The Shar pa were a prominent lineage of religious princes, supposedly descended from Zhang zhung stock. There is some evidence that they had been settled in the area for a considerable time before their overlords, the 'Khon, appeared on the scene. The first of the Shar pa Bla brang of Sa skya was Ye shes 'byung grus, a disciple of Sa skya Paṅḍita. Two of his grandchildren, Dus 'khor ba Ye shes rin chen and 'Jam dbyangs Rin chen rgyal mtshan, served as the *ti shih*, or imperial preceptors, to the Yüan emperors. The lamas of the Klu sdings Bla brang of Ngor are said to descend from this line. The Shar pa family has produced a good number of prominent figures in the religious life of Tibet.

Glo bo Mkhan chen also penned two notes on the *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, an

orthodox treatment of the *tathāgatagarbha* theory, and a study of the examination and appraisal of jewels. The text reproduced by Mr. Kazi is a fresh and often thought-provoking commentary on the *Tshad ma rigs gter*, one of the first and most successful indigenous Tibetan studies on the principles of logic and epistemology. This commentary was written<sup>373</sup> at Thub bstan Dar rgyas gling in 1482, just three hundred years after the birth of the famed Sa skya Paṇḍita, of whom he was acclaimed to be the rebirth. In these three centuries the Tibetan scholastic tradition had seen many major developments.

## II. Buddhist Logic in Tibet

The *Tshad ma rigs gter* is one of the few indigenous Tibetan treatises accorded the esteem usually reserved for the renowned Buddhist treatises of India that were translated into Tibetan and preserved in the *Bstan 'gyur*. In a superbly concise manner Sa skya Paṇḍita summarizes the basic topics treated by Dharmakīrti in his seven monumental expository works on *pramāṇa*.<sup>374</sup> Thanks to the work of Stcherbatsky, Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya, Mironov, Frauwallner, Tucci, and a host of other dedicated scholars, we now have considerable information on the Indian sources of Buddhist logic. Almost without exception these scholars have utilized the Tibetan translations and secondary sources only in so far as they are able to illuminate extant or reconstruct lost Sanskrit originals. With the exception of Stcherbatsky, none of these early scholars attempted to comprehend the various developments in logic and educational methodology in Tibetan regions. No one has yet attempted to investigate how Tibetan scholastics understood and classified the enormous corpus of logic compiled in the *Bstan 'gyur*. While it would justly invite ridicule to venture a complete account of Buddhist logic in Tibet at this point, a bare outline of the more important aspects can contribute toward understanding the significance of the *Tshad ma rigs gter* and the commentary by Glo bo Mkhan chen.

The first works on Buddhist logic had already been translated by Ska ba Dpal brtsegs, Dran pa Nam mkha', and others during the Snga dar, or "period of the earlier propagation of the Dharma" (seventh–ninth centuries). The most important of these were Dharmakīrti's *Sambandhaparīkṣā*, *Hetubindu*, and *Samtānāntarasiddhi*.

The next spurt of active interest in the translation and study of the masterpieces of Buddhist dialectics came during the eleventh century with an attempt at translating the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* of Dharmakīrti's predecessor,

Dignāga, by Zhwa ma Lo tsā ba Seng ge rgyal mtshan and Vasudhararakṣita. A translation of Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* and its detailed commentaries by Devendrabuddhi<sup>375</sup> and Śākyamati<sup>376</sup> was also attempted by Rma Lo tsā ba Dge ba'i blo gros and Subhutiśrīśānti. These new renderings were no doubt inadequate, but they stimulated interest in *pramāṇa* in Tibet. Rma Lo tsā ba's pupil, Khyung po Grags se, stands out among the early teachers whose lineages seem no longer to be extant. The texts and approach of this school are known as *Tshad ma rnying ma* or the "Old Logic."

The "New Logic" (*Tshad ma gsar ma*) begins with Rngog Lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), who critically revised the previous translations and added the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*<sup>377</sup> and *Nyāyabindu*<sup>378</sup> of Dharmakīrti together with a number of important commentaries<sup>379</sup> to what was to become the *Bstan 'gyur*. The *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa yid kyi mun sel* by Phywa pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–59), an upholder of the Rngog tradition, marks the next great milestone in the Tibetan study of logic. It was Phywa pa who initiated what became the *bsdus grwa*,<sup>380</sup> pedagogical manuals intended to systematically inculcate the essential principles of exoteric Buddhism in student monks through the graded practice of logical disputation. This innovation was important, as it was ultimately to develop into the teaching colleges and the *yig cha*, obligatory curricula that became the *raison d'être* of the great monasteries of Central Tibet. A thorough account of these developments is, however, a story that must be told elsewhere.

There were what we might call anti-rational strains in Vajrayāna thought, especially those that entered Tibet with certain *anuttarayoga* tantras. Several of the influential Tibetan masters elaborated upon these trends that are implicit in primitive Buddhism as well as in early Madhyamaka thought. 'Bri gung Skyobs pa 'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217), for instance, tried to deny to ordinary mortals the possession of "real" logic, defining *pramāṇa* as the enlightened awareness (*jñāna*) of an omniscient being—in other words, of a fully developed buddha.

Like many of 'Jig rten mgon po's statements, this one, especially in the form it was presented by his more scholastically oriented disciples, provoked lively and heated debate. There are a few indications that Sa skya Paṇḍita regarded this position as one of the more dangerous "errors" that required refutation in his *Tshad ma rigs gter*, the most precise of his three "mines" (*gter*).<sup>381</sup> It is certain that one of the most important factors motivating Sa skya Paṇḍita to compose the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* was the desire to refute 'Jig rten mgon po's *dgongs gcig* as expounded by his disciple, Dbon po Sher 'byung (1187–1241). The significant intellectual issues in Tibetan cultural history

raised here, however, are problems that will require the broad background and the persevering sort of investigation that we do not yet possess.

The second most important name connected with the “New Logic” is that of Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (1182–1251). With the help of his guru, the Kashmiri scholar Śākyaśrī (d. 1225), Sa skya Paṇḍita retranslated the *Pramānavārttika*. The *Tshad ma rigs gter* was intended to be a condensation of the essence of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and the seven treatises of Dharmakīrti.<sup>382</sup> Although a number of other translations appeared and other schools of logic arose, only two systems, Rngog pa and Sa skya pa, were successful in exerting any lasting influence. The Rngog pa tradition persisted among the old Bka’ gdams pa and some of the Bka’ brgyud pa sects. The vast majority of the other schools of Tibetan logic branched off from the school of Sa skya.

The most important of Sa skya Paṇḍita’s disciples for the transmission of his exoteric teachings were the two brothers of the Shar pa Bla brang, ’U yug pa Rig pa’i seng ge of the Nub pa,<sup>383</sup> Gung pa Skyo ston Dri med,<sup>384</sup> Lho pa Kun mkhyen Rin chen dpal,<sup>385</sup> and Dmar Chos kyi rgyal po.<sup>386</sup> ’U yug pa Rig pa’i seng ge played the most prominent role in the development of dialectics and educational methodology. In his lineage of disciples appeared Bla ma Dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–75) and Nya dbon Kun dga’ dpal. A host of scholars and educators began to appear by the end of the fourteenth century. The fifteenth century was a period of greatness for this tradition and an important era for the establishment of Sa skya pa teaching monasteries: Dga’ ldan Yangs pa can was founded in 1416; Ngor in 1434 by Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po (1382–1456); ’Phan yul Nalendra in 1437 by Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449); ’Bras yul Skyed tshal in 1464 by Byams chen Rab ’byams pa; Gongs dkar Rdo rje gdan in 1469 by Rdzong pa Kun dga’ rnam rgyal, Gtsang Gser mdog can in 1473 by Paṇ chen Don yod dpal; and Rta nag Thub bstan rnam rgyal gling in 1474 by Go rams pa (1429–89).<sup>387</sup>

Another branch of the transmission of ’U yug pa’s teachings passed from Bla ma Dam pa to Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo (1303–80) to Lo chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan and thence to Bo dong Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451). Bo dong Paṇ chen was the author of a startlingly imaginative treatise on logic, the *Tshad ma rig snang*.<sup>388</sup>

According to Kong sprul, the Dge lugs pa transmission also branched off from the Sa skya pa as follows:

1. Sa skya Paṇḍita
2. ’U yug pa Rig pa’i seng ge (d. 1253)
3. Nyi thog pa Sangs rgyas kun smon

4. Zhang Mdo sde dpal
5. Nya (Gnyag) dbon Kun dga' dpal (1345–1439)
6. Red mda' pa Gzhon nu blo gros (1349–1412)
7. Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419)

Tsong kha pa and his two chief disciples, Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432) and Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438), wrote the primary commentaries upon which all the treatments of logic found in the Dge lugs pa *yig cha* are based.

Certain questions and issues that arose as Buddhist logic developed in Tibet are basic to the understanding of sectarian differences. Kong sprul, citing the Sa skya pa scholar Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge, has made this point.<sup>389</sup> Sa skya Paṇḍita adhered strictly to the primary treatises of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, along with Dharmakīrti's autocommentary to the first chapter of the *Pramāṇavārttika*. He selected all of his illustrative and pedagogical examples from these texts themselves, joining them together into a coherent and innovative structure.

Kong sprul notes, however, that the majority of the Tibetan exegetes followed the commentaries of Devendrabuddhi and Śākyamati in devising paradigms and syllogisms. The Dge lugs pa scholastics, led by Rgyal tshab and Mkhas grub, favored the practice of inventing graded syllogisms. This approach, while pedagogically sound, was carried over to all subjects of Buddhist scholasticism and represented a radical break with tradition. Monks raised from early childhood on such a diet could certainly be expected to master the syllogism as a form and the dialectical approach as a technique of inducing lucidity of thought. Whether or not they would be able to understand a related canonical text was another matter.

It is with this context in mind that Glo bo Mkhan chen's late fifteenth-century commentary on the *Tshad ma rigs gter* should be read. The later developments of logic in Sa skya pa, Ngor pa, and Dge lugs pa scholasticism were largely continuations of trends that were already identifiable by the end of the fifteenth century. Glo bo Mkhan chen stands thus on a boundary in both time and space. That this commentary will prove of considerable interest in the decades to come I have little doubt.

## IV. The Dge lugs School

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## CHAPTER 10

# The Autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama

### *I. Introduction*

MR. NGAWANG GELEK DEMO has undertaken the reproduction of the Bkra shis lhun po edition of the autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama, Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567–1662).<sup>390</sup> Anyone who has ever attempted to read Bkra shis lhun po prints will realize the magnitude of the problems that Mr. Gelek faced. These prints are notoriously illegible because of the worn condition of the blocks, the bad inking, and the quality of the paper normally used. Mr. Gelek has utilized two examples but has nevertheless been forced to resort to reconstructing many pages by tracing, a project that has taken the better part of a year. There can be little doubt that his efforts are justified by the importance of the text that he is at last ready to lay before the scholarly public. This work is one of the most significant sources for the study of Tibetan history, political and cultural, during an extremely complex period.

The life of the First Paṅ chen Lama spanned almost a century. The latter part of this era, the first half of the seventeenth century, witnessed the establishment of the three great theocracies of the greater Tibetan cultural world: the 'Brug pa state in Bhutan, the Dga' ldan Pho brang in Tibet, and the institution of the Rje btsun Dam pa incarnation lineage among the Khalkha Mongols. I offer here a brief summary of the origins of each by way of setting the scene for a discussion of the life of the First Paṅ chen Lama.

First, the traditional date for the establishment of the 'Brug pa theocracy, which gave Bhutan its indigenous name—'Brug yul—is 1616, when the heir of the house of the Rgya of Rwa lung, Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594–1651) arrived in Bhutan fleeing from persecution by the king of Gtsang. Gradually, with the help of Bhutanese allies led by the 'Ob mtsho family, he forced the submission or exile of his chief rivals, the Lha pa (Gnyos) and Gnas

rnying pa (Rgya). When Ngag dbang rnam rgyal died in 1651, he handed a reasonably prosperous and unified Bhutanese state on to his son, 'Jam dpal rdo rje (b. 1631). Bstan 'dzin 'brug rgyal (1591–1656) of 'Ob mtsho, the First Sde pa (Deb), organized the administration and created the institutions of *spyi bla* and *dpon slob*. The principle of lineage prevailed in the succession to the head of the Bhutanese church until the male line of Mi pham bstan pa'i nyi ma (1567–1619) came to an end.

Secondly, Gushri Khan's defeat of the last ruler of Gtsang in 1642 resulted in the establishment of the Dge lugs pa church—led by the Fifth Dalai Lama—as the supreme spiritual and temporal authority in Tibet. The rise of the Dga' ldan Pho brang government brought the first semblance of peace and order that had existed for almost eight hundred years.

Finally, the rebirth in 1635 of Jo nang Tāranātha as the son of Mgon po rdo rje, the Tushiyetu Khan, led ultimately to the establishment among the Khalkas and their dependents of a Dge lugs pa theocracy under the titular rule of Tāranātha's successive rebirths. Tāranātha was for the Fifth Dalai Lama and his wronged mother a lecherous villain without equal, but for the majority of Mongol princes of the day, he was a saint and miracle worker beyond compare. The reincarnation of this amazing Jo nang pa scholar in the north left the Fifth Dalai Lama free in 1658 to confiscate Tāranātha's great monastery of Rtag brtan phun tshogs gling in Gtsang. As the friction between the Khalkhas and the western Mongol entente began to lessen, the Khalkhas once again began to look toward Tibet for religious inspiration.

The same period saw other profound political changes for Tibet's neighbors. The expansion of Moghul power loosened, to some extent, Tibet's ancient ties with India. In China the moribund Ming dynasty came to an end and was replaced by the Manchus in 1644. The tiny state of Gorkha was making its influence felt throughout west and central Nepal under the descendants of the great Drabya Shah, disrupting old patterns of trade. By 1656 Gorkha already was threatening the Skyid grong-Kodari-Kathmandu Valley route. The Fifth Dalai Lama provides a glimpse of this problem in his autobiography:

As a result of a [fresh] outbreak of trouble between Nepal and Tibet and Skyid grong, there was a fear that the Gorkha would again take away the Jo bo statue. Therefore, the Sde pa Nor bu, Mgron gnyer Drung pa, and the others who have been sent in accordance with the decision of the government to conduct the 'Phags pa Wa ti [i.e., the Jo bo] arrived at 'Bras spungs on the twenty-third [of the fourth Tibetan month].<sup>391</sup>

There was increasing Mongol involvement in Tibetan affairs as a result of the missionary activities of the Third Dalai Lama, Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543–88), and his subsequent reincarnation as the great-grand-nephew<sup>392</sup> of the Tumet princeling, Altan Khan. Tibetan sectarian and political rivalries were increasingly made known to Mongol patrons; in turn, these princes implored manifestations of the magical powers of their favored lama, sometimes against their ancient enemies—or more often against their closest kin. The result was a fluid alliance between Tibetan and Mongol factions. The religious issue, “Reds” vs. “Yellows” (Bka’ brgyud pa vs. Dge lugs pa), ultimately tended to polarize the factions into two camps. Feuding rivals like the Dzungars, Khoshots, and Torguts joined forces against the persecutors of the Dge lugs pa church. The alliances were increasingly strengthened as incarnations of great Tibetan teachers took rebirth in Mongol lands and as offerings of piety flowed to Tibet. Unfortunately, the very alliance between Khoshots, Dzungars, and Torguts that brought peace and stability to Tibet in 1642 was largely responsible for the disaster that descended upon Tibet during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. This is, however, another story.

At first glance, the Mongol involvement in Tibet seems the result of a revival of Buddhism; later Tibetan and Mongol historians would have us believe that the Third Dalai Lama’s mission to Mongolia was solely one of disinterested conversion. His two most important “catches” were Abudai Khan of the Khalkhas and Altan Khan of the Tumets. According to legend, these two rather sinful kings were transfigured into almost divine emanations upon their acceptance of Buddhist teaching of the Dge lugs pa variety. On further examination, however, many problems are raised if one accepts this interpretation. Vague reference in most of the sources indicate that the Dge lugs pa teachers were not the only Tibetan religious missionaries competing for the attention of the Mongols; Bka’ brgyud pa, Sa skya pa, and Rnying ma pa lamas had long been active here, but they apparently became moribund and morally impoverished. The older sects, especially the Karma pa, seem largely to have devoted the greater part of their energies to the more cultivated tribes of territories like Chahar. These areas were richer, and the Karma pa expected that the growing patronage of these tribes would help to make up for religious revenues that were being lost through the progressive displacement of Tibetan Buddhism in the western hills of Nepal. Remaining were the undoubtedly poorer but more vigorous western Mongol tribes, to whom the fervent piety and strict monasticism of the Dge lugs pa might appeal.

## *II. The Autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama*

The autobiography of the First Paṅ chen is an extraordinarily important source for understanding what really happened in Tibetan history during the seventeenth century. The work largely comprises the reminiscences of the Paṅ chen Lama himself. There are no chapter or topic divisions. It was left unfinished at the death of the Paṅ chen and was completed in 1720 by his rebirth, the Second Paṅ chen Lama, largely on the basis of notes made by the chief attendants<sup>393</sup> of the First Paṅ chen. The text adheres to a loose chronological arrangement that becomes progressively more detailed until 1641, when the events become precisely dated.<sup>394</sup>

It is surprising that this autobiography has not been used by more historians dealing with Tibet, the Mongol tribes, and the Himalayan borderlands.<sup>395</sup> The Paṅ chen Lama was the teacher of the Dzungar Dga' ldan Bo shog thu Khan, the First Khalkha Rje btsun Dam pa Bla ma, the Tümet Fourth Dalai Lama, the Skyid shod Zhabs drung Sprul sku, as well as half-a-dozen other prominent Mongolian incarnations. This often put him at the center of Tibetan-Mongol relations in the seventeenth century. I will cite two instances here:

Galdan Boshogtu Khan (d. 1697) was the sixth son of Batur Hungtaiji, the second from his union with the daughter of his ally, Gushri Khan of the Khoshots. Recognized to be incarnation of the Dben sa Sprul sku (probably of Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, 1605–1643/44), he went to Tibet to study. His chief guru, the First Paṅ chen Lama, prophesied great things for the young incarnation and sent him back to his native land where he found that his elder brother had been murdered. Through his force of character he was able to assert his authority over his fraternal rivals. It seems that the phenomenal rise of the Dzungars as a Central Asian political power can be attributed to the victories of Galdan Boshogtu.

Second, the recognition of Tāranātha's incarnation—the Rje btsun Dam pa—as the son of the Tushiyetu Khan represents an extremely complicated political maneuver on the part of the First Paṅ chen Lama's disciple, the Third Mkhas grub, Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho. Not all of the great Dge lugs pa adherents shared the Fifth Dalai Lama's hostility toward Tāranātha. There was, indeed, considerable factionalism within the Dge lugs pa church itself, and these cleavages often followed provincial boundaries.<sup>396</sup>

Through the autobiography of Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan we can gain insight into many of the momentous events that led up to 1642. In 1618 the Gtsang pa Sde srid<sup>397</sup> again asserted his authority over Dbus and began

anew the persecution of the Dge lugs pa. The response was not long in coming. In 1620–21 the brothers Guru Hungtaiji and Lha btsun Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho, the son of the Tumet chieftain Holochi, joined with the Sde pa of Skyid shod to soak the soil with Gtsang pa blood.<sup>398</sup> The politics of Mongolia aligned Ligdan (Leg ldan) Khan (1592–1634) of Chahar and Choktu Khan of Khalkha against the Tumets and Ordos. The patronage by these princes of the Karma pa aroused Dge lugs pa hostility. The Tumet ardor for the Dge lugs pa was an additional factor in this polarization. Sometime around 1632 an alliance between Gushri, Batur Hungtaiji, and Urluk of the Torguts came into being. With the defeat of Ligdan in 1645,<sup>399</sup> the eight-year period that led to the conquest of Gzhis ka rtse began.<sup>400</sup> A new power had already appeared on the scene: the Manchus, givers of seals and titles.

The most significant structural development throughout the Tibetan cultural world during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the gradual acceptance of the priority of the claims of the rebirth (*yang srid*) over those of the ancient religious lineages in the transmission of accumulated religious prestige and wealth. The 'Brug pa state in Bhutan was founded as a final attempt by the House of Rwa lung to resist the spread of this trend in the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa. The efforts were doomed to be fruitless from the outset, for the Rgya of Rwa lung had already capitulated when they declared their heir, Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, an alternate candidate as the immediate re-embodiment of Padma dkar po. In the autobiography of the First Paṅ chen we can see indications of the processes by which the Dge lugs pa absorbed the old religious noble families and, at the same time, extended its influence over the more recent secular aristocracy through the use of the theory of the immediate re-embodiment.

In late 1612 Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan set out on a visit to Bhutan at the invitation of the Lha pa hierarchs of Gnyos.<sup>401</sup> These lamas headed a branch of the 'Bri gung pa that was strong in the western part of Gtsang, around Pa rnam, and throughout Bhutan. When Ngag dbang rnam rgyal arrived in Bhutan in 1616, his most dangerous rivals were these teachers and their supporters. The First Paṅ chen Lama visited Spa gro, Thim phu, and even Dar dkar. Along with the biographies of a scant few other Tibetan teachers who visited Bhutan before 1615,<sup>402</sup> the Paṅ chen Lama's autobiography gives us our only observation on the historical and ethnological aspects of Bhutan from the viewpoint of an outsider.

In 1656–57 Bhutan is mentioned again because of the Paṅ chen Lama's role in negotiating an uneasy truce between Tibet and Bhutan.<sup>403</sup> Under the provisions of the agreement, hostages and prisoners were exchanged. One of

the Tibetan subjects freed was the scion of the House of Gnas rnying, one of the Paṅ chen Lama's disciples. The merging of the Gnas rnying pa sect with the Dge lugs pa was complete by this time. Bkra shis lhun po became the heir to the religious interests held by the Gnas rnying lineage in both Gtsang and Bhutan. The absorption of the Lha pa would require a few more decades.

This pattern of growth through incorporation of lesser sects was especially common in Gtsang. The rebirth of the First Dalai Lama as the son of Grub chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan resulted in the end of a hereditary line of Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa lamas. This process continued until more recent times. The Sixth Dalai Lama brought the Dge lugs pa considerable leverage with his branch of the Gnyos, who were the descendants of Padma gling pa and chief lamas of the Mtsho sna area. The Second Paṅ chen Lama's birth brought an end to the ancient Bon po lineage of 'Bru tshang in Thob rgyal. The Third Paṅ chen welded the interest of an ancient Rnying ma pa line to Bkra shis lhun po. The manifold examples of this process are too numerous to detail here.

This autobiography also tells us a good deal about the titles used during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: *lha btsun*, *zhabs drung*, *drung pa*, and *drung chen*; *rje btsun*, *rje drung*, and *rje btsun drung*; *sde pa*, *dpon*, and *dpon drung*; and so forth. From the careful reading of this work one can deduce much about the origins and development of the ancient rivalry between Gtsang and Dbus and about the history of a number of Tibetan political and social institutions. However, just as similar biographical sources in other eastern languages demand considerable background research and judicious evaluation if one is to use them for historical purposes, Tibetan *rnam thar* and *rtogs brjod* require an even greater sophistication and corresponding caution.

### *III. Tibetan Art History and the Autobiography*

The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were a period of vigorous ferment in the cultural as well as political field. Style in both prose and poetry became increasingly more complex and ornate. The literary output attributed to the Fifth Dalai Lama represents the culmination of these gongoristic tendencies. The First Paṅ chen Lama, by contrast, seems much too lucid and straightforward, a bit old fashioned when compared with his prodigious disciple.

In painting and casting the mood of innovation was in the air. New styles and syntheses were born. The most significant of these for the future development of Tibetan painting were the styles that developed into the New Sman thang

or Sman ris gsar ma and the Karma sgar bris schools. Other schools appeared during the same period or shortly thereafter, but these seem to have exercised little influence on subsequent development and quickly disappeared.

The New Sman ris is a continuation and further elaboration of the Sman thang school founded by Sman bla Don grub rgyal po of Lho brag (southern Tibet) in 1409. He studied painting with Rdo pa Bkra shis rgyal po and probably took his inspiration from Ming dynasty artwork sent to Tibet as religious gifts. Sman bla Don grub is credited with a number of technical innovations, including the use of several indigenous mineral pigments. His artistic competence and technological discoveries were passed as family secrets from father to son and uncle to nephew among his own descendants and those of a few favored disciples. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the great names of this school were the master painter Sman bla Chos rje Blo bzang pa, Chos rje Dkon mchog lhun grub, and the latter's nephew.

The introduction of the New Sman ris is attributed to Gtsang pa Sprul sku Chos dbyings rgya mtsho (fl. 1625–65), acclaimed by both Fifth Dalai Lama and First Paṅ chen Lama as a “master painter” (*pir thogs dbang po*). The relationships of the New Sman ris with the Mkhyen ris and the brilliant creations of Byi'u lha bzo are still obscure. It would seem that Chos dbyings rgya mtsho introduced into classical Sman ris some of the features of this tradition, especially Byi'u lha bzo's innovations in color usage. The New Sman ris was the precursor of the mode that is now usually called the Lhasa or Central Tibetan style.

The Sgar bris, or Encampment Style, has been traditionally the school followed by the later Karma pa masters. What are usually regarded as Chinese influences are more obvious. Kong sprul hints that the founders of this school derived their inspiration from Chinese textile temple hangings of the Ming dynasty. This school seems also to be an offshoot of the classical Sman ris. The lesser thangkas to which we have access seem more disciplined or mannered than those painted in the usual New Sman ris.

The chief names connected with the founding and development of the Sgar bris are Sprul sku Nam mkha' bkra shis of Yar stod, Chos bkra shis, and Karma bkra shis of Khams. The first was a contemporary of the Ninth Karma pa (1556–1603). This school spread widely in Khams and is now usually known as the eastern Tibetan style although it first appeared as the court style during the time of Karma pa supremacy in Central Tibet.

Among these minor schools one should mention the Dwags ris and the Bhutanese school.<sup>404</sup> This Dwags ris, or style of Dwags po, seems no longer to survive. The Bhutanese school, I am told, persisted; and there are artists



even today who inherited the tradition. The first great artist to paint and teach in Bhutan was a Tibetan, Sprul sku Mi pham chos 'phel (seventeenth century), who propagated his own special fusion of the classical Sman ris and Mkhyen ris.

The autobiography of the First Paṅ chen Lama is a source of considerable importance for understanding developments in Tibetan painting during the first half of the seventeenth century. Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan was an inveterate builder, involved in numerous construction and restoration projects not only at Bkra shis lhun po and the neighboring monasteries of Gtsang but even at Dga' ldan near Lhasa. This biography contains frequent references to the great artists who enjoyed the patronage of the Paṅ chen: Pir thogs rgyal po Sman bla chos rje Blo bzang pa,<sup>405</sup> Chos rje Dkon mchog lhun grub and his nephew,<sup>406</sup> and Pir thogs dbang po Sprul sku Chos dbyings rgya mtsho.<sup>407</sup>

Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan himself demonstrated a great interest in the techniques of casting and metallurgy, specialties that had been monopolized by Newar craftsmen since even before the third quarter of the thirteenth century when Arniko left his mark in Tibet and later in China. There is a fascinating passage that dates from about 1604 in which the Paṅ chen tells of one of his experiences while an image of Maitreya was being cast:

Especially, [we should say something of] this image of the Rje btsun. When it was to be cast, we were present together with the exalted Sman thang pa. As soon as the alloy of molten copper and bell metal (*li*) was poured, crackling and sputtering noises filled our ears. Molten copper boiled out of the mouth of the mold, completely spattering the whole workshop. Because it seemed as if it had not gone into the mold at all, the Newars (*Bal po*) scowled darkly and muttered something in their language about the casting being a failure. The others were in a complete quandary about what to do. Everyone fell into silence. I also was mystified as to what had happened, but I called out, urging them, "Break the mold and see!" Without giving it time to cool [by itself], they chilled it by splashing a good deal of cold water over it. When they broke the mold, a splendid image of the Rje btsun emerged. All were in a state of awe and astonishment; becoming mad with sheer joy, we all cried out, "A la la!" In short, the tremendously stupefying miracle that took place on that occasion, with its manifestation of mixed awe and fear, came much like some self-originated image of unrivaled alloy (*li*) that appeared in Magadha in India.<sup>408</sup>

The present data seem to suggest that painters were almost entirely Tibetan from the middle of the sixteenth century. In Central Tibet the metal workers, however, remained largely Newar up to 1959. Indigenous Tibetan schools of painting that were recognized syntheses of Chinese and Indic styles had made their appearance already by the beginning of the fifteenth century. There is evidence to suggest that these Tibetan schools even had some impact upon Nepalese painting. During the eighteenth century there seems to have been a new influx of artistic influence from India. The relationship of this influx to the Pahari and related schools is worth investigation.<sup>409</sup>

#### *IV. The Career and Personality of the First Paṅ chen*

The infant who was to become famed as the First Paṅ chen Lama, the greatest Dge lugs pa scholar of his generation and preceptor to two Dalai Lamas, was born on the fifteenth day of the fourth Tibetan month of 1567 in Lhan, a small valley bordering the Gtsang rong. His father was a pious man and seems to have been a nephew of Dben sa pa Sangs rgyas ye shes (1525–90). The family claimed descent from the distinguished clan of Sba, which had been closely associated with Buddhism from its introduction into Tibet.<sup>410</sup> This youth, then known as Chos rgya dpal bzang po, was recognized quite early to be the rebirth of Blo bzang don grub and given the name Chos kyi rgyal mtshan. His chief guru was Mkhas grub Sangs rgyas ye shes,<sup>411</sup> but that great teacher unfortunately died before the final ordination of the Paṅ chen Lama. In 1591 he received the full vows of a monk from Paṅ chen Dam chos yar 'phel, Thos gling Slob dpon Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho, and Paṅ chen Lha dbang blo gros. He continued his studies at Dga' ldan.

He was asked by Lhun rtse sde pa to assume the duties of abbot at Gangs can chos 'phel<sup>412</sup> in 1598. In 1601<sup>413</sup> he ascended the throne of Bkra shis lhun po. He became the guru of the Fourth Dalai Lama and the Third Gzims khang gong ma incarnation of 'Bras spungs. He would remain the most prominent teacher of the great incarnations of Tibet and Mongolia for almost fifty years. He was especially popular with the Mongol princes. He traveled several times southward to spread Buddhism among tribal peoples like the Mon pa.

Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan typifies much of the best of Tsong kha pa's legacy. He was both an accomplished scholastic and a profound master of the esoteric. He was completely free of the sectarian rivalries and hatreds that so marred his time. In general, the Dge lugs pa traditions of Bkra shis lhun po

have always been rather eclectic. Esoteric practices embodying the pinnacle of Mahāmudrā practice, e.g., the Dben sa Bka' brgyud, have been very much a part of the special ritual and liturgy of Bkra shis lhun po. The First Paṅ chen Lama has written of the unity of all Tibetan religious systems, focusing on the various teachings of Mahāmudrā traditions of esoteric practice:

*Developing Co-emergence, Ga'u ma,  
Fivefold, Single Taste, Four Letters,  
Pacification, Severance, Great Perfection,  
Instructions on the Middle View, and others:  
There are many names given for each.  
And yet if the yogin who is meditatively experienced  
and learned in the scriptures of ultimate meaning analyzes [them],  
[all these teachings] coalesce in a single intention.*

He tells us that when he offered tea or alms to the monastic assemblies, he refrained from favoring the followers of his own sect. The songs incorporated into the autobiography demonstrate an incandescent spiritual insight that often bursts into flames of poetic brilliance. This teacher is responsible for some of the most enduring liturgical and devotional texts of the Dge lugs pa tradition, and in this autobiography he often gives an account of his literary activities. Occasionally one finds illuminating bits of information about the transformation of Tibetan Buddhism into a popular tradition; the Paṅ chen Lama tells us of the introduction of the cult of Beg rtse lcam sring into Dge lugs pa liturgy, and provides an insight into controversies over whether the mountain deity of Jo mo Lha ri represents a manifestation of Rdo rje G.ya' mo skyong or Dpal gyi lha mo.<sup>414</sup>

## *Appendix*

### *Important Dge lugs pa Incarnations and Abbatial Lines*

#### **I. The Paṅ chen Incarnations of Bkra shis lhun po**

- A. Gnas brtan Rab 'byor
- B. Rigs ldan 'Jam dpal grags pa
- C. Slob dpon Legs ldan 'byed
- D. Slob dpon 'Jigs med 'byung gnas
- E. 'Gos Lo tsā ba Khug pa Lha btsas
- F. Sa skya Paṅḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251)

- G. G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal (1284–1365)
- H. Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438)
- I. Bsod nams phyogs kyi glang po (1439–1504)
- J. Dben sa pa Blo bzang don grub (1505–66)<sup>415</sup>
- 1. Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567–1662)<sup>416</sup>
- 2. Blo bzang ye shes (1663–1737)
- 3. Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes (1738–80)<sup>417</sup>
- 4. Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma (1781–1854)<sup>418</sup>
- 5. Blo bzang bstan pa'i dbang phyug (1855–81?)<sup>419</sup>
- 6. Thub bstan Chos kyi nyi ma (1883–1937)<sup>420</sup>
- 7. Chos kyi rgyal mtshan phrin las lhun grub (1938–89)<sup>421</sup>

## II. The Dalai Lamas ('Bras spungs Gzims khang 'og ma Line)

- 1. Dge 'dun grub (1391–1474)
- 2. Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475–1542)
- 3. Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543–88)<sup>422</sup>
- 4. Yon tan rgya mtsho (1589–1617)
- 5. Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–82)

## III. The Paṅ chen Bsod grags Incarnations ('Bras spungs Gzims khang gong ma Line)

- o. Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364)
- 1. Paṅ chen Bsod nams grags pa (1478–1554)
- 2. Bsod nams ye shes dbang po (1556–92)
- 3. Bsod nams dge legs dpal bzang (1594–1615)
- 4. Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1619–54)<sup>423</sup>

## IV. Dben sa Sprul sku

- 1. Mkhas grub Sangs rgyas ye shes (1525–90)<sup>424</sup>
- 2. Ye shes rgya mtsho (1592–1604)
- 3. Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho (1605–1643/44)<sup>425</sup>

## V. Skyid shod Zhabs drung

- 1. Bstan 'dzin blo bzang rgya mtsho (1593–1638)
- 2. Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (1639–82)

## VI. Khalkha Rje btsun Dam pa

- A. Paṅḍita 'Bar ba'i tso bo
- B. Nag po spyod pa (Kṛṣṇācārin)

- C. Ra tna bha hu la
- D. Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po
- E. 'Ba' rom pa Dar ma dbang phyug
- F. A wa dhu ti pa 'Od zer dpal
- G. Zhang 'Brug sgra rgyal mtshan
- H. Gnyos Rgyal ba Lha nang pa (1164–1224)
  - I. Snar thang Kun mkhyen Saṅgabhadra
  - J. 'Jam dbyangs Chos rje Bkra shis dpal ldan (1379–1449)
- K. Paṇḍita Chos kyi nyin byed
- L. Jo nang Rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog (1495–1566)
- M. Rgyal bu Dga' byed bzang po, Prince of Tripura
- N. Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po (1575–1634)<sup>426</sup>
  - 1. Ye shes rdo rje, alias Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1635–1723)<sup>427</sup>
  - 2. Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me (1724–57)
  - 3. Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma (1758–73)
  - 4. Blo bzang thub bstan dbang phyug (1775–1813)<sup>428</sup>
  - 5. Blo bzang tshul 'khrims 'jigs med (1815–40)<sup>429</sup>
  - 6. Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa (1843–48)<sup>430</sup>
  - 7. Ngag dbang chos dbyings dbang phyug phrin las rgya mtsho (1850–68)
  - 8. Ngag dbang blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang phyug (1871–1924)

### VII. Gsal khang Sprul sku

- 1. Khri XIX Ngag dbang chos grags (1501–51)
- 2. Khri XXXIV Ngag dbang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1575–?)
- 3. Took rebirth among the O rod G.yon ru

### VIII. Rgyal khang rtse pa Sprul sku<sup>431</sup>

- 1. Khri XXV Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho (1526–99)<sup>432</sup>
- 2. Chos 'byor rgya mtsho of Khams
- 3. Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho
- 4. Bskal bzang bstan pa yar 'phel (1746–94)
- 5. Blo bzang dpal 'byor lhun grub (1796–1846)

### IX. The Gdan rabs of Bkra shis lhun po (Founded 1447 or 1459)

- 1. Paṇ chen Dge 'dun grub (1391–1474): abbot 1447/59–74
- 2. Paṇ chen Bzang po bkra shis (1410–78): abbot 1474–78

3. Paṅ chen Lung rig rgya mtsho: abbot 1478–87
4. Paṅ chen Ye shes rtse mo (1443–?): abbot 1487–1512
5. Second Dalai Lama Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475–1542):  
abbot 1512–16
6. Mnga' ris Lha btsun Blo bzang bstan pa: abbot 1516
7. Paṅ chen Shanti pa
8. Paṅ chen Don grub rgya mtsho
9. Shangs pa Blo gros legs
10. Gnas rnying Chos kyi rgyal mtshan: abbot 1569
11. Shangs pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan
12. Phyug gzhug pa Bsod rgyal
13. Shangs pa Bsam grub dpal
14. Nyang pa Dam chos yar phel
15. Nyang pa Lha dbang blo gros
16. Paṅ chen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1567–1662):  
abbot 1600



## CHAPTER 11

# The Life of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje

### *I. Introduction*

**T**HU'U BKWAN BLO BZANG CHOS KYI NYI MA (1737–1802) composed two biographical works dealing with the Second Lcang skya Hu thog thu, Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me, alias Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86). The first and larger work is a brilliant example of Tibetan biography written in elegant poetry interspersed with prose.<sup>433</sup> It was written at Dgon lung<sup>434</sup> between 1792 and 1794 at the behest of the Har chin Ching wang Ratna siddhi and Zhabs drung Bskal bzang ye shes dar rgyas, then abbot (*kha pa*) of Dgon lung. Thu'u bkwan styles himself fully in the colophon as Jing zi'u Chan zhi Thu'u bkwan Hu thog thu Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma, alias Dharma badzra.

The biography<sup>435</sup> of the Second Lcang skya is not only one of the most important sources for the study of Tibetan history; it contains significant information for students of Mongolian, Chinese, and Manchu literature and history as well. Because of Lcang skya's intimate relationship with Ch'ien lung, bonds that dated back to the period when they had studied together—Lcang skya then a hostage incarnation from A mdo, and Ch'ien lung only the fourth son of Emperor Yung cheng—he occupied a position close to the center of power and decision making during this formative period in China's relationship with Tibet.

It should be noted, however, that this biography can be used as a primary source only with extreme caution. Both Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje and his biographer were Tibetanized Mongols. Their monastery was Dgon lung Byams pa gling, resting in the shadow of Chinese might. Following the rebellion of Bstan 'dzin Ching wang, the Chinese expeditionary force had razed this monastery—as well as the rest of the monasteries in the vicinity—to the ground. Both served as willing agents of Chinese imperial policy. Eighteenth-century Tibetan history<sup>436</sup> is a tale of the cunning imposition of a Chinese protectorate over Tibet in the guise of religious patronage. Lcang skya Rol pa'i



rdo rje played a notable role in the manipulations. This biography shows us something of the evolution and application of Chinese religious policy during the reigns of Yung cheng (1722–35) and Ch'ien lung (1735–96). In spite of its strong pro-Chinese bias, this work serves as a useful balance to the official Ch'ing sources with their anti-lamaist prejudices. The emperors, imperial relatives, and Manchu officials begin to emerge as real personages instead of clichéd composites of Confucian virtues (and vices), as often deceived as deceiving in the sophisticated plotting of eighteenth-century Sino-Tibetan geopolitics. It is thus to be hoped that a detailed study of the life and times of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje will eventually join Dr. Klaus Sagaster's learned investigation of his predecessor, the First Lcang skya, Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan.<sup>437</sup>

Thu'u bkwan has divided the biography into twenty-five chapters (*le'u*). The main themes and the years covered by each of the chapters can be summarized as follows, with page numbers (in parentheses) referring to the Tibetan text:

1. Birth: 1717 (pp. 6–61).
2. Recognition and Installation at Dgon lung: 1717–21 (pp. 61–85).
3. The Troubles of 1723–24: (pp. 85–105).
4. Studies and Initiation: 1724–34 (pp. 105–42).
5. Youthful Promise and Appointment as Imperial Ta Gau shri: 1727–35 (pp. 142–68).
6. To Tibet in the Retinue of the Dalai Lama: 1734–35 (pp. 168–95).
7. Final Ordination at Bkra shis lhun po: (pp. 195–227).
8. The Translation of the Mongol *Bstan 'gyur*: 1736–44 (pp. 227–48).
9. Correspondence with the Dalai Lama: 1737–47 (pp. 248–88).
10. Composition of the *Crystal Mirror*: 1736–46 (pp. 288–311).
11. Tantric Initiation of Ch'ien lung: 1745–47 (pp. 311–32).
12. Visit to A mdo: 1748–49 (pp. 332–63).
13. Return to China: 1749–57 (pp. 363–402).
14. Second Journey to Tibet: 1757 (pp. 402–49).
15. Recognition of the Eighth Dalai Lama: 1758–59 (pp. 449–72).
16. Monastic Ordination of the Rje bstun dam pa: 1760–63 (pp. 472–95).
17. Visit to A mdo and Dgon lung: 1763–64 (pp. 495–518).
18. Contemplation at Wu t'ai shan: 1764–67 (pp. 518–62).
19. Service to His Students: 1768–71 (pp. 562–87).

20. Translation of the *Bka' gyur* into Manchu: 1772–79 (pp. 587–611)
21. Visit of the Third Paṅ chen Lama to China: 1780–81 (pp. 611–38).
22. Preparation for the Celebration of his Seventieth Birthday: 1781–86 (pp. 638–54).
23. Death and Memorial Services: 1786 (pp. 654–67).
24. The Mystical Revelation in a Dream of the *Tshad ma'i lam rim*: 1785 (pp. 667–700).
25. Summary of Lcang skya's Life (pp. 700–806).

These chapters center around broad topics, ranging from Rol pa'i rdo rje's studies to his meeting with the Seventh Dalai Lama, from meditation at Wu t'ai shan to the composition of an important work. While the author has attempted to arrange his material chronologically, he is sometimes vague, especially in the period prior to his own meeting with Lcang skya in 1749. Thus, in the early chapters, detailed chronological sequence breaks down.

## *II. The Biography of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje*

After the introductory material that commences every Tibetan biography, Thu'u bkwan opens with a discussion of Rol pa'i rdo rje's predecessors in the Lcang skya incarnation lineage.<sup>438</sup> He quotes the reverential petition of the successive rebirths that mentions fourteen names.<sup>439</sup> He then proceeds to give short biographies of three teachers whom he regarded as belonging to the Lcang skya lineage but whose names were not included in the reverential petition—a tradition that probably originated with the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and the Third Paṅ chen Lama.<sup>440</sup> Following brief biographical sketches of Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal,<sup>441</sup> Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros,<sup>442</sup> and Gtsang smyon He ru ka Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan,<sup>443</sup> the biography of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje begins.

The infant who would eventually be recognized as the rebirth of Lcang skya I Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan was born on the tenth day of the first Mongol (Hor) month of the Fire Bird year (1717) near Lang gru u (Lanchow) in Kansu. His father was of nomadic Mongol stock, a subject of Chi kya Dpon po,<sup>444</sup> and was known as Chi kya tshangs pa Gu ru bstan 'dzin.<sup>445</sup> His mother is simply called Bu skyid.

The officials of the Lcang skya bla brang had previously sent messengers to Tibet to inquire as to where the rebirth should be sought. The replies favored A mdo. The elderly 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa was the general supervisor, but the

actual search was carried out by the general representative of the monks of Dgon lung and two functionaries of the *bla brang*.

Thu'u bkwan criticizes the politicking and corruption that all too often influenced the recognition of incarnations. Rol pa'i rdo rje seems to have been a strong candidate from the beginning, but was nevertheless carefully tested. Although another candidate—the son of a wealthy Mongol prince—was put forward, the Lcang skya bla brang was not swayed. When the recognition was definitive, the emperor sent Dka' chen Shes rab dar rgyas<sup>446</sup> to represent him at the investiture. The youth was solemnly conducted to Dgon lung via Rgyal yag, Zhwa dmar, Rdor zhi, Rgyal rdog, Dgon lung Sngo kho, and Brag dkar. Shortly after the child's arrival, he received the vows of a novice (*dge bsnyen*) from Chu bzang Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan who bestowed upon him the name Ngag dbang chos kyi grags pa bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan.

In 1723 Bstan 'dzin Ching wang, a prince of Kokonor, raised the standard of revolt against China. A punitive expedition was sent into A mdo. Gser khog and a number of other monasteries in the area were put to the torch, and the monks were slaughtered, presumably because of their aid to the rebels. Then in 1724 a Chinese troop approached Dgon lung, and a number of the monks, panicking, attempted resistance and were defeated. Dgon lung was ordered burnt to the ground. The guardians of the young Lcang skya managed to flee with their charge into the wilderness. The emperor, in the meantime, had ordered that the young incarnation should not be harmed but should be conducted to China via Zi ling as a "guest." The Chinese coerced the Lcang skya refugees into surrender by threatening the populace of the area. The seven-year-old Lcang skya was taken to the tent of Yo'u Cang jun, the joint commander of the expedition, who accused him immediately of treason. The plucky lad stood up with wit against the great commander to the amusement of the assembled officers.

After his arrival in China, Lcang skya began his monastic studies. His teachers included Bzang shu Dka' chen Shes rab dar rgyas alias Ngag dbang chos ldan, the Second Thu'u bkwan Hu thog thu Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho (1680–1736), Ar tse chos rje Blo bzang Chos 'dzin, and Rje btsun Chos rgya mtsho. Even in his childhood, Lcang skya manifested penetrating intelligence and shrewd judgment. His early literary works begin to show the command of language for which he became famous.

By 1729, Thu'u bkwan had obtained imperial permission to begin rebuilding Dgon lung. The Emperor Yung cheng (1722–35) was but slightly interested in Buddhism and was inclined to favor indigenous Chinese Buddhism

over the Tibetan variety. The case was quite the opposite with Keng ze Chin wang (1697–1735),<sup>447</sup> the seventeenth son of Emperor K'ang hsi, who was not only a great patron of Tibetan Buddhism but also a scholar of some ability. Unfortunately this prince seems to have been partial to the older sects and openly hostile to the Dge lugs pa. It was Keng ze Chin wang who was responsible for the imperial invitations to both the Black Hat and Red Hat Karma pa<sup>448</sup> Lamas to visit China, though both died en route in 1732.

Lcang skya understood that in order for the Dge lugs pa school and the teachings of Tsong kha pa to prosper in China and Manchuria these teachings would have to be expounded in Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian. He therefore began studying these three languages. One of his fellow students, with whom he made friends, was the fourth son of the Yung cheng emperor. This prince was to become Emperor Ch'ien lung.

He also investigated Chinese Buddhism<sup>449</sup> and came to the conclusion that the philosophical system that Hwa shang Mahāyāna had debated in Tibet seemed no longer to exist in China. The philosophical views that were the most widespread in Chinese Buddhism approached the classic position of the Vijñānavāda (*Sems tsam pa*) and had great similarities with Tibetan Zhi byed pa teachings. The identification of Pha Dam pa Sangs rgyas—Indian founder of the Zhi byed who is supposed to have visited China—with Bodhidharmottara, however, was a strange flower produced from Lcang skya's fertile mind.

By 1735 there were signs of trouble among the western Mongols and of the impending death of the previous Thu'u bkwan, Lcang skya's teacher. Thu'u bkwan and Lcang skya's other mentors wanted Khri chen Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma (1689–1746) to be appointed as his tutor. Keng ze Chin wang, however, was advocating to have Bka 'gyur pa, a Rnying ma pa teacher from Dolonor, selected. The Dge lugs pa faction suspected that Keng ze wished to have Lcang skya converted into a Rnying ma pa. The prince's conspiracy was frustrated and Khri chen was invited to Peking. The twelfth son<sup>450</sup> became a faithful patron of the Dge lugs pa, and relations with Keng ze Chin wang deteriorated rapidly. During this period Lcang skya was invested with the same imperial privileges and titles held by his predecessor: Bkwan ting Phu'u shan Bkwang tshi Tā Ka'u shri.

In 1734, Keng ze Chin wang and Lcang skya were ordered by the emperor to accompany the Seventh Dalai Lama—who had been in exile at Mgar thar—back to Tibet. Tibet was in the firm control of Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas (1689–1747), and there was little to be gained by keeping the Dalai Lama and his father out of Tibet. The imperial delegation was received at Ha

lo pan by the Mgron gnyer Blo bzang dkon mchog, and at Dar rtse mdo by the Dalai Lama's father and Sde pa Sding chen nas. The party arrived at Mgar thar on the twenty-third of the eleventh month. The imperial emissaries carried a patent investing the *yongs 'dzin* Ngag dbang mchog ldan<sup>451</sup> with the title of A chi thu No mon han. After some time, the entourage set out for Tibet. There was a report of trouble in Brag g.yab. As the party neared Lhasa, Lcang skya met the aged Zhogs pa Don yod mkhas grub, a contemporary of his predecessor. During the journey, Lcang skya had the opportunity to request initiation and instruction from the Dalai Lama and the A chi thu No mon han. On the way he continued his studies with the Dalai Lama, Ngag dbang mchog ldan, and 'On Rgyal sras 'Jigs med ye shes grags pa. At the end of 1735, Lcang skya traveled further west to Bkra shis lhun po to take his final monastic vows from the aged Paṅ chen Lama Blo bzang ye shes, who bestowed upon him the name Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me. Suddenly, news was received of the death of the Yung cheng emperor on October 8, 1735. Lcang skya returned in haste to Lhasa.

Thus, in 1736 Lcang skya set out for China. His friend, the fourth son of the late emperor, now reigned as Emperor Ch'ien lung. On his arrival at court, Lcang skya was asked to become the Lama of the Seal (*tham ka bla ma*), the highest lamaist position in China. This post had been held by Thu'u bkwan, who handed it over to Khri chen Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma. It was surrendered to Lcang skya by imperial request. During this time Lcang skya continued his education, studying astrology with Dpal bzang Chos rje, an elder brother of Rta tshag Rje drung.

With imperial encouragement, Lcang skya began the compilation of a bilingual glossary, the *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas*. This would serve as the basis for the translation and correction of a Mongolian edition of the *Bstan 'gyur*. After this dictionary was finished, what must have been an enormous group of scholars began the translation and revision work under imperial patronage in 1741. The whole project was completed a little over a year later in 1742, and the carving of the blocks began.

In 1744, the emperor and Lcang skya established Dga' ldan Byin chags gling in Peking. This teaching monastery was the first of its kind in the imperial capital. Divided into four faculties (*grwa tshang*), it had a capacity of five hundred monks. Ngag dbang chos 'phel of 'Bras spungs Har sdong was appointed first head of the philosophy faculty (*mtshan nyid grwa tshang*). Srad pa Dkon mchog bstan dar was named first head of the tantric faculty (*rgyud pa grwa tshang*). Rmog lcogs Zhabs drung became the first head of the general studies faculty (*rig gnas sna tshogs grwa tshang*), while the chief post of the

medical faculty (*smān pa grwa tshang*) went to Phun tshogs 'dzam gling. After the founding of Dga' ldan Byin chags gling, Lcang skya requested the Dalai Lama to appoint an incarnation who was both high and learned as abbot. The Dalai Lama selected Rta tshag Rje drung Blo bzang ldan, with whom Lcang skya continued his studies.

In chapter 9, Thu'u bkwan quotes a number of Lcang skya's smaller writings and letters, which cover the period from 1737–47. We find mention of the deaths of the Second Paṅ chen Lama Blo bzang ye shes (1663–1737) and of Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs rgyas in 1747. Especially interesting is the biographer's candid analysis of Pho lha nas's character and the charges that he had conspired with certain Rnying ma pa lamas<sup>452</sup> to cause harm to the personage of His Holiness the Seventh Dalai Lama (p. 265).

During the period between 1736, when he returned from Tibet, and 1746, when the Khri chen died, Lcang skya began writing his philosophical masterpiece, the *Grub mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa gsal bar bshad pa thub bstan lhun po'i mdzes rgyan*. The initial stimulus was perhaps his interest in Vijñānavāda philosophical traditions preserved by the Chinese Buddhist schools; it was the portion that covered this school that he completed first. When he showed it to Khri chen Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma, he was perhaps unprepared for the lavish praise that it would provoke. In chapter 10, Thu'u bkwan quotes profusely from Lcang skya's original. Perhaps he regarded this work as the progenitor, or as the starting point, for his own *Grub mtha'i shel gyi me long*.

The emperor had begun to study Tibetan several years previously. Thu'u bkwan expounds in this chapter the theory that Emperor Ch'ien lung was an emanation of Mañjuśrī. In 1745, Lcang skya bestowed upon the emperor the tantric initiation of *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra*. On this occasion the emperor observed the conventions that required the initiate to place the guru on a seat higher than his own and to remain kneeling before the guru until the initiation was completed. Thu'u bkwan at this juncture calls to memory 'Phags pa's initiation of Qubilai in the *Hevajra Tantra*; he states that Qubilai was a predecessor of Ch'ien lung in this particular Mañjuśrī incarnation lineage.

Lcang skya was, by this time, able to preach in Chinese, Manchu, and Mongolian for those who could not understand Tibetan. He also was thinking about the problem of Chinese renderings of Sanskrit words and mantras. Thu'u bkwan quotes the form *Po che po la mi'i to* as the Chinese rendering of *Prajñāpāramitā!* There was, of course, little that could be done about this.

The young Thu'u bkwan—our author—invited Lcang skya in 1748 to visit Dgon lung. The emperor granted permission for his visit to be made the following year, 1749, at which point Lcang skya authorized by imperial

authority (*tsi pen*) for further restoration and repairs at Dgon lung, Sku 'bum, and Btsan po dgon. Journeying via Dolonor, Chahar, Ordos, and Alashan, he arrived in A mdo and met Thu'u bkwan—then twelve years of age—for the first time. He also met his own younger brother, the Chu bzang incarnation. At Zi ling he was received by the Amban Bande, who would later become famous in the troubles of 1751.

During this visit, Lcang skya presided over the final ordination of the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, whom he named Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po. He also witnessed the monastic vows at Gser khog of the Btsan po No mon han Sprul sku and gave him the name Ngag dbang 'phrin las rgya mtsho.

Thu'u bkwan notes that the chronology for the period from 1749 to 1757 is problematic, although these years are filled with important events. A monastery for Manchu monks was founded to the west of the imperial palace, the liturgy was translated into Manchu, and a Tibetan method of chanting was adapted. A school of Tibetan studies was established in the yamen. The emperor wished to introduce the *Kālacakra Tantra* in China and requested Lcang skya to arrange the details.<sup>453</sup> In 1751 Lcang skya heard the sad news of the death of A chi thu No mon han.

Thu'u bkwan reports the tragic events of 1750 in considerable detail.<sup>454</sup> We find that the ringleaders in the murder of the ambans, Fu cing and Labdon, included Dpal grong shag pa and Lding kha chos mdzad, in addition to Blo bzang bkra shis. We see Lcang skya pleading successfully with the emperor to lighten the punishment that he had decided to impose on Tibet.

These years also saw the civil war in Dzungaria between Zla ba chi and Amursana, the Chinese intervention, and the revolt and fight of Amursana. In Khalkha, Dar han Chin wang, the brother of the Second Rje bstun Dam pa Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me (1725–57), was brought to trial. This resulted in a rebellion that Lcang skya helped pacify through his influence with the Rje btsun Dam pa. Lcang skya sent the retired abbot of Dgon lung, Bde dgu Ngag dbang dge legs rgya mtsho, on a mission to Tibet.

The news of the death of the Seventh Dalai Lama was received in Peking in 1757. The emperor decided to send Lcang skya immediately in connection with the recognition of the incarnation. Lcang skya was met at Dar rtse mdo by Rdo ring Gung Paṇḍita Rnam rgyal tshe brtan and Rtse Mgron gnyer Yon tan legs grub. The 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and Thu'u bkwan incarnations joined the party at the Mal gro Ru thog ferry crossing. During the twelfth month, i.e., at the beginning of 1758, the party arrived in Lhasa and was received by De mo Ngag dbang 'jam dpal bde legs rgya mtsho, the acting regent. Both Lcang skya and Thu'u bkwan met and had a discussion with

Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal; they seem to have been greatly impressed with this learned layman. Lcang skya and his biographer visited all of the great monasteries around Lhasa. They were honored by the Dga' ldan abbot, Bsam gtan phun tshogs.

During the fourth month of 1758, Lcang skya traveled to Bkra shis lhun po to meet the young Third Paṅ chen Lama, Dpal ldan ye shes; en route he visited 'Brug and Rwa lung, the small monasteries of the 'Brug pa sect. While at Bkra shis lhun po, Lcang skya met Tshe mchog gling Ye shes rgyal mtshan. In 1759, after Lcang skya returned to Lhasa, there was a discussion about the selection of the Eighth Dalai Lama. There were three strong candidates: one from the east, one from the south, and one from the west. During the month of *Sa ga*, Lcang skya performed the consecration of the monumental reliquary of the Seventh Dalai Lama; shortly afterward, he finished the official biography.

For the recognition of the Dalai Lama the five great oracles of La mo, Gnas chung, Bsam yas, Dga' gdong, and Khra 'brug were summoned to Lhasa. The ceremony was to take place in the presence of the Paṅ chen Lama, Lcang skya, De mo, the Manchu Ambans, and the Council of Ministers. When the ceremonies began the oracles behaved strangely; Bsam yas seized the seat of La mo; Khra 'brug suddenly changed his recognition from the candidate of the west to that of the east. The oracles could come to no agreement. At last, Lcang skya broke the deadlock by recommending that the Paṅ chen Lama make the recognition. The Paṅ chen Lama voted for the candidate from Gtsang. Perhaps in this chaotic selection and its troublesome aftermath, the idea for the highly unpopular golden urn that the Manchu court later tried to impose for the recognition of important incarnations first came into being.

There is a curious allusion at the beginning of chapter 15 to an attempt to slander Lcang skya in the eyes of the emperor by Ha ching nga, the imperial Manchu representative. However, instead of creating difficulties for Lcang skya, Ha ching nga found himself summoned to Khrin thu in disgrace.

After the recognition of the Dalai Lama, the Paṅ chen Lama returned to Bkra shis lhun po, and Lcang skya prepared for his return to China. In 1760 he returned. A kya Zhabs drung and Phu Ta zhin were sent to the formal installation of the Dalai Lama. The Rta tshag Rje drung had died while Lcang skya was in Tibet, and thus a replacement abbot for the Peking monastery was needed. Lcang skya recommended the incarnation of Dge 'dun phun tshogs,<sup>455</sup> who was invited to Peking. Unfortunately, he died shortly afterward. Thu'u bkwan was next summoned from Tibet.

During this period, the Third Rje btsun Dam pa (1758–73) was brought



from Li thang to Dolonor, where he was ordained by Lcang skya. He and the infant Rje btsun Dam pa then proceeded to Jehol, where they were received by the emperor. Lcang skya bestowed the name Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma on the Rje btsun Dam pa. The Rje btsun Dam pa set out for Khalkha, and Lcang skya returned to Jehol. About this time, Lcang skya completed the biography of A chi thu No mon han.<sup>456</sup>

In 1763, Lcang skya's father died. He set out for A mdo and Dgon lung. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa had just retired as abbot of Dgon lung. The monastery urged Lcang skya to become abbot. He acquiesced at last and instituted the formal teaching of the *Pramāṇavārttika* of Dharmakīrti. Lcang skya arranged for the carving of a new edition of the obligatory manuals (*yig cha*) of Se ra Rje btsun at Peking, with the blocks to be stored at Dgon lung. During this time he also visited Zi ling, where he mediated a dispute between Lcags rmog dpon po Dmag zor mgon po and Khams kyi dpon po Dbang 'dus in conjunction with the Zi khron Tsong thu and the Zi ling Amban. Before his return to China, he appointed Dza sag Bla ma Bskal bzang lha dbang as his replacement on the abbatial throne of Dgon lung.

In 1764, Lcang skya returned from A mdo and met the emperor at Jehol. In Tibet one Bra ti Dge bshes had installed the unsuccessful Lho kha Dalai Lama candidate at the Ke'u tshang Ri khrod. Bra ti Dge bshes spread the rumor that the youth was the genuine Dalai Lama. Apparently, he had convinced a number of people; reports reached the ears of the ambans, who passed them on to Peking. The emperor was inclined to order the candidate and his would-be manager transported to Peking to face punishment. Such an order was usually the equivalent of a death sentence because of the rigors of the journey. Lcang skya advised that the so-called *sprul sku* be sent to Bkra shis lhun po and put in the service of the Paṅ chen Lama instead. Without the boy, the miscreant Dge bshes would lose his capacity for troublemaking. This solution avoided the possibility of creating a martyr and, in effect, saved two lives. Around the same time, there were also reports of an attempt to promote the claims of another would-be Rje btsun Dam pa incarnation. This situation, too, was resolved through the prudent counsel of Lcang skya.

In 1767, Lcang skya began the practice of spending the fourth through the eighth months in solitary retreat at Wu t'ai shan, a place sacred to Mañjuśrī. His solitude was broken when tribes along the Yunnan border threw that province into turmoil. The troubles had begun in 1767 and resulted in an expeditionary force being sent to quell the disturbances. Lcang skya performed certain potent rituals connected with Cakrasaṃvara, and the turmoil subsided.

To mark the emperor's sixtieth birthday in 1770, ten thousand statues of

Amitāyus were made and placed in the Wan phau Zi. Lcang skya performed the rituals of consecration. During 1770, Lcang skya's nephew, 'Dan ma Sprul sku, died. Another nephew, Ra kho Zhabs drung, replaced him in Lcang skya's retinue. In this year also the palace modeled on the Potala that the emperor had ordered constructed in Jehol was nearing completion. Lcang skya went to Dolonor in 1771 to hear the monastic vows of the Rje btsun Dam pa, after which both proceeded to Jehol to participate in the consecration ceremonies.

Until Lcang skya's time there were few translations of Buddhist texts in Manchu. Ch'ien lung now suggested that Lcang skya undertake the supervision of the translation of the entire *Bka' 'gyur* into Manchu. Working from 1772 through the late 1770's, the process went very slowly because Lcang skya made final corrections and passed each volume on to the emperor for his personal approval, after which the colophons were prepared.

During this period, there was trouble with the Bon pos in Rgyal rong and with their ruler, Rab brtan Rgyal po. The troubles lasted for several years but, at last, the imperial forces were victorious. An edict prohibiting the practice of the Bon religion was promulgated, and the chief Bon po monastery of the area, G.yung drung lha sdings, was turned into a Buddhist monastery. It was renamed Dga' ldan gling, and Paṇḍita Mkhan po Sangs rgyas 'od zer was sent to head the new establishment. It was at about this time that the emperor ordered Lcang skya to translate the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*—previously nonexistent in Tibetan<sup>457</sup>—from the Chinese. His efforts delighted Ch'ien lung.

The aged mother<sup>458</sup> of the emperor passed away in 1777. Lcang skya performed her funeral rites for seven days. In the same year, De mo Ngag dbang 'jam dpal bde legs rgya mtsho, the regent of Tibet, died. The emperor asked Lcang skya's advice regarding a successor. Lcang skya recommended Btsan po No mon han, but the emperor declined this suggestion. Finally, it was agreed to send Shar rtsa Mkhan po No mon han.<sup>459</sup>

In response to the imperial invitation of 1779, the Third Paṇ chen Lama Dpal ldan ye shes (1738–81) set out for China. Traveling via A mdo and Cha har, he was received by the Lcang skya and the sixth son of the emperor at Tas ka'i Temple on the twentieth day of the fifth month in 1780. After a brief visit to Dolonor, the party proceeded to Jehol where the Paṇ chen Lama was ceremoniously received by the emperor on the twenty-second of the seventh month. The Paṇ chen Lama was housed in the newly completed model of Bkra shis lhun po that had been specially constructed for his visit. The Paṇ chen and Lcang skya wintered with the imperial court in Peking, where the Paṇ chen contracted a fatal case of smallpox. He died in the late afternoon of

the first day of the eleventh month of that same year.<sup>460</sup> The funeral rites were performed. On the twelfth day of the second month of 1781, the party conducting the funeral reliquary (*gser gdung*) of the Paṅ chen Lama began the long and sad journey back to Tibet. Lcang skya accompanied the holy relics to Ch'ing hai.

In 1781, the emperor and Lcang skya visited the temple of Tin ting phu, a few days west of Peking. This temple and its ancient image of the Thousand-armed Avalokiteśvara had recently been repaired by imperial order, and Lcang skya was requested to perform the consecration rites (*rab gnas*). Lcang skya then accompanied his imperial patron to Wu t'ai shan.

The rebirth of the Hal ha Rje btsun Dam pa Blo bzang thub bstan dbang phyug 'jigs med rgya mtsho (1775–1813) had recently been discovered in Gtsang and was being conducted to Mongolia. Lcang skya journeyed to Dolonor to bestow upon the incarnation his monastic vows, following which the two proceeded to Jehol. During this period as well, the emperor ordered the construction of a series of dikes along the Yellow River (Rma chu) for purposes of flood control. Lcang skya performed the rituals for the propitiation of Rma chen Spom ra, the powerful mountain deity that controlled the headwaters of the Rma chu.

To honor Lcang skya, his imperial preceptor and friend, Ch'ien lung, ordered an official ceremony to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of Lcang skya's birth. The text mentions the commission of a throne for Lcang skya, made from red sandalwood and adorned with precious metal and stones, by A sa han Am ban Pe'i zi E phu Bde legs bzang po of Pā rin. This personage would go on to play an important role during the time of the Eighth and Ninth Dalai Lamas.

Lcang skya was in seclusion in 1785 at Wu t'ai shan. On the night of the seventeenth day of the sixth month, he had a profound mystical experience. After the period of seclusion was over, he traveled to Po'u ting phu'u, where he arrived on the first day of the ninth month. During the night Mañjuśrī appeared in a dream revealing the *Tshad ma'i lam rim*. The following day Lcang skya dictated the work from memory.<sup>461</sup>

Lcang skya saw the end of his career in the service of Buddhism drawing near. By this time, Thu'u bkwan had become one of his favorite disciples. Lcang skya's last words were an inquiry about Thu'u bkwan's whereabouts. Before Thu'u bkwan's final parting from Lcang skya, they discussed a revolt by the Ho thon. During the third month of 1786, the emperor moved to Wu t'ai shan. Lcang skya was commanded to return to be in attendance. He set out, and en route, his health began to fail. The ministrations of the physicians,

Chinese and Tibetan, proved to be of no avail. He died on the second day of the fourth month of 1786 at Wu t'ai shan. His funeral was performed with full ceremony. Ra kho Ho thug thu, his nephew, set out for Tibet during the same year to offer the memorial gifts at the great Dge lugs pa monasteries of Tibet.

The final chapter of the biography recounts the highlights of Lcang skya's career. The lists of his students<sup>462</sup> and major literary works<sup>463</sup> are especially interesting. Finally, in the conclusion,<sup>464</sup> Thu'u bkwan precedes the colophon proper with a very helpful list of the sources on which he has based the biography.

## *Appendix*

### *The Incarnation Lineage of the Lcang skya Hu thug thu*

Sagaster has added a scholarly discussion and composite list of the predecessors in the Lcang skya incarnation lineage to his study of the life of Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan.<sup>465</sup> As we have already noted, Thu'u bkwan cites the verse petitions to the successive rebirths (*'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs*) from the work of Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po.<sup>466</sup> This list mentions fourteen predecessors of Lcang skya Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me. Thu'u bkwan then gives brief sketches of the lives of three additional predecessors: Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal, Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros, and Gtsang smyon He ru ka Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan. The construction of a historically coherent list of incarnations preceding Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan is impossible. The multitude of different traditions that emerged during the lifetimes of Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan and his two immediate successors, and the related attempts to reduce and synthesize these variant traditions into lists suitable for devotional recitation and iconographic representation, are at the root of this problem. The construction of a list of names and dates of the Lcang skya incarnations who followed Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan is of greater interest because of their importance as one of the lines of grand lamas of Peking.

I first saw a list of the Lcang skya incarnations with Mr. Wesley E. Needham of the Yale University Library in 1965. This list, representing the tradition found in Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po's work, seems to have been drawn up for Mr. Needham by the last Lcang skya or his functionaries. Some of the dates are still open to question. Up to the time of writing, I have seen two similar lists in India. The dates reproduced here are a composite of the three lists and the verse petitions quoted by Thu'u bkwan. It is interesting to note that

in all three, the predecessors whose biographical sketches have been recorded by Thu'u bkwan have been omitted.

In these lists, the incarnations were numbered consecutively from Tsun da through Chos dbyings ye shes rdo rje. I have, however, regarded Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan to have been the first and have marked the fourteen predecessors A–M.

- A. Tsun da
- B. Grub dbang Shākya bshes gnyen
- C. Dar pa na A tsā rya
- D. Lo chen Ka ba Dpal brtsegs<sup>467</sup>
- E. Rig 'dzin Sgro phug pa (b. 1074)
- F. 'Gro mgon Si si ri pa, alias Gung thang Se ston Ri pa
- G. Glang ri thang pa 'Dul 'dzin Rdo rje seng ge (1054–1123)
- H. 'Gro mgon 'Phags pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1235–80)
- I. Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–75)
- J. Byams chen Chos rje Shakya ye shes (1354–1435)
- K. Se ra Rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1546)<sup>468</sup>
- L. Mkhas grub 'Khon ston Dpal 'byor lhun grub (1561–1637)<sup>469</sup>
- M. Mkhyen rab Grags pa 'od zer (d. 1641)<sup>470</sup>
  - 1. Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan (1642–1714)
  - 2. Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me, alias Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86)
  - 3. Ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1787–1846)<sup>471</sup>
  - 4. Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma (1849?–59?)
  - 5. Blo bzang ye shes bstan pa'i rgya mtsho (1860?–70?)
  - 6. Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa'i sgron me (1871?–90?)
  - 7. Chos dbyings ye shes rdo rje (1891–1957)<sup>472</sup>

## CHAPTER 12

# Philosophical, Biographical, and Historical Works of Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma

### *I. Miscellaneous Works of Thu'u bkwan chos kyi nyi ma*

IN THE SECOND VOLUME of the *Gedan Sungrab Minyam Gyunphel* series, Mr. Ngawang Gelek Demo continues his reproduction of the *gsung 'bum* of Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma. We find here the entire contents (451 ff.) of *Kha*, the second volume of the Lhasa Zhol edition of Thu'u bkwan's collected works. The *dkar chag* to the last volume (*Tha*) notes that the blocks for this edition were prepared at the order of the Rwa sgreng regent, Thub bstan 'jam dpal ye shes rgyal mtshan (1912–47), and Glang mdun Srid blon Kun dga' dbang phyug. This enables us to date the blocks to the period 1934–38.<sup>473</sup> The reproduction begins with a brief *dkar chag*, or notice of contents (pp. 1–4). The *dkar chag* lists a total of twenty-one separate titles; in reality, however, there are only ten individual works treated as separate items. We will look briefly at each work in the volume here. These include works of philosophy, history, biography, iconography, and poetry, and reveal the broad range of Thu'u bkwan's interests and literary facility.

### *1. The Clear Mirror of Philosophical Tenets*

Thu'u bkwan's magnificent masterpiece, the *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khungs dang 'dod tshul ston pa legs bshad shel gyi me long* (pp. 5–519), or simply the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*, needs no introduction. Long recognized as one of the most important sources for the study of the comparative philosophical

schools of India, Tibet, China, and the Mongol world, the *Grub mtha'* represents the *summa* of Thu'u bkwan's long life of scholarship.

The first to notice the *Grub mtha'* was Vasil'ev in 1855.<sup>474</sup> Almost thirty years later, Sarat Chandra Das published English translations of the ninth through twelfth chapters and a portion of the second chapter.<sup>475</sup> Hoffman has included a translation of the ninth chapter.<sup>476</sup> Lu Cheng edited the eleventh section, which deals with Buddhism in China.<sup>477</sup> David S. Ruegg has recently produced an admirable translation with commentary of the seventh chapter dealing with the Jo nang pa.<sup>478</sup>

This text was almost unavailable to Tibetologists outside the Soviet Union and the Rome circle until Chos rje Bla ma published an edition in movable type from Varanasi in 1927.<sup>479</sup> Unfortunately, this edition is filled with misprints. As the *Grub mtha'* in its various editions<sup>480</sup> becomes more accessible, it is to be hoped that a critical edition and translation will eventually appear.

In his exegesis of the philosophical position (*grub mtha'*), Thu'u bkwan normally organizes his materials around three broad topics: 1) historical origins; 2) philosophical teachings; 3) examination of these doctrines in terms of the orthodox Dge lugs pa Prāsaṅgika dialectic. The twelve sections<sup>481</sup> seem to have been arranged more by historical than typological considerations.

The portion dealing with Bon is the most unreliable of the entire *Grub mtha'*. Thu'u bkwan wrote at a politically unfavorable time, a few decades after the Manchu campaign against the Bon-led rebellion in the state of Rab brtan Rgyal po in Rgyal rong and the subsequent imperial proscription of that faith. He had few sources at his disposal and relied upon earlier secondary sources in his criticism. The most important of these are the writings of 'Bri gung Skyob pa 'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217) and the brief critical exposé of Spyan snga Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1390–1448), who groups the Bon po and Rnying ma pa together because the ninefold path is found in both.

In order to give some brief idea of the contents of the *Grub mtha'* I list here the section titles.

1. *'Phags yul du phyi rol pa dang rang sde'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 5–54).

The doctrines of the schools of India, Buddhist and non-Buddhist.

2. *Bod yul du bstan pa snga phyi dang gsang sngags rnying ma'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 55–89).

The former and later periods of the spread of the Buddhist religion in Tibet and the esoteric teachings of the Rnying ma pa schools.

3. *Bka' gdams pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 91–119).

- The teachings of the Bka' gdams pa schools, the tradition that was introduced in Tibet by Lord Atiśa.
4. *Bka' brgyud pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 121–76).  
The teachings of the Bka' brgyud pa schools, Shangs pa and Dwags po.
  5. *Zhi byed pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 177–93).  
The teachings and religious practices of the Zhi byed pa tradition introduced into Tibet by Pha Dam pa Sangs rgyas, and the Gcod system of Ma gcig Lab sgron.
  6. *Sa skya pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 195–233).  
The teachings of the Sa skya pa schools.
  7. *Jo nang pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 235–59).  
The doctrines of the Jo nang pa school; with notes on the Māhamudrā system of Kor Ni ru pa, the Zhwa lu pa (Bu lugs), and the *Lho brag grub mtha'* of Grub chen Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan.
  8. *Dge ldan pa'i grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 261–406).  
The teachings of the Dge lugs pa schools descended from Tsong kha pa.
  9. *Bon gyi grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 407–19).  
The philosophical positions of the Bon faith.
  10. *Ma ha ci na'i yul du rig gyed dang bon gyi grub mtha' byung tshul* (pp. 42–450).  
The beliefs of the followers of Confucius and Lao tzu.
  11. *Rgya nag yi yul du nang pa sangs rgyas pa'i chos lungs byung tshul* (pp. 451–82).  
Chinese Buddhism; its origins and teachings.
  12. *Hor Li Shambha la rnam su grub mtha' byung tshul grub don bshad pas mjug bsdu dang bcas pa* (pp. 483–519).  
Buddhism among the Mongols, in Khotan, and in the legendary land of Shambhala. Concluding remarks.

## 2. *The Biography of Dgongs pa rab gsal*

Thu'u bkwan wrote this brief account of the life of Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal, entitled *Bla chen byang chub sems dpa' dgongs pa rab gsal gyi rnam par thar pa mdo tsam gtam du brjod pa rin po che'i 'phreng mdzes* (pp. 521–34), at the request of a patron, a chieftain of Dmar gtsang, and the caretaker (*dkon gnyer*) of the holy structure believed to contain the mortal remains of this great saint



of A mdo. The first to receive the full monastic vows from the three refugee monks who fled to the wilds of A mdo to escape the persecutions of Glang dar ma, Dgongs pa rab gsal is a symbol of Buddhism's tenacious hold on the Tibetan heart. Through the ordination of Dgongs pa rab gsal, the last embers of the vinaya tradition were fanned to life.

This almost legendary figure in the cultural history of Tibet was born into a Bon po family at Bde khams in Tsong kha. In the preceding chapter, we noted that Thu'u bkwan regarded Dgongs pa rab gsal as a predecessor in the Lcang skya incarnation lineage. His biography of Rol pa'i rdo rje begins with a sketch of the life of Dgongs pa rab gsal.<sup>482</sup> In the present text, which unfortunately is not dated,<sup>483</sup> Thu'u bkwan states that Dgongs pa rab gsal was the immediate reembodiment of the pious minister 'Bro stag snang Khri gsum rje, who died in an Iron Pig year at the age of thirty-five. Accepting this statement requires the addition of 'Bro stag snang to the Lcang skya incarnation lineage.

Thu'u bkwan places the birth of Dgongs pa rab gsal in a Water Rat year, and calculates that he died in a Wood Pig year at the age of eighty-four.<sup>484</sup> While the chronological data in such works is highly suspect, there are indications that the author has followed old oral traditions and perhaps now unavailable texts in putting together this biography. To dismiss the whole of the contents as eighteenth-century fabrication would be a mistake.

The Bon name by which Dgongs pa rab gsal was first known was Mu zu gsal 'bar. His monastic initiatory name was Dge ba rab gsal; this gradually was corrupted into the eulogistic Dgongs pa rab gsal. Thu'u bkwan gives the names of some of the teachers with whom the young Mu zu gsal 'bar studied before his meetings with Gtsang, G.yo, Dmar, and Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje: Khang Rin chen rdo rje, Skyi Rgyal ba'i gtsug tor, and Nam Dga' ldan byang chub—all interesting names in the light of the Tun-huang finds. The fact that Dgongs pa rab gsal found so many teachers of obviously local extraction would indicate that religious activity was considerable in the Tsong kha area. The question of whether we are dealing with Buddhism, Bon, or some mixture cannot yet be answered. Thu'u bkwan also gives a list of places in A mdo with which Dgongs pa rab gsal was supposed to have been connected. Even the location of Bla chen's death at Dmar gtsang is an indication that Thu'u bkwan was dealing with well-established traditions in composing this little work.

### 3. The Masters of Tho ho chi Monastery

The full title of the next work is *Grub pa'i dbang phyug bkra shis rgya mtsho slob brgyud dang bcas pa'i rnam thar mu tig phreng mdzes* (pp. 535–49). In this little historical piece, compiled in 1792 at the behest of one Rgyal mtshan phun tshogs, the Ta Bla ma of Kun 'dul gling Vihara, Thu'u bkwan summarizes the lives of Pog to Cha han Bla ma Bkra shis rgya mtsho and his successors at his monastery at Tho ho chi near Köke Qota (Mkhar sngon). In addition to oral tradition, Thu'u bkwan has relied on two rare texts<sup>485</sup> that seem not yet to have come to light.

Pog to Cha han<sup>486</sup> Bla ma Bkra shis rgya mtsho (d. 1627) was born into a ministerial family of the Thu med. His chief teachers were Sma ra can and Gu yangs, who seem to have been followers of Bka' brgyud pa practice. Bkra shis rgya mtsho meditated at Tho ho chi above Köke Qota, and a monastery gradually grew up around his meditation cell. Bkra shis rgya mtsho was followed by his disciple, Do'u ge'i Di yan chi 'Phrin las rgya mtsho (d. 1656). 'Phrin las rgya mtsho was initially a follower of the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa. In 1652, Bkra shis rgya mtsho and his students met the Fifth Dalai Lama, who was on his way to Peking, at the Mo'u das ferry. 'Phrin las rgya mtsho had four main students: Chos skyabs Di yan chi, Cha han Di yan chi, Cha har Di yan chi, and Ban de Di yan chi. The last three founded their own monasteries and do not concern Thu'u bkwan.

Chos skyabs Di yan chi (d. 1684) became lama of the *gdan sa* of Bog to Cha han Bla ma in 1656 and served until his death. His students quarreled over the succession, and as a result, Nor bu rig 'dzin, a nephew of 'Phrin las rgya mtsho, occupied the *gdan sa* for almost eleven years.

Ngag dbang chos 'phel (1685–1737), the son of Thu mong khu ja lang, was proclaimed the rebirth of Chos skyabs Di yan chi. In 1694 he came to the abbatial throne. He studied with most of the important lamas of A mdo and Mongolia of his day.

Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (born c. 1738), the second embodiment of Chos skyabs Di yan chi, was born among the U rad. He received his first vows from Khri chen Sprul sku Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma and studied with Ra kho Hu thog thu,<sup>487</sup> Phur bu lcog Ngag dbang byams pa, the Seventh Dalai Lama, and the Second 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. He became Tham ka Bla ma in 1783 and was apparently still living when Thu'u bkwan wrote this piece in 1792.

4. *The Biography of Thu'u bkwan II Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho*

The Second Thu'u bkwan, Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho (1680–1736), is the subject of this biography, entitled *Grub pa'i dbang phyug ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho'i rnam thar dpag bsam ljon bzang* (pp. 551–623). Compiled in 1771 at the behest of Dar han dpon po Rab 'byams pa Don 'grub rnam rgyal, this text is packed with interesting historical information.

The work commences with a brief account of the First Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang rab brtan, seventeenth abbot of Dgon lung (1672–75). This lama was born in the Tsong kha area into the Li, claimed by Thu'u bkwan to descend from Genghis Khan. The name of the child's lineage (*rus*) was Thu'u bkwan,<sup>488</sup> from which the incarnation line took its name.

The re-embodiment of Blo bzang rab brtan was born at Char zen zhing in Tsong kha. The author reports that the child's mother took him to meet the La mo Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho on his way from Tibet to China. The Second Thu'u bkwan's teachers included the Second Chu bzang Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, and the First Lcang skya. Gradually, Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho came to hold a position of some influence in Peking. We learn that he attempted to intercede with the Yung cheng emperor on behalf of the unfortunate Stag rtse pa, Tibetan puppet during the Dzungar occupation of 1717–20.<sup>489</sup> The reason the author gives for the Second Thu'u bkwan's unsuccessful efforts to save the aristocrat was Stag rtse pa's firm patronage of the Dge lugs pa church.

Thu'u bkwan adds more to our knowledge of the 1723 rebellion of Bstan 'dzin Ching wang. We learn of the enormous vindictiveness of the commanders of the Chinese expedition. Not only were Btsan po Gser Khog and Dgon lung Monasteries destroyed and the surviving monks put to flight; revered teachers like the Chu bzang, 'Dan ma Grub chen, and A chi thu No mon han incarnations were put to death. Thu'u bkwan reports severe earthquakes in Peking, the cause of which he attributes to the Chinese excesses in A mdo. One of the commanders of the expeditionary force, Nyen gung, in spite of the high regard in which he had formerly been held by the emperor, soon fell into disgrace and was executed by being burnt alive.

According to Thu'u bkwan, the first patent of Chan zhi bestowed on a Tibetan Buddhist prelate was that granted to Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho in the twelfth year of the Yung cheng emperor's reign.<sup>490</sup> The outrageous favoritism shown to the Rnying ma pa and Bka' brgyud pa by the Seventeenth Imperial Prince, Khen zi Ching wang, is again noted in this volume in

greater detail. The deaths of the Zhwa nag and Zhwa dmar incarnations while on their way to visit China is openly attributed to the intervention of the Dge lugs pa protective deities.<sup>491</sup>

One gets some idea of Thu'u bkwan's charming and lucid prose from the passage in which he describes Bstan 'dzin Ching wang:

Applying the proverb of the dog on the top of the house who tried to run after the stars, he, intending to revolt against the throne, brought forth the calamity of that era through such actions as the destruction of the little Chinese fortress called Zen ching with Mongol troops.

*khyi khang steng du thon na gnam gyi skar ma la bsnyegs pa'i dpe  
bzhin / rgyal ngo log rtsis kyis zen ching zer ba'i rgya mkhar khung ngu  
zhig sog dmag gis gtor sogs dus zir bslangs.*<sup>492</sup>

### 5. *The Poetic Tale of Gzhon nu nor bzang*

The next work is entitled *Byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po gzhon nu nor bzang gi rtogs pa brjod pa bskal pa bzang po'i gtam rgyal sras kun tu dga' ba'i zlos gar* (pp. 625–41). In this fragment Thu'u bkwan shows his consummate mastery of Tibet poetics. Written in classical *ślokas*, this is a literary reworking of a popular *avadāna*. The unfinished text contains three chapters (*skabs*):

1. *Grong khyer skyid pa'i byung gnas su rje btsun 'phags pa 'jam dpal dbyangs kyis rjes su bzung ste / byang chub mchog tu sems bskeyed pa la bkod cing lung bstan pa thob pa* (pp. 626–34).

How Mañibhadra was favored by Mañjuśrī in the city of Skyid pa'i 'byung gnas, how he conceived the thought of buddhahood, and how he received the prophecy.

2. *Yul mi mo gya nom mchog gi ri bo mgul legs par dge slong sprin gyi dpal las sangs rgyas thams cad kyi chos kyi sprin yongs su 'dzin pa'i gzungs kyi stobs kyis sgo kun nas dmigs pa thams cad rnam par rigs pa la yangs cag par gzhon ba'i sangs rgyas rjes dran pa thob pa las chos bstan pa yangs dag pa ji lta ba bzhin thos pa* (pp. 634–38).

How he received the whole Dharma cloud of all the buddhas and came to follow in their footsteps.

3. *Lho phyogs kyi ljongs rgya mtsho'i sgo zhes bya bar dge slong rgya mtsho'i sprin las chos kyi rnam grags kun nas mig ces bya ba thos pa las brtsams te / gzungs kyi 'od kun nas snang ba sogs yang dag par bstan pa thos pa* (pp. 639–41).

How he began by hearing the Dharma called *Kun nas mig* from the monk Rgya mtsho'i sprin in the southern realm of Rgya mtsho'i sgo and received other profound teachings.

The elegant style of Thu'u bkwan's ornate verse is well-represented by the following verse, with its intertwining twenty-one syllable lines:

*/ zla shel nor bu'i khang par padma'i gdan bdar a mar gsar pa'i khu  
ba bsil mngar 'thung bzhin du /  
/ gur gum rdul sbags mkhur tshos rab dmar na chung gzhon nu nu ma  
mngon dga' ga bur 'dzag ldan pa'i /  
/ lag mnyen 'khri shing yal ga g.yo ba'i bsil yab 'dab ma'i rlung gis mgo  
skyes kun tu skyed ldan la /  
/ nyi bar brten kyang da dung 'dod pa'i tsha gdung 'phel gyed srid pa'i  
'brog las myur du bdag sgrol mdzod /<sup>493</sup>*

## 6. *The Monastic Chronicle of Dgon lung*

The sixth work in the volume is the *Bshad sgrub bstan pa'i byung gnas chos sde chen po dgon lung byams pa gling gi dkar chag dpyod ldan yid dbang 'gugs pa'i pho nya* (pp. 643–784). This monastic chronicle cum guide to the great institution of Dgon lung<sup>494</sup> was completed in 1775, 171 years after the foundation of the monastery. The name of the monks at whose behest the work was written are enumerated in the colophon: Rab 'byams pa Seng ge rnam rgyal, Bya btang Dka' bcu Don yod mkhas mchog, Rab 'byams pa Ngag dbang chos ldan, Dbon po Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin, and Rdo ba zhabs drung Ngag dbang grags pa rnam rgyal, the incumbent abbot in 1775.

This document is without a doubt a source of enormous importance for the history of the Kansu borderland where the Tibetan, Mongolian, and Han cultures meet. Vostrikov<sup>495</sup> was probably the first to describe this work in the scientific literature. The *Dgon lung dkar chag* is a good example of the literary genre that we can call the monastic chronicle. One of the three largest monasteries of A mdo, Dgon lung was the home monastery for the majority

of the grand incarnation lineages of Peking; the Lcang skya and Thu'u bkwan lines both traced their origins to Dgon lung. From this work, we can learn much about the operation of monastic politics.

The architecture of the work is rather simple; Thu'u bkwan arranges it into four topics or chapters:

1. *Chos sde chen po thog mar ji ltar chags tshul* (pp. 647–60).

How the monastery was first founded.

2. *Mkhan brgyud rim par byon pa rnam kyis bstan pa la bya ba mdzad tshul* (pp. 660–766).

How the successive abbots acted for the benefit of the Buddha's teaching.

3. *Skusung thugs kyi rten byin rlabs can ji ltar bzhugs pa'i lo rgyus* (pp. 766–79).

An account of the sacred objects, i.e., icons, scriptures, and caityas, to be found at Dgon lung.

4. *Zhar byung chos gzhi sbyin bdag byung tshul* (pp. 779–84).

How the lay patrons and religious estates came into being.

The work then closes with a colophon (pp. 782–84).

Dgon lung was founded in 1604. The motivating forces involved were Bra sti Sgar pa Nang so Shes rab grags, Glang kya Dka' bcu Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, A kya Sgar pa, Ho'u 'Bul dpon, Dpa' rin Sgar pa, Cog tsha Sgar pa, 'Da' ras 'Bul dpon, and Se tsha 'Bul dpon. In 1602, a delegation of Mongol grandees was dispatched to Central Tibet. The times were troubled; the king of Gtsang and the Karma pa hierarchs were harassing and persecuting the Dge lugs pa church. The delegation begged the Dalai or Pañ chen Lamas to accompany them to A mdo to found a monastery. Because of the difficult political times, however, neither dared to leave Central Tibet. It was eventually decided to send the Rgyal sras incarnation of 'On Chos sdings Monastery, one of the highest ranking lamas of the Dge lugs pa church, after the Dalai and Pañ chen Lamas, to represent the hierarchy in founding a monastery.

The second section is certainly the most historically interesting. I have summarized the biographical sketches of the forty-one abbots<sup>496</sup> at the end of this essay. The type of information given in the third chapter is of interest not only for the history of Tibetan religious art but also for the historian concerned with the problem of how a monastic institution grows. The last chapter is filled with data of political and economic significance.

### 7. *The Monastic Ordinance of Bde chen chos gling Hermitage*

Monastic ordinances (*bca' yig*) represent a special type of Tibetan Buddhist literature. Although *bca' yig* have a close connection with the vinaya rules, the two are quite distinct. Monastic morality and individual conduct are the fundamental concerns of the vinaya literature, while institutional organization and the liturgical calendar are emphasized in *bca' yig*. In this collection, Thu'u bkwan's editor has put together five monastic ordinances into a single anthology entitled *Dben gnas bde chen chos gling gi bsam gtan pa rnams kyi bca' khrims bstan pa'i pad tshal rgyas pa'i nyin byed sogs bca' yig gi rim pa phyogs gcig tu bkod pa* (pp. 785–826).

A. *Sgrub pa'i gnas mchog bde chen chos gling du bzhugs pa'i dge 'dun rnams kyi blang dor gyi rim pa gsal bar ston pa'i bca' yig bstan pa'i pad tshal rgyas pa'i nyin byed* (pp. 786–811).

Monastic regulation's for the meditating monks of Bde chen chos gling Hermitage founded by Thu'u bkwan. This *bca' yig* was written in 1781 at Dgon lung.

B. *Bslab mchog gling gi bca' yig nor bu ke ta ka* (pp. 811–15).

Ordinances for the Bslab mchog gling Monastery of the left banner of Su nyid. Written at the behest of Dka' bcu Ta Bla ma Blo bzang 'byung gnas and Sngags rams pa Blo bzang bsod nams. Undated.

C. *Or du su a'u shing pe'i ze'i ho sho'i bstan pa dar rgyas gling gi bca' yig* (pp. 815–19).

Regulations for the Bstan pa dar rgyas gling Monastery of the A'u shing Pe'i ze'i ho sho of Or du su. This *bca' yig* is undated but was written at the behest of Mkhan po Blo bzang 'od zer, Rab 'byams pa Chos rje Ngag dbang rin chen, and Chos rje Blo gros dar rgyas. Thu'u bkwan signs himself with the title Sa ma ti Pakśi<sup>497</sup> in the colophon.

D. *Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma zhes bya ba'i gtam* (pp. 819–25).

Instruction written at the request of Har chin Wang Ratnasiddhi.

E. Untitled (pp. 825–26).

A *bca' yig* for the Bkra shis dpal ldan dar rgyas gling Bshad grwa in the territory of O thong Ta Wang Don grub rgya mtsho of Or du su. Dated 1772.

### 8. Miscellaneous Works on Icons and Their Veneration

The editor of Thu'u bkwan's *gsung 'bum* has included four of his smaller works under the title *Bcom ldan 'das mi 'khrugs pa'i sku brnyan bzhengs pa'i dkar chag dad pa'i pad mo bzhad pa'i nyi 'od / sku 'bum byams pa gling gi gzims khang gong du bzhugs pa'i rten gyi dkar chag / lo'u hu'i mthong rten dkar po'i skor tshad dang phan yon / sku brnyan mthong ba don ldan gyi dkar chag bskor tshad bcas phyogs gcig tu bkod pa* (pp. 827–60). All four concern icons or *stūpas* and their veneration. Three of these works are surveys (*dkar chag*) of the relics enshrined in a sacred image or of the objects of veneration preserved in a temple.

A. *Bcom ldan 'das mi 'khrugs pa'i sku brnyan bzhengs pa'i dkar chag dad pa'i pad mo bzhad pa'i nyi 'od* (pp. 828–42).

This is an account of an image of Akṣobhya made by Blo bzang bsam 'grub, a monk-artist of Sku 'bum, to expiate his own imperfections.<sup>498</sup> There is no date given in the text, but we could probably determine the year of writing from Thu'u bkwan's biography. The text was composed at the behest of Blo bzang bsam 'grub himself. Following a discussion of Akṣobhya and his worship, Thu'u bkwan gives a list of the precious relics that have been enshrined within the statue.

B. *Sku 'bum byams pa gling gi gzims khang gong du bzhugs pa'i rten gyi dkar chag* (pp. 842–50).

This piece, written in 1719 at Sgar gsar Theg chen chos mdzod,<sup>499</sup> is an inventory of the icons and other holy objects housed in the upper residential chapel (*gzims khang gong ma*) at Sku 'bum. It records the restorations and renovations made in 1770, 1773, and 1787, for which Thu'u bkwan performed the consecratory rites (*rab gnas*). The personage at whose behest this work was written was Rgyud pa Dpon slob Sprul sku Dkon mchog rnam rgyal.

C. *Lo'u hu'i mchod rten dkar po'i skor tshad dang phan yon* (pp. 850–54).

The White Stupa (Mchod rten Dkar po) of Lo'u hu lies in the territory of the Har chen Mongols. According to local tradition, it had been raised during T'ang times by a Chinese Buddhist monk (*hwa shang*) on his way to India. In this work Thu'u bkwan tells something of the sanctity of this spot and describes the benefits to be derived from circumambulation of the *stūpa*. The text is undated but was written at the behest of Dge bskos Bkra shis don grub at Dgon lung.



D. *Sku brnyan mthong ba don ldan gyi dkar chag skor tshad dang bcas pa* (pp. 854–60).

This small work describes a statue of Śākyamuṇi called the Mthong ba don ldan. In 1778 Thu'u bkwan sent Dar han Don grub dbang rgyal to Lhasa to arrange for the carving of a statue of Lord Śākyamuṇi from sandalwood. Nepali craftsmen were engaged for this work. The image was adorned with gold ornaments. The actual consecration was completed by Klong rdol Bla ma Ngag dbang blo bzang, but both the Eighth Dalai Lama and the Third Paṅ chen Lama performed ceremonial consecratory rites (*me tog 'thor ba*). In 1783 the image arrived at Dgon gsar Thar pa gling in A mdo.

### 9. *Instructions for the Mahāmokṣa Sūtra Liturgy*

In this minor work entitled *Thar pa chen po'i mdo 'don pa'i cho ga'i khrul sel blun po'i kha la rgyas 'debs* (pp. 861–66), Thu'u bkwan deals with the method for the ritual recitation of the *Mahāmokṣa Sūtra* (*Thar pa chen po'i mdo*). Apparently, the popular practice, like so much of the liturgy prevalent among the Mongols and A mdo tribesmen, was corrupt or erroneous.<sup>500</sup> Thu'u bkwan attempts to correct the prevalent ritual practices with this text, which is undated and lacks a colophon.

### 10. *Miscellaneous Verses*

The final portion of this volume is a collection of Thu'u bkwan's ephemera under the comprehensive title: *Rten dang mchog rdzas sna tshogs kyī kha byang / dge ba rdzogs byang du bsngo ba / bka' bsgo 'ga' zhig / bsngo ba / smon lam thor bu bcas* (pp. 867–901). This collection includes verses of blessing,<sup>501</sup> dedicatory verses, benedictions, and prayers. Although these materials will eventually prove to be of great importance for dating Tibetan art objects, it seems of little immediate value to give a comprehensive list of the individual, usually untitled, verses, many of which are no longer than four lines. The editors have divided these ephemera into five broad categories:

A. *Kha byang* (pp. 868–85).

Blessings to be inscribed on the base of images, the reverse of thangkas, or on ceremonial scarves.

B. *Dge rdzogs byang* (pp. 885–88).

Ceremonial verses on the occasion of the execution of religious manuscripts or the performance of acts of service to the clergy, such as the offering of tea.

C. *Bka' bsgo* (pp. 888–90).

Ceremonial verses invoking the deities and imploring their favor.

D. *Bsngo ba* (pp. 890–92).

See note 501.

E. *Smon lam thor bu* (pp. 892–901).

Various prayers.

## II. *The Abbots of Dgon lung Byams pa gling*

The Rgyal sras series of incarnations were considered the chief lamas of Dgon lung because of the decisive role played by Don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho in founding the monastery. Throughout the history of the institution, the abbot (*mkhan po*) was, in theory, the representative of the Rgyal sras Sprul sku; consequently, Sum pa Slob dpon should be regarded as the first abbot. Although Dgon lung was not a branch monastery of 'On Chos sdings, the Rgyal sras incarnations' chief monastery, it did owe personal allegiance to the chief lama. With the progressive involvement of the Rgyal sras lamas in Central Tibetan affairs and the appearance of new incarnation lineages originating from local abbots, the bonds between Dgon lung and 'On Chos sdings gradually loosened. With the support of Manchu patronage, several of these abbatial incarnations, such as Lcang skya and Thu'u bkwan, eventually came to overshadow the Rgyal sras line, which had begun to decline after the middle of the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Rgyal sras had been one of the five or six most important Dge lugs pa incarnation lineages in Tibet.<sup>502</sup> The list of Dgon lung abbots and accompanying notes thus begins with Don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho.

0. **Rgyal sras III Don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho** (pp. 660–69).

Born in Dwags po. Recognized as the rebirth of Chos 'phel rgya mtsho. Teachers included the Third Dalai Lama, the First Paṅ chen Lama, and Grub chen Thar pa rgyal mtshan. Served as abbot of Dwags po Grwa tshang. Sent to A mdo to found a monastery in the Dgon lung area by the Fourth Dalai

Lama in response to an embassy of lay and ecclesiastical dignitaries. Established a score of monasteries and retreats in eastern Tibet besides Dgon lung, which was founded in 1604. Before returning to Central Tibet in 1609, he appointed Sum pa Slob dpon as his representative and abbot.

**1. Sum pa Slob dpon Dam chos rgya mtsho (pp. 669–71): Abbot 1609–12.** Born at Sum pa near Dgon lung. Studied in Central Tibet at Bkra shis lhun po (Shar rtse), 'Bras spungs (Sgo mang), and in the Smad rgyud Grwa tshang. Became a disciple of the 'Phags pa lha<sup>503</sup> of Chab mdo, where he served for a number of years as *slob dpon*. Following his return to the Dgon lung area, he was designated abbot of the newly established monastery. His students included 'Jam pa Chos rgya mtsho, Lcang skya Grags pa 'od zer, 'Dan ma Grub chen Tshul khri ms rgya mtsho, and Lu'u kya Grub chen Dge 'dun dar rgyas. According to local tradition, Dam chos rgya mtsho preceded La mo Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho in the incarnation lineage.<sup>504</sup> Later Tibetan tradition did not, however, include Dam chos rgya mtsho among the predecessors of Blo gros rgya mtsho and his rebirth, Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma.<sup>505</sup>

**2. Ka ring Dka' bcu pa Phun tshogs rnam rgyal (pp. 671–73): Abbot 1612–17.**

Born near the Ka ring Lha khang<sup>506</sup> in the Tsong kha area from the G.yung ba lineage. First vows from Mthong ba don ldan, the Third 'Phags pa lha. Studied in Central Tibet at the Mnga' ris Grwa tshang in Lho kha, 'Bras spungs, and Gsang phu. After returning to A mdo, he met Rgyal sras Sprul sku at Gro tshang. Ascended the abbatial throne of Dgon lung in 1612.<sup>507</sup> After five years, he retired and founded Gro tshang Bkra shis ldeng ka in 1624. Thu'u bkwan reports the existence of a biography of this teacher.

**3. Lhab Chos rje Bkra shis phun tshogs (p. 674): Abbot 1617–21.**

Born at Lhab near Dgon lung. Studied in Central Tibet at 'Bras spungs and Rgyud smad. During his tenure as abbot of Dgon lung, the Mchod khang gsar pa was built.

**4. Sum pa Slob dpon Dam chos rgya mtsho; second term (p. 674): Abbot 1621–27.**

Called to serve a second term. Responsible for making a number of images and overseeing a surge in building. Retired after six years to the Byang chub gling retreat (*dben gnas*).

5. 'Jam pa Chos rje Chos rgya mtsho (pp. 674–75): Abbot 1627–30.

Born at 'Jam pa, near Dgon lung. Studied first at Dgon lung and later in Central Tibet at Bkra shis lhun po (Shar rtse). Invited to return to A mdo by the Sems nyid Nang so of 'Ju lag smad to establish a new monastery. After helping to found Sems nyid, he was invited to become abbot of Dgon lung in 1627. He died in 1630 while on the abbatial throne. He was responsible for creating a great icon of Maitreya displayed during the Smon lam Festival.

6. Lcang skya Chos rje Grags pa 'od zer (pp. 675–77): Abbot 1630–33.

Born at Lcang skya. Studied first with 'Jam pa chos rje. Later went to Tibet to study at 'Bras spungs (Sgo mang) and Ngam ring. Became abbot of Dgon lung on the death of 'Jam pa Chos rje shortly after his return from Central Tibet. Monastic dissent forced him from the abbatial throne and from the monastery. He taught at Ri bo Dan tig, and his fame spread widely. He became teacher of *mtshan nyid* at the newly established Thang ring Thar pa gling. Later, he was invited to return to teach at Dgon lung. After a number of years, he died there. Grags pa 'od zer is usually reckoned to be the immediate predecessor of Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan.

7. Sum pa Slob dpon Chung ba Dam chos rgyal mtshan (pp. 677–78), died 1651: Abbot 1633–37.

Younger brother of Sum pa Slob dpon Dam chos rgya mtsho. Received his education at Dgon lung. He was a skilled politician. After his retirement as abbot, he rendered great service to the monastery by steering it through the Lu'u tsi troubles of 1644. Became the lama of Tas thung Dgon chen and later established a teaching monastery at Ser lung. Sum pa Zhabs drung Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan is said to have been the reembodiment of Dam chos rgyal mtshan.

8. 'Dan ma Grub chen Tshul khrim rgya mtsho (pp. 678–94): Abbot 1637–39.

This biographical sketch is filled with fascinating information about the political maneuverings of Sde srid Bsod nams chos 'phel and the Sde srid Gtsang pa. Tshul khrim rgya mtsho was one of the great personalities of Dgon lung and deeply involved in the factional struggles that had plagued the monastery almost since its founding. Born of a Rnying ma pa family at Ha la che 'Dan ma, a religious estate of Dgon lung. Studied with both Rgyal sras Sprul sku and Sum pa Slob dpon. Studied in Central Tibet during the troubled early seventeenth century with Bsod nams grags pa, the Sgo mang Dpon slob Gung

ru Sangs rgyas bkra shis, and the Fourth Dalai Lama. The first of the 'Dan ma Grub chen incarnations founded a number of monasteries, including Mchod rten thang and Kan chen Dgon Thar pa gling.

**9. Chu bzang I Rnam rgyal dpal 'byor (pp. 694–99) (1578–1651): Abbot 1639–48.**

Born at Dkar leb khang gsar in Stod lung. His teachers included Rgyud pa Rnam rgyal dpal bzang, Stag lung brag pa Blo gros rgya mtsho,<sup>508</sup> Gzhu khang pa Dge legs lhun grub, and the First Paṅ chen Lama. Served as the first *dge bskos* of Sgo mang grwa tshang.

Following his return to A mdo, he founded a monastery at Han Stag lung under the patronage of Ho lo ji and son. He was a teacher of Gushri Khan. During his tenure, the monastery was granted the whole of Dpa' ris as a religious benefice, and the Lha khang chen mo was built. With the help of Sum pa Slob dpon Chung ba, he was able to keep Dgon lung out of the troubles caused by the Lu'u tsi uprising. Chu bzang was forced to retire from the abbatial throne by the faction led by 'Dan ma Grub chen and Btsan po pa. Later, he founded the abbey of 'Bum lung Bkra shis thang Dga' ldan mi 'gyur gling.

**10. Btsan po pa Don grub rgya mtsho (pp. 699–702): Abbot 1648–50.**

Born at Dga' ba gdong. Studied at 'Bras spungs (Sgo mang) and in the Dwags po Grwa tshang. Served as the chief attendant of 'Dan ma Grub chen Tshul khrims rgya mtsho. Went to Sku 'bum where he stayed with an old friend, Rgya nag Grags pa rgyal mtshan. Following his retirement from the abbatial throne of Dgon lung, he founded Gser khog dgon (Btsan po dgon) in 1650. Later, Hor Dka' bcu pa Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub (d. 1699) came to Btsan po to preach and was given the title of Smin grol No min han. He and his successors in the incarnation lineage are also called Btsan po No min han.<sup>509</sup>

**11. Bsam 'grub sgang pa Blo bzang ngag gi dbang po (pp. 702–3): Abbot 1650–51.**

Born at Bsam 'grub sgang in Stod lung. Studied in the Sgo mang grwa tshang of 'Bras spungs. Teachers included Sangs rgyas bkra shis, Sprul sku Grags pa rgyal mtshan and Grub chen Bsod nams grags pa. After a term as *khri* of Bkra shis Sgo mang, he went to Mongolia. He came to the abbatial throne of Dgon lung in 1650 and, after two springs of teaching, returned to Central Tibet. Abbot of Rwa sgren and Byams pa gling. Died at Byams pa gling at the advanced age of seventy. Writings included a *Phar phyin mtha' dpyod*, *Don bdun cu*, and *Rdo rje'i 'phreng ba'i dbang chog*. Among his students were Smin

grol No min han Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub, Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho, and 'Bru la Mkhan chen.

**12. Ha gdong Don yod rgyal mtshan (pp. 703–5): Abbot 1651–53.**

Traditions vary as to his birthplace: Ha gdong, a religious estate of Dgon lung, or Hor Rdza dmar. Went to Central Tibet for studies. Favored by the Fifth Dalai Lama. After his return to Tibet, stayed at Ra la Ri khrod in Mtsho kha. Came to the throne of Dgon lung on his way to China. Due to the continuing intrigues of Btsan po pa Don grub rgyal mtshan and his patrons, he asked permission to retire. Btsan po pa came again briefly to power in 1653.

**13. 'Dan chung Bkra shis 'od zer (p. 705) (d. 1656): Abbot 1653–56.**

'Dan ma Grub chen is often called 'Dan rgan, while this lama is designated 'Dan chung. Invited the Fifth Dalai Lama to visit Dgon lung on his return from Peking. Died during his term as abbot.

**14. Thar po chos rje Bkra shis rgyal mtshan (pp. 705–6): Abbot 1657–61.**

Born at Thar po. Served as lama of Sems nyid Dgon pa. Despite his lack of talent and learning, he became the abbot of Dgon lung for political reasons.

**15. Lu'u kya chos rje Don yod chos grags (pp. 706–7): Abbot 1661–65.**

Born at Lu'u kya. Studied in both A mdo and Central Tibet. Although he was a famed scholar in Buddhist philosophy, he was deeply preoccupied with the contemplative life. He received the Fourth Rgyal sras, Blo bzang bstan 'dzin, when that great lama visited Dgon lung in 1665. On this occasion he begged leave to retire.

**16. Bde rgu che ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho (p. 707): Abbot 1665–72.**

Born in Bde rgu, a nomadic encampment. Studied in both eastern and Central Tibet. Appointed abbot by the Fourth Rgyal sras during his visit to Dgon lung in 1665. Tried to separate spiritual life from the administrative duties of abbot.

**17. Thu'u bkwan I Blo bzang rab brtan (pp. 707–8): Abbot 1672–75.**

Born in the lineage of Thu'u bkwan.<sup>510</sup> Fled his family who wanted him to follow the lay life and was ordained at Dgon lung. Studied with the First Paṅ chen Lama in Central Tibet. On his return to A mdo, he became the lama of Tas thung dgon. Offered the throne of Dgon lung in 1672, but stepped down after only three years. Died soon after his retirement at Bo ro chu 'gag.

**18. Li kya Dpon slob Blo bzang rgyal mtshan (pp. 708–12): Abbot 1675–80.**

Born at Li kya. Did his elementary studies at Dgon lung and later journeyed to Central Tibet where he studied at 'Bras spungs and at Bkra shis lhun po. His teachers included the Fifth Dalai Lama, First Paṅ chen Lama, and Fourth Rgyal sras. Following his return from Central Tibet, he served as the lama of Yar lung<sup>511</sup> monastery before coming to the throne of Dgon lung. Later he retired to the life of contemplation at the hermitage of Byang chub gling. As a consequence of his prayer to be reborn in the Sukhāvati paradise, there was no incarnation lineage of this famed teacher until the next century.

**19. Chu bzang II Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (pp. 712–17): Abbot 1680–88.**

Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan was recognized as the rebirth of Rnam rgyal dpal 'byor and ultimately of Tsong kha pa's disciple, 'Brom ston Sher 'byung blo gros. He had taken other embodiments as Chinese monks and Indian sages.

He received his first vows from Btsan po pa Don grub rgya mtsho. Studied at Dgon lung and at Gser khog. Later he traveled to Central Tibet where he received his final ordination from the Fifth Dalai Lama. His teachers included Khri XLII Rnam dag rdo rje,<sup>512</sup> the Fourth Rgyal sras, and Sgo mang dpon slob. He became Rgyud pa bla ma of Sku 'bum after his return to A mdo. He was subsequently offered the throne of Dgon lung. During his tenure, trouble broke out with Btsan po Gser khog<sup>513</sup> over the honor of receiving Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho who was en route to China. After his retirement as abbot, he continued his studies with Smin grol No mon han.<sup>514</sup> Invited to become the abbot of Sku 'bum; after the death of Smin grol, he was asked to assume the abbatial duties of Gser khog in addition. Teacher of the Seventh Dalai Lama and of Khri chen Sprul sku Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma (1689–1746). Highly regarded by the Mongol princes of the Kokonor. There exists an autobiography of this teacher called the *Nyams dga'i rol rtsed*.

**20. Lcang skya I Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan (pp. 717–24) (1642–1714): Abbot 1688–90.**

Thu'u bkwan refers the reader to Shes rab dar rgyas' biography<sup>515</sup> of the First Lcang skya. After studying for some time at Dgon lung, he journeyed to Central Tibet where he studied in the Sgo mang Grwa tshang of 'Bras spungs with Hor Dka' bcu pa Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub and La mo Khri chen

Blo gros rgya mtsho. He and the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa received from the Rgyud chen Dkon mchog yar 'phel the most profound esoteric teachings of the Srad pa lineage, instructions that this guru had been previously unwilling to pass on for want of suitable disciples until that time. Ngag dbang blo bzang's career was filled with excitement and activity. His students included such lights as Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho, Nyi thang Blo gros shes rab sbyin pa, the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, Thu'u bkwan II Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho, Rdo ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho, Bde dge Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, Sum pa Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, Chu ru kha ba Dka' chen Blo bzang dar rgyas, Brag dkar sngags ram pa, G.yer gshong Sngags ram pa, Grub chen Ni gu pa, Shar rdzong dpon slob, Sgom chen Sbrul nag pa,<sup>516</sup> Sgom zhi Grub chen, Dzā ya Paṇḍi ta,<sup>517</sup> Mkhar sngon Shi re thu, Tho yon ho thog thu, Bde thang sprul sku, Bka' 'gyur ba No min han, Bi lig thu No min han, and Sram pa Bstan 'dzin grags pa, among others.

Lcang skya received the Ch'ing title Bkwan ting Phu'u shan Bkwang tsi Ta Kau shri.<sup>518</sup> Thu'u bkwan recounts here only those facts that he felt were not clear in the two larger biographies.<sup>519</sup>

**21. Rdo ba Rab 'byams pa Dpal ldan rgya mtsho (pp. 724–25): Abbot 1690–93.**

Born at Rdo ba. Studied first at Dgon lung with 'Dan ma Grub chen Tshul khrims rgya mtsho. Later to Central Tibet to study at Ngam ring. During his tenure as abbot, he attempted to settle some of the outstanding contentious issues that divided the monastic community of Dgon lung. He seems to have been opposed by Lcang skya; consequently, he was not on the abbatial throne long. During this period, Lcang skya had a *Bka' 'gyur* brought from Li thang.

**22. Byang chub sems dpa' Sbyor lam pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan<sup>520</sup> alias Bde rgu Chung ba (pp. 725–26): Abbot 1693–1701.**

The younger brother of Bde rgu Che ba. From childhood he was devoted to meditation. His tenure as abbot was plagued by monastic strife and dissent, which he was unable to control.

**23. Stag lung Zhabs drung Blo bzang bstan pa chos kyi nyi ma<sup>521</sup> (pp. 726–27): Abbot 1701–4.**

Rebirth of Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo and Gtsang Rta nag pa Kun dga' rnam sras.<sup>522</sup> Born at Mdo ba on the bank of the Rma chu in A mdo. Studied at Sgo mang Klu 'bum in eastern Tibet and at Ngam ring in Central Tibet. Later became Sngags pa lama of Bkra shis lhun po. Returned to A mdo in accor-



dance with a prophecy of the Paṅ chen Lama and successively became lama of Han Stag lung, Mchod rten thang, and Tas thung. He founded the monasteries of Yar lung in Jag rung and Stag lung. Went to Peking in order to arrange endowments for these two monasteries and was honored by K'ang hsi, who made him lama of the Cha gwan Se in the palace complex. Visited China four times and Tibet four times. Became the abbot of Dgon lung in 1701. He had little time for teaching because of the demands made on him by his patrons. There are some works and prophecies attributed to this teacher.

**24. Thu'u bkwan II Ngag dbang chos kyi nyi ma (pp. 727–30)**

**(1680–1736): Abbot 1704–12.**

Born at Char zen ching. Recognized as the Thu'u bkwan rebirth and invited to Dgon lung. Monastic vows were bestowed by Chu bzang II Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan. His gurus were the First Lcang skya and the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. He was ordered back to A mdo by the Fifth Rgyal sras 'Jigs med grags pa to become abbot of Dgon lung. Many new buildings and images were made and the tantric college (*rgyud pa grwa tshang*) established during his tenure as abbot. He later traveled to Peking. See the *Dpag bsam ljon bzang*, Thu'u bkwan's biography of his predecessor (pp. 551–623).

**25. Chu bzang II Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan; second term (pp.**

**730–31): Abbot 1712–23.**

Following the Second Thu'u bkwan's assumption of duties in Peking, the aged Chu bzang reassumed the burden of the abbacy. Because of his age and heavy activities, most of the teaching was done by U shri Dge bshes Blo gros rgya mtsho and Tshang kya Dge bshes Bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho. With the patronage of Ta yan Hung thas ji and Bkra shis Ching wang, a number of splendid additions were made to the monastery, which all too soon would be destroyed.

**26. 'Dan ma Grub chen II Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las<sup>523</sup> (pp.**

**731–38): Abbot 1723–1724.**

Born at Shing ru. Educated at Gser khog in A mdo and in Central Tibet. Appointed the lama of the newly established tantric college by the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa. While he was serving as the teacher (*slob dpon*) of the *mtshan nyid* faculty at Gser khog, Chu bzang picked him to succeed to the abbatial throne of Dgon lung. He ascended on the fourth day of the tenth month of 1723 at a time of great trouble.

A mdo was in turbulence because of the rebellion of Bstan 'dzin Ching wang. A Chinese expeditionary force under Yo'u Cang kyun and Nyen Gung had entered A mdo, and the Mongol army of Bstan 'dzin Ching wang had been scattered; Bstan 'dzin Ching wang had fled to the Dzungars. It appears that many of the monasteries of the area continued to hold out against the Chinese. The leader seems to have been the lama of Rgyal ldog monastery, Gser khog pa Glang Ta la'i Chos rje. This uprising appears to have been a national movement directed against Manchu imperial encroachment upon the Mongol-Tibetan borderlands. Even fifty years later, Thu'u bkwan writes with great sadness over the tragedy. While he follows official policy in reporting these troubled times, he states clearly that the leaders of the Chinese expeditionary force were unnecessarily brutal and vindictive, and repercussion in the form of an earthquake was visited upon Peking.

During 1723, the Manchu army wrought its vengeance upon Gser khog, which was completely destroyed. Seventeen senior monks and lamas including the aged Chu bzang Sprul sku, were lured through trickery to the Ya min Grong tse and burned alive. Thu'u bkwan reiterates the view that Chu bzang was entirely innocent and was murdered in cold blood. Over a hundred monks of Gser khog were butchered. The three monasteries of Zhwa bo khog, Rgyal ldog Monastery of 'Ju lag, Sems nyid Monastery, and Bra sti Monastery of Ho rod were completely destroyed. In spite of the dreadful destruction visited on these monasteries, there was still no peace. 'Dan ma Grub chen Sprul sku was taken to Zi ling and executed. When this was reported to the monks of Dgon lung by some Chinese Moslems,<sup>524</sup> the monks were outraged. In the first month of 1724, an armed Chinese party approached Dgon lung. Certain of the monks attempted resistance. Dgon lung was ordered razed. The aftermath is described in great detail. In 1729, through the tact and persistence of Thu'u bkwan and Lcang skya, the emperor granted permission to rebuild Dgon lung on the old site.

**27. Sum pa Chos rje Phun tshogs rnam rgyal (pp. 738–39): Abbot 1729–34.**

Born in Sum pa. Educated in Central Tibet at Ngam ring. Received his final vows from the Second Pañ chen Lama, Blo bzang ye shes. After his return to A mdo, he served as the lama of the Byang chub gling hermitage. He was delegated to visit Central Tibet to convey the funeral offerings of Sum pa Zhabs drung and Lcang skya. Later selected as lama of Bkra shis chos gling.

After the monks of Dgon lung were dispersed, he was instrumental in reconstituting and continuing the traditions at the Byang chub gling hermitage.

which had not been destroyed. He would seem to have been appointed the first abbot of the newly rebuilt monastery by Ba yan nang so, who acted without any reference to the great benefactor, Thu'u bkwan Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho. This apparently led to considerable animosity and bitter feelings.

**28. Wang Chos rje Grags pa dpal 'byor (pp. 739–40): Abbot 1734–37.**

Born at Wang Chen khri. Educated at Dgon lung. First became lama of Bkra shis chos gling and then abbot of Dgon lung in 1734. He was grieved by the hatred and vendettas within the monastery. Wang chos rje was a great scholar and poet. Among his writings, Thu'u bkwan mentions a *Don so lnga'i dper brjod* and a number of *mgur*. He received Thu'u bkwan in 1735 when he visited Dgon lung and performed the funeral rites on Thu'u bkwan's death in 1736.

**29. Khyung tsha Zhabs drung Ngag dbang dbang rgyal<sup>525</sup> (pp. 740–41): Abbot 1737–40.**

Rebirth of Khyung tsha Dge bshes Rab brtan. Born in A mdo Shar pa. Met Khri Blo gros rgya mtsho, who performed his tonsure and bestowed upon him the name Ngag dbang blo bzang. Took vows from Lcang skya. Went to Tibet where he was ordained by the Second Pañ chen Lama. Studied with Dge 'dun phun tshogs at the Sgo mang grwa tshang of 'Bras spungs and received the degree of Dka' bcu pa from Gsang phu. After his return to A mdo, he remained in contemplation for many years at Chos bzang ri khrod. He next became Rgyud pa lama of Dgon lung. He also acted as the lama of Bkra shis chos gling and of Ma thi zi Dgon pa.

**30. Bde dgu<sup>526</sup> III Ngag dbang dge legs rgya mtsho<sup>527</sup> (pp. 741–43): Abbot 1740–43.**

Third incarnation of Bde dgu Che ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho. Born of the Yag la gar dpon lineage of the Sha ra Yu gur.<sup>528</sup> Recognized at the age of eight. Studied at Dgon lung. His teacher included Thu'u bkwan and Chu bzang as well as Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya mtsho and the Fifth Rgyal sras 'Jigs med grags pa. He was sent to Tibet in 1737 to invite the Rgyal sras Sprul sku to visit eastern Tibet, but Pho lha nas refused permission. He returned to A mdo to become abbot of Dgon lung. The monastery was again a hotbed of dissension. He also acted as head lama of Mchod rten thang, Ma thi zi, 'Dul ba dgon, and Stong 'khor on various occasions.

**31. Rgya tig Rab 'byams pa Blo bzang don grub (pp. 743–44): Abbot 1743–46.**

The rebirth of Btsan po pa. Born in the nomadic community of Rgya tig. Studied at Dgon lung and at Btsan po. Later went to Central Tibet where he was favored by the teacher Blo bzang dam chos. On his return to A mdo, he was made Rgyud pa bla ma. This teacher was considered to be rather arrogant.

**32. Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor (pp. 744–59) (1704–88): Abbot 1736–49.**

Born into a family of chieftains from Kokonor. Recognized by 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa as the rebirth of Sum pa Zhabs drung. His teachers included Thu'u bkwan, Dpa' rin chos rje Ngag dbang bkra shis, the Second Paṇ chen Lama Blo bzang ye shes, Sgo mang dpon slob Ngag dbang nam mkha', Mog kya Rab 'byams pa 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho, Khri chen Ngag dbang mchog ldan, Khri Nam mkha' bzang po, Sgo mang dpon slob Shes rab rgya mtsho, Sngags pa Bla zur Mnga' ris pa Blo bzang chos 'phel, Ra kha brag pa Bsod nams bzang po, Kun spangs Mnyam gzhag pa, Bra sti Ngag dbang mchog dpal, Rgyud smad Grags pa lhun grub, 'Tsho byed Nyi ma rgya mtsho, Sde pa Lha dbang,<sup>529</sup> Ngag dbang rgya mtsho,<sup>530</sup> and others.

The autobiography of Sum pa Mkhan po is one of the most important documents for the history of the eighteenth-century Tibetan world. Even this little sketch records a number of Sum pa's important deeds. For example, his fascinating role in Pho lha nas's rise to power has yet to be understood fully. It was Sum pa who, as a youth, prevented the monks of Se ra and the other great monasteries from resisting Pho lha nas. For this favor, Pho lha nas made him the abbot of 'Bras yul Skyed tshal.

In his long career in the service of the Dharma, Sum pa served as abbot of Bkra shis chos gling, Ser lung, 'Brug lung, Dul ba dgon, Dga' ldan rin chen gling, and Pho rod Bra sti dgon as well as Dgon lung. He was honored by the Manchu emperor with the title Er te ni Paṇḍi ta Mkhan po.

**33. Chu bzang III Ngag dbang thub bstan dbang phyug (pp. 759–60): Abbot 1749–54.**

Younger brother of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje. He was a student of the Seventh Dalai Lama and Khri Ngag dbang mchog ldan. Besides occupying the throne of Dgon lung, he later served as abbot of both Sku 'bum and Btsan po (Gser khog) dgon. In 1775, when Thu'u bkwan wrote this work, Chu bzang was abbot of Bya khyung Chos sde.

34. Li kya zhabs drung II Phun tshogs grags pa bstan 'dzin (p. 760):  
Abbot 1754–56.

Rebirth of Li kya Dpon slob Blo bzang rgyal mtshan, eighteenth abbot of Dgon lung.

35. Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor; second term (p. 760): Abbot  
1756–61.

36. Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (pp. 760–63): Abbot  
1761–62/63.

37. 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa II Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (pp.  
763–64) (1728–91): Abbot 1763.

38. Lcang skya II Rol pa'i rdo rje (pp. 764–65) (1717–86): Abbot  
1763/64–69/70.

The regent (*tshab*) for Lcang skya was Ja sag Bla ma Bskal bzang lha dbang from 1764 onward.

39. Ser lding Zhabs drung Ngag dbang chos ldan (p. 765): Abbot 1770.  
Ser lding zhabs drung was designated abbot around 1770, but he died in the same year before he could assume the abbatial throne.

40. Thu'u bkwan III Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (pp. 765–66): Abbot  
1771–?

41. Rdo ba Zhabs drung Ngag dbang grags pa rnam rgyal (p. 766): Abbot  
1775.

Abbot in 1775, the year in which Thu'u bkwan composed this history.

## CHAPTER 13

# The Life of Ye shes rgyal mtshan, Preceptor of the Eighth Dalai Lama

### *I. The Biography of Ye shes rgyal mtshan*

THE FIRST Tshe mchog gling Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–93) is an excellent example of the scholar-saint: an ordinary monk who, through intellectual ability and spiritual attainment, rose to one of the loftiest positions in the Buddhist world, that of preceptor to the Dalai Lama. There is a Tibetan saying to the effect that if a youth is talented enough, even the throne of Dga' ldan has no owner.<sup>531</sup> Although Ye shes rgyal mtshan was never installed on the throne of Tsong kha pa, that honor was offered and declined in the twilight years of his long and productive career. His biography, I am certain, will be of interest not only for those scholars working on the history of Tibet and Nepal, but also for specialists in Tibetan art and literature.

The blockprint under consideration bears the marginal notation *Ka* and appears to be either an early edition from Skyid grong Bkra shis Bsam gtan gling (c. 1795) or an extract from the 'Bras spungs Dga' ldan Pho brang edition of the collected works of the Eighth Dalai Lama, 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, in one volume. There is no printer's colophon or indication as to when the blocks were carved or where they were preserved; the text closes only with an author's colophon. Due to the worn condition of the blocks and the lack of a printer's colophon, I am inclined to prefer the first possibility; that it is a print from blocks carved shortly after 1794, when the work was first completed, and preserved at Skyid grong. I have seen three different editions of this biography, and there may be four.<sup>532</sup>

This biography was written by the Eighth Dalai Lama, 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1758–1804), at the Potala in 1794 at the behest of a number of Ye shes rgyal mtshan's students. It is based upon the Eighth Dalai Lama's recollections of his teacher's stories, works such as the *Bkra shis bsam gtan gling gi bka' gyur*

*bstan dkar chag*,<sup>533</sup> and notes made by the attendants (*nye gnas*) in charge of ceremonies.

The Eighth Dalai Lama's life story of his teacher is divided into seven chapters of uneven length. In the first three chapters, dates are few and the New year is not often mentioned; hence, events that occurred within a given year may be found mentioned in the text immediately preceding that page on which the year is mentioned. This is because the year designation might only occur in connection with some event that took place in the middle of the year. After about 1760, the biography is based on especially reliable material. The period between 1775 and 1793 is treated in considerable detail, and it is for this period that the biography is most useful.<sup>534</sup>

This biography is a fascinating document filled with material that should be of interest for the ethnologist as well as the historian. The Eighth Dalai Lama has skillfully punctuated the narrative with a number of quoted passages in which Ye shes rgyal mtshan tells of his life and times with considerable candor in a pleasant colloquial style. The language of these passages reflects faithfully the peculiarities of the western Gtsang dialect that Ye shes rgyal mtshan spoke; pronominal forms like *'u rang* and *'u rang rnam*s for the first person abound. 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho himself had been born in Gtsang at Thob rgyal and perhaps shared some of these dialectical forms and expressions that give this work charm and spontaneity. The narrative style is a superb example of that simple and flowing style that represents literary Tibetan at its best.

## *II. The Life and Times of Ye shes rgyal mtshan*

The family into which the future Tshe mchog gling Yongs 'dzin was born was an illegitimate offshoot of the Sa khud nang pa, an aristocratic family of Rta nag in Gtsang. This family traced its ancestry ultimately to the ancient Royal Dynasty of Tibet through a legitimate son of Chos rgyal Kun bzang nyi zla, a king of Upper Mnga' ris. This son had married the daughter of a court minister and sired an heir who was very popular because of his talents. This princess and her son were objects of hatred to a number of prominent people at court. The queen and some jealous ministers entered into a conspiracy against the young prince and his mother, and both were exiled to Sa khud in Rta nag where the prince's descendants gradually became important landlords.

Ye shes rgyal mtshan's grandfather was Zhabs sdod pa Dbang drag, who held a military position under Lha bzang Khan (1705–17) and was slain by the

Dzungars at 'Dam around 1717. He seems to have been well into middle age when he was assassinated; his illegitimate son had already produced a son of his own in 1713—our subject. After the death of Dbang drag, the legitimate heirs to the estates of Sa khud nang pa refused to give anything to the father of Ye shes rgyal mtshan, Tshangs pa pad dkar, and his family. Tshangs pa pad dkar was brought up by his maternal relatives, a well-to-do farmer family, the Shar skya ba. His identification with the Shar skya ba was strong, but he seems to have had some degree of longing for the glamour of his paternal family with its ancient pedigree. Tshangs pa pad dkar appears never to have adopted the Shar skya ba name, although relations became very close with his maternal cousins.

With no prospect of recognition by his father or his half-brothers, Tshangs pa pad dkar entered the service of the Sle'u shar ma ba<sup>535</sup> of Lhasa, a *sger pa* family. The heir of Sle'u shar had been posted as governor (*rdzong dpon*) to Gting skyes in western Tibet. Tshangs pa pad dkar accompanied his new lord in the capacity of steward (*gnyer pa*).

In Gting skyes, Tshangs pa pad dkar took a village girl as his wife, and the result was Ye shes rgyal mtshan, who was born on Saturday, the twenty-seventh of the seventh Tibetan month of the Water Snake year (1713). The relations between our subject's parents were apparently strained. Tshangs pa pad dkar finally entered monastic life at La stod Shri rgyal, a meditative cloister of the Bka' brgyud pa sect near Rtsib ri. When his wife heard this news, she took over the family property and began an affair with another man. Tshangs pa pad dkar, hearing of this outrage, left his solitary meditation cave in a rage vowing to kill his wife and her paramour. The lover fled, leaving the wife to bear the brunt of the anger of Tshangs pa pad dkar. It would appear that Ye shes rgyal mtshan, then only about six, was able to plead successfully for the life of his mother. The incident was followed by incessant wrangling and bitterness.

When Ye shes rgyal mtshan was seven (1719), the Dzungar invaders ordered a levy of young boys sent to the monastery (*btsun khral*).<sup>536</sup> There was some discussion over the inclusion of Ye shes rgyal mtshan in this levy. His mother apparently opposed this plan. As his family unhappiness increased, a disgust for the transitory world filled the heart of Ye shes rgyal mtshan. He pleaded to be spared the unhappy existence of the farmer or trader. His father understood and took his son to Thos bsam gling Chos rje Tshe brtan rgyal mtshan, who had recently ascended the abbatial throne of Ri khud Chos sde. This lama foresaw that the boy would be of great benefit to the Dharma and sentient creatures, and he changed the boy's name from O rgyan tshe 'phel to O



rgyan chos 'phel. In this monastery Ye shes rgyal mtshan was cared for by a kindly nun, Tshe dbang, who taught him how to read.

In 1722 the Second Paṅ chen Lama Blo bzang ye shes (1663–1737) heard his first vows and bestowed upon him the name Ye shes rgyal mtshan.<sup>537</sup> He had now begun the long course of study and meditation that would ultimately lead to the position of tutor (*yongs 'dzin*) to the Eighth Dalai Lama. His teachers at Bkra shis lhun po included the Paṅ chen, the Rdo rje 'dzin pa Dznyā na śrī, Dka' chen Ye shes thogs med, Grub dbang Blo bzang rnam rgyal (1670–1741) of Skyid grong Dga' ldan Phug po che, Phur bu lcog Ngag dbang byams pa (1682–1762), and Drung rams pa Bsod nams, among others.

Ye shes rgyal mtshan was apparently an extraordinarily capable student. His spiritual advisors at Bkra shis lhun po decided in 1735 that he should go to Blo bzang rnam rgyal to begin the meditative labors necessary for spiritual attainment. He received his final ordination and immediately began constructing his solitary cell (*mtshams khang*). The long process began; after his initial period of solitary confinement had been successfully completed, he sought further esoteric instructions. His teachers were dying: the Paṅ chen in 1737, Blo bzang rnam rgyal in 1741, and Sngags rams pa Ye shes skal ldan in 1752. He came under the influence of the First Zam tsha Sprul sku, Dga' ldan Shar pa Chos rje Nam mkha' bzang po, who ascended to the throne of Dga' ldan in 1746 and died in 1750. Ye shes rgyal mtshan's education was almost completed when he began to collect a following of lay patrons: the Pad tshal ba family; Mthong smon pa, *rdzong dpon* of Skyid grong; Dga' bzhi Gung and his lady; Bde ldan sgrol ma; and members of the Skyid sbug family.

In 1751 Ye shes rgyal mtshan visited Nepal for the first time: on his return he was captured by the troops of Gorkha at the foot of the Be ko ta Pass. He was again to visit Nepal in 1769 on a semi-official visit to Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāḥa, who by then had completed his conquest of the Kathmandu Valley. In 1756 Ye shes rgyal mtshan founded the monastery of Skyid grong Bkra shis Bsam gtan gling. In 1759 he was active in restorations at the monastic seat of Blo bzang rnam rgyal, Dga' ldan Phug po che. More structures were added to the Skyid grong Bsam gtan gling complex in 1767, including the Chos grwa chen mo. In 1788, during the war between Tibet and Nepal, Gorkha troops captured the monastery of Skyid grong Bsam gtan gling. In 1790, the Dalai Lama built the monastery of Tshe mchog Bsam gtan gling near Lhasa for his aged teacher.

As Ye shes rgyal mtshan's fame spread, we find the yearly records more packed with lists of initiations he bestowed. After the death of the Third Paṅ chen Lama Dpal ldan ye shes (1738–81) and the debilitating illness of the

Sixtieth Dga' ldan Khri pa, the Yongs 'dzin Blo bzang bstan pa, Ye shes rgyal mtshan was invited to become the preceptor of the Eighth Dalai Lama. From 1782 to 1793 he labored continuously as *yongs 'dzin*, or tutor.

After Ye shes rgyal mtshan's death in 1793, the Tshe mchog gling bla brang, a name derived from the monastery built by the Eighth Dalai Lama for his aged tutor, joined Kun bde gling, Bstan rgyas gling, and Mtsho smon gling to make up the four *glings*, the incarnations of which were eligible to become regents during the minority of a Dalai Lama.<sup>538</sup>

### III. Literary and Artistic Developments in Eighteenth-Century Tibet

As I have pointed out in the preface to the autobiography of Si tu Paṅ chen,<sup>539</sup> for Tibet the eighteenth century was a period of rediscovery of India and Sanskrit. Connected with this reawakening of interest in Indian heritage was an artistic and literary current characterized by a reworking of *avadāna* and *jātaka* material from the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* in the light of new conceptions of India and the Indic tradition. The biography of Ye shes rgyal mtshan is an important source for this development.

In 1783 Ye shes rgyal mtshan completed his magnificent retelling of the lives of the sixteen *sthaviras* (*arhats*), or Buddhist elders.<sup>540</sup> Already in 1762 we find him busy spreading a system of worship based on the *sthaviras*.<sup>541</sup> It is interesting to note Ye shes rgyal mtshan's effort to reintroduce and popularize the Indian style of iconographic representation of the *sthaviras*.

Although Ye shes rgyal mtshan is probably correct when he traces the origins of this style back to Dben sa pa Blo bzang don grub (1505–65/66), the Chinese and so-called Tibetan styles had largely displaced the Indian long before the end of the sixteenth century. Tucci does not even mention Ye shes rgyal mtshan's work in his treatment of the cult of *sthaviras*, although this is the text dealing with this cycle more extensively than the treatises to which we now have access that will enable a detailed description of the iconography of the *sthavira* thangkas.<sup>542</sup>

It is sad to say that up to the 1970s there was little attempt to utilize Tibetan biographical materials to identify and accurately date Tibetan icons, even though there is an abundance of relevant literary sources. A number of single thangkas and perhaps complete sets of thangkas representing the *sthaviras* have found their way into museums and private collections since 1959. The majority of these paintings originated in western Tibet and were brought out

through Nepal. By using this biography of Ye shes rgyal mtshan and a number of other biographies of lamas from Gtsang and western Tibet, many of these thangkas can eventually be identified. Only after a thorough comparison of thangkas and literary evidence can we establish valid stylistic sequences. Only then can we begin to speak of the study of Tibetan art history.

Ye shes rgyal mtshan's texts on the cult of the *sthaviras* represent only a small part of his contribution to the new movement. The *Jātakamālā* was the subject of a magnificent detailed commentary.<sup>543</sup> We find thangkas illustrating the *Jātakamālā* that reflect the inspiration of this imaginative treatment. Another of Ye shes rgyal mtshan's masterpieces is the two-volume collection of biographies of the teachers in the transmission lineages of the Lam rim teachings.<sup>544</sup> We read of Ye shes rgyal mtshan instructing painters on how to produce sets of paintings illustrating this impressive work. Numerous other thangkas were painted under the direction and patronage of Ye shes rgyal mtshan, and they find mention in the pages of his biography. Gradually, as more biographies like this one become available, the discipline and methods of the art historian working with the better-known traditions will be adapted and applied to Tibetan art.

This recasting of canonical material in literary forms was obviously not confined to Ye shes rgyal mtshan. We read in the biography<sup>545</sup> that in 1775, Ye shes rgyal mtshan was invited to Shel dkar rdzong by the joint governors (*rdzong dpon*), Sding chen Tshe ring dbang 'dus<sup>546</sup> and Bshad grwa 'og pa Kun dga' dpal 'byor.<sup>547</sup> This brief notice enables us to identify and date to the eighteenth century the author of one of the most popular Tibetan literary dramas, the poetic life of Rgyal po Nor bzang,<sup>548</sup> an imaginative reworking of an episode from the *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*. The author mentions at the beginning of the text that he wrote it while serving at Shel dkar. This work can now be precisely dated to the period 1770–80. The mention of Sding chen Tshe ring dbang 'dus has not been brought to my notice in any other source so far consulted. There also exists a literary treatment of the same story by the Third Thu'u bkwan, Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1732–1802).<sup>549</sup>

## V. Literary Arts and Encyclopedias

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## CHAPTER 14

# Buddhist Literary and Practical Arts According to Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal

### *I. Introduction*

OVER FIFTY YEARS AGO, Berthold Laufer published his “Bird Divination among the Tibetans,” an early landmark essay in the development of Tibetological studies beyond the Himalayas.<sup>550</sup> This brilliant study took as its starting point one of the Pelliot documents (no. 3530) from Tunhuang; around this seemingly insignificant little text, Laufer wove a stunning fabric of penetrating insights into the history of the Tibetan language and its philological problems. He raised questions that significantly influenced the research interests of Tibetologists like Bacot, F. W. Thomas, Pelliot, Richardson, Li Fang Kuei, and Chang Kun for the next half century

The first volume of Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal’s (1376–1451) *De nyid ’dus pa* is concerned with, among other things, divination and the prognostication of the future from physical signs and omens, the very subject that inspired Laufer to produce his magnificent essay. In addition to the similarity in subject, the reproduction of the actual works of Bo dong Paṅ chen is likely to have methodological implications comparable to those which Laufer’s investigation produced.

The origins and affiliations of the Bo dong pa school have perplexed a number of Tibetan scholars who sought to classify it and subsume it within a hierarchy of tenets (*grub mtha’*). A series of curious coincidences and misunderstandings led the Bo dong pa to be branded as adherents of the Gzhan stong doctrine, the chief proponents of which were the Jo nang pa. Both the Jo nang pa and Bo dong pa specialized in the *Kālacakra Tantra*, specifically the six-limbed yogic practice (*ṣaḍaṅgayoga*). The monasteries of both the Bo dong pa and Jo nang pa were located in the same general area of Gtsang.

There was a considerable overlap of lay patronage that led some to group the two together.

The most significant reason for the misunderstanding, however, was the confusion of Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1308–86), a teacher of Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), with Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal. Many later Dge lugs pa scholars come to identify Bo dong Paṅ chen with the earlier Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal, a Gzhan stong partisan. As this confusion spread, Gzhan stong theories were attributed to the whole Bo dong pa school—a school that had produced its finest in Bo dong Paṅ chen and was rapidly dying.

The origins of the Bo dong sect go back to Ko brag pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, who invited the scholar Vibhūticandra from Nepal and received a new transmission of esoteric teachings from him centering around the *śaḍaṅgayoga*. Through Grub chen Go lung pa Gzhon nu dpal the lineage that is properly styled the Ko brag pa passed. Other lines branched off from the main current; the Rong pa traced their origins to Rong pa Shes rab seng ge, the son of Rong pa Rga lo, and Rdo rje rgyal mtshan.

The monastery of Bo dong E was established in 1049 by Mu dra pa chen po. The school itself, however, goes back to Bo dong pa Rin chen rtse mo, one of Ko brag pa's disciple-line gurus called the Gnyal zhig bu dgu. Rin chen rtse mo received additional profound instructions from Grub thob Se mo che ba. Rin chen rtse mo was the master of Stag sde pa Seng ge rgyal mtshan, in turn the teacher of the great Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan. The guru-disciple lineage runs through Dpang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa, Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo, and Lo chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan to Bo dong Paṅ chen. Bo dong Paṅ chen's most famous disciples, Paṅ chen Byams pa gling pa and Byang bdag Rnam rgyal grags bzang, upheld magnificently the traditions of learning for which this school had established a reputation. Through disciples of Kun spangs chen po, such as La stod pa Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan and Sron pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, the Bo dong pa splintered into a number of small schools like the La stod pa, Sron pa, 'Gos dkar ba, and Lkog pa, lineages that enjoyed a brief moment of prestige only in northern Nepal and other western Tibetan cultural areas.

Bo dong Paṅ chen, it should be remembered, advocated the tradition of exegesis that passed through Bu ston Rin chen grub and Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan rather than that which was transmitted through Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan. In Bo dong Paṅ chen's studies on the Prajñā-pāramitā and Madhyamaka it is apparent that Bo dong Paṅ chen was—from the exoteric point of view—a staunch advocate of the *rang stong* and of Prāsaṅgika dialectic. His closest intellectual counterparts are Tsong kha pa,

Mkhas grub rje, and some of his contemporaries among the Sa skya pa scholars. Bo dong Paṅ chen largely lacks the subtlety of thought of Tsong kha pa and that mastery of systematic exposition that strikes one in Mkhas grub rje's writings.

## II. *Bo dong Paṅ chen and the Development of the Buddhist Canons*

Perhaps the most persistent interest in Tibetan language and literature has centered on the use of Tibetan translations as controls or tools in editing and translating Sanskrit texts. The study of Tibetan language in India and abroad has been, and continues to be, the handmaiden of Buddhist studies. When foreign scholars first compared some of the Tibetan translations of Sanskrit texts found in the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*, they were impressed by the meticulously faithful rendering that the translators achieved. It was a logical step to the hypothesis that it would be possible to reconstruct lost Sanskrit originals from their Tibetan translations. Unfortunately, several of these Sanskrit reconstructions were found to be erroneous when a copy of the Sanskrit originals, which had been presumed lost, finally appeared. The fundamental principle, however, of using Tibetan renderings as aids in comprehending and interpreting difficult Indic originals was never questioned.

The rigorous methods developed in classical studies in the West were applied to Tibetology. Foreign scholars began to manifest an interest in the various editions of the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*. As they compared the available manuscripts and xylographs in their attempts to establish critical editions, the question of which edition was the most reliable and accurate arose. Laufer is especially noteworthy because of the interest he took in the history and critical investigation of the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*.

Tibetan scholars, too, have been concerned with problems of accuracy and reliability, but for rather different reasons than their foreign counterparts. The most common editions of the *Bka' 'gyur* were the Snar thang, Sde dge, and Lhasa, and for the *Bstan 'gyur*, there were those from Snar thang and Sde dge. They did not question the authenticity of these magnificent collections of wisdom and transcendental truth (or, of course, the esteemed gurus responsible for their redaction) on the basis of the number of incorrect *sngon 'jug* or minor grammatical and vocabulary substitutions. When the foreigner asked about the most reliable edition of any text, the answer was, in the majority of cases, the name of the edition with which the particular teacher was best



acquainted. More recently, there have been a number of admirable attempts to establish a historical sequence for the editions of the *Bka' gyur* and *Bstan gyur* and the criteria for judging the accuracy of both the total edition and constituent texts.<sup>551</sup>

As a result of careful comparisons of the Sde dge, Snar thang, Ch'ien lung, and Cho ni *Bstan gyur* editions of the *Aṣṭāṅgahrdayasamhitā*, Vogel<sup>552</sup> has been able to diagram a plausible model for the relationship between the various redactions of the *Bstan gyur*. He has shown that the Cho ni is clearly a copy from the Sde dge. The Sde dge, Snar thang, and Peking editions have all been "contaminated" according to Dr. Vogel. The Snar thang is the sole edition which has a direct relationship to the original fourteenth-century Snar thang redaction; both Ch'ien lung and Sde dge have been filtered through Bu ston. The edition that Vogel calls the Fifth Dalai Lama's is descended from the 'Phyong rgyas manuscript.<sup>553</sup>

The compilation of the first *Bstan gyur* is a product of three remarkable scholars of Snar thang: Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri, Mchims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs II, and Dbus pa Blo gsal.<sup>554</sup> It was at Snar thang that the principles of Tibetan textual criticism were formulated. Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri at Snar thang examined all the colophons of the *Bka' gyur* texts and verified their identity by checking the number of verses and comparing them with the authoritative *dkar chag*. He also composed the *Bstan pa rgyas pa*, the first attempt to classify the Indic treatises that had been translated into Tibetan in relation to the *Bka' gyur*. His disciple, the Second Mchims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs, became a court chaplain of Buyantu Khan (reigned 1311–20) of the Yüan dynasty and obtained imperial support and financing for the enormous task of copying, checking, and arranging all the Sanskrit treatises that had been translated into Tibetan into a single set of manuscripts. The scholar in charge of the actual editing was Dbus pa Blo gsal, a student of both Bcom ldan Rig ral and Mchims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs. Copies of the Snar thang collection were subsequently prepared for great religious establishments like Sa skya, Mnga' ris Gung thang, Tshal Gung thang, and Stag lung. Several decades later, Bu ston took the original Snar thang *Bstan gyur* to Zhwa lu, where he eliminated all duplicate translations and suspicious texts, and added over a thousand new works. The new redaction was preserved at Zhwa lu. This collection, now the largest, served as the basis for the manuscripts of Rtses thang,<sup>555</sup> Mtshur phu, Byams pa gling (Yar rgyal), and several sets taken to Khams. The details of the interrelationships between the Snar thang and Zhwa lu manuscripts on the one hand and the 'Phyong rgyas, Bo dong, and perhaps other independent collections on the other hand is a problem that yet awaits investigation.

It should be noted, however, that Bu ston and his Zhwa lu redaction would come to exercise an overwhelming influence on all of the xylographic editions. There would be scholars who would come to question the correctness of the criteria used by both Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri and Bu ston,<sup>556</sup> but they would be very few.<sup>557</sup>

Vogel has noted an extremely interesting dittograph in volume *Se* of the Peking *Bstan 'gyur* print preserved at the International Academy of Indian Culture (New Delhi). This dittograph may perhaps be from a different redaction. The evidence that Vogel adduces is quite convincing. A detailed study of a number of prints of the four extant editions of the *Bstan 'gyur* may reveal other dittographs and related evidence. But we must ask: is careful comparison and analysis of variant readings in the several redactions the only approach to *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* scholarship?

Bu ston eliminated a number of duplicate translations from the *Bstan 'gyur*. The magnitude of the project makes it unlikely that he used the preferable readings from the translations to be discarded to edit those which were to be retained. It is also unlikely that he compared the translations carefully to ascertain which were the most faithful; even the magnificent library of Sanskrit texts preserved at Zhwa lu would have been inadequate for this task. He was forced to rely upon the reputation of the translators for reliability. Although in a few cases two translations that were divergent enough have been retained,<sup>558</sup> the majority of the duplicate renderings that Bu ston rejected have perished. One of the most significant features of the *De nyid 'dus pa* is the fact that it preserves some of the purged translations. A typical example is the *Pratītyasamutpādanāmacakra*, attributed to Nāgārjuna. A small extract will serve to illustrate the extraordinary variations:

Bo dong Paṅ chen (v. *Kha*, p. 25): 'di na srog chags kyi skye ba ni las dang nyon mongs pa'i dbang gis yin la / skye ba'i dbang gis kyang bde sdug la sogs pa'i mtshan mar 'gyur bas de dag rim pa bzhin du bshad par bya'o // de la dpyid zla ra ba<sup>559</sup> la sogs pa bcu gnyis shing lo re ra yin te / de dag kyang rim pa bzhin ma rig pa logs<sup>560</sup> pa rten cing 'grel par 'byung ba bcu gnyis su sbyar bar bya'o // zla ba ra re zhing yang nag po dang dkar po'i ngo bo gnyis su 'dus pa yin la / zla ba thams cad la zhag gi shol gyi cha yod pa ni 'bras bu rtsub mo 'byin pa'am / kha cig tu 'bras bu med pa nyid yin pa'i phyir de rtsi bar mi bya'o // de yang zhag bcwo lnga zhing zla phyed du gnas pa las tshes bcu gsum pa ni gsum dang mtshungs so // bcu bzhi pa ni bzhi pa dang / bcwo lnga pa lnga pa dang / nag po'i ngo ji lta ba bzhin du dkar po'i ngo yang

*bzung bar bya'o // de la dpyid zla ra ba'i tshes gcig ni ma rig pa'o //*

Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur: Mdo (Go)*, fol. 32r: 'dir nges par las dang nyon mongs pa'i dbang gis srog chags rnam skyi skye ba 'byung ba la / ji ltar bde ba la sogs pa rnam mtshan ma skye bar 'gyur ba de ltar de rnam la / ma rig pa la sogs pa rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba yan lag bcu gnyis cho ga bzhin nye bar bshad par bya'o // dgun zla 'bring po la sogs pa zla ba bcu gnyis la lo gcig go // de yang rim gyis 'jug pa'i sbyor bas phyogs gnyis la zla ba gcig go // de la zla ba rnam skyi nyi ma lhaq pa thams cad brtsis pa'i zla ba gcig lhaq pa ni mi brtsis te / 'bras bu mi bzang pa skyed pa 'am yang na 'bras bu med pa'i phyir der bya ba brtsam par ma gsungs so // zhag bco lnga la zla ba phyed ste / ji ltar gsum pa de ltar bcu gsum pa'o // ji ltar bzhi pa de ltar bcu bzhi pa'o // ji ltar lnga pa de ltar bco lnga pa'o // ji ltar nag po'i phyogs la de ltar dkar po'i phyogs la'o // dgun zla 'bring po'i tshes gcig la ma rig pa'o //

I hope that these two small passages will give some idea of the nature of the materials that are to be found in the *De nyid 'dus pa*. The translation found in the collection of Bo dong Paṅ chen is undeniably less “literary;” it shuns the artificial method of rendering the Sanskrit relative—i.e., *ji ltar...de ltar*—in favor of a colloquial paraphrase that is more in accord with the genius of the Tibetan language. The stilted prose of the *Bstan 'gyur* version makes for difficult reading.

### *III. Secular Arts and Sciences According to Bo dong Paṅ chen*

The second volume of the works of Bo dong Paṅ chen (volume *Kha*) is made up of ten separately titled and paged sections, a number of which contain several individual works or extracts. The following analysis of the contents of this volume should give some indication of the importance of Bo dong Paṅ chen's preservation efforts vis-à-vis the later canonical collections. It should also provide a brief glimpse into the vast range of secular arts and sciences about which Bo dong Paṅ chen wrote.

I. *'Jam dpal rtsa rgyud las gsungs pa'i skye 'chi sogs brtags pa* (pp. 1–147).

This section, concerned with omens and the interpretation of their import, includes four separate works or extracts:

A. *'Jam dpal rtsa rgyud las gsungs pa las le tshan lnga pa* (pp. 2–24).

This section, dealing with omens and their meaning, is extracted from the *Mañjuśrīmūla Tantra*.<sup>561</sup>

B. *Rten 'brel bcu gnyis kyi gtsug lag gi brtag pa* (pp. 24–55).

This explanation of omens and coincidence is represented by both the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*<sup>562</sup> and Bo dong Paṅ chen to be the work of Nāgārjuna. The Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* gives the Tibetan title as *Rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i khor lo* and the Sanskrit title as *Pra ti tya sa mu tpā dā nā ma tsa kra*. We have already noted that the translation found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* and the one reproduced here are completely independent. The author of the index to the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* attributes that translation to Buddhakāraprabha and 'Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas. This text is mentioned in the *dkar chagas* missing from the Sde dge redaction of the *Bstan 'gyur*. Bo dong Paṅ chen notes that the primary source of this compilation was the *Ḍākārṇavamahāyoginī Tantra*<sup>563</sup> and other esoteric works.

C. *Thub pa chen po drang srong gar gti*<sup>564</sup> *stan bcos las ltas sna tshogs bstan pa* (pp. 57–99).

A translation almost identical to this work on omens is included in both the Sde dge<sup>565</sup> and Snar thang<sup>566</sup> editions of the *Bstan 'gyur*. The index volume to both editions notes that it was translated from the Chinese. It is quite difficult to identify the original Sanskrit title. Among the works of this nature attributed to the great sage Garga are the *Pāsakakevali*<sup>567</sup> and the *Praśnamanoramā*. The treatments of the different classes of omens are numbered from one through fifteen. The eight subsections of the following title continue in sequence from sixteen through twenty-three.

D. *Ltas brtag pa'i tshul mdo sde stag sna las* (pp. 99–146).

The eight topics in this, another work on omens, would appear to have been extracted from the *Śārdulakarṇāvadāna*.<sup>568</sup> These concern the significance of cosmic and other natural phenomena: constellations; heavenly, luminescent, solar, and lunar signs; comets; unusual sounds; rainbows; and earthquakes.

II. *Mi spyad*<sup>569</sup> *rgya mtsho bstan pa* (pp. 147–74).

This treatise is concerned with the significance of physical characteristics: with what can be predicted of a person's destiny from bodily indications. The translation quoted by Bo dong follows that found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*<sup>570</sup> fairly closely. The colophon notes that this text was translated by Pra

ba ka ra, a scholar of Tshad tra pur in the vicinity of O tantra spu ri, and O rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1229–1309) at Dpal Bde chen gling Ri'o Spud tra. There are a considerable number of problems involved in assessing whether Bo dong's translation is independent or is based upon O rgyan pa's. There appears to be a lacuna in Bo dong's version (at p. 171). Yet Bo dong's version obviously contains many better readings that will enable us to interpret the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* version.<sup>571</sup> We find two other works of this genre in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*;<sup>572</sup> the present work seems not to have found its way into the Sde dge redaction of the *Bstan 'gyur*.<sup>573</sup>

The authorship of the present work is still in doubt. There would seem to be some traditional evidence to connect it with Durlabharāja, the son of Nṛsimha and the author of the *Naralakṣana Sānudrikā*. This question will require further investigation.

III. *Dpal ldan zhi ba lhas gsungs pa'i sho 'gyed pa'i mo rtsis bstan pa* (pp. 175–95). The use of dice in prognostication is a very old Indic tradition, going back to Vedic times. The text that Bo dong Paṅ chen has reproduced in this section is attributed to Śāntideva by the Tibetan tradition. It appears in the Snar thang redaction of the *Bstan 'gyur*<sup>574</sup> but is missing from the Sde dge edition, although it is mentioned in the *dkar chag* by Zhu chen Tshul khri ms rin chen. The translation that Bo dong quotes is almost identical with that found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*, where it is attributed to Gotamaśrī, Buddhaśrijñāna, and Thar lo Nyi ma rgyal mtshan.<sup>575</sup>

IV. *Rten 'brel gyi mo rtsis bshad pa* (pp. 197–213).

This text treats a form of divination that is closely associated with the cult of the *dākiṇī*. Small *kārsāpaṇa*, or barley grains, are strewn on a special field; the position and place in which they land provide the required answers to the questions. This work is absent from the canon, although it may ultimately derive from the tantras found in the *Bka' 'gyur*. The greater part probably reflects the thought of Bo dong.

V. *Mkhas pa 'jug pa'i bzo rig sku gsung thugs kyi rten bzhengs tshul* (pp. 215–63).

This treatise was written by Bo dong Paṅ chen himself and has for its subject the technical knowledge needed in the creation of icons. The greatest portion is concerned with metallurgy and casting. He tells us a great deal about the various traditions that were followed in Tibet. In a brief aside he even deals with the making of swords, a subject filled with half-remembered legends from ancient times. He considers briefly (pp. 252–63) the techniques of

painting. This is a source of tremendous importance for understanding the development of metallurgy, casting, and painting in early fifteenth-century Tibet. It would seem that Bo dong Paṅ chen was himself a skilled practicing craftsman.

VI. *Rten gsum bzhengs tshul bstan bcos lugs bshad pa* (pp. 265–342).

This treatise, too, is Bo dong Paṅ chen's own work, but it is based upon the *Samputa*, *Catuhpīṭha*, and *Vajradāka Tantra* cycles. In the previous treatise he was concerned with techniques in the creation of icons. This text, on the other hand, deals with questions of propriety and canonical proportions for the three *rten*, or "supports," for the Dharma. The Mahāyāna tradition recognizes three classes of representation of the Buddha and his teaching. The first (*sku'i rten*) are statues and paintings, which operate primarily on the visual level. The second class (*gsung gi rten*) are books and the *bija* forms of letters, functioning chiefly on the verbal level. The third (*thugs kyi rten*) symbolizes the Buddha on the level of pure conceptualization. Ideally, the various forms of the *stūpa* (*mchod rten*) and certain ritual objects like the bell exemplify this third type.

The work is divided into five chapters. The first (pp. 265–92) considers where holy objects should be housed, i.e., the chapel and temple. Temple architecture falls under the purview of this chapter. In the second chapter (pp. 292–308), Bo dong Paṅ chen takes up questions related to the basic principles to be followed in the design of the various *stūpa* types. The third (pp. 308–30) outlines the rules for the design of visual representations of Buddhism. The brief fourth chapter (pp. 330–33) is concerned with the theories of book reproduction and its karmic rewards. The fifth (pp. 333–42) is occupied with the proper way in which the three *rten* should be honored and worshipped. Bo dong examines the relationships between patron, artisan, and, by implication, the community of the faithful in reference to concepts such as *bsngo ba*, the turning of the merit of an act to the benefit of all sentient beings. At the end of this text, one should notice Bo dong's mention that this is a part of the *De nyid 'dus pa*.

VII. *Sku gzugs la sogs pa'i tshad bshad pa* (pp. 343–92).

In this section, Bo dong Paṅ chen reproduces two extracts and a brief treatise on the subject of the canonical proportions and symbolic forms to be observed when representing the Buddha, bodhisattvas, and tutelary deities.

A. *Dus kyi 'khor lo las gsungs pa'i sku gzugs la sogs pa'i tshad bshad pa* (pp. 343–55). This has been largely extracted from the *Kālacakra Tantra*.<sup>576</sup>

B. *Sdom pa 'byung ba'i rgyud las gsungs pa* (pp. 355–75).

The source of this extract is the *Samvara Udbhava Tantra*.<sup>577</sup>

C. *Drang srong chen po a tri'i bus mdzad pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad* (pp. 375–92). Tibetan tradition attributes—probably wrongly—the *Pratibimbamānalakṣaṇa* to the Vedic sage Ātreya, the author of the *Ātreya Saṁhitā*. This text is found in both the Snar thang<sup>578</sup> and Sde dge<sup>579</sup> redactions of the *Bstan 'gyur*. This iconographic work was translated into Tibetan by Dharmadhāra and Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan.<sup>580</sup> There are several other works of a similar nature included in various redactions of the *Bstan 'gyur*.<sup>581</sup> The translation quoted by Bo dong is identical with that found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*. Bo dong's copy does, however, give some readings that enable us to understand the *Bstan 'gyur* version.<sup>582</sup> By the same token, the *Bstan 'gyur* translation is most helpful for interpreting Bo dong's often corrupt readings that stem from illiterate copyists.<sup>583</sup>

VIII. *Dus 'khor nas gsungs pa'i khyogs kyi 'phrul 'khor bshad pa* (pp. 393–415). Not only does one find in the *Kālacakra* cycle a wealth of information about astronomy, astrology, and chronology, it is also a mine of knowledge about worldly sciences. In this section Bo dong Paṅ chen reproduces what the *Sañcaya Tantra*<sup>584</sup> of the *Kālacakra* cycle says about the *'phrul 'khor* (*yantras*), magical tricks that can be performed by the adept to ensure the victory of one's patrons in warfare. Not only can one employ *'phrul 'khor* in warfare; they have their application in peacetime as well. In this section, however, Bo dong confines himself to the military uses of miraculous techniques. Das enumerates the seven offensive types of *'phrul 'khor*:<sup>585</sup>

- 1) *Rdo'i 'phrul 'khor*: missiles and bombardment to capture a fortress.
- 2) *Gru'i 'phrul 'khor*: the naval use of boats and men.
- 3) *'Bru mar gyi 'phrul 'khor*: the use of burning grain and butter to smoke out a defending army.
- 4) *Gri gug gi 'phrul 'khor*: the deployment of armed swordsmen.
- 5) *Rlung gi 'phrul 'khor*: the use of wind and gales to blow away the top of a hill where enemy fortresses have been constructed.

- 6) *Rdo rje gur gyi 'phrul 'khor*: the use of magical tents to batter down fortifications.
- 7) *Lcags mda'i 'phrul 'khor*: the magical cycle of iron arrows to kill the war enemies that have been armored with mail.

Bo dong's order of presentation varies slightly.

IX. *Dus 'khor nas gsungs pa'i gser 'gyur dang / bcud len la sogs pa'i sbyor ba bshad pa* (pp. 417–505).

There is a voluminous body of literature in Sanskrit on alchemy and witchcraft. Many of these texts are connected with the cult of *rasa*, practices closely connected with late developments in the Śaivite tradition. *Rasa* are fundamentally metallic preparations to which are attributed fabulous powers of healing and rejuvenation. The monarch of *rasa* (*rasendra* or *raseśvara*) is mercury, a substance that was also thought to transmute base metal into gold. *Rasa* was both the condensed essence, the elixir, and a compound. The Tibetan rendering of *rasa* was *bcud* or *bcud len*, concepts that had their own broad connotations in the Tibetan tradition. In this section Bo dong Paṅ chen has surveyed the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* sources for alchemical transmutation and the preparation of *rasa*.

A. *Gser 'gyur bya ba* (pp. 417–52).

This section on the transmutation of other minerals into gold is almost exclusively drawn from the *Kālacakra* cycle.

B. *Bcud len gyi sbyor ba* (pp. 452–77).

Here Bo dong Paṅ chen reproduces the *Kālacakra* sources dealing with the preparation of *rasa*.

C. *Kha sbyor las gsungs pa'i bcud len* (pp. 477–86).

Other tantras mention the use of *rasa* preparations. Bo dong Paṅ chen seems to be quoting here from a tantra of the *yoginī* class.

D. *Dngul chu sbyor ba'i bstan bcos* (pp. 486–505).

This passage on the preparation of mercury is an almost complete quotation of the *Rasasiddhiśāstra* attributed to Vyāḍipāda. It represents a translation made by O rgyan pa and Śrī Narendrabhadra and included in both the Snar thang<sup>586</sup> and Sde dge<sup>587</sup> *Bstan 'gyur*. There is a fragment of another translation



preserved in both the Snar thang and Sde dge editions as well.<sup>588</sup> We also find another work of a similar nature that was translated by Śivadāśa, a yogi of Hardwar, and O rgyan pa.<sup>589</sup>

X. *Bcud len gyi man ngag bshad pa* (pp. 507–601).

The final section in this volume is Bo dong's own work on the preparation of *rasa*, the extraction of elixirs. The treatise is divided into two portions: *nang* (pp. 508–61), concerning the theory, and *phyi* (pp. 561–601), dealing with practical aspects.

#### IV. Indian Grammatical Studies in Tibet

Tibetan scholarship recognized a division of knowledge into five greater and five lesser subjects of exoteric learning. The scholastic classification of knowledge into ten subjects can be conveniently found in the *Collected Works* of Klong rdol Bla ma Ngag dbang blo bzang (1719–94).<sup>590</sup> Several alternative classifications of knowledge are found in various texts of the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*. Both the *Kālacakra Tantra* and the *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandhu speak of a division into eighteen arts and sciences, but the lists differ significantly.

The five major “sciences” were technology (*śilpavidyā*), medicine (*āyurveda*), linguistics (*śabdavidyā*), logic (*pramāṇa* or *hetuvidyā*), and Buddhism. *Bzo rig pa* (*śilpavidyā*) includes a number of subjects that European traditions would not include in “technology.” Besides architecture and iconography, the science is sometimes broadly construed to encompass divination, political and social science, and even the art of love. For Tibetans, linguistics is specifically the study of the grammar of Sanskrit, the perfect language. Tibetan grammar is, in many ways, a branch of the study of Sanskrit. Finally, considered as a science, Buddhism embraces what we might call theology—in as far as Buddhism can be said to have a theology. The Tibetan term is *nang don rig pa*: interior knowledge. It should be remembered that Buddhism is not primarily a philosophy; it is rather a way of action.

Of the five lesser “sciences,” the first four—poetics (*kāvya*), metrics (*chanda*), lexicography (*abhidhāna*), and the performing arts (*natāka*)—were subordinate, or rather supplementary, to the third of the major “sciences,” Sanskrit grammar. For the Indo-Tibetan scholastic, Sanskrit was the perfect language, the idiom of the gods. He who knew Sanskrit perfectly would comprehend all tongues. Sanskrit grammar was synonymous with philology

and linguistics. Four basic texts with their appropriate commentaries served as the basis for the study of Sanskrit: the *Kātantra*, the *Candravyākaraṇa*, the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*, and Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The latter two were translated into Tibetan only in the period of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Bo dong Paṅ chen and his contemporaries were actually conversant only with the *Kātantra* (Tib. *Ka lā pa* or *Cha bsags*) and *Candravyākaraṇa* (Tib. *Tsandra pa*), although they certainly knew of other grammatical expositions from the literature. Bo dong's biographer wrote in verse that is unfortunately less than elegant:

*As for Sanskrit grammar, the eye of all Buddhist śāstra,  
(there are) the excellent Kalāpa and Candrapa,  
as famous to the world as the sun and the moon.*<sup>591</sup>

The study of Sanskrit grammar was a treasured part of Tibetan education. Without at least a superficial acquaintance with the intricacies of Sanskrit, the would-be scholar could not hope to comprehend the beginning pages of even Tibetan commentaries on the great Buddhist treatises of India.

Klong rdol Bla ma mentions eight major expositions of Sanskrit grammar (*sgra mdo chen po brgyad*):<sup>592</sup>

1. *Brgya byin gyis mdzad pa'i indra byā ka ra ṇa* (*Indravvyākaraṇa* attributed to Indragomin; fragments of this exegesis have been recovered from Chinese Turkestan).
2. *Bram ze pa ṅis mdzad pa'i pā ṅi byā ka ra ṇa* (Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*).
3. *Slob dpon tsandra go mis mdzad pa rtog dka' ba paṅḍi ta'i lugs kyi bstan chos tsandra byā ka ra ṇa* (*Candravyākaraṇa* by Candragomin).
4. *Pai sha li byā ka ra ṇa* (*Vaiśalavyākaraṇa*?).
5. *Sha kau ṭa ya na byā ka ra ṇa* (*Śākaṭāvyākaraṇa* attributed to Abhinavaśākaṭāyana).
6. *Su mandra byā ka ra ṇa*.
7. *Pa taṅḍza li byā ka ra ṇa* (The *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali).
8. *Ma nu dzendra byā ka ra ṇa*.

Klong rdol also refers to passages dealing with Sanskrit grammar to be found in canonical texts like the *Mahābherisūtra* and the *Kālacakra* cycle. It is interesting to note that the simpler treatments of Sanskrit most popular among Tibetan scholars, the *Kātantra* and the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*, are not included in the enumeration of the eight major grammatical treatises.

Linguistic and philological science in Tibet would seem to begin with Thon mi A nu, called Sambhoṭa, who in the seventh century adapted an Indic script and Sanskrit grammatical rules to create a written Tibetan idiom. Of Thon mi's writings, some of which must have dealt with Sanskrit, only the *Sum cu pa* and *Rtags kyī 'jug pa*—the basic texts of classical Tibetan grammar—survive today, although a few of the older grammarians quote from the *Mdo' spyi'i sgra mdo*, his small treatises on writing systems.<sup>593</sup>

The problem of ensuring the accuracy of translation of Buddhist canonical texts and the great Sanskrit treatises arose very early. In the *Miscellanea* (*Sna tshogs*) section of the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur*, we find the *Mahāvvyutpatti*,<sup>594</sup> the texts of Thon mi's *Sum cu pa* and *Rtags kyī 'jug pa*, an interesting short treatise by Lce Kyi 'brug,<sup>595</sup> and the *Bka' yang dag pa'i tshad ma las bsdus pa*, attributed to King Khri srong lde bstan.<sup>596</sup>

In the index (*dkar chag*) to the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*, Zhu chen Tshul khri ms rin chen mentions another linguistic work bearing the title *Sgra'i rnam par dbye ba bstan pa su bhanta* that is attributed to the great eighth-century monarch. The reign of Khri srong lde bstan is characterized by an emphasis on the standardization of the Tibetan methods of translation from Sanskrit. Apart from the study of the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, there has been too little investigation of linguistic and philological scholarship during the late eighth and ninth centuries.

One of the most unusual figures in the history of the study of Sanskrit grammar in Tibet is the Indian Smṛtijñānakīrti.<sup>597</sup> This amazing young scholar accepted the invitation of a Tibetan translator to accompany him to Tibet. One of the popular accounts suggests that Smṛti decided to visit Tibet in order to seek the rebirth of his sinful mother. Soon after their arrival in Gtsang, his Tibetan partner died, leaving Smṛti alone in a strange land whose language he could not speak. Smṛti became a shepherd in Rta nag and gradually learned to speak a native, albeit rustic, Tibetan. Eventually, his wanderings led him to Ldan ma in Khams, where he was recognized as an Indian scholar. He began to teach *abhidharma* at Klong thang. For the benefit of his students he composed an introduction to Sanskrit grammar in Tibetan. This treatise was the basic Tibetan work on the subject until the thirteenth century.<sup>598</sup> This teacher is one of the great names in the local lore of Khams. Talismans made from the relics (*tsha tsha*) of this teacher are reputed to confer protection from death by bullets.<sup>599</sup>

Sa skya Paṇḍita has written an exegesis of Smṛti's work, a fact that gives some idea of the popularity the *Smra sgo mtshon cha* enjoyed in Tibet.<sup>600</sup> Sa skya Paṇḍita also attempted his own pedagogical grammar of Sanskrit, the

*Sgra la 'jug pa*, as well as a work on the *visarga* (*Rnam pa bcad bya ji ltar sbyor tshul*), an introduction to Tibetan grammar (*Yi ge 'i sbyor ba*), and an aid to the understanding of Sanskrit translation (*Sgra nye bar bsdu pa 'i tshigs su bcad pa*). Sa skya Paṇḍita also wrote a treatise on the intonation of Sanskrit mantras and rendered a little less than a third of the *Amarakośa* into Tibetan (*Tshig gi gter*).

The accomplishments of the great Tibetan translators and their Indian teachers are all the more remarkable in light of the dearth of materials for the proper study of Sanskrit before about 1275. With the exception of the *Kalāpalaghuvṛttiśiṣyāhitā*<sup>601</sup> by one Tareśvara (Tib. Sgrol ba 'i dbang phyug), which was rendered into Tibetan by Lha bla ma Pho brang Zhi ba 'od—the brother of 'Od lde and Byang chub 'od of the Royal Dynasty of Mnga' ris—in the early eleventh century, all Tibetan translations of the major Sanskrit grammatical texts date from no earlier than the second half of the thirteenth century.

It has already been noted that the tradition of Sanskrit translation was intimately connected with the monastery of Sa skya by the thirteenth century. It was here that Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan and the Nepalese scholar, Lakṣmīkāra, translated such Sanskrit masterpieces as the *Kāvyaḍarśa* of Daṇḍin, the *Nāgānandanāṭaka* of Harṣadeva, and the *Avadānakalpalatā* of Kṣemendra under the patronage of 'Phags pa (1235–80) and the Sa skya Dpon chen Shakya bzang po (reigned 1244?–75). Besides Shong ston and his brother, Shong Blo gros brtan pa,<sup>602</sup> the great names in Sanskrit scholarship of that generation were Thar pa Lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan, the tolerant teacher of Bu ston, and Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1264), the great traveler whose account of his visit to India has recently been published.<sup>603</sup>

The Shong brothers passed on their learning to Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (1276–1342). Dpang Lo tsā ba was the master of Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo (1303–80). The students of Byang chub rtse mo included his nephew Lo chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan, Chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po, and Lo chen Nam mkha' bzang po. Nam mkha' bzang po handed on his learning to Lo tsā ba Thugs rje dpal, a teacher of Dge 'dun grub (1391–1474), and other renowned fifteenth-century Sanskritists.

Other important fourteenth- and fifteenth-century translators and revisers include Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen, Yar klungs Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan, Snar thang Lo tsā ba Dge 'dun dpal, 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal, Snye thang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa bzhi pa,<sup>604</sup> Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po (1441–1527), and Sa Bzang Ma ti Paṇ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan.<sup>605</sup> Almost the entire contents of the *Sgra mdo* section of the *Bstan 'gyur*—excluding the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa* and *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa*—can be attributed to this group of scholars.

The first of the four great grammatical systems to spread in Tibet was the *Kalāpa*, or *Kātantra*. According to the tradition found in the histories, the basic text was preached by Kumāra (Gzhon nu Gdong drug), son of Mahādeva, to the Ācārya Īśvaravarman,<sup>606</sup> who set down the basic text.

The major redactions of the *Bstan 'gyur* differ considerably in the contents of the *Sgra mdo* portion. The *Sgra mdo* exists as a separate entity only in the Sde dge redaction and its offshoots; nevertheless, texts dealing with Sanskrit grammar and the auxiliary science are grouped together in all editions. For instance, the *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa* is included in the Sde dge edition in the *Sna tshogs* section, along with Tāranātha's translation of the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*. In spite of the variations, however, the generalizations that we can draw from the Sde dge edition will apply equally to the other editions. The first treatment of Sanskrit based upon the *Kātantra* system translated into Tibetan was the simplified textbook mentioned above that had been translated in the eleventh century. It was not until the first decades of the fourteenth century that Dpang Blo gros brtan pa produced a translation of the basic text according to the analysis of the Durgasimha commentary.<sup>607</sup> Lo chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan contributed a Tibetan rendering of the first half of that commentary. There was apparently a complete Tibetan translation of Durgasimha's commentary by Bu ston Rin chen grub, which Zhu chen Tshul khrims rin chen was apparently unable to find, although he mentions it in the index to the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*. Bu ston did add a translation of one of Durgasimha's exegetes of specialized topics, that of the *Byings kyi tshogs*.<sup>608</sup> Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo translated another commentary on the *Kātantra* that was probably simplified.<sup>609</sup>

There are translations of works on specialized points of *Kātantra* grammar by Rdo rje rgyal mtshan,<sup>610</sup> Dpang Blo gros brtan pa, Blo gros rgyal mtshan, and Blo gros dpal bzang po. The *Kalāpa* has been the subject of a number of Tibetan commentaries. Sa bzang Ma ti Paṅ chen wrote a multivolume study on the work.<sup>611</sup> We hear of an extraordinarily simplified outline by Dpang Lo tsā ba. Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po wrote a number of studies on specialized topics.<sup>612</sup> There were the *Extensive Commentaries* of Lo tsā ba Nam mkha' bzang po (*'Grel chen legs sbyar 'byung gnas*) and Snye thang Blo brtan bzhi pa.<sup>613</sup> Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Dpal ldan dbang po'i sde wrote an exegetis of the *sandhi* presentation (*Ka lā pa'i mtshams sbyor gyi tikka 'chad nyan rnam gsal*). Ta'i Si tu Rnam rgyal grags pa, Snar thang Lo tsā ba Dge 'dun dpal, Lo chen Thugs rje dpal, Chu mig Lo tsā ba, Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, Dbus pa Blo gsal, Stag tshang Lo tsā ba, and Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje all wrote commentaries on this grammar. Later exegetes include Si tu

Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas, Bai lo Tshe dbang kun khyab, and Zhe chen Drung yig Bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan.

The second of the great grammatical texts to achieve popularity in Tibet was the *Candravyākaraṇa* of Candragomin. The *Candravyākaraṇa* is one of the most difficult treatments of the subject, a fact that did not escape the great Tibetan scholastics. The basic sūtra was translated by Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan and revised by Dpang Blo gros brtan pa. Candragomin's work on the Sanskrit prefixes<sup>614</sup> and a number of other specialized treatises were rendered into Tibetan by Thar pa Lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan. The successors of Shong ston and Thar pa Lo tsā ba are responsible for the translations of all the texts on the *Candravyākaraṇa* that are now found in the *Bstan 'gyur*. The *Tsandra pa* was far less popular with Tibetan scholastic commentators than the *Kalāpa*. A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho mentions only the names of Zhwa lu Lo chen, Lo chen Thugs rje dpal, and Si tu Chos kyi 'byung gnas as authors of detailed works on the *Tsandra pa*. He also notes the existence of an uncompleted commentary by the First 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa, Ngag dbang brtson 'grus.

The third of the great grammatical treatises to enter Tibet was the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa* (*Dbyangs can pa*). The first attempt at translation was made by Lha mthong Lo tsā ba in the sixteenth century, but only the mention of the existence of the text has survived.<sup>615</sup> Several decades later, Jo nang Tāranātha (b. 1575) produced a translation of the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*,<sup>616</sup> which he elucidated with his own Tibetan commentary<sup>617</sup> that would appear to be based upon Anubhūti Svarūpa's *Sārasvataprakriyā* (*caturā*). His chief authority and collaborator was Kṛṣṇa Bhatta, and the translation would seem to date from about 1624. Tāranātha's biography<sup>618</sup> mentions a number of Indian Buddhist teachers with whom he studied, such as the Mahāsiddha Buddhanātha (1590), Nirvaṇasrī from eastern India (1596), and Pūrṇavajra (1596/97). Even Hindu scholars were warmly welcomed by Tāranātha and his contemporaries. One Bhatrī Miśra collaborated with him on a translation of a grammatical text, the *Sgra'i snye ma* (*\*Śabdamañjarī*).<sup>619</sup>

In Tāranātha's *Sārasvata* commentary, the *Mchog gsal*, we find quoted a Sanskrit *stotra* to Tāranātha himself. This eulogy was written by one Paṇḍita Ba ma bhadra in 1631. Tāranātha became interested in the great Sanskrit epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*, through the oral versions of two Hindu ascetics, Pūrṇānanda and Pramānanda,<sup>620</sup> and apparently attempted to render episodes from them. His anonymous biographer notes that he had a vision of Hanuman, whom he describes as the protector of the epics.<sup>621</sup>

Tāranātha's translation failed to find favor with the Fifth Dalai Lama, who

entrusted the task of preparing a new translation to 'Dar Lo tsā ba Ngag dbang phun tshogs lhun grub. Working in conjunction with Balabhadra, a Brahmin scholar from Kurukṣetra, and Gokulanātha Miśra, he produced at Lhasa the translations of the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇasūtra*<sup>622</sup> and Anubhūti Svarūpa's commentary, the *Sārasvataprakriyā(caturā)*,<sup>623</sup> that found their way into the *Bstan 'gyur*. The *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa* was rendered into Tibetan first in the seventeenth century by 'Dar Lo tsā ba, working again under the patronage of the Fifth Dalai Lama. This translation is found in the *Sna tshogs* rather than in the *Sgra mdo* section of the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*<sup>624</sup> and never appears to have enjoyed much popularity. The difficulties of rendering a Sanskrit grammar into Tibetan are so tremendous that it is little wonder that Si tu Paṅ chen wished to revise all of the translations found in the *Sgra mdo* section of the *Bstan 'gyur*.

### V. Tibetan Views of Indian Grammatical Systems

Tibetan teachers of Sanskrit often compare the structure of a complete Sanskrit grammatical formation to the making of a painting, an extended simile that sums up quite well the fundamental approach of the *Kalāpa* system. The internal arrangement of the third section illustrates the point of this little metaphor. Klong rdol Ngag dbang blo bzang cites this example:

Simply to indicate to some degree the meaning of that which is to be expressed [i.e., the root] without illuminating it clearly is like the sketch for a painting. Simply to add endings [to form stems] to express more or less the essence of the meaning without any indication as to the action, actor, mode of action, etc., to show it clearly is just as if one should fill in a painting with color without completing the eyes, ornaments, etc. The completion of the form as a word through the addition of grammatical endings is like a painting that is finished in all respects, both line and color.<sup>625</sup>

It is perhaps this easily comprehensible approach that has maintained the *Kalāpa* as the most popular method for teaching Sanskrit grammar in Tibet. There were many stories in Tibet purporting to account for the origins of the four great grammatical systems that were known there. Tibetan scholars appreciated the *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa* as much as their Indian colleagues and recognized it to represent a perfect scientific description of Sanskrit. It was,

however, this very perfection—that concise expression seen in the aphorisms—that denied it the prominence and influence accorded to the systems that followed less scientific approaches; it was almost impossible to render these sophisticated and descriptively economical verses into comprehensible Tibetan. The Tibetan Sanskritists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries pronounced what 'Dar pa Lo tsā ba had claimed as a translation of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* to be a total misrepresentation. Kong sprul was prepared to accept the fact that the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was impossible to translate.

According to legends handed down in Tibet, the first exegesis of Sanskrit, the language of the gods themselves, was made by Sarvajñādeva in the Traya-trimśati heaven. Indra studied this exposition and expounded it to the Ṛṣi Bṛhaspati (Drang srong phur bu). Consequently, this exposition with its subsequent abridgments was called the *Indravyākaraṇa*. Bṛhaspati mastered the basic points of Indra's explanation and ultimately was honored as the guru of the gods. Unfortunately, his head was turned by all the attention; his pride and self-importance grew until they knew no bounds. Indra, at last, summoned him and said:

*The field of linguistic knowledge is boundless;  
the totality is like the ocean.  
What I know is like a full vase;  
what you know is like a drop of water.*<sup>626</sup>

Bṛhaspati was suitably humbled and was on the point of resolving never again to teach when Indra commanded him to pass on whatever he knew in order that it might be of benefit in the trying times to come.

The immortal Pāṇini, whom we find mentioned in both the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa Tantra* and the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, was born in Śālatura<sup>627</sup> in western Bharat during the fourth century B.C. There is an apocryphal story that illustrates Pāṇini's diligence and undaunted perseverance. In his youth, Pāṇini consulted a palmist to determine whether he would master Sanskrit grammar. From the line of his hand, the palmist foretold that he would not, whereupon Pāṇini took out a knife and carved into his palms the appropriate lines of destiny. He studied with an open mind at the feet of all of the great grammarians of his age; but ultimately, his revolutionary and syncretic approach came from the divine inspiration of both Īśvaradeva and Lokeśvara. Grammatical literature after Pāṇini is largely concerned with elaborating and elucidating the rules of that great master. The scholars of Tibet were familiar with a number of commentaries and subcommentaries dealing with Pāṇini:



Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* in 100,000 verses, Rāmacandra's *Prakriyākaumudī* (*Rab byed zla zer*), and Candrakīrti's *Don 'grel gzugs kyi 'jug pa*,<sup>628</sup> as well as commentaries by Abhinava Śākaṭāyana, Kātyāyana, Puruṣottamadeva, and others. All grammatical literature after Pāṇini reflects his thought to a greater or lesser degree. The other three systems admired by the Tibetans were no exception.

The *Candravyākaraṇa*, the next major Sanskrit grammatical work to find a place in the Tibetan tradition, is attributed to Candragomin, the great Buddhist sage. Candragomin is one of the most interesting Buddhist scholars. He was born in eastern India, probably in Bengal. Tradition has it that he married Tārā, the daughter of the ruler of Varendra. Attached to the spiritual life from childhood, he at last found the burden of the householder's life unbearable and resolved to abandon his wife and worldly attachments. His life was filled with both difficulties and miraculous events. His wanderings eventually led him to Nālanda. His treatment of Sanskrit grammar was the *Candravyākaraṇa Sūtra* together with five auxiliaries: the *Dhātusūtra*, the *Upasarga-vṛtti*, the *Varnasūtra*, and an *Unādisūtra*.

It would appear that this *ācārya* came upon a copy of a *Mahābhāṣya* of Vararuci (*Mchog sred*)<sup>629</sup> in south India. According to the generally accepted rules of scholasticism, a commentary should ideally be concise in expression yet profound in meaning, non-repetitive, and complete. This commentary had been ghosted by a *nāga* who was not especially intelligent; it was verbose, lacking in profundity, repetitive, and not comprehensive. Candragomin was moved by the thought that it would not be difficult to produce a text of greater benefit to those who would learn Sanskrit. He therefore decided to try his hand at writing a commentary on Pāṇini for the student. The result is the *Candravyākaraṇa* in twenty-four chapters and seven hundred verses.

In addition, he authored several supplementary works like the *Yi ge'i mdo* (*Varnasūtra*). Later, at Nālanda, he saw the text of the *Samantabhadra*, a brilliant grammatical treatise by Candrakīrti. Depressed by the mediocrity of his own attempts, he threw the text of the *Candravyākaraṇa* into a well. At that moment, Tārā<sup>630</sup> appeared and prophesied that because he had written with proper motivation, the *Candravyākaraṇa* would eventually be a work of great benefit to all sentient beings, while the treatise by Candrakīrti, who had written with the sole intent of displaying his great learning, would ultimately serve little purpose. At the command of Tārā, Candragomin retrieved the manuscript; thereafter, whoever drank water from that well achieved great wisdom. It was Candragomin's own maternal uncle, Dharmadāsa, who composed the first commentary in 6,000 verses on the *Candravyākaraṇa*.

Another Sanskrit commentary in 12,000 verses was written by Ratnamati. This commentary was the subject of a subcommentary by Pūrṇacandra<sup>631</sup> in 36,000 verses.

As has already been noted, tradition attributes the promulgation of the *Kātantra* to Kumāra Kārttikeya, the son of Mahādeva. The legend is that not long after Indra had expounded an enormous version of the *Indravvyākaraṇa* in 25,000 verses, King Udayana (Bde spyod) commanded the brahmin Īśvaravarman to produce an understandable summary. The brahmin realized that he would fail without divine guidance and began the ritual for the propitiation and invocation of Kārttikeya.<sup>632</sup> The ritual was ultimately successful, and the deity appeared to inquire what boon his invoker sought. When told that Īśvaravarman sought to understand the *Indravvyākaraṇa*, Kārttikeya began to expound Sanskrit grammar: *siddho varṇa sama amnāyah*.<sup>633</sup> Īśvaravarman instantly comprehended the total picture. Around this he built the exposition that became the *Kalāpavyākaraṇa*. This became the most popular system in northern India, Nepal, and Tibet during the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries; it served as the subject for a considerable number of commentaries, both good and bad.

The *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*, the fourth of the great grammatical systems known in Tibet, was also a work of divine inspiration. The goddess Sārasvatī appeared to the Maharashtra scholar, Anubhūti Svarūpa, and revealed to him the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*. Interest in this relatively late presentation spread rapidly from India and Nepal to Tibet. The translations made by both Tāranātha and 'Dar pa Lo tsā ba contained the grossest of errors; consequently, they were unsuitable for teaching Sanskrit. Si tu Paṅ chen compared both of these earlier translations and, ultimately, decided to re-do the verses and autocommentary completely in collaboration with the Nepalese scholar, Viṣṇupati,<sup>634</sup> who appears to have been very fond of this particular grammar. There were a number of Indic expositions by both Hindus and Buddhists, the most famous of which was the 'Grel chen Punydzā rā dza.

In addition to the *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa*, *Candravyākaraṇa*, *Kalāpavyākaraṇa*, and the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*, there was only one other major Indic treatment of Sanskrit that entered Tibet: the *Mañjuśrīvyākaraṇa*, attributed to one Mañjuśrīkīrti and translated into Tibetan by the great Lo tsā ba of Zhwa lu. This presentation seems to have attracted almost no popularity; the explanation lineage appears to have disappeared less than a century after it was introduced.

## VI. Structural Problems with Bo dong Paṅ chen's *Kātantra* Commentary

Volumes *Ga*, *Gha*, and *Nga* of the manuscript collection of Bo dong's collected writing preserved in Tibet House contain his monumental exegesis of the *Kalāpa* system. This work has been held in high regard among Tibetan scholars. That great nineteenth-century bibliographer, A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho, has included this multivolume commentary on the *Kātantra* among the rarest books of the Tibetan tradition.<sup>635</sup> Unfortunately, the volume reproduced here is missing a number of folia at the end. The internal order of the manuscript collection of Bo dong Paṅ chen's writings preserved in Tibet House is an intriguing problem. This collection is missing a sizable number of volumes. It is depressing to note that one of these must be the *dkar chag*. Some volumes begin with a helpful list of the contents included within a particular volume; unfortunately, volume *Ga* lacks such a useful device.

The arrangement of the small sections throughout Bo dong Paṅ chen's three-volume treatment of the *Kātantra* would appear to be completely without reason. The order in which the *Kalāpa Sūtra* treats the topics of Sanskrit grammar appears to have no relationship to the arrangement of the individual sections. Volume *Ga*, the first part of the commentary, is incomplete. It contains five major sections (*le tshan*) of varying sizes. The first four are written in a pleasant, if not beautiful, *dbu can* script. The last is written in legible *dbu med*. It is incomplete, missing all folia from 108 onward. The seventy-second folia of the same section is also missing. One should note that the second and third sections have notations at the end that they are sections (*le phran*) 21 and 104 respectively. Nothing is to be found at the end of sections 1 or 4. It appears that these section numbers reflect a manuscript edition of the *gsung 'bum*, or *De nyid 'dus pa rgyas pa*, that must have shown quite a different internal arrangement.

Volume *Gha* contains five separate sections, the second and third of which bear notations suggesting that they are sections 104 and 17 from perhaps some different arrangement of Bo dong's collected writings. The first section (pp. 1–243) represents a detailed treatment of the *Dhātusūtra* (*Byings kyi mdo*), which deals with the roots of the Sanskrit language. The second (pp. 245–521) is concerned with the concept of the *-sup* endings, the case terminations. In the third (pp. 523–619), we find a lucid presentation of the *Kalāpa* rules and methodology with regard to formation of compounds and utterances. The rules of *sandhi* occupy Bo dong Paṅ chen's attention in the brief fourth section

(pp. 621–47). The fifth portion (pp. 649–920) closes the volume with a detailed analysis of the nominal and pronominal declensions. His exegesis of the verbal conjugations occupies the larger portion of volume *Nga*.

Unless a *dkar chag* to either of the two larger redactions of *De nyid 'dus pa* or the collected works of Bo dong Paṅ chen appears, or a detailed *gsan yig* of a teacher belonging to the Bo dong pa school comes to light, there can be no certainty as to how the volumes should be arranged. That two or more bulky texts bear identical letters<sup>636</sup> is a clue that there may be more than one collection represented among the Tibet House manuscripts and xylographs. The fact that certain of the titled and separately-paged sections within several volumes bear a *le phran* number seems to point to a situation in which there was a random arrangement such as one might expect in a carelessly edited *gsung 'bum*. Since there are several cases where distinct and apparently unrelated fascicles have identical numbers,<sup>637</sup> it appears that these numbers have little relevance to the problems of reconstructing the original arrangement.

One should also observe that the *Kalāpa* commentary, and perhaps other similar treatises, were apparently not initially intended to be unified works. Rather, they probably represent a compilation made from analytical examinations, collected quotations, and random notations made at various times that were later structured into a commentary. Without such a hypothesis, it is difficult to explain the uneven quality of Bo dong Paṅ chen's work, especially as is seen in the present three *Kalāpa* volumes.

## VII. Indian Poetics in Tibet

The comprehension of the rules of classical Sanskrit prosody was no easy task for the Tibetan scholastic. The poetic conventions of the two languages are poles apart. While the meters of Sanskrit *kāvya* are quantitative, i.e., dependent upon the sequence of long and short syllables, for aesthetic effect, the indigenous epic and folk poetry of Tibet is based upon stress and, to a lesser extent, upon the number of syllables. The translators were eventually confronted with the need to develop a conventional methodology for rendering the verse and meter of classical Sanskrit *kāvya* into more elegant Tibetan. This resulted in what was to be the beginning of the study of *chanda* in Tibet. As Tibetan writers developed a competence in Sanskrit, the composition of poetry in that divine language gained popularity as a literary pastime. It was these Tibetan intellectuals, for whom classical Sanskrit was, of necessity, a completely artificial language, who required translations of basic

treatises on prosody, bilingual editions of Sanskrit poetic works, and manuals of examples (*dper brjod*) of the different meters with Tibetan paraphrases.

The systematic study of Sanskrit poetics begins in Tibet with Sa skya Paṇḍita. His *Me tog chun po* is the first Tibetan presentation of the concepts of Sanskrit prosody; his *Tshig gter*, a free adaptation of the first section of the *Amarakośa*, opened up the study of synonymy and Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicography. The *Mkhas pa 'jug pa'i sgo* can be regarded as the first systematic introduction to the poetic figures (*alaṅkāra*) of Sanskrit *kāvya*.

In the Sde dge edition of the *Bstan 'gyur* we find the devotional *Vṛttamālāstuti* of one Jñānaśrīmitra.<sup>638</sup> The translation of this work, apparently included to illustrate how the poetic devices of elegant *kāvya*, especially the meter,<sup>639</sup> could be used, was begun by Shong Lo tsā ba Rdo rje rgyal mtshan (thirteenth century) and completed by Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (1276–1342) using the Sanskrit commentary of Śākyarakṣita. Also included in the *Bstan 'gyur* are two independent attempts to render what became for Tibetan scholars the basic treatise for the study of Sanskrit metrics, the *Chandoratnākara* of Ratnākaraśānti. The first attempt belonged to the tradition of Shong, Dpang, and Bo dang. The basic text (*mūla*) was first undertaken by Byang chub rtse mo (1303–80), subsequently revised by the same scholar and Nam mkha' bzang po (late thirteenth–early fourteenth century), and later corrected by Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po.<sup>640</sup> The translation of the autocommentary was begun by Chos ldan Ra sa ba and completed by Yar klungs Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan (thirteenth century). Later Nam mkha' bzang po corrected it on the basis of a Sanskrit manuscript that had belonged to Dpang Blo gros brtan pa. The autocommentary seems to be incomplete in the *Bstan 'gyur* redaction.<sup>641</sup> The second translation found in the *Bstan 'gyur* is that of Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (fifteenth century).<sup>642</sup>

Besides the *Bstan 'gyur* texts, there are commentaries or exemplifications (*dper brjod*) by Zhwa lu Lo chen Chos skyong bzang po,<sup>643</sup> the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–54),<sup>644</sup> Smin gling Lo chen Dharma śrī (1654–1717),<sup>645</sup> and 'Gyur med bstan 'dzin 'phel rgyas. Si tu Paṇ chen discovered a manuscript of a treatise on metrics in Nepal, hitherto unknown in Tibet, by one Kṛṣṇamiśra the Muni<sup>646</sup> and translated it.<sup>647</sup>

According to Tibetan tradition,<sup>648</sup> the propagator of the art of *chanda* was the sage Vālmiki (Grog mkhar ba). This attribution of the conscious use of formal prosody to the supposed author of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the more literary of the two great epics of India, shows considerable insight. Tibetan scholars were acquainted with at least the names of Piṅgala's *Chandaḥsūtra* and of an

unidentified Sanskrit treatise by one Jāyadeva, although these seem not to have been translated.

In the sixth volume (*Tsa*) of Bo dong Paṅ chen's collected works we find his notes and commentaries on three of the lesser linguistic sciences: metrics (*chanda*), synonymy (*abhidhāna*), and poetics (*kāvya*). A brief summary of the works will serve to further illustrate his wide-ranging literary scholarship.

I. *Sdeb sbyor rtsa 'grel* (pp. 1–85).

This is Bo dong Paṅ chen's own presentation of Sanskrit prosody, a compilation of extracts and paraphrases from the basic text of Ratnākaraśānti's *Chandoratnākara* and its autocommentary, together with explanatory comments. As might be expected, Bo dong Paṅ chen's rendering is derivative of the Shong and Dpang tradition.

II. *'Chi med mdzod las blangs pa'i ming gi mngon brjod rtsa 'grel* (pp. 89–149).

Of the numerous Sanskrit lexicons that exist, the great Tibetan scholars of the past held the *Amarakośa*<sup>649</sup> of Amarasimha in the highest esteem. Although this sixth-century lexicographer was a Buddhist, his scholarly achievement was recognized by all of the great scholars of India. Since its composition the *Amarakośa* has been the subject of well over fifty commentaries. Sanskrit lexicography, the roots of which are the Vedic *nighaṅtus*, flowered in the *kośas*, verse thesauruses of synonyms or homonyms compiled primarily to aid practitioners of *kāvya*. The *Amarakośa* is a dictionary of synonyms divided into three sections, the first two of which are concerned with various names. In the third, Amarasimha treats adjectives, compounds, indeclinables, homonyms, and gender. Tibetan tradition has recorded the name of a number of such lexicons: the *Medinikośa*<sup>650</sup> of Medinākara, Śrīdharasena's *Muktāvalī* or *Viśvalocana* (*Sna tshogs gsal ba*),<sup>651</sup> Puruṣottamadeva's *Hārāvalī*,<sup>652</sup> and so forth. As we have previously noted, the translation of the *Amarakośa* was initially attempted by Sa skya Paṅḍita, who produced a Tibetan version of the first chapter, which he entitled *Tshig gi gter*. This little work was highly regarded and remained popular even after a complete rendering of the Sanskrit original had appeared. There is a commentary on the *Tshig gi gter* by the fifteenth-century translator, Blo gros brtan pa bzhi pa of Snye thang.<sup>653</sup>

The translation of the whole of the *Amarakośa* and the *Kāmadhenu* commentary of Subhūticandra<sup>654</sup> was made by Yar klung Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan and an Indian scholar, Kīrticandra, in Kathmandu (Yam bu). This rendering circulated in manuscript; it is probable that corrections and

emendations were made by scholars of the Dpang school, especially Blo gros brtan pa of Dpang. On the basis of one copy of this earlier translation and another Sanskrit palm leaf manuscript, Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po<sup>655</sup> made a thorough revision of the *Amarakośa* and arranged it in a bilingual text. He seems to have produced a completely new translation of the entire *Kāmadhenu*. The editions of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba were included in the Sde dge redaction<sup>656</sup> of the *Bstan 'gyur*. The Peking and Snar thang editions contain the original Yar klung Lo tsā ba translation, presumably as revised by Dpang Lo tsā ba. Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba also translated the *Viśvalocana* or *Muktāvali* of Śrīdharasena.

Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba's revised editions did not quell the doubts of some of the more critical Tibetan scholars, who had little hesitation in labeling even the new translations as unsatisfactory. The great Si tu Paṅ chen was sufficiently disturbed by previous translations to produce in 1764 a new bilingual edition of the text of the *Amarakośa*. This was based upon the comparison of several Sanskrit commentaries<sup>657</sup> and the oral explanations of his Sanskrit guru, Viṣṇupati. He also produced a similar critical translation of the *Kāmadhenu*.<sup>658</sup>

The rendering of the *Amarakośa* found in volume *Tsa* of the writings of Bo dong Paṅ chen probably represents the text as it had been translated by Yar klungs Lo tsā ba and revised and transmitted through the great scholars of the Dpang tradition. This was also the basis for the text found in the Snar thang and Peking redactions of the *Bstan 'gyur*, while the Sde dge edition contains the revised version of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba. What Bo dong Paṅ chen produces is slightly different from that found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*. While the Snar thang readings are preferable in the vast majority of cases, one occasionally notes forms in Bo dong that clarify the *Bstan 'gyur* text, for example, *padma dkar po dang* is without a doubt better than *padma dkar 'pho pho*. If one compares the Snar thang, Bo dong, and Sde dge versions with an edition of the Sanskrit text, it is obvious that an accurate translation of the *Amarakośa* was a task that had not yet been accomplished by the middle of the eighteenth century. The Snar thang and Bo dong texts render the following line thus:

*mahendraguggulūlūkāvyaḷagrāhisukauśikāḥ*  
/ *mchod pa gu gul sbrul 'dzin rnam* // *kau shi ka'o* /

Si tu Paṅ chen rendered the same line more accurately:

/ *dbang chen gu gul 'ug pa dang* // *sbrul 'dzin rnam la kau shi kaḥ* /

Besides the *Bstan 'gyur* translations, there are numerous indigenous Tibetan lexicographic works.<sup>659</sup> The finest of the Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicons, however, belong to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>660</sup>

III. *Sgra rig pa'i yan lag snyan ngag kyi mtshan nyid rab tu gsal ba'i me long* (pp. 151–241).

The term *kāvya* (*snyan ngag*)—to which this work is devoted—is often translated as “poetry,” although it implies concepts at once both narrower and broader than the English term. It has also been rendered as “ornate poetry.” *Kāvya*, however, centers around the concept of *alaṅkāra* or “adornments,” and encompasses a comprehensive theory of literary aesthetics and the creative process. A better rendering for the term would thus seem to be “poetics.”

Poetics in Tibet begins and ends with the *Kāvyaḍarśa* of Daṇḍin. The sole example of a Sanskrit *alaṅkāraśāstra* to be translated into Tibetan, the *Kāvyaḍarśa* was much admired by the early Sa skya pa masters. Why the Tibetan tradition chose this treatise upon which to base its poetics rather than the *Kāvyaḷaṅkāra* of Bhāmaha or the *Alaṅkārasamgraha* of Udbhaṭa is an intriguing problem. Later Tibetan scholars have tried to ascribe this preference for Daṇḍin to the fact that he was a Buddhist, in spite of the fact that a much better case can be made for Bhāmaha's being a Buddhist. When more is known of the lives and backgrounds of the Indian scholars who came to Tibet in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries one may be able to explain this curious phenomenon.

Along with the *Nāgānanda* of Harṣa, the *Avadānakalpalatā* of Kṣemendra, and the *Vṛttamālāstuti* of Jñānaśrimitra, the translation of the *Kāvyaḍarśa* into Tibetan belongs to the great Shong Lo tsā ba and Lakṣmikāra, who worked during the thirteenth century at the cultural center of Sa skya under the patronage of 'Gro mgon 'Phags pa and the Dpon chen Shākya bzang po (reigned 1244?–75). This was a great period for the development of Tibetan culture.

Shong ston's translation of the *Kāvyaḍarśa* underwent revision first at the hands of Dpang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa, who compared it with a commentary by one Ratnaśrī, and later at the hands of Snye thang Lo tsā ba Blo brtan bzhi pa. The text found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* contains only the corrections made by Dpang Lo tsā ba; the Sde dge redaction includes the edition of Snye thang Lo tsā ba. The differences between these two redactions are considerable: even certain names for types of *alaṅkāras* vary.

Some of the great Tibetan scholars of the past knew and loved a number of the masterpieces of Indic literature: the *Mahābhārata*,<sup>661</sup> Vālmiki's



*Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Agnipurāṇa*, the *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, one *Raghuvamśa* of Ramaśrama,<sup>662</sup> and a number of works attributed to Kālidāsa (Nag mo'i khol po) and his imitators. The knowledge of these works did much to encourage the development of poetics in Tibet. Out of all of these, however, only the *Meghadūta* was ever translated into Tibetan.<sup>663</sup> One does, however, find rare Tibetan poetic works retelling stories from the two epics. Tibetan bibliographers sometimes enumerate a group of eight *Dūtakāvya*, including the *Meghadūta*. Of these only the *Meghadūta* is actually the work of Kālidāsa. Another authentic work of Kālidāsa that was well known to Tibetan scholars was the *Kumārasambhava* (*Gzhon nu 'byung ba*).

The two most frequently consulted Sanskrit commentaries on the *Kāvya-darśa* were those of Ratnaśrī and Vagindrakīrti. The first of these is occasionally mentioned in Bo dong's own commentary. Sanskrit manuscripts of both of these works were used by Si tu Paṅ chen in preparing his new edition of the *Kāvya-darśa*. The number of Tibetan commentaries on the *Kāvya-darśa*, and the *dper brjod* stemming from this work, surpasses the imagination. Perhaps the most original among them were those of 'Jam dbyangs Kha che, Bod mkhas pa, Khams sprul Bstan 'dzin chos kyi nyi ma, and Mi pham.

This section of volume *Tsa* of the writing of Bo dong Paṅ chen comprises the greater part of a version of Daṇḍin's great treatise on the theory and practice of poetics. As one would expect, this manuscript represents the redaction found in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*. In order to compare the considerable variation between the two revisions, some illustrative verses seem appropriate:

Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*, fol. 83, and Bo dong, pp. 158–60:

/ *bsil zer can gyi dgra zla dang* /  
 / *dpal dang ldan dang dri bzang gis* / (B: *bzangs kyiis*) /  
 / *khyod kyi gdong ni chu skyes bzhin* /  
 / *zhes* (B: *ces*) *pa sbyar ba'i dpe ru bshad* /

Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur* as represented by a late nineteenth-century Bkra shis lhun po print, ff. 8v–9v:<sup>664</sup>

/ *bsil zer can gyi 'gran zla dang* /  
 / *dpal dang ldan dang dri bzang gis* /  
 / *khyod kyi gdong ni chu skyes bzhin* /  
 / *zhes pa dbyar ba'i dpe ru bshad* /

In this example of Daṇḍin's fourteenth subtype of *upamā*, the two versions are almost identical. The Snar thang Bo dong tradition gives *dgra zla* in place

of the Bkra shis lhun po 'gran zla. In both cases where Bo dong differs from Snar thang the reading of the latter is preferable. The verse illustrating the twenty-first subtype of *upamā* illustrates the revision of the terminology made presumably by Snye thang Lo tsā ba:

Snar thang/Bo dong:

/ khyod gdong ri dwags (B: dags) mig gis mtshan /  
 / zla ba ri dwags (B: dags) nyid kyis (B: kyis) mtshan /  
 / de lta na yang 'di mtshungs (B: 'tshungs) nyid /  
 / khyad 'phags min zhes (B: ces) mdzes pa'i dpe /

Sde dge (Bkra shis lhun po):

/ khyod gdong ri dwags mig gis mstshan /  
 / zla ba ri dwags nyid kyis mtshan /  
 / de lta na yang 'di mtshungs nyid /  
 / khyad 'phags min zhes ngo bstod dpe /

Here *ngo bstod* replaces *mdzes pa* as the term for this *upamā*. The variant readings seen in the Bo dong manuscript are what one has come to expect from this particular manuscript, e.g., confusion of initial *m* and 'a.

The verse illustrating the thirteenth *upamā* is more interesting. Again, Snye thang Lo tsā ba's version uses a different term from the Bo dong/Snar thang tradition. The Snar thang and Bo dong versions have a number of variant forms:

Snar thang/Bo dong:

/ zla ba skyengs byed (B: bcad) mdzes pa 'di /  
 / zla bas tshar gcod padma (B: padma'i) min /  
 / de phyir khyed (B: khyod) kyis gdong nyid do /  
 / zhes (B: ces) pa 'di ni nges pa'i dpe /

Sde dge (Bkra shis lhun po):

/ zla ba skyengs byed mdzes pa 'di /  
 / zla bas tshar gcod padma min /  
 / de phyir khyod kyis gdong nyid do /  
 / zhes 'di gtan la phebs pa'i dpe /

IV. *Snyan ngag me long gi 'grel pa de nyid gsal ba* (pp. 243–563).

Even in his own time, Phyogs las rnam rgyal enjoyed a reputation as a leading

writer of *kāvya*. It should not be forgotten that his was an era of great poets like Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa (1404–69).<sup>665</sup> As the years have passed and copies of his writing have become increasingly rare, the fame of Bo dong Paṅ chen has dimmed. Nevertheless, the *Snyan ngag de nyid gsal ba*, his exegesis of the *Kāvyaḍarśa*, is still occasionally cited by bolder scholars, and is mentioned in a few *gsan yig* and lists of rare and useful works over the five centuries after his death.<sup>666</sup>

Bo dong's commentary follows the usual arrangement for such a work. The original manuscript has been assigned, as is the case with so much of this collection, to a careless copyist. The orthographic mistakes are especially noticeable in this manuscript.

V. *Snyan ngag kyi don rgyan rab tu gsal ba'i me long* (pp. 565–612).

The fifth title in volume *Tsa* is Bo dong's *dper brjod*, which illustrates the various *alaṅkāra* or figures of speech that have been explained in the preceding commentary. Bo dong Paṅ chen is not in his best form when bound by the rigid exegetic conventions that the *dper brjod* requires. His imagination, however, is often sparked, and he strings together examples for three or four *alaṅkāra* into a connected poetic thought. On these occasions, Bo dong Paṅ chen almost justifies the esteem in which he is held as a poet. Yet as a *dper brjod*, this little booklet impresses one as second rate. Similar works by the Second Dalai Lama and Bod mkhas pa seem to have more to offer.

## CHAPTER 15

# A Tibetan Encyclopedia from the Fifteenth Century

### *I. The Encyclopedic Tradition in Tibet*

IN VOLUME 78 of the Śāta-Piṭaka Series Lokesh Chandra has reproduced the manuscript of an interesting Tibetan compendium of knowledge from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. The original, a fairly recent and often corrupt copy, was located through the kind efforts of the Venerable Thoosay Rinpoche, protector of the young Gyalwang Dookpa incarnation of the Mim Monastery in Darjeeling. The present manuscript bears the title *Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*, or *A Treasury of Explanation, the Jewel that Fulfills One's Desires*. A slightly variant title, *Bshad mdzod spu ti khra mo*, appears at the end of the fourth chapter.<sup>667</sup> This compendium is divided into thirteen chapters (*le'u*) of varying size and ninety-eight<sup>668</sup> topics (*skabs*). A detailed outline in English appears in section IV of this essay.

The *Bshad mdzod* is by no means unique;<sup>669</sup> it is an example of a type of literature that occasionally turns up in the Tibetan literary tradition. The need for systematic arrangements of the concepts and terms of Buddhist scholasticism comprehensible to the beginner or nonspecialist must have arisen very early. The enormous body of sūtras and tantras that had been translated by the twelfth century motivated the composition of indigenous Tibetan treatises that attempted to classify and resolve the discrepancies between groups of works, all of which purported to be the word of the Buddha.<sup>670</sup>

One of the earliest scholastic compendia is the *mkhas 'jug*, or the *Introduction for Scholars*, of Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan. This work was intended to serve as a manual for instructing the beginning monk in the concepts and methods of Mahāyāna scholarship. It is an introduction to the three functions of the scholar: teaching, philosophical refutation, and literary composition. The *mkhas 'jug* was designed primarily for the full-time religious practitioner. The *mkhas 'jug* of 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho

(1846–1912) now shares popularity with that of Sa skya Paṇḍita. These are the only two examples of the genre that are well known.

The compendia of the *mkhas 'jug* type differ in one major aspect from another group that we can call *bshad mdzod*, and to which our text belongs: whereas *mkhas 'jug* are largely meant for monks, *bshad mdzod* are often compiled for pious laymen. The purpose of a *bshad mdzod* is to serve as a key or outline to help the layman understand the often abstract concepts and categories of Tibetan Buddhism. Often these compilations were written for kings and princes; in many cases they contain historical material, since the knowledge of royal pedigrees and religious history is appropriate for a king. We should, however, keep ecclesiastical histories (*chos 'byung*) and family pedigrees (*gdung rabs*) distinct from compendia like the *Bshad mdzod*. For example, the Second Dpa' bo, Gtsug lag 'phreng ba's *Lho brag chos 'byung*—otherwise known as the *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*—is a religious history, even though it contains some material that one might normally find in a compendium. On the other hand, Stag tshag pa Śrībhūtibhadra'a *Rgya bod yig tshang* is a compendium, even though it is largely made up of historical material.

The first known compendium of the *bshad mdzod* type is the *Shes bya rab gsal* by 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–80). This work was written by that great imperial *ti shih* in 1278 for Prince Činggin.<sup>671</sup> The *Shes bya rab gsal* is the best-known example of the genre and has been translated into Chinese,<sup>672</sup> Mongolian,<sup>673</sup> and English.<sup>674</sup> We know of several compendia written during the fourteenth century. These are sometimes quoted in biographies. The majority of these documents are probably lost, however, since they only circulated in manuscript. Our example, dating from the fifteenth century, is one of the oldest surviving examples of this genre.

During the last half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries, two of the most remarkable scholastic collections in the Tibetan tradition made their appearance: the *Thar pa skor gsum* of 'Ba' ra ba Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang and the four redactions (in 110, 20, 2, and 1 volumes respectively) of the *De nyid 'dus pa* by Bo dong Paṇ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal. The *Thar pa skor gsum* is at once explanatory and analytical. In the largest version of the *De nyid 'dus pa*, Bo dong Paṇ chen attempts to give commentaries for all of the important works that had been translated into Tibetan. The medium-length redaction and the two shortened versions are analytical, and approximate the Western concept of the encyclopedia.

During the late eighteenth century, Klong rdol Ngag dbang blo bzang's (1719–94) *Gsung 'bum* appeared. This incredible piece of scholarship is in

reality a series of notes on the terminology and concepts of Buddhist scholasticism. The *Gsung 'bum* contains bibliographies, biographical sketches of famous teachers and lay patrons, and a number of minor works of the author. It was during the nineteenth century that the finest flower of the Tibetan encyclopedic tradition bloomed: the *Shes bya kun khyab* of Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas.

## *II. The Author of the Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*

In the colophon to this compendium the author styles himself Don dam smra ba'i seng ge. The colophon is devoid of any further information that might help identify the author; there is no mention of date or place of compilation, person at whose behest the work was written, or names of the author's teachers. At the time of writing, I was unable to discover anything about this Don dam smra ba'i seng ge from any of the bibliographical or historical sources at my disposal. We cannot even be certain that Don dam smra ba'i seng ge is a name rather than an epithet.

The internal evidence allows us to piece together some information about the circumstances under which the work was written. Don dam smra ba'i seng ge was a native of Gru shul in southeastern Tibet near the border of the northeastern frontier of India. He probably belonged to a princely family that held some power in the area. This family claimed descent from the former Royal Dynasty through Gtsang ma, the brother of Ral pa can and Glang Dar ma who had been exiled to Lho brag Mon. Khri Gtsang ma became the ancestor of a number of petty rulers in what is now Bhutan and southern Tibet.<sup>675</sup> My speculation that Don dam smra ba'i seng ge belonged to the lineage of Gtsang ma rests on the flimsy evidence that he refers his readers to the family records for further information regarding his pedigree.<sup>676</sup> The phraseology here and in a few other places leads me to speculate that the author was a member of the lineage and was writing the compendium for future generations of his family. It could be, however, that he was a lama and household priest to this princely family of Gru shul.

There are, with possibly one exception, no dates given in the text. There are few events mentioned that can be dated. The clearest evidence we have for dating is the list of Phag mo gru pa Lha btsun (rulers). The section<sup>677</sup> begins with a biographical sketch of Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–64).<sup>678</sup> The list continues:

2. Śākya Rin po che
3. Śākya rgyal mtshan: 'Jam dbyangs gu śrī Śākya rgyal mtshan, Second Lha btsun (1340–73)
4. Grags pa'i byang chub: Tshes bzhi gsar ma Grags pa byang chub, Third Lha btsun (1356–86)
5. Bsod nam grags pa: Bsod nam grags pa, Fourth Lha btsun (1359–1408)
6. Grags pa'i rgyal mtshan Dbang: Dbang Grags pa rgyal mtshan, Fifth Lha btsun (1414–45)
7. Grags pa'i 'byung gnas dpal: Tshes lnga Grags pa 'byung gnas, Sixth Lha btsun (1414–45)
8. Kun dga' rgyal mtshan

The eighth personage is yet to be identified. Don dam smra ba'i seng ge seems to reckon him as the eighth ruler in the succession from Ta'i Si tu. The Phag mo gru account continues:

The lineage of Bdag po Kun dga' died out. The younger brother (of) Grags pa byung gnas dpal bzang po'i dpal, called Ngag dbang grags, having been shown to the Che sa, was installed as king.<sup>679</sup>

The Che sa is, of course, Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan. This source makes Grags pa 'byung gnas out to be the brother of Ngag dbang grags (alias Ngag gi dbang phyug). Ngag gi dbang phyug ascended to the abbacy in 1454, on the death of Che sa. On several occasions the author mentions that when this work was being written times were troubled. Certainly, memories of the wars that had plagued Tibet since the reign of Grags pa rgyal mtshan were still fresh.

This passage enables us to date the composition of the compendium to some time after 1457 (or 1469). In the section dealing with the decay of the world<sup>680</sup> we find a passage that offers some dates joined with the *sme ba*:

*/ de nas bstan pa'i phel 'grib bstan pa ni /*  
*/ da lta snyigs ma lnga rdo'i dus yin te /*  
*/ lo'i snyigs ma gnyis nag me pho stag /*  
*/ zla ba'i snyigs ma bdun dmar sa ma yos /*  
*/ zhag gi snyigs ma drug dkar lcags pho 'brug /*  
*/ dus tshod snyigs ma gsum mthing lcags pho khyi /*  
*/ mi'i snyigs ma lnga bcu kha ral mi /*  
*/ mtha' dbus 'khrugs cing ma smad yid mi ches / ...*

This certainly refers to the Phag mo gru pa civil war. The possibilities for the dates are unsatisfying:

<i>me pho stag</i>	2 nag	=	1086	1266	1446	1626
<i>sa mo yos</i>	7 dmar	=	1039	1219	1399	1579
<i>lcags pho 'brug</i>	6 dkar	=	1010	1220	1400	1580
<i>lcags pho khyi</i>	3 mthing	=	1070	1250	1430	1610

The last possibility is too late; the third is, perhaps, a little too early. I think we can, in any event, date the writing of the *Bshad mdzod* to the last half of the fifteenth century or the early years of the sixteenth.

The author of the *Bshad mdzod* represents an interesting eclectic tradition of Buddhism and Bon. Both are treated impartially, almost as two aspects of a single religion. This tolerance was probably the rule in the border regions of Lho kha and the Tibetan valleys along the Bhutanese border.

### III. Stylistic Considerations

The value of this text for the student of Tibetan oral literature is significant. The *Bshad mdzod* is largely written in a poetic style, but it is far removed from the rigid syllable counting of the literary poems. Parallelism is the most important element in this type of poetry, which reminds one of some of the folk poetry found at Tun-huang and edited by Thomas. A representative example occurs when the author is describing the land of the tailed barbarians. I quote it here to give some idea of the flavor of this type of verse:

*Beyond those (countries)  
is the land of the tailed ones.  
(Where) the beetles are the size of yaks,  
(where) the ants are the size of dogs,  
(where) the bees are the size of birds,  
(where) frogs croak with the sound of horses,  
(where) tadpoles grunt with the voice of the female yak...*

*/ de dag rnam s kyi phyi rol la /  
/ gzbug ma can gyi rgyal khams yod /  
/ sbur pa g.yag tsam yod pa yin /  
/ brog ma khyi tsam yod pa yin /*



*/ sbrang ma bya tsam yod pa yin /*  
*/ rbal pa rtas skad tsher ba yod /*  
*/ cong ma 'bri skad ngur ba yod /*<sup>681</sup>

The manuscript is filled with the most appalling spelling errors. Nevertheless, I am sure that this text will be of considerable value to Tibetologists both in India and abroad.

#### *IV. Analytical Outlines of Chapters from the Bshad mdzod*

This section presents the complete translated outline of the contents of the compendium. In the five annotated lists that follow, I present the classifications of the lineages of the world, the geographical structure of the world, the geographical divisions of Tibet, the list of the myriarchies of Central Tibet, and the classification of the languages of the world as outlined in the *Bshad mdzod*. I hope that these bare outlines will be of some value to scholars interested in such subjects.

#### **1. Outline of the Contents of the *Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu***

##### **I. The Physical World (pp. 2–56)**

1. Introduction and Summary of Contents (2–3)
2. Brief Account of the Origins of the Cosmos (3–7)
3. The Various Universes of the Cosmos (7–9)
4. The Worlds of Our Universe (9–11)
5. Our World and the Arrangement of the Discs of Wind, Water, and Earth (11–13)
6. Mount Meru (13–15)
7. The Seven Golden Mountains (15–17)
8. The Seven Corresponding Seas (17–19)
9. The Vast Outer Ocean (19–20)
10. The Encircling Iron Mountains (20–22)
11. The Four Continents and the Eight Subcontinents (22–31)
12. The Sun, Moon, Planets, and Stars (31–36)
13. The City of Paradise of the Gods (36–43)
14. The Palaces and Parks of the Upper Heavens (43–46)
15. The Theory of Origination and Destruction (46–55)
16. The Measurement of Space and Time (55–56)

##### **II. The Sentient Creatures (pp. 56–107)**

17. The Six Spheres of Rebirth (56–57)
18. The Eighteen Hells (57–67)
19. The Sphere of the Pretas (67–69)
20. The Sphere of the Animals (69–71)
21. The Sphere of the Titans (71–79)
22. The Sphere of Humans of the Four Continents (79–83)
23. Humans in Jambudvīpa and Their Fall: Origins of Race, Sex, and Agriculture (83–88)
24. The Origins of the Tibetans (88–100)
25. The Sphere of the Gods (100–107)
- III. The Royal Lineages (pp. 107–78)
  26. Typology of Paramountcy and Kingship (107–9)
  27. Definition and Examples of the Six Types of Lifeless Paramountcy (109–10)
  28. Two Types of Kingship among the Gods and the Primordial Elective Kingship (110–12)
  29. Hereditary Kingship: the Indian Lineages (112–27)
  30. The Three Ra khri [Original?] Dynasties of India (127–35)
  31. Kingship in India, China, and among the Iranian and Pre-Mongolian Tribes (135–38)
  32. Kingship in Tibet before Gnya' khri rtsad po: the Hindu-Buddhist Tradition on the Origins of the Royal Dynasty (139–47)
  33. The Origins of the Royal Dynasty: the Bon po Tradition (147–57)
  34. The Origins of the Royal Dynasty according to a Non-Buddhist (*mu stegs pa*) Tradition of Spo bo (157–59)
  35. The Royal Lineage of Tibet (159–73)
    - a. Three Traditions of the Origin of the Royal Lineage in Tibet Compared: the Lineage to Gri gum rtsan po (159–61)
    - b. Gri gum rtsan po and His Sons (161–62)
    - c. The Royal Lineage to Srong rtsan sgam po (162–64)
    - d. The Royal Dynastic Period (164–69)
    - e. Glang dar ma and the Aftermath (169–173)
  36. The Thirteen Myriarchies of Tibet (173–74)
  37. The Lineages of the Ruling Princes and the House of Phag mo gru (174–78)
- IV. The Tribal Structure of the World (pp. 178–83)
  38. General Outline of the Lineages (178–80)
  39. The Four Great Tribes of Ldong, Rmu, Stong, and Se (180–83)

## V. The Geography of the World (pp. 183–203)

- 40. The Geography of Jambudvīpa (183–88)
- 41. The Geography of the Four Horns (*ru bzhi*) of Tibet (188–97)
- 42. Description and Eulogy of Gru shul (197–200)
- 43. The Languages and Physical Types of Humans (200–203)

## VI. Buddhism: Its Origins and Concepts (pp. 203–411)

- 44. Introduction (203–5)
- 45. Time and the Buddhas of the Eons (*kalpa*) Past (205–7)
- 46. The Buddhas of this Eon (207–12)
- 47. The Life of Śākyamuṇi (212–17)
- 48. How Śākyamuṇi Raised the Thought of Enlightenment after Countless Eons Accumulating Karma (217–22)
- 46a. The Words of the Buddha Classified (222–85)
- 47a. How the Buddha's Dharma Was Propagated (285–91)
- 48a. The Tantras of the Old Order (*Rnying ma pa*) (291–92)
- 49. The New Tantras (292–94)
- 50. The Essence and General Classification of the Buddha's Teaching (294–99)
- 51. The Twelve Branches (*aniga*) of the Sūtra with Examples (299–302)
- 52. The Buddhist Śāstras (302–9)
- 53. Padmasambhava: His Life and Previous Rebirths (309–14)
- 54. Buddhism in Tibet (314–42)
- 55. Decline of Buddhism (342–54)
- 56. Prophecies Concerning the End of the Dharma (354–62)
- 57. The Three Bodies of the Buddha (362–66)
- 58. The Nine Ways (*theg pa rim pa dgu*) of Buddhism (366–71)
- 59. The Tenets of Hinduism and Distinctions within Buddhism (371–74)
- 60. Important Concepts and Categories of Buddhism (374–84)
- 61. The Twelve Divisions of the Buddha's Word: the Tantric View (384–88)
- 62. The Three Vows (388–394)
- 63. The Five 'Bum and the Perfection of Wisdom Literature (394–396)
- 64. The Ten Sins and their Renunciation (396–406)
- 65. The Six Perfections (406–9)
- 66. Consciousness and the Realization of Wisdom (409–11)

VII. Astrology (pp. 411–54)

67. Introduction (411–17)
68. Astrology in China (417–28)
69. How Chinese Astrology Was Transmitted to Tibet (428–31)
70. The *Snang gsal ma bu bco lnga* (431–32)
71. The Processes Used in Astrology (432–40)
72. The Origins of Chinese Astrology: Connections with Wu t'ai shan (440–42)
73. The Great Golden Cosmic Tortoise (442–45)
74. How the Five Elements Appeared (445–46)
- 74a. Additional Astrological Topics (446–54)

VIII. The Bon Religion (pp. 454–60)

75. Brief Description of Bon: Its Origins and Teachings (454–57)
76. Bon Teachers of the Past and Their Miraculous Powers (457–58)
- 76a. The Bon Ka ba dgu skor (458–60)

IX. Medicine (pp. 460–82)

77. Diseases and Their Causes (460–64)
78. Classification of Medicines and Their Properties (464–65)
79. Methods in Medical Examination and Treatment (465–67)
80. Classification of Medical Literature and Methods in Education (467–72)
81. Famous Physicians of Tibet; Criteria of Medical Skill with Similes (472–80)
82. The Eighteen Principles of Medical Treatment (480–81)

X. Esoteric Practices of the Mantrayāna (pp. 482–91)

83. The Practices (482–89)
84. Five Famous Tantric Siddhas of Tibet and the Cult of Vajrakila (489–91)

XI. Philology and Linguistics (pp. 491–506)

85. Origins of Sanskrit Grammar and Tibetan Translation (491–93)
86. Principles of Phonology (493–95)
87. Comparison of the Indic and Tibetan Scripts (495–99)
88. Principles of Tibetan Grammar (499–500)
89. The Chanting of Religious Texts (500–506)

XII. The Importance of Rhetoric and Public Speaking (pp. 506–22)

- 89a. Public Speaking (506–9)
90. The Praise of Leaders (509–13)
91. The Use of Language (513–22)

## XII. The Oral Expression of Happiness (pp. 522–27)

92. Types of Songs and Their Sixteen Functions (522–27)

Colophon (pp. 527–29)

## 2. The Tribal Structure of the World

I. The Twelve Great Tribes (*Rus phye mo*<sup>682</sup> *bcu gnyis*)A. The Four Foreign Nations (*Phyi'i mi'u rigs*<sup>683</sup>)

1. Indic (*Rgya gar*)
2. Sinitic (*Rgya nag*)<sup>684</sup>
3. Iranian (*Stag gzigs*)
4. Pre-Mongolic (*Ge ser*)<sup>685</sup>

B. The Four Original Tibetan Tribes (*Nang gi mi'u rigs*)<sup>686</sup>

1. Se (*Se Byu legs kyi bu bzhi*)<sup>687</sup>
2. Rmu (*Rmu Ko le phra brgyad*)<sup>688</sup>
  - a. Ngam
  - b. Snuvs<sup>689</sup>
  - c. Gzhung
  - d. 'Gar<sup>690</sup>
  - e. Dkar
  - f. Smon
  - g. Snyos<sup>691</sup>
  - h. Ngan lam
3. Ldong (*Ldong Rus chen bcwo brgyad*)<sup>692</sup>
  - a. Cog
  - b. Cog tse
  - c. Tsog ro<sup>693</sup>
  - d. 'Brong<sup>694</sup>
  - e. Khyung po
  - f. Zla ba
  - g. 'Bring<sup>695</sup>
  - h. Lha lung
  - i. Lha rtse<sup>696</sup>
  - j. Brang (i.e., Brang ti)
  - k. Dgos pa<sup>697</sup>
  - l. Khu na
  - m. Nya<sup>698</sup>
  - n. Tshe pong<sup>699</sup>

o. Lu nag

p. Snying<sup>700</sup>

q. Pho gong<sup>701</sup>

r. Thag bzang

4. Stong (*Stong rje bzhi khol brgyad*)<sup>702</sup>

a. Rje cig Cog la Ram pa rje

1) Dmar<sup>703</sup>

2) Dmar ma

b. Rje cig Te tsom Snyal po rje

3) Snyal<sup>704</sup>

4) Snyal dbyen

c. Rje cig Rtsang rje Thod dkar rje

5) Sngog<sup>705</sup>

6) Khrog

d. Rje cig Snyags rje Thog sgrom rje

7) Rtog

8) Bas<sup>706</sup>

B'. Variant Classification of the Tibetan Tribes<sup>707</sup>

1. The Three Lineages of the West (*Stod Kham rigs gsum*)<sup>708</sup>

a. Rgya

b. Gu ge

c. Co ge

2. The Three Lineages of the East (*Smad kham rus rigs gsum*)<sup>709</sup>

a. Ldan pa<sup>710</sup>

b. Bre'o<sup>711</sup>

c. Sum pa<sup>712</sup>

3. The Six Lineages of the Center (*Bar kham rus rigs drug*)<sup>713</sup>

a. The Religious (*Btsun par byed pa*)

1) Se

2) Rmu

b. The Mighty (*Btsan par byed pa*)<sup>714</sup>

3) Khu

4) Snyags<sup>715</sup>

c. The Famous (*Snyan par byed pa*)

5) Ldong

6) Stong

C. The Four Secret Tribes (*Gsang ba'i mi'u rigs*)<sup>716</sup>

1. Khotan (*Li*)

2. Nepal (*Bal po*)<sup>717</sup>

3. Turko-Mongolic (*Hor*)
4. Tangut (*Mi nyag*)

## II. The Tribes that Have Strayed (*Rus khyal ba*)

- A. Shar Rgyal mo Khyi khyo ma<sup>718</sup>
- B. Lho Ko le Dug zla can<sup>719</sup>
- C. Nub Gar klog Kyung skad can<sup>720</sup>
- D. Byang Sog po Pra glag can<sup>721</sup>

## III. The Lineages that Are Still More Errant

(*Rus yang khyal ba* or *Gol ba'i mi bzhi*)<sup>722</sup>

- A. The Apes who Dwell in the Trees (*Shing la gnas pa'i spre'u*)
- B. The Rodents who Live in the Meadow (*Spang la gnas pa'i chi ba*)<sup>723</sup>
- C. The Lizards who Stay among the Rocks (*Brag la gnas pa'i rtsang phag*)<sup>724</sup>
- D. The Frogs who Live in the Water (*Chu la gnas pa'i sbal ba*)

## IV. The Sixteen Bad Tribes (*Rus ngan bcu drug*)<sup>725</sup>

## V. The Forty-Two Slave Tribes (*Rus bran bzhi bcu rtsa gnyis*)<sup>726</sup>

### 3. The Eighteen Lands of Jambudvīpa

#### I. India (*Dbus Rgya gar*) Is Subdivided into Nine Parts:

- A. *Thub pa'i bzhuks gnas Rdo rje gdan* at the Center (Magadha)
- B. *Bha ga la'i gling* to the East (Bengal)
- C. *Bhe ta'i gling* to the South (Vidarbha)
- D. *U rgyan gling* to the West (Oḍḍiyāna; probably Swat)
- E. *Kha che'i gling* to the North (Kashmir)
- F. *Khang bu gling* to the Southeast
- G. *Bzang bya ba* to the Southwest
- H. *Za hor gling* to the Northwest (Mandi)
- I. *Ma ru pa'i gling* to the Northeast (Kāmarūpa)

#### II. The Four Good Lands (*Bzang ba'i yul mo bzhi*)

- A. *'Jang rtsi thog rgyal khams* on the Southeastern Border of India
- B. *'Ga' de sman gyi rgyal khams* on the Southwestern Border of India
- C. *Stag gzigs nor gyi rgyal khams* on the Northwestern Border of India
- D. *Kha dkar li'i rgyal khams* on the Northeastern Border of India

#### III. The Four Bad Lands (*Ngan pa'i yul mo bzhi*)

- A. *Ra tsa'i rgyal khams* to the East of India
  - B. *Mu teg rgyal khams* to the South of India
  - C. *Srin po'i rgyal khams* to the West of India
  - D. Tibet (*Bod kyi rgyal khams*) to the North of India
- IV. The Four Important Lands (*Yul gyi gtso bo bzhi*)
- A. China (*Rgya nag*)
  - B. *Ge ser*
  - C. *Hor*
  - D. *Gru gu*
- V. The Four Lands of Great Importance (*Yul gyi gtso chen bzhi*)
- A. *Bal po yul*<sup>727</sup>
  - B. *Zhang zhung yul*
  - C. *Sum pa*
  - D. *Me nyag*
- VI. The Barbarians (*mtha' 'khob*) Count as One Land and Are Subdivided into Ninety-one Sections:
- A. To the East the Thirteen Tribes Including the *Rgya mo Khyi khyo ma*
  - B. To the South the Eleven Tribes Including the *Ko le Dug mda' can*
  - C. To the West the Eleven Tribes Including the *Gar lhog Kyung skad can*
  - D. To the North the Eleven Tribes Including the *Sog po Prel glag can*
  - E. To the Northeast the Eleven Tribes Including...<sup>728</sup>
  - F. To the Southeast the Eleven Tribes Including...
  - G. To the Southwest the Eleven Tribes Including...
  - H. To the Northwest the Eleven Tribes Including the *Mu stegs Wa zha*<sup>729</sup>
  - I. *Pa gro Mon* (Bhutan), which Counts as One Tribe.

#### 4. The Geographical Divisions of Tibet

- I. *Stod Mnga' ris Skor gsum*<sup>730</sup> under the Rule of the Lineage of Mnga' bdag Rtse lde, King of Spu rang
  - A. Zhang zhung
  - B. Pu rang
  - C. Mang yul
- II. Smad kyi Mdo khams Sgang gsum<sup>731</sup> under the Rule of the Lineage of Mnga' bdag Ka tsa don chen, King of Sgar Rtsong kha
  - A. Sgang gsum<sup>732</sup>
    - 1. Tsha ba rgan
    - 2. Mar rgan



3. Spun po rgyan
- B. (Kha gsum)
  1. Rtsong kha
  2. Blang kha
  3. Khri kha
- III. *Bar Dbu rtsang ru bzhi*<sup>733</sup> under the Rule of the Descendants of the Lineage of Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan of Phag mo gru
  - A. Gtsang
    1. G.yas ru<sup>734</sup>
    2. G.yon ru<sup>735</sup>
  - B. Bod (i.e., Dbus)
    1. Dbu ru<sup>736</sup>
    2. G.yu ru<sup>737</sup>
      - a. Byang
        - 1) Stod
          - a) Gra<sup>738</sup>
          - b) Dol<sup>739</sup>
          - c) Gzhung<sup>740</sup>
        - 2) Bar
          - a) E<sup>741</sup>
          - b) Dmyal<sup>742</sup>
          - c) Yar<sup>743</sup>
        - 3) Smad
          - a) Byar<sup>744</sup>
          - b) Dags<sup>745</sup>
          - c) Rkong<sup>746</sup>
      - b. Lho
        - 1) Stod
          - a) Byar<sup>747</sup>
          - b) Dags<sup>748</sup>
          - c) Rgang<sup>749</sup>
        - 2) Bar
          - a) Gtam shul<sup>750</sup>
          - b) Gru shul<sup>751</sup>
          - c) Chu shul<sup>752</sup>
        - 3) Smad
          - a) Lo ro lung gsum<sup>753</sup>

## 5. The Myriarchies of Central Tibet

### I. Gtsang G.yas ru

1. Sa: Sa Skya under the Rule of the 'Khon Lineage.
2. Chu: Chu mig.
3. Phyag: Khyag or Phyag under the Rule of the Rgyal khar rtse pa of the Khyag Lineage.

### II. Gtsang G.yon ru

4. Lha: under the Rule of Lha Nang chen Kun dga' 'phags and His Children.<sup>754</sup>
5. Zhal: Zhwa lu
6. Gur: Tshong 'dus Gur mo

### III. Dbu ru

7. Rgya Gnas bzhi Rgya ma sgang pa under the Rule of the Rgya Lineage.
8. 'Bri: Byang 'Bri khung pa
9. Tshal: Tshal mo Gung thang under the Rule of the Dkon mchog (?) Lineage.

### IV. G.yu ru

10. G.ya': Rgyal ba G.yab gzang pa under the Rule of the Snyos Lineage.
11. Phag: Sde Phag mo gru pa under the Rule of the Ldong Lha gzig Lineage.
12. Thang: Gnas Thang po che pa under the Rule of the Ston pa Lineage.

### V. Phyed me

13. Chos rgyal Bya ba

### Other Ruling Lineages:

1. Rna dkar rtse pa of the Lineage of Hor rtse
2. Bug pa can pa of the Lineage of Lha
3. Brag kha ba of the Lineage of Dab la yon

## 6. Classification of the Languages of the World

There are 360 different languages spoken in Jambudvīpa. These languages can be divided:

1. India: 100 different languages
2. China: 100 different languages
3. Ge ser: 100 different languages
4. Stag gzig: 100 different languages
5. Mon-Tibetan group: seven different languages:
  - A. Se Wa zha'i skad
  - B. Sgrang Zhang chung gi skad<sup>755</sup>

- C. Stong Gsum pa'i skad
- D. Ldong Me nyag gi skad
- E. Khung Pyi leb kyi skad
- F. Lho Mon pa'i skad
- G. Bod Thang cig pa'i skad

## VI. The Nonsectarian Movement

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## CHAPTER 16

# Mi pham and the Philosophical Controversies of the Nineteenth Century

### *I. Introduction—The Bodhicāryāvatāra*

THE *Bodhicāryāvatāra*, the *Entry on the Course toward Enlightenment*, is one of the great classics of the Mahāyāna tradition. In approximately 1000 verses, Śāntideva outlines the entire process through which the aspirant attains the stage of a bodhisattva. It is recorded that Śāntideva's fellow monks at Nālanda regarded him as a lazy oaf whose sole functions were eating, sleeping, and excreting. They felt that such idle monks were unworthy of the alms offered by the faithful. After all, was it not the obligation of monks to constantly study the Dharma? They decided to expel him from their midst and consequently summoned him to recite what he knew of the Buddha's teaching. Śāntideva appeared before the monastic assemblage as he had been commanded, but refused to begin his final farewell until he had been bidden by his teacher. When Jāyadeva, his preceptor, commanded him, he ascended the lofty throne that his hecklers had raised in order to increase his discomfort, and asked his audience whether they wished him to recite what was known or something new. They reached a consensus that they wished him to expound upon that which was hitherto unknown.

He decided that, for the occasion, his own *Śikṣāsamuccaya* was too long and the *Sūtrasamuccaya*<sup>756</sup> too brief, so he began to improvise the *Bodhicāryāvatāra*. The lucidity of his expression and the profundity of his thought held his audience spellbound. Fortunately, several members of the assembly thought to take down his words; three versions of the verses uttered on that occasion were circulated. Ultimately, Śāntideva himself promoted the one in one thousand *ślokas*.

The *Bodhicāryāvatāra* is superficially not an especially difficult text. Taken as a whole, it is one of the clearest Buddhist treatises. In the ninth chapter, Śāntideva intended to condense all Buddhist and, specifically, Mādhyamika,

thought around the concept of transcendental wisdom (*prajñā*).<sup>757</sup> He wished to describe the process of transforming all consciousness into pure wisdom. To explain this chapter, known as the *Prajñāpariccheda*, both Indian and Tibetan commentators have written volumes on the *Bodhicāryāvatāra*.

Śāntideva begins: “All this (that has been discussed previously), the Buddha has taught for the sake of transcendental wisdom...” He proceeds quickly to the crux of the matter:

*When existence and nonexistence  
Are no longer present before the mind,  
Then, since there is nothing else,  
All conceptualized has come to an end.*<sup>758</sup>

Bu ston Rin chen grub tells us that when Śāntideva reached this ecstatic passage he rose from his throne into the air.

## II. The *Bodhicāryāvatāra* in Tibet

Due to its brilliant and systematic approach, the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* was highly regarded by the early Bka' gdams pa masters, who included it among the six indispensable treatises<sup>759</sup> used in conjunction with Atiśa's *Bodhipathapradīpa* to teach the gradual and methodical approach to Buddhism. The list of Bka' gdams pa expositions of this text is very long; we know of commentaries by Rngog Lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), Phywa pa Chos kyi seng ge,<sup>760</sup> Nyang bran Chos kyi ye shes,<sup>761</sup> Lha 'Bri sgang pa,<sup>762</sup> Gtsang Nag pa,<sup>763</sup> Bu ston,<sup>764</sup> Mtsho sna ba,<sup>765</sup> Dga' ba gdong Mkhan po Chos dpal bzang po,<sup>766</sup> Grub pa shes rab,<sup>767</sup> and Rgyal sras Thogs med.<sup>768</sup> There are numerous early commentaries by Sa skya pa and Bka' brgyud pa masters: Sa skya pa slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo, Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, Sa bzang Paṅ chen,<sup>769</sup> Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen, the Second Dpa' bo, Gtsug lag 'phreng ba, and Phag mgo ba Ye shes brtson 'grus.

With the rise of the “New Bka' gdams pa”—later known as the Dge lugs pa—the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* and the other five basic treatises of the Bka' gdams pa school lost some of their previous prominence. Tsong kha pa's *Lam rim chen mo* covered all of the same material, yet had the added advantage of expounding it in what was regarded as a more lucid way. We should, however, carefully note the fact that there are two treatises preserved that record Tsong kha pa's lectures on the ninth chapter.<sup>770</sup> There is also a fairly detailed

commentary on the whole of the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* by Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432).<sup>771</sup> In these works, Tsong kha pa and his disciples follow the traditional Bka' gdams pa approach of gradualism, with its emphasis on assuring firm footing at each step before attempting the next. The Dge lugs pa method is essentially a way of critical examination and rigorous logic. However, it should be remembered that the *Prajñāpariccheda* is concerned with that state where all conceptualization is eliminated. It is understandable that so much effort should have been expended on the careful elucidation of this chapter.

Another point should be kept in mind: the Dge lugs pa emphasize the need to differentiate between the exoteric and the esoteric, the sūtra and tantra systems of interpreting such critical concepts as the *tathāgatagarbha*,<sup>772</sup> especially at the initial and intermediate stages. The great “heresies,” such as the Gzhan stong,<sup>773</sup> have usually resulted from a failure to observe this principle, from attempting to carry back into the exoteric the metaphors that arise from the profundity of the esoteric. Those who are insufficiently prepared for the practice of the tantras, say the Dge lugs pa, will always run the risk of confusing the levels. The Bka' bgyud pa master Sgam po pa said:

Although there are such terms as discriminating awareness (*shes rab*) and mind (*rang sems*), they belong to the realm of logic, while the real discriminating awareness or mind is beyond all that can be known and expressed.<sup>774</sup>

### *III. Mi pham and His Controversies*

There were few Rnying ma pa commentators on the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* before the nineteenth century. The old Rdzogs chen yogis were content to get about the task of emptying the mind of all conceptualization through the practice of higher esoteric methods. There was little interest in formulating elaborate philosophical models of how *prajñā* was to be realized. Doing took precedent over plans for doing. During the eighteenth century, however, certain Rnying ma pa gurus perceived a need to formulate Rdzogs chen and, especially, the *Snying thig* methodology into a system if these profound teachings were to benefit the scholastically oriented.

It seems that Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po (b. 1808) first conceived of using the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* as a meditation instruction. The great teacher of the nonsectarian movement



certainly saw, as no doubt previous Rnying ma pa masters had noticed, that the *Prajñāpariccheda* could be interpreted as an exposition of the Rdzogs chen methods of immediacy in the total realization of nonconceptualization. There were students of Dpal sprul who spent their lives mulling over and contemplating this chapter. It was one of Dpal sprul's students, Mi pham rgya mtsho, who finally produced an explicit formulation and threw Tibetan scholarly circles into several decades of heated controversy.

'Jam mgon Mi pham rgya mtsho (1846–1912)<sup>775</sup> was one of the most talented figures of the nonsectarian movement. Born in the area of the Ding chu, a tributary of the Ya chu in eastern Tibet, Mi pham was descended from the royal clan of Lha on the side of his father, Mgon po dar rgyas. His mother, Sring chung ma, traced her ancestry to the Smug po Gdong. At the age of twelve he was given as an ordinary monk to the Me hor Gsang sngags chos gling monastery of 'Ju, an affiliate of Zhe chen and ultimately of Smin grol gling. It is reported that he spent eighteen months at the hermitage of 'Ju Nyung in the tantric propitiation of Mañjuśrī, who at last favored him with a remarkable vision. Consequently, Mi pham is often styled 'Ju Mi pham and 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho.<sup>776</sup>

His teachers included Dpal sprul (from whom he received instruction in the *Bodhicāryāvātāra*), 'Jam dbyangs Mkhayen brtse'i dbang po, Kong sprul,<sup>777</sup> Rdzogs chen mkhan po Padmavajra,<sup>778</sup> Lab Skyabs mgon Dbang chen dgyes rab rdo rje, 'Ju dbon 'Jigs med rdo rje, 'Bum gsar Dge bshes Ngag dbang 'byung gnas, and Ngor pa Dpon slob Blo gter dbang po.<sup>779</sup>

In 1862, when Mi pham was just sixteen years old, the Nyag rong war broke out. The following year he went on pilgrimage to Central Tibet with his uncle. He spent time at Dga' ldan, where he came to admire the methods of Dge lugs pa scholasticism.

Mi pham was one of the most imaginative and versatile minds to appear in the Tibetan tradition. His collected works<sup>780</sup> contain some extraordinary treatises. Besides the eighteen volumes, for which the blocks were at last assembled at Sde dge, there were prints of other separate works scattered all over eastern Tibet. To collect a complete *gsung 'bum* of Mi pham was a formidable task.

Mi pham's interests were wide-ranging. He went back to the richest sources of Tibetan religious life, the popular customs and practices that have little changed since the beginning of Tibetan history, and investigated the *ju thig*, a method of divination through the use of knot sortilege.<sup>781</sup> This art is connected with Bon and Zhang zhung, the holy land of that faith. Most Buddhist lamas frowned upon the practices of this ancient religion. Mi pham belongs

to an unusual tradition that goes back at least to Karma chags med in the seventeenth century. These teachers sought to incorporate into Khams pa Buddhism the beliefs and folklore treasured by humble nomads and agriculturists. These teachers were almost anthropologically oriented. In the works of writers like Mi pham, we note a remarkable precision in observation. The Ge sar epic was another of Mi pham's interests. He was largely responsible for setting down several oral accounts in an attempt to standardize the versions. He also tried to develop the cult that continued to worship Ge sar as a *dgra lha*. He wrote a number of liturgical texts intended for this purpose.

Mi pham was also keenly interested in the practical arts. He was a creative physician. Even if some of the methods he recommends smack of quackery, we can never accuse him of lacking imagination. His medical works continue to be highly regarded to this day. He wrote an introduction to technology, the *Śilpaśāstra*. Even the arts of love did not escape the attention of this unusual monk: we find him writing a work on the *Kāmasāstra*.<sup>782</sup> His commentary on the *Kāvyaśāstra*<sup>783</sup> is perhaps the finest source for understanding the development of Tibetan poetics during the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. In this work he quotes extensively from the stories of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. Mi pham compiled a dictionary of the Tibetan and Sanskrit equivalents for the philosophical and psychological concepts of Rdzogs chen.<sup>784</sup>

Mi pham's greatest contribution to the cultural history of Tibet lies, however, in his brilliant and strikingly original commentaries on the important Indic treatises.<sup>785</sup> Rnying ma pa scholars in the past had seldom written detailed pedagogical commentaries on the *śāstras* of exoteric Buddhism. As we have already noted, it was Mi pham's commentary on the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicāryāvātāra*<sup>786</sup> that stimulated the larger controversy. The disagreement over Mi pham's interpretation of the *Prajñāpariccheda* was not the only tempest that Mi pham's new expositions raised. Mi pham's commentary on the *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*<sup>787</sup> of Śāntarakṣita carried the battle straight into the Dge lugs pa camp.

How should one reconcile the apparent conflicts and incompatibilities between the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka positions? Tsong kha pa's careful exposition had its difficulties and perhaps inconsistencies. Mi pham's open advocacy of the Gzhan stong<sup>788</sup> was another red cape, and the bulls were not slow to charge. Among his numerous opponents, the name of Rdo grub Dam chos bzang po stands out, for it was his attack that Mi pham singled out as worthy of a reply.<sup>789</sup> Mi pham's career was filled with disputation; unfortunately, only a small percentage of the polemical tracts that were exchanged back and forth have survived. The great difficulty in interpreting

the few that have been preserved arises from the Tibetan custom of reproducing only the works that support one's own position. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to understand the arguments from the writings of only one side. We are very fortunate in that all of the major sources for Mi pham and Dpa' ris Rab gsal's controversy centered around the *Prajñāpariccheda* survive. One can hope that the other polemical works connected with Mi pham will appear from their places of concealment. I have seen refutations of Mi pham by Brag dkar Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan 'dzin snyan grags of Tre hor Dkar mdzes (1866–1928)<sup>790</sup> and Ldan ma Blo chos.<sup>791</sup> Bdud 'joms Rin po che mentions an exchange of polemics between Dpal sprul and Mi pham on the one hand and Mkhas pa 'Ja' pa Mdo sngags on the other over the *Prajñāpariccheda*.<sup>792</sup>

At the time of writing all but one primary source for the exchange between Mi pham and Dpa' ris Rab gsal regarding the ninth chapter of the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* have now appeared.<sup>793</sup> A critical study of one defined controversy now becomes possible. We are in a better position to test Ruegg's suggestion:

It will perhaps appear from such an investigation that each generation of commentators was concerned in the first place less with producing what might today be considered a historically or philologically accurate interpretation of an authoritative text of their school (although such attempts are not unknown) than with reinterpreting such a work in the light of contemporary philosophical knowledge, in other words with “recreating” the ideas contained in it in a form suitable for their own time.<sup>794</sup>

Mi pham was very much a product of the significant developments that took place in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He was the heir to the nonsectarian approach that Mkhyen brtse and Kong sprul were largely responsible for developing. His approach to textual exegesis was “creative”; there were even nonsectarian proponents who regarded his extensively annotated editions (*mchan 'grel*) as a bit too unusual for pedagogical purposes.

An example is Gzhan dga' (1871–1927), the author of the *Rdzong sar yig cha*. Gzhan dga' attempted to provide historically and philologically accurate interpretations of the major Indic treatises that were the authoritative sources for the basics of Buddhism. It was Gzhan dga' who explicitly formulated the principle that the easiest way to put an end to sectarian differences was to attempt to understand and expound upon the basic Indic sources as the scholars of the past would have. This led him to reject the various interpretations

that almost a thousand years of Tibetan teachers had made. He placed the emphasis on the Indian over the Tibetan commentaries. This produced, of course, what was for Tibet a completely new approach to monastic education. The obligatory manuals (*yig cha*) formulated in terms of dialectical propositions that the student was expected to memorize and practice in mock debate were shown to have the same biases as any other Tibetan commentary. Gzhan dga' substituted these manuals with the careful study of a selection of original texts in an attempt to lead more students to understand the Indic treatises and the principles they expounded rather than producing a facility for formalistic debate of historical positions that the debaters often only half understood or comprehended not at all.

To return to Mi pham and Dpa' ris Rab gsal, it should be noted that they were intellectuals and compassionate teachers who shared similar principles and values. They became close personal friends and often visited each other. Their polemical exchange is remarkable for its warmth and good humor. Both love a lively literary style filled with comparisons and syntactical usages drawn from the colloquial idiom and made elegant by the imaginative use of the rhetorical devices of Tibetan *kāvya*. There is none of the vulgarity and crudeness in the writings of Dpa' ris Rab gsal to which certain of Mi pham's other opponents resorted. The crude attack as attempted refutation is certainly not unknown in the Tibetan tradition. Brag dkar Rin po che's reply to Mi pham's *Brgal lan nyin byed snang ba* is a reasonably mild example. The title he has given the work can be translated "A rebuttal to Mi pham rnam rgyal's reply [the *Nyin byed snang ba*]; a purgative to induce (him) to expel the bloody vomit of perverse views." The text itself contains considerably more vulgar and occasionally indecent observations about even Mi pham himself.

These discussions on the interpretation of the *Bodhicāryāvatāra* and specifically the implications of the ninth chapter for understanding Buddhism as a whole produced a number of subsidiary commentaries. There were Sde dge editions of *Bodhicāryāvatāra* interpretations by Ras chung bla ma Karma tshe dpal (died c. 1928) and Mi nyag Kun bzang bsod nams (died c. 1908). I have also seen a brief commentary by Sde gzhung mkhan po Chos 'phel from Rdzong sar. All of these works depend, however, on understanding the issues raised first by Dpal sprul and later precisely formulated by Mi pham.



## CHAPTER 17

# 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and the Nonsectarian Movement

### *I. Introduction*

IT WAS IN 1960 that I first heard of the *Encompassment of All Knowledge*, the *Shes bya kun khyab*, from my guru, Deshung Rinpoche. He described this treatise as one of the greatest masterpieces of later Tibetan scholarship. During my studies, he told me much of the nineteenth-century cultural renaissance, the finest flower of which was the nonsectarian (*ris med*) movement of eastern Tibet. As the names and achievements of Kong sprul, Mkhyen brtse, Mchog gling, 'Ju Mi pham, Gzhan dga', and Rdza Dpal sprul flowed from his mouth, I became convinced that this group of scholar-saints had enormous significance for the cultural history of Tibet. I decided to prepare for research into this period.

With the publication of Mme. Ariane Macdonald's study of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpamaṇḍala*<sup>795</sup> in 1962, the first information about the significance of the life and works of Kong sprul and Mkhyen brtse became available to Tibetan scholars outside Asia. Mme. Macdonald was the first to describe the *Shes bya kun khyab* in a Western publication. During the summer of 1962, I had the good fortune to see a complete set of this work at the Library of Uppsala University in Sweden, at that time probably the only copy outside India.

Shortly after my arrival in India, I was elated to discover that Lokesh Chandra was planning to reproduce this magnificent work. Through the gracious efforts of the Sikkimese savant, Rai Bahadur T. D. Densapa (Burmiok Athing), two sets of the frequently unclear xylograph edition had been placed at his disposal for use in the preparation of the new edition. At last, a print of the *Shes bya kun khyab* was ready to be placed before the scholarly public.

## II. *The Shes bya kun khyab and Its Place in the Ris med Tradition*

During his long lifetime, Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–99) produced an astonishing literary output of slightly more than ninety volumes in the Dpal spungs edition of his collected works (*gsung 'bum*).<sup>796</sup> Together with the *gsung 'bum* of 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820–92),<sup>797</sup> the *Rgyud sde kun btus*<sup>798</sup> and *Sgrub thabs kun btus*<sup>799</sup> collections, the *Five Treasuries* (*Mdzod lnga*) into which the writings of Kong sprul are traditionally divided represent our chief literary sources for the nonsectarian movement, one of the most important developments in the nineteenth-century Tibetan Buddhist world.

The *Shes bya kun khyab* is traditionally regarded as the first and smallest of the *Five Treasuries*. Consisting of a concise *śāstra* in verse followed by a three-volume autocommentary, this work at first may appear to represent just one more example of that slavish imitation of a Sanskrit model and unhappy stylistic rigidity that makes Tibetan exegetic literature so dull. The title page of the verse text (*kārikā*) reads: *Theg pa'i sgo kun las btus pa gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod bslab pa gsum legs par ston pa'i bstan bcos shes bya kun khyab*, a rough rendering of which would be “*The Encompassment of All Knowledge: A Śāstra That Well Explains the Precepts of the Three Trainings, a Treasury of Precious Scripture Compiled from the Approaches Followed by All the Vehicles.*” The work is sometimes known in the bibliographical sources as the *Shes bya mdzod*, *The Treasury of Knowledge*. According to the colophon, the verses were composed at the behest of the great Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po. However, from Kong sprul's autobiography<sup>800</sup> we gain a more detailed picture of the situation surrounding the composition of the *kārikās*.<sup>801</sup> Bla ma Nges don<sup>802</sup> had for some time requested Kong sprul to write a treatise on the topic of the three vows, a theme that inspired some of the most significant indigenous works in Tibetan Buddhist literature.<sup>803</sup> Bla ma Nges don promised to write a commentary on Kong sprul's verses. When Kong sprul showed the manuscript of the completed draft to Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po in 1862, that great teacher praised the work effusively and declared that this was the first of the *Five Treasuries* that he prophesied Kong sprul would give the world. It was Mkhyen brtse who first gave it the name *Shes bya mdzod*. He urged Kong sprul to produce his own prose commentary. By now, Nges don was ailing and was unable to keep his promise. Though Kong sprul had been working on the verses, his conception of what the work should be gradually changed. While in a broad sense Kong sprul retained his intention to produce a treatise on the three vows,

he went further and demonstrated that, just as the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, in a sense, led naturally into the Vajrayāna, so all the other practical methods of the Vajrayāna reached their epitome in the streamlined *atiyoga* of the Rdzogs chen system. We already find Kong sprul exercising his predilection for the Gzhan stong doctrine, the mortar that held his eclectic structure together.

Kong sprul finished the first draft of the three-volume autocommentary by 1863. He revised and finally completed it in 1864 with the assistance of Bkra shis 'od zer (1836–1910).<sup>804</sup> The *Shes bya mdzod* appears to be the earliest statement of nonsectarian thought. As the relationship between Mkhjen brtse and Kong sprul matured, their conception of the implications of the nonsectarian movement for the various traditions of Tibetan religious life changed. They stretched the bounds of eclectic thinking, integrating both structured bodies of doctrine and fragile lineages of oral transmission. Their innovation called into question the extent to which the synthetic effort may efface the very traditions it seeks to preserve. And yet the esteem with which Kong sprul, Mkhjen brtse, and their collaborators continue to be regarded are a testimonial to the tact and judgment they possessed. Although the nonsectarian movement did engender reactionary intolerance and occasionally the denigration of other traditions of Buddhist practice, even these sectarian responses were couched in the language of eclecticism and unity.

### *III. The Origins of the Ris med Tradition*

The roots of eclecticism and tolerance are sunk as deep into the soil of Tibetan tradition as those of sectarianism and bigotry. From the very beginning, when Bon and Buddhism fought for the faith and patronage of Tibetan nomads and peasants, there have been those who would erect a barrier between the two so great that it could not be crossed. Yet there have also been those who viewed the two as kindred traditions that shared common cultural content and that probably sprang from a single source. In western Tibet (*Stod*) intolerance often predominated. The literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries is filled with the struggles of Bon and Buddhism; we read of contests to the death between such figures as Lo chen Rin chen bzang po (958–1055) and Klu Skar rgyal,<sup>805</sup> between Mi la ras pa and Na ro Bon chung. The pattern in the south (Lho brag and Lho kha) and east (Khams and A mdo), on the other hand, seems to have been one of good-natured synthesis, or at least mutual tolerance. In the central and western areas (Dbus and



Gtsang), the puritanical intellectuals of the New Tantric transmissions composed polemics against the followers of the Old Tantras, the Rnying ma pa. Among these opponents of the Rnying ma pa we find the names of Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od and his youngest son, Pho brang Zhi ba 'od, Lha bla ma Byang chub 'od, Lo chen Rin chen bzang po, 'Gos Lo tsā ba Khug pa Lha btsas of Rta nag, 'Bri gung Skyob pa 'Jig rten mgon po, Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal, and, finally, Bu ston. All these teachers, with the exception of 'Jig rten mgon po and Chag Lo tsā ba, came from Gtsang or the old Mnga' ris. 'Jig rten mgon po was from Khams and Chag Lo tsā ba hailed from Lho kha, but both became deeply involved in the thirteenth-century cultural reawakening of Central Tibet, where purity of practice and demonstrable authenticity of lineage became issues of fundamental importance.

Yet it was here, especially in the west, that fervent believers rediscovered the first of the *gter ma* and revitalized a great tradition. The earliest of the Buddhist *gter ston* was Sangs rgyas bla ma. Born at Mtsho bar in La stod during the latter half of the tenth century, his destiny as a prophet and teacher led him to Glo Dge dkar (in present-day Mustang in Nepal), where he discovered the *Bla rdzogs thugs gsum* and the *Rtsa gsum dril sgrub*. He subsequently wandered over much of northern Nepal, where he revealed other texts including certain *sūtras* translated from the Chinese. Other famed *gter ston* of this early period were Rgya Lo tsā ba Rdo rje bzang po of Jumla and his immediate reembodiment, Rgya Zhang khrom Rdo rje 'od 'bar.<sup>806</sup>

As followers of Bon were converted or driven into hiding in Central Tibet and Mnga' ris, the Rnying ma pa became the primary target of the purists. Bu ston and the scholars of Snar thang before him did not include within the Tibetan canon (*Bka' 'gyur*) the tantras that the Rnying ma pa had treasured through the long period of cultural darkness on the grounds that the Indic originals from which they had been translated could no longer be demonstrated. These purists devised formal criteria that enabled them to exclude even sacred texts for which there was some evidence of Indic originals by exacting linguistic and stylistic considerations. These savants rejected all of the tantras of the *Vajrakīla* cycle, even though the great Sa skya Paṇḍita had seen, copied, and translated a palm leaf manuscript of the *Phur pa rtsa dum* at the Sreg zhing Hermitage in Shangs.<sup>807</sup>

Furthermore, the great 'Brog mi Lo tsā ba, an eminent translator of the New Tantric period, had seen the eight-syllable mantra of Vajrakīla above one of the portals at Bodhgaya. Śākyaśrī, the Kashmiri scholar, added his support by asserting that contemplative methods based on Vajrakīla as tutelary deity existed in India. It should be noted that some of the most sacred and

treasured ancestral rituals and practices of the Sa skya pa school are centered around Kīla as the *heruka*. It would have been most inconvenient for the Sa skya pa teachers had Sa skya Paṇḍita not discovered this manuscript, and had the great 'Broḡ mi and Kha che Paṇ chen not added their evidence for the authenticity of the 'Khon (i.e., Sa skya pa) system of worship of Vajrakīla. In spite of all this evidence, the more critical Tibetan scholastics maintained their skepticism regarding the whole of the *Kīla* cycle, which came to be a common heresy shared by the Sa skya pa and Rnying ma pa. Shared heresies often become grounds for synthesis.<sup>808</sup>

There were always accomplished yogis and discerning intellects among the great Tibetan clerics who were ready to express views in favor of traditions under attack; 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal and Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag 'phreng ba come immediately to mind. The Rnying ma pa tradition continued to glow, a self-perpetuating ember ready to produce the miraculous flame whenever it came into contact with suitable fuel. It continued to manifest the predicted luminescence, the fusion of the rainbow body, the sign of attainment. Ratna gling pa (1403–78), that amazing devotee of Vajrakīla, gathered what he could find of the rejected tantras and their initiations and collected them together in the *Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum*, the manuscript set of which was prepared and subsequently preserved at Gru shul Lhun grub pho brang in Lho kha. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that a xylograph edition of these tantras was carved at Sde dge Dgon chen.<sup>809</sup>

Questions surrounding the validity of rediscovered texts and holy objects (*sa gter*), teachings concealed in the transmigrating principle of associates of Padmasambhava for propagation by future emanations (*dgongs gter*), and teachings revealed in visions (*dag snang*), were initially a further barrier between the Rnying ma pa and the other traditions that followed the New Tantric translations. The common acceptance of rediscovered teachings (*gter*) and Rdzogs chen teachings led to a considerable degree of interaction between the Rnying ma pa and Bon po. There were *gter ston* like Grwa pa Mngon shes (1012–1090), the rediscoverer of the *Rgyud bzhi*, the basic text for traditional medicine, who found texts from both the Rnying ma pa and Bon traditions. Miraculous events appeal to the mind and faith of the pious layman; gradually, revealers of *gter ma* began to appear in the non-Rnying ma pa sects: Gnas gsar Mkhyen brtse'i dbang phyug (b. 1524) among the Sa skya pa sects, Rin chen phun tshogs (1509–57),<sup>810</sup> Dkon mchog rin chen,<sup>811</sup> and Chos kyi grags pa<sup>812</sup> among the 'Bri gung pa, the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje and Karma chags med (seventeenth century) for the Karma Bka' brgyud pa, and Kun dga' bstan 'dzin, the Third Khams sprul (1680–1728), Padma dkar po,

and the Fourth 'Dzi sgar Rdo rje drag po (1740–98) among the 'Brug pa. Even Dge lugs pa teachers found *gter ma* and received visions, such as Dpal ldan rdo rje of 'Phan yul<sup>813</sup> and the Fifth Dalai Lama. Kong sprul tells us that the Indian scholar, Vanaratna of Sadnagar<sup>814</sup> (1384–1468), received the *Padma tshe khrid* in a vision and propagated it to his Tibetan disciples.

The false prophet is a possibility that plagues any tradition that accepts the principle of continuing revelation with doubt. Many Tibetan scholastics were highly critical of revelation in the forms of *gter ma*, *sa gter*, and *dgongs gter*. Even some of the Rnying ma pa teachers were concerned with devising criteria for separating the genuine from the spurious. Apparently, even Padma-sambhava recognized the possibility of false prophets and teachings, and their negative effects on the credibility of those who were genuine. During periods when great numbers of *gter ston* appeared, the tradition was especially subject to criticism. Kong sprul quotes a text from the rediscovery of Dri med Kun dga':<sup>815</sup>

*Prophets will not come in a regular flow.  
Hidden teachings will appear like the tracks of a herd of deer.  
These, too, shall not be without their fruits.  
This is my testimony, the one of O rgyan, [Padmasambhava].*<sup>816</sup>

According to the Rnying ma pa teachers, the whole of the Himalayan region is filled with *gter ma* that will be revealed at the appointed time. In the *gter lung* of Ratna gling pa we read:

*For each important valley there is an important hidden treasure.  
These also are signs of the one from O rgyan.  
For each little place there is a minor hidden treasure.  
These, too, are signs of the one from O rgyan.*<sup>817</sup>

Many *gter ma* texts are superb examples of Tibetan literature. It is important to remember, however, that Tibetan Buddhism, especially the form followed by the Rnying ma pa, is intended first and foremost to be pragmatic—a putting into practice of the insights realized by all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the past. The explanation for the multiplicity of metaphors and tutelary deities lies in the fact that there must be a practice suited to every sentient creature somewhere. Forms or metaphors that were relevant yesterday may lose their efficacy in the changed situation of today. Achieving realization through the practice of a teaching is the ultimate test. Certain rediscoveries

or revelations may have a greater relevance in a given situation and produce especially remarkable results. One such example is the *Dkon mchog spyi 'dus* of Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656),<sup>818</sup> which spread rapidly through most of the other sects and throughout the Tibetan cultural world. Other instructions or rituals might produce an insight into enlightenment for only one being and then disappear. Handing on the esoteric teachings that one receives as unbroken tradition assumes great importance, for some sentient creature yet to come—even one's own future reembodiment—might achieve enlightenment through the practices outlined therein.

Doctrinal systematization reached a high point in Tibet during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The greatest name in Rnying ma pa intellectual history lived in this period: Klong chen Rab 'byams pa Dri med 'od zer. To understand Kong sprul and his writings, one must be acquainted with this phenomenal intellect who set forth the essentials of the Rdzogs chen approach, and indeed of all Buddhist thought, in his *Seven Treasuries (Mdzod bdun)*<sup>819</sup> and *Three Triple Cycles (Skor gsum gsum)*.<sup>820</sup> These *śāstras* are certainly among the most brilliant and original treaties in the indigenous Tibetan literature. Klong chen pa was a master of logical organization. His usage of classical Tibetan has a lucidity that has seldom been equaled. Like most of the great teachers of the Tibetan tradition, he was not narrowly sectarian. He studied with gurus belonging to all major lineages of his time. His close connections with the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa, opponents of the rising power of the Phag mo gru pa, resulted in the unjust aversion of the great Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan, the dominant political figure of the mid-1300's. This story has a happy ending: after a decade of exile, wandering in Bhutan and the Mon pa lands, Klong chen pa was reconciled with the founder of the Phag mo gru dynasty.

Another fourteenth-century eclectic was Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), the veritable embodiment of wisdom itself. His period was one of tremendous intellectual activity and scholastic synthesis that invites comparison with the nineteenth century. The Sa skya pa hegemony had reached its end. The Yüan dynasty collapsed in 1368, largely bringing the period of intellectual cross-pollination between Mongol China and Tibet to a close.

The history of the next three centuries is the story of a progressive solidification of teaching lineages and academic establishments into religious sects. An important factor that allowed the rise of religious sects was the absence of a strong central authority and related political rivalries. From the 1430s onward, conflicts were bitter until the settlement of 1642 brought peace to Tibet.

The origin of the Tshar pa subsect of the Sa skya pa illustrates rather well

the development of sectarian divisions based upon political conflict. A bitter feud had arisen between the lords of 'Dar and Gdong dga' in western Tibet (*La stod*). The brilliant Sa skya pa scholar and monk, Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho (1502–66/67), became involved in the disagreement because of the patronage he enjoyed from the 'Dar family, who had endowed him with the splendid new monastery of Grong mo che.<sup>821</sup> Unfortunately, the wife of the Sa skya pa hierarch, Sngags 'chang Kun dga' rin chen (1517–84), was a noblewoman from the house of Gdong dga', and that revered guru was drawn into the feud on the side of his patron's wife and her kinsmen. Thus came into being a rupture in the Sa skya pa sect that was to last for generations.<sup>822</sup>

The establishment of the Dga' ldan Pho brang and the Dge lugs pa theocracy in 1642 added new dimensions to sectarian relationships in Tibet. The political and sectarian struggles and skirmishes of the last two hundred years had been hard and bitter. The Fifth Dalai Lama and his successor, Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, were faced with the enormous task of healing deep wounds, while attempting to reach a religious settlement that would satisfy the more fanatic and vociferous of the Dge lugs pa clerics, whose sect had suffered considerably from the oppressions inflicted by the kings of Gtsang and their Rin spungs pa predecessors.

The Fifth Dalai Lama was by nature a tolerant prince with a well-developed eclectic bent of mind. Among his gurus were great masters of the Rnying ma pa (*Byang gter* and *Zur Bka' ma* traditions) and the Tshar pa subsect of the Sa skya pa. His family's ties with the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa were very strong; his cousin, Dpag bsam dbang po (1593–1641),<sup>823</sup> was the Fifth Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa. Some claimed that the Fifth Dalai Lama himself was the reemodiment of the great Lha rtse ba Nag dbang bzang po (1546–1615), the First Bde chen chos 'khor Yongs 'dzin, one of the revered chaplains of the house of 'Phyongs rgyas. The long history of rivalry between the great Karma pa hierarchs and their 'Brug pa counterparts was a potent argument for preferential treatment of that sect; the difficult relations with Bhutan, ruled by a rival incarnation of the Gsang sngags chos gling line, made close relations between the Northern 'Brug pa school and the Dga' ldan Pho brang temporarily to their mutual advantage.

The machinations of Tāranātha in support of his Gtsang pa patrons against the Dge lugs pa were of such a nature that the Fifth Dalai Lama and his less tolerant advisors could not allow the Jo nang pa to go unpunished, and they decided to suppress the Jo nang pa in Central Tibet completely. In the case of the other great ally of the Gtsang faction, the Karma Bka' brgyud pa, the Fifth Dalai Lama was prepared to impose a settlement that merely required

the return of all Dge lugs pa monasteries and estates that had been reassigned to the Karma Bka' brgyud pa during the period of Rin spungs and Gtsang pa ascendancy. The unsuccessful revolt of the Karma pa's lay administrators with the support of the Kong po army, however, required harsh reprisals and resulted in drastic limits on the number of Karma Bka' brgyud pa monasteries in Central Tibet. The skillful diplomacy of the Fifth Karma pa Rgyal tshab incarnation, Grags pa mchog dbyangs<sup>824</sup> (1618–58), saved the Karma Bka' brgyud pa from the fate of the Jo nang pa—complete confiscation.

In the interest of reconciling the other Bka' brgyud pa sects, the Dalai Lama treated the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa Sgam po Sprul sku and Rwa lung 'Brug pa incarnations with their strategic positions on the southern marches with great respect. These two lamas were accorded ranks in the official hierarchy immediately after the Dalai Lama. It was not until about 1669 that the Paṅ chen Lama was honored with a throne of the same height as those of these two incarnations.<sup>825</sup>

The latter half of the seventeenth century was undeniably a period of cultural brilliance. On the surface, the literary achievements of the Fifth Dalai Lama and of the Sde srid seem to glisten most brightly. Yet, as one investigates the sources more carefully, it strikes one that something is amiss. Intriguing names like Ldum bu Don grub dbang rgyal and 'Dar ba Lo tsā ba Ngag dbang phun tshogs lhun grub<sup>826</sup> keep cropping up. Ldum bu nas was the greatest scholar in astrology, astronomy, and calendrical calculations to appear in Tibet during the seventeenth century. He was a strong advocate of the Phug pa system over the Mtshur and other rival systems of astrology. There is absolutely no doubt that he was the actual author of the *Baidūrya dkar po* and probably several other astrological works assigned to the authorship of the Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.

The Fifth Dalai Lama and his regents adorned their court with scholars and artists not only from all over Tibet, but from India and Nepal as well. The Fifth Dalai Lama pursued a policy of tolerance, and he selected as advisors scholars belonging to all sects. These people were quick to discover the susceptibility of the Dalai Lama and Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho—both of whom regarded themselves as poets, scholars, and scientists—to open flattery. A number of the Tibetan treatises attributed to these two princes owe little to their purported authors.<sup>827</sup> Certain lamas who were not so fortunate as to receive appointments in Lhasa circulated scurrilous verses that derided the Fifth Dalai Lama and his circle of sycophants.

The Fifth Dalai Lama was deeply interested in Tibetan poetry, a subject that the great Dge lugs pa scholars, with a few exceptions like Zhang zhung

Chos dbang grags pa, had tended to neglect. On the other hand, the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa could boast a number of skilled poets and wits during this period, such as Bod mkhas pa Mi pham dge legs rnam rgyal<sup>828</sup> and Mkhas dbang Sangs rgyas rdo rje (1569–1645). Several of the Bka' brgyud pa masters of *kāvya* wrote mocking verses to tease the Sa skya pa and Dge lugs pa for their rigid scholasticism, and their constant provocation annoyed a number of important Dge lugs pa clerics. The Fifth Dalai Lama was under considerable pressure to retaliate against these offenders. His wise solution was to institute the study of poetics among his own followers. As an introduction to the subject, he composed his famed *Snyan ngag dbyangs can dgyes glu*,<sup>829</sup> which begins with a frontal attack on the arrogance of unnamed Bka' brgyud pa critics. Following criticism of the Mahāmudrā approach, he warms up to do real battle:

Certain adherents of the Dwags rgyud pa have been following these writings of Stag tshang pa and joining together words intended to cast snide aspersions on Lord Tsong kha pa. These Bka' brgyud pa master meditators are like the [timid and cowardly] offspring of the fox skulking into the midst of battling tigers and lions, the Sa skya pa and Dge lugs pa scholars, perfect in the strength of their intellect and knowledge of canon, engaged in debate. Beware! This behavior is very offensive.<sup>830</sup>

The Fifth Dalai Lama is warning the 'Brug pa literati not to play where adult logicians are at work! It would seem that Bod mkhas pa or Sangs rgyas rdo rje had annoyed the Dalai Lama considerably. The Northern 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa began to lose the favor that they had only recently come to enjoy.

A new sectarian policy for the Dga' ldan Pho brang was slowly evolving. An epigram attributed to the Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho himself reflects the situation as it existed shortly after the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama:

The Sa skya pa, Dge lugs pa, and Rnying ma pa are victory banners of the Buddha's teaching: the Karma Bka' brgyud pa, 'Brug pa, and Bon po are the robbers and thieves of the Buddha's teaching.<sup>831</sup>

The 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa had fallen together into a single category of enemy with the opponents of the Dalai Lama's ruling group in 1642.

The patronage that the Rnying ma pa enjoyed under the Fifth Dalai Lama and Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho began to provoke opposition from the more conservative monks from the great monasteries. During this period we find gurus

like Rtog ge ba Blo bzang rin chen<sup>832</sup> and Sle lung Bzhad pa'i rdo rje, who produced as yet uninvestigated syntheses of Dge lugs pa, Rnying ma pa, and Bka' brgyud pa teachings. Bzhad pa'i rdo rje's son, G.yung mgon rdo rje, the 'Brug pa Kun legs incarnation of Dre'u lhas in Gnyal, was also an extremely interesting forerunner of the nonsectarian approach. In light of this apparent resurgence of Rnying ma pa influence, the *dge bshes* of the three big monasteries, many of whom were Mongols with that bigoted conviction of the truth of their own faith that is so often characteristic of the convert, would view the Dzungar excesses against the Rnying ma pa as acts comparable to Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje's righteous assassination of the apostate Glang Dar ma. Nevertheless, the Rnying ma pa later gained the sympathy of Pho lha nas and his friend, Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal,<sup>833</sup> and thus the great monasteries of Smin grol gling and Rdo rje brag were rebuilt.

The name of 'Jigs med gling pa (1730–98) is of enormous significance. His fame dominates the eighteenth-century Rnying ma pa renaissance and stands second only to that of Klong chen Rab 'byams pa in the development of Rdzogs chen thought. His incarnations, the so-called Mkhyen brtse “family,” include many of the greatest names in the nonsectarian movement. I have discussed the Rnying ma pa antecedents of these eclectic developments in Khams during the nineteenth century in some detail in the introduction to the autobiography of Mkhan po Ngag dga' of Kaḥ thog, so I will not dwell upon it here.

As the Dge lugs pa missionary fervor spread to Sde dge and the surrounding areas in the nineteenth century,<sup>834</sup> a different form of religious bigotry appeared. With the codification of the scholastic manuals (*yig cha*) of the great monasteries of Central Tibet, a sort of intellectual petrification occurred. While that magnificent tradition that had added so much to Tibetan ethical and spiritual values continued to produce remarkable teachers and gurus, the rank and file Dge lugs pa monks concentrated upon the slavish pursuit of formalistic argumentation according to the scripts set forth in the *yig cha*. The refutation of a doctrine, a teacher, or a spiritual experience came to be simply a problem of identification. Once the opponent was identified, the refutation was simply the application of the appropriate arguments that had been memorized from childhood. Unless the opponent was a Dge lugs pa and, better still, a graduate of the same college or affiliate using the identical syllabus, there could be no contest. The opponent had already been defeated. In the contest for patronage and followers, these *dge bshes* were not above using such pointless debates to convince the local population of the natural superiority of the new over the old.



The nonsectarian tradition emphasized a different aspect of religious education: scriptural exposition (*bshad pa*). The trend was toward simplification. In their exposition seminaries (*bshad grwa*), monastic educators continued to teach a small number of classical Indian Buddhist *śāstras* in their Tibetan translations as the curriculum. Their students were expected to master these works through oral exposition and the study of editions provided with inter-linear explanatory annotations (*mchan*).<sup>835</sup> The basic aim was comprehension, not only of the words and arguments, but also of the doctrinal implications. This reorientation toward the Indian originals, it was felt, would eliminate many controversies that arose through variant expositions of the same texts by different Tibetan exegetes. There was a parallel tendency to reject the theory that to identify and name the opponent is paramount to defeating him. In other words, many of the great nonsectarian teachers rejected labels.

The Khams pas tell a charming story about the encounter of Rdza Dpal sprul<sup>836</sup> with two dialecticians that illustrates this trend well. Once, when Rdza Dpal sprul was in retreat, several scholars opposed to his nonsectarian approach appeared at the entrance of his cave with the intention of engaging him in sectarian debate. They were accompanied by a large crowd made up of a few sincere followers and the rest village lay-abouts eager for diversion.

Rdza Dpal sprul received his visitors with grace and humility. In order to get the debate under way, one of the scholastic monks asked Rdza Dpal sprul what religious affiliation he claimed. It was expected that he would answer that he was a Rnying ma pa. Instead he replied that he was only a follower of the Lord Buddha. Anxious to establish his Rnying ma pa connections, his would-be opponent then asked Dpal sprul the name of his refuge and *mūlaguru*, expecting to elicit the name of 'Jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu, the Rnying ma pa master who had initiated him. To this query Rdza Dpal sprul replied that the *mūlaguru* in whom he took refuge was the Three Jewels, an answer that left his opponents no grounds on which they could contest. Greatly frustrated, the logician asked Dpal sprul to reveal his "secret name" (*gsang mtshan*), the name bestowed at the time of esoteric initiation, knowing full well that this name would surely pinpoint him as a Rnying ma pa. Without the slightest hesitation, Dpal sprul displayed his penis, indicating that it was his *gsang mtshan*. In Tibetan, the honorific for "penis" is *gsang mtshan*, literally "secret mark," identical in all respects with the word meaning tantric initiatory name. The crowd howled with laughter. The hoped-for debate did not come off as planned, and the logicians left greatly discomfited. This story illustrates especially well the essential approach of the great non-

sectarian teachers. Kong sprul's life story, too, is in effect the story of the nonsectarian ideals and their impact on Khams.

#### *IV. 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and His Friends*

Kong sprul<sup>837</sup> was born in late December of 1813<sup>838</sup> at Rong rgyab near Padma lha rtse in 'Bri zla<sup>839</sup> Zal mo sgang in Khams. His nominal father was Bsod nam s 'phel, a village lama of the Bon religion. It is likely, however, that Kong sprul was born from the union of Bkra shis 'tsho, the wife of Bsod nam s 'phel, and the Khyung po lama G.yung drung bstan 'dzin. Kong sprul firmly believed that his real father was G.yung drung bstan 'dzin, and he gives a long account of that lama's Khyung po lineages<sup>840</sup> in his autobiography. He was, however, looked after and brought up as a Bon po priest by Bsod nam s 'phel.

Kong sprul's education as a Bon po is not documented in any detail, but it was evidently thorough. He also studied medicine with Karma phun tshogs. Around 1827 a great catastrophe engulfed his family and changed the entire course of the young genius' life. A blood feud resulted in an expedition by the Sde dge authorities. His father, Bsod nam s 'phel, and a number of other kinsmen were captured, taken to the Chos sde Pho brang, and imprisoned. The youth followed to take on the task of feeding his father while he was in prison. During these sad days, he met one Chab mdo dbu mdzad named Lha mgar, with whom he discovered he shared an interest in religious art. Through Lha mgar, he met the governor of Chos sde Fortress, Tshe 'phel of Khang sar tshang, who was so impressed with Kong sprul's personality and talents that he asked him to become his secretary and in return promised to help his kinsmen.

The Khang sar tshang seem to have been followers of the Rnying ma pa. Kong sprul's patron introduced him to Zhe chen 'Jigs med blo gsal, who was awed by the youth's knowledge of Bon literature and traditions. When Khang sar shifted from Chos sde to 'Dan khog, Kong sprul followed him and began his studies with the great 'Jam mgon 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal of Zhe chen. He received his final vows as a Rnying ma pa monk in 1832 from 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal.

It seems that the Rnying ma pa were operating under considerable stricture, because in 1833 Dbon rgan Sprul sku of Dpal spungs requisitioned the services of Kong sprul as his secretary. The relations seem to have been quite strained between the Zhe chen Rnying ma pa and the Dpal spungs Karma Bka' brgyud pa. The Dpal spungs lamas insisted that Kong sprul take a second

ordination as a monk, presumably because they did not recognize the Rnying ma pa vows that he had taken the previous year from Zhe chen Dbon sprul. This pettiness and sectarianism distressed Kong sprul, but there was little he could do but accede to the demands of Dbon rgan.<sup>841</sup> This small experience of intolerance seems to have been significant in channeling Kong sprul's interests toward a nonsectarian approach to Buddhist practice and scholarship.

The list of Kong sprul's teachers is amazing; a reverential petition to his gurus written in 1843 contains over sixty names.<sup>842</sup> His teachers represented all of the sects and esoteric lineages, and his interests covered the entire field of traditional Tibetan scholarship.

Kong sprul's reputation as a promising scholar had spread widely. The Dpal spungs authorities expected that the government of Sde dge would requisition the services of their talented new monk just as they had taken him from Zhe chen. There was an unwritten rule that incarnations of a monastery were exempt from obligatory service. It was imperative, therefore, to name Kong sprul as an incarnation of Dpal spungs. The problem was to find an incarnation lineage of which they could recognize him to be the reembodiment. After a certain amount of research, Si tu proclaimed the youth to be the rebirth of a servant of the previous Si tu. Dpal spungs had successfully foiled the Sde dge plot to claim the young prodigy. Kong sprul's tone when he describes this event that occurred so many years before is one of wistful sadness and mild dismay that the world is such a deceitful place.<sup>843</sup>

In 1846, Kong sprul set out on a tour of eastern Khams. He reports that the ruler of the Khro skyabs principality in the Rgyal rong states had begun carving the xylograph blocks for the Bon po canon. When he visited there, over a hundred volumes of the *Bka' gyur* had already been completed.<sup>844</sup>

The times were troubled by religious conflicts.<sup>845</sup> In 1848 open warfare broke out between the great Dge lugs pa monastery of 'Ba' Chos sde and the affiliate of Dpal spungs, Spungs ri dgon nang. Lcags mdud Sprul sku was slain in the conflict. Kong sprul did what he could to calm the situation.<sup>846</sup>

Si tu, the presiding incarnation of Dpal spungs, died on the seventh day of the Fifth month of 1853. The reembodiment was subsequently recognized in Central Tibet (Gnam mtsho kha). In 1857 Kong sprul was sent to Lhasa to secure the release of the little incarnation's parents, who were subjects (*miser*) of Bkra shis lhun po. After visiting Smin grol gling and other great monasteries, Kong sprul was received at Lhasa by the infant Dalai Lama and the Rwa sgreng regent. He obtained the help of the future strongman, Bshad grwa Dbang phyug rgyal po, in persuading the Bkra shis lhun po officials to release the family of the Dpal spungs incarnation.

The Nyag rong incidents were about to break out in eastern Tibet. In 1863 the armies of Mgon po rnam rgyal, the Nyag rong chieftain, swept over Sde dge, capturing all the fortresses and seizing Sde dge's widowed queen and her son. The Lhasa government dispatched an expedition under Phu lung ba to drive back the invaders. The countryside was plagued with constant war and famine until the eighth month of 1865, when the cornered Mgon po rnam rgyal was burnt to death with all of his family in his besieged castle by Khri smon's force.

Kong sprul's difficulties were not yet over. The Dge lugs pa factions availed themselves of the presence of the victorious Lhasa army under Phu lung ba to settle old scores with the other sects and extract the maximum advantage from their new position of strength. It seemed that Kong sprul, too, would be a victim of the purges. At this point, his skill as a doctor stood him in good stead. The Dge lugs pa monasteries of Brag g.yab, Go 'jo, and Ri chab were insisting that Dpal spungs be leveled and its estates and property transferred to themselves. Suddenly, the Brag g.yab leader, Gdong kam, was seized by a severe illness. Kong sprul was called in as the most competent physician in Khams. Gdong kam Bla ma survived and so did Dpal spungs. The Sde dge queen and her minor son, as well as Dpal spungs Dbon sprul, were released. It was during these exceptionally troubled years that the *Shes bya kun khyab* was written.

During the postwar period, 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820–92) and Kong sprul had tremendous influence in Sde dge. They quickly gained the respect of the Lhasa generals posted in the east and were the moral leaders for the distressed people of Sde dge. In 1870 a princess from the ancient house of Ra ga shar (Mdo mkhar ba) arrived in Sde dge as a bride for the heir. This alliance led to one more troubled generation, during which Mkhyen brtse and later Mi pham would be forced to exercise much temporal authority. The political maneuverings were extraordinarily complicated during this period; yet despite the demands made upon them by worldly concerns, Kong sprul and Mkhyen brtse continued to progress by leaps and bounds in their intellectual and spiritual development. The last half of the nineteenth century is one of the most fascinating periods in Tibet's cultural history. There is a wealth of historical sources for the period; a thorough study should eventually be possible.

The relationship between Mkhyen brtse and Kong sprul is one of the most fascinating yet elusive problems in the nonsectarian movement. Kong sprul added the thorough knowledge of Bon that he had gained during his childhood to their common experience. He contributed his deep understanding of

the Dpal spungs synthesis that went back to Si tu Paṅ chen. It was Si tu who had blended the seemingly irreconcilable Gzhan stong and Mahāmudrā positions and spread them throughout the Karma Bka' brgyud pa traditions of Khams.

A close associate of Kong sprul and Mkhyen brtse in revitalizing the Gzhan stong theories was the Zhwa lu Ri sbug sprul sku, Blo gsal bstan skyong. This Kālacakra master from Gtsang was ultimately successful in persuading the administrator (*skyabs dbyings*)<sup>847</sup> of Bkra shis lhun po to allow him to survey the extant blocks at Dga' ldan Phun tshogs gling, Tāranātha's monastery, and Ngam rings, the provincial capital of the La stod Byang pa myriarchs.<sup>848</sup> The majority of the blocks stored in the printeries of these two establishments had been sealed by the Fifth Dalai Lama who went so far as to forbid even the copying of existent prints. The liberal Bkra shis lhun po administrator agreed with Blo gsal bstan skyong that the Jo nang pa works should again be printed; consequently, a number of impressions were made from the ancient blocks.

Much more could be said about the great figures of the nonsectarian movement and the significance of their individual contributions: encyclopedic scholars like Mi pham rgya mtsho; grammarians of the caliber of Ngor pa Dpon slob Ngag dbang legs grub (b. 1811), Lhag bsam rgyal mtshan,<sup>849</sup> and Mkhan chen Bkra shis 'od zer (1836–1910); magnificent *gter ston* such as Bdud 'joms gling pa (b. 1835), Rig 'dzin Padma 'dus pa rtsal (1810–72), and Las rab gling pa (b. 1856); and Bon po scholastics like Shar rdza Bkra shis rgyal mtshan (b. 1859), who was for the Bon po what Kong sprul and Mkhyen brtse were for the Buddhists. It should suffice to say that if one studies the character development of any of these teachers, the names of Kong sprul, Mkhyen brtse, Mi pham, and Mchog gling occur again and again.

### V. *The Shes bya kun khyab As an Encyclopedia*

To style the *Shes bya kun khyab* an encyclopedia can be misleading. There is, of course, no arrangement of the contents alphabetically; there exists no index in which one might expect to find where any particular term, subject, or concept has been treated. Kong sprul has merely created a new treatise following rather faithfully a model sanctioned by centuries of use by his predecessors, the scholars of India. The *Shes bya kun khyab* can be termed encyclopedic by virtue of the comprehensiveness of the subject matter rather than on any formal grounds.

The totality of Tibetan scholastic knowledge has been compressed into a verse work (*mūla*) that runs to only seventy-eight folia. These cryptic verses

(*kārikā*) become the subjects of a three-volume autocommentary (*bhāṣya*), in which Kong sprul expands upon all that he includes in the verses. This autocommentary follows the traditional format, which might be confusing to anyone unfamiliar with the Sanskrit tradition of exegesis. It opens with a detailed explanation of the Sanskrit title that Kong sprul chose for his work.<sup>850</sup> After completing the preliminary formalities required by the *śāstra* form, he follows precisely the structure of the verses.

Kong sprul divides his treatise into ten sections (*gnas*) and forty chapters (*skabs*). Each section contains four chapters that have been arranged with a concern for balance. This chapter order within the sections reflects the fact that the *Shes bya kun khyab* began as a treatment of the “three disciplines” or “three vows” (*trisaṃvara*). His special intention is to stress the virtues of the Rdzogs chen *atiyoga* approach of the Rnying ma pa sect. Within this rigid architectural framework, Kong sprul nevertheless propounds with skill his conception of the Gzhan stong position and the merits of the nonsectarian approach. While the structure is suited to Kong sprul’s aim, it may be confusing to the non-Tibetan who would like to use the *Shes bya kun khyab* as an encyclopedia of Indian and Tibetan learning as it was understood in nineteenth-century Sde dge, the center of art, literature, and education for most of eastern Tibet. Stylistically, Kong sprul is not a remarkable writer. The verses show a cryptic terseness with a concomitant syntactic ambiguity. In the autocommentary, his prose is usually lucid and literary in style, although one occasionally notes questionable structures and spellings.

## VI. Kong sprul on the Development of Tibetan Artistic Styles

A fairly typical example of Kong sprul’s approach is his treatment of the emergence of Tibetan schools of painting and the plastic arts from Nepalese styles:<sup>851</sup>

*From the tradition of Nepalese painting [appeared] the Sman [and]  
Mkhyen schools of painting, [making] two;  
that of Byi’u [made] the third. Through [the efforts of] the three  
[who bore the name of] Bkra shis,  
The Sgar bris school came into being. In casting and sculpture there  
also appeared a succession of craftsmen.*

Kong sprul elucidates these three lines of verse:<sup>852</sup>

As for painting, only the Nepalese tradition in the beginning spread widely. Then Sman bla Don grub, Mañjuśrī in human form, was born at Sman thang in Lho brag. His birth coincided with the discovery of a vein of natural vermillion pigment (*mtshal*) in that region.<sup>853</sup> Because of his wife, he set out to wander and went to Gtsang, where he studied painting with Rdo pa Bkra shis rgyal po. As a result of seeing a Chinese scroll painting from a time when he had taken rebirth in China, he remembered that former existence; he became known as the great master artist of Sman thang, and so forth. He practiced an excellent style of painting, and his tradition flourished in both the lineages of his sons and disciples.

Next, the great art master Mkhyen brtse, who was born at Gong dkar Sgang stod, founded a style of painting separate from that of Sman thang. These two, Sman and Mkhyen, are separate traditions that have become famed as the sun and the moon [of art] in the Land of Snows.

Again, [there appeared one who], because he roamed about here and there tirelessly for the sake of artistic craftsmanship, was known as the Sprul sku Byi'u [lit. "little bird"]. Because of his consummate genius, he founded a school differing from the former two that surpassed others in its coloring and shading.

Later, Gtsang pa Chos dbyings rgya mtsho founded the New Sman [ris] manner. That and numerous other styles of art appeared, but the majority of them belonged to those [two main schools described] above.

Again, the Sprul sku Nam mkha' bkra shis appeared in Yar stod. The Lord Mi bskyod zhabs had prophesied that he would be [one of] his own rebirths, one who would carry on the activities of his own body. The [Fifth] Zhwa dmar Dkon mchog yan lag and the [Fourth] Rgyal tshab Grags pa don grub directed him [in his studies]. He studied the Sman tradition of painting with the fortunate easterner from E, Dkon mchog phan bde, reputed to be an emanation of the Chinese consort, Kong jo. He based his bodily proportions and forms on Indian bronzes and the Sman thang traditions. In his treatment of the backgrounds, etc., and his usage of color, he took inspiration from the Chinese scroll paintings of the Ming period. This style, called the Encampment style [Sgar bris], thus arose.

Later, one called Chos bkra shis came forth. Afterward appeared Kar shod Karma bkra shis. This school [to which these belong] is

without rival in the practice of painting and continues to this very day. In short, these three [called] Bkra shis established in a great way the [Karma] Encampment style.

In sculpture, the most excellent were Sprul sku Sle'u chung pa and Padma mkhar pa. Later one finds the peerless intellect, Karma srid bral Sgo smyon, the attendant of Dwags po Sgo pa, skilled in the Encampment style for sculpture. He was regarded to be a rebirth of the Eighth Lord [Mi bskyod rdo rje]. This [Encampment sculpture] school that included [craftsmen] such as Karma rin chen no longer exists.

The sculptors celebrated as divine emanations, E pa Lkugs pa (the deaf-mute of E)—alias Hor dar—and the Sprul sku Bab phro, appeared during the time of the great Fifth Dalai Lama. Traditions that later stemmed from those two included the 'Dod dpal school, which was especially excellent in sculpture.

He continues:<sup>854</sup>

*Exceptional in the practice of art [was] the Lord of the World [the Karma pa].*

*The aesthetic sensibility [exercised by] Gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba was beyond ordinary comprehension, and [his paintings] become nectar for the eye.*

Superior to all of these [was] the Lord of the World practicing art, the glorious Karma pa Chos dbyings rdo rje. This personage studied painting with the Chus khyer sprul sku Tshe ring of Lho brag, a follower of the Sman ris, and during the early part of his life he worked in the Sman ris manner. During the latter part, however, he was inspired by Chinese scroll painting for painting (*bris*) and influences from [old] Kashmiri originals for his sculpture (*'bur*). His marvelous paintings, along with his embroideries, can be seen even today.

Later, the paintings and sculptures produced by the discernment of the omniscient Gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba surpass the ordinary mind. These magical creations can even today become nectar for the eyes of ordinary folk. How his art is this exceptional was explained in the omniscient lama's own writings on the set of *Avadānakalpalatā* paintings.



Were these remarks on the history of artistic styles to be incorporated into a true encyclopedia, the entry would have to be rewritten and expanded. Even in the autocommentary, Kong sprul assumes a familiarity on the part of his readers with the whole religious and historical background. Such an expanded entry might read as follows:

Until the fifteenth century, the mainstream of Tibetan painting primarily followed Indian models and canons that had been introduced through the Kathmandu Valley and were collectively known as *Bal ris* or the Nepalese Newar style. Following Tāranātha's history of Buddhism in India, Kong sprul notes that Tibetan art initially derived from the art of Nepal, but that the Kashmiri influences were significant, particularly in the western areas. One can distinguish three phases in both the Newar Buddhist art and the Kashmiri. The three stages in the development of Newar art were: (1) a style similar to the old western (Nub rnying) style; (2) a style like the eastern Indian (Shar), i.e., the Pāla style; and (3) the later Newar style. The Kashmiri style is likewise a sequence of phases: (1) a style like the central Indian (Dbus) Magadhan style related to the Pāla style; (2) a style like the old western Indian style (Nub rnying); and (3) the Kashmiri (Kha che ma) style proper, attributed to the perhaps legendary Hasurāja. Tibetan painting derived primarily from Newar painting.<sup>855</sup>

Sman bla don grub of Sman thang in Lho brag founded the Sman ris school during the middle of the fifteenth century.<sup>856</sup> The most significant characteristic of this school was its incorporation of Chinese influences of the Ming period. The Chinese works that influenced Sman bla don grub most were Ming paintings that came to Tibet as religious offerings to the great lamas of Gtsang in the early 1400's. During this period, Gtsang was the center of Tibetan art and culture. It is significant that it was here that the Sman bla don grub learned to paint, rather than in Lho brag in southern Dbus.

The mid-fifteenth century also saw the birth of the second great school, the Mkhyen ris, which takes its origins and name from Mkhyen brtse chen mo of Gong dkar.<sup>857</sup> This style, too, shows a degree of Chinese influence and differs from the Sman ris in its greater realism, its complicated stylized lotuses, and a few other details. The murals of Gong dkar of the late fifteenth century represent this school at its best. Examples of the Mkhyen ris are much rarer than representative works of the other major schools, a fact that suggests that the style of painting declined along with the Sa skya schools in Central Tibet from the mid-1600s onward. But the style experienced a temporary revival thanks to the patronage of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

The Encampment style (*Sgar bris*) or Karma Encampment style (*Karma*

*Sgar bris*)<sup>858</sup> is more than a school of painting; it represents a complete approach to religious art. It developed out of the classical *Sman ris* during the second half of the sixteenth century and shows the greatest Chinese influence of any of the Tibetan schools. The founder of this school was *Sprul sku Nam mkha' bkra shis*.<sup>859</sup> He studied the *Sman ris* tradition with *Dkon mchog phan bde of E*, who was reputed to be an emanation of the Chinese princess *Wen ch'eng Kung chu*, the consort of *Srong btsan sgam po*. *Kong sprul* notes that the chief characteristics of the *Sgar bris* were: 1) innovations in backgrounds and composition and 2) a distinctive use of colors and shading. The *Sgar bris* in some respects reflects Ming dynasty developments in Chinese painting. Tibetan art historians regard the greatest practitioners of this style to be the three artists named "Bkra shis," i.e., *Nam mkha' bkra shis*, *Chos bkra shis*,<sup>860</sup> and *Karma bkra shis*. The last was a contemporary of *Si tu Paṅ chen* who flourished in the mid-eighteenth century. His lineage of students flourished at *Kar shod* near *Karma Monastery* in *Khams*, where there was a famed teaching establishment of painting until 1959. The *Sgar bris* was the style in which the majority of the *Karma Bka' brgyud pa* artists of *Khams* painted. The Fifth *Zur mang Che tshang* was another noted representative of this school. The classical *Sgar bris* was transformed by the commissions and experiments of *Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas* in the eighteenth century.

The *Byi'u ris*<sup>861</sup> dated from the first half of the fifteenth century. *Kong sprul* observed that the distinctive feature of this school was its extraordinary usage of color. Little is yet known of its founder, *Sprul sku Byi'u*, or his relationships with other painting styles, though *Byi'u* may have been a generation earlier than *Sman thang pa*.

The establishment of the New *Sman ris* is attributed to the seventeenth-century artist, *Chos dbyings rgya mtsho of Gtsang*. *Gtsang pa Sprul sku* flourished between 1620 and 1665. Initially, he seems to have attracted the notice of the First *Paṅ chen Lama*, under whose patronage he painted the frescos for many of the renovated and newly constructed chapels of *Gtsang*. Later, his services were requisitioned by the Fifth *Dalai Lama* for at least one major project.<sup>862</sup> The most obvious characteristic of the New *Sman ris* is its stylized use of richer colors. There is great attention to detail: the patterns of the elegant brocaded garments of the figures in the *thangka* are meticulously painted. Flowers are painted petal by petal, leaf by leaf. In the best murals and *thangkas* of the early New *Sman ris* there is, nevertheless, something of the flow and grace of Chinese paintings.

There were a number of lesser schools that seem largely derivative of one or more of the major styles. These minor schools remained largely provincial,

e.g., the Dwags ris, associated with the name of Zhun mthing pa.<sup>863</sup> This style was confined to Dwags po, and some of the sources compare it to Bhutanese and Mon pa painting. Among the regional styles, the “Northern Tradition” of northwest Gtsang (*Byang lugs*) with its antiquity and exaggerated realism is also of interest. It may be one of the oldest schools of art. It is associated with Ngam rings, the capital of the myriarchs of La stod Byang, and seems to have enjoyed a brief period of popularity around Yar ’brog.<sup>864</sup> No examples of tangkas representing this school have yet come to light.<sup>865</sup>

One provincial style developed into a national artistic idiom: that of Bhutan. The Northern ’Brug pa hierarch, Padma dkar po (1527–92), is supposed to have followed the classical Sman ris<sup>866</sup> in his painting, and one would assume that the scions of the house of Rwa lung also upheld this idiom. The First Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594–1651) of the Southern ’Brug pa supposedly included painting among his numerous talents, but none of his creations seem to have survived the fires that plagued Bhutan during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Painting as an educational discipline was introduced in Bhutan probably during the seventeenth century by Sprul sku Mi pham chos ’phel, who followed a fusion of the classical Sman ris and Mkhyen ris.

Remarkable skill in weaving and textile design is a distinctive characteristic of Bhutanese cultural heritage. These folk traditions have left their mark on the religious art, where one finds a composite style that is quite striking in its charm. The embroidered and appliqué thangkās of Bhutan are perhaps the finest in the Tibetan cultural world. Grags pa rgya mtsho (1646–1719)<sup>867</sup> produced the most magnificent example of the embroidered thangka in the First Mthong ba rang grol of Punakha. His talents as an artist attracted the not especially welcome attention of the Bhutanese ruler, Bstan ’dzin rab rgyas, and he was pressed into service to design and assume responsibility for producing an enormous embroidered thangka, the “Gos sku mthong grol chen mo” or “Mthong ba rang grol” of Punakha (Spungs thang). This project was begun in 1689 and completed in 1692. It was this thangka that served as the inspiration and model for at least one similar work, the Zhabs drung thangka of 1753. Grags pa rgya mtsho was then immediately charged with the difficult task of building and painting the frescos of the hermitage of Spa gro Stag tshang (1692–93).

Bhutanese painting soon developed into an indigenous school that borrowed the mannerisms of the classical Sman ris and Mkhyen ris schools, but drew upon a rich indigenous aesthetic sensibility that transformed even the Tibetan palette into one that was distinctively Bhutanese. Through Bhutan’s

religious ties with the 'Brug pa establishments in Ladakh, Lahoul, Spiti, and Nepal, Bhutanese art spread far beyond its boundaries. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Bhutanese painters continued to absorb innovations and influences from both Central Tibet and Khams and to adapt them to that idiom that continued to remain Bhutanese.

While Tibetan art does not for the most part possess great artistic names, the paintings of certain lamas were so highly esteemed that an account of Tibetan art would be incomplete without their mention. At different periods of their lives, these artists' works embodied more than one school or style. Kong sprul mentions two: the Tenth Rgyal dbang Karma pa, Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–74),<sup>868</sup> and Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas.<sup>869</sup> The first is largely remembered because of his employment of old Chinese and Kashmiri models.<sup>870</sup> Si tu was a competent painter, but was immeasurably more brilliant and influential as a hands-on designer of paintings, directing teams of professional artists.

In bas relief work<sup>871</sup> two of the great names of the early period were Sprul sku Sle'u chung pa<sup>872</sup> and Padma mkhar pa. During the next generations, Karma srid bral, alias the madman of Sgo,<sup>873</sup> and Karma rin chen were important artists of the Encampment school of sculpture. Karma srid bral was considered to be an emanation of the Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje. The school of Karma srid bral and Karma rin chen had already died out by Kong sprul's time.

During the seventeenth century, when art flourished under the patronage of the Fifth Dalai Lama, there were two craftsmen whose skill in sculpture was almost miraculous: Sprul sku Bab phro and Hor dar, the deaf-mute of E.<sup>874</sup> The superb artistic tradition that stemmed from these two is called the 'Dod dpal. A famous recent artisan in metalcraft was the Tenth Si tu of Dpal spungs, Padma kun bzang chos rgyal (1854–85), Kong sprul's student. Usually referred to as Si rgod ma, this lama specialized in the design of ritual musical instruments. His *rgya gling* were famous throughout Khams. My friends from Dpal spungs inform me that his carvings that were preserved were most original in their conception and execution.

The serious study of the history of Tibetan art is still just beginning. The pioneering work of Tucci, Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, A. K. Gordon, and Lokesh Chandra revealed a good deal about iconography, but knowledge of historical developments and stylistic features lags behind. For decades the pontifications of eminent museologists and art historians regarding the characteristics and dates of the various styles and schools represented nothing but uninformed guesses. Fortunately, Sinologists are making progress toward

filling in the lacunae in research on Yüan and Ming dynasty Chinese art. Knowledge of Nepalese artistic history is continually increasing. As more of the considerable number of Tibetan literary sources become available, and as discerning eyes have the opportunity to examine representative collections of significant artwork, there will be little room left for the obscurantism and dissimulation that for so long has filled museum catalogs as well as popular works in the West.

It has been the aim of this little exercise to give a small indication of the incredible wealth of information stored in the *Shes bya kun khyab*. Answers to many of the questions that have long intrigued researchers are now readily available. The portals to the treasury of Indic learning that was spirited away to Tibet for safekeeping so many centuries ago stand open. The concise and authoritative statements of the *Shes bya kun khyab* must now become the starting point for many kinds of future research, whether into Tibetan medicine, the knowledge of Sanskrit grammar in the Land of Snows, or obscure points of esoteric Buddhism.

## VII. *The Many Names of Kong sprul*

One of the greatest problems confronting the would-be bibliographer of Tibetan literature is the plethora of names, titles, and epithets by which lamas are known, especially those of the older orders. The case of Kong sprul illustrates this problem especially well. Briefly, Kong sprul was given seven types of names during his life: childhood name, monastic ordination name, bodhi-sattva vow name, tantric initiation name, name as a rediscoverer of hidden treasure, name as a grammarian, and finally an incarnation name.

### I. Names of Childhood

Within a year after the birth of a child, a ceremony for bestowing a name normally takes place. Customs vary from place to place. In some regions girls' names are given to male children to confuse malevolent spirits who might do harm to boys. As one would expect in a culture where mantra plays such an important part, names are potent forces. Seldom does the name given at birth remain the one by which a child is known throughout his life. In the case of religious personages it is never so.

Names of laymen may change for a number of reasons. Should someone, especially a child, in the village die, the name of all children who bear the same

name is changed. After a child reaches a certain age, the female or deprecatory names that had initially been given to ward off evil forces and protect him are customarily changed.

A respected lama may be asked to give a name to a child even though the child already has a name. In 1815, the chief leader in the Bon faith, Bsod nams blo gros,<sup>875</sup> twenty-second abbot of Sman ri Monastery in Gtsang, visited the semi-nomadic settlement in which our subject was born. On this occasion, he performed a ceremony of tonsure and bestowed the name Bstan 'dzin g.yung drung on the young Kong sprul. This is the first name mentioned in the autobiography.

Names given on the occasion of the tonsure ceremony may be regarded as a type of religious initiatory name since the vows of *dge bsnyen* (*upāsaka*) are normally administered on this occasion. In the case of Kong sprul, however, we are justified in treating the name Bstan 'dzin g.yung drung as an example of the first type since the Bon po vows of *upāsaka* led to no full ordination. In any case, we have yet to see a literary work of Kong sprul in which he uses his early Bon po name to sign a colophon. Since names of youth are almost never the forms by which authors become known, we can for practical purposes disregard them, even though they are frequently mentioned in biographical works.

## 2. Names of Monastic Ordination

When the layman takes the robes of a monk, he always changes his name. In some cases a new name is bestowed at the time of taking the *upāsaka* vows. In the case of high incarnations destined for monastic ordination, the vows of the *upāsaka* are a mere formality preliminary to the vows of the novice (*dge tshul*) and fully ordained monk (*dge slong*). While the normal practice for the Dge lugs pa school is to receive the new name when taking the novice's vows, we do find cases in which a lama of the older schools has received new names at the different stages of his monastic ordination.

An illustration is provided by the case of the Eighth Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba (1768–1822). He received his *upāsaka* vows and the name Bka' brgyud bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 'gyur med yongs grub dam chos nyi ma in about 1775 from the Seventh Dpa' bo Gtsug lag dga' ba (1718–81). In 1777 he requested the vows of *dge tshul* and was given the name Mi pham kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba pad dkar bzhad pa'i dge mtshan 'gyur med rdo rje'i snying po mchog tu grub pa'i sde. On the occasion of his final ordination (*bsnyen rdzogs*) in 1794, he received the name Dpal ldan 'chi med

grub mchog ye shes nyi ma 'phrin las rnam par rgyal ba'i sde. Often the names bestowed at the final stage of monastic ordination are simply expanded versions of names received with the novice vows.

An additional type of preliminary monastic name was that bestowed on him by the Eighth Dalai Lama in 1776: Blo bzang mi pham bstan 'dzin rnam rgyal. The government of the Dalai Lama claimed the right of recognition and investiture of all important incarnations. Consequently, we find a practice of two tonsural ceremonies in cases of high-ranking incarnations. These names bestowed by the Dalai Lama or a regent seldom have any bibliographical significance in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, although we must reckon with them at a later period.

In summary, we should recognize four distinct classes of monastic initiatory names: 1) names bestowed on the occasion of taking the *upāsaka* vows, 2) those received with the novice's vows, 3) names received when the full ordination as *bhikṣu* is taken, 4) tonsural names bestowed through governmental prerogative.

In 1833, Kong sprul received the name Karma ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho 'phrin las kun khyab dpal bzang po with the vinaya vows of the western transmission (*Stod lugs*)<sup>876</sup> from the Ninth Si tu Padma nyin byed dbang po (1774–1853) and Dbon rgan Karma theg mchog bstan 'phel (d. 1842). Kong sprul had previously been fully ordained according to the eastern transmission (*Smad lugs*)<sup>877</sup> of the vinaya by 'Jam mgon 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal of Zhe chen in 1832. I am as yet ignorant of the name that Kong sprul received on this occasion. The initial "Karma" is generic and is a part of the ordination name for all teachers belonging to the Karma Kaṁ tshang tradition.

Abbreviated forms of the monastic name employed by Kong sprul in his colophons include Ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho and Yon tan rgya mtsho. On occasion he signs himself simply Guṇa, the Sanskrit equivalent of Yon tan.<sup>878</sup>

### 3. The Bodhisattva Vow Name

Parallel to the vinaya vows of the *pratimokṣa*, the Tibetan tradition postulates two other sets: the vows of the bodhisattva, the discipline of Mahāyāna, and those of the *tantrika*, the discipline of the Vajrayāna. The vinaya is equated with Hīnayāna. Just as one takes a new name when one enters the monastic tradition, so one receives a new name on the occasion of ordination as a bodhisattva.

In 1839 Kong sprul received this set of vows and the name Rgyal sras Blo gros mtha' yas (pa'i sde) from Si tu. Such names are invariably preceded by

Byang chub sems dpa' or Rgyal sras, the Tibetan equivalents or epithets for bodhisattva. Blo gros mtha' yas is probably the name that Kong sprul uses most frequently in signing colophons. I would suggest entering Kong sprul's literary works under the name Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas.

#### 4. Esoteric Initiatory Name

The esoteric initiatory (*gsang mtshan*) name is for Vajrayāna what the bodhisattva name is for Mahāyāna. After one is initiated into one of the esoteric systems, one's tantric guru or, occasionally, one's tutelary deity bestows a secret or esoteric name. When Kong sprul requested the initiation of the *Rtsa gsum dril sgrub* in 1836, he received the "secret" name Padma gar gyi dbang phyug phrin las 'gro 'dul rtsal. Often Kong sprul uses a hybrid form composed of the first portion of his esoteric name followed by his bodhisattva name: Padma gar gyi dbang phyug blo gros mtha' yas pa'i sde.

#### 5. Name As Rediscoverer of Hidden Treasure Troves

The teachings that were concealed by Padmasambhava and his close colleagues for discovery at a future time are called *gter ma*. The teachers who are to open these miraculous caches have all been prophesied by Padmasambhava. Names of *gter ston* to appear in the future are noted in each successive discovery of authentic *gter ma* texts. At the risk of oversimplification, we may say that the names of all *gter ston* were given by Padmasambhava (*gu ru rin po ches btags pa'i ming*). The *gter ston*-to-be is usually annointed by an already practicing discoverer. About 1855, Kong sprul met Mchog 'gyur gling pa (1829–70) for the first time, who proclaimed him to be a *gter ston* with the name 'Chi med bstan gnyis g.yung drung gling pa, often shortened to Bstan gnyis g.yung drung gling pa.

#### 6. Grammatical Name

Following advanced instruction of Sanskrit or poetics, the teacher grants a grammatical name. Kong sprul signs certain of his works with the name Blo gter rab dga' tshangs byung snyems pa'i lang tsho'i zla snang. I assume that he received this name from Zhe chen 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal, although I have found no mention of this in the biographical materials as yet.



## 7. Incarnation Name

In order to prevent the Sde dge authorities from requisitioning the talented young Kong sprul for service in the government, the Dpal spungs lamas proclaimed him to be the rebirth of a personage connected with that convent, an accomplished monk from Bam stengs in Kong po. This monk had served the great Si tu Paṅ chen during his youth and early adulthood. Kong sprul was formally recognized to be the embodiment of this teacher as Kong po Bam steng(s) Sprul sku. Like most Tibetan titles, this one consists of two elements: (1) place or lineage of origin, and (2) function or status (here: *sprul sku*). This name was later shortened to Kong sprul. Because of Kong sprul's great wisdom and scholarship, his contemporaries and disciples likened him to Mañjuśrī and prefixed his name with the additional honorary title 'Jam mgon; thus we find 'Jam mgon Kong sprul as a common short form of his name. Kong sprul was regarded as a Mañjuśrī emanation as well as the reembodiment of the great translator, Vairocana.<sup>879</sup> A name in its full form normally includes both a title and given religious name, for example: Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas or Kong sprul Ngag dbang yon tan rgyan mtsho.

## VIII. *The Literary Production of Kong sprul*

The Tibetan tradition classifies the collected writings of Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas—numbering over ninety volumes in the Dpal spungs edition—into *Five Treasuries (Mdzod lnga)*. The Dpal spungs is the only edition of the entire *Five Treasuries*.<sup>880</sup> The earliest attempt to fit all of Kong sprul's works into the format of the *Mdzod chen lnga* seems to appear in Kong sprul's autobiography, which was edited and completed by Gnas gsar Bkra shis chos 'phel. I have followed his classification here. Briefly, the *Five Treasuries* are:

1. The *Shes bya kun khyab (Encompassment of All Knowledge)*
2. The *Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod (Treasury of Bka' brgyud Mantras)*
3. The *Rin chen gter mdzod (Jewel Treasury)*
4. The *Gdams ngag mdzod (Treasury of Spiritual Instructions)*
5. The *Thung mong ma yin pa'i mdzod (Uncommon Treasury)*

### 1. The *Shes bya kun khyab* or *Shes bya mdzod* (three volumes)

This is reckoned as the first treasury of the five.

## 2. The *Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod* (four or six volumes)<sup>881</sup>

This *Treasury* appears to be the first of the five to have been compiled; in 1856 we find Kong sprul bestowing the initiation of the new collection on Dbon rgan Sprul sku of Dpal spungs and others. The *Shes bya kun khyab* dates to the period 1862–64.

The *Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod* is a compilation of esoteric Bka' brgyud pa teachings that had, for the most part, been transmitted by Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros to Rngog ston Chos sku rdo rje. Rngog ston was one of the four chief disciples of Mar pa. He was a student who excelled in the exegesis of the explanations that Mar pa transmitted (*Gsung bshad chu bo rgyun lta bu'i bka' babs*), while Mi la ras pa was the most accomplished in the esoteric practices, especially that of *gtum mo*, the production of vital heat. The Rngog tradition continued up to Kong sprul's own day. To these major teachings of the Rngog pa Bka' brgyud pa, known collectively as the *Rngog dkyil 'khor bdun*, Kong sprul later added some other rare instructions of the Bka' brgyud pa and Rnying ma pa traditions in some of his own liturgical renditions.<sup>882</sup>

## 3. The *Rin chen gter mdzod* (sixty or sixty-three volumes)<sup>883</sup>

The *Rin chen gter mdzod* is a collection of the smaller basic texts, important supplementary works, newly written liturgical texts devoted to the initiations (*abhiseka*) and propitiation (*sādhana* and *sevavidhi*), and introductory instructions for the majority of the authoritative *gter ma* cycles that had been revealed in Tibet up to Kong sprul's own time. The vast majority of the collection is the work of Kong sprul, who had painstakingly collected the instructions and initiations, many of which were on the point of disappearing. The *Rin chen gter mdzod* is sometimes inaccurately described as a collection of the *gter ma* texts themselves; Kong sprul's intention was never to displace the enormous collected cycles like the *Gnam chos* or *'Ja' tshon pod drug*. He seems only to want to bring some order into the chaos of this "rediscovered" literature, to establish some criteria of authenticity for this genre that had often been reviled and rejected by Tibetan scholars of a more purist bent. His approach, as ever, was eclectic.<sup>884</sup>

## 4. The *Gdams ngag mdzod* (ten volumes)

The fourth of Kong sprul's *Treasuries* is a systematic presentation of the most important instructions of all the Buddhist sects of Tibet. The *gdams ngag* is

the guru's practical instruction to the disciple. Its essence is a record of the insights of an experienced master. At times it may be phrased in the language of ambiguity or paradox;<sup>885</sup> this is the parable, the metaphor, intended to induce a spiritual disciple into an all-encompassing experience of, and ultimately identity with, reality, which we normally only experience as multiplicity through delusion. In apprehending diversity as unity, metaphor can have a profound influence. Kong sprul saw that parable and its language was ultimately at the root of many of the sectarian conflicts. By collecting the instructions and confirmations of an enormous number of such *gdams ngag* and passing them on to his disciples as an organized unit, Kong sprul was implicitly pointing out their ultimate identity.

In some cases Kong sprul adds his own explanation or notes. The arrangement of the collection is in itself a statement of the nonsectarian movement; this compilation is a source of profound importance for understanding what Kong sprul and his colleagues were trying to do. The *Gdams ngag mdzod* was certainly Kong sprul's last great project. Begun about 1886, the collection was finally completed a few years before Kong sprul's death.<sup>886</sup>

##### 5. The *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod* (ten volumes).<sup>887</sup>

The *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod* is properly the collected writings of Kong sprul that do not belong to one of the other *mdzod*. The first volume (*Ka*) contains thirty-three titles. The bulk of this volume is devoted to praises (*stotras*), *guruyogas*, and other liturgical pieces of this type. These minor works do, however, establish Kong sprul's reputation as a master Tibetan poet.

The second volume (*Kha*) contains thirty-one titles dealing with Vajrakīla in his various manifestations propitiated by the Rnying ma pa and Gsar ma ba sects. The last work in the volume is of considerable interest; it is Kong sprul's commentary on the *Phur pa rtsa dum* (*Dpal rdo rje phur pa rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi dum bu'i 'grel pa snying po bsdus pa dpal chen dgyes pa'i zhal lung* in 94 folia). The text of the *Phur pa rtsa dum* is critical for refuting the charges that all of the Rnying ma pa tantras are spurious. Here we have a fragment of one very important Rnying ma pa tantra for which there is ample historical evidence for a Sanskrit original. Kong sprul's editors have included an edition of the *Rtsa dum* itself in this volume.

The third volume (*Ga*) includes twenty-seven titles largely dealing with esoteric liturgy and deities, especially those of the Rnying ma pa school.

The fourth volume (*Nga*) is also concerned with esoteric liturgy, especially

that connected with the tutelaries of the Gsar ma ba sects. This volume includes thirty-eight separate titles.

With the fifth volume (*Ca*), we come to Kong sprul's works of exegesis, introductions to Mahāmudrā and the *Rdzogs chen Snying thig*. Among the forty-four separate titles, there are four of exceptional interest:

1. *Nges don dbu ma chen po la 'khrul rtog nyer gsum gyi 'bur 'joms pa legs bshad gser gyi tho ba.*

2. *Lta ba gtan la 'bebs pa las 'phros pa'i gtam skabs lnga pa lung dang rigs pa'i me tog rab tu dkod pa.*

This work was written in 1839 at the behest of Mkhyen brtse (here called 'Jigs med mkhyen brtse). It is one of Kong sprul's first attempts to expound his understanding of the philosophical theories of the various sects.

3. *Gzhan stong dbu ma chen po'i lta khrid rdo rje zla ba dri ma med pa'i 'od zer.*

4. *Ris med chos kyi 'byung gnas mdo tsam smos pa blo gsal mgrin pa'i mdzes rgyan.*

The first three titles are devoted to various aspects of the Gzhan stong problem. The fourth is a concise account of the various religious traditions and emphasizes their essential unity. In this work Kong sprul demonstrates his high regard for the Gzhan stong as a unifying concept.<sup>888</sup> Kong sprul's Gzhan stong seems to differ from the more typical eighteenth-century Gzhan stong exemplified by Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu. His is without doubt the most inclusive interpretation of the Gzhan stong that has ever been put forward by a Tibetan scholar.

The sixth volume (*Cha*) includes twenty-one collections or individual works. Here letters, instructions, poetical works, *dkar chag*, and monastic ordinances predominate. Kong sprul is the author of a number of intriguing *dkar chag*: one to the reliquary of Smṛtijñānakīrti, one outlining the funeral monuments to the deceased Dpal spungs Dbon sprul, another to the Lhasa Jo khang, another surveying the contents of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa religious literature, and a bulky one devoted to the Dpal spungs hermitage of Kun bzang bde chen 'od gsal gling.

In volume *Ja*, the seventh, we find a total of sixty-eight separate miscellaneous works, the vast majority of which are concerned with popular Buddhism as it was practiced in Khams. In this volume there are several *dkar*

*chag*, one of which describes the reliquary built to house the remains of Khyung po Bla ma G.yung drung phun tshogs, a respected Bon po teacher. This text contains a fair amount of material on the Bon po tradition in Tibet: *Mchog gzigs bla ma dam pa g.yung drung phun tshogs kyi gdung rten dkar chag lha'i sgra snyan*. Kong sprul also includes a number of ephemera such as benedictory verses written on the occasion of the carving of new blocks for printing books.

The eighth volume (*Na*) commences with a number of rituals for invoking the protective and tutelary deities. Especially interesting are Kong sprul's works on the design and iconography of Tibetan thangkas, his study of Sanskrit, and his introduction to medical practice. This volume contains twenty-two items.

The ninth volume (*Ta*) includes twenty-eight separate works. The editors begin with some treatises on astrology (*rtsis*), the largest of which are perhaps not the work of Kong sprul. He gives us an account of the Sde dge marriage custom of the *Mda' dar* as a sort of commemoration of the marriage of the Sde dge king and the daughter of Ra ga shar (Mdo mkhar). The majority of the works are prayers and methods for offering of *gtor ma*.

The tenth volume (*A*) contains three biographical texts on the life of Kong sprul:

1. *Phyogs med ris med kyi bstan pa la 'dung shing dge sbyong gi gzugs brnyan 'chang ba blo gros mtha' yas kyi sde'i byung ba brjod pa nor bu sna tshogs mdog can*. 210 ff.

The autobiography edited and completed by Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel.

2. *'Du shes gsum ldan spong ba pa'i gzugs brnyan padma gar gyi dbang phyug phrin las 'gro 'dul rtsal gyi rtogs pa brjod pa'i dum bu smrig rgyu'i bdud rtsi*. 41 ff.

A supplement compiled at the order of the Fifteenth Rgyal dbang Karma pa Mkha' khyab rdo rje recounting Kong sprul's previous incarnations. The compiler seems to be Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel.

3. *Rje kun gzigs 'jam mgon ngag gi dbang phyug yon tan rgya mtsho'i zhabs kyi 'das rjes kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar nor bu'i snang ba*. 23 ff.

Account of the funeral ceremonies and memorial acts of merit performed by Kong sprul's disciples. Compiled by Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel in 1901.

Identical texts comprise volume *Ah* of the Mtshur phu edition of the *Rin chen gter mdzod*. Even the number of folia is identical. Consequently, it would

seem that the Dpal spungs edition of this volume derives from that of Mtshur phu. The reverse is usually the case, however.

The set of the last of Kong sprul's *Treasuries* in the Tibet House library in New Delhi seems to be incomplete. I have seen a Dpal spungs print without marginal markings of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul's annotated edition of Si tu Paṅ chen's eighteenth-century translation of the *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa*.<sup>889</sup> He is known to have written a commentary on the *Chandoratnākara* in 1872. One of Kong sprul's last works is the biography of his great friend, Mkhyen brtse: *Rje btsun bla ma thams cad mkhyen cing gzigs pa 'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam thar mdor bsdus pa ngo mtshar u dumba ra'i dga' tshal*.<sup>890</sup>

The bibliography of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul's writings, compilations, commentaries, and adaptations would easily merit a volume in itself. As more of the intriguing works of this nineteenth-century Tibetan Leonardo become available, new dimensions will be added to our comprehension of the marvels of the Indic cultural heritage that were so carefully treasured beyond the Himalayas. We shall ultimately be better able to conceive how the Tibetan cultural renaissance of the nineteenth century came to flower.

### Appendix

#### *The Incarnation Lineages of Mkhyen brtse, Kong sprul, Mchog gling, and Mi pham*

Mme. Macdonald has included a diagram illustrating the Mkhyen brtse "family" of incarnations and a brief account of the Kong sprul rebirths in her study of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpamaṇḍala*. Since the appearance of this work in 1962, a considerable body of data has come to light to which Mme. Macdonald had no access.

Some Tibetan traditions group three of the greatest Ris med figures, i.e., Mkhyen brtse, Kong sprul, and Mchog gling, together as the 'Jam dbyangs sprul pa rnam gsum, the three embodiments of Mañjuḥṣa.

The cult of Mañjuśrī presents complex problems. Many of the great Sa skya pa masters of the House of 'Khon had been emanations of that bodhi-sattva. The incomparable Tsong kha pa was hailed as the wisdom of Mañjuśrī embodied. One should also remember that the Manchu Emperor was styled an emanation of that same tutelary. At a certain stage, China is defined as the field specially allotted to Mañjuśrī for conversion. Closely connected with the same problem is the origin and spread of the cult of Ge sar, the epic hero,



*B. The Emanations of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul  
Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–99)*

Kong sprul is regarded by a few Tibetan authorities to be an emanation of Vajrapāṇi, although most scholars believe him to have been a Mañjuśrī incarnation. Bdud 'joms Rin po che mentions both Ānanda, the disciple of the Śākyamuni Buddha, and the great translator Vairocana as previous embodiments of the emanation lineage that Kong sprul represents. Vairocana, the Tibetan translator, is usually represented to be an embodiment of the Vairocana Buddha. The problem is extremely complicated.

Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel, who completed and edited Kong sprul's autobiography, implies that Kong sprul thought of himself as an incarnation of the lineage that passed from Kṛṣṇācārya through Jo nang Tāranātha. To this lineage he adds the great Snye mdo Thams cad mkhyen pa Kun dga' don grub:

1. Nag po spyod pa (Kṛṣṇācārin)
2. Ra tna bha hu la
3. Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po
4. 'Ba' rom pa Dar ma dbang phyug
5. Sa skya A ba dhū ti pa
6. Zhang ston 'Khrul zhig 'Brug sgra rgyal mtshan
7. Gnyos Sangs rgyas ras chen (1164–1224)
8. Mkhas grub Sangha bha dra
9. 'Jam dbyangs Bkra shis dpal ldan (1379–1449)
10. Paṇḍita Chos kyi nyi byed
11. Jo nang Kun dga' grol mchog alias Blo gsal rgya mtsho  
(1495–1566)
12. Rgyal bu Dga' byed skyong of Tripura
13. Jo nang Rje btsun Tāranātha (b. 1575)
14. Snye mdo thams cad mkhyen pa Kun dga' don grub (b. 1268)

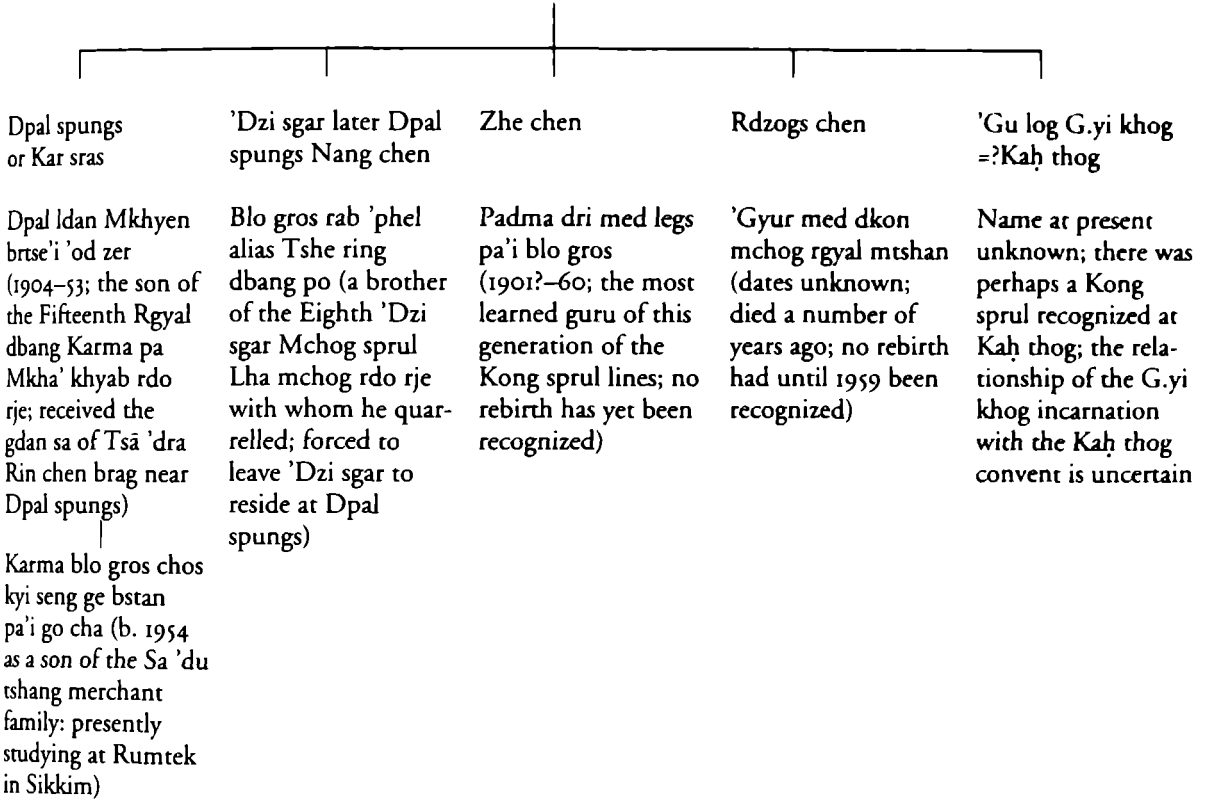
Tibetan scholars also believe that 'Jam mgon Kong sprul's coming had been foretold by the Buddha, Padmasambhava, and other great gurus of the past. They often cite a passage from the *Laṅkāvatāra*:

*At a time subsequent to that,  
the teacher of the five scholastic subjects  
called the leader Blo gros,  
a mighty hero, will appear.<sup>892</sup>*



No teachers between Snye mdo Kun dga' don grub and Kong sprul have been mentioned. Following the death of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul, we know of the recognition of at least five reembodiments:

**'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas**



*C. The Emanations of Gter ston Mchog gyur bde chen zbig po gling pa (1829–70)*

The third of the trio, Mchog gyur gling pa, was born in Khams Lho rgyud Yer stod at Sgom sde Grwa nang of the lineage of A lcags 'Gru, by tradition a ministerial family of the Nang chen principality. His contemporaries hailed him as the eighth-century prince, Mu rug Btsan po, reborn. I have as yet been unsuccessful in tracing a list of the intermediate emanations.

Lha sras Mu rug Btsan po

|  
Gter ston Mchog gyur gling pa (1829–70)

*Rtsi khe line*

⋮  
Dkon mchog 'gyur med btsan pa'i rgyal  
mtshan

⋮  
Karma mi gyur bde chen rdo rje (son of  
O rgyan tshe dbang mchog 'grub dpal  
'bar (b. 1920), a great grandson of the  
First Mchog gling; this incarnation  
resided at Rumtek in Sikkim)

*Gnas brtan line*

|  
Padma 'gyur med theg mchog btsan pa'i  
rgyal mtshan Nges don grub pa'i rdo rje  
(1873?–1927)

|  
Padma 'gyur med bde chen nges don  
theg mchog bstan phel 'Jam dbyangs  
smra ba'i zla ba tshangs sras dgyes pa'i  
lang tsho (b. 1928; resided in Bir, near  
Palampur, H.P.)

*D. The Emanations of 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho (1846–1912)*

The greatest name in the nonsectarian movement at the turn of the century was Mi pham Rin po che. He was regarded to be another Mañjuśrī emanation. Again, I have not yet been able to locate a list of the names of Mi pham's previous embodiments. At least three rebirths were recognized in the decade following his death: 1) Zhe chen Mi pham (a grandnephew of Mi pham rgya mtsho); 2) Tshe dbang bdud 'dul (1915–42), the last prince of Sde dge; 3) Khyung po Mi pham, an incarnation recognized by Rdzong gsar Mkhyen brtse 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi blo gros.

## Notes

1 Mkhan po Ngag dga' is known by a number of names. He received the name Bstan pa rab 'phel from Zhe chen Rab 'byams pa, who recognized him as a minor incarnation of his monastery. In 1889 the Fifth Rdzogs chen, Thub bstan chos kyi rdo rje (b. 1872), performed the ceremony of tonsure and bestowed on the youth the name Gzhon nu padma legs grub. His monastic name, Ngag dbang dpal bzang po, was given at the time of his ordination by Dzi phu Bco bgyad Zhabs drung Blo gros rgya mtsho. The names most commonly found in his works on esoteric Buddhism are 'Od gsal rin chen snying po and Padma las 'brel rtsal, names he received on the occasion of tantric initiation. To his disciples and contemporaries, however, he was almost always known as Mkhan po Ngag dga' or Mkhan po Ngag chung.

2 *Rnam thar* is the technical rendering of the Sanskrit *vimokṣa*, "liberation." In Tibetan literature, what we sometimes understand as a biography or autobiography often goes under the name *rtogs brjod* (Skt. *avadāna*). One should note that the traditional "mystery dramas" like *'Gro ba bzang mo* are also *rnam thar*.

3 In Tibet the principle of continuing revelation takes three forms: the rediscovery of texts and holy objects (*sa gter*) buried by Padmasambhava and his colleagues for revelation at a future time, the spontaneous appearances of teachings that were concealed in the transmigrating principle of Padmasambhava of propagation by a future emanation (*dgongs gter*), and instruction passed on by manifestations of gurus and tutelaries in visions (*dag snang*).

4 For the Rnying ma pa there is a process beyond those of emanation (*bskyed rim*) and realization (*rdzogs rim*): the great perfection (*rdzogs chen*). The Rnying ma pa approach to the process of uniting with the pervading spirituality of ultimate reality, or rather to the process of the complete realization of unity that has always existed, is one of extraordinary directions. Rnying ma pa devotees often compare the Rdzogs chen approach to rocket travel. They would not deny that jets and boats and bicycles and cars are useful; but they assert that, given a suitable launching pad, adequate fuel, and a pilot with proper training, some might prefer the fastest means of transportation.

Guenther (1963), p. 138, has summed up the approach of the Mahāmudrā and, indeed, the other Gsar ma ba schools: "The transformation process, which is at the same time an ascent to higher levels and into greater spheres, needs confirmation by a competent Guru, who ultimately is reality itself. Although there are four confirmations this process is not to be understood numerically. All that has been said so far is merely the preliminary to becoming able to practice the various stages in the total pattern of transformation, and thus is termed the way to maturity. The Developing Stage, the Fulfillment Stage, and the ultimate coincidence of the two, is the actual way of liberation. Liberation is a way of existing rather than a goal to be achieved."

The inner tantric approaches distinguish three “stages” in the process: the developing stage (*bskyed rim*) the fulfillment stage (*rdzogs rim*) and the coincidence stage (*bskyed rim rdzogs zung ’jug*). The term “stage” (*rim*) suggests a hierarchy and progress of some sort, although the conglomerates of psychological events or experience to which we attach these names are intrinsically always coexistent. The emphasis of *rdzogs chen* is upon primordial mind rather than upon specific mental activity of any sort, e.g., the methodology of the “stages.” *Rdzogs chen* is simultaneously the approach, the process, the sum of the stages, and the realization itself.

5 Bdud ’joms Rin po che ’Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje has recently written coherent accounts of the history and essential teachings of the Rnying ma pa. These two works are basic for anyone who would understand something of this neglected school. See ’Jigs bral, *Gangs ljongs* and ’Jigs bral, *Gsang sngags*.

6 See Blo gros mtha’ yas, *Zab mo’i*, fol. 36r. Sangs rgyas Bla ma’s rediscoveries include teachings on the *Bla rdzogs thugs gsum*, *Rtsa gsum dril sgrub*, *Rta mgrin dregs pa zil gnam*, and several practices connected with *sūtras* that had been translated from the Chinese. The later probably include texts now found in the *Mdo mangs*.

7 Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po lived in the eleventh century. Born in Gtsang Rong, he was descended from an ancient line of Rnying ma pa teachers. We know that he met Atiśa in his youth. His Atiśa is a vastly different personality from the purist that ’Brom ston paints. Rong zom mastered the teaching of both tantric transmissions, Old and New. He authored commentaries on several of the Gter ma ba tantras, including those of the *Sarvāvid* (*Ngan song sbyong rgyud*) and the *Vajrabhairava* cycles. He himself worked on the translation of some “new” Indic tantric texts, but these appear not to have lasted the purges of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The names of the Indian scholars with whom he collaborated survive: Mañjuśrīvarma, Mañjuśrījñāna, Upāyaśrīmitra, Buddhākaraśāstra, Devākāracandra, Parameśvara, and Amoghavajra. Unfortunately, the majority of these remain but names.

Our sources regarding the life of Rong zom are extremely limited; in addition to the paragraphs in the various *chos ’byung*, the only biography that seems to survive is the little sketch by Jo nang Kun dga’ grol mchog in the fourth chapter of his autobiography of previous births, entitled *Rong zom chos kyi bzang po’i rtogs pa brjod pa’i yal ’dab bzhi pa* (Kun dga’ grol mchog, *Kun dga’*). He notes that he based his text on the work of Yol dge bsnen Rdo rje dbang phyug.

The works of Rong zom include some of the most important sources for understanding the development of Rnying ma pa thought. There are Dpal spungs editions of his exegesis on the *Guhyamūla Tantra* (*Gsang snying ’grel pa*), his introduction to Mahāyāna Buddhism (*Theg pa chen po’i tshul la ’jug pa*), and his *Snang ba lhar sgrub*. Just before the troubles that befell Tibet, the blocks for an edition of his *gsung ’bum* had supposedly been carved under the patronage of the late ’Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse Chos kyi blo gros. I have seen several small prints from this edition. Let us hope that a complete set of the *gsung ’bum* has survived.

8 Klong chen Rab ’byams pa uses a number of different names in signing his work, a fact that can be confusing to anyone cataloging his writing. We find Ngag gi dbang po of Bsam yas, Dri med ’od zer, Tshul khriṃs blo gros, and Rdo rje gzi brjid, among others.

9 The Third Klong chen pa would seem to have been the immediate rebirth of Nam mkha’ dpal ldan. His work is little known except for his defense of the Rnying ma pa against Karma pa critics like Dpal khang chos mdzod.

10 Bdud ’joms Rin po che has recently edited the latter work, written in 1604, along with

his own supplement, the *Legs bshad bdud rtsi dga' ston* (1605). This work was such a rarity that only two copies seem to have survived, one in the library of the Bihar Research Society (Patna) and the other with Bdud 'joms Rin po che.

11 Paltul (1965).

12 Dhongthog (1968).

13 Dhongthog (1968).

14 Paltul (1965).

15 Variations: Myos and Snyos.

16 A number of manuscript bundles of Tshe dbang nor bu's writings have come to light. Among these are several xylographic prints with notations (*mchan*) that appear to be in Tshe dbang nor bu's own hand. Through the kindness of Burmiok Athing, whose magnificent library includes a number of important works and papers that belonged to Tshe dbang nor bu, I was able to compare a profusely annotated edition of the *Cakrasaṃvara Tantra* with his copy of the *Deb ther sngon po* containing authenticated notes by Tshe dbang nor bu.

17 Richardson (1968).

18 In 1744 Tshe dbang nor bu composed his history of Chinese Buddhism, entitled *Rgya nag hwa shang gi byang tshul grub mtha'i phyogs snga bcas sa bon bsam smos pa yid kyi dri ma dag byed dge' ba'i chu rgyun*. This subject also intrigued Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86), who came to rather different conclusions from studying the Chinese Buddhism of his own day. He held that the doctrinal positions represented were largely identical with those of later Vijñānavāda and the philosophical supposition inherent in the *Zhi byed* practices. He felt that the views that had been refuted by Kamalaśīla were no longer extant and that they had been replaced by Vijñānavāda. He would identify Bodhidharmottara with Pha Dam pa Sangs rgyas.

19 The most interesting of these is his introduction to the *nitārtha* group of *sūtras*, the *Nges don gyi mdo nyi shu'i dkar chag* (1739). This is one of his earliest works involving the Gzhan stong.

20 *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'jig rten khams kyi rnam bzhag go la legs par bshad pa nyung gsal dag kun bzang 'od snang rab tu byed pa* (1743).

21 *Bka' rgyud phyag chen gdams pa ji ltar gsan tshul gyi gsan yig rtogs brjod legs bshad rin chen 'byung khung* (1734).

22 Among the numerous names by which 'Jigs med gling pa is known, the more common are Rang byung rdo rje, Mkhyen brtse'i 'od zer, and Klong chen nam mkha' rnal 'byor.

23 Tucci (1950), p. 1. It would appear that Tucci's xylograph was blurred, as he cites the title as *Gtam tshigs rgya mtsho*.

24 Ferrari (1958), p. 131. Both Tucci and Petech failed to identify the author of the *Gtam tshogs* as 'Jigs med gling pa. They both detached the first part of his name, Rang byung rdo rje, and thus identified him as a master of the Karma pa sect.

25 The *Bden gnyis shing rta dang Rnam mkhyen shing rta*. The first concerns itself with the orthodox Buddhist canon from the vantage point of the two truths, the Mādhyamika dialecticians' handy principle of higher criticism. The second deals specifically with the Rnying ma pa outlook. The *Yon tan mdzod* is, in many ways, a continuation and restatement of the philosophical and psychological speculations that appear in Klong chen pa's *Mdzod bdun* and *Ngal gso skor gsum*.

26 The Sde dge edition contains twenty-six volumes. The *dkar chag* that goes with this edition was written by Kaḥ thog 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub.

27 *Theg pa che chung gi rnam gzhang ma nges ston pa dris lan rin po che'i bstan bcos lung gi gter mdzod.*

28 Rdzogs chen Rgyal sras served for a number of years as the abbot of Rdzogs chen Monastery. His more important works include the *Phung lnga'i rab dbye* and his *Sdom byang rgyas bshad*.

29 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 232.

30 The first of the Rdo pa Grub chen line, 'Jigs med phrin las 'od zer was born in Rdo yul from the Smug po Gdong lineage. He studied with many of the important Bka' brgyud pa and Rnying ma pa gurus of his time. His meeting with 'Jigs med gling pa changed his life, and he henceforth regarded him as his most important teacher. He is also known as Kun bzang gzhan phan, a name that he received from the Second Zhe chen Rab 'byams pa. An autobiography as well as a *gsung 'bum* in about three manuscript volumes are extant. His students included the scholarly 'Jigs med skal bzang, the contemplative Dam tshig rdo rje, and Rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas, on whom he bestowed the *Snying thig*. The seat of the Rdo ba grub chen line was Rdo grub chos sgar in A mdo. The Fourth Rdo ba Grub chen, Kung bzang 'jigs med chos dbyings rang grol, alias Thub bstan phrin las dpal bzang (b. 1927), resides in Gangtok.

31 'Jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu founded the monastery of Phra ma or Rdza chu kha. His collected writings fill about two volumes. In addition, there is an autobiography. His incarnation lineage continued in Tibet, where the last of the lineage died in the 1950s.

32 Sa dbang bzang po is known in the historical sources by his initiatory name of Kun 'grub bde dge' bzang po. See Kolmas (1968), pp. 41 et seq.

33 Mdo Mkhyen brtse Ye shes rdo rje is often known by the epithet 'Ja lus pa chen po. He belonged to the A skyong tribe of the 'Gu log (Golok). A biography of Ye shes rdo rje printed at Hor La dkar tshang near Sde dge exists: *Rig 'dzin 'jigs med gling pa'i yang srid sngags 'chang 'ja' lus rdo rje'i rnam thar mkha' gro'i zhal lung* (155 ff.): Oslo University Library, no. 164.

Among the 'Gu log we find some of the greatest Rnying ma pa teachers of the nineteenth century. Besides Rdo ba Grub chen and Mdo Mkhyen brtse, there are names such as the First Bdud 'joms Khrag thung Bdud 'joms rdo rje (b. 1835) and his son, the Third Rdo ba Grub chen 'Jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma.

34 The name that Rdza Dpal sprul usually employs in signing his works is A bu hral po, "Ragged Old One."

35 As a child, Rdza Dpal sprul had been recognized as the rebirth of Dpal dge Sprul sku Bsod nams sbyin pa. He seems to have been an unusually difficult young *sprul sku*. His excesses resulted in his monks turning him out of the monastery and in the incarnation lineage coming to an end.

36 There is a small biography of Rdza Dpal sprul written by Dge mang Mkhan po Kun dga' dpal ldan. The blocks for printing this work were preserved at Rdzong gsar Monastery near Sde dge.

37 Mkhan po Ngag dga' gives a list of Rdza Dpal sprul's students (Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, pp. 69 et seq.).

38 We should say something at this point regarding the formation of Khams pa names of endearment. The various tribes and localities seem to differ in the ways of making pet names, but there appears to be some overlap: 1) As we have previously seen, one may simply add *dga'* to any syllable, usually the first, of a proper name: Ngag dga' from Ngag dbang dpal bzang, Gzhan dga' from Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba, Gsal dga' from Rab gsal zla ba; 2) Other

similar particles used in different localities are *dge* and *li*: Bstan li from O rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu, Li dge from Li thang Dge bshes Byams pa phun tshogs, Pad dge from Padma dbang chen; 3) A third type involves the use of *A* before the first or third syllable of names: A rnam mgon po from Rnam rgyal mgon po, A stobs from Stobs rgyas.

39 Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927) was, like Mkhas po Ngag dga', dedicated to education. He taught at Rdzogs chen, Dpal spungs, and Sga Skye rgu mdo, among other places. During his early life he lived at Dbon po Bstan li's monastery of Dge mang. Later he founded his own retreat at Rgya bo phug in Khro khong khro zil phrom, home of the *gzhi bdag* Rdo rje g.yung drung, the patron mountain (*bla ri*) of the kings of Sde dge. Gzhan dga' passed away on the fourth day of the first Tibetan month of 1927. Si tu Padma dbang mchog rgyal po officiated at the funeral rites. The ashes of Gzhan dga's pyre yielded relics of five colors, a sign that that teacher had attained a high stage of progress toward buddhahood.

40 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, p. 174.

41 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, p. 174.

42 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, p. 203.

43 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, pp. 203–10. Ngag dga' refers the reader to his own *gsan yig*.

44 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, pp. 141–42.

45 The Wa shul locality takes its name from the tribesmen under the chieftains of the Wa shul lineage who exercised some authority there. The Wa shul are a small lineage divided into three branches. The first exercises authority over Khrom thar. The second and third over Sde gzhung and G.yon ru. The name of the lineage apparently comes from the story of an unmarried girl who fell asleep. While she was dozing, snow fell. A demon came in the guise of a fox and had intercourse with her. When she awoke, she noticed fox tracks in the fresh snow. When she gave birth to a child nine months later, she was asked who was the father of her son. She replied that all she knew was that she had seen fox tracks (*wa shul*) in the snow on the day of her conception. From this story the lineage of chieftains and the locality in Khrom thar take their name.

46 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, p. 6.

47 Among the names of this teacher we find Rgyal sras Byang chub rdo rje and Lung rtogs bstan pa'i nyi ma rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po. He was regarded as a reincarnation of Śāntarakṣita. He was one of the chief disciples of Rdza Dpal sprul. There is a saying in Dza phod: *smyo shul lung rtogs med na // dpal dge rabs chad yin //*: "If there had been no Smyo shul Lung rtogs, the line of Dpal dge would have come to an end." Ngag dga' gives a good deal of biographical data about this guru (Ngag dbang dpal bzang, 'Od gsal, pp. 2–23).

48 A stobs was a student of Rdza Dpal sprul.

49 Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin alias 'Jigs bral mthu stobs gling pa. A student of the Fourth Kaḥ thog Dri med zhing skyong, Mi 'gyur bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, this *gter ston* was reputed to be the re-embodiment of Shud bu Dpal gyi seng ge. His rediscoveries were connected with the *Klong gsal snying thig* cycle.

50 Gter ston Bsod rgyal was student of Rdza Dpal sprul and was a *gter ston* connected with Mkhyen brtse and Kong sprul.

51 Rdzogs chen mkhan po Bsod nams chos phel is also known as Bshad sgrub chos kyi snang ba.

52 Dkon mchog nor bu was a student of Rdza Dpal sprul and had devoted his life to the study of the *Bodhicāryāvātāra*.

53 Mtha' yas Bla ma was a student of the Grub chen 'Ja' lus pa chen po, i.e., Mdo Mkhyen brtse. He died in about 1888.

54 This lama was connected with the Nalendra pa subsect of the Sa skya pa. He died when Ngag dga' was very young.

55 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, pp. 191–92.

56 Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1925) was the teacher of the Rdzong gsar Mkhyen brtse 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi blo gros (1896–1959) and is known for writing a large guide to the places of pilgrimage in Central Tibet.

57 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 230.

58 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 231.

59 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 283.

60 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 285. Mkhan po Ngag dga' describes him as the most important Rnying ma pa lama of Khams after the death of Kaḥ thog Si tu.

61 His more important works seem to be: 1. *Thod rgal zin bris*; 2. *Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad nyung ngu* (1902); 3. *'Jam dpal dbyangs la bstod pa* (1907); 4. *Ye shes bla ma'i khrid gnad bsdu*; 5. *Rim lnga'i khrid kyi brjed byang*; 6. *Dus 'khor gyi brjed byang*; 7. *Drang nges sngon po'i skabs kyi brjed byang*; 8. *Thal 'gyur lugs kyi tshad ma'i zin bris*; 9. *Tshad ma'i ldog pa'i rnam bzhag*; 10. *Bla ma yang tig gi gnyis ka'i yang yig gi 'grel pa nyi ma'i snang ba*; 11. *Rdzogs chen ma bu'i lde'u mig kun bzang thugs kyi ti ka*; 12. *Thod rgyal kyi snyan brgyud mkha'i 'gro'i thugs kyi ti la ka*; 13. *Gzhi khregs chod skabs kyi zin bris bstan pa'i nyi ma'i zhal lung snyan brgyud chu bo'i bcud 'dus*; 14. *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung zin bris*.

62 Byang chub rgyal mtshan was active is producing a religious revival in the Kinnaur (Kha su) area.

63 The autobiography of Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu fills a bulky volume in his collected works. He gives us his thoughts on religion, politics, and even what makes men climb mountains.

64 The Hermit of Wa ra is responsible for producing an edition of the *Bka' 'gyur* in 206 half-size volumes. Before his death he had completed over a quarter of the *Bstan 'gyur*. The small size of the blocks provoked considerable controversy, and the edition was never popular.

65 Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 199: *de'i dbyar kha la kaḥ thog gnyer pa rig rdor dpon g.yog bsu ba slebs kyang khrom chu phyur ba dang phrod pas a 'dzom sgar las 'dir ma thar / si tu rin po che'i gsung bris g.yag gi rwa rtser bcings nas tshu rol du btang ba 'byor ba'i lan du sang phod sprel lo nang kaḥ thog tu 'byor rgya dkrigs chod kyi yi ge phul //*.

66 Perhaps a better reading would be *dkrig chod*.

67 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 140.

68 See Ngag dbang dpal bzang, *'Od gsal*, p. 142.

69 This brief account of the life of Klong chen pa is based upon the *Blue Annals* (Roerich [1949], pp. 200–203), and 'Jigs bral, *Gangs ljongs*, pp. 238–74. There is also a short biography included in an edition of the *Snying thig ya bzhi*.

70 Bdud 'joms Rin po che states that Jñānendrarakṣita (Ye shes dbang po srung), one of the Sad mi mi bdun, had come from the Rog lineage. Most other sources give Sbas as the clan name for this early monk.

71 Bsam grub rin chen was abbot at Bsam yas and presided at Klong chen pa's monastic ordination in 1319. It was he who bestowed the name Tshul khirms blo gros on Klong chen pa. Little else is known of him.

72 Slob dpon Kun dga' 'od zer served as the *upādhyāya* at Klong chen pa's ordination in 1319. Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje and he conferred the initiation of *Vajramālā* upon the Second Zhwa dmar, Mkha' spyod dbang po (1350–1405).



73 Slob dpon Bkra shis rin chen was a specialist in the Lam 'bras system, which he conferred upon Klong chen pa in 1323.

74 One Za lung pa is mentioned as an accomplished tantric *siddha* and one of the gurus of Me long rdo rje (1243–1303). It is unlikely that this Za lung pa and that *siddha* are one and the same. Another Za lung pa is mentioned among the names of the disciples of Ko brag pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1182–1261). The Za lung pa who was Klong chen pa's master passed on to him instructions of the Tshal pa and Stod 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa as well as those of the *Gcod* and *Zhi byed* systems.

75 Bstan dgon pa was the fifteenth abbot of the Gling stod college of Gsang phu Ne'u thog.

76 Bla brang pa Chos dpal rgyal mtshan is reckoned as the sixteenth abbot of Gling stod.

77 Gzhon nu don grub was a Rnying ma pa master who transmitted teachings belonging to the *Mdo*, *Sgyu*, and *Sems phyogs* to Klong chen pa. Little else is known of him.

78 Myos Mthing ma ba Sangs rgyas grags pa was a Rnying ma pa guru.

79 The Slob dpon Gzhon rgyal should not be confused with Rig 'dzin Kumārarāja, Klong chen's chief tantric guru who initiated him into the *Snying thig*. Slob dpon Gzhon rgyal was a specialist in Mādhyamika texts.

80 Gzhon rdor (Gzhon nu rdo rje) was a Bka' gdams pa scholar who instructed Klong chen pa in the teachings that had been propagated by Atiśa and his successors.

81 Rang byung rdo rje was the third Zhwa nag or "Black Hat" Karma pa. He is regarded as one of the greatest scholars of the sect. We find a letter addressed to this master in the third part of Klong chen pa's *Gsung thor bu*.

82 Slob dpon Dbang tshul belonged to a Kālacakra tradition and instructed Klong chen pa in the teachings of the *Sbyor drug*.

83 Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan was the greatest Sa skya pa teacher of the 'Khon lineage in the fourteenth century. Klong chen Rab 'byams pa addressed a communication regarding the Lam 'bras to this guru. He probably received little besides formal initiations from this slightly younger contemporary.

84 Gzhon nu rgyal po, or Kumārarāja, was a disciple of Me long rdo rje (1243–1303) in the *Snying thig* transmission lineage. Klong chen pa seems to have met Kumārarāja in about 1336, a few years before that aged teacher's death.

85 The *Blue Annals* (Roerich [1949], p. 202) names as the specific go-between Sangs rgyas dpal rin, an old comrade of Ta'i Si tu.

86 Little is known of this myriarch of the Yar 'brog principality or his political relationships.

87 Each of the three *Rang grol* includes the basic verse text (*rtsa ba*) and a reasonably detailed prose explanation (*don khrid*). An outline of contents is as follows (page numbers correspond to the print in volume four of the *Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab*):

I. *Rdzogs pa chen po sems nyid rang grol* (pp. 1–59)

A. *Rtsa ba* (pp. 1–33)

B. *Lam rim snying po'i don khrid* (pp. 33–55)

C. *Sems nyid rang grol gyi gsol 'debs* (pp. 55–59)

II. *Rdzogs pa chen po chos nyid rang grol* (pp. 59–99)

A. *Rtsa ba* (pp. 59–78)

B. *Khrid yig* (pp. 78–99)

III. *Rdzogs pa chen po mnyam nyid rang grol* (pp. 99–142)

A. *Rtsa ba* (pp. 99–126)

B. *Khrid yig rin chen snying po* (pp. 126–42)

88 The Rdzogs chen system is often called the Man ngag rdzogs pa chen po.

89 Klong chen, *Bstan bcos*, fol. 6r: *man ngag gi don 'grel rang grol skor gsuml*.

90 The *Chos thams cad rdzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po* is the first Rnying ma pa tantra to be found in volume *Ka* of the Sde dge edition of the *Bka' 'gyur* (*Rnying rgyud*). Ui (1934) gives a Sanskrit title for this tantra (no. 828): *Sarvadharmamahāsāntibodhicittakulaya*. Both the Sde dge and Lhasa editions of the *Bka' 'gyur* include three volumes of Rnying ma pa tantras. These texts were largely excluded from the other editions of the *Bka' 'gyur*.

The editors of the *Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab* have appended one of Klong chen pa's treatments of this important tantra, the *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po'i don khrid rin chen gru bo*. Klong chen pa's own *dkar chag* mentions two other works concerned with the *Kun byed rgyal po*: the *Don 'grel nyi ma 'od zer* and the *Khrid yig nam mkha' klong gsal*.

91 This edition followed the blocks for the *Mdzod bdun* (four vols. marked *Ka* through *Nga*), the *Ngal gso skor gsum*, the *Sngags kyi spyi don tshangs dbyangs 'brug sgra*, and the *Phyogs bcu'i mun sel* together with the text of the *Guhyagarbha Tantra*. This edition was largely based upon that of Sde dge. The margins to this edition also bear *Shri* and *Sarva dznyā shāstram*. There are prints of much of a Khams edition preserved in the University Library in Oslo (Sørensen, nos. 191–200). This may perhaps be an example of a later edition. The textual history of the *Gsung thor bu* merits further investigation.

92 The edition from which this manuscript was copied was certainly later than the Sde dge which dates to the last decade of the eighteenth century. The name Thub bstan snyan grags suggests someone who might have had something to do with the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. The print might have belonged to Bstan rgyas gling, where a number of works by Klong chen pa were preserved.

The blocks for printing the *Klong chen mdzod bdun* were stored at the small nunnery of Sbrags (or: Sgrags and Brag) Tsha seb (also: Tsher gseb). Blocks for printing the *Snying thig ya bzhi* and *Ngal gso skor gsum* were also preserved there. Other works of Klong chen pa were xylographed and preserved at Bstan rgyas gling as well as in Zur khang's *gzim shag* in Lhasa.

93 See Klong chen, *Bstan bcos*.

94 A notable example is the *Gnas lugs mdzod*, the sixth of the *Mdzod bdun*. The *Mdzod bdun*, or *Seven Treasuries*, as a bibliographic grouping does not appear in Klong chen pa's own survey of his works. Each of the six of the *Mdzod bdun* that he does list are separately characterized:

1. *Yid bzhin mdzod*: A general survey of the tantras and their classification (*rgyud sde bzhi'i gnad zab cing rgya che ba'i rim pa bstan pa las bshad pa'i gnas gsal bar ston pa*).
2. *Man ngag mdzod*: A general introduction to Rdzogs chen as a philosophical system (*theg pa mtha' dag gi don rdzogs pa chen po'i lam du 'jug pa'i sngon 'gro'am thabs tsam du shes par bya ba'i phyir kun dang mthun la gong du 'dren pa'i lam rim 'bras bu dang bcas pa ston pa'i bstan bcos kyi gnas gsal ba*).
3. *Chos dbyings mdzod*: The essential import of the precepts included in the expanse class (*klong sde*) of Rdzogs chen (*man ngag gi don 'grel*).
4. *Grub mtha' mdzod*: A survey of the highest tantric teachings from the viewpoint of *atiyoga* (*gsang chen nges pa theg pa'i rgyal po'i rnam gzhang yo ga phyogs kyi don gnan la phab pa'i gsal byed*).
5. *Theg mchog mdzod*: The essential of the Seventeen Tantras and the 119 Precepts of the highest Rdzogs chen esoteric teachings (*rgyud bcu bdun man ngag brgya dang bcu dgu'i don 'grel*).

6. *Tshig don mdzod*: The essential of the highest Rdzogs chen teachings as practice (*lam khyer kyī don 'grel*).
- 95 Guenther (1969), p. 30, has translated *man ngag* (*upadeśa*) as “significant communication.” He quotes the First Karma 'phrin las pa: “*man ngag* means to point out an important topic in a few words, or to elucidate the meaning of existence by having singled out the means of its understanding.”
- 96 Vostrikov (1962), pp. 109–11.
- 97 Thu'u bkwan, *Grub mtha'*, p. 122: *dang po ni dus physis kyī 'brug pa'i yi ge 'ga' zhiḡ na / mar mi dang / gling ras pa sogs na bza' ras dkar gsol ba tsam la bsams nas dkar brgyud ces bris pa'ang snang mod / bka' brgyud ces yongs su grags pa 'thad de //*.
- 98 Thu'u bkwan, *Grub mtha'*, p. 126, describes the chief teachings of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa: *shangs chos gtso bor gyur pa ni / bde mchog / kyai rdor / ma ha ma ya / gsang 'dus / rdo rje 'jigs byed de rgyud sde lnga'i so so'i dbang dang / sdom pa'i dbang / sgyu lus dbang mo che / mkha' spyod bka' lnga / ni gu'i chos drug / sgyu ma lam rim / 'chi med 'khrul 'khor / lam 'khyer su kha'i skor sogs / phyag chen ga'u ma / ye shes mgon po'i chos skor / bde mchog lha lnga / phag mo gsang sgrub / spyan ras gzigs / rnam 'joms / phyag rdor / mi g.yo ba sogs kyī dbang bka' / skyer sgang lugs kyī spyan ras gzigs dang rta mgrin sogs te / grub mtha' thams cad la khyab che'o //*.
- 99 See chapter 4 for a discussion of this *gser 'phreng* and the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud.
- 100 The *gser 'phreng* reproduced here is in almost complete agreement with the account given by Rgyal dbang Kun dga' dpal 'byor (1428–76). See Kun dga' dpal 'byor, *Dkar brgyud*, fol. 2r: (a) *Phyag rgya chen po'i bka' babs*: Phyag na rdo rje, Bram ze Sa ra ha, Lo hi pa, Dha ri ka pa, Ḍing gi pa, Ti lli pa. (b) *Pha rgyud bka' babs*: Gsang bdag, Sa bcu dbang phyug Blo gros rin chen, Klu sgrub, Ma tang gi, Ti lli pa. (c) *Ma rgyud rmi lam gyī bka' babs*: Su ma ti Kun tu bzang mo, Thang lo pa, Shing lo pa, Karṇa ri pa, Ti lli pa. (d) *'Od gsal gyī bka' babs*: Phyag na rdo rje, Ḍombi He ru ka, Bi nā pa, La ba pa, Indra bo dhi, Ti lli pa.
- 101 For an account of the lamas of the Rngog familial lineage of Spre'u zhiḡ, see Roerich (1949), pp. 406–14.
- 102 See chapter 5 for lists of the chief Karma pa incarnations.
- 103 In his brief history of the nonsectarian movement, Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas has given a survey of the original Karma pa monasteries that represents them as an organic unity. See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Ris med*, (fol. 9r of the Dpal spungs print): *gdan sa ni stod lung mtshur phu / karma ri gling / kam po gnas nang ste sku gsung 'thugs kyī 'khor lo gsum / shar phyogs spungs ri dang / tre kam khyim yon tan gyī gnas / 'par ra dang grwa ma gru bzhi phrin las kyī gnas te / de las gyes pa'i dgon gnas gtsug lag gis sa chen po'i khong thams cad khyab cing /*. Perhaps a study of the alignments and allegiances of the earliest Karma pa monasteries will reveal the factors that suppressed the divisive tendencies in the Karma Bka' brgyud pa. With such brilliant and individualistic thinkers as we find among the six great incarnate lamas and their disciples, one would expect much greater fragmentation as a result of rivalries, yet we find nothing of the sort.
- 104 Also 'Bab rom Bka' brgyud pa. Unfortunately, the *gser 'phreng* of this sect did not come out of Tibet.
- 105 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Ris med*, (fol. 9r of the Dpal spungs print): *mnyam med dwags po'i slob ma gsal stong sho sgom grub pa'i dbang phyug chen por gyur cing / mi ma yin 'dul ba'i phrin las can du lung bstan pa ltar 'gro don mtha' yas pa bskyangs //*.

106 On Rgyal tsha, see Roerich (1949), p. 705 et seq.

107 According to Blo gros mtha' yas, *Ris med*, fol. 111, the teacher responsible for spreading Smar pa Bka' brgyud pa teachings to Dpal yul was Stag bu Bla ma.

108 See Guenther (1969), pp. 15–20, for a brief account of the origins of the Shug gseb exegesis.

109 See Roerich (1949), pp. 696–705.

110 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Rje btsun*, p. 591: *'di bris dge bas rdo rje 'chang thob shog / dben gnas klong rdol gling stod 'od gsal sgang du snyams las pa kun dga' brug dpal gyis bris pa'o //*

111 The Klong rdol hermitage was established by the founder of the 'Brug pa sect, Gtsang pa Rgya ras (1161–1211). This monastery was quite close to Lhasa. At some stage it became Dge lugs pa and ultimately gave its name to the great eighteenth century scholar, Klong rdol Bla ma Ngag dbang blo bzang (1719–94).

112 Padma dkar po, *Chos 'byung*, pp. 594–95.

113 There are several different sets of dates for 'Ba' ra ba. Probably the one most compatible with other accepted dates is that found in Roerich (1949), p. 692: 1310–91. Dhongthog (1968), p. 40, gives 1255–1343. Our manuscript (p. 480) gives only *chu lug* (1343 or 1403) for his death and notes that the great guru was 82 at the time of his demise. This would lead us to the calculation that 'Ba' ra ba was born in 1261 or 1321. It has seemed useful to accept 1310–91 until further research establishes a definitive chronology.

114 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Chos rgyal*, p. 469: */ gdul bya sna tshogs srid las sgral phyir du // mdo' rgyal stan chos man ngag dgongs 'brel mdzad // theg pa sna tshogs rgya cher gsal mdzad pa'i // chos rje rin po che la gsol ba 'debs //*

The commentary (with verse-words underlined): */ ces pa ni / 'gro ba'i skyabs mgon thugs rje chen po dang ldan pas / gdul bya dbang pos sna tshogs pa srid pa du kha'i rgyal mtsho las sgral ba'i phyir / thar pa'i gru bo che la sogs pa'i stan chos dang / phyag rgya chen po dang / na ro chos drug la sogs pa'i man ngag dang / bsam mno' bcu gsum dang / bdag med gnas lugs ma la sogs pa'i drang don gyi mgur dang / sems mtha' bral ma dang / gtad med bzhi la sogs pa'i nges don gyi mgur ma la sogs pa'i theg pa sna tshogs rgya cher gsal bar mdzad cing / bdag med rtogs pa'i spyang dang ldan pas thugs rab phul du phyin cing mdo' rgyud ma lus pa'i dgongs pa gsal bar mdzad pa'i chos rje rin po che la gsol ba 'debs so //*

115 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Chos rgyal*, p. 472.

116 'Ba' ra ba founded the monastery of 'Brang rgyas kha in the Spa gro region of Bhutan.

117 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Rje btsun klong*, p. 491: *de la chu ngan pa 'dug pas tshad pas mi mang rab shi //*

118 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Rje btsun klong*, p. 496.

119 A number of variants occur: Slo 'khar ba, Blo mkhar ba, Glo 'khar ba, etc.

120 The civil war of 1434 has been dealt with briefly by Macdonald (1963). 1434 marks the beginning of the Rin spungs pa paramountcy.

121 See Kun dga' dpal ldan, *Phyi dka'*, p. 522: *nyer bdun lon pa'i stag lo la // phag mo gru pa'i dus 'khrug langs // dbus gtsang dmag gi 'tshog 'du rnams // phal cher dol gzhung gnyis su byas // dmag chen gtsang dmag gnyis kar gyi // 'grim lam ba ri sgang la byung // khang khyim thams cad bshus sregs byas // yul grong rnam ni gyang rar btang // sgur chags thams cad gri ru kum // phal po che rnam sprang por btang // grag rims rnams ni mtshon gyis kum / snyoms chung rnams tsho ltogs drir shi // grong pas grong pa brdung pa'i dus // pha bu spun zla yin kyang ni // phar bu spun zla yin kyang ni // phar tshur dos chad rme 'khrug byed // mi bsad pa la stong med cing // nor khyer ba la snyags med pas // thu thu sbyag sbyag brdungs nas su // khyer 'phrogs bsad gsum dus 'da' zhing*

// mi rnams gar 'khyar 'di 'khyar med // rtsa rul zhing rnams 'jag skya 'chos // nyi ma dbus kyi skal chung gcig // de dus su ni 'khrus pa yin // de lta'i dus kyi sems can tshos // myong pa'i du kha bsams tsa na // da lta dran kyang 'chi ma bro //.

122 See *Shangs pa gser 'phreng*, p. 749.

123 The orthography Zhang zhong is also common.

124 Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, *Gangs can*, ff. 21v–22r.: *ga'u ma ni khyung po'i bka' srol te / sngon 'gro rang babs rnam gsum / dngos gzhi skyon bzhi rang grol / 'bras bu sku gsum rang shar gyi sgo nas ston cing / dngos gzhi la rkun po'i ngo sprod ces gsungs so // ni gu chos drug ni / gtum mo lam gyi rmang rdo / sgyu lus chags sdang rang grol / rmi lam nyid 'khrul rang sangs / 'od gsal ma rig mun sel / 'pho ba ma bsgom sangs rgyas / bar do rgyal ba longs sku zhes pa ste / ga'u ma'i gtso bo yang chos drug gi 'od gsal bsgom tshul lo /*. The title of Mkhyen brtse's work is somewhat misleading: it refers only to Mkhyen brtse's extracts from Zhu chen Tshul khrims rin chen's (1697–1774) *dkar chag* to the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*. These notes fill only the first four or five folia of the total 238 folia.

Mkhyen brtse has further classified the complex of teachings that are distinctive to the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa tradition in Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, *Gangs can bod*, ff. 99v–100r.: */ de las byung ba'i chos bka' la / ni gu'i chos skor / su kha'i chos skor / rdo rje gdan pa'i chos skor / mai tri pa'i chos skor / ra hu la'i chos skor te lnga dang / der ma 'thus pa'i man ngag thor bu dang bcas bsam gyis mi khyab pa zhig mchis na'ang / deng sang chos rje mus pa dang / bka' brgyud sogs su ni gu'i skor gtso bor gyur pa la / rtsa ba ni gu chos drug / sdong po phyag rgya chen po ga'u ma / yan lag lam khyer rnam gsum / me tog mkha' spyod dkar dmar / 'bras bu lus sems 'chi med / bka' srung ye shes mgon po'i skor rnams kyi smin grol rgyab brten dang bcas pa las / dang po la / chos drug gi smin byed khog phub gsum / sgos bka' drug / phyag chen bka' lnga / mkha' spyod bka' gsum / gsang sgrub bka' lnga / mgon po bka' gnyis las / dang po ni / chos drug spyi yi khog phug rgyud sde lnga gtso bor gyur pa'i 'jug sgo sgyu lus dbang mo che / bde mchog dbang bzhi lus bsgrigs / lha bzhi dril sgrub bcas / gnyis pa ni / gtum mo sogs chos drug so so'i dbang / gsum pa ni / phyag chen ga'u ma / bla ma / yi dam / sgyu lus lam khyer / lus sems 'chi med kyi dbang / bzhi pa ni / mkha' spyod dkar mo / dmar mo / sum phrugs kyi dbang / lnga pa ni / bde mchog / spyan ras gzigs / phyag rdor / rta mgrin / drug pa ni / phyag drug pa dang / mgon dkar / zhar byung su kha si dahi'i byin rlabs bcas so // gnyis pa grol byed khrid la / thang rgyal (mus pa sogs) dang / jo nang (bka' brgyud sogs) ta ra na tha sogs kyi yig cha'i steng nas chos drug / phyag chen / lam khyer rnam gsum / mkha' spyod dkar dmar gyi 'pho ba / lus sems 'chi med / bla mgon dbyer med rnams kyi nyams khrid // gsum pa lung la / rtsa ba rdo rje'i tshig rkang sogs glegs bam gcig lhag rnams bzhugs shing / gzhan yang sngar smos pa ltar dge lugs pa'i phyogs la'ang chos drug gi khrid rgyun tsam dang / khyad par mgon po phyag drug pa'i rjes gnang / khrid lung bcas rgya cher dar ro //*.

125 Variant: Dngul ston.

126 Dating the early Shangs pa masters is a complicated problem of which Tibetan historians were well aware. 'Gos Lo tsā ba speculated (Roerich [1949], p. 746) that Rmog lcog pa was a contemporary of Phag mo gru pa (1110–70), Skyer sgang pa of 'Bri gung 'Jig rten mgon po (1143–1217), Sangs rgyas Gnyan ston of Spyian snga (1175–1255), and Sangs rgyas ston pa of Yang dgon pa (1213–58).

127 According to Lo chen 'Gyur med bde chen's biography of this master, the *Grub pa'i dbang phyug chen po lcags zam pa thang stong rgyal po'i rnam thar ngo mtshar kun gsal nor bu'i me long* (181 ff.), Thang stong rgyal po was born in the *lcags mo glang* year (1361). The last year mentioned in the work itself is *sa mo yos* (1459) when his death is nearing. The colophon tells us that the work was completed in *sa pho byi lo* (1588), 125 years after the death of Thang stong

(1464). The short biography of 'Gyur med bde chen found in the *Shangs pa gser 'phreng* tells us that 'Gyur med bde chen was born in the *lcags pho byi* year (1540) and that he was a student of Kun dga' grol mchog.

128 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, pp. 531–32: *thang rgyal ni gu'i bka' babs snga phyi gsum / kun mkhyen dol po sangs rgyas kyi sku'i skye ba phyi ma grub chen brtson grus bzang po'am thang stong rgyal po sogs sku gcig la mtshan lnga ldan pa de nyid kyis / ring brgyud mkhas grub shangs ston gyi slob ma mus chen rgyal mtshan dpal bzang nas ri gong stod brgyud du grags pa'i snyan brgyud rnams byang sems sbyin pa bzang po las gsan nas thugs nyams su bzhes pas / ye shes kyi mkha' 'gro dngos kyi rjes su bzung ba'i nye brgyud rim pa gsum byung ste / dang po gtsang gi ri bo cher ni gu ma dngos su byon te / chos drug / phyag chen / lam khyer / 'chi med / bla ma mgon po dbyer med rnams kyi khrid / gnyis pa mdog smad srin rdzong shug sdong gi rtsa bar de dag so so'i dbang / gsum pa mkha' spyod kyi gdams pa yi ge med pa'i brda thabs su byung ba bcas bka' babs snga phyi bar gsum mang mkhar ba blo gros rgyal mtshan sogs las so sor brgyud de da lta'i bar bka' brgyud zam ma chod par bzhugs so //.*

129 Besides the great *Mgon po chos 'byung* of 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1662), there are separate *chos 'byung* for many of the forms, such as *Mgon po Phyag bzhi pa* and *Jag pa me len*. An especially important text is that of *Jag pa me len* by 'Gro 'dul rdo rje: *Btsan gyi rgyal po srog bdag a bse chen po gdug pa snying 'byin gyi byung khungs lo rgyus mdo tsam snying por dril ba gcig shes kun grol*. The author, also known as Kun dga' mi 'gyur rdo rje, appears to have been one of the 'Brug pa Kun legs' incarnations.

130 See Chandra (1963), v. 1, pp. 18–30.

131 Extracted from *Zab lam ni gu chos drug gi bla ma brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs byin rlabs sprin phung*. Written by the Seventh 'Brug chen, Bka' brgyud phrin las shing rta, and supplemented by Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas. From volume *Cha* of the *Gdams ngag mdzod*.

132 Extracted from the *Ni gu'i brgyud 'debs* by Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas. From volume *Cha* of the *Gdams ngag mdzod*.

133 See Roerich (1949), pp. 748–49.

134 See Roerich (1949), pp. 749–52.

135 Snellgrove and Richardson (1968), p. 117–8.

136 The more important of these hereditary religious lineages included the Rlangs of Phag mo gru, the Skyu ra of 'Bri khung, the Ga zi of Stag lung and Khams Ri bo che, the Rgya of 'Brug and Rwa lung, the Rgya of Gnas rnying, the abbatial families of Mtshur phu, the Rngog of Spre'u zhing, and the Gnyos of the Lha pa monasteries.

137 'Brug pa Kun legs belonged to the Rgya lineage of Rwa lung. His father was Nang so Rin chen bzang po, the son of Drung rdor ba, younger brother of Nam mkha' dpal bzang (1398–1425) and Shes rab bzang po (1400–1438). His father had been disinherited by his cousins and was killed in one of the raiding skirmishes that plagued the fifteenth century. There are probably still descendants of 'Brug pa Kun legs in Bhutan today. The incarnations of this famed madman were to be found until 1959 at the Dre'u lhas Monastery in Gnyal (southern Tibet). There is a twentieth-century xylograph edition of the autobiography and selected instructions in four parts (*Ka* through *Nga*) from Dre'u lhas and a *gsang ba'i rnam thar*.

138 See Appendix II of this chapter for a description of some of these hagiographic works by Gtsang smyon and his school.

139 The transmission lineage of these teachings to Gtsang smyon is given in *Sna tshogs rang grol*, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 7: Nā ro Paṇ chen, Sgra sgyur Mar pa Lo tsha (1012–1097); Dbang phyug Bzhad pa rdo rje (1040–1123); Ras chung Rdo rje grags (1083–1161); Khyung tshang Ye

shes bla ma; Ma cig Ong jo ras ma; Rje btsun Zhang ston Lo tstsha; 'Gro mgon Rna ra śrī ri (Rda ra śrī ri?); Byang sems Bsod nams rgyal mtshan; 'Khrul zhig Kun ldan ras pa; Mkhas btsun Gzi brjid rgyal mtshan; Mkhān chen Dbang phyug shes rab; Bya btang Ri khrod ras chen; Ras chen Gzhon nu dpal ldan; Mdong ston Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan; 'Dul 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po; Mnyam med Sha ra rab 'byams pa Sangs rgyas seng ge; Gtsang smyon He ru ka. 140 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 132.

141 The other two biographies are: 1. Dngos grub dpal 'bar; *Rje btsun gtsang pa he ru ka'i thun mong gi rnam thar yon tan gyi gangs ril dad pa'i seng ge rnam par rtse ba*, 31 ff. Compiled in 1508 at La stod Rgyal gyi śrī Bsam gtan gling. 2. Brag dkar Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal (1473–1557); *Grub thob Gtsang pa smyon pa'i rnam thar dad pa'i spu slong g.yo' ba*. 65 ff. Compiled in 1543, probably at Brag dkar rta so.

142 There is an added folio marked 49 'og, but one block has been marked 101 and 102.

143 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 292 reads: *gson pa // chos dbyings dpon chos dpal 'byor dgos yags dang // tshē bstan bsam grub yags pa rgyam mtsho dang // jo bo dar rgyas bkra shis grags pa'o // de las byung pa'i dge tshogs bsam yas des // 'di phyir rgyu phul sgo (?) gsum bkol ba dang // yi rang bgyis dang mthong thos dran reg sogs // mkha' mnyam 'gros kun rdo 'chang thob shog // e bam // zhu dag legs / maṅga lam // śubham // bha wa tu /*

144 The original xylograph belongs to Tokden Rinpoche of Ladakh, who has graciously lent it for reproduction. Thanks are also due to Dr. Tashi Yangphel, who located the xylograph and arranged for the loan. Another copy is preserved in the magnificent library of Burmiok Athing in Gangtok, Sikkim. I have also seen an example at the Toyo Bunko in Tokyo.

145 According to the *Bal yul mchod rten 'phags pa shing kun dang de'i gnas bshad rnam kyī dkar chag* by Nas lung pa Ngag dbang rdo rje (a student of Rang rig pa), the date of the restoration of Swayambhunāth corresponds to 1497, and the name of the king under whom the restorations were carried out is given as Dzā ma bi Ma la. This is a recent edition from the Sgrol ma lha khang, c. 1956, in 10 ff. The biographies of Gtsang smyon are all agreed on the date of 1504 and during the reign of Ratnamalla. I have no explanation for the date mentioned in the guide to Swayambhunāth.

146 The modern orthography is Mkhar kha. This area is near Rgyal rtse.

147 Myang stod. The modern orthography is Nyang stod. The author gives an interesting enumeration of the geographical groupings of Himavat (p. 12): Mnga' ris skor gsum; La stod tsho bzhi; Dbus gtsang ru bzhi; Mdo' khams sgang gsum; Byar dags skong gsum.

148 Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1124–92) was one of the greatest rediscoverers of *gter ma*. Rgod tshang ras pa, oddly enough, treats Myang Ral pa can and Myang Nyi ma 'od zer as two different personages. This is contrary to the tradition followed by modern Rnying ma pa scholars such as Kong sprul and Bdud 'joms 'Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje.

149 Although this biography barely mentions the brothers of Gtsang smyon, Dngos grub dpal 'bar writes of these brothers on a number of occasions. Gtsang smyon's elder brother, Sog po rgyal mtshan, seems to be less well known than Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (b. 1453), the younger brother, who accompanied Gtsang smyon in some of his early escapades.

150 Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyī nyi ma's biography of Lcang skya, however, includes both Mar pa, the guru of Mi la ras pa, and Gtsang smyon among the predecessors of the Lcang skya incarnation line. The biographies of Gtsang smyon by Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal and Dngos grub dpal 'bar make no mention of Gtsang smyon as the incarnation of Mi la ras pa. Mkhyen brtse, in his *Guide to Central Tibet* (Ferrari 1958), refers to Gtsang smyon as the incarnation of Ras chung.

151 A pho Chos rje Mnyam nyid rdo rje (1439–75) was one of the greatest physicians of the Tibetan tradition and the first of the Zur mkhar school.

152 This is the great teaching monastery known in later times as the Dpal 'khor chos sde of Rgyal rtse. This complex was founded in 1418 by Si tu Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags (1389–1442). The Gur pa grwa tshang was one of the colleges of the Sa skya pa sect.

153 The name of the *sde pa* of Rgyal rtse is not given in any of the three biographies. According to Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal's biography of Gtsang smyon, this incident took place in about 1471.

154 Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal dates Gtsang smyon's arrival in Tsā ri at about 1472. He gives the myriarch's name as Bkra shis dar rgyas. The capital of the Bya myriarchy was Chos rgyal lhun po.

155 Gtsang smyon uses this secret name in the colophon to his biography of Mar pa. He qualifies it with the epithet Dur khrod nyul ba'i rnal 'byor pa, "the yogi who wanders in cemeteries." At the end of the biography of Mi la ras pa he styles himself as Dur khrod nyul ba'i rnal 'byor pa Rus pa'i rgyan can, "the yogi who wanders in cemeteries, the one adorned with bones," without the *gsang mtshan*.

156 Rin chen rnam rgyal, *Grub thob*, fol. 10a, clearly states that Gtsang smyon spent three years at Tsā ri. This allows us to date Gtsang smyon's stay to the period of 1472–74/75. The fact that he met Kun dga' dpal 'byor shortly after he had left Tsā ri to some extent corroborates the dating for this period.

157 Bsam sde ba Grags pa mtha' yas was one of the important figures during the troubled administration of Wang Kun dga' legs pa (reigned 1448–81). The center of the Bsam sde ba was Yar klungs Phu sar.

158 Sne'u rdzong pa Dpal 'byor lhun po was also an important minister of this time. We know that he died in 1480.

159 Despite a careful search, I was unable to find any inscription relating to this restoration while I was in Nepal. There is a bilingual inscription concerned with the restorations made by Tshe dbang nor bu. One would expect a similar stone inscription for Gtsang smyon's time.

160 This alternation is especially common in some Kham pa dialects where both of these pre-initials produce as a reflex a whole set of phonemic nasal onset stops.

161 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 173: *de nas bar sgor phebs tshe / snyi shang gi mi mang pos rgya gar nas tshong la yongs pa'i bud med ma bu bzhi bzung nas mtshong (read: 'tshong) du 'gro ba dang mjal ba las pha grub thob kyis khyod rnams gang du 'gro gsungs pas / khong rnams na re / bdag lcags (read: cag) rnams ni 'di dag mtshong (read: 'tshong) ba la 'gro'o zhes zhu (read: zhus) /*

*pha grub thob chen po ni 'khor 'das thams cad mnyam pa nyid du thugs su tshud (better: chud) kyang / rnam pa snying rje'i gzhan dbang du gyur pas / spyan gyi padma las spyen chab kyi 'phreng ba mu tig sdog po (read: rdog po) chu rlung chen po'i rgyun lta bu ldog pa med pa g.yos te / zhal ras kyi dkyil 'khor rlan par mdzad nas / 'di rnams kho bo la tshongs gcig (read: shig) / khyod rnams ji ltar 'dod pa'i rin kho bos bcal bar bya'o / zhes dgos (?) te / tshong pa'i skye bo rnams la spyi 'dod pa'i rin gser nyid du 'phangs pa med par snang (read: gnang) te / bud med ma bu rnams rang yul ga la ba der grogs bzang po dang / sgrags (?) gos dang yo byad chas rkyen bzang po dang bcas sdug bsngal dang bral zhing bde ba'i gnas thob par mdzad nas / gnas skabs kyi bde ba la bkod do /* The merchants of Ma nang are to this day great travelers, ranging as far as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Tokyo in their trading expeditions.

162 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, pp. 67–68: *de dus su rje dpon slob rnams klo'o smon*



*thang du phebs tshe / klo bos gu ge'i mi mang po gsad (read: bsad) pa'i mgo rnams sgo snya la riags pa / glad (read: klad) pa 'bus g.yengs zhing (read: shing) rul nas sa la lhung ba rjes phyag du bzhes nas sha dang klad pa bzhes tshe / mi mang po 'dus pa rnams la dngos grub dgos na sbyin gyi gsung klad pa thur mgo re snang (read: gnang) ba zos pa rnams 'byor pa dang ldan par gyur / de nas dpon po bkra shis mgon kyis (read: gyis) bsnyen bkur bzang po phul / grags mchog bya ba'i gra pa cig lam sna la btang dpon slob 'ga' shas kyis phebs / de dus klo bo dang gu ge me ma 'cham pas lam la 'jigs nyen che ba las bye ma g.yu drung (read: g.yung drung) gi mdo krag bya ba na rta pa man po yon zhing 'dug /.*

163 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 45: *de nas bsnyen bkur bzabs bar bshams nas se ra 'bras dpungs pa'i dge shes 'ga' rtsod pa byed du bcug tshe / dge shes rnams na re 'di 'dra'i cha lugs dang spyod pa sangs rgyas kyis gsungs pa ni nged kyis ma thos sngar byung pa'i gab le'ang mi 'dug khyod kyis cha lugs dang spyod pa 'di su'i lugs yin zer tshe / rnal 'byor dbang phyug gi zhal nas / srog chags grog mos ri mi mthong // khrom pa'i rbal pas rgya mtsho'i mtha' mi rnyed // byis pa'i lag pas nam mkha' mi khyeb // khyod kyis ma thos pa'i chos dang shes bya mangs nas med // cha lugs 'di 'dra sngar byung ba'i gab le med na gsang bsngags kyis lha rnams dang / rgya gar gyi grub chen brgya bcu (read: brgyad bcu) rnams kyang sngar ma byung pa yin nam / tha na ri mor bris pa 'dra yang ma mthong nam / kho bo'i cha lugs dang spyod pa 'di spyir rdo rje 'chang gi gsang sngags bla med kyis rgyud rnams dang / khyad par dpal dges pa rdo rje'i rtsa ba'i rgyud sdus pa dpal rtag pa gnyis pa nas 'di ltar bshad gsung /.*

164 This first edition included petitions (*gsol 'debs*) to both the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*. Rgod tshang ras pa quotes Gtsang smyon's letter to the Fourth Zhwa dmar Karma pa Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524) accompanying gift prints of Gtsang smyon's new editions. See Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 162.

165 Brag dkar rta so monastery in the vicinity of Skyid grong is built on the spot where Mi la ras pa, having meditated for nine years, achieved *siddhi*. The printery at Brag dkar rta so held a large number of important blocks, including the *Bu chen bcu gnyis* biography of Mi la ras pa, one of the major sources upon which Gtsang smyon based his work. See Appendix II for a list of the editions prepared by Rin chen rnam rgyal at Brag dkar rta so.

166 There is one example of what would seem to be a sixteenth-century edition of the *mgur 'bum* in the library of my friend, Mr. L. P. Lhalungpa. This edition may be the Brag dkar rta so edition, although I am inclined to doubt it.

The first folio is very badly damaged. A title has been added in the manuscript: *Rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum*. 245 ff. 5.5–6.0 cm x 43–44 cm. The colophon reads: */ e ma ho // rnal 'byor bdag gis lhag bsam gyis bzhengs pa'i // rkos mkhan gtso bo bod mkhas a mo gha // de la sogs te mkhas pa rnams kyis ming // rang rang ngag gi lag rjes zhabs na yod // sbyin bdag dkar chag rnam thar zhabs na gsal // dge bas 'gro kun gnas skabs mthar thug gi // bde legs rgya mtsho'i dpal 'byor myur thob shog // e bam /*. From the general appearance and dimensions of the blocks, I attribute this edition to Ras chung phug of the same period as the biographies of Gtsang smyon, reproduced here, and Ras chung. We cannot be certain until a print of the *rnam thar* from this edition turns up.

167 The exact year of the Peking Tibetan edition is not yet known. I have assumed that it must precede the Mongolian edition. Because of the marginal notation *Kha*, we may assume that the Peking edition includes the *Gsol 'debs* by Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan, although I have not seen an actual print.

168 I have taken the description of the Peking Mongolian edition from Heissig (1954), pp. 118–20.

169 This edition was, in all probability, prepared during the regency of the De mo (Bstan rgyas gling) regent, Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las rab rgyas (1886–95).

170 Copies in the libraries of Tibet House, New Delhi, and Burmiok Athing, Gangtok.

171 De Jong (1959), p. 9.

172 The blocks preserved in the Sngags pa grwa tshang are perhaps identical with the Snar thang edition. I have heard accounts that the Snar thang blocks were transferred to Bkra shis lhun po by government order during the nineteenth or twentieth century.

173 Skyid sbug was a small retreat near Rgyal rtse belonging to the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa sect. It is from this monastery that the Skyid sbug aristocratic family takes its name.

174 Ding ri Chos kyi rgyal mtshan prepared editions of the short biographies of Tilopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, and Sgam po pa written by Kong sprul, the biography of Mar pa by Gtsang smyon, and Rin chen rnam rgyal's collection of Mi la ras pa's supplementary *mgur*. These were not, however, issued with the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum*.

175 Gtsang smyon advances the birth and death of Mi la ras pa by twelve years to 1054–1135. Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan, the author of the popular *gsol 'debs* often printed with the *rnam thar* and *mgur 'bum* of Mi la ras pa, is in all likelihood responsible for Gtsang smyon's errant chronology: he states in the colophon that the *gsol 'debs* was composed at Bkra shis lhun grub chos grwa in the Earth Dragon year (1448), 314 years after the death of Mi la ras pa. This statement would place Mi la ras pa's death year at 1134, i.e., 1135. In the older biographies of Mi la ras pa, such as the *Bu chen bcu gnyis*, there are few indications of chronology; even when dates are noted, only the animal designations of the twelve-year cycle are used. We would do well to disregard the dates given by Gtsang smyon. The usual dates for Mi la ras pa conform with the established chronology for the whole Bka' brgyud pa school. Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal mtshan has made an understandable error in calculating the number of years elapsed from the year in which he composed the *gsol 'debs* back to an element and animal date that was already established in the Tibetan tradition. Gtsang smyon accepted his predecessor's statement and logically altered the element in the birth year to make both dates coherent.

176 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 166).

177 I am told that the blocks for this edition are still extant.

178 The blocks for printing this edition were probably preserved in Gtsang or in western Tibet near the Nepalese border. U.S. Library of Congress, Washington.

179 Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 133, mentions Dngos grub dpal 'bar's first meeting with his guru, Gtsang smyon. I have not yet been able to trace a biography of this student of Gtsang smyon. He was one of the senior disciples; therefore, I am inclined to place his birth in the period between 1462 and 1472. He apparently spent a long period at Rtsib ri at the Rgyal gyi śrī Bsam gtan gling Monastery.

180 Example from my collection.

181 The respectful title *Lha btsun* (the abbreviation of *Lha yi btsun pa*) was applied only to ordained monks who were descendants of the old Royal Dynasty of Tibet. *Lha* refers to lineages claiming royal descent much in the same way that other lineages used the so-called clan name. *Lha btsun* is usually translated into Mongolian as *toyin*. Related titles are *rje btsun*, *zhabs drung*, and *rje drung*. *Rje btsun* was and still is applied to personages descended from respectable lineages, particularly those of Ldong, Stong, Bse, and Rmu, who have also taken religious vows. *Zhabs drung* was used for descendants of the ancient religious aristocratic lineages, such as the Rgya of 'Brug, the Ga zi of Byang Stag lung, and the 'Khon of Sa skya. Similarly, *rje drung* was reserved for monks or nuns descended from the secular aristocratic families.

- 182 The Gung thang princes were descended from 'Od srung through Dpal 'khor btsan, Bkra shis brtsegs pa, and Dpal lde. They were theoretically the overlords of Glo bo Smon thang.
- 183 Example from the library of L. P. Lhalungpa, New Delhi.
- 184 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 163).
- 185 Example from the library of L. P. Lhalungpa, New Delhi.
- 186 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 105).
- 187 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 164).
- 188 Example from my collection.
- 189 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 165).
- 190 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 107?).
- 191 *Rnam thar smad cha*, fol. 22r.
- 192 We know very little about Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan. The first mention of him in the biography that I have found is in Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 207: / *so so thar pa'i cha lugs can gyi ston sgom bcu phrag gnyis kyi nang nas / rigs sad pa'i skyes bu dam pa mdo sngags gnyis ka la mkhas shing / chen po'i rnal 'byor pa dbang phyug rgyal mtshan /*. In the collected short biographies of the successive incarnations of the Black Hat (Zhwa nag) Karma pa lamas there is mention of one Sde mdun (read: Sde bdun) Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan who was a student of the Seventh Karma pa, Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506). I am inclined to doubt that these two Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan are identical. From the chronological indications I would infer that Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan met Gtsang smyon first about 1502. We would expect then that he would have been born about 1480. The only other piece of information that we have is that he was closely connected with the monastery of Rdza ri Bsam gtan gling.
- 193 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 162).
- 194 Example in the U.S. Library of Congress, Washington.
- 195 'Jam dpal chos lha, known as Lo paṅ ras chen or Śrī Lo paṅ pa, became an eminent yogi and scholar of the Rtsib ri monastery, Rgyal gyi śrī ri dgon. The first mention of him in the biography occurs at Sna tshogs rang grol, *Gtsang smyon*, p. 207–8: *he ru ka'i cha lugs can gyi thugs sras rtogs ldan nyer brgyad kyi nang nas / mos gus mthar phyin pa'i sngags 'chang / rje nyid kyi bka'i gsang mdzod 'dzin pa'i skyes bu dam pa / lo paṅ pa 'jam dpal chos lha /*. The indications are that he met Gtsang smyon first in about 1502. He served for some time as Gtsang smyon's secretary, and we find his name in the colophon to the biography of Mar pa as the scribe of Gtsang smyon.
- 196 Example from the library of Stakna Kusho of Ladakh. There is a print of a *mgur 'bum* of Yang dgon pa that may also belong to an author of Gtsang smyon's school at the library of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in Gangtok. The compiler of the *mgur 'bum* (*Rgyal ba yang dgon chos rje'i mgur 'bum* in 128 ff.) is not clearly stated. The colophon states only that the xylograph was prepared by one Chos dbang rgyal mtshan, a disciple of one Rje bstun Chos legs, in 1524 at the hermitage of Kun gsal Sglang po che in the territory of the princes of Gung thang. The style of the presentation resembles that of Gtsang smyon's school.
- 197 There is a note to the colophon that Sangs rgyas dar po was a student of Gtsang smyon, Lha btsun, and Lo paṅ ras pa.
- 198 Example from the library of Tibet House, New Delhi (no. 160).
- 199 See Ferrari (1958), p. 165.
- 200 From the beginning of the eighteenth century, two incarnation lines of Ngag dbang rnam rgyal were recognized in Bhutan: the Zhabs drung or Thugs sprul of Rta log Gsang snags chos glings and the Phyogs las or Gsung sprul of Spa gro Gsang chen chos 'khor.

- 201 Chandra (1963), pt. I, pp. 125–26.
- 202 This has been reproduced and analyzed in Chandra (1963), part I.
- 203 Lha rtse ba, the author of the Northern supplement, was the teacher and chief supporter of Dpag bsam dbang po.
- 204 Chandra (1963), pt. III, no. 13417.
- 205 Chandra (1965), p. 14.
- 206 Tucci (1957), pp. 235 et seq.
- 207 Chandra (1965) mentions several of these eighteenth-century Sanskrit works.
- 208 Si tu was especially interested in the geography of India. In his diary for the year 1749 (p. 283) he has recorded the names of fifty-six states or ruling dynasties in India with notes on the location of some of these provinces.
- 209 Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755) is subject of a short article by Richardson (1958).
- 210 Kolmas (1968), pp. 32–42.
- 211 The official Karma pa prophecy of Si tu's rebirth states that he would be reborn in the Iron Dragon year (1700). Si tu indicates that the discrepancy results from the fact that the calendar that had been proposed by Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705) and adopted by the Lhasa government had not by 1699/1700 become generally adopted in Khams (p. 7).
- 212 The title "Si tu" is derived from the Chinese title "Kwan ting ta'i si tu" that several of the early lamas of this lineage had received during the Ming dynasty.
- 213 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 73.
- 214 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 133–24.
- 215 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 104.
- 216 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 263–70.
- 217 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 267.
- 218 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 270.
- 219 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 267.
- 220 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 438.
- 221 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 602.
- 222 Chandra (1961), no. 108.
- 223 Chandra (1961), no. 108.
- 224 Chandra (1961), no 99.
- 225 Volume A, 371 ff.
- 226 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 1–124.
- 227 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 124–726.
- 228 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 270.
- 229 An alternative spelling, 'Be lo, was common in Khams. The full name of this editor was Karma tshe dbang kun khyab nges don bstan 'phel.
- 230 See the table below. The erroneous elements have been noted in the form in which they occur and corrected: *chu* (i.e., *shing*) *bya*.
- 231 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 726–40.
- 232 The dates and successions have been taken from Regmi (1966), pt. II.
- 233 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 170.
- 234 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, p. 122.
- 235 Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*, pp. 101–5.
- 236 For example, we find Dngul chu rendered Rngum chu and Stag bstan instead of Rtag bstan.
- 237 For the convenience of historians who may want to use this text, I have prepared a

chronological outline. The page number (in parentheses) indicates where the text for the particular year begins in Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tu*.

I. The Biography: Birth and early youth 1699–1707 (1); *sa byi* 1708 (18); *sa glang* 1709 (20); *lcags stag* 1710 (21); *lcags yos* 1711 (22); *chu 'brug* 1712 (26); *chu sbrul* 1713 (32); *shing rta* 1714 (41); *shing lug* 1715 (44); *me spre* 1716 (49); *me bya* 1717 (51); *sa khyi* 1718 (54); *sa phag* 1719 (58); *lcags byi* 1720 (62); *lcags glang* 1721 (70); *chu stag* 1722 (78); *chu yos* 1723 (97).

II. The Diaries: *shing 'brug* 1724 (124); *shing sbrul* 1725 (133); *me rta* 1726 (137); *me lug* 1727 (141); *sa spre* 1728 (143); *sa bya* 1729 (145); *lcags khyi* 1730 (148); *lcags phag* 1731 (151); *chu byi* 1732 (153); *chu glang* 1733 (156); *shing stag* 1734 (157); *shing yos* 1735 (162); *me 'brug* 1736 (169); *me sbrul* 1737 (177); *sa rta* 1738 (179); *sa lug* 1739 (182); *lcags spre* 1740 (189); *lcags bya* 1741 (198); *chu khyi* 1742 (206); *chu phag* 1743 (210); *shing byi* 1744 (216); *shing glang* 1745 (222); *me stag* 1746 (238); *me yos* 1747 (247); *sa 'brug* 1748 (263); *sa sbrul* 1749 (281); *lcags rta* 1750 (298); *lcags lug* 1751 (306); *chu spre* 1752 (309); *chu bya* 1753 (315); [*shing khyi* 1754] (327); *shing phag* 1755 (331); *me byi* 1756 (340); *sa* [i.e., *me*] *glang* 1757 (350); *sa stag* 1758 (366); *sa yos* 1759 (377); *lcags 'brug* 1760 (395); *lcags sbrul* 1761 (410); *chu rta* 1762 (425); *chu lug* 1763 (446); *shing sprel* 1764 (469); *chu* (i.e., *shing*) *bya* 1765 (494); *me khyi* 1766 (519); *me phag* 1767 (539); *sa byi* 1768 (570); *sa glang* 1769 (593); *lcags stag* 1770 (617); *lcags yos* 1771 (643); *chu 'brug* 1772 (673); *chu sbrul* 1773 (699); *shing rta* 1774 (719).

III. Editor's Supplement: Death and funeral arrangements (726); List of the teachers of Si tu (735); List of the students of Si tu (737); Colophon (740).

238 Accurately numbering the Si tu line is complicated because there are several traditions. The current theory prevalent among scholars of the Karma pa sect counts Padma nyin byed dbang po as the thirteenth of the line. This theory considers the four teachers marked A to D as the first through the fourth, and numbers the successive teachers consecutively. The famous Karma pa scholar, Mi nyag Gangs dkar Karma bshad sgrub chos kyi seng ge, however, considered Padma nyin byed dbang po to have been the ninth of the line. It is this tradition we have followed here.

239 The dates here have largely been taken from a manuscript called the *Kwan ting ta'i si tu rim byon rnams kyi mtshan tho gzigs bde don bsdus me long* in the possession of Ongan Rinpoche of Darjeeling. This manuscript is quite corrupt, however, and has been checked against a number of other sources.

240 This lama is called Legs bshad smra ba'i seng ge in the chronological list belonging to Ongan. Si tu's version, however, is probably more correct. Legs bshad was the son of Mgon po lhun grub, the chieftain of Gling tshang. He was recognized but never installed, for his father refused to give his son to the monks of Lho Karma dgon.

241 After the death of Si tu Chos kyi 'byung gnas, a second incarnation was recognized and a *bla brang* established at Kaḥ thog: 9. Chos kyi blo gros; 10. Chos kyi rgya mtsho, a nephew of Mkhyyen brtse'i dbang po; 11. Name unknown, born in the family of Rgya nag tshang of Skye rgu mdo.

242 The first work has been described by Tucci (1949), p. 154, where the full title is given as 'Dzam gling byang phyogs kyi thub pa'i rgyal tshab chen po dpal ldan sa skya pa'i gdung rab (for: rabs) rin po che ji ltar byon pa'i tshul gyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rin po che'i bang mdzod dgos 'dod kun 'byung. Tucci gives the author as the Sngags 'chang Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams grags pa rgyal mtshan and notes that the blocks were too worn to print legible copies in 1939. Tucci says that he managed to obtain two copies. Tucci lists briefly other Sa skya chronicles that he has seen quoted but copies of which he does not possess.

243 *Srid pa gsum gyi bla ma dpal sa skya pa chen po sngags 'chang ngag gi dbang po kun dga' rin chen gyi rnam par thar ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*. The biography of 'Jam pa'i dbyangs pa Dpal Ngag dbang Bsod noms dbang po grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1559–1621) by Sngags 'chang Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod noms has the title *Khams gsum gyi 'dren pa dam pa grub pa mchog gi ded dpon 'jam pa'i dbyangs bsod noms dbang pa'i rnam par thar bcud kyi thigs phrin rab tu 'phel ba'i dgos 'dod 'byung ba'i chu gter* and is not particularly interesting according to Tucci. Another xylograph in Tucci's library is the *Sa skya Guide* used by Ferrari and Petech in their production of the annotated translation of Mkhyen brtse's guide to holy places (Ferrari, 1958). This work, dating from no earlier than the seventeenth century, bears the title: *Gdan sa chen po dpal ldan sa skya'i gtsug lag khang dang rten gsum gi dkar chag*.

244 *De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam chen gsang ngag rin po che'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*.

245 *Gangs can yul gyi sa la spyod pa'i mtho ris kyi rgyal blon gtso bor brjod pa'i deb ther rdzogs ldan gzhon nu'i dga' ston dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs zhes bya ba bzhugs so*, 1643.

246 See Tucci (1949), pp. 625–29. Unfortunately, Tucci's translation leaves something to be desired; in several places he has omitted names from the lineage.

247 The Yangs pa can print of the *Deb ther sngon po* is identical to the Kun bde gling edition translated by Roerich (Roerich 1949, pp. 210–11). The *Chos 'byung* of Padma dkar po and Bu ston contain little or nothing that is relevant to the origins and early history of the 'Khon.

248 There is an excellent manuscript copy of this work in the Far Eastern Library of the University of Washington.

249 *Rgya bod yig tshang*, fol. 355b: *yig mkhan shākya'i dge bsnyen shri bhu ti / bha dra'i ming can g.yas ru stag tshang pas / shing pho stag la stag sna don rtser bkod /*.

250 Deshung Rinpoche has not only kindly discussed most of the problematical passages with me but also has placed at my disposal a copy of a concise summary of the 'Khon lineage that he prepared for Sandy and Ariane Macdonald.

251 Mkhon/'Khon: In this text the spelling of the clan (*rus*) name is, most commonly, Mkhon. The *Blue Annals* follows the orthography that our Sa skya colleagues themselves use: 'Khon. The very common interchanges between the *m-* and *'a chung* pre-initials in this text would lead one to speculate that at the time this text was written, the *'a chung* represented a nasal.

252 La stod mnga' ris: La stod, according to Deshung Rinpoche, is a name for all of Gtsang stod, Gtsang being divided into Gtsang stod and Gtsang smad. Ferrari (1958), p. 153, n. 542, says: "The La stod (also Las stod) region...seems to be the region south of the Gtsang po about 87' long." (Stod) Mnga' ris refers to western Tibet in general and seems to be contiguous to La stod. In Deshung Rinpoche's opinion the tradition that the *lha mched gsum* (the three heavenly brothers) first came to earth in La stod Mnga' ris is wrong. He contends that they descended to earth at Rgyal mo shel tshwa on the edge of the glacier mountains (*gangs ri*). It is here that the *bla mtsho* of the Sa skya pa is located. (For a discussion of *bla mtsho*, see Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1956), p. 482). This area is north and west of Shangs in G.yas ru in Gtsang. The valley of Shangs is on the other side (i.e., north side) of the Gtsang po, to the east of Gzhis ka rtse. It is about three or four days by foot from Sa skya.

253 Spyi rings: The orthography of this name is Lce ring in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* and Spyi ring according to Deshung Rinpoche. Further research is needed on the connotative as well as the denotative aspects of names from this early period.

254 G.yu ris: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has G.yu ring, as does Deshung Rinpoche.

255 Dbu se: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has G.yu bse. Deshung Rinpoche spells this name as G.yu se. The fact that *g.yu* "turquoise" and *bse* "the name of a plant of the rose family; serow leather, etc." occur in the above names is extremely interesting. Thomas (1957), p. 57, notes that *g.yu* and *bse* are endowed with supernatural attributes and are retained in the Bon pantheon.

256 Si ji li spun bzhi: Both editions of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* at my disposal show probable textual corruption: / *g.yu bse byi la spun bzhi byung ba* /. Tucci (1949), p. 679, n. 3, has compared this phrase in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* with the *Sa skya Chronicles* and has identified the Se byi lu spun bzhi of that source with Si byi li, "the first dwellers on earth."

257 Ldong rus chen bco brgyad: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has "Gdong gi rus chen bco brgyad." Ldong, with its several spelling variations, refers to one of the four or six early tribes of Tibet.

258 Smu'i bu mo Smu bza' ldem bu: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has Rmu'i bu mo Dmu sa ldem. It appears that the Dmu sa of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* is an error for Dmu bza'. Further evidence is necessary, however. Rmu, with the alternate spellings Smu and Dmu, is the name of one of the four or six early tribes of Tibet.

259 Ma sangs spun bdun: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has the identical spelling. Tucci (1949), p. 679, n. 6, quotes the *Sa skya Chronicles* as having Ma bzang, which he thinks is a recent and learned form adopted for the sake of homophony. Part of his evidence rests on the spelling of the name of the seventh brother as Ma sang spyi rje in this same source. Deshung Rinpoche spells this latter name in the same manner.

260 *Rmu thag* and *rkyang thag*: The *rmu thag* is the rope connecting heaven and earth by which the ancient kings of Tibet were reputed to ascend to heaven. The *rkyang thag* is any rope let down from an elevated place to enable someone below to ascend.

261 Tucci has noted that the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* follows another source and omits Ma sangs spyi rje, taking Thog tsha dpa' bo stag as the youngest of the Ma sangs spun bdun. He cites Dkon mchog lhun grub and the *Sa skya Chronicles*, with which the *Rgya bod yig tshang* is in agreement.

262 Thog tsam 'ur ma is given by the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* as Thog lcam hur mo.

263 Thog tsha dpa' bo stag: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* gives the more correct literary form Thog tsha dpa' bo stag, which is corroborated by Deshung Rinpoche's list. For a discussion of the term *tsha*, see Tucci (1949) p. 679, n. 7.

264 This manuscript of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* has numerous substitutions of the genitive for the instrumental. This passage reads: *de'i klu'i bu mo.../*. This is an obvious error for *des klu'i bu mo.../*.

265 Klu lcam bra ma: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* gives the name of the wife of Thog tsha dpa' bo stag as Mon bza' mtsho rgyal. Tucci, in quoting the *Sa skya Chronicles* and Dkon mchog lhun grub, notes this discrepancy between the two traditions. The *Sa skya Chronicles* give the name of Klu lcam bra ma as Klu lcam bram, according to Tucci, and are in agreement with the tradition represented by the *Rgya bod yig tshang*. Mon bza' mtsho mo rgyal is considered by this tradition to be the wife of Thog tsha dpa' bo stag's son, Klu tsha rta so 'od chen.

266 Klu tsha rta so 'od chen: This generation is omitted from the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*, which names the son of Tshog tsha dpa' bo stag as G.ya' spang skyes. Deshung Rinpoche gives the name as Stag po 'od chen. *So* is obviously a scribal error for *po*, but the *rta/stag*

alternation is very interesting. Richardson's investigation on the Zhol inscription have revealed a similar alternation of *rtal/stag* in the name of the minister Ngan lam Stag sgra klu gong. See Richardson (1952), pp. 3 et seq.

267 G.ya' spang skyes. This is the first 'Khon ancestor mentioned in the *Blue Annals*. In the *Blue Annals*, it is said that G.ya' spang skyes gcig was from Yar klungs char. This statement is intriguing in the light of the purported role of Yar klungs in the development of Tibetan civilization. However, this form is probably no more than an error for G.ya' lung.

268 Skya rings khrag med: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* reads Skya rengs khrag med. *Khrag med* does, of course, mean "bloodless." *Skya rengs* is discussed in Tucci (1949), p. 679, n. 8. Roerich's translation of the relevant passage in the *Blue Annals* seems far from satisfactory in light of the more extensive treatment in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* and the *Rgya bod yig tshang*. His translation would seem to imply that the *srin po* was the interloper, not G.ya' spang skyes.

269 G.ya' bum si le ma: G.ya' 'brum si le ma. Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*: G.ya' grum bsil ma; *Blue Annals*: Si li ma. For speculations on the meaning of this episode, see Tucci (1949) p. 679, n. 8.

270 Mkhon bar skyes: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*: 'Khon par skyes; *Blue Annals*: 'Khon par skyes; Deshung Rinpoche: 'Khon ba skyes.

271 Gtsan sa lcam bu smon: This passage in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* is stated: '*khon par skyes kyis jo mo btsan mo bza' lce sman gnyis la sras dpal po che 'khrungs pa l*. Tucci translates this passage to suggest that 'Khon par skyes had two wives; but he cites the *Sa skya Chronicles*, which give the name as Btsan bza' lcam bu sgron. This is another problem that will require further research.

272 Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* and the *Blue Annals* give only the epithet or title Dpal po che, which was awarded only after his meeting with Khri srong lde bstan. Deshung Rinpoche gives both Rje gung stag or 'Khon Dpal po che. Tucci quotes the *Sa skya Chronicles* as giving the name Dkon rje Gung stag.

273 La stod snyan rtse thang gyi ya 'phyang la mul: It is very difficult to identify this locality. La stod is a synonym for Gtsang stod. There is a Rtse thang or Rtses thang in the Lho area of Dbus. It is impossible that this is the place to which this passage refers. The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* has La stod gnyan se thar gyi ya tshangs la yul. The *mul* of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* is an obvious scribal error for *yul*. The *Sa skya Chronicles*, according to Tucci, also have Gnyan se thar. In addition to the spellings *ya 'phyang* of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* and *ya tshangs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*, Tucci also cites the *Sa skya Chronicles* with *ya chang* and the life of Kun dga' rin chen with *ya changs*. None of our *Sa skya* informants will hazard a positive statement as to where this place is. Deshung Rinpoche's comment is: *sngon gyi 'khon ston rnams bzhuvs gnas ni la stod byang 'brog gi sa char yod 'dra ste / yig rnying rnams su la stod byang gi 'khon tsho'i sde pa rnams gsung l*.

274 ad mi mi bdun: The various lists and traditions concerning the Sad mi mi bdun have been studied by Tucci (1949), p. 690, n. 174, and (1955), pp. 12–25. Although it is probable that we will never be able to say positively who were the first Tibetans to be ordained, a careful and comprehensive study of the various traditions and lists will yield very valuable information on the problem of textual relationships. The list of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* corresponds very closely to the list given in the *Chos 'byung* of Padma dkar po, fol. 100r–v, of the Punakha edition and cited by Tucci (1955), p. 15. It is obvious that the list of the *Rgya bod yig tshang* is quite corrupt in its orthography. A thorough investigation of this problem is necessary.



275 Da was Ratna rakshi ta Rin chen bsrung pa: Da was is possibly an old scribal error for Dbas. Perhaps, a *d*-pre-initial became separated from the *b*, and then the *b* was converted into *w* in pseudo-Sanskritization. At present Sba, Dbā', Rba, and Sbas seem to be acceptable substitutions.

276 Rba Dznyāntrai ta Ye shes bsrung pa: Dznyāntrai ta is an obvious textual corruption for Jñānendrarakṣita. The Tibetan translation of the initiatory name lacks the *indra*, the Tibetan *dbang po*.

277 Rta dbyangs: Skt.: Aśvaghōṣa. In this place I am a little leery of interpreting this to mean that Ye shes bsrung pa was an emanation of Rta dbyangs. In the *Bka' thang sde lnga*, there is a Sba Dpal dbyangs. The *Sba bzhed* has Dpal dbyangs; Bu ston has Sba Khri bzher Sang shi ta who is identical with Dpal dbyangs. Sum pa Mkhan po lists Sba khri gzigs and identifies him with Sba Dpal dbyangs. Another redaction of the *Sba bzhed* gives a Rba khri gzigs who was later called Dpal dbyangs. Could Rta dbyangs be a substitution or error for Dpal dbyangs? Or perhaps it might be the other way around.

278 *Bcam mo*: I have considered this an error for *lcam mo*, a sister. This makes Rlangs Lo tsā ba a maternal uncle (*zhang po*) to Mkhon Klu'i dbang po bsrung pa.

279 Rlangs khams pa Lo tsā ba: The spelling Khams pa, in opposition to the previous Khom pa, should be noted. This marriage alliance between the ancestors of the Sa skya pa and ancestors of the Phag mo gru pa is extremely interesting.

280 Rlangs gza' Sne chung: Gza' is obviously an error for bza'. This woman's name is given in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* as Lha sa khrim bu. The translation in Tucci (1949) reads Lhas khrims bu. Tucci notes that the *Sa skya Chronicles* read Glang bza' No chung ma. Since the tradition that the *Rgya bod yig tshang* follows includes Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba among the Sad mi mi bdun, Tucci's contention that *lcam mo* means the same as *bu mo*, which he translates as daughter, cannot stand unchallenged. However, the Fifth Dalai Lama does refer to her as the *bu mo*, daughter.

281 Tucci cites the *Sa skya Chronicles* as stating that Dpal po che had only two sons. This is in accord with the *Rgya bod yig tshang*. The *Blue Annals* and Deshung Rinpoche list four sons. The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*, because of punctuation problems, can be interpreted, as Tucci does, as implying there were five sons.

282 Sba Ye shes dbang po bsrung pa: Compare with the previous occurrence, where the clan name is spelled Rba.

283 From this statement, we may draw the fairly certain conclusion that all of the Sad mi mi bdun were not initiated at the same time. This explains the *rgan pal bar pa/gzhon nu* division and, perhaps, some of the contradictions in the traditions. The initiators of 'Khon were one of the *rgan pa* and his maternal uncle, who was the *bar pa*.

284 *Rdo rje phur pa*: Skt. *Vajrakīla*, one of the Rnying ma pa *Eight Doctrines of Propitiations* (*Bka' brgyad*), held to have been preached by Padmasambhava himself. The basic text of the *Vajrakīla* cycle is the *Vajrakīlayamūlatantrakhanda*. The *Bka' brgyad*, as enumerated by Deshung Rinpoche, are: 1. *'Jam dpal sku*; 2. *Padma gsung*; 3. *Yang dag thugs*; 4. *Bdud rtsi yon tan*; 5. *Phrin las phur pa*; 6. *Dmod pa drag sngags*; 7. *Ma mo rbod gtong*; 8. *'Jig rten mchog bstod*. Each of the *Bka' brgyad* has a corresponding tantra and tantric cycle of deities. The tantric cycles that were followed by the 'Khon system Rnying ma pa were the *Rdo rje phur pa* and the *Yang dag*. Even after the reform of Sa chen Kun dga' snying po, *Vajrakīla* remained a tantric cycle dear to the hearts of the followers of the Sa skya system.

285 Yer pa'i brag is a rock-cliff hill northeast of Lhasa. Khri srong lde btsan is held to have

founded some hermitages here, and since the earliest times this area has been important in the development of Buddhism.

286 Rdo rje Rin po che: There is a discrepancy between the *Rgya bod yig tshang* and the *Sa skya Chronicles* (as quoted by Tucci) on one side, and the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*, the *Blue Annals*, and Deshung Rinpoche, on the other. Rdo rje Rin po che, according to the first set of traditions, is the younger brother of 'Khon Nāgendrarākṣita. The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* identifies Rdo rje rin chen as the son of the youngest of the four brothers, i.e., Tshe 'dzin. The *Blue Annals* identifies Rdo rje Rin po che as the son of the fourth brother, Tshe 'dzin, but Roerich's translation suggests that Tshe 'dzin and Rdo rje Rin po che were synonymous. Deshung Rinpoche as well lists Rdo rje rin chen as the son of Tshe 'dzin. If we believe these accounts, he was, therefore, a nephew of 'Khon Klu 'i dbang po bsrung ba.

287 *Tha snyad*: This word implies both the etymological and semantic meaning of a word or phrase and refers to the distinguishing and defining characteristics of a concept. Deshung Rinpoche glosses this word: *'khon klu dbang khu dbon yan chad bod dang 'khon la sngags pa dang rab byung gi tha snyad te ming ma byung ba'i don no l.*

288 'Bro dgra 'dul: 'Bro, as is well known, is a clan name, occurring in the Tun-huang documents. Also, see Tucci (1949), p. 737.

289 'Gro g.yang lon skyid: 'Gro is an obvious error for 'Bro. Deshung Rinpoche gives her name as 'Bro bza' g.yang lon skyid in a gloss.

290 The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* follows a tradition that says she had only six sons. Tucci, when citing the *Sa skya Chronicles*, does not note any discrepancy between them and the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*. Deshung Rinpoche, on the other hand, follows a tradition in which there were seven sons, the 'Bro tsha spun bdun.

291 *Gson gshid*: This word refers to a sort of celebration or ceremony. *Gshid*, or *shid*, in all the dictionaries, is given as "a funeral ceremony." *Gson*, basically, means "to live; alive." The term *gshid*, nowadays, refers to the giving away of a dead man's possessions to the poor, thus gaining merit for the deceased. Deshung Rinpoche glosses this word: *shid ces pa tshe 'das kyi dge rtsa btang ba'o / sngon gyi yi ge phal cher ltad mo ma gtogs med.* At that time, funerals may have served as opportunities for social interaction and the staging of competitive sporting events. This situation is very reminiscent of certain incidents in the Ge sar epic, where we see a tension-filled *agon* between an uncle and nephew, and the ultimate victory of the nephew in the horse races.

292 Snyan rtse: Deshung Rinpoche thinks the proper orthography is Gnyen rtse. Informants say that this area is in the vicinity of La stod in Gtsang, but they are not sure of its exact location.

293 'Bro is a clan name. By extension, the clan name may have been applied to the area that the clan occupied. However, the reverse process, by which a place name comes to refer to a clan occupying that area, may be more plausible in this case. Although one informant would like to relate this word to 'brog, Deshung Rinpoche's explanation "'bro zhes rus ming" is more suitable in the light of the Tun-huang documents.

294 *Rta lus chas 'dra 'dra ba 'ba' zhig yos*: Deshung Rinpoche explains *yos* as equivalent to *brjes*, the perfect form of *rje ba*, "to barter, change, exchange." In this case, *yos* is probably related to *g.yo ba*, "to move." The word '*ba' zhig* is defined as "only, solely, alone." However, '*ba*' is a legal term that Jäschke gives as "seizure, distraint; or rather the liability of paying higher interest, payment not having been made at the appointed time." I speculate that '*ba'...yos* might mean "to lay down a wager." Deshung Rinpoche has paraphrased this episode

for us: *zhang po de bod kyi gyad pa'i rgyud yin pas sku rtsal shin tu che bar byung / de'i tshe 'bro dgra 'dul gyis gnyen rtser ltad mo nyi ma gsum byung bar sku mched bdun pos nyi ma re re bzhin rta dang gos 'dra 'dra brjes nas rta brgyugs tshab ste su mgyogs dang su mdzes 'gran skabs 'khon sku mched bdun las rtsal che ba dang gos bzang ba dang rta mgyogs pa ma byung bas khrom thog chod /*. All of these terms require further research. The basic question is whether or not this *gson gshid* functioned as a market, an occasion to trade horses, slaves, and merchandise. Does *jos* only mean “to exchange” or can it also mean “to wager on”?

295 *Rta rgyug tshabs 'dran*: The common word for “horse race” is *rta brgyugs*. As seen from Deshung Rinpoche’s paraphrase in the above note, *tshab(s)* means the same as *'gran pa*, “to vie, compete.”

296 *Khrom thog chod*: Deshung Rinpoche glosses this idiom: *khrom thog chod ces mi mang po de'i dkyil na spun bdun khyad par du 'phags pa'i don no /*. This is an extremely interesting idiom and reminds one of the English “to come out on top.”

297 *Tho 'tsham pa*: Deshung Rinpoche says that this phrase means “to seek an opportunity to do harm” (*'tho 'tsham pa zhes pa ni gnod pa byed e thub bam bar gcod bya e thub lta ba'i don te glags 'tshod ba'am glags lta ba'ang zer ro /*).

298 Mang yul is an area of southern and southwestern Gtsang that borders on Nepal. The main town is Skyid grong. The confusion between Mang yul and Mar yul is well known. Deshung Rinpoche has *Mnga' ris Mang yul* in his gloss. Mang yul is in La stod in Gtsang; Mar yul is in *Mnga' ris skor gsum*. The problem in defining this area lies in the smooth way in which Gtsang La stod blends into *Mnga' ris*.

299 The Gung thang pass is in the Mang yul region, at the border of Nepal. Deshung Rinpoche’s gloss reads *Mnga' ris Gung thang*.

300 Gad is surely an error for Srad. Tucci cites the *Sa skya Chronicles* as stating that the descendants of the third brother spread in Srad. Deshung Rinpoche’s gloss also gives Srad. Srad, according to *Bdag chen rin po che*, is about three-and-a-half days’ walk southeast of Sa skya. There was a *rdzong dpon* of the Tibetan government in Srad rdzong.

301 *Gnya' lo ro*: Informants are not sure where this place is located. Tucci (1949), quoting the *Sa skya Chronicles*, says that the descendants of the fourth son spread in *Gnyal lo ro*. If *Gnya' lo ro* should read *Gnyal lo ro*, it would be the valley of the Lo ro, a tributary of the *Gnyal*, located in *Lho kha*. This area is a considerable distance from Sa skya.

302 *Nyang shab*: *Nyang* is a general name for the area south of the Gtsang po including *Gzhis ka rtse* and *Shab*. *Shab* is the southwestern portion of *Nyang* and lies about two days (*zhag*) northeast of Sa skya. There were many communities (*sde*) of Sa skya subjects (*mi ser*) in *Shab*.

303 *Grom pa g.ya' lung*: *Grom pa* is the general name for the area around Sa skya. Deshung Rinpoche says that in old writings the designation for Sa skya is *Gtsang La stod Grom pa Dpal ldan Sa skya*. *G.ya' lung* is a smaller division of *Grom pa*, located southwest of Sa skya. On the basis of this passage from the *Rgya bod yig tshang* and the explanation of Deshung Rinpoche, I must humbly disagree with the identification made in Tucci (1949), p. 679, n. 18, of Mang yul with Mar yul (Ladakh).

304 *Ma 'khrigs sde gsum*: According to Deshung Rinpoche, the *Ma 'khrigs sde gsum* were three communities (*sde*) of the 'Khon, who were descendants of the youngest of the 'Bro tsha spun bdun. These three communities were located in *Snyan rtse reng*.

305 *Snyan rtse reng*: Deshung Rinpoche glosses this passage: *sa cha'i ming yin nges kyang gsal po ngo shes pa ni med / ma 'khrigs sde gsum grong pa tshan pa gsum yod pa yin /*

306 Khab po stag thog: Deshung Rinpoche thinks that the second syllable *po* is an error for *so*. Khab so stag thog is a region in the northern part of La stod. To the east of Sa skya there is the Kha'u lung valley. In this area are several settlements (*grong pa*) that are called the Khab po che.

307 G.yas ru byang: It should be remembered that the direction of the banners (*ru*) was from northeast to southwest. Gtsang was also much larger than it is at present. See Tucci (1956), p. 78, n. 5. The Sa skya influence is very strong in Khams and southwestern A mdo. Tucci attempts to identify the northern boundary of G.yas ru with the Nag chu of southwestern A mdo.

308 Rdal chang tshang: This is probably a corruption. None of our informants would venture an opinion as to the location of this place.

309 Mkhon Dge skyabs: The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* identifies Dge skyabs as the youngest of the sons of Gtsug tor shes rab. Mention of Dge skyabs is omitted in Tucci's translation.

310 Shab stod: Shab is divided into Stod (the upper portion) and Smad (the lower portion).

311 Tsha mo rong glang gi brag: The meditation place (*sgrub gnas*) of Mkhon ston Bal po is located one day's (*zhag*) walk (*bgrod pa*) to the east of Sa skya. It is a cave on the side of the mountain called Phur ri by the local inhabitants. Nowadays, there is a chaplain (*dkon gnyer*) from Sa skya in attendance here.

312 Stan ma bcu gnyis: The usual orthography is Bstan ma. The twelve Bstan ma goddesses belong to the same group as the Tshe ring mched lnga. This group of goddesses was subdued by Padmasambhava, according to one tradition, at 'U yug in Gtsang. See Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1956), pp. 181–98.

313 Bya ru lung pa: Our informants are uncertain as to the location of this area.

314 G.ya' lung mkhar thabs: G.ya' lung lies less than a day's walk to the southwest of Sa skya. Mkhar thabs is the name of a smaller area within G.ya' lung. According to the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle*, Śākya blo gros founded 'Jag gshongs in G.ya' lung. Could Mkhar thabs be the area where 'Jag gshongs is located?

315 *Yab med kyi yul*: *Yab med* is an obvious error for *yab mes* or *yab myes*, "father and grandfather, ancestors, progenitors." In G.ya' lung mkhar thabs, the land of Śākya blo gros' ancestors, there is a *mchod rten* of the 'Khon containing a concealed Rnying ma pa *mchod rten*. Deshung Rinpoche has visited this place.

316 *Go mi'i dge bsnyen* seems to mean no more than the full-fledged *upāsaka* (*dge bsnyen*), who scrupulously observes all eight vows. *Go mi* is derived from the name of Candragomin, who was supposed to have scrupulously observed his vows. The Tibetans render Candragomin as Btsun pa Zla ba and understand *gomin* as equivalent to *btsun pa*.

Deshung Rinpoche's concise explanation of *dge bsnyen* is well worth quoting in full: *srog gcod pa tsam spong bar khas len pa sna gcig spyod pa'i dge bsnyen / srog gcod pa dang / ma byin len gnyis spong bar khas blangs nas srung ba / sna 'ga' spyod pa'i dge bsnyen / srog gcod rku ba brdzun smra ba gsum spong nas srung na phal cher spyod pa'i dge bsnyen / srog gcod rku brdzun gsum spong ba'i khar / rang gi chung ma las gzhan bud med la 'khrig pa spyod pa spong na / yongs rdzogs dge bsnyen / srog gcod rku brdzun bud med la mi tshangs spyod pa gtan nas spong zhing chang mi 'thung na / tshangs spyod dge bsnyen nam / tshangs par spyod pa'i dge bsnyen no / tshangs spyod gzhir bzhag nas ji srid 'tsho ba'i bar / bsnyen gnas yan lag brgyad kyī sdom pa la gnas na / go mi'i dgu bsnyen te / slob dpon tsandra (zla ba) go mi (btsun pa) lta bu lags so / bod skad btsun pa zla ba bsgyur 'dug zhu /*

317 Zhus ston Gzhon nu brtson 'grus was the teacher of Lo ston Rdo rje dbang phyug. To

the best of my knowledge he is not mentioned in the *Blue Annals*. Further research on Zhus ston is necessary.

318 It would appear that Bya ru lung pa is in Shab.

319 'Phrang is less than one day's walk to the southwest of Sa skya. Deshung Rinpoche offers an interesting gloss as to how Sa skya influence became predominant in this area: *sngon sa chen kun snying la 'phrang brag dmar gyi dgon sde dgrar sdang ba la / lha mchog dmar po skor gum gyi bsnyen sgrub las sbyor gyis dbang du bsdus te slob 'bangs gyur gsungs pa deng sang dgon pa stong yang / grong tsho 'ga' yod pa la phra bo zer ba de'o zhes sa skya pa'i dpon slob che bgres rnams gsungs /*

320 Brag dmar is a synonym, seemingly, for 'Phrang. It may have originally referred to a smaller area within 'Phrang but, by extension, has now come to refer to 'Phrang in its entirety.

321 Lo ston Rdo rje dbang phyug: This teacher may be identified with Sna nam Rdo rje dbang phyug, who was sixty-seven when Atiśa arrived in Mnga' ris in 1054. See Roerich (1949), p. 93. Tucci (1949), p. 700, n. 616, would place the birth of Lo ston Rdo rje dbang phyug long before 973. We must, I think, reconsider this whole problem in light of this passage and the Zha lu section of the *Rgya bod yig tshang*. This is beyond the scope of the present essay.

322 *Gong mi'i dge bsnyen*: This mistake for *go mi'i dge bsnyen* is interesting; it demonstrates an often-seen phenomenon, the folk-etymologizing of loan words. *Gong* means "superior" as in *gong ma*. A *gong mi'i dge bsnyen* is then a superior *dge bsnyen*.

323 *Gsang pa sde drug*: Deshung Rinpoche says that this phrase is often encountered in older writings; but, nowadays, no one can enumerate the six classes. He has never seen a list. Because Dkon mchog rgyal po hid all the Rnying ma pa books, today there is little known about the teachings of the 'Khon system before Dkon mchog rgyal po.

324 *Snga 'gyur lnga*: At the time of Padmasambhava many Rnying ma pa tantras were translated. This term refers to these texts. Deshung Rinpoche lists several: *Gsang ba snying po*, *Kun 'dus rig pa*, and the *Glang chen rab 'bog*.

325 *Phra mo nyi shu rtsa gcig*: Deshung Rinpoche glosses this phrase: *phra mo'am phran tshogs don gcig pas gzhung chen po min pa nad zhi ba gdon sel ba sri'u gso ba sogs kyi yi ge nyung ngu tshan pa nyi shu rtsa gcig yin pa 'dra / ming 'di yin kha gsal po deng sang bod na med /*. These are ritualistic and secret texts but are of vastly lesser importance than the tantras themselves, i.e., the *gzhung*.

326 Dkar mo nyi zla lcam sring: This *dharmapāla*, or rather pair of *dharmapāla*, is discussed in Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1956), p. 87. Lcam sring includes Dkar mo and Bdud rgyal.

327 *Nus pa thon pa*: The translation "efficacy resulted" is as close as I can come to what I understand to be the meaning of the concept expressed in these words. Bdag mo explains it: "If a proper *gtor ma* offering should be consumed by fire spontaneously, that would be *nus pa thon pa*."

328 *Lung ston*: This term is not to be found in the dictionaries with a suitable meaning for this context. It means most probably a feast held to honor those who were to receive religious precepts (*lung*). We cannot, however, neglect the possibility that *lung* might be short for *lung pa*, in which case we would have to understand this compound as a local celebration. We know that it served as an occasion for competitive sporting events (*rtsed*). Deshung Rinpoche glosses *rtsed mo*: *mda' 'phen* (archery), *sho* (dice), *dang mig mang rtse ba* (chess).../

329 *'Phyo*: Perhaps "floating through the air" would be a better translation. Deshung Rinpoche glosses this passage: *gnam la mchongs sa la 'khrab ba lta bu la 'phag lding zer srol*. This gloss supports the translation "jumping into the air."

- 330 *Mgo rnyan*: Deshung Rinpoche says that *mgo rnyan* is equivalent to 'bag, "mask."
- 331 Dbang phyug nyi shu rtsa brgyad: These are the *srung ma* of the *maṇḍala* of *Rdo rje phur pa*. They are arranged as follows: the seven white ones to the east, the seven yellow ones to the south, the seven red ones to the west, and the seven green ones to the north. Deshung Rinpoche describes them as having the body of a goddess for the upper part of their bodies. The lower part of their bodies has the shape of a three-cornered *phur pa*. They carry various *phyag mtshan* like the *gri gug*, the *rdo rje*, and the *ral gri*.
- 332 *Phyag mtshan* are iconographically stylized weapons and other ritual items that tantric deities hold in their hands.
- 333 'Phyam: I am certain that this is an error for 'cham, a stylized form of dance employed by monks in certain ceremonies.
- 334 Ma mo Ral pa can: The Ma mo ral pa can is one of the Dbang phyug nyi shu rtsa brgyad. For a description of the *ma mo* type of deity, see Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1956), p. 6. Ral pa can means "with knotted hair."
- 335 *Stabs*: This term can mean "gestures." However, if we read it as an error for *stangs*, it means the sort of chanting or intoning in which the voice alternately increases and decreases in volume. One of our informants has suggested this alternate translation.
- 336 It is interesting to note that corruption is equated with public knowledge of the practice. The intellectual mind has always loved obscurantism and the esoteric.
- 337 *A po*: Deshung Rinpoche thinks this means "elder brother" and refers to Rog Shes rab tshul khriṃs. In the Khams dialect that he speaks, *a po* does mean "elder brother."
- 338 Mang mkhar is the next river valley to the west of the Grom (or Khrum) chu valley on the south side of the Gtsang po.
- 339 *Rnam 'phrul*: Sde gzung sprul sku gives a paraphrase of this account: *shes rab tshul khriṃs kyis 'khon gyi rgyud phyis 'byon rnam sngags gsar ma ma gtogs rnying ma gtan nas nyams len mi mdzad dgongs nas rnying ma'i chos rten thams cad gter bu sbas kyang chos skyong gi cho 'phrul 'tshubs byung bas rdo rje phur pa dang yang dag gi skor bzhas ma phod par nyams su len dgos byung ngo /*.
- 340 The *chos skyong* was the Dkar mo nyi zla lcam sring. Because of the trouble caused by the *chos skyong* of the old 'Khon system, it became impossible to purge the *Rdo rje phur pa* and *Yang dag* cycles.
- 341 *Chos bskor* has the ambiguous meaning of the doctrinal cycle, as well as the entire host of deities of a cycle: the central deity together with his retinue. Tibetans do not distinguish between these two meanings.
- 342 This passage explains why the Rnying ma pa *Phur pa* cycle is still an integral part of Sa skya doctrine.
- 343 *Dus gtor* seems to be the most important ritual item here. There are two types of *dus gtor*: 1. daily *gtor ma* offered at a fixed time in the evening and 2. the *gtor ma* offered on fixed days of each month. The fixed days are the 8th, 14th, 23rd, and 29th days of the Tibetan month.
- 344 Mang mkhar Myu gu lung: Myu gu lung was founded by 'Brog mi Lo tsā ba as a residence in 1043.
- 345 *Tshong 'grul byas pa*: Mkhon Dkon mchog rgyal po acquired the requisite wealth to donate to his guru for initiation.
- 346 *Rtsa rin*: The rosary that Dkon mchog rgyal po presented to 'Brog mi was obtained as the price of letting some nomads graze on Sa skya, or rather Mkhon, grassland. Deshung Rinpoche explains the passage: *tshong rgyab phyir yul khams phan tshun la mang po phyin pa la*

*tshong 'grul byas pa'i 'bras bu la rta bcu bdun thob / sa skya pa'i sa phyogs rtswa mang po yod sa la / khyim tshang 'brog pa mang po sems can la zar bcug pa'i glag cha la nor bu'i phreng ba zhig khug pa red /.*

347 *Sku 'bum*: This reliquary, containing the bodies of Śākya blo gros and Rog Shes rab tshul khriims, still exists today. Locals believe that if those afflicted with *mdze* (leprosy) eat some of the earth from around this *sku 'bum*, they will be cured.

348 Zhal lung is probably an error for G.ya' lung. Bdag mo says this *sku 'bum* is located very near Sa skya in G.ya' lung.

349 I am reasonably certain that this refers to the *Seng lden gyi phur pa bco lnga pa cha gnyis*.

350 Deshung Rinpoche paraphrases this passage: *'khon la phur pa cha mang po yod pa phal cher gter la sbas de'i nang nas phur pa rtse che ba cha gcig khong rang gang du phebs sar sku la 'bral med du bcang ba'i don /.*

351 *Sku bsangs*: Deshung Rinpoche says this is the honorific equivalent of the English "picnic."

352 Spom po ri: The spelling in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* is Dpon po ri. This is the hill that overhangs the monastery and city of Sa skya. Tucci (1949), p. 680, n. 27, also gives the spelling Bon po ri.

353 See Tucci (1949), p. 679, n. 14.

354 Gdong nag pa: The Jo bo Gdong nag pa was the equivalent of a contemporary *rdzong dpon*, according to Deshung Rinpoche. His permission was necessary to build a monastery.

355 According to Deshung Rinpoche, Gu ra ba is a clan name of Zhang zhung. It is interesting to note that the earliest temple in Sa skya, built by Dkon mchog rgyal po, is called Sgorum Gzim spyil dkar mo, which apparently means "immovable" in the language of Zhang zhung. Dkon mchog rgyal po took his second wife from the Gu ra ba, and she became the mother of Sa chen Kun dga' snying po.

356 Deshung Rinpoche thinks that Lha mi is a proper name.

357 Although the calculation of the *nirvāṇa* of the Buddha is beyond the scope of this essay, it should be noted that a year 3,207 years before a Water Female Ox year cannot be an Earth Female pig year. These calculations have probably been taken from Sa skya Paṇḍita.

358 The monastery of Sa skya was almost entirely reconstructed in the sixteenth century. The Bla brang shar pa designates the Gzims khang Rnying ma, where Sa chen meditated. This is one of the oldest portions of Sa skya still in existence.

359 The nine *sme ba* are used in astrological calculations. They are as follows: 1. *gcig dkar*; 2. *gnyis nag*; 3. *gsum mthing*; 4. *gzhi ljang*; 5. *lnga ser*; 6. *drug dmar*; 7. *bdud dmar*; 8. *brgyad dkar*; 9. *dgu dmar*.

360 This passage is very troublesome.

361 *Bu sring ma* means both daughter and sister and is used with a *rus* name to refer to any female born of that *rus*.

362 The Fifth Dalai Lama's *Chronicle* gives her name as Ma gcig Zhang mo.

363 Often one finds the spelling *Tshad ma rig gter*. Glo bo Mkhan chen analyses the meaning of the Sanskrit and Tibetan titles. See Bsod nams lhun grub, *Tshad ma*, p. 4: *sam skri ta'i skad du'i pra ma na ni 'tshad ma / yuk ta ni / rigs pa / ni dhi ni / gter zhes bya ba yin no // bod skad du bshad na / tshad ma ni mngon sum dang rjes dpag ste / de 'dis ston pas / brjod bya las ming du btags pa'o // rigs pa ni bzhi las 'thad pa bsgrub pa'i rigs pa ste / mngon gsum dang rjes dpag gnyis so // rigs pa ni zad pa'i 'byung gnas su gyur pa gter zhes bya'o //*. It would appear that *rigs*

*pa* is the preferred form; consequently, we have used the title *Tshad ma rigs gter* throughout this introduction to refer to Sa skya Paṇḍita's great masterpiece.

364 Snellgrove (1967) provides an excellent account of the religious life and fervor of Dolpo during and shortly after this period. It is important to see what was occurring in Dolpo within the broader picture of the trends that were also predominant in the more prosperous Mustang and throughout southwestern Tibet.

365 *Rje btsun mi la ras pas mthun gi lta ba ji ltar bzhed pa'i gnas lugs su bkod pa 'khrul med snang ba*. See Bsod nams lhun grub, *Tshad ma*, pp. 423–26. This text bears the mark *Ga*, suggesting that it is a part of the third volume of the collected works. The traditional list of the contents of the *gsung 'bum* makes it clear, however, that this little work belonged to the fourth volume (*Nga*).

366 Glo bo Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen is the translator of the *Yuddhajayanāmatantrarājasvarodaya*, the basic source for the *dbyangs 'char* methods of astrology. This tantra seems basically Hindu in origin. The interlocutor is Umā, i.e., Pārvatī, and consequently this work was consigned to the *Bstan 'gyur*. Glo bo Lo tsā ba collaborated with Jayānanda, a scholar of Jumla, in producing this translation.

367 Rgyal tshab Dam pa Kun dga' dbang phyug was the fourth abbot of Ngor and a disciple of the great Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456).

368 Gu ge Paṇḍita Grags pa rgyal mtshan was another disciple of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po and is remembered for a biography of his master.

369 Yongs 'dzin Dkon mchog 'phel served as the seventh abbot of Ngor.

370 *Rje bla ma'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rin po che'i phreng ba*.

371 Dmar ston Rgyal mtshan 'od zer was a disciple of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po.

372 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, fol. 132r. Mnga' ris Paṇ chen (1487–1542) had attained his twenty-fifth (i.e., twenty-fourth) year in 1511.

373 Glo bo Mkhan chen gives in the colophon the complete form of his initiatory name: Bsod nams lhun grub legs pa'i 'byung gnas rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po.

373 Dharmakīrti's *Sde bdun* are: 1. *Pramāṇavārttika*; 2. *Pramāṇaviniścaya*; 3. *Nyāyabindu*; 4. *Sambandhapariṅśā*; 5. *Hetubindu*; 6. *Vādanyāya*; 7. *Samtānāntarasiddhi*.

373 *Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi dka' 'grel* (Ui (1934), no. 4217). Devendrabuddhi's purpose in this commentary was to supplement and complete Dharmakīrti's autocommentary. These two works are collectively known as the *Tshad ma stong phrag bcu gnyis pa*.

373 Śākyamati was a disciple of Devendrabuddhi. His *Pramāṇavārttikatikā* (Ui (1934), no. 4220) was written as a commentary on the *Tshad ma stong phrag bcu gnyis pa*.

377 *Tshad ma rnam nges* (Ui (1934), no. 4211). Ui states that this text was translated by Blo ldan shes rab and one scholar, Gzhan la phan pa bzang po.

378 *Rigs pa'i thigs pa* (Ui (1934), no. 4212). According to Ui this work was also translated by Gzhan la phan pa bzang po and Blo ldan shes rab.

379 For example, the two-volume *Pramāṇavārttikālamkāra* of Prajñākaragupta (Ui (1934), no. 4221). This work was translated by Blo ldan shes rab and Skal ldan rgyal po and subsequently revised by Kumāraśrī and 'Phags pa shes rab.

380 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, ff. 201v–234v, from which this account has largely been adapted. Kong sprul is briefly addresses the definition of *bsdus pa* and *bsdus grwa*. He quotes an unknown source: *bsdus pa'i don kyang ji skad du // rgyal ba'i bka' dang de 'grel btsan bcos kyi // dgongs don ma lus legs par bsdus pas na // bsdus pa zhes su mkhas pas mtshan du btags l*.

381 These three great works are the: 1) *Legs bshad rin po che'i gter mdzod*, a didactic poem;



2) *Tshig gi gter*, a Tibetan translation of the first portion of the *Amarakośa*; and 3) the *Tshad ma rigs gter*.

382 Sa skya Paṇḍita himself characterized the *Tshad ma rigs gter* as *sde bdun mdo dang bcas pa'i snying po*, "The essence of the *Seven Treatises* and the *sūtras*."

383 The Nub pa Bla brang was also connected with the Sa skya Monastery complex. After the death of 'U yug pa the rights passed to his nephew and chief disciple, Nyi thog pa Sang rgyas kun smon. Kong sprul considers Khang ston 'Od zer rgyal mtshan Gnyan Dar ma seng ge, Zhang Mdo sde dpal, and Zur khang pa Dkar Shakya grags pa all to have been disciples of Nyi thog pa. There is apparently confusion in some of the sources; Dkar Shakya grags is sometimes listed as a student of Grags pa rgyal mtshan of Sa skya.

384 The Gung pa Bla brang is the third of the four great allied *bla brangs* of the thirteenth century. This *bla brang* passed from guru to disciple, and familial claims seem never to have been asserted.

385 Lho pa Kun mkhyen is remembered for compiling the *yig cha*, or monastic curriculum. His was perhaps the first such attempt among the Sa skya pa scholars.

386 Dmar Chos kyi rgyal po is best known for a popular commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Legs bshad rin po che gter mdzod*. He also produced a curious commentary on the *Tshad ma rigs gter*.

387 In addition to these great Sa skya pa teaching monasteries, the vast majority of similar Dge lugs pa institutions were founded during the same century.

388 Another indigenous Tibetan presentation of logic is the *Rig gzhung rgya mtsho*, an enormous work that emerged from the genius of the Seventh Karma pa, Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1505). This text became the basic work for the Kaṁ tshang Bka' brgyud pa.

389 *rigs pa'i gtsug rgyan gnyis kyi gzhung lugs la // sde bdun gang 'og bsdebs nas 'chad pa dang // rgya 'grel legs cha btus nas 'chad pa dang // rung gi rnam rtog nyid kyi 'chad pa ste // gang ri'i khrod 'dir 'chad tshul rnam gsum las // skye ba du ma rig lam goms byas nas // skyon dang brgyud pa'i man ngag dang ldan cing // 'jam dbyangs thugs kyi mkhyen pa mnga' ba yi // sa skya pa ni 'chad tshul dang po bzhed /.*

390 Please see the Appendix for a list of the predecessors and subsequent rebirths of Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan. According to a variant system of reckoning, Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan was the fourth of the numbered line taking Mkhas grub Rje to have been the first. The scheme that puts Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan as the first, however, has gained currency in Western-language sources and has consequently been followed here.

391 Ngag dbang, *Za hor*, v. 1 (*Ka*), fol. 247v: *skyid grong du bal bod kyi bde gzar la brtan slar jo bo gor khas gdan drangs dogs pas sde pa'i bslab ston dang bstun sde pa nor bu dang mgron gnyer drung pa sogs kyi 'phags pa wa ti gdan drangs pa nyer gsum la 'bras spungs su phebs /.*

392 Although the relationship of Yon tan rgya mtsho to Altan khan is usually stated to be that of great-grandson, the few sources at my disposal here in Delhi would seem to make him out to be the grandson or great-grandson of Sume Taiji, Altan Khan's younger brother.

393 The colophon mentions Phyag mdzod Blo bzang dge legs, Mdzod 'dzin Phun tshogs rab brtan, and Gsol dpon Blo bzang bstan 'dzin.

394 For the benefit of those who may wish to use the text for historical purposes, I have prepared a rough chronological outline indicating where the text (in parentheses) treating the particular year might be expected to begin. It should be kept in mind that the page correspondences are often only approximate, especially for the early period. Tenth cycle: *mi yos* 1567 (8); *sa 'brug* 1568; *sa sbrul* 1569; *lcags rta* 1570 (9); *lcags lug* 1571 (10); *chu spre* 1572; *chu*

*bya* 1573 (12); *shing khyi* 1574; *shing phag* 1575; *me byi* 1576; *me glang* 1577; *sa stag* 1578; *sa yos* 1579; *lcags 'brug* 1580; *lcags sbrul* 1581; *chu rta* 1582 (13); *chu lug* 1583 (17); *shing spral* 1584; *shing bya* 1585; *me khyi* 1586 (22); *me phag* 1587; *sa byi* 1588; *sa glang* 1589 (30); *lcags stag* 1590 (32); *lcags yos* 1591 (33); *chu 'brug* 1592 (36); *chu sbrul* 1593; *shing rta* 1594; *shing yos* 1595; *me spral* 1596 (42); *me bya* 1597; *sa khyi* 1598 (45); *sa phag* 1599 (46); *lcags byi* 1600 (47); *lcags glang* 1601 (51); *chu stag* 1602 (52); *chu yos* 1603 (55); *shing 'brug* 1604 (66); *shing sbrul* 1605; *me rta* 1606; *me lug* 1607 (83); *sa spral* 1608 (90); *sa bya* 1609 (92); *lcags khyi* 1610 (93); *lcags phag* 1611 (93); *chu byi* 1612 (102); *chu glang* 1613 (106); *shing stag* 1614 (110); *shing yos* 1615 (113); *me 'brug* 1616 (113); *me sbrul* 1617 (114); *sa rta* 1618 (115); *sa lug* 1619 (129); *lcags spral* 1620 (130); *lcags bya* 1621 (131); *chu khyi* 1622 (132); *chu phag* 1623 (133); *shing byi* 1624 (134); *shing glang* 1625 (134); *me stag* 1626 (135). Eleventh cycle: *me yos* 1627 (143); *sa 'brug* 1628 (152); *sa sbrul* 1629 (154); *lcags rta* 1630 (168); *lcags lug* 1631 (170); *chu spral* 1632; *chu bya* 1633 (185); *shing khyi* 1634 (192); *shing phag* 1635 (195); *me byi* 1636 (208); *me glang* 1637 (212); *sa stag* 1638 (222); *sa yos* 139 (223); *lcags 'brug* 1640 (224); *lcags sbrul* 1641 (226); *chu rta* 1642 (227); *chu lug* 1643 (239); *shing spral* 1644 (241); *shing bya* 1645 (246); *me khyi* 1646 (263); *me phag* 1647 (269); *sa byi* 1648 (271); *sa glang* 1649 (275); *lcags stag* 1650 (278); *lcags yos* 1651 (281); *chu 'brug* 1652 (284); *chu sbrul* 1653 (291); *shing rta* 1654 (294); *shing yos* 1655 (298); *me spral* 1656 (302); *me bya* 1657 (308); *sa khyi* 1658 (327); *sa phag* 1659 (358); *lcags byi* 1660 (377); *lcags glang* 1661 (383); *chu stag* 1662 (387). Death and funeral: *shing sbrul* 1665 (441); *me lug* 1667 (447).

395 Only Shakabpa (1967) among the modern historians has cited this autobiography as a historical source.

396 See the appendix for a list of the Khalkha Rje btsun Dam pa hierarchs.

397 The regnal years of the “kings” of Gtsang are as follows: 1. Tshe brtan rdo rje (reigned 1564–?) ; 2. Karma bstan srung dbang po (reigned 1611); 3. Karma phun tshogs rnam rgyal (reigned 1611–21); 4. Karma bstan skyong dbang po (reigned 1621–42).

398 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 129–33.

399 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 177–79 and 210–12.

400 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 223–27.

401 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 102–4.

402 Of special importance are the biographies of the early Rwa lung pa teachers, the biography and songs of 'Ba' ra ba and some of his disciples, and the biography of Sngags 'chang Kun dga' rin chen. There are, of course, biographical materials for a few native Bhutanese lamas, such as Padma gling pa and the successors of Pha jo 'Brug sgom zhig po.

403 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 314–16.

404 Tucci seems to have taken Dwags ris to be a part of the great Zhun thing pa's name. See Tucci (1949), v. 1, p. 293.

405 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, p. 47.

406 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, p. 47.

407 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 261, 275, 300, 302, 406, etc. During 1655–56, Chos dbyings rgya mtsho was engaged in painting the frescoes of the Bkra shis lhun po Sngags khang.

408 Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, p. 7.

409 Tucci (1949), v. 1, pp. 277–79, has dealt with the role of Newar craftsmen.

410 Also Rba, Sbas, Dbas', and Dbas. Ye shes dbang po of this clan is almost universally included among the Sad mi mi bdun, the first seven Tibetan candidates to be ordained during the eighth century. See the *Autobiography*, pp. 5–6.

411 Other teachers were Bka' bcu pa Dpal mgon, Skyed tshal Dge bshes Grangs can pa, Drung 'tsho Rta mgrin bzang po (his cousin or elder brother), Zhi gnas Dka' bcu pa Tshul khriims pa, Gnas rnying Zhabs drung Rwa lo sprul sku, Chos rje A yu pa bgres pa Ngag dbang grags pa (d. 1586), Twenty-sixth Dga' ldan Khri Dam chos dpal 'bar (1523–99), Srad Rgyud Rgyud chen Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, and Srad Rgyud Rgyud chen Byams pa rgyal mtshan.

412 Gangs can chos 'phel was one of the teaching establishments of Gtsang during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century. It contained two colleges (*grwa tshang*). The Pañ chen Lama gives a list of the most important of these teaching monasteries on p. 140.

413 Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan assumed the abbatial duties of Bkra shis lhun po on the third day of the twelfth month of the year of the Iron Rat. This date corresponded to the third day of the second month (*dgun stod zla ba*) of the Iron Ox year in the vinaya calendar.

414 See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, *Chos smra*, pp. 145–46.

415 It seems that at least one other incarnation of Blo bzang don grub was recognized. This *sprul sku* disappears from the scene quite early.

416 Pañ chen Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan remembered his experiences when he was Padmasambhava, Atiśa, and Dwags po lha rje. Some authorities reckon these three teachers in the incarnation line of the Pañ chen Lamas.

417 The birth-year of Dpal ldan ye shes varies in some of the sources.

418 His full name was Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma Phyogs las rnam rgyal.

419 Alias Blo bzang dpal ldan chos kyi grags pa.

420 His full name is Blo bzang Thub bstan chos kyi nyi ma Dge legs rnam rgyal.

421 One sometimes encounters the name Bskal bzang tshe brtan.

422 Bsod nams rgya mtsho should probably be reckoned as the First Dalai Lama as it was he who was honored with the title by Altan Khan of the Tümet. The title was extended retroactively to two of his immediate predecessors as 'Bras spungs Gzims khang 'og ma incarnations.

423 There are two variant traditions accounting for the untimely end of the Gzims khang Gong ma line of incarnations. The great Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705) writes in the *Bai dūrya ser po* (Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, *Dpal mnyam*, v. I, p. 72): *de'i yang sprul ngag dbang bsod nams dge legs / de'i rjes su gad kha sa ba'i nang so gro lhug thog mar thams cad mkhyen pa yon tan rgya mtsho'i sprul sku yong du re yang rjes su ngag dbang dge legs kyi sprul sku byas pas mthar skye gnas kyang mi bzang bar gyur to //*. Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor (1704–88), however, contradicts the Sde srid in the *Re'u mig* (Ye shes dpal 'byor, *Rgya gar*, pp. 70–71): *shing lug (1655) / sprul sku grags rgyan skye bar grags pa'i khang gzhi bde skyid rgyal po 'khrungs // me bya (1657) / bod kyi de'i rgyal po (e.g., rdo rje shugs ldan) ni gzims khang gong ma sprul sku grags rgyan zer ba ni chag sdang gi gtam kho nar zad do / des na dpon bsod nams chos 'phel ni lo 'dir 'das nas khong dge lugs la thugs zhen che pas chos srung ba'i tshul bzung nas dge lugs pa skyong zhes grags pa bden nam snyam mo //*.

424 Some sources give 1591 as the year of Sangs rgyas ye shes's death.

425 It would seem that Galdan Boshogtu Khan of the Dzungars was recognized as the rebirth of Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho. Unfortunately, the Mongol sources needed to research this claim were not available in Delhi at the time of writing.

426 There was apparently some controversy as to whether the First Khalkha Rje bstun Dam pa was really the incarnation of Tāranātha. Blo bzang rta mgrin (1867–1937) writes in his history of Buddhism in Mongolia (Blo bzang rta mgrin, *'Dzam gling*, fol. 97v): *yang rje nyid kyi*s

*/ nga tā ra nā tha'i sku'i skye ba min kyang paṅ chen thams cad mkhyen pas tā ra nā tha'i mtshan gyis brlabs pa'i dbang gis tā ra nā tha'i tshom bu yin byas chog ces yang yang gsungs pa dang / rje btsun tā ra nā thas / nga rang la sku skye sde dpon stobs ldan cig / dge bshes 'phrin las can cig / mtha' khob kyī don du byin gyis brlabs pa'i sprul pa cig dang gsum 'byung / snga ma des da lta'i nged kyī chos lugs cung zad 'dzin / phyi ma gnyis kyis mi 'dzin gsungs pa la / dam pa gong ma dag gis ngos 'dzin mi 'dza bar mdzad snang yang mkhas pa 'gas / de ni sde srid sangs rgyas pa / 'jam dbyangs bzhad pa / rje btsun dam pa ste gsum du 'tshad ces lkog tu smra ba'ang thos te / gang yang rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyī rnam 'phrul yin na tha mal pas shan 'byed par dka' ba'i gnas so //.* The implied attribution of Gzhan stong views to the great Sde srid is an extraordinary revelation.

427 The first Rje btsun Dam pa was the son of the Tushiyetu Khan Mgon po rdo rje and the grandson of Erke Mergen Khan.

428 His full name is Blo bzang thub bstan dbang phyug 'jigs med rgya mtsho, alias Blo bzang dge legs.

429 His full name was Blo bzang tshul khriṃs 'jigs med bstan pa rgyal mtshan.

430 Some sources give this name as Blo bzang dpal ldan dam pa.

431 The seat of the Rgyal khang rtse incarnations seems to have been Kobdo.

432 Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho belonged to an aristocratic family of Gad pa kha pa (Gad sa kha pa) lung from which the ill-fated Fourth Gzims khang gong ma Grags pa rgyal mtshan came.

433 The second item (p. 833–965) in the volume are the verses of the full biography issued separately. The first folio has the title: *Thams cad mkhyen pa rol pa'i rdo rje yi // rtogs brjod dge ldan bstan pa'i mdzes rgyan gyi // yang rgyan snyan ngag mu tig chun po kun // glegs bam rin chen za ma tog 'dir bzhugs //.*

434 There is an edition of this biography from Dgon lung Byams pa gling in two volumes, 241 ff. and 245 ff. See Vostrikov (1962), p. 211.

435 The supplementary volume (*bka rgya ma*) of the Peking edition of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje's *gsung 'bum* begins with a biography of Rol pa'i rdo rje entitled *Rdo rje chang Lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa dad pa'i padmo rnam par 'byed pa nyi ma'i 'od zer*. This work (151 ff.) was written in 1787 by Chu bzang Ngag dbang thub bstan dbang phyug (b. 1736), the younger brother of Lcang skya.

436 Petech (1950).

437 Sagaster (1967).

438 See the Appendix to the present essay.

439 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 17–23.

440 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 15: *'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs kyī tshig zin la thon pa bcu bzhi dang / der mi gsal yang tshad ma'i lung las dngos su thos gsum rtogs pa brjod pa'o //.*

441 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 23–33.

442 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 33–48.

443 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 48–58.

444 The Chi kya Dpon po were supposed to be descendants of Chi kya Dor rta nag po and belonged to the area around Tsong kha.

445 *Tshangs pa* is a dialect form for *sngags pa*, village priests and magicians.

446 This is Bzang shu Dka' chen Shes rab dar rgyas alias Ngag dbang chos ldan, author of the *Subud Erike* (Sagaster 1967).

447 Also referred to as Yun li, Prince Kuo.

448 Zhwa nag XII Byang chub rdo rje (1703–32) and Zhwa dmar VIII Dpal chen chos kyī don grub (1695–1732).

449 Thu'u bkwan mentions the popular exposition of Chinese Buddhism that Lcang skya used: *Ta mo tsu shi bho dhi dharmo tta ra*.

450 Probably the son of K'ang hsi.

451 Ngag dbang mchog ldan (1677–1751) later became the fifty-fourth abbot of Dga' ldan (1739–46) and was the first of the Rwa sgreng line of incarnation. Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje rewrote a biography of this teacher.

452 Thu'u bkwan mentions specifically Kah thog pa, probably to be identified with Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755).

453 The name of the Kālacakra specialist to whom the Seventh Dalai Lama assigned this responsibility is not mentioned in this work but is known from other sources. Skal bzang tshe dbang was the favorite pupil of Zhwa lu Slob dpon Rin chen lhun grub, who not only favored him with profound instruction in the Kālacakra system but also with a number of sound beatings. Because of this stern discipline and training, the youth became a great master of the teachings of this system. However, he ran away to Lhasa to escape the discipline of his teacher. There he met the Dalai Lama, who was greatly impressed with him. The Dalai Lama gave him a position in the Rnam rgyal Grwa tshang and sent him to Peking when the request for an expert in the Kālacakra came from Lcang skya. Skal bzang tshe dbang gained the favor not only of Lcang skya but also of Ch'ien lung.

After a number of years in China, he decided that he wanted to return to Tibet, and asked to be appointed abbot of Zhwa lu. Through the indulgence of his patron, he gained the appointment as the Thirtieth Mkhan chen of Zhwa lu. A *rnam thar* of this teacher is said to exist but has not yet been located in India.

454 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, p. 374 et. seq.

455 Dge 'dun phun tshogs was the Fiftieth Dga' ldan Khri pa (1715–22) and the First Gung thang Sprul sku. The lama mentioned here is the immediate predecessor of Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me (1762–1823).

456 The *Khri chen ngag dbang mchog ldan gyi rnam thar mtha' spyod grub pa'i gnam snyan lha'i rnga bo che*.

457 There is a *Śūraṅgamasamādhi Mahāyāna Sūtra* found in the Sde dge edition of the *Bka' gyur*. Whether this text is identical with the popular Chinese *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* is open to question.

458 The lady is styled Rgyal yum Bwhang thas hu. See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, p. 607.

459 Ngag dbang tshul khrim of Co ne (1721–91) was the Sixty-first Dga' ldan Khri (ascended 1778). This regent later gave rise to the Mtsho smon gling line of incarnations.

460 This date probably corresponds to a Western date in 1781.

461 Thu'u bkwan reproduces the text, which is also known as the *Gnyid mo che'i rmi lam gyi rol mtshor shar ba'i bstan bcos ngo mtshar zla ba'i snang brnyan*. See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, p. 679–96.

462 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 771–82.

463 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 788–94.

464 See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 806–31.

465 Sagaster (1967), pp. 337–42.

466 The *Rje btsun lcang skya rol pa'i rdo rje'i 'khrungs rabs kyi gnam brjod ngo mtshar dad pa'i ljon shing*. See Thu'u bkwan, *Khyab bdag*, pp. 18–23.

467 Needham's list follows a slightly variant order: C. Dar pa na A tsa rya; D. Dpal ldan Rig 'dzin Sgro phug pa; E. Lo chen Ka ba Dpal brtsegs; F. 'Gro mgon Si si ri pa.

468 Sagaster notes that the Mongolian sources give 1544 as the death year for Se ra Rje btsun Chos kyī rgyal mtshan.

469 'Khon ston Dpal 'byor lhun grub is now usually reckoned to be the first in the Pha bong kha pa line of incarnations.

470 Grags pa 'od zer was born at Lcang skya and served briefly as abbot of Dgon lung during the period 1630 to 1633. There is no mention of the tradition that this teacher was the immediate predecessor of Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan in the short biographies of the successive abbots of Dgon lung in Thu'u bkwan's *Dgon lung dkar chag*.

471 Needham's list gives the dates for this teacher as 1787–1848. See also Sagaster (1967), p. 64.

472 Sagaster cites Hashimoto Koho's *Moko no ramakyo* (Tokyo, 1942), which gives brief summaries of the biographies of the nineteen Lcang skya incarnations. He refers to the sixth of the numbered line as Ye shes rdo rje. This tradition has apparently omitted one of the incarnations that died in childhood.

473 Chandra (1963), vol. I, p. 52, notes the existence of other editions of the *gsung 'bum* from Dgon lung, Peking, Bla brang, and A ge. Vostrikov mentions another edition from the Bkra shis chos gling Grwa tshang of the Dga' ldan Monastery in Urga. At least one of these editions follows a variant arrangement of seventeen volumes (*Ka* through *Ma* with a supplementary *Rtsis shar*). These volumes were considerably smaller than those of the Lhasa edition.

474 Vasil'ev (1855).

475 Das (1882).

476 Hoffman (1950).

477 Cheng (1942).

478 Ruegg (1963).

479 There are actually two different formats of this edition: one in the traditional *poti* style and the other in a Western book form. Both appear to have been printed from the same type-setting.

480 The Zhol edition of the *Grub mtha'* is probably not as reliable as some of the older editions. In addition to the prints found in the edition of the collected works already mentioned here, Vostrikov mentions a Sde dge edition of the *Grub mtha'* in 209 ff.

481 Lokesh Chandra has noted Sarat Chandra Das's variant numberings of the chapters and suggests that he may have either overlooked a chapter or used a different edition in which the Dge lugs pa section was placed at the end. The last possibility is most unlikely. I would suggest that Sarat Chandra Das was working from a manuscript that omitted the first section on India, which contains nothing not found in the *Grub mtha'* of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje. It should be remembered that there was no Central Tibetan edition of the *Grub mtha'* until the blocks for Thu'u bkwan's *gsung 'bum* were carved.

482 See vol. I of Thu'u bkwan's works, p. 23–33, for another biography of Dgongs pa rab gsal.

483 I am of the opinion that this work was written prior to the Lcang skya biography, which was composed between 1792 and 1794.

484 There are two possibilities for the dates of Dgongs pa rab gsal: 832–915 and 892–975. There are chronological inconsistencies with established dates created by both pairs. I prefer the second set.

485 1) *Ngag dbang chos 'phel yan chad dus 'khor paṇḍi ta zhabs blo bzang rgya mtsho mdzad pa'i dkar chag nyung ngu*; 2) *Sprul sku blo bzang bstan 'dzin phrin las kyī rnam thar bya bral ba grags pa bstan 'dzin gyis bsgrigs pa'i gsol 'debs*.

- 486 This spelling alternates with Cha kan. The Mongolian form is probably Bogdo Chagan Bla ma.
- 487 Probably the immediate predecessor of the nephew of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje. He is called the Tham ka Bla ma of Dolonor.
- 488 The author glosses the name Thu' u bkwan with the Tibetan 'go dpon, "leader" or "headman."
- 489 See p. 583.
- 490 See p. 596.
- 491 See p. 598.
- 492 See p. 586.
- 493 p. 631–32.
- 494 See Schram (1957). This work contains a treatment of Dgon lung.
- 495 Vostrikov (1962), p. 133.
- 496 Sagaster (1967) has appended (pp. 342–47) a reconstructed list of the first thirty-two abbots of Dgon lung. Sagaster had access only to the *Re'u mig* of Sum pa Mkhan po and the collected reverential petitions to the successive abbots written by Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan in 1712. Although there are significant differences between Sagaster's list and the list that can be extracted from the collection of biographical sketches found in chapter 2 of the *Dgon lung dkar chag*, it is a testimony to his meticulous scholarship that the differences are so few. I have indicated where Sagaster's reconstruction differs from the *Dgon lung dkar chag* in the majority of cases.
- 497 The title Sa ma ti Pakśi (Tib. Bsam gtan Mkhan po) was not, contrary to what some Western Tibetologists have assumed, limited to the Mtsho smon gling incarnations.
- 498 The Mahāyāna ideal inherent in any act of piety is that merit accruing therefrom will benefit all sentient creatures without distinction. This theory, however, does not exclude meritorious actions that have, in addition, the expiation of personal faults and imperfections.
- 499 This monastery is probably Mdzod dge Sgar gsar.
- 500 See p. 861.
- 501 I have used the translation "verses of blessing" to render *bsngo ba* realizing full well its inadequacy. The term *bsngo ba* (Skt. *parināma*) means the turning of the merit of an action to the benefit of all sentient creatures without discrimination.
- 502 The lineage is as follows: A. Mi tra dzo ki; B. Mgon po Zhi ba lha; C. Rigs pa'i khu byug (teacher of Atiśa); D. Phu chung ba Gzhon nu rgyal mtshan; E. Sne'u zur pa; F. Rgyal sras Thogs med Bzang po dpal (1295–1369); G. Rtogs ldan 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1356–1428); 1. Shes rab 'phel (b. 1429); 2. Sprul sku Chos 'phel rgya mtsho; 3. Don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho; 4. Blo bzang bstan 'dzin; 5. Blo bzang ngag dbang 'Jigs med ye shes grags pa (1696–1740) (Regent of Tibet 1728–35); 6. Bskal bzang thub bstan 'jigs med rgya mtsho. Thu' u bkwan cites the *rnam thar* of the Rgyal sras incarnations called the *Dad pa'i rol mtsho*, compiled by one Ngag dbang rab brtan.
- 503 Although Thu' u bkwan does not indicate to which of the 'Phags pa lha incarnations of Chab mdo he refers, it would appear to be 'Phags pa lha III Mthong ba don ldan (1567–1604).
- 504 La mo Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho (1635–88) was the forty-fourth hierarch of Dga' ldan Monastery. He held the throne from about 1682. He is also called Klu 'bum Blo gros rgya mtsho and Khri Rgya nag pa.
- 505 Khri chen Sprul sku Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma (1689–1746).
- 506 The Ka ring Lha khang was located near the more famous temple of Ko'u tam sde that

had been founded by Gro tshang Has bla ma Bsam gtan blo gros under Chinese imperial patronage. Phun tshog rnam rgyal later founded Gro tshang monastery near his birthplace. 507 According to the tradition followed by Sum pa Mkhan po in the *Re'u mig* and cited by Sagaster, Phun tshog rnam rgyal's tenure as abbot was 1615–17. Thu'u bkwan, however, refutes his teacher on the evidence of Ka ring dka' bcu pa's autobiography.

508 Stag lung brag pa Blo gros rgya mtsho (1546–1618) was the Thirtieth hierarch of Dga' ldan (1615–18).

509 Perhaps the most famous lama of this line was the author of the *'Dzam gling rgyas bshad*, Smin grol No min han 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (1789–1838).

510 The author glosses the Chinese lineage name with the Tibetan *sa yi bdag po*, “territorial lord.”

511 This Yar lung should not be confused with the Yar klungs Valley of Dbus.

512 Khri XLII Rnam dag rdo rje is perhaps better known by his monastic name Blo bzang don yod. We know that he was on the throne of Dga' ldan from 1668–78.

513 Gser khog, alias Btsan po, and Dgon lung were rivals.

514 This is the first of the line, Hor Dka' bcu pa Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub, author of a famous debate manual (*bsdus grwa*).

515 See Sagaster (1967).

516 Should we instead read Sprel nag pa?

517 This is probably the Qalqa Jaya Paṇḍita Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (b. 1642).

518 See p. 724.

519 See p. 724.

520 Sagaster gives the name of Bde rgu Chung ba as Kun dga' rgya mtsho.

521 Sagaster has Blo bzang bstan pa'i chos kyi nyi ma. He quotes Sum pa who has simply Stag lung zhabs.

522 Rta nag pa Kun dga' rnam sras was a disciple of the First Paṇ chen Lama. In accordance with the Paṇ chen's prophecy, he went to eastern Tibet. He converted an image of a Taoist (*bon*) deity from the time of Confucius (*kong tse*) into a Maitreya. He founded the monastery of Han Stag lung with the patronage of the Han Stag lung chieftain, Rta mgrin.

523 This name is omitted from Sagaster's list.

524 Called here Mu stegs pa Hos Hos.

525 Sagaster's list gives Ngag dbang rnam rgyal.

526 The orthography fluctuates freely between Bde dgu and Bde rgu.

527 Sagaster's list gives this name as Dge legs rgyal mtshan.

528 Thu'u bkwan offers some interesting bits of information about these Turkic-speaking Tibetan Buddhists. His theories on the origins of Pe har and the Bha ta Hor are worthy of careful investigation.

529 Sde pa Lha dbang was a Lhasa aristocrat who had studied astronomy and astrology (*rtsis*) with the Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho.

530 Thu'u bkwan notes that Ngag dbang rgya mtsho, one of Sum pa's teachers of *rtsis*, was a student of one La Ngag dbang pa. Thu'u bkwan names a number of other teachers with whom Sum pa studied at a later period: Khri chen sprul sku Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma, Ra kho Shes rab chos 'byor, Mtshan sgrom mkhan po Dge 'dun don grub, Sngags rams pa Blo bzang byung gnas, Gro tshang Ngag dbang shes rab, and Smon lam dpal 'byor.

531 *phru gu la yon tan yod na // dga' ldan khri la bdag po med //*.

532 The original print reproduced in Delhi belongs to the present Ri rdzong Sras sprul and



was obtained through the gracious efforts of Kushog Bakula. Although the print reproduced here is blurred in some places, Mr. Gelek has preferred this edition (A) over the 1946 edition (B) because A seems to be the oldest and the edition on which B is based.

Edition A (carved c. 1795 in Skyid grong?): *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa rigs dang dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i mnga bdag bka' drin gsum ldan yongs 'dzin paṇḍi ta chen po rje btsun ye shes rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i sku gsung thugs kyi rtogs pa brjod pa thub bstan padmo 'byed pa'i nyin byed*. 208 ff. Margin: *Thub bstan Ka—nyin byed*. (No printer's colophon).

Edition B (carved 1946 in Skyid shod Sku 'bum thang): *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa rigs dang dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i mnga' bdag bka' drin gsum ldan yongs 'dzin paṇḍi ta chen po rje btsun ye shes rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i sku gsung thugs kyi rtogs pa brjod pa thub bstan padmo 'byed pa'i nyin byed*. 273 ff. Margin: (v) *Thub bstan nyin byed*; (r) *Yongs 'dzin rnam thar*. Edition B was carved through the efforts of Ding ri ba Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1897 1956?), and contains a printer's colophon (*par byang*) by Phur lcog Thub bstan byams pa tshul khriṃs bstan 'dzin.

Edition C (cf. UI, no. 6149, perhaps Tshe mchog gling): *Paṇḍi ta chen po rje btsun ye shes rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i sku gsung thugs kyi rtogs pa brjod pa thub bstan padmo 'byed pa'i nyin byed*. 208 ff. Margin marked *Ka*. Edition C was not available in Delhi for examination and collation.

533 Kanakura (1953), no. 6090.

534 For the convenience of historians who might want to use this source to corroborate other sources, I have subdivided the chapters into a rough chronological outline. I have also given a chapter outline of B in order to show the material that has been added in this later edition.

I. Birth, childhood, and first vows: pp. 2–19 (B: ff. iv–13r); *chu sbrul* [1713] p. 13; Seventh year [1719] p. 15; *chu stag* 1722 p. 17.

II. Studies at Bkra shis lhun po: pp. 19–28 (B: ff. 13r–18r); *lcags khyi* [1730] p. 24; Nineteenth year [1731] p. 24; Twenty-second year [1734] p. 25.

III. Advanced studies and contemplation: pp. 28–89 (B: ff. 18r–57r); *shing yos* [1735] p. 32; *me 'brug* [1736] p. 37; *me sbrul* [1737] p. 38; *phyi lo (sa rta)* [1738] p. 39; *lcags bya* [1741] p. 45; [1750] p. 51; *chu spre* XII [1752] p. 80; *chu bya* [1753] p. 81.

IV. The years on the border of Nepal: pp. 89–201 (ff. 57r–128v); *shing phag* [1756] p. 90; *me byi* [1756] p. 91; *me glang* [1757] p. 93; *sa stag* [1758] p. 93; *sa yos* [1759] p. 98; (*lcags*) *'brug* [1760] p. 100; (*lcags*) *sbrul* [1761] p. 102; *chu rta* [1762] p. 108; *chu lug* [1763] p. 113; *shing spre* [1764] p. 116; *shing bya* [1765] p. 117; *me khyi* [1766] p. 118; *me phag* [1767] p. 126; *sa byi* [1768] p. 130; *sa glang* [1769] p. 131; *lcags stag* [1770] p. 134; *lcags yos* [1771] p. 135; *chu 'brug* [1772] p. 138; *chu sbrul* [1773] p. 139; *shing rta* [1774] p. 140; *shing lug* [1775] p. 142; *me spre* [1776] p. 161; *me bya* [1777] p. 184; *sa khyi* [1778] p. 187; *sa phag* [1779] p. 189; *lcags byi* [1780] p. 192; *lcags glang* [1781] p. 196; *chu stag* [1782] p. 199.

V. Career as tutor to the Eighth Dalai Lama: pp. 201–302 (ff. 128v–190r): (*chu stag*) [1782] p. 201; *chu yos* [1783] p. 214; *shing 'brug* [1784] p. 217; *shing sbrul* [1785] p. 227; *me rta* [1786] p. 231; *me lug* [1787] p. 240; *sa spre* [1788] p. 246; *sa bya* [1789] p. 247; *lcags khyi* [1790] p. 249; *lcags phag* [1791] p. 269; *chu byi* [1792] p. 278.

VI. His final years and death: pp. 302–86 (B: ff. 190r–241v): (*chu byi*) [1792] p. 302; *chu glang* [1793] p. 348.

VII. Recapitulation of his deeds with guide to the monuments in his memory: pp. 386–411 (B: ff. 241v–257r).

Author's colophon: pp. 411–15 (B: ff. 257r–259r).

List of contents of the Tshe mchog gling edition of the collected works in nineteen volumes: not in A (B: ff. 259r–269v).

Printer's colophon: not in A (B: ff. 269v–272r).

535 My friend Mr. L. P. Lhalungpa would reject an identification of this Sle'u shar ma ba family of Lhasa with the prominent monastic *shag tshang* of Sne'u shag (pronounced Liushar). He observes that there is a Sle'u rdzong near Lhasa. Perhaps, this *sger pa* family's name had some connection with this *rdzong*.

536 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, *Dpal ldan*, p. 15.

537 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, *Dpal ldan*, p. 16.

538 The list of incarnations of Tshe mchog gling is as follows: 1. Bka' chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan, teacher of the Eighth Dalai Lama; 2. 'Jam dpal ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, teacher of the Tenth and Eleventh Dalai Lamas; 3. ?; 4. ?, died of smallpox at the age of 7; 5. Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las dpal ldan bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan, brother of the Sixth Paṅ chen Lama, Chos kyi nyi ma, died at Gzhis ka rtse; 6. Bstan 'dzin dge legs (b. 1958) son of Bsod nams rdo rje, a Sikkimese doctor, and Rnam rgyal sgröl ma.

539 See chapter 7 of the present volume.

540 *Thub pa'i dbang po 'phags pa gnas brtan bcu drug dang bcas pa'i rtogs pa brjod pa rgyal bstan rin po che'i mdzes rgyan phul byung gser gyi 'phreng ba*, 215 ff. Kanakura (1953), no. 6016.

541 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, *Dpal ldan*, p. III.

542 Tucci (1949), p. 568. One should also note the important treatment of the same material by the famous Bhutanese scholar, Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal (1700–1767): *'Phags pa'i gnas brtan chen po bcu drug gi rnam par thar pa rdzogs ldan sbyin pa'i rnga dbyangs*, manuscript, 40 ff.

543 *Skyes rabs so bzhi pa'i rnam par bshad pa theg chen gsal ba'i sgron me*, 388, 370, and 271 ff. Kanakura (1953), no. 5983.

544 *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam par thar pa rgyal bstan mdzes pa'i rgyan mchog phul byung nor bu'i phreng ba*, 474 and 498ff. Kanakura (1953), no. 5985.

545 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho, *Dpal ldan*, p. 146.

546 Tshe ring dbang 'dus was probably the son or heir of Sding chen nas, the favorite of the father of the Seventh Dalai Lama. I have been unable to attest the name in sources earlier than the eighteenth century.

547 Bshad grwa 'og pa Kun dga' dpal 'byor is mentioned in an entry dated 1792 as *bka' blon*. No more is heard of his colleague at Shel dkar. The biography of the Fifth Dalai Lama gives the orthography for this name as Sha ra 'or pa. This is the first occurrence of the form Bshad grwa 'og pa that I have seen. Later the orthography was standardized to Bshad sgra.

548 *Chos kyi rgyal po nor bu bzang po'i rnam thar phyogs bsgrigs byas pa thos chung yid kyi dga' ston*, 218 ff. Date and place of edition unknown. Kanakura (1953), no. 7082.

549 *Byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po gzhon nu nor bzang gi rtogs pa brjod pa bskal pa bzang po'i gtam rgyal sras kun tu dga' ba'i zlos gar*, 9 ff., pp. 625–42.

550 Laufer (1914), pp. 1–110.

551 Chandra (1959); Badaraev (1968); Vogel (1965). Editions of the *Bka' 'gyur* include: Peking Yung lo (1410); Peking Wan li (1605); Peking K'ang hsi (1684?); Li thang (late seventeenth early eighteenth century); Snar thang (1732); Sde dge (1733); Peking Ch'ien lung (1737); Cho ni; A mdo Ra rgya (c. 1810); Wa ra Ri khrod (c. 1930) in 206 volumes (small format); Lha sa (1930s); Chab mdo (1930s) (carved form same papers as Lha sa; there may be an earlier [eighteenth-century] edition from Chab mdo); Urga (c. 1937). Editions of the *Bstan 'gyur* include:

Peking Ch'ien lung (1724); Sde dge (1737–44); Snar thang (1741–42); Cho ni (1753–73); Wa ra (c. 1945) (never finished; small format).

552 Vogel (1965), p. 30.

553 The 'Phyong rgyas manuscript was prepared at the order of Hor Rdo rje tshe brtan, one of the great ancestors of the Fifth Dalai Lama. This prince of the 'Phyong rgyas family served Wang Grags pa 'byung gnas (reigned 1414–45) and his successors of the house of Phag mo gru. See Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Bod kyi deb*, p. 223. The 'Phyong rgyas manuscript of the *Bstan 'gyur* must have contained 234 volumes (subtracting 16 from 250), and included texts that had been translated subsequent to the time of Bu ston.

554 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal has discussed the history of the Snar thang and Zhwa lu redaction and their offspring in the *Deb ther sngon po*. See Roerich (1949), v. 1, pp. 337–39.

555 The Rtses thang manuscript served as the basis for the Gong dkar and Thel sets.

556 Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri was an opponent of the *Kālacakra Tantra*. He would reject most of the texts of this cycle from the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur*. He, however, regarded the *Guhyagarbha Tantra* as genuine. Because of Bu ston's predilection for the *Kālacakra* cycle and his antipathy toward Rnying ma pa tantras, the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* today include the *Kālacakra* texts but reject the older tantras.

557 The texts that belonged to Kheng ze Ching wang represent a heterodox tradition. Perhaps some of these might go back to earlier translations.

558 For instance, two translations of a *Rasasiddhiśāstra* attributed to Vyāḍipāda have been preserved in the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*.

559 Note the variant conventions in rendering the Sanskrit months into Tibetan. The reason is a difference of approximately two months in calculating the New Year. Cf. Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's *Rgyal khab chen po'i dga' ston gyi dus dam pa'i chos las brtsams pa'i bel gtam gyi lde mig skal bzang mgrin rgyan rna bar kun dga' ster ba'i bdud rtsi* (1694). The old New Year is preserved in the celebration of the Peasants' New Year.

560 Read *sogs*. This is the error of a semi-literate copyist working from a *bam yig* manuscript.

561 Ui (1934), no. 543.

562 *Mdo, Go*, ff. 31v–42r.

563 Ui (1934), no. 372 (*Rgyud 'bum, Kha*).

564 Read *gar ga'i*. This orthographical error is additional evidence that this *dbu can* copy has been made from another manuscript probably written in a western Tibetan *bam yig* in which *ta* and *'a* are easily confused, especially when they occur with the *ki ku*.

565 Ui (1934), no. 434I: *Thub pa chen po drang srang gar gas ltas kyis rnam pa bstan pa zhes ba'i gtsug lag*.

566 *Mdo, Go*, ff. 122f–157v. The Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* include the additional chapters extracted from the Ārya Śā ru laṅ karṇa (ff. 138v–157v). The first fifteen chapters conclude: *thub pa chen po drang srang skar ma'i ltas kyi gtsug lag rma bya las ltas sna tshogs bstan pa zhes ba'i ltas ji snyed pa rdzogs so //*.

567 The *Pāśakakevali* has been edited (1859) and translated (1868) by Albrecht Weber. There is another German rendering by Julius Erich Schroeter (1900).

568 Ui (1934), no. 358.

569 The alternation of *s* and *d* is common in the manuscripts from the Bo dong collection. This title should read: *Mi dpyad rgya mtsho bstan pa*.

570 *Mdo, Go*, ff. 211v–220r: *Rgya mtshos bstan pa'i mtshan*.

571 See for instance Bo dong, p. 173: *dmar ser mig la rtsa dang ldan pa ni // bu dang bde ba mang po thob par byed // g.yan pa mtho ba bde ba med par byed // g.yas pa mtho na bu med don dang bral*. Compare with Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur: Mdo (Go)*, fol. 219v: *dmar ba'i mig la rtsa dang ldan pa ni // bu dang bde ba mang po 'thob par byed // g.yon pa mtho ba chen por bshad // g.yas pa mtho na bu med don dang bral //*.

572 These are: (1) *Mi'i mtshan nyid pa rgya mtsho (Mdo, Go, ff. 209r–211v)*. Translated by Dharmadhāra and Grags pa rgyal mtshan. Ui (1934), no. 4338 (*Thun mong, Ngo*). (2) Text without title; Incipit: *gang la gnyer ma lnga yod cing // de yi sna rgyud mtho ba dang // (Mdo, Go, ff. 220r–221r)*. Translated by O rgyan pa at Rdo rje gdan. The colophon calls this text *Mi spyad* [sic].

573 Ui (1934) lists three related texts from the *Thun mong lugs* section (volume *Ngo*):

1. *Rgya mtshos bstan pa'i mtshan*. Ui (1934), no. 4336 (ff. 148v–150v). Translated by Prabhākara and O rgyan pa. This is perhaps a smaller version of the text already cited above.
2. *Mi dpyad kyī bstan bcas bsdus pa*. Ui (1934), no. 4337 (ff. 150v–151r). Translated by O rgyan pa. This is probably the untitled text mentioned in the footnote above from the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur*.
3. *Mi'i mtshan nyid brtag pa rgya mtsho*. Ui (1934), no. 4338 (ff. 151r–153v). Ui attributes this text to one Tibetan scholar, Grags pa rgyal mtshan. This reflects a misunderstanding in which he has taken the name of the person at whose behest the text was translated to be the author. This is certainly identical with the first text cited in the footnote immediately above.

574 *Mdo, Go*, ff. 115r–122r.

575 Thar pa Lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan was the master of Bu ston Rin chen grub. He was a disciple of Shes rab seng ge (1251–1315), the middle son of Rgwa lo. Bu ston notes that his master spent some twelve years in Nepal engaged in the work of translation. Gotamaśrī hailed from the east (*shar phyogs*), i.e., Bengal or Assam. Buddhaśrījñāna was from the same area. In the colophon to this work in the *Bstan 'gyur* he is described as *Bal po rdzong gi rgyal po bla ma paṇḍi ta*. The missing genitive is puzzling. They were assisted in this translation by one Nepalese scholar, Rāma.

Although the Bo dong and the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* versions represent a single version, there are differences in reading that are sometimes quite interesting: Bo dong, p. 179: *'on kyang rang sems 'chol 'dug pas / sems rtse cig tu gyis / rang gi nye du yi gros dang yang stun / rnam rtog ma byed / sngar yang bya ba mang po shor 'dug / da yin na rang la blo nye ba rnams kyī ngag bzhin gyis / don 'grub par 'gyuro //*.

Compare with Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur (Mdo (Go)*, fol. 117r): *'on kyang rang sems 'chol 'dug pa sems rtse gcig tu gyis / khyed rang gi nye du'i gros dang yang bstun / rnam rtog ma byed sngar yang khyod kyī nya ba mang po shor 'dug / da yin na'ang rang la blo nye ba rnams kyī ngag bzhin du gyis shig / don 'grub par 'gyur ro /*. The *Bstan 'gyur* version is quite as corrupt as Bo dong's.

576 Ui (1934), no. 362.

577 Ui (1934), no. 373.

578 Cf. *Mdo, Go*, ff. 23r–28v.

579 Ui (1934), no. 4316.

580 This translator is not to be identified with Bo dong's uncle and guru, but rather with the earlier Yar klungs Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan.

- 581 These include the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* (*Sku gzugs kyi mtshan nyid kyi rnam 'grel*), written by one Samyaksambuddha (Snar thang, *Go*, ff. 7v–11r).
- 582 For instance, the Snar thang *Bstan 'gyur* (*Go*, fol. 23v) reads: / *sna rdog zlum po sar mo ste* /. Bo dong's version gives the correct *sna rtog*.
- 583 An example is seen on p. 377 where we read: *bstan bcos mi mthun bzhin byas na // sbyin bdag rnam par nyams bar 'gyur //*. The correct reading is to be found in the *Bstan 'gyur*: *bstan bcos mi mthun bzhin byas na // sbyin bdag rnam par nyams par 'gyur //*.
- 584 Ui (1934), no. 362.
- 585 Das (1902), p. 855.
- 586 *Mdo*, *Go*, ff. 377r–383r: *Dngul chu grub pa'i bstan bcos*.
- 587 Ui (1934), no. 4313.
- 588 *Mdo*, *Go*, ff. 3v–5v. *Gser 'gyur gyi bstan bcos bsdus pa*. Ui (1934), no. 4314.
- 589 *Mdo*, *Go*, ff. 1v–3v. *Thams cad kyi dbang phyug bcud len nad thams cad 'joms shing lus kyi stobs rgyas par byed pa*. Ui (1934), no. 4318.
- 590 See Ngag dbang blo bzang, *Rig gnas*. Klong rdol Bla ma is here quoting the *Lam rim chen mo* of the incomparable Tsong kha pa.
- 591 See vol. 1 (*Ka*), p. 162: *'di ni brda' sprod gzhung lugs kun gi mig // dpal ldan ka la pa dang tsan tra pa // nyi ma zla ba lta bur kun du grags //*.
- 592 See Ngag dbang blo bzang, *Rig gnas*.
- 593 For example, Stag lung Lo tsā ba Ngag dbang grags pa in his *Yi ge'i rnam bshad*.
- 594 Ui (1934), nos. 4346–47.
- 595 Ui (1934), nos. 4350 and 4351. The *Gnas brgyad chen po'i rtsa ba* and its commentary, the *Sgra'i bstan bcos*. The latter is sometimes attributed to King Khri srong lde btsan.
- 596 Ui (1934), no. 4352. The Sanskrit title *Samyagvākpramāṇoddhṛtasūtra* is given by the editors, presumably from the fabricated title found in the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur*.
- 597 His name is often found in the Tibetan form *Dran pa'i ye shes grags pa*.
- 598 Ui (1934), nos. 4295 and 4296. The title is given as *Smra ba'i sgo mtshon cha lta bu rtsa 'grel*. The Sanskrit title appears as *Vacanamukhāyudhopama*.
- 599 There is some confusion in the Tibetan sources regarding Smṛtijñānakīrti. In some of these he is identified with *Sgra'i tsher ma*, who taught Sanskrit to 'Brom ston; in others, he is confused with the Indian scholar, the Ācārya Phra la ring mo, who also traveled to Khams. The *Smra sgo mtshon cha* commentary is sometimes attributed to Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po. Rong zom is variously regarded to be the rebirth of Smṛti or the re-animation through *grong 'jug* of Phra la ring mo. All we can be certain of is that Smṛti is to be dated to the tenth or early eleventh century.
- 600 Volume *Tha* of the *Sa skya bka' 'bum* contains Sa skya Paṇḍita's outline of this work, the *Smra sgo sa bcad*.
- 601 See Ui (1934), no. 4284.
- 602 Dkon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa'i chos*, fol. 172r, refers to Shong Blo gros brtan pa as being the nephew (*dbon po*) of Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan. Other sources, however, make him out to be the younger brother of Rdo rje rgyal mtshan.
- 603 Roerich (1959).
- 604 The translator of *Snye thang* calls himself the “Fourth Sthiramati” reckoning Vasubandhu's disciple to have been the first. The second was Shong Blo gros brtan pa, while the third was Dpang Blo gros brtan pa.
- 605 Sa bzang Ma ti Paṇ chen was a student of the great Kun mkhyen Dol po pa (1292–1361) and a teacher of Sa bzang 'Phags pa Gzhon nu blo gros.

606 The Tibetan sources give the form Slob dpon Dbang phyug go cha, which should render the Sanskrit Īśvaravarman. In the majority of Sanskrit bibliographies, however, one finds the form Śarvavarman. Kong sprul gives the form Sarvavarman. Some of the Tibetan sources have emended Sarvavarman to Śarvavarman. Western bibliographical sources are roughly divided between Īśvaravarman and Sarvavarman.

607 The Tibetan rendering is Bgrod dka' seng ge, the result of an attempt to form an etymology for Durga. Durgasim̃ha's commentary survives in a Sanskrit original, the *Kātantravṛtti*. See Ui (1934), no. 4283.

608 See Ui (1934), no. 4285. A Sanskrit original of a *Dhātukāya* survives. This work is attributed to Śarvavarman.

609 The author of this commentary is given as Jo bo Drag 'byor. The Sanskrit original of Drag 'byor would seem to be Ugrabhūti. This commentary has the title *Śiṣyahitāvyākaraṇa-kalāpasūtravṛtti*. Ui (1934), no. 4286.

610 Ui (1934), no. 4289. In his *dkar chag* to the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur* Zhu chen Tshul khirms rin chen quotes the colophon that is signed by Lo tsā ba chen po Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, who styles himself as a student of a scholar Śrīmaṇika and one Bsod nams bzang po. One is tempted to identify this Rdo rje rgyal mtshan with Shong ston.

611 There was a xylographic edition of much of Sa bzang Ma ti's great commentary from Sde dge Dgon chen. This has been reprinted photographically in the new Japanese edition of the *Sa skya bka' 'bum* and related texts.

612 A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho lists a few of these: 1) *Ka la pa'i bshad sbyar gzhung don gsal ba*; 2) *Ka la pa'i mtshams sbyor lnga bye brag tu bshad pa*; 3) *Ming le yan gyi spyi bshad*; 4) *Ka la pa'i sa bcad*; 5) *Nyer bsgyur 'grel pa*.

613 The largest part of Snye thang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa's great commentary survives in the British Museum. Cf. Or 6752 (B) and 6626. More portions may turn up bound with other works.

614 *Nyer bsgyur (nye bar bsgyur ba)* is the Tibetan rendering of *upasarga*, "prefix." Ui (1934), no. 4270.

615 Lha mthong Lo tsā ba was a disciple of the Eighth Zhwa nag Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–54).

616 Ui, no. 4423. *Brda sprod pa dbyangs can*. The fact that the editors of the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur* included this translation would suggest that 'Dar pa Lo tsā ba's latter translation had not gained complete acceptance. See also volume *Pha* of Tāranātha's *gsung 'bum*, where his translation is reproduced.

617 Volume *Pha* of the *gsung 'bum* contains Tāranātha's own commentary: *Dbyangs can brda sprod kyi 'grel pa mchog gsal* (401 ff.).

618 Besides the autobiography (*Rgyal khams pa tā ra nā thas bdag nyid kyi rnam thar nges par brjod pa'i deb gter shin tu zhib mo ma bcos lhug pa'i rtogs brjod*. 331 ff.), there is a manuscript biography that bears the title *'Jam mgon grub pa'i dpa' bo'i rnam thar*. The authorship is unknown.

619 Tāranātha is the author of a commentary on this short grammatical work of unknown authorship: *Dpal sgra'i snye ma du ma'i don shes rtog pa* (15 ff.) in volume *Pha* of his *gsung 'bum*.

620 The *dbu can* manuscript gives *Sra ma nanda*. The manuscript has probably been copied from an *dbu med* manuscript, and the scribe has misread the *pra* as *sra*.

621 See the *'Jam mgon grub pa'i dpa' bo'i rnam thar*.

622 Ui (1934), no. 4297.

- 623 Ui (1934), no. 4298.
- 624 Ui (1934), no. 4420.
- 625 See Ngag dbang blo bzang, *Rig gnas*, p. 392.
- 626 This and similar legends about the origins of Sanskrit grammar can be found in any number of historical and reference sources, such as Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag 'phreng ba's *Lho brag chos 'byung*, Bu ston's *Chos 'byung*, Mkhyen brtse's *Sgra'i chos 'byung*, Kong sprul's *Shes bya kun khyab*: *sgra yi rig pa mtha' yas te // yongs su rdzogs pa rgya mtsho tsam // nga yis shes pa bum pa gang // khyod kyis shes pa chu thig tsam* /. It is the *Shes bya kun khyab* that has served as the basis for the presentation summarized here. See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, ff. 198v–201v.
- 627 Kong sprul notes in his *Shes bya kun khyab* (Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, fol. 199r) a tradition that Pāṇini was born in the west of Āryadeśa at Bhi ru ka'i tshal, perhaps another name for Śalātura or a place in the vicinity.
- 628 There is a *Subodhikā*, a commentary on the *Sārasvatasūtra*, by one Candrakīrti. This *Ārthaṭīkka* is obviously a different work. There is also an exegesis of the Pāṇini system by a Candrakīrti, a teacher of Nālanda. This work has the title *Samantabhadra*.
- 629 Vararuci would seem to be an alias of Patañjali in the present context.
- 630 The *Chos 'byung* of Bu ston unaccountably suggests that it was Lokeśvara rather than Tārā who appeared to Candragomin to prophesy that the *Candravyākaraṇa* would be of great benefit and to save him from destroying the manuscript.
- 631 This enormous subcommentary by Pūrṇacandra (Zla ba gang ba) apparently no longer survives in its entirety.
- 632 The Tibetan sources render Kārttikeya as both Smin drug and Gdong drug.
- 633 This reading, drawn from Kong sprul, agrees substantially with the interpretation made by Obermiller when he was editing the *Chos 'byung* of Bu ston. He notes that the xylograph from which he was working had *siddho varṇa samam naye*.
- 634 Viṣṇupati was Si tu Paṅ chen's beloved master of Sanskrit. Si tu's autobiography relates that Viṣṇupati's real name was Vachura (or Bachura) Ojha and that he hailed from Tirhut.
- 635 *Dpe rgyun dkon pa 'ga' zhig gi tho yig don gnyer yid kyi kunda bzhad pa'i zla 'od 'bum gyi snye ma*. See Chandra (1963), no. 12889.
- 636 For example, there are two bulky volumes bearing the designation *Nga*. The first is the continuation of volume *Gha*, the concluding (or what would seem to be the concluding) portions of the *Kālapa* exegesis; this contains a total of 444 folia. The second volume designated *Nga* comprises a part of a *Rgyud sde spyi rnam* in 625 folia, of which the first 300 are missing.
- 637 One should remember that the third section of volume *Ga* (*Rtags can gyi yi ge bshad pa*) is also numbered 104.
- 638 Ui (1934), no. 4305.
- 639 Zhu chen Tshul khriims rin chen characterizes this work in the *dkar chag* to the *Sde dge Bstan 'gyur* (Ui (1934), no. 4569): *l sdeb sbyor gyi dper brjod ston pa sdeb sbyor gyi phreng ba'i bstod pa...*
- 640 Ui (1934), no. 4303.
- 641 Ui (1934), no. 4304.
- 642 Ui (1934), no. 4459.
- 643 Cf. Chandra (1963), no. 13023: *Sdeb sbyor bsduṣ don*.
- 644 Cf. Chandra (1963), no. 13021: *Sdeb sbyor gyi rnam bzhag*.
- 645 Cf. Chandra (1963), no. 13022: *Sdeb sbyor rin 'byung gi 'grel pa don gsal me long*. There was a Sde dge xylographic edition of this work in 31 ff. This text comprised ff. 173–203 of the

edition of the *Snyan ngag 'grel pa dang dper brjod* of Bod mkhas pa Mi pham dge legs rnam rgyal (seventeenth century). This collection has been included in the Toyo Bunko reproduction of the *Sa skya bka' 'bum*.

646 This author would seem not to be identical with Kṛṣṇamiśra, the eleventh-century author of the allegorical *Prabodhcandrodaya*.

647 There are reports to the effect that Si tu produced a retranslation of the *Chandoratnākara*, both *mūla* and autocommentary.

648 See, for example, Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, fol. 221r.

649 The *Amarakośa* is also known as the *Nāmalingānuśāsana* or *Trikāṇḍa*.

650 Medinākara probably belongs to the fourteenth century. His dictionary is also called the *Nānārthaśabdakośa*.

651 The *Viśvalocana* was translated into Tibetan by Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba and ultimately was included in the Sde dge redaction of the *Bstan 'gyur*. Ui (1934), no. 4453 (*Sna tshogs*, Po, 70v–163v).

652 Puruṣottamadeva stems from the *Amarakośa* tradition and seems to belong to the twelfth century.

653 *Tshig gter gyi rgya cher 'grel pa me tog gi chun po*. Manuscript in 68 ff. India Office Library (London), no. 12.

654 It should be noted that Subhūticandra's commentary follows the system of grammar expounded in the *Candravyākaraṇa*. This is the reason for its popularity in Tibet over those such as the *Tshig zla gnyis pa* of Rāyamukuṭa, which follows Pāṇinian rules.

655 It is interesting to note that Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba is described as 'Gos Lo tsā ba gsum pa Dharma pa la bhadra. The first of the great translators of the 'Gos clan was Khug pa Lhas btsas; the second was, of course, Gzhon nu dpal, the historian and author of the *Deb ther sngon po*.

656 Ui (1934), nos. 4299–4300 (*Sgra mdo*, Se). The full title of Subhūticandra's commentary is *Amarakośaṭīkakāmadhenu*.

657 Si tu specifically mentions Bhānuji Dikṣita's *Vyākhyāsudhā* (also called *Rāmāśramī* and *Subhodhinī*), the *Tshig zla gnyis pa* of Rāyamukuṭa, and the commentary on the first section by King Jagajjaya Malla of Kathmandu.

658 Chandra (1965) reproduces an edition of a careful commentary by Si tu on the *Amarakośa*. This apparently represents Si tu Paṅ chen's third work on the *Amarakośa*.

659 Among the more popular indigenous Tibetan lexicographic works, the following are especially esteemed: Snar thang Lo tsā ba Dge 'dun dpal's *Mngon brjod gser phreng rol ba*; Rin spungs pa Ngag dbang 'jig grags's *Mngon brjod mkhas pa'i rna rgyan*; Dpal khang Lo tsā ba's *Mngon brjod pad dkar 'phreng ba*; Mkhyen brtse Lo tsā ba's *Mngon brjod sde tshan bdun pa*; Tshul khriims seng ge's *Ming gi tshogs gsal bar byed pa blo gsal rna cha*; Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis's *Mngon brjod Brda gsar rnying gi rnam gzhas li shi'i gur khang*; Dngul chu Dharma bhadra's *Mngon brjod rgya mtsho'i chu thigs*.

660 The greatest of these Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionaries are: Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal's (1697–1763) *Nye bar mkho ba'i legs sbyar gyi skad bod kyī brda' kā li'i phreng ba sprigs ngo mtshar nor bu'i do shal* (See Bacot [1930]); Zhe chen Drung yig Bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan's (fl. 1750–75) *Legs par sbyar ba lha'i skad dang gangs can pa'i brda' shan sbyar ba dri bral nor bu'i me long*; 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho's (1846–1912) *Skad gnyis shan sbyar*. The last is one of the important sources for the Sanskrit equivalents of Rnying ma pa philosophical and meditation terminology.

661 Tibetan tradition attributes the *Mahābhārata* to the Drang srong Rgyas pa, i.e., Vyāsa.



- 662 The epic poem, the *Raghuvamśa*, is usually attributed by modern scholars to Kālidāsa.
- 663 The *Meghadūta* (*Sprin gyi pho nya*) was translated into Tibetan by the Kashmiri scholar Sumanaśri and Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo. The translation was later revised by Lo chen Nam mkha' bzang po.
- 664 No example of the Sde dge *Bstan 'gyur* is available in Delhi. The Bkra shis lhun po print that has been used here contains thirty-seven folios.
- 665 Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags pa was a disciple of Mkhas grub rje. His more famous literary works include a poetic biography of his countryman, Lo chen Rin chen bzang po, hymns of praise to Mi la ras pa, the *Rgyal bu zla ba'i rtogs brjod*, and the *Ra ma ṅa'i rtogs brjod*, a literary reworking of the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.
- 666 A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho (1803–75), the A mdo ba bibliographer, has listed a number of this magnificent scholar's other related poetical writings; see Chandra (1963), v. 3, nos. 12974–97 and 11044–46. The vast majority of these works are unfortunately among the volumes missing from the collection preserved in Tibet House.
- 667 The fourth chapter (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, pp. 178–83) contains a detailed classification of the lineages or “clans” of Tibet and is perhaps the most important chapter in this compendium. Because of the variant title and since the fifth chapter is also numbered as the fourth (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 203), one might at first suspect that this chapter is a later addition, perhaps an extract from another work. This, however, cannot be the case because: 1) the chapter is mentioned in the introduction (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 3) as one of the thirteen to be treated; and 2) the style of this chapter is identical with that of the rest of the work. We are, therefore, dealing only with a variant title.
- 668 The last topic is numbered ninety-two, but there are four topics that have duplicate numbering (46a, 47a, 48a, and 89a) and two that are unnumbered (74a and 76a).
- 669 My friend Chopal discovered a manuscript in the library of the Tibetan Refugee Lamas' Ashram at Buxa in Jalpaiguri District (West Bengal) that was almost certainly a copy of a text identical to the manuscript provided by Thoosay Rinpoche. There is a manuscript entitled *Bzhad mdzod* in the Royal Library in Copenhagen that probably represents a text similar or identical to that of our manuscript. There is a reasonably large manuscript without title in the British Museum that is apparently a compendium compiled in Gtsang or western Tibet. Other important manuscripts and fragments of works of this type have been found in India and Nepal.
- 670 Tucci (1949) has treated a number of these works, especially the tantric classification (*rgyud sde'i rnam gzhaḡ*) of the Sa skya pa masters.
- 671 Činggim was a descendant of Genghis Khan.
- 672 The *Chang so chil lun* translated by one Shar pa (1259–1314) in 1306.
- 673 The *Ciqula keregligci tegüs udyata sastir* translated by Širegetü Guoši Čorji (fl. 1600–1650).
- 674 See Bagchi (1937).
- 675 See Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 170. In addition to the Mon pa princelings who traced their ancestry to Khri Gtsang ma, we find descendants of the Royal Dynasty ruling in Pu rang (from Mnga' bdag Rtse lde) and in Tsong kha (from Mnga' bdag Ka tsa don chen). At Bsam yas the Bu tshal ba and Lha Gling ka ra still reigned. The descendants of Drung chen lha dbang po, who claimed descent from Yum brtan, perhaps through a daughter, ruled over Yar stod Bug pa can.
- 676 *lho bhyang mon gyi rgyal po rnam s / mnga' 'bdag rtsang ma'i gdung rgyud yin / 'on kyang rang gi yig tshang gzigs //*

677 Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, pp. 175–76.

678 All dates for the Phag mo gru pa are based on the *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* of Paṅ chen Bsod nams grags pa (1478–1554). See Bsod nams grags pa, *Rgyal rabs*, ff. 56v et seq.

679 Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 175–76: *brgyud pa kun dga'i rgyal mtshan de / bdag po kun dga' gdung chad de / grag pa 'byung gnas dpal bzang po'i dpal / chung po ngag dbang grag zhes bya / che sar ston nas rgyal por bkod //*.

680 Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 354.

681 Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 188.

682 *Phye mo* is an interesting term. I have interpreted it as an orthographical error for *che molchen mo*. On Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 5, we find *phye mo* occurring in a context where it obviously must mean a female ancestor parallel to *mes po*, “grandfather, ancestor.” The dictionaries give the form *phyi mo* with the meaning “grandmother.”

683 I have rendered the terms *rigs* and *rus* freely as “tribe,” “nation,” or “lineage” depending on what seemed best in context. Due to the technical meaning that the term “clan” has acquired in social anthropology, it would seem prudent to avoid using that term until we know more about the social organization of ancient Tibet.

684 I have separated with a rule subgroups of lineages or tribes that are enumerated together. Although it might first appear that these groupings occur only due to the requirements of verse, I have come to the conclusion that, in the case of the Tibetan tribes, these groupings reflect relationships that may prove considerably significant; therefore, I have indicated three sub-groupings in the outline.

685 The attribution of pre-Mongolic peoples with the term *ge ser* is bound to raise some controversy. There is, however, convincing evidence in some of the manuscripts and fragments that have recently come to light. The problem is much too complicated to go into here.

686 *Nang* here means non-foreign and hence indigenous to the Tibetan world.

687 The *Se* (variant: *Bse*) tribes included the 'A zhwa, who were conquered by the Tibetans during the time of Srong btsan sgam po. There is some information about the 'A zhwa lineages in the biographies of the Gnas gsar ba bla mas. Our text (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 183) describes the *Se* lineages as the “Four Sons of *Se Byu legs*” and enumerates them: a) *Se gong Rgyal nang rje*; b) 'Gro gang Nyer ba se; c) 'Og gog Tsang 2(?) se; d) 'Og ma Bde stong se. Unfortunately, there is reason to believe that our text is rather corrupt at this point.

688 The *Rmu* (variants: *Smu* and *Dmu*) tribes claimed a common ancestor, *Rmu rje Kol po*. The eight tribes are known under the collective name *Rmu Ko le phra brgyad* (variant: *Ko le'i khri brgyad*).

689 Variant: *Gnubs*.

690 Variant: *Mgar*.

691 Variant: *Gnyos*.

692 The *Ldong* (variant: *Dong*) tribes claimed as a common ancestor *Ldong chen po Spodro*. Their probable original homeland was to the northeast of Tibet. Their original language was identical with that of *Mi nyag*, a dialect of which developed into the language of the Tangut. One or two speakers of some dialect of the *Mi nyag* language are in exile in India. This language is called *Mi nyag Rong skad* by the Tibetans and seems to have survived in a few isolated valleys. Most of *Mi nyag* adopted dialects of Tibetan centuries ago. Other prominent lineages tracing their ancestry to *Ldong chen po* include the *A'o Ldong*, from which the *Rnam rgyal* dynasty of Sikkim traces its descent.

693 Scribal error for *Cog ro*. Variant: *Chog ro*.

- 694 This may well be an error for 'Bro or for 'Brom.
- 695 'Bring is probably a shortened form for 'Bring yas. We should not, however, rule out the possibility that it is a scribal error for 'Brid or 'Dre. Lha lung was the lineage to which Dpal gyi rdo rje, the assassin of Glang dar ma, belonged. Both Lha lung and Lha rtse are place names. We must consider the possibility that place names gradually became accepted as alternative names for lineages. This certainly occurred in later Tibetan history. Consider the case of the Ga zi lineage of Byang stag lung, who were best known in the eighteenth century as Mdo mkhar, derived from the name of their estate on the Bhutanese border. During the nineteenth century the lineage was better known as Ra ga shar, derived from the location of their Lhasa palace. The members of the 'Khon lineage of Sa skya are often described as being of the lineage of Sa skya (*sa skya pa'i gdung brgyud*). I suspect that both Lha lung and Lha rtse are connected with 'Bro.
- 697 Error for 'Gos (variant: Mgos).
- 698 Possible error or variant for Myang (variant: Nyang).
- 699 Variants: Tshe spong and Tshes pong.
- 700 Possibly a corrupted form of Snyi or Snyi ba.
- 701 Variant: Pho yong.
- 702 The four princely lineages of Stong trace their ancestry to a common male ancestor whose name is not given in our source. It is significant that the name of the female ancestor is mentioned: Gnas sman rgyal mo. The original homeland of the princely lineages of Stong was probably Sum pa; their original language was probably a dialect of Sum pa that was lost after they settled in Tibet. The subject lineages of Stong may have belonged to the aboriginal populations of Tibet, which the Stong princely lineages conquered in the distant past, long before the seventh century. The Ldong lineages seem to have been later intruders on the scene.
- 703 Variants: Mar and Mar pa.
- 704 Variant: Gnyal.
- 705 Variants: Rngog and Rngogs.
- 706 Variants: Sba, Rba, Sbas, Dba's. This lineage was to become one of the most important during the Royal Dynastic period. The classification preserved here reflects the conquests that occurred many centuries before Srong brtsan sgam po.
- 707 See Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 179.
- 708 On Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 190, a list is given of six tribes that held power in western Tibet: a. Cog ro, b. Cog tse, c. Thang dkar, d. Bre gang, e. Khyung po, f. Wa na
- 709 In Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 191, we find six great tribes (*rus chen drug*) listed as being paramount in eastern Tibet: a. Gra, b. Skyu ra, c. Rtsa mi, d. Shi mi, e. Ldan ma, f. Tre'o.
- 710 Error for Ldan ma.
- 711 Error for Tre'o or Tre hor.
- 712 A group of Sum pa tribesman settled in A mdo became rather powerful and were gradually incorporated into the old lineage structure. The connection of the Stong tribes with Sum pa had been forgotten by this time. Consequently, a new lineage under the name of Sum pa makes its appearance.
- 713 here are several lists of a scheme with six great tribes of Central Tibet. Tucci (1949) p. 714, gives two: 1) a. Se, b. Rmu or Dmu, c. Ldong, d. Stong, e. Gra or Dgra, f. Bru or 'bur. 2) a. Dgra, b. 'Bru, c. Ldong, d. 'Ga', e. Nu bo, f. Dpa' mda' or Dpal mnga'. Stein (1961) has corrected Tucci's reading of *nu bo*, "younger brother," as the name of a lineage in his second list. Here we must read: e. Dpa', Dba', or Wa, and f. Mda' or Zla.

714 The expanded version of our text may represent an attempt to incorporate two new lineages that had gained considerable power into a traditional prestige structure based upon lineage. The usage of the epithet *btsan par byed pa* in reference to these two tribes lends credence to this view.

715 Variants: Gnyags and Rnyegs. Cf. Rje cig Snyags rje Thog sgrom rje, the fourth of the princely lineages of Stong, above.

716 It is difficult to see why these tribes or nations should be described as “secret” or “hidden,” except that the term fits in with the traditional construct of *phyi nang gsang gsum*.

717 It is worth mentioning that the author of our *Bshad mdzod* keeps Li and Bal po distinct. Several fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sources confuse the two. See Macdonald (1963), p. 113.

718 Better reading (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 186): Rgya mo Khyi khyo ma. Several of my learned Tibetan friends have suggested an identification with Japan.

719 Better reading (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 186): Ko le Dug mda' can. This can probably be identified with the Veddoid tribes of Ceylon and Malaysia.

720 Variant (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 186): Gar lhog Kyung skad can. The Qarluq Turks.

721 Variant (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, p. 186): Sog po Prel glag can. This probably refers to the Tungusic or Hyperborean peoples.

722 Perhaps these four groups refer to tribes that have animals as totems.

723 Chi ba is an obvious error for *byi ba*.

724 I have taken *rtsang phag* to be an incorrect form for *rtsangs pa*, some sort of lizard or chameleon. Construing the word to mean some type of wild pig or boar presents problems.

725 Unfortunately, the author does not enumerate the lineages belonging to these last two categories.

726 This outline of tribal structure is missing the names of a number of lineages that occur in earlier documents and later histories. Some of the obvious omissions, like 'Khon, Lce, Ga zi, and Zur, can be explained by the fact that these lineages traced their ancestry back to the gods. Other omissions, like the Hor of 'Phyong rgyas, result from the fact that these lineages are alleged to have sprung from distinguished ancestors in India or China. We are left with a residue of prominent lineages, the most important of which are Mchims, Sna lam, and Bran ka, for which we cannot yet account.

727 This geographical classification, it should be noted, omits the mention of Li (Khotan), while the lineage classification outlined above includes both Li and Bal po.

728 The manuscript is defective at this point, the scribe probably having omitted a line in copying. We cannot be certain where the The brang Mig cig should be placed in the geographical arrangement. Two names are completely missing.

729 The Mu steps Wa zha were the Se lineages who had not accepted the Bon-Buddhist religious complex and who had not become Tibetanized linguistically and culturally.

730 Tucci (1949), p. 681, citing the *Ngor chos 'byung* of Ngor chen Dkon mchog lhun grub (1497–1557), gives as the Mnga' ris skor gsum: 1. Mal yul mtsho (i.e., Mar yul), 2. Gu ge, 3. Pu hrangs. In the autobiography of Zhu chen Tshul khirms rin chen, we find an expanded list of the Skor gsum. See Tshul khirms rin chen, *Chos smra*, fol. 11r: 1. Pu rangs, Mang yul, and Zangs dkar; 2. Li, Bru sha, and Sbal te; 3. Zhang chung, Khri lde, and Stod smad. I think the evidence suggests that, as Tibetan political power increased and the Tibetanization of border peoples progressed, new classificatory schemes incorporating these new areas and peoples that had not been subject to Tibet during Yüan and Ming times became necessary. A parallel development can be observed in the expansion of the three *sgang* of Khams into six.

731 Zhu chen's autobiography (Tshul khriims rin chen, *Chos smra*) and Klong rdol Bla ma (Ngag dbang blo bzang, *Rgya bod*) both give a classification of eastern Tibet into three realms (*kham*s *gsum*): Smad khams (Mdo khams); 2. G.yar mo thang (Mdo khams); 3. Gying thang (Btsong kha).

732 The classification of Mdo khams (i.e., Khams proper) into three *sgang* occurs in a number of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sources, e.g., the *Ngor chos 'byung* (Dkon mchog lhun grub, *Dam pa'i chos*): 1. Tshal *sgang* (*Bshad mdzod*: Tsha ba *rgang*), 2. Bo 'bor *sgang* (*Bshad mdzod*: Spun po *rgang*), 3. Mar khams *sgang* (*Bshad mdzod*: Mar *rgang*). Only after the seventeenth century does the classification into six *sgang* appear. Zhu chen's autobiography lists (Tshul khriims rin chen, *Chos smra*): 1. Rngul rdza Ze mo *sgang*, 2. Tsha ba *sgang*, 3. Smar khams *sgang*, 4. Spo 'bor *sgang*, 5. Dmar rdza *sgang*, 6. Mi nyag Rab (Ra ba?) *sgang*.

The evidence of these lists seems to point to a situation in which eastern Tibet was first divided into three parts: 1) Khams with its center near modern Smar khams and usually called Mdo khams; 2) G.yar mo than which included parts of Khams and inner A mdo and usually called Mdo smad; 3) Outer A mdo consisting of Tsonk kha, Blang kha, and Khri kha and usually referred to as Tsonk kha or Sar Btsong kha. The whole area was under the nominal control of a line of princes who traced their ancestry to the former Royal Dynasty of Tibet, and who ruled the area from the Kokonor much as the Mongols later did.

With the donation of the three *chol kha* by Qubilai, a new classification evolved that reckoned Central Tibet to be the first of the *chol kha* and divided the three parts of eastern Tibet into two: 1) Khams or Mdo stod, which extended up to the bend of the Yellow River, and 2) A mdo or Mdo smad, which included much more of the old G.yar mo than Mdo smad and all of Btsong kha.

Khams was subdivided into three *sgang*. As Tibetan religious and political influence expanded eastward into areas that had been parts of the old Sum pa and Mi nyag, the classification of Khams into three *sgang* was expanded into six. The term *sgang* refers to the upland and relatively flat area lying between two great river canyons.

733 The *ru* organization of Tibet has long intrigued scholars. The work of Thomas, Tucci, and Geza Uray has added to our knowledge. Nevertheless, there are still numerous problems in need of solutions. Tucci (1949), pp. 737–38, gives a detailed comparison of several literary sources concerning the four *ru* of Central Tibet. Zhu chen's autobiography follows the same tradition as that of the Fifth Dalai Lama's biography of Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho (Tshul khriims rin chen, *Chos smra*): Dbu ru, G.yo ru, G.yas ru, Ru lag. This tradition substitutes Ru lag for G.yon ru. Our text is much the same: G.yu ru occurs for G.yo ru, G.yon ru appears in place of Ru lag; and the designation Dbus is replaced by Bod.

Klong rdol Bla ma, quoting 'Brom ston, divides Tibet into eight parts (Ngag dbang blo bzang, *Rgya bod*): 1. Dbus, 2. Gtsang, 3. Khams, 4. Dwags, 5. Kong, 6. Long po, 7. Nyang; 8. Byang thang 'Brog. In this classification, Mnga' ris has been omitted. This reflects a scheme in which Mnga' ris skor gsum is reckoned to be one of the myriarchies of Gtsang. The separation of Dwags po and Kong po from Dbus and Gtsang is significant: in our outline these areas are treated as important parts of G.yu ru.

How should we approach this problem? We must accept that we are faced with traditional lists reflecting a number of different historical periods. The *ru* organization underwent changes, but these lists, handed down orally, were preserved long after a new system was in existence. We should not necessarily assume that lists found in later documents represent more recent organizations than lists found in older documents. We must examine the *gter ma*

materials and the Tun-huang documents critically. Do the materials found in the *Bka' thang sde lnga* necessarily reflect a scheme earlier than the fourteenth century? Although these works are based on older materials, can we be sure that the editors have not edited and reinterpreted these older materials in light of political and administrative divisions of their own time? How can we be sure that the Tun-huang materials have not been affected by the same sort of reinterpretation? The *ru* organization certainly changed significantly during the almost two-and-a-quarter centuries of the Royal Dynastic period.

From the earliest times, the fundamental distinction in the Tibetan lands was that between the Bod and 'Brog, or between the settled and the seasonally transhumanant or nomadic populations. The broader contours of early Tibetan history concern the processes by which nomadic tribes of largely non-Tibetan stock were transformed into settled populations, and the processes by which they adopted Tibetan language and culture. The *ru* organization played an important role in these processes. Our text contains hints of an older classificatory scheme, a scheme prior to the twofold division of Central Tibet into Dbus and Gtsang. The text replaces Dbus with Dbu ru and G.yu ru with Bod. Dbus is derived from Dbu ru. To speak of Dbu ru and G.yu ru as the two *ru* of Dbus is nonsense. Even today, Tibetans are reluctant to classify Lho kha, Kong po, and Dwags po as part of Dbus. Dbus meant Dbu ru.

Gradually, as more nomads were assimilated and the Tibetan cultural area expanded, old meanings were forgotten, geographical names shifted, and new classifications emerged. 'Brom's eightfold classification is one such early scheme.

734 The boundaries of G.yas ru (Don dam, *Bshad mdzod*, pp. 192–93) are vaguely defined as upward (roughly westward) from Chu mtshams bzang gi sogs pa ri and downward (roughly eastward) from Las stod Bye ma la g.yung drung. The largest center of commerce was Zhong zhong in Shangs; the greatest monastery was Rtags bde chos gling. Klong rdol Bla ma offers the interesting piece of information that Nyang chu gzhung lay in G.yas ru.

735 The boundaries of G.yon ru are also fairly vague: from Gtsang Sil ma'i la thog upward (westward) and from Snying po'i breng gi la'i sgo downward (eastward). The chief market was Tshong dus Gor mo (read: Tshong 'dus Gur mo). The most important monastery was Zhwa lu Ri phug. Most of the sources identify G.yon ru with Ru lag. Klong rdol Bla ma notes that Shab was in Ru lag.

736 Our author becomes more detailed when he comes to Dbu ru. The eastern boundary is 'Ol ka Shug pa spun bdun; the southern, the Dkar la. The western border is fixed at Snya mo Gzhung (Snye mo Gzhu); the northern, at Smri ti mig. Don dam smra ba'i seng ge then describes some of the important religious places and monuments of Dbu ru. He notes that Lha sa is the chief place of pilgrimage and trading center for all of the four *ru*. Klong rdol Bla ma mentions Zho and Mal gro in the north, and 'Phan yul and Stod lung in the south of Dbu ru. He also places Skyid shod in Dbu ru, in opposition to Ngam shod in G.yu ru.

737 G.yu ru is the native *ru* of the author, and he becomes more thorough in his descriptions. Zhu chen and other Sa skya sources give the orthography G.yo ru. We also find an occasional substitution of Dbus G.yas ru for G.yu ru. See Tucci (1949), pp. 737–38, for a suggested explanation of this phenomenon. The eastern boundary is placed at Rkong Lha nag po; the northern at the Rma la. The western border was at Kha rag Byi stod; the southern, at Sha 'ug Rta sgo. Don dam smra ba'i seng ge notes that the largest religious establishment was Sol nag Thang chen (Thang po che in the 'Phyong rgyas Valley). The most important place of pilgrimage was Rtsa ri Rtsa gong. Klong rdol Bla ma notes that Ngam shod and Lho kha belonged to G.yas ru of Dbus.

738 Gra is the valley or complex of valleys now called Grwa nang, Grwa phyi, and Grwa. See Ferrari, (1958), p. 54–55.

739 Dol is not mentioned in Ferrari (1958). It is a small tributary valley to the east of Grwa. Here was located one of the monasteries founded by Lo ras pa.

740 Gzhung lies to the east of Dol. The famous monastery Gzhung Spre'u zhing was the seat of the hereditary lamas of the Rngog lineage. This lineage apparently died out in the seventeenth century.

741 See Ferrari (1958), pp. 51, 126.

742 I am inclined to doubt that Dmyal here is identical with the Gnyal of the maps, unless this is a case of transferred place names. The Gnyal of the maps lies in southern G.yu ru, whereas this Dmyal is described as being in the central part of northern G.yu ru.

743 Yar included the Yar klungs and 'Phyongs rgyas Valleys.

744 This Byar would appear to be Byar smad of the maps.

745 Dags refers to some part of Dwags po.

746 Rkong is the old orthography for Kong po.

747 Does Byar here refer to Byar stod of the maps?

748 Dags again probably refers to some part of Dwags po.

749 Should we take Rgang to be a variant for Rkong, or might this be a misreading of a cursive Nyang?

750 Gtam shul is mentioned in Ferrari (1958), p. 135, in connection with Smra bo lcogs. Perhaps it is misplaced on the maps.

751 Gru shul, or Gro shul, is the area from which our author came. See Ferrari (1958), pp. 51, 127.

752 This Chu shul is not mentioned in Ferrari (1958). There is another Chu shul noted at the confluence of the Skyid chu and Gtsang po in Ferrari (1958), p. 72.

753 Lo ro is mentioned in Ferrari (1958), p. 51. The three valleys of Lo ro are as yet unidentified. This division of G.yu ru, curiously enough, leaves Lho brag largely unaccounted for. Lho brag must have been a part of G.yu ru if it were a part of any of the *ru*. Perhaps Lho brag still was treated as a *sbas yul*, a hidden territory that had not yet been opened and Tibetanized completely.

754 Perhaps Nang chen Kun dga' 'phags belonged to the Bug pa can pa family, who traced their ancestry back to the ancient Royal Dynasty.

755 Normally, Zhang zhung is preceded by *Smar*, *Smra*, or *Smu*. *Smar* is the Zhang zhung word for "good."

756 Bu ston, Tāranātha, and a number of other Tibetan authorities refer to a *Sūtrasamuccaya* by Śāntideva. The *Sūtrasamuccaya* that we know today is attributable to Nāgārjuna. A number of ingenious solutions have been put forth to explain this discrepancy. See Murti (1960), p. 101, n. 3.

757 Guenther (1959), pp. 3, 225, translates this key term with the superbly accurate but verbose "discriminating awareness born from wisdom." He points out that *prajñā* is a transcending function; with the help of *prajñā* we may "pass beyond the borders of our habitually unenlightened attitude and enter the realm of spirituality and enlightenment." It is this transcending function that seems to be the most significant.

758 Guenther (1959), p. 214.

759 The six basic texts of the Bka' gdams pa (*Bka' gdams gzhung drug*) are: 1) *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra* of Maitreya or Asaṅga; 2) *Bodhisattvabhūmi* of Asaṅga; 3) *Śikṣāsamuccaya* of

Śāntideva; 4) *Bodhicāryāvatāra* of Śāntideva; 5) *Jātakamālā* of Āryaśūra; 6) *Udānavarga*.  
760 Phywa pa Chos kyi seng ge was a brilliant logician of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. He was a disciple of Gro lung pa Blo gros 'byung gnas.

761 Nyang bran Chos kyi ye shes belonged to the twelfth century and was a student of Zhang Tshe spong ba Chos kyi bla ma, Rngog Lo tsā ba's successor on the throne of Gsang phu.

762 Lha 'Bri sgang pa seems to have lived in the twelfth century. He founded 'Bri sgang Monastery in 'On phu.

763 Gtsang Nag pa Brtson 'grus seng ge lived during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. He was one of the four chief disciple of Phywa pa and was renowned for his brilliance in logic.

764 Bu ston's commentary on the *Spyod 'jug* bears the title *Byang chub kyi sems gsal bar byed pa zla ba'i 'od zer*.

765 Mtsho sna ba Shes rab bzang po, the famous vinaya scholar, was a disciple of Zangs chen pa Dar ma bsod nams, in turn a disciple of Lha 'Gro ba'i mgon po of Spyil bu. He served as abbot of the monastery of Bra gor. He seems to have lived during the early fourteenth century.

766 Chos dpal bzang po, abbot of Dga' gdong in Pa rnam, is also known as Jo gdan tshongs pa. He was a disciple of Bu ston.

767 Grub pa shes rab was the fourteenth in the abbatial line of Snar thang. He thus belongs to the fourteenth century.

768 The great Bka' gdams pa master of Dngul chu, Rgyal sras Thogs med Bzang po dpal (1295–1369), is one of the significant figures in the transmission of the *Blo sbyong*. His commentary on the *Bodhicāryāvatāra*, the *Legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtsho*, survives in a xylographic edition from Sde dge Dgon chen.

769 Sa bzang Ma ti Paṅ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan belongs to the fourteenth century. He was a student of both Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan and Lam 'bras pa Gang she. He wrote a detailed commentary on the *Spyod 'jug* as well as a summary of its essential points (*bsdus don*). The large commentary was available in a xylographic edition from Sde dge Dgon chen.

770 The *Shes rab le'u zin bris* was written down by Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen. See Kanakura (1953), no. 5399. The *Spyod 'jug shes rab le'u'i 'iika blo gsal* was written down by an unnamed student. See Kanakura (1953), no. 5411.

771 Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen's commentary bears the title: *Rnam bshad rgyal sras 'jug ngogs*. See Kanakura (1953), no. 5436.

772 See Ruegg (1969).

773 See Ruegg (1963).

774 See Guenther (1959), p. 215.

775 This brief account of the career of Mi pham is based on 'Jigs bral, *Gangs ljongs*, pp. 671–90. There is a short biographical sketch of Mi pham and his writings to be found in Mi pham's *gsung 'bum* (vol. *Hum*). Unfortunately, I have no access to this work at the time of writing.

776 Among the names of Mi pham we find 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal, 'Jam dpal dgyes rdo rje, Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho, Mi pham Phyogs las rnam par rgyal ba, Mi pham 'Jam dpal dgyes pa, and Blo gros rab gsl padma bzhad pa. He also occasionally uses Sanskrit equivalents in signing his works.



777 Kong sprul taught Mi pham Sanskrit grammar according to the *Candrvyākaraṇa*, as well as Tibetan medicine. Mi pham seems also to have studied astrology and chronology (*rtsis*) with that great scholar.

778 Rdzogs chen mkhan po Padma rdo rje was one of the greatest scholars of the “pure” Rnying ma pa tradition. He expressed doubts that the eclecticism that was in vogue might ultimately be destructive of his beloved tradition. He wrote a number of refutations and counter-refutations including one against the Sa skya pa scholar Glang nag Bsod nams brtan pa, entitled *Snga 'gyur rnying ma'i gzhung la brgal ba'i lan lung dang rig pa'i skya rengs dang po*. There was a Rdzogs chen edition of his collected works in one or two volumes.

779 'Jam dbyangs Blo gter dbang po was a disciple of both Mkhyen brtse and Kong sprul. He is remembered for his work toward completing the thirty-two volume *Rgyud sde kun btus* collection that Mkhyen brtse had begun. He also was instrumental in the preparation of the xylographic edition of the seventeen-volume *Lam 'bras slob bshad* collection.

780 According to a *dkar chag* of the Sde dge collection compiled by 'Jam dbyangs Blo gros rgya mtsho dri ma med pa'i dpal about 1937 and reproduced by Chandra (1963), v. 1, pp. 155–72, the Sde dge edition contained nine volumes in the medium format (*ldeb 'bring*), six volumes in the long format (*ldeb chen*), and the *Kālacakra* texts in something over two volumes. The *ldeb 'bring* were numbered according to the formula of Mañjuśrī: *Om, A, Ra, Pa, Tsa, Na, Dhiḥ, Hūm, Śriḥ*. The longer format volumes were marked *Ka, Kha, Ga, Nga, and Ca*. The *ju thig* volume was unmarked. The *Kālacakra* texts included one slim volume that was unmarked and two *ldeb 'bring* tomes that bore the letters *E* and *Warṁ*. Blocks for other important treatises by Mi pham were preserved at Zhe chen, Rdzogs chen, Kaḥ thog, A 'dzom chos sgar, Dpal 'byor sgar, Hor La dkar, and Rdzong sar.

781 Chandra (1963), nos. 3393–94.

782 Mi pham's monastic status as the author of a treatise on erotics prompted that other great writer on the amatory arts, Dge 'dun chos 'phel, to make a humorous justification of his own contribution. While Mi pham, one would assume, only worked from dusty Sanskrit originals, Dge 'dun chos 'phel was inspired to record firsthand information gained during his extensive travels in India. It should be noted that Mi pham's *'Dod pa'i bstan bcos* (Chandra [1963], v. 1, no. 3382) is not one of his sparkling works.

783 *Snyan dngags me long gi 'grel pa dbyangs can dgyes pa'i rol mtsho*. See Chandra (1963), v. 1, no. 3333.

784 The bulky bilingual glossary existed in a xylographic edition only at Kaḥ thog. It runs to almost five hundred folia.

785 Mi pham wrote expanding commentaries (*mchan 'grel*) to the *Pratimokṣasūtra*, *Suḥṛtlekha*, *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, *Abhidharmakośa*, *Mahāyānasamgraha*, *Prajñānāmamūlamadhya-makakarikā*, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, and *Mahāyānottaratantrasāstra*. He wrote detailed expositions on the *Sūtrālaṅkāra*, the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, the *Madhyāntavibhaṅga*, and the *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*.

786 See Chandra (1963), v. 1, no. 3387.

787 See Chandra (1963), v. 1, no. 3378.

788 His most open statements are the *Bde gshegs snying po'i stong thun chen mo seng ge'i nga ro*, Chandra (1963), v. 1, no. 3192, and the *Gzhan stong khas len seng ge'i nga ro*, Chandra (1963), v. 1, no. 3368.

789 See Mi pham, *Rdo grub*.

790 *Mi pham rnam rgyal gyis rtsod pa'i yang lan log lta'i khong khrag 'don pa'i skyug sman*, 146

ff. There is a print of this work in the University Library in Oslo (Sørensen, no. 182). I did not notice a copy of Brag dkar's previous polemic in the Oslo collection. The complete works of Tre hor Brag dkar in nine volumes were available in a xylograph edition from Se ra Sngags pa grwa tshang.

791 Ldan ma Blo bzang chos dbyings is the author of a *Mi pham brtsod lan* in ff. 55. This was xylographed at the Blo gsal gling grwa tshang printery at 'Bras spungs. This should be distinguished from Ldan ma Blo chos's *Brgal lan legs pa'i gnam 'byed*, of which there was a block print from the Spom ra khams tshang of 'Bras spungs. Ldan ma Blo chos's works are available in India.

792 See 'Jigs bral Rin po che, *Gangs ljongs*, p. 682.

793 See the following: Mi pham, *Shes rab*; this publication includes the *Brda shan 'byed the tshom dra ba gcod pa'i ral gri*. Mi pham, *Brgal lan*; dated 1889. Mi pham rgya mtsho, *Gzhan gyis*; dated 1903. Blo bzang rab gsal, *'Jam dpal*; this text is a copy made from a rare print of the A mdo A rig Dgon chen edition of three of Dpa' ris Rab gsal's replies to Mi pham that were written in 1897. Blo bzang rab gsal, *Shes ldan*; dated 1903. Tre hor Brag dkar Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan 'dzin snyan grags, *Zab mo dbu ma'i gnad brjod pa blo gsal dga' ba'i gnam*.

The reply of Brag dkar Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan 'dzin snyan grags to the *Brgal lan nyin byed snang ba* belongs to this group; it was, however, so abusive and ill-formulated that Mi pham deigns to mention it only in passing. Dpa' ris Rab gsal's first critique of the *Brgal lan nyin byed snang ba* is the representative work for the opposite side.

794 Ruegg (1969), p. 509.

795 Macdonald (1962).

796 See Chandra (1961), p. 516: "Dpal spungs. 1. *Rin chen gter mdzod sogs kong sprul rin po ches mdzad pa'i mdzod rnam pa lnga*. 90 volumes."

797 The *gsung 'bum* of Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po was xylographed at Rdzong gсар through the efforts of 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse Chos kyi blo gros (1896–1959). Prints from the xylograph blocks comprise about thirteen volumes. In addition, there were works by Mkhyen brtse that existed only in manuscript form in 1959. Much of the *gsung 'bum* is, however, preserved by the Mkhyen brtse Bla brang in Gangtok.

798 The *Anthology of Tantras*, *Rgyud sde kun btus*, was a compilation of the important tantric initiations (*abhiseka*) of the Gsar ma ba, i.e., the "Later" or "New" Tantra schools. It was compiled by order of Mkhyen brtse and contains thirty-two volumes. The catalog (*dkar chag*) volume is dated 1892.

799 The *Anthology of Sādhanas*, the *Sgrub thabs kun btus*, contains fourteen volumes and is a magnificent gathering of *sādhanas* taken largely from Gsar ma ba traditions. The credit for the editing of the collection goes to Mkhyen brtse's student, Ngor pa Dpon slob Blo gter dbang po, although the inspiration derives from his master.

800 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*. This is included in volume A (10) of the ten-volume collected works, i.e., *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*, of the Dpal spungs edition housed at the Tibet House. This autobiography was completed by Kong sprul's disciple, Gnas gсар Bkra 'phel, also known as Bkra shis chos 'phel.

801 Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, fol. 100v.

802 Nges don bstan pa rab rgyas (1808–64 or 67) was the first Zla bzang sprul sku and the founder of Til yag Monastery in Nang chen.

803 Examples include the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* of Sa skya Paṇḍita, written to refute, among other things, the *dgongs gcig* doctrines of 'Bri gung Skyob pa 'Jig rten mgon po; and Mnga'

ris Paṅ chen's *Sdom gsum rnam nges*, the basic defense of the tantric practices of the older schools.

804 Bkra shis 'od zer was a famous scholar and abbot (*mkhan chen*) of Dpal spungs. He is also known as Bkra shis 'od zer blo gros rgyas pa'i sde, or Karma bzod pa rab brtan dpal bzang po.

805 This personage is probably to be identified with Gshen chen Klu dga' (996–1035), whose rediscovery of the Bon po *abhidharma* text, the *Srid pa'i mdzod phug*, in 1017 at 'Grig mtshams mtha' dkar marks the beginning of the later spread (*phyi dar*) of Bon. The Buddhist sources have garbled the name of this extraordinary personage until we find the form Gshin rgur Glu dga' in the *Grub mtha' chen po'i mchan 'grel* of Ngag dbang dpal ldan, the Chos rje of Urga (b. 1797), presumably following 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa Ngag dbang brtson 'grus (1648–1722). Sa skya Paṅḍita, in the *Sdom gsum rab dbye* (chapter 3, lines 462–68), refers to him as Sangs rgyas skar rgyal and does not specifically name him a Bon po. He criticizes him as a person possessed by a malevolent *klu* spirit who adulterated (*log par 'chos*) genuine teachings.

806 The important role of the hilly tracts of western India and Nepal in transmitting religious practices to Tibet is an urgent problem awaiting investigation.

807 The monastery of Sreg zhing evokes memories of the Sreg lineage to whom it once belonged. The Sreg were a lineage specializing in religious practice, much like the 'Khon of Sa skya pa and many other such clans. The line apparently died out in the sixteenth century. The sect was founded by the brothers Sreg ston Sgom btsun and Sreg ston Char 'bebs, who had gone to India with Rga Lo tsā ba and received esoteric teachings from Rtsa mi Sangs rgyas grags at Bodhgaya, which the family then treasured and came to specialize in. Char 'bebs founded the family into which Sreg ston Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1432–1506) was born. The teachings of this lineage were absorbed by the Dge lugs pa and seem subsequently to have disappeared. Pha rgod Kun dga' bzang po, the great-grandfather of the Second Dalai Lama, founded the new monastery of Rta nag Rdo rje gdan. Through him, the ancestral teachings of the Sreg merged with those of the 'Jag subsect of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa. Kong sprul collected the rare teachings of this tradition, as well as those of the Bsam sdings subsect, and included them in the *Gdams ngag mdzod*. He was very interested in this sect as an intersection where two traditions that were in apparent conflict came together.

808 Kong sprul devotes volume *Kha* of his *gsung 'bum* (*Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*) to the various rituals connected with Vajrakīla and his various manifestations. This volume concludes with Kong sprul's magnificent commentary on the *Phur pa rtsa dum*, the *Dpal rdo rje phur pa rtsa ba'i rgyud kyī dum bu'i 'grel pa snying po bsdus pa dpal chen dgyes pa'i zhal lung* in 94 folia.

809 See Chandra (1962), p. 508. This edition in twenty-six volumes is based on the further editorial work of 'Jigs med gling pa and includes some texts that are supplementary to the Lhun grub pho brang redaction. In the late 1960s, Bdud 'joms Rin po che granted the initiation of the collection together with the *Bka' gyur* at Ghoom, Darjeeling. On this occasion the initiations of several supplementary volumes not found in the Sde dge edition were also bestowed.

810 Rin chen phun tshogs is better known as a *gter ston* under the name Gnam lcags me 'bar. He was the sixteenth in the abbatial succession (*gdan rabs*) of 'Bri gung. His teachers included the Fourth Zhwa dmar Chos kyī grags pa, 'Bri gung pa Kun dga' rin chen, the Indian yogi Vajranātha, and Mnga' ris Paṅ chen Padma dbang rgyal and his brother. In 1538, he recovered the *Dam chos dgongs pa yang zab* from the Ti gro Tshogs khang. There is a brief biography

of Rin chen phun tshogs in Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, ff. 134r–135v. Rtogs ldan Sprul sku Thub bstan bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (b. 1938) has published a short history of the 'Bri gung pa school. See Rtogs ldan, *Chos rje*.

811 Dkon mchog rin chen, the twentieth in the abbatial succession of 'Bri gung, was regarded to be a rebirth of Rgyal dbang Bsod nams rgya mtsho. He received a number of visionary revelations including the *Thugs rje chen po sogs rtsa gsum*. The transmission of these had apparently died out when Kong sprul wrote the *Gter ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar*.

812 Rig 'dzin Chos kyi grags pa, the twenty-first in the abbatial succession of 'Bri gung, was regarded as the rebirth of Rin chen phun tshogs. He was one of the greatest scholars that the 'Bri gung pa school produced after 'Jig rten mgon po. He was a student of 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656). His pure visions (*dag snang*) include texts from the *Gshin rje yang zlog* and the *Sgra mi snyan tshe sgrub*.

813 Dpal ldan rdo rje was a contemporary of the Third Dalai Lama, Bsod nams rgya mtsho (1543–1588), on whom he bestowed the initiation of the *Tshe sgrub 'chi med rdo rje'i srog shing*, a long-life ritual that he had received in a vision. This liturgical method still enjoys some degree of popularity. See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, fol. 202r–v.

814 Paṅ chen Nags kyi rin chen, or Vanaratna, belonged to the ruling house of Sadnagar (Grong khyer dam pa), which lay to the east of Gaya. He studied with Ratnakirti, apparently a famed Buddhist scholar of the day. For some reason, Vanaratna wandered to the Paro area of western Bhutan, and from there to Tibet, where he was received with great honor. His life was rich in mystic experiences and visions, during the most famous of which he received the *Padma tshe khrid*. This teaching he passed on to the 'Brug chen Rgyal dbang incarnation, Kun dga' dpal 'byor (1428–78), through whom it entered the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa. After a lengthy sojourn in Tibet, he went to the Kathmandu Valley, where he eventually died. A number of stories about this teacher are preserved to this day in Nepal. See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, ff. 202v–203v.

815 Dri med Kun dga' appears to have been born in 1357. He belonged to the Grwa phyi area of Dbus, where the great Rnying ma pa monastery of Smin grol gling now stands. See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, ff. 35v and 120r.

816 Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, fol. 35v.

817 Quoted in Blo gros mtha' yas, *Zab mo'i*, fol. 35v.

818 Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po belonged to Ha ru Gnam tshal in Kong po. His names are many: Las 'phro gling pa, Hum nag me 'bar, Ngag dbang chos rgyal dbang po, and so forth. He was a disciple of the great gurus of the 'Brug pa (Mi pham Bkra shis blo gros, Lha rtse ba, 'Brug chen Dpag bsam dbang po) and of the Dwags po (Nor bu brgyan pa). The *Dkon mchog spyi 'dus* texts that he rediscovered were received by a host of renowned disciples: Nor bu brgyan pa, 'Bri gung Chos kyi grags pa, Dpag bsam dbang po, Rdo rje brag Rig 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po, Rtse le Sna tshogs rang grol, Bka' 'gyur ba Mgon po bsod nams mchog ldan, and even the Karma pa hierarchs. 'Ja' tshon snying po is unusual as a *gter ston* since he remained a monk, whereas the prerequisite for the majority of *gter ston* is that they have a female partner. 'Ja' tshon snying po's *gter ma* remain some of the most common liturgical texts that one encounters.

819 The *Seven Treasuries* (*Mdzod bdun*) of Klong chen Rab 'byams pa are: *Chos dbyings mdzod*, *Yid bzhin mdzod*, *Grub mtha' mdzod*, *Theg mchog mdzod*, *Gnas lugs mdzod*, *Tshig don mdzod*, and *Man ngag mdzod*.

820 The *Three Triple Cycles* (*Skor gsum gsum*) are the *Ngal gso skor gsum*, the *Rang grol skor*

*gsum*, and the *Mun sel skor gsum*. The concepts of the *mdzod* and *skor gsum* played a great role in later Tibetan literature. The arrangement of Kong sprul's writings into the *Mdzod lnga* can be attributed to the influence of Klong chen's *Mdzod bdun*. We find 'Jigs med gling pa writing a *Yon tan mdzod* to supplement and elucidate Klong chen Rab 'byams pa. The Bon po scholar, Shar rdza Bkra shis rgyal mtshan (b. 1859), wrote a Bon po *Mdzod bdun*. 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho is the author of a *Gnyug sems skor gsum*.

821 Grong mo che lies in the Mang mkhar valley, a little over a day's journey from Sa skya. The usual spelling of the name of that part of the Mang mkhar valley where Tshar chen's monastery is situated is 'Dar.

822 The Sa skya pa and Ngor pa developed along different lines than the Tshar pa. There was little exchange of teachings between the two major divisions of the Lam 'bras for several generations.

823 The biography of Dpag bsam dbang po is an extraordinary source for the history of Tibet during the decades immediately before the establishment of the Dga' ldan Pho brang government.

824 It should be remembered that the child who was to become the Fifth Dalai Lama had also been claimed as the rebirth of the Karma Bka' brgyud pa Rgyal tshab incarnation.

825 Shakabpa (1967), p. 119: "The young Paṅ chen Lama was now old enough to take his dge tshul ordination from the Dalai Lama and he was brought to Lhasa for this purpose. Lengthy discussions took place among the Dalai Lama's officials as to the height of the respective thrones. It was finally decided that the Paṅ chen Lama would occupy a throne at the same height as those accorded the Gampo Trulka [sic] and the Drukpa Trulku, two prominent lamas."

826 The Lo tsā ba of 'Dar is the Sanskritist responsible for the translation of the Anubhūti *Sarasvatāvvyākaraṇa* and of the *Pāṇinivyākaraṇa*. It would seem that he was the Sanskrit scholar who did not know versification and meters well enough and who has earned for the Fifth Dalai Lama the reputation of being a bogus Sanskritist. See Tucci (1957).

827 Another example is Bya tshang pa Padma sri gcod, who was probably responsible for the intellectual content of certain of the Sde srid's medical treatises, for example, the *Man ngag lhan thabs* (1691). Rarely a work might be initially attributed to the prince and then later become known under the name of the actual author. A good example is the biography of G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po, the Younger. Klong rdol Bla ma (reproduced in Chandra [1963], vol. 3, no. 16267) attributes this text as well as the biography of the Elder to Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, while A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho (Chandra [1963], vol. 3, no. 10973) assigns the work correctly to Dar mo Sman rams pa Blo bzang chos grags.

828 Bod mkhas pa, literally "learned scholar of Tibet," would appear to be a delightful spelling of a place name whose orthography had not been previously established. This form was the object of a good deal of jesting from his contemporaries. One of his literary opponents took to shortening the tail of the final *d* in the first syllable, an alteration that produced Bong mkhas pa, meaning "wise jackass."

829 This famed work on *kāvya* owes much to the blind Smon 'gro Paṅḍita and his son. According to Si tu Paṅ chen, Smon 'gro Paṅḍita was to blame for the advice to eliminate the Jo nang pa monasteries. This work was begun in 1647, but is wasn't ready for the preparation of the blocks until 1656. Smon 'gro seems to have been the student of Sgang rgad 'Od zer rgyal mtshan and Grangs can 'Jam pa'i rdo rje, who were the disciples of Zhwa lu Lo chen Chos skyong bzang po.

830 Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Snyan ngag*, p. 11.

831 Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, *Snyan ngag*, p. 11.

832 Blo bzang rin chen, a disciple of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa Ngag dbang brtson 'grus (1648–1721), began as a Dge lugs pa and ended up a Rnying ma pa. So thoroughly have the oppressive tendencies of the tradition functioned that none of his important treatises, even those on secular subjects, have survived. He reminds one of another perplexing rebel, the later Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1903–51).

833 Mdo mkhar Tshe ring dbang rgyal had been a disciple of the ill-fated Smin gling Lo chen Dharma śrī, one of the casualties of the Dzungar persecutions. Pho lha nas was often accused by his Dge lugs pa contemporaries of favoring the Rnying ma pa sect. His relations were very warm with Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu; but can one really say that they were better than his cordial patronage of Phur bu lcog Ngag dbang byams pa? It should be remembered that Lcang skya and his biographer, Thu'u bkwan, were evaluating the reign of Pho lha nas in the wake of the sad events of 1750–51. So when Thu'u bkwan reports that Pho lha nas was conspiring with Rnying ma pa lamas to do harm to the Seventh Dalai Lama, we must see those statements in their proper perspective.

834 The Dge lugs pa influence in other parts of eastern Tibet, for example, Li thang, 'Ba' thang, and Chab mdo, was of considerable age. Sde dge and its dependencies, however, did not favor the Dge lugs pa over the other sects. The sister of the Seventh Dalai Lama had been given as a bride to a Sde dge prince in the eighteenth century. The nineteenth century was marked by an expansion of the Dge lugs pa establishment and the Lhasa government into a weakened Sde dge.

835 The best examples of the *mchan 'grel* are the works of Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927). Gzhan dga' Rin po che produced a set of annotated commentaries on thirteen of the most important treatises in the *Bstan 'gyur* that expound Buddhist thought. These achieved great popularity and were adopted as the *yig cha* of the Rdzong sar Bshad grwa, the seat of 'Jam dbyangs Mkhjen brtse Chos kyi blo gros, as well as in all the *bshad grwa* seminaries following in Gzhan dga's tradition. They were collectively known as "Gzhan dga's thirteen-gloss commentaries."

836 Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos skyi dbang po (b. 1808) is one of the most important lamas of the Rnying ma pa as well as the nonsectarian movement. He is better known to Tibetan scholars as A bu Rin po che and he often signs his works as A bu Hral po, "the ragged old one." Rdza Dpal sprul is the author of some of the best-loved works in Tibetan literature: the *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, a superb introduction to Vajrayāna Buddhism and specifically to the *Rdzogs chen snying thig* teachings of the Rnying ma pa, the *Gtam padma tshal gyi zlos gar*, a moving poetical work on the impermanence of happiness written to console a noble of Sde dge who had lost his spouse and the *Drang srong gdol ba'i gtam*.

837 This account of the life of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul is based on Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, as well as 'Jigs bral, *Gangs ljongs*, pp. 656–71.

838 He was born on the tenth day of the tenth Tibetan month of the Water Bird year of the fourteenth cycle.

839 'Bri zla Zal mo sgang is the ridge between the 'Bri (Yangtse) and Shar zla Rivers.

840 The Khyung po lineage (*rus*) traced its origins to a legendary ancestor, the Great Eagle (Khyung chen), an emanation of a mythical buddha of the upper realm, Kun bzang rig snang. This gigantic eagle descended from the heavens at the six-peaked mountain of Gyim shod.

When that great bird flew back into the heavens, he left behind four eggs, white, black, yellow, and green. When these eggs opened, four youths emerged. From the first three originated the Khyung po tribes of Dkar ru, Nag ru, and Gser tsha. The fourth youth, Khyung 'phags khra mo, mounted a turquoise dragon and rode off to the Rgyal rong. There sub-clans of Lha khyung, Mu khyung, and Khyung rgod tshog gradually appeared.

The Khyung lineages produced a host of famous contemplative minds from both Buddhist and Bon po traditions. From the line of Khyung 'phags khra mo we find such names as Mi la ras pa and Khyung po Rnal 'byor, the founder of the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa, among the Buddhists, and the famed *gter ston* Blo ldan snying po and Rtogs ldan Bkra shis rgyal mtshan among the Bon po. The great Bon po lama of Nang chen, Grags pa rgyal mtshan, came from the Khyung po lineage of Rgyal rong. In his nephew-lineage such famous figures as Khyung po Bla ma Nam mkha' od zer, Rin chen lhun grub, Bstan pa rnam rgyal, Bstan pa lhun grub, Tshul khrim mchog legs, and Nyi ma bstan 'dzin, the Zhang chung linguist, appeared. Kong sprul's father, G.yung drung bstan 'dzin, was the last of the eminent line.

841 In his autobiography (Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, ff. 17–18), Kong sprul writes: *ngos nas zhe chen sdod skabs sdom pa thob tshul bshad kyang sma 'bebs tshig ngan bcas sdom pa rgyal ba yab sras la zhu dgos rgyu red gsungs / ... dbon rgan tshang nas nged la'ang da ras bsnyen rdzogs sgrub dgos gsungs pa / sngar zhe chen dbon sprul mdun nas zhus lugs dang gsung tshul rnams zhus kyang / sdom pa 'di nas ma zhus thabs med /*. It is obvious that he felt rather strongly about taking the vinaya vows twice.

842 *Mos gus kyi rabs las skyes pa'i thugs rje mngon par bskul ba'i tshig phreng skal ldan 'dod pa 'jo ba'i bum bzang*. 19 ff. in vol. *Ka* of the *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*.

843 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, fol. 19. The picture sketched by him of the factors that go into the recognition of an incarnation is not very appealing.

844 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, fol. 54v.

845 The autobiography is filled with episodes detailing the troubled times. One 'Gu log incarnation, Śu mi dhur Kun sprul, was in open rebellion against the Si tu, the acknowledged superior for all the Karma Bka' brgyud pa monasteries of Khams. Kong sprul's diplomacy persuaded the Kun sprul to apologize and make his peace with Dpal spungs.

846 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, fol. 60.

847 One is tempted to identify this *skiyabs dbyings* with the ill-fated Seng chen Blo bzang bstan 'dzin dpal 'byor, the patron of Sarat Chandra Das. An emanation of the 'Brong rtse or Seng chen line that included Blo bzang tshul khrim (b. 1745), a tutor (*yongs 'dzin*) of the Fourth Paṅ chen Lama, this *sprul sku* seems to have already been administrator of Bkra shis lhun po in 1873 when Blo gsal bstan skyon completed his survey (*dkar chag*) of the sealed blocks. Granting such a permission would have been entirely in keeping with the character that emerges from the writings of Sarat Chandra. Through the Pha lha family, this remarkable intellectual came into contact with Sarat Chandra, with whom he formed a curious relationship until Seng chen's untimely demise. Their acquaintance was to have great consequences for Tibetan studies outside Tibet. The Bkra shis lhun po edition of this lama's *gsung 'bum* (three volumes) sadly contains none of the technical writings that Sarat Chandra mentions occasionally in passing.

A comprehensive study of the personalities involved in the establishment of contacts between Tibet and the rest of the world has yet to appear. A fascinating document illustrating an encounter cum confrontation of a traditional yet broad-minded lama with a sympathetic and sensitive European is the *'Khor 'das kun gyi gnas tshul gsal bar bstan pa dris lan nyi*

*ma'i snying po*. In about a hundred folia, Kun dga' chos legs rdo rje attempts to set forth the essentials of Buddhist thought and practice for someone who is assumed to be ignorant of even the most basic concepts. The author demonstrates a significant awareness of non-Buddhist views. This work was written about 1825 at Rdzong khul Nā ro phug po che for the edification of one "Skendha," who is described as "Rgya gar Rum yul pa." This can only be Alexander Csoma de Körös. It would be fruitful to compare this with several examples of Buddhist missionary tracts written for Mongol converts during the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries.

848 See Chandra (1963), vol. 1, pp. 18–30, for the results of this survey.

849 Yongs 'dzin Lhag bsam rgyal mtshan of Ku se (called *yongs 'dzin* because he was the tutor of the Fifteenth Rgyal dbang Karma pa) is remembered not simply for his works on Tibetan grammar. His complicity, along with Nyag rong Gter ston Bsod rgyal in saving the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in De mo Regent's plot c. 1895 has assured him at least a footnote in Tibetan history.

850 *Yāna sarvāmukhebhyaḥ samuccaya pravacanam ratnakośa trisikṣā sudeśikāśāstram sarvajñeyaspharaṇa*. While Kong sprul's Sanskrit is better than that of many other lamas who have constructed titles for their treatises, it nevertheless leaves much to be desired. One notes the usual carelessness with case endings and modifier agreement, the loose construction that immediately identifies Sanskrit translated from Tibetan, and the occasional unusual lexical item. Kong sprul has found in the *Mahāvvyutpatti* the word *spharaṇa*, a rare alternative form for *sphuraṇa* "penetration," and has used it to translate *khyab pa*; "pervading, encompassing."

851 Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, vol. I, p. 36: *ri mo bal ris rgyun las sman mkhyen gnyis // byi'u'i lugs gsum bkra shis rnam gsum nas // sgar bris srol dod 'bur bzo'ang rim mkhas gyur /*

852 Blo gros mtha' yas, *Shes bya*, v. 1, pp. 570–72: *ri mo ni thog mar bal ris kho na dar srol che ba las / ji zhid na 'jam pa'i dbyangs mi yi tshul can sman bla don grub zhabs lho brag sman thang du sku 'khrungs pa dang / yul de'i mtshal kha yang bye / chung ma'i rkyen gyis yul 'khyar te gtsang du byon nas rdo pa bkra shis rgyal po las ri mo gsan / sku skye ba snga ma rgya nag tu 'khrungs dus kyi ri mo si thang gzigs pas sngon gnas dran te sman thang chen mor grags pa sogs phul du byung ba'i ri mo'i rgyun mdzad cing sras brgyud dang slob brgyud gnyis kyi rgyun byung / yang mkhyen brtse chen mo zhes gong dkar sgang stod du byung ba des kyang snga ma las zur du bzo rgyun mdzad de sman mkhyen gnyis zhes gangs can du nyi zla ltar grags pa'i shing rta'i srol so so bar gyur / gzhan yang bzo gnas 'di'i ched du ngal ba med par nyul bas sprul sku byi'ur grags pa rig rtsal bla na med pas bzo rgyun snga ma gnyis ka dang mi gcig pa tshon mdangs ni gzhan las kyang khyad par 'phags pa zhid byung / phyis su gtsang pa chos dbyings rgya mtshos sman gsar gyi srol btod / de sogs bzo rgyun gzhan du ma byung yang gtso cher snga ma de dag gi khongs su gtogs / yang yar stod du sprul sku nam mkha' bkra shis zhes grags pa byung / rje mi bskyod zhabs kyis nyid kyi sprul pa sku gzugs kyi 'phrin las spel ba por lung bstan / zhwa dmar dkon mchog yan lag dang rgyal tshab grags pa don grub kyis zhal bkod mdzad de / e nas skal ldan shar phyogs pa dkon mchog phan bde bya ba rgya mo bza' kong jo'i sprul par grags pa de las sman ris kyi rgyun bsalabs / rus tshugs rgya gar li ma dang sman thang lugs gzhir bzhang pa la ta ming dus kyi si thang bzhin yul ljongs bkod pa sogs dang tshon mdangs mdzad pa la sgar bris su grags pa'i bri rgyun 'di byung / de rjes chos bkra shis bya ba zhid byung bar grags shing / phyis su kar shod karma bkra shis zhes ri mo'i lam srol la 'gran zla bral ba'i rgyun da lta'ang gnas pa bcas mdor na bkra shis rnam pa gsum gyis sgar bris srol rgya chen btod / de bzhin tu 'bur la phul du byung ba ni / sprul sku sle'u chung pa dang / padma mkhar pa gnyis yin la / phyis su sgar lugs la mkhas pa dwags po sgo pa'i zhal ngo sku mdun karma srid bral lam sgo smyon zhes mtshungs*



*pa med pa'i blo gros can rje brgyad pa'i sku'i sprul par grags pa de dang / karma rin chen sogs du ma byung ba'i rgyun de dag ni da lta mi snang la / gong sa lnga pa chen po'i dus su byung ba'i e pa lkugs pa'am hor dar ces pa dang / sprul sku bab phro zhes sprul pa'i bzo bor grags pa de dag gi rgyun las phyis su 'bur la khyad par 'phags pa 'dod dpal gyi bzo rgyun sogs byung bar gnas so //.*

853 The statement “yul de'i mtshal kha yang bye” means (as an auspicious coincidence or omen) that a deposit of the pigment cinnabar or native vermilion was discovered in his part of Lho brag.

854 See vol. 1, p. 572–73: *khyad par bzo sbyong 'jig rten dbang phyug mchog // gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba'i rnam dpyod ni // tshur mthong blo 'das mig gi bdud rtsir 'gyur // de dag thams cad las khyad par du 'phags pa bzo sbyong 'jig rten dbang phyug dpal karma pa chos dbyings rdo rje'i zhal snga nas sman lugs pa lho brag chus khyer sprul sku tshe ring las ri mo gsan te sku tshe'i stod du sman lugs sor bzhag dang / smad nas si thang dang kha che'i bzo rgyun bzhin mdzad de bris 'bur gnyis / si thang phyag drubs dang bcas pa da lta mngon du mjal ba 'di rnams dang / phyis su thams cad mkhyen pa gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba'i rnam dpyod las 'khrungs pa'i bris 'bur rnams ni tshur mthong gi blo yi ra ba las 'das shing rdzu 'phrul chen po'i bkod pa da lta tha mal pa rnams kyi'ang mig gi bdud rtsir mngon sum gyur pa dang / de ltar khyad pa du 'phags pa'i tshul skyes rabs dpag bsam 'khri shing gi zhal thang rtogs brjod kun mkhyen bla ma nyid kyi gsung las gsal lo //.*

855 In India there are several fragmentary accounts of the development of Tibetan art. Unfortunately, at the time of writing I have access to only one besides Kong sprul's brief account: the verse *Dpyad don tho chung* written for the Tshong dpon Bsam 'grub tshe ring by the Thirteenth Rgyal dbang Karma pa, Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1733–97). Bdud 'dul rdo rje agrees with Kong sprul that the first Tibetan thangka paintings followed the Nepalese style (fol. 23r): *thang sku bod 'dir thog mar bal ris te // dkyil 'khor dang ni rgyud sde'i lha tshogs legs //.*

856 Bdud 'dul rdo rje postulates that the Sman ris was later than the Mkhyen ris: *mkhyen brtse bod ris legs pa'i srol btod cing // lhag tu rgyal sde'i sku ni chos cher 'phags // de rjes sman thang yab sras sman rnying zhes // cung zad tshon srab nyams gyur de bas che /.* Other histories state (more correctly) that Sman bla don grub and Mkhyen brtse were contemporaries and even co-disciples of the same master. Dhongthog Rinpoche (1968), p. 123, gives 1409 as the date for the establishment of the Sman ris: *Lho brag sman thang du 'khrungs pa'i lha bris mkhas pa sman bla don grub kyis rgya bal gyi ri mo gzhir bzhag thog rig rtsal gyi legs cha du mas brgyan te ri mo'i bris rgyun gsar du dar ba lho brag sman bris zhes pa bya / (VII) 373 sa glang 1400.* This is about a half century too early, and the source is unknown. Probably the next sixty-year cycle was meant. Bdud 'dul rdo rje observes that a distinguishing feature of the classical Sman ris is the usage of somewhat thinner colors than one finds in the paintings done in Mkhyen brtse's style.

857 Mkhyen brtse chen mo should not be confused with Gnas gsar Mkhyen brtse'i dbang phyug (b. 1524), the chief disciple of Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho (1502–66/67), and a student of Sgo rum pa Kun dga' legs pa. Gnas gsar 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse'i dbang phyug belonged to the lineage of 'A zhwa. Kong sprul asserts here that the great artist Mkhyen brtse chen mo was born at Gong dkar Sgang stod (i.e., in Dbus), while in the *Gter ston brgya rtsa'i mam thar* he gives the birthplace of the Gnas gsar bla ma as Bo dong in western Gtsang. Thus we are dealing with two different personages from different regions. Klong rdol Bla ma similarly calls the founder of the Mkhyen ris “Sprul sku Mkhyen brtse ba” who was born at Gong dkar stod. The observation of Bdud 'dul rdo rje and others that the archetypal thangkas

of the Mkhyen ris school more frequently depict *maṇḍalas* and figures from tantric cycles is intriguing.

858 The classical Sgar bris painting is normally what one visualizes when one thinks about Tibetan thangkas that demonstrate a strong Chinese influence. Bdud 'dul rdo rje defines the classical Sgar bris: *rim gyis tshon srab nyams 'gyur khyad par can // de bas tshon srab yul ljongs rgya ris lags // nam bkris phyag bris sgar ris zhes su grags //*.

859 Sprul sku Nam mkha' bkra shis is mentioned as a student of the Eighth Rgyal dbang Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje, in the collected brief biographies of the Karma pa hierarchs. The accuracy of this statement by Nges don bstan rgyas is brought into question by this passage of the *Shes bya kun khyab*. However, because of Nam mkha' bkra shis's relationship with the Fifth Zhwa dmar, Dkon mchog yan lag (1525–83), and the Fourth Rgyal tshab, Grags pa don grub (c. 1550–c. 1617), there is little danger of error if we set the date for the origin of the Sgar bris to the second half of the sixteenth century.

860 The second Bkra shis flourished in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. I know little else about him.

861 The brief accounts of art that are accessible belong to the Sgar bris or Sman ris gsar ma of Khams, and usually treat this school together with the Byang lugs. Klong rdol Bla ma mentions that Byi'u Lha bzo was born in Yar klungs.

862 There is considerable material about Chos dbyings rgya mtsho in the autobiographies of the First Panchen and Fifth Dalai Lama.

863 Variant: Zhun thing ba.

864 It is associated with the name of Byang bdag Rnam rgyal grags bzang, the brilliant prince and disciple of Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451).

865 The Byang lugs cannot have flourished beyond the beginning of the seventeenth century. Bronzes that clearly belong to this style exist. These are strikingly realistic.

866 Other great Northern 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa masters painting in the Sman ris, "Old" or "New," include the Third Khams sprul, Kun dga' bstan 'dzin (1680–1728), and the Eighth Rgyal dbang 'Brug chen Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba (1768–1822).

867 Also known as Sangs rgyas grags pa, he was the most talented Bhutanese pupil of the great refugee scholar Gtsang Mkhan chen Dpal ldan rgya mtsho (1610–84).

868 The brief biographical sketch that appears in the *Chos rje karma pa sku 'phreng rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsduḥ dpag bsam khri shing* of Sman gdong Mtshams pa Nges don bstan rgyas gives some indication of Chos dbyings rdo rje's obsession with art. It would seem that one Sprul sku Phan bde (probably Dkon mchog phan bde of E) teased the Ninth Karma pa about his mediocrity as a painter. On that occasion, the Karma pa prophesied that he would soon put all painters to shame in a coming rebirth. The Ninth Karma pa Dbang phyug rdo rje (1556–1603) planned a few highly regarded mural paintings, but it was the next of the line to whom the prophecy referred.

869 See Chos kyi 'byung gnas, *Ta'i si tur*. One can discover something of Si tu's activities as a painter from this volume. The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology has published the color photos of a set of five thangkas based on a set designed by Si tu Paṅ chen (the *Rgyan drug mchog gnyis*). These icons seem to represent a modified Karma Sgar bris style. One can only wish that the color reproduction of these extraordinary pieces of art had turned out better.

870 Kong sprul notes that Chos dbyings rdo rje followed the Sman ris in his earlier paintings but later based his paintings on Chinese scroll paintings and "Kashmiri" art in his sculpture.

How did these influences penetrate Tibet? What Kong sprul means by “Kashmiri art traditions” (*kha che'i bzo rgyun*) in this context is old statues from Kashmir or lands adjoining Tibet to the west. This is referred to by Bdud 'dul rdo rje when he writes: *rje btsun bcu pa'i phyag bris kha che li'i // nyams 'gyur ngo mtshar zla bral chen po'o //*. Even at an earlier period the biographical sketch (fol. 172v) cites his love for “Kashmiri bronzes:” *rtan gsum gyi sku rgyu dang chag tshad sogs la mkhyen pa zla med / kha che'i li ma la lhag par mnyes //*.

871 The Tibetan term 'bur can be applied to any technique in which there is a use of relief, such as engraving, sculpting, carving, and even certain types of textile work. It comes from the verb 'bur ba, “to swell, to protrude outward.”

872 Little is known at present about Sprul sku Sle'u chung pa, though he flourished in the fifteenth century. He is mentioned in passing by the First Panchen in his autobiography.

873 Karma srid bral or Sgo smyon, the attendant of Dwags po Sgo pa, was regarded by some to be a rebirth of Mi bskyod rdo rje, the Eighth Karma pa (1507–54).

874 Lkugs pa Hor dar of E is briefly mentioned on a number of occasions in the official biography of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

875 Bsod nams blo gros occupied the abbatial throne of Sman ri from 1810 to 1835. He is perhaps better known by the name Shes rab dgonz rgyal.

876 The *Stod lugs* of the vinaya transmission was introduced into Tibet by Kha chen Pañ chen Śākyaśrībhadrā in the early thirteenth century. This tradition is shared by the Sa skya pa, Bka' brgyud pa, and Dge lugs pa schools.

877 The *Smad lugs* goes back to the rekindling of the vinaya tradition after Glang dar ma's persecution had all but snuffed it out. The three monks who fled from Central Tibet to A mdo found a Chinese monk to stand in, enabling them to ordain Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal as a Buddhist monk. The followers of Bon claim that since Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal was already a Bon po monk, he passed on the Bon po as well as the Buddhist vinaya.

878 Nineteenth-century Khams pa tradition also proclaimed Kong sprul to be an emanation of Vairocana, Mkhyen brtse to be that of Khri srong lde btsan, and Mchog gling to be that of Prince Mu rug btsan po. Mkhyen brtse and Mi pham rgya mtsho were also regarded as Mañjuśrī incarnations. Mkhyen brtse's name is usually prefixed by “Jam dbyangs,” whereas Mi pham rgya mtsho is generally styled “Jam mgon.” Guṇa is used in the edition of Kong sprul's collected works as a marginal marking.

879 Kong sprul seems to have been proclaimed an emanation of Vairocana first by the great teacher Zhe chen 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal. This teacher was also the master of Rdza Dpal sprul and Mkhyen brtse.

880 There is a Mtshur phu (Central Tibet) edition of the *Rin chen gter mdzod* in sixty-three volumes. This edition was prepared under the patronage of the Fifteenth Rgyal dbang Karma pa. The three extra volumes (*Om*, *Ah*, and *Hum*) include the biographical materials on Kong sprul, the *Lam rim ye shes snying po*, and the introduction to the new *gter ma*, *Bla ma'i thugs sgrub rdo rje drag rtsal*. There may have been an edition of the *Rin chen gter mdzod* from A 'dzom chos sgar. I have not yet ascertained the veracity of this report. The other four treasures appear to have been printed only at Dpal spungs. The *Gter ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar* was written in 1886, and the *dkar chag* and *brgyud yig* were completed in 1889. The edition as such must date from about that time.

881 According to some sources, the *Sngags mdzod* should include Kong sprul's esoteric commentaries. Another tradition treats these commentaries as texts that should be appended to the fifth *Mdzod*, the *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*. This tradition would consider the *Thun*

*mong ma yin pa'i mdzod* to contain thirteen volumes. Only the Dpal spungs edition seems ever to have existed, and this included the esoteric commentaries.

882 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, ff. 196r et seq., where Gnas gsar Bkra shis 'phel describes the contents of the *Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod*.

883 As noted above, the Dpal spungs (sixty volumes) and Mtshur phu (sixty-three volumes) editions of the *Gter mdzod* differ somewhat. The Mtshur phu is considerably later than the Dpal spungs edition and is certainly not as reliable. Some examples of the Mtshur phu redaction contain Kong sprul's biography of his old friend, Mkhyen brtse.

There exist later supplements to the Dpal spungs edition as well. See 'Jigs bral, *Gsang sngags snga 'gyur na*, commonly known as the *Gter mdzod thob yig*. Bdud 'joms Rin po che bestowed the initiation of the whole of the *Rin chen gter mdzod* in 1968 at Rawalsar. The book cited here is a product of that initiation.

884 Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel describes quite well what must have been Kong sprul's intention in Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, ff. 197v–198r: *de ltar sa gter dgongs gter dag snang snyan brgyud kyi chos skor rgya che ba rnams kyi dbang gi snying po dang / khrid rgyun yod rigs rtsa bar bzung / sgrub thabs phrin las dbang chog bsnyen yig dang khrid yig sogs gang dgos gsar du sbyar / chos tshan nyung ngu dang rgyun dkon pa'i rigs / gter phran rnams kyi gzhung dang yig rnying rnams phyogs gcig tu bsdus / de dag la'ang gsal byed dgos pa la zur 'debs sogs zhib par bkod pa'i pu sti 'bring tshad drug cur longs pa bzhugs / gter gsar lam rim ye shes snying po'i 'grel pa sogs kyang 'di'i khongs su sdud dgos pa yin no //*

885 An acquaintance once told me the story of two European Tibetologists who went to visit a revered lama in Kalimpong. One of the two asked the lama for instruction in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The guru obliged him, but the researcher came away unimpressed, noting that the lama's instruction had been largely mumbo jumbo about empty skies and mirrors.

886 See Blo gros mtha' yas, *Phyogs med*, ff. 198v–210r, where Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel gives a detailed analysis of the contents of this collection.

887 At the time of writing there seem to be two sets of prints from the Dpal spungs blocks of the fifth and last *Treasury* in India: the first is in the library of Tibet House, New Delhi; the other belongs to Nenang Pawo Rinpoche in Darjeeling. Both sets contain ten volumes with designations from *Ka* through *A*. The *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*, according to Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel, should contain seven volumes. Another tradition considers the *Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod* and an auxiliary *Rgya chen bka' mdzod* to constitute twelve volumes. The Dpal spungs print preserved in Tibet House contains ten volumes and appears to be incomplete.

Kong sprul writes of the Gzhan stong (Blo gros mtha' yas, *Ris med*, fol. 15): *de ltar chos lugs de rnams kyi grub mtha'i dbang du byas na / bod 'dir lta ba dbu ma spyod pa yod smra kho na las mi 'dra ba mang po spyod dbang med pa chos rgyal chen po'i bkas bcad pas bye mdo dang sems tsam gyi grub mtha' 'dzin pa bod du ma byung zhing / o rgyan chen po'i rjes 'brang kun mkhyen dri med 'od zer sogs gsan sngags rnying ma'i mkhas grub rnams dang / mar mi dwags gsum nas bzung / phyis yongs rdzogs bstan pa'i bshes gnyen kun gzig chos kyi 'byung gnas kyi bar du byon pa'i bka' brgyud che bzhi chung bryad kyi mkhas grub rnams dang / sa chen khu dbon rnams dang / zi lung pañ chen / bo dong pa / khyad par kun mkhyen dus gsum sangs rgyas dol po pa chen po de'i dgongs pa gsal byed rje btsun chen po tā ra nā tha sogs jo nang bka' brgyud kyi skyes chen rim byon thams cad kyi lta grub ni gzhan stong dbu ma kho na yin la / nang gses bzhed tshul gyi khyad par mi 'dra ba cung zad yod de /*. This quotation is an excellent example of why Tibetologists should develop historical and comparative approaches to Tibetan Buddhism. It is not enough merely to attempt to interpret what the Sanskrit originals were supposed to mean.

One must further try to understand what any particular text or commentary meant at a specific time in the development of Tibetan speculative thought.

889 An example of this rare work in a Dpal spungs print has recently turned up. The blocks are identical in style and size to those for printing the collected works: there is, however, no marginal volume notation. It is, therefore, difficult to relate it to the rest of Kong sprul's works: *Mtsho ldan ma'i brda sprod pa'i rab byed kyi 'grel mchan zla ba bdud rtsi'i thig le* (Margins: (r) *Dbyangs can sgra gzhung*; (v) *Rab byed gsar 'gyur 'grel mchan*, 267 ff. It is interesting to note the form Mtsho ldan ma in place of Dbyangs can ma.

890 Petech erroneously attributes this farewell tribute to Mkhyen brtse to Gnas gsar Bkra 'phel, Kong sprul's secretary (Ferrari [1958], pp. xix–xx). Besides the Sde dge edition of this biography (118 ff.), there is a Dpal spungs edition (151 ff.) included in the *Rin chen gter mdzod*. Another smaller biography of Mkhyen brtse exists, written by the Third Rdo Grub chen, 'Jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma.

891 The list of the previous incarnations of Mkhyen brtse has been taken from Kong sprul's biography of that teacher, cited above. This has been checked with the *Gter ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar* in which the Rgyal sras Lha rje rebirths have been numbered. Only the great 'Jigs med gling pa lacks such a number.

892 See 'Jigs bral, *Gangs ljongs*, p. 656:

*/ de yi 'og tu byas dus la /*  
*/ 'dren pa blo gros zhes bya ba /*  
*/ shes bya lnga rnam ston pa po /*  
*/ dpa' bo chen po 'byung bar 'gyur /*



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**16. Mi pham and the Philosophical Controversies of the Nineteenth Century**

*Gzhan gyis brtsad pa'i lan mdor bsdus pa rigs lam rab gsal de nyid snang byed: An Answer to Blo-bzang-rab-gsal's Refutation of the Author's Sher le nor bu ke ta ka and its Defense, the Brgal lan nyin byed snang ba*. Jam-mgon ju Mi-pham-rgya-mtsho. Sonam T. Kazi, Gangtok. 1969. pp. 1–11.

**17. 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and the Nonsectarian Movement**

*Kongtrul's Encyclopaedia of Indo-Tibetan Culture*. International Academy of Indian Culture, New Delhi. 1970. pp. 1–87.

#### IV. Recent Research

Almost without exception, the essays written by E. Gene Smith some three decades ago were seminal forays into the vast world of Tibetan literature. They often can do no more than map out the territory, giving us a rough sketch of ground that was hitherto totally unknown. Thus, it is both natural and exciting that so much has been accomplished in the last thirty years of scholarship on Tibetan history and literature. Much of the work cited below grew directly out of Smith's essays, and many of the authors have benefited from Smith's personal guidance and assistance.

The following annotated bibliography is designed to bring the reader up to date on the subjects covered in Smith's essays. It is certainly not a comprehensive listing of all that has been written on each subject, and the focus has been primarily on English language sources. I hope that the books and essays listed here are representative of the best scholarship that has followed Smith's efforts. Many of the works listed contain substantial bibliographies that will lead the interested reader deep into the minutiae of each topic.

**1. The Autobiography of the Nyingmapa Visionary Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang Gyatso, Janet (1998).** *Apparitions of the Self: The Secret Autobiographies of a Tibetan Visionary.* Princeton University Press, Princeton. This is the most important full-length treatment of Tibetan autobiography to date.

Dudjom Rinpoche Jikdrel Yeshe Dorje (1991). *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History. Volume 1: The Translations.* Wisdom Publications, Boston.

Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein (1991). *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History. Volume 2: Reference Material.* Wisdom Publications, Boston. This two-volume set is essential reading for the history of the Rnying ma school. Volume 2, compiled by Dorje and Kapstein, contains a wealth of reference materials that extend far beyond the Rnying ma school.

#### 2. Klong chen Rab 'byams pa and His Works

Ehrhard, Franz-Karl (2000). *The Oldest Known Block Print of Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa's Theg mchog mdzod: Facsimile Edition of Early Tibetan Block Prints, with an Introduction by Franz-Karl Ehrhard.* Lumbini International Research Institute, Lumbini. Ehrhard's introduction is an important contribution to our knowledge of the textual history of Klong chen pa's works.

Germano, David (1994) "Architecture and Absence in the Secret Tantric History of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*)."  
*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 17/2. pp. 203–336. Germano provides an extensive survey of the intellectual history and major religious and philosophical themes of the Rdzogs chen tradition, concentrating on Klong chen Rab 'byams pa. See his bibliography for further references.

#### 3. Golden Rosaries of the Bka' brgyud pa Schools

Khenpo Könchog Gyaltzen (1990). *The Great Kagyu Masters: The Golden Lineage Treasury.* Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca. This is a translation of part of the *Bka' brgyud kyi rnam thar chen mo*, a 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa *gser 'phreng* by Rdo rje mdzes 'od.



#### 4. The Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa Tradition

Kapstein, Matthew (1980). "The Shangs-pa bKa'-brgyud: An Unknown Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism." *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*. Michael Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi, eds. Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi. pp. 138–44. Kapstein provides a historical framework for the Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa tradition.

Kapstein, Matthew (1991). "The Illusion of Spiritual Progress: Remarks on Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Soteriology." *Paths to Liberation: The Mārga and Its Transformations in Buddhist Thought*. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Robert M. Gimello, eds. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu. pp. 193–224. Kapstein provides an extended discussion of the religious themes underlying the life story of Khyung po Rnal 'byor, as well as a treatise on the Buddhist path by Niguma.

Riggs, Nicole (2001). *Like an Illusion: Lives of the Shangpa Kagyu Masters*. Dharma Cloud, Eugene. This is an abridged translation of the collection of *rnam thar* discussed by Smith.

#### 5. The Life of the Gtsang smyon Heruka

Eimer, Helmut and Pema Tsering (1990). "Blockprints and Manuscripts of Mi la ras pa's Mgur 'bum Accessible to Frank-Richard Hamm." *Frank-Richard Hamm Memorial Volume*. Helmut Eimer, ed. Indica et Tibetica Verlag, Bonn. pp. 59–88. Eimer and Tsering provide a supplement to Smith's list of blockprints of the works attributed to Mi la ras pa.

Lhalungpa, Lobsang P. (1977). *The Life of Milarepa*. Arkana, New York. Lhalungpa translates Gtsang smyon Heruka's version of Mi la ras pa's life story. See p. xxx of the introduction, where he discusses Gtsang smyon Heruka's printing efforts.

Lewis, Todd and Jamspal, Lobsang (1988). "Newars and Tibetans in the Kathmandu Valley: Three New Translations from Tibetan Sources." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 36. pp. 187–211. Lewis and Jamspal translate a passage from Rgod tshang ras pa's biography of Gtsang smyon Heruka that chronicles one of his three journeys to Kathmandu, pp. 192–94.

Stearns, Cyrus (2000). *Hermit of Go Cliffs: Timeless Instructions from a Tibetan Mystic*. Wisdom Publications, Boston. Although little has been written about Gtsang smyon Heruka himself, there have been numerous translations of works printed and popularized by him and his followers. The songs translated by Stearns were edited and printed by Gtsang smyon Heruka's principle student, Lha btsun pa Rin chen rnam rgyal (1473–1557).

#### 6. Padma dkar po and His History of Buddhism

Aris, Michael (1979). *Bhutan: The Early History of a Himalayan Kingdom*. Aris & Phillips Ltd. Warminster. Aris discusses the debate surrounding Padma dkar po's reincarnation on pp. 205–9.

Broido, Michael (1984). "Padma Dkar-po on Tantra as Ground, Path and Goal." *The Journal of the Tibet Society* 4. pp. 5–46.

Broido, Michael (1985). "Padma Dkar-po on Integration as Ground, Path and Goal." *The Journal of the Tibet Society* 5. pp. 5–46. In these two articles Broido looks at the place of interpretation in the philosophical writings of Padma dkar po.

Huber, Toni (1999). *The Cult of Pure Crystal Mountain: Popular Pilgrimage and Visionary*

*Landscape in Southeast Tibet*. Oxford University Press, New York. Huber translates chapter 4 of Padma dkar po's guide to Tsā ri on pp. 61–71.

### 7. The Diaries of Si tu Paṅ chen

Newman, Beth (1996). *Tale of the Incomparable Prince*. Harper Collins Publishers, New York. A translation of Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal's *Gzhon nu zla med kyi gtam rgyud*—a good example of the literary achievements of Si tu Paṅ chen's times.

Ehrhard, Franz-Karl (1997). "The Lands are Like a Wiped Golden Basin': The 6th Zhvadar-pa's Journey to Nepal and His Travelogue (1629/30)." *Les Habitants du Toit du Monde*. Samten Karmay and Philippe Sagant, eds. Société d'ethnologie, Nanterre. pp. 125–38. Ehrhard discusses a travelogue to Kathmandu composed by one of Si tu Paṅ chen's predecessors, providing helpful background to the study of Si tu Paṅ chen's own travels.

Lewis, Todd and Jamspal, Lobsang (1988). "Newars and Tibetans in the Kathmandu Valley: Three New Translations from Tibetan Sources." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 36. pp. 187–211. Lewis and Jamspal's article contains translations from Si tu's diary that describe two of his journeys to Kathmandu.

Stearns, Cyrus (1999). *The Buddha from Dolpo: A Study of the Life and Thought of the Tibetan Master Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen*. State University of New York Press, Albany. Stearns discusses Si tu's involvement with the Gzhan stong doctrine.

### 8. The Early History of the 'Khon Family and the Sa skya School

Jackson, David P. (1987). *Entrance Gate for the Wise: Sa-skya Paṅḍita on Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Pramāṇa and Philosophical Debate*. Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, Wien. Jackson's book covers a later period of Sa skya pa history than Smith's essay. Chapter 1 details the life of Sa skya Paṅḍita (1182–1251).

Stearns, Cyrus (2002). *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam 'bras Tradition in Tibet*. Wisdom Publications, Boston. Stearns provides a critical edition and English translation of the *Zhib mo rdo rje* by Sa skya Paṅḍita's disciple, Dmar ston Chos kyi rgyal po.

### 9. Glo bo Mkhan chen and Buddhist Logic in Tibet

Dreyfus, Georges B. J. (1997). *Recognizing Reality: Dhamrakīrti's Philosophy and Its Tibetan Interpretations*. SUNY Press, Albany. Dreyfus provides an extensive survey of the major themes of logic and epistemology in Tibet, especially during the period following Sa skya Paṅḍita. See his bibliography for further references on the philosophical aspects of Tibetan logic.

Jackson, David (1984). *The Mollas of Mustang: Historical, Religious and Oratorical Traditions of the Nepalese-Tibetan Borderland*. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. Jackson provides a history of Glo bo Mkhan chen's homeland, Mustang.

van der Kuijp, Leonard W. J. (1983). *Contributions to the Development of Tibetan Buddhist Epistemology: From the Eleventh to the Thirteenth Century*. Franz Steiner, Wiesbaden. Van der Kuijp surveys the historical development of Buddhist logic and epistemology. See especially pp. 97–116 on the *Tshad ma rigs pa'i gter* of Sa skya Paṅḍita.

van der Kuijp, Leonard W. J. (1989). *An Introduction to Gtsang nag pa's Tshad-ma rnam-par nges-pa'i ti-ka legs-bshad bsdu-s-pa: An Ancient Commentary on Dharmakīrti's Pramānaviśāyā, Otani University Collection No. 13971*. Rinsen Book Co., Kyoto. Van der Kuijp outlines a history of logic and epistemology in Tibet prior to Sa skya Paṇḍita.

van der Kuijp, Leonard W. J. (1994) "Fourteenth Century Tibetan Cultural History IV: The Tshad ma'i byung tshul 'chad nyan gyi rgyan: A Tibetan History of Indian *Pramānavāda*." *Festschrift Klaus Bruhn zur Vollendung des 65. Lebensjahres dargebracht von Schülern, Freunden, und Kollegen*. Nalini Balbir and Joachim K. Bautze, eds. Verlag für Orientalistische Fachpublikationen, Reinbek. A recent contribution by van der Kuijp on the history of logic and epistemology in Tibet.

*Results of the Nepal-German Project on High Mountain Archaeology, Part IV: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Reports on Research Activities in The Nepal-Tibetan Border Area of Mustang During the Years 1992–1998*. VGH Wissenschaftsverlag. 1999. An important collection of over forty detailed studies dedicated to various aspects of culture in and around Mustang.

#### 10. The Autobiography of the First Paṇ chen Lama

Ya, Hanzhang (1994). *Biographies of the Tibetan Spiritual Leaders Panchen Erdenis*. Foreign Language Press, Beijing. Biographical studies of the Paṇ chen Lamas by a Chinese scholar. See pp. 14–57 for a biography of the Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan, based in part upon the autobiography.

Norbu, Jamyang: ed. (1996) *Lungta No. 10: Lives of the Panchen Lamas*. Amnye Machen Institute, Dharamsala. This issue of *Lungta* contains several articles about the Paṇ chen Lamas.

#### 11. The Life of Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje

Everding, Karl-Heinz (1988). *Die Präexistenzen der lCari skya Qutuqtus: Untersuchungen zur Konstruktion und historischen Entwicklung einer lamaistischen Existenzenlinie*. Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden. Everding presents a study of the life of the Third Lcang skya incarnation, Ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1787–1846).

Wang, Xiangyun (2000). "The Qing Court's Tibet Connections: Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje and the Qianlong Emperor." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 60 (1). pp. 125–63. Based upon Chinese sources.

#### 12. Philosophical, Biographical, and Historical Works of Thu'u bkwan

##### Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma

Hopkins, Jeffrey (1996). "The Tibetan Genre of Doxography: Structuring a Worldview." *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson, eds. Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca. pp. 170–86. Hopkin's article serves as a gateway for recent studies of *grub mtha'* literature.

Tachikawa, Musashi (1974, 1978, 1981, 1986, 1990, 1993). *Chibetto Bukkyō shūgi kenkyū [A Study of the Grub Mtha' of Tibetan Buddhism]*. Toyo Bunko, Tokyo. (*Studia Tibetica*, volumes 3, 4, 7, 11, 13, 26.) A series of works presenting detailed outlines of the Sa skya pa, Shi byed pa, Rnying ma pa, Mongolian, Bka' brgyud pa, and Jo nang pa chapters of the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*.

**13. The Life of Ye shes rgyal mtshan, Preceptor of the Eighth Dalai Lama**

Schuh, Dieter (1988). *Das Archiv des Klosters bKra-sis-bsam-gtan-glin von sKyid-groñ*. VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, Bonn. Schuh studies the history of Ye shes rgyal mtshan's monastery in southwest Tibet, and provides facsimiles of local administrative documents.

Willis, Janice (1995). *Enlightened Beings: Life Stories from the Ganden Oral Tradition*. Wisdom Publications, Boston. pp. 125–30. Willis' book contains a translation of selected passages from Ye shes rgyal mtshan's *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam par thar pa*, as well as a brief survey of his life.

**14. Buddhist Literary and Practical Arts According to Bo dong Pañ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal**

Diemberger, Hildegard; Pasang Wangdu; Marlies Kornfeld; and Christian Jahoda (1997). *Feast of Miracles: The Life and the Tradition of Bodong Chole Namgyal (1375/6–1451 AD) according to the Tibetan Texts "Feast of Miracles" and "The Lamp Illuminating the History of Bodong*. Porong Pema Chöding Editions, Clusone. This book contains a translation of prose sections of the biography of Bo dong Pañ chen by 'Jigs med 'bangs, composed in 1453.

Ehrhard, Franz-Karl (2000). *Four Unknown Mahāmudrā Works of the Bo-dong-pa School: Facsimile Edition of Early Tibetan Block Prints, with an Introduction by Franz-Karl Ehrhard*. Lumbini International Research Institute, Lumbini. Ehrhard's introduction is an important contribution to our knowledge of the textual history and intellectual development of the Bo dong pa school after Bo dong Pañ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal.

van der Kuijp, Leonard W. J. (1996). "Tibetan Belles-Lettres: The Influence of Dañḍin and Kṣemendra." *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger R. Jackson, eds. Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca. pp. 393–410. Van der Kuijp surveys the history of ornate poetry and literature in Tibet. See his bibliography for further studies.

Verhagen, Pieter C. (1994). *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet: Volume One, Transmission of the Canonical Literature*. E. J. Brill, Leiden.

Verhagen, Pieter C. (2001). *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet: Volume Two, Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*. E. J. Brill, Leiden. In these two volumes Verhagen provides a comprehensive survey of the Sanskrit grammatical literature known in Tibet.

**15. A Tibetan Encyclopedia from the Fifteenth Century**

Jackson, David (1984). *The Mollas of Mustang: Historical, Religious and Oratorical Traditions of the Nepalese-Tibetan Borderland*. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala. Jackson surveys the sections on Tibetan oratory in Don dam Smra ba'i seng ge's *Bshad mdzod* on pp. 62–67.

Haarh, Eric (1969). *The Yar-Luñ Dynasty: A Study with Particular Regard to the Contribution by Myths and Legends to the History of Ancient Tibet and the Origin and Nature of Its Kings*. Gad, Kobenhavn.

Hoog, Constance (1983). *Prince Jin-gim's Textbook of Tibetan Buddhism: The Śes-bya rab-gsal by 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan dPal-bzan-po of the Sa-skyapa*. E. J. Brill, Leiden. A translation of a precursor to the *Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*.

### 16. Mi pham and the Philosophical Controversies of the Nineteenth Century

Pettit, John Whitney (1999). *Mipham's Beacon of Certainty*. Wisdom Publications, Boston. Pettit's book is the most comprehensive study of Mi pham's life and works. See especially pp. 101–24 on the controversies between Rnying ma pa and Dge lugs pa philosophers. See his bibliography for further references.

### 17. 'Jam mgon Kong sprul and the Nonsectarian Movement

Heller, Amy (1999). *Tibetan Art: Tracing the Development of Spiritual Ideals and Art in Tibet, 600–2000 A.D.* Jaca Book, Milano. Heller provides a beautifully illustrated and meticulously researched chronological survey of the visual arts in Tibet.

Jackson, David (1996). *A History of Tibetan Painting: The Great Tibetan Painters and Their Traditions*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien. This is the most comprehensive history of Tibetan painting and painters to date. Jackson includes translations of many passages first translated by Smith. See chapter 1 (pp. 19–42) for a survey of research both before and after Smith's essay.

Jackson, David (1997). "A Reviver of Sa-skyapa Scriptural Studies." *Les Habitants du Toit du Monde*. Samten Karmay and Philippe Sagant, eds. Société d'ethnologie, Nanterre. pp. 139–53. A study of Brag g.yab Thub bstan bzang po (c. 1891/2–c. 1930), a student of Gzhan phan Chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927), heir to the nonsectarian tradition of the nineteenth century.

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé (1995). *Myriad Worlds: Buddhist Cosmology in Abhidharma, Kālacakra, and Dzog-chen*. Translated and edited by the International Translation Committee of Kunkhyab Chöling founded by the V. V. Kalu Rinpoché.

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Tayé (1999). *Buddhist Ethics*. Translated and edited by the International Translation Committee founded by V. V. Kalu Rinpoché. Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca. *Myriad Worlds* and *Buddhist Ethics* are the first two installments in the projected complete translation of the *Shes bya kun khyab* by the students of the late V. V. Kalu Rinpoche.

Martin, Dan (1996). "The Star King and the Four Children of Pehar: Popular Religious Movements of 11th- to 12th-Century Tibet." *Acta Orientalia* 49/1–2. pp. 171–95. Martin studies Klu Skar rgyal, alias Sangs rgyas Skar rgyal, mentioned by Smith in section 2 of the present essay.

Paltrul Rinpoche (1994). *The Words of My Perfect Teacher: Kunzang lama'i shelung*. Padmakara Translation Group, trans. Harper Collins, San Francisco. A translation of a classic from the nonsectarian tradition, the *Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung*, by Dpal sprul 'Jigs med chos kyi dbang po (1808–87).

Schuh, Dieter (1976). *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke, Teil 6: Gesammelte Werke des Koni-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas*. Steiner, Wiesbaden. A catalog of the collected works of 'Jam mgon Kong sprul.

Schwieger, Peter (1990, 1995, 1999). *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke, Bande 10, 11, 12. Die mTshur-phu-Ausgabe der Sammlung Rin-chen gter-mdzod chen-mo, nach dem Exemplar der Orientabteilung, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*. Franz Steiner, Stuttgart. These volumes catalog the *Rin chen gter mdzod* up through volume 34. More volumes are promised.



# Index

- A 'dzom chos sgar 30, 327, 337  
 A bu Hral po. *See* Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po  
 A bu Rin po che. *See* Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po  
 A chi thu No mon han. *See* Ngag dbang mchog ldan  
 A dzom 'Brug pa 'Gro 'dul dpa' bo rdo rje (1885–1924?) 83  
 A khu ching Shes rab rgya mtsho (1803–75) 2, 86, 316, 319, 331  
 A kya Sgar pa 155  
 A kya Zhabs drung 141  
 A lcags 'Gru 272  
 A mdo 237, 276, 298, 321, 323  
 A mdo Ra rgya 312  
 A mes dpal 111  
 A pho Chos rje Mnyam nyid rdo rje (1439–75) 63, 93, 286  
 A rtse Chos rje Blo bzang Chos 'dzin 136  
 A sa han Am ban Pe'i zi E phu Bde legs bzang po 144  
 A skyong 276  
 A stobs Rin po che 27, 28, 277  
 A wa dhu ti pa 'Od zer dpal 130  
 'A zhwa 320, 335  
*Abhidharmakośa* 190, 327  
*Abhinava Sākaṭāyana* 198  
*Abhisamayālaṅkāra* 327  
 Abudai Khan 121  
*Agnipurāna* 206  
 Akṣobhya 157  
 Alashan 140  
*Alaṅkārasaṅgraha* 205  
 Altan Khan 121, 303, 305  
*Amarakośa* 93, 94, 203, 204, 318  
*Amarasīmha* 203  
 Amban Bande 140  
 Amoghavajra 274  
 Amursana 140  
 Anubhūti 331  
 A'o ldong 320  
*Ārthaṭīkka* 317  
 Āryadeśa 317  
 Āryaśūra 326  
 Asaṅga 325  
*Aṣṭādhyāyī* 191, 197  
*Aṣṭāṅgahrdayasāmbhitā* 182  
*Aśvagoṣa*. *See* Rta dbyangs  
 Athing, Burmiok 275, 285. *See* Densapa, Rai Bahadur T. D.  
 Atiśa 33, 60, 228, 274, 299  
 Ātreya 188  
 A'u shing Pe'i ze'i ho sho 156  
*Avadānakalpalatā* 193, 205, 253  
 Avalokiteśvara 82, 268  
 'Ba' Chos sde 248  
 'Ba' ra 39  
 'Ba' ra ba Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang (1310–91) 47, 48, 210, 282, 304  
 'Ba' ra Bka' brgyud pa 45, 46  
 'Ba' ra brag 47  
 Ba ri sgang 51  
 'Ba' rom Bka' brgyud pa 43  
 'Ba' thang 332  
 Ba yan nang so 168  
 'Ba' rom pa Dar ma dbang phyug 130  
 Bachur Ojā 95  
 Bai lo Tshe dbang kun khyab (b. 1718) 94  
*Baiḍūrya dkar po* 243  
 Bakula, Kushog 311  
 'Bal 54  
 Bal po 126, 219, 322  
 Bal po rdzong gi rgyal po bla ma paṅḍi ta 314  
 Bal po yul 221  
 Bal ravine 108  
*Bal yul mchod rten 'phags pa shing kun dang de'i gnas bshad rnam kyī dkar chag* 285  
 Balabhadra 196  
 Bam stengs 262  
 Ban de Di yan chi 151  
 Bar 222  
 Bar 'Brug 44, 45  
 Bar khams rus rigs drug 219  
 Bar Rdo rje brag. *See* Rdo rje brag  
 Bar sgo 68  
 Bare 88  
 Bas 219  
 Batur Hungraiji 122, 123  
 Bco brgyad Khri chen. *See* Chopgye Trichen  
 Bcom ldan Rig pa'i ral gri 17, 182, 313  
*Bcud len gyi man ngag bshad pa* 190  
*Bcud len gyi sbyor ba* 189  
 Bdag po Kun dga' 212  
 Bde bar gshegs pa bsrung pa. *See* Rlangs Khom pa Lotstsha Su ga ta warma rakṣi ta  
 Bde chen chos 'khor Yongs 'dzin 86, 242  
 Bde chen chos gling 156  
 Bde dge Kun dga' rgyal mtshan 165  
 Bde dgu Che ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho 168  
 Bde dgu Ngag dbang dge legs rgya mtsho 140, 168  
*Bde gshegs snying po'i stong thun chen mo seng ge'i nga ro* 327  
 Bde khams 150  
 Bde ldan sgrol ma 174  
 Bde legs rgya mtsho 66  
*Bde mchog mkha' 'gro snyan rgyud* 61  
*Bde mchog mkha' 'gro'i snyan rgyud nor bu skor gsum* 42  
*Bde mchog snyan rgyud* 41, 65  
 Bde rgu che ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho 163  
 Bde rgu Chung ba. *See* Byang chub sems dpa' Sbyor lam pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan  
 Bde spyod. *See* Udayana  
 Bde thang Sprul sku 165  
 Bdog lun pa 50  
 Bdud 'dul phug 65  
 Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1615–72) 18  
 Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1733–97) 335, 336, 337  
 Bdud 'joms gling pa (b. 1835) 250

- Bdud 'joms Rin po che 'Jigs bral  
ye shes rdo rje 3, 33, 232, 270,  
274, 278, 285, 329, 338
- Bdud rtsi yon tan 295
- Be ko ta Pass 174
- 'Be lo Tshé dbang kun khyab.  
See Bai lo Tshé dbang kun  
khyab (b. 1718)
- Beg rtse lcam sring 128
- Bgrod dka' seng ge. See Dur-  
gasirñha
- Bha ta Hor 310
- Bhāmaha 205
- Bhānuji Dikṣita 318
- Bhatgaon 93
- Bhatri Mīśra 195
- Bhe ta'i gling. See Vidarbha
- Bhi ru ka'i tshal 317
- Bhūpatindramalla 94
- Bhutan 34
- Bi lig thu No min han 165
- Bka' bcu pa Dpal mgon 305
- Bka' brgyud 'phrin las shing rta  
(1718–66) 83, 284
- Bka' brgyud gser 'phreng 46*
- Bka' brgyud pa 40
- Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod 262, 338*
- Bka' chen Ye shes rgyal mtshan  
312
- Bka' gdams glegs bam 93*
- Bka' gdams gzhung drug 325*
- Bka' gdams pa 41, 60, 228
- Bka' gyur 16, 17, 280, 312*
- Bka' 'gyur ba no min han 165
- Bka' ma 15, 18*
- Bka' thang sde lnga 295, 324*
- Bka' yang dag pa'i tshad ma las  
bsdus pa 192*
- Bkra shis 'od zer (1836–1910) 237,  
329
- Bkra shis 'od zer blo gros rgyas  
pa'i sde. See Bkra shis 'od zer  
(1836–1910)
- Bkra shis 'tsho 247
- Bkra shis brtsegs pa 289
- Bkra shis bsam gian gling gi bka'  
'gyur bstan dkar chag 171*
- Bkra shis Ching wang 166
- Bkra shis chos 'phel. See Gnas  
gsar Bkra 'phel
- Bkra shis chos gling 167, 169
- Bkra shis chos gling Grwa tshang  
308
- Bkra shis Chos sde 57
- Bkra shis dar rgyas 286
- Bkra shis dge legs 26
- Bkra shis dpal 'byor (1498–1541) 96
- Bkra shis dpal ldan dar rgyas  
gling Bshad grwa 156
- Bkra shis lhun grub Chos grwa  
72, 73, 288
- Bkra shis lhun po 66, 73, 119, 124,  
126, 127, 130, 250, 305, 333
- Bkra shis lhun po Sngags khang  
304
- Bkra shis lhun po Sngags pa  
Grwa tshang 73
- Bkra shis mgon 65
- Bkra shis mthong smon 82
- Bkra shis rgya mtsho. See Pog to  
Cha han bla ma Bkra shis rgya  
mtsho (d. 1627)
- Bkra shis rnam rgyal (1450–97)  
96
- Bkwan ting Phu'u shan Bkwang  
tshi Tā Ka'u shrī. See Lcang  
skya Ngag dbang blo bzang  
chos ldan
- Bla brang pa Chos dpal rgyal  
mtshan 33, 279
- Bla brang rdzong pa Mkhan chen  
Ngag dbang chos grags 57
- Bla brang Shar pa 301
- Bla chen Dgongs pa rab gsal. See  
Dgongs pa rab gsal
- Bla chen Kun dga' 'phrin las rgya  
mtsho. See Phun tshogs bstan  
pa
- Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal  
mtshan (1312–75) 47, 49, 115,  
146, 180, 194, 228, 279
- Bla ma Dam pa to Lo chen  
Byang chub rtse mo (1303–80)  
115
- Bla ma Dmar ston Rgyal mtshan  
'od zer 112
- Bla ma Nges don 236
- Bla ma Sher gzhon 50
- Bla ma yang tig gi gnyis ka'i yang  
yig gi 'grel pa nyi ma'i snang ba  
278*
- Bla ma'i thugs sgrub rdo rje drag  
rtsal 337*
- Bla rdzogs thugs gsum 238, 274
- Blang kha 222, 323
- Blo bzang bkra shis 140
- Blo bzang bsam 'grub 157
- Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 163, 309
- Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las  
(b. ca. 1738) 151
- Blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho  
(1605–1643/4) 122, 129, 130
- Blo bzang bstan pa'i chos kyi nyi  
ma. See Stag lung Zhabs drung
- Blo bzang bstan pa chos kyi  
nyi ma
- Blo bzang bstan pa'i dbang  
phyug (1855–1882) 129
- Blo bzang bstan pa'i nyi ma  
Phyogs las rnam rgyal  
(1781–1854) 129, 160
- Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal  
mtshan (1635–1723) 130, 308
- Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me  
(1724–57) 130
- Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma  
(1732–1802) 176
- Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan  
(1567–1662) 5, 21, 119, 122, 123,  
126, 129, 131, 303, 304, 305
- Blo bzang dam chos 169
- Blo bzang dge legs. See Blo bzang  
thub bstan dbang phyug  
(1775–1813)
- Blo bzang don grub 127, 305
- Blo bzang don yod. See Khri  
XLII Rnam dag rdo rje
- Blo bzang dpal 'byor lhun grub  
(1796–1846) 130
- Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa  
(1843–48) 130
- Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa'i  
sgron me (1871?–90?) 146
- Blo bzang dpal ldan chos kyi  
grags pa. See Blo bzang bstan  
pa'i dbang phyug (1855–81?)
- Blo bzang dpal ldan dam pa. See  
Blo bzang dpal ldan bstan pa'i  
sgron me (1871?–90?)
- Blo bzang dpal ldan ye shes  
(1738–80) 129
- Blo bzang mi pham bstan 'dzin  
rnam rgyal. See Rgyal dbang  
'Brug pa Kun gzigs chos kyi  
snang ba (1768–1822)
- Blo bzang ngag dbang 'Jigs med  
ye shes grags pa (1696–1740)  
309
- Blo bzang rab brtan 152
- Blo bzang rab gsal 328
- Blo bzang rin chen. See Rtog ge  
ba Blo bzang rin chen
- Blo bzang rnam rgyal 174
- Blo bzang rta mgrin (1867–1937)  
305
- Blo bzang Thub bstan chos kyi  
nyi ma Dge legs rnam rgyal.  
See Thub bstan Chos kyi nyi  
ma (1883–1937)
- Blo bzang thub bstan dbang  
phyug 'jigs med rgya mtsho.  
See Blo bzang thub bstan  
dbang phyug (1775–1813)
- Blo bzang thub bstan dbang  
phyug (1775–1813) 130
- Blo bzang tshul 'khrims 'jigs med  
(1815–40) 130, 306



- Blo bzang tshul khirms (b. 1745)  
333
- Blo bzang ye shes (1663–1737)  
129, 174
- Blo bzang ye shes bstan pa'i rgya  
mtsho (1860?–70?) 146
- Blo gros dpal bzang po 194
- Blo gros mtha' yas 274, 282, 302,  
330, 332
- Blo gros rab gsal padma bzhad  
pa. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)
- Blo gros rgyal mtshan 194
- Blo gsal bstan skyong 250, 333
- Blo gsal gling Grwa tshang 328
- Blo gsal rgya mtsho. *See* Jo nang  
Kun dga' grol mchog  
(1495–1566)
- Blo gter rab dga' tshangs byung  
snyems pa'i lang tsho'i zla  
snang. *See* Kong sprul  
(1811–99)
- Blo ldan snying po 333
- Blo mkhar ba. *See* 'Khrul zhig  
Glo 'khar ba Kun dga' don  
grub
- Blue Annals* 102, 278, 279, 292,  
294, 295, 296, 299
- Bo 'bor sgang 323
- Bo dong 335. *See also* Bo dong E, E
- Bo dong E 180. *See also* E
- Bo dong Nam mkha' bzang po 75
- Bo dong pa 66, 179
- Bo dong pa Rin chen rtse mo 180
- Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las  
rnam rgyal (1376–1451) 4, 6,  
75, 179, 180, 203, 206, 208,  
210, 336
- Bo ro chu 'gag 163
- Bod 222
- Bod kyi rgyal khams 221
- Bod mkhas pa Mi pham dge legs  
rnam rgyal 206, 208, 244, 318,  
331
- Bodhicāryāvātāra* 7, 26, 227, 228,  
229, 231, 277, 326
- Bodhidharmottara 137, 275
- Bodhipathapradīpa* 228
- Bodhisattva Zla ba rgyal mtshan  
49
- Bodhisattvabhūmi* 325
- Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā* 176
- Bogdo Chagan Bla ma. *See* Pog  
to Cha han bla ma Bkra shis  
rgya mtsho (d. 1627)
- Bon xiii, 53, 143, 148, 149, 150,  
213, 215, 217, 230, 237, 238, 239,  
247, 249, 266, 310, 322, 333,  
329, 337
- Bon Ka ba dgu skor* 217
- Bon po ri. *See* Spom po ri
- Bra gor 326
- Bra sti Monastery 167
- Bra sti Ngag dbang mchog dpal  
169
- Bra sti Sgar pa Nang so Shes rab  
grags 155
- Bra ti Dge bshes 142
- Brag dkar 136, 328
- Brag dkar Blo bzang dpal ldan  
bstan 'dzin snyan grags 232, 328
- Brag dkar Rin po che 233
- Brag dkar rta so 70, 75, 285, 287
- Brag dkar Sngags ram pa 165
- Brag dmar 106. *See* 'Phrang
- Brag g.yab 138, 249
- Brag kha ba 223
- Brag la gnas pa'i rtsang phag 220
- Brag po che ba Rdo rje dpal 57
- Brag rtsa dgon 57
- Bram ze pa nis mdzad pa'i pā ni  
byā ka ra na* 191
- Bran ka 322
- Brang 218
- 'Brang rgyas kha 282
- 'Bras mo pa 45
- 'Bras spungs 69, 120
- 'Bras spungs Dga' ldan pho  
brang 171
- 'Bras spungs Gzims khang 'Og  
ma 129, 305
- 'Bras spungs Gzims khang Gong  
ma 129
- 'Bras spungs Har sdong 138
- 'Bras yul Skyed tshal 115, 169
- Brda shan 'byed the tshom dra ba  
gcod pa'i ral gri* 328
- Brda sprod pa dbyangs can* 316
- Bre gang 321
- Bre'o. *See* Tre'o or Tre hor
- Brgal lan legs pa'i gnam 'byed* 328
- Brgal lan nyin byed snang ba* 233,  
328
- 'Bri 223, 332
- 'Bri gung 284, 329
- 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa 21, 33,  
34, 39, 43, 44, 123, 151
- 'Bri gung Chos kyi grags pa 330
- 'Bri gung Chos rje Kun dga' rin  
chen 34, 75, 329
- 'Bri gung Sgom chen 34
- 'Bri gung Skyob pa 'Jig rten  
mgon po (1143–1217) 43, 114,  
148, 238, 283, 328
- 'Bri khung. *see* 'Bri gung
- 'Bri sgang 326
- 'Bri zla Zal mo sgang 28, 247, 332
- 'Bring 218
- 'Bring yas 321
- 'Bro 105, 296, 321
- 'Bro Dgra 'dul 105, 296
- 'Bro Stag snang Khri gsum rje  
150
- 'Bro tsha spun bdun 296
- 'Brog La phyi Gangs ra 78
- 'Brog mi Lo tsā ba 100, 107, 108,  
239, 300
- 'Brom ston Rgyal ba'i 'byung  
gnas (1005–1064) 33
- 'Brom ston Sher 'byung blo gros  
164
- 'Brong 218
- 'Brong rtse 333
- Brtag gnyis. See Hevajra Tantra*
- Bru 321
- 'Bru la Mkhan chen 163
- Bru sha 322
- 'Brug chen 284
- 'Brug chen Dpag bsam dbang po  
330
- 'Brug chen Rgyal dbang Kun  
dga' dpal 'byor (1428–1476)  
64, 330
- 'Brug chen VII Bka' brgyud  
phrin las shing rta (1718–66)  
56
- 'Brug grags dgon lag 18
- 'Brug lung 169
- 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa 39, 43,  
44, 123, 242, 288, 336
- 'Brug pa Bla ma 'Phrin las 28
- 'Brug pa Kun legs (1455–1529) 60,  
245, 284
- 'Brug pa Lha btsun 75
- 'Brug pa Sku chen Chos dbyings  
rol pa'i rdo rje 28
- 'Brug pa'i chos 'byung 83
- 'Brug rnam rgyal 70, 71
- 'Brug smyon Kun dga' legs pa.  
*See* 'Brug pa Kun legs  
(1455–1529)
- 'Brug tshang 124
- Bsam grub rin chen 33, 278
- Bsam 'grub sde 65
- Bsam 'grub sgang pa Blo bzang  
ngag gi dbang po 162
- Bsam gtan gling in Spa gro 34
- Bsam gtan Mkhan po. *See* Sa ma  
ti Pakśi
- Bsam gtan phun tshogs 141
- Bsam rdzong chos sde pho brang  
pa 'Phags mchog Chos nyid ye  
shes 57
- Bsam sde ba Grags pa mtha' yas  
286
- Bsam sde rgyal po Grags pa  
mtha' yas 65
- Bsam sdings pa 55

- Bsam yas 21, 141, 278, 319  
 Bse. *See* Se  
 Bshad grwa Dbang phyug rgyal  
 po 248  
 Bshad grwa 'og pa Kun dga' dpal  
 'byor 176, 312  
*Bshad mdzod spu ti khra mo. See*  
*Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*  
*Bshad mdzod yid bzhin nor bu*  
 209, 211, 213, 214  
 Bshad sgrub chos kyi snang ba.  
*See* Rdzogs chen Mkhan po  
 Bsod nam chos phel  
 Bskal bzang bstan pa yar 'phel  
 (1746–94) 130  
 Bskal bzang 'Gyur med bde chen  
 57  
 Bskal bzang thub bstan 'jigs med  
 rgya mtsho 309  
 Bskal bzang tshe brtan. *See* Chos  
 kyi rgyal mtshan phrin las  
 lhun grub (1938–89)  
 Bslab mchog gling Monastery 156  
 Bsod nam grags pa, Fourth Lha  
 btsun (1359–1408) 212  
 Bsod noms blo gros 74, 259, 337  
 Bsod noms bzang po 316  
 Bsod noms dge legs dpal bzang  
 (1594–1615) 129  
 Bsod noms grags pa. *See* Paṅ  
 chen Bsod noms grags pa  
 (1478–1554)  
 Bsod noms lde'u btsan 18  
 Bsod noms lhun grub legs pa'i  
 'byung gnas rgyal mtshan dpal  
 bzang po. *See* Glo bo Mkhan  
 chen Bsod noms lhun grub  
 (1456–1532)  
 Bsod noms 'phel 247  
 Bsod noms phyogs kyi glang po  
 (1439–1504) 129  
 Bsod noms rdo rje 312  
 Bsod noms rgya mtsho (1543–88)  
 121, 129, 305, 330  
 Bsod noms thabs mkhas rgya  
 mtsho 85  
 Bsod noms ye shes dbang po  
 (1556–92) 129  
 Bstan dgon pa 33, 279  
 Bstan 'dzin 'brug rgyal  
 (1591–1656) 120  
 Bstan 'dzin blo bzang rgya mtsho  
 (1593–1638) 129  
 Bstan 'dzin Ching wang 133, 136  
 Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal  
 (1700–1767) 74, 89, 312  
 Bstan 'dzin dge legs (b. 1958) 312  
 Bstan 'dzin g.yung drung. *See*  
 Kong sprul (1811–99)
- Bstan 'dzin Mkhyen rab Dge legs  
 dbang po (1931–60) 83  
 Bstan 'dzin rab rgyas 256  
 Bstan gnyis g.yung drung gling  
 pa. *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Bstan pa dar rgyas gling  
 Monastery 156  
 Bstan pa lhun grub 333  
 Bstan pa rab 'phel. *See* Mkhan po  
 Ngag dga'  
 Bstan pa rgyas pa 182  
 Bstan pa rnam rgyal 333  
 Bstan pa tshe ring (1678–1738) 91  
 Btsan po Dgon 140  
 Btsan po No mon han Sprul sku  
 140  
 Bstan rgyas gling 72, 73, 175, 280,  
 288  
 Btsan bza' lcam bu sgron. *See*  
 Gtsan sa lcam bu smon  
 Btsan po Gser khog 152, 164  
 Btsan po No min han. *See* Btsan  
 po pa Don grub rgya mtsho  
 Btsan po No mon han 143  
 Btsan po pa Don grub rgya  
 mtsho 162  
 Btsan po pa Don grub rgyal  
 mtshan 163  
 Btsong kha. *See* Gying thang  
 Btsun pa Zla ba. *See* Candra-  
 gomin  
*Bu chen bcu gnyis* 288  
 Bu skyid 135  
 Bu sring ma 301  
 Bu ston Rin chen grub  
 (1290–1364) 16, 17, 49, 129,  
 180, 228, 238, 314, 325  
 Bu tshal ba 319  
 Buddhākaraprabha 185, 274  
 Buddhanātha 195  
 Buddhaśrījñāna 186  
 Bug pa can pa 223, 325  
 'Bum, The Five 216  
 'Bum gsar Dge bshes Ngag  
 dbang 'byung gnas 230  
 'Bum lung Bkra shis thang Dga'  
 ldan mi 'gyur gling 162  
 Bum thang 34  
 Buxa 319  
 Buyantu Khan 182  
 Bya 64  
 Bya bral Rin po che 13, 14, 29  
 Bya btang Dka' bcu Don yod  
 mkhas mchog 154  
 Bya btang Ri khrod Ras chen 285  
 Bya khyung Chos sde 169  
 Bya Nang so Bkra shis dar rgyas  
 64  
 Bya ru lung pa 106, 298, 299
- Bya tshang pa Padma sri gcod  
 331  
 Bya yul Sngags grwa 86  
 Byams chen Chos rje Shakya ye  
 shes (1354–1435) 146  
 Byams chen Rab 'byams pa 115  
 Byams pa gling 162, 182  
 Byams pa kun dga' sangs rgyas  
 bstan pa rgyal mtshan 25  
 Byams pa Yon tan mgon po 56  
 Byang 222  
 Byang bdag Rnam rgyal grags  
 bzang 180, 336  
 Byang 'Brug 44, 45  
 Byang chub 'od 193  
 Byang chub gling 160, 167  
*Byang chub kyi sems gsal bar byed*  
*pa zla ba'i 'od zer* 326  
*Byang chub kyi sems kun byed*  
*rgyal po'i don khrid rin chen*  
*gru bo* 280  
 Byang chub rgyal mtshan. *See*  
 Khu nu Byang chub rgyal  
 mtshan  
 Byang chub rtse mo (1303–1380)  
 202  
 Byang chub sems dpa' Sbyor lam  
 pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan 165,  
 310  
 Byang gter 242  
 Byang lugs 336  
 Byang Ngam rings 19  
 Byang Rdo rje gdan 57  
 Byang Rta rna 45  
 Byang sems Bsod noms rgyal  
 mtshan 285  
 Byang sems Sbyin pa bzang po 57  
 Byang Sog po Pra glag can 220  
 Byang Stag lung 321  
 Byang thang 99  
 Byang thang 'Brog 323  
 Byar 222, 325  
 Byar dags skong gsum 285  
 Byar po 83  
 Byar po Gsang sngags chos gling  
 45  
*Bye ba ring bsrel* 93  
 Bye ma g.yung drung 69  
 Byi'u 251  
 Byi'u lha bzo 125, 336  
 Byi'u ris 255  
*Byings kyi mdo. See Dhātusūtra*  
*Byings kyi tshogs* 194  
 Bzang ba'i yul mo bzhi 220  
 Bzang bya ba 220  
 Bzang shu Dka' chen Shes rab  
 dar rgyas. *See* Dka' chen Shes  
 rab dar rgyas  
 Bzhad pa'i rdo rje 245

- Cakrasamvara Tantra* 21, 50, 61, 139, 275  
 Candragomin 298  
 Candrakīrti 198, 317  
*Candravyākaraṇa* 191, 195, 198, 199, 327  
*Catuhpīṭha Tantra* 187  
 Ch'ien lung (1735–96) 133, 134, 137, 143, 144, 307  
 Ch'ing 134  
 Ch'ing hai 144  
*Cha bsags*. See *Kātantra*  
 Cha han Di yan chi 151  
 Chab lung pa 47  
 Chab mdo 160, 309, 312, 332  
 Chab mdo Dbu mdzad 247  
 Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1264) 193, 238  
 Chahar 121, 140  
 Chan zhi 152  
*Chandoratnākara* 202, 203, 267, 318  
*Chang so chil lun* 319  
 Char zen ching 166  
 Char zen zhing 152  
 Che sa. See Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan  
 Chi kya Dor rta nag po 306  
 Chi kya Dpon po 135, 306  
 Chi kya tshangs pa Gu ru bstan 'dzin 135  
 'Chi med bstan gnyis g.yung drung gling pa. See Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Cho ni 312  
 Chog ro. See Cog ro  
 Choktu Khan 123  
 Chopgye Trichen 111  
 Chos 'byor rgya mtsho of Khams 130  
 Chos 'phel rgya mtsho 159  
 Chos bkra shis 125, 252, 255  
 Chos bzang ri khrod 168  
 Chos dbang rgyal mtshan 289  
*Chos dbyings mdzod* 330  
 Chos dbyings rdo rje (1604–74) 257, 336  
 Chos dbyings rgya mtsho 125, 255, 304, 336  
 Chos dbyings ye shes rdo rje (1891–1957) 146  
 Chos dpal bzang po 326  
 Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506) 16, 67, 289, 303  
 Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524) 16, 287  
 Chos grwa chen mo 174  
 Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1774). See Si tu Pañ
- chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1776)  
 Chos kyi blo gros 291  
 Chos kyi go cha (1542–85) 96  
 Chos kyi grags pa. See Gtsang smyon  
 Chos kyi nyi ma 312  
 Chos kyi rgya mtsho 291  
 Chos kyi rgyal mtshan. See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan  
 Chos kyi rgyal mtshan Dge legs dpal bzang (1586–1632) 96  
 Chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po 193  
 Chos kyi rgyal mtshan phrin las lhun grub (1938–89) 129  
 Chos ldan Ra sa ba 202  
 Chos rgya dpal bzang po. See Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan  
 Chos rgyal Bya ba 223  
 Chos rgyal Kun bzang nyi zla 172  
 Chos rgyal lhun po. See Gtsang smyon  
 Chos rje A yu pa bgres pa Ngag dbang grags pa (d. 1586) 305  
 Chos rje Bla ma 148  
 Chos rje Blo gros dar rgyas 156  
 Chos rje Dkon mchog lhun grub 125, 126  
 Chos rje G.yam spyil ba 61  
 Chos rje Nam mkha' dkon mchog 79  
 Chos rje Nyi lde pa Nam mkha' bzang po 101  
 Chos sde Pho brang 247  
 Chos sgo ba Bsod nams dpal 77  
 Chos sgo ba Chos dpal shes rab 57  
 Chos sku Lha dbang grags pa 56  
 Chos sku Rdo rje 'chang 56  
 Chos skyabs Di yan chi (d. 1684) 151  
 Chu 223  
 Chu 'bar 65  
 Chu bzang 140, 152  
 Chu bzang I Rnam rgyal dpal 'byor 162  
 Chu bzang II Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 136, 164, 166  
 Chu bzang Ngag dbang thub bstan dbang phyug (b. 1736) 169, 306  
 Chu la gnas pa'i sbal ba 220  
 Chu mig. See Chu  
 Chu mig Lo tsā ba 194  
 Chu mtshams bzang gi sogs pa ri 324  
 Chu ru kha ba Dka' chen Blo bzang dar rgyas 165
- Chu shul 222, 325  
 Chus khyer sprul sku Tshe ring 253  
 Ćinggim, Prince 210, 319  
 Co ge 219  
 Co ne 307  
 Cog 218  
 Cog ro 320, 321  
 Cog tse 218, 321  
 Cog tsha Sgar pa 155  
 Csoma de Kőrös, Alexander 334
- 'Da' ras 'Bul dpon 155  
 Da was Ratna rakshi ta 104  
 Dab la yon 223  
*Dad pa'i rol mtsho* 309  
*Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas* 138  
 Dagchen Rinpoche 1  
 Dags 222, 325  
*Dākārnavamahāyogini Tantra* 185  
 'Dam 173  
*Dam chos dgongs pa yang zab* 329  
 Dam chos dpal 'bar (1523–99) 305  
 Dam pa Bde gshegs (1122–92) 18  
 Dam pa Kun dga' grags 101  
 Dam tshig rdo rje 276  
 'Dan chung Bkra shis 'od zer 163  
 'Dan khog 247  
 'Dan ma Grub chen 152, 162  
 'Dan ma Grub chen II Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las 166  
 'Dan ma Grub chen Tshul khriims rgya mtsho 160, 161, 162  
 'Dan ma Sprul sku 143  
 'Dan rgan 163  
 Dañḍin 193, 205, 206  
 'Dar 242  
 'Dar ba Lo tsā ba Ngag dbang phun tshogs lhun grub 196, 243  
 Dar dkar 123  
 Dar han Chin wang 140  
 Dar han Don grub dbang rgyal 18  
 Dar han dpon po Rab 'byams pa Don 'grub rnam rgyal 152  
 Dar ma dbang phyug 43, 270  
 Dar mo Sman rams pa Blo bzang chos grags 331  
 Dar pa na A tsā rya 146  
 Dar rtse mdo 19, 138, 140  
 Dba'. See Sba  
 Dbang drag 173  
 Dbang Grags pa rgyal mtshan, Fifth Lha btsun (1414–45) 212  
 Dbang phyug 107  
 Dbang phyug Gzhad pa rdo rje (1040–1123) 284. See also Mi la ras pa

- Dbang phyug nyi shu rtsa brgyad 300  
 Dbang phyug rdo rje (1556–1603) 336  
 Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan 74, 76, 289  
 Dbas. *See* Sba  
 Dben sa pa Blo bzang don grub (1505–1565/66) 129, 175  
 Dben sa pa Sangs rgyas ye shes (1525–90) 127  
 Dben sa Sprul sku 122  
 Dbon po 18, 315  
 Dbon po Bstan li O rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu 26, 277  
 Dbon po Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 154  
 Dbon po Sher 'byung (1187–1241) 114  
 Dbon po tshang 28  
 Dbon ras Dar ma seng ge (1177/8–1237) 82  
 Dbon rgan Karma theg mchog bstan 'phel (d. 1842) 260  
 Dbon rgan Sprul sku 247, 263  
 Dbon ston Skyer sgang pa Chos kyi seng ge 54, 56  
*Dbu ma la 'jug pa'i rnam bshad nyung ngu* 278  
 Dbu ru 222, 223, 323, 324  
 Dbu se 103, 293  
 Dbus 64, 109, 237, 254, 323, 330  
 Dbus gtsang ru bzhi 285  
 Dbus Mda' dpon 29  
 Dbus pa Blo gsal 182, 194  
 Dbus Rgya gar 220  
 Dbus smyon Kun dga' bzang po (1458–1532) 47, 60, 61  
*Dbyangs can brda sprod kyi 'grel pa mchog gsal* 316  
*Dbyangs can pa. See Sārasvata-vyākaraṇa*  
*Dbyangs can sgra gzhung* 339  
 De bzhin gshegs pa (1384–1415) 16, 42, 50  
*De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam chen gsang ngag rin po che'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* 292  
 De mo 287, 334  
 De mo Ngag dbang 'jam dpal bde legs rgya mtsho 140, 143  
 De mo Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las rab rgyas 74  
*De nyid 'dus pa* 6, 179, 183, 210  
*Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* 320  
*Deb ther sngon po* 16, 101, 275, 313  
 Densapa, Rai Bahadur T. D. 235  
 Deshung Rinpoche xiii, 1, 2, 5, 7, 100, 101, 235, 292, 293, 296  
 Devākāracandra 274  
 Devendrabuddhi 114, 302  
 Dga' ba gdong 162  
 Dga' ba gdong Mkhan po Chos dpal bzang po 228  
 Dga' bzhi Gung 174  
 Dga' gdong 141, 326  
 Dga' ldan 126, 127, 230, 307  
 Dga' ldan Byin chags gling 138, 139  
 Dga' ldan gling 143  
 Dga' ldan Pho brang 19, 119, 120, 242, 244, 331  
 Dga' ldan Phug po che 174  
 Dga' ldan Phun tshogs gling 250  
 Dga' ldan rin chen gling 169  
 Dga' ldan Shar pa Chos rje Nam mkha' bzang po 174  
 Dga' ldan Yangs pa can 115  
 Dge ba rab gsal. *See* Dgongs pa rab gsal  
 Dge bskos Bkra shis don grub 157  
 Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1903–51) 327, 332  
 Dge 'dun grub (1391–1474) 129, 130, 193  
 Dge 'dun phun tshogs 141, 168, 307  
 Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1475–1542) 55, 129, 131  
 Dge ldan Phun tshogs gling 90  
 Dge legs rgyal mtshan. *See* Bde dgu III Ngag dbang dge legs rgya mtsho  
 Dge mang 23, 277  
 Dge mang Mkhan po Kun dga' dpal ldan 276  
 Dge rtse Paṇḍita 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub 18  
 Dgon gsar Thar pa gling 158  
 Dgon lung 133, 139, 142, 152, 154, 159, 163, 164, 166, 167, 169, 306, 308, 309  
 Dgon lung Byams pa gling. *See* Dgon lung  
 Dgon lung Sngo kho 136  
 Dgon rnying 18  
 Dgongs pa rab gsal 135, 145, 149, 150, 308, 337.  
 Dgos pa. *See* 'Gos pa  
*Dgyes pa rdo rje'i mngon rtogs tshigs bcad ma zin bris* 65  
 Dharmabadrā. *See* Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737–1802)  
*Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* 327  
 Dharmadhāra 314  
 Dharmadāsa 198  
 Dharmakīrti 113, 114, 115, 116, 142, 302  
 Dhongthog 275, 282, 335  
*Dhātukāya* 316  
*Dhātusūtra* 198, 200  
 Dignāga 114, 116  
 Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche 2  
 Ding chu 230  
 Ding ri 47  
 Ding ri ba Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1897–1956?) 73, 74, 288, 311  
 Dka' bcu pa 168  
 Dka' bcu Ta Bla ma Blo bzang 'byung gnas 156  
 Dka' chen Shes rab dar rgyas 136  
 Dka' chen Ye shes thogs med 174  
 Dkar 218  
*Dkar brgyud chos 'byung* 281  
*Dkar brgyud gser 'phreng* 40  
 Dkar brgyud pa. *See* Bka' brgyud pa  
 Dkar la 324  
 Dkar leb khang gsar 162  
 Dkar mo nyi zla 107  
 Dkar mo nyi zla lcam sring 106, 299  
 Dkar po gling 28  
 Dkar ru 333  
 Dkon mchog 223  
 Dkon mchog 'jigs med dbang po 140, 145, 170  
 Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me (1762–1823) 307  
 Dkon mchog lhun grub 293, 315  
 Dkon mchog phan bde 252, 255  
 Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan 64  
 Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan (b. 1453) 285  
 Dkon mchog rgyal po 5, 99, 100, 107, 109, 299, 300, 301  
 Dkon mchog rin chen 239, 330  
*Dkon mchog spyi 'dus* 241, 330  
 Dkon mchog yan lag (1525–83) 336  
 Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan 104, 294  
 Dkon rje Gung stag. *See* Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan  
 Dmar 219  
 Dmar Chos kyi rgyal po 115, 303  
 Dmar gtsang 149  
 Dmar ma 219  
 Dmar pa Bka' brgyud pa. *See* Smar pa Bka' brgyud pa  
 Dmar rdza sgang 323  
 Dmar rtse 49  
 Dmar ston Rgyal mtshan 'od zer 302  
 Dmod pa drag sngags 295

- Dmu. *See* Rmu  
 Dmyal 222, 325  
 Dngos grub dpal 'bar 285  
 Dngul chu 49  
 Dngul chu Dharma bhadra 318  
 Dngul chu sbyor ba'i bstan bcos 189  
 Dngul ston. *See* Rngul ston Rin dbang  
 'Dod dpal 253, 257  
 'Dod pa'i bstan bcos 327  
 Dol 51, 222, 325  
 Dol Lha sna 49  
 Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361) 180, 315  
 Dolonor 140, 142, 143  
 Dolpo 302  
 Don dam smra ba'i seng ge 6, 211, 324  
 Don 'grel gzugs kyi 'jug pa 198  
 Don 'grel nyi ma 'od zer 280  
 Don grub sdings 47  
 Don so lnga'i dper brjed 168  
 Don yod chos kyi rgya mtsho 159, 309  
 Don yod rdo rje 66  
 Dong. *See* Ldong  
 Dūtākāvya 206  
 Do'u ge'i Di yan chi 'Phrin las rgya mtsho (d. 1656) 151  
 Dpa' bo 42  
 Dpa' bo Gtsug lag 'phreng ba 84, 210, 239, 228, 317  
 Dpa' mda' 321  
 Dpa' rin Chos rje Ngag dbang bkra shis 169  
 Dpa' rin Sgar pa 155  
 Dpa' ris 162  
 Dpa' ris Rab gsal 232, 233, 328  
 Dpag bsam dbang po (1593–1641) 83, 242, 290, 331  
 Dpag bsam ljon bzang 166  
 Dpal Bde chen gling Ri'o Spud tra 186  
 Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho 20, 306  
 Dpal 'byor sgang 327  
 Dpal bzang Chos rje 138  
 Dpal chen chos kyi don 'grub (1695–1732) 91  
 Dpal chen Ri bo che 65  
 Dpal dbyangs. *See* Sba Dpal dbyangs  
 Dpal dge Sprul sku Bsod nams sbyin pa 276  
 Dpal grong shag pa 140  
 Dpal gyi lha mo 128  
 Dpal gyi rdo rje 321  
 Dpal khang Chos mdzod Lo tsā ba 274, 318  
 Dpal 'khor btsan 289  
 Dpal 'khor lo bde chen Chos sde 64, 286  
 Dpal ldan chos skyong 89  
 Dpal ldan rdo rje 240, 330  
 Dpal ldan ye shes (1738–81) 141, 143, 174, 305  
 Dpal lde 289  
 Dpal mnga' 321  
 Dpal po che 100. *See* Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan  
 Dpal ri Rdo rje gdan 74  
 Dpal ri Theg chen gling 21  
 Dpal sgra'i snye ma du ma'i don shes rtog pa 316  
 Dpal sprul 20, 90, 230, 232  
 Dpal sprung Dbon sprul 53, 90, 247, 248, 249, 265, 277, 339  
 Dpal yul see Dpal yul Byang chub gling  
 Dpal yul Padma nor bu (d. 1932) 28  
 Dpal yul Rnam rgyal byang chub gling 17, 18, 45, 282  
 Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (1276–1342) 33, 180, 193, 194  
 Dpon 'bum 47  
 Dpon chen Shākya bzang po (reigned 1244?–75) 205  
 Dpon po ri. *See* Spom po ri  
 Dpyad don tho chung 335  
 Drabya Shah 120  
 Dran pa Nam mkha' 113  
 Dran pa'i ye shes grags pa. *See* Smṛtijñānakīrti  
 Drang nges sngon po'i skabs kyi brjed byang 278  
 Drang srong chen po a tri'i bus mdzad pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad 188  
 Drang srong gdol ba'i gdam 26, 332  
 Drang srong phur bu. *See* Rṣi Bṛhaspati  
 Drang srong Rgyas pa. *See* Vyāsa  
 Dre'u 245  
 Dre'u lhas 284  
 Dri med 'od zer. *See* Klong chen Rab 'byams pa (1308–63)  
 Dri med Kun dga' 240, 330  
 Dri med zhing skyong mgon po 18  
 Drukpa Thoosay Rinpoche 2  
 Drung 'tsho Rta mgrin bzang po 305  
 Drung chen lha dbang po 319  
 Drung rams pa Bsod nams 174  
 Drung rdor ba 284  
 Dudjom Rinpoche. *See* Bdud 'joms Rin po che  
 Dul ba dgon 169  
 'Dul ba dgon 168  
 'Dul 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po 285  
 Dung mtsho ras pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan 42  
 Dur khrod nyul ba'i rnal 'byor pa. *See* Gtsang smyon  
 Durgasīmha 194  
 Durlabharāja 186  
 Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–93) 42  
 Dus 'khor ba Ye shes rin chen 112  
 Dus 'khor gyi brjed byang 278  
 Dwags 323  
 Dwags po 41, 125  
 Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa 40, 53  
 Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa Sgam po Sprul sku 243  
 Dwags po Lha rje (1079–1153). *See* Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen (1079–1159)  
 Dwags po Sgo pa 253, 337  
 Dwags po Sgom tshul (1116–69) 41, 42, 48  
 Dwags ris 125, 256, 304  
 'Dza' drag 66  
 Dzā ma bi Ma la 285  
 Dza phod 277  
 Dza sag Bla ma Bskal bzang lha dbang 142  
 Dzā ya Paṇḍi ta 165  
 'Dzam gling rgyas bshad 310  
 Dzi phu Bco brgyad Zhabs drung Blo gros rgya mtsho 28, 273  
 'Dzi sgar 240  
 Dzungar Dga' ldan Bo shog thu Khan 122  
 Dzungar 18, 19, 121, 140  
 E 222, 252. *See also* Bo dong E  
 E pa Lkugs pa 253  
 E Shag byang 35  
 Er te ni Paṇḍi ta Mkhan po. *See* Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor  
 Erke Mergen Khan 306  
 Fu cing 140  
 'Ga' 321  
 'Ga' de sman gyi rgyal khams 220  
 Ga zi 44, 321  
 Gad 105. *See* Srad  
 Galdan Boshogtu Khan (d. 1697) 122, 305  
 Gangs can chos 'phel 127, 305  
 Gangs ljongs 274, 278  
 'Gar 218

- Gar dbang chos kyī dbang phyug  
(1584–1630) 42
- Gar lhog Khyung skad can 221,  
322
- Garga 185
- Gaton Ngawang Legpa xiii
- Gcod 279
- Gdams ngag mdzod* 53, 262, 263,  
284, 329
- Gdan sa Thel 43
- Gdong dga' 242
- Gdong drug. *See* Kārttikeya
- Gdong gi rus chen bco brgyad.  
*See* Ldong rus chen bco brgyad
- Gdong kam Bla ma 249
- Gdong khar 17
- Gdong khar 'tsho byed. *See* Sog  
zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan
- Ge sar 231, 267–68, 296
- Ge ser 218, 221, 223, 320
- Genghis Khan 152, 319
- Gla 'khor Dpon ne Grags dpal 66
- Glang bza' No chung ma. *See*  
Rlang gza' sne chung
- Glang chen rab 'bog 299
- Glang dar ma 100, 211, 321
- Glang kya Dka' bcu Bsod nams  
rgyal mtshan 155
- Glang mdun Srid blon Kun dga'  
dbang phyug 147
- Glang nag Bsod nams brtan pa  
327
- Glang ri dka' bcu pa Dkon  
mchog skyabs 75
- Glang ri thang pa 'Dul 'dzin Rdo  
rje seng ge (1054–1123) 146
- Gling phrug A bkar 28
- Gling ras Bka' brgyud pa 44
- Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje  
(1128–88) 44, 48, 76
- Gling stod 279
- Gling tshang 291
- Glo bo 49
- Glo bo Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin  
chen 111, 302
- Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams  
lhun grub (1456–1532) 5, 111,  
112, 116, 301, 302
- Glo bo Smon thang 17, 65, 289.  
*See also* Glo bo, Smon thang
- Glo Dge dkar 238
- Glo mkhar ba Kun dga' don  
grub 48, 50
- Gnam 81
- Gnam 'Brug Se ba Byang chub  
chos gling 44, 81
- Gnam chos* 18, 263
- Gnam lcags me 'bar. *See* Rin  
chen phun tshogs
- Gnam mtsho kha 248
- Gnam phu 'Brug dgon. *See*  
Gnam 'Brug Se ba Byang chub  
chos gling
- Gnas brgyad chen po'i rtsa ba 315
- Gnas brtan Rab 'byor 128
- Gnas chung 19, 141
- Gnas gsar ba bla ma 320
- Gnas gsar Bkra' phel 266, 270,  
328, 338
- Gnas gsar Kun dga' legs pa'i  
'byung gnas (1704–60) 89
- Gnas gsar Mkhyen brtse'i dbang  
phyug (b. 1524) 239, 335
- Gnas lugs mdzod* 280, 330
- Gnas mdo Bka' brgyud pa 42
- Gnas rnying 124
- Gnas rnying Bka' brgyud pa 54
- Gnas rnying Chos kyī rgyal  
mtshan 131
- Gnas rnying pa 119
- Gnas rnying Zhabs drung Rwa lo  
sprul sku 305
- Gnas sman rgyal mo 321
- Gnas Thang po che pa. *See*  
Thang
- Gnubs. *See* Snubs
- Gnya' khri rtsad po 215
- Gnya' lo ro. *See* Gnya' ro
- Gnya' nang 65
- Gnya' ro 105
- Gnyags. *See* Snyags
- Gnyal 64, 284
- Gnyal lo ro. *See* Gnya' ro
- Gnyal zhig bu dgu 180
- Gnyan ston Ri gong pa Chos kyī  
shes rab 54, 56
- Gnyen rtse. *See* Snyan rtse
- Gnyos 123, 124, 284
- Gnyos lineage 18, 19
- Gnyos Rgyal ba Lha nang pa  
(1164–1224) 130
- Gnyos Sangs rgyas ras chen  
(1164–1224) 270
- Gnyug sems skor gsum* 331
- Go 'jo 249
- Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge  
(1429–89) 112, 115
- Gokulanātha Miśra 196
- Gol ba'i mi bzhi 220
- Go lung pa Gzhon nu dpal 180
- Gong dkar 254, 313
- Gong dkar Sde srid Ngag gi  
dbang phyug grags pa rnam  
rgyal 83
- Gong dkar Sgang stod 252, 335
- Gongs dkar Rdo rje gdan 115
- 'Gos clan 16
- 'Gos dkar ba 180
- 'Gos Lo tsā ba gsum pa Dharma  
pa la bhadra. *See* Zhwa lu Lo  
tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po
- 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal  
(1392–1481) 16, 101, 193, 239,  
283, 313
- 'Gos Lo tsā ba Khug pa Lha btsas  
128, 185, 238
- 'Gos pa 321
- Gos sku Mthong grol chen mo  
256
- Gotamaśrī 186, 314
- Gra 222, 321, 325
- Grags shos Nam mkha' rgyal  
mtshan 65
- Grags pa byang chub 75
- Grags pa 'byung gnas (1414–45)  
16, 212
- Grags pa byung gnas dpal bzang  
po'i dpal 212
- Grags pa don grub (c. 1550–c.  
1617) 336
- Grags pa mchog dbyangs  
(1618–58) 243
- Grags pa 'od zer 308
- Grags pa rgya mtsho (1646–1719)  
256
- Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1619–54)  
129, 314, 333
- Grags pa'i byang chub. *See* Tshes  
bzhi gsar ma Grags pa byang  
chub, Third Lha bstun  
(1356–86)
- Grags pa'i 'byung gnas dpal. *See*  
Tshes lnga Grags pa 'byung  
gnas, Sixth Lha bstun  
(1414–45)
- Grags pa'i rgyal mtshan Dbang.  
*See* Dbang Grags pa rgyal  
mtshan, Fifth Lha bstun  
(1414–45)
- Grangs can 'Jam pa'i rdo rje 331
- 'Grel chen legs sbyar 'byung gnas  
194
- 'Grel chen Punydzā rā dza 199
- Gri gum rtsan po 215
- 'Grig mtshams mtha' dkar 329
- 'Gro ba bzang mo 273
- 'Gro 'dul dpa' bo rdo rje 35
- 'Gro 'dul rdo rje 284
- 'Gro gang Nyer ba se 320
- 'Gro g.yang lon skyid 105, 296
- Gro lung pa Blo gros 'byung  
gnas 326
- 'Gro mgon 'Phags pa Bsod nams  
rgyal mtshan (1235–80) 146, 205
- 'Gro mgon Rna ra śrī ri 285
- 'Gro mgon Sangs rgyas ras chen  
(1088–1158) 96

- 'Gro mgon Shing mgo ras pa 45  
 'Gro mgon Si si ri pa 146  
 'Gro mgon Ti shri ras pa 43  
 Gro shul. *See* Gru shul  
 Gro tshang 310  
 Gro tshang Bkra shis ldeng ka 160  
 Gro tshang Has bla ma Bsam gan blo gros 310  
 Gro tshang Ngag dbang shes rab and Smon lam dpal 'byor 310  
 Grog mkhar ba. *See* Vālmiki  
 Grol mchog Sems kyi mdud grol or Kun dga' grol mchog (1507–66) 56  
 Grom. *See* Grum  
 Grom chu 300  
 Grom pa g.ya' lung 105, 297  
 Grong khyer dam pa. *See* Sadnagar  
 Grong mo che 242, 331  
 'Gru chu Khams 28  
 Gru gu 221  
 Gru shul 211, 216, 222, 325  
 Gru shul ba 46  
 Gru shul Lhun grub Pho brang 239  
 Grub chen Bsod nams grags pa 162  
 Grub dbang Blo bzang rnam rgyal (1670–1741) 174  
 Grub dbang Śākyaśrī (1853–1919) 29  
 Grub dbang Shākya bshes gnyen 146  
 Grub mchog Bka' brgyud bstan 'dzin 56  
 Grub mchog Mgon po grags pa 56  
*Grub mtha' chen po'i mchan 'grel* 329  
*Grub mtha' mdzod* 330  
*Grub mtha'i shel gyi me long* 139  
 Grub pa shes rab 228, 326  
 Grub ri E wam dga' 'khyil 57  
 Grub thob Chos 'byung rin chen (1351–1408) 57  
 Grub thob Se mo che ba 180  
 Grub thob Ye shes brtsegs pa 45  
 Grub thob Yon tan dpal 112  
 Grum 100  
 Grwa 325  
 Grwa lag dgon 29  
 Grwa nang 325  
 Grwa pa Mngon shes (1012–1090) 239  
 Grwa phyi 325, 330  
 Grwa phyi O rgyan Smin sgröl gling. *See* Smin grol gling  
 Grwa Valley 33  
 Gsal khang Sprul sku 130  
 Gsal stong Sho sgom 43  
 Gsang ba snying po 299  
 Gsang ba'i mi'u rigs 219  
 Gsang bdag 'Phrin las lhun grub (1611–62) 18  
 Gsang pa sde drug 106, 299  
 Gsang phu 326  
 Gsang phu Ne'u thog 160, 168, 279  
 Gsang sngags chos gling 83, 242  
*Gsang snying 'grel pa* 274  
 Gser gling pa Bkra shis dpal (1292–1365) 55, 57  
*Gser 'gyur bya ba* 189  
 Gser khog 136. *See* Btsan po Gser hog  
 Gser khog dgon 162  
 Gser khog pa Glang Ta la'i Chos rje 167  
 Gser tsha 333  
 Gshen chen Klu dga' (996–1035). *See* Klu Skar rgyal  
*Gshin rje yang zlog* 330  
 Gsol dpon Blo bzang bstan 'dzin 303  
*Gtam padma tshal gyi zlos gar* 26, 332  
 Gtam shul 222, 325  
*Gtam tshogs* 21, 22, 275  
 Gter bdag gling pa 18, 19  
 Gter chen Bdud 'dul rdo rje (1615–72) 18  
 Gter chen Rang rig 19  
*Gter mdzod thob yig* 338  
*Gter ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar* 330, 335, 337  
 Gter ston Bsod rgyal 28, 277  
 Gter ston Dri med (d. 1932) 28  
 Gter ston Mchog gyur bde chen zhis po gling pa (1829–70) 272  
 Gter ston Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 28.  
 Gtring skyes 173  
 Gtsan sa lcam bu smon 104, 294  
 Gtsang 17, 19, 44, 99, 222, 238, 242, 250, 254, 304, 323  
 Gtsang byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan 101  
 Gtsang G.yas ru 223  
 Gtsang G.yon ru 223  
 Gtsang Gser mdog can 115  
 Gtsang ma 211  
 Gtsang ma Shangs ston (1234–1309) 56  
 Gtsang Mkhan chen Dpal ldan rgya mtsho (1610–84) 70, 336  
 Gtsang Nag pa Brtson 'grus seng ge 228, 326  
 Gtsang pa Chos dbyings rgya mtsho 252  
 Gtsang pa Rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje (1161–1211) 44, 48, 81, 82, 83  
 Gtsang pa Sde srid 122  
 Gtsang pa Sprul sku Chos dbyings rgya mtsho (fl. 1625–65) 125, 255  
 Gtsang po 292, 300  
 Gtsang Rde bente rakṣi ta 104  
 Gtsang Rta nag pa Kun dga' rnam sras 165  
 Gtsang Sil ma'i la thog 324  
 Gtsang smyon He ru ka Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan (1452–1507) 5, 41, 59–66, 69, 70, 73, 75, 76, 135, 145, 239, 284, 285, 286, 289  
 Gtsang sngags bde chen 57  
 Gtsang stod 292  
 Gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba 253  
 Gtsug lag dga' ba (1718–1781) 259  
 Gtsug tor shes rab 106  
 Gu ge 65, 219, 322  
 Gu ge Paṇ chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan (d. 1486) 112, 302  
 'Gu log 24, 333  
 Gu ra ba 109, 301  
 Gu yangs 151  
 Gubhaju 88  
*Guhagarbha Tantra* 280, 313  
*Guhyaṃūla Tantra* 17, 274  
 Guṇa. *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Gung pa Bla brang 303  
 Gung pa Skyo ston Dri med 115  
 Gung thang 49, 65, 105, 297  
 Gung thang Rdzong kha 75  
 Gung thang Se ston Ri pa. *See* 'Gro mgon Si si ri pa  
 Gung thang Sprul sku 307  
 Gur 223  
 Gur gyi mgon po 99  
 Gur pa 64  
 Gur pa grwa tshang 286  
 Gushri Khan 120, 123, 162  
 G.ya' 'brum si le ma. *See* G.ya' bum si le ma  
 G.ya' bum si le ma 103, 294  
 G.ya' bzang 46  
 G.ya' bzang Bka' brgyud pa 45, 46  
 G.ya' bzang chos rje (1169–1233) 46  
 G.ya' grum bsil ma. *See* G.ya' bum si le ma  
 G.ya' lung 301  
 G.ya' lung chos skyar 108  
 G.ya' lung dur 'khrod 107  
 G.ya' lung mkhar thabs 106, 298  
 G.ya' spang skyes 103, 293, 294

- G.yag chos smyon pa 62  
 Gyalwang Dookpa 209  
 Gyang khang 18  
 G.yar mo thang 323  
 G.yas ru 99, 105, 222, 292, 323  
 G.yas ru byang 298  
 G.yel phug 43  
 G.yer gshong Sngags ram pa 165  
 Gyer sgom chen po 46  
 Gyim shod 332  
 Gying thang 323  
 G.yo ru 323  
 G.yon ru 222, 277  
 G.yor po Rgya mo che 54  
 G.yu bse. *See* Dbu se  
 G.yu lung pa Yon tan rgya mtsho 64  
 G.yu ring. *See* G.yu ris  
 G.yu ris 292  
 G.yu ru 33, 222, 223  
 G.yu se. *See* Dbu se  
 G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po 93, 331  
 G.yung ba lineage 160  
 G.yung drung bstan 'dzin 247, 333  
 G.yung drung lha sdings 143  
 G.yung mgon rdo rje 245  
 G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal (1284–1365) 129  
 'Gyur med bstan 'dzin 'phel rgyas 202  
 'Gyur med kun bzang rnam rgyal 20  
 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal 247  
 'Gyur med padma rnam rgyal. *See* Rgyal tshab O rgyan theg mchog rdo rje  
 'Gyur med rdo rje. *See* Rig 'dzin Gter bdag gling pa Padma gar dbang 'Gyur med rdo rje (1616–1714)  
 Gzhan dga' Gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba (1871–1927) 26, 29, 232, 235, 277, 332  
 Gzhan phan mtha' yas. *See* Rdzogs chen Rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas (b. 1800)  
 Gzhan ston dbu ma chen po 'i lta khrid rdo rje zla ba dri ma med pa 'i 'od zer 265  
 Gzhan stong khas len seng ge'i nga ro 327  
 Gzhis ka rtse 123, 292  
 Gzhon nu 'byung ba. *See* Kumārasambhava  
 Gzhon nu don grub 33, 279  
 Gzhon nu dpal 318  
 Gzhon nu Gdong drug. *See* Kumāra  
 Gzhon nu nor bzang 153, 312  
 Gzhon nu padma legs grub. *See* Mkhan po Ngag dga'  
 Gzhon nu rdo rje. *See* Gzhon rdor  
 Gzhon nu rgyal po 279  
 Gzhon nu zla med kyi rtogs brjod 89  
 Gzhon rdor 33, 279  
 Gzhu khang pa Dge legs lhun grub 162  
 Gzhung 50, 51, 218, 222, 325  
 Gzhung Spre'u zhing 41, 325  
 Gzims khang gong ma 127, 157, 305  
 Gzims khang Rnying ma 301  
 Ha ching nga 141  
 Ha gdong Don yod rgyal mtshan 163  
 Ha la che 'Dan ma 161  
 Ha lo pan 137  
 Ha ru Gnam tshal 330  
 Hal ha Rje btsun Dam pa Blo bzang thub bstan dbang phyug 'jigs med rgya mtsho (1775–1813) 144  
 Han Stag lung 162, 166, 310  
 Hanuman 195  
 Har chen Mongols 157  
 Har chin Ching wang Ratna siddhi 133  
 Har chin Wang Ratnasiddhi 156  
 Hārāvali 203  
 Harchin E phu (Qarcin Efü) Blo bzang don grub (fl. 1743–56) 71  
 Harṣa 205  
 Harṣadeva 193  
 Hasurāja 254  
*Hetubindu* 302  
*Hevajra Tantra* 64, 100, 139  
 Hinayāna 22, 260  
 Ho 167  
 Ho lo ji 162  
 Ho thon 144  
 Hor 220, 221  
 Hor dar 257. *See* E pa Lkugs pa Hor Dka' bcu pa Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub (d. 1699) 162, 164, 310  
 Hor La dkar 327  
 Hor La dkar tshang 276  
 Hor Rdo rje tshe brtan 313  
 Hor Rdza dmar 163  
 Hor rtse 223  
 Ho'u 'Bul dpon 155  
 Hum nag me 'bar. *See* Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656)  
 Hwa shang Mahāyāna 137, 275  
 Indra 197, 295  
 Indragomin 191  
*Indravākarāṇa* 191, 197, 199  
 Īśvaradeva 197  
 Īśvaravarman 194  
 'Ja' lus Mgon po dpal 'byor 56  
 'Ja lus pa chen po. *See* Mdo Mkhyen brtse Ye shes rdo rje (1800–1859)  
 Ja sag Bla ma Bskal bzang lha dbang 170  
 'Ja' tshon pod drug 263  
 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656) 330  
 'Jad 49  
 'Jag 329  
 'Jag chen Byams pa dpal (1310–91) 55, 57  
 'Jag Chung dpal dgon 54, 56  
 'Jag gshongs 298  
 'Jag pa Bka' brgyud pa 54, 55, 57  
 Jag pa me len 284  
 'Jag pa Rgyal mtshan 'bum (1261–1334) 57  
 Jag rung 166  
 Jagajjayamalla 94  
 Jalpaiguri District 319  
 'Jam dbyangs Bkra shis dpal ldan (1379–1449) 270  
 'Jam dbyangs Blo gros rgya mtsho dri ma med pa 'i dpal 327  
 'Jam dbyangs Blo gter dbang po 327  
 'Jam dbyangs bsod nams dpal bzang 57  
 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa 135, 140, 151, 165, 170, 308, 329  
 'Jam dbyangs chos kyi grags pa (1478–1523) 81, 82, 83  
 'Jam dbyangs Chos rje Bkra shis dpal ldan (1379–1449) 130  
 'Jam dbyangs gu śrī Śākya rgyal mtshan, Second Lha btsun (1340–73) 212  
 'Jam dbyangs Kha che 206  
 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse Chos kyi blo gros (1896–1959) 274, 328, 332  
 'Jam dbyangs Mkhyen brtse 'i dbang po (1820–92) 25, 54, 57, 230, 236, 249  
 'Jam dbyangs rin chen rgyal mtshan 17, 112



- 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)
- 'Jam dbyangs shes rab rgya mtsho (1396?–1474) 112
- 'Jam dpal chos lha. *See* Lo paṅ ras chen
- 'Jam dpal dbyangs la bstod pa* 278
- 'Jam dpal dgyes rdo rje. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)
- 'Jam dpal rdo rje (b. 1631) 120
- 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1758–1804) 6, 171
- 'Jam dpal rol pa'i blo gros (died c. 1948) 73
- 'Jam dpal rtsa rgyud las gsungs pa las le tshan lnga pa* 185
- 'Jam dpal rtsa rgyud las gsungs pa'i skye 'chi sogs brtags pa* 184
- 'Jam dpal sku 295
- 'Jam dpal ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 312
- 'Jam mgon A myes zhabs Ngag dbang Kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1662) 101, 284
- 'Jam mgon grub pa'i dpa' bo'i rnam thar* 316
- 'Jam mgon 'Gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal 247, 260
- 'Jam mgon 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)
- 'Jam mgon Kong sprul. *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)
- 'Jam mgon Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas (1813–99). *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)
- 'Jam mgon Mi pham rgya mtsho. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)
- 'Jam mgon Rdo rje rin chen 57
- 'Jam pa Chos rgya mtsho 160, 161
- 'Jam pa'i dbyangs pa Dpal Ngag dbang Bsod nams dbang po grags pa rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1559–1621) 292
- Jambudvipa 215, 216, 220, 223
- Jang rtsi thog rgyal khams 220
- 'Jang Sa tham 93
- Jāyadeva 203, 227
- Jayamaṅgala 93
- Jayānanda 302
- Jayaprakāśamalla 92
- Jehol 142, 143, 144
- 'Jigs med mi 'gyur dbang rgyal (1823–83) 83
- 'Jig rten mchog bstod* 295
- 'Jig rten mgon po 330
- 'Jigs bral. *See* Bdud 'joms Rin po che 'Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje
- 'Jigs bral mthu stobs gling pa. *See* Gter ston Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin
- 'Jigs bral Rin po che 328
- 'Jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma 276, 339
- 'Jigs med dbang gi rdo rje (1963–) 83
- 'Jigs med gling pa (1730–98) 21, 22, 24, 26, 245, 275, 276, 329
- 'Jigs med grags pa 166
- 'Jigs med mi pham chos dbang (1884–1930) 83
- 'Jigs med phrin las 'od zer 276
- 'Jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu 24, 26, 246, 276
- 'Jigs med skal bzang 276
- Jing zi'u Chan zhi Thu'u bkwan Hu thog thu Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma. *See* Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737–1802)
- Jñānaśrimitra 202, 205
- Jñānendrarakṣita 278, 295
- Jo bo 120
- Jo bo Drag 'byor 316
- Jo bo Gdong nag pa 108, 301
- Jo gdan tshongs pa. *See* Chos dpal bzang po
- Jo mo Lha ri 128
- Jo mo Zhang mo 109
- Jo nang Kun dga' grol mchog (1495–1566) 270, 274
- Jo nang pa 50, 55, 56, 250, 331
- Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal (1308–86) 180
- Jo nang Rje btsun Kun dga' grol mchog (1495–1566) 130
- Jo nang Rje btsun Tāranātha. *See* Jo nang Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po (1575–1634)
- Jo nang Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po (1575–1634) 56, 120, 130, 195, 242, 254, 270, 316
- Jog po 'Chad dkar 54
- 'Ju 230
- 'Ju ba 28
- 'Ju dbon 'Jigs med rdo rje 230
- 'Ju lag smad 161
- 'Ju Mi pham *See* Mi pham
- Jumla 238, 302
- Jātakamālā* 176, 326
- Ka ring Dka' bcu pa Phun tshogs rnam rgyal 160, 310
- Ka ring Lha khang 160, 309
- Kaḥ thog 327
- Kaḥ thog Dri med zhing skyong 277
- Kaḥ thog 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub 275
- Kaḥ thog Mkhan po Kun dpal 28
- Kaḥ thog pa. *See* Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755)
- Kaḥ thog Rdo rje gdan 17, 18
- Kaḥ thog Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755) 56, 89, 265, 290, 332
- Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho (1880–1925) 28, 29, 278
- Kālacakra 46, 188, 189, 191, 250, 279, 307, 313, 327
- Kālacakra Tantra* 20, 140, 179, 188, 190, 313
- Kalāpa* 191, 193, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 201. *See also* *Kātantra*
- Kālidāsa 206, 319
- Kalimpong 338
- Kalu Rinpoche 53
- Kaṁ tshang Bka' brgyud pa 42, 45, 303
- Kāmadhenu* 203, 204
- Kamalaśīla 275
- Kāmarūpa. *See* Ma ru pa'i gling
- Kāmasāstra* 231
- Kan chen Dgon Thar pa gling 162
- K'ang hsi 137, 166, 307
- Kansu 135, 154
- Kar shod 255
- Kar shod Karma bkra shis 252
- Karma Bka' brgyud pa. *See* Kaṁ tshang Bka' brgyud pa
- Karma bkra shis 125, 255
- Karma bstan pa'i nyin byed gtsug lag chos kyi snang ba. *See* Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1776)
- Karma bstan skyong dbang po 304
- Karma bstan srung dbang po 304
- Karma bzod pa rab brtan dpal bzang po. *See* Bkra shis 'od zer (1836–1910)
- Karma chags med 18, 231, 239
- Karma Gzhan phan 'od zer 56
- Karma ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho 'phrin las kun khyab dpal bzang po. *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)
- Karma pa 17, 42
- Karma pa Chos dbyings rdo rje 253
- Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje 194
- Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339) 33, 46, 49, 239, 278
- Karma pa Rgyal tshab 243
- Karma pa Rol pa rgyal mtshan 50
- Karma phun tshogs 247

- Karma phun tshogs rnam rgyal  
304  
Karma rin chen 257  
Karma sgar bris 125, 254  
Karma sku chen 18  
Karma srid bral 257, 337  
Karma srid bral Sgo smyon 253  
Karma tshe dbang kun khyab  
nges don bstan 'phel. *See* Bai  
lo Tshes dbang kun khyab  
Kārttikeya 317  
Kashmir. *See* Kha che'i gling  
*Kātantra* 191, 194, 199, 200, 316.  
*See also* Kalāpa.  
Kathmandu 203  
Kātyāyana 198  
*Kāvyaśāstra* 193, 205, 206, 208,  
231  
*Kāvyaśālikāra* 205  
Kazi, Sonam T. xiii, 13, 34, 111, 113  
Ke'u tshang Ri khrod 142  
Keng ze Chin wang (1697–1735)  
137  
Kha byang 158  
Kha che ma 254  
Kha che Paṅ chen 44, 239  
Kha che'i gling. *See* Kashmir  
Kha chen Paṅ chen  
Śākyāśribhadra 337  
Kha dkar li'i rgyal khams 220  
Kha gsum 222  
Kha rag Byi stod 324  
Khab po stag thog 105, 298  
Khalkha Rje btsun Dam pa 122,  
129, 304  
Khams 237, 255, 323  
Khams kyi dpon po Dbang 'dus  
142  
Khams Lho rgyud Yer stod 272  
Khams sprul Bstan 'dzin chos kyi  
nyi ma 206  
Khang bu gling 220  
Khang dmar gling 51  
Khang nang 18  
Khang Rin chen rdo rje 150  
Khang sar tshang 247  
Khang ston 'Od zer rgyal mtshan  
Gnyan Dar ma seng ge 303  
Khen zi Ching wang 152  
Kheng ze Ching wang 313  
Khenpo Noryang 2  
'Khon xi, 5, 102, 279, 292, 299, 321  
'Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po  
(1034–1102). *See* Dkon mchog  
rgyal po  
'Khon Dpal po che. *See* Dkon pa  
rje Gung stag btsan  
'Khon Klu 'i dbang po bsrung ba  
296  
'Khon Nāgendrarakṣita 99, 296  
'Khon ba skyes. *See* Mkhon bar  
skyes  
'Khon par skyes. *See* Mkhon bar  
skyes  
'Khon Rog shes rab tshul khrim  
100  
'Khon Vajrakila 64  
Khoshots 121  
Khra 'brug 141  
Khrag 'thung rgyal po. *See*  
Gtsang smyon  
Khrag med 294  
Khrag thung Bdud 'joms rdo rje  
(b. 1835) 276  
Khri chen 18, 19, 139  
Khri chen Blo bzang bstan pa'i  
nyi ma (1689–1746) 137, 139  
Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho  
163, 164, 165  
Khri chen Ngag dbang mchog  
ldan 169  
Khri chen sprul sku Blo bzang  
bstan pa'i nyi ma (1689–1746)  
151, 164, 309, 310  
Khri Gtsang ma 211  
Khri kha 222, 323  
Khri lde 322  
Khri Nam mkha' bzang po 169  
Khri Rgya nag pa. *See* La mo  
Khri chen Blo gros rgya mtsho  
(1635–88)  
Khri smon 249  
Khri srong lde btsan 24, 100, 104,  
192, 295, 315, 337  
Khri XIX Ngag dbang chos grags  
(1501–51) 130  
Khri XLII Rnam dag rdo rje 164,  
310  
Khri XXV Dpal 'byor rgya mtsho  
(1526–99) 130  
Khri XXXIV Ngag dbang chos  
kyi rgyal mtshan (1575–?) 130  
Khrid yig Nam mkha' klong gsal  
280  
Khrin thu 141  
Khro khong khro zil phrom 277  
Khro phu Bka' brgyud pa 44  
Khro phu Lo tsā ba Byams pa  
dpal 44  
Khro skyabs 248  
Khrog 219  
Khrom River 30  
Khrom thar 277  
Khrom thog chod 297  
'Khrul zhig Kun ldan ras pa 285  
'Khrul zhig Padma chos rgyal  
(1876–1958) 29  
Khu na 218  
Khu nu Byang chub rgyal  
mtshan (1858–1921) 29  
Khug pa Lhas btsas 318  
Khyab bdag Mgon po rnam rgyal  
56  
Khyag. *See* Phyag  
'Khyin Lo tsā ba 107  
Khyung chen 333  
Khyung 'phags khra mo 333  
Khyung po 218, 247, 321, 332  
Khyung po Bla ma G.yung  
drung phun tshogs 266  
Khyung po Bla ma Nam mkha'  
od zer 333  
Khyung po Grags se 114  
Khyung po Mi pham 272  
Khyung po Rnal 'byor 40, 49, 53,  
54, 333  
Khyung po Tshul khrim mgon  
po 55, 56  
Khyung rgod tshog 333  
Khyung tsha Dge bshes Rab  
brtan 168  
Khyung tsha Zhabs drung Ngag  
dbang dbang rgyal 168  
Khyung tshang Ye shes bla ma  
284  
Kila 239  
Kinnaur 278  
Kirticandra 203  
Klong chen pa. *See* Klong chen  
Rab 'byams pa  
Klong chen Rab 'byams pa  
(1308–63) 14, 16, 33, 34, 241,  
274, 278, 279, 280  
Klong chen ras pa Rin chen tshul  
khrim 48, 49, 50  
*Klong chen snying thig* 21, 22, 24  
*Klong gsal gter ma* 18  
Klong gsal snying po (1625–92)  
18  
*Klong gsal snying thig* 277  
Klong rdol 44, 47, 282  
Klong rdol Bla ma Ngag dbang  
blo bzang (1719–94) 158, 190,  
210, 282, 323, 324, 331, 335  
Klong thang 192  
Klu 'bum Blo gros rgya mtsho.  
*See* La mo Khri chen Blo gros  
rgya mtsho (1635–88)  
Klu lcam bra ma 103, 293  
Klu sdings Bla brang 112  
Klu Skar rgyal 237  
Klu tsha rta so 'od chen 103, 293  
Klu 'i dbang po bsrung pa. *See*  
Mkhon Na ga entra rakṣi ta  
Ko brag pa Bsod nams rgyal  
mtshan (1182–1261) 66, 180,  
279

- Ko le Dug mda' can 221, 322  
 Ko le'i khri brgyad. *See* Rmu Ko  
   le phra brgyad  
 Kobdo 306  
 Kodari 120  
 Köke Qota 151  
 Kong 323  
 Kong jo 252  
 Kong po 47, 85  
 Kong po Bam steng(s) Sprul sku.  
   *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Kong po Bde skyid khang gsar 29  
 Kong sprul (1811–99) 7, 15, 20,  
   25, 43, 53, 55, 56, 57, 72, 90,  
   211, 230, 232, 235, 236, 237,  
   240, 249, 258, 267, 270, 281,  
   284, 285, 288, 302, 327, 332  
 Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas.  
   *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Kṛṣṇa Bhatta 195  
 Kṛṣṇamiśra 202, 318  
 Kṣemendra 193, 205  
 Ku se 334  
 Ku se Padma bzang chen 28  
 Kumāra 194  
 Kumārarāja. *See* Gzhon nu rgyal  
   po  
*Kumārasambhava* 206  
 Kun 'dul gling Vihara 151  
 Kun 'dus rig pa 299  
 Kun 'grub bde dge' bzang po. *See*  
   Sa dbang bzang po  
 Kun bde gling 175, 292  
 Kun byed rgyal po 34, 280  
 Kun bzang bde chen 'od gsal  
   gling 265  
*Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung* 26,  
   332  
*Kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung zin*  
   bris 278  
 Kun bzang gzhan phan. *See* 'Jigs  
   med phrin las 'od zer  
 Kun bzang mthong grol rdo rje 35  
 Kun bzang rig snang 332  
 Kun dga' 'brug dpal 47  
 Kun dga' bstan 'dzin (1680–1728)  
   239, 336  
 Kun dga' bzang po (b. 1458). *See*  
   Dbus smyon Kun dga' bzang  
   po (1458–1532)  
 Kun dga' chos legs rdo rje 334  
 Kun dga' don grub 271. *See*  
   'Khruil zhig Glo 'khar ba Kun  
   dga' don grub  
 Kun dga' dpal 'byor (1428–78)  
   281, 286, 330  
 Kun dga' dpal ldan 282  
 Kun dga' grol mchog 55, 284  
 Kun dga' gzi brijid 65  
 Kun dga' legs pa (1433–83) 16  
 Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas 57  
 Kun dga' lhun grub rgya mtsho  
   56  
 Kun dga' mi 'gyur rdo rje. *See*  
   'Gro 'dul rdo rje  
 Kun dga' rgya mtsho. *See* Bde  
   rgu chung ba  
 Kun dga' rgyal mtshan  
   (1432–1481) 55, 75, 124, 212  
 Kun dga' rin chen (1517–84) 101,  
   294  
 Kun dga' snying po. *See* Jo nang  
   Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po  
   (1575–1634)  
 Kun gsal Sgang po che 289  
 Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba  
   (1768–1822) 83, 336  
 Kun ldan ras pa (1148–1217) 44  
 Kun mkhyen Chos 'byor dpal  
   bzang 75  
 Kun nas mig 154  
 Kun spangs chen po 180  
 Kun spangs Mnyam gzhag pa 169  
 Kung bzang 'jigs med chos  
   dbyings rang grol (b. 1927) 276  
 Kurukṣetra 196  
 Kusho, Stakna 289  
 Kushok 46  
 Kwan ting ta'i si tu. *See* Si tu  
  
 La bar Zur mkhar 63  
 La mo 141  
 La mo Khri chen Blo gros rgya  
   mtsho (1635–88) 152, 160, 164,  
   309  
 La Ngag dbang pa 310  
 La phyi 65, 66  
 La stod 65, 103, 104, 242, 250,  
   285, 292  
 La stod Ding ri Khang gsar 74  
 La stod Lho Shel phug 66  
 La stod Mtsho bar 15  
 La stod pa Dbang phyug rgyal  
   mtshan 180  
 La stod pa Dkon mchog mkhar  
   54  
 La stod Rgyal gyi śri Bsam gtan  
   gling 285  
 La stod Shri rgyal 173  
 Lab Skyabs mgon Dbang chen  
   dgyes rab rdo rje 230  
 Labdon 140  
 Lakṣmīkāra 193, 205  
 Lam 'bras 279, 331  
 Lam 'bras pa Gang she 326  
*Lam 'bras slob bshad* 39, 327  
 Lam rim 39, 60  
*Lam rim chen mo* 228, 315  
*Lam rim ye shes snying po* 337  
 Lama Tashi Gyaltsen xiii  
 Lang gru u 135  
*Lanikāvatāra Sūtra* 197  
 Las 'phro gling pa. *See* Rig 'dzin  
   'Ja' tshon snying po  
   (1585–1656)  
 Las rab gling pa (b. 1856) 250  
 Las stod. *See* La stod  
 Las stod Bye ma la g.yung drung  
   324  
 Lcags la rgyal po 19  
 Lcags mdud Sprul sku 248  
 Lcags rmog dpon po Dmag zor  
   mgon po 142  
 Lcang skya. *See* Rol pa'i rdo rje  
   (1717–86)  
 Lcang skya bla brang 135  
 Lcang skya Grags pa 'od zer 160,  
   161  
 Lcang skya Hu thog thu 133  
 Lcang skya Ngag dbang blo bzang  
   chos ldan 135, 137, 164, 309  
 Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje. *See*  
   Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86)  
 Lcang skya Ye shes bstan pa'i  
   sgron me 145  
 Lce Kyi 'brug 192  
 Lce ring. *See* Spyi rings  
 Ldan ma 192, 219, 321  
 Ldan ma Blo bzang chos dbyings  
   328  
 Ldan ma Blo chos 232, 328  
 Ldan pa. *See* Ldan ma  
 Lding kha chos mdzad 140  
 Ldong 103, 215, 218, 293, 320, 321  
 Ldong chen po Spo dro 320  
 Ldong Lha gzigs 223  
 Ldong Rus chen bcwo brgyad.  
   *See* Ldong  
 Ldum bu Don grub dbang rgyal  
   243  
*Legs bshad bdud rsi dga' ston* 275  
*Legs bshad rin po che'i gter mdzod*  
   302, 303  
 Legs bshad smra ba'i nyi ma  
   (1683–98) 96, 291  
 Legs ldan rdo rje 17  
*Legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtsho* 326  
 Lha bla ma Byang chub 'od 238  
 Lha bla ma Pho brang Zhi ba 'od  
   193  
 Lha bla ma Ye shes 'od 238  
 Lha 'Bri sgang pa 228, 326  
 Lha btsun 288, 289  
 Lha btsun Blo bzang bstan 'dzin  
   rgya mtsho 123  
 Lha btsun Rin chen rnam rgyal  
   (1473–1557) 66, 75, 77, 285, 286

- Lha bzang Khan (1705–1717) 172  
 Lha dgon pa. *See* Yang dgon pa  
   Rgyal mtshan dpal (1213–58)  
 Lha gdong 47  
 Lha Gling ka ra 319  
 Lha 'Gro ba'i mgon po 326  
 Lha khang chen mo 162  
 Lha khyung 333  
 Lha lung 218, 321  
 Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje 150,  
   245  
 Lha mgar 247  
 Lha mthong Lo tsā ba 195, 316  
 Lha Nang chen Kun dga' 'phags  
   223  
 Lha pa 119, 123, 124, 284  
 Lha pa Bka' brgyud pa 43  
 Lha rtse 218, 321  
 Lha rtse ba 290, 330  
 Lha rtse ba Ngag dbang bzang po  
   (1546–1615) 86, 242  
 Lha sa Bstan rgyas gling 74  
 Lha sa khrim bu. *See* Rlang gza'  
   sne chung  
 Lha sras Khri rnam rgyal sde 75  
 Lha'i dbang pos bsrung pa. *See*  
   Gtsang Rde bente rakṣi ta  
 Lhab 160  
 Lhab Chos rje Bkra shis phun  
   tshogs 160  
 Lhag bsam rgyal mtshan 250  
 Lhalungpa, L. P. 287, 312  
 Lhan 127  
 Lho 65, 222  
 Lho brag 64, 125, 237  
*Lho brag chos 'byung* 102, 210, 317  
 Lho brag Mon 211  
 Lho 'Brug 39, 45  
 Lho 'Brug Mkhan chen 74  
*Lho chos 'byung* 89  
 Lho gter 18  
 Lho Karma dgon 291  
 Lho kha 64, 213, 237  
 Lho Ko le Dug zla can 220  
 Lho pa Kun mkhyen Rin chen  
   dpal 115, 303  
 Lho Yel phug 45  
 Lhun grub sman gling 63  
 Lhun rtse sde pa 127  
 Li kya 164  
 Li kya Dpon slob Blo bzang rgyal  
   mtshan 164, 170  
 Li kya zhabs drung II Phun  
   tshogs grags pa bstan 'dzin 170  
 Li thang 142, 312, 332  
 Ligdan (Leg ldan) Khan  
   (1592–1634) 123  
 Ljon pa lung 28, 29  
 Lkog pa 180  
 Lkugs pa Hor dar. *See* Hor dar  
 Lo chen Byang chub rtse mo  
   (1303–80) 180, 193, 319  
 Lo chen Dharma śrī (1654–1717)  
   18, 20  
 Lo chen Grags pa rgyal mtshan  
   115, 180, 193  
 Lo chen 'Gyur med bde chen 283  
 Lo chen Ka ba Dpal brtsegs 146  
 Lo chen Nam mkha' bzang po  
   193  
 Lo chen Thugs rje dpal 194  
 Lo paṇ ras chen 289  
 Lo paṇ ras pa 'Jam dpal chos lha  
   79  
 Lo ras pa Dbang phyug brtson  
   'grus (1187–1250) 45, 84, 325  
 Lo ro 325  
 Lo ro lung gsum 222  
 Lo ston Rdo rje dbang phyug  
   106, 298, 299  
 Lo tsā ba Nam mkha' bzang po  
   194  
 Lo tsā ba Thugs rje dpal 193  
 Lokeśvara 197  
 Long po 323  
 Lo'u hu 157  
 Lung rtogs 28  
 Lung rtogs bstan pa'i nyi ma rgyal  
   mtshan dpal bzang po 277  
 Lu'u kya chos rje Don yod chos  
   grags 163  
 Lu'u kya Grub chen Dge 'dun  
   dar rgyas 160  
 Lu'u tsi 161  
 Ma bzang spun bdur. *See* Ma  
   sangs spun bdun  
 Ma cig Ong jo ras ma 285  
 Ma gcig Zhang mo. *See* Jo mo  
   Zhang mo  
 Ma 'khrigs sde gsum 297  
 Ma mo Ral pa can 107, 300  
 Ma mo rbod gtong 295  
 Ma nang pa 68  
 Ma nu dzendra byā ka ra ṇa 191  
 Ma ru pa'i gling. *See* Kāmarūpa  
 Ma sang spyi rje 293  
 Ma sangs 103  
 Ma sangs spun bdun 293  
 Ma sangs spyi rje 103, 293  
 Ma thi zi Dgon pa 168  
 Madhyamaka 114, 180, 227, 231,  
   275  
*Madhyamakālaṅkāra* 231, 327  
*Madhyamakāvātāra* 327  
*Madhyāntavibhaṅga* 327  
 Magadha. *See* Thub pa'i bzhugs  
   gnas Rdo rje gdan  
*Mahābherisūtra* 191  
*Mahābhārata* 195, 205, 231, 318  
*Mahābhāṣya* 191, 198  
 Mahābodhi 50  
 Mahādeva 194  
 Mahākāla 55  
*Mahāmokṣa Sūtra*. *See* Thar pa  
   chen po'i mdo  
 Mahāmudrā 21, 46, 49, 53, 128,  
   244, 250, 265, 273  
 Mahāsiddha 68  
*Mahāvīryūtpatti* 192, 334  
 Mahāyāna 22, 84, 187, 209, 227,  
   260, 274, 309  
*Mahāyānasamgraha* 327  
*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra* 325  
*Mahāyānottaratantraśāstra* 327  
 Maithili 94  
 Maitreya 161, 325  
 Maitripāda 40  
 Mal gro 324  
 Mal yul mtsho 322  
*Man ngag lhan thabs* 331  
*Man ngag mdzod* 330  
 Man ngag rdzogs pa chen po  
   280  
 Mandi. *See* Za hor gling  
 Mang mkhar 107, 300, 331  
 Mang mkhar Dgon gsar brgyud  
   'dzin Blo gros rgyal mtshan 57  
 Mang mkhar myu gu lung 107,  
   300  
 Mang thos Bsod nams chos 'phel  
   57  
 Mang yul 49, 65, 105, 297  
 Mañbhadra 153  
 Mañjuṣa 102  
 Mañjuśrī 34, 139, 144, 262, 267  
 Mañjuśrījñāna 274  
 Mañjuśrikīrti 199  
*Mañjuśrimūlakaḷpa Tantra* 197  
*Mañjuśrimūlakaḷpamaṇḍala* 235,  
   267  
*Mañjuśrimūla Tantra* 185  
 Mañjuśrivarman 274  
*Mañjuśrīvyaḷkāraṇa* 199  
 Mar. *See* Dmar ma  
 Mar kham sngang 323  
 Mar pa Chos kyi blo gros  
   (1012–1097) 40, 41, 48, 61, 70,  
   74, 77, 145, 263, 288  
 Mar rgan 221  
 Mar yul 297  
*Mārkaṇḍeyapurāna* 206  
 Mchims 322  
 Mchims 'Jam pa'i dbyangs 182  
 Mchod khang gsar pa 160  
 Mchod rten Dkar po 157  
 Mchod rten thang 162, 166, 168

- Mchog gling 235, 250, 267  
Mchog gsal 195  
Mchog gyur gling pa (1829–70) 25, 261  
Mchog gzigs Karma lhag mthong 56  
Mchog sred 198  
Mda' dar 266  
Mdo 279  
Mdo ba 165  
Mdo bo che 65  
Mdo bo che ba 45  
Mdo khams. *See* Smad khams; G.yar mo thang  
Mdo' khams sgang gsum 285  
Mdo krag 69  
Mdo mangs 274  
Mdo mkhar. *See* Byang stag lung  
Mdo mkhar ba. *See* Ra ga shar  
Mdo mkhar Zhabs drung Tshe ring dbang rgyal (1697–1763) 20, 90, 141, 245, 318, 332  
Mdo Mkhyen brtse. *See* Grub chen 'Ja lus pa chen po  
Mdo Mkhyen brtse Ye shes rdo rje (1800–1859) 25, 276, 277  
Mdog zhe dgon 57  
Mdong ston Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan 285  
Mdzod 'dzin Phun tshogs rab brtan 303  
Mdzod bdun 241, 275, 280, 330  
Mdzod dge Sgar gsar 309  
Mdzod lnga 236, 262  
Me hor Gsang sngags chos gling 230  
Me long rdo rje (1243–1303) 279  
Me nyag 221  
Me tog chun po 202  
Medinākara 203, 318  
Medinikośa 203  
Meghadūta 206, 319  
Mgar. *See* 'Gar  
Mgar thar 137, 138  
Mgo dha wa ri (Kodari) 65  
Mgo log Bla ma Bsod dpal ldan 28  
Mgon po bsod nams mchog ldan 330  
Mgon po chos 'byung 284  
Mgon po dar rgyas 230  
Mgon po lhun grub 19, 291  
Mgon po Phyang bzhi pa 284  
Mgon po Phyang drug pa 55  
Mgon po rdo rje 120, 306  
Mgon po rnam rgyal 249  
Mgon po skyabs 89  
Mgon po Zhi ba lha 309  
Mgrol gnyer Blo bzang dkon mchog 138  
Mgrol gnyer Drung pa 120  
Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–54) 202, 252, 253, 316, 336, 337  
Mi dpyad kyi bstan bcas bsod pa 314  
Mi dpyad rgya mtsho bstan pa 313  
Mi 'gyur bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 277  
Mi la ras pa (1012–1097) 40, 41, 48, 60, 61, 237, 287, 288, 333  
Mi nyag 93, 220, 320  
Mi nyag Gangs dkar Karma bshad sgrub chos kyi seng ge 291  
Mi nyag Kun bzang bsod nams 233  
Mi nyag Rab sgang 323  
Mi nyag Rig 'dzin rdo rje 28  
Mi pham (1846–1912) 6, 20, 25, 90, 206, 209, 229, 232, 235, 250, 267, 272, 318, 326, 327, 328  
Mi pham Bkra shis blo gros 330  
Mi pham brtsod lan 328  
Mi pham bstan pa'i nyi ma (1567–1619) 120  
Mi pham dbang po (1641–1717) 83  
Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)  
Mi pham 'Jam dpal dgyes pa. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)  
Mi pham kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba pad dkar bzhad pa'i dge mtshan 'gyur med rdo rje'i snying po mchog tu grub pa'i sde. *See* Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba (1768–1822)  
Mi pham phrin las rab brtan (1658–82) 96  
Mi pham Phyoogs las rnam par rgyal ba. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)  
Mi pham rgya mtsho. *See* Mi pham (1846–1912)  
Mi spyad rgya mtsho bstan pa 185  
Mi tra dzo ki 309  
Mi'i mtshan nyid brtag pa rgya mtsho 314  
Mim Monastery 209  
Ming gi tshogs gsal bar byed pa blo gsal rna cha 318  
Ming le yan gyi spyi bshad 316  
Mkha' 'gro snyan rgyud 66  
Mkha' khyab rdo rje 266  
Mkha' spyod dbang po (1350–1405) 278  
Mkhan chen 'Jam dbyangs Kun dga' sangs rgyas 63  
Mkhan chen Bkra shis 'od zer (1836–1910) 250  
Mkhan chen Dbang phyug shes rab 285  
Mkhan po Blo bzang 'od zer 156  
Mkhan po Dkon mchog nor bu 28, 277  
Mkhan po Gzhan dga' 28  
Mkhan po Lha rgyal 28  
Mkhan po Ngag chung. *See* Mkhan po Ngag dga'  
Mkhan po Ngag dbang dpal bzang (1879–1941). *See* Mkhan po Ngag dga'  
Mkhan po Ngag dga' (1879–1941) 4, 13, 14, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 245, 273, 276, 277  
Mkhan po Rdo rje 13  
Mkhan po Rgyal mtshan 'od zer 28  
Mkhan po Ye shes rgyal mtshan 28  
Mkhar chu 64  
Mkhar dga' 63  
Mkhar kha. *See* Mkhar dga'  
Mkhar sngon. *See* Köke Qota  
Mkhar sngon Shi re thu 165  
Mkhas btsun Gzhon nu grub (d. 1319) 54, 55, 57  
Mkhas btsun Gzi brjid rgyal mtshan 285  
Mkhas dbang Sangs rgyas rdo rje (1569–1645) 244  
Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438) 116, 122, 129, 181, 303  
Mkhas grub Dpal ldan dar po of Pu rong 57  
Mkhas grub Gtsang ma Shangs ston (1234–1309) 56  
Mkhas grub Karma chags med 42  
Mkhas grub 'Khon ston Dpal 'byor lhun grub (1561–1637) 146, 308  
Mkhas grub Khyung po rnal 'byor 56  
Mkhas grub Sangha bha dra 270  
Mkhas grub Sangs rgyas ye shes (1525–90) 127, 129  
Mkhas grub Shangs ston (1234–1309) 54, 55  
Mkhas grub Tshul khriims mgon po 49  
Mkhas pa 'jug pa'i bzo rig sku gsung thugs kyi rten bzhengs tshul 186

- Mkhas pa 'jug pa 'i sgo* 202  
 Mkhas pa'i dbang po Dkon  
   mchog lhun grub 101  
 Mkhas pa'i dga' ston. *See* Lho  
   brag chos 'byung  
 Mkhon. *See* 'Khon  
 Mkhon bar skyes 103, 294  
 Mkhon Dge mthong 106  
 Mkhon Dge skyabs 106, 298  
 Mkhon Dkon mchog rgyal po  
   300. *See* Dkon mchog rgyal po  
 Mkhon Klu'i dbang po bsrung  
   pa 295. *See* Mkhon Na ga  
   entra rakṣi ta  
 Mkhon Na ga entra rakṣi ta 104  
 Mkhon Rdo rje Rin po che. *See*  
   Rdo rje Rin po che  
 Mkhon Rog Shes rab tshul  
   khrims 106, 107  
 Mkhon ston Bal po 106  
 Mkhon Tshul khrims rgyal po  
   106  
 Mkhyen brtse (1820–92) 20, 25,  
   90, 232, 235, 249, 252, 265,  
   267, 285, 327, 335  
 Mkhyen brtse chen mo 254, 335  
 Mkhyen brtse Lo tsā ba 318  
 Mkhyen brtse'i 'od zer. *See* 'Jigs  
   med gling pa  
 Mkhyen brtse'i dbang po 236,  
   283, 291, 328  
 Mkhyen rab Grags pa 'od zer (d.  
   1641) 146  
 Mkhyen ris 125, 256, 335  
 Mnga' bdag Ka tsa don chen 221,  
   319  
 Mnga' bdag Rtse lde 221, 319  
 Mnga' ris Grwa tshang 160  
 Mnga' ris Gung thang. *See* Gung  
   thang  
 Mnga' ris Jo stan 46  
 Mnga' ris Lha btsun Blo bzang  
   bstan pa 131  
 Mnga' ris Mang yul. *See* Mang  
   yul  
 Mnga' ris Paṅ chen Padma  
   dbang rgyal (1487–1542) 16, 17,  
   23, 111, 302, 328, 329, 330  
 Mnga' ris skor gsum 285, 297  
*Mngon brjod Brda gsar rnying gi*  
*rnam gzbag li shi'i gur khang*  
   318  
 Mnyam med Sangs rgyas dpal  
   bzang (1398–1465) 56  
 Mnyam med Sha ra Rab 'byams  
   pa Sangs rgyas seng ge 285  
 Mog kya Rab 'byams pa 'Jam  
   dbyangs rgya mtsho 169  
 Mon bza' mtsho mo rgyal 103  
 Mon bza' mtsho rgyal. *See* Klu  
   lcam bra ma  
 Mon pa 127  
 Mon ravine 108  
 Mon Rta dbang 83  
 Mon rtse pa Kun dga' dpal ldan  
   (1408–75?) 4, 46, 47, 48, 50  
 Mon rtse Rtogs ldan Kun dga'  
   legs bzang 65  
 Mtha' yas Bla ma Bcom ldan rdo  
   rje 28, 277  
 Mtho lding 75  
 Mthong ba don ldan 158, 160  
 Mthong ba rang grol 256  
 Mthong smon pa 174  
 Mtshan nyid grwa tshang 138  
 Mtshan sgrom mkhan po Dge  
   'dun don grub 310  
 Mtsho bar 238  
 Mtsho kha 163  
 Mtsho ldan ma 339  
 Mtsho smon gling 175, 309  
 Mtsho sna 124  
 Mtsho sna ba 228  
 Mtsho sna ba Shes rab bzang po  
   326  
 Mtshur 243  
 Mtshur phu 61, 182, 284  
 Mu dra pa chen po 180  
 Mu khyung 333  
 Mu rug Btsan po 272, 337  
 Mu srad pa Gtsang byams pa  
   Rdo rje rgyal mtshan. *See*  
   Gtsang byams pa Rdo rje rgyal  
   mtshan  
 Mu stegs pa Hos Hos 310  
 Mu stegs Wa zha 221, 322  
 Mu teg rgyal khams 221  
 Mu zu gsal 'bar. *See* Dgongs pa  
   rab gsal  
*Muktāvali* 203, 204  
 Mus chen Nam mkha'i rnal  
   'byor 57  
 Mus chen Rgyal mtshan dpal  
   bzang 55, 56  
 Mus Sdi lung 57  
 Mustang. *See* Smon thang  
 Myang 63, 285, 321. *See* Myang  
 Myang Nyi ma 'od zer. *See* Nang  
   ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1124–92)  
 Myang stod. *See* Myang  
 Myos. *See* Gnyos  
 Myos Mthing ma ba Sangs rgyas  
   grags pa 33, 279  
 Na ro Bon chung 237  
 Nā ro chos drug 40, 54  
 Nā ro Paṅ chen 284  
 Nag chu 298  
 Nag mo'i khol po. *See* Kālidāsa  
 Nag po spyod pa 130, 270. *See*  
   Kṛṣṇācārin  
 Nag ru 333  
*Nāgānanda* 193, 205  
 Nāgārjuna 183, 325  
 Nalendra pa 278  
 Nam Dga' ldan byang chub 150  
 Nam mkha' bkra shis 255  
 Nam mkha' bsam grub rgyal  
   mtshan 72, 287, 288  
 Nam mkha' bzang po 193, 202  
 Nam mkha' dpal bzang  
   (1398–1425) 284  
 Nam mkha' dpal ldan 274  
 Nam mkha' rdo rje 65  
 Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan 56  
 Nam mkha' stobs rgyal 65  
*Nāmalīṅgānuśāsana. See Amara-*  
*kośa*  
*Nānārthāśabdakośa. See*  
*Medinīkośa*  
 Nang chen 43, 333  
 Nang chen Kun dga' 'phags 325  
 Nang gi mi'u rigs 218  
 Nang so Rin chen bzang po 284  
*Naralakṣana Sāmudrikā* 186  
 Nāropa (1016–1100) 40, 41, 48,  
   53, 76, 82, 288  
 Nas lung pa Ngag dbang rdo rje  
   285  
 Ne rings Bka' brgyud pa 45  
 Ngag dbang 'phrin las rgya  
   mtsho 140  
 Ngag dbang bkra shis rnam rgyal  
   16  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang. *See*  
   Khyung tsha zhabs drung  
   Ngag dbang dbang rgyal  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang chos kyi  
   nyi ma bstan 'dzin dbang  
   phyug (1871–1924) 130, 145,  
   308  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang chos ldan  
   (1642–1714) 146  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las  
   rab rgyas (1886–95) 288  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang 'phrin las  
   dpal ldan bstan pa'i rgyal  
   mtshan 312  
 Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya  
   mtsho (1617–82) 129, 313, 332  
 Ngag dbang brtson 'grus  
   (1648–1722) 195, 329  
 Ngag dbang bsam gtan blo gros  
   (c. 1866–1931) 29  
 Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin  
   las (1639–82) 129  
 Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu.

- See Rdza Rong phu Bla ma  
Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor  
bu (1867–1940)
- Ngag dbang bstan pa dar rgyas 57
- Ngag dbang chos 'phel  
(1685–1737) 138, 151
- Ngag dbang chos dbyings dbang  
phyug phrin las rgya mtsho  
(1850–68) 130
- Ngag dbang chos kyi grags pa  
bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan. *See*  
Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86)
- Ngag dbang chos kyi rgya mtsho  
(1680–1736) 152
- Ngag dbang chos ldan. *See* Dka'  
chen Shes rab dar rgyas
- Ngag dbang chos rgyal dbang po.  
*See* Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying  
po (1585–1656)
- Ngag dbang dpal bzang po. *See*  
Mkhan po Ngag dga'
- Ngag dbang dpal ldan 329
- Ngag dbang grags 212
- Ngag dbang mchog ldan  
(1677–1751) 138, 140, 152, 307
- Ngag dbang nor bu. *See* Padma  
dkar po (1527–92)
- Ngag dbang rab brtan 309
- Ngag dbang rgya mtsho 169, 310
- Ngag dbang rnam rgyal  
(1594–1651) 44, 70, 83, 120, 123,  
256, 289, 310
- Ngag dbang tshul khirms  
(1721–91) 307
- Ngag dbang yon tan rgya mtsho.  
*See* Kong sprul (1811–99)
- Ngag dga'. *See* Mkhan po Ngag  
dga'
- Ngag gi dbang phyug. *See* Ngag  
dbang grags
- Ngag gi dbang po 19. *See also*  
Klong chen Rab 'byams pa  
(1308–63)
- Ngagyur Nyingmay Sungrab* 13,  
34, 35, III, 279, 280
- Ngal gso skor gsum* 275, 280
- Ngam 218
- Ngam ring 161
- Ngam rings 250, 256
- Ngam shod 324
- Ngan lam 218
- Ngan lam Stag sgra klu gong 294
- Ngan pa'i yul mo bzhi 220
- Ngan rdzong pa 61
- Ngan rdzong ras pa Byang chub  
rgyal po 41
- Ngan rdzong snyan rgyud* 41
- Ngan song sbyong rgyud. See*  
*Sarvavid*
- Ngang tshul Byang chub 24
- Nges don 'brug sgra 17
- Nges don bstan pa rab rgyas  
(1808–64 or 67) 328
- Nges don bstan rgyas 336
- Nges don gyi mdo nyi shu'i dkar*  
*chag* 275
- Ngor 89, 101, 115, 302
- Ngor chen Dkon mchog lhun  
grub (1497–1557) 322
- Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po  
(1382–1456) 115, 302
- Ngor Mkhan chen 112
- Ngor pa 75
- Ngor pa Dpon slob Blo gter  
dbang po 230, 328
- Ngor pa Dpon slob Ngag dbang  
legs grub (b. 1811) 250
- Ngor Phan khang Dpal ldan  
chos skyong (1702–59) 71, 74
- Ngos chu bla brang 79
- Ni gu'i brgyud 'debs* 284
- Niguma 40, 53, 55, 56
- Ni gu pa 165
- Nirvanaśrī 195
- Nor bu brgyan pa 330
- Nor bu rig 'dzin 151
- Nor bu sde 65
- Nu bo 321
- Nub Gar klog Kyung skad can  
220
- Nub pa 115
- Nub pa Bla brang 303
- Nub rnying 254
- Nus pa thon pa 299
- Nya 218
- Nya dbon Kun dga' dpal  
(1345–1439) 115
- Nyang rong 27, 230, 249
- Nyang rong Gter ston Bsod rgyal  
334. *See also* Gter ston Bsod  
rgyal
- Nyams dga'i rol rtsed* 164
- Nyang 323. *See* Myang
- Nyang bran Chos kyi ye shes  
228, 326
- Nyang chu gzhang 324
- Nyang pa Dam chos yar phel 131
- Nyang pa Lha dbang blo gros 131
- Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer  
(1124–92) 285
- Nyang rong 19
- Nyang shab 105, 297
- Nyang smad Bsam sdings 54, 55,  
57
- Nyang stod Skyid sbug 73
- Nyāyabindu 114, 302
- Nyen gung 152
- Nyer bsgyur 'grel pa* 316
- Nyi ma bstan 'dzin 333
- Nyi thang Blo gros shes rab sbyin  
pa 165
- Nyi thog pa Sangs rgyas kun  
smon 115, 303
- Nṛsimha 186
- O rgyan chos 'phel. *See* Ye shes  
rgyal mtshan (1713–93)
- O rgyan pa 46, 189, 314
- O rgyan pa Rin chen dpal. *See* O  
rgyan pa Seng ge dpal  
(1229/30–1309)
- O rgyan pa Seng ge dpal  
(1229/30–1309) 46, 186
- O rgyan tshe 'phel. *See* Ye shes  
rgyal mtshan (1713–93)
- O rod G.yon ru 130
- O tantra spu ri 186
- O thong Ta Wang Don grub  
rgya mtsho 156
- 'Od gsal 276, 277, 278
- 'Od gsal rin chen snying po. *See*  
Mkhan po Ngag dga'
- 'Od lde 193
- 'Od srung 289
- Odḍiyāna 46. *See* U rgyan gling
- 'Og gog Tsang 320
- 'Og ma Bde stong se 320
- 'Ol ka Shug pa spun bdun 324
- 'On Chos sdings 155, 159
- 'On phu 326
- 'On Rgyal sras 'Jigs med ye shes  
grags pa 138
- Or du su 156
- Ordos 140
- Pa gor Bai ro tsa na 104
- Pa gro Mon 221
- Pa rnam 123
- Pa tañdza li byā ka ra na* 191
- Pad gling Thugs sras Zla ba rgyal  
mtshan 17
- Pad tshal ba 174
- Padma 'phrin las (1641–1717) 18
- Padma dbang mchog rgyal po  
(1886–1952) 96
- Padma dkar po (1527–92) 5, 44,  
45, 47, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 239,  
256, 282, 294
- Padma don yod nyin byed dbang  
po (1954–) 96
- Padma gar gyi dbang phyug blo  
gros mtha' yas pa'i sde. *See*  
Kong sprul (1811–99)
- Padma gar gyi dbang phyug  
phrin las 'gro 'dul rtsal. *See*  
Kong sprul (1811–99)
- Padma gling 20

- Padma gling pa 124, 304  
*Padma gsung* 295  
 Padma kun bzang chos rgyal  
 (1854–85) 96, 257  
 Padma las 'brel rtsal. *See* Mkhan  
 po Ngag dga'  
 Padma lha rtse 247  
 Padma mkhar pa 253, 257  
 Padma mtsho 28  
 Padma nyin byed dbang po  
 (1774–1853) 96, 291  
 Padma rig 'dzin (1625–97) 19  
*Padma tshé khrid* 240, 330  
 Padmasambhava 240, 261  
 Pahari 127  
*Pai sha li byā ka ra ṅa* 191  
 Pāla 254  
 Paṅ chen Bla ma Blo bzang ye  
 shes (1663–1737) 138, 139  
 Paṅ chen Bsod nams grags pa  
 (1478–1554) 129, 161, 320  
 Paṅ chen Byams pa gling pa 180  
 Paṅ chen Bzang po bkra shis  
 (1410–78) 131  
 Paṅ chen Dam chos yar 'phel 127  
 Paṅ chen Dge 'dun grub. *See*  
 Dge 'dun grub (1391–1474)  
 Paṅ chen Don grub grags pa 64  
 Paṅ chen Don grub rgya mtsho 131  
 Paṅ chen Don yod dpal 115  
 Paṅ chen Lama 119, 122, 124, 127,  
 243, 255, 305, 310  
 Paṅ chen Lha dbang blo gros 127  
 Paṅ chen Lung rig rgya mtsho 131  
 Paṅ chen Nags kyi rin chen. *See*  
 Vanaratna (1384–1468)  
 Paṅ chen Shanti pa 131  
 Paṅ chen Ye shes rtse mo  
 (1443–?) 131, 165  
 Paṅ chen Vanaratna. *See*  
 Vanaratna (1384–1468)  
 Paṅḍita Ba ma bhadra 195  
 Paṅḍita 'Bar ba'i gts'o bo 129  
 Paṅḍita Chos kyi nyin byed 130,  
 270  
 Paṅḍita Mkhan po Sangs rgyas  
 'od zer 143  
 Pāṇini 193, 196, 198, 199, 317, 331  
 Pañjaranātha. *See* Gur gyi mgon  
 po  
 Par bu pa Blo gros seng ge 46  
 Parameśvara 274  
 Pārvatapāda. *See* T'i pu pa  
 Paro 330  
 Pārvatī. *See* Umā  
*Pāsakakevali* 185  
 Patañjali 191, 198, 317  
 Pe har 310  
 Peking Ch'ien lung 312  
 Peking K'ang hsi 312  
 Peking Wan li 312  
 Peking Yung lo 312  
 Pha bong kha pa 308  
 Pha Dam pa 66  
 Pha Dam pa Sangs rgyas 137, 275  
 Pha jo 'Brug sgom zhig po 44, 304  
 Pha lha 333  
 Pha rgod Kun dga' bzang po 329  
 Phag 223  
 Phag mgo ba Ye shes brtson 'grus  
 228  
 Phag mo gru 16, 34, 284  
 Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po  
 (1110–70) 17, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48,  
 77, 213, 283  
 Phag smyon pa 61  
 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan  
 (1235–80) 210  
 'Phags pa lha 160  
 'Phags pa lha III Mthong ba don  
 ldan (1567–1604) 309  
 'Phags pa Wa ti 120  
 Phan khang (Phan bde khang  
 gsar) bla brang 89  
 'Phan yul 54, 324  
 'Phan yul Nalendra 115  
 Pho brang Zhi ba 'od 238  
 Pho gong 219  
 Pho lha nas Bsod nams stobs  
 rgyas (1689–1747) 20, 89, 137,  
 139, 245  
 Pho lha Taiji 19  
 Pho rod Bra sti dgon 169  
 Pho yong. *See* Pho gong  
 Phra la ring mo 315  
 Phra ma 276  
 Phra ma dgon 24  
 'Phrang 106, 299  
*Phrin las phur pa* 295  
 Phu chung ba Gzhon nu rgyal  
 mtshan 309  
 Phu lung ba 249  
 Phu Ta zhin 141  
 Phug pa 243  
 Phun tshog rnam rgyal. *See* Ka  
 ring dka' bcu pa Phun tshogs  
 rnam rgyal  
 Phun tshogs 'dzam gling 139  
 Phun tshogs bstan pa 71, 74  
*Phung lnga'i rab dbye* 276  
 Phur bu lcog Ngag dbang byams  
 pa (1682–1762) 151, 174, 332  
 Phur lcog Thub bstan byams pa  
 tshul khirms bstan 'dzin 311  
 Phur pa 300  
*Phur pa rtsa dum* 238, 264, 329  
 Phyang 223  
*Phyang chen Ga'u ma* 40, 53  
 Phyang mdzod Blo bzang dge legs  
 303  
 Phyang rgya chen po 40  
 Phyangs sprul Rin po che 29  
 'Phyam. *See* 'cham  
 Phyed me 223  
 Phyi'i mi'u rigs 218  
*Phyogs bcu'i mun sel* 280  
 Phyogs las 289  
 'Phyong rgyas 21, 83, 182, 313, 324  
 Phyug gzhug pa Bsod rgyal 131  
 Phywa pa 114  
 Phywa pa Chos kyi seng ge  
 (1109–59) 114, 228, 326  
 Piṅgala 202  
 Pir thogs dbang po Sprul sku  
 Chos dbyings rgya mtsho 126  
 Pir thogs rgyal po Sman bla chos  
 rje Blo bzang pa 126  
 Pog to Cha han bla ma Bkra shis  
 rgya mtsho (d. 1627) 151  
 Po'u ting phu'u 144  
 Pra ba ka ra 185  
*Pra ti tya sa mu tpā dā nā ma tsa  
 kra*. *See* *Pratitya-  
 samutpādanāmacakra*  
*Prabodhacandrodaya* 318  
 Prajñākaragupta 302  
*Prajñānāmamūlamadhyamaka-  
 karikā* 327  
*Prajñāpariccheda* 228, 229, 231,  
 232. *See also* *Bodhicāryāvātāra*  
*Prajñāpāramitā* 106, 139, 180  
*Prakriyākāumudī* 198  
 Pramānanda 195  
*Pramānasamuccaya* 113, 115, 327  
*Pramānavārttika* 114, 115, 116, 142,  
 302  
*Pramānavārttikālarikāra* 302  
*Pramānaviniścaya* 114, 302  
 Prāsaṅgika 148, 180  
*Prāśnāmanoramā* 185  
*Pratibimbamānalakṣaṇa* 188  
*Pratimokṣasūtra* 327  
*Pratityasamutpādanāmacakra* 183  
 Pṛthvinārāyaṇa Śāha 93, 174  
 Pu hrangs 322 *See also* Pu rang,  
 Spu rangs  
 Pu rang 319 *See also* Pu hrangs,  
 Spu rangs  
 Punakha 70, 71  
 Pūrṇacandra 317  
 Pūrṇananda 195  
 Pūrṇavajra 195  
 Puruṣottamadeva 198, 203, 318  
 Qalqa Jaya Paṅḍita Blo bzang  
 bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (b. 1642)  
 310



- Qubilai 139, 323
- Ra ga shar 249, 266, 321
- Ra kha brag pa Bsod nams bzang po 169
- Ra kho Ho thug thu 145, 151
- Ra kho Shes rab chos 'byor 310
- Ra kho Zhabs drung 143
- Ra la Ri khrod 163
- Ra ma dgon 50
- Ra ma na'i rtogs brjod* 319
- Ra tna bha hu la 130, 270
- Ra tsa'i rgyal khams 221
- Rab brtan Rgyal po 143
- Rab 'byams pa Chos rje Ngag dbang rin chen 156
- Rab 'byams pa Dngos grub dpal 'bar 75
- Rab 'byams pa Ngag dbang chos ldan 154
- Rab 'byams pa Seng ge rnam rgyal 154
- Rab byed gsar 'gyur 'grel mchan 339
- Rab byed zla zer. *See* Prakriyākaumudī
- Raghuvamśa* 206
- Rai Bahadur Densapa 102
- Ral pa can 211
- Rāma 314
- Rāmacandra 198
- Ramaśrama 206
- Rāmāyaṇa* 195, 202, 206, 231, 319
- Ran Rad nentra rakṣi ta 104
- Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339). *See* Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339)
- Rang grol 279
- Rang grol skor gsum* 34
- Ras chen Gzhon nu dpal ldan 285
- Ras chung 40, 44, 61
- Ras chung Bka' brgyud pa 61
- Ras chung bla ma Karma tshe dpal 233
- Ras chung phug 62, 67, 287
- Ras chung Rdo rje grags (1083–1161) 41, 48, 284
- Ras chung snyan rgyud* 41, 61, 62
- Rasasiddhiśāstra* 189, 313
- Ratna gling pa (1403–78) 18, 239, 240
- Ratna Malla 66
- Ratnakīrti 330
- Ratnamatī 199
- Ratnaśrī 206
- Ratnākaraśānti 202
- Rāyamukuta 318
- Raṇajitamalla 93
- Rba. *See* Sba
- Rba Dznyāntrai ta Ye shes bsrung pa 104, 295
- Rba khri gzigs. *See* Sba Dpal dbyangs
- Rdal chang tshang 106, 298
- Rdo ba Dpal ldan rgya mtsho 165
- Rdo ba Grub chen 'Jigs med phrin las od zer (1745–1821) 24
- Rdo ba Rab 'byams pa Dpal ldan rgya mtsho 165
- Rdo ba Zhabs drung Ngag dbang grags pa rnam rgyal 154, 170
- Rdo brag Rig 'dzin Khams gsum zil gnon 17, 19
- Rdo grub chos sgar 276
- Rdo grub Dam chos bzang po 231
- Rdo pa Bkra shis rgyal po 125, 252
- Rdo ring Gung Paṇḍita Rnam rgyal tshe brtan 140
- Rdo rje brag 17, 18, 19, 20
- Rdo rje brag rdzong 57
- Rdo rje brag Rig 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po 330
- Rdo rje drag po (1740–98) 240
- Rdo rje 'dzin pa Dznyā na śrī 174
- Rdo rje gdan 314
- Rdo rje G.ya' mo skyong 128
- Rdo rje g.yung drung 277
- Rdo rje gzhon nu 57
- Rdo rje gzi brjid. *See* Klong chen rab 'byams pa (1308–63)
- Rdo rje phur pa 105, 295, 300
- Rdo rje rgyal mtshan 34, 180, 194, 315
- Rdo rje rgyal po. *See* Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po (1110–70)
- Rdo rje Rin po che 99, 105, 296
- Rdo rje shugs ldan xi
- Rdo yul 276
- Rdor zhi 136
- Rdza chu kha 23. *See* Phra ma Rdza Dpal dge. *See* Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyī dbang po
- Rdza Dpal sprul O rgyan 'jigs med chos kyī dbang po (b. 1808) 23, 26, 229, 235, 246, 276, 277, 332
- Rdza Rong Phu Bla ma Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin nor bu (1867–1940) 29
- Rdza stod 27, 28
- Rdzogs chen 14, 20, 21, 22, 26, 53, 251, 273, 274, 277, 327
- Rdzogs chen Bla ma Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 28
- Rdzogs chen ma bu'i lde'u mig kun bzang thugs kyī ti ka* 278
- Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Blo gsal 28
- Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Bsod nam chos phel 28, 277
- Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Padma rdo rje 327
- Rdzogs chen Mkhan po Padma-vajra 230
- Rdzogs chen Rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas (b.1800) 22, 26, 276
- Rdzogs chen Snying thig* 265, 332
- Rdzong dkar ba 67
- Rdzong gsar Bshad grwa 26
- Rdzong gsar Mkhyen brtse 'Jam dbyangs chos kyī blo gros (1896–1959) 272, 278
- Rdzong gsar Monastery 276
- Rdzong kha 65
- Rdzong khul Nā ro phug po che 334
- Rdzong nang 18
- Rdzong pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal 115
- Rdzong sar 327
- Rdzong sar Bshad grwa 332
- Rdzong sar yig cha* 232
- Red mda' pa Gzhon nu blo gros (1349–1412) 116
- Re'u mig* 309
- Rga Lo tsā ba 329
- Rgang 222, 325
- Rgod tshang gdan sa pa Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan 79
- Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258) 45, 46, 48, 75, 78
- Rgod tshang ras pa Sna tshogs rang grol (1494–1507) 5, 62, 67, 69, 285, 287
- Rgya 44, 219, 223
- Rgya bo phug 277
- Rgya bod yig tshang* xi, 5, 101, 102, 210, 293, 294, 295, 299
- Rgya gar 218
- Rgya gar Rum yul pa 334
- Rgya Gnas bzhi Rgya ma sgang pa 223
- Rgya Lo tsā ba Rdo rje bzang po 238
- Rgya mo Khyi khyo ma 221, 322
- Rgya mtsho'i sgo 154
- Rgya mtsho'i sprin 154
- Rgya mtshos bstan pa'i mtshan 314
- Rgya nag 218, 221
- Rgya nag chos 'byung* 90
- Rgya nag Grags pa rgyal mtshan 162

- Rgya nag tshang 291  
 Rgya sgom Legs pa rgyal mtshan 56  
 Rgya tig 169  
 Rgya tig Rab 'byams pa Blo bzang don grub 169  
 Rgya yags pa 45  
 Rgya Zhang khrom Rdo rje 'od 'bar 238  
 Rgyal ba G.yab gzang pa. *See* G.ya'  
 Rgyal ba Lha nang pa (1164–1224) 43  
 Rgyal ba Yang dgon Ye shes rgyal mtshan 45  
 Rgyal ba'i dbang po Kun dpal 'byor (1428–76) 83  
 Rgyal bu Dga' byed bzang po, Prince of Tripura 130  
 Rgyal bu Dga' byed skyong 270  
*Rgyal bu zla ba'i rtogs brjed* 319  
 Rgyal byed tshal 21  
 Rgyal dbang 'Brug chen 85, 336  
 Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa 83, 242  
 Rgyal dbang 'Brug pa Kun gzigs chos kyi snang ba (1768–1822) 259  
 Rgyal dbang Karma pa 42, 257, 334, 335  
 Rgyal dbang Kun dga' dpal 'byor (1428–76) 82, 281  
 Rgyal dbang rje 82  
 Rgyal gyi śrī Bsam gtan gling 288  
 Rgyal khang rtse pa Sprul sku 130, 306  
 Rgyal khar rtse pa 223  
 Rgyal ldog 167  
 Rgyal mo rong 93  
 Rgyal mo shel tshwa 292  
 Rgyal mtshan 'bum (1261–1334) 54  
 Rgyal mtshan phun tshogs 151  
 Rgyal po Nor bzang 176  
 Rgyal rdog 136  
 Rgyal sras 155  
 Rgyal sras Blo gros mtha' yas (pa'i sde). *See* Kong sprul (1811–99)  
 Rgyal sras Bsod nams lde'u btsan (1673–1723) 18  
 Rgyal sras Byang chub rdo rje 277  
 Rgyal sras Gzhan phan mtha' yas 276  
 Rgyal sras Sprul sku 161  
 Rgyal sras Thogs med Bzang po dpal (1295–1369) 49, 228, 309, 326  
 Rgyal thang 45  
 Rgyal thang pa Bde chen rdo rje 75  
 Rgyal tsha (1118–95) 44, 281  
 Rgyal tshab 42, 116  
 Rgyal tshab Dam pa Kun dga' dbang phyug (1424–78) 112, 302  
 Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432) 116, 229, 326  
 Rgyal tshab Grags pa don grub 252  
 Rgyal tshab O rgyan theg mchog rdo rje 20  
 Rgyal yag 136  
 Rgyal yum Bwhang thas hu 307  
 Rgyan drug mchog gnyis 336  
*Rgyud bzhi* 239  
 Rgyud chen Dkon mchog yar 'phel 165  
 Rgyud pa bla ma 164  
 Rgyud pa Dpon slob Sprul sku Dkon mchog rnam rgyal 157  
 Rgyud pa grwa tshang 138, 166  
 Rgyud pa Rnam rgyal dpal bzang 162  
*Rgyud sde kun btus* 90, 236, 327, 328  
*Rgyud sde spyi nam* 317  
 Rgyud smad Grags pa lhun grub 169  
 Ri bo che 44  
 Ri bo Dan tig 161  
 Ri chab 249  
 Ri 'go ba Ratna bha dra (1281–1313) 96  
 Ri gong 54  
 Ri gong stod brgyud 55  
 Ri khrod ras chen Sangs rgyas seng ge 56  
 Ri khud Chos sde 173  
 Ri pa Gzhon nu rgyal mtshan (1311–90) 49  
 Ri rdzong Sras sprul 310  
 Ri rgya dgon 45  
 Rig 'dzin Chos kyi grags pa. *See* Chos kyi grags pa  
 Rig 'dzin Gter bdag gling pa Padma gar dbang 'Gyur med rdo rje (1616–1714) 18  
 Rig 'dzin 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656) 241, 330  
 Rig 'dzin Klong gsal snying po 18  
 Rig 'dzin Kumārārāja (1266–1343) 33, 279  
 Rig 'dzin Kun bzang shes rab 18  
 Rig 'dzin Legs ldan rdo rje (b. 1512) 111  
 Rig 'dzin Ngag gi dbang po (1580–1639) 19  
 Rig 'dzin Padma 'dus pa rtsal (1810–72) 250  
 Rig 'dzin Rgod kyi ldem 'phru can 19  
 Rig 'dzin Sgro phug pa (b. 1074) 146  
 Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu (1698–1755) 18, 20, 22, 286, 307  
 Rig gnas sna tshogs grwa tshang 138  
*Rig gzhung rgya mtsho* 303  
 Rig rdor 30  
 Rigs ldan 'Jam dpal grags pa 128  
*Rigs pa'i khu byug* 309  
*Rigs pa'i thigs pa* 302  
*Rim lnga'i khrid kyi brjed byang* 278  
*Rin chen 'dzad med* 101  
 Rin chen bsrung pa. *See* Da was Ratna rakshi ta  
 Rin chen bzang po (958–1055) 15, 237, 238, 319  
 Rin chen dbang po bsrung pa. *See* Ran Rad nentra rakṣi ta  
 Rin chen dpal bzangs 65  
*Rin chen gter mdzod* 90, 262, 266, 328, 337, 339  
 Rin chen lhun grub 333  
 Rin chen phun tshogs (1509–57) 239, 329  
 Rin chen rnam rgyal 286, 288  
 Rin spungs 66, 242, 282  
 Rin spungs pa Ngag dbang 'jig grags 318  
 Rje btsun Bsod nams rtse mo of Zhe dgon 57  
 Rje btsun Chos legs 289  
 Rje btsun Chos rgya mtsho 136  
 Rje btsun Dam pa Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me (1725–57) 119, 140, 142, 143, 306. *See also* Khalkha Rje btsun Dam pa  
 Rje btsun Tāranātha. *See* Jo nang Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po (1575–1634)  
 Rje btsun Ye shes rgya mtsho 56  
 Rje btsun Zhang ston lo tsntsha 285  
 Rje cig Cog la Ram pa rje 219  
 Rje cig Rtsang rje Thod dkar rje 219  
 Rje cig Snyags rje Thog sgrom rje 219, 322  
 Rje cig Te tsom Snyal po rje 219  
 Rje gung stag. *See* Dkon pa rje Gung stag btsan  
 Rje mkhan po of Bhutan 89  
 Rkang tshugs phug 65  
 Rkang 222, 325

- Rkong Lha nag po 324  
 Rkyang mo kha pa 45  
 Rlangs 43  
 Rlangs gza' Sne chung 104, 295  
 Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba 104, 295  
 Rlangs Khom pa Lotstsha Su ga ta warma rakṣi ta. *See* Bde bar gshegs pa bsrung pa  
 Rma chen Spom ra 144  
 Rma la 324  
 Rma Lo tsā ba Dge ba'i blo gros 114  
 Rma se rtogs ldan Blo gros rin chen 42  
 Rme'u ston 54  
 Rmog lcog 54  
 Rmog lcog pa Kun dga' dge legs dpal 'bar 56  
 Rmog lcog pa Rin chen brtson 'grus 54, 56  
 Rmog lcogs Zhabs drung 138  
 Rmor tsha 18  
 Rmu 215, 320, 321  
 Rmu Ko le phra brgyad 218, 320  
 Rmu rje Kol po 320  
 Rmu'i bu mo Dmu sa ldem. *See* Smu'i bu mo Smu bza' ldem bu  
 Rna dkar rtse pa 223  
 Rnal 'byor Ye shes dbang po (1220–81) 96  
 Rnal Rin chen gling pa 45  
*Rnam bshad rgyal sras 'jug ngogs* 326  
*Rnam pa bcad bya ji ltar sbyor tshul* 193  
 Rnam par snang mdzad bsrung ba. *See* Pa gor Bai ro tsa na  
 Rnam rgyal 28, 320  
 Rnam rgyal Grwa tshang 307  
 Rnam rgyal sgröl ma 312  
 Rngog 114, 281, 325. *See* Sngog  
 Rngog Bka' brgyud pa 41  
 Rngog Byang chub dpal 16  
 Rngog dkyil 'khor bdun 263  
 Rngog Lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109) 114, 228  
 Rngog ston Chos sku rdo rje 41, 263  
 Rngogs. *See* Sngog  
 Rngul rdza Ze mo sgang 323  
 Rngul ston Rin dbang 54  
 Rnyegs. *See* Snyags  
*Rnying ma'i rgyud 'bum* 22, 25, 90, 239  
 Ro snyoms skor drug 44  
 Rog 33, 278  
 Rog Shes rab tshul khriṃs 300, 301  
 Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86) 6, 71, 133, 134, 135, 146, 150, 170, 275, 307, 308  
 Ron 'Od gsal phug 65  
 Rong pa Rga lo 180  
 Rong pa Shes rab seng ge 180  
 Rong rgyab 247  
 Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449) 115  
 Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po 130, 270, 274, 315  
 Rṣi Bṛhaspati 197  
 Rta dbyangs. *See* Rba Dznyāntraī ta. *See* Aśvaghōṣa  
 Rta log Gsang snags chos glings 289  
 Rta lus chas 'dra 'dra ba 'ba' zhig yos 296  
 Rta mgrin 310  
*Rta mgrin dregs pa zil gnam* 274  
 Rta nag 192  
 Rta nag pa Kun dga' rnam sras 310  
 Rta nag Rdo rje gdan 55, 329  
 Rta nag Thub bstan rnam rgyal gling 115  
 Rta tshag Rje drung Blo bzang ldan 138, 139, 141  
 Rtag brtan Phun tshogs gling 91, 95, 290  
 Rtags bde chos gling 324  
*Rten gsum bzhengs tshul bstan bcos lugs bshad pa* 187  
 Rtog 219  
 Rtog ge ba Blo bzang rin chen 245, 332  
 Rtogs ldan Bkra shis rgyal mtshan 333  
 Rtogs ldan 'Jam dpal rgya mtsho (1356–1428) 309  
 Rtogs ldan Sprul sku Thub bstan bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (b. 1938) 330  
*Rtsa gsum dril sgrub* 238, 261, 274  
 Rtsa mi 321  
 Rtsa mi Sangs rgyas grags 329  
 Rtsa na 65  
 Rtsa ri Rtsa gong 324  
 Rtsa rin 301  
 Rtse le Sna tshogs rang grol 330  
 Rtse Mgron gnyer Yon tan legs grub 140  
 Rtses thang 43, 182, 313  
 Rtsib ri 49, 78, 173, 288, 289  
 Rtsis shar 308  
 Rtsong kha 222  
 Ru dam rdzogs chen o rgyan bsam gtan chos gling 17, 19  
 Ru lag 323  
 Rus bran bzhi bcu rtsa gnyis 220  
 Rus khyal ba 220  
 Rus ngan bcu drug 220  
 Rus phye mo bcu gnyis 218  
 Rus yang khyal ba 220  
 Rwa 'brug pa 21  
 Rwa lung 21, 39, 44, 45  
 Rwa lung 'Brug pa 243  
 Rwa sgreng 147, 248, 307  
 Sa 223  
 Sa Bzang Ma ti Pañ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan 193, 194, 315, 326  
 Sa bzang Pañ chen 228  
 Sa bzang 'Phags pa Gzhon nu blo gros 315  
 Sa chen Kun dga' blo gros (1729–83) 101  
 Sa chen Kun dga' snying po 99, 100, 109, 295  
 Sa dbang bzang po 24, 276  
 Sa ga 141  
 Sa khud nang pa 172  
 Sa ma ti Pakṣi 156, 309  
 Śa ru lañ karṇa 313  
 Sa skya A ba dhū ti pa 270  
 Sa skya bka' 'bum 92, 315, 316  
 Sa skya Chos grwa chen po Yongs 'dzin Ma ti 57  
 Sa skya Dpon chen Shakya bzang po 193  
 Sa skya pa Bla ma Dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–75) 33  
 Sa skya pa Drag shul phrin las (1871–1935) 101  
 Sa skya pa slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo 228  
 Sa skya Pañdita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) 111, 115, 128, 202, 203, 209, 238  
*Śabdamañjari. See* Sgra'i snye ma  
 Sadnagar 240, 330  
 Śākya blo gros 106, 298, 301  
 Śākya rgyal mtshan. *See* 'Jam dbyangs gu śri Śākya rgyal mtshan, Second Lha bstun (1340–73)  
 Śākya Rin po che 212  
 Śākya'i dge bsnen 102  
 Śākyamati 114, 302  
 Śākyamuṇi 158, 216  
 Śākyaraksita 202  
 Śākyasri (d. 1225) 115, 238  
 Śālatura 197  
 Samantabhadra 198, 317  
*Sambandhaparikā* 302  
 Sambhoṭa. *See* Thon mi A nu

- Samputa Tantra* 100, 187  
*Samtānāntarasiddhi* 302  
*Saṃvara Udbhava Tantra* 188  
*Samyagvākpramāṇoddhṛtasūtra*  
 315  
 Samyaksambuddha 315  
*Sāñcaya Tantra* 188  
 Sangs rgyas bkra shis 162  
 Sangs rgyas Bla ma 15, 238, 274  
 Sangs rgyas bstan pa of Sde dge  
 19  
 Sangs rgyas dar po 78, 289  
 Sangs rgyas dbon (1251–96) 44  
 Sangs rgyas Dbon ras Dar ma  
 seng ge (1177–1237/8) 44  
 Sangs rgyas dpal rin 279  
 Sangs rgyas 'dren 63  
 Sangs rgyas Gnyan ston of Spyanyan  
 snga (1175–1255) 283  
 Sangs rgyas grags pa. *See* Grags  
 pa rgya mtsho (1646–1719)  
 Sangs rgyas rdo rje 244  
 Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 243  
 Sangs rgyas rgyal mtshan 212. *See*  
 Gtsang smyon  
 Sangs rgyas skar rgyal. *See* 'Jam  
 dbyangs bzhad pa Ngag dbang  
 brtson 'grus (1648–1722)  
 Sangs rgyas ston pa. *See* Sangs  
 rgyas ston pa Brtson 'grus seng  
 ge  
 Sangs rgyas ston pa Brtson 'grus  
 seng ge 54, 56, 57, 283  
 Sangs rgyas ye she. *See* Mkhas  
 grub Sangs rgyas ye shes  
 Sangye Tenzin xiii  
 Śāntarakṣita 104, 231, 277  
 Śāntideva 186, 227, 228, 325  
*Sārasvataprakriyā (caturā)* 195,  
 196  
*Sārasvatavyākaraṇa* 191, 193, 195,  
 196, 199, 267, 339  
 Sārasvatī 199  
*Sarasvatāvyaṅkaraṇa* 331  
*Śārdulakarnāvadāna* 185  
 Sarvajñādeva 197  
 Śarvavarman 316  
*Sarvavid* 274  
 Sba 127  
*Sba bzhed* 295  
 Sba Dpal dbyangs 295  
 Sba Khri bzher Sang shi ta. *See*  
 Sba Dpal dbyangs  
 Sba Khri gzigs. *See* Sba Dpal  
 dbyangs  
 Sba Ye shes dbang po bsrung pa.  
*See* Rba Dznyāntraī ta  
 Sbal te 322  
 Sbas 278. *See* Sba
- Sbrags Tsha seb 280  
 Sbus ri 50  
*Sbyor drug* 279  
*Sde bdun* 302  
 Sde dge 207, 230, 251, 312  
 Sde dge Dgon chen 239, 316, 326  
*Sde dge'i rgyal rabs* 25  
 Sde gzhung 277  
 Sde gzhung mkhan po Chos  
 'phel 233  
 Sde gzhung Sprul sku Kun dga'  
 bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan  
 (1906–86). *See* Deshung  
 Rinpoche  
 Sde pa Gzhis dga' ba 67  
 Sde pa Lha dbang 169, 310  
 Sde pa Nor bu 120  
 Sde pa Sding chen nas 138  
 Sde pa Tsha 'da' ba 65  
 Sde pa Tsham mda' ba 79  
 Sde Phag mo gru pa. *See* Phag  
 Sde srid Bsod nams chos 'phel  
 161  
 Sde srid Gtsang pa 19, 83, 161  
 Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho  
 (1653–1705) 242, 243, 244, 290,  
 305, 306, 310, 331  
*Sdeb sbyor gyi rnam bzhag* 317  
*Sdeb sbyor rtsa 'grel* 203  
 Sding chen 176  
 Sding chen nas 312  
*Sdom byang rgyas bshad* 276  
*Sdom gsum rab dbye* 22, 112, 114,  
 328  
*Sdom gsum rnam nges* 17, 23, 329  
*Sdom pa 'byung ba'i rgyud las  
 gsungs pa* 188  
 Se 215, 320, 321  
 Se ba Byang chub chos gling 85  
 Se byi lu spun bzhi. *See* Si ji li  
 spun bzhi  
 Se Byu legs 320  
 Se Byu legs kyi bu bzhi 218  
 Se gong Rgyal nang rje 320  
 Se ra 69  
 Se ra Rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal  
 mtshan (1469–1546) 142, 146  
 Se ra Sngags pa grwa tshang 328  
 Se tsha 'Bul dpon 155  
 Second Chu bzang Blo bzang  
 bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 152  
 Sems nyid 161, 167  
 Sems nyid Dgon pa 163  
 Sems nyid Nang so 161  
 Sems phyogs 279  
 Sems tsam pa. *See* Vijñānavāda  
 Seng chen. *See* 'Brong rtse  
 Seng chen Blo bzang bstan 'dzin  
 dpal 'byor 333
- Seng ldan gyi phur pa bco lnga  
 pa 107  
 Ser lding Zhabs drung Ngag  
 dbang chos ldan 170  
 Ser lung 161, 169  
 seven 'Bro tsha brothers 105  
 seven Lha mi communities 108,  
 301  
 Sga ba Bla ma 'Jam dbyangs rgyal  
 mtshan (1870–1940) 29  
 Sga rje 24  
 Sga Skye rgu mdo 277  
 Sga ston Ngag dbang legs pa  
 (1864–1941) 29  
 Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen  
 (1079–1159) 41, 42, 43, 48, 53,  
 61, 229, 288  
 Sgam po Pañ chen sprul sku Nor  
 bu rgyan pa 70  
 Sgang dkar ba 75  
 Sgang gsum 221  
 Sgang rgad 'Od zer rgyal mtshan  
 331  
 Sgar bris 125, 251, 254, 336  
 Sgar gsar Theg chen chos mdzod  
 157  
 Sgar Rtsong kha 221  
 Sgi li Chos 'od 45  
 Sgo mang 160  
 Sgo mang Dpon slob 164  
 Sgo mang Dpon slob Ngag  
 dbang nam mkha' 169  
 Sgo mang Dpon slob Shes rab  
 rgya mtsho 169  
 Sgo rum Gzim spyil dkar mo 301  
 Sgo rum pa Kun dga' legs pa 335  
 Sgo smyon. *See* Karma srid bral  
 Sgom chen Sbrul nag pa 165  
 Sgom sde Grwa nang 272  
 Sgom zhi Grub chen 165  
*Sgra mdo* 193  
*Sgra mi snyan tshes sgrub* 330  
*Sgra rig pa'i yan lag snyan ngag  
 kyi mtshan nyid rab tu gsal ba'i  
 me long* 205  
 Sgra sgyur Mar pa lo tsha  
 (1012–1097) 284  
*Sgra'i bstan bcos* 315  
*Sgra'i chos 'byung* 317  
*Sgra'i rnam par dbye ba bstan pa  
 su bhanta* 192  
*Sgra'i snye ma* 195  
*Sgra'i tsher ma* 315  
 Sgro mo lung dben pa 57  
 Sgrol ba'i dbang phyug. *See*  
 Tareśvara  
 Sgrol chen Sangs rgyas rin chen  
 16  
*Sgrub thabs kun btus* 90, 236, 328

- Sgrub thabs rin 'byung* 95  
 Sgyu 279  
*Sha kau ta ya na byā ka ra na* 191  
 Sha ra rab 'byams pa 61, 63, 64  
 Sha ra Yu gur 168  
 Sha 'ug Rta sgo 324  
 Shab 297, 299, 324  
 Shab bya ru 106  
 Shab stod 106, 298  
 Shangs 47, 238, 292  
 Shangs dkar ba Rin chen rgyal  
   mtshan (1353–1434) 56  
 Shangs pa Bka' brgyud pa 40, 49,  
   53, 55, 281, 283, 329  
 Shangs pa Blo gros legs 131  
 Shangs pa Bsam grub dpal 131  
 Shangs pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan  
   131  
*Shangs pa gser 'phreng* 55, 283, 284  
*Shangs pa'i rin chen rnam bdun*  
   54  
 Shangs ston (1234–1309) 57  
 Shangs Zur khang 75  
 Shar Mkho thing Rin chen gling  
   34  
 Shar pa 112, 319  
 Shar rdza Bkra shis rgyal mtshan  
   (b. 1859) 250, 331  
 Shar rdzong Dpon slob 165  
 Shar Rgyal mo Khyi khyo ma  
   220  
 Shar rtse 160  
 Shar rtse Mkhan po No mon han  
   143  
 Shar skya ba 173  
 Shar zla 332  
 Shel dkar gling pa 29  
 Shel dkar rdzong 176  
 Shel Phug 66  
*Shes bya kun khyab* 7, 15, 23, 211,  
   235, 236, 250, 251, 258, 262, 317  
*Shes bya rab gsal* 210  
 Shes rab bzang po (1400–38) 284  
 Shes rab dar rgyas 164  
 Shes rab dgongs rgyal. *See* Bsod  
   nams blo gros  
 Shes rab le'u zin bris 326  
 Shes rab 'phel (b. 1429) 309  
 Shes rab rdo rje 101  
 Shes rab seng ge (1251–1315) 314  
 Shes rab yon tan 105  
 Shi mi 321  
 Shing la gnas pa'i spre'u 220  
*Shing rta nam gnyis* 22  
 Shing ru 166  
 Sho dgon 45  
 Sho sgom 43  
 Shong Blo gros brtan pa 193  
 Shong Lo tsā ba 205  
 Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan  
   180, 193, 315  
 Shud bu Dpal gyi seng ge 277  
 Shug gseb Bka' brgyud pa 46  
 Si byi li. *See* Si ji li spun bzhi  
 Si ji li 103  
 Si ji li spun bzhi 293  
 Si li ma. *See* G.ya' bum si le ma  
 Si rgod ma. *See* Padma kun  
   bzang chos rgyal (1854–85)  
 Si tu 18, 28, 29, 42, 291, 333  
 Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho 28  
 Si tu Chos kyi rgyal mtshan  
   (1377–1448) 96  
 Si tu drung che Sa ta'i zhing  
   chen (1345–76) 96  
 Si tu Padma dbang mchog rgyal  
   po 277  
 Si tu Padma nyin byed dbang po  
   (1774–1853) 260  
 Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung  
   gnas (1699–1776) 5, 45, 87, 88,  
   91, 199, 202, 204, 250, 255, 257,  
   262, 267, 290, 291, 317, 331, 336  
 Si tu Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags  
   (1389–1442) 286  
 Si tu Shākya bzang po 34  
*Śikṣāsamuccaya* 227, 325  
*Śilpaśāstra* 231  
*Śīsyahitāvya-karaṇa-*  
   *kalāpasūtravṛtti* 316  
 Śivadāśa 190  
 Ska ba Dpal brtsegs 113  
*Skad gnyis shan sbyar* 318  
 Skal bzang tshe dbang 307  
 Skendha 334  
 Skog dkar brag 65  
*Skor gsum gsum* 241  
 Sku bsangs 301  
 Sku 'bum 95, 140, 157, 164, 169, 301  
 Skya rengs 294  
 Skya rengs khrag med. *See* Skya  
   ring khrag med  
 Skya rings khrag med 103, 294  
 Skye rgu mdo 291  
 Skyed tshal Dge bshes Grangs  
   can pa 305  
 Skyer sgang pa 54, 283  
 Skyi Rgyal ba'i gtsug tor 150  
 Skyid grong 75, 120, 297  
 Skyid grong Bkra shis Bsam gtan  
   gling 171, 174  
 Skyid grong Dga' ldan Phug po  
   che 174  
 Skyid pa'i 'byung gnas 153  
 Skyid sbug 174, 288  
 Skyid shod 44, 47, 61, 324  
 Skyid shod Zhabs drung Sprul  
   sku 122  
 Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen  
   bkra shis 318  
 Skyu 34  
 Skyu ra 321  
 Sle lung Bzhad pa'i rdo rje 245  
 Sle'u rdzong 312  
 Sle'u shar ma ba 173, 312  
 Slo 'khar ba. *See* 'Khrul zhig Glo  
   'khar ba Kun dga' don grub  
 Slob dpon Bkra shis rin chen 33,  
   279  
 Slob dpon Dbang phyug go cha.  
   *See* lśavarvarman or Sarvavar-  
   man  
 Slob dpon Dbang tshul 33, 279  
 Slob dpon Gzhon rgyal 33, 279  
 Slob dpon 'Jigs med 'byung gnas  
   128  
 Slob dpon Kun dga' 'od zer 33,  
   278  
 Slob dpon Kun dga' nyi ma 64  
 Slob dpon Legs ldan 'byed 128  
 Sma ra can 151  
 Smad 'Brug 45  
 Smad khams 323  
 Smad khams rus rigs gsum 219  
 Smad kyi Mdo khams Sgang  
   gsum 221  
 Smad lineages 84  
 Smad lugs 260, 337  
 Smad Rdo rje brag. *See* Rdo rje  
   brag  
 Smad rgyud Grwa tshang 160  
 Sman bla Chos rje Blo bzang pa  
   125  
 Sman bla Don grub rgyal po 125,  
   252, 254, 335  
 Sman gzhung cha lag bco brgyad  
   93  
 Sman pa grwa tshang 139  
 Sman ris 254, 255, 256, 335, 336  
 Sman ris gsar ma 125, 255, 336  
 Sman thang 124, 252, 254  
 Sman thang pa 126, 255  
 Smar khams edition 14  
 Smar khams Rgyal sras dgon 13  
 Smar khams sgang 323  
 Smar mkhan chen 'Od zer bla  
   ma 45  
 Smar pa Bka' brgyud pa 45  
 Smar pa grub thob Shes rab seng  
   ge 45  
 Smin drug. *See* Kārttikeya  
 Smin gling Lo chen Dharma śrī  
   (1654–1717) 202, 332  
 Smin grol gling 17, 18, 20, 230,  
   248, 330  
 Smin grol No min han. *See* Btsan  
   po pa Don grub rgya mtsho

- Smin grol No min han 'Jam dpal chos kyi bstan 'dzin 'phrin las (1789–1838) 310
- Smin grol No min han Ngag dbang 'phrin las lhun grub 162
- Smin grol No mon han 164
- Smon 218
- Smon gro pa 95
- Smon 'gro Paṇḍita 331
- Smon lam Festival 161
- Smon lam thor bu* 159
- Smon thang 111. *See also* Glo bo, Glo bo Smon thang
- Smra ba'i sgo mtshon cha lta bu rtsa 'grel* 315
- Smra bo lcoqs 325
- Smra sgo mtshon cha* 315
- Smra sgo sa bcad* 315
- Smri ti mig 324
- Smrtijñānakirti 15, 192, 265, 315
- Smu 103. *See* Rmu
- Smu bza' ldem bu 103
- Smug po Gdong 230, 276
- Smug po Sdong 28
- Smu'i bu mo Smu bza' ldem bu 293
- Smyo shul 28
- Smyo shul Lung rtogs 26, 28
- Sna lam 322
- Sna nam Rdo rje dbang phyug 299
- Sna phu 49
- Sna phu pa. *See* Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje (1128–88)
- Sna tshogs 192
- Sna tshogs gsal ba*. *See* *Viśvalocana*
- Sna tshogs rang grol 284, 286
- Snang ba lhar sgrub* 274
- Snang gsal ma bu bco lnga* 217
- Snar thang 73, 181, 182, 207, 312
- Snar thang Kun mkhyen Saṅga bhadra 130
- Snar thang Lo tsā ba Dge 'dun dpal 193, 194, 318
- Sne'u gdong 61
- Sne'u rdzong pa Dpal 'byor lhun po 286
- Sne'u rdzong pa Dpal 'byor rgyal po 65
- Sne'u shag 312
- Sne'u zur pa 309
- Snga dar 113
- Snga 'gyur lnga 299
- Sngags 'chang Kun dga' rin chen (1517–84) 242, 304
- Sngags 'chang Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams 291, 292
- Sngags 'chang Sangs rgyas dpal ldan 63
- Sngags kyi spyi don tshangs dbyangs 'brug sgra* 280
- Sngags mdzod. *See* Bka' brgyud sngags mdzod
- Sngags pa Bla zur Mnga' ris pa Blo bzang chos 'phel 169
- Sngags pa grwa tshang 288
- Sngags rams pa Blo bzang bsod nams 156
- Sngags rams pa Blo bzang byung gnas 310
- Sngags rams pa Ye shes skal ldan 174
- Sngog 219
- Snubs 218
- Snya mo Gzhung 324
- Snyal 219
- Snyan brgyud* 55, 61
- Snyan dngags me long gi 'grel pa dbyangs can dgyes pa'i rol mtsho* 327
- Snyan ngag dbyangs can dgyes glu* 244
- Snyan ngag 'grel pa dang dper brjad* 318
- Snyan ngag me long gi 'grel pa de nyid gsal ba* 207–8
- Snyan par byed pa 219
- Snyan rgyud rdo rje'i tshig rkang* 65
- Snyan rgyud yig cha* 66
- Snyan rtse 105, 296
- Snyan rtse reng 105, 297
- Snye mdo Thams cad mkhyen pa Kun dga' don grub (b. 1268) 270
- Snye thang Blo brtan bzhi pa 194
- Snye thang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa bzhi pa 193, 207, 316
- Snyi ba 321
- Snyi phu 46
- Snyi shang 68
- Snying 219
- Snying po'i breng gi la'i sgo 324
- Snying thig 18, 229, 279
- Snying thig gsar ma*. *See* *Klong chen shying thig*
- Snying thig ya bzhi* 278, 280
- Snyos 218, 223. *See* Gnyos
- So mas chos rje 'Jam dpal ye shes 75
- Sog po Prel glag can 221, 322
- Sog po rgyal mtshan 285
- Sog zlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552–1624) 16, 17
- Sol nag Thang chen 324
- Solu 112
- Spa gro 49, 123
- Spa gro Gsang chen chos 'khor 289
- Spa gro Stag tshang 256
- Spa ri ba Mkhyen pa'i bdag po 45
- Spang (Dpang) lo tsā ba 79
- Spang la gnas pa'i chi ba 220
- Spo 70, 73
- Spo bo 215
- Spo 'bor sgang 323
- Spo lu 13
- Spom po ri 108, 301
- Spom ra khams tshang 328
- Spre'u zhing 281, 284
- Sprin gyi pho nya. *See* Meghadūta
- Sprul sku Bab phro 253, 257
- Sprul sku Byi'u 252, 255
- Sprul sku Chos 'phel rgya mtsho 309
- Sprul sku Grags pa rgyal mtshan 162
- Sprul sku Mi 'gyur rdo rje (1645–67) 18
- Sprul sku Mi pham chos 'phel 126, 256
- Sprul sku Nam mkha' bkra shis 125, 252, 255, 336
- Sprul sku Phan bde 336
- Sprul sku Sle'u chung pa 253, 257, 337
- Spu hrangs 49. *See also* Pu hrangs, Pu rang
- Spun po rgyan 222
- Spungs ri Dgon nang 248
- Spungs thang 70, 71, 73, 74, 86
- Spyan snga Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1390–1448) 148
- Spyan snga Ngag gi dbang po (1439–91) 16
- Spyan snga Rin chen ldan (b.1202?) 47, 48, 78
- Spyi rings 103, 292
- Spyod 'jug shes rab le'u'i 'iika blo gsal 326
- Sra ma nanda. *See* Pramānanda
- Srad 297
- Srad pa Dkon mchog bstan dar 138
- Srad Rgyud Rgyud chen Byams pa rgyal mtshan 305
- Srad Rgyud Rgyud chen Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 305
- Sram pa Bstan 'dzin grags pa 165
- Sreg 328, 329
- Sreg ston Char 'bebs 329
- Sreg ston Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1432–1506) 329
- Śri bhu ti bha dra 102
- Śri Lo paṇ pa. *See* Lo paṇ ras chen

- Śri Lo paṅ ras pa 'Jam dpal chos  
   lha 78  
 Śri Narendrabhadra 189  
 Srid pa'i mdzod phug 329  
 Śridharasena 203, 204  
 Śrīmaṇika 316  
 Srin po'i rgyal khams 221  
 Srīng chung ma 230  
 Sron pa 180  
 Sron pa Kun dga' rgyal mtshan 180  
 Srong btsan sgam po 215, 255  
 Stag bu Bla ma 282  
 Stag gzigs 218, 220, 223  
 Stag lung 39, 44, 284  
 Stag lung Bka' brgyud pa 43  
 Stag lung brag pa Blo gros rgya  
   mtsho (1546–1618) 162, 310  
 Stag lung Lo tsā ba Ngag dbang  
   grags pa 315  
 Stag lung Ngag dbang rnam  
   rgyal 84  
 Stag lung thang pa Bkra shis dpal  
   (1142–1210) 43, 85  
 Stag lung Zhabs drung Blo  
   bzang bstan pa chos kyi nyi  
   ma 165  
 Stag po 'od chen 293. *See* Klu  
   tsha rta so 'od chen  
 Stag rtse pa 152  
 Stag sde pa Seng ge rgyal mtshan  
   180  
 Stag sna don rtse 102  
 Stag tshag pa Śrībhūtibhadra 210  
 Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin  
   chen 101, 193, 194, 202, 228  
 Stag tshang pa 102  
 Stag tshang rdzong pa 101  
 Stan ma bcu gnyis. *See* Twelve  
   Stan ma  
 Sthiramati 315  
 Stod 'Brug 41, 45, 47  
 Stod Khams rigs gsum 219  
 Stod lugs 260  
 Stod lung 324  
 Stod Mnga' ris 292  
 Stod Mnga' ris Skor gsum 221  
 Stod Rdo rje brag. *See* Rdo rje  
   brag  
 Stod smad 322  
 Ston pa 223  
 Stong 215, 219, 321  
 Stong 'khor 168  
 Stong 'khor Bsod nams rgya  
   mtsho 168  
 Stong rje bzhi khol brgyad. *See*  
   Stong  
 Su mandra byā ka ra ṅa 191  
 Śu mi dhur Kun sprul 333  
 Su nyid 156  
 Subhutiśrīśānti 114  
 Subodhikā 317  
 Suhṛllekha 327  
 Sukhasiddhi 40  
 Sum cu pa 192  
 Sum pa 167, 219, 221, 321  
 Sum pa Blo bzang bstan pa'i  
   rgyal mtshan 165  
 Sum pa Chos rje Phun tshogs  
   rnam rgyal 167  
 Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal  
   'byor (1704–88) 102, 169, 170,  
   305, 309, 310  
 Sum pa Slob dpon 159, 161  
 Sum pa Slob dpon Chung ba  
   Dam chos rgyal mtshan 161,  
   162  
 Sum pa Slob dpon Dam chos  
   rgya mtsho 160  
 Sum pa Zhabs drung Blo bzang  
   bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan 161  
 Sumanaśrī 319  
 Sume Taiji 303  
*Śūraṅgama Sūtra* 143  
*Śūraṅgamasamādhi Mahāyāna*  
   *Sūtra* 307  
*Sūtrālaṅkāra* 327  
*Sūtrasamuccaya* 227, 325  
*Svayambhūpurāna* 93  
 Swayambhunāth 63, 66, 285  
  
 Ta bla ma 151  
 Ta Gau shri 134  
*Ta mo tsu shi bho dhi dharmo tta*  
   *ra* 307  
 Ta yan Hung thas ji 166  
 Ta'i Si tu 279, 320, 336  
 Ta'i Si tu Byang chub rgyal  
   mtshan (1302–64) 33, 34, 42,  
   211, 241  
 Ta'i Si tu Rnam rgyal grags pa 194  
 Takna 46  
 Tangut 320  
 Tārā 198  
 Tāranātha. *See* Jo nang  
   Tāranātha Kun dga' snying po  
   (1575–1634)  
 Tareśvara 193  
 Tas ka'i Temple 143  
 Tas thung 166  
 Tas thung dgon 163  
 Tas thung Dgon chen 161  
 Tenzin Namdak xiii  
 Tha snyad 296  
 Thag bzang 219  
 Thag chos mdzad. *See* Rin chen  
   dpal bzangs  
*Thal 'gyur lugs kyi tshad ma'i zin*  
   *bris* 278  
 Thang 223  
 Thang dkar 321  
 Thang lugs 55, 56  
 Thang ring Thar pa gling 161  
 Thang stong rgyal po Brtson  
   'grus bzang po (1361–1464) 55,  
   57, 65, 283  
 Thar lo Nyi ma rgyal mtshan 186  
*Thar pa chen po'i mdo. See*  
   *Mahāmokṣa Sūtra*  
 Thar pa gling 34  
 Thar pa Lo tsā ba Nyi ma rgyal  
   mtshan 17, 193, 195, 314  
 Thar pa rgyal mtshan 159  
*Thar pa skor gsum* 210  
 Thar po 163  
 Thar po chos rje Bkra shis rgyal  
   mtshan 163  
*Theg mchog mdzod* 330  
*Theg pa chen po'i tshul la 'jug pa*  
   274  
 Theravāda 22  
 Thim phu 123  
 Tho ho chi 151  
 Tho 'tsham pa 297  
 Tho yon Ho thog thu 165  
 Thob rgyal 124, 172  
*Thod rgal zin bris* 278  
 Thog lcam hur mo. *See* Thog  
   tsam 'ur ma  
 Thog lha 'od chen 103  
 Thog tsam 'ur ma 103, 293  
 Thog tsha dpa' bo sta. *See* Thog  
   tsha dpa'o stag  
 Thog tsha dpa'o stag 103, 293  
 Thon mi A nu 192  
 Thos bsam gling Chos rje Tshe  
   brtan rgyal mtshan 173  
 Thos gling Slob dpon Dpal 'byor  
   rgya mtsho 127  
 Thu mong khu ja lang 151  
 Thu'u bkwan I Blo bzang rab  
   brtan 163  
 Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi  
   nyi ma (1737–1802) 6, 40, 133,  
   147, 170, 281, 285, 308  
 Thu'u bkwan Ngag dbang chos  
   kyi rgya mtsho (1680–1736)  
   136, 152, 165, 166, 168  
 Thub bstan Chos kyi nyi ma  
   (1883–1937) 129  
 Thub bstan chos kyi rdo rje  
   (b.1872) 28, 273  
 Thub bstan Dar rgyas gling 113  
 Thub bstan 'jam dpal ye shes  
   rgyal mtshan (1912–47) 147  
 Thub bstan phrin las dpal bzang.  
   *See* Kung bzang jigs med chos  
   dbyings rang grol (b. 1927)

- Thub bstan snyan grags 35, 280  
 Thub pa'i bzhugs gnas Rdo rje  
   gdan. *See* Magadha  
 Thugs rje chen po sogs rtsa gsum  
   330  
 Thugs sprul. *See* Zhabs sprul  
*Thun mong ma yin pa'i mdzod*  
   262, 264, 329, 337, 338  
 Ti gro Tshogs khang 329  
 Ti pu pa 41  
 Ti se 65, 66  
 Til yag 328  
 Tilopa 41, 48, 61, 288  
 Tin ting phu 144  
 Tirhut 317  
 Tirhutiya 95  
 Tokden Rinpoche 285  
 Torguts 121  
 Trayatrimṣati Heaven 197  
 Tre bo 42  
 Tre hor Dkar mdzes Brag dkar  
   Blo bzang dpal ldan  
   (1866–1928) 232, 328  
 Tre'o 321  
*Trikaṇḍa*. *See* Amarakośa  
 Tsa 'dra 53  
*Tsandra pa*. *See* Candravayākaraṇa  
 Tsha ba rgan 221  
 Tsha ba sgang 323  
 Tsha mo rong glang 106  
 Tsha mo rong glang gi brag 298  
 Tshad ma gсар ma 114  
*Tshad ma rig snang* 115  
*Tshad ma rigs gter* 111, 112, 113, 115,  
   116, 303  
*Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi dka' 'grel*  
   302  
*Tshad ma rnam nges* 302  
 Tshad ma rnying ma 114  
*Tshad ma'i bsdus pa yid kyi mun*  
   sel 114  
*Tshad ma'i lam rim* 135, 144  
*Tshad ma'i ldog pa'i rnam bzhag*  
   278  
 Tshad tra pur 186  
 Tshal Gung thang 42, 223  
 Tshal mo Gung thang. *See* Tshal  
 Tshal pa Bka' bgyud pa 42  
 Tshal sgang 323  
 Tshang gсар dpon 43  
 Tshang kya Dge bshes Bstan  
   'dzin rgya mtsho 166  
 Tshangs pa pad dkar 173  
 Tshar chen Blo gsal rgya mtsho  
   (1502–66/67) 242, 323, 335  
 Tshar pa 241  
 Tshe brtan rdo rje 304  
 Tshe dbang bdud 'dul (1915–42)  
   272  
 Tshe dbang lha mo 24  
 Tshe dbang nor bu. *See* Rig 'dzin  
   Tshe dbang nor bu  
   (1698–1755)  
 Tshe dbang rab brtan 35  
 Tshe dbang rdo rje 'dzin 25  
 Tshe 'dzin 296  
 Tshe mchog Bsam gtan gling 174  
 Tshe mchog gling bla brang 175  
 Tshe mchog gling Ye shes rgyal  
   mtshan 141  
 Tshe mchog gling Yongs 'dzin  
   171, 172  
 Tshe 'phel 247  
 Tshe pong 218  
 Tshe ring dbang 'dus 176, 312  
 Tshe sgrub 'chi med rdo rje'i  
   srog shing 330  
 Tshe spong. *See* Tshe pong  
 Tshes bzhi gсар ma Grags pa  
   byang chub, Third Lha btsun  
   (1356–86) 212  
 Tshes lnga Grags pa 'byung gnas,  
   Sixth Lha btsun (1414–45) 212  
 Tshes pong. *See* Tshe pong  
*Tshig don mdzod* 330  
*Tshig gi gter* 193, 202, 303  
*Tshig gter gyi rgya cher 'grel pa me*  
   *tog gi chun po* 318  
*Tshig zla gnyis pa* 318  
 'Tsho byed Nyi ma rgya mtsho 169  
 Tshong dpon Bsam 'grub tshe  
   ring 335  
 Tshong 'dus Gur mo 324. *See* Gur  
 Tshul khrims blo gros. *See* Klong  
   chen Rab 'byams pa (1308–63)  
 Tshul khrims mchog legs 333  
 Tshul khrims rgyal po 105  
 Tshul khrims rin chen 101, 322  
 Tshul khrims seng ge 318  
 Tshul khrims snying po. *See*  
   Dwags po Sgom tshul  
 Tsog ro. *See* Cog ro  
 Tsong kha 306, 319, 323  
 Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa  
   (1357–1419) 16, 55, 116, 180,  
   229, 241, 267  
 Tsun da 146  
 Tsā ri 49, 63, 64, 286  
 Tumet 121, 122  
 Tushiyetu Khan 120  
  
 U rad 151  
*U rgyan Bsnyen sgrub* 46  
 U rgyan gling. *See* Oḍḍiyāna  
 U shri Dge bshes Blo gros rgya  
   mtsho 166  
 'U yug pa Rig pa'i seng ge (d.  
   1253) 115, 303  
  
*Udānavarga* 326  
 Udayana 199  
 Udbhaṭa 205  
 Ugrabhūti. *See* Jo bo Gdong  
   nag pa  
 Ūjūmūjin 89  
 Umā 302  
*Unādisūtra* 198  
*Upasargavṛtti* 198  
 Upāyaśrimitra 274  
 Uray 88  
 Urga 308, 329  
 Urluk 123  
  
*Vacanamukhāyudhopama*. *See*  
   *Smra ba'i sgo mtshon cha lta bu*  
   *rtsa 'grel*  
 Vachura Ojha. *See* Viṣṇupati  
*Vādanyāya* 302  
 Vagindrakīrti 206  
 Vairocana 337  
*Vaiśalavyākaraṇa*. *See* *Pai sha li*  
   *byā ka ra ṇa*  
 Vajrabhairava 274  
*Vajradāka Tantra* 187  
 Vajradhara 54  
 Vajrahāsa 16  
 Vajrakīla 22, 217, 238, 239, 264,  
   329. *See also* Rdo rje phur pa  
*Vajrakīlayamūlatantrakaṇḍa* 295  
*Vajramālā* 278  
 Vajranātha 329  
*Vajrapañjara Tantra* 100  
 Vajrapāṇi 46  
 Vajrayāna 84, 85, 106, 237, 260,  
   332  
 Vālmiki 202, 205  
 Vanaratna (1384–1468) 240, 330  
 Vararuci 198. *See* Patañjali  
 Varendra 198  
 Vasudhararakṣita 114  
 Vibhūticandra 180  
 Vidarbha. *See* Bhe ta'i gling  
 Vijñānavāda 139, 275. *See also*  
   Sems tsam pa  
 Vimalamitra 14  
 Viśvalocana 203, 204, 318  
 Viṣṇumalla 95  
 Viṣṇupati 199, 317. *See* Bachur  
   Ojā  
 Viṣṇuprakāśamalla 94  
*Vṛttamālāstuti* 202, 205  
*Vyāḍipāda* 313  
*Vyākhyāsudhā* 318  
 Vyāsa 318  
  
 Wa na 321  
 Wa ra 313  
 Wa ra Ri khrod 312



- Wa ra ri khrod pa Dam chos  
   bstan pa (d. c. 1946) 29  
 Wa shul 277  
 Wa shul Khrong khog 27  
 Wan phau Zi 143  
 Wang Chen khri 168  
 Wang Chos rje Grags pa dpal  
   'byor 168  
 Wang Grags pa 'byung gnas 313  
 Wang Kun dga' legs pa 286  
 Wen ch'eng Kung chu 255  
 Wu t'ai shan 134, 142, 144, 217  
  
 Ya chu 230  
 Ya 'phyang la mul 104  
 Yab med kyi yul 298  
 Yag la gar dpon 168  
 Yam bu. *See* Kathmandu  
 Yamen 140  
 Yang dag 105, 300  
 Yang dag thugs 295  
 Yang dgon 47  
 Yang dgon Bka' brgyud pa 45  
 Yang dgon pa (1213–58) 47, 48,  
   49, 78, 289  
 Yangs pa can 292  
 Yangtse. *See* 'Bri  
 Yar 222, 325  
 Yar 'brog 35, 65, 256, 279  
 Yar klungs 310, 336  
 Yar klungs char 294  
 Yar klungs Lo tsā ba Grags pa  
   rgyal mtshan 193, 202, 203, 314  
 Yar klungs Phu sar 286  
 Yar lung 164, 310  
 Yar stod 125, 252  
 Yar stod Bug pa can 319  
 Ye phug pa Bka' brgyud pa. *See*  
   Yel pa Bka' brgyud pa  
*Ye shes bla ma'i khrid gnad bsdu*  
   278  
 Ye shes bstrung pa. *See* Rba  
   Dznyiāntrai ta Ye shes bstrung  
   pa  
 Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma. *See* Rje  
   btsun Dam pa  
 Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma  
   (1758–73) 130  
 Ye shes bstan pa'i nyi ma  
   (1849?–59?) 146  
 Ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan  
   (1787–1846) 146  
 Ye shes bstan pa'i sgron me. *See*  
   Rol pa'i rdo rje (1717–86)  
 Ye shes 'byung grus 112  
 Ye shes dbang po 304  
 Ye shes dbang po srung. *See*  
   Jñānendraraksita  
 Ye shes rdo rje. *See* Blo bzang  
   bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan  
   (1635–1723)  
 Ye shes rgya mtsho (1592–1604)  
   129  
 Ye shes rgyal mchog 57  
 Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–93) 6,  
   171, 172, 176  
 Yel pa Bka' brgyud pa 45  
 Yer pa 105  
 Yer pa'i brag 295  
*Yi ge'i mdo. See Varnasūtra*  
*Yi ge'i rnam bshad* 315  
*Yid bzhin mdzod* 330  
 Yo'u Cang jun *see* Yo'u Cang  
   kyun  
 Yo'u Cang kyun 136, 167  
 Yogācāra 231  
*Yogaprakāśa* 94  
 Yol dge bsnyen Rdo rje dbang  
   phyug 274  
 Yol phu Gser gling 57  
 Yon tan mtha' yas (1724–83) 86  
*Yon tan mdzod* 22, 275  
 Yon tan rgya mtsho (1589–1617)  
   129, 303  
 Yongs 'dzin Blo bzang bstan pa  
   175  
 Yongs 'dzin Dkon mchog 'phel  
   112, 302  
 Yongs 'dzin Lhag bsam rgyal  
   mtshan 334  
 Yongs 'dzin Ngag dbang grags pa  
   17  
*Yuddhajayanāmatantrarājasvaro-*  
*daya* 302  
 Yul gyi gtso bo bzhi 221  
 Yul gyi gtso chen bzhi 221  
 Yum brtan 319  
 Yun li. *See* Keng ze Chin wang  
   (1697–1735)  
 Yung cheng (1722–35) 133, 134,  
   136, 152  
  
 Za hor 104  
 Za hor gling. *See* Mandi  
 Za lung pa 33, 279  
 Zam tsha Sprul sku 174  
 Zangs chen pa Dar ma bsod  
   nams 326  
 Zen ching 153  
 Zhabs drung Bskal bzang ye shes  
   dar rgyas 133  
 Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam  
   rgyal. *See* Ngag dbang rnam  
   rgyal (1594–1651)  
 Zhabs sdod pa Dbang drag 172  
 Zhal 223  
 Zhal lung. *See* G.ya' lung  
 Zhal lung 'jag bshongs 108  
  
 Zhang 'Brug sgra rgyal mtshan  
   130  
 Zhang G.yu brag pa Brtson 'grus  
   grags pa (1123–93) 42  
 Zhang Mdo sde dpal 116, 303  
 Zhang sgom Chos seng 54  
 Zhang ston 'Khrol zhig 'Brug  
   sgra rgyal mtshan 270  
 Zhang Tshe spong ba Chos kyi  
   bla ma 326  
 Zhang zhong. *See* Zhong zhong  
 Zhang zhung 99, 221, 230, 301,  
   322, 325, 333  
 Zhang zhung Chos dbang grags  
   pa (1404–69) 208, 243, 319  
 Zhang zhung Gu ra ba 108  
 Zhe chen 17, 19, 20, 230, 247,  
   327  
 Zhe chen 'Gyur med mthu stobs  
   rnam rgyal 261, 337  
 Zhe chen 'Jigs med blo gsal 247  
 Zhe chen Dbon sprul 'Gyur med  
   mthu stobs rnam rgyal 20  
 Zhe chen Drung yig Bstan 'dzin  
   rgyal mtshan 20, 89, 195, 318  
 Zhe chen Kong sprul 20  
 Zhe chen Mi pham 272  
 Zhe chen Rab 'byams pa 20, 273,  
   276  
 Zhi byed 54, 137, 275, 279  
 Zhi gnas Dka' bcu pa Tshul  
   khrims pa 305  
 Zhig po gling pa 17  
 Zhing skyong 18  
 Zho 324  
 Zhogs pa Don yod mkhas grub  
   138  
 Zhol 294  
 Zhong zhong 53, 324  
 Zhu chen Tshul khrims rin chen  
   (1697–1774) 89, 92, 186, 192,  
   283, 317  
 Zhun mthing pa 256  
 Zhun thing ba. *See* Zhun  
   mthing pa  
 Zhus ston Gzhon nu brtson  
   'grus 106, 298  
 Zhwa bo khog 167  
 Zhwa de'u Sprul sku 35  
 Zhwa dmar 42, 90, 136, 278  
 Zhwa dmar Dkon mchog yan  
   lag 252  
 Zhwa dmar VIII Dpal chen chos  
   kyi don grub (1695–1732) 306  
 Zhwa lha khang 21  
 Zhwa lu 307. *See also* Zhal  
 Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong  
   bzang po (1441–1527) 193, 202,  
   204, 331

- Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Dpal ldan  
 dbang po'i sde 194  
 Zhwa lu Ri phug 324  
 Zhwa lu Ri sbug sprul sku 250  
 Zhwa lu Slob dpon Rin chen  
 lhun grub 307  
 Zhwa ma Lo tsā ba Seng ge rgyal  
 mtshan 114  
 Zhwa nag 90, 289  
 Zhwa nag XII Byang chub rdo  
 rje (1703–32) 306  
 Zi khron Tsong thu 142
- Zi ling 136, 140, 142  
 Zla ba 218  
 Zla ba chi 140  
 Zla ba gang ba. *See* Pūrṇavajra  
 Zla ba sgron ma 35  
 Zla bzang 328  
 Zur Bka' ma 242  
 Zur khang 35, 280  
 Zur khang pa Dkar Shakya grags  
 pa 303  
 Zur mang 42  
 Zur mang Bka' brgyud pa 42
- Zur mkhar A pho chos rje. *See* A  
 pho Chos rje Mnyam nyid rdo  
 rje  
 Zur mkhar 286  
 Zur phug pa Rin chen dpal  
 bzang 47, 48  
 Zwa ra 46  
 Zwa ra ba Skal ldan ye shes seng  
 ge (d. 1207) 45



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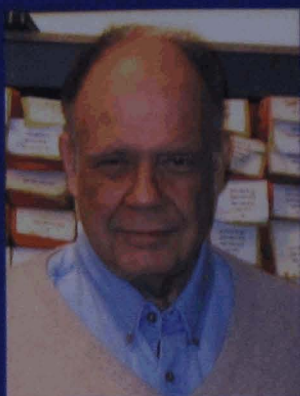
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