

THE CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES LECTURES

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TIBETAN BUDDHISM BY THE MONGOL IMPERIAL
FAMILY

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LEONARD VAN DER KUIJP
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MONGOL IMPERIAL FAMILY *

Our knowledge and understanding of the nature and extent of Tibetan-Mongol relations from the Mongol conquest of Tibet in 1240 and its occupation of this land through the Yuan period (1276-1368) of Chinese history is happily growing at a reasonably steady pace. Much of this has been due to the fact that increasingly more pertinent Tibetan sources are becoming available, sources that were hitherto inaccessible or even unknown. They shed new light not only on how the Tibetans reacted to this new state of affairs and the different roles they played as they moved, at times with a measure of complacency, in the upper regions of the successive imperial courts, but also, albeit on a much more limited scale, on the business of Mongol rule in China. As far as their quality as literary sources on the policies of the imperial court is concerned, they do not quite balance the enduring loss of the *Veritable Records of the Yuan Dynasty*, the *Yuan shilu*, Wei Su (1303-72) salvaged long ago, albeit it in vein; the records were destroyed by the Ming. But they do clarify a number of important aspects of their rule in China and Tibet that are all but ignored or very succinctly alluded to in the relatively few surviving Chinese sources of the period.

Published now more than thirty years ago, D. Schuh's study of the Tibetan edicts promulgated by the Mongol court in Yuan China on behalf of the Tibetan clergy and a portion of the relevant Tibetan biographical literature did much to clarify certain administrative, political and even lexicographic aspects of the relations that existed between members of the upper echelons of the Tibetan clergy and the Mongol imperial court.¹ Till

* This paper is the second in a series under the general title of "Fourteenth Century Tibetan Cultural History." It was first conceived in the early 1990s, and is partially a product of my stay in Beijing in 1992 that was funded by the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, Washington, D.C. [now Committee on Scholarly Communication with China, New York]. I am very much indebted to an anonymous referee of this much earlier draft of the essay, who generously provided me with an opportunity to correct some of my mistakes and to add further materials that had escaped my attention. Respecting his anonymity, I thank him for the obvious time he took to go through this early version. "C.P.N." refers to the Tibetan section of the China Nationalities Library at the Cultural Palace of Nationalities, Beijing. Only studies mentioned more than twice in this paper are referred to in abbreviated form and listed in the bibliography. With some exceptions, all exact dates that follow below are calculated from the Tibetan with the aid of the *Tabellen* in Schuh (1973).

¹ Schuh (1977).

now we only had Tibet-related edicts promulgated by the Tibetan ecclesiastic hierarchy in the service of and active at the court, as well as several such documents that were issued by an emperor, empress-dowager, or a prince. The recent publication of two edicts issued by myriarch Smon lam rdo rje (ca. 1284-1347) and his son Kun dga' rdo rje (1309-64) of Tshal pa myriarchy² that controlled Lhasa and its environs indicate for the first time that the competence of issuing such documents in the name of the emperor was not solely confined to the upper echelons of the clergy. D. Schuh is not a sinologist. The sinological dimension of his seminal work was fruitfully taken up in a separate paper by H. Franke, who made a number of corrections as well as additions to his work through a careful sifting of especially the *Yüan Dynastic History*, the *Yuanshi*, all the while underscoring that not only do Tibetan and Chinese literary sources for the Yuan period complement each other, but Tibetan documents also oftentimes include a good deal of information not found in the latter.³ Himself not a Tibetanist, Franke has nonetheless greatly contributed to bringing clarity to the Tibetan dimension of what was happening during the Yuan dynasty in several other essays. Three papers by him, two on the East Tibetan Sga A nyan dam pa Kun dga' grags (1230-1303) and one on the Xixia-Tangut monk Sha lo pa (1259-1314), that is, ?Sher dpal (< ?Shes rab dpal),⁴ have shed a good deal of light on the activities in Yuan China of these two high-ranking clergymen. Sga A nyan dam pa was instrumental in propagating cults that

² See the *Bod kyi yig tshags phyogs bsgrigs*, vol. 1, ed. Rdo rje tshe brtan, et al. (Beijing: krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1997), 3-4. For these two men, see K.-H. Everding, tr., *Der Gung thang dkar chag*, Monumenta Tibetica Historica, Abt. 1, Bd. 5 (Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag GmbH, 2000), 123-31. Smon lam rdo rje's biography by his son Kun dga' rdo rje is extant.

³ Franke (1990).

⁴ See his "Tan pa, A Tibetan Lama at the Court of the Great Khan," *Orientalia Venetiana* 1 (1984), 157-80 and the first chapter in Franke (1996: 11-65), and "Sha lo pa (1259-1314), A Tangut Buddhist Monk in Yüan China," *Religion and Philosophie in Ostasien: Festschrift für Hans Steininger zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. G. Naundorf et al. (Königshausen: Neumann, 1985), 201-22; see also his *China under Mongol Rule* (Aldershot: Variorum Ashgate Publishing, 1994). One still cannot help but still wonder whether "Sha lo pa" is not derived from Tibetan shar pa, "Easterner," and whether he may have thus been connected with Sa skya monastery's Shar pa Residence. For A nyan [or: gnyan, mye] dam pa, see now also Chen Qingying and Zhou Shengwen, "A Study of the Famous Tibetan Monk National Preceptor Dam pa of the Yuan Dynasty [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo Zangxue* 1 (1990), 58-67, Shen Weirong's paper [not accessible to me] in *Yuanshi ji beifang minzushi yanjiu jikan* (1989/90), 70-4, and E. Sperling, "Some Remarks on Sga A gnyan dam pa and the Origins of the Hor pa Lineage of the Dkar mdzes Region," *Tibetan History and Language: Studies Dedicated to Uray Géza on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. E. Steinkellner, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 26 (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1991), 455-65.

centered on the tantric deity Mahākāla at, among other places of the empire, the capital of Dadu, a circumstance that had historical precedence. As was indicated by E. Sperling, much of the Mongols' keen concern with this deity was already prefigured in the Xixia state.⁵ The large catalogue of monasteries in what is now called Dkar mdzes khul in Khams, West Sichuan, edited by 'Jigs med bsam grub and others, records his crucial involvement in the construction of several monasteries in this area.⁶ Mention must also be made of Chen Qingying's numerous contributions to our understanding of Tibetan-Mongol relations during the said period. We should recognize here at least his biographical study of Lama 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235-80)⁷ of Sa skya monastery, from 1264 to 1270 one of the National Preceptors (*guoshi*) of the court of Qubilai Qaghan (Shizu Emperor, r. May 6, 1260 to February 18, 1294) and later, from 1270 to his passing, the Qaghan's Imperial Preceptor (*dishi*), and several other books of which he was the translator, co-translator or editor. These include the Chinese translations of G.yas ru Stag tshang pa Dpal 'byor bzang po's *Rgya bod yig tshang*, a circa 1434 compilation of various documents, a version of Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's *Deb ther dmar po* chronicle, A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams' (1597-1659) 1629 genealogical study of his family that controlled Sa skya monastery - he himself was Sa skya's twenty-eighth grand-abbot -, and the highly important autobiography of Ta'i si tu (< Ch. *dasitu*) Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302-64).⁸

In spite of these contributions and those by L. Petech, Su Bai, Y. Ishihama,⁹ T. Otosaka and many others,¹⁰ much remains to be done in terms

⁵ See his "Rtsa mi Lo tsā ba Sangs rgyas grags pa and the Tangut Background to Early Mongol-Tibetan Relations," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies. Fagernas 1992*, ed. P. Kvaerne, vol. II (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 801-24; see also Wang Yao, "A Cult of Mahākāla in Beijing," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies. Fagernas 1992*, ed. P. Kvaerne, vol. II (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 958-9.

⁶ *Khams phyogs dkar mdzes khul gyi dgon sde so so'i lo rgyus gsal bar bshad pa nang bstan gsal ba'i me long*, vol. I [Neibu] (1999), 153 ff., 177, 456.

⁷ *The Yuan Dynasty's Imperial Preceptor 'Phags pa* [in Chinese] (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 1992).

⁸ See, respectively, the *Han Zang shiji* (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1986), Chen-Zhou (1988), Chen-Gao-Zhou (1989), and Btsan lha-Yu (1989).

⁹ See, respectively, Petech (1990), *The Archeology of Buddhist Monasteries of the Tibetan Tradition* [in Chinese] (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996), 222-33, 264-74, 322-87 - my thanks to G. Tuttle for this reference -, her and Y. Fukuda's very useful *A Study of the Grub mtha' of Tibetan Buddhism, Vol. 4 - On the chapter on the history of Mongolian Buddhism of Thu'u bkwan's Grub mtha'* - [in Japanese], *Studia Tibetica* No. 11 (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1986), her "The Image of Qubilai's Kingship as based on 'Phags pa's Buddhist Ideas [in Japanese]," *Nihon Chibetto Gakkai Kaihō* 40 (1994), 35-44, and *A Historical Study of the*

of increasing our understanding of the extent to which members of the Mongol court were practically involved with Tibetan Buddhism and the particulars of their support of its traditions that in their combination had, beginning in the 1250s, virtually become a state religion. In a Buddhist context, the underlying theoretical basis for concrete expressions of patronage and other forms of support on the part of the Mongol imperial family is of course the conviction that this would channel the accrued karmic merit into a variety of concrete manifestations, from ensuring the stability of the reign and the longevity of the emperor and the imperial family, to guaranteeing the prosperity of the nation as a whole and, lest we forget, one's own well-being, if not in the present, then in the future. Regardless of whether the rituals were performed at the court in Dadu or Shangdu, or in Tibet proper, their financial support by the Mongols did much to create and undergird beneficent karma for both parties. The support took on a variety of shapes, but it did ultimately set into motion an unprecedented transfer of imperial wealth to Tibet proper that had many short and long-term consequences, from the construction of new monasteries and, concomitant with the increase in the monastic population, the institution of new monastic curricula, to an increase in book-production and things artistic, and the rise of a new aristocratic class. It is hardly an accident that among these rituals was one that focused on the so-called *De bzhin gshegs pa bdun gyi mdo*, that is, the *Āryasaptatahāgatapūrvapranīdhānaviśeṣavistāranāmamahāyāna-sūtra*, a work the Tibetans later variously classified as a sutra and an action-tantra. The Buddha as healer (*smān bla*, *Bhaiṣajyaguru*), who stands at the center and the ritual-complex that took its departure from this sutra, was primarily the domain of the Bka' gdams pa school and Ze'u 'Dul 'dzin Grags pa brtson 'grus (1253-1316), from 1299 to 1305 the tenth abbot of Snar thang monastery, participated in and possibly presided over several of its enactments while staying at the courts of Qubilai and his successor Öljeitü Qaghan (Chengzong Emperor, r. May 10, 1294 to February 2, 1307).¹¹ To be sure, the rituals associated with this sutra had a long history in Tibet proper

Tibetan Buddhist World [in Japanese] (Tokyo: Tōhō shoten, 2001), especially pp. 25-44 for an excellent analysis of Lama 'Phags pa's position at Qubilai's court that forms the basis for the later chapters on Tibetan Buddhist ideology among the Mongols and the Manchus.

¹⁰ See the long and detailed bibliographical survey by F.W. Mote in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6. *Alien Regimes and border states*, ed. H. Franke and D. Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 689-726, and the useful bibliography in Y. Ishihama, "Japanese Research on Tibetan History, 1985-98; Tibetan Studies in Japan," *Asian Research Trends: A Humanities and Social Sciences Review* 9 (1999), 31-2.

¹¹ See his biography, the *Dpal ldan ze'u 'dul 'dzin chen po'i rnam thar gsal byed yid bzhin nor bu*, twenty-one folio handwritten dbu med manuscript under C.P.N. catalogue no. 002815(6). It was written in Snar thang at an unspecified date by an unidentified disciple of his. The reference to this ritual is found on fols. 6b ff.

and, we can infer, in the Indian subcontinent as well. Indeed, the longest fundamental treatise on its procedures (*cho ga, vidhi*) was apparently authored by none other than Śāntarakṣita (?-783/788/797) for the benefit of emperor Khri srong lde'u btsan (r. ca. 755- 97), his family and his reign.¹² Titled **Saptatahāgatapūrvapraṇidhānaviśeṣavistārasūtrāntopadeśa*, the tradition surrounding this work is probably correct in assuming that he was the author, for its canonical version as found, for instance, in the Sde dge print of the Tanjur is signed by his common epithet "Bodhisattva."¹³ The name[s] of the translator[s] is [are] not given in the colophons of any of the available canonical xylographs of this work, but we do learn there that it was written:

[*dbang phyug dam pa'i mnga' bdag dpal lha btsan po lha sras khri srong lde'u btsan gyi*] *sku tshe bsring ba dang / dbu rmog btsan pa dang / chab srid mtho ba dang / las sgrib sbyang ba dang / tshogs gnyis spel ba'i ched du /...*

...for the sake of the [emperor's] longevity, the might of [his] helmet [= authority],¹⁴ the supremacy of the reign, the purification of [his] stained [= bad] karma, and the development of the two accumulations [of his gnosis and merit]...

Of course, not entirely unproblematic is that, in contrast to the sutra, it is not included in the *Ldan dkar ma* [or: *Lhan [d]kar ma*] catalogue of possibly 824, and the Snar thang scholar Dar ma rgyal mtshan (1227-1305) alias Bcom ldan ral gri also does not register it in his catalogue of translated scripture that he probably compiled before 1280¹⁵ - Dar ma rgyal mtshan

¹² On his date, see now C.A. Scherrer-Schaub, "Enacting Words. A Diplomatic Analysis of the Imperial Decrees (bkas bcad) and their Application in the Sgra byor bam po gnyis pa Tradition," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 25 (2002), 282, n. 66, 313-4.

¹³ TT vol. 31, no. 3136 [# 3132], 443/1-451/3 [Pu, 246a-75a].

¹⁴ For the term *dbu rmog*, "helmet," in the sense of "authority," see F.K. Li and W.S. Coblin, *A Study of the Old Tibetan Inscriptions*, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Special Publications No. 91 (Taipei, 1987), 434. And for *dbu rmog btsan pa* in the sense of "best helmet" and "great merit," see Btsan lha Ngag dbang tshul khriims, *Brda dkrol gser gyi me long* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1997), 586.

¹⁵ For the sutra, see the entry in M. Lalou, "Les textes bouddhiques au temps du roi Khri srong lde btsan," *Journal Asiatique* CCXLI (1953), 323, no. 147. Titled *Bstan pa rgyas pa rgyan gyi nie tog or, alternatively, Bstan pa rgyas pa rgyan gyi nyi ma'i 'od zer*, Dar ma rgyal mtshan's catalogue is now available in two different manuscripts. One is a thirty-eight-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 005968; the other is a handwritten *dbu med* manuscript in seventy-eight folios. For this work, see K.R. Schaeffer

was among the premier masters of Ze'u. Instead, it first formally raises its head as a "canonical" treatise in Dbus pa Blo gsal's (ca. 1255-?) catalogue of a / the Snar thang Tanjur.¹⁶ To be sure, we can assume that Ze'u was familiar with his teacher Mchims Nam mkha' grags' (1210-85) study of this cult.¹⁷ Mchims, himself Snar thang's eighth abbot from 1250 to 1285, observes in the preamble of his work that deals with the cult's history, that Śāntarakṣita had introduced its practice in Tibet when Buddhism was in the process of becoming a bona fide state religion under Khri srong lde'u btsan. The introduction of Indian Buddhism in late-imperial Tibet meant that, as a foreign and competing body, it had to be able to hold its own vis-à-vis the indigenous institutions with their own cultural and religious concepts that, apparently, had already begun actively resisting it when Khri srong lde'u btsan was still a young man. In other words, the Indian master may very well have felt that were Buddhism to have a fighting chance, this ritual complex, no doubt along with several others, needed to become an integral part of the religious and ritual life of the Tibetan court and the families associated with it.

Mchims also figures as a teacher of Lama 'Phags pa and the latter lists the so-called *Sangs rgyas sman gyi bla'i mdo* in his record of texts and

and L.W.J. van der Kuijp, *An Early Tibetan Survey of Buddhist Literature. The Bstan pa rgyas pa nyi 'od of Bcom ldan ral gri*, forthcoming in the *Harvard Oriental Series*.

¹⁶ See his *Bstan bcos kyi dkar chag*, eighty-one folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalogue no. 002376, 30a, where he states that all three *vidhi*-texts, nos. 3136-8 [see above note 12], were written by the Bodhisattva. Dbus pa Blo gsal placed all three in the eighth chapter of his catalogue in which are listed the practice- and action-tantras. On the other hand, in the catalogue of translated scripture he appended to his ecclesiastic chronicle of 1322-6, Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364) ascribes all three to Zhi ba 'tsho [= Śāntarakṣita] and surmises that they might have to be reclassified under the sutra rubric; see the *Bde bar gshegs pa'i bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston (and Sgra tshad pa)* [Lhasa print], part 24 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 992 [Ibid., ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1988), 267-8]. He classified them once again under the heading of action-tantra in his 1335 catalogue of the Zhwa lu Tanjur, for which see the *Bstan 'gyur gyi dkar chag yid bzhin nor bu dbang gi rgyal po'i phreng bu*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston (and Sgra tshad pa)* [Lhasa print], part 26 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 542. But this was hardly the end of the story of their putative authorship, as Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382-1456) pointed out in his brief undated study of the cognate rituals anent eight Tathāgata-s; see his *Bde gshegs brgyad kyi mchod pa'i cho ga*, SSB vol. 10, no. 146, 337/4. There he agrees with some unidentified scholar[s], who had reacted to Mchims' proposal that all three texts had been written by Śāntarakṣita. By contrast, he [they] held that the long and short versions were written by some unidentified Bka' gdams pa teachers and not by the Indian master.

¹⁷ See the undated thirty-three folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript bearing the title *De 4n gshegs pa bdun gyi mchod pa ji ltar bsgrub pa'i tshul*, which is extant under C.P.N. catalogue no. 004399(7).

teachings as one of a number of texts he had studied with him.¹⁸ This is of course none other than the well-known *Bhaiṣajyaguruvaiḍūryaprabhāsa-pūrvapraṇidhānaviśeṣavistāranāmamahāyānasūtra*. This particular work emerged well before the abovementioned sutra and, indeed, large sections of it are incorporated in the latter. Needless to say, they share common concerns and, arguably, may have arisen in a similar intellectual and religious environment.¹⁹ The first can possibly be viewed as a mainstream Indian Buddhist response, informed by further developments, to the second, which may very well have originated in one or the other Buddhist community on the fringes of the subcontinent.

Now in his quasi-obituary of Lama 'Phags pa, roughly titled '*Phags pa's Werdegang*, the Hanlin scholar Wang Pan (1194-1286) made the following statement, as cited in Nian Chang's (1282-1341) 1333 history of Buddhism.²⁰

In the beginning, Tibet had National Preceptor Shandaluoqida...

It is not hard to recover Śāntarakṣita's name from *Shandaluoqida*! Wang Pan begins his text with the full Chinese title in thirty-six characters Lama 'Phags pa received when he was appointed Imperial Preceptor, and then relates briefly where and under what auspicious familial circumstances he was born. This is followed by the lines cited above that conclude with how he was venerated (*zun*) by the Tibetan king (*guowang*). What motivated Wang Pan to write these lines is, of course, open to interpretation. Lama 'Phags pa is not mentioned once in his biography in the *Yuanshi*, and the particulars of their relationship, or Wang Pan's with Lama 'Phags pa's associates, are not altogether transparent. But what seems rather clear on the surface of things is that he wanted to draw attention to a historical precedent and indicate the evident parallels he saw between the Tibetan lama's activities at Qubilai's court and those of Śāntarakṣita at the court of Khri srong lde'u btsan. I am not aware of a reference in the literature that Lama 'Phags pa ever led or participated in these rituals; the cult of the white

¹⁸ *Lung dang brgyud pa sna tshogs thob pa'i gsan yig*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 315, 287/3.

¹⁹ For a note on these, see P. Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism, The Doctrinal Foundations* (London: Routledge, 1989), 247-51.

²⁰ See the *Fozu lidai tongzai, Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaikyoku, comp. Ono Genmyō (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-32), vol. XLIX, no. 2036, 707c13, as cited in Xiao Diyan and Jie Luzhu, "Phags pa under the Pens of Yuan and Ming Chinese Historians [in Chinese]," *Xizang Yanjiu* 1 (1983), 92. Wang Pan's sketch is also partly reproduced in Dehui's *Chi xiu biazhang qinggui, Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaikyoku, comp. Ono Genmyō (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-32), vol. XLVIII, no. 2025, 1117b8 ff.

parasol (*gdugs dkar*) in which we know he repeatedly participated, is unrelated to it.²¹ According to Chinese sources, then, in Dadu, the main celebrations took place on the fifteenth day of the second lunar month; in Shangdu dissimilar celebrations were scheduled on the fifteenth day of the sixth lunar month. There are many problems in correlating the Tibetan calendar[s] with the Chinese one, but we can be fairly certain that the first of these commemorates to the day on which the Buddha pacified those who disagreed with him, the *tirthika*-s. This is also called the day on which the Buddha showed a great miracle (*cho 'phrul chen mo*). For Lama 'Phags pa [and the Bka' gdams pa school], this took place on the fifteenth day of the final-winter or the horse-month (*sta pa*; read *rtā pa*), where the horse-month is the first month of the Chinese calendar.²² It is altogether unclear to me what the occasion might have been celebrated in Shangdu. Lastly, quoted by Nian Chang and translated by Franke, the anonymous *Hongjiao ji*, contains an interesting reference to Qubilai's interest in the cult of the Bhaiṣajyaguru, to the extent that he had perhaps as many as three of its ritual texts translated into Chinese, two of which by Sha lo pa, sometime between 1291 and 1294.²³ This fits well with Ze'u's presence in his court.

Yet another key-element in the quid pro quo dialectic of Mongol patronage of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan clergymen was that of the establishment of a Bureau for Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs [in 1264] and the institutions of the Imperial Preceptor, who, in contrast to National Preceptors, was always a Tibetan cleric and, it seems, a member of the Sa skya school, and the funding of large-scale construction projects of temples and monasteries in China proper as well as in Tibet and on the Sino-Tibetan marches. Another form of patronage was the provision of funds for the compilation, copying and, in some cases, printing and the subsequent wide distribution of Buddhist texts.

The collected writings of Lama 'Phags pa provide a good number of illustrations for the copying out [not printing] of canonical Tibetan texts that was sponsored by members of the Mongol imperial family. These were

²¹ See F.W. Cleaves, "The "Fifteen 'Palace' Poems" by K'o Chin-ssu," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 20 (1957), 453-5, where the full dossier on the cult is translated from the *Yuanshi*, and the partial translation of the same in Liu Ts'un-yan and J. Berling, "The Three Teachings in the Mongol-Yüan Period," *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion under the Mongols*, ed. Hok-lam Chan and Wm. Th. De Bary (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 482-3. Cleaves rightly surmises the cult has something to do with Sitātapatrā. Lama 'Phags pa wrote a short ritual text on her in 1275; see SSBB vol. 7, no. 147, 76/4-8/1.

²² *Sangs rgyas kyi dus chen bzhi'i ngos 'dzin*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 294, 256/2; see also Schuh (1973: 32); see also below n. 38.

²³ Franke (1996: 159) and H. Franke, "Sha lo pa (1259-1314), A Tangut Buddhist Monk in Yüan China," 209.

discussed elsewhere in some detail.²⁴ In this essay, we turn to a similar expression of their patronage, namely the provision of funds to have Tibetan Buddhist books printed, in particular, those belonging to the extremely esoteric Kālacakra (Tib. *duś 'khor*) cycle.²⁵ This began perhaps in the 1290s and continued right through to the end of the Yuan, and somewhat beyond. Before doing so, we should first briefly mention three other printing projects in which the Mongol imperial family had been engaged. The printer's colophon (*par byang*) of the earliest known xylograph of a Tibetan text whose printing blocks were financed by the imperial family, namely those for Sa skya Paṇḍita's (1182-1251) autocommentary on the *Tshad ma rigs pa'i gter*. The completion of the carving of the blocks for this celebrated work on Buddhist logic and epistemology is dated December 16, 1284.²⁶ We also learn from it that these blocks were prepared in Da renwang huguo monastery [founded 1271-4] that is located north of Dadu.²⁷ The project was initiated and financed by none other than empress Chabi, Qubilai's senior wife, and was completed by her daughter-in-law Kōkōcin shortly after she

²⁴ See the *Introduction* of the volume by K. Schaeffer and me referred to in n. 15.

²⁵ For the more recent studies on this textual corpus, see J. Newman, "Islam in the Kālacakratantra," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21 (1998), 311-71, *ibid.*, "The Epoch of the Kālacakra Tantra," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41 (1998), 319-49, and V.A. Wallace, *The Inner Kālacakratantra. A Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also in this connection my forthcoming "Atiśa and the Kālacakra Corpus."

²⁶ See my "Two Mongol Xylographs (hor par ma) of the Tibetan Text of Sa skya Paṇḍita's Work on Buddhist Logic and Epistemology," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 16 (1993), 280-3, 291-3. In his translation of Dalai Lama V's chronicle, Tucci (1949: 630) writes that the Tshal pa myriarch Dga' bde dpal built a printery at Tshal. This was repeated in E. Lo Bue, "Iconographic Sources and Iconometric Literature in Tibetan and Himalayan Art," *Indo-Tibetan Studies: Papers in Honour and Appreciation of Professor David L. Snellgrove's Contribution to Indo-Tibetan Studies*, ed. T. Skorupski (Tring: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990), 184: "Dga' bde mgon po(sic) set up a printing press." This is based on a misreading. The available texts of Dalai Lama V's work write bar khang, "middle story," and not par khang, "printing house." The reading of "grand bar khang" is also met with in the anonymous *Rgyal rabs sogs bod kyi yig tshang gsal ba'i me long, Sngon gyi gdam me tog gi phreng ba...with other rare historical texts* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1985), 113. Indeed, I have so far found no evidence for the printing of Tibetan texts in Central Tibet before the fifteenth century. For Dga' bde dpal, see now also K.-H. Everding, tr., *Der Gung thang dkar chag*, 111-9, 157 ff. His longish biography by Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje is extant.

²⁷ The story of this powerful personality is briefly told in M. Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family," *Studia Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke*, ed. W. Bauer, Münchener Ostasiatische Studien, Bd. 25 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner), 1979, 167-70, and especially in F. W. Cleaves, "The Biography of the Empress Cabi in the *Yüan-shih*," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3-4 (1979-80), 138-50. The latter observes, on p.145, n. 45, two different dates for her death, namely 1277 and 1284. Rossabi dates her passing to the year 1281 in his *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 206.

had passed away. Given the extreme likelihood that the preparation of these printing blocks had not taken more than three years, this circumstance should allow us to dispel the confusion that besets the conflicting notes on the year of her death in the *Yuanshi*,²⁸ so that we can be pretty certain that she died in 1284. Later Tibetan sources call xylographs deriving from these blocks “Mongol xylograph[s]” (*hor par ma*); the same appellation is also used for a xylograph of Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Sdom gsum rab tu dbye ba*, which has not [yet] come down to us.²⁹ The Mongol imperial family evidently took a non-sectarian approach to this kind of patronage. Indeed, the literature makes it abundantly clear that a number of Tibetan Buddhist tantric texts belonging to the Rnying ma pa school were also printed in Yuan China in the first half of the fourteenth century. These, too, are referred to as *hor par ma*.³⁰

Now just because these xylographs are called *hor par ma*, this does not mean that such a designation was exclusively confined to those texts whose printing blocks were carved under the auspices of the Mongol imperial family. In this connection, we cannot neglect to mention that, in the first half of the sixteenth century, three xylographs of different Tibetan canonical texts belonging to the *Pañcarakṣā* corpus circulated in Central Tibet. Called *hor par ma*, neither their exact provenance nor their dates are known, but it is quite unlikely that these have their origin in acts of patronage that went all the way back to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. The only source for these three *hor par ma* known to me is a little undated work by Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis (ca. 1470-1540). There he studied a select number of the readings of what he calls the *hor par ma* of the *Mahāpratisarāvidyārājñī*, the *Mahāsāhasrapramardinīsūtra* and the *Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī* by comparing them with the corresponding passages in several Sanskrit manuscripts to which he had access.³¹ It is of course not

²⁸ For this monastery, see Franke (1996: 135).

²⁹ See D.P. Jackson, *The Entrance Gate for the Wise (Section III). Sa skya Paṇḍita on Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Pramāna and Philosophical Debate* vol. 1, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 17,1 (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1987), 73 and 81, n. 25.

³⁰ These are revisited in my forthcoming “A Tibetan Magus at the Mongol Court of Külüg Qaghan [the Wuzong Emperor]: The Case of G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal (1287-1365).”

³¹ See the *Sgra'i nyer mkho gal che ba'i skor 'ga' zhig*, four-folio handwritten dbu med manuscript, C.P.N. catalogue no. ?(17). On the literary genre to which these three texts belong, see P. Skilling, “The *Rakṣā* Literature of the *śrāvakayāna*,” *Journal of the Pali Text Society* XVI (1992), 109-82. The Kaṭacchhubhadanta Ratnamaṅgala of M. Hahn, “Sanskrittexte aus dem tibetischen Tanjur (1): Das Nāgārjuna zugeschriebene *Daṇḍakavīttastotra*,” *Berliner Indologische Studien* 3 (1987), 52, is thus none other than this Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba.

altogether unlikely that the ethnonym *hor* in the term *hor par ma* refers to the so-called “thirty-nine Mongol tribes” that had settled in the area between Nag chu and Chab mdo, some of whose chieftains had close ties with especially members of the Bka' bgyud pa school.

In the pages that follow, I will first examine the available dossier on those printing projects of Tibetan texts anent the Kālacakra literature. This is followed by a brief discussion of various notices of Kālacakra initiations and teachings given by Tibetan hierarchs to members of the Mongol imperial family. I should hasten to point out that the obvious sketchiness of my narrative reflects the paucity and brevity of the relevant notices found in the Tibetan sources that are available to me. In conclusion, I make a few general remarks on the state of Tibetan Buddhism in Yuan China, the influence of Chinese Buddhism in Tibet, and the continued support by the Mongol imperial family of Buddhism in Tibet immediately after the fall of the Yuan.

LAMA 'PHAGS PA AND THE KĀLACAKRA CORPUS. Lama 'Phags pa had been interested in questions dealing with the calendar and chronology ever since he was a boy. Schooled in the subject by his uncle Sa skya Paṇḍita, his first precocious foray in the area of the calendrical calculation pertaining to the Kālacakra corpus was apparently written in 1249, when he was a mere lad of fourteen.³² He then studied it once again around the age of twenty-two when he was sojourning on Mount Wutai in Shanxi. On purely scientific grounds and fortunately unbeknownst to most of them, it was not in the Tibetans' best interest that their premier sources for Indic computational astronomy consisted of the incomplete and at times misleading remarks on the subject in especially the first chapter of Yaśas' *Laghukālacakratantra* (*Dus kyi 'khor lo [bsdus pa'i] rgyud*) (early 11th c.), allegedly a synopsis of the much longer but no longer extant *Kālacakramūla-tantra*, and its premier commentary, Puṇḍarīka's *Vimalaprabhā* (*Dri med 'od*) (early 11th c.). Originally from the unlocatable land of Sambhala [Tib. Shambhala], these arcane treatises, as well as most of their cognates that deal primarily with their spiritual practice, were rendered into Tibetan in the eleventh century, thus not long after they had made their first public appearance in the subcontinent. The diction and contents of these two tracts in particular posed such a large number of profound philological problems for the Tibetan Sanskritists that they were

³² This is his *Lnga bsdus sgra gcan gza' lnga dang bcas pa'i rtsis gzhi*; for his oeuvre on astronomy, see Schuh (1973: 6-10, 30-2). To be added are his two works on astrology, the *Lo bdag gi rtsis nyi shu rtsa gnyis pa*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 291, and the *Rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i gstug lag gi de kho na nyid rin po che'i sgron ma*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 292, both of which are undated, as well as his 1266 study of the Kālacakra corpus' *thugs dkyil* in SSBB vol. 6, no. 65.

translated and retranslated into Tibetan well over a dozen times by some twenty translators, some of whom worked in groups of two.³³ There is in fact nothing comparable in the history of the Tibetan translations of canonical texts. Not only are the various computations found in these texts incomplete, they are also often quite misleading, if not in outright error, where their astronomy was concerned.³⁴ But given the combination of being proficient in the calendrical astronomy of the Kālacakra corpus and a National Preceptor at the court of Qubilai, there is therefore nothing anomalous about the fact that, in March 7, 1268, Lama Phags pa would finish a little treatise on the parity that exists between the Chinese calendar, possibly the one in use at the Mongol court, and a [or the] Tibetan one that was based on this corpus.³⁵ Towards the end of this tract, then, we have the following stylistically inelegant summation:

*'phags pa'i yul du rab byung nas // lo yi mgo 'dzin rgya rnams
kyis // shing pho byi ba thog mar 'dod // [3] zla ba'ang dbus 'gyur
tshal du ni // rgyal gyi zla bas thog mar 'dren // [5] shambha la ni nag
pa'i zla // zla ba rnams kyi thog mar 'dod // [7] rgya yi sta [read: rta]
pa dpyid ra ba // gcig pa zhes byar 'dod pa yin // [9] bod rnams phal
cher de rjes 'brang // [10] de phyir lo dang zla ba'i tshul // rgya yi rjes
su 'brangs nas ni // yang dag nges pa 'tshol ba'i tshul // dus kyi 'khor
lo'i tshul bzhin bshad // [14] zla shol 'dor ba'i [read: 'don pa'i] tshul
yang ni // dpal ldan dus kyi 'khor lo'i lugs // de rje 'brang ba'i gzhung
las shes // [17] bod la grags pa'i rgya rtsis pa // 'khrul pa nyid du
'chad par byed // [19].*

³³ This is the figure given by 'Gos Lo tsā ba in his *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud kyi dka' 'grel snying po'i don rab tu gsal ba'i rgyan* [one hundred and ninety-nine-folio xylograph, marginal notation Ca], 2b. Not given in the colophon, he completed this work in 1467, according to his 1517 biography by Zhwa dmar Chos grags ye shes (1453-1524), for which see the *Dpal ldan bla ma dam pa mkhan chen thams cad mkhyen pa don gyi slad du mtshan nas smos te gzhon nu dpal gyi rnam par thar pa yon tan rin po che mchog tu rgyas pa'i ljon pa*, seventy-four-folio hand-written dbu can manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 003259(11), 67b. Written at the behest of Spyān snga Ngag gi dbang phyug grags pa (1439-90) of [Phag mo gru] Gdan sa mthil, its printing was also underwritten by the latter and the blocks were carved in 1472.

³⁴ D. Pingree, "Ravikās in Indian Astronomy and the Kālacakra," *Le Parole e i Marmi. Studi in Onore di Raniero Gnoli nel suo 70° Compleanno*, ed. R. Torella, Serie Orientale Roma, XCII, 2 (Rome: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, 2001), 655-64.

³⁵ See the *Rtsis kyi gtsug lag dang mthun par nges pa*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 289, 251/1; see also Schuh (1973: 32) where "1264" is a typographical error; the correct date is given in Schuh (1973: 6-7). He wrote it in a place called Man gong. His collected writings contain one other work he wrote in Man gong, namely the one on the evocation of Vajrabhairava in SSBB vol. 7, no. 116, which he completed on August 31, 1268. Its colophon states that he wrote it for the Prince-Bodhisattva (*rgyal bu byang chub sems dpa'*), whom I am unable to identify.

In the holy land [India], the onset of the [sixty-]year [cycle] is taken from the *rab byung* (*prabhava*) [year onward]; the Chinese claim the wood-male-mouse year to be the first [year of their sexagenary cycle].³⁶ The [synodic] months, however, are headed by the month of *rgyal* (*pausa*) in the grove that is the center [of the world, India];³⁷ as for Shambhala[’s *Kālacakratāntra*], the month of *nag pa* (*caitra*) is claimed to be the first of the [twelve calendar] months. It is claimed that the *rta* [month] of China, the first spring-month, is called *gcig pa* [the first month of the calendar year].³⁸ The Tibetans by and large follow that. Thus, having followed Chinese [methods] in the typology of year and month, the method of searching for [and acquiring] real

³⁶ This fact was already noticed by several scholars, for which see P. Pelliot, “Le cycle sexagénnaire dans la chronologie tibétaine,” *Journal Asiatique* 1 (1913), 647-8. Though presently not available to me, I recall that, in his large 1536-40 study of Karma pa III’s 1318 *Rtsis kyi bstan bcos kun las btus pa*, a versified work on computational astronomy and the calendar, Dpa’ bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504-66) observes that a Smyal pa [= Gnyal pa] Lha mdzes and others had held the view that the Kālacakra corpus’ *prabhava* year [= Sino-Tibetan fire-female-hare (*me mo yos*) year] is to be equated with the [Sino-Tibetan] wood-mouse year, a notion that must have led to some horrific confusion. This same Gnyal pa Lha mdzes is noted in this context by Smin grol gling Lo tsā ba Chos dpal (1654-1718) alias Dharmashrī in his *Rtsis kyi man ngag nyin byed snang ba’i nam ’grel gser gyi shing rta*, *Collected Works*, vol. IV (Dehra Dun, ?), 25 [= ed. Bsod nams phun tshogs (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1983), 32].

³⁷ The same phrase denoting the subcontinent is also met with in Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo’s (1142-82) circa 1167 *Chos la ’jug pa’i sgo*, SSBB vol. 2, no. 17, 345/3.

³⁸ The usual Tibetan ordinal equivalent for “first” is *dang po*. The term *gcig pa* is also found in Snye thang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa’s (?-ca. 1460) commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita’s *Tshig gi gter*, for which see the *Mngon brjod kyi bstan bcos tshig gi gter zhes bya ba’i ’grel pa rgya cher don gsal ba* (Gangtok, 1977), 154: *rgya nag rtsis pa’i lugs kyi dpyid ra rta’i thog tha ste / gcig pa zhes byar brjod pa yin // zhes ’byung ste /*. The quotation of the line of verse may go back to a reading of a different manuscript of ’Phags pa’s work. Note further the assumed and by no means uncontroversial equivalence of the Chinese or Sino-Tibetan horse-month with the first spring-month (*dpyid ra*). Some authors may have even mistaken the bonafide Tibetan nomenclature for the months of the year, as in *dpyid zla ra ba* etc., for the terminology belonging to the Kālacakra corpus. For example, Bsam gtan bzang po has the following apposition in his undated biography of Dar ma rgyal mtshan: *dus ’khor lugs kyi ston zla ra ba / khrum[s] gyi zla ba /*; see the *Bcom ldan rig pa’i ral gri’i nam thar dad pa’i ljon shing*, handwritten twenty-six-folio *dbu med* manuscript, 20a-b. The expression *ston zla ra ba*, “first autumn-month,” does not belong to the terminology of the Kālacakra corpus and, what is more, is neither of Indic nor of Chinese origin. Byang bdag quotes Lama ’Phags pa’s work in the *Ta’i si tu rnam rgyal grags pa dpal po’i (?sic) dris lan smra ba’i cod pan*, 5a, to the effect that in it he “appears to have construed the very first month of a secular [reckoning] as a tiger-month” (*jig rten pa’i zla ba dang po nyid la stag[g]i zla bar mdzad snang*). Byang bdag adds that this was confirmed by National Preceptor Bsod nams shes rab (?-?) to whom he had sent a letter requesting information on the calendar current in Ming China while the latter was at the court.

certainty [= the {true} epoch (*nges pa, dhruva/ka*)],³⁹ we have explained in the manner of the *Dus kyi 'khor lo*. Also the way in which an intercalary month is inserted is known from texts that follow that system of the glorious *Dus kyi 'khor lo*. The *rgya rtsis pa*⁴⁰ known in Tibet explain [this] wrongly.

His great-uncle Rje btsun had already said something similar,⁴¹ and this quotation from Lama 'Phags pa is, as far as I am aware, the only time in his writing where he broaches the subject of the Chinese calendar as it was known to him. D. Schuh, to whose pathbreaking investigations in the history of the Tibetan calendar we owe so much, comments on this passage to the effect that it:⁴²

...noticeably ends with a criticism of those Chinese astronomers who apparently had made efforts that the principles of Chinese calendrical reckoning ought to be used in Tibet. The intention of 'Phags pa is doubtless two-fold: namely, on the one hand, the parity that exists between Tibet and China of the reckoning of years and the beginning of the year ought to be emphasized and declared to be binding; on the other hand, he clearly wants to indicate that furthermore the calendar ought to be constructed in accordance with the non-Chinese Kālacakra-derived system of computation. The latter restriction must doubtless be regarded as politically particularly delicate.

³⁹ My interpretation differs here somewhat from the one given in Schuh (1973: 6, n. 25), who opts to read *rgya yi* instead of the text's *rgya yis*. I see no reason to change the original reading. The technical term *dhruvaka* is usually rendered by Tibetan *nges pa*. Karma 'phrin las pa I (1456-1539) points out that some Tibetans had translated it by *brtan pa* in order to bring out its meaning more clearly, while others, in his opinion, wrongly, wrote it *dhruva*; see his *Dri[s] lan gnas lugs gsal bar ston pa'i nyi 'od, The Songs of Esoteric Practice (mgur) and Replies to Doctrinal Questions (dri[s] lan) of Karma 'phrin las pa* (New Delhi, 1975), 221.

⁴⁰ The term *rtsis pa*, when used for an individual, is a bit ambiguous, in that it can refer to someone who does astronomical computation and calendrical calculation, as well as to one who casts horoscopes and makes almanacs. I have therefore chosen to leave it untranslated. The term *rgya rtsis pa* is ethnically ambiguous, for it can refer to such an individual who is Chinese (*rgya [mi]*), or to a Tibetan who does Chinese (*rgya [nag gi]*) astrology. In his 1443 *Rtsis la 'khrul ba sel ba*, 'Gos Lo tsā ba obviously uses the term in the sense of a native Chinese astrologer; see fol. 38b of the 1463 blockprint [marginal notation, Nga]. However, in the *Deb gter sngon po* there is a passage where the term may indeed refer to a Tibetan or Tibetans, as it has to do with the dates of Śākyasrībhadrā (1127-1225), see 'GOS, 947 ['GOS1, 1241]; Roerich (1979: 1065) and Guo (1985: 697) misunderstood the text.

⁴¹ See his *Dus tshod bzung ba'i rtsis yig*, SSB vol. 4, no. 130, 299/4-5; this passage is also referred to in Schuh (1973: 7, note 29).

⁴² Schuh (1973: 6).

I am not entirely convinced of one important aspect of this interpretation, namely that Lama 'Phags pa's *rgya rtsis pa* refers to "chinesischen Astronomen." There are furthermore two assumptions that will need further clarification, the first of which is that Lama 'Phags pa intended to address a wider audience with his work for driving this point home than merely a Tibetan one. To be sure, the fact that he wrote these lines in Man gong (< Ch. ?), located, I believe, in China proper, and several months after his departure for the court from 'Dam, to the northeast of Lhasa, can easily lead to the conclusion that his intention with this work might have been more than, as the title would have it, merely to bring about some parity between the two calendars. But then we do not know very much about the reception his writings enjoyed at the court or, in this and many other instances, their intended audience. We have, for example, no evidence that this work was ever noted in wider circles; there is furthermore no record that Qubilai was able to read Tibetan. The second assumption is that the Mongol court privileged those Chinese officials who were responsible for the calendar and astronomical computation. While, as was shown by Ishihama, Lama 'Phags pa had a hand in the layout of Dadu⁴³ and, lest we forget, he was responsible for the development of the 'Phags pa script for use throughout the empire, there is no room for doubting that the court valued and was dependent on Arabo-Persian and Chinese astronomy for their calendar. The Mongols had appreciated Muslim astronomy since the time of Ögedei Qaghan and during Qubilai's reign, in particular, the names of Üsa Tarjaman (?-1308), Jamāl al-Dīn, and the Chinese astronomer Guo Shoujing (1231-1316) loom large. It may very well be that Lama 'Phags pa's wrote his little treatise in reaction to the calendar, backed up by some seven astronomical instruments, Jamāl al-Dīn had introduced at the court in 1267, while he was still in Tibet.⁴⁴ In spite of his influence, the little tract had no success. As was already pointed out by Schuh, the Tibetan edicts and decrees that were issued from the court and the Bureau for Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs used the Chinese and not one or the other Tibetan calendar.⁴⁵

⁴³ See her *A Historical Study of the Tibetan Buddhist World* [in Japanese], 41-2. For Dadu in general, see also M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 131-5, 257, n. 81-4, and the note in Franke (1996: 142).

⁴⁴ See J. Needham [and Wang Ling], *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. III, Mathematics and the Sciences of the Heavens and the Earth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 48-9, 372, M. Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times*, 125-6.

⁴⁵ Schuh (1977: 170). There may be a few exceptions to this, however.

Now there is a longstanding tradition among Tibetan *rtsis pa* that the Kālacakra corpus' calendar was well-known not only in the Xixia empire, but also in China proper during the Song dynasty. The presence in these regions of the corpus and the calendar derived from it was put forth by at least one Tibetan astronomer, namely Grwa phug pa Kun dga' dpal (15th c.), the elder brother of the more famous Grwa phug pa Lhun grub rgya mtsho whose 1447 landmark study of the corpus' computational astronomy did so much to influence later developments in the Tibetan calendar. We learn about this in the sixth register (*kha byang*) of his *Dus tshigs 'khor lo bcu pa*.⁴⁶ Regrettably, this work has not [?yet] come down to us *in toto*, but a longish passage from it is cited by both the Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705) and Smin grol gling Lo tsā ba. In this passage, we read the following lines:⁴⁷

me mo yos zhes rab byung dang po'i lo //
'phags pa'i yul du dus kyi 'khor lo phebs //
de nas ring por ma thogs rgya nag dang //
bod khams kun du tshul 'di dar zhing 'gyur //
khyad par rgya nag mi nyag rgyal rabs dus //
dpal ldan dus kyi 'khor lo'i lugs bzang la //
mkhas pa'i paṇḍita zhig rgya nag byon //

The Kālacakra went [from Sambhala] to the Holy Land [= India]
 [In] the fire-female-hare year, the [first] year of the first *rab byung*
 (*prabhava*) [= 1027].

Not long thereafter, this method [of its calendar] spread in
 China and in all of the Tibetan land.

Specifically, during the ?dynastic succession of China [?and] Xixia,

⁴⁶ The title may be translated as: *The Ten Cycles of Time's Vital Points*. One of the earliest works on *dus tshigs* known to me is Mchims Blo bzang grags pa's (1299-1363) still unavailable *Dus tshigs gsal ba'i me long*, which he cites in his undated *Abhidharmakośa* commentary; see the *Mdzod chung* [*Chos mngon pa gsal byed legs par bshad pa'i rgya mtsho*], part 1 (Sarnath: Sakya Student's Union, 1978), 279. For the term *kha byang*, see now Lab phan 'dum Blo bzang blo gros, "Bod kyi bstan bcos sam rtsom yig gi kha byang skor bshad pa," *Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig* 5 (1994), 115-42.

⁴⁷ See, respectively, the *Bai dūrya g.ya sel*, vol.1 (Dehra Dun, 1976), 139, and the partial quote in the *Rtsis kyi man ngag nyin byed snang ba'i rnam 'grel gser gyi shing rta*, *Collected Works*, vol. IV (Dehra Dun, ?), 28 [= ed. Bsod nams phun tshogs (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1983), 36]. Smin grol gling Lo tsā ba provides the actual title of the sixth *kha byang*, namely, *Nyi ldog / zlog 'khor lo'i kha byang*, that is, *The Register of the Cycle on the Solstice*.

A *pandita* learned in the good system of the illustrious Kālacakra came to China.

There is, to my knowledge, so far no really concrete literary or art-historical evidence that the *Laghukālacakratāntra*, the *Vimalaprabhā* or, for that matter, Abhayākaragupta's (11th-12th c.) *Kālacakrāvata*⁴⁸ (after 1086/87) played a direct role in either the astronomy as practiced in Xixia, its calendar or its Buddhist practice.⁴⁹ We find no support whatsoever for the supposition that one or the other treatise was ever translated into Tangut. It is true, as E.I. Kychanov and others have shown, that the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* formed part of the official curriculum of twelfth century Xixia Buddhist monastic education,⁵⁰ and its well-known linkage with a segment of passages found in the Kālacakra corpus that deal with Sanskrit phonology should be noted. But this association ought on no account be privileged. One of the remarkable features of the voluminous Indian and Tibetan commentarial literature that grew up around the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* shows that its contents are, hermeneutically, rather flexible and fluid to the extent that they allow it to be associated with a variety of other tantric texts and traditions. In fact, its putative connection with the Kālacakra literature has nothing to do with the latter's astronomy, but, rather, is largely founded ritualistically on what can perhaps be described as its gnoseological theory of Sanskrit phonology. Be this as it may, there is one indication, in the person of Rtsa mi Lo tsū ba Sangs rgyas grags pa (12th c.), that should prevent us from not *a priori* excluding the possibility that the corpus was perhaps not entirely unknown to the Xixia. This man, who is most consistently said to be a native of Xixia and even a scion of its imperial family, traveled to the subcontinent, learned Sanskrit, and became a major disciple of Abhayākaragupta himself.⁵¹ An important scholar in his own right, he is credited with having prepared Tibetan renditions of both the *Laghukālacakratāntra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*. He

⁴⁸ On this work, see J. Newman, "The Epoch of the Kālacakra Tantra," 328-9.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Wu Tianchi, *A Draft History of Xixia* [in Chinese] (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1980), Shi Jinbo, *A Brief History of Xixia Buddhism* [in Chinese] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1988), and also the splendid catalogue of treasures from the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, *Lost Empire of the Silk Road. Buddhist Art from Khara Khoto (X-XIIIth Century)*, ed. M. Piotrovsky (Electa: Thyssen-Bornemisza Foundation, 1993).

⁵⁰ See E.I. Kychanov, "From the History of the Tangut Translation of the Buddhist Canon," *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*, ed. L. Ligeti, vol. 1 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), 382.

⁵¹ On his ties with Abhayākaragupta, see for now E. Sperling, "Rtsa mi Lo tsā ba Sangs rgyas grags pa and the Tangut Background to Early Mongol-Tibetan Relations," 801, 809-11.

either carried out these translations under the guidance of his master or while he was abbot of Vajrāsana in Bodhgayā. Unfortunately, they are now most likely lost, but a few quotations from them are found in the relevant literature such as, for example, in Sgra tshad pa Rin chen nam rgyal's (1318-88) notes on Bu ston's lectures on the Kūla-cakra and in the large 1434 *Vimalaprabhā* commentary by the Dga' ldan pa scholar Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang po (1385-1438).⁵²

The connection of the Kālacakra with China proper before its conquest by the Mongols is much more tenuous and I believe, in the final analysis, probably not substantiable. It is true that the Tibetan literary tradition asserts that the Dznyāna badzra [= Jñānavajra = Ye shes rdo rje] who authored a large and rewarding commentary on the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* was a "Chinese abbot" (*rgya'i mkhan po*). This is what we read in the colophon of the uncredited Tibetan translation that makes its debut in Dbus pa Blo gsal's catalogue.⁵³ It is also true that this Jñānavajra cites the *Vimalaprabhā* and even refers to a problem having to do with the corpus' canonicity.⁵⁴ The combination of these factors must have contributed to the judgment we find in an interlinear gloss in Sgra tshad pa's aforementioned notes, namely, that the corpus was present in China prior to its arrival in the Indian subcontinent.⁵⁵ The gloss says furthermore that this work was translated "during the era of Bsam yas' king" (*bsam yas rgyal po'i dus su*) without, unfortunately, specifying this king's identity. References to such figures at Bsam yas are not infrequently found in the pre-sixteenth century literature. But matters doubtless stood in part differently. Jñānavajra also refers to 'Bal mi ka [Vālmīki] and his *Rāmāyaṇa*, the works on the theory of drama, etc. by Bharata and a Byi sha khi la [= ?], and host of other non-Buddhist Indian treatises, and even summarizes and refers to a hitherto unknown study of Kamalaśīla's (ca. 780) *Madhyamakāloka*.⁵⁶ In brief, then,

⁵² See, respectively, SGRA, 142, 158, and the *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i 'grel chen dri ma med pa'i 'od kyi rgya cher bshad pa de kho na nyid kyi snang bar byed pa*, *Collected Works* [Lhasa Zhol print], vol. Kha (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 161.

⁵³ See, respectively, TT vol. 38, 4024 [# 4019], 412/3 [Pi, 310a], and the *Bstan bcos kyi dkar chag*, 41b-2a.

⁵⁴ TT vol. 38, 4024 [# 4019], 325/1 [Pi, 4b] and 338/5 [Pi, 52a].

⁵⁵ SGRA, 142.

⁵⁶ TT vol. 38, 4024 [# 4019], 328/2, 4, and 335/6 [Pi, 15b, 16b, and 42a]. The commentary is titled *Dbu ma snang ba'i rnam par bshad pa de kho na nyid kyi sgron ma*, which might have read in Sanskrit: **Madhyamakāloka bhāṣyatattvapradīpa*. Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge's (1109-69) undated *Madhyamakāloka* exegesis has recently surfaced by way of a eighty-two folio, handwritten dbu med manuscript. Its title page but has *Dbu ma'i yig cha / phya pas byas*, "Madhyamaka Textbook, written [non-honorific form of the verb!] by Phya pa." The colophon has the quasi-descriptive title: *Dbu ma snang ba'i gzhung go don rigs pa'i tshul*

if he were Chinese, then he must have had an unusually fine knowledge of Indian literature. Needless to say, this is all quite unlikely. There is no doubt that Jñānavajra flourished not before *circa* 1050, so that it is of course not impossible that he was an Indian monk who had been active in [Song] China. Albeit disadvantaged in the competition for Indian Buddhist expertise with the Tibetans, the later Song period witnessed the appearance of a fairly substantial number of Indian Buddhist masters in China.⁵⁷ But this is highly speculative. It is very unlikely that, even if Jñānavajra had stayed in China for so long that he had become fully acculturated during his stay there that, if they had known of him in person, the Tibetans would have believed him actually to have been a Chinese scholar. Further, his study of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, as well as its Tibetan rendition, betray not one iota of the possibility of a Chinese environment, cultural or linguistic. Rather, both definitely point to an Indic ancestry. Another possible origin for the view that the Kālacakra was known in China may possibly be traced to the 'Bro tradition of the corpus' transmission which, in Tibet, began with 'Bro Shes rab 'bar (11th c.). But this requires further study.

The identity of this Jñānavajra thus remains a mystery. Now the Tanjur contains a large number of short tracts on tantric ritual practice that are all signed by a Jñānavajra; one of these was translated by Lo tsā ba Rin chen bzang po (958-1055). Further, the evidently twelfth century Rngog Lo tsā ba Buddhapāla [= Sangs rgyas skyong] is recorded to have collaborated with a Jñānavajra on the Tibetan version of this Indian scholar's (*rgya gar gyi mkhan po*) very own **Tattvamārgadarśana* in the Lha khang bi ha ra (< *vihara*), after they had made a supplication at the "offering site" (*ishogs 'khor sa*) in Shing kun.⁵⁸ "Shing kun" is here certainly to be understood as an abbreviation of "Phags pa Shing kun" and thus designates the temple of Svayambhūnāth in the Kathmandu Valley. Of interest is that, unlike the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* commentary, the architecture of the **Tattvamārgadarśana* is surprisingly un-Indic and, in fact, quite reminiscent of a scholastic treatise written around the kind of topical outline (*sa bcaad*) that is so ubiquitous in Tibetan writing. Therefore, one cannot help but wonder whether the Tibetan translator had at least a hand in its composition. It is at this stage not possible to determine whether these two works were written by one and the same individual.

dang myi 'gal zhing blo chung bas kyang bde blag tu rtogs pa byis pa'i 'jug ngogs. As far as I can tell, Phya pa did not have access to the **Madhyamakāloka bhāṣya iatvaprādīpa*.

⁵⁷ See, lastly, Tansen Sen, "The Revival and Failure of Buddhist Translations during the Song Dynasty," *T'oung Pao* LXXXVIII (2002), 27-80.

⁵⁸ TT vol. 32, no. 3720 [# 3715], 134/1-46/6 [Tsu, 129a-64b]. This work was obviously inspired by the *Hevajratantra*.

While he did use one or the other earlier renditions of the *Laghukālacakratantra* and the *Vimalaprabhā*, Lama 'Phags pa must have entertained some doubts about the quality of their Tibetan translations. By his time, there were in theory no less than some fifteen different versions in existence. We know that, in the mid-1260s or mid-1270s, he together with Shākya bzang po, his right-hand man and Grand-governor (*dpon chen*) of Central Tibet, had Shong ston Lo tsā ba Rdo rje rgyal mtshan carry out a revision or retranslation of their Tibetan versions. Though they appear to have received Lama 'Phags pa's imprimatur, they were apparently by no means greeted with universal acclaim and approbation. For example, Sgra tshad pa points out that Kun spangs pa Thugs rje brtson 'grus (?-1313) alias Mi bskyod rdo rje did not think much of the effort and, indeed, is said to have even remarked at one time, in an intemperate moment, that Shong ston Lo tsā ba's translations were riddled with errors.⁵⁹

Be this as it may, several Mongol courts were keenly interested in these tracts, even to the point of sponsoring several Tibetan xylograph editions. Arguably, the involvement on their part in their dissemination owed less to the technicalities of its astronomy than to the unbridled reverence their Tibetan chaplains displayed for this corpus as well as its putative place of origin, Sambhala, a land located not in the subcontinent, but, and this is important, somewhere "north of the Sītā river," that is, to the north of Tibet. The coincidence of the Mongols' origins and the geographical position of their homeland relative to the source of this corpus cannot have been lost on them. In other words, whatever the religious motivation of members of the Mongol ruling class may have been, or whatever the extent in which some of them may have been engaged in the arcane meditative practices the Kālacakra prescribed, as the word of the Buddha, these texts provided an excellent vehicle for their political legitimation among their own people and their Tibetan allies. Their patronage of these xylographs was not without self-interest and, in the larger scheme of things Yuan, was clearly financially of very little consequence. It is to these xylographs that we now turn.

PRINTING THE KĀLACAKRA CORPUS. D.P. Jackson already referred, *via* a previous indication of E. Gene Smith, to what amounts to the earliest notice of a xylograph of Shong ston Lo tsā ba's translation of the

⁵⁹ SGRA, 158: *shong 'gyur la skyon mang po yod* /. Founder of Jo mo nang hermitage in circa 1300, Kun spangs pa's profound displeasure with Shong ston Lo tsā ba's efforts must have been in part instrumental in the later revision of the translations of both in Jo mo nang the two mati scholar-translators prepared at the request of Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1291-1362); for this revision, see C.R. Stearns, *The Buddha from Dolpo. A Study of the Life and Thought of the Tibetan Master Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 24-7.

Laghukālacakratāntra. Preserved in a collection of works attributed to Bo dong Paṅ chen 'Jigs med grags pa (1375-1451) alias Phyogs las nam rgyal,⁶⁰ one of the distinctive features of this xylograph is that, like the one of Sa skya Paṅḍita's text noted above, it has a Tibetan and a Chinese pagination. In all probability, the Chinese pagination was necessitated by the plausible circumstance that the Chinese woodcarvers were employed in the preparation of the printing blocks could only keep track of the order of the blocks by carving Chinese page numbers in the margins. The first portion of the xylograph's colophon reads in part:⁶¹

/ dpal ldan dus 'khor rgyud kyi rgyal po 'di /
/ sangs rgyas bstan pa dar cing rgyas pa dang /
/ mi dang rgyal po'i thugs dgongs rdzogs pa 'am /
/ tha'i hu yum sras chab srid brtan byas nas /
/ gdul bya sems can kun la phan phyir du /
/ u rgyan pa zhes grags pas par du bsgrubs /

This [text of the] *Dpal ldan dus 'khor rgyud kyi rgyal po* was established as a print[ed edition] by one renowned as "U rgyan pa," For the sake of spreading and increasing the Buddha's teaching and, The fulfillment of either the [last] intention of the Lord of Man, the emperor, or [for the sake of] benefiting all sentient beings [whose conflicting emotions] are to be disciplined, After stability had been effected [in] the reign of the Tha'i-hu, the Mother, and [Her] Son.

In connection with this passage, Jackson suggested that it "...seems to indicate that the printing was completed after the death of" Qubilai by U rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230-1309), an important master of the 'Brug pa and Karma sects of the Bka' brgyud pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. Given that mention is made of the "empress mother" (*tha'i hu* < Ch. *taihou*), we can be sure that the original print postdates Qubilai who died on February 18, 1294. This means that it was prepared between 1294 and 1309. We can also be sure that the name in religion of this U rgyan pa, as opposed to other thirteenth century masters known by the same epithet, is Rin chen dpal,

⁶⁰ See his "Notes on Two Early Printed Editions of Sa skya pa Works," *The Tibet Journal* 8 (1983), 22, n. 14.

⁶¹ See the *Mchog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyung ba rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo*, *Encyclopedia Tibetica. The Collected Works of Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las nam rgyal* vol. 116 (New Delhi: The Tibet House, 1970), 357.

since, in the same colophon, he pays respects to his beloved teacher Dgod [read: Rgod] tshang pa [Mgon po rdo rje (1189-1258)]. U rgyan pa had been a guest of Qubilai in 1292 with somewhat turbulent results. And, judging from the vivid description of the events that transpired during these audiences with the Mongol emperor of his main biography, it appears that his visit had been witnessed by this disciple and biographer Bsod nams 'od zer, or, if not by him, then by the author of one of the sources of U rgyan pa's life to which he had access.⁶² The colophon's "Lord of Man, the Emperor" (*mi dbang rgyal po*) cannot but refer to Qubilai and the empress mother must therefore have been Kōkōcin, the mother of emperor Öljeitü. Öljeitü himself is mentioned only once in the two available, full-scale biographies of U rgyan pa,⁶³ but neither single out any printing projects he, or others on his behalf, had carried out in the Mongol capital or elsewhere. On the other hand, they do note that he had sent U rgyan pa gifts for the temple of Bodh-gayā. Of some interest is that, in a document dated 1374 that bears witness to the restoration of Bsam yas monastery, Lama dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312-75) of Sa skya's Rin chen sngang Residence says that "beginning with the Öljeitü emperor, the Lord[s] of Man [= the Mongol emperors] had undivided faith in the [Buddhist] Teaching."⁶⁴ This may very well suggest that there was a tradition current in Tibet that was somewhat skeptical about the extent and depth of the commitment to [Tibetan] Buddhism on the part of his predecessors and this would of course include Qubilai.

The wording of the colophon does not mention explicitly that the blocks were carved in China proper, but, given the way in which the individual blocks were "paginated," it is most likely that they were. Bsod nams 'od zer's study of U rgyan pa's life does contain one passage indicating that U rgyan pa had erected (*bzhengs*) many texts of the Kālacakra corpus,⁶⁵ albeit without specifying the exact procedures or nature of these reproductions or when he might have done so. It is therefore unlikely that the term *bzhengs* is used as an oblique reference to printing unless, of course, we take it as an abbreviation of *par bzhengs*.

It is perhaps at first glance somewhat puzzling that U rgyan pa's text is based on the translation made by Shong ston Lo tsā ba's rendition of the

⁶² See, respectively, his undated biography by Bsod nams 'od zer in BSOD, 168-74 [BSOD1, 234-42] and its derivative by a Rgyal shrī, in RGYAL, 85b-92b. RGYAL is in large part based on Bsod nams 'od zer's work, for which see the bibliographic remark in RGYAL, 115a.

⁶³ BSOD, 182-3 [BSOD1, 253-4] and RGYAL, 94a.

⁶⁴ BLA, 48b [= 454b]: *ol ja du rgyal po nas brtsams te / mi'i dbang po bstan pa la mi phyed pa'i dad pa can l.*

⁶⁵ BSOD, 202 [BSOD1, 278]; this is absent from RGYAL, 107b.

text. To be sure, from the more than a dozen Tibetan renditions, it was Shong ston Lo tsā ba's that was included in the early Tanjur manuscript canons and achieved widespread use and study, in spite of later revisions, especially the one by scholars active at Jo mo nang monastery.⁶⁶ U rgyan pa's own transmissions of Kālacakra teachings included the one that passed through and was influenced by the Tibetan translation of this text by Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197-1264), which he studied, together with other texts and related practices, under his eldest brother Go lung pa Mdo sde dpal rgyal mtshan in Go lung monastery. This line of transmission is usually referred to as the Chag tradition (*chag lugs*) and, indeed, it was among those transmissions that, like U rgyan pa himself, the young Shong ston had also first received from Go lung pa.⁶⁷ They were thus dharma-brothers (*chos grogs*). In the absence of Chag Lo tsā ba's translations, we do not know how different these may have been from Shong ston Lo tsā ba's versions. But there were probably several reasons why printing blocks were carved for the latter. What carried the most weight was no doubt the fact that Shong ston Lo tsā ba's renditions had received the imprimatur of Lama 'Phags pa, whose authority in Mongol imperial circles was clearly beyond dispute.⁶⁸ His biographies nowhere indicate that U rgyan pa gave initiations in, or taught, the Kālacakra while in China, let alone when he was among the Mongols. The same holds for what appears to be a collage of the religious talks he

⁶⁶ See the rather pertinent remarks by Jo nang Kun dga' grol mchog (1507- 1566) in his biography of Byang bdag in connection with his studies of the text under Byams gling Pan chen Bsod nams mnam rgyal (1400-75) and other scholars from 1444 onward in the *Rigs ldan chos kyi rgyal po rnam rgyal grags pa bzang po'i rnam par thar pa rab bsngags snyan pa'i 'brug sgra*, Ngam ring monastery xylograph, 21b ff. The colophon of the print states on fol. 34b that it was written by *btsun pa* Grol mchog in Byang Ngam ring monastery with Blo bde bzang po as his scribe. It was then committed to the printing block with the patronage of Kun dga' rin chen grags pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po, at the time ruler of Byang, with the aid of a scribe by the name of Shri badzra [= Dpal {?ldan} rdo rje].

⁶⁷ Shong ston Lo tsā ba is mentioned but once in BSOD, 159 [BSOD1, 221] and RGYAL, 80a-b, in connection with some Kālacakra teachings given to him by U rgyan pa. For the Chag tradition, see now the late Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan's *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo ji liar dar tshul brgyud pa'i lo rgyus dang bcas pa skal bzang rna ba'i dga' ston, Skar nag rtsis kyi lo rgyus skor*, vol. 1, ed. Byams pa 'phrin las (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1998), 250-5.

⁶⁸ It is not yet clear whether this has any historical truth to it but, writing in 1640, 'Brug pa Sangs rgyas rdo rje (1569-1645) notes a tradition that has it that Lama 'Phags pa had become "displeased" (*mi dgyes pa*) with Shong ston Lo tsā ba after his translations; see the two versions of his *Gnas gsum gsal byed nor bu'i me long*, a handwritten *dbu med* text in *Responses to Various Polemical Writings. Mkhas dbang Sangs rgyas rdo rje*, Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Literature Series, vol. 133 (Rewalsar, 1985), 355, and a handwritten *dbu can* text in his *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Kathmandu: Shri Gautam Bud[d]ha Vihara, 1995), 450.

gave while at the court.⁶⁹ These deal in the main with standard exoteric Mahayana subjects and were evidently designed for easy consumption by the laity and, as far as I have been able to determine, the Kālacakra does not figure in this collection.

The colophon of the *Laghukālacakratantra* xylograph states furthermore that the scribe (*yi ge'i mkhan po*) was a certain Rtse Inga Rin chen dpal. Tibetan *rtse Inga* usually refers to Mount Wutai. We know that U rgyan pa spent some time there while he was returning to Tibet from Qubilai's court, but it is impossible that this Rin chen dpal was U rgyan pa. It must have been his name-sake, for the carving of the printing blocks took place after Qubilai's passing and thus after he had sojourned there.

A final word. With some important variations, the biographies of U rgyan pa by Bsod nams 'od zer and Rgyal shrī contain a very interesting, if somewhat wooden, narrative from which we learn not only that the Kālacakra corpus was still studied in Kashmir in the thirteenth century - this is not exactly unexpected news -, but also that its study was not solely confined to men. Women, too, actively participated in its practice and were in fact able to achieve considerable renown on account of their expertise in it.⁷⁰ Returning from Uḍḍiyāna [Swat] en route to Tibet, U rgyan pa and his modest party traversed the Kashmir Valley and ultimately arrived in Śrīnagar in the late 1250s, but before Rgod tshang pa's passing. There, they entered into a conversation with their host at whose house they were staying. For some reason, he wanted to determine whether these strangers were really Buddhists (*chos pa*), as they professed they were, and this lead him to invite several individuals to test U rgyan pa in particular. The ensuing Tibetan text of either narrative is by no stretch of the imagination great literature and the protagonists only "say" things and do not "ask" questions or "reply" to them; one recension of Bsod nams 'od zer's narrative says the following:

*paṇḍita l bkug nas byung : paṇḍita de na re : khyod chos pa yin
na chos ci shes zer : der grub thob rin po che pas mngon pa shes
tshad ma yang mnyan gsungs nas : chos kyi gsung glengs mdzad pas :
mngon pa shes par 'dug : tshad ma yang mnyan 'dug : gzhan ci shes
zer : dpal dus kyi 'khor lo shes gsungs pas : rdzun zer bar 'dug zer nas
ha las te thal mo rdebs cing 'dug : der rdzun ma yin dpal dus kyi 'khor*

⁶⁹ See the *Grub thob chen po o rgyan pa'i gsung sgros tshogs chos rin chen phreng ba*, seventy-five folio handwritten *dbu med*, uncatalogued C.P.N. manuscript. Fol. 1b mentions that his "potential" or actual audience included the emperor, vassals[s] (*rgyal phran*), the prince[s], the imperial envoys (*gser yig pa*), VIPs (*mi chen*), chiliarch[s] (*stong dpon*), etc. The text itself seems to be a collage of several talks.

⁷⁰ BSOD, 70-1 [BSOD1, 99-100] and RGYAL, 38a. I follow by and large the readings of the first.

*lo de nges par shes gsungs pas : dus 'khor shes mi shes brtag pa'i
 phyir du : dus 'khor gyi paṅ chung l bkug nas de dang gsung glengs
 mdzad pas : grub thob rin po che mkhas par byung : yang khong gis
 rgan mo l bkug nas byung ste : rgan mo de'i blo la dpal dus kyi 'khor
 lo'i 'grel chen dri ma med pa'i 'od byang po yod pa l 'dug : [? rgan
 mo de ni khyod ni kha che'i yul khams tsam na dus kyi 'khor lo la
 mkhas pa lags skad :] rgan mo de dang dpal dus kyi 'khor lo la gsung
 glengs mdzad pas : rje grub thob rin po che'i thugs [la] dus kyi 'khor
 lo'i 'grel chen gal che pa dka' pa rnams la nan tan cher mdzad pas ma
 [b]snyel. : gzan rnams byang po ma byung pas : rgan mo de na re :
 khyod kyis dus 'khor mnyan 'dug : mkhas po mi shes pa 'dra zer : ngas
 shes bya rnams rtsa 4n du dor nas yun ring po song : u rgyan la sogs
 pa rgyal khams mang po zhig [b]skor bas brjed pa yin zhes gsungs
 pas : de khyed bden : bod kyi paṅḍita 'dug zer ba[s]...*

A paṅḍita was called and the paṅḍita said “If you are a Buddhist, what Buddhism do you know?” To that, the precious Grand-thaumaturge [U rgyan pa] said: “I know Buddhist phenomenology (*mngon pa* = *abhidharma*); I studied logic and epistemology as well.” Then, because of [their ensuing] discussion of Buddhism, [the paṅḍita] said: “[You] know Buddhist phenomenology, you studied logic and epistemology as well. What else do you know?” [U rgyan pa] said: “I know the Kālacakra.” Thereupon [the paṅḍita] replied “You are lying.” Astonished and clapping his hands, he said to him “It is not a lie, I certainly know the Kālacakra!” Thereupon, a junior paṅḍita [RGYAL has: “two junior paṅḍitas”] in the Kālacakra was called in order to examine whether or not he knew the Kālacakra. Because of his discussion with him, the precious Grand-thaumaturge emerged as a scholar [in the Kālacakra]. Then, he [? the junior paṅḍita, their host] called for an old lady. That old lady's mind lucidly had the Great Commentary of the Kālacakra, the *Vimalaprabhā*.⁷¹ [...⁷²] By discussing the Kālacakra with the old lady, the precious

⁷¹ RGYAL has: “[She] was one skilled in reciting the Great Commentary, the *Vimalaprabhā*, by heart.” (*de'i blo la 'grel chen dri med 'od kha bton byang pa l 'dug*). The very same ability is also attributed, for example, to Lo tsā ba Byang chub rtse mo, for which see Stag lung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal's (1571-1626) 1609 *Stag lung chos 'byung*, ed. Thar gling Byams pa tshe ring, Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 22 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1992), 359.

⁷² The texts of BSOD and BSOD1 vary here considerably. BSOD1 has: *rgan mo de'i yum ni khyer zer kha che'i yul khams tsam la dus 'khor la mkhas pa lags skad / rje grub chen rin po che'i thugs la / dus kyi 'khor lo'i dka' dka' dang / gal che la nan tan cher mdzad pas mi snyel /*. I do not quite understand the first line. RGYAL has: “My husband is [or: was] known

Grand-thaumaturge had not forgotten the Great Commentary, since he had taken great pains [in understanding] the important difficult parts. [But] since the other [parts] did not come [to him so] lucidly, the old lady said: "You did study the Kālacakra, [but] you seem not to know [this work as] an expert." [U rgyan pa] replied: "A long time has passed since I got rid like a root of what should be known. I have forgotten [it] because I roamed through many regions such as Uḍḍiyāna, etc." "You are right," [she said], "[you] are a Tibetan Paṇḍita."...

A reference to the printing of the [*Kālacakratāntra*]-*uttaratantra*[*hrdaya*]⁷³ with, we can suppose, Mongol imperial support is found in one of Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan's (1552-1624) remarkable studies of criticisms levelled against the Rnying ma pa tradition, which is dated 1605.⁷⁴ There we find an interesting interlinear note anent an early fourteenth century Tibetan xylograph of this text. The gloss reads as follows:

*rong po rdo rje rgyal mtshan pas / rgyud phyi ma spar du
bzhengs pa'i mjug byang du /
'dzam gling byang phyogs¹ rgya nag yul chen gyi² //
rgyal po'i pho brang ta'i ru zhes grags pa'i //
mkhar gyi lho phyogs¹ nam si³ zhes pa'i sder //
sngon med spar 'di sgrub⁴ 'dod blo skyes nas //...*

1. Missing in New Delhi ed.
2. New Delhi ed., *gyis*.
3. Chengdu ed., *ki*.
4. Chengdu ed., *bsgrub*.

In the concluding colophon of the *Rgyud phyi ma (Uttaratantra)* that was prepared as a blockprint by Rong po Rdo rje rgyal mtshan⁷⁵ it is said:

as a scholar in but the Great Commentary [= *Vimalaprabhā*]” (*nga'i khyo ga cheyn* [= '*grel chen*] *tsam na mkhas shes grags*).

⁷³ TT vol. 16, no. 363 [# 3631], 37/5-41/7 [Ka, 129a-40a].

⁷⁴ See his *Gsang sngags snga 'gyur la bod du rtsod pa snga phyir byung ba rnam kyī lan du brjod pa nges pa don gyi 'brug sgra*, Collected Writings, vol. 1 (New Delhi, 1975), 573 [= ed. Padma tshul khriims (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1997), 312].

⁷⁵ For Rong po Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, see 'GOS, 696-8 ['GOS1, 928-9, Roerich 1979: 792-4, Guo 1985: 519-20], where his dates are given as 1283 to 1325 - 'Gos Lo tsā ba says that he died aged forty-three [= forty-two] -, and where it is stated that he went to the Mongol

“A desire having been born [in me] to establish this unprecedented print at the monastery called Nam si (< Ch. Nansi, ‘Southern Monastery’), south of the city famous as Ta’i ru (< Ch. Da[i]du)⁷⁶, the imperial residence of the great land of China [in] the northern region of Jambudvīpa,..”

From the dates of Rong po Rdo rje rgyal mtshan and the little information we have about his life, we can assume that this xylograph of the Tibetan translation of the *Kālacakrottāra Tantra* must have originated sometime between 1310 and 1325. Not one xylograph from these printing blocks has been sighted so far.

A xylograph of what is possibly the *Vimalaprabhā* is noted in Ngor chen's undated biography of his master Grub chen Buddhashrī (1339-1420).⁷⁷ There he writes that Buddhashrī's ?estranged father, National Preceptor Dpal 'byor legs pa, an erstwhile attendant of Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1310-58) of Sa skya's Lha khang Residence, “had made a xylograph of a commentary on the *Dpal 'dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud* in Mongolia.” Though the exegesis in question probably refers to *Vimalaprabhā*, we cannot *a priori* exclude the possibility that it was Lama dam pa's own study of the *Vimalaprabhā*, the more so since the Tibetan literature most frequently calls the *Vimalaprabhā* the “Great Commentary” (*'grel chen*).

Though by no means an open and shut case, materials in support of the hypothesis that it was Lama dam pa's *Vimalaprabhā* commentary for

imperial court in a dog-year which Roerich identified with the year 1310; 1322 would also be a possibility. 'Gos Lo tsā ba's account is probably based in part on Bu ston's history of the Kālacakra system where Rong po's biography is given in his *Rgyud sde'i zab don sgo 'byed rin chen gces pa'i lde mig*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston (and Sgra tshad pa)* [Lhasa print], part 4 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1965), 72-3. Bu ston writes that he was born in 1283, that he left for the court in a dog-year, and gives the first day of the tenth month of an ox-year as the date on which he passed away, whereas 'Gos Lo tsā ba reads here the “wood-female-ox year.” Of course, Rong po was a major teacher of Bu ston for the Kālacakra, among other things, and he figures prominently in his record of teachings received. Bu ston's Kālacakra history was written in 1329, and his biographer Sgra tshad pa indicates that they met in the early 1320s, so that his “ox-year” can only be the year 1325. For this, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, *The Life of Bu ston Rin po che. With the Tibetan Text of the Bu ston rnam thar*, Serie Orientale Roma XXXIV (Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1966), 87-9. Hence, the date of his passing, according to Bu ston, must have been October 17, 1325.

⁷⁶ For *Nansi*, as opposed to *Beisi*, “Northern Monastery,” see *YS*, 20, 434, in an entry for the year 1301.

⁷⁷ The following is taken from the *Grub chen buddha shrī ba'i rnam par thar pa*, Sa skya Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 1 (Dehra Dun: Sakya Centre, 1983), 414-5; see also SSBB vol. 9, no. 34, 36/4 (hor yul du dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyud 'grel gyi par mdzad pa po), 37/1.

which the printing blocks were carved are collected in the next paragraph. We do not know how often, if at all, Kun dga' rgyal mtshan had been able to return to Tibet. The longest sketch of his life by A mes zhabs, which is still miserably short, has nothing to say about this,⁷⁸ nor do any of the other sources used for this essay. If he had not, then this could mean that either Dpal 'byor legs pa had been in his service before he left for the Mongol court in 1332, or that he joined him while he was in China, or both, namely, that he had been his attendant in Tibet and that he came to China at a later date. Supposing that he did not meet Buddhashrī's mother Sgrol ma 'bum in China, and there is no reason for us to do so, then we must assume that he was at least in Tibet in the year 1338, for Sgrol ma 'bum gave birth to her son in Sgo phu, a monastery in Mdog, located to the northeast of Ngam ring in Byang La stod. Ngor chen mentions his father next in connection with the ordination of his son as a monk in 1361. There we learn that, shortly after his ordination, Buddhashrī organized a large farewell party for his father's impending voyage to China. Lastly, Ngor chen suggests that his father's status as National Preceptor had made him quite wealthy. He relates this in a longer narrative in which he sketches the saintliness of his master, especially in terms of his unbridled generosity. We read there the following:⁷⁹

*rje nyid kyi yab hor yul du byon pas dngos po bsam kyis mi
khyab pa yod kyang / de dag la 'dzin pa cung zad kyang mi mnga' ba /
phal cher yab yum gnyis kyi don du rdzogs par mdzad cing /...*

Although the lord's father owned inconceivable thing[s] because he had gone to Mongolia, [Buddhashrī] did not take even a little of these [and] for the better part fulfilled the aim[s] of his father and mother...

We can therefore conclude that, at an unspecified time but probably after the fall of the Yuan, Dpal 'byor legs pa went to Mongolia and it was there that he became involved as the editor of this xylograph. This could indicate that he had relocated to Qara Qorum [= Ch. Helin]. However, the earliest known National Preceptor of Qara Qorum, according to an entry dated 1375, was *Rdo rje dge legs dpal bzang po "of the former Yüan,"⁸⁰

⁷⁸ NGAG, 330-1 [Chen-Gao-Zhou 1989: 229-30].

⁷⁹ *Grub chen buddha shrī ba'i rnam par thar pa*, Sa skya Lam 'bras Literature Series, 421, and SSBB vol. 9, no. 34, 39/1.

⁸⁰ See the *Mingshilu zangzu shiliao*, ed. Gu Zucheng et al., vol. 1 (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1982), 26 ff.; for the second character ji, read er, as in Tamura Jitsuzō, ed., *Mindai manmō shiryō* vol. 10 (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1959), 11.

and they ought not to be confused with one another. So far, no xylograph from these printing blocks has been retrieved.

Sgrol ma 'bum is of course not an unusual name for a Tibetan woman. Yet, one cannot help but wonder whether she is not the same Sgrol ma 'bum, who later became the mother of Sa bzang Gzhon nu blo gros (1358-1412), another one of Ngor chen's teachers.⁸¹ His father was the monk Gzhon nu dpal and Ngor chen's silence on their possible identity may, perhaps, be interpreted in the sense that this was a delicate and sensitive issue. After all, his father was a monk!

These, then, are the extant references to Mongol sponsorship of the printing of Kālacakra texts. Now the miscellaneous writings of the great Sa skya pa scholar Lama dam pa contained in vol. Na [= vol. 12] of an incomplete handwritten *dbu can* edition of his collected oeuvre housed in the Tibetan library of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities adds several significant details to our dossier on the Kālacakra in Yuan China.⁸² The volume in question contains three short, undated letters that have to do with it and what appears to be his own commentary on the *Vimalaprabhā*, titled *Nges pa'i don gyi gsal byed*. The Tibetan texts of these letters will be published elsewhere. The first is primarily addressed to Toghon Temür Qaghan (Shundi Emperor; r. July 19, 1333, to September 14, 1368; r. in Mongolia to May 23, 1370), but also mentions prince Ayushiridara (1339-78), the son he had with his Korean wife, who became heir-apparent (*hwang tha'i tshē* < Ch. *huangtaizi*) in 1355.⁸³ It is essentially a letter of introduction and recommendation for a Lama Legs pa ba, an expert in esoteric and exoteric Buddhism, whom Bla ma dam pa proposed to the court as a teacher of Buddhism, expressing the hope that he be treated as well as Lama Kun dga' rgyal po ba [= doubtless Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' rgyal mtshan]. The other two are addressed to Ayushiridara. The first is a letter of recommendation for this same Lama Legs pa ba, albeit this time made quite explicitly in connection with the Kālacakra. Lama dam pa writes that the editorial corrections to the *Dus kyi 'khor lo'i tīkā*, "a

⁸¹ See the *Bla ma dam pa sa bzang 'phags pa gzhon nu blo gros kyi rnam par thar pa*, SSBB vol. 9, no. 35, 42/4. Though his dates are said to be the earth-male-dog [1358] to water-male-dragon [1412] year, we nonetheless read on p. 44/2 that [shortly before his passing] he felt somewhat unwell at the age of sixty-seven [= sixty-six]!

⁸² For an analysis of a portion of this collection, see van der Kuijp (1993).

⁸³ Lama dam pa also refers to him as the *rgyal tshab dam pa*, the "noble representative [of the emperor]," and *rgyal sras dam pa*, "the noble son of the emperor." This prince is mentioned but once in Lo tsü ba Byang chub rtse mo's biography of Bla ma dam pa, in BYANG, 50a, as the Great Emperor (*gong ma chen po*) A yuñ [//] rda ra shrī in an entry for the year 1373. For him, see also *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, vol.1, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoyang Fang (New York; Columbia University Press, 1976), 15-7.

[*Laghu*]kālācakra[*tantra*] commentary,” that had previously not been completed are now finished (*zhus dag sngar ma grub pa ding sang legs par grub*) and that this Lama Legs pa ba had a full command of the corpus as well as of the pentad of Maitreya texts. It adds furthermore that Duke (*gu'i gung* < Ch. *guogung*) Chos kyi rin chen (?-1402)⁸⁴ was the one at whose behest he had written it. The exegesis referred to here, in which Ayushiridara apparently had some interest, would thus appear to have been Lama dam pa's very own study of the *Vimalaprabhā*. Only his comments on the *Abhiśekha* and *Jñāna*-chapters have been located so far, meaning that three-fifths of his large-scale work is still missing.⁸⁵ In Lama dam pa's

⁸⁴ For the titles of *guogung* and [*dai*]sītu, see Farquhar (1990: 30-1). Called Si tu Chos kyi rin chen in BYANG, 41a, he requested Kālācakra teachings from Lama dam pa towards the end of 1362. The same as Ta[']i si tu Chos kyi rin chen, he was closely linked to the House of Byang, having married into this family after which his daughter Byang sems 'Bum skyong rgyal mo wedded *gu'i gung* Chos grags dpal bzang po of the same family; see Dpal ldan chos kyi bzang po, *Sde pa g.yas ru byang pa'i rgyal rabs rin po che bstar ba, Rare Tibetan Historical and Literary Texts from the Library of Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa* (New Delhi, 1974), 175, 183 [Ibid., *G.yas ru byang pa'i gdung rabs*, twenty-four-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002833, 4b, 8b]. He was myriarch of Lho. Bo dong Paṅ chen's study of the history of the *Guhyasamājatantra*, specifically, the biography of his maternal uncle Lo tsā ba Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1352/3-1405) notes him severally; see the *Gsang 'dus lung rigs man ngag ston par byed pa'i bla ma tshad ma'i lo rgyus, Encyclopedia Tibetica. The Collected Works of Bo dong Paṅ chen Phyogs las rnam rgyal*, vol. 64 (New Delhi: The Tibet House, 1972), 468 ff., 480-1, as indicated in D.P. Jackson, *The Entrance Gate for the Wise (Section III). Sa skyā Paṅḍita on Indian and Tibetan Traditions of Pramāṇa and Philosophical Debate*, 134, 154, n. 46. There we read that he was the founder of Shel dkar monastery, in 1383, albeit together with Grags pa rgyal mtshan after the latter had been appointed “representative / successor” (rgyal tshab) of Bla ma Mnyam med pa chen po [Grags pa rgyal mtshan] of Sa skyā's Grang mo che Residence; on the latter, see my “Fourteenth Century Tibet: Cultural History I: Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan as a Man of Religion,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 37 (1994), 143-4. Chos kyi rin chen's death is dated the tenth day of dbo month of the chu pho rta year which is the equivalent of March 14, 1402. For Chos kyi rin chen, see now also Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho, *Shel dkar chos 'byung. History of the “White Crystal.”* tr. Pasang Wangdu and H. Diemberger (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 30 ff., and K.-H. Everding, *Das Königreich Mang yul Gung thang. Königtum und Herrschaftsgewalt im Tibet des 13.-17. Jahrhundert, Teil 2, Studien zur Geschichte des Reiches, Monumenta Tibetica Historica, Abt.: Scriptoros, Band 6 (Teil 2)* (Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag GmbH, 2000), Index, 739.

⁸⁵ Vol. Ca of his oeuvre [and most likely vol. Cha which is missing from this collection] includes his various exegeses of the Kālācakra literature, of which only the first text entitled '*Grel chen dri med 'od kyi bsod pa'i don rnam par gsal ba*, a summary of the *Vimalaprabhā*, is dated July 26, 1363; see van der Kuijp (1993: 139-40). In an entry for the years 1442-3, Byams gling Paṅ chen Bsod nams mam rgyal's (1400-75) biography of 1486 by his disciple Rgya ston Lcags ri pa Byang chub mam rgyal mentions that the Phag mo gru ruler gong ma Grags pa 'byung gnas (1414-45) urged to him to write a longer and more detailed work than the very substantial text of Lama dam pa and the incomplete, but nonetheless large,

biography, Lo tsā ba Byang chub rtse mo writes that he had completed writing it sometime in 1360-1 and that, in an entry for the year 1362, Swi du (< Ch. *situ*) Chos [kyi] rin [chen] had requested him to teach it - he was its *zhu ba po*.⁸⁶ The last and third letter states *inter alia* that he had met Lama Legs pa ba when the latter had come to Tibet, and that the writing of his subcommentary had not yet been completed. He adds that when the Lama was residing for a while in Shing khun, the original was borrowed and that the copied text would be sent as soon as possible. It is therefore not at all improbable that this Lama Legs pa ba was in fact none other than Buddhashrī's father, but a large margin of uncertainty remains.

None of these letters are dated and my discussion of their contents followed the order in which they occur in vol. Na. Lama dam pa's strong letters of recommendation might also be interpreted in the sense that he thought Lama Legs pa ba would be the right man for the job of Imperial Preceptor that had been vacant since 1358. This was not to be.

KĀLACAKRA INITIATIONS. There are several other instances of the obvious interest the Mongol imperial family took in the Kālacakra corpus. For example, we read in Tshal pa's chronicle that sometime towards the end of 1337 Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje (1284-1339), whom U rgyan pa had recognized as the reembodiment of Karma pa II Karma pakshi (1204/6-83) in *circa* 1288, gave Kālacakra empowerments to the emperor and his ministers at Dadu.⁸⁷ This passage occurs in a longish narrative which, Tshal pa acknowledges, he had summarized from long and short versions of the Karma pa's own autobiographical writings. Tshal pa, our foremost and earliest source for these, also intersperses his summaries with his own personal observations. For example, just prior to his notice of the Karma pa giving what he calls the "Great Kālacakra Empowerment" (*dus 'khor dbang mo che*), he remarks that from 1333 up to his time of writing [1359], Toghon Temür's reign had been characterized by happiness and stability, and that this and its duration had everything to do with the blessings imparted to him and his family by the Karma pa. Of course, this paints at a minimum a much too rosy a picture. Sometime in 1337, presumably during the summer, the

commentary of Mkhas grub [see n. 51]. The ruler told him not to worry about getting too prolix and that he ought to strive for a truly comprehensive treatment. He did so with a vengeance and therefore did not complete his seven-volume study until the years 1455-6. For this, see *the Dpal ldan byams pa gling pa chen po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mshar gyi phreng ba*, ninety-five-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002775(1), 30a ff.

⁸⁶ BYANG, 38b, 41a.

⁸⁷ TSHAL, 104 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 91]. This detail was apparently taken from a large and a summary version of Karma pa III's autobiographical notes (*rje de nyid kyis gsung pa'i rnam thar rgyas bsdus rnam las btus!*).

Karma pa saw a significant omen in Shangdu indicating to him that all was about to take a turn for the worse. Hoping for some kind of intervention, he thus proceeded to petition Avalokiteśvara, Tibet's patron-Bodhisattva, and soon received the [ungenerous] sign that the emperor and those present who were Buddhists would not come to harm. A calamity then struck during the eighth [lunar] month of 1337, when a large earthquake occurred at Mount Jiming (Tib. Gim mi shan) in the vicinity of Dadu. In his paper on the Karma pa's travels to and stay in Yuan China, Chen Qingying draws attention to two notices of an earthquake near Dadu in the *Yuanshi*, one in 1334 and the other one in 1337. It reports that during the one of 1334 Mount (*shan*) Jiming had collapsed (*beng*) and that a lake had been formed.⁸⁸ This does not pose a serious problem when we assume that the name of this place had not changed in the three intervening years, or that the word *shan* indicates here several mountains. The versified study of the Karma pa's life by Zhwa dmar II Mkha' spyod dbang po (1350-1405) is so far the earliest Tibetan source to date this quake to the fourteenth day of that month, which would correspond to September 9 of that year.⁸⁹ This is exactly to the date given for the beginning of a series of quakes that lasted through to September 14 in the *Yuanshi*. Fortunately, this event had been [pre-]intuited (*mkhyen*) by the Karma pa who had already left his residence and was staying encamped on a plain. But the quake was severe enough for him to report that, because villages had been destroyed, all the Chinese inhabitants (*rgya*) had fled and that no harm had come to the places where those who had requested the Karma pa for refuge and other teachers and disciples were staying. We do not know what happened to the unfortunate ones who were not his disciples. In any case, he gave the Kālacakra empowerments and initiations shortly thereafter.

⁸⁸ This mountain is identified in Chen Qingying, "A Sketch of Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's Two Trips to the [Yuan] Capital[s] [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo Zangxue* 3 (1988), 97. I thank Mr. Toh Hongteik for reminding me of this article. See also Franke (1990: 107).

⁸⁹ See the *Chos rje thams cad mkhyen pa rang byung rdo rje'i rnam thar tshigs bca'd ma*, *Collected Works*, vol. II (Gangtok, 1978), 156, and the parallel passage of Si tu VIII Pañ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas' (1700-74) in SI, 224. The Karma pa's biography in Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal's massive 1447 chronicle of the Bka' brgyud pa school even suggests that he went to Mount Jiming on the fourteenth day of the said month and year; see the *Lho rong chos 'byung*, ed. Gling dpon Pad ma skal bzang and Ma grong Mi 'gyur rdo rje, Gangs can rig mdzod 26 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe mying dpe skrun khang, 1994), 242 [Ibid., *Bka' brgyud rin po che'i lo rgyus phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa'i gsol 'debs rgyas pa*, four hundred and forty-six-folio handwritten dbu med manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002448(6), 136a]. The corresponding passage of Dpa' bo II, in DPA', 941, has him intuiting the pending earthquake while he sojourned on this mountain.

Though granted the title of National Preceptor on May 19, 1334 (*khyi lo zla ba lnga pa'i nya la*),⁹⁰ Karma pa III was never formally appointed Imperial Preceptor and for this reason his name does not appear in any of the more chronologically proximate listings of the individuals who held this office. And, indeed, Tshal pa and the other later biographies of this hierarch rightly make no mention of this. But there is at least one more or less contemporaneous Chinese source and one late Tibetan text that do predicate this title of him. In an entry for the year 1337, Quan Heng says in his *Gengshen waishi* that he was “honored as a *dishi*,” and that this was the rank that [*taishi!*] El Temür (?-1333) had held previously.⁹¹ These men knew each other. According to Tshal pa, they first met on the eighteenth day of the tenth lunar month [November 6] of 1332, that is, the very same day on which the Karma pa arrived at the imperial palace in Dadu. The entry in the *Yuanshi* for the *jiazi* day of the tenth lunar month [November 16] of 1332 says that *El Tegüs, the second son of Tugh Temür Qaghan [Wenzong emperor, r. October 16, 1328 - 26 February 26, 1329, September 8, 1329 - September 2, 1332] took his vows (*shoujie*) from the Western monk Jia'ermawa (*Karma pa).⁹² His name in religion may have been something along the lines of *Gunaḍhara, at least that is how P. Pelliot interpreted the Chinese. The circumstance that he was not given a Tibetan name in all likelihood means that the Karma pa did not function as his “abbot” (*mkhan po*, *upadhyāya*) and thus played a marginal role in the rituals of his ordination.

Now Tshal pa⁹³ writes in an entry for January 31, 1333 (*bya lo zla ba dang po'i nya*), that, donning his black hat and intoning the *mani pad* [=

⁹⁰ TSHAL, 102 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 90]. YS, 39, 843, says that: “In that year [1334], the Western-region monk Jialima [Karma{pa}] came to the imperial city [of Dadu] and was awarded the title “Initiating National Preceptor” (*guanding guoshi*) and given a jade seal [of office].” See also below *ad* n. 92. We have to be careful with reconstructing these dates according to the Tibetan calendar[s], for there is some evidence, for which see below, that the Karma pa used the Chinese calendar in the entries of his autobiographical writings. This will require further study, especially bearing in mind his own work on the calendar, for which see above n. 36. This also means that my equivalents of the dates based on his autobiographical writings are subject to further scrutiny.

⁹¹ We find this in Schulte-Uffelage (1963: 32) and thence in Franke (1990: 102, note 4). For some reservations, see my “On the Life and Political Career of Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302-?1364),” *Tibetan History and Language. Studies Dedicated to Uray Géza on His Seventieth Birthday*, E. Steinkellner, ed. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 26 (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1991), 306, n. 35.

⁹² YS, 37, 812. See also L. Hambis, *Le chapitre CVII du Yuan che [avec des notes supplémentaires par Paul Pelliot]* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1945), 141.

⁹³ TSHAL, 102 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 90].

om mani padma hūm] mantra, the Karma pa was able to open a pathway through the throngs of people [a flash-crowd?] who had come to watch the young Toghon Temür and his entourage arrive at Dadu. The emperor-designate had traveled from southern China (*sman tse'i yul*). Neither the *Yuanshi* nor Quan Heng say when exactly he had left Guilin in Guangxi Province for the north, or when he arrived at his destination, which they leave unspecified. He most probably arrived at the palace in Dadu straight from Liangxiang, some thirty miles to the south of Dadu.⁹⁴ In Liangxiang, he was met by El Temür and other notables, and it was possibly also there that Toghon Temür and the Karma pa paid their mutual respects. Tshal pa writes in :⁹⁵

*sbrel dkar chen po'i mdun du rgyal po nyid byon nas bsu zhing
zhabs la btugs / mos gus dang dbul ba bsal gyis mi khyab /*

The emperor himself having come to the front of [his] large *sbrel dkar*, met [the Karma pa] and touched [his] feet; [the emperor gave him] great reverence and inconceivable [number of] gifts.”

Irrespective of what *sbrel* or *sbral dkar* means, we can be sure that for the Chinese who were present this sequence of events was a serious and enormous breach of protocol. It is not what one expects an emperor to be doing. Though so many years junior to the Karma pa, the young Toghon Temür was still the emperor-designate and, as such, his behavior must have been a cause for concern among the Chinese courtiers. In the privacy of their own thoughts, they may have shrugged it off as the kind of behavior one can expect of non-Chinese barbarians. Nonetheless, it is of some interest that the corresponding passage in Dpa' bo II's chronicle suggests that it was the Karma pa who came to the seated emperor and showed him proper respect and obeisance. This may reflect a very different sensibility concerning

⁹⁴ Schulte-Uffelage (1963: 28).

⁹⁵ TSHAL, 102; TSHAL1, 58a, has *sbral dkar chen mo*. Chen-Zhou (1988: 89) render *sbrel dkar* by *hada*, that is, *kha btags*, the white ceremonial scarf used for official greetings and other purposes. But this is not possible. But the meaning of the expression *sbral dkar* remains elusive, as I have found no dictionary entries for it; *sbrel* makes no sense. On the other hand, DPA', 939-40, has *rgyal po gur dkar chen po na gser khri la bzhugs pas rgyang ring po nas sngun bsus te...* “Since the emperor was seated on a golden throne in a large white tent, [the Karma pa] was led before him from afar...” Though also indebted to Dpa' bo II's narrative, SI, 217, has: *sbrel dkar gzim gur chen mo'i mdun du / mi dbang rgyal po chen po nyid byon nas /...*, here *gzim gur* means residential tent and *sbrel dkar* seems to be used attributively with respect to the tent. Schuh (1977: 133) paraphrases the passage of si, 217, in which the relevant line occurs, but does not deal with this problematic line *per se*.

matters of protocol on Dpa' bo II's part who, after all, was writing in the heyday of the Ming.

Then, upon the request of the still powerful empress dowager Budashiri⁹⁶ and other dignitaries, including El Temür, the Karma pa gave them an unidentified tantric empowerment, an event that may very well have taken place in Dadu. To be noted is Toghon Temür's absence from this brief list of attendees. Shortly thereafter one the Karma pa's attendants by the name of Grags pa brtson 'grus was appointed Secretary (*tshen dben* < Ch. *qianyuan*) of the Bureau of Imperial Blessings.⁹⁷ We then learn, as is so well-known from Chinese sources, that El Temür got into serious trouble for his machinations and intrigue. Tshal pa, now narrator rather than the excerpter of the Karma pa's autobiographical sketches writes:⁹⁸

*mi dpon mang pos mtha'i shri la ngan brtsams nas 'khrugs pa
chen po yong bar byung ba / chos rjes zhal ta byon nas bde 'jam la
bkod /*

A great amount of trouble arose after many officials had begun to be nasty to the Taishi [= El Temür]. The Lord of Religion, having come to, established peace and quiet [among them].

⁹⁶ A translation of her very short biography in the *Yuanshi* may be found in F. W. Cleaves, "The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1335 in Memory of Chang Ying-jui," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 13 (1950), 35-6.

⁹⁷ For the identification of *tha'i hi dben* with *daxiyuan*, see Franke (1990: 113); for this bureau, see Farquhar (1990: 139, 162, n. 82-3), who has *taixiyuan*. The reading *dben* [for *yuan*] is found in TSHAL, but not in TSHAL1, 58a, which has the more correct *dben*. Chen-Zhou (1988: 89) and Chen Qingying, "A Sketch of Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's Two Trips to the [Yuan] Capital[s]" [in Chinese], 96, suggest that the Tibetan reflects Chinese *taihuiyuan*, but no bureau by this name ever seems to have existed under the Yuan. According to Chinese sources, the *taixiyuan* was established in 1328, but its name was already changed in 1329 to become the Bureau of Imperial Cults, the *taixi zongyin yuan*. It is thus possible that Tibetan *tha'i hi* is short for *taixi zongyin*. Though tempting, the equation *tha'i hi dben* < Ch. *tai'yuan*, Bureau of Medicine, is probably untenable. For its administration, see P. Ratchnevsky, *Un code des Yuan*, Tome second (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 46 ff. and Farquhar (1990: 34-6). To be sure, why Grags pa brtson 'grus would have been appointed to the last office is not altogether clear, unless, perhaps, he was trained in traditional Tibetan medicine. We know that the Karma pa himself wrote a highly influential *materia medica* titled *Sman ming rgya mtsho*. Regardless of this, the only other medical tradition this bureau countenanced beside the Chinese one was the Muslim Arabo-Persian one. It is thus not likely that Tibetan *tha'i hi dben* reflects Chinese *tai'yuan*.

⁹⁸ TSHAL, 102 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 88-9].

This then was the first encounter between the future emperor and the Karma pa. Tshal pa [or the Karma pa] says that he was enthroned in Shangdu during the sixth lunar month. On the surface, this date appears to contradict the Chinese dossier on his enthronement, which holds that it took place on July 19, a day that occurred in the seventh Tibetan lunar month, July 12 being the last day of the Tibetan sixth lunar month.⁹⁹ Again, Zhwa dmar II is our first Tibetan source to be a bit more precise. He states that, when Toghon Temür was at his residence (*gdan sa*) on the eighth day of the sixth lunar month of that year, a number of omens appeared that the Karma pa felt were extremely positive in their purport.¹⁰⁰ It so happens that the eighth day of the seventh Tibetan lunar month falls on July 19, and this means that, provided the tables generated by D. Schuh are not unreliable, the sources used by Tshal pa and Zhwa dmar II - these were presumably at least indirectly [for the latter] the Karma pa's autobiographical writings - utilized the Chinese and not the Tibetan calendar! It hardly requires saying that this is not altogether insignificant, although it is somewhat peculiar that the Karma pa *apparently* did not make use of his own calendar in these, which were most probably based on his very own diary entries. The study of his *Rtsis kyi bstan bcos kun las btus pa* becomes all the more an important desideratum. Consequently, from now on, we have to be on our guard when we use Tibetan literary sources that were written when their immediate authors were traveling in China. At the same time, we must also be aware that, when their writings are used in the later literature, the dates found in the "originals" are usually left intact. Lastly, what may be of singular importance is Dpa' bo II's allegation that the Karma pa was not merely present in Shangdu at this time, but that he in fact had empowered Toghon Temür for his "office of great emperor" (*rgyal po chen po'i go sa*) and that he had made a speech on his behalf (*dbang bskur te shis brjod mdzad*).¹⁰¹ That is to say, he suggests that the Karma pa played an important role during the new emperor's investiture.

The question that needs to be asked is where was the Imperial Preceptor during all of this or, at least, who was he? In spite of the Karma pa's obviously influential position at the court, we have to be skeptical of the association of the *dishi* title with him. Tradition and precedence carried much weight and Sa skya and the Imperial Preceptors that were born in its families were powerful forces. So far the only Tibetan work I have come across where we learn that he was sometimes styled in this way is Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho's (1523-96) study of Buddhist chronology of 1587. No

⁹⁹ Schuh (1973: *89*).

¹⁰⁰ *Chos rje thams cad mkhyen pa rang byung rdo rje'i rnam thar tshigs bcad ma*, 154.

¹⁰¹ DPA', 940.

great admirer of a number of traditions current in the Bka' brgyud pa school, Mang thos was one of the foremost sixteenth century Sa skya pa scholars to take aim and criticize these in no uncertain terms. He notes the allegation (*zer*), which I cannot place at the present time, that the Karma pa was an Imperial Preceptor and, unexpectedly, reacts rather benignly by suggesting that he may have functioned as one at the beginning of Toghon Temür's reign and at the same time (*thog mtshungs*) as Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, since he was so much the latter's senior.¹⁰² Be this as it may, we cannot lend any credence to this assertion, if only because his contemporaneity with the *bona fide* Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' rgyal mtshan would present us with a serious and a virtually unprecedented anomaly. Whereas there were many contemporaneous National Preceptors, no two Imperial Preceptors ever seem to have "reigned" at the same time, with perhaps only one exception during Qubilai's reign. Namely, according to the *Yuanshi*,¹⁰³ when Lama 'Phags pa was given permission to leave for Tibet in 1274, the court appointed his younger half-brother Rin chen rgyal mtshan (1239-79) as the in-house Imperial Preceptor, after which Lama 'Phags pa's still very young nephew Dharmapālarakṣita (1268-87) was brought to the court as his replacement. Rin chen rgyal mtshan is not recognized as an Imperial Preceptor in any other Chinese or Tibetan source, and it is therefore unlikely that he was actually formally appointed as one. But perhaps Qubilai's reign was a special case. During one of his meetings with U rgyan pa in his palace in Shangdu, he made an fairly unambiguous overture to him by giving him the official jade seal (*shel gyi dam kha* < Mon. *tamgha*) that had belonged to Lama 'Phags pa.¹⁰⁴ Having no desire to get involved with everything his acceptance of the seal would have implied, which may have included his acquiescence to the Imperial Preceptorship, U rgyan pa declined the gift and, after having stayed for about a month and a half, soon left the court under an ever darkening cloud. The preponderance of the evidence indicates that he

¹⁰² *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed lhag bsam rab dkar*, ed. Nor brang O rgyan, Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 4 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1988), 175: 'dis hor tho han thi mur gyi twi shri mdzad zer bas / spyir tho han thi mur gyis lo nyer lnga rgyal srid mdzad pa'i stod la ti shri kun rgyal gyis twi shri mdzad / bar skabs su bla chen bsod blos mdzad / mjug tu twi shri med pa lo brgyad byung zer ba'i tho han gyi sku tshe'i stod twi hri kun rgyal dang thog mtshungs tsam du twi shri mdzad par mngon te / rang byung rdo rje twi shri kun rgyal las lo nyer drug gis bgres pa yin pa'i phyir ro // There is obviously a problem with the number of years during which Toghon Temür is said to have reigned [twenty-five!], but its discussion will have to be reserved for another time.

¹⁰³ YS, 8, 154, and YS, 202, 4517, as quoted in Petech (1990: 23, n.73). The date given for this is April 24, 1274, and occurred after Lama 'Phags pa had taken leave.

¹⁰⁴ BSOD, 170 [BSOD1, 236] and RGYAL, 87b.

departed from Central Tibet in 1292.¹⁰⁵ And if he left in late spring or early summer of that year, then he may very well have arrived in Shangdu in mid- or late-summer. At the time, Grags pa 'od zer (1246-1303) of Sa skya's Khang gсар Residence had been Imperial Preceptor for about a year and, if my take on these events is not incorrect, then it seems that the aged and ailing Qubilai felt no sense of loyalty towards him.

It seems to have been very important for the actual or acting Imperial Preceptor to reside at the court, an importance that was probably as much administrative as religious. It is for this reason that I am inclined to hold that Karma pa III's title should be interpreted functionally in the sense that he had given the emperors certain empowerments and teachings, the more so since no Chinese and standard Bka' bgyud pa sources state that he had formally received the *dishi* title or that he was awarded, let alone used, the seal of this office. This is also how we need to interpret the statement of Nam mkha' bsod nams [or his sources] when he writes in his chronicle of the Gtsang tsha family (*brgyud*) of the Rngog branch-clan that one of its scions Ri bo pa Rin chen bzang po (1231-1307) [or 1243-1319] "became a great Imperial Preceptor" (*ti shr? chen por gyur*).¹⁰⁶ Chos nyid ye shes (1727-?), who completed his fine history of a branch of the Gnyags clan in 1775, also says hyperbolically that Mus chen Rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1287-1347) was the Imperial Preceptor of Buyantu Qaghan [Renzong Emperor, r. April 7, 1311 to March 1, 1320] and, later, of Toghon Temür.¹⁰⁷ Though it is more than likely that he was involved in teaching and ritual activity at the court, the court never formally appointed him to the office of the Imperial Preceptor. Finally, Brag dgon Zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1801-after 1871) notes a Lama Gu rum, otherwise unknown to me, in his large, 1864 history of Buddhism in Amdo, who was an "Imperial Preceptor of the Mongol[s]."¹⁰⁸

Now the Tibetan and Chinese dossiers present us with several problems that have to do with the succession of Imperial Preceptors and

¹⁰⁵ Both BSOD, 162, and BSOD, 226, have it that he left for the China in the "water-male-dragon year, at the age of seventy-three [= seventy-two]" where RGYAL, 82a, has water-male-snake year, at the age of sixty-three [= sixty-two]." The water-male-dragon year and the water-male-snake year roughly correspond to 1292 and 1293. Zhwa dmar III, *Chos kyi rje rgyal ba au'yan pa chen po'i rnam par thar pa rdzogs ldan bdud rtsi'i dga' ston*, *Collected Works*, vol. II (Gangtok, 1978), 109, as does Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal, Lho rong chos 'byung, 742 [*Bka' bgyud rin po che'i lo rgyus phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa'i gsol 'debs rgyas pa*, 450a] indicate his departure to have taken place in the water-male-dragon year [1292] when he was sixty-two.

¹⁰⁶ *Rngog rabs gsal ba'i me long*, forty-seven folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. catalogue no. 002813(2), 16a.

¹⁰⁷ GNYAGS, 283, 293.

¹⁰⁸ BRAG, 680.

their respective terms of office. Gtsang Byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, who considers the Imperial Preceptors in the eighth chapter of his exceptional 1475 study of Sa skya monastery's history, appears to be disinclined to accept the veracity of a written source (*yi ge kha cig*) he does not identify, which registered an Imperial Preceptor from Mdo smad [Amdo] between Kun dga' legs pa⁴ 'byung gnas [rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po] (1308-?) and his younger brother Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, both of whom were scions of Sa skya's Lha khang Residence.¹⁰⁹ This Mdo smad pa, who turns out to be the Imperial Preceptor Rin chen grags, is mentioned by Seng ge bzang po in his ?1419 biography of Rig[s] pa'i seng ge (1287-1375), by Yar lung Jo bo Shākya rin chen sde in his 1376 chronicle, and by Gtsang Byams pa himself, albeit in a rather different context.¹¹⁰ According to the latter, he succeeded Sangs rgyas dpal (1267-1314) of Sa skya's Khang gсар Residence in 1309/10, and stayed in this office until 1313, when he was relieved of his duties by the appointment of Kun dga' blo gros (1299-1327) who, Gtsang Byams pa says, was Imperial Preceptor from 1315 to 1327. However, this does not mesh with what we read elsewhere in his work, namely, that the child Kun dga' blo gros left for the court at the age of ten, in the earth-female-hen year, and that he was appointed Imperial Preceptor at the age of eleven in the earth-male-rat year.¹¹¹ No earth-male-rat year occurred in his life-time, so that we have to conjecture that Gtsang Byams pa may have meant to write iron-male-dog year - in some East Tibetan dialects, *byi* is homophonous with *khyi*, and the "earth"-element must have been an oversight. This year corresponds to 1310! If the *intitulationum* of the extant edicts issued by him in the emperor's name are authentic, and there is so far no reason for doubting this, then he was an Imperial Preceptor by at least 1316.¹¹² Indeed, Tshal pa himself says that he held this post under:¹¹³

1. Buyantu Qaghan
2. Gegen Qaghan [Yingzong, r. April 19, 1320 to September 4, 1323]

¹⁰⁹ GTSANG, 63a.

¹¹⁰ *Mkhan chen bka' bzhi pa chen po rig[s] pa'i seng ge'i rnam par thar pa yon tan rin po che'i rgya mtsho, Mi nyag mkhas dbang lnga'i rnam thar*, ed. Thub bstan nyi ma (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 78, and YAR, 168 [YAR1, 161, T'ang 1989: 95], and GTSANG, 62a.

¹¹¹ GTSANG, 39a.

¹¹² The *bya lo* year of the edict published in the *Bod kyi yig tshags phyogs bsgribs*, vol. 1, 1, is there said to be the year 1309. This seems too early, and most likely needs to be pushed forward by one duodenary cycle, that is, to the year 1321.

¹¹³ TSHAL, 49 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 45].

3. Yesün Temür Qaghan [Taidingdi Emperor, r. October 4, 1323 to August 15, 1328).

On the other hand, G.yas ru Stag tshang pa's compilation states that he was given this office by the court of *Siddhipala (*dbyings khyung* < Ch. *yingzong*) [= Gegen Qaghan], which is also reflected in Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen's (1405-77) 1467 study of the ruling 'Khon family of Sa skya.¹¹⁴ But this cannot be correct. Not a member of Sa skya's ruling families, Rin chen grags' appointment could only have been an interim and provisional solution.

The dates of Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas who, according to most sources, formally succeeded Kun dga' blo gros on May 17, 1327, though he was officially confirmed on October 17, 1328,¹¹⁵ are a matter of some debate. For example, the chronicles of Tshal pa, Yar lung Jo bo and G.yas ru Stag tshang pa are silent on them, but Yar lung Jo bo does reckon him as the Imperial Preceptor between Kun dga' blo gros and Rin chen grags - the mention of the latter may have possibly been the source for Gtsang Byams pa's reference to the aforementioned *yi ge kha cig*. Stag tshang Lo tsā ba relates that he died in 1330, whereas Gtsang Byams pa, who suggests that he passed away at the age of thirty-three, has [as his dates 1308 to] 1339!¹¹⁶ Writing much later, A mes zhabs says that he was invited by the court in 1328 and then cites two different sources for two different year of his passing. The first is Mus srad pa Shes rab rdo rje's (late 14th c.) study of Sa skya's abbatial succession, which observed that he died in Dadu in the hare-year [1339] at the age of thirty-three. According to him, he was born in 1307. The second is Nyi lde ba Nam mkha' bzang po (ca. 1400) study of the same. Stating that he passed away in the horse-year [1330] at the age of twenty-two, he suggests that he was Imperial Preceptor for three years.¹¹⁷ Not one

¹¹⁴ See, respectively, the *Rgya bod yig tshang chen mo*, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985), 336 [*Han Zang shiji*, 210] and STAG, 25b.

¹¹⁵ Petech (1990: 83). There is a tradition in Amdo that Blo gros dpal ldan of the family that controlled the great monastery of Rong bo in Qinghai "revered" the Imperial Preceptor as his lama, for which see 'Jigs med theg mchog, *Rong bo dgon chen gyi gdan rabs* (Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1988), 99, 739-40. I do not know whence it originated, but it seems to be apocryphal.

¹¹⁶ STAG, 25b, and GTSANG, 42a-b.

¹¹⁷ NGAG, 329-30 [Chen-Gao-Zhou 1989: 229]. Neither work has come down to us. Writing at times *nyi sde* and *nyi bde*, GTSANG, 67a, is so far the only source to provide a rough genealogy of the Nyi lde family and its residence in Sa skya: Lama Dkon mchog 'byung gnas [a disciple of Sa skya Paṇḍita] - [his maternal cousins (*gnag dbon*) (*sic*)] National Preceptor Shes rab dpal and Lama Rin chen 'od - [their maternal cousins] Kun spangs Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, Kun spangs Chos skyong dpal, National Preceptor Nam mkha' seng ge [an interlinear

edict promulgated by him in the emperor's name has been published so far, so that we have no outside corroborating evidence for the onset or rough duration of his tenure as Imperial Preceptor. Tshal pa and Yar lung pa held that he was Imperial Preceptor under Yesün Temür, whereas G.yas ru Stag tshang pa, Stag tshang Lo tsā ba and Gtsang Byams pa maintained that he functioned in this capacity under Tugh Temür.¹¹⁸

As stated, his younger brother was Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' rgyal mtshan and here, too, none of the Tibetan sources are clear on the year of his accession to this office. He was certainly not the most obvious candidate for the job, being a layman with the layman's title of Duke (*guogung*) and the father of two sons, Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1332-59) and Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1332-64), he had with two wives. This means that, in roughly 1331, he was not a monk. The tradition holds that he later, very likely shortly thereafter, became one. So far, the only bit of evidence that he was ordained a monk is Grags pa rdo rje dpal bzang po's (1444-?) study of the four transmissions of Śākyaśrībhadrā's (1127-1225) *vinaya* tradition in Tibet. Though he does not provide a date for his ordination, he does indicate that his "abbot" had been Mkhan chen Bsod nams grags pa (1273-1353) of the Chos lung transmission.¹¹⁹ The consensus of our sources is that Kun dga' rgyal mtshan was Imperial Preceptor to the following emperors:

1. Tugh Temür
2. Irincenbal [= Rin chen dpal] [Ningzong emperor, r. October 13 to December 14, 1332]
3. Toghon Temür

Reflected by the fortunes of the emperors and the confusion that beset the succession of imperial preceptors, these were turbulent times,

note states that he founded the Nyi lde Residence], National Preceptor Tshul khriṃs grub, and two laymen (*mi skya*) - [the sons of the eldest of the two layman] Bsod nams seng ge and Ngag dbang bzang po - [? the son of the latter (*de'i sras*)] Kun dga' dpal who is also known as Nyi bde (*sic*) Rgya'o - [his sons] Initiating National Preceptor (kun *ling gug shri* < Ch. *guanding guoshi*) Nam mkha' bzang po and Ta'i dbyen ju (< Ch. ?) Bsod nams rgyal mtshan - [the sons of Nam mkha' bzang po] Ngag dbang grags pa and Nam mkha' grags pa.

¹¹⁸ See, respectively, TSHAL, 49 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 45], YAR, 161 [YARI, 155, Tang 1989: 92], *Rgya bod yig tshang chen mo*, 337 [Han Zang shiji, 210], STAG, 25b, and GTSANG, 62b. The published texts of Yar lung Jo bo's chronicle wrongly call him Nam mkha' rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po, but this is due to a lapsus in the original manuscript, for which see also the *Yar lung chos 'byung*, one hundred and sixteen-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002446(2), 97a-b. Note that *Arigiba (1320-after 1365), son of Yesün Temür, who spent some time on the throne in October and November of 1328, does not count in this context.

¹¹⁹ *Mkhan [b]rgyud rnam gsum byon tshul gyi rnam thar*, twenty-five-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002775(6), 13b-4a.

indeed.¹²⁰ The problems with the reign[s] of Tugh Temür can *prima facie* mean one of two things: either Kun dga' rgyal mtshan was appointed Imperial Preceptor in late 1328 or sometime between 1329 and 1332. All the evidence points to the latter. In this connection, there is an important passage in Tshal pa's chronicle which states that the Karma pa met him in the second half of 1331 while both were en route to China.¹²¹ The mention there of his title "Imperial Preceptor" may very well have been informed through hindsight, though it is entirely thinkable that he was traveling as a *bona fide* Imperial Preceptor, even though he may not have been formally appointed through a ceremony that, according to one single source, was to take place at the court. This squares well with Si tu Paṅ chen's narrative when he says that Kun dga' rgyal mtshan invited Karma pa III to the temple of Me tog [ldum] ra ba during Irincenbal's reign.¹²² In this passage, he is also styled Imperial Preceptor. Nian Chang writes that his formal appointment as Imperial Preceptor did not take place until July 19, 1333, which coincided with the enthronement of Toghon Temür.¹²³ This may have been the official ratification of his new post. Mus chen, who seems to have arrived in Dadu in the end of 1332, received three edicts by him that are dated, respectively, "the monkey-year, fifteenth day of the tenth lunar month," "the hen-year, the fourteenth day of the second lunar month," and "the hen-year, the twenty-second day of the second lunar month."¹²⁴ Provided that Chos nyid ye shes has reproduced these intact, and there is no reason to assume that he did not, then the one dated towards the end of 1332 begins with the *invocatio*: *om sva sti siddhi (sic!)*, and has as its *intitulatio*: "Kun dga' rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po," that is, we have his name without the title of Imperial Preceptor or that of Duke (*guogong*), his earlier, far less illustrious lay-title. It also lacks an authorization such as "by order of the emperor" and the like, but it was written in temple of Me tog ra ba, the Dadu residence of the Imperial Preceptors. This seems to reflect quite nicely the times in which it was issued. There was no emperor on the throne, or even an emperor-designate, when the edict was issued, and, without an emperor, there could be *de jure*

¹²⁰ For an overview of these times, see Hsiao Ch'i-ch'ing, "Mid-Yüan Politics," *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6. *Alien Regimes and border states*, ed. H. Franke and D. Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 527-56.

¹²¹ TSHAL, 101 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 89].

¹²² SI, 217.

¹²³ See the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaikyoku, comp. Ono Genmyō (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-32), vol. XLIX, no. 2036, 735b, as quoted in Petech (1990: 86).

¹²⁴ GNYAGS, 285-6. Dated the ox-year [1337, 1349], one additional previously unpublished edict of Kun dga' rgyal mtshan in the emperor's name is contained in the *Bod kyi yig tshags phyogs bsrigs*, 2.

no Imperial Preceptor. The year in which the second and third were issued was 1333, but both are dated prior to Toghon Temür's enthronement. It thus appears that the presence of an emperor-designate was a sufficient condition for Kun dga' rgyal mtshan to issue an edict in his name and for him to be designated Imperial Preceptor.

Lastly, each of the three recensions of Ta'i si tu's autobiography-cum-political testament contain several entries relating to Kun dga' blo gros and Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, that are apt to create chronological confusion, as they shift for the period under consideration from a duodenary to a sexegenary notation for the year.¹²⁵ At one point, there is an entry for the hare-year wherein is related that the remains of the erstwhile Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' blo gros had returned to Tibet. This can only refer to the year 1327. The remains were escorted by, among others, Si tu Dar ma rgyal mtshan, who also ended up being entrusted with inviting the Karma pa, Mus chen and probably also Kun dga' rgyal mtshan as the new Imperial Preceptor to the court. Ta'i si tu then speaks of the doings of the Bailan Prince of Sa skya's Dus mhad Residence - he must have been Bsod nams bzang po (1291-ca. 1335) - and his daughter for the serpent-year [1329], after which the manuscripts of his work suddenly confront us with a sexagenary, rather than the earlier duodenary, notation of the year. The next entry is one for the thirteenth day of the fourth month of the water-horse year. Btsan lha Ngag dbang tshul khriims and Yu Wanzhi indicated in their Chinese translation of this difficult work - this was also rendered explicit by Petech, that the years given in this passage and those that follow are wrong.¹²⁶ The horse-year in question can only be 1330, which was the iron-male-horse year. The next entry is for the beginning of the winter of the wood-female-hen year, which must be 1333, that is, the water-female-hen year. It is between these two entries that we learn of Kun dga' rgyal mtshan's departure for the court.

There are three basic Chinese sources for the succession of the Tibetan Imperial Preceptors: the *Yuanshi* minus chapter 202, the *Yuanshi* chapter 202, and Nian Chang's *Fozu lidai tongzai*. The Imperial Preceptors indicated in these were tabulated long ago by G. Tucci,¹²⁷ who already recognized that a *Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan was an Imperial Preceptor between Kun dga' blo gros and Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas, and that *Rin

¹²⁵ What follows is based on the *Lha rigs rlang kyi rnam thar* (New Delhi, 1974), 331-2 [**Tā si tu byang chub rgyal mtshan gyi bka' chems mthong ba don ldan, Rlang po ti bse ru*, ed. Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs and Nor brang O rgyan, Gangs can rig mdzod, vol. 1 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 153-4, *Ta si byang chub rgyal mtshan gyi bka' chems*, ed. Chos 'dzoms (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 54-6]. See also Petech (1990: 86).

¹²⁶ Btsan lha-Yu (1989: 108 ff.) and Petech (1990: 85).

¹²⁷ Tucci (1949: 15, 252-3).

chen grags¹²⁸ occupied this post between Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas and Kun dga' rgyal mtshan. *Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan was presumably the interim solution during Kun dga' blo gros' three-year absence from the court, but he is otherwise unknown to the Tibetan sources used for this paper, and no edicts by him have been published thusfar. As for the identity of Rin chen grags, things are complicated by the fact that the period knows of several men with this name, so that it is by no means easy to establish his identity with any sense of definitiveness. According to the *Yuanshi*, he was appointed on December 22, 1329¹²⁹, and this would suggest that Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas was, for one reason or another, incapacitated and thus unable to fulfill his function. The date in question occurred on the first day of the twelfth lunar month of the earth-serpent year of the Tibetan calendar, and Kun dga' legs pa'i 'byung gnas had probably already died at that time, but his death is cloaked in mystery. None of the sources indicate whether his remains were ever transported back to Sa skya. Indeed, it is doubtful that they were. The eighth and last chapter of Gtsang Byams pa's work is dedicated to an inventory of sacred objects of all the main residences and temples of Sa skya, and one looks there in vain for a notice of the presence of his reliquary.

To return to Rin chen grags, Petech ventures the view that he may have been the same as the National Preceptor who, in 1325, was responsible for having printing blocks carved for a summary of Sino-Tibetan political history during the Tang in Dpal gyi sde chen monastery in Shing kun [= Lintao, in Gansu].¹³⁰ The text in question was the compilation of documents on the subject by Song Qi (998-1061), which was put into summary form and edited by a Han gsi'u tsha - his name appears in various Tibetan guises. A certain Chief-reciter [of scripture] (*jiang-zhu*) Bao then completed the Tibetan translation in Shing kun on April 16 or May 15, 1285, and Rin chen

128 Wang Furen and Chen Qingying, *A Brief History of Relations between the Mongol and Tibetan Nationalities* [in Chinese] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1985), 37, reconstructed his name as *Rin chen bkra shis and Petech (1990: 83, n. 64) is willing to entertain this possibility as well. In light of the Tibetan dossier of n. 109, this can now be safely discarded. The same holds for *Rin chen grags shis, an impossible Tibetan name, that we find in the *History of the Yuan Dynasty* [in Chinese], ed. Han Rulin, vol. 2 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1986), 256.

129 As cited in Petech (1990: 83).

130 What follows is in part based on Petech (1990: 84) and references, and also on P.K. Sørensen, *Tibetan Buddhist Historography. The Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies. An Annotated Translation of the XIVth Century Tibetan Chronicle: Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, Asiatische Forschungen, Bd. 128 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994), 501-3. GTSANG, 32b, says that along with Chu mig dpal gyi sde chen and Bsam 'grub in Rtso mdo [in Mdo khams], Dpal gyi sde chen was Lama 'Phags pa's intermediate see (*gdan sa bar ba*).

grags had it printed forty years later.¹³¹ Who was this Rin chen grags? This is not easy to answer, since there were a number of individuals with this name during the thirteenth and early fourteenth century. But we do find a possible answer in Brag dgon Zhabs drung's history. Making use of what he calls the *Tā dbon lo rgyus*, *Annals of the Grand Yuan* [reembodiments, *sprul sku*],¹³² which has so far not come down to us, he comes to speak of "four great clerics (*grwa [pa]*)" from Mdzod dge in Amdo [here northern Sichuan], who were Lama 'Phags pa's disciples. These were: Nyang dbon Mgon po blo gros, Dpal Shes rab 'bar, Dbang dpon po Blo bzang tshul khriims and Tā dbon po, that is, the Great Yuan (*tā dbon* < Ch. *dayuan*). The latter was none other than Drung Rin chen grags - the term-*cum*-title *drung* would suggest his closeness to Lama 'Phags pa -, who founded three monastic sees, including Dpal gyi sde chen monastery - the name of this institution is also on occasion [wrongly] written as "Bde chen." Brag dgon Zhabs drung says that he became his teacher's representative when Lama 'Phags pa returned to Tibet [in 1274] and that he was revered by Qubilai on an equal footing with his master. Both Mgon po blo gros and Rin chen grags were active in the conversion of Bon po-s in the Amdo area, apparently at Qubilai's orders. This may have been a reflex of the 1281-2 persecution of Daoism. Rin chen grags' nephew was Drung Mdzes pa'i tog alias Dkon mchog rin chen. He also studied with Lama 'Phags pa, assumed the abbacy of Shing kun and built there, as well as in the central Tibetan monastery of Bde ba can, a seminary for the study of exoteric Buddhism (*mtshan nyid*). Now the earliest work Lama 'Phags pa wrote while he resided in Shing kun is dated 1271¹³³ and, as far as I am aware, the name Dpal gyi sde chen does not occur in any of his writings. Chos nyid rdo rje states¹³⁴ that, en route to Tibet in the first half of 1333, Mus chen made a stop-over in Shing kun at which time Prince Chos dpal (< Mon. Choshbal) invited him to his palace. Headquartered in Hezhou, in Gansu, Chos dpal was the Zhenxi Wuqing prince and thus a descendant of A'urughci, Qubilai's seventh son from a junior wife.¹³⁵ At this time, he also "sated with gifts of religion" an unnamed

¹³¹ I owe the suggestion of reading *gyang chu* and its variants as reflecting Chinese *jiangzhu* to Mr. Toh Hongteik. The name of the Chinese translator is also written as *ba hu, hu*, etc. The *ba'u* reading is found in YAR, 32 [YAR1, 34] and, though maybe a *lectio faciliior*, might very well reflect Chinese *bao*, that is, Sanskrit *ratna*, which as good a Buddhist name as any. "Bao" would be the last part of his full name [in religion].

¹³² What follows is taken from BRAG, 562-3, 584, 589, 592. A *Tā dbon sprul sku* Blo bzang seng ge is noted in BRAG, 726.

¹³³ SSBB vol. 7, no. 224, 212/1.

¹³⁴ GNYAGS, 288.

¹³⁵ For the Zhenxi Wuqing princes in general and this prince in particular, see L. Petech, "Princely Houses of the Yüan Period Connected with Tibet," ed. T. Skorupski, *Indo-Tibetan*

Shing kun abbot. This suggests that “Shing kun” can and was used as an abbreviation of “Dpal gyi sde chen in Shing kun” (*shing kun dpal gyi sde chen*). One cannot help but wonder whether this abbot might have been Dharmaphala, who Brag dgon Zhabs drung notes, along with a Lama Saṃgha as abbots, respectively, in Rtse Inga [Mount Wutai] and of Shing kun Dpal gyi sde chen.¹³⁶ If we reckon that this Rin chen grags was at least twenty-five years old when he founded this institution and if he were the same as the National Preceptor, then he must have been roughly eighty years old in 1325. It is improbable that they are one and the same, but it is not impossible. We should recall that the phrase *tā dbon* [or: *ta dben*] is often used as an abbreviation for Grand Yuan [National Preceptor] or even Grand Yuan [Imperial Preceptor]. If our Rin chen grags be the same as the Imperial Preceptor, then he was probably in his early eighties in 1329. This is even more improbable. Yet there is a bit of outside evidence that would argue for holding both unlikely scenarios. Situated between the years 1353 and 1358, an entry of Seng ge bzang po's biography of Rigs pa'i seng ge mentions a Mdzes tog from Amdo as well as a Chos ldan seng ge, of whom he says that he was the nephew of Imperial Preceptor Rin chen grags.¹³⁷ Rigs pa'i seng ge's fame had reached Amdo, and both had come to his see for studies. Not a common name in the Tibetan religious onomasticon, this Mdzes tog may very well be the same as the Mdzes pa'i tog who, according to Brag dgon Zhabs drung's source, was also a nephew of our Rin chen grags. Why Seng ge bzang did not mention this about his Mdzes tog is perhaps significant. Though quite thin, then, the circumstantial evidence accumulated so far therefore strongly suggests that Tū dbon Rin chen grags, National Preceptor Rin chen grags and Imperial Preceptor Rin chen grags are possibly indeed one and the same individual.

In 1337, Karma pa III stayed in Shing kun, where he built a Bka' brgyud pa monastery, possibly in recognition of Karma pa II Karma Pakshi's (1204/6-83) brief sojourn there and almost certainly motivated by the fact that it was located on one of the main routes connecting Central Tibet with the Mongol courts.¹³⁸ He did this for a good reason. A Bka' brgyud pa enclave in Shing kun would no doubt ensure that Bka' brgyud pa travelers did not have to depend on a monastery with Sa skya pa affiliations.

Studies: Papers in Honour and Appreciation of Professor David L. Snellgrove's Contribution to Indo-Tibetan Studies, Buddhica Britannica. Series Continua II (Tring: The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990), 264-7.

¹³⁶ BRAG, 680. Could this Saṃgha be the same as the translator (lo tsā ba) Saṃgha, who was with Lama 'Phags pa in Tibet in the late 1270s?

¹³⁷ See n. 110.

¹³⁸ TSHAL, 105, 93 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 92, 82].

One of Kun dga' rgyal mtshan's sons, Chos kyi rgyal mtshan traveled to the Mongol court in 1356 and became the private chaplain (*dgos kyi bla mchod*) of Ayushiridara. Having been granted the National Preceptor title, a seal of office and an official writ (*tho shu* < Ch. *tushu*), he died only three years later at the age of twenty-seven.¹³⁹ His death occurred in the vicinity of as was escorting the remains of his father back to Tibet. There is no question that his conflict with Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan that had led to the military occupation of Sa skya's Lha khang chen mo in 1356 had forced him into this exile. At the same time, given the fact that his uncle and father had been Imperial Preceptors, there was probably the expectation that he would ultimately succeed his father. This was not to be. Both fell victim to the uprisings that punctuated the last decade of Toghon Temür's ineffective reign with increasing frequency. Instead, Kun dga' rgyal mtshan was succeeded by Bla chen Bsod nams blo gros (1332-63) of Sa skya's Dus mchod Residence.¹⁴⁰ He had apparently left Tibet for the court during the seventh lunar month of 1361. The Karma pa, who had left Dadu in late winter, met him in Dung tshang - this must be located between Dadu and Mount Liupan in Ningxia. Rebellions flared up left and right, but the unlucky Bsod nams blo gros persevered and finally arrived in Dadu. He did not hold the position of Imperial Preceptor for a very long time. Lo tsā ba Byang chub rtse mo writes that, sometime in the ninth lunar month of 1363, Lama dam pa had heard that he and his entourage had perished. This fulfilled his earlier prediction that Bsod nams blo gros would not live a long life. Now Zhwa dmar II writes in his biography of Karma pa IV Rol pa'i rdo rje (1340-83) that, in 1360, the Karma pa was invited to Shing kun by Dpal ldan mchog, then abbot of Bde (*sic*) chen in Shing kun.¹⁴¹ A few weeks after the Karma pa finally arrived at the court in late December of that year, he petitioned the emperor to appoint this same Dpal ldan mchog as National

¹³⁹ GTSANG, 43b.

¹⁴⁰ What follows is taken from BYANG, 39a, 41a, 40b.

¹⁴¹ ZHWA, 270. ZHWA, 319 relates that this biography took its point of departure from a *Rnam dag nyi ma'i 'od zer*, which seems to have been an autobiography, Karma pa IV's spiritual song[s] (*mgur*) and his own oral reports that were subsequently written down. In addition, other information was also derived from conversations with Rje btsun Ri khrod pa and Bla ma dam pa Punyai pra bha wa [= Bsod nams 'od gsal]. The precise chronology was taken from Slob dpon chen po *gu'i gung* Rin chen dpal, who had been with Karma pa IV from when the latter was four years old until his death. It was written at the behest of Karma pa IV's nephew Blo gros rgyal mtshan in 1388 [or 1400] in the great mountain-hermitage of Lkog 'phreng.

Preceptor, whereupon the court granted his request. Si tu Paṅ chen's biography of the Karma pa is, to date, our only source for this.¹⁴²

There is another intriguing, albeit very sparsely documented, case of a descendant of Qubilai taking an interest in the Kālacakra. The Mongol Zhenxi Wuqing prince Prajñā, Chos dpal's son, requested Bu ston for initiations in the Kālacakra [and other esoteric tantras] when he came to Central and Midwest Tibet, in 1353, with an entourage of about a hundred Mongols.¹⁴³ He did not ask for this solely for religious reasons, for he evidently had an intellectual curiosity for calendrical astronomy. Franke has provided further evidence of the prince's interest in this area by his study of a manuscript of an astronomical treatise in Arabic that was dedicated to him.¹⁴⁴ A so-called *zīj*, the manuscript even includes some glosses in Tibetan for the names of the month. And we now know that one of Bu ston's minor works, namely a little text on the iconometry of the Dhānyakaṭakastūpa, was most likely translated into Chinese around this time as well.¹⁴⁵ The Kālacakra tradition has it that the Buddha proclaimed the

¹⁴² SI, 363. An oversight led Schuh (1977: 144) to write *ti-shih* instead of *guoshi*, which makes quite a difference! The bibliographic remarks Si tu Paṅ chen appended to his biography of the Karma pa, in SI, 392-5, state that it is primarily based on the work by Karma Dkon mchog gzhon nu, the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century scholar, and contains several quotations from it, including a lengthy one from Duke Rin chen dpal. In addition to the work by Zhwa dmar II, Si tu Paṅ chen also lists a biography by a Bla ma Lha steng pa and the biographies by Tshal pa and Dpa' bo II.

¹⁴³ On him, see L. Petech, "Princely Houses of the Yüan Period Connected with Tibet," 267-8. In addition to the literature cited in this paper, we may mention Yar lung Jo bo's history, which seems to have been the source used by G.yas ru Stag tshang pa referred to by Petech; see YAR, 86 [YAR1, 86-7, T'ang 1989: 53-4]. [*S*]rad nya (*sic!*), that is, Prajñā, is also noted in an entry for the year 1359 in the biography of Karma pa IV in Tshal pa's chronicle, as well as in that of Dpa' bo II, which formed the basis for the entry in the eighteenth century source cited by Petech; see TSHAL, 115 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 100] and DPA', 959. Aside from other variants, Petech's source reads *dbang hu* in the singular, whereas these earlier texts read the plural *dbang hu rnam*s; for *dbang hu* (Ch. *wangfu*), see Farquhar (1990: 349).

¹⁴⁴ See his "Mittel-Mongolische Glossen in einer arabischen astronomischen Handschrift," *Oriens* 31 (1988), 103, 107-111. On p. 96, he refers to the "forthcoming" study by E.S. Kennedy and J. Hogendijk, "Two Tables from an Arabic Astronomical Handbook for the Mongol Viceroy of Tibet," *A Scientific Humanist. Studies in Memory of Abraham Sachs*, ed. E. Leichty et al., Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 9 (Philadelphia, The University Museum 1989), 233-42. This paper adds nothing that is of immediate relevance to the present essay, suffice it to mention that it says [on p. 233] that the prince's name was Radna.

¹⁴⁵ For this work, see briefly my "Jambhala. An Imperial Envoy to Tibet During the Late Yuan," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113 (1993), 536, n. 38, and for the collection of Chinese translations of Tibetan texts in which this work is found, for instance the *Dacheng yaodao miji* (Taipei: Ziyu chubanshe, 1986). For the latter, see the valuable studies by Chr. I. Beckwith, "A Hitherto Unnoticed Yüan-Period Collection Attributed to

Kālacakramūlatantra in this stupa, so that Bu ston's work has nothing directly to do with the calendar or its computation. It does add further testimony to the interest in this literature during roughly the middle of the fourteenth century.

Matters are a trifle more complicated with the various accounts of Karma pa IV's activities at the court, which also included instructions in the Kūlacakra corpus. Writing in telegraph-style, Tshal pa, our earliest source for this, relates that during his three-day sojourn in Mi nyag 'Ga [Ganzhou] towards the end of October 1360, Na'i ra thu [= ?Nayiratu], the privy councillor (*phing chang* < Ch. *pingchang*) of the *hong tha'i tshe*, crown-prince Ayushiridara, arrived bearing cloth as a gift.¹⁴⁶ While in Shang yang hu,¹⁴⁷ he was met by Tho gon (< Mon. Toghon),¹⁴⁸ a director (*dben shri* < Ch. *yuanshi*) of most likely the Bureau for Tibetan and Buddhist Affairs, who escorted him to Dadu. He arrived there on January 23, 1361, where he took residence at the Mchod rten sngon po, the Blue Stūpa, a place that still needs to be located.¹⁴⁹ On January 30, Mitripala, that is, ?Maitrīpāla,¹⁵⁰ the

'Phags-pa," L. Ligeti, ed., *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 1, ed. L. Ligeti (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), 9-16, and Chen Qingying, "A Study of Imperial Preceptor *Dacheng xuanmi* [in Chinese]," *Fojiao Yanjiu* 9 (2000), and by the same author "The *Dacheng yaodao miji* and Tibetan Buddhism of the Xixia Dynasty [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo Zangxue* 2 (2003) - the published versions are not available to me, hence I cannot give page references. See also the remarks in Shen Wei-rong, "Two Topics of Research on the Karma pa in the Yuan Dynasty [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo Zangxue* 4 (1989), 77-82. A new edition of the *Dacheng yaodao miji*, together with a lengthy introduction, is being prepared by Wang Yao. For a study of the stupa and its role in Kālacakra lore, see A. Macdonald, "Le Dhānyakāṭaka de Man-lungs Guru," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 57 (1970), 169-213.

¹⁴⁶ The following is taken from TSHAL, 118-9 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 103-4], which was unavailable to Schuh (1977: 142 ff.), but on which his sources must have relied. A *pingchang* is associated with the Central Secretariat, see Farquhar (1990: 170). This envoy did not come entirely unexpected. TSHAL, 115-6 [Chen-Zhou 1988: 101-2] relates that, though the Karma pa had been approached earlier by the court, he was prevented immediately to make good on the invitation because of the numerous revolts that raged in Qinghai, Gansu and Shanxi.

¹⁴⁷ Chen-Zhou (1988: 103) equates Tibetan *sha yang hu* with Xianyang prefecture (*hu* < Ch. *fu*), but this appears to be improbable, since Xianyang was a county (*xian*). TSHALI, 68b, has *shang yang hu*, which is possibly the better reading.

¹⁴⁸ He may have been one of the "ten friends," for which see Schulte-Uffelage (1963: 68).

¹⁴⁹ Franke (1990: 116) tentatively suggests that this stupa may be the one located about 103 li from Ganzhou in Gansu Province. Since the Karma pa was at the capital, this stupa must have been its namesake.

¹⁵⁰ Tshal pa does not give his name. While the study of Karma pa IV's life by Zhwa dmar II fails to give a precise date for his birth, it does have the name of this son of the "grand prince" (*rgyal bu chen po*); see ZHWA, 274; 'GOS, 437 ['GOS I, 595] has "Maitrīpāla." L. Hambis, *Le chapitre CVII du Yuan che [avec des notes supplémentaires par Paul Pelliot]*, 142-3, n. 1, gives his name as *Maitreyapāla on the strength of a single entry in the *Yuanshi*,

son of the *hong tha'i tshe* [= Ayushiridara] was born and on the next day he was formally invited by the crown prince to come to his residence. The invitation was accompanied by various offerings for him and his sizable entourage.¹⁵¹ After having been given additional gifts by Toghon Temür and his son, “the great Qan (*gan chen po*) and the lesser Qan (*gan chung pa*),”¹⁵² he taught the five treatises of Maitreya[nātha] and an unspecified collection of stories of the Buddha's previous lives at the request of the crown-prince (*rgyal bu chen po*). During this time, he came to be revered by all monks and prelates who were present, including National Preceptor Lama Rgyal [ba] rin

in YS, 47, 986: Mai de li ba la; it would seem that one significant syllable “ya” is lacking for this reconstruction, but it is one that can easily go astray.

¹⁵¹ The offered items were a *bre* of gold, brocade for eight senior monks of his entourage and thirty pieces of silk to many other members of his train. The next item presents a problem of interpretation. The text has *sang de hong tha'i tshe ... mi brgya dang bdun cu la rgyug nang*, whereas TSHAL1, 68b, has the better *sang de hong tha'i tshes ... mi brgya dang bdun cu la rgyugs nang*. Chen-Zhou (1988: 104) rendered the former in the sense that Karma pa IV was given an escort of one hundred and seventy persons. However, *rgyugs*, meaning “rations, provisions” must be interpreted as the patient of this transitive sentence.

¹⁵² The sentence in question reads in TSHAL, 119: *gan che ba'i shang len gser bre gnyis dngul bre gsum / gan chung ba'i gser bre gcig gos phyi nang dgu tshan gcig phul* /. On the other hand, TSHAL1, 68b, has the much better: *gan che bas shang len gser bre gnyis / dngul bre gsum / gan chung pas gser bre gcig / gos phyi nang dgu mtshan gcig phul* /. TSHAL'S *gan che ba'i* and *gan chung ba'i* needs to be corrected in each case to *..bas - ba'i* and *bas* are homophones - otherwise the transitive verb *phul*, “offered,” lacks a necessary agent. Other alternatives would be either to read *shang len du* or *shang len de'i dus su*, which would obviate the suggested corrections, or, with the corrections, we would have to read *shang len* appositionally with the “rewards.” Of course this would be fairly peculiar, since these would then be only associated with the great Qa[gha]n! The pair *gan che ba* and *gan chung ba* are rather odd and, to my knowledge, unprecedented. That *gan chung ba/pa* refers to an individual is indicated by the later line that he stayed at his palace for forty days. This palace would perhaps be the Palace of Clear Peace that was built in 1359. Schulte-Uffelage (1963: 91) reports that the monks of this palace consisted of Tibetans and Koreans. The expression *shang len / shangs len* is problematic. L. Petech, “Yüan Official Terms in Tibetan,” *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Narita 1989*, ed. Shōren Ihara and Zuihō Yamaguchi, vol. 2 (Narita: Naritasan Shinshoji, 1992), 671, derives it from Mongol *shangla-* / *shangna-* (< Ch. *shang*, “to reward, favor”) plus Tibetan *len*, “to take, receive, accept,” and suggests that “[I]t occurs in connection with, and having [read: has, vdK] the same meaning as, festival, official banquet and the like.” The translation in Chen-Zhou (1988: 104) simply reads: “The great Qan presented (*zeng*)...,” but this cannot be squared with the syntax of the sentence. Another occurrence of this expression is met with in, for instance, Ta'i si tu's autobiography in the *Tā si tu byang chub rgyal mtshan gyi bka' chems mthong ba don ldan, Rlangs po ti bse ru*, 329: *dben pa'i skor la shangs len mtshon pa re bsrubs* /. The Chinese translation in Btsan lha-Yu (1989: 226) reads here *zeng li*.

[chen],¹⁵³ and was made head over all those “who offered to Heaven,” an expression that is of course curiously anachronistic. He was also granted a jade seal (*shel gyi dam kha*) of a *Thu lu shri skya'o* Great Yuan National Preceptor.¹⁵⁴ Requesting a large edict (*'ja' [sa] < Mon. jasagh*) for the pardon of criminals, he dispatched Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan,¹⁵⁵ the head (*sde dpon*) of the Karma Bka' bryud pa monastic community in Dadu, to proclaim it in Tibet. The Karma pa's relationship with A-yushiridara had one additional consequence. The latter issued a princely edict (*ling ji < Ch. lingji*) called a special edict for the furtherance of Buddhism, which stipulated that, whereas men of the cloth had previously not been obliged to prostrate themselves before the emperor, this had later been reversed so that they had to do so before members of the imperial family and high officials. Due to the present trying times (*dus ma bde ba*), the edict reinstated the

¹⁵³ Schulte-Uffelage (1963: 68) mentions a Jialinzhen in an entry for 1353. It is not possible to reconstruct his name, as he did, by “Kya(ka) rin chen.” Rather, I now think we have to consider him to have been none other than this Rgyal ba rin chen.

¹⁵⁴ Chen-Zhou (1988: 104) render this title as *chilu xingjiao dayuan guoshi*, “Holding the Vinaya and Interest in the Teaching, the Great Yuan National Preceptor.” This is no doubt identical to the title of *thung ling shi skya'o ta dben gu shri* which Toghon Temür gave to Chos kyi rgyal mtshan of Sa skya's Lha khang chen mo Residence, which we find is in YAR, 167 [YAR1, 159: *thung ming shi skya'i ta dben gu shri*] and in GTSANG, 43b, and SA, 331: *tho[ng] ling ta ho ta dben gug shri*. Tang (1989: 94) conjectures the possible Chinese equivalent of *tongling shijiao dayuan guoshi*, “Uniting and Leading Śākyamuni's Teaching, the Great Yuan National Preceptor.” GTSANG, 41a, associates Bla chen Kun dga' rin chen (1339-99) of the Bzhi thog Residence with the same title, if we transpose *kya'o* and *si*, namely, with *thong ling kya'o si ta dben gug shri*. The anonymous referee of the much earlier version of my paper (1994) suggested that the Tibetan of this title might stand for *Chulu shijiao dayuan guoshi*, “Upholding the Vinaya and Śākyamuni's Teaching, the Great Yuan National Preceptor.” None of these additional titles for the National Preceptors, or anything remotely resembling them, is found in Farquhar (1990). Lastly, the *Bod kyi lo rgyus yig tshags dang gzhung yig phyogs bsodus dwangs shel me long*, ed. Bkra shis dbang 'dus (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 204-5, made available a hitherto unknown edict issued by Imperial Preceptor Kun dga' blo gros in 1317. What makes this document so remarkable is that it contains a note over and above the actual text of the edict in which is stated: “translated by tsi gyō [*?chijiao*] tshe tsi Grand National Preceptor Bsod nams rin chen dpal bzang po in the great monastery of Dge ba rang rgyal on [for *gyi* read *du*] the eighth year, the fifth month, the fifteenth day [of] the ?Tienshun [era] of the Great Ming [*?1464*]” (*ta'i mi[?ng] then bshun lo brygad pa zla ba lnga pa bco lnga'i nyin gyi (sic) dge ba rang rgyal gyi sde chen du tsi gyō tshe tsi ta'i gro'i shri bsod nams rin chen dpal bzang pos bsgyur //*). I cannot locate Dge ba rang rgyal monastery. Presumably, this document was translated from Chinese during the reign of the Yingzong emperor of the Ming. In DPA', 1427, Tienshun is rendered *then shun*.

¹⁵⁵ He may be the same as National Preceptor Dkon mchog rgyal mtshan who issued an edict in Shandong in 1341, for which see É. Chavannes, “Inscriptions et pièces de chancellerie chinoises de l'époque Mongole (seconde série),” *Toung Pao* 9 (1908), 418-21, plates 28-9 [between pp. 598-9], and the study by Wang Yao in *Wenwu* 11 (1981), 45-50.

earlier privilege of not being required to prostrate themselves.¹⁵⁶ In addition to this attempt to gain merit, reaffirm the allegiance of institutionalized Buddhism, and thereby influencing positively the downhill course of events that were beginning to shake the very foundations of the empire, Ayushiridara also gave the order to restore the temples and monasteries that had been destroyed during the recent revolts. The Karma pa left Dadu on May 11, 1361, but returned in the winter for the primary purpose to request of the court that he be permitted to leave for Tibet. This he did shortly after January 9, 1362, in spite of Ayushiridara's tears. There is no available record concerning what he taught there during this brief interlude.

On the other hand, Zhwa dmar II's study of Karma pa IV's life, our next earliest source and itself based on a miscellany of sources that have yet to be located, states that he left Dung 'ching (< Ch.?) postal district (*'ja' mo*) for Dadu on December 23, 1360.¹⁵⁷ After his arrival, he gave the emperor and his son[s] a Vajrayogin? empowerment and many tantric teachings such as the six doctrines of Nāropa.¹⁵⁸ Singling out the great prince (*rgyal bu chen po*) [= Ayushiridara], he writes that Karma pa IV taught him the *Skyes rabs brgya rtsa*, a study of the *jātakas* compiled by his precursor Karma pa III, the *Uttaratantra* and *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* plus commentaries, the *Laghukālacakratantra* plus commentary [= *Vimalaprabhā*] and ancillary Indian texts, as well as an initiation of Rgyal ba rgya mtsho Avalokiteśvara. This early source continues by stating that he also gave sermons to a rather varied audience consisting of Chinese, Mongol, Uyghur, Tangut, and Korean (*ka'u li*)¹⁵⁹ notables and other assorted elements of the capital's population.

¹⁵⁶ The entire paraphrased passage reads: *bstan pa shes bskyed pa'i 'ja' sa khyad par du rgyal bu chen po'i ling ji na / bande rnam kyis gong ma la phyag 'tshal mi dgos par bkur ba la / phyis rgyal brgyud mi dpon sogs la phyag 'tshal dgos byung 'dug pa'i [TSHAL], 68b, 'dug las /] dus ma bde ba des lan / da phyis de bzhin ma byed [zer ba..]. Cognate passages are found in DPA', 961, and in Si tu Paṅ chen's si, 359. Chen-Zhou (1988: 104) interpreted this passage quite differently, starting with equating *ling ji* with the town of Liangzhou which is not acceptable.*

¹⁵⁷ The following is based on ZHWA, 270-3.

¹⁵⁸ In addition to these texts, si, 359, states that he also gave tantric teachings concerning the *Lhan cig skyes sbyor*, *Phyag rgya chen po gang gā ma*, *Bsam gtan thun 'jog*, and the *Sku gsum ngo sprod*. The latter was written by Karma pa II.

¹⁵⁹ ZHWA, 273-4, 276. An identical passage is met with in 'GOS, 437 ['GOS1, 594- 5, Roerich 1979: 502 and Guo 1985: 327-8]. The presence of Korean monks in the capital and elsewhere in China is of course very well attested. Though not always reliable, H.H. Sørensen, "Lamaism in Korea During the Late Kōguyō Dynasty," *Korea Journal* 33 (1993), 67-81, is the only paper to explore the very little that is known about the [almost negligible] influence Tibetan Buddhism had in Korea. That some Tibetans were skeptical about Korean Buddhism seems to be indicated by Sgra tshad pa. In his 1369 *De bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po'i mdzes rgyan gyi rgyan mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog*, he lumps them [*ka'u le*] together with non-Buddhists and Sog po, as having wrong views; see the text in *The Collected Works of Bu ston*

The logistics involved when giving such religious talks to a multinational audience are briefly alluded to when Zhwa dmar II deals with his earlier sojourn in Sprul pa'i sde, "the [previous] see of Uncle (*e chen* < Mon. *echen*) Köden, the residence of Sa skya Paṇḍita," just prior to his voyage to Dadu. In this connection, he writes that, while delivering his sermons, Mongol and Uyghur interpreters sat on the right side of his throne, while the Chinese and Tangut (*mi nyag*) interpreters flanked him on the left side. It may be important to note here the implication that Tangut was therefore by no means a dead language in the middle of the fourteenth century. Zhwa dmar II's text is also the earliest source for a very brief aside on the economic upturn in the fortunes of the empire that was attributed precisely to his presence at the court. Lastly, we may mention here that, aside from Karma pa IV's connections with the Mongol imperial family of Yuan China, his biographies record that he had to decline an "urgent" invitation from the "*stod hor rgyal po* Tho lug the mur" sometime in the year 1362. This "Western Mongol Qan," whose invitation was accompanied with a seal and many offerings, was no doubt Tughluq Temür, who reigned in Moghūlistān from 1347 to 1363.¹⁶⁰

SOME CONCLUSIONS. There is very little that can be said about the actual religious use the Mongol imperial family made of these xylographs or other Tibetan Buddhist texts whose production was in one way or another sponsored by them. The same holds for the Mongol Buddhist community at large. Aside from the Chinese renditions of a Tibetan corpus of treatises belonging to the enormously complex "path and result" (*lam 'bras*) tantric system of the Sa skya pa and the Mahāmudrā teachings of the Bka' brgyud pa schools, and some scattered, superficial references in the *Yuanshi* and elsewhere in Yuan sources to the tantric deity Mahākāla, there is next to nothing transmitted about the extent of the actual practice of tantric Tibetan Buddhism in Yuan China. The said collection of Chinese translations of Tibetan tantric texts does suggest, however, that a number of individuals did find the practices associated with these texts of interest, but it is anyone's guess to what extent these were learned and practiced with a sense of responsibility and sincerity. Given that the vast majority of the Mongol Buddhists, regardless of whether they belonged to the imperial

(and *Sgra tshad pa*) [Lhasa print], part 28 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 282. But this cannot be pressed too far.

¹⁶⁰ ZHWA, 280. Virtually the same wording is also found in the corresponding passage of DPA', 964, and SI, 363. For Tughluq Temür, see for instance the reprint of N. Elias and E. Denison Ross, eds. and trs., *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia being the Tarikh-i-Rashidi of Mizra Muhammed Haidar, Dughlāt* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), 5-23. An examination of the various usages of the term *stod hor* is found in Zhang Yun, "An Investigation and analysis of *Stod hor* [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo Zangxue* 1 (1994), 99-105.

family or not, did not read Tibetan, imperial support towards the production of manuscripts and xylographs must for now be interpreted, firstly, as a desire to do something that their Tibetan court chaplains could appreciate and, secondly, as an indication of the felt need to create good karma, to get a grip on the course future events may take. Thus, much of this patronage had to do with merit-making. And this must have also motivated them to patronize the reproduction of Chinese Buddhist texts of which the *Yuanshi*, too, gives more than ample evidence. Mongol imperial support of having these Kālacakra texts printed on several occasions does suggest that the Kālacakra cycle with its putative origin in the northern land of Sambhala / Shambhala¹⁶¹ may have found some resonance in the upper echelons of Mongol society in China, if only because of the geographical space occupied by the Mongols. D. Martin demonstrated that the thirteenth century witnessed what can be called a paradigm shift in the Tibetan Buddhists' perception of Tibet's place in the topography of the known world. Whereas, previously and in consonance with Indian Buddhist literature, the Tibetans located themselves to the north of the center, the Indian subcontinent, we now find that the center came to be occupied by Tibet, whereby the Mongols were shifted to the north and the subcontinent to the south.¹⁶² Doubtless, this had much to do with the fact that institutionalized Buddhism in northern India had suffered greatly at the hands of the Turkic invaders of the late twelfth and early thirteenth century. The result of its virtual destruction was that the Tibetans suddenly found themselves, at least this was their perception, at the center of the Buddhist world, a notion that was no doubt given greater depth and nuance by the circumstance that only Tibetan clerics were sought out the Xixia and the Mongols to occupy the post of Imperial Preceptor, the highest position in the religious hierarchy of these dynasties. The newly found international role of the Tibetan clergy, the psychological impact of this shift and its consequences for their self-understanding and literary praxis will need to be examined. For example, we may be able to determine that the new social and political realities had a noticeable impact on the way in which the Tibetans commented on Indian Buddhist treatises. On the other hand, we must also be quite clear about the fact that, in contradistinction to the Tibetan clerics mentioned above, many Tibetans,

161 "Utopian Thought in Tibetan Buddhism: A Survey of the Śambhala Concept and Its Sources," *Studies in Central & East Asian Religions* 5/6 (1992-3), 78-86; see also M. Matsumoto, "Shambhala [in Japanese]," *Ronshū* 27 (2000), 23-35.

162 See his "Tibet at the Center: A Historical Study of Some Tibetan Geographical Conceptions Based on Two Types of Country-Lists Found in Bon Histories," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies. Fagernes 1992*, ed. P. Kvaerne, vol. I (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 531-2.

clerics and laypeople alike, harbored a profound resentment towards the Mongols who, after all, had forcibly occupied their land. This comes to fore in several ways, not least among which in the many anti-Mongol prophesies that began to circulate in the Tibetan cultural area, prophesies that were as a rule placed in the mouth of the eighth century Padmasambhava. I intend to return to these on a future occasion. Another important task for future research would be to find out whether there are any Chinese sources on Kālacakra-related literature and practise at the Mongol court of Yuan China. I doubt very much that more will be found and, as far as I am aware, *kālacakra* or its Chinese equivalent *shilun* do not occur in the *Yuanshi*. Mongol interest in this cycle with its apocalyptic and universalist visions was obviously a spill-over of the incredibly concerted efforts at its dissemination on the part of the Tibetans. A thoroughgoing concern with this tantra as evidenced by the numerous commentaries and translations is a distinctive feature of late thirteenth and fourteenth century Tibetan intellectual history. One could conjecture that this circumstance may perhaps in part have been a psychological reflex of the new political situation in Tibet, a land that had been conquered and was now occupied and governed by a foreign power.

All things considered, it is hardly likely that these xylographs were intended for the consumption of the non-Tibetan clergy. It would not be unfair to say that in terms of sheer learning and command of Buddhist literature, the Tibetan hierarchs far outstripped their Chinese counterparts. It appears that from the very beginning of the infiltration of Tibetan Buddhism in the Mongol court the "church" language was Tibetan and remained Tibetan, and this must have prevented all but the most convinced non-Tibetan members of the Buddhist clergy and laity from gaining access to the essentials of Tibetan Buddhism. Time and again we read that interpreters were active when Tibetan prelates gave sermons en route to the capital cities, and also when they were at the court. Whereas from the Yuan onward, Tibetan Buddhism had a considerable impact on China and the Chinese sensibility as a whole, Chinese forms of Buddhism exerted by and large very little influence on Tibet. Generally speaking, only very few Tibetans studied, took an interest in, or had much of an idea of, Chinese Buddhism. It is therefore difficult to assess the remark made about Mchims Nam mkha' grags by Skyo ston Smon lam tshul khriims (1219-99), his successor to Snar thang's abbatial throne. Mchims is not known to have traveled beyond Central Tibet, but Skyo ston nonetheless wrote that "with respect to Buddhism, he did not differentiate between Indian, Chinese or Tibetan

[Buddhism].”¹⁶³ Lama 'Phags pa was not so tolerant or ecumenically inclined, and his critique of a Chinese interpretation of the instantaneous attainment of Buddhahood allegedly taught in the eleventh chapter of the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra* is found in his collected writings.¹⁶⁴ At the same time we know that he was also supportive of Chinese forms of Buddhism. A little after 1270, he wrote a eulogy on the occasion of the compilation of a [?part of a] Chinese Buddhist canon in Sichuan by the monk Yi.¹⁶⁵ Given his long stay in China among the Mongols, there is a high probability that, instead of relying on Uyghur or other intermediaries and interpreters, Lama 'Phags pa had learned a sufficient amount of Chinese to get by, and possibly Mongol and Uyghur as well, but there is so far no airtight evidence that he was able to speak these languages, let alone write anything in them. But we can be more confident with some of his contemporaries. For example, Bsod nams 'od zer writes in his biography of U rgyan pa that the master was not only able to converse in Sanskrit, but also that he spoke some vernaculars of mountain people (*ri brag pa*), Chinese, Mongol and Uyghur, to the extent that he “did not need to rely on other interpreters (*lo tsa ba gzhan la ltos mi dgos par gda' /*).¹⁶⁶

Further, in spite of the fact that certain Chinese transmissions of Buddhist sutras also entered into Tibet at that time, they had no identifiable impact on its intellectual history.¹⁶⁷ The known nexus in each recorded case

¹⁶³ See the *Mchims nams mkha' grags kyi rnam thar*, fifty-folio, handwritten *dbu med* manuscript under C.P.N. catalogue no. 002806(13), 38a: [*des na*] *chos la rgya gar ma dang / rgya nag ma dang / bod ma la sogs pa'i rnam dbye mi mdzad de /*.

¹⁶⁴ See his *Dam chos pad dkar gyi tshig don la gzhan gyi log par rlog pa dgag pa*, SSBB *Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum* comp. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, vol. 7 (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968), no. 233, 215/2-9/1/1. Shokutaro Iida first studied this treatise in a 1979 paper, which was reprinted in his *Facets of Buddhism* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991), 65-83. 'Phags pa completed this work at the request of his disciple Da sman (< Mon. Dashman) not far from Sa skya in Chu mig Dpal gyi sde chen monastery on March 18, 1277. This Da sman may be the same as the official Qubilai had organize mail relay-systems in central Tibet, who was later appointed president of the Bureau for Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs; see lastly Petech (1990: 62) and H. Franke's review of this book in the *Central Asiatic Journal* 36 (1992), 147. Lama 'Phags pa's chapter eleven is chapter twelve of Kumārajīva's translation for which see L. Hurvitz, trs., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 195-201.

¹⁶⁵ See the *Yi gyang jus glegs bam bsgrubs pa la bsngags pa*, SSBB vol. 7, no. 256, 237/4-8/2. A native of Sichuan, Yi may be possibly be identified with Yuanyi, on whom see Franke (1996: 136 ff.). For another bit of information on Lama 'Phags pa's support of Chinese Buddhism, see the interesting notes in I. Hamar, *A Religious Leader in the Tang: Chengguan's Biography*, *Studia Philologica Buddhica, Occasional Paper Series XII* (Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2002), 17-9.

¹⁶⁶ BSOD, 201 [BSOD1, 277].

¹⁶⁷ *Thus Ngor chen's Thob yig rgya mtsho*, SSBB vol. 9, no. 36, 99/4, 101/2-3.

of this transmission was the fairly elusive Lo tsā ba Mchog ldan legs pa'i blo gros dpung rgyan mdzes pa'i tog, a Sanskritist and, from 1294 onward, one of the masters of the more famous Dpang Lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342). He received these transmissions from such Chinese monks as Gyang chu (< Ch. *jiangzhu*) and Sam gya ru, names that only exist in Tibetan transcription. The latter had apparently himself received the *Avatamsakasūtra* in forty-five chapters from this very same Gyang chu, and was able to speak Tibetan.

Relations between the Tibetans and the Mongol imperial family remained in place after the fall of the Yuan dynasty, though now on a much more superficial level, and titles and other privileges continued to be granted by the Qaghan while in Qara Qorum.¹⁶⁸ We read about this in Mi dbang 'Phags pa's 1479 biography of Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags (1381-1442), the ruler of Rgyal mkhar rtse in Central Tibet. Woven around the history of the Shar ka ba family to which Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags belonged, he writes that, in 1372, a master (*dpa' shi* < Mon. *baghsi*) Chos kyi 'od zer went on a mission to the imperial court [in Qara Qorum] on behalf of this family.¹⁶⁹ He returned with a seal (*dam rtags*) and title of *si tu* for his employer 'Phags pa rin chen (1320-76), Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags' grand-uncle. The text is quite explicit that it was the Mongol emperor (*hor rgyal po*) who had bestowed these honors and this means that it was Ayushiridara who had given him this title.

Placed between the middle of the third lunar month and the ninth day of the fourth lunar month of 1373, an entry in Lama dam pa's biography informs us that he met the Imperial Preceptor.¹⁷⁰ Who was this Imperial Preceptor? Yar lung Jo bo's list of these men ends with Bsod nams blo gros, and Gtsang Byams pa does the same, but says quite explicitly that there were no Imperial Preceptors during the next two generations of emperors.¹⁷¹ Gtsang Byams pa seems to countenance here only the emperors of China in that he follows this with the remark that Karma pa V De bzhin gshegs pa

¹⁶⁸ Inasmuch as there is no record of him having gone to China, it is entirely probable that these men were in Tibet. In fact, they may have formed part of the entourage of Lha btsun Chos kyi rin chen, the deposed Gongdi emperor (1269-1332) of the Southern Song, who lived in the immediate vicinity of Sa skya monastery from the 1280s until his recall and execution in Hexi. But only if this Lha btsun is in fact the deposed Song emperor. For him, see the references in my "Jambhala. An Imperial Envoy to Tibet During the Late Yuan," 533, n. 22, and also the long note in Franke (1996: 153-4).

¹⁶⁹ See the *Rab brtan kun bzang 'phags kyi rnam thar*, ed. Tshe don (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987), 17 [*Ibid.*, (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1978), 29].

¹⁷⁰ BYANG, 49a.

¹⁷¹ YAR, 168 [YAR1, 161, Tang 1989: 95] and GTSANG, 62b.

(1384-1415) and Theg chen Chos rje Kun dga' bkra shis (1349-1425) were Imperial Preceptors "during *tha'i tshun*." Doubtless, Tibetan *tha'i dzun* reflects Chinese Taizong, that is, the Yongle Emperor. No doubt basing themselves on Ming sources, Wang Furen and Chen Qingying list a *Nnam rgyal dpal bzang po as the last Yuan Imperial Preceptor, but, once again, Tucci had it right long ago when he reconstructed this man's Tibetan name as *Nam mkha' dpal bzang po.¹⁷²

There is also evidence of a tenuous and short-lived connection between the young Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419) and the Mongol imperial family. In an entry for the end 1379 or the beginning of 1380 in his splendid biography by 'Brug Rgyal dbang Chos rje of 1845, we learn that "the son of the supreme Mongol emperor" had sent him a letter and gifts while he was in Bde ba can monastery during the winter session (*dgun chos*).¹⁷³ The Mongol prince may be identified as a son of Toghuz Temür (1342-88/9), Ayushiridara's younger brother, who reigned from 1378 to 1388, and who himself was the son of the last bona fide emperor Toghon Temür.¹⁷⁴ Carried to the court by a Dge bshes Bsod nams rgyal ba, Tsong kha pa's reply of February 3, 1380 is non-committal and uninformative, rendering it impossible to determine the contents of the prince's letter.

The late twelfth century witnessed the beginning of what was to become the leitmotif of Tibetan Buddhist culture, namely the notion of reincarnation. Over time, many incarnation series were proposed that incorporated an ever increasing number of individuals in their narratives of ongoing reincarnation. For a large variety of reasons, some obvious, others much less so, the most disparate men are at times embraced by and included in these series, often for purposes of additional legitimation. In this connection, something interesting happened to Qubilai. The long biography Skäl bzang legs bshad wrote of Byams pa mthu stobs kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1835-95) included in his subject's previous reembodiments none other than this Mongol emperor!¹⁷⁵

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¹⁷² *A Brief History of Relations between the Mongol and Tibetan Nationalities* [in Chinese], 37, and Tucci (1949: 685).

¹⁷³ See his *'Jam mgon chos kyi rgyal po tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam thar*, ed. Grags pa rgya mtsho et al. (Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), 147-8. Tsong kha pa's reply is there fully cited.

¹⁷⁴ For his biography, see *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, vol.2, 1293-4.

¹⁷⁵ See his *Rje btsun byams pa mthu stobs kun dga' rgyal mtshan gyi rnam thar* (Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1994), 184-94.

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BLA Bla ma [= Lama] dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Collected Works*, vol. Na, one hundred and one-folio [= 408-507] handwritten *dbu can* manuscript under C.P.N. catalogue no. 003877.

BRAG Brag dgon Zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas, *Mdo smad chos 'byung*, ed. Smon lam rgya mtsho (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982).

BSOD Bsod nams 'od zer, *Grub chen o rgyan pa'i nam par thar pa byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun* (Gangtok, 1976), 1-212.

BSOD1 Ibid., ed. Rta mgrin tshe dbang, *Gangs can rig mdzod*, vol. 32 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe mying dpe skrun khang, 1997).

BYANG Lo tsā ba Byang chub rtse mo, *Chos rje bla ma dam pa'i nam[s] thar thog mtha' bar gsum*, seventy-five-folio handwritten *dbu can* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002898(6).

DPA' Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, Smad cha, ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986).

GNYAGS Chos nyid ye shes, *Gnyags ston pa'i gdung rabs dang gdan rabs*, ed. Rta mgrin tshe dbang, *Gangs can rig mdzod*, vol. 31 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe mying dpe skrun khang, 1997).

'GOS 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal, *Deb gter sngon po* (New Delhi: International Academy for Indian Culture, 1976).

'GOS1 Ibid., *Deb ther sngon po*, Smad / Stod cha, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs skrun khang, 1984).

GTSANG Gtsang Byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, *Sa skya mkhon (sic) gyi gdungs rab (sic) rin po che'i 'phreng ba*, fols. 91(?). Incomplete ninety-folio handwritten *dbu can* manuscript, Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel L 591/4.

NGAG A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams, *Sa skya'i gdung rabs ngo mtshar bang mdzod*, ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986).

RGYAL ?Rgyal shrī, *Grub chen po u rgyan pa'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*, one hundred and five-folio uncatalogued handwritten *dbu med* manuscript of the C.P.N.

SGRA Sgra tshad pa Rin chen nam rgyal, *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i skabs su chos rje lo tsā ba'i gsung sgros 'byung ba'i zin bris*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston (and Sgra tshad pa)* [Lhasa print], part 27 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 121-380.

SI Si tu Paṅ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas and 'Be lo Tshe dbang kun khyab, *Sgrub [b]rgyud karma ka« tshang brgyud pa rin po che'i rnam par thar pa rab 'byams nor bu zla ba chu shel gyi phreng ba*, vol. 1 (New Delhi, 1972).

SSBB *Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum* comp. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, vols. 15 (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968-9)

STAG Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen, *Sa skya pa'i gdung rabs 'dod dgu'i rgya mtsho*, thirty-four-folio handwritten *dbu med* manuscript catalogued under C.P.N. no. 002437.

TSHAL Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, *Deb ther dmar po*, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1981).

TSHAL1 Ibid., *Hu lan deb gter dmar po tshal pa kun dga' rdo rjes mdzad pa*, eighty-seven-folio handwritten *dbu can* manuscript (Beijing: Buddhist Research Institute, Huangsi, "Yellow Monastery," no date).

TT *The Tibetan Tripitaka, The Taipei Edition*, ed. A.W. Barber (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991), vols. 71.

YAR Yar lung Jo bo Shākya rin chen, *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung*, ed. Dbyangs can [lha mo] (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1988).

YAR1 Ibid., ed. Ngag dbang (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1988).

ZHWA Zhwa dmar II Mkha' spyod dbang po, *Mtshungs med bla ma dam pa'i rnam par thar pa yon tan mi zad pa rab tu gsal ba'i me long*, *Collected Works*, vol. II (Gangtok, 1978), 203-319.

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