

Some Remarks on the Textual Transmission and Text of Bu ston Rin chen grub's *Chos 'byung*, a Chronicle of Buddhism in India and Tibet*

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For János, wherever he may now be.

he *Chos 'byung* or the *Origin of the [Buddhist] Dharma*, the now famous chronicle of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism that Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364) authored sometime between 1322 and 1326, has been known to non-Tibetan Indo- and Buddhological scholarship for over a century.¹ Because of its author's consummate command of the Tibetan Buddhist canonical literature and his numerous citations therefrom, this long treatise has played a significant, albeit a not always sufficiently appreciated, role in our understanding of how Buddhism developed in the Indian subcontinent and in his native Tibet. Of course, one of the main reasons for its in-

* Manuscripts listed under C.P.N. catalog numbers refer to those that I was happily able to inspect, now two decades ago, in the Nationalities Library of the C[ultural] P[alace of] N[ationalities] in Beijing, and of which I was most of the time able to make copies. My translations sometimes include additional information that I believe is implicitly embedded in the original Tibetan text. However, I have dispensed with signaling most of these in square brackets for optical and aesthetic reasons. But anyone familiar with Tibetan will no doubt be able to recognize where I did add to the Tibetan text and be able to judge for him or herself whether these extras are on target or outright misleading. Almost all the references to Tibetan, texts or terms and names, have been standardized. The "Bibliographic Abbreviations" includes only those sources that are referred to three or more times. And, lastly, it should be understood that when the texts only provide the Indo-Tibetan or Sino-Tibetan designation for a year, there is a slight overlap with the following year of the Gregorian calendar, so that, for example, strictly speaking, the *rab byung* (*prabhava*) [= fire-female-hare] year of the first Indo-Tibetan sexagenary cycle should be given as "ca. 1027" and not as "1027."

¹ For further specific references, see my "The Textual History and Early Transmission of Bu ston Rin chen grub's *Chos 'byung*, a Chronicle of Buddhism in India and Tibet," which is under preparation.

fluence is that ever since its appearance from Bu ston's fecund pen, the *Chos 'byung* also enjoyed a high measure of renown among his fellow Tibetan scholars, even to the extent that one, namely, Gnyag phu ba Bsod nams bzang po (1341-1433), wrote a summary of it in 1378.² As a direct result of its popularity, sets of printing blocks were carved for it on at least four occasions in Central and East Tibetan monasteries. The first of these was prepared in the early 1470s at Bu ston's erstwhile seat of Zhwa lu monastery. It was part of the project for printing his collected oeuvre that Mkhän chen IV 'Khrul zhig Tshul khriṃs rgyal mtshan (1399-1473), abbot of this institution from the end of December of 1440 to 1467, conceived and initiated not long before his passing. However, this project was never fully realized. Aside from the *Chos 'byung*, he was only able to have blocks carved for a few of his other writings, including, I rather suspect, Bu ston's famous 1359 treatise in which he deals with what makes enlightenment possible (*tathāgatagarbha*), the well-known *De bzhiṃ gshes pa'i snying gsal zhiṅ mdzes par byed pa'i rgyan*.³ Judging from the numerous entries in the extant biographical literature, Bu ston's chronicle was studied by many fourteenth and fifteenth century scholars, and not only by those who had either been his disciples or disciples of his disciples, etc., or who had close connections with Zhwa lu itself. But the text first went "public" with this Zhwa lu print and, as a direct consequence, we begin to find it quoted in a much more broad spectrum of literary sources by intellectuals who belonged to different religious affiliations. Other sets of printing blocks were subsequently carved in Lhun grub steng in Sde dge under the supervision of Zhu chen Tshul khriṃs rin chen (1697-1774), some-

² See *Chos 'byung rin po che'i gter*, Jo nang dpe tshogs, vol. 11 (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2008), 275-312.

³ This might explain why Gser mdog Paṅ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428-1507) was able to refer to it in, for example, his undated replies to queries posed to him by Mus Rab 'byams pa Thugs rje dpal about his controversial 1482 *Gser gyi thur ma* study of Sa skya Paṅḍita's (1182-1251) *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, for which see *Complete Works*, vol. 23 (Thimphu, 1975), 386, 407. The thirty-nine-folio Lhasa Zhol print of Bu ston's work was translated and studied in D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Le traité du tathāgatagarbha de Bu ston Rin chen grub* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1973), but printing blocks for an edition in seventy-four folios were also carved and deposited in 'Bras spungs monastery's printery at a so far unknown time, for which see H. Eimer, "Der Katalog des Großen Druckhauses von 'Bras spungs aus dem Jahre 1920," *Studies in Central & East Asian Religions* 5/6 (1992-3), 30, no. 246. This work is also sometimes wrongly attributed to his student Sgra tshad pa Rin chen nram rgyal (1318-88), most probably because he authored a commentary on it; see, for example, Gung thang Dkon mchog bstan pa'i sgron me's (1762-1823) incomplete study of Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa's (1357-1419) 1408 *Drang ba dang nges pa'i don nram par phyed ba'i bstan bcos legs bshad snying po* in his *Collected Works*, vol. 2 (New Delhi, 1975), 549-50.

time between 1739 and the year of his passing, and then in Lhasa from 1917 to 1919, as part of the very first printing of his complete works. A noteworthy feature of this Lhasa Zhol print — this holds also for the many prints of his other writings that are contained in this edition — is that it is cluttered with numerous interlinear notes and glosses. The origin of many of these annotations is still unclear. Though it is certain that a substantial number undoubtedly postdate Bu ston by various margins of sorts, it is probable that some of these were found in one or another manuscript which the editors, who included the controversial Rdo bis Shes rab rgya mtsho (1884-1968),⁴ had at their disposal. To be sure, we can also not *a priori* rule out the likelihood that these later editors had themselves insinuated some of them into their final texts. There also exists a Bkra shis lhun po print for the *Chos 'byung*, but it has so far resisted an accurate dating. Lastly, a host of manuscripts of the text are known to be extant, of which only one rather late exemplar has been published.⁵ This particular exemplar exhibits several differences from the Lhasa Zhol print.

As far as its architecture is concerned, the text of the *Chos 'byung* falls into four main sections. In the first, Bu ston sought to provide a hermeneutic program for the understanding of Buddhism *per se*. To be sure, he was not the first Tibetan scholar to begin his study of the

⁴ For his interesting life that ended in tragedy, see H. Stoddard, "The Long Life of Rdo sbis Dge bshes Shes rab rgya mtsho," *Proceedings of the 4th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Schloss Hohenkammer - Munich 1985*, ed. H. Uebach and Jampa L. Panglung (München: Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), 465-471, and two panegyric volumes: *Dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po shes rab rgya mtsho*, comp. Mtsho sngon zhing chen srid gros kyi slob sbyong dang rig gnas lo rgyus u yon lhan tshogs (Xining: ?, ?1996) and Phun tshogs, *Rje btsun pra dnya sa ra mchog gi srid zhi'i legs tshogs 'dod rgur 'jo ba'i mdzad 'phrin dang rdo sbis grwa tshang gi gdan rabs dad gsum nor bu'i chun po* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1998), and Lha rams pa Skal bzang rgya mtsho's recent bilingual Tibetan-Chinese biography, *Rje btsun dam pa shes rab rgya mtsho'i rnam thar* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2010). For his philosophical encounter with his erstwhile student Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1903-51), see, briefly, D.S. Lopez, Jr., *The Madman's Middle Way. Reflections on Reality of the Tibetan Monk Gedun Chopel* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 234 ff. For reasons of space, Lopez did not mine his critiques to the full, but future studies of twentieth century Tibetan Madhyamaka thought should definitely include these as well as those that are not mentioned in Lopez's piece, *The Critics* [pp. 230-44]. We are still in the dark about Rdo bis' editorial principles. Suffice it to mention that he laid down some editorial criteria for the correct spelling of Tibetan verbal forms in his *Dus gsum gyi rnam gzhag blo mun sel ba'i 'od snang la zhu dag gnang ba'i skabs kyi dpyad gtam*, *Collected Works*, vol. 3 (Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1984), 452-6. This work was written at the behest of officials of the Central Translation Bureau [*krung yang* (< Ch. *zhongyang*) rtsom sgyur las khungs] in Beijing.

⁵ BUM. This manuscript is differently filiated from the printed versions of the *Chos 'byung*.

history of Buddhism in this way. A full documentation and analysis of the precursors of the architecture and contents of this portion of Bu ston's text would lead us too far afield, but suffice it to point out here that these have their parallels in what we find in such works as the ecclesiastic chronicle that is attributed to Nyang ral Nyi ma'i 'od zer (1124-92) and those by *Lde'u Jo sras and Mkhas pa Lde'u — both belong to the thirteenth century, the latter apparently to its third quarter.⁶ In short, this aspect of Bu ston's work is far from unique and, indeed, represents a tradition that was already well established in Tibet. Thusfar, the oldest available reflex of this genre is the second Sa skya pa patriarch Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo's (1142-82) *Chos la 'jug pa'i sgo* of circa 1167. Much more an introduction to Buddhism, with an appendix on its developments in India and Tibet, than a fullfledged chronicle, Bu ston knew this work well. While there is no evidence that he was directly familiar with the other three histories just mentioned, he himself reports that he was acquainted with several other specimen of this genre. Thus he writes, in 1326, in response to a query Rin chen ye shes addressed to him about his *Chos 'byung*, that he had a knowledge of the chronicles written by Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109-69) — this influential Bka' gdams pa scholar was an important teacher of the Slob dpon for some eleven years —, Gtsang nag pa Brtson 'grus seng ge (?-after 1195), Khro phu Lo tsā ba Byams pa'i dpal (1172-1237), Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197-1264) and Mchims Nam mkha' grags (1210-85).⁷ Unfortunately, except for what appears to be a manuscript of Gtsang nag pa's short work, which is still awaiting publication, none of these have been

⁶ Of the three manuscripts and one recently printed text of Nyang ral's study, NYANGA abruptly stops at NYANG, 379 [NYANGb, 445, NYANGm, 407b]. From hereon I will do as if Nyang ral is the author of this work, although my student D. Hirshberg has cast very serious doubt upon this in his forthcoming dissertation. For the other two works, see my "Dating the Two Lde'u Chronicles of Buddhism in India and Tibet," *Études bouddhiques offertes à Jacques May, Asiatische Studien / Études asiatiques* XLVI.1 (1992), 468-91 — this paper is now in need of several corrections —, and S.G. Karmay, "The Origin Myths of the First King of Tibet as Revealed in the *Can-Inga*," *The Arrow and the Spindle. Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998), 292; this is a revised version of an earlier paper published in *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Fagernes 1992*, vol. 1, ed. P. Kvaerne (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 413-4. The wording of portions of the colophons of the works by Nyang ral, Lde'u Jo sras, and several manuscripts of the *Dbu' / Sba bzhed* corpus suggests a close affinity among them in the sense that they may very well have been written in a kindred literary and religious milieu.

⁷ Untitled, *Thams cad mkhyen pa bu ston rin po che'i gsung rab thor bu ba*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa], Lhasa Zhol print, part 26 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 192.

recovered so far.

The next two major sections of the *Chos 'byung* delineate the inception and development of Buddhism in India and Tibet — the rather disappointing survey of Buddhism in Tibet ends in a listing of Indian and Indic *Paṇḍita*-s and Tibetan translators —, and the fourth and last section is a catalog of the translated scriptures to which he had access. The well-known English rendition of the text published now some eighty years ago by E. Obermiller included neither the section on these *paṇḍita*-s and translators, nor the catalog of translated scriptures.⁸ Nishioka Soshū published an edition and study of this catalog in Japanese,⁹ and Satō Hisashi published earlier a Japanese rendition of the chapter on Tibet.¹⁰ But the only complete translations of the *Chos 'byung* into a foreign language are the ones into Chinese by Guo Heqing and Pu Wencheng.¹¹ Mention must of course also be made of the regretted J. Szerb's critical, annotated edition of its chapter on Tibet, including the listings of *paṇḍitas* and translators, which is based on the four abovementioned prints plus two handwritten manuscripts of unclear filiation.¹² Szerb's book is a carefully executed piece of work, one that he was ever so tragically unable to finish. H. Krasser completed a very substantial number of the entries in the enormous critical apparatus of his edition, and we must all be grateful for his selfless labors. One source not used by Szerb for his edition is Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu's (1698-1755) undated notes on and summary of Bu ston's narrative of the *Chos 'byung*'s section on Tibet.¹³ But in all fairness, even if he had used it, it would have added precious little of substance to his work and, indeed, apart from a tenuous bibliographic value, it also has virtually none for the present paper.

The phenomenology of Tibetan book culture and the modes and speed with which knowledge and texts were or could potentially be disseminated in traditional, pre-1959 Tibet are still by and large uncharted areas of research. We also know virtually next to nothing about the specifics of the technology of Tibetan writing. The kinds of

⁸ Obermiller (1931-1932).

⁹ Nishioka Soshū, "An Index to the Catalog Section of 'Bu ston's Chronicle of Buddhism,' I, II, III [in Japanese]," *Tōkyō daigaku bungakubu bunka kōryū kenkyū shisetsu kenkyū kiyō* 4 (1980), 61-92; 5 (1981), 43-94; 6 (1983), 47-201.

¹⁰ A Japanese translation of the Lhasa Zhol print's section dealing with Tibet can be found in Satō (1977: 845-73).

¹¹ See, respectively, Guo (1986) and Pu's *Budun fojiao shi* (Lanzhou: Gansu Minzu chubanshe, 2007). I thank Mr. Sun Penghao, my student at Renmin University, Beijing, for drawing my attention to Pu's work, which unfortunately is not [yet] available to me.

¹² Szerb (1990: XIII-IV).

¹³ TSHE, 539-52; TSHE1, 196-200.

pens and paper that were in use or the different styles in which a book could and did make its physical appearance are subjects that still remain to be explored to any degree of detail, not to mention where paper and writing instruments were actually manufactured, when not imported. The recent work by Dpal bsdus is indeed a good beginning.¹⁴ In his youthful 1624 commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita's unprecedented *Rol mo'i bstan bcos*, *Treatise of the Musical Arts*, Sa skya monastery's twenty-eighth grand-abbot A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597-1659) mentions an old manuscript of his precursor's work which, he stipulates, was written with an "iron pen" (*lcags smyug*) on golden-hued paper (*shog bu gser mdangs can ma*).¹⁵ And he estimates that this manuscript dates from the time when Sa skya Paṇḍita was alive and well, that is, from the first half of the thirteenth century. This is a not insignificant datum.

A similar kind of ignorance confronts us when we open a Tibetan book. The varieties of punctuation and punctuation graphs that we find used in them, the different ways in which the written text is spatially organized on the piece of paper that has now morphed into a book page, and even the different ways in which the colophons organize such relevant bits of information as the identity of the author, the place and time of his or her composition, the person or persons at whose behest a work was written, and the ways in which the identity of the scribe is given, all these items still need to be looked into and accounted for in a systematic and sustained way.¹⁶ And we can go on and on. A work like the one M.T. Clanchy wrote for writing, penmanship, and early England's book culture and production or, more close to the Tibetan cultural area, even something more limited in scale like O. von Hinüber's booklet on Indian *Schriftlichkeit*, are im-

¹⁴ *Bod kyi yi ge'i rnam bshad seng ge'i nga ro* (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004).

¹⁵ *Rig pa'i gnas lnga las bzo rig pa'i bye brag rol mo'i bstan bcos kyi rnam par bshad pa 'jam dbyangs bla ma dges pa'i snyan pa'i sgra dbyangs blo gsal yid phrog 'phrin las yongs khyab*, *Collected Works*, vol. 6 (Kathmandu: Sa skya rgyal yongs gsung rab slob gnyer khang, 2000), 534.

¹⁶ But see J.I. Cabezón, "Authorship and Literary Production in Classical Buddhist Tibet," *Changing Minds. Contributions to the Study of Buddhism and Tibet in Honor of Jeffrey Hopkins*, ed. G. Newland (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2001), 233-63, M. Clemente, "Colophons as Sources: Historical Information from Some Brag dkar rta so Xylographies," *Rivista di Studi Sudasiatici* 11 (2007), 121-58, and O. Almogi, "How Authentic are Titles and Colophons in Tantric Works in the Tibetan Canon? The Case of Three Works and Their Authors and Translators," ed. O. Almogi, *Beiträge zur Zentralasienforschung*, Bd. 24 (Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies GmbH, 2008), 87-126, and their references to the secondary literature.

portant desiderata for Tibetan studies,¹⁷ though truth be told C.A. Scherrer-Schaub, K.R. Schaeffer, and S. van Schaik have now begun to till the fields in significant ways of this area of scholarship.¹⁸ However, what is clear is that until the second half of the twelfth century, all Tibetan books were written out by hand and circulated by means of copying, lending and borrowing — we still have no idea of the mechanisms by which manuscripts were formally lent out by their institutional or private owners. Much later, Zhwa dmar IV Chos grags ye shes (1453-1524) notes in his 1517 biography of 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392-1481) that the latter was able to borrow two or three volumes at the time of the Tanjur-canon from the library of Snar thang monastery's 'Jam dpal lha khang.¹⁹ We also still know dismally little about the history of libraries and reading²⁰ in the Ti-

¹⁷ See, respectively, *From Memory to Written Record. England 1066-1307* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), *Der Beginn der Schrift und frühe Schriftlichkeit in Indien*, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrgang 1989-Nr. 11 (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur / Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GMBH, 1989).

¹⁸ See her "Towards a methodology for the study of old Tibetan manuscripts: Dunhuang and Tabo," *Tabo Studies II. Manuscripts, Texts, Inscriptions, and the Arts*, ed. C.A. Scherrer-Schaub and E. Steinkellner, Serie Orientale Roma LXXXVII (Rome: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, 1999), 3-36, "Tibet: An Archeology of the Written," which is forthcoming in *Old Tibetan Studies Dedicated to the Memory of R.E. Emmerick*, ed. C.A. Scherrer-Schaub (Brill: Leiden, 2011), Scherrer-Schaub and G. Bonani, "Establishing a typology of the old Tibetan manuscripts: a multidisciplinary approach," *Dunhuang Manuscript Forgeries*, ed. S. Whitfield (London: The British Library, 2002), 184-215 [= *Ibid.*, *The Cultural History of Western Tibet. Recent Research from the China Tibetology Center and the University of Vienna*, ed. D. Klimburg-Salter, Liang Junyan et al. (Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House, 2008), 299-337], Schaeffer's *The Culture of the Book in Tibet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), and van Schaik's "Towards a Tibetan Paleography: A Preliminary Typology of Writing Styles in Early Tibet," which is forthcoming in *Manuscript Cultures: Mapping the Field*, ed. J. Quenzer and J.-U. Sobisch (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012). The recent publication of Grong khang Tshe ring chos rgyal, *Gangs can yig srol 'phel rim skor gyi gleng gdam yid kyi rang sgra* (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 2010), 166 ff., offers an interesting narrative about the different types of scripts that are used in Central, East, and Northeast Tibet, although we need to swallow hard several times when he speaks of scripts that were allegedly developed in pre-Khri srong lde btsan times.

¹⁹ *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* [dbu can manuscript], C.P.N. catalog no. 003259(11), 14a [= ed. Ngag dbang nor bu (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2002), 33].

²⁰ For "the art of reading in Tibet," see the pioneering paper of A.C. Klein, "Oral Genres and the Art of Reading in Tibet," *Oral Tradition* 9 (1994), 281-314. For some notes on the "Kagyü attitudes towards abooks and book learning," see D. Martin, "The Book-Moving Incident of 1219," *Edition, éditions: l'écrit au Tibet*,

betan cultural area. But we do know that by the beginning of the ninth century there were both imperial and monastic [and perhaps even private] libraries in cultural Tibet, and there is ample evidence that, in later times, wealthy noble families also owned private libraries that were kept separate, as they were in the case of temples and monasteries, from the more secular institutional archives in which such documents as muniments, taxation records, land and labor contracts and the like were safeguarded. Often called *dkar chag*, many if not all monasteries, estates, and palaces had their own inventories of precious objects, from the statuary and sepulchres of their saints to their collections of books and ritual bells, drums, paintings and other sacred objects. These existed either as separate documents or in larger treatises that dealt with the history of the institutions in which they were housed. Not many of these have been published so far. But a truly significant literary event would be the publication of the *dbu can* manuscript of the monumental *dkar chag* of the new monastery of Chos 'khor sde chen that Karma bstan skyong dbang po (1606-42), the last of the Gtsang pa Sde srid rulers, had built right above Bkra shis lhun po.²¹ If memory serves, it was compiled and written by 'Jam dbyangs Kun dga' bsod nams lhun grub (1571-1642) of the Sa skya pa school's Rtse gdong Residence, the slightly incomplete and beautifully calligraphied manuscript originally consisted of three hundred and ten folios. It is now inaccessibly stored away in either the basement of the museum in Lhasa, or somewhere in 'Bras spungs monastery. Several such inventories were also written for Sa skya and its temples, albeit on a less comprehensive scale, and a particularly significant one is found in the eighth and last chapter of the study of the monastery and its ruling families Gtsang Byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan (1423-98) completed in 1475. Worthy of a full analysis in its own right, we learn there that the various temples already housed tens of thousands of manuscripts and printed works, including manuscripts (*phyag dpe*) that had belonged to Ba ri Lo tsā ba Rin chen grags (1040-1111), Mal Lo tsā ba Blo gros grags (ca. 1100), 'Khon Dkon mchog rgyal po (1034-1102) — he was Sa skya's founder —, 'Khon Sgyi chu ba (ca. 1100), Gnang Kha'u ba Dar ma rgyal mtshan (ca. 1100) and the first four patriarchs, from Sa chen Kun dga' snying

evolution et devenir, ed. A. Chayet et al., *Collectanea Himalayica* 3 (Munich: Indus Verlag, 2010), 201 ff.

²¹ C.P.N. catalog no. 004351. I first drew attention to this work in my "On Some Early Tibetan *Pramāṇavāda* Texts of the China Nationalities Library of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing," *Journal of Buddhist and Tibetan Studies* 1 (1994), 24, n. 4. This short-lived journal has gone the way of all flesh and is now defunct.

po (1092-1158) to Sa skya Paṇḍita.²² Unfortunately, we have so far nothing of the kind for Zhwa lu monastery or Ri phug, Bu ston's primary places of residence for most of his adult life.

The most common form of the reproduction of books in Tibet was of course that of copying by hand. At times, an author would himself cause to make copies of a work he had just written in order to send it to his colleagues for their perusal and criticism and, he would hope, enjoyment. To be sure, this also provided him with an opportunity to make a name for himself, especially if he were at the beginning of his career. Uncertain how often this was done, an interesting, if still fairly isolated, case in point is Bu ston's very own *Chos 'byung*. Indeed, that we have Rin chen ye shes' reaction to the *Chos 'byung*, to which I referred above, was in the first place due to the simple fact that Bu ston had sent him and others — unfortunately, he does not name them — a copy of his work for the purpose of soliciting their comments. At other times, copies of the author's own writings were sent as presents and, on occasion, as enclosures (*rten*) of letters. An example of this is Mkhas grub Dge legs dpal bzang po (1385-1438). He writes at the end of his undated letter to a Dge bshes Sangs rgyas bzang po that he encloses copies of two biographies (*rnam thar*) of Tsong kha pa, a long and short one.²³ Though this is little more than a half-educated guess, these two *rnam thars* were quite possibly his well-known large-scale study of his teacher Tsong kha pa's life and his much shorter work on the same that is contained in a collection of his more brief literary pieces.²⁴

Very few Tibetan autograph manuscripts have survived, so that virtually all manuscripts and prints are ultimately copies of an almost always-elusive original. As a result of the copying process, we often have multiple exemplars of one and the same work and, as is to be expected, these are as a rule not textually identical. Most of the

²² See his *Sa skya mkhon (sic) gyi gdungs rab rin po che'i 'phreng ba*, incomplete ninety-folio *dbu can* manuscript, Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, Reel L 591/4, 86a and 77a.

²³ See his *Gsung thor bu ba rnam phyogs gcig tu bsdoms pa*, *Collected Works* [Lhasa Zhol print], vol. Ta (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 639. For books as objects of exchange or "religious gifts" (*chos kyi sbyin pa/bya, deyadharmā*), see the remarks in Schaeffer, *The Culture of the Book in Tibet*, 125 ff. For the notion of such *deyadharmā*-gifts, see G. Schopen, "The Phrase 'sa prthivīpradeśat caityabhūto bhavet in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17 (1975), 147-81.

²⁴ These are the well-known *Rnam thar dad pa'i 'jug ngogs*, *Collected Works* [of Tsong kha pa, Lhasa Zhol print], vol. Ka (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 5-146, and the lesser known *Gtam rin po che'i snye ma*, *Gsung thor bu ba rnam phyogs gcig tu bsdoms pa*, *Collected Works* [of Mkhas grub, Lhasa Zhol print], vol. Ta (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 562-93.

time, if the aim was simply to make a copy, the resultant texts show simple omissions and kindred relatively minor errors related to spelling and other oversights caused by careless, ignorant or sleepy copyists. Doubtless, there were also times when these copies were willfully and purposefully edited in one way or another by a scribe or scholar, especially when, setting himself over and above the text, he was motivated by personal or sectarian concerns. Thus, in the ensuing editorial process, entire passages could be, and indeed often were, deleted from or added to the "original text," thereby changing it forever. To be sure, many possible examples can be adduced for this. The famous "autobiography" of emperor Srong btsan sgam po (ca. 569-649), the *Bka' chems ka khol ma*, is a good case in point. A "treasure-text" (*gter ma*) Atiśa (ca. 982-1054) allegedly recovered from a hole in a beam of Lhasa's Gtsug lag khang in *circa* 1049, it was never printed and copies circulated only in handwritten form. Incidentally, to designate this work a *gter ma* or to hold that Atiśa was an actual revealer of such texts, a *gter ston*, as is not infrequently found in the later Tibetan literature, may not be altogether uncontroversial and in fact is a bit of a stretch if so stated without tongue in cheek. Even if Atiśa, the person and the circumstances under which he recovered this and other cognate treatises generally do not fit the description of a *gter ston* that we find delineated in such later works on these themes as, for example, in Rdo grub chen III Kun bzang 'jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma phrin las kun khyab dpal bzang po's (1865-1929) brief survey of the subject,²⁵ apologists and defenders of the *gter ma* tradition often do signal him as a *gter ston* and these works as a *gter ma*-s. Gu ru Chos kyi dbang phyug (1212-70) does not note either Atiśa or the *Bka' chems ka khol ma* in his early study of the incipient *gter ma* tradition, but the great Ratna gling pa (1403-76) mentions both in his 1464 study of the same — he calls the *Rgyal po bka' chems*,

²⁵ See Tulku Thondup, *Hidden Teachings of Tibet. An Explanation of the Terma Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism*, ed. H. Talbott (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1997), which includes a translation of Rdo grub chen III's undated *Las 'phro gter brgyud kyi nram bshad nyung gsal ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*, *Gsung 'bum*, vol. 2, ed. Bkra shis (Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa/Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2006), 475-539. See also the remarks in J. Gyatso, "Drawn from the Tibetan Treasury: The *Gter ma* Literature," *Tibetan Literature. Studies in Genre*, ed. J.I. Cabezon and R.R. Jackson (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), 147-69, and A. Doctor, *Tibetan Treasure Literature. Revelation, Tradition, and Accomplishment in Visionary Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2005), 19-30, and 52-71, for an edition and translation of 'Ju Mi pham rgya mtsho (1846-1912) undated piece on distinguishing a *bona fide* from a fraudulent *gter ma* revealer. Mi pham's text is structurally anomalous, since it begins with *yang dang por...*. This strange opening remark strongly suggests that the original text was left incomplete, and that it was therefore perhaps never intended to be published as it stood.

the *Shog dril ma* — and states that its counterparts, the *Bka' chems 'ong ba 'dod 'jo* by the master (*slob dpon*), and the *Bka' chems dar dkar gsal ba* of the queen,²⁶ were also recovered by Atiśa.²⁷ Ratna gling pa is not insensitive to the fact that he is a bit on thin ice to include these in his account of the *gter ma* genre of literature and that these writings are not quite of the same stripe as your normal everyday *gter ma*. The reason for their inclusion, he writes, is *inter alia* because even if the distinction between "new" (*gsar ma*) and "old" (*rnying ma*) does not hold for Srong btsan sgam po's writings, all Buddhist traditions in Tibet take them to be authoritative (*tshad ma*) and non-controversial (*rtsod med*) texts.²⁸

In his polemic work of 1442-3 on the dates of the historical Buddha and the Tibetan calendar, the *Rtsis la 'khrul ba sel ba*, 'Gos Lo tsā ba wrote that some unidentified scholars suggested a scenario of the number of years that had passed since the nirvāṇa of the Buddha on the basis of the *Bka' chems ka khol ma*'s narrative of the wanderings of the famous Jo bo statue depicting the Buddha when he was twelve years old, peregrinations that are framed in a rough chronological sequence.²⁹ They thus claimed that when the statue was finally in-

²⁶ Both witnesses of Ratna gling pa work — see below n. 27 — have *slob dpon gyis bka' chems 'ong ba 'dod 'jo*, but, for example, *Bka' chems ka khol ma*, ed. Smon lam rgya mtsho (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 4, 235, 315, has it that *Bka' chems zla ba 'dod 'jo*, and not *Bka' chems 'ong ba 'dod 'jo*, was written by Srong btsan sgam po's [sixteen] ministers (*blon po*) and not the master (*slob dpon*) — it would appear that the latter confusion is the result of a misreading of the abbreviated *skung yig* graph-cluster of *slob dpon*.

²⁷ See, respectively, *Gter 'byung chen mo*, *The Autobiography and Instructions of Gu ru Chos kyi dbang phyug*, vol. 2 (Paro, 1979), 75-193, and *Gter 'byung chen mo gsal ba'i sgron me*, *Selected Works of Ratna gling pa*, vol. 1 (Tezu, Arunchal Pradesh: Tibetan Nyingmapa Monastery, 1973), 54-5 [= *Ratna gling pa'i gter chos*, vol. 2 (Darjeeling, 1977-79), 61]. Gu ru Chos kyi dbang phyug's work should be viewed as essentially a defense of his own activities as a *gter ston* and the *gter ma* texts he recovered. His treatise may very well have been prompted in part by a critique of him and at least one of the works he recovered that we encounter in a tract that is attributed to Chag Lo tsā ba Chos rje dpal (1197-1264); see D. Martin, *Unearthing Bon Treasures. Life and Contested Legacy of a Tibetan Scripture Revealer with a General Bibliography of Bon* (Kathmandu: Vajra Publications, 2009), 114.

²⁸ *Gter 'byung chen mo gsal ba'i sgron me*, 56 [= *Ratna gling pa'i gter chos*, vol. 2, 62].

²⁹ 'GOS, 11b. From its printer's colophon, in 'GOS, 49b, we learn that, underwritten by Sryan snga Ngag gi dbang phyug grags pa (1439-90) of [Phag mo gru] Gdan sa mthil, the blocks were carved for it in 1466. The scribe of the script used for the printing blocks was Bsod nams bzang po; the carver (*brkos kyi 'du byed*) was Bkra shis rgyal mtshan and the editor for both (*do dag par byed pa po*) was the layman Bsam grub grags from Byang. What remains to be determined is to what extent, if at all, he had revised his work in the twenty-three intervening years, especially in view of Grwa phug pa Lhun grub rgya mtsho's 1447 treatise on chronology that was written in exceedingly critical reaction to it, for which see below n. 63.

stalled in the Gtsug lag khang or Jo khang in Lhasa, roughly some three thousand and five hundred years had passed since the Buddha's nirvāṇa. The transmissive instability of the passage that they used for this calculation is quite evident when we juxtapose and compare the readings of the four different recensions of the *Bka' chems ka khol ma* that are so far more or less widely available.³⁰ 'Gos Lo tsā ba, too, was keenly aware of this instability and the presence of different manuscripts having inconsistent readings. For one, it led him to comment that, while the original manuscript (*dpe ngo bo*) of the text had been placed in the reliquary chapel (*gdung khang*) of Bya yul [monastery and was therefore no longer accessible], the extant copies suffer from various interpolations and elisions, so that roughly dating the Buddha's nirvāṇa on its basis cannot be said to be reliable (*yid brtan pa ma yin*) and that for this reason the number of elapsed years cannot be calculated with a measure of authority.³¹ More than four centuries hence, Brag dgon Zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rgyas (1802-after 1871) said as much in his celebrated 1864 history of Buddhism in Amdo.³² This raises such questions as

³⁰ The passage in question can be found in *Chos [b]rgyal srong btsan sgam po'i bka' chems*, *The Literary Arts in Ladakh*, vol. 1 (Darjeeling: Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang, 1972), 379, *Chos rgyal srong btsan sgam po'i bka' them* [= *chems*] *bka' khol ma*, *Ma 'ongs pa'i lung bstan gsal ba'i sgron me*, vol. 1 (Leh, 1973), 640 ff., *Bka' chems ka khol ma*, ed. Smon lam rgya mtsho (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 31 ff., and *Srong btsan sgam po'i rnam thar bsodus pa*, tbc.org, 14a ff. Needless to say, the readings of these four texts are often at great variance with one another. For remarks on this work, see Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs, "Lha sa gtsug lag khang gi lo rgyus bshad tshul zhib mjug byas pa," *Chab spel tshe brtan phun tshogs gyi gsung rtsom phyogs bsgrigs* (Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1993), 34-60 — my thanks to my student Ian J. MacCormack for this important reference —, H. DeCler's review of J.I. Cabezón and R. Jackson, eds., *Tibetan Literature. Studies in Genre* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1996) in *The Tibet Journal* 23 (1998), 77-91, and R.M. Davidson, "The Kingly Cosmogonic Narrative and Tibetan Histories: Indian Origins, Tibetan Space, and the *Bka' chems ka khol ma Synthesis*," *Lungta [Cosmogony and the Origins]*, ed. R. Vitali] 16 (2003), 64-83. For a Chinese translation of the Lanzhou "edition" of this work, see now Lu Yajun, tr., *Zhujian shi - Songzan ganbu de yixun* (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2010).

³¹ The full text reads in 'GOS, 18b: *de yang bka' chems kyi yi ger grags pa ni mang po la grags pas bkod pa tsam ste / rgyal po srong btsan sgam nyid kyi bkod pa'i yi ge gtsang ma yin na shin du bka' btsan pa yin mod kyi / ding sang gi yi ge rnam la mang nyung dang gzhung mi mthun pa mang du mthong zhing / jo bo rjes ka ba bum pa can dang nye ba'i gdung las phyung ste bris pa'i dpe ngo bo bya yul gyi gdung khang du btsud nas da ltar gyi yi ge ni gzhan gyi blo la rags rim zhig gnas pa bris pa yin no / zhes kyang 'byung bas shin du yid brtan pa ma yin phyir lo grangs rnam tshad mas grub pa ma yin no //.*

³² BRAG, 694; for his marvelous work, see now G. Tuttle, "Challenging Central Tibet's dominance of history: *The Oceanic Book*, a nineteenth century politico-religious geographic history," *Mapping the Modern in Tibet*, ed. G. Tuttle, Beiträge

the limits of manuscript authority in Tibetan writing and what constitutes an authoritative edition, if something of this nature ever existed in the Tibetan Buddhist world.

It stands to reason that the sociology of knowledge in Tibet was affected with the advent of blockprinting. This technique that allowed for a different way in which knowledge could be disseminated most probably had its inception, albeit on quite local scales, around the turn of the thirteenth century, although this could perhaps be pushed back into the second half of the twelfth century.³³ But the precise degree to which printing may have had an impact on and thus changed the Tibetan intellectual landscape when it became more widespread has yet to be determined. In Central Tibet, the carving of printing blocks took off in a respectable but by no means universal way only during the first half of the fifteenth century. Why this should have been so is not at all obvious and is something that, too, still needs to be studied. The economic resources for projects of this kind had already been in place for a long time, so that their putative absence until that period could not have been an inhibiting factor. We may have to consider issues that have to do with developments in the monastic curricula and, what is of course quite related to these, the extent and depth of the demographic shifts that must have taken place from the villages and countryside to the monasteries. In some cases, we have to take into account the felt need to keep certain texts, especially those that have to do with esoteric teachings, away from the public eye. Accordingly, how decisions were made in particular or in general with regards for what text or textual corpus printing blocks were to be carved, and why, are as yet unknown quantities as well. For example, why were in Rtsed thang, most probably sometime between 1434 and 1445, printing blocks carved for Vasudhararakṣita's and Zha ma Lo tsā ba Seng ge rgyal mtshan's twelfth century translation of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and *not* for the earlier rendition by Kanakavarman and Mar thung Lo tsā ba Dad pa shes rab?³⁴ We know that both leave quite a bit to be desired

zur Zentralasienforschung, Bd. 24 (Halle: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies GmbH, 2011), 135-72.

³³ In addition to the literature cited in my "Faulty Transmissions: Some Notes on Tibetan Textual Criticism And the Impact of Xylography," *Édition, éditions: l'écrit au Tibet, évolution et devenir*, ed. A. Chayet et al., *Collectanea Himalayica* 3 (Munich: Indus Verlag, 2010), 441-63; see now also Xiong Wenbin "Tibetan Buddhist Scriptures Published with the Financial Aid of Members of the Yuan Dynasty's Imperial Family [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo zangxue* 3 (2009), 91-103, which was written as a supplement to Shes rab bzang po's earlier "Investigating Tibetan Language 'Yuan Blockprints' [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo zangxue* 1 (2009), 41-50.

³⁴ A few notes on this print may be found in my "Two Mongol Xylographs (*hor par ma*) of the Tibetan Text of Sa skya Paṇḍita's Work on Buddhist Logic and Epis-

in terms of their philological reliability, but several, almost rhetorical, questions naturally emerge of their own account: Did the printing of the first rather than the second have something to do with the perceived and actual differences in the quality of their translations? Was it because Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen (1364-1432), who had used this particular translation as the basis for his own commentary on the text, was in particular good standing with the political powers that were in Rtsed thang?³⁵ Or did other still to be disclosed factors, such as, more mundanely, ready access to the manuscript of their translation, play a role in this decision? To be sure, there was already in place a longstanding tradition in Tibetan learning of philological and text-critical scholarship, itself a function of the presence in mind of the possible vicissitudes and various forms of contamination that can and do occur in the process of translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan and that can and do occur during the transmission of handwritten manuscripts and their repeated copying. Among many other possible examples, we may single out the following as important witnesses to the Tibetan philological and text-critical spirit: Bu ston's studies of the *Samputatantra* of 1336 and the *Vajrodaya* of 1342, the critical edition of the Tibetan translation of Candrakīrti I's (?9thc.) *Pradīpodyotana*-commentary on the *Guhyasamājantra*, which Tsong kha pa completed in the 1410s, and Mkhas grub's undated study of Dhar-

temology," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 16 (1993), 289-90. The much later Sku 'bum print of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* was also based on their translation, see the detailed paper of H. Yaita, "On the Sku 'bum Version of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* [in Japanese]," *Journal of the Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies*, 21 (1998), 19-50, and also his "The Tibetan Text of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, Sku 'bum Edition [in Japanese]," *Journal of the Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies*, 27 (2004), 77-113.

³⁵ See his *Tshad ma mdo'i rnam bshad* [*Tshad ma kun las btus pa'i rnam bshad mthar 'dzin gyi tsha gdung ba 'joms byed rigs pa'i rgya mtsho*], *Collected Works* [Lhasa: Zhol print], vol. Nga (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1981), 333-588, a work that he wrote between 1424 and 1432. By contrast, Dge ba rgyal mtshan (1387-1462) is much less enthusiastic about Vasudhararakṣita's and Zha ma Seng ge rgyal mtshan's rendition, for which see, for example, his *Tshad ma kun las btus pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa'i rgyan*, *The Collection (sic) Works of the Ancient Sa skya pa Scholars*, vol. 1 (Dehra Dun: Sakya College, 1999), 406. The forty-two-folio *dbu med* manuscript of the *Tshad ma kun las btus pa'i rgya cher bshad pa rgyan gyi me tog* by Dar ma rgyal mtshan (1227-1305), alias Bcom ldan Rig[s] pa'i ral gri, that has recently come to light shows that the author's exegesis is based on Vasudhararakṣita's and Zha ma Seng ge rgyal mtshan's text as well, but at the same time shows some significant departures from it. Dar ma rgyal mtshan's study is so far the oldest Tibetan commentary, if not the oldest one überhaupt, on Dignāga's tract that is currently available. For the latter in particular, see my and A.P. McKeown's forthcoming *Bcom ldan ral gri (1227-1305) on Indian Buddhist Logic and Epistemology: His Commentary on Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya*.

makīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*. The rather fundamental difference that prevailed among these three scholars was, of course, that only Bu ston was a superb Sanskritist. This enabled him to make well-founded and independent judgements about the philological accuracy of the different Tibetan translations and the Sanskrit manuscripts to which he had access. Tsong kha pa is not known as a Sanskrit scholar, so that we may assume that his many references to the readings of "Sanskrit" or "Indian manuscripts" are taken from the earlier commentarial literature, including that of Bu ston, and do not really reflect his own scholarship *per se*. Yet his edition must on all counts be considered a commendable piece of work. Though Mkhas grub was also not quite at home in Sanskrit, his comments do indicate how often a finely honed intellect like his could be right on the money when it came to disentangling a passage's awkward philological knot. It is a curiosity that, just as in Buddhist and other intellectual circles of the Indian subcontinent, so, too, in Tibet, the patterns and causes of textual contamination, and the theoretical considerations that might be brought to bear on them, were for some reason never thought to be worthy of a full articulation, let alone a thorough analysis.

The impact printing had on Tibetan textual criticism and scholarship in general has to date also been barely examined. For now, it is safe to say that, with the advent of more widespread printing in the fifteenth century, we begin to witness the emergence of a slightly different kind of philological tension in the intellectual practices of a select number of scholars. Whereas the earlier textual problems that I signaled in the literature were by and large caused by the different readings of handwritten texts or, in the case of the canonical literature, on competing variations in their translations and their correspondence of lack of it with, when available, the original Sanskrit manuscript[s], the emergence of printed texts added an additional variable in the equation. A growing awareness of the presence of conflicting readings of one or the other manuscript (*bris ma*) and a print (*par/spar ma*) of the same work can now be observed where, I think it not irrelevant to emphasize, Tibetan scholars generally did not *a priori* privilege one recension over the other. Examples of comparisons between the handwritten text and the print are legion and more turn up every day.³⁶ Though the onset of printing has doubt-

³⁶ Several examples come immediately to mind. Writing in 1468, Nor bzang rgya mtsho (1423-1513) compares the reading of 'GOS, 11b, with that of a handwritten manuscript in his *Legs par bshad pa padma dkar po'i zhal lung las rtsis 'phro gsal bar byed pa'i sgron me* [1681 Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling print], 2a. Zhwa dmar IV compares time and again a print of the *Dgongs gcig* text of Dbon Shes rab 'byung gnas (1187-1241) via statements placed in the mouth of his uncle 'Bri gung 'Jig

less significance for Tibetan social and intellectual history, I think it would nonetheless be counterproductive were we to overestimate the implications and influence printing as such had for and on Tibetan intellectual and cultural practices in general. For I believe it is fair to say that the available evidence so far suggests that these did not run very deep and, indeed, were by and large rather surprisingly superficial. To be sure, printing a work potentially provided a vehicle and a guarantee for its more widespread dissemination, but the availability of printing blocks was by no means a guarantee that prints from them enjoyed a greater circulation. There are thus many examples for the fact that, for whatever reason, prints could also be rarities. Brag dkar Zhabs drung records that he had seen a print of the biography of Men ju (< ?Ch. Minzhou) Dpal ldan bkra shis (1377-after 1445) that extended up to his sixty-eighth year.³⁷ He writes that he does not know where a print of this work might be and says that he had drawn from it *in extenso* "because [its] transmission (*dpe*

rten mgon po (1143-1217) with other readings; see his 1516 *Dam pa dgongs pa gcig pa'i gsal byed* (Bir: The Bir Tibetan Society, 1992), 20, etc. [= *Collected Works*, vol. 2 (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009), 695, etc.], Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456-1532) signals a discrepancy between the text of his erstwhile teacher Gser mdog Pan chen's undated *Blo gros bzang po'i dri lan* [*Collected Works*, vol. 23 (Thimphu, 1975), 1-25], and the print of his *Sdom pa gsum gyi dris lan chen mo*; see his *Sdom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i dka' ba'i gnas rnam par 'byed pa zhib mo rnam 'thag*, *The Collection (sic) Works of the Ancient Sa skya pa Scholars*, vol. 2 (Dehra Dun: Sakya College, 1999), 80a [159]. The *Sdom pa gsum gyi dris lan chen mo* is doubtless the large treatise subtitled *Gser gyi thur ma* [*Collected Works*, vols. 6-7 (Thimphu, 1975), 439-648 and 1-230]. It was written in 1481 and the printing blocks were carved only two years later in 1483. Glo bo Mkhan chen's own work is dated the hen-year, for which there are therefore several candidates: 1489, 1501, 1513, and 1525. Another example is found in Se ra Rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan's (1469-1544/6) *Rgyas pa'i bstan bcos tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi don 'grel rgyal tshab dgongs pa rab gsal zhes bya ba le'u dang po'i dka' ba'i gnas la dogs pa gcod pa* [Se ra, Byllakuppe, print], 66a [= *Se ra rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan gyi gsung pod dang po*, ed. Jigs med bsam grub (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2006), 110], where he refers to a problematic reading in a print of Rgyal tshab's *Pramāṇavārttika* commentary subtitled *Thar lam gsal byed*. The print in question must be the one in two hundred and forty folios, dated 1449, of which a copy is located under C.P.N. catalog no. 004732; see my "A Minor Text-Critical Problem in the Dga' ldan rtse Xylograph of Rgyal tshab Dar ma rin chen's (1362-1432) *Pramāṇavārttika* Commentary," which is under preparation.

³⁷ BRAG, 684; his biography is found in BRAG, 679-84. For the annotated Chinese translation of this passage with many references to Ming sources on him, see the *Anduo zhengjiaoshi*, tr. Wu Jun et al. (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1989), 640-5; see further Chen Nan, "A Study of Dazhi Fawang [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo zangxue* 4 (1996), 68-83, and also Toh Hong-teik, *Tibetan Buddhism in Ming China*, Harvard University dissertation (Cambridge, 2004), 180-2. My friend Shen Weirong has been able to secure a copy of a rare manuscript of a Chinese translation of a substantial biography of this fairly important figure.

rgyun) was exceedingly rare." Presumably, then, the information he was able to provide on his life was based on the notes he had taken when he had access to this print. Dpal ldan bkra shis' life was an interesting one and one hopes that a print of his biography is still extant in one or the other library. Among other things, in 1404, he went to Ming China with his uncle Drung chen Dpal ldan rgya mtsho as the guest of the court of the Yongle Emperor (r. 1402-23). Later, he functioned as an interpreter for Karma pa V De bzhin gshegs pa (1384-1415) and became his disciple until the master's death. A regular visitor of the Ming court and a beneficiary of its largesse, an entry for 1428, the third year of the Xuande Emperor (r. 1425-34), in Bragdkar Zhabs drung's survey of his life, notes that he restored with imperial support a temple of the monastery of Lhun grub bde chen, which he had constructed in 1417. Among other items, this monastery housed a Chinese Buddhist canon (*rgya yig gi bka' 'gyur*), several collections of the Tibetan canon, and other manuscript treasures such as the Chinese and Tibetan versions of the large *Avataṃsakasūtra* written in gold ink.

Traditional Tibetan culture with its intellectual production of letters was bichromatic and confined to, and placed in, the service of the Buddhist and Bon religions and their institutions. That is to say, until the twentieth century, the Tibetan cultural area had no newspapers or any other publishing outlet of "popular" literature. Regardless of their subject-matter, the printing of Buddhist works — I am not sure when printing blocks began to be carved for Bon po works — that had in one way or another to do with religion was, perhaps with the exception of "state-subsidized" printing on the part of the Dga' ldan pho brang and the Potala from the mid-seventeenth century onward, and Sde dge's Lhun grub steng from the eighteenth century onward, always a very local and, indeed, a relatively haphazard and unsystematic endeavor. Given the unusually numerous printing projects Dalai Lama V Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-82) funded and initiated, one may very well draw the conclusion that he realized, and was able to harness, the power of the printed word as an important propaganda tool that could be used towards the legitimization, consolidation and centralization of his political and spiritual power over Central Tibet and other regions. Small and larger printeries were indeed associated with some monasteries, and much later with the libraries attached to the residences of noble families, but it is fair to say that they never really sought to attract a mass audience.³⁸ For this reason, and irrespective of the fact that we are

³⁸ For these, see F. Robin, "Note préliminaire concernant les imprimeries non monastiques au Tibet," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 15 (2005), 1-25.

speaking of blockprinting and not of printing by movable type, the introduction of printing in the huge area dominated by Tibetan culture was unable to have the profound impact this "new" technology had upon its introduction in fifteenth century Europe. The relatively [not absolute!] scarcity of natural resources such as wood for the printing blocks and paper for printing, and their attendant relatively high cost, may also have been sufficiently prohibitive for its widespread use and no doubt exerted negative pressures on its development. These factors notwithstanding, it is worth briefly to pause before the circumstance that until the twentieth century only very, very few Tibetan literati ever deigned to write anything in the vernacular. And it is fair to say that, throughout the history of Tibetan writing of some thirteen hundred years,³⁹ there was, with some noteworthy early examples, virtually no secularization of Tibetan letters. The result of this was that the hegemony of monks and men of the cloth in general and the rule by petty dictators, benign and malignant, never came under a real threat by the introduction and dissemination of ideas that were different from the monochromatic ideology of a certain kind of Buddhism in particular in which the secular and the religious were inextricably intertwined. Their violent replacement was to come from the outside in 1959.

Given the above comments in point form, it should now not be surprising that the text of the *Chos 'byung* also fell victim to the various pitfalls of transmissive corruption. Though critical of several other points in Bu ston's work, there is only one occasion where, for example, Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504-66) found it necessary explicitly to point out that there was a problem with a reading of the print to which he had access. We now know that this must have been the Zhwa lu print of the early 1470s and I will return to his remarks below very shortly. Gser mdog Paṅ chen most likely also used this print for his remarks in his 1502 history of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist logic and epistemology.⁴⁰ This is of course not to say that he was unfamiliar with the *Chos 'byung* prior to its Zhwa lu "publication." He most definitely was. The biographical and autobiographical litera-

³⁹ For a penetrating reexamination of the beginnings of Tibetan writing, see now S. van Schaik, "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing," *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, Old Tibetan Documents Online Monograph Series, vol. III, ed. Y. Imaeda, M.T. Kapstein and T. Takeuchi (Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Languages, 2011), 45-96, but see also, albeit with very serious reservations, Grong khang Tshe ring chos rgyal, *Gangs can yig srol 'phel rin skor gyi gleng gdam yid kyi rang sgra*, *passim*.

⁴⁰ *Tshad ma'i mdo dang bstan bcos kyi shing rta'i srol rnams ji ltar byung ba'i tshul gdam du bya ba nyin mor byed pa'i snang bas dpyod ldan mtha' dag dga' bar byed pa*, *Complete Works*, vol. 19 (Thimphu, 1975), 27.

ture of the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries provide ample evidence for the popularity of Bu ston's text and, indirectly, for the fact that a good number of handwritten copies must have been in circulation. In his quite remarkable 1454 study of the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*, Gser mdog Paṅ chen refers to a statement Bu ston had made in the catalog portion of the *Chos 'byung* that turns out to be text-historically somewhat troubling.⁴¹ Aside from addressing a rather controversial issue concerning the authorship of two important works, the observations made by Gser mdog Paṅ chen indicate that several interesting and not altogether insignificant variant readings were present in his copy when compared with the corresponding passage of the *Chos 'byung*'s Lhasa Zhol print,⁴² and I plan to take a closer look at this particular concundrum on a separate occasion.

A disciplined critic of his forebears, Dpa' bo II was himself an excellent and critical historian and, let truth be told, was demonstrably far more in tune with problems of Tibetan historiography than was Bu ston. It should therefore not come as a surprise that he voiced his disagreement with him in several places. In contrast to the issue he raised about the state of the text of the *Chos 'byung* to which I briefly referred earlier, these others have to do with what he felt was Bu ston's own position on historical events. Thus, in his opinion, they are quite unrelated to any alleged or real contamination that may have befallen the text of the *Chos 'byung* in the course of its *Tradierung*. One of these devolved on the year in which Bu ston says emperor Khri srong lde btsan was born, namely the earth-male-horse year, that is, the quite impossible year 718.⁴³ Dpa' bo II mentions this year after he dismisses the veracity of the hare-year, 739 or 751, that he had apparently found in one of the texts of the *Rba* [= *Sba*] *bzhed*⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan 'grel pa dang bcas pa'i snga phyi'i 'brel rnam par btsal zhiing / dngos bstan kyi dka' ba'i gnas la legs par bshad pa'i dpung tshogs rnam par bkod pa / bzhed tshul rba rlabs kyi phreng ba*, *Complete Works*, Vol. 11 (Thimphu, 1975), 167-8.

⁴² BU, 939 [BU1, 230, BUM, 1266]; see also Guo (1986: 250).

⁴³ DPA', 297 [= Huang-Zhou (2010: 118-9)], *ad* the passage in Szerb (1990: 18) [Obermiller 1932: 186, Satō 1977: 852, Guo 1986: 171] and BUM, 1186. Note the difference of exactly two duodenary cycles between 718 and 742, which is a water-male-horse year! For the life and times of Khri srong lde btsan, see Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs and Nor brang O rgyan, *Bod kyi lo rgyan rags rim g.yu'i phreng ba*, Stod cha (Lhasa: Bod ljongs dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1989), 276-333, and the Chinese translation in *Xizang tongshi*, trs. Chen Qingying, Gesang yixi [= Skal bzang ye shes] et al. (Lhasa: Xizang guji chubanshe, 1996), 125-50; see also Sde rong Tshe ring don grub, *Xizang tongshi. Jiexiang baoping* (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 2001), 106-10, an important work on Tibetan history that appears to be currently banned.

⁴⁴ For this work, see below n. 45. Sa skya Paṅdita seems to differentiate between a *Rgyal bzhed*, a *Dbā' bzhed*, and a *'Ba' bzhed* in his *Thub pa'i dgongs pa rab tu gsal*, for

to which he had access.⁴⁵ Although none of the latter state in what

which see the 1734 Sde dge print in SSBB 5, no. 1, 25/4; he also seems to distinguish between a *Rgyal bzhed*, a *Dpa' bzhed* — *dpa'* and *dba'* are easily miscarved — and a '*Bangs bzhed* in his *Skyes bu dam pa rnam la spring ba'i yi ge*, for which see SSBB 5, no. 30, 332/1, and J. Rhoton, tr., *A Clear Differentiation of the Three Codes* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 234. The editions of these two works in *Sa skya gong ma rnam lnga'i gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma las sa pañ kun dga' rgyal mtshan gyi gsung pod gsum pa, Mes po'i shul bzhaq* 15, ed. Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2007), 96 and 395, have no variant readings except *dba'* for *dpa'* in the latter! The spelling of some of these titles are no doubt the result of manuscript contamination, as 'Brug pa Sangs rgyas rdo rje (1569-1645) points out in his 1626 reply to a work by Klu sgrub chos kyi rgyal mtshan, then abbot of Ngam ring monastery in Byang, that must be placed in the context of an earlier series of debates between these two scholars that ultimately had their origin in disputes that were launched some sixty years previously between the Sa skya pa scholar Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho (1523-94) and 'Brug chen IV Padma dkar po (1527-96) of the 'Brug pa sect of the Bka' brgyud pa school. Thus Sangs rgyas rdo rje notes in his *Ngam ring mkhan chen klu sgrub chos kyi rgyal mtshan pas brgal lan gsang gsum rdo rje'i snying po mchog tu grub pa'i gtam, Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Kathmandu: Shri Gautam Bud[d]ha Vihara, 1995), 225-6, that *rba* and *dpa'* are identical, being based on archaic *versus* updated terminologies (*brda' gсар rnying*). And in the *Shing rag*, a response to 'Brug pa Sangs rgyas rdo rje's *Srid gsum rnam par rgyal ba'i dge mtshan*, Klu sgrub chos kyi rgyal mtshan had apparently stated that, while for the majority of Sa skya pa, *Rba bzhed* and '*Ba' bzhed* were different texts, he believed that *rba* and '*ba'* were archaic/outdated terms (*brda rnying*) and that, furthermore, the print of the *Thub pa'i dgongs pa rab gsal* was contaminated (*ma dag*). This may very well be a reference to the late fifteenth century Gong dkar print of this work.

⁴⁵ See the passages in SBb, 4 and 8. The other versions of the *Sba bzhed* only have the first, namely the year in which he was born, for which see SBp, 3-4, SBch, 87, the Chinese translation of SBch in Tong-Huang (1990: 4) and another version of the *Sba bzhed*, the *Dba' bzhed*, published in Pasang Wangdu-Diemberger (2000), makes no mention of either. Cognate with these are also the passages in Khri srong lde btsan's biography that we find in MES, 168, 174 [for MES, see below n. 75]. Dpa' bo II evidently had access to a text of the *Sba bzhed* that was similar to the one of SBb. In the print of his work, that is, DPA'(p), the long quotations from the *Sba bzhed* are reproduced in smaller characters than what appears to be Dpa' bo II's work as such, which therefore would indicate that it was inserted at a later date. The one responsible for its insertion is not known — it may have been Dpa' bo II himself — but it must have been done before the text was committed to the printing blocks in the second half of the sixteenth century under the sponsorship of the ruling family of Bya in Lho stod, with Tshe dbang dar po as one of the master carvers. As is evident from DPA'(p), 661 [DPA', 651], Tshe dbang dar po was a contemporary of Dpa' bo II. The text itself, as were at least two of the first three sections (*skabs*), was written at the behest of a ruler (*sa skyong*) by the name Bsod nams rab brtan, who still needs to be identified. The only Bsod nams rab brtan known to me, who would fit chronologically, is the scion of the Lha rgya ri family. For studies of the *Sba bzhed* and its recensions, see Faber (1986), Tong Jinhua, "Lun 'Bashi'," *Zangzu Wenxue Yanjiu / Bod kyi rtsom rig zhib 'jug* (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 1992), 64-85 — it was first published in *Zangxue Yanjiu Wen* (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1989), ?-? —, Ph. Denwood, "Some

Remarks on the Status and the Dating of the *Sba bzhed*," *The Tibet Journal* XV (1991), 135-48, Dbyangs can mtsho, "<Sba bzhed> kyi rtsom pa po dang de'i lo rgyus rig pa'i rin thang la dpyad pa," *Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig* 4 (1996), 79-86, M.T. Kapstein, "The Chinese Mother of Tibet's Dharma-king: The Testament of Ba and the Beginnings of Tibetan Buddhist Historiography," *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism. Conversion, Contestation, and Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 23-37, esp. n. 11, pp. 212-4, and Bis mdo Rdo rje rin chen, "<Sba bzhed> las 'byung ba'i don chen 'ga'i dogs dpyod," *Bod kyi yig rnying zhib 'jug*, ed. Kha sgang Bkra shis tshe ring (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2003), 450-5. I do think that we can safely bypass the hypothesis formulated by Kapstein that "the monk of Snyas, Ldum bu Ma ni arga [= ?artha] siddhi [= ?Nor bu don grub]," the scribe of sbb, might just refer to Ldum bu [ba] Don grub dbang rgyal, and that, quoting an indication of this in an early essay by the very regretted E.G. Smith, now reprinted in his *Among Tibetan texts. History & Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, ed. K.R. Schaeffer (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2002), 243, the latter "was one of the Fifth Dalai Lama's inner circle." [On the same page, Smith goes so far as to ascribe the ?1685 *Vai durya dkar po* study of calendrical astronomy to him, a work that is otherwise usually attributed to the Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653-1705), the *de facto* ruler of Tibet from 1685 to his death. Leaving the door ever so slightly ajar, this does not seem possible. If the Sde srid were not its author, then the occasions on which the 1688 *Vai durya g.ya sel*, equally attributed to him, gives a third-person mention or reference to Ldum bu would indeed be hard to explain away; see, for example, *Vai durya g.ya sel*, vol. 1 (Dehra Dun, 1976), 165. Further, Lo tsā ba Chos dpal (1654-1718), who had studied with Ldum bu ba [or: Zlum po ba], also makes no allusion to his putative involvement with the writing of the *Vai durya dkar po*. But, given the Sde srid's status, this may have been a sensitive issue. In any event, the Lo tsā ba's undated *Skar nag rtsis kyi dri lan skor phyogs bsdus*, *Collected Works*, vol. 5 (Dehra Dun, nd), 142-66, 166-87, contains very politely formulated questions posed directly and explicitly to the Sde srid about some passages of his *Vai durya dkar po*.] Ldum bu, whose name is *always* given as "Don grub dbang rgyal," and thus *sans* "nor bu," only has one single entry in Dalai Lama V's own listing of those teachers with whom he had studied the subject of astrology and calendrical astronomy; see his 1670 *Record of Teachings Received. The Gsan-yig of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*, vol. 1 (New Delhi, 1970), 32-6. And the colophon of his 1657 *Rtsis skar / dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i suang ba*, *Collected Works*, vol. 20 (Gangtok, 1994), 671-2, does not even mention Ldum bu among those to whom he felt indebted for his understanding of the subject. In addition, I believe that Kapstein's remark about Dalai Lama V's "intense interest" in the *Sba bzhed* certainly overstates the case and needs to be tempered. Not only does Dalai Lama V not once mention the text, let alone its various recensions, in his long three-volume autobiography, but we notice that he repeats in his own chronicle only those passages, by paraphrase and identified or unidentified citation, that were already quoted by Dpa' bo II, whose work he knew so well and whom he never fails to put down — the new political situation in Central Tibet that ensued upon the very recent [1642] defeat of the Gtsang pa ruling house and their Karma Bka' brgyud pa chaplains seem to have demanded this from him. In other words, it is not at all certain, indeed it is improbable, that, unlike apparently his other nemesis Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552-1624) and later on the Sde srid, he had actually consulted a manuscript [or manuscripts] of the *Sba bzhed* [or any other cognate text] which, if it were otherwise, might have suggested he had taken more than a pedestrian interest in this work. Dalai Lama V cites

year Khri srong lde btsan's father Khri lde gtsug brtan, alias Mes Ag tshoms, was killed, one of them, the version published in Beijing, does claim that his son was eight [= seven] years old when he ascended the imperial throne as a result of his father's violent death. For Dpa' bo II, Khri lde gtsug brtan was born in 680. Again, citing a *Sba bzhed*, he also has it that he died at the age of sixty-three [= sixty-two], that is, in 742.⁴⁶ No such figure is found in any of the extant versions of the *Sba bzhed*, but he employs it to dismiss its putative claim that Khri srong lde btsan was born in a hare-year on arithmetic grounds. On the other hand, in his 1643 chronicle, Dalai Lama V gives Bu ston the benefit of the doubt for this [mis]dating and, by exculpating him from any responsibility, is willing to lay the blame for this date on a scribe's carelessness; we read there:⁴⁷

the *Sba bzhed* in the following passages of his *Bod kyi deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1991), 52-4, 60, 62-3, 66 [= Z. Ahmed, tr., *A History of Tibet by Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet*, Indiana University Oriental Series, vol. VII (Bloomington: Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1995), 51-2, 58, 61, 65-6]. Each of these quotations is retrievable from Dpa' bo II's chronicle. Lastly, a very minor quibble: In spite of the tantalizing parallel Kapstein draws between a narrative of the *Sba bzhed* and *1 Kings* of the *Old Testament*, I now do not think it fruitful to elicit potential confusion when he [and I myself and others!] have rendered *Sba bzhed* by *Testament of Ba*. To my knowledge, the usage of *bzhed* nowhere remotely resembles the English usage of "testament," — the term that comes close to this is *bka' chems* which he elsewhere [p. 149] does translate as "testament" —, so that Sba Gsal snang did not write his *bzhed*, *Claim*, as a testator. With finely-tuned eyes for these things, S. van Schaik and Iwao Kazushi identified two pieces from the narrative among the Tibetan manuscripts found in Dunhuang/Shazhou, for which see their "Two Fragments of the *Testament of Ba* from Dunhuang," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 128 (2009), 477-87. Given that the cave in which these and other manuscripts were found was most probably sealed in *circa* 1006 — see Rong Xinjiang, "The Nature of the Dunhuang Library Cave and the Reasons for its Sealing [tr. V. Hansen]," *Cahiers d'Extrême Asie* 11 (1999), 272 —, these fragments predate all the other versions of this work. For more recent publications of and anent *Dba' bzhed-Sba bzhed-Rba bzhed* texts, see my "A Hitherto Unknown Tibetan Religious Chronicle From the Early Fourteenth Century," which is in press in *Zangxue xuekan / Journal of Tibetan Studies* 7 (2011) and my "Notes on the Diffusion of the Translations of the Large *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (*Yum rgyas pa*) in Early Tibet," which is under preparation.

⁴⁶ DPA', 293, 303. This means that he passed away in 741, the *lcags sbrul* year, or in 742, the *chu rta* year. Needless to say, many of the dates the Tibetan historians have given for the Tibetan emperors are not reliable, and I refer to Sørensen (1994) for the relevant remarks and summaries of earlier work.

⁴⁷ Dalai Lama V, *Bod kyi deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, 53: *m khas pa chen po bu ston zhabs kyi gsung phal cher tshad mar gda' bas / rgyal po sa rta la 'khrungs par gsungs pa 'di yig mkhan gyis nor ba'i rgyun 'byams pa zhiig yin nam /* [= Ahmed, tr., *A History of Tibet by Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet*, 51].

*mkhas pa chen po bu ston zhabs kyi gsung phal cher tshad
mar gda' bas / rgyal po sa rta la 'khrungs par gsungs pa 'di
yig mkhan gyis nor ba'i rgyun 'byams pa zhig yin nam /*

Because the oeuvre of the great scholar, the reverend Bu ston, is by and large authoritative, is the statement that the emperor was born in the earth-horse year a transmissive continuation of a mistake on the part of a scribe?

Thus, the authority vested in an author can render him virtually blameless for real or imagined errors. In her long and rewarding article on textual criticism during the Song period, and much else besides, S. Cherniak has made a number of important observations about Chinese textual critics in general, one of which is that they "do not take textual changes to be the inevitable fruit of an intrinsically corruptive process of transmission."⁴⁸ Tibetan critics appear to reflect the opinion of the late Indian Buddhist scholar Haribhadra (ca. 800)⁴⁹ in that they accept that the opposite is the case, namely, that textual change is the inevitable result of the transmission of multiple copies. Clearly, the upshot of Dalai Lama V's remark is that Bu ston's work was the victim of an unscrupulous process of textual contamination and that he could not be held responsible for this apparent lapse. He also uses this occasion to make a negative comment against Dpa' bo II for not being sufficiently precise in marking off his disagreement with his own view on the issue, and criticizes his scholarly method as being one that "whiles away a spring day" (*sos dus kyi nyi ma 'phul byed*), that is, his was an exercise in fruitlessness; lest we forget, Dpa' bo II was an important member of the Karma sect of the Bka' brgyud school. Given that the civil war that pitted 'Bras spungs against the

⁴⁸ See her "Book Culture and Textual Transmission in Sung China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 54 (1994), 13.

⁴⁹ Reading the colophon of the Tibetan translation of a version of the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra*, we learn that he was credited with editing (*zhu dag*) this sutra; see *Bka' 'gyur*, vol. 28, no. 0026, ed. Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2007), 844. In another edition of the sutra, translated by the Newar Paṇḍita Śāntibhadra and Nag tsho Lo tsā ba Tshul khrims rgyal ba (1011/2-ca.1070) in the Bsod nams rgyun 'byung monastery of Kathmandu, Haribhadra himself states that he had seen many volumes with different readings and had thus taken it upon himself to collate these into a correct text; see *Bstan 'gyur*, vol. 51, no. 0099, ed. Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2000), 848. I have not been able to identify the monastery where the translation took place in J.K. Locke, S.J., *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal* (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Press PVT. LTD., 1985).

Gtang pa Sde srid in Shigatse with the Karma Bka' brgyud hierarchs as their main allies had just come to an end in favor of 'Bras spungs and the *bla brang*-corporation of Dalai Lama V in particular, no love was lost between him and the Karma Bka' brgyud establishment.

Another favorite target of the Dalai Lama was Paṅ chen Bsod nam grags pa (1478-1554), who was in much greater proximity to his own sphere of influence and spiritual home at 'Bras spungs monastery than Dpa' bo II. Indeed, the Dalai Lama's *bla brang* of 'Bras spungs' Gzims khang 'og ma residence that was managed by the extremely savvy, influential, and sectarian Bsod nam chos 'phel (1595-1657), alias Bsod nam rab brtan, was at logger-heads with the Gzims khang gong ma incarnation series of 'Bras spungs monastery that had originated with the Paṅ chen. Sprul sku Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1619-56) was the contemporary, third representative of this series that, in the perception of especially Bsod nam chos 'phel, and perhaps Dalai Lama V privately shared this view, was their spiritual rival and perhaps even competed with the Gzims khang 'og ma for economic resources.⁵⁰ Never mind that Grags pa rgyal mtshan had apparently also been put forward as a viable candidate for the subsequent re-embodiment of Dalai Lama IV Yon tan rgya mtsho (1589-1616), a candidacy that had gone nowhere for reasons that still remain to be fully examined. In an entry for roughly the middle of the year 1639 in his autobiography,⁵¹ Dalai Lama V notes how the Zhal ngo, that is Bsod nam chos 'phel, had commented rather caustically on an account embedded in a series of reverential petitions to the previous re-embodiments (*'khrungs rabs 'gsol 'debs*) of the Gzims khang gong ma series that Bkra shis rgya mtsho, the chant master of 'Bras spungs' huge Tshogs chen assembly hall, had recently composed. The latter had begun his work with the Kashmirian master Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127-1225) and his re-embodiment Bu ston. The

⁵⁰ See, quite briefly, S.G. Karmay, "The Fifth Dalai Lama and his Reunification of Tibet," *The Arrow and the Spindle. Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998), 514, where the year of Grags pa rgyal mtshan's passing is mistakenly given as 1654. Dalai Lama V quite clearly states in his autobiography that after a severe and acute illness with high fever (*gnyan tshad*), he passed away on July 5, 1656; see *Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, Stod cha [vol. 1] (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 493. To be noted is that he simply calls him *sprul pa'i sku* and, quite tellingly, is silent on his re-embodiment. The very same date is also found in Jaya Paṇḍita Blo bzang 'phrin las' (1642-1708) biographical sketch of Grags pa rgyal mtshan in his *Thob yig* of [the very end of] 1702, for which see his *Collected Works*, repr. L. Chandra (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1981), 58. Pp. 41-58 of the latter deal with his life and the lives of his earlier re-embodiments.

⁵¹ What follows is taken from *Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i rnam thar*, Stod cha [vol. 1], 183.

Zhal ngo made the point that Paṅ chen Lama Blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1570-1662) and Gling smad Zhabs drung Dkon mchog chos 'phel (1573-1644/6), then the thirty-fifth abbot of Dga' ldan monastery, had said that this did not tally with what was found in "the author's colophon (*mdzad byang*) of a work of Paṅ chen Bsod nams grags pa." I have not been able to isolate what is being alluded to in the colophons of the Paṅ chen's œuvre that are available to me through tbr.org. Further, I also do not understand what kind of objections the Paṅ chen Lama may have had, for his own undated piece on the successive re-embodiments (*skyes pa'i rabs*) of the Gzims khang gong ma is as follows: Chos kyi byang chub [*Dharmabodhi] – Shākya dpal bzang [b]o [= Śākyaśrībhadrā] – Gser sdings pa Chos sku 'od zer (?1214-92) – Bu ston – Grub chen Kun dga' blo gros (1365-1443) – Paṅ chen Bsod nams grags pa, etc.⁵² Could his reservations have stemmed from Bkra shis rgya mtsho having failed to include the precursors to Śākyaśrībhadrā and from having omitted Gser sdings pa in this chain of re-embodiments? To be sure, aside from his apparent re-entry into Tibetan religious history as the protector-deity Rdo rje shugs ldan, one who belongs to the *rgyal po* class of demonic deities, Grags pa rgyal mtshan as such did not entirely disappear from the Tibetan scene. Sum pa Mkhan po Ye shes dpal 'byor (1704-88), for one, writes in the entry for the wood-sheep year [February 7, 1655 – January 26, 1656] of his chronological tables, which he appended to his 1748 chronicle, that he was reborn as none other than Khang zhi bde skyid rgyal po, that is, the Kangxi Emperor (b. May 4, 1654) of the Qing dynasty! Being a chronological impossibility, this entry must have been a rumor of later vintage. Suffice it to say that he does not once suggest that Grags pa rgyal mtshan had in fact morphed into the *rgyal po* deity of Rdo rje shugs ldan. The printing blocks of his collected œuvre, including those for his chronicle, were carved in an inelegant "typeface" in the monastery Usutu/Üsütü-yin süme/juu [Ch. Wusutu zhao],⁵³ the badly smudged reproduction of the print of his chronicle offers the following reading of this pas-

⁵² *Gsung thor bu ba phyogs gcig tu bsdebs pa rnams, Collected Works*, vol. 5 [Ca] (New Delhi, 1973), 81-3. In my essay cited above in n. 1, I discuss the various series of re-embodiments in which the tradition has given Bu ston a place.

⁵³ J.W. de Jong, "Sum-pa Mkhan-po (1704-1788) and His Works," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 27 (1967), 210-1. This monastic complex comprising five different structures of which one carries the name Usutu-yin juu, is located some twelve kilometers from Kökeqota in Inner Mongolia; for a description, see I. Charleux, *Temples et Monastères de Mongolie-intérieure*, Archéologie et histoire de l'art 23 (Paris: Éditions du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques, Institut nationale d'histoire de l'art, 2003), 58 and the enclosed CD under [13].

sage⁵⁴:

*bod kyi de'i rgyal po ni gzim [read: gzims] khang gong ma
sprul sku grag rgyan zer ba na [or: ni] chag [read: chags]
sdang gi gtam kho nar zad da (sic) /des na dpon bsod nam
chos 'phel na [or: ni] lo 'dir 'das nas khong dge lugs la
thug zhen che bas chos srung ba'i tshul bzung nas dge lugs
pa skyong zhes grags pa bden nam ? /*

By contrast, the typeset volume of the same work that was published quite recently in China has turned the second half of this passage into a veritable unintelligible word salad, for we now read⁵⁵:

*bod kyi de'i rgyal po ni gzim khang gong ma sprul sku grag
rgyan zer ba ni chag sdang gi gtam kho nar zad de /nges ni
dpon bsod nam chos 'phel ni lo 'dir 'das nas khong dge lugs
la thug zhen che bas chos srid de'i tshul bzung nas dge lugs
pa skyong zhal grogs po bde nor ram snyam /*

A. Chattopadhyaya and S.K. Sadhukhan ventured to translate the first as⁵⁶:

That the particular Tibetan king is the incarnation of gZim-khañ goñ-ma as said by Grags-rgyan is nothing but a biased statement. dPon bsod-nams chos-'phel died in this year. Due to his much devotion to dGe-lugs he assumed the role of the protector of the religion and the saviour of the dGe-lugs-pa as per popular belief. I think, this is true.

Obviously, the translation that G. Dreyfus offered a few years thereafter in his survey of the history of the Rdo rje shugs ldan cult is a palpable improvement⁵⁷:

⁵⁴ 'Phags yul rgya nag chen po bod dang sog yul du dam pa'i chos 'byung tshul dpag bsam ljon bzang, *Collected Works*, vol. 1, repr. L. Chandra (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1975), 570.

⁵⁵ *Chos 'byung dpag bsam ljon bzang*, ed. Dkon mchog tshe brtan (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1992), 898.

⁵⁶ *Tibetan Chronological Tables of 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa and Sum pa Mkhan po*, The Dalai Lama Tibeto-Indological Series-XII (Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1993), 238 — I consciously sidestep the earlier and wholly failed attempt at a translation of Sum pa Mkhan po's tables by B.P. Singh in 1991.

⁵⁷ "The Shuk-den Affair: History and Nature of a Quarrel," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21 (1998), 236. This essay recurs in a slightly

The assertion that this Tibetan spirit (*bod de'i rgyal po*) is Drak-ba Gyel-tsen, the reincarnation of the Upper Chamber, is just an expression of prejudice. Thus, I believe that the rumor that it is Sö-nam Chö-pel, who after passing away in the same year, is protecting the Ge-luk tradition having assumed the form of a dharma protector through this ["great concern for the Ge-luk tradition,"] is correct.

Following the edited text as given in an earlier reproduction of the tables and chronicle⁵⁸ — this is not —, he thus read *bod 'di'i rgyal po* — if not used as definite articles of personal pronouns, then the deictic particles *'di* and *de* mean "this" and "that" — instead of the more curious and rather unclear *bod kyi de'i rgyal po*, and read the final two words as *snyam mo /*. Tibetan grammar dictates that *bod de'i rgyal po* renders "the *rgyal po* of that Tibet," and it is only *bod kyi rgyal po de* that can be translated as "that Tibetan *rgyal po*." The term *rgyal po* is ambiguous, for it can either mean "king, emperor," or it can indicate a particular class of demonic beings that inhabit the vast Tibetan demonological depository. All that I can say for now is that prior to this entry of his tables Sum pa Mkhan po uses *rgyal po* only in the sense of the former. To the chagrin of a number of fellow Dge lugs pa adherents, Tibetan as well as foreign, the present Dalai Lama has banned his propitiation and evocation.⁵⁹ Though quite relevant in this connection, the text in these chronological tables of the entry for the year 1657 is quite badly transmitted.

Although the Paṅ chen gives the very same years of birth for Srong btsan sgam po, that is, the fire-female-ox year [617], and Khri srong lde btsan as Bu ston had done,⁶⁰ Dalai Lama V is now much

modified form on the official website of HH the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet at www.dalailama.com.

⁵⁸ Ed. L. Chandra (Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1959), 70-1.

⁵⁹ For additional background information, see *The Worship of Shugden. Documents Related to a Tibetan Controversy* (Dharamsala: Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration, nd) and the detailed *Dorje Shugden History* that Trinley Kalsang has compiled at www.dorjeshugdenhistory.org. His translations should be used with caution, however. Other websites concerning Rdo rje shugs ldan can also be fruitfully consulted.

⁶⁰ G. Tucci, *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma. Tibetan Chronicles by Bsod nams grags pa*, vol. 1, Serie Orientale Roma XXIV (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1976), 145, 151 [17b-8a, 24a], and also the text in *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*, ed. Don grub (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 17, 23, and the translation in Huang Hao, *Xin Hongshi* (Lhasa: Xizang remin chubanshe, 1987), 18, 24. Writing in 1539, the Paṅ chen stipulates that Srong btsan sgam po was born in the fire-ox year, one thousand four hundred and forty-nine years after the Buddha's nirvana. The date of the latter was the subject of a good deal of

debate, as is illustrated in D. Seyfort Ruegg, "Notes on some Indian and Tibetan reckonings of the Buddha's Nirvāṇa and the Duration of his Teaching," *The Dating of the Historical Buddha / Die Datierung des historischen Buddha*, Part 2 (Symposium zur Buddhismusforschung, IV, 2), ed. H. Bechert (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 263-90. Not translated by G. Tucci, the second chapter of the Paṅ chen's chronicle on the genealogy of the rulers of Shambhala contains the necessary chronological details to make sense of what he says about things having to do with chronology in the third chapter on Tibet's imperial period; see the texts in *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma. Tibetan Chronicles by Bsod nams grags pa*, 6b-14b, and *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma*, 6-14, as well as the translation in Huang Hao, *Xin Hongshi*, 7-14. In his deliberations, he mentions Mkhas grub's commentary on the first chapter of the *Vimalaprabhā* of 1434, 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), 145, 150, 155-7, 878 - p. 156 contains an intraline gloss "twelve," signaling either that the number was initially omitted by a careless scribe or carver when the text was being prepared for printing, or that the original manuscript was corrupt. The text of the Paṅ chen's chronicle published by G. Tucci also suggests by way of an interlinear note that the *chu pho rta* [year, 879 B.C.], the date given for the historical Buddha's enlightenment in Mkhas grub's work [on p. 878], is a "corrupt wording" (*yi ge ma dag*), and both it and the Tibetan text published in Lhasa have a note to indicate that the Paṅ chen alludes once to the position of a Jo nang pa scholar. The biographies of Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1528) by his disciple Skyogs ston Lo tsā ba Rin chen bkra shis (ca. 1480-1540) and A mes zhabs suggest that Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba took serious exception to some of the views Mkhas grub had expressed in this and other Kālacakra-related writings; see the 1517 *Rje btsun zhwa lu lo tsā ba'i rnam par thar pa brjed byang nor bu'i khri shing, dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalog no. 002790(9), 16a, and the *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos 'byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i shing rta*, *Collected Works*, vol. Pa, *dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalog no. 003204, 140a [= *Collected Works*, vol. 19 (Kathmandu: Sa skya rgyal yongs gsung rab slob gnyer khang, 2000), 270]. Mkhas grub was Dga' ldan khri pa III, the third abbot of Dga' ldan monastery. It is therefore noteworthy that Dga' ldan khri pa XIV Rin chen 'od zer (1453-1540) does not once allude to his 1434 treatise in his 1517 study of religious chronology (*bstan rtsis*), though he does briefly note a *bstan rtsis* text Mkhas grub had written in 1437, some three years after his study of the *Vimalaprabhā*'s first chapter; see *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i sgron me, dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalog no. 002324 (1), 23b. As far as I am aware, such a work was never included in the various printed editions of his collected œuvre. The Paṅ chen writes that, though Mkhas grub's treatise was unclear about the year in which the Buddha was born, he took it to have been the fire-horse year [915 B.C.]. The generally accepted life-span of the Buddha is eighty years, so that his nirvāṇa took place in 834 B.C. This then means that the Paṅ chen was of the opinion that Srong btsan sgam po was born in 617. See further Tshe tan Zhabs drung 'Jigs med rigs pa'i blo gros' (1910-89) *Bstan rtsis kun las btus pa* (Xining: Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982), 34, who cites A kyā II Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1708-68) for a different interpretation of Mkhas grub's incomplete remarks. The relevant passage in Nor brang O rgyan's recent study of the fifth Dalai Lama's chronicle, the *Dpyod kyi rgyal mo'i glun dbyangs kyi 'grel pa yid kyi dga' ston* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1993), 146-7, does not help here. To be noted also is that the latter's Western dates for events that happened during Tibet's imperial period are not always

less charitable in his judgment and he writes in continuation of the above passage:

*gang ltar chos rje bsod nams grags pa sogs 'ga' zhig gis /
rgyal po khri srong lde btsan sa rta la 'khrungs pa dang /
chos rgyal srong btsan sgam po me glang la 'khrungs par
byed pa ni / gtsug lag rtsis kyi gzhung lugs la blo gros kyi
'jug pa shar ba zhig gis brtags tshe lo grangs bcu gnyis
tsam mi 'grig pa'i mu cor gyi gtam du zad do //*

Whatever the case may have been, the fact that some such as Chos rje Bsod nams grags pa, etc. have Emperor Khri srong lde btsan be born in the earth-male-horse year and Chos rgyal Srong btsan sgam po in the fire-ox year is but a nonsensical tale of simply not accounting for the twelve-year cycle when this is examined by one in whom has dawned an understanding of the scholarly tradition of astrological / astronomical science.

The ire he displays against the Paṅ chen and other stock-opponents with some regularity in his chronicle shows how Dalai Lama V was on occasion unable to maintain a clear boundary between scholarly displeasure and intellectual dissatisfaction, on one hand, and an obvious contempt, in which the scholarly, the personal, and the political had become indistinct and diffuse, on the other. The Paṅ chen's position on the chronological conundrum that was briefly discussed in note 60 can be better understood now that his own work on religious chronology (*bstan rtsis*) of 1529 — as he says, some two thousand three hundred and sixty-four years upon the Buddha's passing — has been published.⁶¹ Omitting the gloss, his view is quite plain:

*ṭik chen de nyid snang ba las //
ston pa'i 'khrungs lo mi gsal yang //*

[gloss: *mkhas grub rjes dgung lo lnga bcu ba shing stag la
rtsis / de yang ston pas sangs rgyas pa'i phyi lo zla bzang
la rtsa rgyud gsungs des / lo gcig gam gnyis su bstan / de
nas lha dbang la sogs pa'i chos rgyal drug dang / grags pa*

reliable.

⁶¹ What follows is taken from his *Bstan rtsis rin po che'i phreng ba, Paṅ chen bsod nams grags pa'i gsung rtsom nyer mkho dang drang nges phyogs bsgrigs* (Xianggang: Zhang khang gyi ling dpe skrun kung zi, 2002), 207-8.

*la sogs pa'i rigs ldan dgus rim pa bzhin lo brgya brgyar
chos bstan pa sogs rtsis pa las [read: lus] so // phyis gyi
mkhas pa kha cig ston pa lcags sprel la 'khrungs nas gya
gcig pa lcags 'brug la rtsa rgyud gsungs pa dang lo de nyid
la mya ngan las 'das par bzhed do //*

*me rta yin pa'i bstan rtsis dang //
phal cher mthun shas che bar mngon //
de la bsams nas bdag gis ni //
chos 'byung yid kyi mdzes [b]rgyan du //
'di yi steng nas rtsis pa ste //
mkhas pa rnams kyis dpyad mdzod cig //*

Despite the fact that the Teacher's birth year is unclear
From Mkhas grub's *Tik chen de nyid snang ba*,

{gloss: Mkhas grub rje did a calculation at the age of fifty in the wood-tiger year [1434]. Further, due the fact that the Teacher pronounced the *Kālacakramūla-tantra* to Sucandra the year subsequent to his enlightenment, he taught it for one or two years.⁶² Thereafter, one depends on the fact that each of the six religious kings [of Sambhala] such as *Devendra etc. and each of the nine Kalkin rulers [of Sambhala] such as Yaśas, etc. respectively taught the tantra etc. for one hundred years. Some later scholar[s]⁶³ averred (*bzhed*) that the Teacher was born in the iron-monkey year [961 B.C.], that he pronounced the *Kālacakramūlatantra* at the age of eighty in the iron-dragon year [881 B.C.], and that he passed beyond suffering in that very year.}

⁶² See Mkhas grub, *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*, 149-50. This point is quite controversial and will have to be revisited on a future occasion. For now, see Sum pa Mkhan po's lengthy discussion of Mkhas grub's work and the reactions engendered by it in his *Phags yul rgya nag chen po bod dang sog yul du dam pa'i chos 'byung tshul dpag bsam ljon bzang*, 356-68 [= *Chos 'byung dpag bsam ljon bzang*, ed. Dkon mchog tshe brtan, 539-59].

⁶³ The gloss of unknown provenance refers here at least to Grwa phug pa Lhun grub rgya mtsho'i dpal (ca.1400-60) and his 1447 study of *Kālacakra* computational astronomy, which its colophon titles *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo las 'byung ba'i rtsis kyi tshul la yang dag pa'i ngag sbyin pa legs par bshad pa padma dkar po'i zhal lung*. For the relevant passage, see *Rtsis gzhung pad dkar zhal lung*, ed. Yum pa (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2002), 83-9 [= 1681 Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling print, 56b-61b].

It is evident that it is by and large for the most part
 consistent
 With the religious chronology for the Buddha's nir-
 vāṇa
 Being the fire-[male-]horse year [915 B.C.].
 Having considered this, I,
 In my *Chos 'byung yid kyi mdzes rgyan* [of 1529],
 Did a calculation on its basis.⁶⁴
 May scholars reflect on this!

He then writes:

thub pa mya ngan 'das pa nas //
lo grangs stong dang bzhi brgya dang //
zhe dgu 'das pa'i me glang la //
chos rgyal srong btsan sgam po 'khrungs //

In the fire-ox year [617], forty-nine and
 One thousand four hundred years
 After the Seer's passing,
 The religious king Srong btsan sgam po was born.

We should note in passing that the fact that the Paṅ chen composed his *Bstan rtsis* and his chronicle of the Bka' gdams pa school during his first year as the fifteenth abbot (*dga' ldan khri pa*) of Dga' ldan monastery, and this is of course hardly an accident.

All the prints as well as the manuscript of the *Chos 'byung* have it that the construction of Bsam yas monastery was completed in the *sa mo yos* year which, if anything, elicits the quite unsustainable equivalent of 799.⁶⁵ None of the historians mentioned thusfar has taken issue with this date by expressly mentioning Bu ston. Quite aware that "many documents" did so, Dpa' bo II himself is inclined to the view

⁶⁴ *Bka' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung yid kyi mdzes rgyan, Two Histories of the Bka' gdams pa Tradition* (Gangtok, 1977), 205 [= *Ibid.*, vol. 11 (Mundgot: Drepung Loseling Library Society, 1982-90), 331. The text of the first is based on a print from newly carved printing blocks that were prepared at the order of A kyā Ho thug tu (< Mon. *qutuytu* [= 'phags pa]) II [= Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan], who noticed that the existing print had so many errors that he called for a new "edition." However, he did not live to see the first print from these blocks. This happened only in the water-rat year [1772], when this work was printed in the Potala with [']De mo No mon han (< Mon. *nom-un qan* [= *chos kyi rgyal po*) VI Ngag dbang 'jam dpal dge legs rgya mtsho (1726-77) having written a concluding prayer in his Gzim[s] chung Rig gnas kun gsal residence.

⁶⁵ Szerb (1990: 28) [Obermiller 1932: 186, Satō 1977: 852, Guo 1986: 171] and BUM, 1190.

that its construction was finished in the *chu [mo] yos* year, that is, in 763. But writing about a hundred years after Dalai Lama V, Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu pointed out that "a supreme scholar like Bu [ston]" (*mkhas mchog bu lta bu*) could hardly be faulted for this. The mistake in the "year's element[-designation]" (*lo khams*)" was simply an error on the part of a careless scribe.⁶⁶ But we may as well face it. It cannot be denied that the *Chos 'byung* is extraordinarily weak when it comes to providing dates for events and Bu ston's discussion of the year in which the Buddha passed away is the only other place in his entire œuvre, where, although he really remains uncommitted, we witness him making an attempt to achieve some sort of chronological precision.⁶⁷ But even there, in the final analysis and when all is said and done, he leaves us with a sense of incompleteness and, perhaps, even with a sense of intellectual disappointment. Then again, maybe we should not feel this way. For it is quite possible that, unlike many other Tibetan experts in the computational astronomy of the *Kālacakratantra* corpus, Bu ston realized that the data provided by this corpus were unable to provide such calculations for events that happened long ago, especially when the relevant sources only gave the barest chronological details about their occurrences. It is thus perhaps not surprising that not one Indic scholar who wrote about the *Kālacakra's* computational astronomy — I am here thinking in particular of the two luminaries Abhayākaragupta (ca. 1065-1125) and Śākyasrībhadrā — ever ventured to calculate the important dates of the Buddha's life, let alone the year of his nirvāṇa-passing, by resorting to this corpus. Earlier, in his 1319 commentary on Haribhadra's (ca. 800) *Abhisamayālamkāravivṛtti*, Bu ston had taken the established Sa skya pa position, namely that the historical Buddha had passed to nirvāṇa in 2133 B.C., as his own point of view. Thus, he stated that three thousand four hundred and fifty years had elapsed since the year of his writing, namely, the earth-female-sheep year, 1319.⁶⁸ The other place where he attempts to put forward a more sophisticated chronology is in the section on the "correct year" (*lo dag, śuddhavarśa*) of the *Kālacakratantra* corpus in the fifth chapter

⁶⁶ TSHE, 547; TSHE1, 198.

⁶⁷ This passage was studied in C. Vogel, "Bu-ston on the Date of the Buddha's Nirvana," *The Dating of the Historical Buddha / Die Datierung des historischen Buddha*, Part 1, ed. H. Bechert (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 403-14.

⁶⁸ *Shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i man ngag gi bstan bcos mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyan ces bya ba'i 'grel pa'i rgya cher bshad pa lung gi snye ma*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa], Lhasa Zhol print, part 18 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 725.

of his 1326 treatise on astronomical computation.⁶⁹ Even if this essay is not the place for its analysis, it is worthwhile to note that the recently published study of this work which Blo gros dpal bzang [po] wrote in the spring of a *yongs 'dzin* (**paridhāvin*) year while he resided in Lhun grub steng, in Gnyal smad, adds a few interesting details to this passage.⁷⁰ At the outset, the author mentions a Sku zhang Chos rje and a Shākya dbang phyug as his teachers of the subject — the former is most likely none other than Rin chen mkhyen rab mchog grub (1436-97), alias Mkhyen rab Chos rje, a member of the Zhwa lu Sku zhang family and an erstwhile abbot of 'Phan po Nā lendra monastery.⁷¹ But it is in its section on Buddhist chronology *per se* that the author lets us in during which *yongs 'dzin* year he had composed his work, for he writes there that he had completed it one hundred and seventy-three years after Bu ston's *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* commentary. Hence, the year in which the author had written his work could only have been 1492, and this tallies quite well with the fact that he twice cites 'Gos Lo tsā ba. In addition, it also allows us to identify with greater certainty the Sku zhang Chos rje as none other than Rin chen mkhyen rab mchog grub! The catalog of the library holdings of several of 'Bras spungs monastery's chapels lists three works that appear to be comments on Bu ston's *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i*

⁶⁹ See his *Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsis kyi bstan bcos mkhas pa rnams dga' bar byed pa*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa], Lhasa Zhol print, part 4 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 778-83 [= ed. Bsod nams phun tshogs (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1987), 181-6], and also the partial translation in J. Newman, "The Epoch of the *Kālacakra Tantra*," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41 (1998), 334-7.

⁷⁰ *Mkhas pa rnams dga' bar byed pa'i dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba*, Jo nang dpe tshogs 16 (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2010), 221-4; my discussion of its authorship is based on information given on pp. 251-2, 191, 215-6, 223 of this work.

⁷¹ See D.P. Jackson, *The Early Abbots of 'Phan po Nalendra: The Vicissitudes of a Great Tibetan Monastery in the 15th Century*, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 23 (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1989), 27-8; Zhwa lu Lo tsā ba's 1497 biography of this man is available in a seventy-two folio *dbu med* manuscript at tbrc.org under W1CZ2158, and a synoptic version is found in Ri phug Blo gsal bstan skyong's (1804-after 1874) *Dpal ldan zhwa lu pa'i bstan pa la bka' drin che ba'i skyes bu dam pa rnams kyi rnam thar lo rgyus ngo mtshar dad pa'i 'jug ngogs* [*History of Zhwa lu*] (Leh, 1974), 167-90. For more recent studies of Nā lendra monastery, see especially the late Mkhan chen Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan's *Rong ston smra ba'i seng ge'i gdan sa dam pa dpal nā lendra rnam par rgyal ba'i sde'i gdan rabs chen mo ngo mtshar gtam gyi rgya mtsho*, *Nā lendra'i dgon gnas nyams gso bya tshul sogs zin bris*, and *'Phan po nā lendra'i lo rgyus bsdu pa ngo mtshar gtam gyi snying po*, vol. 2, ed. Gangs ljongs rig rgyan gsung rab par khang (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, nd), 425-99, 500-7, 508-24.

rtsis kyi bstan bcos mkhas pa rnam sga' bar byed pa; these are⁷²:

1. Shākya dbang phyug, *Mkhas pa rnam sga' bar byed pa'i dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba*
2. Rgyal ba Bya bral ba Dge 'dun dpal, *Mkhas pa sga' bar byed kyi dka' ba'i gnad rnam sga' bar byed pa'i sgron me*
3. Dge slong Dus zhabs pa Shākya dbang phyug, *Mkhas pa sga' bar byed kyi lde mig rtsis kyi man ngag bdud rtsi'i thigs pa*

The first is no doubt our text. Its attribution to Shākya dbang phyug is most probably based on a misreading, for the colophon does *not* state that he was its author. A Blo gros dpal bzang is registered in the aforementioned catalog as the author of a lengthy work on computational astronomy titled *Skar rtsis kyi mdor bsdus gsal bar byed pa'i legs par bshad pa nyi ma'i 'od zer*,⁷³ and he may very well have been the author of our treatise. Our Blo gros dpal bzang [po] can thus by no stretch of the imagination be equated with the well-known Lo tsā ba Blo gros dpal bzang po (1282-1354 / 1299-1353), one of Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan's (1292-1361) premier disciples and erstwhile abbot of Jo nang monastery from 1338 to his passing.

Now Dpa' bo II's sole reference to the printed text of the *Chos 'byung* occurs in connection with his discussion of the various listings of the first Tibetan monks who were ordained by the Bengali monk Śāntarakṣita and his associates in the second half of the eighth century under the aegis of Khri srong lde btsan. A limited dossier of these lists as they appear in different writings was first investigated in detail by G. Tucci, who already noted *inter alia* that these men basically fall into two groupings, one in which six individuals are mentioned, and one which contains seven.⁷⁴ The men so categorized are known to most available later sources as either "the six examined individuals" (*sad mi drug*)⁷⁵ or "the seven examined individuals" (*sad mi*

⁷² 'Bras spungs dgon du bzhugs su gsol ba'i dpe rnying dkar chag, comp. Karma bde legs et al., Smad cha [2] (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004), 1863, nos. 021346-8, 021350.

⁷³ 'Bras spungs dgon du bzhugs su gsol ba'i dpe rnying dkar chag, 1862, no. 021338.

⁷⁴ Tucci (Part Two, 1986: 12 ff.) and below n. 121; see also the discussion in Khang dkar (1985: 186-228).

⁷⁵ sbb, 59 [sbb, 51, sbch, 156], the Chinese translation of SBch in Tong-Huang (1990: 45) and MES, 236. The same is found in DPA'(p), 356 [DPA', 360] via the text cited from an "extensive [version of the] *Sba bzhed*." MES is of uncertain authorship, in spite of the fact that the publisher has wrongly attributed it to Nyang ral; see the note in J. Szerb, "Two Notes on the Sources of the *Chos 'byung* of Bu ston Rin chen grub," *Reflections on Tibetan Culture. Essays in Memory of Turrell V. Wylie*, ed. L. Epstein and R.F. Sherburne (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 143, 146, n. 4, and the entry in Martin (1997: 31). The penultimate page is unfortunate-

bdun) — the alternative expression *sad mi mi bdun* is also occasionally used in the literature.⁷⁶ Neither expression occurs in the recently

ly missing and the last Tibetan mentioned prior to the colophon in fol. 150b [MES, 300] is Mi la ras pa (?1040-?1123), so that his *floruit* may be the *terminus ante quem* of its date of composition and / or of the manuscript. The incomplete colophon, which begins [and ends] on fol. 152a, states that the manuscript belonged to the monk Shakya [read: Shākya] rin chen who was affiliated with 'Bri gung monastery. The close textual relationship that exists between this work's biography of Khri srong lde btsan, Nyang ral's chronicle and the *Sba bzhed-s* still requires detailed investigation.

⁷⁶ For the expression *sad mi bdun*, see *Lde'u Jo sras in JO, 123, Mkhas pa Lde'u in LDE'U, 302 and in an interlinear note of the chronicle of 1283 by Ne'u Paṇḍita Grags pa smon lam blo gros in Uebach (1987: 100-1) [NE'U, 21, NE'U1, 19, Wang-Chen 1990: 116] — the toponym *ne'u* [sometimes also *snel* and *nel*] should probably have to be corrected to *sne'u*. The same is also met with in Cha gan Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan's 1304 history of the *Lam 'bras* transmission, in CHA, 7a, Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's (1309-64) *Deb ther dmar po*, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang phrin las (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1981), 37 [Chen Qingying and Zhou Runnian, trs., *Hongshi* (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1988), 33], in a manuscript of the *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* (Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1973), 425 [Sorenson 1994: 369-70] — its attribution to Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312-75) remains problematic —, in the 1422 chronicle by Rgyal sras Thugs mchog rtsal, in THUGS, 263, and in Mang thos' 1587 study of Buddhist chronology, in MANG, 52. As for Ne'u Paṇḍita's work, I see no reason to depart from H. Uebach's dating of 1283 in Uebach (1987: 16-7), and instead date it to 1343, as is done by several later sources cited in Seyfort Ruegg, "Notes on some Indian and Tibetan Reckonings of the Buddha's Nirvāṇa and the Duration of his Teaching," 274, n. 53 — we may add here that, strictly speaking, Bu ston does not "refer" to him in his undated *'Dul ba spyi'i rnam par bzhas pa*, as the latter maintains; rather, a sublinear note attributes to him a statement which the text as such but prefixes by *kha cig*, "some"; see *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and *Sgra tshad pa*, Lhasa Zhol print, part 21 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 128 [= ed. Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, *Collected Works*, vol. 21 (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2008), 163]. The exact provenance or veracity of this note cannot be ascertained. On the other hand, the cognate expression *sad mi mi bdun* is encountered in NYANG, 271 [NYANGa, 429, NYANGb, 312, NYANGm 294a], where these [unidentified] seven men are singled out as a special grouping within some one hundred and forty who had been ordained by Śāntarakṣita. We also find this expression in Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan's (1147-1216) RJE, 84/1, RJE1, 104/2 and RJE2, 272/2, in another recension of Tshal pa's chronicle (Gangtok: Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 1961), 17b [Inaba Shōju and Satō Hisashi, trs., *Furan tebuteru (Hu lan deb t'er - Chibetto Nendaiki)* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1964), 94], in Bla ma dam pa's 1341 history of the *Lam 'bras* transmission, in BLA, 7 [BLAM, 3b], in RGYAL, 205 [Sorenson 1994: 369-70], and in U rgyan gling pa's (1323-?67) 1352 PBT, 416-7, and the 1393 or 1395 *Lo paṅ bka'i thang yig* and the *Blon po bka'i thang yig* of between 1368 and 1393 — both are attributed to U rgyan gling pa! — in the BTSL, 403, 449, 488. The dates for the last two are taken from A.-M. Blondeau, "Le *Lha-dre bka'-than*," *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1971), 42. The evidence for their putative authorship by U rgyan gling pa needs to be revisited. Not surprisingly, the expression recurs in TSHE, 547; TSHE1, 198. Finally, 'Brong bu Tshe ring rdo rje's fine study of the various listings of these

found text of the *Dbā' bzhed*.⁷⁷ As will be shown below, there is very little consistency as far as the number or the names of these men is concerned, and Mkhas pa Lde'u even quotes the phrase "the thirteen examined individuals [who] renounced the world" (*sad mi bcu gsum rab tu byung ba*).⁷⁸ Evidently, the tradition [or traditions] surrounding these events and the names and identities of the individuals who allegedly played a role in them are contaminated and multimorphous and, most likely for the better part, invented.

Dpa' bo II discusses the question of these different groupings and the identities and names of the individuals in considerable detail by comparing various accounts, and it is in this context that he alleges that there was a problem with the print of the *Chos 'byung* with which he was working. To be sure, the passage in question, or, for that matter, the entire section on the development of Buddhism in Tibet, does not cast Bu ston in the light of a shining historian. Even without the text-critical conundrum proffered by the reading of the Zhwa lu print of the *Chos 'byung* for which he can be hardly blamed, he provides us with a fairly muddled and confusing account of two varying [and, perhaps, competing] groupings. He first rather curtly observes in the *Chos 'byung* that, in a sheep-year [?779], twelve monks of the [Mūla]Sarvāstivāda school were invited to Tibet so as to determine whether or not institutionalized, monastic Buddhism could take hold in this country, and that ultimately seven men "were selected and ordained as monks."⁷⁹ After these laconic remarks anent the background to the ordination of the "seven examined individuals," three prints of the *Chos 'byung*, but *not* the Lhasa Zhol one, continue by saying:

*rgan gsum ni / sba ma ṅdzu śrī / gtsang de we ndra / bran
ka mu ti ka / gzhon gsum ni / 'khon nā ge ndra / pa gor bai
ro tsa na / rma ā tsā rya rin chen mchog go // bar pa glang
ka ta na / rab tu byung ba mtshan ye shes dbang po yin la /
mkhan po dā na śī las byas zhes kha cig zer ro // mkhan po
bo dhi sa twas byas nas / thog mar bya khri gzigs rab tu
byung bas / mngon shes lnga dang ldan par gyur to // de*

first ordained Tibetan men came to my attention after this article was completed; see his "Bod kyi sad mi'i skor gyi gleng gzhi thog ma," *Krung go'i bod rig pa* 4 (2001), 122-38.

⁷⁷ We would have expected the term in the relevant passage of the *Dbā' bzhed* in Pasang Wangdu - Diemberger (2000: 69-72, 17a-b).

⁷⁸ LDE'U, 358. His enumeration of these thirteen consists of one grouping of seven and one of six men, for which see below.

⁷⁹ Szerb (1990: 28-30) [Obermiller 1932: 190, Satō 1977: 857, Guo 1986: 174] and BUM, 1191.

*nas sba gsal snang / 'ba'/sba khri bzher sang shi ta / pa gor
bai ro tsa na ra kṣita / ngan lam rgyal ba mchog dbyangs /
'khon klu'i dbang po srung ba / rma ā tsā rya rin chen
mchog / gtsang legs grub dang bdun rab tu byung ba'i
mtshan / ye shes dbang po dang / dpal dbyangs la sogs pa
yin / sad mi mi bdun yin zer ro //*

[Scenario One]

Some have alleged: The three older ones:

- [1] Sba Ma ñdzu śrī
- [2] Gtsang De we ndra
- [3] Bran ka Mu ti ka.

The three younger ones:

- [4] 'Khon Nā ge ndra
- [5] Pa gor Bai ro tsa na
- [6] Rma ācārya Rin chen mchog.

The middle one:

- [7] Glang Ka ta na.

[?Sba Ma ñdzu śrī's] ordination name was Ye shes dbang po and [that the function of] the abbot was performed by Dānaśīla [and not by Śāntarakṣita].⁸⁰

[Scenario Two]

After the [office of the initiating] abbot was enacted by Śāntarakṣita, inasmuch as at first

- [1*] Bya Khri gzig had renounced the world, [the latter] became endowed with five paranormal cognitions. Subsequently,

- [1] Sba Gsal snang
- [2] 'Ba' / Sba Khri bzher
- [*3] Sang shi ta

⁸⁰ Citing an unidentified "chronicle" (*lo rgyus gcig*), THUGS, 263, refers to a similar but not identical scenario.

- [4] Pa gor Bai ro tsa na rakši ta
 [5] Ngan lam Rgyal ba mchog dbyangs
 [6] 'Khon Klu'i dbang po srung ba
 [7] Rma ā tsarya Rin chen mchog
 [8] Gtsang Legs grub

were ordained and the names in religion of these seven were "Ye shes dbang po," "Dpal dbyangs" etc. They are called the *sad mi mi bdun*.

Szerb indicated in his edition that, in opposition to the other prints, the Lhasa Zhol one has a sublinear gloss: « — It is also said that: 'Since the emperor passed on at the age of fifty-six [= fifty-five] in the iron-male-horse year [790], Bsam yas was built in the iron-male-tiger [year, 750]}' » (*rgyal po lcags pho rta lo pa lnga bcu rtsa drug la 'das pas bsam yas lcags po stag la rmang bting zer ba'ang 'dug*). It also presents a somewhat different account of what I have called Scenario One. Namely, it has "Sba / Dba' Ra tna ra kti[read: kṣi] ta" for "Gtsang De we ndra [= Lha'i dbang phyug]" for the second of "the three older ones" and "Gtsang / Rtsangs De we ndra" for "Rma ā tsā rya Rin chen mchog" as the third of the "three younger ones." Further, in Scenario Two, the Zhwa lu print [as well as those of Bkra shis lhun po and Sde dge] has by contrast to the one from the Lhasa Zhol one / (*shad*) between 'Ba' / Sba Khri bzher and Sang shi ta, suggesting that we must reckon with two individuals. Given that Bya Khri gzigs does not belong to the *sad mi mi bdun* group, this would then result in a total of eight "examined individuals," which contradicts the number seven given by the text itself. As will be seen below, this conundrum was noted by Dpa' bo II and thence by Tucci.⁸¹ A reminder: it is not unimportant to recognize that Scenario One is not necessarily Bu ston's own position on the matter, since he places this in the mouth[s] of "some[one] (*kha cig*)."

A lengthy interlinear gloss in the recent print of Dpa' bo II's work takes a passage from what it calls the "extensive version of the *Rba* [= *Sba*] *bzhed*" as its point of departure for a discussion of the various listings of these first Tibetan men of the cloth.⁸² Upon inspection, it turns out that this passage is clearly closely affiliated to the narrative of the same in the recension of the *Sba bzhed* that was recently published in Beijing,⁸³ although the *variorum* that follows its reproduc-

⁸¹ Tucci (Part Two, 1986: 18).

⁸² DPA'(p), 354-6 [DPA', 359-60].

⁸³ The text is found in SBB, 57-9. SBB, 61-2 refers to "another position" (*lugs gcig*), which is glossed as deriving from "another extensive [version] of the [*Sba*] *bzhed*" (*bzhed rgyas shos*). This narrative is also found in DPA'(p), 359-60 [DPA', 364],

tion below does suggest the existence of some significant differences between the two. Thus, the Beijing version of the *Sba bzhed* states with the interlinear notes in « » and my own additions in []:

dus der rje blon rnams rtsed^a bro dang longs spyod^b la yengs^c pa dang /^e de yan chad bod la dge slong gi ming yang med pa las bsam yas kyi rtsig rmang thams cad byi khung byas te^d lha khang dang rten rnams la mchod pa dang zhabs tog byed pa med pas /^e btsan po thugs ma bde nas 'bangs rnams la chos bya bar rigs so zhes gsungs^f nas /^e de^e nas^e yos^g kyi lo'i dpyid zla ra ba'i ngo la /^e slob dpon gyis thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde /^e dbus pa bye brag tu smra ba bya ba'^h dge slong bcu gnyis spyang drangs nas /^e zhang blon gyi bu tsha mchims legs «bzang» la sogs paⁱ la^e slob dpon gyis rgya gar^e skad bslabs pa las /^j mchims a nu'i bu shakya^k dang / pa gor na^l 'dod «he 'dod kyang zer» kyi bu pa^e gor^e bai ro tsa na dang /^e sba rma gzigs «khri bzher yang zer» kyi bu ratnar^m /ⁿ sba^o khri bzher gyi bu^p sang shi ta yang zer ba de^q dang / zhang nya bzang gi bu lha bu^r dang / lha bse btsan dang /^s shud pu khong sleb la sogs^t kyis skad lobs / mchims legs bzang^u la^e sogs pa zhang blon gyi bu tsha gzhan^v mang zhig gis ni skad ma shes so / blon po 'gos^w na re /^e nged blon po rgan^e po^e rnams la long ma mchis pas a tsa ra'i skad lob^x mi khom pas rgan po'i chos zhu^y zer bas /^e slob dpon gyis a pha dang /^e a ma'i skad don thog tu phebs^z te /^e don^e la^e rgya skad dang mthun par bod skad mkhyen zhing byang ba dang / bod skad du chos bshad pas sam skri ta'i skad ma dgos pas / slob dpon gyi zhal nas / bod byang chub sems dpa'i sprul pa'i skad yin pas chos byar btub po gsung bas /^{aa} btsan po'i zhal nas /^e slob^e dpon^e nga'i bod la dge slong med pas nga'i zhang blon dag la dge slong btub bam ces^e zhus pa'i^{ab} lan^e du^e /^e btub pas sad par bya gsungs nas skad lobs pa^{ac} tsho las thog mar bod la dad pa che ba'i sba^o «sang shi ta yang zer» khri gzigs^{ad} dge slong byas^{ae} ma^e thag^e tu^e mtshan sba^e dpal dbyangs su btags / mngon par shes pa lnga^{af} dang ldan pas /^e btsan po dgyes te de'i zhabs spyi bor blangs te khyod bod kyi rin po

where it, too, is predicated of "another extensive *Sba bzhed*" (*sba bzhed rgyas shos*). This means that we must reckon with at least two "extensive" recensions of the text. Whether one of these corresponds to Sde srid's substantially annotated manuscript of the text, the *sba bzhed tshig sna ring mo*, as quoted in the *Vai dūrya g.ya' sel*, vol. I (Dehra Dun, 1976), 29, is as yet unclear. But we need to be aware that the text of sbb is itself an artificial construction of the editor, as it is based on a not altogether clearly articulated use of three different *Sba bzhed* manuscripts.

*che yin no^e zhes bka' btsal nas^e mtshan kyang sba^o ratna
zhes btags te /^{ag} bod kyi rab tu^e byung ba la snga ba de yin
no /*

- ^a DPA'(P), DPA': *rtse.*
- ^b DPA'(P), DPA': *omit dang longs spyod.*
- ^c DPA'(P), DPA': *g.yengs.*
- ^d DPA'(P), DPA': *add 'dug /.*
- ^e DPA'(P), DPA': *omit.*
- ^f DPA'(P), DPA': *gsung.*
- ^g DPA'(P), DPA': *lug.*
- ^h DPA'(P), DPA': *smra ba'i.*
- ⁱ DPA'(P), DPA': *rnams for tsha mchims legs «bzang» la
sogs pa.*
- ^j DPA'(P), DPA': *pas for pa las /.*
- ^k DPA'(P), DPA': *add pra bha.*
- ^l DPA'(P), DPA': *he.*
- ^m Read *ratna.*
- ⁿ DPA'(P), DPA': *rba khri bzher gyi
bu khri gzigs sam
sang shi ta dang
for sba rma gzigs
«khri bzher yang
zer» kyi bu
ratnar/.*
- ^o DPA'(P), DPA': *rba.*
- ^p DPA'(P), DPA': *add khri gzigs sam.*
- ^q DPA'(P), DPA': *omit yang zer ba de.*
- ^r DPA'(P), DPA': *btsan.*
- ^s DPA'(P), DPA': *omit this entire phrase.*
- ^t DPA'(P), DPA': *leb rnams.*
- ^u DPA'(P), DPA': *gzigs.*
- ^v DPA'(P), DPA': *omit pa..gzhan.*
- ^w DPA'(P), DPA': *mgos rgan.*
- ^x Text has *lob.*
- ^y DPA'(P), DPA': *zhu'o.*
- ^z Text has *phabs.*
- ^{aa} DPA'(P), DPA': *have saṃskṛta'i skad med kyang bod
byang chub sems dpa'i sprul pa'i skad yin
pas chos byar btub gsungs te sgom lung
phog go / from dang / to gsung bas /.*
- ^{ab} DPA'(P), DPA': *pas.*
- ^{ac} DPA'(P), DPA': *have slob dpon gyis btub bam sad cig
gsungs te skad bslabs pa after lan pas.*

^{ad} DPA'(P), DPA':	add <i>rab tu phyung ste</i> .
^{ae} DPA'(P), DPA':	add /.
^{af} DPA'(P), DPA':	<i>lŋga'i mŋgon par shes pa</i> .
^{ag} DPA'(P), DPA':	<i>zhes thogs /</i> .

At that time when the construction of Bsam yas⁸⁴ was completed, the Lord (*rje*) and his ministers diverted themselves in celebration and amusement,⁸⁵ and, due to the fact that up to that time there was not even the name for a monk in Tibet, the entire structure of Bsam yas was barren and empty of monks. Because there was no one to make offerings to and worship the temples and religious objects (*rten*), the Mighty One was unhappy and, saying to Śāntarakṣita: "It will be appropriate that the population gets involved with religion", the master then invited twelve monks of the Magadha-Vaibhāṣika of the Mūlasarvāstivāda school in the first spring-month of the hare-year. The master (*slob dpon*) having taught the Indian language [Sanskrit] to Mchims Legs «bzang», the son of his *zhang blon* [minister belonging to the families of the imperial fathers-in-law] etc., Khri srong lde btsan ordered that:

- [1] Shākya, the son of Mchims A nu,
- [2] Pa gor Bai ro tsa na, the son of Pa gor Na 'dod
«also called He 'dod»,⁸⁶

⁸⁴ For the various names of this monastery, see A. Chayet, "Contribution aux recherches sur les états successifs du monastère de Bsam-yas," *Tibet. Civilisation et Société*, ed. F. Meyer (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1990), 109-17.

⁸⁵ Both sbb, 57 and sbp, 54 [sbch, 154, Tong-Huang 1990: 44] as well as MES, 234, indicate that the celebrations lasted twelve years; we find the same in LDE'U, 355. Neither Nyang ral nor *Lde'u Jo sras or Ne'u Paṇḍita have anything to report here, but Bu ston writes that they took place over a thirteen year period! — see Szerb (1990: 28) and BUM, 1191 —, as does THUGS, 261.

⁸⁶ He was, of course, one of the first two men to bring the Rdzogs chen teachings to Tibet. NYANG, 317-8 [NYANGa, 506, NYANGb, 368-9, NYANGm, 341b] notes that Khri srong lde btsan was visited by Vajrasattva in a dream who suggested to him that he send two Tibetan monks to search for the Bka' Rdzogs pa chen po in India. Allowing for rather serious orthographic instability, according to the reading of NYANGm, both men, Rtsang The lag and Rtsang Legs grub, were sons of Dpal gor He 'dod. On the other hand, the other editions all have simply a "son of Spa[P]a gor He 'dod and Rtsang[s] Legs grub, the son of Rtsang[s] The legs," a reading that would seem preferable. After having been ordained and taught the art of translation by Śāntarakṣita, they were given gold dust to cover the expenses for their trip and dispatched to the Indian subcontinent.

- [3] Ratna, the son of Sba Rma gzigs «also called
Khri bzher» — the son of Sba
Khri bzher is also called Sang shi ta,
[4] Lha bu, the son of Zhang Nya bzang,
[5] Lha bse btsan [also a son of Zhang Nya
bzang?], and
[6] Shud pu Khong sleb, etc.,

should study the language as well. A good number of other sons of the ministers of the in-laws of the imperial family (*zhang blon*) such as Mchims Legs bzang etc., had not known the language. As Minister 'Gos rgan⁸⁷ had said: "Since our senior ministers have no leisure and no free time to study the language of the master (*a tsa ra*), they ought to request religious teachings for old men." The master knew the father and mother tongues of the Tibetans and was pure in the

⁸⁷ Only the cognate passage in MES, 234, gives "Khri bzang" as his name; a 'Bro *zhang* Khri bzang is noted in one of the Dunhuang documents — see Thomas (1951: 9, 11) — which might just indicate that "Khri bzang" was either a not altogether uncommon name, or, not entirely unlikely, a title [?as well]. Insofar as he is mentioned by this very same name elsewhere in the versions of the *Sba bzhed* and MES itself, *rgan* must be taken adjectivally in the sense of "old" or "senior". His full name appears to have been 'Gos [or: Mgos] Khri bzang yab lhag [or 'Gos {or: Mgos} Khri bzang Yab lhag], which we find in Sbb, 17 — this is missing in the corresponding passage in SBp, 13 [SBch, 101, Tong-Huang 1990: 14] — in an entry when Khri srong lde btsan had just become emperor at a very young age. The addition of the epithet *chen po*, "great," to his title of "minister" might suggest that he was already a senior minister at this time. It is also affixed to his basic title in Sbb, 35, again there is no corresponding passage in the other versions, in an entry just prior to the narrative of the construction of Bsam yas. The *Sba bzhed*-s first note him as one of the pro-Buddhist ministers, together with *zhang* Nya bzang; see Sbb, 16, and SBp, 13 [SBch, 101]. A similar passage is contained in NYANG, 433 [NYANGb, 509, NYANGm, 468a]. He must be identical to "Mgos Khri bzang yab [or: Yab] lag" of the listing of ministers in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* in Bacot-Thomas-Toussaint (1940-46: 102, 132) and Wang-Chen (1992: 40, 160). Furthermore, Nyang ral includes him in what is, again, *allegedly* his *gter ma*-biography of Padmasambhava in a grouping of six ministers of Khri srong lde btsan, and among those who petitioned Padmasambhava, just prior to his departure from Central Tibet, for guidelines when performing their office; see the *Slob dpon padma'i rnam thar zangs gling ma* (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989), 88-9, 151-2, and the translation in Erik Pema Kunzang, *The Lotus-Born. The Life Story of Padmasambhava*, ed. M.B. Schmidt (Shambhala: Boston & London, 1993), 100-1 and 158-9. With some interesting variants, these passages are also reproduced in his chronicle in NYANG, 325-6 and 363-4 [NYANGa, 519-20 and 583-4, NYANGb, 378-9 and 427-8, NYANGm, 350b-1a and 389b-90a] where, however, in the second of these passages, Khri bzang yab lhag's name does not appear.

realization that, in substance (*don la*), Tibetan was on par with Sanskrit. And, inasmuch as Sanskrit was unnecessary since he explained the religion in Tibetan, the master said: "Because Tibetan is the wondrous language of the bodhisattva [= ?Avalokiteśvara],⁸⁸ the Tibetans are able to practice religion." Thereupon the Mighty One (*btsan po*) — the emperor — asked: "Oh master, since there are no monks in my Tibet, will my *zhang blon* be capable of monkhood?" The master replied: "We should examine whether they are capable." And from among those who had studied the Sanskrit language, at first, Sba Khri gzigz «also called "Sang shi ta"», one of great faith in Tibet, was made a monk. He was immediately thereafter named "Sba Dpal dbyangs." Insofar as he was endowed with five paranormal cognitive faculties, the Mighty One was delighted and, having placed his head at his feet, said: "You are a jewel of Tibet." Hence, he was also called Sba Ratna; he was the earliest of the Tibetan monks.

The text continues:

*btsan po na re / slob dpon gyis nga'i zhang blon dad pa can^a
da dung rab tu phyung cig ces^b zhus pas / sad cig gsungs
nas sba^c gsal snang dang / sba khri bzher dang /^b pa gor na
'dod «he 'dod kyang zer» kyi bu^d bai ro tsa na dang / ngan
lam rgyal ba mchog dbyangs dang / rma a tsa ra^e rin chen
mchog dang / la^f gsum rgyal ba'i^g byang chub dang drug^h/
dge slong byas te /ⁱ ming yang^b ye shes dbang po^j dang / de
la sogs par btags nas sad mi drug rab tu byung ngo / «sba
dpal dbyangs la rgya nag skad sang shi ta zer / la la khri
bzher gyi bu sang shi ta zer / sba gsal snang skya ba'i dus
ming / de nas sems bskyed zhus nas dang rab tu byung nas
ming ye shes dbang por slob dpon bodhi satwas btags /*

⁸⁸ This remarks confronts us head on with a major problem, since the earliest references to the Tibetan area being the domain that is protected by Avalokiteśvara, that is, of which he is the patron Bodhisattva, occurs in mid to late eleventh century texts. This is either an interpolation or it is simply the earliest reference to this notion, period. I myself am inclined to hold that this is an interpolation. It is of course true that Tibet's imperial period knew of various Buddhist cults, including one that centered on Avalokiteśvara; see S. van Schaik, "The Tibetan Avalokiteśvara Cult in the Tenth Century: Evidence from Dunhuang Manuscripts," *Tibetan Buddhist Literature and Praxis*, ed. R.M. Davidson and Chr. Wedemeyer (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 55-72.

*bzhed 'bring po las gtsug lag khang tshar / zhal ma bsros
bar du gsal snang rab tu byung / rgya skad bslabs pa rnams
kyang de dus lobs / rab tu byung ba yang de dus su byung
bar bshad»*

- ^a DPA'(P), DPA': omit *bstan po to can*.
^b DPA'(P), DPA': omit.
^c DPA'(P), DPA': *rba*.
^d DPA'(P), DPA': omit *pa gor to kyi bu*.
^e DPA'(P), DPA': *ātsar*.
^f DPA'(P), DPA': *las*.
^g DPA'(P), DPA': *ba*.
^h DPA'(P), DPA': *lnga*.
ⁱ DPA'(P), DPA': add *gsal snang la sngar sems bskyed zhus
pa'i tshe btags pa'i*.
^j DPA'(P), DPA': add *btags*.
^k DPA'(P), DPA': *pa*.

The Mighty One then said: "The master must presently ordain my faithful *zhang blon*" Śāntarakṣita saying: "Let us examine them!", the six:

- [1] Sba Gsal snang,
 [2] Sba Khri bzher,
 [3] Vairocana, the son of Pa gor Na 'dod <also called
 He 'dod>,
 [4] Ngan lam Rgyal ba mchog dbyangs,
 [5] Rma A tsa ra Rin chen mchog and,
 [6] La gsum Rgyal ba'i byang chub

were made monks and, having been given names such as "Ye shes dbang po" etc., these were the six examined individuals who had renounced the world. «Sba Dpal dbyangs was called "Sang shi ta" in Chinese; some allege that Sang shi ta was the son of Khri bzher; "Sba Gsal snang" was his name when a layman and then, after he had resolved to effected an enlightened frame of mind, the master-bodhisattva named him "Ye shes dbang po." The [*Sba*] *bzhed* of intermediate length (*'bring po*) states that Gsal snang was ordained between the completion of Bsam yas monas-

tery and prior to its consecration⁸⁹; that those who had studied Sanskrit, were studying it at that time, and also that their ordination took place at that time before the consecration.»

The various names of the leading members of the Sba [or: Dba', Dbas] family present us with problems that cannot be dealt with here. Much more work needs to be done to unravel the identities and roles played by them, but suffice it to say here that Sba Gsal snang figures in some listings of those individuals who were ministers during the second half of Khri srong lde btsan's reign.⁹⁰

While in substance identical, but in length more synoptic, it is quite clear that the different readings of the just-cited passage in the Paris [and Chengdu] recension of the *Sba bzhed* and in the anonymous biography of Khri srong lde btsan are indicative of their close filiation with one another.⁹¹ "Dba'," "Sba," and "Dbas" being variants, the recently published text of the *Dba' bzhed* is editorially a great deal more distant from them as far as this passage is concerned.⁹² To be noted also is that despite the frequent textual identity of the Paris and Beijing recensions of the *Sba bzhed*, as well as the *Dba' bzhed*, Bu ston's *Chos 'byung* is only cited in the first and not in the latter and, we should add, it is also not quoted in the anonymous biography.⁹³

⁸⁹ This may very well be a reference to the text in Pasang Wangdu-Diemberger (2000: 69, 17a). The same passage of this intermediate redaction is also paraphrased in an interlinear note in DPA'(p), 354 [DPA', 359]: *bsam yas tshar nas zhal sro ma byas pa'i bar der rab tu byung bar bshad*.

⁹⁰ JO, 121 and LDE'U, 301; but see also 'Brong bu Tshe ring rdo rje, "Dba' gsal snang gi me che'i lo rgyus skor gyi dpyad brjod," *Krung go'i bod rig pa 2* (2005), 37-48.

⁹¹ SBP, 49-51 [SBCh, 154-6, Tong-Huang 1990: 44-5] and MES, 234-6.

⁹² Pasang Wangdu - Diemberger (2000: 69-70, 17a-b).

⁹³ SBP, 54 [SBCh, 160]: *Gsung rab rin po che'i bang mdzod - bang mdzod* is semantically identical to *mdzod*. This seems to have been first noticed in Faber (1986: 39-40) and also by Jampa L. Panglung Rinpoche in Uebach (1987: 103, n. 473), though it went unrecognized in the translation of Tong-Huang (1990: 48). Dpa' bo II also felt compelled to refer to Bu ston, where the relevant passage occurs in Szerb (1990: 41) and BUM, 1198; see DPA'(p), 339 [DPA', 392]; see also Huang-Zhou (2010: 220). Both are discussed in Uebach (1987: 103, n. 473), who observed that Dpa' bo II cited Bu ston's *Chos 'byung*. Things are a little complicated. Dpa' bo II does indeed *prima facie* cite the *Chos 'byung*, but one important variant reading in his citation is not retrievable from those for this passage in the manuscripts of Bu ston's text that Szerb used, namely, *brtse min*. They have *tsen min*, *rtsen mun*, and *rtsen min*, which but reflect the difficulty of finding a Tibetan phonetic approximation of Chinese *jianmen*. Dpa' bo II's quotation thus retains the reading *brtse min* that we also have in SBP, 54 [SBCh, 160]. My impression therefore is that Dpa' bo II did not cite directly from the *Chos 'byung*, but rather, as now appears likely, from a quotation of Bu ston's work in a text of the *Sba bzhed*. As we will briefly

This means, of course, that the manuscript [not necessarily the text] on which the Paris edition is based must be dated to not earlier than the third decade of the fourteenth century. The narrative of the anonymous biography adds nothing of intrinsic interest to the dossier we already have, but we should cite it, if only for the sake of completeness:

*dus der rje blon rnams rtsed bro dang longs spyod la yengs
pas / bsam yas kyi rtsigs rmang thams cad byi khung du
byas te / lha khang la mchod cing zhabs tog med pas btsan
po thugs ma bde / 'bangs rnams la chos bya bar rigs so zhes
gsol nas / slob dpon gyi^a rgya gar gyi skad slob pas / sba
gsal snang dang / sba khri bzher sang shi ta dang / pa dkor
na 'dod kyi bu bai ro tsā na dang / mchims a nu'i bu shā
kya dang / shud pu khong sleb la sogs pas skad lobs /
mchim^b long gzigs la sogs pa zhang blon gyi bu tsha mang
zhig snyung nas skad mi lobs pas / blon po mgos rgan gyi
mchid nas / slob dpon rgan pa rnams la long ma mchis pas /
a tsa ra'i skad slab mi khom pas / rgan chos su mchi zhus
pas / slob dpon gyi^a bod kyi a pha dang a ma'i skad don
thog tu phebs te / chos skad dang mthun par mkhyen nas /
bod skad du chos bshad pas sa« skri ta'i skad slob ma dgos /
bod byang chub sems dpa'i sprul pa'i skad yin pas / chos
byar stub po gsungs / de nas lug lo'i dpyid zla ra ba'i ngo
la / slob dpon gyis thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde / dbus
pa bye brag tu smra ba'i dge slong bcu gnyis spyan drangs
nas bod skad sbyang ba dang / btsan po'i zhal nas nga'i
blon po dge slong med pas / nga'i zhang blon rnams la de
btub bam mi btub ces bka' stsal ba'i lan du / btub pam sad
par bya gsung^c nas / bod la dad pa che ba 'ba' khri gzigs
dge slong byas ma thog^d tu mngon par shes pa dang ldan
pas / btsan po dgyes te de'i zhabs spyi bor blang^e nas khyod
bod kyi ratna yin no ces bka' stsal bas ming kyang sba rat-
na ces btags te / bod kyi rab tu byung ba la snga ba de yin
no / btsan po na re / slob dpon nga'i zhang blon dad pa can
da rung rab tu phyung cig ces gsungs pas / sad cig gsung
nas sba gsal snang dang / 'ba' khri zher sang shi ta dang /
pa gor 'dod kyi bu bai ro tsā na dang / ngan lam rgyal ba
mchog yangs dang / sma a tsa ra rin chen mchog dang / la
gsum rgyal ba'i byang chub drug dge slong byas te / ming
kyang ye shes dbang po dang / dpal dbyangs la sogs pa*

see below, the *brtse min* reading was the result of a popular etymology that had nothing to do with the original Chinese term.

btags nas sad mi drug rab tu byung /.

^a read *gyis*; ^b read *mchims*; ^c read *gsungs*; ^d read *thag*; ^e read *blangs*.

We have just seen that one recension of the *Sba bzhed* cites the *Chos 'byung*. The relationship between both texts is symmetrical and reciprocal, for Bu ston also cites a recension of the *Rba bzhed* [= *Sba bzhed*], and we may add that this is the only time in the main body of his *Chos 'byung* where he quotes the title of a work written by a Tibetan, aside from the one brief nod at Lo tsā ba Rin chen bzang po's (958-1055) *Sngags log sun 'byin*, a study of apocryphal and spurious tantric texts.⁹⁴ The context in which he refers to the *Sba bzhed* is found in connection with his citation of a passage from Sa skya Paṇḍita's 1217 biography of his uncle and master Rje btsun — it is part paraphrase, part citation, though encapsulated by the quotative: *chos rje sa skya pa'i zhal nas...zhes gsungs so //*.⁹⁵ There, Bu ston reads the text as saying that there is a prophecy in the elusive **Vimalaprabhāvākarāna* where the phrase "in the land of the red faces" (*gdong dmar gyi yul du*) refers to Tibet.⁹⁶ From Chinese and other sources, we know of the early Tibetan custom of smearing faces with a red substance, probably vermilion.⁹⁷ Bu ston suggests, in an uncommitted way, that the *Sba bzhed* explained the "land of the red faces" to be *rgya*, which here can only indicate *rgya nag*, that is, China. Now the phrase *gdong dmar gyi yul* occurs in the *Sba bzhed* texts in the following context. On behalf of his son Khri srong lde btsan, Khri lde gtsug btsan dispatched some five envoys, including one named Sang shi with a box (*sgrom bu*)⁹⁸ to the court of the Xuanzong Emperor (r. 713-756) for acquiring

⁹⁴ BU, 741 [BU1, 82, BUM, 992] and Obermiller (1931: 137) and Guo (1986: 71). It is not frequently cited, but this must be the same text Glo bo Mkhan chen refers to as the *Chos log sun 'byin* in his *Sdom pa gsum gyi rab tu dbye ba'i dris lan lung gi tshad ma 'khrul spong dgongs rgyan*, *Rgyud sde spyi rnam gsal byed sogs* (Dehra Dun, 1985), 253. Ny[w]a dbon Kun dga' dpal (1285-1379) cites several passages from this work in his post-1371 *Gzhi lam 'bras gsum las brtsams pa'i dris lan yid kyi mun sel*, ed. 'Bras Rab 'byams pa Dkon mchog chos kho et al. (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2006), 102 ff.

⁹⁵ *Bla ma rje btsun chen po'i rnam thar*, SSB 5, no. 17, 148/2; this passage is also cited by Mang thos in MANG, 45.

⁹⁶ BU, 818 [BU1, 138, BUM, 1097] and Obermiller (1932: 108) and Guo (1986: 120); on the problem of identifying the text in which this prophecy occurs, see now also Uebach (1987: 157, n. 1059).

⁹⁷ See P. Pelliot, *Histoire ancienne du Tibet* (Paris: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient, 1961), 5, n. d., and also the various notes in S. van Schaik in earlyTibet.com.

⁹⁸ SBb, 5 [SBch, 90, SBp, 5]; Tong-Huang (1990: 6) suggest here *xinhan*, which together may be interpreted as a "message in a box." For the passages that follow, see also A. Macdonald, "Une lecture des P.T. 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290. Essai sur

Buddhist scriptures. According to the *Sba bzhed*, this must have taken place sometime between the years 733 and 737. Parenthetically, as far as our Tibetan sources go, we only find this legation mentioned in these texts, as well as in later writings that are expressly related to them or one or other recension, and nowhere else, not even in Nyang ral's work which, as is known, depends to a large measure on a version of the *Sba bzhed*, or on another work that contained much of the same information, for its narratives of the imperial period from Khri srong lde btsan onward. Chinese sources note that diplomatic intercourse between the two courts was a rather frequent affair but, not unexpectedly, none contain the observations made in the *Sba bzhed*-s. When the party arrived at the narrow pass of Ke'u lo/le, an expert diviner (*ju zhag mkhan*)⁹⁹ of a certain governor (*dbang po*) of Bum sangs, who himself was a courtier¹⁰⁰ of the Chinese imperial court, related that in three months from today a Bodhisattva would arrive as an envoy from Tibet, the Western region, whereupon he drew for him what he would look like, the shape of his body, and his features. The governor of Bum sangs brought this to the emperor's ear, and the latter immediately sent an envoy, ordering him not to allow the Tibetan party to be detained and to ensure that they be given offerings. Upon their arrival, the Tibetan envoy(s) — the *Sba bzhed* texts always use the singular, suggesting that Sang shi played the preeminent role in this pentad which is not surprising when we keep in mind that he appears to have belonged to the Sba clan — was hon-

la formation et l'emploi des mythes politiques dans la religion royale de Srong btsan sgam po," *Études tibétaines dédiées à la mémoire de Marcelle Lalou* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1971), 379 ff.

⁹⁹ For *ju zhag* = Ch. *zhouyi*, that is, *Yiqing*, *Book of Changes*, see R.A. Stein, "Saint et divin' un titre tibétain et chinois des rois tibétains," *Journal asiatique* CCLXIX (1981), 261, 269, n. 87. In a note, *The Blue Annals*, tr. G. Roerich, 251, presumably via his learned informant Dge 'dun chos 'phel (1903-52), already identified *ju zhag* as a "system of prognostication," although it is not registered in his dictionary; see Y.N. Roerich, *Tibetan-Russian-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Parallels*, ed. Y. Parfionovich and V. Dylykova, Issue 3 (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, 1985), 171. This expression is comparatively rare in Tibetan texts. Of the available dictionaries, it is only listed in *Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las' Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo* (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig dpe skrun khang, 2002), 874, though its status as a loan word was not explicitly recognized. Be this as it may, it also occurs in NYANG, 418 [NYANGb, 490, NYANGm, 451a] — the first has *rgya nago gi ju zhag mkhas pa*, "Chinese diviner," the other two wrongly have: ...*ju yag mkhas pa* — in connection with Khri gtsug lde btsan's (806-41) plans to build a temple along the lines of the Gtsug lag khang, Bsam yas, and Skar chung, where the diviner searched for an appropriate site. Thence, we encounter it in MES, 111.

¹⁰⁰ Only SBP 5 [SBch 90] prefixes his name by *snyan snga na*, which Tong-Huang (1990: 6) render by *yuxian dachen*, "grand-official." For the interpretation of *bum sangs dbang po* that I tentatively follow, see Pasang Wangdu-Diemberger (2000: 49, n. 121-2).

ored in a way that somewhat reduces the credibility of the narrative. For not only did a Chinese monk greet him respectfully (*phyag byas*), but also when he was lead before the emperor, the latter too greeted him in the same fashion, whereupon the Sang shi presented him with the message. After an exchange of pleasantries, including an offer by the emperor to make him a minister of his court, he was asked what it was he desired, to which the envoy replied: "If you wish to do me good, I request a text in one thousand *bam po*¹⁰¹ of the Buddha's pronouncements." The relevant passage of the Beijing text of the *Sba bzhed* — it is also found in Dpa' bo's work — then reads as follows:¹⁰²

*rgya rje na re / ki'u li^a te^b gcan zan^c gyi 'phrang la song
rtsa na'ang gnod pa ma byas par rim 'gro cher byas byung
/ bum sangs dbang po'i ju zhag mkhan na re'ang l^b khyod
byang chub sems dpa'i sprul par 'ong zer / hwa shang
mngon shes can gyis kyang khyod la phyag byas / khyod kyi
spyod pa dang sbyar na'ang sangs rgyas kyi lung nas l^d
lnga brgya'i tha^e ma la gdong dmar gyi yul du dam pa'i
chos kyi khungs 'byin pa'i dge ba'i bshes gnyen 'ong bar
lung bstan pa de'ang khyod yin par gor ma chag ngas
kyang grogs bya'i^f zer^g te / mthing shog la gser chus bris
pa'i chos bam po stong gnang /*

^a DPA'(p), DPA': *le*.

^b DPA'(p), DPA': omit.

^c DPA'(p), DPA': *gzan*.

^d DPA'(p), DPA': *na /*.

^e DPA'(p), DPA': *mtha'*.

^f The editor corrects to 'o';

DPA'(p), DPA': *yi*.

^g DPA'(p), DPA': *gsungs*.

The Chinese Sovereign (*rje*) said: "Even if you had gone to Ki'u li, a mountain pass with wild animals,¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ For this term, see lastly my "Some Remarks on the Meaning and Use of the Tibetan Word *bam po*," *Zangxue xuekan* 5 (2009), 114-32, and the literature cited therein.

¹⁰² SBb, 6-7; see also the corresponding passage in DPA'(p), 297-8 [DPA', 301] and Huang-Zhou (2010: 120-1).

¹⁰³ SBp, 6 [SBch, 91-92, Tong-Huang 1990: 7] has but a few minor variants, the most important one being *ki'u li'u (ke'u le'u) yi 'phrang la* - the phrase in brackets is the correction proposed by Tong-Huang -, with *te* missing as in Dpa' bo II's text. MES, 172-3, reads somewhat differently: *rgya rje na re khyod lam du zhugs pa'i dus su yang : ju zhag mkhan po na re : bho de sad ta'i sprul pa ha shang mngon shes can gyis kyang khyod la phyag byas : khyod kyi spyod pa dang sbyar nas sangs rgyas kyi lung nas lnga brgya'i tha ma la : gdong dmar gyi yul du dam pa'i chos khungs 'byin pa'i dge ba'i*

you would have been respectfully received, without having come to harm. Also the *Zhouyi* expert of the governor of Bum sangs had said that you would come as a wondrous manifestation of a Bodhisattva. Even a clairvoyant monk has saluted you. In connection with your behavior as well, it is certain that the prophecy in a text of the Buddha that at the end of five hundred years a spiritual friend will come who will give the source of the holy *dharma* in the land of the red faced ones, is you. I, too, shall assist you." And he gave him a text (*chos*) of a thousand *bam po* in length, which was written with gold ink on dark blue paper.

Given this passage, Bu ston's allegation that the *Sba bzhed* identified *gdong dmar gyi yul* with *rgya* [*nag*] was therefore justifiably criticized by Dpa' bo II, who concludes, after paraphrasing a passage from the *Sba bzhed*, that the text's *gdong dmar can gyi yul* is unequivocally Tibet.¹⁰⁴ Bu ston's citation of the prophecy of Vimalaprabhā is one of an apparent, but still not identified, canonical source, which undoubtedly because of its relative vagueness enjoyed great contextual versatility among Tibetan historiographers. To date, the earliest source to make a reference to this passage and land that can be dated is Bsod nams rtse mo's history which refers here to a passage from the **Vimalaprabhāparipṛcchāsūtra*.¹⁰⁵ Subsequently, 'Gos Lo tsā ba quoted it in full, together with a few additions made by Bsod nams rtse mo's nephew Sa skya Paṇḍita, and criticized it severely in his *Rtsis la 'khrul ba sel ba*.¹⁰⁶

Lastly, it is only the supplemented *Sba bzhed* that has an opening phrase in which the author pays homage that is followed by a line indicating what the subject-matter will be, and it is precisely there

bshes gnyen yong par lung bstan khyod yin par nges : ngas kyang grogs bya'o zer nas : mthing shog la gser gyi bris pa'i bam po stong gnang byar dga' ches :

¹⁰⁴ DPA'(p), 169 [DPA', 168]; see also Huang-Zhou (2010: 12) where *bu* was rendered as *zi*, instead of being identified as a reference to Bu [ston]. As is evident from DPA'(p), this passage occurs in an interlinear note. Of interest is that, in this particular reference, the latter but has *Rba bzhed*, whereas we know from the other quotations found in his lengthy analysis of the reign of Khri srong lde btsan that he had access to perhaps as many as five or more versions of the text.

¹⁰⁵ The *Lha mo dri ma med pas zhus pa* (**Devivimalaprabhāparipṛccha*) is cited in the *Chos la 'jug pa'i sgo*, SSBB 2, no. 17, 343/1/3, to the effect that Buddhism will come to the "land of the red face[s]" two thousand and five hundred years after the nirvana of the Buddha. This very same text and passage — the only variant is "two thousand five hundred or eight hundred" — is cited in NYANG, 165 [NYANGA, 245, NYANGb, 186, NYANGm, 105a].

¹⁰⁶ See, respectively, the *Bla ma rje btsun chen po'i rnam thar*, 147/1-8/2, and 'GOS, 12a-4b, 19a-20a.

that we meet once again with "red faces"¹⁰⁷:

rigs gsum mgon po'i rnam 'phrul gyis //
sha za gdong dmar 'dul mdzad pa //
mes dbon gsum la phyag 'tshal te //
bka' tshig yi ge zhib mo bri //

Paying homage to the three, the ancestor and grand-
 sons,¹⁰⁸

The pacifiers of the red-faced flesh-eating de-
 mons,

By being wondrous emanations of the three
 types of protectors,

We shall write a detailed official document.

To call the Tibetan citizenry "red-faced meat-eating demons" is hard-ly flattering. It reminds one of the ways in which the Mongols conquerors of Tibet are addressed in especially the *Lha' 'dre bka'i thang yig* and the *Blon po'i bka'i thang yig*, and in the prophesies of the more "orthodox" revelatory texts of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. In the entry for *gdong dmar can gyi yul*, *Dung dkar Blo bzang*

¹⁰⁷ SBp, 1 [SBch, 83, Tong-Huang 1990: 1]. For an analysis of this passage, see R. A. Stein, "Tibetica Antiqua IV: La tradition relative au début du bouddhisme au Tibet," *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* LXXV (1986), 171, n. 6, and also G. Uray, "Contributions to the Date of the *Vyutpatti* Treatises," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* XLIII (1989), 10-1.

¹⁰⁸ For the term *dbon*, see H. Uebach, "Notes on the Tibetan Kinship Term *dbon*," *Tibetan Studies in Honour of H.E. Richardson*, eds. M. Aris and Aung San Suu Kyi (Westminster: Philips and Aris, 1979), 301-9. The meaning of "grandson" is also found in Buddhaguhya's *Bhoṭasvāmidāsalekha*, in S. Dietz, *Die buddhistische Briefliteratur*, Asiatische Forschungen, Band 84 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984), 259-60: "Durch den Spur rgyal Tibets, den Herrn aller Schwarzhäupte Khri srong lde'u btsan, den Sohn des Ag tshoms mes und Enkel des Rlung nam 'phrul gyi rgyal po [= Khri 'dus srong, vdK], ist die Bodhisattvareinkarnationsreihe des Srong btsan sgam po, der Verkörperung des Avalokiteśvara, nicht unterbrochen worden" (*bod kyi spur rgyal mgo nag yangs kyi rje // khri srong lde'u btsan ag tshoms mes kyi sras // rlung nam 'phrul gyi rgyal po'i dbon po yis // srong btsan sgam po spyang ras gzigs kyi sku // byang chub sems dpa' sku rgyud gdung ma chad //*). For an earlier translation of this quatrain, see R.A. Stein, "Saint et divin' un titre tibétain et chinois des rois tibétains," 257-8, n. 64, where he also says that "ce texte doit être <apocryphe> (vers 850 ou après)." Elsewhere and later, he suggested that it was written "entre 850 et 1000(?)," and observed that, for reasons that are yet to be clarified, Bu ston reproduced it in full in his 1342 *Rnal 'byor rgyud kyi rgya mtshor 'jug pa'i gru gzings*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa], Lhasa Zhol print, Part 11 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1968), 136-8; see his "Tibetica Antiqua IV: La tradition relative au début du bouddhisme au Tibet," 185, n. 39. A somewhat annotated version of the text was published in the *Legs rtsom snying bsodus*, ed. Phur kho (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1991), 135-45.

'phrin las' recently published Tibetan-Tibetan dictionary suggests that it had been understood in three different ways.¹⁰⁹ Possibly basing himself on Bu ston's [mis]interpretation, he first relates that the *Rba* [= *Sba*] *bzhed* used it to refer to China. He then says that Sa skya Ngor Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub had identified it as referring to Tibet — this Bsod nams lhun grub is of course none other than Glo bo Mkhan chen.¹¹⁰ Lastly, he mentions Bo dong Lo tsā ba Nam mkha' bzang po who, in his *Bstan rtsis legs bshad nor bu'i phreng ba*, had interpreted it to indicate *kla klo'i yul* (**mlecchadeśa*), that is, "land of the barbarians [here: Muslims]," in accordance with the *Kālacakra* corpus.¹¹¹ A disciple of Lo tsā ba Byang chub rtse mo (1303-80), this Nam mkha' bzang po flourished in the second half of the fourteenth century and also seems to have been known as Stag lung Lo tsā ba.

All this raises the question of the possibility of a relationship other portions of the *Chos 'byung* may have with one or the other, or even with both recensions of the *Sba bzhed*. A number of Japanese and Western scholars have briefly dealt with this question in several comparative studies of the various accounts of the Bsam yas debates of presumably the middle of the second half of the eighth century. Of the latter, F. Faber argued that the *Chos 'byung*'s exposition of the debates precisely indicates a probable indebtedness to both recensions; he writes¹¹²:

He [Bu ston, vdK] probably...had access to both editions [of the *Sba bzhed*, vdK] known to us today... But without doubt he has had a copy of the longer edition [the supplemented *Sba bzhed*, vdK]...as he quotes information contained only in that edition.

¹⁰⁹ *Dung dkar tshig mdzod chen mo*, 1117.

¹¹⁰ See his reply to question no. 5 in his *Mi'i dbang po mgon po rgyal mtshan gyi dris lan rgyal sras bzhad pa'i me tog*, *Collected Works*, vol. III (New Delhi, 1977), 26-7. In all fairness, the view that the phrase indicated Tibet was already held by Bsod nams rtse mo and Sa skya Paṇḍita, as well as by Nyang ral and 'Gos Lo tsā ba [in 'gos, 19b].

¹¹¹ This may be the little *dbu med* manuscript of a *Bstan rtsis* of his work that is cataloged under C.P.N. catalog no. 002317(1), to which I do not have access. For Islam in this corpus, see now J. Newman, "Islam in the *Kālacakrantra*," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21 (1998), 311-71.

¹¹² Faber (1986: 42, 48 ff.); see BU, 887-90 [BU1, 187-90, BUM, 1193-8] and Obermiller (1932: 191-6), Satō (1977: 859-63), Guo (1986: 175-8), and Szerb (1990: 34-42). The narrative of 'Dul 'dzin Mkhyen rab rgya mtsho, in his 1557 study of the Rnying ma pa's literary and spiritual traditions, is obviously based on the *Chos 'byung*; see the *Sangs rgyas bstan pa'i chos 'byung dris lan nor bu'i phreng ba* (Gangtok, 1981), 215-9.

This cannot be entirely maintained. In my opinion, Bu ston's very brief discussion of this debate, its preliminaries and aftermath does not quite warrant such a view, the more so since, we have seen that, firstly, his only explicit reference to the text is faulty and arguably anomalous for one who is otherwise such a meticulous scholar and, secondly, we now know of three, or perhaps even four earlier scenarios of the debate that parallel the narratives [not: narrative] of the published texts of the *Sba bzhed*.¹¹³ Furthermore, as Faber himself has noticed and as we saw above, the supplemented *Sba bzhed* cites a passage of the *Chos 'byung*, in which the two key-Chinese terms for the interlocutors of the debates, *dunmen[pai]* (*ton/ston mun*), "Instantaneists, Simultaneists," and *jianmen[pai]* (*tseu min, rtsen mun*), "Gradualists," are given their Tibetan equivalents *cig car ba* and *rim gyis pa*. Whence Bu ston has taken these is at present unknown. To be sure, these equations were not first made in the *Chos 'byung*, for juxtapositions of these phonemic representations of the Chinese terms and their Tibetan equivalents are of course already found in the *Bsam gtan mig sgron* of Gnubs Sangs rgyas ye shes (?783-?896/7) and Lha 'Bri sgang pa's (12th c.) much later survey of the debate.¹¹⁴ However, this state of affairs does not detract from the peculiarity that earlier, datable historical literature, namely Nyang ral's work in particular, elicits explanations of these that are obviously based on what D. Seyfort Ruegg has called "pseudo-etymologies."¹¹⁵ Now when we compare the relevant passage with its cognates in the *Sba bzhed* texts, we witness again the peculiar and text-historically puzzling relationships that unquestionably exist, on one hand, among Nyang ral's work, the two *Sba bzhed*-s individually and the anonymous biography, and between the recensions of the *Sba bzhed*. For whereas the

¹¹³ This includes Lha 'Bri sgang pa (12thc.), on whom see H. Eimer, "Eine frühe Quelle zur literarischen Tradition über die Debatte von Bsam yas," *Tibetan History and Language: Studies Dedicated to Géza Uray 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), 163-72. A descendant of Yum brtan, Glang dar ma's (died 841) eldest son, Lha 'Bri sgang pa's dates are not known so far. He must have been alive in 1193, the year in which he acted as a functionary during Spyan snga Grags pa 'byung gnas' (1175-1255) ordination as a monk, for which see the **Spyan snga grags pa 'byung gnas kyi sku tshé'i ring byung ba'i don chen 'ga'i lo tshigs, Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru rgyas pa, Gangs can rig mdzod 1*, ed. (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 446 [= *Brlangs kyi po ti bse ru*, in *The History of the Gnyos Lineage of Kha rag...* (Dolanji, 1978), 377].

¹¹⁴ See, respectively, the *Sgom gyi gnad gsal bar phyé ba bsam gtan mig sgron* (Leh, 1974), 118-86, 65-118, — see also Seyfort Ruegg (1989: 66-7) — and H. Eimer, "Eine frühe Quelle zur literarischen Tradition über die Debatte von Bsam yas," 168: *ston min cig car 'jug pa dang / tseu min rim gyis 'jug pa gnyis...*

¹¹⁵ Seyfort Ruegg (1989: 63, n. 120).

supplemented *Sba bzhed* has here virtually the same reading as Nyang ral [or should we reverse the relative chronology implied by this statement?] and the anonymous biography — it is immediately preceded by the quotation from the *Chos 'byung* on the import of these Chinese expressions —, this is not the case for the Beijing recension of this work. The passage in Nyang ral, the supplemented *Sba bzhed* and the anonymous biography state in all their text-critical complexity, a number of aspects of which I have obviously been unable to dissolve successfully¹¹⁶:

*btsan pos rgya'i ston pa'i^a chos 'di^b min^c nam^b byas pas^d
ston min pa bya bar grags / drang srong bzod pas^e /^f lus la
me spar nas mchod pa phul bas^g /^h sems can^f la brtse ba'i
sgo nas tshogs bsags pa gal che byas pas / btsan po na re /
lus la me spar ba'i brtse ba de yang /ⁱ chos min nam byas
pas^j brtse^k min pa bya bar grags so //*

^a SBch/p: *pas*.

^b NYANG/b/m: omit; MES: *de chos*.

^c NYANGm: *men*.

^d NYANGm, SBch/p, MES: add /.

^e MES: *pa bas*.

^f MES: omits.

^g NYANG, SBch/p,

MES: omit.

^h NYANGm, MES: omit.

ⁱ SBch/p, MES: omit.

^j SBch/p: add /.

^k SBch/p, MES: *brtsen*.

Because the Mighty One had said: "This is not the doctrine of the Chinese teacher?," this position became known as *ston min pa*, 'that which is not of the teacher.' Because the sage Bzod pa had said: "The gathering of the accumulations of merit and gnosis on account of having loving kindness for sentient beings, exemplified by giving offerings through setting fire to one's body, is vital," they became known as 'those who are not kind' due to the Mighty One saying in response: "Is not also the loving kindness consisting of setting fire to one's body dharma?"

The Beijing text of the *Sba bzhed* states the matter somewhat differently, albeit also a trifle obscurely, in the following words¹¹⁷:

btsan pos rgya'i ston pa'i chos 'di bag tsam mnam ba^a min

¹¹⁶ SBch, 160 [SBp, 54, Tong-Huang 1990: 48], NYANG, 398 [NYANGb, 465, NYANGm, 287/2-288/2], MES, 241-2.

¹¹⁷ SBb, 64-5.

*nam byas pas ston min pa bya bar grags / gcig shos na re /
drang srong bzod par smra bas lus la me btang nas kyang
mchod pa phul bas sems can la brtse ba'i bsam pas tshogs
gsog pa gal che zer bas / rgyal po na re / lus la me gtong
ba'i brtse ba de yang chos min nam byas pas brtse min pa
bya bar grags /*

^a Read *pa*.

Because the Mighty One had said: "Is not this doctrine of the Chinese teacher a trifle suspect [lit. a trifle smelly]?", it became known as 'that which is not of the teacher.' Another had said: "According to what is stated by the seer Bzod pa^a, namely, gathering the accumulations of merit and gnosis consisting of a loving thought for sentient beings by means of giving an offering even through having set fire to one's body, is vital." Thus, inasmuch as the emperor replied: "Is not also the loving kindness of setting fire to one's body dharma?", they became known as 'those who are not with loving kindness' (*brtse min pa*).

^a At my peril, I emend the text to *drang srong bzod pas smras pas!*

Do the *Sba bzhed* recensions, Nyang ral and the anonymous biography give credence to these pseudo-etymologies? The answer is flatly, no! Firstly, it is certain that the correlates of *cig car ba* and *rim gyis pa* were known to the Tibetans of the ninth and twelfth centuries. Indeed, we find these pairs unambiguously used in both the *Sba bzhed* texts, Gnubs Sang rgyas ye shes' (9th c.) well-known *Bsam gtan mig sgron*, Nyang ral's work, and other authorities. And secondly, these are placed in the mouth of the emperor who, as the sources tell us, was conversant in neither Sanskrit [or some other Indo-Aryan medium] nor Chinese, inasmuch as he required interpreters in both languages during the proceedings of the debates, and someone else. The etymology of *rtsen / brtse min pa* is of course also rather puzzling, for it too would fit quite well with the kind of things that went on in the way of self-immolation among the followers of the Chinese position. In fact, it stands in flat contradiction with what is transmitted about Kamalaśīla and Ye shes dbang po.

Furthermore, it is not all that obvious that Bu ston relied "solely" on one or other *Sba bzhed* texts for the narrative of the debate or, what should not be ruled out, of the yet to be unearthed cognate

texts of the *Bla bzhed*, or even *Rgyal bzhed*, the existence of which was first indicated by Sa skya Paṇḍita. The evidence adduced for this or, perhaps better, the evidence that can be adduced, is simply too thin for such a conclusion. Seyfort Ruegg formulated a more sober and circumspect judgment in his assessment of the possible intertextual relations that may exist among them, though he does not discuss the relative textual position of the anonymous biography. In terms of the *Chos 'byung*, he states that Bu ston's source for the debates "may well have been a *Sba bzhed*; at any rate, the accounts of [the debates, vdK]...we find in both texts are clearly closely related."¹¹⁸ And he observes in connection with the putative relationship between Nyang ral's text and the two recensions of the *Sba bzhed*, that certain differences in their accounts may be due to the circumstance that Nyang ral may have used ancient records of the Nyang/Myang clan, possibly then of Nyang/Myang Sha mi, that are reflected in what he perceives to be a different and more positive assessment of the Chinese teachings.¹¹⁹ Moreover, he quite rightly notes that the variant readings found in the two *Sba bzhed* texts are certainly not more grave or significant than those met with in Nyang ral's text and the *Sba bzhed*s individually. This observation certainly undermines the more sweeping scenario that is occasionally voiced, namely that Nyang ral had incorporated in his chronicle "long passages" of the supplemented *Sba bzhed*.

Both the *Sba bzhed* and the *Dbal bzhed*, as well as the anonymous biography, record the emperor's delight with the ordination of the first Tibetan men and his overbulliance which, they allege, resulted in him wanting to have his wives who did not reign (*btsun mo srid ma zin pa*) and all the sons of his *zhang blon* to take religious vows as well. This did not sit well with the members of his court, and the more soberminded among his ministers objected with rather compelling fiscal and strategic arguments to the effect that, the state being then charged with their maintenance, the imperial coffers would be overburdened and the military would be undermined because of the absence of sufficient manpower. Ultimately, Khri srong lde btsan relented, but his intemperate attitude to the newly introduced Bud-

¹¹⁸ Seyfort Ruegg (1989: 70).

¹¹⁹ Seyfort Ruegg (1989: 90-1). I do not think that we can readily assent to his interpretation of the phrase uttered by Khri srong lde btsan upon the defeat of Hwa shang Mahāyāna, namely *don la mi mthun pa tsam mi 'dug ste*, by his paraphrase "in substance there was no disagreement between the two opponents," which he proposes to indicate that Nyang ral [?or better, Khri srong lde btsan] was not unfavorable to the Hwa shang. In my view, it ought be rendered as: "There was no mere disagreement in substance," meaning that the disagreements were significant and serious.

dhist faith, which he was the first to elevate to a state religion, was an ominous sign. Later, the reportedly rather excessive devotion to Buddhism on the part of his grandson Khri gtsug lde btsan, alias Ral pa can, would become one of the causes for the 841-2 persecution that virtually wiped Central Tibet clean of its major institutions — one cannot help but notice that this persecution occurred almost at the same time as the one that raged in Tang China from 842 to 845. Much later Tibetan sources suggest that his fratricidal elder brother Glang dar ma (803-42) had a hand in this. On the other hand, more contemporary sources suggest that he may not have been necessarily ill disposed towards Buddhist institutions.¹²⁰

But let us now turn to Dpa' bo II's text-critical remarks concerning the aforementioned passage of the *Chos 'byung*.¹²¹ Of interest is that the passage he quotes from "the extensive recension" of the *Sba bzhed* omits Sba Khri bzher, so that it has a total of five men who were ordained subsequent to the earlier ordination of Sba Khri gzigs. Another point he makes there is that, although a substantial number of texts, including Bu ston's *Chos 'byung*, write "Bya Khri gzigs", the name is in fact a corruption (*yi ge nyams*) of "Sba Khri gzigs." As for the different listings of the first ordained Tibetans, Dpa' bo II then writes anent what we have called Scenario Two:

*kha cig rba bzhed kyi sad mi drug po'i legs gsum gyi tshab
tu gtsang legs grub brjes / ngan lam gyi 'og tu khon klu'i
dbang po bcug pa la sad mi bdun byed par snang ngo /*

Some sources exchange Legs gsum of the six exam-

¹²⁰ On the question of the historical import of the manuscript of Pelliot tibétain 134 in connection with Glang dar ma's turbulent reign, see lastly C.A. Scherrer-Schaub, "Prière pour un apostat — Fragment d'histoire tibétaine," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 11 (1999), 217-46, in which she quite convincingly argues that the 'Wu'i dun brtan for whose benefit (*sku yon*) this prayer is dedicated is none other than Glang dar ma. Whereas such a work is not registered in the *Lhan* [or: *Ldan*] *dkar ma* catalog, the *'Phang thang ma* lists a little work on Madhyamaka by a certain Btsan po Dba' dun brtan, the orthography of which is but yet another scribal mishap; see *Dkar chag 'phang thang ma / Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, ed. Bod ljongs rten rdzas bshams mdzod khang (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2003), 57. Scherrer-Schaub's essay and this datum may have some repercussions for the way in which we need to view this last emperor of imperial Tibet. The misidentified, anonymous chronicle of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism [see n. 45] in a collection of *Dba' / Sba bzhed* texts has it *inter alia* that he founded the temples or monasteries (*gtsug lag khang*) of Khra sna and Spa gro Stag go phug po che, and that his wife Tshes spong za Btsan mo 'phan founded the temple or monastery of Bsam grub lcam bu; see *Dba' bzhed*, ed. Longs khang Phun tshogs rdo rje, Gangs can rig mdzod 56 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 2010), 291.

¹²¹ DPA'(p), 356-7 [DPA', 361]; see also Huang-Zhou (2010: 168).

ined individuals of the *Rba* [read: *Sba*] *bzhed* with Gtsang Legs grub and, having inserted 'Khon Klu'i dbang po after Ngan lam, appear to create seven examined individuals.

At this juncture, he also states, in obvious connection with the Zhwa lu print of the *Chos 'byung*, that:

bu ston chos 'byung du'ang par brko dus zhus dag pas nyams pa yin nam kun mkhyen bu ston lta bu 'di tsam la mi 'khrul mod kyang thog mar bya khri gzigs rab tu phyung bas mngon shes lnga dang ldan par gyur to // de nas rba gsal snang / rba khri bzher / sang shi ta / pa gor bai ro tsa na / ngan lam rgyal mchog / 'khon klu'i dbang po srung ba / rma rin chen mchog / gtsang legs grub dang bdun rab tu byung ba'i mtshan ye shes dbang po dang dpal dbyangs la sogs pa yin / sad mi bdun yin zer ro zhes rba khri gzigs dang po dang gsum pa gnyis kar lan re grangs / khri bzher gyi bu sang shi ta zhes pa'i bu dang rnam dbye chad / gcod mtshams nyams pas ming gnyis su song / dgu pa'am brgyad grangs nas mi bdun yin zhes pa dang / rba ratna'i ming ye shes dbang po yin pa 'dra ba sogs nag nog che bar snang ngo //

Is it a corruption introduced in Bu ston's chronicle by the editors at the time when the blocks were being cut? Although a scholar like the all-knowing Bu ston would indeed not err in merely something like this, inasmuch as Bya khri gzigs had first renounced the world, he would have been the one endowed with the five types of paranormal cognition. Then, the names in religion of the seven initiated ones: Rba Gsal snang, Rba Khri bzher, Sang shi ta, Pa gor Vairocana, Ngan lam Rgyal mchog, 'Khon Klu'i dbang po srung ba, Rma Rin chen mchog, Gtsang Legs grub, were "Ye shes dbang po," "Dpal dbyangs" etc. They are called the "seven examined individuals." Rba Khri gzigs, the first, and the third Rba Khri bzher are counted twice and the word "son" and the case ending (*rnam dbye*) in *khri bzher gyi bu sang shi ta* were omitted. Since the dividing punctuation-line (*gcod mtshams*) became corrupted, two names came about. Enumerating nine or eight, the text states these involved seven individuals. And there appears to have been a great deal of confu-

sion about the name of Sba Ratna seemingly being "Ye shes dbang po" etc.

Finally, as a further testimony to the problematic transmission of the names of the first ordained monks in the *Chos 'byung*, the *dbu med* manuscript of this work has a rather different text for the first part of the various prints in which Bu ston mentions another take on the names of the first seven ordained Tibetans; it states¹²²:

rgan 3 ni dbas ma ñdzu shrī [sublinear gloss: *rgyal po lcags pho rta lo pa lnga bcu rtsa drug la 'das pas bsam yas lcags po stag la rmang bting zer ba'ang 'dug*] / *dbas ratna rakṣita* / *bran ka mu ti ka* / *gzhon 3 ni* / *'khon nā ge ndra* / *pa gor bai ro tsa na* / *rtsang pa de wentra'o* // *bar pa glang ka ta na* / *rab tu byung ba'i mtshan ye shes dbang po yin la* / *mkhan po dā na śī las byas zhes kha 1 zer ro*

[Scenario One]

Some have alleged: The three older ones:

- [1] Dbas Ma ñdzu shrī {sublinear gloss: it is also said that: "Since the emperor passed on at the age of fifty-six [= fifty-five] in the iron-male-horse year [790], Bsam yas was built in the iron-male-tiger [year, 750]}."
- [2] Dbas Ratnarakṣita
- [3] Bran ka Mu ti ka.

The three younger ones:

- [4] 'Khon Nā ge ndra
- [5] Pa gor Bai ro tsa na
- [6] Rtsang De wentra.

The middle one:

- [7] Glang Ka ta na.

[?Dbas Ma ñdzu shrī's] ecclesiastic name was Ye shes dbang po and that the function of the abbot was performed by Dānaśīla [and not by Śāntarakṣita].

¹²² BUM, 1191.

To be noted, again, is that the manuscript has the same interlinear note as the Lhasa print. Further, even if it does not share with the four prints the same orthography for the clan name Dbas/Sba/Dbal'/Dpal, it does share with the Lhasa print the enumeration of the same individuals in Scenarios One and Two. However, like these prints, it has no *shad* / between 'Ba Khri bzher and Sang shi ta.

Now Tucci discussed the problems surrounding the identities of these first Tibetan monks almost fifty years ago. Little wonder, then, that we must now take some exception to two of his comments on Bu ston's listings. For one, he argued that Bu ston was politically motivated when he included 'Khon Klu'i dbang po [= 'Khon Nā ge ndra rakṣita, 'Khon Klu'i dbang po srung ba — *srung* and its variants *bsrungs* and *bsrung* are homophones], an ancestor of the 'Khon clan to which the ruling families of Sa skya belonged. That is to say, the fact that Bu ston placed him in the listing of the first Tibetan monks was due to the crucial importance Sa skya played at the time of his writing as Central Tibet's center of political power, albeit for the Mongol overlords.¹²³ This argument can now be safely dismissed, for the very simple reason that there is a much earlier precedent for his appearance among these “seven examined individuals,” one with which Bu ston was most probably quite familiar and which he obviously did not need to make up for political or diplomatic reasons. Writing more than a hundred years before him, Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan already mentions 'Khon Klu'i dbang po in these very terms¹²⁴.

¹²³ Tucci (Part Two, 1986: 16-7).

¹²⁴ RJE, 84/1. For an in depth discussion of various scenarios offered in Sa skya scholarship such as the writings of Rje btsun, see A mes zhabs 1629 study of Sa skya's ruling families, *Sa skya gdung rabs ngo mtshar bang mdzod*, ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 13. Rje btsun's genealogy is partly followed in the introduction of Shar pa Ye shes rgyal mtshan's (?1222-?1287) biography of 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235-80) of 1283, for which see *Bla ma dam pa chos kyi rgyal po rin po che'i rnam par thar pa rin chen phreng ba, The Slob bshad Tradition of the Sa skya Lam 'bras*, vol. 1 (Dehra Dun, 1983), 291 ff. The very same genealogy is equally registered by Bla ma dam pa in BLA, 6-7 [BLAm, 3a-b], where the first seven Tibetan monks are also enumerated with their names in Sanskrit and Tibetan, namely the three older ones: Dbas Ratnarakṣita Rin chen srung ba — he is said to have been the first of these —, Bha Dznyā nedra rakṣi ta Ye shes dbang po srung ba, Ratna indra rakṣi ta Rin chen dbang po srung ba, the middle one Glang Su ga ta varman rakṣi ta Bde bar gshegs pa'i go cha srung ba, and the three younger ones: Pa gor Bai ro tsa na rakṣi ta Rnam par snang mdzad srung ba, 'Khon Nā gendra rakṣi ta Klu'i dbang po srung ba and Gtsang De wendra rakṣi ta Lha'i dbang po srung ba. This listing is quite different from the one we encounter in RJE2, for which see below, and in *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, for which see RGYAL, 204-5 [Sørensen 1994: 369-70].

*de 'ang bod kyi dpal 'phrul gyi rgyal po khri srong lde
btsan gyi sku ring la sgra sgyur gyi lo tsā ba sad mi mi
bdun zhes bya ba las gzhon gsum gyi nang nas mkhas par
byed pa 'khon klu'i dbang po zhes bya ba yin no //*

Now, during the lifetime of the illustrious majestic emperor of Tibet Khri srong lde btsan, the one who acted as a scholar from among the three younger ones in [the grouping of] the so-called "seven examined men," the *lo tsā ba*-s who translate, was [an individual] called 'Khon Klu'i dbang po.

And elsewhere this same author had it that¹²⁵:

*sa yi bdag po nyid kyis rgyun du mchod pa'i sad mi mi
bdun las gzhon pa gsum du grags pa'i nang nas / yon tan
dpag tu med pa dang ldan zhing tshul khrims dri ma med
la / mngon par shes pa mnga' zhing rdzu 'phrul thogs pa
med pa dang ldan pa / 'khon klu'i dbang po'i bsrung ba
zhes bya'o //*

From among the renowned three younger ones in the grouping of the seven examined individuals who were continuously worshipped by the Lord of the Earth Khri srong lde btsan himself, there was an individual called 'Khon Klu'i dbang po'i bsrung ba with immeasurable qualities and stainless ethics, with prescience and unimpeded wondrousness.

In the preamble to his undated commentary of the *Vajravīdāraṇā-dhāraṇī* where he details its history of transmission in Tibet, Rje btsun writes that it was translated into Tibetan during the second half of Srong btsan sgam po's life, and adds that it was the earliest Buddhist text that was rendered into Tibetan (*bod la bsgyur ba la 'di snga ba yin no //*). To my knowledge, this is an unprecedented statement. He then proceeds to give what amounts to the earliest datable listing of the *sad mi mi bdun*. Equating them once again with translators, he writes¹²⁶:

¹²⁵ RJE2, 277/2. I owe this very important reference to Khang dkar (1985: 204). The little canonical work is found in TT, vol. 19, no. 745 [# 750], 241/5-7 [Dza, 265b-6b].

¹²⁶ RJE2, 277/2.

*rgan gsum / gzhon gsum / bar pa ni btsun pa ye shes dbang
po bya ba yin te / de dang bdun no // rgan gsum ni dbas
manydzu shrī dang / gtsang shī lendra dang / bran ka mu
ki ta'o // gzhon gsum ni / pa gor bai ro tsa na / 'khon klu'i
dbang po dang / gtsang de bendra rakṣita'o //*

The three older ones, three younger ones; the middle one was called Reverend (*btsun pa*) Ye shes dbang po; together with him, seven. The three older ones: Dbas Manydzu (*sic*) shrī, Gtsang Shī lendra [Tshul khrimś dbang po] and Bran ka Mu ki ta. The three younger ones: Pa gor Vairocana, 'Khon Klu'i dbang po and Gtsang De bendra rakṣita [= Lha'i dbang po srung ba].

I do not understand why Rje btsun, or the source to which he had access, relegated Ye shes dbang po to the middle rather than the most senior position, as we find in most other authorities. Both available versions of the *Sba bzhed* make it plain that "Ye shes dbang po" is the name in religion of Gsal snang, who was ordained by Śāntarakṣita in Mang yul prior to his ultimate departure for and sojourn in Central Tibet.¹²⁷ The texts of the *Sba bzhed* and the *Dbā' bzhed*, as well as Nyang ral's chronicle, agree that after Śāntarakṣita had passed away the emperor appointed Sba Gsal snang, alias Sba Ye shes dbang po, as the first Tibetan religious leader (*ring lugs*)¹²⁸ of the Buddhist community. And this is somewhat supported by an undated manuscript from Dunhuang, which can only be dated to not later than the first half of the eleventh century. There Dba' btsun ba Yes she [read: btsun pa Ye shes] dbang po and Dba' Dpal dbyangs are listed, in this order, among Śāntarakṣita's disciples.¹²⁹ Arguably, in-

¹²⁷ SBP, 11-2 [SBCh, 98-9, Tong-Huang 1990: 13], SBB, 11-2, and MES, 180-1. This narrative is missing from Nyang ral's treatise.

¹²⁸ On the title of *ring lugs*, see Chen Jianjian, "Tibetan *ring lugs* — An Investigation into the Evolution of the Term — Studies of Old Tibetan Terms from Dunhuang Texts, 1 [in Chinese]," *Zhongguo zangxue* 3 (1991), 134-40; a shorter version of this paper was published by the same author under her Tibetan name "Bsod nams skyid" as "Ring lugs zhes pa'i tha snyad kyi go don 'gyur tshul la rags tsam dpyad pa," *Tibetan Studies. Proceedings of the 6th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Fagernes 1992*, vol. 2, ed. P. Kvaerne (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 781-8. For another view, see M. Walter, "The Significance of the Term *ring lugs*: Religion, Administration and the Sacral Presence of the Btsan po," *Acta Orientalia Hungarica* 51 (1998), 309-19.

¹²⁹ Thomas (1951: 85-6); see also SBB, 62, SBP, 53 [SBCh, 159, Tong-Huang 1990: 47], and MES, 240 — only the latter uses the term *chos dpon* instead of *ring lugs*. The manuscripts of Nyang ral's work have here the unintelligible combination of *chos dpon du ring lugs*; see NYANG, 396 [NYANGb, 462, NYANGm, 424b]. When he left

dicators of Ye shes dbang po's senior and superior status are that he is listed first and that *btsun pa*, "reverend," is only affixed to his name. Of course, there is nothing in the book that would preclude us to conjecture that Rje btsun had included 'Khon Klu'i dbang po so as to further the respectability of his family. But it is clear that as far as Bu ston was only following a well-established tradition, invented or not, and did not fudge his sources in order to make a flattering statement in consonance with the political realities of his time. These items notwithstanding, 'Khon Klu'i dbang po inclusion is perhaps not entirely free from controversy. Indeed, Dpa' bo II cites a passage from the *Lo rgyus chen mo*, the *Great Annals* that is attributed to Khu ston Brtson 'grus g.yung drung (1011-75), in which he does *not* figure among a grouping of the six men who were the first ordained Tibetans!¹³⁰

We can also not give our unqualified assent to another one of Tucci's arguments, this one a bit confusing, for Bu ston having included Glang Ka ta na in his listing of these men. Glang Ka ta na but figures in the *Chos 'byung's* listing of what I have called Scenario One. This by no means necessarily reflects Bu ston's own position, although we can be sure it was the one held by Mang thos! Tucci argues furthermore that the latter is identical to Rlangs Sugatavarman - *glang* and *rlangs* are of course homophones — according to the listings in the later history of Ngor chen Dkon mchog lhun grub (1497-1557) and Ngor chen Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649-1705).¹³¹ But the Tibetan sources do not suggest that these two names refer to one and the same individual, and we cannot assume that this was the case just because the *Chos 'byung's* Scenario One has Glang Ka ta na and the chronicle of Rgyal sras Thugs mchog rtsal, an undated fragment of an unidentified chronicle,¹³² and the portion of the history attributed to Ngor chen Dkon mchog lhun grub have Rlangs/Glang Sugatavarman occupy the "middle" (*bar pa*) position. A branch of the Rlangs clan did not *de facto* achieve political paramountcy in Tibet until the 1350s under the leadership of Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal

for Lho brag to embark on a lengthy meditative retreat, the emperor appointed Sba Dpal dbyangs as *ring lugs*; see SBB, 64, and SBP, 54 [SBCh, 160, Tong-Huang 1990: 48]. Whereas MES, 241, has here simply [and wrongly] *slob dpon*, "master," the manuscripts of Nyang ral's treatise use the term *chos dpon*, "master of religion"; see NYANG, 397 [NYANGb, 464, NYANGm, 425b].

¹³⁰ DPA'(p), 357 [DPA', 361-2]. For the *Lo rgyus chen mo*, see the note in Martin (1997: 26).

¹³¹ Tucci (Part Two, 1986: 16).

¹³² THUGS, 263, and the anonymous *Bod gangs can du bstan pa dang bstan 'dzin ci ltar byon pa'i rag rim gcig bsdus te phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa'i zin ris* (sic) (Gangtok, 1976), 668-9. We will see below that he is also listed by Cha gan albeit not in the center-position.

mtshan (1302-64), who himself had been appointed myriarch of Phag mo gru myriarchy on September 23, 1322. If so, one would have to wonder why we do not expressly encounter his name in the *Padma bka' thang* or, for that matter, the *Bka' thang sde lnga*, for these works surfaced when he was gaining or was in firm control first of Dbus and then of Gtsang as well. An enigma, a Glang Ka ta na is nowhere registered in the extant genealogies of the Rlangs clan or in Ta'i si tu's autobiography. In the latter, Ta'i si tu but indicates that there was a connection between the Rlangs and the 'Khon families as long ago as the second half of the eighth century. During a difficult political meeting held in Rab btsun sometime around the year 1351, he had made a speech in which he remarked on the close teacher-disciple relationship that had existed between 'Khon Klu'i dbang po and the "spiritual friend" (*dge bshes*) Rlangs Khams pa Go cha.¹³³ At first glance we may consider this a rhetorical ploy on his part in his attempt to provide a historical precedent that might be used towards a reconciliation of sorts with the powers at Sa skya and its 'Khon family. But was it one? It is curious or was *this* politically motivated that, earlier, Bla ma dam pa had even gone so far as to suggest, in an apparently unprecedented fashion, that both Rlangs Khams pa Go cha and Thon mi Sambhoṭa were responsible for the creation of the Tibetan script in the first half of the seventh century!¹³⁴ One of the two major genealogies of the Rlangs clan briefly observes that Rlangs Khams pa Go cha and Rlangs Khams pa Bai ro tsa na [= Vairocana] were two Tibetan translators of Buddhist scripture. And it says rather vaguely that they lived "during the lifetime[s] of the three *rgyal po me[s] dbon*," that is, in Tibet's imperial period.¹³⁵ Some colophons of a Tibetan rendition of the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*¹³⁶ associate

¹³³ See his *Bka' chems mthong ba don ldan*, *Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru rgyas pa*, ed. Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs, *Gangs can rig mdzod 1* (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 205.

¹³⁴ BLA, 6 [= BLAm, 3a]. This is absent from *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, which only registers Thon mi as the author of the Tibetan script; see Sørensen (1994: 167 ff.).

¹³⁵ See the anonymous RLANGS, 37 [RLANGS1, 176].

¹³⁶ See my forthcoming "Notes on the Diffusion of the Translations of the Large *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (*Yum rgyas pa*) in Early Tibet." See also the Dalai Lama V's *Record of Teachings Received. The Gsan-yig of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*, vol. 4 (New Delhi, 1971), 301. Rlangs Khams pa Go cha is already mentioned in connection with this sutra in NYANG, 394; NYANGb, 461 has here "Glang 'Khams Go cha," and NYANGm, 423b, "Glang Khams Go cha." NYANG, 398 [NYANGb, 465, NYANGm, 427b] refers to a Khams pa Go cha as a Senior Interior Minister (*nang blon chen po*), who was dispatched to Lho brag by Khri srong lde btsan to fetch Sba Ye shes dbang po in order that he put a stop to the spate of self-mutilations and suicides that ensued in the aftermath of the debates between the parties led by Hwa shang Mahāyāna and Kamalaśīla. Khams pa Go cha must have felt a sense of urgency, for his sovereign had told him that he would be ex-

Rlangs Khams pa Go cha with an early translation of this text and indicate that he flourished in the second half of the eighth century. This means that at least the time-period presumed by Ta'i si tu's assertion is right on target and that he was not subordinating history to his ideological and political ambitions and will. Strangely and inexplicably, the list of names of the Tibetan translators in the prints and the manuscript of the *Chos 'byung* consistently prefix Khams pa Go cha's name by "Nyang" and not "Rlangs," but there is enough evidence for holding that this is an old contamination and/or "carvo" of the text.¹³⁷ The by far shorter genealogy of the Rlangs clan but mentions a Su ka/ga ta go cha, that is, *Sugatavarma, as the second son of Gser pa Rgyal 'bring shang rdzong and the younger brother of Rgyal btsan klu bzher.¹³⁸ On the other hand, he figures much more prominently in the longer, more thick description of the Rlangs clan as a contemporary of Padmasambhava and Myang/Nyang Ting nge 'dzin bzang po, but not explicitly as having been one of the "examined individuals."¹³⁹ As is suggested by the citation from Yar lung Jo bo Shākya rin chen sde's chronicle of 1376 in the next paragraph, a scion of the 'Khon family had even taken a sister of Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba as his wife! Further, A mes zhabs equates Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba with Rlangs Bde bar gshegs pa go cha bsrungs pa.¹⁴⁰ So far, the earliest source for his inclusion in the listing of these men is the 1304 history of the *Lam 'bras* teachings by Cha gan Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan, for which see below, and the same recurs in Tshe

ecuted were he not to find him and be unsuccessful in having Sba Ye shes dbang po return to the court. In SBb, 65, he is called Interior Minister (*nang blon*) Khams pa, and Minister (*blon po*) Kham pa in SBch, 161 [Tong-Huang 1990: 49], SBp, 55; MES, 242, has the problematic [and nonsensical] "Interior Minister Minister" (*nang blon blon*) Kham[s] pa. The question is whether this man and Rlangs Khams pa Go cha are one and the same and my surmise is that they are.

¹³⁷ Szerb (1990: 114) and BUM, 1230. We find the same "Nyang Khams pa Go cha" noted in the Lhasa Zhol print of the catalog section of the *Chos 'byung* anent the translation of the *Satasahasrikaprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, for which see Nishioka, "An Index to the Catalog Section of 'Bu ston's Chronicle of Buddhism' I, "Tōkyō daigaku bungakubu bunka kōryō kenkyū shisetsu kenkyū kiyō 4 (1980), 68. Nyang Khams pa Go cha is also registered in the listing of the first translators and men of religion in the Sde dge print of the PBT, 415. On the other hand, the cognate listing in the *Lo pan bka' i thang yig*, in BPSL, 404, has "Khams pa Go cha."

¹³⁸ See the anonymous *Lha rigs rlangs kyi skye rgyud*, *Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru rgyas pa*, ed. Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs, Gangs can rig mdzod 1 (Lhasa: Xizang minzu chubanshe, 1986), 21, and the *Rlangs kyi gdung rgyud po ti bse ru*, another manuscript of the text [pp. 97-159], in *The History of the Gnyos Lineage of Kha rag...* (Dolanji, 1978), 146.

¹³⁹ RLANGS, 91-6 [RLANGS1, 316-28].

¹⁴⁰ *Sa skya gdung rabs ngo mtshar bang mdzod*, 12-3.

dbang rgyal's 1447 study of the Mar pa Bka' brgyud pa tradition.¹⁴¹ Neither Cha gan nor Tshe dbang rgyal is known to have had an axe to grind with this listing.

Judging from several of his remarks in his chronicle, Yar lung Jo bo enjoyed excellent relations with Bdag chen Kun dga' rin chen (1339-99), the seventeenth grand-abbot of Sa skya monastery. It was most likely through him that he was granted access to some of Sa skya's most "private" documents, the family chronicles of that branch of the 'Khon clan that had founded and controlled, if not always wholly successfully, Sa skya and her estates. In fact, his exposition of the early history of this clan in his chronicle is surprisingly comprehensive and it appears to have been used rather extensively later on by Stag tshang pa Dpal 'byor bzang po in his compilation of 1434 [and somewhat beyond].¹⁴² The passage from Yar lung Jo bo's chronicle to which I should like to draw attention has to do with the fortunes of the family during the reign of Khri srong lde btsan and its nuptial ties with the Rlangs clan. The text states¹⁴³:

*de'i dus su bod na sprul pa'i rgyal po khri srong lde btsan
bzhugs pa'i sku ring la / za hor gyi mkhan po zhi ba 'tsho
gdan drangs / de'i slob bu bod kyi btsun pa la snga ba sad
mi mi bdun du grags pa yod / rgan gsum /^a gzhon gsum /^a
bar pa^b dang bdun yod pa la / bar pa rlangs^c khams pa su ga
ta warma rakši ta zhes bya ste / bod skad du bde bar gshegs
pa bsrung ba zhes bya'o //
dkon pa rje gung stag ni blo che zhing 'jig rten gyi bya ba
la mkhas pas /^d rgyal po'i nang rje bo^e yun ring du byas /
de'i ming 'khon dpal po che zhes kyang grags so // des
brlangs^c khams pa lotstsha ba'i bu mo brlangs^c za sne
chung ma bya ba khab tu bzhes pa la / sras gnyis byung
ba'i che ba des /^a dba' ye shes dbang po dang / rang gi
zhang po'i thad du rab tu byung ste / 'khon klu'i dbang po
bsrung ba zhes bya'o //
'ga' zhig gis^d mkhan po zhi ba 'tsho yin la / slob dpon rang*

¹⁴¹ *Lho rong chos 'byung*, ed. Gling dpon Pdama skal bzang and Ma grong Mi 'gyur rdo rje, Gangs can rig mdzod 26 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1994), 368.

¹⁴² See the *Rgya bod yig tshang chen mo*, ed. Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las (Cheng du: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1985), 307-8; for a translation from the University of Washington manuscript of the text, see E.G. Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts. History & Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*, ed. K.R. Schaeffer, Studies in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001), 104. It turns out that Dpal 'byor bzang po was the uncle of the better known Stag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen (1405-77).

¹⁴³ YAR, 142-3 [YAR1, 137-8].

*gi zhang po yin zer ro // gang ltar yang / lo tstsha ba gzhon
gsum gyi nang nas thugs rab che ba / 'khon na ga inda^f
rakṣi ta zhes pa sngags dang mtshan nyid kyi yon tan phun
sum tshogs pa mnga' bas / de nas 'khon la grags pa chen po
byung ba yin no //*

^a YAR1 omits.

^c YAR *brlangs*. ^e YAR1 *kha*.

^b YAR1 adds *gcig*.

^d YAR omits. ^f YAR1 *itra*.

At that time, during the time when Khri srong lde btsan, wondrously emanated ruler (*sprul pa'i rgyal po*), dwelled in Tibet, Śāntarakṣita, abbot from Za hor, was invited. As for his ordinandi (*slob bu*), the Tibetan monks, the earliest were known as the seven examined ones. As for those who were the seven, to wit, the three older ones, the three younger ones, and the middle one, the middle one was one called Rlangs Khams pa Su ga ta varman rakṣi ta; in Tibetan he was called Bde bar gshegs pa [add: *go cha* (= *varman*)] bsrung ba.

Inasmuch as Dkon pa Rje Gung stag was of great intelligence and learned in the ways of the world, he acted for a long time as head of the [?imperial] household (*nang rje bo*). He is also known as 'Khon Dpal po che.

He took for his wife Rlangs za [better: *bza'*] Sne chung ma, the sister of Rlangs Khams pa Lo tsā ba, and the eldest of the two sons that were born to them took his vows in the presence of Dba' Ye shes dbang po [bsrung ba]¹⁴⁴ and his own maternal uncle; he was called 'Khon Klu'i dbang po bsrung ba.

Some alleged that while the officiating abbot was Śāntarakṣita, the officiating preceptor (*slob dpon*) was his own maternal uncle.¹⁴⁵ Whatever the case might have been, since the one called 'Khon Na ga indra rakṣi ta, the one with the highest spirituality among the three younger translators, was of excellent en-

¹⁴⁴ Gtsang Byams pa Rdo rje rgyal mtshan has *slob dpon zhi ba mtsho*, "Master Śāntarakṣita," instead of Yar lung Jo bo's *dba' ye shes dbang po*; see his *Sa skya mkhon* (*sic*) *gyi gdungs rab rin po che'i 'phreng ba*, 4b.

¹⁴⁵ On the basis of his name in religion, Stag tshang Lo tsā ba dismisses the allegation that he was ordained by his maternal uncle in his 1477 study of this family, the *Dpal ldan sa skya pa'i 'khon gyi gdung rabs 'dod dgu'i rgya mtsho*, *dbu med ms.*, C.P.N. catalog no. 002437, 8a.

dowment in mantric and philosophical Buddhism, great renown accrued henceforth to the 'Khon.

The succinct passage on the history of Buddhism in Tibet by Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo makes no mention of any *sad mi*.¹⁴⁶ In 1278, U rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230-1309) wrote a short royal genealogy (*rgyal rabs*), apparently or apocryphally on behalf of Emperor Qubilai.¹⁴⁷ Like the better known genealogies written by Rje btsun and 'Phags pa,¹⁴⁸ he, too, does not refer at all to the first ordained Tibetans and thus his work will also not detain us here.

In addition to the dossier on the "seven examined individuals" presented by Tucci and Khang dkar,¹⁴⁹ we can now draw brief attention to the following other listings of the "examined men" - the names given below are given exactly, warts and all, as they are found in the texts -, each of which predate Bu ston's *Chos 'byung*:

I. *Lde'u Jo sras¹⁵⁰

[1] Ca Dpal dbyangs, the earliest one (*snga ba*)

¹⁴⁶ See the *Chos la 'jug pa'i sgo*, SSBB vol. 2, no. 17, 343/2.

¹⁴⁷ *Rgyal rab[s] kyi[s] phreng ba*, *dbu med* ms., C.P.N. catalog no. 002898(8), fols. 13. Though not attested in the text itself, U rgyan pa's undated biography by his disciple Bsod nams 'od zer, does link its composition to Qubilai; see the *Grub chen o rgyan pa'i rnam par thar pa byin rlabs kyi chu rgyun* (Gangtok, 1976), 120 [Ibid., ed. Rta mgrin tshe dbang, Gangs can rig mdzod 32 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1997), 171]. *Rgyal rabs kyi phreng ba*, fol. 13a, mentions Činggis Qan as a world-conqueror, but nowhere Qubilai himself and, in MANG, 65, 68, Mang thos refers to and quotes [or, better, paraphrases] passages from fols. 7b and 9a of this little treatise. For the environment in which U rgyan pa had written the latter, see my "U rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230-1309), Part Two: For Emperor Qubilai? His *Garland of Tales about Rivers*," *The Relationship between Religion and State (chos srid zung 'brel) in Traditional Tibet*, ed. C. Cüppers (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2004), 299-339.

¹⁴⁸ These were edited in G. Tucci, *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma. Tibetan Chronicles by Bsod nams grags pa*, vol. 1, Serie Orientale Roma XXIV (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1976), 127-35.

¹⁴⁹ Khang dkar (1985: 225).

¹⁵⁰ JO, 123-4. This listing is of course quite problematic were we to accept that this Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje is the same as the one who, according to wide-spread Tibetan opinion, ended up assassinating Glang dar ma in 842. Snyag Ku ma ra (*sic*) [read: Gnyags Ku mā ra] is probably to be identified as Gnyags Dznyā na ku mā ra [Jñānakumāra] or Ye shes gzhon nu; for him see the Gnyags family chronicle by Chos nyid ye shes of 1775, the *Gnyags ston pa'i gdung rabs dang gdan rabs*, ed. Rta mgrin tshe dbang, Gangs can rig mdzod 31 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1997), 91-7. Already NYANG, 275 [NYANGA, 436, NYANGb, 317, NYANGm, 299a], states that he was a translator-Sanskritist under Khri srong lde btsan's father Khri lde gtsug btsan (r. 712-54/5), alias Mes ag tshom[s].

- [2] Gsal snang
- [3] Ngan lam Rgyal mchog dbyangs, the highest among the monks of a noble family (*btsun pa*)
- [4] Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje
- [5] Ā tsa [ra] Rin chen mchog, the highest among those of acute intellect (*blo rno ba'i rab*)
- [6] La gsum Rgyal ba'i dbang phyug
- [7] Bai ro tsa na, the highest among scholars (*mkhas pa'i rab*),

and then we have the other list:

- [1] Ā tsa rya Ye shes dbang po, the earliest one
- [2] Gnyan Ā tsa rya Dpal dbyangs, the highest among the learned one[s]
- [3] Rma Rin chen mchog
- [4] Snyags Ku ma ra
- [5] Nam mkha' snying po, the highest in spiritual power (*mthu*)

II. Mkhas pa Lde'u¹⁵¹

[The earliest monks, the two *ban dhe* (< *vandya*) of the Rba [family]

- [1] Sba Gsal snang
- [2] Sba Gsal sbyar
- [3] Btsun pa Ngan lam
- [4] Lha lung Dpal gyi rdo rje
- [5] Rin chen, the sharp-minded (*blo rno ba*)
- [6] Rgyal ba byang chub, [?who took his vows] three times (*lan gsum*)
- [7] Mkhas pa Bai ro tsa na

[The earliest elder (*gnas brtan*, **sthavira*)]

- [8] 'Or Rgyad kha phun
- [9] Sman Shākya
- [10] 'Gar Shākya
- [11] Snubs Nam mkha' snying po, the one of great magical power
- [12] Yon tan snying po, the sharp-minded
- [13] Myang [Rlāngs] Khams pa Go cha, the sharp-minded with intelligence

III. Ne'u Paṇḍita¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ LDE'U, 358.

- [1] Rad na, the son of Rba Rmang gzigs
- [2] Shākya pra bha, the son of 'Chims A nu
- [3] Legs grub, the son of Rtsangs The len tra
- [4] Rba Dpal dbyangs
- [5] The son of Zhang Nyang bzangs
- [6] Hong len, the son of Shud
- [7] Rba Gsal snang

IV Cha gan¹⁵³

- [1] Pa kor Bai ro tsa na rakṣi ta
- [2] Dbas Dznya na in tra rakṣi ta
- [3] Bha Ratna intra rakṣi ta
- [4] Snyegs Sku ma ra intra rakṣi ta
- [5] Glang Su ga do varman rakṣi ta
- [6] 'Khon na ga intra rakṣi ta
- [7] Rtsang Dhe ba intra rakṣi ta'

Finally, a recently published chronicle of still unknown authorship that can most likely be dated to the first half of the fourteenth century records the following four alternate views on the examined seven [I transliterate and translate the passage, warts and all]¹⁵⁴:

dba' rad na [gloss: *rba lha lod kyi bu dpa' khri bzangs rab tu phyung ngo*] / *mchims* [gloss: *mchims a nu'i bu*] *shākya pra bha* / *rtsangs legs grub* / *dpa' 'or bai ro tsa na* / *zhang lha bu* / *shod bu khong len* / *dba' ye shes dbang po* [gloss: *dba' gsal snang* / *dba' ye shes dbang po* / *dba' rad na rnam rnam grangs su 'chad pa snang ngo //*] *dang bdun slob dpon zhi ba 'tshos rab tu phyung ngo //*
kha 1 nas dba' rad na / *dba' gsal snang* / *'ba' khri bzher sang shi ta* / *bai ro tsa na* / *ngan lam rgyal ba mchog dbyangs* / *dma' rin chen mchog las /rgyal ba'i byang chub dang bdun du 'chad la* /
kha 1 nas dba' manydzu shrī varma / *rtsangs the se na tra* / *bran ka mu ti* [gloss: *bran kha gu kha*] / *glang su kha*

¹⁵² NE'U, 21 [NE'U1, 19]. The first listing in THUGS, 263, corresponds to Ne'u Paṇḍita's grouping.

¹⁵³ CHA, 7a.

¹⁵⁴ Anonymous, *Rba bzhed (sic!), Dba' bzhed*, ed. Longs khang Phun tshogs rdo rje, 287; on this work, see my "A Hitherto Unknown Tibetan Religious Chronicle From the Early Fourteenth Century," which is forthcoming in *Zangxue xuekan / Journal of Tibetan Studies* 7 (2011).

[gloss: *in tra zer*] / *bai ro tsa na* / 'khon klu'i dbang po /
rtsags bai na tra rakṣi ta dang bdun du 'chad cing /
kha 1 nas dba' manydzu shri varma / *bran ka sgo'i dbang*
po bsrung ba / *rtsangs lha'i dbang po bsrung ba* / *bai ro tsa*
na / *klu'i dbang po bsrung ba* / *gzhon nu bsrung ba* / *lce*
khyi 'brug dang bdun du 'chad do //

[1] Dba' Rad na [gloss: Dba' Khri bzangs, the son of Rba Lha lod was ordained], Mchims [gloss: the son of Mchims A nu] Shākya pra bha, Rtsangs Legs grub, Dpa' 'or Bai ro tsa na, Zhang Lha nu, Shod bu Khong len, Dba' Ye shes dbang po [gloss: Dba' Gsal snang, Dba' Ye shes dbang po, and Dba' rad na appear to be the same]; the seven were ordained by Master Śāntarakṣita.

[2] Some state the seven to be: Dba' Rad na, Dba' gsal snang, 'Ba' Khri bzher sang shi ta, Bai ro tsa na, Ngam lam Rgyal ba mchog dbyangs, Dma' Rin chen mchog las, and Rgyal ba'i byang chub,

[3] and some state the seven to be: Dba' Manydzu shri varma, Rtsangs The se na tra, Bran ka Mu ti [gloss: Bran Kha gu kha], Glang Su kha [gloss: it is alleged {his name was} In tra], Bai ro tsa na, 'Khon Klu'i dbang po, and Rtsags Bai na rakṣi ta,

[4] and some state the seven to be: Dba' Manydzu shri varma, Bran ka Sgo'i dbang po bsrung ba, Rtsangs Lha'i dbang po bsrung ba, Bai ro tsa na, Klu'i dbang po bsrung ba, Gzhon nu bsrung ba, and Lce Khyi 'brug.

What can we do with these many disparate lists of the first ordained Tibetan men? How are these to be interpreted if not in the sense that somewhere along the line the tradition dropped the ball and is here wholly unreliable? There is of course a tradition in India and Tibet that the ordinandus (*mkhan po*, *upādhyāya*) lends part of his own name in religion. Strictly speaking, the ordinandus is technically called the *upasampatprekṣin* and the *upādhyāya* is the one who looks after the ordinandi upon their ordination. Nonetheless, it would appear that one and the same individual played both roles and, indeed, in many, if not all, relevant sources it is the *upādhyāya* who relinquishes part of his name to the ordinand. This was clearly the case with Śākyaśrībhadrā who lent the second part of his name, *śrībhadrā*/*dpal bzang po* to his *ordinandi*. Thus, Stag tshang Lo tsā ba was certainly not claiming anything that was bafflingly new when he

wrote in his autocommentary on his *Grub mtha' kun shes* of 1463 that the seven *sad mi* all received *rakṣita*, the final element of Śāntarakṣita name, as part of their name by virtue of the latter being their ordaining abbot.¹⁵⁵ This would lend further credence to Cha gan's listing. But Stag tshang Lo tsā ba then goes on to say that while such an exchange of names is used for a present-day ritual (*da ltar gyi cho ga*), it is "absent in earlier rituals (*sngon chog = sngon gyi cho ga*), in the 'come here[, oh monk]' (*tshur shog = ehi bhikṣu, dge slong tshur shog*),¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ For what follows, see his *Grub mtha' kun shes nas mtha' bral grub pa zhes bya ba'i bstan bcos nram par bshad pa legs bshad kyi rgya mtsho* (Thimphu, 1976), 113-4 [= ed. Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, Gsung 'bum pod dang po, Mes po'i shul bzhas, vol. 29 (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009), 182-3].

¹⁵⁶ This statement will have to be looked into with greater care. For variations with the *ehi bhikṣu* formula in the various *vinaya* traditions, see briefly Jin-il Chung's recent *Handbuch für die Buddhistische Mönchsordination bei den Mūlasarvāstivādins* (Gimpo: Institute for Buddhist Scriptures in Korean Translation, 2011) 7, n. 4. The *ehibhikṣukā upasampadā* (*tshur shog gi bsnyen par rdzogs pa*) type of ordination is of course noted in many sources; see, for example, Vasubandhu's (4thc.) *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in L. de La Vallée Poussin, tr., *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, Tome III, Chapitre 4, *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques*, volume XVI (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1971), 60-1. Among many discussions, a particularly fine survey of the so-called "self ordination" (*rang byung gi bsnyen par rdzogs pa, svāma upasampadā*) [of the historical Buddha, etc.] versus the *tshur shog gi bsnyen par rdzogs pa* is found in Rong ston Shākya rgyal mtshan's (1367-1449/51) large commentary on the *Vinayakārikā* by 'Phags pa Sa ga'i lha [Ārya Viśākhadeva], a disciple of a certain 'Phags pa Dge 'dun 'bangs [Ārya Saṅghadāsa], in *Dul ba me tog phreng rgyud kyi nram 'grel tshig don rab tu gsal ba'i nyi 'od*, *Collected Works*, vol. Ta [9], ed. Bsod nams tshe 'phel (Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa/Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2008), 126 ff. The text of the *Vinayakārikā* is found in SDE, vol. 45, no. 4128 [# 4123], 287/2-304/6 [Shu, 1b-63a], and Rong ston comments are anent the passage on 287/6-7 [Shu, 3b-4a]. According to the colophon of the *Vinayakārikā*'s Sde dge print, the Nepalese, that is, Newar scholar (*bal po'i mkhas pa*) Jayākara and the Tibetan Sanskritist Prajñākīrti [Shes rab grags] co-translated Viśākhadeva's work in, most likely, the eleventh century at the behest of Lha bla ma Zhi ba 'od (1016-1111). And Rong ston and Vanaratna (1384-1468) subsequently revised this translation. Of the first catalogs of the Tanjur, Dbus pa Blo gsal's early fourteenth century catalog of a/the Snar thang Tanjur, one of the two catalogs of Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje (1284-1339), the 1362 catalog that was compiled by Byang chub rgyal mtshan et al., and the one that Mnga' ris Chos rje Phyogs las rnam rgyal's (1306-86) compiled of a/the Byang Ngam ring Tanjur — this catalog is wrongly attributed to Sgra tshad pa Rin chen rnam rgyal (1318-88) — only give the author's name and dispense with name[s] of the translator[s]; see, respectively, *Bstan bcos kyi dkar chag*, eighty-one-folio *dbu med* manuscript, C.P.N. catalog no. 002376, 48a, *Bstan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag*, *Collected Works*, vol. Nga (Lhasa, 2006), 711, *Bstan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che'i za ma tog*, *The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa] [Lhasa print], part 28 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 543-4, and *Bstan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag dri med 'od kyi phreng ba, Jo nang dpe tshogs*, vol. 23, ed. Ngag

dbang kun dga' 'jam dbyangs blo gros (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2010), 156. Bu ston's 1335 catalog of the Zhwa lu Tanjur mentions the name of the author as well as that of the translators albeit without the place-name with which Jayākara might have been associated; see *Bstan 'gyur gyi dkar chag yid bzhin nor bu dbang gi rgyal po'i phreng ba, The Collected Works of Bu ston* [and Sgra tshad pa], Lhasa print, part 26 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 612. The other catalog that Karma pa III had compiled as well as Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po's (1382-1456) 1447 catalog of the Tanjur at Brag dkar theg chen gling monastery in Glo bo Smon thang mention only the names of the author and the Tibetan translator Shes rab grags [= Prajñākīrti]; see, *Rje rang byung rdo rje'i thugs dam bstan 'gyur gyi dkar chag, Collected Works*, vol. Nga (Lhasa, 2006), 580, and *Bstan bcos 'gyur ro 'tshal gyi dkar chag thub bstan rgyas pa'i nyi 'od, Collected Works*, vol. 4 (Dehra Dun: Sa skya Centre, 1999?), 598 [= *Evam bka' 'bum 7/20, Mes po'i shul bzhaq*, vol. 138, Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2010), 296]. In other words, there is no question of any consistency among these early catalogs! Further, only the catalogs of 1335 and 1362 as well as the one by Mnga' ris Chos rje state that text consists of five *bam po* units. The other catalogs that were mentioned above are silent on this matter. The fourteenth century Bka' gdams pa scholar from Snar thang monastery Bsam gtan bzang po has the same five *bam po*-s in his 1356 commentary on the *Vinayakārikā*, for which see *Me tog phreng rgyud kyi ti ka bla ma'i legs bshad rgya cher bshad pa legs bshad rgya mtsho, Bka' gdams gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs*, vol. 38, ed. Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang (Chengdu: Si khron dpe skrun tshogs pa / Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2007), 179. On the other hand, Rong ston explicitly observes that it was not five but six *bam po* units in length, and this is also the measurement of the text that is contained in the Sde dge print. The "all-knowing lama" to whom Bsam gtan bzang po on occasion makes reference is a certain Dka' bzhi pa Shes rab seng ge. This Snar thang master's own undated summary and commentary on the *Vinayakārikā*, which was petitioned by a certain Shes rab bzang po, can be found in *Rare Sa skya pa Commentaries from Nepal* (Delhi, 1977), 1-29, 31-243, and is subtitled *Legs bshad rgya mtsho*. The Dka' bzhi pa makes no mention of either the length of the *Vinayakārikā* or its translators, but he does note at one point, on p. 241, that three thousand four hundred and thirty-four years had elapsed from the Buddha's passing to a water-female-hen year. Given that the Bka' gdams pa communities at Snar thang generally held that the Buddha passed away ca. 2133 B.C., this can only mean that the water-female-hen year in question is 1333. A major intellectual figure of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Rong ston has now come into his own in D.P. Jackson, "Rong ston bKa' bcu pa: Notes on the title and travels of a great Tibetan scholastic," *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ. Papers dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, ed. B. Kellner et al., Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 70.1 (Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007), 345-60, and the literature that is cited therein. The concluding remarks in his undated work, which he wrote while residing in Gsang phu sne'u thog monastery, suggests a somewhat different story concerning the text's translations — for what follows, see 'Dul ba me tog phreng rgyud kyi rnam 'grel tshig don rab tu gsal ba'i nyi 'od, 633-4. Namely, he first writes in the ensuing verse that:

lo paṅ gang gis bsgyur ba ni //
 'phags pa'i pho brang byang phyogs su //
 lha rgyal bla ma zhi ba 'od //

dam chos skyong mdzad sku drin la //
chos dbyings gtsug lag khang chen du //
mkhas pa dza yā a ka ra /
snyegs tshul pra dznya kirti yis //
gsol ba btab nas bdag gis bsgyur //
dges des thub bstan rgyas par shog //

By which translators and paṇḍitas the text was translated:
 I translated the text after I was petitioned,
 By the scholar Jayākara and Snyegs tshul Prajñākīrti.
 In the great Chos dbyings [Dharmadhātu] temple,
 During the lifetime of the divine king, Bla ma Zhi ba 'od,
 The pretector of the holy religion,
 In the citadel of the Noble Avalokiteśvara, in the northern region,
 May the Sage's Teaching spread by the virtue engendered through this work.

Obviously, there is something awry here. We probably have to read *sku ring la* instead of *sku drin la* and I have translated this line accordingly. The notion that Jayākara and Snyegs Prajñākīrti had requested this translation is contradicted by all the entires of this translation in the early catalogs and the identity of "me" rests quite obscure. In short, I am not in the position to suggest a solution to this problem. The verse is then followed by a statement in prose to the effect that the text was first translated by the Indian Mūlasarvāstivādin monk-*paṇḍita* Jayākara-gupta and Lo tsā ba Bsnyel 'or Prajñākīrti — note the variant clan affiliation of the Prajñākīrti in the verse! Then, the Nepalese *paṇḍita* Jayākara and the Tibetan translator Prajñākīrti subsequently revised the earlier translation. The colophon of the Sde dge print suggested that Rong ston and Vanaratna later revised the revised translation. According to Gser mdog Paṅ chen's biography of Rong ston, the latter first met Vanaratna in *circa* 1426, on which occasion he availed himself of the opportunity to study Sanskrit grammar with the master from Chittagong as well as the Cakrasamvara and other texts; see *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i bshes gnyen shākya rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i zhal snga nas kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i rol mtsho*, *Complete Works*, vol. 16 (Thimphu, 1975), 310. Vanaratna apparently gave him a manuscript copy of Śarvavarman's *Katantra* during this time. Rong ston does *not* mention Vanaratna in his *Vinayakārikā* commentary, and expresses his debt only to Mkhan chen Blo gsal ba and Dmar ston Chos rje. Gser mdog Paṅ chen stipulates, on p. 311 of his biography, that he studied the *Vinayakārikā* with the Snar thang scholar and its fourteenth abbot Lnga rig Dpang ston Grub pa shes rab (1357-1423). It is possible that the "Mkhan chen Blo gsal ba" is none other than this Grub pa shes rab. The absence of any overt mention Vanaratna from Rong ston's *Vinayakārikā* commentary might therefore suggest that he had written it prior to his meeting with the former. Yet, he does on occasion modify a rendition or refer to and correct an explicitly earlier translation (*sngon 'gyur*) of the text; see, for example, *'Dul ba me tog phreng rgyud kyi rnam 'grel tshig don rab tu gsal ba'i nyi 'od*, 254, 454. Gser mdog Paṅ chen states in *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i bshes gnyen shākya rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i zhal snga nas kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i rol mtsho*, 360, that he completed this and other works in the earth-male-dragon year [1448], while Nam mkha' dpal bzang, another one of his biographers, writes that Rong ston composed this work the age of eighty-five [=four]; see *Bla ma dam pa rong ston chos rje'i rnam par thar pa phrin las rgyas shing rgyun mi chad pa'i rten 'brel bzang po*, *Collected Works* [of Rong ston], vol. Ka [1], ed. Bsod nams tshe 'phel (Chengdu: Si khron dpe

etc." He also notes that in the ordination practices of the [Mūla]sarvāstivāda *vinaya*, which is *the* corpus of canon law that prevailed in Tibet, the affixes of the names in religion are *dpal* (*śrī*), *bzang po* (*bhadra*), and *snying po* (*garbha*). This would mean that Śāntarakṣita was not Kamalaśīla's *ordinandus*, and that the latter may very well have become his disciple after his ordination.

Thusfar, then, Dpa' bo II's text-critical note on the problematic reading of the passage on the "examined men" of the Zhwa lu print of the *Chos 'byung*. One of the findings of this paper is that, as far as the inclusion of members of Sa skya's 'Khon family and the Rlangs clan among these men, one cannot but conclude that the differences in the various listings in the sources that belong to the latter half of the thirteenth century and beyond have absolutely no connection with the political realities of Central Tibet under Mongol and Sa skya rule and Phag mo gru rule during this time. This is not altogether unimportant. It signals a measure of intellectual integrity of these sources that may have been whittled away a bit with the remarks made to the contrary in the secondary literature. Another finding is of course that, from the twelfth century onward, there was no consensus among the Tibetan historians regarding the identities of the first young Tibetan men who had been "examined" and then ordained. Apparently, this was one of the many records of late Tibetan imperial history that had been irretrievably expunged.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS

Tibetan Sources

BLA	Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, <i>Bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar snang ba</i> , <i>Sa skya lam 'bras Literature Series</i> , vol. 16 (Dehra Dun: Sakya Centre, 1983), 1-121.
BLAm	Ibid. <i>dbu med</i> ms., C.P.N. catalog no. 002799(7), fols. 50.
BRAG	Brag dgon Zhabs drung Dkon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas, <i>Mdo smad chos 'byung</i> , ed. Smon lam rgya

skrun tshogs pa/Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2008), 168. D.P. Jackson, *The Early Abbots of 'Phan po Nalendra: The Vicissitudes of a Great Tibetan Monastery in the 15th Century*, 8, indicated that the sources differ on the year of his passing, from *circa* December 30, 1449, to sometime in 1451, but they appear to agree that Rong ston composed his study of the *Vinayakārika* towards the very end of his long life.

- mtsho (Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982).
- BTSL U rgyan gling pa, *Bka' thang sde lnga* [based on the Sde dge print], ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986).
- BU Bu ston Rin chen grub, *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 Zhol print, part 24 (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971), 633-1055.
- BU1 Ibid. [allegedly based on the Sde dge print], ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 1988).
- BUM Ibid. *Bu ston rin chen grub kyi gsung 'bum*, ed. Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang, 24 [24/28/3] (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig dpe skrun khang, 2008), 807-1414.
- CHA Cha gan Dbang phyug rgyal mtshan, *Lam 'bras kyi bla ma bod kyi lo rgyus rgyas pa bod bstan pa'i 'byung 'dems ma, dbu med ms.*, C.P.N. catalog no. 002864(4), fols. 92.
- DPA' Dpa' bo II Gtsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, Stod cha, ed. Rdo rje rgyal po (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986).
- DPA'(p) Ibid., *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* [Delhi print], vol. 1 (New Delhi, 1980).
- 'GOS 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal, *Rtsis la 'khrul ba sel ba* [Pho brang rgyal bzangs smon mkhar print], fols. 49.
- JO Lde'u Jo sras, *Lde'u chos 'byung*, ed. Chos 'dzoms (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987).
- Khang dkar Tshul khriims skal bzang (1985), *Bstan pa snga dar gyi chos 'byung 'brel yod dang bcas pa'i dus rabs kyi mtha' dpyod 'phrul gyi me long* (New Delhi: Western Tibetan Cultural Association).
- LDE'U Mkhas pa Lde'u, *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung*, ed. Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs and Nor brang O rgyan, Gangs can rig mdzod 3 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987).
- MANG Mang thos Klu sgrub rgya mtsho, *Bstan rtsis gsal ba'i nyin byed lhag bsam rab dkar*, ed. Nor brang O rgyan, Gangs can rig mdzod 4 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1987), 1-251.
- MES Anonymous. *Byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po chos rgyal mes dbon rnam gsum gyi rnam thar rin po che'i phreng ba* (Paro, 1980).

- NE'U Ne'u Paṇḍita Grags pa smon lam blo gros, *Sngon gyi gtam me tog phreng ba*, Bod kyi lo rgyus deb ther khag lnga, eds. Ldan lhun Sangs rgyas chos 'phel et al., Gangs can rig mdzod 9 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1990), 1-54.
- NE'U1 Ibid., *Sngon gyi gtam me tog gi phreng ba...with other rare historical texts from the library of Burmiok Athing T.D. Densapa* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1985), 1-50.
- NYANG Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer, *Chos 'byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi'i bcud*, ed. Nyan shul Mkhyen rab 'od zer et al., Gangs can rig mdzod 5 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1988).
- NYANGa Ibid., Manuscript "A" (Paro, 1979).
- NYANGb Ibid., Manuscript "B" (Paro, 1979).
- NYANGm Ibid., ed. R.O. Meisezahl, *Die große Geschichte des tibetischen Buddhismus nach alter Tradition Rnying ma'i chos 'byung chen mo* (Sankt Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 1985).
- PBT U rgyan gling pa, *Padma bka' thang* [based on the Sde dge print] (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1988).
- RGYAL ?Bla ma dam pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan, *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long* [based on the Sde dge print], eds. Rgyal sras Ngag dbang blo bzang and Mgon po rgyal mtshan (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982).
- RJE Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan, *Bla ma sa skya chen po'i rnam thar*, SSBB 3, no.5, 83/3-87/3.
- RJE1 Ibid., *Ga ring rgyal po la rtsis bsdu du btang ba'i yi ge*, SSBB 4, no.95, 104/1/6-4/6.
- RJE2 Ibid., *Rdo rje rnam par 'joms pa'i rgyud kyi gsal byed 'od zer can*, SSBB, vol. 4, no. 122, 277/1-82/2.
- RLANGS Anonymous, *Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru che dge yig tshang dang / mi rgyud grol thabs*, *Rlangs kyi po ti bse ru rgyas pa*, ed. Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs, Gangs can rig mdzod 1 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1986), 29-99.
- RLANGS1 Ibid., *Rlangs kyi gdung rgyud po ti bse ru*, *The History of the Gnyos Lineage of Kha rag...* (Dolanji, 1978), 159-337.
- SBb Sba Gsal snang, *Sba bzhed*, ed. Mgon po rgyal mtshan (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1980).
- SBch Ibid. *Bashi*, ed. Tong Jinhua and Huang Bufan (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1990), 83-210

- SBP Ibid., *Une chronique ancienne de Bsam yas: Sba bzhed*, ed. R.A. Stein (Paris: Publications de l'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1961)
- SSBB *Sa skya pa'i bka' 'bum* [Sde dge print], vols. 15, Comp. Bsod nams rgya mtsho (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968-9).
- THUGS Rgyal sras Thugs mchog rtsal, *Chos 'byung rin po che'i gter mdzod bstan pa gsal bar byed pa'i nyi 'od*, ed. Bu byung Dbang 'dus, Gangs can rig mdzod 17 (Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1991).
- TSHE Rig 'dzin Tshe dbang nor bu, *Bu ston kha ches mdzad pa'i chos 'byung rin po che'i mdzod las / rig pa 'dzin pa tshe dbang nor bus nye bar btus pa'o*, *Collected Works*, vol. IV (Dalhousie, 1973), 539-52.
- TSHE1 Ibid., *Kaḥ thog rig 'dzin tshe dbang nor bu'i bka' 'bum*, ed. Padma dbang chen rdo rje et al., Bar cha [vol. 2] (Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2006), 196-200.
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