

## Tibetan Expertise in Sanskrit Grammar (5): Two Blo gros brtan pas on *Vyākaraṇa* – So many Sthiramatis<sup>1</sup>

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**A**mong the prolific Tibetan authors in the field of Sanskrit linguistics in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries we find a triad of scholars named Blo gros brtan pa, respectively styled the second, third and fourth Blo gros brtan pa. They were indubitably thus regarded as members of a form of intellectual dynasty in reference (and reverence) to the famous Indian *paṇḍita* Sthiramati. Like their Indian namesake they were experts in various branches of Buddhist scholasticism. In this article I will discuss two works on Sanskrit grammar which can tentatively though confidently be attributed to two of the three Blo gros brtan pas. I will also briefly address the matter of the proliferation of Sthiramatis / Blo gros brtan pas in the Tibetan Middle Ages.

### 1. *Dpang lo tsā ba's translation of the Cāndra-vyākaraṇa Vṛtti.*

Given the fact that the *Cāndra-vyākaraṇa sūtra* text and a wide range of subsidiary treatises belonging to the *Cāndra* school have been included in the first, fourteenth-century redaction of the *Bstan 'gyur* section on Sanskrit grammar, it is remarkable that a Tibetan translation of Dharmadāsa's basic *vṛtti* commentary on the *Cāndra sūtra* text is conspicuously missing in this canon.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cordial thanks are due to Burkhard Quessel (curator of the Tibetan collection of the British Library, London) for magnanimously providing information on and digital pictures of relevant holdings of that library, and to Dr. Péter-Dániel Szántó (presently postdoc researcher at LIAS, Leiden University) for his invaluable assistance in the reading of the '*Vartula*' script passages.

<sup>2</sup> HSGLT 1: 54.

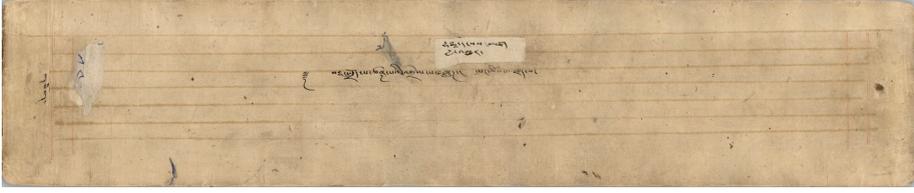


Illustration 1: Title page *Cāndra Vr̥tti*, BDRC W2PD17532 volume 3 section 1: f. 1r.



Illustration 2: Opening page *Cāndra Vr̥tti*, BDRC W2PD17532 volume 3 section 1: f. 1v.

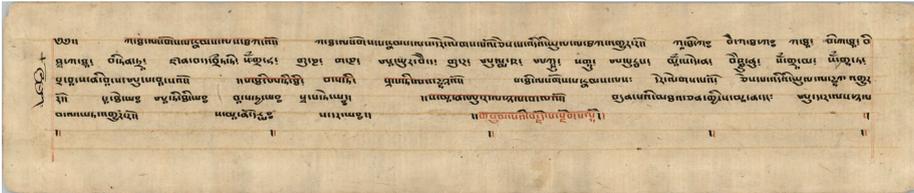


Illustration 3: Final page *Cāndra Vr̥tti*, BDRC W2PD17532 volume 3 section 1: f. 146r.

However, in the Buddhist Digital Resource Centre (BDRC) archives we find a 146 folio Tibetan manuscript<sup>3</sup> which is a partial translation of that commentary (see illustrations 1-3).

The author's name is given in Sanskrit on the title page,<sup>4</sup> in the title captions at the opening of the text,<sup>5</sup> and in two chapter concluding formulae,<sup>6</sup> and it is given in Tibetan (Chos kyi 'bangs) in the closing formulae of chapters 1.1 and 1.2.<sup>7</sup>

Was this translation for some reason or due to some circumstance not included in *Bstan 'gyur*? One obvious reason may have been that it

<sup>3</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 p. 3-291 = f. 1r-146r5. Passages written in red ink in the manuscript are **in red ink** in my transcription. Passages marked with a horizontal red stroke in the manuscript are underlined in my transcription.

<sup>4</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 p. 3 = f. 1r: *brda sprod pa tsandra pa'i 'grel pa bzhugs / sp(y?)ang [= dpang?] los (?) mdzad pa*. Affixed note tag above title: *dharmā da sas mdzad snga 'gyur*.

<sup>5</sup> *rgya gar skad du : tsāndra byā ka ra ṅa br̥t ta dharmā dā sa / bod skad du : brda sprod pa : tsāndra pa'i 'grel pa dharmā dā sa*, f. 1v1.

<sup>6</sup> Concluding formulae of *Cāndra* 1.3: *dharmā dā sa*, f. 47v7; and of *Cāndra* 1.4: *dharmā dā sha*, f. 60r5.

<sup>7</sup> Concluding formulae of *Cāndra* 1.1 and of *Cāndra* 1.2: *chos kyi 'bangs*, f. 20r7; *chos kyi 'bangs*, f. 30v4.

is incomplete. It covers only the first three of the six chapters (*adhyāya*) of *Cāndravyākaraṇa*. However, incompleteness *per se* was not always an obstacle to canonization, as, for instance, elsewhere in the section on grammar we see that incomplete renderings of Durgasiṃha's commentary on *Kātantra* were included in *Bstan 'gyur*.<sup>8</sup> Depending on the identification of the translator it may also have been too recent to have been included in Bu ston's redaction of *Bstan 'gyur*.

The translation ends abruptly at the end of chapter 3. No colophon of any kind is given. I have not been able to trace any indication of the translator's identity elsewhere in the manuscript. Was this translation made by Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342)? The BDRC redactors have included it in volume 3 of a collection of his works (W2PD17532). Granted, in the manuscript itself I find no *prima facie* evidence that Dpang lo tsā ba was indeed the translator, but he may very well have been. After all, he was a leading authority on Sanskrit grammar in his era. And his biography informs us that he produced several works on *Cāndra* --which could apply to translating or actually authoring-- during or briefly after one of his early visits to Nepal,<sup>9</sup> and that he made a 'corrected translation' (*'gyur bcos*) of *Cāndra* grammar.<sup>10</sup> The latter may be a reference to Dpang lo tsā ba's canonized translation(s) of *Cāndra* works (*Adhikāra-saṃgraha* and *TiÑ-anta*), or it may (also) refer to his authorship of this *Cāndra Vṛtti* translation. I think we have sufficient reason to assume, for the time being, until further research may prove this assumption wrong, that Dpang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa was indeed the translator of the present document.

In the 1930s Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana reported that two Sanskrit manuscripts of this *Cāndra vṛtti* commentary were preserved in Zha lu Ri phug.<sup>11</sup> Did the translator, whoever s/he may have been, use these very same manuscripts? It is certainly conceivable that this has been the case. However, if indeed Dpang Blo gros brtan pa was the translator, he may have translated this work during one of his many sojourns in Nepal and may therefore have availed himself of manuscript sources available locally there. We know that he translated the *Adhikāra-saṃgraha* and *TiÑ-anta*, two works on *Cāndra* grammar, in Patan in Nepal<sup>12</sup> and that he studied *Vyākaraṇa* there, in particular

<sup>8</sup> HSGLT 1: CG 11 and CG 11A.

<sup>9</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 84-85 l. 20-1: *tsandra pa'i yig sna mdzad*.

<sup>10</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85 l. 14-15: *sgra tsandra pa'i 'gyur bcos*.

<sup>11</sup> Sāṅkrtyāyana (1937: 41 nr. 285, 43 nr. 294), HSGLT 1: 54.

<sup>12</sup> HSGLT 1: CG 5 and 8: the *Bstan 'gyur* colophons give Patan (designated Ye rang and Rol pa'i grong khyer respectively) as the location in Nepal where Dpang lo tsā ba made these translations. See also, for the former translation, Ngag dbang skal

the *Cāndra* system, with local *paṇḍitas* such as Rāmaṇa-ācārya and Madana(?)-ācārya.<sup>13</sup>

The commentary contained in W2PD17532\_3\_1, which deals with *Cāndra-vyākaraṇa adhyāya* 1 to 3, comprises approximately two-fifths of the entire text of Dharmadāsa's *vr̥tti*. This may be an example of an unfinished translation. And this fact may have played a role in its non-inclusion in the *Bstan 'gyur* canon. Or we may be faced with a fragmented transmission of this manuscript, comparable to what we will encounter in the next part of this study. It is certainly not exceptional for a Tibetan manuscript set, especially one of some antiquity, to be split up in the course of time.

This manuscript belongs to the same set, therefore has a similar format and appears to be by the same hand as BDRC W2PD17532\_4-7, that I will discuss *infra*. If this is indeed the case, the scribe could very well be Blo gros dbang phyug, main disciple of Snye thang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa, and the manuscript would then (possibly) date from the fifteenth century (see 2.1 and 2.3 *infra*).

1.1. Subdivision of Dpang lo tsā ba's translation of the  
*Cāndra-vyākaraṇa Vr̥tti* (BDRC W2PD17532, vol. 3 section 1)

- 1.1. *Adhyāya* 1 *pāda* 1: W2PD17532 p. 1-41 = f. 1r-20v<sup>14</sup>
- 1.2. *Adhyāya* 1 *pāda* 2: W2PD17532 p. 41-64 = f. 20v1-30v4<sup>15</sup>
- 1.3. *Adhyāya* 1 *pāda* 3: W2PD17532 p. 64-96 = f. 30v4-47v7<sup>16</sup>
- 1.4. *Adhyāya* 1 *pāda* 4: W2PD17532 p. 96-121 = f. 47v7-60r5<sup>17</sup>
- 2.1. *Adhyāya* 2 *pāda* 1: W2PD17532 p. 121-142 = f. 60r5-70v2<sup>18</sup>
- 2.2. *Adhyāya* 2 *pāda* 2: W2PD17532 p. 142-171 = f. 70v2-86r2<sup>19</sup>

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Idan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85 line 1: *spyir btang dang dam pa rtog dkar bsgyur*.

<sup>13</sup> Ngag dbang skal Idan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 84 l. 7-8: *dgung lo nyer gcig pa la bal por byon nas / rā ma ṅa ā tsarya dang / ma ṅa ṅa (?) ā tsarya la sgra tsandra pa bsan no*.

<sup>14</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 41 = f. 20r7-20v1: *brda sprod pa tsāndra pa'i 'grel pa chos kyi 'bangs kyis mdzad par skabs dang po'i rkang pa dang po rdzogs so*.

<sup>15</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 64 = f. 30v4: *brda sprod pa tsāndra pa'i 'grel pa chos kyi 'bangs kyis mdzad par dang po'i rkang pa gnyis pa rdzogs so*.

<sup>16</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 96 = f. 47v7: *brda sprod pa tsāndra pa'i 'grel pa dharma dā sa'i skabs dang po'i rkang pa gsum pa rdzogs so*.

<sup>17</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 121 = f. 60r5: *brda sprod pa tsāndra pa'i 'grel pa dharma dā shar* [sic] *skabs dang po rdzogs so*.

<sup>18</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 142 = f. 70v2: *gnyis pa'i rkang pa dang po rdzogs sho*.

<sup>19</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 173 = 86r2: *brjod pa gnyis pa'i rkang pa gnyis pa rdzogs so*.

- 2.3. *Adhyāya* 2 *pāda* 3: W2PD17532 p. 171-190 = f. 86r2-95v2<sup>20</sup>  
 2.4. *Adhyāya* 2 *pāda* 4: W2PD17532 p. 190-220 = f. 95v2-109v1<sup>21</sup>  
 3.1. *Adhyāya* 3 *pāda* 1: W2PD17532 p. 220-235 = f. 109v1-117r2<sup>22</sup>  
 3.2. *Adhyāya* 3 *pāda* 2: W2PD17532 p. 235-249 = f. 117r2-125r4<sup>23</sup>  
 3.3. *Adhyāya* 3 *pāda* 3: W2PD17532 p. 249-273 = f. 125r4-138r1<sup>24</sup>  
 3.4. *Adhyāya* 3 *pāda* 4: W2PD17532 p. 273-291 = f. 138r1-146r5<sup>25</sup>

## 2. *Snye thang lo tsā ba's Kātantra Commentary*

### 2.1. BDRC W2PD17532\_4-7

Let us now have a look at a second manuscript set which BDRC has included in the 'various collected works' (*gsung phyogs bsdus*) of Dpang Blo gros brtan pa. It consists of seventeen volumes, a total of 1573 folios, written in a scholastic form of *dbu med* script, and it was included in the BDRC archives as volumes 4 to 7 of W2PD17532.

The first part of the manuscript contains a translation of the *Kātantra sūtra* text in one volume (26 folios; see illustrations 4-7).<sup>26</sup>

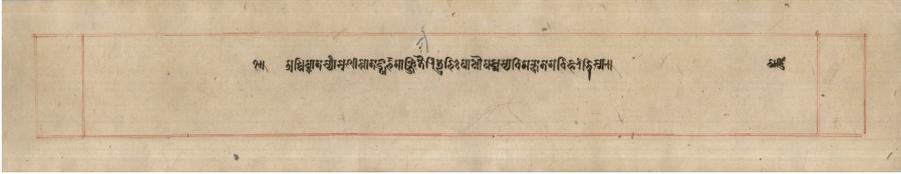


Illustration 4: Title page *Kātantra sūtra* text, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1 f. 1r.

- <sup>20</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 192 = 95v2: *skabs gnyis pa'i rkang pa gsum pa rdzogs so*.  
<sup>21</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 220 = f. 109v1: *skabs gnyis pa'i brjod pa rdzogs sho*.  
<sup>22</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 235 = f. 117r2: *gsum pa'i skabs dang po rdzogs so*.  
<sup>23</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 249 = f. 125r4: *gsum pa'i rkang pa gnyis pa rdzogs so*.  
<sup>24</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 275 = f. 138r1: *gsum pa'i rkang pa gsum pa rdzogs so*.  
<sup>25</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 3 section 1 *finitur*, p. 291 = f. 146r4-146r5: *sa mā na u ra la nyal ba la'o / bāun pa'i mtha' can gyi sa mā na dang: u da ra las nyal ba la yat 'gyur ro* (= *Cāndra* 3.4.106, the final *sūtra* of final, fourth *pāda* of third *adhyāya*: *samānodare śayitah*. Commentary: *samānodarāt saptamyantāc chayite yaD bhavati*) *gsum pa'i brjod pa rdzogs sho /*  
<sup>26</sup> BDRC: W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1: p. 3-55 = f. 1r-26r4.

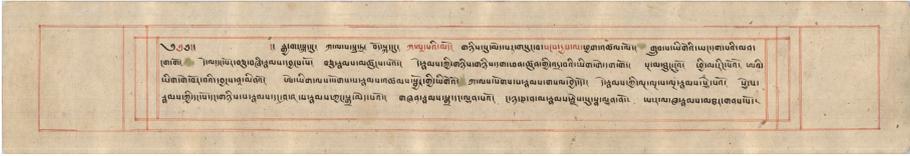


Illustration 5: Opening page *Kātantra sūtra* text, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1 f. 2r.



Illustration 6: Penultimate page *Kātantra sūtra* text, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1 f. 25v.



Illustration 7: Final page *Kātantra sūtra* text, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1 f. 26r.

The bulk of the manuscript is occupied by the *Ka lā pa'i 'grel bshad chen mo*, an extensive commentary on *Kātantra* grammar in sixteen volumes (see illustrations 8-13, 23-24). It covers the first three chapters (on *sandhi*, on nominal and verbal morphology respectively; totaling 1547 folios) but omits the final fourth chapter on primary nominal derivation (Sanskrit: *kṛt*).<sup>27</sup>



Illustration 8: Title page *Kātantra* commentary, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2 f. 1r.



Illustration 9: Title page *Kātantra* commentary chapter 1, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2 f. 2r.

<sup>27</sup> BDRC: W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2-vol. 7. This is indubitably *A khu tho yig* section 17 no. 3: *blo brtan bzhi pa'i sgra fi ka chen mo*, HSGLT 1: 92 note 216.

The *Kātantra sūtra* translation is the version by Dpang Blo gros brtan pa which is contained in *Bstan 'gyur*.<sup>28</sup> Its colophon, just like its canonical counterpart, identifies the translator as 'third Blo gros brtan pa' which is a common appellation of Dpang Blo gros brtan pa.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, the chapter colophons of the subsequent commentary consistently identify the author as the 'fourth Blo gros brtan pa'.<sup>30</sup>

Why then would Dpang Blo gros brtan pa be referred to as the 'fourth Blo gros brtan pa' in virtually each chapter concluding formula of this commentary in the same manuscript set as the *Kātantra sūtra* translation where he is designated the 'third Blo gros brtan pa'? It seems far more likely that what we have here is a work by Snye thang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (mid-15<sup>th</sup> century), who is indeed often designated as the 'fourth Blo gros brtan pa'.<sup>31</sup> He too was a renowned expert on Sanskrit grammar. In sum, I think we can confidently conclude that the *Kātantra* exegesis contained in BDRC W2PD17532 is not a work by Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342), but by Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa (fl. 15<sup>th</sup> cent.).<sup>32</sup>

The scribe of the manuscript was 'the eminently clear-minded' (*blo gros rab tu gsal ba*) Ngag dbang lo tsā ba Blo gros dbang phyug,<sup>33</sup> also known as (Khro phu) Snyan ngag pa Blo gros dbang phyug, a personal pupil of Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa. He requested the composition of his master's commentary on *Kātantra* discussed here (see also *infra*) and his commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita's *Tshig gter*<sup>34</sup> contained in this same collection (and was the scribe of both) and therefore

<sup>28</sup> HSGLT 1: CG 10.

<sup>29</sup> BDRC: W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 1: *zhes pa kyt rnams su mdo las rkang drug pa rdzogs so / ka lā pa'i mdo rdzogs so / tshul 'di dpal ldan sa skya ru / blo gros brtan pa gsum pa yis / dur ga sing ha'i 'grel pa la / brten nas sgra don ji [numeral 4]n [= bzhin] bsgyur, f. 25v4-25v5.*

<sup>30</sup> *Dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* (or orthographical variants of this, including the use of the numeral 4 instead of *bzhi*). All extant chapter colophons do so. For chapter 3.4 the last folio(s) is/are missing in the manuscript so we do not have a colophon for this chapter.

<sup>31</sup> A prominent expert on Sanskrit grammar and poetics, who was a teacher of Gser mdog paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan (1428-1507); HSGLT 1: 92; Smith (2001: 193, 315 note 604).

<sup>32</sup> Correct therefore BDRC's attribution to Dpang lo tsā ba and inclusion in his 'assorted works' in W2PD17532. Parenthetically, correct also BDRC's cataloguing of the second chapter as entitled *me long*; it actually reads *ming le* which is brief for *ming gi le'u*, 'chapter on nouns'.

<sup>33</sup> All extant chapter colophons identify him as such. One might wonder if Blo gros rab tu gsal ba, or Blo gros rab gsal, is the name of a different individual and two scribes were involved, but this is highly unlikely considering the phrasing and interpunction of many of the chapter colophons.

<sup>34</sup> BDRC W2PD17532\_3\_4; also BDRC W23195. Here too BDRC's attribution to Dpang Blo gros brtan pa should be corrected: it is in fact a work by Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa.

he must have been contemporaneous with the author. No date is given for the manufacture of the manuscript, but as the scribe was—apparently—a contemporary of the author it can be dated to the fifteenth century. Some caution is required here as the fifteenth-century colophons may have been faithfully copied by a scribe at a later date.

The second and third folios of the commentary manuscript bear four delicate colored gouache illustrations, unfortunately without any identifying captions (see illustrations 10-13): the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (2v left); the deity Śaṅmukha ('six-headed') Kārttikeya, who plays a prominent role in the origin legends of *Kātantra*, seated on his peacock mount (2v right); an unidentified Indian *paṇḍita*, possibly Śarvavarman, the author of the *Kātantra sūtra* text, with a palatial mansion in the background (3r left); and an unidentified Tibetan *blama*, possibly Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (translator of the *sūtra* text) or perhaps Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa (author of the commentary), with the Tibetan mountains in the backdrop (3r right).



Illustration 10: Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2, f. 2v left.



Illustration 11: Deity Kārttikeya, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2, f. 2v right.



Illustration 12: Indian paṇḍita, Śarvavarman (?),  
BDRC W12PD17532 vol. 4 section 2, 3r left.



Illustration 13: Tibetan bla ma, Dpang Blo gros brtan pa (?) or Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa (?),  
BDRC W12PD17532 vol. 4 section 2, f. 3r right.

It is interesting to note that an Indic script is used not only in each of the Sanskrit chapter title captions, where one might expect this, but also for a more lengthy Sanskrit passage in the concluding parts of this manuscript (f. 50v2-51r2; see illustrations 23-24 *infra*). This appears to be a translation into Sanskrit of the following verses written (by the commentary's author) in Tibetan, and subsequently translated (by the author or a later redactor?) into rather clumsy cut-and-paste error-ridden Sanskrit.<sup>35</sup> One might perhaps have expected a little better Sanskrit from an author who has just finished an extensive commentary on *Kātantra* grammar. We know, however, that a limited competence of translating into Sanskrit and composing Sanskrit verses, is not unknown even among renowned Tibetan scholars in this field.<sup>36</sup> And, I suppose we should also reckon with the possibility that this Sanskrit translation may have been added at a later date by an editor or redactor involved in the transmission.

<sup>35</sup> I have appended a transliteration of the Sanskrit and Tibetan of these verses *infra* in 2.5. Particularly the last section of the Sanskrit passage was characterized (in a personal communication, April 2020) by Dr. Szántó as "total gibberish".

<sup>36</sup> See for instance Tucci (1957).

As I mentioned above, the commentary as we have it presently in the BDRC archives appears to be incomplete. It does not deal with the final, fourth chapter of the *Kātantra* rule system, on primary nominal derivation (*kṛt*) which constitutes approximately one-fifth of the entire *Kātantra* rule system. It would have been conceivable –certainly considering the bulk of the materials involved— that the author did not get to finish an integral commentary. The lengthy (Sanskrit and Tibetan) colophon materials which are appended at the end of the text as we have it in BDRC, i.e. the end of the third chapter, seem to suggest that the Sanskrit source on which the author based his commentary may have ended here also. And, the scribe was a contemporary and associate of the author and therefore would most likely have had access to the full work had the author finished it.

However, it turns out that we are faced here with a fragmented transmission of this manuscript and this text. As luck would have it, we are now in a position to fill in (at least most of) the blanks in this particular transmission. Fragments of two manuscripts of the same text are preserved in the British Library (henceforth BL) which were first signaled by the incomparable Gene Smith.<sup>37</sup>

## 2.2. BL Or. 6626

BL shelf mark Or. 6626 consists primarily of fragments of a *dbu med* manuscript of the *Ka lā pa'i 'grel bshad chen mo*. The bundle contains a single folio (28) from a different text (as we will see below; see illustrations 16-17) and forty-three folios (WAM 6-49) from the fifth, penultimate *pāda* of the chapter on *kṛt* nominal derivation (with a chapter colophon at 49r4-5; see illustrations 14-15).<sup>38</sup> Leaving aside the isolated folio 28 for the moment, in BL Or. 6626 we have the comments running from *Kātantra* 4.5.6 (in part) up till the end of *pāda* 4.5. As this is part of the *kṛt* sections missing in the BDRC manuscript, we can conclude that Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa's '*Grel bshad chen mo* commentary indeed covered the entirety of the *Kātantra sūtra* text, and that the BDRC manuscript is in fact incomplete.

<sup>37</sup> Smith (2001: 194, 316 note 613), which is an updated version of his introduction to the 1969 edition of Bo dong Paṅ chen's Collected Works; and personal communication, Lausanne 1999. Sincere cordial thanks to Burkhard Quessel, curator of the Tibetan collection of the British Library, for generously providing information about and digital images of these manuscripts. It is interesting to note that Mr. Quessel was also present at the memorable 1999 meeting mentioned above when Gene Smith drew my attention to these manuscripts.

<sup>38</sup> Concluding phrase: *brda' sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las kṛt kyi mdo rkang pa lnga pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so/ // kṛt rkang pa lnga pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o*, BL Or. 6626 f. 49r4-5.

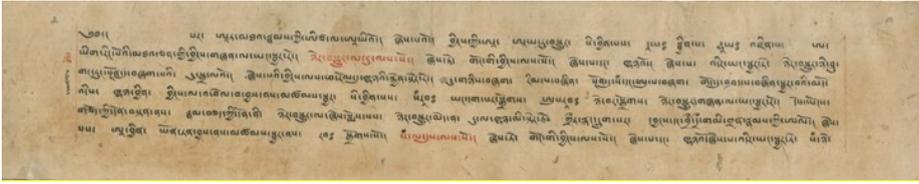


Illustration 14: *Kātantra* commentary 4.5.6 etc., BL Or. 6626 fol. WAM 6r.



Illustration 15: *Kātantra* commentary 4.5 final folio, BL Or. 6626 fol. WAM 49r.

What is more, judging by their paleographical and codicological features I feel confident that the BL Or. 6626 fragments in fact stem from the very same manuscript (set) partially preserved in BDR W2PD17532. How these two (and the remaining as yet untraced) sections of this manuscript have become dispersed is entirely a matter of conjecture, but apparently they did. It is certainly not uncommon for Tibetan manuscripts, especially the more precious ancient ones, to be divided up at some point(s) in their history. In any case, these two remaining parts have now (virtually) been joined together again. *Bien étonnés de se trouver ensemble?*

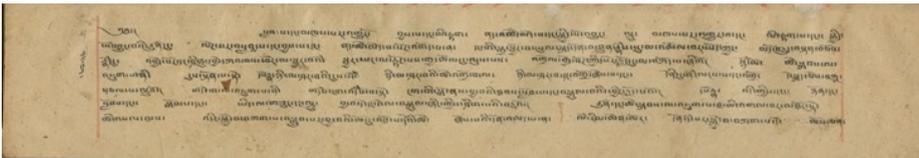


Illustration 16: Isolated folio, BL Or. 6626 fol. 28r.

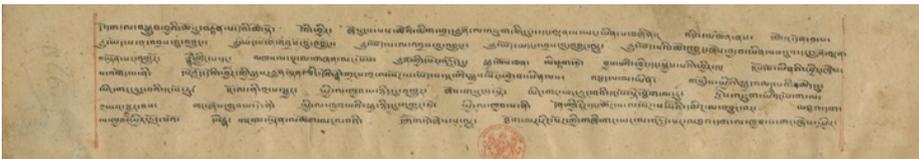


Illustration 17: Isolated folio, BL Or. 6626 fol. 28v.

As for the isolated folio 28 at the beginning of the bundle Or. 6626 (see illustrations 16 and 17), it deals with grammar, but not Sanskrit grammar. It is in fact a fragment of an as yet unidentified commentary

on *Sum cu pa* (SCP), one of the two basic treatises of Tibetan indigenous grammar. It contains comments on SCP 19, which deals with the enclitic particle *dang*, and SCP 21, on the pronoun *gang*. Reference is made to *Prasannapadā* and *Lam rim chen mo* (f. 28r7), which sets this fragment in a *Dge lugs pa* context. There is a reference to Rnam gling paṅ chen Dkon mchog chos grags' (1646-1718) commentary on the two basic treatises which is dated 1683 (f. 28v3),<sup>39</sup> so this would place this fragment in the late seventeenth century at the earliest. It appears not to belong to the Si tu tradition of Tibetan grammar as it does not follow the re-arrangement of SCP 19-23 that Si tu Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699?-1774) has introduced in his *Sum rtags 'grel chen* (dated 1744).<sup>40</sup> As Si tu's re-ordering of SCP was adopted by most later grammarians, it seems likely that this fragment stems from a commentary written before mid-1740s. In sum, the approximate timeframe for composition of this commentary lies between 1683 and 1744.

Perhaps this folio was singled out and added to this volume also because of the unusual ornamental sign in red ink on f. 28r6-7. Judging by the British Museum stamp on f. 28v it was at one point received or regarded as a separate acquisition. Comparing this folio with the remainder of Or. 6626 one notes that it contains seven lines per folio side, instead of six in the remainder; it does not have an *E* or *WAM* marking in the margin; the *ductus* is slightly thinner than in the remainder. However, the general layout of the page and the execution of the script are very similar to the remainder. Perhaps it was produced at the same scriptorium as the remainder? Perhaps both belonged to a larger manuscript set containing treatises on Sanskrit as well as Tibetan grammar? Perhaps manuscripts were added to this set at various dates?

If indeed this single folio 28 was contemporaneous with the remainder of BL Or. 6626 and with BDRC W2PD17532 4\_2-7 –which I should stress is by no means a certainty, but surely a possibility-- it would mean that this particular manuscript of the *'Grel bshad chen mo* cannot antedate the late seventeenth century. This then would imply that the colophon identifications of the fifteenth-century scribe(s) were evidently copied faithfully by the seventeenth / eighteenth-century scribe(s) of the manuscript at hand.

<sup>39</sup> Entitled *Lung du ston pa sum cu pa dang rtags kyi 'jug pa'i rnam 'grel legs bshad snang byed nor bu*; Tillemans & Herforth (1989: 9, 31); BDRC WIKG10590.

<sup>40</sup> Graf (2018: 442).

## 2.3. BL Or. 6752

BL shelf mark Or. 6752 also consists of sections of *Ka lā pa'i 'grel bshad chen mo*, covering the final four *pādas* on verbal morphology (3.5-3.8) and the entire final chapter on primary nominal derivation (4.1-4.6), in 277 folios (see illustrations 18-22).<sup>41</sup> It is a *dbu med* manuscript, clearly in a format and scribe's hand different from the BDRC and BL Or. 6626 manuscripts.<sup>42</sup> And its contents partially overlap with BDRC W2PD17532 and BL Or. 6626.

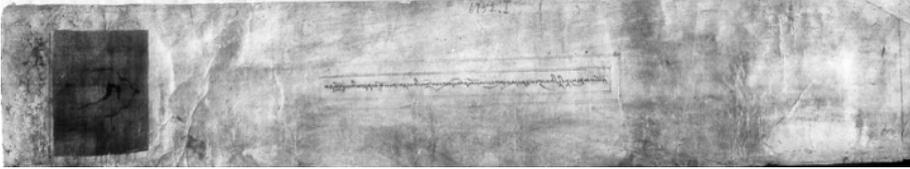


Illustration 18: Title page *Kātantra* 3.5, BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 page 1: E PA f. 1.

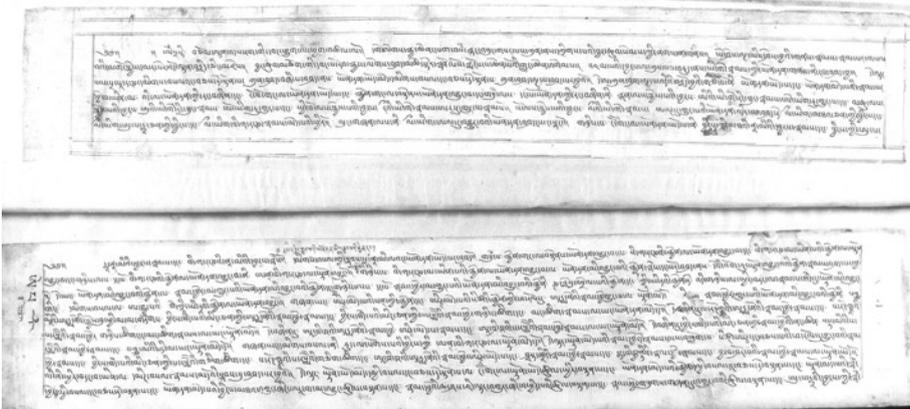


Illustration 19: Opening pages *Kātantra* 3.5, BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 page 2: E PA f. 1v-2r.

<sup>41</sup> BL Or. 6752 consists of two volumes: *E*, sections *pa* to *ma* in 147 folios, and *Wam*, sections *tsa* to *za* in 130 folios. On the opening folio of volume 1 marked as “presented by the Secretary of State for India – 1905”. On the final folio of volume 1 marked “147 folios Dec 1906”.

<sup>42</sup> BL Or. 6752 averages 10 lines per side of the manuscript, whereas BDRC W2PD17532 and BL Or. 6626 have an average of 6 lines per side.

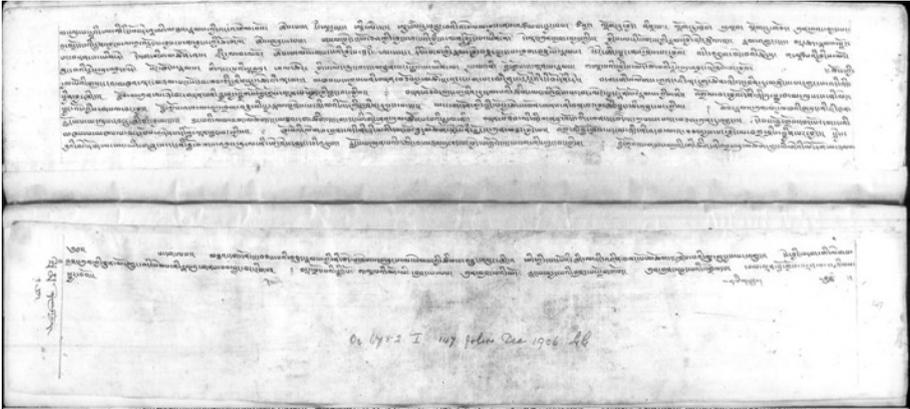


Illustration 20: Final pages *Kātantra* 3.8, BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 page 149: E MA f. 22v-23r.

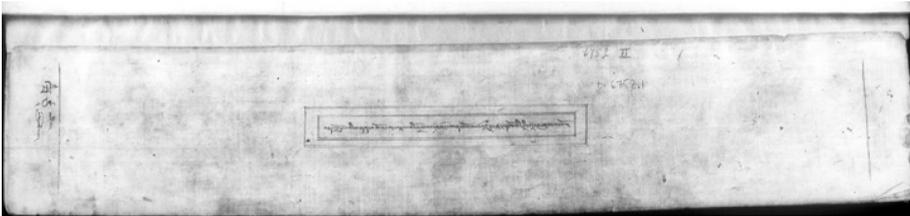


Illustration 21: Title page *Kātantra* 4, BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 page 1: WAM TSA f. 1r.

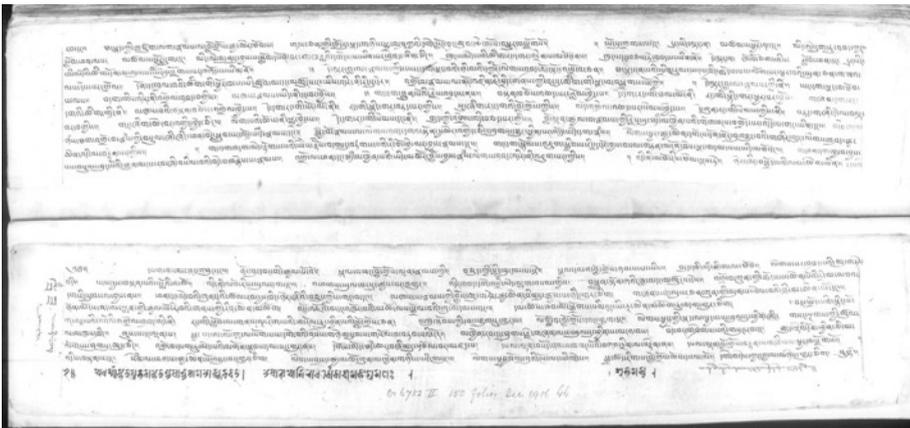


Illustration 22: Final pages *Kātantra* 4.6, BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 page 152: WAM ZA f. 31v-32r.

Here we have, therefore, partial remains of another manuscript of the '*Grel bshad chen mo*. This second manuscript of the text clearly attests to the popularity of this *Ka lā pa'i 'grel bshad chen mo*. It is also a further confirmation that Snye thang lo tsā ba's commentary did in fact cover

the fourth chapter of *Kātantra*, on *kṛt* formations, as well. For this particular manuscript we have a *terminus ante quem* in the English handwritten marginal captions dating the reception of it as a gift from the “Secretary of State for India” in 1905/1906.

Interestingly, in two of the chapter colophons in BL Or. 6752 the author’s own pupil Blo gros dbang phyug is identified as the scribe,<sup>43</sup> that is the same scribe as the one responsible for the BDRC manuscript and *ipso facto* probably also for the BL Or. 6626 manuscript. Blo gros dbang phyug is also credited, in the extensive section of colophon materials at the end of the manuscript, as one the individuals who requested Snye thang lo tsa ba to write this commentary.<sup>44</sup> If this same Blo gros dbang phyug indeed was the scribe of (part of) BL Or. 6752, this would place the date of this manuscript also in the fifteenth century. However, I suppose we should also reckon with the possibility that a later copyist may have faithfully copied these parts of the colophon as well.<sup>45</sup>

Two more scribes are identified in BL Or. 6752: (Gsol ja ba) Blo gros bsod nams<sup>46</sup> and (Sgra tshad rig pa) Blo gros chos dpal.<sup>47</sup> The latter may have been a supervisor to the entire scriptorial project of production and correction. It is striking that the names of all four individuals involved in the creation of this text and the transmission of this manuscript begin with “Blo gros”. Do we have here an instance of the widespread custom in Tibetan Buddhism for monks to receive an ordination name which shares components with the name of the ordaining *bla ma*? Were not only Blo gros dbang phyug but also Blo gros bsod nams and Blo gros chos dpal (i.e. all three scribes mentioned in this manuscript) personal disciples of the author Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa, and were they ordained by the master himself? At present we can only speculate, but it certainly is not farfetched to suppose they may have been.

<sup>43</sup> BL Or. 6752: *Kātantra* 3.5 (f. 38r3) and *Kātantra* 4.1 (f. 41r5): *blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lo tsa ba blo gros dbang phyug*.

<sup>44</sup> BL Or. 6752: *Kātantra* 4.6 (f. 32r5): *rang gi slob ma gnas lnga rig pa'i pha rol tu phyin pa'i blo gros can / mthu stobs kyi dbang phyug tu gyur pa / lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug dang (...)* *dge ba'i bshes gnyen du mas gsol ba btab pa'i ngor*.

<sup>45</sup> Note, for instance, that in the much later manuscript copy (by Mgon po Tshe brtan, Gangtok, Sikkim 1977) of Snye thang’s commentary on *Tshig gter* (BDRC W23195) the text of the colophon of the manuscript it was evidently based on was copied verbatim, f. 153v5-6: (...) *snyan ngag pa blo gros dbang phyug gis yang yang gsol ba btab pa'i ngor / blo gros brtan pa bzhed [sic; = bzhi] pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba khro phu snyan ngag dbang phyug go*.

<sup>46</sup> *Kātantra* 4.2 (f. 16v5); *Kātantra* 4.4 (f. 18r10-18v1); *Kātantra* 4.5 (f. 19r2).

<sup>47</sup> *Kātantra* 4.6 (f. 32r8).

The colophon materials brought together at the end of the manuscript<sup>48</sup> are diverse, and attempt to give an overview of the transmission of *Kātantra* treatises in Tibet. The colophon of the canonical translation of the *sūtra* text (HSGLT 1 CG 10) is quoted *in toto* first and foremost (f. 30v9-31r6). Then the focus moves to the complex transmission of the *Śiṣyāhitā* commentary (HSGLT 1 CG 12 and CG 14; f. 31r6-32r4).

The actual colophon of the present work specifies that the author's pupil Blo gros dbang phyug, the linguist (*sgra pa*) Amogha, and others had requested the author to compose this commentary, and that he did so on the basis of the grace (i.e. teaching or patronage?) of Bsod nams bzang po. A charming detail is the play on words with the two components of his most prominent pupil's name: *blo gros* and *dbang phyug*:<sup>49</sup>

'This *Brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo'i 'grel bshad*, authored by the fourth (Dpal ldan) Blo gros brtan pa has now been completed. Faced by the petitions [to write this treatise] by many *kalyāṇamitras*, such as his own disciple translator Blo gros dbang phyug, whose mind (*blo gros*) has reached perfection in the five *vidyāsthānas* and who became master (*dbang phyug*) of power, and the grammarian Amogha, who reached perfection in the study of the Sanskrit language, who is skilled in the methods of *mantras* and is powerful, (...) [the author composed this work], basing himself on the grace of (Dpal ldan) Bsod nams bzang po.'

We find a line of Indic "Vartula" script containing the standard formula *ye dharmā hetuprabhavā* etc. and the concluding benediction *śubham astu* in the last line of the final folio of the manuscript (32r9; see illustration 22).

So, fitting the pieces of the puzzle together (again), we can conclude that in BDRC W2PD17532 and BL Or. 6626 we have two fragmented remains of the same manuscript (set). And on the basis of both BL Or. 6626 and BL Or. 6725 we can affirm that Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa's *Ka lā pa'i 'grel bshad chen mo* commentary did indeed cover the entirety of *Kātantra*'s rule system, including the fourth and final chapter on

<sup>48</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (150-152), f. 30v9-32r9.

<sup>49</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (152), f. 32r4-32r7: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo'i 'grel bshad 'di ni | rang gi slob ma gnas lnga rig pa'i pha rol tu phyin pa'i blo gros can | mthu stobs kyi dbang phyug tu gyur pa | lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug dang | legs sbyar gyi skad la sbyangs pa phul du phyin zhing | gsang sngags kyi tshul la mkhas shing | nus pa dang ldan pa | sgra pa a mo gha la sogs pa dge ba'i bshes gnyen du mas gsol ba btab pa'i ngor | mkhyen rab dang thugs rje gzhan las phul du phyin pa mnga' bas | bde bar gshegs pa'i gsung rab dang | rgyud sde'i don phyin ci ma log pa thugs su [= thugs su] chud cing | 'gro ba dpag tu med pa'i mgon skyabs dam par gyur nas | dgos 'dod thamd [= thams cad] char bzhi du stsol bar mdzad pa | dpal ldan bsod nams bzang po'i bka' drin la brten nas | dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba rdzogs so |.*

primary nominal derivation (*krt*). Therefore it has now been possible to reconstruct the entire text of Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa's 'Grel bshad chen mo Kātantra commentary. With its estimated total size of circa 2000 folios<sup>50</sup> (in six-line manuscript) it is certainly among the most extensive Tibetan works on Sanskrit grammar ever written in the pre-modern era, vying with Sa bzang mati paṅ chen's Kātantra commentary *Legs sbyar rab gsal snang ba* (431 folios in blockprint)<sup>51</sup> and Bu ston's *Dpe 'grel chen po* commentary on the examples in Kātantra (543 folios in blockprint),<sup>52</sup> and even Si tu Paṅ chen's *Cāndra* commentary *Legs bshad 'dren pa'i gru rdzings* (929 folios in blockprint).<sup>53</sup> Thus far no xylographs of the 'Grel bshad chen mo have come to light. It most certainly was a treatise of the caliber and stature that would have justified xylographic reproduction.

#### 2.4. Subdivision of Snye thang lo tsā ba's Kātantra Commentary

##### 2.4.1. BDRC W2PD17532 4.2-7.4

1. *Sandhi*: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2 p. 57-216 = f. 1-80r6<sup>54</sup>
- 2.1. Nouns *pāda* 1: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 3 p. 217-358 = f. 1-75r5<sup>55</sup>
- 2.2. Nouns *pāda* 2: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 4 p. 359-612 = f. 1-126r3<sup>56</sup>
- 2.3. Nouns *pāda* 3: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 5 p. 613-916 = f. 1-152r5<sup>57</sup>

<sup>50</sup> The approximate ratio of folios of manuscript 'A' (BDRC W2PD17532 & BL Or. 6626) : manuscript 'B' (BL Or. 6752) = 5 : 2.

<sup>51</sup> HSGLT 2: 91-98.

<sup>52</sup> HSGLT 2: 81-89.

<sup>53</sup> HSGLT 2: 169-180.

<sup>54</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 2 *finitur*: f. f. 40r1-40r2: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka la pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la / mtshams sbyor gyi mdo / rkang pa drug pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so / mtshams sbyor ji snyed pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni / blo gros rab tu gsal ba ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o.*

<sup>55</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 3 *finitur*: f. 75r3-75r5: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka la pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la / ming bzhi par / ming le dang po'i mdo yi bshad pa rdzogs so // ming le dang po'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan bloos brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni / shākya'i btsun pa nang [?] ba con ldan pa / bloos spyas [?] kyis leḍ par bgyis pa dge leḍ mchog tu gyur cig /*

<sup>56</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 4 *finitur*: f. 126r1-126r3: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka la pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la ming bzhi par ming le gnyis pa'i mdo yi bshad pa rdzogs so // ming le gnyis pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lo tsstha ba / blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o.*

<sup>57</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 4 section 5 *finitur*: f. 152r4-152r5: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka la pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las ming [infralinear addition: le] [numeral: 4] par / ming [infralinear addition: le] [numeral 3] pa'i 'grel pa la / [later handwriting: dpaldan bloos*

- 2.4. Nouns *pāda* 4: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 1 p. 3-258 = f. 1-128r3<sup>58</sup>
- 2.5. Nouns *pāda* 5: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 2 p. 259-398 = f. 1-71r2<sup>59</sup>
- 2.6. Nouns *pāda* 6: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 3 p. 399-596 = f. 1-99r2<sup>60</sup>
- 3.1. Verbs *pāda* 1: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 1 p. 3-170 = f. 1-84r5<sup>61</sup>
- 3.2. Verbs *pāda* 2: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 2 p. 171-456 = f. 1-144r4<sup>62</sup>
- 3.3. Verbs *pāda* 3: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 3 p. 457-610 = f. 1-77r3<sup>63</sup>
- 3.4. Verbs *pāda* 4: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 4 p. 611-992 = f. 1-190r5<sup>64</sup>

*brtan pas*] sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni bloos rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang *lotstsha ba bloos dbang phyug gis* bgyis pa'o / shu bham.

- <sup>58</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 1 finitur: f. 128r2-18r3: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / ming bzhi par / ming le bzhi pa'i mdo yi bshad pa rdzogs so // ming le bzhi pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o // yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o // shu bham.*
- <sup>59</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 2 finitur: f. 70v5-71r1: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i [missing; mdo yi bshad pa] [71r1:] las bshad pa las / ming le bzhi par ming le lnga pa'i mdo yi bshad pa rdzogs so // ming le lnga pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug giso // manggalam.*
- <sup>60</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 5 section 3 finitur: f. 98v5-99r2: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / ming le bzhi par ming le bzhi par / ming le drug pa'i mdo yi bshad pa rdzogs so / ming le drug pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o // yi ge pa ni / blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lo tstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o // manggalam.*
- <sup>61</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 1 finitur: f. 84r5-84v1: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo'i bshad pa las / kun bshad pa'i mdo / rkang pa dang po'i bhad pa rdzogso / kun bshad dang po'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan bloos [= blo gros] brtan pa [numeral 4] pas sbyar ba'o / yig ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o // dge'o.*
- <sup>62</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 2 finitur: f. 144r3-144r4: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la / kun pa'i mdo / rkang pa [numeral: 2] pa'i bshad pa rdzogsho / kun [numeral: 2] pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yige pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o // shubham.*
- <sup>63</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 3 finitur: f. 77r2-77r3: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la / rkun [sic] bshad pa'i mdo / rkang pa [numeral: 3] pa'i bshad pa rdzogsho / kun gsum pa'i 'grel pa / dpaldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yige pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o // dge'o.*
- <sup>64</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 6 section 4 finitur: f. 190r5: *pa rasmāi'i rnam dbye byung pa la / pitsa'i rkyen yang (?) na 'jig cing / yang (?) na mi [ends abruptly; no concluding formulae or colophons] [affixed tag: 6.6446.3]*

- 3.5. Verbs *pāda* 5: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 1 p. 3-178 = f. 1-87r<sup>65</sup>  
 3.6. Verbs *pāda* 6: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 2 p. 179-450 = f. 1-135r<sup>66</sup>  
 3.7. Verbs *pāda* 7: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 3 p. 451-554 = f. 1-52r<sup>67</sup>  
 3.8. Verbs *pāda* 8: BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 4 p. 555-658 = f. 1-52r<sup>68</sup>

#### 2.4.2. BL Or. 6626

- 4.5. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 5 (incomplete: first five folios missing): BL Or. 6626 (2-46): WAM 6-49r<sup>69</sup>

#### 2.4.3. BL Or. 6752

- 3.5. Verbs *pāda* 5: BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (1-39): E - PA f. 1-38r<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 1 *finitur*: f. 86v4-87r2: *brda sprod pa'i snying po* / *ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa la* : *kun bshad pa'i mdo* : *rkang pa lnga pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* / *kun bshad lnga pa'i 'grel pa* : *dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* / *yi ge pa ni* : *blo gros rab tu gsal ba* : *ngag dbang lotstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o* // *slad* (?) *du ma dpe dag la gang mchis pa'i* / *yi ge'i gzugs dang dag dang ma dag sogs* / *par tu btab 'di'i dge ba gang mchis pa* / *mar gyur nam mkhyen go 'phang la reg shog* / [minusc.: *lan cig zhus ma XXXr dag* /].

<sup>66</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 2 *finitur*: f. 136r2-136r3: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo'i bshad pa las* / *kun bshad pa'i mdo rkang pa drug pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* / *kun bshad drug pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* / *yi ge pa ni* / *blo gros rab tu gsal ba ngag dbang lotstsha ba bloos dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o* // [minusc.: *ma XXXr lan gcig zhus // bka' bcung* (?) *ba dang chos gnyis* (?) *kyis so* //].

<sup>67</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 3 *finitur*: f. 52r4-52r5: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / kā la* [sic] *pa'i mdo'i bshad pa las* / *kund* [= *kun bshad*] *pa'i mdo rkang pa bdun pa'i* [PROBABLE LAPSUS; SYLLABLES OMITTED: *bshad pa rdzogs so* / *kun bshad bdun pa'i* ?] *'grel pa dpalldan bloos* [= *dpal ldan blo gros*] *brtan pa [numeral 4] pas sbyar ba'o* / *yi ge pa ni* / *bloos* [= *blo gros*] *rab tu gsal ba* / *ngag dbang lo tstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o* // *bkra shis*.

<sup>68</sup> BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 4 *finitur*: f. 51v5-52r2: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo'i bshad pa las* / *kun bshad pa'i mdo rkang pa bryad pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* // *kun bshad bryad pa'i 'grel pa dpalldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* / *yi ge pa ni* / *blo gros rab tu gsal ba ngag dbang lo tstsha ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o* // *su pra tiṣṭha badzra ye swahā manggalaṃ* // [minusc.: *mang* (?) *ltar* (?) *lan cig zhus dag / bris sub 'di las mang ba med do* //].

<sup>69</sup> BL Or. 6626 (45) *finitur*: f. 49r4-5: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las* / *kṛt kyi mdo rkang pa lnga pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* // // *kṛt rkang lnga pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* // *manggalaṃ* [minusc.: *gcig xx zhus*]

<sup>70</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (1-39) *finitur*: f. 38r2-3: *brda' sprod pa'i snying po* : *ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las* : *kun bshad pa'i mdo* : *rkang pa lnga pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* // *kun bshad pa lnga pa'i 'grel pa* : *dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* // *yi ge pa ni* / *blo gros rab tu gsal ba* / *ngag dbang lo tsa ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o* / [minusc.: *lan cig zhus*].

- 3.6. Verbs *pāda* 6: BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (39-100): WAM - PHA f. 1-61r<sup>71</sup>  
 3.7. Verbs *pāda* 7: BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (101-126): WAM - BA f. 1-25r<sup>72</sup>  
 3.8. Verbs *pāda* 8: BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (127-149): WAM - MA f. 1-23r<sup>73</sup>  
 4.1. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 1: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (1-42): WAM - TSA f. 1-41r<sup>74</sup>  
 4.2. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 2: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (43-60): WAM - TSHA f. 1-16v<sup>75</sup>  
 4.3. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 3: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (60-83): WAM - DZA f. 1-23v<sup>76</sup>  
 4.4. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 4: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (83-102): WAM - WA f. 1-18v<sup>77</sup>

<sup>71</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (39-100) *finitur*: f. 61r7-8: *brda' sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / kun bshad pa'i mdo / rkang pa drug pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kun bshad pa drug pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o // [minusc.: lan cig legs par zhus] [61r8:] [minusc.: xxx xxx bya'i xxx 'dzin xxx xxx xxx blo gros mchog ldan rtod [= rtogs?] byin [?] dang bral ba'i / skal ldan [infralinear: xxx] xxx bshad ltar xxx xxx mkhyen pa'i xxx 'dir bkod do].*

<sup>72</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (101-126) *finitur*: f. 25r3-4: *brda' sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / kun bshad pa'i mdo / rkang pa bdun pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kun bshad bdun pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o // [minusc.: lan cig legs par zhus].*

<sup>73</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 1 (127-149) *finitur*: f. 23r2-3: *brda sprod pa'i snying po / ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / kun bshad pa'i mdo : rkang pa brgyad pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kun bshad brgyad pa'i 'grel pa / dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o.*

<sup>74</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (1-42) *finitur*: f. 41r5-6: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las / kṛt kyi mdo rkang pa dang po'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kṛt rkang dang po'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo [41r6:] gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba / ngag dbang lo tsa ba blo gros dbang phyug gis bgyis pa'o / [minusc.: lan cig zhus so]*

<sup>75</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (43-60) *finitur*: f. 16v4-5: *brda sprod pa'i snying po : ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las : kṛt kyi mdo : rkang pa gnyis pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kṛt rkang gnyis pa'i 'grel pa : dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni : gsol ja ba blo gros bsod nams kyiis bgyis pa'o / dge'o // [minusc.: lan cig legs par zhus/].*

<sup>76</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (60-83) *finitur*: f. 23v6-8: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo / yi bshad pa las / kṛt kyi mdo : rkang pa gsum pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kṛt rkang gsum pa'i 'grel pa dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / legs pa'i gsung mchog legs par gsal byed legs pa'i mchog gyur yi ge pa / rnam pa kun tu rnamkhyen [= rnam mkhyen] thob phyir rnam mang / dge la rab btson zhing / kun mkhyen bla ma kun tu mnyes byed kunas [= kun nas?] rgyas pa'i bloos [= blo gros] can / chos kyi tshul rnam chos bzhin snra ba chos dpal zhes bya gang de'o // [minusc.: lan cig nan tan du bgyis te zhus /] manggalabhawantu // //.*

<sup>77</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (83-102) *finitur*: f. 18r10-v1: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las : kṛt kyi mdo rkang pa bzhi pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so // kṛt. rkang bzhi pa'i 'grel pa : dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o / yi ge pa ni / gsol ja ba blo gros bsod nams kyiis bgyis pa'o // // manggalabhawantu [sic] // [minusc.: lan cig legs par nan tan du zhus / /].*

4.5. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 5: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (102-120): WAM - ZHA f. 1-19r2<sup>78</sup>

4.6. *Kṛt* formation *pāda* 6: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (121-151): WAM - ZA f. 1-30v9<sup>79</sup>

Colophons: BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (151-152): WAM - ZA f. 30v9-32r9

2.5. Appendix: Sanskrit verses in BDRC W2PD17532

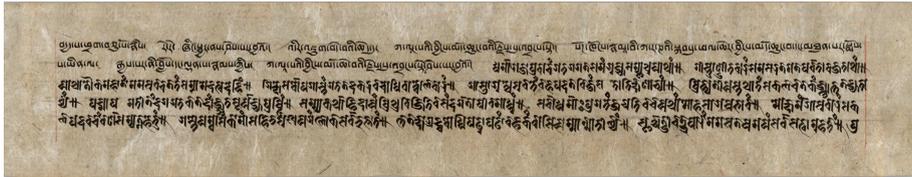


Illustration 23: *Kātantra* commentary, concluding sections, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 4, f. 50v.

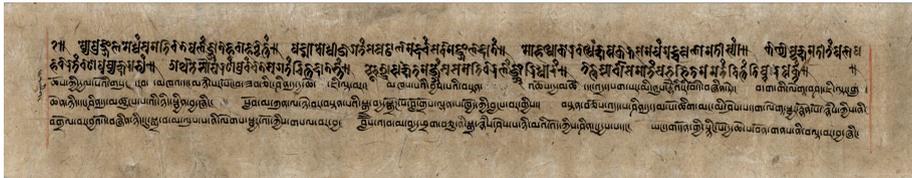


Illustration 24: *Kātantra* commentary, concluding sections, BDRC W2PD17532 vol. 7 section 4, f. 51r.

Transliteration of the (corrupt) Sanskrit verses at the end of *Kātantra* chapter 3.8 in BDRC W2PD17532\_7\_4, f. 50v2-51r2 (see illustrations 23-24):<sup>80</sup>

*dharmā-rājā-pravācaṃ gata-gagana-samaṃ guhya-sampr̥thu yāthāṃ //*  
*śāstrā-[pa]ṇḍita-kāraṃ sama-sarata[?]-mata parvatā-vajra-tāthāṃ[?] //*  
*yāthā tauka-mahānāṃ mama svaca-tataṃ samrāme datya dehiṃ //*  
*śikṣe sarvopasāstaṃ śata-tada-kara[?]-vaco dhivān dholakāraṃ[?] //*  
*śāstrā gutye suvateṃ vaha[= bahu]-pada-tavijaṃ sa to tikṣaṇābhyāṃ*  
*prihyatīsus tathātaṃ sakala catakam [?] jra[?]ttuta dyutādhyam //*  
*padmopamatītaṃ daśa śatakataḍāṃ jñata sūrya-dyu-puṣṭim //*  
*samyak arthāhidāṣaṃ prithu bijitivasam darśatā p̥voa mādhum \ //*

<sup>78</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (102-120) *finitur*: f. 19r1-2: *brda sprod pa'i snying po* : *ka lā pa'i mdo yi bshad pa las* : *kṛt kyi mdo* : *rkang pa lnga pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* // *kṛt. rkang lnga pa'i 'grel pa* : *dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* / *yi ge pa ni gsol ja ba blo gros bsod nams kyiṣ bgyis pa'o* / [minusc.: *lan cig zhus ti* [?]] *legs par bgyiso* /] *shu bham* / / .

<sup>79</sup> BL Or. 6752 vol. 2 (121-151) *finitur*: f. 30v: *brda sprod pa'i snying po ka lā pa'i mdo'i bshad pa las* / *kṛt kyi mdo rkang pa drug pa'i bshad pa rdzogs so* // *kṛt rkang drug pa'i 'grel pa* / *dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa bzhi pas sbyar ba'o* / .

<sup>80</sup> Sincere thanks are due to Dr. Péter-Dániel Szántó for his reading and analysis of this Sanskrit passage.

*sarvā dharmāḥ pragataṃ [?] jayati vaca yathāṃ moha sāgaṣa[?]bhāvaṃ /  
 mokṣa rmaṅgāsu [= sumārge?] vāraṃ sakala-pada-vacaṃ-varṇa-sampanna-  
 hetuṃ /  
 śasteyam vase kāmāṃ sahita sukha yaśaṃ loka sarva tattātaṃ [?]  
 tena kṣāgradvaco dhvi paṭuā paṭāṃ vahakaṃ vāsi yasmān mātīrṇyaṃ [??]  
 sṛtyantī [?] candra pāraṃ mama sutaṣam ayaṃ X sarva sattvā muhantaṃ /  
 prapye [?] prajñāṃ lamedhvaṃ [?] sumati catapalaṃ [?] jñāna-havāha[?]-  
 vṛttaṃ [?]  
 padmābodhvī [?] jagataṃ [?] sapaṭālam udacaṃ sarva-maṅgala-dātaṃ /  
 moha-dhvokāra-vatdhvaṃ [?] kṣayakraru [?] samayaṃ [?] śuddha-śalāmati  
 [?] syāṃ  
 kalyas[?]dakṣam atītaṃ phalapahavarataṃ vaṇapūṣpakṣarābhyāṃ /  
 tārthate [?] sausuraṇaṃ [?] pravamaṇcata [?] sugataṃ citta-dātataṃ [?]  
 cūtan drāyaṃ kṣatamaṅgalaṃ susamativaralaṃ jñīridhvāraṃ [??] //  
 tattvassarvāsamātaṃ subhahitamamataṃ vittaṃ tiṣṭarayaktaṃ [??] //*

Given that the Tibetan verses (f. 51r3-51v5), that follow immediately in the manuscript, are basically grammatically sound, whereas the Sanskrit is extremely maladroit and error-ridden it would seem that the Sanskrit is actually a translation from a Tibetan original, rather than the other way around:

*chos kyi rgyal po'i gsung rab mkha' dang mnyan par song ba zab cing shin  
 tu rgya che XX ji lta bar /  
 mkhas pa'i byas pa'i bstan 'chos rgya mtsho dang 'dra pa shin tu dam po  
 tshig mang mo shes pa dag (/)  
 legs sbyar rnon po rnam kyis ni chen nyid dang shin tu mtshungs pa 'di  
 nyid sbyin bya zhing /  
 slob ma kun la nye bar bstan pa'i sgra brgya sgrogs so blo gros ldan pa  
 khyod kyi blangs bar gyis /  
 bstan bcos 'dud pa shin tu dam po tshig mang mi shes pa dag legs sbyar  
 rnon po rnam kyis ni 'grol bar bya'o de bzhin nyid du smra ba ma lus pa ni  
 legs sbyar 'od kyis gsal bar bya /  
 bloos [= blo gros] 'dab ma brgya phrag bcu ni sgra rnam shes pa nyi ma'i  
 'od kyis shin tu rgyas pa dang /  
 yang dag don gyi snying po rgya che sa bon gnas ni blta bar bya zhing  
 sbrang ci 'thung bar gyis /  
 chos rnam kun la rgyal ba'i gsung ni ji bzhin rmongs pa ma lus rab tu zhi  
 bar bya ba dang /  
 thar pa'i lam bzang mchog dang mtha'dag tshig dang ngag dang yige phun  
 sum tshod pa'i rgyu [?] la ni /  
 bstan bcos 'di ni gnasu 'dod cing phan dang bde dang grang pa dang bcas  
 'jig /*

*rten kun du 'byung de bas bloos [= blo gros] dbang po dag pa'i mkhas pa  
 mkhas [infralinear addition: pa] mang pos bsten 'di blo ldan blang bar  
 bgyis /  
 kho bo'i legs [infralinear addition: bshad] 'di ni nyi ma'i dbang po zla ba  
 mchog ste sems can rmongs kun mthar [syllable obliterated] byed pa /  
 'gro ba'i bloos [= blo gros] padma nyid ni 'dab ma dang bcas rgyas par byed  
 la bkris sbyin par byed /  
 skyes bu'i me tog la [infralinear addition: yang] yid gzhungs dang ni blo  
 bzang 'bras bu la ni ye shes bdutsi [= bdud rtsi] 'jug //  
 rmongs pa mun pa'i 'ching ba mnyam du zad par byed pa blo dang dad pa  
 ngag gi [infralinear addition: s] blang bar gyis /  
 bloos [= blo gros] dpag bsam shing gi tshig ni 'bras bu mchog gyur yi ge'i lo  
 tog ma mnyam pa dag las /  
 mtha' dag don dang bcas pa'i bcud rnam s kyi ni bde gsheḍ gsung la sems  
 kyi tshim pa 'byung 'gyur zhing /  
 yid kyid dbang po'i zhing la ting 'dzin bzang po mchog dang shes pa'i  
 myu [infralinear addition: g] gu rgyas par 'gyur /  
 de phyir bdag gi leg [infralinear addition: s] bshad kun gyi thun mong  
 gyur 'di sems ni rnal du gnas [supralinear addition: par] blang bar rid [=  
 rigs] /*

3. *So many Sthiramatis! A brief case study of the inheritance, adoption and sharing of personal ordination names in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*

What then about this construct of the four Blo gros brtan pas, the four Sthiramatis?

3.1. *Sthiramati*

Eponymous to the three Tibetan Blo gros brtan pas was, of course, the famous sixth-century Indian scholastic Sthiramati, one of the foremost commentators of the famous Indian master Vasubandhu. The Indian 'original' Sthiramati (470-550?), hailing from Valābhi (Gujarat) yet mainly active in the monastic academy of Nālandā, was an expert in *Yogācāra* and *Abhidharma* scholasticism, and was primarily famed for his commentaries.

His prime importance in the Tibetan traditions lies in his canonized extensive *Tattovārthā Ṭīkā* commentary on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharma-kośa*,<sup>81</sup> and he wrote a *Vibhāṣā* commentary on the same master's *Pañcaskandhaka*.<sup>82</sup> He also authored *Ṭīkā* commentaries on two early *Mahāyāna sūtras*, the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa* and the *Kāśyapaparivarta*. The

<sup>81</sup> Beijing *Bstan 'gyur* vols. *mdo* 129 f. 1-385r8 and 130 f. 1-565r8.

<sup>82</sup> Beijing *Bstan 'gyur* vol. *mdo* 59 f. 1-67v1; Kramer (2013-2014).

remainder of his oeuvre is devoted to the exegesis of *Yogācāra* treatises, such as *Ratnagotravibhāga* and *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, as well as a number of other works.

Although Sthiramati may not have been a direct disciple of Vasubandhu, he is often depicted as such in Tibetan pictorial art. For instance in this probably 19<sup>th</sup>-century Tibetan scroll painting portraying the famous Indian master Vasubandhu, we see Sthiramati seated at the foot of the master's throne (see illustration 25). Vasubandhu is shown teaching –quite unusually– at night under a star-sprangled sky, with Sthiramati bottom left and Vimuktisena bottom right. Vasubandhu is teaching (as his right hand gesture indicates) and debating (his left hand) at the same time. Sthiramati appears to be reading the *dpe cha* page he holds up. Or is he offering it to Vasubandhu? Is he offering his commentary to the *auctor intellectualis* of a number of the works he explored?



Illustration 25: Vasubandhu, with Sthiramati and Vimuktisena; scroll painting Tibet 19<sup>th</sup> century; Rubin Museum of Art no. P1999.33.5; Himalayan Art Resource no. 928.

Three Tibetan scholastics with the same ordination name (Tibetan *blo gros brtan pa* translates Sanskrit *sthīramati*) were styled the second, third and fourth Blo gros brtan pa respectively.

### 3.2. Shong Blo gros brtan pa

The 'second' Blo gros brtan pa was Shong Blo gros brtan pa (second half 13<sup>th</sup> cent.).<sup>83</sup> He was the younger brother (or perhaps nephew?) and pupil of the famed scholar Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan (c. 1235/1245-?).<sup>84</sup> He contributed nine translations to *Bstan 'gyur*, seven in the *Tantra* section, and two in the sphere of linguistics: a treatise on Sanskrit grammar entitled *Vibhakti-kārikā*<sup>85</sup> and his revision of his brother's translation of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaśāstra*, which remained a standard textbook for the art of poetics in Tibet for centuries since.<sup>86</sup> He also figured prominently, together with his brother Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, in the transmission of the *Kālacakrantra*.

### 3.3. Dpang Blo gros brtan pa

Dpang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342) was the 'third' Blo gros brtan pa.<sup>87</sup> He ranks among the foremost Sanskrit linguists of his day and age in Tibet. He was in fact a pupil of both Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan (see above) and Shong lo tsā ba, the 'second' Blo gros brtan pa.

He contributed no less than eight translations of Sanskrit grammatical treatises to the *Bstan 'gyur* canon.<sup>88</sup> In addition to his expertise in Sanskrit grammar and poetics he was also an achieved master in the Tibetan transmissions of *Abhidharma*, the *Kālacakrantra*, and epistemology (*pramāṇa*). A number of his translations in the field of *pramāṇa* can be found in *Bstan 'gyur*. Arguably the most notable among these is his rendering of Jinendrabuddhi's extensive *Ṭīkā* commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* entitled *Viśālāmalavati*; it is not at all surprising that Dpang lo tsā ba chose to translate this particular commentary as it abounds in grammatical analyses.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>83</sup> HSGLT 1: II.2.8, p. 88; Smith (2001: 193, 316 n. 602); BDRP P 1052.

<sup>84</sup> Smith (2001: 180, 193); BDRP P1046; Treasury of Lives: Shongton Dorje Gyeltsen.

<sup>85</sup> HSGLT 1: CG 6.

<sup>86</sup> HSGLT 1: II.2.8, p. 88; and see *infra*.

<sup>87</sup> HSGLT 1: II.2.9-II.2.10, p. 88-92; Smith (2001: 180, 193, 194); BDRP P 2085; Treasury of Lives: Pang Lotsāwa Lodro Tenpa; Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRP W1KG13996 p. 79-92; BDRP W1KG16556 p. 77-88; Khu byug (2013).

<sup>88</sup> HSGLT 1: CG 5, 8, 9, 11A, 14, 15, 24 and 32.

<sup>89</sup> HSGLT 1: 89.

He stood firmly in the robust tradition of Sanskrit studies in Sa skya monastery and the *Sa skya pa* school. In his adolescence he studied Sanskrit grammar and poetics at Sa skya, and specifically in Mang mkhar khra tshang with Mchog ldan pa.<sup>90</sup> Interspersed with his frequent visits of Nepal and India (traditionally the number of seven visits is mentioned)<sup>91</sup> and subsequently, he taught extensively in Sa skya and other *Sa skya pa* convents, and acquired great fame as an outstanding scholar and teacher.

His particular skills are famously epitomized in this verse:<sup>92</sup>

‘Acquired the key to the aphorisms of Shong ston.  
Opened the treasury of the Sanskrit language.  
Acquired the jewels of various traditions.  
Master to celebrate the feast of aphorisms.’

His emphasis on the use of Indic originals of his source materials not only showed in his writing but also in his teaching. This is neatly exemplified by the following episode from his biography, speaking of the time when he was teaching in Sa skya or Gnas po che monastery in his early twenties. In it we hear a distant echo of the complaints voiced by his students on the skills and efforts required from them (apparently including reading of Sanskrit commentaries) by this –no doubt—demanding tutor:<sup>93</sup>

‘As his teaching of *Abhidharma* and *Pramāṇa* was based on the *Sa skya pa* traditions and Indian commentaries, his students found it hard to grasp and therefore they requested him to write a commentary, and he subsequently commenced writing [a commentary].’

Later on in his life he spent several periods teaching in monastic colleges in various areas of central Tibet, such as Bsam yas, Gung thang,

<sup>90</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho’s *Shel dkar chos ’byung*, BDRC W1KG13996 p. 83: *de nas mang mkhar khra tshang du bla ma mchog ldan pa’i drung du byon nas / ston pa de ka lā pa dang / tsandra pa’i byings dang / snyan ngag me long gsan.*

<sup>91</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho’s *Shel dkar chos ’byung*, BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85: *slar yang bal po dang rgya gar du lan bdun gyi bar du byon no.*

<sup>92</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho’s *Shel dkar chos ’byung*, BDRC W1KG13996 p. 84 quoting from one of his translation colophons: *shong ston legs bshad lde mig blangs // legs sbyar skad kyi gter kha phye // sna tshogs gzhung lugs rin chen blangs // legs bshad dga’ ston ’gyed la dbang.*

<sup>93</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho’s *Shel dkar chos ’byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 86-87: *mngon pa dang tshad ma sa sde dang rgya ’grel gyis (gyi) steng nas gsungs pas grwa pa rnans ’dzin dka’ bar byung nas tikka mdzad par zhus pas / de nas rtsom pa’i dbu tshugs so.*

Stag lung, Byang Rwa sgreng, Gtsang phu Ne'u thog,<sup>94</sup> and in particular in Sa skya and Bo dong E, two strongholds of Sanskrit learning in Tibet. He was in fact the abbot of Bo dong E monastery in the last five years of his life.

His activities in translating and writing continued throughout his career. In addition to his canonized translations in the areas of grammar, epistemology and poetics, his biography refers, *inter alia*, to his authoring corrections and annotations to translations of *Cāndra* grammar,<sup>95</sup> *Abhidharmakośa*<sup>96</sup> and *Pramāṇavārttika*.<sup>97</sup> We have his commentary on *Kāvyaḍarśa*,<sup>98</sup> as well as a summary of this same basic treatise presumably also by him.<sup>99</sup> And, of course, above we have met with –what I assume to be– his partial translation of Dharmadāsa's *vṛtti* on *Cāndra vyākaraṇa*.

His major original writings on Sanskrit grammar were his *Brda sprod pa'i snying po gsal ba*, 'Essence of grammar clarified' (also known as *Dpang lo'i shog cig ma*, 'One-leaf [treatise] of Dpang lo', possibly 1309) along with its auto-commentary dated 1339,<sup>100</sup> and his undated *Tshogs gsum gsal ba*, 'Three collectives [of language] clarified',<sup>101</sup> which he wrote probably towards the end of his life at the behest of Gzhon nu seng ge.<sup>102</sup> He may also be the author of a brief yet extremely technical grammatical analysis of the Sanskrit term *pratītyasamutpāda* preserved in one of the interstices of *Bstan 'gyur*.<sup>103</sup>

### 3.4. Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa

<sup>94</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 89: *lha sa dang bsam yas dang / gung thang / stag lung / byang rwa sgreng / gtsang phu ne'u thog*.

<sup>95</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85: *sgra tsandra pa'i 'gyur bcos*; see also above, section 1.

<sup>96</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85: *mdzod kyi 'gyur bcos dang mchan*.

<sup>97</sup> Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 85: *rnam 'brel ('grel) gyi 'gyur bcos dang mchan rnams mdzad*.

<sup>98</sup> BDRC W2PD17532\_3\_2: *snyan ngag me long gi rgya cher 'grel pa gzhung don gsal ba*, f. 1-135v6; f. 135v6: *dpal ldan blo gros brtan pa zhes bya bas sbyar ba*. Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 88: *de nas sa skya bla brang du byon / me long gi 'tikka mdzad*.

<sup>99</sup> BDRC W2PD17532\_3\_3: *snyan ngag me long gi bsdus don*, f. 1-7v2.

<sup>100</sup> HSGLT 2: I.2.2.8, p. 70-75.

<sup>101</sup> HSGLT 2: I.2.2.9, p. 75-79.

<sup>102</sup> HSGLT 2: I.2.2.9, p. 77; Ngag dbang skal ldan rgya mtsho's *Shel dkar chos 'byung* BDRC W1KG13996 p. 89: *bla ma gzhon nu seng ges bskul nas tshogs gsum gsal bar mdzad*.

<sup>103</sup> Verhagen (1996); Verhagen (forthcoming A: section 3.1.2).

The designation ‘fourth’ Blo gros brtan pa falls to Snye thang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (mid-15<sup>th</sup> cent.).<sup>104</sup> In the present article we have met with his extensive commentary on *Kātantra* grammar. He also authored corrections to the translation of Daṇḍin’s manual of poetics, *Kāvyaḍarśa*, initially made by one of the –as one might say— ‘founding fathers’ of this lineage, Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan, which had already been improved upon by the second and third Blo gros brtan pa. In fact, two of the four xylograph *Bstan ‘gyur* editions contain the version by Dpang lo tsā ba (the Peking and Snar thang recensions), whereas the other two have the version of Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa (*in casu* the Sde dge and Co ne redactions).<sup>105</sup> He also wrote an extensive commentary on Sa skya Paṇḍita’s *Tshig gi gter*, a partial translation of the *Amarakośa* Sanskrit lexicon.<sup>106</sup> He may not have been a direct disciple of Dpang lo tsā ba, but he was for all intents and purposes an heir to his tradition of *Vyākaraṇa* and *Alaṅkārasāstra* studies.

Was the appellation ‘fourth Blo gros brtan pa’ perhaps created by Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa himself?<sup>107</sup> Did he regard or represent himself as an heir to the transmissions via Shong and Dpang Blo gros brtan pa? Or was this moniker conferred by his entourage? In the latter case a likely candidate could be the scribe of the *Kātantra* ‘*Grel bshad chen mo*’ manuscript introduced above, Blo gros dbang phyug, who was a personal disciple of Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa. The available colophons and other sources unfortunately do not provide us with a definite answer to this particular question.

### 3.5. Three Blo gros brtan pas

All three Tibetan ‘Sthiramatis’ were master philologists involved in the transmission of grammar and poetics and related areas of scholasticism and they may therefore have been regarded as a kind of dynasty by their contemporaries or in retrospect. Parenthetically, the ordination name Blo gros brtan pa was by no means unique to the three individuals we have been discussing. We find Blo gros brtan pa also as the name of, for instance, the seventh Dga’ ldan khri pa Blo gros

<sup>104</sup> The available biographical data on this individual are extremely sparse; HSGLT 1: 92 & notes 216 & 217; Smith (2001: 315 note 604).

<sup>105</sup> Van der Kuijp (1996: 379).

<sup>106</sup> BDRC: W2PD17532\_3\_4: *tshig gter gyi rgya cher ‘grel pa*; also BDRC W23195: *mngon brjod kyi bstan bcos tshig gi gter zhes bya ba’i ‘grel pa rgya cher don gsal ba*; BDRC W23195 f. 153v5-6: *snyan ngag pa blo gros dbang phyug gis yang yang gsol ba btab pa’i ngor / blo gros brtan pa bzhed [sic] pas sbyar ba’o / yi ge pa ni blo gros rab tu gsal ba khro phu snyan ngag dbang phyug go*.

<sup>107</sup> As suggested by Gene Smith (2001: 315 n. 604).

brtan pa (1402-1476)<sup>108</sup> and Kha che paṅ chen Blo gros brtan pa, a 'Kashmiri great scholar' of unknown exact date, who was involved in the transmission of the *Abhidharmakośa* in Tibet.<sup>109</sup>

In a wider perspective the three Blo gros brtan pas in question belong to the transmission lineage of Sanskrit grammatical studies in Tibet from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, which I have documented in HSGLT 1.<sup>110</sup> In this particular *guru-śiṣya-paramparā* Dpang Blo gros brtan pa constitutes a veritable hub. He was a pupil of prominent Sanskrit linguists of this time: Stag sde ba Seng ge rgyal mtshan (1212-1294), Shes rab seng ge (1251-1315), Shong ston Rdo rje rgyal mtshan (c. 1235/1245-?), and Shong Blo gros brtan pa (second half 13<sup>th</sup> cent.). And, in his turn, he taught many of the brightest of the next generation of Indo-Tibetan philologists, such as his nephew Byang chub rtse mo (1303-1380), Sa bzang Ma ti paṅ chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1294-1376), and Blo gros dpal (14<sup>th</sup> century). Via scholars such as Zha lu Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1528) and Skyogs ston Ngag dbang rin chen bkra shis (ca. 1495-after 1577) this lineage continues uninterrupted until the sixteenth century, and in fact way beyond. The celebrated Sde gzhung rin po che Kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1906-1986) appears to have been the last living holder of the full (*lung*) transmission of the *Sa skya pa* scholastic tradition on Sanskrit grammar.<sup>111</sup>

We may wonder then what is the position of the fourth Blo gros brtan pa, i.e. Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa in this dynasty? Can his place in the transmission lineage of Sanskrit scholasticism be established? Minimal biographical data are available on Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa so there is very little to go on in this respect. Seeing his date he cannot have been a direct disciple of either Shong or Dpang. Snye thang Blo gros brtan pa built and expanded upon work by both his earlier namesakes, so the least we can say is that he certainly stands in what could be called a scholastic scriptural connection to Shong and Dpang, the second and third Blo gros brtan pas.

### 3.6. Minute excursus: Sanskrit grammar and the *Kālacakrantra*

Speaking of the transmission lineages of Sanskrit linguistics, I would like to turn very briefly to a question that presented itself to me already in the 1980s in the course of my Ph.D. research, and which has nagged me ever since. It struck me then that almost invariably the scholars / translators involved in the area of Sanskrit grammar in the 13<sup>th</sup> and

<sup>108</sup> Treasury of Lives: The Seventh Gaden Tripa, Lodro Tenpa.

<sup>109</sup> BDRC P10023.

<sup>110</sup> HSGLT 1: 324-326.

<sup>111</sup> Private communication Prof. David Jackson, 1996 (?), then Hamburg University.

following centuries were also experts in *Kālacakratantra*.<sup>112</sup> Was this coincidence, or was there some structural correlation between these two fields? Obviously, in this period the lore of the *Kālacakratantra* was widely popular in Tibet. So the correlation between the *Kālacakra* and *vyākaraṇa* traditions may be entirely coincidental.

However, it should be noted that the *Kālacakratantra* tradition is particularly rich in the employment of language and script based elements in its *praxis*, most notably perhaps in its *rnam bcu dbang ldan* (Sanskrit *daśabala*) monogram emblem. It is telling, for instance, that Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364) wrote an 'instruction tool' (*bshad thabs*) specifically on the linguistic issues of *Kālacakratantra*, containing *inter alia* a lengthy exposé on *rnam bcu dbang ldan* and a pseudo-grammatical analysis of the Sanskrit term *evam*.<sup>113</sup> We find a continuation of this in similar work of Zha lu Chos skyong bzang po (1441-1528), *in casu* in his epitome of Sanskrit linguistics entitled (*Ka lā pa'i*) *Spyi don gsal ba'i snying po*.<sup>114</sup> In it he devotes a section to the grammatical techniques applied in the *Kālacakratantra* tradition.<sup>115</sup> The author's close association with the *Kālacakratantra* is shown also by the homage to the Buddha Kālacakra at the beginning of this treatise (*namah śrīkālācakrāya*),<sup>116</sup> whereas commonly in Indo-Tibetan linguistics such homage would be addressed to deities of language such as Mañjuśrī or Sarasvatī.

So, we see that some of the most prominent grammarians / philologists of the Tibetan 'Middle Ages' have written works specifically on the linguistic aspects of the *Kālacakratantra*. And we know that the majority of the Tibetan scholars of Sanskrit grammar were involved in the transmission of that same *Tantra*. Still it remains an open question whether this correlation is purely coincidental or signals a significant link between the two fields of expertise. Future research may shed some light on this tantalizing question.

#### 4. Concluding Observations

This article has provided further evidence of the intensive attention paid to the indigenous Indic traditions of Sanskrit grammar in Tibetan scholasticism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The incomplete translation of the *Cāndra vṛtti*, which I assume to be by Dpang lo tsā ba

<sup>112</sup> HSGLT 1: 212-213.

<sup>113</sup> HSGLT 1: 96; HSGLT 2: 1.2.2.10, p. 79-81; Verhagen (1993: 325-329); (forthcoming A: section 3.1.3.2).

<sup>114</sup> BDRC: W1KG9085; Verhagen (forthcoming A: section 3.1.3.2) and (forthcoming B: section 2).

<sup>115</sup> BDRC: W1KG9085 f. 9r2-10r2.

<sup>116</sup> BDRC: W1KG9085 f. 1v1.

Blo gros brtan pa (1276-1342), and the extensive commentary on *Kātantra* by Snye thang lo tsā ba Blo gros brtan pa (fifteenth century) clearly attest to this.

In the latter case it has been possible to reunite incomplete remnants of one single manuscript which are kept in distinct archives, namely the Buddhist Digital Resource Centre and the British Library. The dating of this manuscript set remains a vexing uncertainty. The scribes mentioned in the colophon materials point to a date in the fifteenth century. On the other hand, if the single manuscript folio 28 in BL Or. 6626 is indeed contemporaneous with the rest of BL Or. 6626 and with BDRC W2PD17532, and we take this as a *Leitfossil* so to speak, the set would date from the late seventeenth century at the earliest. As we should also reckon with the possibility that manuscripts may have been added to the set at various dates, the question of the date of the BDRC W2PD17532/BL Or. 6626 set remains undecided: ranging from the fifteenth to late seventeenth / early eighteenth century.

Moreover, also on the basis of a second (incomplete) manuscript of this same treatise in the British Library, we are presently able to reconstruct the entire text of Snye thang lo tsā ba's *Kātantra* commentary and we can now conclude that Snye thang's commentary covered all four chapters of *Kātantra*'s rule system. This indeed makes it one of the most voluminous treatises –if not the most voluminous-- on Sanskrit grammar ever written in Tibetan in pre-modern times.

Within this scholastic tradition three major exponents shared the ordination name Blo gros brtan pa and they were considered as masters continuing the work of their famous Indian namesake Sthiramati (sixth century CE). Perhaps they themselves professed to be heirs to the legacy of Sthiramati, or their entourage proffered them as such. Whatever may have been the case –probably it was a bit of both-- they bore the designations 'second' to 'fourth' Blo gros brtan pa with good right.

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