

**The *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* by Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang
'phrin-las (1642-1715): An Enquiry into Biographies as
Lineage History**



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Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis centres on a text belonging to a rich but understudied genre of Tibetan Buddhist literature known as *thob yig* or *gsan yig*, ‘records of teachings received’. Their undeniable value has been acknowledged by scholars who utilised them as supplementary material for research on biographies, transmission lineages and authentication of Buddhist texts. However, extensive studies of *thob yigs* as the focal topic of research are few and scarce. Chronologically, these texts form the "biography" of Tibetan Buddhism since the very beginning of sectarian Buddhism in Tibet. The primary purpose of these texts is to document in detail the transmission lineages through which major religious practices and teachings were passed down.

The main text investigated for this thesis is titled the “*Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*” and was compiled by the 17th century Khalkha Mongolian monk-scholar Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las (1642-1715). He who was one of the most distinguished Mongolian Tibetan Buddhist masters of his time and still occupies one of the highest positions amongst the ranks of Mongolian monk-scholars to have emerged throughout history. Unlike simpler examples of its genre, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig* also includes relevant

information on tantric and monastic precepts, instructions and consecrations, expositions on doctrine and practice, meditation guidelines, historical events, and autobiographical and biographical material related to important female and male Buddhist figures. Though catching the attention of scholars both in and outside of Mongolia as an important work for the study of Tibetan Buddhism, to date, it has never been studied in detail.

This thesis attempts to remedy the lack of study of this vast work. The focus here being the aspect of *rnam thar*, ‘biography’ in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig*. These life stories totalling around 227 form the structural backbone of the work and is the feature which makes the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long* a truly unique example of its genre. The chapters of this thesis investigate a selection of *rnam thars* belonging to Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s own teacher and contemporaries, as well as the author’s *rang rnam*, ‘autobiography’. Through this analysis, the goal of this thesis is to demonstrate what these life stories reveal about the author’s outlook on the chaotic 17th century period, his vision of an exemplary Dge-lugs tradition, the manifestation of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s relentless devotion to Buddhism in the narratives he composes, and how this work and its contents fits into the larger context of Tibetan Buddhist writing.

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The first time I laid eyes on Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* which spans 1234 folios, I was overwhelmed by the prospect of being able to study this work, composed by an individual over three centuries ago as the product of the endeavours of his entire life dedicated to the study of Buddhism. The author stated this work to have been part of his aspiration to leave behind something that can inspire and inform those who are interested in the study of Buddhism long after his own lifetime. As I sat there opening file after file of photographed folios of the *thob yig*, I realised how fortunate I was to be presented with this opportunity to read and study his work, but the daunting realisation of the scope of the project at hand also materialised.

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A Note on Translation and Transliteration

I would like this opportunity to state that all the translation and transliteration of Tibetan and Mongolian in this thesis are my own work unless otherwise stated.

My English translations of relevant sections of primary Tibetan and Mongolian sources are to be found throughout the main body of the thesis with the corresponding transliteration of found in the footnote.

For the transliteration of passages from Tibetan language works consulted for this thesis, the Wylie transliteration system was used:

ཀ *ka* ཁ *kha* ག *ga* ལ *nga*

ཅ *ca* ཆ *cha* ཇ *ja* ཉ *nya*

ཏ *ta* ཐ *tha* ཌ *da* ན *na*

པ *pa* ཕ *pha* བ *ba* མ *ma*

ཙ *tsa* ཛ *tsha* ཝ *dza* ཡ *wa*

མ *zha* ཟ *za* འ ' ལ *ya*

ར *ra* ལ *la* ཤ *sha* ས *sa*

ཏ *ha* ཨ *a*

For the Sanskrit terms, the standard IAST (International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration) system was followed.

For the transliteration of Classical Mongolian sources, I used the following system arranged below following the Mongolian alphabetical order:

Vowels: a e i o u ö ü

Consonants: n b p kh/k ġ/g m l s sh t d ch j y r w (v)

For the transliteration of Cyrillic Mongolian Sources, I used the Following system presented in the below table:

Cyrillic	а	б	в	г	д	е	ё	ж	з	и	й	к	л	м	н	о	ө	п
Latin	a	b	w	g	d	ye/yo	yo	j	z	i	i	k	l	m	n	o	ö	p

Cyrillic	р	с	т	у	ү	ф	х	ц	ч	ш	щ	ъ	ы	ь	э	ю	я
Latin	r	s	t	u	ü	f	kh	ts	ch	sh	shch	i	y	i	e	yu	ya

Introduction

The 17th century marked the beginning of the golden age of Mongolian Buddhism and it is in this period that we find the largest number of texts translated into Mongolian from Tibetan by outstanding Mongolian monk-scholars, such as the 170 texts covering medicine, astrology, philosophy and similar subjects translated by the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662),¹ not to mention those monk-scholars who took part in the large project of translating the enormous *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* into Mongolian.²

As well as Mongolian monk-scholars producing translations of Tibetan texts, the 17th century also saw the rise of original compositions in Tibetan by Mongolian authors. According to the monk Byambaa Ragchaa from Khalkha Mongolia, who has collected and recently republished an astonishing number of Tibetan texts written by Mongolians, the estimated number of Mongolian Buddhist writers who wrote in and translated from Tibetan counts around 500 scholars (Byambaa 2003:21). Some of the earliest of these notable figures include:

- ❖ Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan (1639–1704): 79 works in four volumes
- ❖ Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las (1642–1715): 37 works in six volumes

¹ Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662) studied in Tibet under the First Panchen Lama and had both Rnying-ma and Dge-lugs affiliations. For more on this figure see his autobiography in Radna-bhadra (1967:98) and Perdue (2005:104).

² There were multiple translation projects to translate the Tibetan *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* into Mongolian between the 14th and 18th centuries (Dorjasuren 2007:371). The first complete translation in 108 volumes was carried out by Ayushi Güüshi and Shiregetü Güüshi between 1602-1607. Another version in 113 volumes was systematised under the organisation of two individuals Kun-dga' 'od-zer and Bsam-gtan seng-ge on the basis of the existing version by the command of Ligden Khaan (1592-1634) between 1628-1269 using golden ink and often referred to as the *Altan Kanjur*, “Golden *Bka' 'gyur*”. Then between 1717-1720 the Mongolian translation was edited again and blockprinted in 108 volumes in Beijing under the sponsorship of the Manchu Emperor Kangxi (1654-1722). The *Bstan 'gyur* was translated by a large group of Mongolian monk scholars headed by Lcang-skye Rol-pa'i rdo rje (1717-1786) and Dga'-ldan Shiregetü Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i nyi-ma (1689-1762) between 1741-1749 and blockprinted in Beijing in 1749. For more on the translation of the *Bka' 'gyur* and *Bstan 'gyur* into Mongolian see Borjigin-Ujeed (2009), Bulag (2003), Kollmar-Paulenz (2002) and Stanley (2005).

- ❖ Shireethu Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i nyi-ma (1689–1762): 77 works in four volumes
- ❖ Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes dpal-'byor (1704–1786): 71 works in eight volumes
- ❖ Lcang-skya Rol-pa'i rdo-rje (1717–1786): 205 works in ten volumes
- ❖ Chakhar dge-bshes Blo-bzang tshul-khrims (1740–1810): 222 works in ten volumes

This unprecedented growth of literary production can be attributed to the growing number of monk-scholars from the various Mongolian regions educated in the Dge-lugs-pa monastic institutions. These scholars, who could afford to embark on the long journey to Tibet, were of noble ancestry or backed by nobility and held an influential position in both matters of religion and state upon their return to Mongolia. A large percentage of these scholars stayed in Tibet for decades and returned home as no less than experts in Tibetan Buddhism and its accompanying academic framework of study, making lasting contributions to both Tibetan and Mongolian intellectual cultures (Erdenibayar 2007:303). Due to the authority they held on account of their education and heritage, many were invited to and also played political and diplomatic roles in the Manchu court, which was at the time just beginning to blossom into the great power it was to become in the following decades (Karmay 2003:73).

The most influential of the Mongolian monk-scholars also left behind a large corpus of religious writings composed in Tibetan regarding various aspects of the Buddhist dharma and religio-historical constellations of the period. These scholars were educated extensively in both Mongolia and Tibet, familiar with the religio-political situation of both settings and thus in a uniquely privileged position. Consequently, the wide range of their education and experience is reflected in their works. Academics such

as Bareja-Starzyńska,³ Bira,⁴ Elverskog,⁵ and Erdenibayar⁶ have examined the works by Mongolian scholars and noted their undeniable contributions to the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

The Mongolian scholar Gombojab believes that there were some 100 Mongolian writers who together wrote around 400 volumes and the Mongolian academic Jügder Chimidiin believes that there were 209 such traditional Mongolian scholars (Khadalov 1981:44). Their in-depth knowledge of the Tibetan literary tradition is reflected both in their writings and in the writings of the authors they influenced. The authority of the historical narratives that they and their affiliates composed is ideologically strengthened by the Tibetan monk-scholars' tendency to give "sacral character to Chinggis and Khubilai Khaan in their writings, regarding them as incarnations of powerful Boddhisattvas and tutelary deities" (Perdue 2005:122).

The contribution of Mongolian Buddhist scholars is thus significant both in terms of literary output and in impact upon their social, political, and religious environments in the larger constellation of Tibet, Mongolia, and the Qing. Academic work to this date has barely scratched the surface of this vast corpus and its wider implications. As such, this thesis aims to contribute one further piece toward our overall understanding of this complex and important wealth of material by examining one highly influential work: the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las.

³ On the life and works of the First Jebtsundamba of Mongolia (1635-1723), see Bareja-Starzynska (2008, 2010, 2015).

⁴ In his two volumes concerning Mongolian historical literature and writing from 1200-1900, he dealt with the lives and works of many of these prominent monk-scholars to have come out of Mongolia. See Bira (1970) and Bira (2002).

⁵ Elverskog focused on the issue of Tibetocentrism in the study of the Tibet-Mongolia interface by looking at the socio-political dimensions of the religious exchange. See Elverskog (2007).

⁶ On the importance of the life and works of Sum-pa Mkhan-po Ye-shes dpal-'byor, see Erdenibayar (2007).

1. Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las

Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las (1642-1715)⁷ was a 17th century Khalkha Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monk-scholar who will henceforth be referred to in short as Dza-ya Paṇḍita. He was upheld during the 17th century as one of the *gurban jula*, 'three butter lamps' (Olziibuyan & Chuluun 2002:1) of Buddhism in Mongolia along with the first Jebtsundamba Khutukthu Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan⁸ (1635-1723) and the first Lamin Gegeen Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan⁹ (1639-1704). Together with the Lamin Gegeen, the two were also known as the 'two sun and moon like disciples' of the Jebtsundamba Khutugtu (Lhasayoure 2012:31). Today, he remains amongst the most prolific Mongolian Buddhist masters and is remembered as a pivotal scholar, teacher, historian, master of Buddhist medicine, and author of *rnam thars* owed mainly to his vast encyclopaedic work, the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

He was born in 1642 in Mukhar Khujirt, now known as Arkhangai Aimag, Khalkha Mongolia and at the age of three was recognised as the reincarnation of Sain Noyan Köndülün or Köndelen Tsökür¹⁰ (1558-1640). At the age of 12 he was accepted as the disciple of the First Jebtsundamba and was granted the title Noyan Khutugtu. When

⁷ Not to be confused with the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662).

⁸ Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723), also known as Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar was the son of Tüsheets Khan of the Khalkha Mongols. He was recognised as the reincarnation of Jonang Tāranātha and later became the spiritual head of the Dge-lugs-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism in Khalkha Mongolia. He was popularly dubbed the 'Mongolian Dalai Lama'. For a study of his biography and his religio-political position, see Bareja-Starzynska (2008), (2010).

⁹ Mkhan-chen Chos-gyal Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan (1639-1703) was the first reincarnation in Mongolia in the Lamin Gegeen lineage. He was an influential poet, medical doctor and astrologer who developed the system upon which the traditional Mongol calendar is based (Mend-ooyo, 2013:65). His origin was in India and he is said to have been reborn in Tibet six times. He was born in the year 1639. In 1642, he was recognised as the reincarnation of Lamiin Gegeen at which point he took the name Chos-gyi rdo-rje and was enthroned as the abbot of Lamiin Gegeen monastery. He was recognised as the proper reincarnation by the Panchen Lama and his advisors. After being accepted as the disciple of the First Jetsundamba, he went to Tibet in 1673 to study the dharma. He was a good friend, teacher and the disciple of Dza-ya Paṇḍita (Boldbaatar 2004:73-73).

¹⁰ Abatai Khan's younger brother. A key figure in the spread of Buddhism in Mongolia.

he was 19, he went to Tibet and received his full monastic ordination from the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682). After his stay in Lhasa, he travelled to Bkra-shis lhun-po monastery, his main monastic college, where he met and studied with the First Panchen Lama (1570-1662). In 1678, he was bestowed the title Dza-ya Paṇḍita by the Fifth Dalai Lama and was sent back to Mongolia soon after in 1679 to contribute to spreading the *dharma* in Mongolia. Upon his return to Khalkha Mongolia, he was enthroned as the abbot of Zayain Khüree ¹¹ in Mongolia and established many other temples and monasteries. He passed away in 1715 in Khalkha Mongolia and his remains were entombed in a *stūpa* at his own Monastery: Zayin Khüree. Aside from the above-mentioned Tibetan Buddhist hierarchs, he had the privilege of studying with and forming close relations with many other historically important Buddhist masters of the Dge-lugs tradition.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita is renowned as a prolific writer, composing his first written work at the age of 17, a prayer book called the *Bogdiin Zalbiral*, “Prayer to the Buddha”. He composed works in both Mongolian and Tibetan including prayers, commentaries, philosophical treatises, poems and works of history and biography. Some of his notable works include the first Mongolian-authored commentary of the Indian scholar Daṇḍin’s *Kāvyādarśa*, “Mirror of Poetics” which was composed in 1670 when he was only 28 years old. It is titled *Don rgyan so lnga’i dper brjod tshangs sras dgyes pa’i glu dbyangs*, “The illustration of the thirty-five ornaments of meaning known as the melody which delights the children of Brahma” and had an enormous influence on *kāvya* style poetic writing in Mongolia (Yontan 1982:1120).

¹¹ Zayin Khüree was renovated and reopened after its partial destruction during the communist revolution and stands in Arkhangai Aimag, Tsetserleg, 257 miles west of Ulaanbaatar. See Charleux (2016).

2. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*

The most famous of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writings is his *thob yig*, the text which concerns this thesis. *Thob yig*, 'records of teachings obtained', is synonymous with the term *gsan yig*, 'records of teachings heard'. In English, both are generally referred to as 'records of teachings received' (Martin 1997:vi). In their simplest form, they are “nothing more than bare lists of disciplines, precepts, directions and consecrations taken, and of the person giving them” (Vostrikov 1970:199); however, the larger works of this type are often rich in information of great variety of themes.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*, being the second largest example to date, is representative of the more complex works of this genre that comprise not only lists of lineages but also detailed information on topics such as sūtra, tantra, historical episodes, and biographical material regarding the author as well as other prominent individuals of the tradition (Vostrikov 1970, Sobisch 2002, Kramer 2008, Wayman 1962). These works comprise more than one single literary genre since they combine elements of historiographical, biographical or bibliographical writing, as shall be discussed in Chapter Two. A large number of *thob yigs* have survived until today, varying hugely in length: from the 23 folio *thob yig* of 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280) (van Schaik 2000:5) to the extensive 1500 folios of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617–1682). The oldest known texts that could be considered as *thob yig* date back to the 11th century and the latest *thob yigs* such as that of Blo-bzang rta-mrin (1867-1937) date from as recent a period as the 20th century. If looked at chronologically, they form the “biography” of the lineages of Tibetan Buddhism since the very beginning of sectarian Buddhism in Tibet.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* carries the full title of *Shakya'i btsun pa blo bzang 'phrin las kyi zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig gsal pa'i me long*, "The clear mirror of the profound and vast noble¹² teachings received by the Shakya monk Blo-bzang 'phrin-las". The work is more often known by its shorter title, *Thob yig gasl bai me long*. It has four volumes and 11 chapters which total 1234 folios and make up the last four volumes of his six volume *gsung 'bum*. According to the colophon of the work, it was written between 1698 and 1702.

The Tibetan version employed for this thesis is the Beijing block print from the early 1900s. Full copies of the *thob yig* are kept in the national and university libraries of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the national library of Ulaanbaatar, the library of Gandan monastery in Ulaanbaatar, the library of the University of Warsaw, and the archives of St Petersburg. This present thesis used photographs of the copy kept in Höhhot and scanned copies of the version from the National Library of Ulaanbaatar, which I obtained from the late scholar Nyamochir in the summer of 2013 during my stay in Ulaanbaatar.

The work was also translated into Classical Mongolian during Dza-ya Paṇḍita's lifetime and the Mongolian translation has survived in manuscript form. The Mongolian version exists in three volumes kept separately across different libraries in Höhhot, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. More recently, the late Khalkha scholar Nymochir Phrinlai from Ulaanbaatar published the original Classical Mongolian manuscript version in three modern Cyrillic Mongolian book volumes; in this publication, he also compares problematic areas with the Tibetan block print. I received a

¹² It is noteworthy that *zab pa*, 'profound' and *rgya che ba'i*, 'vast' is at the same time a common reference to Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka equalling 'profound' and Asanga's Yogacara equalling 'vast', hinting at the Buddhist content of the text.

copy only very recently and was therefore unable to take it into account in this thesis but hope to investigate it closely in the future.

The primary interest of the present thesis is the large number of *rnam thars* contained within Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*. These *rnam thars* act as the framework for the transmission lineages and expositions on various topics of sūtra and tantra contained within the *thob yig* and thus bind the work together.

3. The Goals of this Thesis

Despite recognition of the value of this work by numerous scholars of Tibetan and Mongolian Studies, there has been to this date no attempt to contextualise or study the contents of this work. This present thesis is an attempt to remedy this lack of scholarship and open the topic of this work for later discussion. Due to the vast size of this *thob yig* and the topics it covers, the focus of this study went through a journey of “narrowing down” which concluded with the decision to research a portion of the large number of *rnam thars* contained in this work, totalling 227. The *rnam thars* chosen for closer analysis and contextualisation are contained in Chapter Nine of the *thob yig*, which contains the *rnam thars* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's teachers and contemporaries. This choice seemed appropriate given the historical importance of these figures as well as the author's familiarity and hence ability of his writing to shed light on the historical and religio-political constellations during the 17th century.

The primary aim of this DPhil project is to investigate the purpose of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* and its value for Tibetan Studies by investigating the following themes:

- 1) What is the place of *thob yigs* as a genre of Tibetan Buddhist literature and how does Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* compare to other works of its genre?
- 2) Why are there so many *rnam thars* in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* and what purpose do they serve?
- 3) How can these *rnam thars* and other related materials in the *thob yig* be employed to map the Tibetan Buddhist world?
- 4) What do the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* reveal about the Mongolia-Tibet interface?
- 5) What implications may the religio-political constellations of the 17th century have had on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing?

Methodologically, the research is primarily a textual and historical study of this *thob yig* and other works of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as well as the works of other prolific Buddhist masters and influential figures of the period such as the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) and his regent Sde-srid Sangs-gyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705). The selected sections from the *thob yig* contain references to elaborate transmission lineages and commentaries, detailed historical accounts of key events of the 17th century, and biographies of the key religious figures of the period.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita presents the wide range of topics in his *thob yig* by weaving together transmission lineages of teachings and practices, historiographical accounts, and exposition of the practices and teachings around the central theme of *rnam thars* of important figures of the tradition. In doing so, he never relents in quoting his sources, whether written or conversational, which makes this work broad and reliable.

Through cross-analysis of a selection of the *rnam thars* found in this *thob yig*, the present thesis hopes to demonstrate how these life stories are able to not only stand alone

as reliable accounts of the lives of their subjects but, when these interconnected life stories of authoritative teachers are combined and read together, are also able to embody a “*rnam thar*” of the Dge-lugs tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. They thus provide a unique picture of this tradition as a whole, as portrayed by a Mongolian scholar in the crucial period of the 17th century.

4. Chapter Outlines

Chapter One presents the historical, religious and political backdrop to Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his writing. This chapter will begin by recounting the history of Central Asia starting from the Mongolian Yuan dynastical period in the 13th century when Tibetan Buddhism assumed the role of a catalyst for foreign relations through to the author’s own times of the 17th century. Throughout the discussion, the role of Tibetan Buddhism in the events leading up to the rise of the Qing Dynasty and the enthronement of the Fifth Dalai Lama will be addressed. As Tibetan Buddhism was the catalyst for the relations between the Mongols, the Tibetans and the Qing, this section recounts the events of this period primarily with regard to their association with Tibetan Buddhism. Lastly, the historical period of the 17th century itself, in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita lived, studied, and carried out his religious activities will be examined in the context of religion, culture, and politics in and between Mongolia and Tibet.

Chapter Two of this thesis focuses on the *rang rnam* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita found at the end of volume two of his *gsung 'bum*. It introduces and presents the author and his works based on his *rang rnam* against the backdrop of existing scholarship. This autobiography, spanning 33 folios and written entirely in verse, is analysed in the context

of the Dge-lugs-pa dominated religio-historical and socio-political setting of 17th Central Asia with particular points of reference being Tibetan Buddhist religious writing, and information on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's teachers, patrons, monastic education and personal experiences. The *rang rnam* is rather unusual in its *thob yig*-like presentation, which sets the scene for the exploration of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's masterpiece, the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Chapter Three introduces the literary genre of *thob yig* as well as gives an overview of the content of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* through an analysis of its structural and stylistic features. *Thob yig* as a rather under-studied Tibetan Buddhist literary genre will be introduced and analysed in terms of style, content, purpose and genre categorisation in the wider context of the Tibetan Buddhist literary tradition. Then Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* will be introduced with special reference to the large number of *rnam thars* found within the work. The *thob yigs* of masters of other traditions as well as other Dge-lugs-pa masters who were contemporaries of Dza-ya Paṇḍita will be referred to as examples that demonstrate why this *thob yig* is unusual for its genre. Aside from the brief structure outline of this *thob yig* published by Alex Wayman (1962), no detailed analysis of the *thob yig* has been published to date. A detailed contents overview for the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, drawing attention to the hundreds of *rnam thars* which form the backbone of this work and which accompany this chapter, can be found in the Appendix of this thesis. Lastly, the stylistic features of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* will be analysed with reference to other *thob yigs*, especially that of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, whose writings had a great influence on Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

Chapter Four begins with the analysis of the *rnam thars* found in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* by examining one of these *rnam thars* in detail. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar*

of the Fifth Dalai Lama was a fitting choice as the subject was one of, if not *the* most important religious and secular figures of the 17th century Tibetan Buddhist world. His *rnam thar* will be examined and contextualised from beginning to end with reference to other works with which we find parallels, such as the Fifth Dalai Lama's own *rang rnam* and the *BaiDUrya ser po* by Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. The central themes of consideration for this analysis are firstly the depictions of the religious activities of the Fifth Dalai Lama such as his early life, religious training, monasteries which he founded and his role as a teacher, and secondly how Dza-ya Paṇḍita deals with the controversial political events which took place during the life of the Fifth Dalai Lama in his attempt to provide a religiously pure narrative. Moreover, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's personal experiences, which occupy a large portion of the *rnam thar*, will be discussed in relation to his own life story. Lastly, the chapter will touch upon the emphasis Dza-ya Paṇḍita places on the Mongols and their place in the Tibetan Buddhist world, which is a recurring theme throughout the *thob yig*. The detailed examination of the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama thus highlights some of the major themes for analysis that can be found across the other *rnam thars*, connecting them as parts of a larger whole.

Chapter Five focuses on the role of the *rnam thars* within the larger framework of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. The continuity and connections between the narratives will be examined in order to demonstrate that these *rnam thars* are links in a chain and thus need to be read as parts of a larger narrative, the “*rnam thar* of the Dge-lugs tradition”. As a *thob yig* it deals with lineages but a closer look reveals the need to distinguish different types of lineages, namely: Reincarnation Lineage, Ancestral Lineage, Master-disciple Lineage and Transmission Lineage. These lineage typologies will be discussed in detail with reference to the body of literature which accompany them. Then the topic of reincarnation lineages, represented by *'khrungs rabs*, will be discussed together with a

detailed exploration of the *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. With reference to other *'khrungs rabs*, such as that of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, this section of the chapter aims to demonstrate how Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses *'khrungs rabs* as a tool to interweave the reincarnation and ancestral lineages of his masters. The textual examples are drawn from the *rnam thars* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own masters and contemporaries such as the Fifth Dalai Lama, the First Jebtsundamba, the Second Panchen Lama, Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho and the Sixth Dalai Lama, which are all found in the Ninth Chapter of the *thob yig*. This section of the thesis also aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the author's reasons for writing the work, what he wanted to achieve, and his own personal position as a Khalkha Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monk who experienced first-hand the dramatic changes that took place in 17th century Central Asia.

Chapter Six addresses some of the general tendencies of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's work, the foremost of these being his "Buddhist glazing" over controversial events, a prominent feature maintained throughout the life stories. The second is the observation that in his efforts to present a pure and authoritative Buddhist tradition, he employs an interpretation of the *lugs gnyis* model in which religion supersedes the secular, rather than putting them on a level plane. Another recurrent theme and something of an innovation on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's part that sets his writing apart from the works of his Tibetan contemporaries is his tendency to insert the Mongols into the life stories of the Dge-lugs-pa masters and, consequently, into the history of the tradition. In examining the "Mongolian flavouring" of the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig*, the questions of "why?" and "for whom" he writes will be addressed. In extracting the "Mongolness" of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing, the similarities and differences between the treatment of topics by Tibetan and Mongolian authors such as the Sde-srid and the Mongolian historian Saṅgag Secen will also be explored. In terms of the Mongolian sources referred to, these are mostly the historical works dating between

the late 16th and 17th centuries, composed in Mongolian by Mongols such as Toba Taiji's *Sira Tuġuji*, "The Yellow History" and Saġang Secen's *Khagad-un Ündüsiin-ii Erdeniyin Tobci*, "The Bejewelled Summary of the Origin of the Khaans".

The thesis closes with an outlook on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's impact within Mongolia and a discussion of his influence on the Mongolian Buddhist tradition, as well as on later Mongolian monk-scholars and their writing. In doing so, the present author hopes to highlight the contribution of the study of works by Mongolian Buddhist authors writing in Tibetan such as Dza-ya Paṇḍita has yet to make for the field of Tibetan Buddhist Studies.

Chapter One: The Historical Context

All narratives, including historical ones, are written against a contextual backdrop that can help us understand the plot and twists contained within. Therefore, the background of a piece of historical writing is essential to the interpretation and understanding of its contents. When reading a text, such as the one examined in this thesis, the cultural, historical, religious and political contexts act as the codes with which we can decrypt the message relayed by the author.

Our author Dza-ya Paṇḍita, lived in one of the most dynamic periods of Central Asian history when the political and religious frameworks of the Central Asian nations were undergoing radical structural and organisational breakdowns and reformations. Regardless of their level of impact, many of the changes and interplays of power that were taking place during the 17th century related in some way to the Dge-lugs-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. To analyse the contents of this *thob yig*, which was written during the end of this defining age, it is necessary to explore the following aspects of the 17th century Dge-lugs-pa dominated Tibetan Buddhist world in which the author lived:

- ❖ The role of Tibetan Buddhism for the Central Asian countries during the period leading up to the 17th century
- ❖ The relevance of Tibetan Buddhism for the 17th century religio-political power dynamics between Tibet, Mongolia and the Manchu Qing

This chapter will begin by recounting the history of Central Asia starting from the Yuan period in the 13th century when Tibetan Buddhism assumed the role of a catalyst for foreign relations. Particular emphasis will be placed on the events relating to the

Mongolian leaders and Tibetan Buddhist hierarchs, the *mchod yon*, ‘patron-priest’ relationship model and its impact on the exchanges that took place between these nations and the development of Tibetan Buddhism in both Tibet and Mongolia.

As we move closer to the 17th century, the role of Tibetan Buddhism in the events leading up to the rise of the Qing Dynasty will be addressed. Although this period was defined by the formation of the Manchu Qing Empire, the key players continued to include the Tibetan Buddhist traditions backed either by powerful Tibetan patrons or formidable Mongolian patrons who had recently converted to Tibetan Buddhism. Hence, this section recounts the events of this period primarily with regards to their association with Tibetan Buddhism.

Lastly, the historical period of the 17th century itself, in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita lived, studied, and carried out his religious activities will be examined in the context of religion, culture, and politics in and between Mongolia and Tibet. This section will also include a brief discussion of the rise to power and developments of the Dge-lugs school of Tibetan Buddhism as headed by the Fifth Dalai Lama.

Another element that will be examined is the role and input of the Dge-lugs-pa Mongolian monastics who were active during this period. In doing so, this chapter aims to establish the contextual backdrop against which we can approach the contents of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s literary masterpiece, the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*.

1.1. The Mongolian Yuan Dynasty Period

It can be argued that sectarian divisions within Tibetan Buddhism first began to play a role in the arena of power struggle in Central Asia in the 13th century when the Mongol Khaans¹³ established religio-political relations with the Tibetan lamas.¹⁴ Later historical narratives from the 17th century such as Saṅgag Secen's *Khagad-un Ündüsün-ü Erdeni-yin Tobci*, "The Bejewelled Summary of the Origin of the Khaans"¹⁵ maintain that the Mongols had already converted to Tibetan Buddhism by the time of Chinggis Khaan (1162-1227). Similarly, later Tibetan sources also suggest that in 1207, Chinggis Khaan received teachings from Lamas and declared Tibet to be a self-governing state subject to paying tribute to the Mongol rulers (Norbu 2001:48). Chinggis Khaan and his troops never entered Tibetan territories but it is likely that they had some form of first contact with Tibetan Buddhism when they conquered the Tangut Empire.

Although there is evidence that Chinggis Khaan exempted monks from taxation and prohibited the destruction of monasteries (Choi, 1998:123), even by his grandson Khubilai Khaan's times, there were still shamans performing rituals alongside Christian priests and Buddhist monks (Borjigin-Ujeed 2009:23). Thus, the possibility that Chinggis Khaan converted to Buddhism as claimed by the later Mongolian chronicles is extremely unlikely.

¹³ In order to distinguish between the Great Mongolian Khans and lesser Khans, I used "Khaan" with a double "a" for the "Great Khans" and "Khan" for the other Khans.

¹⁴ The early Tibetan imperial period and the Tibetan presence in Dunhuang will not be discussed here due to the topic here being focused on the period of history in which Buddhism in Tibet was already divided into different traditions.

¹⁵ This work is a historical chronicle of the Mongols written in 1662 and is one of the first works to present Mongolian history through a Buddhist lens. For a discussion of this work together with its translation and transliteration see Krueger (1967).

In reality, the first truly significant contact between the Mongols and Tibetan Buddhism was established through the meeting of Ögedei Khaan's brother prince Köden (1201-1251) and the patriarch of the Sa-skya school Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) in 1247 during the short reign of Chinggis Khaan's grandson Güyüg Khaan (1206-1248). After receiving the invitation from Köden, Sa-skya Paṇḍita reached the prince's court together with his two young nephews: the ten year old 'Phags-pa (1235-1280) and six year old Phyag-na rdo-rje (1239-1267). This meeting brought about a chain of events upon which later models of the religio-political interface between Tibet and other powerful neighbouring nations would come to be based.

Both Köden and Sa-skya Paṇḍita passed away in 1251 after which the young 'Phags-pa and Phyag-na rdo-rje stayed at Köden's court until they were summoned to prince Khubilai's court in 1254. The Tibetan tradition recounts how Khubilai converted to Buddhism, accepted the supremacy of the lama, appointed 'Phags-pa as his root lama and handed over to him the thirteen myriarchies of Tibet (Smith 1996:89). After Khubilai became Khaan in 1260, he bestowed the title "State Preceptor" on 'Phags-pa and sent him back to Tibet in 1264 (Smith 1996:90). The historical accuracy and context of their relationship has been much debated by scholars, who have sometimes discredited the Tibetan accounts as later fabrications (Wylie 1977; Petech 1990; Everding 2002). Regardless of historical accuracy, Tibet for the first time since the ninth century had a centralised governing system which was to an extent autonomous and at the same time introduced a system of government that could be headed by a Buddhist patriarch.

On the Mongol side, the evidence of teachings and initiations bestowed on Khubilai Khaan indicates the Khaan's genuine interest in Tibetan Buddhism, but it is unlikely that Khubilai fully converted to Buddhism as claimed later in the above

mentioned 17th century chronicles.¹⁶ Nonetheless, due to 'Phags-pa's presence in the Mongol court, the Mongolian nobility became familiar with Tibetan Buddhism and the first seeds of conversion were sown.

Another important development that took place during this period was the introduction the term *mchod yon* into politics. The term *mchod yon* is made up of *mchod gnas* meaning 'officiant' or 'chaplain' and *yon bdag* meaning 'donor' (Ruegg 2003:363). Later Tibetan and Mongolian historical traditions portray the relationship between Khubilai and 'Phags-pa as the idealised model for the *mchod yon*; the so-called 'patron-priest' relationship. Thus, the interpretation of *mchod yon/yon mchod* as 'the chaplain and the patron' or 'patron and priest' has been widely employed by scholars such as Tucci. However, both Ruegg and Cüppers have pointed out that the term is not precisely translatable into English (Ruegg 2003: 365; Cüppers 2004:9).

Semantically speaking, the term *yon* translates from the Sanskrit term *dakṣiṇā*, meaning the fee given to a lama or priest for a consecration or ritual performed for the lay donor, whilst *yon gnas* translates from the Sanskrit term *dakṣiṇīya*, which means the one who is the recipient of offerings (Ruegg 2003:365). Therefore, this interpretation places the *yon bdag* and *mchod gnas* on the same plane of honour or respect. Consequently, each party is contributing something to the other and is worthy of honour from the other, creating a mutually beneficial relationship.

Historically, this relationship is grounded in the Buddhist tradition. Within the practice of giving alms, the donor who gives alms to the monk can also be considered the

¹⁶ There is evidence that the Mongolian nobility continued their ancestral worship practices and rituals during Khubilai Khaan's times. Furthermore, Khubilai was interested in many religions, not just Buddhism. His capital Kharakhorum was recorded to be home to Muslim mosques, Christian churches as well as Buddhist monasteries.

donee, as he is the one who receives spiritual merit in return for the alms he offers. However, the monk can also be both, as he is the donor in the sense that he is offering spiritual merit, yet also the donee as he is receiving alms. Now, if this interpretation of *mchod yon* is applied to the Mongol–Tibetan relationship during the 13th century, this can place both parties on an equal plane.

From a political perspective, the term also offers much insight into the relationship between the Mongol rulers and the Sa-skye Lamas. To understand this, Ruegg again refers to the Indian origins of the relationship between a *dharmarāja*, ‘Dharma King’ and *bhikṣu* as an origin and a parallel to the term *mchod yon*. In this relationship model, the *dharmarāja* is a secular counterpart to the *bhikṣu*, who is the embodiment of spiritual side of power (Ruegg, 2003:366). Furthermore, Ruegg asserts that the term ‘patron’ could have a twin meaning: either as the patron who has secular power that is patronising a religious body, or as a patron bodhisattva in the sense of Avalokiteśvara - the patron deity of Tibet (Ruegg 2003:367).

In terms of the Mongol-Tibet relationship in the 13th century, 'Phags-pa was regarded as an emanation of Avalokiteśvara whilst Khubilai was considered the incarnation of Mañjughoṣa (Ruegg 1995:864). This was not a new phenomenon; later historians such as the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705) identified the Tibetan king Srong-btsan sgam-po as the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara to support the role of the Fifth Dalai Lama as the temporal and spiritual ruler of Tibet. From this perspective, the boundary of political and religious power would again be blurred. As a result, the Mongol Khaan gained authority in the religious domain due to his association with a Bodhisattva, and the lamas as incarnations of Bodhisattvas gained political authority due to their association with the kings of Tibet, who were also considered to be manifestations of

Avalokiteśvara. Later, this interchangeable and dynamic model of the *mchod yon* relationship would lay the foundations for the merging of religion and state in the form of the *lugs gnyis*, ‘the two systems of religion and state’, a model of an ideal government established by the Fifth Dalai Lama based on the theory of *chos srid zung 'brel* or *chos srid gnyis 'brel*, ‘combination of religious and secular power’.¹⁷

According to the later Tibetan and Mongolian traditions, the Mongols fully converted to Buddhism during the time of Khubilai Khaan due to his patronage of the Sa-skya school, which consequently secured the supremacy of the Sa-skya school in Tibet. In reality, the power struggles amongst the Mongolian descendants of Chinggis Khaan and the power struggles between the different Tibetan Buddhist schools continued to be rife. The new convention for Tibetan Buddhist schools to seek patronage amongst the Mongolian Khaans or princes lead to other relations following the model of Khubilai and 'Phags-pa such as Möngke as the patron of the 'Bri-gung-pa; Ülegü of the 'Phag-mo gru-pa; and Arigbukha of the Stag-lung-pas.

Despite the newly forged alliances between the Mongolian elites and the Tibetan Buddhist traditions, there is no evidence to suggest that the Mongols outside of the nobility had begun converting to Buddhism. The Mongols were renowned for their respect for religion and beliefs, and so, the influence of high lamas from various traditions in the courts of the Mongol Khaans and princes did begin to impact the religious worldview of the Mongol nobility. As contact with religious elites was only present within the Mongol court, if any conversion took place it would have been confined to the nobility. Thus, from the start of Buddhism’s introduction to the Mongols, it was conducted from the ‘top-

¹⁷ The term *lugs gnyis* as it appears in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s writing will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four of this thesis. Please see also Cüppers (2004) and Ruegg (1995).

down'. Over the next few centuries, however, Buddhism gradually became the national religion of all the Mongols extending to all levels of society. Nevertheless, as we will see below, Buddhist authority continued to remain the enterprise of the nobility.

1.2 The Late Yuan Period

Later Mongolian historical sources maintain that after the collapse of the Mongol Yüan Dynasty, Tibetan Buddhism had disappeared from Mongolia only to be reintroduced in the 16th century due to the efforts of Altan Khan of the Twelve Tümeds in Southern Mongolia and of Abadai Khan in the Northern Khalkha Mongolia. There is evidence of lamas in Oirad in the 15th century but the full conversion of the Oirad Mongols that came in the 17th century (Serruys 2010:538) was owed to the efforts of the Khoshud nobility such as Baibağas Bağatur Noyan (d. 1630).¹⁸ Although royal support of Buddhism did subside with the decline of Yuan power, the conversion of the Mongols had already begun to seep into the fabric of the Mongolian world-view from the top-down. Furthermore, the remainder of the Yuan became known as the Northern Yuan and did not completely disappear until the death of Ligden Khaan in 1634. The Northern Yuan were much diminished in power compared to the former glory of the Yuan, but their Khaans and nobility continued their support of Tibetan Buddhism and the conversion of the Mongols continued in their realm, albeit with less impact on other Mongolian territories.

¹⁸ He was the father of Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662) who was responsible for his son's ordination and period of study in Tibet. For a more detailed discussion of the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita see Taupier (2014).

Towards the end of the Yuan Dynasty, the weakening empire was no longer comparable to the days of Khubilai Khaan and, with the decline in state resources and costs of suppressing civil unrest, state support of Buddhism was by no means a priority. After the fall of the Great Yuan dynasty in 1368, the already delicate unity of the Mongolian empire quickly dissipated. However, the descendants of Chinggis Khaan and the other noble houses of Mongolia continued to increase their economic power, wealth, and livestock. The state of disunity led to the Mongolian aristocracy becoming “more and more determined to be independent and escape the control of others” (Natsagdorj & A. Ochir 2010:525). It is likely that the devout converts to Tibetan Buddhism amongst the nobility continued their support of the religion. Yet, the lack of a centralised institution and political disunity resulted in a lack of historical sources, and therefore we cannot draw any definite conclusions.

Perdue noted that: “fragmentation has been by far the most common experience of Central Eurasians” (Perdue 2005:19). Mirroring the disunity amongst the Mongols, the Sa-skya dominance did not last long in Tibet’s competitive sectarian environment. Quoting Shakabpa: “...early in 1354, Sakya lost most of the Ü province to Pakmo Drupa. In 1358, when Sonam Gyeltsen was on the Sakya throne and Wangtsan and Namkha Tenpa were his Ponchens, Sakya's authority was completely lost to Pakmo Drupa or Nedongpa. From that point, Sakya's political influence gradually declined” (Shakabpa 2009:239).

1.3. The Northern Yuan Period

After the fall of the Great Yuan Dynasty, many of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism that would soon come to play crucial roles in the history of Central Asia began to establish their firm grounding in Tibet, namely the major Tibetan Buddhist traditions such as the Dge-lugs-pa and the Karma Bka'-brgyud. These traditions were competing for power by seeking patronage from powerful Tibetan families. This power struggle led to a similar era of disunity and internal strife as in the Mongolian situation. Some Tibetan Buddhist traditions followed the model of the *mchod yon* relations formed between the Sa-skyas and the grandchildren of Chinggis Khaan. They sought support from the many dispersed descendants of Chinggis Khaan, who were individually seeking ways to establish their authority and to expand their territories.

The new relations between the various Mongolian groups and the Tibetan Buddhist traditions on one hand advocated a fight for political power and on the other actively promoted the adoption of Tibetan Buddhism amongst the Mongols. But without an existing precursor, nationwide conversion would not have been possible. It can be said that after the fall of the Greater Yuan Dynasty, state-supported Tibetan Buddhism had all but disappeared amongst the Mongols. However, the seeds of the religion sown during the Yuan period did not completely vanish; Tibetan lamas from various Buddhist traditions continued to travel to the different Mongolian regions, not only to spread Buddhism amongst the people but also as part of official and trade missions. Serruys points out that a number of Tibetan high lamas in Oirad during the early 15th century was recorded in the *Ming Shih Lu*¹⁹ as part of a network of tribute and trade between Tibet and the Oirad

¹⁹ Chinese 明实录. Referring to the empirical annals of the Ming emperors and consequently also of the dynasty.

Mongols (Serruys 2010:543). Lamas require patrons and thus, Buddhism continued to spread at a lesser level yet still supported by the nobility who could act as patrons.

There is a lack of reliable Mongolian historical sources written during this period regarding the status quo of Tibetan Buddhism and its interaction with the Mongols. The later historical narratives such as the 17th century *Altan Tobci*, “The Golden Summary” or the slightly later *Erdeni-yin Tobci*, “The Jewelled Summary” do not give us any insight into Buddhist interactions between Tibet and Mongolia during this period and instead emphasise the *mchod yon* relations established between the Mongols and Sa-skyas. Nevertheless, it can be speculated that for the encounter between Altan Khan and the Third Dalai Lama in 1578 to have proceeded in the way it did, Buddhism must have survived the fall of the Yuan and continued to disseminate in Mongolia. Serruys argues something similar from his examination of Chinese sources, stating: “the Shih-lu texts make it abundantly clear that long before 1578 there already existed a Lamaist tradition (in Mongolia) at least among the nobility” (Serruys 2010:559).

In whatever way Buddhism may have continued to spread in Mongolia during the second major dissemination of Buddhism amongst the Mongols in the 16th and 17th centuries, the Tibetans and the Mongols conducted affairs following the model of the events of the 13th century between the Sa-skyas and the Mongols. The two major *mchod yon* relationships established during the 16th century were between two Mongol Khans and the Third Dalai Lama Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588). These two Khans were Altan Khan (1506-1582) of the Tümed Mongols and his nephew Abadai Khan (1554-1588) of the Khalkha Mongols. The former was responsible for inviting the Dge-lugs-pa patriarch to Mongolia in 1577 and the latter for spreading the influence of the Dge-lugs-pas amongst the Khalkha Mongols after his meeting with the Third Dalai Lama in Höhhot

in 1587. Abadai Khan's younger brother Tümenkin Sain Noyan (1558-1640)²⁰ also made notable contributions to the spread of Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism in Khalkha Mongolia. The exchanges between the Third Dalai Lama and the Mongol Khans not only played a crucial role for the religio-political development of the Mongols but also had an impact on the religio-political history of Tibet, because it gave the Dge-lugs-pa an unprecedented boost.

By the 16th century, there were a notable number of devout Buddhists amongst the Mongol nobility. It is said that Khutuḡtai Secen Khung Taiji (1540-1586), who was responsible for Altan Khan's actions to invite the Third Dalai Lama to Mongolia, was a Buddhist (Elverskog 2010:533). The existence of devout Buddhists amongst the Mongolian nobility alone is not enough to account for the large-scale conversion that took place in the following centuries. The lack of sources again only allows for a speculative interpretation of what prompted Altan Khan and his Ordos and Tümed relatives, as well as Abadai Khan and the Khalkhas, to adopt Buddhism. Natsagdorj & Ochir suggest that in their attempt to set up a united Mongol state, the Khans felt the need for a more organised form of state religion than the existing shamanic practices native to the Mongolians (Natsagdorj & A. Ochir 2010:525).

During Altan Khan and Abadai Khan's times, the Mongols were widely engaged in trade and commerce with the Ming and would have been fully aware of China's Buddhist history. The need to establish a state seen as culturally legitimate and on equal grounds with their rival neighbours could have likely been a driving factor in the promotion of Buddhism. Furthermore, the knowledge of the historical relationship

²⁰ He was considered to have been the previous incarnation of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las. He personally travelled to Lhasa and established *mchod yon* relations with the First Panchen lama Blo-bzang Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1570-1662) and was responsible for sponsoring the Tibet-Mongolia highway as well as the construction of Erdeni yin Zuu together with his brother Abadai Khan. We will encounter this figure in more detail in the next chapter.

between their forefathers and Tibetan Buddhism during the Yuan period and the existence of devout Buddhists amongst the ruling classes, are some of the likely factors that contributed to the mass conversion of the Mongols in the 16th century.

Whatever the motivations may have been, Altan Khan's endorsement of the translation of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*sūtra into Mongolian, as well as his encouragement of his sons and descendants to support lamas and translators, demonstrates his genuine interest in Buddhism beyond a politically intelligent move.

The widespread adoption of Buddhism that took place during the 16th century amongst the Mongols again followed the earlier “top-down” model. According to Bawden, “missionary lamas addressed their missionary work principally towards the rulers and nobility of Mongolia” (Bawden 1968:32). He further comments: “missionizing against the shamans the lamas took care to identify themselves with the ruling class, with the result that Buddhism thoroughly penetrated all levels of Mongol society in the coming centuries” (Bawden 1968:34). The relationships between the missionary lamas and the Mongolian ruling elites continued to be based on the *mchod yon* model established earlier and worked to bring the Mongols and Tibetans even closer together during this new age of conversion.

Another factor that would have helped the Buddhist cause amongst the Mongols had to do with the authentication of divine authority. After Chinggis Khaan unified the Mongols and started to expand the empire, he divided the newly acquired territories amongst his relatives and closest advisers. His descendants continued this model of inheritance of power, and by the 16th century, ruling members belonging to the Chinggisid bloodline with ambitions for the seat of Khaan kept dividing the authority amongst themselves. Each new Khaan would repeat the process, which further dispersed the

possibility of a united Mongolian empire, until what was Chinggis Khaan's great empire was nothing more than a number of minor princedoms in the 16th century. As all these princedoms were headed by rulers belonging to the authentic bloodline of Chinggis Khaan, there was an additional need for a different form of authority and this is where Buddhism provided another level of appeal.

The Buddhist model of the *Dharmarāja*, (Tib. *Chos rgyal*) 'Dharma King' and *Cakravartin*, (Tib. '*Khor los bsgyur ba'i rgyal po*') 'Universal Monarch' provided another means for their claim to divine power. At this level, the new Khaan would not only be the successor to the legacy of Chinggis Khaan but also the successor to the role of a universal monarch as embodied by the legendary emperor Aśoka of the Maurya Empire. This idea started to take shape as a result of the conversion to Buddhism initiated by Altan Khan, and as we shall see later on, went on to develop into a much more powerful tool of identity formation and state building during the Qing period.

Before moving on to the Qing period, it is also important to briefly mention the development of the Buddhist clergy amongst the Mongol populous. From the 16th century onwards, the Mongol aristocracy started to look more and more to Tibet for religious authority in terms of texts, teachings, and religious identity. In the beginning, this was predominantly defined by high Tibetan lamas travelling to Mongolia to answer these needs but, as the conversion to Buddhism came to be more common amongst the Mongols, highly learned Mongolian lamas started emerging towards the end of the 16th century.

Some of the most notable of these early Mongolian masters of Tibetan Buddhism include Torğut Mongolian Neici Toyin (1557-1653) who was highly influential amongst the Khorchin Mongols, and the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662), whose religio-political actions were fundamental for the Oirad conversion to

Buddhism. Both were from high-ranking families belonging to noble bloodlines. Neichi Toyin was the son of a Torgud nobleman in charge of an army of ten thousand soldiers (Borjigin-Ujeed 2009:75) and Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita was the adopted son of the Oirad chief Baibaḡas Baḡatur Noyan (d. 1630). Both these figures made lasting contributions to the future of Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism in Mongolia as well as playing defining roles in the future of their nations.

These examples show that at the beginning of the 16th century mass conversion, Tibetan Buddhism was again in the hands of the Mongolian nobility. Atwood stated: “perhaps the most obvious legacy of the Mongol world empire was the Chinggisid principle of sovereignty attaching only to the descendants of Chinggisids” (Atwood 2010:611). The value of a legitimate Chinggisid bloodline was essential for any claim to political authority. As well as symbolising authority owed to their ancestral lineage, these Mongolian lamas from noble ancestral lineages also held the Buddhist authority owed to the authentic transmission lineages handed down to them through an unbroken chain of accomplished teachers of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition and their predecessors. This convention of high Mongolian lamas with both an authentic Mongolian noble ancestral lineage and an Indo-Tibetan religious lineage became more and more popular during the next few centuries and made lasting contributions to the development of Central Asia, as we will see below.

1.4. The Qing Period

Reminiscent of the 13th century historical *mchod yon* relationship established between Khubilai Khaan (1215-1294) and Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa, the alliance formed between the Third Dalai Lama Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588) and Altan Khan (1507-1582) of the Tümed Mongols in the 16th century was part of a chain of events that led to the meeting of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682) and Güshri Khan (1582-1655) of the Khoshud Mongols in 1638 (Karmay, 2003:71).

The Central Asian political situation in the early 17th century was a chaotic one. One of the defining features of this period was the rise of the Manchu Qing Empire. It can be said that the Jurchen leader, Nurhaci's (1559-1626) claim to the status of Khaan of the Great Jin Empire after conquering Jianzhou in 1616 marked the beginning of what would soon become the Qing Empire. Perdue writes: "the expansion of the Qing state formed part of a global process in the 17th and 18th centuries. Nearly everywhere, newly centralized, integrated, militarized states pushed their borders outward by military conquest, and settlers, missionaries, and traders followed behind. Western European historians often characterize this period as that of the "17th century crisis" of state formation" (Perdue 2005:10). Many of these "militarized states" refer to newly-established Mongol princedoms.

While the Qing were on the rise as the new steppe power, the Mongolian descendants of Chinggis Khaan were still fighting for power amongst themselves, causing the demise of princedoms and giving rise to new ones. There were brief periods of unification seen within the Chinggisid empire, for example from 1510-1634 during the lifetime of Dayan Khaan and his descendants, who passed down the leadership and

dominant lineage to their brothers, uncles, and cousins following the model of Chinggis Khaan (Atwood 2010:613). However, after their passing, the unity of the Mongols once again dissolved.

In Tibet, the situation was also one of disorder defined by power struggles between the different Tibetan Buddhist traditions, often coupled with their Mongolian patrons' interests. One can propose that the common ground between these nations was Tibetan Buddhism; and in particular the Dge-lugs tradition. The rise to religio-political power of the Dge-lugs-pa in 1642 with the enthronement of the Fifth Dalai Lama as the supreme secular and religious ruler of Tibet marked the beginning of a chain of events that would come to place the Dge-lugs tradition at the centre of diplomacy and politics of Central Asia.

1.4.1 Tibet

The various rival Tibetan Buddhist traditions of the 17th century such as the Karma Bka'-brgyud and Dge-lugs-pas were struggling amongst themselves, backed by their powerful patrons. Many of them had allied with formidable Mongol Khans and princes following the model set by the Third Dalai Lama and Altan Khan during the previous century (Sperling 2003:121). These alliances led to the conversion of many of the Mongol principalities to Tibetan Buddhism (Chayet 2003:46), and Buddhism was revived in Mongolia on a large scale (Ishihama 2004:19). These newly converted Mongols fought on behalf of their respective Buddhist affiliates for their religious and political supremacy in Tibet. During these conflicts, the decision made by the treasurer of the Dga'-ldan pho-brang Bsod-nams chos-'phel (1595-1658) to seek help from Khoshud Güshri Khan (1582-

1655) against the Khalkha Choḡthu Taiji, who supported the Bka'-brgyud tradition, was fundamental for the Dge-lugs-pa's rise to power (Shakabpa 1967:103).

Güshri Khan complied with Bsod-nams chos-'phel's request and led his Khoshud Mongols, with additional aid from the Dzungar Mongols led by Erdeni Baḡatur Khong Taiji (d.1653) of the Choros clan, and attacked Choḡthu Taiji and his followers at their own camp in Kökenuur in 1637. Güshri Khan settled in Kökenuur with his followers after having emerged victorious. In the following year, Güshri Khan went to Lhasa accompanied by a few officials disguised as pilgrims to meet the Dalai Lama (Karmay 2003:71) and was bestowed the title Bstan-'dzin Chos-gyi rgyal-po by the Great Fifth. In the years that followed, Güshri Khan defeated the King of Be-ri in Eastern Tibet, who had joint forces with the King of Gtsang and had plotted to attack the Dge-lugs-pas. After Güshri Khan's military victory against Be-ri, the Fifth Dalai Lama had clearly expressed his wish for Güshri Khan to take his Mongol troops and return to Kökenuur. However, Bsod-nams chos-'phel took the initiative and issued the order from the mouth of the Dalai Lama, stating that he would not be opposed to the Khan attacking Gtsang. Güshri Khan then attacked Gtsang which resulted in two years of warfare and the King of Gtsang and his two ministers finally surrendering in 1642.²¹

The year 1642, which coincides with the birth of the author of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las was a notable year in the history of Central Asia. The Dalai Lama was welcomed to the fortress of Bsam-grub-rtse in Gtsang and on the 5th day of the 4th month of 1642, he was enthroned as the supreme ruler of Tibet (Karmay 2003:72). At this point, he assumed total power over both the temporal and spiritual orders in Tibet with Bsod-nams chos-'phel appointed as his regent (Shakabpa

²¹ For a detailed discussion of the events see van Schaik (2000) and Sperling (2003).

1967:111). Soon after, on the 15th day of the 4th month, the Dalai Lama returned to 'Bras-spungs and declared Lhasa the capital of Tibet and the Dga'-ldan pho-brang Tibet's official government. He then started the long process of developing and putting into place the new laws, political and religious infrastructures, and the establishment of monastic structures at the old, new, and newly converted Dge-lugs-pa institutions throughout Tibet.

Traditional sources claim that Tibet had been ruled by a Buddhist government as early as the reign of the King Srong-btsan sgam-po in the 7th century. However, it was during the 17th century and owed to the efforts of the Fifth Dalai Lama that a Buddhist government representative of both secular and religious power started to dictate the governance of Tibet. The majority of the political and religious frameworks installed by the Fifth Dalai Lama in the 17th century withstood the following centuries until the Chinese communist invasion of Tibet in the twentieth century (with the religious aspects surviving even beyond the invasion). Furthermore, the model of the *chos srid gnyis 'brel* that the Great Fifth had propagated unified Central Asia, including the Mongols and the Manchus, through the employment of Buddhism-dominated ideologies (Ishihama 2004:16).

The decades that followed were not completely devoid of political unrest; disputes and competition were seen even inside the Dge-lugs tradition itself as echoed by the untimely and suspicious death of the Sprul-sku Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1619-1656), which would later lead to the Rdo-rje shugs-ldan controversy.²² The Dge-lugs-pa supremacy was not completely set in stone and their position was threatened at times, even by their Mongolian patrons. Lhazang Khan's occupation of Lhasa after the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama and later Dzungar attacks are but some examples. However, in a sense,

²² For a discussion of the Rdo-rje shugs-ldan dispute see Williams (1996) and Dreyfus (1998).

the Dge-lugs-pas maintained their power in Tibet with the defence, support and intervention of Mongols and later (albeit on somewhat manipulative terms) through the support of the Qing court.

During the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama and his regent Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705), the Dge-lugs-pa tradition and its monastic institutions grew to something resembling a Buddhist empire. Accordingly, due to the growing relationship between the Dge-lugs-pa tradition and the Mongols, colleges and monasteries that accommodated Mongolian religious figures and novices grew extensively in number in Tibet (Chayet 2003:46). These monastic institutions became important religious centres for their respective regions and often acted as centres for local governments. They were self-contained locations for commerce, jurisdiction, and regional leadership, political diplomatic hotspots headed by Dge-lugs-pa hierarchs whose power and authority reached back to the Dga'-ldan pho-brang and the Dalai Lama in Lhasa. The highly-organised nature of Dge-lugs-pa monastic institutions that could double as secular infrastructures for running the state was one of the major appeals for the model to be adopted by the Mongols and endorsed by the Qing.

The Fifth Dalai Lama's influence over the Mongols becomes clear from the events of 1659, when he successfully advised Mongol chiefs to unite, and refrain from fighting amongst themselves and to stay united. Later, the Kangxi emperor requested the Dalai Lama to intervene numerous times when quarrels broke out between Mongolian princes. The Tibetan tradition maintains that the Great Fifth went to lengths to prevent violence and war within Tibet and these aspirations reached beyond the boundaries of Tibet itself, into the borderlands and the Mongolian regions. However, the transition to Dge-lugs-pa dominance supported by the Mongols was far from peaceful with the destruction of many

Karma bka'-brgyud and Jo-nang monasteries. Even in the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama, there are numerous records of violent rituals he himself had to carry out against the opponents of the Dge-lugs-pas.²³ Nevertheless, the treaty established in 1684 between Tibet and Ladakh instigated by the Fifth remained in place for the next 80 years.²⁴ His motivations were reflected in the actions of his regent, the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho who later wrote to the Dalai Khungtaiji of the Khoshud in the name of the Dalai Lama requesting the unification of the Mongols (Millward et al 2004:127).

The influence of the Tibetans on Mongolian state organisation and everyday religious and political life was not one-sided. With the consolidation of the Mongol conversion to Tibetan Buddhism, more and more Mongolian lamas travelled to Tibet to further their religious education. There was also an increase in the number of nobility travelling to Tibet to pay their respects to the Dalai Lama or to go on pilgrimages to the holy sites of Tibet such as the Jo-bo Śākyamuni in Lhasa. Consequently, there was a general increase in the number of Mongolians in Tibet at any given time and, eventually Mongolian influence on Tibet started to be felt. The increasing influence of the Mongols in all aspects of Tibetan culture is apparent in the writing of the Fifth Dalai Lama:

“since there was a large Mongol army in the country and the Tibetan leaders were forced to yield much of their land to them, it became customary to recognise the sons of Mongol leaders as reincarnations. It is said that I too was one (even though I was not a Mongol).”
(Karmay 2003:68)

Because of the close-knit relationship between the rulers of Mongolia and Tibet, religious authority and subsequently the model for political authority in Mongolia reached

²³ For example, from the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama: “the Tsang Desi was probably a religious king. I could not go and meet him personally due to the many rites of destructive action that I had executed against him” (Karmay 2014:167).

²⁴ See also Vitali (1996) concerning the increase of Dge-lugs-pa power in Ladakh.

back to the Dalai Lama in Tibet. This led to the Mongols' adoption of the Tibetan state organisation model based on the concept of *chos srid lugs gnyis*, 'the two systems of religion and the state' known in Mongolian as *törü shasin khoyar yosu*. This system consisting of 'religious' and 'state' laws was widely advocated by the Fifth Dalai Lama after his rise to power. Historically, the *lugs gnyis* ideology was subject to interpretation and reinterpretation throughout history of the Tibetan Buddhist world and at times religion was considered to supersede the state in authority (Ardussi 2004:44).²⁵

The *lugs gnyis* ideal is closely related to and originates from the *mchod gnas*, 'teacher' and *yon bdag*, 'patron' discourse going back to the 13th century Yuan period relations between Khubilai Khaan and the Sa-skyas that were discussed earlier. As mentioned, the application of this terminology on the status of the Buddhist lama and the secular patron is not always straightforward. Depending on the context, either could be considered above the other or as equals. It was the Great Fifth who gave it a new institutional form and the 'religious law' or 'Buddhist government' came to be equated with a 'Dge-lugs-pa government' (Ishihama 2004:29). As the foreign relations between Tibet, Qing and Mongolia became more intertwined and complex over the following century, the applications of *lugs gnyis* and its implications for the way in which history was written and remembered grew to new heights.

In Mongolia, the first usage of the term²⁶ in reference to official state law appears in historical treatises from the 17th century onwards such as Saṅgang Secen's *Erdeni-yin Tobci*, "The Jewelled Summary" and the two different texts both known as *Altan Tobci*, "The Golden Summary". The Fifth Dalai Lama's interpretation of this ideal is clear in his

²⁵ For a more detailed discussion of *lugs gnyis* and its interpretations and applications throughout the history of the Tibetan plateau see Chapter Four of this thesis.

²⁶ Mongolian: *khoyar yosun*, *khoyar törü*. Tibetan: *lugs gnyis*, *lugs zung* (Ishihama 2004:19).

1676 letter to the Khalkha Tüsiyetü Khan where, in which he clearly places the Dge-lugs-pa school far above the other schools in religious and secular value:

“Because the Buddha’s compassion enters every impartial living being, the proper dharma is non-sectarian... since the Dalai Lama named Bsod-nams appeared as the state preceptor of the northern land of great Mongolia, the yellow hat sect has flourished, if you esteem the lord Mañjuśrī Tsongkhapa’s precious teachings, then you will always be protected by the dharma protectors such as the six armed Mahākāla, Yamāntaka...”
(Karmay 2003:72)

This interpretation was accepted by the Mongols and proved to be a useful tool for the newly-risen Qing rulers in keeping under check their only truly formidable threat: the Mongols.

1.4.2. The Qing

Even before the Qing Dynasty was established, the Mongols and the Jurchens²⁷ had a long history of familiarity and amicable relations. During Nurhaci’s times (1558-1626), the Manchus had close relations with the Mongols through marriage alliances and bestowal of titles. Perdue writes: “Nurhaci had exchanged wives and concubines with the Khalkha Mongols since 1594, and he received the title Sure Kündülen Khan from them in 1607” (Perdue 2005:122).

Before Nurhaci’s successor Hung Taiji (1592-1653) proclaimed the Dai Qing empire, the Mongols of the Southern Mongolian region had already allied themselves with the Manchus, and later played an important role in the Qing conquest of China (Kaplonski

²⁷ The Jurchens who later became the Manchu in 1630 were of Tungstic origins and shared much with the Mongols and Turks in terms of culture and traditions. See Franke (1990) and Eliot (2001) for more detailed studies of the Jurchen people.

2010: 637). It is written in the Mongolian historical sources that a great banquet was held in celebration of the Hung Taiji's victory attended by forty-nine princes of sixteen inner Mongolian Banners (Bawden 1968:47).²⁸ Subsequently, with the help of the Southern Mongols consisting of clans such as the Khorcin and other Mongolian groups, in 1644, Hung Taiji eradicated what remained of the Ming Dynasty and was enthroned as the emperor of China.

After the formation of the Qing Empire, the Mongols again played a defining part in the future development of the empire. Ligden Khaan (1588-1634) endorsed the translation of the Tibetan *Bka'-gyur* into Mongolian during his reign, which enabled the Manchus to read the texts due to their familiarity with the Mongolian language. "The Manchus were first introduced to Tibetan Buddhism through these translation channels, preparing the way for the visit of the Dalai Lama to Beijing in 1652" (Perdue 2005:126). The Qing adoption of Buddhist ideas first to expand their influence and later their full conversion to Buddhism was owed largely to the translation efforts of the Mongols.

The proximity between the Mongols and the Qing is further evident in the Manchu utilization of Mongolian as the other official government language (Rawski 2004:17) and the creation of the Manchu script, which was based on the Mongolian script. The Mongols and the Manchus who were both steppe nations sharing a similar culture, language, customs, and ancestry did not find it difficult to find a common ground. As a result, it is highly likely that, the Manchus, who had recently stepped into the arena of Central Asian power-play, were in the eyes of the Tibetans not so different from the Mongols with whom

²⁸ For a detailed discussion of the Mongolian banner systems see Atwood (2004).

the Tibetans had a long history of relations. The Manchu promotion of their affinity with the Mongols further strengthened this idea for the Tibetans.

Unlike the early incorporation of the Southern Mongols into the Qing banner system,²⁹ not all Mongolian regions came to be part of the Qing Empire in a peaceful fashion. The Khalkha and Oirad Mongols continued to fight for the unification of a Mongol empire right up to the end of the 17th century. According to Elverskog, for the Qing, “the process of projecting an image of continuity and tradition was greatly beneficial; and, as is well known, the Manchus had a keen sense of how to appropriate history for shaping the legitimacy of the present. A fundamental element of their imperial enterprise was in fact the projection of themselves as the ultimate apotheosis of righteous rulers in the recurring cycles of history and myth” (Elverskog 2006:8). In order to pacify the remaining Mongols, who were devout converts to Tibetan Buddhism, and incorporate them into the growing Qing Empire, they had to project an image that was appropriate for both the Mongols and the Buddhist Tibetans. Elverskog describes the Qing rule of Central Asia as one that was “largely refracted through the prism of Buddhism” (Elverskog 2006:13). He also points out that: “Based upon the enormous Buddhist literary, architectural and artistic output undertaken by the Qing, it is quite clear that the Dharma played a profound role in the Manchu imperial project” (Elverskog 2010:722).

The Qing success as an empire was owed to their ability to continuously mediate between the Mongolian groups and the Tibetans through their skilful utilisation of various aspects of culture, religion, and politics each step of the way. The relationship between these parties was not always straightforward and the dynamics changed regularly depending on the individuals in power. However, one thing is clear: the Qing domination

²⁹ For a detailed discussion of the Qing banner system see Elliot (2001).

of Central Asia would not have been possible without the successful relationship they were able to maintain with the various Mongolian Khans and princes who by this time all had some form of relationship with the Dge-lugs-pa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.

1.4.3. The Mongols

As mentioned earlier, by the beginning of the Qing era, the Mongols were in a chaotic state of disunity, with many of the clans fighting for their own power whilst others attempted the unification of a great Mongol empire. However, most of the Mongol princedoms had all but fully converted to Tibetan Buddhism by the beginning of the 17th century. Buddhist revival properly began in Khalkha in 1586 when Abadai Khan oversaw the construction of the Erdeniyin Zuu monastery. In Southern Mongolia, although Buddhist conversion began earlier in 1557 when Altan Khan established the Yehe Juu³⁰ monastery in Höhhot, the Buddhist monastic institutional authority was not established until the 1690s (Bawden 1968:53). In Oirad, there is evidence of Tibetan Buddhism during the early 16th century but their proper conversion in the early 17th century is owed to the Khoshud leader Güshri Khan and his Dzungar relatives' support of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition and of the Dalai Lama.

The Khorcin, Ordus, Tümed, and Cakhar Mongols had already been integrated into the banner system by the time the Qing Dynasty was established. This Southern part of Mongolia would later become what is known today as the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region and was an “intellectual centre of the Mongolian cultural area

³⁰ Known as Da Zhao in Chinese, it still stands today in the historical part of Höhhot, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, China.

throughout the Qing period” (Elverskog 2006:10). Indeed, Dolonuur and Höhhot were active centres of Tibetan Buddhist scholarly activity from which emerged many learned high lamas of Mongolian origin. Our author Dza-ya Paṇḍita spent over eleven years of his life between Dolonuur and Höhhot during the Khalkha-Oirad war.

The Khalkha Mongols on the other hand were still independent and ruled by the three Khalkha Khans, namely the Jasaḡtu Khan, Secen Khan, and Tüsiyetü Khan. Tüsiyetü Khan Cakhundorji’s (d.1655) brother, the first Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa’i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723), was the first Dge-lugs-pa religious leader of Mongolia who made lasting contributions to the development of Buddhism in Mongolia. “It is well worth noting that it was precisely the Tüshiyetü Khan-Jebdzundamba Khutuḡtu alliance that held Manchu rule at bay until 1691” (Elverskog 2010:731). The submission of the Khalkha Mongols to the Qing can be dated to 1691 when the Khalkha nobles, under the leadership of the First Jebtsundamba Khutuḡtu, submitted to the Qing at Dolonuur in Southern Mongolia (Kaplonski 2010:637).

The events that led to the submission of the Khalkha to the Qing had much to do with another powerful Mongolian group, the Oirad Mongols. Atwood writes: “three new Oirad polities emerged in the 17th century: the Kalmyks on the Volga dominated by the Torghud ethnies, the Zünghar principality between the Altai and Tianshan mountains dominated by the Zünghar ethnies, and the Upper Mongols in Tibet dominated by the Khoshud ethnies” (Atwood 2010:611). During the early 17th century, Khara Khula established Dzungaria by uniting the Chorus, Dörbed and Khoid clans of the Oirad. Khara Khula’s son, Baḡatur Khungtaiji took part in the expedition in Tibet in support of the Khoshud leader Güshri Khan between 1634-1642, thus beginning a close-knit relationship between the Oirad Mongols and the Dge-lugs-pas. Baḡatur Khungtaiji married Güshri

Khan's daughter Yum Aga and their son, Sengge (d. 1671), succeeded his father as ruler whilst his other son, Ġaldan (1644-1697), was sent to be educated as a Dge-lugs-pa monk in Tibet under the guidance of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

In 1687, the Khalkha Tüsiyetü Khan attacked the Jasaġtu Khan, killing the Khan and Ġaldan's brother, Sengge. Ġaldan renounced his monastic vows and returned from Tibet to take over the Dzungar rule and vowed to avenge his brother Sengge's death. Under the leadership of Ġaldan, who claimed the title of Boshuġthu Khan with the blessing of the Dalai Lama, Dzungaria was established as the last great Mongolian power to attempt the unification of a Mongolian empire.

The Oirad and the Khalkha had a history of clashes throughout the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, which led to the Dzungars inhabiting the region near the Altai mountains. Although Ġaldan's relations with the Qing started on good terms, with Ġaldan paying tributes to the Qing in 1677, his tribute in 1679 after his victory over Xihai to request the Qing emperor to officially recognise his title, Boshuġthu Khan,³¹ spelled the beginning of trouble. "Starting from the early 17th century, the Dzungars grew to be serious contenders for power in the region, establishing what was known as Dzungaria, and posing substantial challenges to the influence of the Qing" (Kaplonski 2010:637). Ġaldan and his growing power would soon become a serious threat to the unity of the Qing Empire and the peace they endeavoured to keep between the Mongols.

³¹ The title Boshuġthu Khan literally means 'the destined Khan'. Ġaldan was bestowed the title by the Dalai Lama. Unlike any other Mongol leaders before him, he wrote a letter to the Qing emperor for confirmation of the title that he already held. For a detailed discussion of the relationship of Ġaldan and the Qing see Sneath (2010).

As well as avenging his brother, Ġaldan found another incentive for attacking the Tüsiyetü Khan³² in the events of the Hüreng Belcher meeting of 1686.³³ This meeting was organised in hopes of resolving the internal disputes between the seven divisions of the Khalkhas which at this point in history included the disputing Oirads and Khalkha groups. The representatives of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Qing emperor were present during this meeting as well as other prominent Dge-lugs-pa monks such as the first Lcang-skya Khutuġtu Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang chos-ldan (1642-1714). The First Jebtsundamba acted as the head of the meeting as requested by the Manchu emperor's representative Achitu Chos-rje. During the meeting, the First Jebtsundamba was seated on the same level as the 44th Dga'-ldan khri-pa Ngag-dbang blo-gros rgya-mtsho (1635-1688) who was the representative of the Dalai Lama and did not pay him the due respect of bowing. After the meeting, the Dalai Lama's representative passed away on route to Tibet and thus the results of the meeting never reached the Sde-srid who was then acting in the stead of the late Fifth Dalai Lama. Afterwards, Ġaldan is said to have sent a letter to the Jebtsundamba accusing him of disrespecting the representative of the Dalai Lama and it was not long before he attacked the Khalkha Tüsiyetü Khan's lands.

Scholars are at a disagreement regarding Ġaldan's motivation for attacking the Tüsiyetü Khan. Some scholars, especially some Chinese historians, hold the view that Ġaldan was instrumental to the office of the Dalai Lama's intentions to suppress the growing power of the Jebtsundamba, who was the younger brother of Tüsiyetü's Khan, and thus used the grounds of defending the Dalai Lama to attack and subdue the Khalkha.

³² Tüsiyetü Khan Cakhundorji was the sixth-generation descendant of Geresenji, who was the son of Dayan Khaan, making him the fifth Khan to bear the title of Tüsiyetü Khans. The Tüsiyetü Khans were of Chinggisid bloodline and ruled over the Tüsiyetü Khanate belonging to the left banner of Khalkha.

³³ This meeting between divisions of the Khalkha Mongols and the representatives of the Qing emperor and the Dalai Lama was intended to resolve the in-fighting amongst the Mongols but in fact led to adverse consequences. For a discussion of this event and its relevance to the relations between the nations involved see Sperling (2003), Bareja-Starzyńska (2015) and Perdue (2005).

Kaplonski writes: “Galdan was closely allied with the Dalai Lama and his intervention into the Khalkha dispute is seen by some as a move against the First Javzandamba Khutagt, who was growing in influence” (Kaplonski 2010:638). However, one could argue that, in this situation, the Qing would have had more concern with the growing power of the Jebtsundamba, who was a highly influential Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa religious leader of Chinggisid ancestry. The double legitimacy of such an individual could threaten the Qing’s promotion of the Dalai Lama’s religious authority over the Mongols, and could have presented the possibility of a leader who might have been able to unite the Mongols.

Another argument is that Ġaldan pursued his personal ambitions to expand his own power and to overcome the Tüsiyetü Khan and the Khalkhas so as to establish a united Mongolian empire (Perdue 2005:149). Indeed, even today, Mongols everywhere including the Khalkha remember Ġaldan as the last Khan who fought for the unity of the Mongols against the Qing, as seen in popular folk tales and songs. However, Perdue also points out that earlier writers such as Lomi and the Jesuit Gerbillon (1654-1707) believed Ġaldan’s motives to have been simply to avenge his brother Sengge’s unlawful death for which he held the Tüsiyetü Khan and his family responsible. Whatever Ġaldan’s actual reasons for his decision to attack the Tüsiyetü Khan and the Khalkha territories may have been, in his various letters³⁴ to the Qing emperor, the Tüsiyetü Khan and the Russian Tsar, the loyalty he felt towards his brother and his devotion towards his teacher, the Fifth Dalai Lama is unarguable.

The consequences of Ġaldan’s attack on the Khalkha territories led to the Tüsiyetü Khan and the Jebtsundamba seeking Qing protection and finally agreeing to submit to the

³⁴ For the contents of these letters see Perdue (2005), Bareja-Starzyńska (2015) and Krueger (2014).

Qing in 1691 at Dolonuur, Southern Mongolia. The Qing, led by the emperor Kangxi in person, embarked on three expeditions to annihilate Ġaldan and when he passed away in 1697 from natural causes, Qing dominance over the Mongolian regions was finalised.

At the end of the 17th century, the Mongols could be regarded as separate pockets of power under Qing dominion who all held themselves to be connected to the Dge-lugs-pa tradition in some way. The Southern Mongolians who had converted earlier were part of the Qing Empire were devout supporters of the Qing's promotion of Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism and had established monastic scholastic centres in Höhhot and Dolonuur. The Khalkha had the First Jebtsundamba, a Chinggisid descendant and brother of the Tüsiyetü Khan, who had been educated in Tibet for eleven years under the Fifth Dalai Lama and the First Panchen Lama. The Oirad, dominated by Dzungaria, were headed by Ġaldan who had been recognised by the Fifth Dalai Lama himself as the reincarnation of the Second Dben-sa sprul-sku Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho (1605-1644), who had personally ordained the Jebtsundamba. Thus, although their relationships were politically complicated, the different groups of Mongols did have the Dge-lugs tradition of Tibetan Buddhism as a shared common ground.

1.5. The Contribution of Mongolian Buddhist Scholars

Even before the Qing period, the Mongol nobility beginning with the ruling Khans had developed the tendency to rule over their subordinates and to strengthen their authority through their support of Tibetan Buddhism and the promotion of the *lugs gnyis*. The ability for this ideal of governance to combine secular and religious laws enabled the stabilisation of their own dominance.

During the early Qing period, in the eyes of the Mongols, the Manchu adoption of Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism was easily accepted and enabled them to perceive the Qing as people of the same faith with whom they shared more than just a similar ancestral heritage. Elverskog notes in regard to the Southern Mongols: “...based on the architectonic India-Tibet-Mongol-Qing Buddhist narrative found in all Qing-period Mongol sources it is also clear the Mongols themselves powerfully identified with the court’s Buddhist project” (Elverskog 2010:722).

Of course, “the idea of a Dge-lugs-pa dominated Central Asia” is a subject that has many layers of complexities, bias of later writing, and narratives of political manipulations. Nonetheless, Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism and Dge-lugs-pa monastics played an important role in the diplomacy between the Central Asian nations during the early Qing period. Politically important individuals were often Buddhist monastics who played a vital role in the dissemination of Buddhism and the formation of foreign relations.

As mentioned earlier, Buddhism was introduced to Mongolia from the top down and remained so throughout the Buddhist history of Mongolia. As Buddhism became more popular amongst the Mongols, a large number of Tibetan lamas went on teaching tours to Mongolia, where they were highly respected and supported by the local nobles and their subjects. Many of these lamas passed away in Mongolia and their reincarnations were sought and found locally, thereby creating new lines of reincarnations in Mongolia (Lobsang and Ürüntuyag-a 1998: 156). Due to the top-down model of Buddhism in Mongolia, many of the reincarnations were found in noble families, often descending from the royal bloodline of Chinggis Khaan, and the most-notable of these monk-scholars went on to make lasting contributions in the religio-political developments of Central Asia. Kaplonski comments: “high-ranking lamas and incarnations were treated *de facto* if not

de jure as nobility” (Kaplonski 2010:641). The most famous example is the grandson of Altan Khan, who was recognised as the Fourth Dalai Lama after the Third Dalai Lama passed away in Mongolia.

Heissig writes: “beginning in 1626, lamaist monks appeared in the conduct of diplomatic missions for the Manchu. In 1627, a certain Dbu-mjad chos-rje acted as go-between in the peace negotiations between the Naiman, Aukhan and Manchu... Lamaism exerted a certain influence upon these tribes” (Heissig 2010:571). He adds: “lamaism must have increased its influence in the Manchu-occupied territory within a very short time; its abuses even made necessary an imperial decree in 1632” (ibid:573).

Along with Mongolian reincarnations of Tibetan Lamas, several prominent native Mongolian reincarnation lineages emerged and obtained religious titles from the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas, resulting in a specifically-Mongolian system of ranks among the reincarnations. “The high reincarnations are khutuḡtu, nom-un khaan, gegen, khubilḡan, shabrang, bandida, chorji, and ḡabju. The last three titles were usually conferred upon accomplished lamas by the highest Tibetan or Mongolian Buddhist authorities like the Dalai Lama, Panchen Lama, Jangjia Khutuḡtu and Kanjurwa Nom-un Khaan” (Borjigin-Ujeed 2009:47). Later on, some of these titles made their way back to Tibet where Tibetan lamas with Mongolian titles were not uncommon.

The emphasis on a legitimate Chinggisid bloodline for a claim to nobility and the custom of marriage alliances between powerful families meant that advancing in society was difficult for those who were born into less notable families. The establishment of

Mongolian monastic centres such as Erdeni Juu and Zayin Khüree³⁵ meant that as well as offering an opportunity for education, “unlike the lay hierarchy, one could advance through the ranks of the Buddhist church, regardless of social background (Kaplonski 2010:641). However, despite the growing number of monastics and monastic institutions, the most notable monk-scholars continued to be from noble backgrounds and in the case of those who were not, appropriate noble previous rebirths were allocated to them to secure patronage of the nobility.³⁶

The rise in the number of highly educated Mongolian lamas in the 17th century coincides with the boom of Mongolian language literary works on history and royal genealogy such as Saḡang Secen’s 1662 *Erdeni-yin Tobci*, “The Jewelled Summary” and Toba Taiji’s (d.1697) *Sira Tuḡuji*, “The Yellow History”.³⁷ These works were composed by either Mongolian monk-scholars or intellectual nobility and unlike the earliest forms of Mongolian historical writing such as the 13th century *Monggol-un Niguca Tobciyan*, “The Secret History of the Mongols” and the *Arban Buyantu Nom-un Caḡan Teüke*, “The White History of the Book of the Ten Merits”, were full of Buddhist ideas and narratives.

Mongolian Buddhism has always been reliant on the Tibetan tradition and their religious masters as well as Buddhist literature for religious authority. Naturally, the Tibetan influence seeped into the fabric of secular authority due to the Mongolian adoption of the *lugs gnyis* ideal of governance. However, the development of highly regarded indigenous reincarnation lineages in Mongolia, which were recognised as

³⁵ This was Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s own monastery, which he founded after his return to Khalkha. The three main temples are still preserved today as a museum. For more information on the history, architecture, renovation and art of this monastery see the edited volume by Charleux (2016) and the book by Teleki (2013).

³⁶ Dza-ya Paṇḍita himself was not from a noble family and so his recognition as the reincarnation of Tümenkin Sain Noyan (1558-1640), who was the brother of Abatai/Abadai Sain Khan (1554-1589) served to provide him with a quasi-aristocratic status throughout his reincarnation lineage.

³⁷ These works will be discussed in relation to Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s writing in Chapter Five.

authentic by the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, represented a movement towards making Buddhism something that was their own. The 17th century historical narratives like the *Sira Tuḡuji* linking the bloodline of Chinggis Khaan to the Indian King Mahāsammata echoed this aspiration. As most of these notable reincarnate lamas were descendants from Mongolian noble ancestry or linked to the bloodline through reincarnation or adoption by nobility, these monk-scholars could embody both traditional Mongolian authority and Buddhist authority for the Mongols. As we will see later on in Chapters Three and Four, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* also reflects this fusion of Tibetan Buddhist and Mongolian ancestral strands.

These Mongolian monk-scholars have left behind hundreds of volumes in both Mongolian and Tibetan of which Western academia to this day has barely scratched the surface. The writing left behind by the Fifth Dalai Lama and his contemporaries such the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705) are seen as the richest sources of the religio-political history of the period by many scholars today. The Great Fifth alone left behind 27 volumes of writing and his 'Records of Teachings Received' on its own suffices as a detailed mass survey of Tibetan literary history leading up to the 17th century rather than a single person's reading list that the standard 'Records of Teachings Received' usually are (Brauen, McCormick, Suvikapakornkul, Zehner and Becker 2005:80). Thus, unsurprisingly, scholarship on doctrine or on the socio-religious and religio-political dimensions of this fundamentally crucial period of Tibetan Buddhist history has so far been largely based on the works compiled by traditional Tibetan scholars.

In Mongolia, the literate amongst the Mongols would also have mostly been the nobility and the intellectual class, many of whom were monastics who were also responsible for the majority of Mongolian language religious and non-religious works. As

for the Tibetan language, it was reserved for use within the monastery and only read and studied by the monk-scholars and a few highly-educated nobility who were devout Buddhists with genuine interest in Buddhist doctrines and teachings. Thus, we can assume that the early Tibetan language works authored by Mongolian monk-scholars were aimed at the Tibetan speaking audience: both the Tibetan and Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas, but primarily the Mongolian monastic community as a branch of the Tibetan Dge-lugs-pas.

The colophons of their works suggest that they were instructed by both Mongolian and Tibetan masters to compose their works as part of their duty to spread Buddhism in Mongolia upon their return. This is true in the case of Dza-ya Paṇḍita whose exhorting party included the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Second Panchen Lama. Dza-ya Paṇḍita mentioned in the *rnam thar* of his master the First Jebtsundamba that the latter was not able to compose many works due to not having taken notes or written anything down during his study in Tibet. Thus, most of these Mongolian monk-scholars were likely to have been working from notes taken during their study in Tibet. However, the actual composition of their works took place after their return to their native Mongolian lands. Later, these Tibetan works were often translated into Mongolian during their lifetime by their Mongolian disciples or much later by future disciples of the lineage.

Figures such as Dza-ya Paṇḍita expressed their regret in having not had the opportunity to return to Tibet and some of the Mongolian monk-scholars such as the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita indeed returned to Tibet during their lives. Yet, most of them were active in their native Mongolian lands after their return. Thus, their works probably did not reach central Tibet and if they did it would have been much later on when some of these literary works were block-printed and there was more possibility of wider distribution. It is said that some transmission lineages that were lost in Tibet were rediscovered from Dza-ya

Pañḍita's *thob yig* in the twentieth century.³⁸ This points to the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monastic community as the intended primary audience for these Tibetan language works composed by the Mongolian monk-scholars.

1.6. Conclusion

Since the various traditions of Tibetan Buddhism entered the realm of political power play in the 13th century, the relationship between the Mongolians and Tibetans grew more and more intimate. After the Mongols first encounter with the Sa-skyā tradition of Tibetan Buddhism in the 13th century during the early Yuan period, Tibetan Buddhism was introduced amongst the Mongols from the top-down. Subsequently, the dissemination of Buddhism amongst the Mongols can be described in terms of the first and second “waves”. Tibetan Buddhism, more specifically the institutionalised form of Tibetan Buddhism belonging to the Dge-lugs tradition was thus begun as an enterprise of the nobility and remained so during the period of scholarly activity in the Mongolian regions.

This era of heightened scholarly activity began approximately around the late 16th century and reached its peak between the latter half of the 17th century and the 18th century. The Mongolian monk-scholars from this period were either themselves nobility or had close ties with the Mongolian aristocracy. Consequently, their intimate knowledge of the Tibetan Buddhist world extended beyond the religious domain. High ranking Mongolian Buddhist monk-scholars began to make substantial contributions to the intellectual culture

³⁸ This was communicated to me during a conversation with Lobsang Yongden in Cambridge.

and religio-political exchanges between Tibet, Mongolia and the Manchus from the beginning of the 17th century onwards.

Some of the most notable of these scholars include the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662), the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723), the Lamin Gegen Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan (1639-1704) and the Second Lcang-skye Rol-pa'i rdo-rje (1717–1786), as well as the subject of this thesis, Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las.

Although writing in Tibetan for an audience that had been educated in the medium of the Tibetan language, these scholars were still writing outside of the socio-political pressures of Tibet itself. A straightforward and honest style of writing can be observed amongst the writing of the Mongolian monk-authors that could be representative of something distinctively Mongolian.³⁹ Therefore, works such as the *thob yig* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, representing the largest known *thob yig* extent today after that of the Fifth Dalai Lama himself, could offer fresh perspectives on the 17th century Dge-lugs-pa-dominated Tibetan Buddhist world. Before examining his masterpiece in detail, the person of Dza-ya Paṇḍita needs to be introduced.

³⁹ this topic will be discussed in detail later in Chapter Six.

Chapter Two: The Autobiography of Dza-ya Paṇḍita

The present chapter introduces the figure of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las (1642-1715) who is considered the most famous amongst all the disciples of the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mthsan (1635-1723). He was an influential and accomplished Buddhist master renowned throughout Khalkha Mongolia, Southern Mongolia, China and Tibet. At the time, Mongolia was lacking individuals to commentate on various aspects of Buddhist philosophy, sūtras, existing Indian and Tibetan commentaries and philosophical root texts such as the works by Nāgārjuna and Śāntideva. Dza-ya Paṇḍita was one of the few Mongols who went on to answer this need and throughout his lifetime, he compiled many works on various aspects of Buddhism such as sūtra, tantra, astrology and medicine. His *gsung 'bum*, 'collected works' are preserved in six volumes printed in a clear Beijing block-print⁴⁰ in the early 19th century with the last four volumes consisting of the *thob yig*, 'records of teachings received'. His teacher and friend, the First Jebtsundamba who was the most notable Mongolian Buddhist figure of religio-political significance of his times did not leave behind many writings, which makes Dza-ya Paṇḍita's works even more valuable.

This chapter also aims to structurally and stylistically analyses Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*, 'autobiography', which is found in the second volume of his *gsung 'bum*. The content of his *rang rnam* will be contextualised within the Dge-lugs-pa dominated religio-

⁴⁰ 51cm by 10.6cm, xylograph size: 40.5cm by 8.4cm with 4-6 lines per page. Byambaa considers there to have been two blocks of the *gsung 'bum* (Bareja-Starsyńska 2015:24). There is a complete version kept in the University of Inner Mongolia in Hōhhot. The national university of Mongolia, the department of history and the library of Gandantegchinlen in Ulaanbaatar have between them a complete collection. As well as the Tibetan block-print, there is a handwritten Mongolian translation of his *thob yig* in three volumes that was done by two of his disciples. Although the Mongolian translation leaves certain parts untranslated, it was under Dza-ya Paṇḍita's guidance so is quite a reliable source. Volume one, two and three are kept in Hōhhot and another copy of volume one is kept in Ulaanbaatar. I was able to obtain photographs of all four Mongolian manuscripts for this study.

historical and socio-political setting of 17th century Tibet with regard to his teachers, patrons, monastic education and personal experiences.

2.1. Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las (1642-1715)

There are two main biographies of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las which are considered as the most authoritative accounts of his life. The first is his own *rang rnam* found in the second volume of his *gsung 'bum* entitled *ShAk btsun blo bzang 'phrin las kyi // ngag rnam phyogs su bsgrigs pa las // rang gi 'khor bar spyod pa'i tshul // shin tu gsal ba'i sgron me bzhugs //*, “The lamp which completely clarifies the manner in which he himself [the monk Dza-ya Paṇḍita] lived his life in *saṃsāra*, from the compilation of the words of the Shākyā monk Blo-bzang 'phrin-las”. This *rang rnam* and its contents form the main topic of analysis of the present chapter.

The second work is the *rnam thar*, ‘biography’ of Dza-ya Paṇḍita composed by one of his closest disciples, Bka'-'gyur-ba Mer-gen no-mon-han.⁴¹ This *rnam thar* is titled *Dkyil 'khor rgyal mtshog'i [rgyal mchog gi] mnga' bdag rdo rje 'chang dza ya pan dti blo bzang 'phrin las dpal bzang po'i rnam thar dpag bsam yongs 'du'i dbang po*, “The *rnam thar* of the master of the *dkyil 'khor rgyal mchog*, the Vajra holder Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las dpal-bzang-po, [which is like] the Lord of the Wish-fulfilling Trees”.⁴² Bka'-'gyur-ba Mer-gen no-mon-han composed this *rnam thar* in the same nine-meter

⁴¹ He is said to have been one of the main disciples of Dza-ya Paṇḍita. Not much is known about this figure. Recently, his *gsung 'bum* was acquired by Japanese scholars from Lhasa. Sadly, I only obtained the xerox copy less than two weeks ago and thus regret not being able to include it in this study.

⁴² It is located in the fifth (Tib. *ca*) volume of the *gsung 'bum* of Bka'-'gyur-ba Blo bzang tshul-khrims, ff. 53a–144a. It can be found in the vol. 39 of the voluminous Collected Works by Tibetan authors in 82 volumes entitled in Tibetan *Dpyad gzhi'i yig cha phyogs bsgrigs*, “A Collection of Basic Research Books”. It was printed in the mid-1990s in China by the “Tianjin Publishing House of Ancient Books” (天津古籍出版社).

kāvyā style verse which was clearly influenced by Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own *rang rnam*. I was not able to work on this *rnam thar* for the present thesis due to having only obtained a copy of the work a month before the submission deadline thanks to the generosity of Bareja-Starzyńska.

There is also a short summary of the *rnam thar* by Bka'-'gyur-ba Mer-gen no-mon-han titled *Dza ya paN+Di ta blo bzang 'phrin las kyi rnam thar mdor bsdus*, “The condensed *rnam thar* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las” which spans seven pages⁴³. I was able to employ this condensed version as an additional reference for the summary of the life of Dza-ya Paṇḍita outlined below.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own *rang rnam* is preserved in the 19th century Beijing block-print of his *gsung 'bum* and comprises 33 folios. Given Dza-ya Paṇḍita's knowledge of Daṇḍin's work,⁴⁴ his own *rang rnam* is not surprisingly fully compiled in *kāvyā* style verse with nine syllable lines (- - / - - / - - / - - -) with the exception of a quotation from the teaching given to Tsong-kha-pa by his teacher Don-grub rin-chen (1309-1385),⁴⁵ which consists of seven syllable lines (- - / - - / - - -). This work was presumably written by Dza-ya Paṇḍita or dictated to one of his disciples soon after his return to Mongolia

⁴³ Mi-nyag mgon-po, Ye-shes rdo-rje, Thub-bstan nyi-ma, Dpal-rdor, Lha-mo-skyabs. “*dza ya paN+Di ta blo bzang 'phrin las kyi rnam thar mdor bsdus*.” In *Gangs can mkhas dbang rim byon gyi rnam thar mdor bsdus*. TBRC, work W25268, vol.1: pp.384 – 390 (Tbrc.org:2014).

⁴⁴ The Indian scholar Daṇḍin's renowned work on poetry, the *Kāvyādarśa*, “Tib. *Syan ngag me long*”, “Mon. *Johistü ayalg-un toli*” was the most significant Indian work on poetry in Tibet since Sa-skya Paṇḍita, who chose it as the standard to be relied on from his time onwards. This work was first translated into Mongolian from the Tibetan by one of the First Jebstundamba's disciples, Dge-legs rgyal-mtshan, and as for the first commentary to be composed by a Mongolian, it was composed by none other than Dza-ya Paṇḍita. He was the First Khalkha Mongolian individual to thoroughly study the *Kāvyādarśa* and was praised by his teachers during his time in Tibet for having been learned in its 35 branches (Altangerel 1959:1165). The work is today preserved as the 13th work in the first volume of his *gsung 'bum* and spans 20 folios. It has the title *Don rgyan so lnga'i dper brjod tshangs sras dgyes pa'i glu dbyangs la*, “The illustration of the thirty-five ornaments of meaning known as the melody which delights the children of Brahma” known in Mongolian as the *Otkha-yin guchin tabün chimig-yin üliger ügülegii*. This commentary was first composed in Tibetan in 1670 then translated into Mongolian. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's familiarity with the *Kāvyādarśa* had much influence on his own writing and later Mongolian writers as we shall see later on.

⁴⁵ Also known as Chos-rje Don-grub rin-chen. He was one of Tsong-kha-pa's main teachers.

from Tibet as it does not span the entirety of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's life, leaving out important historical episodes which occurred during his lifetime such as the revolt of Ġaldan Boshuġthu,⁴⁶ and Dza-ya Paṇḍita's travels to Southern Mongolia and the Manchu court. One can speculate from where and when the narrative cuts off that it may have been written in 1682 or 1683. The colophon of the work cuts the narrative short as if finished in a hurry and does not give much information about the circumstances surrounding its compilation:

[F33a] '...I offered the empowerment of Yamāntaka, the eleven faced Avalokiteśvara etc. and many classes of permissions, transmissions and empowerments and so on. May prosperity and happiness increase!'⁴⁷

Although it does not account for Dza-ya Paṇḍita's whole life, this *rang rnam* gives detailed information about his education and activities during his time in Tibet. The content and stylistic features of this *rang rnam* will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

Aside from the primary sources discussed above, there are also some secondary Mongolian sources kept at the National Library of Ulaanbaatar and books published in Inner Mongolia that have been taken into account.⁴⁸ However, in many of these sources, the lack of proper referencing and ambiguity of information means one can only speculate

⁴⁶ Ġaldan Boshuġthu Khan, also known as Choros Erdeniin Ġaldan (1644–1697). He led the Dzungar Mongols against the Khalkha Mongols in the war of 1688, which ultimately led to the submission of the Khalkha to the Qing Empire. For a more detailed analysis of the Dzungar-Khalkha conflict see (Sneath 2007:183).

⁴⁷ (F33a) 'jigs byed bcu gcig zhal gyi dbang sogs dang // rjes gnam lung gi rigs yang mang por phul /// bkra shis dge legs 'phel //

⁴⁸ See Altangerel (1982), Boldbaatar (2004), Ġalluu (2003), Ganhuyag & Dondub (2002), Öljei (1992), and, Yontan (1982).

and must refer to them with a certain amount of caution. Nevertheless, the life of Dza-ya Paṇḍita in a nutshell is as follows.

In Mongolia today, tradition accepts that the reincarnation lineage of Dza-ya Paṇḍita began in India. He is said to have been born in India five times, three times in Tibet⁴⁹ and then once in Mongolia as Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür (1558-1640) before taking birth as the First Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las.⁵⁰ His reincarnation lineage has been kept alive and today, the present reincarnation, the Seventh Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin phul-'byung 'jigs-med dpal-bzang spends his time at his monastery at Zayin Khüree and his new home in Ulaanbaatar. His subsequent reincarnations to the present day are as follows:⁵¹

- ❖ Second Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang dge-legs rnam-rgyal (1717-1765)
- ❖ Third Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'jigs-med rdo-rje (1767-1803)
- ❖ Fourth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'jigs-med rnam-rgyal (1804-1867)
- ❖ Fifth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang chos-kyi dbang-phyug (1868-1904)
- ❖ Sixth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang thub-bstan chos-kyi nyi-ma (1904/5-1930)
- ❖ Seventh Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin phul-'byung 'jigs-med dpal-bzang (1972-Present)

⁴⁹ There are a few variations of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's previous incarnation lineage which have been summarised in Please refer to Figure 1 in the Appendix.

⁵⁰ However, the *rang rnam* states he was born briefly as the son of a blind man who died at the age of three immediately before the birth as Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

⁵¹ Alternatively, in Mongolian: Second Dza-ya Paṇḍita Bandriin Lubsannyamdelegnamjil (1717-1765), Third Dza-ya Paṇḍita Tsengjenjabîn Luvsanchoinjinvanichig [Luvsandorj] (1767-1803), Fourth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Dannrangiin Luvsanjigmednamjil [Luvsannanjil] (1804-1867), Fifth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Vanchinbazarîn Luvsanchoinjinvanichig (1868-1904), Sixth Dza-ya Paṇḍita Sodnomdorjiin Lubsantuvden Chojjinnyam (1904/5-1930). Seventh Dza-ya Paṇḍita Luvsandanzanpüljinjigmed (1972-present). The following list is a summary from various Mongolian and Western Sources Ganhuayag & Dondub (2002), Öljei (1992), Boldbaatar (2004) and Bareja-Starzyńska (2016).

The incarnation directly preceding Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las was a renowned individual named Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür (1558-1640).⁵² He was the brother of Abatai Sayin Khaan⁵³ and fourth son of Oḡonukhu Üijeng Noyan. Oḡonukhu Üijeng Noyan was the third son of Jalayir Khungtaiji Geresenji, who belonged to the direct bloodline of Chinggis (Bira 2002:8). He played a major role in spreading Buddhism in Mongolia in the 16th century and was the first to initiate the tradition of pilgrimage from Mongolia to Tibet, as well as the construction of Erdeni-yin Zuu monastery together with his brother Abatai Khaan in 1586.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita himself was born in Ha-su-lung, Hu-cir-thu in the Hang-ga'i-hang region⁵⁴ of Khalkha Mongolia. His father Gzung-thar was an ex-monk under the Dharma lord Sbyin-pa dar-rgyas of Coni Monastery, and his mother was named Orkhitai. Dza-ya Paṇḍita had one older sister, one younger brother and two younger sisters. He was born at daybreak on the 15th day of the auspicious month of *Sa-ga-zla-wa*⁵⁵ in the year 1642, which coincides with the enthronement of the Fifth Dalai Lama as the supreme ruler of Tibet.

⁵² Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür (1558-1640) was the younger brother of Abatai Khaan (see next footnote) and although not a Khaan or Khan himself, he was in charge of the seven banners of his Aimag, which meant that he had much input in spreading Buddhism in Mongolia. He himself travelled to Tibet and, as mentioned in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*, met both the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. He was also responsible for building the road from Lhasa to Kokonur. He later overlooked the establishment of the law in the newly independent Khalkha Mongolia as well as the later laws that were established. It is also recorded in the accounts of the second son of Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür, Danjanlam Betesjav that the construction of Zayin Khüree; was started by Tümenkin Noyan in 1631 Öljei (1992:55).

⁵³ Abatai/Abadai Sain Khan (1554-1589) was the chief son of Oḡonukhu Üijeng Noyan (born 1534), who was the 3rd son of Geresenji Jalayir Khungtaiji (1513-1549), who was the 11th son of Batu Möngke Dayan Khaan (1464-1517/1534). Abatai Khaan established independent Khalkha Ulus Elverskog (2006:58) and promoted Buddhism in Mongolia.

⁵⁴ Today's Arkhangai province in Mongolia, around 250 km west of Ulaanbaatar.

⁵⁵ Tradition holds this day to be the day of birth, nirvāṇa and parinirvāṇa of the Buddha and hence is held as very auspicious.

At the age of five, he received his *dge bsnyen* vows in the presence of Rabs-byams-pa Blo-gros rgya-mtsho.⁵⁶ In 1653, he met the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan and was bestowed the title Noyan Khutuḡtu. In 1656, aged 14, he became famous in Mongolia as the *Deged Ertönc-yin Nüid*, 'the eye of the world' (Boldbaatar 2004:68). In the summer of 1657, he attended the gathering of the four banners⁵⁷ that the lord Jebtsundamba headed for the first time in celebration of his safe return from Tibet. In 1658, Dza-ya Paṇḍita started studying medicine. In the spring of 1659, he compiled a supplication prayer of the lord Jebtsundamba based on the *Bla ma rgyang 'bod*, "Calling the Lama from Afar" compiled by the Panchen Lama and requested permission for going to Tibet to study the *dharma*.

In the autumn of 1660, he left Mongolia and arrived in Lhasa in 1661, the same year as the enthronement of Enkh Amgalan Khaan of the Manchu empire. On the 1st day of the 10th month, he met the Great Fifth Dalai Lama for the first time and received his *śrāmaṇera* vow from him. On the 9th day of that same month, he met the First Panchen Lama.

In the 1st Mongolian month of 1662, he arrived in Bkra-shis lhun-po monastery, which would later become his main place of study and residence in Tibet. In that same year, when the First Panchen Lama passed away, he attended all the funeral rituals. In 1664, he travelled to Dbus and received his full ordination from the Fifth Dalai Lama and received the *dharma* name Blo-bzang 'phrin-las. In the 10th month of 1667, Dza-ya Paṇḍita

⁵⁶ He was presumably a Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monk.

⁵⁷ Southern and Northern Mongolia were administered through a system of divisions of different Aimags. Each Aimag was made up of a number of Khoshuus. Khalkha Mongolia was divided into four Aimags until 1723 when the estate of the Jebtsundamba Khutuḡtu became separate from the four Aimags (Elverskog 2006).

fell ill but still attended the enthronement feast for the Second Panchen Lama at Bkra-shis lhun-po.

Between 1668 and 1674, he travelled extensively between Lha-sa, Pha-bong-kha, Se-ra, 'Bras-spungs, Bkra-shis-lhun-po, Dga'-ldan and Rgod-tshang monasteries, where he received many teachings, *'khrid*, 'instructions', practices, *rjes gnang*, 'permissions', *dbang*, 'empowerments' and transmissions of texts.

Towards the end of 1673, Tüsiyetü Khan Cakhundorji's (d.1655) of the left banner of Khalkha Mongolia came to Lha-sa, and Dza-ya Paṇḍita arrived in Lha-sa on the 2nd day of the 1st Mongolian month of 1674 to meet him. He travelled together with the Khan to the main monasteries of Dbus and Gtsang to pay respects to the Fifth Dalai Lama, the Second Panchen Lama, the Dga'-ldan khri-pa and the abbots of the major monastic colleges. When the Khan was getting ready to leave, he expressed his wish for Dza-ya Paṇḍita to return to Mongolia with him. However, the Dalai Lama advised Dza-ya Paṇḍita to stay in Tibet for the time being and go back to Mongolia at a later time. Before the Khan departed, Dza-ya Paṇḍita composed a *rnam thar* of the Khan as an offering. After the Khan departed, he spent the next few years travelling between the major monastic colleges to complete his training.

In the winter of 1676, a number of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's patrons including Yelteng Noyan, Taicing khoshuci, Mergen Ahai, the mistress Magata, Secen Noyan and Üitsen Noyan came as pilgrims to Lha-sa, so Dza-ya Paṇḍita went to meet them.

On the 11th day of the 5th month of the year 1679, he left Lha-sa to return to Mongolia and travelled via Dga'-ldan. When he arrived in Nag-chu, he stayed there for 10 days, then crossed the 'Bring-chu river and arrived in 'Brong-chung grags-pa via the

Kökenuur-Lhasa highway. Then, he reached Sku-'bum monastery; he left Kökenuur on the first day of the 8th Mongolian month, arriving at Er-tsha on the 19th of the 9th Mongolian month. On the 3rd day of the 12th month, Dza-ya Paṇḍita arrived at his own home. Later that month he carried out the *smon lam* prayer for *lo gsar*.

In 1679, he built the Gungereg and Demchig monasteries in a place called Tamir Bulag. Later that year, he built a monastery called Buyanig Delgeruuegch, “The monastery which spreads merits” with his own funds. In 1686, he met the Lcang-skya Khutuḡtu Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang chos-ldan (1642-1714)⁵⁸ who came from Amdo and exchanged many tantric initiations with him (Dashbadrah 2002:26). In 1686, when the retired Dga'-ldan khri-pa Ngag-dbang blo-gros rgya-mtsho came to Mongolia, Dza-ya Paṇḍita met him at Zhu-ring pil-chir (TBRC.org:356).

In 1688, due to the of Ġaldan Boshuḡthu war,⁵⁹ he went to Southern Mongolia together with the Jebtsundamba and stayed in Höhhot, Dolonuur and Beijing (Öljei 1992:48). In 1691, he went to meet the Kangxi Emperor (1654-1722) at his palace in Beijing and was bestowed the title of *Dza sag*⁶⁰ by the emperor. In 1694, he went to Beijing again to meet the emperor and spent *lo gsar* there. According to the summary of the *rnam thar* written by Bka'-'gyur-pa Mer-gen No-mon-Khaan, the Kangxi Emperor wished for Dza-ya Paṇḍita to stay in the Manchu court, but he rejected the offer due to his

⁵⁸ Also known as Bstan-'dzin legs-bshad rgya-mtsho or Dge-'dun-skyabs. He studied in central Tibet for 23 years after which he went back to Dgon-lung monastery, where he had lived since the age of two. He later became the abbot of Dgon-lung in 1688. In his lifetime, he worked closely with the Manchu court and the emperor which led to him travelling extensively in Tibet, Northern Mongolia, Southern Mongolia and China.

⁵⁹ For more information on the figure of Ġaldan Boshuḡthu Khan and the events surrounding the war see Sneath (2010:183).

⁶⁰ During the rule of the Manchus, the rank of *dza-sag*, which is the same as the Tibetan rank *spyi dpon*, was bestowed upon individuals in their empire who controlled a banner or district. For more on titles and ranks during the Qing period, see Elverskog (2006).

wish to pursue his religious activities. Despite his political title and the wishes of the emperor, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's dedication to Buddhism is clearly reflected in his writings.

In 1696, after his return from Southern Mongolia and China, he built his own monastery Gunden monastery⁶¹ that became his permanent place of residence in Khalkha Mongolia thereafter (Dashbadrah 2002:26). His personal monastery complex was home to 1000 monks at its peak with 4000 at the time of *Nomin Hural*, 'religious festivals'. He was said to have had over 1000 disciples and 5000 people subject to the maintenance of his monastery (Öljei 1992:61). His personal library was full of Chinese, Tibetan, Manchu and Sanskrit books (Öljei 1992:51). The presence of such a variety of different language Buddhist texts in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's personal library suggests that the Tibetan Buddhist world in the 17th century was very much cosmopolitan in nature. Given that Dza-ya Paṇḍita travelled extensively in this world is reflected in the books he kept in his monastery.⁶²

According to Öljei, in 1699, he gave the title of Buyan-yig Iltegegci Monastery, 'the monastery which clarifies merits' to the monastery he built in Höhhot (Öljei 1992:48). However, this monastery was built by another lama known as Höhhot-yin Dza-ya Paṇḍita.⁶³ The fact that in 1697, the Dalai Mañjuśrī Neichi Toyon invited him to Höhhot,⁶⁴ suggests that he did not have a monastery of his own and stayed instead with the Neichi Toyon.

⁶¹ This is part of the Zayin Khüree Complex.

⁶² An indepth discussion on the topic of the "17th century Cosmopolitan Tibetan Buddhist World" is one which is beyond the scope of this thesis and is something which I hope to return to in later projects.

⁶³ According to the Archive of the monasteries in Höhhot written in 1786, this Dza-ya Paṇḍita came to Beijing in 1662 with over 160 households of disciples of Jasagtu Khan Banner of Khalkha and stayed in Höhhot following the command of the Kangxi Emperor. Please refer to the Appendix for the transliteration and translation of the archive pages which discuss this Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his monastery.

⁶⁴ He was a renowned Eastern Mongolian tantric master who was famous for his active suppression of Shamanism. For more information about his life and activities see Borjigin-Ujeed (2011:265-277).

His father Gzung-thar passed away in 1700 after which he took care of the funeral rites. In 1703, he went to Dolonuur and met again with the Lcang-skya Khutugtu Ngagdbang chos-ldan. Although he always wished to return to Tibet and finally went to seek permission from the Kangxi Emperor to do so in 1711, after detailed discussion of the matter with his friend and teacher the First Jebtsundamba, he decided not to go due to his age and poor health (Dashbadrah 2012:27). On the 20th day of the 1st month of the year 1715 he passed away at the age of 73.

2.2. Tibetan Buddhist Biographical and Autobiographical Writing

The term “biography” originates from the Greek words *bios*, ‘life’ and *graphia*, ‘writing’. It is defined as ‘an account of someone’s life written by someone else’.⁶⁵ At a glance, Tibetan biographical literature appears interpretable through Western biographical literary theories and genres. However, Tibetan biographical writings developed during very different periods of history and socio-cultural settings (Gyatso 1992:476). Some postmodern theorists have even argued that a diary is the most trustworthy type of biographical writing, as the “self” does not go through retrospective analysis (Gyatso 1998:109). This type of understanding of biographical writing poses a problem when applied to Tibetan Buddhist biographies, which are often laced with myths, legends, dreams, prophecies and visions that are presented as facts. Furthermore, Tibetan literary genres (just like literary genres in other languages and cultures) are not strictly defined, since “genres” can often contain defining characteristics of other genres. Types of writing that can fall under Tibetan biographical literature are *rtogs brjod*, ‘great deeds or

⁶⁵ en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/biography (accessed 2017).

activities', *mi tshe*, 'life story', *rgyal rabs*, 'account/story of kings', *lam yig*, 'travel accounts', *thob yig/gsan yig*, 'records of teachings received', *rang rnam*, 'autobiography', and stories of *gter ma*, 'treasure texts' as well as others (van der Kuijp 1996:39). Nevertheless, Tibetan biographical literature has many features, which allow for it to be analysed through Western literary theory, which may be a useful tool in engaging with their content and context.

The main term used for biographies, "*rnam thar*" is the contracted form of the term "*rnam par thar pa*" corresponding to Sanskrit "*vimokṣa*". It can be translated as 'life of liberation' or 'liberation story' and represents one of the most popular Tibetan Buddhist literary genres. The term can refer to any biography of a religious figure but also to sacred biography or hagiography in a sense comparable to medieval European hagiographies (Roesler 2014:116). In Tibet, it came to represent the genre of biographical literature for all Tibetan Buddhist schools from approximately the 11th century onwards (Roberts 2010:181). Tibetan life writing almost always carries religious connotations with only about 23 out of 1225 biographies and autobiographies dating between the 11th -20th centuries on tbrc.org belonging to secular figures (Schaeffer 2010:296).

Compelling reasons for self-assertion and distinction can be traced to the dawn of the hegemony of Buddhism in Tibet. In this competitive climate, personal accomplishments of individual religious masters became the centrepieces in the struggle to establish a lineage and eventually an institution and power base (Gyatso 1998:116). Out of the many different schools of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dge-lugs-pa tradition to which Dza-ya Paṇḍita belonged was the most prolific producer of biographical writing. In his analysis of *rnam thars* archived by tbrc.org, Schaeffer noted that the number of Dge-lugs-pa biographies and autobiographies amounted to almost the same number as the Sa-skya,

Rnying-ma and Bka'-brgyud *rnam thars* combined with a marked rise around the 17th century, which can arguably be related to the political rise of this tradition (Schaeffer 2010:296).

The earliest dictionary usage of the term autobiography states that is “the story of one’s life written by himself”. In essence of Western biographical theory, an autobiography can only be written from living experience, and the narrator must also be the subject (Shaw 2010:23). Bruss defines autobiography from the perspective of the reader, proposing that a key feature of what readers consider to be autobiography is that the experiences and events reported therein are presented as true and are believed to be true by the author (Bruss 1976). In this light, Tibetan autobiographical writing would fit the Western interpretation. Lejeune states that the author of the work should be the same as the principle character and the narrator (Lejeune 2009). This is slightly problematic for the Tibetan autobiographical tradition as the narrative voice does not always tell us who the author is. The master often narrates his life events to his disciple or disciples who then compose the *rnam thar* or *rang rnam* in the first-person. The title of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s autobiography suggests that this very may well be the case here.

Tibetan Buddhism, amongst the various Buddhist traditions around the world, has by far the most prominent corpus of religious autobiographical literature. India has over two millennia of Buddhist literary history, which has had huge impacts on the literary tradition in Tibet. However, there is no evidence to suggest that Tibetan autobiographical writing also originated in India since the Indian Buddhist tradition never developed this

genre on a larger scale.⁶⁶ Chinese Buddhism has an autobiographical tradition but this is significantly smaller in size than the Tibetan (Gyatso 1998:115).

The Tibetan term for autobiography is “*rang rnam*”, *rang* meaning “self” and *rnam* short for *rnam thar*. Schaeffer’s study of the *rnam thars* and *rang rnams* on tbrc.org showed that in comparison to *rnam thars*, the number of *rang rnams* are considerably fewer (Schaeffer 2010:296). Shaw stated, “autobiography tends to emerge at times when there is a particular need to assert a single identity... ‘I’ autobiographies tend to come at times when the ‘I’ feels that it differs a little from other ‘I’s’ that happen to be around” (Shaw 2010:25). In the context of competitive and unsteady sectarian situation of Tibet in the 16th-17th centuries, the rise in autobiographical writing echoes the heightened need to define what constitutes the ‘I’ from others.

Overall, authors of both *rnam thars* and *rang rnams* follow a standardised style and structure which contains elements that can be traced back to the most exemplary of all Buddhist lives – that of the Buddha. The Buddha biographies including the *jātaka* narratives identify lineages that link the Buddha to his karmic past as well as to the lineages of previous and future Buddhas. These lineages have been employed by many Buddhist traditions and their affiliated Buddhist rulers for legitimising and empowering their respective civil institutions as part of the genealogy of world rulers able to trace their heritage back to the Buddha (Schober 1997:17). The life of the Buddha is often divided into “deeds” representing the most notable events in his life. There are two common divisions, one of “eight deeds” and a later division of “twelve deeds” with the latter being the most favoured model in Tibet:

⁶⁶ See the remarks in Roesler (2010:5).

- ❖ Descent from Tuṣita heaven
- ❖ Conception in the womb
- ❖ Birth in Lumbini
- ❖ Learning royal arts and skills
- ❖ Marriage and fatherhood
- ❖ Renunciation
- ❖ Ascetic practices
- ❖ Meditating in Bodhgaya
- ❖ Victory over Mara
- ❖ Enlightenment
- ❖ Teaching the *dharma*
- ❖ Nirvāṇa

(Roesler 2014:121)

The chronological structure of the Buddha's life represents the most exemplary life model for all later Buddhist traditions including the Tibetan.

Common elements found in the majority of Tibetan Buddhist biographical and autobiographical writing (with the exception of the last two only being applicable to biographical writing), summarised from the analysis given by Cousens, Ruegg, Smith and van Schaik, are as follows:⁶⁷

Dedications to the Bodhisattvas, the gurus and the protectors of the teachings.

(In the case of autobiographies) Apologetic beginning, where the religious master is at first reluctant or apologetic in telling his life narrative which he deems “unworthy of recording” and only later concedes due to the urging of his disciples or patrons or both.

⁶⁷ See Cousens (2002), Ruegg (1966), Smith (2010) and van Schaik (2000).

Accounts of previous incarnations often referred to as the “Garland or Rosary of [Previous] Births” in which only notable rebirths are usually mentioned as it amplifies one’s lineage.⁶⁸

Prophecies foretell the individual’s rebirth in the world.

Birth is usually include the names of their parents, often tracing their ancestry back to an illustrious teacher or one of the important clans from the imperial period.

Renunciation, represented by one’s ordination as a *dge tshul*, ‘novice’ and the later ordination as a *dge slong*, ‘fully ordained monk’ corresponding to the Buddha’s renunciation of palace life.

Training and education often include extensive lists of teachings received. In many cases, the author supplies a more detailed *thob yig/gsan yig*, ‘record of teachings and transmissions received’ compiled from the notes kept by the teacher during his life.

Practices of meditation, usually accomplished in retreat. This is often the period when a teacher will undergo hardship and austerities in pursuit of the goal, mirroring the Buddha’s six years of ascetic practice.

Awakening as a result of the austerities and intensive practice of meditation in retreat, corresponding to the process that led up to the awakening of the Buddha.

Work and activity of the individual, describing teachings and activities for the benefit of sentient beings, corresponding to the Buddha’s choice to stay in *saṃsāra* to teach the *dharma* for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Death of the teacher, usually presented as a moment of triumph, echoing the Buddha’s own *parinirvāṇa*.

⁶⁸ See Appleton (2010:110-176) for an analysis of the way in which the Pāli *jātakas* serve and fit into the biographical frame of Buddhism.

A list of the *main disciples* of the teacher is added at the end of lineage biographies, which acts to ensure the continuity of the tradition.

In this sense, the life of a Tibetan Buddhist master is understood by himself and also by those in his lineage in the context of spiritual and religious experiences as well as in light of the exemplary life of the Buddha himself, the ultimate Buddhist teacher.

In Tibet, biographical writing never forgot the traditional Buddha biography prototype. However, as Shaw states: “autobiographies and biographies at all historical periods are like plants that adapt and grow in soils, dependent on readership or audience, intention, the type of text involved, social, personal, and religious expectations, and even economic considerations” (Shaw 2010:19). The socio-cultural and religio-political context and pre-Buddhist historiographical traditions of Tibet caused biographical writing in Tibet to develop in a unique way. Tibetans were concerned with origin myths and royal genealogies long before the influence of Buddhist literature from India. The Dunhuang finds show that paternal lineages, royal and clan genealogies and family statistics were produced not long after the invention of the Tibetan script (Gyatso 2010:117). The knowledge of one’s divine origin represented one’s power and authority. Thus, the recitation of these origin narratives demonstrated the Spu-rgyal kings’ and the royal clans’ direct link to the divine past. With the fall of the empire and largescale rise of Buddhism, the Buddhist lineages and religious origins became the source of empowerment for the emerging Buddhist schools and their powerful patrons. In this world, Buddhist teachers were the living embodiment of the source of this new power, which ultimately led to the tradition of *sprul sku*, ‘reincarnation’. These charismatic individuals were in turn the composers as well as subjects of religious *rnam thar* writing that now encompassed the origin myths and replaced the royal genealogies (ibid).

In the West, autobiographical writing was particularly vibrant under the drive of modernity at key moments of historical change such as the protestant reformation, the Copernican revolution, enlightenment movement, industrial revolution and the age of romanticism (Gyatso 1998:116). Comparably, religious life writing in Tibet came into proper existence after the demise of the Spu-rgyal Empire and in the wake of newly-emerging local kingdoms, whose rulers traced their origins back to the empire. The Spu-rgyal Empire is followed by the *sil bu'i dus skabs* 'age of Fragmentation (of the former empire)'. It was not so much a chaotic period as one of dispersion and fragmentation of the centralised military empire of Spu-rgyal. Post-imperial Tibet was a chaotic period with no central governance, where the newly-formed Buddhist schools backed by different royal clans and kingdoms were fighting amongst themselves for power. As the situation developed, the *sprul sku* phenomenon also changed the transference of power in Tibet from inheritance-based to reincarnation-based (ibid.), positing the Buddhist teachers closer to the centre of the competition for power. Their need to demonstrate legitimacy and authority is paralleled by the explosion in the number of *rnam thar* writing. The earliest Tibetan autobiographers include Gtsangs-pa rgyas-ras (1161-1211) and the second Karmapa Karma Pakshi (1206-1282) (Gyatso 1992:466).

Later on, the 15th and 16th centuries bore witness to heated sectarian competition backed by powerful families as well as foreign Mongolian princes and Khans descended from the bloodline of Chinggis Khaan who were also seeking power amongst themselves. This period was characterised by the development of a highly sophisticated scholastic systematisation and a progressive solidification of teaching lineages as well as scholastic and monastic establishments into religious sects (Rheingans 2009: 249). In the 17th century, the Dge-lugs-pas had emerged as the supreme religious and secular authority in Tibet, but competition and strife was not discontinued. It was then more necessary than

ever for the lineage holders and teachers of the Dge-lugs-pas to compile their life stories in order to uphold the image of a strong tradition with legitimacy and authority of lineage. This was not only true for the Dge-lugs-pas but also for the other schools, as biographies documenting exemplary lives of teachers showed the strength, unity and authority of each tradition not only for their rivals but also for their disciples, the future of the tradition. This is mirrored by the rise in the number of biographical writing in the 17th century, especially the Dge-lugs-pas (Schaeffer 2010:294).

The rise to power of the Dge-lugs-pas headed by the institution of the Dalai Lama (despite the rivalries and disputes which ensued) brought Tibet under something which resembled a unified organised government. Nevertheless, the rival schools remained powerful due to their patrons (both Tibetan and Mongolian). In this world, the charismatic reincarnate lamas of the different schools were in a sense the *axis mundi* of their respective schools, holding authority over the legitimacy and authenticity of their traditions. An outstanding figure in this respect was the Great Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682), a great Buddhist scholar, cunning politician and prolific writer. The corpus of autobiographical writing he left behind is the largest recorded in Tibetan history, and the stylistic and structural features of his writing became somewhat of a prototype for Tibetan Buddhist biographical writing thereafter. The autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama⁶⁹ is consciously styled as a departure from earlier autobiographies, which he deemed either too difficult to understand or evasive when treating their subject's actions (Roesler 2014:265). His autobiography is structured like a diary recording the innumerable services he presided over, consecrations he performed, sermons he gave, audiences he granted and envoys he received (Gyatso 1998:101). The writing of the Fifth

⁶⁹ See Karmay's newly published translation of the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama (Karmay 2014).

Dalai Lama hugely influenced Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as he himself states in the colophon of his *thob yig*.⁷⁰

In the West, the main emphasis of biographical writing is on the individual's life and the life narrative is driven by a curiosity about the individual's personality, i.e., the creation of Western man and his ego (Kindall 1980:10011). On the contrary, individual life stories in the Tibetan Buddhist traditions are written to strengthen the image of an authoritative and legitimate lineage to which the individual belongs. Furthermore, they also serve as inspiration and role models for the disciples within that lineage upon whom the task of maintaining the tradition into the future depends. This is reflected in the popular saying still maintained amongst Tibetan Buddhist monks today: "The biographies of the previous scholars, are the practices of the disciples who follow".⁷¹

In this sense, individual *rnam thars* can be seen as pieces of a more comprehensive puzzle that map out different Tibetan Buddhist lineages that again come together to form a tradition. Each life story can be compared to a chapter within a much bigger "biography" of the lineage. This is reflected in the large collections of biographies kept by different Tibetan Buddhist traditions, often titled 'rosary' or 'necklace', suggesting the unbroken chain of religious transmission, even if they are often structured like family trees rather than a rosary, with stress on transmission lineage rather than individual life (Roesler 2014:123). As part of a larger whole, it would seem fitting that the individual *rnam thars* follow standardised stylistic and structural features.

⁷⁰ See Chapter Three.

⁷¹ *sngon byon mkhas pa'i rnam thar / rjes 'jug gdul bya'i nyams len* / I was told of this saying by Lama Tenzin Tselek during a conversation at the Oxford Buddhist Vihara, March 2013.

2.3. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*

In comparison to the typical structure of Tibetan *rnam thar* writing as outlined above, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* can be broken down as follows:

Prototypical Tibetan <i>rang rnam</i>	Dza-ya Paṇḍita's <i>rang rnam</i>
Dedications	Dedications
Apologetic beginning	Apologetic beginning
Previous incarnations	Previous incarnations
Prophecies	
Birth	Birth
Renunciation	Renunciation
Training and education	Training and education
Practice	Practice
Dreams	Dreams
Prophetic experiences	Prophetic experiences
Awakening	
Work and activity	Return to Mongolia
Death ⁷²	

The incompleteness of the account of his life leading up to his death can be attributed to the *rang rnam* being compiled soon upon his return to Mongolia, speculatively sometime in or soon after 1680 as he returned home from Tibet in the last month of 1679. Therefore, aside from the missing accounts of prophecies regarding his

⁷² The death of the individual can be dealt with in an autobiographical work when the scribe is the disciple writing in the first-person voice of the teacher or when a *rang rnam* composed by the teacher himself is added to later by one of the disciples to complete his life narrative.

birth and awakening, the structural features and order of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* fits the standard *rnam thar* model. Something worth noting is the way in which the prophecies, dreams and practices are woven in and around his religious training and education, as for example in the following two episodes:

“In the summer, at the time when I was drawing a body image of the *chos skyong* (dharma protector) as requested by the attendant lama, one night, in a dream, two golden *ācāryas* of light from Rgod-tshang said “you should compose a complete stanza of praise for the *gtor ma* ritual for inviting the *chos skyong*”. The morning after the dream, I made a request at the feet of the great scholar and tantric master Bsod-nams grags-pa, and he said: “it is likely to be the blessing of the guru and you should compose it”. So, I composed it accordingly, and after having finished the *thangka*, I offered it and he was pleased.”⁷³

“On the 22nd day after Losar, the physician Sgo-ma rag-pa performed a colon purification rite. That night, in a dream, I dreamt that I was lying down with my head placed in the lap of the Panchen Rinpoche with a Yama standing on my belly, pressing me down with his foot. So, the Panchen Rinpoche said, “by this [pressing down of Yama's feet] may your sickness be purified.” Because of dreaming so, I woke up and a happy feeling arose.”⁷⁴

These dreams and prophecies demonstrate that Dza-ya Paṇḍita considered these experiences an important and valid part of his life, in that they support and strengthen his religious achievements.

⁷³ (F21a-21b) *dbyar ka bla ma drung pa'i bka' bzhin du // chos skyong sku brnyan bris skabs nu mo gcig // rmi lam na rgod tshang nas 'od zer ba'i // a tsa ra gnyis khyod kyis chos skyong la // spyen 'dren mchod gtor bstod pa sho lo ka // gcig la tshang ba rtsom zhes rmis pa'i sang // mkhas grub bsod nams grags pa'i zhabs drung du // zhus par bla ma'i byin rlabs yin shas che // rtsom zhes phebs pas tshigs bcad gcig kyang brtsams // thang ka tshar nas phul bas thugs mnyes mdzad //*

⁷⁴ (F27a) *nyi shu gnyis yi nyin // dpon tshang sgo ma rag pas sbyongs shig btang // de nub rmi lam pan chen rin po che'i // sku pang la ni bdag gi mgo bzhag cing // nyal ba'i lto bar dam can chos kyi rgyal // bzhengs nas zhabs kyis mnan par pan chen gyis // 'di yi na tsha dag par khrus kyis shig // gsungs ba rmis pas sad tshe dga' snang byung //*

2.3.1. *The Structure of the rang nam*

At closer investigation, the sub-sections that make up the *rang nam* spanning 33 folios can be divided as follows.

Dedications: 0.25 folio

- Homage to Mañjughoṣa, the teachers, yidams, Ḍākas and Ḍākinis, and the protectors

Apologetic beginning: 0.75 folio

- An account of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's disciples and patrons urging time and time again for him to record his life story, and he himself giving a list of reasons as to why his life is one not worthy of recording

Previous incarnations: 1 folio

- Dza-ya Paṇḍita listing the life and merits of his most notable Mongolian incarnation, Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür (1558-1640)
- He also mentions another incarnation between Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür and himself, which is not recorded in any secondary source I have come across so far:

“I was born as a son of one who was blind who went to play games and upon returning thirsty from play, due to the thirst, I drank some contaminated water. It is said that because of this, I had died and then I was reborn. I heard this from my parents.”⁷⁵

Birth: 0.5 folios

⁷⁵ (F3a) mig zhar gcig gi bur skyes rtse mo la // song nas skom zhing yong tshe mi gtsang ba'i // btung ba btung pas shi nas 'dir skyes par (skye bar) // labs (langs) pa yin zhes pha ma'i ngag las thos // This above information would be a valuable addition to existing scholarship on the previous incarnations of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as it is believed that the incarnation as Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür directly precedes Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las.

Religious Training and education in Mongolia: 3.5 folios

- Taking his *upāsaka* vows from the Vinaya holder Rab-byams-pa Blo-gros rgya mtsho (1610-1659)⁷⁶
- Taking his *abhiṣeka* vow from the *dharma* lord Dge-'dun bsod-nams⁷⁷
- Meeting and recognising the Jebtsundamba Khutugtu Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan as his friend and teacher
- Receiving teachings from Mongolian masters:
 - His first teacher Shes-rab rin-chen⁷⁸
 - The First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-msthan
 - Dharmarāja Ngag-dbang blo-bzang dpal-bzang-po⁷⁹
 - Dge-'dun bsod-nams
 - Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-rgyam-pa⁸⁰
 - Lo-tsa-ba Dharmarāja Mahāpaṇḍita⁸¹

Training and education in Tibet: 22 folios

- Taking his *śrāmaṇera* vow from the Fifth Dalai Lama in the spring of 1655
- Making the decision to stay in Bkra-shis lhun-po monastery

⁷⁶ Also known as La-mo zhabs-drung dkar-po Blo-gros rgya-mtsho. He was a prominent Dge-lugs-pa teacher from A-mdo who was active in religious and political activities between Khalkha and Oirad Mongolia under the directions of the Fifth Dalai Lama and received the title Tsha-kan No-mon-han (the white *dharma* king). He was recognised in 1612 as the reincarnation of La-mo Tshogs-gyis-rgya-mtsho and presided over a monastic college he founded called Gcan-tsha Mgur-dgon Rnam-rgyal-gling with 300 monks.

⁷⁷ No information was sourced.

⁷⁸ His birth and death dates are unknown, was active during the 17th century and was a disciple of the Panchen Chos-gyi rgyal-mtshan. In the notes of the life of the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (Tbrc.org, 2014), it states that together with the First Panchen Lama, She-rab rin-chen recognised the Jebtsundamba as the reincarnation of Tāranātha.

⁷⁹ He is the reincarnation of the Twenty-Seventh Dga'-ldan khri-pa Sangs-rgyas Rin-chen (1540-1612). (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁰ (F5a) Dza-ya Paṇḍita states 'yan lag 'byung sogs skyes chen du ma yi // yang srid blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'phrin rgyam pa'i // He was the reincarnation of a Kashmiri master. However, I could not clarify his identity any further.

⁸¹ No information was sourced.

- Receiving teachings, practices, *rjes gnang*, ‘practice permissions’, *dbang*, ‘empowerments’ and *lung*, ‘textual transmissions’ from prolific Tibetan masters. I have listed below the most important ones:
 - Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682)
 - First Panchen Lama Blo-bzang chos-gyi rgyal-mtshan (1570-1662)
 - Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes (1663-1737)
 - Dga'-ldan khri-pa Dpal-ldan rgyal-mtshan (1655-1662)⁸²
 - Dge-'dun don-grub (17th century)⁸³
 - Gling-stod zhabs-drung Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1590-?)⁸⁴
 - 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa (17th century)⁸⁵
 - Blo-bzang bstan-pa dar-rgyas (17th century)⁸⁶
 - Bka'-'gyur-pa Sbyin-pa rgya-mtsho (1629-1695)⁸⁷
 - Rgod-tshang Khams-pa Drung-'thos nan-chen-po⁸⁸
 - Ngag-dbang blo-gros (17th century)⁸⁹
- Dreams, divinations and prophecies associated with his religious training and practice
- Overcoming various obstacles such as sickness, challenges of his monastic education and rivalry of his peers
- Receiving advice and help in recovering from illness from his teachers such as the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho.⁹⁰

⁸² The 40th Dga'-ldan khri-pa. He was born in Mnga'-ris spi-ti grang-khar and studied at Mnga'-ris grwa-tshang. He assumed office as the Dga'-ldan khri-pa in 1654 and retired in 1662 (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸³ Also known as Sngags-pa dpon-slob or Sngags-chen Dge-'dun don-grub (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁴ Also known as Nyi-thang chos-rje Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁵ Also known as Gnas-brtan 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa or Pha-bong kha-pa 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa or 'Dul-'dzin 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa. He was the most important scribe of the Fifth Dalai Lama and was one of the main tutors of the sixth Dalai Lama (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁶ Tbrc.org person P3308 (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁷ Also known as Khri Sbyin-pa rgya-mtsho, Ngag-dbang dpal-bzang or Blo-bzang Sbyin-pa rgya-mtsho and was the forty-sixth Dga'-ldan khri-pa (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁸⁸ Dza-ya Paṇḍita's stated he is the reincarnation of Sgon-sde Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan (1532-1592) (Tbrc.org, 2014), aside from this I could not clarify the identity of this individual.

⁸⁹ Also known as Mer-gan bla-ma or Mer-gan bla-ma Ngag-dbang blo-gros (Tbrc.org, 2014).

⁹⁰ For example, (F29b) *de nas gsol ja gsum gyi bar // khyod la bstan 'gror phan pa'i re yod pas // rgyal ba gnyis pa'i bstan pa'i zhabs 'degs la // gang brtson byed dgos grub mtha' gzhan rnams dang // rnying ma la sogs byed mkhan skya ser la // nga yis smras pa yin zhes 'phrin bskyal nas // byed du ma bcug skyabs 'gro'i nyams len dang // bsnyen gnas bsnyung gnas gtor ma brgya rtsa dang // bka' gdams legs bam lam rim la*

Return to Mongolia: 3.5 folios

- Passing on the instructions given to him by the Fifth Dalai Lama regarding specific teachings and practices to the Jebtsundamba upon his return to Mongolia
- Giving teachings, permissions, initiations and transmissions

2.4. The Contents of the rang nam

As with any Tibetan Buddhist *rnam thar* or *rang nam*, this autobiography must have been composed for particular reasons. Looking at the number of folios dedicated to each subsection of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam*, it is clear that the sections covering his training and education far outnumber the other sections. This suggests that this *rang nam* was primarily compiled to demonstrate that he received an exemplary religious education during his 19 years of religious training in Tibet. In this respect, we could say that Dza-ya Paṇḍita chose to represent his life through his religious training and education. The majority of the *rang nam* consists of lists of teachings, permissions, instructions and transmission received, which is reminiscent of the *rang nam* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The various transmissions of teachings and practices have corresponding sections in Dza-

sogs dang // rgyud sde 'og ma'i nyams len sbyar na // khe che nyen chung de ltar byas na legs // Then, during the duration of three tea servings, he said 'because I have hope in you of benefiting the *dharma* and the sentient beings, you should do your best to act in the service of the teachings of the second Buddha [Lama Tsong-kha-pa]. To the other traditions, the practitioners of the Rnying-ma etc., and other lay and ordained people [who follow these traditions], convey the message that I command so: "If you practice going for refuge many times, *Bsnyen gnas*, *Bsnyung gnas*, the 100 *tormas*, the *Bka'-gdams glegs-bam*, the *Lam-rim* and practice of the lower sections of *tantra*, then the benefits will be great and the obstructions will be small. If you do according to these words, then it is good.

ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* which means we can approach the *rang rnam* as a "list of contents" for the *thob yig*, and renders it a good point of comparison for the *thob yig* itself.

If we take a look at his religious training and education, it closely parallels the Dge-lugs-pa monastic education structure still upheld today by Dge-lugs-pa monastic institutions. Dreyfus distinguished three main stages within Tibetan monastic education today:

- 1) Memorisation and acquisition of basic literacy
- 2) Commentary
- 3) Debate (Dreyfus 2003:79)

In Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*, these stages are clearly present. At the age of 10, he started studying the different Tibetan and Mongolian scripts:

"I learned reading and writing the Tibetan *dbu can* [script] and *dbu med* script without much effort. As for Mongolian writing, I studied it extensively, trained and strove for the sake of it."⁹¹

By the age of 14, there is evidence that he was still continuing to familiarise himself with the Tibetan language:

"I was sent away and furthermore, I learned a little bit about the way to read Tibetan and speak Tibetan."⁹²

As for memorisation of texts and commentaries, the entire *rang rnam* is full of the names of texts he memorised. For example:

"From that time onwards, at the time of apprehending the commentaries, because I was told that it would be beneficial, I also thoroughly memorised about two verses daily of the root text of the second volume. Then after continuously doing so, I thoroughly memorised the root text of

⁹¹ (F4b) *bod yig gzhab bshur klog dang dri ['bri] ba sogs // dka' tshegs med par shes shing sog yig ni // ched du gnyer bslab /*

⁹² (F9a) *gtong zhing gzhan yang bod yig klog tshul dang // bod skad cung zad slob cing tshe dbang sogs /*

Dharmakīrti's commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇavārttika*... During that time, I thoroughly memorised the commentary of all four chapters of the commentary on Dignāga's *Pramāṇavārttika* by the supreme scholar Shintapa.”⁹³

It is clear from the stages of his education that, as he memorised, he also engaged in the practice of debating. There are quite a number of examples he gives for his debate topics:

“My teacher kindly taught me a fairly extensive debating method using the topic of the eight auspicious symbols titled “*Bkra shis brtags brgyad gang rung yin pa'i phyir*”. At that time, it appeared in my mind that I could use the parasol and the goldfish to refute the proposition. After the practice of *rtsi bzhaḡ*, ‘debate manual’, a monk from my college took the debating subject of cause and effect on a basic level and challenged me, to which I answered back with a nice answer. For that performance, he and some others said: “It seems like you stayed in Sku-'bum or some other monastery in Amdo”. ”⁹⁴

Another prominent aspect of monastic education is the study of the 10 Buddhist branches of learning. Today, monks still engage in five major and five minor branches of learning at the IBD (Institute of Buddhist Dialectics) in Dharamsala.⁹⁵ These 10 branches are also present in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's education and training. The two major sciences that he brings up more often than the rest are those of medicine and art:

“For a month and a half, I trained a little bit as a *thangka* painter and although I wished to learn for a longer period, I was not able to because my teacher obtained a sickness in his foot. After my teacher returned home, because of carelessly passing time, I only painted two or three *thangkas* and was not able to continue to learn *thangka* painting with any serious

⁹³ (F11b-12a) 'di yi skabs nas tik ka 'dzin dus su // phan yong gsungs nas le'u gnyis pa yi // rtsa ba nyin rer sho lo ka gnyis tsam // 'chag med 'dzin cing de nas mu 'thud nas // rnam 'grel rtsa ba yongs rdzogs blo la bzung // mdzes byed dgun chos bar du sbyor ba rtsi // dgun chos dang por rig 'bring la zhugs shing // lo gnyis rig 'bring la bsdad rnam 'grel gyi // le'u bzhi ka'i mtha' dpyod mkhas pa'i mchog // shin.ta pa'i gsung yongs rdzogs blo la bzung //

⁹⁴ (F11a) *bkra shis brtags brgyad gang rung yin pa'i phyir* // zhes pa'i khyab skor rgyas tsam bka' drin bskyangs // de skabs sems la gdugs dang gser nya sogs // skyon du btang na yong ba 'dra snyam shar // rtsi bzhaḡ tshar nas nged kyi khams tshan gyi // grwa pa gcig gis rgyu 'bras chung ngu nas // bgro bling (gleng) btang bar lan yang dga' mo rgyab // de la gzhan 'ga' sku 'bum la sogs pa'i // a mdo'i dgon par bsdad pa yin pa 'dra // zer mkhan byung...

⁹⁵ See Ruegg (1995) for more on Tibetan Buddhist monastic curriculum.

devotion. So, learning *thangka* painting was in name only but essentially a futile effort.”⁹⁶

Although modest about his skills as a *thangka* painter, later in his career Dza-ya Paṇḍita paints many *thangkas* and is also commissioned to paint them for his teachers:

“During the spring, according to the instructions of my incomparable teacher, the great *Dge bshes* with incomparable kindness Bsod-nams grags-pa, I drew a *thangka* of the Buddha which he wanted as his tutelary object of worship and I offered it to him. Because of this, he was extremely pleased and as a result I generated immeasurable merits. Similarly, the Skyid-shod sprul-sku said that he needed a *tsakali* of Sītāpatrā, so because I drew and offered it, he was extremely pleased.”⁹⁷

The topic of medicine that is raised throughout the *rang rnam*. He records his study of Buddhist medicine in detail right from an early age in Mongolia:

“...the profound scholar translator, the Dharmarāja Mahāpaṇḍita became the head of our teachers, and in his presence, I learnt the art of translation. He said: 'Because you have all the good qualities and talents, it is a great loss that you are not learning other arts, so you need to learn the art of medicine'. He then introduced me to many ways of preparing raw medicinal ingredients and general medicine. Afterwards, I learned how to diagnose by taking the pulse and he gave me a manuscript of how to take pulse and examine urine. Although I had no desire to learn this, I did it in accordance with his instructions and became able to prepare several powders from the *Bzhi bad bdun*.⁹⁸ As a result, I became able to benefit those who are sick by prescribing them medicine.”⁹⁹

⁹⁶ (F5b) *zla ba phyed dang gnyis kyi ring // lha bris cung zad bslab cing rgyun ring tsam // slob 'dod yod kyang khod [kho] rang zhabs bsnyung zhing // nang du log phebs de [te] nas [dus] rnam g.yeng gis // 'da' bas thang ka gnyis gsum bris pa las // brtson pas tshad ldan rgyun skyong ma byung bas // bslab pa'i ming tsam ma gtogs don med byung //*

⁹⁷ (F19a) *sos ka bka' drin mtshungs med dka' [ka] chen lags // bsod nams grags pa'i gsung bzhin thugs dam rten // ston pa'i sku thang bris nas phul ba la // shin tu thugs mnyes dpag med bsod nams bskrun // de gzigs [bzhi] dpon slob skyid shod sprul sku yis // gdugs dkar tsa ka li zhig dgos phebs par // bris nas phul bas shin tu thugs mnyes mdzad //*

⁹⁸ A chapter from *Rgyud bzhi*.

⁹⁹ (F6a) *chos kyi rgyal po ma ha' pandita // nged tsho'i dpon po'i thog tu phebs pa'i drung // lo tsa' slob pa'i 'og tshugs de nyid kyis // khyod kyi shes rab 'di 'dras yon tan rigs // mi slob pa ni shin tu phangs [phangs] pas [pa'i] na [gnas] // gso rig slob ces khrog sman phal che ba'i // ngo sprod gnang zhing rtsa chu'i mdo dpe gnang // slob 'dod med kyang khod kyi gsung bzhin du // bzhi bad bdun thad phye ma'i sbyor sde 'ga' // sbyar zhing nad par btang ba phan thogs byung //*

It seems he was not so keen in the study of medicine at a young age of 14, but after arriving in Tibet, he notes:

“In the presence of the second reincarnation *Mtsho-smad mkhan-chen*, Gling-stong zhabs-drung Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho, I received the oral transmission of *Bka' bsgo*, *Spyod 'jug* and the root tantra of medicine. Saying that we two had a connection from previous lives, he gave me a Buddha statue as a symbol of our karmic connection. He also told me 'As for staying in Central Tibet, during your religious study break sessions etc. you can come to me and I will teach you the science of medicine'. He expressed extreme pleasure in our meeting.”¹⁰⁰

It is widely known in Khalkha Mongolia, even today, that after his return from Tibet Dza-ya Paṇḍita reformed the practice of Buddhist medicine and was renowned throughout Mongolia for his knowledge and talents in the medicinal arts. This is reflected in his *rang rnam* as well as his *thob yig*, in which the section regarding medicine is one of the most extensive.

It is also worth mentioning that Dza-ya Paṇḍita himself appears to have been ill quite a number of times during his life. He records these instances with just as much detail as the texts he studied:

“In the fire male horse year, although I was continuously ill with bad phlegm,¹⁰¹ by the grace of the three jewels, I memorised the scriptures and went to the debating sessions, studied the lessons on wisdom, and received the oral transmissions without a break. I endeavoured to do these as best I could.”¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ (F9a) *mtsho smad mkhan chen sku skye nyi thang pa // gling stong zhabs drung blo bzang rgya mtsho'i drung // thugs dam bka' bsgo spyod 'jug gso rig gi // rtsa rgyud lung zhus nged gnyis tshe sngon nas // 'bral ba'i od ces 'bral spangs [dbang] thub sku gnang // dbus su sdod na chos mtshams la sogs par // nga yi rtsa ru yong/yod nas gso rig slob // gsung zhing dgyes tshor bla na med pa mdzad //*

¹⁰¹ One of the 3 roots of all illnesses: *bad kan*, *rlung*, *mkhri pa*.

¹⁰² (F13a) *zil gnon lo la bad kan lta bu yis // rgyun du na yang dkon mchog thugs rje yis // dpe cha 'dzin skyor chos ra rig lung la // 'chag med 'gro zhing brtson pa'i khul tsam byas //*

“From the next day, because a great epidemic arose in the monastery, due to sickness and infectious disease, I could not go for the debating sessions or sponsored tea services.”¹⁰³

“When I was practising, I was continuously ill. However, I acted in endurance and memorised the verse composition on the path, the *Thams cad mkhyen par bgrod pa'i bde lam*, and the verse composition of the *Lam rim* composed by the great tantrika Dkon-mchog mchog-rgyan.”¹⁰⁴

These are but a few of the many examples of illnesses Dza-ya Paṇḍita endured during his life. This suggests that as well as the polymath education he received in the Tibetan monastic environment, his own illnesses may have been one of the main motivations for his interest in studying and mastering the art of Buddhist medicine.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's interest in medicine and the authority of the medicinal section of his *thob yig* in Mongolia may have also had something to do with his relationship with the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. As mentioned in Chapter Two of this thesis, Dza-ya Paṇḍita had access to the Sde-srid's works during his compilation of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* after his departure from Tibet. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's high regard for the Sde-srid and agreement with the Sde-srid's outlook on affairs is evident in his *rang rnam*. On the occasion of the Sde-srid's enthronement, Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes:

“By the power of the eight worldly *dharma*s, Sde-srid ascended to the throne and I went to Dbus to request a proper meeting.”¹⁰⁵

This suggests that Dza-ya Paṇḍita was aware of the Sde-srid's previous personal feelings about taking up responsibility of the Sde-srid. Considering that Dza-ya Paṇḍita wrote his

¹⁰³ (F11a) *de yi sang nyin nas // dgon par nad yams chen po zhig byung bas // rims des na nas mang ja chos ra la // 'gro rgyu ma byung...*

¹⁰⁴ (F24b) *bsnyen pa'i skabs dang rgyun du gzugs mi bde na'ang // sdug sran byas shing lam 'khrir tshigs bcad ma // thams cad mkhyen par bgrod pa'i bde lam dang // rgyud chen dkon mchog mchog rgyan gyis mdzad pa'i // lam rim tshigs bcad blor bzung //*

¹⁰⁵ (F25a) *rgyun gyi nyams len 'jig rten chos brgyad kyi // dbang gis sde srid sbyin pa khrir phebs pa'i // mjal kha legs so zhu bar dbus su phyin //*

rang rnam before the Sde-srid or the Fifth Dalai Lama completed their works¹⁰⁶ outlining how the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho wished not to take up the office of the Sde-srid, this passage clearly indicates the author's first-hand knowledge on the matter. Furthermore, Dza-ya Paṇḍita deeming this occasion an important one to travel to Dbus and see the Sde-srid personally indicates the existence of a close relationship between Dza-ya Paṇḍita and the Sdei-srid during the former's time spent in Tibet, if not after.

There are more passages that demonstrate the existence of a relationship between the Sde-srid and Dza-ya Paṇḍita and interestingly, some hold a medicinal context:

“By the kindness of the Sde-srid, Sgo-ma rag-pa performed [rites] daily and from time to time he requested that the physician Gsum-dga'-pa from the physician school to be invited to check my health, and he performed 100000 confession rites to the dharma protector Paldan Lhamo. His request was agreed to and [as a result] I was a little relieved [of my sickness].”¹⁰⁷

This passage indicates the Sde-srid's respect and care toward Dza-ya Paṇḍita in facilitating his recovery. This could only have increased Dza-ya Paṇḍita's reverence for the Sde-srid and his skills in medicine. Accounts such as these from Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* are suggestive of where and from whom his interest in medicine originated.

The study of Buddhist philosophy also plays a major part in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's education. As for philosophical study along with the commentarial curriculum, Dreyfus notes that the first layer of the monastic curriculum is based upon the fundamental Madhyamaka root texts: *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, and Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Dreyfus 2003:104). He also divides the study of the

¹⁰⁶ These works being the Fifth Dalai Lama's autobiography including the Sde-srid's supplement as well as the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po*.

¹⁰⁷ (F27a) *sde srid brtse bas dpon tshang sgo ma rag // nyin bzhin btong ba gnam zhing skabs skabs la // spon tshang dar mo nas dang sum dga' ba // gdan 'dren zhus shing 'phrod rten byas pa dang // lha mo chos skyong ltung bshags 'bum ther gtong // gsung ba grub bstun kha yang cung zad glod //*

commentarial literature into a “lower” and a “higher” curriculum. The texts that make up the lower curriculum are:

- ❖ Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Treatise of the Middle Way)
- ❖ Āryadeva’s *Catuḥśataka* (Four Hundred Stanzas)
- ❖ Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatāra* (Introduction to the Middle Way)
- ❖ Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (Compendium of Abhidharma)
- ❖ Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośa* (Treasury of Abhidharma)
- ❖ Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇavārttika* (Commentary on Valid Cognition)

The higher curriculum consists of:

- ❖ *Mahāyānottaratantra/Ratnagotravibhāga* (Treatise on the Sublime Continuum)
- ❖ *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (Ornament of Realisation)
- ❖ *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* (Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras)
- ❖ *Madhyāntavibhāga* (Differentiation of the Middle and the Extremes)
- ❖ *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* (Differentiation of Phenomena and Ultimate Nature)
- ❖ *Pratimokṣasūtra*
- ❖ Guṇaphrabha’s *Vinayasūtra*

All of these texts feature in the list of texts Dza-ya Paṇḍita studied, and the order in which he studies them also matches. This suggests that the monastic education he received in Tibet in the 17th century is echoed in the monastic education received by monks today at the IBD, the newest of the Buddhist institutions to be opened in the 20th century under the guidance of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. This fact was further pointed out to me during the many hours I spent with Lama Tenzin Tselek in 2013, at that time a monk just reaching the end of his study at the IBD, looking over the *rang rnam* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as he himself often delighted in the way the structure of his own education mirrored that of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s over three centuries ago.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita went to study in Tibet at a time when Dge-lugs-pa monastic institutions were starting to transform into the powerful centres of religion and politics they were to remain for the next few centuries. Being from a noble background and receiving patronage from high-ranking political and religious individuals of Khalkha Mongolia, he received the most exemplary monastic education when he was in Tibet. He was also trained under the most prolific teachers at the top monastic colleges of Central Tibet. Consequently, deeper analysis of the contents of his *thob yig* is necessary to outline the relationship between Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his teachers. Before we venture into the *thob yig*, the way Dza-ya Paṇḍita presents himself in his own life story is worth mentioning as it is a characteristic that is maintained throughout the *thob yig* as well.

2.5. *Observations on the Style of the rang nam*

Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las was a highly learned scholar with many talents, which becomes clear from his biographical writing, even from a glance at his *rang nam* that he decided to compile in verse. However, he presents himself in a very modest way and often questions the validity of his experiences and merits with rational criticism, sometimes even taking on a humorous light-hearted tone in doing so. For example:

“...because my merit had decreased, the gracious lord the ācārya Shes-rab rin-chen passed away. I was distracted for some years with distractions and although I am not completely certain about my memories, in a dream one night, a lama calling himself the Victorious Tsong-kha-pa was sat atop a throne at the right of my yurt. Seeing this, it occurred to me that the hearsay “the lord [Tsong-kha-pa] has a big nose” is untrue. Thus, with devotion arising in my mind, at that moment, I saw him appearing in the centre of

the sky and then I woke up with a great feeling of happiness arising in my mind.”¹⁰⁸

Although dreaming of Lama Tsong-kha-pa is indeed very auspicious for a Dge-lugs-pa monk, he jokingly includes the point about his nose, giving the whole narrative a light-hearted feel, which at the same time makes it more believable and down to earth. Another example would be:

“While I was staying in Lhasa, the great Yelteng Noyan became sick with fever. Although the physicians etc. of the Dpon-tshang dar-mo family and the skilled highest physicians gave him medicine, the disease was not removed. He said to me that he needed medicine. Despite my saying that I was not properly trained and thus not daring to offer medicine properly, due to his increased persistence, I offered him some courses of medicine. As a result, his sickness was quickly removed. I understood this according to the saying [from the medical point of view] ‘if the patient and the doctor have karmic relations, then the disease will be cured’, and as due to the power of faith.”¹⁰⁹

Dza-ya Paṇḍita mentions his study of medicine a number of times and we know that he learnt it from great teachers. However, when he records his experience of medicinal practise it, he humbly gives all credit to faith in the teachings of the Buddha.

In his writing, he quotes the advice and instructions of his main teachers word-for-word, adding to the personal and honest tone of his autobiography. An example of this is the poem the Fifth Dalai Lama compiled for Dza-ya Paṇḍita upon his departure from Tibet to Mongolia:

“On the 5th day, for the bestowal of seal and permits etc., I went to request a composition of dedication and aspiration for some small offerings and

¹⁰⁸ (F4a) *bdag gi bsod nams nyams pas drin can rje // slob dpon shes rab rin chen zhing gzhan du // phebs pa'i rjes su lo 'gar rtsed mos g.yengs // bgrang bya brjed rung nub gcig rmi lam du // rgyal ba tsong kha pa zhes bla ma zhig // bdag gi gur na g.yas su bzhugs khri'i steng // bzhugs pa mthong bar bdag gi sams la ni // rje de nyid kyi shangs che zhes thos pa // bden rgyu mi 'dug snyam pa'i dad de nas // nam mkha'i mthongs su phebs pa mthong ba'i mur // gnyid sad sams la dga' snang chen po byung //*

¹⁰⁹ (F25b5) *lha sar bsodad skabs yel teng no yon chen // tshad pas bsnyung bar dpon tshang dar mo nas // la sogs lha rjes mkhas pa rnam kyis sman // phul kyang ma dangs bdag la sman dgos gsungs // bdag gis tshad ldan ma bslab 'bul mi nus // zhus kyang u tshugs ches pas sman thun 'ga' // phul bas bsnyung gzhi myur du dangs byung ba // gso bya gso byed bsod nams las kyis 'brel // gsungs pa bzhin dang dad pa'i nus par go //*

tham phud and also received hand and feet blessings and was told ‘offer the *tham phud* to the great lord (i.e. the Jo-bo Śākyamuni statue in Lhasa)’. When I asked for a composition for this offering, it was bestowed as thus:

May the merits of offering the *phud*, ‘first print’¹¹⁰ of this *tham kha*,¹¹¹
‘seal’,
that looks like the blazing imprint of sunrise [*dus mtshams*, the time
between day and night],
before the eyes of Buddha Śākyamuni, who is the sole ornament of the
world,
flow ceaselessly towards great enlightenment, like the stream of the
Ganges flows into the ocean.
The people who come under the rule of the Chinggis Khaan who holds the
lineage of heaven,
are numerous like the constellations of stars.
May this system of leading the sentient beings towards the path of
liberation and,
The rulers who are the charioteers of the Buddha activity last so long as
cyclic existence lasts.
May all the followers of the Dharmarāja of the three times, Lama Tsong-
kha-pa,
Like beings in the cool shade of the foliage and fruits of the divine tree,
Be blessed to enjoy the nectar of Dharma and do whatever practice they
wish,
For the benefit of all sentient beings and find joy”.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ The *phud* can refer to the best or first of something and anything. So here, in the context of the *tham ka*, it refers to the very first print made by the seal.

¹¹¹ A *tham ka* is a seal upon which is carved the name of the individual, normally awarded as a sign of accomplishment or political power.

¹¹² (F30a-30b) *tshes pa lnga la tham ka 'ja' sa sogs // gnang ba'i legs sor 'bul ba phran bu dang // tham phud phul ba'i bsngo smon bka' rtsom zhig // zhu bar phyin nas phyag dbang zhabs dbang zhus // tham phud jo bo chen por phul zhes gsungs // phul ba'i bka' rtsom zhus par 'di ltar gnang // thun mtshams ri mo rab 'bar (bar) tham ka'i phud // 'dzam gling rgyan gcig shAkya mu ni yi // spyang sngar phul ba'i bsod nams gang gA'i rgyun // byang chen zla ba'i ma mar rtag 'bab shog // ching gis gnam gyi rgyud 'dzin rgyal rigs kyi // mda' 'babs rgyu skar 'phreng rjes bsnyeg pa'i 'gro // thar lam nyer 'khril 'phrin las shing rta yi // kha lo 'khor ba ji srid sgyur nus shog // khams gsum chos kyi rgyal po btsong kha pa'i // bstan pa yongs 'du'i phang phung 'dab ma'i grib // bsil por yid can mtha' dag sim tshor la // ci dgar spyod pa'i byed por bdag byin rlobs //*

2.6. Conclusion

In terms of style, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* echoes the structure and presentation of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rang rnam*. Dza-ya Paṇḍita weaves the narrative of his *rang rnam* around a central focus upon his religious training and education, but overall following in its structure, what he saw to be a standardised Dge-lugs-pa biographical writing style. Like most Tibetan Buddhist biographical writing, the contents of his *rang rnam* creates an image of a highly learned Buddhist master who was part of a strong and authoritative tradition. The numerous practices and teachings listed within his autobiography demonstrate that the religious training he received was an exemplary one and gives him the authority to pass his learning on to his own disciples in the future, ensuring the continuity of his lineage.

As a Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa master who would return to his own country, the task of propagating his tradition would fall on him and a handful of other learned masters. In Dza-ya Paṇḍita's case, it was the Fifth Dalai Lama himself who commanded his return to Mongolia to spread the teachings of the Dge-lugs-pas. Thus, his position had to be strong and his education comprehensive to ensure his ability to carry out that task. In this case, not only does his *rang rnam* serve as inspiration for later disciples and contribute to an image of a strong lineage with accomplished masters, it also acts as a "Monastic Curriculum Vitae" in ensuring the authority of his religious activities after his return to Mongolia. His life story is represented through detailed documentation of his religious education and training resulting in a *rang rnam* that can be approached as a "contents" for his actual *thob yig*.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* should not be considered alone, but rather as part of a larger whole. It is only one of many pieces forming the larger image of a strong and

authoritative tradition that has over the centuries produced a continuity of highly learned masters capable of upholding their tradition in a competitive, sectarian world. For a fuller understanding of the life of the author himself, this *rang rnam* has to be taken together with the rest of his large corpus of writings, such the *rnam thars* of other Buddhist masters found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*. The structure of this *rang rnam* is itself reminiscent of a *thob yig*, which further supports the need for this work to be read together with his masterpiece, the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. Closer scrutiny of this work will allow the presentation of a more comprehensive image of his identity and religious activities.

Chapter Three: The Thob yig gsal ba'i me long

This chapter introduces the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las. The first part discusses the category of “genre” as a tool for the study of Tibetan literature and the problematic points that need to be reflected when using Western vocabulary and literary theories for such endeavours. The second part is an analysis of *thob yigs* as a genre of Tibetan literature whilst considering the issues in the first part of this chapter. The third part of this chapter examines the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* as the second largest of its genre and discusses in detail its contents, contexts, structure and stylistic characteristics.

To date, the only point of reference for the contents of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* has been Alex Wayman's 1962 eight-page article titled “Outline of the Thob Yig Gsal Bahi Me Lon”. In his article, Wayman goes through the text chapter by chapter, giving the translation of the title as well as some information regarding the structure of each chapter together with the corresponding folio numbers for the subsections he mentions. Having thoroughly studied the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, I have noticed that Wayman's outline contains numerous mistakes regarding folio numbering and leaves out many of the chapter subsections. Despite being an invaluable resource for the study of this work, it leaves something to be desired for a more comprehensive content overview for this vast and encyclopaedic *thob yig*. Therefore, an extensive content analysis of this work was created to provide a detailed picture of what this text contains for Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*.¹¹³ Thus, this chapter aims to highlight some the unique defining features of this work and place it in the wider world of Tibetan literature.

¹¹³ See Figure 10 in the Appendix.

3.1. Genres and Classifications

The first Tibetan historiographical writing date from Tibet's imperial period; 7th to 9th centuries and have similarities with the Indian *vaṃśāvalī* (Annals) works (van der Kuijp 1996:39). Tibetan literature owes a lot to the Indian literary tradition in terms of style and structure. However, the vast numbers of historical works composed and the emphasis on the diverse forms of biographical writing (*rnam thar*, *rang rnam*, *gsan yig*, *thob yig*) makes the historiographical tradition of Tibet distinct from that of India and quite unique amongst those of its neighbouring countries of Central Asia¹¹⁴. The various forms of historical writing in Tibet are riddled with “narratives”, and the genres such as *Annals* and *Chronicles* used in the West to categorise historical literature are also employed to categorise Tibetan historico-literary works. Tibetans did not create strict literary “genres” *per se*, and the “genres” inflicted upon Tibetan literature are done so by Western scholars who are used to working within such clearly defined categories. Due to the interchangeable nature of the 'genres' applied to Tibetan historiographical works (Vostrikov 1962:61), it is hard to draw clean cut lines of distinction between them. Consequently, the “genres” used to categorise them today, as stated by Vostrikov, are created via 'natural classification established by practice and the terminology introduced in practice' (ibid).

The terminologies of genre classification utilised today for the study and understanding of world literature are rooted in European literary traditions and prove problematic even when used to delineate European literature due to the lack of strict

¹¹⁴ Unlike China and Japan, where Buddhism was made very much their own in the sense that they considered their indigenous saints the holiest, Tibet emphasized the importance of the Indian masters; linking the Tibetan masters to the Indian ones as a means authenticating their form of Buddhism (Gyatso, 2001:121). These biographical works in support of a legitimate and authoritative lineage is important for the survival of the sects in the face of religio-political competition between them.

guidelines of 'genre' in the Tibetan literary tradition (Gyatso 1992:476). “Genres” of historical literature that are considered applicable to historical writing across all cultures include *Annals* and *Chronicles*.

Roesler noted in her contribution to the recent book *Tibetan Literary Genres* that: “literary genre is an awkwardly vague and evasive category, and even within the limited context of European literature scholars do not agree on the use and the usefulness of this category” (Roesler, 2015:31). Indeed, the discourse surrounding the usage and specifications of genres is representative of an entire field of study of its own.

The task of genre classification often results in the attempt to designate clear-cut labels to literary works. Written works, regardless of their origins, almost always carry characteristics of more than simply one single genre. In addition to their broad genre categories, they may have more specific features, which can result in subgenre classifications. For example, *Comedy* can exhibit the subgenres of *Satire*, *Deadpan comedy* and *Wordplay*. These subgenres often cross over themselves and can also traverse other genres, complicating already fluid and interconnected classifications. Genres such as *Tragicomedy* and *Philosophical Fiction* are representative of some of the efforts to generate appropriate descriptive labels for such genre crossovers. Changes in the usage of language and vocabulary over time which is subject to socio-historical or religio-political factors further complicate the matter. White, in his discussion of Prince’s view of genre as theory-resistant entity, states that: “if genre is an essential element or aspect of literarity, then, genre’s resistance to theory implies that theory itself is inimical to literature and should not, therefore, be brought to bear upon the literary artwork” (White 2003:597). He also points out that: “no one has ever produced a compelling theory of genre despite the millennial effort to do so” (White 2003:598). However, if there is a future for today’s

multicultural and ever-growing field of literary studies, shared terminology is a fundamental.

In the case of Tibetan literary works, it goes without saying that categorisation must be conducted with caution as it is impossible to simply transfer existing European literary genre classifications to these works. Contemporary categories and their definitions deriving from the Greco-Roman classifications such as *epic*, *dramatic* and *lyric* are not outright compatible with the variety of works found in the Tibetan literary world (Cabézon and Jackson 1996:12). But if we are to use Western terms such as *biography*, *historiography* and *poetry* to discuss Tibetan works, then it is important to consider Tibet's unique historical and social context.

Some earlier scholars to touch upon the topic of *genre* in terms of Tibetan literature include Vassiljev (1855), Vostrikov (1970) and Schoening (1988) whose works, despite their then-limited access to texts and resources, still have a firm place amongst modern authoritative scholarship. Vostrikov's work on *Tibetan Historical Literature*, especially, is a paramount introductory encyclopaedic resource. In his bibliographical work, Schoening classified Tibetan literature using a three-layered approach:

- 1) the "intrinsic strategy" using Tibetan terms
 - 2) the extrinsic strategy using only western terms, and
 - 3) the combination strategy which outlines a path for future research
- (Rheingans 2015:9)

The studies mentioned above also set the scene for further study of genre within Tibetan literature. Ultimately, these earlier scholarly contributions brought attention to the huge variety of Tibetan texts and the need to systematise them whilst considering some of the indigenous Tibetan as well as contemporary Western approaches to Tibetan literature.

More recently, scholars such as Cabezón and Jackson (1996), Kapstein (2003), Almogi (2005) and Schaeffer (2009) have further endeavoured to systematise Tibetan literature and have met similar challenges of combining indigenous Tibetan and contemporary Western approaches of organising literature. Cabezón and Jackson's volume still serves as a good introduction for navigating the complex web of Tibetan literary works whereas Almogi, Schaeffer and Kapstein's suggestions for classification of Tibetan literature not only highlighted the shortcomings of the existing approaches but also opened a new dialogue for tackling these issues.

Rheingans' volume on *Tibetan Literary Genres* is the most recent contribution to the discourse on the study of Tibetan literature and provides a comprehensive discussion of earlier attempts to systematise Tibetan literature. Rheingans's suggestions for future studies of Tibetan literary genres and possible solutions for systematising the classification of Tibetan texts are as follows:

- “- [More] systematic criteria for types belonging to classes
- Consistent terminology (possibly with text linguistic terms)
- Creation of a hierarchy of criteria for Tibetan text classification
- Examinations of “text function” with specific aims and corpora
- Further study of implicit Tibetan categorisations
- Examination of the production and contexts of text collections
- Reception studies and development of methods for doing so
- Delineation of possible genre-prototypes and genre-transformations
- Survey of modern Tibetan concepts of pre-modern literature
- Continued study of individual genres”

(Rheingans 2015:20)

As useful as such studies would be, the question arises as to how useful such classifications would really be for understanding the texts themselves and their purpose? Roesler highlights the issue that: “the notion of genre itself is somewhat evasive, since it combines different aspects such as a) the subject matter of a work, b) the style (e.g. prose or verse), c) length (novel as opposed to short stories, and d) pragmatic aspects such as

performance (drama) and function” (Roesler 2015: 32). Jackson pointed out in the same volume that: “the very attempt to establish ‘bright lines’ between and among various types of texts is to some degree misguided. I will argue that this is so because many texts turn out, on close inspection, to be far less bounded and far more open and fluid than their location under such-and-such a title or such-and-such a genre might lead us to believe” (Jackson 2015:90). Schwieger’s preference of a “functional classification” seems favourable but comes with its own problems of how to define textual function itself (Schwieger 2015:277). The dialogue thus continues, as do the difficulties faced by those studying Tibetan literature and having to use the unavoidable tools of Western literary terminologies.

Despite all shortcomings, without some degree of generalisation and utilisation of genre classifications, one simply cannot discuss texts or groups of texts. Therefore, the employment of existing European genre classifications to discuss Tibetan literature cannot be avoided when one is writing for a Western academic audience. The following points should be considered when utilising genre classifications:

- 1) The fluidity of genre classifications:
 - a. In terms of the European usage of the terms
 - b. In terms of the indigenous Tibetan classifications
- 2) The political, religious, social, cultural and historical context for the production of a text
- 3) The purpose for which the text was created (synchronic perspective) and the purpose it served and continues to serve throughout its existence (diachronic perspective, reception history).

In doing so, one can at least remain mindful of the shortcomings and challenges of using such terminologies.

Jackson asserted that: “for the most part, Tibetan texts do belong to a specific genre, and while we find traces of other genres in many texts, this does not betoken a general breakdown of genre-typologies” (Jackson 2015:104). Thus, in the case of indigenous Tibetan classifications, although never writing within strict genre guidelines, a manner of literary genre does exist in the Tibetan literary world. Roesler’s recent contribution provides an in-depth discussion of the Indian Buddhist precedents for the organisation and development of Tibetan literature:

- 1) The 'limbs' or 'parts' of the word of the Buddha
- 2) The subdivision of canonical scriptures into the three 'baskets'
- 3) The five fields of knowledge, which were expanded to comprise five major and five minor fields in Tibet

(Roesler 2015:33)

In the 13th century, Sa-skya Paṇḍita recognised the importance of literature for Buddhist education and went to great lengths to create a system of categorisation by drawing upon the Indian tradition of the ten “fields of knowledge” (Jackson 1996:19) which later became the most prominent model of a scholarly approach to religious literature in Tibet. However, Tibetan scholars “did not theorise extensively about genre or literature, but, encountering a mass of texts, developed implicit schemes and classifications” (Rheingans 2015:2). The models borrowed from India were further developed in Tibet and even then, they were only used as models to organise the ever-growing numbers of predominantly Buddhist literary works. Moreover, indigenous Tibetan genre designations in work titles such as *chos 'byung*, ‘history of Buddhism’, *rnam thar*, ‘life writing’ or literally ‘liberation narrative’, *zhus len*, ‘answers to questions’, *gsung 'bum* and so on were *not* derived from the Indian tradition.

These classification models too were subject to change in meaning and interpretation over time and the categories we encounter today remain vague. Even when the terminologies can be translated into English, they do not always carry the same meaning, as becomes clear when considering the difficulties in rendering terms such as *rnam thar* in English.

Lo rgyus represent possibly the earliest form of historical writing in Tibet (Vostrikov 1962:62). The term *lo rgyus* literally translates as 'tidings of year[s]' (van der Kuijp 1996:42), which suggests that in their earliest form, consisted of year-by-year chronological account of past events. However, this early form has not passed down to us today. Instead, the term today can essentially be used to refer to any narrated account of Tibetan history in general (Vostrikov 1962:62). They can contain historical, quasi historical or even ahistorical 'narratives' in somewhat of a chronological order (van der Kuijp 1996:43).

An example of the genre *lo rgyus* that is no longer in circulation but appears in fragments and quotations within other Tibetan literary works; some classed as *lo rgyus* and others not, is the *Lo rgyus chen mo*, "The Grand Annals" by Khu-ston brtson-'grus g.yung drung (1011-1075) (ibid.). The fact that the only information available to us about this work is contained within sections of other historical works belonging to various other historical genres, would suggest that these latter works have characteristics of *lo rgyus* as well as the respective genres in which they are classed. This is reflective of the fluidity and interchangeable nature of terms used to group Tibetan literary works into genres.

Beyond the matter of indigenous classification terminology and models, there are other fundamental factors for understanding Tibetan texts. Almogi (2005) discuss in detail the importance of text titles, investigating a whole variety of types of titles and their

significance. She examines literary titles and the Tibetan genre terms contained within them in relation to the meaning attributed to them, asserting that: “for a better understanding of Tibetan titles, one should perhaps pay more attention to how titles are conceived by the tradition and especially, when possible, by the authors themselves” (Almogi 2005:45). She also highlights that most Tibetan work titles can be divided into 1) the descriptive title and 2) the ornamental title (Almogi 2005:29). For example, the title of the *'khrungs rabs* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705) “*Lha sras mu ne'i zlos gar mi dbang sangs rgyas rgya mtsho'i 'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs thog med bskal pa ma*”, can be divided into:

- 1) *Lha sras mu ne'i zlos gar mi dbang sangs rgyas rgya mtsho'i 'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs*: the descriptive title which can give more away on the contents of the text and the genre or genres to which it may belong
- 2) *Thog med bskal pa ma*: the ornamental title which is mostly poetic but can sometimes also contain clues about the genre of the text.

Thus, a closer look at titles can indeed be a useful tool for analysing Tibetan texts without getting lost in the genre discourse. If the title is taken together with the colophon of the text, further information is often unearthed such as the identity of the author, the occasion on which the work was composed, the scribe or the printing house and so on. It is particularly worthwhile to pay attention to the multiple layers of colophons that can be found at the end of some works: the author’s colophon which may provide information on the author and their intention in composing the work, the year it was written, and the printing colophon which contains details of the production of the text in blockprint format and may provide information on the transmission history and reception. The essay by Cabezón (2001) examining the colophons of Tibetan texts in relation to authorship

underlines some important points of consideration for determining the purpose, the context and matters of authorship of a text. According to Cabezón: “the colophons of Tibetan works are a unique phenomenon in that they are often our only sources for the context in which the text was produced or any information about the author” (Cabezón 2001:239).

So how does one go about analysing Tibetan literary works and genres? There are many questions one should consider aside from “genre”: Why? When? For whom? By whom? Where? and so on. Genre is indeed one of many useful tools for determining the nature of a text but by no means *the* defining characteristic.

3.2. *Thob yig as a Genre*

Considering the anomalies of genre and the challenges of classifying texts, where does *thob yig* fit into the wider Tibetan literary world? The term *thob yig*, ‘records of [teachings] obtained’ is used synonymously with its honorific term *gsan yig*, ‘records of [teachings] heard’. Sometimes the term *thos yig*, ‘records of [teachings] heard’ is also encountered. In the English language, they are generally referred to as “records of teachings received” (Martin 1997:vi). As described by Vostrikov: “a quite distinctive class of Tibetan works is that of the so-called *thob-yig-s* or *gsan-yigs-s*... sometimes classed under biographical literature, they essentially comprise a special and highly extensive class of Tibetan works” (Vostrikov, 1970:199). They are usually compiled towards the end of a Buddhist practitioner’s life. In their simplest form, they are “nothing more than bare lists of disciplines, precepts, directions and consecrations taken, and of the person giving them” (Vostrikov 1970:199). However, the more complex works comprise not only

lists of lineages but also detailed information on sūtra, mantra, historical episodes and biographical material regarding the author and often other individuals.

A large number of these works have survived down to the present day and vary in length and Buddhist tradition. The lengths of these works range from a mere collection of 23 folios like that of 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280) (van Schaik 2000:5) to the huge 1500 folios *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617–1682). The oldest known texts that contain lineage lists which are characteristics of *thob yig* date to the 11th century such as the lists found in Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer's (1124-1192) *Chos 'byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi'i bcud* (Sobisch 2002:164). This period of history coincides with the renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet. However, the actual term *gsan yig* and *thob yig* does not appear until the 13th century. Some earlier examples of such works include the *gsan yigs* of the Sa-skya patriarch Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1147-1216) and Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (1357–1419). Van der Kuijp suggested that the beginning of the tradition of composing *thob yigs* may be tied to the concern for authenticity that arose with the establishment of the first “schools” of Tibetan Buddhism after the “dark period” (van der Kuijp 1995:920). The most recent examples date from the 20th century and more will undoubtedly be compiled due to the nature of the living tradition that is Tibetan Buddhism. If looked at chronologically, they form the “biography” of the lineages of Tibetan Buddhism since the very beginning of sectarianism in Tibet.

The first mention of *thob yig* in Western academia was possibly by Vassiljev, who pointed out their significance for Tibetan Studies (Vassiljev 1855:7). Although Vostrikov included them in his well-known work on Tibetan historical literature, he mainly emphasised their value as supplementary references for other works (Vostrikov

1970:199). Since then, scholars of Tibetan Studies have, in passing acknowledged the indisputable value of *thob yigs* for various fields of research, such as bibliographical, the transmission lineage of a text or practice,¹¹⁵ as references for the biographies of Buddhist lineage masters¹¹⁶ or for authenticating other Buddhist works.¹¹⁷ As for studies primarily focused on *thob yig*, Sobisch (2002) and Kramer (2008) have each written articles on the 383 folio *gsan yig* of the Sa-skyā hierarch A-myes-zhabs, van Schaik (2000) wrote on the content of the *gsan yig* of 'Jigs-med gling-pa and there is an article by Ehrhard (2012) on the contents of the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama.¹¹⁸ The Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich also has an ongoing project archiving *gsan yig* of Sa-skyā masters. Beyond these, a comprehensive study of *thob yig/gsan yigs* themselves and their significance as the focal topic of research are practically non-existent. Nevertheless, these 'veritable goldmines' (Sobisch 2006:162), *thob yigs* have much to offer for the field of Tibetan Studies.

So how do *thob yigs* fit into the Tibetan literary world? What purpose do they serve? Van Schaik remarks that: “when a Tibetan Buddhist teacher recounts the lineage for the transmissions which he or she has received, he is demonstrating that he has been considered fit to receive them by the teachers who passed them on to him... [*Thob yigs* are] perhaps best seen as a series of entries, each entry headed by the name of a text, or

¹¹⁵ Unlike China and Japan, where Buddhism was made very much their own in the sense that they considered their indigenous saints the holiest, Tibet emphasized the importance of the Indian masters; linking the Tibetan masters to the Indian ones as a means authenticating their form of Buddhism (Gyatso, 2001:121). These biographical works in support of a legitimate and authoritative lineage is important for the survival of the sects in the face of religio-political competition between them.

¹¹⁶ Van der Kuijp employed *gsan yig* in his study of the transmission lineage of early Buddhist *Pramāṇavāda*, see van der Kuijp (1995). Sobisch used the *gsan yig* of A-mes-zhabs to trace the transmission lineage and textual structure of the *lam 'bras* teachings. See Sobisch (2002).

¹¹⁷ Bareja-Starzynska used the biography of the first Jebsundamba written by and preserved in the *gsan yig* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita as reference for her study, see Bareja-Starzynska (2008), (2010) and (2015).

¹¹⁸ Garret used various *thob yigs* to authenticate the text she used for her study which traced the origins of Tibetan medicinal treatises to the times of early Buddhism in India, see Garret (2007).

collection of texts” (van Schaik 2000:6). The common and defining feature of all *thob yigs* is that they are a type of Tibetan Buddhist religious literature compiled by members of the monastic community, and with the sole target audience of the monastic community. Regardless of length, period of history or other defining features of content and structure, all examples of *thob yig* contain transmission lineages, with the simplest examples being bare lists of names in the transmission lineages of specific texts. However, the more complex forms of this type of literature are far more extensive and can contain sections that could be representative of individual works of other genres. The following lists some of the features found amongst these texts:

- ❖ *Biographical features.* Both autobiographical and biographical. The transmission lineages can be approached as the religious biography of the author, hence autobiographical. The author can include biographical material about the individuals in the transmission lineage ranging from mere date and place of birth to more extensive biographies.
- ❖ *Historiographical features:* Van der Kuip mentioned that *thob yigs* and *gsan yigs* represent “potentially primary historiographical source material for the reconstruction of its [Tibetan Buddhism’s] development and, above all, how it was perceived to have developed from the Indian subcontinent” (van der Kuip 1986:920). Given the large number of these texts that were composed by later Tibetan Buddhist scholars including Mongolian authors, the later sources could similarly shed light on how the later tradition perceived the earlier development of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet.
- ❖ *Chronological features:* Few *thob yigs* comprise merely transmission lineages, but they tend to provide some sort of additional information. In most cases the additional information is abbreviated and short. However, in cases where dates and places of birth are provided for the individuals in the transmission lineage, it provides us with extra data for known masters and the means to fill the gaps for unknown masters, who remain many. In the case where extensive information is provided about individuals the work can act as a lineage history functioning

similarly to, for example, the *Bka' rgyud gser 'phreng*, 'golden rosaries'¹¹⁹ and similar biography collections of specific lineages.

- ❖ *Bibliographic features.* The *gsan yig* of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama is by far the most extensive example for its bibliographic value, cross-analysing numerous *gsan yigs* and discussing in detail their chronological developments.¹²⁰ Sobisch writes regarding the *gsan yig* of A-myes-zhabs Ngag-dbang kun-dga' bsod-nams (1597-1659): “The *gsan yig* of A mes zhabs and his teachings are uniquely valuable sources for Sa skya pa bibliographical and historical information. I found... no less than eighteen complete catalogues of collected works in these” (Sobisch 2002:179).
- ❖ *Encyclopaedic features.* Most of the larger examples of *thob yigs* such as that of Bu-ston, the Fifth Dalai Lama and Dza-ya Paṇḍita are organised following the branches of Buddhist learning and their sub-classifications such as *sūtra*, *tantra*, inner and outer sciences. Consequently, when taken together with the textual sources, details of lineage masters, chronology of transmission and other possible additional historical and biographical materials, these works can act as an encyclopaedic resource for future disciples of the tradition to seek references for their study, legitimacy of their lineage and information about their masters.

In terms of writing style and arrangement, most works use a common method of presentation, structure and language. As noted by Sobisch, it “takes time to get accustomed to the particular style...[and] one must navigate through them by understanding their literary structures” (Sobisch 2002:170). Kramer’s observations were similar, stating: “only when one understands the technical language utilized in the *gsan yigs*, will one be able to determine the relations between the individuals listed in a lineage” (Kramer 2008:491). Transmission lineages trace the teaching, text or practice right back to the propagator. In the case that the propagator is not the Buddha, we often find the

¹¹⁹ Van Schaik introduces the general genre of *thob yig* and gives a complete translation of the *gsan yig* of 'Jigs-med gling-pa with a running commentary, including a discussion of its stylistic features and relevance in context. See van Schaik (2000).

¹²⁰ For a detailed study of this literature see Chapter Three in Smith (2001:39-53).

propagator to be Bodhisattvas, Mahāsiddhas, other celestial Buddhas and prominent human teachers. These transmission lineages always state the name of the teaching or text followed by *thob pa'i brgyud pa ni*, 'as for the transmission lineage of the received teaching' and after listing the lineage, ends with *de las bdag la'o*, 'from him to me' and sometimes include the name of the final recipient inserted after *bdag*. If the author received the transmission through more than one line they often provide the alternative transmission lineage, introducing them after the main one indicated by 'yang', 'yang na' or 'gzhan yang' (Kramer 2008:502).¹²¹

There are numerous examples of *thob yigs* spanning over a millennium, and so it is necessary to mention a few of the notable ones to demonstrate how they combine some of the above mentioned literary characteristics:

- ❖ Bu-ston's *thob yig* titled *Bla ma dam pa rnams kyis rjes su bzung ba'i tshul bka' drin rjes su dran par byed pa* is organised according to classifications of text types such as *tantra*, *sūtra*, *khrid* and so on. This structure became a common model for many later *thob yigs* including that of the Fifth Dalai Lama and consequently Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las who structured his *thob yig* on the model of his root teacher – the Fifth Dalai Lama.
- ❖ The *Lung dang brgyud pa sna tshogs thob pa'i gsan yig* by the Sa-skya patriarch 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280), 23 folios in length and compiled in 1278, is one of the earliest and shorter examples of its genre. Despite its brevity, it is more than a mere list of names and texts and includes historical information about the context of the transmission in India and Tibet which gives this work a historiographical flavour.
- ❖ The *gsan yig* of the 27th Sa-skya throne holder A-myes-zhabs Ngag-dbang kun-dga' bsod-nams (1597-1659), titled *Chos kyi rje dpal ldan bla ma dam pa rnams las dam pa'i chos ji ltar thos pa'i tshul legs par bshad pa zab rgyas chos kun gsal ba'i nyin byed*, has 383 folios of which only the last 12 folios cover his *thob yig*,

¹²¹ For a detailed study of the structural and contents of this work see Ehrhard (2012).

whereas the other 371 contain the 11 *gsan yigs* of his 11 personal teachers. This work not only provides the extensive transmissions received by all eleven individuals but also shows how they all come together in the person of A-myes-zhabs as the one who received the majority of those teachings. His own *thob yig* contains numerous catalogues of biographies for which he received the reading transmissions. Throughout the work, he provides the date and place of birth for figures when possible, making his work an important bibliographic and historical resource on the Sa-skya lineage.

- ❖ One of the most important texts of this genre is also the largest recorded and belongs to the Great Fifth Dalai Lama titled *Zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig gang+gA'i chu rgyun*. This work will be discussed in more detail in relation to Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, but for now we can say it has extensive bibliographic and historiographical features.
- ❖ Other texts are arranged differently, such as Kun-dga' bzang-po's text, noted by van Schaik is "divided into seven sections, where each section contains the transmissions which he received from one particular teacher" (van Schaik 2000:4).
- ❖ Works such as Gter-bdag gling-pa's (1646-1714) *thob yig* titled *Zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig rin chen 'byung gnas* and Sa-skya Zhu-chen Tshul-khrims rin-chen's (1697-1774) *gsan yig* titled *Zhu chen tshul khrims rin chen gyi gsan yig*, which are both larger examples of their genre. They contain extensive information on other texts and practices, which is representative of the bibliographical nature of some of these works. This is hardly surprising, given the authors' active engagement in collecting and disseminating texts and practices.

In terms of genre classifications, it is apparent that there are many crossovers due to the varying content that can be found in these texts. Following Almogi's stress on the value of titles for approaching a text (Almogi 2005:44), as most of these texts have the term *thob yig*, *thos yig* or *gsan yig* in the main or the secondary title, using the term to refer to texts of this type is not problematic. However, aside from the stylistic and linguistic features of the presentation of the transmission lineages, these texts can vary hugely in length and content, often containing elements of other genres such as historiography, biography, bibliography, catalogues and lineage history. Given the fluidity

of genres, we can but look to the content, purpose and context of these texts to understand their value for the tradition and also for academic research. It is therefore important to keep certain elements in mind when approaching *thob yigs*, (if not all Tibetan Buddhist texts):

- 1) **Why**, i.e. the occasion and purpose of the composition. This information is often given in the colophon: this can tell us the circumstances for the composition of the text, such as the individuals involved, and textual sources of the text. Similar information is often also found in the introductory section.
- 2) **What**, i.e. the title, subtitle, secondary titles and possible later alternative titles. These can provide us with the author's understanding of the text as well as how the tradition may have utilised it in retrospect.
- 3) **When**, i.e. the historical period in which the text was composed or compiled. The politico-historical, socio-cultural, religious and linguistic period can determine the usage of certain terms, avoidance or highlighting of certain topics and the choice interpretation of events.
- 4) **Who**, i.e. the identity of the author. This can shed light on the reasons behind the composition of the text. For example, if the author was of high political position then his reasons for writing and ability to include or exclude certain elements in his writing would potentially differ vastly from an author who is less known and who would likely have been under less religio-political pressures.
- 5) **Where**, i.e. the geographical location as well as the tradition to which the author belongs. Tradition is extremely important given that the primary purpose of these texts is to contribute to the preservation of an authentic and legitimate tradition. Therefore, tying in with the idea of the author and historical period, knowing the

geographical and historical background of the tradition, their religious leaders and the historical setting will tell us more about the contents and context of the text.

If we now turn to Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* and apply these questions to its contents, some of the aforementioned complexities of genre specification and literary approaches will become clearer.

3.3. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*

Bira described Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* as an example of its genre that “does not go beyond the limitations of the usual Buddhist work of this kind” (Bira 2002:9). However, with 1234 folios, this work is the second largest of its genre and rivalled only by the 1500 folio *thob yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama. Dza-ya Paṇḍita was much influenced by the latter in terms of style, structure and content and also used it a reference for his own work (Vostrikov 1970:244). Unlike the basic structure of simpler examples that systematically present lists of transmission lineages, practices and teachings, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* is unusually comprehensive. Not including biographies that are part of the '*khrungs rabs*, ‘pre-birth stories’, the work contains 227 biographies of important lineage masters that are not only of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition but also of historically prominent masters from India, Tibet and Mongolia as well as Bodhisattvas, Buddhas and deities. These biographies are often titled as *nam thar* for historical figures and peaceful deities and *lo rgyus* for wrathful deities and celestial Buddhas. As the author does not specify his reasons for doing so, one can only speculate that this may have something to do with the convention of the sources he was using to compose his own work. Moreover, there are sections describing events that are invaluable for historical studies, such as the

account of the conquest of Gtsang that occurred during the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama (Bira 2002:12). It is also riddled with detailed and intimate information about the author found amongst the biographies of his personal masters. In these *rnam thars*, such as that of the Fifth Dalai Lama, the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho and the First Jebtsundamba, as well as information about his relationship with his teachers, there are skilfully composed narratives that shed light on the complex religio-political context of the 17th century Dge-lugs-pa world.

The *thob yig* of Dza-ya Paṇḍit is located in his six volume *gsung 'bum*, preserved in Tibetan *dbu can* script and printed during the late Qing period in the early 1900s in a clear Beijing block print of 51cm by 10.6cm, xylograph size: 40.5cm by 8.4cm, with 4-6 lines per page.¹²² His *thob yig* makes up the last four of the six volumes, spanning a total of 1234 folios:

- ❖ Volume 1: 297 folios
- ❖ Volume 2: 315 folios
- ❖ Volume 3: 319 folios
- ❖ Volume 4: 303 folios

According to the colophon, the work was written between the Earth-Tiger and Water-Horse years (1698-1702). Regarding his motivations to start compiling the work, Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes:

“According to the words of exhortation of the great *ācārya* Rin-po-che Blo-bzang rnam-rgyal dpal-bzang-po,¹²³ from the beginning of the tiger

¹²² For examples of the zerox images and photographs of the folios, please refer to Figure 2 and 3 can be found in the Appendix.

¹²³ I could not clarify who this was and am hoping his identity will become more apparent after studying the *rnam thar* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita composed by Bka'-'gyur-pa mer-gen no-mon-han.

year (1698), I composed 180 pages. When I read it out to the ācārya Rinpo-che Lcang-skyā zhabs-drung, he said: “Finish it by all means!”¹²⁴

Evident here and in the *rang rnam* of the Second Lcang-skyā Khutugtu, which mentions Dza-ya Paṇḍita on many occasions and lists him foremost amongst the individuals who exhorted the Second Lcang-skyā Khutugtu to write the *rang rnam*, the two individuals had much influence on one another.

Later in the colophon, Dza-ya Paṇḍita lists others who exhorted him to compile this work as well as those who gave him religious instructions during his life:

“The spiritual son of the Mkhan-po Dharmarāja, the lead chanter Blo-bzang rab-brtan who is endowed with spiritual vision exhorted me whilst [he offered me] a silver maṇḍala and offering scarves. Furthermore, many zealous [individuals] such as my own sensible neighbor, the lead chanter Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin, the one who is a skilled *thangka* painter and translator Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan and Ngag-dbang bzang-po exhorted me time and time again. Based on [their exhortation],

I was instructed by individuals such as the supreme protector and refuge of all beings including gods, the omniscient glorious Panchen Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan,

and if I mention his name for the sake of truth [benefit of beings]: the great scholar, the omniscient glorious one who is the crown ornament of samsara and nirvana Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho,

the chief of his (i.e. Fifth Dalai Lama) spiritual sons, the omniscient Panchen Blo-bzang ye-shes who is glorious, the butter lamp of the north, the supreme glorious Sprul-sku Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan,

particularly the one whose kindness is incomparable, the glorious scholar and siddha the ācārya Rinpoche Bsod-nams grags-pa¹²⁵ and many other excellent masters who number about 50. [The one who was] sustained by their kindness, was born in the Northern country of Khalkha as the reincarnation of the Śākya monk Bka'-'gyur-pa rab-'byams smra-ba named Blo-bzang 'phrin-las who is also known by the title Dza-ya Paṇḍita

¹²⁴ (V4F298b) *dpon rin po che blo bzang rnam rgyal dpal bzang po'i gsung gi bskul ba ltar stag lor mgo nas shog bu brgya dang brgyad cu tsam brtsams pa slob dpon rin po che lcang skyā zhabs drung gi sku gzhegs su snyan 'bul zhus par cis kyang mthar phyin bar rtsoms shig gsungs pa'i bka' phebs pa /*

¹²⁵ He was one of the teachers of the First Jebtsundampa as well as Dza-ya Paṇḍita. He was the master of the tantric college of 'Bras-spungs monastery. See Bareja-Starzyńska (2015:80-81).

Khutuḡtu, which was bestowed by the command of the victorious one, the great omniscient one (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama).”¹²⁶

This corresponds to the standard Tibetan Buddhist literary convention of politeness when writing a piece of biographical writing. Stating that one only wrote the work regarding themselves due to the wishes of others is a form of modesty.

It would be another four years before Dza-ya Paṇḍita could finish the work due to various health problems and travel which he specifies in detail, following the conventions for an apologetic opening of his work:

“Although I had put together some small collections of notes, when I was staying in Tibet I was sick for three years and when I was well I was busy requesting religious teachings etc. From when I returned to Mongolia until I was 57 years old, as Rnal-'byor-pa Shes-rab rdo-rje said: “You should travel the countries at all times for the purpose of what you wish for,” I travelled the kingdom(s). Because I was endeavouring one-pointedly for the eight worldly dharmas,¹²⁷ I did not have any free time to compose [the *thob yig*]. For the entirety of the earth tiger year (1698) I was ill and because of this I didn't even do a little bit of travelling and avoided [other] people, and by the grace of the guru and the three jewels, it was like turning adversity into favour and I composed the first 180 pages, and I was thinking whether I might be able to complete it, but in the rabbit year (1699) my illness got worse and the wheel of the eight worldly dharmas turned for long periods. For two years, I passed the time with the distraction of the

¹²⁶ (V4F298b2) *mkhan po chos kyi rgyal po'i thugs sras chos kyi spyen ldan dbu mdzad blo bzang rab brtan gyis dngul maN kha rtags dang bcas te bskul ba dang / gzhan yang rang gi nye 'khor ba rnam dpyod dang ldan pa'i dbu mdzad blo bzang bstan 'dzin dang / lha bris lotsA sogs la blo gros kyi mig phye ba'i bsod nams rgyal mtshan dang / ngag dbang bzang po sogs don gnyer can du mas yang yang bskul ba la brten nas lhar bcas 'gro ba yongs kyi skyabs mgon dam pa paN chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po dang / don gyi slad du mtshan nas smos te mkhan chen thams cad mkhyen pa srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho dpal bzang po dang / de'i sras kyi thu bo paN chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes dpal bzang po dang / byang phyogs bstan pa'i sgron me mchog gi sprul pa'i sku blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po dang / khyed par du yang bka' drin mtshungs med mkhas shing grub pa'i dbang phyug slob dpon rin po che bsod nams grags pa dpal bzang po'i zhal snga nas la sogs te yongs 'dzin dam pa lnga bcu'i bka' drin gyis nye bar 'tsho ba'i byang phyogs khal kha'i yul grur skyes pa'i shaAkyā'i btsun pa bka' 'gyur pa rab 'byams smra ba'i (V4F299a) sku skye blo bzang 'phrin las ming gzhan rgyal ba thams cad mkhyen pa chen po'i bka' lung gis dza ya paNDi ta khu thug thu zhes 'bod pas...*

¹²⁷ These are: 1. The hope for happiness, 2. The fear of suffering, 3. The hope for fame, 4. The fear of insignificance, 5. The hope for praise 6. The fear of blame, 7. The hope for gain and 8. The fear of loss.

pleasant title of [acting] for the benefit of others, and so I broke my promise and failed to achieve my goal [of writing].”¹²⁸

“After that, from the 11th day of the 6th month of that year until the fifth Mongolian month of the water horse year (1702), I was not able to achieve it because I was unwell. However, although I was unwell I thought “staying in vain is [bad] karma” and “I have the supreme blessing of the lama and the three jewels so that, for the purpose of completing this [*thob yig*], adverse circumstances will turn out to be a support (i.e a friend)”. So, after the 6th Mongolian month, I continued to compose. Although I wasn’t able to do so uninterruptedly every day due to the distractions of my mundane affairs, I reminded myself not to abandon [the plan] in my mind.”¹²⁹

Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s mention of his illness here in the colophon is not the first. He suffered from numerous episodes of illness throughout his life which he often brings up in his own *rang rnam* and the *rnam thars* of his teachers. As mentioned in Chapter Two, it is a possibility that his interest in medicine and *snyung gnas* could perhaps be related to his own repeated incidences of poor health and his relationship to the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho who was of course highly learned in Buddhist medicine and authored the well known medicinal treatise the *BaiDUrya Sngon po*.

Throughout the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita is extremely consistent in naming the text or individual that he quotes from, putting him in the ranks of what we call today an extremely “reliable author”. As well as the sources which he refers to throughout the *thob yig*, he also lists the titles of the works which he saw to be his main

¹²⁸ (V4F196a3) *brjed tho’i reg zeg (theg) phran bu re byas na’ang / bod du bsdad skabs lo gsum gyi bar na ba dang / gzugs po bde skabs chos zhu ba sogs kyi brel ba dang sog yul du sleb pa nas bzung ste rang lo nga bdun pas stag gi par ji skad du rnal ’byor pa shes rab rdo rjes / ’dod pa’i ched du yul dus kun tu ’khyams / zhes gsungs pa bzhin rgyal khams bskor te ’jig rten chos brgyad la rtse gcig tu brtson pa’i dbang gis rtsom long ma byung / sa stag lo hril por na bas phyogs ’gro bzhin ma byas mi yang ’dzems nas bsdad dus bla ma dkon mchog gi thugs rjes rkyen ngan grogs shar lta bur gyur te mgo nas shog grangs brgya dang brgyad cu tsam byas nas mjug rdzogs par byed e thub bsams kyang / yos lo nas na tsha yang drag sngar nas nyams len rgyun ring byas pa’i ’jig rten chos brgyad kyi ’khor lo bskor te lo gnyis kyi bar gzhan don gyi ming snyan po btags pa’i rnam g.yeng gis dus ’da’ bar byas nas dral ’byor stong zad du byas /*

¹²⁹ (V3F296b2) *de rjes lo de’i zla ba drug pa’i tshes bcu gcig nas chu rta’i hor zla lnga pa thub gzugs po mi bde ba’i stabs kyi ma thub kyang / gzugs po mi bde na’ang don med du bsdad pa las snyam pa dang / ’di’i mjug rdzogs pa’i phyir du rkyen ngan grogs du shar ba bla ma dkon mchog gis byin gyis brlabs pa yan yod snyam nas hor zla drug pa nas de’i ’phro nas brtsams te byas pa yin kyang yang ’jig rten mthun ’jug gi g.yeng bas nyin re bzhin ma chad par byed long ma byung yang blos ma btang bar byas shing go...*

sources in the colophon of his work. They are found on V4F299a1 to V4F299b4. He also divides them according to the genre of Buddhist literature which provides the reader with a rather neatly organized list. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's main sources for the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* are:

Sūtras:

- ❖ *Rgyal ba'i yum brgyad stong ba* (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*)
- ❖ *Mdo sdud pa* (*Prajñāpāramitāsaṃcayagāthā*)
- ❖ *'Od srungs kyis zhus pa* (*Kāśyapaparivarta*)
- ❖ *Drag shul can gyis zhus pa* (*Ugraparipṛcchā*)
- ❖ *Sdong po bkod pa* (*Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*)

Tantras:

- ❖ *Gsang 'dus rtsa rgyud* (*Guhyasamāja Mūlatantra*)
- ❖ *Bde mchog rtsa rgyud* (*Cakrasaṃvara Mūlatantra*)
- ❖ *Dus 'khor gyi rgyud* (*Kālacakra tantra*)

Indian Root Texts on Philosophy:

- ❖ *Mngon rtogs rgyan* (*Abhisamayālaṅkāra*)
- ❖ *Rgyud bla ma* (*Mahāyānottaratantra Śāstra*)
- ❖ *Sa rgyan gnyis* (*Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*)
- ❖ *Bslab spyod gnyis* (*Sikṣāsamuccaya* and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*)
- ❖ *Skyes tshoms gnyis* (*Jātakamālā* and *Udānavarga*)
- ❖ *Bka' gdams gzhung drug*

Bka'-gdams-pa Stages of Teachings:

- ❖ *Bka' gdams glegs bam*
- ❖ *Be'u bum sngo khra dmar gsum*
- ❖ *Dpe chos rin spungs*
- ❖ *Man ngag rin spungs*
- ❖ *Dge ba'i bshes gnyen gro lung ba chen po'i bstan rim*

The Collected Writings of Tsong-kha-pa and his disciples:

- ❖ *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa*
- ❖ *Sngags rim chen mo*
- ❖ *Sbas don kun gsal*
- ❖ Mkhas-grub Nor-bzang rgya-mtsho's *Dus 'khor spyid don dri med 'od rgyan*
- ❖ *Thar lam gsal byed*
- ❖ *Sdom gsum rnam bzhag*
- ❖ *Gzugs brnyan gsal ba'i me long*
- ❖ *Spyi don rigs rgyan*

Many rnam thars such as:

- ❖ *Rnam thar dad pa'i 'jug dogs*
- ❖ Rtogs-ldan-pa's appendix of the *rnam thar* of Tsong-kha-pa
- ❖ Śāntipa's *rnam thar*
- ❖ Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan's *rnam thar*
- ❖ Bu-ston's *rnam thar*
- ❖ Lho-brag phyag-rdor's *rnam thar*
- ❖ Panchen Rinpoche [Chos-gyi rgyal-mtshan]'s *rnam thar*
- ❖ Fifth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar*

The chos 'byungs:

- ❖ *Bu ston chos 'byung*
- ❖ Las-chen Kun-rgyal-pa's *Bka' gdams chos 'byung*
- ❖ Panchen Bsod-nams grags-pa's *Bka' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung*
- ❖ *Rgya gar chos 'byung*
- ❖ Mkhan-nag Lotsāwa's *Dga' ldan chos 'byung*
- ❖ The *rnam thars* of majority of the great lamas of the Dge-lugs tradition
- ❖ The works by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho such as the *BaiDUrya ser po* which clarifies the origins of the monasteries and monastic colleges as well as the number of candidates in the monastery.

The gsan yigs:

- ❖ Tsong-kha-pa's *gsan yig*
- ❖ The incomplete *gsan yig* of the Panchen [Chos-gyi rgyal-mtshan]
- ❖ The *Gsan yig gang+gA'i chu rgyun* of the Fifth Dalai Lama [Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682)]
- ❖ The *gsan yig* of the Vajradhara Pha-bong-kha-pa 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa
- ❖ The *gsan yig* of Skyid-shod sprul-sku's reincarnation Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las chos-dbang grags-pa'i-sde
- ❖ Some collected sections from the *gsan yig* of [the Second] Lcang-skya zhabs-drung [Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang chos-ldan (1642-1714)]
- ❖ Some collected sections from the *gsan yig* of Mkhan-po Nomon Khaan [Lamin Gegen Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan (1639-1704)]

It is noteworthy that although he frequently quotes from prophecies and treasure texts such as the *Bka' thang sde lnga* and the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* in the *thob yig*, none of them are listed by him as his main sources. Some of these main sources which are listed feature often in the *thob yig*, but some are never mentioned directly. Thus, it is possible that he retrieved the quotations from amongst the works he does list here or, as he was consistent in referring to those sources in the text, he did not feel the need to list them separately in the colophon.

The final details of the completion of the work are given together with the location and the names of the scribes:

“I completed it on the Fifth day of the waxing moon of the 11th Mongolian month when the sun was passing into/was in Sagittarius (*gzhu khyim*) of the water horse year (1702) known as *Zhin wu* in the Eastern country of China.”¹³⁰

“It was completed in writing at the great religious center that is a depository of accumulating merit of all those who possess faith, the place of teaching and practice of the *saṅgha*; the monastery which was named Dga'-ldan rab-rgyas-gling by the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes which was

¹³⁰ (V4F302b4) *shar phyogs tsi na'i yul grur zhin wu zhes grags pa'i chu pho rta lo'i nyin byed dbang po gzhu khyim du spyod pa'i hor zla bcu gcig pa'i yar do'i rdzogs pa...*

later named Dge-gsal lha-khang by the Manchu Emperor. The scribes are No-mon-chid dge-slong Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin and other Lotsawas, the monk who has the distinguishing eye of the teachings Blo-bzang 'don-grub, Ulemci piligthu Ngag-dbang rgya-mtshan, gu-shi pande Ngag-dbang blo-bzang, he who possesses faith Sangs-rgyas dar-rgyas and thunmal piligthu Chos-rgya-mtsho, who did this diligently.”¹³¹

This tells us that Dza-ya Paṇḍita likely finished compiling this work during his time in the Qing dominated China and Southern Mongolia as a result of Ġaldan Boshuġthu’s invasion of Khalkha Mongolia,¹³² which suggests that the scribes listed above with Mongolian names could be from Southern Mongolia. Blo-bzang 'don-grub is likely to be the same figure who helped with the translation of the work into Mongolian. As for the other individuals, it is difficult to determine their identity without looking through the Mongolian materials in Höhhot.

The work has the main title *Zab pa dang rgya che ba'i dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. “The clear mirror of the record of the noble teachings received, which are profound and extensive”. It is also known by the shorter title *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, “The clear mirror of the record of teachings received”. Almogi used Atiśa’s comments on assigning titles using the example of *me long*, ‘mirror’, stating: “indeed, numerous commentaries and expositions which are aimed at elucidating and clarifying a given work or subject matter have the word *me long*. ‘mirror’ in their titles, often in combination with the verb *gsal ba* (clarify)” (Almogi 2005:41). The use of the expression

¹³¹ (V4F303a1) *rgyal po'i pho brang mkhar sngon po'i rlung lha'i phyogs su gnas pa / dad ldan rnams kyi bsod nams gsog pa'i rten dang dge 'dun rnams kyi bshad sgrub kyi bsti gnas chos sde chen po paN chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes dpal bzang pos gnang ba'i ming dga' ldan rab rgyas 'jam dbyangs gong ma chen po'i bkas dge gsal lha khang zhes ming gnang ba'i dgon par re zhig rdzogs par sbyar ba'i yi ge pa ni nom chi dge slong blo bzang bstan 'dzin dang / lo tsA sogs chos la blo mig phye ba'i dge tshul blo bzang don grub dang / u lem ci pi lig thu ngag dbang rgyal mtshan dang / gu shiA ban+di ngag dbang dang / dad gus dang ldan bsang pa sangs rgyas dar rgyas dang / thun mal pi lig thu chos rgya mtsho rnams kyi sgo gsum 'bad pas bgyis pa'o /*

¹³² This topic was discussed in Chapter One.

“clear mirror” in the title suggests that this work was intended to clarify the teachings he had received.

The above-mentioned Mongolian translation is preserved in a handwritten manuscript in three volumes, of which the first volume exists in two versions. The complete set is stored in Höhhot, Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in separate collections.¹³³ The other copy of volume one is kept by the National University Archives in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.¹³⁴ Their details are as follows:

- ❖ Volume 1 (Ulaanbaatar): 350 folios. No colophon.
- ❖ Volume 1 (Höhhot): 349 folios. No colophon
- ❖ Volume 2 (Höhhot): 105 folios. No colophon.
- ❖ Volume 3 (Höhhot): 376 Folios. Includes colophon.

Volumes Two and Three have the same handwriting whereas both copies of Volume 1 appear to be written by different hands. The colophon of the third and final volume of the Mongolian translation of the *thob yig* carried out during Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s lifetime refers to the work as *Bogda jay-a pandita khutug tu yin sonusugsan üchüg, bodi gurban keseg tü gegen toil*, “The records of teachings received of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Khutugtu known as Clear Mirror in Three Parts”. As the translation into Mongolian was carried out long before the Tibetan block-print was created, it is possible that the work was previously known by a different title and was given the title it bears in the Tibetan block-print at a later date. The colophon of Volume 3 on folio 376 reads:

¹³³ Due to agreements made at the time I was given photographic files of the manuscripts. I am unable to provide details about the exact location of the original manuscripts.

¹³⁴ Photographic copies of this manuscript were given to me by Nyamochir Phrinlei, who was a distinguished young Mongolian scholar from the Mongolian National Academy of Sciences. He transliterated and published the *thob yig* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita after years of cross referencing the Mongolian with the Tibetan block print. He sadly passed away on November the 11th, 2016. Please refer to Figure 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the Appendix for examples of the manuscripts folios.

“As for the records of teachings received of Dza-ya Paṇḍita Khutuḡtu known as the *Clear Mirror in Three Parts*, Vajradhara Dza-ya Paṇḍita requested his disciple 'Bro Mergen Rab-'byams-pa to translate the work, who accepted the command of his precious teacher with honour. Just as he was contemplating making the translation in a manner worthy of his teacher for the benefit of other beings, two other disciples of the Siddha [Dza-ya Paṇḍita] Shiregetü and Khubilgan Choiji also requested [Dza-ya Paṇḍita to allow them to] translate [the text] smoothly and properly for the benefit of the dharma and sentient beings. [With Dza-ya Paṇḍita's permission, the three of them together] endeavoured in the translation efforts and wrote down [the translation].

The kind teacher 'Bro [Mergen] Rab-'byams-pa told his disciple Dge-slong Blo-bzang don-grub to translate the second section of the *rnam thars* of Abhayākaragupta etc. and that he [Mergen Rab-'byams-pa] would correct and edit it. He [Blo-bzang don-grub] accepted the request with honour and very meticulously translated the *rnam thars* of Abhayākaragupta etc., which were difficult to translate, but because of relying on the instructions and kindness of his teacher he, Blo-bzang don-grub, was able to carefully translate them.

I wish to accomplish the knowledge of ten grounds by the merit gained by using my three doors [body, speech, and mind] for this blessed path very cautiously and dedicate it for the benefit of the sentient beings.”¹³⁵

Thus, the Mongolian translation was the result of the combined efforts of four individuals:

Mergen Rab-'byams-pa, Shiregetü and Khubilgan Choiji, who were disciples of Dza-ya Paṇḍita and responsible for the larger part of the translation, and Blo-bzang don-grub who was a disciple of Mergen Rab-'byams-pa. They carried out the translation during Dza-ya Paṇḍita's lifetime likely under his guidance and advice. The existence of two manuscript copies of Volume 1 and the different handwriting across the four manuscripts indicate that

¹³⁵ *Bogda jay-a pandita khutug tu yin sonusugsan üchiüg, bodi gurban keseg tü gegen toli kemekü sudur i, budatu vajra dara zay-a pandita mön öberiyen bar 'bro mergen rab 'byams pa dur orchigul kemen, bogda jarlig soyurhag san i orui bar abugad, bogda mön tegün ü ölmei batudkhu kiged, busud un tusa dur orchigulkhuy-a sedhin atala, siditiü mön tegünü ilete yin shabi shiregetü kiged khubilgan chos rje khoyagula ber, shajin hiked amitan u tusa dur joriju, silugun-a sayidur orchigulhuy-a duradugsan dur, simdaju orchigulhuy-a tugurbigsan mön amoi. Achitu blam-a 'bro rab 'byams pa tere ber, abhy-a kara terigüten ü ram tar khoyadugar keseg I anu, ayag g-a tahimlig blobzang donrub shabi dur iyen, asuru kichiyejü orchigul bi jasadu kemen, adistid tu jarlig soyurkhagsan I orui ber abugad, ayul ügei garkhu yin orun terigüten ü nam tar edeger anu, asuru kichiyejü orchigulkhuy-a berke bügetele, achitu blam-a yugan jarlig un achi dur sitüjü, asuru kichiyejü orchigululug-a blo bzang donrob kemkü. Adistid tu egünü mör tür gurban egüden iyen, asuru hichiyejü jarugsan buyan iyer, arban gajar un erdem üd I ugugata tegüsgejü, amitan u tusa yi üiledün chidakhu yin tula jorimui.*

either copies were made of the original or that these are the original autographs by the multiple translators. It is difficult at this point to assess if any of these manuscripts could be part of the original autograph of the translation. However, it is clear that the Mongolian translation predates the Tibetan blockprint printed in the early 1900s. Given that it was translated during Dza-ya Paṇḍita's lifetime and possibly under his guidance, it could have valuable additional information and better readings compared to the Tibetan block-print, which contains numerous misspellings and mistakes. A comprehensive comparison of the two goes beyond the scope of this thesis, but is an area that I will undoubtedly return to in my future studies.

A comparison of the Tibetan and Mongolian versions shows that a large part of Chapter Nine, from V3F248a5 to V4F174b5, is missing in the Mongolian translation. As the colophon of the Mongolian manuscript does not specify any dates or offer any further insight, one can only speculate. At first, the idea that the work was not yet completed when the translation was done seemed possible. However, the last volume of the Mongolian text ends with Chapter Eleven: the final chapter of the entire work. This suggests the work was complete at the time of its translation but that the last section of Chapter Nine was left untranslated on purpose. The untranslated folios contain the *rnam thars* written by Dza-ya Paṇḍita of his own teachers such as the Fifth Dalai Lama, the Second Panchen Lama, the First bJebsundamba and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. These *rnam thars* will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, but for now we can only guess the reasons for their not being translated into Mongolian. It may have been the case that Dza-ya Paṇḍita had the intention to revise the life stories of his masters at a later date due to the controversial politico-historical events which concern their lives.

The more extensive colophon of the Tibetan blockprint runs from V3F289b6 to the last folio of the work, V3F303a5, totalling 13 folios. Right at the start, Dza-ya Paṇḍita discusses the value of the *Gsan yig ganga'i chu rgyun* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and presents it as the model for his own *thob yig*:

“The good monk and the great and learned scholar, the all knowing and all seeing Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho said: “As for the *Gsan yig ganga'i chu rgyun* which is the guide to the teachings received from the great masters from memory, it is necessary for the future disciples to follow the composition of this *gsan yig* in endeavouring to seek the excellent teachings.” Thus, after having understood this properly, I composed this record of the teachings I received just like a small bird endeavouring on the path of the lord of the birds in the vast sky. This was not composed because of the desire for honour and gain but rather thinking, “This is the counteragent for the forgetfulness of my own mind and for the benefit of others and my peers,” I composed it including the biographies and stories of the lineages.”¹³⁶

Here, his “peers” likely refers to the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas, which would indicate that one of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s primary goals for compiling this work was for the benefit of the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas. He is also very clear in stating his familiarity with the contents of the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and that he used it as a model, which demonstrates his knowledge of the works of the tradition as well as referring the authenticity of his work to the indisputable authority of the Dalai Lama. Later in the work, he again clarified: “As for the structure, I followed the *gsan yig* of the root guru, the crown ornament of Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa, the *Gsan yig Ganga'i chu rgyun*.”¹³⁷ Comparing the structures of these two

¹³⁶ (V4F291b6): *btsun bzang mkhas dbang thams cad mkhyen gzigs ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtshos zab dang rgya che'i chos tshul rnams / yongs 'dzin dran dbang rnams las legs par gsan pa'i* (Folio 292a) *gsan yig gangga' i chu rgyun ljags rtsom gnang ba 'di / rjes 'jug bu slob rnams kyis dam chos 'tshol bar brtson pa 'di ltar dgos zhes gdams par legs rtogs nas / kun gsal yangs par 'dab bzang gtso bos bgrod pa'i lam du bye'u chung rtsol ltar chos zhus tho 'di bkod / 'di ni rnyed bkur grags 'dod phyir bskrun min / rang gi blo yi brjed ngas gnyen po dang / skal mnyam gzhan la phan pa'ang srid snyam pas / brgyud pa rnams thar lo rgyus dang bcas bris /*

¹³⁷ (V4F296b5) *go rims sa bcad rnams bla ma srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan gyi gsan yig gang+ga'i chu rgyun ltar byas /*

works, Dza-ya Paṇḍita did indeed base the organisation of his chapters and subsections on the Fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan yig*.

Regarding the structure of the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ehrhard observes: "The *gsan-yig* of the Fifth Dalai Bla-ma is thus structured for the most part around the principle of the "five objects of knowledge" (*rig gnas lnga*)" (Ehrhard 2012:80). We can generalise the following simplified structure for the Fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan yig*:

Section 1) *bstan par 'jug pa'i sgo so so thar pa'i sdom rgyun*. The stream of *prātimokṣa* vows, [which are] a door for entering into the Buddhist doctrine.

Section 2) *zhugs nas thos bsam bya ba gnas lnga rig pa'i skor*. The cycle of the knowledge of the five objects which are to be heard and reflected on after entering [the Buddhist doctrine].

- *Thun mong pa'i rig pa'i gnas*. The common objects of knowledge
 - Grammar
 - Logic
 - Medicine
 - Craftsmanship
- *Thun mong ma yin pa'i rig pa'i gnas*. The uncommon inner knowledge (i.e. Buddhism)
 - Exoteric vehicle of the cause: philosophy and logic organised according to the texts composed by the "Two Excellent Ones" (Guṇaprabha and Śākyaprabha) and the "Six Ornaments" (Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, and Dignāga and Dharmakīrti)
 - Esoteric mantric vehicle of the result, divided into the four classes of tantras: *Kriya*, *Caryā*, *Yoga* and *Yoganiuttara*.
 - *gsang sngags phyi 'gyur*. Secret Mantra Translated Later
 - *zur bka'*. Pronouncements Set Apart
 - *spyi bka'*. General Pronouncements
 - *zur byung*. Supplement

Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses almost identical divisions within his chapters in terms of structure.¹³⁸ However, in terms of content, the works are very different. Whereas the Fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan yig* can be described as a "comparative *gsan yig*-ology" (Ehrhard 2012:79) that discusses in detail other *gsan yigs* and their source texts, which are important for the Dge-lugs-pa tradition, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* concentrates on the life stories of the figures who were important for the tradition. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's conscious efforts to model his work on that of the Fifth Dalai Lama indicates that he could have been attempting to create a composition that could supplement the *gsan yig* of the Great Fifth. Indeed, the *Gsan yig ganga'i chu rgyun* can be referenced for detailed information on the texts and the *thob yig gsal ba'i me long* for information on the authors of those texts.

The defining characteristic which makes the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* a unique example of its genre is the huge number of biographies found throughout the work. This was no accident and the author elaborates upon his reasons for this inclusion in the colophon:

"It is said by the great scholar Āryaśūra [in the introductory stanzas of his *Jātakamālā*]: By those praiseworthy good [deeds]

all the paths which lead to one becoming a Buddha are taught.

Even those who do not have faith come to have faith,

and through stories full of dharma they will be pleased."

Thus, after relying on the *rnam thars* of the supreme ones, for those who were previously faithless [faith is] born anew, and the faith of those who already have faith will continuously grow even greater.

In the *Lam rim chen mo* it is said: "The glorious scholars of Nalendra hold the view that one should explain [the teachings] from the viewpoint of the

¹³⁸ For the structure and contents of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* see the Appendix.

three: the pure speech of the *ācāryas*, the pure lineages of the disciples, and the pure *dharma* that is to be explained. However, later on, the teachings spread from Vikramaśīla, and the scholars there hold the view that the most important points are the greatness of the author, of the doctrine, and of the way of how it is taught and listened to. Out of these two ways of explaining which are known to have occurred, I am going to explain according to the latter [i.e. the three greatnesses]”. Thus, following this advice, I will explain the teachings from the viewpoint of the greatness of the authors and [the greatness of] the doctrine and the lineage that obtained it. Furthermore, generally, the main objects of this composition are the *rnam thars* of the supreme lamas. by expounding the virtues of the victorious lord and his spiritual sons, together with the object of the meaning of the commentaries of the immaculate authoritative texts of the Buddha. As for the composition, I composed it in accordance with the composition of the commentaries composed by the scholars of India... The Lamas said, “compose this *thob yig*!” according to this advice, I saw much defilements cleared away.

It is said: “If you please the Lamas everyday, then you will destroy your great defilements of actions done again and again during ten million aeons, and afterwards become a Buddha.”

Thus, I composed these condensed *rnam thars* from the viewpoint of ease of mind for the purpose of doing accordingly with [the advice of the lamas], disregarding all fatigue because I considered that explaining the life stories of the lamas for all sentient beings, and the merit originating from this, will become the cause for me to be taught by the lamas [in the future].”¹³⁹

He later states:

“Ordinary people do not strive for the teachings, but even if they do, by the power of attachment and aversion they will only look to those works

¹³⁹ (V4F296b4) mkhas mchog dpa' bos / grags pa'i mtshan mar gyur pa bzang po 'di rnams kyi / bde bar gshegs gyur lam rnams gang yin bstan par 'gyur / yid la dad pa med pa rnams kyang dad par 'gyur / chos dang ldan pa'i gtam gyis rab tu dga' bar gyur / ces dam pa'i rnam par thar pa la bsten nas sngar dad pa med pa rnams gsar du skye zhing yod pa rnams gong du 'phel bar 'gyur ba dang / lam rim chen mor / de la dpal n+ 'a len+dra'i / lam rim chen mor / de la dpal n+ 'a len+dra'i (F297a) mkhas pa rnams ni slob dpon gyi ngag dag pa dang / slob ma'i rgyud dag pa dang / bshad bya'i chos dag pa gsum gyi sgo nas 'chad par bzhed la / dus phyis ni bi kram la shI lar bstan pa dar bas / de'i mkhas pa rnams ni chos rtsom pa po'i che ba dang / chos kyi che ba dang / de ji ltar bshad cing nyan pa'i tshul gsum sngon du gal che bar bzhed pa'i tshul gnyis byung bar grags pa las 'dir ni phyi ma ltar bshad par bya'o / zhes gsungs pa'i rjes su 'brangs nas phal che bar mdzad pa po'i che ba dang / des mdzad pa'i chos thob pa'i rgyud pa dang bcas pa'i sgo nas bshad la / de yang spyir rtsom pa ces bya ba / bla ma dam pa rnams kyi rnam par thar pa dang / rgyal ba sras dang bcas pa'i yon tan brjod pa dang / bde bar gshegs pa'i gzhung lugs dri ma med pa'i dgongs 'grel dang bcas pa brjod bya'i yul du byas te / 'phags yul gyi mkhas pa rnams kyi bshad pa ltar sdeb sbyor gyi gtsug lag dang mthun par rtsom shes na... (F297b4) bla ma rnams kyi thob yig 'di gyis zhes gsungs pa ltar bka' bzhin bsgrubs shing mnyes par byas ni sdig pa mang po 'dag par mthong zhing / ji skad du / bla ma nyin gcig mnyes byas na / bskal pa bye ba ther 'bum du / byas dang byas bcug yi rang ba'i / sdig chen bcom nas sangs rgyas 'gyur / ces bya ba'i don la yid spro ba'i sgo nas rnam thar mdor bsdus te bkod pa 'di yang skal ba bzang por khums shing / slad nas skye ba thams cad du'ang bla ma'i rnam thar brjod par 'gyur ba dang de'i dge bas bla mas rjes su bzung ba'i rgyur dmigs nas ngal ba khyad du bsad de bsgrigs pa yin /

(*śāstras*, *bstan bcos*) that they like and abuse those made by those that they don't like, and therefore there is no hope that they might be beneficial to others. However, considering it in an impartial state of mind I thought that even for those who are of lower intelligence than me it may be of some benefit. Generally, I urged myself (*bskul*) with pure aspiration [to write the *thob yig*] because it will be of benefit for the conditions of the teaching [i.e., it will help to preserve and spread the teaching].”¹⁴⁰

These passages clearly explain Dza-ya Paṇḍita's reasons for writing this *nam thar*-heavy *thob yig*. He was trying to produce a work that would be accessible and inspirational for everyone and not only the scholarly elite. Earlier on, Dza-ya Paṇḍita acknowledged the works of his masters such as the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, which extensively discusses the *sūtras* and *śāstras* and is aimed at those of higher capacity. Consequently, through his own efforts, he was able to compose a work capable of supplementing the works of his masters, a work that is at the same time capable of presenting certain complexities of the doctrine in a more comprehensible format for a large general monastic audience that does not possess the higher capacities of the elite scholars of the tradition. Given that he was requested by the Fifth Dalai Lama to spread the teachings in Mongolia, which had very recently embraced Buddhism, his decision to compose a work that is more easily accessible seems appropriate.

The huge number of biographies found in this work is extremely unusual for its genre. Other *thob yigs*, when providing additional information on the transmission lineage will only provide very brief supplements such as date and place of birth of the teacher. In Dza-ya Paṇḍita's case, many of the *nam thars* are over 15 folios in length, some reaching over 70 folios. These longer *nam thars* can stand on their own as separate works in their

¹⁴⁰ (V4F298a4) *phal che bas chos don mi gnyer / gnyer kyang chags sdang gi dbang gis rang ka dga' ba rnams kyi bstan bcos la blta rtog dang / mi dga' ba rnams kyis byas pa la kha gtong ba sogs kyi rgyu mtshan shes pas gzhan la phan yong bsam pa'i re ba med rung / blo gzu bor gnas pa 'ga' zhig dang / rang las blo dman pa rnams la phan pa'ang srid snyam zhing / gtso cher bstan pa'i dmigs rkyen la phan res lhag bsam nam par dag pas rgyud bskul te /*

own right. For example, in the case of the *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba, it is also found as a separate work from the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* and later became the model upon which all subsequent biographies of the Jebtsundamba were based in Khalkha Mongolia.¹⁴¹ Within the *thob yig*, the *rnam thars*, which are found throughout the chapter and subchapter divisions of the Buddhist teachings such as medicine, *sūtras* and different classes of *tantra* with which the individuals are associated, forms the skeleton of the *thob yig*. The historical and bibliographical information as well as the transmission lineages are organised in and around these *rnam thars*. As part of the larger work, each *rnam thar* can be approached as a link in the longer chain of the lineage *rnam thar* of the author's tradition. This work can thus be approached as an encyclopaedic resource of 17th century Dge-lugs-pa Buddhism organised according to the *rnam thars* of those figures considered most notable for the tradition.

Bareja-Starzyska observed that Dza-ya Paṇḍita may have been the first Mongolian to start composing *rnam thar* in Tibetan language (Bareja-Starzyska 2015:50), which is extremely plausible. In writing the *rnam thars*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows a carefully formulated structure which is reminiscent of elements such as the twelve deeds of the Buddha. It is noteworthy that although there is no formalised “structure” as such for *rnam thar* writing, the analysis of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* writing style is very close to the formulas generalised by contemporary scholars which are based on studies of Tibetan Buddhist *rnam thars*. The hypothesis that Dza-ya Paṇḍita consciously chose to compose the *rnam thars* according to a formula is backed up by the numerous sources he provides for the *rnam thars* he writes. This suggests that he read many examples of *rnam thars* and observed a “pattern” which he held as a “standard” for composing *rnam thars*;

¹⁴¹ For a detailed study of the *rnam thar* of Jebtsundamba by Dza-ya Paṇḍita see Bareja-Starzyska (2015).

not too unlike what scholars do today in the attempt to understand the *rnam thar* genre. If Dza-ya Paṇḍita was the first amongst the Mongolian monk-scholars to write Tibetan language *rnam thars*, his efforts to create examples that could be deemed “standard” and “authentic” would make good sense.

The author's writing style is worth mentioning. Scholars working on literature authored by Mongolian monk-scholars, such as Bira (2002) and Bareja-Starzynska (2008) have commented on the concise manner in which these authors approach their sources. Bira comments on Sum-pa Mkhan-po Ye-shes Dpal-'byor that “a serious, critical and scientific approach to his sources is characteristic of the author and he never leaves his sources without analysing and evaluating it” (Bira 2002:20). In a personal communication, Bareja-Starzynska who examined the biography of the first Jebtsundamba written by Dza-ya Paṇḍita as well as Dza-ya Paṇḍita's autobiography, described his writing style in a similar manner. Dza-ya Paṇḍita is indeed cautious about authenticity, always providing references and indicating when he is uncertain. This observation is true for Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing style throughout his *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. He is consistent in his quotations from authoritative texts before making any statement, discusses existing inconsistencies on various topics when necessary and expresses his uncertainty of a subject when he is unsure.

Here are some examples from the various *rnam thars* in the *thob yig*:

- ❖ From the *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba: “...he listened to many teachings taught by the Master Gyel Wanchog (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) starting with the *Kadam Legbam*. Though he listened to such teachings [I] have not seen his register of teachings received (*sanyig*) and therefore all these [pieces of information] were not certain” (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:126).
- ❖ From the *rnam thar* of the Sixth Dalai Lama: “According to one account of the story it wasn't the queen but the king who said that a

god appeared from space and said: “there is no need to be distressed, I will give you a son”. Not long after he had a son who was called either Smyos Grags-pa-dpal or Yon-tan grags-pa who later had a son known as Smyos-rgyal-ba lha-nang. Whether the information originates from the accounts of the Queen or from the King, I think the former story [of the Queen] is more likely.”¹⁴²

- ❖ From the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama: “In terms of his compositions: although it is not absolutely clear how the books of his collected writings have been compiled, in terms of the books composed in the Po-ta-la there are...”¹⁴³

There are many more examples some of which will be encountered naturally through the contextualisation of the contents of the *thob yig* later in this thesis. Nevertheless, for now, it is valid to state that the information and the treatment of the sources within this *thob yig* by an author who is extremely concerned with authenticity makes it a reliable source on the manifold subject matters it addresses.

3.4. General Observations on the Structure and Contents

The 11 chapters of this work are all clearly indicated, with the chapter titles found at the end of each chapter. The transmission lineages of teachings and practices which characterise the *thob yig* genre are inserted throughout the chapters and subsections. The sections begin with a general introduction followed by the discussion of important aspects of subject matter, backed up by numerous quotations from clearly referenced authoritative texts; then the main body (usually containing numerous life stories or legends) follows,

¹⁴²(V2F288a6) *lo rgyus gcig ltar na rgyal mo ma* (F288b) *yin par rgyal po yin bar snang nas lhas smyos sdug bsngal ma dgos la bu gcig ster lo gsungs shing / mi ring ba na bu gcig byung bar smyos grags pa dpal lam yon tan grags pa dang / de'i sras smyos rgyal ba lha nang du grags pa nas rgyal mo las byung ba dang rgyal po las byung ba snga phyi gnyis sngon ma btsan par sems shing /*

¹⁴³ (V2F269a5) *rtsom pa legs bshad kyi dbang du byas na / bka' 'bum gyi po ti'i bsgrigs lugs la mtha' gcig tu ma nges kyang / po ta lar bzhengs pa gnang pa'i po ti'i dbang du byas na /*

with transmission lineages of associated teachings or practices inserted between the subsections. For example:

- 1) Volume 1 F221a4: Legend of Āryā Tārā followed by F231a1: Śloka in praise of the 21 Tārās and lastly F232a5: transmission lineages of teachings and practices associated with Ārya Tārā.
- 2) Volume 2 F16a3: *lo rgyus* of Amitāyus followed by the transmission lineages of associated cycles of teachings and practices on F23a5.

Most often, the sub-sections are *rnam thars* or contain a number of *rnam thars*. These *rnam thars* always begins with a four-line verse dedication to the individual, followed by the main body of the subsection, often containing *rnam thars*. The ending contains the lineage of teachers and the lineages of teachings or practices associated with the individual that were passed down to Dza-ya Paṇḍita. All the *rnam thars* in this *thob yig* follow this structure.

To provide a general idea of how the different sections are structured, below is the example of the *rnam thar* of Sems-dpa' chen-po Dpal-ldan ye-shes (14th century): F26b1-5:

“I pray that the one who was born from the glory of large quantities of the accumulations, who possessed the highest knowledge of scripture and realisation may swiftly make the fortunate ones and complete the accumulations of merit and wisdom.

As for where this Mahāsattva Dpal-ldan ye-shes who is the excellent object of this praise was born, although the scholars and disciples etc did not see his *rnam thar*, they are certain that he studied with *bla mas* and scholars such as Rgyal-sras Thogs-med dpal-bzang-po etc., and because he was trained in the doctrine of the victorious one, he became a great scholar.

He composed many treatises such as the biography of *Rgyal-sras Rin-po-che*, the *Blo sbyong snyan brgyud chen mo* and the stories related to the *Dpe chos rin [chen] spungs [pa]*. He was a great being who acted greatly for the benefit of those who follow the dharma.

As for the transmission lineage of the reading transmission of the *Blo sbyong snyan brgyud chen mo* that was composed by him: the lord Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, the first Panchen Lama Blo-bzang chos-rgyan, after whom there were some lamas whose details I was not able to receive. Then the lama Dge-bshes Bsod-[nams] grags-pa who bestowed it to me. I did not acquire the previous [chronology of the] transmission lineage.”¹⁴⁴

To give another example of the transmission lineages of teachings received by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, below is the final transmission lineage found at the end of the *rnam thar* of Thogs-med dpal-bzang-po (1295-1369):

“As for the reading transmission lineage of the *Ras rgyang pa yi kha chems dris lan gtum mo 'bar ba* of Bshes-gnyen Rgyal-mtshan: Rgyal-sras Thogs-med bzang-po-dpal, Rgya-ma yon-tan-'od, the Mahāsattva 'Phags-pa blo-'phel, Spyān-snga Tshul-khrims-dar, Spyān-snga Bsod-nams lha-dbang, Spyān-snga Ngag-dbang chos-grags rgyal-mtshan, Brag-dgon spyān-snga Gzhon-nu chos-dpal bzang-po, Vajradhara Pha-bong-kha-pa Dpal-'byor lhun-grub, the omniscient Chos-dbyings rang-grol; the great scholar, the victorious lord, the great omniscient Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho dpal-bzang-po; the attendant lama Rinpoche Brtson-'grus rgyal-mtshan, *ācārya* Rin-po-che Blo-bzang don-grub who bestowed it to me Blo-bzang 'phrin-las. Also, I requested it from the one with immeasurable kindness, the *ācārya* Rin-po-che Bsod-nams grags-pa dpal-bzang-po, but as I cannot remember whom he heard it from or requested it from I would have to ask again.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ (V2F26b1) ! // *rlabs chen tshogs gnyis dpal las legs 'khrungs shing / lung dang rtogs pa'i yon tan mchog mnga' bas / skal ldan rnams la bsod nams ye shes tshogs / myur du rdzogs par mdzad la gsol ba 'debs / zhes pa'i bstod yul dam pa sems dpa' chen po dpal ldan ye shes 'di gang du 'khrungs ba'i yul mkhan slob sogs rnam thar ma mthong bsam nges kyang / rgyal sras thogs med dpal bzang po sogs bla ma mkhas pa mang po bsten cing / rgyal ba'i gsung rab la sbyangs pas mkhas pa chen por gyur te / rgyal sras rin po che'i rnam thar / blo sbyong snyan brgyud chen mo / dpe chos rin spungs la mkho ba'i gtam brgyud sogs bstan bcos mang po mdzad cing / bstan 'gro'i don rlabs po che mdzad pa'i skyes chen zhig go / des mdzad pa'i blo sbyong snyan brgyud chen mo'i lung brgyud ni / rje sangs rgyas ye shes / pan chen rin po che blo bzang chos rgyan / bar 'di nas bla ma 'ga' ma nges / bla ma dka' chen bsod grags pa / des bdag la'o / brgyud gong ma rnams ma rnyed //*

¹⁴⁵ (V2F26a3) *bshes gnyen rgyal mtshan dar ras rgyang pa'i kha chems dris lan gtum mo 'bar ba rnams kyi lung legs par thob pa'i brgyud pa ni / rgyal ba'i sras po thogs med bzang po dpal / rgya ma yon tan 'od / byangs sems 'phags pa blo 'phel / spyān snga tshul khrims dar / spyān snga bsod nams lha dbang / spyān snga ngag dbang chos grags rgyal mtshan / brag dgon spyān snga gzhon nu chos dpal bzang po / rdo rje 'chang pho bod kha pa dpal 'byor lhun grub / zur thams cad mkhyen pa chos dbyings rang grol / mkhan chen rgyal dbang thams cad mkhye pa chen po ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho dpal bzang po / bla ma drung pa rin po che brtson 'khrus rgyal mtshan / slob dpon rin po che blo bzang don grub / des bdag blo bzang 'phrin las la gnang ba'o / yang bka' drin mtshungs med slob dpon rin po che bsod nams grags pa dpal bzang po la zhus / khong gis su las gsan pa zhus pa yin kyang dran yul du mi snang bas slar 'tshol //*

The last sentence, in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita states his uncertainty regarding the information he is providing, is another perfect example of his honest and concern with accuracy in composing this *thob yig*, which makes his work a reliable source. Looking at the presentation and language of the transmission lineages, they match the features highlighted by Kramer (2008) in her article on the stylistic features of the *gsan yig* of A-myes-zhabs, and the author is consistent throughout his work in clearly indicating when a section begins and ends.

3.5. Conclusion

Taking into consideration the anomalies of genre classifications and the complexities of applying genres to Tibetan literary works discussed earlier, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* is indeed an example of Tibetan Buddhist writing which illustrate the fluidity of genre classifications. As the second largest example of *thob yig/gsan yigs* recorded to date, like other large examples of its genre, the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* covers an encyclopaedic range of topics of Buddhist learning. Amongst these, 227 *nam thars* that form the structural backbone of the work is the aspect which grants Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* a truly unique characteristic. Evident from the author's colophon, these *nam thars* were consciously composed as the core of the *thob yig* by Dza-ya Paṇḍita as part of his efforts to spread the teachings of the Dge-lugs tradition in Mongolia. As mentioned, these interlinked *nam thars* are intended to be read together as part of a larger narrative; a narrative resembling a "*nam thar* of the Dge-lugs-pas". In order to demonstrate this, we need to consult some of the *nam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

Chapter Four: Dza-ya Paṇḍita's rnam thar of the Fifth Dalai Lama

The following section presents the *rnām thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama with some reference to the *rnām thar* of the First Jetsundampa. The 8 folio '*khruṅgs rabs*' of the Fifth Dalai Lama, which is part of the *rnām thar*, will be discussed in Chapter Five. The *rnām thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama is one selected for analysis from the hundreds in this *thob yig* as it seemed most appropriate due to his prevelance during the 17th century and his influence upon Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his writing.

His *rnām thar* is found in Chapter Nine of the *thob yig*, titled *Rgyal ba tsonḡ kha pa yab sras kyi rnam thar dang ḡsung 'bum so so nas lung thob pa'i tshul brgyud ba dang bcas pa bshad pa'o*, "The explanation how the reading transmission from the *rnām thar* and *ḡsung 'bum* of Tsong-kha-pa and his disciples were obtained, together with the transmission lineages". This chapter concerns the history of the Dge-lugs-pa lineage and alone contains a total of 53 *rnām thars* excluding the '*khruṅgs rabs*', 'pre-birth stories' of the respective masters.

The *rnām thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama will be examined and contextualised from beginning to end with reference to other works with which we find parallels, such as the *BaiDUrya ser po* by Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. The central themes emerging from this analysis are:

- 1) The religious activities of the Fifth Dalai Lama
- 2) An interpretation of *lugs gnyis*, 'the two systems', which in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's exposition places religion before the state
- 3) The emphasis on the Mongols and their place in the Tibetan Buddhist world.

4.1. The Structure of the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama

The *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama totals 37 folios from V3F48a5 to V3F285a5. The structure is as follows:

V3F248a5: *'khrungs rabs* (7 folios)

V3F254a5: Texts and prophecies supporting the Fifth as a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (7 folios)

V3F261a1: Prophecies (3.5 folios)

V3F264a3: Birth, early life, ordination and training (2 folios)

V3F267b1: Victory over the Gtsang-pa Sde-srid, Gushri Khan gifting the 13 myriarchies, and enthronement (1.5 folios)

V3F269a1: Works composed (3 folios)

V3F272a3: Religious activities and disciples (4 folios)

V3F276a1: Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own experiences (2 folios)

V3F278b1: Monasteries founded by the Fifth (3 folios)

V3F281a4: Religious activities (3 folios)

V3F284a2: Entrusting Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho with matters of state, death, miracles after death and erection of the mausoleum (1 folio)

It is clear from the structure that the religious activities and position of the Fifth Dalai Lama receive more attention than other matters such as the controversial political events of the 17th century and other life events.

Throughout this *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, the term *lugs gnyis* is encountered many times. In each instance, it is used to express the superiority of the matters

of religion over matters of state.¹⁴⁶ This “religion before state” interpretation of *lugs gnyis* is a major theme throughout the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and already evident in the opening prayer, which only highlights his religious status:

“I pay homage with my body, speech and mind to the great holder of the doctrine,

who, with a wisdom as vast as the sky,

had thoroughly studied all the infinite sūtras and tantras

and thus, possessed the glorious virtues of scriptures and realisation and was an expert of the good doctrine.”¹⁴⁷

4.2. Prophecies

The first seven folios contain prophecies and statements from sūtras, tantras and treasure texts that validate the Fifth as a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. This section has many parallels in the writings of Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho both in terms of texts quoted¹⁴⁸ and figures mentioned such as Dkon-mchog-'bangs,¹⁴⁹ Rin-chen-mchog¹⁵⁰ and King Srong-btsan sgam-po etc., some of which go back to the *Bka' gdams glegs bam* narratives. Folios V3F258b3 to V3F260a3 are identical to parts of

¹⁴⁶ The “religion before state” interpretation found throughout the *rnam thars* in this *thob yig* will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. See Chapter Six.

¹⁴⁷ (V3F253a5) *nam mkha' ltar yangs rgya chen mkhyen pa yis / rab 'byams mdo rgyud kun la legs sbyangs pas / lung rtogs yon tan dpal mnga' bstan bzang mkhas / bstan 'dzin chen por sgo gsum gus pas 'dud /*

¹⁴⁸ Mahāyānasūtras such as the *Dam chos pad+ma dkar po* (Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarikāsūtra*), *Sgyu ma lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin mdo*, *Za ma tog bkod pa* (Skt. *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*), tantras such as the *Guhyasamājatantra*. *Bka'-gdams-pa* texts such as the *Bka' gdams glegs bam*, Atiśa's *gsung 'bum* and treasure texts such as the *Bka' thang sde lnga* are also mentioned in the *BaiDurya ser po*, but the Sde-srid uses a much more extensive number of quotes and texts for his narrative. See chapter 22 of the *BaiDurya ser po* in Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1989).

¹⁴⁹ Abbreviation of Dkon-mchog gsum-gyi-'bangs, (Skt. Triratnadāsa), an Indian King who is considered a previous incarnation of 'Brom-ston Rgyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas who appears in the *Bka' gdams glegs bam* as well as the *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the *BaiDurya ser po*.

¹⁵⁰ Son of King Dpal-gyi gzi-brjid born from a lotus at the time of the Buddha Gser-'od seng-ge rnam-par rol-pa'i rgyal-po. Appears in the *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the *BaiDurya ser po* by Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho.

chapter 22 of the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po* and contain quotations from texts such as the *Avataṃsakasūtra* and the *Bka' gdams glegs bam*, identifying the Dalai Lama's incarnation lineage with the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.¹⁵¹ It appears that as well as using similar sources to compile his account, certain sections are directly lifted or summarised from the Sde-srid's work. All in all, the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po* dedicates 20 pages to the narrative validating the Dalai Lama as a manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, whereas Dza-ya Paṇḍita achieves this in 7 folios by quoting from the same authoritative texts and passages.

It is interesting to note that when the *BaiDUrya ser po* was completed in 1698, Dza-ya Paṇḍita had already left Tibet, so we must conclude that either Dza-ya Paṇḍita was familiar with an unfinished version of the work during his time in Tibet or the Sde-srid sent Dza-ya Paṇḍita a copy after its completion. There are clues in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan also found in Chapter Nine of the *thob yig*:

“[The Emperor] requested the translation into Mongolian of a part of the biography of the Supreme Ruler (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) composed by the Regent which refers to the [Dalai Lama] passing on to another [Buddha] field. Therefore, Batulai and myself (i.e. Za-ya Pandita) for about 4 days stayed there as the retinue and accomplished [that goal].”

(Breja-Starzyńska 2015:165)

This above event happened in 1697 but does not mention anything about the *BaiDUrya ser po*. However, it indicates further familiarity with the writing of the Sde-srid on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's part. Either way, Dza-ya Paṇḍita knew the Sde-srid personally and held both him and his works in high regard.

¹⁵¹ For detailed studies on the identification of the Fifth Dalai Lama with Avalokiteśvara see Kapstein (1992), van der Kuijp (2005), and Ishihama (2003).

The next 3.5 folios are dedicated to various prophecies foretelling the coming of the Fifth. They appear like abridged versions of the 11 page account of chapter 23 of the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po*.¹⁵² These folios contain prophecies about Za-hor, the birth place of the Fifth Dalai Lama as well as Gushri Khan, quoted from the *Bka' gdams glegs bam*,¹⁵³ the *Bka' thang sde lnga*¹⁵⁴ and *Thang lha'i lung bstan dri med yid kyi gdung sel*.¹⁵⁵ This section ends with some prophecies from texts which were or would soon become major Rnying-ma texts such as the *Tshe sbyin ma'i grubs*,¹⁵⁶ *Yang gsang rgya can*,¹⁵⁷ and prophecies of Padmasambhava. These are not found in the work of the Sde-srid, whose corresponding section ends with prophecies from the *Rgyal po bka' thang*.¹⁵⁸ Although both authors share the same goal of establishing the authenticity of the birthright of the Dalai Lama, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's prophecies which are not found in the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po* are all from Rnying-ma texts, which is quite unusual for a Dge-lugs-pa scholar writing to justify the religious position of the Dalai Lama. Here and elsewhere Dza-ya Paṇḍita makes connections to multiple Tibetan Buddhist traditions, which can only be interpreted as his effort to draw attention to the Fifth Dalai Lama's connections to a wide range of Tibetan Buddhist traditions, a factor we know from the Fifth's own writings.

¹⁵² Pages 370-371 of the 1989 print titled "Gzigs pa lnga ldan gyi sgo nas 'dul zhing gangs can gyi ljongs su sku bltams nas gsan bsam sgom gsum dang / rgyal bstan 'dzin spel gyi dka' spyad mdzad pa mdor bsdu /

¹⁵³ A compilation of biographical accounts and teachings of the Bka'-gdams-pa tradition.

¹⁵⁴ A treasure text discovered in stages by O-rgyan gling-pa in the 14th century. See Blondeau (1971). This section concludes with a quote apparently from the *Btsun mo bka' thang* ending with (F262b4) *rgyal khrims gser gya (gyi) gnya' shing lci la sbram : chos khrims dar gyi mdud pa lta bur dam* : "The secular law will be extensive and strong like a golden yoke. The religious law will be firm like a silk knot". However, the Sde-srid quotes the same passage and clarifies that it is from the *Rdo rje gling pa'i gter lung* (P373, chapter 22 of the *BaiDUrya ser po*).

¹⁵⁵ A series of prophecies found within the *Rig 'dzin srog sgrub*, a collection of Rdzogs-chen teachings of the Rnying-ma order revealed by Lha-btsun nam-mkha' 'jigs-med (1597-1650).

¹⁵⁶ *'Phags ma rid bzhin zla ba tshe sbyin ma'i grubs thabs snying por dril ba 'chi med bdud rtsi'i gter mdzod* later included in 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas's (1813-1899) *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo*.

¹⁵⁷ *Yang gsang rgya can* was later included in 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros mtha'-yas's (1813-1899) *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo*.

¹⁵⁸ Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1698:371).

4.3. Early Life

Dza-ya Paṇḍita begins the life of the Fifth with an account of the miraculous visions, dreams and auspicious signs that appeared before and at the time of his birth:

“At the time of his birth, in his mother’s dream, as [she] was attempting to leave through a window, it was difficult due to the [pregnant] state her body. A woman wearing beautiful adornments and clothes appeared and pulled her and so she was able to leave [through the window] comfortably. When she awoke, her body still felt extremely relaxed.”¹⁵⁹

A similar dream is recorded in the *rang rnam* of the Fifth Dalai Lama but is attributed to Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho of Bde-chen, who was the treasurer of the Dalai Lama’s family: “around the time of my birth, Sangye Gyatso also dreamt that because of his height he had difficulties when he tried to get out of a window, and from outside of the window a well-dressed woman pulled him out” (Karmay 2014:40) which suggests Dza-ya Paṇḍita did not, at least not for this section, consult the *rang rnam* of the Fifth.

The account of his early life is very short and presented in a hagiographical style emphasising his realised nature from an early age:

“By the power of the disposition of accomplishing learning and discipline in all his [previous] lifetimes, he slept sitting up from a young age and whispered prayers continuously day and night.”¹⁶⁰

The Fifth Dalai Lama himself, on the other hand, is rather reserved about memories of his past lives and often denies them, stating for example: “This year I was four and it was the end of the Iron-monkey year (1620). As I did not have any memory up to now, all has

¹⁵⁹ (V3F264b2) *bltams pa'i tshe yum gyi mnal lam du skar khung gcig la phebs par brtsams pa na / sku lus kyi stabs nas phebs dka' ba la / bud med rgyan cha shin tu mchor mo zhig gis then byung bas sku lus bde ba dang bcas phebs thub pa dang / sad tshe sku lus kyang shin tu bde ba'i nyams byung zhes gsungs /*

¹⁶⁰ (V3F264b4) *skye ba thams cad du mkhas shing btsun la grub pa'i bag chags kyi mthus / chung ngu nas tsog por bzhugs pa dang / zhal 'don shab shib nyin mtshan khor yug tu mdzad pa byung /*

been stated according to what other people had said” (Karmay, 2014:45). In contrast, regarding the First Panchen Lama’s visit to Sna-dkar-rtse, Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes:

“[the young Fifth Dalai Lama] said he knew the [Panchen Lama] had been through many hardships [in the past] and recollected many other events of his former lives.”¹⁶¹

“Furthermore, as it has been said: “Due to gaining mastery after studying for many lifetimes...” so, in his previous lives, he had manifested as a scholar and had realised all the dharmas, and he could remember past events as if they had happened yesterday.”¹⁶²

These accounts enhance the transcendental nature of the Dalai Lama outlined in the previous folios containing the narratives of his identification with Avalokiteśvara and “verify” the prophecies foretelling his birth.

4.4. *Controversies*

The political events surrounding the recognition of the young Dalai Lama such as his secret passage to Sna-dkar-tse due to opposition from the Gtsang faction and the Karma Bka'-rgyud (Shakabpa, 1967:101) are completely “glossed over”. Instead, the folios that directly narrate the life of the Fifth are hagiographical in style and predominantly highlight his religious accomplishments and accompanying miracles:

“Furthermore, he visited Dga'-ldan, Gsang-sngags-mkhar, Se-ra, 'Bras-[spungs], Skyor-lung, Yar-klungs, Rgyal, Ra-sgreng and Southern Mongolia and after converting them, he turned the great wheel of many teachings for the laity who had gathered there, such as the *Bka' gdams glegs bam* and other teachings according to what was each individually desired. The gods showered a rain of flowers from the sky in front of them all.

¹⁶¹ (V3F265a6) *paN chen thams cad mkhyen pa dang dka' chen byung gsung ba sogs sngon gnas rjes dran bsam gyis mi khyab pa gnang /*

¹⁶² (V3F266a3) *de yang / tshes rabs mang por mkhas par rab sbyangs pas / ces sogs gsungs pa ltar / sku skye pa snga ma rnams su mkhas pa'i tshul bstan nas / chos thams cad thugs su chud zin cing / sngon gyi gnas kha sang gi dus bzhin du dran na'ang /*

Spheres of five colored rainbows appeared everywhere as if it was the natural state of reality.”¹⁶³

Even the account of the Gtsang war has a place amongst the most politically significant events of the 17th century, which is presented in the context of religion:

“He was given the name Ngag-gi dbang-phyug Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho and was enthroned as the crown ornament of the monks donning saffron robes of the snowy land of Tibet.

Before that, Arsalang, son of Tshog-thu who had the wrong view of opposing the teachings of the second Buddha [Tsong-kha-pa] arrived in Tibet together with his large army. He saw that the Tshog-thu father and son possessed the 10 defects [of an enemy of the dharma] and deserved to be destroyed. So, in order to increase happiness and peace in Tibet and to protect the teachings of the second Buddha [Tsong-kha-pa], he pacified the anger of the 'Gong-po Ar-gtad etc., and performed suitable ritual actions [for subduing or destroying hostile forces] and so, excellent signs appeared.

Arsalang, together with his company, were corrupted by the Zhwa-dmar rab-'byams-pa etc., so before meeting him [the Dalai Lama] they had decided not to carry out the custom of reverence. However, as soon as they met face-to-face, his previous resolve disintegrated like [trying to squeeze] sand into dough. So, he prostrated and requested blessings etc.

Not long afterwards, the lord Gushri arrived in Dbus Gtsang after having annihilated Tshog-thu and his retinue [of the army] so that only their name remained (i.e. they were completely destroyed). They made limitless offerings of various objects and offered hundreds of thousands of *srangs* of silver. He [the Fifth Dalai Lama] bestowed desired teachings to the lord and his retinue and bestowed the title Bstan-'dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po to Gushri Khan in accordance with the prophecies, and then Bstan-'dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po returned home.

In Mdo-smad, Don-yod of Beri etc. had wrong contentions (i.e. the Beri King was a Bonpo) towards the general teachings of the Buddha, especially that of the second Buddha [Tsong-kha-pa]. After seeing that they possessed the 10 qualities of the enemies of the dharma, he realised that they needed to be destroyed on the grounds of great compassion. So, in Phan-bde legs-bshad-gling monastery, he performed the ritual and practice of the

¹⁶³ (V3F266b3) *de yang dga' ldan / gsang sngags mkhar / ser 'bras skyor lung / yar klungs / rgyal / ra sgren / hor nang sogs zhabs kyis bcags shing / skya ser mang du 'tshogs pa rnams la / bka' gdams glegs bam sogs rang rang gi 'dod pa dang mtshungs pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo rgya chen po bskor cing / de dag gi tsha'ng nam mkha' nas lha rnams kyi me tog gi char 'bebs pa / 'ja' tshon kha dog sna lnga' gur sogs ni chos nyid bzhin du thams cad la byung /*

Mañjuśrī with the subduing *mudrā*. Because of invoking acts of black magic [of destruction] and [the Beri King's] conduct of innumerable deluded acts, only his name remained [i.e. they were completely annihilated].

Similarly, although he repeatedly sent messengers to Gtsang saying they should act in whichever way was best for governing peacefully according to good customs, because of the power of worldly arrogance and the advice of corrupt ministers it was defied.

Bstan-'dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po together with his troops arrived in Byang-rgyab. The Sde-srid Rin-po-che, performing the dance of human existence like Viṣṇu, went to intervene in person, and as in the story of the 77000 Śākyas who were killed by Virūḍhaka,¹⁶⁴ the Mongolian troops died in Gtsang. If the Mongolian army had not intervened, as a consequence, the teaching of the Second Buddha Tsong-kha-pa would have been rejected. So, the lord himself made a stupa with materials of great repelling powers and by performing the destruction rites based on the Mañjuśrī with the subduing *mudrā* etc., Gtsang was reduced to a mere name [i.e. lost its power].

Both the *mchod yon* [the Sde-srid and Gushri Khan] offered the 13 myriarchies of Tibet to this lord [the Fifth] as his religious domain. This lord also brought all of Dbus Gtsang under discipline and set them on the path of highest rebirths and liberation.”¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ King Virūḍhaka of Kosala was contemporary to the Buddha and massacred the Śākya clan after usurping his father Prasenajit's throne.

¹⁶⁵ (V3F267b1) *ngag gi dbang phyug blo bzang rgya mtsho zhes gsol te gangs can ngur smrig 'dzin pa rnams kyi cod pan du mnga' gsol / de gong du rje rgyal ba gnyis pa'i bstan pa la log par 'khu ba'i chog thu'i ar sa lang dmag dpung gtos che ba dang bcas bod du 'byor par / chog thu pha bu bcas pa zhing bcu tshad pa'i bsgral byar gzigs nas / bed kham s kyi bde skyid spel ba dang / rje rgyal ba gnyis pa'i bstan pa rin po che bsrung ba'i slad du / 'gong po ar gtad sogs sdang sems zhi byed dang / mngon spyod kyi las kyang ci rigs mdzad pas rtags khyad par can byung / ar sa lang 'khor bcas zhwa dmar rab 'byams pa sogs kyis rgyud bsad pas / rje 'di ma mjal gong tu / mjal ba tsam ma gtogs phyag sogs mi byed pa'i khrims bcas kyang / zhal gyi dkyil 'khor mjal ma thag dam bca' bye ma'i chang bu ltar zhig ste phyag btsal / byin rlabs zhu ba sogs byas / mi ring bar dpon po gu shrIs tshog thu 'khor bcas ming gi lhag mar byas nas / dbus gtsang du 'byor / zang zing 'bul ba dngul srang khri phrag mang po dang bcas mtha' yas pa phul / dpon po 'khor bcas la 'dod chos dang / gu shrI dpon po rang la bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal po'i lung las bka' gnam ste / bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal po phyir phebs / mdo smad du be ri don yon sogs spyir rgyal ba'i bstan pa / khyad par rje rgyal ba gnyis pa'i bstan pa la log par 'khu ba'i sems ldan de dag zhing bcu'i yul du dgongs nas / snying rje chen po'i sgo nas phan bde (F268a) legs bshad gling du 'jam dpal phyag rgya zil gnon gyi chog sgrigs phyag len rnams btsugs te mngon spyod kyi las / gdug gis dad bye rmongs kyi las rab 'byams gnam bas de dag ming gi lhag ma tsam du gyur / de mtshungs nga sor gtsang par yang thabs du ma'i sgo nas bde 'jags kyi gzhung bsgrigs lugs legs lam gang che gnam dgos pa'i pho nya yang yang gnam yang / 'jig rten dregs pa'i dbang dang / blon po ngan pa'i kha dbang gis ma nyan pa'i rgyur brten / bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal po sogs dmag dpung bcas byang rgyab tu 'byor / khyab 'jug mi'i srid pa'i zlos gar bsgyur ba sde srid rin po che mdun chings la phebs kyang / 'phags skyes pos shAkya bdun khri bdun stong bsad pa'i gnam brgyud ltar sog dmag gtsang phyogs su shor / gtsang nas kyang sog dmag gi nus pa mngon du ma gyur na / le lan rje rgyal ba gnyis pa'i bstan pa la log pa'i sems 'chang bar brten rje 'dis kyang rdzas bzlog stobs chen gyi mchod rten byas te / 'jam dpal phyag rgya zil gnon sogs kyi sgo nas las sbyor gnam bas gtsang ba ming gi lhag mar gyur / mchod yon gnyis nas bod khri sgor bcu gsum rje 'di'i mchod gzhis su*

It is interesting to note that there is absolutely no mention of Gushri Khan's interception of Arsalang or any reference to the internal disagreements within the Dge-lugs-pa faction (Shakabpa 1967:104). Instead, Arsalang's change of heart is attributed entirely to his religious aspirations; just by his meeting with the Dalai Lama, he is said to have developed faith for the Dge-lugs-pas. This account parallels the life of the Buddha in which his first five disciples resolve not to honour him but are converted merely by meeting him face to face.¹⁶⁶ Dza-ya Paṇḍita's tendency to use the life story of the Buddha as a model for the *rnam thars* he writes, including his own, is worth pointing out now but will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six. Buddhism, or rather "faith", is understood here purely from the Dge-lugs-pa context of an interpretation of *lugs gnyis* for which Buddhism provides the ultimate framework. Arsalang's "wrong views", the "wrong contentions" of the Bonpo Beri king, and the "wrong attitude" of the Gtsang faction are explained as "opposing the teachings of the second Buddha Tsong-kha-pa".

The events indeed correlate if we compare Dza-ya Paṇḍita's account to the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rang rnam*. The Dalai Lama writes: "The army of Arsalang, son of Chogthu, consisting of about ten thousand soldiers, arrived at Dam... Zhalngo consulted Phabongkha, who said the situation was risky, but it could be averted through rituals... Arsalang intended to go and meet the Garpa (Karmapa) at Tshurphu, but leaders among his own men, who were very religious, were terribly worried and suddenly left for Dolgyedra. So Arsalang was embarrassed. The objective of the Zhamar and his men evaporated like a rainbow. For the Gelug side, it proved to be good... Yeshe Gyatsho came as an agent of Arsalang to say that Arsalang wanted me to come to Lhasa. That

phul / rje 'dis kyang dbus gtsang gis thams cad zhabs kyis bcags shing skye bo thams cad mngon mtho ngas (nges) legs kyi dpal la bkod /

¹⁶⁶ See the *Ariyapariyesanāsutta*. Sutta 26 of the Majjhima Nikāya. Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi (2009:172).

evening I went to Gaden Khangsar in Lhasa. The next day, when we met each other, the Thaiji (Arsalang) suddenly began by prostrating before me and asking for blessings although he and his men were said to have agreed among themselves not to prostrate” (Karmay 2014:121-123). However, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s version heavily stresses the importance of the teachings of Tsong-kha-pa as the catalyst for Arsalang’s change of heart and completely glosses over the historical causes behind the events with a “Buddhist Glaze”.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s Buddhist glossing of political events is not unique to the *rnam thar* of the Fifth. For example, Bareja-Starsynska, in her study of the *rnam thar* of the First Jetsundampa noted that “the narrative of the Jetsundampa’s biography by his disciple Zaya Paṇḍita uses Buddhist argumentation to explain the conflict between Galden Boshügtü and Zanabazar” (Bareja-Starzynska 2015:70). Before narrating the events that led up to the Oirad and Khalkha war, Dza-ya Paṇḍita recounts Devadatta’s attempts to harm the Buddha, which Bareja-Starzynska rightly noted as the parallel between the disputes between Galden and the Jetsundampa (ibid.).¹⁶⁷

Thinkers such as Ricoeur, Heidegger and Weber saw narratives, historical and otherwise as a means of understanding the world (Dowling 2011:55). Narratives are created by people who are born into a world of existing narratives who then go on to create and recreate narratives from the existing ones according to their respective political, historical and social conditionings. Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s narrative of the 17th century events surrounding the Dge-lugs-pa rise to power is one where he deliberated the events through a religious lens for a particular purpose: to portray his tradition, the Dge-lugs-pas and their

¹⁶⁷ The Oirad-Khalkha war and the involvement of the Jebsundamba and Galdan will be analysed in Chapter Six of this thesis.

leader the Fifth Dalai Lama, as the most religiously excellent amongst the Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

4.5 Religious Activities

The next three folios contain lists of the Fifth Dalai Lama's writings and are filled with condensed text titles, which is fitting as the work is part of a *thob yig* that primarily serves to preserve transmission lineages of texts and teachings. Dza-ya Paṇḍita remarks:

“In regard to his [textual] compositions: although it is not absolutely clear how the books of his collected writings have been compiled, in terms of the books in the Potala there are...”¹⁶⁸

This suggests that when this was composed between 1698 and 1702, the writings of the Fifth were not yet published as a collection. The folios devoted to the writings of the Fifth alone are longer than those covering his actual life events and the politically significant events such as the Gtsang war. Their purpose here again supports the observation that it is Dza-ya Paṇḍita's objective to demonstrate the religious accomplishments and therefore the religious position of the Fifth above all his other aspects.

The next four folios contain accounts of the religious activities of the Fifth such as the teachings he bestowed upon notable individuals at prominent monasteries and the lists of his main disciples:

“In terms of turning the wheel of dharma: outwardly, in his 9th year (aged eight), because he was invited by Thub-pa tha'i-ji, he bestowed the empowerment of the *Guruyoga* to the assemblies of Se-ra and 'Bras-spungs in Lhasa. At 'Bras-spungs, longevity empowerments [were bestowed] privately on Thub-pa tha'i-ji.

¹⁶⁸ (V3F269a6) *rtsom pa legs bshad kyi dbang du byas na / bka' 'bum gyi po ti'i bsgrigs lugs la mtha' gcig tu ma nges kyang / po ta lar bzhengs pa gnang pa'i po ti'i dbang du byas na /*

Afterwards, in 'Bras-spungs, he foremost bestowed the *Vajrāvali* upon [those of] the *Tngri* appointed lineage¹⁶⁹ of Chinggis Khaan, and the lineage of the dharma kings of Tibet, the successive higher and lower monastic seats of the lineage of 'Khon, the Phag-mo gru-pa of the lineage of the oracles, the Rlangs family, the 'Bri-gung of the Skyr family and the glorious Stag-lung, all divinely appointed clans, those who are of high lineage status, and the one whose lineage was established by their high status and strength, the lord of the high skies, the Bstan-'dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po [Gushri Khan] who is an emanation of Mañjuśrī etc. and the royal lineages of China and Mongolia together with the many nobilities of Tibet, the great lamas and the high officials.

Furthermore, he bestowed in general the text of the *Sgrub thabs brgya rtsa*, *Snar thang brgya rtsa* etc. and specifically the instructions, empowerments, reading transmissions and practice instructions upon huge numbers of Chinese, Tibetans and Mongols who were residents in the surrounding areas as well as those who spontaneously gathered at the Potala, Lhasa, Zan-g.yang mi-'gyur lhun grub, Khra-'brug monastery in G.yon-ru, Dga'-ldan, 'Bras-spungs, Se-ra, Thog-chen-gling, Bkra-shis lhun-po, Chos-'khor-rgyal,¹⁷⁰ Zha-lu, E-re-ngo, Bsam 'grub-rtse in Gtsang, and to the nomads along the road east towards China."¹⁷¹

In these passages, Dza-ya Paṇḍita elevates the position of the Mongols by placing Chinggis Khaan and his royal lineage before the “lineage of the dharma kings of Tibet” and the Tibetan royal clans. His tendency to insert the significance of Chinggis Khaan, his

¹⁶⁹ *Möngke-Tngri*, ‘eternal heaven’ is the highest pre-Buddhist god of the Mongols, often associated with the blue sky or the heavens. In the *Secret History of the Mongols*, Chinggis Khaan states that his mission to conquer was appointed to him by *Möngke-Tngri*. This led to the later interpretation of all Chinggisid lineages to be legitimised by *Tngri*, which is why the term *Möngke Tngri-yin kücündür* “by the power of the eternal heaven” appears on all Mongolian imperial seals. See Heissig & Walther (1980:47-65).

¹⁷⁰ The place where the First Dalai Lama was born, N.E. of Lhasa.

¹⁷¹ (V3F272a5) *chos 'khor bskor ba'i dbang du byas na / phyi ltar dgung lo dgu par thub pa tha'i jis gdan drangs ba'i lha sar ser 'bras kyi tshogs su bla ma'i rnal 'byor dang / 'bras spungs su thub pa tha'i jir sger tu tshe dbang gnang ba nas bzungs rigs kyi mtho ba gnam (gnang) jing gir (gis) dang /gangs can gyi sjongs (ljongs) su bod chos rgyal gyi gdung rus / 'khon gyi gdung gdan sa gong 'og gi zhal ngon rim / rlangs lha gigs kyi gdung dpal phag mo grub pa / skyur 'bri gung dang stag lung gzi / 'od gsal lha (F272b) las chad pa'i gnyos kyi mtshon rigs rus mngon par mtho ba dang / stobs kyi mtho ba gnam pa'i dbang phyug bstan 'dzin chos kyi rgyal po sogs rgya hor gyi rgyal rigs / bod kyi che dgu bla chen dpon chen dang bcas pa ji snyed dang / 'bras spungs su jing gir gnam gyi gdung du bltams pa'i 'jam dbyangs sprul skus dbus bar rdo rje 'phreng ba / gzhan yang gru 'dzin / lha ldan / zan g.yang mi 'gyur lhun grub / g.yo ru khra 'brug gdan sa chen po dga' ldan / 'bras spungs / ser thog chen gling / bkra shis lhun po / chos 'khor rgyal / zha lu gser bkad / e re ngo / gtsang stod bsam 'grub rtse / shar rgya nag gi yul phebs lam dang bcas gnas nges med du sgrub thabs brgya rgyam (rtsa) snar thang brgya rtse sogs spyi bka' dang sgos bka' dbang lung 'khrid sogs thun mong ba'i chos kyi de dang der gnyug mar gnas pa dang glo bur du lhags pa sogs rgya bod hor sog ris su ma zad pa'i du ma dang /*

bloodline and the Mongols into the narrative is a theme maintained throughout the *thob yig* and will be examined in more detail in Chapter Six.

The next section deals with the notable disciples of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Dza-ya Paṇḍita first establishes that the Fifth was the teacher of great scholars from many prominent Tibetan Buddhist traditions. It is of interest to note that the Rnying-mas are absent in name, and instead implied in the phrase “those who had accomplished the old tantras”:

“As for his fortunate disciples, nowadays, in the northern land of Tibet that is surrounded by snowy mountains, [they are] great scholars and great men who became great saints, monks and scholars of every background: Sa-skya, Dge-lugs-pa, Karma Bka'-brgyud and 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud, those who had accomplished of the old and new tantras. All of them pay homage to the lotus feet of this supreme venerable one. There is not a single person who does not have connections to him or not received teachings of the supreme dharma [from him].”¹⁷²

Though he draws attention to the Fifth Dalai Lama’s connection to many traditions, the author’s reluctance to refer to the Rnying-ma by name reflects his efforts to comply with the Dalai Lama’s own attitude: non-sectarian, but having to take a step back from the Rnying-mas on political grounds. The exact words of advice against the Rnying-mas are found later in this *rnam thar*. Meanwhile, the passage continues:

“For some, he was no other than their Vajrācārya or their teacher. If I were to summarise the most important ones:

The supreme *nirmāṇakāya* manifestation, the lord of the teachings, the omniscient glorious Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes; many Dga'-ldan khri-pas, chiefly, he was the main teacher of 'Jam-dbyangs dkon-mchog chos-'phel who took up the golden throne of the second Buddha, the great Tsong-kha-pa; his own spiritual son, the lord of lamas, Pha-bong-kha Mkhas-grub 'Khon-ston Dpal-'byor lhun-grub; Zha-lu mkhan-chen Rin-

¹⁷² (V3F273a3) *deng sang gangs yis bskor ba'i byang phyogs 'di na / sa dge kar 'brug / gsang sngags gsar rnying la sogs pa 'grub mtha' ris su ma chad pa'i mkhas btsun grub pa'i dbang phyug tu gyur pa'i bla chen mi chen rnams las rje btsun dam pa'i 'di'i zhabs pad la mi 'dud pa dang / dam pa'i chos kyi 'blel ('brel) pa ma gsan pa ni gcig kyang med de /*

chen bsod-nams mchog-grub; the emanation of Vairocana Gter-bdag gling-pa etc. and many other supreme teachers.

His chief disciple [Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho], since a young age, he guarded [the realm] with love and compassion based on *lugs gnyis* and endeavoured for the great deed for making whichever of the many great kings of all the lands act for the benefit of the beings after taking up government. He was a chief disciple and a lineage holder who properly executed the matters of religion and state. In order to see the teachings [carry on] into many later *bskal pas*, he educated many scholars and siddhas in China, Tibet and Mongolia. He is no other than the Sde-srid Rin-po-che Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho.”¹⁷³

It is noteworthy that the inclusion of Gter-bdag gling-pa suggests that Dza-ya Paṇḍita was ultimately attempting to portray the centrality of the Fifth Dalai Lama for the whole of Tibetan Buddhism. As for the description of the Sde-srid, it places him as supreme amongst the disciples of the Fifth Dalai Lama and validates his life and religio-political activities in the context of the “religion before state” interpretation of *lugs gnyis* maintained throughout this narrative. Dza-ya Paṇḍita here demonstrates his respect for the Sde-srid as a great master and ruler who solely acted for the benefit of spreading the teachings of the Buddha.

He then lists the main disciples of the Fifth, decisively listing the Mongolian disciples according to their Mongolian homeland and separately from the Tibetans, which establishes the Mongols as a distinct part of the Dge-lugs-pa Tibetan Buddhist world. He writes:

¹⁷³ (V3F273a5) *la la'i rdo rje slob dpon / la la'i mkhan por ma gyur pa med cing gtso che ba rags rim tsam smos na / mchog gi sprul pa'i sku bstan pa'i bdag po pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes dpal bzang po dang / rgyal ba gnyis pa tsong kha pa chen po'i gser khrir phebs pa'i sku gzhogs nyid kyi dbu blar gyur pa'i 'jam dbyangs dkon mchog chos 'phel gyis dbus dge ldan khri pa mang po (F273b) dang / nyis (nyid) kyi dbu bla'i gtso bo pha bong kha ba mkhas grub 'khon ston dpal 'byor lhun grub / zha lu mhan chen rin chen bsod nams mchog grub / pai ro'i sprul pa gter bdag gling pa sogs yongs 'dzin dam pa mang po dang / thugs sras ni sku na phra mo nas lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas thugs brtse bas bskyangs shing chos srid gnyis ka yongs su gtang pa'i sras kyi thu bo brgyud 'dzin chen po ni thogs med bskal pa (du) mar gsungs ltar kyi rgya bod hor gsum du mkhas shing grub pa brnyes pa mang po dang / sa'i khyon la dbang bsgyur ba'i rgyal po chen po rnams su yang srid du ma bzhes nas bstan 'gro'i don rlabs po che mdzad pa'i sde srid rin po che sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 'di nyid yin cing /*

“Additionally, there are innumerable masters such as the master
Vajradhara 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa,

the master of the high mountain hermitage Dga'-ldan Byams-pa rin-chen
and

his personal attendant master Rin-po-che 'Jams-dbyangs grags-pa etc.,

the great monk Rgyal-ba 'phags-pa-lha,

Rta-tshag Rje-drung Rin-po-che,

De-mo sprul-sku,

Sems-dpa' chen-po,

'Brug-pa sprul-sku,

Gnas-rnying zhabs-drung,

Rgyal-sras Rin-po-che etc. and other great Tibetan lamas – there were
many.

From the Kingdom of Khalkha, there is the lamp of the teachings of the
North, the supreme emanation, the glorious [First Jetsundampa] Blo-bzang
bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan,

Stong-bsgor's emanation 'Jam-dbyangs Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las
rgya-mtsho,

the lord of the royal temple, Dpal-'byor rgya-mtsho's reincarnation Blo-
bzang bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho,

Byams-pa sprul-sku,

the lord Legs tshogs-lhun-grub's reincarnation, Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin
rgyal-mtshan etc. and many other great monks.

Also from Oirad: The reincarnation of the Skyid-shod dharma lord Bstan-
'dzin rgya-mtsho, the treasury of empowerments, transmissions and oral
instructions, the Zhabs-drung Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-
las chos-dbang grags-pa'i-bsde,

Dben-sa sprul-sku,

the former and latter reincarnations of Se-chen rab-'byams-pa Khutugtu ¹⁷⁴ who was reborn as the adopted son of O-chir-thu Khan,

Apalas's son Rgyas-pa bla-ma etc. and many other Oirad Lamas.

As for those who obtained the profound teachings from this lama and didn't fully realise them, they are countless. Although it is difficult to completely realise full understanding, there are almost 1000 who did realise."¹⁷⁵

The mention of his major Mongolian disciples alongside yet separately from the prominent Tibetan disciples puts the Mongolian scholars on the same plane as the Tibetans. During a period in which Mongolian monk-scholars were not yet in the religious-political loci of the wider Central Asian Tibetan Buddhist world, this is an innovation on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's part and yet another means by which he weaves the Mongols into the fabric of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition.

4.6. Dza-ya Paṇḍita's First-Hand Experiences

The next two folios are devoted to Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own memories about the Dalai Lama. The episode he recalls foremost carries implications for Dza-ya Paṇḍita himself:

¹⁷⁴ Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662).

¹⁷⁵ (V3F274a4) *gzhan yang dpon slob rdo rje 'chang 'jam dbyangs grags pa / ri khrod dga' ldan slob dpon byams pa rin chen / zham ring pa slob dpon rin po che 'jam dbyangs grags pa sogs mtha' klas / bla chen la rgyal ba 'phags pa lha / rta tshag rje drung rin po che / de mo sprul sku / sems dpa' chen po / 'brug pa sprul sku / gnas rnying zhabs drung / sgyal (rgyal) sras rin po che sogs bod kyi bla chen mang po dang / khal kha'i rgyal khams nas byang phyog pa stan pa'i sgron me mchog gi sprul pa'i sku blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po / stong bsgor sprul pa'i sku 'jam dbyangs blo bzang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las rgya mtsho / rgyal khang rtse pa dpal 'byor rgya mtsho'i sprul sku blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho / byams pa sprul sku / rje dpon legs tshogs lhun (F274a) grub kyi sprul sku blo bzang bstan 'dzin rgyal mtshan sogs bla chen mang po dang / o'i rod nas kyang / skyid shod chos rje bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho'i sprul sku dbang lung man ngag gi gter mdzod zhabs drung rin po che ngag dbang bstan 'dzin 'phrin las chos dbang grags pa'i sde / dben sa sprul sku / se chen rab 'byams pa khu thug thu sku skye snga phyi gnyis o chir thu rgyal po'i sres tshab sku skye / a pa las kyi bu rgyas pa bla ma sogs o'i rod kyi bla ma mang po'ang snang ngo / rje bla ma chen po'i zab chos thob pa las nyams len med pa ni grangs kyis mi lang / nyams rtogs dngos su shar ba dka' na'ang nyams len ba stong ngu nye ba dang /*

“Thus, as for the spiritual sons of this great omniscient one who are beyond expression like the stars of the sky or the dust of the earth,¹⁷⁶ for me, a disciple with the lowest cognition, it is not suitable to be counted among them on account of my realisation. However, based on the connection through good aspirational prayers in past lives, I relied on him after meeting him for the first time in person and he sustained a view of me that was above my own value. Between my renunciation and *śramaṇera* ordination, I requested the empowerment of Amitāyus and the nine deities of the system of Jetāri¹⁷⁷ and many [practice] permissions such as that of the protectors of the three lineages, many scriptural transmissions headed by the middling *Lam rim* to be bestowed twice.

When I was in my 36th year, in the [fire] snake year (1677), when I was extremely sick, the Sde-srid looked after me and when I was going to meet the great protector and patron the venerable one (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama), he enquired about my sickness. Afterwards, he said things like “I hope you will work for the benefit of the dharma in Mongolia” and “I am as happy as a mother” etc. By his kindness of delivering me into the refuge of the protective retinue of his tutelary deity, up to now and as long as I live, I maintain the attitude of virtuous practice and it came to be just as I had requested it from the lama.

On the first day of the 5th Mongolian month of the earth male sheep year known as Don-grub (1679), before I went back to Mongolia, at the time when I went for blessings to the venerable one, during tea, I happened to sit together with some lamas and some female Oirad rulers in the same ranks of seat. After the seated ranks had dispersed, I paid homage to the golden body of the venerable Rin-po-che, he gave me an original document,¹⁷⁸ a lock of rolled up hair and took off the monk robes from his body and gave them to me as an act of kindness.

He bestowed upon me the title¹⁷⁹ “Dza-ya Paṇḍita Khutuḡtu”, edicts, seal etc. and a position amongst his inner circle. There were none others like me amongst the attendants of this venerable one. From mid-morning until dinner time, during a period longer than two tea offerings, he firstly bestowed upon me the scriptural transmission of Tsong-kha-pa’s *Guruyoga*. Afterwards, taking the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Se-chen Rab-'byams-pa Khutuḡtu¹⁸⁰ as an example, because I had the wish to act for the benefit of the Dharma in Mongolia, he told me many stories of how misfortunes will occur if one acts according to the teachings of the Rnying-ma lineage.

¹⁷⁶ *drig pa* must be a misspelling for *dreg pa* “dirt” which has been translated here as “dust”.

¹⁷⁷ The Blue Annals mention Jetāri as one of the teachers of Atiśa who instructed him in the *Prajñāpāramitā* and the Vajrayāna (Roerich 1976:243). *The Encyclopaedia of Chinese Buddhism* gives his dates as 950-1000 and states that he was a Bengali Mahāsiddha who was a scholar of Madhyamika and a contemporary of Atiśa. (chinesebuddhismencyclopedia.com 2016).

¹⁷⁸ *Ma dang* – I took this as an original document but of what it is unclear.

¹⁷⁹ Tibetan transcription of the Mongolian term *cholo* meaning “title”.

¹⁸⁰ This likely refers to the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho (1599-1662).

He gave me advice such as “at the time when practitioners of that sort appear, oppress them and do what is beneficial for the teachings of the great Tsong-kha-pa” etc. and other instructions of the two systems that were close to his heart which was like a precious official authorisation – these he bestowed extensively with great compassion.

Then, after dinner, without me requesting it, he bestowed upon me the blessings of the 13 Yamāntakas and the oral empowerment of the *Bar chad kun sel*. In the evening, I gave the venerable Sde-srid the highest outer offerings of a golden statue of the Buddha, a throne together with the back cushion, a thangka of the 13 Yamāntakas, 3 monks robes and a cloak, robes and [meditation] cushions etc. and other well-made monks essentials, a good horse together with the saddle, a golden trunk, woollen cloth and other objects of great magnitude.

The Sde-srid also bestowed on me a well-made golden image of Tsong-kha-pa, a thangkha of the sixteen elders,¹⁸¹ dharma robes and robes, a golden trunk, balls of molasses packed in goat skin, cloths etc. and innumerable gifts.

Then, on the 5th day of that month, during solitary meditation I met him [the Fifth] and requested the hand and feet blessings. When I requested a composition of stanzas for the *tham phud* offering, I was bestowed three stanzas of dedicational lines for offering the *tham phud* to the Jo-bo.¹⁸²

As before, when I arrived in Tibet for the first time from Mongolia, I requested prayers for being accepted as his [the Dalai Lamas] disciple for all subsequent lifetimes and he kindly agreed. He also bestowed on me a composition of a two-verse *śloka* etc.¹⁸³ I have no way of repaying his kindness according to the two systems. So, I prayed to become his disciple until enlightenment and to practice according to his instructions and please him.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ The 16 *arhats* [tib. *gnas rten bcu drug*, skt. *sthavira*].

¹⁸² The actual stanzas are found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* as well as the *gsung 'bum* of the Fifth Dalai Lama covered in Chapter Two.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ (V3F275b6) *de ltar thams cad mkhyen pa chen po* (F276) 'di nyid kyi sras slob nam mkha'i skar tshogs dang sa'i drig [dreg] pa lta bu brjod kyis mi lang ba'i slob ma rnams kyi tha shal dngos cag lung rtogs kyi yon tan gang gi sgo nas kyang de rnams kyi gras su chud pa'i 'os ma yin kyang sngon gyi smon lam bzang po'i 'brel pa la brten nas thog mar zhal gyi dkyil 'khor mjal ba nas bzungs te rang 'khos las lhag pa'i spyang bskyangs gnam zhing rab byung nas bsnyen rdzogs kyi bar tshar gnyis dang / dzetA ri'i lugs kyi tshe dpag med lha dgu'i dbang / rigs gsum mgon po'i rjes gnam sogs rjes gnam du ma dang / byang chub lam rim 'bring po'i ljags lung tshar gnyis kyis gtsos pa'i ljags lung du ma zhus / rang lo so drug pa sprul lor nad tshabs chen pos btab pa'i skabs su / sde srid chen pos skyong spyin pa sku gzhogs su phebs skabs nged kyi na tsha'i dri ba mdzad nas sog yul gyi bstan pa la phan e yong gi re ba yod ma shin dga' ba yod pas gsung ba sogs thugs dam bsrung 'khor gyi skyabs 'og tu tshud pa'i bka' 'drin gyis da lta re gcig lon pa'i bar lnga pa'i lam du ma song bar dge sbyor gyi 'dun blo ma bor ngos / rje bla ma nyid la gsol ba 'debs bzhi par mchis pa lags / don grub ces pa sa mo lug hor zla lnga pa'i tshes gcig la sog yul du log pa'i gdong / sku gzhogs rin po cher phyag dbang la phyin skabs gsol ja gcig gi ring la bla ma 'ga' o'i (F276b) rod kyi dpon mo 'ga' zhig dang bzhugs gral du mnyam por byung / bzhugs gral grol nas bdag la / sku gzhog rin po che nyid kyi gser sku phyag nas ma dang / dbu lo bubs gcig / sku gzhogs

These passages relate more to the figure of Dza-ya Paṇḍita than the Fifth Dalai Lama and in places clarify points not mentioned in the author's own *rang rnam*. For example, the information about when the Dalai Lama bestowed the title “Dza-ya Paṇḍita Khutugtu” is not found in the *rang rnam* but clarified here in the *rnam thar* of the Fifth. These passages also contain valuable information about the close-knit relationship that existed between the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho and Dza-ya Paṇḍita, evident from the Sde-srid looking after Dza-ya Paṇḍita when he was sick and from their exchange of gifts when the latter was departing from Tibet. There is little reference to their relationship in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own *rang rnam* and the *rnam thar* he composed of the Sde-srid but, here and elsewhere in the *thob yig*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita speaks highly of the Sde-srid and often refers to his works for validation of the arguments he makes. As pointed out above, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's work also has close parallels with the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po*. The first-hand accounts in the *rnam thar* of the Fifth contain valuable information about the author and his personal relationships with his teachers and friends and thus need to be read

nyid kyi bzhes pa'i sku chos nged rang gi 'drin byed kyi yul du sku lus las phyir phud nas gnam ba dang / dza ya paN+Ti ta khu thug thu zhes pa'i cho lo 'ja' sa dang tham ka sogs nang ma'i gnas sbyin gnam zhing / de nas sku gzhogs su dngos cag (can) gcig pu ma gtogs zham ring ba'i rigs su yang med par tsha rting ma'i skabs nas gsol tshigs kyi bar gsol ja gnyis song nas kyang yun ring po'i bar thog mar rje bla ma tsong kha pa chen po la brten pa'i bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi ljags lung thugs thog nas gnam zhing / de rjes o'i rod kyi dza ya paN+Ti ta se chen rab 'byams pa khu thug thu dper mdzad nas sog yul gyi bstan pa la phan pa'i re ba yod pas sog yul du rnying ma'i chos kyi rigs byas na mi shis ba byung pa'i lo rgyus mang po gnam nas / de rigs byed mkhan byung tshe dag ga ba dang / rgyal ba tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa la gang phan pa byed dgos pa sogs lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas thugs nye ba'i bslab ston bdag la gnam ba'i bka' shog chen mo'i nang gi gsung ngag rin po'i che'i rgyas bshad lta bur thugs brtse ba chen pos bstsal / de nas gsol tshigs grol rjes ma zhus par mgon po'i bka' chen bcu gsum gyi nang gi byin rlabs bar chad kun sel gyi bka' dbang gnam / rgongs mo sde srid sku gzhogs (F277a) su rtse'i phyi'i gnam spyin ston pa'i gser sku bzhus khri rgyab yol dang bcas pa cig / mgon po'i bka' chen bcu gsum gyi thang ka bcu gsum / chos gos rnam gsum gos ber / gzan sham gdan mar sogs bla chas yongs rdzogs / rta bzang po sga bcas / gser sgam snam bu gtos che ba sogs kyi gnam sbyin rgya chen po mdzad / sde srid sku gzhogs nas kyang rje bstun tsong kha pa chen po'i gser sku che legs / gnas bcu'i sku thang gzhan yang chos gos gzan sham sogs dang / gser sgam / bur ltang / snam bu sogs kyi gnam spyin yang dpag med mdzad / de nas tshes lnga la sku mtshams khongs su mjal phyag dbang dang zhabs dbang zhus / tham phud 'bul ba'i tshigs bcad kyi bka' rtsom zhus par tham phud jo bo rin po che'i sku gzhogs su 'bul ba'i bsngo smon tshigs bcad gsum pa zhig gnam / snga sor sog yul nas thog mar bod du slebs pa'i skabs tshe rabs thams cad du rjes 'dzin gyi gsol 'debs smon lam ngos kyi zhus par zhal bzhes bzang po byung zhig bka' rtsom sho lo ka gnyis pa cig kyang gnam ba sogs lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas bka' drin bskyangs pa'i drin 'khor thabs ma mchis pas da dung yang byang chub snying po'i bar du bka' 'bangs su gyur nas bka' tshul bzhin sgrub pa'i mchod pas mnyes par gsol ba 'debs pa lags so / de yang rat+na'i bstan pa spyi lung du / de nas sngon gyi thugs bskyed rgyal po ni /

together with the other relevant *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* for the reader to achieve a comprehensive idea of the events of the period and relationships between the figures.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's inclusion of his own personal experiences is not unique to this *rnam thar*. For example, Bareja-Starzynska noticed the same feature in the *rnam thar* of the Jetsundampa and commented that "in order to learn more about Zaya Paṇḍita's biography one should study the whole work of his "records of teachings received" (*thob yig*) since between the accounts of the Buddhist masters Zaya Paṇḍita included information about himself" (Bareja-Starzynska 2015:37). For example, the *rnam thar* of the Jebtsundamba contains similarly intimate scenes:

"At that time, I also went to the Changkya Khutugtu in order to obtain the longevity empowerment... in the winter of that [year] when I went to pay my respects [to the Jetsundampa] I sat down to present offerings for the twenty-fifth (i.e. anniversary of the passing of Tsongkhapa) and I requested the longevity empowerment and blessing with authorization (*rjes gnang*) of the Wish fulfilling Wheel of the White Tārā and of the black Mañjuśrī. [The Lord] offered [me] his own monk's shawl."

(Bareja-Starzynska 2015:162-163)

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's first-hand accounts of encounters with his masters validate and elevate his own position as one who was taught by great scholars and who acted according to their aspiration and council. Moreover, it also firmly places him in the chronology of the master-disciple lineage stemming from these masters.

His devotion to his teachers and dedication to their cause is clear in these passages. The inclusion of his memories of the Sde-srid here is suggestive of his respect for the Sde-srid as one who is an "extension" of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Throughout the *thob yig* and other works in his *gsung 'bum*, such as his *rang rnam*, recounting of the advice of the Dalai Lama authorises his religious activities after his return to Mongolia. Dza-ya Paṇḍita was sent back to Mongolia by the Dalai Lama against his own wishes to remain in Tibet,

with the mission to spread the Dge-lugs-pa teachings in Mongolia. Accordingly, he seems to have avoided matters of the state and chose instead to spend the rest of his years engaged in religious activities.¹⁸⁵

It is noteworthy that, though adhering to the Fifth's non-sectarian attitude towards different Buddhist traditions throughout the *rnam thar*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita is cautious about referring to the Rnying-ma-pas directly and quotes the advice given to him by the Fifth against spreading their teachings, "taking the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Se-chen Rab-'byams-pa Khutuḡtu as an example". Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita was both a Rnying-ma-pa and Dge-lugs-pa and, when his ashes were taken to Lhasa after his unexpected death on the way back to Tibet in 1662, "he was honoured by both Red Hat and Yellow Hat Lamas" (Perdue 2005:104), the Red Hats being the Rnying-mas. The inclusion of this comment 1) elevates Dza-ya Paṇḍita above the Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita and 2) indirectly criticises the Dzungars who were closely connected to Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita. The Dzungars attacked the Khalkha under Ġaldan Boshuḡthu in 1687 which led to the Jetsundampa and Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own escape to Southern Mongolia and other Qing territories and so, this passage is suggestive of the authors attempt to highlight their "wrongdoings" and express his own bitterness regarding the whole affair. Yet, more of this is stated explicitly; here and elsewhere, Dza-ya Paṇḍita addresses political conflict through the lens of religion.

After these personal episodes that underline the special favours and advice given to Dza-ya Paṇḍita, the narrative returns to glorifying the Dalai Lama:

"Furthermore, the prophecy in the *Rat+na'i bstan pa spyi lung*: "as for the former kings who had generated [*bodhi*]citta," and so on clearly refers to him. "The king who formerly generated *bodhicitta*" means that he is the incarnation of former kings such as Srong-btsan sgam-po and Khri-srong lde-btsan. It is said that "the manifestation of the great compassionate one

¹⁸⁵ See Chapter Two on the *rang rnam* and the figure of Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

will appear in Dbus,” which is the place of his birth, and that “the dharma king will appear together with his army” means that like the universal monarch and his four troops spreading across all nations, this supreme lord himself established [his rule] as the lord of scholars, monks, and siddhas without partiality and together with his disciples appeared for the glory of the teaching and beings.”¹⁸⁶

The Fifth Dalai Lama is again depicted as a divine manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, reincarnation of the Dharmarājas of Tibet, and an impartial scholar who was prophesised in the authoritative scriptures. As we have seen recurring throughout the *rnam thar*, the return to the divine reincarnation lineage of the Dalai Lama is a stylistic tool Dza-ya Paṇḍita employs to transition between different sections. These sections, which are in themselves dense and somewhat disjointed, are connected through short passages such as this, referring the reader back to the greatness of the Fifth whilst stylistically enabling the narrative to transition smoothly from one topic to the next. This is an innovative tool on Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s part, and is not unique to this *rnam thar* as we will see in later chapters.

4.7. Monasteries Founded

The next 3 folios list the monasteries founded by the Fifth, and contain many parallels with chapter 24 of the *BaiDUrya ser po*,¹⁸⁷ which also concerns the monasteries founded by the Fifth Dalai Lama. Dza-ya Paṇḍita reveals the *BaiDUrya ser po* as his main source at the beginning of this section:

¹⁸⁶ (V3F277a6) *de yang rat+na'i bstan pa spyi lung du / de nas sngon gyi thugs bskyed rgyal po ni / (F277b) zhes sogs kyang dam pa 'di'i lung bstan yin par mngon te / sngon gyi thugs bskyed rgyal po zhes pas / sngon mi rje srong bstan sgam po dang / khri srong sde'u btsan sogs kyi rnam sprul yin par bstan / thugs rje chen po'i sprul ba dbus nas 'byon ces pas 'khrungs yul dang / chos kyi rgyal po dpung dang bcas pa 'byung / zhes pas / dper na 'khor los bsgyur ba'i rgyal po dpung tshogs yan lag bzhi dang lhan cig tu yul so sor rgyu bar byed pa ltar / rje btsun dam pa 'di nyid kyang grub mtha' ris su ma chad pa'i mkhas btsun grub pa'i dbang phyug slob ma'i tshogs dang bcas te bstan 'gro'i dpal du 'byon pa dang /*

¹⁸⁷ Titled “*rje bla ma chen po gnam sa'i bdag por gyur nas dgon pa gsar 'debs mdzad pa*”. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1989:396).

“His fame spread in the small and large monasteries and temples of Mdo-smad. The allocation of food allowances and monastic estates of the *saṅgha* etc. is explained extensively in the *BaiDUrya ser po* composed by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho and one can find out more there.”¹⁸⁸

Comparing the two texts,¹⁸⁹ it is clear that the *BaiDUrya ser po* was Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s main source. As mentioned earlier, the *BaiDUrya ser po* was only completed in 1679; after Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s return to Mongolia. So, whether he was familiar with an unfinished version or was sent a completed copy by the Sde-srid after its completion, he was familiar with the contents of the text. In a few places, Dza-ya Paṇḍita fails to give the location for the monastery which can be found in the Sde-srid’s *BaiDUrya ser po* and, in one instance, Dza-ya Paṇḍita gives “Nor-bu chos-'phel” instead of “Nor-bu chos-'khor”, most likely a simple error on Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s part. Where the Sde-srid gives a more detailed account of the circumstances surrounding the monastery’s foundation and other information such as the head teachers, Dza-ya Paṇḍita summarises the information by giving only the date and place. For example, regarding the recently converted monastery of Tāranātha, Dga'-ldan chos-'khor-gling:

“Dga'-ldan chos-'khor-gling was built in Myug of G.yas ru in Gtsang, in the earth female bird year (1669).”¹⁹⁰

The Sde-srid’s version, on the other hand, is much more detailed:

“Dga'-ldan chos-'khor-gling was built in Nyug of G.yas ru in Gtsang, in the earth female bird year (1669). The first head teacher was Phun-tshogs tshogs-'phel from Dgon-thang. Then it was Blo-bzang dpal-ldan from 'Phyong-rgyas, then Dgon-zhol shes-rab chos-ldan from 'Bras-spungs. Nowadays the teachings are carried out according to the summaries of the system at Ra-ba-stod by Dan-'bag-pa Phun-tshogs rnam-rgyal, Panchen Bsod-nams grags-pa’s Vinaya [tradition], the precious great lama’s

¹⁸⁸ (V3F281a4) *mdo smad kyi chos sde che chung gi lha khang rnam su snyan dar mchod 'bul kyi skor dang / dge 'dun rnam kyi phogs za tshul chos gzhis sogs mtha' klas pa sbyor ba rnam ni sde srid sangs rgyam mtshos mdzad pa'i bai DAur ser por rgyas par yod pa las shes par bya'o /*

¹⁸⁹ For the table comparing the monasteries in the writings of both authors, please refer to Figure 8 in the Appendix.

¹⁹⁰ (V3F278b5) *g.yas ru gtsang gi myug tu sa mo bya lor tshugs pa dga' ldan chos 'khor gling /*

Madhyamika, Prajñāpāramitā and the Abhidharma and so on according to the [teachings] of the root lama. The '*dul-skyong* are [deities] such as Sman-bla. There are about 150 resident monks.'"¹⁹¹

The two lists are almost identical until the last 30 monasteries in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's work starting with "Dga'-ldan sum-rtsen-gling" are absent in the Sde-srid's list of monasteries. This may be due to the *BaiDUrya ser po*'s completion in 1698 whereas Dza-ya Paṇḍita continued to compile his *thob yig* until 1702, allowing Dza-ya Paṇḍita to supplement the Sde-srid's work. This additional information also makes Dza-ya Paṇḍita's list of monasteries founded by the Fifth Dalai Lama an important supplementary source for the *BaiDUrya ser po*.

The *rnam thar* then once again stylistically returns to the elevated depiction of the Fifth Dalai Lama before narrating the final days of his life:

"As for the lord, he had mastery over spreading the teachings through the means of exposition, debate and composition. When expounding, he is just like Nāgārjuna or Asaṅga expounding the meaning of the sūtras of Lord Buddha, his complexion is clear, his voice when he is reading is melodious and [resonates] for a long time, his speech is smooth, very clear and is full of various examples of the branches of truth; these fully descend into the hearts of the disciple. Just by merely staying within the boundaries of the root text [i.e. not using the commentaries], the meaning is understood.

At the time of debate, it is just like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti setting about the destruction of the teachings of the heretics, and he does so whilst smiling with a strong voice and acute mouth without intimidation. After apprehending both words and meaning, he had the ability to steal the confidence of the opponent.

At the time of composing, he is just like the great scholar Ārya[deva] and king Dge-'bangs engaging in explaining the virtues of Lord Buddha... With his rhetoric and fine arguments, he pleases the minds of the scholars and is a great and powerful scholar with smooth speech.

¹⁹¹ (P398) g.yas yu gtsang gi nyug tu sa mo bya lor tshugs pa dga' ldan chos 'khor gling / chos 'chad pa thog ma dgon thang pa phun tshogs tshogs 'phel / de nas 'phyong rgyas pa blo bzang dpal ldan / 'bras spungs dgon zhol shes rab chos ldan / da lta dan 'bag pa phun tshogs rnam rgyal gyis bsod tshad ra ba stod pa lugs / paN chen bsod grags pa'i 'dul ba / rje bla ma chen po'i dbu phar mdzod gsum sogs la 'chad nyan dang / sman bla sogs 'dul skyong gong bzhin / ang dang grwa pa brgya dang lnga bcu skor /

Thus, by reciting, hearing, reflection, renunciation, concentration, the wheel of activities, explaining, debating and composition, he turned limitless wheels of the inner, outer and secret dharma for the benefit of the fortunate disciples.

As for the noble and common people of China, Tibet and Mongolia, they all abided under the cool shade of the white umbrella of the compassion of this supreme being, and they remained happily, enjoying the fruits of each of their own greater and lesser merits.”¹⁹²

These passages extol the Fifth Dalai Lama’s abilities as a Buddhist scholar, rendering him equal to great Indian scholars and philosophers of the past whose influence spread across the Central Asian nations. In contrast to this rather hyperbolic language, the Fifth Dalai Lama himself writes about his religious activities as such:

“There is no doubt that I was in possession of a fortunate human rebirth, but if one examined things, I had more obstacles than favourable conditions for seeking a spiritual master and learning, reflecting and meditating. It appeared to me that I was in fact one of those who lacked freedom. So from that time I had to completely abandon my studies of texts.”
(Karmay 2014:150)

The Dalai Lama expresses similar dissatisfaction with his religious endeavours throughout his *rang nam*, which contrasts with Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s portrayal of his master as one who was foremost occupied with religious activities. This contrasts with the portrayal of the Fifth by many of his contemporaries such as the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho who emphasises the position of the Fifth as the righteous ruler of Tibet who is the manifestation

¹⁹² (V3F281a5) *gtso bor 'chad rtsod rtsom gsum gyi sgo nas bstan pa rgyas par mdzad pa la mnga' brnyes te / 'chad pa'i che [tshe] / klu sgrub thogs med sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi mdo don 'chad pa la zhugs pa lta bu ste / 'chad pa'i tshe / zhal gyi mdangs gsal / gsung (F281b) snyan cing 'jebs la / thag ring por grags pa / gsung ngag dal zhing chod che / don nges pa'i yan lag dpe sna tshogs dang bcas te slob ma'i snying la 'babs pa / gzhung gi gcod mtshams mdzad pa tsam gyis don go nus pa 'dra ba mkhyen rtsod pa'i tshe / phyogs glang chos grags mu stegs kyi ston pa 'joms pa la chas pa lta bu ste / 'dzum pa'i mdangs dang bcas / ngag drag po dang rtab pa min pa / zhal so thag ni tshig dang don / gnyis ka la skyon phral du bzungs nas phas kyi rgol ba'i spobs pa 'phrog nus pa / rtsom pa'i tshe / mkhas mchog dpa' bo dang / rgyal po dge 'bangs sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi yon tan brjod pa la zhugs pa lta bu ste / tshig spyor dang / rgyan bzang pos mkhas pa rnam kyi yid mgu bar mdzad cing snyan ngag 'jam la zhugs che zhig mkhyen no / de ltar klog pa thos bsam / sbong bsam gtan / bya ba las kyi 'khor lo dang / 'chad rtsod rtsom gsum gyi sgo nas skal ltan slob ma'i tshugs la phyi nang gsang ba'i chos kyi 'khor lo mtha' klas pa bskor cing / rgya bod hor gsum gyi skye 'gro mchog dman kun kyang dam pa 'di'i thugs rje'i dgugs dkar po gcig gi grib bsil la brten nas rang rang so so'i bsod nams che chung gi 'bras bu la longs spyod pa'i sgo nas bde bar gnas pa lags so /*

of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Ishihama’s interpretation of a “Buddhist government” in Mongolia reflects a similar idea: “(In Mongolia) it is clear that the religious law is considered to be superior to the imperial law, and the imperial law should be melded with the religious law... in Mongolia the religious law is superior to the secular one” (Ishihama 2004:18-20). Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as the author of a *thob yig* (a religious genre of literature) uses the term in a way that foremost highlights the Dge-lugs-pa tradition’s religious authority and in doing so, establishes a theme that runs throughout the work.

4.8. *Later Life and Death*

The last folios contain the events leading up to the passing of the Fifth Dalai Lama and can be broken down as follows:

- ❖ Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows the model of the Sde-srid in his discussion of the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama and explains the event in the Buddhist context of enlightened beings manifesting death for the benefit of sentient beings, underpinned with quotes from various authoritative scriptures:

“It is said in the second chapter of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra*: “In order to bring all sentient beings to maturation, he exhibited passing into nirvāṇa. He manifested in inconceivable manifestations of Buddhas and Tathāgatas”. In the third chapter of the *Dkon mchog brtsegs pa*, ‘skt. *Ratnakūṭa*’: “When the Buddha asked the Bodhisattvas: “What is the object of your practice?” Śāntamati answered: “By virtue of having a body, Bodhisattvas, even though they are without birth, without transmigration and without origination, manifest being born, dying, transmigrating and originating for the purpose of bringing sentient beings to maturation”. From the *Sgyu 'phrul [dra ba]*, ‘Skt. *Māyājāla*’: “Having been born for the purpose of liberating the ignorant subjects to be tamed, [I] will show them nirvāṇa”. From the *Rgyud bla ma* (Skt. *Mahāyānottaratantra Śāstra*): “The noble one has destroyed the suffering of birth, sickness and old age from the root”. For the purpose of obtaining the ultimate truth, by uprooting [the suffering] of birth, sickness and old age from the root, the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and

noble ones pass beyond transmigration and are completely without suffering. However, for the purpose of the liberation of those subjects to be tamed they are still able to give the appearance of passing away into nirvāṇa. Just like this, the great lord himself, the crown ornament of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho dpal-bzang-po, though his vajra body is immune to birth, [death, and sufferings of saṃsāra], he considered those beings subject to grief and sorrow who believe in permanence with skilful means and so he intended to teach them through [manifesting] final passing into nirvāṇa”.¹⁹³

- ❖ A single sentence stating that the Fifth Dalai Lama himself entrusted religious-political responsibility to Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho:

“He entrusted Sde-srid Rin-po-che Sangs-rgyam-pa¹⁹⁴ with political authority and with the responsibility for the two systems [temporal and spiritual].”¹⁹⁵

- ❖ Religious activities of the Fifth Dalai Lama during the period of his final illness:

“In the second month of that year (1682), he (the Fifth) instructed the Sde-srid that if his illness were to last for more than three weeks, longer than the [reading and exposition of the] Sutra would take, he would try as best as he could to continue the readings from the Sutra texts. Thereupon, the Sde-srid suggested that if the ill-health would last only three weeks, the teachings could resume after the three weeks. He (the Fifth) immediately performed an incense offering ritual. [Thus], he was always thinking of the welfare of his spiritual subjects. The solitary meditation or retreat taken during the first lunar month, and refusal to have either the longevity *sādhana* or obstacle removal rituals indicate, on reflection it would appear that all signs or

¹⁹³ (V3F282a1) *skal ba zad pas ji skad du / gser 'od dam pa'i le'u gnyis pa las / sems can yongs su smin mdzad phyir / yongs su mya ngan 'da' bar ston / sangs rgyas bcom ldan bsam mi khyab / de bzhin gshegs pa rtag pa'i sku / sems cn rnam la phan pa'i phyir / bkod pa rnam pa sna tshogs ston / zhes pa dang / dkon mchog brtsegs pa'i le'u sgum pa bsam gyis mi khyab pa las / bcom ldan 'das byang byub sems dpa' rnam rang gi spyod yul gang lags zhes sogs kyi phror / zhi ba'i blo gros / byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyi sku dang ldan pas skye ba dang / 'chi 'pho dang / 'byung ba med kyang sems can rnam smin par bya ba'i phyir skye ba dang / 'chi 'pho dang / 'byung ba yang ston do / zhes dang / skyu 'phrul las / ma rig smin mdzad 'dul ba'i phyir / 'byung nas mya ngan 'da' bar ston / zhes pa dang / rgyud bla ma las / 'phags pas skye dang na pa dang / rga ba'i sdug bsngal rtsad nas spangs / zhes nges don du nyon mongs pa las grub pa'i skye rga na 'chi sogs rtsa ba nas spangs bas 'chi 'pho b'am myu ngan las 'da' ba sangs rgyas dang byang sems 'phags par gtan nas med kyang gdul bya rnam smin par bya ba'i phyir my ngan las 'das pa'i tshul bstan po ltar rje bla ma srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan thams cad mkhyen pa ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho dpal bzang po nged don du rdo rje'i sku la skye 'jig mi mnga' yang / rtag par 'dzin (F282b) pa rnam skyob skye ba sogs thabs la mkhas pas dran dang shes bzhin du mdzad pa'i tham mya ngan las 'da' ba chen po ston par dgongs te /*

¹⁹⁴ The Fifth Dalai Lama also employs this abbreviated name for the Sde-srid in his 1679 decree appointing the Sde-srid as responsible for conducting the administration of secular affairs. See Richardson (1980).

¹⁹⁵ (V3F282b6) *sde srid rin po che sangs rgyam pa la srid gtsor gyur / lugs zung gi thugs 'gan don du 'bogs pa gnam /*

portents suggest indirectly that he [the Fifth] was all the while only intent on [manifesting] passing away for the benefit of others.”¹⁹⁶

❖ Advice bestowed to the Sde-srid on the day of his passing:

“In accordance with the prophecy, in his 66th year, on the 25th day of the second month of the dog year (1682), the day when *ḍākinīs* gather, [the Great Fifth] having made up his mind to transmigrate to the other realm, gave the Sde-srid Rin-po-che detailed instructions about administering and sustaining the Dharma and the State. Thereupon, when the Sde-srid cried and with prostrations requested indications as to where his [next] supreme emanation might appear, and who his parents were likely to be etc., [the Fifth] replied: “Since all composite phenomena are impermanent, how can there be any certainty? Things will be alright. Do not be short-sighted. Search although there is no certainty, whatever happens [after my death] you may need to keep it a secret for a while. My incarnation, too, will appear before long with ease and you will come to know the location of birth, parents etc. due to conditions of past karma and the prevailing circumstances clearly in due course. Even though there could be various potential candidates, since there will be no likelihood of error, you need not be overly anxious. This religio-political cause of ours has suffered from perverted and inauspicious events in the past from various quarters, and has been the object of myriad malevolence and evil designs, nevertheless, the protection of our collective positive karma, too, has not sapped too badly and thus, their evil machinations were not realized. The recent meditation sessions I entered into, too, were solely undertaken for the benefit of the Dharma and polity; and as a result of the harmonious alignment of the force of your own karma, destiny and prayers, no harm will come.

As for how best to serve the interests and wellbeing of the Dharma, the state and the Tibetan subjects as well as working for this and future lives, use your discretion since you are widely read and knowledgeable, and do things the way I have been doing.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ (V3F283b3) *zla ba gnyis pa'i nang bdun gsum ma mdo las kyang ring ba thub na gang thub ring gnang ba'i dril bsgrags... bdun gsum rang yin tshe grol nas zhus chog zhus par / 'phral dud lam byed gnang bkhong gdul bya'i rjes bar dgongs...zla ba dang po'i sku mtshams dang 'di gnyis kyi tshe sgrub dang rkyen* (F284a) *sel mi dgos pa'ang shugs bstan du gnang ba'i spom cha las gzhan don du gzigs pa'i dgongs pa sha stag tu mchis /*

¹⁹⁷ (V3F284a5) *lung bstan ltar dgong lo re drug pa khyi lo zla ba gnyis pa'i nyi shu lnga dpa'+pa DA ki 'du ba'i nyin zhing gzhan du phebs par thugs thag chod pa nas sde srid rin po che la bstan srid 'dzin skyong sogs bslab ston zhi bar gnang 'dug / de skabs sde srid kyi bshums shing phyag dang bcas mchog sprul gang du phebs pa dang yab yum sogs zhus par 'dus byas tshang ma mi rtag gshis nges pa ci yod skyon med blo sna ma thung* (F284b) *rtal (brtsal) nges pa med cing legs nyes byung yang re zhig gsang dgos yong / nged kyi skye ba'ang mi 'gyangs par las sla ste yul dang pha ma sogs sngon las 'phral rkyen 'dzom dgos pas slar gsal bar shes yong / 'dra min yong yang nor so mi yong bas blo kyog mi dgos / bstan srid 'di snga sor yang phyi nang mang po nas rten 'brel log pa dang mtho mtshams kyi rigs mang yang rten 'brel yang cher ma log cing de dag gi don lag tu ma khel / nged da lam gyi mtshams 'di yang bstan srid rang gi ched*

Not only does this passage provide a detailed account of the last days of the Fifth Dalai Lama, its significance is paramount for this narrative as it fully justifies the Sde-srid's actions such as taking control of running the government and concealing the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama as merely following the instructions given by the Fifth himself. It also underlines the Dalai Lama as one who acted solely for the benefit of sentient beings, and consequently the Sde-srid too as one who does "things the way I (i.e. the Fifth) have been doing". This passage skillfully glosses over some of the most controversial events of the 17th century Tibetan Buddhist world, events that led to a major falling out with the Qing and to the invasion of the Khoshots under Lha-bzang Khan, and thus had long-term repercussions for Tibet's political fate.¹⁹⁸

❖ Death and funeral:

"Afterwards, on the day of [the constellation] Aśvinī, at midday, [although already fully enlightened] he manifested the appearance of going to rest in the blissful realm of *dharmadhātu*. He passed away peacefully, after which rainbow clouds of various colours appeared. Especially, on the day of releasing the tutelary deity, five-coloured rainbows and many rainbow clouds [in the shape] of the eight auspicious symbols appeared. As for his precious relics, his personal attendants headed by the Sde-srid Rin-po-che, after preparing the best possible offerings of both imaginary and actual objects, they made the offerings so that [he would continue to incarnate] without interruption for the [benefit of] sentient beings...Many supports of body, speech and mind such as Lamas, Buddhas, peaceful and wrathful forms of Bodhisattvas etc. were erected. As for the mausoleum constructed for the Sole Ornament of the World, the costs can be represented in terms of currency, as a total of 1,528,929 *srang*,¹⁹⁹ 8 *zho*,²⁰⁰ and 3 *skar*;²⁰¹ which when converted in terms of barley grain, amounts to a total

*kho nar bgyis pa yin zhing / khyod rang gi las dang skal pa smon lam gyi mtshams sbyor gyi mthus skyon
yong ba med cing / bstan srid dang bod 'bangs bde thabs 'di phyi'i don sogs khyod rang tha snyad kyi rigs
blo rgya che ba bcas blos chod la nged kyis bgyid pa ltar bsgrubs /*

¹⁹⁸ This topic will receive further investigation in Chapter Five.

¹⁹⁹ Weight for silver or gold weighing about 40g.

²⁰⁰ 1 *srang* = 10 *zho*.

²⁰¹ Weight for silver or gold. 10 *skar* = 1 *srang*.

weight of 27,520,736 *khal*,²⁰² 18 *bre*,²⁰³ and approximately over 5 *phul*.^{204,205}

In setting the scene for the controversies which were to follow, Dza-ya Paṇḍita is very meticulous in his presentation of the events surrounding the Fifth Dalai Lama's passing. The divine nature of the Dalai Lama, which is highlighted throughout the *rnam thar*, is re-established and then, with a single authoritative sentence voiced from the Fifth Dalai Lama himself, the Sde-srid's position and actions are legitimised.

4.9. Conclusion

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's narration of the life of the Fifth Dalai Lama allowed him to maintain the religiously pure position of his master as a figure who acted solely in accordance with his expression of the *lugs gnyis* ideal, while at the same time ensuring his narrative did not contradict historical events. Controversial political events receive significant "Buddhist Glaze" of religious interpretations in line with the image he is trying to create: a unified and authoritative Buddhist tradition with equally accomplished religious masters.²⁰⁶

²⁰² 1 *khal* = 25-30 lbs.

²⁰³ Grain measure. 1 *bre* = 6 *phul* or 1/20 *khal*.

²⁰⁴ Small grain measure. 1 *phul* = 1/4 *bre* or 1/80th *khal*.

²⁰⁵ (V3F284b4) *de nas nyin phyed rta'i dus kyi bsgang smad du chos dbyings bde ba'i klong du mngon par mnal pa'i tshul bstan to / nyer zhi nas 'ja' sprin kha dog sna tshogs pa byung dang / lhag par thugs dam grol ba'i snam gang gi nyin 'ja' tshon sna lnga dang bkra shis rtags brgyad 'dra ba'i 'ja' sbrin mang po byung snang sku gdung rin po cher sde srid kyis dbus pa'i zham ring ba rnams kyis dngos bshams yid sprul gyi mchod pa kun tu bzang po'i mchod spyin gyi rjes su 'gro bas rgyun mi 'chad (F285a) par mcho... sku gsung thugs kyi rten mang du bzhengs / mchod sdong 'dzam gling rgyan gcig po'i rgyu song dngul du bsgril ba srang sa ya gcig dang lnga 'bum nyi khri brgyad stong dgu nyi shu rtsa dgu zho brgyad skar gsum 'brur phab gshor khal bye chen gnyis dang sa ya bdun lnga 'bum nyi khri bdun brgya so drug bre bco brgyad phul phyed lnga lhag bcas song ba sogs kyis mtshon pa'i rten bzhengs /*

²⁰⁶ Dza-ya Paṇḍita's "Buddhist Glazing" elsewhere in the *thob yig* will be examined in more detail in Chapter Six.

Structurally, *rnam thars* form the backbone of this *thob yig* and the contextual focus within these life stories is religion rather than politics. The significance held by the Qing over the 17th century period does not receive special attention and, when mentioned, it is only to further elevate the religious position of the teacher:

“Because Mañjuśrī the highest King (i.e. the Qing Emperor) had been long sending requests, he [the Dalai Lama] went to the palace of the Chinese emperor. There, he set innumerable Chinese, Tibetans and Mongolians headed by the emperor of the China onto the path of highest rebirth and ultimate excellence. Above all, the emperor also bestowed this lord (the Fifth Dalai Lama) the title of great Vajradhara and [also offered him] a hat and garments worn in the Tibetan government, a golden Thamkha, parasol, horses, silk etc. and limitless amounts of gold and silver etc. He also installed him as his Lama.”²⁰⁷

Although he purposefully avoids political statements, by legitimising the figures and their life events on religious grounds, Dza-ya Paṇḍita succeeds in claiming religious-political authority for the Dge-lugs tradition and its prominent masters and lineage holders. In concurrence, Kleiner notes that: “a text dating from 1698, 16 years after his death, noted tellingly that the Dalai Lama’s government served Tibet just as a Bodhisattva serves all humanity” (Kleiner 2016:211). Furthermore, the underlying concept of a wider cosmopolitan Buddhist empire headed by the Fifth Dalai Lama is supported by the presence of the different ethnicities referred to above who were “set on the path of highest liberation and ultimate excellence” by the Fifth. Thus, narratives such as this prove that the writing of individuals like Dza-ya Paṇḍita and the Sde-srid that promote the divine image of the Fifth Dalai Lama were proving effective as early as during their own lifetimes.

²⁰⁷ (V3F268b4) 'jam dbyangs gong ma rgyal pos yun ring po nas gsol ba btab pa bzhin / rgya nag po'i pho brang gi bar phebs te / rgya bod sog po sogs rgya nag rgyal pos gtsos skye bo bgrang ba las 'das pa mngon mtho nges legs la bkod / gong ma rgyal pos kyang / rdo rje 'chang chen po'i mtshan / las zhwa las gos / gser gyi tham kha / gdugs rta dar sogs dag gser dngul la sog pa mtha' klas pa gul (phul) zhing / rang gi bla mar mnga' gsol /

Chapter Five: Contextualisation of the rnam thars

In the previous chapter, the *rang rnam* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita and the *rnam thar* of the most important of his masters, the Fifth Dalai Lama were introduced and analysed in detail. Throughout narrative life stories, several recurrent themes can be highlighted. In particular, the author's tendency to refer to the place of the Mongols in the history of the Dge-lus tradition, and an interesting interpretation of *lugs gnyis* in which religion equated with the Dge-lugs-pa tradition is placed above the secular. Whether these features are purposefully placed by the author within these *rnam thars* or the result of the investigation carried out for this thesis will become clear as these themes are examined against the backdrop of some of the other *rnam thars* found in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

For this purpose, the current chapter will focus on the role of the *rnam thars* within the larger framework of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* and forms the largest part of this thesis containing the translation and analysis of a selection from the hundreds of the *rnam thars* found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*. The significance of these *rnam thars* increases given that Dza-ya Paṇḍita is likely to be the first Mongolian to write Tibetan language *rnam thars* which could shed light on the influence these *rnam thars* had on *rnam thar* writing in general then onwards in Mongolia.

Lineage is an important theme that is highlighted throughout the *rnam thars* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita. Unlike the more conventional examples of *thob yigs* which simply concern the transmission lineages of teachings and practices, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* covers all the lineage typologies found in the Tibetan Buddhist world, namely: Reincarnation Lineage, Ancestral Lineage, Master-disciple Lineage and Transmission Lineage.

Reincarnation lineages, often represented by *'khrungs rabs* are found at the beginning of a large number of *rnam thars* in this *thob yig*. This section will begin with a detailed exploration of the *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, fitting given that his *rnam thar* was discussed in detail in the previous chapter. Then, select other *'khrungs rabs* such as those found in the *rnam thars* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho will be compared to demonstrate how Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses *'khrungs rabs* as a tool to interweave the reincarnation and ancestral lineages of his masters.

Another central theme are the teaching and transmission lineages, which are again after expressed in the form of *rnam thars*. Therefore, the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* will be examined with regard to the continuity and connections between the narratives. The connection between the author's own *rang rnam* and the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* will also be discussed to demonstrate that these *rnam thars* are links in a chain and thus need to be read as parts of a larger narrative, the “*rnam thar* of the wider tradition”.

Throughout this chapter, the contents of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing will be examined against the writing of his contemporaries by whom he was most influenced. These include the Sde-srid Sang-rgyas rgya-mtsho's *BaiDUrya ser po* and his supplement to the Dūkula and the writings of the Fifth Dalai Lama, such as his *Gsan yig ganga'i chu rgyun*, “The Records of Teachings [known as] the Flow of the Ganges”, and his decree appointing the Sde-srid as regent. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between Dza-ya Paṇḍita's life story of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the *BaiDUrya ser po*. In terms of the Mongolian sources referred to, they are mostly historical writings dating between the late 16th and 17th centuries composed in Mongolian by Mongols, such as as Saḡang Secen's *Khaḡad-un Ündüsiin-ü Erdeni-yin Tobci*, “The Bejewelled Summary of the Origin of the Khans” and Toba Taji's *Shira Tuḡuji*, “The Yellow History”.

5.1. Lineage

The idea of lineage has always played an important role in authenticating teachings and authorising teachers for the various traditions of Buddhism across cultures. An unbroken chain of authentic teachers descending from the Buddha himself is of high importance for Buddhists. Without an authentic lineage, teachers or their teachings cannot gain authority amongst the Buddhist community and they will not be perceived as fit to carry on this unbroken line.

Especially in Tibet, the different traditions of Tibetan Buddhism have always been faced with competition and sectarian disputes since the 11th century revival of Buddhism. Consequently, the significance paid to lineage in order to claim authority and demonstrate authenticity through an unbroken lineage resulted in huge corpuses of accompanying literature.

When considering the idea of lineage in the context of Tibet, there are four main types of lineage that need to be addressed. These are:

- 1) Ancestral Lineage
- 2) Reincarnation Lineage
- 3) Master-disciple Lineage
- 4) Transmission Lineages of Practices and Teachings

Often it is possible to extract master-disciple lineages from texts such as *thob yig* and *gsan yig* that concern transmission lineages, making these two types of lineages appear strongly interconnected. However, it is necessary to distinguish between “iii. Master-disciple Lineage” and “i.v. Transmission Lineages of Practices and Teachings” due to idea of the ‘root lama(s)’ as shall be discussed below.

In Tibet, there are huge corpuses of literature which concern these lineage typologies. Certain genres exist purely to tackle different types of lineage. Often, more than one type of lineage can be reflected within a single piece of writing. The representation of different types of lineage in Tibetan writing will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

5.1.1. *Ancestral Lineage*

The emphasis on one's ancestral lineage reaches further into the history of the Tibetan people long predates their first encounter with Tibetan Buddhism. Even before a literary tradition developed in Tibet, the royal clans and families maintained an important oral tradition of reciting their ancestral lineages aloud during important occasions. The earliest forms of such indigenous Tibetan literature are the genres known as *rgyal rabs*, 'royal genealogies'²⁰⁸ *jo rabs*, 'genealogies of princes and rulers of Tibet', and *gdung rabs*, 'family genealogies' which, as noted by Vostrikov represent also "the most "secular" form of Tibetan historical works" (Vostrikov 1962:62). The *gdung rabs* which have a long history in Tibet reaching back to the Spu-rgyal era mirror an element of authority through ancestral lineage deeply rooted in the Tibetan worldview. Although confined to the royal family and the nobility, this type of literature is evidence of early indigenous concern amongst the Tibetans for remembering and recounting their ancestral lineage.

²⁰⁸ Examples include the *Rgyal rabs sba bshad* which represents one of the oldest surviving texts of this genre. See Wangdo and Diemberger (2000).

These early works, in their simplest form are nothing but lists of kings and occasional dates of significance. The more complex forms that have been attracting the attention of Tibetologists over the decades comprise detailed 'narratives' of events celebrating the reigns of certain kings and their notable deeds, and are full of mythical and legendary components. These works are characteristic of the Indian *vaṃśāvalī*, but the earliest examples of *rgyal rabs* are no longer accessible to us (Vostrikov 1962:63). Thus, due to the adaptations of content and structure these works have undergone over the centuries, the true extent of the influence of *vaṃśāvalīs* on the earliest Tibetan genealogies cannot be determined from the editions available to us today. The most well-known examples of this genre are *Bod kyi rgyal rabs*²⁰⁹ by Sa-skya patriarch rJe-btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1147-1216) and the *Phags pa'i rgyal rabs*²¹⁰ by another notable Sa-skya patriarch 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1235-1280).

The oldest accessible texts that have characteristics of *rgyal rabs* that we have access to is the version of the *dba'/sba' bzhed* translated and published by Wangdu and Diemberger in 2000, which was dated to the 9th century.²¹¹ This text represents one of the oldest and most frequently quoted sources by later historians. Many versions have passed down to us today due to the popularity of copying the text throughout history. However, the various versions show evidence that they underwent adaptations, additions, interpretations and other changes during the copying process.²¹² In regard to the content of the 9th century edition, Sorensen notes: "...in terms of composition it may from the very outset have looked much like a motley patchwork with reminiscences of a *chos 'byung*, *lo*

²⁰⁹ This is a verse rendition of the list of kings and their respective dynasties starting with gNya'-khri btsan-po to Ral-pa-can.

²¹⁰ Vostrikov notes that the latter has very little difference in terms of content but is somewhat better expressed and more concise (Vostrikov 1962:66).

²¹¹ For a more detailed description of the content, structure, translation, commentary and comparison with other versions of the '*dba'/sba' bzhed*' see Wangdu and Diemberger (2000).

²¹² The reasons and purpose of these adaptations will be examined later on in more detail.

rgyus and *rgyal rabs*” (Sorenson 2000:xvi). This indicates that even the earliest example of *rgyal rabs* contain characteristics of other forms of historical genres of Tibetan literature.

These earlier works and their ability to project back to the dynastic era influenced later writings such as the Fifth Dalai Lama’s *rgyal rabs* titled *Gangs can yul gyi sa la spyod pa'i mtho ris kyi rgyal blon gtso bor brjod pa'i deb ther rdzogs ldan gzhon nu'i dga' ston dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, “The chronicle regarding the golden age of the kings and ministers of the high mountains of the land of snows, the feast of the youths, the song of the spring queen (i.e. the cuckoo)” composed in 1643.²¹³ This work was also influential amongst the Mongols too and was more popularly known as the *Gzhon nu'i dga' ston*, “The feast for the youths”, translated into Mongolian as *Jaluus yin Horim*. This work, which spans 113 folios and has 21 sections, is preserved in the *gsung 'bum* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. It starts with the life of the Buddha and the origins of the Tibetan Kings then continues to discuss their descendants and successors as well as the Mongol Khaans, starting from Khubilai and concluding with the 17th century.²¹⁴ By composing this work, the Great Fifth was able to trace the “ancestry” of his newly established state back to historical periods of Tibetan history and beyond to the historical Buddha himself. Consequently, he achieved an unbroken chronology of the “Ancestral Lineage” of Tibetan rulers and their descendants and through recounting them, validates himself as their legitimate successor.

²¹³ It is also known by the shorter title *Bod kyi rgyal rabs deb ther rdzogs ldan gzhon nu ma*, “The chronicle of Tibet known as the maiden of the golden age”, *Rgyal ba lnga pa'i deb ther*, “The choricle of the Great Fifth”, and *Dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, “The song of the spring queen (i.e. the cuckoo)” (Vostrikov 1962:78).

²¹⁴ For a detailed table of contents of this work see (Vostrikov 1962:79).

Amongst Mongols, the convention of recounting one's ancestry also predates their conversion to Tibetan Buddhism. The earliest Mongolian chronicle, the *Monggul-un Niguca Tobciyan*, "Secret History of the Mongols" recounts the ancestry of Chinggis Khaan starting from Börte Chinu and Quai Maral (Onon 2001:39). Later Mongolian chronicles, such as Saḡang Secen's *Khaḡad-un Ündüsün-ü Erdeni-yin Tobci* and Toba Taiji's *Shira Tuḡuji*, maintain their connection to the *Monggul-un Niguca Tobciyan* but are also supplemented with Buddhist elements.

The combination of traditional Mongolian and Tibetan customs of recounting the knowledge of their ancestral lineage interlaced with a Buddhist lineage allowed both nations to compose new texts belonging to the *rgyal rabs* genre or at least containing characteristics of *rgyal rabs* during the 17th century. Careful study and selection from earlier sources resulted in works that validated their ancestral lineage as authoritative in both traditional and new Buddhist contexts.

5.1.2. Reincarnation Lineage

When the dynastic model of authority was transferred to the monastic institutions and powerful "schools" of Tibetan Buddhism, ancestral lineage alone was no longer a sufficient source of authority. Some traditions, like the Sa-skya, relied on an uncle-nephew succession of the secular and monastic head of their tradition so that both secular and religious forms of authority could be kept in the 'Khon family, which is a convention still maintained today. The alternative model of reincarnate lamas as successors to the legacy of a powerful master is heavily owed to Karma Pakshi (1204/6–1283) and his reincarnations. Since the 13th century there was a dramatic rise in the number of

reincarnate lamas, which promoted the phenomenon of reincarnation lineage as another source of authority.²¹⁵ Consequently, the *gdung rabs* were supplemented or even replaced by *gdan rabs*, ‘succession of monastic heads’.

As well as *gdan rabs*, the literary genre known as '*khrungs rabs* or *skyes rabs*, ‘former life stories’²¹⁶ based on the *Jātakas*, ‘the narratives of the previous lives of the Buddha’, represented the move from ancestral to reincarnation lineages for validating the position of a tradition or particular teacher. These narratives usually started in India during the time of the Buddha with the earliest individual in the line of lives often being a major disciple of the Buddha.

The inclusion of *skyes rabs* or '*khrungs rabs* in the *rnam thars* of any notable individual, together noble ancestral lineage genealogy, was symbolic of Tibetan Buddhist traditions’ efforts to build a cohesive centre of power in a competitive sectarian environment. Consequently, an authoritative tradition needed religious leaders possessing both a legitimate noble ancestral lineage and an authentic reincarnation lineage.

5.1.3. Master-disciple Lineage

The significance of master-disciple lineages, which originated in India, was strengthened by consolidation of the reincarnation system for transference of religious power. Belonging to an “authentic lineage” included the position and authenticity of one’s own teacher, their teacher and so on. Roesler described works of such nature as “Life-stories embedded in the macro-structure of the religious lineage” (Roesler 2014:123).

²¹⁵ For more information *sprul sku* system see Wylie (1978).

²¹⁶ This genre of literature will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Literature which covers this type of lineage include the *Bka'-brgyud gser phreng*, “golden rosaries of the Bka'-brgyud tradition”²¹⁷ literature and texts belonging to the *Bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar*, ‘biographies of lineage lamas’.

Vostrikov noticed that “the biographies in the *bla-ma-brgyud-pa'i-rnam-thar-s* are linked not on the basis of the succession to the headship of a monastery (as in the *rgyal-rab-s*) or of the succession of incarnations (as in the *'khrun-rab-s*), but on the basis of the succession in receiving and imparting some doctrine or cult from one tradition to the other (*brgyud*)” (Vostrikov 1962:180). Rightfully so, there are unmissable similarities between works titled *bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thars*, *gdan rabs* and, *'khrungs rabs/skyes rabs* in that they contain collections of individuals’ life stories linked in a continuous religious tradition.

Works of this nature, which document prominent lineage holders and their major disciples, can be found amongst the written works of all Tibetan Buddhist schools. Some of the more notable stand-alone works include the *Byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam par thar pa rgyal bstan mdzes pa'i rgyan mchog phul byung nor bu'i phreng ba*, “Biographies of the eminent gurus in the transmission lineages of the graded path teachings, called the jewelled rosary” written by Yongs-'dzin Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (1713-1792).²¹⁸ This text, according to Vostrikov, “is widely known in Tibet and Mongolia and is included in works marked for compulsory mass reading in spiritual schools” (Vostrikov 1962:181). Indeed, even today, in Dge-lugs-pa monasteries of Tibet and Mongolia, Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan’s text is still reading out aloud and remains a popular

²¹⁷ For more on this see Mon-rtse-pa Kun-dga'-dpal-ldan & Kun-dga'-brug-dpal (1970).

²¹⁸ This work contains the life stories of the Dge-lugs-pa lamas belonging to the Dga'-ldan oral tradition. For a study and translation of this work see Willis (1995).

convention, demonstrating the power still found in the authority of the lineage of previous masters.

Works of the *gser phreng* or *bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* types can vary in length. Some of these collections contain extensive biographies of the individuals mentioned but if taken as part of a single text, the emphasis is always the larger lineage presented through the “chain” or “rosary” of life stories rather than the individual lives themselves.

5.1.4. Transmission Lineage

Very much connected to the master-disciple lineage are the transmission lineages of teachings and practices, primarily preserved in *thob yig* and *gsan yig*, ‘records of teachings received’, the very genre addressed by this thesis.

Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhist masters collected and recorded every teaching and practice transmitted to them and the transmission lineages through which they were received. Thus, anyone who transmitted a teaching or practice to an individual can be called their teacher. However, each Buddhist monk has only one main teacher to whom they would refer as their *rtsa ba'i bla ma*, ‘root lama, root teacher or root guru’. Despite having a large number of teachers and few main teachers, there is always just *one* main *rtsa ba'i bla ma*. This tradition continues today, where receiving teachings and transmissions from many masters is encouraged amongst Tibetan Buddhist practitioners. But when asked “who is your teacher?” the person would start with their *rtsa ba'i bla ma* then list one or two more masters who they deem influential upon their learning. Thus, in the numerous lists of transmissions of practices, the teachers immediately preceding the individual writing the *thob yig* may not necessarily be the *rtsa ba'i bla ma*. This linear

master-disciple lineage of root lamas needs to be distinguished from the more “network-like” lineages extractable from transmission lineages of practices and teachings.

This is not to say that transmission lineages have no value for clarifying master-disciple lineages. On the contrary, where the knowledge of such master-disciple lineages has been lost, by thorough inspection of the transmission lineages of teachings and practices found within *thob yigs*, it is possible to recreate or reimagine them. When possible, *rnam thar* and *gdan rabs* accounts can supplement this retracing process.

Thob yigs are the ideal sources of information in terms of retracing transmission lineages. This practice remains today in Tibet and Mongolia, which enables later disciples to authenticate and bring back lost transmission lineages and gives life to practices and teachings deemed lost. Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig* is said to have provided the means for bringing back lost lineages in Mongolia after the socialist period and it was even suggested that certain lineages lost in Tibet were retraced and brought back to life from the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*.²¹⁹ For Western academia, cross-referencing the lineages contained within the *thob yigs* and *gsan yigs* that have survived since the 13th century would reveal certain crossovers between traditions which are otherwise difficult to clarify.

In addition, examining the contents of examples of *rang rnam*, enables us to extract something similar to the transmission lineages documented in *thob yigs*. This possibility is owed to the Tibetan autobiographical writing style of documenting the notable daily receiving of teachings and practices from one’s master. The Fifth Dalai Lama’s autobiography is full of such records, as is the case for Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s own *rang rnam*. Unlike the standard *thob yig*, which are often nothing more than bare lists of

²¹⁹ This information was communicated to me by the Mongolian monk-scholar Soninbayar during our meeting in the summer of 2012.

transmission lineages, the biographies often shed light on the context of the transmission such as the reasons for the transmission, extra advice or instructions, and other related events. Consequently, when possible it is worth studying both the *rnam thar* or *rang rnam* together with the *thob yig* of an individual.

The *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* is unusual in that it is “fleshed out” around a “skeleton” of hundreds of *rnam thars*, when compared to other examples of *thob yigs* and *gsan yigs* simply list transmission lineages of teachings and practices. The *rnam thars* in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig* are ideally suited to establish an unbroken chain of accomplished masters. As mentioned, an authentic lineage is fundamental for claims of legitimacy and authority in the Tibetan Buddhist world, especially in the competitive and unstable era of the 17th century.

Structuring the *thob yig* around *rnam thars* enabled Dza-ya Paṇḍita to cover all four types of lineages, and thus claim authenticity of all four for his tradition. According to Ary, “biography can be used to do more than simply inspire, inform, and instruct... biography can also be used to make important legitimization claims that bear directly upon the formulation of both sectarian and personal identity and the creation of community” (Ary 2015:10). Although in reference to the early Dge-lugs philosophical tradition, the role of biography for formations of identity for and within a lineage also applies to this study of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s work.

When regarded as parts of a single narrative, this chronological chain of *rnam thars* is in itself the history of the Dge-lugs-pa lineage and, through them, Dza-ya Paṇḍita claims authority for his tradition. Through examining the chronology of *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, one can observe recurrent themes purposefully included by the author to allow for the inclusion of all four lineage typologies in his *thob yig*. The

significant literary techniques through which he accomplished this will be analysed in more detail in the following sections.

5.2. *Dza-ya Paṇḍita's Treatment of Ancestral Lineages*

The ancestral lineages of the figures occupy an important place in the *rnam thars* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita. The majority of the *rnam thars* in chapter Eight and Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* include extensive discussions of the ancestral lineage of the respective individuals. These discussions include myths and legends of the geographical location associated with the particular ancestral lineage as well as the origin of the ancestral lineage itself.

In the case of the Sixth Dalai Lama, the discussion of the region of his birth and the origins of his ancestral lineage occupies half the *rnam thar*. Again, associated myths and legends are narrated with the support of quotations from authoritative scriptures and treasure texts. Often, the discussion of the ancestral lineages takes up more folios than the actual life of the individual master. In doing so, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was able to include another type of lineage in his *thob yig* in addition to mere teaching lineages. The presentation of ancestral lineages in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* will be revisited later in Chapter Six.

5.3 *'Khrungs rabs: The Treasury of Reincarnation Lineages*

Dza-ya Paṇḍita begins many of his *rnam thars* with a *'khrungs rabs*. This is especially true for the *rnam thars* of his own masters and contemporaries. Some of these

are brief lists of their previous lives, while others contain extensive life stories of each of the previous incarnations. It is important to examine some examples to demonstrate how he utilises '*khrungs rabs*' as a means for including reincarnation lineage in his *thob yig*.

In Tibet, the two terms '*khrungs rabs*' and '*skyes rabs*' are used synonymously and were translated by Vostrikov as 'histories of incarnations' (Vostrikov 1962:92). For this study, these terms will be translated as 'Stories of Former Lives'. Appropriately pointed out by Roesler, these narratives "contain a doctrinal message, demonstrating the Buddhist law of Karman and the benefit of Buddhist virtues beyond a single life-time. In addition, they assert the religious accomplishments of the respective Buddhist master and inspire devotion" (Roesler 2014:120).

Although rebirth is accepted by all Buddhist traditions, in Tibet the rebirth doctrine took to different heights following the *sprul sku*, 'emanated body' system since the 13th century. As mentioned, the *sprul sku* model became one of the most popular systems for passing on authority within Tibetan Buddhist traditions and this was accompanied by an extensive corpus of literature concerning topics of the rebirth and pre-birth. According to Vostrikov:

"Regarding every person as a link in the chain of countless manifestations of consciousness, the Tibetan Lamas thought themselves capable of discovering, in historical and mystical figures of the past, previous manifestations of this consciousness and of ascertaining beforehand where and in what form this consciousness will be born again... Every somewhat noted figure of Tibetan history – particularly from among the members of the Order – began to be regarded not only as the descendant of a specific dynasty of a person but also as a new embodiment of the person born again and again"

(Vostrikov 1962:192)

The prototype on which all later Tibetan '*khrungs rabs*' or '*skyes rabs*' are based are the Indian *Jātakas*, containing narratives of the previous births of the Buddha Śākyamuni. In

Tibet, particularly popular examples include Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*, "Garland of former lives" and numerous later Tibetan expositions such as the Third Karmapa Rang-'byung rdo-rje's (1284-1339) 14th century *Skyes rabs brgya rtsa*, "One hundred former life stories [of the Buddha]".

Based on the model of the Buddha's former lives, Tibetans began to formulate *'khrungs rabs* and *skyes rabs* for prominent masters and lineage holders and even the legendary kings of the Spu-rgyal Empire as a means to authenticate their own lineage. For example, the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* is a treasure text attributed to the King Srong-btsan sgam-po, supposedly first revealed in the 12th century, but, as demonstrated by Kapstein, the work's contents continued to evolve up to the 17th century (Kapstein 1992:82). The *Maṇi bka' 'bum* contains legendary narratives about the manifestations and previous lives of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, some of his lives taking place in Tibet. By associating him with Tibet through manifestations such as the king Srong-btsan sgam-po, the previous lives of the Bodhisattva can also be attributed to Srong-bstan sgam-po, which likens the narrative chain in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* to a "*Jātaka*" of the king Srong-btsan sgam-po. Later, in the 17th century, the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* narratives were disseminated widely by the Fifth Dalai Lama as a means of promoting himself as a legitimate ruler of Tibet.²²⁰

If we now return to the *'khrungs rabs* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, there are several actual sections titled *'khrungs rabs* distinguished from the *rnam thar* of the individual that follows. The below examples are all from Chapter Nine of the *thob yig*, as it would prove too extensive to cover all chapters of this sizeable work in this thesis.

Chapter Nine has a total of 53 *rnam thars*, not including individuals mentioned in

²²⁰ For a detailed discussion see Kapstein (1992).

the *'khrungs rabs*. Out of the 53, only 5 are preceded by a section which the author titled as *'khrungs rabs*. These *'khrungs rabs* belong to the following individuals:

V3F235b4: 'Khon-ston Dpal-'byor lhun-grub (1561-1637) (1 folio)

V3F248a5: The Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682) (7 folios)

V4F10a3: The Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes dpal-bzang po (1663-1737) (14 folios)

V4F21a5: Sprul-sku Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1619-1656) (2 folios)

V4F30a6: Rje-btsun bla-ma Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723) (30 folios)

From the number of folios dedicated to the *'khrungs rabs* and their variety in length and detail, it becomes clear that length has little to do with prominence of the figure. The shorter ones are no more than lists of names with a short passage of information such as in the *'khrungs rabs* of 'Khon-ston Dpal-'byor lhun-grub (1561-1637):

“He was born as the arhat Cundara in the presence of the Ikṣvāku [the Buddha]. He was accomplished in the Tripiṭaka and his mind-stream was enriched by the three trainings of the *Mngon rtogs rgyan*. Then he was born as the Ācārya Śākyamitra who was a chief disciple of Nāgārjuna. He compiled compendiums and especially was a master of the teachings of the Mantrayāna. Then he incarnated as Ka-ba dpal-brtsegs who translated innumerable teachings of the sutras and tantras and himself was supreme amongst the eight lotsabas. Then he incarnated as Sgro-phug-pa. Then he incarnated as the venerable Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan who, having relied on the scholar Don-yod-pa etc., became a great scholar. He composed many writings such as the *ShAka Lan kar lan* and he passed his times by the means of the scholarly pursuits of teaching, debating and composition [of the dharma].”²²¹

²²¹ (V3F235b5) *mnyam med bu ram shing pa'i spyen sngar dgra bcom pa tsun+dar sku 'khrungs / lung sde snod gsum la mkhas pa dang / mngon rtogs bslab pa gsum gyis thugs rgyud yongs su phyug par mdzad do / de nas slob dpon shAkya bshes gnyen du sku bltams / de ni 'phags pa klu sgrub kyis (kyi) sras kyi thu bo / gsung rab sbyi dang / khyad par 'dus ba sogs sngags kyi bstan pa'i* (F236a) *bdag po chen pa'o // de rjes ska*

In contrast to the above example, the *'khrungs rabs* of the First Khalkha Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang btsan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723) spans 30 folios, exceeding the 18 folios dedicated to his *nam thar*. In this instance, the 14 former lives of the First Jebtsundamba are visited in more detail than some of the *nam thars* found elsewhere in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

Vostrikov provides other examples of *'khrungs rabs* in his work on Tibetan historical literature and concludes:

“[Using the *'khrung rabs* of Ngag-dbang tshul-khrims (1721-1791) as an example] the account of “incarnations” as given in this work does not follow a strict chronological sequence. Besides some “incarnations” described are partly contemporaries. Such peculiarities are also observed in other works of this type... These are explained by the fact that the “histories of incarnations” (*'khrungs rabs*) are, as already stated, based on small texts of cultic nature – the so called *'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs* i.e. “prayers to incarnations”, which usually have been compiled by persons, who, though occupying high positions in the Buddhist hierarchy – have most superfluous ideas of history.” (Vostrikov 1962:97)

On the contrary, it could be argued that these high-ranking Buddhist masters had a clear reason for why they picked the specific figures they chose to include in the *'khrungs rabs* they composed, as can be demonstrated by the closer examination of one prominent example.

5.3.1 The *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama

To understand the significance of the *'khrungs rabs* included in the *Thob yig gsal*

(ka) ba dpal brtsegs su sku skye ba bzhes / mdo sngags kyi chos mtha' yas pa bsgyur cing / lo tsa ba brgyad gyi nang nas mchog tu gyur pa de nyid do // de rjes sgro phug par skye ba bzhes.... (F236b3) de nas rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan du sku 'khrungs / mkhas pa don yod pa sogs bsten nas mkhas pa chen por gyur te / shAka lan kar lan sogs mang du mdzad cing 'chad rtsod rtsom gsum kyis dus 'da bar mdzad do //

ba'i me long by Dza-ya Paṇḍita and how these fit into the context of other '*khrungs rabs*, it is necessary to explore at least one in detail. As the previous chapter of this thesis explored Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, it is fitting to continue with an analysis of his '*khrungs rabs*.

After the usual four-line verse dedication marking the beginning of a new section, the author provides a brief introduction:

“As for the worthy object of this praise [the Dalai Lama], he worked in countless rebirths and reincarnations for the benefit of all beings. Although they are uncountable, to briefly narrate the 13 incarnations that took place in India and Tibet...”²²²

These 13 life stories are each brief, with no more than a folio dedicated to any single one.

It is noteworthy to mention that, though listed as 13, there are in fact 14 individuals, as we will see later. The '*khrungs rabs* concludes with the following statement:

“If one wishes to know more about the extended versions of their *rnam thars*, then one can find out from the *Rnam thar chen mo*²²³ composed by the Great Fifth. As for the transmission lineage of the *Zhal tshe 'phel gyi mngon rtogs* and *Bla rgyud gsol 'debs*, it was bestowed to me by the ācārya Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang blo-bzang chos-ldan. The previous transmission lineages need to be searched for again.”²²⁴

The former lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama as told by the '*khrungs rabs* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita are:

V3F248b: Rnal-'byor dbang-phyug Birwaba or Virūpa

❖ Born in Bhishana, East of Bodhgayā

²²² (V3F248a6) *zhes pa'i bstod yul dam pa 'di ni bgrang yas pa'i skye ba dang sprul pas 'gro don mdzad pa mtha' klas kyang rgya bod gnyis su sku'i sprul par rags pa tsam bshad pa bcu gsum la /*

²²³ Having looked thoroughly through the *Dukūla* and the secret *rnam thar* of the Fifth, there are no corresponding parallels to these 13 pre-birth stories or the mention of the *rnam thar chen mo*.

²²⁴ (V3F253a3) *'di rnams kyi rnam thar rgyas par shes par 'dod na rygal dbang lnga bas mdzad pa'i rnam thar chen mo las shes bar bya'o / de lta bu'i skyes chen dam pa nyid kyi mdzad pa'i zhal tshe 'phel gyi mngon rtogs / bla rgyud gsol 'debs dang bcas pa'i yung thob pa'i brgyud pa ni / slob dpon rin po che ngang dbang blo bzang chos ldan dpal bzang po / des bdag la'o / brgyud pa gong ma rnams slar 'tshol rgyu //*

- ❖ Scholar of Nalendra
- ❖ Followed the path of the secret tantra and displayed many miraculous signs such as reversing the flow of the Ganges

V3F248b: a Sthavira

- ❖ Born in Oḍḍiyāna
- ❖ Instructed by Vajravārāhī
- ❖ Scholar and Siddha who principally trained in sūtra, tantra and prātimokṣa
- ❖ Scholar of Bodhgayā

V3F249a: Panchen Dharmapāla

- ❖ Born in Eastern India
- ❖ Completely trained in the five sciences
- ❖ Heard oral instructions from Nāgārjuna
- ❖ Passed down teachings of secret yoga to Rin-chen bzang-po

V3F249a: Gayadhara

- ❖ Born into a scholarly lineage in Eastern India
- ❖ Highly trained in the five sciences
- ❖ Taught the great scholar 'Brog-mi
- ❖ Extensively spread the Buddhas teachings in Tibet and Greater Tibet

V3F249b: Mkhas-grub khyung-po (978/90-1127)

- ❖ Born in Snye-mo ra-mang in Gtsang into the Khyung family
- ❖ Completely mastered astrology
- ❖ Heard teachings from a Bon lama named G.yung-drung rgyal-po
- ❖ Heard teachings of the mind, space, and oral instructions from a Rnying-ma lama 'Byung-gnas seng-ge
- ❖ Heard teachings of the Mahāmudrā from the lay teacher RA-hu-la
- ❖ Relied on 150 scholars and 50 siddhas in India
- ❖ Received teachings from Vajradhara and a Ye-shes Mkha'-'gro
- ❖ Spread the teachings of the Shangs-pa Bka'-brgyud

V3F249b: Paṇ-chen Bsod-snyoms-pa chen-po

- ❖ Born in Kashmir
- ❖ Learned in writing, calculation, music, poetry, grammar, dancing and the 18 arts and sciences
- ❖ Trained in the Vajrayāna and the Tripiṭaka
- ❖ Famed throughout the lands as a Paṇḍita and Siddha
- ❖ Officiated at the full monastic ordination of Sa-skya Paṇḍita

V3F249b: Sangs-rgyas ston-pa (1207-1278)

- ❖ Born in a city named Bsil-ma
- ❖ Heard many teachings of the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna
- ❖ Lamp of the teachings of the Shangs-pa bka'-brgyud

V3F250a: Kun-mkhyen Chos-'od (1214-1292)

- ❖ Born in Nyang-stod gser-sdings
- ❖ His mother was from the Mgar clan
- ❖ Received *dbang* and *lung* of sūtra and tantra
- ❖ Master of philology and poetry

V3F250b: Kun-mkhyen-bu

- ❖ Born in the country of Nyang-sna-bzhi
- ❖ Learnt in sūtra, tantra and vinaya
- ❖ Studied with Khro-phu Lō-tsa-ba Byams-pa-dpal (1173-1236)
- ❖ Gave teachings at Zha-lu monastery and built the temple of Ri-phug

V3F250b: Yar-klung-pa chen-po Seng-ge rgyal-mtshan (1345-1413)

- ❖ Master of yoga
- ❖ Subdued many oath-bound guardians of the dharma
- ❖ Composed commentary of the Hervajra tantra

V3F251a: Pha-rgong Bsod-nams bzang-po (14th century)

- ❖ Accomplished in the six doctrines of Niguma (Shangs-pa Bka'-brgyud and Rnying-ma)

V3F251b: Rnal-'byor dbang-mo

- ❖ Born in G.yas-ru in the Zhang lineage
- ❖ Became the queen of the ḍākinīs

V3F251b: Blo-gsal rgya-mtsho

- ❖ Born near Sa-skya in Smug-gshongs bde-pa'i-tshal
- ❖ Studied in Bkra'-shis lhun-po
- ❖ Practised the 13 Yamāntakas and 21 Tārās belonging to the system of Atiśa (Bka'-gdams-pa)
- ❖ Assistant abbot of Zha-lu monastery (Sa-skya)
- ❖ Had many disciples who were great upholders of the glorious Sa-skya tradition

V3F252a: Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588)

- ❖ Teacher of the Karmapa Rgyal-tshab rin-po-che Grags-pa don-grub

The previous Dalai Lamas are not included here as their *rnam thars* are discussed elsewhere in Chapter Nine. These figures, apart the first four incarnations are historical figures from Tibet. It is also interesting to note that amongst them, they seem to include all historical Tibetan Buddhist schools apart from the Jo-nang and Bka'-brgyud tradition (with the exception of the well-represented Shangs-pa bka'-brgyud). This is noteworthy considering the historic period in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita was writing. As a Dge-lugs-pa scholar, he was aware of the contextual rivalries between the Dge-lugs-pa and the Karma Bka'-brgyud. Thus, presenting the Fifth Dalai Lama as masterful over all prominent Tibetan Buddhist traditions in his former lives but leaving the Karma Bka'-brgyud and Jo-nang out completely can be read as the author's desire to present these traditions as insignificant in the former lives of his teacher, who was a great being learned in all that is

worth learning. Referring back to the Sixth Dalai Lama's recognition process mentioned in the previous chapter, this is but one instance in which the Dge-lugs-pa's anti-Karma Bka'-brgyud sentiments arise in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. Thus, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's reason for choosing these figures seems to be to highlight the religious mastery of the former lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama but to exclude his political opponents from authority.

As there are a number of *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita's contemporaries, including one by the Fifth himself, it is necessary to provide comparison between these versions.

The first is the *'khrungs rabs* composed by the Fifth Dalai Lama himself is titled *'Khrungs rabs kyi zhing bkod 'bri tshul gyi rtogs brjod kha byang dang bcas pa gsal ba'i me long*, "The clear mirror of stories of former lives, written like a 'map' of the previous incarnations, together with an inventory".²²⁵ This work was composed in verse by the Fifth Dalai Lama and spans 20 pages in the modern edition (1988-1989). This work solely concerns the previous births of the Fifth Dalai Lama and lists 15 individuals:

- ❖ Pad-dkar-'chang/Spyan ras-gzigs
- ❖ King Sgra-dbyangs rnga-sgra's son 'Jig-rten dbang-phyug
- ❖ Dkon-mchog gsum-gyi-'bangs
- ❖ Chos-rgyal Srong-btsan sgam-po
- ❖ Chos-rgyal Khri-srong lde'u-btsan
- ❖ Mnga'-bdag khri-ral(-pa-can)
- ❖ 'Brom-ston
- ❖ Kha-che Dgon-pa-ba
- ❖ Sa-skya-pa Bla-chen snying-po
- ❖ Lang-tsho'i snying-po dar-ba'i-dpal
- ❖ Las-'brel smon-lam lde-mig

²²⁵ The reprinted modern book edition is accessible on TBRC (tbrc.org W19860).

- ❖ Lha-rje Dge-ba-'bum
- ❖ Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Dge-'dun-grub
- ❖ Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho
- ❖ Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho
- ❖ Thams-cad mkhyen-pa Yon-tan rgya-mtsho

Compared to the individuals included in the *'khrungs rabs* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, there are no crossovers apart from the Third Dalai Lama, but in terms of his enumeration Dza-ya Paṇḍita does not include him in the 13 former lives. So, it is unlikely that this work by the Fifth was one of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's sources.

The examples found in the *'khrungs rabs* by the Fifth Dalai Lama elevate the figures within to supramundane standards for which the composition utilises a significantly verbose poetical style. For example, from the section about Sa-skya Bla-chen snying-po:

“Having realised the supreme stage of a Vajradhara,
 which had not been achieved even by the Bodhisattvas on the tenth
 [Bodhisattva] *bhūmis*,
 in the Akaniṣṭha-realm located on earth
 he is known as the venerable Sa-skya-pa Bla-chen snying-po.
 Born into the 'Khon family, emerging victorious from the two obscurations,
 he was [like] Mañjuśrī in person, and accomplished all the *siddhis* without
 exception.
 Knowing everything that there is to be known, he possesses the highest
 knowledge, compassion and power,
 The Vajradhara who possesses the eight qualities of mastery.
 In a region that possesses all the embodiments of the ten virtues,
 is the place known as Sa-skya.

In respect to the doctrines of the Secret Mantra

it equals Oḍḍiyāna, the land of the *dākinīs*.”²²⁶

Here, the main points are that the founder of the Sa-skya tradition, Sa-kya-pa Bla-chen kun-dga' snying-po was considered as an emanation of Mañjuśrī, an individual accomplished in the tantric tradition and of the important lineage holders of the Sa-skya tradition. His birthplace Sa-skya being likened to Oḍḍiyāna further emphasises his connections with the Vajrayāna. Consequently, the Fifth Dalai Lama is legitimising his own with *rnying ma* and *gsar ma* tantric as well as Sa-skya lineages through the affiliations of his former life. Like the writings of the Sde-srid, the Great Fifth draws attention to the divine origins of this figure. However, he also highlights the religious accomplishments of Sa-skya Bla-chen snying-po as a great Buddhist master, which, as we will later see is the sole concern for Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

Another major theme running throughout this *'khrungs rabs* is the Fifth's drawing of attention to his former lives as manifestations of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. For example, in the narrative concerning Avalokiteśvara:

“I was Avalokiteśvara who was the son of the king Sgra-dbyangs rnga-sgra. At the time when he was sixteen years old he was on route to meet the Buddha 'Od-mdzad ye-shes-tog. On the way, he met the sun and moon Tārā and the sky Tārā who became his two queens. They offered a blue water lily and a conch to the Buddha and generated the Bodhicitta.”²²⁷

Although not explicitly stating that this son was the manifestation of the Bodhisattva

²²⁶ (P837) *sa bcu'i byang sems rnams kyis bskrun min pa'i / sa mchog rdo rje 'dzin pa mngon gyur nas / sa la gnas pa'i 'og min zhing khams su / sa skya par grags bla chen snying po'i zhabs / sgrib gnyis las 'khon 'khon par skyes kyi rgyud / 'jam dpal dbyangs dngos dngos grub ma lus thob / shes bya kun mkhyen mkhyen brtse'i nus mthur ldan / rdo rje 'chang dbang dbang phyug brgyad ldan pa / dge bcu'i yon tan kun tshang ba'i / yul grur dpal ldan sa skya zhes / gsang ba sngags kyi chos tshul la / o rgyan mkha' 'gro'i gling dang mtshungs /*

²²⁷ (P830) *rgyal po sgra dbyangs rnga gra'i sras su 'jig rten dbang phyug 'khrungs pa'i tshe / lo bcu drug lon pa na / sangs rgyas 'od mdzad ye shes tog gi drung du byon pa'i lam khar nyi zla'i sgron ma dang nam mkha'i sgron ma gnyis kyis btsun mo nbya bar gsol zhing / sangs rgyas la ut+pa la dang dong rtse phul te sems bskyed do /*

Avalokiteśvara, the two queens he takes are in fact the two Tārā consorts of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.

The second *'khrungs rabs* is found in the 22nd Chapter of the *BaiDUrya ser po* composed by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in 1697. It is titled *Rgyal ba lnga pa ngo bo spyan ras gzigs yin pa dang / der ci'i slad du brtse ba'i bdag nyid spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug ces bgyi ba sogs kyi rgyu mtshan lung dang bcas pa bstan pa*, “The explanation of why the Victorious Fifth [himself] is called the lord of loving-kindness Spyran-ras-gzigs together with prophecies” and belongs to the last part of the *BaiDUrya ser po* which deals with the Fifth Dalai Lama’s passing away and the enthronement of the Sixth Dalai Lama.

This chapter contains numerous text references to the different emanations of Spyran-ras-gzigs in the Land of Snows accumulating in the Fifth Dalai Lama. The title of the text alone clarifies the purpose of this text: to link the manifestations of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara to the incarnation lineage of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The Sde-srid lists twenty-seven figures as manifestations of Spyran-ras-gzigs and therefore former births of the Fifth Dalai Lama, of whom the first are legendary figures and the latter are historical figures:

- ❖ The King 'Od-ldan
- ❖ Yangs-pa
- ❖ The potter Yangs-pa'i-'od
- ❖ The charioteer of a hell guardian
- ❖ The son of a servant Mngon-dgar
- ❖ The son of a Brahmin Sprin
- ❖ The son of a potter Snang-byed
- ❖ The potter Yangs-pa'i-'od
- ❖ The Dharma king Dpal-gyi gzi-brjid

- ❖ Rin-chen-mchog
- ❖ The King Byams-pa'i stobs-ldan
- ❖ The King Rin-chen
- ❖ The King Sgra-dbyangs rnga-sgra'i sras
- ❖ Mig-mi-'dzum
- ❖ 'Phags-pa Dpal-brtsegs rgyal-po
- ❖ Rin-chen 'byung-gnas
- ❖ Pad-ma'i snying-po/Padma-skyes
- ❖ 'Phags-pa nam-mkha' rgyal-po phyag-ston spyen-stong
- ❖ Dkon-mchog-'bangs
- ❖ The King Srong-btsan sgam-po
- ❖ The King Khri-srong lde'u-btsan
- ❖ Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer 1124-1192
- ❖ 'Brom-ston Rgyal-pa'i 'byung-gnas
- ❖ PaN-chen Dge-'dun-grub
- ❖ Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho
- ❖ Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho
- ❖ Yon-tan rgya-mtsho

The figures in this work again do not contain any crossovers with the *'khrungs rabs* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, as elsewhere in his writing Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows much of what the Sde-srid writes - often word for word. However, compared to the *'khrungs rabs* composed by the Fifth, they have much in common. Given that both the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho were trying to popularise the image of the Fifth Dalai Lama as a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and thus a legitimate ruler of Tibet, their inclusion of figures who would support their promotion of the authentic Dge-lugs-pa rule and so, the narratives regarding the mythical king Dkon-mchog-'bangs and the Spu-rgyal kings are fitting to their agenda.

The narratives of the chapter use flowery language and provide little detail of the normal daily lives of the individuals very much in the hagiographical style. For example,

the story of Mig-mi-'dzum, 'Skt. Animiṣa' found in chapter 22 of the *BaiDUrya ser po* contains the following passages:²²⁸

“After the prince Mig-mi-'dzum received the prophecy, the Buddha Rin-chen snying-po bestowed these words [to the prince]: “Oh son of good family, for what reason did you examine the suffering of all beings alike regardless of bad rebirths or high rebirths? It is because you have generated a mind of compassion to act for the release of all sentient beings from suffering and act to pacify the *kleśas*. For this reason, oh son of good family you are named Spyān-ras-gzigs dbang-phyug.”²²⁹

The validation that Mig-mi-'dzum is in fact Avalokiteśvara is voiced from the mouth of a Buddha following the model of the sūtras, providing an undebatable authority for the traditional audience. The other narratives in this chapter of the *BaiDUrya ser po* follow a similar model, linking each figure in some way to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.

The last text of interest is the *Rgyal ba lnga pa'i khrungs rabs rmad byung bskal pa ma*, “The former birth stories of the Great Fifth known as the marvellous aeon” also composed by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho in 1693 (a few years before the *BaiDUrya ser po*). It is preserved as part of the *Gnas chung rdo rje sgra dbyangs gling gi 'don chog*, “The collection of liturgical writings from Gnas-chun rdo-rje sgra-dbyangs-gling monastery” pp. 338-353. There is also a Mongolian translation of the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma*.²³⁰ According to the colophon, it is the translation of the Tibetan text.²³¹ Like the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma*, it contains 58 different pre-birth stories of the Fifth Dalai

²²⁸ Titled “*Rgyal ba lnga pa ngo bo spyān ras gzigs yin pa dang / der ci'i slad du brtse ba'i bdag nyid spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug ces bgyi ba sogs kyi tgyu mtshan lung dang bcas pa bstan pa /*

²²⁹ (P355) *de bzhin gshegs pa rin chen snying pos rgyal bu mig mi 'dzum lung bstan nas 'di skad ces kyang bka' btsal to / rigs kyi bu gang gi phyir khyod kyis ngan song rnam su yang bltas / mtho ris rnam su yang bltas / sems can thams cad kyi sdug bsngal la yang bsltas shing / sems can thams cad sdug bsngal las thar bar bya ba dang / nyon mongs pa rab tu zhi bar bya ba'i phyir snying rje'i sems bskyed pas na / rigs kyi bu de'i phyir khyod spyān ras gzigs dbang phyug ces bya'o /*

²³⁰ I obtained the xerox copy of rare handwritten Mongolian manuscript of 50 folios from Ulaanbaatar.

²³¹ The colophon reads: “By the merit of translating and summarising these 58 *rnam thars* from Tibetan into Mongolian, may all the supreme beings who are the upholders of the *dharma* meet the good fortune of prostrating at the foot of the glorious lamas. And until the summer time of a good *kalpa* may the white clouds of the *dharma* fill the expanse of the sky and from the air underneath [these clouds] may the dragon roar of [the teachings] of the yellow sect resonate completely in the 10 directions.”

Lama in India and Tibet.

The *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* itself is composed entirely in verse and totals a mere 7 folios. The verses refer to 58 figures presented as the former lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama. However, as the verses are dense and brief, it is often difficult to decipher the identity of the figure. In the colophon of the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma*, the Sde-srid describes his work as “The prayers to stories of former lives of the great root lama who is the great crown ornament of the three realms, named for the benefit [of beings]; Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho”.²³² This suggests that the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* is a *'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs*, instead of a full *'khrungs rabs*. Vostrikov mentioned in his work on Tibetan historical writing that works in the genre of *'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs* form the “canvas” or basis for larger works constituting *'khrungs rabs* or other collections of biographies, and do not themselves constitute anything of historical value (Vostrikov 1962:100). Vostrikov also mentioned the existence of a commentary to the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* titled *Mu tig chun po*,²³³ which spans 79 folios (ibid.). Without this commentary, it is difficult to figure out exactly to whom the dedicational verses in the Sde-srid’s work refer to.

The Mongolian text, which introduces itself as a translated summary of the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma*, possibly provides clarification on these figures. Although the Mongolian manuscript lacks a comprehensive colophon and introduction, its 50-folio length indicates it could indeed be the summary of both the Sde-srid’s *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* and the *Mu tig chun po*. For example, the introductory page of the Mongolian text

²³² (F41a) *ces rje bla ma khams gsum gyi gtsug rgyan chen po don slad mtshan nas smos pa ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'khrungs rabs rnam thar gsol 'debs /*

²³³ I was unable to get access to this text for this thesis.

reads:

“The lord Dalai Lama himself is Avalokiteśvara. As for how this came to be so: many innumerable kalpas ago, in the western lands, at the time when the Buddha Altan-gereltü arsalang [Gser-'od seng-ge] appeared in the world, there was a king known as Sür Jabaglang un Chogtu [Rgyal-po Dpal-gyi gzi-brjid] who had two sons Eringchingshimba [Rin-chen sems-dpa'] and Eringchinghog [Rin-chen-mchog]. This king who then generated the Bodhicitta is now Buddha Tshe-dpag-med, Rin-chen-sems-dpa' is now Spyran-ras-gzigs and the son Rin-chen-mchog is now Vajrapāṇi – thus it was prophesied.”²³⁴

This is the first of the 58 *rnam thars* in this text and, aside from the mistaken substitute of Rin-chen-mchog with Rin-chen sems-dpa',²³⁵ the narrative is well-known for identifying the Dalai Lamas as Avalokiteśvara. Unlike the Sde-srid's version, the narrative here is quite long and tells the entire mythical narrative of the King and his sons, who would later become the Buddha Amitāyus and the Bodhisattvas Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi. Again, it is likely that the Mongolian here combines aspects of the *Mu tig chun po* to supplement the *Rmad byung bskal ka ma* in compiling these narratives. Nevertheless, by starting the composition with the statement that the Fifth himself is Avalokiteśvara, our anonymous translator sets the tone for the remaining 57 life stories, which almost always return to the

²³⁴ *Tere Bogda dalai blama anü homshin bodisatü borhan chu angha eche yambar metü bologsan uchir yambar hemebezu urida nügchigsen toholagshi ügei kalab in orida baragön jüg dūr saibar sacharagsan altan gereltü arsalang un baidal ier asarato chengelegsen ilugugsen borhan yirtumchö in oron dūr ügede boljo irehü in chagtu sür jabaglang un chogtu hemehü hagan tegünü hobilju türüggen hübegün Eringchingshimba [Rin-chen sems-dpa'], Eringchinghog [Rin-chen-mchog] saldas tai anghan dūr bodi degedü dūr sedhil egusegsen hagan anu edüge Chibagmid [Tshe-dpag-med] borhan, Eringchingshimba Jaraishig [Spyan-ras-gzigs], Eringchinghog Wacharbani [Vajrapāṇi], duichin toboo hemeyechü nomlagsan bolai...*

²³⁵ These figures are also mentioned in the work by Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas ryga-mtsho in his *BaiDurya ser po* (P350): *bcom ldan 'das gser 'od seng ge rnam par rol pa'i rgyal por rol pa'i rgyal po zhes bya ba byung ste chos ston pa'i tshe chos dang ldan pa chos kyi rgyal po dpal gyi gzi brjid ces bya ba byung / ... rgyal po skyed mos tshal na bsam gtan tu gnas bzhin par 'dug pa'i dus glo g.yas g.yon nas tsan dan sprul gyi snying po'i padma bkra ba gnyis las khye'u mtshan sum cu dang dpe byad brgyad cu dang ldan pa rin chen sems dang rin chen mchog ces bya ba gnyis brdzus te...* [at the time when the Buddha Gser-'od seng-ge rnam-par rol-pa'i rgyal-po appeared in the world and was teaching the dharma, there appeared a king by the name of Dpal-gyi-gzi-brjid. When the king was meditating in the pleasure grove there appeared two sandalwood lotus flowers on each of his left and right side of the body. From inside the lotuses there appeared two boys possessing the thirty[-two] major and 80 minor marks [of a supreme being] who transformed into Rin-chen-sems and Rin-chen-mchog...

fact that these respective incarnations are in fact manifestations of Avalokiteśvara.

In a similar vein to the Fifth Dalai Lama's own *'khrungs rabs*, the main theme of the Mongolian translation of the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* is the deity Avalokiteśvara. Therefore, numerous textual references in support of his argument from sūtras, *gter mas* and prophetic texts such as *Dam chos pad+ma dkar po*, 'Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*', *Sman gyi gzhi*, *Mdo Za ma tog*, 'Skt. *Ratnakaraṇḍasūtra*' and the *Bka' gtang sde lnga*. Ishihama, in her analysis of the dissemination of the belief in the Fifth Dalai Lama as a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, noted that "this development reached its consumption during the period when the Desi was in sole power over Tibet" (Ishihama 2003:538). She further notes that the Sde-srid presents the most detailed account of why the Fifth is Avalokiteśvara in his *rnam thar* of the Fifth (Ishihama 2003:543).²³⁶ As such, it is fitting that the Sde-srid's *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth also identifies the previous incarnations of the Fifth with the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.

These three *'khrungs rabs* all contain narratives of legendary and historical figures who are widely accepted as manifestations of Avalokiteśvara. Though stylistically different, they share a hagiographical nature and the common theme of deifying the previous incarnations of the Fifth Dalai Lama through identification with Avalokiteśvara and associated mythical figures, tantric lands such as Oḍḍiyāna, and historically prominent Buddhist lineages.

These *'khrungs rabs* mostly mention historical Buddhist masters who are the incarnations of the Dalai Lamas immediately preceding the Fifth. Only the *'khrungs rabs* authored by the Fifth himself and his regent Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho mention scholars

²³⁶ Titled "*Drin can rtsa ba'i bla ma ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i thun mon ma'i rnam thar du kuu la'i gos bzang las glegs bam gsum pa'i las 'phro bzhi pa*".

before Dge-'dun-grub. This is fitting as it was both the Fifth and the Sde-srid's objectives to stress the Fifth Dalai Lama's status as both a divinely authorised ruler of Tibet and an equally worthy scholar by the standards of any Tibetan Buddhist tradition. According to Ary: "Tibetan biographical writing is not merely a historical, inspirational, and/or instructional accounts... but also a powerful tool in establishing philosophical authority and legitimacy, both personally and institutionally (Ary 2015:103). Though he is referring to the implementation of biographical writing for the formation of early Dge-lugs-pa philosophical lineages, in the context of these *'khrungs rabs* the life stories are framed to secure another type of legitimacy and authority for which the process utilised is similar.

What all four versions of the *'khrungs rabs* have in common is how these prominent figures legitimise and empower the Fifth Dalai Lama. It was surprising to find that the works exclusive of Dza-ya Paṇḍita emphasise the Fifth Dalai Lama's connection to Avalokiteśvara through his previous lives and contain a number of parallel life-stories. They all start with Dge-'dun-grub and conclude with the incarnation lineage of the Dalai Lamas. There are two important threads which run through all these narratives:

- 1) Identification of the former lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama with Avalokiteśvara
- 2) The mixing of sectarian affiliations through the former lives

The Sde-srid's works emphasise the first point, whereas the Fifth Dalai Lama's works combine the two. This is fitting to the motives of the Dga'-ldan pho-brang and the Fifth to promote his leadership of Tibet as handed down from supramundane authority. Dza-ya Paṇḍita, on the other hand, chooses only to adhere to the second point as it seems his objective is purely religious: to demonstrate the accomplishment of his master throughout his former lives. Throughout Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing, we see him maintain a step away from the secular political play, which could explain why he did not choose to include any

figures popularly presented as emanations of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in his *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's version, aside from the Third Dalai Lama (who is 14th in the list and therefore does not actually belong to the 13 pre-incarnations Dza-ya Paṇḍita refers to) contains no parallels to the other three *'khrungs rabs*. This is especially surprising considering Dza-ya Paṇḍita's awareness of the writings of both the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, evident by his repeated references to their works.²³⁷ The figures Dza-ya Paṇḍita chose for his *'khrungs rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama highlight the scholarly and siddhic achievements of his previous lives and his mastery over the different traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Thus, emphasising his role as a Buddhist master over that of a secular ruler.

Regarding religious texts, Robinson asserts that “[they] need to be read on multiple levels... as history, as hagiography and as myth” (Robinson 1996:61). Preceding his version of the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Dza-ya Paṇḍita provides a unique *'khrungs rabs* not found in the works of his contemporaries. Their collective lives encompass the entire spectrum of study of the Buddhist curriculum such as the inner and outer sciences, dialectics, sūtra and tantra. They also cover a number of prominent Indian and Tibetan Buddhist schools, namely Nalendra monastery, Bka'-gdams-pa, Sa-skya, Shangs-pa bka'-brgyud, Rnying-ma and even the Bon. Major teachings and lineages are also covered such as the Mahāmudrā, Yamāntaka and Hevajra. As Buddhist lives are not restricted to one lifetime, all these figures, accomplishments and lineage affiliations are ultimately manifested in the Fifth Dalai Lama. This all points to the Fifth as an

²³⁷ Dza-ya Paṇḍita refers to the *Dukūla*, the *gsan yig Ganga'i chu rgyan*, the *BaiDUrya ser po* etc. numerous times throughout the *thob yig*.

accomplished master who umbrellas the major traditions of Buddhism and their accompanying doctrines and teachings from the early days of Buddhism in India down to his own times. In the other three collections of *'khrungs rabs*, the main emphasis was on the deified portrayal of the Fifth as an emanation of Bodhisattvas and dharma kings. Only the Fifth himself highlights his previous lives as siddhas and scholars too. Despite Dza-ya Paṇḍita's list of incarnations' total difference from the figures found in the Fifth's own *'khrungs rabs*, his exposition is still more in line with the Fifth. By combining mythical narratives, historical accounts and amplified depictions of the past lives of his master, he portrayed the Dalai Lama as an authoritative and highly accomplished master and the lineage holder of multiple Buddhist traditions.

5.3.2. Other *'khrungs rabs* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*

As mentioned earlier, there are several *'khrungs rabs* found in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. An interesting example being the *'khrungs rabs* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho included at the beginning of the Sde-srid's *rnam thar*. Dza-ya Paṇḍita does not call it a *'khrungs rabs* but he still lists the previous incarnations of the Sde-srid:

“As for the uncommon *rnam thar* of the supreme object of this praise, the great ruler, the glorious Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, the range of activities of the great supreme noble ones transcends the object of explanation that an inferior one like me can offer. Nevertheless, if I briefly explain his common *rnam thar* that is in accordance with the perception of those destined to be tamed...

His previous incarnations are:

- 1) The Dharmarājā Zla-bza bzang-po who taught the *mūlatantra* of Dpal-'dus kyi 'khor-lo
- 2) The mother of the Brahmin Gsal-ba
- 3) In Vaishali, Dga'-rab dpal, who was the older brother of the King Kuntu dga'

- 4) The glorious Des-ma
- 5) Dkon-mchog-'bang's best horse
- 6) The King Bham-ga-la who was the father of the prince Dad-pa brtan-pa (one of the jātakas in the *Bka' gdams legs bam*)
- 7) The Ācārya who had extremely firm faith Sgyu-ma mchil-pa
- 8) At the time of the child Dge-'dun chos-'phel, the householder Dpal-sbas
- 9) At the time of Sro-lung Kun-tu-rgyu Ne-tsog g.yu-mthing
- 10) The son of the lord Gnya'-khri btsan-po, Mu-khri btsan-po
- 11) At the time of Lha-tho-tho-ri snyan-shal who was the first king to rely on the supreme dharma, [his son] Mchog-khri gnyan-gzugs-can
- 12) Gung-ri gung-btsan who was the son of the Dharma King Srong-btsan sgam-po who introduced writing [to Tibet] for the first time and translated the Dharma from India, and established the 16 pure human laws
- 13) The supreme son [of Khri-srong lde-btsan] Mu-ne btsan-po at the time of the Dharma King Khri-srong lde-btsan who invited the Abbot Bodhisattva and the knower of the three times Padmasambhava and instructed Zan-g.yang mi-'gyur lhun-grub to build the monastery
- 14) Lha-lung dpal-gyi rdo-rje who sent Glang-dar-ma who harmed the Dharma to his death
- 15) Rngog Legs-pa'i shes-rab who requested the *bu chos* at the time of 'Brom-ston Rgyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas
- 16) As for the prophecy of this immaculate Lama, of the 17 incarnations taken by Lha-sras for the benefit of sentient beings, the Fifth [of these seventeen] – the Vidyādhara, treasure discoverer Rin-chen gling-pa.
- 17) Se-chen rgyal-po (i.e. Khubilai Khaan) who became the lord of the great kingdom of China and Mongolia
- 18) The treasure discoverer Bzang-po grags-pa
- 19) The root lama of the omniscient Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho who was the all accomplished lord of the scholars and siddhas; Nor-bzang rgya-mtsho
- 20) He who invited the omniscient Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho to Mongolia, the Dharma king Altan Khan who cleared away the darkness of the border lands with the sun rays of the teachings of the victorious one Tsong-kha-pa who became the crown ornament of the yellow hats and other manifestations...

In all of China and Tibet he divinely emanated in whichever way was necessary for each one.”²³⁸

²³⁸ (V3F165b3) *ces pa'i bstod yul dam pa sa skyong chen po sangs rgyas rgya mtsho dpal bzang po'i thun mong ma yin pa'i rnam par thar pa ni 'phags chen dam pa rnam kyi spyod yul las dam na bdag lta bus brjod pa'i yul las 'das / 'on kyang thun mong ba gdul bya'i snang ngo dang bstun pa'i rnam par thar pa cung zad brjod pa la / sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das dbal dus kyi 'khor lo'i rtsa rgyud gsungs pa'i chos rgyal zla ba bzang po / bram ze gsal ba'i yum 'ong ma / yangs pa can du rgyal po kun tu dga'i gcen po dga' rab dpal sprang mo des (de'i) ma / dkon mchog 'bangs kyi chibs chen cang/cad shes / rgyal bu dad pa brtan pa'i yab rgyal po bham ga la / dad pa rab tu brtan pa'i blon po sgyu ma mchi la pa / khye'u dge 'dun chos 'phel gyi dus du khyim bdag (F166a) dpal bas / sro lung kun tu rgyu'i dus du ne tsog gyu mthing / rje gnya' khri btsan po'i sras mu khri btsan po / dam pa'i chos kyi dbu thog mar bsnyes pa'i lha tho tho ri snyan shal dus su sras mchog khri gnyan gzugs can / thog mar yi ge'i srol btod cing rgya gar nas chos bsgyur ba dang / mi chos gtsang ma bcu drug gi khrims bca'i chos rgyal srong btsan sgam po'i sras gung gi gung btsan / chos rgyal*

This list of previous incarnations of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho from Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing is almost identical to that in the *'khrung rabs gsol 'debs* composed by the Sde-srid himself, titled *Lha sras mu ne'i zlos gar mi dbang sangs rgyas rgya mtsho'i 'khrung rabs gsol 'debs thog med bskal pa ma bzhugs so*, "The 'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs of the ruler Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho who is an emanation of Lha-sras and Mu-ne known as the Thog med bskal pa ma". This text is written fully in verse and spans 3.5 folios with a four line *śloka* dedicated to each individual. We do not know the exact dates of its composition. However, it must have been composed around the same time as the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma*; which was composed in 1693, as part of the Sde-srid's efforts to legitimise his position of the successor of the Fifth. The 20 individuals from the *Thog me bskal pa ma* are:

1. Zla-ba bzang-po
2. Bram-ze's queen Yid-'ong-ma
3. Bar+da-sbyor dga'-rab-dpal
4. A female tramp
5. Dkon-mchog-'bang's best horse
6. King Bhang+gara/Bhad+gara
7. Khong-yangs sgyu-ma mchil-pa
8. Householder Dpal-spas
9. A speaking parrot named Don-grub
10. Nya-khri btsan-po's son Mu-khri btsan-po

khri srong lde btsan gyis mkhan po bo dhi stwa dang / dus gsum mkhyen pa padma 'byung gnas spyang drangs shing zan g.yang mi 'gyur lhun grub gyis grub pa'i gtsug lag khang bzhengs pa'i dus su sras mchog mu ne btsan po / bstan pa la gnod pa byas pa glang dar ma lnga pa'i lam du btang ba'i lha lung dpal gyi rdo rje / dri med bla mas lung bstan pa'i lha sras kyis 'gro don mdzad pa'i skye ba bcu bdun gyi lnga pa rig sngags 'chang ba gter bton rin chen gling pa / rgya hor gyi rgyal khams chen por dbang bsgyur pa'i se chen rgyal po / gter bton bzang po grags pa / thams cad mkhyen pa dge 'dun rgya mtsho'i dbu bla mkhas shing grub pa'i dbang phyug nor bzang rgya mtsho / thams cad mkhyen pa bsod nams rgya mtsho sog yul du spyang drangs te zhwa ser cod pan 'tshang ba'i rgyal ba tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa'i nyi 'od kyis mtha' 'khob kyi mun pa bsal bar mdzad pa'i Al thang chos kyi rgyal po sogs rgya bod kun tu (F166b) gang la gang 'dul gyi sprul pa'i zlos gar rnam par bsgyur ba'i bod kyi bstan 'gro'i rjes bo sa skyong chen po 'di nyid lung bstan pa...

11. Tho-Tho-ri gnyan-btsan's son Mchog-khri gnyan-gzung-btsan
12. Srong-btsan sgam-po's son from Queen Mong-bza' Gung-ri gung-btsan
13. Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's son Mu-ne btsan-po
14. Lha-lung Dpal-gyi rdo-rje
15. Legs-pa'i shes-rab who requested the *Bu chos* of the Bka'-gdams legs-bam from 'Brom ston
16. Gter-ston Rin-chen gling-pa who is the 5th of the 17 emanations taken by Lha-sras for the benefit of beings
17. Se-chen rgyal-po (i.e. Khubilai Khaan)
18. Gter-ston Bzang-po grags-pa
19. Mkhas-grub Nor-bzang rgya-mtsho
20. Altan khan.

This is not the only occasion where Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows the Sde-srid's writing. We saw examples of him doing so in the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and will again see later in this chapter. When not lifting entire sections from the Sde-srid's writing, Dza-ya Paṇḍita often presents a condensed version. In this case, the difference in the spelling of the figures' names and their style of introduction suggests Dza-ya Paṇḍita's source may not have been the exact text of the Sde-srid's *Thog med bskal pa ma*.

Vostrikov's answer to the irregularity of the chronology and historicity of the individuals found in *'khrungs rabs* was mentioned earlier, yet further asserted:

“The Tibetans do not pay much attention to the lack of chronological sequence in the listing of incarnations. The fact that these texts ascribe, to the same person, two or more simultaneous re-births in the past is also taken by the Tibetan very lightly. This person is normally regarded by these texts as an embodiment of the Buddha or Bodhisattva and, according to the Buddhist ideas, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas can be embodied simultaneously in various places and in various persons.”

(Vostrikov 1962:97)

This may answer for the lack of chronology and possibility of simultaneous embodiments found in the *'khrungs rabs*, yet, there is another important purpose that *'khrungs rabs* serve

and, to demonstrate this purpose, there is no better example than the Sde-srid's *'khrungs rabs*.

Looking at the list of figures presented as former manifestations of the Sde-srid in his *'khrungs rabs*, a number of themes stands out. Firstly, most of the individuals' lives are tied to the life of another figure accepted by the tradition as one of the previous manifestations of the Fifth Dalai Lama. For example, the best horse of the legendary king Dkon-mchog-'bangs who is one of the previous incarnations of the Fifth Dalai Lama or Gung-ri gung-btsan, who was the son of Srong-btsan sgam-po. These previous lives echo the close master-disciple ties between the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid. It is noteworthy that the Sde-srid's previous lives are all in a subordinate role to the previous lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama which suggests that the Sde-srid aims to portray himself in a supportive role to the Dalai Lama throughout all his previous lives. The use of his *'khrung rabs* as a tool through which the Sde-srid expressed his loyalty to the Fifth Dalai Lama is a rational move during a period where rumours of his "ambition" and "power-grasping" was widespread amongst the Tibetans, Mongols and the Qing.

Whether the Sde-srid chose to demonstrate his loyalty to the Fifth Dalai Lama through this *'khrungs rabs* as a cunning move or it was genuine, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's inclusion of this *'khrungs rabs* in his *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid demonstrates his position on the matter of the Sde-srid's character. Here and elsewhere, Dza-ya Paṇḍita presents the Sde-srid as the most loyal of disciples of the Fifth Dalai Lama and upholds him as a great teacher and leader.

Secondly, there are figures in the *'khrungs rabs* who held power over Tibet during the *snga dar* and *phyi dar* periods of Tibetan history. The Sde-srid's past lives as the ruler of Tibet further legitimise his position as regent especially, following the passing of the

Fifth Dalai Lama. As these figures were always close subordinates of the previous manifestations of the Fifth Dalai Lama, he again strengthens his position as solely acting in support of his master. For example, the *'khrungs rabs* indicates that he was Khri-srong lde'u-btsan's son Mu-ne btsan-po, and also Nya-khri btsan-po's son, Mu-khri btsan-po. Both figures were *btsan pos* of the imperial period, but as the sons of more prominent *btsan pos* associated with the reincarnation lineage of the Fifth Dalai Lama, they appear as subordinates and successors in their position, rather than competitors.

Thirdly, in the list of previous incarnations, there are two who are Mongolians: Se-chen rgyal-po who, is Khibulai Khaan from the 13th century interaction between the Sa-skyas and the Mongols and Altan Khan of the Tümed Mongols, who had close ties with the Third Dalai Lama. These connect the Sde-srid to the Mongols, whose support was fundamental for upholding the Dge-lugs-pa dominancy in Tibet. If one supposes that the Sde-srid wrote his *'khrungs rabs* sometime around 1694, the Sde-srid would have been aware of the uncertainty of the way the Qing and the Mongols would react to the revelation of his decision to have the death kept a secret from them for so long. Maybe the Sde-srid hoped to bring himself closer to the Mongols through his reincarnation lineage in light of the impending disclosure of his actions.

The reincarnation lineage presented in the Sde-srid's *'khrungs rabs* is not entirely unique. In his article on the *'khrungs rabs gsol 'debs* of the Qianlong Emperor composed by the Second Panchen Lama in 1780 on the occasion of the emperor's seventieth birthday. Uspensky listed the previous incarnations of the Qianlong emperor included in this *'khrungs rabs*:

1. King Prasenajit (Pali. Pasanadi)
2. Rin-chen bzang-po

3. King Buddhapakṣa
4. Mu-ne btsan po, the son of Khri-srong lde'u-btsan
5. Samāyavajra
6. Rngog Lo-tsa-ba Legs-pa'i shes-rab
7. Dpal-ldan dmar-'phyar-ba
8. Khubilai Khaan
9. Smon-lam-dpal
10. Skyabs-mchog-dpal
11. Spyin-pa rgya-mtsho (1629-1695)

As we can see, this *'khrungs rabs* has multiple crossovers with the *'khrungs rabs* of the Sde-srid. Uspensky noted that:

“...during the Third Dalai Lama’s missionary journey to Mongolia he attested that his *sbyin bdag*, Altan khan of the Tümed, was both the king Prasenajit and Mongolian emperor Hubilai in his previous lives. This could mean that within the Gelugpa school there existed some sort an outline of the previous incarnation lineage of mighty secular ruler.”
(Uspensky 2002:223)

This argument makes sense as the Sde-srid, Third Dalai Lama and the Second Panchen Lama shared similar goals in prescribing these former lives in each of their cases. The Third Dalai Lama hoped to gain Altan Khan’s support by linking him to his ancestor Khubilai Khaan, who is remembered as being a Buddhist ruler, and to the lineage of Indian Dharma Kings.

The Sde-srid needs the legitimacy of his reincarnation lineage which includes Indian, Tibetan and Mongolian rulers to authorise him as the legitimate regent of the Dalai Lama and a ruler of Tibet. Later, the *'khrungs rabs* composed by the Second Panchen Lama similarly authenticated the Qianlong emperor as a part of the same lineage of legitimate Buddhist rulers through a similar reincarnation lineage.

According to Roesler: “biographies and hagiographies contain different types of

truth, not just historical ones, and in order to understand these different truths we must consider when and why biographies are written” (Roesler, 2014:2). If we take a closer look at Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s presentation of the former lives of his teachers, his reasons indeed become more apparent.

The *'khrungs rabs* found in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* all start in a mythical age through to the period of the Kings of Tibet and end with the incarnations of the figures closest to the individual to whom the *'khrungs rabs* belongs. The figures between the first and last do not match chronologically, yet this is a phenomenon absolutely acceptable in the Tibetan tradition. In the case of the Fifth Dalai Lama’s *'khrungs rabs*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita presents a completely unique piece of writing. Being a contemporary of the Fifth and the Sde-srid, and judging from his references to their writings, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was undoubtedly familiar with their works, yet his version is entirely different. The reason can only be his aim to highlight the religious position of the Fifth Dalai Lama. In the case of the *'khrungs rabs* of the Sde-srid, Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses the same list of former lives used by the Sde-srid himself. This suggests that these two authors had the same purpose for supporting this *'khrung rabs*: to authorise the position of the Sde-srid. Evidently from Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s treatment of the Sde-srid and his writings throughout his *thob yig*, he and the Sde-srid agreed on many matters.

Ary’s aim for his study was to “provide a more nuanced vision of the early stages of the Geluk schools development” (Ary 2015:105), and he stressed the “interrelatedness of philosophical authority and personal authority which makes it only natural that biography, where personal charisma is created, constructed, and proclaimed to others, should be recognized as a key resource for research into the intellectual history of Tibetan Buddhism” (ibid). His study of the *rnam thars* of Tsong-kha-pa and his immediate

disciples demonstrated how the tradition attributes authority and accomplishments retrospectively to figures long passed away in order to legitimise their tradition and lineage. Dza-ya Paṇḍita, writing in the 17th century achieves something similar: his narratives rework the life stories of past figures and by chronologically linking them together he achieves authority and status for his contemporaries.

5.4. The “*rnam thar*” of the Dge-lugs Tradition

Chapter Three examined the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* in general and it was mentioned that the text was structurally modelled on and likely designed to supplement the *Gsan yig gang+ga'i chu rgyun* of his root teacher, the Fifth Dalai Lama. It also brought to attention some defining characteristics that make Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* a truly unique example of its genre. Particularly, the number of *rnam thars* totalling 227 that are found in this work, forming the structural backbone of the 11 chapters of the *thob yig*. The majority of the longer *rnam thars* found in Chapters Eight and Nine concern the lineages of the Bka'-gdams-pa and the Dge-lugs-pa traditions.²³⁹

In the previous chapter of this thesis, the detailed analysis of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar* from Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* revealed that Dza-ya Paṇḍita was able to communicate more than just transmission lineage in the way in presented the life story of his teacher.

The following section will illustrate how the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* interrelate and together form a larger “lineage life story” through two case studies.

²³⁹ See the contents overview of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* in the Appendix of this thesis.

The first case study concentrates on the *nam thars* of the Fifth and Sixth Dalai lama and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho.

The second case study draws examples from the *nam thars* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan and Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam*. As discussed in Chapter Two, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam* itself is closely connected to the *thob yig* and the *nam thars* included within.

Before we examine the two case studies, there are a few further key points which need to be made regarding *nam thar* in the context of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writings.

5.4.1. Life Writing in the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition

The topic of Tibetan biographical writing received some discussion earlier in Chapter Two of this thesis and many distinguished scholars have discussed Tibetan biographical writing in detail, so I will proceed here with a brief exposition of the elements that most concern this chapter's context.

In Tibet, *rang nam*, 'autobiography', *nam thar*, 'liberation narrative/biography', *gsang nam*, 'secret biography', *thun mong pa'i nam thar*, 'common biography', *thun mong ma yin pa'i nam thar*, 'uncommon biography' and *lo rgyus*, 'stories', and can all refer to a piece of biographical writing. Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses all but the first of these terms in the titles of the 227 life stories contained within his *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

One aspect of Tibetan Biographical writing most commonly noted by scholars is not the historicity of their contents but rather the message communicated through their narrative content (Diemberger 2007; Gyatso 1998, 1999; Martin 2005; Quintman 2008,

2014; Roberts 2007, 2010; Schaeffer 2010; Smith 2001; Tiso 1989 and Yamamoto 2012). For the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita certainly chooses to narrate the lives of his masters and bygone Buddhist teachers and saints with the aim of communicating a range of messages. For example, his decision to relate certain historical or controversial episodes with a thick “Buddhist glaze” is one observation that will be expanded upon later on.

Roesler discusses in detail the life story of the Buddha subdivided into numbers of deeds as one of the prototypes on which later Buddhist biographies are modelled (Roesler 2014:119). In the life stories Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes, there appears to be a strong underlying structure. In the Tenth Chapter of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, we find a *rnam thar* of the Buddha Śākyamuni structured around the 12 deeds. This supports the idea that Dza-ya Paṇḍita was consciously attempting to write the *rnam thars* in his *thob yig* based on something he saw to be a standard model of life writing in the examples he studied. Dza-ya Paṇḍita was likely the first Mongolian to write such large volumes of *rnam thar* in the medium of the Tibetan language. Furthermore, given that he wrote his *thob yig* as a part of his endeavours to fulfil the command of the Fifth Dalai Lama to spread Buddhism in Mongolia, it makes sense that he would attempt to compose examples of *rnam thar* deemed authentic by Tibetans and also able to provide prototypes for the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas.

According to Tiso, the way narratives are constructed reveals much about what the author and their culture saw as saintliness, and are often a careful blend of the historic, mythic and literary (Tiso 1989:219). In the case of the *rnam thars* in the Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, the ways in which the lives of the figures are recounted reveal much about how the author chose to interpret the lives of his masters and present

them for the wider Dge-lugs-pa tradition. In particular, as instructed by the Great Fifth, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's principal goal was disseminate an authentic tradition and lineage in Mongolia for the future Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas. Thus, his interpretation of these lives can tell us something about what he saw as worthy of reverence.

One of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's primary aspirations was to bring back the records of the major types of lineages of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition to Mongolia through the *rnam thars* in his *thob yig*.²⁴⁰ Many biographies not only tell the life of the individual but use narrative patterns that relate the individuals' life to other lives, or to the tradition due to importance of lineage in Tibet (Roesler 2014:119). This is true for the numerous *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, in that many are interconnected and contribute to a message about the larger lineage rather than simply a narrative about one individual. This is reminiscent of other collections of *rnam thars*, such as that by Yongs-'dzin Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, which is rich in historical information as well as detailed biographical material on prominent individuals in Tibetan Buddhist history such as Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, Vasubandhu, Candrakīrti, Atiśa and Tsong-kha-pa. (Vostrikov 1962:183).

Roesler noted that: "Biography collections are structured like a family tree and map out the place of individual teachers in tradition and also assert the identity and authenticity of specific teaching lineage" (Roesler 2014:131). Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* was not composed or titled as a biography collection and contains many other elements such as expositions on the doctrine, different branches of learning, classes of tantras, *sādhana*s and more. Nevertheless, the huge number of biographies link these sections together. Chapters such as Eight and Nine of the *thob yig*, which are purely biographical give the *thob yig* features of a "biography collection", thus authorising the identity and

²⁴⁰ See the section dealing with the colophon of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* in Chapter Three.

authenticity of the lineages of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition. To demonstrate how he achieves this we shall turn to the case studies.

5.4.2. Case Study One

This first case study aims to demonstrate how the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* can be read together to form a larger narrative. For example, the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar*, as discussed in detail in the previous chapter, is a stand-alone example of Tibetan life writing yet it is also one link in a chain, or one bead of a rosary. Strung together and read together, they form what can be described as a larger "lineage life story". Reflected within this chain, one can observe the history, identity and chronology of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition as interpreted by the author and his tradition during the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century.

The *rnam thar* of the Sixth Dalai Lama is inserted at the end of the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, after which follows the collection of writings composed by the Fifth and the transmission lineages of the teachings and practices amongst them as obtained by Dza-ya Paṇḍita. The structural placement of the *rnam thar* of the Sixth Dalai Lama presents him as a part of the Fifth Dalai Lama's life, supporting the hypothesis that the *rnam thars* in this *thob yig* are part of larger a chain of life stories forming something like a "lineage life story".

Another life story which fits into this "segment" of the "lineage life story" is the *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705), found at the end of Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. Despite being located hundreds of folios

apart from the *rnām thars* of the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lamas, the Sde-srid's *rnām thar*, in terms of its contents, is irrefutably linked to the narratives of the other two *rnām thars*.

5.4.2.1 The structure of the *rnām thars* of the Sde-srid and the Sixth Dalai Lama.

Before illustrating how these three *rnām thars* interrelate, it is necessary to introduce the *rnām thars* and address some of the peculiarities found within. Furthermore, the basic structure of each of these *rnām thars* will be summarised,²⁴¹ as even in the way that Dza-ya Paṇḍita structured each narrative, there is observable evidence of the interrelated nature of these life stories.

The *rnām thar* of the The Sixth Dalai Lama Tshangs-dbyangs rgya mtsho (1683-1706/1746) is 9 folios in length, running from V3F285a5 to V3F293b6 and it does not begin with the usual dedication verses which Dza-ya Paṇḍita includes at the beginning of every other *rnām thar* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. This *rnām thar* simply begins with:

“Now to briefly explain of the *rnām thar* of the victorious one, the Sixth [Dalai Lama].”²⁴²

This further suggests that this *rnām thar* is purposefully included in the *rnām thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The passage that follows provides more indications of this narrative as a continuation of the life of the Fifth:

“the many manifestations he took from [the time of] the lord Gnya-khri btsan-po to the crown ornament of samsara and nirvana (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) was [all] for the purpose of compassionately protecting the beings

²⁴¹ For the structure of the *rnām thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama see the beginning of Chapter Four.

²⁴² (V3F285a5) *da ni rgyal dbang drug pa'i rnām thar mdor bsduṣ tsam brjod pa ni...*

of snowy Tibet, which demonstrates that his compassion surpasses that of all the victorious ones.”²⁴³

This passage states that the narrative to follow will present the life of the Sixth Dalai Lama, who is the embodiment of the continuation of the life of the Fifth because there is no ultimate difference.

The basic structure of the *rnam thar* of the Sixth Dalai Lama is as follows:

- ❖ A discussion of the geographical origins of Tibet and its divisions ending with the birth place of the Sixth Dalai Lama in Mon. This section is full of reference to mythical manifestations of Avalokiteśvara in Tibet and quotations from authoritative scriptures such as the *Bka' gdams glegs bam* and the *'Jam dpal rtsa rgyud*, 'Skt. *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*'.
- ❖ A discussion of the Smyos clan: the ancestral lineage of the Sixth Dalai Lama, together with related myths, legends and prophecies from authoritative texts such as the *Bka' thang sde lnga*, a treasure text revealed by O-rgyan gling-pa.
- ❖ A discussion of the ability of Bodhisattvas to emanate according to their will and choose their birth place and parents etc.
- ❖ A discussion of how the Fifth Dalai Lama realised it was time to transmigrate his consciousness to the Sixth and the day which this happened.
- ❖ Prophecies about the birth of the Sixth Dalai Lama
- ❖ A detailed account of how the Sixth Dalai Lama was recognised.
- ❖ His enthronement.
- ❖ Accounts of how the Sixth Received and gave teachings just like his former incarnation, the Fifth.
- ❖ Descriptions of miraculous occurrences validating his authenticity as the Dalai Lama.

²⁴³ (V3F285b1) *bod kha ba can pa rnams la rje gnya' khri btsan po nas rje bla ma srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan gyi bar sku skya (skye) ba mang por thugs brtse bas bkyangs pa ni rgyal ba kun las lhag pa'i thugs rje yin tshul dang /*

There is no mention of the death of the Sixth Dalai Lama or any information which could support the version of the life of the Sixth Dalai Lama in which he survived and lived out his life in Alasha.²⁴⁴ The main emphasis from the structure appears to be the affirmation that the Sixth Dalai Lama is an authentic manifestation of the Fifth Dalai Lama. In this, Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows the model of the structure of the Sde-srid's *BaiDUrya ser po*, which first establishes the Fifth Dalai Lama as the manifestation of Avalokiteśvara, followed by the life of the Fifth and concludes with a transition to the life of the Sixth (who the Sde-srid goes onto promote as the rightful manifestation of the Fifth). However, the Sde-srid had clear chapters and subchapters for his work, whereas Dza-ya Paṇḍita deliberately presented the two lives as one by having the life of the Sixth as a subsection within the life story of the Fifth.

The *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (1653-1705) is 9.5 folios in length, running from V3F165b2 to V3F174b2, which completes Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. As mentioned, the '*khrungs rabs*' of the Sde-srid links him to the life of the Fifth throughout his previous lives. Following the '*khrungs rabs*', save a few mistakes and substitutions, the first 2.5 folios are almost word for word as it appears in the 27th chapter of the *BaiDUrya ser po*, which concerns the passing of the Fifth and the Sde-srid taking responsibility as the ruler of Tibet. Later, another folio's worth of quotations is lifted directly from the *BaiDUrya ser po* regarding the passing of the Fifth and the bestowal of the state to the Sde-srid.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Referring to the account of the text popularly known as the "Secret Life of the Sixth Dalai Lama" written by Ngag-dbang lhun-grub dar-rgyas (1757). For a translation see Dharmatāla's *Hor chos 'byung* and the translation by Klafkowski (1979). There is another translation by Wickham-Smith (2011) but this version has a less than academic introduction and more paraphrased translation. See also Aris (1989).

²⁴⁵ Some of these passages will be compared and contextualised below.

Following my analysis, the basic structure of the Sde-srid's *rnam thar* is as follows:

❖ Four-line verse dedication:

“I pay homage to the great leader
who spreads the general teachings of the perfect Buddha who
completed renunciation and realisation,
and especially the stainless doctrine of the Dge-lugs-pas
throughout the entire expanse of the earth.”²⁴⁶

- ❖ Condensed '*khruungs rabs* listing previous manifestations of the Sde-srid connected to the previous lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama and other rulers of Tibet and Mongolia.
- ❖ Explanation of his name together with prophecies foretelling the Sde-srid's birth as a manifestation of Lha-sras and Legs-pa'i shes-rabs, as well as affirmation of this by the Fifth Dalai Lama (contains sections entirely lifted or summarised from the *BaiDUrya ser po*).
- ❖ How the Sde-srid followed the instructions of the Fifth Dalai Lama since a young age.
- ❖ Prophecies about Tibet and the Sde-srid's birthplace Nyang supported by quotations from the *Bka' gdams glegs bam* and words of the Second Dalai Lama Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho (contains sections entirely lifted or summarised from the *BaiDUrya ser po*).
- ❖ His birth accompanied by miraculous signs.
- ❖ The Fifth Dalai Lama taking the Sde-srid under his wing, training and nurturing him like his own son (contains similarities with the *BaiDUrya ser po*).
- ❖ The Fifth Dalai Lama bestowing responsibility of the state upon the Sde-srid at the time of his passing and stating that “whatever he does, it is indistinguishable from my own acts”²⁴⁷ (contains similarities with the *BaiDUrya ser po*).
- ❖ The Sde-srid establishing the 16 secular laws.

²⁴⁶ (V3F165b2) *spangs rtogs mthar phyin rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi // bstan pa spyi dang khyad par dge ldan pa'i // dri med ring lugs rgya mtsho'i gos can gyi // khyon mthar rgyas mdzad mi dbang chen por 'dud* /

²⁴⁷ (V3F171a3) *'dis gang byas nged rang nas byas pa dang khyad med par...*

- ❖ The Sde-srid's future actions being pre-conceived by the Fifth Dalai Lama, even when the Sde-rid was young, and how he lovingly nurtured him.
- ❖ The Fifth Dalai Lama realising it was time for him to transfer his consciousness to the Sixth.
- ❖ The Fifth Dalai Lama bestowing the decree to rule together with the seals and entrusting responsibility of the state and religion to the Sde-srid, instructing the Sde-srid to rule according to the ideals of *lugs gnyis* and to write his biography.
- ❖ The Fifth Dalai Lama passing and the Sde-srid acting solely to follow the instructions of the Fifth in matters of religion (composing treatises, erecting stūpas, Buddha images).
- ❖ The Sde-srid discovering and enthroning the Sixth Dalai Lama and serving him with the same respect and reverence with which he served the Fifth Dalai Lama according to the ideals of *lugs gnyis*.
- ❖ The Sde-srid overseeing the construction of the funeral stupa of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

The Fifth Dalai Lama first met the infant Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho Lung-dkar-mo in 'Dam on his way back from Beijing. He was asked to bless the birth of the infant Sangs-rgya rgya-mtsho, whose father had died when he was aged four (Richardson 1980:342). It is likely that the Fifth Dalai Lama's decision to care for the boy from this time onwards meant that, for the boy, his father figure was replaced by the Fifth Dalai Lama. The Sde-srid often refers to the Dalai Lama in his writing as his "father-like lama", such as in the *BaiDUrya ser po*. Dza-ya Paṇḍita follows this model, stressing the close relationship between the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid throughout their *rnam thars* and his loyalty to the Dalai Lama's aspirations. Accordingly, this *rnam thar* is full of references to the Fifth Dalai Lama and, if the reader were unaware of to whom the life story belonged, it could easily be a supplement to the life story of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

5.4.2.2. *The Links in the Chain of the Lineage of the Fifth Dalai Lama*

It is clear from the presentation of the *rnam thars* of the Sde-srid and the Sixth Dalai Lama that Dza-ya Paṇḍita meant for these narratives to be read together as parts of a larger whole. The main emphasis of doing so is the resultant image of the Fifth Dalai Lama as an authoritative, learned master, whose life is inseparable from the lives of the Sde-srid and the Sixth Dalai Lama; they are the extensions of the life, activity and intentions of the Fifth.

Several episodes in both the *rnam thars* discussed above, as well as in the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama examined in the previous chapter:

- ❖ The events leading up the passing of the Fifth Dalai Lama, always narrated early in the narrative then repeated later.
- ❖ The passing of the Fifth Dalai Lama, always described using the expression, “the saffron robed one saw the need for transferring the consciousness from the Fifth to the Sixth for the sake of not cutting off the line of the playful dance.”²⁴⁸ In both *rnam thars*, the Fifth Dalai Lama is the person of interest.
- ❖ The Sde-srid as the rightful legitimate ruler of Tibet according to the command and instruction of the Fifth Dalai Lama.
- ❖ The narration of the Sde-srid’s activities after the passing of the Fifth, and during the life of the Sixth as nothing but endeavouring to fulfil the instructions left by the Fifth.
- ❖ The Sixth Dalai Lama’s authenticity as the reincarnation of the Fifth.

The episodes leading up to the passing of the Fifth and his bestowal of the responsibility of state and religion to the Sde-Srid by is repeatedly mentioned in both the

²⁴⁸ (V3F171b6) *ngur smrig gar gyis rol pa zam mi chad pa dun gyi lnga pa drug par 'pho ba'i dgos pa du ma gzigs te...*

Sde-srid's and the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar* by Dza-ya Paṇḍita. The treatment of this topic is one of the themes linking these two narratives together.

The Sde-srid himself discusses the matter in detail in both his *BaiDUrya ser po* and the final section of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Rgyal dbang lnga pa'i rang rnam du kU la'i gos bzang*, where he too emphasises his actions to accord to nothing but the intentions of the Gerat Fifth and he himself is a ruler authorised by command of the Fifth. There is one paragraph in the 27th Chapter of the *BaiDUrya ser po* that discusses the Fifth Dalai Lama entrusting the Sde-srid with control of religion and state, referring both to the first time he was requested to take up the position of regent in 1675, and to the final taking up of the position in 1679:

“...the saffron robed one saw the need for transferring the consciousness from the Fifth to the Sixth for the sake of not cutting off the line of the saffron robes ones. When he (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) was close to the moment of dissolving the sphere of his *rūpakāya* form into the sphere of great bliss of the *dharmakāya* [he said]: “I have nurtured [you] since you were young like one taking care of their baby. From the *sūtras* and old *tantras* and the secret [teachings], I know indeed that you are the reincarnation of Lha-sras and [also] Rngog Legs-pa'i shes-rabs at the time of 'Brom-ston and [were born] as my principle attendant throughout many other inseparable lifetimes and from a young age I recognised you [as the figures just mentioned]”. Thus he (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) pointed out and commanded me to look after the religion and state. On my part, I had no interest in political affairs which is mixed up with defilements and persistently requested to revoke his command. [The Fifth] instructed me as such when I was in my teens in the wood rabbit year (1675) and gave the irrefutable heavy command [to do so] in the earth sheep year (1679).”²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ (P441) *ngur smrig gar gyis rol pa zam mi chad bdun gyi lnga pa drug par 'pho ba'i dgos pa du ma gzigs te dran dang shes bzhin du gzigs sku'i dkyil 'khor chos sku bde ba chen po'i klong du bsdu bar mdzad par nye ba na kho bo na tshod chung ngu nas sre'u gso ba ltar brtse bas bskyangs shing bka' gter gsang rgya dang bcas pa nas lha sras kyi yang srid 'brom ston gyi dus rngog legs pa'i shes rab sogs skye ba du mar 'bral med du sku'i rim gro ba la sogs pa'i tshul du byung ba de yin no zhes ngos 'dzin snga sor nas gnang bzhin der chos srid 'dzin dgos pa'i bka' btsal yang rang ngos nas rgyal srid sogs sdig dang 'dres pa 'di rigs bzhed pa med gshis dgongs pa nan gyis zhus pa shing yos lo sogs lo grangs 'khrol yang sa lug lo bzlog tu med pa'i bka' lci ba phebs shing /*

In his *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, Dza-ya Paṇḍita lifted the first half of this paragraph word for word until the direct speech of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Dza-ya Paṇḍita instead finishes his paragraph with a short sentence summarising how the Sde-srid was entrusted with the state:

“He (i.e. the Fifth) bestowed the authoritative decree of the great seals of the Buddha’s teachings [to the Sde-srid] and properly entrusted the religious and secular state to him.”²⁵⁰

Elsewhere in the *rnam thar*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita paraphrases the part of the paragraph from the *BaiDurya ser po* quoted above to demonstrate the love and care the Fifth Dalai Lama had for the Sde-srid. With this evidence to hand, it is clear that Dza-ya Paṇḍita closely studied the writings of the Sde-srid before compositing this *rnam thar*.²⁵¹

In the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, the event of the transference of power from the Fifth to the Sde-srid is stated in a single sentence and, later in the narrative, the instructions to the Sde-srid by the Fifth Dalai Lama to keep his death secret are provided in detail.²⁵² There are over 3.5 folios in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid discussing the events leading to the Fifth Dalai Lama’s bestowing of responsibility of the state and religion to the Sde-srid and the Sde-srid’s destiny to receive it. For example, from the mouth the Fifth Dalai Lama:

“Also, at the time when Sde-srid Blo-bzang sbyin-pa was enthroned, although the Great Fifth gave the instructions [for Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho] to take up the responsibility of the *sa skyong*, after requesting to think about it, he refused. Later, in the earth sheep year known as *don grub*, after the Sde-srid Blo-bzang sbyin-pa had resigned and retired to Sne-gdong, the root guru himself (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) summoned him (i.e. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) to his presence and said: “see that the time [prophesised

²⁵⁰ (V3F172a1) *rje bla ma nyid tshad mar 'dzin pa rnams kyis da dang dbyer med du 'dzin dgos pa'i bka' rtags kyi phyag rgya chen po'i bca' yig sogs stsal zhing chos srid yongs su gtad pa ni /*

²⁵¹ See Chapter Two in regard to how Dza-ya Paṇḍita came to be familiar with the Sde-srid’s writing *BaiDurya ser po* and other writings after his return to Mongolia.

²⁵² See Chapter Four.

by] many prophecies has come. I confer you the throne of the great kingdom which controls all of the kingdoms of the three provinces of great Tibet which includes: Northern and Southern La-stod, Gur-mo, Chu-mig, Shangs, and Zha-lu: the six myriarchies of Gtsang, Rgya-ma, 'Bri-gung, Tshal-pa, Thang-po che-pa, Phag-grub, G.ya'-bzang: the six seats of Dbus, and Yar-'brog myriarchy on the border of Dbus-gtsang, which makes the thirteen myriarchies of Tibet; Dbus-gtsang the province of the dharma, Upper Mdo the province of the people, Lower Mdo the province of the horses.” thus he bestowed words of auspiciousness. At that time, the supreme root lama said: “whatever he does, everyone must respect it as if it was done by me” and sealed it.”²⁵³

This passage carries the message that the Sde-srid and the Fifth Dalai Lama are one and the same in action and in intention, and justifies the Sde-srid's position through the authority of the Fifth Dalai Lama and thus bonding the two lives inseparably.

If we then look to the Fifth Dalai Lama's decree appointing Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho as Sde-srid, the wording is similar:

“Since he is without personal ambition and his foremost care was to bring about the advancement of the religious government; and especially because he has not departed in the least from my instructions... Since he will be acting as my representative for the secular administration which I am unable to undertake, everyone shall accept orders without hesitation and without any suggestion of disagreement that whatever is done by him shall be the same as if it were done by me. And it shall not be allowed to anyone, by causing dissension between myself and the Sde-pa, to injure the interests of the government and maliciously to concoct unfounded falsehoods.”
(Richardson 1980:333-334)

The similarity of these passages suggests that Dza-ya Paṇḍita was at least aware of the decree. Dza-ya Paṇḍita left Tibet to return to Mongolia on the 11th day of the 5th

²⁵³ (V3F170b4) *sde srid blo bzang sbyin pa khri 'don gnang skabs kyang gong sa nas sa skyong gi thugs khur bzhes dgos pa'i bslab ston phebs kyang dgongs pa nan zhus mdzad nas ma gnang / de nas don grub ces pa sa lug la sa skyong blo bzang sbyin pa dgongs pa zhus nas sne gdong du zur bzhugs gnang skabs rje bla ma nyid kyis gong du drangs pa'i lung bstan du ma'i dus la babs par gzigs / la stod lho byang / gur mo / chu mig / shangs dang / zha lu ste gtsang khri drug / rgya ma / 'bri gung / tshal pa / thang po che pa / phag grub / g.ya' bzang ste dbus khri drug / (F171a) dbus gtsang gi mtshams su yar 'brog khri skor gcig ste bod khri sgor bcu gsum / dbus gtsang chos kyi chol kha / mdo stod mi'i chol kha / mdo smad rta'i chol kha ste / bod chen po'i chol kha gsum gyi rgyal khams kun la mnga' bsgyur ba'i rgyal thabs chen po'i khri la dbang bskur te shis rjod (brjod) mdzed (mdzad) / de dus rje bla ma mchog gis 'dis gang byas nged rang nas byas pa dang khyad med par*

Mongolian month of 1679 arriving back to Khalkha on the 29th day of the 9th Mongolian month. Consequently, he was not in Tibet when the Fifth Dalai Lama's decree was issued. However, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was evidently familiar with the writings of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho from his tendency to frequently quote from *BaiDUrya ser po* in his *thob yig*. Moreover, he translated the section of the *Dukūla* authored by the Sde-srid from Tibetan into Mongolian for the Qianlong emperor. As both works describe the contents of this decree in detail, it is understandable that Dza-ya Paṇḍita included a summarised version of the decree in his *thob yig*.

The presence of the Fifth Dalai Lama is felt throughout the Sde-srid's *rnam thar* at every stage of the Sde-srid's life, to nurture, motivate and exhort him in all actions right from the time of his birth:

“The great root lama himself, the crown ornament of samsara and nirvana (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) saw to this lord of men becoming a regent according to the two systems. Since he (i.e. Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) was young he stayed close by the side of [the Fifth Dalai Lama] who took care of him with unsurpassable love and looked upon whatever he did as good and they passed [their] time in only happiness.”²⁵⁴

“This *rnam thar* (i.e. the supplementary section of the *Dūkula*) [which he composed] to render his service from the perspective of trying solely to please the great root lama must be regarded as the chief amongst all the *rnam thars* [of the Fifth Dalai Lama].”²⁵⁵

Although discussing the life of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, these passages together with those found in the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama form part of a single

²⁵⁴ (V3F171b3) *rje bla ma srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan nyid mi dbang chen po 'di lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas rgyal tshab du 'gyur bar gzigs te sku na phra mo nas sku zhabs su bcar bar bzhugs par mdzad bla na med pa'i brtse bas bskyangs pas 'di'i gang mdzad thams cad legs par gzigs pa'i dgyes pa 'ba' zhig gis dus 'da' bar mdzad cing /*

²⁵⁵ (V4F173b2) *rje bla me chen po'i thugs mnyes pa 'ba' zhig bsgrubs pa'i sgo nas zhabs tog mdzad pa 'di ni rnam thar gyi gtso bo yin par go /*

narrative of the “*rnam thar* of the lineage” in which the Fifth can be regarded is the lead character and the Sde-srid as one of the main supporting characters.

Regarding the interrelated lives of the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid, Dza-ya Paṇḍita adds his own comments at the end of this passage:

“For the sake of [upholding the intentions of the Fifth Dalai Lama], I (i.e. the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho) took on an attitude of forsaking even my own body and life and whatever else [was necessary for the goal]. Ever since then, I developed an unstoppable supreme faith [which was not a latent feeling]” thus it is said [in the *BaiDUrya ser po*]... As for the statement regarding him establishing the mind-set to forsake even his own body and life for the sake of the intention of the great root lama – this seems to be a main element of his life.”²⁵⁶

Here, it seems that Dza-ya Paṇḍita places his own statement to tell the reader in the simplest terms that “in his whole life, the Sde-srid did nothing other than to act in accordance with the intentions of the Fifth Dalai Lama”, as if an insurance against this point somehow escaping the reader’s attention despite its repeated reinforcement throughout the *rnam thar*.

The actual words spoken to the Sde-srid by the Great Fifth are found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rnam thar* of the Dalai Lama, which can be located in the previous chapter. Once more, upon close reading, we understand the need to read these narratives as part of a larger whole for a clear image of the events.

²⁵⁶ (V3F168b5) *de rje bla ma chen po nyid kyi dgongs bzhed 'ba' zhig 'dzin pa dang gang gi don du rang gi lus srog la sogs gang yang 'dor nus pa'i bsam pa rnyed pa nas dad pa'i lhag bsam mi 'gog pa ni blo lkog tu ma gyur / zhes gsungs...* (F169a) *rje bla ma chen po nyid kyi don du rang gi lus srog la sogs gang yang 'dor nus pa'i bsam pa rnyed ces gsungs pa 'di yang rnam thar gyi gtso bo yin pa 'dug /*

The Sde-srid's life after the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama is presented solely in terms of complying with the Fifth's intentions, performing the rituals and teachings for which the Fifth would have been responsible in life, thus acting in stead of the Fifth:

“He made offerings of all kinds of coloured banners to the two images of the Jowo, the precious silver reliquary stupa at Dga'-ldan and the offering hall of the crown ornament of the world etc. He offered tea and money to accumulate merit at the great monastic centres of Dge-ldan rnam-par rgyal-ba'i-gling, 'Bras-spungs, Se-ra, Bkra-shis lhun-po and the other small and large monastic centres of Tibet and Greater Tibet... At the time of the *tshogs mchod chen mo*, he bestowed the reading transmission of the *Rmad byung bskal pa ma* to the Dge-ldan khri-pa, De-mo sprul-sku, Nyi-ma-thang zhabs-drung and the masters from Se-ra and 'Bras-spungs”²⁵⁷

Turning our attention to the Sixth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar*, the presence of the Fifth is again felt throughout his life that only starts at the mid-point of the narrative. Before accounting the birth of the Sixth, Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes:

“The Bodhisattva (i.e. Avalokiteśvara) made the small offering of the playful dance of a saffron robed one seven times for the sake of protecting the sentient beings of the degenerating times and was taking care of the subjects to be tamed, especially, the Fifth realised that the time had come for him to transmigrate his consciousness to the Sixth.”²⁵⁸

Thus, the life of the Sixth Dalai Lama is presented as the deliberate act of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

²⁵⁷(V3F173b) *jo bo rnam gnyis / dga' ldan dngul gdung rin po che / mchos sdong 'dzam gling rgyan gcig sogs rten gsum rnams la mchod rdzas sna tshogs / gdan sa chen po dge ldan rnam par rgyal ba'i gling 'bras spungs / se ra / bka shis lhun po sogs bod dang bod chen po'i chos grwa che chung bla chen rnams su chos gzhis / phogs ja tshul phul ba... tshogs mchod chen mo'i skabs / dge ldan khri rin po che / de mo sprul sku / nyi ma thang zhabs drung / ser 'bras kyi slob dpon pa rnams kyis gtso mdzad pa'i tshogs pa thams cad la rmad byung bskal pa ma'i ljags lung gnang /*

²⁵⁸ (V2F289a5) *byang chub sems dpa'...snyigs ma'i dus kyi 'gro ba rnams skyong bar ngur smrig gar gyis rol pa'i zim mchod par bdun phebs te gdul bya rnams rjes su 'dzin pa'i dus / de nad (nas) lnga pa drug par 'phos te phebs pa'i dus dgongs /*

The presentation of the life of the Sixth as the continuation of the Fifth is then further supported by the folios detailing the process through which the young Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho was recognised:

“[Sde srid] sent these two lamas: The Kha-rag chos-rje Zil-gnon rdo-rje and Rngo-pa Bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan to properly perform the [tests] of separating [between] the genuine object and the [unauthentic] religious and personal possessions. Rdzong-dpon Blo-bzang dge-legs placed the images of the great venerable Tsongkhapa and the great root lama who is the crown ornament of samsara and nirvana in front [of the Sixth Dalai Lama] and asked him: “Who are you?” [to which] he (i.e. the Sixth Dalai Lama) looked at the image of the previous lord (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) and said: “That’s me”. Then, for 7 days, the deciding of whether the religious and personal objects are authentic or not by separating them [carried on]... On the seventh day, he was presented a porcelain cup and an ordinary one. After handling the porcelain one he said: “This one is mine”. There were many instances such as these of his recognition [of his previous belongings] and he didn’t make a single mistake.”²⁵⁹

Though not included here, the connecting folios narrate in intricate detail the process of identifying the real items belonging to his previous incarnations from the fakes. The young boy clearly recognising his previous incarnation as himself is yet another way of supporting the justification that the infant Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho is the rightful reincarnation of the Fifth Dalai Lama.

After his recognition, another key player in this chain of life stories, the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho enters the scene:

“the Sde-srid took up the responsibility [for the Sixth Dalai Lama] and decided to invite him to the great palace Potala... On account of the extraordinary need for concealment as prophesied by the great dharma

²⁵⁹ (V2F290a3) *de nas kha rag chos rjo (rje) zil gnon rdo rje dang rdo pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan la nang rten nyer spyad sogs ngo bo re dang 'dra min 'phral ba ltas legs ba re (par) bcas btang bas / thog mar rdzong dpon rgya legs pas rje btsun tsang (tsong) kha pa chen po dang rje bla ma srid zhi'i gtsug rgyan nyid kyi sku gnyis spyen lam du bstar ba la de gang yin zhus par rje gong ma'i skur gzigs nga gnang ba dang / de nas rten sku'i nyer spyad sogs ngo bo re dang 'phral ba ltas legs pa'i rdzus ma re bcas nyin bdun gyi bar yong par... res nu ma ster ba'i stang kha sogs sku rtsed gnang... nyin bdun par zhal dkar dang dkyus ma gnyis spyen 'bebs zhus par zhal dkar rang la phyag 'chang zhing nga'i yin sogs ngos 'dzin phul ba rnam kyang gcig kyang ma nor zhing /*

protector Rdo-rje grags-ldan and others, until he reached the appropriate age, he acted for the benefit of beings in a hidden way.”²⁶⁰

This passage relates the life of the Fifth to the Sde-srid but also provides a secondary and highly interesting explanation beyond the wording used in the *nam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama²⁶¹ as to why the Sixth Dalai Lama’s recognition was hidden until 1697.

The author also presents the bestowal of his *dge tshul* vows and his ordination name by the Second Panchen Lama in a way that allows him to mention the Fifth Dalai Lama:

“In the past, at the time of his previous incarnation (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama’s times), the omniscient Panchen Lama Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan went to Sna-dkar-rtse to identify [the Fifth] and take the first cutting of hair from his crown. Similarly, now, the omniscient Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes was invited to initiate his *dge tshul* vows and bestowed him the name Blo-bzang rin-chen tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho and remained there to attend on him.”²⁶²

This account demonstrates the unbroken master-disciple lineage that existed between the previous incarnations of the two figures. This tradition of the Dalai Lama being trained by the Panchen, and vice versa, remained the convention throughout their subsequent reincarnations. Thus, this passage echoes the interwoven nature of their master-disciple and reincarnation lineages.

²⁶⁰ (V2F291a1) *de nas sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtshos thugs khur bzhes te pho brang chen po gru 'dzin du gdan 'dren par thugs thag bcad... snga sor sku gong ma'i skabs pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang chos ky'i rgyal mtshan sna dkar rtser phebs ngos 'dzin gnang ste gtsug phud bzhes pa ltar da lam yang pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes spyen drangs dge tshul gyi sdom pa phul te mtshan blo bzang rin chen tshangs dbyangs rgya mtshor gsol nas zhabs phyir phebs /*

²⁶¹ See the previous Chapter.

²⁶² (V2F291a4) *snga sor sku gong ma'i skabs pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang chos ky'i rgyal mtshan sna dkar rtser phebs ngos 'dzin gnang ste gtsug phud bzhes pa ltar da lam yang pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes spyen drangs dge tshul gyi sdom pa phul te mtshan blo bzang rin chen tshangs dbyangs rgya mtshor gsol nas zhabs phyir phebs /*

The enthronement of the Sixth Dalai Lama also points the reader's attention to its connection to the passing of the Fifth Dalai Lama:

“At the time of autumn harvest of the virtuous fire ox year possessing the four elements... on the 10th day of the waxing moon of the 10th Mongolian month, he became the holder of the joyous teachings of the saffron robed one dancing the playful dance, the great 'Jam-mgon [Tsongkhapa] Blo-bzang grags-pa. According to the translations of the old mother line tantras, it is day on which the *dākinīs* gather. It is the day of the great festival for the marking the day when the one who holds a white lotus, the saffron robed playful dancer the Fifth went to abide in the realm of the dharmakaya. [On this day] he (i.e. the Sixth Dalai Lama) was enthroned at the great palace Potala as the saviour, protector and sole supreme refuge of me and others, the gods and all the sentient beings.”²⁶³

The enthronement of the Sixth on the day that marks the passing of the Fifth again links the lives of the two individuals. Afterward, the narrative goes on:

“As soon as he had done so (i.e. was enthroned), his spiritual son who was entrusted with the [responsibility] of the religion and state the two, the great lord of men, protector of the realm, the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho carried out the foundations for enthronement and bestowed him the supports of the body, speech, mind, virtue and enlightened activities, his [own] writings on the five sciences, the 15 volumes on the [*Bka' gdams*] *legs bam* as well as the seal of his previous incarnation together with its serial numbers and thus enthroned him as the supreme glorious protector of the teachings and the beings... He hoped to fulfil all their wishes through governing them... In the same way, the Fifth Dalai Lama bestowed the wealth [of teachings] to the omniscient Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes, he returned the teachings [to the Sixth Dalai Lama] as offerings and he heard and practiced the teachings of the sutras, tantras and the general and specific sciences.”²⁶⁴

²⁶³ (V2F291a6) *me glang 'byung ba bzhi ldan gyi gnam lo dge ba'i lo rtsi tog rnams sdud pa 'bras ldan gyi dus...* (F291b) *mthun pa'i hor zla bcu pa'i phyogs phyi ma dam can 'du ba'am mar ngo'i phyogs kyi rdzogs pa gnyis pa 'jam mgon ngur smrig gar rol bdag nyid chen po blo bzang grags pa'i dpal dga' ldan yid dga' chos 'dzin du gshegs pa dang gsang sngags ma rgyud dang snga 'gyur gyi mar ngo'i TA ki 'du ba'i dus chen / khyad par phyag na pa dang kar (padma dkar) ngur smrig gar rol lnga pa 'od gsal chos sku'i ngang du bzhugs pa'i tshes dus...dge par (bar) gru 'dzin gyi gzhal med khang chen por bdag sogs lha dang bcas pa'i lus can kun gyi skyabs dang mgon dang dpung gnyen dam par mnga' gsol...*

²⁶⁴ (V2F292a2) *ma thag chos srid gnyis yongs su gtad pa'i thugs sras sde srid sa skyong mi dbang chen po sangs rgyas rgya mtshos zhal bsro mnga' dbul gyi rim pa sku gsung thugs yon tan 'phrin las kyi rten gyi khongs rig pa'i gnas lnga'i skor nyid kyi gsung rtsom glegs bam bco lnga skor bris cha dang bcas pa dang gong ma chen po'i bkar rtags kyi phyag rgya le tshan dang bcas bstan 'gro'i dpal mgon dam par mnga' gsol ba la / (F292b3) de dag rnams la bdag rkyen gyis re ba skong ba... ngur smrig gar rol lnga pa chen pos pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang ye shes la stsal pa rnams nor bdag pos len pa'i tshul gyis bka' chos*

The revelations of this last passage make it possible to observe the interconnected nature of the 17th century Dge-lugs-pa lineage starting with the Fifth Dalai Lama. This can be simply shown as: Fifth Dalai Lama > Second Panchen Lama and the Sde-srid > the Sixth Dalai Lama. If we then turn to the *nam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes, we find more detailed accounts of the enthronement of the Sixth Dalai Lama. From this connection, we can summarise that the lives of these figures are but parts of a chapter in the life story of the larger Dge-lugs-pa lineage.

The above examples are gleaned from but a few of the *nam thars* from Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, which demonstrate their interconnected nature. Read together, the *nam thars* of the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lama, the Sde-srid and, at times, the Second Panchen Lama, can be seen to form sections of a larger “lineage *nam thar*” concentrating on the lineage stemming from the Fifth Dalai Lama.

5.4.3. Case Study Two

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own *rang nam* which is located at the beginning of the second volume of his *gsung 'bum* is relevant here. Though not part of the *thob yig*, it is closely linked to the *nam thars* found in the *thob yig* and is the aspect which concerns this second case study. For example, the accounts of his return to Mongolia and instructions received from the Fifth Dalai Lama are mentioned in the *nam thar* of the Fifth in the *thob yig* but treated in more detail in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam*.²⁶⁵ The *tham phud* and *ślokas* offered to Dza-ya Paṇḍita by the Fifth are mentioned in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *nam thar* of the Fifth

'bul bzhes kyis mtshon mdo sngags rig pa'i gnas spyi bye brag tu gsan sbyong sogs lugs zung gi sgo nas mdzad pa bzang pos 'gro ba kun smag rum gyi smyug pa las bsal zhing... /

²⁶⁵ For the translations of the relevant passages please refer to Chapter Two and Chapter Four.

but the details of the events and the *ślokas* themselves are found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*.²⁶⁶

Likewise, the account of his first meeting²⁶⁷ with the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan, their meeting when Dza-ya Paṇḍita wished to go to Tibet to study, and their later meeting when he returned from his studies, are all recorded in brief in the manner of a diary in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*. These episodes are expanded upon in the *rnam thar* of the Jebtsundamba found on folios V4F30a to V4F78b of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. For example, in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*, regarding their meeting on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's return to Khalkha Mongolia from Tibet, he lists the religious instructions and the gifts bestowed to him by the Jebtsundamba:

“After having stayed about half a month, I received the long-life empowerment and the practice permission of longevity and the white Tarā and was bestowed a gift of a monk's shawl received by the venerable one the Dalai Lama himself, a pillow, cushion, seat, silk brocade, silver plate, exactly 10 *srang* of gold, 10 phu-la-ka,²⁶⁸ and 30 good horses headed by the best horse in the stable.”²⁶⁹

In the *rnam thar* of the Jebtsundamba, the episode is treated in much more detail:

“I returned to Mongolia. In the Summer of the Iron Monkey year (1680) called *drag po* I went to pay respects to the Lord Master. When I arrived at the monastery the Master already knew about my coming and he received and blessed me. For a long time, we discussed news in detail. Later [the Master] departed to the monastery Ribo Gegye Ling and [I] followed him. Outside the monastery, it was the time when majority of objects [of cult] were manufactured. [The Master] stayed there for ten days and [I] requested an empowerment. [He] was delighted and gave me [religious] instructions, [as well as] Master's own personal upper robe, ten liangs of gold, a silver bowl, a throne cushion, ten [pieces] of fine leather [called] *bu la ka*, and thirty horses headed by one excellent horse of the

²⁶⁶ Please refer to Chapter Four for the passages from the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Chapter Two for the details and the *ślokas*.

²⁶⁷ For the account of this please refer to Chapter Two.

²⁶⁸ This refers to the Mongolian term for a fur seal pelt.

²⁶⁹ (F32b1) *zla phyed tsam bsdad tshe dbang sgrol dkar gyi // rjes gnang zhus shing sku gzhogs nyid bzhes pa'i // sku gzan gcig dang snye 'bol gdan gos chen // dngul sder gcig dang gser srang bcu tham pa // phu la ka bcu chibs chen gyis gtsos pa'i // rta bzang sum cu tham pa'i gnang sbyin stsal //*

“white heads”, a charger in the stable. And other things he offered [me] as gifts which have no comparison.”

(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:131-132)

Both accounts match, yet only when read together do they provide a comprehensive picture of events. The “religious instructions” mentioned in the *rnam thar* of the Jebtsundamba are clarified as “permission of longevity and the white Tarā” in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam*.

The above examples further support my hypothesis of the interconnected nature of the *rnam thars* if the *thob yig* and Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam*. As discussed at length in Chapter Two, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam* is structured like a condensed *thob yig* and acts like a “contents” for the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*, in that the topics mentioned in brief are expounded upon in more detail in the *thob yig*.

5.4.3.1 Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s “*rnam thar*” in the *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*

In analysing the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s first-hand accounts of the Fifth Dalai Lama take up almost two full folios. These passages firmly place the author himself into the narrative and thus into the lineage.²⁷⁰ The following examples highlight how the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig* can also be read as part of the author’s own life story.

The *rnam thars* of the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa’i rgyal mtshan (1635-1723), and the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes (1663-1737) written by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, are almost entirely narrated in the first-person. By recounting only those

²⁷⁰ Please refer to Chapter Four.

events to which he was a witness to, Dza-ya Paṇḍita created narratives that are just as much about himself as about their subjects.

In the First Jebtsundamba's *rnam thar*, it is evident that Dza-ya Paṇḍita composed some of the narrative based on what he personally heard from the Jebtsundamba himself. This is evident in the following passage which is concerned with the Jebtsundamba's time spent studying in Tibet with the Panchen Lama at the age of 17:

“...according to the words of the very Master,²⁷¹ at the time [back when he was young] due to the fault of not applying himself greatly to the dharma, he did not take notes... because he was not able [to write notes about his teachings, since he did not know how to practice dharma], it happened like that [and he did not write his ‘records of teachings received’] – he said. Therefore “followers, disciples like myself should be diligent” – he said.”
(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:117-118)

This account provides an explanation as to why the Jebtsundamba did not leave behind much writing, and possibly why Dza-ya Paṇḍita did; he was firmly instructed write by his master who regretted not having done so himself.

After Dza-ya Paṇḍita meets the First Jebtsundamba, the remainder of the *rnam thar* is almost based fully upon his first-hand experiences. There is even a suggestion of his reluctance to discuss events at which he was not present:

“I was in Tashilhunpo and other [places] in U and Tsang from the Iron Mouse Year (1660) until the Earth Sheep Year (1679). And therefore, I was not able to write about the [Master's] exemplary deeds of this period well and with certainty.”
(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:129)

Indeed, until the passage indicating his return to Mongolia, the only events Dza-ya Paṇḍita recounts are those which relate to the Jebtsundamba which he was a witness to during his time in Tibet, such as envoys dispatched by the Jebtsundamba arriving in Dbus Gtsang.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Referring here to the First Jebtsundamba.

²⁷² For the translation of these passages please see (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:130-131).

Thus, the remainder of the narrative can be read as an account of the life shared by this emblematic master-disciple pairing.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita clearly marks his own return to Mongolia stating: “On the twelfth *hor month* of the Earth Sheep year (1679) called *don grub*, I returned to Mongolia” (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:131). After this remark, the remaining two thirds of the *rnam thar* are purely narrated in the first-person. There are many examples, from which I will here quote only one:

“...this master created a new and correct Mongolian script based on Laṅca script. [He also] intended to translate Kanjur to Mongolian. However, unfortunate times came and therefore this wish was not accomplished. At that time, I asked [the master] whether [in order to repay] some of the gifts [which I had obtained from him], he would agree that I would write his biography. Or if not, then [a biography] just as small as a seed should be [composed]. However, [the Lord] did not accept [my proposal]. Again, when I pressed [him] he answered: “I do not have such a good life-story of liberation *rnam thar* to please the wise ones. Eminent masters [should be] thanked for their benevolence of Holy Dharma and they should be spoken about first and later we will see. [Then the Jebtsundamba] travelled to the Yellow Palace. While he was there, [I] went to [bid] him farewell and to receive [his] blessing. When I urged him about his *rnam thar*, he said: “Should I tell you that I went to the palace and ate exactly this many cookies?” He joked and played and let [this question] pass [in that manner].” (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:160-161)

This passage, which at first seems to recount simple, light-hearted conversational exchanges between a master and disciple, reveals much upon close inspection. The “unfortunate times” clearly refer to the Oirad attack of the Khalkha lands, which led to the Jebtsundamba’s and Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s escape to Southern Mongolia, and the author’s bitterness towards the situation is clear. Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s persistent “pressing” on the First Jebtsundamba and his humoured replies also testify to the familiarity and carefree nature of the master-disciple relationship between these two figures. Moreover, this passage also provides the pre-context that brought about the composition of this *rnam thar*.

Before we turn to the *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama, it is worth mentioning one more notable passage that explicitly exposes the author's innermost feelings:

“Previously the great ruler (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) said with no respect about the Master Kunga Nyingpo (i.e. Tāranātha) in his biography and it seemed that he supported the destruction of the silver stupa of Tagten [monastery] and so on. Therefore, I was feeling a little bit unhappy.”
(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:175)

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's lament occurs after the episode of the Qianlong Emperor asking him to translate part of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *rnam thar* into Mongolian. Given that his closest friend and master, the Jebtsundamba is the reincarnation of Jo-nang Tāranātha, one can speculate that Dza-ya Paṇḍita is here expressing his unhappiness of having just read the accounts of the past Dge-lugs-pa and Jo-nang-pa disputes, which had less than peaceful endings. In this heartfelt account, which is yet another example of his honesty, one can detect the author's genuine devotion and the love he feels toward both his teachers in his narrative voice. His torn feelings are clear as he recounts the destruction of the monasteries of the former incarnation of the Jebtsundamba by one of his most admired and venerated teachers, the Fifth Dalai Lama. There are many other examples that demonstrate why this *rnam thar* is relevant to uncovering information about both Dza-ya Paṇḍita and the Jebtsundamba, for which I refer the reader to the highly reliable translations by Bareja-Starzyńska (2015).

Turning to Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes (1663-1737), after the *'khrungs rabs* and a short discussion of the ancestral lineage and place of birth of his master, he jumps straight into first-hand accounts of the life of Second Panchen Lama.

A large section of the Second Panchen Lama's *rnam thar* is narrated in intricate detail through the author's first-hand experiences, until the penultimate folio in which he says: "after I returned to Mongolia..."²⁷³ after which he discusses the teachings and practices obtained from various teachers by the Second Panchen Lama. At the end of this section, just before the lists of transmission lineages which conclude this *rnam thar*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita states:

"Furthermore, I heard he obtained many teachings from both the Ācārya Rinpoche Dka'-chen hor-lags and the Lama Rinpoche Bsod-nams grags-pa. But I do not know the details of which [exact] teachings as I have not seen or heard or had the chance to look at the *rnam thar* or the *gsan yig* [of the Second Panchen Lama]."²⁷⁴

In this passage, Dza-ya Paṇḍita again demonstrates his concern with the authenticity of the information he provides.

The folios between are riddled with the life of the Second Panchen Lama as remembered from Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own time spent with him, including accounts of his dreams and conversations. For example, an account of how he acted as one of the attendants of the young Second Panchen Lama from the age of eleven or twelve:

"Every year onwards from [when the Panchen Lama reached] the age of 11 or 12, at the time of the great long-life ceremony on the evening of the Dharma Sessions,²⁷⁵ when he went up to the balcony of the *lha khang* with large courtyard of cobbled stones, I and other ācāryas attended to him (i.e. were his attendants for the occasion)."²⁷⁶

²⁷³ (V3F19a5) *bdag sog yul du slebs pa'i rjes su...*

²⁷⁴ (V3F20a1) *gzhan yang slob dpon rin po che dka' chen hor lags dang / bla ma rin po che dka' chen bsod nams grags pa gnyis las kyang bka' chos mang po gsan pa thos kyang bka' chos ci 'dra gsan pa'i zhib chags gsan yig dang rnam thar mthong zhing 'dris yang ma byung bsam nges...*

²⁷⁵ In the large monasteries, there are about four days of mainly debate and other rituals every year during of the "Dharma Sessions" which are similar to the modern idea of a term or semester. (Dunkar 1993:8).

²⁷⁶ (V3F18b3) *dgung lo bcu gcig bcu gnyis nas lo ltar du dpon slob chos thog gi rgongs mo'i sku rim chen mo'i skabs rdo gcal chen mo'i lha khang gi gseng g.yab la phebs slob dpon pa rnam dang nged kyang zhabs phyir bsad /*

Yet again, these personal accounts within the *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama demonstrates the interlinked nature of the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* and Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own life. Without reading them together as part of a larger narrative, it is difficult to see the larger more comprehensive picture.

5.5. Conclusion

Roesler observed three general structural characteristics in the majority of works of Tibetan life writing. Of the three, two are relevant in contextualising the intertwined nature of the *rnam thars* in Da-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*:

- ❖ Narratives of reincarnation that provide a macro structure of an individual succession of lives. (Roesler 2014:120)
- ❖ Individual life-stories embedded in the macro-structure of a religious lineage. (Roesler 2014:119)

As discussed in the previous section regarding *'khrungs rabs*, these accounts of previous lives already link together a number of prominent mythical and historical figures in the “lineage life story”. Adding to these, the interlinked *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* also include these figures in the larger “lineage life story”.

Although Roesler's idea of a “macro-structure” was primarily in terms of transmissions of doctrine and practice, it is also applicable to Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* for the clear value that the *rnam thars* contained within form a larger lineage of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition. As this thesis has shown, this lineage is not recorded in a linear or chronological fashion but rather randomly in a manner comparable to an image of a lineage tree or field, and as thus, it can be likened to a biographical collection. Collections

such as these often include *rnam thars* of individuals whose respective *rnam thars* or *rang rnam*s have not survived as individual works. Even in the case of *rnam thars* with a number of versions still in circulation, these collections offer a chance for the information contained within to be cross-analysed, and prove to be a vital element in showing us how these narratives develop and adapt over time.

When the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* are read as part of a single narrative, the *'khrungs rabs* and prophecies about figures come together to form a larger story. When prophecies are involved, they have the ability to include future reincarnations and lineages and therefore, the *rnam thars* and their associated *'khrungs rabs* complement each other. In doing so, the transmission lineages, reincarnation lineages, master-disciple lineages and sometimes ancestral lineages are drawn together in a manner that is only fully revealed upon deep and comparative readings of the *rnam thars*.

Shaw stated: “the voice of narrator can tell us a lot about the intension of the text” (Shaw 2010:19). As mentioned, Dza-ya Paṇḍita often narrates his fist-hand experiences in the *rnam thars* of his closest masters, and his autobiography is structured like a diary that contains instances where he voices his own feelings and opinions. Consequently, the sections from the life stories of his masters in which he provides first-person narration upon episodes relating to or experienced by his masters, reveal more to the reader about the person of Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

By inserting himself into this lineage, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was then able to claim the authority and authenticity of these lineages for his disciples to follow in what can be regarded as a clearly thought out literary approach remarkable for his time. Consequently, when these *rnam thars* are combined and read as a larger lineage life story, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s writings and his specific style reveal their significance in providing the aware

reader with the ability to link together masters from the past, present and future. Thus, providing the framework within which the future disciples can further their appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the overall history of their lineage and the development of their tradition throughout history.

Chapter Six: Some Reflections on the Modes of Presentation in the Thob yig gsal ba'i me long

Within the *rnam thars* discussed in the previous chapters, as well as the themes that interlink them as a larger narrative, a number of recurrent themes and modes of presentation utilised by the Dza-ya Paṇḍita in his narration of the lives of his masters can be observed. They serve to paint These accounts are presented in a manner according to the ideal of what he saw to be an unbroken and authoritative Buddhist Tradition.

6.1. Buddhist Glaze

Many of the *rnam thars* found in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* feature extensive quotations from authoritative Buddhist scriptures including *sūtra*, *tantra*, treasure texts, myths, and legends. It is the norm for Tibetan Buddhist writers to quote such texts and their purpose for doing so is usually to validate the statements they are attempting to make. The aspirations of authors differ depending on the socio-cultural or religio-political context in which they write and their audiences, and so, the same quotes from authoritative texts can be utilised to justify arguments worlds apart.

In the Sde-srid's *rnam thar*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's quotes from the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, *Rgyal po bka' thang* and the *Bka' gdams legs bam* authenticate the Sde-srid as the rightful destined ruler of Tibet. For example, he quotes the following from the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* in reference to the Sde-srid's name:

“Named as Rin-chen-'byung (Ratnasambhava)
The letter *ga*: his youth
The letter *ba*: his acts of Dharma mind
The letter *a*: the greatness as a person

He will lovingly nurture the teachings of the Buddha
He will be venerated by all the wise and learned ones.”²⁷⁷

After which, he gives an explanation as to how this can be understood to refer to none other than Sangs-rgyas rgya mtsho:

“Before he was born, he received the name Dkon-mchog don-grub from one of the eighteen great *Ging* deities: The Brahma with Conch Topknot²⁷⁸ and was called by that name when he was a child. The Sanskrit term Ratna means the same as both Dkon-mchog and Rin-chen. Furthermore, *Rin chen byung gnas* is synonymous with *rgya mtsho* which is known to all. As for *Dkon mchog* and *Sangs rgyas*, anyone [knows it is possible to] merge them. As for the letter *ga*, it is connected to the earth and is the root letter [for *rgya mtsho*]. His name Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho can be explained correctly from all these angles.”²⁷⁹

The image of an authentic and authoritative Dge-lugs tradition upheld by none but the most accomplished and legitimate teachers throughout history is what Dza-ya Paṇḍita endeavoured to narrate. As a result, there are many instances in the *rnam thars* in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses core Buddhist doctrines and examples reaching back to the time of the Buddha himself to tackle the narration of controversial events relating to the wider Dge-lugs-pa tradition.²⁸⁰

Thob yigs belongs to the religious genre of Tibetan literature and thus, one could be inclined to argue that Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s emphasis on religion is merely in line with the type of text he is composing. However, a closer reading discloses the author’s personal

²⁷⁷ (V3F166b2) 'jam dpal rtsa ba'i rgyud las / rin chen 'byung zhes bya ming dang / yi ge ga zhes gzhon nu zhes / yi ge ba chos sems bya / yi ge a ming bdag nyid che / ston pa'i bstan pa gces 'dzin byed / blo ldan yon tan kun gyis bkur...

²⁷⁸ One of the 18 great *Ging* deities belong to the *lhag mgron* class of deities which also include the 28 *Íśvaras*, 32 *dākinīs* and so on. They are half-wisdom and half-worldly deities and are only allowed to eat the *lhag ma*, 'leftover feast offering' of the *tshogs phud*, 'main feast offering'.

²⁷⁹ (V3F166b3) yum gyi lhums su ma zhugs gong ging chen tshangs pa dud gi thor tshugs can nas mtshan dkon mchog don grub tu 'dogs pa mdzad cing / chung ngu'i dus de ltar du 'bod pas na legs sbyar gyi skad du radna ste dkon mchog dang rin chen zung gi skad ded yin pa dang / yang na rin chen 'byung gnas rgya mtsho'i mngon brjod du yongs su grags shing / dkon mchog gam sangs rgyas su 'ang 'jug pa dang / yi ge ga zhes rgya mtsho'i gos can dang 'dogs 'brel las ming gzhi dngos yin pas / sangs rgyas rgya mtsho zhes mtshon pa sogs sgo du ma nas 'grig cing /

²⁸⁰ Please refer to the discussions of the examples of “Buddhist Glaze” in Chapter Four.

feelings, criticisms, and disappointments. The issue with the Oirad led by Ġaldan Boshuġthu and the Khalkha under the rule of Tüsiyetü Khan Cakhundorji supported by the religious authority of the First Jebtsundamba provides a fine example. The following chronology of events is extracted from the translation the Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *nam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba by Bareja-Starzyńska:

“...the deeds of Māra cannot reach above the seventh ground [of spiritual development of Bodhisattvas] and his methods to quickly terminate their accumulations [are meaningless], [because] Bodhisattvas manifest as Māra, the Evil one make obstacles for him. Devadatta caused harm during the path of learning of the teacher (i.e. the Buddha) in order to quickly terminate the Teacher's accumulation”... About the reason of ignorance Buddha Bhagavān also said: “I or a similar individual should know his own limits (i.e. control himself). If an individual does not control himself, he certainly degenerates”. This is said and, according to it in a general sense, individuals do not control themselves. In Particular, [one example can be shows:] the Panchen [Lama], the great omniscient one, recognised the incarnation of Khedub Sangye Yeshe [in Ġaldan Boshuġthu], and genuinely showed him his kindness. If his (i.e. the Panchen Lama's) words are beyond interpretation, [then Ġaldan Boshuġthu] was indeed the reincarnation of Khedub Sangye Yeshe, who was a great saint and this is similar to what was said earlier... And because of that,²⁸¹ while enjoying life of an ordinary being, with mind possessed by Māra, Ġaldan Boshuġthu asked this Lord (i.e. the Jetsundampa): “Why don't you bow your head to the Throne Holder of Geden (i.e. Ganden)?” and so on and sent a slanderous letter...[Ġaldan] arrived at the land of Khalkha majority. Owing to his advanced merits, all Khalkha fled... At that time it was said that if someone's actions terminated, it was similar to the achievements accomplished by one thousand Buddhas. This Lord [i.e. Zanabazar] knew, that owing to [their past] deeds the tragedy of the Khalkhas would come and he went in the direction of the [Manchu] Emperor.”

(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:147-151)

Bareja-Starzyńska aptly comments on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's “Buddhist argumentation”, stating: “he tried to explain the situation in the framework of Buddhist ideology. Ġaldan was portrayed as Devadatta and that implied that Zanabazar was like the Buddha Śākyamuni. In this understanding, the wrong deeds of Ġaldan (similarly to Devadatta)

²⁸¹ Here referring to the statement earlier about how Bodhisattvas manifest as Māra to cause obstacles to high level Bodhisattvas to help ripen their karma.

actually helped Zanabazar to develop his best qualities, like the Buddha himself” (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:71). Ġaldan was recognised as the reincarnation of Dben-sa sprul-sku Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho (1605-1644), a highly regarded Dge-lugs-pa master and also the individual who carried out the full ordination of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own master, the First Jebtsundamba. Despite his own feelings, undoubtedly bitter considering the loss of monasteries and his own escape from Khalkha, his primary goal was to present an undivided, strong Dge-lugs tradition with an unbroken lineage of authentic teachers, that included Ġaldan due to his *sprul sku* status. Therefore, he was able to present a narrative in which, all the players were acting in some way for the greater benefit of the Buddhas' teachings by using a Buddhist explanation that reaches back to the time of the historical Buddha for authority. Thus, this is another example of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's tendency to refer to the life of the Buddha, and resultantly, a superb example of a case of “Buddhist Glazing”.

Similarly, in the *rnam thars* of the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lama by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, the scandalous events surrounding the concealment of the death of the Fifth and the birth of the Sixth is explained purely through Buddhist authority. In the *rnam thar* of the Sixth, it is explained through the prophecies of the dharma protector of the tradition:

“On account of the extraordinary need for concealment as prophesied by the great dharma protector Rdo-rje grags-ldan and others, until he reached the appropriate age, he acted for the benefit of beings in a hidden way.”²⁸²

²⁸² (V2F291a4) *chos skyong chen po rdo rje grags ldan gyi lung sogs phyi(r) nang gsang ba'i dgos pa khyad par can la brten / dgung lo tshes kyi ngo mthong bar sbas pa'i tshul gyis 'gro don mdzad...*

In the Sde-srid's *rnam thar*, the concealment is not even mentioned, yet the instructions bestowed upon him by the Great Fifth to keep his death a secret can be found in the section narrating the passing of the Fifth in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama.²⁸³

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's "Buddhist Glazing" reaches beyond merely explaining events via the authority of Buddhist scriptures and prophecies from treasure texts. Through an innovative interpretation of the age-old ideal of *chos srid gnyis 'brel*, he supports his goal to compose an interlinked "chain" of *rnam thars* that can represent and uphold the image of an authoritative Dge-lugs-pa tradition.

6.2. *Lugs Gnyis*

The term *lugs gnyis*, 'two systems', as discussed in Chapter One, it is the abbreviated form of *chos srid lugs gnyis*, 'the two systems of religion and state' or *chos srid gnyis 'brel*, 'the conjunction of religion and state', a model of government which existed in Tibet prior to the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama. However, it was during the Great Fifth's reign that it became widely employed to describe the Dga'-ldan pho-brang government's attitude toward leadership and rule in Tibet.²⁸⁴

This ideology originates from 13th century relations between Tibetan Buddhist masters and political leaders, in particular 'Phags-pa and Khubilai Khaan, whose relationship was interpreted in terms of *mchod gnas*, 'religious teacher' and *yon bdag*, 'patron'. According to Mullard: "In a simplified way *lugs gnyis* represents the political

²⁸³ Please see Chapter Four.

²⁸⁴ For more information on *lugs gnyis* in relation to the Dga'-ldan phro-brang see the *BaiDurya ser po* by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, Ishihama (2004) and Sperling (2003).

institutionalisation of the *mchod yon* concept of religious patronage” (Mullard, 2011:25).²⁸⁵ During the 17th century, this system was revived within the religious and secular sphere of Tibetan politics, compared to the sun and the moon or to an umbrella protecting all beings (Cüppers 2011:25) by the Fifth Dalai Lama.

It is a religio-political theory in which, ideally, religion and state stand on equal grounds, and complementarily guide the development and organisation of a country’s governance. In the ideal context, the application of this theory to the government of a state would establish balance and stability between the religious and secular orders.

However, depending on the historical, political, religious and individual contexts, the actual application of *lugs gnyis* throughout history did not always conform to the original ideal. It is as Ruegg comments: “...the superiority of the one over the other, or alternatively their equality of status, will depend on the exact circumstances prevailing contingently at a given historical time and place” (Ruegg 2004:10). The actual practical application of this system throughout history in was always subject to different interpretations dependent on the shifts of political and religious power sources.

Ardussi brings our attention to the three governments formed in the Himalayas during 1625-1642, namely the Dga'-Idan pho-brang²⁸⁶ in Tibet in 1642, Sikkim in 1642, and Bhutan in 1625/26, stating that they “endured into the 20th century each with a distinctive religion-state basis” (Ardussi 2004:34). During the rise of these powers, it was sometimes the religious preceptor who was considered superior, whilst on other occasions

²⁸⁵ For more on *mchod yon* see Ruegg (1995), (2004) and (2014) and Cüppers (2004).

²⁸⁶ The official government set up by the Fifth Dalai Lama at the Dga'-Idan pho-brang at 'Bras-spungs monastery where he previously occupied the seat of abbot prior to his enthronement as the secular and religious ruler of Tibet. For in-depth discussion of its formation and organisation, see Buswell and Lopez (2013) and French (1996).

such as when the political situation demanded it, the ruler or the “lay donor” was considered more prevalent. All three believed they upheld the traditional ideal of *lugs gnyis*, but varied in interpretation and application according to their individual contexts.²⁸⁷ The interpretations and applications of this ideology throughout history was subject to constant shifts in the power balances between religion and state, which Ruegg concurs as “fluid, sometimes even kaleidoscopic” (Ruegg 2004:10).

In the context of the post-1642 Dge-lugs-pa state as represented by the Fifth Dalai Lama’s Mongol supported Dga’-ldan pho-brang government, the “religious” was equated with the Dge-lugs-pa and the “secular” also existed relatively to the Dge-lugs-pa power. According to Karmay, the new political hierarchy of the Dga’-ldan pho-brang government model with the Dalai Lama as the head of state in some sense superseded the *chos yon* structure, as the Dalai Lama became both the religious and secular ruler (Karmay 2003:73). The 17th century understanding of the “state” was different to past definitions in which the ideology behind *chos srid lugs gnyis* was also subject to different interpretations and applications. However, like previous regimes, Dga’-ldan pho-brang government promoted their application of the ideology as the righteous and authentic model, in line with traditional theoretical ideals, was also maintained by the Dalai Lama and his Regents.

According to Mullard, in its ideal application, the “political figure or government is obliged to actively preserve and promote Buddhism” (Mullard 2011:25). In Tibetan society during the 17th and 18th centuries, *lugs gnyis* as the perfect mode of government was widely promoted in the writings of the Fifth Dalai Lama and his regent Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. Their works discussed in detail how the religious influences should shape the

²⁸⁷ For a detailed analysis of the way the *lugs gnyis* functioned in each region, see Ardussi (2004:33-46).

political, and the governing system guided by Buddhism should influence, support and contribute to the growth of the religious system. There are numerous passages in the first volume of the *Dukūla* authored by the Fifth in which he discusses *lugs gnyis* with various authoritative figures from Tibet and Mongolia and advises their adoption of the model:

“Trulku and Thorgod Daichin invited me to go to Lhasa and again made ten thousand important gifts, and I said prayers of dedication. Taglung Zhabdrung was there and we had a long conversation about the two systems (spiritual and temporal)...As requested by Secen Choje, I wrote on the two systems (spiritual and temporal) concerning what should be accepted and rejected...Machen, the Taglung Zhabdrung, came to see me. He was on the way from Lhodrag via Samye and Yarto. I cordially welcomed him and we had a good chat on the two systems (spiritual and temporal).”
(Karmay 2014:185-192)

Many of the figures to whom the Fifth bestows instructions on *lugs gnyis* and its ideals are Mongols, which is in line with his aspiration to spread this mode of governance in the lands under the influence of the Dge-lugs tradition. Following in the footsteps of this “father-like” lama, the Sde-srid writes in the *BaiDUrya ser po*: “Those who are responsible for the continuity of the great root lama’s two systems of the religious and secular, it is none other than us, his chief disciples.”²⁸⁸

Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes following the example of the Fifth Dalai Lama, at least in the usage of the term, as seen in this passage describing the Sixth Dalai Lama’s enthronement:

“He was like the ship to cross the great ocean of liberation and perfect Buddhahood for all people and the 9 classes of beings. Like the ladder for placing the two feet for entering the mansion of the truly high and definite goodness, he remained teaching [the beings] like the vajra that is the many fold crown ornament of the beings. Afterwards, he prayed from the core of his heart to remain forever throughout countless *kaplas*. He became the holder of the throne of the yellow hats and became the root of all divine

²⁸⁸ *BaiDUrya ser po* Chapter 27: *rje bla ma chen po 'di nyid kyi chos srid gnyis ka'i rgyun 'dzin sras kyi thu bo kho bo cag las gzhan du ma gyur*.

knowledge of all beings and the holder of the *lugs gnyis* of religion and state of the heaven mandated Ganden Palace.”²⁸⁹

This description of the Sixth Dalai Lama is reminiscent of the ideal model of the ruler of a system combining the religious and the secular: the Indian model of the *cakravartin*, ‘universal monarch’, “who on account of his enlightened status is the ideal ruler, as he will govern according to higher principles than that of a worldly political figure.” (Mullard 2011:26)

The reference to *lugs gnyis* with a “religion first” interpretation is also repeatedly observed in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rnam thar* of the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho:

“From the age of eight he saw the maṇḍala of the face [of the Fifth Dalai Lama] and eagerly received the instructions on the *lugs gnyis* again and again [from the Fifth]. Under the guidance of the great root lama, he thoroughly studied the ten [branches of Buddhist] sciences. He became an outstanding vajra-disciple of the outer, inner and secret vehicles of the heart essence of the supreme teachings of the Mahāyāna.”²⁹⁰

And later:

“When he reached the age of 45, he invited the supreme reincarnation of the supreme root guru, the omniscient Sixth Dalai Lama to the great palace Potala which is distinguished as the doorway to all the Buddhist schools and enthroned him as the supreme glorious lord of the teachings and beings upon the fearless lion throne. Like the previous [incarnation] he pleased [the Sixth Dalai Lama] in the three kinds ways [of the student to master] based on the *lugs gnyis* [of religion and state].”²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ (V3F293b4) *mi rgyu ba'i skye dgu kun gyis thar pa dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i rgya mtshor bgrod pa'i gru rdzings sam mngon mtho dang nges legs kyi khang bzang du 'jug pa'i them skas dam par zhabs zung ltar bcas 'gro ba'i gtsug rgyan du ma 'gyur ba'i rdo rje ltar bstan par bzhugs pa 'di bzhin lags / slad nas kyang bskal pa nas bskal pa'i bar du brtan par bzhugs par gsol ba snying gi dkyil nas 'debs shing slang yang dam pa 'di nyid kyi thugs rjes zhwa ser cod pan 'chang pa'i ring lugs gnam bskos dga' ldan pho brang gi lugs gnyis zud du 'jug pa'i bstan srid skye dgu'i phan bde kun gyi rtsa ba chen po 'di bzhin lags / slad nas kyang bskal pa nas bskal pa'i bar du brtan par bzhugs po...*

²⁹⁰ (V3F170b3) *dgung lo brgyad pa nas zhal dkyil mjal zhing lugs gnyis kyi gsung gi bdud rtsi yang nas yang du ngoms med du bzhes pa dang / rje bla ma mchog gi drung du rig pa'i gnas bcu phrag la legs par sbyangs shing theg mchog bstan pa'i snying po'i phyi nang gsang gsum gyi thun mong ma yin pa'i rdo rje slob mar gyur /*

²⁹¹ (V3F173b5) *dgung lo zhe lnga'i thog tu rje bla ma mchog gi sprul pa'i sku thams cad mkhyen pa drug pa sde bzhi'i sgo 'phar phye ba'i pho brang chen po po ta lar spyang drangs / bstan dang 'gro ba'i dpal mgon*

Although both passages clearly refer to *lugs gnyis*, they are both in the context of religious power. The first passage implies that the Sde-srid received the guidance of *lugs gnyis* from the Fifth Dalai Lama and leads straight to his training in the 10 branches of Buddhist sciences. The second describes the enthronement of the Sixth Dalai Lama as “the lord of the teachings and beings”, highlighting his position as the religious master above all else. Later, the relationship between the Sde-srid and the Sixth Dalai Lama, though presented in the context of *lugs gnyis*, is described as a religious relationship of master and disciple.

There is more evidence of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s “religion before the secular” interpretation in his *rang rnam* and the sections of the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, in which he narrates his own first-hand experiences. As for some particularly intriguing examples from the *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama:

“He gave me advice such as “when practitioners of that sort (i.e. Rnying-ma) appear, act for the benefit of the teachings of the great Tsong-kha-pa with pure force” etc. and other instructions of the *lugs gnyis* that was close to his heart. He bestowed the official authorisation of these precious words with great compassion of heart.”²⁹²

In this passage, Dza-ya Paṇḍita draws a parallel between the teachings of Tsong-kha-pa and the “instructions of the two systems”. The Dge-lugs-pas are the upholders of Tsong-kha-pa’s teachings, and so he is suggesting that *lugs gnyis* is foremost represented in the religious doctrines of the Dge-lugs-pa. This passage also highlights the Dalai Lama’s feelings toward the Rnying-ma teachings being spread in Mongolia. As the Fifth Dalai Lama’s personal appreciation of the Rnying-ma teachings for his own practice is well known, we can conclude that his objection toward the teachings here can only be in the

dam par mi 'jigs pa'i seng khrir mnga' gsol te / sngar lugs bzhin lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas mnyes pa gsum sgrubs pa...

²⁹²(V2F276b4) de rigs byed mkhan byung tshe dag ga ba dang / rgyal ba tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa la gang phan pa byed dgos pa sogs lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas thugs nye ba'i bslab ston bdag la gnang ba'i bka' shog chen mo'i nang gi gsung ngag rin po'i che'i rgyas bshad lta bur thugs brtse ba chen pos bstsal...

realm of political gain and loss. If the Rnying-ma were to become successful in Mongolia, there would have been risk of the Dge-lugs-pa losing their Mongolian support upon which the Dalai Lama and his tradition heavily relied. The passage later continues:

“As before, when I arrived in Tibet for the first time from Mongolia, when I requested aspirational prayers and prayers for being accepted as his (i.e. the Fifth Dalai Lama) disciple for all subsequent lifetimes, he accepted and promised in a good way. He also offered me a composition of a two verse *śloka* etc., and I have no way of repaying his kindness to me from the grounds of the *lugs gnyis*. So, I made the veneration to be born as his disciples again and again until re-enlightenment and to practice according to his instructions – by this, he was delighted and made the aspirational prayer for this.”²⁹³

Again, though the exact nature of the kindness bestowed upon Dza-ya Paṇḍita “from the grounds of *lugs gnyis*” is here not clarified, this reference is found amongst matters of religion rather than secular matters. This further supports the theory that Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s interpretation of the ideology was one which at its core was occupied by religion.

In the *rang rnam* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, we find the evidence of the author’s devotion to the Dalai Lama and the advice he was bestowed:

“In the 6th Mongolian month [of 1680], I went to meet the lord of the northern direction the Lord of Dharma Jebtsundamba and on the day of meeting him, I bestowed him the detailed and comprehensive advice of *lugs gnyis* time and time again with great joy.”²⁹⁴

Here, we encounter a brief account of Dza-ya Paṇḍita relaying the teachings and instructions to his master the First Jebtsundamba. One can speculate it is the same

²⁹³ (V2F277a4) *snga sor sog yul nas thog mar bod du slebs pa'i skabs tshe rabs thams cad du rjes 'dzin gyi gsol 'debs smon lam ngos kyis zhus par zhal bzhes bzang po byung zhig bka' rtsom sho lo ka gnyis pa cig kyang gnang ba sogs lugs gnyis kyi sgo nas bka' drin bskyangs pa'i drin 'khor thabs ma mchis pas da dung yang byang chub snying po'i bar du bka' 'bangs su gyur nas bka' tshul bzhin sgrub pa'i mchod pas mnyes par gsol ba 'debs pa lags so / de yang rat+na'i bstan pa spyi lung du / de nas sngon gyi thugs bskyed rgyal po ni /*

²⁹⁴ (F32a6) *hor zla drug par byang phyogs bstan pa'i bdag // rje btsun dam pa'i sku gzhogs mjal par phyin // mjal nyin dgyes pa chen pos lugs gnyis kyi // (Folio 32b) gsung bgros zhib rgyas stsal bar lan yang phul //*

instructions he received from the Fifth Dalai Lama during his time in Tibet, which he mentions multiple times in his *rang rnam*. Unlike Dza-ya Paṇḍita who admittedly was resolved to dedicate his life to religion, the Jebtsundamba, who was the younger brother of the Khalkha leader Tüsiyetü Khan Chakhundorji, was an individual whose position and influence was spread across both the religious and the secular. Accordingly, once the instructions of *lugs gnyis* were passed on to the Jebtsundamba, its interpretations and applications were sure to have more influence in the political arena.

Lugs gnyis is foremost understood as a religio-political ideology or theory of the governance of the state. Thus, once the instructions of the theory and its applications were transmitted amongst the Mongols, the understanding of the position of and relation between the two counterparts were again subject to interpretations dependent on the religio-political and socio-cultural setting, suitable to the specific goals and needs of those in power at that time. Bareja-Starzyńska argues something similar regarding the attitudes of the various Mongolian groups towards *lugs gnyis*: “though the Mongols were part of the political model of the ‘two systems’ (*lugs gnyis*)... it was just a model and its implementation in real politics could have differed from the ideas... Though they referred to being the secular part of the model and to being an arm of the religious leader, the Dalai Lama, they fought between themselves over supremacy.” (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:73)

Despite the insistence of all the factions throughout history to have upheld the ideal model of *lugs gnyis* in their rule, their interpretations and applications understandably always contrasted with the theoretical ideological model. Thus, there is no one interpretation of *lugs gnyis* more correct or true to the ideal than the other. Yet, dependent on the geographical location, the people, the religio-political context, and the individuals in positions of power, these interpretations of the ideal do reveal some form

of truth regarding the individual, social group, religious tradition or secular state. Thus, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's apparent interpretation of *lugs gnyis* in which religion supersedes state is not unusual in the least, and is just as valid as the multitude of other interpretations of *lugs gnyis* found throughout history.

The above occasion of Dza-ya Paṇḍita bestowing teachings of *lugs gnyis* upon the Jebtsundamba by no means marked the first transmission of this ideology in Mongolia. Oirad Dza-ya Paṇḍita Nam-mkha'i rgya-mtsho translated the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, which also promoted this ideology in 1643. Saṅang Secen's 1662 *Erdeni-yin-tobci* refers both to the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and the *Padma bka' thang* sections also refer to the ideals of a Buddhist government (Ishihama 2004:16). As is evident from the frequency of quotes from the Tibetan texts in his writing, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was undoubtedly familiar with and influenced by these Tibetan works in composing his *thob yig*.

It is also extremely likely that he encountered the *Erdeni-yin-tobci* and the other 17th century historical works during the time he spent in Southern Mongolia. The manner in which these Mongolian literary works likely influenced Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing will become apparent as we explore his treatment and depiction of the Mongols in the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

6.3. *The Mongolian Theme in the Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*

With regard to Tibetan historiographical literature, Kleiner notes that “the shift of succession from family descent to spiritual genealogies in so far as family genealogies become redescribed as involving incarnation lines. Gradually, the genealogical representation of incarnate lineages replaces that of noble families” (Kleiner 2016:210). In Mongolia, despite new-found emphasis on reincarnation lineage owed to the influence of Tibetan Buddhism, the Mongols continued to highlight the importance of their ancestral lineage by often reaching back to the bloodline of Chinggis Khaan.

Throughout the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita often highlights the significance of Chinggis Khaan, his bloodline and the place of the Mongols in the Tibetan Buddhist world. This theme is exceptionally prominent in the *rnam thars* found in the Ninth Chapter of the *thob yig*, which contains the *rnam thars* of the masters of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition. These life stories belong to the individuals who the author considered the most important figures of the tradition among his contemporaries.

Within these life stories, there are numerous references to the Mongols in accounts of ancestral lineage or in listing the disciples of prominent Tibetan masters. As mentioned in Chapter One, most of the Mongolian monk-scholars writing in Tibetan had the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monastic community and their future disciples in mind as their primary audience when writing their works. Therefore, it can be speculated that Dza-ya Paṇḍita's inclusion of the Mongols in the *rnam thars* is also primarily aimed to place the Mongols in the lineage of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition for the sake of the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa audiences.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita was directed by the Dalai Lama to spread “the teachings of the second Buddha Tsong-kha-pa” in Mongolia, and by weaving the Mongols into the historical narratives and life stories of the Tibetan Buddhist masters, he attempted to affirm the faith amongst the existing Dge-lugs-pa Buddhists in Mongolia. Furthermore, these narratives firmly place the Mongols and consequently the future Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa disciples within the “life story of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition”, which is portrayed as an authoritative and authentic tradition with equally pure and legitimate masters throughout its long history.

The passages from the Fifth Dalai Lama’s *rnam thar*, which demonstrate how Dza-ya Paṇḍita wove the Mongols into the Tibetan narrative, was discussed in detail in Chapter Four. Some noteworthy examples included placing the ancestral lineage of Chingghis Khaan above those of the Tibetan Spu-rgyal Kings and listing the Mongolian disciples of the Fifth separately from the Tibetan disciples. He also paid careful attention to the individual ancestral lineages of the Mongolian disciples. In doing so, he made the ancestral as well as master-disciple lineages of these Mongolian masters available for the reader. Consequently, this further supports his intention to demonstrate the authenticity of these masters for the benefit of future Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa disciples of his tradition.

The Mongolian theme is also prominent throughout the *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, also found in Chapter nine of the *Thob yig gal ba’i me long*. This *rnam thar* totals 20.5 folios and runs from V3F10a3 to V3F21a5. As mentioned, this *rnam thar* is almost fully based on the first-hand experiences of the author. These first-hand accounts take up about a third of the *rnam thar* and include many occasions where Mongols occupying important political and religious roles are at the centre of the event.

The examples here represent but a few passages from the *nam thar* that chiefly concern the Mongols:

“In the [Water] Ox year (1673) the lord Cagan from the Khalkha right wing came to Dbus to receive the *dge slong* ordination from the venerable one (i.e. the Second Panchen Lama)... the lord Taipung Hungtaiji came to get his *dge tshul* vows from the venerable one (i.e. the Second Panchen Lama). There were many who came to practice such as the lord Dharmaśrī Khungtaiji and his brother, the lady named Rgyal-mo [who was the wife] of Boshuḡthu Khöndülüng Tsökhür etc. They made immense offerings to the venerable one.”²⁹⁵

The two lords mentioned, who came to receive their *dge slong* and *dge tshul* ordinations from the Panchen Lama, are both minor lords from noble families and of no particular importance to the narrative, nor did they play notable roles in spreading of Buddhism throughout Mongolia. However, this episode exemplifies Mongolian nobility joining the Dge-lugs-pa monastic community, as they return to Mongolia carrying both the authority of Mongolian noble heritage and a Dge-lugs-pa mandated religious position. By recording the master-disciple and patron-priest relationships between the Second Panchen Lama and the nobilities of Khalkha Mongolia, Dza-ya Paṇḍita firmly attaches the Khalkha Mongols to the lineage of the Second Panchen Lama.

He also mentions Mongolian lay nobility coming to receive teachings from the Second Panchen Lama, which demonstrates the continuity of the *mchod yon* relationships during this period. It is interesting to note that one of these lay figures is the widow Rgyal-mo of his previous incarnation Tümenkin Sain Noyan Khöndülüng Tsökhür (1558-1640). As he was the younger brother of Abadai Khan, Rgyal-mo would have been regarded as

²⁹⁵ (V3F17b4) *glang lor khal kha g.yas ru pe sud dpon po tsha kAn par zhes pa dbus su rgyal ba'i sku gzhogs nas dge slong gser du bsgrubs pa de...dpon po ta'i phung hong tha'i ji rang rgyal pa'i sku gzhogs nas gsar du dge tshul bsgrub pa dang / dpon po dharmA shrI hong tha'i ji sku mched dang / g.yon ru po shog thu khun du lung chos khur gyi dpon mo rgyal mo shes bya ba dang u rAn khan gyi dpon po bzhi thu ta'i ching sogs 'grub pa mang po byung / sku gzhogs su 'bul ba rgya chen po dang /*

one of the higher classes of nobles of Khalkha Mongolia. Thus, this demonstrates the large number of Mongolian nobility travelling to Tibet during the mid 17th century.

Another passage recounts the arrival of an even more important Khalkha Mongolian figure to Tibet:

“In the [Wood] Tiger year (1674) the lord of the Khalkha left wing, the Vajra Tüsiyetü Khan came to the great monastic centre [Bkra-shis lhun-po]. The venerable Rinpoche was invited to the assembly and he (i.e. the Khan) made enthronement offerings, also made offerings of tea and donations to the assembled masses six or seven times... when he requested scriptural transmissions [from the Second Panchen Lama]. I also requested these together with the Khan...²⁹⁶ In the winter of the [Fire] Dragon year (1676) a great number of travellers from the north[ern Khalkha lands] such as the nun of Khalkha Nomon Etsen, Yelteng Noyan, Secen Noyan, Taicing Hungtaiji and Magata Uitsen Noyan etc. came [to Bkra-shis lhun-po].”²⁹⁷

Again, Dza-ya Paṇḍita mentions that the Khan received religious instructions and transmissions from the Panchen Lama which, as he points out, he himself requested together with the Khan. Thus, this passage can be regarded as evidence of linking himself and the Khan to the lineage of the Panchen Lamas. Later in the passage, there is another list of important high-class nobility from Khalkha travelling to Tibet.

Such mass groups of Mongols travelling to Tibet on pilgrimage are frequently recorded in the *rang rnam* of the Fifth Dalai Lama in both the sections authored by the Fifth Dalai Lama and by the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. One could argue that Dza-ya Paṇḍita is merely documenting events according to a style of *rang rnam* writing. Nevertheless, in the context of the *thob yig* and the other *rnam thars* within, he maintains

²⁹⁶ (V3F17b6) *stag lo'i zla ba gsum par khal kha g.yon ru'i rgyal sa bzungs pa'i rdo rje thu she ye thu rgyal po chos grwa chen por* (F18a) *phebs / sku gzhogs rin po che tshogs su spyang drangs khri 'bul dang / mang ja 'gyed drug bdun tsam phul... ljags lung zhus skabs bdag gis kyang rgyal po dang lhun du zhus /*

²⁹⁷ (V3F18a6) *'brug Lo'i dgun khal kha no mon e tsen gyi dge tshul ma dang yel teng dpon po / se chen no yon ta'i ching hong tha'i ji ji ma gta u'i tseng no yon sogs byang 'grul gtos che ba byung /*

an emphasis of placing the Mongols within the Dge-lugs-pa narrative through weaving them into the religious lineage. Therefore, these accounts of important Mongol nobility in the *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama needs to be read in line with the author's goal to demonstrate to the future Mongolian disciples that their lords and ancestors were closely linked to the Tibetan lineage holders of the tradition.

In a similar manner to the list of disciples we find in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Dza-ya Paṇḍita lists the Mongols separately from the Tibetans when listing the important disciples of the Second Panchen Lama on V3F20bL3:

“As for his chief disciples in order:

The omniscient Sixth Dalai Lama Blo-bzang rin-chen Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho (1683-1706/46),

Ra-tshog rje-drung [Rin-po-che Ngag-dbang dkon-mchog nyi-ma] (1653-1707),

[Fourth] Rgyal-sras Rin-po-che ['Jigs-med ye-shes grags-pa] (1696-1750),

[Sixth] De-mo sprul-sku [Ngag-dbang 'jam-dpal bde-legs rgya-mtsho],

Skyid-shod sprul-sku [Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las chos-dbang grags-pa'i sde (1639-1682) who is the reincarnation of Skyid-shod sprul-sku Bstan-'dzin Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1593-1638)],

Sems-dpa' chen-po,

Nyi-ma-thang zhabs-drung,

Lcang-skya zhabs-drung [Ngag-dbang Blo-bzang chos-ldan] (1642-1714) (who is the reincarnation of the two great lineage holders Dkon-mchog rgyal-mtshan and the great lineage holder Dge-'dun don-grub),

Bla-ma Tshogs-gsog-pa Blo-bzang chos-grags,

Bla-ma Dka'-chen-po Bsod-nams grags-pa and many other scholars from the greater and lesser monasteries of Dbus Gtsang and many lamas who were siddhas etc. from Dbus Gtsang.”

After listing the major Tibetan disciples of the Second Panchen Lama, Dza-ya Paṇḍita lists the following figures:

“[and from Mongolia] there were also many great figures such as the Vajra Tüsiyetü Khan [Chakhundorji] from Khalkha, [Tenzin] Dalai Khan [of the Khoshut] (d.1701) and [the Sixth son of Gushri Khan] Dalai [Batur] Khungtaiji etc.”

These individuals are all leaders of different Mongol factions, each with some claim to the bloodline of Chinggis Khaan and his siblings, or who were themselves Khans. By receiving teachings from the Panchen Lama, these Mongol lords receive the double authority mandated by their ancestral and Buddhist lineage.

In the *rnam thars* found in the Ninth Chapter of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, there is only one *rnam thar* that belongs to a Mongolian master, the First Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan. Together with a lengthy '*khrungs rabs*,²⁹⁸ his *rnam thar* totals 48 folios and is the longest life story in this chapter.

Due to his Mongolian heritage and noble ancestry, it is no surprise that the topic of the Mongols features most in this *rnam thar* in comparison to the others examined in this thesis. Most of the life events of the Jebtsundamba documented in this *rnam thar* took place in Tibet, Khalkha Mongolia or Southern Mongolia. These accounts foremost feature the religious exchanges between the Jebtsundamba and other prolific Dge-lugs-pa masters, as well as important secular figures including the Qianlong Emperor himself. For example:

“In the autumn of the Wooden Pig year (1695) called *mchod ldan* according to the previous custom [the Master] met with the Great Emperor. From the beginning to the end [of their meeting] lamas, chieftains great and petty, clerics and lay people of high and low status of the eight divisions [belonging to] Abaga, Sönid, Üjemchin and Ordos, [came] to meet with [the Master] and let fall the rain of holy Dharma and to display liberation.”
(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:163-164)

²⁹⁸ Please refer to the contents of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* in the Appendix for the structure of the '*khrungs rabs*.

These accounts place the Jebtsundamba (referred to in the above passage as “the Master”) and Dza-ya Paṇḍita as those present during all events, which highlight the elevated status of both figures: the Jebtsundamba’s elevated position as honoured guest and teacher of the Emperor. Furthermore, according to this above rendition, on this occasion, the Jebtsundampa and not the Emperor is the reason why such an array of Mongolian lords, lamas and nobility travelled long distances to pay their respect. In turn, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s own status is elevated status as the heart disciple of the Jebtsundamba. Consequently, Dza-ya Paṇḍita not only gains authority for his master and for himself as authentic Buddhist teachers but by listing the leaders and nobility of the various Mongolian divisions as their disciples also achieves a link between the Mongols and the Dge-lugs-pa lineage, reaching back to the Dalai and Panchen Lamas in Tibet owed to his own and the Jebtsundamba’s connection to the Dge-lugs-pa lineage holders.

Through these observations of the emphasis on the Mongols throughout the *nam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*, we must consider the other Mongolian elements that pervade Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s writing.

6.4. The Influences of Mongolian Historical Writing on Dza-ya Paṇḍita

Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig* is inherently an example of Tibetan Buddhist literature. The Buddhist emphasis in his writing and his aspiration to produce a work representative of the Tibetan Buddhist literary tradition have been discussed at length in the previous sections. He clearly states in the colophon of his work that he was significantly influenced by the writings of his teacher, the Fifth Dalai Lama, which inspired him to compose the

Thob yig gsal ba'i me long following the structure of the *gsan yig* of the Fifth.²⁹⁹ The influence that the writing of the Sde-srid had on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig*, such as the *BaiDUrya ser po* and the supplement to the *Dukūla*, have been discussed in detail throughout the previous Chapters. Furthermore, the works listed as his main sources for the *thob yig* are all Tibetan works. Yet, at a closer look, there are clear Mongolian characteristics to his work.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita did not only spend most of his life in Khalkha Mongolia, but also spent considerable time in Southern Mongolia (1689-1696) during the Oirad and Khalkha war as well as returning on several visits later in his life. Undoubtedly, this frequency of visits would have rendered him familiar with 17th century historical works written by Mongolian authors.

Aside from the earlier works such as the 13th century *Monggol-un Nīguca Tobciyan*, “The Secret History of the Mongols” and the *Arban Buyantu Nom-un Caḡan Teiike*, “The White History of the Book of the Ten Merits” from the Yuan period, much of the important Mongolian chronicles can be dated to the post 16th century period. Due to the internal warfare taking place between Mongolian factions between the 14th and 16th centuries, not much was written or has survived from this era. Subsequently, the period in which Mongols began to compose historical works coincided with the mass conversion of the Mongols to the Dge-lugs tradition. These later narratives, though conforming with prior Mongolian historical writing and often reproducing sections from the *Monggol-un Nīguca Tobciyan* word by word, clearly exhibit Buddhist influences. The most famous of these works include:

²⁹⁹ See Chapter Three of this thesis for details of the contents of the colophon.

- 1) The *Altan Tobci*, “The Golden Summary” composed by Lubsangdanjin’s (tib. Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin) in 1635.
- 2) The *Erdeni-yin Tobci*, “The Jewelled Summary” composed by Saḡang Secen in 1662.
- 3) The *Sira Tuḡuji*, “The Yellow History” completed between 1643-1731 attributed to Saḡang Secen’s brother Toba Taiji (d.1697) (Öljitü 1982:24)
- 4) The *Asaraḡci Neretü-yin Teüke*, “Asaragchi’s History” composed by Byamba Erke Daicing in 1677.

Compared to the early Mongolian chronicles that echo the narrative content and of the *Monggol-un Niḡuca Tobciyan*, these 17th century chronicles place emphasis upon the authority of the combination of Chinggisid bloodline and Buddhism. For example, the *Sira Tuḡuji* begins with a verse quotation from the *Bod kyi deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, “The chronicle of Tibet: the melodious song of the spring queen (i.e. the cuckoo)”,³⁰⁰ written by the Fifth Dalai Lama in 1643 and covering the history of Tibet up to the time of his enthronement as an offering to Gushri Khan for his support of the matter (Ahmed 1970:23):

“If one does not know their roots, they are like a monkey lost in the woods.

If one does not know their family origins, they are like a dragon made from turquoise (i.e. easy to break).

If one does not look to the texts narrating the deeds of one’s forefathers, it is like a man who abandons his daughter”.³⁰¹

Starting the narrative with a direct quote from the Fifth Dalai Lama immediately indicates the Buddhist emphasis that this text will maintain. Quoting from the Fifth Dalai Lama’s work, which aimed to combine the ancestral lineage of the Tibetan rulers with those of

³⁰⁰ This text is also known amongst the Mongols as the *Jalaḡus-un Khorim*, “The Feast of the Youths”.

³⁰¹ (*Sira Tuḡuji* F1) *Yerü kümüm öber-ün ug ijaḡur iyen ese medebesü oi dur töḡüregsen sarbacin dur adali. Öber-ün obug iyen ese medebesü uyun ber keigsen luu dur adali. Ecige ebüges-ün eimü teimü kemekü bicig ud nu ese üjebesü mön keiken nu jabaḡaju kigsen dur adali.*

India reaching back to the Buddha, demonstrates the Mongols' desire to be included in this lineage – their royal ancestral lineage too can be validated through the same succession. It also demonstrates the influence that the Fifth Dalai Lama's works were having on the Mongolian literary tradition not long after the Dge-lugs-pa dominancy in Tibet. In a similar vein, the *Erdeni-yin Tobci* starts with a supplication to the Buddhist objects of refuge, after which the author states: "I shall relate, comparing with many sūtras of old, the summarizing herewith, how the three peoples of ancient India, Tibet and Mongolia have appeared since ancient times, from King Mahāsammata to the present, in order" (Krueger 1967:9). Again, the Buddhist influence of this historical narrative is clear from the start.

The *Sira Tuġuji* and the *Asaraġci Neretü-yin Teüke* have many textual overlaps with the latter appearing to be a summarised version of the former. The *Sira Tuġuji* was also used extensively by Saġang Secen for his *Erdeni-yin Tobci*, which is possibly the most authoritative historical chronicle from the 17th century and that which has had the biggest impact on Mongolian historical writing thereafter. Both texts centre on the bloodline of Chinggis Khaan and on Buddhism, here equated with the lineage of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition. Embedding the history of Mongolia into the wider lineage of Tibetan Buddhism and reaching all the way back to India is a characteristic often observed across Mongolian historical works from the 17th century onward. In this way, Mongolian historical writings from this period are comparable to Tibetan *chos 'byung* literature, by which they were undoubtedly influenced.

6.4.1. Comparison of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* with 17th Century Mongolian Historical Literature

As discussed, the *rnam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* are full of Buddhist references and the author even uses Buddhism as means for glazing over controversial events. These Buddhist elements are shared across Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing and Mongolian historical works from the 17th century. In addition, it is interesting to compare the ancestral lineages from some of these Mongolian historical works to the presentation of ancestral lineages found in the *rnam thars* written by Dza-ya Paṇḍita. As we shall see, the latter was clearly influenced by aspects of Mongolian literary tradition.

Chapter Five of the *Erdeni- yin Tobci* concerns the genealogy of the descendants of Chinggis Khaan until the fall of the Yuan Dynasty, and begins with:

“His (i.e. Chinggis Khaan) four sons were Cagatai, Jöci, Ügedei, Tolui and [together with] his daughter [named] Secen Seceikün [he had a total of] five [children]. Cagatai who was the eldest became Khan of the Sartagul, the next son Jöci became Khan of the Togmug and the third son Ügedei became Khaan because the youngest who was to be Khaan and guard the hearth died during his father rule... His (i.e. Ügedei) two sons were Güyüg and Köden...”³⁰²

The genealogy of the descendants of Chinggis Khaan is presented in a rather straightforward manner and the next pages move swiftly through the different generations and their descendants.

In the *Sira Tuğuji*, Toba Taiji writes in a similar matter-of-fact style when chronicling the history of the Mongols through the genealogy of the descendants of Chinggis Khaan. Chapter Five, which documents the descendants of Dayan Khaan up to

³⁰² Translated from the transliteration in Volume One by Gō et.al (1990:83).

the 18th century, is an ideal example as the period has crossovers with Dza-ya Paṇḍita's times:

“The queen Mandukhai Secen [and Dayan Khaan] [had four pairs of twin sons], the twins Törü Bolud and Ulus Bolud, the twins Bars Bolud and Arsa Bolud, the twins Ocir Bolud and Alcu Bolud and the twins Al Bolud and Gegen Abai. The queen Güsei who was the daughter of Keriye Khojigir of the Oirad had two sons, Gerüdi and Cing. The Queen Jimisken who was the daughter of Oruci Sigüsi of the Orkhud had two sons, Gere Bolud and Geresenji. Dayan Khaan had eleven sons and only one daughter. Ulus Bolud did not have any kin.”³⁰³

The narrative then systematically goes through the descendants of the sons of Dayan Khaan and their descendants:

“Dayan Khaan's eleventh and youngest son Geresenji Jalayir Khungtaiji whose [seven] sons were Asikhai Darkhan Khungtaiji, Nünedei Khadan Bağatur, Oğonukhu Üjeng Noyan, Amin Torakhal Noyan, Darai Taiji, Ġaldan Köndülen and the youngest Samu.”³⁰⁴

After this, the narrative follows the descendants of Geresenji Jalayir Khungtaiji, who include the previous incarnation of Dza-ya Paṇḍita:

“Geresenji Jalayir Khungtaiji's third son Oğonukhu Üjeng Noyan's [six] sons were Abatai Sain Khaan, Abokhu Mergen Noyan, Kidad Yelten Khosiğuci, Tümenkin Köndülen Sain Noyan, Bağarai Khosiğuci Noyan and Bodhisud.”³⁰⁵

³⁰³ (Shira Tuğui 1982 reprint, pp.119) *Tendece Mandukhai Secen Khatun ece törügsen Törü Bolud, Ulus Bolud khoyar ikir-e. Bars Bolud, Ars-a Bolud khoyar ikire. Wcir Bolud, Alcu Bolud khoyar ikire. Al Bolud, Gegen Abai khoyar ikire buyu. Nöğüge Oirad-un Keriye Khojigir-un ükin K(G)üsei Khatun-ece törügsen Gerüdi, Qing khoyar bui. Orkhud-un Oruci sigüsi-yin ükin Jimisken Khatun-ece törügsen Gere Bolud, Geresenje khoyar buyu. Dayan Khağan-u arban nigen köbegün gağca ükin buyu.*

³⁰⁴ (Shira Tuğui 1982 reprint, pp.133) *Dayan Khağan-u arban nigediğer odkhun köbegün Geresenje Jalair Taiji-yin köbegün Asikhai Darkhan Khung Taiji, Nünedei Khadan Bağatur, Nukhunukhu Üjeng Noyan, Amin Duradkhal Noyan, Darai Taiji, Daldan Köndülen, Samu Odkhun.*

³⁰⁵ (Shira Tuğui 1982 reprint, pp.136) *Geresenje Jalair-un Khung Taiji-yin gudağar köbegün Nukhunukhu Üjeng Noyan-u köbegün Abadai Sain Khağan, Abukhu Mergen Noyan, Kitad Jaldan Khusiğuci, Tümenkin Köndülen Sain Noyan Bakharai Khusiğuci Noyan, Budisug Odkhan*

If we turn to some examples from the *nam thars* composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, we can observe unmistakable similarities between his style of writing and the above passages cited from 17th century Mongolian historical sources.

In the *nam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba, given his Chinggisid ancestry, it is no surprise that the account of his ancestral lineage echoes the *Erdeni- yin Tobci* and the *Sira Tuguji*:

“...owing to the power of many [people] king *cakravartin*... Brahmā, who took the form of a human, became universally famed as Chinggis Khaan. And from that one [king] in the twenty seventh generation appeared a king [called:] Batu Möngke Dayan. From his eleven sons, the tenth was [called] Jalair Khung Tayiji. From his seven sons, the third [was called] Üijeng Noyan. From his six sons the eldest was [called] king Abutai (or Abatai)...His son was Erkei Mergen. His (i.e. Erkei Mergen) son was called Vajra-king, the Tüsiyetü [Khan]. He acted with full understanding of the two [kinds of affairs]: [regarding Buddhist] doctrine and state. He was the father of the present lord (i.e. Zanaḥbazar).”

(Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:106-109)

The only difference between this passage and those of the Mongolian chronicles is that, here, Dza-ya Paṇḍita mentions only Abatai Khan who is important for this ancestral lineage, rather than naming all descendants of Üijeng Noyan. Nevertheless, there are obvious similarities between this account and the Mongolian chronicles in terms of language, structure and presentation.

In Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam*, we find an account of the ancestral lineage of Tümenkin Sain Noyan (1558-1640), one of his previous incarnations, which again reflects the Mongolian historical works:

“In my previous life, I was a renowned individual. I was a glorious, renowned and learned hero known as Köndülen Tsöskhür. He was a supremely virtuous and pious person. Since the time of the Cakravartin Chinggis Khaan who came to power, after twenty-six generations had passed, it arrived at the time of the one called Batu Mönke Dayan Khan who had eleven sons. Of them, the eleventh son was called Jalayir

Khungtaiji who had seven sons. The eldest of these seven sons was an intelligent individual whose name was Uitsen Noyan who had six sons. If I were account a little bit about the history and actions of the third of these sons [Khöndülün Tsöskhür]...”³⁰⁶

The narration of the ancestral lineage of Khöndülün Tsöskhür closely echoes the example from the *Sira Tuğuji*. After presenting the ancestral lineage, Dza-ya Paṇḍita recounts the notable deeds of his previous incarnation, such as building Erdeni-yin Zuu monastery with his brother Abatai Khan, receiving teachings from the First Panchen Lama and the Fifth Dalai Lama in Lhasa, and establishing the first road between Lha-sa and Kokonur. Although not from a noble ancestral lineage himself (an authentic Chinggisid lineage and a legitimate claim to a previous master-disciple lineage), by including a discussion of the Chinggisid lineage of his previous incarnation and his Buddhist endeavours, he stakes a claim to both legitimising factors upheld by the Mongols.

6.5. Conclusion

As well as bringing a distinctly Mongolian essence to the *rnam thars* he composes, the inclusion of detailed yet condensed records of ancestral lineages of his masters in the narratives allows Dza-ya Paṇḍita to include yet another type of lineage in his *thob yig*. he was writing to demonstrate to the Mongolian disciples that they occupy a legitimate place in the Dge-lugs tradition, both throughout history and during their own times. By adopting aspects of Mongolian historical writing in presenting the ancestral lineages of his masters

³⁰⁶ (V3F2b1) *bdag gi skye ba snga mar grags pa yi // dpa' 'dzangs grags 'bar dpon po khun du lung // tshos khur zhes pa de ni gnam bskos mchog // stobs kyis 'khor bsgyur ching gis rgyal po nas // mi rabs nyi shu rtsa drug song ba'i rjes // pa thu mung khu ta yang h'an zhes pa // byon par sras po bcu gcig byung ba las // bcu [gcig] pa tsa la'ir hong tha'i ji zhes par // sras bdun yong pa'i rtse mo'i grangs ldan ni // u'i tsen no yon zhes par sras drug las // gsum pa yin zhing de yi mdzad spyed [spyong] kyi // lo rgyus cung zad brjod na...*

near the beginning of each life story, he added a distinctively Mongolian flavour to the otherwise traditional Tibetan style narratives he composes.

For the Mongolian Dge-lugs-pas of those times, this would have no doubt been appealing, considering that most of the highly-trained monastics and intellectuals were from Mongolian noble ancestry. By interlinking Mongolian ancestral lineages with the Buddhist master-disciple, reincarnation and transmission lineages, Dza-ya Paṇḍita bestows authority on the Mongolian monk-scholars of his times as well as delivering narratives that can provide a “close to home” inspiration for the future Mongolian disciples of his tradition.

If one seeks historical significance for these *rnam thar* accounts then reading between the lines is required. History, as Lévi- Strauss insists, “is never only history of, it is always also history for. And it is not only history for in the sense of being written with some ideological aim in view, but also history for in the sense of being written for a specific social group or public” (White, 1975:51). This *thob yig* was written at the request of Tibetan and Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa masters and thus targeted both Tibetan and Mongolian (southern and northern) Buddhist monastic communities. In accordance with Lévi-Strauss’s remark, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s primary goal was to present the religious authority of his tradition and the purity of its teachers, both Tibetan and Mongolian. The *rnam thars* that hold this work together should therefore be approached foremost for their significance as a religious history presented from the perspective of a Khalkha Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monk-scholar who lived and travelled extensively in Tibet, Mongolia and the Qing empire during the 17th century.

Conclusion

1. Summary

The starting point of the research carried out for this thesis was Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*, which proved to be closely connected to his *thob yig* in terms of content and style. A closer reading of the *rang rnam* together with the *rnām thars* in the *thob yig* revealed that the *rang rnam* supplements the *thob yig* in many places for missing information. Moreover, the *thob yig* acts as an extension of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's life story given the wide range of personal information on the author embedded in the *thob yig*.

An investigation into Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *thob yig* in the context of the *thob yig* genre, as well as the wider genre itself, revealed the highly unique features of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. This includes the author's writing style and extensive range of topics of Buddhist learning covered by the work as well as expositions, commentaries, transmission lineages and historical materials related to these topics. The most exciting of these features was the 227 *rnām thars* contained within this *thob yig*, which act as the backbone of the work around which everything else is woven. Upon closer investigation, the *rnām thars* in *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* revealed that it is not only Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam* and the *thob yig* that are interlinked.

To avoid getting lost in the different topics and historical periods these 227 *rnām thars* cover, the examples chosen for analysis all emanated from Chapter Nine of the *thob yig*, which contains 53 *rnām thars*, the largest number of *rnām thars* in one chapter. Many of these *rnām thars* include a *'khrungs rabs*, which adds another layer to the narratives. The *rnām thars* picked belong to the Fifth and Sixth Dalai Lama, the Second Panchen Lama, the First Jebtsundamba and the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho. Only the Fifth

Dalai Lama's *nam thar* and *'khrungs rabs* were examined in detail from beginning to end.

Many of the *nam thars* in the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* are sufficient to stand alone as individual *nam thars* serving to inspire and edify and their focus is purely religious, which is fitting to the *thob yig* literary genre. Moreover, the interconnected nature of these life stories suggests that they are intended to be read as part of a larger whole. In this context, each *nam thar* acts as part of a larger chain which together form the *nam thar* of the Dge-lugs-pa as interpreted by Dza-ya Paṇḍita as part of his effort to compose a work that demonstrates the pure and authoritative nature of his tradition. Consequently, these life stories feature all three types of *nam thar* outlined by Roesler (Roesler, 2014:119-121):

- 1) *Rnam thar* with an internal micro-structure in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita often refers back to episodes of the life of the Buddha as a point of comparison or validation for the life stories of his teachers.
- 2) *Rnam thar* embedded in the macro-structure of a religious lineage in which these *nam thars* are part of a chronological chain and can be seen as belonging to a larger narrative telling the history and genealogy of the Dge-lus-pa tradition.
- 3) Narratives of reincarnation that provide a macro-structure of an individual succession of lives in which Dza-ya Paṇḍita writes *'khrungs rabs* for certain *nam thars*.

There is then yet another level to these *nam thars*: Dza-ya Paṇḍita's incorporation of his personal experiences place him within these narratives and consequently also place him firmly in the chain of unbroken lineage of teachers. These narratives are as much a part of his own religious *nam thar* as he is the continuation of the lineage. The *nam thars* in this *thob yig* therefore need to be approached on three levels:

- 1) As individual biographies of accomplished masters aimed to inspire and edify.

- 2) As the “*rnam thar*” of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition represented through an unbroken chain of accomplished teachers that should be read as part of a larger whole.
- 3) As an extension of the author’s own life in the sense that these *rnam thars* often encompass Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s own experiences. By being the disciple of these illustrious masters and present in their life stories, he himself becomes a part of the lineages he received through them.

One could argue that this process of creating and shaping historical narratives results in some degree of loss of 'historical accuracy'. History is not linear in the sense that narratives and historical episodes are revisited time and time again and are subject to interpretations and reinterpretations in line with the aspirations and social, political, religious and cultural contexts of the point in time when history is reinvestigated. As Riceour states: “subjects recognize themselves in the stories they tell about themselves” (Riceour 1985:247). Historical “facts” and wishful ideologies come together in the way real events are interpreted and are woven into historical “narratives” as an expression of what “truth” represents for those who are compiling history. Thus in retrospective, by reading the *rnam thars* of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* together as part of a larger whole, we are presented with the idealised “life story” or “history” of the Dge-lugs tradition as perceived by Dza-ya Paṇḍita during the 17th century.

Throughout the life stories, Dza-ya Paṇḍita utilises certain stylistic and linguistic tools to achieve the composition of a work that is representative of an authentic and authoritative Dge-lugs tradition. Aside from his concerns regarding composing the work in adherence to Tibetan Buddhist literary conventions, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was writing in and about a religio-politically sensitive period. Accordingly, he was also concerned with representing his masters and peers as the purest and most exemplary religious figures. He achieved this through the employment of a “Buddhist Glazing” of controversial events

and a “religion before secular” interpretation of the *lugs gnyis*, ‘the two systems of religion and state’.

According to Barthes: “[narrative] is simply there like life itself... international, transhistorical, transcultural” (Barthes 1977:79). The *lugs gnyis* ideal, in an abstract sense, is indeed trans-historical and trans-cultural.

By employing a strategic interpretation of *lugs gnyis* in which religion precedes state, the controversial political events of the period receive a generous layer of “Buddhist Glaze”. In the 17th century, Dza-ya Paṇḍita employed this ideal to document the controversial events of the period without contradicting them and to depict his teachers such as the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Sde-srid – who were at the centre of some of these political events – as nothing other than the most excellent of Buddhist teachers, genuine and pure religious masters of the tradition and acting solely for the benefit of the teachings without contradicting their religious or political position.

Throughout the *rnam thars* in the *thob yig*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s foremost identification as a Mongol is evident in the way he emphasises the place and input of the Mongols in the history of the Dge-lugs-pas in both the religious and political spheres. His emphasis on the Mongols in the *rnam thars* was part of his aspiration to transmit the teachings of Tibetan Buddhism amongst the Mongols as something familiar and close to home. In doing so, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s depiction of the events are ever in line with the “religion before state” interpretation of *lugs gnyis* he maintains throughout his narrative, thus placing Buddhism before all else.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita was primarily writing for a Mongolian Buddhist audience but he was also very much concerned with producing a work that would be regarded highly by

Tibetans including his prominent circle of masters and peers. Consequently, he meticulously attempted to ensure his work was stylistically, structurally and in its content reflective of the style and structure idealised amongst the Tibetan Buddhist scholars. There are many indications of his interpretation of what constitutes an ideal piece of Tibetan Buddhist writing.

The Mongols developed a mass culture of textual production from the 16th century onward as a result of their adoption of Tibetan Buddhism, which is in itself a text-heavy tradition. The Tibetan tendency to link their religious and sometimes even ancestral heritage back to India was adopted by the Mongols who endeavoured to mirror this in their writing. This trend is evident in the way Mongolian Lamas, even today, try and link the ancestral lineage of Chingghis Khaan back to the Śākya Clan, to which the Buddha belonged. Therefore, in the 17th century, when the Mongols were in the midst of developing their literary styles, three elements of consideration amongst Mongolian Buddhist writers can be observed:

- 1) Composing works that reflect the undeniable place of the Mongols in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and their religious heritage reaching back to India
- 2) Composing something authentic and legitimate in the eyes of the Tibetan tradition
- 3) Composing the works in a way that is accessible for future Mongolian Buddhist disciples.

Concern with these above factors is clear in Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writings as he himself was one of the pioneers among 17th century Mongolians writing Buddhist literature in Tibetan. Bareja-Starzyńska notes something similar in her study of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba: "a Mongolian influence is present in the subject matter which makes reference to Chinggis Khan. It may perhaps be seen also in the objective approach of the author" (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:58). When approaching

the *thob yig* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita, his concern for the work to be close to home for the Mongolian audience was clearly as much as of a concern as presenting an authentically Tibetan work. This concern for authenticity may also be the reason why many Mongolian authors like Dza-ya Paṇḍita write in a straightforward and honest writing style, and is in itself a fascinating topic requiring further comparative research.

2. The Legacy of Dza-ya Paṇḍita and the Thob yig gsal ba'i me long

Dza-ya Paṇḍita was considered during his lifetime as one of the leading monk-scholars of Mongolia and his fame as such has outlived him to this very day – so what was the legacy left by him and his writing? To answer this, it is necessary to briefly examine the influence his writing may have had on Tibetan Buddhist writing in the parts of Mongolia where he was active and the possible influences he made upon later Tibetan Buddhism in those regions.

There are many examples of life stories written by later Mongolian monk-scholars clearly influenced by Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writing in terms of style, content and treatment of topics and although the following discussion touches the surface of possibilities for comparative research between Dza-ya Paṇḍita and later Buddhist writers, it also represents a goldmine of potential future research.

2.1. Dharmatāla's *Hor chos 'byung*.

Dam-chos rgya-mtsho (1810-1890), also known as Dharmatāla wrote his *Chen po hor gyi yul du cam pa'i chod ji ltar dar ba'i tshul gsal bar brjod pa padma dkar po'i phreng ba*, “The rosary of white lotuses, bring the clear account of how the previous teaching of the Buddha appeared and spread in the great country of Mongolia” in 1889. The chronicle, which was originally written in Tibetan, was then translated into Mongolian in 1958 by Gombojab (Klaffkowski 1987:xvi). He mentions that his two main sources were Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes dpal-'byor (1704-1788)'s *Mtsho sngon gyi lo rgyus*, “Annals of Kokonor” and Lcang-skye Rol-pa'i rdo-rje's (1717-1786) *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byung gnas*, “The sources of learning”. However, an analysis shows that he also heavily relied on other sources including Dza-ya Paṇḍita's works.

There are unmistakable clues in Dharmatāla's *Hor chos 'byung* which reveal that parts of his work originate from Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*. In the chapter which discusses the spread of Buddhism in Mongolia in the 17th century, Dharmatāla wrote:

“In the Sog lands...In days of old those lands had many adherents to the Sakya and Karma lineages and teachings, but nowadays, they house only the holders of the Yellow Hat system of teachings. The All-seeing Great Fifth (Dalai Lama) said: - The Old Teaching is not suitable for the Sog country. That was why Gyelkhang Tse Tsulku did not receive the empowerment of the Kagyu. (The Great Fifth) also told Dzaya Pandita: - Do not teach the Old Teaching in the Sog country. It is also recommended that you do not perform any exorcisms there. When Dzaya Pandita went to the Sog country, he received the following prophecy: - If you propagate the Old Teachings in the Sog lands, it will only bring bad luck! If anybody else tries to spread them, you must stop him! He also received a lot of practical instruction how to teach the doctrines of the Great Venerable Tsong Khapa.”
(Klaffkowski 1987:143)

This entire passage, which discussed the Fifth Dalai Lama advising against spreading the Rnying-ma teachings in Mongolia, is based on Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang nam* and the *nam*

thar of the Fifth Dalai Lama he composed as part of Chapter Nine of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

Furthermore, Dharmatāla's short *rnam thar* of Dza-ya Paṇḍita in his *Hor chos 'byung* is a summarised version of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rang rnam*. In this section, Dharmatāla writes: "His works: four volumes of the "Clear mirror of Teachings" (are his major work)" (Klaffkowski 1987:351), which clearly indicates that the author was aware of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's writings. The parallels noted above demonstrate that Dharmatāla was not only aware of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's works but was influenced by their contents and in a number of places within his own compositions used summaries from the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

In her study of the *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba composed by Dza-ya Paṇḍita, Bareja-Starzyńska noticed something similar. She asserted that: "all later biographies of Zanabazar written in Tibetan followed the account of his life as presented by Zaya Pandita" (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:12). She compared Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thar* of the First Jebtsundamba with the account by Dharmatāla in his 1889 *Hor chos 'byung*, 'History of Buddhism in Mongolia' and found that Dharmatāla's account "contains a long passage on Zanabazar's biography, which is a summary of Zanabazar's biography by Zaya Pandita" (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:51). She also adds later that: "the lineage of Chinggis Khan's descendants is presented in Dharmatāla's work in the same way as in the biography by Zaya Pandita" (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:55).³⁰⁷ This provides yet another example in which Dharmatāla drew from Dza-ya Paṇḍita in composing his work.

³⁰⁷ See Bareja-Starzyńska (2015: see 52-55) for the detailed comparison of the passages from Dza-ya Paṇḍita and Dharmatāla.

Of course, one has to keep in mind that Dharmatāla's work is intended to be a *'chos 'byung* and thus, life stories are but one part of the story. Yet, in their presentation and style, the short life stories in the *Hor chos 'byung* are reminiscent of the writing style of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *rnam thars*. There are many examples in Dharmatāla's work which demonstrate the influence of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's work in terms of style and content, thus, the following is the last that shall be exemplified here:

“Luntu Lungcholong (Jing ger rgyal po'i gdung brgyud Hal-ha U'i tsen bo yon gyi sras gsum pa lun tu lung chos lung), the third son of U'i tsen Noyon of Halha who was (himself) a descendant of King Chingis, was the first to introduce the custom of pilgrimages (literally of “going to, travelling to” 'gro-ba) from Halha to U-Tsang. He gave great gifts to the (First) Panchen Lobzang Chokyi Gyentshen and the offerings of tea and money to Sera, Drepung and other monasteries. He was the Protector who made the silver tomb of the Venerable (Fourth Dalai Lama) Yontan Gyatso. In his own country, he built two or three temples and many images. After his death, when offerings were conducted at his body, Amitābha, a conch shell of reverse winding, a letter A and other (manifestations) self-appeared on his forehead in their full shapes.”

(Klaffkowski 1987:530)

If we compare this account with Dza-ya Paṇḍita's discussion of the same individual and his deeds in his *rang rnam*:

“If I were to account of the history of his actions of the third of these sons, that lord was courageous, wise and intelligent. Except for those [clans] that did not bear the name of the king (i.e. were not under his rule), he was responsible of both religion and politics in all the other seven princedoms. He was the first to initiate the custom of going to Tibet. He went to Tibet and met with the two Shakyamuni statues, the Panchen Rinpoche and the great Bodhisattva De-mo Sprul-sku and gave them great offerings and gifts. To the three main monasteries Se-ra, 'Bras-spungs, Dga'-ldan and to Bkra-shis lhun-po etc. and the other great and small monasteries, he distributed many donations. He also offered 10000 *srang* of silver for erecting the silver stūpa of omniscient [the Fourth Dalai Lama]. The omniscient [First] Panchen Lama bestowed him the title Dharmaraja Aśoka Khöndülüng Tsökhür and engraved the title on a silver seal. The seal was then offered to Jo-bo's in his alms bowl for three nights and then given bestowed it to him (i.e. Khöndülüng Tsökhür). Today, this seal is in my possession. After the great lord passed away, at the time of cremation, an image of Amitābha appeared on the crown of his head, and on his feet

the letter ‘A’ appeared by itself. Furthermore, a right-turned conch and many other relics appeared.”³⁰⁸

Dharmatāla’s account is clearly a condensed version of what is found in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam*. Thus, just as he had aspired, in the 19th century, Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s work was continuing to influence the future disciples of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition in Mongolia.

2.2. *Blo-bzang rta-mgrin*

Another example is found in the works of a 20th century Khalkha Mongolian Dge-lugs-pa monk-scholar who lived during a chaotic religio-political period of Central Asia. Namely Blo-bzang rta-mgrin (1867-1937), otherwise known as Blo-bzang rta-dbyangs. Described by King in his insightful thesis upon the life and works of Blo-bzang rta-mgrin, he was a “polymath, monk, abbot, pilgrim and modernist discontent who wandered extensively through the shifting socio-political landscape of the Qing-socialist transition in Outer Mongolia” (King 2014:ii).

Blo-bzang rta-mgrin left behind many works considered as excellent literary examples of his times. Two of these will be referred to here in order to demonstrate the influence Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his writing may have had upon him.

³⁰⁸ (F3a4) *de yi mdzad spyed (spyod) kyi // lo rgyus cung zad brjod na dpon chen de // dpa' rtsal 'dzangs pa'i blo gros dang ldan pas // rgyal po'i mtshan med ma gtogs tsho bdun gyi // bstan srid lar rgya'i thugs khur bzhes pa dang // bod la thog mar 'gro ba'i lam srol phye // jo shaAk gnyis dang pan chen rin po che // sems dpa' chen po de mo sprul ba'i sku // la sogs mjal zhing 'bul ba stobs chen mdzad // se 'bras dge gsum bkra shis lhun po sogs // dgon pa che chung kun la mang 'gyed dang // thams cad mkhyen pa yon tan rgya mtsho yi // dngul gdung bzhengs rgyur dngul srang khri tsho phul //...pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa chen po yis // chos rgyal (F3b) mya ngan med pa khun du lung // tshos khur zhes pa'i mtshan dang mtshan de nyid // yi ger brkos pa'i dngul gyi tham ka zhig // jo bo'i gsol lhung nang du bzhas po gsum // bzhas nas gnang ba da lta bdag la yod // dpon chen de nyid lnga pa'i lam gshegs pa'i // sku gdung spur zhu byas skabs dbu thod du // 'od dpag med kyi sku dang zhabs ngar la // a yig rang byon gzhan yang dung gyas 'khyil // ring bsrel la sogs mang po byon 'dug pa'i //*

One is his *thob yig* titled *Blo bzang rta dbyangs rang nyid chos sgor zhugs te thos pa byed tshul gyi rim pa la/ sdom pa nod pa dang lung khrid dbang rjes thob tshul*, “The manner which I myself, Blo-bzang rta-dbyangs, entered the religious life by gradually listening, receiving vows, transmissions, instructions, initiations, and subsequent attainment” (King 2015:84). Although a much shorter length of 252 folios, the title of this work alone is reminiscent of the title of Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *Thob yig gsal ba’i me long*.

The second is his *rang rnam*, titled *Rang gi byed spyod rags bsdoms 'di snang za zi'i rjes gcod*, “Summary of my gross conduct: what appears as following after food and the necessities of life” (King 2015:82). This work was completed in 1936, just one year before the author passed away. It totals 33 folios and is written in *kāvya* style nine-meter prose which mirrors Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam* which also has a total of 33 folios and composed in the same nine-meter verse, yet written almost 150 years earlier. Although one can argue that the nine-meter *kāvya* style verse is one of the most common Tibetan poetic structures, the number of folios and similarity in the title suggest that Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *rang rnam* had a definite influence on Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s *rang rnam*.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was the first Mongolian commentator on the *Kāvyādarśa* and, which consequently influenced the Buddhist literary tradition in Mongolia thereafter. This begins with his own *rnam thar*, composed completely in verse by his heart disciple Bka’-’gyur-ba Mer-gen no-mon-han. From the basic onset of observation of the titles, length of the *rang rnam*, and genre, there are definite clues regarding Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s influence upon Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s writing, and if one digs deeper into their contents then an irrefutable resemblance becomes clear. Regarding this, King states: “the biographies of both the Great Fifth Dalai Lama and Dzaya Paṇḍita figure prominently in Zawa Damdin’s histories, and in addition to history

and prose (auto)biography, the latter seems to have been influenced to record the minutiae of his religious training in rubrics set forth by the former” (King 2015:85). If we turn to the contents of Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s writing, there are clear echoes of Dza-ya Paṇḍita and his works.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita witnessed a period of history during the 17th century when the religious and political constellations of Central Asia were undergoing rapid developments and changes of power, often linked to Buddhism. He himself decided against involvement in politics and dedicated his efforts to the spreading of Buddhism. Consequently, this chaotic environment influenced his interpretation of *lugs gnyis* in which religion supersedes the secular and “Buddhist Glazing” of events functioned as a means of recording the events of the period and the lives of his masters to preserve an authoritative and pure Dge-lugs tradition for his future disciples.

Another element which pervades both author’s writings is the repeated employment of the *lugs gnyis* ideal. This term appears throughout the *rnam thars* in Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s *thob yig*, subject to the “religion before state interpretation” through which the author achieves his goal of writing a pure and authoritative lineage “biography” of his tradition. Blo-bzang rta-mgrin also dedicates many folios discussing *lugs gnyis* in his works and giving the ideal much elevation. However, his interpretation takes a different angle to that of Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

Blo-bzang rta-mgrin also witnessed a different yet equally chaotic period of Central Asian history, namely the decline and fall of the Qing imperial power and the beginning of the socialist era. Regarding Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s treatment of events in his works, King observes: “Zawa Damdin took the Two Systems as his primary historical subject decades after its decline in his Mongolian homeland... even as the categories of a

Euro-Russian Buddhology entered Mongolia – one that reified a homogeneous, singular, world religion as its subject—for Zawa Damdin and his primary interlocutors, the subject of his “Buddhist” histories was actually this religio-political matrix.” (King 2015:17). Thus, though contrasting with Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s “religion first” interpretation of *lugs gnyis*, Blo-bzang rta-mgrin employed *lugs gnyis* as the tool that enabled him to claim the contents of his narratives as “Buddhist” whilst explicitly discussing politics.

Though different from Dza-ya Paṇḍita, Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s interpretation and employment of the term *lugs gnyis* could arguably have followed in the footsteps of Dza-ya Paṇḍita to rework something an authoritative and ancient subject in explaining the present with greater efficacy. In doing so, he hoped to achieve his goal of presenting the Mongols as much part of the legitimate past of Khans, princes and Buddhists as the righteous members of the revolutionary present. Regarding Blo-bzang rta-mgrin’s interpretation and employment of *lugs gnyis*, King writes: “[Blo-bzang rta-mgrin] synthesized newly available European scholarship in Altaic philology and Mongol archaeology with a particular redaction of Qing-era Buddhist primordialism. The result was a rather novel vision of Mongol history that still privileged the Two Systems and still found “Mongols” across Asia as catalysts in the Buddhization of Tibet and China” (King 2015: 145). He adds: “Zawa Damdin was looking, perhaps desperately, for any legacy of the Two Systems in his dystopian revolutionary environs” (King 2015:312).

Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s emphasis on the ideal of *lugs gnyis* extends beyond his *thob yig*. Works written in Mongolian by monastics were aimed at an audience of literate nobility and intellectuals. According to Bareja-Starzyńska, these Mongolian language texts “were not focused on religious instructions, although they contained some information on Buddhist practices. The Tibetan texts, on the other hand, were written for the monks with

a clear message on dharma teachings and practises aiming at broadening their religious knowledge (Bareja-Starzyńska 2015:58). Dza-ya Paṇḍita wrote much ornate poetry in Mongolian which relates to the importance of *lugs gnyis*. Most of these works were written as advice for how one should live their lives and were aimed at both the laity and monastics (Altangerel 1982:1164). For example, he composed a poem titled *Chagan bolur toli*, ‘The white crystal mirror’, which demonstrates the meaning of the *lugs gnyis* for the laity and nobility:

“- If taking and discarding are to be considered in terms of the two systems,
Which are the religious system of the Buddha and the secular of the people,
If one wants to fit into the secular system,
It has as its base to get along with all people.
- One should well examine their future path
The unfailing precaution requires great patience
Being attentive without flaw requires persistent endeavour,
Follow [in the footsteps of] the deeds of the elder, superior and good.
- Always abandon the bad image of
being upset by criticism and pleased at praise,
Forever abide in good nature without stain,
like pure gold which does not degrade or change.
- Abstain from hating the superiors, belittling the inferiors
And being jealous of the ones who are equal to you,
If you generate beneficial thoughts for all
It will be very good for the present and for forever.”³⁰⁹

This poem, though aimed at the laity and stating it concerns the secular system, clearly echoes the ethics of Buddhist doctrine. In terms of idea and style, this poem echoes Sa-skya Paṇḍita’s *Legs par bshad pa rin po che*³¹⁰, which was in circulation in Mongolian and which was conceivably Dza-ya Paṇḍita’s inspiration. Though clearly influenced by

³⁰⁹ *Abcu ugurakhu-yi khous yosun-du ilgabal, Airgun burkhan ba alimad kümün-ü nom bui. Angkhalagad kümün-ü nom-du jokhican orukhu gebel, Aliba kümün-tei tağarakhu ni tegün-ü ündüsü mön. Alus khoitu-yin mör-i saidur binjilen, Andakhu ügei seremji tesbüri külicenggüi yeke-tei, Aldakhu ügei kinağur, batu kiciyel saitai, Akhamad degedü sain-u yabudal-i situtugei. Mağulakhu-du gomudakhu, mağtakhu-du bayarlakhu jerge Mağu dōri-yi cağ imağta tebqi, Mağutaju khubiradağ ügei sijir alta metü, Mağu ügei sain cinar-iyer orusin baituğai. Öndör-tü ösilen, douradu-yi durumjilakhu, Öbertegen tengcekü-dü atağarkhal-i tebcin, Örgen-dü tusatai sedhil-I egüsgebel, Öni ba edüge khoyar-tu masi sain bile.* (Altangerel 1982:1169)

³¹⁰ For a translation and commentary see Davenport, Davenport and Thonden (2000).

Sa-skyā Paṇḍita's writing, Dza-ya Paṇḍita's verses are much simpler, more condensed and engineered for his own times. In further demonstrating the range of influence of his writing, many of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's verses are nowadays found amongst modern and popular Mongolian proverbs, which circulate amongst the people.

3. Final Remarks

Today, as owed to the development of technology and the internet, we are as endeavouring scholars privileged to have instant access to historical sources at an unprecedented level, enabling one to look back at the past through the contents of these sources and in retrospect see their connecting links and divergent elements with greater clarity and ease than ever before. According to White: "all publically sanctioned forms of cultural expression, of which 'literature' is one, necessarily reflect the modes of social praxis at a given time and place... the aim of literary history must be to demonstrate how a given literary form is adequate for the representation of the set of lived relationships possible within those modes of praxis" (White 1975:102). Despite the impossibility of fully claiming to know the past, we are by linking the "chapters" of history together into a coherent sequence in retrospect able to paint a clearer picture of the past.

Certeau defined 'fiction' as 'the repressed other of historical discourse' (White 2005:147) to which White adds that "simply true accounts of the world are very small, and tell us little about 'reality'" (White 2005:147). It is according to this observation that the life stories Dza-ya Paṇḍita composed were not presented in a strictly chronological order, nor can their content be justified as definite fact. "Historical accuracy" is determined through "historical enquiry" and the latter of these is conducted by the

collecting and testing of evidence in order to determine its ultimate authenticity. Through 'historical enquiry', events that are considered as 'facts' can be separated from 'fiction' and labeled as 'historically accurate'.

Although a Mongol, like many other Mongolian monk-scholars of his times, Dza-ya Paṇḍita was a highly cosmopolitan individual of his times who lived his life across Khalkha Mongolia, Tibet and numerous Southern Mongolian regions under the Qing banner system, as well as across other regions of the Qing empire. These Tibetan language literary works written by Mongolian monastic authors rightly deserve recognition by the Tibetan Buddhist literary tradition. Aris states regarding the Tibetan Buddhist historiographical tradition:

“[these works] were written from an exclusively Buddhist viewpoint to celebrate the past glories of clans and principalities, religious schools, cults and monasteries and the Tibetan state itself. The histories met, and continue to meet, the urgent need for legitimising present conditions or aspirations through the vigorous assertions of authority. In their sheer multiplicity, they reveal the intensely competitive and diversified world that gave them birth. By providing models to be emulated the histories impose highly selective views of the past on the present views that continue even today to shape a strong sense of local national identity.”

(Aris 1997:9)

In composing his *thob yig*, Dza-ya Paṇḍita provided an encyclopaedic map of the history of the Dge-lugs-pa? tradition presented mainly through his life stories of the prominent figures and lineage holders. In doing so, he provided a historically significant means for the future disciples of his tradition to trace their own lineages to legitimate and authentic masters throughout history, thus continuing the unbroken lineage of the Dge-lugs-pa tradition. Furthermore, within the works he embedded an array of literary and intellectual tools such as a model of life writing, a method of interpreting and reinterpreting existing ideals and terminology that could be employed by the future

disciples to compose their own “chapters” in the life story of the tradition. In these elements and more, Dza-ya Paṇḍita revolutionised the style of *rnam thar* writing and established his pivotal position as one of the most celebrated Mongolian monk-scholars to this day. What exists in this thesis is an analysis of one chapter of his vast work, which will hopefully serve a springboard to the continued scholarly examination of this criminally under-studied facet of Tibetan language Buddhist literature composed by Mongolian authors both by myself and by other academics.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita Blo-bzang 'phrin-las was an individual who decidedly devoted his entire life to religious endeavours, and this dedication to his goal and to the advice of his teachers is echoed poignantly and often throughout his writing. The principal objective of his life after returning from his studies in Tibet was to spread the Dge-lugs tradition and their teachings in Mongolia. We can conclude in retrospect from the influence both himself and his writing had upon the literary masterpieces of his successors and subsequent Mongolian Buddhist writers in Mongolia that his principal aspiration was thus fulfilled.

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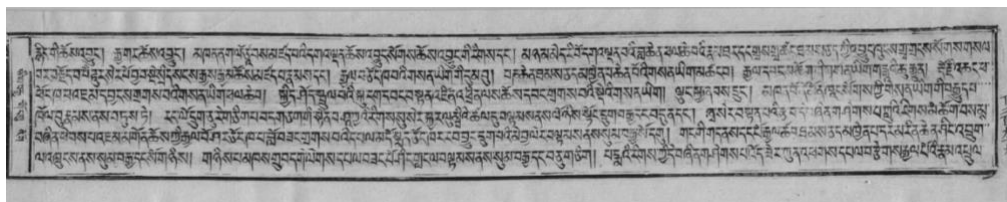
himalayanart.org (2017). Available at: himalayanart.org [Accessed 25th May 2015]

Appendix

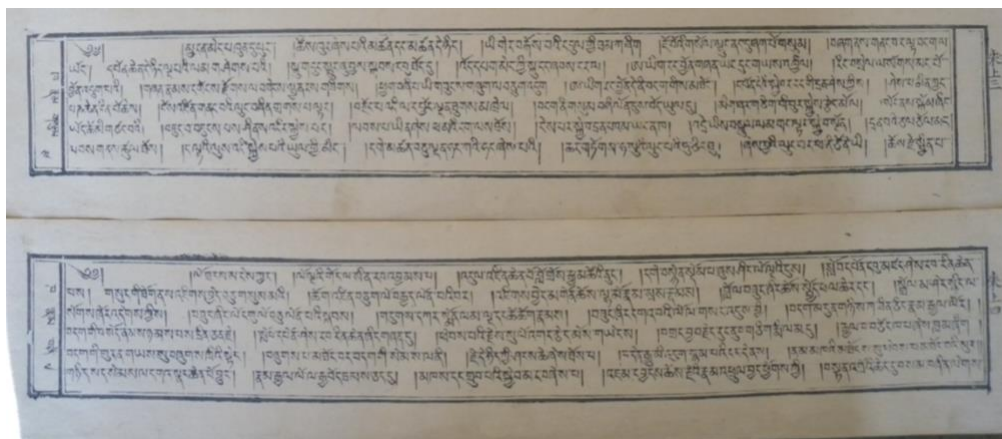
1. Figure 1: Alternate Mongolian names for the previous incarnations of Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

India	Alternate Tibetan Name	Mongolian Variations
Ġaldan Sonom	Byang-sems rgyal-ba	Jansanjamba
Ġalsan	Chos-rgyal mnya-ngan-med (Aśoka)	Chojilnyanammed
Bumbasambu	Mdzes-sdug 'thob-pa bzang po	Tovuusambu
Ġubamhara	Shubhamkara	Ġubamakhara
Ratnasad	Blo-dpon ratna-seng-ge	Radnasaseded
Tibet		
Lodoirabdan	Blo-gros brtan-po	Lodoiravdan
Sonom Baldui	Bsod-nams dpal-grub	Sodnombalduv
Chogloinamjl	Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub	Cholainamjil

2. Figure 2: Xerox image of a folio of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's thob yig kept in Ulaanbaatar (Obtained from Nyamochir. P, 2013).



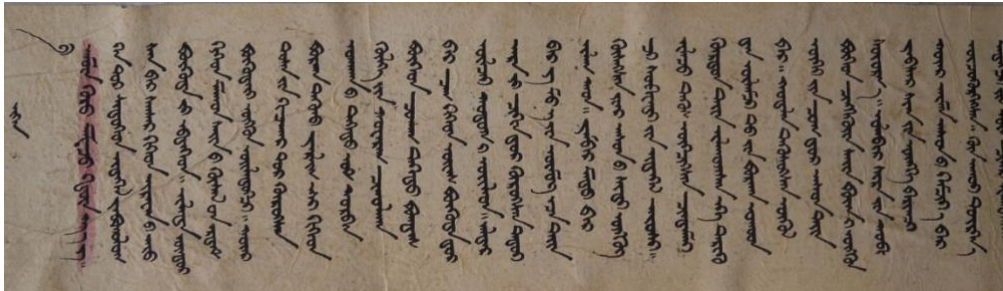
3. Figure 3: Photograph of folios of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's thob yig kept in Höhhot (Ujeed. H & Ujeed. U, 2012)



4. Figure 4: Photograph of manuscript folios of the Mongolian translation of Volume 1 kept in Ulaanbaatar (Obtained from Nyamochir. P, 2013).



5. Figure 5: Photograph of manuscript folios of the Mongolian translation of Volume 1 kept in Höhhot (Ujeed. H & Ujeed. U, 2012).



6. Figure 6: Photograph of manuscript folios of the Mongolian translation of Volume 2 kept in Höhhot (Inner Mongolia Library 2012).



7. Figure 7: Photograph of manuscript folios of the Mongolian translation of Volume 3 kept in Höhhot (Inner Mongolia Library 2012).



8. Höhhot Dza-ya Paṇḍita

Transliteration and Translation of the section concerning ‘Sain Erkilegci Monastery’ from the ‘Archive of the original Building of all the monasteries such as Caḡlasi ügei süm-e’³¹¹ in Höhhot’.

Transliteration:

“Sain-i erkilegci sum-e-yi baicagabasu, zay-a bandid khutuḡtu-yin uḡ baiguluḡsan anu. Engke amuḡulang-un terigun on-du khalkh-a-yin jasaḡtu khan khusigun-ece nige jaḡun jiran ḡarun örüke shabinar-tai ireju bugda ejen-ügegen-dü baralakhui-dur deḡer-e-ece jarliḡ baḡulḡaḡsan anu, khutuḡtu ci shabinar lug-a selte köke khota-yin orun deki ali jokistai ḡajar-tu amur-iyer nutuḡlan saḡutuḡai kemegsen-I kiciyenggüilen daḡaju kharacin-u ḡoul-un ekin-dü jirḡalangtu kemekü aḡulan-du keid süm-e baigulju darui-dur ailadkhaḡsan-du jarliḡ masi sain kemejü ḡurban caḡ-un burkhan-dur ḡoul üiledkü zandan modu basa kedü kedün jüil-ün yeke kölgen-ü sudur shangnaḡsan daraḡ-a-bar nige cangzad jasaḡ lam-a talbiju jakiraḡulun jici dörben yeke demci talbigad, bugda ejen-ü tümen nasun-u öljei-yin nom khural-i üiledcü saḡuḡad khural süm-e-yi yekedken jasakhui dur ḡuyun ailadkhaḡsan dur, engke amuḡulang-un ḡucin jirḡuduḡar on-du deḡer-e ece sain-i erkilegci süm-e kemen manju monggul kitad ḡurban jüil üjüg-ün ner-e shangnaju biyan elḡüjüküi. Seileḡsen uḡ jarliḡ tai kösiy-e cilaḡun-u biciḡ ügei. Tengri-yin tedḡüḡsen-ü tabin khoyaduḡar on-u jun-u terigün sar-a-yin sinin arban”

Translation:

“According to the records, Sain-i Erkilegci Monastery was originally built by Zaya Pandita Khutuḡtu. [Dza-ya Paṇḍita] came [to Beijing] with over 160 households of disciples from Jasagtu Khan Banner of Khalkha in the 1st year of Kangxi (1662). There, he had an audience with the Emperor. His Highness gave the command [to Dza-ya Paṇḍita]: “choose any suitable place in the area of Höhhot and stay there comfortably.” So, [he] humbly followed the [Emperor’s] order and built a

³¹¹ Also known as Yehe zuu (Ch. 无量寺 or 大召).

monastery on the Jirgalangtu mountain at the source of River Kharacin. When he reported this, [the emperor] praised [him] and bestowed him sandal wood for sculpting the Buddhas of the three times, and several Māhayāna sūtras. After that, [Dza-ya Paṇḍita] appointed a *Shangtsad* (i.e. a governing lama) and four major *demchi* lamas. [He] also held religious services for the longevity of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Upon expanding his monastery, the Emperor bestowed the monastery the title of Sain-i Erkilegci Süme. [The name of the monastery] was written in three languages (Manchu Mongolian and Chinese) on a plaque at his request and placed up [above the doorway of the monastery] in the 36th year of Kengxi (1698). The original stone tablet with the carving of the Emperor's commands were never retrieved.

[This above account was written down] on the 10th day of the 1st summer month of the 52nd year of Qianlong (1786).”

9. Figure 9: Comparison of the monasteries founded by the Fifth Dalai Lama the BaiDürya ser po and Dza-ya Paṇḍita's thob yig.

In the below table, the details of name and location appear as they do unanimously in both works unless highlighted in yellow (unique to Dza-ya Paṇḍita) and green (unique to the Sde-srid). The original Tibetan dates have been converted to their Roman equivalents.

Dza-ya Paṇḍita's thob yig	BaiDürya ser po	Location
Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1645)	Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1645)	G.yas ru shangs
Dga' ldan yang rtse (1669)	Dga' ldan yang rtse (1669)	Chu shur yar gsum lhun po rtse'i rdzong 'og smyug
Dga' ldan gsung rab gling (1669)	Dga' ldan gsung rab gling (1669)	G.yo Ru do la tshel
Dga' ldan 'og min gling (1649)	Dga' ldan 'og min gling (1649)	Rnam rgyal lha rtse north of Ru lag
Dga' ldan don gnyis gling (1649)	Dga' ldan don gnyis gling (1649)	Lho brag do rdzong khul
Dga' ldan bshad sgrub gling (1654)	Dga' ldan bshad sgrub gling (1654)	Pho brang gong ri dkar po nye 'dabs thod ba ri
Dga' ldan thos bsam dar rgyas gling (1651)	Dga' ldan thos bsam dar rgyas gling (1651)	G.yo ru yar klung: stod sham po gangs
Dga' ldan chos 'khor gling (1669)	Dga' ldan chos 'khor gling (1669)	G.yas ru Gtsang
Dga' ldan gsang sngags yang rtse (1647)	Dga' ldan gsang sngags yang rtse (1647)	Yer pa brag gseb
Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1651)	Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1651)	Mnga' ris khyung rdzong dkar po'i nye 'dabs
Gsang sngags byang chub gling (1651)	Gsang sngags byang chub gling (1651)	Bskod ring chag dogs de ngod
Bdud dpung zil gnong gling (1679)	Bdud dpung zil gnong gling (1679)	Phung po ri po che
Dga' ldan bdud 'joms gling (1682) G3619	Dga' ldan bdud 'joms gling (1682)	Lha brag mkhar
Dga' ldan rab rgyas gling (1645)	Dga' ldan rab rgyas gling (1645)	Thob rgyal
Dga' ldan byams pa gling (1647)	Dga' ldan byams pa gling (1647)	Rong byams gling
Dga' ldan rab brten gling (1669)	Dga' ldan rab brten gling (1669)	Eastern dwags po'i cha sku rab rnam rgyal khul
Shel dkar chos sde (1645)	Shel dkar chos sde (1645)	La stod
Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling (1658)	Dga' ldan phun tshogs gling (1658)	Jo nang pa'l dgon rtag brtan pa'l grwa nying
Dga' ldan dar rgyas gling (1646)	Dga' ldan dar rgyas gling (1646)	Mtshan sgrog
Thang sag Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1651)	Thang sag Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1651)	phan yul
Thar pa gling (1650)	Thar pa gling (1650)	Sa lug phag gdong pa 'phos shul tre tha ba
Dga' ldan gling (1666)	Dga' ldan gling (1666)	Near Chos 'khor rgyal (remains of Sgyer smyung)
Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1675)	Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1675)	Bal bod yi mtshams gnya' nang: Grod pa phug
Rgya mtsho gling (1651)	Rgya mtsho gling (1651)	Khams stod rdod kyi sa'i char
Dga' ldan phan bde gling (1659)	Dga' ldan phan bde gling (1659)	Smad mdo khams: cha 'ba' Lhun grub rab brtan khul
Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1668)	Dga' ldan 'phel rgyas gling (1668)	Bar khams
Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1666)	Dga' ldan chos 'khor (1666)	Dkar shod dgon
Dga' ldan rab brtan (1668)	Dga' ldan rab brtan (1668)	Ri shod dgon grwarneying 'phos shul
Dga' ldan 'gro phan gling (1677)	Dga' ldan 'gro phan gling (1677)	Mdo khams: la mo rtse
Dga' ldan chos gling (1667)	Dga' ldan chos gling (1667)	Mi nyag spu lung ra lte dgon pa
Dga' ldan lha rtse (1651)	Dga' ldan lha rtse (1651)	Kong po kar srid kyi steng
Jo rdzong sgar grwa tshang (1666)	Jo rdzong sgar grwa tshang (1666)	Khams kong rtse sgril ngos ri
Nor bu chos 'khor (1645)	Nor bu chos 'phel (1645)	Srad rin chen rtse pa lha bzang jus legs
Bkra shis chos 'phel (1657)	Bkra shis chos 'phel (1657)	Gting skyes khri ljam: brag dkar ba
Tshe chu sgrub sde	Tshe chu sgrub sde	Dpal chen chu po ri
Gong ra nges gsang gling	Gong ra nges gsang gling	Rin spungs
Gsang sngag chos 'khor	Gsang sngag chos 'khor	Yar 'brog stag lung
Smin grol gling	Smin grol gling	Grwa phyi 'og min
Dga' ldan gsang sngags bde chen (1680)	Dga' ldan gsang sngags bde chen (1680)	Tshugs gras Lho brag
Dga' ldan 'gro phan gling (1681)	Dga' ldan 'gro phan gling (1681)	La phyi chu dbar
Dga' ldan chos gling (1680)	Dga' ldan chos gling (1680)	Rtse sgrang
4 monks residences (1645)	4 monks residences (1645)	Pho brang ri bo gru 'dzin
Gsang ri sman skyong gling (1685)	Gsang ri sman skyong gling (1685)	Yar 'brog gi sa'i char 'brug dgon gsang ri
Dga' ldan bkra shis gling (1682)	Dga' ldan bkra shis gling (1682)	Lho brag
Dga' ldan 'gro don gling (nunnery) (1681)	Dga' ldan 'gro don gling (nunnery) (1681)	Mtsho sna khul glang chu dgon
Dga' ldan sum rtse gling (1679)		Rgyal thang rtse
Dga' ldan nges legs gling (1623/83)		Bar khams byang rgyud kyi sa'i cha zur
Rta dbang Dga' ldan mam rgyal lha rtse (1680)		Mon Bod mtshams mtsho sna khul
Dga' ldan 'gro don gling (1681)		Glang chu
Dga' ldan rig grol gling (1623/83)		phyong gnyas thang po che
Dga' ldan theg mchog glig		
Dga' ldan bde chen gling		
Dga' ldan bskyed rdzogs gling		
Dga' ldan bkra' shis gling		Brong rdzong
Dga' ldan thar 'dod gling		Gngal
Dga' ldan skabs gsum gling		Ri dmar
Dga' ldan dpal 'byor gling		Phu dmar
Renovated 13 old monasteries (1627/87)		Mtho lding
Rgyud grwa (1626/86)		Gu ge phi byung 'brog: sa khongs bkra shis sgang
Rdo rje sgra dbyangs gling (1666)		
Dga' ldan gsang sngags theg mchog gling (1657)		
Dga' ldan gsang sngags 'gro 'dren gling (1657)		Go 'jo
Gro phan ldan ngo mtshar rig byed gling		Lcags ri baitur

10. The Contents of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*

In creating this detailed content overview, Chapters Eight and Nine are laid out in more detail than the rest as they contain the *rnam thars* that will be the main focus of this thesis. I would also like to point out that although there could have been more detail about the subjects, text titles, and figures mentioned in this *thob yig*, due to the scope of this thesis, it is something I cannot analyse in more detail here and that will return to at a later date.

Volume 1

F1a: Dedications to the lineage masters including Nāgārjuna, Rgyal-tshab-rje, Asaṅga, 'Brom-ston Rgyal-ba'i byung-gnas, Dge-'dun-grub and the Dalai Lama lineage etc.

§ Chapter One: Volume I F4a2 - F60a6

Title: *Dge ba'i bshes gnyen bsten nas thos pa 'tshol tshul dang / rang nyid bstan par zhugs nas rab byung bsnyen rdzogs thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of the method of seeking out the instructions of a *kalyāṇamitra*, by adhering to him and the exposition of the methods of, having personally entered into the teaching, receiving the novice ordination and the full ordination.”

This section is filled with quotations from numerous authoritative scriptures and prolific figures to back up the statements.

F4a2: The value and benefits of the dharma which is hard to obtain.

F5a1: The two divisions of supreme dharma. 1) *lung*, ‘scripture’ and 2) *rtogs pa*, ‘experiential’. The author goes on to explain what both are, paying considerably more attention to the latter.

F12a1: How to obtain the *lung* and the proper way of receiving it.

F12b1: The proper way of listening to the transmission of the *lung*.

F13a1: The reasons why it is necessary to find a *kalyāṇamitra* and the characteristics and virtues by which to identify them.

F22a5: The proper way of honouring a lama.

F26a1: The benefits of *gsol ba btab*, ‘prayers to the lama’.

F28a6: The benefits of seeing the lama.

F29a4: The benefits of erecting body images and praise (of the lama).

F29a6: The benefits of performing anniversary of funeral rituals (of the lama).

F33a6: What one should do when one meets the lama for the first time.

F35a1: Instructions on how one should request teachings from the lama.

F35a4: The proper way the lama should treat his disciples.

F50b3: Examples of good *kalyāṇamitras*.

F50b4: The dangers of not relying on a lama.

§ Chapter Two: Volume I F60b1 - F122b1

Title: *Thun mong ba'i rig gnas rnam la thos bsam gyi bag chags cung zad bzhag pa*, “The brief presentation of the habitual tendencies of studying and reflecting on the common sciences.”

This chapter which deals with the common sciences, is mostly taken up by the treatment of the common science of *gso ba rig pa* (medicine) in which we find a history of Buddhist medicine, *rnam thars* of the important lineage holders of the medicinal tradition and discussion of the major medicinal treatises. The transmission lineages of teachings and practices associated with the common sciences are found at the end of each

subsection. The first folios introduce the common sciences in general, after which Dza-ya Paṇḍita explains that *sgra* (grammar) has five supplementary subclasses:

F65a2: *snyan ngag*, 'skt. *Kāvya*' 'Eng. poetic speech'

F67a6: *mngon brjod*, 'synonymy'.

F68a4: *sdeb sbyor*, 'metrics'.

F68a6: *zlos gar*, 'drama'.

F69b6: *dkar rtsis*, 'astrology'.

F70a4: *tshad ma*, 'logic'.

F76a2: *bzo ba*, 'craftsmanship'.

F77b2: *gso ba*, 'medicine'. This section is full of biographical and historical accounts of individuals concerned with the transmission of the medicinal arts to Tibet, especially those concerned with the *Rgyud bzhi*.

F83a1: *lo rgyus* of G.yu-thog yon-tan mgon-po (708-833).

F84a2: *rnam thar* of Khyung-po'i jo-mo Padma 'od-ldan.

F85a2: How Dge-bshes Rog-ston received the transmission of the *Rgyud bzhi* such as his encounter with Ye-shes mkha-'gro.

F89a2: *'khrungs rabs* of G.yu-thog mgon-po. India: 'Tsho-byed gzhon-nu (Skt. Jīvaka) Gu-ru-Padma, Dpa'-bo, Dam-pa, Birwapa, Skye-bu me-lha. Tibet: Srong-btsan sgam-po, G.yu-thog mgon-po.

F91a6: Works composed by G.yu-thog mgon-po.

F95a6: Cycles of teachings and transmission lineages.

F101a3: *rnam thar* of Shākya-dbang kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251).

F102b3: *rnam thar* of Mkhas-grub Brnyes-mnyam rdo-rje.

F106: *rnam thar* of Mkhas-pa'i dbang-po Dkon-mchog dge-legs.

F108b6: *rnam thar* of Srong-btsan sgam-po.

§ Chapter Three: Volume I F122a1 - 174b2.

Title: *Rgyu mtshan nyid kyi theg pa'i dam pa'i chos la thos bsam gyi bag chags cung zad bzhag pa dang gzhung ma'i lung dang 'khrid thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The brief presentation of the habitual tendencies of studying and reflecting on the noble teachings of the vehicles of the causal philosophical and how the *gzhung ma'i lung*, ‘authoritative scriptures’ and the *khrid*, ‘practice instructions’ were obtained.

The author begins by generally discussing the uncommon (i.e. specifically Buddhist) sciences. Following the example of the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama, he presents the divisions of 1) the causal philosophical vehicle and 2) the resultant tantric vehicle. These are both considered the uncommon inner sciences. This chapter deals with the first and divides the teachings into *lung*, ‘scriptures’ starting on F122b3 and *khrid*, ‘instructions’ on F171b4. Dza-ya Paṇḍita starts this chapter with the *rnam thars* of the important lineage holders of the tradition for the causal philosophical vehicle.

F123a2: Byams-pa mgon-po (Maitreyaṇātha).

F125b4: 'Phags-pa Thogs-med (Asaṅga).

F129b6: Mkhas-mchog dbying-gnyen (Vasubhandhu).

F134a3: Yon-tan-'od (Guṇaprabha).

F136b3: Klu-sgrub (Nāgārjuna).

F138b1: Āryadeva.

F141b2: Seng-ge bzang-po (Haribhadra).

F144a1: Dpal-ldan Phyogs-kyi glang-po (Dignāga).

F145b2: Chos-kyi grags-pa (Dharmakīrti).

F148a3: Candragomin.

F150a6: 'Phags-pa Dge-'dun 'bangs-kyi slob-ma.

F150b6: Śākyaprabha.

F151b2: Dharmarakṣita.

F152b5: Asaṅga and the history of the six major Bka'-gdams-pa texts: *Mahāyānasūtralaṃkara*, the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, the *Śikṣasamuccaya*, the *Bodhisatvacaryāvatāra*, the *Jātakamālā* and the *Udānavarga*.

F157a3: Śāntideva.

F162b4: Atīśa's *Chos chung brgya rtsa* containing 103 *śāstras* and their translators.

F169a4: Śākyaśrī.

F171b4: A discourse on *khrid*, 'instructions' which consists of a general discussion, followed by the transmission lineages.

§ Chapter Four: Volume I F174b2 - 297a5.

Titled: *Zur bka'i rjes gnang gi skor thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, "The exposition of the way in which the cycles of *rjes gnang*, 'practice permission' of the *zur bka'*, 'specialised proclamations' were obtained."

Dza-ya Paṇḍita explains that the resultant mantra vehicle has three divisions: 1) specialised proclamations 2) general proclamations and 3) proclamation cycles from the extended meaning of *sūtras* and *tantras* from the supplementary collected writings of lamas. The structural divisions are again modeled on the *gsan yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The section on specialised proclamations is further divided into 1) *rjes gnang*, 'practice permission' and 2) *dbang*, 'empowerment', of which this chapter only deals with *rjes gnang*. In treating his subject matter, the author discusses in particular the *Bya ba'i rgyud*, 'Skt. *Kriyātantra*' starting on F174b4 and the *Rnal 'byor bla med*, 'Skt. *Yoganiruttaratantra*' starting on F249a4. This chapter is full of legends and life stories of figures including the Sixteen Elders, 'Skt. *Ṣoḍaśa sthavirāḥ*'. It is noteworthy that in this chapter, Dza-ya Paṇḍita uses the terminology *lo gryus* to narrate the life stories of wrathful deities whereas here and elsewhere he uses *nam thar* for the life stories of other legendary figures such as the Sixteen Elders, Bodhisattvas such as Avalokiteśvara, and the 84 Mahāsiddhas.

F174b4: *bya ba'i rgyud*, 'Skt. *Kriyātantra*' begins with various transmission lineages of *rjes gnang* and *dbang*.

F175b4: The *rnam thars* of the Sixteen Elders begins with a general introduction and a discussion of the textual tradition originating in India, Tibet and China based on the *Bka' gdams chos byung chen mo*. There is a mistake in the Tibetan text in that the 13th Elder Panthaka is missing.

F179b6: Yan-lag-'byung (Aṅgiraja/Aṅgaja)

F181b2: Ma-pham-pa (Ajita)

F181b5: Nags-gnas (Vanavāsin)

F182a3: Dus-ldan (Mahākālīka)

F182b1: Rdo-rje mo'i-bu (Vajrīputra)

F183a6: Bzang-po (Śrībhadrā)

F183b6: Gser-be'u (Kanakavatsa)

F184a6: Gser-can (Kanaka)

F184b5: Ba-ku-la (Bakula)

F185b2: Sgra-gcan-'dzin (Rāhula)

F188b2: Lam-brtan (Cūḍapanthaka)

F190b3: Bha-ra-dha-dza bsod-snyoms-len (Piṇḍola Bharadvāja)

(Missing: Pantaka)

F191b5: Klu-yi-sde (Nāgasena)

F192a5: Sbed-byed (Gopaka)

F193a3: Mi-phyed-pa (Abhedya)

F196b2: *rnam thar* of Slob-dpon Rdze-tari (Jetāri).

Fa98b3: *rnam thar* of Nāgarākṣa.

F204a1: Praise of Mgon-po 'Od-dpag-med (Amitābha).

F211b4: Praise of Avalokiteśvara.

F221a4: Account of Ārya Tārā and her past.

F231a1: Praise of the 21 Tāras.

F240b2: *lo rgyus* of Khro-chen Rme-ba-brtsegs (Krodha Bhrukumkūṭa).

F243b1: *lo rgyus* of Dza-mbha-la dkar-po (White Jambhala).

F246b4: *lo rgyus* of Rnam-sras (Vaiśravaṇa).

F249a4: *Rnal byor bla med*, ‘Skt. *Yoganiruttaratantra*’ begins with a general discussion of the classifications of *pha gryud*, ‘father tantras’ and the *ma rgyud*, ‘mother tantras’. Dza-ya Paṇḍita states that this section deals only with the *ma rgyud*.

F249a4: *lo rgyus* of Rdo-rje 'jigs-byed (Vajrabhairava).

F249b6: *lo rgyus* of the *Tshe dbang* of the Ma-gcig grub-rgyal tradition.³¹²

F272a2: *Dus kyi 'khor lo* (Kālacakra).

F276b4: *lo rgyus* of Lha-mo Dbyangs-can drag-mo (wrathful Sarasvatī).

F281b6: *lo rgyus* of Mgon-po Bya-roq mtshan-can (four-armed form of Mahākāla).

F286b1: *lo rgyus* of Ye-shes mkha'-gro-ma Seng-gdong-ma (Siṃhamukhā).

Volume 2

§ Chapter Five: Volume II F1a1 - F130a6.

Title: *Zur bka' dbang du ma thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of the way in which the various *dbang*, ‘empowerments’ of the *zur bka'*, ‘specialised proclamations’ were obtained.”

Dza-ya Paṇḍita explains that in this chapter, which primarily deals with *dbang*, he will firstly briefly explain the way in which one enters the tantric vehicle (starting on F1a2), and that secondly, he will discuss how the *dbang* of each practice was obtained in more detail (starting on F14a4). The first section includes a discussion of the Vajrayāna backed up by numerous quotations from authoritative texts. The second part is organised

³¹² A female Indian siddha who was one of Ras-chung-pa's teachers.

following the four classes of *tantras*, which is again the model used by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his *gsan yig*. The author sequentially runs through each class starting with an introductory discussion of the *tantra* classification which is followed by various legends and *rnam thars*, with the transmission lineages inserted at the end of each subsection.

F1a4: *sngags la 'jug tshul spyir bshad pa* – General exposition of the way in which one enters the tantric vehicle.

F14a4: *Bye brag tu rgyud sde so so'i dbang thob pa'i tshul* – Separate expositions of how the *dbang* of each tantra class was obtained.

F14a4: *bya ba'i rgyud (kriyātantra)*.

F16a3: *lo rgyus* of Tshe-dpag-med (Amitāyus).

F25a5: *rnam thar* of Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalokiteśvara) ending with the various forms of Avalokiteśvara found amongst the *tantras*.

F37b3: *rnam thar* of Dge-slong-ma Dpal-mo (Lakṣmīṃkarā) who was the propagator of the fasting practice *smyung gnas*.

F40a1: Exposition on *smyung gnas* belonging to the system of Avalokiteśvara.

F45b6: The five benefits of the virtues of Bcom-ldan-'das Mi-'khrugs-pa (Akṣobhya) and his *rnam thar*.

F62b5: *Spyod rgyud (caryātantra)*.

F63a5: *Rnal 'byor rgyud (yogatantra)*.

F68a4: *Rnal 'byor bla med (yoganiruttaratantra)*.

F74a1: *pha rgyud* (the father *tantras* of the *yoganiruttaratantra*). Here Dza-ya Paṇḍita subdivides the section into six families within the father *tantras*:

- 1) *Mi bskyod pa'i rigs* – Akṣobhya family
- 2) *Rnam snang gi rigs* – Vairocana family
- 3) *Rin 'byung gi rigs* - Ratnasambhava family
- 4) *'Od dpag med kyi rigs* – Amitāyus family
- 5) *Don grub kyi rigs* – Amoghasiddhi family
- 6) *Rdo rje 'chang gi rigs* – Vajradhara family

F79b1: *rnam thar* of Phyag-na rdo-rje (Vajrapāṇi).

F87a6: The various forms of Phyag-na rdo-rje.

F92a2: *rnam thar* of 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs (Mañjughoṣa).

F93b1: *lo rgyus* of Rdo-rje 'jigs-byed (Vajrabhairava) known as Rje-btsun 'Jam-pa'i-dbyangs khri-bo'i-sku.

F98a3: *Ma rgyud* (mother tantras).

F98b2: The account of how Bde-mchog (Cakrasaṃvara) appeared.

F115a3: Regarding Dus-'khor (Kālacakra).

§ Chapter Six: from Volume II F130a6 - F144a5

Title: *Spyi bka'i dbang rnams thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of how the empowerments of the general proclamations were obtained”.

This chapter is the shortest of the Eleven Chapters of this *thob yig*. Its introduction is followed by the *rnam thar* of Abhayākaragupta which takes up most of the chapter. Also included is a short *rnam thar* of Mahāsiddha Mitra followed by the works attributed to him and their transmission lineages.

F130b1: *rnam thar* of Abhayākaragupta and his main works such as the *Rdo rje 'phreng ba*, ‘Skt. *Vajrāvali*’ and their transmission lineages.

F144a5: *rnam thar* of Grub-pa chen-po Mi-tra (Mahāsiddha Mitra), his works and their transmission lineages.

§ Chapter Seven: F152a5 - 259a4

Titled: *Spyi bka'i rjes gnang gi skor thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of how the cycle of *rjes gnang* ‘permissions’ of the general proclamations was obtained.”

Dza-ya Paṇḍita begins this section with a discussion of *rjes gnang* and numerous *sādhana* collections as well as their respective transmission lineages. The bulk of this chapter is made up of *rnam thars*, particularly those of the Eighty-Four Mahāsiddhas which are generally quite short, with the transmission lineages of teachings and practices associated with them located at the end of each *rnam thar*.

F152a5: Discussion of *rjes gnang* and *sādhana* collections and the transmission lineages of the ones that were obtained.

F168b6: The *rjes gnangs* from the cycle of teachings associated with the *Snar thang brgya rtsa*.

F179a4: Rdo-rje-'chang (Vajradhara) and his qualities.

F183a5: *rnam thar* of the Grub-thob brgyad-cu-bzhi 'the eighty-four Mahāsiddhas'. On F251a6, he states that he received the details about the Mahāsiddhas from a *yig cha* 'monastic textbook' composed by Dge-slong Snam-grub shes-rab.

- 1) F183a6: LU-i-pa (Lüipa)
- 2) F184a5: DA-ri-ka-pa (Dārikapa)
- 3) F185a5: Dem-ki-pa (Ḍeṅgipa)
- 4) F186a1: LI-la-pa (Līlapa)
- 5) Fa86a5: 'Bi-ra-ba (Virūpa)
- 6) F188a3: Dombi-he-ru-ka (Ḍombipa)
- 7) F189a6: Zha-ba-ri-pa (Śavaripa)
- 8) F190a6: Sa-ra-ha (Saraha)
- 9) F191b1: Ko-ki-li (Kokilipa)
- 10) F192a2: Mi-na-pa (Mīnapa)
- 11) F192b6: Go-ra-Sha (Nāth Siddha Gorakṣa)
- 12) F194a3: Tso-ranggi (Cauraṅgipa)
- 13) F194b3: Ba'i-na-ba (Vīṇāpa)
- 14) F195a5: ShAnti-pa (Śāntipa)
- 15) F196b4: Tog-tse-pa (Celukapa)
- 16) F197a5: Tintra-pa (Tantipa)
- 17) F198b1: Tsam-ri-pa (Kamparipa)
- 18) F199a6: GaDga-pa (Khaḍgapa)
- 19) F200a1: Klu-sgrub snying-po (Nāgārjuna)
- 20) F202a4: Nag-po-pa (Kaṇhapa)
- 21) F203b6: AA-rya-de-wa (Āryadeva)
- 22) F205a4: Tha-ga-pa (Thaganapa)
- 23) F206a6: Tai-lo-pa (Tilopa)
- 24) F206b6: NA-ro-pa (Nāropa)

- 25) F207b5: Zha-li-pa (Śyalipa)
- 26) F208b1: Tsa-tra-pa (Catrapa)
- 27) F209a2: Bha-tra-pa (Bhadrapa)
- 28) F210a2: Dho-Sha(kha)nti (Dukhaṃdhi)
- 29) F210b2: A-tshu-ki (Ajogi)
- 30) F211a5: KA-la-pa (Kālapa)
- 31) F212a1: Do-mbhi-pa (Dhombīpa)
- 32) F212b2: Me-ko-pa (Mekopa)
- 33) F213a1: Kam-ri-pa (Kaṅkāripa)
- 34) F213b3: Dza-lantra (Jālandhara)
- 35) F214a1: RA-hu-la (Rāhula)
- 36) F214b3: Dharma-pa (Dharmapa)
- 37) F215a3: Dho-ka-ri (Dokaripa)
- 38) F215b2: Me-dha-na (Medhinī)
- 39) F215b6: Sam-ka-dza (?)
- 40) F216a6: Rdo-rje dril-bu (Ghaṇṭāpa)
- 41) F220b1: A-yo-ki (Jogipa)
- 42) F220a5: Tsa-ko-li (?)
- 43) F221a5: Ghu-tu-ra (Godhuripa)
- 44) F221b5: Lu-tsi-ka (Lucikapa)
- 45) F222a3: Kam-ka-ra (Cāmāripa)
- 46) F222b6: Wa-ba-ba [La-ba-pa] (Kambala)
- 47) F224b1: Bha-de-pa (Bhandepa)
- 48) F225a2: Tante-pa (Taṇtepa)
- 49) F225b3: Ku-ku-ri-pa (Kukkuripa)
- 50) F226a4: Ku-dznya-li (Kucipa)
- 51) F227a1: Dha-ma-pa (?)
- 52) F227a6: Madhi-la (Mahipa)
- 53) F228a2: A-tsanti (Acinta)
- 54) F228b4: Bha-la-ha (Babhaha)
- 55) F229a4: Na-li-pa (Nalinapa)
- 56) F229b3: ShAn-de-wa (Śāntideva)
- 57) F231b1: Indra-bhu-ti (Indrabhūti)
- 58) F232a6: LakShim-ka-ra (Lakṣmīṅkarā)

- 59) F233b3: Dza-lentra-pa (Jayānanda)
- 60) F234a4: Ni-gu-na (Nirguṇapa)
- 61) F234b5: Tsa-pa-ri (Pacaripa)
- 62) F235b2: Tsam-pa-ka (Campaka)
- 63) F236a4: Bhi-Sha-na (Bhikṣanapa)
- 64) F236b3: Dhi-li-pa (Dhilipa)
- 65) F237a5: Ku-ma-ri (Kumbharipa)
- 66) F237b4: Du-me-pa (?)
- 67) F238b3: Ma-ni-bha-drA (Mañibhadrā)
- 68) F239b3: Me-kha-la (Mekhalā)
- 69) F240b1: Ka-na-kha (Kanakhala)
- 70) F240b3: Ka-na-ka (Kaṅkaṇa)
- 71) F241b3: Chom-bu-pa (?)
- 72) F241b4: Dha-su(hu)-ri (Dhahulipa)
- 73) F242a3: U-dha-ri-pa (Udhilipa)
- 74) F242b3: Ka-pA-li (Kamparila)
- 75) F243a4: Ki-ra-pa (Kirapālapa)
- 76) F244a2: Mtsho-skyas-rdo-rje (Sakara)
- 77) F245b1: Sarba-bha-ba (Sarvabhakṣ)
- 78) F246a3: NA-ga-bo-dhi (Nāgabodhi)
- 79) F247a1: Pu-ra-li (Putalipa)
- 80) F247b4: Pa-na-ha (Upanaha)
- 81) F248a2: Ko-ka(ta)-li (Koṭālipa)
- 82) F249a1: A-na-ka (Anaṅgapa)
- 83) F249b3: Sa-mu-ndra (Samudra)
- 84) F250a4: Bya-ri-pa (Vyālipa)

F253b4: Secret *nam thar* of Bla-ma Dbu-ma-pa Dpa'-bo rdo-rje (14th century).

F257a4: Discussion of *khrid* 'instructions'.

§ Chapter Eight: Volume II F259aL4 - Volume III F43aL5.

Titled: *zhar byung bla ma'i gsung 'bum sogs mdo sngags tha snyad so sor dbye dka' ba'i skor la mkhan chen zhi ba 'tsho dang jo bo rje dpal ldan a ti sha yab sras so so'i rnam thar sngon du brjod pa'i sgo nas de dag gi gsung 'bum nas lung thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of how the reading transmission (*lung*) of various *sūtras* and *tantras* which are difficult to classify were obtained from the *gsung 'bums* ‘collected works’ and *rnam thars* of the root lamas which were composed in the past such as Zhi-ba-'tsho (Śāntarakṣita), Atiśa and their spiritual sons”.

Chapter Eight and Nine of Dza-ya Paṇḍita's *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* should be approached as two parts of a single chapter. Both chapters have their own respective beginning and finishing dedications as well as colophons detailing the circumstances of their compilation. However, the title of Chapter nine is presented immediately after the title of Chapter eight in the fashion of a single subchapter heading and followed by dedicational verses as will be clarified below. Taken together these two chapters total 549 folios, which is almost half the length of the entire 1234 folios of the *thob yig*. Taking into consideration that there is a total of eleven chapters, the folios dedicated to the contents of these two chapters by far outnumber the others.

Chapter eight concerns the genealogy of the Bka'-gdams-pa school as evidenced from its title. It is presented through a chronology of *rnam thars* of the propagators, lineage holders, important teachers and major religious figures associated with the Bka'-gdams-pas. The various transmission lineages of practices and teachings are found at the end of each *rnam thar*. For most part, the *rnam thars* are relatively short, ranging from 0.5 to 4 folios. The focus of the sections are the life stories, with the lineage information and transmission lineages of teachings and practices slotted in at the end. Not surprisingly, the longer *rnam thars* belong to figures that are particularly upheld by the Dge-lugs-pas during Dza-ya Paṇḍita's own time. Out of the total of 23 *rnam thars*, most belong to prominent Bka'-gdams-pa lineage holders and renowned masters. After this brief verse introduction, the general structure of the contents are as follows:

F259a5: *rnam thar* of Zhi-ba-'tsho (Śāntarakṣita, circa. 8th century) (5.5 folios).

F264b1: Transmission lineage of obtaining the summarised valid set of discourses from the recited *dhāraṇīs* (2 folios).

F265b1: The *rnam thar* of Atiśa (982-1054) and the transmission lineages of important Bka'-gdams-pa teachings by Atiśa (7.5 folios).

F271b4: Transmission lineages of the teachings relating back to Atiśa.

F272b4: *rnam thar* of Mkhas-grub khyung-po (978/990-1127) (2 folios).

F274b1: *rnam thar* of Nag-tsho Lo-tsa-ba (1011-1064) (3.5 folios).

F277b5: *rnam thar* of Lha-bla-ma Byang-chub-'od (11th c) (1 folio).

F278b1 Introduction to the *bshes gnyens* (skt. *kalyāṇamitras*); the spiritual sons of Atiśa.

F278b1: 'Brom-ston-pa Rgyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas (1004/5-1064) who is considered to be an emanation of the *rigs gsum mgon po*³¹³ – mostly Avalokiteśvara (5.5 folios).

F283a4: List of his disciples:

- Ldang-lcom ston-pa
- Kyur Gzhon-nu 'od-zer
- Lha-ba-mi Shes-rab g.yung-drung
- Ka-ba rgya-gar rug-pa'i Zhang-chen-po
- Bran-ka jo-brtsun, Kam-yung ba-pa
- Yung-pa Ka-kyog-pa
- Yol-rdzong rnal-'byor-pa
- Ston-pa Yon-tan-'bar
- Sgom-pa rin-chen bla-ma
- A-mes sman-rgan
- Rwa-sgom Ag-tshom
- Ston-pa Dbang-phyug-'bar
- Pha-rgan ldong-ston, Ngo-bo-legs
- Kham-pa lung-pa chen-po

F283b5: [tbrc.org: P3442] Po-to-ba (1027-1105) (1.5 folios).

F285a4: [tbrc.org: P3443] Gzhon-nu-'od [Pho-brang sdings-pa] (11th c) (1 folio).

³¹³ The protectors of the three families, Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāni.

F285b3: Brag-dkar-ba (1032-1111), Slob-dpon 'Phan-yul-pa and Lce-sgom Rdzong-pa Shes-rab rdo-rje³¹⁴ (1 folio).

F286a4: [tbrc.org: P1840] Dge-bshes Dol-pa Shes-rab rgya-mtsho (1059-1131) (3.5 folio).

F294a3: [tbrc.org: P2271] Bdud-rtsi-grags (1153-1232) (1 folio).

F295a1: [tbrc.org: P1060] Mchims-chen-mo Nam-mkha'-grags (1210-1285) (1 folio).

F295b6: [tbrc.org: P3143] Rwa-lo-tsa-ba Rdo-rje-grags (1016-1128/1198) (12 folios)

F307b6: [tbrc.org: P0RK1258?] Lo-chen Dpal-mchog rdo-rje (1 folio).

F308a6: [tbrc.org: P4404] Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) (7 folios).

F315a2: [tbrc.org: P3089] Bsod-nams seng-ge dpal-bzang-po (d.1253) (1 folio).

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F1a1: [tbrc.org: P155] Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290-1364) (1 folio).

F4a6: [tbrc.org: P1830] Rgyal-sras Thogs-med dpal-bzang-po (1295-1369) (27 folios).

F26b1: [tbrc: P0RK972] Sems-dpa' chen-po Dpal-ldan ye-shes (circa. 14th century) (0.5 folio).

F26b5: [tbrc.org: P1317] Lho-brag grub-chen Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan (1326-1401) (13 folios).

F39b2: [tbrc.org: P60] Bla-ma rje-btsun Red-mda'-ba (1349-1412) (4 folios).

Most of these figures are easily recognised as some of the most important lineage holders of the Bka'-gdams-pa tradition. Sa-skya Paṇḍita finds a place amongst them with a longer *nam thar* narrative, equal in length to that of Atiśa and close to the *nam thar* of Rgyal-sras Thogs-med. The reason for this may be the significance that these figures carry

³¹⁴ See Sorensen (1999).

for the Bka'-gdams-pa lineage and Sa-skya Paṇḍita's prominence amongst the later Tibetans and Mongolian Buddhists.

Chapter Eight ends with the *nam thar* of Rgyal-sras Thogs-med which is by far the most elaborate. The ending is stylistically no different from the endings of the shorter segments:

“As for how the transmission lineage of *mkha' mnyam ma* was obtained, I do not know the teachers between Red-dma'-pa and the omniscient Panchen Rinpoche. The Panchen Rinpoche, then the secretary lama Blo-bzang bstan-pa dar-rgyas who bestowed it to me Blo-bzang 'phrin-las. Alternative transmission being the omniscient lord [the Fifth Dalai Lama], then the *ācārya* Rin-po-che Byams-pa rin-chen who bestowed it to me.”³¹⁵

The passage then immediately jumps into the usual eight-line dedication found at the end of each chapter and ends with:

“Chapter eight of the *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long* of the supreme dharma, explaining the *nam thars* of the scholars and siddhas of India and Tibet and the many Bka'-gdams-pas and how I obtained the *lung* (reading transmission) from their collected writings.”³¹⁶

§ Chapter Nine: Volume III F43a5 - F174b5.

Title: *Rgyal ba tsong kha pa yab sras kyi nam thar dang gsung 'bum so so nas lung thob pa'i tshul brgyud ba dang bcas pa bshad pa'o*, “The explanation of the *nam thars* of the victorious Tsong-kha-pa and his spiritual sons and the way in which the *lungs* from their respective *gsung 'bums*, together with the transmission lineages were obtained”.

As mentioned before, Chapter Nine is the continuation of Chapter Eight, beginning with Tsong-kha-pa as the founder of the “new Bka'-gdams-pas”. A more comprehensive analysis and contextualisation of both these chapters will follow later in Chapters Four, Five and Six of this thesis.

³¹⁵ (V3F42b65) *mkha' mnyam ma'i lung thob pa'i brgyud pa ni / rje btsun red mda' pa nas pan chen thams cad mkhyen pa'i bar du brgyud pa'i bla ma rnams ma rnyed / pan chen rin po che nas / zhabs drung blo bzang bstan pa dar rgyas / des bdag blo bzang 'phrin las la gang ba'o / yang rgyal ba thams cad mkhyen pa / slob dpon rin po che byams pa rin chen / des bdag la'o /*

³¹⁶ (V3F43aL1) *dam pa'i chos kyi thob yig gsal ba'i me long las rgya bod kyi mkhas grub sngon byon bka' gdams pa mang po'i nam thar dang de dag gi gsung 'bum las lung ji snyed thob pa'i tshul bshad pa'i sarga ste brgyad pa'o //*

Chapter Nine begins with the usual four-lined verse dedication followed by the chapter title:

“I shall speak about the *avadānas* of the wise one and his spiritual sons,
The Lord Tsong-kha-pa who taught even the wise,
who is the supremely shining treasure of wisdom, who properly cut his
head hair,
the saffron robed one who has supreme wisdom and compassion.

Secondly, the *rnam thars* of the Victorious Tsong-kha-pa and his spiritual sons and the way in which the reading transmissions from their respective *gsung 'bums* were obtained, together with the transmission lineages, will be explained...”³¹⁷

The text here jumps straight into the life story of Tsong-kha-pa after which the chapter progresses in the same style as chapter eight: *rnam thar* after *rnam thar* with the transmission lineages woven into the end.

There is a total of 53 *rnam thars* in Chapter Nine. As mentioned before, Chapters Eight and Nine form a single unit, which means that together these two chapters contain seventy-six *rnam thars*. The contents of Chapter Nine are as follows:

F43b3: Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa (1347-1419) (7.5 folios)

F70b4: Bla-ma Rtogs-ldan 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho-ba (1356-1428) (4 folios).

F74a6: Gyal-tshab rin-po-che (1364-1432) (3 folios).

F77a3: Chos-rje 'Dul-ba 'dzin-pa (1374-1434) (3.5 folios).

F80b1: Dge-legs dpal-bzang-po (1385-1438) (11 folios).

F91b1: Chos-rje Zha-lu-pa Legs-pa rgyal-mtshan (1375-1450) (2 folios).

F92a3: Chos-rje Chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1402-1473) (1.5 folios).

F93a2: Lha-btsun rin-chen Blo-gros rgya-mtsho (circa. 14th century) (0.5 folio).

³¹⁷ (V3F43aL5) *mkhyen gter gsal mchog dbur la legs sbangs te / mkhyen brtse nus ldan ngur smrig gar brtsen pa / mkhyen yangs bstan pa'i bdag po tsong kha ba / mkhyen ldan yab sras rtogs brjod gleng bar bya / gnyis pa rgyal ba tsong kha pa yab sras kyi rnam thar dang gsung 'bum so so nas lung thob pa'i tshul brgyud pa dang bcas pa bshad pa la...*

F93b2: Byang-sems Ra-sgreng-pa ShAkya-bsod-nams (circa.1357).

F94b2: Mkhas-pa'i dbang-po Chos-dbang grags-pa (1401-1469/71) (1 folio).

F95a4: Rje-btsun bla-ma Chos-sgo-ba 'Jam-dbyangs kha-che (circa. 14th century) (0.5 folio).

F95b4: Chos-rje Smon-lam mtha'-yas-pa.

F96a3: Chos-rje Hor-ston-pa (1373-) (0.5 folio).

F96b3: Sems-dpa' chen-po Gzhon-nu rgyal-mchog-pa (14th c) (0.5 folio).

F97a3: Las-chen Kun-rgyal-ba (1432-1506) (0.5 folio).

F97b4: Spyian-snga Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1402-1472) (4 folios).

F101b5: 'Jam-dbyangs chos-rje (1379-1449) (4.5 folios).

F106a5: Rwa-sgreng rgyal-ba'i dben-gnas [Dge-'dun-grub] (1391-1474) (6 folios).

F112b1: 'Dul-'dzin Grags-pa dpal-ldan blo-gros sbas-pa (c.1400) (6.5 folios).

F116b2: Yongs-'dzin dam-pa 'Jam-dbyangs ye-shes (1433-?) (1 folio).

F117b3: Thams-cad mkhyen-pa gnyis pa Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho (1476-1542) (20 folios).

F137ba4: PaN-chen Bsod-nams grags-pa (1478-1554) (1 folio).

F138b1: Thams-cad mkhyen-pa gsum-pa Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588) (10 folios).

F148b6: Bsod-nams ye-shes dbang-po (1556-1592) (1.5 folios).

F150a1: Grub-pa'i dbang-phyug chen-po Blo-bzang don-grub dpal-bzang po (1504/5-1556/6) (21.5 folios).

F171b1: Sangs-rgyas ye-shes (1525-1590/91) (15 folios).

F186b2: Mkhas-pa'i dbang-po Sgom-sde Nam-mkha' rgyal-mtshan (1532-1592) (3 folios).

F188b3: Rgyud-chen Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho (16th c) (2 folios).

F190b1: Thams-cad mkhyen-pa chen-po Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1570-1662) (45 folios).

F235b4: The condensed '*khrun*gs *rabs* (pre-birth stories) of 'Khon-ston dpal-'byor lhun-grub (1561-1637) (1 folio) followed by his *rnam thar*. (12 folios).

F247b5: Chos-rje Dkon-mchog lhun-grub dpal-bzang-po (0.5 folios).

F248a5: The '*khrun*gs *rabs* of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682) (7 folios).

F254a5: The *rnam thar* of the Fifth Dalai Lama (31 folios).

F285a5: The *rnam thar* of the Sixth Dalai Lama Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho (1683-1706/46) (8 folios).

F293b6: F293b6: The works from the collected works of the Fifth Dalai Lama and other works written by the Fifth or offered to the Fifth.³¹⁸

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F7a4: The transmission lineages of works and teachings associated with the Dalai Lama which were received by Dza-ya Paṇḍita.

F10a3: The '*khrun*gs *rabs* of the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes dpal-bzang po (4 folios).

F14b5: *rnam thar* of the Second Panchen Lama Blo-bzang ye-shes (1663-1737) (7 folios).

F21a5 – F23a3: '*khrun*gs *rabs* of Sprul-sku Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan.

F23a3: The *rnam thar* of Sprul-sku Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1619-1656) (9 folios).

F30a6: The '*khrun*gs *rabs* of Rje-btsun bla-ma Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (30 folios).³¹⁹

- ❖ F30b3: Dang po 'Bar-ba'i gtso-bo
- ❖ F31a3: Gnyis pa Grub-pa'i dbang-phyug Nag-po sbyod-pa
- ❖ F32a3: Gsum-pa grub-thob Ratna Bahula
- ❖ F33b5: Bzhi-ba Rong-jom chos-ldan
- ❖ F36a1: Lnga-pa Dar-pa dbang-phyug

³¹⁸ It is quite fascinating that there already existed some form of the collected writings of the Fifth Dalai Lama by 1702 when Dza-ya Paṇḍita completed his *Thob yig gsal ba'i me long*.

³¹⁹ The figures in the '*khrun*gs *rabs* of the First Jebtsundamba were listed due to the sheer length of each of the life stories which are often longer than some of the stand alone *rnam thars*.

- ❖ F40b5: Drug pa Avadhutipa
- ❖ F42a4: Bdun pa 'Brug-sgra rgyal-mtshan
- ❖ F44b1: Brgyad-pa Sangs-rgyas-chen nam-rgyal-ba lha-nang-pa
- ❖ F47b4: Dgu-pa Sanghabhadra
- ❖ F49b2: Bcu-pa 'Jam-dbyangs cho-rje
- ❖ F50a5: Bcu-gcig-pa Chos-kyi nyin-byed
- ❖ F51b2: Bcu-nyis-pa Rje Kun-dga' grol-mchog
- ❖ F53b6: Bcu-gsum-pa Dga'-byed sa-skyong
- ❖ F55a4 – F57a2: Bcu-bzhi-pa Rje-btsun Kun-dga' snying-po (Tāranātha)
- ❖ F57a2 – F60a1: summary of the 14 previous births

F60a1: *rnam thar* of Jebtsundamba Blo-bzang bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan (1635-1723) (48 folios).

F78b3: Khri-thog zhe-bzhi-pa Ngag-dbang blo-gros rgya-mtsho dpal-bzang-po (1635-1688) (1 folio).

F79b2: Sprul-sku Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho (1605-?) (1 folio).

F80b3: Rje-drung Ngag-dbang chos-kyi dbang-phyug (1602-1652) (1 folio).

F81a4: Lho-brag mkhan-chen (3 folios).

F84a2: Dge-'dun don-grub dpal-bzang-po (circa. 17th century).

F87a6: Rdo-rje-'chang Blo-bzang bstan-pa dar-rgyas dpal-bzang-po (17th c) (6 folios).

F93a2: 'Jam-dbyangs grags-pa dpal-bzang-po (circa. 17th century) (9 folios).

F102b1: Skyid-shod sprul-sku Ngag-dbang bstan-'dzin 'phrin-las chos-dbang grags-pa (1639-1682) (9 folios).

F111b6: Ācārya rin-po-che Bstan-pa dar-rgyas dpal-bzang-po (circa. 17th century) (11.5 folios).

F123a1: Grub-dbang Blo-bzang rgyal-mtshan (1670-1741) (0.5 folio).

F123b4: Incarnation of Gling-stod zhabs-drung: Ngag-dbang gzhon-nu blo-bzang bstan-pa'i nyi-ma dpal-bzang-po (1689-1762/72) (3 folios).

F126b2: Vajradhara [2nd Lcang-skyā] Ngag-dbang blo-bzang chos-ldan dpal-bzang-po (1642-1714) (1 folio).

F127b6: Bsod-nams grags-pa dpal-bzang-po (17th c) (20 folios).

F147a6: Reincarnation of Legs-tshogs lhun-grub: Blo-bzang bstan-'dzin rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po (1639-1704) (17 folios).

F164a2: Mnga'-ris zhabs-drung rin-po-che ['Jam-dbyangs bla-ma] Ngag-dbang 'jam-dbyangs bsod-nams nyi-ma bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po theg-mchog mi-'gyur dbang-gi-sde³²⁰ (1 folio).

F165b2: Sa-skyong chen-po Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho dpal-bzang-po (1653-1705) (10 folios).

§ Chapter Ten: Volume IV F174b5 - F242b2

Title: *Rgyu phar phyin pa'i chos gtso bor ston pa'i mdo'i skor gyi lung thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of how the scriptures of the cycle of *sūtras* which foremost demonstrate the teachings of the causal *pāramitā* were obtained”.

This chapter begins with the narrative of the Buddha’s initial turning of the wheel of dharma which includes a *nam thar* of the Buddha, after which follows the narrative of how the first texts were composed by the early disciples. Lastly this chapter discusses the later lineage holders endeavouring to act in accordance with and for the benefit of the teachings.

F175a3: *nam thar* of the Buddha divided into 12 deeds: 1) 177b4, 2) 178b5, 3) 179a2, 4) 179b3, 5) 180a1 6) 181b1, 7) 183a3, 8) 183b2, 9) 184a2, 10) 185a1, 11) 185b1 12) 186b2.

F187a4: How the great Śrāvakas compiled the words of the Buddha into the first collection of scriptures of the (*Hīnayāna*). In this section Dza-ya Paṇḍita introduces the *Theg dman pa'i lugs* (*Hīnayāna*) and the *Theg chen po'i lugs* (*Mahāyāna*). He subdivides the *Hīnayāna* into three phases found on: 1) F187a6, 2) 189a1 and 3) 189a5.

³²⁰ There seems to have been another Mnga'-ris sprul-sku whose name was 'Jam-dbyangs bsod-nams nyi-ma bstan-pa'i rgyal-mtshan who was active in Mongolia. There is no further information on this second individual but given Dza-ya Paṇḍita's ethnic origins it is probably safe to assume the figure concerned here is the second Mnga'-ris sprul sku.

F190a4: *Theg pa chen po (Mahāyāna)* starts here with a general introduction and a chronological account from the beginning of the teachings in India down to how the teachings arrived in Tibet on F194b3.

F194b3: How the teachings spread in Tibet. F194b4L: *Snga dar* and F19b5: *Phyi dar*.

F197a3: The *'Dul ba (Vinaya)*.

F201a2: The *Phar pa chen nyid pa'i chos 'khor (Prajñāpāramitā)*.

F209a2: The *Sangs rgyas phal po che (Avataṃsaka)* and the *Dkon mchog brtsegs pa (Ratnakūṭa)*.

F210b4: The *Avataṃsaka* divided into: F210b4: *ka*, 211a5: *kha*, F211b3: *ga*, F211b5: *nga*, F212a1: *ca*, F212a1: *cha*.

F213a6: The *Ratnakūṭa* divided into: F214b1: *ka*, F214b4: *kha*, F214b6: *ga*, F215a2: *nga*, F215a4: *ca*, F215b5: *cha*.

F217b3: The many *sūtras* found amongst the divisions of the teachings in the three “turnings of the wheel” for which Dza-ya Paṇḍita provides the translators of the *sūtras* and their transmission lineages.

§ Chapter Eleven: Volume IV F242b2 - F289b6

Title: *'Bras bu rdo rje theg pa gtso bor ston pa'i rgyud kyi skor gyi lung thob pa'i tshul bshad pa*, “The exposition of how the scriptures of the cycles of *tantras* which foremost concern the teachings of the resultant Vajra vehicle (*Vajrayāna*) were obtained.”

Dza-ya Paṇḍita explains that he will not discuss the Rnying-ma *tantras* included in volumes *ka*, *kha* and *ga* of the *Bka' 'gyur* as he did not receive the transmissions. He then goes on to discuss the collections according to the four classes of *tantras* following Bu-ston's treatment in his *Chos 'byung*. Each section has detailed lists of lineage teachers and transmission lineages for the texts and practices that are discussed.

F242b5: *Rnal 'byor bla med kyi rgyud (Yoganiruttaratantra)*.

F259a3: *Rnal 'byor rgyud (Yogatantra)*.

F262b2: *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i rgyud* (*Caryātantra*).

F264b1: *Bya ba'i rgyud* (*Kriyātantra*).

§ Colophon: Volume IV F289b6 to the last folio of the work F303a5.

On the colophon see the contents of Chapter Three of this thesis.