

Fifteenth Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming and Political Unrest

LIRI Seminar Proceedings Series

Edited by

LUMBINI INTERNATIONAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Volume 8



Fifteenth Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming and Political Unrest

Proceedings of a Conference
Held in Lumbini, Nepal, March 2015

Edited by
Volker Caumanns and Marta Sernesi

Lumbini International Research Institute
Lumbini 2017

Lumbini International Research Institute
P.O. Box 39
Bhairahawa, Dist. Rupandehi
NEPAL
E-mail: liri.lumbini2016@gmail.com

© Lumbini International Research Institute

Cover illustration: Gyantse fortress. Photograph by Jörg Heimbels.

All rights reserved.

Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, no part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photocopy, microfilm, scanner or any other means without prior written permission. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

ISBN 978-9937-0-3042-7

First published in 2017

Printed in Nepal by Dongol Printers, Kathmandu



Participants in the Conference, 9—14 March, 2015, Lumbini

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
Introduction	xi

Political and Institutional History

FRANZ-KARL EHRHARD	
Chos dpal bzang po (1371–1439): The “Great Teacher” (<i>bla chen</i>) of rDzong dkar and His Biography	1
KARL-HEINZ EVERDING	
Gyantse: Rise, Prime and Decline of a Tibetan Principality in the 14 th –16 th Centuries	33
MATHIAS FERMER	
Putting Yar rgyab on the Map	63
FEDERICA VENTURI	
Before and After: A Perspective on the Fifteenth Century in Tibet	97

Cultural History

VOLKER CAUMANN	
The Collected Works of gSer mdog Paṇ chen Shākya mchog ldan: The Formation and Early Transmission of a 15 th -Century Literary Corpus	115
EDWARD HENNING	
Vanaratna and the Origins of <i>grub rtsis</i>	161
DAVID JACKSON	
The sMin grol gling Lamdre Sculptures Reconsidered	173
MARTA SERNESI	
Towards a History of Early Tibetan Printing: New Evidence and Uncharted Territories	195

Polemics

Yael Bendor

- Did mKhas grub rje Challenge the Authenticity of the Sa skya *Lam*
'bras Tradition? 227

Jörg Heimbels

- The Dispute Between mKhas grub rJe and Ngor chen: Its Representation
and Role in Tibetan Life-Writing 249

Klaus-Dieter Mathes

- Did 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481) Espouse a *gZhan*
stong View? 291

PREFACE

The present volume constitutes the proceedings of the conference *Towards a History of 15th Century Tibet: Cultural Blossoming, Religious Fervour and Political Unrest*, held at the Lumbini International Research Institute from March 9–14, 2015, and organised in collaboration with Christoph Cüppers. We wish to thank him, as well as everyone working at the LIRI center, for the smooth organisation and wonderful hospitality. We also wish to thank the Reiyūkai for the generous financial support. Finally, we wish to thank Basanta Bidari, for acting as our knowledgeable and amiable guide during our day trips.

The seminars held at the LIRI were inaugurated in March 2000, and entail a week of talks, excursions, and plenty of occasions for exchange and discussion. We wish to thank all the participants to the conference for the very constructive and informed conversations, and all the knowledge shared. Moreover, shortly before the conference, Kathmandu International Airport was closed due to a minor plane accident, causing disruption to the travel of many of the attendants. We wish to thank everyone for travelling nonetheless, and for participating in our small gathering. Besides the speakers represented in the present volume, we were joined in Lumbini by Dan Martin, Tibor Porcio, and Eva Kamilla Mojzes.

Sadly, two of our colleagues and friends that spent the week in Lumbini with us are no longer in this world. They are Edward Henning and Elliot Sperling, whom we wish hereby to remember, and to whom we dedicate the present volume.

Edward was a generous, warm-hearted and extroverted character, and he will be greatly missed. He sent us his paper before the illness broke out, and hence it is included, after some minor editing, in the present volume. We wish to thank his wife Ayse for the permission to publish. We wish to take this opportunity to remember the pleasure of sharing a good meal conversing with Edward, listening to the stories and experiences from his remarkable life. Knowing his hospitality and friendliness, we are sure that many share such fond memories of him.

Elliot's recent and unforeseen passing has left a great void. In remembering the brilliant, kind, and witty man, we cannot but feel that the discipline has lost one of its most gifted scholars. His contribution to the LIRI seminar concerned the economic and demographic growth of Eastern Tibet during the 15th century. Last December he felt that the paper was not yet finalised for publication, and hence, unfortunately, we are not able to include it in the present volume. A great number of homages and memories of Elliot have been shared after his demise, and we partake in the grief at his loss, as well as expressing our gratitude to have been able to share the week in Lumbini with him.

Marta and Volker

INTRODUCTION

We shall begin this journey by stating that, of course, there never was any such thing as a Tibetan 15th century. On the plateau, time was not counted *anno domini*, nor measured in centuries or millennia. The calendar was articulated in sexagenary cycles (*rab 'byung*) starting in 1027, so that the period under consideration fell under the 7th and 8th cycles (1387–1506). However, to talk about the 15th century in relation to Tibet is more than a handy shortcut, a conventional means of immediately pointing to the timeframe we wish to consider. In fact, it is a means of placing the discourse about Tibet within the wider frame of global history. Positioned in the heart of the Asian continent, at the crossroad between South Asia, East Asia, and Central Asia, was not Tibet part of the 15th century world? Can we study the history of Tibet in isolation from the wider developments in Asian history, and world history at large?

Periodization is, of course, one of the chief means by which historians construct narratives, interpret data to construct coherent accounts, and individuate discontinuities. Bryan Cuevas (2006: 44) has noted how “there has not been much sustained reflection on the critical question of periodization in the historical study of Tibet,” and indeed, scholars have not yet agreed on an overarching scheme for treating Tibetan history. Any such division is not only artificial and provisional, but also has a wide range of political and ideological implications that the choice of terms such as “Renaissance,” “Middle-Age,” or “Modern Era,” for example, would immediately convey.

Hence, the historian faces a difficult alternative: does (s)he wish to treat Tibet within the global context, allowing a fuller understanding of its role in it, as well as investigating the circumstances that influenced the turn of events on the plateau? In this case, one would need to look beyond the Tibetan historical narrative, and employ “borrowed” terms and notions in order for Tibet to be understood in a wider historical discourse. Alternatively, the historian of Tibet might prefer to employ emic categories and understandings of the periodization of Tibetan history. But in this case the risk is that the focus will become too narrow, and that one will end up thinking of Tibet’s history in isolation.

The “long century” that we are looking at in this volume begins in the middle of the 14th century. Usually, in order to construct periodization schemes, “threshold” dates are established (e.g. 1492, 1789) that symbolically mark major discontinuities, although even events such as revolutions are now understood as processes lasting in time. We suggest that one such significant date, for Central and East Asia, including Tibet, can be identified to be 1368, since that is the conventional date that marks the end of the Yuan dynasty. In fact, the Yuan dynasty kept China and Tibet closely connected to the Mongol Khanates: it promoted cultural exchanges, and the

transmission of knowledge and technologies throughout Eurasia (see e.g. Allsen 2009; Biran 2015). The court had a distinct plural and cosmopolitan character, and Tibet, which was integrated into the Mongol Empire, participated in these exchanges. The advent of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) marked a major shift in the power relations in East Asia and Central Asia, and Tibet witnessed dramatic political and cultural changes as well. This is usually indicated, in studies on domestic history, as being the transition from the Yuan–Sa skya Hegemony to that of the Phag mo gru, and it is dated variably to 1349, 1350, 1354, 1358, or 1361.

The following period saw political unrest and ongoing civil wars. As the overall administrative centralized system collapsed, the Tibetan territory formerly controlled by the Yuan dynasty was fragmented into a number of smaller polities. Individuals and families were able to rise to a new prominence, or considerably strengthen their position, to become key political players during the 15th century. Even though the Phag mo gru succeeded, at least for a while, in reorganising many of the local powers around their rule, they were not capable of controlling the fringes of the plateau, so that Western and Eastern Tibet were effectively autonomous. In central Tibet (dBus gTsang) there were frequent conflicts, shifting alliances, and maneuvers to gain political influence, while the fortunes of the ruling Phag mo gru nobles were on the decline (1432) and the Rin spungs pas made a bid for power. A profound transformation of the religious and political configuration of Tibet, which came to full maturation during the following century, was initiated at this time. In fact, many of the contributions in this volume look at the 16th century as well, and it may be argued that the next main moment of discontinuity should be identified as being in 1642, with the coming to power of the 5th Dalai Lama.

The policy of the early Ming in relation to Tibet is a politically charged topic, and as such it has been variously interpreted and debated (see e.g. Sperling 2004: 11–12, 26–27). Elliot Sperling, in his dissertation (1983), analyses the scholarly proposition, which was widely repeated at the time, that the early Ming emperors adopted a “divide and rule” policy in Tibet, and concludes that this thesis is not supported by documentary evidence. Shen (2007) also considers this definition inapt, and argues that the policy was characterized by a much more passive attitude of “accommodating barbarians from afar.” Both scholars underline the importance of commerce in the diplomatic relationships between Ming China and Tibet: it was sought to keep the routes open, and the old Yuan relay stations, between the capital and the plateau, and the “tribute missions” to the court were sanctioned occasions for commerce, which involved the exchange of paper money, textiles, clothing, and tea for Inner Asian goods (Rossabi 1975: 60–83). In particular, the horse-tea trade became of high strategic importance for the Chinese. In fact, the Ming military depended on Tibet for the supply of the highly coveted inner Asia horses, ideally suited for warfare against the Mongols. The development of this trade influenced the overall Ming policy towards Tibet, and it became so important that it influenced population movements (Sperling 1988).

Elliot Sperling, in the talk that he delivered at the conference in Lumbini, returned on this important issue, underlining the importance of furthering the study of Tibetan economic history. He suggested that the tea–horse trade (which, despite its name, to a lesser extent also involved other items, such as silk) induced a stark economic and demographic growth in Eastern Tibet (Khams), mirrored by the foundation of new monastic establishments. According to his reconstruction, which is unfortunately missing from these proceedings, during the 15th century Sichuan was the richest region of China, commerce was flourishing, and smuggling over the border was rampant. More research in this area is very much needed, as it would help clarify the role of Tibet in global and long-term economic trends, such as the circulation of silver (see e.g. Flynn 2015; von Glahn 2013; Kuroda 2009). Indeed, it may be posited that, with the growth of the horse trade, silver flowed into Tibet, and that during the 15th century the plateau witnessed an exceptional period of prosperity. For example, Rossabi (1975: 77) maintains that, “[i]n the latter half of the fifteenth century, as the Chinese need for Inner Asian horses became critical, the court wooed the Mongols and Central Asians with presents of silver, expanding vast amounts in this effort.” As the foreign trade missions demanded silver in lieu of paper money, emperors were forced to limit this practice “in order to prevent a disastrous outflow of the metal” (*ibid.*). Such a scenario would explain the incredible cultural efflorescence that characterizes the period in Tibet, which could have been made possible only by the availability of a significant economic surplus that, at the moment, is difficult to account for.

Indeed, between the second half of the 14th century and the early 16th century, we witness a period of cultural splendour, which found expression in a wide range of literature, in scholastic philosophy, in the figurative arts, and in technical innovation. Several of the greatest Tibetan scholars and spiritual adepts lived in this period, some acting as agents of religious reform, often styled as a return to the tradition’s origins. Religious monuments that still mark the Tibetan landscape were erected, and we observe the birth of truly Tibetan artistic styles. Monumental many-doors *stūpas*, in rGyal rtse, Jo nang, and gCung Ri bo che, testify to the grandeur of the achievements in architecture, sculpture, painting, and carpentry, while the iron bridges of Thang stong rgyal po are probably the best-known engineering accomplishments of the time. Xylographic book printing spread in central Tibet in the 15th c., and it was rapidly adopted throughout the plateau. Overall, notwithstanding the political turmoil, this was an extremely fertile period in Tibetan cultural history.

We also witness several political developments that come to maturation during this period, and that eventually come to shape Tibetan society. The Mongol policy of tax exemption of the monastic establishments favoured the concentration of wealth in those institutions, and this paved the way to their later political prominence. However, during the Yuan–Sa skya period the relationship between the religious institutions and the local noble families was very close. The myriarchies (*khri skor*) had a monastery at their heart, which was the centre of power and of the administration, but

often the ecclesiastic centres were governed by a clan through the uncle-nephew (*khu dbon*) system. In any case, the temporal affairs were not directly in the hands of the clergy, but in the hands of a lay administrator stemming from the local noble families (e.g. the Sa skya *dpon chen*, the 'Bri gung *sgom pa* etc.), charged with managing the administrative and financial matters. However, under the Phag mo gru, Buddhist institutions and hierarchs gradually separated from clan politics, to become autonomous political players, in competition, that managed the relationship with the noble houses. The religious market became more fluid, the allegiances between religious and political actors started shifting, and new schools emerged, most prominently the dGa' ldan pa / dGe lugs pa. The religious landscape changed dramatically, with many new monasteries flourishing, while old ones declined or were attracted within the orbit of the new schools and lineages.

Monastic centres prospered, and some became long-lasting players in the religio-political scenery. It may be argued that the increase in recognition of new incarnations series (*sprul sku* lines) during this period is also linked to this shift in the relationship between religious institutions and clan politics. Indeed, it has been observed how from the 1460s to the 1630s there were at least 85 new incarnation lineages recognized, 43 of which were in Central Tibet, and more than a third (32) were within the dGa' ldan pa/ dGe lugs pa (Tuttle 2017: 40–42). The growing autonomy of the monastic institutions from the political trajectory of specific families called for new means of mediating between the religious and secular powers that would allow constant re-negotiations, greater economic independence, and room for political maneuvers to forge alliances at the expenses of the rival schools. Arguably, when compared to the *khu dbon* system, the *sprul sku* form of succession to the religious office guaranteed much more flexibility in all these domains (see also Schwieger 2015, Sørensen 2005).

While this volume is not a systematic investigation of all these developments, the contributions gathered here help to construct a composite and complex picture of this fascinating period. Indeed, the aim of our conference, and of this volume, is to bring together different perspectives and approaches in the study of Tibetan history. Historians of Tibetan politics, economy, society, religion, literature, material culture, art, or philosophy, seldom have the opportunity to share their insights and collaborate to reconstruct a fuller picture of Tibet's past. Collaborative volumes and conference proceedings usually focus on themes, rather than time periods, with very few exceptions (e.g. Cuevas ed. 2006; Pommaret ed. 1997). However, to thoroughly understand the *Zeitgeist* of the 15th century in Tibet we must draw from a wide field of knowledge. Only by bringing together our studies of the main political and cultural shifts of this era can we gain a more comprehensive historical understanding of the period. We hope that this effort will show the benefit to be gained from such a multi-disciplinary approach, and it will encourage further collaborative enquiries into distinct phases of Tibet's history. In the present volume, we have grouped the contributions into three main sections, but it will become evident how they all respond to each other and enrich one another.

The **first main section** focuses on issues pertaining to the political and institutional history of 15th-century Tibet, and comprises four articles. While the first three articles (contributed by Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Karl-Heinz Everding, and Mathias Fermer) are case studies that, from different angles, deal with the political and religious activities of local Tibetan ruling houses, the fourth article (contributed by Federica Venturi) provides a general assessment of historical developments and structures that may be singled out as representative features of the “long 15th century” in Tibet.

Ehrhard’s article, which opens this section, explores the religious career of the “great teacher” (*bla chen*) of rDzong dkar, Chos dpal bzang po (1371–1439), who acted as “court chaplain” (*sku rim pa*) of the ruling family of Mang yul Gung thang in the first half of the 15th century. While following the course of Chos dpal bzang po’s life as it is presented in a biography (*rnam thar*) by the latter’s disciple Mañjuśrījñāna (alias Chos ’khor Lo tsā ba), Ehrhard touches upon a number of important aspects of the political and cultural life of Mang yul Gung thang. The article thus provides insights into the interactions between the clerical and political elites of western central Tibet, the marriage-based politics of the Mang yul Gung thang nobles (i.e., a branch of the Yar lung dynasty), and the political and military conflicts in which the ruling house was involved. At the same time, Ehrhard sheds light on the activities and duties of a 15th-century Buddhist chaplain, who was expected to perform court rituals, to give religious instructions to members of the ruling family, to oversee the production of holy objects (such as statues, thangkas, books, etc.), and to engage in war magic at the behest of his donors.

Everding’s article investigates the rise, peak, and decline of rGyal rtse, a principality of western central Tibet that was ruled by a branch of the Shar ka ba clan. The article, which makes extensive use of the introductory chapter of the biography of the rGyal rtse ruler Rab brtan Kun bzang ’phags (1389–1442; r. 1413–1442), takes a large time span into account (i.e., from the 11th to the 16th centuries), and thus individual narrative episodes recede into the background in favour of longer-term lines of development. This enables Everding to highlight the main historical events and the prevailing political structures, and to analyse the crucial conditions that had a bearing on the history of the principality of rGyal rtse. In this regard, Everding touches on the unstable political situation in central Tibet after the demise of the Sa skya–Yuan alliance, rGyal rtse’s ties to other Tibetan regional powers (in particular to Sa skya and Zha lu), as well as the economic advantages and geopolitical disadvantages of the rGyal rtse region.

Still another Tibetan noble house is dealt with in Fermer’s article. Here, the focus is on the ruling family of Yar rgyab and the role that it played as patron of Buddhist masters and religious communities in dBus. Like Ehrhard and Everding, Fermer makes extensive use of the biographical literature, but also draws on fieldwork in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR). In doing so, Fermer employs a different approach from the two former contributions: he organizes his findings according to

the spatial layout of the Yar rgyab family's territory which, in the 15th century, encompassed the two principalities of Yar rgyab and Gong dkar. Fermer discusses a large number of toponyms that are mentioned in the sources and, due to his fieldwork, he is able "to put Yar rgyab on the map." In connecting these toponyms to the sites of the projects sponsored by the ruling house, Fermer illustrates how the Yar rgyab family—whose members considered themselves to be descendants of the imperial minister Thon mi Sam bho ṭa (6th/7th cent.)—deeply shaped the religious landscape of their domain.

Venturi's article opens up the perspective to an overall assessment of the Tibetan political world in the 15th century, a period that she proposes to date from 1361 (i.e., the end of the Sa skya–Yuan alliance) to 1517 (i.e., the year in which the Rin spungs nobles lost control of dBus). The article touches upon issues of historical continuity and change as well as the problem of periodization, and thus mirrors some of the questions that have been discussed at the outset of this introduction. Venturi pursues her goal chiefly by employing two complementary approaches: a prospective approach "to pinpoint how events of the 14th century paved the way for the 15th century," and a retrospective approach pursuing "how the historical roots of the 16th century can be traced to events of the 15th century." In this respect, Venturi discusses a number of dynamics that were introduced by the Mongols (i.e., tax exemption of the clergy, foreign patronage, and the conferral of honorific titles), as well as the ongoing favouritism at the administrative level, and the phenomenon of "imperial revivalism." In doing so, she emphasizes in particular the historical continuities, which link the long 15th century with its preceding and succeeding periods.

The **second main section** comprises four articles that contribute to our knowledge of the cultural history of 15th-century Tibet. The articles in this section focus on diverse topics such as book culture (Volker Caumanns, Marta Sernesi), calendar calculation (Edward Henning), and art (David Jackson), and provide a glimpse into some of the cultural developments and shifts that were taking place in this period.

The section opens with Caumanns' article on the formation and early transmission history of the writings of the Sa skya master gSer mdog Paṅ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), who was one of the towering polymaths of 15th-century Tibet. By tracing the genesis of two early editions of this master's Collected Works (which are now considered lost), Caumanns sheds light on a number of aspects pertaining to the production of these two editions, their contents and structure, and the institutional contexts in which they came into being. Caumanns particularly examines the prominent role that members of the noble family of gTing skyes (i.e., a branch of the Shar ka ba clan) took on as patrons, but also as religious masters in Shākya mchog ldan's monastery of gSer mdog can in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Moreover, Caumanns presents a tentative list of works by Shākya mchog ldan that were contained in these early editions, but which did not find their way into the later, mid-18th-century "Bhutanese" edition (which is the only extant edition today).

A very different topic—i.e., Tibetan calendar calculation—is dealt with in Henning’s article. Henning critically examines the origins of the *grub rtsis* system, i.e., the “correct” system of calendar calculation, which is allegedly based on the original *Kālacakra Mūlatantra* (and not on the extant *Laghutantra*). Among the various *grub rtsis* systems (such as the Phug pa and mTshur phu schools), the article focuses on the specific system that was set forth by ’Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481), and which was heavily influenced by late Indian traditions. These Indian influences (including a “mistaken theory underlying the algorithms used to create the calendar”) apparently harken back to ’Gos Lo tsā ba’s teacher Vanaratna (1384–1468), a Buddhist master from Chittagong (in present-day Bangladesh). Henning assumes that the inaccuracies that are inherent in ’Gos Lo tsā ba’s *grub rtsis* system may mirror later corruptions in the Indian *Kālacakra* calendar. As Henning points out, given the destruction of the great monastic centres of learning in Northern India in the wake of the Turkic-Muslim conquest, these corruptions may not come as a surprise.

From calendar calculation we move on to Tibetan art. Jackson’s article focuses on a famous set of statues that portrays the lineage masters of the “Path with the Result” system (*lam ’bras*) in Theg chen Chos rje’s transmission (i.e., the *theg chen lugs*). This set of twenty statues, which is nowadays preserved in sMin grol gling Monastery, originated at the monastery of Gr(w)a thang (situated in lHo kha). Previous scholarship dated the statues to the late 15th or early 16th century. Jackson, however, attributes the set to the workmanship of the great Tibetan artist mKhyen brtse chen mo, and thus assumes that it was produced in the 1470s or 1480s. As Jackson shows, there are good reasons to believe that the set was commissioned by a wealthy sponsor from the ruling house of Yar rgyab (see also Fermer’s contribution in this volume). It seems that its production took place during an extensive renovation of Gr(w)a thang Monastery, which was initiated in 1481 by Khrims khang Lo tsā ba bSod nams rgya mtsho (1424–1482), who had been an influential teacher of the Yar rgyab nobles. The article concludes with a careful reconsideration of a number of statues that were left unidentified by earlier scholars or required a new discussion.

With Sernesi’s article we return to the book culture of 15th-century Tibet, and specifically to the issue of the introduction of xylographic book printing in the plateau. This contribution surveys recent findings in Tibetan book history, showing how they prompt a revision of the commonly held opinion that the spread of the technology in central Tibet was directly linked to the production of the Yongle bKa’ ’gyur. Indeed, the available data shows that book printing was also adopted before the completion of the canon, was diffused across a very wide area, and was engendered by a broad range of agents and actors. It is suggested that wood block printing gradually became part of a pool of available means of textual production and merit making activities, adopted by the local noble houses as part of a complex relationship of patronage between donor and recipient (*yon mchod*). This occurred in the context of the shifting re-negotiations of power between the religious and political authority,

and of the great institutional development of the Buddhist schools, with the spread of mass monasticism and the institution of study curricula.

The **third main section** of our volume consists of three articles (contributed by Yael Bentor, Jörg Heimbel, and Klaus-Dieter Mathes) that explore, from various perspectives, the roles that scholarly disputes and polemical exchanges played in the religious and intellectual life of 15th-century Tibet. David Seyfort Ruegg—in his well-known periodization of the history of Madhyamaka in Tibet—labels the phase from the 14th to 16th centuries—which roughly corresponds to what is considered in this volume to be the “long 15th century”—as the “classical-systematic period,” and characterizes it as “the high point of Tibetan textual exegesis, philosophical penetration and systematic hermeneutics.” He goes on to remark that “[i]n this period there took place the definitive constitution as philosophical schools of the principal Tibetan orders (*chos lugs*),” that is: the rNying ma, Sa skya, dGa’ ldan (or: dGe lugs), bKa’ brgyud, and Jo nang schools (Seyfort Ruegg 2000: 5–6). This characterization of the “classical-systematic period,” as proposed by Seyfort Ruegg, points to two conspicuous features that informed the religious and intellectual life of 15th-century Tibet in general, namely: high scholasticism and the formation of full-fledged Buddhist schools. As the three contributions in this section of our volume strikingly illustrate, scholarly disputes and polemical exchanges on sūtric and tantric topics (as types of intellectual practice) constituted a decisive driving force, which shaped and, at the same time, were shaped by these two features.

The articles of Bentor and Heimbel take a fresh look at the “Hevajra body *maṇḍala* dispute,” a controversy that already has attracted some scholarly attention by Tibetologists. Bentor’s contribution is a careful delineation of the evolution and the contents of this dispute, which was ultimately rooted in Tsong kha pa’s and Ngor chen Kun dga’ bzang po’s attempts to formulate a coherent system of Buddhist thought and practice, an undertaking that led to different doctrinal and hermeneutical choices. As Bentor shows, the controversy passed through several intensifying stages and escalated into a severe crisis between adherents of the nascent dGa’ ldan school and upholders of the old Sa skya school. The dispute—in which Ngor chen and Tsong kha pa’s disciple mKhas grub rJe dGe legs dpal bzang (1385–1438) figured prominently—revolved around a number of issues, including the practice of deity yoga, points of interpretation concerning the body *maṇḍala* in the Cakrasaṃvara and Hevajra systems, and the “correct” exegesis of authoritative statements of great masters of the past.

The second article on this topic reminds us that textual sources do not constitute transparent media that reproduce the past “how it actually happened.” Focusing on narrative representations of the “Hevajra body *maṇḍala* dispute” in biographical literature, Heimbel shows how Tibetan authors often took an active part in conflicts like this and thus pursued their own agendas. In his article, Heimbel makes recourse to literary portrayals of Ngor chen (one of the main protagonists of the dispute) that were sketched by later dGe lugs authors such as Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal

mtshan (1469–1544), Paṅ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478–1554), and Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1732–1802). As Heimbel shows, these authors projected the intersectarian gap of their own time (which separated two distinct schools) to the emerging intrasectarian divides between diverging factions within the Sa skya school in the early decades of the 15th century. Far from producing objective accounts, these dGe lugs authors endeavoured to establish the superiority of mKhas grub rJe (who is styled as Tsong kha pa's faithful apostle) over Ngor chen. Their narrative strategy led to a consolidation and reaffirmation of a distinctive dGe lugs identity, which began to emerge around the 1440s.

With Mathes' article—the last one in our volume—we move on to a “hot issue” of 15th-century scholastic philosophy, namely the contested view of “emptiness-of-other” (*gzhan stong*). The article investigates 'Gos Lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal's analysis of Buddha nature and pursues the question of whether this master advocated a *gzhan stong* view. Mathes faces a difficult situation regarding sources, since no philosophical work by 'Gos Lo tsā ba has come down to us apart from a commentary on the *Ratnagotravibhāga* (in which the term *gzhan stong* is not mentioned). Therefore, Mathes makes use of “secondary sources” such as the Eighth Karma pa's polemical review of 'Gos Lo tsā ba's lost Kālacakra commentary and a biography composed by the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa. As Mathes is able to show, 'Gos Lo tsā ba's position on Buddha nature differs sharply from the position held by the Eighth Karma pa, who (like the Third and Seventh Karma pas) supported a type of *gzhan stong* view. It is, moreover, obvious that 'Gos Lo tsā ba was influenced, to a certain extent, by Tsong kha pa's scholastic exegesis and thus attempted to harmonize the latter's view of emptiness with the *mahāmudrā* approach of the bKa' brgyud pas. In the end, Mathes comes to the conclusion that it is problematic to describe 'Gos Lo tsā ba's position as *gzhan stong*, although the Eighth Karma pa (ironically) terms it as “great *gzhan stong*.”

As this brief overview may have shown, the articles in our volume cover a wide range of topics and approaches, bringing together specialised expertise on Tibetan history, art history, philosophy, etc. Each of the contributions provides an insight into 15th century Tibet from its privileged point of view, enriching our historical understanding of the period. Some of the contributions are intimately linked, looking at the same phenomenon through different sources, or providing supplementary data to each other's investigations. Others present different manifestations of parallel processes, or proceed to map out yet another adjacent field of historical knowledge. Hence, we believe that read altogether these contributions are more than just the sum of their parts, but show instead how only this multiplicity of approaches can enlighten the deep and complex historical dynamics at play. We hope that this initial attempt at an inter-disciplinary historical approach to a key turn in Tibetan history will encourage further research.

Marta Sernesi and Volker Caumanns

Bibliography

- Allsen, Thomas T. 2009. "Mongols as vectors for cultural transmission." In Nicola di Cosmo, Allen J. Frank and Peter B. Golden (eds.). *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia. The Chinggisid Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 135–154.
- Biran, Michal. 2015. "The Mongols and the Inter-Civilizational Exchange." In Benjamin Z. Kedar and Merry Wiesner-Hanks (eds.). *The Cambridge World History: Volume 5. Expanding Webs of Exchange and Conflict, 500 CE–1500 CE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 534–558.
- Cuevas, Bryan J. 2006. "Some Reflections on the Periodization of Tibetan History." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 10: 44–55.
- Cuevas, Bryan J. (ed.) 2006. *Power, Politics, and the Reinvention of Tradition: Tibet in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the IATS, 2003*. Leiden: Brill.
- Flynn, Dennis O. 2015. "Silver in a global context, 1400–1800." In Jerry H. Bentley, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (eds.). *The Cambridge World History: Volume 6. The Construction of a Global World, 1400–1800 CE. Part 2. Patterns of Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 190–212.
- von Glahn, Richard. 2013. "Cycles of silver in Chinese monetary history." In Billy K.L. So (ed.). *The Economy of the Lower Yangzi Delta in Late Imperial China. Connecting Money, Markets, and Institutions*. London and New York: Routledge, 17–71.
- Kuroda, Akinobu. 2009. "The Eurasian silver century, 1276–1359: commensurability and multiplicity." *Journal of Global History* 4: 245–269.
- Pommaret, Françoise. ed. 1997. *Lhasa lieu du divin. La capitale des Dalai-Lama au 17e siècle*. Genève: Olizane.
- Rossabi, Morris. 1975. *China and Inner Asia. From 1368 to the Present Day*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Schwieger, Peter. 2015. *The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China. A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Seyfort-Ruegg, David. 2000. *Three Studies in the History of Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka Philosophy: Studies in Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka Thought, Part 1*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien.
- Shen, Weirong. 2007. "'Accommodating Barbarians from Afar': Political and Cultural Interactions Between Ming China and Tibet." *Ming Studies* 56: 37–93.
- Sørensen, Per. 2005 "The Dalai Lama Institution: Its Origin and Genealogical Succession." *Orientalions* (September): 53–60
- Sperling, Elliot. 1983. *Early Ming Policy Towards Tibet: An Examination of the Proposition that the Early Ming Emperors adopted a "Divide and Rule" Policy towards Tibet*. PhD Dissertation, Indiana University.

- ___ 1988. "The Szechwan–Tibet Frontier in the Fifteenth Century." *Ming Studies* 26: 37–55.
- ___ 2004. *The Tibet-China Conflict: History and Polemics*. Washington: East-West Center Washington.
- Tuttle, Gray. 2017. "Pattern Recognition: Tracking the Spread of the Incarnation Institution through Time and across History." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 38: 29–64.

THE DISPUTE BETWEEN MKHAS GRUB RJE AND NGOR CHEN: ITS REPRESENTATION AND ROLE IN TIBETAN LIFE-WRITING

JÖRG HEIMBEL
(University of Hamburg)

The roots of eclecticism and tolerance are sunk
as deep into the soil of Tibetan tradition
as those of sectarianism and bigotry.¹

In the second decade of the fifteenth century an intense religious dispute erupted between mKhas grub rJe dGe legs dpal bzang (1385–1438) and Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456). According to Tibetan textual sources of the Sa skya pa school, this dispute was essentially over the interpretation of the Hevajra body *maṇḍala*. However, it has been shown elsewhere that the dispute was actually a gradually intensifying exchange of rhetorical blows that was also fuelled and intensified by several other arguments. The polemic-loving mKhas grub rJe can be singled out as one of its main players; he antagonised the Sa skya pa—the very school he himself was closely linked to through his own religious training prior to meeting Tsong kha pa (1357–1419)—with his harsh attacks against not only Ngor chen but also against other prominent masters, such as Red mda' ba gZhon nu blo gros (1349–1412), his own teacher, and Rong ston Shes bya kun rig (1367–1449). But Ngor chen also played his role in the dispute. He had initially objected to some of Tsong kha pa's positions, such as on deity yoga or the body *maṇḍala* practice of Cakrasaṃvara, which mKhas grub rJe felt impelled to defend. This, in turn, gave rise to those new arguments that spurred further tensions, escalating in what has become known as the dispute about the Hevajra body *maṇḍala*.²

1 Smith 2001: 237.

2 See the important contribution by Yael Bentor in this volume. I would like to thank Yael Bentor for sharing earlier drafts of her paper and her valuable remarks on certain passages of this paper. Thanks are also due to September Cowley for carefully proofreading my English. For an in-depth study of another debate, namely the polemic exchange between the rNying ma pa master 'Ju Mi pham (1846–1912) and his dGe lugs pa opponent dPa' ris Rab gsal (1840–1912), including also an investigation into the debate's socio-historical and possible religiopolitical backgrounds, see Viehbeck 2014. On polemics and polemical literature in Tibet, see Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: [1]–33. See also Lopez 1996 and Viehbeck 2014: 40–50.

In general, the dispute was not merely a polemical exchange written in a cutting tone—there is nothing to suggest that mKhas grub rJe and Ngor chen ever met personally³—but was also conducted from a sectarian standpoint, which shaped the religious realities of fifteenth-century Tibet. One direct outcome was a travel ban placed on the religious scholars of Sa skya. The intense dispute had inflamed passions to such an extent that the administration of Sa skya prohibited its own scholars from travelling, probably aiming at easing the agitated emotions and preventing any further disputes.⁴ Ultimately, the dispute contributed to an ever-growing sectarian divide and polarisation between followers of Tsong kha pa's emerging dGe lugs pa school and those of the old Sa skya pa school.⁵

While researching my dissertation on the life and times of Ngor chen,⁶ I noticed that the dispute also played an important polemical role in the related biographical and historiographical literature, especially in textual sources from the dGe lugs pa school.⁷ That life-writing can, for instance, exhibit such a polemical function has already been pointed out by Janet Gyatso, who noted its “polemical agendas,” “namely to assert the religious achievements of a master and his or her lineage in contrast to those of rival schools,” and that this literature reflects “the competitive climate of Tibetan sectarian politics.”⁸ Similarly, in his recent contribution on life-writing and the formation of early dGe lugs pa identity, Elijah Ary has argued that “Tibetan biographical writing is not merely a historical, inspirational, and/or instructional account, as Willis maintains, but also a powerful tool in establishing philosophical authority and legitimacy, both personally and institutionally,” and that “in our study of Tibetan religion we need to take better account of biographical writing as a crucial instrument of sectarian formation.”⁹

In a similar line, I shall argue in this essay that the description of sectarian disputes in Tibetan life-writing, as exemplified by that between mKhas grub rJe and Ngor chen, together with the slanderous portrayal of Buddhist masters involved in it, functions as an important narrative strategy in establishing not only the religious authority of a religious master and his doctrinal superiority over his opponent but ultimately also the superiority of the school with whom he is associated over that of his rival. In doing so, they also strengthen intersectarian differences and create and consolidate a common unifying sectarian identity. They share this function with the

3 See the *Dus kyi me lce* (p. 51.1–4).

4 See Heimbel 2014: 356–358.

5 On the sectarian divide between the dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa, see Dreyfus 1997: 33–41. See also Dreyfus 2005: 293–297, Jackson 2007: 352–357, and Jackson 2010: 178–179.

6 See Heimbel 2014.

7 Though the dGe lugs pa were first referred to as dGa' ldan pa, after the name of Tsong kha pa's monastic foundation of dGa' ldan, and then also as dGe ldan pa, for simplicity's sake, I shall use the later designation dGe lugs pa.

8 Gyatso 1998: 103.

9 Ary 2015: 103.

actual polemic writings that originate within those disputes. As has been pointed out by Cabezón and Dargyay,

Yet another reason for the genre's popularity, therefore, has to do with the role that it plays in forming and nourishing a sense of identity and belonging. Polemics is both the parent and the child of sectarian identity-formation. When such an identity becomes important to a culture (...) scholars will often resort to polemics to create a sense of distinctiveness for their particular school. Followers of that school will in turn look to polemical works to give them a sense of identity: to show them how their school differs from and is superior to that of their rivals.¹⁰

The Secret Biography of mKhas grub rJe

Among the numerous accounts of mKhas grub rJe's life, the second earliest extant is his secret biography by Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544), the twelfth abbot of Se ra Monastery (tenure: 1538–1541),¹¹ which discusses at great length the debates that mKhas grub rJe engaged in.¹² This biography has been utilised as a major source by Elijah Ary in his important study on the early dGe lugs pa history, showing, among other things, how mKhas grub rJe's position within that school's hierarchy was elevated throughout the centuries and how he was styled as one of Tsong kha pa's two closest disciples and his chief spiritual heir and interpreter.¹³ But it is not only mKhas grub rJe's portrayal that is of interest here. Also very telling is the presentation of the debates he engaged in and the portrayal of the religious masters he debated, as both are given in a highly sectarian tone, conveying the

10 Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 6.

11 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 22a3–4). rJe btsun pa served also in many other monastic positions: abbot of Se ra Byes college (tenure: 1511–1540), *zhal bdag* of dGe ldan Byang gling, and abbot of sTag rtse Rin chen sgang (installed in 1523); see the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fols. 16a5–6, 22a2–6).

12 There are different block-print editions of mKhas grub rJe's collected works, such as from sKu 'bum, Zhol, and bKra shis lhun po. Interestingly, his secret biography contained in the sKu 'bum recension (*mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1), which is used for this essay, is much more extensive than that in those from Zhol (*mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 2) and bKra shis lhun po (*mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 3). It contains passages that are entirely missing from the other two, and numerous individual sentences are either extended in the former or shortened in the latter two. Note that also the Zhol and bKra shis lhun po recensions vary to a certain extent from each other. For references to biographies and biographical sketches of mKhas grub rJe's life, see Ary 2015: 41, n. 121. For a translation of his secret biography according to the reading of the Zhol recension, see *ibid.*: 121–149.

13 See Ary 2015: [39]–66 and *passim*.

tensions and animosities that had arisen between the emerging dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools.¹⁴

On two occasions, rJe btsun pa discusses various arguments that mKhas grub rJe had with other religious masters: first in a subsection on mKhas grub rJe's deeds for the Buddha's teachings through explanation and practice, and a second time in the succeeding subsection on the many protector deities who praised him and performed their activities for him.¹⁵ In both subsections, he also deals with Ngor chen, and paints a highly negative picture of him when first mentioning him in the former:¹⁶

Furthermore, the one known as Ngor pa Kun bzang, whom the Sa skya pa worship like Vajradhara, though he had received many profound teachings of the Vajrayāna from rJe btsun Tsong kha pa,¹⁷ due to [his] very clinging to the riches and honours of this life, ignoring [his] tantric pledges and vows like grass, he engaged in denigrating Tsong kha pa, the father, and his spiritual sons, and also expressed verbally a lot of terrifying slander by simply regurgitating [others].

But Ngor chen is not the only Sa skya pa master to be attacked by rJe btsun pa. His portrayal is preceded by the adverse criticism directed against Rong ston, with whom mKhas grub rJe quarrelled at dPal 'khor Chos sde in about 1427, and followed by that of Kon ting Gu shrī Nam mkha' bzang po from Sa skya's Nyi lde bla brang.¹⁸ Finally,

14 Those animosities still existed in the twentieth century, as we learn from an account by dGe 'dun chos 'phel (1903–1951), who, while visiting Ngor in the 1930s, remarks that some Ngor pa monks were disparaging Tsong kha pa; see the *gSer gyi thang ma* (pp. 30.20–31.5): *grwa pa yon tan can 'ga' zhiḡ rje btsun tsong kha pa chen po la lam dman par zhugs pa zhes mi 'os pa'i ngan smras cher byed| rigs pa'i rgyu mtshan ci smras kyang phan par mi 'dug| der ngas 'o na rgyal ba rin po che yang lam ngan du zhugs par thal| de tsong kha pa'i rjes su 'brangs pa'i phyir smras pas khong tsho'i kha rbad kyis chod| deng sang gi rigs pa'i gsang tshig chen po zhiḡ de nas go|*.

15 See the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 6a2–4). On the structure of mKhas grub rJe's secret biography, see Ary 2015: 59–66.

16 *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 11b1–3): *gzhan yang| ngor pa kun bzang pa zhes grags pa sa skya pa rnams kyis rdo rje 'chang lta bur bkur ba des kyang| tshe 'di'i rnyed bkur la ha cang zhen pa'i dbang gis| rje btsun tsong kha pa las rdo rje theg pa'i chos zab mo du ma zhiḡ nyan yang| dam tshig dang sdom pa rtswa ltar yal bar dor te| rje tsong kha pa yab sras la skur ba 'debs pa la zhugs nas| ngag tu yang rdzes [= rjes] zlos byed pa tsam gyi [= gyis] ya nga ba'i ngan smras du ma byas shing|*.

17 During his first sojourn in dBus (1414–1417), Ngor chen paid a visit to Tsong kha pa at Ri bo dGe ldan (i.e., dGa' ldan Monastery), receiving the reading transmissions for the *Lam rim gnyis* (i.e., Tsong kha pa's two main treatises on the path: the *Lam rim chen mo* and *sNgags rim chen mo*), the *gSang 'dus kyi bshad rgyud gsum gyi ĩk*, *Sarvadurgatipriśodhanatantra*, and *Dhyānottarapāṭalāṭikā*. However, Ngor chen's main reason for approaching Tsong kha pa at that time was not merely to request teachings, but rather to gain support for his undertaking to revive the two lower tantric systems of Kriyā and Caryā. On Ngor chen's visit, see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (pp. 514.1–6, 522.4–523.6).

18 See the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fols. 11a3–b3, 11b3–4), respectively. For a more

all three are characterised as “fools who have not understood the essence of the excellent words [of the Conqueror] [and] do not have an impartial mind.”¹⁹

However, it would be unjust to think that rJe btsun pa simply fabricated his portrayal of Ngor chen. He actually drew on a slanderous passage that mKhas grub rJe himself had included in one of his writings originating within the body *maṇḍala* controversy. mKhas grub rJe had written that work in reply to a refutation by the above-mentioned Kon ting Gu shrī, who had initially attacked mKhas grub rJe for his chapter on the body *maṇḍala* included in his presentation of the creation stage of Guhyasamāja.²⁰ mKhas grub rJe’s rejoinder bears no title, but in his biography by Paṅ chen bDe legs nyi ma (fl. 16th century) the work is listed as the *Rejoinder to the Response that Kon ting Go’u shrī Gave about the Guhyasamāja Body Maṇḍala* (*Kon ting go’u shrīs gsang ’dus lus dkyil lan btab pa’i yang lan*).²¹ After discussing what he considered to be Kon ting Gu shrī’s misconceptions of Buddhism, in general, and of the body *maṇḍala*, in particular, mKhas grub rJe also deals with Ngor chen, attacking him harshly, though without identifying him by name. In a long introductory passage full of caustic rhetoric,²² he portrays Ngor chen as a religious master who, though having received Vajrayāna teachings from Tsong kha pa, discarded his tantric pledges like grass out of hope for the riches and honours of this life and disparaged Tsong kha pa holding much hate and jealousy.²³ Though Ngor chen had not received a religious training under teachers skilled in the *sūtras* and *tantras*, as mKhas grub rJe argues, he took on the burden of refuting the fine explanations of true scholars, writing texts that made others feel ashamed. mKhas grub rJe continues in this way,

detailed presentation of mKhas grub rJe’s confrontation with Rong ston, see the *mKhas grub rje’i gsang rnam* 1 (fols. 11a3–5, 14a2–18a6) and *Rong ston gyi rnam thar* (pp. 346.3–347.1). See also Cabezón 1992: 17–18, 389–390, 399, n. 20, Jackson 2007: 352–356, and Jackson 2010: 178–179.

19 *mKhas grub rje’i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 11b4–5): *de lta na yang blun po gsung rab kyi gnad ma go ba gzu bor gnas pa’i blo dang mi ldan pa de dag dri ma med pa’i rigs pas rjes su ’dzin par ga la nus*].

20 In his rejoinder, mKhas grub rJe refers to Nam mkha’ bzang po simply as “Kon ting Gu shrī, the great universal religious teacher of the Great Monastic Seat;” see the *Yang lan* (p. 775.2): *gdan sa chen po’i yongs kyi dge ba’i bshes gnyen chen po kon ting gug shri bas*]. However, based on a remark in the *mDo smad chos ’byung* of dKon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1801–1866), it is possible to identify Kon ting Gu shrī as Nam mkha’ bzang po; see the *mDo smad chos ’byung* (p. 6.16–17): *glo bo mkhan chen gu ge chos dpal bzang po* | *kwan ting ku shri nam mkha’ bzang po rnam kyis mdzad pa’i ngor shar ba’i gdung rabs lnga* | *rjes ma ’dis mkhas grub rin po cher dgag pa’i rnam pa zhig phul ba’i lan gsung ’bum thor bur bzugs*]. Cf. van der Kuip 1985: 34, who has identified him as Theg chen Chos rje Kun dga’ bkra shis (1349–1425).

21 See the *mKhas grub rje’i rnam thar* 2 (fol. 12b5–6).

22 Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 17 call mKhas grub rJe “one of the great masters of invective,” citing another passage by him as an example for the different kinds of polemic insult one finds in polemical works.

23 On Ngor chen’s objections to some of Tsong kha pa’s positions, see the contribution by Yael Bentor in this volume.

also attacking Ngor chen's supporters, who "with the firewood of [exaggerated] words ignited ever greater the flame of hatred" (*tshig gi bud shing gis zhe sdang gi me lce ches cher sbar ba*), before he finally comes to his main point, the flaws that he perceived in two works by Ngor chen on Hevajra.²⁴

In the succeeding subsection on the many protector deities that appeared to mKhas grub rJe, rJe btsun pa includes a long narrative on mKhas grub rJe's conflict with the Sa skya pa school, styling him as the innocent target of the baseless allegation that he had refuted the Sa skya pa's doctrinal system (*sa skya pa'i grub mtha'*). Though mKhas grub rJe, as his biographer acknowledges, had first trained in that very system, he was a student of Tsong kha pa and had been that already for many lifetimes. To clarify his master's pure teachings, he took birth in this world and followed Tsong kha pa just like Ānanda had followed Buddha Śākyamuni. While he was serving Tsong kha pa's teachings through exposition, disputation, and composition, people claiming to be Sa skya pa became overwhelmed by jealousy and spread everywhere, without any reason, the rumour that mKhas grub rJe had refuted the doctrinal system of the Sa skya pa, "getting ready to take their shoes off by [hearing] the sheer sound of water" (i.e., precipitately jumping to wrong conclusions).²⁵ But since none of those Sa skya pa scholars were capable of debating mKhas grub rJe, they tried to defeat him by all sorts of spellcasting sorcery (*mtshu*), such as throwing magical *gtor ma* weapons (*gtor zor*). The most powerful experts of magical incantations (*ngag nus*) gathered at Sa skya and many times threw *gtor ma* weapons into the direction where mKhas grub rJe resided. Though, prior to that, mKhas grub rJe considered the Sa skya pa's chief protectors—that is, the two Mahākāla forms of Vajrapañjara (i.e., Gur gyi mgon po) and Caturmukha (i.e., mGon po zhal bzhi pa)—to be his main personal protectors, in repelling those attacks, he successfully relied on another form of Mahākāla—that is, Ṣaḍbhuja Mahākāla (i.e., mGon po phyag drug pa)—who was also an important protector of Tsong kha pa and his tradition. Later on, when mKhas grub rJe served as abbot of dGa' ldan, the Sa skya pa were once again engaging in black magic, throwing *gtor mas* into that monastery's direction. However, it was in vain because mKhas grub rJe repelled all attacks. But at Sa skya itself, as a downside of that sorcery (*mtshu log*), the main temple collapsed, showing that the use of a powerless incantation can turn against oneself.²⁶

At the time of those encounters, Ngor pa Kun bzang (i.e., Ngor chen) took on the responsibility of the Sa skya pa and sent messages to Rong ston and Chos rje bSod blo to gain their support in challenging mKhas grub rJe, because he was refuting the

24 See the *Yang lan* (pp. 797.2–801.2). mKhas grub rJe wrote his rejoinder between the years 1427 and 1431 while still living in gTsang. On the date of his rejoinder and the critique that he expressed therein, see the forthcoming publication of my dissertation (Heimbel 2014).

25 *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 24b3): *chu'i sgra kho nas lham 'phud [= 'bud] pa'i rtsom pa sngon du btang nas*.

26 See the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fols. 24b1–25a5).

Sa skya pa's doctrinal system (*sa skya pa'i grub mtha'*).²⁷ To uphold that system, Ngor chen wanted to debate on tantric subjects and asked Rong ston to do the same on Prajñāpāramitā and Chos rje bSod blo on Pramāṇa. But since the latter two perceived this as highly inappropriate, it fell on Ngor chen alone to write a text (*yig cha*) refuting the doctrinal system of Tsong kha pa and his disciples (*rje btsun tsong kha pa yab sras kyi grub mtha'*). Ngor chen had his polemic writing (*rtsod yig*),²⁸ which allegedly was full of mistakes, making him an object of shame, delivered by an envoy to mKhas grub rJe, who wrote in reply the *Rejoinder, Wheel of Thunderbolts* (*rTsod lan gnam lcags 'khor lo*), refuting all of Ngor chen's erroneous views.²⁹

When rJe btsun pa compiled his biography of mKhas grub rJe,³⁰ the sectarian divide between the dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools was firmly established; this is also reflected by his choice of words in presenting mKhas grub rJe's disputes. In

27 Chos rje bSod blo was possibly Chos rje bSod nams blo gros who is given as a teacher of 'Jam dbyangs Shes rab rgya mtsho (1396–1474), the third abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1462–1465); see the *Ngor gyi gdan rabs* (p. 7.1).

28 Cabezón and Dargay 2007: 12 translate *rtsod yig* as “disputational document or record,” and *ibid.*: 251, n. 39 explain that the term refers “to the written accusation that initiates a polemical exchange.” This shows that rJe btsun pa perceived Ngor chen as having initiated the dispute.

29 See the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 25a5–b5). rJe btsun pa presents two such mistakes from the rejoinder that mKhas grub rJe wrote to Kon ting Gu shrī, which shows that rJe btsun pa's presentation of the polemical exchange is mistaken. In that rejoinder, mKhas grub rJe attacked Ngor chen for both his Hevajra body *maṇḍala sādhana* from 1410 and his extensive exposition of the Hevajra *sādhana* from 1419. mKhas grub rJe only wrote his *rTsod lan gnam lcags 'khor lo* later while serving as abbot of dGa' ldan (tenure: 1432–1438). He wrote it in reply to Ngor chen's two refutations from 1426. Ngor chen's refutations are, in turn, a reply to the chapter on the body *maṇḍala* that mKhas grub rJe had included in his presentation of the creation stage of Guhyasmāja (which he wrote in the first half of the 1420s). On the chronology of the polemical exchange, see the contribution by Yael Bentor in this volume.

30 Unfortunately, rJe btsun pa did not date his mKhas grub rJe biography. From the colophon, we only learn that he based his work on an earlier mKhas grub rJe biography by dGe slong Chos ldan rab 'byor, a student of both Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rJe, and that he added accounts that had been related to him by Kun dga' bde legs rin chen rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1446–1497) of gNas rnying Monastery, a disciple of mKhas grub rJe's younger brother Ba so Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1402–1473); see the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 39a1–3). rJe btsun pa studied under that master as a small boy starting at age six (i.e., 1475) for five or six years, also taking from him both lay-follower (in 1475) and novice-monk ordination (in 1481); see the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 5a5–b4). At the urging of his teacher, he later returned to gNas rnying to teach at its *Se ra grwa tshang* from the end of 1495 until about 1499. During that period, he also received many teachings from Kun dga' bde legs rin chen that descended from Ba so Chos kyi rgyal mtshan; see the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 12b2–6). It was probably during that period that Kun dga' bde legs rin chen told rJe btsun pa the accounts of mKhas grub rJe's life that he mentions in his colophon. Thus I would suggest to date rJe btsun pa's mKhas grub rJe biography to post-1495. For the mKhas grub rJe biography by Chos ldan rab 'byor, see the *mKhas grub rje'i rnam thar* 1. See also Ary 2015: 41–47, 59, 107–120. On gNas rnying Monastery and its colleges, see the *Baidūrya ser po* (pp. 247–249, no. 27).

designating mKhas grub rJe's opponents and their doctrine as Sa skya pa, and mKhas grub rJe as a close disciple of Tsong kha pa, whose teachings he was expounding, rJe btsun pa separates both groups from each other, projecting the intersectarian division of his time to the widening intrasectarian differences of that of mKhas grub rJe's. The body *maṇḍala* dispute ultimately contributed to that division, but during its heyday in the 1420s a clear-cut division was yet to occur.³¹ By then, mKhas grub rJe obviously considered himself still a Sa skya pa. This can be seen in his aforementioned reply to Kon ting Gu shrī, in which he, as pointed out by Leonard van der Kuijp, "though admitting and justifying his polemics, vehemently defends his Sa-skyapa orthodoxy, reasserts his allegiance to basic Sa-skyapa doctrine, and denies having maverick tendencies."³²

Through his representation of the dispute, rJe btsun pa establishes mKhas grub rJe's superiority, both doctrinally and as a tantric specialist, over the ignorant Sa skya pa, who, unable to defeat him by scholastic means, resorted to powerless tantric sorcery. But since mKhas grub rJe was defending Tsong kha pa's positions, rJe btsun pa not only engenders faith in his authority as a legitimate and powerful expounder of his master's teachings but also establishes the doctrinal superiority of Tsong kha pa himself. Thus, ultimately, he highlights the doctrinal superiority of his own school,

31 Dreyfus 1997: 36 has pointed out that "by the end of Dzong-ka-ba's life (1419), the new Ga-den-ba school seems to have been organized as a partly separate group, although it is unclear how self-conscious this was." *Ibid.*: 36 has further stated that "the Ga-den-bas did not see themselves as completely separate from other schools. There was a particular lack of differentiation from the Sa-gya school, to which Dzong-ka-ba and most of his disciples belonged. (...) It is hard to know the degree to which sectarian labels were even applicable to this time." But *ibid.*: 36 has also pointed out that the situation may have changed in the 1430s with the installation of mKhas grub rJe as abbot of dGa' ldan, who enforced a stricter orthodoxy. Similarly, Jackson 2007: 356 has stated that "stricter dGe lugs pa factionalism in dBus, especially in the areas nearest Lhasa, began by the early 1440s, possibly under the indirect influence of mKhas grub rJe," and that by 1442 further dogmatic hardening occurred when "the sNe'u rdzong ruler enforced a stricter and more rigid sectarian division between Sa skya and dGe lugs monks in the Lhasa area. This noble, acting as patron and follower of the great dGe lugs pa monasteries, ordered certain Sa skya pa monks in his domain (including the unwilling young Shākya mchog ldan) to join religious classes at dGe lugs pa monasteries." See also Cabezón and Dargayay 2007: 42, who have remarked that "some of Tsong kha pa's closest and most influential students—Mkhas grub rje and Dge 'dun grub chief among them—were attempting to create a unique and separate identity for their new school, a project that involved, in part, distancing themselves from their Sa skya pa roots."

32 Van der Kuijp 1985: 34. For the relevant passages, see the *Yang lan* (pp. 775.5–776.5, 793.3–798.3, 801.2–5). In the same work, mKhas grub rJe accuses Ngor chen of classifying Tsong kha pa as a lama from a different tradition as opposed to the five founding fathers of the Sa skya pa school; see the *Yang lan* (p. 798.3–4): *de nyid kyis kye rdor gyi sgrub thabs kyi bshad pa zhig byas gda' ba de na nged kyi rje btsun tsong kha pa chen po la gzhan lugs bla ma zhes pa'i tha snyad byas sa skya pa'i rje btsun gong ma dang chos rje khu dbon la rang lugs bla ma zhes pa'i tha snyad byas nas*.

the dGe lugs pa, over the Sa skya pa. In order to establish that superiority, he also needs to denigrate the Sa skya pa, in general, and those Sa skya pa masters with whom mKhas grub rJe had clashed, in particular. Ngor chen's vilifying portrayal is but one of many examples. As mentioned, rJe btsun pa partly drew on a passage by mKhas grub rJe for it, though that does not justify it. Rather, it reveals the negative image he wanted to create of Ngor chen and those other Sa skya pa masters among his audience, which can initially be located within his dGe lugs pa monastic circles at Se ra and his supporters and patrons.

rJe btsun pa also raises the body *maṇḍala* dispute to a higher, much more general level. Without specifying any concrete issue, he styles the dispute as a general conflict between the Sa skya pa, on the one hand, and Tsong kha pa and his disciples, such as mKhas grub rJe, on the other hand. By comparison, in his reply to Kon ting Gu shrī, mKhas grub rJe voiced his lack of understanding of certain misinterpretations that his remarks on the body *maṇḍala* had provoked, such as that he was accused of having refuted the *Lam 'bras* or the venerable founding fathers of the Sa skya pa tradition (*rje btsun gong ma*), which he strictly denied.³³ However, rJe btsun pa describes the conflict as an unjust attack by the Sa skya pa against mKhas grub rJe, who accused him of having refuted not just individual points but the entire doctrinal system of the Sa skya pa. Similarly, he states in a general way that Ngor chen, upholding the doctrinal system of the Sa skya pa, wrote a text that refuted the system of Tsong kha pa and his followers. By this simplified presentation, rJe btsun pa exaggerates the erstwhile doctrinal differences by drawing on the sectarian divide of his time. In doing so, he further strengthens this divide and contributes to an antagonistic and also competitive climate between both schools.

At the end of his subsection on the protector deities that appeared to mKhas grub rJe, rJe btsun pa included several accounts that can be understood as a vindication of both mKhas grub rJe's turning away from and criticism of the Sa skya pa school. These accounts contrast the desolate state of the Sa skya pa school with the superiority of the qualities and teachings of both Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rJe. Even the Sa skya pa's chief protectors are said to have followed Tsong kha pa and mKhas grub rJe, disobeying their original orders to harm them. This passage has been summarised by Elijah Ary:³⁴

All of those deities extol Khedrup—once again portrayed as one of Tsongkhapa's closest disciples—for being such an excellent and upstanding religious figure and scholar, but each interacts with Khedrup in a somewhat different way (...). Some simply appear and praise him, others demand his propitiation, while yet others tell him that they were sent by the Sakyapas to destroy him. The latter

33 See the *Yang lan* (pp. 775.4–5, 796.5–6). See also Bentor (forthcoming) and Davidson 1991: 222, 234–235, n. 64.

34 Ary 2015: 64. Those accounts were extracted from mKhas grub rJe's biography by Chos ldan rab 'byor, though rJe btsun pa did rearrange them.

group of deities, upon seeing Khedrup and realizing his great qualities, disavow their mission, feeling it inappropriate to follow through with their orders. One such deity even says that, were it not for his previous promises to protect and serve the Sakyapas, he would have joined Tsongkhapa's entourage as their protector (...).

The latter group of deities include the Sa skya pa's chief protectors Vajrapañjara and Caturmukha. In order to better convey an accurate impression of those episodes, I shall give here the first appearance of Vajrapañjara in translation, which directly follows the presentation of mKhas grub rJe's dispute with Ngor chen:³⁵

In that case, because the Sa skya pa were not able to withstand the dispute via textual authority and reasoning, [they] performed sorcery, such as throwing *gtor ma* weapons. At that time, Vajrapañjara showed his physical appearance [to mKhas grub rJe] and said [to him]: "You, human, do not give up Sa skya! Stay at Sa skya!"

As for that, rJe Bla ma thought: "For staying at Sa skya, if there would be a single person with a pure view and conduct, [I] would stay. But the doctrine of the previous lamas [i.e., the founding fathers of Sa skya] does no longer exist. Likewise, the disciples of the subsequent generations have disappeared. Who is able to stay at this sad place whose temples are full of women, donkeys, cattle, and barmaids? Though [I] did not stay physically, [my] mind has been upholding [the Sa skya pa doctrine]. Especially during this short life, [I, however,] stay where rJe Bla ma Tsong kha pa chen po resides."

[mKhas grub rJe] replied: "[I] am offering *gtor mas* to you, *ḍākinīs* and Dharma protectors of Sa skya."

35 *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fols. 25b5–26a5): *de ltar sa skya pa rnams kyis lung rigs kyi sgo nas ni risod par ma bzod pas| gtor zor 'phen pa sogs mthu byas pa'i tshe na| rje bla ma 'di nyid la gur gyi mgon pos sku'i snang ba bstan te mi khyod kyis sa skya blos ma gtong| sa skyar sdod ces gsungs| der rje bla mas sa skyar sdod pa la lta spyod rnam par dag pa gcig yod na sdod mod| bla ma gong ma'i grub mtha' ni med| phyi rabs kyi gdul bya ni 'di bzhin du song| gtsug lag khang rnams ni bud med dang bong bu ba glang chang mas gang| skyo sa 'dir sus sdod tshugs| lus kyis ma bsdad kyang sems kyis bzung yod| khyed sa skya'i mkha' 'gro chos skyong rnams la gtor ma ni 'bul gyi yod zhus pas| bstan pa nub sar sdod dgos pa yin| dar sar gang byas kyang yong mod| nga yang 'di na lta spyod la ltos nas bsdad pa min| bla ma snga ma'i dam tshig dang bka' bsgo yod pas bsdad pa yin| gzhan yang nged cag 'khor bcas khyod kyi bla ma'i rjes su 'brang gi yod| sa skya pa rnams khyod la gtan nas mi dga' bar 'dug nga la gtor ma byin nas blo bzang grags pa yab sras dang| khyad par du khyod la gnod pa ci 'khyol gyis shig zer| khong tsho'i ngo ma chog pa dang| bla ma snga ma'i bka' bsgo dran nas| kha rag tshun chad du 'jigs pa'i cha lugs kyis 'ongs| slar log nas phyin zhes gsungs so||* For the original account, cf. the *mKhas grub rje'i rnam thar* 1 (fol. 6a3–b2).

[Vajrapañjara] then spoke: “One should stay where the [Buddha’s] doctrine is ceasing. As for the place where [it] flourishes, it would be fine whatever one did. I, too, have not stayed here depending on the [pure] view and conduct [of Sa skya’s monks]. [I] have stayed because of the tantric commitments of the previous lamas and the command [I] have [from them]. Beyond that, I and [my] retinue are following your lama [i.e., Tsong kha pa]. The Sa skya pa do not like you at all. Giving me *gtor mas*, [they] said: ‘Inflict harm on Blo bzang grags pa, the father, and [his] disciples, and especially on you, as best as [you] can.’ Unable to refuse their request, and remembering the command of the previous lamas, [I] came in a terrifying form as far as Kha rag. [But I] returned again and went [to Sa kya, not following through with my orders].”

Subsequently, similar accounts on encounters with Caturmukha are given. This protector tells mKhas grub rJe, for instance, that he must uphold the tradition of the Sa skya pa (*sa skya pa’i srol*), and that if he would not stay at Sa skya, he would follow him wherever he would go.³⁶ On another occasion, he tells him that he was dispatched by the Sa skya pa to harm him, but realising his qualities, and the negative consequences if Tsong kha pa and his disciples were to be harmed and left without protection, he returns to Sa skya.³⁷

The episodes discussed above figure prominently in mKhas grub rJe’s secret biography and their general tone is highly sectarian. Drawing on the doctrinal divide between the dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools, rJe btsun pa created a powerful image conveying to his audience both the necessity and legitimacy of mKhas grub rJe’s polemics and his doctrinal superiority over those Sa skya pa masters he had debated.³⁸ Breaking with mKhas grub rJe’s past as a Sa skya pa student, he also established his identity and authority as an authentic expounder of Tsong kha pa’s teachings. Ultimately, by highlighting the sectarian divide between the Sa skya pa, on the one hand, and Tsong kha pa and his disciples, on the other hand, he contributed to the process of consolidating a self-conception and sectarian identity of his dGe lugs pa audience as an independent school, distancing them from their Sa skya pa origins. Later dGe lugs pa generations could also reaffirm and strengthen this identity by drawing on those accounts of mKhas grub rJe’s victories.

In presenting mKhas grub rJe’s disputes, rJe btsun pa may generally have been influenced by the political unrest and military clashes between the Rin spungs pa and

36 See the *mKhas grub rje’i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 26a5–6). For the original account, cf. the *mKhas grub rje’i rnam thar* 1 (fol. 6b2–3).

37 See the *mKhas grub rje’i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 26a6–b2). For the original account, cf. the *mKhas grub rje’i rnam thar* 1 (fol. 7b3–5).

38 rJe btsun pa also expresses this directly within the subsection on the protector deities. He states that mKhas grub rJe did not deliberately object to the doctrine of the Sa skya pa. He did so because a number of its aspects were unacceptable. It was not mKhas grub rJe who was to blame, but the Sa skya pa’s doctrine. See the *mKhas grub rje’i gsang rnam* 1 (fols. 27b6–28a3).

Phag mo gru pa that dominated the religiopolitical landscape of central Tibet during the last decades of the fifteenth and early decades of the sixteenth centuries. In particular, he may have been influenced by his personal engagement in debates and polemics.³⁹ Thus a brief excursus into the history of that period is needed to embed rJe btsun pa's life into the larger religiopolitical context of his time.

During those politically unstable times characterised by constant shifts of power and forming of new alliances, from 1480 on, the Rin spungs pa family of eastern gTsang gradually succeeded in taking control of dBus, which they dominated from 1498 to 1517. With the loss of power of the Phag mo gru pa government and their local allies (e.g., the sNel pa and Brag dkar nobles), the dGe lugs pa lost one of their earliest and strongest patrons, suffering from harsh restrictions that the Rin spungs pa enacted against them in the area of lHa sa. For instance, from 1498 on, as a strategic measure to control the movement of the dGe lugs pa, they were forbidden to participate in the New Year's Great Prayer Festival (*smon lam chen mo*) in lHa sa, which had originally been initiated by Tsong kha pa in 1409, but was now overseen by monks from the Karma bKa' brgyud pa and Sa skya pa schools, which were patronised by the Rin spungs pa. The Rin spungs pa's support of the hierarchs of the Karma bKa' brgyud pa school—the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524) and Seventh Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1507)—further contributed to sectarian clashes. For example, monks from Se ra and 'Bras spungs are said to have destroyed a new Karma bKa' brgyud pa monastery that had only recently been built by the Seventh Karma pa near lHa sa, and the Karma pa himself was attacked by monks of the dGe lugs pa school.⁴⁰

rJe btsun pa—a native of gTsang who received his religious training at gNas rnying and bKra shis lhun po in gTsang and Se ra and dGa' ldan in dBus—engaged during those eventful times in rituals to repel the enemy's army (*dmag bzlog*) and debated with Sa skya pa scholars, both in person and writing, as we learn from his biography by his disciple Paṇ chen bDe legs nyi ma. He performed those rituals while at Bye ri sTag rtse when it came to long-lasting war-related disturbances (*sde gzar*)

39 On the life of rJe btsun pa, see Ary 2015: [67]–102. Kapstein 2006: 128 has pointed out that “it is one of the unfortunate illusions of Tibetan history that religious tension has too often been taken as the cause, rather than as a symptomatic ideological projection, of the underlying fissures that have often afflicted Tibetan society.”

40 On these developments, see the *Bod kyi lo rgyus* (vol. 2, pp. 538.12–540.19), Czaja 2013: 235–255, Jackson (under preparation), Kapstein 2006: [127]–131, Rheingans 2010: 244–249, and DiValerio 2015: 133–141. In addition, Nälendra, a large Sa skya pa monastery to the north of lHa sa in 'Phen po may have been sacked by dGe lugs pa monks; see Jackson 1989: [1]–5, 18–25, and Jackson (under preparation). However, the political situation was much more complicated than this simplified presentation may suggest, and cannot simply be reduced to a conflict between gTsang and dBus. For instance, the Fourth Zhwa dmar pa was also closely connected to the Phag mo gru pa and mediated in those conflicts, and the rGyal rtse lords of eastern gTsang supported the Phag mo gru pa in dBus.

between gTsang and dBus, apparently in support of the Phag mo gru pa and their allies. Since his rituals are said to have been successful, the local governors (*sde pa dpon blon*) developed a deep faith in him.⁴¹

The first debate he engaged in is recorded for the period when he served as main teacher (*'chad nyan*) of the bDe ba chen college of Rong Byams chen Chos sde, which he did for thirteen years from 1499 on. The Byams chen Chos sde was the main Rin spungs pa monastery and one of numerous Sa skya pa monasteries in gTsang whose foundation the Rin spungs pa lords had patronised.⁴² Among its seven colleges (*grwa tshang*), there was one dGe lugs pa *grwa tshang*, bDe ba chen, which rJe btsun pa was leading as teacher.⁴³ On one occasion, his Rin spungs pa patron staged a debate (*bgro gleng*) at his seat at Rin spungs, out of which rJe btsun pa is said to have emerged victorious, defeating the foremost Sa skya pa *dge bshes* present at Rin spungs and winning fame for spreading Tsong kha pa's teachings.⁴⁴

His patron was the sDe pa sGar pa, the general of the Rin spungs pa army encampment, who can be identified as Don yod rdo rje (1463–1512), who on another occasion brought together many learned Sa skya pa *dge bshes* in lHa sa, staging debates (*bgro gleng*) in the Po ta la and at gZhis ka sNe'u with dGe lugs pa lamas from Se ra—whose Byes mKhas snyan grwa tshang rJe btsun pa had been heading since 1511—and 'Bras spungs.⁴⁵ The unrivalled rJe btsun pa is said to have defeated

41 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fols. 20b5–21a1). Bye ri sTag rtse refers to the Bye ri sTag rtse rdzong, a Phag mo gru pa outpost near Zhogs on the right bank of the sKyid chu; see Sørensen & Hazod 2007: 22–24, 208, n. 542, 767, n. 5, and *passim*. According to Hazod 2004: 31, it was founded under Ta'i si tu Byang chub rgyal mtshan (1302–1364) and was “one of several governing seats occupied by families from the Phag gru ruling house.” Though undated, rJe btsun pa apparently performed those rituals prior to his 1523 installation as abbot of sTag rtse Rin chen sgang; see the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 22a2–3).

42 Byams chen Chos sde was founded in 1427 by Nor bu bzang po (1403–1466); see the *Rin spungs pa sger gyi gdung rabs* (p. 130.1–2) and Czaja 2013: 483–484. Other Sa skya pa monasteries that were established under the patronage of the Rin spungs pa were, for instance, 'Bras yul sKyed mos tshal (1448), Zi lung at Pan Khyung tshang (1452), which Shākya mchog ldan transformed into gSer mdog can (in 1471), rTa nag gSer gling (1467), and rTa nag Thub bstan rnam rgyal (1473).

43 According to sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705), the Byams chen Monastery had seven colleges (*grwa tshang*): four Sa skya pa (sDe rgyas, dPal 'byor sgang, Shar chen pa, and lHum ra sdings), two Bo dong pa (Nor bu gling and Chen khang pa), and one dGe lugs pa (bDe ba can); see the *Baidūrya ser po* (p. 230, no. 14). rJe btsun pa is listed as the third lama heading that college; see the *Baidūrya ser po* (p. 230, no. 14). In 1647, Byams chen was converted into the dGe lugs pa monastery named dGa' ldan Byams pa gling; see the *Baidūrya ser po* (p. 401.5–10).

44 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fols. 12b4–13a2, 14b2–6).

45 Jackson (under preparation) has pointed out that “the sNel pa family were among the most powerful nobles in Central Tibet at the end of the Phag mo gru pa, controlling as they did the important sNe'u rDzong (the district including lHa sa, and a fort on the banks of the sKyid chu below 'Bras spungs, not to be confused with the Phag mo gru pa capital, sNe gdong). (...) The

all of them, leaving behind stunned officials (*dpon skya*) among the spectators adhering to the Sa skya pa doctrine, who could not believe that in all of dBus and gTsang no worthy opponent could be found to cope with him.⁴⁶

These accounts by bDe legs nyi ma attest to public debates between dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa masters that were staged by the Rin spungs pa when that noble family was controlling both dBus and gTsang.⁴⁷ These occasions provided the debaters with the chance to settle their doctrinal differences in front of their patrons, to distinguish themselves publicly by establishing the doctrinal superiority of their own tradition,

leading branch of the family (...) aligned itself in the mid-fifteenth century against the Rin spungs pas, but in the 1490s lost its power when defeated by the armies of Rin spungs pa Don yod rdo rje and his allies,” thereby also losing their estate, the gZhis ka sNe’u. They were also patrons of Tsong kha pa and the three large dGe lugs pa monasteries of dGa’ ldan, ’Bras spungs, and Se ra; see Jackson 2007: 355. Similarly, Czaja 2013: 245–246 has pointed out that “with the elimination of the noble house of Sne’u the Dge lugs pa lost a noble family which had patronised them for generations. Having lost the patronage of the Phag mo gru pa some decades earlier, the result was disastrous. It weakened the position of the Dge lugs pa significantly.” On the governors of sNel pa (or sNe’u), see Sørensen & Hazod 2007: 759–763. See also Czaja 2013: 569.

46 See the *rJe btsun pa’i rnam thar* (fols. 16b4–17a1). Some days prior to his own passing on the nineteenth day of the eleventh lunar-month of the male wood-dragon year (i.e., 1544), rJe btsun pa was invited from Byams chen Monastery because the sDe pa dMag dpon pa had fallen sick, but heard on the next day that he had already passed away. Here the Rin spungs pa lord cannot be Don yod rdo rje, who had already passed away in 1512, but may possibly be Ngag dbang rnam rgyal; see Czaja 2013: 488–489. On another occasion, rJe btsun pa was invited from Gong dkar by a certain dPon po bDag mo, probably the wife of a Gong dkar or Yar rgyab noble. Since this invitation was extended when rJe btsun pa was serving as abbot of Se ra (tenure: 1538–1541), the noble lady cannot be the famous dPal ldan rDo rje bde ma (d. 1490/91)—the sister of Hor rDo rje tshe brtan, the ruler of Phyang rgyas valley—who was married to two brothers from the neighboring Yar rgyab house. One of her most famous children was Kun dga’ rnam rgyal (1432–1496), who founded the Sa skya pa monastery of Gong dkar rDo rje gdan in 1464. Czaja 2013: 263–264 mentions several visits that Padma dkar po (1527–1592) paid to Gong dkar, the first, in 1536, following the invitation of a noble lady called dPon sa bDag mo and on another occasion in 1552, when he became the lama of a certain bDag mo, whom Czaja identifies as ’Phyang rgyas rTse ma. Probably at the Gong dkar rdzong, rJe btsun pa gave teachings to the *zhal ngo* (i.e., either the sons of that noble lady or her minor nobles/functionaries), and also to scholars of various traditions and the best Sa skya pa *dge bshes* from Gong dkar Monastery, who are all said to have developed a great trust in his enlightened activities and paid him their respect. See the *rJe btsun pa’i rnam thar* (fol. 22b1–3). On rDo rje bde ma, see Fermer 2010: 95–98.

47 dPa’ bo gTsong lag phreng ba (1504–1566) mentions an earlier debate between the Karma bKa’ brgyud pa master Chos rje gSung rab mang thos, a disciple of the Seventh Karma pa, and sMon lam dpal (1414–1491), abbot of both dGa’ ldan and ’Bras spungs during most of the 1480s, and Legs pa chos ’byor (1429–1503), the latter’s successor on the ’Bras spungs throne; see the *mKhas pa’i dga’ ston* (p. 1167.4–9), *Baidūrya ser po* (pp. 78–79, 107), and Jackson (under preparation). sMon lam dpal successfully revolted for a few years against the invading Rin spungs pa troops and may have been involved in the aforementioned misfortunes of Nā lendra Monastery; see Jackson 1989: 18–25 and Jackson (under preparation).

and to prove that they were worthy of their patrons' continuous support. In the case of rJe btsun pa, however, we must note that, though he was a dGe lugs pa, he also maintained connections with the Rin spungs pa, whose lords originally followed an even-handed approach in their religious patronage, as exemplified by the aforementioned dGe lugs pa college of the Byams chen Chos sde. However, by the turn of the century, out of primarily political reasons, they predominantly patronised the Karma bKa' brgyud pa and Sa skya pa schools. That Don yod rdo rje staged one of those public debates at the estate of the sNel pa nobles, the erstwhile rulers of IHa sa and important dGe lugs pa patrons, can be seen as a further attempt to humiliate the sNel pa donor and their dGe lugs pa donee, though, according to his biography, rJe btsun pa emerged victorious over the Sa skya pa.

bDe legs nyi ma describes rJe btsun pa's debates with Sa skya pa lamas in a cordial atmosphere free of sectarian tensions. But the tone of his presentation changes slightly when discussing the polemical writings rJe btsun pa directed against the Sa skya pa masters Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429–1489) and Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), both of whom had written refutations of Tsong kha pa. Twice, he refers to rJe btsun pa's polemic writings, styled both times as a direct quote of his master: first in a passage when discussing his studies as a young boy and later as an episode preceding his passing away. In the first passage, we are told that, unable to tolerate the spreading of Tsong kha pa's teachings, Go rams pa and Shākya mchog ldan composed evil verses slandering Tsong kha pa, which is why rJe btsun pa wrote a few verses in reply, fearing that otherwise Tsong kha pa's teachings would come to harm. But apart from that, from the time when he was first able to speak, he had never spoken any words with the thought of harming others.⁴⁸ This is partly reiterated in the second episode: Since Go rams pa and Shākya mchog ldan had slandered Tsong kha pa and refuted his teachings, rJe btsun pa, on the verge of dying, discontinued his daily ritual commitments and wrote his responses to those two masters' refutations.⁴⁹

By contrast, the polemical exchange with the young Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554) is described as a cordial exchange between like-minded scholars, lacking such statements as the Karma pa discrediting Tsong kha pa.⁵⁰ According to bDe legs nyi ma, the Karma pa had his commentary on the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* delivered to rJe btsun pa along with a letter praising him as one of the greatest scholars alive, and requesting that he review his commentary and provide an answer.⁵¹ Similarly, the Karma pa also sent his commentary to dGe 'dun rgya mtsho (1475–1542), who, however, too busy to respond, urged rJe btsun pa to do so, which he

48 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 4a1–3).

49 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 30a1–3).

50 Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 30 consider Mi bskyod rdo rje to be one of “the most famous classical critics of Tsong kha pa.” On his critique of the dGe lugs pa Madhyamaka, see Williams 1983a. On his life, see Rheingans 2008 and Rheingans 2010.

51 For the Eighth Karma pa's commentary, see the *Karma pa'i gsung 'bum* (vols. 12–13). On his commentary, which he began in 1529 and completed in 1531, see Rheingans 2008: 129–131.

accordingly did by writing his *Kar lan klu sgrub dgongs rgyan*.⁵² rJe btsun pa then had his work delivered to the Karma pa, whose encampment was pitched at sNye mo. After a detailed analysis, the Karma pa considered the work to be an exceptional composition and is said to have developed strong faith in the Madhyamaka system as expounded by Tsong kha pa,⁵³ sending to rJe btsun pa a letter full of praise together with some authentic hair (*dbu skra 'khrul med*) from Tsong kha pa as an enclosure (*riten*). He also distributed the *Kar lan* among the most famous scholars of dBus and gTsang and among many political leaders (*sde dpon*), asking them to respond to rJe btsun pa's work.⁵⁴

Within his discussion of the polemical exchange with the Eighth Karma pa, bDe legs nyi ma also mentions rJe btsun pa's responses to Go rams pa's and Shākya mchog ldan's refutations of Tsong kha pa for a third time. We are told that rJe btsun pa contacted the Eighth Karma pa in this respect, asking him to testify or give witness (*dpang po mdzad*) in his project. But since the Eighth Karma pa considered rJe btsun pa to be the most suitable person to rectify the Buddha's doctrine, he urged him to write his responses, though he stated that it would be very important for him to receive these texts afterwards. Thus, when shortly before his death rJe btsun pa finished writing his response to Shākya mchog ldan (*Shāk lan*) and the first part (*stod tsam*) of Go rams pa's (*Go lan*), he sent both to the Eighth Karma pa, who is said to have been very delighted and at all times full of praise for rJe btsun pa.⁵⁵

A similar picture is found in the opening sections of the actual responses that rJe btsun pa wrote to Go rams pa, Shākya mchog ldan, and the Eighth Karma pa, representing the two Sa skya pa masters in a rather bad light compared with his respectful portrayal of the Eighth Karma pa, though all three had written refutations of Tsong kha pa.⁵⁶

52 For the *Kar lan klu sgrub dgongs rgyan*, see the *dGag lan phyogs bsgrigs* (pp. [69]–173). It has been mentioned, for instance, by Brunnhölzl 2007: 150–151, Brunnhölzl 2010: 713–714, n. 341, Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 30, Lopez 1996, and Seyfort Ruegg 1988: 1271–1272.

53 'Jam dbyangs bzhad pa (1648–1722) also states that the Eighth Karma pa “repeatedly says that the foremost precious [Dzong-ka-ba's] system is flawless;” see Hopkins 2003: 516–517.

54 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fols. 23b2–24b6).

55 See the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 24b2–6). See also the *rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* (fol. 30a3–4). According to sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, rJe btsun pa was requested by the Eighth Karmapa to write his responses to Go rams pa and Shākya mchog ldan; see the *Baidūrya ser po* (p. 140.2–3). In his commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, the Eighth Karma pa included some critique of Go rams pa and Shākya mchog ldan; see Williams 1983b. For his *Madhyamakāvatāra* commentary, see the *Karma pa'i gsung 'bum* (vol. 14). He began writing this commentary at the end of 1544 or beginning of 1545; see Rheingans 2008: 141, n. 170. According to Seyfort Ruegg 1998: 1271, his commentary “can be presumed to contain Mi bskyod rdo rje's response to the searching questions and objections directed to him by Ser byes rje btsun Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1546) in his *Kar lan klu sgrub dgoṅs rgyan*.”

56 See the *Ita ba ngan pa'i mun sel* (pp. 177.17–178.13, 385.11–386.1) and *Kar lan* (pp. 71.18–72.2), respectively. As has been pointed out by Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 30, the responses

In summary, it can be stated that rJe btsun pa was actively engaged in defending the views of Tsong kha pa against attacks launched from non-dGe lugs pa masters, be it in the debating ground or through polemical writings.⁵⁷ Moreover, he flourished during politically unstable times temporarily characterised by the suppression of his dGe lugs pa school in its traditional stronghold in and around lHa sa, accompanied by the loss of power of its erstwhile religious patrons. It thus cannot be ruled out that in his portrayal of mKhas grub rJe's disputes with such eminent Sa skya pa masters as Ngor chen, rJe btsun pa was not only influenced by the larger political developments and his own polemics but might have had his own agenda.

Other Portrayals of Ngor chen and Ngor

Negative portrayals of Ngor chen and the seat of his tradition—the monastery of Ngor E waṃ chos ldan that he founded in 1429 in the upper reaches of the remote Ngor valley about 30 km southwest of bSam grub rtse (present-day gZhis ka rtse)—can also be found in later sources by scholars of the dGe lugs pa school. For instance, a later calumny is the well-known account of Paṇ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478–1554), who in his *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* recounts Ngor chen's alleged efforts in urging the Rin spungs pa lord Nor bu bzang po (1403–1466) to withdraw the support he was granting the dGe lugs pa.⁵⁸

to Go rams pa and Shākya mchog ldan form two parts of a single work, the *Phyin ci log gi gdam gyi sbyor ba la zhugs pa'i smra ba ngan pa rnam par 'thag pa'i bstan bcos gnam lcags 'khor lo*. After a common opening section, the work begins with the rebuttal of Shākya mchog ldan, followed by that of Go rams pa, and concludes with a versified summary, revealing that the entire work was completed by rJe btsun pa's disciple and biographer bDe legs nyi ma; see the *lTa ba ngan pa'i mun sel* (pp. [175]–178, 178–385, 385–514, 514–518), respectively. On that work, see also Lopez 1996. It would lead us too far astray to investigate the relation between rJe btsun pa and the Eighth Karma pa, for which the sources on the latter's life must also be analysed. On them, see Rheingans 2008: 82–93.

57 Ary 2015: 78–79 points out that rJe btsun pa also aimed at doctrinal cohesion and purity within his own tradition, refuting as well the writings of his forbears and contemporaries.

58 *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (pp. 99a1–100.5): *chos lugs sa dkar la mos kyang dge ldan pa la 'ang dag snang mdzaḍ de yang khong gis chos rje ngor pa la khrid zhu bar rtsam [= brtsams] pa'i tshe bla ma'i zhal nas nged kyi 'dod pa gsum sgrub na khrid ster gsung [= gsungs] de la khong gis sgrub par nus na de bzhin byed zhus khrid thon pa na bla mas mnga' zhabs kyi dge ldan pa rnams sa skya par sgyur ba dang dka' bcu ba dge 'dun grub dgon pa 'debs pa'i mkhar las 'di 'gog pa dang ngor dgon gsar la mor ban mang po 'bul ba rnams dgos zhes gsungs de la nor bzang pas spyir chos lugs bsgyur ba dbang yod sus kyang bya mi 'os shing khyad par nged kyis <chos chos> [= chos] rje rgyal tshab pa la chos 'brel zhus pas khong dge ldan pa la dam tshig srung dgos pa 'ang yod dka' bcu ba dgon pa 'debs pa la grogs dan byed pa ma byung kyang bkag na nged sde pa la gdam ngan phog 'ong bas dgag mi spobs dgon gsar la mor ban ltos [= gtos] chen po 'bul ba gong ma na rim gzhis bskor la phebs pa'i zhabs tog las ka skyel mi'i rgya ban rnams kyi sna len sde bzar [= gzar] gyi rkyen khur sogs dgos pas 'bul mi bde zhes zhus pa yin skad. Emendations made by the author. For Tucci's emendations, see Tucci 1971: 125–126.*

Though the religious traditions [to which Nor bzang] was inclined were the Sa [skya pa] and dKar [brgyud pa], [he] also saw the good side of the dGe ldan pa. In fact, when he began to request from Chos rje Ngor pa instructions, that lama said: “If [you] accomplish my three wishes, [I] will give you the instructions.” With this regard, [he] replied: “If [I] am capable to accomplish [your wishes], [I] will do accordingly.” At the time when the instructions took place, the lama spoke: “[I] want the conversion of the dGe ldan pas that are under [your] rule to Sa skya pas, the end of the construction work of the monastic foundation [of] dKa’ bcu ba dGe ’dun grub [i.e., bKra shis lhun po], and an offering of many *mor ban* servants to the new monastery of Ngor.” As to that, Nor bzang is said to have replied: “In general, it is not worthy for anyone in power to convert a religious tradition and, in particular, because I have established a Dharma connection with Chos rje rGyal tshab [i.e., Dar ma rin chen], [I] also have to uphold the commitment [I made] to him [and] the dGe ldan pa. Even though [I] have offered no assistance to bKa’ bcu ba for [his] monastic foundation, in case [I] would bring [the construction] to a halt, I and [my] office would suffer from a bad reputation. Thus [I] do not dare to stop [it]. [It] is not convenient [for me] to provide a large number of *mor ban* servants to the new monastery [of Ngor], because [I have many] obligations, such as the responsibility for hosting the successive [Phag mo gru pa] rulers who are making formal visits to the estates, the officials delivering orders for official duties, the *rgya ban* servants, [and the responsibility for] the incidents of warfare-related disturbances [occurring here in my domain].

However, it was stated by the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) that this account was fabricated and lacked credibility. In his history of Tibet, he corrected and strongly criticised bSod nams grags pa’s remarks, dismissing them based on what he perceived to be an historical anachronism:⁵⁹

For his translation, see *ibid.*: 239–240. Based on explanations by Khri byang Blo bzang ye shes bstan ’dzin rgya mtsho (1901–1981), *ibid.*: 239, n. 2, 240, n. 1 provides explanations and paraphrases for otherwise lexically unattested terms: *mor ban* were “female servants as a part of the *mi ser* provided as servants of a monastery and attached to its property and service;” *zhabs tog las ka skyel mi* is paraphrased as *zhabs zhu’i las don gyi bka’ yig skyel mkhan*; and *rgya ban* clarified as *bran g.yog*, who in gTsang are “also called *skye’o* = *ban c’en*.” Cf. *ibid.*: 125, where he suggests to emend *rgya ban* to *skya ban*.

- 59 dPyid kyi rgyal mo’i glu dbyangs (p. 160.2–11): *chos rje bsod grags pas| chos rje ngor chen pas rin spungs nor bzang pa la| rje dge ’dun grub kyis dgon pa ’debs pa ’gog dgos tshul gsungs pa ni ngag rgyun ma dag pa’i ’chal gtam zhig bris par snang ste| thams cad mkhyen pa dge ’dun grub kyis bkra shis lhun po ’debs skabs| bsam ’grub rtse’i rdzong dpon ’phyong rgyas pa hor dpal ’byor bzang po yin zhing| ’di nyid kyis rje dge ’dun grub kyi sbyin bdag gi mthil mdzad par ming tsam gi mkhas pa ma yin pa’i grags pa don dang mthun pa’i pañ chen byams pa gling pa bsod nams rnam par rgyal bas mdzad pa’i yar rgyab kyi gdung rabs na gsal bar gsungs so||* For the translation of this passage, see also Ahmad 2008: 127. On the foundation of bKra shis lhun

That Chos rje Ngor chen told Rin spungs Nor bzang that [he] wants [him] to stop the foundation of [bKra shis lhun po] Monastery by rJe dGe 'dun grub is a fabricated rumour of a false oral tradition, which appears to have been written down by Chos rje bSod grags. Because when the Omniscient dGe 'dun grub founded bKra shis lhun po, the district governor of bSam grub rtse was 'Phyong rgyas pa Hor dPal 'byor bzang po. That this [governor] acted as the foremost among the patrons of rJe dGe 'dun grub is clearly stated in the *Genealogy of Yar rgyab* written by Paṅ chen Byams pa gling pa bSod nams rnam par rgyal ba, whose fame for *not* being a scholar in name only was justified.

The fact that bSod nams grags pa sought to denigrate Ngor chen in other contexts is further evident from remarks he made in two other writings. In his history of the old and new bKa' gdams pa schools, the *bKa' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung*, he mentions as a side note that Chos rje Kun bzang (i.e., Ngor chen) showed an “attitude of jealousy” (*phrag dog pa'i rnam 'gyur*) towards bKra shis lhun po.⁶⁰ And while

po, a discussion of dPal 'byor bzang po's role in its foundation, and the accuracy of the Fifth Dalai Lama's argument, see Czaja 2013: 223–225, n. 54 and Shen 2002: 106–111. On the *Yar rgyab kyi gdung rabs* by Byams pa gling pa bSod nams rnam rgyal (1400–1475), see Martin 1997: 63, no. 99 and Shen 2002: 207–208, n. 289. However, the Fifth Dalai Lama's regent, sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, alludes to tensions between Ngor chen and dGe 'dun grub, mentioning as an aside in his biographical sketch of the latter that dGe 'dun grub composed his famous song (*gsung mgur*) known as *Shar gangs ri ma* because of the jealousy shown by Ngor chen; see the *Baidūrya ser po* (p. 238.20): *gsung 'bum gras ngor pa kun bzang pas phrag dog mdzad par brten pa'i shar gangs ri ma sogs* (...). Indeed, after having praised his own masters (i.e., Tsong kha pa and his disciples) in the first part, dGe 'dun grub criticises certain hostile masters in his second part. For instance, he says: (*Shar gangs ris ma*, p. 367.5): *lar da lta gangs ri'i khrod 'di na|| rang bstan pa 'dzin par khas len zhiing|| gzhān bstan 'dzin dgra bo'i dwangs mar 'dzin|| tshul 'di la skyo ba gting nas skyes*||. Partly, the song thus reflects the tensions and animosities between the emerging dGe lugs pa and old Sa skya pa schools. The song, the colophon of which is by a different hand and does not provide any date or place of composition, may have been written somewhere in gTsang or even in bKra shis lhun po because dGe 'dun grub refers in it to dGa' ldan Monastery as located in the east. For the song's translation, see Mullin 1985: 119–121. *Ibid.*: 266, n. 4 also commented on the historical background of the aforementioned verse: “This refers to an intensive campaign of persecution that had been launched against the Ge-luk-pa school by certain of the older sects who, jealous of the Ge-luk's overnight popularity, attempted to maintain the status quo by means of force. Gen-dun Drub, typical to his style, does not identify anyone by name. However, a glance at any fifteenth-century history of Tibet reveals quite clearly the sources of the problem.”

⁶⁰ See the *bKa' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung* (p. 148.11–18). The two statements of bSod nams grags pa have also been criticised by the late Sa skya pa master gDong thog Rin po che bsTan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1933–2015); see the *Dus kyi me lce* (pp. 136.15–138.7). The former statement has been defended by the dGe lugs pa master mDo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1932–2002); see the *Kun khyab 'brug sgra* (pp. 30.19–31.16). A similar comment like that of bSod nams grags pa was also made by a much later non-dGe lugs pa historian, though it seems to have been based on it. In a short summary of controversies that emerged between and also among followers of the new

discussing in his *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* the patronage the Sa skya pa school received from the kings of Glo bo (i.e., Mustang), he relates that with the invitation of Ngor chen all the monasteries in that domain were forcibly converted into the Sa skya pa, in general, and the Ngor pa, in particular, and that the king A ma dpal (1388–ca. 1456) was slightly adverse to the dGe lugs pa.⁶¹

Given bSod nams grags pa's bias as a pro-dGe lugs pa historian, and the fact that his accounts were sometimes dismissed by less sectarian lamas of his own tradition, the reliability of his accounts can be dismissed.⁶² As far as we know, Ngor chen was on good terms with the house of Rin spungs, whose lords are recorded among his chief patrons, and he would have had no need to win them over for the sectarian activities alleged by bSod nams grags pa.⁶³ The biographical sources mention at least two visits that Ngor chen paid to Rin spungs. The first is recorded as being in the year 1441 or 1442, while he was on his way back from the Phag mo gru pa court, to which he had been invited by Gong ma Grags pa 'byung gnas (1414–1445), the sixth sovereign of the Phag mo gru pa regime (r. 1432–1445).⁶⁴ The second took place a couple of years later in 1446, when he was invited by Nor bu bzang po and his brother dPal bzang rin chen (b. 1405).⁶⁵ We should also not forget that Ngor chen embarked in 1447 on his third journey to Glo bo, only returning in the second half of 1449, and

tantra schools (*gsar ma ba*), sTag sgang mKhas mchog Gu ru bkra shis (fl. 18th/19th century) mentions that a “passionate and aggressive attitude” (*chags sdang gi rnam pa*) was shown from Ngor when dGe 'dun grub established bKra shis lhun po; see the *Gu bkra'i chos 'byung* (p. 992.19–20). On this passage, see also Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 271, n. 216.

61 See the *Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* (p. 39a2–6): *blo 'o ni rdzong kha ba'i dpon sa skya 'phar ba'i sde dpon du 'dug la|de yang dpon a ma dpal gyi ring snga sor chos rje phyogs las pa dang| phyis ngor pa kun bzang pa spyan drangs pa rtsa ba'i bla mar khur te| mnga' zhabs kyi chos sde rnam spyir sa skya pa dang dgos [= sgos] ngor pa yin na min na byed du bcug ste| dge ldan pa la sdang zur re tsam yang ston| de rjes dpon bkra shis mgon gyi ring yang chos lugs sngar bzhin la dge las stobs che|*. For the translation of this passage, see Tucci 1971: 170. On this passage, see also Vitali 1996: 499, n. 843, 509, n. 862.

62 According to van der Kuijp 1983: 260, n. 19, sDe gzhung Rin po che Kun dga' bstan pa'i nyi ma (1906–1987), “is also inclined to hold this allegation as a fabrication on Bsod-nams grags-pa's part.” Cf. Shen 2002: 107–108, 207–208, n. 289, who perceives bSod nams grags pa's account as accurate. For further critique of bSod nams grags pa by the Fifth Dalai Lama, see Jackson 2007: 351–352, n. 20 and van der Kuijp 2013: 138–145. On distorted accounts by later dGe lugs pas on the dispute between mKhas grub rJe and Rong ston Shes bya kun rig, see Jackson 2007: 354, n. 32.

63 See the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 535.3–5).

64 See the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 462.2–3) and *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 545.1–6).

65 When this invitation reached him, Ngor chen was bestowing the *Lam 'bras* at Ngor. He discontinued his teaching, and, installing Mus chen as his representative, he travelled to Rin spungs. See the *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 608.2–4). Cf. the *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 218.2–4), which states that Ngor chen travelled to sNubs Chos lung. But this does not contradict the former statement, because that monastery of the Chos lung tshogs pa was located in the Rong valley forming part of the domain of the Rin spungs pa lords.

thus he might have had already left by the time bKra shis lhun po was founded.⁶⁶ However, it is conceivable that Ngor chen was at least unamused when he learned of the plan of dGe 'dun grub (1391–1475) to establish a dGe lugs pa institution only about half a day's walk away from his own seat.⁶⁷ But until new sources prove otherwise, there is no reason to accept bSod nams grags pa's remarks. Like the lords of rGyal rtse and La stod Byang,⁶⁸ the Rin spungs pa, as mentioned above, followed traditionally an even-handed approach in their religious patronage and allowed dGe 'dun grub to build bKra shis lhun po in close vicinity to bSam grub rtse, the district-fort (*rdzong*) that Nor bu bzang po had recently brought under his control.⁶⁹

More than three hundred years after the founding of bKra shis lhun po, the fairly sectarian dGe lugs pa scholar Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1732–1802) looks back on those developments from a different point of view, thereby revealing the great significance his school ascribed to the foundation of bKra shis lhun po as a foothold in hostile territory. In his *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*, he relates that dGe 'dun grub was offered the abbatial throne of dGa' ldan after the death of Zha lu pa Legs pa rgyal mtshan (1375–1450), the fourth abbot of dGa' ldan (tenure: 1438–1450). However, concerned about the future development of his newly established seat, dGe 'dun grub is said to have declined that offer, arguing:⁷⁰

66 On Ngor chen's three visits to Glo bo, see Heimbrel 2014: 341–426.

67 It is difficult to say whether high sectarian tensions actually arose between bKra shis lhun po and Ngor during the time of their first few abbots. If they did, they eased over time. From the seventeenth century onwards, we find regular references to visits paid by Ngor pa lamas to bKra shis lhun po, as would be expected during the dGa' ldan pho brang period when bKra shis lhun po dominated much of gTsang politically.

68 For instance, seven of the seventeen colleges (*grwa tshang*) of dPal 'khor bDe chen (or dPal 'khor sDe chen or dPal 'khor Chos sde) and ten of the twenty-five colleges of Ngam ring Chos sde (or Ngang rings Chos sde) were dGe lugs pa; see the *Baidūrya ser po* (pp. 244–247, no. 26, 263–267, nos. 79–88), respectively.

69 On different datings of this capture (1434/35 or 1446), see Czaja 2013: 20, 221, n. 43, 223, and Shen 2002: 211–212, n. 302.

70 *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (pp. 354.6–355.1): *dgra mkhar dgra'i lung par rgyag dgos pa yin| nged rang gi 'dir yang dga' ldan tsam zhig 'ong ba'i re ba yod gsungs nas ma phebs|*. For the translation of this passage, see also Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima 2009: 280 and Shen 2002: 223, n. 341. Cf. the *dGe 'dun grub pa'i rnam thar* (p. 64.1–2), where dGe 'dun grub's rejection of the dGa' ldan abbacy is not phrased in such a harsh tone: *rje bla ma'i gsung nas| bdag der mi 'gro| de'i rgyu mtshan yang dgon pa 'di yang btab ma thog tu song bas rgyun brtan pa cig ma byung dogs shing| khyad par sngar byas pa thams cad kyang bstan pa spyi sgos 'ba' zhig la bsams| da dung yang rje btsun tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa 'ba' zhig la bsams te 'dir ka sdod pa yin gsungs te (...)*. For the translation of this passage, see Shen 2002: 223. This passage served as the model for the presentation by Yong 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793); see the *Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (vol. 2, p. 634.4–6): (...) *rje 'di bas bdag dge ldan gyi gdan sa byed du mi 'gro| de'i rgyu mtshan yang dgon pa 'di yang btab ma thag tu song bas rgyun brtan pa cig ma byung dogs shing| khyad par sngar byas pa thams cad kyang bstan pa spyi sgos 'ba' zhig la bsams| da dung yang rje btsun tsong kha pa chen po'i bstan pa 'ba' zhig*

A hostile fort needs to be built on the enemy's land. [I] have the hope that my own [monastery] will also develop here just about [the same as] dGa' ldan." [So] saying, [he] did not go [for the abbatial throne of dGa' ldan].

Thu'u bkwan specified the sectarian reason that allegedly prompted dGe 'dun grub to decline that offer:⁷¹

[It] appears that [dGe 'dun grub] spoke like that because in the vicinity of this monastery [i.e., bKra shis lhun po] were many at that time with wrong views about the doctrine of the Lord [Tsong kha pa] such as Ngor pa, Go [rams pa], and Shāk[ya mchog ldan]. But later on, by the splendour of bKra shis lhun po, which had gradually unfolded, [Sa skya pa monasteries] such as [the seats of those aforementioned masters of] Ngor, rTa nag Thub bstan [rnam rgyal], and gSer mdog can were characterised by [their] invisibility like fire flies in front of the sun.

A similar statement is contained in another eighteenth-century source, namely the compilation of the lives of *Lam rim* masters by Yong 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793), though it is given within a slightly different context: dGe 'dun grub is said to have declined the abbatial throne of dGa' ldan for a second time after the passing away of Chos rje Blo gros chos skyong (1389–1463), the fifth abbot of dGa' ldan (tenure: 1450–1463):⁷²

la bsams te 'di khar sdod pa yin]. Cf. also the *bKa' gdams chos 'byung* (pp. 790.23–791.2): *zhal nas* | *nga nyid la 'di bas re che ba cig yod pa yin* | *nga 'di kha ru dga' ldan tsam zhig e yong lta ba yin* | *zhes gsungs pa gda*']. On both passages, see also Shen 2002: 223–224, n. 341.

71 *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (p. 355.1–2): *de dus chos sde 'di'i nye 'khor na ngor pa dang go shāk sogs rje'i ring lugs la log par lta ba mang bas de skad gsungs par snang la* | *phyis su bkra shis lhun po rim gyis dar rgyas su song ba'i gzi brjid kyis* | *ngor dang* | *rta nag thub bstan dang* | *gser mdog can sogs nyi ma'i drung du me khyer bzhin snang mi rung gi mtshan nyid can du gyur to*]. For the translation of this passage, see also Thuken Losang Chökyi Nyima 2009: 280 and Shen 2002: 223, n. 341. This passage has also been discussed in polemics exchanged between the dGe lugs pa master mDo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho and the Sa skya pa master gDong thog Rin po che; see the *Dus kyi sbrang char* (pp. 130.5–131.5), *Dus kyi me lce* (pp. 40.15–43.8), and *Lung rigs thog mda'* (pp. 13.16–18.11). gDong thog Rin po che discusses also a second passage from Thu'u bkwan's *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long*, in which the latter belittles the Sa skya pa's influence in eastern Tibet; see the *Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* (p. 214.3–4), *Dus kyi sbrang char* (pp. 128.18–130.5), and *Dus kyi me lce* (pp. 36.16–40.14). For the response to that criticism by Yon tan rgya mtsho, see the *Kun khyab 'brug sgra* (pp. 40.4–41.10) and *Lung rigs thog mda'* (pp. 11.16–13.15). Moreover, such debates as that between mKhas grub rJe and Rong ston and that between mKhas grub rJe and Ngor chen are also discussed; see the *Dus kyi me lce* (pp. 43.18–52.12) and *Lung rigs thog mda'* (pp. 18.14–22.8).

72 *Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (vol. 1, p. 926.2): (...) *kho bo dgra yul du dgra mkhar brtsig [= rtsig?] dgos pa yod pas 'di kha rang du rje'i bstan pa 'dzin pa yin*]. On this passage, see also Shen 2002: 223–224, n. 341.

Because a hostile fort needs to be built on the enemy's land, just at this [monastery] here, I am upholding the teachings of the Lord [Tsong kha pa].

Those accounts suggest that some dGe lugs pa enthusiasts considered Ngor chen and his monastic foundation to be one of the major obstacles to their expansionist ambitions in gTsang. By the time of the foundation of bKra shis lhun po, Ngor chen was surely a towering figure on the religious scene of gTsang and formed a counterweight to the expanding dGe lugs pa. Similar to Tsong kha pa, he can be considered a reformer in his own right, who not only tried to renew the Sa skya pa school from within but also, as Leonard van der Kuijp has put it, "sought to weed out a number of Tibetan opinions which he considered to be non-supportable."⁷³ A similar statement is made by Gung ru Shes rab bzang po (1411–1475) in his continuation of Ngor chen's *Lam 'bras* history:⁷⁴

In particular, at the time when the precious teachings of the glorious Sa skya pa were drowned in the swamp of superimposition and depreciation by ourselves and others, and were thus unclear, this Great Being [i.e., Ngor chen], showering down a heavy rain of textual authority and reasoning (...), performed the clean-up of washing off all filth of misconceptions.

It should be emphasised that Shes rab bzang po mentions the distortion of the Sa skya pa teachings by both internal *and external forces*. This brings us back to Ngor chen's role in counterbalancing the dGe lugs pa expansion. That he was allotted such a role even by his own Sa skya pa school is evident from a statement found in the main part of the biography that Go rams pa wrote in 1465 of his teacher Mus chen dKon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469), the chief disciple of Ngor chen and second abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1456–1462). At one point, Go rams pa presents in direct speech a long remark Mus chen is said to have made about the reason why he felt deeply grateful towards Ngor chen:⁷⁵

73 Van der Kuijp 1987: 176, n. 2.

74 *Lam 'bras kyi byung tshul* (p. 496.4–6): *khyad par du dpal ldan sa skya pa'i bstan pa rin po che rang gzhan gyis sgro 'dogs dang skur 'debs kyi 'dam du bying ste mi gsal ba'i skabs su bdag nyid chen po 'dis rang gzhan gyi grub mtha' rgya mtsho'i pha rol tu son pa'i lung rigs kyi char chen phab nas log rtog gi dri ma thams cad 'khrud pa'i byi dor byas te*.

75 See the *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 625.2–5): (...) *bod du rdo rje theg pa'i lam srol la bla ma gong ma nas brgyud pa'i lam srol 'di dang mar pa nas brgyud pa'i ringog gzhang gi bka' srol shangs pa nas brgyud pa'i ni gu sogs kyi bka' srol dang bu ston rin po che nas brgyud pa'i yo ga'i bka' srol sogs mang du yod kyang dus phyis chos rje ri bo dge ldan pas gsang sngags kyi bka' srol la grub mtha' bsam pa rkang btsugs nas bshad nyan gyis gtan la phabs par mdzad de sngar gyi bka' srol de dag gang dang yang mi mthun pa 'dug kyang dbus gtsang gi dge ba'i bshes gnyen phal cher de la dad pa cig byung de la chos rje rin po ches grub mtha' snga phyi'i gnad zgigs nas dgag sgrub mang du mdzad bla ma gong ma'i bka' srol gyi rkang btsugs te de'i rjes su zhugs pas chog pa cig byung pa yin*. Given the critique Go rams pa directed against Tsong kha pa, one might wonder whether it is not Go rams pa himself speaking through the subject of his biography. On Go rams pa's critique, see Cabezón and Dargyay 2007.

In Tibet, the Vajrayāna tradition has many [traditions] such as this tradition transmitted from the previous [Sa skya pa] lamas [i.e., the five founding fathers], the tradition of the rNgog gzhung transmitted from the Mar pa [bKa' brgyud pa], traditions such as of Ni gu transmitted from the Shangs pa [bKa' brgyud pa], and the tradition of the *yoga*[*tantras*] transmitted from Bu ston Rin po che. Later on, however, Chos rje Ri bo dGe ldan pa [i.e., Tsong kha pa] established an idea of tenet for the secret *mantra* tradition and determined [it] through teaching. Though that [new system] was contradictory to any of those older traditions, most of the religious teachers of dBus and gTsang developed some faith in it. In that regard, having investigated the crucial points of the earlier and later doctrines, Chos rje Rin po che [i.e., Ngor chen] made many refutations and proofs. Since he established the previous lamas' [i.e., the founding fathers of Sa skya's] tradition, it [again] became permissible that it could be followed.

This passage was somewhat simplified by bDag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1444–1495), the twenty-first throne-holder of Sa skya (tenure: 1473–1495), who included it in his own biography of his teacher Mus chen, which he compiled in 1479 partly based on Go rams pa's work:⁷⁶

In general, regarding the Vajrayāna tradition in Tibet, many [traditions] appeared such as that transmitted from the previous Sa skya pa lamas [i.e., the five founding fathers], the tradition of the rNgog gzhung pa transmitted from the Mar pa [bKa' brgyud pa], that transmitted from Bu ston Rin po che, and the tradition of Ni gu transmitted from the Shangs pa [bKa' brgyud pa]. Later on, however, a newly established Vajrayāna tradition appeared that was contradictory to any of those [older traditions], [and] also most of the people [developed] lots of faith for [a tradition] like that. As to that, Chos rje Rin po che [i.e., Ngor chen] investigated the crucial points of the earlier and later doctrines. Holding on to the tradition of the previous Sa skya pa lamas, [he] separated the authentic from the non-authentic practices. It became [then again] permissible that this [tradition] could be followed.

We could thus assume that the aforementioned portrayals of Ngor chen as a sectarian figure from the pens of partisan dGe lugs pa historians were simply aimed at establishing the superiority of their own school by discrediting Ngor chen, and thus

76 See the *Mus chen gyi nram thar* 3 (p. 28.3–6): (...) *spyir bod du rdo rje theg pa'i bka' srol la sa skya pa'i bla ma gong ma nas brgyud pa dang| mar pa nas brgyud pa'i rngog gzhung pa'i bka' srol dang| bu ston rin po che nas brgyud pa dang| shangs pa nas brgyud pa'i ni gu'i bka' srol sogs mang du byung kyang| dus phyis de dag gang yang mi mthun pa'i rdo rje theg pa'i bka' srol gsar btsugs byung ba skye bo phal cher kyang de lta bu la dad pa mang| de la chos rje rin po che'i zhal snga nas grub mtha' snga phyi'i gnad gzigs| bla ma gong ma'i bka' srol la bzung nas nyams len nram dag yin min so sor phyee ba 'di'i rjes su zhugs pas chog par byung|*

indirectly also his tradition and its followers, by any means—fair or foul—because they feared him and his influential tradition as one of their main rivals in gTsang.

Biographies of Ngor chen

As with mKhas grub rJe, numerous accounts of Ngor chen's life can be found in Tibetan religious literature. But among at least six full-length biographies, only two are presently available. His earliest extant biography was written in 1455 by his chief disciple and abbatial successor to the throne of Ngor, Mus chen dKon mchog rgyal mtshan, when Ngor chen was still alive and in his seventy-third year.⁷⁷ The second extant biography is a much later compilation of early Ngor chen biographies written by Ngor chen's direct disciples, including that of Mus chen. It was compiled in 1688 by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705), the twenty-fifth abbot of Ngor, 232 years after Ngor chen's death.⁷⁸ Both these biographies contain references to the body *maṇḍala* debate, direct and indirect, and three passages are of interest here, whereby the first two are found in both works and the third only in the later compilatory work.

In the section on Ngor chen's engagement in the arts of exposition, disputation, and composition (*'chad rtsod rtsom*), his biographers inform us about his polemical writings in the passage on disputation. Both also mention his refutations within the body *maṇḍala* dispute, though without identifying his opponent by name:⁷⁹

77 After his master's passing, Mus chen wrote a short addendum in 1457, which focussed on the circumstances of Ngor chen's death and the subsequent religious activities; see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (pp. 468.2–473.6).

78 On Ngor chen's biographies, see Heimbel 2011 and Heimbel 2014: 29–85. In compiling Ngor chen's biography, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, according to his colophon, followed the command of his teacher lHun grub dpal ldan (1624–1697), the twenty-fourth abbot of Ngor (tenure: 1673–1686), who told him that because the lives of Ngor chen composed by the latter's personal disciples were both “difficult to bring together” (*'dzom dka'*) and “difficult to understand” (*rtogs dka'*), he should compile a new biography incorporating the information from those old ones. One can thus speculate that those old biographies were scattered across various locations, hard for even an abbot of Ngor to easily lay his hands on. In addition, the religiopolitical climate of central Tibet, which with the 1642 establishment of the dGa' ldan pho brang government was heavily dGe lugs pa dominated, may have further stimulated that project. To preserve the memory and legacy of the founder of Ngor and its tradition, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs compiled a new Ngor chen biography, on the basis of which future generations of Ngor pa monks could define their identity and community. To distribute his compilation, he oversaw its carving at the powerful court of his new patron, the king of sDe dge, where he spent the last years of his life as court chaplain, being one of the first Ngor pa masters to serve in that function. Owing to his activities, the relationship between Ngor and sDe dge was further deepened and would intensify even further over the course of the eighteenth century, when almost continuously a series of retired Ngor abbots acted as chaplains at the court of sDe dge, outside of the administrative grip of the dGa' ldan pho brang government. On this donor-donnee relation, see Heimbel 2014: 46–52, [513]–521.

79 *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 546.2–5): *de ltar 'chad pa'i sgo nas sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa gsal*

After [he] had in this way clarified the [Buddha's] doctrine by means of exposition, [Ngor chen] repudiated the false conceptions by others through disputation: (...) There also emerged the terrifying mistaken conception by a later day [faction] that the body *maṇḍala* of Hevajra (...) was a fabrication nowhere taught in the *tantras* [and] Indian treatises. [Ngor chen] correctly refuted [this misapprehension] by means of textual authority, reasoning, and esoteric instructions, and composed the two [refutations] *Eliminating the Argument about the Body Maṇḍala, Destruction of the False Position* and [*Eliminating the Argument about the Body Maṇḍala,*] *Destruction of the False View*, which are great treatises that establish the unsurpassed intent of the *tantras* and scriptures.

Both biographies also contain a longer account on Ngor chen's endeavour to revive the two lower tantric systems of Kriyā and Caryā, which is told in the larger context of the sectarian dispute between the emerging dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools. According to Ngor chen's biographers, during the winter teaching session at the end of 1425 or the beginning of 1426, many monks experienced dreams that a misfortune (*sku chag*) would befall Ngor chen, and divinations also confirmed that impending threat. Consequently, several senior monks approached Ngor chen requesting that he perform a *spong dag* offering, which consists in the distribution of one's personal belongings, and to go into a strict retreat. Though questioning the certainty of those divinations, Ngor chen complied and distributed his possessions in the Bla brang Shar to the monastic community of Sa skya. Afterwards, he secluded himself in a strict retreat in his residence, the Shāk bzang sKu 'bum, until about the sixth month of 1426, performing tantric practices of Uṣṇīṣavijayā and the generation of "protective

bar mdzad nas|rtsod pa'i sgo nas gzhan gyis log par rtog pa bzlog pa yang| (...) yang phyis kyis kye rdo rje'i lus dkyil rgyud rgya gzhung gang nas kyang ma bshad pa'i rtog brtags yin no zhes pa'i log rtog 'jigs su rung ba (...) de lung rigs man ngag gi sgo nas legs par sun phyung nas|rgyud gzhung gi dgongs pa bla na med pa sgrub par byed pa'i bstan bcos chen po'i lus dkyil rtsod spong smra ba ngan 'joms zhes bya ba dang|lta ba ngan sel zhes bya ba gnyis mdzad do|| For the original passage, see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 462.4–6). For the two refutations, see the *Ngor chen gyi bka' 'bum* (vol. 1, pp. 545–580.6, 580.6–625.3). Sangs rgyas phun tshogs mentions the body *maṇḍala* debate a fourth time within the context of Ngor chen's three sojourns in Glo bo: "Hearing of the fame of this rDo rje 'chang, [A ma dpal] invited with great believing trust and under large efforts [Ngor chen] again and again. But since previously the dispute had emerged that the view of the Tantra Trilogy [of Hevajra] along with the Esoteric Instructions [i.e., the *Lam 'bras*] of the Sa skya pa was "mind only" and that the Sa skya pa body *maṇḍala* was not taught in the *tantras* [and] treatises, the monastic rule was established that there was no place to where Sa skya pa *dge bshes* could go to. After this [restriction, Ngor chen] got no opportunity to visit [Glo bo];" see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 537.3): *rdo rje 'chang 'di'i snyan pa thos nas dad 'dun dang bka' [= dka'] spyod chen pos yang yang spyang drangs kyang|snga ma sa skya pa'i rgyud gsum man ngag dang bcas pa'i lta ba sems tsam yin zer ba dang|sa skya pa'i lus dkyil rgyud gzhung nas ma bshad zer ba'i rtsod pa byung nas|sa skya pa'i dge bshes rnam s'thor sa med pa'i bca' khrims byas nas 'byon stabs ma byung|*

circles” (*srung 'khor*) of Vajrapañjara, aimed at repelling that pending threat. As a positive outcome, he had a prophetic dream according to which he would live for another thirty-nine years.⁸⁰ At the evening two days prior to the conclusion of his retreat, he called two disciples, mNga' ris pa dKon mchog 'od zer and Mus chen, disappointedly reflecting on his unsuccessful undertaking.⁸¹

Apart from performing a few refutations and proofs of our doctrine, [I] have not caused harm to anybody. Nevertheless, some have performed a kind of sorcery [to magically cause harm] based on the Six-armed one. The magical display of this [sorcery] should have occurred last year, but because [the practice of] the Dharma by me, the master, and [my] disciples, was flawless, [I] have not been harmed [by it]. Also the agitated dream from some days ago seems to be for me like a magical display for a positive outcome. If [I] had entered into retreat half a month later, [it] would have turned out harmful. In that regard, even if it had been harmful, there is no moral responsibility of other [people] at all.

Ngor chen's direct speech continues and we learn more details about his undertaking such as that, during his first visit to dBus (1414–1417), he deliberately went to see Tsong kha pa at dGa' ldan to secure support. He did, however, not succeed in securing the support he had hoped to gain, because Tsong kha pa considered the training in the lower tantric systems less beneficial than that of the highest. The entire account ends with a reference to an earlier episode that had already been dealt with in the section on Ngor chen's religious training, namely his studies under Tsong kha pa.⁸²

80 While in retreat, Ngor chen also composed his two aforementioned refutations in the Hevajra body *maṇḍala* dispute against mKhas grub rJe's misrepresentation of Bu ston (1290–1364) and praises of Uṣṇīṣavijayā, Pañjaranātha with his consort Śrīdevī, Four-faced Śrīmahākāla, and Pu tra brother and sister, beseeching them for their help in overcoming his obstacles. For the praise of Uṣṇīṣavijayā and those of the other protector deities, which were arranged as one work, see the *Ngor chen gyi bka' 'bum* (vol. 1, pp. 72.3–78.5, 87.2–92.3), respectively. Since Ngor chen wrote the first praise for the fulfilment of his own wishes (*rang gis [= gi] 'dod don zhu ba'i phyir du*) and the second to request for his own ends the activities of the *dharmapālas* (*rang gi 'dod pa'i phrin las zhu ba'i phyir du*), it is evident that he was somehow troubled.

81 *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 522.2–4): *rang re'i grub mtha'i dgag sgrub re tsam ma gtogs su la yang gnod par 'gyur ba ma byas kyang| 'ga' zhig gis phyag drug pa la brten pa'i byad kha 'dra byas par 'dug| 'di'i cho 'phrul na ning 'ong rgyur 'dug na'ang na ning rang re dpon slob rnams kyis chos smar po byung bas ma tshugs par gda'| khar sing nas kyi rmi lam tshab tshub de pa'ang rang re la dkar phyogs 'dra'i cho 'phrul 'dra yin tshod du 'dug| mtshams byed pa zla phyed kyi 'phyis na skyon du 'gro bar gda'| de la skyon du song na'ang gzhan sems kyi 'khri ba ci yang mi 'dug|. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs copied this passage with slight variations from Mus chen's *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (pp. 456.6–457.2). The sorcery is also mentioned by A mes zhabs (1597–1659); see the *mGon po chos 'byung* (pp. 260.6–261.1). That impending threat and Ngor chen's undertaking to revive the two lower tantric systems is also briefly mentioned in Mus chen's own biographies, though in a different context; see the *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 598.2–4), *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 215.3–5), and *Mus chen gyi rnam thar* 3 (p. 10.1–4).*

82 For the entire episode, see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (pp. 455.6–458.2) and *Ngor chen gyi*

As only told by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, while at dGa' ldan, Ngor chen also received a few reading transmissions from Tsong kha pa and was himself requested by such masters as gNas brtan rGyal 'od to confer such empowerments as of Kālacakra. But Ngor chen denied those requests, establishing merely a few religious connections (*chos 'brel*) by giving teachings on *guruyoga*. His rejection was related to a dream that he had while at dGa' ldan. In that dream, a white figure was laying with his right side on the ground, saying: "You should not teach the Dharma here. Do not stay for a long time. I will not do [you any] harm."⁸³

After the conclusion of Ngor chen's entire narration, both his biographers relate a short conversation between him and his two disciples that he had now overcome the imminent threat (*sku chag* or *chag sgo*).⁸⁴ But only Sangs rgyas phun tshogs then refers once again to Ngor chen's aforementioned dream that he had while staying at dGa' ldan.⁸⁵

This entire episode is interesting insofar as, though mainly concerned with Ngor chen's failed attempt to revive the two lower tantric systems, it clearly adopts a subtle sectarian undertone, revealing the sectarian conflict between Tsong kha pa and his followers and Ngor chen. The main elements are Ngor chen's statement that apart from writing a few refutations he had not caused any harm, the sorcery directed against him, his failure to get Tsong kha pa's support, and his dream at dGa' ldan.

The narration can also partly be linked with passages from mKhas grub rJe's secret biography, which reveal the identity of both the Six-armed one, who was requested to attack Ngor chen, and the person behind that request. As mentioned above, in repelling the magical attacks of the Sa skya pa, mKhas grub rJe relied on a new protector, Six-armed Mahākāla. Considering the passages from Ngor chen's and mKhas grub rJe's biographies, the "Six-armed one" can surely be identified as Six-armed Mahākāla, and the person behind the ritual curse as originating within the dGe lugs pa school, if not as mKhas grub rJe personally or his immediate circle, as it is conveyed by those biographies. These accounts from both mKhas grub rJe's and Ngor chen's biographies also reveal the important role that sorcery played within the dispute, or, at least, in its textual representations.⁸⁶

rnam thar 2 (pp. 521.1–523.6).

83 *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 514.6): *khyed 'dir chos ma 'chad| yun rings ma 'dug ngas gnod pa mi byed* (...). On Ngor chen's stay at dGa' ldan and his studies under Tsong kha pa, see n. 17. A meeting between Tsong kha pa and Ngor chen is also confirmed by Tsong kha pa's and mKhas grub rJe's biographies. In his extensive Tsong kha pa biography, rGyal dbang Chos rje Blo bzang 'phrin las rnam rgyal (fl. 19th century) reports that meeting, but predates it to 1399, fifteen years prior to Ngor chen's first visit to dBus; see the *Tsong kha pa'i rnam thar* (p. 175.10–12). rJe btsun pa confirms the meeting in his disparaging portrayal translated above; see the *mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam* 1 (fol. 11b1–2).

84 See the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 1 (p. 458.1–2) and *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 523.4–5).

85 See the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 523.5–6).

86 Sorcery was also employed in the polemical exchange between Mi pham and dGe lugs pa

The third passage is only found in the compilatory work of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, who opens his account of Ngor chen's life by quoting at length two *sūtras* in which the Buddha, according to tradition, prophesied Ngor chen's coming and his future attainment of Buddhahood (i.e., the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* and *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*).⁸⁷ However, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs quotes the first *sūtra* in a fragmentary or selective way by picking out only certain verses and skipping others, but presenting them as one citation; he even reverses the sequence of the *sūtra* by citing back to front.⁸⁸ Comparing the citations from the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* in Ngor chen's biography with the *sūtra* itself, it is obvious that the original reading of the *sūtra* was considerably altered and one verse was apparently added. This finding is interesting because part of that passage is traditionally interpreted as the prophecy of Ngor chen's conflict with mKhas grub rJe. Sangs rgyas phun tshogs cites this part as:⁸⁹

Whatever *bhikṣus* will appear in later times,
Other rough, fierce, and extremely harsh
Bhikṣus will challenge this.

He then adds a quote from two lines later in the *sūtra*:⁹⁰

[They will say]: “This Dharma was not taught by the Conqueror.”
Look how [those people] rejoice in the mistaken world!

scholars; see Phuntsho 2007: 192: “mKhan po 'Jigs med Phun tshogs (...) recounts in his biography of Mipham (...) how the monks of the three dGe lugs pa seats in central Tibet attempted to vanquish Mipham through sorcery and exorcisms. Mipham however triumphed unharmed through his spiritual powers and the sorcery and exorcism are said to have rebounded onto the performers themselves, bringing abnormal diseases and death.” Note the similar narrative pattern as in the above-mentioned account by rJe btsun pa of the Sa skya pa attacking mKhas grub rJe with sorcery. This sorcery also backfired and at Sa skya itself the main temple allegedly collapsed.

87 For Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' quotations, see the *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (pp. 477.3–479.1, 479.1–479.4), respectively. For the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra*, see the *bKa' 'gyur dpe bsdur ma* 119 and P 769. For the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, see the *bKa' 'gyur dpe bsdur ma* 131 and P 781.

88 For the quotations from the fifth chapter of the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra*, see P 769 (fols. 99a2, 99a5–8, 99b5–7, 100b1, 100b4, 100a8–100b1, 100b2–3, 100a1–2, 100a3–4) and for those from the ninth chapter of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, see P 781 (fol. 94a4–8).

89 *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 478.3–4): *gang dag phyi dus dge slong rnam 'byung ba|| rtsud dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yi|| dge slong gzhan gyis 'di la rtsod par 'gyur||*.

90 *Ngor chen gyi rnam thar* 2 (p. 478.4): *chos 'di rgyal bas gsungs pa ma yin zhes|| 'jig rten phyin ci log la kun dgar ltos||*. By comparison with the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* (P 769, fol. 100b4), the second line of Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' verse reads *dgar* instead of *dga'*. This could be a play on words of Ngor chen's personal name Kun dga' bzang po and may suggest that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs intended an understanding of the line as: “[This] worldly view is mistaken and [people saying like that] will lean on Kun dga' [bzang po]” or [This] worldly view is mistaken and [people saying like that] shall look for Kun dga' [bzang po].”

The *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* reads:

Whatever *bhikṣus* will appear in later times,
[They will] be rough, fierce, and extremely harsh.⁹¹

[They will say]: “This Dharma was not taught by the Conqueror.”
Look how [those people] rejoice in the mistaken world!⁹²

Short citations from both *sūtras*, though varying to a certain extent from the originals, are also found in a section on Ngor chen in the *Lam 'bras* history of 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang phyug (1524–1568), which predates Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' work by more than a century. With regard to the religious conflict, mKhyen brtse'i dbang phyug openly reveals the identity of Ngor chen's opponent:⁹³

Even the denigration by Chos rje mKhas grub [saying] ‘[This] is not a *sūtra* [i.e., an authentic teaching]’ was prophesied in the *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra*:
“Other angry, fierce, and extremely harsh *bhikṣus* will challenge that.”

Up to now, I was unable to identify the verse “Other (...) *bhikṣus* will challenge this (or that)” from Sangs rgyas phun tshogs' quotation and the *Lam 'bras* history. It might have been added and the *yin* in the preceding verse (*rtsub dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yin*) might have been changed to *yi* to join the next verse (*dge slong gzhan gyis 'dilde la rtsod par 'gyur*).

By comparison, Ngor chen's dispute with mKhas grub rJe is not as openly discussed in his two biographies and elaborated on as rJe btsun pa did in his secret biography of mKhas grub rJe. They also lack any disparaging portrayal of mKhas grub rJe similar to that of Ngor chen drawn by rJe btsun pa. Nevertheless, the passages discussed above function in a similar way as those in mKhas grub rJe's secret biography.

For his biographers, it was naturally Ngor chen who emerged victorious out of the dispute by writing his refutations against “the terrifying mistaken conception by a later day [faction] that the body *maṇḍala* of Hevajra (...) was a fabrication nowhere taught in the *tantras* [and] Indian treatises.” Since Ngor chen, according to his biographers, “correctly refuted [this misapprehension] by means of textual authority, reasoning, and esoteric instructions,” his doctrinal authority and tantric expertise

91 *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* (P 769, fol. 100b1): *gang dag phyi dus dge slong rnams 'byung ba|| rtsub dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yin||*.

92 *Kuśalamūlaparidharasūtra* (P 769, fol. 100b4): *chos 'di rgyal bas gsungs pa ma yin zhes|| 'jig rten phyin ci log la kun dga' ltos||*.

93 *gSang chen bstan pa rgyas byed* (p. 150.2–3): *'phags pa dge ba'i rtsa ba yongs su 'dzin pa'i mdo|| (...) khro dang gtum dang shin tu rtsub pa yi|| dge slong gzhan gyis de la rtsod par 'gyur|| zhes chos rje mkhas grub pas mdo ma yin zhes skur pa 'debs pa'ang lung bstan pa dang (...).* For the translation of this passage, see also Stearns 2006: 245.

were established as superior to mKhas grub rJe's, whose identity, though not openly revealed, was surely well-known to the audience within Sa skya pa monastic circles.

Ngor chen's superiority over mKhas grub rJe was further substantiated by the quotation that Sangs rgyas phun tshogs pieced together from the *Kuśalamūlapari-dharasūtra*, in which the Buddha allegedly prophesied Ngor chen's conflict with mKhas grub rJe. Though Sangs rgyas phun tshogs did not openly reveal the identity of that fierce monk disputing the authenticity of what can be interpreted as the Hevajra body *maṇḍala*, it is more than obvious that he alluded to mKhas grub rJe, as we have learned from the *Lam 'bras* history of 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang phyug. Employing that quotation, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs authenticated Ngor chen's doctrinal superiority and mKhas grub rJe's inferiority by letting the Buddha himself proclaim that Ngor chen held a correct view and mKhas grub rJe an erroneous one.

The long account on Ngor chen's undertaking to revive the two lower tantric systems was told within the larger context of the sectarian dispute. Both biographies conveyed the impression that Ngor chen, as the result of his polemic engagements, suffered from an unjust attack of sorcery originating within the monastic circles of the dGe lugs pa, though he himself had not inflicted harm on anyone. His seventeenth-century biographer reinforces the sectarian undertone by twice mentioning that dream Ngor chen had while at dGa' ldan, in which he was told not to teach there and only stay for a short time, otherwise, he would be harmed. By these statements, Sangs rgyas phun tshogs reveals to his audience that Tsong kha pa's monastic foundation of dGa' ldan with its community of followers was a hostile environment for a Sa skya pa master to stay and teach.

We saw similar narrative strategies also in the aforementioned passages from the *Lam 'bras* history of Gung ru Shes rab bzang po and the biography that Go rams pa wrote of his teacher Mus chen. Shes rab bzang po established the superiority of Ngor chen's doctrinal positions over erroneous views both within and without of the Sa skya pa school: Ngor chen, "at the time when the precious teachings of the glorious Sa skya pa were drowned in the swamp of superimposition and depreciation by ourselves and others," by "showering down a heavy rain of textual authority and reasoning (...), performed the clean-up of washing off all filth of misconceptions." Go rams pa was much more concrete, directly spelling out very clearly whose doctrine needed to be rectified, namely that of Tsong kha pa, whose views were, as he argues, contrary to all earlier Vajrayāna traditions present in Tibet, yet his tradition gained a large following in dBus and gTsang. Ngor chen then investigated the key points of the old and new doctrines and performed many refutations and proofs. In doing so, he re-established the old Sa skya pa tradition and made it again possible to follow.

Conclusion

Analysing the textual passages that represent the religious controversy between mKhas grub rJe and Ngor chen, and also its related textual material, we saw that each tradition portrays their respective protagonist as emerging victorious out of it by successfully refuting the erroneous views of their opponent. Though such engaging in religious debates is considered to be one of three scholarly qualities a Buddhist masters exhibits for the benefit of others—the other two being exposition and composition (*'chad rtsod rtsom*)—the discussed accounts show that the dispute was not merely a simple exchange of standard polemics but a heated debate with the aforementioned immediate and far-reaching consequences. As later reflections about the dispute, those accounts openly convey the tensions and animosities that arose between the emerging dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools. As suggested by rJe btsun pa's presentation, they may both be a result of such disputes and a cause contributing to increase already existing tensions through their highly partisan representation.

As we saw, those accounts were not given without any ulterior motives. Cabezón and Dargyay have pointed out that “the motives of polemicists are in many cases far from noble. A desire for reputation, patronage, power, and followers is in some cases more evident as the driving force than a desire for the truth.”⁹⁴ Similarly, the authors of biographies and other historiographical works, who at times were polemicists themselves, can be assumed to have had their own motives and personal agenda for including those sectarian passages. By representing each of their respective protagonists as emerging victorious over his rival, of whom an insulting portrayal can be drawn,⁹⁵ the authors of those passages authenticate their respective subject as a powerful expounder of the Buddha's doctrine, establishing the doctrinal superiority of the views associated with him and his lineage above that of his rival. In doing so, they contribute to the process of consolidating a distinctive sectarian identity for the lineage and school associated with their biographical subject. On the basis of those accounts, later followers could reaffirm and strengthen their sectarian identity and sense of community by recalling the victories that the important founding figures of their tradition—mKhas grub rJe as the chief disciple and expounder of Tsong kha pa and Ngor chen as the founder of the Ngor branch of the Sa skya pa school—had achieved over rivals from outside of their own schools.

⁹⁴ Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 9–10.

⁹⁵ Insult is also an important element employed in polemical works; see Cabezón and Dargyay 2007: 8, 16–18.

Bibliography

Tibetan sources

- Kar lan* = Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544). *gSung lan klu sgrub dgongs rgyan*. In *dGag lan phyogs bsgrigs*, pp. 69–173.
- Karma pa'i gsung 'bum* = Eighth Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554). *dPal rgyal ba karma pa sku 'phreng brgyad pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i gsung 'bum*. 26 vols. [Lhasa]: [s.n.], [2004]. TBRC (W8039).
- Kun khyab 'brug sgra* = mDo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1932–2002). *brGal lan kun khyab 'brug sgra: gDong thog sprul sku la gdams pa brgal lan kun khyab snyan pa'i 'brug sgra*. Paris: Yon tan rgya mtsho, 1979 (offset); New Delhi: dGe slong bsTan 'dzin dge legs, 1980. TBRC (W29046).
- bKa' 'gyur dpe bsdur ma* = Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang (ed.). *bKa' 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma)*. 109 vols. Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2006–2009.
- bKa' gdams chos 'byung* = Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1432–1506). *bKa' gdams kyi rnam par thar pa bka' gdams chos 'byung gsal ba'i sgron me*. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 2003.
- bKa' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung* = Paṇ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478–1554). *bKa' gdams gsar rnying gi chos 'byung yid kyi mdzes rgyan*. Gangs can rig mdozd, vol. 36. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 2001.
- mKhas grub rje'i rnam thar 1* = dGe slong Chos ldan rab 'byor (fl. 15th century). *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa'i rnam thar*. In [gSung 'bum mKhas grub rje]. 16 vols. sKu 'bum Byams pa gling: sKu 'bum Byams pa gling par khang, [199?], vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 109–133. TBRC (W23693).
- mKhas grub rje'i rnam thar 2* = Paṇ chen bDe legs nyi ma (fl. 16th century). *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa'i rnam thar mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog*. In [gSung 'bum mKhas grub rje]. 16 vols. sKu 'bum Byams pa gling: sKu 'bum Byams pa gling par khang, [199?], vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 79–108. TBRC (W23693).
- mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam 1* = Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544). *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa dge legs dpal bzang po'i rnam thar rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan gyis bsgrigs pa dad pa'i rol misho*. In [gSung 'bum mKhas grub rje]. 16 vols. sKu 'bum Byams pa gling: sKu 'bum Byams pa gling par khang, [199?], vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 1–77. TBRC (W23693).
- mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam 2* = Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544). *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsang ba'i rnam thar rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad pa*. In *The Collected Works (gSun 'bum) of the Lord mKhas-grub rJe dGe-legs-dpal-bzan-po*. 12 vols. Reproduced from a set of prints from the 1897 IHa-sa old Zol (dGa'-ldan-phun-tshogs-glin) blocks. New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1980–1982, vol. 12 (*a*), pp. 421–470.5. TBRC (W384).

- mKhas grub rje'i gsang rnam 3* = Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544). *mKhas grub thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsang ba'i rnam thar rje btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad pa*. In [gSung 'bum *mKhas grub rje*]. 10 vols. Reprinted from a set of impressions of the old Tashilhunpo blocks. Dharamsala, H.P.: Sherig Parkhang, 1997, vol. 10 (*tha*), pp. 567–604.2. TBRC (W29195).
- mKhas pa'i dga' ston* = dPa' bo gTsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566). *Dam pa'i chos kyi 'khor lo bsgyur ba rnams kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa mkhas pa'i dga' ston*. 2 vols. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1986.
- Gu bkra'i chos 'byung* = sTag sgang mKhas mchog Gu ru bkra shis (fl. 18th/19th century). *bsTan pa'i snying po gsang chen snga 'gyur nges don zab mo'i chos kyi byung ba gsal bar byed pa'i legs bshad mkhas pa dga' byed ngo mtshar gtam gyi rol mo*. Gangs ljongs shes rig gi nying bcud. Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1990.
- Grub mtha' shel gyi me long* = Thu'u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737–1802). *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khungs dang 'dod tshul ston pa legs bshad shel gyi me long*. In *Collected Works of Thu'u-bkwan Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-nyi-ma*. 10 vols. Edited and Reproduced by Ngawang Gelek Demo with Introduction by E. Gene Smith. Gedan Sungrab Minyam Gyunphel Series, vol. 2. New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1969–1971, vol. 2 (*kha*), pp. 5–519.
- dGag lan phyogs bsgrigs* = Rin chen tshe ring (ed.). *dGag lan phyogs bsgrigs*. Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1997.
- dGe 'dun grub pa'i rnam thar* = Paṇ chen Ye shes rtse mo (b. 1433). *rJe thams cad mkhyen pa dge 'dun grub pa dpal bzang po'i rnam thar ngo mtshar rmad byung nor bu'i phreng ba*. In *Phyag na pad dkar 'chang ba thams cad mkhyen pa rje dge 'dun grub dpal bzang po'i gsung 'bum*. [bKra shis lhun po?]: bKra shis lhun po gzhung, [199?], vol. 6 (*cha*), pp. 1–127. TBRC (W24769).
- mGon po chos 'byung* = A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1659). *dPal rdo rje nag po chen po'i zab mo'i chos skor rnams byung ba'i tshul legs par bshad pa bstan srung chos kun gsal ba'i nyin byed*. In *dPal sa skya pa chen po sngags 'chang thams cad mkhyen pa ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams kyi gsung 'bum*. 29 vols. Kathmandu: Sa skya rgyal yongs gsung rab slob gnyer khang, 2000, vol. 25 (*ra*), pp. 1–491.
- Ngor gyi gdan rabs* = 'Jam mgon Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705). *dPal e wam chos ldan gyi gdan rabs nor bu'i phreng ba*. In *Lam 'bras Tshogs bśad: The Sa-skya-pa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Ñor-pa transmission*. 6 vols. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge blocks from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Ñor. Sa-skya Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 25. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1985, vol. 25 (*ya*), pp. 1–52.
- Ngor chen gyi bka' 'bum* = Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456). [*Ngor chen kun dga' bzang po'i bka' 'bum*]. 4 vols. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Ngor Pal E-Wam Cho Dan, 1993. TBRC (W11577).

- Ngor chen gyi rnam thar 1* = Mus chen dKon mchog rgyal mtshan (1388–1469). *sNyigs dus kyi rdo rje 'chang chen po chos kyi rje kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa mdor bsdu pa*. In *Lam 'bras slob bśad: The Sa-skyapa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Tshar-pa transmission*. 21 vols. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Ñor. Sa-skyapa Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 1. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1983–1985, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 432–473.
- Ngor chen gyi rnam thar 2* = 'Jam ngon Sangs rgyas phun tshogs (1649–1705). *rDo rje 'chang kun dga' bzang po'i rnam par thar pa legs bshad chu bo 'dus pa'i rgya mtsho*. In *Lam 'bras slob bśad: The Sa-skyapa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Tshar-pa transmission*. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Ñor. Sa-skyapa Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 1. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1983–1985, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 475–585.
- rJe btsun pa'i rnam thar* = Pañ chen bDe legs nyi ma (fl. 16th century). *rJe btsun chos kyi rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa dngos grub kyi char 'bebs*. sKu 'bum Byams pa gling: sKu 'bum Byams pa gling gi par khang, [s.d.]. Block-print, 37 fols. TBRC (W1KG22408).
- lTa ba ngan pa'i mun sel* = Se ra rJe btsun pa Chos kyi rgyal mtshan (1469–1544). *Zab mo stong pa nyid kyi lta ba la log rtog 'gog par byed pa'i bstan bcos lta ba ngan pa'i mun sel*. In *dGag lan phyogs bsgrigs*, pp. 175–518.
- Deb ther dmar po gsar ma* = Pañ chen bSod nams grags pa (1478–1554). *rGyal rabs 'phrul gyi lde mig gam deb ther dmar po'i deb gsar ma*. In Giuseppe Tucci, *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma: Tibetan Chronicles by bSod nams grags pa, Vol. 1: Tibetan Text, Emendations to the Text, English Translation and an Appendix containing two Minor Chronicles*. Serie Orientale Roma, vol. 14. Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1971, pp. 1–103a.
- Dus kyi sbrang char* = gDong thog bsTan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1933–2015). *Ma bcos dngos 'brel brjod pa dus kyi sbrang char. The Timely Shower: Expression of Unaltered Reality*. Delhi: T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche, 1974.
- Dus kyi me lce* = gDong thog bsTan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1933–2015). *gDong lan lung rigs thog mda'i rtsod zlog ma bcos dngos 'brel brjod pa dus kyi me lce*. Delhi: T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche, 1979.
- mDo smad chos 'byung* = Brag dgon Zhabs drung dKon mchog bstan pa rab rgyas (1801–1866). *Yul mdo smad kyi ljongs su thub bstan rin po che ji ltar dar ba'i tshul gsal bar brjod pa deb ther rgya mtsho*. Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982.
- P = Peking *bKa' 'gyur* and *bsTan 'gyur*. Numbers according to: Daisetz T. Suzuki (ed.). *The Tibetan Tripitaka. Peking Edition. Catalogue & Index*. Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1961.
- dPyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs* = Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682). *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. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1980 (second edition). First edition 1957.

Bod kyi lo rgyus = Chab spel Tshe brtan phun tshogs and Nor brang O rgyan. *Bod kyi lo rgyus rags rim g.yu'i phreng ba*. 3 vols. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe nying dpe skrun khang, 2006 (second edition). First edition 1989.

Baidūrya ser po = sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705). *dGa' ldan chos 'byung baidūrya ser po*. Gangs ljongs shes rig gi nying bcud. Xining: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1989.

Mus chen gyi rnam thar 1 = Go rams pa bSod nams seng ge (1429–1489). *rJe btsun bla ma mus pa chen po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*. In *Lam 'bras slob bśad: The Sa-skyapa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Tshar-pa transmission*. 21 vols. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Nör. Sa-skyapa Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 1. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1983–1985, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 586–627.

Mus chen gyi rnam thar 2 = Gung ru Shes rab bzang po (1411–1475). *rJe btsun sems dpa' chen po dkon mchog rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa gsung sgros ma*. In mkhan chen A pad Rin po che Yon tan bzang po (1927–2010; ed.), *gSung ngag lam 'bras slob bshad chen mo: The Great Collection of the Lamdre Lobshe Teachings*, 26 vols. (vols. 1–26); *gSung ngag lam 'bras tshogs bshad chen mo: The Great Collection of the Lamdre Tshogshe Teachings*, 5 vols. (vols. 27–42), and *Lam 'bras kha skong rdo rje rin po che'i mdzod: A Treasure of Vajra Jewels: Supplement Text on the Lamdre*, 1 vol. (vol. 43). Kathmandu: Sachen International (rGyal yongs sa chen), 2008, vol. 27 (*sha*), pp. 205–250.

Mus chen gyi rnam thar 3 = bDag chen Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1444–1495). *rJe btsun bla ma dam pa dkon mchog rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar phreng ba*. In *Lam 'bras slob bśad: The Sa-skyapa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Tshar-pa transmission*. 21 vols. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Nör. Sa-skyapa Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 2. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1983–1985, vol. 2 (*kha*), pp. 1–33.

Tsong kha pa'i rnam thar = rGyal dbang Chos rje Blo bzang 'phrin las rnam rgyal (fl. 19th century). *'Jam mgon chos kyi rgyal po tsong kha pa chen po'i rnam thar thub bstan mdzes pa'i rgyan gcig ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng ba dang mdzad rnam zhal thang*. Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe nying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang (ed.). Gangs can khyad nor dpe tshogs, vol. 58. Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 2009.

Yang lan = mKhas grub rJe dGe legs dpal bzang (1385–1438). [*Kon ting go'u shrīs gsang 'dus lus dkyil lan btab pa'i yang lan*]. In *The Collected Works (gSun 'bum) of the Lord mKhas-grub rJe dGe-legs-dpal-bzan-po*. 12 vols. Reproduced from a set of prints from the 1897 lHa-sa old Žol (dGa'-ldan-phun-tshogs-gliñ) blocks.

New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1980–1982, vol. 9 (*ta*), pp. 775.1–808.1. TBRC (W384).

Rin spungs pa sger gyi gdung rabs = Yar lung pa A 'bum. *dPal ldan rin spungs pa sger gyi gdung rabs che long tsam zhig yar lung pa a 'bum gyis bkod pa*. In *sNon gi gtam me tog gi phren ba: A 13th century source on the history of the Tibetan kings and rulers by Ne'u Paṇḍita Grags-pa-smon-lam-blo-gros with other rare historical texts from the library of Burmiok Athing*. Dharamsala, H.P.: T. D. Densapa, 1985, pp. 125–134.

Rong ston gyi rnam thar = gSer mdog Paṇ chen Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507). *rJe btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i bshes gnyen shākya rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po'i zhal nga nas kyi rnam par thar pa ngo mtshar dad pa'i rol mtsho*. In *The Complete Works (gsun [sic] 'bum) of Gser-mdog [sic] Paṇ-chen Śākya-mchog-ldan*. 24 vols. Reproduced from the unique manuscript prepared in the 18th century at the order of Rje Sakya-rin-chen [sic], the 9th Rje Mkhan-po Bhutan [sic] preserved at the Monastery of Pha-jo-sdins [sic] 'og-min-gnis-pa [sic]. Delhi: Nagwang Topgyal, 1995, vol. 16 (*ma*), pp. 299–377 (third edition). First edition, Thimphu: Kunzang Topgey, 1975.

Lam 'bras kyi byung tshul = Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456) and continued by Gung ru Shes rab bzang po (1411–1475). *Lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i man ngag gi byung tshul gsung ngag rin po che bstan pa rgyas pa'i nyid 'od*. In [*Ngor chen kun dga' bzang po'i bka' 'bum*]. 4 vols. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Ngor Pal E-Wam Cho Dan, 1993, vol. 1 (*ka*), pp. 435–508.3. TBRC (W11577).

Lam rim bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar = Tshe mchog gling Yongs 'dzin Ye shes rgyal mtshan (1713–1793). *Biographies of Eminent Gurus in the Transmission Lineages of the Teachings of the Graduated Path: Being the text of 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 by Tshe-mchog-gling Yongs-'dzin Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan*. 2 vols. Gedan Sungrab Minyam Gyunphel Series, vols. 18–19. New Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1970.

Lung rigs thog mda' = mDo smad pa Yon tan rgya mtsho (1932–2002). *gDong lan lung rigs thog mda'*: *Gyi na pa zhig gi blo'i sprin rum las 'ongs pa'i gdong lan lung dang rigs pa'i thog mda'*. Paris: Yon tan rgya mtsho (offset); New Delhi: Mongolian Lama Gurudeva, 1979. TBRC (W00EGS1017303).

Shar gangs ri ma = dGe 'dun grub (1391–1475). [*gSung mgur shar gangs ri ma*]. In *The Collected Works of the First Dalai Lama Dge-'dun-grub-pa*. Reproduced from the prints from 'Bras-spun's Dga'-ldan Pho-bran carved about 1894 from the library of the Ven. Dar-mdo Rin-po-che of Kalimpong. 6 vols. Gangtok: Dordrup Lama Sangye, 1978–1981, vol. 6 (*cha*), pp. 367.1–368.5.

gSang chen bstan pa rgyas byed = 'Jam dbyangs mKhyen brtse'i dbang phyug (1524–1568). *'Jam mgon mkhyen brtse'i lam 'bras slob bshad khrid yig skor gsung ngag rin po che lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i khog phub kyi rnam bshad las gdams ngag byung tshul gyi zin bris gsang chen bstan pa rgyas byed*. In *Lam*

'bras slob bśad: The Sa-skyapa Teachings of the Path and the Fruit, according to the Tshar-pa transmission. 21 vols. Reproduced from prints from the Sde-dge redaction from the library of the Ven. Klu-sdiñs Mkhan Rin-po-che of Nor. Sa-skyapa Lam 'bras Literature Series, vol. 14. Dehra Dun, U.P.: Sakya Centre, 1983–1985, vol. 14 (*pha*), pp. 1–155.4.

gSer gyi thang ma = dGe 'dun chos 'phel (1903–1951). *rGyal kham rig pas bskor ba'i gtam rgyud gser gyi thang ma.* In Hor khang bSod nams dpal 'bar et al. (eds.), *dGe 'dun chos 'phel gyi gsung rtsom.* 3 vols. Gangs can rig mdzod, vols. 10–12. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe mnying dpe skrun khang, 1990, vol. 1, pp. [1]–426.

Secondary Literature

Ahmad, Zahiruddin. 2008. *The Song of the Queen of Spring or A History of Tibet by Ņag-dBañ Blo-bZañ rGYa-mTSHo Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet.* New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan. Revised edition.

Ary, Elijah S. 2015. *Authorized Lives: Biography and the Early Formation of Geluk Identity.* Somerville: Wisdom Publications.

Bentor, Yael. (forthcoming). “Tibetan Interpretations of the Opening Verses of Vajraghaṇṭa on the Body Maṇḍala.” In Yael Bentor and Meir Shahar (eds.), *Chinese and Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism.* Leiden: Brill.

Brunnhölzl, Karl. 2007. *In Praise of Dharmadhātu: Nāgārjuna and the Third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje.* Ithaca and Boulder: Snow Lion Publications.

———. 2010. *Gone Beyond: The Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, The Ornament of Clear Realization, and Its Commentaries in the Tibetan Kagyü Tradition.* Volume One. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

Cabezón, José Ignacio. 1992. *A Dose of Emptiness: An Annotated Translation of the sTong thun chen mo of mKhas grub dge legs dpal bzang.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Cabezón, José Ignacio and Geshe Lobsang Dargyay. 2007. *Freedom from Extremes: Gorampa's “Distinguishing the Views” and the Polemics of Emptiness.* Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Czaja, Olaf. 2013. *Medieval Rule in Tibet: The Rlängs Clan and the Political and Religious History of the Ruling House of Phag mo gru pa. With a Study of the Monastic Art of Gdan sa mthil.* Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Davidson, Ronald M. 1991. “Reflections on the Maheśvara Subjugation Myth: Indic Materials, Sa-skyapa apologetics, and the birth of Heruka.” *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 14(2): 197–235.

DiValerio, David M. 2015. *The Holy Madmen of Tibet.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dreyfus, Georges B. J. 1997. *Recognizing Reality: Dhamrakīrti's Philosophy and Its Tibetan Interpretation.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

- _____. 2005. "Where Do Commentarial Schools Come From? Reflections on the History of Tibetan Scholasticism." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 28(2): 273–297.
- Fermer, Mathias. 2010. "The Life and Works of Gong dkar rDo rje gdan pa Kun dga' rnam rgyal (1432–1496)." Magister thesis, University of Hamburg (slightly revised version).
- Gyatso, Janet. 1998. *Apparations of the Self: The Secret Autobiographies of a Tibetan Visionary*. A Translation and Study of Jigme Lingpa's *Dancing Moon in the Water* and *Dākki's Grand Secret-Talk*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hazod, Guntram. 2004. "The Ruins of lDan: Ancient Places in the Eastern Zone of the Lhasa Maṇḍala." *The Tibet Journal*, 29(3): 25–54.
- Heimbel, Jörg. 2011. "Biographical Sources for Researching the Life of Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456)." *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* 22: 47–91.
- _____. 2014. "Ngor chen Kun dga' bzang po (1382–1456): An Investigation into the Life and Times of the Founder of the Ngor Subschool of the Sa skya Order." PhD dissertation, University of Hamburg.
- Hopkins, Jeffrey. 2003. *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba's Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views on the Nature of Reality*. Ithaca and Boulder: Snow Lion Publications.
- Jackson, David P. 1989. *The Early Abbots of 'Phan-po Na-lendra: The Vicissitudes of a Great Tibetan Monastery in the 15th Century*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien.
- _____. 2007. "Rong ston bKa' bcu pa: Notes on the title and travels of a great Tibetan scholastic." In Birgit Kellner et al. (eds.). *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ: Papers dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the occasion of his 70th birthday*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien, 345–360.
- _____. 2010. *The Nepalese Legacy in Tibetan Painting*. New York: Rubin Museum of Art.
- _____. (under preparation). *Rong ston and the Abbots of 'Phan po Nā lendra: The Vicissitudes of a Great Tibetan Monastery*.
- Kapstein, Matthew. 2006. *The Tibetans*. Malden, Oxford, and Victoria: Blackwell Publishing.
- van der Kuip, Leonard. 1983. *Contributions to the Development of Tibetan Buddhist Epistemology: From the eleventh to the thirteenth century*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH.
- _____. 1985. "Apropos of a Recent Contribution to the History of Central Way Philosophy in Tibet: Tsong Khapa's Speech of Gold." *Berliner Indologische Studien* 1: 47–74.
- _____. 1987. "Ngor-chen kun-dga' bzang-po on the Posture of Hevajra: a Note on the Relationship between Text, Iconography and Spiritual Practice." In Marianne Yaldiz and Wibke Lobo (eds.). *Investigating Indian Art. Proceedings of a Symposium on the Development of Early Buddhist and Hindu Iconography held*

- at the Museum of Indian Art Berlin in May 1986. Berlin: Museum für Indische Kunst und Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 173–177.
- _____. 2013. “Some Remarks on the Textual Transmission and Text of Bu ston Rin chen grub’s *Chos ’byung*, a Chronicle of Buddhism in India and Tibet.” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 25: 115–193.
- Lopez, Donal S., Jr. 1996. “Polemical Literature (*dGag lan*).” In José Ignacio Cabezón and Roger Jackson (eds.). *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. Essays in Honor of Geshe Lhundup Sopa. Ithaca: Snow Lion, 217–228.
- Martin, Dan in collaboration with Yael Bentor. 1997. *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works*. London: Serindia Publications.
- Mullin, Glenn H. [1981] 1985. *Selected Works of the Dalai Lama I: Bridging the Sutras and Tantras*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.
- Phuntsho, Karma. 2007. “‘Ju Mi pham rNam rgyal rGya mtsho – His Position in the Tibetan Religious Hierarchy and a Synoptic Survey of His Contributions.” In Ramon N. Prats (ed.). *The Pandita and the Siddha: Tibetan Studies in Honour of E. Gene Smith*. Dharamsala, H.P.: Amnye Machen Institute, 191–209.
- Rheingans, Jim. 2008. “The Eighth Karmapa’s Life and His Interpretation of the Great Seal.” PhD dissertation, University of the West of England, Bristol.
- _____. 2010. “Narratives of Reincarnation, Politics of Power, and the Emergence of a Scholar: The Very Early Years of Mikyö Dorje and Its Sources.” In Linda Covill, Ulrike Roesler, and Sarah Shaw (eds.). *Lives Lived, Lives Imagined: Biography in the Buddhist Traditions*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 242–297.
- Seyfort Ruegg, David. 1988. “‘A Kar ma bKa’ ’brgyud Work on the Lineages and Traditions of the Indo-Tibetan dBu ma (Madhyamaka).” In Edenda Curaverunt, G. Gnoli, and L. Lanciotti (eds.). *Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata*. Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1249–1280.
- Shen, Weirong. 2002. *Leben und historische Bedeutung des ersten Dalai Lama dGe ’dun grub pa dpal bzang po (1391–1474): Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der dGe lugs pa-Schule und der Institution der Dalai Lamas*. Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica.
- Smith, Gene E. 2001. *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Sørensen, Per K. and Guntram Hazod in cooperation with Tsering Gyalbo. 2007. *Rulers on the Celestial Plain: Ecclesiastic and Secular Hegemony in Medieval Tibet. A Study of Tshal Gung-thang*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Stearns, Cyrus. 2006. *Taking the Result as the Path: Core Teachings of the Sakya Lamdré Tradition*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.

- Thukten Losang Chökyi Nyima. 2009. *The Crystal Mirror of Philosophical Systems: A Tibetan Study of Asian Religious Thought*. Translated by Geshé Lhundub Sopa with E. Ann Chávez and Roger R. Jackson. Edited by Roger R. Jackson. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Tucci, Giuseppe. 1971. *Deb t'er dmar po gsar ma: Tibetan Chronicles by bSod nams grags pa, Vol. 1: Tibetan Text, Emendations to the Text, English Translation and an Appendix containing two Minor Chronicles*. Roma: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.
- Viehbeck, Markus. 2014. *Polemics in Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism: A Late 19th-Century Debate Between 'Ju Mi pham and dPa' ris rab gsal*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien.
- Vitali, Roberto. 1996. *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge Pu.hrang: According to mNga' ris rgyal.rabs by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa*. Dharamsala, H.P.: Tho. ling gtsug.lag khang lo.gcig.stong 'khor.ba'i rjes.dran.mdzad sgo'i go.sgrig tshogs.chung.
- Williams, Paul M. 1983a. "A Note on Some Aspects of Mi bskyod rdo rje's Critique of dGe lugs pa Madhyamaka." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 11: 125–145.
- _____. 1983b. "On Rang Rig." In Ernst Steinkellner und Helmut Tauscher (eds.), *Contributions on Tibetan and Buddhist Religion and Philosophy. Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Symposium Held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13–19 September 1981*, Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, vol. 2, 321–332.

