

# The Bird-faced Monk and the Beginnings of the New Tantric Tradition, Part Two

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Part One of this essay was published in a volume commemorating my friend Gu ge Tshe ring rgyal, , ed. G. Hazod and Shen Weirong (Beijing: China Tibetology Publishing House, 2018: 403-450). There I introduced the newly recovered and published work on the main corpora of tantric literature and its classification, etc. that was written by Lo ts ba Rin chen bzang po (958–1055), who, in a variety of prophetic passages, is also known as the "bird-faced monk" ( ).<sup>1</sup> That portion of my essay consisted of three parts: A lengthy preamble, [1] A survey of Rin chen bzang po's biographies, his exant writings, and the environment in which he worked, [2] his classification of Buddhist tantric literature, and [3] the question of spurious tantras and allegedly questionable religious practices during the eleventh century. In this, the second part of the essay, I study two passages from his that are cited by Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1552–1624). I first began working on these fragments some seven years ago and thus well before the text of his had come to my attention. With the publication of the Lo ts ba's , the wonderful world of the

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1 The nick-name "bird-faced monk" ( ) occurs in the translator's colophon of the translation of the \* , for which see BKA', vol. 87: 510. Lo ts ba Rin chen bzang po (958–1055) is no doubt the person behind that name. What lies behind the abbreviations that are used in this article can be found on the last page.

karma of publishing and tbrc.org has now made it possible for my essay to be a bit more comprehensive, and it concludes with an appendix that consists of a title list of tantras that belong to the four classes of tantric literature that Rin chen bzang po distinguished at the end of his work.

Ter nagedachtenis van Gu ge Tshe ring rgyal po.

Let us now first fast forward some five and a half centuries from the era of Rin chen bzang po to a certain Lha rje Blo gros bzang po who, it turns out, must be identified as Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan, a scholar and physician whose many writings on a wide variety of subjects go a long way in informing us of the interest he took in old and rare manuscripts and in pursuing fairly unusual topics of inquiry.<sup>2</sup> Among them is a rather sophisticated treatise that he had written in 1576 at the astonishing age of twenty-four.<sup>3</sup> In this work, he goes to great lengths defending the doctrinal authenticity and the orthopractical and experiential integrity of

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2 For him, see J.D. Gentry, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, unpublished Harvard University doctoral dissertation (Cambridge, MA, 2014), and now his truly outstanding \_\_\_\_\_, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2016.

3 SOG1, 171 [= SOG2, 143; SOG3, 145]. He wrote this work in Bsam gtan gling monastery, in Mon yul, that is, in Bum thang, in present day Bhutan. The editor/publisher of SOG2 dated this work to 1636 [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] in the table of contents. Writing in 1605, Sog bzlog pa himself stated in his \_\_\_\_\_ [in the \_\_\_\_\_], in \_\_\_\_\_, vol. I, New Delhi: Sanje Dorji, 1975: 599 [= ed. Padma tshul khriems, Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1997: 337, 339], that he had completed this work at the age of twenty-four, so that he must have finished it in the \_\_\_\_\_-year of the previous sexagenary cycle, that is, in 1576. SOG1, 171-173; SOG 3, 145, have a printer's colophon by Gzhan phan chos kyi blo gros who states that the printing blocks of Sog bzlog pa's work were carved by order of a certain 'Jam pa'i rdo rje at Bstan gnyis dar rgyas gling monastery, alias Zhe chen monastery. Gzhan phan chos kyi blo gros is better known as Zhe chen Rgyal tshab IV 'Gyur med Padma rnam rgyal (1872–1926).

the texts, ideas and practices of the Old School ( ).<sup>4</sup> Standing as a proleptic testimony to his later success in excavating rare books from their places of hiding, this piece was not even his first foray into the world of scholarship, for in it he already refers to his own treatise on the stages of the spiritual path ( ). That the Lha rje must actually be identified as Sog bzlog pa is evidenced by the fact that this work is listed in the catalog of his collected oeuvre and that he signed this very name to his replies to queries that had been raised much earlier by Gter ston Ratna gling pa (1403–1479) in response to a request by Sh kya rab 'phel, who like Sog bzlog pa, had been a disciple of Gter ston Zhig po gling pa (1524–1583). Indeed, Sog bzlog pa was the author of a very informative biography of this rather controversial "treasure-text revealer" ( ) whose fame also included being a great "repeller of Mongols" ( ).<sup>5</sup> Finally, he also signs himself as Gdong dkar 'Tsho byed Blo gros rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po, where , "healer," implies the same thing as .<sup>6</sup> "Blo gros bzang po" is thus an abbreviation of "Blo gros rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po." To what extent he really was a practising physician is unclear. Writing a disquisition on the problems surrounding the authorship of the medical text of the , he concluded his little, learned tract by saying<sup>7</sup>:

[ ]

Though I do not understand the categories of the ,  
 Since the good news, the story of G.yu thog, an actual , and,

4 SOG1, 8, 99 [= SOG2, 8, 85; SOG3, 95, 126]. Shortly after the response to the first query, in SOG1, 12-13 [= SOG2, 11-12; SOG3, 96], he cites a fairly little-known letter Sha gad Lo ts ba – his full name was Yar 'brog Sha gad Lo ts ba Shes rab bzang po – sent to Dar ma rgyal mtshan (1237–1305), alias Bcom ldan [rig{s} pa'i] ral

The chronology of its line of transmission,  
 Has come to my ear, I write because I have acquired the courage of  
 speaking exactly what is the case.

We also gather from the catalog of his writings that he had even written a biography of G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po, whom he believed to have been contemporaneous with Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1147–1216) and whom he believed to have been the author of the

. No trace of this work has been found so far. The literary activity of writing biographies of G.yu thog seems to have been in the air for reasons that may be connected to the somewhat earlier publication of the 1546 Grwa thang xylograph of the by Zur mkhar ba. Sog bzlog pa's junior contemporary 'Ja' tshon snying po (1585–1656) had also composed a biography of G.yu thog and these were important precedents for the much more influential and thus the better-known biographies of the so-called elder and younger G.yu thog that Dar mo Sman rams pa Blo bzang chos grags (1638–after 1697) compiled in 1680.<sup>8</sup>

What is worth noting is that Sog bzlog pa states at the outset of his defense of the Old School that Rin chen bzang po did not confute the Old School tantric literature in his ,<sup>9</sup> but only took aim at the literal interpretation of the orthopraxis of tantric literature ( ) as a whole. This is an echo of Gser mdog Pa chen Sh kya mchog ldan's (1428–1507) earlier characterization of Rin chen bzang

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8 For 'Ja' tshon snying po's work, see my "Za hor and Its Contribution to Tibetan Medicine, Part Two: Sources of the Tibetan Medical Tradition," / , vol.12, 2015: 64, n.1. An English translation of the biography of "the elder" G.yu thog Yon tan mgon po by way of Dar mo Sman rams pa's edition of the earlier work by G.yu thog Lhun grub bkra shis is of course available in Rechung Rinpoche, , Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973: 147–327. The Tibetan texts of the biographies of "the elder" and "the younger" G.yu thog as edited and presented by Dar mo sman rams pa can be found in , ed. Dbang 'dus, Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982: 1-313, 315-348. Dalai Lama V Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1685) states in his autobiography that he wrote the concluding prayer to the blockprint of this work on May 14, 1680; see , vol. 3, Lhasa: Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 1991: 340.

9 With a good number of rather significant different readings, A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams (1597–1659) reproduces the relevant texts of Pho brang Zhi ba 'od (1016–1111) and 'Gos Lo ts ba I Khug pa lhas btsas (11<sup>th</sup>c) in his , in , ed. Si khron bod yig dpe rnying myur skyob 'tshol sgrig khang, vol. 40, Lhasa: Bod ljongs dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 2012: 28-32, 32-35. It would seem that he had no access to Rin chen bzang po's work.

po's agenda,<sup>10</sup> which included the remark that his goal had been to put forth a hermeneutic for the provisional and definitive intent of the Highest Yogatantras and that he did not list the titles of what he considered to be inauthentic ( ) tantras, but rather confuted those practices that had taken place on the basis of having taken certain specimen of tantric literature literally by citing passages from the upper two types of tantras, that is, the Yoga- and Highest Yogatantras, and from some Mahayana sutras and authoritative commentaries. All these remarks are borne out by a fifty-two-folio manuscript of what is purportedly his , that Dr. Sha bo Mkha' byams kindly made available to me a few months ago. Indeed, the main thrust of this work involves a detailed explication of the way in which the antinomial expressions found especially but not exclusively in the literature ought not be taken literally ( ). And much later this very feature is also indicated by Mkhas dbang Sangs rgyas rdo rje (1569–1645) where he states that Rin chen bzang po mainly ( ) dealt with this subject in his work.<sup>11</sup> But once again, we are confronted with a problem. 'Gos Lo ts ba II Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481) refers to what he calls Rin chen bzang po's in his 1472 study of difficult passages in the corpus. He points out that while Rin chen bzang po cites severally from the corpus, he did not fully translate it at the time.<sup>12</sup> This was of course left to Pa ita r bhadrabodhi and Gyi jo Lo ts ba Zla ba'i 'od zer. But the problem with 'Gos Lo ts ba II's remark is that the manuscript of the that is currently available not once cites passages from the corpus. As is indicated by the title of Sog bzlog pa's work, it consists of a series of replies to

10 For what follows, see his , in , vol. 7, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2013: 144-145. To be sure, as is evident from his

, 509-538, 538-541, Sog bzlog pa was most probably familiar with this work as well as undoubtedly with Gser mdog Pa chen's undated reply to Bya pa Skal bzang chos kyi rgya mtsho'i sde who had sent him a letter apropos of queries of the above treatise. This letter was titled or subtitled and Gser mdog Pa chen's undated response to it was his , in , vol. 17, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2013: 375-410.

11 See the afterword of his untitled inquiry into problematic doctrines and works of ambiguous provenance that is contained in his , vol. V, Kathmandu: Acarya Shedup Tenzin, 1995: 593. Glo bo Mkhan chen Bsod nams lhun grub (1456–1532) appears to cite this work in his undated

, in , vol. 7, ed. Si khron bod yig dpe mnying bsdu sgrig khang (Chengdu: ?, ?), 153: ...

. However, the text of this quotation is not found in the manuscript. Glo bo Mkhan chen's title suggests that it is a nod to Go rams pa Bsod nams seng ge's (1429–1489) 1476 response, subtitled , to the series of controversial questions Gser mdog Pa chen had posed concerning Sa skya Pa ita's .

12 See the ,?Pho brang Rgyal bzang smon mkhar xylograph, 2b.

queries ( ) – some fourteen of these are isolated in the New Delhi manuscript by means of an ornamental Rin spungs <sup>13</sup> - in a work that he took to have been the Karma pa VIII's directive ( ) to adherents of the Old School. Unfortunately, he provides few details about the circumstances under which this directive was written - indeed, he may not have known much about these - and its highly contentious if not inflammatory content, except towards the end where he apparently recorded its colophon. There it was stated, among other things, that the Karma pa had written it in Central Tibet in a rat ( ) year. More about this will follow below.

There was at least one earlier reaction to this directive. 'Dul 'dzin Mkhyen rab rgya mtsho had already responded to this very same work in the fre-serpent year, that is, in 1557. Calling himself a Sngags 'chang, a tantric practitioner, this native from G.yag sde in Rtsang [= Gtsang] rong or simply Rong<sup>14</sup> states that he had composed his highly learned treatise at the behest of Ngag dbang kun dga' chos 'byor, an erstwhile disciple of the Karma pa himself and the abbot of the Tshogs sde dge 'dun sgang religious community, as well as at the behest of the then governor of Yar rgyab principality that is located in what is present-day Grwa nang.<sup>15</sup> He also writes that he had taken his inspiration from the writings of Zla ba grags pa, a close disciple of Ratna gling pa, Gter ston Bsam gtan gling pa, Padma brtse ba chen po – the Bhutanese manuscript has the correct Sman rtse ba chen po<sup>16</sup> -, Mkhas grub Sna tshogs rang grol, and one whose name includes r , that is, Dpal.<sup>17</sup>

Now contrary to Sog bzlog pa's contribution, which is a systematic response to some of the issues that were raised in the letter, 'Dul 'dzin's work exhibits none of these features. With seventeen sections ( ) in all, the first thirteen sections consist of an introduction

13 SOG1, 5-153 [= SOG2, 4-128; SOG3, 93-140]. SOG1, 153-161 and 161-169 [= SOG2, 128-134 and 135-141; SOG3, 140-142 and 142-144] contain, respectively, reflections on the treasure-text ( ) traditions and the Karma pa hierarchs and their earlier re-embodiments.

14 See 'DUL1, 303, 380, 390 [= 'DUL2, 404, 491, 504]. He is probably the same Mkhyen rab rgya mtsho who is noted as a Sngags 'chang in 'Brug chen IV Padma dkar po's (1525–1592) autobiography; see his , in , vol. 3, Darjeeling: Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang, 1973: 461.

15 For what follows, see 'DUL1, 83-84, 610-611 [= 'DUL2, 118-121, 773]. For the early history of the Tshogs sde dge 'dun sgang community, see J. Heimbels, "The Jo gdan tshogs sde bzhi: An Investigation into the History of the Four Monastic Communities in kya r bhadra's Vinaya Tradition," in , Band 1, ed. F.-K. Ehrhard and P. Maurer, Andiast: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies GmbH, 2013: 215 f. For Yar rgyab, see now M. Fermer, "Putting Yar rgyab on the Map," in , ed. V. Caumanns and M. Sernesi, Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2017: 63-96.

16 'DUL1, 379 [= 'DUL2, 490] registers a certain Rgyal dbang rje Sman rtse Chos rje Bsam grub rgyal po as an erstwhile disciple of Ratna gling pa.

17 This may refer to Don grub legs pa dpal 'bar whom he characterizes as one of his principal teachers in 'DUL1, 296 [= 'DUL2, 387].

to Buddhism and its historical development in India together with a detailed account of the rise and spread of the Old School's Word ( ) and Treasure-text ( ) traditions and their respective exponents. Section thirteen includes a survey of the traditions that flourished among some important members of the New School, that is, especially among the Bka' brgyud school. The actual response to the issues addressed in what was allegedly the Karma pa's tract only begins at section fifteen, that is, at more than half way through the text, at the fourth rubric ( ) – read "the first rubric" – and 'Dul 'dzin uses the format of first presenting the issue at hand which he then follows up with a detailed reply.<sup>18</sup> This section contains some twenty-one problems areas in as many such "rubrics." It would appear that Sog bzlog pa was not familiar with 'Dul 'dzin's treatise, at least I have not detected any evidence that he might have known it.

Lastly, Lho pa Bya bral, "the last/lowest disciple" of Padma gling pa (1450–1521), also penned a response to the alleged work of the Karma pa in a hare-year, meaning either in 1555 or, perhaps less likely, some duodenary cycle thereafter, while in [Ri ngogs] Dar rgyas chos gling.<sup>19</sup> The preface suggests that he may be identified as Don grub legs pa dpal 'bar whose name 'Dul 'dzin prefixes with the epithet Lho pa Thams cad mkhyen pa and of whom he states that he was in fact a disciple of Padma gling pa.<sup>20</sup> If that were the case, then Lho pa Bya bral may indeed have written his work as early as 1555! Sometime in 1550 or 1551, Rin chen phun tshogs chos kyi rgyal po (1508–1557), the seventeenth abbot of 'Bri gung monastery, traveled south and met with an assortment of Padma gling pa's disciples in Bu tshal/Bsam yas. His biographer Rin chen dpal styles one of these Chos rje Lho pa who had come with his students to see Rin chen phun tshogs chos kyi rgyal po from Dar rgyas chos sdings in Kong po, and he may very well be our Lho pa Bya bral.<sup>21</sup> Neither 'Dul 'dzin nor Sog bzlog pa refers to his work, which dispenses with a thick scholarly apparatus of the likes of 'Dul 'dzin, and Lho pa Bya bral in turn does not mention either one. However, at one point he cites a certain Rje Zhig po.<sup>22</sup> It is indeed tempting to identify him as Zhig po gling pa, one of Sog bzlog pa's masters, which

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18 'DUL1, 436-568. Since "the fourth rubric" is followed on p. 448 by

would possibly make him Sog bzlog pa's senior contemporary. But this is mere speculation.

But surprise, surprise, it now turns out that the Karma pa was not the author of this circular letter at all! Rather, the available evidence suggests that the author was an interloper who, apparently intent on creating intersectorian trouble for reasons so far only known to him, had circulated his tract using the Karma pa's name as its author!<sup>23</sup> At least this is what the Karma pa himself stated in his reaction to this letter, which essentially begins with him calling the author a fraud, a liar, and an ignoramus with low insight ( ), although he does set the stage by opening his work with a brief introduction to the bona fide Old and New School critiques such as those written by Rin chen bzang po, and 'Gos Lo ts ba I. Reading the Karma pa's reaction it is clear that the anonymous author was not altogether at home in either the Old or the New School. Indeed, the Karma pa systematically demolishes those passages in this circular that he considered to be seriously illconceived and doctrinally wanting. There is also one instance where he comments on a point made by the author which, he says, would not merely be a tall tale for him, but also for someone like Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), thereby perhaps suggesting that he suspected that the writer was possibly a member of the Dge ldan pa, that is, the Dge lugs pa school.<sup>24</sup> And this raises a host of other questions that cannot be addressed here.

The Karma pa's work consists of two parts.<sup>25</sup> The first is the longest by far and is directed squarely against well over forty statements made by the author of the fraudulent open letter, whereas the second summarizes some of his own reservations with the Old School that we have partly encountered in the texts to which S.G. Karmay had already drawn our attention<sup>26</sup> as well as in his enormous commentary on 'Jig rten mgon po's precepts. The first item that is discussed by the Karma pa is the letter's colophon where the author had identified himself as the Karma pa. The interloper had written the following<sup>27</sup>:

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23 This does throw a slight wrench in D. Higgins' assumption that the Karma pa was indeed its author in his otherwise fine study; see his

, in  
, Heft 78, Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2013:  
213 f.

24 See MI1, 74 [= MI2, 403]. The Karma pa uses the term Dge ldan pa in MI1, 101 [= MI2, 477].

25 MI1, 55-100, 100-104 [= MI2, 351-473, 473-486]. For what it is worth, the catalog of the Tibetan collection of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing listed a manuscript of this work in fifty-six folios under no. 003878(8).

26 , Leiden: Brill,  
2007: 180-182, 188, 195, 230.

27 For all the following three passages from the Karma pa's work, see MI1, 55 [= MI2, 353]. The more or less corresponding passages for the first [1a] and third [2a] of these in 'Dul 'dzin's work can be found in 'DUL1, 564, 437-438 [= 'DUL2, 716, 564], and in SOG1, 164, 5 [= SOG2, 137, 4-5; SOG3, 143, 93]. Passage [1] is absent from Lho pa Bya bral's work, but passage [2a] can be found in his  
, 3-4.

[1a]

Proclaimed by the Karma pa to the well-known Rdzogs chen Lama in Te gro...  
composed in Snye mo during the moon's waxing period of the eighth lunar -  
month of the rat-year; may there be happiness!

All this was a rather unpleasant hoax; Mi bskyod rdo rje writes:

[1b]

Now, because there was not any well-known lama who was an adherent of  
Rdzogs chen in Te gro when I was staying in Snye mo in the wood-male-rat year  
[ ], to say that I issued a proclamation ( ) to him appears to be a great  
slanderous lie.

To be sure, the reading "wood-male-rat year" presents us with a problem, since no such year occurred in the Karma pa's lifetime; the two most proximate wood-male-rat years were, roughly, 1504 and 1564! If he had originally written "rat year," which a later editor changed to the wood-male-rat year, then we have the following options: 1516, 1528, 1540, or 1552. I think we can easily dispense with the first one. And this leaves 1528, 1540, or 1552. Taking his biography by his contemporary Dpa' bo II in hand, we learn from an entry – it is placed between 1548 and 1554- that 1552 or the water-male-rat year must indeed have been the year in question.<sup>28</sup> What is more, we also learn from him that the Karma pa had written his response while he was a guest of the ruler of Yar rgyab, who was probably the same one at whose request 'Dul 'dzin had composed his reply some five years later and three years after the Karma pa's passing. It is therefore remarkable, and I am unable to explain this away, that 'Dul 'dzin makes no mention of the fact that the Karma pa may not have been the author of this letter! But he

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, ed. Rdo rje rgyal po, vol. 2: 1295, 1297. J. Rheingans,  
, unpublished University of the West of England doctoral dissertation,  
Bristol, 2008: 144-145, n. 181, suggests that it was written in 1553, an ox-year. My thanks go out to J. Rheingans  
for sharing his dissertation with me. We find the same in his

, in

, vol. 7, Bochum/ Freiburg: project verlag, 2017: 106.

does apparently cite the colophon in its entirety, which began with:

[ ] [ ]  
[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]  
a

a The text in brackets indicates the variant readings found on p. 716 of the Bhutanese ms.

Furthermore, considering that [my work] is difficult to comprehend by an Old School person who had trivial questions, do properly investigate and issue a response to this easy read that is not obscured by ornate poetry, poetic diction, prosody, etc.!

And we find the very same line in Sog bzlog pa's work. Thus, we may conclude that 'Dul 'dzin and Sog bzlog pa might have taken their cue from the remarks of the Karma pa's colophon and accordingly proceeded to take issue with the anonymous author's critical statements about the Old School. But this would create other problems.

The second of the forty or so problematic remarks by the anonymous author that immediately follows the above and the Karma pa's first comment is:

[2a]

Further, the expression "the yoga vehicle" figures in that document; since, apart from the three vehicles, "the yoga vehicle" does not occur in the scriptures that are known in this Tibet, the author was deluded about the expression.

Comparing the Karma pa's text of [2a] with the corresponding ones in 'Dul 'dzin, Lho pa Bya bral, and Sog bzlog pa, we notice that he abbreviated the passages of the text with which he took issue. And many of the actual entries of the author's opinion about sundry doctrinal niceties elicited from the Karma pa a number of choice expressions to the effect that what the fraud had said "merely shows that he himself is the big both whi4C005600gs pa'i40550(Tw /Span[<005100.8zinny.

There is no question that Sog bzlog pa had the very same text in mind that the Karma pa himself had criticized earlier. The same holds for 'Dul 'dzin and Lho pa Bya bral. And I believe we can also accept that the Karma pa had written this work that was ever so critical of the interloper's piece, if only because it is registered in the earliest catalog of his writings, namely, the one that was compiled by his disciple Zhwa dmar V Dkon mchog yan lag (1525–1583).<sup>30</sup> Towards the end of his treatise, Sog bzlog pa cites a directive ( ) that the Karma pa had apparently sent to Ngag dbang bkra shis grags pa rgyal mtshan (1488–1564), the Phag mo gru ruler whose court was located in Sne'u gdong– the Phag mo gru nominally ruled over Central Tibet during this time –, in which he had allegedly stated the following<sup>31</sup>:

[read: ]

At present, in this Dbu ru, region in the north,  
 Demonic re-embodiments such as the  
 treasure-revealer Lcang lo can....

No friend of the Bka' brgyud pa school as a whole for a variety of politico-historical reasons, Dalai Lama V Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) cites these same two lines in his 1666 catalog of Rje btsun Bsam gtan gling pa's cycle of esoteric instructions.<sup>32</sup> He quotes these first and foremost in the context of the Karma pa having, in his opinion, falsely accused G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal (1287–1365) for manufacturing a fake copy of the Sanskrit manuscript of the from the Kathmandu Valley, that he had written the lines Gter ston Lcang lo can, and that he had thus belittled (

<sup>30</sup> See the text in the Karma pa's oeuvre, the

, in , vol. 1, ed. Karma Bde legs, Lhasa: 2004: 10, and also the manuscript of the same in Zhwa dmar V, in , vol. 2, Gangtok: Dzongsar Chhentse Labrang, 1974: 210. A history of the Karma pa's writings and their printing is found in Rheingans,

, 43 f.

<sup>31</sup> SOG1, 164 [= SOG2, 137; SOG3, 143]. The recently published edition of the Karma pa's oeuvre contains two such directives; see the \*

and the , in , vol. 3, ed. Karma Bde legs, Lhasa: 2004: 63-65, 102-111. The Karma pa also wrote a very interesting guide to good governance for the Sne'u gdong court; see

, in , vol. 3, ed. Karma Bde legs, Lhasa: 2004: 43-58.

<sup>32</sup> For what follows, see his

, in , vol. 27, ed. Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe mnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009: 591, 594-595.

) Rin chen phun tshogs chos kyi rgyal po, the re-embodiment of Lha sras Rgyal po, that is, Mu tig btsan po (ca. 800), one of the sons of king Khri srong lde btsan.<sup>33</sup> Lcang lo can is the name of a small private chamber atop the Mi 'gyur rdo rje palace of 'Bri gung monastery. Also known as Gter ston Gnam lcags me 'bar, the treasure revealer is none other than Rin chen phun tshogs, who had unearthed such revelatory literature as the

cycle at Lcang lo can in 1540–1543. Evidently, Dalai Lama V's source for the above was a comment the Karma pa had made in connection with the text in his huge exegesis of the

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G.yung ston himself made no mention of his alleged connection with such a Sanskrit manuscript in his admittedly brief autobiography that largely consists of a record of the instructions he had received from his teachers.<sup>35</sup> But he was already criticized by 'Bri gung Dpal 'dzin for what the Dalai Lama V had alleged; the former had written<sup>36</sup>:

33 Dalai Lama V devotes one entire section on him [and 'Bri gung Rig 'dzin Chos kyi grags pa's (1595–1659)] revelations in his 1680 record of teachings received, for which see his

, in , vol. 4, ed. Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009: 168-184. His activities as a treasure-text revealer have been summarized in Gu ru Bkra shis' 1807–1809 , ed. Rdo rje rgyal po, Xining: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1990: 541-544.

34 See, respectively, his , in , vol. 4, ed. Ser gtsug nang bstan dpe rnying 'tshol bsdu phyogs sgrig khang, Beijing: Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2009: 299, and p. 975 of the text of complicated origins in the Karma pa's , vol. 4, ed. Karma Bde legs, Lhasa: 2004: 885-1139.

35 For a discussion of a portion of his life that is based on his autobiography, see the fine essay by Xie Guangdian , "Yongdun duo'erzhibande yuanting zhixing - yiqi zizhuan wei zhongxin ——— [Autobiography of g.Yung ston rDo rJe dPal ba (1287–1365): A Tibetan Buddhist at the Mongolian Court (as per p. 259)]," in

, no. 7, ed. Shen Weirong, Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2014: 243-259. See also my forthcoming "A Tibetan Magus at the Yuan Court of Külüg Qa an (Wuzong Emperor): The Case of G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal bzang po (1287–1365)".

36 See his , tbrc.org, W1CZ885, 27b. The text quoted in Sog bzlog pa,

, 394 [= ed. Padma tshul khriims, 134] shows a few minor different readings.

One called G.yung ston Rdo rje dpal,  
Offered Bu ston Rin chen grub,  
A golden flower<sup>37</sup> without ?preconditions,  
Along with a Sanskrit manuscript of the .

When he [= G.yung ston] requested [Bu ston] to emend the translation,  
And place it [read: bcug] in the collection,  
[Bu ston] had understood that the Sanskrit manuscript was fraudulent,  
And did not wish to listen to the request.

Sog bzlog pa cites this passage and, saying that this was an occasion for some critical reflection,  
offered the following rebuttal<sup>38</sup>:

a  
b  
c  
d  
e  
f

---

37 The "golden flower" is a metaphor for a gift that accompanies a request.

38 , 394-395 [= ed. Padma tshul khrim, 134-135].

g  
h i

- a Delhi, ed.:
- b Delhi, ed.:
- c Delhi, ed.:
- d Delhi, ed.:
- e Delhi, ed.:
- f Delhi, ed.:
- g Delhi, ed.: 'gyur.
- h Delhi, ed.:
- i Delhi, ed.:

In some reply to queries in [Bu ston's] ,  
Many passages of the are quoted,<sup>39</sup>  
He greatly valued the commentary [?].

The great scholar Thar pa Lo ts ba,  
Translated anew the \* ,<sup>40</sup>  
And understood it[s veracity].  
Hence, this tale is di f cult to be true.

Even if Bu ston did not accept it,

39 For this very problematic reference, see my "The Lives of Bu ston Rin chen grub and the Date and Sources of His ,"  
 , no. 35, 2016: 287-291, and my forthcoming "Did Mar pa Lo ts ba Chos  
kyi blo gros ever meet N rop ? A Propos of Some Conflicting Chronologies," especially n. 13.

40 This is Thar pa gling Lo ts ba Nyi ma rgyal mtshan (ca.1250–1320), the erstwhile abbot of Bodhgay ,  
the translator of the – see P. Skilling, tr., .  
2 vols., Oxford: The Pali text Society, 1994, 1997 – and Bu ston's teacher of Sanskrit. See also my "Notes on  
Jñ namitra's Commentary on the ,"  
 , ed. U.T. Kragh, Cambridge: Department of  
South Asian Studies, 2013: 1409 f. I am unable to identify the \*

Master Padmasambhava's translation that he did by himself and,  
Thereafter, Pa chen Vimalamitra,  
Gnyags ston Jñ nakum ra [Ye shes gzhon nu],  
Acted as translators and translated the text in Yer pa.

Up to the sovereign Ral pa can (r. ca. 806–838),  
Its explanation and transmission were widespread.  
In the meantime, it was translated by Bcom ldan ral gri.<sup>41</sup>  
Again, it was translated by one called Glo bo Lo ts ba  
Dpal ldan byang chub.<sup>42</sup>

Later, it was translated by 'Bri gung Lo ts ba  
Nor bu dpal ye shes (1313–1387)<sup>43</sup> and,  
Because some five translations had taken place for it,  
There was no outcry [against it].

Much earlier in his work, Dpal 'dzin had preceded this statement by having written something quite similar<sup>44</sup>:

a

---

41 It may not be quite accurate to say that Bcom ldan ral gri, that is, Dar ma rgyal mtshan, translated the entire tantra, but he did write a study of it; see the \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, vol. 10, Lhasa: Khams sprul Bsod nams don grub, 2006: 155-192.

42 Glo bo Lo ts ba Dpal ldan byang chub is an unknown quantity [to me] and his name does not appear in any of the traditional listings of translators nor in Khri Bsam gtan's excellent study, \_\_\_\_\_, Lanzhou: Kan su'u mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2005.

43

a Chengdu, ed.: , "It is known that...."

Because one called Rma Ban[de] Rin chen mchog,  
Had written the ,  
It is alleged that, when the king, upon hearing this, looked for it,  
It was hidden for twelve years.<sup>45</sup>

Reacting to it, Sog bzlog pa had written something very similar as the passage that I just cited.<sup>46</sup> But he adds for good measure that passages of the are cited in the Indic commentary on the by Rgya byin sdong po [\*Indran la] of Uddiyana (8<sup>th</sup> c.), the Indic study of the by Vi vamitra (8<sup>th</sup> c.), and the , one of the two major sections of the . Already 'Gos Lo ts ba II had argued that even such an authority as Bu ston had included the first two in his Tanjur and, I hasten to add, he had done so without any reservations about their canonicity.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, he writes that Buddhaguhya's [or: Buddhagupta's] eighth century

was written on the basis of this tantra and that such earlier scholars as Chos kyi sryan mnga'[read: snga] ba – his identity is unclear to me – and Bu ston considered the so-called commentary by Sgeg pa'i rdo rje [\*Vila avajra] and the one by Nyi 'od seng ge [\*S ryaprabhasi ha] to be witnesses ( ) of its authenticity. Both authors appear to have worked in the eighth century. I do not know what Sog bzlog pa may have meant by the latter expression, but Lha bla ma/Pho brang Zhi ba 'od had already questioned the canonicity of this so-called .<sup>48</sup>

In his comments on the history of the controversy surrounding the famous and its ultimate vindication as an authentically Indic work in his 1680 record of teachings received, Dalai Lama V first refers to the well known account that kya r bhadra had obtained a Sanskrit manuscript of this work from while he was staying in Bsam yas and that it subsequently fell into the hands of Snar thang pa Bcom ldan ral gri via the

45 Something like these lines is also found in the that is attributed to 'Gos Lo ts ba I; see the , Thimphu: Kunsang Topgyel and Mani Dorji, 1979: 20-21.

46 , 275 [= ed. Padma tshul khriims, 15-16].

47 See, respectively, the , repr. L. Chandra, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1976: 92 [= , tr. G.N. Roerich, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979: 103], and the in , Part 26, ed. L. Chandra, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971: 454, 468.

48 Karmay, "An Open Letter by Pho brang Zhi ba 'od," in , Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 2009: 32.

of ces of a certain Rta ston Gzi brjid.<sup>49</sup> In 1204, kya r bhadra had been invited to Central Tibet by Khro phu Lo ts ba Byams pa'i dpal (1174–1237) and the latter's autobiography contains a lengthy account of their travels throughout the area from that time to 1214, when his guest left for Kashmir. Be this as it may, the Karma pa line of re-embodiments had long-standing connections with the Old School, as indicated by Dpa' bo II and as is patently clear from the oeuvre of Karma pa II Karma pakshi (1204–1283) and Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje (1284–1339) and especially by the Karma pa himself.

Writing quite a while after the "publication" of this open letter, Sog bzlog pa's testimony may be judged to carry little weight in view of the fact that the Karma pa had already fully and

it as well.<sup>52</sup> Rather, it has to do with the grammatical derivation and the definition of the word ( ), here used not in the sense of a literary work, but rather in the sense of the stream [of consciousness]; Sog bzlog pa's text begins as follows:

[ ]

The of Grand-Translator Rin chen bzang po states:

Why is it called ? is called in the Sanskrit language;<sup>53</sup> from the word , , inasmuch as the term links and is continuous ( ),<sup>54</sup> it is ; further, inasmuch as it links the stream of consciousness ( , \* ) of the triad of [1] the foundation of spiritual practice, the occasion of being a sentient being, [2] the path towards liberation, the occasion of meditative practice, and [3] the result, the occasion of enlightenment, it is .

The manuscript of Rin chen bzang po's work reads this passage somewhat differently under the rubric of the "etymology" ( , \* ) of <sup>55</sup>:

52 The location of this and the next passage in Sog bzlog pa's work should have a parallel in MI1 [= MI2], but...it does not.

53 The word derives from meaning continuity, unbroken succession, and , which has the sense of protecting. For other explanations, see Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (late 11<sup>th</sup> c.), , in , , vol. 2, ed. Bkra shis et al., Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1999: 87-88, and Bu ston suggests a different derivation in his , in , Part 15, repr. L Chandra, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1969: 98, where he cites the , that is, Saraha's (9<sup>th</sup> c.) commentary on the \* for which, see BSTAN, vol.13: 1167; derives from [read: ] – - and - !

54 The word is identified as an archaism ( ) for in Rnam rgyal tshe ring, , Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2001: 362.

55 This rubric is contained in RGYUD, 19-20.

Why is it called ? is called in the Sanskrit language, that is, from the word , "tantra." Inasmuch as as it links and is continuous, it is ...

Parenthetically, this is not exactly the explanation of that is given in the late eighth century , which defines it merely as continuity ( ).<sup>56</sup> And Sog bzlog pa continues the quotation by citing two lines of verse from, ostensibly, a/the \* it is not found therein! -, which provides three undetermined signifiers ( ) for the word "linkage":

In that connection, it is said in a/the \* :

The term has the sense of linkage;  
The sense is threefold, that is,

and...

The quotation of the tantra stops in mid-verse, as is indicated by the final quotative , without specifying what these three signifiers are. The and the conjunction that follow it are Sog bzlog pa's signal that this portion of the quotation from Rin chen bzang po's text has come to an end. He then continues with the second quote indicated by "further, the very same work states" ( ):

[read: ]

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56 Mie Ishikawa, , in No.18, , vol. 2, Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1990: 97, no. 294.

Or, one should take \_\_\_\_\_ as linking the signified with the signifier,<sup>58</sup> which, without being incomplete, is easily able to establish in an outstanding fashion the linkage and continuity of the three streams of consciousness<sup>59</sup> as well. It is stated in the \* \_\_\_\_\_ :

Due to linkage, without being incomplete, and  
Outstandingness,<sup>60</sup> it is called \_\_\_\_\_ ;

And, further, the expression \* \_\_\_\_\_ [means] it is tantra inasmuch as its own characteristic is apprehended.<sup>61</sup>

Again, the manuscript of Rin chen bzang po's work is different and has the quotation and its intent reversed, and adds further pertinent details:

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57 These lines do not occur in the translation of the text of the tantra, \_\_\_\_\_, that is now available in BKA', vol. 87: 543-742.

58 The bivalency of the term \_\_\_\_\_ in the sense of the signified and signifier, is also used by Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo (1142–1192), the second patriarch of the Sa skya pa school, in his \_\_\_\_\_ [Sde dge print], in \_\_\_\_\_, vol. 2, no. 1, ed. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968: 29/3 [Ga, 58a] [= \_\_\_\_\_, tr. Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso and W. Verrill, \_\_\_\_\_, vol. 1, Xlibris Corporation, 2012: 425]. We encounter it as well in Ratna gling pa's citation of the/a Sgyu 'phrul, for which see his 1458–1466 \_\_\_\_\_ [= \_\_\_\_\_], Tashijong: The Sungrab Nyamso Gyunphel Parkhang, 1972: 82:

. I have not been able to verify this quotation in the canon. For "signified" and "signifier" as reflecting and \_\_\_\_\_, see J.C. Gold, \_\_\_\_\_, Albany: State University Press of New York, 2008: 48 f.

59 I have not found an explanation of the expression \_\_\_\_\_ . At my peril but with some sort of precedent in Rin chen bzang po's work, I venture to explain it as referring to the state of mind at the outset of one's spiritual practice ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), in the progressive course of one's spiritual practice ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), and the state of mind that takes place as its result ( \_\_\_\_\_ ).

60 For the various notions of "outstanding", see Klong chen Dri med 'od zer's (1309–1364) \_\_\_\_\_ [Sde dge blockprint], in \_\_\_\_\_, vol. Kha [2], 158-160.

61 I am not at all sure what this actually means!

It then continues with:

62

63

The problem with these citations in the \_\_\_\_\_ is, as far as I can see – which may not be far enough! –, that none are traceable in the translations of these texts as we now have them in the Kanjur-canon of the New School, that is, they are not found in Rin chen bzang po's very own translation of the Vairocana-centered \* \_\_\_\_\_ or in Kāśapa's and Nag tsho Lo tsāba's \_\_\_\_\_ 1050s–1060s translation of the \* \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>64</sup> Thus we \_\_\_\_\_ have to consider the following possibilities. First, if Sog bzlog pa is correct in attributing

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62 This is [almost] a quotation of \_\_\_\_\_, II: ii, 49a-b, which reads in BKA', vol. 80: 39:

63 I have been unable to recover the actual source of quotation.

64 See, respectively, BKA', vol. 17, nos. 465 [#466] and 500 [#502].

the [redacted] to Rin chen bzang po, then it is not wholly unthinkable that the latter had based himself on translations of those Sanskrit manuscripts that included these lines of verse. These translations are now lost. Later, so another possible scenario might run, Rin chen bzang po as well as the team of Kāśapa Pañita and Nag tsho Lo ts ba used manuscripts of these tantras that did not contain these lines. Admittedly, it is not clear to me where these lines may have been placed in the narratives of these texts, for they do not anywhere discuss the notion behind the term [redacted]. In view of the fact that Tibetan editor-readers are often wont to insert passages in or excise them from manuscripts they were working with, often without any warning signs to their later readers, another though perhaps less likely possibility is that the titles of these texts that are indexed to these citations may have been tampered with. A search of the texts of the [redacted] [tbc.org] reveals that the lines:

virtually occur in piecemeal fashion in the [redacted] \*, albeit with very different significations,<sup>65</sup> and that the lines:

occur with the only insignificant variant reading of [redacted] for [redacted] at the beginning of the seventeenth chapter of the [redacted], which is an Old School tantra.<sup>66</sup> More can and probably should be said about these textual problems, but suffice it for now to mention that Dge rtse Pañita 'Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub (1761–1829) cites the very same last two lines in his 1797 catalog of the [redacted] where, however, he writes that these were taken from what he calls the [redacted] [\* [redacted]],<sup>67</sup> but I have not been able to retrieve these from any works that have [redacted] in their titles. Regardless of whether he copied these from another source, which is very, very likely, it thus remains to be determined whence they originated.

65 BKA', vol. 79: 556-557.

66 BKA', vol. 101: 867.

67 See his

[redacted], in [redacted], vol. Ja [7], Chengdu: Bod yig dpe rnying myur skyob, 2001: 108. For Dge rtse Pañita, see now the study of T. Makidono, [redacted], Bibliotheca Tibetica at Indica 2, Tokyo: Sankibo Busshorin, 2016.

Sa chen Kun dga' snying po (1092–1158), the first patriarch of the Sa skya pa school, does not explain the meaning of ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ in his above mentioned booklet, but his son the Slob dpon Bsod nams rtse mo does and his comments warrant a brief discussion.<sup>68</sup> In all, the Slob dpon cites three different texts for short definitions of ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ . The first two are the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ and the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* , which, he writes, but have it that ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ equals continuity, ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , and the third is what he calls the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* with the to all intents and purposes identical formula ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ . The Tibetan translation for ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ is this time ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ and not ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , which of course is fine and makes no difference. But, again, Rin chen bzang po's translation of the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* does not contain anything like the one line cited by Bsod nams rtse mo. We thus have to consider the possibility that Rin chen bzang po's ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ Bsod nams rtse mo's quotations are to be located in another work than the one translated by the former. For this we may have to turn to the Old School corpus of the so-called eight ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* -s. The octet's textual history, not to mention the contents of the corpus itself, is indeed a very complicated affair and, for this obvious reason, I will not enter into a discussion of it. This notwithstanding, a few words are in order. According to Nyang ral's ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ treasure-text biography of Padmasambhava, the cycle of the so-called "eight-fold ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ ( ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ ) texts," consisted of the following<sup>69</sup>:

1. ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་<sup>70</sup> 5.
2. ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ 6.

68 For what follows, see his ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ [Sde dge print], 29/3-4 [Ga, 58a-b][= ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , tr. Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso and W. Verrill, 426 f.].

69 ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ed. Thub bstan nyi ma, Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989: 62 [= E. Pema Kunzang, tr., ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ed. M.B. Schmidt, Boston: Shambhala, 1993: 80-81]. This work must now be used together with L. Doney, ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , Andiastr: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2015, where the relevant passages are found on 141 [40b-41a] and 238-239 [34a-b]. Interestingly, Zhi ba 'od dismissed the authenticity of a [or the?] ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ corpus, for which see Karmay, "An Open Letter by Pho brang Zhi ba 'od," 31-32.

70 The ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ is at times called the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* in that it is part of the much larger ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* corpus; see D. Martin, "Illusion Web - Locating the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* in Buddhist Intellectual History," in ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ed. Ch.I. Beckwith, Bloomington: The Tibet Society, 1987: 181, citing Zur 'tsho Dkon mchog tshul khriims, ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , Dalhousie, 1980, vol. 1: 15, and vol. 3: 251. For the various recensions of this work and the criticism it received from a number of New School intellectuals, see Dorji Wangchuk, "An Eleventh-Century Defence of the Authenticity of the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་\* ," in ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ed. H. Eimer and D. Germano, Leiden: Brill, 2002: 265-291. See now also Shen Weirong and Yang jie , " ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ "Miaomi zangxu" yu juyi wushang mifa yu xizangde chuanbo [ ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ and the Dissemination of the ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ ( ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ ) ]," in ལྷོ་འཇམ་མཁའ་མཚན་ , ed. G. Hazod and Shen Weirong, 451-509.

3. 7.  
4. 8.

The \_\_\_\_\_ attributes the first translation of these to the joint efforts of Padmasambhava and Cog ro Klu'i rgyal mtshan. It also has something to say about the provenance of this corpus and the other texts mentioned in this part of the narrative, for it ends with the statement that, "not leaving in India" ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), Padmasambhava had miraculously taken these and a host of other manuscripts from N land \_\_\_\_\_ monastery in what is now Bihar State to Tibet, after which they were deposited in the "treasury" ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) of Bsam yas monastery. The stipulation made by the adverbial phrase "not leaving them in India" could and probably ought to be construed as a response to the possible charge, perhaps first made by 'Gos Lo ts ba I, that no Sanskrit originals could be found in the subcontinent for many of the Old School's tantras.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, 'Gos Lo ts ba I is reputed to have questioned some seventy-two Indian scholars whether such and such a work was familiar to them during his sojourn in the subcontinent. When he received a negative reply, he felt that this was sufficient proof that these were not authentically Buddhist scriptures.<sup>72</sup> We do not encounter anything of the sort in the available text of his \_\_\_\_\_ -open letter, but Gser mdog Pa chen does quote Rngog Lho brag pa to this effect. Styling the latter as belonging to the lineage of Mgos = ['Gos Lo ts ba I], he writes<sup>73</sup>:

71 'Gos Khug pa Lhas btsas, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Thimphu: Kunsang Topgyel and Mani Dorji, 1997: 20. This phrase is absent in the text A mes zhabs Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams cites in his \_\_\_\_\_, 33.

72 \_\_\_\_\_, tr. G.N. Roerich, 360.

73 \_\_\_\_\_, 144-145. Gser mdog Pa chen writes that Rngog had composed a study of the rise and development of Buddhist tantra, titled \_\_\_\_\_. Unfortunately, this work has not [yet] been sighted. The \_\_\_\_\_ [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] that is attributed to Chag Lo ts ba Chos rje dpal (1197–1264) refers to the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lho brag, and I wonder if this Lho brag may be the same as Rngog Lho brag pa; see the \_\_\_\_\_, 17. For the \_\_\_\_\_ [shes rab ral gri], see K. Raudsepp, "The Dating and Authorship Problems in the Sngags log sun 'byin Attributed to Chag Lo ts ba Chos rje dpal," in \_\_\_\_\_, ed. B. Dotson et al., Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2009: 281-297.

The premise of the statement by Rngog Lho brag pa who is an exponent of Mgos' tradition appears to be established, namely, that:

Since seventy-two Pa itas contemporary with Mgos were asked about some of the profound religious texts/practices of Bla chen 'Brog mi, they allegedly ( ) replied that these were absent in the subcontinent.

Thus, while Lord Mgos, too, was a contemporary of the Bla chen and a disciple of Gay dhara, I doubt that he never criticized the religious texts/practices that had not appeared to himself but that had appeared to that one, the Bla chen.

We must bear in mind that there is a tradition holds that relations between 'Brog mi Lo ts ba and 'Gos Lo ts ba I were rather strained.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, Gser mdog Pa chen does question the integrity of Rngog Lho brag pa's remark. And he writes a little further down that while it is the case for what Lho brag pa had to say about the translations of texts, it does not necessarily hold for the profound transmissions that were transmitted by word of mouth ( ) or for instructions ( ).<sup>75</sup> He provides as examples the six teachings of N rop and N guma as evidence for what would go counter Rngog's claim. And he ends by saying that: "Hence, where did the great translator Mgos criticize 'Brog mi's profound teachings? Rngog was careless."

In what may have been his chronicle, in which the is cited extensively as an authority, including the above passage,<sup>76</sup> Nyang ral or the author observes that Rma Rin chen mchog had invited Vimalamitra to help him revise the earlier translations, whereafter the two men primarily focused their energies on going through and editing the translations of this

74 See, for example, C.R. Stearns, tr.,  
Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001: 53-55, 92-97.

75 145-146:

[146]

There are of course some  
problems with this remark that cannot be discussed here.  
76 , 308.

cycle.<sup>77</sup> This effort apparently also included the \_\_\_\_\_, which, since it concerns Vairocana [= \_\_\_\_\_], must of course be none other than Rin chen bzang po's \* \_\_\_\_\_. ! It therefore appears that, once again, Rin chen bzang po's rendition had a precedent, let alone the fact that we now do not have eight but nine \* \_\_\_\_\_ texts!

One of the implications of such a revision, if it did take place, is that they would then have been translated in accordance with Vimalamitra's interpretation of this textual corpus. Though not mentioned by Nyang ral, Vimalamitra is on occasion credited with being the author of splitting the original \* \_\_\_\_\_ of a hundred thousand chapters into this eight-fold corpus. Thus, we seem to have competing traditions for its formation, the mystery of which need not detain us here, but suffice it to say that any of these eight [or sometimes even nine] texts might be generically called a \* \_\_\_\_\_. It is fairly certain that one or the other library of Sa skya monastery had manuscripts of at least four of the octet. Judging that these "appear to be authentic" ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) Old School tantras, Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan records the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_ in his catalog of tantric literature, which he probably composed around the year 1200.<sup>78</sup>

In fact, all of these other sources single out the following famous, if cryptic, passage from the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>79</sup>:

[34]

[35]

The \_\_\_\_\_ is often rightly or wrongly the eighteenth chapter of the \_\_\_\_\_ proper, but this is something that still needs to be looked into in some detail. These two quatrains in the \_\_\_\_\_ 1000 Tibetan translation of the former by, ostensibly, raddh karavarman and Rin chen bzang po read<sup>80</sup>:

77 \_\_\_\_\_, 422.

78 See his \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, vol. 3, no. 25, ed. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968: 275/4/1 [Ja, 205a].

79 See Yukei Matsunaga, ed., \_\_\_\_\_, Osaka: Toho Suppan, Inc., 1978: 115.

80 BKA', vol. 81: 588. The colophon On p. 611, n. 606, we learn that only the Li thang edition contains the text that a certain Thang chen pa and Rgyal mtshan reng [= ?ring] mo had compared with the version that was contained in the so-called \_\_\_\_\_, that is, a collection of manuscripts of tantras that were housed in or belonged to Stag lung monastery.

[ ]

[var. ]

This particular reading of the passage is identical to the text that we find, for example, in the possibly early nineteenth century Gting skyes manuscript of the

.<sup>81</sup> There the first translation of this work is attributed to Buddhaguhya [or: Buddhagupta] and 'Brog mi Lo ts ba Dpal gyi ye shes, who were active around the year 800, after which, so we are told, it was edited much later by raddh karavarman and Rin chen bzang po, argues either for their potential consanguinity, which is unlikely, or that the later translation was not a new translation of the text at all, but, to put it charitably, a revision, or, finally, that we have a problem with the colophon[s]. Whatever the case may be, their virtual identity does call to mind the findings of K.W. Eastman, who argued long ago that the readings of the Dunhuang manuscript of the

and its early 800 translation ascribed to Vimalamitra and Ska ba Dpal brtsegs provide evidence that the so-called New School "translation" by raddh karavarman and Rin chen bzang po is at best a slight revision of the former, though the names of these earlier translators are as absent from the New School's Kanjur colophons as they are from their catalogs.<sup>82</sup> This notwithstanding, Eastman's conclusion stands in singular opposition to that of Martin, who wrote that "[a] comparison of random parts of the text in the Nyingma version [= in the , vdK] and the Peking version [= Peking Kanjur, vdK]

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81 See the [Gting skyes recension], vol. 17, Thimphu: Dingo Khenste Rimpoche, 1973–1975: 177. For the various recensions of the , see Thub bstan chos dar, , Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2000: 4-16; a useful work is also M. Derbac, , unpublished University of Alberta master's thesis, Edmonton, 2007. A very valuable summary of state-of-the-art research on the is R. Mayer, "The Rnying ma Tantras," in , ed. J. Silk et al., vol.1, Leiden: Brill, 2015: 390-397.

82 See his "The Dunhuang Tibetan Manuscript of the [in Japanese]," in [ ] 26, 1990: 5, as cited in A. Hermann-Pfandt, "The as a Source for the History of Tantric Buddhism," in , ed. H. Eimer and D. Germano, Brill: Leiden, 2002: 141.

showed many variant readings in both wording and syntax."<sup>83</sup> The text in the Peking Kanjur is also attributed to raddh karavarman and Rin chen bzang po, and Martin's point is well taken, for the same applies when we compare the Kanjur xylographs [and one manuscript] of the with the text of the manuscript of the Gting skyes recension and the 1794–1798 Sde dge xylograph of the , which, too, is ascribed to Buddhaguhya and 'Brog mi Lo ts ba Dpal gyi ye shes.<sup>84</sup> I do not know which recension of the Eastman has used, but the mid-eighteenth century Mtshams brag manuscript from Bhutan does bear out his results and for good reason. It is after all a copy of the translation ascribed to raddh karavarman and Rin chen bzang po, with a few revisions by Rav ndra and Chag Lo ts ba II.<sup>85</sup> What all this implies is, of course, that it is hazardous to draw conclusions on a narrow dossier of texts. Again, all of Tibetan Buddhism, including its manuscript treasures, is local with the consequence that almost nothing can be universalized. Martin and Eastman also drew attention to the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscript of the , which cannot postdate the early eleventh century.<sup>86</sup>

We have so far no such tradition of the different translations of the . Zhwa dmar IV Chos grags ye shes (1453–1524) informs us in his 1517 biography of his master 'Gos Lo ts ba II that, during the summer retreat of 1443, the latter had revised and corrected ( ) the earlier translation[s] of the Candrak rti II's (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> c.) commentary on the on the basis of his own study of the text and several Sanskrit manuscripts, one of the and no

83 "Illusion Web - Locating the in Buddhist Intellectual History," 183-184; the quote is taken from p. 184.

84 BKA', 81, 442-583 (= SDE, vol. 5-M4. s - C, 8 -o 4.

less than three of the *...* itself.<sup>87</sup> This revised translation of the *...*, a commentary on the version of the *...* in seventeen chapters, was never included in any of the xylographed Tanjurcanons. Later, 'Jigs med gling pa (1729–1798) remarks in his 1772 catalogue of a manuscript edition of the *...* that 'Gos Lo ts ba II had also revised-*...*-edited the translation ( *...* ) of the *...*.<sup>88</sup> If true, then this might very well imply that the said Sanskrit manuscript of the *...* to which he had access was the one of the tantra's recension in eighteen chapters.

But we are not out of the woods and we will not be for some time after this essay sees the light of day. The translation of the \* *...*, Vi vamitra's commentary on the *...*, which is a very early, if not the earliest available, study of the text, has preserved some very different readings indeed. The verses that were just under consideration are a case in point; his text has<sup>89</sup>:

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87 See the

*...*, manuscript in seventy-four folios, 45b [= *...*, ed. Ngag dbang nor bu, Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004: 107-108]. 'Gos Lo ts ba II also edited the translation of Buddhaguhya's commentary on the *...*. That he did so without recourse to a Sanskrit manuscript is evident in the very terminology Zhwa dmar IV employs for his narrative; he writes in the same passage indicated above: ...

I have not been able to verify the translator[s] of Vi vamitra's work, which has a great deal of significance for Indo-Tibetan intellectual history and unquestionably merits a detailed examination in its own right, especially in terms of the authorities it cites, for this gives us an insight, albeit no doubt if ever so skewed, into certain aspects of its author's literary and religious environment. Vi vamitra twice mentions unnamed sutras and he refers a number of times to tantric texts that he equally leaves unidentified. However, what is of considerable importance is that he does expressly refer to a host of other tantric sources by title. For our purposes, three of these stand out, the [ ], the , and the Vairocana-centered .<sup>90</sup> Thus, these Indic sources must have existed in one form or another during the middle of the eighth century, at the latest, a point that is not without significance for the literary development of the tantric movement as a whole.

Vi vamitra was of course not alone in this, and it would be useful to do this kind of preliminary excavation in the exegeses of his contemporaries such as Vil savajra, Buddhaguhya, and the early eighth century kyamitra, to name but a few. What is more, His commentary indicates that there were a number of points of contention with the interpretation of the . While the sources available to me do not signal any problems with its provenance, I think that the integrity of Vi vamitra's work as a translation of a purely Indic text is probably not entirely beyond question. This is arguably borne out by the fact that it contains a references to "some Indian writings" ( ) and the "Indian language" ( ), that is, Sanskrit.<sup>91</sup> Surely, this strikes one as strange and really makes no sense, unless, of course, Vi vamitra or the author of these two passages addressed an audience other than an Indian one or one that was not conversant with Sanskrit.

Now the text of the verses that the Slob dpon cites reads slightly differently<sup>92</sup>:

90 BSTAN, vol.19: 906-907, 914-915, 955-956. The citation, on p. 914, from the is , which I have not been able to locate in the eleventh century Tibetan translation of this tantra. P.-D. zantó,

(2012), 14-15, has argued that the gestation period of the [as we now have it] took place from 850 to 1000, "(with preference for an earlier date)." Dated December 16, 2012, I accessed zantó's work on academia.edu. Vi vamitra's references to a \* would suggest that the inception of this tantra's gestation period may have to be pushed back by one century, to 750.

91 BSTAN, vol.19: 1079, 1117.

92 , 29/4 [Ga, 58b] [= , tr. Ngor Thartse Khenpo Sonam Gyatso and W. Verrill, 426]. Glo bo Mkhän chen mentions that one of Rje btsun's disciples, Mi nyag Shes rab 'bar, alias Prajñ jv l , had written a commentary on Bsod nams rtse mo's work as well; see his , in , vol. 4, Dehra Dun: Pal Evam Chodan Ngorpa Centre, 1985: 26. This Tangut-Xixia scholar's work has not yet surfaced.

Is it a coincidence that this is exactly the same reading that we have in his younger brother Rje btsun's survey of the philosophical and practical contents of the Sa skya pa school's Path-and-Result system that is foremost based on the [redacted] ?<sup>93</sup> Hardly! Since this book was also edited by his nephew Sa skya Pa [redacted] ita, we cannot rule out the possibility that he had slightly revised these two quatrains of the tantra. After all, he was a redoubtable Sanskrit scholar, though, as far as I am aware, his biographies and historical sources are silent on this particular score. The Slob dpon's remarks are given additional force in Gtsang Byams pa's work.<sup>94</sup>

Of course, the variants of the [redacted] 's quotations in the Slob dpon's and Rje btsun's writings are not altogether compelling in their departures from the text of the Kanjur. But this is not the reaction one gets with the quotation of the first of these two quatrains that we encounter in 'Dul 'dzin's reply to what he considered to have been the Karma pa's controversial letter; he quotes the verse as follows<sup>95</sup>:

[redacted] is a term for linkage (\* [redacted] ).

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93 See his [redacted] [Sde dge print], in [redacted], vol. 3, no. 1, ed. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 1968: 2/1-2 [Cha, 3a-b]. The reading is also very close to Bu ston, [redacted], in [redacted], Part 14,

In that connection, linkage is three-fold;  
It is stated to consist of essence-foundation and,  
Method and what has arisen from the method, the result.

There is no question that the first two lines of this quatrain echo Rin chen bzang po's quotation from the \*

But...enough of this! The point of the above deliberations is to show the profound philological-historical and bibliographical problems that must be confronted once we begin to take a closer look at the multiplicity of our sources and delve below their surface. Even if these manifold issues are well nigh impossible to resolve at present, I would nonetheless argue that they need to be addressed as much as possible, almost , before we can venture to ask questions that have more to do with a philosophical or religious interpretation of the texts at hand. Further, and more to the point of this two-part exploration of but a few aspects of Rin chen bzang po's complex work, it is painfully obvious that so much more can and should be done with it. What is quite clear and worthy of further consideration is that, in this treatise, he neither mentions nor addresses the corpus of works that we associate with the Old ( ) tantras. And this can hardly be insignificant.

At the end of his discussion of the four classes of tantric literature, Rin chen bzang po provides a remarkably complex listing of the titles of the relevant tantras in abbreviated form, in RGYUD, 66-72. One can but be amazed at the immense knowledge Rin chen bzang po must have possessed of the relevant literature. What now follows is this listing, warts and all. To be sure, these lists cry out for further analysis and discussion. The published text distinguishes between what appears to be Rin chen bzang po's work and the annotations found in the manuscript by using smaller type for the latter, and I have done the same in my translation.

A. Action-tantras; RGYUD, 66-68:

Three ways in which these are restricted ( ):

- a. Generally and specifically restricted
- b. Restricted in terms of , and
- c. Restricted in terms of the way in which they originated [67]

- 1. Four general subject tantras
  - primarily teaches worship, tormas, panegyric of worship
  - primarily teaches mandalas
  - primarily teaches meditation
  - primarily teaches spiritual behavior

The specific subdivisions of , , and , will come below.

- 2. When they are restricted in terms of , , and :

Basic:

Explanatory:

. – the

domain of 'Jam dpal, and further

Basic:

Explanatory:

etc.

Basic:

Explanatory:

—  
primarily teaches the pacification of the eight classes

—  
primarily teaches the pacification of the            and  
the lord of the earth (            )

[68]  
, etc.

etc.

Sgrol ma

etc.

3. According to the ways in which they originated:

Sangs rgyas kyi

.....

.....

..... Rig pa mchog  
 - primarily ( )  
 teaches the supreme spiritual attainment  
 .....  
 - primarily teaches the empowerment[s]  
 .....  
 - primarily teaches the common spiritual attainments  
 ..... [ ]  
 .....zhabs las

It is said that there are others tantras that issued from these. In brief, among the sutras and the , some are called rtog pa (\* ) and some are called gzungs (\* ); there are very many of them.

B. Conduct-tantras; RGYUD, 68:

Basic: – primarily  
 teaches the generation of the Body ( )  
 Explanatory:

It is claimed that each of these tantras originate from the eight good-fortune signs ( ), that is, the eight [?pilgrimage] places ( ), so there are eight tantras.<sup>96</sup>

Some claim: and the  
 are conduct-tantras, but some do not claim them as conduct tantras;  
 [The sentence ends with: , which I do not understand].

C. Yoga-tantras; RGYUD, 69:

<sup>96</sup> I do not quite understand this statement.

Basic:

teaches primarily  
teaches primarily

As for the , there are five<sup>97</sup>:

When one becomes enlightened in the nature of reality and emptiness:

[1]

When one becomes enlightened due to the lotus-moon seat:

[2]

When one becomes enlightened in the wording of the Speech ( )::

[3]

When one becomes fully enlightened in the Body ( ):

[4]

Four sections ( ) and explanatory tantra:

[1]

[2]

[3]

[4]

[5]

[6]

[7]

D. The supreme, the highest Yoga-tantras; RGYUD, 69-72:

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<sup>97</sup> Although five are slated to be mentioned, only four are given!

- [1] Means-Father ( ) tantra:  
- the basic tantra is the in ninety-eight chapters
- [2] Insight-Mother ( ) tantra
- [3] Non-dual tantra

[1] Father tantras

Basic:

- explanatory: – seems to be ( )

– seems to be ( )

Furthermore, the , [70] etc.

Their explanatory tantras:

etc.

[2] Insight-mother tantras:

From a classification of the , the basis of all:

Basic:

Here, the basic tantra of the \_\_\_\_\_ is the five hundred thousand  
one - it is in the hands of the \_\_\_\_\_ kin - the tantra practiced in the human world,  
the

Explanatory-:

uncommon

Explanatory-: \_\_\_\_\_, etc.

common

From that the need of sixteen types of tantra ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) is shown.

Furthermore:

...

Or ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) the six tantras:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

When the \_\_\_\_\_ is classified: The extensive basic tantra in one  
hundred thousand chapters; the intermediate one in one hundred thousand  
lokas; the summary one in fifty-one chapters.

The neuter tantras ( \_\_\_\_\_ )<sup>98</sup>: The thirty-two basic tantras such as  
the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_, etc. and the countless  
ancillary tantras ( \_\_\_\_\_ ). It is stated<sup>99</sup>:

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98 This is a highly unusual category and requires further exploration.

99 I have not been able to identify the origin of this quotation. Rje btsun Grags pa rgyal mtshan has the last two lines  
in his \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ vol. 3, no. 37, ed. Bsod nams rgya mtsho, Tokyo: The Toyo  
Bunko, 1968: 300/2 [Ja, 256b].

The basic tantra is three-fold.  
The explanatory tantras are thirty-two [71]  
The ancillary tantras are countless.

Two basic tantras, the extensive tantra. What is known  
as the are in the hands of the . Its subsequent text, the  
. <sup>100</sup> Its subsequent text,  
and ; it is said<sup>101</sup>:

The explanatory tantras are claimed to be five-fold.

What derives from the and the  
and ?

.....kun nas bkod pa  
De bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs, etc.

The :

Basic tantra: in three chapters  
Explanatory tantras:

, etc.

The :

Basic tantra: in one hundred  
thousand [ -s]...  
Its subsequent texts  
in one hundred thousand  
-s  
Its subsequent texts: One in fifty-one chapters  
in one hundred thousand [ -s]

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100 I have the feeling we must read here , "one hundred thousand lines."  
101 I have been unable to identify the origin of this quotation.

Explanatory tantras:

...

[72]

The twenty-four

The :

Basic tantra:

Explanatory tantras:

, etc.

The :

Basic tantra:

Subsequent tantra:

Explanatory tantra:

, .

[3] Non-dual tantras:

and

As for :

Explanatory tantra:

, etc.

Some claim these to be conduct-tantras; some claim them to be ritual-tantras.

As for

Basic tantra:

The summary derived from it in five chapters

Explanatory tantra:

, etc.

BKA' [ ], ed. *Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang*, 108 vols., Beijing: *Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang*, 2006–2009.

BSTAN [ ], ed. *Krung go'i bod rig pa zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang*, 120 vols., Beijing: *Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang*, 1994–2008.

'DUL1 'Dul 'dzin Mkhyen rab rgya mtsho,  
, Gangtok: Dzongsar Chhentse Labrang, 1981.

'DUL2 Ibid., Thimphu, 1984.

MI1 Karma pa VIII Mi bskyod rdo rje,

in , comp. *Dam chos zla ba*,

- Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2009: 55-104.
- MI2 Ibid., , vol. 3, ed. Karma Bde legs, Lhasa: 2004: 351-486.
- RGYUD Lo ts ba Rin chen bzang po,  
, in  
vol. 1, Kathmandu: Sa skya rgyal yongs gsung rab slob gnyer khang, 2007: 1-77/78.
- SDE [= Sde dge xylograph, vdK], ed. A.W. Barber,  
72 vols., Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991.
- SOG1 Lha rje Blo gros bzang po/Sog bzlog pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan,  
, in  
, repr. Sonam T. Kazi, Gangtok, 1971: 1-173.
- SOG2 Ibid.,  
[read: ] [ ]  
, in , vol. II,  
New Delhi: Sanje Dorji, 1975: 1-143.
- SOG3 Ibid. "  
,"  
1, 2002: 93-117; Ibid., 2, 2002: 123-  
145.

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