

# *Vision and Violence*

LAMA ZHANG AND THE POLITICS OF CHARISMA  
IN TWELFTH-CENTURY TIBET



BY

CARL S. YAMAMOTO

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## Vision and Violence

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*Cover Illustration:* Lama Zhang, wearing “Sgam po pa’s Hat” (see Introduction, I). From *Bla ma zhang gi mam thar zin bris*, manuscript from ‘Bras spungs monastery

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*To the memory of Lillian Mezzelo, 1928–2011*



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## PREFACE

Sometimes it helps to ask very simple questions. Even stupid questions. Mine went something like this: *How did Tibet become Buddhist?*<sup>1</sup>

It was this question that snapped into focus the blur of issues my research had become when it was still a dissertation-in-process. Above all, it convinced me that Lama Zhang Brtson 'grus grags pa (1122–1193) was more than just a marginal “crazy” in the history of Tibetan Buddhism, and that looking at the details of his life would afford important clues about that larger, more drawn-out event now often called the “Tibetan renaissance.”

When I had first begun to consider Lama Zhang as a possible research subject, the impression I had of him was that of a volatile—possibly psychotic—minor character who had used his religious authority to gain political leverage, engaged in ethically suspect activities, and employed the less reputable forms of Buddhist tantra as a smokescreen for his misconduct. Furthermore, though he had been revered as a master of the philosophical/contemplative system known as the “Great Seal” (*mahāmudrā*), his irresponsible promotion of this technique as a self-sufficient soteriological “panacea” had led him to devalue the ethical side of classical Buddhism, which hastened his lapse into immoral behavior. For all of this, he had been rebuked and shunned by his more respectable Bka' brygud pa contemporaries.

I don't know exactly where I got this impression: like all impressions, it was the informal summing-up of countless barely understood opinions and assumptions. But I do believe it has some currency among contemporary Tibetologists. For example, since completing the dissertation form of the book, I have read a master's thesis on a peripherally related subject that offers a very similar impressionistic picture of Lama Zhang. Since the sections of the thesis treating of Zhang are based entirely on secondary sources, the author cannot be faulted for this, but it does suggest that the impression is out there.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Kapstein frames the same issue in considerably less crude terms: “[A] central problem for the historical study and interpretation of Tibetan civilization” is “[t]he penetration by Buddhism of Tibetan culture, so that the two would become to all intents and purposes indivisibly associated.” Kapstein 2000, 3.

My first intimation that there was another way to look at Lama Zhang was the clash between the supposed rebukes of his respectable contemporaries and the absolute and unwavering respect I saw when I looked at the sources themselves. Most emblematic of this for me was the rough and affectionate relationship I saw between Lama Zhang and the First Karmapa—a respectable figure if there ever was one.

The key to understanding the centrality of Lama Zhang in medieval Central Tibet is the figure of the “Lord of the Teachings” (*bstan pa'i bdag po*), a persona that pulls together disparate threads—religion and politics, contemplation and action, literature and governance, vision and violence—and creates an enduring pattern, a template for later politico-religious leaders of Lhasa: most prominently the future Dalai Lamas. The “Lord of the Teachings” is a principle of order introduced into a social world gone to pieces (*sil bu*). Like Wallace Stevens’s “jar in Tennessee,”<sup>2</sup> it causes the surrounding landscape to arrange itself around it, creating order wherever it is placed. And new principles of order—varied and multiple—were precisely the agents of the Central Tibetan “renaissance.”

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<sup>2</sup> Stevens, Wallace, “Anecdote of the Jar.”

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## INTRODUCTION

### PICKING UP THE PIECES: LAMA ZHANG AND THE “TIBETAN RENAISSANCE”

#### I. SGAM PO PA’S HAT

Lama Zhang (1122–1193)<sup>1</sup> was a figure about whom it was not easy to be neutral. He was a man of extremes and contradictions: poet and military commander, iconoclast and traditionalist, solitary recluse and public leader, master of words and denigrator of verbal knowledge, charismatic visionary and bureaucratic administrator, meditation master and institution-builder, preserver of peace and perpetrator of “fierce activities.”

Like his life, his reputation has fluctuated wildly. Even today, he is the occasion for strong opinions: a leading contemporary Tibetologist, for example, comments that he was, “[t]o state the obvious, . . . a pathological tyrant.”<sup>2</sup> Obvious or not, this has surely not been the consensus opinion on Zhang. His followers, the Tshal pa Bka’ brgyud pa, saw him as a realized buddha, as did the influential Bka’ brgyud pa historians Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal, Dpa’ bo Gtsug lag phreng ba, and ‘Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal.<sup>3</sup>

Nor was this positive assessment limited to partisans of the Bka’ brgyud pa order: the Third Dalai Lama is reported to have “pressed the ends of his eyes with the fingers of his hands” and said “I was like this when I was Lama Zhang.”<sup>4</sup> The Fifth Dalai Lama also thought himself to be Zhang’s incarnation, and the Great Fifth’s regent, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, regarded Lama Zhang as a reincarnation of both Padmasambhava and Srong btsan sgam po, key figures in the Tibetan imperial national myth that was being actively fashioned during Zhang’s lifetime.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bla ma Zhang; also called, variously, Zhang Dar ma grags, Zhang Brtson ‘grus grags pa, Sna nam Brtson ‘grus grags pa, Zhang ‘Gro ba’i mgon po, Skye med Zhang, Zhang G.yu brag pa, Gung thang Bla ma Zhang, Zhang Tshal pa, and Zhang Rin po che, singly or in different combinations. On the issue of Zhang’s dates, see Chapter 1, n.75.

<sup>2</sup> Davidson 2004, 331.

<sup>3</sup> *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 195; *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808; *Deb ther sngon po*, 832.

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad 1999, 186.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmad 1999, 186.

Still, he was not universally revered, even in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The great scholar Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) strongly criticized Zhang's views on Buddhist soteriology.<sup>6</sup> And among his contemporaries, there were those who questioned both his activities and his moral character: "The stories of your crimes," wrote one such critic, "are beyond belief."<sup>7</sup>

Between buddha-cum-national-saint and criminal psychopath there is not much ground for reconciliation, even if we grant the normal fluctuations to which public reputations are subject.

In some ways, the controversies that have attended Lama Zhang are unfortunate, because they distract from more interesting historical issues, leaving behind a misleading impression, the cartoon image of a quirky minor character: in the more favorable versions a principled eccentric, in the less favorable a dangerous and heterodox madman—but in either case, a decidedly peripheral figure. But I want to argue, on the contrary, that Zhang was in fact right at the center of things at a particularly key moment in Central Tibetan history: the medieval Buddhist revival known to traditional Tibetan commentators as the "later spread of the teachings" (*bstan pa phyi dar*). The same period has more recently been called the "Tibetan renaissance"<sup>8</sup>—but in either case what is meant is that crucial formative time when Tibetans put together a unified religious culture, out of scattered fragments, inspired by a new vision of Tibetan society as Buddhist, not by accident, but by its very nature and from its very inception.

The "earlier spread of the teachings" (*bstan pa snga dar*) of the seventh through ninth centuries had brought Buddhism to the Tibetan imperial court, but the extent of its penetration into society at large appears to have been limited.<sup>9</sup> It was only during the "later spread" revival period—roughly from the mid-tenth to the mid-thirteenth century—that the manifold and varied discourses and practices of the Buddhist tradition, particularly its late Indian tantric forms, came to permeate medieval

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<sup>6</sup> See Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan, *Sdom gsum rab dbye* (Rhoton 2002), and the excellent discussion in Jackson 1994.

<sup>7</sup> khyod kyi sdig spyod rnam thar bsam mi khyab. *Phyag khri mchog ma*, Shedup V.60z. There is in my mind, as I discuss below in Chapter Five, a question whether this work might not have been written by Lama Zhang himself, as a parody. Even so, it would seem to reflect, in a funhouse mirror as it were, real criticisms that others were making. Otherwise it could not be a parody.

<sup>8</sup> Davidson 2005.

<sup>9</sup> On this issue, see the fascinating blog post van Schaik 2009, with contributions by Dan Martin and Brandon Dotson.

Tibetan society at every level. The moral, political, literary, and material cultures of Tibet were reconfigured according to Buddhist soteriological narratives. Tibetan customs of diet, dress, and bodily comportment were reshaped by Buddhist ethical, medical, ritual, and aesthetic norms. Tibetans' sense of time was rearranged according to a Buddhist calendar of festivals and holidays and embedded within a sweeping Buddhist vision of history and cosmic time. The very physical landscape of Tibet was overlain with a sacred topography of Buddhist temples, shrines, monasteries, *stūpas*, and religious landmarks, all tied together by an extensive webwork of pilgrimage routes centered around the holy city of Lhasa. On top of this, a growing body of new—and distinctively Tibetan—writing began to take shape inside and outside of the monasteries, and the outlines of a remarkable Tibetan Buddhist culture of learning and literary production were becoming discernible. So complete was the culture's "Buddhicization" during this time, that today one must repeatedly remind oneself that Tibet was not always Buddhist. And, I will argue, it is precisely in his role as an agent of this historical "Buddhicization" of Tibet—as an agent of this "renaissance"—that Lama Zhang's significance for Tibetan history as a whole lies.

There could be no more fitting emblem of Lama Zhang's centrality than the meditation hat (*sgom zhwa*) he wore. It is said to have been handed down from the great Sgam po pa—pivotal "renaissance" figure who wedded Mi la ras pa's hermit-meditator tradition to the monastic tradition of the Bka' gdams pa-s, thus giving rise to the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa, one of the most successful of the "new orders" (*gsar ma*). Sgam po pa is said to have passed the hat on to his nephew Sgom pa tshul khriims snying po (1116–1169, 'Sgom tshul' for short), one of Zhang's root lamas. Sgom tshul in turn bequeathed it to Zhang.<sup>10</sup> The hat could have gone to any number of disciples better known to us today—the first Karma pa, for instance, or 'Bri-gung 'Jig rten mgon po, both of whose orders have survived to the present. It is of no small significance that it ended up on Lama Zhang's head. The circumstance that the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s did not survive, while other Bka' brgyud pa suborders did, has allowed for a progressive forgetting of Lama Zhang's centrality—to the point where a figure formerly regarded as one of the "Three Jewels of Tibet,"<sup>11</sup> ranking with Tsong kha pa and the first Phag mo gru pa, could be demoted to the

<sup>10</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.32.

<sup>11</sup> bod nor bu rnam gsum. Roerich 1976, 711; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.51, II.379.

status of a marginal eccentric. But when viewed from the standpoint of the great medieval Buddhist transformation of Tibetan society, the inheritor of Sgam po pa's hat was anything but marginal.

## II. "TIBET IN PIECES"<sup>12</sup>

To get some perspective on the Buddhist revival, we need to back up a bit, and look first at the immediately preceding period—the century following upon the mid-ninth-century dissolution of the Tibetan empire—for to understand a “revival” we have to be clear on what exactly needed reviving and why.

Later Tibetan commentators employ a number of tropes when referring to this period—all giving voice to a general sense of turmoil, decline, and disorder. One common metaphor focuses on the state of Tibetan Buddhism, representing it as a once-blazing fire that has been reduced to mere “embers” (*me ro*). Thus, Nyang ral Nyi ma 'od zer (1136–1204)—a contemporary of Lama Zhang—wrote, regarding the subsequent Buddhist revival: “The embers of the teachings were rekindled from the East.”<sup>13</sup> Mkhas pa Lde'u, writing a century later, employs the same figure of embers, and adds others as well:

The manner in which the embers of the Dharma were rekindled: . . . The teachings wax and wane, like the rising and setting of the sun and moon. . . . Like plants in summer and winter, [the teachings] are subject to change.<sup>14</sup>

But it was not just that the Buddhist teachings had declined: the great Tibetan empire had foundered at about the same time. So the crisis was much more far-reaching. When Buddhism lost its hold and the empire collapsed, the ensuing trauma shook all levels of Tibetan society: the political, the religious, the economic, the domestic, the spiritual, the psychological. Thus, perhaps the most compelling metaphor for the period was the one that pictured Tibetan society as something that had fallen to pieces (*sil bu*)—a formerly vital and integrated whole that had become

<sup>12</sup> Martin, Dan, “The Periodization of Tibetan History: General Chronology,” [http://www.thdl.org/collections/history/timeline\\_general.html](http://www.thdl.org/collections/history/timeline_general.html).

<sup>13</sup> bstan pa'i me ro smad nas bslangs pa. *Chos 'byung me tog snying po'i sbrang rtsi'i bcud*, 449.

<sup>14</sup> de nas chos kyi me ro bslangs lugs/ . . . bstan pa de yang . . . nyi zla'i shar nub dang 'dra ste 'phel 'grib/ . . . dbyar dgun gyi rtsi thog dang 'dra ste 'gyur ba. . . . *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa*, 390.

fragmented and dispersed. Zhang's biographer Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, for example, writes:

In Tibet at that time, as the law of the kings of Tibet had declined, but the law of the Mongols had not yet spread, Tibet had gone to pieces (*bod sil bur song*).<sup>15</sup>

A common later variant refers to this period as a “time of fragmentation” (*sil bu'i dus*).<sup>16</sup>

This metaphor of “fragmentation” carries more emotional force than the others because it makes manifest the traumatized state of the whole society, not just the Buddhist teachings. Furthermore, since fragmentation presupposes a prior state of wholeness, the metaphor also carries within it a picture of an ideal past and an implicit narrative of future restoration. In this case, that ideal past is the period of the “Dharma Kings” (*chos rgyal*) of the Tibetan Empire, and the ideal future one in which, through the healing powers of the Buddhist teachings, and the integrative powers of heroic kingship, the fragments are put back together and Tibet is restored to its former glory as a worldly and spiritual superpower.

As it turns out, there would be no future empire—at least not without substantial foreign leveraging—and the new heroes would not be kings. Still, there *would* be a large-scale social-cultural reintegration, and it would not depend on emperors or empires as binding agents. This sets for the historian of the period the task of identifying those binding agents—the social and cultural forces that, in the absence of a strong central government, worked to maintain cohesion and counteract dispersion. It is here that Lama Zhang's contributions are most significant for, as I will argue, he not only founded and maintained an impressive religious community, but also provided tools for putting the “pieces” of Tibet back together again: compelling minimodels of religious, political, ideological and symbolic organization that would prove enormously influential for those who would, during the course of the following centuries, re-envision and rebuild Tibet as a unified Buddhist society. And at the center, commanding this array of unifying practices, stood—not the “Dharma King”—but the *tantric lama*: a charismatic, larger-than-life visionary for

<sup>15</sup> de dus bod 'dir/ bod rje'i rgyal khirms nub/ hor gyi rgyal khirms ma dar bas/ bod sil bur song/. Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.148. The same figure is used by the Fifth Dalai Lama, *Dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, 3.2.9. THDL electronic version. [http://www.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th\\_dl\\_history](http://www.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th_dl_history).

<sup>16</sup> E.g., Shakabpa 1976, 235.

whom worldly and spiritual power were but two inseparable aspects of a single mastery.

### III. THE BUDDHIST REVIVAL AND THE RISE OF THE DWAGS PO BKA' BRGYUD PA ORDER

When Tibet is described as “fragmented,” this indicates first of all the loss of centralized political authority following upon the collapse of the empire. But fragmentation was not just an affair of politics and governance; nor was it by any means confined to the Tibetan areas. “[I]t cannot have been an accident,” writes Davidson, “that the Chinese, the Tibetan empire, and other Central Asian principals endured a series of calamities of almost exactly the same nature at almost precisely the same time. . . .”<sup>17</sup> Christopher Beckwith expands on this notion, referring to a broader mid-ninth-century “collapse of the early medieval world order,” affecting the greater part of Central Eurasia.<sup>18</sup> Both Davidson and Beckwith suggest there were as yet poorly understood larger-scale economic—even climatic—disruptions underlying the widespread political and social turbulence.

We do know, for example, that about the same time the Tibetan empire, the Uighur states, and the Chinese Tang dynasty fell, there was decreased economic activity along the circuits of trade and commerce that had connected India, Central Asia, Tibet, and China for centuries—the very circuits that had played such a key role in the dissemination of Buddhism from India to Central, East, and Southeast Asia. As Tansen Sen writes:

From the mid-ninth to the mid-tenth centuries, the woeful state of trade across Central Asia remained unchanged. The political fragmentation of the region not only hindered long-distance trade but also made it perilous for Buddhist monks to travel between India and China. . . . The overland route between India and China through Tibet was only marginally operational during this period.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, part of the reason that trade activity in the region ground to a near-halt was that, without centralized political authorities to maintain, regulate, and protect the routes, travel became dangerous and difficult. It would appear then that the interaction between stable states and economic activity was reciprocal—economic stasis destabilized

<sup>17</sup> Davidson 2005, 72.

<sup>18</sup> Beckwith 2009, 158.

<sup>19</sup> Sen 2003, 212, 213.

governments; unstable governments dampened the dynamism of trade and commerce—and that the breakdown of the economy and the breakdown of stable governing entities set up a mutually reinforcing downward spiral that caused turmoil throughout the region, a turmoil that was not only political and economic, but also social and cultural. It was to last at least a hundred years.

One of the effects produced in Tibet, in addition to commercial standstill, wars, and political chaos, was the disappearance of organized forms of Buddhism. New monasteries were no longer being built, old venerable institutions were falling into decay,<sup>20</sup> novice monks were no longer being ordained, and written records were becoming scarce.

Just as the dark time of fragmentation and cultural stasis between the mid-ninth and the mid-tenth century was bound up with a sort of diminished network dynamism within the interlocking economic system of Tibet, India, Central Asia, and China, so the period of revival, which began in the mid-tenth century, seems to have coincided with an economic revival, along with renewed political stability and cultural vitality, throughout the region. As Davidson writes:

[W]e have tantalizing suggestions that the last half of the tenth century was a time of economic coalescence and the reemergence of some political stability.... It is no coincidence that the period of the [Tibetan] renaissance almost exactly mirrors a rebirth experienced in Central Asia and China generally and in the northeastern Tibetan Hexi and Liangzhou areas in particular.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, Sen writes that, after a century of economic paralysis, there was a mid-tenth-century “resumption of overland trade” between India and China through Central Asia, aided by two developments:

First, the expanding role of Buddhist institutions in economic activities in both India and China helped itinerant merchants procure funds, market religious and non-religious items, and, at times, escape the payment of taxes at custom houses. Second, the establishment of Buddhist kingdoms in Tibet and Central Asia renewed the demand for Buddhist commodities

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<sup>20</sup> Davidson quotes at length a pathos-filled description by Klu mes, a member of the group who reoccupied Bsam yas monastery—the oldest and most venerable monastery in Tibet—after it had been empty for decades. We are presented here with a sad picture of a monastery badly damaged by water, with trees pushing through the windows, many of the pillars cut down, fallen plaster everywhere, a fox den in the circumambulatory path, and birds nesting in the statues. Davidson 2005, 94–95.

<sup>21</sup> Davidson 2005, 86.



and, at the same time, facilitated the movement of merchants through their territories.<sup>22</sup>

It is against the background of this economic revitalization and renewed circulation of goods and people that we see, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, a revival of Tibetan cultural and religious life. This early period of the Buddhist resurgence was characterized, first of all, by a revival of monasticism and a reintroduction of Buddhist teaching lineages from India. If there was anything that symbolized the missionary vigor of the new religious movements that arose as Tibet was coming out of the “period of fragmentation,” it was the renewed interest in building temples and establishing a monastic system of celibate monks with legitimate Vinaya lineages. Traditional accounts tell of the heroic “ten men of Dbus gtsang (i.e. Central Tibet)”<sup>23</sup> who traveled to the Tsong kha region of northeastern Tibet in search of unbroken ordination lineages, and then returned to Central Tibet to build Buddhist temples.<sup>24</sup> This temple-building was continued and expanded by the religious successors to the “ten scholars”—the groups known as the “lower” or “Eastern Vinaya”<sup>25</sup> monks. The result, according to Davidson, was a

dizzying process of temple construction and congregation formation in Ü and Tsang from the late tenth through the twelfth centuries, with several hundred sites of congregations developed under the aegis of representatives of their tradition.<sup>26</sup>

Because temples and monasteries were intimately bound up with the activities of trade and pilgrimage,<sup>27</sup> they “provided a network of physical foci for the social and mercantile interaction of small traveling merchants and Tibetan religious.”<sup>28</sup> As these activities intensified, the Tibetan landscape became crisscrossed with multiple interlacing networks, along which flowed materials, goods, people, ideas, texts, and religious practices at an accelerating pace, catalyzing a dramatic reanimation of Tibetan society.

<sup>22</sup> Sen 2003, 215.

<sup>23</sup> dbus gtsang gi mi bcu. *Deb ther sngon po*, 105 (Roerich 1976, 77).

<sup>24</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, 105; Roerich 1976, 77.

<sup>25</sup> smad ‘dul. Tibetan *phyi dar* Vinaya lineages are classified as “upper” (*stod*), “lower” (*smad*), and “middle” (*bar*), which as geographical designations signify western, eastern, and central, respectively. Davidson 2005, 349.

<sup>26</sup> Davidson 2005, 122.

<sup>27</sup> van Spengen 2000, 23–24.

<sup>28</sup> Davidson 2005, 87.

As monasteries gained economic and political strength, they attracted the attention of the aristocratic clans, “the most powerful single institution in Tibet.”<sup>29</sup> Though the clans initially saw in the monastic network a rival power, in time many became patrons of the new religious institutions, “exploit[ing] the newly acquired wealth of the monasteries by securing clan members a place in the spiritual hierarchy.”<sup>30</sup> It was members of two of these clans, the ‘Khon and the Rngog, who in 1073 established the historic monasteries of Sa skya and Gsang phu ne’u thog, respectively.<sup>31</sup>

The new monasteries, fortified by merchant wealth and aristocratic prestige, provided a concrete physical and social foundation for the newly emerging monastic movement and for the new sects that would coalesce around them.

In that period, a new crop of religious leaders and missionaries—the Eastern Vinaya monks, the charismatic new translators, and the Bka’ gdam pa followers of the Indian guru Atiśa—came on the scene to promote a revived Buddhist culture.<sup>32</sup> A stream of new texts poured in from India and—in what seems to have been in part a response to these new texts—a body of discovered “treasures” (*gter ma*) began to appear from within the ranks of the practitioners of the old religion.<sup>33</sup> It was a rich period, but also quite volatile—truly a time of information overload.

But toward the beginning of Lama Zhang’s century—the twelfth century—things began to shift, as the mass of disparate new materials was slowly processed, assimilated, and shaped into characteristically Tibetan forms. “The twelfth century,” writes Davidson, “stands as the watershed in Tibetan religion, for it became the time in which Tibetans confidently established their independent perspective on the architecture of the Buddhist path.”<sup>34</sup> As such, it might be seen as the beginning of a period of consolidation, owning-up, and taking-stock after the frenetic activity of the eleventh century. A sort of cultural self-confidence set in, as “Tibetans began to feel themselves authentically Buddhist enough to inaugurate the process of innovation.”<sup>35</sup> This innovation took at least two different forms:

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<sup>29</sup> Davidson 2005, 274.

<sup>30</sup> van Spengen 2000, 23.

<sup>31</sup> *Deb ther dmar po*, 43, 62.

<sup>32</sup> Davidson 2005, 315.

<sup>33</sup> Davidson 2005, 364.

<sup>34</sup> Davidson 2005, 427.

<sup>35</sup> Davidson 2005, 377.

(1) First of all, there was innovation in the sorts of *social institutions* that evolved to support the new religious practices. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the new religious groups—though they had garnered popular support and established institutions—were, compared to the dynastic clans, organizationally immature, and unable to provide a stable model of institutional succession. But by the end of the century, the old model of clan authority had in some places—most notably in Sa skya—merged with the monastic model, effecting a new institutional stability with reliable methods for transmitting authority from one generation to the next.<sup>36</sup> This was a new social formation, one not seen in India, the first of several uniquely Tibetan solutions to the problem of succession.

(2) Along with the new institutional configurations, there came innovative *approaches to doctrine and practice*. For instance, from the eleventh-century Bka' gdams pa missionaries and the Rngog family came the monastery of Gsang phu ne'u thog, which in the twelfth century rose to prominence as a center of scholarship, specializing in logic and debate.<sup>37</sup> Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169) was perhaps the best known of the Gsang phu abbots, and trained, not only his Bka' gdams pa successors, but also Bsod nams rtse mo from Sa skya monastery,<sup>38</sup> as well as Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa and Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po from the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa tradition.<sup>39</sup> One source even claims that Lama Zhang himself—often taken as the quintessential anti-scholastic—studied with Phya pa.<sup>40</sup>

As significant as the novel forms of organization and practice evolving at Sa skya and Gsang phu may have been, for our purposes the most important new development of the twelfth century was what Davidson dubs “the Kagyüpa [Bka' brgyud pa] efflorescence”<sup>41</sup>—the profusion of lineages descended from “the mysterious master Marpa.”<sup>42</sup>

The key catalyst here was Sgam po pa Bsod nams rin chen—the master whose meditation hat Lama Zhang inherited—a synthesizing figure who had trained under both the Bka' gdams pa monastics and the tantric yogin Mi la ras pa. As Trungram Sherpa writes:

<sup>36</sup> Davidson 2005, 427.

<sup>37</sup> van der Kuip 1987.

<sup>38</sup> D. Jackson 1996, 235–36.

<sup>39</sup> Davidson 2004, 382.

<sup>40</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, 406; Roerich 1976, 333.

<sup>41</sup> Davidson 2004, 385.

<sup>42</sup> Davidson 2004, 175.

His efforts to synthesize the two lines, with their Kadam and Kagyu practices, are encapsulated in the name for his system, “The Unity of Bka’ gdams and *phyag chen* (Mahāmudrā)” (bka’ phyag zung ‘brel).<sup>43</sup>

When he established Dwags lha Sgam po monastery in 1139, he not only brought monastic discipline to the siddha-based *mahāmudrā* tradition, but also created the social platform that enabled “the Kagyüpa transition from a fragile series of lineages into an organized monastic denomination with multiple institutions possessing a common identity.”<sup>44</sup>

The Dwags po Bka’ brgyud pa line provided a sort of countertradition to that offered by the Gsang phu Bka’ gdams pa-s, one more meditatively based and less scholastic in outlook. In fact, in several places Sgam po pa criticizes the exclusively scholastic approach. For example, he writes, in a letter to Phag gru:

This is not known even by a learned *paṇḍita*. It is not understood by discriminative understanding (*prajñā*). It is not within the scope of the dialectician’s activities. . . . [I]t arises without words.<sup>45</sup>

Still, lest one be tempted to call Sgam po pa’s view “anti-intellectual,” it is important to keep in mind that he and three of his most prominent pupils—Phag mo gru pa, Dus gsum mkhyen pa, and Lama Zhang himself—were trained by the Bka’ gdams pa-s. As Geoffrey Samuel expresses it, “Gampopa’s position is a compromise between the shamanic perception of Enlightenment as beyond words but positive, and the academic analysis of it in purely negative terms.”<sup>46</sup>

And indeed, what seemed to later hard-liners—like Sa skya Paṇḍita—to be an irresponsible mixing and matching of doctrines and practices must be viewed from the standpoint of the twelfth century: the sectarian and doctrinal divisions that would later be taken for granted were still fluid—as evidenced by the wide array of teachings Zhang received that would later be associated exclusively with non-Bka’ brgyud pa orders from an array of teachers who would also later be claimed by different orders.

Even given the wider array of practices available at the time, Sgam po pa still seems to have leaned toward syncretic positions instinctively, as if by temperament. As Davidson writes:

<sup>43</sup> Sherpa 2004, 158.

<sup>44</sup> Davidson 2004, 385.

<sup>45</sup> ‘di mkhas pa paNDi tas kyang mi shes/ shes rab kyis mi rtogs/ rtog ge ba’i spyod yul ma yin/ . . . tshig dang bral ba . . . rab ‘char. D. Jackson 1994, 40, 151.

<sup>46</sup> Samuel 1993, 479.

Gampopa works toward breaking down the barriers to vocabulary synthesis, so that terminology from one area can be employed freely to explain others, and he develops the idea of the “conformity” of the different vehicles with one another. This is probably one basis for his amalgamation of the Kagyüpa traditions and the language of the Kadampa Mahayanist ideas...<sup>47</sup>

Although Zhang’s contact with Sgam po pa appears to have been minimal, his primary teacher was Sgom tshul, Sgam po pa’s nephew and successor to the abbacy of Dwags lha Sgam po monastery, and he clearly inherited these strong tendencies that are characteristic of the Dwags po Bka’ brgyud pa-s, favoring inclusiveness over orthodoxy, and nonconceptual meditation over discursiveness.

But Sgom tshul’s significance also has a geographical dimension, for the accidents of Central Tibetan history set him down in *Lhasa*—and this would prove key to the later career of Lama Zhang.

#### IV. LHASA IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

It is easy to forget just how much twelfth-century Lhasa differed even from the capital city it was to become in its “classical” period—never mind the idyllic holy city of our imaginations. In twelfth-century Lhasa, there was no Potala, no Norbulinka, no Tibetan “government,” no *ambans* or other foreign emissaries, no Dalai Lama. Twelfth-century Lhasa was considerably smaller—in both population and extent—than the more familiar seventeenth-century Lhasa of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Most of all, twelfth-century Lhasa had no unified political authority—which meant the people of the city were subject to the frequent shifts of power between small-time clan- and sect-based local rulers, as well as the depredations of bandits and thieves. A sense of spiritual and civic malaise appears to have been widespread. There would still have been reminders—palaces, temples, fortresses, art works—of the magnificence of the age of imperial Buddhist hegemony, but twelfth-century Lhasans looked back at the empire period with the melancholy of those for whom Central Tibet had,

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<sup>47</sup> Davidson 2004, 390. Sgam po pa’s concern with just how much “terminology from one area can be employed . . . to explain others” is evidenced in works of his that Jan-Ulrich Sobisch identifies as among the earliest examples of the “Three Vows (*sdom gsum*)” genre of Tibetan scholastic literature. Sobisch 2002, 177–215. Note that it is precisely from within this tradition that Sapaṅ attacks both Sgam po pa and Zhang. *Sdom gsum rab dbye* (Rhoton 2002).

in Lama Zhang's words, "fallen into a time of degeneration."<sup>48</sup> Most prominent among these reminders of past glory would have been the Ra mo che and the Lhasa 'Phrul snang—or "Jo khang"<sup>49</sup>—temples, said to have been built to welcome Emperor Srong btsan sgam po's two Buddhist wives. But during Zhang's lifetime, both of these temples—the most sacred Buddhist sites in Lhasa—were burned to the ground in sectarian fighting, as had been parts of the holy Bsam yas monastery a half century earlier. There could be no more apt and depressing symbol for Lhasans of the depths to which Central Tibet had fallen. In Zhang's recounting of the disturbances, he likens the Jo khang temple to a lion eaten from within by worms, adding that "nothing remained but ruins and smoke."<sup>50</sup>

It was here that Lama Zhang, rather late in his life, was drawn into the vortex of Central Tibetan politics, and it was here that he left his enduring mark. By the time of his death, the two temples had been rebuilt, the local routes had been made safe for merchants and pilgrims, and at least a semblance of normalcy had been restored to everyday life. Buddhism had become an instrument not only of religious life but also of law, order, and governance, and the groundwork had been laid for a century and a half of Tshal pa rule in Central Tibet. More than this, the city of Lhasa had begun its dramatic transformation from the ruin of an old imperial encampment to a cultural dynamo powering a new Tibetan Buddhist culture that would continue to evolve up through the 1950s.

## V. A SKETCH OF THE LIFE

Even apart from these larger historical issues of the "later spread" Buddhist revival, Lama Zhang's life would be well worth studying in itself, as the story of a high-spirited, strong-willed, and charismatic individual of unimpeachable spiritual authority, feared and revered by his contemporaries,

<sup>48</sup> *dus kyi snyigs ma la babs pas*. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.173. In Buddhist texts, *dus kyi snyigs ma* is the standard Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit word *kaliyuga*, "degenerate age." This is a good example of the use of terms from the transhistorical Buddhist cosmology of successive world "ages" to describe small-scale historical events within Tibet.

<sup>49</sup> On the many names for this temple, see Warner 2008, 214–18. *Gtsug lag khang* is perhaps the most common local designation. *Ra sa 'phrul snang* is an older version than *Lha sa 'phrul snang* and is often used by scholars, but since the latter is the form the name takes in all of the writings of Zhang and his disciples, I will use it here for the most part.

<sup>50</sup> *seng ge'i khog pa 'bus gzhig pa bzhin du nang nas zhig ste/ mer bsregs nas re'u hrul dang du ba las med pa*. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.173.

cantankerous, never shying away from controversy, but at the same time highly articulate and self-reflective, with a wicked sense of humor and an unusual command of literary and other expressive means.

His life story begins as the conventional Buddhist narrative of the gifted child who is universally acknowledged from an early age to be possessed of exceptional spiritual powers, but then takes an unconventional detour through a phase of habitual cruelty to animals—the adult karmic pay-back for which is, as he relates in his autobiography, chronic intestinal distress—this cruel streak perhaps foreshadowing some of the morally controversial aspects of his later character and actions.

His young adulthood is marked by repeated attempts—often unsuccessful—to master a life made turbulent by the contrary pulls of high spiritual aspiration, formidable magical powers, and an unruly temperament. He gains notoriety in eastern Tibet as “the Great Magician from Central Tibet” and engages in destructive sorcery—usually involving the sacrifice of animals and/or the defeat of family enemies. A pattern emerges wherein periods of backsliding alternate with periods of contrition. In this aspect, Zhang’s story resembles that of the great yogin *Mi la ras pa*—of whom Zhang is a third-generation spiritual lineal descendant—whose path to sainthood likewise entailed the overcoming of an early life of harmful worldly sorcery.<sup>51</sup>

This period ends in Zhang’s twenty-fourth year with a metaphoric purgative dream in which he expels from his nose a snake-like creature—seeming to represent his karmic predisposition towards evil—whom he acknowledges has accompanied him for many lifetimes, and to whom he bids goodbye as it disappears over the horizon. Shortly afterward, he resolves to take ordainment as a monk.

This inaugurates the next phase of his life, during which Zhang pursues the career of monk and wandering hermit-yogin. During this time, he seeks out realized teachers, refuses disciples and patrons, and devotes himself to solitary tantric practice in the mountain retreats that dot that region of Central Tibet bounded by Lhasa on the west and Bsam yas on the east. It was during this period that his prodigious literary gifts began to show. He wrote *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*,<sup>52</sup> a treatise on “Great Seal” (*mahāmudrā*) meditation that is his best-known work—though perhaps

<sup>51</sup> Lama Zhang in fact wrote one of the earliest extant versions of *Mi la*’s life story. *Mi la’i rnam thar*, Shedup I.146–58. See also Quintman 2006, 96–101.

<sup>52</sup> *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.78–149.

not his most representative work. Less familiar, but ultimately more significant, are his songs of spiritual realization (*mgur*), his biographies of past Bka' brgyud pa masters, and *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*<sup>53</sup>—thought to be among the first autobiographies written in Tibetan. His model during this phase of his life is clearly the cotton-clad recluse-saint Mi la ras pa, who embodied the ideal of the solitary meditator, shunning human contacts and devoting himself full time to the pursuit of realization.

A key turning point occurs in his late thirties, when sectarian fighting breaks out in Lhasa—leading, among other things, to the burning of the Lhasa 'Phrul snang (Jo khang temple), Tibet's holiest Buddhist site—and Zhang is charged by his teacher Sgom tshul with the restoration of the temple as well as the enforcement of law and order within the Lhasa area. It is at this point that Zhang—with much initial reluctance—abandons the eremitic life to which he has hitherto devoted himself and throws himself with zeal into public life. Over the course of the next three decades, he and his religious order—the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa—will take political control over the Lhasa area, and he will craft the persona that proves to be his most lasting legacy to Tibetan Buddhism: “Lord of the Teachings” (*bstan pa'i bdag po*)—the publicly committed tantric lama, charismatic master of space, time, and symbol, whose administration of the worldly sphere rests firmly on a base of spiritual attainment.

By the time of his death at the age of 71, the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s are a force to be reckoned with: a sizable and well organized monastic order with a supporting community of lay followers and patrons, a militia, a sainted founding figure, a spiritual lineage, a literary corpus, and a strategic foothold—both political and religious—in Lhasa, the symbolic center of the Tibetan Buddhist universe.

## VI. LAMA ZHANG'S AFTERLIFE

“Every charismatic figure lives twice—” writes Adam Hochschild, “once in real life and once after death, as a screen on which people project their hopes and illusions.”<sup>54</sup> This certainly holds true for the charismatic Lama Zhang. Though the principal focus of this work will be the events of his actual lifetime, an assessment of his importance would not be complete without a look at the ways in which his own works and deeds outlived

<sup>53</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.316–66.

<sup>54</sup> Adam Hochschild, back cover, Barmé 1996.



him. I will begin by examining his impact on the later culture of Tibetan Buddhism and then discuss the ways in which he has appeared in contemporary scholarship.

### A. *In Tibet*

Even after the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s lost their control of Lhasa, and through the numerous power shifts that followed over the next several centuries, the figure of Lama Zhang retained its religious and political authority. Part of what survived was what I, in Chapter Two, call Zhang's religious "style"—an integrated complex of literary, doctrinal, and contemplative emphases that served as an influential model of Buddhist practice for later generations of Tibetans. But a more important aspect of his religious afterlife can be seen in his adoption as a legitimizing icon by later sectarian traditions. For these successor groups, Lama Zhang was to become, to borrow Bernard Faure's illuminating phrase, a "virtual object"<sup>55</sup>—that is, a symbolic placeholder within their own lineage-supporting narratives. In fact, it is precisely this attractiveness of Zhang to posterity that makes it necessary for us to exercise caution when reading later accounts of his life—all of which have been colored by the concerns and interests of these would-be spiritual offspring—and take care to identify and separate out these later agendas so as not to mistake them for the agendas of Zhang and his direct disciples. Much of the work of this book will be to disentangle the elements of Zhang's life gleaned from sources from his own lifetime from these later appropriations. At the same time, it is important to see how these later appropriations point to real accomplishments in his own life that served as the basis for the later virtualizing.

There have been mainly two sectarian traditions who have claimed Lama Zhang, the Bka' brygud pa and the Dge lugs pa. In the Bka' brygud narrative, Zhang is incorporated as the founder of the Tshal pa, one of the "Four Great" subschools of the Bka brygud pa order. He is particularly renowned within this tradition as an early master of the philosophical/contemplative system known as the "Great Seal" (*mahāmudrā*; Tib. *phyag rgya chen po*)—which becomes, along with the "Six Dharmas of Nāropa"

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<sup>55</sup> Faure 1986, 197. This point is elaborated upon in Chapter Five below.

(*nA ro chos drug*), one of the cornerstones of the classical Bka' brygud pa "tenet system" (*grub mtha'*).<sup>56</sup>

The Dge lugs appropriation is, for our purposes, more interesting, because it speaks more directly to the above-mentioned issues of secular-religious sovereignty within Central Tibet. Gradually, during the 16th and 17th centuries, the principal Tshal pa Bka' brygud pa monasteries in Central Tibet came under Dge lugs control, and remained so until the mid-twentieth century. In the process, relevant narratives of the Tshal pa-s were integrated into the Dge lugs lineage histories. Thus we see, for example, the eighteenth-century Dge lugs text the *Gung thang Register* asserting that "the coming of the supreme conquerors who appear among us today as the omniscient incarnate succession [i.e. the Dalai Lamas] is a manifestation of the acts of this very one [Lama Zhang]."<sup>57</sup> In particular, Zhang became an important emblem of political-spiritual control over "the Lhasa mandala,"<sup>58</sup> and was incorporated as such into the developing lineages of the Third, the Fifth, and the Seventh Dalai Lamas, as well as the head of the order, the Dga' ldan khri chen.<sup>59</sup> It is in fact tempting to dub him, in retrospect, a sort of "proto-Dalai Lama."<sup>60</sup> The point of such an appellation would be to highlight, first of all, his importance as a precedent-setter for later Lhasa-based religious rulers, but also the quite conscious efforts of the early Dalai Lamas to appropriate the symbolism of religious-secular rule he employed and style themselves his direct spiritual heirs. This can be seen especially in the powerful complex of narratives centering on the Lhasa 'Phrul snang temple, with its Jo bo Śākyamuni statue and its associated protectors Dpal ldan lha mo and Mahākāla—all of which would become central elements of the governing ideology of the Dalai Lamas. But it was Lama Zhang who first put together this specific combination of tantric Buddhism, charisma, Jo bo worship, and political rule that would become most closely identified—not only for the outside

<sup>56</sup> See, e.g., *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dgong rgyan*, Shar yul phun tshogs tshe ring, 357–413.

<sup>57</sup> da lta rang cag nams la dngos su snang ba'i rgyal mchog thams cad mkhyen pa sku 'phreng rim par byon pa 'di nyid kyi mdzad pa'i nam 'gyur zhig yin. *Gung thang dkar chag*, 13a; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.91.

<sup>58</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.20.

<sup>59</sup> *Gung thang dkar chag*, 13a; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.91.

<sup>60</sup> This may seem less far-fetched if one considers that the best-known retroactive recipients of the title were the First and Second Dalai Lamas, neither of whom possessed the title during his own lifetime. So it is really not such a stretch to think of Zhang, in his role as "virtual object" in the Dge lugs pa lineage narrative, as similarly, though less officially, a "proto-Dalai Lama."

world, but for Tibetans themselves—with the institution of the Dalai Lamas. This would reach its most developed form in the rule of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682).

### B. *In Scholarship*

As suggested at the beginning of the chapter, Lama Zhang—even removed from the contentious atmosphere of Tibetan religious politics—has been anything but an object of disinterested study. The issues that surround him seem capable of touching fresh nerves even 800 years after his death—and this holds not only for contemporaries with sectarian agendas, but also those with more general scholarly concerns pertaining to knowledge, authority, leadership, violence, etc.

For convenience I divide scholarly treatments of Zhang into two sorts: (1) topical treatments, the focus of which is generally not Lama Zhang himself but some more circumscribed issue to which he is seen as having made a contribution, and (2) more comprehensive treatments of Zhang's life and teachings. I begin with the topical treatments:

#### (1) Topical Treatments

(A) *Zhang as founder of one of the “Four Great” Bka’ brgyud pa suborders* (bka’ brgyud che bzhi). In the traditional expositions of the Bka’ brgyud pa order of Tibetan Buddhism, the various suborders are presented according to a simplified schema of “Four Great” and “Eight Lesser” orders (*che bzhi chung brgyad*).<sup>61</sup> Lama Zhang finds a place within this schema as founder of the Tshal pa Bka’ brgyud pa, one of the Four Great suborders. This four-eight framework, employed in most Tibetan-language scholarly works, is also used by many non-Tibetan-language scholars.<sup>62</sup> Systematizations of this sort rarely offer much specific information on Zhang himself; he stands as a sort of placeholder “founder” figure within the “Four Great” category. Still, these standardized accounts are obviously not intended as “history” in the modern sense and should be taken for what they are: useful digests of a large quantity of information, with value both as simple mnemonics for scholars and others, and as lineage markers for the faithful.

<sup>61</sup> See, e.g., Dung dkar 2002, 158–59.

<sup>62</sup> See Guenther 1955, 90, n1; Snellgrove 1987, 488–89; Kapstein 1996, 278; Smith 2001, 41–46.

(B) *Zhang as an early Tibetan advocate of the “Great Seal” or mahāmudrā* (Tib. phyag rgya chen po). The highest teaching of the Dwags po Bka’ brgyud pa has traditionally been the meditative/philosophical system known as *mahāmudrā*, or the “Great Seal,”<sup>63</sup> and Lama Zhang’s close association with this practice has given him his highest visibility within modern scholarship. The most thorough treatment of Zhang’s *mahāmudrā* contributions is to be found in Dan Martin’s work, particularly his translation and annotation of the treatise for which Zhang is best known, *The Path of Ultimate Profundity* (*Lam zab mthar thug*).<sup>64</sup> David Jackson offers further insight into Zhang’s *mahāmudrā* approach by linking it to the controversial innovations of Sgam po pa in this area.<sup>65</sup> It is interesting that Zhang is well known in this role even to scholars of different religious orders—for example, Dudjom Rinpoche, who, in his massive work on the Rnying ma school of Tibetan Buddhism, quotes a *mahāmudrā* instruction from Lama Zhang’s *Path of Ultimate Profundity*.<sup>66</sup>

Zhang has also been associated historically with a much-disputed *mahāmudrā*-related doctrine (apparently originating with Sgam po pa) called the “white panacea” (*dkar po chig thub*), which holds that if one has “realized one’s own mind” (*rang sems rtogs pa*), nothing more need be done in the way of religious practice in order to attain the highest religious goal: everything else is extraneous. This doctrine—if it indeed ever was presented as a formal doctrine—was criticized fiercely by the great thirteenth-century scholar-monk Sa skya Paṇḍita. Later Bka’ brgyud pa scholars have defended Sgam po pa and Lama Zhang, and the controversy has to some degree continued to this day, even spilling over into mildly heated exchanges among contemporary academic scholars.<sup>67</sup> In general, the white panacea controversy has been framed as a *philosophical* debate, which unfortunately tends to reduce Lama Zhang’s complicated religious legacy to a simple doctrinal position—somewhat ironic since Zhang often claimed not to understand doctrine particularly well.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>63</sup> See, e.g., Kongtrul 2007.

<sup>64</sup> *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.78–149; Martin 1992, 1996a, and 2001. A new translation of this text can be found in Roberts 2011, part of the Library of Tibetan Classics series edited by Thupten Jinpa.

<sup>65</sup> Jackson 1994.

<sup>66</sup> Dudjom 1991, 201.

<sup>67</sup> See R. Jackson 1982; van der Kuip 1983; Broido 1987; Seyfort Ruegg 1989; D. Jackson 1990 and 1994; and Davidson 2005.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. his remark in the *Shes rab grub pa ma* biography, Shedup I.320, that though he was taught all of the standard Buddhist texts, “There was no comprehension” (*shes pa ni ma byung*).

As a doctrinal debate, the white panacea issue has generally been interpreted as a local variation of the broader disagreement between advocates of the “simultaneous” approach (*cig car gyi ’jug pa*) and advocates of the “gradual” approach (*rim gyis ’jug pa*) to enlightenment—a controversy embodied most concretely in the semi-legendary eighth-century debate at Bsam yas monastery between the villainous Chinese Chan monk Hwa shang Mahāyāna and the Indian *paṇḍita* Kamalaśīla.<sup>69</sup> By far the most thorough treatment of the white panacea controversy can be found in the writings of David Jackson, who concentrates heavily and sympathetically on Sa skya Paṇḍita’s principles of scholarship and the manner in which these principles stood behind his abhorrence of the Bka’ brgyud pa doctrines.<sup>70</sup>

(C) *Zhang as a literary figure*. Martin was the first to bring to the attention of scholars the striking variety of writing styles of which Lama Zhang was capable—at least some of which were undoubtedly his own inventions.<sup>71</sup> Zhang has since received a degree of scholarly attention around issues relating to Tibetan literary genres. Of greatest interest in this regard are his works of biography and autobiography. Regarding the latter, Zhang is commonly seen as an innovator in the area of Tibetan religious autobiography (*rang gi nam thar*),<sup>72</sup> a genre that would, in the coming centuries, generate a quantity of life-writing unmatched by any other pre-modern Buddhist culture. This is not to ignore the more conventional genre of religious biography, or hagiography. Here, too, Zhang’s role is paramount. Schaeffer cites him as one of the key early hagiographers of the “later spread” period—writing what Schaeffer regards as precursors to the well-known Bka’ brgyud “Golden Rosary” (*gser phreng*) collections of lineage biographies.<sup>73</sup>

Another literary genre that has brought scholarly attention to Zhang is that of “songs of realization,” or *mgur*. These songs, closely associated with Mi la ras pa, are derived from an Indian genre called *dohā*, as well as from indigenous Tibetan sources. Schaeffer, in his book on the semi-legendary Indian saint Saraha, and again in an article on Zhang’s Indian root lama Vairocana vajra, acknowledges Lama Zhang as an early Tibetan transmit-

<sup>69</sup> On this debate, see Faber 1986; Seyfort Ruegg 1989; Seyfort Ruegg 1992; Gomez 1983; Stein 1987.

<sup>70</sup> D. Jackson 1990 and 1994.

<sup>71</sup> Martin 1996a, 62–63; 65.

<sup>72</sup> Gyatso 1998, 101.

<sup>73</sup> Schaeffer 2000, 362.

ter of the *dohā* song tradition.<sup>74</sup> Martin also mentions Zhang in this role in his article on Tibetan female religious leaders of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>75</sup> As a composer of *mgur*, Zhang was occasionally anthologized in Tibetan song collections, and thus turned up in a popular English translation of the sixteenth-century *Bka' brgyud mgur mtsho* sponsored in 1980 by the controversial lama Trungpa Rinpoche.<sup>76</sup>

(D) *Zhang as a political leader.* Finally, Lama Zhang has received attention from modern scholars as an early example of a Tibetan religious leader who assumed a strong political role. In his classic work on Tibetan culture and history from 1962, R.A. Stein brings up Zhang in his discussion of “the evolution of monastic power,” first as founder of Tshal Gung thang monastery, and then as an example of a “high ecclesiastic” who served as “go-between” linking religious with secular power. In particular, he mentions Zhang’s role as a negotiator and enforcer of secular law in a time of serious social disorder.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Thaye, Dolma, and Lister, in the notes to their translation of one of the Bka’ brgyud “Golden Rosary” biographical anthologies, write that “Lama Zhang dedicated himself to establishing law and order through military means.”<sup>78</sup> Martin offers a fuller treatment of this issue, suggesting that Zhang “played an important role in Tibet’s development into . . . a ‘theocracy,’” and “may help us to explain why it is that from his time on central Tibet’s polity remained sectarian-based, rather than monarchical as was most of the world in those times.”<sup>79</sup> An important source for discussions of Zhang’s political legacy was contributed by Everding, who translated a late-eighteenth-century text called the Gung thang Register (*gung thang dkar chag*), which chronicles the history and inventories the contents of Tshal Gung thang, the monastery founded by Lama Zhang in 1187.<sup>80</sup> Covering a period far exceeding the span of Lama Zhang’s rule, the work affords an extremely important chronicle of the post-Zhang development of the Tshal pa into a major power within the Lhasa area.

One of the stories related to Zhang’s political leadership that has interested scholars involves a supposed feud between him and the

<sup>74</sup> Schaeffer 2005, 8.

<sup>75</sup> Martin 2004, 70.

<sup>76</sup> *Bka' brgyud mgur mtsho*; Nālandā Translation Committee 1980, 272–73.

<sup>77</sup> Stein 1972, 78, 146–47.

<sup>78</sup> Thaye, Dolma, Lister 1990, 67.

<sup>79</sup> Martin 2001, 49–50.

<sup>80</sup> Everding 2000.

protector deity Pehar. Pehar is best known as the protector of the Gnashung temple—home to the famous oracle of the Dalai Lamas—and it is undoubtedly this connection that has helped keep the legend alive. Nebesky-Wojtkowitz, in his landmark treatment of Tibetan demons and protector deities, recounts how Pehar—feeling he was not receiving the respect due him at Zhang’s monastery, Tshal Gung thang—caused the monastery to catch fire and burn, as a result of which Zhang ejected him from the monastery, imprisoning him within a box that was sent floating down the Skyi river.<sup>81</sup> This episode has become a part of the local lore of the Tshal Gung thang village area—although, as Guntram Hazod argues, the figure of Lama Zhang, as he appears in these stories, is more a general stand-in for the Tshal pa Bka’ bgyud pa-s as a whole than an individual historical figure.<sup>82</sup>

Also closely related to his role as a political leader is the repairs Zhang and his teacher Sgom tshul made to the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang, or Jo khang, temple (see Chapter Four below). Because of the historical and architectural importance of the temple, mentions of Lama Zhang can thus also be found in works by specialists in Tibetan architecture. Thus we see in Vitali’s study of the early temples of Central Tibet a short account of the conflicts in Lhasa in the 1160s that damaged the temple, the mediation of the conflicts by Sgom tshul, and the subsequent appointment of Zhang to oversee its repair and maintenance.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, Anne-Marie Blondeau and Yonten Gyatso, and Amy Heller mention Zhang’s name when discussing details of the renovations made to the Jo khang during the twelfth century.<sup>84</sup>

## (2) More Comprehensive Treatments

More recently, there have been at least three scholars whose treatments of Lama Zhang’s life and works have gone beyond mere topical mentions: David Jackson, Dan Martin, and Per Sørensen and Guntram Hazod.<sup>85</sup>

Jackson’s principal concern in his contribution is not with Lama Zhang as such, but with the aforementioned “white panacea” controversy occasioned by Sa skya Paṇḍita’s criticisms of the early Dwags po Bka’ brygud

<sup>81</sup> Nebesky-Wojtkowitz 1956, 104–05.

<sup>82</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.571.

<sup>83</sup> Vitali 1990, 82.

<sup>84</sup> Blondeau and Gyatso 2003, 28, 31–32; Heller 2004.

<sup>85</sup> D. Jackson 1994; Martin 1990, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001a, and 2001b; Sørensen and Hazod 2007.



pa *mahāmudrā* teachings. But, as Zhang was seen as a principal target of these polemics, Jackson devotes several chapters to his doctrines and life, offering a thorough and well-documented accounting of (1) the doctrines set forth in *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*, (2) their background in Sgam po pa's controversial "sūtra *mahāmudrā*" teaching, and (3) Zhang's controversial political and military activities.<sup>86</sup>

Along with his important translation from *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*, Martin published a series of articles between 1992 and 2001 that together offer one of the fullest treatments available of Lama Zhang. In addition to recounting his political involvements, Martin relates Zhang's more "worldly" concerns to the *mahāmudrā* outlook, suggesting that perhaps Zhang's political activities were not really incompatible with his Buddhist principles:

[F]rom Zhang's own perspective, he was only putting into practice his understanding of what might today be called "engaged Buddhism," or, in terms that would have made more sense to Zhang, bringing compassion and non-dual awareness to their peak by plunging once more into the life of the world in the post-meditation phase.<sup>87</sup>

Furthermore, Martin, in his discussion of *mahāmudrā*, brings a welcome measure of levelheadedness to the "white panacea" controversies, reminding us—correctly, in my view—that the idea of a less-than-gradual path to realization "is not a Tibetan invention, but has its direct roots in tantric lineages in India, and less directly in Mahayana discussions about the Path."<sup>88</sup>

Finally, the most recent work to deal comprehensively with Lama Zhang is Per Sørensen and Guntram Hazod's massive book on the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa order, *Rulers on the Celestial Plain*.<sup>89</sup> This work takes the form of a translation of and commentary on the late-eighteenth-century *Gung thang Register* (*gung thang dkar chag*), also translated by Everding (see above).<sup>90</sup> The scope of the book—the trajectory of this particular order and its residual influences from the twelfth through the twentieth century—obviously extends far beyond Lama Zhang's life. Still, there is a large amount of material on Zhang—much of it never seen before in a non-Tibetan-language publication—and it stands as by far the most

<sup>86</sup> D. Jackson 1994.

<sup>87</sup> Martin 2001, 50.

<sup>88</sup> Martin 2001, 50.

<sup>89</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007.

<sup>90</sup> Everding 2000.



comprehensive treatment of his life and writings to date. What is especially noteworthy about Sørensen and Hazod's approach is the scope and ambition of their methodological program, which is

to combine texts and ethnography, in an attempt to establish what we may term historical geography—still far too rarely engaged in a Tibetological context—which here means: documenting political developments in place and time and making these historical developments visible in the landscape and topography.<sup>91</sup>

To this end, they utilize a bewildering variety of means: translation, textual explication, ritual theory, political history, ethnographic fieldwork, geography, and toponymic research, resulting in a densely annotated translation supplemented by photographs (including aerial satellite photos), maps, charts, and a collection of self-standing essays on a variety of loosely connected topics having to do with Tshal Gung thang and its environs. It will undoubtedly be years before scholars exhaust the riches of this complex and challenging work.

## VII. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

While I think it unwise to approach a subject as rich and varied as the present one with the blunt instrument of rigid methodology—the more perspectives the better, it seems to me—there is a cluster of concepts I employ at a high level of generality that I think deserve some explicit mention at the outset. I will discuss them briefly under three broad headings: hegemony, charisma, and style.

### *A. Hegemony*

From the standpoint of social theory, the most helpful explanatory framework I have found for conceptualizing the “Buddhicization” of Tibet—the end result of the momentous Buddhist revival of the “later spread” period—is that of “hegemony” found in the writings of Gramsci and later neo-Gramscian scholars. I am certainly not the first Tibetanist to think this: Janet Gyatso, in her account of this same period, writes of “the hegemony of Buddhism in Tibet”; similarly, Geoffrey Samuel refers to the

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<sup>91</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.9.

“partial hegemonisation in Tibet” by “the dissenting tradition of Indian [Buddhist] Tantra.”<sup>92</sup>

In the Gramscian tradition, hegemony refers to the process by which a dominant social group achieves and maintains its power through its mastery of the cultural sphere. The caretakers of this sphere are what Gramsci calls ‘the intellectuals’, a term with a broader meaning than is usual in English:

at the highest level would be the creators of the various sciences, philosophy, art, etc., at the lowest the most humble “administrators” and divulgers of pre-existing, traditional, accumulated intellectual wealth.<sup>93</sup>

Hegemony is opposed to coercion, which is the form of control exercised in the political sphere by an organized state. As Malpas and Wake write:

Unlike many theories of power, hegemony does not advocate a “top-down” dictatorial model of rule. Within hegemonic relations, the dominant class or classes favour encouragement over coercion.<sup>94</sup>

Gramsci took care to emphasize that the idea of hegemony does not apply to the dominant party alone: it also refers to a subordinate group’s struggle to marshal the symbolic and cultural resources necessary to gain ascendancy. In Gramsci’s terminology, rather than force, hegemony operates through “consent” and “moral and intellectual leadership.” It begins with dispersed individual wills and seeks to achieve a “collective will,” which includes shared goals and values as well as a shared world-view.<sup>95</sup>

The version of this theory I find most compelling is that offered by Laclau and Mouffe. Here, the concept of hegemony is understood from within a theory of discourse, which makes Gramsci’s somewhat vague ideas about a “general will” more precise. Consent and leadership are effected through struggles over the *symbolic* realm, the realm of discourses, within which are embedded *identities*—or in Laclau and Mouffe’s language, “subject-positions.” Hence the primary operation that achieves hegemony is what they call “articulation”—the discursive linking together of contingent cultural fragments to attain a new group identity tied to a common purpose.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Gyatso 1998, 116; Samuel 2005, 52–71.

<sup>93</sup> Gramsci 1971, 13.

<sup>94</sup> Malpas and Wake 2006, 199–200.

<sup>95</sup> Gramsci 1971, 57–58.

<sup>96</sup> The more thorough discussion of this is in Laclau and Mouffe 2001, pp. 105–14.

The idea of hegemony forms a backdrop to the discussion herein insofar as a large part of Lama Zhang's mastery—his literary innovations, his activities as “Lord of the Teachings,” his cultivation of the deities and protectors associated with the Lhasa Gtsug lag khang temple, his fixing of Bka' brgyud lineages, his appropriation and administration of physical and sacred space—is really a mastery of discursive means and thus serves as an excellent example of hegemony as the symbolic fixing of unities within a fragmented cultural space. This makes Lama Zhang, despite his characteristic modesty about his formal learning, a quintessential Gramscian “intellectual.” Looking at the details of Lama Zhang's intellectual operation at this local level will also yield important clues about the larger event of the Buddhist revival and the many ways in which hegemony operates there as well.

A drawback to the use of this concept is that over time the meaning of the word ‘hegemony’ has been diluted to the point where, for many—scholars and others—it now signifies little more than domination. In this sense, it is seen as a purely negative state, something to be overcome, not achieved. Thus, for example, Tibet scholar Martin Mills criticizes the use of the term to characterize the spread of Buddhism in Tibet, explicitly associating it with the Chinese Communist position that “a hegemonic Buddhist ideology acted to legitimate feudal inequalities in pre-modern Tibet by effectively silencing subaltern modes of identity and discourse, in particular those produced by the peasantry.”<sup>97</sup> Clearly, the word ‘hegemonic’, as employed here by Mills, connotes something like ideological coercion, if not outright suppression. For Gramsci, as Chantal Mouffe explains, “intellectual and moral leadership exercised by the hegemonic class does not consist in the imposition of the class ideology upon the allied groups,”<sup>98</sup> whereas Mills's account seems to imply exactly that. He suggests, for example, that if Tibetan institutional Buddhism had been truly hegemonic, it would have “actively sought to *silence* . . . local ideologies.”<sup>99</sup> The fuller Gramscian concept, which seems to me more useful—especially as applied to Tibetan Buddhism—sees hegemony not as the silencing of opposing positions, but as something that is fragile, contingent, and in Raymond Williams's words, “has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified,” because “[i]t is also continually resisted, lim-

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<sup>97</sup> Mills 2003, 334–35.

<sup>98</sup> Mouffe 1979, 193.

<sup>99</sup> Mills 2003, 345.

ited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own.”<sup>100</sup> In fairness to Mills, the word “hegemonism” was in fact used by the Chinese government during the Mao era in the strictly negative sense, as “a code word for imperialism.”<sup>101</sup> So there may be some historical basis for Mills’s objection. But what is unfortunate is that there is no other term that carries the subtlety of Gramsci’s notion, so if we let it be flattened into a mere synonym for ‘domination’, we lose a rich explanatory concept.

Matthew Kapstein also employs the term ‘hegemony’ to refer to the Buddhist penetration of medieval Tibetan culture, writing:

Buddhism in Tibet developed through a sustained and subtle process, whereby the foreign religion achieved a *decisive cultural hegemony* but was at the same time, as conquerors almost always are, transformed by its own success.<sup>102</sup>

This usage—particularly its suggestion that the hegemon is itself transformed by its own success—would seem more consonant with the Gramscian sense of the term ‘hegemony’.

A fascinating recent employment of the term can be found in McCleary and van der Kuip’s two working papers in “the economics of religion,” which posit a “religion market” wherein religious groups compete for market share. They write:

Our argument begins by observing that homogeneity of the Buddhism market in Tibet became established from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. . . . *The Buddhist hegemony over the Tibetan religion market* meant that outside religions, such as Islam and Christianity, had high entry costs . . . . Without competition from other religions, Buddhism flourished in Tibet, with several schools and sects developing over time.<sup>103</sup>

‘Hegemony’ here, it would seem, is roughly synonymous with ‘monopoly’. This is a somewhat less subtle sense of hegemony—closer, perhaps, to that of Mills (and Mao)—though the flexibility of the market model does leave open the possibility that the concept thus framed could be reconciled with the fuller sense advanced by Mouffe and Williams, wherein rival positions are not eliminated, but “held in suspension,” as it were, and can always reappear given a change in circumstances.

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<sup>100</sup> Williams 1977, 112.

<sup>101</sup> Cohen 2000, 200.

<sup>102</sup> Kapstein 2000, 4 (emphasis added).

<sup>103</sup> McCleary and van der Kuip 2007a, 1 (emphasis added).

It is only the fuller, more flexible conception of hegemony that I have in mind as a background concept here, though the word itself will be used sparingly. What occurred during the Buddhist revival was not strong-armed ideological conquest—it was a slow building of consensus through the negotiation of multiple fragile alliances, a gradual accumulation of influences across a subtle network of language, symbol, ritual, and social life.

### B. *Charisma*

The Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s, during the first years of their rule over the Lhasa area, offer a good example of what Max Weber called "charismatic leadership," wherein an individual assumes leadership of a group by virtue of the followers' belief that he or she is "endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."<sup>104</sup> This concept has received extensive treatment elsewhere, but the use I make of it, and its connection with other key concepts, needs to be discussed briefly. My specific interest is in charisma's power to create order. Charisma is like current passing through an electromagnet lying among scattered iron filings: patterns form when it is switched on. In particular, I will discuss—in Chapters Two and Four—the way Lama Zhang's charisma organizes space and time in the form of territory and tradition, respectively. Space is bound and sacralized through the tantric "sealing" of territories, and time is structured as tradition through the symbolic links that connect charismatic lama lineages and assemble them into large and continuous temporal units. This ordered and sacralized space-time—a social body bound by the ligaments of territory and tradition—in turn enables the Tshal pa polity to hold together in the face of disorganizing social forces, making it one of the earliest successful large-scale political-monastic communities in Central Tibet.

Insofar as charisma performs this organizing function, it is closely related to hegemony as described above. The symbolic organization of space and time through the power of charisma, and the appearance therein of embedded social identities, is a good example of the process of "articulation" central to Laclau-Mouffe's theorization of hegemony. This connection between hegemony and charisma ensures that the authoritative basis of leadership and consent is the spiritual accomplishment of the lama.

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<sup>104</sup> Weber 1978, 241.

I also note—and will develop further in Chapter Two—the fascinating parallels between the social-scientific concept of charisma and the notion of “blessings” (*byin rlabs*), so crucial to most forms of Tibetan Buddhism. Early on, one of Zhang’s principal teachers scolds him for overconceptualizing his meditative experiences, and enjoins him to think less and pray more, since “This is the lineage of blessings!”<sup>105</sup>—and indeed blessings and charisma were to take on all the more importance for the various Bka’ brgyud pa subsects because of their self-identification as meditative, not scholastic, orders. Of course, all of the rising twelfth-century orders stressed charisma to some degree, but the Tshal pa model was striking (and later criticized) for its strong emphasis on the charismatic tantric adept as an organizing principle.

### C. Style

Some of the earliest scholarship on Lama Zhang, as noted above, focused on the criticisms Sa skya Paṇḍita leveled against certain Bka’ brgyud exponents of the Great Seal or *mahāmudrā*—of which Zhang was often taken as a prototypical representative. In reading these accounts, I often felt an uneasy sense that the real issues were not on the table, that the parties to the dispute were talking past one another—particularly when modern scholars appeared to be subtly taking sides. It seemed to me that what was really at issue in the exchanges between the Sa skya and the Bka’ brgyud partisans was not so much points of doctrine as matters of style. It was like trying to referee a debate between an Abstract Expressionist and a Photorealist. Dan Martin seemed to be saying much of the same thing when he wrote about “differing approaches to Buddhism that had a great deal of trouble approaching each other.”<sup>106</sup>

At the same time, it seemed to me that what was most interesting about Lama Zhang was not captured by a dispute framed as a doctrinal controversy, and furthermore that what had survived of his life and works was more than a set of doctrines or an official lineage. He had a way of pulling together an ensemble of effects that had impact and influence even though his “school” of Tibetan Buddhism had not survived. This, too, was best expressed by the word ‘style’, which shifted the emphasis to what seemed to me most compelling about a strong personality like Zhang.

<sup>105</sup> de byin brlabs kyi brgyud pa yin. *Zin bris*, 39a–39b.

<sup>106</sup> Martin 1996a, 60.

Historians and philosophers of science—most notably Alistair Crombie—have used the idea of style as a means for understanding those aspects of science that are not captured by the explicit “content” of a scientific discipline.<sup>107</sup> This has proved particularly fruitful for the understanding of scientific disputes—which often revolve around something less “objective” than the theory or evidence at hand and less “subjective” than mere personality differences. Following upon Crombie’s work, Sergio Cremaschi and Marcelo Dascal of the International Association for the Study of Controversies have employed the concept of style as an analytical tool for understanding such diverse controversies as those between the nineteenth-century economists Malthus and Ricardo and the twentieth-century philosophers Derrida and Searle. Referring to the former controversy, they write that

methodological considerations are but one of a whole set of stratagems employed by each opponent. We argue that each opponent’s preference for a particular kind of stratagem expresses *his own specific scientific style*. . . .<sup>108</sup>

If one were to substitute ‘religious’ for ‘scientific’ in the above passage, the last sentence might be a good description of the Bka’ brgyud–Sa skya “doctrinal” dispute. “[T]his notion [of style],” Cremaschi and Dascal write, “may be useful for historians of science no less than for historians of art.”<sup>109</sup> And to this, of course, we can add “and historians of religion.”

My own use of the concept of style will center on Lama Zhang’s characteristic choices around issues of knowledge (experiential valued over verbal), religious practice (distinct preferences with regard to meditation and ritual), doctrinal deviation (an unusual, at times extreme, tolerance), and literary language (a flair for innovation verging on the outrageous and a mastery of diverse genres). Style is what lends coherence to this collection of choices, and is hence tied closely to both hegemony and charisma. What draws Zhang’s religious outlook together into a unity, holding the diverse elements of style together, is the sheer force of personality: charismatic power and visionary will backed by the spiritual credibility that religious attainments confer. And this charismatically unified style serves in turn as the instrument of hegemony—the means by which intellectual and moral leadership is assumed, consent negotiated, and collective will forged through the activation of cultural signifiers. This is where

<sup>107</sup> Crombie 1994.

<sup>108</sup> Cremaschi and Dascal 1998, 229. See also Dascal 2001.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

Lama Zhang's command of literary and other symbolic means as well as his inclusive, synthesizing sensibility stand out. Hegemony as effected by Zhang is the work of the visionary—the one who, through his mastery of language and discourse, opens unimagined vistas, enunciating a broad and expansive vision of sacred space, time, and community that commands assent and brings together competing groups and practices.

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Though I think it best, after these initial methodological reflections, to allow these three terms to retire discreetly into the background, they should not be forgotten, for the concepts associated with them will continue to animate much of the discussion directed toward broader issues. In particular, all three bear directly on the question of how Central Tibet reassembled itself after the “time of fragmentation” and how Lama Zhang contributed to that reassembly; for hegemony, charisma, and style are all social-cultural coagulants—they keep things together, keep them from going to pieces. It is therefore no accident that these concepts play an important framing role in my narrative of the life and writings of Lama Zhang. They stand behind my central argument that Lama Zhang's specific contribution to the Buddhist “renaissance” was a *new model of rulership and religious community* offered for posterity. This was important because a principal agent of the Buddhist revival was the new, increasingly institutionalized sectarian orders, which, as they grew in extent and organization, became social forces to be reckoned with. Zhang's tantric model of rulership offered the means to hold together one of the larger and more “worldly” of these religious orders—the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa—as it underwent the transition from scattered groups of hermitic meditators to an integrated large-scale community. The basis of his model of rulership and community was a distinctive *style* of Buddhist tantra—a personal reconfiguration of the rich toolkit of ritual, textual, and contemplative practices handed down by the Buddhist tantric tradition—which acted as the symbolic connective tissue of a complex community centered on the figure of the *charismatic lama*. Zhang's was only one of several such models: as monastic polities began appearing throughout Central Tibet during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, other models of sectarian community were offered—most notably at Rwa sgreng, Gsang phu ne'u thog, and Sa skya monasteries. But Zhang's was an especially provocative model, and became enormously influential. It was based, not on scholarship, not on a strict monastic code, not on doctrinal purity, but on the charisma of the tantric hermit who, shunning his beloved seclusion, comes down from



the mountains, assumes the mantle of “Lord of the Teachings” (*bstan pa'i bdag po*), and builds a worldly community. The Lord of the Teachings, as envisioned by Zhang, is not only a monk and tantric adept, but also an aggressive political and military figure, an enforcer of law and order. He sustains a community through his multidimensional mastery (*bdag po* can also be translated as ‘master’)—his ability to marshal a variety of resources, both material and spiritual, and forge them into a unity. He masters space: annexing, marking off, and sealing territory through magic and force, subduing both human and nonhuman enemies, and offering protection from physical danger, social disorder, and spiritual malaise. He masters time: linking his community, through narrative and trope, to a rich and authoritative past of powerful adepts and buddhas, to a legitimizing and identity-supporting lineage. And finally, he masters language and discourse: knitting together the spatial-temporal community of territory and lineage through his command of a large array of oral and written literary genres, which he employs in a remarkably self-conscious and purposeful fashion.

## VIII. SOURCES

The primary source I have used for Lama Zhang's writings is the 2004 nine-volume *Collected Works* published in Kathmandu by Shree Gautam Buddha Vihar, edited by Khenpo Shedup Tenzin and Lama Thinley Namgyal as part of the Sgam po pa Library series. All of the citations herein to Lama Zhang's works are to this version: it is by far the most complete, legible, and easily obtainable collection of Zhang's writings, which makes it a good point of reference for present and future scholarship. Until fairly recently, the only available sources for Lama Zhang's writings were the *Highly Esoteric Experiential Writings*, a collection of Zhang's “sealed,” or secret, works (*Bka' rgya ma*) from O rgyan chos gling monastery in Bhutan, and the *Bka' 'thor bu*, an incomplete piece of what must at one time have been a collected works, from the library of Burmiok Athing in Gangtok, Sikkim. Fortunately, there are now at least three editions of Zhang's collected works available to the public: a five-volume nineteenth-century manuscript *Gsung 'bum*, reprinted in Kangding, Sichuan, sometime in the 1990s; a nine-volume *Bka' 'bum* scanned to microfilm by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project from a manuscript housed at Samdo monastery in Nepal; and finally the nine-volume Sgam po pa Library edition mentioned above. Though I have found it most convenient to cite to

the latter, it is not—nor was it intended to be—a critical edition in the text-critical sense, and thus does not render transparent the provenance of the texts used in its compilation. Its use herein is therefore not meant to sidestep the problems attendant on the existence of a variety of collections of uncertain provenance, or the desirability of eventually creating a textual apparatus that would track the origins and variations in Lama Zhang's writings. This, however, should not be considered a part of the current project, and its outcome would not, I believe, affect the substance of what is written here.



## CHAPTER ONE

### LAMA ZHANG'S LIFE

#### I. SOURCES FOR LAMA ZHANG'S LIFE

We begin with Lama Zhang's life—what should be the easiest part of the task at hand. But setting out even the basics of a twelfth-century Central Tibetan life proves to be a formidable task, in part because the sources are so elusive. There are a couple of issues regarding sources that will come up repeatedly throughout this work, so it is best that they be addressed at the outset:

(1) *Chronology*. In much of the past work on Lama Zhang, there has been very little effort made to separate out information derived from texts produced during or shortly after Zhang's lifetime and information that postdates Zhang by anywhere from 100 to 500 years. This does not necessarily have to be seen as a criticism—especially where indigenous Tibetan historical works are in question, for obviously their aims are quite different from those of contemporary historical scholars, and the charge of anachronism is more or less irrelevant. This has begun to change in recent years, but many contemporary European, American, and Japanese translators and expositors—both scholars and Buddhist practitioners—continue to treat Tibetan texts in this fundamentally ahistorical fashion. In looking at the sources, I will try to follow the example set by Sørensen and Hazod in their treatment of the eighteenth-century *Gung thang Register*, which they regard, not as a direct description of the life of Lama Zhang and the sect of which he was the founder, but as a “depiction of Tshal Gung-thang monastery . . . from the perspective resulting from the appropriation of the site by the dGe-lDan-pa [Dge lugs pa] in the 17th century.”<sup>1</sup> This means placing each source, as much as possible, within its period of composition and remaining aware of the different interests and concerns that govern the accounts of Zhang's life that date from different times and places.

(2) *Genre and Textual Economy*. As will be seen directly below, the textual sources on Zhang's life belong to a variety of literary genres: autobiographies and hagiographies, works of eulogy and supplication,

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<sup>1</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.13.

secret instructions to disciples, spiritual songs, sectarian histories, monastic guidebooks, transcriptions of oral transmissions, ritual texts, and so forth. This diversity of genres raises interesting questions about how to read and interpret works belonging to different genre classes—and indeed how genres should be taxonomized in the first place. These in turn lead to further questions about how diverse works were intended to be used, how they were transmitted and circulated, the practical contexts in which they were used, etc., as well as the question of how we ourselves, as scholars, should use the works. If we do not know how to read particular genres, then any information we glean from them becomes problematic. Even among the works written by Zhang himself, there is no rhetorical uniformity that allows an easy lumping together of texts or a single method of reading them all. Some, for example, appear to be humorous, sarcastic, or ironic in tone—but it is hard to imagine how criteria for determining such a thing might be formulated.<sup>2</sup> These questions will be addressed in more detail in Chapters Three and Four below—particularly those sections dealing with “textual economies” and “genre families”—but we should keep these issues in mind as we go through the sources on Zhang’s life, lest we become immodest about the progress we seem to be making in reading the texts. As Sørensen and Hazod write:

One of the major challenges of medieval historiography dealing with Tibetological materials has to do with the circumstance that our knowledge and understanding of the methods and techniques of argumentation and modes of perception conveyed in much written literature is, from the modern viewpoint, restricted.<sup>3</sup>

What might, therefore, appear on the surface to be the driest part of the exposition turns out to be charged with all of the hottest issues

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There are a number of texts I have consulted as sources of information about Lama Zhang’s life. I have for convenience divided them into three rough groupings: (A) works written by Zhang, (B) works written by his immediate disciples and contemporaries, and (C) works written by others after his lifetime.

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<sup>2</sup> For an interesting discussion of this issue of how to determine humor, etc., in an Indian context, see Schopen 2007. Thanks to Karen Lang for bringing this piece to my attention.

<sup>3</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.14–15.

## A. Works Written by Lama Zhang<sup>4</sup>

### 1. Autobiographical Works

This is a very loose—and possibly anachronistic—category (see discussion of autobiography, Chapter Three below) that is, nonetheless, useful for our purposes here. Chief among these texts is the one called *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*,<sup>5</sup> which is named after the disciple, Shes rab grub pa, who requested the piece during a retreat in Sgrags. It is not clear whether the piece was written down by Zhang or dictated to, and transcribed by, Shes rab grub.<sup>6</sup> Martin dates this work to around 1166,<sup>7</sup> when Zhang would have been around 44 years old, which means that the major political and military events of his life—which occurred later—are not described. Still, as we shall discuss below, it stands as a literary milestone, being one of the first known self-standing Tibetan religious autobiographies.<sup>8</sup>

There are other works that might well be called autobiographical—containing, as they do, first-person accounts by Zhang of important events in his own life—though they also fit into other, more established categories. Chief among these categories are “instructions to disciples” (*gdams ngag*) and “supplications and eulogies” (*gsol ‘debs bstod pa*). There will be a more detailed discussion of the overlap and interconnectedness of diverse genres in Chapter Three below.

### 2. Instructions to Disciples

The group of texts called the *Sealed Precepts* (*bka’ rgya ma*)<sup>9</sup> is quite difficult to categorize. Several of these texts are called “biographies” (*rnam thar*) and contain first-person accounts of events in Zhang’s life, so they might plausibly be called autobiographies. But at the same time, the context in which they are offered is that of a lama giving secret tantric teachings to a small circle of his most advanced disciples. Thus we might consider these texts as bridging the categories of autobiography and instructions to disciples (*gdams ngag*). The texts themselves are transcripts made by disciples of secret teachings given by Zhang in places like Ngar phug, Mon pa

<sup>4</sup> For a more complete inventory of Zhang’s writings, see Appendix 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Nyid kyi rnam thar shes rab grub pa ma* (hereinafter, *Shes rab grub pa ma*), Shedup I.316–366.

<sup>6</sup> See discussion below, Chapter Three.

<sup>7</sup> Martin 1996a, 64.

<sup>8</sup> Gyatso 1998, 101.

<sup>9</sup> *Zhang bka’ rgya ma*, Shedup VII.1–706.

gdong, Spyi khungs, G.yu brag, Bsam yas, Mchims phu, G.ya' lung 'brong bu, Tshal, and the Gtsug lag khang (Jo khang) in Lhasa.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. *Eulogies and Supplications*

Another important work that is explicitly autobiographical, yet styled as a different genre of work, is the piece called *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*.<sup>11</sup> The form of this work is that of the traditional Buddhist eulogy (*bstod pa*; Skt. stotra), but it is here turned into a self-eulogy (*nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa*) which lays down a narrative of Lama Zhang's life. (For a discussion of the complex relationships between the genres of biography and eulogy, see Chapter Three below.) This work is also important because it serves as the root text for Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's commentary-cum-biography, the *Concise Biography*, discussed below.

There are other eulogies that probably should not be considered autobiographies but that nonetheless tell us much about his life. There are,

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<sup>10</sup> Among the *Bka' rgya ma* texts I have drawn upon in this regard are the *Response to Questions of Dar ma gzhon nu* (*Dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.23–38); *The Small Sleeping Hut Instructions* (*Gzims chung ma'i zhal gdams*, Shedup VII.157–67); the *Bsam yas mchims phu ma Biography: Advice to Lha btsun* (*Rnam thar bsam yas mchims phu ma lha btsun la gdams pa*, Shedup VII.499–501); the *Lha sa ma Biography* (*Lha sa ma rnam thar*, Shedup VII.532–49); the *Ngar phug ma Instructions* (*Ngar phug ma'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.2–23); the *Bsam yas ma Biography* (*Rnam thar bsam yas ma*, Shedup VII.468–74); the *Adamantine Secret Sealed Precepts* (*Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.168–74); the *Spyi khungs ma: the Root of the 21 Hüm-s* (*Spyi khungs ma skor las hUM nyi shu rtsa gcig gi rtsa ba*, Shedup VII.335–38); the *Spyi khungs ma: Observations and Instructions of the 21 Hüm-s* (*Spyi khungs ma hUM nyi shu rtsa gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa*, Shedup VII.338–74); *The Approach of Gtsang ston the Yogin: Instructions* (*Gtsang ston rnal 'byor lugs gdams ngag*, Shedup VII.636–44); *Concise Instructions: Sealed Precepts* (*Bka' rgya ma bsdu pa'i zhal gdams*, Shedup VII.644–50); and *The Approach of 'Bring po Lo zhig* ('*Bring po lo zhig gi lugs*, Shedup VII.624).

Other instructions to disciples I have used that are not included in the *Sealed Precepts* but that also offer information on Zhang's life include the *Secret Instructions on Relaxed Alertness Spoken at 'Brong bu lkogs pa* (*Brong bu lkogs par gsungs pa'i man ngag lhug pa*, Shedup IV.236–91); the *Questions Asked by Dge bshes Sha mi, etc.* (*Dge bshes sha mi la sogs pas zhus pa*, Shedup III.497–513) (see discussion in Chapter Three below); the *Two Quintessential Secret Instructions Told to the Brothers, Lords of Gtsang* (*Gtsang pa rje btsun sku mched la gsungs pa'i gnad kyī man ngag gnyis*, Shedup III.421–31); *All That Is Needed: Instructions Spoken to the Ruler of Phrang mgo* ('*Phrang mgo btsad po la gsungs pa'i gdams pa dgos pa kun tshang*, Shedup III.39–174); and *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits* (*Theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad kyī dgongs pa'i nying phugs chen mo zab pa dang rgya che ba'i don gtan la 'bebs par byed pa phan byed nyi ma'i snying po* (hereinafter, *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*), Shedup II.297–650).

<sup>11</sup> *Nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa dgos* 'dod re skong ma (hereinafter, *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*), Shedup I.108–111.

for instance, the very odd works called the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*<sup>12</sup> and the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri mchog*<sup>13</sup>—works that are problematic from every possible angle, including authorship, voice, context, intended audience, and overall meaning—which will be discussed much more fully below in Chapter Five. Let it suffice for now to say that, however these works will ultimately be construed, they are surely among the most important sources we possess on the political conflicts that accompanied the rise of Lama Zhang and the Tshal pa-s to preeminence in the Lhasa area.

There is another self-eulogy called the *Byang mkhar ma: A Self-Eulogy*,<sup>14</sup> which offers much less biographical material but is still a useful source of information.

#### 4. *Hagiographies*

Closely related to the eulogies are the lineage hagiographies written by Zhang. These are short biographical pieces—sometimes consolidated with or into eulogies—devoted to the lives of the great lamas of his lineage. Here we see what was to become the standard Bka' brgyud pa sequence of lineage lamas—Vajradhara, Tailopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, Sgam po pa—though there is no reason to assume that Zhang himself was the first to fix this particular order. Still, this became the standard opening sequence for all subsequent Bka' brgyud pa lineage lists, and Zhang's sequence of lineage hagiographies has to be seen as an important precursor to what was to become a major Bka' brgyud pa genre in the next century, the “Golden Rosary” (*gser 'phreng*) collections, which were inspirational collections of lama life-stories.<sup>15</sup>

But more useful to us here than the standard Bka' brgyud pa forefather hagiographies are the biographies he wrote of his own root lamas—particularly Rgwa lo tsā ba, Mal Yer pa ba, and Dwags po Sgom tshul<sup>16</sup>—for it is in these writings that we see little snippets of Lama Zhang's own

<sup>12</sup> *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*. Subtitled *Bla ma zhang ston gyis bla ma zhang ston rang nyid la shin tu ngo mtshar ba'i sgo nas bstod pa*, Shedup V.657–65. The spelling of the requestor's name varies in different editions of Zhang's writings, substituting 'gu ru' for 'gu rub' and 're po skyid' or 'ri bo skyid' for 're bo skyid'.

<sup>13</sup> *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.598–604.

<sup>14</sup> *Nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa byang mkhar ma*, Shedup I.111–12.

<sup>15</sup> See Smith 2001, 39–51; Schaeffer 2000, 362.

<sup>16</sup> *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.170–181; *Dpal chen po rgwa lo'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.181–222; *Rje yer pa ba'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.242–284.



life as well as the more general social and religious life of twelfth-century Central Tibet.

### 5. *Spiritual Songs* (mgur)

Zhang stands two teaching generations removed from, and within the direct lineage of, Mi la ras pa (1040–1123), the most famous Tibetan composer of spontaneous spiritual songs (*mgur*), who died approximately the same year Zhang was born. Lama Zhang was trained in *mgur* by one of his root lamas, Mal Yer pa ba, who in turn had been trained by two of Mi la ras pa's direct disciples, Gling kha ba (dates unknown) and Ras chung Rdo rje grags (1083–1161).<sup>17</sup> In addition, Zhang received the transmission of the *dohā* (an Indian precursor to Tibetan *mgur*) teachings from his Indian root lama, Vairocanavajra. Thus, the composition and performance of spiritual songs was always a part of his practice, and there are scores of songs related to specific meditative practices. Included along with songs of realization and meditative attainment are more personal songs wherein Zhang examines his own character flaws (the *Advice to Myself*<sup>18</sup> and the *True Confession*,<sup>19</sup> for example) or answers criticisms of his public actions (for example, the untitled song 14 of the *Fifteen Songs Sung at Bsam yas brag sngon*, the one that begins “Beggar-monk Zhang, who is without plans for the future . . .”).<sup>20</sup> What is especially intriguing about Zhang's *mgur* is that, besides the songs of realization and confession one has come to expect from the genre, there are songs that make specific reference to conflicts and military engagements into which he entered—the sort of information that is frustratingly difficult to find in his other writings. Among the songs that allude to conflicts and fighting are song 13 of the *Fifteen Songs Sung at Bsam yas brag sngon* (“This crazy beggar-monk of Zhang/in this mere instant of human life . . .”),<sup>21</sup> [Song] *Sung at the Time of Fighting with the Gdos pa*,<sup>22</sup> the *Nineteen Songs of the Secret Mantra Practice*,<sup>23</sup> *Some Songs of G.yu brag pa by Protector of Beings Zhang*

<sup>17</sup> On Ras chung Rdo rje grags, see Roberts 2007.

<sup>18</sup> *Rang la gros 'debs ma*, Shedup V.651–53.

<sup>19</sup> *Don gyi bshags pa*, Shedup V.653–54.

<sup>20</sup> *phyi tshis med pa'i sprang ban zhang*. . . Shedup V.511–13.

<sup>21</sup> *zhang gis sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ mi tshe yud tsam 'di nyid la*. . . Shedup V.507–11.

<sup>22</sup> *Gdos pa 'khrug pa'i dus su gsung pa*, Shedup V.667–69.

<sup>23</sup> *Gsang sngags lag len gyi mgur bcu dgu zhal brda'i yi ge gcig dang nyi shu*, Shedup V.516–47.

*Rin po che*,<sup>24</sup> and *The Blue Pigeon*,<sup>25</sup> as well as short songs contained within larger prose works such as *The Handwritten Biography of Lama Zhang*<sup>26</sup> and *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits*.<sup>27</sup>

## 6. Miscellaneous Works

There are scores of other works written by Zhang that are not directly autobiographical but that nonetheless allude to important events in his life. Among these is a fascinating piece called *The Great Scroll Created in Five Parts*,<sup>28</sup> which could conceivably be the last text written by Zhang. It was left, according to the colophon, on the lintel of the doorway to his sleeping quarters at Tshal Gung thang.<sup>29</sup> This suggests to me that it was perhaps hidden above the doorway and found only after his death. It is, among other things, a sort of last will and testament, and mixes very detailed instructions on the delegation of monastic duties and the disposal of monastic properties with general observations about his life, including some of the later political events.

Another text that is difficult to classify but fascinating to browse is the massive *Earth and Sky Turned Upside Down: The Dharma Composition Called "Ascertaining the Unmistaken Situational and Ultimate Meaning."*<sup>30</sup> (See discussion in Chapter Two below, the section titled "Literary Style.")

### B. Works Written by Zhang's Immediate Disciples and Contemporaries

There are three known biographical writings by direct disciples of Zhang, one called the *Later Biography of Lama Zhang*,<sup>31</sup> another called the *Rgyal*

<sup>24</sup> 'Gro ba'i mgon po zhang rin po che g.yu brag pa'i mgur kha shas, Shedup VI.313–34.

<sup>25</sup> Phu ron sngon mo ba, Shedup V.709–11, number 3 of the *Three Little Dances* ('cham chung gsum), which make up section 43 of the collection called *Forty-five Sections of the Teachings Called "The Play of the Dharmakāya Wherever It Arises," A Collection of Songs of Experience of Zhang Protector of Beings G.yu brag pa* (zhang 'gro ba'i mgon po g.yu brag pa'i nyams mgur gyi tshogs gang shar chos sku'i rol rtse'd ces bya ba'i nang chos tshan zhes lnga), Shedup V.709–11.

<sup>26</sup> Zin bris.

<sup>27</sup> Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po, Shedup III.297–650.

<sup>28</sup> Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa, Shedup V.188–232.

<sup>29</sup> gzims chung gi sgo'i ya them la bzhugs so. *Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V. 232.

<sup>30</sup> Gnas skabs dang mthar thug gi don phyin ci ma log pa gtan la 'bebs par byed pa zhes bya ba'i rtsom chos sa log gnam log, Shedup IV.449–731.

<sup>31</sup> Rnam thar phyi ma, Shedup VI.283–302.

*blon ma Biography of Zhang Rinpoche*,<sup>32</sup> and a third called the *Handwritten Biography of Lama Zhang*.<sup>33</sup> The last mentioned, according to a note added to its colophon sometime after the initial creation of the manuscript, was authored by the monk Lha ri ba chen po<sup>34</sup> (aka Nam mkha' 'od, Sangs rgyas 'od,<sup>35</sup> or Sangs rgyas ras pa<sup>36</sup>), who is mentioned quite often in Zhang's own writings. This text was discovered in the course of a recent project to catalog the library of 'Bras spungs monastery near Lhasa and is not found in any of the existing collections of Zhang's works. The name of the author (or possibly editor) of the *Rgyal blon ma* does not appear in the text itself, but evidence points to a disciple named Ston pa Rgya lo (possibly a shortened form of Rgyal ba Lo zhig, a name that also occurs several times), *rgyal blon* being presumably a corruption of *rgya lo*.<sup>37</sup> Finally, the *Later Biography of Lama Zhang* was authored by a disciple named Mar sgom.<sup>38</sup> What is interesting about the *Rgyal blon ma Biography* and the *Handwritten Biography* is that they share a large amount of material, suggesting a community of disciples within which common manuscripts, notes, and text fragments were circulated—perhaps being collated, rearranged, and edited by different hands, resulting in a number of different, but related, versions of Zhang's life story.

What is most lacking as a resource for Zhang's life is accounts of Zhang's activities by contemporaries who were *not* disciples. We can only hope that as the diverse materials of the twelfth century become more available to scholarship, additional evidence of this sort will turn up. For now, however, we do at least have two texts that offer intriguing hints about how

<sup>32</sup> *Zhang rin po che'i rnam thar rgyal blon ma* (hereinafter, *Rnam thar rgyal blon ma*), Shedup VI.183–302.

<sup>33</sup> *Bla ma zhang gi rnam thar zin bris* (hereinafter, *Zin bris*).

<sup>34</sup> *Zin bris*, 82a, handwritten edit.

<sup>35</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 199.

<sup>36</sup> *Zin bris*, 2a.

<sup>37</sup> In the *Zin bris*, there is the following passage: “Ston pa Rgya lo saw [Zhang] as the two-faced [Vajravārahi?]. Then, an indestructible devotion arose in him, and he put the lama's life story into writing so that whoever heard it would have conviction.” (ston pa rgya los zhal gnyis par mthong/ de nas mi phyed pa'i dad gus skyes nas/ bla ma'i rnam thar thos tshad la yid ches pas yi ger btab pa yin/) *Zin bris*, 58b.

As for the possible identity of Ston pa Rgya lo and Rgyal ba Lo zhig, Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje writes: “As for the outer biographies, there are three: [first,] the extensive [biography], put together [*bsdebs*] by Rgyal ba Lo Zhig...” (phyi'i rnam thar la gsum/ rgyas pa rgyal ba lo zhig gis bsdebs pa/) Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje. *Gro mgon rin po che'i rnam thar bsdu pa dgos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel pa* (hereinafter, *Rnam thar bsdu pa*), Shedup VI.105.

<sup>38</sup> Also called, according to Sørensen and Hazod, Mar lung Byang chub seng ge. Sørensen-Hazod 2007, 601.

he might have been regarded in some contemporary circles. These are the above-mentioned “self-criticisms”—the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gurb re bo skyid* and the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog*—both of which contain scathing indictments of Zhang for a variety of alleged misdeeds. There are, however, many problems related to interpretation and attribution—which will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Three below—but however these are resolved, they remain important evidence of what must have been genuine criticisms and conflicts following upon his ascent to power in Central Tibet.

### C. Works Written by Later Authors

There are accounts of Zhang's life in a number of later historical works, particularly those written by Bka' bgyud pa authors. The first of these, the *Red Annals*,<sup>39</sup> was written by the fourteenth-century Tshal pa myriarch (*khri dpon*) Tshal pa si tu Kun dga' rdo rje (1309–1364), who, upon stepping down from his political position, took ordination (and the ordination name Dge ba'i blo gros)<sup>40</sup> and became a great scholar-monk. His account is of especial interest because he was the only one among the major historians who stood within Lama Zhang's monastic lineage.

Kun dga' rdo rje also wrote a biography of Lama Zhang, called the *Commentary on the “Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes,” the Concise Biography of the Protector of Beings*,<sup>41</sup> which takes the form of a commentary on Zhang's self-eulogy discussed above. This work contains probably the most extensive account of Zhang's life outside of his own and his immediate disciples' writings—including life-stories, lists of teachings received, short bios of his root lamas, and stories of miracles, meditative attainments, and encounters with demons—and is composed in the formal outline (*sa bcad*) style that was to become a common scholastic mode of expression but is seldom, if ever, found in Zhang's own writings.

There is another work by Kun dga' rdo rje about which little is known at present. This is called *The Lineage List of Mtshal pa: The Clear Mirror Annals, Delight of the Scholars*,<sup>42</sup> and is, according to Leonard van der Kuijp, “variously styled a *lhan thabs* (‘teaching aid’) or a *kha skong* (‘supplement’)

<sup>39</sup> *Deb ther dmar po*.

<sup>40</sup> *Gung thang dkar chag*, 37a.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Gro mgon rin po che'i rnam thar bdus pa dgos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel pa, Shedup VI.103–182.

<sup>42</sup> *Mtshal pa'i bgyud yig deb ther gsal ba'i me long mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog*, Shedup VI.52–58.

to the [*Red Annals*].”<sup>43</sup> This text is quoted in a work titled *Prophecies Arrayed in a Basket Regarding the Protector of Beings, Zhang Rinpoche*,<sup>44</sup> a gathering of excerpts from scriptures and other works foretelling the life of Zhang which was added to Zhang’s collected writings by an unknown editor. The *Lineage List*, according to Dung dkar Blo bzang ‘phrin las, editor of the contemporary addition of the *Red Annals*, “furnishes by and large a history of the ecclesiastics and secular rulers associated with the Tshal/Gung thang estates.”<sup>45</sup>

Outside of the Kun dga’ rdo rje biography, the most detailed information about Zhang from a later source is to be found in the *Lho rong Dharma History*,<sup>46</sup> written sometime around the middle of the fifteenth century by Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal (aka Ri bo che Dpon tshang). This text gives extensive coverage to the religious history of the Bka’ brgyud pa line, and the section on Lama Zhang contains a wealth of detail on his life and religious accomplishments.<sup>47</sup>

In 1476, shortly after the appearance of the *Lho rong Dharma History*, ‘Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481), a member of the Karma Bka’ brgyud pa (or Karma Kam tshang) order, wrote perhaps the most famous Tibetan religious history, the *Blue Annals*,<sup>48</sup> which contains a less thorough, though still fairly substantial, section on Lama Zhang.

Another important history, written sometime in the middle of the 16th century by the Second Dpa’ bo reincarnate lama, Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566), of the Karma Bka’ brgyud order, is called the *Scholars’ Feast Dharma History*.<sup>49</sup> Though relatively short, the section on Zhang contains some interesting material on his political and military adventures that cannot be found in either the *Lho rong Dharma History* or the *Blue Annals*. There is also a section on repairs and renovations to the Lhasa Gtsug lag khang and Bsam yas monastery that provides valuable information on the early *phyi dar* disturbances and the factional fighting that damaged these two landmarks.

<sup>43</sup> van der Kuijp 1996, 44.

<sup>44</sup> ‘Gro ba’i mgon po zhang rin po che’i lung bstan za ma tog bkod pa sogs lung bstan gyi skor, Shedup VI.1–90; Samdo I.143.

<sup>45</sup> van der Kuijp 1996, 51, n.20.

<sup>46</sup> *Lho rong chos ‘byung*.

<sup>47</sup> For more information on Rta tshag Tshe dbang rgyal and the *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, see van der Kuijp 2001.

<sup>48</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*.

<sup>49</sup> *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*.

The next significant works of Bka' brgyud pa history are the *Dharma History of the 'Brug pa*<sup>50</sup> by Padma dkar po (1527–1592), and the *Stag lung Dharma History* by Stag lung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1571–1626),<sup>51</sup> great scholars of the 'Brug pa and the Stag lung Bka' brgyud pa schools, respectively. Both treat more of the Tshal pa-s in general than of Lama Zhang specifically, though Padma dkar po gives more information on his life.

In the mid-17th century, the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682), wrote a history of Tibet entitled *Annals of Tibet: Song of the Spring Queen*.<sup>52</sup> The Great Fifth considered himself a reincarnation of Lama Zhang and felt a strong personal connection to Gung thang, the main Tshal pa temple. Though the portion of his history devoted to Lama Zhang is short, it treats extensively of Zhang's successors and the period during which the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s dominated the Lhasa area.

After the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama, his regent (*sde srid*) Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705) wrote a biography of the Great Fifth entitled "*The Fine Silken Garment*": *the Ordinary Outer Biography of My Kind Root Lama, Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*.<sup>53</sup> There, in a chapter devoted to the Great Fifth's lineage of previous incarnations, we find a short account of Lama Zhang's life, followed by an account of the rule of the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s.

In the late eighteenth century, a member of the Dge lugs pa sect named 'Jog ri ba Ngag dbang bstan 'dzin (by this time, all of the former Tshal pa properties were Dge lugs possessions under the administration of Se ra monastery) wrote the *Gung thang Register*,<sup>54</sup> which was a history of, and inventory of the sacred artifacts housed within, Tshal Gung thang, the main monastery founded by Lama Zhang. Most likely under the influence of the Dge lugs-oriented histories of the Fifth Dalai Lama and his regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, 'Jog ri ba concentrates on the ruling period of Tshal pa hegemony, but also offers a brief treatment of Zhang's life and some of the political conditions that obtained when he first came to power.

<sup>50</sup> *'Brug pa'i chos 'byung*, vol. 2, 525–29.

<sup>51</sup> *Chos 'byung ngo mtshar rgya mtsho*, 995–96.

<sup>52</sup> *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*.

<sup>53</sup> *Drin can rtsa ba'i bla ma ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i thun mong phyi'i rnam thar du kU la'i gos bzang*. English translation: Ahmad 1999.

<sup>54</sup> *Gung thang dkar chag*. Translated in Sørensen-Hazod 2007.

There are a couple of other relevant works that should be mentioned, though little is known about them at present, except that they are mentioned as sources within the aforementioned *Prophecies Arrayed in a Basket*. First of all there is a text that, from its title—*The Lineage of Yang dgon Lamas*<sup>55</sup>—would appear to be a lineage list for Tshal Yang dgon, one of the monasteries established by Zhang, and was therefore probably composed either by a Tshal pa or a Dge lugs pa. The other is entitled *Dharma History of Dga' ldan*,<sup>56</sup> the Dge lugs monastery. There are a couple of known works by that title—most prominently the one composed by the aforementioned regent for the Fifth Dalai Lama, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho<sup>57</sup>—however, the author of this one is listed as one Mkhas grub Bsod nams ye shes dbang po, who may well be the Dge lugs pa by that name who resided at 'Bras spungs monastery during the late 16th century.<sup>58</sup>

## II. THE LIFE

### A. Birth and Childhood

In Tsha ba gru, like Lumbinī grove,  
[you] entered [your] mother's womb in a good  
dream omen.

When nine months had elapsed, at the time of  
your birth,

people said you were an emanation body,  
and in your youth, while you played,  
all of the children received divine teachings.  
Local people requested blessings [from you].

*O manifest of the signs of emanation,*

*I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *Yang dgon gyi bla ma brgyud pa*, Shedup VI.58–70.

<sup>56</sup> *Dga' ldan chos 'byung*. Quoted in *Lung bstan za ma tog bkod pa*, Shedup VI.79–80.

<sup>57</sup> *Dga' ldan chos 'byung baiDU r+ya ser po*.

<sup>58</sup> Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center database. <http://www.tbrc.org/kb/tbrc-detail.xq?jsessionid=34B8E42A23724195D5BD47528EEAD20E?RID=P1000>. Accessed 2/8/08.

<sup>59</sup> lum bi'i tshal 'dra tshal ba'i grur/ yum gyi lhums zhugs rmi ltas bzang/ zla dgu lon nas sku bltams tshe/ sprul pa yin zhes 'gro ba dang/ gzhon nur rol rtсед mdzad pa'i tshe/ byis pa'i tshogs nmams lha chos nyan/ yul mi nmams kyis byin rlabs zhu/ sprul pa'i brda ston khyed la 'dud/. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.108.



Lama Zhang was born in 1122<sup>60</sup> into the Sna nam clan, one of those families that, during the imperial years, had earned the title *zhang* (literally “maternal uncle”) because it provided wives for the imperial family.<sup>61</sup> Though he thus had links to a distinguished family, there is nothing in any of the biographies to suggest wealth or high social standing. His father was a local lay tantric practitioner and his mother an ex-nun.

There is a story in the *Lho rong Dharma History* that tells how the two parents met: the mother, a nun named Shud mo Gza’ mangs skyid, was of course celibate. But she paid a visit one day to a great female teacher—said to have been in reality a wisdom *ḍākīṇī*—called Ma Jo dar ma. Ma Jo told her that she was just like Prasannaśīlā, mother of the great Indian monks Asaṅga and Vasubandhu—who had likewise been a nun originally—and that if she were to give birth to a son, he would, like the two Indian brothers, be a great benefit to the Dharma. “Today,” she told her, “remain at the edge of Sri gad. Whoever appears there, you will marry.”<sup>62</sup> Of course, the person who appeared at the place where she was waiting was Zhang Rdo rje sems dpa’, Lama Zhang’s father-to-be.

The first issue of the union was Zhang’s older brother, Zhang Sgag po, who was to become a lay practitioner attending on his more important younger brother. This first birth was said to have been a very difficult one.

But it is said that when Shud mo Gza’ mangs skyid subsequently became pregnant with Lama Zhang, things went very differently. First of all, she had several auspicious dreams: she dreamed that when she was at the Lhasa Gtsug lag khang, light rays emanated from two of the principal

<sup>60</sup> This is the date of birth given in *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 181, *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 806, Dung dkar’s notes to the *Deb ther dmar po*, 427, n.583, and the modern text *Lha sa’i dgon tho rin chen spungs rgyan*. Also, *Deb ther sngon po* says “In general, from the birth of Zhang Rin po che to the year Fire Ape (me spre, 1476 A.D.) 354 years have passed.” *Deb ther sngon po*, 839, Roerich 1976, 716. This would also come out to 1122. However, *Deb ther dmar po*, 121, and *Deb ther sngon po*, 832–33 (Roerich 1976, 711), give his year of birth as 1123. Though there is no certainty here, for convenience I will use the year 1122 throughout as my reference point in calculating the relative dates of life events.

Also, note that where the Tibetan reads “lo \_\_ lon nas,” I read this as “when I reached my \_\_ year” rather than “at the age of \_\_.” Thus, for example, in the *Shes rab grub pa ma*, 320, I interpret the phrase “lo bcu gcig lon nas” to mean “when I reached my eleventh year,” which is synonymous with “when I reached the age of 10,” assuming that, e.g., a Tibetan begins his or her first year at birth. Thus, I interpret the year in question here as 1132.

However, since not only are there inconsistencies in the sources, but also months and days are generally not provided, all dates calculated herein should be taken as very imprecise landmarks set down for convenience and general orientation.

<sup>61</sup> For an account of the way in which aristocratic clans acquired the appellation *zhang* during the time of the Tibetan empire (c.600–c.850), see Dotson 2004.

<sup>62</sup> *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 181.



statues, the Jo bo Śākyamuni and the Mahākaruṇika (the 11-faced 1000-armed Avalokiteśvara), as well as from the sky, dissolving into her body. The full significance of this dream can only be seen later, in light of subsequent events in Lama Zhang's life, but for now let us simply note it as the earliest indication of a special relationship between Zhang and the Jo khang temple and the Jo bo Śākyamuni statue. In another dream, she flew through the sky seated on a sun-and-moon disc. "Her body," it is said, "felt light and blissful."<sup>63</sup> Finally, when she gave birth to Zhang, unlike the earlier birth, this one was smooth and painless.<sup>64</sup>

From early on, Zhang was considered an exceptional child, with a special connection to the Buddhist teachings. He was given the name Dar ma grags, and it is said that his cradle was continually encircled by rainbows—a subject of much gossip among the neighbors, and a source of distress to Zhang's mother, who already seemed to have been an object of disapproval for having renounced her nun's vows for the sake of marrying.<sup>65</sup> From an early age, he was considered to be an emanation-body (*sprul sku*) and was asked for blessings constantly. In his second year, when his mother took him to where the village women congregated, he is said to have realized for the first time the dreamlike nature of all phenomena.

There were other early signs of his spiritual potential. His mother taught him the 100-syllable Vajrasattva mantra, and he would chant it day and night as he went through his otherwise ordinary boyish activities. While at play, he would stand in a high place and pretend to preach the Dharma to the other children.

The first truly significant spiritual event occurred somewhere around his third year.<sup>66</sup> It is said that he was sitting on the lap of his father, who was explaining a point of Dharma—the sufferings of the hell realms—to his aunt. The child overheard the harrowing account and was frightened into a first religious realization. "I overheard it," he wrote, "and became extremely terrified. Faith arose vividly."<sup>67</sup> He asked his father what would help keep him out of the hells, and his father answered that only the taking of refuge and the performance of prostrations in the presence of holy objects would be of any avail. Hearing this, the young Zhang jumped

<sup>63</sup> *Zin bris*, 2b.

<sup>64</sup> *Zin bris*, 2b.

<sup>65</sup> *Zin bris*, 2b–3a.

<sup>66</sup> *Zin bris*, 3a–3b, and *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 182, say this occurred in his third year; *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.318, says his sixth year.

<sup>67</sup> go nas shin tu bred pa byung/ dad pa lhang gis skyes/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.319.

down from his father's lap, hurried to the room where the ancestral religious texts were kept, and began taking refuge and doing prostrations.

In his fourth year, he was taken by his mother to meet Ma Jo dar ma, the yoginī who had earlier prophesied his birth. When the boy began to prostrate to her, she stopped him immediately, insisting that he take the place of honor while she and her attendants circumambulated and prostrated to him. She then requested of him a Dharma talk, at which point he recited lines associated with the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*), the gist of which was that if one truly knew oneself to be a buddha, nothing else need be done in the way of religious practice.<sup>68</sup> This becomes significant later in his life, when he becomes associated with the special *mahāmudrā* teaching called the “white panacea” (*dkar po chig thub*), which similarly taught the dispensability of extraneous practices once one has realized the key point of the Dharma. Ma Jo, impressed by this performance, wrote down what he said and insisted to Zhang's mother that the boy be given a proper education so that his obvious karmic predispositions toward the Dharma not be wasted.

However, despite his precocious spiritual qualities, he tells in his autobiography about his struggles with evil impulses from an early age—stories that, perhaps not surprisingly, do not appear in the hagiographies written by disciples and others—how, as he put it, “faith and sin were joined, so many contradictory traits arose together.”<sup>69</sup> There are, for instance, acts of cruelty toward animals, for which he was to receive fitting karmic payback:

I killed and ate baby fish from clear-water ponds. I even swallowed a live little baby fish. I cut off the rear-end of a meat fly, placed a flower there, and sent it flying off. I think it is the ripening of that karma that I am now constipated and flatulent.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> The verse in the *Lho rong Dharma History* reads as follows:

The ocean of compassion covers all sentient beings.

Even deities and *nāgas* hear the words of truth.

If one knows oneself to be a buddha,

One need not venerate the Three Jewels in any other way.

(*thugs rje rgya mtshos sems can kun la khyab/lha dang klu yang bden pa'i bka' nyan to/rang gis rang nyid sangs rgyas yin shes na/dkon mchog gsum ni gzhan ni bkur mi dgos/*)

*Lho rong chos 'byung*, 183. As Dan Martin writes, this incident “demonstrates, already at a tender age, his engagement with ‘ultimativist’ Buddhist perspectives which comes through so clearly in his later compositions on the Great Seal (*Mahāmudra*).” Martin 2001, 46.

<sup>69</sup> dad pa dang sdig tu 'dzoms pas 'gal ba dang 'du ba mang du byung. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.319–20.

<sup>70</sup> gtsang chab ldan gyi lu ma nas nye'u bsad cing zos/ nye'u chung gson po zhiig khyur mid kyang byas/ sha sbrang gi rkub bcad pa'i shul du me tog bcug cing spur nas btang/

We might note that, whatever his later degree of spiritual attainment, and however the opinions of his later actions may have varied among admirers and detractors, that quality of an audacious bad boy remained a personal trait of Lama Zhang throughout his life.<sup>71</sup> I like to think of it as perhaps the source of both his admirable and his questionable qualities. Certainly, his self-characterization as a person in whom “many contradictory acts arose”<sup>72</sup> is right on the mark.

### B. Early Education

When you reached your tenth year, you went to the presence  
of the learned ones, where you studied grammar and logic.

*O, all-knowing one who is without ignorance with regard to objects of knowledge, I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>73</sup>

In compliance with Ma Jo Dar ma’s injunction, he received a fairly thorough Buddhist education, including expositions of nontantric texts on grammar, logic, abhidharma, and the perfection of wisdom—among the texts mentioned in the hagiographies and histories are the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, the *Jātaka tales*, and the *Heart Sūtra*—as well as various tantric teachings and initiations, especially those pertaining to Cakrasaṃvara and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa (*na ro chos drug*), but also the cycles of the *Hevajra Tantra*, the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti*, the *Mahāmāyā*, and others.<sup>74</sup>

Later, speaking tongue-in-cheek about his textual studies, Zhang would write laconically, “I didn’t understand [any of it].”<sup>75</sup> This cavalier attitude towards formal study would mark his approach to religion throughout his life.

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da lta rtug pa mi thon zhing bul ba ‘di de’i nram smin yin snyam. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.319.

<sup>71</sup> In fact, in one text he identifies himself as Brtson ‘grus grags pa, the “bad boy,” or “bad son” (bu ngan brtson ‘grus grags pa bdag gis ni/). *Dpal rgwa lo la bstod pa bzhi pa*, Shedup I.76.

<sup>72</sup> nga la yang ‘gal ba ‘du ba’i byed spyod mang po byung. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.318.

<sup>73</sup> lo bcu lon nas mkhas pa yi/ spyan sngar phyin nas sgra tshad bsalab/ shes bya’i don la ma rmongs pa’i/ thams cad mkhyen pa khyed la ‘dud/. Shedup I.108–09.

<sup>74</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.320; *Zin bris*, 6a–7b; *Lho rong chos ‘byung* 183–85; *Deb ther dmar po*, 121; Roerich 1976, 712–13.

<sup>75</sup> shes pa ni ma byung. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.320.

At the level of practice, however, he seems to have had a natural aptitude—even precocity—especially where tantric meditation, ritual, magic, and visionary experiences were concerned. At the age of 15, he had a vision of the tutelary deity Dpal 'bar dbang phyug, but decided, after consulting with his teacher, that such a premature vision—though apparently genuine—could only serve as an obstacle to his practice. Earlier, when he was only 10 years old, he inadvertently caught a glimpse of the Cakrasaṃvara *maṇḍala* while another practitioner was doing rituals, and it caused his body to go rigid or into convulsions.<sup>76</sup> Later, after he had been formally initiated into the Cakrasaṃvara practices, his experience was so similar that “the thought occurred to me that if that’s the case, it made no difference whether you received the empowerment or not.”<sup>77</sup> Similarly, he is said to have cured a nun of an illness by performing a healing ritual that he had only seen someone else perform once before, and also performed an effective thread-cross ceremony without any prior training.<sup>78</sup> Thus, his disciple Nam mkha' 'od wrote:

In this way, though he did not have a [formal] spiritual practice, he became known as one endowed with blessings due to karmic residues from earlier lives, and he [or: it is?] said that everyone—sick people, etc.—came to request blessings from him.<sup>79</sup>

His precocity extended not only to healing and ritual practices, but also to displays of worldly power. One time, when he was in his teens, “a foul-mouthed old man from Gsang phu [the Bka' gdams pa monastery, known for its scholastic curriculum]” insulted his teacher, Rngog Mdo lde, saying “Your teacher Rngog has a mind like a teetering pillar at the top of a hill,” to which Zhang responded by saying, “Ah, you talk like that about my teacher: I’ll work my power on you!” and conjured up a frightening apparition of armed soldiers, causing the old man to exclaim, “Little *mantrin*! You really do have the power!”<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> lus sbrid chil gyi song. *Zin bris*, 7a.

<sup>77</sup> de rtsug song na dbang bskur ba dang ma bskur ba la khyad med bsam pa gcig byung. *Zin bris*, 7a.

<sup>78</sup> *Zin bris* 5a.

<sup>79</sup> de ltar dge sbyor ma byas kyang/ sngon gyi las 'phros byin brlabs can du grags nas/ nad pa la sogs pa thams cad kyis byin brlabs zhur 'ong gsung/. *Zin bris*, 5b.

<sup>80</sup> gsang phu'i rgan po kha rgod gcig na re khyod kyi slob dpon rngog de khog pa la kha'i ka ba rong gi bya ba yin byas/ a nga'i slob dpon la de skad zer ba khyod la mthu byed zer du byung/ sngags chung thu mngon 'dug zer/ rgyal po'i cho 'phrul dngos su dmag tshan chen po byung/. *Zin bris*, 7b.

Thus, the themes of his later life begin to emerge early, and the contours of a distinct style of practice begin to become visible: decidedly tantric, practical, nonscholastic, reliant on magic, with a casual approach to the formalities of study, and a preference for experiential realization over intellectual understanding.

### C. Destructive Magic and the Life Turnarounds

In your middle years, out of angry compassion,  
by the power of karma,  
you achieved magical accomplishments.  
By the power of prayer, you went to Khams.  
[Beneficial] karma [from past lives] was awakened, and you remembered  
the shortcomings of saṃsāra.  
Having completed the training, you attained austerities.  
You eliminated the roots of desire completely.  
You neither harm nor injure others.  
*O liberated mendicant, I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* [of All Sentient Beings]: *A Self-Eulogy*<sup>81</sup>

In his eighteenth year, his life took a turn for the worse, as “virtue was cut off by previous bad karma,”<sup>82</sup> and he began to engage in morally questionable magical practices. The occasion was a conflict of some sort between Zhang’s immediate family and more distant relatives on his father’s side. The hagiographies are vague on the details, but at this time Zhang—like Mi la ras pa before him—took up the practice of destructive magic (*‘dremthu*) in order to aid his family. This period of black magic lasted three years, during which time, Zhang recounts, “the [reputation of] the Zhang [family] lineage went into decline—it was destroyed”<sup>83</sup>—as a result of his actions. About this time, both of his parents, as well as a couple of his closest teachers, died, and Zhang, saddened by these deaths, and having quarreled with his older brother, left Central Tibet and proceeded to Khams.<sup>84</sup> He remained there for six to eight years—roughly from the age

<sup>81</sup> bar du snying rje khros pa yis/ las kyi dbang gis sgrub mthu mdzad/ smon lam stobs kyis khams su byon/ las sad ‘khor ba’i nyes dmigs dran/ bsrab pa rdzogs nas dka’ thub mdzad/ ‘dod pa’i rtsa ba gtan nas spangs/ gzhan la gnod dang ‘tshe mi byed/ thar pa’i dge sbyong khyed la ‘dud/. Shedup I.109.

<sup>82</sup> sngon gyi las ngan zhig gis yon tan sked par bcad. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.320.

<sup>83</sup> zhang gi rigs nyams par byas/ brlags par byas/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.321.

<sup>84</sup> It is not very clear just where in ‘Khams he spent most of his time, but the *Handwritten Biography* reports that it was in Nags shod, in western ‘Khams, that he met up with the teacher Rgwa lo tsa, roughly in 1148 or 1149. *Zin bris*, 14b.

of 19 or 20 to the age of 26 or 27 (1141–49?).<sup>85</sup> In Khams, he received the Buddhist vows of celibacy from a teacher named Glang ston. But shortly thereafter, he once again took up the practice of magic, acquiring a reputation as a powerful wizard and the epithet “Great Magician from Central Tibet” (*dbus pa mthu chen*). According to the accounts, some of the rituals involved the sacrifice of animals, such as goats.

It was at this point—when he had, from an ethical point of view, sunk to his lowest point—that he had the first of a number of epiphanies that revealed to him the depravity of his life, after each one of which he returned to the Buddhist path, at least for a time.

The first occurred in his twenty-fourth year—around 1145—when one night, in a dream, a large amount of pus, snot, and blood was discharged from his nose, followed by a snake-like creature, which emerged “like marrow from bone.”<sup>86</sup> According to one version, the creature was transformed first into the deity Dpal ldan lha mo, then into a deer, then into a musk deer (*gla ba*), after which it disappeared off in the western direction. As it was leaving, Zhang thought to himself, “O creature, alas! I have been associated with you for a long time. Now go in the direction of the setting sun, and I will certainly not meet with you [again].”<sup>87</sup> He interpreted this dream as an awakening of good karma from a past life, and said that later in his life he found much meaning in the dream.

After the dream, he established a Dharma center, intending to stick to a strictly Buddhist path, but after two months he again relapsed, going into a black magic retreat with one of his students, a person called Bsgom pa

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<sup>85</sup> *Zin bris* 9b: “In his twentieth year [1141], he went to ‘Khams with the teacher Ru ston (lo nyi shu la slob dpon ru ston gyi zla la khams su byon).” *Zin bris*, 20a: “Having reached six years there in Khams, in the company of the lama, he left (der khams su lo bdun lon gar ba bla ma dang ‘grogs nas byon no).” But if it was six years, this would mean he left ‘Khams in 1147. However, according to most accounts, his ordainment in ‘Khams occurred in 1148 (see, e.g., *Shes rab grub pa ma*, 325: “In the first watch of the night on the third day of the last month of spring in the dragon year [1148], I became a monk” (bcu gsum gyi spyang sngar ‘brug gi lo’i dpyid zla tha chung gi tshes gsum gyi nyin par dgong thun dang por bsnyen par rdzogs)). He is said to have returned to Dbus with his teacher Rgwa lo tsa ba, date unspecified. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, 325; *Zin bris*, 20a; *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 187. But shortly after they returned, Rgwa lo went into retreat, during which time Zhang met with Mal Yer pa ba. He is known to have met Yer pa ba in his 29th year (1150), so I am guessing around 1149 for the return from Khams.

<sup>86</sup> rus nas rkang phyung pa lta bu. *Zin bris*, 10a.

<sup>87</sup> srog chags khyod dang yun ring po zhiig ‘grogs ang snyam pa zhiig byung nas/ srog chags de nyi ma nub phyogs su sid song ba dang/ da ni khyod dang gtan du mi ‘phrad snyam pa zhiig rmis/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.322.

Yu rgyal.<sup>88</sup> Though it is not clear what the specific purpose of the retreat was, it probably had something to do with subduing worldly enemies through magical power, and it appears that animals were sacrificed, for there were bowls of blood, along with *gtor mas* and *maṇḍalas* of some kind. During the course of the retreat, the two retreatants ran out of supplies and tried to borrow money from a friend, but were unsuccessful. Their plight caused Zhang to fall into a state of dejection, which produced a second turnaround:

Because of my dejection, all actions oriented toward this life were [seen as] without meaning. They were only causes of the sufferings of *saṃsāra*. Up until now I had been mistaken [about the *saṃsāric* nature of actions oriented toward this life]. I was very fortunate not to have died in that mistaken state. . . . I made the sincere vow, in this life, not to perform actions oriented toward this life, such as magic.<sup>89</sup>

Having seen in an instant the suffering, *saṃsāric* nature of the cruel rituals in which they had engaged for mere this-worldly ends, Zhang, determined to end the process then and there, began upsetting the bowls of blood and *maṇḍalas* and destroying the *gtor mas* and other ritual implements. His student, thinking he had gone mad, tried to restrain him physically, but Zhang insisted he was doing the most sane thing he could possibly do. “I am not crazy,” he said. “[This is] the arising of faith!”<sup>90</sup> Later, he commented that “from that time up to the present, I have never prayed to the Dharma protectors for the purpose of conquering enemies.”<sup>91</sup>

This time there was no relapse, but he was to have another crucial epiphany shortly thereafter—around 1147—that would consolidate his final turn back to the correct Buddhist path and his eventual decision to ordain as a monk. This time, he was reading the *Ratnakuta Sūtra*, and in the middle of his reading, he realized that, while the Buddha was, in sūtras, always calling out “Monks! Monks!” he never called out “*Mantrins!*” or “*Laypeople!*” or “*Patrons!*” It seemed to him at this time that

<sup>88</sup> *Zin bris*, 10a–10b.

<sup>89</sup> yi mugs pa la brten nas tshe ‘di’i bya ba thams cad don med ‘dug/ ‘khor ba sdug bsngal gyi rgyud ‘ba’ zhig du ‘dug pa da de snga yan chad nga re nor/ nor ba re’i ‘phrod ma shi khar rje che/ . . . tshe ‘di la mthu la sogs pa tshe ‘di’i bya ba byed rir zhe mna’ skyal/. *Zin bris*, 10b.

<sup>90</sup> nga smyo ba min dad pa skyes pa yin. *Zin bris*, 10b.

<sup>91</sup> de nas bzung ste tha ma da la thug gi bar du dgra la rbad pa’i ched du chos skyong la gsol ba ‘debs ma myong. *Zin bris*, 11a.

if he wanted to be a true practitioner of the path, he would have to take the formal vows of a monk.<sup>92</sup>

Proceeding to a meeting of prominent religious leaders in Khams, he asked advice from a lama named 'Od mchog. He was told that Central Tibet (*dbus*) was the best place to go for ordination; all of the Khams pa-s who were serious about becoming monks traveled there rather than ordaining in Khams. But the urgency of the situation made a long trip seem undesirable—for all he knew, he might die along the way, and to die without having ordained seemed to him at the time the greatest of misfortunes—so he resolved to take the vows there in Khams.

For this he was criticized by local lamas, who noted the irony of a Central Tibetan coming to Khams for ordination when all of the Kham pa-s were trying to get to Central Tibet for the same purpose:

We Khams pa-s all seek the Dharma in Dbus—will you [a person from Dbus] be an example of one who takes the vows here [in Khams]?<sup>93</sup>

He was also criticized by a teacher named Ru ston:

You hope to make a living beating the drum and performing the village rituals, but how can there be a drum-beating monk who has taken ordination?<sup>94</sup>

It is not clear from the context whether Ru ston was a monk who doubted that a drum-beating village ritualist like Zhang could ever be a good monk, or a lay *mantrin* who scorned the celibate life of the ordained monk, but either way his comment offers an intriguing hint of the tension that must have existed at that time between local lay ritualists and ordained monks.

Ignoring the criticisms, Zhang gave away all of his possessions and took the full vows of a monk in 1147, at the age of 25. He was given the ordination name *Śākya Monk Brtson 'grus grags pa*.<sup>95</sup>

As soon as he was ordained, there was a rush of would-be sponsors who wished to claim him as their lama:

<sup>92</sup> *Zin bris*, 11a-11b; *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 184.

<sup>93</sup> nged khams pa kun kyang dbus su chos 'tshol ba la/ khyed 'dir rab tu byung ba'i dpe yod dam. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.324.

<sup>94</sup> khyod kyi 'tsho ba rnga rdung zhing grong chog byed pa la re ba yin pa la/ rab tu byung nas dge slong rnga brdung pa ga la srid. *Zin bris*, 12a.

<sup>95</sup> shAkya'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pa. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.325.



Then, the patrons, having helped with my ordination gift, and helped complete the offering, fell into disagreement and argued. One said “Be my lama,” another said “Be *my* lama,” and they could not get along.<sup>96</sup>

It seems odd that sponsors would be so eager to claim a newly ordained monk. This suggests that, even before he was ordained, Zhang had gained some prominence, or perhaps notoriety, in the circle of lamas, monks, and patrons of Khams—possibly because of his reputation as an adept of powerful magical rituals. There is a passage later in the *Handwritten Biography* that underscores the reputation Zhang had made for himself in Khams, where his teacher Rgwa lo tsā ba, noting Zhang’s reluctance to leave Khams, comments, “He does not [want to] go to Dbus gtsang, the place where knowledge originated, because here the people venerate him like a god and love him.”<sup>97</sup> But, despite his being much in demand, he shunned all of the patrons’ offers and went off by himself to practice as a free, unattached wanderer:

I said, “I am not staying with any of you. If I wish to go, I will go. If I wish to stay, I will stay. From tomorrow on, though I have food to eat, I will not make provisions [for myself]. Not even a red cup!”<sup>98</sup>

It seems fitting that the moment of Lama Zhang’s entrance into formal monasticism should be marked by a dispute over money, power, and patronage. This too would be a recurrent theme of his later years.

#### D. Meetings with Key Teachers

When you went to the glorious Rgwa lo,  
faith was born, and you came to his presence.  
You requested instructions and achieved [meditative] attainments.  
*O solitary hero, I pay homage to you!*

You received the advice of Yer pa ba and ‘Ol ka ba  
and wandered the mountain retreats.  
You did wind meditation and perfected the signs.  
*O full-attainer of the practices, I pay homage to you!*

<sup>96</sup> de nas yon bdag po mams kyis kyang nga’i phyag rten gyi grogs byas nas dbul ba tshar ba’i ‘grog la yon bdag pa mams ma ‘cham par rtsod par gyur nas/ gcig na re nga’i mchod gnas byed zer/ gcig na re ‘di mchod gnas byed zer nas ma ‘cham/. *Zin bris*, 13a.

<sup>97</sup> ‘di kho dbus rtsang rig pa’i ‘byung gnas su mi ‘gro bar ‘di na mis lha bzhin bkur ba la chags nas gsung/. *Zin bris*, 19b.

<sup>98</sup> nga khyed rnams kyi khriś su mi zhugs/ ‘gro snying ‘dod na ‘gro sdod snying ‘dod na bsdod/ sang nang par nas bza’ ru yod kyang ka ca tshags mi byed/ dmar yol gcig gaM gal to gcig gaM. *Zin bris*, 13a. I do not know how to make sense of “red cup” here.

You knew without exception the empowerments and instructions  
of Bai ro and the one from Ngam shod smad pa [Lama Gshen].

Sole heir to many practice lineages,

*O consummation of the instructions, I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>99</sup>

During the course of his wandering, Zhang encountered many teachers. According to one source, there were forty-four lamas with whom he had a “karmic connection” (*las ‘brel*), and six who became his root lamas.<sup>100</sup> Of the root lamas, three were of especial importance—Rgwa lo tsā ba, Mal Yer pa ba, and Dwags po Sgom tshul.

### 1. *Rgwa lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal*

About a year after he took the monastic vows—roughly 1149, when he was about 27 years old—Zhang heard that a famous lama and translator from A mdo, Rgwa lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal—known for short simply as “the Glorious One” (*dpal*)—would be coming to Khams on his way to Dbus. Dpal Rgwa lo’s most important teachers were Tsa mi lo tsā ba, the Tibetan or Tangut translator and abbot at Bodh Gayā, and the Indian master Abhayākara.<sup>101</sup> He was known as the yogin who had achieved many spiritual attainments (*siddhi*) at the Cool Grove charnel ground near Bodhgayā, India, where he had had visions of the Cakrasaṃvara *maṇḍala* and visitations from myriad wisdom *ḍākiṇīs*. When Zhang traveled to Nags shod, in western ‘Khams, where Rgwa lo was staying, upon first sight of the lama, “my mind turned around,” he said, and “appeared like the sky. . . . It was like a dream.”<sup>102</sup> He took this as the sign of an important karmic connection between the two of them and of the receipt of a blessing. When he requested that Rgwa lo be his teacher, the reply he received was five statements, each one of which possessed a hidden meaning:

<sup>99</sup> dpal ldan rgwa lo byon pa’i tshe/ dad pa skyes nas spyang sngar phyin/ gdams ngag zhus nas sgrub pa mdzad/ dpa’ bo gcig pur bzhugs la ‘dud/ yer pa ba dang ‘ol ka ba’i/ gdams ngag mnos nas ri khrod ‘grims/ rtsa lung bsgoms pas rtags nmams rdzogs/ sgrub pa mthar phyin khyed la ‘dud/ bai ro ngam shod smad pa yi/ dbang dang gdams pa ma lus mkhyen/ sgrub brgyud du ma’i bu gcig pu/ gdams pa’i mthar thug khyed la ‘dud/. Shedup I.109.

<sup>100</sup> *Deb ther dmar po*, 121.

<sup>101</sup> For more on Tsa mi lo tsā ba, see Zhang’s *Dpal chen rgwa lo’i rnam thar*, Shedup I.184–88; *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 530; Sperling 1994.

<sup>102</sup> mjal ma thag tu shes pa log gis ‘gyur/ sems nyid nam mkha’ lta bur lam gyis song/. . . rmi lam lta bu byung/. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 185.

- (1) “If you become my follower, you will starve to death,” which Zhang understood to mean *You must be willing to die for the sake of the Dharma*.
- (2) “Meditate on the union of emptiness and compassion,” which meant *I am giving you the core of the instructions*.
- (3) Then, he gave Zhang a cup of soup to drink containing cumin and brown sugar, which meant *I am giving you my experiences*.<sup>103</sup>
- (4) “My instructions have no mouth, eyes, or ears,” which meant *It is not appropriate to teach others when you yourself are not liberated*.
- (5) “There is no harm now,” which meant *If you are realized, there is no harm in your teaching others*.

Above all, he understood from these instructions that he had been “accepted,” or “taken to heart” (*thugs la btags*) by the teacher.

Zhang received from Rgwa lo many secret instructions on tantric ritual and yogic practice, especially the subtle-body practices known as “the Six Dharmas of Nāropa”—which included the practices of (1) the “fierce woman” heat meditation (*gtum mo*; Skt. *caṇḍālī*), (2) the illusory body (*sgyu lus*; Skt. *māyākāya*, *māyādeha*), (3) dream (*rmi lam*; Skt. *svapna*), (4) luminosity (*’od gsal*; Skt. *prabhāsvara*), (5) the intermediate state (*bar do*; Skt. *antarābhava*, *antarbhāva*, *antarābhāva*), and (6) consciousness-transference (*’pho ba*; Skt. *saṃkramatī*, *saṃkrāntī*)—but also on the tantric practices associated with the Cakrasaṃvara and Kālacakra tantric cycles and the Mahākāla rituals. Also noteworthy is that Rgwa lo was a primary teacher of two of Lama Zhang’s most famous contemporaries as well—the first Karma pa incarnation, Dus gsum mkhyen pa, and the first Phag mo gru pa incarnation, Rdo rje rgyal po.

Though Zhang had had many teachers before Rgwa lo, this marked his first true lama-disciple relationship, in the sense of a teaching relationship based on a close personal bond, with all of the emotional turbulence that entailed. Zhang was throughout his life a very proud man—he himself mentions this at several points as one of his chief failings<sup>104</sup>—and Rgwa lo continually tested his pride by means of the inconsistent, seemingly irrational behavior that was a trademark of the proto-Bka’ brgyud pa lineage teachers, and Zhang’s strong devotion to Rgwa lo left him in a state

<sup>103</sup> *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 185–86.

<sup>104</sup> *Zin bris*, 9a, 23b, 33b, 36a-b, 56a, 60b; *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 193; *Rnam thar bsdud pa*, 117; *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa’i khrel ’debs*, Shedup V.658.

where he would weep uncontrollably whenever he was in the teacher's presence.

All of the time, I wished for the lama to cherish [only] me. When, every month or so, I would go somewhere else away from the lama, unable to stand separating from him, as from a father, I would go cry.

As for the lama's conduct, he always acted unpredictably, but my devotion was unbroken. I thought this was surely a blessing.<sup>105</sup>

It was as a member Rgwa lo's entourage that Zhang finally returned to his homeland, Central Tibet, after six years in Kham.<sup>106</sup>

## 2. *Mal Yer pa ba* (1105–1170)

Shortly after he had imparted his most important instructions to Zhang, Rgwa lo tsā ba went into a three-year sealed retreat, at which time Lama Zhang went off by himself to do solitary meditation—mostly, it would appear, the *gtum mo* heat meditation. In the course of his *gtum mo* practice, he encountered meditative obstructions (*gegs pa*), which manifested as a losing of semen at night while he was sleeping. Since his chief lama was unavailable, he went to see a teacher named Mal Yer pa ba,<sup>107</sup> who stayed at Spos ka in the region of Yer pa and was said to specialize in removing tantric obstructions. This would have been around 1150, when Zhang was 28 years old.

Yer pa ba belonged to that class of solitary meditators known as *ras pa-s*, or “cotton-clad ones,” the best known of whom was Mi la ras pa, probably the most famous of all Tibetan saints. The *ras pa-s* were so called because of the single cotton garment (*ras*) they wore, even during the winter time, requiring no other clothing than that because of their mastery of the *gtum mo* heat meditation. Two of Yer pa ba's teachers, Gling kha ba and Ras chung pa, had been direct disciples of Mi la ras pa, so we could say that there were three degrees of separation between Mi la ras pa and Lama Zhang (see the chart in Appendix 2, “Lama Zhang's Root Lamas and Their Principal Teachers”).

<sup>105</sup> dus rtag tu bla ma la rang gces su re bar byung/ bla ma'i spyang nas gzhan du zla ba re re tsam 'gro tsa na 'bral ma phod nas pha tshad du ngu yin phyin/ bla ma'i mdzad spyod ni dus rtag tu phyad ma phyod mar mdzad pa la gdung ba ni rgyun ma chad pa byung/ byin rlabs yin nges snyam. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup 1.328.

<sup>106</sup> *Zin bris*, 20a.

<sup>107</sup> Also known as Smon lam btsan and as Mal Spos kwa ba. *Deb ther sngon po*, 1038; Roerich 1976, 888.

In fact, Yer pa ba's status as a *ras pa* rather than a monastic caused a moment's pause for Zhang, who wondered if it was proper for an ordained monk to consult with a nonmonastic yogin, and also whether a consultation would constitute an act of disloyalty to Dpal Rgwa lo:

But how could I think of going?—I am a monk and he is a yogin. If I ask him for Dharma teachings, I would live in worry that I had done injury to my lama Dpal Rg[w]a lo.<sup>108</sup>

We see once again this issue come up—as it did at the time Zhang was considering ordination—regarding the proper lifestyle for an early Bka' brgyud pa practitioner, whether it was preferable to follow a lay ritualist, a lay yogin, or a celibate monastic path. Furthermore, as he admitted later, because of a deep pride that made him regard himself as just as good a meditator as Yer pa ba, his original intent was only to go to have the specific obstruction removed, not to request more general teachings.<sup>109</sup>

Despite these misgivings, Zhang went to Yer pa ba's center in Spos ka to ask for advice on the meditative obstacles, but Yer pa ba was not there at the time. Still, merely standing near Yer pa ba's residence was enough for a blessing to be bestowed upon Zhang:

When I saw the great meditator's dwelling place, faith arose vividly. I cried for a long time. I had a powerful experience of bliss and clarity. At that time, it was as if I had received all blessings in one moment.<sup>110</sup>

Even when he met Yer pa ba in person later, the effect would not be as strong as that first encounter with Yer pa ba's dwelling place. Still, a deep faith arose from the first meeting, and Yer pa ba gave him further instructions on the Six Dharmas of Nāropa. In a spiritual song written later at G.ya lung, Zhang described the effects of combining Yer pa ba's instructions with those of Rgwa lo as being “like being stabbed with a knife.”<sup>111</sup> Having produced good results, Yer pa ba invited Zhang to wander the mountains with him as a *ras pa*:

<sup>108</sup> 'gro snyam pa la ga re nga dge slong gcig khong rnal 'byor pa gcig la chos zhush na nga'i bla ma dpal rgwa lo rma 'bab kyi dogs nas bsdad. *Zin bris*, 22a.

<sup>109</sup> *Zin bris*, 23b.

<sup>110</sup> sgom chen pa'i brang khang mthong pa la sogs pa la brten nas/ dad pa lhangs kyis skyes/ yun ring po gcig du ngus/ nyams bde gsal du 'ur gyis song/ de'i dus su byin brlabs thams cad dus gcig la zhugs pa 'dra/. *Zin bris*, 22a.

<sup>111</sup> dpal ldan rgwa lo'i gdams ngag la/ rje btsun yer pa ba'i gdams ngag sbyar/ ral gri ngar gyis btab pa bzhin. *G.ya' lung zhal so ma*, Shedup V.675.

"We will roam the mountain retreats, and carry only the clothes [we need] wherever we go," he said. "If we concentrate with effort on the [internal] winds, it is impossible for the winds not to arise," he said, and it happened just like that.<sup>112</sup>

Zhang became so accomplished at the heat-generating *gtum mo* practice that it is told that on one occasion, after a large blizzard left him snow-bound in his meditation hut, he practiced so strenuously that the local residents finally had to beg him to leave because he was causing flooding and overwhelming the local system of dikes by melting all of the snow in the vicinity.<sup>113</sup>

Besides training him in the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, Yer pa ba taught Zhang the yoga of leaving footprints in solid rock—something Yer pa ba had learned from the infamous Rwa lo tsā ba Rdo rje 'grags<sup>114</sup>—and also initiated Zhang into the Path with Fruit (*lam 'bras*), a system of tantric practice descended from 'Brog mi lo tsā ba and later associated principally with the Sa skya pa order, in the lineage of the great female teacher Ma gcig Zha ma. Yer pa ba himself had received this transmission from Gling kha ba, who had in turn received it from Zha ma herself.<sup>115</sup> It is interesting to note that it is said to have been during the course of Zhang's performance of a Zha ma Path with Fruit wind-channels practice—at the point where he "dissolved his body, . . . wind and mind remained together in the central channel, and his body, speech, and mind were transformed into the body, speech, and mind of the Venerable Lady"<sup>116</sup>—that he first left footprints in rock. Yer pa ba also gave Zhang the "aural transmission"

<sup>112</sup> 'o skol ri khrod 'grims pa la gos de tsam ga na theg gsungs/rlung rtsol rem pas rlung mi skye mi srid gsungs pa de la de kho na tsug byung/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.332.

<sup>113</sup> *Zin bris*, 35b–36a. For a thorough discussion of the importance of the issue of flood control—from both a political and a religious standpoint—see Sørensen 2003.

<sup>114</sup> *Zin bris*, 31b–32a. For more on Rwa lo tsā ba, see Rwa Ye shes seng ge, *Rwa lo tsA ba'i mnam thar*.

<sup>115</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I. 299–300.

<sup>116</sup> *Zin bris*, 31a. rje btsun ma. This probably refers to Vajravārāhī (Rdo rje phag mo) or Vajrayoginī (Rdo rje rnal 'byor ma), often viewed as the same figure. The rock-footprint episode is described more fully in the text from Zhang's *Bka' rgya ma* entitled *G.ya' lung 'brong bu ma rdo la zhabs rjes byung ba'i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.511, where it is revealed that the practice he was engaged in at the time was associated with the *River of Vows Tantra* (*Sdom pa rgya mtsho'i rgyud*). This tantra, according to the *Blue Annals*, belonged to a cycle of meditative teachings called "the six texts of Vajravārāhī" (phag mo gzhung drug), and was transmitted from King Indrabhūti's sister Lakṣmīnkara (Lha mo dpal mo) to the originator of the Path with Fruits (*lam 'bras*) system, Virūpa. *Deb ther sngon po*, 343; Roerich 1976, 389.

(*snyan brgyud*)—the teachings of Mi la ras pa that were passed down by his nonmonastic disciples—which he likely had received from Ras chung pa, and taught him to sing *mgur*, those spontaneous songs of enlightenment closely associated with Mi la ras pa, singing, on a particularly eventful occasion, a month’s worth of songs in a single night, leaving his disciples—Zhang included—in tears.<sup>117</sup> In addition, there were characteristic *siddha*-style teachings that emphasized the fast track to realization over the more gradual methods that were to become dominant in Tibet. One of these was called the “thunderclap” or “lightning strike” (*thog babs*), and was a method of rapid apprehension connected with the teachings of *mahāmudrā*. Another was called the “sudden path” (*lam cig char ba*) and was considered to be a secret precept (*man ngag*) handed down from the Indian *paṇḍita* Nāropa.<sup>118</sup>

These fast-track practices became key components of Lama Zhang’s practice “style,” and set him off sharply from other of his contemporaries, such as the Bka’ gdams pa-s and the Sa skya pa-s. These practices came to be associated strongly with the Bka’ brgyud pa order, in no small measure through Zhang’s enormous influence, and, as we will see later, they will become the object of Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan’s famous criticisms of Lama Zhang and his teachers’ teacher Sgam po pa in the next century.

### 3. Other Important Teachers

A few of his other important teachers should be mentioned here as well, for they give an idea of the breadth of his training and the manner in which various teachings that in later centuries would come to be associated with distinct orders of Tibetan Buddhism were, during the twelfth century, actually available to all, and teachings that later came to be kept separate were mixed freely.

We have seen already, for example, how Zhang had been initiated by Yer pa ba into the Path with Fruit (*lam ‘bras*) practice associated with the Sa skya tradition. Another of his root teachers also had connections with the Sa skya tradition. This is ‘Ol kha ba (1103–1199), also known as Grol sgom or Chos g.yung. This yogic adept received trainings not only from Sgam po pa and Ras chung pa, but also from Ba ri lo tsā ba, who had been

<sup>117</sup> *Zin bris*, 26b.

<sup>118</sup> *lam cig char ba la sogs pa nA ro pa’i man ngag sna tshogs. Rtsa ba’i bla ma sna tshogs kyis ‘thob byang*, Shedup 1.308.



the teacher of Dkon mchog rgyal po, the founder of Sa skya monastery. He was especially known as a master of the technique of transferring one's consciousness into the body of some other deceased being (*grong 'jug*), which had been passed down from Mi la ras pa's teacher Mar pa. Not only was 'Ol kha ba Zhang's teacher, but he had also instructed Zhang's first important lama, Rgwa lo tsā ba, and there is a story that when the two adepts were competing in yogic attainments at Se mo do, 'Ol kha ba entered the body of a dead goose and, making a cackling sound, flew three times around Sky Lake (*nam mtsho*), much to Rgwa lo's astonishment.<sup>119</sup> He is credited with teaching Zhang "relative bodhicitta" (*kun rdzob byang chub kyi sems*), which in this case means generating compassion. Zhang met him at Rgya (or Cha)<sup>120</sup> monastery about the same time he was receiving instructions from Yer pa ba—during the period when Rgwa lo was in his three-year retreat (late 1140s–early 1150s). He was given many empowerments and trainings, and when he was leaving the monastery, 'Ol kha ba is said to have placed his hands on the top of Zhang's head and given him the benediction "May this one, my lama Zhang the meditator, wander in *samsāra*. May he do immeasurable benefit for sentient beings," about which Zhang later commented, "And it happened just like that: the prayer came true. Now benefitting others does not upset me in the same way."<sup>121</sup>

Among his other important teachers, we should also mention Vairocana-*navajra*, his only Indian root lama, who gave him Cakrasaṃvara tantric teachings, but most important, introduced him to the Indian tradition of *dohā*, the songs of the tantric "great adepts" (*grub chen*; Skt. *mahāsiddha*).<sup>122</sup> Later, Lama Zhang was to write numerous songs in the *mgur* genre, a Tibetan style evidently much influenced by the Indian genre of *dohā*.

### E. Meeting with Sgom tshul and Realization of Mahāmudrā

When you received the blessings of Dwags po [Sgom tshul],  
unfabricated awareness dawned from within.  
Everything arose spontaneously as the one taste.  
Your own mind was the uninterrupted great bliss.  
Conceptual thought was liberated naturally.  
Whatever appeared dawned as the Dharmakāya.

<sup>119</sup> Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.128–29; Roerich 1976, 461.

<sup>120</sup> *Zin bris*, 28a reads "Rgya"; *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 189 reads "Cha."

<sup>121</sup> de kho na bzhin byung smon lam 'grub/ da lta gzhan don la skyo ba med pa de rtsug yin/. *Zin bris*, 28a.

<sup>122</sup> Schaeffer 2000, 366.



Compassion was born for the unrealized ones.

*O victorious buddha, I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>123</sup>

By far the most important of Lama Zhang's teachers was Sgom pa Tshul khrims snying po of Dwags po (1116–1169), the eldest son of the great Sgam po pa's older brother Rgya pa se and a direct disciple of Sgam po pa. Founder of 'Tshur/Mtshur Lha lung monastery in Stod lung, he was renowned as both a skilled political mediator and a virtuoso meditator—especially as an adept of the *mahāmudrā* practice he had learned from his uncle. *Mahāmudrā* was also a source of controversy—again criticized during the thirteenth century by Sa skya Paṇḍita—in large part because it was a tantric practice that Sgam po pa had separated from the other tantric trainings, such as the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, and taught to those who had never received tantric initiations.<sup>124</sup> It seems to have been a formless meditative practice that bypassed the tantric deity yoga and subtle-body practices, advancing a much simplified approach to realization, and was in this sense compatible with the fast-track realization practices that Yer pa ba had taught to Zhang. The nontantric *mahāmudrā* was accused by Sa skya Paṇḍita of being a form of the hinese han practices of Hwa shang Mahayana that had, in Tibetan lore, been proscribed by King Khri Srong bde btsan after Hwa shang had been defeated in debate by the Indian Paṇḍita Kamalasila.<sup>125</sup> Whether or not historically accurate—and there are hints that it actually may be, at least in part<sup>126</sup>—Sa skya Paṇḍita's account has at least a surface plausibility insofar as some of the *mahāmudrā* practices do resemble both Chinese Chan and the Rnying ma Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*) practices in form. In this sense, both *mahāmudrā* and the Great Perfection are examples of what David Germano calls “post-tantric” practices—meaning meditative practices offered within the context of tantric teachings but dispensing with much of the

<sup>123</sup> dwags po'i byin rlabs zhugs pa'i tshe/ rig pa spros bral nang nas shar/ thams cad ro mnyam lhan cig skyes/ rang sems bde chen rgyun chad med/ rnam par rtog pa ngang gis grol/ snang tshad chos kyi sku ru shar/ ma rtogs pa la snying rje skyes/ sangs rgyas rgyal po khyed la 'dud/. Shedup 1.109–10.

<sup>124</sup> For a thorough discussion of this issue, see D. Jackson 1994, 17–35; see also Ronald Davidson's excellent analysis in Davidson 2005, 285–89.

<sup>125</sup> See R. Jackson 1982, Broido 1987, van der Kuijp 1983, and D. Jackson 1990 and 1994.

<sup>126</sup> See D. Jackson 1994, 22–24; Kapstein 2000, 77–78. This issue is discussed more fully in Chapter Two below.

complicated technology and ritual of classical tantra in favor of simplified practices backed by an aesthetic and ethic of ease and naturalness.<sup>127</sup>

Zhang first heard about Sgom tshul when he was 32 years old and had been doing *gtum mo* and other strenuous yogic practices for several years. He had been informed that the great man was staying at Lha lung (this would have been in 1154, the same year that 'Tshur/Mtshur Lha lung monastery was built), and he went to ask Yer pa ba's permission to visit the lama. At the time, Yer pa ba was doing a silent retreat, so he indicated his approval of Zhang's request by snapping his fingers.<sup>128</sup>

When Zhang first saw Sgom tshul's face—which he thought resembled that of an Indian mendicant—his hair stood on end and his body went numb. The great lama teased him about his irresolute shopping-around for teachers: "You've served so many lamas, yet you are still not satisfied?" he asked.<sup>129</sup> Zhang replied that he had been practicing for eight years and was indeed still not satisfied, and begged Sgom tshul to put to rest his discontent. It was at this point that Sgom tshul gave Zhang a simple *mahāmudrā* instruction called "coemergence" (*lhan cig skyes sbyor*). As Zhang had been steeped for years in the complex perfection stage (*rdzogs rim*) practices of Cakrasaṃvara and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa, which he had learned from Rgwa lo and Yer pa ba, when he was given these startlingly simple instructions, he immediately felt as though "all of my previous meditation had been but superficial knowledge. Now, I thought, I am truly a meditator."<sup>130</sup>

But Sgom tshul cautioned him against prematurely overvaluing what had occurred. Warning him against overintellectualizing his experience—falling into "obscuration by analysis"<sup>131</sup>—he insisted that "This meditation of our [lineage] depends [not on analysis, but] on blessings," and that therefore he should "Pray earnestly [to the lineage lamas for a blessing], [then] do *mahāmudrā*."<sup>132</sup>

When he was later given the full instructions on *mahāmudrā*, the effect was electric:

Out of the state of sky-like mind without fabrications, the fire of exalted wisdom spread, and the thought, "It is like this! It is like this!" arose

<sup>127</sup> Germano and Hillis 2005, 1288.

<sup>128</sup> *Zin bris*, 39a.

<sup>129</sup> khyod bla ma de tsam brten pas ma tshim mam. *Zin bris*, 39a.

<sup>130</sup> 'a ma sngar gyi sgom thams cad shes pa kha phyir bltas su 'dug. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.347.

<sup>131</sup> brtag dpyad kyis bsgrib pa.

<sup>132</sup> nged kyi sgom 'di byin rlabs la re ba yin/ gsol ba drag tu thob/ phyag rgya chen po zhig bya'o/. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 191.

intermittently. Then, realization dawned resplendently....I saw directly [what is meant by] the saying, “There is no arising.”...I saw in direct perception [the truth of] the saying “There is no cessation.”...I saw directly the nonexistence of abiding....I saw [directly] what in hearsay is called “the Dharmakāya.” I was extremely joyous, and beat my little drum.<sup>133</sup>

This deep realization is traditionally called the apprehension of “emptiness,”<sup>134</sup> but within Sgam po pa’s *mahāmudrā* teachings, it is also known as realizing “the nature of the mind,”<sup>135</sup> and it cannot be achieved without a competent lama to point it out directly. This pointing-out is called the “introduction”<sup>136</sup> to the nature of the mind. Thus, one account, by the great Bka’ brgyud pa historian Dpa’ bo Gtsug lag phreng ba, relates about Zhang’s experience: “He saw correctly the very nature of the mind.”<sup>137</sup>

Note, however, that even in this moment of realization, that old obstacle—his pride—again reared its head:

At the time that realization dawned in me, [I saw that] earlier I had not experienced [true] realization. But now I was realized. The thought arose that, even in a buddha, realization superior to this was not possible.<sup>138</sup>

#### F. Cultivation of Realization; Meditative Attainments

In all the mountain retreats and hermitages  
of Byang mkhar ‘Brong bu, etc.,  
you abandoned [concern for] body and life and practiced.  
The Lord pacified the obstacles to blessings.

*You attained the ultimate end in the mountain retreats: I pay homage to you!*  
You achieved supreme and ordinary accomplishments.

Whatever appeared, you understood as [like] reflections in a mirror.

Lama Zhang, *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>139</sup>

<sup>133</sup> sems ma bcos pa nam mkha’ lta bu’i ngang nas/ shes rab kyi me mched cing de rtsug ‘dug de tshug ‘dug snyam pa rong rong pa byung/ de nas rtogs pa lhag gis shar...skye ba med pa’i sgra ‘o che de gcer gyis mthong/...‘gag pa med pa bya ba de mngon sum du gcer gyis mthong/...gnas pa med pas gcer gis mthong/...chos kyi sku zer ba’i gyer po che de da mthong/ shin tu dga’ nas te te yang brdungs. *Zin bris*, 39b-40a.

<sup>134</sup> stong pa nyid; Skt. śūnyatā.

<sup>135</sup> sems kyi ngo bo.

<sup>136</sup> ngo sprod.

<sup>137</sup> sems kyi ngo bo yang dag par gzigs. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 807.

<sup>138</sup> nga la rtogs pa shar ba’i dus su ni/ sngon chad rtogs ma myong ba de ring rtogs/ ‘di las lhag pa’i rtogs pa sangs rgyas la yang mi srid snyam pa byung/. *Dge bshes sha mi dang dge bshes grwa pa dang gtsang pa jo btsun la sogs pas zhus pa’i nyams myong gi gleng slong ring mo*, Shedup III.498.

<sup>139</sup> byang mkhar ‘brong bu la sogs pa’i/ ri khrod dben gnas thams cad du/ lus srog dor nas sgrub pa mdzad/ rje yis byin brlabs bar chad zhi/ ri khrod mthar thug khyed la ‘dud/ mchog dang thun mong dngos grub brnyes/ snang tshad me long gzugs brnyan go/. *Shedup I.110*.

After Lama Zhang's deep realization of emptiness, Sgom tshul helped him integrate the two seemingly opposed styles of meditation, the strenuous wind-and-channel exertions of the tantric perfection stage practices and the deceptively simple, almost sūtric, emptiness meditations of *mahāmudrā*.<sup>140</sup> This combination became his main practice and he spent the remainder of his 30s (roughly 1154–1160) meditating in the mountains by himself. He meditated at Bsam yas and Mchims phu, at Brong bu, G.yu brag, Byang mkhar, Bzang yul Mon pa gdong, Spyi khungs, and other retreat sites. Besides subtle-body practices and formless *mahāmudrā* meditations, he engaged in numerous ritual practices associated with the tantric deities Cakrasaṃvara, Mahākāla, and Dpal ldan lha mo, and the serpent deities called klu.

We can see here the beginnings of Zhang's struggles with the issue of "worldliness" and the different career paths open to an accomplished and much-in-demand lama during the twelfth century. One path was exemplified by his teacher Sgom tshul, who chose a very public life—mediating disputes, founding monasteries, and nurturing disciples. At the other pole stood the life of the saintly Mi la ras pa, who hid in the mountains, shunning the company of others, and spent long hours in meditation. At this time, Zhang chose the latter path—thinking "In this life, [I should be] without disciples and patrons, and I don't need to be a spiritual teacher,"<sup>141</sup>—wandering in solitude in order to cultivate and deepen his realization experience.

During this phase, he practiced a deep asceticism that, like that of Mi la ras pa, at times became a threat to his own physical survival. He decided, for example, that all the time he spent gathering and preparing foods could be more profitably spent in meditation practice, so, giving his flint and steel to a shepherd, he swore off cooked foods, living off of barley-flour–paste and cold water. He even considered, during this period, giving up all food whatsoever.<sup>142</sup> Another time, near Lha lung, three wolves slept outside of his door for several days. Unable to leave his retreat, yet unable to concentrate on his meditation because of fear, he was driven to a realization that the instinct for physical survival itself was in fact an obstacle to practice:

<sup>140</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, 353. The fact that Zhang is intent on practicing *both* forms of meditation together is significant for how we read the "white panacea" (*dkar po chig thub*) controversy. See below, Chapter Two, the section entitled "Post-tantra."

<sup>141</sup> tshe 'di la slob ma dang yon bdag med pa dge bshes ci ma byung gcig bya dgos. *Zin bris*, 28b.

<sup>142</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.336.

Thinking, “Still, if one does not offer as food one’s entire body and life, one will not become a great meditator. Not attaining Buddhahood from beginningless time, I have wandered in *saṃsāra* because of a feeling of ownership toward my own body and life. From now on, I will really give up this body as an offering to sentient beings, and if it is taken [as food], I am indeed content.”<sup>143</sup>

Another time, when a wolf was at his door, and he had the same thought—“that the sage is not concerned, even if he is eaten by old wolves”<sup>144</sup>—he communicated the thought to his teacher Yer pa ba, who responded with a harsh scolding that woke him from his conceited self-destructiveness:

[Yer pa ba said,] “What! How can this be right? There could be no greater obstacle to attainment than to be eaten by a wild animal. From now on, do not think that way. Be very careful around wild animals!”

[Zhang] answered him thus: “If I am careful around wild animals, the accumulation of merit of the *Bdag nyid chen mo* [practice] is just clever talk. All of our instructions say, ‘Offer body and life as food.’ What kind of meditation practice is it that is stingy with body and life?”

[Yer pa ba] said, “Don’t say that! How dare you, when even I don’t dare! If you disobey my orders, your commitment will be broken. From now on, do not think like that: you must be careful with your body and life!”<sup>145</sup>

One might think of this as a first step toward pulling Zhang back into the world, at a time when he had reached an extreme of hermit-like withdrawal. We shall see the larger significance of this in Chapter Four below.

During this hermit period, he is said to have been constantly harassed by demons—demons in red wigs,<sup>146</sup> turbans, and funny hats,<sup>147</sup> demons in

<sup>143</sup> yang lus srog thams cad la ma bzod par sgom chen mi ‘ong/ sangs mi rgya thog ma med pa nas lus srog la bdag tu bzung pas ‘khor bar ‘khyams par yin/ de res lus ‘di dngos su sems can la sbyin par btang du byung pa re ‘tshengs mod/. *Zin bris*, 24b–25a.

What is described here bears some resemblance to the practice known as “severance” (*gcod*), associated with the teacher Ma gcig lab sgron (d. 1149). According to the list of Zhang’s teachers and teachings set forth in *Rtsa ba’i bla la ma sna tshogs kyis ‘thob byang*, Zhang received the “severance” teachings from someone named Slob dpon Thang pa. Shedup, I.313.

<sup>144</sup> *Zin bris*, 43a.

<sup>145</sup> a pa de ‘dra ba ga na btub/ gcan zan gyis zos na bsgrub pa’i bar chod de las che ba med/ phyin chad de ltar ma sem par gcan zan la zon chag che bar gyis gsung nas kho bos ‘di skad zhus/ gcan zan zon chag bgyis pa na/ bdag nyid chen mo’i tshogs bsod kha spyang tsa/ ‘o skol rang gi gdam ngag kun/ lus srog thed la gzad par gsungs/ lus srog la ser sna byas pa yi/ bsgom bsgrub ji lta bu gcig bdog zhus pas/ de skad ma zer dang/ khyod kyi phod te ngas mi phod/ nga’i bka’ bcag dam tshig nyams/ phyin chad de ltar ma sem par/ lus srog la ser sna gyis gcig gsungs/. *Zin bris*, 43a–43b.

<sup>146</sup> *Zin bris*, 50b.

<sup>147</sup> *Zin bris*, 48a.

battle gear mounted on deer,<sup>148</sup> demons who inflicted diseases or created howling blizzards, floods, and avalanches,<sup>149</sup> and demons who created terrifying apparitions,<sup>150</sup> frightening him into states bordering on insanity.<sup>151</sup> He was often forced to leave an otherwise comfortable dwelling or place of retreat because of their obstructive activities. Of all the obstacles he faced, demons were the most frequent and the most persistent, and it was not until quite late in his life that he was able to overcome them:

I myself was afflicted by the magical apparitions of demons. Contradictory things were mixed together.... If the power of recitation and meditation remains firm, they [demons] cannot do any harm, but because they [demons] cannot tolerate this, there will be magical apparitions.... By meditating on compassion and bodhicitta combined, through the karmic connection, eventually, while saying prayers to subdue [the demons], I got used to [the illusions].<sup>152</sup>

There were to be many subsequent realizations, which showed him that the initial *mahāmudrā* experience granted by Sgom tshul was not in fact the highest realization possible. Many occurred in dreams, most especially the remarkable dream he had while in retreat at Bzang yul Mon pa gdong in a dragon year (probably 1160)<sup>153</sup> in which, according to the tradition, he was propelled into full buddhahood.

In this dream,<sup>154</sup> he is traveling in the heaven of the 33 gods in search of the sacred land of Uddiyāna, home of Padmasambhava, the Indian *siddha* credited with taming the wild native Tibetan deities and thereby instituting Buddhism in Tibet. He becomes lost along the way, but encounters Ye

<sup>148</sup> *Zin bris*, 38a.

<sup>149</sup> *Zin bris*, 21a.

<sup>150</sup> *Zin bris*, 20b.

<sup>151</sup> *Zin bris*, 48a.

<sup>152</sup> nga rang la 'dre'i cho 'phrul gyis tshugs par 'dug/ 'gal ba 'du bar 'dug/... bzlas pa dang ting nge 'dzin gyi nus pa brtan pas ni khos gnod pa byed mi nus kyang kho ma bzod pas cho 'phrul ni 'ong... snying rje byang chub kyi sems bsgoms shing 'brel bar byas pas/ las 'brel des nam zhig gdul byar smon lam 'debs pa la goms nas yod/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.345.

<sup>153</sup> 'brug gi lo'i dbyar zla ra ba'i tshes brgyad kyi nub mo bzang yul mon pa gdong du... *Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.168. Another possible dragon year would be 1172, but this seems less likely to me, as Zhang was by that time absorbed in the task of projecting Tshal pa power throughout Central Tibet.

<sup>154</sup> Accounts of this dream can be found in the texts from the *Sealed Precepts* entitled *Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.168–74; *Spyi khungs ma skor las hUM nyi shu rtsa gcig gi rtsa ba*, Shedup VII.335–38; *Spyi khungs ma hUM nyi shu rtsa gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa*, Shedup VII.338–42; and *Spyi khungs ma hUM gi gdams pa bka' rgya can*, Shedup VII.374–82; also in *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 807–08 and *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 195.

shes mgon po, the wisdom manifestation of the wrathful deity Mahākāla, the “Great Black One,” who gives him a powerful secret teaching—the “secret instruction on annihilation [of enemies].”<sup>155</sup> Then, emanating as Heruka, a wrathful blood-drinking deity, Zhang proceeds to the “Diamond Throne” (*rdo rje gdan*; Skt. *vajrāsana*) in Bodhgayā, where he encounters Vajrayoginī, the blood-drinking female deity.

Then, extraordinary things begin to happen. Without his willing it, his body is transformed into a red letter *Hūm*, and he is drawn involuntarily into the vagina of Vajrayoginī, thus beginning a *Fantastic Voyage*<sup>156</sup>—like sequence in which Zhang travels up through her body’s central channel, visiting each of the four cakras (*‘khor lo bzhi*) as he ascends.

At her belly *cakra*, he has a vision of the course of the transmigration of all beings—seeing first of all, like images in a mirror, the six migrating classes of beings, and among them, his own past lives, where he revisits his 1,008 past-life lamas, then his present life, where he sees his 31 present-life lamas and his own future achievements: the building of statues, shrines, temples, monasteries, etc. Finally, he witnesses his own death—seeing his cremated remains laid out on the third storey of his own *stūpa*. Then he ascends to the heart *cakra*, where he sees, in a billion worlds, a billion Vajrāsanas, and a billion Lama Zhangs there making a billion offerings, accumulating boundless merit. At her throat *cakra*, he sees countless buddha-fields, and within each of these buddha-fields, himself, transformed into the buddha Vairocana, preaching the Dharma to countless beings. At the crown of her head, he finally sights, in the western direction, the sought-after land of Uddiyāna. There, he finds the Lotus-Ruby Palace and the *maṇḍala* of the seven female deities of the goddess Vajravārāhī,<sup>157</sup> where all of his defilements are cleansed.<sup>158</sup>

He then descends back the same way he had come, receiving, at each of the four *cakras*, one of the four tantric empowerments. Then he exits by way of her vagina, is transformed into the three-eyed Heruka holding a vajra and bell, receives the secret name Mtsho skyes rdo rje (Skt. Padma-

<sup>155</sup> tshar bcad pa'i man ngag. *Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.170.

<sup>156</sup> *Fantastic Voyage*: 1966 film directed by Richard Fleischer, starring Stephen Boyd and Raquel Welch, in which a crew of doctors and technicians is shrunk and sent, in a micro-submarine, on a voyage into the body of a famous scientist to repair damage to his brain from the inside. Halliwell and Walker 1992.

<sup>157</sup> lha bdun gyi dkyil 'khor.

<sup>158</sup> *Spyi khungs ma hUM nyi shu rtsa gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa*, Shedup VII.341.



vajra, “lake-born vajra,” one of Padmasambhava’s epithets), and is given a sermon on the Dharma by Vajrayoginī.

It is at this point that he awakens from the dream and, in the technical vocabulary of Buddhist tantra, he “purified the body of fully ripened karma (*rnam smin gyi lus*) and transformed it into the body of magical illusion (*sgyu ‘phrul dra ba’i sku*), transformed his body into the form body [of a buddha] and his mind into the Dharma body [of a buddha], and attained buddhahood.”<sup>159</sup>

### G. Public Life

You tamed beings with law, etc.

*Protector of beings, I pay homage to you!*

You erected temples, foundation of the teachings.

You constructed a Śākyamuni [statue] as your representative.

In a degenerate time, O emanation, you taught.

*O siddha king, I pay homage to you!*

Lama Zhang, *Protector of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>160</sup>

By this time—in his middle to late 30s (late 1150s–early 1160s)—Zhang had begun to achieve recognition as a great yogin, and had therefore also begun to accumulate would-be monk disciples, lay followers, and patrons. This presented him with an enormous dilemma: he felt the tug of responsibilities to others, but taking on followers and cultivating patrons would mean giving up the free-wandering life of a *Mi la ras pa*. What he really loved was solitary roaming among the mountain retreats, and so his first impulse was to get as far away from patrons and disciples as he could.

We might think of this as analogous to the dilemma faced by Śākyamuni Buddha immediately after his enlightenment. At that time, he sat under the Bodhi tree thinking what he should do:

Must I now preach what I so hardly won?

Men sunk in sin and lusts would find it hard

to plumb this Doctrine,—up stream all the way,

abstruse, profound, most subtle, hard to grasp.

Dear lusts will blind them that they shall not see,

<sup>159</sup> nam smin gyi lus dag ste/ sgyu ‘phrul dra ba’i skur gyur lus gzugs sku dang sems chos skur sang rgyas pa’io. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>160</sup> rgyal khirms la sogs ‘gro ba ‘dul/ ‘gro ba’i mgon po khyed la ‘dud/ bstan pa’i gzhi ma gtsug lag bzhengs/ rang gi sku tshab shAka thub mdzad/ snyigs ma’i dus su sprul pa bstan/ grub thob rgyal po khyed la ‘dud/. *Shedup* I.110.



—in densest mists of ignorance befogged.

As thus I pondered, my heart inclined to rest quiet and not to preach my Doctrine.<sup>161</sup>

Eventually, of course, the Buddha understood that his wish to remain in an enlightened yet solitary state was selfish and that he owed it to other beings to share his knowledge. Zhang eventually came to a similar conclusion, but not without a lot of conflicting emotions.

On one occasion, he decided that the only way he could escape the distraction of others was to leave Tibet altogether. This should be a gauge to us of the degree of his popularity at the time, where the flocks of people who came to him looking for blessings and advice began to seem a hindrance to his own practice:

At one time I thought, “I must act without regard for what disciples and patrons are doing.” Thinking I would go away—from Gtsang, to Mnga’ ris, to the Kathmandu valley—I went to Nyang sel, where the common people made offerings [to me].<sup>162</sup>

But even so, much as he longed for solitude, he could not escape his sense of obligation to others:

I met with [the disciple] Rnon ston, who asked where I was going. I told him I was going [to Gtsang, Mnga’ ris, Kathmandu, etc.]. He pleaded with me, saying, “If the teacher goes away, we disciples will abandon the Dharma.” I understood that he was right, and turned back...<sup>163</sup>

Another time, when he was with Yer pa ba, he expressed the wish that the teacher would “Bless me that I not be distracted by a retinue and disciples.”<sup>164</sup> This made Yer pa ba extremely angry. Reminding Zhang that if realized practitioners declined to teach, there would always be a reserve army of incompetents and con men ready to step in to fill the vacuum, he told him,

Surely you must benefit the teachings and sentient beings... If you do not nurture disciples, your commitment will be wiped out.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>161</sup> Saddhatissa, trans. 1985. *Sutta Nipāta* VI.1.

<sup>162</sup> yang skabs gcig na slob ma dang yon bdag gis ci byed rtsis med gcig bya dgos snyam nas/ rtsang nas/ mnga’ ris nas/ bal yul nas yar la ‘gro snyam nas/ nyang sel du phyin pas ‘bangs rnam kyis phyag rten byas/. *Zin bris*, 42a.

<sup>163</sup> rnon ston dang ‘phrad pas gar ‘gro zer/ ‘di ltar ‘gro byas pas slob dpon bzhud na nged slob ma rnam chos spong zer nas bshol ttab/ bden snyam nas mar la log/. *Zin bris*, 42a.

<sup>164</sup> ‘khor dang slob mas g.yeng ba mi ‘ong bar byin gyis brlab tu gsol. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 192.

<sup>165</sup> ‘bstan pa dang sems can la phan thogs nges pa yin te/... khyod kyis slob ma ma bskyangs na dam tshig la sel ‘ong gsungs/. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 192.

This life dilemma, which Zhang faced at several points during his career, is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four below, where I talk about two radically different careers—one private and one public—open to the charismatic lama in twelfth-century Tibet. It is enough to say at this point that the dilemma was resolved for Zhang by his chief root lama, Sgom tshul—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it was resolved by *history*.

Ironically, Zhang had come to see Sgom tshul in Lhasa for the same reason he had gone to Yer pa ba—to tell him that what he really wished for was to become a “directionless [wanderer]” (*phyogs med*).<sup>166</sup> This must have been sometime around 1160,<sup>167</sup> when he was 38 years old, because the reason Sgom tshul was staying in Lhasa at that time, rather than at his monastery in Lha lung, was that he had been called in to mediate the disputes among the “four [religious] factions of Lhasa” (*lha sa sde bzhi*), or perhaps between the four factions and the dominant Gnyos clan.<sup>168</sup> Zhang himself, in his biography of Sgom tshul, gives perhaps the most detailed available account of the conflicts, the fighting, and the manner in which, first, the two protector deities of the Lhasa region, Dpal ldan lha mo and Grib Rdzong btsan, and then the Jo bo statue itself, prevailed upon Sgom tshul to mediate.<sup>169</sup> I will quote it at length because of its importance as a chronicle of the time:

[Tibet] having fallen into a time of degeneration, all of the evil demons appeared at the great Gtsug lag khang of the Lhasa 'Phrul snang—foundation of all Tibetan temples, mother of all of the Buddha's teachings. All of the members of the religious community were fighting. As when a lion's insides are eaten by worms, [the Gtsug lag khang] was destroyed from within.

When nothing remained but ruins and smoke, the protectress of the Gtsug lag khang Remati [Dpal ldan lha mo] and the Rdzong btsan of Brib [sic; = Grib]—manifesting as a black woman and a boy wearing a silk brocade turban—summoned [Sgom tshul] from Stod lung. At the time he arrived at the ruins of the Gtsug lag khang, there were tears in [the eyes of] the *nirṇaṇakāya* Śākyamuni [i.e., the Jo bo]. Light rays issued from its heart and dissolved into the teacher's heart.

The evil demons were tamed. [Sgom tshul] himself entered the individual homes of the monks, laypeople, etc. [to mediate]. In a time of degeneration, when it was extremely difficult to subdue unruly beings, this great victory

<sup>166</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 192.

<sup>167</sup> Dung dkar 1991, 33.

<sup>168</sup> Vitali 2004, 136.

<sup>169</sup> Zhang's description appears to have been at least one of the sources of the account given in the *Lho rong chos 'byung* (178–79).

banner of the precious virtues came and performed great waves of activities for the sake of the Buddha's teachings.

He said, "But I was saddened by the behavior of the extremely unruly and proud members of the religious community. When I was thinking of leaving, the precious lama [Sgam po pa] appeared in person near dawn and said, 'You dare to abandon me?' Then he dissolved into the sky."

Further, he said, "Though I remained for a long time, extremely rough behavior occurred and I was saddened. When I was [again] thinking of leaving, there appeared before me a manifestation of the trunk and limbs of the body of the Tathāgata [the Jo bo], which said 'You dare to abandon me?' and dissolved into the sky."

Again, he said, "Though I remained for a long time, I was saddened. When I was [again] thinking of leaving, there appeared before me a fully perfected body of the Tathāgata [the Jo bo], which said, 'If you go, I will go too,' and dissolved into the sky."

He thought, "Now I will stay here even if I die—I must take care of the Gtsug lag khang," at which time he brought together the leaders [of the factions] for three days and they had discussions. Still, they could not agree, and there were no [further] discussions forthcoming. He said, "We are being stopped by a coarse female nonhuman," so that night he offered *gtor ma*-s and said, "Today there will be [a resolution]," and it happened just like that. . . .

[When an elder monk expressed concern for Sgom tshul's safety as mediator of the conflicts, Sgom tshul replied:]

I will go [to Lhasa], and I will not be hurt. In addition, I will easily make a smooth reconciliation. I will gradually restore the Gtsug lag khang. I will place all those who are fleeing the area together in homes, and I will gradually establish the rule of law in the four districts of Lhasa. You just listen!" It happened just as he said.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>170</sup> dus kyi snyigs ma la babs pas 'dre srin gdug pa can thams cad ni langs/ dge 'dun thams cad ni 'khrug/ seng ge'i khog pa 'bus gzhi pa bzhi du nang nas zhi ste/ mer bsregs nas re'u hrul dang du ba las med pa'i dus su/ gtsug lag khang gi srung ma re ma ti dang/ brib kyi rdzong btan gnyis bud med nag mo zhi dang/ khye'u thod dar gyi ber gon pa zhi tu sprul nas stod lung nas sryan drangs nas/ gtsug lag khang gi re'u hrul stong par byon pa'i dus su/ sprul pa'i sku shAkya mu ne la sryan chab byung/ thugs ka nas 'od zer byung nas slob dpon gyi thugs khar thim/ 'dre srin gdug pa can btul/ dge 'dun dang dge bsnyen la sogs pa khong rang so so rang gi tshang du bcug/ snyigs ma'i dus su skye bo mi bsrin pa shin tu gdul dka' ba'i dus su/ yon tan rin po che'i rgyal mtshan chen po byon nas/ sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa la bya ba rlabs po che mdzad/ 'on kyang ni dge 'dun nga rgyal can shin tu mi bsrin pa rnam kyi byed spyod la skyo ba skyes nas phyir gshegs par dgongs pa'i dus su/ tho rangs kha bla ma rin po che dngos su byon nas khyod kyi nga 'jog phod dam gsungs nas nam mkha' la thim gsung/ yang yun ring du bzhugs kyang byed spyod shin tu rtsub par byung nas thugs skyo ste bzhud par dgongs pa'i dus su/ de bzhi gshegs pa'i sku lte ba yan chad mngon pa zhi mdun du byon nas/ khyod kyi nga 'jog phod dam gsungs nas nam mkhar thim gsung/ yang yun ring du bzhugs kyang thugs skyo nas bzhud par dgongs pa'i dus su/ de bzhi gshegs pa'i sku yongs su rdzogs pa zhi mdun du bzhugs nas/ khyod 'gro na nga yang 'gro gsungs nas nam mkha' la thim gsung/ da yang shi yang 'dir bsad la/ gtsug lag khang gi zhabs tog bya dgos snyam pa'i dus su/ nyi ma gsum du

This then was the situation when Zhang arrived in Lhasa to discuss with Sgom tshul his wish to become a “directionless wanderer.” Sgom tshul seemed to be, under the circumstances, in no mood to listen to Zhang’s petty career waffling, when both the Jo khang and the Ra mo che—the two holiest Buddhist sites in Lhasa—had been burned down and Central Tibet was spinning into social disorder as a result of religious fighting, banditry, and general lawlessness. Thus, when Zhang asked his advice, Sgom tshul rebuffed him, saying, “If you become a directionless wanderer, who will do service to my Jo bo?”<sup>171</sup> This was his way of pulling Zhang out of his hermitic self-involvement and directing his talents back into the public sphere, where they could do some genuine good. Thus, in a formal ceremony at the Jo khang, Sgom tshul officially bestowed upon Zhang the title “Lord of the Teachings” (*bstan pa'i bdag po*), and charged him with the restoration of the damaged Jo khang and Ra mo che temples and the maintenance of law and order in the immediate Lhasa area.<sup>172</sup>

Besides teaching, service to the Jo bo, temple repair, and law enforcement, this title implied support of the Dharma by means of public works and building projects. He built numerous *stūpas*, temples, shrines, and statues. He erected a monastic complex across the Skyi river from Lhasa at Tshal, not only to house and train religious practitioners, but also for the sake of protecting the pilgrimage routes that led to the numerous holy sites within Lhasa—most especially, of course, the Jo khang. The first monastery, Tshal Yang dgon, was built in 1175, the second, Tshal Gung thang, in 1187. He placed the roads, rivers, and valleys of the Lhasa area under “seal” (*rgya*), taking responsibility for the protection of all beings, nonhuman as well as human, within his jurisdiction (see the fuller discussion of this in Chapter Four below).

It was during this period that he became involved in armed conflict and other controversial activities. These will be treated in more detail in Chapter Five, but to give a short account, conflicts appear to have arisen for broadly two reasons: (1) his imposition of law upon Lhasa and environs—most especially the routes leading in and out of the city that were used

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gtso bo rnam bsags nas mdun ma byas pas ma 'cham pa la/ mdun ma mi yong bar 'dug/ mi ma yin rtsub mo zhi gis sgog par 'dug gsungs nas/ de'i nub mo gtor ma zhi g btang ba dang/ de ring 'ong bar 'dug gsungs nas de bzhin du byung/... nga der song la rma ma babs kyi steng du'ang sdum 'jam nyal gyis bya/ gtsug lag khang rim gyis gso/ yul shor ba thams cad tshang du lhan gyis bcug la/ lha sa sde bzhir rgyal khriims kad kad 'cha' ba zhi g bya yis khyod rang nyon cig gsung. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, *Shedup* 1.173–77.

<sup>171</sup> khyod phyogs med byed na nga'i jo bo'i zhabs thog sus byed. *Zin bris*, 46b.

<sup>172</sup> A more detailed treatment of this key title “Lord of the Teachings” and its relationship to the issue of “law and order” can be found below in Chapters Four and Five.

by pilgrims and traders—which resulted in conflict with those who either violated his regulations or contested his authority to issue them;<sup>173</sup> and (2) his use of force to acquire building materials—particularly juniper, the wood most suitable for religious architecture—from neighboring areas for his construction projects.<sup>174</sup> All of these activities—and the degree to which legitimate policing functions spilled over into illegitimate aggression remains a matter of disagreement—required a police and/or military force, and this appears to have been composed of monks from Zhang's Tshal pa monasteries. There are reports of battles where Zhang as well as his closest disciples were themselves present on the field. During some of these encounters, Zhang employed his long-time expertise in the use of practical magic to subdue enemies, and there are reports of disciples having visionary experiences of tantric deities within the heat of battle.<sup>175</sup>

#### H. *Last Years and Death*

Everything is an emanation of you.

[Yet] in that very emanation, there is no emanation.

There is neither emanation nor nonemanation.

*O realization-possessing king, I pay homage to you!*

Ah! The degenerate sentient beings

who never met you—what a pity!

Fortunate, all those who have met you.

They will be happy both in this and in later [lives].

Through prayers to you, the good of all will be accomplished.

The more you do, the greater the benefit; the less you do, the smaller the benefit.

O excellent one, may sentient beings who have never met you  
be tamed [by you] and escape the bad states [of rebirth]!

Lama Zhang, *Protector of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*<sup>176</sup>

The fighting on Zhang's part made him a figure of controversy among his contemporaries and, according to the *Blue Annals*, the First Karma pa, Dus gsum mkhyen pa—with whom Zhang had a fascinating close

<sup>173</sup> Roerich 1976, 714–15; also *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II.542–43.

<sup>174</sup> *Zin bris*, 54a.

<sup>175</sup> *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 808.

<sup>176</sup> thams cad khyed kyi sprul pa ste/ sprul tsam nyid na sprul pa med/ sprul dang mi sprul gnyis mi mnga'/ rtogs ldan rgyal po khyed la 'dud/ kye ma snyigs ma'i sems can kun/ khyod dang ma phrad snying re rje/ las can khyod dang phrad pa kun/ 'di dang phyi ma gnyis su bde/ gsol ba btab pas don kun 'grub/ cher reg cher 'tshengs chung reg chung ngu 'tshengs/ dam pa khyod dang ma phrad sems can kun/ phyi ma ngan song nas thon gdul byar shog/. Shedup I.110–11.

relationship—persuaded Lama Zhang to tone down the belligerence, because people were unhappy with him.<sup>177</sup>

This was late in his life, and it would appear that his last few years were thus spent in less aggressive activities, consolidating his now-secure sphere of influence and administering the Tshal pa-controlled areas of Central Tibet.

In his 72nd, and final, year (1193), his health appeared to grow progressively worse (as he was by this time assumed to be a transcendent buddha who had chosen this particular incarnation, it is said that he *pretended* to ill health),<sup>178</sup> and his priorities turned toward two goals: teaching full-time and building a great *stūpa* for his own remains at Tshal Gung thang monastery. Regarding the first goal, he commented, “In my old age, I have only the worry whether my patrons and retinue will go to the hells.”<sup>179</sup> He ordered his patrons and disciples now to concentrate all of their efforts on finishing the *stūpa* in time for his cremation. He himself now taught continuously until he was no longer able to walk, then had his men carry him around on a palanquin, from which he continued to teach. Finally, he became too weak even to teach in this way and was confined to his room. In his last days, he sat in bed silently while his monks—all of them weeping uncontrollably—held a procession through the room and received the lama’s last blessings.

When he passed away, there were numerous auspicious signs:

At that time, there were four earthquakes, a great sound resounding three times, and an intense light. That night, great offerings were made to the body, and a fragrance of healing herbs pervaded the whole area of Tho yul—a sign of the gathering of *ḍākinīs* [at his bedside].<sup>180</sup>

After the proper rituals and the ablution and preparation of the body, it was clothed in Dharma robes and carried in the meditation posture outside to the recently finished third storey of the *stūpa*. A light rain fell through the night—an offering of the sky deities—but, to everyone’s surprise, not a drop fell on Zhang’s corpse, which remained completely dry.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>177</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, 569–70; Roerich 1976, 479–80. For more on the relationship between Zhang and the first Karma pa, see the section entitled “Reining in the Wildman” in Chapter Five, below.

<sup>178</sup> *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 196.

<sup>179</sup> nga rgas kha ‘dir yon bdag ‘khor bcas dmyal bar song dogs pa’i thugs khral las med pa yin. *Zin bris*, 71a.

<sup>180</sup> de’i tshe sa gyo ba bzhi byung/ sgra chen po lan gsum byung ‘od chen po gcig byung/ de’i nub mo pur la mchod pa chen po byas pas tho yul thams cad sman gyi dri las khyab ‘byung/. *Zin bris*, 73a.

<sup>181</sup> *Zin bris*, 73b.

Then there occurred a memorial service that assembled a cast of great religious notables from the area who had come to pay their last respects. The variety of practitioners represented is remarkable and could be considered a tribute to the broad inclusiveness<sup>182</sup> of Zhang's influences and teachings:

From the southern direction, all of the *mantrins* of all the directions constructed *maṇḍalas* of both the old and the new tantras, and made offerings. The Bon teacher Gya bhai along with all of the Bon po leaders constructed a [Bon] *maṇḍala* and made offerings. [Representatives from] all of the nearby bordering sectarian groups and monasteries, both [monastic] spiritual teachers and independent spiritual teachers, made *maṇḍalas* and offerings.<sup>183</sup>

It is said that even his enemies—"those who had done evil in the past"—came to pay their respects, and ended up "crying and lamenting."<sup>184</sup>

When it came time for the cremation, the attendants were unable to make the body catch fire. After several unsuccessful efforts, the body itself ignited spontaneously from within the heart with "the fire of primordial wisdom," consuming itself with neither flame nor smoke.<sup>185</sup> Again, a sweet fragrance enveloped all of the neighboring valleys, while rainbows and parasols filled the sky. When the ashes had cooled, numerous miraculous relics were recovered—which were given highly specific symbolic meanings: his unburned heart was a sign of "immutable primordial wisdom"; his unburned tongue, a sign of "the uninterrupted turning of the wheel of Dharma speech"; his unburned eye, sign of "the watching of all beings forever"; numerous small particulate relics (*ring srel*), signs of "extensive [enlightened] activities for the benefit of sentient beings"; images of Cakrasaṃvara, Vajrayoginī, and Avalokiteśvara, signs of Zhang's "nonduality with the tutelary deity"; and a *maṇḍala* emerging from the side of the body, sign of "the attainment of the thirteenth [bodhisattva] ground."<sup>186</sup>

<sup>182</sup> See the treatment of Zhang's inclusivism below, Chapter Two.

<sup>183</sup> lho phyogs nas phyogs phyogs kyi sngags pa thams cad kyis sngags gsar rnying gi dkyil 'khor bzhangs nas mchod pa phul/ bon ston gya b+hai gyis dbu mdzad pa'i bon po thams cad kyis/ dkyil 'khor bzhangs nas mchod pa phul/ tho phyi mtha' 'khor gyi sde pa dang dgon pa ba dang/ dge bshes pa dang/ rang re'i dge bshes pa thams cad kyis maN+Dala dang mchod pa phul/. *Zin bris*, 74b-75a.

<sup>184</sup> sngar sdig pa sogs pa'i dgra thams cad kyang ngu zhing chos nges 'debs so/. *Zin bris*, 73b.

<sup>185</sup> *Rnam thar bsdu*s pa, Shedup VI.177.

<sup>186</sup> *Rnam thar bsdu*s pa, Shedup VI.177-78.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LINEAGE AND STYLE: PLACING LAMA ZHANG IN THE TRADITION

Having sketched the outlines of Lama Zhang's life, in this chapter I will attempt to place Zhang within his tradition, situating him in relation to his past inheritances as well as his future legacy. The first step will be to look at the dozens of separate teaching lineages he inherited that would be bound together into a composite entity eventually known as the "Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa" order, then make an effort to gauge his "influence" by means of the idea of "religious style"—seen here as a loosely assembled complex of doctrinal, meditative, ritual, and discursive emphases, supported by a surprising pluralistic ethic of tolerance toward opposed practices and practitioners.

#### I. WAS LAMA ZHANG A BKA' BRGYUD PA?

##### A. *Sect and Lineage*

According to the standard textbook account,<sup>1</sup> Lama Zhang is the founder of the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa—one of the "four great" subschools (*che bzhi*) of the Mar pa (or Dwags po) Bka' brgyud pa, which in turn is regarded as one of the major "orders" (*chos lugs*) of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> The standard sequence of Bka' brgyud pa, or "Oral Transmission Lineage," teachers is:

- (1) Vajradhara, a buddha
- (2) Tailopa,<sup>3</sup> the Indian *pañḍita* who received the teachings as a direct revelation from Vajradhara

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Dung dkar 2002, 158–59.

<sup>2</sup> Today, for example, the Bka' brgyud pa is classed by the Tibetan exile government as one of the four major schools (*chos lugs che khag bzhi*) of Tibetan Buddhism. See, e.g., [http://www.tibetoffice.org/en/index.php?url\\_channel\\_id=69&url\\_subchannel\\_id=&url\\_publish\\_channel\\_id=195&well\\_id=2](http://www.tibetoffice.org/en/index.php?url_channel_id=69&url_subchannel_id=&url_publish_channel_id=195&well_id=2). Accessed 8/3/08. Another well known classification scheme—dating, according to Kapstein 1996 (276), from around the thirteenth century—classifies the Mar pa Bka' brgyud pa as one of "eight great conveyances" (*shing rta brgyad*) of the Buddhist doctrine in Tibet.

<sup>3</sup> Also Tilopa or Tillipa. I use "Tailopa" because this is the form it usually takes in Zhang's writings.



- (3) Nāropa, abbot of the famous Indian monastery Nālandā and student of Tailopa
- (4) Mar pa, Nāropa's Tibetan disciple
- (5) Mi la ras pa
- (6) Sgam po pa

From there, the lineage accounts diverge depending on the subschool claiming descent—for the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa, the next lamas in the sequence are Sgom tshul, nephew of Sgam po pa and one of Zhang's root lamas, and then Lama Zhang, while for the Karma bka' brgyud, for example, the next in the sequence is Dus gsum mkhyen pa, followed by Karma Pakši and the rest of the chain of Karma pa-s. But the first six are always the same.

For most purposes, there is nothing wrong with the standard account, but if we wish to understand the specific role played by Lama Zhang in this history, we need to look more closely, and when we do, things become considerably more complicated. For one thing, from the standpoint of the twelfth century, sectarian boundaries were not nearly so neat as they may appear from the nineteenth or twentieth century, and we have to be careful not to read back into Zhang's period distinctions that only became fixed in later centuries. In fact, we might go so far as to ask: to what extent did there even exist at that time something like a self-conscious Bka' brgyud pa "school"?

Here we run into some terminological obstacles that are best addressed in the beginning. The Bka' brgyud pa is sometimes regarded as a *brgyud* pa or "lineage"—as is implied by its name—but often also as a *chos lugs*, variously rendered as "tradition," "sect," "school," "denomination," or "order."<sup>4</sup> The difference between these two categories is explained by David Germano as follows:

*chos lugs* is the standard word for a "sect." It signifies a religious order with an independent hierarchy and administration, distinctive properties, and an explicit sense of membership with ways of expressing self-identification. In contrast, *brgyud* points to a lineage, which stresses the transmission of a body of knowledge or practices from a teacher to a student over successive generations.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Tucci 1949 (I.81) uses "sect" for *lugs*, but opines that "[s]ect is not, perhaps, the right word." Kapstein 1996 (284) and Germano (*THDL Encyclopedia*) use "sect," Lopez 1997 suggests "order," "school," or "sect" (24), while Davidson 2005 speaks of "denominations" (277).

<sup>5</sup> David Germano, *THDL Encyclopedia of Religions & Sects*, <http://www.thdl.org/xml/show.php?xml=/reference/typologies/relsects.xml&l=5>. Accessed 7/28/08.

Religious lineages are modeled after biological lineages—the term *brgyud pa* is the same in both cases—and are held together by direct personal relationships between lamas and their disciples, along with the oral instructions (*gdams ngag*)<sup>6</sup> that are transmitted from generation to generation. This can be seen clearly, for example, in a eulogy Zhang writes to the lamas of one of his lineages:

To those venerable ones, the true lineage [*dnegos brgyud*] that transmits [*brgyud pa*] words and meaning from one person to another, I bow down in homage!<sup>7</sup>

Familial tropes abound in descriptions of lama-disciple bonds, particularly those within tantric teaching lineages. Thus, for example, we read in the *Blue Annals* about the followers of Mar pa known as the “four spiritual sons” (*thugs sras bzhi*)—a very common way of referring to disciples.<sup>8</sup> Lama Zhang, in a self-eulogy that will be discussed below in Chapter Three, calls himself the “sole son of many practice lineages,”<sup>9</sup> and, in describing his relationship to one of his root lamas, Rgwa lo tsā ba, writes:

When, every month or so, I would leave the lama’s presence and go somewhere else, unable to stand separating from him, as from a father, I would go off and cry.<sup>10</sup>

Lineage is a basic way by which religious practitioners relate personally to time and history and thus assume specific group identities, and though the notion has been important throughout the history of Buddhism, it seems to have taken on a special significance in Tibet. As David Jackson puts it:

The fastidious care paid by generation after generation of Tibetans to recording actual lineages . . . is, as far as I can judge, special within the Asian Buddhist cultural realm. Though rooted in Indian concepts of the guru lineage, these Tibetan expressions of lineage have few close parallels known to me elsewhere in the world.<sup>11</sup>

A lineage requires only personal connections between teachers and disciples. A *sect*, on the other hand, implies something like an institutional

<sup>6</sup> Kapstein 1996, 275–89.

<sup>7</sup> gcig nas gcig tu tshig don brgyud pa yi/ dnegos brgyud rje btsun rnams la phyag ‘tshal ‘dud/. *Lam gsum brgyud pa’i gsol ‘debs*, Shedup 1.107–08.

<sup>8</sup> Roerich 1976, 403.

<sup>9</sup> sgrub brgyud du ma’i bu gcig pu. *Dgos ‘dod re skong ma*, Shedup 1.109.

<sup>10</sup> bla ma’i spyen sngar nas gzhan du zla ba re re tsam ‘gro tsa na ‘bral ma phod nas pha tshad du ngu yin phyin. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup 1.328.

<sup>11</sup> D. Jackson 2005, 38.

base and a relatively widespread organization. Germano lists six marks that characterize a sect:

- (1) a clearly identified founder;
- (2) a distinctive body of literature specific to it;
- (3) statements of identity separate from other religious movements;
- (4) centers with permanent buildings;
- (5) a shared administrative hierarchy; and
- (6) common ritual activities such as pilgrimages and festival events.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, we could say, using this terminology, that during the time of “fragmented Tibet” (*bod sil bu*)<sup>13</sup> following the breakup of the Tibetan empire, what survived were Buddhist *lineages*, whereas monastic institutions—and hence *sects*—had disappeared altogether. “Individual teachers and practitioners,” writes Cyrus Stearns, “were not identified according to allegiance to a specific sect, but . . . were thought of as upholders of particular transmission lines [*brgyud pa*] of esoteric instruction.”<sup>14</sup>

What we see happening in eleventh- and twelfth-century Central Tibet is a gradual reinstitutionalization of Buddhist lineages, and Zhang was to play an important role in this broad transformation of religious life. But the extent to which there existed an actual Bka’ brgyud pa sect during Zhang’s lifetime—as opposed to “a series of fragile lineages”<sup>15</sup>—remains to be seen.

## B. Lama Zhang’s Lineages

### 1. The Bka’ brgyud pa as Sect and Lineage

Curious about how Lama Zhang himself thought about this issue of the Bka’ brgyud pa sect, I decided to track and count the occurrences of the term *bka’ brgyud* in the most recent edition of his collected works. I was initially skeptical about the term, my suspicion being that it was a later category projected back—in a “Whiggish” fashion<sup>16</sup>—onto earlier figures. I found that this in fact was not the case, that there was actually a relatively

<sup>12</sup> Germano, *THDL Encyclopedia*.

<sup>13</sup> Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje, *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.148.

<sup>14</sup> Stearns 2000, 2.

<sup>15</sup> Davidson 2005, 283.

<sup>16</sup> Butterfield 1965.

consistent use of the term *bka' brgyud* in Zhang's writings and that its meaning seems to have been fairly stable.

The term occurs 35 times.<sup>17</sup> Among the more interesting patterns I found, were the following:

- (1) In 10 of these 35 cases, it occurs in the phrase *bka' brgyud bla ma* or *bka' brgyud kyi bla ma*—"Oral Transmission Lineage lama." E.g., "I, this beggar-monk Zhang, have served various Oral Transmission Lineage lamas."<sup>18</sup>
- (2) In 5 cases, the lineage is identified explicitly as that of the Indian *paṇḍita* Nāropa. E.g., "This unmistakable path of Lord Nāropa's Oral Transmission Lineage was transmitted [by me] to Mar sgom, Rgya ston, and 'Dul ba 'od."<sup>19</sup>
- (3) In 4 cases, this lineage is explicitly tied to Zhang's root lama Sgom tshul. E.g., "If I had not met with this Oral Transmission Lineage of yours [i.e. Sgom tshul's], my efforts would have accomplished little—what a waste!"<sup>20</sup>
- (4) There is one clear occurrence—in a work entitled "Garland of the Supreme Path of the Practice Lineages"<sup>21</sup>—where lineages other than the Nāropa lineage, and root lamas other than Sgom tshul, are mentioned. This is the only case where an unambiguously plural form, *bka' brgyud mams* ("oral transmission lineages"), is employed, and here the term appears to be synonymous with the broader term *sgrub brgyud* ("practice lineage"), which—unlike *bka' brgyud*—is seldom used as a proper noun.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> A few occurrences in the Shedup *Gsung 'bum* were eliminated from the list: first of all, I have ignored all of those entries that read "dpal tshal pa *bka' brgyud* kyi bstan pa'i mnga' bdag zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa'i gsung 'bum rin po che," which is the current editors' title for the entire set. Secondly, at Shedup VI.63, there is a passage that reads "slob dpon sgom pa la zhus pas/ *bka' brgyud* 'di la byin rlabs yod/," which was eliminated because it is a quotation from a later work, *Yang dgon gyi bla ma brgyud pa*, added by an unknown editor.

<sup>18</sup> bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ *bka' brgyud* kyi bla ma sna tshogs bsten/. *Byang phyi 'brong du gsungs pa'i ku re'i phreng ba dum bu bzhi* (song # 13 from *Brag sngon du gsung pa'i mgur bco lnga*), Shedup V.609.

<sup>19</sup> rje nA ro pa'i *bka' brgyud* kyi lam/ phyin ci ma log pa 'di mar sgom dang/ rgya ston 'dul ba 'od la *bka' babs so*/. *Gdams ngag bka' babs lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.100.

<sup>20</sup> khyed kyi *bka' brgyud* 'di dang ma phrad pas/ don chung rtsol bas ngal ba a re phangs/. *Dwags po pa la bstod pa*, Shedup I.68.

<sup>21</sup> *Sgrub brgyud lam mchog phreng ba*, Shedup IV.341–77.

<sup>22</sup> 'gro ba yongs la *bka' drin che/ bka' brgyud mams kyi don re bsgrubs*/. *Sgrub brgyud lam mchog phreng ba*, Shedup IV.362. A relevant distinction is made in the *Blue Annals*,

A complete charting of the occurrences of the term is set forth below in Appendix 5. What can be gleaned from this, however, is the following: contrary to what I had expected, the term *bka' brgyud* appears for the most part to refer in Zhang's writings to just those six religious masters who have, up to the present day, been known as the first six lamas of the Bka' brgyud pa order of Tibetan Buddhism.

This impression is reinforced by a look at the one work that explicitly lists the members of the lineage. The name of the text is *Two Prayers to the Oral Transmission Lineage*, and each separate prayer consists of a series of stanzas petitioning lineage lamas for blessings (for a more detailed discussion of this genre of prayer/supplication (gsol 'debs), see Chapter Three below). Since the stanzas proceed sequentially, the prayer can also be read as a record of the succession of lamas of the lineage. The opening stanza of the second prayer reads as follows:

From the palace of the *Dharmadhātu*,  
 Possessor of uninterrupted primordial wisdom,  
 Teacher of secret mantra without remainder:  
*May I be blessed by Vajradhara!*<sup>23</sup>

Each stanza has the same basic form, with the last line being a petition to the next lama in the lineage—respectively, Tailopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, and Sgam po pa. The last of these petitioning stanzas supplicates Zhang's root lama Sgom tshul (here called "Dwags po Sgom pa"):

Because you fully possess the aspiration to enlightenment,  
 The mere sight of you inspires faith!  
 You who has ripened many fortunate ones:  
*May I be blessed by Dwags po Sgom pa!*<sup>24</sup>

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where it is said that Mar pa's lineage was divided into a teaching lineage (*bshad pa'i bka' gzung*), handed on to his pupils Mes, Rngog, and 'Tshur, and a "practice lineage" (*sgrub pa'i bka' gzung*), passed on to Mi la ras pa. *Deb ther sngon po*, 490 (Roerich 1976, 405). The distinction appears to be one between the book-learned and the meditators, respectively, the latter being the line that came to be known as the Bka' brgyud pa.

<sup>23</sup> chos kyi dbyings kyi pho brang nas/ ye shes rgyun chad mi mnga' ba/ gsang sngags ma lus ston mdzad pa'i/ rdo rje 'chang gis byin gyis rlobs/. *Bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs gnyis*, Shedup I.58.

<sup>24</sup> byang chub sems dang rab ldan pas/ mthong ba tsam gyis dad pa skye/ skal ldan mang po smin mdzad pa'i/ dwags po sgom pas byin gyis rlobs/. *Bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs gnyis*, Shedup I.59.

The other of the two prayers is similar, and invokes the identical sequence of lamas—Vajradhara, Tailopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, Sgam po pa, and Sgom tshul—as the basis for a similar sequence of petitions.

## 2. *Other Lineages*

All of this would appear to lend credence to the Whiggish notion that there actually did exist from the very beginning a distinct Bka' brgyud pa sect, or order, the identity of which has remained stable throughout its history. A look, however, at Lama Zhang's detailed recountings of his diverse lineages tells a different story. In the work entitled *Various Lineages*, e.g., he lists the major lineages to which he lays claim along with the separate lamas that were included in each of those lineages. Altogether, he lists 15 different lines of transmission:<sup>25</sup>

1. The Instructions on the Six Limbs of Practice (Kālacakra)<sup>26</sup>
2. Coemergence<sup>27</sup>
3. The Simultaneous, the Gradual, and the Random Paths<sup>28</sup>
4. "Lightning Strike" or "Thunderbolt" *Mahāmudrā*<sup>29</sup>
5. The Practice Lineage of the Holy Cycle of the Guhyasamāja<sup>30</sup>
6. The Aural Transmission<sup>31</sup>
7. The Path with Its Fruit<sup>32</sup>
8. The Revered Lady Yoginī<sup>33</sup>
9. *Mahāmudrā* and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa<sup>34</sup>
10. The Equality of the Three Times, the Cakrasaṃvara Single-Yidam [Practice], etc., and the Gtor ma Itself, etc.<sup>35</sup>
11. The Extensive Path of Virūpa<sup>36</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.293–307.

<sup>26</sup> sbyor ba yan lag drug gi gdams ngag.

<sup>27</sup> lhan cig skyes pa.

<sup>28</sup> lam cig char ba dang/ rim gyis pa dang/ kha 'thor ba.

<sup>29</sup> phyag rgya chen po thog babs.

<sup>30</sup> dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i 'phags skor sgrub brgyud.

<sup>31</sup> snyan brgyud.

<sup>32</sup> lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa.

<sup>33</sup> jo mo rnal 'byor ma.

<sup>34</sup> phyag rgya chen po dang nA ro'i chos drug.

<sup>35</sup> dus gsum mnyam pa nyid dang/ bde mchog dpa' bo gcig pa la sogs pa dang/ gtor ma'i de nyid la sogs pa.

<sup>36</sup> bir wa pa'i lam rgyas pa.

12. Commentaries on *Dohā* [songs]<sup>37</sup>
13. Coemergence with *Gtum mo*<sup>38</sup>
14. Vajravārāhī<sup>39</sup>
15. Hevajra Coemergence<sup>40</sup>

In the listings of the transmission line of lamas for each of these teachings, there is only one that corresponds to the Bka' brgyud pa line as set forth above—this is the ninth item in the list, the “*Mahāmudrā* and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa” teachings. Here we see the familiar sequence Vajradhara, Tailopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, Sgam po pa, Sgom tshul, and Lama Zhang.<sup>41</sup> But this is the *only* place.

There are a few other lineages that include some of these Bka' brgyud pa teachers, but with slightly different personnel and a different root lama bestowing the final transmission on Zhang. For example, number 3, “The Simultaneous, the Gradual, and the Random Paths,” a cycle of Hevajra tantric teachings, has the following lineage:

Hevajra, a buddha  
 Vajragarbha, a bodhisattva  
 Tailopa  
 Nāropa  
 Mar pa  
 Rngog Chos rdor  
 Mi la ras pa  
 Gling ka ba 'Bri sgom ras pa  
 Mal Yer pa ba  
 Lama Zhang<sup>42</sup>

Of note as well are number 10, “The Equality of the 3 Times...,” a Cakrasaṃvara tantric cycle, and number 7, “The Path with Its Fruit,” teachings which passed through two masters—Ba ri lo tsā ba and 'Brog mi lo tsā ba, respectively—who are generally associated with the teachings of the Sa skya pa school, not the Bka' brgyud pa.

<sup>37</sup> do ha'i 'brel [sic] ba.

<sup>38</sup> lhan cig skyes pa dang gtum mo.

<sup>39</sup> rdo rje phag mo.

<sup>40</sup> dpal dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa.

<sup>41</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup 1.300.

<sup>42</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup 1.296–97.

In fact, when we look for distinctly “Bka’ brgyud pa” teachings—as this term has come to be understood in subsequent centuries—we find only that one slender *Mahāmudrā*–Six Dharmas lineage nested within a luxuriant growth of tangled transmission lines not ordinarily associated with the Bka’ brgyud pa order. The nonsectarian—or perhaps more aptly, pre-sectarian—flavor of Zhang’s religious inheritance in evidence here is, according to Stearns, very much characteristic of the time period:

Prior to the thirteenth century, the rigid sectarian identities that would plague later Tibetan religious history had not yet fully crystallized, and the network of monasteries specifically connected to the major transmission lines was still in embryonic form. An eclectic approach to study and meditative realization was still commonplace.<sup>43</sup>

The context of Stearns’s remarks is his study of the life of a once-highly-respected yogin whose lineage died out without issue and whose story has therefore survived only by luck and chance. There must have been scores of such lineages in the twelfth century whose histories will never be known, history of course being “written by the winners,”<sup>44</sup> even in Tibet—and there, as elsewhere, histories written by winners are almost invariably rather attenuated compared to the living reality.

One of these “winners” would, of course, be the thirteenth-century Bka’ brgyud pa order. And their story of a single unidirectional transmission line of Bka’ brgyud pa Dharma launched by the buddha Vajradhara and moving inexorably into a glorious Bka’ brgyud future must be viewed in light of the increasing power—both cultural and political—that began to accrue to Bka’ brgyud–identified institutions. But the more fastidiously we stick with twelfth-century sources, and the more closely we look at Zhang’s richly endowed religious life, the less adequate this traditional biological trope of lineal succession seems.

Consider, for example, some of the other works that, like the *Various Lineages* text discussed above, hint at the true complexity of Lama Zhang’s heritage. One such work, entitled *Various Root Lamas*<sup>45</sup> (the contents of this work are charted out in Appendix 3), lists 44 masters from whom he received teachings, along with the specific teachings received from each of those masters—a total of 141 teachings. Even if we confine ourselves to his root lamas, the quantity of teachings reported still numbers 55. If

<sup>43</sup> Stearns 2000, 2.

<sup>44</sup> Orwell 2000, 88.

<sup>45</sup> *Rtsa ba’i bla ma sna tshogs kyis ‘thob byang*, Shedup I.307–16.



we consider that each of these teachings has a lineage of transmission associated with it stretching back several generations at the least, and several centuries in some cases, and if we further consider the geometric expansion that occurs with each generation we travel back, then it should become clear that any project to construct a family tree that could do justice to all of these influences would crash and burn before reaching even the third generation of ancestors—by which point the tree would have become impossibly complex, not to mention most untrealike in appearance.<sup>46</sup>

In order better to understand how this chaos of religious inheritance is sorted out by Lama Zhang and the early Bka' brgyud pa-s, it is necessary to consider in more detail the process of *tradition-building*. In the next section, I will suggest ways in which we can understand the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa-s as a tradition-in-form, paying particular attention to the crucial role played in this process by the charismatic lama as well as by what I call the "symbolic" or "discursive" dimension.

### C. The Formation of Traditions

#### 1. Tradition and Charisma: The Institution of the Tantric Lama

As we will see later in this chapter, the Bka' brgyud pa-s, despite their close connection with the Bka' gdams pa sect, did not place nearly as high a premium on scholarship and conceptual knowledge as did the latter. They were originally meditators and tantric sorcerers, and it was these activities that lent them social power and credibility. As such, they stood as exemplars of the kind of authority that Weber called "charismatic."<sup>47</sup> Weber thought of charisma as something that adhered to both sacred

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<sup>46</sup> There is, in fact, a mathematical basis for this insufficiency. I discovered this first-hand when—tacitly assuming the biological model of religious descent—I downloaded one of the many genealogical software programs currently available on the Internet with the thought that I would use it to chart Zhang's religious lineages. It turned out to be impossible because the program only allowed one set of "parents" for any one "child." What was I to do with Zhang's 44 parent-teachers?

From the standpoint of graph theory, this can be expressed in terms of "indegrees" and "outdegrees": software designed for biological family trees allows vertices with outdegrees of any number (i.e., an unlimited number of offspring) but prohibits vertices with indegrees greater than 1 (i.e., more than one set of parents). To handle Zhang's lineage tree, the program would have to allow vertices with an indegree of at least 44. Even given a program where this was possible, however, the problem of the unwieldiness of the resultant "tree" would still remain.

<sup>47</sup> See the discussion of charisma in the Introduction.

and secular leaders, which makes it apply especially well to Lama Zhang's career. As a concept, it bridges the "worldly" and the religious and thus offers an excellent way of making sense of twelfth-century Lhasa, where these two domains were coming together in a new way. For Lama Zhang and many of his Bka' brgyud pa contemporaries—such as the First Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa and the First Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po—it was charisma that attracted disciples and patrons. As such, it acted as an important organizing and binding principle within their religious communities, an adhesive agent that help bind disparate lineages into more cohesive institutional orders.

Weber explicitly connects the idea of charisma to the formation and maintenance of religious communities:

Primarily, a religious community arises in connection with a prophetic movement as a result of routinization (*Veralltäglicung*), i.e., as a result of the process whereby either the prophet himself or his disciples secure the permanence of his preaching and the congregation's distribution of grace, hence insuring also the economic existence of the enterprise and those who man it, and thereby monopolizing as well the privileges reserved for those charged with religious functions.<sup>48</sup>

Applying this concept to the gradual institutionalization of the proto-Bka' brgyud pa hermit lineages during the eleventh and twelfth centuries may not produce an exact fit, but there is a enough conceptual overlap that the idea helps make sense of much of our material. Because charisma is seen as a bridge between spiritual and worldly power—because it is a sort of spiritual capital that can be converted, via routinization, into a worldly, institutional form—it offers an approach to the puzzle of how a dispersed collection of solitary spiritual adepts could coalesce into a sect of large, organizationally complex institutions.

As religious communities united around charismatic leaders like Lama Zhang, the institution of the tantric lama became an important binding element for the new religious traditions-in-process. As we shall see in Chapter Four below, Zhang was personally able to draw together a diverse array of religious and political means and fashion them into a new public persona known as "Lord of the Teachings" (*bstan pa'i bdag po*)—a role that proved influential as a model for later religious-political rulers of the Lhasa area.

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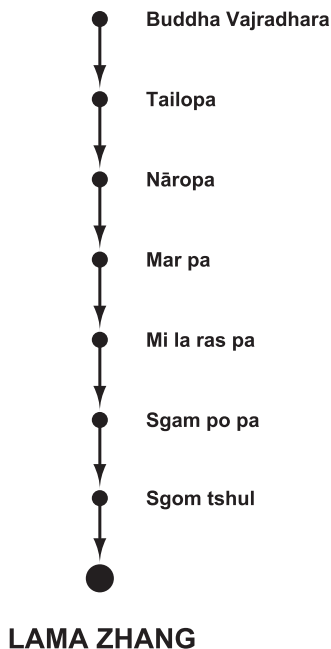
<sup>48</sup> Weber 1978, 452.

## 2. *The Symbolic Construction of Tradition*

We have already seen above the importance of the biological trope of lineage (*brgyud pa*), which models religious succession on kinship descent. This is one way in which the impossible complexity of religious influence is streamlined into a more manageable model of inheritance. Nevertheless, as Claude Levi-Strauss points out, even for biological lineages, where descent is governed by laws of nature, the “objective ties” of family are always bound up within systems of *symbolic* relationships:

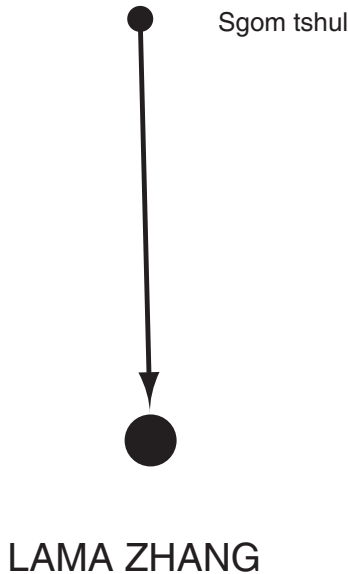
A kinship system does not consist in the objective ties of descent or consanguinity between individuals. It exists only in human consciousness; it is an arbitrary system of representations, not the spontaneous development of a real system.<sup>49</sup>

If this is true for natural families, then how much more so must it be for religious traditions. To see how this works, let us consider more closely the “standard” Bka’ brgyud pa sectarian lineage tree used by Lama Zhang:



<sup>49</sup> Levi-Strauss 1963, 50.

It is important when looking at a diagram like this to understand just how drastic a process of selection has taken place to arrive at it. This is a point made by John McRae in a somewhat different context when—speaking of Chan and Zen Buddhist lineages—he criticizes what he calls the “string of pearls fallacy,” which reduces the complexity of religious succession to a unilinear progression of masters, as though there were only one practitioner per generation.<sup>50</sup> Look, for example, at the last link of this chain, the arrow that connects Sgom tshul to Lama Zhang:



<sup>50</sup> McRae 2003, 10. I think it is probably better not to call this a “fallacy,” which suggests a mistake in reasoning. As will be seen below, there is no mistake here: in order for inheritance to make any sense at all—in order for a *tradition* to come into being—the plethora of connections to the past must be pruned and modeled into a narrative or other symbolic structure.

McRae suggests, as an antidote to the “string of pearls fallacy,” what he calls “McRae’s second rule of Zen studies: ‘Lineage assertions are as wrong as they are strong,’” which he amplifies in the following manner:

[E]very time we read that the masters of such-and-such a group are related to each other in a lineal succession, the statement is probably inaccurate in some sense, and the more important it is to the religious identity of the individuals involved, the less accurate it will be.

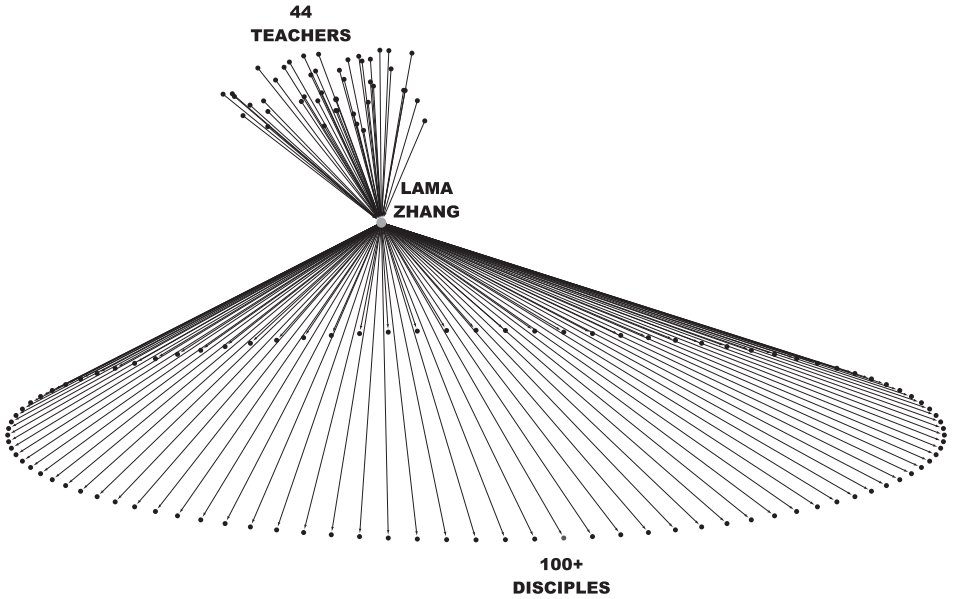
McRae 2003, 8. Though coming from a non-Tibetan field, this would seem to me to be a sound maxim for Tibetologists to follow as well.

If this were all the evidence we had to go on, we would naturally assume that Zhang had only one teacher. But when we look at Zhang's actual listing of teachers and teachings received, the aforementioned work called *Various Root Lamas*, we see mention of 44 teachers and 141 teachings. So this single link of the chain, magnified, would really look more like this:<sup>51</sup>



The boldface arrow is the original one indicating Sgom tshul (here called by the name "Dwag po ba") as Zhang's teacher. Now it is nearly lost in the welter of other arrows. And if we add in the arrows pointing from Zhang to his own disciples, we get a much more complicated structure:

<sup>51</sup> *Rtsa ba'i bla ma sna tshogs kyi 'thob byang*, Shedup I.307–316.



What this diagram does not even show is that Zhang's 44 teachers might each have had 100 other disciples, and Zhang's 100-plus disciples 30 or 40 other teachers. The more details we add in, the further we get from anything like a "string of pearls" structure. And if we were to fill in a couple more generations—or even just a couple of Zhang's Bka' brgyud pa contemporaries, such as Dus gsum mkhyen pa and Phag mo gru pa—the resulting chart would become quite unreadable. Even if, following out the family trope, we were to expand our model into that of a proper genealogical chart—which more resembles an inverted tree than a string of pearls—we still would not come up with anything yielding, by any stretch of the imagination, an accurate model of Zhang's inheritance from the past.<sup>52</sup>

But, of course, this is not the point of a lineage chart: it is not meant to be an accurate depiction of history. It is a *representation*—a symbolic stand-in expressing, not real relationships, but a *tradition*. In this respect, the Dwags po Bka' brgyud pa order fits well the characterization of "tradition" provided by Raymond Williams:

<sup>52</sup> On the fundamental mathematical incompatibility of genealogical and sectarian-historical structures, see footnote 46 above.

Most versions of “tradition” can be quickly shown to be radically selective. From a whole possible area of past and present, in a particular culture, certain meanings and practices are selected for emphasis and certain other meanings and practices are neglected or excluded.<sup>53</sup>

In truth, the full relationship of Lama Zhang to the Buddhist tradition as a whole is complex and virtually unpicturable. But this could be said for any individual’s relationship to his or her past. Relations of influence are simply not traceable in the way biological familial relationships are. A symbolic, narrative, or other discursive representation, however—especially one that is modeled on biological succession—is much easier to keep track of, which means that for purposes of knowing where one stands in relation to one’s predecessors, a tradition is infinitely preferable to the raw unassimilable reality. As such, traditions—precisely because they are selective—allow the individual to feel connected to an otherwise incomprehensible past, and as such grant a manageable sense of identity.<sup>54</sup> As the German historian Jörn Rüsen writes: “Tradition is the most fundamental form by which identity is shaped.”<sup>55</sup> This is especially

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<sup>53</sup> Williams 1977, 115.

<sup>54</sup> Thus, a lineage is a good example of a “discursive formation,” in Laclau and Mouffe’s sense (see Introduction, “Methodological Considerations”)—a constructed representation built up out of real elements, which are selected out and “articulated”—i.e. linked symbolically—into moments of a “structured totality.” From this standpoint, to say that a tradition is constructed is not to say that it is somehow a “fake” (though those no doubt exist), for it is in fact built out of real elements, but rather that the tradition is a contingent construal of the real past produced by a particular group that, in an antagonistic struggle with others, has achieved hegemony. This is a particularly useful standpoint insofar as it sees “subject positions”—i.e. identities—as parts of these discursive formations. This allows us to see the important role of identity-formation in the maintenance of traditions, which seems especially relevant in the case of Tibetan Buddhist lineages. See Laclau and Mouffe 2001, especially the section entitled “Articulation and Discourse,” 105–14.

<sup>55</sup> Rüsen 2004, 146. Rüsen follows this insight with an unconvincing criticism of the idea that tradition is “constructed,” equating the idea with a primitive sort of subjectivism. A much more interesting criticism of constructivist approaches is offered by Manuel De Landa, who proposes instead a “realist social ontology” that, as against “the idealist one espoused by . . . the so-called ‘social constructivists,’”

is all about objective processes of assembly: a wide range of social entities, from persons to nation-states, will be treated as assemblages constructed through very specific historical processes, processes in which language plays an important but not a constitutive role.

De Landa 2006, 3. I believe De Landa’s criticisms of social constructivism should be taken very seriously. At the same time, I do not see his materialist assemblage theory as at all inconsistent with the idea that lineages and traditions are discursive constructs that make selections from real material elements and articulate them into symbolic systems. As with many such evocations of the non-issue of “idealism,” everything appears to ride on how one chooses to interpret key terms like “constructed” and “constitutive.”

important for religious sectarian groups, where the competitive aspect of group membership requires discrete identities clearly distinguished from those of the members of other groups. This would seem to be what the Bka' brgyud pa lineage narratives offer—a determinate identity for anyone who belongs to the tradition. As such, lineage-building solidifies the sense of group identification by demarcating clearly the boundaries between religious groups—which helps explain why we see so much of it here, in twelfth-century Central Tibet, at precisely the time when the process of group consolidation is in a state of rapid flux.

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I began this chapter wondering whether, in the twelfth century, there even existed something corresponding to the standard account of the Bka' brgyud pa sect. Another way of posing this question might be to ask “Was Lama Zhang really a Bka' brgyud pa?” I think it is safe to say now, after considering Zhang's writings on the subject, that the correct answer is “Yes and no.” Yes, because Zhang undoubtedly recognized, and considered himself heir to, a *lineage* whose members match the “standard” Bka' brgyud pa account and which he even called by that name. But No, because, while he clearly attached great importance to the lineage, there is no evidence in his writings that he considered it his *main* or *sole* lineage, or that he felt anything like an exclusive sectarian attachment to it as a group. There was, of course, fervent devotion to all of his lineage lamas, but from the evidence, it would seem that the Bka' brgyud pa at this time remained just one lineage among many, and had not yet reached the state of organization that would justify the appellation “sect” or “order.” At the same time, we see during Zhang's lifetime the stirrings of the process that would in time bring into being a distinctive Bka' brgyud pa sect—i.e., the process of tradition-building, wherein what began as a solitary lineage would gain hegemonic status through appropriation and consolidation at the material and symbolic/ideological levels, and through institutionalization at the social level. But these were not entirely impersonal processes; they could never have occurred without the active interventions of larger-than-life individuals like Zhang, who were slowly transforming a figure familiar from Indian esoteric Buddhism—the tantric lama—into a distinctively Tibetan creature: more “worldly,” more “engaged,”<sup>56</sup> more willing to take on the responsibilities of governance and rulership that

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<sup>56</sup> See Martin 2001, 50.



had formerly been the exclusive province of kings and members of the old aristocratic clans. But in order to understand Zhang's distinctive contribution to this transformation of the office of the lama, we need first to acquire a general sense of his approach to Buddhist practice in general.

## II. LAMA ZHANG'S RELIGIOUS STYLE

A writer's vision of life is less tangible than his politics, economics, religion, ideology; but it goes deeper, and it is what makes his work last long after his causes have won or lost or faded away.

—Marshall Berman<sup>57</sup>

### A. Chos lugs: *Style vs. System*

If we were to judge Lama Zhang's effect on the history of Tibetan Buddhism by sectarian criteria alone, we would probably have to say that his effect has been rather small, for the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa order eventually disappeared—in part, it simply died out; in part, it was absorbed into the more robust sects that have survived into the present such as the Dge lugs pa, the sect of the Dalai Lamas. But there is more to influence than order or sect. For one thing, some of the teaching lineages of which he was a part—particularly the Bka' brgyud pa *Mahāmudrā*–Six-Dharmas-of-Nāropa lineage—survive to the present day and to no small degree through the efforts of Zhang and his successors. But there is a less tangible form of influence that I wish to discuss, and for this I would like to use the term *style*. Essentially what I want to say is that the thing Lama Zhang passed on to posterity was above all a particular *style of religious practice* rather than, for example, a doctrinal system or an enduring network of monasteries. This style was to a large degree taken up by the various sub-sects of the Bka' brgyud pa order and, along with the model of rulership and religious community that grew out of the style, is his true legacy. In the Tibetan language, there are a number of words we might choose from to express this idea of style:

#### (i) *stangs*

Probably the most informal is *stangs*. It is commonly attached to verbs to form noun phrases meaning “way or manner of [verb]” For example,

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<sup>57</sup> Berman 1999, 80.

byed *stangs*—"way of doing something," *lab stangs*—"way of speaking," and '*tsho ba skyel stangs*—"lifestyle."

(ii) *tshul*

Among the synonyms for *stangs* found in the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary* are *tshul*, *thabs*, and *lugs*.<sup>58</sup> All three of these terms, in addition to their colloquial meanings, are used extensively to render technical Buddhist terminology. *Tshul* literally means "manner," "way," or "method."<sup>59</sup> Examples of specifically Buddhist uses of the term are, e.g., *gnas tshul*—"manner of abiding" or "mode of existence,"<sup>60</sup> *tshul khrims*—"ethics" or "morality,"<sup>61</sup> *byung tshul*—"manner of arising" or "origin"<sup>62</sup> and *chos tshul*—"religious precepts."<sup>63</sup>

(iii) *thabs*

Likewise, *thabs* is an extremely important Buddhist term, used above all to translate the Sanskrit expression *upāya*—"means," a keystone of classical Mahāyāna doctrine (for more on this term, see the subsection entitled "Style and Means," below).

(iv) *lugs*

Most interesting for our purposes, however, is the last of these terms for "style," *lugs*. First of all, it is often used to refer to social phenomena: e.g., *lugs srol*—"custom" or "tradition,"<sup>64</sup> and *cha lugs*—"manner or style of dress."<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, we have already seen this term in the expression *chos lugs*, translated above as "sect," "order," "school," or "denomination." The literal meaning of *chos lugs* is "Dharma style" or "religious style." As such, it seems the most direct and literal Tibetan-language correlate for

<sup>58</sup> *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 2278. Definition of *tshul*: "1) thabs... 2) lugs sam stangs."

<sup>59</sup> Goldstein 2001, 882.

<sup>60</sup> Jeffrey Hopkins' *Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, version 2.0.0. THL Tibetan to English Translation Tool. <http://www.thlib.org/reference/translation-tool>. Accessed 2/1/09.

<sup>61</sup> Jeffrey Hopkins' *Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*.

<sup>62</sup> E.g., one chapter of the *Red Annals* is entitled *bstan pa phyi dar gyi byung tshul*, or "the way in which the later transmission of the teaching came into being." *Deb ther dmar po*, 38.

<sup>63</sup> Goldstein 2001, 378.

<sup>64</sup> Goldstein 2001, 1077.

<sup>65</sup> *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 776.

the phrase “style of religious practice” I suggested above as a good way of describing Lama Zhang’s religious influence.

But the term *chos lugs* has also taken on another meaning—one that is very far from this informal sense of “Dharma style” I am looking for. Here *lugs*, detached from its social context, has come to refer to any sort of “system” in the abstract, and *chos lugs* thus has become essentially synonymous with *grub mtha’*, “doctrinal tenet system.”<sup>66</sup> In this sense, *bka’ brgyud chos lugs* has come to mean, not a historically situated group of religious practitioners, but rather a sort of timeless ideal object—an ahistorical, almost mathematical, structure in which are embedded the truths associated with the Bka’ brgyud pa school.<sup>67</sup>

These two terms, “style” and “system,” are the polar extremes between which the expression *lugs* alternates. But they also correspond to two historical poles of Tibetan Buddhism, two competing views of how it should be practiced: what might be called *scholasticism* and *anti-scholasticism*. As will be seen below, Zhang clearly falls into the anti-scholastic camp—for which he will be severely chastised by the paradigmatic scholastic, Sa skya Paṇḍita. Zhang’s interest is not at all in creating systems of doctrine. Though he was trained as a youth in all of the standard texts of Buddhist doctrine, he claims not to have understood much of them.<sup>68</sup> However literally we choose to interpret this statement, it is clear his approach was informal and unsystematic. It is for this reason that the deliberately loose notion of a “religious style”—*chos lugs* in its nonscholasticist sense—seems especially appropriate as a means of explicating Zhang’s religious approach.

<sup>66</sup> See, e.g., the contemporary historical work entitled *The Ruby Key* (*Bod kyi lo rgyus spyi don padma ra’a ga’i lde mig*), by Thub bstan phun tshogs, p. 457, where one of the chapters is headed *bka’ brgyud pa’i grub mtha’ byung tshul*—“The Origins of the Bka’ brgyud pa System,” as if the Bka’ brgyud pa were essentially a set of doctrines rather than a lineage of teachers or a group of institutions. Sometimes the terms for religious order and tenet system are fused in the compound term *chos lugs grub mtha’* (see, e.g., Dung dkar 2002, 158: “bka’ brgyud/ mar pa lo tsA dang mi la ras pa sogs kyi slob rgyud ‘dzin pa’i slob ma re res *chos lugs grub mtha’i* ‘dod tshul ‘dzin stangs cung mi ‘dra ba re byung/”). It would be interesting, from a historical standpoint, to investigate just when it was that the term *chos lugs* began to take on this meaning of doctrinal system.

<sup>67</sup> From this it can be seen that the term “Protestant presupposition”—when used to mean the assumption that a religion is reducible to a set of beliefs or doctrines—should not be confined in its application only to “Western” commentators. Cf. Schopen 1997.

<sup>68</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.320.

## B. *The Elements of Lama Zhang's Religious Style*

As a starting point, we might think of a religious “style” as a loosely clustered, but historically specific, configuration of beliefs and practices that hold together for a time as a single integrated symbolic system. I count the following as among the more significant elements of Zhang’s style.

### 1. *Verbal vs Experiential Knowledge*

#### a. *Conceptual Knowledge and Meditative Experience*

A quick way of zeroing in on the issue of style is to look at intersectorian polemical exchanges, because they often encode style-critique within what is ostensibly “substance”-critique—criticism of religious doctrine, for example.<sup>69</sup> Probably the most famous doctrinal controversies between the Bka’ brgyud pa and the rival Sa skya pa sect centered on certain criticisms that the great scholar-monk Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga’ rgyal mtshan (1182–1251) directed against Sgam po pa, Lama Zhang, and other Bka’ brgyud pa-s. The following verses—which are directed specifically at Lama Zhang “and certain [other] adherents of Kagyu Great Seal traditions,” according to Go rams pa Bsod nams Seng ge, the fifteenth-century Sa skya pa commentator on Sapaṇ’s writings<sup>70</sup>—give something of the substance and flavor of the criticisms:

Some say that the profound words and meanings  
of the Perfectly Enlightened One’s discourses  
and of the teachings so well expounded  
by adepts and learned masters  
are just wordplays  
that can be discarded as unessential.

The arbitrary pronouncements of the ignorant  
who do not even understand well-arranged words,  
let alone excellent meanings, may bring a laugh to the learned.  
But these sundry, irrelevant writings  
are called “treatises” and are being made  
the object of study and instruction!

Their words may succeed in delighting the simple,  
but they cannot gladden the wise.  
They are a waste of time and intelligence.

<sup>69</sup> See Cremaschi and Dascal 1998, discussed above in the Introduction.

<sup>70</sup> Rhoton 2002, 80, n. 58.

Alas! Now I see to what a state  
the Enlightened One's teaching has come.<sup>71</sup>

The substance of the criticism seems to be that Zhang (or whoever the intended target may be) underestimates the importance of the Buddhist scriptures—the verbal manifestations of the enlightenment of the buddhas—taking them to be “just wordplays,”<sup>72</sup> and therefore, presumably, dispensable.

As far as it goes—ignoring for the moment the polemical heat and the fussy tone—this seems to me a not completely inaccurate account of some of Zhang's views. He does indeed, in several places, discount the importance of verbal knowledge on the Buddhist path. For example,

Collections of words, however pointed and profound,  
Spoken in however many ways,  
Cannot touch the true condition of the mind.<sup>73</sup>

Similarly, he complains about “those dull-witted ones...who prattle words like parrots,”<sup>74</sup> as well as

those ignorant beings, those wannabe sages, who, because they fix only on the words—wherein the buddhas and bodhisattvas conceal their true intent—misapprehend the unmistakable profound meaning, and who abandon the definitive meaning, criticizing [those who expound the true meaning], saying, “This is the wrong teaching, not in accord with the transmission of the Dharma.”<sup>75</sup>

This downplaying of the role of words is premised on the conviction that mere “conceptual knowledge” (*rtog pa*)—the sort possessed by those who

<sup>71</sup> la la rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi/ gsung rab tshig don zab mo dang/ grub thob rnam dang mkhas rnam kyi/ shin tu legs par bshad pa'i chos/ tshig gi na ya yin pas na/ dgos pa med pas dor zhes zer/ tshig kyang bsgrig legs mi shes na/ don bzang smos kyang ci dgos pa'i/ blun po rnam kyi rang dga'i tshig/ mkhas rnam bzhad gad bskyed pa yi/ 'brel med sna tshogs bris pa la/ bstan bcos yin zhes nyan bshad byed/ blun po dga' ba bskyed nus kyi/ mkhas rnam dga' ba bskyed mi nus/ dus dang blo gros grong du 'gyur/ kye ma sangs rgyas bstan pa ni/ 'di ltar gyur pa da gzod go/. *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, 1.244–47 (Rhoton 2002, 73).

<sup>72</sup> tshig gi na ya.

<sup>73</sup> ji tsam zab cing rno ba'i tshig tshogs kyi/ rnam grangs du mar brjod par byas gyur kyang/ sems kyi gnas lugs thog tu phebs mi srid/. *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.82–83.

<sup>74</sup> dbang po rtul po...ne tso ltar tshig la lce sbyangs pa'i gang zag. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.357.

<sup>75</sup> sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyi ldem por dgongs pa'i tshig rnam 'ba' zhig la a 'thas pas zab mo'i don phyin ci ma log pa rnam blor mi shong zhing/ 'di chos kyi babs dang ma mthun log chos yin zer nas nges pa'i don spong zhing skur ba 'debs pa'i gang zag gti mug can mkhas su re ba rnam/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.357–58.

spend all their time with texts but do not bother to cultivate meditative attainments—is an obstacle on the path to realization:

Having not experienced meditation on the primordial, they do not understand the nature of conceptual thought. Not recognizing conceptual thought, they misunderstand the gist of the Dharma. Because of that, they cover everything over with a one-sided conceptuality and wrongly find fault in whatever is said and done, and will thereby accumulate the deepest of sins.<sup>76</sup>

This insistence on the premier importance of direct, nonconceptual knowledge is in turn based on the tradition of doctrine and practice most strongly associated with the Bka' brgyud pa sect—the “Great Seal” or *mahāmudrā* (Tib. *phyag rgya chen po*). The Great Seal will be discussed in more detail below under the heading “Style of Meditation and Religious Practice,” but for now let it suffice to point out a couple of its relevant features. Most important for our purposes here is that the form of *mahāmudrā* that Zhang inherited—which was taught by Sgam po pa, uncle and teacher of Zhang’s root lama Sgom tshul—presented a stripped-down path of practice, shunning complicated techniques and intellectual elaboration. The most important factor of realization was held to be a direct acquaintance with “the nature of [one’s own] mind” (*sems kyi ngo bo*). As Zhang writes:

When you see the nature of your own mind,  
You eliminate everything harmful in the mind.<sup>77</sup>

Sometimes the phrase is abbreviated to simply “mind” (*sems*), as when Sgam po pa writes,

If you do not realize your own mind,  
You will not attain buddhahood.<sup>78</sup>

Simple as this may seem, realizing one’s own mind cannot be done on one’s own—a teacher is required. The role of the teacher is to point directly at the disciple’s mind in such a way that the disciple directly apprehends its true nature. This is necessarily a face-to-face teaching, which

<sup>76</sup> khong gis gnyug ma bsgom ma myong bas rnam rtog gi rang bzhin mi shes/ rnam rtog ngos ma zin pas chos kyi gnad mi go/ des na rnam rtog phyogs gcig pa gcig gis thams cad la bkab nas ji skad byas pa la skyon log pa re re rnyed nas sdig pa kham po che sog tu yong. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I. 357–58.

<sup>77</sup> rang sems ngo bo mthong gyur nas/ sems la gnod pa thams cad spang/. *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.131.

<sup>78</sup> rang gi sems ma rtogs na sangs mi rgya. *Sgam po pa’i gsung ‘bum* I.453.

is why it cannot be conveyed by texts. Thus, Sgam po pa's *mahāmudrā* teaching method is sometimes spoken of as a "pointing at the nature of the mind."<sup>79</sup>

Though the practice is immediate and requires no special knowledge on the part of the disciple, there is in fact a more complicated, and controversial, doctrinal basis underlying it. After all, someone might well ask why a knowledge of something so private and individual as one's own mind should be touted as the path to buddhahood. This makes sense only if we consider the connection Sgam po pa makes between *mahāmudrā* and the "Buddha-nature"<sup>80</sup> class of Mahāyāna teachings, which posit within all sentient beings a seed of buddhahood that is, in Sgam po pa's words, "the primary cause for enlightenment."<sup>81</sup> This seed of buddhahood is, in addition, held to be no different from the *Dharmakāya*, or the ultimate nature of reality:

Buddhahood is the *Dharmakāya*, and the *Dharmakāya* is emptiness. Therefore, because emptiness pervades all sentient beings, all sentient beings must possess the Buddha-nature.<sup>82</sup>

The way these two separate streams of doctrine—Buddha-nature and *mahāmudrā*—are joined in the Bka' brgyud pa tradition is, according to Klaus-Dieter Mathes, by way of "the equation of the buddha-nature with the *mahāmudrā* term *unfabricated natural mind*."<sup>83</sup> What this means is that when one apprehends directly the nature of one's own mind, one at the same time apprehends both one's own inherent potential for buddhahood (the Buddha-nature) and the ultimate nature of reality (the *Dharmakāya*). As Zhang writes,

This *Dharmakāya*, which abides unchanging in this way,  
Is none other than one's own mind.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup> sems kyi ngo bo ston pa. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 1.799–800.

<sup>80</sup> The Tibetan terms for this are *de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po* (Skt. *tathāgatagarbha*), *bde gshegs snying po* (Skt. *sugatagarbha*), and, less frequently, *sang rgyas snying po* (Skt. *buddhagarbha*). The most extensive treatment of the connections between *mahāmudrā* and the buddha-nature teachings—particularly as related to the textual tradition of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* can be found in Mathes 2008.

<sup>81</sup> sangs rgyas kyi rgyu. Sgam po pa, *Thar rgyan*, 6. English translation: Konchog Gyaltsen 1998, 49.

<sup>82</sup> sangs rgyas ni chos sku yin la/ chos sku ni stong nyid yin te/ stong nyid des sems can thams cad la khyab pa'i phyir na/ sems can sangs rgyas kyi snying po can yin pa'o/. Sgam po pa. *Thar rgyan*, 7.

<sup>83</sup> Mathes 2008, 373.

<sup>84</sup> de ltar gnas pa'i 'gyur med chos sku 'di/ rang gi sems las ma gtogs gzhan na med/. *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.80.

So the apprehension of one's own mind turns out not to be such a private affair after all. Done properly, it encompasses and enfolds all knowledge and thus transcends the merely personal. As the Ra mo che Jo bo statue told Zhang in a vision:

Everything that appears and exists is the *mahāmudrā*,  
 Is of one taste, and is filled with great bliss.  
 Coemergent suchness [i.e. the ultimate nature of phenomena]  
 Is nothing but the dawning of one's own mind as the teacher.<sup>85</sup>

It should be no surprise, then, that those who practiced within Sgam po pa's tradition of *mahāmudrā* would treat direct intuitive knowledge as non-negotiable and regard intellectual knowledge with indifference, if not outright scorn. This in turn would imply a path of practice rather far removed from the scholastic book- and debate-centered activities that were beginning to take hold in certain Tibetan monasteries during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Though the scholastic form of Buddhist practice would not really come into its own until the time of Sa skya Paṇḍita in the next century, the sarcastic tone of some of Lama Zhang's remarks about "sophists" and "clever-tongued wannabe sages,"<sup>86</sup> for example, suggests that there must have been considerable tension between the hermit-meditative groups led by figures like Zhang and the growing contingent of scholarly monks, even in the twelfth century. Unfortunately—there having apparently been an unwritten prohibition on naming names—we do not know for sure the objects of Zhang's criticisms, any more than we know for certain whom Sa skya Paṇḍita had in mind. Since the premier Central Tibetan center for Buddhist logic and debate at the time was the Bka' gdams pa monastery Gsang phu ne'u thog,<sup>87</sup> it is tempting to speculate about whether some of Zhang's jibes might not have been aimed in that direction, but the ties of teaching lineage and mutual respect between the early Bka' brgyud pa-s and the Bka' gdams pa-s were so close it is difficult for me to believe this could have been the case.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>85</sup> jo bo nyid kyi zhal nas/ snang srid thams cad phyag rgya che/ ro snyoms bde ba chen pos gang/ lhan cig skyes pa'i de nyid ni/ rang sems bla mar shar las byung/. *Lha sa ma nram thar*, Shedup VII.546.

<sup>86</sup> rtog ge ba . . . mkhas su re ba kha spyang po. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.359–60.

<sup>87</sup> See van der Kuip 1987 for more on Gsang phu ne'u thog. The great Gsang phu abbot and logician Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–69) was of the same generation as Zhang's root lamas.

<sup>88</sup> It should be remembered that not only did Sgam po pa and other early Bka' brgyud pa luminaries such as Sgom tshul, Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po, and the First Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa have Bka' gdams pa teachers, but Zhang himself, early in his life, studied under several Bka' gdams pa-s. *Rtsa ba'i bla ma sna tshogs kyis 'thob byang* lists



Whoever may have been the disputing parties—and much historical work remains to be done here—it seems clear that at this time, when the future of Buddhism in Central Tibet was still very much up for grabs, two different camps were gradually being separated out, and two very different visions of the Buddhist path and the role therein of intellect, reasoning, and scholarship were being offered up for consideration, and in increasingly polarized terms. Lama Zhang represented—or came to represent in subsequent debates—one pole of this opposition, the one that emphasizes direct experience and downplays intellect and reasoning.

That there are doctrinal issues at stake here seems to me undeniable. But the degree of mutual incomprehension between the competing parties—even among contemporary scholars—suggests to me that what is really at issue here goes much deeper than doctrine. Attempts have been made at analyzing the controversies on another level, but they have so far been bogged down by partisanship.<sup>89</sup> On the one side, we have contemporary Bka' brgyud pa apologists who, following the great sixteenth-century 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa scholar Padma dkar po, attempt to explain away Sapaṇ's polemic as based on "personal animosity"—for which one contemporary defender of Sa skya Paṇḍita understandably cries "Foul!"<sup>90</sup> But then

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five: Glang ston pa, Slob dpon Sgom chos, Slob dpon 'Od mchog, Slob dpon Rgyas ston, and Slob dpon Lcog ro Jo sras. Shedup L307–316. It even seems he may have studied with the great logician Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge himself if we are to judge by a passage in the *Blue Annals* that claims Zhang, along with the First Karma pa, as one of Phya pa's disciples. *Deb ther sngon po*, 406 (Roerich 1976, 333). We know that Phag mo gru pa was a student of Phya pa as well. It does seem odd that Phya pa is not mentioned on any teacher lists of Zhang's, but there is an intriguing passage in Zhang's apparent "last will and testament," *The Great Scroll, Created in Five Parts* (*Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V.204), where he writes about "the teachers of mine whom I did not have the opportunity to meet with face to face" (zhal mi mjal ba'i glags med pa'i nga rang gi slob dpon), and includes among them "the teacher Phya pa" (ston pa phya pa). The passage is not easy to contextualize, and I am uncertain whether it refers to teachers with whom he wished he had met but never had the chance, or teachers with whom he had once studied but never was able to see after that. This is the only reference to Phya pa I was able to find in Zhang's collected works.

<sup>89</sup> See especially R. Jackson 1982, Broido 1987, van der Kuijp 1983, and D. Jackson 1990 and 1994.

<sup>90</sup> D. Jackson 1990, 26. E.g., the famous *mahāmudrā* commentator Dwags po Bkra shis rnam rgyal (1512/1513–1587), commenting on Sapaṇ's contention that *mahāmudrā* was just a disguised form of Chinese Chan, writes

This statement is completely false for it reflects the critic's personal feeling rather than the truth. There is neither evidence nor logic in the contention. . . .

Namgyal 1993, 105.

Is this an unjust attack on Sapaṇ? I think it is important not lose sight of the fact that there were polemical conventions at play in the remarks of Padma dkar po and Bkra shis rnam rgyal, and that accusing one's opponent of personal bias was a perfectly acceptable

that same defender turns around and throws the anachronistic pejorative “anti-intellectual” at the early Bka’ brgyud pa-s, as if they were American fundamentalist parents trying to keep the teaching of evolution out of their children’s high school.<sup>91</sup> The real point, as Ronald Davidson rightly notes,<sup>92</sup> is that both sides have a lot of history on their side—extending back deep into the Indian traditions of Buddhism—and I think it would be more productive to look at the way these different approaches have waxed and waned depending on historical circumstances than to take sides. Looking at this as a conflict between different “styles of religious practice” (chos lugs) is one way of not taking sides.

b. *The Importance of Blessings*

I have received the blessings of the lama. Nothing is accomplished by babbling words. To rely on that is to fill your mouth with shit.<sup>93</sup>

[last words of Lama Zhang’s autobiography]

There is another danger we should be wary of when looking at these competing models of knowledge, and that is treating them as if they were instances of some sort of “perennial” human conflict: e.g., “reason vs. intuition,” “classicism vs. romanticism,” “rationalism vs. mysticism,” or any number of other such ready-made oppositions. This is very easy to do, because the disputes between meditators and scholastics do, on the surface, look so much like ones with which we are already familiar. But if we were to cast Lama Zhang as a sort of Tibetan Wordsworth flinging a defiant “We murder to dissect!” at Sapaṅ’s Jeremy Bentham, or as an anarchic prankster poking holes in the pretensions of stuffy academics, we should end up with a very misleading idea of what was at stake for the early Bka’ brygud pa-s.

The most important thing we would miss is the crucial role played in all of this by *blessings* (*byin rlabs*), because, for Zhang, the opposition is really not so much between pure intuition and calculating intellect as it is between knowledge realized *through the power of the lama* and knowledge

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rhetorical maneuver that everyone understood. Thus, e.g., we see Sapaṅ himself using this strategy when he complains that opponents, motivated by afflictive emotions, have willfully misunderstood his attacks on them:

[W]hile I have made refutations and proofs in conformity with scripture and reasoning . . . , most worldly people speak ill of me through thoughts of desire and aversion.

D. Jackson 1993, 120.

<sup>91</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 39.

<sup>92</sup> Davidson 2005, 431, fn 25.

<sup>93</sup> nga la bla ma’i byin rlabs zhugs pa yin/ ca le co le smra yis mi lang/ de la brten skyag pa khar chug/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.365.

not so empowered. The nonconceptual knowledge of realization is by no means a freewheeling, individual affair: it is in fact only possible when one has been blessed by a realized teacher. As Mar pa wrote:

Coemergence, the innate primordial awareness,  
Though present in the hearts of all beings,  
Cannot be realized if it is not pointed out by the lama.<sup>94</sup>

The solitary meditator without connection to a lama is cut off from any possibility of realization, no matter how assiduously he or she may pursue meditation or how powerful the experience.

This comes up repeatedly in Lama Zhang's life and writings. Shortly after he meets up with Sgom tshul, he is given his first *mahāmudrā* teaching, an instruction called "coemergence" (*lhan cig skyes sbyor*), after which Zhang has some remarkable meditative successes. A sort of spiritual pride results, and he returns to Sgom tshul, excited, and attempts to give verbal form to his experiences. Sgom tshul stops him with a warning: "Teacher Zhang, you think [too] much! Pray! This is the lineage of blessings!"<sup>95</sup> It is only after Sgom tshul checks this "fault of analysis"<sup>96</sup> that Zhang is able to achieve genuine meditative attainments.

It is significant that Sgom tshul offers *prayer*—by which is meant prayer to the lineage lamas for blessings—not intuition or experience, as the antidote to overintellectualization. A deep faith is required in order for one to be a proper vessel for blessings:

In general, it is because I have a thick armor [of faith, devotion to the lama] that a knowledge of all key points of the Dharma has come [easily] to me. Therefore, now, through the blessings of the lama, whatever I do turns into Dharma.<sup>97</sup>

Zhang is very explicit in his framing of this whole issue of conceptual knowledge vs. knowledge of the nature of the mind within the terms of the question of blessings:

<sup>94</sup> lhan cig skyes pa gnyug ma'i ye shes de/ 'gro ba kun gyi snying la yod gyur kyang/ bla mas ma mtshon rtogs par mi nus so/. Mar-pa Chos-kyi bLo gros 1995, 5a (7).

<sup>95</sup> zhang ston bsam blo la mang gsol ba thob/ de byin brlabs kyi brgyud pa yin gsung/. *Zin bris*, 39a–39b.

<sup>96</sup> brtag dpyad kyis bsgrub pa. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.348.

<sup>97</sup> spyir go cha 'thug po zhig yod pas chos kyi gnad thams cad shes pa zhig byung bas da lta bla ma'i byin rlabs kyis ci byas chos su 'gro ba 'di de las byung ba yin/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.362.

If you truly receive the blessings of the lama, you will recognize conceptual thought, and thus realize the nature of the mind. By that, you will understand the nature of all things.<sup>98</sup>

Later, looking back on his life in the autobiographical self-eulogy entitled *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of Sentient Beings]*, he reiterates this as the lesson of his first teaching from Sgom tshul:

When you received the blessings of Dwags po [Sgom tshul],  
unfabricated awareness dawned from within.  
Everything arose spontaneously as the one taste.  
Your own mind was uninterrupted great bliss.  
Conceptual thought was liberated naturally.<sup>99</sup>

In many ways, the English word “blessing” is simply not adequate to capture the full import of the Tibetan term *byin rlabs*. *Byin rlabs* is something that comes from direct contact with a buddha or a realized lama, and is often spoken of almost as a quasi-physical substance—or energy—that passes from the lama to the disciple at certain key moments. For example, when Zhang meets Rgwa lo tsā ba for the first time, he says:

When I saw his face, the hair of my body stood on end, and my consciousness was turned around. A marvelous experience of bliss and clarity arose and remained. . . . At that time, though [Rgwa lo] did not recognize me, I thought I had received a blessing.<sup>100</sup>

Sometimes a blessing is like an electric shock delivered to the body of the recipient. Other times, the body is paralyzed or goes limp.

Blessings are also thought to inhere in sacred objects and places, particularly ones that have a connection with an exalted figure. We saw this earlier, in Chapter One, when Zhang arrived at the residence of his soon-to-become root lama Mal Yer pa ba and, despite the absence of the lama himself, received a powerful blast of lama-energy just from being there:

<sup>98</sup> bla ma'i byin rlabs gsha' mar zhugs na/ nram rtog ngos zin te sems kyi rang bzhin rtogs nas yong/ des chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin shes te yong/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.358.

<sup>99</sup> dwags po'i byin rlabs zhugs pa'i tshe/ rig pa spros bral nang nas shar/ thams cad ro mnyam lhan cig skyes/ rang sems bde chen rgyun chad med/ nram par rtog pa ngang gis grol/. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.109–10.

<sup>100</sup> zhal mthong ba'i dus su lus kyi ba spu zing song bas shes pa log gis 'gyur/ bde gsal gyi nyams ngo mtshar can skyes nas 'dug .../ de'i dus su ngo ma shes byin rlabs zhugs snyam pa byung/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.325.

At the mere sight of the hermitage, tears poured and poured. It was like receiving a blessing. Later, actually meeting in person, there were no tears.<sup>101</sup>

Thus, the charge he received from the place was actually stronger than that generated by the lama himself when the two of them finally met.

It is this locally concentrated blessing energy that makes a place or object sacred, so that when pilgrims visit a holy site, or when lamas perform rituals centered on a consecrated object, one of their goals is to share in the blessing that resides in that site or object.<sup>102</sup> We see this in Zhang's account of a retreat he conducted with a small circle of close disciples at the Jo khang temple. Prayers were being said in front of the statue of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara known as the Mahākaraṇika (Tib. *snying rje chen po*):

When we made prayers, light rays in five colors issued from the hair tuft between the eyebrows of the statue. They dissolved into me and primordial wisdom blazed up spontaneously. Boundless blessings arose.<sup>103</sup>

Though it lacks this important connotation of power, “blessing” seems to be the only translation of *byin rlabs* that fits all of its usages reasonably well. Still, some scholars have offered coinages that work well in particular situations. Lama Yeshe offers “inspiration,”<sup>104</sup> Geoffrey Samuel “blessing-power”<sup>105</sup> and “positive spiritual energy,”<sup>106</sup> and David Jackson “spiritual impulse,”<sup>107</sup> while Toni Huber suggests “empowerment,” which he says “fits better with most Tibetan conceptions of the term.”<sup>108</sup> These translations—while not adequate substitutes for “blessing” as an all-purpose stand-in—do capture the sense of a dynamic and personal *power* that emanates from the lama to the disciple, charging body and mind with spiritual energy and inspirational zeal.

Indeed, as Huber points out, the notion of *byin rlabs* as “power” pervades all sectors of Tibetan culture and may in fact have its origins in

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<sup>101</sup> dgon pa mthong ba tsam gyis mchi ma shar shar byung/ byin rlabs de dus su zhugs pa ‘dra/ phyis zhal dngos su mjal ba la ni mchi ma ma byung/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.332.

<sup>102</sup> Samuel 2005, 63.

<sup>103</sup> gsol ba btab pa'i dus su/ sku lus kyi smin 'tshams kyi mdzod spu nas/ 'od zer kha dog lnga byung ste/ bdag la thim pa dang ye shes rang 'bar/ byin rlabs tshad med par byung/. *Lha sa ma rnam thar*, Shedup VII.535.

<sup>104</sup> Yeshe 1987, 98.

<sup>105</sup> Samuel 2005, 63.

<sup>106</sup> Samuel 1993, 267.

<sup>107</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 49.

<sup>108</sup> Huber 1999, 90.

the political realm. Though it is traditionally glossed as a Buddhist term, translating the Sanskrit word *adhiṣṭāna*,<sup>109</sup> it in fact has a pre-Buddhist meaning, associated with the kings of the early Tibetan royal cult:

[I]n the language of the pre-Buddhist royal cult the central figure, the *btsan-po* or divine king, was held to possess *byin* as a personal property or quality of his physical body. As an essential, powerful characteristic in this context *byin* is translated as “splendour” or “glory”. . . . [N]otions of power (or “status”?) and place, and perhaps even height, are all found in the concept that Tibetans represented with *byin-gyis-brlabs*.<sup>110</sup>

In this sense, as a bridge between the political realm, represented by divine kingship, and the religious, represented by the spiritual power of the lama, the term “charisma” might not be an entirely inappropriate rendering of *byin rlabs*. Below, in the Conclusion, this issue of charisma and Lama Zhang’s role as both a spiritual and a religious leader will be taken up in more detail.

\* \* \*

Initially it seemed we had a neat dichotomy within which to pigeonhole Lama Zhang—derived in part, no doubt, from our own culture: he was the man of experience and intuition, opposed to the scholar imprisoned within words and concepts. We have seen that things are not so simple, that the criticism of intellect was in part also a criticism of intellect employed without the necessary blessings, intellect as an attempted substitute for a personal relationship to a teacher:

To hope for realization of the true state of things through words and analysis, without hoping for the lama’s blessing, is to taste tears.<sup>111</sup>

If we looked closely, we would also see other ways in which the dichotomy would have to be qualified. For instance, as David Jackson points out, proponents of a scholasticized Buddhism—including Sapaṅ—generally agreed that, whatever the role of words and reasoning in the initial stages of the Buddhist path, “at the final stage, the ultimate could not be known

<sup>109</sup> “The Sanskrit can be glossed by ‘authority’, ‘power’, ‘residence’, ‘abode’, ‘seat’, taken from *adhiṣṭāna* (*√ṣṭā*) ‘to stand upon’, ‘to inhabit’, ‘to abide’, ‘to stand over’, ‘to govern’, etc.” Huber 1999, 91. Huber also writes, and I agree, that “it would be extremely interesting to compare in detail Tibetan conceptions of the embodiment of royal or religio-political power and its ritual aspects with those of ancient India. . . .” Huber 1999, 91.

<sup>110</sup> Huber 1999, 90–91.

<sup>111</sup> bla ma’i byin rlabs la mi re bar tshig dang brtag dpyad kyis gnas lugs rtogs su re ba ‘di ngu bro bar ‘dug/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.353.

directly by conceptual thought.”<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, Lama Zhang’s insistence on the importance of devotion to a lama and the receipt of blessings also would have been shared by Sa skya Paṇḍita and many other scholastics—though perhaps not assigned quite the same importance.

These qualifications do not make the opposition *meditator vs. scholastic* or *experiential vs. verbal knowledge* less useful, however. What they do make clear is that the issue is one of emphasis, and this is all the more reason to speak in terms of a conflict of *style*, not doctrine. Though Zhang and the scholastics he criticized may have shared many of the basic elements of doctrine and practice—they were all Buddhists, after all, and Buddhists within a rather specific tantric tradition—the way they configured these elements, the relative weights they assigned to particular elements (to reason and meditative insight for example), differed, and these differences constituted *different styles of practice*.

## 2. *Style of Meditation and Religious Practice*

The style of meditation with which Lama Zhang is generally associated is, of course, *mahāmudrā*. He is famous among the Bka’ brgyud pa-s for his work entitled *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*,<sup>113</sup> which is still quoted in contemporary treatments of the training. So closely is his name associated with *mahāmudrā* that a contemporary popular guidebook to Tibet—written by a well-known Tibet scholar—names him as one of those who first introduced the practice to Tibet.<sup>114</sup> The fact that he is known among contemporary scholars, both Tibetan and Western, primarily for his *mahāmudrā* text, and for the doctrinal controversies generated by Sa skya Paṇḍita’s criticisms of the “white panacea” (*dkar po chig thub*) doctrine (see below), may give the impression that he represented a sort of Tibetan counterpart to the well-known Japanese “single-practice” (*senju*) schools of Buddhism of the Kamakura period. The fact is, however, that his exposure ranged widely over a broad spectrum of exoteric and esoteric practices. As with his general approach to practice, his “style” of meditation consisted of his own individual mix of all of these different practices and traditions.

<sup>112</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 77.

<sup>113</sup> *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.78–149.

<sup>114</sup> Dorje 1996, 72: “The Kagyupa school maintains the lineages of the Indian masters Tilopa, Naropa, and Maitripa, which emphasize the perfection stage of meditation (*sampannakrama*) and the practice of the Great Seal (*Mahamudra*). These were introduced to Tibet by Marpa Lo-tswa (1012–96) and Zhang Tselpa (1122–93).”

a. *Classical Tantric Practices*

The general term for non-*mahāmudrā* tantric practices that seems to come up the most in Zhang's writings is "path of means" (*thabs lam*). For example, in the *Shes rab grub pa ma* autobiography, after he has been introduced by Sgom tshul to the life-changing *mahāmudrā* meditation, when it seems to him that "all of my earlier meditation had been superficial knowledge,"<sup>115</sup> he struggles to integrate this new practice into what he had been practicing previously when he was wandering the mountains with Mal Yer pa ba as a "cotton-clad" yogin (*ras pa*). At this time, Sgom tshul teaches him not to reject Yer pa ba's teachings, but to integrate them with *mahāmudrā*. Zhang reports:

Both the wind and the *mahāmudrā* [practices] were mixed as one. Both the path of means [*thabs lam*] and *mahāmudrā* were mixed as one.<sup>116</sup>

By "wind" practices, Zhang is referring to what are often called "perfection stage"<sup>117</sup> or "subtle body" yogas, which involve visualizing the body as a network of channels, through which subtle energies and fluids—called "winds" and "drops"—are made to pass. These, along with the "deity yoga" visualization practices of the "generation stage,"<sup>118</sup> make up the bulk of the classical tantric practices as they developed within the Bka' brgyud pa order.

(i) *The Six Dharmas of Nāropa* (nA ro chos drug). The classical tantric "perfection stage" practices are found within a widely dispersed corpus of texts and a complicated web of lineages. Within the Bka' brgyud pa traditions, these are generally presented as a more manageable and systematically arranged package of practices called the "Six Dharmas [or Yogas] of Nāropa." These six yogas are:

1. "fierce woman" (*gtum mo*; Skt. *caṇḍālī*)
2. illusory body (*sgyu lus*; Skt. *māyādeha*)
3. dream (*rmi lam*; Skt. *svapna*)
4. luminosity (*'od gsal*; Skt. *prabhāsvara*)
5. intermediate state (*bar do*; Skt. *antarābhava*)
6. transference of consciousness (*'pho ba*; Skt. *saṃkrānti*)

<sup>115</sup> 'a ma sngar gyi sgom thams cad shes pa kha phyir bltas su 'dug. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.347.

<sup>116</sup> rlung dang phyag rgya chen po gnyis gcig tu 'dres/ thabs lam dang phyag rgya chen po gnyis gcig tu 'dres/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.353.

<sup>117</sup> rdzogs rim (Skt. *saṃpannakrama*).

<sup>118</sup> bskyed rim (Skt. *utpattikrama*).



In time, “Six Dharmas of Nāropa” came to be a general term for everything taught by the Bka’ brgyud pa-s that was not *mahāmudrā*—i.e. a synonym for “path of means”—however, in Zhang’s lifetime, it appeared to refer to something a little more specific. Thus, for example, we see listed in the text *Various Lineages* a number of “path of means” lineages, but only one of these—the “standard” Bka’ brgyud pa lineage that passes from Vajradhara to Tailopa, Nāropa, Mar pa, Mi la ras pa, Sgam po pa, and Sgom tshul—is identified as a Six-Dharmas lineage.<sup>119</sup> That this is a designation for a specific lineage of teachings and not a general term for all such practices is evidenced by the fact that Zhang receives many of these “packaged” practices separately from teachers not included in the Six-Dharmas lineage. The most obvious example of this is the famous *gtum mo* or “fierce woman” inner-heat yoga, which he practices extensively with Rgwa lo tsā, Mal Yer pa ba, and Vairocanavajra, none of whom are part of the Six-Dharmas lineage. On the other hand, his Six-Dharmas root lama, Sgom tshul, is almost never mentioned in connection with the *gtum mo* practice.

(ii) *Cakrasaṃvara*. This tantric cycle belongs to the class of “highest yoga tantras,”<sup>120</sup> traditionally designated as a “mother” or “yogini” tantra.<sup>121</sup> Zhang’s first exposure came in a somewhat unusual manner when he was only 11 years old and under the tutelage of his first root lama Rngog Mdo lde. It appears that someone named Zhang tshab (possibly a relative?) was doing a practice involving the construction of a Cakrasaṃvara *maṇḍala*, and the young Lama Zhang happened upon the scene and caught a glimpse of the *maṇḍala*—something that is forbidden to one who has not received the proper initiation. He later wrote:

I also saw [the *maṇḍala*], and thus received a blessing, and my body was [temporarily] paralyzed.<sup>122</sup>

We will view this incident again, in a slightly different light, below under the heading “Inclusivism.”

Shortly thereafter, Zhang received two formal Cakrasaṃvara initiations, one called “the empowerment based on the painted cloth *maṇḍala*”<sup>123</sup> from a teacher named Lde’u in the district of Nag shod; the other called

<sup>119</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.300–01.

<sup>120</sup> rnal ‘byor bla na med pa’i rgyud (Skt. *anuttarayoga-tantra*).

<sup>121</sup> ma rgyud; rnal ‘byor ma’i rgyud.

<sup>122</sup> ngas kyang bltas pas byin brlabs zhugs nas lus sbrid chil gyi song. *Zin bris*, 7a.

<sup>123</sup> bde mchog gi ral bris la brten pa’i dbang. *Zin bris*, 17a.

“the empowerment based on the red powder *maṇḍala*”<sup>124</sup> in a place called Mkhar sna. Much later in his life, in a place called Rgyal, he met another of his root lamas, the great Indian master Vairocana vajra, who gave him another Cakrasaṃvara initiation.<sup>125</sup> The records he kept of teachings and teachers indicate that he also received Cakrasaṃvara teachings from his root lamas Rgwa lo tsā ba (the tradition of the *mahāsiddha* Lūipa<sup>126</sup> and the “wisdom *ḍākinī* consort tradition”),<sup>127</sup> and ‘Ol ka ba (the “single-deity” tradition).<sup>128</sup>

Cakrasaṃvara teachings became extremely important within the community of practitioners that began to assemble around Lama Zhang as he became better known. The Fifth Dalai Lama’s biographer, the regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, wrote with regard to Zhang that

He established a community of monks. He made the tutelary deity [Cakra]śaṃvara (bDe-mCHog) and the Protector-of-Religion, the four-armed Lord of Knowledge [Mahākāla], his chief (deities).<sup>129</sup>

Zhang had several visionary experiences involving the deity Cakrasaṃvara, one of which is particularly significant because it led to the establishment, in 1175, of the monastery of Tshal Yang dgon, one of his two major monasteries in the area of Tshal:

In the wood female sheep year [1175], it having been requested by Spu ru ba’s teaching lineage holders, [Zhang] had a vision [of the site] as the palace of [Cakra]saṃvara, and he built the monastery of Mtshal [yang dgon].<sup>130</sup>

This was the beginning of his involvement in the politics of the Lhasa area, and the deity Cakrasaṃvara would continue to stand as an emblem of the interconvertibility, in Zhang’s hands, of spiritual power and secular power. Of special note in this regard is the incident, recorded in the “*Scholars’ Feast*” *Dharma History*, where Dar ma gzhon nu, Lama Zhang’s successor to secular power, “had a vision, on the battle lines, of the face of [Cakra]saṃvara.”<sup>131</sup>

<sup>124</sup> rdul tshon la brten pa’i dbang. *Zin bris*, 17b.

<sup>125</sup> *Zin bris*, 49b.

<sup>126</sup> *Rtsa ba’i bla la ma sna tshogs kyis ‘thob byang*, Shedup I.307.

<sup>127</sup> bde mchog gi yum ye shes kyi mkha’ ‘gro ma. *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.296.

<sup>128</sup> dpa’ bog cig pa. *Rtsa ba’i bla la ma sna tshogs kyis ‘thob byang*, Shedup I.309.

<sup>129</sup> Ahmad 1999, 187.

<sup>130</sup> shing mo lug gi lo la spu ru ba’i slob ris rnams kyis zhu ba phul nas bde mchog gi pho brang du gzigs nas mtshal gyi dgon pa btab. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 192.

<sup>131</sup> dpon dar ma gzhon nus ‘khrug gral du bde mchog zhal mthong. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

(iii) *Vajravārāhī*. *Vajravārāhī* (Tibs. *rdo rje phag mo*) is a female buddha, often depicted in tantric art and literature as the consort of *Cakrasaṃvara*, but also on her own as chief deity of various *maṇḍalas* and practice traditions. Often she appears to be identified with *Vajrayoginī*.<sup>132</sup> Note that one of the *Cakrasaṃvara* practice traditions Zhang received from *Rgwa lo tsā ba* mentioned above is called “*Cakrasaṃvara*’s wisdom *ḍākinī*, the consort,” which I take to be a *Vajravārāhī* practice. His Indian lama, *Vairocana vajra*, conferred upon him a *Vajravārāhī* initiation,<sup>133</sup> as well as a practice called “Coemergence with *Gtūm mo* [inner heat],”<sup>134</sup> which would be a “perfection stage” subtle-body practice, but must also be a *Vajravārāhī* deity-yoga practice because it lists her as the first teacher of the lineage.<sup>135</sup> *Mal Yer pa ba* initiated him into a lineage called the “*Vārāhī* goat lineage”<sup>136</sup> as well as a practice called the “Revered Lady *Yoginī*,”<sup>137</sup> which it seems likely refers to *Vajravārāhī/Vajrayoginī*.

Of particular significance is the episode described above in Chapter One where Zhang, after days of strenuous subtle-body practices, has a dream encounter with *Vajrayoginī* wherein he is transformed into the letter *hūṃ* and sucked up into her central channel—in an odd sort of reverse subtle-body practice; or rather, an odd table-turning occurrence in which he, the former subject of the yoga, becomes the manipulated syllable-object of *Vajrayoginī*’s own subtle-body yoga—and upon being expelled from her body, he wakes up as a buddha. Also noteworthy—and possibly connected with the *Vajrayoginī* dream—is his dream encounter with an assembly of wisdom *ḍākinīs* who give him a subtle-body practice that also involves the manipulation of the syllable *hūṃ*, which he practices assiduously for several days, following which he is granted a *Vajrayoginī* deity-yoga practice and a text, which turns out to be the autobiographical self-eulogy the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]*.<sup>138</sup> This is described in more detail below in Chapter Three, below.

<sup>132</sup> English 2002, xxii.

<sup>133</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.305.

<sup>134</sup> *lhan cig skyes pa dang gtum mo*.

<sup>135</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.305–06.

<sup>136</sup> *phag mo ra lugs brgyud. Phag mo ra lugs brgyud pa’i gsol ‘debs*, Shedup I.99–100.

<sup>137</sup> *jo mo rnal ‘byor ma. Brgyud pa sna tshogs*. I.300. The listed lineages are identical—*Rdo rje phag mo*, *Bi na pa ri*, ‘*Ba*’ *ro phyag rdum*, *Rje lo tsā ba chen po*, *ShAkya seng+ge*, *Gling ka ba*, *Yer pa ba*. Perhaps they are two names for the same practice?

<sup>138</sup> *Dgos ‘dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.108–111.

If indeed Vajrayoginī is identical here with Vajravārāhī, this would be one more reason to place the Cakrasaṃvara-Vajravārāhī lineages and cycles of practice at the very center of Zhang's meditative constellation.

(iv) *Hevajra*. Like the Cakrasaṃvara tantras, the Hevajra is also considered a “highest yoga tantra” of the “mother” or “yoginī” tantra class. Mar pa lo tsā ba, who received the transmission from Nāropa, is considered to have played a major role in the propagation of this tantric cycle in Tibet.<sup>139</sup> Lama Zhang received the Mar pa transmission of this tantra, but what is interesting is that it does not follow the standard Bka' brgyud pa lineage path: from Mar pa it passes to Mi la ras pa, but then rather than passing through Sgam po pa and Sgom tshul as might be expected, it is transmitted to Gling kha ba, and then Mal Yer pa ba, who in turn teaches it to Zhang. This particular version of the Hevajra teaching is called the “Simultaneous, the Gradual, and the Random Paths,”<sup>140</sup> or alternatively the “Three Paths.”<sup>141</sup> Another Hevajra teaching, called the “Hevajra Coemergence,”<sup>142</sup> came to Zhang by way of Vairocana vajra, bypassing the whole standard Bka' brgyud pa lineage.<sup>143</sup>

(v) *The Dharma Protectors* (chos skyong). An important part of Zhang's ritual practice involved the class of deities known as “Dharma Protectors” (chos skyong), wrathful forms of buddhas, described by Nebesky-Wojkowitz as “gods and goddesses who have passed beyond the six spheres of existence,” as opposed to “those deities who are still residing within the spheres inhabited by animated beings.”<sup>144</sup> The most significant of these ferocious realized beings are Mahākāla and Dpal ldan lha mo.

<sup>139</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, 484; Roerich 1976, 400.

<sup>140</sup> lam cig char ba dang/ rim gyis pa dang/ kha 'thor ba. *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.296–97.

<sup>141</sup> lam gsum. There is a eulogy by Lama Zhang to the “Three Paths” lineage, which lists the same line of lamas mentioned in the *Brgyud pa sna tshogs* above. On this basis, I am assuming they refer to the same set of practices. *Lam gsum brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs*. I-104–08. It would appear that David Jackson, in discussing the controversy about the “white panacea” (see below, section entitled “Sūtra Mahāmudrā”), mistakes the lam cig char ba portion of this Hevajra teaching for the mahāmudrā “instantaneous path” teaching, which sometimes goes by the name of cig char ba. D. Jackson 1994, 81. It is difficult to know, without further information, what this “simultaneous path” Hevajra teaching might be.

<sup>142</sup> dpal dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa.

<sup>143</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.306.

<sup>144</sup> Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 3. See also Beyer 1978, 47–54.

*Mahākāla*. As reported by Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho,<sup>145</sup> the principal protector deity of Tshal Gung thang monastery was Mahākāla, the “Great Black One” (Tib. *nag po chen po*)—often referred to simply as “the Protector” (Tib. *mgon po*).<sup>146</sup> Mahākāla assumes many different forms. It would appear that the one that was most important to the Tshal pa-s was the Four-Armed Mahākāla (*mgon po phyag bzhi*), a statue of which still stands in Tshal gung thang. We also see important encounters in dreams and visions with Ye shes mgon po, the “primordial wisdom” manifestation of Mahākāla.

The primary source of Lama Zhang’s Mahākāla teachings was Rgwa lo tsā ba. Rgwa lo, who had been such a strong presence in Zhang’s life, was well known in Tibet as a primary transmitter of important Mahākāla lineages.<sup>147</sup> According to the list of Lama Zhang’s lineages, *Various Lineages*,<sup>148</sup> the version of the Mahākāla teachings Zhang received was called “The Crow-Faced Dharma Protector” (*chos skyong bya rog can*), and it centered on an emanation of Mahākāla with the face of a crow. This will be discussed below in Chapter Five, the section entitled “‘Fierce Activities’: the Question of Tantric Justifications.” Rgwa lo received the Mahākāla teachings in India from Tsa mi lo tsā ba.<sup>149</sup>

The companion list to *Various Lineages*, called *Various Root Lamas*, mentions as well a teaching Zhang received from Rngog mdo lde called “The Two Segments of the Tent” (*gur brtag gnyis*),<sup>150</sup> which seems to belong to the cycle of “Mahākāla of the Tent” (*gur mgon*) teachings.<sup>151</sup> Another of his teachers, Lama Gshen pa, was also known as a practitioner of the “Mahākāla of the Tent” teachings, which he received from the Great Sa skya lama Sa chen Kun dga’ snying po.<sup>152</sup> It is not clear, however, whether he initiated Zhang into this teaching.

As will be discussed in detail in the Chapters Four and Five, the practices centering on this wrathful protector deity Mahākāla became especially important at the time Zhang moved into public life, serving as what

<sup>145</sup> Ahmad 1999, 187.

<sup>146</sup> See Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 38–67.

<sup>147</sup> Della Santina 2003, 185. Della Santina bases her work on the *Bstan srung rgya mtsho’i rnam thar*, an eighteenth-century work on the protector deities written by the Dge lugs pa author Sle lung Rje drung Bzhad pa’i rdo rje (b.1697).

<sup>148</sup> *Brgyud pa sna tshogs*, Shedup I.293–307.

<sup>149</sup> *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 530; Sperling 1994; Sperling 2004.

<sup>150</sup> *Rtsa ba’i bla ma sna tshogs kyis ’thob byang*, Shedup I.310.

<sup>151</sup> See Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.222, n. 593.

<sup>152</sup> Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje, *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.133.

some would consider a tantric rationalization for violent acts—what Sperling calls the use of “the cult of Mahākāla as a means toward worldly empowerment.”<sup>153</sup> As it turns out, this use of Mahākāla-centered tantra as a support for quasi-imperial ambitions would be picked up by the Mongols in the next century, much of which can be traced directly to Lama Zhang’s influence.<sup>154</sup>

*Dpal ldan lha mo.* A closely associated wrathful protector deity who was extremely influential in the ritual life of Lama Zhang and the Tshal pa-s was the goddess Dpal ldan lha mo.<sup>155</sup> She is often represented as either an attendant or a consort of Mahākāla.<sup>156</sup> There is in Tshal Gung thang an important statue known as the “Dpal ldan lha mo, Sovereign of the Desire Realm” (*dpal ldan lha mo ‘dod khams dbang phyug ma*), which used to be kept in the Mahākāla shrine room, the so-called “Protector Chapel” (*mgon khang*), and is the focus of a yearly ceremonial marriage between Dpal ldan lha mo and Grib Rdzong btsan, protector of the neighboring Grib valley.<sup>157</sup> These are the two protector deities who, as we saw in the summary of Zhang’s life in Chapter One, are said to have initiated the invitation of Sgom tshul to Lhasa at the time when factional fighting had laid to waste both the Jo khang and the Ra mo che temples.

This episode is evidence of an early association of Dpal ldan lha mo with the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang, or Jo khang, temple, so that Zhang’s involvement with her is tied closely to his involvement with the temple and the Jo bo Śākyamuni statue. She would later become an important protector deity for the Dge lugs pa sect and the Dalai Lamas, and the latter would make use of this Jo khang–Dpal ldan lha mo symbolic nexus originally articulated by Zhang in their political-religious ideology of rule over Lhasa.

As we shall see below in Chapters Four and Five, Dpal ldan lha mo appears to Zhang especially at politically crucial moments or moments when he is undergoing a crisis of confidence in the religious viability of some of his more controversial political activities.

<sup>153</sup> Sperling 2004, 5.

<sup>154</sup> Sperling 2004, 1. For the importance of the Mahākāla cult to the Tangut and the Mongol Yuan rulers, see Debreczeny 2007, 20–27.

<sup>155</sup> For general information on Dpal ldan lha mo, see Tucci 1949, 590–94; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, 22–37; Heller 2003, 82–87.

<sup>156</sup> Heller 2003, 85.

<sup>157</sup> See Richardson 1993, 87–89; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.585–93.

(vi) *Other Lesser Deities*. As a master magician, Zhang was accustomed to, and skilled at, dealing with all of the lesser deities that play such an important role in Tibetan everyday life—what Beyer describes as “the innumerable malevolent spirits whom the Tibetans consider, along with the human maledictions that often set them in motion, the original cause of almost every calamity.”<sup>158</sup> He was said to have been harassed by assorted bothersome demons (*‘dre srin*) all of his life, and seems finally, towards the end, to have made some kind of peace with them.<sup>159</sup> He dealt as well with the spirits known as “gods and demons” (*lha srin*), such as the *rgyal po* and the *ma mo*.<sup>160</sup> The most important among these, though, is the *klu*, aquatic serpentine creatures often equated with the Indian *nāga* deities, but that apparently had a pre-Buddhist existence as indigenous Tibetan deities.<sup>161</sup> These were especially important as guardians of the land, which means that in many of his territorial dealings, acquisitions, and conquests Zhang negotiated with these deities. Throughout his lifetime, Zhang cultivated unusually good relations with the *klu*—often encountering them in dreams, and even traveling to the palace of the *klu* and preaching the Dharma to their kings and queens<sup>162</sup>—and their significance for him is bound up intimately with his role as “Lord of the Teachings” (see Chapter Four) and proprietor of the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang temple, for the *klu* had served as special protectors of the temple from the very time of its construction.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Beyer 1978, 292.

<sup>159</sup> See *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup 345–46.

<sup>160</sup> See, e.g., *Zin bris*, 7b; *Lho rong chos ‘byung* 184; *Rgyal po chen po bzhis gnas lugs bstab pa*, Shedup VII.321; *Lha sa ma rnam thar*, Shedup VII.536; *Rnam thar gsol ‘debs srid gsum bla ma*, Shedup VI.100; *Gdos pa ‘khrug pa’i dus su gsung pa*, Shedup V.667.

For scholarship on the *lha srin*, see in particular the April 2002 (no. 2) issue of *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines*. Especially pertinent is Karmay 2002.

<sup>161</sup> See Dollfus 2002.

<sup>162</sup> *Rnam thar rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.270–71.

<sup>163</sup> See, e.g., the account of the building of the Jo khang in the *Rgyal rabs gsal ba’i me long*:

At this time, there came a naga-king, an emanation of the Lord Buddha, white in colour with a hood of snakes and three eyes. Having presented a white, lasso-forming snake to Songtsen Gampo, he said, ‘Erect an image of me, and I shall protect this royal shrine from any future damage up to the magnitude of the Lesser Thousand-fold World!’ Then the naga-king Nanda came and said, ‘Erect an image of me, and I shall protect this royal shrine from any future damage up to the magnitude of the Intermediate Thousand-fold World!’ Then the naga-king Upananda came and said, ‘Erect an image of me, and I shall protect this royal shrine from any future damage up to the magnitude of the Three Thousand-fold Worlds!’

Translation, Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltzen 1996, 173.



b. “*Post-Tantra*”<sup>164</sup>

(i) *Sūtra Mahāmudrā*. In the thirteenth century, the great Sa skya Paṇḍita, in his *Discrimination of the Three Vows*,<sup>165</sup> *Entrance Gate for the Wise*,<sup>166</sup> and *Elucidation of the Sage’s Intention*,<sup>167</sup> wrote strong criticisms of what he considered to be doctrinal deviations in contemporary Tibetan versions of Buddhism—particularly those offered by the Bka’ brgyud pa order, but also notably the Rnying ma pa and Bon po “Treasure revealers” (*gter ston*). His measure was always Indian Buddhism,<sup>168</sup> and he believed many Tibetan versions of the teachings to be decadent and unjustified deviations from the true Buddhism of its land of origin, if not downright fabrications. Though he does not mention Lama Zhang by name, it is clear from later Sa skya pa commentators on the works, such as Go rams pa Bsod nams Seng ge, that Lama Zhang was a major object of these criticisms.<sup>169</sup>

One of the doctrines with which Zhang’s name became associated as a result of these criticisms was known as the teaching of the “white panacea” (*dkar po chig thub*),<sup>170</sup> a medical metaphor used to refer to a single practice that contains within it the whole Buddhist path—that is, in David Jackson’s words, “a teaching through which, by the power of realizing or knowing this one thing alone . . . , a person is able to be completely liberated. . . .”<sup>171</sup> Thus, Zhang writes in the *Lam zab mthar thug*:

de’i dus su klu’i rgyal po sangs rgyas bcom ldan ‘das sku mdog dkar po sprul gyi  
gdengs ka can/ spyan gsum dang ldan pa byon te/ rgyal po la sprul zhags dkar po cig  
phul nas/ rgyal po’i lha khang ‘di la stong chung ngu’i bar gyi gnod pa byung na ngas  
srungs shig/ nga’i gzugs cig mdzod cig zer ro/ yang klu’i rgyal po dga’ bo byung nas/  
rgyal po’i lha khang ‘di la stong bar ma’i bar du gnod pa byung na ngas srungs shig/  
nga’i gzugs cig mdzod ci zer ro/ yang klu’i rgyal po nye dga’ byung nas/ rgyal po’i lha  
khang ‘di la stong gsum gyi bar du chu’i gnod pa byung na ngas srungs shig/ nga’i  
gzugs cig mdzod cig zer ro/.

*Rgyal rabs gsal ba’i me long*, 141.

<sup>164</sup> The term was coined by David Germano. See Germano and Hillis 2005.

<sup>165</sup> *Sdom gsum rab dbye*. English translation, Rhoton 2002.

<sup>166</sup> *Mkhas pa rnam sgyu pa’i sgo*. English translation, D. Jackson 1987.

<sup>167</sup> *Thub pa’i dgongs gsal*.

<sup>168</sup> Davidson 2005, 154: “[W]hen the question of orthodoxy is considered, the neoconservative view really occupies one of two perspectives. On one hand, a work, teaching, or ritual is deemed authentic if it is Indian in origin, although this is sometimes difficult to determine.”

<sup>169</sup> Rhoton 2002 does an excellent job of identifying the targets of Sapaṇ’s complaints using commentators such as Go rams pa. For a general overview of the Tibetan “Three Vows (*sdom gsum*)” literature, to which this work of Sapaṇ stood as a key contribution, see Sobisch 2002.

<sup>170</sup> D. Jackson translates this term as “self-sufficient white remedy.”

<sup>171</sup> D. Jackson 1990, 27.



In the moment you realize your own mind,  
all of the white virtues without remainder  
are perfected in a single instant, without [any other] practice.<sup>172</sup>

The white panacea doctrine was controversial for three reasons: (1) it seemed to render superfluous many of the practices that were viewed, both traditionally and by Sa skya Paṇḍita, as essential steps on the path to the final goal of liberation; (2) it appeared to bypass the strict tantric requirement that a practitioner undergo a series of secret initiations prior to undertaking advanced teachings; and (3) it was considered to be a “Chinese” teaching—in particular a teaching of the dread Chan monk Hwa shang Mahāyāna, who had, according to semi-legendary accounts, been banished from Tibet by king Khri strong lde'u btsan in the eighth century after his doctrine had been definitively refuted by the Indian master Kamalaśīla.

The origins of the white panacea teaching—and possibly also the phrase *dkar po chig thub*—lie in the work of Sgam po pa, particularly in his controversial teaching of what came to be called “*sūtra mahāmudrā*.” Sgam po pa himself cites the canonical *sūtra*-class *Uttaratantra*, a treatise on the Buddha-nature attributed to Maitreya, as the source of *sūtra mahāmudrā*.<sup>173</sup> However, according to the account given in the *Blue Annals*, *mahāmudrā*, before Sgam po pa, was not considered to be an independent practice—it was a state of realization that arose within the tantric perfection stage *gtum mo* or inner-heat practice.<sup>174</sup> We see this, for example, in a biography of the Indian *siddha* Tailopa attributed to Sgam po pa's predecessor, Mar pa lo tsā ba, where *mahāmudrā* is explicitly presented as part of the perfection stage. This occurs in a scene where Tailopa encounters a wisdom *ḍākini*, who tells him, “If you want to attain . . . my mind, be assiduous in the Great Seal of the perfection stage.”<sup>175</sup> However, according to the *Blue Annals*,

<sup>172</sup> rang sems rtogs pa'i skad cig mar/ dkar po'i yon tan ma lus pa/ bsgrubs pa med par dus gcig rdzogs/. *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.140.

<sup>173</sup> “The sourcebook of this mahāmudrā of ours is the *Mahayana Highest Continuum [Uttaratantra]* composed by the transcendent conqueror Maitreya.” Quoted in Kongtrul 2007, 209. See also Sherpa 2004, 164–65. Sherpa also suggests that an overlooked influence on Sgam po pa's *mahāmudrā* is Maitrīpa, Mar pa's other key teacher besides Nāropa. Sherpa 2004, 166–73.

<sup>174</sup> phyag rgya chen po'i rtogs pa de yang rje mar pa dang rje btsun mi la gnyis kyi ring la/ sngon du gtum mo'i ye shes bskyed/. *Deb ther sngon po*, 846.

<sup>175</sup> thugs [sgrub par 'dod na] rdzogs rims phyag rgya chen po la btsun par gyis shig. *Bde mchog mkha' 'gro snyan rgyud*, vol. *kha*—*Brgyud pa yid bzhin nor bu'i nram par thar*

Dwags po Rin po che [Sgam po pa] caused the *mahāmudrā* realization to arise also in novices who had never received the tantric initiation.<sup>176</sup>

This was what caused the furor. Hitherto, *mahāmudrā* had belonged exclusively to the tantric teachings—which means it was guided by a strict system of vows and initiations (or “empowerments”) that were given to secret initiates who had been thoroughly trained in the “path of means” practices described above—particularly the “development stage” deity-yoga and the “completion stage” subtle-body practices.

Sa skya Paṇḍita claimed that one reason Sgam po pa’s “white panacea” was being taught outside the system of tantric initiations was that the teaching was actually nontantric in origin, descended, in fact, not from Nāropa as claimed, but from Chinese Chan—or, as he puts it: “Chinese-style Great Perfection,”<sup>177</sup> a brilliant coinage that skewers three doctrines (the Great Seal, the Great Perfection, and Chan) with a single phrase. He even hints at dark conspiracies to install these foreign practices through deception:

[Proponents of *mahāmudrā*], based only on the words  
of the system of the Chinese master [Hwa shang Mahāyāna],  
changed the name to *mahāmudrā*,  
concealing its [true] name.<sup>178</sup>

As it turns out, there is in fact evidence—cited by van der Kuip, David Jackson, and Kapstein—of a Chinese influence in Sgam po pa’s work (though nothing that would support a conspiracy theory): first of all, an association, traceable at least as far back as the twelfth century, of the term “white panacea” with the Chinese Chan monk Hwa shang Mahayana,<sup>179</sup> and secondly, quotations from “apocryphal” Chan sutras that turn up in Sgam po pa’s best-known work, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*.<sup>180</sup> It is

pa, 7a. In Mar-pa Chos-kyi bLo-gros 1995, 12. My rendition is a slightly altered version of the English translation on p. 43.

<sup>176</sup> dwags po rin po ches ni/ las dang po ba dbang bskur ma thob pa dag la yang phyag rgya chen po’i rtogs pa bskyed par mdzad./ *Deb ther sngon po*, 847.

<sup>177</sup> rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen. *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, III.167 (Rhoton 2002, 303).

<sup>178</sup> rgya nag mkhan po’i gzhung lugs kyi/ yi ge tsaṃ la brten nas kyang/ de yi ming ‘dog gsang nas ni/ phyag rgya chen por ming bsgyur nas/ da lta’i phyag rgya chen po ni/ phal cher rgya nag chos lugs yin. *Sdom gsum rab dbye*, III.174–75 (Rhoton 2002, 304).

<sup>179</sup> See van der Kuip 1986; D. Jackson 1990, 21; D. Jackson 1992, 104; D. Jackson 1994, 3.

<sup>180</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 17–24; Kapstein 2000, 77. Kapstein writes, “[I]t is very unlikely that Gampopa and his cohorts were deriving such quotations directly from the [“apocryphal”] sūtras cited; rather they probably were culling them from preexisting meditation manuals....”

not clear whether Sa skya Paṇḍita had access to any of the actual sources cited by the modern researchers, or whether his charge was based on inferences made from the many doctrinal and rhetorical similarities he noticed between *mahāmudrā* and Chan. David Jackson has written, e.g., about certain literary images used by Hwa shang to represent “all-at-once enlightenment” that also appear in Great Perfection and *mahāmudrā* texts—including those of Lama Zhang<sup>181</sup>—and pointed out where Sapaṇ, in his *Discrimination of the Three Vows*, criticized this very imagery as having no basis in Indian canonical works.<sup>182</sup>

On the one hand, this research on the traces of Chinese tradition to be found within Tibetan materials is fascinating, and a much-needed antidote to the Indocentrism and systematic suppression of any mention of Chinese influences in official Tibetan religious histories. On the other hand, however, one has to wonder if it is really necessary to go so far afield to explain the presence in Tibet of a movement that valorizes direct experience and rejects conceptualization when the Indian Buddhist tradition is full of such movements<sup>183</sup>—one of which took up the already-existing tantric term *mahāmudrā*.

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<sup>181</sup> The one that I noticed immediately was the metaphor of “finger pointing at the moon”: kho bos smras pa des kyang mi dpog ste/mdzub mos zla ba mtshon pa bzhin du rtogs/. *Lam zab mthar thug*, Shedup IV.85.

<sup>182</sup> D. Jackson 1992, 104–05.

<sup>183</sup> It is tempting to call these movements “protestant Buddhism,” after Gregory Schopen’s famous essay on “Protestant presuppositions” in Euro-American Buddhist scholarship. Schopen 1997. This is not the place to go into the issue at length, but suffice it to say that, whatever their prejudices, those who “Protestantized” Buddhism were not inventing something out of whole cloth; they were picking up on a set of discursive forms and strategies that had been present from the very beginnings of Buddhism, even if they exaggerated them and ignored other important things in the process. Throughout its history, there have been movements that have recapitulated this anti-ritualist, anti-discursive, anti-bureaucratic rebellion of the “historical Buddha”—“back-to-the-Buddha”-style movements—backed by a pervasive negative rhetoric, that have sought to cut through complex institutional accretions and strip Buddhist practice down to something basic and simple. We might think of Germano’s “post-tantra” as an example of one of these periodic “back-to-the-basics” movements. And perhaps “protestant” is not such a bad name for these movements if we mean by that a movement based on a “protest” against what is seen as a status quo. These are rebellious, often anti-institutional, movements that try to take practice back to something basic and simple. In this sense, we might call them “romantic” movements, perhaps even “nostalgic” movements insofar as the wonderful past they try to revive is often an idealized projection, a past that never really existed (on this issue, see also Davidson 2002b, 227, on *siddha* culture appropriations of “tribal” identities; perhaps this is also relevant to Lama Zhang’s mysterious “nomad dance” (*brog shon*) verse, Shedup IV.542). We might also note that romantic movements of this sort seldom last for more than a generation before they are co-opted—one reason, I suppose, why they must recur periodically. Also, see Weber 1978, 452, on the “routinization of charisma.”

It falls to future scholarship to trace the evolution of this word *mahāmudrā* within the multiple tantric traditions of India and Tibet—it would appear to be exceedingly complicated. We do know, however, that Sapaṇ and the others who objected to a nontantric *mahāmudrā* were correct in their contention that the concept had originally belonged to the classical tantric teachings, particularly those falling within the class of “highest yoga tantra” such as the above-mentioned Cakrasaṃvara and Hevajra cycles. Within those teachings, the word appeared especially in texts describing the “subtle-body” sexual yogas, taking on a whole range of referents, from an individual yogic technique, to the consort with whom one united, to the experience of blissful realization made possible through union with that consort, to the ultimate reality that revealed itself in that experience—and eventually simply “ultimate reality” *tout court*, irrespective of the practice context within which it was revealed.<sup>184</sup>

At the same time that the meaning of *mahāmudrā* was being transformed and the term was being separated from its original contexts, a new set of practices began to appear within tantric communities in both India and Tibet. Again, the history is very hazy, the sources are primarily textual, and we have to be careful in evaluating the texts that evidence these new trends, for their connection to actual practices on the ground may be tenuous, complex, rhetorical, and/or deceptive. But what we can say is that these new views seemed a sort of reaction against classical tantra, rejecting complicated meditations, athletic yogas, and horrific, violent, and sexualized symbol systems in favor of single simplified, often relatively formless, styles of meditation. Germano calls these movements

<sup>184</sup> See, e.g., S.K. Ramachandra Rao:

*Hevajra-tantra* calls upon the devotees to adopt “mahāmudrā” which involves the employment of ones own bodily energies.... There is little doubt that it originally meant “the great seal”, and signified a method of sealing up (or locking) the strength (physical, psychical and sexual)... [Later,] *mahāmudrā* came to mean the passionate girl that one takes during the ritual performance of “secret congress” (*guhyaśamāja*).

Rao 2002, 140–41.

Ronald Davidson compares *mahāmudrā* to the related term *sahaja*, which originally had a more specific technical meaning, but then was “wrenched from its web of relations and cast as a cipher for absolute being.” Davidson 2002a, 65. About *mahāmudrā* specifically, Davidson writes:

Similarly, *mahāmudrā* in some early esoteric literature appears to describe a specific symbol (a seal), and this was no doubt related to its initial genesis. I believe that this was the same process to which *sahaja* became subject.

Davidson 2002a, 66.

“post-tantric.”<sup>185</sup> What is meant by this is that, though they may bear a superficial resemblance to approaches that historically preceded tantra—such as the “Perfection of Wisdom” teachings on emptiness—or practices relatively untouched by the esoteric strain of Buddhism—such as East Asian “single-practice” schools—they are in fact very different in character, for they represent approaches that originated *within* the tantric tradition, but that subsequently passed *through* it into something else. Thus, though the simplified post-tantric conceptions of practice may, on the surface, resemble nontantric single-practice movements, they differed in that they retained residues of tantra—semantic accretions that, though invisible, still made their presence felt.<sup>186</sup> In Tibet, these practices came to prominence especially among the Bka’ brgyud pa-s and the Rnying ma pa-s, and there are many resemblances—as well as lineage ties—among the Rnying ma pa followers of the Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*) and the Bka’ brgyud pa *mahāmudā* acolytes.<sup>187</sup>

It is within the context of these broad movements that we have to place Sgam po pa’s *sūtra mahāmudrā*. Though works such as the *Blue Annals* make it seem as though Sgam po pa simply invented a new practice out of the blue, from a historical standpoint, we can see that a broader social movement was afoot, that post-tantra was “in the air” and being taken up within a number of divergent circles.

(ii) *Rhetoric and Reality*. Lama Zhang has been typecast as the model proponent of the post-tantric “simultaneist” (*cig car ba*) path—“one of the most famous and radical exponents of a ‘simultaneous’ and ‘instantaneous’ method of Mahāmudrā realization among the early Dwags-po bKa’-brgyud-pas”<sup>188</sup>—largely on the basis of his famous *mahāmudrā* treatise, *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*. And there is no denying that the tract is full of hyperbolic statements about the self-sufficiency of *mahāmudrā* as a means of enlightenment irrespective of the presence or absence of any of the traditional path factors Sa skya Paṇḍita would have wished to see. But the problem here, as with post-tantra in general, is that it is never

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<sup>185</sup> See Germano and Hillis 2005, 1288, where reference is made to “the evolution of independent traditions out of perfection-phase praxis that embraced a radical rhetoric of the transcendence of practice along with a proclivity for naturalism, spontaneity, and nonconceptuality rather than the esoteric motifs of transgression, sexuality, and power.”

<sup>186</sup> Germano 1994, 207.

<sup>187</sup> See, e.g., Zhang’s recitation, at a very early age, of a Great Perfection verse in the presence of one of his first teachers, Ma Jo Dar ma, above, Chapter One.

<sup>188</sup> D. Jackson 1992, 102.

quite clear what conclusions we should draw from his written words. As Germano writes, in regard to the similar negative rhetoric of the Great Perfection,

[I]n the history of Buddhism we often find the rhetorical negation of a practice serves a variety of functions without necessarily entailing the literal rejection of the practice in question.<sup>189</sup>

That this is so in Lama Zhang's case is evident everywhere you look outside of *The Path of Ultimate Profundity*. Just the long list of teachers and practices detailed above, by itself, should raise suspicions that the "white panacea" may not be the whole story. Zhang was 32 years old ("in my 33rd year")<sup>190</sup> when he received his first instruction on *mahāmudrā*. In other words, he had already received twenty-five to thirty years of traditional sūtra and tantra teachings before he was administered the "self-sufficient" remedy. If *mahāmudrā* is literally to be regarded as the only practice necessary, why does Zhang engage in such a variety of ritual, yogic, and magical practices? Furthermore, it may be true that, after he was given the *mahāmudrā* instruction on coemergence by Sgom tshul, all of his past meditation felt superficial,<sup>191</sup> but he clearly did not stop doing these other practices. Indeed, Sgom tshul, after Zhang had achieved that initial opening experience, worked hard to make sure he integrated *mahāmudrā* with the subtle-body heat practices he had been doing with *Rwga lo tsā ba* and *Mal Yer pa ba*.<sup>192</sup>

Furthermore, in his Sealed Precepts (*Bka' rgya ma*)<sup>193</sup> there are records of the secret retreats he held with a small circle of his closest disciples. The texts are full of accounts of every manner of tantric teaching: Cakrasaṃvara, Dpal Idan lha mo, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrayoginī, Vajradhara, Vajrapāṇi, the wisdom *ḍākinīs*, Mahākāla, Vajra Wave, the Four Guardian Kings, the Dharma Protectors, Ye shes mgon po, *gaṇacakra* feast offerings, fire offerings, *gtor ma* offerings, *maṇḍala* offerings, refuge and confession rituals, and so forth. There is nothing whatsoever to indicate Zhang was giving his disciples anything like the stripped-down "single-practice" style

<sup>189</sup> Germano 1994, 227–28.

<sup>190</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.347.

<sup>191</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.347.

<sup>192</sup> "Both the wind and the *mahāmudrā* [practices] were mixed as one. Both the path of means and *mahāmudrā* were mixed as one" (rlung dang phyag rgya chen po gnyis gcig tu 'dres/ thabs lam dang phyag rgya chen po gnyis gcig tu 'dres/). *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.353.

<sup>193</sup> *Zhang bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.1–706.

teachings that one would see in certain East Asian Buddhist schools. There are many instances where *mahāmudrā* comes up, but it is, to my knowledge, never presented as a self-sufficient single-practice road to enlightenment. Even out on the battlefield, a principle of equal time seems to have been observed: one disciple, it is true, is reported as having a *mahāmudrā* realization, but another sees the face of Cakrasaṃvara.<sup>194</sup>

Perhaps most striking of all is that when Zhang, according to the tradition, achieved buddhahood, clearly the peak moment of his religious career, it happened based on weeks of strenuous subtle-body practices—the *hūṃ* syllable practices given to him by the wisdom *dākinīs*—in conjunction with a visionary dream. There is no mention at this time of *mahāmudrā*.

\* \* \*

### 3. *Inclusivist Outlook*

The sharp criticisms Sa skya Paṇḍita made of Sgam po pa and Lama Zhang evidence a religious sensibility very different from that of Lama Zhang himself, and I cannot help but think that, as with the issue of mixing teachings, much of what is at stake here has more to do with clashing religious styles than with substantive points of doctrine and practice.

Dan Martin notes how, in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, as the loose sectarian lines and institutional affiliations of an earlier period gave way to group consolidation and contention between distinct groups, “there was a strongly emerging concern for sectarian self-identification,” which “involved pointing out what was ‘different’ about one’s own tradition against the others, while reserving the claim to possess the total picture.”<sup>195</sup> In this climate, it became very common for religious writers to adopt what Jamie Hubbard calls an *exclusivist*<sup>196</sup> view of competing traditions, characterized by a sharply polemical tone, a narrowing of the scope of acceptable variation from a posited norm, a decreased tolerance for deviation, and a heightened vigilance in the policing of doctrinal boundaries. Probably the most sophisticated example of the exclusivist style can be found in the polemical works of Sa skya Paṇḍita.

<sup>194</sup> *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 808. See below, Chapter Five, the section entitled “‘Fierce Activities’: the Question of Tantric Justifications.”

<sup>195</sup> Martin 1997a, 285.

<sup>196</sup> Hubbard 1995, 120.



Oddly enough, there also appeared a sort of negative image of exclusivism—something Matthew Kapstein has called “religious syncretism”<sup>197</sup>—which goes to extremes to obliterate the boundaries between doctrines, practices, and religious groups. A representative figure of this inclusivist<sup>198</sup> approach is Karma Pakśi, the second Karma pa (1204–1283), who accepted all teachings, even those of non-Buddhists (*mu stegs pa*),<sup>199</sup> as teachings of the Buddha, writing, for example, that

One must not, then, disparage the *mu stegs pas* . . . for the philosophical systems of *mu stegs pa* teachers are said to be miraculous displays of the Conqueror [i.e. the Buddha] . . .<sup>200</sup>

It is to this *inclusivist* group that Lama Zhang belongs, and when I say that the differences between Zhang and Sapaṇ often seem like a clash of religious styles, much of the meaning is captured by this difference between an exclusivist and an inclusivist outlook. Indeed, according to Martin, it is this very fact of Zhang’s “liberal sentiments”<sup>201</sup> that makes him object of a later criticism by a ‘Bri gung Bka’ brgyud pa named Dbon Shes rab ‘byung gnas (1187–1241)—a contemporary of Sapaṇ, and a major figure in the thirteenth-century trend that Davidson dubs “neoconservative”<sup>202</sup>—who in effect criticized Zhang for being “soft” on Bon, the Tibetan *mu stegs pa* religion.<sup>203</sup>

The language Zhang uses suggests that the doctrinal root of this inclusivism may be the Mahāyāna doctrine of “expedient means.”<sup>204</sup> The classical exposition of this view is found in the *Lotus Sūtra*:<sup>205</sup>

The thoughts that are in the minds of living beings,  
the different types of paths they follow,  
their various desires and natures,  
the good and bad deeds they have done in previous existences—

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<sup>197</sup> Kapstein 1985, 358. Kapstein discusses, besides Lama Zhang, the second Karma pa, Karma Pakśi, as an exemplar of this sensibility.

<sup>198</sup> Rather than “syncretism”—which has some connotations it may be better to avoid here—I will use Hubbard’s more neutral “inclusivism” to characterize Zhang’s views. See Hubbard 1995, 120.

<sup>199</sup> Skt. *tīrthika*.

<sup>200</sup> Kapstein 1985, 367.

<sup>201</sup> Martin 1997a, 283.

<sup>202</sup> Davidson 2005, 151–54.

<sup>203</sup> Martin 1997a, 283.

<sup>204</sup> *thabs*; Skt. *upāya*.

<sup>205</sup> *Dam pa’i chos pad ma dkar po*; Skt. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. As for direct influence of the *Lotus Sūtra*, there are a few mentions of the text in Zhang’s writings, but nothing that really bears on the issue at hand.



all these the Buddha takes cognizance of,  
and then he employs causes, similes and parables,  
words that embody the power of expedient means,  
in order to gladden and please them all.<sup>206</sup>

According to this sūtra, the task of a buddha is to “tame” or “discipline” (*dul ba*) sentient beings—i.e. to bring them to a state of enlightenment. This is the ultimate goal of all Buddhist teachings. The reason there is such a bewildering variety of doctrines—some of which seem contradictory—is that there is an equally bewildering variety of sentient beings, with different temperaments, preferences, and propensities, receptive to different sorts of messages, drawn to different styles of teaching. Therefore, the buddhas, in their boundless knowledge of the hearts of beings and their boundless compassion, have crafted different forms of the Dharma to suit the different kinds of beings. This seems clearly to be what Zhang has in mind:

All of the tathāgathas of the ten directions have as their nature or essence nothing but compassion. Through the power of prayer, they tame [beings] by whatever means are necessary, or they manifest according to the nature of the one to be tamed.<sup>207</sup>

The Dharma is therefore something deeper than a particular arrangement of words, for many different arrangements of words—or any other medium, for that matter—can correspond to the true Dharma.

It is interesting to note the different uses to which this extraordinarily flexible teaching has been put.<sup>208</sup> At its inception, it appears to have been,

<sup>206</sup> Watson 1993, 34.

<sup>207</sup> phyogs bcu'i de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad thugs rje 'ba' zhig gi rang bzhin nam ngo bo/ smon lam gyi dbang gis gang la gang 'dul lam/ gang la ci 'dul du gdul bya'i ngo bo la byon pa yin/. *Sa log nam log*, Shedup IV, 581.

<sup>208</sup> Thus, despite its inclusivistic rhetoric, in real practice, according to Hubbard, “the Lotus Sutra can readily be seen actually to include both affirmation and denial, inclusivism and exclusivism. . . .” Hubbard 1995, 129. Of course, we should be careful not to confuse reality and rhetoric. Whatever its history of exclusivistic application in, e.g., China and Japan, the rhetoric of the *Lotus Sūtra* remains open to an inclusivistic interpretation, which means that, depending on the circumstances, it might very well be put to use in the service of an inclusivistic agenda. To say that the *Lotus Sūtra*, because of its history, is only open to exclusivistic interpretations is like saying that the rhetoric of individual liberty in the U.S. Constitution is false because some of its signers owned slaves. What this ignores is the way the rhetoric of liberty could be taken up, re-universalized, and applied to areas it was not originally meant to cover—the emancipation of slaves and the rights of women, e.g. For a penetrating general theory of the “indeterminacy” within all discourses that allows historically specific agents to “fix” different meanings, see Laclau and Mouffe 2001, particularly the section entitled “Articulation and Discourse,” 105–14.

in part, a hermeneutical device used to explain how the teachings of the omniscient Buddha could have the appearance of contradiction, since a buddha could by definition not contradict him- or herself. It is also significant that it appeared at a time when a nascent Mahāyāna movement, very much a Buddhist minority, was fighting to legitimize a new class of visionary sūtras as the words of the Buddha himself, as well as delegitimize the doctrines of those who followed the *arhat* path as being lesser teachings.<sup>209</sup>

But in the case of the Tibetan inclusivists, the doctrine is used, not so much to delegitimize opposing doctrines as to legitimize *all* doctrines, even those of non-Buddhists like the Indian *tīrthikas* and the Tibetan Bon po-s. The reasoning goes like this: there is no “one-size-fits-all” Dharma, for every being has a unique disposition and is therefore best taught by means of a teaching method specially chosen for that disposition. But, in that case, why stop at “Buddhist” doctrines? Why not see, for example, Bon po—or Christian, or Muslim—doctrines as a buddha’s compassionate way of reaching and liberating those who would be unreceptive to explicitly Buddhist doctrines? There are all manner of trivial differences among humans, such as linguistic and cultural barriers, that a buddha should be able to overcome in order best to bring the maximum number of beings to realization. Thus, Lama Zhang, clearly taking up this “skillful means” discourse and extending it far beyond its original boundaries, writes, in a work called “The Earth and Sky Turned Upside Down”:

[Buddhas] tame and lead these various beings by appearing in various guises: for the one who is tamable by a buddha, as a buddha; for one who is tamable by a bodhisattva, as a bodhisattva; . . . for one who is tamable by Bon, as Ston pa Gshen rab mi bo, . . . etc., [according to] the various aspects [of the one to be tamed]. In the same way, [buddhas appear to] those tamable by [the means appropriate to] the householder, the ordained monk, the ordinary common person, etc., and the fisherman, the hunter, the laborer, etc.<sup>210</sup>

This is truly taking the “skillful means” teachings to an extreme—perhaps a *reductio ad absurdum*, some would say. I would guess this would be Sapan’s position, and in some sense he would of course be right: if

<sup>209</sup> Hubbard 1995, 124.

<sup>210</sup> ‘dul bya la khyad par nram pa sna tshogs pa ste/ sangs rgyas kyis ‘dul ba la sangs rgyas/ byang chub sems dpas ‘dul ba la byang chub sems dpa’/ . . . bon gyis ‘dul ba la ston pa gshen rab mi bo . . . nram pa sna tshogs pa/ de bzhin du khyim pa dang/ rab tu byung ba dang/ so so’i skye bo tha mal pa la sogs pa/ nya pa dang/ rngon pa dang/ bya ba la sogs pa ‘dul ba/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 583–844.

everything from cuneiform tablets to Hallmark cards and neo-Nazi literature is to be considered a statement of Buddhist doctrine, it is hard to know what point there could be in calling oneself a follower of the Buddha.

Still, as a rhetorical gesture signifying compassion, flexibility, and tolerance in the face of narrow sectarianism—which is surely how it must be read—it has to be taken seriously, however flamboyant the expression. And the expression gets even more flamboyant:

Bon po-s [find the Dharma] in the Bon teaching, *mantrins* in the mantra teaching, householders in the householder teaching, . . . common people in the common-person teaching, . . . women in the women's teaching, singers in the singer teaching, dancers in the dancer teaching, . . . workers in the worker teaching, hunters in the hunter teaching, butchers in the butcher teaching.<sup>211</sup>

Following the sort of extremist rhetorical logic one sometimes finds in Zhang, the point is finally reached where the goal encompasses the instruction even of nonhuman beings in the Buddha's Dharma in whatever way is appropriate to the particular nonhuman species—in the end teaching the Dharma as the squeaks, grunts, and howls, or even the non-verbal behavior, of the various animal species:

In the same way, among the teachings that tame by means of [the methods appropriate to] the king, the ministers, the common people, the king of geese and other types of birds, elephants, camels, horses, etc., one teaches according to whichever of these [is appropriate]. The variations [in the teachings] are [of a number] beyond words. Furthermore, [the ways of teaching appropriate to] lions, deer, and wild game, such as the royal wild game, are beyond words. The leaders of the hells [find the Dharma] in the hell teachings, wild game in the wild-game teachings. There are many differences between individual species.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>211</sup> bon kyi bstan pa la bon po/ sngags kyi bstan pa la sngags pa/ khyim pa'i bstan pa la khyim pa/ . . . so so'i skye bo'i bstan pa la so so'i skye bo/ . . . bud med kyi bstan pa la bud med/ glu mkhan gyi bstan pa la glu mkhan/ gar mkhan gyi bstan pa la gar mkhan/ . . . bya ba'i bstan pa la bya ba/ rñgon pa'i bstan pa la rñgon pa/ shan pa mkhan gyi bstan pa la shan pa mkhan/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 586–87.

<sup>212</sup> de bzhin du rgyal po dang/ blon po dang/ dmangs phal pa dang/ ngang pa'i rgyal po la sogs pa bya sna tshogs dang/ glang po che dang/ nga mong dang/ rta la sogs pas 'dul ba'i bstan pa la de dang de dag tu bstan te sna tshogs pa brjod kyis mi lang/ gzhan yang seng+ge dang/ sha ba dang/ ri dwags kyi rgyal po ru ru la sogs pa ri dwags sna tshogs pa ste brjod kyis mi lang/ dmyal ba'i bstan pa la dmyal dpon/ yi dwags kyi bstan pa la yang de/ so so'i rigs tha dad pa mang po/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 587.

This is extended as well to the other classes of beings in the Buddhist cosmology—e.g., to whatever forms of signaling facilitate communication with demons, hell-beings, or hungry ghosts.

#### 4. *Literary Style*

##### a. *Zhang's Stylistic Palette*

The range of styles of which Lama Zhang was a master is impressive. He wrote eulogies, prayers, ritual manuals, advice on practice (*bslab bya lag len*), descriptions of tenet systems (*grub mtha'*), answers to disciples' questions (*zhus lan*), advice to rulers, instructions on meditation, expositions of *mahāmudrā* philosophy and practice, songs of spiritual experience (*nyams mgur*), lineage hagiographies (*rnam thar*), autobiographies (*rang gi rnam thar*), and sealed visionary writings (*Bka' rgya ma*). Some of these seem to be genres not known to have existed before Lama Zhang. Autobiography is one that I will look at in more detail below, as it was, in later centuries, to become an extremely significant Tibetan literary form, and Zhang's autobiographical writings thus give us an opportunity to look at a generic form at a very early stage of its development. In addition, as Dan Martin writes:

Besides autobiographies, other genres that Zhang Rinpoche initiated, at least in an incipient form, are the genres of Gsan-yig, "Records of Things Learned," and the Bca'-yig, "Monastic Constitutions"... Later Tibetan writers such as the Fifth Dalai Lama followed Zhang in producing "sealed" works in a body of texts kept apart from their Collected Works.<sup>213</sup>

Some of his new forms were quite unusual—Martin calls them "experimental"<sup>214</sup>—and it is difficult in many cases to judge how he intended them to be used. There is, for example, a late work, one of the chapters of which is labeled a "nomad dance" (*'brog shon*), which contains extended sections where more conventionally expository text is interspersed with song-like repetitive passages such as:

Verses! Verses!  
Nomad dance! Nomad dance!  
Prose! Prose!  
Discussion! Discussion!  
Decide about them!<sup>215</sup>

<sup>213</sup> Martin 1996a, 65.

<sup>214</sup> Martin 2001, 48.

<sup>215</sup> tshigs bcad/ tshigs bcad/ 'brog shon/ 'brog shon/ tshigs lhug/ tshigs lhug/ gleng slong gleng slong du gtan la phab bo. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.568.

and

Joy, joy, great joy!<sup>216</sup>

Also to be found are rhythmic strings of chant- or song-like syllables that appear to be interjections, onomatopoeia, or perhaps simply rhythmic devices: “shō li la li e e,”<sup>217</sup> “ha ha ha ha ha ha ha,”<sup>218</sup> “la lo e lo la la na ha lo ō,”<sup>219</sup> “o ho lo la lo lo,”<sup>220</sup> and “e e e e e e e e’o e he.”<sup>221</sup> These seem very similar to some of the devices found in oral epic poetry and in ancient Tibetan verses found, e.g., in the Dunhuang texts. Stein speaks in this regard of

certain reduplicated or trebled syllables that have no lexical meaning, but serve to describe specific appearances or situations, rather like onomatopoeia but without being restricted to representing sounds.<sup>222</sup>

Stein has translated a number of these verses from the Dunhuang collections. For example:

Nearer, ah yes, ever nearer  
Yarpa, yes, is near to the Sky,  
Stars of the sky, yes, *si-li-li*.

Nearer, ah yes, ever nearer,  
Lakar, yes, is near to the rock,  
Stars of the rock, yes, *si-li-li*.

Durwa, yes, near to the river,  
Lively otter, yes, *pyo-la-la*.  
Nyenkar, yes, near to the earth.

All kinds of fruit, yes, *si-li-li*.  
Maltro, yes, is near to Lum,  
Icy the wind, yes, *spu-ru-ru*.<sup>223</sup>

It seems possible that the many untranslatable syllables in Zhang’s songs and verses serve a like function. We see similar forms in what are by far the best known songs of the period: Mi la ras pa’s songs of realization

<sup>216</sup> bde ba bde ba bde ba che. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.544.

<sup>217</sup> *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.518–33.

<sup>218</sup> *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.520.

<sup>219</sup> *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.543.

<sup>220</sup> *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.537.

<sup>221</sup> *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.543.

<sup>222</sup> Stein 1972, 253.

<sup>223</sup> Stein 1972, 254.

or *mgur*. As Stein notes, what makes these songs especially important—aside from their religious content—is that, though their ostensible model is the Indian Buddhist spiritual songs known as *dohā*, Mi la ras pa “adapted this foreign model to the indigenous songs of his country.”<sup>224</sup> This mix of imported Indian Buddhist conventions and indigenous Tibetan forms is also much in evidence in the songs of Lama Zhang—who learned *dohā* from his Indian teacher Vairocana vajra and *mgur* from Mal Yer pa ba. Unfortunately, *mgur* is much too large a topic to be taken on here, but it is to be hoped that future research will make clearer just what was going on in this early period of the genre. Until more broad-based and detailed work is done in this area, it would be very hard to say just how much of the odd-seeming literary devices in Zhang’s songs are simple applications of existing *mgur* or *dohā* conventions, how much are adaptations of “folk” verse forms, and how much are examples of individual innovation. Certainly, with some of the more extreme stylistic manifestations—the exuberant scatological vocalizations such as “Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit! Eat shit!”<sup>225</sup> “Put shit in your mouth! Put shit in your mouth! Put shit in your mouth!”<sup>226</sup> and “Shit shit shit shit I!”<sup>227</sup> and cryptic exclamations such as “Red fox! Red fox! Red fox! Red fox! Red fox!”<sup>228</sup>—it is difficult to imagine them as anything other than idiosyncratic personal formulations.

It is very tempting to speculate about the meaning of provocative writing of this sort. For instance, the apparent imitation of “nomad” song and dance suggests something similar to the romantic mythologization of tribals that Davidson points out among early Indian *tantrikas*, who would take on the persona of the Śābara, living wild in the jungle with his consort, free from the binding constraints of civilization and institutionalized religion.<sup>229</sup> Unfortunately, until we can provide some context for reading—what I call in Chapter Three below an account of the “textual economy” of a reading community<sup>230</sup>—it will be very difficult even to translate, let

<sup>224</sup> Stein 1972, 260.

<sup>225</sup> skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos/ skyag pa zos. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.556.

<sup>226</sup> skyag pa khar chug/ skyag pa khar chug/ skyag pa khar chug/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.647.

<sup>227</sup> skyag pa skyag pa skyag pa ngas. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.671.

<sup>228</sup> wa dmar po/ wa dmar po/ wa dmar po/ wa dmar po/ wa dmar po. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV.492.

<sup>229</sup> Davidson 2002b, 227.

<sup>230</sup> See Chapter Three below.

alone make sense of, such a work, intriguing though it may be. Surely, for example, the situation of a twelfth-century Lhasan vis-à-vis Tibetan nomadic culture would have been very different from that of an Indian Brahmin yogin vis-à-vis outcaste tribal peoples, so that the imagination of “wildness” would have had a very different flavor. But, again, we need more social, historical, and textual specifics.

Perhaps as significant as the variety of genres Zhang mastered are the parodies and satires he wrote within some of these same genres—for example, his mock-eulogies to himself—which play with the conventions of established styles and evidence an unusually developed self-reflexive understanding of the very issue of style itself. These will be examined in more detail in Chapter Three.

#### b. *Style and Means*

An interesting link can be made between the issue of style and Lama Zhang’s inclusivistic attitude toward doctrinal differences, which was discussed above. The connection is made once again by way of the doctrine of expedient means, which, in some passages of the *Lotus Sūtra*, is given an explicitly literary spin, implying a broad-based mastery of a variety of styles of expression:

Sometimes [the Buddha] preaches sutras,  
verses, stories of the previous lives of disciples,  
stories of the previous lives of the Buddha, of unheard-of things.  
At other times he preaches regarding causes and conditions,  
uses similes, parables, passages of poetry  
or discourses.<sup>231</sup>

This might be considered a sort of Buddhist tropology, a soteriology-based rhetoric. The idea is that if a teacher is to “tame”—that is, bring to spiritual maturity—a variety of beings, he or she must in effect be a consummate rhetorician, understanding how various linguistic and other signifying effects are produced, how different styles, devices, tropes, and topoi work on different types and levels of understanding, and how best to use them for the benefit of sentient beings.

Zhang makes abundant use of this same language of “taming beings”—it is a crucial element of his “Protector of Beings” (*gro ba’i mgon po*) persona, and hence also of his conception of political, civic, and military responsibility (see Chapters Four and Five below)—and extends his doc-

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<sup>231</sup> Watson 1993, 34.

trinal inclusivism into the realm of style and genre, showing how the same considerations argue for a varied palette of styles:

[Among the means of taming beings,] there are: taming by means of the treatises, taming by means of the lama's instructions, taming by means of blessings, taming by means of signs and methods, taming by means of pacification and beneficial actions, taming by means of wrath and destruction, taming by resting in equanimity, taming by Indian [methods], taming by Chinese [methods], taming by Tibetan [methods], taming by means of verses.<sup>232</sup>

Zhang interprets this to mean that, in the hands of a skillful and realized teacher, many less-than-canonical forms of writing are just as good as the words of the Buddha or the great Indian commentators. This is especially significant in a polemical atmosphere where writings that lacked a proven Indian pedigree were being condemned by “purists” and “neoconservatives” as illegitimate.<sup>233</sup> He praises what he calls the “words of the [spiritually] accomplished ones,”<sup>234</sup> which, “though they are neither scriptures nor commentaries, . . . are no different from the flawless scriptures,”<sup>235</sup> and which use a variety of unorthodox forms such as “songs of experience and realization, verses, various symbolic expressions—even word-play, jokes, and humorous teachings.”<sup>236</sup> Other forms teachings may take include “formal poetry,” “lame and informal verses,” “nonsense speech,” “verbal abuse,” and “various kinds of musical performances, such as song and dance, etc.”<sup>237</sup>

<sup>232</sup> gzhan yang bstan bcos kyis ‘dul ba dang/ bla ma’i man ngag gis ‘dul ba dang/ byin rlabs kyis ‘dul ba dang/ brda dang thabs kyis ‘dul ba dang/ zhi ba’am phan btags pas ‘dul ba dang/ drag po’am tshar gcod pas ‘dul ba dang/ btang snyoms su bzahag pas ‘dul ba dang/ rgya gar mas ‘dul ba dang/ rgya nag mas ‘dul ba dang/ bod mas ‘dul ba dang/ tshigs su bcad pa . . . ‘dul ba/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 585.

<sup>233</sup> See Davidson 2005, 151–54; Martin 1997a, 285–87.

<sup>234</sup> grub pa thob pa’i tshig.

<sup>235</sup> bka’ ma yin par gyur kyang . . . bka’ dri ma med pa dang khyad par med.

<sup>236</sup> nyams myong dang rtogs pa’i mgur dang/ tshigs su bcad pa dang/ brda’i bye brag sna tshogs dang/ rtse mo dang/ ku re dang/ bzahad gad kyi tshul du gsungs pa nams kyang/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 579–80.

On jokes as expository vehicles, cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein’s reported comment to Norman Malcolm that “a serious and good philosophical work could be written that would consist entirely of jokes. . . .” Malcolm 1958, 29.

<sup>237</sup> snyan ngag gis ‘dul ba dang/ tshig theng po dang lhug pas ‘dul ba dang/ mu cor smra ba zhes bya ste/ kha rgod ci thod thod kyis ‘dul ba dang/ glu dang gar la sogs pa’i rol mo’i khyad par sna tshogs kyis ‘dul ba dang/ ‘di lta bu kho nas ‘dul gyis. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 585.



From this, it can be seen as well that teaching activities need not be confined to verbal teachings. Any sort of behavior, used skillfully by a realized lama, can bring a disciple to realization:

[The teacher uses] different forms, different attire, different languages; long hair, short hair, no hair; fine clothes, inferior clothes, no clothes; speaking loudly, whispering, not talking at all, etc.: [the means] are unlimited.<sup>238</sup>

We can also see from this how the notion of rhetorical skill-in-means and the command of a range of stylistic resources both connect with the idea of truth as nonconceptual and nonpropositional. If truth means *propositional* truth, then there would be, for a given language, only a limited number of sentences that expressed any particular true proposition, and deviations therefrom could only be false. For example, if the truth in consideration is that of the absence of a self,<sup>239</sup> a root tenet of classical Buddhism, then, for example, tenets of *mu stegs pa* religious schools that implied the existence of a permanent self—let's say, for example, the well-known statement in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* that “The finest essence here—that constitutes the self of this whole world; that is the truth; that is the self (*ātman*)”<sup>240</sup>—could only be false. There would be no possibility of finding Buddhist truths in non-Buddhist religious doctrines. If, however, as Zhang often emphasized, truth has more to do with the realized state of mind than with words, then there will be no fixed constellation of words that best embodies that state, and there will be no single style of communication best suited to convey that state in all situations and to all kinds of minds. This leaves open the possibility that statements which, as expressions of a mere propositional content, directly contradict the words of classical Buddhist texts might—if they produced a realized mind-state—be considered Buddhist truths, teachings in accord with the Dharma. Thus the way is open to consider *mu stegs pa* teachings as actually Buddhist teachings, or conversely, to consider Buddhist teachings as not being Buddhist if taught in an inappropriate situation to a being who did not have the aptitude to receive them. Furthermore, also among the candidates for Buddhist truths would be speech-acts, such as abusive language (*kha rgod*) and nonsense talk (*mu cor smra ba*), whose

<sup>238</sup> dbyibs tha dad pa/ cha byad tha dad pa/ skad rigs tha dad pa/ skra ring po/ skra thung ba/ skra med pa/ chas bzang po/ chas ngan pa/ gcer bu ba/ skad po che/ shub shub smra ba/ smra bcad pa/ de la sogs te mtha' yas mchog/. *Sa log gnam log*, Shedup IV, 587–88.

<sup>239</sup> bdag med; Skt. *anātman*.

<sup>240</sup> Olivelle 1998, 253.

propositional content is either indeterminate or irrelevant, as well as non-verbal symbolic acts like dancing, and even nonverbal, nonsymbolic acts like going naked, not speaking, and living as a hunter or a butcher. In all of these cases, the actions would produce truth-effects independently of, or in the absence of, an explicit propositional content.

\* \* \*

Tibet—according to a prevailing view during the period of Buddhist revival under consideration here—was a society on the mend. It was on the mend because it had fallen to pieces: it had—as noted above in the Introduction—passed through a “time of fragmentation” (*sil bu'i dus*). Buddhism, in its revived form, was seen as a cultural savior that would knit the rent fabric back together again. One way this was done during Lama Zhang's lifetime was, as we have seen in this chapter, through the renewal and reconstruction of lineages (*brgyud pa*). The term *brgyud pa* belongs to a semantic cluster of Tibetan words that signify continuity, connection, binding, unbrokenness, and when taken in the sense of lineage—whether biological or sectarian—it signifies unbrokenness *in time*. Hence, lineage serves as an ideal way of healing the temporal fragmentation Tibet had suffered, a way of reconnecting the present with the past and the future.

Religious style (*chos lugs*) is another binding force, a protection against dissolution. Lama Zhang's style takes up theoretically separable bits of doctrine, ritual, and symbol and integrates them into a useable and unified religious approach. And style is precisely what connects Zhang to posterity: though the Tshal pa-s no longer exist, the influence of Zhang on successive generations of Buddhist practitioners has been incalculable—particularly but not exclusively within the Bka' bryud pa order—and what has survived is his style. Lineage and style are key elements of tradition, and the Dwags po Bka' brgyud order owes a large part of its survival to its success at linking past, present, and future in a comprehensible manner through a tradition.



## CHAPTER THREE

### “TO TELL YOUR OWN STORY YOURSELF”: AUTOBIOGRAPHY, GENRE FAMILIES, AND TEXTUAL ECONOMIES

One aspect of Lama Zhang’s distinctive religious style that deserves further elaboration on its own merits is his literary style. As seen in the previous chapter, his sensitivity to nuances of form and rhetoric and his mastery of genre made him a great innovator in Tibetan literature. Among the most striking of his contributions have been his writings about his own life, considered among the earliest examples of what was to become an unusually productive genre in Tibet: religious autobiography (*rang gi rnam thar*).<sup>1</sup> It would therefore seem appropriate, before looking specifically at his religious autobiographies, to step back and consider in more detail the historical circumstances surrounding the appearance of this new genre and the implications such a treatment might have for the issues of politics, religious lineage, and charismatic authority central to this book. My point of departure will be Janet Gyatso’s important work on the historical conditions that underlay the earliest examples of this new genre.<sup>2</sup>

#### I. GYATSO ON THE HISTORICAL CONDITIONS FOR AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN TIBET

##### A. *The Collapse of the Tibetan Empire and the Reconstitution of Tibet as a Buddhist Culture*

For Gyatso, the key to understanding why autobiography appeared in Tibet when it did is a proper view of the way in which Tibet was transformed into a Buddhist culture during the period roughly from the seventh through the thirteenth centuries C.E.:

[T]he radical overthrowing of the past and the construction of a new cultural identity that occurred with the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet

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<sup>1</sup> Gyatso 1998, 101.

<sup>2</sup> Gyatso 1998, Gyatso 1992, 466–78.

was the principal factor that made for the development and flourishing of autobiography.<sup>3</sup>

I will focus on four relevant aspects of this period to which Gyatso draws our attention: (1) the new Buddhist identity taken on by the culture, (2) the growth of an individualistic ethos and a new group of charismatic Buddhist culture heroes, (3) political decentralization and sectarian competition, and (4) the patronage relationship and its implications for the issue of religious self-presentation.

### 1. *The New Buddhist Cultural Identity*

The primary group to which loyalty adhered during the imperial period was the *clan*. Leadership in government as well as in society at large devolved upon the aristocratic clan heads. But the collapse of the empire created a power vacuum, and during the “later spread” period an alternative power-center appeared—the new Buddhist missionaries.<sup>4</sup> In this new climate, the possibilities arose for individuals to achieve positions of prominence without engaging the old clan power structure:

The comparative absence of culture and traditional authority in the wake of the collapsed empire gave the individual religious entrepreneur considerable leeway for self-assertion. Such figures did not need to be aristocrats . . . ; instead, religious power and prestige were based upon ability and personal achievements.<sup>5</sup>

The power vacuum was accompanied by what might be called an “identity vacuum,” wherein the communal self-conceptions associated with the empire became increasingly less compelling, at the same time that Buddhism’s growing cultural power was positioning it to fill this vacuum—providing not only new power centers, but also a developing sense of cultural unity, and hence a sense of cultural *identity*, as a Buddhist society. As a sort of negative mirror-image to this Buddhist identity-in-process, there evolved a view of Tibet’s pre-Buddhist past as one of savagery and barbarism, which had been tamed by the civilizing influence of Buddhism:

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<sup>3</sup> Gyatso 1998, 119.

<sup>4</sup> Davidson 2005, 107.

<sup>5</sup> Gyatso 1998, 119.

... Tibetan Buddhists needed to reshape themselves and to assume an utterly new identity, one to which their ancestral, barbaric nature was anathema.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. *Individualism and the New Heroes of Buddhist Culture*

The weakening of clan ties and the formation of new Buddhist identities not only served as a counterbalance to the power of the aristocratic families, but also freed particular individuals from traditional group ties and set them on new, distinctly Buddhist, career paths. Gyatso notes how this new individualist ethos "bears some similarity... to the European turn away from tradition and toward individual autonomy after the Enlightenment."<sup>7</sup> There thus emerged a new species of Tibetan "culture heroes"—"charismatic individuals"<sup>8</sup> who were instrumental in effecting the penetration of Buddhism into all levels of the society: monastics, ascetics, translators who had braved the perilous journey to India to bring back new Buddhist texts, visionaries, magicians, and yogic virtuosos, to name a few.<sup>9</sup> These then became a sort of "new aristocracy" as against the old aristocrats of the imperial families.

## 3. *Political Decentralization and Sectarian Competition*

When the empire fell apart, power became dispersed from its former center—the king—to localized units of political rule. As Geoffrey Samuel writes:

With the collapse of the early kingdom, a pattern in which centers of local authority competed for some degree of wider influence was to hold sway.<sup>10</sup>

Without the centripetal pull of empire, which had held local sectarian tensions in suspension, the post-imperial period saw renewed competition and conflict among various local groups and sects, including the rising new Buddhist-identified groups. Furthermore, as Gyatso points out,

[t]he flip side of this competitiveness has been a fierce loyalty within the group, be it the clan, the religious sect, or even the smaller unit of the family, and a marked investment in distinguishing "us" from the others.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Gyatso 1998, 119.

<sup>7</sup> Gyatso 1998, 118.

<sup>8</sup> Gyatso 1998, 120.

<sup>9</sup> Gyatso 1998, 119.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel 1993, 457.

<sup>11</sup> Gyatso 1998, 120.

What this reveals is that in all of these social displacements, an issue that never ceases to recur is that of *identity*, whether it be group or individual based. This point will be taken up in much more detail below.

#### 4. *The Patronage Relationship*

The opposition between old aristocratic families and the new Buddhist missionaries has, for the sake of clarity, been set forth above in an exaggeratedly stark fashion, but in actuality the situation was more complicated, for though the clans initially saw in the monastic network a rival power, in time they became patrons of the new religious institutions, “exploit[ing] the newly acquired wealth of the monasteries by securing clan members a place in the spiritual hierarchy.”<sup>12</sup> Among the most important early products of this new relationship between aristocratic families and monastic communities were Sa skya and Gsang phu monasteries, both founded in 1073 by members of the ‘Khon and the Rngog clans, respectively.<sup>13</sup> In fact, without considerable aristocratic support, it is difficult to imagine Buddhism having ever succeeded in establishing hegemony in Tibet the way it did.

Out of these alliances there gradually emerged a new sort of politico-religious configuration that would become “a fundamental pattern operative throughout most of Tibetan Buddhist history”<sup>14</sup>—culminating eventually in the priest-patron (*mchod yon*) relationship between the first Dalai Lamas and their Mongol overlords.<sup>15</sup> “The patron-priest pattern,” writes Gyatso, “was repeated on a smaller scale between lamas and the nobility everywhere in Tibet.”<sup>16</sup>

#### B. *New Strategies of Legitimation; New Modes of Recognition and Self-Presentation; New Forms of Literature*

The new circumstances Tibetan culture found itself in by the twelfth or thirteenth century made it fertile for the growth of new cultural forms—one of which was the genre of religious autobiography.

Here was the situation in brief: the centralized empire had dispersed and in its place stood a new politically decentered culture that explicitly

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<sup>12</sup> van Spengen 2000, 23.

<sup>13</sup> *Deb ther dmar po*, 43, 62.

<sup>14</sup> Gyatso 1998, 125.

<sup>15</sup> Ruegg 1991, 441–53.

<sup>16</sup> Gyatso 1998, 127.

identified itself as Buddhist. There were strong forces contributing to a climate of sectarian competition, and at the same time a growing acceptance of individualistic forms of self-expression. Finally, the competitive character of the group rivalries spilled over into competition among charismatic religious specialists—the translators, ascetics, and yogins mentioned above—for the support of powerful aristocratic patrons.

The net result was a proliferation of new identities—individualistic in character—assumed by religious teachers who were compelled to legitimize themselves within an increasingly competitive climate: to present themselves as spiritual figures of outstanding accomplishment, extraordinary individuals worthy of credibility, a following, and patronage. Gyatso speaks in this regard of a dialectic of “recognition” wherein selves are constituted by means of relations of mutual acknowledgment, or the withholding thereof:

To be perceived and recognized by others is an assurance that one exists; by being an other to someone else, one is a self to oneself, whatever the precise nature of that self.<sup>17</sup>

When the relationships of the religious teacher to his or her constituents are framed this way, as ones in which identity operates within a network of recognitions, and thus in which continued maintenance of the relationships requires a legitimizing “self-presentation,”<sup>18</sup> then the appearance of a literary form that explicitly sets out the life of the charismatic hero-practitioner begins to make a lot of sense:

Autobiography, a principal venue of such self-presentation, is thus central to the career of the spiritual teacher and to the perduring legacy of his lineage.<sup>19</sup>

The self-presentation of the charismatic individual by means of autobiography then becomes a means of cementing his or her ties to a dedicated readership of disciples and patrons—those who bestow legitimacy through the dialectic of recognition. This is achieved by presenting, within

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<sup>17</sup> Gyatso 1998, 220. Though Gyatso does not cite Hegel, it was he who most notably employed this notion of “recognition” to refer to the mutual construction of selves within a relationship. Cf. his famous chapter in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* on “Lordship and Bondage.” Hegel 1977, 111–19. This Hegelian conception of recognition has, in recent decades, received much attention within philosophy, psychology, and political theory. See, e.g., Benjamin 1988, Honneth 1995, and Ricoeur 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Gyatso 1998, 265.

<sup>19</sup> Gyatso 1998, 265.



a milieu of vigorous sectarian competition, a life that stands out by virtue of its outstanding religious accomplishments:

[O]ne of the polemical agendas of life-story writing in Tibet...[is]...to assert the religious achievements of a master and his or her lineage in contrast to those of rival schools. Both biography and autobiography reflect the competitive climate of Tibetan sectarian politics...<sup>20</sup>

This competitive climate, according to Gyatso, explains why autobiography should have emerged during this particularly fluid period of Tibetan history, when so much was at stake:

[I]t was precisely at the dawn of this sectarian competition...that both biography and autobiography were first written.<sup>21</sup>

## II. TEXTUAL ECONOMIES AND THE BIRTH OF GENRES

### A. *Textual Economies*

The great virtue of Gyatso's account of the rise of Tibetan autobiography is its insistence that the issue of genre be considered not only in terms of formal literary categories but also in terms of political and social conditions. Her approach seems especially well suited to a consideration of Lama Zhang's autobiographies since he was not only one of the earliest known Tibetan autobiographers but was also right in the middle of the social and political upheavals that convulsed Central Tibet in the twelfth century. So a good place to begin might be to ask to what extent Lama Zhang's autobiographical writings bear out Gyatso's observations.

Indeed there is much in Lama Zhang's circumstances that accords with Gyatso's suggestions. As we have seen above in the sketch of his life, Zhang lived much of his adult life within a contentious milieu very much like that she describes: twelfth-century Central Tibet, where religious groups competed for political power with impressive ferocity. We saw, for example, how Zhang's initial involvement in Lhasa politics had come at the bidding of his root lama Sgom tshul, who—after having been called in to mediate factional fighting that had left the two holiest religious sites of Lhasa burned to the ground—had appointed Lama Zhang to take charge of the Jokhang temple and the Jo bo Śākyamuni statue. We

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<sup>20</sup> Gyatso 1998, 103.

<sup>21</sup> Gyatso 1998, 120.

saw how Zhang had taken this to mean not only physical restoration of the damaged temple but also policing and administration of the Lhasa area, along with protection and control of all of the connected pilgrimage and trade routes, and we saw how conflicts with other groups developed out of this situation. We also saw the importance of religious charisma as a support for Zhang's secular authority. So the idea that Zhang's autobiographies may have had been advertisements for a charismatic religious leader with a political agenda seems quite plausible on the surface.

There is, however, one major obstacle to seeing Zhang's autobiographies from this perspective—the admonitions to secrecy that are found in almost all of these works. Such admonitions are to be expected of course in the biographies belonging to Zhang's *Sealed Precepts* (*Bka' rgya ma*). E.g.:

It is very important that these sealed biographies of mine not be discussed [?'chugs pa] with anyone else whomsoever.<sup>22</sup>

But even in the two autobiographies that are considered exoteric,<sup>23</sup> we find similar prohibitions. Toward the beginning of his best known autobiography, the *Shes rab grub pa ma*, for example, we find:

Thus, if [this autobiography] is shown to others—aside from those few who are wholly trustworthy to me—they will certainly only abuse and disparage [it], and destroying their own religious lineage and accumulating the deepest of sins, they will cast themselves into hell. Therefore, it is vital not to show [this] to others.<sup>24</sup>

And his other major autobiographical work, the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of All Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*, employs almost identical language:

If this is shown to [other] people, they will accumulate sins.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> nga'i nram thar bka' rgyas btab pa rnams gzhan su la'ang ma 'chugs pa gal che'o. *Rnam thar bsam yas ma*, Shedup VII.474.

<sup>23</sup> In a late work of Lama Zhang's in which he arranges biographies of himself into the classical tripartite outer-inner-secret schema (*phyi'i nram par thar pa*, *nang gi nram par thar pa*, *gsang ba'i nram par thar pa*), he labels the *Shes rab grub pa ma* as an "outer biography" and the *Dgos 'dod re skong ma* as an "inner biography." *Bka' rgya spyi chings ma*, Shedup VII.84. In Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's classification, both are placed in the category of "outer biography." *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.105.

<sup>24</sup> nga rang la blo gsha' mar 'gel ba re re tsam las ma gtogs/ gzhan la bstan na nges pa kho nar gshe zhing smod la/ rang gi rgyud sreg cing sdig pa kham po che bsags nas kho rang gis kho rang dmyal bar bskyur bar byed pas na gzhan la mi ston pa gal che'o/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.317.

<sup>25</sup> 'di mi la bstan na sdig pa sog du 'ong. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Samdo C, I.24v. This line does not occur in the Shedup version.

The question then is: if these texts were intended to promote the virtues of Lama Zhang over his political and religious rivals, why would he insist that they not be shown to anyone outside of his circle of disciples? What good is a secret advertisement?

Clearly we need to know a lot more about Lama Zhang's concrete situation to determine whether or not Gyatso's suggestions are applicable here. It would of course be helpful to have more specific historical information, but what is missing is more than just a *quantity* of information: we need a different *kind* of information—one that pertains to what I call *textual economies*.

To illustrate what I mean by this, consider the difficulties a modern reader—accustomed to the conventions of modern autobiography—faces when confronted with a twelfth-century Tibetan autobiography. The term “autobiography” carries so much weight, and has such an easy familiarity, we automatically think we know what we are talking about. When I hear the word “autobiography,” for example, what first comes to mind is a picture of someone like Henry Adams seated alone at a desk in his library, recollecting his life in tranquility. And I imagine the reader to be a similar solitary figure, perhaps reclining in an armchair in front of a fireplace absorbed in Adams's life. And autobiography thus becomes a sort of direct conduit from a voice to an ear, conveying the subjective flavor of a life. There is a tidy obviousness to this scenario—one solitary mind in communion with another—that erases all of the intermediary steps that stand between the reader and the author.

Everything that is left out—and thus taken for granted—in this picture is what I mean by the *textual economy* of the work. More explicitly, textual economy includes all of the circumstances surrounding the production, distribution, and use of a text—everything that comes into play when we ask Robert Darnton's three questions:

1. How do texts come into being?
2. How do they reach readers?
3. What do readers make of them?<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Darnton 2007, 495. Darnton's first question is actually “How do books come into being?” but I have adapted it for our context, since he includes manuscripts under the label *books*.

I call this an *economy* to emphasize the fact that texts, as concrete human products, are in continual motion, and much of their meaning derives from this motion. They circulate through physical, social, and symbolic spaces, carried along with all of the other materials and cultural artifacts—people, animals, crops, trade goods, tools, weapons, technological know-how, religious practices—that move through and between societies.<sup>27</sup> Thus, the modern assumption of, for example, a single, solitary author documenting his or her “inner life” is an assumption about the conditions under which a text is produced, and therefore belongs to textual economy. Likewise with the assumption of a solitary and silent reader peering into the life of the author, which is an assumption about the typical use made of a text and the circumstances that accompany that use. All of the omitted intervening steps in our modern example, having to do with publishing contracts, copyright law, editorial practices, market forces, the physical manufacture of books, communities of readers, etc., and all of the social relationships that facilitate these material and symbolic transactions, also belong to textual economy. The problem with our habitual responses to a genre as familiar as autobiography is that genre labels carry with them assumptions about particular textual economies. But textual economies differ radically between different sorts of works, different time periods, and different cultures, and, if we omit this crucial information, it is easy to make misjudgments about meaning. In this sense, genre labels can be deceptive: works that are classed together based on formal similarities alone may differ radically in their textual economies. For example, consider again *The Education of Henry Adams* compared with Lama Zhang’s autobiographical self-eulogy *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* (discussed below). In form, there are certain similarities—enough that it seems reasonable to call them both “autobiographies.” But when we look more closely at the manner in which they were read, for example, we see, for example, that the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* was probably recited while prostrating before an image of its author, whereas I would guess that instances of *The Education of Henry Adams* being read in such a posture are quite rare. Differences of this sort are surely significant, yet they are covered over by the genre classification. To be sure, this is an obvious example, but I am certain there must be scores of similar discrepancies at a much subtler level that could easily pass under the

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<sup>27</sup> For a larger perspective on this movement of things in human history, see Bentley 1993; De Landa 2000; McNeill & McNeill 2003.

radar if we are not careful. It is for this reason that we must work hard to *defamiliarize* Tibetan autobiographies, and a good place to start would be by attempting to reconstruct the specific textual economies that belonged to this period when they were first making their appearance.

### B. *Genre Families*

This, of course, is easier said than done. We still await the inventorying of massive collections of texts that will, it is to be assumed, throw much needed light on this period of Central Tibetan history. And nontextual historical work in areas such as archeology have barely begun. Still, there is much that can be done in the meantime in terms of laying the conceptual groundwork for the eventual reception of large amounts of empirical information. For example, in surveying Lama Zhang's collected works with the hope of answering questions about the origins of Tibetan religious autobiography, it began to appear to me that perhaps the very question of the birth of a genre—when that genre is considered outside of its relationships to other genres—was not the right one to ask. If we think of a genre as a hermetic unit, defined and set off from other genres by determinate formal properties, then it becomes difficult to explain how it is that new genres ever appear. Where do new genres come from? Of course, as Gyatso has shown in the case of autobiography, specific historical and social circumstances play a role. But if we concentrate exclusively on these external conditions, or on biographical information about a particular author, we ignore the important role played by the *literary tradition* within which every new text is produced. Social conditions change, to be sure, but social conditions by themselves, or even social conditions in conjunction with individual creativity, do not create new forms of expression.

The complex interplay of tradition and individual innovation in Zhang's literary work is best seen in the way his autobiographical works seem often to blend and blur the boundaries between genres: literary forms from one genre find use within others and passages migrate from texts of one genre to those of another. Rather than distinct or isolated genres, there appear in fact to be something more like *families*, or perhaps *family networks*, of related genres. Looking at these genre families not only yields some interesting insights into the origins of Lama Zhang's autobiographies—it also throws light on their possible textual economies.

There are three among the intergeneric family relations that I think it would be particularly illuminating to look at here:

- (A) autobiography and the older, more established genre of hagiography,
- (B) autobiography and the genre of supplications and eulogies, and
- (C) autobiography and the lama’s personal instructions to disciples.

1. *Hagiographies and Autobiographies*<sup>28</sup>

We do not really know how Lama Zhang classified his own writings as a whole, if he did at all. The first classification we know of was made by Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje (1309–1364), the famous Tshal pa Bka’ brgyud pa *dpon chen* who, late in life, became a monk and a scholar (taking the name Dge ba’i blo gros) and produced, among other works, the well-known history called *The Red Annals* (*Deb ther dmar po*). What we know about Kun dga’ rdo rje’s classification we know from the *Record of Teachings Received* (*gsan yig*) of the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682), which contains a taxonomic listing of Lama Zhang’s writings.<sup>29</sup> Though Kun dga’ rdo rje was born more than a century after Lama Zhang’s death, he at least belonged to the Tshal pa lineage, and thus we can get some idea of how Zhang’s immediate successors regarded his written corpus.

Kun dga’ rdo rje divides Zhang’s works into eight categories:

- 1. supplications and eulogies (*gsol ‘debs bstod pa’i skor*)<sup>30</sup>
- 2. biographies (*mdzad pa rnam thar gyi skor*)
- 3. advice and procedures (*bslab bya lag len gyi skor*)
- 4. tenets of the great and small vehicles (*theg pa che chung gi grub mtha’i skor*)
- 5. guidance on meditation practice (*nyams len sgom ‘khrid kyi skor*)
- 6. teachings that emphasize mainly the definitive meaning alone (*nges don kho na gtso bor ston pa’i skor*)
- 7. miscellaneous sayings (*gsung sgros thor bu’i skor*)
- 8. vajra songs of the power of [meditative] experience (*nyams myong shugs kyi rdo rje’i glu’i skor*)

<sup>28</sup> I will render the Tibetan term *nam thar* as either “biography” or “hagiography,” as the occasion dictates. In general, “biography” includes, and “hagiography” excludes, autobiographies (*rang gi nam thar*). There may be exceptions to this, but the context should make the sense clear.

<sup>29</sup> *Gsan yig 5DL*, II.88b–99b.

<sup>30</sup> *gsol ‘debs* can be translated as “prayer,” “supplication,” or “reverential petition”; *bstod pa* as either “praise” or “eulogy.” I will use whichever of these terms seems best suited to the context. For example, “reverential petition” works well by itself, but “lineage reverential petition” offends the ear—“lineage prayer” seems much preferable.

This taxonomy forms the basis of virtually all subsequent arrangements of Zhang's collected writings.

In considering this list, what is of immediate interest—since our first concern is with Zhang's autobiographical writings—is that his principal autobiography, the *Shes rab grub pa ma*,<sup>31</sup> falls into the second class, “biographies.” Note that there is no distinction made between his *rang gi rnam thar* and straight-out *rnam thars*. This does not mean that no one noticed the difference—as we shall see below, Zhang himself commented on the unusualness of his composing an autobiography—only that the difference did not seem significant enough to create a separate category of work.

When we move in closer and look at the specific works listed within this category of biography, we see that the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* is placed at the end of a group of thirteen works. These are:<sup>32</sup>

1. *Biography of Tai lo [pa] (tai lo'i rnam thar)*
2. *Biography of Nāro[pa] (nA ro'i rnam thar)*
3. *Biography of Mar pa (mar pa'i rnam thar)*
4. *Biography of Mi la [ras pa] (mi la'i rnam thar)*
5. *Biography of Dwags po lha rje (dwags po lha rje'i rnam thar)*
6. *Biography of Dwags po Sgom pa (bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar)*
7. *Biography of Dpal chen Rgwa lo (dpal chen rgwa lo'i rnam thar)*
8. *Biography of Lama Gshen (bla ma gshen gyi rnam thar)*
9. *Biography of Mal Yer pa ba (mal yer pa ba'i rnam thar)*
10. *Biography of Bai ro (bai ro'i rnam thar)*
11. *The Story of the Various Lineages (brgyud pa sna tshogs kyi rnam thar)*
12. *The Story of the Various Lamas (bla ma sna tshogs kyi rnam thar)*
13. *Autobiography Told Directly to the Monk Shes rab grub (dge slong shes rab grub kyi ngor gsungs pa'i rang nyid kyi rnam thar)*

The listing opens with (a) five biographies of the great Indian and Tibetan proto-Bka' brgyud pa lamas—who would become the standard first five in all subsequent Bka' brgyud pa lineage lists—followed by (b) five biographies of Zhang's own root-lamas, then (c) two lists of his lineages and received teachings, and finally (d) the autobiography. If there is an unstated organizing principle underlying this taxonomy, then surely it must be the

<sup>31</sup> *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.316–66.

<sup>32</sup> *Gsan yig* 5DL, II.89b.



idea of *religious lineage*. All but three of the works record the lives of those past masters who constitute Zhang's tradition—a tradition that is traced all the way back to Indian masters, and ultimately to buddhas, and which is the foundation upon which Zhang's religious authority and claim to legitimacy rest—and of the remaining three, one is Zhang's autobiography and the other two are explicit accounts of Zhang's lineage pedigrees. The taxonomy, by displaying the family relationships between different classes of texts—demonstrating that hagiography, autobiography, and lineage lists belong to a common genre family—offers an implicit message about the relationship between stories told about masters and the demands of sectarian cohesion, and thus gives us our first clue as to the links between autobiographical works and extra-textual realities, i.e. textual economies.

Another way of taxonomizing biographies is suggested in one of Zhang's own works, the *Sealed Work [Written at] Spyi chings*, where his autobiography is grouped, not with Zhang-composed hagiographies of lineage masters, but with other biographies that take Zhang as their subject, whether written by him or by his disciples, thus forming a group based on *subject*, rather than *author*:

There are three [categories of] immaculate biography of Protector of Beings G.yu brag pa [Lama Zhang], who is the essence of the body, speech, and mind of all of the buddhas of the three times: (1) two immaculate outer biographies, the *Ston pa rgyal blon ma* and the *Shes rab grub pa ma*; (2) the inner biography, the explanation, by way of eight meanings, of the *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, requested at G.yu ru grwa thang by the monk Ya so; and (3) the secret biography: the *Lam zab bla ma'i lam*.<sup>33</sup>

Note here the classical tripartite "inner," "outer," and "secret" classification schema, distinguishing works on the basis of an increasingly secret content. We see this same classification scheme repeated in Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's later biography of Lama Zhang.<sup>34</sup> Again, however, note that there is no distinction made between autobiographies and biographies written by others.

<sup>33</sup> *Bka' rgya spyi chings ma*, Shedup VII.84–85. Though first-person material in this text identifies it as a Zhang-composed work, the language of this particular passage suggests it was not written by him. Aside from the third-person epithet "Protector of Beings" (*'gro ba'i mgon po*)—which he seldom uses for himself—there is the tripartite inner-outer-secret (*phyi nang gsang*) schema, which I have not seen employed in any of his other works and suspect may be an anachronism. More work on terminology used in the twelfth century by others would be required to resolve this.

<sup>34</sup> *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.105.



This sense that there is no hard and fast distinction between *rnam thars* and *rang gi rnam thars* is reinforced when we compare some of the texts that tell Lama Zhang's life story. Here, for example, is a passage warning of the dangers of showing Zhang's story to the uninitiated, in three different versions, from three different texts—one of them composed by Zhang and two by his disciples:

***Shes rab grub pa ma***  
***Autobiography, Shedup***  
**1.356:**

If you tell [this] to others, it will certainly terrify them. Their hearts will split open.

Because their conceptuality covers up, they will say, “This is not possible,” and will abandon the holy Dharma.

gzhan la smras na skrag  
nges pa yin/  
snying ‘gas pa yin/  
kho rang gi rtog pas  
bkab pas ‘di mi srid zer  
nas dam pa’i chos spong  
du ‘ong ba yin/

***Rnam thar rgyal blon***  
***ma, Shedup VI.252:***

If you tell [this] to others, it will certainly terrify them.

Their conceptuality covering up, they will say, “This is not true,” and will abandon the holy Dharma.

gzhan la smras na skrag  
nges pa yin/  
kho rang gi rtog pas  
bkab nas ‘di mi bden zer  
nas dam pa’i chos spong  
du yong ba yin

***Rnam thar zin bris, 41a:***

If you tell [this] to others, it will certainly terrify them.

Because they cover by means of conceptuality, they will say, “This is not possible,” and will abandon the Dharma.

gzhan la smras na skrag  
nges pa yin no/  
kho rang gis rtogs pas  
bkab nas ‘di mi srid zer  
nas/ chos spong du ‘ong  
pa yin/

The passages where the texts diverge are underscored, in both the English and the Tibetan. What is especially interesting about this is that the differences and correspondences cut across *all three* texts—in other words, sometimes the autobiography agrees with the first hagiography as against the second, sometimes the autobiography agrees with the second hagiography as against the first, and sometimes the two hagiographies agree as against the biography. We see many examples of this cross-cutting among the three texts, enough that we can safely assume that either material was shared between texts or else they all descended from earlier common ancestor text(s).

It is interesting in this regard that there is no quoting of other texts—the material is simply transferred back and forth between hagiographies and biographies. In religious literary Tibetan, there are, to be sure, well established conventions for quoting from a text (this is most evident where a canonical sūtra or commentary is being cited), but we never

see these conventions of quotation used; we never see anything like, for example, "As it says in the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*, . . ." <sup>35</sup> The effect this produces in the hagiographies can be disorienting—at least to this reader—because there are transitionless jumps from the first to the third person and then back again with no apparent signaling mechanism to prepare the reader.

David Snellgrove makes a similar observation with regard to the modern hagiographies and autobiographies he has translated:

[A]s personal pronouns are seldom expressed, it is possible to slip easily in Tibetan from the first person to the third and back again to the first. Since most of the material is autobiographical, the compiler usually just reproduces his story in the first person just as he received it from his lama. But when it suits his convenience, he will change to the third person, as though he himself were retelling the story. This is more easily done in Tibetan where there is no difference between direct and indirect speech. <sup>36</sup>

While Snellgrove's statement that "there is no difference between direct and indirect speech" in Tibetan is somewhat overstated—there are a number of syntactic forms used to indicate direct quotation—his point is well taken. In attempting to disambiguate some of these texts, my first impulse was to attribute the difficulty to my own failings as a reader of Tibetan, but then I found that the native Tibetan speakers who assisted me with my translation work often could not themselves tell who was speaking when I asked them. Or else they considered the question who was speaking too obvious even to mention, but then disagreed among themselves as to who that was.

The easy manner in which materials from one text moved into others—a practice that seems much less strict than those governed by the formal conventions of quotation seen in scriptural exegesis and philosophical exposition—also suggests a reading community in which manuscripts of the master circulated freely among disciples, being exchanged, copied, and circulated, then recontextualized, recopied, and recirculated, until there existed multiple related texts that varied in different ways from one another. This would account not only for the appearance of passages from the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* in the *Rnam thar rgyal blon ma* and the *Rnam thar zin bris*, but also for the manner in which the latter two

<sup>35</sup> "shes rab grub pa ma las . . ."

<sup>36</sup> Snellgrove 1967, 74.

hagiographies—both written by direct disciples of Zhang—alternately trace and then diverge from each other.

\* \* \*

While there no simplistic conclusions to be drawn from this, a couple points should be made about the relationships between hagiographies and autobiographies within Zhang's works:

(1) Though few autobiographies had been written before Zhang wrote his, the move from biography to autobiography was not seen as anything startling: nothing like a leap into a new form of expression, or a sudden awakening into a new self-consciousness. Autobiographical materials were (and continue to be, as we see from Snellgrove's observations) mixed freely into subsequent hagiographies with no sense that anything unusual was taking place. One area for future research might be to look at older hagiographies to see if first-person was mixed in with third-person narrative before self-standing autobiographies even existed; this would not be surprising. We might note as well the way this affects the notion of "authorship," which, it would seem, is crucial to the distinction between biographies and autobiographies. For if writers, as a matter of course, considered other-authored materials as fair game to be taken up and re-used without attribution or quotation, then the idea of authorship itself becomes complicated—complicated in ways that further undermine any attempt to make a hard distinction between self-authored and other-authored texts.

(2) Autobiographies have their place within a family of genres bound together by the theme of *lineage*. This family includes—besides hagiographies and biographies—lists of teachings received (*gsan yig*) and lineage records (*brgyud yig*). These different kinds of texts are grouped together because they participate in a common enterprise—maintaining group cohesiveness by providing members with a sense of connection to an uninterrupted line of past spiritual masters—that is, to a tradition. As we shall see below, there are still other classes of texts that, because of their connection to the idea of lineage, might also be considered to belong to this genre family.

## 2. *Biographies, Supplications, and Eulogies*

A key question dictated by the injunction to consider textual economy is: how was a given text actually used? As it turns out, one of our clues as

to how biographies might actually have been used lies in the connection we just been exploring between the genre of biography and the idea of lineage. To put this question of the actual use of biographies into perspective, we might begin by looking at a passage where Zhang offers an explicit answer to a closely related question, "Why write a biography?" This occurs in the colophon to a text entitled *The Uḍumbara: Eulogy to the Glorious Rgwa lo*,<sup>37</sup> where Lama Zhang explains how he came to write these verses of praise to his teacher Rgwa lo tsā ba:

Lama Dags [sic] po Sgom pa said [to me]: "Your lama, the great glorious Rgwa lo, has a great reputation. Therefore, [you should compose] a eulogy, putting his story (*rnam thar*) or his special virtues into words."<sup>38</sup>

Why write someone's story? Lama Dwags po's answer is direct: *in order to praise his or her special virtues*. With this answer, an explicit connection is made between biography and eulogy. This is important because it is easier to trace the concrete practices associated with lama eulogies than those associated with lama biographies, and if the genres are related, then perhaps we have found a way to connect biographies as well to actual practices.

The case is similar with supplications—reverent prayers for blessings made to the past great lamas of one's lineage: the unambiguously ritual context in which they are recited lessens the temptation to view them as pure "literary" works without a direct connection to daily practices.<sup>39</sup>

As it turns out, the first two genre categories in Kun dga' rdo rje's classification scheme, which we examined above, are these very genres: (1) supplications and eulogies (*gsol 'debs bstod pa'i skor*)<sup>40</sup> and (2) biographies (*rnam thar*), and within Lama Zhang's writings, the close relationship between the two of them is expressed as a persistent blurring of the

<sup>37</sup> *Dpal rgwa lo la bstod pa u dum wa ra*, Shedup I.68–80.

<sup>38</sup> bla ma dags [sic] po sgom pa'i zhal nas/ khyed kyi bla ma dpal chen po rgwa lo de ngo mtshar che bar grags pa che bas/ rnam thar ram/ yon tan gyi khyad par ci 'dra gda' gsung ba mdzad nas bstod pa/. Samdo *Bka' 'bum* at I(ka).27. This part of the colophon does not appear in the Shedup *Gsung 'bum*.

<sup>39</sup> See Beyer 1978, 38, where he writes, referring to a Bka' brgyud pa monastery he studied in Khams in the 1970s: "Every ritual in the monastery begins with one or more prayers to the entire lineage of the gurus, . . . in which they are asked to empower the practitioners to the effective performance of the ritual."

<sup>40</sup> While analytically distinct, supplications and eulogies are grouped together in classifications of Zhang's works, and are in fact often combined in practice, as we see in Lama Zhang's writings.

boundaries that separate them. This can best be seen by considering texts that could be classed as *either* autobiographies or eulogies.

a. *The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*

The first piece under consideration is called the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes [of Sentient Beings]: A Self-Eulogy*.<sup>41</sup> Its dual nature is reflected in the lack of agreement as to how it should be classified. In the above-mentioned inner-outer-secret schema taken from Zhang's *Sealed Work [Written at] Spyi chings*, we saw this text tagged as an "inner biography."<sup>42</sup> In Kun dga' rdo rje's taxonomy, however, it is placed in "supplications and eulogies," not in "biographies." That Zhang himself saw this piece as one that straddled traditional genre boundaries is evidenced by the colophon to the work, which reads:

A *eulogy* in the form of a *biography* to the great lord of yogins, Bde ba'i rdo rje, by 'Dod chags rdo rje.<sup>43</sup>

As it turns out, both "Bde ba'i rdo rje" and "'Dod chags rdo rje" are pseudonyms used by Lama Zhang for himself, which makes this a *self-eulogy* in the form of a biography—hence also an *autobiography*. Thus it is both new and old: new as an autobiography, for there seem to have been very few written at that time, but old as a eulogy, for this genre—called *stotra* in Sanskrit—originated in India centuries before Buddhism began trickling into Tibet.

Indeed, it is useful to consider the text first of all as an example of this older, liturgical genre, because the genre was very common and its formal properties long since codified, if not formularized. The opening stanza of Zhang's verse reads:

In Tsha ba gru, like Lumbinī grove,  
[you] entered [your] mother's womb in a good dream omen.  
When nine months had elapsed, at the time of your birth,  
people said you were an emanation body,  
and in your youth, while you played,  
groups of children would receive divine teachings.  
The people of the area would ask for blessings.  
*O teacher [bearing] the signs of emanation, I pay homage to you!*<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.108–111.

<sup>42</sup> *Bka' rgya spyi chings ma*, Shedup VII.84–85.

<sup>43</sup> rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po bde ba'i rdo rje la/ 'dod chags rdo rjes rnam thar gyi sgo nas bstod pa'o/. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.111.

<sup>44</sup> lum bi'i tshal 'dra tshal ba'i grur/ yum gyi lhum s zhugs rmi ltas bzang/ zla dgu lon nas sku bltams tshe/ sprul pa yin zhes 'gro ba dang/ gzhon nur rol rtse mdzad pa'i tshe/

If we look at the formal verse layout, we see an A-B structure: the first seven lines—the “A” section—describe Zhang’s birth and childhood, and the last line—the “B” section (italicized)—serves as a eulogistic refrain. This formula is followed throughout the piece:

You received the advice of Yer pa ba and ‘Ol ka ba  
and wandered the mountain retreats.  
You did wind meditation and perfected the signs.  
*O full attainer of the accomplishments, I pay homage to you!*<sup>45</sup>

This A-B form is very common in Buddhist eulogies, even when they are not biographical. Thus, for example, here is a Sanskrit verse from a eulogy to Śākyamuni Buddha found in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*:

You are liberated from all obstacles;  
You are the sage who masters the entire world;  
Objects of awareness are pervaded by your awareness;  
Your mind is liberated.  
*Homage to you!*<sup>46</sup>

Zhang himself wrote these more conventional eulogies. This verse is taken from the work called *Supplication of the Oral Transmission Lineage*:

Lord who, out of the power of great bliss,  
perfected the three bodies:  
*I bow down in homage to Vajradhara!*<sup>47</sup>

Sometimes, as in the *Eulogy to Rje Yer pa ba in the Form of [a Eulogy to] the Protectors of the Three [Buddha] Families*,<sup>48</sup> eulogy and supplication are combined:

O fearless yogin  
like the Radiant Power-Master (i.e. Vajrapāṇi),  
I bow down to your venerable body.  
Grant blessings upon our bodies!

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byis pa'i tshogs rnam s lha chos nyan/ yul mi rnam kyis byin rlabs zhu/ sprul pa'i brda ston khyed la 'dud/. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup L108.

<sup>45</sup> yer pa ba dang 'ol ka ba'i/ gdams ngag mnos nas ri khrod 'grims/ rtsa rlung bsgoms pas rtags rnam rdzogs/ sgrub pa mthar phyin khyed la 'dud/. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup L109

<sup>46</sup> Paul Griffiths, “A Hymn of Praise to the Buddha’s Good Qualities,” in Lopez 1995, 42.

<sup>47</sup> bde ba chen po'i ngang shed nas/ sku gsum mthar phyin bcom ldan 'das/ rdo rje 'chang la phyag 'tshal 'dud/. *Bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs*, Shedup L56.

<sup>48</sup> The “protectors of the three buddha families” are Vajrapāṇi (*phyag na rdo rje*), Mañjuśrī (*'jams dpal dbyangs*), and Avalokiteśvara (*spyen ras gzigs*).

O sweet-speaking yogin  
 Like the melodious-voiced young Mañjuśrī,  
 I bow down and offer praise to your venerable speech.  
 Grant blessings upon our speech!

O yogin with equal [compassion] for everyone,  
 Like Lord Avalokiteśvara,  
 I bow down and offer praise to your venerable mind.  
 Grant blessings upon our minds!<sup>49</sup>

Notice in all of these cases the identical A-B stanza form: first, what might be called a “descriptor,” which offers identifying information about the object of supplication or eulogy, then a refrain offering praise or supplication. The form is the same; what is different about Zhang’s biographical eulogy is the content of the “A” section, the descriptor: in the more traditional supplication-eulogy, the descriptor is an epithet or a short descriptive phrase, whereas in Zhang’s text, it is expanded to include extended narrations of life events.

Indeed, Gene Smith has suggested, writing of the early Bka’ brgyud pa biographical anthologies known as the “Golden Rosaries,”<sup>50</sup> that some biographies may have originated in just this way, as commentarial expansions on what were originally shorter supplications to lineage lamas.<sup>51</sup> One can imagine a scenario wherein short eulogistic-supplicatory works evolved through a progressive expansion of their descriptor “A” sections: simple epithets grew into short descriptive phrases, then short life-narratives, then longer narratives, and so forth, until what had originally been brief liturgical prayers with a very practical bent became self-standing biographical works—something more like what we think of as “literature.” This is not to suggest a single straight line running from older genres to self-standing literary biographies—surely there were multiple paths—but at least in the case of Lama Zhang’s works, we can see a clear formal connection between eulogy and autobiography.

The importance of this connection should not be underestimated, for it highlights a crucial but relatively neglected source of new genres: namely,

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<sup>49</sup> gzi brjid mthu stobs bdag po ‘dra/ nyam nga med pa’i rnal ‘byor pa/ rje btsun sku la phyag ‘tshal lo/ bdag cag lus ‘di byin gyis rlobs/ gsung dbyangs ‘jam dpal gzhon nu ‘dra/ snyan par smra ba’i rnal ‘byor pa/ rje btsun gsung la phyag ‘tshal bstod/ bdag cag ngag ‘di byin gyis rlobs/ thugs rje spyen ras gzigs dbang ‘dra/ kun la snyoms pa’i rnal ‘byor pa/ rje btsun thugs la phyag ‘tshal bstod/ bdag cag yid ‘di byin gyis rlobs/. *Rje yer pa ba la rigs gsum mgon po’i sgo nas bstod pa*, Shedup 1.86–87.

<sup>50</sup> gser ‘phreng

<sup>51</sup> “Golden Rosaries of the Bka’ brgyud Schools,” in Smith 2001, 39.

*old genres*. This can be especially difficult to see in the case of a genre as seemingly familiar as autobiography, which can to the contemporary reader seem a direct and spontaneous response to life experiences, rather than a response mediated through already-existing narrative forms.

But there is another novel element introduced here by Lama Zhang that is crucial to autobiography: this is the element of *self-reflexivity*—the *auto* in *autobiography*, the *self* in *self-eulogy*. As we saw above, Zhang, in the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*, acknowledges the strangeness of this reflexive movement:

Generally, it is not the way of the most excellent ones to tell your own story yourself. To do so is not appropriate. It is not in accord with the Dharma.<sup>52</sup>

And it must have appeared even less in accord with the Dharma to write one's own *eulogy*, to praise oneself in song. We see Zhang here suspended, as he so often is, between tradition and novelty. Tradition resides in the eulogy form that he retains, novelty in the two layers he adds to that tradition: (1) the expanded life-narrative, which makes it a biography, and (2) a reflexive movement, which makes it a self-eulogy.<sup>53</sup>

But in this case we have an unusual indirect reflexivity—reflexivity mediated through a nonreflexive form, for the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*, like a traditional eulogy, is written not in the first but in the *second* person. As such, it lacks what we think of as the quintessential autobiographical voice. "I pay homage to you!" is the repeated refrain, and the only way we know that the 'you' refers to 'me' is through information external to the work itself—in this case, through the title ("self-eulogy") and through our knowledge that the two names given in the colophon both refer to Lama Zhang. Hence, we have an odd hybrid work, an autobiography narrated in the second person.

But we still have no idea why anyone would write a work of self-praise, and our ignorance here only encourages cultural projections, such as the stereotype of Zhang as a sort of boastful, egotistical wildman. What we actually know about the circumstances surrounding the creation of

<sup>52</sup> spyir rang gi nram thar rang gis brjod pa ni dam pa nrams kyi lugs ma yin/ bya bar 'os pa ma yin/ chos dang mthun pa ma yin/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.316–17.

<sup>53</sup> There is one other self-eulogy in Zhang's corpus that is not discussed here. It is entitled *The Byang mkhar ma Self-Eulogy*. *Nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa byang mkhar ma*, Shedup I.111–112. This work is interesting insofar as it also evidences Zhang's peculiar self-reflexivity. It is, however, less pertinent to the present discussion as it, unlike the *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, contains no biographical material. Also, there is no colophon suggesting the occasion for its composition or the way in which it was intended to be used.



the text comes first of all from the colophon, which tells us where it was completed—at the temple of the Chos bskor dra [sic] thang,<sup>54</sup> which was part of Zhang's monastic complex at Tshal Gung thang, just south of Lhasa, across the Skyi river. In addition, Zhang's own listing of his biographies mentioned earlier tells us that it was requested by a monk named Ya so, and this also accords with Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje's later account, which says that it was "told to the monk Gtsang pa Ya so at G.yu ru grwa thang."<sup>55</sup> Still, none of this tells us why it was written or how it was meant to be used.

Fortunately, there are two other texts, found in the collection called the *Sealed Precepts*,<sup>56</sup> that reveal the circumstances surrounding the writing of this work. One is called *The Story of "The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes,"*<sup>57</sup> and the other *The Sādhana of "The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes."*<sup>58</sup> In the first of these texts, we are given an account of a fascinating series of dream encounters between Lama Zhang and an assembly of wisdom *dākinīs*. In the first such encounter, he is given a practice called "the 21 [instructions on the syllable] *hūm*,"<sup>59</sup> an ensemble of perfection-stage subtle-body yogas involving the manipulation of winds, channels, and syllables—the practice which, according to the tradition, led eventually to Zhang's achievement of full buddhahood.<sup>60</sup> After practicing this for several days, he awoke one morning at dawn feeling an unusual intensification of his experience. He composed a vajra-song, went outside and beat his drum, then returned to his meditation hut only to

<sup>54</sup> chos bskor dra [sic] thang gi gtsug lag khang du sbyar ba rdzogs so. *Dgos 'dod re bskong ma*. Samdo Zhang Bka' 'bum, I.24v. This line does not appear in the Shedup version.

<sup>55</sup> g.yu ru grwa thang du dge slong gtsang pa ya so la gsungs pa. Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje, *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.105.

<sup>56</sup> *Bka' rgya ma*. Found in volume VII of Shedup.

<sup>57</sup> *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.440–46.

<sup>58</sup> *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i sgrub thabs*, Shedup VII.446–47.

<sup>59</sup> hUM nyi shu rtas gcig.

<sup>60</sup> Of especial interest here are the texts recounting the dream of Zhang's in which he is transformed into a *hūm* syllable, drawn up into the vagina of Vajrayoginī, and sent on an *Incredible Voyage*—like passage through her *cakra* centers, culminating in his achievement of full buddhahood. See *Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.168–74; *Spyi khungs ma skor las hUM nyi shu rtas gcig gi rtas ba*, Shedup VII.335–38; *Spyi khungs ma hUM nyi shu rtas gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa*, Shedup VII.338–42. See also *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 194–95; and *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 807–08. As pointed out in Chapter Two above, it is also of great interest that Lama Zhang—who is often portrayed as an advocate of the controversial *mahāmudrā* doctrine called "the white panacea" (*dkar po chig thub*), which dispenses with tantric initiations and complicated practices in favor of a simplified formless meditation—should have been such a dedicated practitioner of, and indeed is said to have attained buddhahood by means of, these supposedly rejected tantric practices.

discover that the crown protrusion of a buddha had appeared on his head. A few days later, the *ḍākinīs* returned to his meditation hut, singing:

The crown protrusion on the head radiates upward.  
To the being possessed of the power of knowledge,  
We offer praise!

...

O, fulfiller of the needs, wishes, and hopes [of sentient beings],  
We bow down to the master lama!<sup>61</sup>

It was at this point that the *ḍākinīs* gave to Lama Zhang the eulogy called *the Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*, the very text under discussion here. When he inquired as to its purpose, they explained:

This eulogy to you [is] a precious wish-granting jewel. O radiant one, if one recites this *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* and performs the deity [practice], one will attain buddhahood in this lifetime, in this body.<sup>62</sup>

The deity-yoga practice they gave to him is set forth in the accompanying *sādhana* piece: briefly, one is to recite the eulogy while visualizing Lama Zhang seated at the heart of Vajrayoginī. Each time one comes to the eulogistic refrain—the above-described “B” section—one visualizes friends, wealth, and food descending from above like rain.<sup>63</sup> The *sādhana* ends with the promise that

If you practice the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* secret *sādhana* in this way, you will, in this very life, achieve the supreme and ordinary attainments.<sup>64</sup>

Finally, they instruct Zhang on the transmission of the eulogy and practice to his disciples:

The one called Btsan ‘bang tsha ba grub [read ‘gru’] Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas and the one called Bka’ shog will come. Teach it to them.... At the Chos

<sup>61</sup> dbu'i gtsug tor gyen du 'bar/ skyes bu rig pa'i stobs ldan la/ kho bo cag gis bstod par rigs/... rje na mo gu ru/ dgos 'dod re ba skong mdzad pa/ bla ma rje la phyag 'tsal lo/. *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.444.

<sup>62</sup> khyed kyi bstod pa 'di yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che/ 'od zer can dgos 'dod re skong ma 'di kha ton byas shing yi dam byas na/ tshe gcig lus gcig 'di la sangs rgya ba'i dgos pa yod do/. *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.444–45.

<sup>63</sup> dgos 'dod re skong ma'i 'dud ces pa'i skabs su/ mi nor zas gsum char bzhin du 'bab par bsam. *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i sgrub thabs*, Shedup VII.447.

<sup>64</sup> 'di ltar dgos 'dod re skong ma'i gsang sgrub 'di nyams su blang na/ mchog thun mong gi dngos grub rnam tshe 'di nyid la thob. *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i sgrub thabs*, Shedup VII.446.

'khor Grang [sic] thang, give it to the monks named Ya len gyi rme ba can and Ma len gyi rme ba can. Then, this [teaching] of yours will increase.<sup>65</sup>

\* \* \*

There are a couple of points I would like to make about these *ḍākinī* dreams and their relevance to the interpretation of the autobiography called the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*.

(1) First of all, though it may seem so upon a surface reading, the self-eulogy is clearly not just a piece of versified braggery.<sup>66</sup> Rather, the second-person eulogizing voice is that of the *ḍākinī*s addressing Lama Zhang. To be sure, the fact that it is Zhang speaking his own praise using the words of the *ḍākinī*s certainly complicates things from the standpoint of voice, as does the fact that the piece is intended to be recited by disciples while they perform deity-yoga visualizations. But what we have here is not so much boastfulness as a deliberate playing with the conventions governing established genres, and this is the real novelty—the *genius*, let us say—in Zhang's writings: he is remarkably self-aware regarding the process of composition itself and the means of expression that go into it, and he is therefore able to write in a bewildering variety of styles. It is not surprising that someone so sensitized would—in a literary culture that did not always encourage outright individual innovation—write some of the earliest examples of the new genre of autobiography.

(2) Secondly, we see that the autobiographical passages cannot be understood simply as detached life narratives, but must be seen in their relation to concrete social practices—in this case, as part of a specific tantric ritual containing elements of both deity yoga and *guru pūjā*, the centerpiece of which is a visualization of Vajrayoginī with Lama Zhang seated in her heart. Note how far this is from a modern autobiography designed to tell an inspiring story or convey historical information or just be “a good read.”

<sup>65</sup> de tsan 'bangs tsha ba grub rgyal ba 'byung gnas bya ba dang/ bka' shog bya ba 'ong/ de la shod/ ... chos 'khor grang [sic] thang zhes bya bar dge slong ya len gyi rme ba can/ ma len gyi rme ba can bya ba de la byin/ de nas khyod kyi 'di rgyas par 'ong/. *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.445.

<sup>66</sup> Though it might be interesting to look at possible connections between Tibetan literary forms and the Tibetan oral traditions mentioned by Stein of “great talking matches, where everyone vied in praising, glorifying, and vaunting himself; when challenges, too, were exchanged, and bragging. . . .” Stein 1972, 255.

b. *The Two Self-Criticisms*

We should also note the two "self-criticism" works discussed more fully in Chapter Five, the *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs* and the *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, for they are also essentially self-eulogies that convey biographical information. But, as will become abundantly clear in their treatment below, they are confounding texts that resist easy categorization and interpretation. They share with *The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* a roughly eulogistic form and a second-person voice, but they are much looser, more freestyle, in structure, not following the standard eulogy form so closely. Still, we see in these works—as in *The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*—the way in which the difficult issues of voice, tone, authorship, identity, authority, and textual economy come together, sometimes cacophonously, in the interplay between genres: the ironical reflection on genre typologies; the bewildering rhetorical conflation of praise with denunciation, modesty with arrogance, and shame with admiring self-regard; the playful and knowing bending of genre conventions; the mixing of genres; the generation of new genres; the experimentation with religious personae implicit in traditional genre forms; and the playing out of religious and political tensions as rhetorical clashes between literary forms. The degree of self-reflexive awareness of genre *as genre* is striking: Zhang understands the stylizing nature of style and has begun to toy with it in a self-conscious fashion.

3. *Autobiographies and Instructions to Disciples*

Once we become sensitized to the subtle ways in which seemingly distinct genres relate to one another, we begin to see genres less as strictly segregated categories and more as nodes within multiply connected fluid webworks of expressive means. With this in mind, let us continue our examination of the genre of autobiography, looking more closely at Zhang's principal overt autobiography, the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*.

The work appears to have been written in the dog year 1166, when Zhang was in his early 40s—a time when he was in transition from a life of solitary retreat to one of religious leadership, political and military responsibility, and public notoriety. It being, as such, a fairly early work, notably absent from it are events from the last third of his life—the period during which he emerged as a controversial public figure much entangled in the political life of late-twelfth-century Lhasa.

We should note at the beginning that the term rendered as "autobiography" here is *nyid kyī nam thar*, not *rang gi nam thar*, which later was to

become the standard term for the genre. It would seem that *rang gi nram thar* was not yet being used in this technical sense. There are two occurrences of the term that I know of in Zhang's works, both in the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*. In the first instance—already quoted above—he is explaining why he has undertaken what might seem an inappropriately self-aggrandizing project:

Generally, it is not the way of the most excellent ones to tell your own story yourself. To do so is not appropriate. It is not in accord with the Dharma.<sup>67</sup>

The other instance occurs a couple lines later:

However, my own story is not [told] for the sake of showing off. . . . Hoping to benefit a few, I thought there would be nothing wrong with telling [my story].<sup>68</sup>

It seems pretty clear from the context that in both of these cases (the translated phrase is underscored), the term *rang gi nram thar* has the simple, nontechnical sense of “one’s own story” or “my own story” and is not meant to designate a formal genre.

Within Kun dga’ rdo rje’s classification scheme, the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* is placed in the second group, that of *mdzad pa nram thar* or “biographies.” As we saw above, Kun dga’ rdo rje’s category contains, besides the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*, essentially two sorts of works: hagiographies of lineage lamas and lists of teachings and lineages—which makes it quite clear how the idea of *lineage* acts as the governing principle of the category. The placement of Zhang’s autobiography at the end of this list sends out a strong message about his position within the tradition and the authority that flows from that position. We should keep in mind, however, that here the message is *Kun dga’ rdo rje’s*, not Zhang’s, and we have to be very careful as historians not to collapse the two into a single univocal Tshal pa Bka’ brgyud pa tradition. Kun dga’ rdo rje has his own reasons for grouping Zhang’s autobiography with the other lineage-related pieces, but these reasons may have little, or nothing, to do with the way the text was actually used 150 years earlier, during Lama Zhang’s own lifetime.

When we look at what Zhang himself tells us about the circumstances in which the text was composed, we see a picture not always consonant

<sup>67</sup> spyir rang gi nram thar rang gis brjod pa ni dam pa rnam kyis lugs ma yin/ bya bar ‘os pa ma yin/ chos dang mthun pa ma yin/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.316–17.

<sup>68</sup> ‘on kyang ni rang gi nram thar ngoms pa’i ched du ma yin. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.317.

with Kun dga' rdo rje's classification scheme, and, from the standpoint of its origin, and the likely uses to which it was put, the text may actually be more closely related to texts in Kun dga' rdo rje's *fifth* category, “guidance on meditation practice,” than it is to the other works in the “biographies” category.

Consider the following passage from the work:

If [this autobiography] is shown to others—aside from those few who are wholly trustworthy to me—they will certainly only abuse and disparage [it], and destroying their own religious lineage and accumulating the deepest of sins, will cast themselves into hell. Therefore, it is vital not to show [this] to others.<sup>69</sup>

This tells us a little bit about how the work was used—or intended to be used: it was not meant to be shown to outsiders. This means that, despite Kun dga' rdo rje's placing of it with other lineage-legitimizing texts, it is unlikely it was used for that purpose during Zhang's lifetime—at least lineage-legitimizing in Gyatso's sense of advertisements for the lama. We might express this point by asking: what good is an advertisement that cannot be shown to anyone? This same prohibition is repeated in the colophon to the piece, which also gives us more clues as to the circumstances under which it was composed:

Spoken at Khung phug rdzong of Sgrags, at the request of [lit. “not able to refuse”] the monk Shes rab grub pa. It is spoken with the intent to benefit. Its point of view will not accord with [that of] others. If you show it to others, they will accumulate sins.<sup>70</sup>

Sgrags is the region of Central Tibet that lies between the Skyid and the Gtsang po rivers, two river valleys west of Bsam yas monastery (see map, \_\_\_\_). Khung phug rdzong turns up often in Zhang's writings, being one of his favorite retreat spots. He sometimes stayed there alone, sometimes in the company of his closest, most accomplished disciples. So it seems likely that the occasion for Shes rab grub pa's request for an autobiography was one of these collective retreats.

<sup>69</sup> gzhan la bstan na nges pa kho nar gshe zhing smod la/ rang gi rgyud sreg cing sdig pa kham po che bsags nas kho rang gis kho rang dmyal bar bskur bar byed pas na gzhan la mi ston pa gal che'o/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.317.

<sup>70</sup> sgrags kyi khung phug rdzong du dge slong shes rab grub pa'i ngo ma bzlog nas smras pa/ phan sems kyi smras pa yin/ gzhan dang snang ba mi mthun/ gzhan la bstan na sdig pa sog/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.365.

Looking through his texts for other references to retreats at this site, I came upon a work entitled the *Questions Asked by Dge bshes Sha mi, etc.*,<sup>71</sup> which I believe came out of the very same retreat that occasioned the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography*.

*Questions Asked by Dge bshes Sha mi, etc.* is placed by Kun dga' rdo rje in the class of "guidance on meditation practice" (*nyams len sgom 'khrid kyi skor*), the fifth category of his *dkar chag*. Again, this is a well established genre of work grounded in the necessarily close relationship of lama and disciple in the tantric forms of religious practice that came to dominate Tibet. Indeed, there is again a family of interrelated terms used to designate different works of this sort, and we see these terms recurring throughout Lama Zhang's collected works. I list a few of them below, in the order of the frequency of their occurrence in titles from Zhang's collected works:

- (1) instructions (*gdams ngag* or *gdams pa*): perhaps the most general term, designating what Kapstein characterizes as "Tibetan technologies of the self," which are "articulation[s] of the dynamic interaction between master and disciple"<sup>72</sup> (*gdams pa* occurs 16 times and *gdams ngag* occurs 9 times in titles to Zhang's works).
- (2) [secret] instructions (*man ngag*): sometimes synonymous with *gdams ngag*, but often connoting a greater secrecy (23 occurrences).
- (3) answers to questions (*zhus lan*): a form especially associated with Sgam po pa, the root lama of Zhang's teacher Sgom tshul, but much used by Zhang as well. These take the form of answers to questions posed by disciples and thus often have names of disciples in their titles—e.g., *Answers to the Teacher Dar ma gzhon nu's Questions* (*Dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan*)<sup>73</sup> (8 occurrences).
- (4) heart advice (*snying gtam*): a personal instruction from lama to disciple (8 occurrences).
- (5) introduction (*ngo sprod*): this is an important term used in the Bka' brgyud pa *mahāmudrā* practices, where the term "introduction to [the nature of] the mind" (*sems ngo sprod*) indicates a special "pointing out" instruction wherein the lama directly shows the disciple the disciple's own mind. In its more general usage, *ngo sprod* retains this

<sup>71</sup> *Dge bshes sha mi dang/ dge bshes grwa pa dang/ gtsang pa jo btsun la sogs pas zhus pa'i nyams myong gi gleng slong ring mo* (hereinafter, *Dge bshes sha mi la sogs pas zhus pa*), Shedup III.497–513.

<sup>72</sup> Kapstein 1996, 276.

<sup>73</sup> *Dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.23–38.



connotation of direct knowledge conveyed through a close personal relationship between lama and disciple (6 occurrences).

(6) advice (*gsung sgros*) (5 occurrences).

(7) instruction manual (*khrid yig*): "practical manuals explicating particular systems of meditation, yoga and ritual"<sup>74</sup> (4 occurrences).

The colophon to *Questions Asked by Dge bshes Sha mi, etc.* begins like this:

"The Long Discussion of Zhang the Beggar-monk." At the request of the monk Shes rab grub pa, at Khum phug rdzong of Sgrags, in the year of the dog, a bit more than two thirds was put in writing there. The remaining later discussions were written down at Tshal sgang [chos spyil] of Dbu ru skyi shod in the presence of the spiritual teacher and Vinaya-holder Sha mi, the spiritual teacher Grwa pa, and the spiritual teachers, the two Gtsang pa Jo btsun brothers.<sup>75</sup>

Then there is, once again, the injunction to secrecy:

I request that, except for my closest disciples,  
this not be shown to anyone.  
Seal! Seal! Seal! Seal! Seal! Seal!  
Set down with seven seals [i.e. top secret].<sup>76</sup>

Notice the similarity between this and the colophon to the *Shes rab grub pa ma* autobiography, which we saw earlier (here I've altered my translations slightly, to highlight the parallels in the Tibetan syntax):

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***Questions Asked by Dge bshes Sha mi, etc.:***      ***Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography:***

At Sgrags kyi khum phug rdzong,  
in the year of the dog,  
at the request of the monk Shes rab  
grub pa,  
[this] was spoken.

At Sgrags kyi khung phug rdzong,  
at the request of the monk Shes rab  
grub pa,  
a bit more than two thirds was put in  
writing.

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<sup>74</sup> Kapstein 1996, 276.

<sup>75</sup> sprang ban zhang gi gleng slong ring mo zhes bya ba sgrags kyi khum phug rdzong du khyi'i lo la dge slong shes rab grub pa'i ngo ma zlog nas yi ge sum cha gnyis lhag tsam der bris/ phyis kyi gleng slong lhag ma rnams dbu ru skyi shod kyi tshal sgang du dge bshes 'dul ba 'dzin pa sha mi dang/ dge bshes grwa pa dang/ dge bshes gtsang pa jo btsun sku mched gnyis kyi ngor bris pa'o/. *Dge bshes sha mi la sogs pas zhus pa*, Shedup III.512-13.

<sup>76</sup> slob ma snying dang 'dra ba re re tsam min pa su la yang mi bstan par zhu'o/ rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya/ rgya rim pa bdun gyis btap bo/. *Dge bshes sha mi la sogs pas zhus pa*, Shedup III.513.



In addition to the colophons, there is at least one other passage shared in common by these two works, which leads me to believe they had a common origin, and allows us a further glimpse of the real circumstances that seem to have prompted Zhang to write about his own life. In this passage, he recounts his life-shaking first meeting with Dwags po Sgom tshul. Here Zhang receives from Sgom tshul his first *mahāmudrā* teaching, the instruction on “coemergence,” which results in an extraordinary realization experience. This is the version in the autobiography:

Then, in my 33rd year, I met the precious teacher, endowed with kindness, endowed with blessings, endowed with the true lineage, the one who introduced me directly to the perception of the *sugatagarbha*, which exists in the minds of all sentient beings as a natural possession. As soon as I met him, he bestowed upon me the practice of coemergence, and I meditated. Oh! I saw that all of my earlier meditation had been superficial knowledge. Now, I thought, I am definitely a meditator!<sup>77</sup>

Here is the same passage as it occurs in *Questions Asked by Dge bshes Shami*, etc.:

**Advice on the four landmarks.** Then, in my 33rd year, I met the precious teacher, endowed with kindness, endowed with blessings, endowed with the true lineage, the one who introduced me directly to the perception of the *sugatagarbha*, which exists as a natural possession—and thus this meditation occurred. With regard to this, there are: first, the landmark of the arising of meditation; second, the landmark of experience; third, the landmark of the dawning of realization; and fourth, the landmark of enhancement that brings benefit. From among these, first, the arising of meditation landmark: as soon as I met the precious one, he bestowed upon me the practice of coemergence, and I meditated. Oh! I saw that all of my earlier meditation had been superficial knowledge. Now, I thought, I am definitely a meditator!<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> de nas lo sum cu so gsum la slob dpon rin po che bka' drin can/ byin rlabs can/ don gyi brgyud pa can/ sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la rang chas su yod pa'i bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po de gcer gyis mngon sum du ngo sprod par byed pa de dang mjal ma thag tu lhan cig skyes sbyor gngang nas bsgoms pas 'a ma sngar gyi sgom thams cad shes pa kha phyir bltas su 'dug\_/da ni sgom mkhan rang gtan la 'bebs par 'dug snyam/. *Shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup 1.347.

<sup>78</sup> sa mtshams bzhi pa'i gdams ngag ni/ de nas lo sum cu so gsum na slob dpon rin po che bka' drin can/ byin rlabs can/ don gyi brgyud pa can/ sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la rang chas su yod pa'i bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po de gcer gyis mngon sum du ngo sprod par byed pa de dang mjal bas sgom 'di byung/ de la sgom skyes pa'i sa mtshams dang gcig—/nyams su myong ba'i sa mtshams dang gnyis/ rtogs pa shar ba'i sa mtshams dang gsum/ rtogs pa bogs 'don pa'i sa mtshams dang bzhi las/ dang po sgom skye ba'i sa mtshams ni/ rin po che dang mjal ma thag lhan cig skyes sbyor gngang nas bsgoms pas/

Words that appear in the meditation instruction but not in the autobiography are marked here in underscored boldface. Aside from these, the passages are identical. We can see here how the meditation instruction format—the underscored *mahāmudrā* language of the “four landmarks,” which is not present in the autobiography—serves as a sort of framework upon which the life-narrative material is hung, indexing the life story to the occasion of its telling: This is not life narration for its own sake; it is *life narration employed in order to round out a personal meditation instruction to a disciple*. This, then, is one answer to the question, “Why would a twelfth-century Tibetan lama write about his own life?” It suggests that the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* was tied to practice contexts very different from those of, for example, autobiographies written to promote a lineage, or to enhance the reputation of a charismatic lama in the eyes of potential patrons. It traveled in different, more private, circles; followed different traffic patterns; and thus had a different significance.

For this reason, despite the outward resemblance, it is quite different from the other works in the category of *rnam thar*. As I have argued above, those other works in the category—the lineage hagiographies, teaching lists, and lineage lists—seem to me more closely related, in terms of practice contexts, to the category of “supplications and eulogies.” So there is, in effect, a split within the category of “biographies”: on the one side we have works that gravitate towards the category of “supplications and eulogies”; on the other, texts that gravitate towards the category of “guidance on meditation practice.” These different genre family relationships—which reflect different textual economies—are obscured by the standard taxonomy. But if, against the grain of surface taxonomies, we look at texts as material artifacts, traveling through physical, social, and symbolic spaces, traversing diverse reading communities, and accruing significance thereby, then we see kinship relationships that are rather different from those displayed by standard taxonomies.

Just to make these differences as stark as possible, I have drawn a chart of what I think of as two different creation myths for genres. This is not at all intended to represent what actually happened. It may be more useful to think of these stories as two Weberian ideal types, which never exist in their pure forms in the real world, but which display the logical relationships more clearly than real-world examples.

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‘a ma/ sngar gyi sgom thams cad shes pa kha phyir bltas su ‘dug/ da ni sgom mkhan rang gtan la ‘beb par ‘dug snyam/. *Dge bshes sha mi la sogs pas zhus pa*, Shedup III.497–513.

# TWO BIOGRAPHY ORIGIN MYTHS

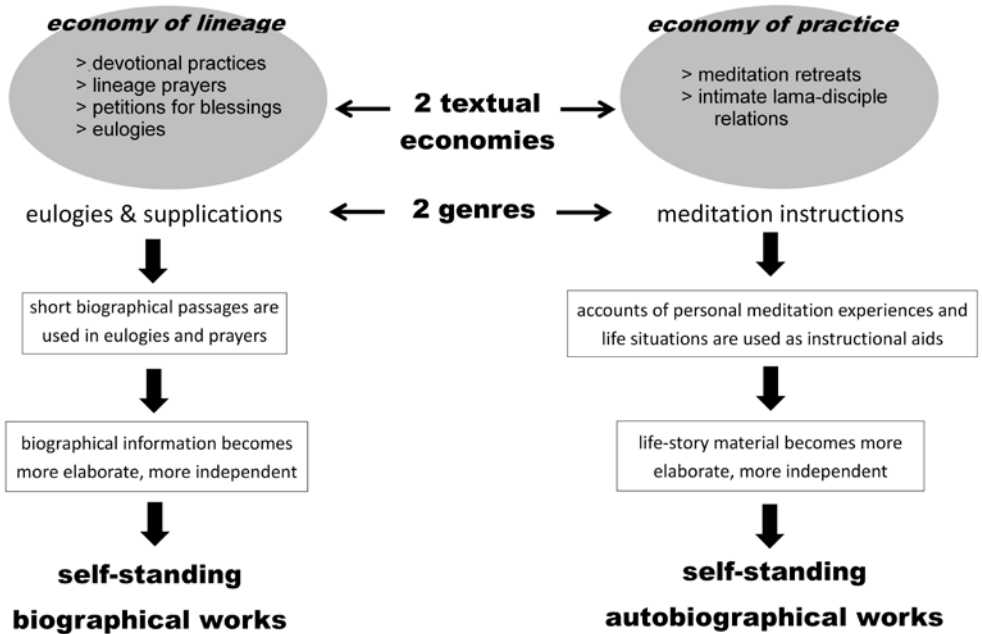


Figure 3.1

We begin from two different textual economies, two different contexts of textual production and religious activity:

- (1) On the left side, those tied to tradition-maintaining practices: devotional rituals, lineage prayers, petitions for blessings, eulogies—all of those activities that imbue individual practitioners with a sense of group identity and connection to a past. The genre associated with these practices is that of eulogies and supplications.
- (2) We now see a process by which short biographical passages are used in eulogies and prayers (the “descriptor” or “B” section).
- (3) These biographical passages become more elaborate, more independent, capable of standing alone outside of the supplications or eulogies.
- (4) Until finally, we have a full-scale genre of self-standing biographical works—life-narratives of famous lamas intended as inspirational and devotional material.

One the right side, a different textual economy is pictured:

- (1') Here we have all of the activities centered around guru-disciple relationships: meditation retreats and personal interactions—instructions given face to face. The genre associated with these practices is that of instructions of various sorts.
- (2') Within this context, autobiographical material is gradually introduced by the lama to fill out the personal instructions.
- (3') Again, the biographical material gradually becomes more elaborate, more independent.
- (4') Until there emerges in the end a new self-standing genre of autobiography—born, in this case, not from the context of those lineage-affirming rituals that gave birth to hagiographies, but from the context of intimate lama-disciple relations.<sup>79</sup>

An idealized model like this, to be sure, entails much simplification—but useful simplification, one would hope, because the two origin myths, if not separable in reality, are nonetheless analytically distinct, and their idealization thus affords a glimpse of formal properties and family resemblances not otherwise visible in everyday genre categories. There are, of course, all sorts of real-world complications that would intrude on this neat little schema. For example, *The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes*, discussed above, would have originated at the top left of the chart, with lineage prayers and supplications, and followed the left-hand course of development, but then taken a reflexive jump across the chart and ended up on the lower right, as an autobiography—in this case, a self-eulogy. But of course, it is precisely the schema that allows us to see this as a real-world complication.

The point here is that all biographies are not alike—do not originate within the same economies, do not belong to the same genre families or

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<sup>79</sup> In later centuries, works would appear that were much more explicit about the connection of life-stories with teaching contexts. Three and a half centuries later—when the genre of *rnam thar* was well established and its conventions more fixed—the Eighth Karma pa, Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–54), for example, wrote a work called *Training Guide in the Form of a Biography of Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje* (*Karma pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i rnam thar la bslab pa'i khrid*). Rheingans 2010, 256. The title is interesting insofar as it explicitly acknowledges the dual-genre aspect—similar to the way Zhang's *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* acknowledged its genre blurring in the colophon, calling itself "a eulogy in the form of a biography." *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.111.

family networks. This is not necessarily to advocate jettisoning or redoing genre categories: of course, they are very useful. But at the same time, we should keep in mind that that is all they are: useful devices for keeping track of texts and for exploring their properties and relationships.

What is important for our purposes here is that once again we see a close family relationship between autobiography and another genre of writing—in this case, personal instructions to disciples—that has a more obvious relationship to ritual and other practices. By relating autobiography to concrete textual practices in this way, we inoculate ourselves against the anachronistic yet almost irresistible temptation to picture a solitary and disembodied soul in deep reflection, recollecting its past and transmitting that recollection to some similarly solitary reader-soul. The important lesson here is that Tibetan religious autobiography most likely began as a less-than-autonomous practice, probably as part of some other genre. As time went on, the autobiographical portions became separated from the practical instructions as interest in the lives of great lamas increased, and in time a new genre came into being.

#### 4. *Other Directions*

Other areas of connection to be explored in future work might include the relationship between Zhang's autobiographies and the various Tibetan song traditions. Zhang was known in particular as a writer of *mgur*, those songs of spiritual realization most closely associated with *Mi la ras pa*. Some of these songs have autobiographical content as well. Space makes it impossible to treat of this genre here—it would require a whole other volume in itself, or at least a chapter, to do it justice—but it is there for future consideration. Furthermore, *mgur* is known to have been influenced not only by Indian Buddhist song forms such as *dohā*, but also by indigenous Tibetan “folk” forms. It would be very interesting also to look at the literary genres in which Zhang wrote in relation to the popular art genres in existence during his lifetime. He was, after all, by his own admission, not particularly well schooled in classical Indian Buddhist literature. But this lack did not mean he worked in a vacuum without literary models: there are so many indigenous Tibetan forms that could conceivably have influenced the turn to autobiography. For example, we see a very strong first-person voice in oral traditions such as epic as well as in the literary practices associated with, e.g., games and drinking contests. Could these have influenced his writing? Among the forms that Stein mentions in his discussion of the Dunhuang manuscripts, one of particular inter-

est is the "great talking matches where everyone vied in praising, glorifying and vaunting himself,"<sup>80</sup> for as we have seen, some of Zhang's more controversial works were his "self-praises," and he was often accused of being over-boastful. But what we cannot know from these accounts is whether the boastfulness really was an idiosyncratic personality trait—which seems to be the received view—or whether it might not have been a persona borrowed from Tibetan folk other literary traditions and put to use for his own purposes.

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Obviously, much research remains to be done on twelfth-century Central Tibetan textual economies. The opening of new textual archives and empirical research in archeology and geography will undoubtedly yield more information on the social production and reception of texts of various kinds. But even now, it is possible—because of the strong relationship between genre family networks and textual economies—to use the information we do possess on literary taxonomies to make educated guesses about textual circulation and use patterns. While we do not know exactly how and why Lama Zhang wrote autobiographies, or how they were distributed, reproduced, and preserved by disciples, patrons, and lineage successors, or the precise circumstances under which they were read and used, I think we can safely say that (1) these circumstances were very different from the corresponding circumstances surrounding the production, distribution, and consumption of modern autobiographies; and (2) the use of these texts was *closely tied* to (a) lineage-affirming rituals and ceremonies and (b) special retreats in which Lama Zhang interacted closely with his most advanced disciples, giving direct hands-on meditation instruction. "Closely tied" may seem an unfortunately loose term for what is a crucially important relationship, but we cannot simply say that all of his autobiographical texts were actually used in rituals or retreats—the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* is the only one discussed for which there is any evidence for such a directly practical use. What we can say, however, is that his autobiographies inhabited a common semantic field with the texts associated with lineage rituals and practical advice to disciples: the settings in which they were created and used were common, and they shared formal properties as well as verbatim passages with those more straightforwardly ritual texts. Thus they were related at a distance

<sup>80</sup> Stein 1962, 255.

to rituals and retreats, but this distant relationship is an important part of their meaning, for it is what distinguishes them from purely “literary” works—i.e. works meant *only* to be read. Clearly, there is a continuum of works that lie between the extremes of instruction manuals and “pure literary works.” And the evidence suggests, as mentioned above in the discussion of eulogies and supplications, that the historical trajectory in Tibet during the Buddhist revival was towards an increasing production of self-standing biographies—that is, “literary” biographies—through the abstraction of biographical content out of the practical texts within which they were originally embedded.

This sort of approach, in its treatment of the multiple ways new genres could have come into being, offers an alternative to purely formalistic treatments of literary genres—particularly those that attempt to apply, without further historical specification, categories of Euro-American literary criticism to Tibetan works—and suggests areas where future research might fruitfully apply itself.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### “LORD OF THE TEACHINGS”

If there were nothing more to Lama Zhang’s life than his achievements as a religious practitioner and a literary innovator—a sort of lesser *Mi la ras pa*—his place in Central Tibetan history would remain secure. But of course there was a lot more to his life, and when he ascended to a position of dominance in the political life of Lhasa, he veered radically from the path marked by *Mi la* at a particularly crucial moment in Central Tibetan history, when the new Buddhist orders were taking on an increasingly public role as shapers of Tibetan politics and culture. It is here that his most lasting contribution lies, for his personal career became a mirror of the career of the *Bka’ brgyud pa* order as a whole, as the order made its epic twelfth-century transition from private/meditative to public/governing mode.

#### I. THE TWO CAREER PATHS

We saw in earlier the reluctance with which Zhang entered public life—and the scoldings he received from two of his most important lamas, *Yer pa ba* and *Sgom tshul*.<sup>1</sup> The scoldings are interesting in that they indicate, first of all, that his initial reluctance to teach and govern was genuine—not just the formal show of hesitation required by an etiquette of humility—because conventionalized modesty surely would not have angered his teachers. But more than this, they indicate just how much the religious climate had changed in the two generations that intervened between Lama Zhang and *Mi la ras pa*. For *Mi la*, refusal of social involvement was a point of religious principle, as we see in this exchange between him and one of his disciples:

Shen Gom Repa then said, “We see no need for you to remain in the solitude of a hermitage. Please come to Tibet to help sentient beings there.”

The Jetsun replied, “To stay in a hermitage is, in itself, to help all sentient beings. I may come to Tibet; however, even there I will still remain alone

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter One.



in a hermitage. You must not think that this is an ill practice; I am merely observing my Guru's orders. Besides, the merits of all stages in the Path are acquired in the hermitage. Even if you have very advanced Experiences and Realization, it is better to stay in the land of no-man, because this is the glory and tradition of a yogi. Therefore you, also, should seek lonely places and practice strict meditation.<sup>2</sup>

For Mi la ras pa, refusal of public service was considered a sign of the superior practitioner: though he took on disciples and trained them, what was most important, and what would ultimately be of the highest benefit to sentient beings, would be for him to pursue meditation practice single-mindedly and solitarily, without the distractions created by human company.

This was the ideal to which Zhang aspired, as well as the style of life to which he seemed drawn by temperament. It was even a source of an unhealthy pride. He himself became aware of this issue during the time he spent wandering the mountains in solitude:

Then there arose a pride that thinks, "There is no one like me when it comes to wandering in the mountain retreats. I am like Mi la ras pa, [wandering in] the snow for nine days and nine nights."<sup>3</sup>

Despite the element of pride he overlaid on the aspiration to the solitary hermit life, there was nothing in the life itself that could be seen as anything but praiseworthy. Why, then, would two of his teachers dress him down for aspiring to be like Mi la ras pa, probably the most highly regarded Tibetan Buddhist practitioner ever? What had changed in less than a hundred years?

The best way of answering this question would be to observe how, by the mid-1100s, the basic forms of organization of religious life within the proto-Bka' brgyud pa traditions were shifting dramatically in the direction of larger groups, formal governing structures, fixed locations with permanent buildings and infrastructure, and most important, a larger role in the social, political, and economic lives of their surrounding communities—in short, they were becoming institutionalized public organizations. As a result, the conception of the ideal religious life was likewise shifting: in Mi la ras pa's time, the prototype was Nāropa, who had *left* the institutional

<sup>2</sup> Chang 1977, 292.

<sup>3</sup> ri khrod 'grim pa la nga dang 'dra ba med/ mid la ras pa'i kha ba nyin dgu mtshan dgu dang 'dra snyam pa'i nga rgyal byung/. *Zin bris*, 36a.

framework in order to pursue religious truth; beginning with Sgam po pa and his disciples, a new ideal was coming into focus—that of the publicly responsible religious leader. Sgom tshul was a good example of this new type: a realized *mahāmudrā* adept, he became known as a skilled negotiator and arbitrator of disputes—particularly those between rival religious groups. It is not that there were no longer hermit meditators; it is just that there were now alternative career paths available to the new practitioner, one of them being the active public life. We see other of Sgam po pa’s first- and second-generation disciples choosing—or being chosen by—this public life as well: the First Karma pa Dus gsum mkhyen pa, ‘Bri gung pa ‘Jig rten mgon po, ‘Ba’ rom pa Dar ma dbang phyug, Ti shrī Ras pa, and the Second Karma pa Karma Pakśi, to give the most prominent examples; and this would set the pattern for later generations of Bka’ brgyud pa-s as well: they would, in the next generation, be increasingly allying themselves with various rulers, especially those of the Tangut state and the Mongol empire.<sup>4</sup>

## II. “LORD OF THE TEACHINGS,” “PROTECTOR OF BEINGS”

### A. *Who Was Fighting?*

#### 1. *The “Four Communities” of Lhasa*

Zhang’s initiation into public life, as we saw in Chapter One, occurred unexpectedly when he arrived in Lhasa in 1160, at about the age of 38, to announce to Sgom tshul his intention of becoming a “solitary wanderer.” Sgom tshul, however, had other plans for Zhang, sending him as far from the solitary life as could be imagined, charging him with the repair and administration of the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang (Jo khang) temple, recently damaged because, in Zhang’s words, “all of [the members of] the religious community were fighting.”<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, it is difficult to make out from this exactly who was fighting whom. The term Zhang uses to refer to the combatants is *dge ‘dun*—the Tibetan noun that translates the standard Sanskrit word *saṅgha*, designating in the most general way possible the community of Buddhist practitioners—which means it tells us little

<sup>4</sup> See van der Kuijp 1991; Sperling 2004.

<sup>5</sup> *dge ‘dun thams cad ni khrug. Bla ma dwags po sgom pa’i rnam thar*, Shedup I.173–74.

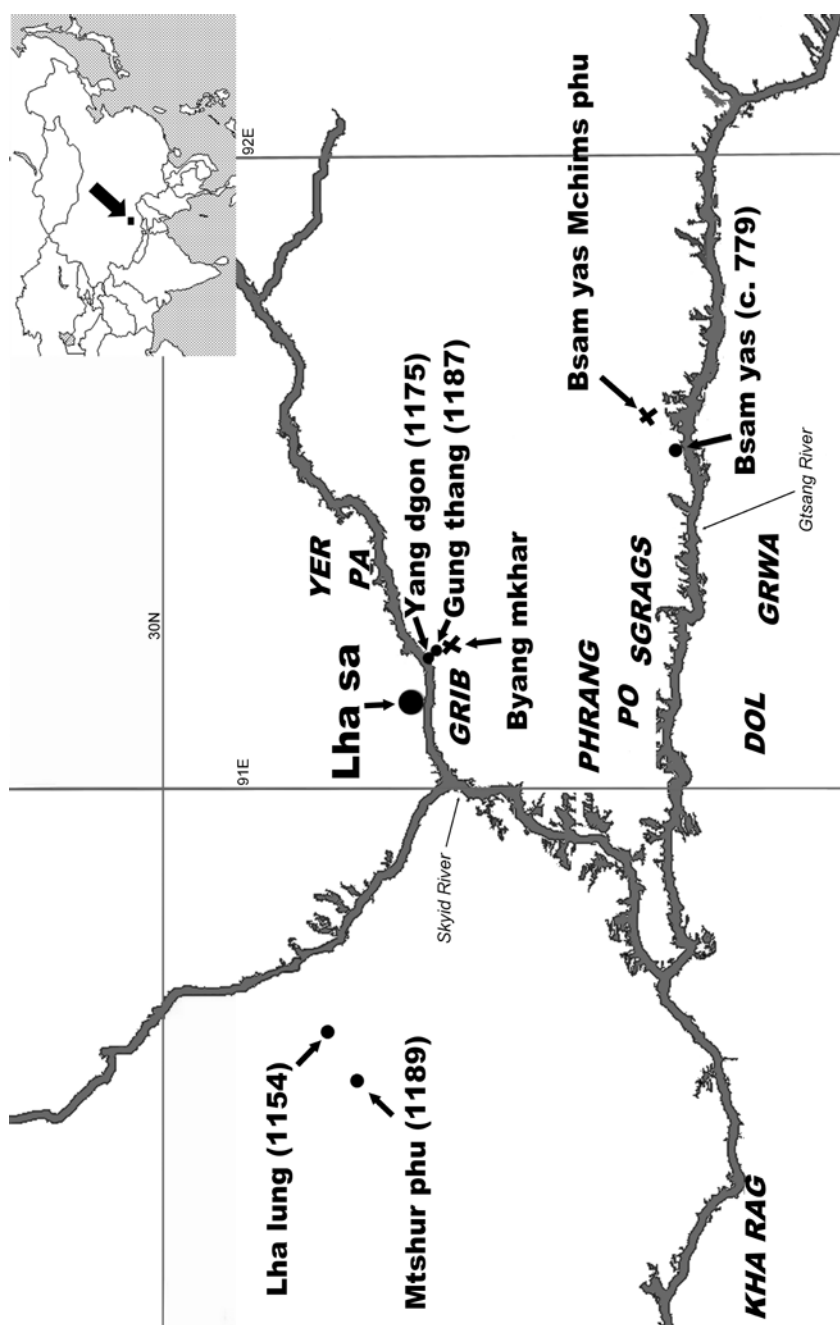


Figure 4.1: Twelfth-Century Central Tibet

beyond the fact that religious communities were involved. Another time, he uses the term “factions” (*sde pa*):

Though all the factions have arisen as enemies,  
The fault of factional fighting is not in me.<sup>6</sup>

Dung dkar Blo bzang ‘phrin las is more specific, suggesting that the fighting parties belonged to what he refers to as “the four groups” (*tsho pa bzhi*) or “the four [religious] communities” (*tsho pa sde bzhi*):

In 1160, the four [religious] communities fought with each other over an extended period in Lhasa, Yar lung, and Phan po.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, Vitali attributes the conflict to what he calls “the four monastic communities of Lhasa” (*lha sa sde bzhi*),<sup>8</sup> a term he takes from a text called *The Lineal Succession of the Kha rag Gnyos*<sup>9</sup> (about which more will be said below in the discussion of the Gnyos clan). All of the terminological variations make the issue rather confusing, and so, in order to make better sense of the events that drew Zhang into public life, we need to look in more detail at what is known about these mysterious “four communities.”

As Sørensen points out, there is a critical ambiguity to the term *sde bzhi* as it applies to our period, which may have caused some confusion historically, for the term has at least three distinct meanings:

(1) It refers to the four “Eastern Vinaya”<sup>10</sup> monastic groups—the Klu mes, the Rba, the Rag, and the ‘Bring<sup>11</sup>—descended from four of the semi-legendary “ten scholars of Dbus Gtsang”<sup>12</sup> who, in the tenth century, reintroduced Buddhist monasticism to Central Tibet after traveling to far northeastern Tibet to receive ordination.<sup>13</sup>

(2) It also refers to the four imperial-era Lhasa monastic congregations established by King Ral pa can (reigned 815–838) to do service to the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang or Jo khang temple. These were known as the “monk

<sup>6</sup> *sde pa thams cad dgar lang kyang/ sde ‘khrug gi nyes pa nga la med/ . Gdos pa ‘khrug pa’i dus su gsungs pa*, Shedup V.667.

<sup>7</sup> *phyi lo 1160 lor/ lha sa dang/ yar lung/ ‘phan po bcas la yod pa’i gong gsal gyi tsho pa sde bzhi phan tshun barmag ‘khrug yung ring byung/*. Dung dkar 1997, 535.

<sup>8</sup> Vitali 2004, 136.

<sup>9</sup> *Kha rag gnyos kyi rgyud pa byon tshul mdor bsdus* (hereinafter *Kha rag gnyos kyi gdung rabs*).

<sup>10</sup> smad ‘dul.

<sup>11</sup> Sometimes the four groups are listed as Klu mes, Rba-Rag, ‘Bring, and Rma.

<sup>12</sup> *dbus gtsang gi mkhas pa mi bcu*. Dung dkar 1997, 532; English: Dung dkar 1991, 31.

<sup>13</sup> Tucci 1949, 82–84; Stoddard 2004, 73–81; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, 11.401–02.

congregations" (*dge 'dun gyi sde*) or the "four communities" (*sde bzhi*), and presumably disappeared when the empire broke up.<sup>14</sup>

(3) Finally, with reference to the Lhasa area specifically, the term came to designate not only the original monastic communities established by Ral pa can but also the *geographic regions* occupied by those communities. Thus, *lha sa sde bzhi* came to mean not only the four Lhasa monastic communities but also the four neighborhoods arrayed in the four directions around the central Jo khang temple, irrespective of who happened to be occupying them. Sørensen and Hazod show how this geographical sense of *lha sa bde bzhi* was closely tied to a geomantic vision of Central Tibet as a sacred *maṇḍala* with Lhasa at the center—the principal place of power—anchoring concentric groups of "fours" arrayed in the four cardinal directions: the "four protective mountains," the "four plains" (*thang bzhi*), the "four ridges" (*sgang bzhi*), the "four springs" (*chu mig bzhi*), etc.<sup>15</sup> In this sense, perhaps "four districts"—with its clear geographical connotation—would be a more accurate translation of *bde bzhi* than "four communities." Eventually, "four districts" became a single blanket term for the Lhasa area in general—perhaps analogous to the contemporary expression "five boroughs" used as a synonym for "New York City." Thus, though the original four monastic congregations did not survive the dissolution of the empire, the geographic designation for the four districts stuck. The example that Sørensen gives is the passage from the *Lho rong Dharma History* describing the thirteenth-century Tshal pa leader Sang rgyas 'bum as "Lord of the Four Districts of Lhasa (*lha sa sde bzhi*)," where *lha sa sde bzhi* clearly refers to the entire geographic region, not to four monastic communities.<sup>16</sup>

The use of the term *sde bzhi* in sense (1) above—i.e., meaning the four Eastern Vinaya groups—is complicated by the fact that these groups were not initially quartered in Lhasa. After obtaining ordainment in northeastern Tibet, the founders returned to Central Tibet and initially settled in the vicinity of Bsam yas, Tibet's oldest Buddhist monastery, apparently sharing responsibility for its upkeep. It was here that, in 1106—according to the biography of Rwa lo tsā ba Rdo rje 'grags, the controversial translator-lama who reconciled the parties and repaired the damage—conflicts broke out

<sup>14</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.401–02; Alexander 2005, 91–100.

<sup>15</sup> "Here, the group of the lHa-sa *sde bzhi* . . . itself reflects an early representation form of the quadripartite model of the lHa-sa *sa dpyad*." Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.575–78, n. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.413.

between two of the Eastern Vinaya communities, which resulted in the burning of large parts of the Bsam yas complex:

At that time, the circumambulation path and many temples at Bsam yas were burnt because of the jealous fighting between the Klu mes and the Spa [=Sba] Rag.<sup>17</sup>

Eventually, offshoots of the four groups migrated to Lhasa and set up communities there as well. It is tempting to assume that the conflicts in Lhasa in 1160 were also conflicts among these same religious communities. This seems to be the view, for example, of Dpa' bo Gtsug lag phreng ba, sixteenth-century author of the *Scholars' Feast*:

In Ra sa [Lhasa], because of the greed of the four factions (*sde bzhi*) of the Eastern Vinaya—the Klu mes, the Rba, the Rag, and the 'Bring—speaking and listening (*bshad nyan?*) spread. Later, there was factional fighting between the Rba and the 'Bring, as a result of which the whole Gtsug lag khang was destroyed by soldiers.<sup>18</sup>

Dung dkar and Vitali also appear to assume that the four groups in Lhasa are in some sense "the same" as the Eastern Vinaya groups at Bsam yas. But I agree with Sørensen that there is some room for skepticism here. We have to keep in mind that the Lhasa events are more than fifty years and fifty kilometers removed from the Bsam yas events, and there must have been many other religious groups in the Lhasa area by the mid-twelfth century. As the offshoots of the original four communities filtered west toward Lhasa and mingled with local Lhasa communities, and as the political arms of the religious communities became articulated in myriad ways with the powerful clans that already ruled in Central Tibet, the inter-relationships must have become quite complex,<sup>19</sup> to the point where the formula "four communities," though a convenient shorthand, would have had at best a tenuous relationship to what was happening on the ground.

<sup>17</sup> de'i tshe bsam yas kyi 'khor sa dang lha khang mang po klu mes dang/ spa rag tsho 'khrugs pa'i chags sdang gis me la bsregs/. *Rwa lo tsā ba'i rnam thar*, 283–84. *Deb ther sngon po* quotes this passage almost verbatim, adding the year Fire-Male-Dog (*me pho khyi*), which Roerich interprets as the year 986. Most scholars now, however, seem to think 1106 is more plausible given that Rwa lo tsā ba's date of birth is usually set at 1016. See, e.g., Dung dkar 1991, 31.

<sup>18</sup> ra sar klu mes rba rag 'bring tsho ste smad 'dul gyi sde bzhi chags nas bshad nyan dar/ physis rba 'bring gi sde 'khrug byung bas gtsug lag khang thams cad dmag gis zhig/. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 448.

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Sørensen's discussion of the dispersion of 'Bring communities around Lhasa and their complicated relationships with clans such as the Rngog. Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.404–09.

I think it is significant that in Lama Zhang's account of the disturbances (quoted at length in Chapter One above), there is no specific mention of the Klu mes, Rba, Rag, and 'Bring factions.

As we saw above, Lama Zhang uses the more general term *dge 'dun*, not *lha sa bde bzhi*, to refer to the quarreling parties. Still, *lha sa bde bzhi* does in fact occur in his work (eleven times by my count),<sup>20</sup> but each time with sense number (3)—the topographical sense—as its most likely meaning. To give a couple of examples, it is used in the colophons to several of his works on religious practices (*chos nyams len*) as part of the record of the place of composition:

*The Limitless Calm Abiding of Beggar-Monk Zhang*, composed at Do rte sgo phu of the four districts of Lhasa.<sup>21</sup>

And:

*The Full-Moon Gathering of the Glorious Mother-Goddesses: A Practice of Beggar-Monk Zhang*, composed for the benefit of his fortunate disciples in the Mchor forest of Dog bde sgo phu in the blessed place, the area of the four districts of Lhasa.<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, in his biography of Sgom tshul, Zhang quotes his teacher as saying, "I will gradually establish the rule of law in the four districts of Lhasa,"<sup>23</sup> and Zhang's direct disciple Nam mkha' 'od, in *The Handwritten Biography of Lama Zhang*, writes:

Then, it is said, [abundant] rain fell for three years. The earth of the fields of the four districts of Lhasa was well watered, and so the harvests were good.<sup>24</sup>

In all of these cases, "four districts of Lhasa" would appear to mean simply "Lhasa," or "the Lhasa area." It would not be impossible to translate the term as referring in some way to four religious groups, but I think the top-

<sup>20</sup> For a charting of the known occurrences of this term in Zhang's writings, see Appendix 6.

<sup>21</sup> sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas mtha' yas zhes bya ba/ lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phur bkod pa'o/. *Mdor te 'chor nag tu gsungs pa zhi gnas skor dum bu brgyad/ dum bu gsum pa/ gnas mtha' yas*, Shedup V.58.

<sup>22</sup> sprang ban zhang gi lag len ma mo dpal 'dus nya ga zhes bya ba byin gyis rlabs pa'i sa phyogs lha sa sde bzhi'i yul/ dog bde sgo phu'i mchor nag tu slob ma skal ldan gyi don du bkod pa/. *Dpal 'dus nya ga chung ba*, Shedup I.475.

<sup>23</sup> lha sa sde bzhiir rgyal khirms kad kad 'cha' ba zhig. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.177.

<sup>24</sup> de nas lo gsum du char pa bab lha sa sde bzhi'i zhing gi sa dran nas la lo legs skad. *Zin bris*, 57a.

ographical meaning makes more sense in each individual instance, and the accumulation of these small instances—along with the absence of any examples of an unambiguous reference to four communities—seems to me to support the translation “four districts.”

The problem then is that the term *lha sa sde bzhi*, used with regard to the conflicts around the Jo khang, might refer to offshoots of the Eastern Vinaya congregations in the area, or it might simply refer to the inhabitants of Lhasa in general—which might include, but would not necessarily be limited to, members of the Klu mes, Rba, Rag, and ‘Bring communities. Unfortunately the other historical works from which our information on Zhang’s life is derived give no help here: the term does not occur in the *Blue Annals* or the *Red Annals*.<sup>25</sup>

## 2. Local Clans

The four Eastern Vinaya congregations are identified by clan names—Klu mes, Rba, Rag, and ‘Bring. It is important, however, not to confuse these religious communities with clan-based communities. “‘Bring,” e.g., is merely the family name of the founder of the ‘Bring religious communities, and it does not necessarily follow from its use that these communities were actually under the control of the ‘Bring clan. As Sørensen and Hazod point out, the ‘Bring communities around Lhasa appear in fact to have been controlled by the Rngog, Sna nam, Gnyos, and Mgar clans, among others.<sup>26</sup> It would appear that the interactions between the local clans and the new religious communities during the “later spread” period were complex and in continual flux, and a detailed mapping out of these connections remains a task for future scholarship. But two of these clans stand out in accounts of the mid-twelfth-century political and religious conflicts in Lhasa: the Mgar and the Gnyos.

### a. The Mgar Clan

The clan that is most often invoked in discussions of the Tshal pa Bka’ brgyud pa and their political control of the Lhasa region is the Mgar. This was an old family that had been extremely influential during the time of the Tibetan empire. Their Central Tibetan power base was the community of Grib, on the south bank of the Skyi river, south of Lhasa and west

<sup>25</sup> It would be of great interest, of course, to know just what Gtsug lag phreng ba’s sources were for his statements about the *‘dul smad gyi sde bzhi*.

<sup>26</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.407.



of Tshal. In the years following Lama Zhang's death in 1193, competing clans struggled for control of the religious community, the Mgar emerging within a generation as the most powerful and influential patrons of the Tshal pa-s, helping them consolidate their political-religious hold on the region. For over a hundred years, the region would be ruled jointly by the abbot of Tshal Gung thang and a secular ruler (*drung chen*) from the Mgar family.<sup>27</sup>

The period of Mgar dominance (roughly the 1230s to the 1360s)<sup>28</sup> is well documented. What is not so clear, however, is the degree of influence they exercised during Lama Zhang's actual lifetime. Here, the sources are difficult to interpret. There was apparently a member of the Mgar clan among Lama Zhang's disciples, a man named Rgyal ba 'byung gnas. According to the Fifth Dalai Lama,

Mgar Rgyal ba 'byung gnas and Zhang Rinpoche became priest and patron [*mchod yon*].<sup>29</sup>

The term employed here by the Great Fifth—*mchod yon*, which literally means “object of worship and patron”<sup>30</sup>—is something of an anachronism, I think. Later, it would become the technical term used to characterize a system of joint rule divided between a secular ruler and a religious preceptor. The term would appear to date to the beginnings of the Tibetan incorporation into the Mongol Yuan empire in the mid-1200s, and described the relationship, first of all, between the Sa skya monk 'Phags pa (1235–1280) and the Mongol emperor Qubilai Qan, and subsequently between the Dalai Lamas and their Mongol lords.<sup>31</sup> It does not, however, appear in any of Lama Zhang's works with this meaning,<sup>32</sup> and

<sup>27</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.43.

<sup>28</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.43.

<sup>29</sup> mgar rgyal ba 'byung gnas/ 'di dang zhang rin po che mchod yon du gyur/. *Dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu byangs*. THDL electronic version. [http://www.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th dl history text.xml&m=all](http://www.thdl.org/xml/showEssay.php?xml=/collections/history/texts/5th%20dl%20history%20text.xml&m=all). Chapter 5.3: Tshal pa'i skor, 106.

<sup>30</sup> For more on this term, see Ruegg 1991.

<sup>31</sup> Ruegg 2004, 9; Sperling 1987.

<sup>32</sup> The phrase *mchod yon* seems to occur in Zhang's writings only with the general sense of “water offering.” For example, *Dgon gnas dang khang bzang bkra shis par byed pa'i man ngag bzugs*, Shedup I.699:

The secret instruction on the performance of the **water-offering** ritual for the purpose of making a religious gathering place, a fine house, or an ordinary residence auspicious and happy.

(dgon gnas dang/ khang bzang dang/ phal pa'i khyim bkra shis shing bde legs su 'gyur bar bya ba'i ched du **mchod yon** gyi cho ga'i rjes su 'breng ba'i man ngag ni/.)

indeed there is no reason it should, because the offices of secular ruler and religious preceptor were not divided between two persons—they were joined in the person of Lama Zhang. Had Zhang and Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas been in a true *mchod yon* relationship, then Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas would have to have exercised considerable secular political power, but there is no evidence in Zhang’s collected works that this was the case. Despite the importance assigned to Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas in later works treating of the Tshal pa-s, I find only one mention of him in Zhang’s works. The text where this occurs, which will be treated in much greater detail in the next chapter, is entitled *The Story of “The Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes.”*<sup>33</sup> Here, a host of wisdom *dākinīs* deliver a prophecy and a teaching to Lama Zhang in a dream, and Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas is mentioned as one of the disciples to whom Zhang will pass on the teaching.<sup>34</sup> So he may in fact have been an important patron to Zhang—this is what the *Gung thang Register* says<sup>35</sup>—but there is nothing in the sources to suggest he exercised any ruling power.

In fact, mentions of the Mgar family are very rare in Zhang’s actual works, though they turn up with more regularity in later accounts. In Zhang’s *Great Scroll, Created in Five Parts*, Zhang records a consecration performed by a disciple called “Mgar the Meditator” (*mgar sgom*).<sup>36</sup> Mgar sgom is also mentioned in Zhang disciple Ston pa Rgya lo’s *Rgyal blon ma Biography*,<sup>37</sup> and again a century and a half later in Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje’s *Concise Biography*, where he is named as one of Zhang’s “lesser disciples.”<sup>38</sup> At first I thought this person might have been Mgar Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas, but then Kun dga’ rdo rje, in both the *Red Annals* and the *Concise Biography*, places Mgar Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas in a listing of Zhang’s “great [spiritual] sons who accomplished enlightened activities”<sup>39</sup>—a designation that, as Sørensen and Hazod note, seems to apply to patrons and

<sup>33</sup> *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos ‘dod re skong ma’i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.440–46.

<sup>34</sup> *Spyi khungs ma/ dgos ‘dod re skong ma’i lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.445.

<sup>35</sup> mgar rgyal ba ‘byung gnas kyi[s?] zhang rin po che’i yon bdag mdzad. *Gung thang dkar chag*, 29a.

<sup>36</sup> dge bshes bzho ras mgar sgom gnyis kyes rab gnas byed. *Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V.213.

<sup>37</sup> *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.259–60. The same episode occurs in the *Handwritten Biography*, where the name is given as “Gar sgom.” *Zin bris*, 37a.

<sup>38</sup> bu phran. *Rnam thar bsodus pa*, Shedup VI.167.

<sup>39</sup> phrin las sgrub pa’i bu chen. *Deb ther dmar po*, 123 (referred to as “Gar rgyal ba ‘byung gnas”); *Rnam thar bsodus pa*, Shedup VI.169–70.

other overtly political supporters<sup>40</sup>—which suggests that Mgar sgom and Mgar Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas were not the same person.

But notice already how inflated Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas’s reputation has become in the one hundred and fifty years between Zhang’s death and Kun dga’ rdo rje’s histories: he has gone from being a barely acknowledged disciple to one of the “great sons.” And then by the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama—four and a half centuries after Zhang’s death—Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas has been placed in a position *vis à vis* Lama Zhang comparable to that of the mighty Qubilai Qan *vis à vis* ‘Phags pa!

It might seem odd that a “great son” is hardly ever mentioned in the actual works of the “father,” or that a figure comparable to a world emperor would leave virtually no trace in contemporary histories. But could it perhaps be, as Bernard Faure once remarked about the Chinese Chan master Hui neng—another shadowy figure who attained posthumous reputation inflation—that Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas’s “chief merit was to be relatively unknown”?<sup>41</sup> Faure’s point here is that religious lineages are generally constructed retrospectively by parties seeking present legitimacy through a perceived connection to a spiritually authoritative past. In this context, it is often the case that the less that is known about “founding” figures in a tradition, the better they serve the purposes of the present authors of the lineage—which is why so often ultimate authority for a particular tradition appears to reside in figures who are little more than names buried in an irretrievable past.<sup>42</sup> It is tempting, therefore, to see the hand of the later-powerful Mgar clan here, writing an obscure figure from their own family into Lama Zhang’s story in order to glorify the Mgar–Tshal pa hegemony of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. At any rate, it would be desirable to know more about this mysterious figure Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas.

### b. *The Gnyos Clan*

Recent scholarship has added an intriguing new actor to the scene in twelfth-century Central Tibet—the Gnyos clan.<sup>43</sup> Both Vitali and Sørensen suggest that this clan played an important role in the politics of Lhasa

<sup>40</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.40.

<sup>41</sup> Faure 1986, 198.

<sup>42</sup> Matthew Kapstein makes the same point with reference to the great Indian saint of Tibetan Buddhism’s founding myth, Padmasambhava:

Padmasambhava, a marginal Dharma master of the eighth century, in this way reemerged two centuries later as an emblem of Tibet’s imperial greatness, and a hero to a wide network of tantric cults that had taken root and flourished during this time.

Kapstein 2000, 159. For more on this issue, see the section of this chapter entitled “Lama Zhang as a Virtual Object” below.

<sup>43</sup> See, in particular, Vitali 2004, 104–57; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.413–448.

from the 1160s through the 1180s, and so must be taken into account when considering the 1160 disturbances around the Jo khang/Lhasa ‘Phrul snang and the Ra mo che.

The Gnyos upheld “old school” (*rnying ma*) Buddhist lineages during the Tibetan imperial period and on through the “time of fragmentation” following the breakup of the empire. But early in the period of the “later transmission”, a member of the Gnyos family, Yon tan grags (b. 973)—subsequently known as Gnyos lo tsā ba—traveled to India with a group of Tibetans that included the great Bka’ brgyud pa progenitor Mar pa lo tsā ba, and returned to establish a “new school” (*gsar ma*) transmission that was passed on to successive generations of the Gnyos family.<sup>44</sup> By the mid-twelfth century the Gnyos—backed by what Sørensen calls “the considerable spiritual prestige” afforded by “being the exclusive lineage-holders of specific or idiosyncratic Indian esoteric tantric teachings”<sup>45</sup>—had established a strong presence throughout Central Tibet, especially in the region of Kha rag, on the border of Dbus and Gtsang (hence the frequent appearance of the clan name as “Kha rag Gnyos”). In particular, the Gnyos took a strong leadership role within numerous ‘Bring communities in the immediate area of Lhasa.<sup>46</sup> For our purposes, the most important Gnyos figure was Grags pa dpal (1106–1165/1182?), who, according to Sørensen, “became the undisputed ruler of the wide ‘Bring-controlled lHa-sa area.”<sup>47</sup>

It was Grags pa dpal who, according to *The Lineal Succession of the Kha rag Gnyos*,<sup>48</sup> intervened in, and resolved, what is called the “great battle of the Lhasa *sde bzhi*” or just “the great battle of Lhasa.”<sup>49</sup> This “great battle” very much resembles the disorders of 1160 we see in Zhang-related texts,

<sup>44</sup> Vitali 2004, 134–36; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.417–18.

Gnyos lo tsā ba appears in Gtsang myon Heruka’s biography of Mar pa in a generally unflattering light. For example, he is portrayed as being jealous of Mar pa’s superior learning, as a result of which he bribes one of the Indian attendants into dumping Mar pa’s irreplaceable books of secret tantric instructions into the Ganges. See Nalanda Translation Committee 1982, 32.

Gnyos lo tsā ba does not, however, appear in Lama Zhang’s biography of Mar pa, written some 300 years earlier (*Rje btsun mar pa’i rnam thar*, Shedup 1.139–46), which suggests the episode was added later. It would be interesting to look at more biographies of Mar pa and attempt to determine when this episode first appears, and why.

<sup>45</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.417.

<sup>46</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.418–19.

<sup>47</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.424.

<sup>48</sup> *Kha rag gnyos kyi gdung rabs*, 6b–7a: “In this period, there was great unrest between the four communities of lHa sa (lHa sa *sde bzhi*).” Translated in Vitali 2004, 136, n. 37. The Tibetan is: de’i dus su lha sa sde bzhi’i ‘khrug mo che langs.

<sup>49</sup> lha sa sde bzhi’i ‘khrug mo che OR lha sa’i ‘khrug mo che. *Kha rag gnyos kyi gdung rabs*, 24.

but there are important differences. First of all, there is no mention of Sgom tshul, who—according to the accounts in Zhang’s collected works, the *Lho rong Dharma History*, the *Red Annals*, Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje’s biography of Zhang, the *Blue Annals*, and Dung dkar—mediated the dispute and repaired the temples. There is, however, mention of Sgom tshul’s younger brother, Sgom chung Shes rab byang chub (1130–73), who served as abbot of Dwags lha sgam po, the monastery founded by his uncle, Sgam po pa. There is a fascinating passage in *The Lineal Succession of the Kha rag Gnyos* where Sgom chung addresses Grags pa dpal directly:

Gnyos Grags pa dpal, you are the lord of both the lower and upper ‘Bring [communities], and the four districts of Lhasa are held by the Gnyos clan. At present, only you have the ability to remove the yoke [of civil disorder]. Therefore, you must take control by ending the great battle of Lhasa, doing service to the Jo bo, and repairing the damage.<sup>50</sup>

If “the great battle of Lhasa” in fact refers to the disturbances of 1160, then it seems possible that Sgom chung is being confused here with his elder brother Sgom tshul, who by all other accounts mediated the disputes and took charge of the Jo khang and Ra mo che restoration efforts. Even if we grant this, however, it is striking that there is no mention whatsoever of Lama Zhang in connection with the mediation of the disputes; nor, conversely, is there mention of Grags pa dpal in the accounts that name Zhang as the mediator. In fact, if, in the above quotation, we were to change the names of the characters—Sgom chung to Sgom tshul and Grags pa dpal to Lama Zhang—we would be left with a dialogue that could easily have occurred between *Sgom tshul* and *Zhang*, rather than between Sgom chung and Grags pa dpal.

There are, it seems to me, a number of possible ways of explaining this situation:

- (1) The Gnyos family chronicle, *The Lineal Succession of the Kha rag Gnyos*—which is after all, as Sørensen and Hazod point out, a work of apologetics<sup>51</sup>—has simply substituted Grags pa dpal for Lama Zhang as the person charged by Sgom tshul with the repair and administration of the two Lhasa temples. This could have been done intention-

<sup>50</sup> gnyos grags pa dpal khyed ‘bring mtsho stod smad kyi bdag por ‘dug cing/ lha sa sde bzhi ‘di gnyos kyi[s] bzung bar ‘dug/ deng sang khyed min pa gnya’ spang thub pa yang mi ‘dug pas/ lha sa’i ‘khrug mo che de zhib dang/ jo bo’i zhabs rtog zhig gsos sogs khyed kyi zhal lta dang bdag mdzod/. *Kha rag gnyos kyi gdung rabs*, 24.

<sup>51</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.413.

ally or unintentionally; in a work written with the aim of glorifying the accomplishments of the Gnyos family patriarchs, either of these possibilities is plausible.

- (2) The Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s, who dominated the politics of Lhasa for a century and a half following Lama Zhang's demise, simply wrote Grags pa dpal and the Gnyos family out of the historical picture. Again, it is equally plausible that this was done purposefully or simply through the inadvertent omissions that are to be expected in partisan histories.
- (3) The incident described in the Gnyos chronicle as "the great battle of Lhasa" is simply not the same event as the 1160 disturbance recounted in the other sources. If only one of the major actors had been different, this possibility could probably be dismissed, but given that the identities of *both* parties differs between the two accounts, we have to leave this open as a possibility.

Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence available to choose among these alternatives. They are all plausible, but until we have at least a third account so we can triangulate between the Tshal pa-leaning and the Gnyos-leaning accounts, we can only speculate.

There are, however, vague intimations elsewhere that the Tshal pa-s fought with the Gnyos at some point during Lama Zhang's lifetime. These appear in two roughly parallel passages—close enough that they could have a common source—in the two disciple-written biographies of Zhang, the *Rgyal blon ma Biography* and the *Handwritten Biography*. In the former, it says "[Zhang] knew how Dge bshes Gnyos's army was approaching"<sup>52</sup>; and in the latter, it says "[Zhang] knew correctly, through clairvoyance, that Dge bshes Snyos [sic] was leading a powerful army against the people."<sup>53</sup> It seems possible that "Dge bshes Gnyos" is a reference to Gnyos Grags pa dpal. If we take this together with the scattered references to battles fought in territories with a strong Gnyos clan presence like Gyer, Grwa, and Kha rag (see the section in Chapter Five entitled "Some Sites of Fighting"), there might be the beginning of an argument that one of the opponents of the Tshal pa-s was the Gnyos.

<sup>52</sup> dge bshes gnyos kyi dmag ji ltar 'gyur mkhyen. *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.279.

<sup>53</sup> dge bshes snyos [sic] kyi dmag btsan 'bangs su 'dren pa mngon shes kyi legs par mkhyen. *Zin bris*, 61b.

Sørensen, based on the Gnyos family materials, makes some bold hypotheses regarding the influence of Grags pa dpal and the Gnyos clan on the politics of mid-twelfth-century Lhasa, concluding that “it was the powerful and strong-minded Grags-pa-dpal who ruled the lHa-sa area already from the early 1160’s until his death most likely in the early 1180’s,”<sup>54</sup> and furthermore that “Grags-pa-dpal or his kin practically speaking stood behind the invitation of Dvags-po [Sgom tshul to Lhasa to mediate the conflict] with a view to ensure spiritual legitimation and endorsement behind their (prior de-facto?) appropriation of the area.”<sup>55</sup>

Vitali is a bit more conservative in his speculation. Whereas Sørensen counts the Gnyos (representing the ‘Bring) as one of the “four communities of Lhasa” (*lha sa sde bzhi*), Vitali sees the Gnyos as a separate power—in fact the dominant power in Lhasa prior to the fighting—and the conflict as an uprising by the “four communities” *against* the ruling Gnyos clan. Given this interpretation, Sgom tshul’s intervention is seen as upsetting the balance between the Gnyos family and the religious communities and thereby giving Lama Zhang and the Tshal pa-s a foot in the door, which they exploited fully, displacing the Gnyos as the dominant power in Lhasa. Thus, “the episode seems to mark the beginning of a subsidiary position of the gNyo in comparison to that of the Tshal pa.”<sup>56</sup>

Perhaps not surprisingly, when it comes to sorting out the roles of the various clans in the rule of the Lhasa area, we are faced with discrepancies in sources that we cannot resolve without further information. And, unfortunately, none of our sources can be considered disinterested parties: everyone had a stake in the struggles over legitimacy and lineage that framed the histories. The Great Fifth Dalai Lama—and by extension the Dge lugs pa author of the *Gung thang Register*—is only the best-known of these interested parties. As is noted below, Lama Zhang became an important symbol of political-religious control over the “Lhasa *maṇḍala*,” and many of the later accounts of his life are colored by the necessity for later would-be Lhasa rulers to appropriate the symbols and narratives of Zhang’s life as part of the legitimating ideology of Lhasa rulership. But even before the Fifth Dalai Lama and the Dge lugs pa-s, we have, for example, Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje, one of the main sources of information on Zhang, who also happened to be a member of the Mgar family

<sup>54</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.437.

<sup>55</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.426.

<sup>56</sup> Vitali 2004, 137.



and—before he stepped down from his position of power to devote himself to a life of monasticism and scholarship—a powerful Tshal pa political leader (*drung chen*).

All of the parties are interested parties. For this reason it is important to work as much as possible with twelfth-century materials and not take for granted that accounts written from one to four hundred years later would not impose their own agendas on the history.

\* \* \*

Whatever we may ultimately decide about the respective contributions made by the various religious communities and local clans to the Lhasa disturbances, what remains clear is the crucial role played here by the Lhasa 'Phrul snang or Jo khang temple—and, in particular, the Jo bo statue—as the key symbolic point of intersection between religious and political power in Lhasa. What was at stake in the Lhasa conflicts was clearly more than just a strategic physical site—there was an important symbolic dimension as well. The Jo khang was, in Zhang's words, "the foundation of all Tibetan temples, the mother of all of the Buddha's teachings,"<sup>57</sup> and as such it was absolutely necessary for any group seeking political and spiritual hegemony over the Lhasa area to control the site and "do service to the Jo bo."<sup>58</sup> This is a scenario we will see repeated throughout Central Tibetan history in the centuries to come. "New rulers..." writes André Alexander, "regularly began their rule with a restoration of the Jokhang and a handful of other significant monasteries,"<sup>59</sup> because to be proprietor of the Jo bo was to be lord of Lhasa. Though the site of course possessed an important religious and political meaning from the time of the Tibetan empire, we see here in the twelfth century a new post-imperial political-religious alignment falling into place, with the temple serving as the symbolic focal point.

### 3. *Supernatural Participants*

Given the difficulties we have had ascertaining the historical parties to the Lhasa disputes based on the available sources, perhaps Lama Zhang's rather different style of explanation is one worth taking seriously:

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<sup>57</sup> bod kyi gtsug lag khang thams cad kyi gzhi mo/ sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa thams cad kyi ma mo/. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i mam thar*, Shedup 1.173–74.

<sup>58</sup> jo bo'i zhabs thog byed. Sgom tshul's words to Zhang. *Zin bris*, 46b.

<sup>59</sup> Alexander 2006, 149.



[Tibet] having fallen into a time of degeneration, all of the evil demons appeared at the great Gtsug lag khang of the Lhasa 'Phrul snang—foundation of all Tibetan temples, mother of all of the Buddha's teachings. [As a result,] all of the members of the religious community were fighting.<sup>60</sup>

The *Lho rong Dharma History* offers a similar diagnosis:

At that time in Lhasa, because evil demons were fighting, the religious communities could not get along.<sup>61</sup>

Here, the primary agents are not humans, but supernatural beings. The account of the resolution of the dispute that follows this line of explanation accordingly brings in the two most important protector deities of the region, Dpal ldan lha mo and Grib Rdzong btsan, who, in concert with the Jo bo statue itself, are seen as the real forces behind the peace brokered by Sgom tshul:

When nothing remained but ruins and smoke, the protectoress of the Gtsug lag khang Remati [Dpal ldan lha mo] and the Rdzong btsan of Brib [Grib]—manifesting as a black [= black-haired? black-clad?] woman and a boy wearing a silk brocade turban—summoned [Sgom tshul] from Stod lung. At the time he arrived at the ruins of the Gtsug lag khang, there were tears in [the eyes of] the *nirṃaṇakāya* Śākyamuni [i.e., the Jo bo]. Light rays issued from its heart and dissolved into the teacher's heart. The evil demons were tamed.<sup>62</sup>

We have already seen in Chapter Two the importance of the goddess Dpal ldan lha mo to Lama Zhang's religious practice. Here, her strong association with the Lhasa 'Phrul snang temple and the Jo bo statue, as well as her role in local cults of the wrathful protector deity Mahākāla, mark her as an important symbolic nexus between the spiritual and the political aspects of Zhang's Lord of the Teachings persona. There is a scene in the *Handwritten Biography* where her role is laid out quite explicitly:

<sup>60</sup> bod kyi gtsug lag khang thams cad kyi gzhi mo/ sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa thams cad kyi ma mo/ lha sa 'phrul snang gi gtsug lag khang chen po der/ dus kyi snyigs ma la babs pas 'dre srin gdug pa can thams cad ni langs/ dge 'dun thams cad ni 'khrug/. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.173–74.

<sup>61</sup> de dus lha sar 'dre srin gdug pa can nams 'khrugs pas/ dge 'dun sde pa nams ma 'chams pa/. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 178.

<sup>62</sup> re'u hrul dang du ba las med pa'i dus su/ gtsug lag khang gi srung ma re ma ti dang/ brib kyi rdzong btsan gnyis bud med nag mo zhig dang/ khye'u thod dar gyi ber gon pa zhig tu sprul nas stod lung nas spyen drangs nas/ gtsug lag khang gi re'u hrul stong par byon pa'i dus su/ sprul pa'i sku shAkya mu ne la spyen chab byung/ thugs ka nas 'od zer byung nas slob dpon gyi thugs khar thim/ 'dre srin gdug pa can btul/. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.174.

In the Lhasa 'Phrul snang [Zhang] saw the face of [Dpal ldan] Lha mo. When he was sleeping in the kitchen storeroom [*sde pa'i nag tshangs kyi mdzod?*], he talked with Lha mo at midnight. An attendant overheard, and asked the teacher, "What was that?" and [Zhang] said, "Dpal ldan lha mo has asked me to stay in Lhasa permanently. I said, 'As for myself, because I work for the benefit of sentient beings, I haven't the time to stay permanently. But I will not let it slip my mind. I will come from time to time.' With these words, I made my appeal to Lha mo. Now prepare a *gtor ma*." Then, he appointed a temple caretaker. Even now, an emanation of Zhang does service to Lhasa.<sup>63</sup>

The other deity, Grib Rdzong btsan, is the protector god of Grib, the village on the south bank of the Skyi river across from Lhasa, just to the west of Tshal.<sup>64</sup> Grib had for some time been a stronghold of the Mgar, the aristocratic clan with powerful ties to the kings of the Tibetan empire period who became, as we saw above, the dominant patrons of the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa in the generation following Lama Zhang's death. Sørensen and Hazod's suggestion that the presence of Grib Rdzong btsan might indicate some involvement of the Mgar clan in the resolution of the Jo khang fighting seems to me a very plausible one.<sup>65</sup> This would make Grib Rdzong btsan, like Dpal ldan lha mo, an important symbolic marker of the interpenetration of spiritual and political power in the region—what later Tibetan commentators would call *chos srid zung 'brel*: "the merging of religious and secular rule."<sup>66</sup> We should not, however, let this analytical distinction mislead us here: it is not as though there were, in the twelfth century, two distinct spheres of power that had to be brought together; the Lord of the Teachings simultaneously exercised power within both realms without necessarily distinguishing the two.

Later, the union of Tshal pa spiritual power, centered at Gung thang monastery, and Mgar clan power, centered in Grib—embodied respectively in the figures of Dpal ldan lha mo and Grib Rdzong btsan—would be symbolically reenacted every year at the "Flower Offering" ceremony

<sup>63</sup> lha sa 'phrul snang du lha mo'i zhal gzigs pa yin/ sde pa'i nag tshangs kyi mdzod du gzims pa'i dus su/ nam phyed tsam na lha mo dang glengs langs mdzad pa nye gnas pas thos nas/ slob dpon la de ji tsug lags zhus pas/ dpal ldan lha mo nga la lha sar rtag tu bzhugs par zhu zer ba lags/ nga ni sems can gyi don byed pas/ rtag tu sdod mi khom/ blos ni mi gtong/ skabs su yong/ de skad du lha mo la zhu ba phul ba yin/ da lta rang gtor ma shoms gsung/ de nas dkon gnyer bzhag pa yin/ da rung du zhang gi sprul pas lha sa'i zhabs tog byed pa 'di yin no/. *Zin bris*, 57a.

<sup>64</sup> Davidson mistakenly takes Grib Rdzong btsan to be a "secular authority." Davidson 2005, 328.

<sup>65</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.425.

<sup>66</sup> Dung dkar 1997, trans. Dung dkar 1991; Ruegg, 2004, 9–13.

(*me tog mchod pa*), which took the form of a ritual union of the Lha mo statue of Gung thang monastery with her “husband,” the Grib Rdzong btсан statue housed in the Grib temple.<sup>67</sup>

### B. “*The Yoke, the Law, and the Seals*”

Sources indicate that, at the time of the factional fighting, the Lhasa area as a whole was descending into lawlessness, becoming unsafe for ordinary citizens. Central Tibet, the *Scholars’ Feast Dharma History* tells us, “had become lawless and fragmented,”<sup>68</sup> and religious life, according to the *Lho rong Dharma History*, had degenerated to the point where “the [Buddhist] teachings had nearly reached extinction.”<sup>69</sup> Beyond the damage to the central holy sites, there seems to have been a general breakdown of civil society— “A son did not listen to his father,” laments the famous treasure-finder Nyang ral Nyi ma ‘od zer, “a servant did not acknowledge his lord, and the vassal did not hear the noble”<sup>70</sup>—and the surrounding hills had come under the control of brigands, who preyed on pilgrims and merchants as well as on local herders, farmers, and villagers. Pilgrims were afraid to visit Tibet’s holiest pilgrimage sites.

As Sgom tshul had already established himself as a skilled negotiator in hostile situations, and carried with him the prestige of Sgam po pa’s religious and family lineage, he was a natural choice to be called in as a peacemaker by the warring clans and factions. Taking charge of the Lhasa area, he began first of all by repairing the damaged temples, and then appointed Lama Zhang, as one of his chief disciples, to take charge of their administration.

We can only speculate whether Zhang felt he could not refuse his great teacher, or whether he had intuitively grasped the historical moment—the way things had changed since Mi la ras pa’s generation. For a new social order was falling into place: an order that depended for its cohesion on Buddhism—Buddhism as a set of universal ideas, rituals, and social practices, Buddhism as a distinctive marker of cultural identity—and monks and other religious figures such as Zhang would have a key public role to play in that new order. Traditional histories frame this emerging

<sup>67</sup> Richardson 1993, 87–89; Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.585–596. The ceremony continues to the present day and has been videotaped by the Tibetan Himalayan Library. [www.thl.org](http://www.thl.org).

<sup>68</sup> bod rgyal khrims med pa sil bur song. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>69</sup> bstan pa nub pa la thug nas. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 193.

<sup>70</sup> Quoted in Davidson 2005, 71.

Buddhist hegemony as a *return* or a *reinstatement*, calling it a "second" or "later propagation" (*phyi dar*) of the Buddhist teachings, as if some discrete and self-identical entity had simply gone away for awhile and then come back.<sup>71</sup> But this second coming was in fact very different from the first. This time Buddhism was more than just a court religion—not just the symbolic accoutrements a ruling elite wrapped itself in, or the magic and spectacle gracing the public face of the machinery of rulership. This time, Buddhism was in the process of infiltrating the whole society, in a way it never had during the imperial era, becoming in effect the social binder of a new Tibetan culture. How much of this was understood by Sgom tshul and Zhang we can only guess at. There was clearly something in the air—a changed sense of what the realized yogin owed the community at large, a sense of public responsibility. The hermit life was still an option, but not for Lama Zhang. It is no exaggeration to say this was one of those transformative moments when individual judgment is so in tune with the hidden hand of history that a seemingly trivial decision can be seen in retrospect to have had very large consequences.

The upshot is that Lama Zhang accepted Sgom tshul's "offer," and set about reconstructing the temples and restoring law and order to Lhasa. As he wrote later,

By means of a broad and vast mind [directed] to the benefit of sentient beings, I have produced great waves of virtue for the benefit of sentient beings. . . . I have proceeded as a great *Lord of the Teachings*.<sup>72</sup>

In order to understand just what it was that Zhang was taking on and what it had to with the particular articulation of politics and religion that would be his legacy to Lhasa, we must look more closely at this crucial phrase "Lord of the Teachings" (*bstan pa'i bdag po*). This is one of a number of interrelated phrases also used by Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje to describe the role assigned to Zhang by Sgom tshul:

When Lama Dwags po Sgom pa repaired the damage caused by factional fighting at the two temples of Lhasa [Jo khang and Ra mo che], he made [Zhang] **Lord of the Temples** (*lha khang gi bdag po*).

<sup>71</sup> As critic Henry Louis Gates writes: "Self-invention is . . . depicted as discovery." Gates 1992.

<sup>72</sup> nga rang sems can gyi don du blo rgya ha cang yang che drags pas/ ngas sems can gyi don du dge ba rlabs po che gang dang gang byas . . . bstan pa'i bdag po chen por song/. *Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V.189–90.

When he departed for Dwags po, he designated [Zhang] as the precious **Protector of Beings** (*'gro mgon rin po che*) and [Zhang] was enthroned as **Lord of the Teachings and of the Temples** (*bstan pa dang lha khang gi bdag po*).<sup>73</sup>

"Lord of the teachings" is also a standard epithet of Śākyamuni Buddha. But in Tibet the term came to be used also as a title for great religious figures. In this respect it is similar to the term "Protector of Beings" (*'gro [ba'i] mgon [po]*), which is closely related in meaning and was also applied to Zhang.<sup>74</sup> These two titles are of particular interest here, because they were interpreted in the twelfth century in such a way as to form a semantic bridge between the "worldly" (*tshe 'di'i*) sphere of politics and the religious goals of the Mahāyāna bodhisattva path. Zhang, in one of the last works he is known to have written, is quite explicit in making this connection between the bodhisattva vow and his role as protector of law and order in Lhasa:

[Addressed to] all sentient beings who now come under my protection and who fall under the jurisdiction of my secular law [*rgyal khrims*]:

When I become completely and perfectly enlightened in the Dharmadhatu as the glorious Vairocana, at that time all sentient beings will become tenth-ground bodhisattvas. Through this karmic link [created by] protecting [sentient beings] against fear and enemies in the present, I will at that time conquer those bodhisattvas' cognitive obscurations—that enemy appertaining to the three spheres—and all will attain buddhahood there.<sup>75</sup>

This is also consonant with the classical Mahāyāna Buddhist notion of the bodhisattva deeds, the first of which is "giving," and one type of which is "giving fearlessness"<sup>76</sup>—which is just what a Protector of Beings does.

<sup>73</sup> *lha sa nram gnyis su sde 'khrug byung nas rgud pa/ bla ma dwags po sgom pas gsos nas/ lha khang gi bdag po mdzad/ khong dwags por bzhud khar 'gro mgon rin po che la gtad nas/ bstan pa dang lha khang gi bdag por mnga' gsol ba/*. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.150.

<sup>74</sup> Also applied to other major figures such as 'Jig rten mgon po, founder of the 'Brig Bka' brgyud pa.

<sup>75</sup> *da lta nga'i skyabs 'og tu tshud tshad dang nga'i rgyal khrims kyi khongs su tshud tshad kyi sams can thams cad/ nga chos kyi dbyings su dpal nram par snang mdzad du mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa'i tshe/ de'i dus su sams can thams cad sa bcu'i byang chub sams dpar gyur te/ da lta ngas 'jigs pa dang/ dgra las skyabs pa'i las 'brel 'dis/ de'i dus su byang chub sams dpa' de nams shes bya'i sgrib pa 'khor gsum du gtogs pa'i dgra de ngas bcom nas/ thams cad der sangs rgya ba yin no/*. *Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V.232.

<sup>76</sup> See, e.g., Dung dkar 2002, 1580: "The four types of giving are: (1) giving material gifts; (2) giving the Dharma; (3) giving fearlessness; and (4) giving afflictive emotions" (*sbyin pa*

All of this does not seem so odd if we reflect on what exactly it meant to be put in charge of the Jo khang temple—Tibet's holiest site—and its principal resident, the great Jo bo statue. The Jo bo and the Jo khang were thought of, from very early on, as the very heart of the Dharma in Tibet. As Zhang's later biographer Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje put it:

The happiness of sentient beings depends upon the teachings of the Buddha. The flourishing of the teachings [in Tibet] depends upon the activities of the precious Jo bo, the statue of the Bhagavān [Śākya]muni himself, Lord of the Teachings.<sup>77</sup>

To take care of the Jo bo was therefore, through a kind of sacred synecdoche, to take care of Tibetan Buddhist culture as a whole. For if the Jo khang and Jo bo fell, the Dharma in Tibet fell; it was that simple. This is what makes the prophecy in the *Bka'* 'chems ka khol ma—the famous "pillar testament" held traditionally to have been left by King Srong btsan sgam po within a pillar of the Jo khang temple and discovered 400 years later by the great Indian *pañḍita* Atiśa—so poignant:

In that way, a king from the devil's own family  
Will exhaust the merit of the Tibetan people.  
The Buddha's doctrine will entirely deteriorate. . . .  
Having ruined the Jokhang temple, evil people will punish each other. . . .  
All the monasteries will become the homes of deer  
And temples will be cattle pens.<sup>78</sup>

This is the worst thing that could happen to Tibet from the point of view of the Buddha's Dharma.

What it meant to be a Lord of the Teachings or a Protector of Beings was therefore, first of all, to take care of the Jo bo. But "taking care of the Jo bo" had, because of the symbolic significance attached to the site, both a narrow and a broad meaning: the former entailing the physical restoration and upkeep of the temple complex, the latter implying, in addition, ensuring the site's continued functioning as a place of pilgrimage—which meant, above all, protecting the pilgrims who came to pay homage to it. This was no small task. If pilgrims were terrorized by banditry and sectarian

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rnam pa bzhi/ zang zing gi sbyin pa/ chos kyi sbyin pa/ mi 'jigs pa'i sbyin pa/ nyon mongs kyi sbyin pa/).

<sup>77</sup> sems can gyi bde skyid sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa la rag las/ bstan pa'i dar rgyas de/ bstan pa'i bdag po bcom ldan 'das thub pa nyid kyi sku tshab/ jo bo rin po che'i phrin las la rag las pa las. *Rnam thar bsduś pa*, Shedup VI.150.

<sup>78</sup> Translation in Davidson 2005, 61.

violence, if routes were blocked by criminal activity and civil disorder, this would be an enormous impediment to the progress of the Dharma in Tibet. So to be a Lord of the Teachings meant to keep the pilgrimage routes safe and open, to maintain that degree of civil order necessary to allow religious practices to flourish. It was expressly for this purpose, in fact, that Zhang, according to Kun dga' rdo rje, built his first temple at Tshal:

At that time, in the Wood Female Sheep year [1175], he built the monastic seat Tshal [Yang dgon] for the purpose of protecting the circumambulators who had come from the Stod area, who were afraid in Lam gyi thang stod.<sup>79</sup>

It is easy to see how the original religious commitment quickly entails a host of other commitments that may not have seemed, at first glance, to be part of the job description. There is, for example, a clear economic component to this Protector of Beings role, for the well-being of countless sentient beings depends upon a prosperous and safe environment within which material life—farming, animal husbandry, household crafts, commerce, and trade—can be maintained:

I saw this protection of others  
As extremely meritorious. . . .  
In that land, numberless laypeople  
And merchants,  
And many fish, deer, fowl, etc.,  
And horses and cows were comfortable and provided for.  
Because there was no fighting, the local people  
Had good harvests and were without injury, death,  
And quarreling, and therefore they were comfortable and supported.<sup>80</sup>

It is interesting to see how such otherwise seemingly unrelated functions as protection of wildlife, teaching of Buddhism, promotion of both nomadic and settled agricultural life, maintenance of trade and pilgrimage routes, and law enforcement are comfortably accommodated by this single notion of Lord of the Teachings/Protector of Beings. The specificity

<sup>79</sup> dus der stod phyogs nas 'ongs pa'i skor ba pa rnam la lam gyi thang stod du 'jigs pa yod pa bsrung ba'i don du shing mo lug gi lo la gdan sa tshal ttab. *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.151.

<sup>80</sup> gzhan gyi skyel ma byed pa 'di/ shin tu bsod nams che bar mthong/ . . . de yi yul na ser chags dang/ tshong pa dpag tu med pa dang/ nya dang ri dwags bya la sog/ rta phyugs mang po bde zhing 'tsho/ 'khrug pa med pas yul mi'i tshogs/ lo legs snad yar shi chad dang/ 'thab rtod med pas bde zhing 'tsho/. *Dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa'i nying phugs chen mo zab pa dang rgya che ba'i don gtan la 'bebs par byed pa phan byed nyi ma'i snying po* [hereinafter, *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*], Shedup II.542–43.

of Lama Zhang's description of what it is a Lord of the Teachings does—and the ease with which he moves back and forth between "political" and "religious" duties—is quite revealing.

And, of course, in a lawless time, there is no way any of this can be accomplished without the possession of political power and control over something like a police force, if not an army. And if we find ourselves recoiling reflexively when we hear "Buddhism" and "military" mentioned in the same breath, we may need to reflect very carefully on the full meaning of these phrases "Protector of Beings" and "Lord of the Teachings."

There are three key terms that are used repeatedly to describe Zhang's specific activities in his role as Lord of the Teachings: the yoke (*gnya'*), the law (*rgyal khirms*), and the seals (*rgya*). For example, in song number 13 of the *Fifteen Songs Sung at Bsam yas brag sngon*, he sings:

Now I have become Lord of the Teachings.  
I have given up wrongful subjugation  
And become the protector of those without protection.  
Wherever I travel,  
By means of the yoke, the law, and the sealing of roads,  
I make everyone happy without [discrimination between] high and low.<sup>81</sup>

Again, in *The Great Scroll, Created in Five Parts*, Zhang writes:

I have impartially enacted the yoke, the law, the sealing of roads, etc., and thus proceeded as a great Lord of the Teachings.<sup>82</sup>

And again, in the work entitled *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits*, he writes:

Then, [the fighting] became more widespread,  
[So] I instituted the yoke, the sealing of roads, and the law.<sup>83</sup>

Similarly, the *Later Biography*, written by his disciple Mar sgom, says:

Having, out of the altruistic mind of enlightenment [*byang chub kyi sems*], united by force the four horns of Dbus and Gtsang, he established sentient

<sup>81</sup> da lta bstan pa'i bdag por gyur/ ngan byed chom la phab lags pas/ mgon med nams kyi mgon du gyur/ gang du phyin pa'i sa phyogs der/ gnya' dang rgyal khirms lam rgya yis/ mtho dma' med par skyid du bcug/. *Bsam yas brag sngon du gsung pa'i mgur bco lnga*, Shedup V.509.

<sup>82</sup> gnya' dang/ rgyal khirms dang/ lam rgya la sogs pa phyogs med du byas pas bstan pa'i bdag po chen por song/. *Shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa*, Shedup V.189.

<sup>83</sup> de nas je mched je mched la/ gnya' dang lam rgya rgyal khirms byas/. *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II.542.



beings in happiness by means of the yoke, the law, and the sealing of roads.”<sup>84</sup>

Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje uses exactly the same terms:

At that time, in [Central] Tibet, because the law of the venerable kings of Tibet had declined, and the law of the Mongols had not yet spread, Tibet was in fragments. Because factional fighting was causing extreme [civil] unhappiness, the precious lama—as prophesied earlier in the *Mañjuśrī Mūlatantra*—took on the role of ruler and enacted the yoke, the law, the sealing of roads, etc.<sup>85</sup>

There are numerous variants of this trio of yoke, law, and seal. For example, the *Handwritten Biography* says:

Then, he tamed the wrongdoers. He planted victory banners of the precious [Buddhist] teaching. He instituted the yoke, the seals, and the taking of evidence, and indeed established all of the area of [Central] Tibet in [a state of] happiness.<sup>86</sup>

Here, for “law” (*rgyal khrims*) is substituted the term “taking of evidence” (*dpang po*)<sup>87</sup>—which, given the context, suggests something similar to law: a judicial function of some kind, perhaps the settlement of disputes or the judgment of criminal acts. Similarly, the *Scholars’ Feast Dharma History* uses two of the three principal terms, but expands on the term “seal”:

It being a time when [Central] Tibet had become fragmented and lawless, he sealed the hills, valleys, and roads to everyone.<sup>88</sup>

All three of these terms—*rgyal khrims*, *gnya’*, and *rgya*—are rich with cultural and historical resonances. The term *rgyal khrims* literally means “the law of the kings,” and is the Tibetan legal term that, as Rebecca French

<sup>84</sup> byang chub kyi sems kyis dbus gtsang ru bzhi dbang du bsdu nas/ gnya’ dang rgyal khrims/ lam rgyas sems can bde ba la bkod/. *Rnam thar phyi ma*, Shedup VI.284.

<sup>85</sup> de dus bod ‘dir/ bod rje’i rgyal khrims nub/ hor gyi rgyal khrims ma dar bas/ bod sil bur song/ phan tshun sde ‘khrug gis shin tu ma bde ba las/ bla ma rin po ches gong du ‘jam dpal rtsa rgyud kyis lung bstan ltar/ rgyal po’i tshul bzung nas/ gnya’ dang rgyal khrims/ lam rgya la sogs mdzad. *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.148.

<sup>86</sup> de nas nag po’i phyogs nmams btul/ bstan pa rin po che’i rgyal mtshan [ba] tsugs/ gnya’ rgya spang [dpang?] po la sogs pa mdzad nas/ bod kham bde ba la bkod la lag[s] so/. *Zin bris*, 56b.

<sup>87</sup> The actual word in the *Zin bris* is *spang po*, but I am reading it as a misspelling of *dpang po*, which yields a more plausible meaning.

<sup>88</sup> spyir de’i dus bod rgyal khrims med pa sil bur song ba’i skabs yin pas thams cad la ri rgya klung rgya lam rgya mdzad. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

writes, "come[s] closest to a Western notion of secular law."<sup>89</sup> It is traditionally seen as one of a pair of opposing terms, the other being *chos khrims*, "the religious law." As Fernanda Pirie describes the pair:

In central Tibet a distinction was made between *chos khrims* (religious law, right, or customs) and *rgyal khrims* (the law, right, or customs of the ruler), reflecting a structural distinction between the authority of the monastic and civil arms of the government...<sup>90</sup>

The word *gnya'* is a little more complicated. One possible reading would be to take it as a shortened form of *gnya' bo*, or "witness," which would make it similar to the term *dpang po* mentioned above, implying something like the resolution of disputes. But there is a more basic meaning that should be considered first: *gnya'* literally means "neck," but when it occurs in the context of law and governance, it is shorthand for *gnya' shing*, which signifies the wooden yoke used to control animals—oxen, for example—who pull a plow. "Yoke" is a metaphor for the ideal measure of guidance or control to be exercised by leaders, and its meaning is closely tied to the terms *rgyal khrims* and *chos khrims*. There is a well-known Tibetan proverb that says:

The law of the kings [*rgyal khrims*] is like a golden yoke [*gnya' shing*], but the religious law [*chos khrims*] is like a silken knot.<sup>91</sup>

The difference between the two laws is that religious law is smooth, like silk, leading the subject gently, without discomfort, whereas the law of the ruler must be very firm, like a yoke.<sup>92</sup> As every occurrence of the term

<sup>89</sup> French 1995, 100.

<sup>90</sup> Pirie 2006, 187, n. 8.

<sup>91</sup> *rgyal khrims gser gyi gnya' shing chos khrims dar gyi mdud pa lta bu yin*. Chandra Das 1902, 173.

Ardussi finds a similar formulation in the *Law Code of Karma bsTan-skyong dBang-po*: *chos khrims dar gyi bdud pa 'jam la dam pa/ rgyal khrims gser gyi gnya' shing lji[d] non che ba*.

Ardussi 2005, 44, fn 40, and French finds it in the Ganden Potrang (*dga' ldan pho brang*) code of the Dalai Lamas, French 1995, 1.

<sup>92</sup> See, e.g., the description of these two symbols on the website of the Bhutan Royal High Court of Justice:

The Silken Knot or the Knotted Scarf represents softness and lightness of touch. ... Together with the Golden Yoke described below, the Knotted Silk Scarf symbolises the spiritual laws which are light and soft in touch, but which become tighter and tougher for those who break them. ...

The Golden Yoke signifies that everybody, irrespective of social status and background, is equal before the law. ... However, if we break the laws, depending on the nature of our breach, the weight of the Golden Yoke will become heavier and heavier,

*gnya'* in the above quotations involving Zhang is accompanied by the term *rgyal khrims*, it is safe to assume that this well-known proverb probably forms the semantic backdrop to the descriptions of Zhang's acts of governance. If we thus see "the yoke" and "the law" as belonging together in this fashion, we might give a loose, nonliteral translation of *gnya' dang rgyal khrims* as simply "law and order."

Finally, we have what is perhaps the most intriguing term: *rgya*, or "seal." The most common occurrence is as *lam rgya*, "sealing of roads" or "sealing of routes," indicating control over the routes traveled by pilgrims and commercial travelers, perhaps by controlling access or even levying tolls.<sup>93</sup> In one text written by Zhang, recounting a battle over stolen horses, there is a suggestion that his monks served as (armed?) escorts for travelers through the more dangerous areas of Central Tibet:

Later, the highway was cut off.  
Great fear was everywhere.  
All of the beggar-monks were able to form protective escorts.  
Then, [the fighting] became more widespread.  
[The monks] were able to protect the whole area.  
This provision of protective escorts for others  
Was seen as extremely meritorious.<sup>94</sup>

Escorts of this kind would presumably also be included in "road seal." The other two seals mentioned are "valley seal" (*klung rgya*) and "hill seal" (*ri rgya*). In later usage, these terms would come to mean the issuance of prohibitions on hunting and fishing within the areas under consideration, putting all of the living creatures in that area under protection.<sup>95</sup> This

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reflecting the severity of our crimes. Therefore, we can understand the Golden Yoke to refer to our personal obligation to adhere and respect the laws of the nation.  
<http://www.judiciary.gov.bt/html/education/publication/crest.php>. Accessed 2/15/09.

<sup>93</sup> *The Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary* defines *lam rgya* as "a law forbidding passage on narrow precipices, etc." (lam 'phrang sogs su phyin mi chog pa'i khrims), 2763; Jackson translates *lam rgya* as "restricted the access to ... roads" (D. Jackson 1994, 63); Martin, in his entry in the THDL Translation Tool, offers "route restrictions" (<http://www.thdl.org/reference/translation-tool.html>); while one informant I spoke to suggested a system of permits, like passports, controlling access to roads.

<sup>94</sup> phyis kyi phyi lam chen po chod/ 'jigs pa chen po 'di kun tu/ sprang long re re skyel ma thub/ de nas je mched je mched la/ yul kham kun gyi skyel ma thub/ gzhan gyi skyel ma byed pa 'di/ shin tu bsod nams che bar mthong/. *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II.542.

<sup>95</sup> *The Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary* defines *ri rgya* as "laws prohibiting the killing of wild game [herbivores]" (ri dwags bsad mi chog pa'i khrims), 2673; and *klung rgya* as "laws prohibiting the killing of living creatures who inhabit a valley, whether on land or in the water" (lung gzhung skam gsher la gnas pa'i srog chags bsad mi chog pa'i khrims), 46.

sense is most certainly encompassed by the term here—we saw above how “Protector of Beings” included within its scope of obligation the duty to promote the happiness of all sentient beings, human and nonhuman, within his jurisdiction—but it would also surely include the imposition of laws upon those areas, along with the protection of its inhabitants from brigands and other threats to civil peace.

So we might think in general of the “sealing” of an area as being something like the placing of that area under the rule of law—whether that means regulations, taxes, restraints, policing, or even military control—and thus marking it as a controlled territory. It should be kept in mind, however, that though “sealing” is a political concept, it is explicitly tied to the religious concept of Protector of Beings: one ultimately protects beings by leading them to buddhahood, but in the meantime there are lesser, yet more immediate, protections such as protection from fear. Thus, one seals off a “safety zone,” protecting human settlements from crime and disturbance, wild animals from hunting, and pilgrims and travelers from brigandage.

### III. PUBLIC WORKS

#### A. *The Works*

Enforcing the law might be considered the negative side of the role of Lord of the Teachings: dispelling obstacles—such as civil disorder—to the well-being of the Jo bo and, by extension, the Dharma. On the positive side, being a Lord of the Teachings meant, first of all, creating the material infrastructure for a thriving Buddhist polity. The importance of building projects should not be underestimated. Tshal pa Kun dga’ rdo rje, for example, places law enforcement under the heading “ordinary activities” (*thun mong gi phrin las*)<sup>96</sup> but building of monasteries, temples, and statues under the heading “special activities” (*khyad par gyi phrin las*), clearly assigning a higher value to the latter.<sup>97</sup> In Zhang’s writings, these material constructions are referred to repeatedly as the “foundation” or “basis of the teaching” (*bstan pa’i gzhi mo*),<sup>98</sup> making clear their spiritual significance.

<sup>96</sup> *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.148.

<sup>97</sup> *Rnam thar bdus pa*, Shedup VI.150.

<sup>98</sup> *Tshal sgong chos spyil ma’i skor las lam zab bla ma’i lam gtsang ston rnal ’byor gyi zin bris tshogs ’khor dang chos thun bzhi*, Shedup VII.342.

His first building project was G.yu brag retreat center (*sgom grwa*),<sup>99</sup> which was erected sometime during the 1160s<sup>100</sup> in the area of Sgrags, which lies between Lhasa and Bsam yas, immediately to the south and southeast of Tshal (see map, \_\_\_\_). It is said in the *Handwritten Biography* that, by this time, the number of disciples and lay people who were encamped in the area immediately surrounding his meditation quarters had become so great that the people requested he build a more permanent institution, which he did.<sup>101</sup> This would have been around the time he first assumed stewardship of the Jo bo, so it is not out of the question that the erection might have served a political purpose as well, though no such purpose is mentioned explicitly in the sources. His association with G.yu brag was strong enough that he continued to be referred to as “Zhang G.yu brag pa” or “Gro ba’i ngon po G.yu brag pa” even after he had become firmly established at Tshal.

Still, the first truly significant projects he undertook were the building of monasteries in Tshal, across the Skyid river, to the southeast of Lhasa. The first was Tshal Yang dgon.<sup>102</sup>

In the wood female sheep year [1175], at the request of Spu ru ba’s teaching lineage holders, he established the monastery of Mtshal [Yang dgon], which he had seen in a vision as the temple of [Cakra]saṃvara.<sup>103</sup>

We have already seen above that the express reason offered for building this monastery was the protection of the pilgrimage routes that passed through the area of Tshal into Lhasa. As such, the act of building Tshal Yang dgon was explicitly referred to as “doing service to the two [temples] of Lhasa.”<sup>104</sup>

The second monastery complex, Tshal Gung thang, was built in 1187, a couple kilometers to the southeast of Tshal Yang dgon. This occurred, according to the *Scholars’ Feast Dharma History*, in fulfillment of a prophecy by his teacher Sgom tshul.<sup>105</sup> The prophecy frames the founding of the monastery within the context of Sgom tshul’s initiation of Zhang as Lord of the Teachings and his directive to protect the Jo bo Śākyamuni statue

<sup>99</sup> *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 192.

<sup>100</sup> Davidson 2005, 329.

<sup>101</sup> *Zin bris*, 52a.

<sup>102</sup> *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 192.

<sup>103</sup> shing mo lug gi lo la spu ru ba’i slob ris rnams kyi zhu ba phul nas bde mchog gi pho brang du gzigs nas mtshal gyi dgon pa btab. *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 192.

<sup>104</sup> lha sa nmam gnyis kyi zhabs tog tu/ shing mo lug gi lo la tshal btab. *Deb ther dmar po*, 122.

<sup>105</sup> *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

and its environs, and thus, as with Yang dgon, it is said that "Gung thang was built to do service to the Jo bo."<sup>106</sup>

Along with the monasteries came numerous chapels, shrines, and statues, the most important of which was the statue of Śākyamuni Buddha referred to as the "Great God" (*lha chen* or *lha mo che*),<sup>107</sup> the "Great God Blazing in Glory" (*lha chen dpal 'bar*),<sup>108</sup> or sometimes the "Great Enlightenment" (*byang chub chen po*),<sup>109</sup> which was built within Tshal Gung thang complex. According to the *Rgyal blon ma Biography*, "there does not exist a statue larger than this in the world,"<sup>110</sup> and Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje wrote that, "although there exist in Tibet some great statues, there is none like this marvelous fine cast statue."<sup>111</sup> It was even said to have been prophesied in the *Mañjuśrīmūlatantra*, where there are two lines of verse—albeit rather vague—that read:

A lovely image of the Teacher [Śākyamuni]  
will undoubtedly be constructed.<sup>112</sup>

From the beginning, the statue was strongly identified with Lama Zhang. It was regularly referred to as his "agent" or "proxy" (*sku tshab*),<sup>113</sup> and Zhang is quoted as saying, on one occasion, "After I die, this very statue will uphold the Dharma itself."<sup>114</sup> The degree of identification can be seen in one verse of song number 15 of the collection called *Some Songs of G.yu brag*:

I, the little monk, am like Gung thang [monastery] of Tshal.  
My unchanging mind is the Great God Blazing in Glory [statue] itself.  
If you are going to ask for a blessing, ask me!  
If you are going to do devotion, do it to me!<sup>115</sup>

<sup>106</sup> gung thang jo bo'i zhabs thog du bzhengs. *Zin bris*, 46b.

<sup>107</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 192.

<sup>108</sup> *Deb ther dmar po* 122; and note by Dung dkar Blo bzang 'phrin las, 431, identifying this as a statue of Śākyamuni: *Lha chen dpal 'bar/ ston pa sangs rgyas kyi sku brnyan chen po*.

<sup>109</sup> *Dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.56.

<sup>110</sup> 'dzam bu gling na lugs ma 'di las che ba med. *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.284–85.

<sup>111</sup> bod na sku gzugs chen po 'ga' re bzhugs kyang/ lugs legs pa mtshar ba 'di lta bu med/. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.153.

<sup>112</sup> *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.153–54.

<sup>113</sup> E.g., *Mon gdong ma bka' rang babs kyi 'grel pa*, Shedup VII.183: shAkya rang gi sku tshab bzhengs pa'o; *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.154: nyid kyi sku tshab tu lha chen byang chub chen po bzhengs.

<sup>114</sup> nga 'das pa'i 'og na bstan pa blugs ma rang 'di rang gis 'dzin pa yin gsungs. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 193.

<sup>115</sup> ban chung nga tshal gyi gung thang dang 'dra ste/ sems mi 'gyur ba lha chen dpal 'bar rang lags so/ khyed rang byin rlabs zhig zhu na nga rang la zhus dang/ mos gus shig byed na nga rang la gyis dang/. *G.yu brag pa'i mgur ma 'ga'zhig*, Shedup VI.332–33.

Not only was the statue enormous and beautiful, but it was also considered to be possessed of special powers. From the time of its construction, extraordinary events occurred around it. By day, ordinary laborers worked on it, but at night—to the astonishment of the local people—the work was taken up by deities, so that construction went on continuously around the clock.<sup>116</sup> Also, at the time of construction, numerous buddhas appeared to Zhang, with their consorts and retinues, scattering flowers, bestowing blessings on him, and urging him on to the final goal of buddhahood:

Son of good family, you have engaged in activities. Throw away your burden and perfect all of the enlightened activities of a buddha without exception. By taming [them], free from *saṃsāra* all sentient beings wherever they abide, and you shall without doubt attain enlightenment. . . . We will help you and this statue to benefit sentient beings until *saṃsāra* is emptied out!<sup>117</sup>

Then, when the statue was finally finished and filled with innumerable holy relics, a lavish consecration ceremony was conducted, attended by the great Bka' brgyud pa leaders Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–93; the First Karma pa) and Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje (1128–88; one of the founders of the 'Brug pa Bka' brgyud pa order), among others.<sup>118</sup> Miraculous events of many sorts occurred. There is one in particular that is unfortunately rather difficult to make out through the haze of time and competing versions, but I think it worth spending some time attempting to sort it out because it shows in a striking manner the strong relationship of identity between the Śākyamuni statue and Lama Zhang himself.<sup>119</sup>

There are accounts of this incident in four sources: chronologically, Nam mkha' 'od's *The Handwritten Biography* (twelfth/thirteenth century), Kun dga' rdo rje's *The Concise Biography* (fourteenth century), the *Lho rong Dharma History* (fifteenth century), and the *Gung thang Register* (eighteenth century). The *Concise Biography* and the *Gung thang Register* explicitly place this event at the consecration of the Great God statue, so I will begin with them. At the time the great statue was consecrated, the ceremony was performed jointly by Lama Zhang and the Karma pa, but

<sup>116</sup> *Zin bris*, 63b.

<sup>117</sup> rigs kyi bu khyod kyis bya ba byas/ khur bor/ sangs rgyas kyi phrin las ma lus par rdzogs/ khyod kyi gdul byas gar khyab kyi sems can thams cad 'khor ba las thar nas byang chub thob par gdon mi za na/ . . . khyod dang rten 'dis 'khor ba ma stongs bar du sems can gyi don byed pa'i grogs nged kyis bya'o/. *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.153.

<sup>118</sup> *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.154.

<sup>119</sup> It is also a piece in the puzzle of Lama Zhang's relationship to the First Karma pa, Dus gsum mkhyen pa. This will be given a more detailed examination in Chapter Five.

in the middle of the consecration something quite startling occurred. Kun dga' rdo rje writes:

It is reported that Lord Dus gsum mkhyen pa [the Karma pa] lifted Zhang Rinpoche and placed him on the statue, saying, "E te nar, you merge! E te na, merge!"<sup>120</sup>

Similarly, we read in the *Gung thang Register*:

Dus gsum mkhyen pa performed the consecration, lifting Zhang Rinpoche and saying "Merge!"<sup>121</sup>

The two other accounts offer a lot more detail, and clearly refer to the same incident, but cast some doubt as to whether the statue being consecrated was the Great God itself or one of the numerous subsidiary statues that were consecrated along with it. A prominent disciple and patron, Mar pa lha dkar (also known as Mar bsgom), was known to have commissioned scores of other statues for the event, including a statue of Lama Zhang himself.<sup>122</sup> This is what seems to be referred to by the other two texts. First of all, the *Handwritten Biography*:

Mar bsgom acted as the sponsor and erected a cast statue of Zhang, and the consecration was made by both [Zhang] and the precious Khams pa, Dbu se [Dus gsum mkhyen pa]. At that time, Zhang said, "Gray old man, this statue, which I call 'Zha[ng] ra dga' chung,' is the body of the actual man, so do the consecration carefully." Having said this, the two of them made the consecration.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>120</sup> rje dus gsum mkhyen pas zhang rin po che btegs nas rten la bzahag cing/ khyod e te nar thim/ e te na thim gsung skad/. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.155. No one I consulted was certain as to the meaning of "e te na" and "e te nar." I treat them here as interjections.

<sup>121</sup> dus gsum mkhyen pas ni zhang rin po che bteg nas 'di la thim zhes gsungs nas rab gnas mdzad. *Gung thang dkar chag*, 57a.

Sørensen and Hazod translate this passage as "Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa on his part having lifted up [the statue of] Zhang Rin-po-che said: 'Vanish into it!' whereupon he performed the consecration." Sørensen and Hazod 2007, L.259. Since there is no other statue mentioned in the passage, it is assumed their parenthetical "[the statue of]" is an interpretive extrapolation from other texts recording the incident.

<sup>122</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 204; *Gung thang dkar chag*, 58b.

<sup>123</sup> mar bsgom gyis yon bdag byas nas zhang gi sku tshad lugs ma de bzahengs nas rab gnas khams pa [rin po che] dbu se dang gnyis kyis mdzad/ de'i dus su zhang gi zhal nas rgan po se bo rten 'di zha ra dga' chung bya ba khyo ka bsha' ma gcig gi sku yin pas rab gnas bzobs gcig gsung nas khong gnyis kyi[s] rab gnas byas/. *Zin bris*, 58b.



It is the *Lho rong Dharma History*, however, that offers the most information, making clearer what all of the lifting and merging in the other texts was all about:

Mar sgom acted as the sponsor, and the two of them, Rje Dbu se [Dus gsum mkhyen pa] and [Zhang], performed the consecration of the cast statue of Zhang that resided at Gung thang.

At that time, [Zhang] said, “Gray old man, this statue, which I call ‘Zhang ra ga chung,’ is the body of the actual man, so do the consecration carefully.” With his two hands, [Dbu se] suddenly took [Zhang’s] body on his lap, and saying “Merge with this Zhang [ra] ga chung [statue]!” threw [Zhang] at the statue. [Zhang’s?] body went rigid. “This is not ascertainable by thought,” he said.<sup>124</sup>

Lama Zhang’s reaction to the violent act of the Karma pa—the Tibetan term is *sku sbrid chil gyis song*, meaning his body became numb, or rigid (one informant suggested to me something like an electric shock passing through the body)—implies that the merger between Zhang and the statue on some level actually did take place. Unfortunately, it is still not incontestably obvious which statue was involved—whether the Great God or a likeness of Zhang. The matter is not helped by an ambiguity of phrasing that occurs in the two last-mentioned accounts: in the passages from both the *Handwritten Biography* and the *Lho rong Dharma History*, the phrase I translate as “cast statue of Zhang” could, with the change of a single letter, also be translated as “the statue that acted as agent (or proxy) for Zhang,” a phrase used several times to refer to the Great God statue.<sup>125</sup> However, whether he was united with the Great God itself or with one of the many lesser statues used in the consecration ceremony, the

<sup>124</sup> mar sgom gyis yon bdag byas pas/ gung thang du bzhugs pa’i zhang gi sku tshad blugs ma de’i rab gnas la rje dbu se dang/ nged gnyis kyis byas pa’i dus su rgad po se bo rten ‘di zhang ra ga chung bya bar khyo ga gsha’ ma zhig gi sku yin pas rab gnas gzob cig gsungs pas/ de khad phyag gnyis kyis sku pang du btab nas zhang ga chung ‘di la thim pa gyis gsungs nas sku ‘dra la brgyab pas sku sbrid chil gyis song nas/ thugs kyis ma nges pa byung gsungs/. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 194.

<sup>125</sup> The term *sku tshad* means “statue”; the term *sku tshab* means “proxy,” “agent,” or “representative.” There are some cases where phrases are identical, or nearly identical, except for the substitution of one term for the other, which is extremely suspicious. E.g.:

shAkya rang gi sku tshad bzhengs pa.

*Spyi khungs ma hU-M nyi shu rtsa gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa*, Shedup VII.342. Compared with:

shAkya rang gi sku tshab bzhengs pa’o.

*Mon gdong ma bka’ rang babs kyi ‘grel pa*. VII.183.

Also:

gung thang btab/ nyid kyi sku tshab tu lha chen byang chub chen po bzhengs

connection established between Zhang and the Great God—and by extension, between Zhang and Śākyamuni Buddha—remains a powerful one.

The Great God comes into the picture with special poignance at the time of Zhang’s death, in 1193. As Kun dga’ rdo rje reports:

In the evening, when the remains were taken to the chapel, Gtsang ston Hral mo saw [Zhang] Rinpoche himself appear in person and sit on the lap of the Great God [statue]. He is reported to have said, “My blessings and deeds have been extensive.” At that time, tears came to the eyes of the Lhasa Jo bo. Tears also came to the eyes of the Great God. Many light rays radiated [from the Great God statue]. When the remains were taken to the top of the crown protuberance, Rinpoche himself actually appeared in the middle of the face [of the Great God]. There are many stories of miracles in addition to these.<sup>126</sup>

The Great God could almost be seen as a mirror image of the Jo bo statue in the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang just across the river—the two Śākyamuni statues, as it were, watching each other across the Skyi river—and the karmic identification of Zhang with each of them is equally strong. This linking of Zhang to Śākyamuni Buddha is much in evidence throughout the accounts of his life. Thus, for example, the very first line of the *Fulfillment of the Needs, Wishes, and Hopes* self-eulogy quoted above is “In Tsha ba gru, which is like Lumbinī grove [the Buddha’s birthplace], [you] entered [your] mother’s womb . . .”<sup>127</sup> In the *Handwritten Biography*, Nam mkha’ ‘od employs an even more elaborate version of this rhetorical conceit—ingeniously linking each of the places associated with Zhang’s birth to a corresponding place in the vicinity of the Buddha’s birthplace (the complexity of the figure makes it difficult to translate with any elegance; I use parentheses to help separate out the similes):

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*Lung bstan za ma tog bkod pa sogs lung bstan gyi skor (mtshal pa’i brgyud yig deb ther gal ba’i me long mkhas pa’i yid ‘phrog)*, Shedup VI.56.

Compared with:

gung thang du bzhugs pa’i zhang gi sku tshad blugs ma de’i rab gnas.

*Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 194.

<sup>126</sup> nangs par gdung rnams mchod khang du spyen ‘dren pa’i tshe/ rin po che dngos su byon nas lha mo che’i pang na bzhugs pa gtsang ston hral mos mthong/ nga’i byin rlabs dang mdzad pa rgya cher song gsung skad/ de’i tshe lha sa’i jo bo la spyen chab byon/ lha mo che la’ang spyen chab byon/ ‘od zer mang po ‘phros/ gdung gtsug tor gyi steng du spyen drangs pa’i tshe/ zhal gyi dkyil ‘khor la rin po che nyid dngos su byon/ gzhan yang ngo mtshar gyi lo rgyus mang du snang/. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.178.

<sup>127</sup> lum bi’i tshal ‘dra tshal ba’i grur/ yum gyi lhums zhugs. . . . *Nyid la nyid kyi bstod pa dgos ‘dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.108

Regarding the place that is called Tsha ba gru (which is like Lumbinī Grove): In that [place] (resembling holy Magadha), in that special land, at Chu bzangs (like the Telar river) in Btsan 'bangs Tsha ba gru (like Kapilavastu), the town not far from [the city] on the right side of the great river, Lhasa (like Vajrāsana, the place where [the Buddha] understood the excellent teaching, the definitive teaching, the holy Dharma), birthplace of the precious qualities, basis of the spread of the precious teaching. . . .<sup>128</sup>

This identification is further reinforced by the way the Śākyamuni epithets “Protector of Beings” (*'gro ba'i mgon po*) and “Lord of the Teachings” (*bstan pa'i bdag po*) were applied to Zhang, and the way in which these titles united in one person the roles of religious leader and secular ruler. We thus see a complicated system of correspondences established between Zhang and the Great God, Zhang and the Jo bo, the Great God and the Jo bo, and ultimately Zhang and Śākyamuni Buddha himself. Later, this webwork of equivalences would come to include Dalai Lamas and others who would exercise religious and secular power in Lhasa, and who would find ways to link themselves to Lama Zhang as their point of access into this power system. So the Śākyamuni connection is by no means a trivial one—it has both a religious and a political import—and the relationship is anchored symbolically and geographically by the two statues and their enclosing temples, which serve as the two poles that define the force field that is Lama Zhang's power, spanning the Skyi river and taking in all of the surrounding territory.

### B. Marking Territory, Sacred and Political

It is important to remember when considering Zhang's “worldly” activities of law enforcement, governance, and building that, in his role as Lord of the Teachings or Protector of Beings, he straddles two realms: the ordinary realm of everyday life and the less visible, but just as palpable, world of supernatural agents. As such, every act has a double valence, can be read according to either of two related, but not always commensurable, logics. This is especially evident where space or territory is at stake.

<sup>128</sup> lum pa'i tshal 'dra tsha ba grur/ ces gsungs pa ni/ yul khyad par du/ 'phags pa ma ga ta [ces] dang 'dra bar bstan pa rin po che dar ba'i gzhi/ yon tan rin po che 'byung pa'i gnas/ chu bo chen po'i g.yas ngos/ legs par bstan pa nyes par bstan pa dam pa'i chos go ba'i yul rdo rje gdan lta bu'i/ lha sa dang thag nye ba'i grong khyer ser skya dang 'dra ba btsan 'bangs tsha ba grur/ skyes ldan dang 'dra ba'i chu bzangs su/. *Zin bris*, 1b.

On the frequent comparison of the Lhasa 'Phrul snang temple to Vajrāsana, the “diamond throne” where the Buddha attained enlightenment, see Warner 2008, 220.

The marking off of physical space has long been seen within the Tibetan cultural region as a marking off of spiritual space as well. The best-known Tibetan example of this is set forth in twelfth-century *Pillar Testament*, where a geomantic temple-construction scheme is said to have been devised by Srong btsan sgam po's Chinese bride Kong jo, who, in a geomantic divination, saw “this land of snow, this kingdom of Tibet, in the form of a supine demoness”<sup>129</sup> that, if Buddhism was to take hold in Tibet, would have to be subdued. For this purpose, Kong jo envisioned numerous geomantic remedies, which included, among other things, the building of twelve temples, known as “the twelve immutable nails,”<sup>130</sup> to be situated strategically upon those parts of the landscape that corresponded to various of the demoness's body parts, thereby violently restraining the demoness and making Tibet safe for Buddhism.

In a similar fashion, Zhang's legal-political-military acts of “sealing” territories, securing control over resources, and implementing building projects—monasteries, retreat centers, lay settlements, highways, temples, shrines, statues, and *stūpas*—served at the same time as means of consolidating and marking off sacred space. While he is lacing the physical landscape of Central Tibet with markers of Tshal pa control, he is simultaneously staking out Tshal pa territorial claims within an invisible spiritual landscape.

That this was the case is demonstrated implicitly by the care Zhang takes to negotiate at each stage of his rule all of the necessary spiritual “permissions” from the supernatural lords of any territory to which he makes a political claim. There is, for example, in a work called *The Ngar phug ma Questions Answered*,<sup>131</sup> an especially intriguing account of a joint visionary encounter that Zhang and his successor-to-be Dar ma gzhon nu have with a queen of the subterranean water deities known as *klu* (conventionally identified with the Indian *nāgas*). In this particular episode, the queen *klu* residing in the Skyi river at the place where it adjoins the district of Tshal (*gtsang chab ldan gyi klu mo*) in effect makes a sacred land grant to Zhang for the purpose of erecting the main Tshal pa temple complex, granting him symbolic dominion over great reaches of Central Tibet:

<sup>129</sup> kha ba can bod kyi rgyal khams 'di/ srin mo gan rgyal du nyal ba'i gzugs su shes/. *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, 132. See Dalton 2011, 110–25, for a thorough discussion of the *Pillar Testament*'s subjugation narrative.

<sup>130</sup> mi 'gyur ba'i gzer bcu gnyis. *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, 133.

<sup>131</sup> *Ngar phug ma'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.2–23.

From the river there arose a great fountain, which completely filled the three gorges of Ngan lam valley as well as Grib and, uncontainable, it overflowed into Skyi shod, Ngom shod, and the four horns of Central Tibet, rushing all the way to Me nyag, and the queen *klu* said, "For you, Lord of the Teachings, . . . I will accomplish everything you wish from now until the end of time."<sup>132</sup>

At that point, saying "Look, Rinpoche!" she granted Zhang and Dar ma gzhon nu a prophetic revelation of the great building complexes that would, in future years, come to occupy the land—emblems of the future expansion of Tshal pa power.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> gtsang chab ldan nas/ nas kyi chu mig chen po rdol nas byung bas/ ngan lam lung pa ral gsum grib dang bcas pa mer gyis khengs nas ma shong par lhud lhud lud nas skyi shod ngom shod dbus gtsang ru bzhir ma shong bar me nyag g+ha ru chil gyis song ba dang/ klu mo de na re/ . . . bstan pa'i bdag po khyod nyid la/ da nas bzung nas dus mtha'i bar/ dgongs pa thams cad nga yis bsgrub/. *Ngar phug ma'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.6–7.

<sup>133</sup> *Ngar phug ma'i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.7.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### “GREAT MEDITATOR WHO TEARS DOWN FORTS”<sup>1</sup>

Lama Zhang’s assumption of the mantle of “Lord of the Teachings” made him a focal point of controversy. As a public figure he made many enemies, and was criticized not only for his political and military exploits, but also for his unconventional behavior. This has led some contemporary commentators to cast him as an essentially marginal player who was viewed as an embarrassment by the heavyweights of the Bka’ brgyud tradition—an unstable and violent eccentric who had to be reined in. In this chapter I undertake a more balanced assessment—one that would contextualize, rather than moralize, Zhang’s military exploits and restore him to his rightful place in the tradition. In the process, I will examine the connections between Buddhist tantra and political violence and attempt to gauge the extent to which Zhang’s controversial behavior can be understood from within this framework.

## I. CONFLICTS AND FIGHTING

### A. *Reasons for Fighting*

Only the historically naïve could blame the conflicts in Lhasa on Lama Zhang alone. It should not even be necessary to point out that at the time Zhang, at the bidding of Sgom tshul, took control of the Jo khang, Lhasa was not a peaceful Buddhist fairy hamlet: the situation he came into was fraught with danger, with many competing groups, both secular and religious, at each other’s throats, contending for political, religious, and economic power, with robbers in the countryside and the Ra mo che and the Jo khang in flames. It must have been a frightening time for ordinary Lhasans.

Still, Tibetan historians seem to agree that Zhang stood out among Tibetan religious leaders as one particularly prone to quarrels and/or fighting (*khrug pa*).<sup>2</sup> Looking at the literature, there are loosely four reasons

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<sup>1</sup> sgom chen yul mkhar sgyel. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.602.

<sup>2</sup> The term *khrug pa* is not used only for physical fights; it can refer as well to simple quarrels.

for which Zhang is said to have resorted to force: (1) in order to subdue those who refused the “seals” he imposed on the Lhasa area, (2) as part of everyday law enforcement, (3) for the purpose of procuring building materials, and (4) in order to subdue “enemies of the teachings.”<sup>3</sup>

### 1. *Refusal of the “Seals”*

When Zhang was given the formal initiation as steward of the Jo bo, and imposed a system of laws and restrictions—the above-mentioned “seals”—it was here that we first see signs of conflict and military activity. *The Scholars’ Feast Dharma History* says:

Against those who were not united under his seals, he performed fierce activities, such as going into battle, etc.<sup>4</sup>

I interpret “those who were not united under the seals” (*rgya ‘og tu mi ‘du ba rnams*) as referring to those who refused in principle to recognize his authority to enforce the law, rather than to those who simply broke particular laws. Unfortunately, there are very few references to specific groups who might be included in this category. Dun dkar Blo bzang ‘phrin las writes that “from the middle of his life to the later part of his life, he went into battle with many leaders of the lands of Lho kha, ‘Bri khung, and ‘Ol kha, and brought their communities under his power,”<sup>5</sup> but unfortunately does not cite his sources for this information. A good guess would be the warring clans and religious communities associated with the “four districts of Lhasa,” or perhaps the Gnyos clan, but we cannot say for certain.

### 2. *Law Enforcement*

The second case is perhaps the easiest to understand. We saw above, for example, in *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits*, how he organized monk escorts in order to ensure safe passage for merchants and pilgrims along the roads. In some instances, such as the Mkhar chu ba horse-stealing incident noted below, this led to outright fighting between the Tshal pa-s

<sup>3</sup> *Zin bris*, 57b.

<sup>4</sup> *rgya ‘og tu mi ‘du ba rnams la dmag g.yul ngo sogs drag po’i ‘phrin las mdzad pa. Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>5</sup> *sku tshe’i dkyil nas sku tshe’i smad du ma slebs bar/ lho kha dang/ ‘bri khung/ ‘ol kha sa khul gyi sger btsan dpon rigs mang por dmag drangs te kho tsho’i mi sde rnams dbang ‘og tu bsdus par mdzad/*. Notes to *Deb ther dmar po*, 427, n.583.

and other communities. Needless to say, the lines that divide day-to-day law enforcement from military maneuvering are not always clear.

### 3. *Procurement of Building Materials*

We have seen above the importance attached to Zhang's building projects as his way of consolidating control, both physical and symbolic, over the Lhasa region. All of this of course required access to resources, and there thus occurred conflicts over the procuring of building materials. As it says in the *Blue Annals*:

He built temples as well as the Great God [Śākyamuni statue]. The necessary [construction] materials he received from various sources—some were given, others taken by force.<sup>6</sup>

As will be seen below, many of these battles over materials took place in Yer pa, just to the east of Lhasa.

### 4. *“Enemies of the Teachings”*

This justification is employed in the *Rgyal blon ma Biography*, where his opponents are referred to in one case as “harmers of the [Buddhist] teachings,”<sup>7</sup> and also in the *Handwritten Biography* and the *Lho rong Dharma History*, where a certain battle situation is explained as being caused by the appearance of “hostile enemies of the precious [Buddhist] teachings,” who have arisen within a “time of degeneration,” and created a situation where “the teachings had almost disappeared from the river valley of the Left Horn [of Central Tibet].”<sup>8</sup> This talk about the disappearance of the teachings from the Left Horn is puzzling. From all other evidence, the Buddhist teachings were thriving in Central Tibet at that time, taking a firmer and firmer hold in the Tibetan soil with each decade: new religious orders, better-organized and better-financed institutions, richer patrons, larger and better-cataloged libraries of texts, a groundswell of popular devotional forms, a growing corps of ordained monks, revived pilgrimage routes, and ever denser networks of monasteries. So it seems unlikely the area was being overrun by infidels. Besides the Bon po-s, the only

<sup>6</sup> gtsug lag khang dang lha chen bzhangs/ de'i cha rkyen yang la la la blangs/ la las phul/ la la la bstan phrogs lta bu mdzad/. *Deb ther sngon po*, 836. Roerich 1976, 714–15.

<sup>7</sup> bstan pa'i gnod byed. *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.278.

<sup>8</sup> snyigs ma'i dus 'dir bstan pa rin po che la gnag pa'i dgra rnam lang pas/ g.yo ru chu rgyun gyi bstan pa nub pa la thug/. *Zin bris*, 57b.



possible “non-Buddhists” I could imagine would be the scattered unaffiliated lay spiritualist movements documented by Dan Martin,<sup>9</sup> but neither of these groups could have possessed much institutional strength. It seems more likely the groups the Tshal pa-s were fighting were Buddhists as well. The only reasonable conclusion would therefore be that “enemy of the teachings” and “hostile to the teachings” were sectarian designations used by Zhang’s disciples to denigrate those rival Buddhist groups with whom the Tshal pa-s were fighting. We will see below the more sinister implications of pegging someone as an enemy of Buddhism.

### B. *Some Sites of Fighting*

Though there is a distinct lack of historical detail, there are passages in the sources that mention places where some of Lama Zhang’s battles may have taken place. This does not pretend to be an exhaustive listing, merely a starting point.

#### 1. *Mkhar chu*

In *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits*, an incident is recounted where horses are stolen from Tshal by some men from Mkhar chu, and the senior monks, insisting that monks are not fighters, refuse to join a posse to take back the horses. Zhang threatens to leave Tshal if the monks will not fight, at which point some lay patrons intervene:

[The patrons said:]

“Master, we beg you not to leave by yourself!

We will pursue [the Mkhar chu ba-s] and recover [the horses].

If peaceful means are called for, we will pursue peacefully.

If fierce means are called for, we will pursue fiercely.

Master, do not leave by yourself!

This great meditation center

Will go to ruin. We implore you to stay!”

This having been said, the community of monks went to fight.

All of the horses were recovered.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Martin 1996b, 1996c.

<sup>10</sup> slob dpon gcig pur mi ‘bros pa/ zhu’o nged kyis bsnyags ‘gugs bya/ zhi bar ‘os na zhi bas bsnyags/ drag por ‘os na drag pos bsnyags/ slob dpon gcig pur ma bros shig /sgom grwa chen po ‘di tsam pa/ gzhig tu phongs pas bzhugs par zhu/ zer nas grwa tshogs dmag la song/ rta rnams thams cad khugs nas byung/. *Phan byed nyi ma’i snying po*, Shedup II.542. For more on conflicts with the Mkhar chu ba, see Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.180, n.429.

There are other incidents reported involving the Mkhar chu ba that suggest a longer-term engagement, or at least sporadic outbreaks of fighting. To judge from the accounts in the *Blue Annals* and the *Lho rong Dharma History*, a final truce between Zhang and the Mkhar chu ba was brokered by Gling ras pa Padma rdo rje, whom we have already seen at the consecration of the Great God statue:

At the time of outbreak of the last battle between Lama Zhang and the four contending parties, Lama Zhang said [to Gling ras pa], “You must do whatever is in your power,” and he stopped the troops of the Mkhar chu temple.<sup>11</sup>

This is all that is known at this point about the battles.

## 2. *Mtha’ bzhi Dol* [*Gdol*]

In a passage of the *Gung thang Register* dealing with Zhang’s disciple ‘Dul ba ‘od, it is said that “at the time Zhang Rinpoche was fighting a great battle in Mtha’ bzhi Dol, Kha rag Nyag po [‘Dul ba ‘od] came there to fight with him.”<sup>12</sup> There is no indication when this fighting would have taken place.

In the *Handwritten Biography*, Zhang singles out a patron named Shākya Dar as a man of particular virtue.<sup>13</sup> But he also notes that he had fought against him in the past:

He said, “Look at Dpon Shākya dar. Even though he was defeated in the fight, he asks me for an empowerment, and by the compassion of the teacher this has indeed been done.”<sup>14</sup>

This same Shākya Dar is named in Kun dga’ rdo rje’s *Concise Biography* as in fact being from Mtha’ bzhi (Dol), so perhaps the fight with him had been part of the larger warfare in Mtha’ bzhi Dol and he was a patron from that area who had eventually been won over to the Tshal pa side.

<sup>11</sup> bla ma zhang dang/ ‘thab bzhi’i ‘khrug pa phyi ma lang pa’i dus su/ bla ma zhang gis khyed la nus pa ci yod kyi steng byed dgos gsungs pas/ gling chung bas/ mkhar chu/ pho brang tsho’i dmag bkag pas/ ‘thab bzhi pa dmag bsham rgyu med par phyir song/ de la mi nmams kyis kha zer ba la/ chos brgyud ‘go snyoms pa’i ngur bzhengs/. *Lho rong chos ‘byung*, 639.

<sup>12</sup> zhang rin po che dang mtha’ bzhi dol du ‘khrug pa chen po byas pa’i dus su kha rag nyag pos ‘khrug pa la byon. *Gung thang dkar chag*, 21b.

<sup>13</sup> *Zin Bris*, 70b–71a.

<sup>14</sup> dpon shAkyā dar la ltos/ ‘khrug pa kho rgyal yang nga la dbang zhus pa ‘di slob dpon gyi thugs rjes zin pa yin mod gsungs/. *Zin bris*, 68a.

There is also mention of fighting in “Dol gyi mtha’ bzhi” in the story of the dust storm in which Zhang became lost, only to be rescued by the dog Wild-Yak Snout, which is told below in the section on “Fierce Activities.”<sup>15</sup>

Another reference to activity in this area is in the passage from Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, regent of the Fifth Dalai Lama—quoted in full below in the section on “Fierce Activities”—where the dog Wild-Yak Snout, in his role as emanation of Mahākāla, assisted Zhang in the violent subordination of, among others, “the ruler of Gdol po.”<sup>16</sup>

Finally, there is the acknowledgment of this battle in the colophon to a song, a single stanza of which was quoted earlier, song number 15 of the collection called *Some Songs of G.yu brag*. Here, the compiler explains the circumstances under which Zhang composed the spontaneous song:

It is said that, at the upper end of Dol, a member of the retinue was taken prisoner [by the Dol pa-s]. There, he was tied to a catapult, and the catapult was fired. He died. The retinue felt sad about that, and some said they wished to return [home]. Others said, “But where is there to return to?” Aware of this, [Lama Zhang] sang [this song].<sup>17</sup>

This passage is striking not only for the information it offers about the location of the battle, but also for its hints as to the sorts of weaponry used in these fights—catapults<sup>18</sup>—as well as its empathetic depiction of the personal toll a life of soldiering must have taken on ordained monks.

### 3. *Bzang yul Ya[r] sna/G.yo ru*

Another song of Zhang’s also presents this personal side of the monk-soldier’s life simply and elegantly, with a touch of homesickness and world-weary sadness:

In the snake year, time of the waxing moon of the month of [the constellation] Dbyug gu,  
I was a little worried about losing the battle.

<sup>15</sup> *Zin bris*, 65b–66a.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmad 1999, 187. Similar passage in *Gung thang dkar chag*, 63a. Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.272.

<sup>17</sup> dol gyi yar snar ‘khor gcig btson du khyer/ der sgyogs la gdags pas sgyogs phog nas shi skad/ der ‘khor rnam skyo ba skyes nas la la gar ‘deng zer/ la la na re gang du ‘deng zer ba mkhyen nas gsungs pa’o/. *G.yu brag pa’i mgur ma ‘ga’ zhig*, Shedup VI.333.

<sup>18</sup> There are murals in the Potala depicting battle scenes in which catapults are used. Seen in *The Angry Monk: Reflections on Tibet*, the documentary on Gendun Choephel by Swiss filmmaker Luc Schaedler (2005).

Unhappy thoughts arose.  
 If we lose the battle, it will be unfortunate:  
 There will be no rest, though we remain a long time,  
 and we will wish to reach Tshal quickly.  
 If, having won the battle quickly,  
 we reach Tshal, we will be happy,  
 And in our minds, very palpable  
 fervid thoughts will arise.<sup>19</sup>

What is of interest to us here, however, is the colophon, which tells of a great battle, and reads, in part:

In the year of the great battle of G.yo ru. [Composition] begun at Bzang yul mon pa gdong. Completed at Ya sna.<sup>20</sup>

The “snake year” would be either 1173 or 1185. The first major building at Tshal was Yang dgon, completed in 1175, which would suggest the later date for this battle, since the poem speaks of returning to Tshal as home base. However, as Sørensen and Hazod note, there were probably less permanent structures that Zhang and his men were occupying before Yang dgon was built, so really either date would work given the information we have at this time.<sup>21</sup>

The mention of Bzang yul and Ya sna are also helpful, for there are references in two other texts to a battle that took place there, so it is possible these refer to the same battle or battles. The first such reference is found in the last sentence of the colophon to the work entitled *Two Secret Instructions on the Essential Point Told to the Gtsang pa rje brtsun Brothers*, which reads:

Secret instruction on the essential point composed at the time of the battle at Bzang yul Yar sna.<sup>22</sup>

The second reference is in the colophon to a work entitled *Answers to Questions from Nyang khol ba*. The identity of Nyang khol ba is uncertain—aside

<sup>19</sup> sbrul lo dbyug gu'i zla stod la/ 'khrug pa cung zad pham dogs byas/ mi dga' ba yi rtog pa shar/ 'khrug pa pham na ma legs kyi/ yun ring sdod kyang mi khom zhing/ myur du tshal du sleb par 'dod/ 'khrug pa myur du rgyal gyur nas/ tshal du slebs na dga' ba la/ snyam du yid ni rab gdung ba'i/ rtog pa shin tu rags pa 'gyus/. *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II. 301.

<sup>20</sup> g.yo ru'i 'khrug pa chen po'i lo la/ bzang yul mon pa gdong du dbu btsugs/ ya snar gzhung bskyangs/ grwa thang du tshar bar byas pa rdzogs so/.

<sup>21</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.33.

<sup>22</sup> gnad kyi man ngag bzang yul yar snar 'khrug pa'i dus su bkod pa'o. *Gtsang pa rje brtsun sku mched la gsungs pa'i gnad kyi man ngag gnyis*, Shedup III.421.

from his being a beggar monk (*sprang po*)—but the last line of the colophon is similar to that of the advice to the Gtsang pa rje brtsun brothers:

Composed at the time of the battle at Bzang yul Yar sna.<sup>23</sup>

Again, this is currently all the information available regarding this battle.

#### 4. *Gdos* [*Rdos*]

There were military engagements in the area of *Gdos* as well. As the *Rgyal blon ma Biography* tells it:

Also, one time, [Zhang] was subjugating harmers of the teachings, and having seen that the time was ripe for taming, he fought against the *Gdos* pa.<sup>24</sup>

The *Handwritten Biography* tells us that catapults (or possibly hand-operated slings?) were employed in these battles:

Still, it is said that the fighting was not pacified, and that there were catapult [or sling] battles.<sup>25</sup>

Another place we hear about the battle of *Gdos* is in accounts of the life of the great yogin *Ti shri Ras pa* (1164/65–1236), who would later serve as imperial preceptor to the Tangut kingdom, shortly before it was conquered by the Mongols in 1211.<sup>26</sup> *Kun dga' rdo rje* reports an episode where *Ti shri*, who had studied under both *Tshal pa* and 'Ba' rom *Bka' brgyud pa* teachers, objected to being dragged into a battle with the *Gdos pa*:

The *siddha* *Ti shri Ras pa*, having heard [of Lama Zhang], arrived. He engaged in the battle at *Gdos pa*. [Zhang] said, "Launch rocks at the enemy!" Twice [*Ti shri Ras pa*] launched rocks. The third time, he thought to himself, "I have come for the sake of the Dharma, not to kill people!" and did not launch [rocks].<sup>27</sup>

Those of us who reflexively read an anti-war message into this episode should note that *Ti shri* is reported to have "lost a bit of auspiciousness"

<sup>23</sup> bzang yul yar snar 'khrug pa'i dus su yi ger bkod pa. *Nyang khol ba'i zhus lan*, Shedup V.297.

<sup>24</sup> yang skabs shig tu bstan pa'i gnod byed thul zhing/ gdul bya dus la bab par gzigs nas/ gdos par 'khrug pa mdzad. *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI. 278.

<sup>25</sup> khrug pa ma zhi bar sgyogs 'khrug byung skad. *Zin bris*, 55a.

<sup>26</sup> See Sperling 1987 and Sperling 2004.

<sup>27</sup> grub thob ti shi ras pas snyan pa gsan nas byon pas/ gdos par 'khrug pa mdzad pa dang thug/ dgra 'di nmams la rdo 'phongs gsungs/ rdo ba lan gnyis 'phangs/ gsum pa la nga chos la yong nas mi bsad na mi yong snyam ma 'phangs/. *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.164.

(*rten 'brel cung zad 'chugs*) for following his conscience rather than Lama Zhang's orders, a direct reference to the eventual fate of the Tangut state:

[Zhang] said, “[As a karmic consequence of your refusal to fight,] you will [in the future] turn back harmers of the teachings two times, but the third time you will not be able to turn them back,” and it is said that later, in Me nyag gha [i.e. the Tangut state], he turned back the Mongol army twice, but the third time could not turn it back.<sup>28</sup>

### 5. *Gyer and Grwa*

One of the specific conflicts where the opponents of the Tshal pa-s are characterized as “enemies of the [Buddhist] teachings” took place in the area of Grwa, which lies on the Gtsang po river, west of Bsam yas. The enemy here is referred to as the *Gyer pa*, or “the men from Gyer.” According to Sørensen and Hazod, Gyer (also Dgyer or Gye re) was a valley southwest of Lhasa—due west of Grwa—that had become a stronghold of the Gnyos clan,<sup>29</sup> so it is tempting, given what we know about the Gnyos activities around Lhasa, to see this as one incident in a continuing struggle between the Gnyos and Tshal pa-s for hegemony over Central Tibet. Perhaps “the men from Gyer” here refers to the “army of Dge bshes Gnyos” mentioned above in the section entitled “The Gnyos Clan.” As for the “enemies of the teachings” label, the Gnyos under Grags pa dpal, needless to say, were as Buddhist as the Tshal pa-s.

The encounter follows an interesting course of development. It begins with Zhang and a small group of monk-soldiers greatly outnumbered, faced off against an “army assembled from Kha rag below to ‘Ol kha above.” Kha rag, too, was a center of Gnyos family dominance (hence the clan designation “Kha rag Gnyos”), which lends further support to the hypothesis that the assembled forces may have been affiliated with the Gnyos. The stretch of land that runs from Kha rag to ‘Ol kha is enormous—it must cover nearly 200 kilometers of the Gtsang po river—so, even allowing for likely exaggeration, the line of troops must have been truly impressive. Lama Zhang's monk-soldiers were in a state approaching panic, “doubting they could turn back the army.”<sup>30</sup> It was at that time that Zhang, saying

<sup>28</sup> khyed kyi bstan pa la gnod pa lan gnyis bzlog nas lan gsum pa la mi bzlog pa 'dug gsungs nas/ phyis me nyag g+har hor gyi dmag lan gnyis bzlog pa la/ gsum pa de ma bzlog skad/. *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.164.

<sup>29</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.674, n.7.

<sup>30</sup> kha rag man chad 'ol kha yan chad kyi dmag 'tshogs pa la/ thams cad dmag kha ma thub kyis dogs nas zhed/. *Zin bris*, 58a.

to his troops, “You underestimate me!” settled into the meditative state known as “the equanimity-in-the-great-pacification *samādhi*,” then picked up a horse-whip and charged toward the enemy, waving the whip back and forth. His monks followed, shouting and waving, advancing without resistance. The mountains and valleys of the region of Grwa filled up with rainbows,<sup>31</sup> and the Gyer pa troops, filled with faith, gave up without a fight:

There was no loss of life, injury, or property damage. Not [considering each other as] enemies, faith arose in everyone, and the soldiers then went their separate ways, like guests after drinking cordial *chang*.<sup>32</sup>

## 6. *Yer pa*

One of the most sought-after building materials in medieval Tibet was juniper (*juniperus tibetica*), which was, according to André Alexander, “the preferred wood for inner chapels.”<sup>33</sup> There are a number of texts that hint at the struggles that must have taken place in the mid-twelfth century over access to the juniper forests of Central Tibet. Yer pa, east of Lhasa, seemed to have been a particularly desirable spot. In a text called *Talk on Compassion: A Jolt to the Mind*, written in either 1170 or 1182, Zhang begins a sentence of the colophon with the words, “in the year of the tiger, when we came to take the juniper of the central temple in Yer pa . . .”<sup>34</sup> It is not clear from this whether the Tshal pa-s meant to seize the juniper trees *belonging* to the central temple of Yer pa, or if they intended actually to disassemble the temple itself in order to take the valuable juniper framework of the inner chapel.

In the *Handwritten Biography*, we read that in 1187, when Tshal Gung thang was in the early stages of construction, there appeared at the construction site a great cloud of dust, which Zhang, in a vision, saw as the wrathful deity Mahākāla (Tib. *mgon po* or *nag po chen po*)—future protec-

<sup>31</sup> slob dpon gyi zhal nas khyed kyis nga la de las ma mthong ‘am ngas zhi ba chen po’i ting nge ‘dzin la mnyam par bzahag pas chog gsung nas/ phyag lcags g.yas g.yon du ya yo bya[s] pas/ dmag gi mi rnams de’i rjes su ‘brangs nas ‘gyer pa ji ltar ‘dod pa bzhin phebs/ gra’i ri [slungs] med par ‘ja’ yis gang/. *Zin bris*, 58a.

<sup>32</sup> shi rmas dang god choms med pas/ dgra zin med pa thams cad dad nas dmag gi mi rnams ‘gron po chang ‘thungs bzhin gyes/. *Zin bris*, 58a.

<sup>33</sup> Alexander 2005, 23. For example, the internal timber frame of the Jo khang temple, is, according to Alexander, made of juniper.

<sup>34</sup> stag gi lo la yer par dbu rtse’i shug pa ‘don du phyin tsa na. *Snying rje’i gtam blo brdeg*, Shedup IV.439–40.

tor of the monastery—in his form as Brag lha Mgon po. “If the teacher is building a temple,” said the protector, “then I offer you some juniper.”<sup>35</sup>

The juniper so generously “offered” by Mahākāla happened to be, once again, in the region of Yer pa, and the people of Yer pa were understandably less sanguine about their juniper being appropriated than the deity had been about offering it, so when Zhang and an army of monks arrived and began helping themselves to the trees that had been promised to them, the people of Yer pa resisted:

[Zhang] went to Yer pa, and obtained juniper from the local people. Because they gave [only] 28 [juniper trees], the teacher was not pleased. He said he wanted all of them, and when all [of the local people] rebelled and refused to give it, there was fighting.<sup>36</sup>

The particulars become vague at this point, but in the ensuing fracas, a member of Lama Zhang’s retinue was killed by a citizen of Yer pa, at which time Zhang performed a miracle of some sort with respect to the body—perhaps resurrecting it or turning into an offering object?<sup>37</sup>—which caused the people of Yer pa to withdraw in awe, offering him all of the juniper.

## II. “FIERCE ACTIVITIES”: THE QUESTION OF TANTRIC JUSTIFICATIONS

### A. *Vision and Violence*

Despite his violent reputation, these last two “fights” show fairly typical Zhang-style battlefield encounters—tense but relatively bloodless, and decided by a miraculous act from the great lama. Though he had long ago given up “evil magic” (*ngan byed*), he clearly was not averse to using his considerable powers—which had, after all, early in his life earned him the epithet “Great Magician from Central Tibet” (*dbu pa mthu chen*)—in the service of his political and military aims.

Besides magic, we see as well a distinctly tantric framing of military events. There is, for example, an account, in a biography of Ti shrī Ras pa,

<sup>35</sup> sa tshub rtsig byung/ bla mas gzigs par brag lha mgon pos slob dpon lha khang rtsig na shug pa ‘bul zer/. *Zin bris*, 54a.

<sup>36</sup> yer par byon nas yul mi la shug pa blangs pas/ nyi shu rtsa brgyad phul bas slob dpon ma dgyes par shug pa thams cad ‘dod zer bas thams cad kha log nas ma ster ‘khrug par song/. *Zin bris*, 54a.

<sup>37</sup> The Tibetan is “rten gyi phung po song,” meaning something like “the body was turned into an object of worship”(?). *Zin bris*, 54a.



of a battle the teen-aged Ti shrī participated in shortly after meeting Lama Zhang. This may or may not be the same battle reported by Kun dga' rdo rje and recounted above in “Some Sites of Fighting” where Ti shrī eventually refused to fight. But this one explicitly brings into the battle scene both *mahāmudrā* and blessings (*byin rlabs*):

When he reached his fifteenth year, he went to Zhang Rinpoche for a name. As he met up with him while he was engaged in battle, [Zhang] said to him “You must fight my battle!” He went into the battle lines, transporting stone projectiles and launching whirling-tipped [arrows?]; as a result victory was gained. Rinpoche said, “Whatever I do is nothing but *mahāmudrā*!” Immediately, [Ti-shrī Ras pa] entered a state of blessing.<sup>38</sup>

Similarly, the *Scholars' Feast Dharma History*, e.g., reports that:

Against those who were not united under his seals, [Zhang] performed fierce activities—going into battle, etc.—as a result of which there often occurred in his disciples, even on the battle lines, the arising of *mahāmudrā* realization; and Dpon Dar ma gzhon nu had a vision, on the battle lines, of [Cakra]saṃvara.<sup>39</sup>

The mention of “fierce activities” (*drag po'i phrin las*)<sup>40</sup> strikes an ominous chord here. The two battles described at the end of the last section above ended nonviolently. But there are other occasions on which Zhang used magic rituals to defeat enemies where it is not always clear that the battles were bloodless. One such encounter is set forth in the *Scholars' Feast Dharma History* as an illustration of Zhang's use of “fierce activities” on the battlefield,<sup>41</sup> and it is this use of distinctly tantric terminology to justify violent activities that has upset some commentators.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately,

<sup>38</sup> dgung lo bco lnga bzhes pa'i skabs mtshan du zhang rin po che mjal du byon/ 'khrugs pa mdzad pa dang mjal bas khyod kyis nga'i 'khrug pa byed dgos gsung/ khong 'khrug gral du byon nas rgyog rdo bskyal ba dang/ bsgul tog 'phan pa sogs mdzad pas 'khrugs pa rgyal ba dang/ rin po che nas ngas ji ltar byed kyang phyag rgya chen mo las mi 'da' gsungs nas de ma thag byin rlabs zhugs/. Text taken from, and translation adapted from, Sperling 1994. The text quoted is an unpublished contemporary biography of Ti shrī Ras pa by Ma-ti ratna entitled *Dpal ldan 'ba' rom bka' brgyud gyi rnam* [sic] *thar chos 'byung mdo' bsdus gsal byed sgron me*.

<sup>39</sup> rgya 'og tu mi 'du ba rnam la dmag g.yul ngo sogs drag po'i 'phrin las mdzad pas slob ma rnam la'ang 'khrug gral du phyag rgya chen po'i rtogs pa skyes pa mang du byung zhing dpon dar ma gzhon nus 'khrug gral du bde mchog zhal mthog, *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 808.

<sup>40</sup> *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 808. The term *phrin las* literally means “activities”; it is sometimes translated as “enlightened activities” in the Buddhist context to emphasize that the deeds in question are not ordinary actions—e.g., violent acts motivated by anger—but rather the skillful means of an enlightened mind.

<sup>41</sup> *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 808.

<sup>42</sup> See especially Davidson 2005, 329.

the description of this particular battle is abbreviated and cryptic in the extreme, and I have not seen it described elsewhere. Everything, from the identity of the opponents to the means used to defeat them, is murky, but from the tone and imagery of the description, and its contextualization as a “fierce activity,” it seems clear that—unlike the encounter with the Gyer pa-s at Grwa recounted above—this one did not end with the rival soldiers leaving the field together like *chang*-buddies after a night of drinking:

In Tshal, which was filled with tadpoles,<sup>43</sup> [Zhang] attached a rope to the two parts of a long forked tree. Tying it around his own neck, he made several knots and pulled it numerous times. The meadow turned a muddy red.

At that time, he said, “Today a great benefit has occurred,” and was delighted.<sup>44</sup>

Immediately following this admittedly difficult passage, as if to explain its import, the author writes:

The *siddha* O nyan pa said, “Although it is generally taught that [those who commit acts leading to rebirth in] the three lower states are ‘objects of liberation,’ fierce activities have not actually been practiced except by Virūpa in India and by Zhang Rinpoche in Tibet.”<sup>45</sup>

The specific reference here is to the controversial tantric doctrine of “liberation” (*sgrol ba*), according to which a bodhisattva, who has vowed to help all sentient beings, can justifiably kill (“liberate”) a person who belongs to any of ten categories of “objects of liberation” (*bsgral ba’i zhing bcu*). One of these “objects” is enemies of the Buddhist teachings.<sup>46</sup> Though it might look to an outsider like murder, the motivation for such an act would be compassion, not hatred, the wish to deliver the evildoer from rebirth in one of the three lower states.

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<sup>43</sup> tshal gyi na sbal ljong gis gang ba. I do not know what this means. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808. Perhaps *sbal ljong* should be construed as part of the name of the field rather than as a description of its contents?

<sup>44</sup> tshal gyi na sbal ljong gis gang ba de la shing ring po’i sna gnyis la thag pa btags/ de nyid kyi mgul la bzhes nas ‘drud pa mang du mdzad nas na kha dmar nyog gis song ba na de ring don chen po byung gsungs nas mnyes par mdzad/. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>45</sup> spyir ngan song gsum bsgral ba’i zhing du bshad kyang drag po’i ‘phrin las mngon sum du mdzad pa rgya gar du bir+wa pa dang bod du zhang rin po che las ma byung zhes grub thob o nyan pas gsung/. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

“O nyan pa” here is considered to be O rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230–1309), disciple of Rgod tshang pa Mgon po rdo rje (1189–1258), both prominent ‘Brug pa bka’ brgyud pa-s.

<sup>46</sup> See Meinert 2006, 121–24.

The clear implication here is that the ritual Zhang performed in the Tshal meadow, when the whole meadow went red, was a “liberation” rite of this sort, i.e. a ritual killing of persons seen to be “enemies of the teachings”—which, as we have seen above, might have come by that time to mean anyone who opposed his political designs. This would indeed be disturbing.

There is another text found in Zhang’s collected works that makes implicit reference to the “liberation” rite. This text is called *Biography: Praise to the Lama of the Three Realms*, the author of which wrote under the Sanskrit name Kirtipūṇya, whom Martin dates to the early fifteenth century.<sup>47</sup> The line in question reads:

I pay homage to you, who tamed the difficult-to-tame “ten objects” [*zhing bcu*].<sup>48</sup>

It seems pretty likely here that the phrase *zhing bcu*, “ten objects,” means “the ten objects of liberation,” the technical term used to refer to those ten classes of wrongdoers who can justifiably be killed in the “liberation” rite. If that is not completely clear from the context, there is another line later that would seem to confirm the sense, explicitly targeting one of those ten objects, “harmers of the teachings”:

In order to tame the difficult-to-tame harmers of the teachings,  
you have gone before Ye shes mgon po again and again,  
and, through great waves of activities, you rouse  
the holders of the teaching: I make prayers to you!<sup>49</sup>

The reference to “Ye shes mgon po,” a form of the wrathful tantric deity Mahākāla, the principal protector of Tshal Gung thang, makes clear this developing connection between Zhang’s tantric practices and the ideology of warfare that increasingly drove the Tshal pa-s. We have already seen the important role Mahākāla played in legitimizing Zhang’s seizure of juniper trees in Yer pa, and the vision Zhang had at that time was not his only Mahākāla vision. At the time that he sojourned in a dream through the body of Vajrayoginī (see Chapter One), before he had actually encountered the goddess, while searching for the land of Uddiyāna, he also encountered Ye shes mgon po. The different sources give slightly

<sup>47</sup> Private correspondence.

<sup>48</sup> *zhing bcu*’i gdul dka’ ‘dul la gsol ba ‘debs. ‘Gro mgon zhang gi rnam thar gsol ‘debs *srid gsum bla ma*, Shedup VI.100–01.

<sup>49</sup> *bstan la gnod byed gdul dka’ ‘dul ba yis/ ye shes mgon po yang yang mdun byon nas/ rlabs chen spyod pas bstan pa ‘dzin pa ru/ bskul bar mdzad la gus pas gsol ba ‘debs/*. ‘Gro mgon zhang gi rnam thar gsol ‘debs *srid gsum bla ma*, Shedup VI.101.

different versions of what he received from the deity. The *Scholars' Feast Dharma History* says that “he was given the *siddhi* of the four enlightened activities [*phrin las nnam bzhi*].”<sup>50</sup> These are traditionally held to be: (1) pacifying activities, (2) increasing activities, (3) overpowering activities, and (4) fierce activities,<sup>51</sup> the last of the four being, of course, the very activities that are in question here. The *Sealed Precepts* in Zhang's collected works is much more specific, saying Mahākāla initiated him into the “secret instructions on annihilation [of enemies],”<sup>52</sup> which the *Lho rong Dharma History* elaborates as “the *nine* instructions on annihilation [of enemies].”<sup>53</sup> And indeed, the closer we look at some of Zhang's darker activities, the more we see the looming shadow of Mahākāla.<sup>54</sup>

As recounted in Chapter Two above, Zhang received the Mahākāla teachings from his lama Rgwa lo tsā ba, acknowledged as one of the most important early transmitters of that tradition in Tibet. It is significant that Rgwa lo is also known to have inflicted a military defeat on some heretic (*mu stegs pa*) soldiers in India by manifesting as the three-eyed Heruka, a wrathful tantric deity.<sup>55</sup> The branch of the Mahākāla teachings in which Rgwa lo specialized was centered around “The Crow-Faced Dharma Protector” (*chos skyong bya rog can*),<sup>56</sup> a fierce protector with the face of a crow who is considered a form of Mahākāla. Rgwa lo is said to have subdued this fierce deity while meditating on Cakrasaṃvara in the Cool Grove charnel ground near Bodhgayā in India and forced it to do his bidding.<sup>57</sup> In one of Zhang's hymns of praise to Rgwa lo, he writes:

Mahākāla, the Crow-Faced One,  
The hosts of Mamo [goddesses] and flesh-eating *yakṣas*,  
Even the hosts of Dharma Protectors and Guardians,  
Came out to make offerings to you!<sup>58</sup>

<sup>50</sup> o nyan du 'byon bzhed pa na ye shes mgon pos phrin las bzhi'i dngos grub phul. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 807.

<sup>51</sup> zhi ba'i 'phrin las/ rgyas pa'i 'phrin las/ dbang gi 'phrin las/ drag po'i 'phrin las bzhi.

<sup>52</sup> tshar bcad pa'i man ngag. *Rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma*, Shedup VII.170.

<sup>53</sup> tshar gcod pa'i man dgu. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 194.

<sup>54</sup> See Sperling 1987 and Sperling 2004 for a discussion of the involvement of Ti shri Ras pa in “the cult of Mahākāla as a means toward worldly empowerment” (Sperling 2004, 5), which, Sperling argues, Ti shri inherited from Lama Zhang.

<sup>55</sup> mu stegs pa'i mi thams cad kyang der byung ste/ bla ma la dmag drangs pa dang/ bla ma ting nge 'dzin la bzhugs pas dmag thams cad kyes he ru ka spyen gsum par mthong nas bros so/. *Dpal chen po rgwa lo'i nnam thar*, Shedup I.195.

<sup>56</sup> *Rtsa ba'i bla la ma sna tshogs kyes 'thob byang*, Shedup I.307.

<sup>57</sup> Della Santina, 183–84.

<sup>58</sup> nag po chen po bya rog gdong/ ma mo gnod sbyin sha za'i tshogs/ chos skyong srung ma'i tshogs nams kyang/ khyed sku mchod pa'i phyr lhaags/. *Dpal la yan lag bdun gyi sgo nas bstod pa*, Shedup I.85.

There is, to this day, a statue of the Crow-Faced Dharma Protector in Tshal Gung thang monastery, in the chapel of the four-armed Mahākāla, and the “Crow-Faced One” (*bya rog gdong can*) seems to have played an important role in the framing of Zhang’s military exploits as “fierce activities.” There are occasional mentions, in accounts of Zhang’s rougher exploits, of a mysterious protector called “Wild-Yak Snout” (*’brong zhur*), a dog-like being<sup>59</sup> whom Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, in his biography of the Fifth Dalai Lama, calls “an emanation of the Crow-Faced One”:

[Zhang] made [Cakra]saṃvara his tutelary deity and the four-armed Ye shes mgon po [Mahākāla] his Dharma Protector. [Ye shes mgon po’s] attendant was an emanation of the Crow-Faced One, the white-chested black wild dog named Wild-Yak Snout. . . . Led by [Wild-Yak Snout], who assisted with and carried out Zhang’s activities, [Zhang] subdued through fierce means the wrongly contending classes [= “enemies of the teachings”], such as the ruler of Lcang rgyab and the ruler of Gdol po. . . . A small *stūpa* [to Wild-Yak Snout] was erected.<sup>60</sup>

The *stūpa* memorializing Wild-Yak Snout is recorded in the *Gung thang Register* as the “Sri-Spirit–Suppressing *Stūpa*” (*sri gnon mchod rten*), or more simply as the “Dog *Stūpa*” (*khyi ’bum*).<sup>61</sup> As for the subduing activities of this protector-dog, it is difficult to find other references within Zhang’s works, though there is an episode in the *Handwritten Biography* where Zhang is lost in a dust storm after a fight in Dol gyi mtha’ bzhi and is led to safety by Wild-Yak Snout. The same passage reports that when the dog died, “everyone agreed that rainbows touched the body of Wild-Yak Snout.”<sup>62</sup>

As further evidence of the increased mingling of tantra and war among the Tshal pa-s, the *Scholars’ Feast Dharma History* reports that “*mahāmudrā*

<sup>59</sup> It is actually more complicated than that. The term used is mgon khyi dom nag snying dkar, which Sørensen and translate as “White-chested Black Stray-Dog/Dog-Bear.” Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.272, n.798.

<sup>60</sup> yi dam bde mchog dang chos skyong ye shes mgon po phyag bzhi pa gtso bor mdzad cing/ de’i las mkhan bya rog gdong can gyi sprul pa mgon khyi dom nag snying dkar ming ‘brong zhur bya ba/ . . . zhang gi rogs dang phrin las sgrub pa zhig yod pa des sna drangs te lcang rgyab gtsang [sic] po dang gdol po gtsang [sic] po sogs log par ‘khu ba’i rigs drag po’i sgo nas btul/ . . . ’bum chung yang bzhengs/. *Kun mkhyen lnga pa chen po’i rnam thar du ku la’i gos bzang grangs brgya dgu pa*. Shedup VI.74–75. Also translated in Ahmad 1999, 187.

There is a near-verbatim passage in *Gung thang dkar chag*, 63a. See Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.272.

<sup>61</sup> *Gung thang dkar chag*, 63a. Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.272.

<sup>62</sup> *Zin bris*, 65b–66a.

realizations also occurred among [Zhang’s] disciples on the battle lines,”<sup>63</sup> and furthermore that his chief disciple and soon-to-become-successor, Dar ma gzhon nu, “had a vision, on the battle lines, of the face of [the tantric deity] Cakrasaṃvara.”<sup>64</sup>

Another wrathful deity who aided Zhang in his political-military endeavors—and who was also associated with Mahākāla<sup>65</sup>—was the principal protector of Lhasa and the Jo khang temple, the goddess Dpal ldan lha mo. We saw, in Chapter Two, the importance Zhang attached to the Dpal ldan lha mo practices and, in Chapter Four, the significant role Dpal ldan lha mo played—acting together with Grib Rdzong btsan and the Jo bo—in the resolution of the fighting at the Jo khang in 1160 and the subsequent assumption by Zhang of the administration of the temple.

There is an incident reported in the *Handwritten Biography* that brings together Dpal ldan lha mo, Mahākāla, and the Jo bo in a particularly spectacular fashion. The occasion, significantly, was a bout of self-doubt that came over Zhang after a particularly disturbing battle in Lhasa (involving the Rdos [Gdos?] pa, and possible some *klu* as well):

When [Zhang] was in his sleeping quarters at Tshal Yang dgon, he thought to himself, “Was I wrong? Have I let go of my *bodhicitta* [i.e. compassion], getting into fights?” and he examined [the issue] while in bed.

In the sky in front of him, Ye shes mgon po appeared, and spoke thus: “Do not harbor doubts or be of two minds about your *bodhicitta*. Offer *gtor mas* and make prayers to the [Three] Jewels. Do not forget your past [life] generation of *bodhicitta*. Also, remember the words of the lama!”

He was thinking, “Now, what should I do?” and at that time he invited into his presence Dpal [ldan] lha mo. He made prayers to the two Jo bo-s.

In particular, when he was making prayers at the [Lhasa] ‘Phrul snang that day, a great army was assembled, and with [Dpal ldan] lha mo taking the reins, they circumambulated [the Jo khang] three times.

[Zhang] emerged from within rainbows and light, held in the arms of the Jo bo, and said, “Jo bo, am I self-centered or not?” and light rays issued from the heart of the Jo bo. Everyone saw them emanate back and forth [between the two of them]. Then, the many rays of light that emanated from the heart remained for a long time. At that time, the whole inside and outside of the temple were filled with light.

<sup>63</sup> slob ma rnam la’ang ‘khrug gral du phyag rgya che po’i rtogs pa skyes pa mang du byung. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>64</sup> dpon dar ma gzhon nus ‘khrug gral du bde mchog zhal mthong. *Mkhas pa’i dga’ ston*, 808.

<sup>65</sup> Until recently, her statue stood in the Mahākāla chapel of Tshal Gung thang.

Then, the whole assembly meditated together, and everyone was as happy as if they had perfected the four empowerments. Everyone had generated great faith, saying they were as happy as if they had done a full year meditation retreat.<sup>66</sup>

Some context would help here. Was a real army assembled around the Jo khang temple or was it part of Lama Zhang's vision? What was the point of the theatrical military circumambulation? Who was the intended audience? Even without knowing the particulars, however, we can say that this spectacle demonstrates in a very dramatic fashion the role the tantric triad of Jo bo, Mahākāla, and Dpal lhan lha mo played in the legitimizing discourse of "fierce activity" that wove the disparate strands of Zhang's political and religious life together into a unified narrative fabric. The fact that the whole thing is occasioned by Lama Zhang's doubts about the apparent contradiction between the bodhisattva ideal and his military activities also seems particularly significant. By this time, as we shall see below, strong criticisms of Zhang's behavior were being voiced by some of his contemporaries, and the whole narrative unfolding of the episode—its cathartic movement from self-doubt, through visionary experience, divine intervention, and public spectacle, and its conclusion in a grand reconciliation scene, a moment of unity and faith—works perfectly as a kind of ritual-discursive healing of what must have been a genuine social rift.

### B. *Lama Zhang as a Virtual Object*

One problem in dealing with areas of history where the evidence is relatively scarce is that there is an eagerness to pounce on any bit of information that seems relevant to the inquiry at hand. And this has its dangers.

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<sup>66</sup> 'tshal gyi yang dgon gyi gzims mal na bzhugs pa'i dus su/ nga'i byang chub kyi sems kha thal nas 'khrug pa byed pa 'di nor raM snyam nas gzhiq mal byas pas/ mdun gyi nam mkha' la ye shes kyi ngon po byon nas 'di skad gsung/ byang chub kyi sems kyi spyod pa la yid gnyis dang the tshom ma za bar/ gtor ma gtong pa dang/ dkon mchog la gsol ba thob sngon sems bskyed pa ma brjed par bgyis/ bla ma'i gsung yang dran par gyis gsung/ da gang tsug bya snyam pa'i dus su/ dpal lha mo spyang 'dren du byung/ jo bo rnam gnyis la gsol ba 'debs su byon/ khyad par du 'phrul snang du gsol ba 'debs pa'i dus su/ de'i nyin mo dmag mo che 'tshogs pasa yod pa la lha mos chibs kha byas nas skor ba lan gsum byas/ 'ja' dang 'od kyi gseb de'i nang du byon nas jo bo'i phyag nas 'jus nas/ jo bo nga la rang 'dod 'dug gaM mi 'dug gzigs shig gsungsa pa dang/ jo bo'i thugs kha nas 'od zer byung nas/ phar 'phros tshur 'phros byed pa thams cad kyis mthong/ de nas thugs kha nas 'od shar ba de da rung du ma yal bar bzhugs/ de'i dus su lha khang phyi nang thams cad 'od kyis gang/ der 'tshogs pa thams cad sgom du phril la song pas/ thams cad la dbang bzhi rdzogs ste thob pa bas kyang dga'/ lo re 'tshams bcad nas bsgoms pa bas kyang dga' zer nas thams cad dad/. *Zin bris*, 54b–55a.



I myself was quick to seize on this material on tantra and violence—thinking it perhaps the key to unraveling the mysteries of Zhang's politico-religious synthesis—until I began to notice a discrepancy in tone between the different sources I was consulting. References to "liberation" (*sgrol ba*) and "fierce" (*drag po*) practices turned up often in the later accounts, but the earlier the accounts, the less of this material there seemed to be.

To give an example, consider the issue of "fierce activity" (*drag po'i phrin las*). The sources where this term is applied to Lama Zhang's conduct almost invariably post-date Zhang's era by several hundred years. It is, above all, in Kirtipunya's biography of Zhang (fifteenth century), Dpa' bo Gtsug lag phreng ba's *Scholars' Feast Dharma History* (sixteenth century), and Sde srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's biography of the Fifth Dalai Lama (seventeenth century) that we see explicit use of the tantric vocabulary of "fierce activity."<sup>67</sup>

When we look for this vocabulary in the works of Zhang and his immediate disciples, however, we find a rather different situation. Consider, for example, the above-referenced battle at Gdos, where there were catapult fights. The battle seems to be going in the Gdos pa-s' favor, and Zhang's men explicitly appeal for "fierce activities," which Zhang categorically refuses:

Still, it is said that the fighting was not pacified, and there were catapult [or sling] battles. The retinue, disciples, and patrons said, "We are in a fight, and the teacher should pray now to the Dharma protectors to perform fierce deeds [*drag po'i las*]."

[Zhang] Rinpoche said, "I will not ask the Dharma protectors for fierce deeds! We must tame them by means of *bodhicitta*. We must pray to the lamas and the [Three] Jewels [rather than to the Dharma protectors]. If I petition the Dharma protectors, then they will surely take care of the patrons and us only in this life. I already told you how it would be with regard to the Dharma protectors!"<sup>68</sup>

At another point earlier in the same work, he also explicitly forswears the use of fierce means to destroy enemies. This occurs immediately following

<sup>67</sup> It is true that Gtsug lag phreng ba quotes O rgyan pa Rin chen dpal (1230–1309), but even he lived over a hundred years after Zhang, and in radically changed circumstances (the time of Tibet's incorporation into the Mongol empire).

<sup>68</sup> khrug pa ma zhi bar sgyogs 'khrug byung skad/ 'khor slob yon bdag rnam na re/ 'khrug pa 'di tsam byed pa la da res drag po'i las bya ba'i phyir slob dpon gyis chos skyong la gsol ba 'debs thang zer ba la/ rin po che'i zhal nas nga chos skyong la drag po'i las mi zhu/ byang chub kyi sems kyis 'dul dgos pa yin/ bla ma dang dkon mchog la gsol ba 'debs dgos pa yin/ chos skyong la gsol ba btab na kho yon bdag pa la tshe 'di [la] rjes su 'dzin nges pa yin te rtsa na chos skyong la ji skad zer gsung. *Zin bris*, 55a–55b.



that transforming event described in Chapter One where, in the middle of a magic retreat, he suddenly destroyed all of the ritual implements and overturned the bowls of blood from sacrificed animals:

[I said,] “From today, even if I die of hunger or freeze to death, I will refrain from these actions [i.e., using magic to destroy enemies]. I vow to do only what is true Dharma...” From that time on up to the present, I have never prayed to the Dharma protectors for the purpose of conquering enemies.<sup>69</sup>

It is important not to collapse our sources into a single homogeneous “tradition.” A few hundred years is a long time: political-religious circumstances change, interests change, agendas change. It is not really in the scope of this work to look at Zhang’s posthumous career, but we might note that, because of his role as a ruler of Lhasa and his ties to the Jo bo and the Lhasa ‘Phrul snang, it became, in later centuries, entirely standard for aspiring hegemonies of Lhasa to add Lama Zhang to their list of past incarnations. The most prominent, of course, was the Fifth Dalai Lama, but even the Third Dalai Lama is reported, when he was only three years old, to have “pressed the ends of his eyes with the fingers of his hands and acknowledged (that he had been Zhang Rin-po-che) by saying, ‘I was like this when I was Lama Zhang.’”<sup>70</sup> It should go without saying that there would, within the Dge lugs pa order of the Dalai Lamas, be ample reason to wish for a reconciliation between political-military realities and religious ideals, and the tantric legitimization of violence apparently served that purpose quite efficiently.

We might note in this regard a pointed observation made by Bernard Faure in his treatment of the construction of Chan lineages in medieval China:

Significantly, most founders have a very dim historical existence. Most of the Buddhist schools start in relative obscurity and are organized by a second- or third-generation successor, who, I would argue, is in most cases the real founder. The first patriarch is retrospectively promoted to his honorific rank in order to give more legitimacy to the new school.<sup>71</sup>

While it is certainly not the case that Lama Zhang has a “very dim historical existence,” we nonetheless have to remain aware of the extent to which “Lama Zhang, Founder Of The Tshal Pa Bka’ Brgyud Pa School” is

<sup>69</sup> de ring la ltogs dri ‘khyags drir shi yang bya ba gtong/ chos bsha’ gcig mi byed/... de nas bzung ste tha ma da la thug gi bar du dgra la rbad pa’i ched du chos skyong la gsol ba ‘debs ma myong/. *Zin bris*, 10b–11a.

<sup>70</sup> Ahmad 1999, 186.

<sup>71</sup> Faure 1986, 197. Cf. Matthew Kapstein’s similar observations on Padmasambhava in Chapter Four, footnote 42, above.

the construct of a later tradition. Faure calls such phantom First Patriarchs "virtual objects."<sup>72</sup> "Their purpose," he writes, "is largely ideological."<sup>73</sup>

Even by the time of Lama Zhang's great biographer Tshal pa Kun dga' rdo rje (fourteenth century), this process of virtualization was well underway. If we look, for example, at Kun dga' rdo rje's account of Zhang's years of practicing "evil magic," we can see how different it is from Zhang's and his immediate disciples' earlier versions:

He indeed became known widely as "the Great Magician of Central Tibet." By the force of karmic predispositions from practicing fierce activities [*drag po'i phrin las*] in past lives, he protected the teachings by means of wrathful compassion [*thugs rje khros pa*], but aside from this, he did not gain power by means of harmful thoughts or harmful actions.<sup>74</sup>

While in the early accounts—e.g., that of Zhang's disciple Nam mkha' 'od—Zhang, like Mi la ras pa, explicitly repented of his old life as "the Great Magician of Central Tibet," with its animal sacrifices and its destruction of enemies through immoral magic, already Kun dga' rdo rje is retrospectively framing this same conduct in terms of the Buddhist tantric notion of "fierce activities."

This is not to say there were not attempts by Zhang and his immediate disciples to cast some of his more questionable actions in tantric terms, but these were not nearly so blatant as the later apologetic constructs, and we need to keep the difference in mind and not treat all of the accounts of Zhang's life as if they issued from a single self-consistent source.

### III. VOICES AGAINST LAMA ZHANG

#### A. "Eulogizing" Lama Zhang

It is interesting that many of the extant writings on Lama Zhang give a distinctively positive—perhaps for a modern sensibility, *disturbingly* positive—spin on events toward which ambivalence might seem a healthier response. Surely part of this has to do with the "history-is-written-by-the-winners" effect: it cannot have hurt that the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, for example, was a major booster of Lama Zhang's reputation.

<sup>72</sup> Faure 1986, 197.

<sup>73</sup> Faure 1986, 198.

<sup>74</sup> dbus pa mthu chen zhes pa'i grags pa chen po byung mod kyi/ sku tshe snga mar drag po'i phrin las sgrub pa'i bag chags kyi dbang gis thugs rje khros pas bstan pa bsrung ba ma gtogs/ gnod sems dang gnod pa'i las mnga' ba ni ma yin no/. *Rnam thar bsdu pa*, Shedup VI.118–19.

But still there were dissenting voices within his own time. In the course of putting Lhasa under the control of himself and his armed monks, Zhang appears, not surprisingly, to have made many enemies. The most natural enemies would have been the ruling members of the 'Bring religious settlements and the Gnyos clan, who, according to Vitali, and Sørensen and Hazod, were rapidly losing their power to the Tshal pa-s in the last quarter of Zhang's lifetime. Other possible opponents would have been the unidentified communities of the "four districts of Lhasa," those groups whose fighting left parts of Lhasa in ruins before Zhang assumed control.

But there are also some tantalizing hints about possible intrigues *within* the Tshal pa camp. We saw above, for example, how the great Ti shñi Ras pa, despite his respect for Zhang as a teacher, balked at participating in his more extreme military adventures, and there could very easily have been others who were becoming uneasy with the escalation of violent activities—not to mention those who wanted his power for themselves. And at one point, Zhang remarks to his disciple Nam mkha' 'od (author of the *Handwritten Biography*) that "There's a greater story of my life that you don't know about." When asked to elaborate, he says:

I do not hide anything... I have engaged so many enemies in battle, but by the compassion of my teacher, and because I do not cling to [the things of] this life, I think [of my enemies] as my father and mother, and make no distinction [between parents and enemies]. Even if all of my enemies are among my disciples, I will not refuse to give empowerments. This is the greater story of my life.<sup>75</sup>

The idea that there could have been enemies in his monasteries, whom he nevertheless still recognized as disciples, and to whom he continued to give initiations, is an intriguing one. Unfortunately, besides this passage, I have seen nothing that refers explicitly to such a problem.

There are, however, a couple of very unusual texts to found in his collected works that are suggestive in this regard, albeit deeply baffling. By virtue of their titles, as well as their content, they would seem to belong together. The first is called *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyang khri mchog*<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> nga'i nram thar che ba cig yod te khyod kyis ma go bar 'dug gsung/ de gsung par zhu dang byas pas ngas gsangs pa med gsung/ de gang lags zhus pas/ ngas 'khrug pa de tsam gcig byas pa'i dgra thams cad slob dpon gyi thugs rjes tshe 'di la ma zin pa ma dgongs nas bstan dang glag mda' lha chung pas med/ dgra thams cad slob ma'i nang nas kyang ngas dbang ma bskur ba med pa 'di yin/ nga'i nram thar che ba yin gsung/. *Zin bris*, 67b–68a.

<sup>76</sup> *Phyang khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.598–604.

The title of this text in some collections is simply *Phyang khri mchog ma*. However, in one case—a four-volume private collection from Lhasa (in the possession of Dan Martin)—the

and the second *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*.<sup>77</sup> Both of them, despite the self-critical element, are, oddly enough, also styled as “eulogies” (*bstod pa*). The generic label is significant, given the importance of the eulogy in Zhang’s work in general—a point given detailed treatment in Chapter Three above. But these two texts are unlike any other eulogies I have ever seen. First of all, the term “self-criticism” in the titles

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title is *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel ‘dod*, and in the table of contents of the Shedup *Collected Works* it is listed as *Phyag khri mchog gi[s] zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*. Unfortunately, I do not have access to the collections from which the Kathmandu editors worked, so I cannot be certain as to the title’s provenance. However, I provisionally favor the title *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri mchog* (*Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*), since it is an exact parallel to that of the other text in question here—*Gu rub ri bo skyid kyis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.657–65—placing the two works in the same rough category, which would in turn offer clues as to their reading, as well as to the identities of the requestors, *Phyag khri mchog* and *Gu rub re bo skyid*.

Giving the text such a title would also place it in a class with numerous others listed in the collected works whose titles follow the formula:

[type of text] requested by [name of requestor]

—for example, “[Instructions on] the *gtor ma* Practice Requested by Dwags po ‘Dul ‘dzin” (*Dwags po ‘dul ‘dzin gyis zhus pa’i gtor ma’i lag len*, Shedup I.557–88). Other examples of titles in this format include the following: *Khams ston blo gros rdo rjes zhus pa’i zung ‘jug gi don phyin ci ma log pa*, Shedup III.319–29; *Dge bshes sha mi dang/ dge bshes grwa pa dang/ gtsang pa jo btsun la sogs pas zhus pa’i nyams myong gi gleng slong ring mo*, Shedup III.497–513; *Dge bshes jo sras dar ma seng+ges zhus pa’i lang ‘bras bu dang bcas pa’i mchid tshig lhug pa sa bcad dang bcas pa*, Shedup IV.30–78; *Rig pa dang rkang par ldan pa zhes bya ba sum ston rdo rje snying pos zhus pa*, Shedup V.148–59; *Dpon dwags po sgom pa la zhang rin po ches zhus pa’i zhus lan*, V.282–91; and *Yang dar ma gzhon nus zhus pa*, Shedup VII.38–76.

Here the subgenre would be works where [name of requestor] would be filled in with the name of a sponsor—an intriguing category, to say the least, particularly in what it might eventually reveal about patron-relationships of the period.

<sup>77</sup> *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.657–665.

The term *khrel ‘debs* is translated here as “self-criticism,” an admission of one’s own faults or shortcomings. This is not the only possible meaning of the term, and its multivalence only complicates the interpretation of these two already very difficult works. According to Goldstein 2001, *khrel* as a noun means “modesty” or “shame”; as a verb it means “to ridicule.” Related terms include, e.g., *khrel rgod*, “jeering, ridiculing, making fun of, sarcasm,” and *khrel med*, “shameless, immodest, brazen, contemptible.” *Khrel ‘debs* or *khrel btab* means “to recount/list/accuse sb. of faults or mistakes.” This could mean accusations against oneself or against others. I believe in this case it means self-accusations, or admissions of one’s own shortcomings. This reflexive element is made quite clear in the colophon to the *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, which uses the term *rang la rang gis khrel btab*, which literally means “listing of faults by oneself with regard to oneself,” i.e. self-criticism. In fact, in the Fifth Dalai Lama’s listing of Zhang’s works, the title given for this piece actually incorporates the “by oneself with regard to oneself” phrasing: *Gu rub re ba [sic] skyid kyis zhus pa’i rang gis rang khrel ma*. 5DL *Gsan yig*, II.95.

Since the use of the term *khrel ‘debs* in the titles of both of the works is identical, I take the term also to mean “self-criticism” in the title of the *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*.

introduces a self-reflexive dimension not ordinarily present in a eulogy: they are about *himself*, not someone else. Secondly, one might almost call them “anti-eulogies” (“mallogies”?), for they are works of damnation, not praise. And finally, the issues of *voice* they raise are complex: it is not always clear to what extent they are intended to be read as ironic or humorous pieces. However we ultimately choose to read them, these two texts offer indirect evidence of the controversies that surrounded Zhang’s leadership and the manifold accusations that came at him from as-yet-unidentified sources.

### 1. *The Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog*

The *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri mchog* is subtitled “*Wicked Death, Wicked Corpse*: A Eulogy from a Standpoint of Total Contempt [Requested] by Phyag khri mchog of Brang mda’ to Lama Zhang at the Chos skor grwa thang [of Tshal].”<sup>78</sup> Phyag khri mchog, like Rgyal ba ‘byung gnas (see the section in Chapter Four above titled “Mgar clan”), appears in both the *Red Annals* and the *Concise Biography* as one of Zhang’s “great [spiritual] sons who accomplished enlightened activities”<sup>79</sup>—which, as discussed above, refers in general to patrons and other political-financial supporters.<sup>80</sup> “Brang mda’” is the name of the area of present-day Stod lung bde chen where, presumably, this patron lived.<sup>81</sup>

If we construe the title as *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri mchog*, the text would appear to be occasioned by a request from the patron Phyag khri mchog for a piece expressing culpability for some wrongdoing. We will see below that the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* was also written at the request of a patron. Why Zhang’s lay sponsors should have asked for works of self-criticism from their religious master is unclear. We have seen throughout this chapter the important roles

<sup>78</sup> bla ma zhang la brang mda’i phyag khri mchog gis/ chos skor grwa thang du shin tu brnyas bcos kyi sgo nas bstod pa/ shi ngan ro ngan zhes bya ba’o/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.598–604. Following the reasoning set forth in footnotes 76 and 77 above, I read an implicit “requested” (*zhus pa*) into the subtitle here. Without the implied *zhus pa*, the correct translation of the subtitle would be “A Eulogy to Lama Zhang by Phyag khri mchog of Brang mda’ from a Standpoint of Total Contempt, [Composed] at the Chos skor grwa thang [of Tshal].” This would support a reading of the work as that of Phyag khri mchog, not Lama Zhang. A plausible case might be made for this reading, but it is not the one I favor.

<sup>79</sup> phrin las sgrub pa’i bu chen. *Deb ther dmar po*, 123; *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.169–70 (in this work, his name is spelled “Chag khri mchog”).

<sup>80</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.40.

<sup>81</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.694, n.2.

Zhang's patrons began to play once he became active in the "worldly" sphere. We also know that, from the time he was ordained in Khams, he resented the intrusions of patrons vying for his spiritual powers and gifts. Perhaps these difficult works in some way reflect this tense relationship with patrons. Whatever that relationship might have been in these particular instances, there is, in Zhang's other works, precedent for such admissions of wrongdoing, and there is at least one other work that is labeled a "self-criticism." This is called *The Little Song of the Self-Criticism of Beggar-Monk Zhang*.<sup>82</sup>

Faithless,  
taking pleasure in sins,  
[facing] birth in the hells:  
at the moment of death, great remorse over this shame.

Much activity,  
great worry,  
bad attitude:  
great remorse over this pointless activity.

Arrogant because of learning,  
taking pleasure in [mere] words,  
no [lamas'] instructions:  
great remorse over the appearance of this demon pride. . .

Small perseverance,  
lazy brain,  
great pretense:  
great remorse over this lack of heart.

Attached to objects of sense,  
great desire,  
lacking self-power:  
great remorse over corrupted vows.

Beggar-monk Zhang,  
acquainted with people,  
makes a declaration:  
great remorse over being carried away by demons. . .<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> sprang ban zhang gi khrel 'debs kyi glu chung blangs pa.

<sup>83</sup> dad pa med/ sdig la dga'/ dmyal bar skye/ 'chi khar 'gyod pa 'di gyong re che/ bya brel mang/ sems khral che/ kun slong ngan/ byas pa don med 'di gyong re che/ thos pas khengs/ tshig la dga'/ man ngag med/ rlom pa'i bdud langs pa 'di gyong re che/ . . . snying rus chung/ klad pa sla/ ngo srung che/ rang mdo med pa 'di gyong re che/ yul dang nye/ 'dod chags che/ rang dbang med/ sdom pa nyams pa 'di gyong re che/ sprang ban zhang/ mi dang 'dris/ sgrog tu tshud/ bdud kyi khyer ba 'di gyong re che/ . . . sprang ban zhang gi sems la 'gyod pa'i glu chung/. *Gsang sngags lag len gyi mgur nyi shu/ bcu drug pa*, Shedup V.539-41.

The voice of this self-critical song is not so unusual to those familiar with Buddhist liturgical literature. It in fact bears a fairly strong resemblance to well-known Buddhist confessional prayers (*ltung bshags*), offering a sort of generalized litany of spiritual and ethical shortcomings that, though articulated from a first-person perspective, is not especially personal in tone or specific as to misconduct. But it is the sort of work we might expect in response to a request for a self-criticism.

But what we find in the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog* is quite different from the conventionalized declarations of fault of the *Little Song*. There are, to be sure, verses that, like the confession prayers, enumerate fairly generalized faults:

Beggar-monk Zhang, carried away by the demon of laziness:  
where is it taught that virtue is attained through laziness?  
Look at the bad results laziness produces!<sup>84</sup>

But even so, there are significant differences, the most glaring being that the voice is in the *second* rather than the first person, the author assuming the persona of a hostile outside party directing accusations at Lama Zhang. Which immediately raises the question: who is doing the accusing? Who is the speaker here?

Whoever it is is looking for more than just generalized faults. Some verses move far beyond the convention-bound confession format, assuming a quite specific and scathing form:

Beggar-monk Zhang, what haven't you done?  
When you first became a great meditator, you practiced pure renunciation,  
but, it is clear that, having grown old, you have given it all up for the sake  
of a livelihood, for wealth, etc.<sup>85</sup>

Many of the criticisms are in this vein, accusing Zhang of a "worldliness" inconsistent with his monk vows:

Scripture, reasoning, and all of the lamas' instructions say to give up  
worldly activities.  
But your [worldly] activities exceed even those of a householder! . . .  
Great meditator who has everything he needs, shame on you!<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> le lo bdud kyi khyer ba'i sprang ban zhang/ le los yon tan thob par ga nas bshad/ le los 'bras bu ngan pa 'byin la ltos/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.599.

<sup>85</sup> zhang gi sprang ban khyod kyi ci ma byas/ sgom chen gsar pa'i dus su spong dag byas/ na so rgas nas 'tsho bas bor dogs nas/ longs spyod shi sog byed la mngon sum gzigs/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.600.

<sup>86</sup> lung rigs bla ma'i gdams ngag mtha' dag nas/ 'jig rten bya ba btang bar gsungs pa la/ bya ba khyim pa bas kyang che bar spel/ . . . mi mkho dgu mkho'i sgom chen khyod la khrel/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.600.



Most interesting, though, are the references to Zhang’s policing and military activities:

Great meditator who tears down forts,  
Who plunders whatever he wants, wherever he wants—horses, armor,  
scriptures, etc.  
Day and night you prepare for the battle—[gathering] personnel, armor,  
weapons, troops, etc.<sup>87</sup>

Clearly, this is not the voice of someone who held Zhang in high esteem. Because of this, some commentators have postulated a hostile outside party named Phyag khri mchog as the accuser here. Jackson, e.g., referring to the text as “verses of criticism,” suggests the writer may have been a member of the homonymous Chag clan, which had in the eleventh and twelfth centuries produced several masters within the Bka’ gdams pa order.<sup>88</sup> Martin likewise attributes the verses to an outsider, calling them verses of “obvious rancor.”<sup>89</sup>

There is much to be said for this view, and the evidence is so scant and contradictory that it certainly should not be ruled out as a possible reading. I, however, would like to advance a different reading, one in which the likely author of the piece was Zhang himself, not Phyag khri mchog, and in which the latter was the requestor, not the accusing party, and furthermore was not a Bka’ gdams pa or other outsider but a disciple and patron of Zhang. My reasons for believing this are as follows:

1. I read the term *khrel* ‘debs here—by analogy with its use in the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* and *The Little Song*—reflexively, indicating a work written about one’s own shortcomings, not those of someone else.<sup>90</sup>
2. The phrasing of the title is exactly parallel to that of the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*—i.e. “Self-Criticism Requested by [name of patron]”<sup>91</sup>—and in that work Zhang is explicitly identified as author.

<sup>87</sup> sgom chen yul mkhar sgyel zhing rta khrab gsung rab sogs/ gang na dgos dgu gnad dgu ‘phrog par byed/ skye bo go cha mtshon cha dmag dpung sogs/ nyin med mtshan med ‘khrug pa’i shom las byed/ sgom chen ‘khrug dpon byed pa su yi lugs/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa’i khrel* ‘debs, Shedup V.602.

<sup>88</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 65, n.149.

<sup>89</sup> Martin 1996a, 65.

<sup>90</sup> See footnote 77 above, which gives my argument for reading *khrel* ‘debs reflexively.

<sup>91</sup> Note that I read the sixth case *gi* in *Phyag khri mchog gi[s] zhus pa’i khrel* ‘debs in the Shedup edition as an error. Turning *gi* into the third case *gis* makes the title parallel *Gu rub re bo skyid kyi zhus pa’i khrel* ‘debs exactly, which makes better sense.



3. The *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* shows, in addition, that it was within Zhang's rhetorical repertory to employ the second-person narrative mode to level accusations at himself, in which case the presence of that mode does not necessarily indicate an author other than Zhang.
4. Zhang had a disciple/sponsor by the name of Phyag khri mchog. Unless there is a very strong reason to believe there was another contemporary by this name who might have offered such criticisms—which, so far as I can see, there is not—then he would be the logical first choice as the person after whom the piece was named.
5. The work was, according to the colophon, requested at the Chos skor grwa thang at Tshal,<sup>92</sup> where, as recorded in various other colophons, many of the retreat-based exchanges between Zhang and his disciples took place.<sup>93</sup> If Phyag khri mchog were a Bka' gdams pa opponent, there is no reason he would be in retreat at the Chos skor grwa thang.
6. The work is found in every edition of Zhang's collected writings. It is difficult to see why a work written by someone outside of the circle of the Tshal pa-s that offered harsh criticism of Lama Zhang would be retained in a canonical collection of Zhang's writings. Thus, for example, the best-known criticisms of Zhang were written by Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan in the above-mentioned work, *The Three Vows*,<sup>94</sup> but this would surely not be a reason to include excerpts from that work in Zhang's collected works; indeed, it would be very odd if something like that were to happen.

It should be noted, however, that there is one passage that suggests the opposite conclusion, offering a counter-case for the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog* having been written by someone other than Lama Zhang, and that is a comment by the Fifth Dalai Lama in his listing of Lama Zhang's works. There, the Great Fifth wrote:

<sup>92</sup> bla ma zhang la brang mda'i phyag khri mchog gis/ chos skor grwa thang du shin tu brnyas bcos kyi sgo nas bstod pa/ shi ngan ro ngan zhes bya ba'o/. *Phyag khri mchog gis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.604.

<sup>93</sup> Other works written or requested at the Chos skor grwa thang include: *Gsol 'debs chen mo gnad du skyol ba'i rdo rje*, Shedup I.49–53; *Nyid la nyid kyi bstod pa dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.108–111; *Don gtan la 'bebs par byed pa phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II.297–650; *Yon tan rtsal mchog*, Shedup IV.212–36; and *Lhan skyes kyi bstod pa gnyis*, Shedup VI.610–11.

<sup>94</sup> *Sdom gsum rab dbye* (Rhoton 2002).

This [text] does not appear in the table of contents, and though *it is not spoken*, it is the custom to give a textual empowerment.<sup>95</sup>

The problem here is how to interpret the phrase “it is not spoken.” One interpretation would be to read it as “it is not Lama Zhang’s words.” This is certainly a plausible reading, but the other considerations I have enumerated weigh against it, and we must look forward to future textual work being done in this area to clear up some of the uncertainties. A reading of the text as written by someone other than Zhang would have to be part of an extended argument that took into account all of the issues I raise here and that offered an alternate interpretation of the work as a whole.

## 2. *The Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*

The other work under consideration, the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*, is quite similar, both in form and in content, consisting also in a string of fierce denunciations delivered from a second-person standpoint:

Having sworn to be a religious practitioner, you engaged in all sorts of nonreligious actions.

Having sworn to be a meditator, you let every sort of distraction grow.

Having sworn to be a mountain-dweller, you bound yourself to the city.

Having sworn to be a monk, you performed all sorts of contrary actions.

Having sworn off attachments, you accumulated possessions of every sort.

Hypocritical pundit! I will not bow down to you!<sup>96</sup>

We see here the same accusations of worldliness, though the accusing voice is rather more harsh than that of the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog*. One thing that is notably different from the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog* is that we do *not* see mention of military activities. The bulk of the material concerns only Zhang’s shortcomings as a spiritual practitioner: his laziness, his worldliness, his ethical lapses. There are, however, some interesting passages that question the nature of the actual practices he taught, suggesting they were somehow not standard Buddhist practices:

<sup>95</sup> ‘di dkar chag na mi snang zhing **gsung min** kyang lung mdzad srol ‘dug. *5DL Gsan yig*, II.94b.

<sup>96</sup> chos par khas blangs chos min sna tshogs byed/ sgom par khas blangs g.yeng ba ci ‘phel byed/ ri par khas blangs grong khyer thags su ‘thag/ btsun par khas blangs ‘gal ba sna tshogs byed/ chags med khas blangs yo byad ci ‘tshogs byed/ tshul ‘chos mkhan po khyod la phyag mi ‘tshal/. *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.658–59.

Where does it say that a monk can dance and sing?  
 Whose tradition is it to speak but have nothing come out of your mouth?  
 Where is it taught that you can act however you please without forethought?  
 Is that the religious tradition of fully ordained monks?<sup>97</sup>

These lines seem to refer to antinomian *siddha*-style practices considered to fall outside of the mainstream of institutional Buddhist monasticism (but see also the discussion of skillful rhetorical means in Chapter Two above, the section entitled “Style and Means”).

The “A–B” stanza form of the classical eulogy has already been discussed in Chapter Three above, and we should take note here of the lively manner in which the conventions of eulogy—for example, the standard “B” section refrain of “I bow down to you!”—are turned on their heads with extravagant hyperbole and converted into their opposites, creating an effect that verges on hysteria:

O perverted spiritual teacher! I will not bow down to you!  
 O ill-mannered monk! I will not bow down to you!  
 O tree of poison! I will not bow down to you!  
 O white on the outside, black on the inside! I will not bow down to you!  
 O disgrace to religious practitioners! I will not bow down to you!<sup>98</sup>

The traditional form here is preserved, but in a twisted and ironic fashion. This reflexive awareness of literary convention, and willingness to play with it, is, as we saw in Chapter Three, a strong trait of Zhang’s literary style.

What the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* offers that is most conspicuously absent from the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog*, however, is an explicit identification of the author:

Eulogy to himself, the teacher Lama Zhang, from the standpoint of extreme wonder, by the teacher Lama Zhang.<sup>99</sup>

Implicitly acknowledging the oddity of this self-characterization—why would someone write a eulogy to himself?—the colophon explains the occasion of its composition:

<sup>97</sup> dge slong glu len bro rdung gang nas bshad/ kha nas ci min smra ba su yi lugs/ ‘dod pa bag med spyod pa gang nas gsungs/ rab tu byung ba’i chos lugs de yin nam/. *Gu rub re bo skyid kyiis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.664.

<sup>98</sup> log pa’i bshes gnyen khyod la phyag mi ‘tshal/ dge slong tho co mkhan la phyag mi ‘tshal/ dug gi sdong po khyod la phyag mi ‘tshal/ phyi dkar nang nag khyod la phyag mi ‘tshal/ chos pa’i rkang ‘dren khyod la phyag mi ‘tshal/. *Gu rub re bo skyid kyiis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.665.

<sup>99</sup> bla ma zhang ston gyis/ bla ma zhang ston rang nyid la shin tu ngo mtshar ba’i sgo nas bstod pa/. *Gu rub re bo skyid kyiis zhus pa’i khrel ‘debs*, Shedup V.657.

The patron from Ngan lam byang phyi, Gu rub re bo skyid, requested of the teacher Lama Zhang “a eulogy by yourself to yourself.” So the teacher Lama Zhang reflected upon himself and, great wonder having arisen, composed a eulogy. Disseminate this everywhere. Listen and look! I have completed the self-criticism.<sup>100</sup>

This colophon, however, would appear to raise more questions than it answers, the first being: why does it say in the title that Gu rub re bo skyid requested a self-criticism, but in the colophon that he requested a self-eulogy? Are these not contradictory requests? And why does Zhang, in the colophon use *both* generic terms? This indeed is the basic paradox underlying both the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyang khri chog* and the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*: eulogy (*bstod pa*) and self-criticism (*khrel 'debs*) are diametric opposites; how can the same piece be both?

There are, as I see it, a number of ways this might be worked with:

1. The use of the term “praise” for a work of blame could be ironic or sarcastic—intended perhaps to signal the insincerity of the self-reproach, and an intent to ridicule the requestor. A possible scenario suggested by this interpretation might then be something like this: Zhang’s increasingly controversial behavior leads to concern among those who provide him with material support. An attempt is made to restrain him, along with a demand for something like a public admission of wrongdoing. Zhang, for his part, responds by flinging the demand back in his sponsors’ faces, delivering a mocking version of the requested self-criticism—a wild self-referential parody of an accusatory work—as a way of asserting his independence.
2. Alternatively, the patrons may have made genuine requests for works of self-praise—perhaps as devotional pieces to be used by disciples—but had their requests turned on their heads by Zhang, who offered “anti-eulogies” or self-criticisms instead, retaining the form of the well-known eulogy genre as the vehicle of works of self-accusation and contrition.
3. A third possibility is that the works were not in fact written by Zhang, and that they contain genuine accusations made by hostile parties.

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<sup>100</sup> ngan lam byang phyi'i yon bdag gu rub re bo skyid kyis/ bla ma zhang ston la/ khyed rang nyid kyis khyed rang nyid la bstod pa zhig zhu byas pas/ bla ma zhang ston gyis rang nyid la bsams pas shin tu ngo mtshar skyes te bstod pa mdzad pa'o/ 'di ni kun la spel lo/ nyon cig ltos shig/ rang la rang gis khrel btab rdzogs so/. *Gu rub re bo skyid kyis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs*, Shedup V.665.

This would leave us to resolve the question of why they should be called eulogies at all—or for that matter, why they should be called self-criticisms, since they would be neither.

The *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* presents other difficulties as well. The *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyang khri chog's* self-characterization as being composed “from the standpoint of total contempt” matches the content of the work, but the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid's* self-characterization as being composed “from the standpoint of extreme wonder” seems to have nothing to do with its content, which is all thunderous denunciation. In fact “eulogy from the standpoint of total contempt” would have been a better tag for the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* as well, for it contains nothing positive, nothing consistent with a “standpoint of extreme wonder.”

The discrepancy is strong enough that one could not be blamed for being suspicious whether the term for “wonder” (*ngo mtshar*) might not be the mistake of some early editor or transcriber. Is it possible that what was meant was really *ngo tsha*: “shame,” “embarrassment,” or “modesty”? Though there is no definitive textual basis for this, the words are virtually indistinguishable in speech and, from the perspective of meaning, there is much to recommend the hypothesis: a “standpoint of acute shame” surely seems more compatible with the sense of a self-criticism than does a “standpoint of extreme wonder.” In fact, the term that I translate as ‘self-criticism’ in the title of both texts—*khrel ‘debs* or *khrel btab*—literally means “planting of shame” or “planting of reproach.”<sup>101</sup> The wording in the colophon here is actually *rang la rang gyis khrel btab*, or “planting of shame by oneself with regard to oneself”—which further underscores its essentially self-critical aspect.

In the end, there is little a modern scholar can do with works like these than plead ultimate ignorance—or at least insufficient evidence—while suggesting possible readings. They are fascinating, and no doubt offer much information about the religious life of the period, but they remain inscrutable, not the least because the tone is so difficult to judge.

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<sup>101</sup> It is interesting that the example sentence offered by Melvin Goldstein for the word *‘khrel* in his Tibetan-English dictionary is *khrel dang ngo tsha bral ba’i mi*—“A person who is devoid of modesty and shame.” Goldstein 2001, 149.

### B. *Humor and Rhetoric*

One of my Tibetan informants once said to me, "What we think is funny, you don't; and what you think is funny, we don't." I do not think this is entirely true, but it is a point well taken: the sense of humor even of contemporary Tibetans inside of Tibet can be quite different from that of non-Tibetan university scholars, and when you add eight centuries of history to the mix, the difficulty of discerning something so subtle as humor or irony is not to be underestimated. Even my contemporary Tibetan informants could not agree on whether there was humorous intent in the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog* and/or the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*. And though well-meaning scholars have no doubt at times overexaggerated cultural differences, it is hard not to see that issue looming large here. For a long time, under the influence of other scholars' interpretations, I regarded the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog* as a damning work of criticism by an enemy of Zhang's and the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid* as Zhang's brilliant parody of a damning work of criticism—perhaps even a direct reply to the former work—but the more time I spent with these puzzles, the less certain I became: I simply could not get around the fact that in form, in tone, even in title, the two works were virtually identical. What clues marked one as parody and the other as not? Originally it had seemed to be the hyperbolic, almost slapstick, subtitle of the *Self-Criticism Requested by Gu rub re bo skyid*—*Eulogy by the Teacher Lama Zhang to the Teacher Lama Zhang Himself from a Standpoint of Extreme Wonder*<sup>102</sup>—that bespoke humor. But then, why could the colophon of the *Self-Criticism Requested by Phyag khri chog*—"Wicked Death, Wicked Corpse": *A Eulogy from a Standpoint of Total Contempt [Requested] by Phyag khri mchog of Brang mda' to Lama Zhang at the Chos skor grwa thang [of Tshal]*—not be interpreted similarly? Without further works with which to compare them, I still cannot see how one could decide the issue—the two texts seem to be *sui generis*.

So what we really need is more time: time for more scholarship, for a more thorough survey of the Tibetan literature of the twelfth century, with a view to tracing the rough outlines of genre categories and noting the rhetorical and compositional traits that mark the different genres. If we see a lot of works that seem to fit this category of biting satire and

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<sup>102</sup> Dan Martin's translation is even better: "Astonished Verses of Praise to Myself." Martin 1996a, 66.

slapstick parody, then perhaps we can then decide about Zhang's works. And if it should turn out that the texts by Zhang remain anomalous, then it may be impossible to decide. Skepticism here, it seems to me, is healthy; the more, the better.

But even if we cannot give a definitive interpretation of these two works, they still provide valuable information about Zhang's public life. He was controversial—that much remains clear. His relationship with lay sponsors was tense and subject to continual renegotiation, and there are suggestions—particularly in the two above “self-critical” works—that his attitude toward his patrons fluctuated from reverence and gratitude to resentment, scorn, and mockery, and that this conflictual relationship may have been a spur to literary innovation. But he also had real enemies. Even where criticisms of his activities—for example, his military and other “worldly” exploits—found expression in broad, mocking, or ironic voices, they still must have resembled in some way criticisms that were actually being leveled at Zhang. Even if the accusations came from Zhang himself and were meant sarcastically, they must have been imitations of real accusations and thus reflective of the controversies in which he was involved.

### C. *Reining in the Wildman*

In some contemporary scholarly accounts, Lama Zhang is depicted as a figure out of the mainstream of the developing Bka' brgyud pa order, a marginal “crazy”<sup>103</sup> and a “threat[] to civil order”<sup>104</sup> whose “extreme practices...even in the eyes of his bKa'-brgyud-pa co-religionists bordered on the scandalous.”<sup>105</sup> By “extreme practices” is apparently meant

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<sup>103</sup> Davidson 2005, 327.

Though it would be several centuries before there would be an actual movement based on the figure of “the crazy” (*smyon pa*) (see Ardussi and Epstein 1978, Stearns 2007, 58–80, and DiValerio 2011), Lama Zhang often signed his works “this crazy beggar-monk Zhang” (*zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'di*). See, e.g., songs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, and 15 of the collection entitled “Fifteen Songs Sung at Brag sngon” (*Brag sngon du gsung pa'i mgur bco lnga*, Shedup V.482–516); song 11 of “Twenty Songs of Secret Mantra Practice” (*Gsang sngags lag len gyi mgur nyi shu*, Shedup V.532–34); and song 1 of “Three [Songs Sung] at ‘Be nag brag’” (*‘Be nag brag la [ma] gsum*, Shedup V.697–99). Note, also, that the presumed author of the *Rgyal blon ma Biography*, Rgya lo, is referred to in one colophon as “Lo zbig, the crazy” (*smyon pa lo zbig*). *Chos spyil ma DA ki ma'i mngon rtogs gsang ba don ldan ma*, Shedup VII.293–99.

<sup>104</sup> Davidson 2005, 332.

<sup>105</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 67.



both doctrinal and political extremism,<sup>106</sup> between which, it seems to be implied, there must have been an internal relationship—irresponsible doctrines, in other words, go together with irresponsible actions. For this reason, it was necessary that he be reined in by the more responsible and respectable patriarchs of the developing order such as Sgam po pa, Sgom tshul, and Dus gsum mkhyen pa.

I believe this picture, though it incorporates some genuinely factual elements, is, as a broad interpretation, fundamentally misleading. The sources seem fairly unanimous that, within the developing Bka' brgyud pa tradition itself, Lama Zhang was considered among the four or five major players, and that both his religious views and his political activities were seen as essentially consistent with the overall outlook of the emerging order.

One episode that is supposed to evidence the patriarch Sgam po pa's disapproval of Zhang is found in the *Blue Annals*. Here we see Rdo rje rgyal po—the First 'Phag mo gru pa—and someone named “Dge bshes Zhang” paying a visit to the great Sgam po pa:

There was a widespread rumor that a wise Khams pa [Phag mo gru pa] was staying with Sa skya pa [Sa chen Kun dga' snying-po], so Dge bshes Zhang also paid his respects. He invited [Phag mo gru pa] to come to stay with him.

Thinking that [Phag mo gru pa] might become religious preceptor to King Bya sa and others, [Zhang] made him stay. But Phag mo gru pa would not flatter them, and Lama Zhang was not pleased.

Zhang was falsely accused of wrongdoing by some persons, and Zhang said to 'Gro-mgon [Phag mo gru pa]: “I have never done wrong! How can I quiet this sort of talk?” ‘Gro mgon said, “If you rely on a great spiritual teacher, will that not quiet things down?” [Zhang] asked, “Well, who is a great spiritual teacher?” and [Phag-mo gru-pa] said, “Right now, only Dags po Snyi sgom [Sgam po pa] has a great reputation.” Zhang said: “If you, the spiritual teacher from Khams, will accompany me, I will go to his presence.”

Then the two of them went to [Dwags lha] Sgam po, but when they arrived, Lord Sgam po pa was slightly ill, and so it was a few days before they could see him.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> “Sa-pan was no doubt deeply disturbed by some of what Zhang had done or taught.” D. Jackson 1994, 67. In fact, the criticisms by Sa pan said to be directed at Lama Zhang do not, to my knowledge, mention disturbing conduct, only teachings.

<sup>107</sup> sa skya pa'i drung na khams pa shes rab can zer nas snyan pa che bas dge bshes zhang yang gus par byung ste/ spyen drangs pas 'grogs nas byon/ khong gis bya sa gtsang po la sogs pa'i sar yang yon mchod du 'gyur snyam nas bzhugs su bcug pas/ mthun 'jug ma mdzad pa la bla ma zhang cung ma mnyes/ zhang la nyes pa med pa'i skur pa chen po cig byung bas/ zhang gis 'gro mgon la/ nga la nyes pa ni ye med/ 'di 'dra ba'i gnam ji ltar



When the two finally got to see Sgam po pa, he gave them some general instructions, then took Phag mo gru pa aside to give him special instructions, leaving “Dge bshes Zhang” out.

The implication here is that Lama Zhang, worried about the bad reputation he had acquired because of his quarrels, had attempted to manipulate Phag mo gru pa into introducing him to Sgam po pa, hoping that the famous and respected lama would be able to quash the criticisms, but that he was in effect snubbed by Sgam po pa.<sup>108</sup>

But this interpretation falls apart under closer examination. The first clue that something is wrong is the fact that, within the writings of Zhang and his immediate successors, there is not a hint that he ever met with Phag mo gru pa—and it is difficult to imagine such a momentous meeting going unmentioned. But furthermore, in the accounts of Zhang’s one clearly documented visit to Dwags lha sgam po monastery—the occasion being a consecration—he in fact receives empowerments and blessings from Sgam po pa himself and is fêted by the master and his nephews Sgom chung and Sgom tshul in a manner befitting an important guest.<sup>109</sup>

Most damaging, however, is the strong evidence that the “Zhang” who accompanied Phag mo gru pa to meet Sgam po pa was not our Lama Zhang at all. If we cross-correlate the *Blue Annals* episode with others from relevant historical works, it becomes clear that there was in fact another person sometimes called “Lama Zhang” or “Dge bshes Zhang” who was indeed closely associated with Phag mo gru pa, as well as with ‘Jig rten mgon po, founder of the ‘Bri gung Bka’ brgyud pa:

Lama Zhang: at first he was a religious brother of the Protector of Beings [Phag mo gru pa]. Later, devotion was born in him and he became a disciple. He founded the great monasteries of Se gseb and Ngang rkyal, and supported a religious community. When the Protector of Beings [Phag mo gru pa] passed away, he did service to the monastic seat and accomplished much. He also became preceptor for the ‘Bri khung Dharma Lord [‘Jig rten mgon po].<sup>110</sup>

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byas na zhi bar ‘gyur dris pas/ ‘gro mgon gyis/ dge ba’i bshes gnyen chen po cig la brten na zhi bar ‘gyur ram gsungs pas/ ‘o na dge ba’i bshes gnyen su che zer/ da lta dwags po snyi sgom kho na snyan pa che bar ‘dug pa gsungs pas/ dge bshes khams pas grogs byed na ni nga khong gi drung du ‘gro zer bas/ der gnyis po bsdongs te sgam por byon pas phebs pa la/ rje sgam po ba sku cung zhig mnyel bas zhag ‘ga’ ma mjal/. *Deb ther sngon po*, 657–58. Also, Roerich 1976, 557–58.

<sup>108</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 60.

<sup>109</sup> This visit is described in *Rgyal blon ma*, Shedup VI.275–276; *Zin bris*, 60a–61a; and *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.145.

<sup>110</sup> bla ma zhang ni/ dang por ‘gro mgon dang mched grogs yin pa las/ phyis mos pa rnyed nas slob ma mdzad/ se gse ba dang ngang rkyal gyi gtsug lag khang chen po btat/

*This* Lama Zhang, unlike our Gung thang Lama Zhang, had many contacts with Sgam po pa, Phag mo gru pa, and 'Jig rten mgon po. Given that Gung thang Lama Zhang had nothing to do with Se gseb and Ngang rgyal monasteries, and was never a “religious brother” or “disciple” of Phag mo gru pa, and never acted as preceptor for 'Jig rten mgon po, it seems evident that we have here a case of mistaken identity. This other Zhang also has to have been the person who occupied Phag mo gru pa's monastic seat at Gdan sa thel monastery for a short time after the death of the master<sup>111</sup>—another role that has been mistakenly assigned to Lama Zhang by various commentators.<sup>112</sup>

The other Zhang is referred to as “Zhang Se gseb”—after the monastery he founded—in another passage of the *Blue Annals*<sup>113</sup> as well as in the *Lho rong Dharma History*.<sup>114</sup> Sørensen and Hazod identify him with a certain Zhang Sum thog pa, named in the *Blue Annals* as one of Sgam po pa's pupils.<sup>115</sup> The fact that this Zhang is, in one episode, called by the name “Dge bshes Zhang Sum thog pa”<sup>116</sup> lends support to the hypothesis that he and Dge bshes Zhang, founder of Se gseb, are the same person. What finally clinches it all, however, confirming that the alter—“Lama Zhang,” Dge bshes Zhang, Zhang Se gseb, and Zhang Sum thog pa are the same person is a passage in the *Red Annals* describing an important trip that Phag mo gru pa took:

In his forty-second year, [Phag mo gru pa] went to [Dwags lha] Sgam po, accompanied by Dge bshes Zhang Sum thog pa, and met the incomparable Dwags po lha rje [Sgam po pa].<sup>117</sup>

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dge 'dun gyi sde yang bskyangs/ 'gro mgon zhi bar gshegs nas gdan sa'i zhabs tog kyang mang du bsgrubs/ 'bri khung chos rje'i mkhan po yang mdzad do/. *Deb ther sngon po*, 669–70; Roerich 1976, 568–69.

<sup>111</sup> Roerich 1976, 569.

<sup>112</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 61; also *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 3223.

Also, Berzin appears to make a similar mistake when he writes that “In 1175, Pagmodrupa's disciple, Tselpa Zhang Yudragpa (*Tshal-pa Zhang 'Gro-ba'i mgon-po g.Yu-brag-pa brTson-'grus grags-pa*) (1123–1194), built Tsel Yanggon Monastery (*Tshal Yang-dgon grva-tshang*).” Alexander Berzin, “A Survey of Tibetan History: 2 The Struggle for Religious Survival after the Fall of the Tibetan Empire.” <http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/en/archives/e-books/unpublished-manuscripts/survey-tibetan-history/chapter-2.html>. Accessed 10/3/08.

<sup>113</sup> Roerich 1976, 580.

<sup>114</sup> *Lho rong chos 'byung*, 371.

<sup>115</sup> Roerich 1976, 462.

<sup>116</sup> Roerich 1976, 707.

<sup>117</sup> dgung lo bzhi bcu rtsa gnyis pa la dge bshes zhang sum thog pa dang 'grogs nas sgam por byon te rje mnyam med dwags po lha rje dang mjal. *Deb ther dmar po*, 116.

This appears to be the very trip to Dwags po that we began the discussion with. But this time, “Dge bshes Zhang” is clearly identified as Dge bshes Zhang Sum thog pa, not Gung thang Lama Zhang.<sup>118</sup> So it was he, not our Lama Zhang, who was kept waiting by Sgam po pa when he arrived with Phag mo gru pa.

Thus, this incident involving Phag mo gru pa and the snub by Sgam po pa cannot be used as evidence that “the controversies surrounding Zhang had started up even before he had come into contact with the Dwags-po bka'-brgyud lineage.”<sup>119</sup>

Another more interesting episode cited to evidence Zhang's disfavor in the eyes of the other Bka' brgyud pa-s can be found again in the *Blue Annals*, where it is written that Zhang stopped fighting at the request of the First Karma pa, Dus gsum mkhyen pa. According to this account, the Karma pa had been in his homeland, Khams, establishing monasteries there, when he decided it was imperative for him to return to Central Tibet:

The purpose of my coming back to Central Tibet (dBus) is to fulfill sGom-tshul's command, who had told me: “Regardless of what situation you find yourself in Eastern Tibet (Khams), return west!” and to establish a monastery here in the midst of gZhu and 'Tshur, and to offer a hundred volumes written in gold to Dags-lha sGam-po, and to make a request to bla-ma Zhang not to engage in fighting, because people are unhappy with his fighting. I have come for these purposes.<sup>120</sup>

One scholar gives this an odd, anachronistic twist, saying that the Karma pa “evidently saw himself as acting in part on behalf of Zhang's master sGom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po (who had been a known peace-maker, like Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa himself),”<sup>121</sup> thus giving the impression that Zhang's actions had met with the disapproval of his root lama Sgom tshul

<sup>118</sup> One might even question whether the “Lama Zhang” mentioned in the sources treating of the Gnyos family (see above section “Who Was Fighting?”) might also have been Zhang Sum thog pa, since there are very few mentions of contacts with the Gnyos in Gung thang Lama Zhang's writings. The fact that both the Gnyos clan and Zhang Sum thog pa were closely associated with 'Jig rten mgon po and the 'Bri gung Bka' brgyud pa-s lends some support to this hypothesis.

<sup>119</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 60.

<sup>120</sup> kho bo dbus su 'ongs pa'i dgos pa/ sgom tshul gyi zhal nas khyod khams su skyid sdug ci byung yang yar shog gsung ba'i bka' sgrub pa dang/ gzhu 'tshur gyi bar 'di dgon pa 'debs pa dang/ dwags lha sgam por gser gyi glegs bam brgya 'bul ba dang/ bla ma zhang gi 'khrug pa la mi mams mi dga' bar 'dug pas/ khong la 'khrug pa mi mdzad pa'i zhu ba 'bul ba mams la 'ongs pa yin gsung/. *Deb ther sngon po*, 569–70. Translation, D. Jackson 1994, 64.

<sup>121</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 63. This anachronism is duplicated in the TBRC *Treasury of Lives* biography of Dus gsum mkhyen pa. <http://www.tibetanlineages.org/biographies/view/Karmapa%2001%20Dusum%20Khyenpa%20Chokyi%20Drakpa/2683>.

and that thus his behavior was essentially out of sync with that of both of these great masters. The problem with this is that Sgom tshul died in 1169, and from all accounts, Zhang's fighting did not begin at least until Tshal Yang dgon was built, which was in 1175, and possibly even not until 1187, the year Tshal Gung thang was built. Jackson dates Dus gsum mkhyen pa's return to Central Tibet to sometime between 1185 and 1188,<sup>122</sup> nearly two decades after Sgom tshul's death. So the dates simply do not match up, and the implication that Sgom tshul—who had given Zhang the authority to rule Lhasa in the first place—disapproved of Zhang's methods of governance has no basis in the relevant texts. Nor have I seen anything elsewhere in Zhang's works to indicate that Sgom tshul was unhappy with his disciple. If one of Dus gsum mkhyen pa's reasons for returning to Central Tibet was indeed to stop Zhang from fighting (or quarreling—remember '*kh rugs pa* can mean either), he must have acted for his own reasons and not because of some implicit directive of a long-since-deceased Sgom tshul.

Still, there is no denying the Karma pa's wish that Zhang's military exploits be toned down. When he came to visit to Zhang, it is said that Zhang had a number of visionary experiences, and that when Dus gsum mkhyen pa asked Zhang to stop fighting, he grasped the Karma pa's finger and "danced wildly," after which he ceased his hostile activities.<sup>123</sup>

This picture of a sober, peace-loving, and paternal Karma pa laying down the law to a violent, dancing, half-mad junior colleague is a memorable and seductive one, but misleading if taken as an emblem of a fundamental difference in view, temperament, and demeanor. In fact, the relationship between the two men, from the glimpses we get in Zhang's collected works, is quite fascinating and belies simplistic stereotypes.

If anyone could have prevailed upon Zhang to change tactics, it would have been the Karma pa. The two traveled in the same circles, had many of the same root lamas, shared disciples, and died in the same year.<sup>124</sup> Moreover, their relationship to one another appears to have been one of closeness and respect: many of their transactions suggest they shared a rough

<sup>122</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 64.

<sup>123</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 64; Roerich 1976, 479–80.

<sup>124</sup> Zhang and Dus gsum mkhyen pa had four root-lamas in common: Vairocana-vajra, Dwags po Sgom tshul, Gshen pa Rdo rje seng ge, and Rgwa lo tsā ba. Sørensen and Hazod suggest that Zhang's disciple Lha ri ba Nam mkha' 'od, author of the *Handwritten Biography*, was the same person as Dus gsum mkhyen pa's disciple with the same name. Sørensen and Hazod 2007, II.648. Finally, both Zhang and the Karma pa died in 1193.

sort of *siddha* humor, almost Chan-like in its physicality. We have already seen Dus gsum mkhyen pa's rough handling of Zhang at the consecration of the Great God statue, and now Zhang's humorous finger-dance when the Karma pa asked him to stop causing trouble. There are other episodes with a similar flavor, such as this one, which occurred when the Karma pa was visiting Tshal Gung thang:

When [Zhang] was sleeping together with the venerable Dus gsum mkhyen pa in the Dbus gling small dormitory, [Zhang] arose in the middle of the night and, sitting on top of Dus gsum mkhyen pa, gave him three slaps.<sup>125</sup>

The Karma pa's attendants—men from Khams, renowned for their fierceness—were stunned to see their master, a very distinguished high lama, treated in this fashion. The Karma pa himself, however, was unfazed:

When [Dus gsum mkhyen pa's] Khams pa attendants heard this and asked “What happened?” the venerable Dus gsum mkhyen pa said, “Lama Zhang has just extended my life by three years!”<sup>126</sup>

These are clearly interactions between equals, not between a stuffy, chastising patriarch and an errant, naughty boy.

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At any rate, whatever the Karma pa's involvement, it does seem that the political situation cooled off some during Zhang's last five years. It seems entirely possible, however, that this period of relative peace had as much to do with the consolidation of Tshal pa hegemony over the area as with a change of heart on Zhang's part.

It was during this period as well that Zhang began setting in place the institutional structures that would keep the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s intact and powerful after his death, assigning special roles to his closest disciples and consolidating relationships to powerful patrons. We note here the specialization of Tshal pa offices, the separation into distinct secular and religious duties of what had been united in one person, Lama Zhang. This seems to parallel similar developments throughout the cen-

<sup>125</sup> dbus gling gzims chung du rje dus gsum mkhyen pa dang lhan du gzims pas/ nam phyed la zhang rin po che bzhangs nas/ dus gsum mkhyen pa'i steng du zhon nas thal lcag gsum rgyab/. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.146.

<sup>126</sup> nye gnas khams pa rnam kyis tshor nas de 'dra ci yin zer bas/ rje dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhal nas/ bla ma zhang gis nga'i tshe lo gsum bsring pa yin gsungs skad/. *Rnam thar bsdus pa*, Shedup VI.146.

tral areas of Tibet during this period—e.g., at Sa skya, Dwags lha sgam po, and Gdan sa thel monasteries<sup>127</sup>—where we see a similar division of religious and secular functions.

Zhang's successors were Dar ma gzhon nu (1145–1232/33),<sup>128</sup> his close attendant, who became the secular ruler of Tshal, and Shākya Ye shes, who inherited the religious seat (*gdan sa*) at Tshal Yang dgon. Under these two leaders and their successors, Zhang's governing and building projects would be continued and expanded, and the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s would come to dominate Lhasa politics for the next century and a half. As Sørensen and Hazod write,

The patron-priest union entered into between these two persons thus ushered in the beginning of the post-Zhang era, with Tshal-pa hegemony resting upon two pillars, of the religious and secular thrones. . . . [T]he Tshal-pa can possibly be acknowledged as the first such monastic-hegemonial polity ever established in post-dynastic Central Tibet.<sup>129</sup>

During this period, the Tshal pa-s would also expand their base of operations beyond Central Tibet, establishing strong monastic networks throughout eastern and western Tibet.<sup>130</sup>

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Thus, the solitary magician and meditator, "the crazy beggar-monk Zhang"—who arrived in Lhasa seeking permission from his lama to leave Lhasa, to "wander without direction," who sought to escape all worldly (*jig rten gyi*) obligations, remove himself from the defiling social sphere of human affairs (*mi chos*) where he would be hounded by patrons and distracted by disciples—this crazy beggar-monk never left the world. Unlike his model Mi la ras pa, Zhang ended up spending the rest of his life in the very midst of the human realm he had thought to escape. He took to this life with surprising verve and proved a capable and influential leader. Though he made many enemies and came in for his share of criticism, he continued to believe his actions were untainted

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<sup>127</sup> Of particular interest was the system whereby one son of a prominent clan would become ordained, while the other would be a lay secular leader. Religious succession would therefore pass through uncle-nephew lineages. See Tucci 1949, 18–19.

<sup>128</sup> For more on Dar ma gzhon nu, see Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.40–41.

<sup>129</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007, I.41.

<sup>130</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2007 is by far the most far-reaching and thorough treatment of the fortunes of the post-Zhang Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s.

by worldliness—that it was possible to be and act in the world without being defiled by it. He wrote:

Having landed in this realm of human affairs, though I appeared only to be engaged in this-worldly activities—erecting statues and buildings, enforcing the law and sealing the roads, protecting against bandits, fighting, etc.—had I been, from the depths, bound to this world, I should have perished.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> mi chos kyi yul du gzhi phab nas/ lugs ma dang gnas gzhi dang rgyal khirms dang lam rgya dang rku skyabs dang 'khrug pa la sogs pa 'jig rten 'di'i byed spyod kho na 'dra ba sha stag tu snang ste/ 'jig rten 'di dang 'brel ba bting nas bdog na 'gum pa lags so/. *Yang dgon gyi bla ma brgyud pa*, in *Lung bstan za ma tog bkod pa sogs lung bstan gyi skor*, Shedup VI, 64–65.

## CONCLUSION

### MASTERING SPACE, TIME, SYMBOL: LAMA ZHANG AND THE BUDDHIST HEGEMONIZATION OF CENTRAL TIBET

#### I. SECTARIAN GROUPS AND THE INSTITUTION OF THE LAMA

##### *A. Hegemony and Charisma*

“[A] central problem for the historical study and interpretation of Tibetan civilization,” writes Matthew Kapstein, is “[t]he penetration by Buddhism of Tibetan culture, so that the two would become to all intents and purposes indivisibly associated.”<sup>1</sup> The project envisioned is obviously long-term and will require the unearthing and interpretation of a multitude of local processes. This work is intended as a small contribution to that larger project.

A good place to begin would be to look at a trend very clearly in evidence within the microcosm of twelfth-century Lhasa and the life of Lama Zhang: the increased size, degree of organization, and consequent social power of the new monastic orders. Through the expansion of the religious orders—across the physical territories of Tibet, across the political, economic, and social spheres—Buddhist discourses and practices came to infiltrate the smaller spaces of everyday life, activity, thought, and feeling, attaining what Janet Gyatso calls “the hegemony of Buddhism in Tibet.”<sup>2</sup> Everything from sophisticated scholarly disputations and high-church ceremonies down to the details of personal and household rituals and the propitiation of chthonic deities was taken up and reconfigured according to a Buddhist discourse disseminated in large part by these new religious orders.

A crucial aspect of this makeover of Tibetan culture was, according to Gyatso, a shift in power and influence away from aristocratic clan heads to charismatic religious leaders:

After the fall of the Yarlung dynasty, the loss of prestige of the royal descendants, and the succeeding period of chaos and decentralization, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Kapstein 2000, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Gyatso 1998, 116.



eventual birth, in the eleventh century, of a new order based on religious sects, the focus of power in Tibet shifted to *the powerful master*: the translator who had been to India and mastered Sanskrit scholastic literature; the celibate ascetic who could maintain awesome heights of purity; the magician who could bring spirits, competitors, disciples, and patrons under sway; the visionary who received special transmissions of esoteric teachings; and finally, the yogic virtuoso who could remember past lives.<sup>3</sup>

These new culture heroes—paradigmatic Gramscian “intellectuals”—stood at the center of the new institutional configurations that were defining a new Buddhist Tibetan culture, and the variety of roles embodied by these Buddhist charismatics was distilled into the single multipurpose role of the *lama*. The institution of the lama became a key organizing principle of the new sectarian groups that effected the Buddhist hegemonization of Central Tibet during this “later spread” period. “Almost without exception,” van Spengen writes, “the monasteries that stem from this period grew up around charismatic masters.”<sup>4</sup>

I have tried to show here the major contribution Lama Zhang made to this all-important institution of the lama. By following his career, and looking at his part in the transformation of the “Lhasa *maṇḍala*” into a Tshal pa Bka’ bgyud pa dominion, we have been able to track the early evolution of this institution of the lama and the way it mediated the contradictory dictates of joint secular-religious rule during this important transitional period.

As we have seen, Zhang’s approach to the role of lama is best seen in the idea of “Lord of the Teachings”—an office into which he was initiated by Sgom tshul at the time of the Lhasa disturbances of 1160. The expression *bstan pa’i bdag po* turns up throughout the writings and carries within it implicitly all of the important issues pertaining to the role of the lama within the new Buddhist society.

The Lord of the Teachings was above all else a *master* (an alternate rendering of the term *bdag po*)—a person of knowledge, power, and authority. This is evident in the pervasive rhetoric of sovereignty, control, and subjugation we have seen employed to describe the activities of a Lord of the Teachings, whether the object of control was to be sentient beings, forces of nature, gods and demons, human enemies, or simply one’s own mind and body:

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 119 (emphasis added).

<sup>4</sup> Van Spengen 2000, 24.

You tamed beings with law, etc.<sup>5</sup>

Externally, [he was] the hero who tames evil spirits, dwelling alone in frightening places such as charnel grounds. Internally, [he was] the hero who tames the channels, winds, and drops, dwelling alone in the realm of the Dharmakāya.<sup>6</sup>

He subdued wrongdoers. He planted victory banners of the precious teaching.<sup>7</sup>

He subdued through fierce means the wrongly contending classes...<sup>8</sup>

The way in which [the demon-gods] were subdued through the two types of *bodhicitta* and bound by oath [to the Buddhist teachings] is clarified in detail...<sup>9</sup>

Those who did not submit to his law, he subdued with a magical army.<sup>10</sup>

He vanquished difficult-to-tame beings, and having taken [beings] under his care, gave them protection.<sup>11</sup>

Zhang, as Lord of the Teachings, was thus always taming, conquering, suppressing, and defeating—in short *mastering*—something. The authority that empowered this mastery had three principal sources:

(1) *His Own Personal Accomplishments As a Tantric Adept*. We have already seen from the histories and biographies that Zhang was regarded as a possessor of extraordinary powers from very early on. As it says in the *Scholars' Feast Dharma History*: "From an early age, he was known as an incarnation, so everyone asked for his blessings."<sup>12</sup> And even before he had committed himself to the Dharma, he was respected and feared as a magical adept—"The Great Magician from Central Tibet" he was called when he lived in Khams. Then, as a hermit tantric practitioner, he became renowned for his meditational accomplishments as well as

<sup>5</sup> rgyal khirms la sogs 'gro ba 'dul. *Dgos 'dod re skong ma*, Shedup I.110.

<sup>6</sup> phyir gdon bgegs thul/ ba'i dpa' bo dur khrod la sogs 'jigs pa'i gnas su gcig pur bzhugs/ nang du rtsa rlung thig le thul ba'i dpa' bo/. *Rnam thar bsds pa*, Shedup VI.124–25.

<sup>7</sup> nag po'i phyogs mams btul/ bstan pa rin po che'i rgyal mtshan ba tsugs/. *Zin bris*, 56b.

<sup>8</sup> log par 'khu ba'i rigs drag po'i sgo nas btul. Sde srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho. *Du kU la'i gos bzang*. Also translated in Ahmad 1999, 187.

<sup>9</sup> byang chub sems gnyis kyis btul zhing dam la btags tshul/ zhib par . . . gsal. *Rnam thar bsds pa*, Shedup VI.141.

<sup>10</sup> *Phu ron sngon mo ba*. Nālandā Translation Committee 1980, 272.

<sup>11</sup> gdul dka'i 'gro ba tshar bcad cing/ rjes su bzung nas mgon mdzad pa'o/. *Rnam thar bsds pa*, Shedup VI.150.

<sup>12</sup> chung ngu nas sprul par grags te thams cad kyis byin rlabs zhu. *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston*, 806.

his ability to work miracles and magic. Finally, as a ruler of the Lhasa area, he incorporated many practices relating to fierce tantric deities—particularly Mahākāla and Dpal ldan lha mo—into his repertory of ruling strategies. Even those who criticized him harshly never questioned his fearsome powers as a tantric master.

(2) *His Possession of an Authentic Lineage.* A second source of Zhang's authority was his connection to a lineage of masters—a *tradition*. This was explored in detail in Chapter Two. As indicated in that discussion, charismatic lineages were especially important within the budding Bka' brgyud pa tradition, which minimized other sources of authority such as scholarship.

(3) *His Special Relationship to the Jo khang Temple and the Jo bo Statue.* As recounted in Chapters One, Four, and Five, from the time he was in his mother's womb and she dreamed that beams of light shot out from the Jo bo and Avalokiteśvara statues, dissolving into her body,<sup>13</sup> Zhang's relationship to the temple and its powerful statues was a special one. His abrupt career change and initiation into public life occurred when he was put in charge of repairing and administering the temple, and throughout his life major transformative events and visions occurred there. Since it had always been considered to be the holiest of all Tibetan Buddhist sites, his evident karmic link to it conferred upon him enormous prestige and authority.

The social capital that accompanied this combination of tantric skill, credible lineage, and special relationship to sources of ritual power lent authority to Zhang in the public world. This made Zhang, as I argue in the Introduction, a perfect example of the type of authority Weber labeled "charismatic." We cannot underestimate the importance of charisma, understood in this Weberian sense, in Tibetan social life. It is what gave the lama power and influence—both spiritual and worldly. The respect that was accorded to any powerful sorcerer is in evidence throughout Zhang's life story, and even the fame and reverence that later attached to him as Buddhist monk and tantric adept were really not so different from those he received as a magician. In fact, Tibetan tantric lamas have always acted very much like sorcerers—more so than, say, Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka or Burma—inasmuch as they have customarily handled affairs of what Geoffrey Samuel calls the "pragmatic" sphere:

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<sup>13</sup> *Zin bris*, 2b.

The realm of this-worldly concerns, conceived of in terms of interactions with local gods and spirits, and carried out by a variety of ritual practitioners, foremost among them being the lamas, who employ the techniques of Tantric practice for this purpose...<sup>14</sup>

Magical efficacy of this kind—in concert with the less worldly lama-virtues such as contemplative/yogic attainments and ritual expertise—was the source of the lama's charisma. That charisma in turn was what drew disciples and patrons. As such, it acted as an important organizing and binding principle within a religious community.

We noted above, in Chapter Two, the interesting parallels between the concept of charisma and that of “blessings”—an idea so crucial within the Tibetan cultural sphere in general, but especially within the nonscholastic lineages like Zhang's. The two terms obviously cannot be substituted for each other freely—we have already commented on the near-impossibility of finding a satisfactory English translation for the Tibetan term *byin rlabs*—but comparing them brings to light important facets of Tibetan lama-disciple relationships.

As described above, *byin rlabs*—variously rendered as “inspiration,”<sup>15</sup> “blessing-power,”<sup>16</sup> “positive spiritual energy,”<sup>17</sup> “spiritual impulse,”<sup>18</sup> and “empowerment,”<sup>19</sup>—was seen as a sort of spiritual substance inhering in extraordinary people and places. It was sought after by disciples and pilgrims, who, by coming into the proximity of these persons and places, hoped to become the beneficiaries of a sort of spiritually empowering energy transfer.

I have already discussed in Chapter Two the crucial role played by blessings in Lama Zhang's conception of the religious life—the constant insistence, for example, that neither scholastic knowledge nor meditative practice could possibly bear fruit in the absence of the blessings of the lama. Here I want to re-emphasize the similarity between blessing-power and charisma insofar as they both play an important role in the binding together of a collective into a cohesive group. It is significant in this regard that *byin rlabs* was originally not an exclusively religious concept, but was seen, in pre-Buddhist Tibet, as that particular quality possessed

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<sup>14</sup> Samuel 1993, 31.

<sup>15</sup> Lama Yeshe 1987, 98.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel 2005, 63.

<sup>17</sup> Samuel 1993, 267.

<sup>18</sup> D. Jackson 1994, 49.

<sup>19</sup> Huber 1999, 90.

by the great dynastic kings—"glory" or "splendor" (or even "height")—which made them fit to rule. "Leadership," if interpreted broadly enough, might even serve as a circumstantial gloss. This indeed is very close to the modern conception of charisma. It was only later that *byin rlabs* came to be used as well to characterize that special quality possessed by great spiritual beings—though traces of the earlier usage still cling to the word.

\* \* \*

Thus, I have tried to keep visible, throughout this work, the progressive movement of Buddhist discourses and practices across Central Tibet, the slow but sure Buddhization of Tibetan culture and society, that formed the backdrop to Lama Zhang's rise to prominence in the twelfth century. Furthermore, I have argued that the agent of this hegemonic movement was the new sectarian groups—larger, better organized, more cohesive, and, not the least important, taking as their focal points charismatic tantric masters. In the next section, I want to suggest a way of looking at this movement in terms of *space* and *time*—along with *symbolic* or *discursive* dimension that underlies and enables the hegemonization of space and time. I will be speaking specifically about Lama Zhang and the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa-s, but also keeping one eye on the larger picture of sectarian proliferation throughout Central Tibet.

### B. *The Spatial Dimension: Spread and Densification*

The expression used in the traditional histories to characterize the Buddhist revival of the tenth through thirteenth centuries was "later *spread* (*dar*) of the teachings." The use of the word *dar* is interesting here because it connotes not only increased popularity, but also real spatial expansion: the doctrine literally *covered* the land of Tibet.

But it did not cover the land evenly—the way, say, a coat of paint would cover a smooth primed surface—for there was another spatial dimension to the Buddhist revival that was not quite as obvious, but that was just as important as the geographical expansion of monastic networks: this was the spatial *densification* in the distribution of religious groups. If we had the means to create religious-population density maps for the period, we would probably see, as we moved from the tenth, eleventh, and early twelfth centuries into the mid-twelfth, not only an extension of new Buddhist practices across the Tibetan plateau, but also a growing unevenness in the distribution of religious activities and populations—an increased concentration, or clumping, around nodal points like monasteries and a sparser distribution away from these nodes.

This densification is the spatial correlative to the increased *institutionalization* of sectarian communities at the level of organization: the networks of monasteries, shrines, and other pilgrimage sites became tighter, more fine-meshed, while the monastic nodes became more institutionalized, supporting and administering ever larger and more specialized groups of monks.

We can see this at work quite explicitly in Lama Zhang's life. We have already noted in Chapter Four how the construction of statues, *stūpas*, monasteries, roads, etc., was seen both as a way of establishing Tshal pa dominion over a physical space and as a means of marking sacred space. As the Tshal pa-s increased in size, they created denser settlements and institutional monastic communities. Another practice we looked at in Chapter Four with clear spatial effects was the "sealing" (*rgya*) of roads, hills, and valleys referred to above. This not only put all humans and animals within the sealed area under Zhang's protection, but also was a way of managing and monitoring movements of people and goods through the territories under consideration, thus effecting a form of geopolitical control.

Other incidents involving Zhang show how religious charisma itself—a seemingly immaterial thing—could paradoxically produce real material effects and thus serve as an agent of spatial demarcation. This can be best seen, perhaps, in the story of the founding of G.yu brag, Zhang's first monastery. G.yu brag, in the region of Sgrags, had been one of his most important retreat sites, one of the places that became known as the "Seven Sites of Realization" (*sgrub gnas bdun*).<sup>20</sup> But it is reported in the *Handwritten Biography* that after he had been there for awhile, "tent-dwellers" (*gur rtsa ba mams*)—would-be disciples—began settling the area around his place of retreat. They made so many offerings to Zhang, that his tiny retreat quarters were unable to hold them:

Then, when the offerings had filled up [his retreat space], [the people] requested that [Zhang] stay in one place. Thus, G.yu brag [monastery] was built and he remained there.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> sgrub pa'i gnas bdun la gsol ba gdab cing bstod pa 'di bya'o zhes pa nas/ g.ya' lung bsam yas mon gdong dang/ spyi khungs tshal sgang chos spyil dang/ 'phrul snang g.yu brag gnas bdun la/ gsol ba btob pas don rnams 'grub bo/. *Dkar chag chen mo*, Shedup VII.680–81.

<sup>21</sup> de nas phyag rten rgyang byed tsa na sa gcig la bzhugs par zhu zer nas/ g.yu brag btob nas bzhugs/. *Zin bris*, 52a.

If the traditional religious histories are to be believed, this was in fact how several of the early Bka' brgyud pa monasteries were founded. Zhang's experience repeated almost exactly that of his contemporary Phag mo gru pa Rdo rje rgyal po, who founded the famous Gdan sa thel monastery. Phag gru, like Zhang, had made a request to his master Sgam po pa to become a solitary wanderer, and was given permission. He eventually built a grass meditation hut at Gdan sa thel, and when word got out, his own hut was gradually encircled by the temporary dwellings of followers. After 13 years there, a total of 1,300 disciples, 800 of them monks, were occupying the site.<sup>22</sup>

The point here is that Zhang and Phag gru did not actively recruit disciples—followers were drawn by the charisma of a great meditator in their midst, and this in turn had repercussions for the arrangement of space: charisma attracts followers, and the charismatic individual becomes the central focus of a sort of force field—a field of attraction that, like that which draws planets into orbits around a sun, arranges disciple-satellites in space around that focus according to a sort of law of charismatic gravitation. If this happens repeatedly, as it appears to have during the Buddhist revival, then the force of charisma can be seen to create patterns of varying densities around central charismatic figures, reshaping the Tibetan landscape no less than patterns of rainfall, migration, or commerce.

If we bring in the factor of patronage—and we have seen phrases like “disciples and patrons” (*slob ma dang yon bdag*) occurring together repeatedly in Zhang's works, as if the two were natural parts of a single unit—we can observe other space-defining processes driven by charisma. What Zhang learned when he took the monk's vows in Khams (see Chapter One) was that charisma drew patrons. Though he was a newly ordained monk with little experience, his reputation as a person of power—a charismatic—made him a desirable object of the attention of wealthy sponsors from the beginning: “One said ‘Be my lama,’ another said ‘Be *my* lama,’ and they could not get along.”<sup>23</sup> This was a crucial aspect of the institution of the lama. Without sponsorship, without financial support, a monastic establishment could not grow up around a religious specialist. In order to be a lama, one had to be not only a disciple-magnet, but also

<sup>22</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, 660–62; Roerich 1976, 560–62.

<sup>23</sup> gcig na re nga'i mchod gnas byed zer/ gcig na re 'di mchod gnas byed zer nas ma 'cham/. *Zin bris*, 13a.

a sponsor-magnet. And what made one a sponsor-magnet was charisma and reputation—whether originating in personal yogic prowess, magical capabilities, or a suitable lineage of charismatic predecessors.

As we saw in Chapter Four, this caused Zhang much mental conflict in the beginning:

I thought, “What is the use of disciples and patrons? I need to [be able to] act without forethought!”<sup>24</sup>

What he did not understand at that point was that his gifts as a powerful being drew both disciples and patrons to him, and he could not simply will this not to be the case. At some point he had to take responsibility for his charisma, which is what he did when he accepted the role of “Lord of the Teachings.”

The presence of sponsors affected the spatial distributions around the lama-nodes because it brought the monastic institutions into the economic realm. This is something that has been an aspect of the Buddhist tradition almost from the beginning: Buddhism was early associated with urbanization and commerce,<sup>25</sup> and its primary method of diffusion to non-Indian cultures was along trade routes. In Tibet, as the Buddhist monasteries became larger, they naturally “emerged as nodes of political and economic activity.”<sup>26</sup> Patronage was, to be sure, not the sole impetus to economic involvement—nomads and farmers, e.g., used the monasteries, with their recurring cycles of festivals, as sites of exchange—but patronage ensured that no lama, however powerful, could ignore the imperatives of trade and economy. Thus, the spatial distribution of Buddhism across the Tibetan landscape came to be strongly affected by the large degree of overlap between the monastic networks, the pilgrimage networks, and the trade networks.

These Buddhist social practices effecting spread and densification are good examples of what Henri Lefebvre calls “spatial practices”:

The spatial practice of a society secretes that society’s space; ... it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it.<sup>27</sup>

This production of social space through practices is explicitly bound up, according to Lefebvre, with the process of securing hegemony:

<sup>24</sup> slob ma dang yon bdag gis ci byed rtsis med gcig bya dgos. *Zin bris*, 42a.

<sup>25</sup> Thapar 2002, 173.

<sup>26</sup> van Spengen 2000, 23.

<sup>27</sup> Lefebvre 1991, 38.



"Is it conceivable that the exercise of hegemony might leave space untouched? . . . The answer must be no."<sup>28</sup> And, indeed, the hegemonizing movement of Buddhism across Tibet did not leave space untouched—or time, either, for that matter.

### C. *The Temporal Dimension: Lineage and the Formation of Traditions*

Along with the spatial expansion and clustering at work during this period, as the scattered hermit groups were transformed into more localized, compact communities with a more formal institutional organization, we have also seen a *temporal* consolidation underlying this same group individuation process. This temporal dimension was most evident in the key institution we introduced in Chapter Two—that of *lineages*, quasi-genealogical constructions that linked a group, through a chain of charismatic lamas, to an authoritative past figure—in particular, to a buddha.

As described above, trope of *brgyud pa* clearly modeled religious succession on kinship descent: the disciple was like an offspring of the lama, and the sect, as it endured through time, was like a family—so that just as group-sanctioned ties of kinship conferred social legitimacy on a child, so did a proper religious lineage confer spiritual legitimacy on a practitioner or sect. A religious sect without a history, a practitioner without a confirmed lineage, was an illegitimate child, had no spiritual pedigree. It was in this idea of lineage that we saw most clearly the manner in which a religious *tradition* is put together through the forging of links to past lamas.

And just as charisma was seen above to have had a space-defining effect, it also affected this temporal process of lineage-building. Recall the episode recounted in Chapter Two above where Sgom tshul puts a stop to Zhang's overintellectualizing of his first *mahāmudrā* experience by reminding him that "This is the lineage of *blessings*!"<sup>29</sup> What this meant, among other things, was that what was passed down from lama to disciple was not some discursive content—a doctrine, for example—but rather this palpable blessing-power that emanated from the charismatic lama. This blessing—or charisma, if you like—was the binding agent of

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>29</sup> de byin brlabs kyi brgyud pa yin. *Zin bris*, 39b. This same phrase, "lineage of blessings" (*byin rlabs kyi brgyud pa*), occurs again at the end of Zhang's biography of Sgom tshul: byin rlabs kyi brgyud pa 'di nyid kyi nram par thar pa/ gong ma gong mas gsungs pa'i phyogs zur mtshon tsam re smos pa/. *Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i nram thar*, Shedup 1.181.

the tradition; thus, it was said, the Bka' brgyud pa was the tradition of charisma (read: lineage of blessings).

Weber actually employed the term "lineage charisma" to describe what happens when the charisma of a powerful leader is transferred to his or her family line.<sup>30</sup> It would not be a stretch to extend this concept to take in nonbiological lineages like the Bka' brgyud pa as well. One thing we see happening as these lineages became institutionalized was a similar transfer of charisma from individual founding figures like Lama Zhang to the Bka' brgyud pa order itself.

This was especially important for an order that, at least in its earliest century, strongly downplayed discursive understanding and bookish approaches to the Dharma. Thus, of all the various things that could have been said to ensure the transgenerational continuity of a religious tradition—material culture, for instance (buildings, *stūpas*, shrines, statues, texts, paintings, clothing, religious implements), or inherited practices (ritual observances, pilgrimage traditions, customary social ties between lay and monastic communities), or more formal transmission mechanisms (monastic regulations, ordination procedures, doctrines, etc.)—none was considered to be as important as the transmission of this incorporeal spirit-substance. Blessings were the sparks of inspiration, power, and courage that were the real transmission of the charismatic lama, and Lama Zhang's writings are filled with countless blessing experiences, accompanied by the constant refrain: this is the only thing that ensures spiritual progress; scholastic learning, reciting of mantras, performance of offerings and rituals—these are all ineffectual in the absence of a blessing from the lama. This is why the personalized instructions of the lama (*gdams ngag*) were considered more important even than canonical texts: they were the word-packets in which resided the blessing energy. Charisma thus anchored the present in the past: it allowed the present practitioner to participate in the full blessing-power of the buddhas and the past masters of the tradition. It thus helped to bind communities not only spatially by creating dense attraction patterns around a lama, but also temporally, linking up a temporal continuum of masters in a way that mere scholarly teachings could not.

Just as spatial spread and densification facilitated the process of group demarcation and consolidation by arraying religious communities around different charismatic centers, so lineage also helped groups distinguish

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<sup>30</sup> Weber 1978, 1135–36.

themselves from each other by connecting respective members to different histories—thus conferring upon them distinct identities based in family-like relationships to past charismatic masters. Following up on Lefebvre's idea of "spatial practices," we might speak here by analogy of "temporal practices"—of which lineage-building is a prime example—which produce the social time of Bka' brgyud pa historical consciousness, linking the present to a meaningful past.

#### D. *The Symbolic Dimension: Territory, Tradition, Text, and Identity*

We have seen how the institutionalization of monastic communities organized around charismatic lamas like Lama Zhang effected a slow takeover of Central Tibetan society by Buddhist discourses. In particular, I have sought to underscore the importance of space- and time-articulating practices in this takeover. But when we look more closely at the complicated manner in which spaces and times—territories and traditions—are produced, we begin to see that there was more to the achievement of Buddhist hegemony than the bare occupation of space and time. Or rather, the occupation of space and time could not have been accomplished without a third element—what Laclau and Mouffe emphasize in their neo-Gramscian synthesis, the *symbolic* or *discursive* component of hegemony.<sup>31</sup> Without it, a group would be a mere aggregate and a tradition a welter of irrelevant past connections: there would be no social cohesion and there would be no group identity. Without command of this component, a ruler like Lama Zhang could secure governance only through force. This is the dimension evoked by poet Joseph Brodsky when he writes that

[E]mpires are held together by neither political nor military forces but by languages. . . . Empires are, first and foremost, cultural entities; and it's language that does the job, not legions.<sup>32</sup>

##### 1. *Territory: Space Hegemonized*

The importance of the discursive/symbolic can be seen first of all when we look again at the manner in which the Tshal pa Bka' brgyud pa took over the territory of Lhasa—a process already described in Chapters Four and Five. Of course they occupied physical space—they fought with neighboring groups, they seized building materials, they restricted access to areas,

<sup>31</sup> Laclau and Mouffe 2001, pp. 105–14.

<sup>32</sup> Brodsky 1986, 309.

they enforced laws—but this was not all they did. Holding the Lhasa area required taking control of—*mastering*—a symbolic dimension of space as well. This is implied in the geomantic schema that pictured Lhasa as a “sacred *maṇḍala*”: a *maṇḍala* is not just a diagram; it is a symbolically and spiritually charged space. As such, it could only truly be mastered by a lama, by a tantric adept. And nothing signified Tshal pa control of the Lhasa *maṇḍala* so emphatically as Lama Zhang’s commandeering of the symbolism of the Jo khang and the Jo bo, and all of the attendant guardian and other deities, in support of his rule of Lhasa.

In this regard, we should recall the mammoth—almost cinematic—spectacle described in Chapter Five above that was marshaled, significantly, at the very time Zhang was beginning to wonder whether his military adventures might not be inconsistent with his bodhisattva vows. It was at that time that the duo of wrathful deities associated with the Jokhang, Dpal ldan lha mo and Mahākāla, along with the Jo bo Śākyamuni, appeared before Zhang to assure him that everything he had done was fully justified, then led him on a triple circumambulation of the Jo khang temple, accompanied by soldiers and masses of followers, climaxing with dazzling displays of light throughout Lhasa.<sup>33</sup>

This event was clearly calculated to seal Zhang’s symbolic rights to rule over the Lhasa area, and in it the religious symbols of Buddhist tantra were mobilized in support of the Tshal pa physical occupation of, and political rule over, the area of Lhasa and its environs. Insofar as this symbolic appropriation of a sacred space was also political, it seems appropriate to call it “ideological” as well.

There are many other occasions where we see how an appropriation of the symbolic means of rulership accompanied Zhang’s territorial appropriations—usually with the support of, or through negotiations with, chthonic or wrathful deities. There was, for example, the land grant of all of the territories of Central Tibet made to Zhang by the queen of the aquatic *klu* deities in a joint vision of Zhang and his political successor Dar ma gzhon nu, discussed at the close of Chapter Four above.<sup>34</sup> There was the vision he had of Cakrasaṃvara, related in Chapter Two, that indicated to him the site of Yang dgon monastery.<sup>35</sup> There was the vision he had of Mahākāla during the building of Gung thang monastery (Chapter Five),

<sup>33</sup> *Zin bris*, 54b–55a.

<sup>34</sup> *Ngar phug ma’i zhus lan*, Shedup VII.3–7.

<sup>35</sup> *Lho rong chos ’byung*, 192.

in which the deity offered him juniper from Yer pa for his new building.<sup>36</sup> And, finally, we should mention the still imperfectly understood notion of “sealing” (*rgya*) territories. This was repeatedly invoked as part of the triad “yoke,” “seal,” and “law”—considered to be defining activities of a Lord of the Teachings. Furthermore, while no tantric deities appear outright in connection with Zhang’s “sealing” activities, in its contemporary form—as reported by anthropologist Toni Huber—“sealing” a space explicitly involves the invocation of wrathful tantric deities.<sup>37</sup> Caution, of course, should be exercised in using contemporary materials to make inferences about the past, but there are enough territory-related interactions between Zhang and tantric deities to make it likely that Zhang’s “sealing” possessed, alongside its obvious political meaning, a related tantric symbolic dimension, and that traffic with wrathful deities would have played a part in the practice.<sup>38</sup>

## 2. *Tradition and Text: Time Hegemonized*

Just as a *territory* like Lhasa or Tshal was not simply a bare piece of land but rather a symbolically charged space, in the same way, a *lineage* like the Bka’ bgyud pa-s, *qua* tradition, was more than just a string of pre-existing historical antecedents: it was above all a symbolic or discursive system of actively forged links to the past. This I have already discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, where I showed how the establishment of a lineage tradition required the creation of a symbolic representation of the past—an abstract “family tree” built by making a radical selection from a veritable clutter of past lama-disciple relationships.

We have seen as well, in Chapter Three, the importance of new literary genres in supporting the discursive construction of lineages and sects. I would like here to tie literary production a little more closely to these issues of Buddhist hegemony, group formation, tradition, and identity. Given that the symbolic/discursive element was such an important ingredient of the Buddhist wave that washed over Central Tibet in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is not surprising that textual production would have played a large part in this hegemonizing process.

<sup>36</sup> *Zin bris*, 54a.

<sup>37</sup> Huber 2004, 132.

<sup>38</sup> In this regard, it is interesting that an even earlier reference to “sealing” can be found in the biography of the eleventh-century translator Rwa lo tsā ba Rdo rje ‘grags. Rwa lo was notorious for using the “fierce” tantric practices associated with the deity Vajrabhairava against his political enemies. *Rwa lo tsā ba’i nram thar*, 100, 264.

This is a point we saw Janet Gyatso make in Chapter Three, where we noted the close connection between the growth of large institutions centered on charismatic lamas and the appearance of new literary genres, particularly biography and autobiography. “Both genres,” she wrote, “served to position a charismatic figure at the center of a religious establishment...”<sup>39</sup> The way these two genres accomplished this, Gyatso suggested, was by publicizing the great virtues of the lamas as a way of drawing patrons and disciples. If this was the case, then Zhang—an undisputed literary innovator in a position of strategic political and religious leadership at a critical juncture of Tibetan history—would make an ideal lens through which to look at the way this process played out. We have certainly seen some of what Gyatso spoke of within Lama Zhang’s life and writings, where, in the disciple-composed hagiographic works, the charismatic lama’s life—foretold in prophecies and prefigured in past incarnations—unfolded as a plotted drama progressing from miraculous birth and extraordinary childhood, to meetings with teachers, virtuosic yogic attainments, and realization, to a final culmination in the buddha activities of taming and bringing to fruition. We have seen it as well in Zhang’s autobiographical works, with their somewhat different narrative logic of multiple backslidings, sinful activities, the kindness of teachers, and eventual turnaround.

But we also saw in Chapter Three the more subtle ways in which biographies contributed to the construction of lineages *qua* traditions. There was, for example, the series of hagiographic works that Zhang composed. This series—regarded by Schaeffer, as noted in the Introduction, as a precursor to the later, more formal anthologies of Bka’ brygud pa lama biographies known as “Golden Rosaries”<sup>40</sup>—consisted of biographies of Zhang’s Indian and Tibetan predecessors in the Bka’ brygud pa lineage. It is interesting in this regard that, while Zhang wrote biographies of five of his immediate teachers—Sgom tshul, Rgwa lo, etc.—he composed only one biography per generation for the teachers of the preceding generations: that is, he selected only one of Sgom tshul’s teachers, Sgam po pa, then one of Sgam po pa’s teachers, and so forth, all the way back to Tailopa and Vajradhara. He therefore carried out, through his choice of hagiographies to write, the very process of selection singled out above as constitutive of a tradition. A table of contents of his hagiographies would thus itself

<sup>39</sup> Gyatso 1998, 120.

<sup>40</sup> Schaeffer 2000, 362.

be an abstract representation of the standard Bka' bgyud pa lineage tree, a symbolic reduction of the multiplicity of past connections to a "string of pearls" à la McRae.<sup>41</sup> Later, the Golden Rosary collections would serve a similar function as implicit structural statements about the historical continuity and genealogical integrity of the Bka' bgyud sect.

But we have also seen in Chapter Three, through analysis of Zhang's literary productions, that biographies and autobiographies did not operate alone in this work of cementing sectarian relationships and holding together large institutions. In fact, as I have already argued in the same chapter, Tibetan biographies and autobiographies cannot as a rule be understood in isolation from neighboring genres such as eulogies, supplications for blessings, instructions to disciples, and lists of teachings received, for these outwardly dissimilar literary forms made up a *genre family*, related not at the superficial formal level, but in terms of their "textual economies." It was therefore not single genres such as autobiography that upheld the institution of charismatic lamas and their dependent organizations, but the whole family network of related genres.

Works within these genre families did more than just advertise the virtues of a lama (though of course they did this as well): they also played a crucial part in the symbolic fixation of lineages through the selecting out and highlighting of the significant links within an otherwise bewildering plethora of past teacher-disciple relationships, thereby creating a symbolic or discursive continuity. We saw this most clearly in Lama Zhang's lists of teachers and teachings—which laid out his spiritual pedigree explicitly—but also in the verses of praise and supplication to past lamas, which, like the hagiographical lineage biographies, performed the same task less directly, through their literary form rather than their explicit content.

The strong family affinities between these lineage-affirming works and the lama hagiographies suggest that the writings may have been circulating through similar textual economies, and hence tied to similar practice contexts—a relationship that could not be guessed by looking at the surface formal properties of these seemingly unrelated genres. In this case, the practice contexts—rituals of lama invocation and praise, *gurupujā* and deity-yoga *sādhana* practices, ceremonial petitions for blessings to past lamas of the tradition—would have added a striking communal and performative dimension to the use of the texts, one that defined a

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<sup>41</sup> McRae 2003.



textual community quite different from those of modern solitary readers of biographies.<sup>42</sup>

Attention to the specific practice contexts with which these texts were associated might bring to light further ways in which the family of lineage-affirming/hagiographical texts strengthened sectarian cohesion: for example, by reinforcing *sectarian identities*. The practices in question here all had a very strong identity-affirming aspect, being collective rituals of supplication, meditation, worship, praise, and remembrance, which upheld and promoted group allegiance by summoning individual practitioners to act out their membership in a family-like tradition extending backward in time to the buddhas themselves. These forms of ritual participation, insofar as they implicated participants into power-infused relationships governed by group loyalty and identity, make excellent examples of the ideological process Althusser calls “interpellation”—the positioning of persons as particular sorts of subjects, i.e. the conferring of identities, by “addressing” or “hailing” them in a particular manner.<sup>43</sup> We might mention as well both the standard Buddhist and the special tantric Buddhist ordainment and initiation procedures, which also seem to play on the biological family trope, working in part to strip novices of their family identities and initiate them into a new family of sons and daughters of the Buddha.

The same could be said for other families of texts we looked at—for example, the one that includes lama-disciple instructions and certain types of autobiographies (see Chapter Three). Here, too, the context within which these texts took their meaning—close lama-disciple relationships, small-group retreats, face-to-face meditation instructions, and collective spiritual aspiration—would have been equally important as shapers of individual and group identities. We might recall in this regard Gyatso’s discussion (see Chapter Three) of the importance—from the standpoint of selfhood—of the complex interplay of “recognition” that went on between and among lamas and disciples.

Again, because of their more directly practical nature, texts like meditation instructions are less likely to be viewed as independent “literary”

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Beyer 1978, xii: “Buddhism is basically a performing art.”

<sup>43</sup> “[I]deology ‘acts’ or ‘functions’ in such a way that it ‘recruits’ subjects among the individuals..., or ‘transforms’ the individuals into subjects...by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: ‘Hey, you there!’” Althusser 1971, 174.



works. But, once again, taking note of the striking family resemblances between these and the more “literary”-seeming works like Zhang’s *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* allows us to see how even the latter, though less obviously practical in import, also derived much of their meaning from their relationship to these identity-conferring practice contexts. In this particular case, we are afforded a more nuanced take on autobiography as it relates to subjectivity and selfhood, for it should be clear from the practice context that the identities in question in, for example, the *Shes rab grub pa ma Autobiography* would have gone beyond the identity of the author alone, and that the autobiography would have been more than just an advertisement for Zhang. The subjectivities in formation belonged as well to the whole group, having been shaped within the ideologically charged recognition dialectic that unfolded under the watchful eye of the charismatic lama-leader, and in which could be discerned the subtle ways in which texts were produced, circulated, and used within the Tshal pa religious circles.

This is obviously just scratching the surface of the textual practices surrounding Lama Zhang and the early Tshal pa-s, and much work remains to be done. Our knowledge of twelfth-century Central Tibet is slight compared to our knowledge of, say, seventeenth-century Central Tibet, and obviously more texts from the period need to be catalogued, translated, and analytically marked up. But at the same time, it seems to me that the issue is as much one of orientation as of volume of research. The textual effects I have been looking at are not hidden, but from the standpoint of literary theory or philology, they are barely visible. For this reason I propose—not as a replacement for, but as a complement to, traditional textual studies—a future research agenda directed towards filling out our extremely sketchy knowledge of twelfth-century manuscript cultures and textual economies, one that shifts, in D.F. McKenzie’s words,

from questions of authorial intention and textual authority to those of dissemination and readership as matters of economic and political motive and of the interaction of text and society as an important source of cultural history.<sup>44</sup>

This is a shift that has, over the past few decades, yielded much fruitful work within the disciplines studying European and American book

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<sup>44</sup> McKenzie 1986, 6.

culture,<sup>45</sup> and I believe a similar approach within Tibetan studies would be extremely beneficial.<sup>46</sup> If we ground our literary categories on a view of texts as full-scale participants in the material and social world—rather than as ideal objects residing in an immaterial space of meaning (though they are that as well)—we put texts back into the world, back into the concrete situations and reading communities that give them life. It is here that I believe we would see the complicated ways in which texts were implicated in the hegemonizing processes of spatial appropriation, tradition-building, and identity-formation that made the Tshal pa-s such a political and religious powerhouse.

## II. “LORD OF THE TEACHINGS” REVISITED

Afterwards, I became Lord of the Teachings.  
 If I decline, the teachings decline.  
 If I flourish, the teachings flourish.  
 I am the measure of the teachings  
 If my teachings were to degenerate,  
 the many obedient who rely upon me would perish.  
 They would be carried into the meadowlands by the wind.  
 The laypeople would be stripped naked.  
 The many small monasteries would be conquered by force.  
 The land of injury and death would fill up.  
 If, in spite of the anguished cries from the slaughter  
 of every fish, deer, fowl, etc.,  
 people cannot bear to protect them,  
 many living creatures of the thousand realms will be destroyed.

—Lama Zhang, *The Heart of the Sun That Benefits [All Sentient Beings]: Ascertaining the Profound and Vast Meaning, the Great Quintessence of the Intention of All of the Buddhas of the Three Times.*<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup> For a primer on “book history” as a growing interdisciplinary project, see Howsam 2006. Also, Finkelstein and McCleery 2005. Moretti 2005 suggests inventive ways we might use large data sets to graph trends in textual economy that traditional “literary criticism” or philology cannot even begin to approach.

<sup>46</sup> An encouraging step in this direction is Schaeffer 2009—really the first extensive treatment of Tibetan literature from a book-history perspective.

<sup>47</sup> *phyis nas bstan pa'i bdag por song/ kho bo nub na bstan pa nub/ kho bo dar na bstan pa dar/ bstan pa'i nya ga kho bo la/ ... kho bo'i bstan pa nyams dmas na/ blo gtad kha nyan mang po zhig/ na ma gcig la lung pos khyer/ ser chags rnams la gcer bshus 'ong/ dgon bu mang po brdungs kyis 'joms/ snad yar dang shi chad kyi lung pa 'gengs/ nya dang ri dwags bya la sogs/ re re'i srog gcod kyi skad ngan yang/ mi bsrung bzod glags mi 'dug na/ stong khams kyi srog chags mang po zhig/. *Phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*, Shedup II.543.*

The original “Lord of the Teachings” was, of course, Śākyamuni Buddha. We see, for example, Zhang’s disciple Nam mkha’ ‘od referring to the “great cast statue of the Lord of the Teachings, Śākyamuni.”<sup>48</sup> In Chapter Four we looked at the way in which Zhang was identified with Śākyamuni Buddha through a complicated system of correspondences, wherein:

Zhang’s birthplace = the Buddha’s birthplace  
 Lhasa = Vajrāsana in Bodhgayā  
 Zhang = the Jo bo  
 Zhang = the Great God statue at Gung thang  
 the Jo bo statue = the Great God statue  
 Gung thang temple = the Jo khang temple, etc.

This system would be extended greatly in the centuries to come—a convincing demonstration of the importance Zhang held in the political imaginary of later Lhasa rulers—acquiring further equations such as:

Third Dalai Lama = Lama Zhang  
 Fifth Dalai Lama = Lama Zhang

and, interestingly, some retroactive equations:

Lama Zhang = Āryadeva  
 Lama Zhang = Lha tho tho ri gnyan btsan  
 Lama Zhang = Srong btsan sgam po<sup>49</sup>

These equations, of course, pick up and extend that same logic of equivocal chaining that helped pull the multiple discourses and narratives of rulership together around Zhang in the first place.

Hence, the role of Lord of the Teachings—the figure of Lama Zhang as a latter-day Śākyamuni—might be thought of as the central unifying symbol within the complex and extensive system of correspondences and equivalences that enabled the Tshal pa-s to hegemonize mid-twelfth-century Lhasa and to hold and extend this hegemony for another century and a half after Zhang’s death.

The Lord of the Teachings, as embodied in Lama Zhang, is the consummate master (*bdag po*), ruling by means of his superior power and charisma:

- He is the *master of sentient beings*, compassionately taming them according to their needs: subjugating demons and harmful deities, bringing

<sup>48</sup> bstan pa’i bdag po shag thub kyi lugs sku chen po. *Zin bris*, 70b.

<sup>49</sup> See “Kirtipunya”’s *Gro mgon zhang gi rnam thar gsol ‘debs srid gsum bla ma*, Shedup VI.93.

humans to right behavior and correct understanding of the Dharma. At the same time, he is Protector of Beings (*'gro ba'i mgon po*), giving the “gift of fearlessness” (*mi 'jigs pa'i shyin pa*) through outwardly “worldly” activities. (Chapter Four)

- He is the *master of physical and social space* through his activities of building, maintaining, protecting, yoking, sealing, and law enforcement. (Chapters Four and Five)
- He is the *master of sacred space*, binding territories through his ritual expertise. (Chapter Four and Five)
- He is the *master of time and history*, through his possession of a spiritual pedigree, based on the blessings handed down through a lineage of past masters. (Chapter Two)
- He is the *master of religious style* (*chos lugs*), understanding implicitly that staying power resides not so much in intellectual positions, in doctrines and systems, but in a total religious outlook—a style—that holds realization, doctrine, ritual, and symbols together in an integrated whole. (Chapter Two)
- He is the *master of narrative and rhetoric*, taming beings through his extensive knowledge of the full panoply of means of expression, his knowledge of the different types of beings with their different temperaments and needs, and his ability to choose the form of expression—whether verbal or nonverbal—that is perfectly suited to a particular type of being. (Chapters Two and Three)
- He is the *master of symbols*, taking charge of the preeminent symbol of Buddhism in Tibet, the Jo khang temple, as well as the many symbols of Indian tantric Buddhism, using them as instruments of hegemony, working both at the material as well as the discursive and ideological level. (Chapters Three and Four)

Most of all, he is master of what I have come to think of as the Tshal pa *ruling machine*: that whole ensemble of mobilized forces—a heterogeneous mix of persons, spaces, histories, buildings, statues, deities, texts, religious artifacts, animals, weapons, and religious discourses—that he, as befitting a larger-than-life man of power, pulled together into a unity by means of charisma, magic, myth, symbol, and narrative. Lhasa would not see the likes of it again until the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama, and when they did see another such machine, it would—as the Great Fifth himself acknowledged—owe much to its predecessor machine. This is Lama Zhang's legacy; this is what has survived him.



## APPENDICES



APPENDIX ONE

CONTENTS AND BACK MATTER/COLOPHONS TO VOLUMES 1–7  
OF THE SHEDUP-NAMGYAL 2004 EDITION  
OF LAMA ZHANG'S *COLLECTED WORKS*\*

*Dpal ldan tshal pa bka' brgyud kyi bstan pa'i mnga' bdag zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa'i gsung 'bum rin po che: The Collected Works of Zhañ brtson 'grus grags pa 1123–1193. 9 volumes. Edited by Khenpo Shedup Tenzin and Lama Thinley Namgyal. Kathmandu: Shree Gautam Buddha Vihar, 2004.*

KA (VOLUME 1)

ka ka

dpal ldan tshal pa bka' brgyud kyi bstan pa'i mnga' bdag zhang g.yu brag pa brtson 'grus grags pa'i gsung 'bum rin po che'i dkar chag baiDUrya'i do shal rang nyid (25 folios) 1–48

ka kha

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i gsung gsol 'debs bstod pa'i skor (32 folios) 49–112

1. gsol 'debs [chen] mo gnad du skyol ba'i rdo rje gra thang ma I.51

skal pa dang ldan pa'i gang zag la byin rlabs mi 'jug mi srid pa'i gsol 'debs/  
chos 'khor grwa thang gi gtsug lag khang du shAkya'i dge slong brtson  
'grus 'bar gyi don du sbyar ba'o/ gnad du skyol ba'i rdo rje'o/

2. gsol 'debs pho nya myur mgyogs sam gnyis med thugs rje ma I.53

yid ches shing gsol ba rus pa'i gting nas btab na byin rlabs mi 'jug mi srid  
pa'i man ngag/

3. bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs dang po I.56

sprang ban zhang gis bka' brgyud la gsol ba btab pa'o/

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\* Back matter is enclosed in boxes. This may or may not consist of formal colophons.



bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs gnyis pa I.58

bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs zhang gis bkod pa'o/

4. rtsa ba'i bla ma bzhi'i gsol 'debs I.59

rtsa ba'i bla ma bzhi la dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas gsol ba btab pa'o/

5. rtsa ba'i bla ma drug la gsol 'debs pa I.61

bla ma drin can rnams la bstod cing gsol ba btab pa shAkya'i dge slong sna nam brtson 'grus grags pas/ tshal yang dgon gsar ma'i nang du bkod pa rdzogs so//

6. rtsa ba'i bla ma brgyud pa dang bcas pa la gsol ba 'debs pa bsil ba tshal ma I.63

sprang ban zhang gis rtza ba'i bla ma brgyud pa dang bcas pa rnams la gsol ba bsdus te btab pa stod lung mtshur gyi lha lung du bris so/

7. dwags po pa la bstod pa I.67

sna nam gyis slob dpon dwags po la bstod pa'o//

8. dpal rgwa lo la bstod pa u dum wa ra I.68–80

dpal rgwa lo la sna nam gyis bstod pa u dum wa ra zhes bya ba'o//

dpal la bstod pa gnyis pa I.72

dpal chen rgwa lo la/ sna nam sgom pa zhang gis bstod pa'o//

dpal la bstod pa gsum pa I.75

shAkya'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas bstod pa'o//

dpal rgwa lo la bstod pa bzhi pa I.76

sna nam zhang sgom gyis bstod pa'o// rtse gcig ting 'dzin ngang la rol phyir mngon shes ldan/ rang bzhin dmigs med rtogs dka' thugs chud sku gsum brnyes/ bden gnyis dbyer med mtha' bzhi spangs pa'i dbu mar bzhugs/ thugs rjes gzhan don rdzogs mdzad rje btsun dpal la 'dud//

9. dpal la smre gsol ba I.8o

dpal chen po rgwa lo la zhang gi sprang pos smre gsol ba'o//

10. dpal la yan lag bdun gyi sgo nas bstod pa I.83

dpal chen rgwa lo'i yon tan gyi rjes su 'brangs te sprang ban zhang gis smon lam btab pa'o//

11. rje yel [sic] pa ba la rigs gsum mgon po'i sgo nas bstod pa I.86

NO BACK MATTER

12. yang rje yel [sic] pa ba la bstod pa I.87

NO BACK MATTER

13. rje btsun rin po che sku mched la bstod pa I.92

bla ma rje btsun yer pa ba sku mched la gdung ba'i sems kyis bstod pa 'di/ shAkya'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas shing mo lug gi lo la/ rta mo ra tshal sgang gi dgon pa rmang bru ba'i dus su bkod pa'o//

14. rje yel [sic] pa ba la stod pa sh+lo ka gnyis pa I.94

rje rin po che la zhang gis bstod pa'o//

15. lhan skyes brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs I.94

sprang ban zhang gi gsol ba btab pa'i tshig/

16. lhan skyes don bstod I.95

dpal ldan lhan cig skyes pa la gnas lugs kyi sgo nas bstod pa/ lhan cig skyes pa'i don nges par mthong ba'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug bde ba'i rdo rjes bdud btul ba'i brag rdzong rdo rje'i rigs kyi kha dog can du mdzad pa'o/

17. phag mo ra lugs brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs I.99

NO BACK MATTER

18. sbyor drug brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs I.100

NO BACK MATTER

19. lam gsum brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs I.104

NO BACK MATTER

20. nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa dgos 'dod re skong ma I.108

rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po bde ba'i rdo rje la/ 'dod chags rdo  
rjes rnam thar gyi sgo nas bstod pa'o//

21. nyid la nyid kyis bstod pa byang mkhar ma I.111

NO BACK MATTER

### ka ga

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i gsung mdzad pa rnam thar gyi skor  
(127 folios) I.113–366

1. dpal tai lo pa'i rnam thar I.114
2. dpal nA ro pa'i rnam thar I.119
3. rje btsun mar pa'i rnam thar I.139
4. bla ma mi la ras pa'i rnam thar I.146
5. bla ma dwags po lha rje'i rnam thar I.159
6. bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar I.170
7. dpal chen po rgwa lo'i rnam thar I.181
8. bla ma gshen pa'i rnam thar I.222
9. rje yer pa ba'i rnam thar I.242
10. bla ma ba'i ro'i rnam thar I.284

rig pa'i 'byung gnas ma ga d+ha'i lho phyogs/ yul ko sa la'i grong khyer  
so na tha pu ri zhes bya bar rgyal rigs tsa ha nar sku 'khrungs pa'i brtul  
zhugs spyod pa'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po shrI bai ro tsa na  
la/ shAky'a'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas sgro skur med par bsngags  
pa'o//

11. brgyud pa sna tshogs I.293

- (a) theg pa chen po gsang sngags I.294
- (b) sbyor ba yan lag drug gi gdams ngag I.295
- (c) lhan cig skyes pa I.296
- (d) lam cig char ba dang/ rim gyis pa dang/ kha 'thor ba I.296
- (e) phyag rgya chen po thog babs I.297
- (f) dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i 'phags skor sgrub brgyud kyi gdams ngag I.298
- (g) snyan brgyud I.298

- (h) lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa I.299
- (i) jo mo rnal 'byor ma I.300
- (j) phyag rgya chen po dang nA ro'i chos drug I.300
- (k) dus gsum mnyam pa nyid dang/ bde mchog dpa' bo gcig pa la sogs pa dang/ gtor ma'i de nyid la sogs pa I.301
- (l) bir wa pa'i lam rgyas pa 'di I.302
- (m) do ha'i 'brel ba I.304
- (n) lhan cig skyes pa dang gtum mo I.304
- (o) rdo rje phag mo I.305
- (p) dpal dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa I.306

bla ma brgyud pa'i rim pa'i mtshan nas brjod pa'o// gang dag deng sang dus 'dir rab byung zhing/ sgrub pa gtso bor mdzad bzhed de dag rnams/ bstan pa'i gzhir gyur tshul khrims ma yengs srungs/ rtsod pa'i dus 'dir srung dka' 'gal rkyen mang/ bud med mthong ba'i dug can ring nas spongs/ 'byung nye rang dbang med par bdag brlag mchi/ rtsa ba bzhi la shi sbar ma 'thams na/ bsgrubs pas mi stongs ngan 'gro'i gnas su lhung / slob dpon ngag gi dbang phyug grags pa yang/ bud med reg pa'i dug gis zin la ltos/ zhang gi sprang ban bdag gi snying gtam yin/ tshul khrims gtsang na ci bsam thams cad 'grub/ ithi//

12. rtsa ba'i bla ma sna tshogs kyis 'thob byang I.307

NO BACK MATTER

13. nyid kyi rnam thar shes rab grub pa ma I.316

sgrags kyi khung phug rdzong du dge slong shes rab grub pa'i ngo ma bzlog nas smras pa/ phan sems kyis smras pa yin/ gzhan dang snang ba mi mthun/ gzhan la bstan na sdig pa sog/ yang deng sang dus 'di na rdo rje spun dang / chos pa dang / sgom chen pa nang la nang phan tshun skyon la rtog cing skyon med pa la skyon du sgrog pa'i dus chos bya ba'i dbang yang med mi bya ba'i dbang yang med/ bla ma rnams dang dbyen byed/ skye bo rnams kyi drung du mi snyan pa sna tshogs thabs sna tshogs kyis sgrog/ phrag dog gi khrod 'dir spyod par byung ste/ sngon gyi las ngan la bsams nas glod nas bzhag/ mi dang 'brel ba bskyungs/ mis ci ma tshor byas/ su ci zer yang chos dang ci mthun byas so/ lus srog thed la gzan/ bya bral rgyab tu skyur/ 'khri ba btsan chod byas/ zhe 'dod thams cad spangs/

ka nga

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i gsung bslab bya lag len gyi skor (168 folios) I.367–702

- 1. bya byed thams cad kyi sngon 'gro'i lag len I.368
- 2. skyabs 'gro sems bskyed shin tu bsdu pa I.376

3. sems bskyed kyi dngos gzhi'i cho ga I.379
4. sems bskyed kyi rnam bzhag dpal chen po rgwa lo las thob pa paN+Di ta a b+h+ya dang tsa mi'i bzhed pa thun mong ma yin pa I.385
5. bsnyen gnas kyi cho ga I.414
6. bla ma lam khyer bdun I.420
  - dang po I.420
  - gnyis pa I.426
  - gsum pa I.432
  - bzhi pa I.435
  - lnga pa I.439
  - drug pa I.441
  - bdun pa I.442
7. thun bzhi'i nyams len I.444
8. rgyun du bya ba'i chos spyod spyi'i lag len dpal 'dus nya ga che ba I.448
9. dpal 'dus nya ga chung ba I.475
10. spyan 'dren chen mo I.490
11. jo chung I.507
12. lhan chung I.509
13. ting chung I.511
14. lhan skyes dbang po rab 'bring tha gsum gyi mngon rtogs las
  - tha ma'i mngon rtogs I.513
  - 'bring gi mngon rtogs I.517
  - dbang po yang rab kyi mngon rtogs I.521
15. dpal rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i tshogs mchod gsal bar byed pa'i sgron ma I.530
16. jo mo'i lhan thabs gsal byed khams ston blo gros rdo rje'i ngor bkod pa I.543
17. byin rlabs dus kyi gtor ma I.551
18. dwags po 'dul 'dzin gyis zhus pa'i gtor ma'i lag len I.557
19. gsang ngags lag len I.588
20. bdag nyid chen mo'i [sic] tshogs gsog dpal nA ro pa'i rjes su 'brangs pa I.625
  - bdag nyid chen po'i tshogs gsog rnal 'byor dbang phyug mi la'i rjes su 'brangs pa I.635
  - bdag nyid chen po'i tshogs gsog ra lugs bkod pa I.625
21. gnas brtan mgon po'i don du mdzad pa'i zas kyi rnal 'byor I.641
22. lag tu blang ba'i rim pa ji lta bar bstan nas skye med du gtan la 'bebs par byed pa sna tshogs chos sku I.647
23. ro sreg thabs I.669
24. gshin gshin po'i bsngo ba I.675
25. bsngo ba'i yon bshad I.679
26. bsngo ba [sic] yon bshad shin tu bsdus pa I.687
27. rab gnas mdo lugs bsdus pa I.688
28. bum pa'i cho ga dang thig I.696
29. dgon gnas dang khang bzang bkra shis par byed pa'i man ngag I.699

NO BACK MATTER
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ka ca

theg pa che chung grub mtha'i skor las/ chos spyi'i stong thun gleng gzhi chen mo  
rgyas bsdsu gnyis (16 folios) I.703-734

NO BACK MATTER

ka cha

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ rang blo'i skyon sel sa bcad dang bcas  
pa (17 folios) I.735-768

grub mtha'i skyon sel gyi sa bcad I.760

dkon mchog gsum gyi bkra shis mdo las byung ba rnams I.766

#### EDITORS' COLOPHON:

oM swa sti/ tshad med snying rje'i mkha' klong yangs po ru/ lung rtogs yon  
tan rgyu skar 'bum bkra zhing/ gzhan don 'od stong 'gyed pa'i bsil zer can/  
'gro mgon g.yu brag pa la phyag 'tshal lo/ khyod nyid gdong dmar bod kyi  
yul gru 'dir/ dkar brgyud b an pa'i rgyal mtshan 'dzin pa'i phyir/ bsam bzhin  
mi yi sha tshugs bzung nas kyang/ dri med rgyal ba'i bstan la thos bsam  
dang/ khyad par mnyam med dwags po sgom tshul sogs/ dam pa'i bshes  
gnyen gtsug gis gus bsten nas/ thos don sgom la gcig tu gzhol sogs kyi/  
sgrub brgyud bstan pa'i srol bzang 'dzin mdzad cing/ lha mi yongs kyi bsod  
nams mchod sdong du/ tshal gung gtsug lag khang chen rten brten pa/ legs  
par bskrun dang zhi drag sna tshogs pa'i/ phrin las rgya mtshos gdul bya  
smin par mdzad/ lhag par rang gis rnyed pa'i lam bzang la/ skal ldan gzhan  
yang 'jug phyir zab don gyi/ gdams pa'i tshogs rnams lhug par bstan pa yi/  
gsung 'bum yid bzhin dbang gi rgyal po bskrun/ tshul de phral yun gnas  
dang gdul bya la'ang/ phan phyir bla ma phrin las rnam rgyal dang/ mkhan  
po bshad sgrub bstan 'dzin rnam gnyis nas/ glegs bam gsar bzhengs mdzad  
pa'i dge ba'i mthusb/ thub bstan yang snying don brgyud 'brug pa yi/ ring  
lugs mi nyams phyogs bcu kun khyab cing/ bstan 'dzin mtha' dag zhabs  
zung rdo rje ltar/ nam yang g.yo med dge mtshan 'bar gyur cig/ khyad par  
skyabs mgon 'brug pa'i mtshan can dang/ skyabs rje 'dzi sgar mchog sprul  
rnam gnyis kyi/ gsang ba gsum gyi nyer 'tshe kun zhi nas/ bstan 'gror sman  
pa'i mdzad phrin rgyas gyur cig/ don brgyud bstan la lhag bsam zhabs tog  
mkhan/ bla ma phrin las rnam rgyal kun mched kyang/ tshe mtha' yas pa'i  
ngo bor zhabs brtan cing/ thugs bzhed phrin las lhun grub 'byung gyur cig/  
tshul 'dir dngos dang brgyud nas lhag bsam gyis/ zhabs 'deg legs sgrub  
'brel thogs rnams pa yang/ gnas skabs mthar thug chos ldan don grub ste/  
legs tshogs yon tan gong du 'phel gyur cig/ gzhan yang 'jig rten kun tu bde  
skyid kyi/ dga' ston chen po'i khyab cing 'gro ba kun/ byang chub sems kyi  
rang rgyud legs sbyangs nas/ sku gsum thar pa'i zhing du bsgrod par shog/  
ces zhu dag dang chabs cig 'dzi grwa 'jam dbyangs nas sngon gyi ma dpe'i  
smon tshig la kha bsgyur cung zad bgyis te bal yul rang byung sprul pa'i  
mchod rten rin po che'i nye 'dabs 'brug dkar gsung rab nyams gso khang  
nas bkod pa dge legs 'phel// // bkra shis// oM ye d+har+mA he tu pra b+ha  
wA he tun+te ShAn+ta thA ga to h+ya wa data/ te ShAny+tsa yo ni ro  
d+ha e waM bA di mahA shra ma NaH swA hA// sar+ba mang+ga laM//

## KHA (VOLUME 2)

**kha ka**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ gzhi lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa gtan la 'bebs par byed pa grub mtha' tshig gsum (50 folios) II.1–100

grub mtha' tshig gsum 'phrul gyi lde mig/ gcig shes kun la mkhas pa gzhi lam 'bras bu gsal bar byed pa 'di/ slob ma chos la gnas pa dad pa che ba/ ser sna chung ba/ bla ma la gus pa/ dam tshig bsrung ba/ zab don go ba/ dge slong g+hirti sing has dbu mdzad pa snod ldan 'ga' zung gi don du dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas yi ger bkod pa rdzogs so//

**kha kha**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ bden gnyis zung 'brel sa bcad dang bcas pa (98 folios) II.101–296

bden gnyis zung 'brel gyi sa bcad II.281

bden gnyis zung du 'brel ba'i bsdus don rtsom pa po nyid kyis bkod pa rdzogs so/ shub+haM//

**kha ga**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa'i nying phugs chen mo zab pa dang rgya che ba'i don gtan la 'bebs par byed pa phan byed nyi ma'i snying po (177 folios) II.297–650

dgongs pa thams cad kyi spyi mdzod chen mo'i phugs kyi nying phugs rgyal po'i rgyal po chen po zhes bya ba/ g.yo ru'i 'khrug pa chen po'i lo la/ bzang yul mon pa gdong du dbu btsugs/ ya snar gzhung bskyangs/ grwa thang du tshar bar byas pa rdzogs so// shub+haM//

**kha nga**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ rnal 'byor lam gyi rim pa sa bcad dang bcas pa (21 folios) II.651–692

rnal 'byor lam rim gyi sa bcad II.683

sprang ban zhang gi dga' la re'i yig chung tshigs bcad dang/ tshig lhug pa dang/ 'dres ma phra men gyi tshig la sogs pa tsab ra tsub ra mang po bris nas bdog/ la la sngon chos dang dge sbyor pag pig gi dus/ la la de bas drag pa'i dus su bris/ dga' la re yin/ sdig pa mi bsags par zhu'o/ mang+ga laM//

**kha ca**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ rnal 'byor lam gyi rim pa nyi ma'i snang ba (34 folios) II.693–759

rnal 'byor lam gyi rim pa nyi ma snang ba zhes bya ba bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas nye bar sbyar ba'o//

## GA (VOLUME 3)

## ga ka

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ phan byed rab gsal nor bu'i phreng ba (19 folios) III.1–38

bdag la shes thos gzhan la phan pa'i mthu med kyang/ gong ma'i gsung  
la brten pa'i tshig 'ga' yi ger bkod pa las/ bsod noms gang des nam  
mkha'i mtha' mnyam sems can rnams kyi ni/ rang rang lam grol chen  
po phyag rgya che rtogs rgyal gyur cig/ brtson 'grus grags pas nye bar  
sbyar ba'o/ sems can thams cad kyi don du gyur cig//

## ga kha

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ 'phrang mgo btsad po la gsungs pa'i  
gdams pa dgos pa kun tshang (68 folios) III.39–174

sprang ban zhang gis rje rgyal btsad po la gdams pa kun tshang thugs  
kyi ngyen po zhes bya ba/ rgyal po nyid kyi pho brang yang rtse'i steng  
du dbu btsugs nas/ sgrags kyi ngar phug tu gzhung bskyangs te/ tshal  
gyi yang dgon du tshang bar bkod pa'o/

## ga ga

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ dgongs pa bskang ba (29 folios) III.175–232

dgongs pa bskang ba'i gleng slong zhes bya ba/ sprang ban zhang gis  
'phrang po khra do'i snye 'tsher du dbu btsugs te/ le'u gnyis pa yan chad  
tshar nas/ sgrags kyi ngar phug tu gzhung bskyangs/ sgrags kyi phu chung  
gi lam brag phug tu tshar bar byas nas bkod pa yos bu'i lor dbyar zla tha  
chung gi tshes nyi shu gcig gi dgong mo tshar bar bkod pa yin no/

## ga nga

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ 'ja' sgom byang chub snying po'i don  
du mdzad pa'i tshoms kyi rim pa (36 folios) III.233–304

zhang gi sprang ban gyi/ yi ge nyog ring 'di/ slob ma 'ja' yis bskul/ tshig  
sdeb ma legs pa/ tshig phyir 'brangs pa yis/ gang zag rnams la mthol/  
don khog ma legs pa/ bla ma rnams la mthol/ 'di bris bsod noms des/  
bdag dang bu slob rnams/ phyin ci log spangs nas/ 'di bzhin spyod par  
shog/ zhang gi sprang ban dang/ rjes 'jug slob ma rnams/ tshe rabs  
thams cad du/ rab tu byung bar shog/ tshul khrims rnyog med cing/  
ma nyams mthar phyin shog/ byang sems mthar phyin nas/ gzhan don  
'bad med shog/ gnas lugs rtogs gyur nas/ rtse gcig 'bad med shog/bu  
slob skal ldan kun/ rtag tu dul bar shog/ tshigs su bcad pa'i tshoms so/  
sprang ban zhang chung gis 'ja' sgom byang snying gi phyir du/ ngan  
'dam ral gsum gyi dbus/ sri zhal gnyis kyi so mtshams/ byang mkhar gyi  
brag rtsi'i spyil por bris pa/ tshoms kyi rim pa zhes bya ba rdzogs so/ ji  
srid 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du/ yi ge 'di mi nub par dar zhing rgyas  
pa dang/ 'gro ba sems can thams cad la phan thogs par gyur cig//



**ga ca**

theg pa che chung gi grub mtha'i skor las/ byang chub sems kyi lag len sogs chos tshan drug (19 folios) III.305–342

1. byang chub sems kyi lag len III.306
2. 'dul ba'i lde mig III.310
3. khamstons rdo rje dbang phyug gis zhush pa'i zung 'jug gi don phyin ci ma log pa III.319
4. zung gsum ya drug gi gdams pa III.329
5. chos bgyad spong ba'i yig chung III.332
6. lam mchog bdud rtsi'i chu rgyun III.339

NO BACK MATTER

**ga cha**

'gro mgon g.yu brag pa'i gsung nyams len sgom khrid kyi skor (202 folios) III.343–746

1. rje btsun tai lo pa'i chos drug III.344

NO BACK MATTER

2. slob dpon shAka yes sku mched la gsungs pa'i khrid yig gsal ba'i sgron me III.357

dge ba'i bshes gnyen dam pa sku mched gnyis kyi ngo la/ khrid lugs shin tu gsal bar bgyis pa lags so/

3. slob dpon shAka yes la gsungs pa'i khrid yig bsdu pa III.368

NO BACK MATTER

4. ral sgom gyi don du sbyar ba'i khrid yig snying po'i don gtan la 'bebs pa III.372

NO BACK MATTER

5. phyag rgya chen po dbu snyung ma zhes bya ba thun mong ma yin pa'i snying gtam III.391

bla ma rin po che zhang g.yu brag pa'i snying gtam tshig gcig ma lags so/ sdig pa sog pas kun la ma ston cig/ gal che'o/ bu de las bdog re gsungs nas dbu snyung bzhes so//

6. phyag rgya chen po mtshon par byed pa'i man ngag III.393

'di bris dge ba gang yin des/ phyag rgya chen po rtogs par shog/ phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag dge slong ri khrod pa'i don du mdzad pa/

7. phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag mthar thug don gyi snying po mdor bsdus pa III.402

phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag brjed byang 'di/ dad ldan blo dman 'ga' yis bskul gyur pas/ sna nam ban chung bdag gis bris pa yi/ dge ba gang des 'gro ba rgyal gyur cig/phyag rgya chen po mtshon par byed pa'i yi ge ban chung zhang gis zin bris su bsdebs pa/

8. stag sgom la gsungs pa'i gnad kyi man ngag III.417

pha rgan zhang gi snying gtam sprugs/ the tshom ma za gzhan don mdzod/ ma lus sdug byur yin snyam na/ skyid 'dod le lo'i bdud byung bas/ shin tu sdug byur nyams su longs/ zhang gi sprang ban rnal 'byor pas/ grub thob mang po'i bcud bsdus nas/ mi tshe sgrub la bskyal ba yi/ byin rlabs zhugs pa'i rtogs pa yin/ theg pa kun gyi bcud bsdus nas/ bu la snying gtam sprugs pa yin/ dpal ldan stag sgom sgrub pa po/ de la the tshom ma za mdzod/ de ring nyid nas 'tsher yang ni/ gzhan la phan na gang yang gyis/ tshe smad 'di nas 'go btsugs nas/ ji srid nam mkha' gnas kyi bar/ 'tsher ba med par gzhan don gyis/ go cha chen po gyon par zhu/ nga yang rtso ba'i bla ma yin/ mi 'thad snyam pa ma sems shig/ yig tshas ras yug gcig las med/ pha spad gnyis kyi snying gtam yin/

9. gtsang pa rje brtsun sku mched la gsungs pa'i gnad kyi man ngag gnyis III.421

gnad kyi man ngag dang po III.421

gnad kyi man ngag gnyis pa III.427

sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam yin/ gtsang gi la stod stag ris su/ ston pa sku mched rnam gnyis kyi/ yab rgan don du bskul gyur pas/ gnad mchog bris te bskur ba yin/ gnad kyi man ngag bzang yul yar snar 'khrug pa'i dus su bkod pa'o//

10. gnad kyi man ngag thun mong ma yin pa III.431

mthar thug gi man ngag thun mong ma yin pa yin no/ mi la ma ston cig/

11. gra phu'i sa ston khri dga' la gsungs pa'i ting nge 'dzin gsum III.433  
 dang po III.433  
 gnyis pa III.435  
 ting nge 'dzin gsum pa III.436

ting nge 'dzin phyi ma/ slob dpon zhang gis bla ma sa ston khri dga' la  
 grwa thang nas bskur ba yin no/

12. gnas brtan grags seng la gsungs pa'i khrid III.437

NO BACK MATTER

13. dngos po'i don gnas lugs gtan la 'bebs par byed pa zhes bya ba'i gsung sgros  
 III.438

shAkyai dge slong ri khrod pas/ gzhan gyis gsol btab brjed byang 'di  
 bris pas/ 'gro ba rnams la phan thogs 'gyur ba dang/ bla ma rnams kyis  
 bzod pa mdzad par zhu//

14. dge bshes mkha' ru ba la gsungs pa'i snying gtam III.444

dge bshes pa nyid kyi thugs kyis mi khrel bar zhu'o//

15. bla ma pha ta zhes bya ba'i don du bkod pa'i phyag rgya chen po chig chod  
 III.448

phyag rgya chen po'i gdams ngag chig chod ma/ sprang ban zhang gis  
 sgrags kyi ri khrod dpal rdzong g.yu brag tu bla ma pha ta'i don du bkod  
 pa rdzogs so/

16. sgom ma mo chen mo'i ngo sprod snying gtam ma III.452

sgom ma mo chen mo 'di 'da' ka 'chi brod kyi gdams ngag snyan nas  
 snyan/ thugs nas thugs su brgyud pa/ grub thob nas grub thob tu zam  
 ma chad pa'i man ngag thun mong ma yin pa'o/ gzhan la spel du mi  
 rung ngo/ gsang thub par gyis shig/

17. bsam yas kyi yon bdag mo 'bum skyid la gsungs pa'i khrid III.454

chos skor brag dmar bsam yas su gsungs pa'o/ yi ger bkod pa la nyes pa  
 yod srid na bzod par gsol lo/

18. phyag rgya chen po thog babs dang/ thog babs kyi brda yi rtsa ba rgyab rten  
 dang bcas pa ral nag sgom pa'i don du mdzad pa III.456  
 thog babs kyi brda'i rtsa ba III.463  
 brda'i rgya rten III.487  
 phyag rgya chen po yas phub kyi gdams ngag III.490  
 rang bzhin bde drug III.492  
 phyag rgya chen po'i bskul ma dgu III.493

NO BACK MATTER

19. phyag rgya chen po don gsum gyis gtan la 'bebs pa III.493

NO BACK MATTER

20. zhal gdams gsum III.495  
 dang po III.495  
 zhal gdams gnyis pa III.495  
 zhal gdams gsum pa III.496

NO BACK MATTER

21. dge bshes sha mi dang/ dge bshes grwa pa dang/ gtsang pa jo btsun la sogs  
 pas zhus pa'i nyams myong gi gleng slong ring mo III.497

zhang gi sprang ban gyis/ rang gi myong tshod rnams/ bu bas lhag pa  
 yi/ slob ma'i don du bkod/ nyams myong ngag tu bton/ gsang ba bsgrags  
 srid na/ bla ma yi dam dang/ chos skyong tshogs la mthol/ 'di smras dge  
 ba des/ 'di mthong skal ldan gyis/ ye shes mthar phyin nas/ gzhan don  
 kun rdzogs shog/ sprang ban zhang gi gleng slong ring mo zhes bya ba  
 sgrags kyi khum phug rdzong du khyi'i lo la dge slong shes rab grub pa'i  
 ngo ma zlog nas yi ge sum cha gnyis lhag tsam der bris/ phyis kyi gleng  
 slong lhag ma rnams dbu ru skyi shod kyi tshal sgang du dge bshes 'dul  
 ba 'dzin pa sha mi dang/ dge bshes grwa pa dang/ dge bshes gtsang pa  
 jo btsun sku mched gnyis kyi ngor bris pa'o/ slob ma snying dang 'dra  
 ba re re tsam min pa su la yang mi bstan par zhu'o/ rgya rgya rgya rgya  
 rgya rgya rgya/ rgya rim pa bdun gyis btab bo/

22. phyag rgya chen po'i lam khyer III.513

'brel med kyi yig chung bris pa las/ dge ba bdag gis gang thob pa/ des  
 ni 'gro ba ma lus kun/ myur du rdo rje 'dzin gyur cig/ phy'a'o lung du  
 mdzad//

23. mal dbu dkar ba la gsungs pa'i man ngag gnyis pa III.527  
gnyis pa III.534

NO BACK MATTER

24. gnas brtan sga 'dra ba la gsungs pa'i khrid yig rim pa gsum III.535  
dang po III.536  
gnyis pa III.537  
gsum pa III.540

NO BACK MATTER

25. sku gsum gyi ngo sprod che ba III.543

rnam bzhag bdag 'dra dman pas mi rtogs kyang/ dam pa'i gsung dang  
lung gi rjes 'brangs nas/ sprang ban zhang gis phyogs mtshon tsam zhig  
bris/ mi shes skyon sogs mchis na bzod par bzhes/ de las dge ba cung  
zad bsags srid na/ bdag 'dra rmongs pa'i gdul bya gang yin la/ sku gsum  
don rtogs mngon gyur gzhan phan shog/ sku gsum gyi ngo sprod sprang  
ban zhang gis byang phyi 'brong bu spyi khungs su sbyar ba'o/

26. sku gsum ngo sprod chung ba III.555

zhang gi sprang ban gyis/ sku gsum ngo sprod byas/ nyes pa bzod par  
bzhes/ bsod nams 'gro la bsngo/ man ngag gi sku gsum/ rje btsun gyi  
zhal gyi gdams ngag/ sprang ban zhang gis yi ger bkod pa'o/

27. pha rol tu phyin pa'i don phyin ci ma log pa'i man ngag III.556

'bri klog sgom gsum byas na bla na med/ shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin  
pa'i don phyin ci ma log pa sgom pa'i man ngag/ bla ma gcig nas gcig tu  
brgyud pa'i byin rlabs kyi gnad kyis mi 'char mi srid pa'i man ngag thun  
mong ma yin pa'o/ skal med rnams kyis mthong na byin rlabs nyams te  
'gro bas gzhan la mi bstan pa'r mdzod/

28. dwags po'i chos bzhi'i ngo sprod III.558

rin po che'i gsung sgros man ngag tshig bzhi pa zhes bya ba/ zhang rin  
po ches che long tsam zhig yi ger bkod pa'o/

29. rnal 'byor rnam pa bzhi'i rnam bzhag khams pa mgon ston gyi don du mdzad pa III.568

rnal 'byor rnam pa bzhi'i sa mtshams 'di khams pa ston pa mgon ston gyis zhus nas sprang ban zhang rang gis bsgoms pa'i nyams thog nas phye ba/ skyi shod kyi tshal sgang du dbu btsugs nas/ zhal gyi ri'u chung gdong du stag gi lo'i ston zla 'bring po'i tshes bzhi'i nyin mo tshar bar bkod pa'o/ bsre bsad sus byed kyang mkha' 'gros chad pa chod/

30. rnal 'byor bzhi'i dbye ba III.582

rnal 'byor bzhi'i dbye ba'o/

31. rnal 'byor bzhi'i nyams 'char tshod III.587

NO BACK MATTER

32. rnal 'byor bzhi'i gnas lugs III.588

NO BACK MATTER

33. rnal 'byor bzhi'i ngo sprod chung ba III.596

NO BACK MATTER

34. shor sa bzhi'i ngos 'dzin lags III.598  
shor sa bzhi'i ngos 'dzin chung ngu III.603

shor sa bzhi ngo sprad pa rdzogs so/

35. gol sa bzhi'i ngos 'dzin III.605

gol sa bzhi rdzogs so/

36. na tsha bogs su 'don pa'i gzer dang po III.609  
nang sems kyi ro snyoms III.617  
gnyis pa 'chi ba grogs su 'khyer ba'i gzer III.626  
gsum pa bar chad dngos grub tu blang ba'i gzer III.644  
bzhi pa mtshan rtog rang sar grol ba'i gzer III.654  
lnga pa nyon mongs pa lam du slong ba'i gzer III.655

zhal shes gzhan rnams gdams ngag po ti'i gseb na snyan brgyud ma dang lhan du gda'o//

## 37. chos drug III.663

'di la yi ge byar mi rung ba la byas pa yin pas dam tshig la soms la su  
la yang ma bstan cig/ sus tshor yang bla ma'i bka' bcag pas dam tshig  
nyams nas ci byas cir mi btub pa 'ong ngo/ 'chi khar rang gi yi ge 'di me  
la sregs shig mis mthong du mi rung ngo/ rgya rgya rgya/

## 38. dkon mchog gsum gyi bkra shis mdo las byung ba rnams III.744

bkra shis dam pa des kyang deng 'dir legs shog/ sar+ba mang+ga laM//

## NGA (VOLUME 4)

## nga ka

chos nyams len du dril ba nges don kho na gtso bor ston pa'i skor la dum bu gsum  
las/ dang po man ngag chig lab ring mo sogs (224 folios) IV.1–448

## 1. mi rtag pa sgom pa'i man ngag chig lab ring mo IV.1

chig lab ring mo zhes bya ba bla ma zhang rin po che'i zhal gdams  
rdzogs so//

2. dge bshes jo sras dar ma seng+ges zhus pa'i lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i mchid  
tshig lhug pa IV.30

dge bshes jo sras dar ma seng+ges zhus pa'i lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i  
mchid tshig lhug pa'i sa bcad IV.77

mchid tshig lhug pa zhes bya ba dge bshes jo sras dar ma seng+ge'i  
gsung ma bcag par sprang ban zhang gis sgrags kyi chos phu'i rgod po  
brag tu bkod pa rdzogs so/

## 3. phyag rgya chen po lam zab mthar thug zhang gi man ngag IV.78

deng sang dus ngan chos pa rnams/ thos pas rang rgyud thul ba nyung/  
tshig tshogs mkhas kyang don ma rtogs/ phyir la nga rgyal rtsod pa  
'phel/ sgrub brgyud bla ma rje btsun rnams/ don gyi rjes su 'brangs te  
sgrub/ nga rgyal la sogs gtan spangs nas/ don rtogs lung rigs dgongs  
pa rdzogs/ tai lo pas ni nA ro la/ tshig gcig tsam yang ma gsungs te/  
lung rigs man ngag dang bcas kun/ ma lus nA ro'i thugs la rdzogs/ de  
phyir kho bo'i lab lob 'di/ khengs skyung la sogs kha spyang dang/ 'gal  
'brel rtsi dang zlos pa'i skyon/ ma brtags mu cor smras pa yin/ rang gi  
gdul byar gang bab la/ 'di yis phan pa srid pa'i mtha'/ mi khegs snyam  
nas bris pa yin/ lung rigs gdams ngag mi mthun pa/ tshig cig byung na  
mgo bo khos/ sprang ban zhang gi rtogs tshod 'di/ spar bu thul gyi brag  
sngon du/ nye gnas mar pas bskul nas bris/ mi la ma bstan sdig pa sog/  
bka' dang bstan bcos rnams dang ni/ bla ma rnams kyi dgongs pa dang/  
rang gi rtogs tshod gleng ba yin/

4. gces pa bsdu pa zhes bya ba g.yu brag tu mdzad pa IV.149

sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam lags/ skal med rnams kyi mthong bar  
mchi'o/ snying gi snying la gtad pa yin/ gces pa bsdu pa zhes bya ba  
g.yu brag gi spyil po'i gzims mal nas sprod pa rdzogs so//

5. chos lag len du dril ba zhes bya ba chos phur mdzad pa IV.155

chos lag len du dril ba chos phu'i rgod po brag tu bkod pa'o/

6. yid ches pa'i gnad bcu gsum bstan pa IV.162

NO BACK MATTER

7. mon mtsho sna'i gnas brtan spungs pa la gsungs pa'i snying gtam IV.167

gces pa'i bu la pha yis snying gtam tshig/ de las med kyis snying gi  
dkyil du zhog/ sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam gnas brtan spungs pa  
la gngang ba tshal gyi yang dgon du bkod pa/

8. gnas brtan sgom chen la gdams pa nya ga 'gag 'dus IV.168

sprang ban zhang gis gnas brtan sgom chen la gdams pa chos phu'i rgod  
po'i brag tu'o/

9. bdud rtsi bum phreng IV.172

zhang sgom rang gis rang la gdams pa bdud rtsi bum pa'i phreng ba  
zhes bya ba/ gong dkar mo'i brag phug tu bkod pa rdzogs so//

10. phra mo gcod pa'i gleng slong IV.187

de kun tshig tu ma shor ram/ go yul du yang ma shor ram/ snying nas  
nang du cer gyis blta/ phra zhing phra 'o bu tsho kun/ shin tu zab bo  
pha spad tsho/ phra mo bcod pa'i gleng slong sprang ban zhang gis  
'phrang po spang lung du bkod pa/

11. brda' bzhi don bzhi'i gdams pa IV.196

NO BACK MATTER

12. phyag rgya chen po brda' don rtsa 'grel IV.204

dge slong ri khrod pa'i mchid tshig gi bshad pa lags/ ithi//



13. yon tan rtsal mchog IV.212

yon tan rtsal mchog zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis phag gi lo la chos skor grwa thang du dbu btsugs nas bzang yul mon pa gdong du ston zla ra ba'i nyi shu gnyis kyi snga dro tshar bar bkod pa'o//

14. 'brong bu lkogs par gsungs pa'i man ngag lhug pa IV.236

ngan lam pa'i sprang ban zhang ston gyis rang nyid kyi gnyen por rang nyid la smras pa/ sri'i 'brong bu lkugs par bris pa dge//

15. 'khor 'das kyi rtsa ba gcod pa'i man ngag IV.291

rtsa ba gcod pa zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis lha sa sde bzhi'i nang/ dog bde phu'i mchor nag tu yon bdag phyug po rje btsun snang bas bteg pa'i dus su sems la shar nas bkod pa/

16. lam 'bras dril ba'i nyams len IV.301

lam 'bras dril ba'i nyams len//

17. sgom chen dar ma seng+ge'i zhus lan IV.302

sgom chen dar ma seng+ge la gsungs pa'i 'khyugs med gnad kyi gdams pa IV.303

sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam yin/ dar ma seng+ge'i sems la chongs/

18. gnas brtan mgon po la springs pa IV.307

gnas brtan mgon po la gsungs pa kun tshang nor bu rin chen IV.308  
thun mong ma yin pa'i nyams thams cad mkhyen pa IV.331

thams cad mkhyen pa zhes bya ba re'u rtsa ba'i gtsug lag khang du bsdebs pa'o/

19. chags sdang rtsad gcod IV.338

sprang ban zhang gi gdams ngag nying khu chags sdang rtsad gcod zhes bya ba rdzogs so/

20. bla ma dngos su byon pa'i gleng slong IV.341

bla ma dngos su byon pa'i gleng slong sprang ban zhang gis tshal gyi yang dgon du shar nas 'phrang po'i spang lung du yi ger bkod pa/

21. sgrub brgyud lam mchog phreng ba IV.350

sgrub brgyud lam mchog phreng ba 'di/ khams pa gcig gis bskul byas nas/ spang phu thul gyi brag sngon du/ slob ma'i 'dod chos bkod pa yin/

22. gsum gcig tu dril ba'i man ngag IV.377

gsum gcig tu dril ba'i gdams ngag rdzogs so//

23. snying gtam nyi shu pa IV.378

snying gtam nyi shu pa zhes bya ba/

24. 'od gsal nor bu'i phreng ba IV.382

sems nyid 'od gsal nor bu'i phreng ba zhes bya ba rdzogs so//

25. yid ches gleng slong IV.390

dur khrod chen por mchog brnyes pa'i/ dpal ldan rgwa lo'i zhal na re/ lus ngag yid gsum bya ba de/ thams cad yid kyis byed pa yin/ zhes gsungs pa yi bka' de la/ bu dbus pa ston chung nges shes skyes/ yid la 'thad cing gzhung dang mthun/ shin tu dga' nas 'di tsho bris/ 'gro kun nga 'drar yid ches par/ byin gyis brlab par mdzad du gsol/ dpal chen po rgwa lo'i dgongs pa la/ bu dbus pa sna nam ston chung gis shin tu yid ches pa'i sgo nas bkod pa/ yid ches gleng slong zhes bya ba sgrags kyi ngar phug tu bris pa/

26. man ngag snying po gsal ba IV.408

zab pa dang rgya che ba ma lus pa'i don gcig tu dril nas gsal zhing ma lus par bkod pa/ shAkya'i dge slong sna nam brtson 'grus grags pas skal pa dang ldan pa'i slob ma dbang po yang rab kyi don du tshal sgang gi yang dgon gsar pa'i nang du bkod pa/ man ngag gi snying po gsal ba zhes bya ba'o/

27. 'chi ba grogs su 'khyer ba'i snying gtam IV.419

sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam lags/ bshes gnyen pa yi thugs la zhog/

28. 'dud kyi mda' nyi shu rtsa lnga pa IV.421

bdud kyi mda' nyi shu rtsa lnga po 'di ma zhugs par byed pa gal che'o/

## 29. snying rje'i gтам blo brdeg IV.423

nga la ni myong bas grub pa yin/ nga rang gis myong tshod phyogs gcig  
tsam bris pa 'di la snying rje'i gтам blo brdeg ces ming gdags/ stag gi lo  
la yer par dbu rtse'i shug pa 'don du phyin tsa na ston zla ra ba'i tshes  
bco lnga'i nyin par spos kha'i 'og/ gдан sa'i deng rtse byang ngos su gtor  
ma'i byin rlabs kyi dus su blo la shar nas/ tshal du tshes bcu bdun gyi  
nyin par dbu btsugs nas sgrags kyi ngar phug tu ston zla 'bring po'i tshes  
bzh'i snga dro la 'phro bcad nas bzhag pa'o/ phyi mi la ma bstan/ shin  
tu sdig pa sog par 'gyur bas/ bka' rgyas gsha' mar btab bo/

## 30. yon tan ngom pa IV.440

ban chung zhang gi yon tan ngom pa'i le'u mig chung dgon par bkod  
pa'o/ rtogs pa phul phyin rje btsun rin po che/ nyams myong mthar  
phyin bla ma brtsun 'grus can/ yid bzhin nor bur gsol btab ci 'dod  
'byung/ man ngag rgya mtsho mnga' brnyes khyod la 'dud/

## nga kha

dum bu gnyis pa/ gnas skabs dang mthar thug gi don phyin ci ma log pa gтан  
la 'bebs par byed pa zhes bya ba'i rtsom chos sa log gnam log (142 folios)  
IV.449–731

1. ming dang tshig gi phu thag bcad pa'i le'u ste dang po IV.449
2. phugs thag phra mo gcig kyang ma chod pas phugs 'khor bar 'khyams pa'i le'u  
ste gnyis pa IV.454
3. phugs thag gcod pa ma legs na slar gol sa che bar bstan pa'i le'u ste gsum pa  
IV.455
4. phugs thag mi bcad par sangs mi rgya zhing gzhan don mthar ma phyin pas  
bar dor sgyid lug par bstan pa'i le'u ste bzhi pa IV.457
5. dben pa chen po'i ngang nas byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa'i le'u ste lnga  
pa IV.458
6. las 'phro'i khyad par bstan pa'i le'u ste drug pa IV.463
7. rtog ge ba la sogs pa'i shes rab ji ltar che yang grol mi srid par bstan pa'i le'u  
ste bdun pa IV.472
8. gleng slong lang ma long ma'i le'u ste brgyad pa IV.485
9. gleng slong bskyar chung gi le'u ste dgu pa IV.500
10. 'brog shon gyi le'u ste bcu pa IV.506
11. lang ma long ma sna tshogs bskyar ba'i le'u ste bcu gcig pa IV.542  
IV.588

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang rin po ches mdzad pa'i bstan bcos sa slog gnam  
log ma zhes bya ba rdzogs so//

mdo las byung ba'i dkon mchog gsum gyi bkra shis IV.730

## CA (VOLUME 5)

ca ka

chos nyams len du dril ba nges don kho na gtso bor ston pa'i skor las/ gsum pa  
phun sum tshogs pa sna tshogs nor bu'i phung po sogs (93 folios) V.1–186

1. phun sum tshogs pa sna tshogs nor bu'i phung po V.2

NO BACK MATTER

2. gling gi jo mo la gsungs pa'i mya ngan bsal ba V.8

bla ma rin po che gling ras pa sku yal ba'i shul du mya ngan bsal ba'am  
skyo sangs kyi yi ge 'di sprang ban zhang gis bkod nas ma jo'i phyag tu  
brdzangs pa lags so/ yi ge 'dis skal ldan dpag tu med pa la phan thogs par  
gyur cig/ phan thogs par gyur cig/ phan thogs par gyur cig/

3. dor te 'chor nag tu gsungs pa zhi gnas skor dum bu brgyad V.56

dum bu dang po/ zhi gnas dri med V.56

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas dri med ces bya ba/ lha sa dor te sgo phu'i  
'chor nag tu bkod pa/

dum bu gnyis pa/ zhi gnas kyi phyag rgya V.57

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas kyi phyag rgya/ lha sa dor te sgo phur  
bkod pa'o//

dum bu gsum pa/ zhi gnas mtha' yas V.58

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas mtha' yas zhes bya ba/ lha sa sde bzhi'i  
dor te sgo phur bkod pa'o/

dum bu bzhi pa/ 'chol gtam 'thor bu V.60

sprang ban zhang gi 'chol gtam 'thor bu lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo  
phur bkod pa'o/

dum bu lnga pa/ zhi gnas ngos 'dzin V.62

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas ngos 'dzin pa zhes bya ba/ lha sa dor te  
sgo phur bkod pa'o/

dum bu drug pa/ zhi gnas skyon sel V.63

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas skyon sel lha sa dor te sgo phur bkod  
pa'o/

dum bu bdun pa/ zhi gnas nyams myong V.65

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas nyams su myong ba zhes bya ba/ byin  
gyis brlabs pa'i sa phyogs lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phur bkod pa'o/

dum bu brgyad pa/ zhi gnas thams cad kyi rgyal po kun tshang nam mkha'  
V.66

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas thams cad kyi rgyal po kun tshang nam  
mkha' zhes bya ba lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phu'i 'chor nag tu bkod  
pa'o/

4. bdud ngos 'dzin pa'i man ngag che long du byas pa V.79

bdud ngos 'dzin pa'i man ngag che long du byas pa/ sprang ban zhang gi  
skyid shod ngan lam byang phyi'i 'brong bur bsdebs pa'o//

5. 'brong bu cal col chung ba V.94

nga yi smra ngag nyog ring 'di/ mkhas su re nas byas pa min/ rang gi gshis  
dang bstun nas smras/ dge des 'gro kun sangs rgyas shog/

6. snying gtam bu brgyad ma V.101

sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam de las med kyi bu/ sprang ban zhang gi  
snying gtam gzhan la gsongs shig bu/ snying gtam bu brgyad ma/

7. gnyen po lhan thabs V.104

ban chung zhang gis byang mkhar phu'i brag phug tu bu slob kun gyi  
don du bsdebs/ bsre bsld sus byed mkha' 'gros mgo bo khos/ gnyen po  
lhan thabs zhes bya ba/

8. 'khor lo bde mchog ma V.109

'khor lo bde mchog ces bya ba/ sprang ban zhang gis ri'u rtse'i gtsug lag  
khang du bsdebs pa/

9. gsang phu ma V.115

NO BACK MATTER

10. blo zlog gros 'debs V.124

zhang sgom g.yu brag la sgom pa'i dus su/ spyir sems can thams cad kyi  
byed spyod dang/ dgos su rang gi grwa pa'i byed spyod la ma mgu nas/  
bstan bcos blo ldog gros 'debs zhes bya ba/ spre'u lo'i dbyar zla 'bring  
po'i nyi shu lnga'i nyin par/ g.yu brag gzims spyil du bkod pa'o//

11. skyo shas blo brdeg ma V.128

skyo shas blo brdeg zhes bya ba zhang rin po ches mdzad pa'o/

12. btsad po khri rtse la gsungs pa'i mched tshig V.138

sprang ban zhang gi mchid gros 'di dag la/ thugs dang 'gal srid bzod par  
bzhes par zhu/ mdzad par lcogs tshad ma bsnyel mdzad par zhu/ zhang  
tshan dpon slob thugs blo 'dres pa'i mthus/ mnga' bdag rje blon rtag tu  
rgyal 'gyur shog/ brag dmar bsam yas kyi rgyal po khri rtse la/ zhang ldom  
bu bas zhus pa'i mchid tshig pho brang gi yang thog tu bkod pa'o/

13. gru gu sgang pa'i gnas brtan seng+ge grags la bka' phrin rdzangs pa V.143

mngon sum myong bas grub kyis gnas brtan pa/ sprang ban zhang gi  
snying gтам tshig 'ga' 'di/ gnas brtan snying gi dkyil du bzhag par zhu/  
sprang ban zhang gis chu shul gru gu sgang gi gnas brtan seng+ge grags  
la sgrags kyi ngar phug nas bskur ba'o/

14. rig pa dang rkang par ldan pa zhes bya ba sum ston rdo rje snying pos zhus  
pa V.148

bsam yas 'tsher po'i brag sngon du/ 'brog ston rdo rje snying pos zhus/  
sprang ban zhang gis dga' nas bris/ [*Not really back matter: appears in  
middle of piece, V.159.*]

rig pa dang rkang par ldan par zhes bya ba/ bsam yas phu'i brag sngon  
du bsam gтам seng+ge spun gyis pha ma rgan rgon gyi gson dge'i dus  
su bteg nas bkod pa//

15. lha rje srab sman grags seng la gsungs pa'i drin lan sob pa'i snying gтам  
V.164

zhang gi sprang ban gyis/ gzhung phur sku 'khrungs pa'i/ lha rje srab  
sman zhes/ dpon chen dam pa des/ bdag gi nad gsos pas/ dri lan bsab  
pa'i phyir/ snying gтам mthar thug 'di/ bkra shis tshal sgang du/ yi ger  
bkod pa lags/ spre'u lo sa ri'i/ nyi shu bdun la tshar/ gang dgar mi bstan  
zhu/ bka' rgya btab pa lags//

## ca kha

zhang 'gro ba'i mgon po g.yu brag pa'i gsung sgros thor bu sna tshogs kyi skor  
(147 folios) V.187–480

1. shog dril chen mo dum bu lnga byas pa V.188  
dang po V.188  
shog dril dum bu gnyis pa V.213  
shog dril dum bu gsum pa V.219  
shog dril dum bu bzhi pa V.225  
shog dril dum bu lnga pa V.232

zhes zhang rin po ches gsungs/ gzims chung gi sgo'i ya them la bzhugs so//

2. gnyen po'i yig chung V.232

bla ma gong ma rnams kyi man ngag 'di/ ban chung zhang ston bdag gis  
phyogs tsam bsdebs/ 'di la dge ba ci mchis de dag gis/ bdag sogs sdug  
bsngal mtha' dag spong bar shog/ gnyen po'i yig chung 'di bu tsha dpal  
mgon gyis bskul nas bris pa las phyi nas ban de rje'u sgom gyi phyir cung  
zad mang bar byas so/ sna nam ban de brtson 'grus grags pas nye bar  
sbyar ba rdzogs so//

3. gnyen po bsten pa'i man ngag sgom chen gsar pa la gdams pa V.264

sprang ban zhang gis sgom chen gsar pa rnams la gdams pa'o//

4. dge bshes lhun po dang dol po ston pa'i zhus lan V.268

bla ma rin po che dang dge bshes lhun po'i zhus lan no// ithi// bla ma  
zhang rin po che grongs nas zla ba ngo lnga lon tsa na/ dge bshes lhun po  
bzang du/ sku khamsh zhig ma bde nas/ yar byon pa'i nus pa ni med/ rin  
po che grongs pa la/ grongs rtags ngo mtshar can mang po byung ba thos  
nas/ mos gus drag po byas pa'i dus su/ tshad dug gis non/ btsas g.yul gyi  
dus su bab nas/ g.yog po ni med/ bye thang la sbra dkar phub nas bzhugs  
pa la/ gsol ba drag tu btad pas/ dpon g.yog gnyis byon nas/ phyag gis sbra  
dkar gyi sgo yol bsal nas/ chos de rnams gsungs nas yang yang mjal bar  
byas pa yin te/ phyis ma mjal/ mi la bshad pas lan par 'dug/

5. dwags po sgom tshul gyi gsung zin bris V.272

dang po V.272  
gnyis pa V.275  
gsum pa V.277  
bzhi pa V.278  
lnga pa V.279

slob dpon dwags po sgom tshul gyi gsung sgros/ zhang rin po ches zin  
bris su mdzad pa/ gsung sgros lnga pa'o/

6. slob dpon dwags po sgom pa la zhang rin po ches zhus pa'i zhus lan V.282

slob dpon dwags po sgom pa la zhang rin po ches zhus pa'i zhus lan/

7. nyang khol ba'i zhus lan V.291

rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po zhang rin po che la/ sprang po  
nyang khol bas ma bde ba'i 'gag cung zad tsam zhus pa lan dang bcas  
pa/ bzang yul yar snar 'khrug pa'i dus su yi ger bkod pa/

8. gsung sgros rin chen rgya mtsho V.297

rje rin po che'i gsung sgros rin po che'i dum bu lta bu tshig res kyang  
'gag mang po khrol ba'i bka' gsal/ gang zag gi rigs dang gnas skabs sbyar  
cing gsungs pa'i gdams ngag/ lar zhal nas gsungs pa thams cad gdams  
ngag tu byon pas bri bas ga na long na yang/ gal che che 'ga' dbang  
bskur gyi dus dang springs chos kyi dus dang/ tshogs chos chen mo'i  
dus dang/ gtor ma gtong ba'i dus dang/ spyang sngar de ltar bsdad pa'i  
dus rnams su dran pas zin tshad rnams bla ma'i byin rlabs kyi cha cung  
zad phog pa'i dge slong shAkya ye shes kyis phyogs gcig tu bsdebs pa  
rdzogs so//

9. slob dpon shAkya ye shes kyis gsung sgros zin bris su mdzad pa dum bu  
brgyad V.384

dang po V.384

gnyis pa V.394

gsum pa V.396

rnal 'byor pa gsum la gsungs pa yi ger bkod pa'o/

bzhi pa V.399

lga pa V.400

drug pa V.403

bdun pa V.406

brgyad pa V.407

NO BACK MATTER

10. dkon gnyer hrab [sic] mo'i zin bris V.409

zhang rin po che'i gsung gi 'gag rnams dkon gnyer hril mos yi ger bkod  
pa 'di yongs su rdzogs so//



11. dge tshul bla ma ye shes kyi zin bris gsum V.433  
 dang po V.433  
 gnyis pa V.441

zhang rin po che'i gsung sgros shAkya'i dge tshul bla ma ye shes kyi  
 bkod pa//

gsum pa V.444

yon bdag rgan po zhig la gsungs pa bdag gis brjed thor bris pa'o//

12. nyams len gegs sel rdo rje'i tshig rkang shAkya'i dge tshul bla ma ye shes kyi  
 mdzad pa V.446

sgrub pa nyams len rnams kyi gegs sel rdo rje'i tshig rkang lhad med  
 par dran pa gso ba'i ched du/ shAkya'i dge tshul bla ma ye shes kyi gsal  
 byed yi ger bstan pa/

13. bla ma zhang rin po che'i gsung sgros zur tsam dge slong bsod nams grags pas  
 mdzad pa V.465

NO BACK MATTER

#### ca ga

zhang 'gro ba'i mgon po g.yu brag pa'i nyams mgur gyi tshogs gang shar chos sku'i  
 rol rtsed ces bya ba (120 folios) V.481–720

1. bsam yas brag sngon du gsungs pa'i mgur bco lnga V.482

[dang po V.482:]

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma la phyag 'tshal  
 lol kwa ye snying nas soms mdzod dang/ zhang gi sprang ban srad can  
 'dis/ bsams pas sems la tshugs thabs med/ kha sang de ring mang po  
 yis/ ma tshor zla ba hrib kyi thal"*

'chi bas 'jigs pa'i gtam sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas phu'i brag sngon  
 du bkod pa'o/

gnyis pa V.485:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
 'tshal lol kye ma 'khor tshe thog med nas/ skyes nas da lta thug gi bar/  
 zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ glo bur rkyen rtog sna tshogs kyi/  
 ma myong bya ba'i dgu cig myong"*

skyo shas blo rdeg ces bya ba bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du sprang ban  
 zhang gi blo la shar nas bkod pa/

gsum pa V.486:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ skye 'gro mang po'i byed  
spyod mthong/ da lta rang dbang yod dus 'dir/ longs spyod sbyin pa  
mi gtong bar/ ser sna sku 'phrog gi spyod ngan 'dis/ yi dwags su skye  
ba mi tshor ba/"*

pha rol tu phyin pa drug bla ma dang bdun sprang ban zhang gi blo la  
shar nas bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du bya lo wa'i zla ba'i tshes gcig gi  
nyin par bkod pa/

bzhi pa V.488:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa la/ brgyud ldan bla ma'i byin  
rlabs zhugs/ rnam rtog zhi gnas chen por myong/ zhi gnas ye shes chen  
por shar/"*

rtog pa ngos 'dzin pa'i zhi gnas sprang ban zhang gi blo la shar nas bsam  
yas phur bkod pa'o/

lnga pa V.490:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ de ring kha nas thon tshad  
gleng/ thams cad stong pa'i chos rnams dang/ nam mkha' lta bu'i chos  
rnams la/ dngos dang dngos med ma mthong bas/ bsgom bya'i dngos  
po ma mthong ngol/"*

ma mthong ba'i zhi gnas chen po zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gi blo  
la shar nas bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du bkod pa/

drug pa V.492:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ kha nas thon tshad smra  
snying 'dod/ nam mkha' nam mkha' nam mkha' yangs/ mi gnas mi  
gnas mi gnas las/ gar yang 'gro dang 'ong ba med/"*

zhi gnas rgod po zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gi blo la shar nas bsam  
yas 'ching phu'i brag sngon du bkod pa'o/

bdun pa V.493:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ bla ma sku sun 'don ma  
myong/ byin rlabs snying gi dkyil du zhugs/ zhi gnas chen po'i sgom  
zhig rnyed/"*

zhi gnas bskyed pa'i rim pa zhes bya ba/ dge slong shes rab grub pas  
zhus nas bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du bkod pa/

brgyad pa V.495:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' nam mkha' chen po'i ting nge 'dzin/ mtha' dbus med pa'i zhi  
gnas mchog/ rgya mtsho chen po'i ting nge 'dzin/ gting mtha' med pa'i  
zhi gnas mchog!"*

**zhi gnas dpe mtshon zhes bya ba bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du sprang  
ban zhang gi blo la shar nas bkod pa/**

dgu pa V.496:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' rtogs ldan gyi bla ma byin rlabs can/ sprang ban zhang gi  
mnyes par bgyis/ zang zing gi bsnyen bkur ma 'byor te"*

**bsam yas phu'i brag sngon du dge slong shes rab grub pas zhus/ sprang  
ban zhang gi blo la shar nas bkod/**

bcu pa V.498:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' dam pa rje yi zhal nas sul' rnam rtog bka' drin che 'o gsungs/  
rnam par rtog la brten nas sul' byang chub sems mchog sbyong la  
sogs/ yon tan dpag med skye gsungs pa/ sprang ban zhang gi nyams  
su babs!"*

**rtog pa lam khyer zhes bya ba bla ma gong ma'i gsung sgros sprang ban  
zhang gi nyams su bab nas bsam yas phur bkod pa/**

bcu gcig pa V.503:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' brgyud ldan gyi bla ma byin rlabs can/ nyin med mtshan med  
thams cad dul' zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dil' zas skom gnyid dang  
bag med kyang/ snying gi dkyil du bzhugs par zhu!"*

**rtog pa gtan la dbab pa zhes bya ba bsam yas phur bkod pa/**

bcu gnyis pa V.505:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ 'jig rten 'di yi rnam rtog  
dang/ kun slong ngan pa tshar bcad nas/ 'jig rten gyi bya ba phyam  
gyis btang!"*

**byin rlabs kyi nya ga zhes bya ba bsam yas phur bkod pa/**

bcu gsum pa V.507:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ mi tshe yud tsam 'di nyid  
lal' bya ba thams cad tshang bar bgyis!"*

sna tshogs zhi gnas chen po zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gi blo la  
shar nas bsam yas phur/ bya lo wa'i zla ba'i tshes gnyis kyi nyin par  
bkod pa/

bcu bzhi pa V.511:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' phyi tshis med pa'i sprang ban zhang/ yo byad srel ba ltar  
snang yang/ bstan dang 'gro don ma gtogs par/ rang 'dod khab rtse  
tsam yang med/"*

snying gdam blo rdeg zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas phur  
bkod pa/

bco lnga pa V.513:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ rang gis go tshod khyed  
la bshad/"*

brtson 'grus kyi lcag bran zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas  
phu'i brag sngon du bkod pa/

2. gsang sngags lag len gyi mgur nyi shu V.516

dang po V.516:

*"pha rje btsun rnams la phyag 'tshal lol' bu skal ldan bdag la byin gyis  
rlob/ khyed sgrub pa nyams su len pa kun/ sprang ban zhang gi 'di ltar  
gol"*

sprang ban zhang gi man ngag sna tshogs 'di/ zhu lugs bzang ngan gyi  
thog na gda'/ sprang ban zhang gi nyams myong gi gnad du 'bebs pa'i  
le'u 'o/

gnyis pa V.519:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' kye ma rnal 'byor sgom chen rnams/ mi lus rin chen thob lags  
kyang/ phyugs ltar bro ba nyab nyen gda'ol"*

da rung ri khrod dgon pa snyogs/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/  
mi chen gyi ngo srung byed byed nas/ chos brgyad kyi 'dam du tshud  
nyen gda'o/ da rung ri khrod dgon pa snyogs/ sprang ban zhang gi nyams  
myong gi glu chung/

gsum pa V.520:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol' bdag rang sprang ban zhang ston 'di/ 'od gsal gcer mthong  
gi dbyangs zhig len/ gcer mthong gi dbyangs shig ma blangs nal gnyis  
'dzin gyi mun pa sangs dus med/"*

**sprang ban zhang gi bde skyid 'di/ ri khrod 'grims na 'phel gyin gda'/  
sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bzhi pa V.522:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ ri khrod kyi sprang ban zhang sgom bdag/ lung stong du mi  
tshe bskyal lags pas/ bla ma'i gdams ngag nyams su myongl"*

**sprang ban gyi glu chung/**

lnga pa V.523:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ kye lags 'o skol chos byed rnams/ sprang ban zhang gis 'di ltar  
gol"*

**nga sprang ban gyi rjes su bsgrub bzhed rnams/ ri khrod dgon par bzhugs  
lags sam/ sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

drug pa V.525:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ kho bo zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ zang zing gi lto gos ma rnyed  
pas/ mdo kham sgang du 'khyam du phyin/ dpal ldan rgwa dang tug  
gis mjal"*

**sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bdun pa V.527:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ kho bo zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ 'jig rten dang bstun pa'i glu  
zhig len/ 'jig rten pa dang mi bstun dul phal cher 'jig rten pa la mosl"*

**sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

brgyad pa V.528:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ kho bo zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ rang gi nyes skyon ma tshor  
bas/ shes pa phyir btas 'phros te thall"*

**bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ ri khrod du sgom sgrub byas byas  
nas/ ngo srung phran tshogs tsam gyi phyir/ grong gseb tu babs pa a re  
phangs/ sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

dgu pa V.530:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ deng sang gi dus na blo  
re bdel"*

**sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bcu pa/ V.531:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol lags sam mched grogs dam pa kun/ kho bo zhang gi rnal 'byor  
pa/ bla ma sgrub brgyud can gyi bul/ ri khrod 'grims pa 'di dgongs lags  
sam/"*

**sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bcu gcig pa V.532:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol kho bo zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ gsang sngags kyi thabs lam  
nyams su blangs/ rig pa'i gnad du phog lags sam/ nyams myong gi glu  
chung len snying 'dod/"*

**zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'di/ blo rgod ri la 'bros kyin gda'/ gzhan  
gyis bsgyur bar dka' snyam bgyid/ kho bo skye shis 'jigs so skal ldan kun/  
sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bcu gnyis pa V.534:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol kye lags deng sang rtsod dus 'dir/ mi lus rin chen thob pa kun/  
'khor ba'i rgya mtsho'i chu gling las/ bros thabs shig da res btsal re  
ran/"*

**sprang ban zhang gis de ltar smras/ bu slob 'ga' la bgyis pa lags/ sprang  
ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bcu gsum pa V.535:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban rnal 'byor bdag/ lta sgom spyod pa'i glu  
zhig len/"*

**sprang ban zhang gi lta sgom spyod gsum gyi glu chung/**

bcu bzhi pa V.536:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol zhang gi rnal 'byor ban chung bdag/ skyo sangs kyi glu chung  
bag re len/"*

**sprang ban zhang gi glu chung/**

bcu lnga pa V.538:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol mi lus thob/ dbang po tshang/ na so gzhon/ chos dang phrad  
pa 'di ngo mtshar che/"*

**sprang ban zhang gi tshigs bcad 'theng po phyed dang bcu gsum gyi glu  
chung/**

bcu drug pa V.539:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol sprang ban zhang gi khrel 'debs kyi glu chung blangs pa"*

sprang ban zhang/ mi dang 'dris/ sgrog tu tshud/ bdud kyis khyer ba 'di gyong re che/ snying rje nor/ man ngag shor/ mkha' 'gro 'khrugs/ bka' chad 'ong ba 'di gyong re che/ sprang ban zhang gi sems la 'gyod pa'i glu chung/

bcu bdun pa V.541:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol sprang ban zhang gi rnal 'byor ngas/ chos nyid dag pa'i dbyangs gcig len!"*

zhang gi sprang ban srad can 'di/ ri khrod na gcig pur nyal gyin gda'/ skal ldan kun lad mo spro lags sam/ zhang gi sprang ban gyi tshig rkang gsum pa'i glu chung/

bco brgyad pa V.542:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol zhang gi sprang ban srad can 'dis/ de ring glu gcig len snying 'dod!"*

srad ma can gyi sprang ban bdag/ 'dir 'dug gi gnas la nges pa med/ zhen chags ma che bu slob tsho/ sprang ban zhang gi tshig rkang gsum pa'i glu chung/

bcu dgu pa V.544:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol kho bo zhang gi sprang ban 'dil shes rab nang nas mched lags pas/ tshig sdeb kyi dbyangs chung zad pa med!"*

sprang ban zhang gi dbyangs chung tshig rkang gsum pa/

nyi shu pa V.545:

*"na mo gu rul sna nam sprang po zhang ston bdag gis/ nga rang la tshad mar 'dzin cing gus pa dang/ nga rang kho na la blo 'gel ba dang/ nga rang gis las 'phro bzhag pa dang/ nga rang gi gdul byar gyur nges pa'i slob ma re re tsam la phan du re nas yig sna dang/ zin bris dang/ tshigs su bcad pa dang/ long gtam gyi yi ge dang/ nyams myong gi glu chung mang po byas nas yod de/ de rnams thams cad gzhan su la yang ma bstan cig/ bstan du mi rung ngo/ gal te gzhan gyis mthong na phal che ba rnams kyi sdig pa shin tu che ba sog nyen yod pa yin"*

NO BACK MATTER

## 3. phy'a'o lung ma le tshan brgyad V.547

dang po/ V.547:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ oM oM oM oM bkra shis legs/ lta sgom spyod pa dam tshig  
mchog/ ngo bo mnyam nyid rtogs gyur na/ rnal 'byor rtag tu bkra shis  
bde/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gis phy'a'o lung gi dgon par bkod pa'o/**

gnyis pa/ V.548:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ phyag 'tshal phyag 'tshal phyag 'tshal bstod/ zhe 'dod med pa'i  
sprang ban zhang/ phyogs ris med la phyag 'tshal bstod/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi rtogs pa'i nyams la bstod pa phy'a'o lung du'o/**

gsum pa/ V.549:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ bdag rang sprang ban zhang ston 'di/ bla ma rje yi byin rlabs  
kyis/ ma bcos kyi ngang nas rtogs pa shar/!"*

**snying po don gyi glu sprang ban zhang gis phy'a'o lung du'o**

bzhi pa/ V.552:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ sprang ban zhang la phyi tshis med/ spyod pa bu chung 'di  
brod par gda/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gis phyi tshis gtor ba'i glu chung phy'a'o lung du'o/**

lnga pa/ V.554:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ sprang ban zhang gis 'di ltar gol/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi mtshang tshig phy'a'o lung du'o/**

drug pa/ V.556:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ sgrub brgyud kyi bla ma  
mnyes bgyis pas/ mun pa'i dkyil du nyi shar bzhin/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi du ma ro gcig gi rtogs pa phy'a'o lung du'o/**

bdun pa/ V.559:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lol/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban la/ snang ba thams cad rtog  
par shar/!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi lhan cig skyes pa'i rtogs pa phy'a'o lung du'o/**



brgyad pa/ V.559:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ zhang gi sprang ban bcol chung po/ le lo med pa’i thun bzhi ’di/  
ngo ma ldog la gcog phod pa/”*

sprang ban zhang la ci ma byung/ mgo rlung langs pa tshor lags sam/  
sprang ban zhang gi phod pa ring mo phyas’o lung du bkod pa’o/

4. mon gdong ma bcu bzhi V.561

dang po/ V.561:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ zhang gi sprang ban sradd ma langs/”*

bla ma rje btsun byin rlabs kyi/ sprang ban gyi sems la rtogs pa shar/  
phal gyis thos na skrag par nges/ sngon sbyangs skal ldan ’ga’ la smras/  
sprang ban zhang gi rtogs pa’i glu chung/

gnyis pa/ V.563:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ sprang ban gyi snying la byin rlabs zhugs/ rtogs pa’i glu chung  
ngag tu smras/”*

sprang ban zhang gi rtogs pa’i glu chung/

gsum pa/ V.564:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ sprang ban la gza’ gtad med pa la/ de gshol ’debs pa’i sradd  
ma can/”*

sprang ban zhang gi sradd gtam mo/

bzhi pa/ V.566:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ e ma ho skal ldan chos mdzad rnams/ sprang ban zhang gi ’di  
tsug go/ lto zhag re chag kyang mi tshugs par/ rgyun gtor gcog pa su  
yis phod/”*

sprang ban zhang gi gleng slong/

lnga pa/ V.567:

*“bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha’ ’gro ma rnams la phyag  
’tshal lol/ rje rin po che ’di bka’ drin chel/ rje btsun dam pa’i bka’ drin gyis/  
lhan cig skyes pa’i rtogs pa ’di/ dge rtsa thams cad bsdu pa zhig/”*

sprang ban zhang gi rtogs pa’i glu chung/

drug pa/ V.571:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'dil sa gcig tu bsdad dbang mi gda' bas/ phyogs med kyi yul du sprang du 'gro!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi sprang glu/**

bdun pa/ V.573:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ sems gnas par 'dod/ mi gnas par mi 'dod/ zhe 'dod kyi mtshan ma/ rnam rtog spang bar 'dod!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi bre mo'i gtam/**

brgyad pa/ V.576:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams phyag 'tshal lol/ kyai ho snying dang 'dra ba'i skal ldan kun/ sprang ban zhang la smra rgyu 'di las med/ lta ba dngos po'i gnas lugs rtogs 'dod na/ lta bar ma blta lta ba'i bya ba thong!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi long gtam/**

dgu pa/ V.577:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ nyi shu bdun gyi dgong mo nas/ sprang ban zhang gi lta ba med/ yin min gnyis kyi blo dang brall/ gzhi blo 'das su thal te 'gyod ri shi!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi rtogs pa'i glu chung/**

bcu pa/ V.578:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ bshad pa po phal cher tshig la mkhas te don mi shes/ sgrub pa po phal cher don la mkhas te tshig mi shes!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi yig chung kha 'thor ba'o/**

bcu gcig pa/ V.579:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ tha mal dang lha sku khyad med kyang/ bskyed pa'i rim pa bsgom pa 'dil grub thob rnams kyi snying gtam lags!"*

**sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam/**

bcu gnyis pa/ V.581:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lo/ nor phyugs zhing dang nyo tshong sogs/ phyi yi spros pas ngan  
'gror 'ching!"*

sprang ban zhang gi mchid tshig go/

bcu gsum pa/ V.582:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag  
'tshal lo/ zhang gi sprang ban de ring nas/ lta ba phyal lta yug tu thall!"*

sprang ban zhang gi kha byung rgyal/

bcu bzhi pa/ V.583:

*"na mo gu rul 'be nag brag la rnal 'byor lam rim bkod/ byang mkhar  
phug tu blo yi skyon sel bkod/ byang mkhar rtse la tshoms kyi rim pa  
dang/ phyag rgya chen po mtshang 'brur bcas pa bkod!"*

sprang ban zhang gi kha nas thon tshad gla sgro mon pa gdong du bkod  
pa rdzogs so/ des mon pa gdong bcu bzhi pa'o/

5. bsam yas rgod po ma snga V.584

dang po/ V.584:

*"rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas/ rang bzhin skye med phyag  
rgya'i ngang/ mal 'byor rtogs ldan 'phyo sa yin!"*

sprang ban zhang gi yong glu ring mo bsam yas phur bkod pa'o/

gnyis pa/ V.585:

*"rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas/ e ma e ma e ma hol/ bya  
ba btang ba'i sgom chen bde!"*

sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas phur bkod pa'o/

gsum pa/ V.586:

*"rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas/ thugs rje 'bar ba'i klong  
dkyil nas/ mi zad khro ba dpag med 'phrol!"*

sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas mchims phur bkod pa'o/

bzhi pa/ V.587:

*"rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas/ zhang gi sprang ban rnal  
'byor pas/ rje btsun bsten tshad sgrub brgyud bsten!"*

nam mkha' mdzod kyi sprang ban skyid/ sprang ban zhang gis bsam yas  
phur bkod pa'o/

lnga pa/ 588:

*"rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas rkyag pa ngas/ rang cag mi sdod byang  
chub sgrub/ yul mi thams cad 'khor ba sgrub/ thog ma med pa'i dus  
ring nas/ yul chos ngan pas ma bsus med/"*

sprang ban zhang gis yul chos gog po spong ba'i glu chung/ bsam yas  
phur dge slong shes rab grub pas bteg pa'i dus su blo la shar ba dum  
bu lnga'o/

6. yang dgon ka dgu mar gsungs pa'i mgur V.592

tshal gyi yang dgon ka dgu mar bzhengs pa'i mgur lags so/

7. rang sems gtan la 'bebs pa'i glu V.593

sprang ban zhang gi snying gdam lags/  
cir snang thabs lam grogs su khyer/  
sprang ban zhang gi rang sems gtan la dbab pa'o/

8. phyag khri mchog ma V.598

bla ma zhang la brang mda'i phyag khri mchog gis/  
chos skor grwa thang du shin tu brnyas bcos kyi sgo nas bstod pa/ shi  
ngan ro ngan zhes bya ba'o/

9. gnas brtan dar ma bsod nams la bla mas zhal du btab pa'i gdams pa gnyis  
V.604

dang po/ V.604:

*"gu ru na mol 'das dang ma 'ongs rtog pa yi/ bar na da lta skad cig mal  
zhes pa'i sems shig yod pa yin/"*

sprang ban zhang gis ngar phug tu/ gnas brtan dar ma bsod nams la/ bla  
mas zhal du btab pa'i gdams pa rgya grong gi dar bsod ma'o//

gnyis pa/ V.605:

*"bla ma dam pa rnam la phyag 'tshal lol/ phyag rgya chen po lhun gyis  
grub pa'i ngang/ rang gi sems nyid 'di la zer ba lags/"*

sprang ban zhang gi chig chod chen mo/ lha sa'i rgya grong gi gnas  
brtan dar ma bsod nams la ngar phug tu gsungs pa'o//

10. zhu lnga ma V.605

sprang ban zhang gi'o/

11. rdo rje gdan drug ma V.607

NO BACK MATTER

12. seng+ge rgyal po'i sgrub thabs V.608

seng+ge rgyal po'i sgrub thabs dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas mdzad pa'o/

13. byang phyi 'brong du gsungs pa'i ku re bzhi V.609

dang po/ V.609:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lo/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ bka' brgyud kyi bla ma sna tshogs bsten!"*

sprang ban zhang gis ngan lam byang phyi 'brong bu spyi khungs su bsdebs pa'o//

gnyis pa/ V.616:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lo/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ shes rab dang sbyangs pa mi bdog kyang/ rje btsun rnams kyi thugs la btags!"*

sprang ban zhang gis chos kyi dbyings las spros te smras pa byang phyi 'brong bur bsdebs pa'o/

gsum pa/ V.618:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lo/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'di/ 'brong bur lo mang bsdad lags kyang/ bod la rgyal khrims mi bdog pas/ ma bsgoms sku re'i phreng ba brtsams!"*

nyes skyon spong bar bskul ba zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis byang phyi 'brong bur bsdebs pa'o//

bzhi pa/ V.636:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lo/ tha snyad mkhan rnams gang rtsod pa'i/ chos de la ni sgrub pa po/ don la mkhas rnams mi rtsod del/ chos nyid rtsod pa zhi phyir rol!"*

sprang ban zhang gi long gtam 'di/ byang phyi 'brong bur rnam rtog la shar nas bsdebs pa'o//

14. grub thob dbu se dang mjal dus gsungs pa V.639

NO BACK MATTER

15. yon tan seng+ge'i brang khang du rtog med spros bral gyi rjes la mgur gsungs pa V.641

NO BACK MATTER

16. blo bde bzhi'am skyid pa bdun gyi mgur V.642

zhang g.yu brag pa'i skabs su bab pa'i tshig/

17. mi rtag pa la bskul ba'i mgur V.643

bde ba'i rdo rje'i zhal nas/ nga'i dge sbyor en re kun 'di dran pa las  
byung ba yin gsungs/

18. ang bcu bzhi ma V.644

NO BACK MATTER

19. lam khyer gyi dbyangs V.647

lam khyer gyi dbyangs chung ngo/

20. cis kyang dgos med ma V.648

'di ru bri yis ga na long/

21. gegs sel brgyad pa V.649

sprang ban zhang gi glu chung//

22. rang la gros 'debs V.651

gcig pur ri khrod 'grims dang kye/ gros 'debs tshang 'bru dang bcas  
pa'o//

23. don gyi bshags pa V.653

NO BACK MATTER

24. ra mda' ma V.654

NO BACK MATTER

25. zhal so ma V.656

NO BACK MATTER

26. gu rub ri bo skyid kyis zhus pa'i khrel 'debs V.657

ngan lam byang phyi'i yon bdag gu rub re bo skyid kyis/ bla ma zhang ston la/ khyed rang nyid kyis khyed rang nyid la bstod pa zhig zhu byas pas/ bla ma zhang ston gyis rang nyid la bsams pas shin tu ngo mtshar skyes te bstod pa mdzad pa'o/ 'di ni kun la spel lo/ nyon cig ltos shig/ rang la rang gis khrel btab rdzogs so/

27. rang rig ye shes ma V.665

NO BACK MATTER

28. gdos pa 'khrug pa'i dus su gsungs pa V.667

NO BACK MATTER

29. sgam po rab gnas ma V.669

NO BACK MATTER

30. g.yu brag yi ched ma V.671

yi chad kyi le'u'o/

31. g.yu brag spro bskyed pa V.672

zhang ston spro ba bskyed pa'i le'u'o//

32. g.ya' lung gi gdeng chen bcu drug ma V.673

zhang gi glu chung ngo/

33. g.ya' lung zhal so ma V.675

NO BACK MATTER

## 34. g.ya' gong gangs gong ma V.676

NO BACK MATTER

## 35. bye ma can du gsungs pa gnyis V.678

dang po/ V.678:

*"bla ma yi dam mkha' 'gro rnams/ spyi gtsug rgyan du bzhugs nas  
kyang/ ban chung gi dpang po mdzad du gsol"*

mi gzhan gyis bltas na bdag ngan te/  
bdag gis bltas pas gzhan ngan mthong/  
de bas dran lugs 'di rgod re bro/  
thos na ri sho bas kyang rgod re tshor/  
byang pha gi na ri sho ba spang phug tu nyal/  
sha za ko ba gon pa me 'de grogs ri bong gis byed pa de la zer ro/

gnyis pa/ V.689:

*"bla ma mkha' 'gro rnams la gus pas phyag 'tshal lo/ bla ma la sgom  
nyams 'bul dus su/ rtogs tshad mtho dman de ru gsol/bla ma mnyes na  
mtho ba lagsl"*

bye ma can gyi dgon pa ru/  
skur ba sdig sog byung nas blangs/  
gzhan gyi nor rdzas la rkus pa 'am/  
bud med la chags pa spyad pa 'am/  
lte ba theg nas de ring bar/  
nyes pa de kun gyur pa na/  
mgon po bya rog gi mgo bo khos/  
phyir sdig pa'i las ka byed ma myong//

## 36. snang sems gnyis med du ston pa'i glu V.693

skye shi med par 'di dang phyi ma yod ma myong ba'i lhun grub 'di ngo  
mtshar che/ ston zla tha chung zla ba gcig lha lung nags kyi spyi bo la  
bsgoms pas nyams myong shar ba yi ger bkod pa'o/

## 37. khrel bgad ring mo V.695

sbrang ban zhang gi khrel rgod byang mkhar mda' chog tu bkod pa'o/

## 38. smre gsol V.696

da ni 'jig rten stong la khad/ skal ldan gdung ba'i smre sngags gsol//



39. 'be nag brag la gsum bka' rgya dang bcas pa V.697

dang po/ V.697:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ zhang gi sprang ban smyon pa 'dis/ rtogs pa'i thog nas sna tshogs smras/ smras smras 'dra yang smras pa med/ smra med pa la sna tshogs smras/"*

byang mkhar gyi 'be nag brag tu'o/

gnyis pa/ V.699:

*"dam pa skyes mchog thams cad dang/ dpa' bo rnal 'byor ma tshogs 'dud/ kwa ye mi bsdad ri la 'deng/"*

ri khrod kyi nyams myong sprang ban zhang gis byang mkhar 'be nag brag tu'o/

gsum pa/ V.701:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ 'ja' tshon nam mkha'i klong du yall/ gang nas byung la gang du song/"*

sangs rgyas kyi dgongs pa thun mong ma yin pa'i glu/ sprang ban 'zhang gis byang mkhar 'be nag brag la'o/

40. zhal brda gdams ngag pa V.703

sprang ban zhang gis bka' rgya btab/

41. bka' yi lo rgyus kyi gdams ngag V.703

ban chung bdag gis gdams ngag smras pa lags so

42. zhang rin po che sku gshegs nas dge bshes brag sgom pas/ slob dpon dug gis grongs pa'i gtam ngan dang/ kha mchu dang/ las ka kun thos nas yid ma bde bas/ maN+Dal phul nas gsol ba btab pas/ nam mkha' nas spyang sngar byon te/ 'di skad gsungs/ V.705

NO BACK MATTER

43. 'cham chung gsum V.707

dang po/ V.707:

*"bla ma dam pa rnams la phyag 'tshal lol/ gnas chen po zhig gi rtas nas 'ongs/ chos skor rga 'dra'i rtas nas 'ongs/ dbyangs de'i rtse ru 'cham chung zhig rgyob dang lol"*

zhang gi bro mo che'o//

gnyis pa/ V.708:

*"bla ma dam pa rnams la phyag 'tshal lol gangs stod kyi seng lcam dkar mo ngal yar la bltas kyang gangs kyi ngangl"*

NO BACK MATTER

gsum pa/ V.709:

*"bla ma dam pa rnams la phyag 'tshal lol an de phu ron sngon mo bal khyod shar gyi phyogs su 'gro mi 'grol"*

NO BACK MATTER

44. snang ba zil gnon gyi 'cham chung V.711

**zhes gung thang gi lcags ri rmang bru ba'i dus su mar sgom gyis ram bu bteg nas gsungs pa yin skad/**

45. bla ma dpal la shis par brjod pa gnyis V.712

dang po/ V.712:

*"dpal chen po rgwa lo la phyag 'tshal lol bkra shis rab mchog dpal ldan rgwa lo zhes grags pa'i/ gtsang kar sku 'khrungs gzhon nur bslab pa'i gzhi dag lal"*

**dpal chen po rgwa lo la bsngags pa'i sgo nas shis par brjod pa/ shAkya'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas nye bar sbyar ba'o/**

gnyis pa/ V.714:

*"bkra shis gang zhig mkha' sprin ye shes glog gi phreng/ snyan pa'i 'brug sgra chen pos gling mchog bzhi ru gragsl"*

**dpal chen po rgwa lo'i mdzad pa'i yon tan dang bsngags pa'i sgo nas shis pa brjod pa/ sna nam zhang sgom gyis bkod pa tshigs su bcad pa bcu gsum pa rdzogs so/**

## CHA (VOLUME 6)

cha ka

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang rin po che'i lung bstan za ma tog bkod sogs lung bstan skor (45 folios) VI.1–90

- [1] tshal pa drung chen kun dga' rdo rje 'am/ de nyid rab tu byung ba'i mtshan/ tshal pa thams cad mkhyen pa si tu dge ba'i blo gros kyis mdzad pa'i zhus lan deb ther dmar po las bla ma zhang gi rnam thar/ VI.47
- [2] tshal pa'i brgyud yig deb ther gsal ba'i me long mkhas pa'i yid 'phrog las/ VI.52
- [3] yang dgon gyi bla ma brgyud pa/ VI.58

- [4] kun mkhyen lnga pa chen po'i rnam thar du ku la'i gos bzang grangs brgya dgu pa las/ VI.70
- [5] mkhar nag chos 'byung bris ma grangs 35 nas grangs 76 bar/ VI.76
- [6] mkhas grub bsod nams ye shes dbang pos mdzad pa'i dga' ldan chos 'byung las/ VI.79

NO BACK MATTER

### cha kha

'gro mgon zhang gi rnam thar gsol 'debs srid gsum bla ma (6 folios) VI.91–102

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang gi gsang ba'i rnam thar la bstod cing/ gsol ba 'debs pa'i tshigs su bcad pa 'di nyid/ gsang sgrub nyams su len pa'i skal ldan gyi don du/ kirti puN+yas dad cing mos nas sbyar ba'o// sar+ba mang+ga laM//

### cha ga

'gro mgon rin po che'i rnam thar bsodus pa dgos 'dod re skong ma'i 'grel pa (40 folios) VI.103–182

'gro ba'i mgon po dpal ldan g.yu brag pa'i// zhal gyi bdud rtsi zhal nas zhal du brgyud// bdag la rjes gnang bcud myong brgyud pa nye// zhal gyi bdud rtsi rnam thar 'grel ba bkod// 'di las nongs gang bla ma yi dam dang// chos skyong rigs kyis bzod mdzod dge ba gang// rnyed pa de yis bdag sogs gdul bya rnames// bla ma'i rnam thar snyogs shing dgongs 'grub shog// sar+ba mang+ga laM//

### cha nga

zhang rin po che'i rnam thar rgyal blon ma (60 folios) VI.183–283

zhang rin po che'i rnam par thar pa rdzogs so//

rnam thar phyi ma VI.283–302

[NOTE: THIS PIECE IS APPENDED TO THE *RNAM THAR RGYAL BLON MA*, WITH NO INDICATION THAT A NEW WORK IS BEGINNING. IT WOULD APPEAR, HOWEVER, TO BE THE WORK CALLED THE *RNAM THAR PHYI MA* ELSEWHERE. SEE, E.G., SAMDO VERSION.]

zhang rin po che'i rnam thar phyi ma rnames rang gi dran pa gso ba dang/ skal ldan rnames kyi dad gus gsos gdab pa'i phyir/ che long tsam zhig ye ger bkod pa'o// 'di mthong byang chub thob par shog/

cha ca

nyams len sgom khrid kyi skor 'thor bu rnams (5 folios) VI.303–312

lhan cig skyes sbyor gyi skor VI.304

bla ma rin po che'i zhal gdams so/

zhang gi gdams pa lhan cig skyes sbyor VI.307

NO BACK MATTER

lhan cig skyes pa'i man ngag sprugs pa ma VI.310

lhan cig skyes pa'i man ngag sprugs pa yin no/

cha cha

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i mgur ma 'ga' zhig (11 folios) VI.313–334

- [1] *"pha bla ma rnams la phyag 'tshal lo// dgos bka' drin can la skyabs su mchi// mi 'bral spyi gtsug rgyan du bzhugs// bzhugs nas byin gyis brlab tu gsol//"* VI.314

sku 'bum chen mo bzhengs pa'i dus su las mi rnams dub nas rdo skyel  
ma nus pa la/ zhang rin po che'i mgur bla ma gling dang/ dbus ras kyis  
ram btegs nas/ bro 'jog len mdzad pas thams cad 'ur nas chad pa sos  
skad do// rtsa ba drug ces pa'o//

- [2] *"na mo gu rul bla ma dam pa rnams la phyag 'tshal zhing skyabs su mchi'o// byin gyis brlab par mdzad du gsol// dus gsum sangs rgyas thams cad kyil// thugs rjes 'gro ba'i don sprul pa//"* VI.317

NO BACK MATTER

- [3] *"na mo gu rul 'gro ba'i re skong rin po che// snyigs ma'i dus kyi chos kyi rje// mkhyen pa gnyis ldan rin po che// mi mchog khyod la gus pas 'dud//"* VI.319

dgong mo'i spyad rim thon pa'i rjes la gsungs pa'o/

- [4] yang phugs chen mo VI.320

yang phugs chen mo'o//

- [5] gsang sngags kyi tshig bshad VI.321

ces pa ni ban chung zhang ston bdag gis dur khrod kyi thol glu la brten  
nas bdag la dad cing mos pa 'ga'i don du bsdebs pa'o/

- [6] sgom pa sta khu la rtogs pa shar ba/ zhang rin po ches mkhyen nas gsungs pa/ VI.324

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [7] chab sman po gcig VI.325

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [8] ma la jo mo VI.326

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [9] lding 'phyo ba VI.326

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [10] bla ma rnams kyi nyams myong mgur du bzhengs pa VI.327

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [11] tshal gyi bye ma'i gling du rnga mo'i steng nas mgur bzhengs pa VI.328

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [12] pha rin po che la VI.329

**bla ma rin po ches gshe skur 'debs pa dang sdig sog pa rnams la gsungs pa/**

- [13] kun tshong ma VI.330

**kun tshong ma bya ba lags so/**

- [14] tshal gyi ka dgu ma'o VI.331

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [15] rdo rje gdan drug VI.331

**NO BACK MATTER**

- [16] 'gro ba'i re skong VI.333

**dgong mo'i spyad rim thon pa'i rjes la gsungs pa'o/**

cha ja

'gro mgon zhang gi blo bde sum cu ma (5 folios) VI.335–344

'di bris bsod nams rgya chen gyis// mkha' mnyam sems can thams cad  
kun// rnam mkhyen sangs rgyas thob par shog/ // dge'o// dge'o// dge'o//

cha nya

zhang rin po che'i zhal gdams tshigs bcad phyogs bsgrigs (40 folios) VI.345–424

1. phun sum tshogs pa sna tshogs nor bu'i phung po VI.346

NO BACK MATTER

2. zhang gi snying gdam VI.374

bu la snying gdam/

3. rnal 'byor rnam bzhi'i rtogs tshod VI.379

sprang ban zhang gi snying gdam yin// rje btsun mal zhig dgyes par  
dgongs// de ltar rnal 'byor rnam bzhi'o// dam pa'i gsung la gzhi bcas nas//  
kho bo rang gi myong tshod rnams// sba gsang med par smras pa lags//  
de ltar rnal 'byor rnam bzhi dang// de las lhag pa'i chos srid dang// zhen  
med snying rje'i rlan med na// gzhan snang gzugs sku 'char nges med//  
gzhan snang gzugs sku med pa la// bla med byang chub ga la bshad//  
zhang gi sprang ban rnal 'byor ngas// snying nas de ltar thag chod pas//  
sna tshogs bsod nams rtsal sbyong la// gzhi ma 'cha' ba de tsug lags// rnal  
'byor rnam bzhi'i rtogs tshod 'di// rje btsun mal gyi ngo ru bris// sdig sog  
rten du 'gyur srid pas// gzhan du mi bstan bcang bar zhu/

4. rnal 'byor bzhi yi 'char lugs VI.388

NO BACK MATTER

5. ngas ma mthong bcu bzhi VI.395

ngas ma mthong bcu bzhi'o//

6. bcud mchog bka' rgya ma/ VI.398

NO BACK MATTER

7. gros 'debs so brgyad ma/ VI.403

bla ma dam pa gong ma rnams kyi gdams ngag la brten nas/ rang la rang  
gis gros su btab pa'o// gros 'debs sum cu so brgyad ma/

8. zhang gi rin chen 'bru brgyad ma/ VI.410

zhang rin po che'i gdams ngag rin chen 'bru brgyad ces bya ba'o/

9. bslab bya tshig gsum ma/ VI.411

kho bo rnal 'byor a re mtshengs// bdag gzhan kun kyi skyon mthong nas// bslab bya tshig gsum yi ger bkod// lha yul gsang phu'i ri khrod du/ kun tshang don gyi phreng ba 'di rdo rje ye shes don du bla ma zhang gis bkod//

cha ta

gdams ngag phyogs bsgrigs lhugs pa ma (46 folios) VI.425–516

nga'i snying 'di lhur gyis phyung yang de las ma mchis so// jo sras dkar po la zhang rin po ches gdams pa'o//

1. 'khor la 'jug ldog gi gdams ngag VI.428

'khor ba 'jug ldog gi man ngag 'di bla ma zhang ston ri khrod pa'i man ngag yin gsung ngo// rdzogs so//

2. thugs kyi nying khu ljangs rnal 'byor pa la gdams pa VI.443

bu'i dam pas bskul gyur nas// nor chad med par yi ger bkod// 'gro rnam phyag rgya che rtogs shog/

3. rtog pa lam du khyer ba'i gdams ngag VI.449

[a] VI.449:

*"bla ma rje btsun dam pa rnam la phyag 'tshal zhing skyabs su mchi'o// 'o skol nges pa kho nar rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thob par 'dod pa'i gang zag des/ bla ma phyin ci ma log pa las/ gdams ngag phyin ci ma log pa thob par byas nas/ 'jig rten blos lings kyis btang nas bsgom dgos pa yin/"*

lam chos kyi phyag rgya rtog pa lam du khyer ba'i gdams ngag/

[b] VI.455:

*"bla ma rje btsun pa rnam la phyag 'tshal zhing skyabs su mchi'o// 'khor ba mtha' dag las yid 'byung nas/ bla na med pa'i byang chub don du gnyer ba des/ 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa'i khyad par ni/"*

grub pa thob pa'i bla ma la zhus nas/ nyams su blang ba yin/ gzhan la bstan na bka' chad yong/ 'chi ba 'dra na me la sregs/ rnam rtog lam khyer gyi man ngag go// rdzogs so//

[c] VI.461:

*“na mo gu ru/ bla ma dam pa rnams la phyag ’tshal zhing skyabs su  
mchi’o byin gyis brlab pa mdzad du gsol lo// dus gsum sangs rgyas  
thams cad kyi thugs rjes ’gro ba’i don du sprul pa/”*

NO BACK MATTER

[d] VI.464

*“’gro ba’i mgon po rin po che la skyabs su mchi// gsung gi phyogs gcig  
spro bas yi ker bkod/”*

NO BACK MATTER

4. nyams snang shar tshul VI.470

[a] VI.470:

*“slob dpon rin po che la skyabs su mchi’o// lha lung dgon pa nas rtog gis  
phyin nas/ dang po yang dgon gcer gyis mthong/”*

NO BACK MATTER

[b] VI.472:

*“’o skol bla na med pa’i byang chub bsgrub pa la chos mang po bshad  
mi ’tshal/”*

NO BACK MATTER

5. gnyis su med pa’i sgom khrid VI.474

gnyis su med pa’i sgom khrid dpal lha sa ba’i don du mdzad pa/

6. snying rje lam khyer ma VI.482

snying rje lam khyer gnad kyi brgyud pa ’chug pa med pa yin no/

7. byang chub yang dag pa’i ’dug tshul phyin ci ma log pa’i gdams ngag VI.489

bla na med pa’i byang chub yang dag pa’i ’dug tshul phyin ci ma log pa’i  
gdams ngag ’gro ba’i mgon po g.yu brag pa’i gsung phyin ci ma log pa ’di  
rdzogs so//

8. byang chub sems dpa’ ma VI.491

NO BACK MATTER



9. bka' thams cad kyi bcud VI.496

kye zhang sgom khyod kyis 'gro ba 'dul bar smon lam 'debs pa ma gtogs pa/ da lta 'dul ba'i mthu mi 'dug gis/ slob ma dang yon bdag la ma dga' bar/ kha rog par sgoms shig/ khyod kyi da lta'i snying rje de nges par bdud yin par 'dug gis/ khyod rang gi tsha bo brtson 'grus seng ge man tshun pa la rtag tu soms//

10. ngan 'gro las dbugs dbyung ma VI.498

ces khams gsum 'khor ba las gzengs bstod par bya'o//

11. gzengs bstod pa VI.500

zhal nyid nas sbor ba/

12. skabs skabs su VI.505

[a] VI.505:

*"skabs skabs su mi gar mang mang du/ nga bcom ldan 'das dpal lhan cig skyes pa'i sku mngon sum du bkra lam me ba 'di yin pa la/"*

NO BACK MATTER

[b] VI.509:

*"pha rol tu phyin ma la skyabs su mchi'o// skyabs su mchi'o// yang yang gsungs pa la dris pas/ mnal thun gcig sad la khad tsam na rtag pa'i rtsa ba chod/"*

NO BACK MATTER

[c] VI.511:

*"nam mkha' gnas kyi bar du seng ge dang glang po che la sogs pa'i bstan/"*

NO BACK MATTER

[d] VI.512:

*"nga mi rtag/ yul mi rtag/ gnas mi rtag/ 'gro sa mi rtag snying nas mi rtag/"*

ltos dang skyag pa ngas gsungs/

## 13. nyams thod rgal VI.513

sprang ban zhang la ngam shod kyi bye stongs kyi shul kar chibs pa  
lo yi ngang pa'i steng du shar nas/ brag dmar bsam yas kyi 'khor sa  
bar mar 'brug lo dbyar zla 'bring po'i tshes gnyis kyi nyin par tshar bar  
bkod pa'o/

## cha tha

zhang rin po che'i gsung man ngag gi skor phyogs bsgrigs (15 folios) VI.517–546

## 1. bla ma lha la gsol ba 'debs pa'i man ngag VI.518

byin rlabs mi 'jug mi srid pa'i gsol 'debs kyi man ngag rdzogs so//

## 2. 'bras bu phyag rgya chen po sgom pa'i man ngag VI.526

gnad ka de bas na/ bka' brgyud 'di rang la gsol ba 'debs cing/ man ngag  
gi gnad 'di rang la gsol ba btab pa 'di gcig pus chog pa lags so//

## 3. thig le bsrung ba'i man ngag VI.530

NO BACK MATTER

## 4. sgom pa btsan yul ba la bskur ba'i man ngag VI.531

slob dpon zhang rin po ches/ sgom pa btsan yul ba la bskur ba rdzogs so//

## 5. gung thang gi khri kha nas spel ba VI.533

gung thang gi khri kha nas spel ba/ rin po ches/

## 6. byang chub sgrub pa'i gnad kyi man ngag VI.535

byang chub sgrub pa'i gnad kyi man ngag zhes bya ba/

## 7. phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag VI.543

NO BACK MATTER

## 8. chags sdang rtsad nas gcod pa'i man ngag gi nying khu VI.544

chags sdang rtsad nas gcod pa'i man ngag gi nying khu/

**cha da**

'gro ba'i mgon po bla ma zhang gi gsung zhus lan skor (10 folios) VI.547–566

1. slob dpon sgom pa dang zhang rin po che yi zhus lan VI.548

sgom chen pa phal sgom gyis 'ching ba yin gsung//

2. dri lan VI.558

ban ldom bdag gi dri ba rnams// gnad du phog par mi gda' yang// thugs  
rje chen po'i rang bzhin gyis// zag med dbyings nas lan tshun re// bdag  
la thugs la btags par zhu// rin po che'i dris lan//

**cha na**

bla ma zhang gi tshogs chos dang gsung sgros 'thor bu (13 folios) VI.567–592

rin po che'i zhal nas mkhar ston zhing sha cig bar du shes pa 'khrugs pa  
yin gsung//

1. gsung sgros snying gzer ma VI.573

zhang rin po che'i gsung sgros snying gzer ma'o/

2. khar ston ma VI.580

rin po che'i zhal nas mkhar ston zhing sha cig bar du shes pa 'khrugs pa  
yin gsung//

3. nor gcig 'gyod gnyis khyad chos drug VI.585

NO BACK MATTER

4. gdung khang chen mo'i nang gi rten gyi dkar chag VI.586

NO BACK MATTER

**cha pa**

zhang rin po che'i gsung cho ga lag len gyi skor (22 folios) VI.593–636

1. skyabs 'gro sems bskyed kyi phan yon dang cho ga VI.594

NO BACK MATTER

2. dbang bskur ba'i don du gsol ba 'debs pa VI.602

NO BACK MATTER

3. zhang gis mdzad pa'i lhan chung VI.606

rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug bde ba rdo rje'i gdams pa yang dag pa'o/

4. lhan chung VI.609

zhang gis gdul bya blo rmongs pa'i don du/ chos bskor gyi rur mdzad/  
bsod nams de yis 'gro kun gyi// rang sems lhan cig skyes rtogs shog/

5. lhan skyes kyi bstod pa gnyis VI.610

chos bskor grwa thang du sprang ban zhang gis bkod pa'o/

6. yi ge brgya pa'i gzungs chog VI.611

yi ge brgya pa'i gzungs chog byin rlabs 'ba' zhig gi rang bzhin gsang ba  
nas gsang bar byon pa

7. he ru ka'i gzungs chog VI.616

dpe 'di shin tu dogs par byed pa yin pas mi spel ba gal che'o// bka' rgya  
yod do// gsang ngo// rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rim pa bdun  
btab bo// u pa de sha yo// bla ma rin po che zhang la/ slob dpon sgom  
pas zhus/ khong la bdag gis stod lung mtshur gyi lding mo dgon par  
zhus pa'o// ithi// maN+Dal pad ma 'dab brgyad pa bya'o//

8. zhang gi gtor bsgrigs VI.617

drug cu rtsa gsum rtsa gsum po// chags pa med par gtong ba 'di// sprang  
ban zhang gi lag len lags// skal ldan bu tsho rnams kyis kyang// chags  
pa med par btang gyur na// sprang ban zhang gi thugs dgongs rdzogs/  
rdzogs so//

9. zhang gi chos gtor bcu gsum ma VI.619

NO BACK MATTER

10. zhang gi gtor zin VI.621

NO BACK MATTER

11. zhang gi gtor ma'i man ngag VI.625

gtor ma brgya rtsa brgyad kyi man ngag ste/ dpal chen po rgwa lo'i  
rjes su 'brangs nas/ dam pa gzhan gyi man ngag la yang zur tsam brten  
pa'o// rdzogs so//

12. ting nge 'dzin dbang bskur ba'i man ngag VI.630

ting nge 'dzin gyi bdag 'jug bsdus pa'o//

13. gsang sngags kyi gso sbyong VI.632

NO BACK MATTER

### cha pha

zhang 'gro ba'i mgon po'i bka' rgya gsang bdun mar grags pa'i chos sku ye shes kyi  
DA ki'i bdag mdun gnyis kyi cho ga chu 'babs su bkod pa phan bde'i lam bzang  
(30 folios) VI.637–696

NO BACK MATTER

### cha ba

gsang ba'i nram thar bka' rgya ma'i sgo nas tshogs kyi cho ga gzims chung ma  
(6 folios) VI.697–708

NO BACK MATTER

### cha ma

lag mchod bdud rtsi'i thigs pa (9 folios) VI.709–726

NO BACK MATTER

### cha tsa

zhang rin po che'i gong khug ma dpon dar ma gzhon nu la gdams pa (11 folios)  
VI.727–748

chos kyi rgyal po zhang g.yu brag pas dar ma gzhon nu la gdams pa gong  
khug mar grags pa rdzogs so// mang+ga laM/

kha skong du bkra shis Shedup VI.746–47

## JA (VOLUME 7)

ja ka

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i gsang ba'i rnam thar bka' rgya ma (353 folios) VII.1-706

ka

ngar phug ma'i zhus lan VII.2

ngar phug tu dpon dar ma gzhon nu dang/ klu mos zhus pa'i zhus lan  
bzhi pa/ 'gro ba'i mgon pos dpon dar ma gzhon nu dang/ 'dul ba 'od gnyis  
la gnang/ rnal 'byor dbang phyug gis karma sha snying du grub thob dam  
pa la'o// des las can bud+d+ha shrI la phyag dpe dang bcas pa gnang/ des  
bdag la'o// thugs la btags so/ bka' drin can/ bka' rgya nan chags chen por  
mdzad do// dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i rnam thar bka' rgya ma'o//

kha

dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan VII.23

NO BACK MATTER

ga

yang dar ma gzhon nus zhus pa VII.38

NO BACK MATTER

nga

bla ma sku gsum du sgrub pa'i zhal gdams VII.76

NO BACK MATTER

ca

bka' rgya spyi chings ma VII.84

nga yi rnam thar gsang ba sbas pa 'di rnams la ma lus lus pa med par zhus  
pa 'dul ba 'od khyod yin no// sbas pa'i rnal 'byor sangs rgyas bu bcu la//  
gdams pa'i mthar thug gsang ba sbas pa bstan// tshe gcig lus gcig 'di la  
'tshang rgya ba// ngo mtshar che/ ngo mtshar che/ a re  
skyid/ a re skyid/ a re skyid/ gung thang gzims chung du me mo 'brug lo'i  
tshes bcu la/ dar ma gzhon nu 'dul ba 'od gnyis kyis// gsol ba btab cing  
yang yang zhus pa 'di// DA ki'i gsung bzhin yi ger bris pa yin// rjes 'jug  
rnams kyis tshe 'dir sangs rgyas 'grub// las can rnams kyis nyams len 'di  
la mdzod//

cha

bla ma'i bka' babs lo rgyus VII.90

khyod la bshad pa yin/ gzhan la gsang gsung/ bka' rgya btab bo// drin can  
rgya'i gsung/ ithi/ rang gi brjed thor bris so//

ja

gdams ngag bka' babs lo rgyus VII.97

bka' babs lo rgyus so/

nya

bla ma'i byin rlabs ye shes dbang gi bka' rang babs VII.101

NO BACK MATTER

ta

bla ma'i byin rlabs ye shes dbang gi sngon 'gro byin rlabs lde mig VII.106

'di su la'ang ma bstan cig/ nga'i chos bka' rgya ma 'di dag gar bde bde ru  
mi su la yang ma bstan cig/ su la yang mi ston pa'i bka' rgya yod do/

tha

bka rgya las dbang bzhi VII.121

'di bla ma'i byin rlabs ye shes dbang gi bka' rgya lde mig go// ithi/ nga'i  
bka' rgya ma 'di rnam la dam du gyis shig/ ithi/ rgya rgya rgya//

da

lha ngo bstan pa VII.132

lha ngo sprad pa'i bka' rgya lde mig go/

na

rba rlabs lde mig VII.139

rdo rje rba rlabs kyi zhal gyi bdud rtsi 'di/ yos bu lo'i dgun zla 'bring po'i  
tshes bcu bdun gyi nyin par/ gung thang gzims chung du/ dpon dar ma  
gzhon nu dang/ 'dul ba 'od gnyis la/ nga'i lus po a dmar por song nas/  
khong gnyis kyi nga la rgyu mtshan zhus pas/ ngas srog rtsol gnad du  
bsnun pas/ zhag bdun du ting nge 'dzin gcig tu song/ dar ma gzhon nu  
la sgo sdoms byas/ zhag bdun na khong gnyis kyi btas pas/ nga'i lus po  
phyi nang thams cad a dmar po 'od du ltem ltem 'dug pa mthong nas/ da  
khyed gnyis la rba rlabs 'di bya yis byas nas gdams so// ithi/ sgo ra ba la  
nyi zla 'od yod/ kho la rgyus yod/ rba rlabs kyi bka' rgya lde mig go// rgya  
rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rim pa bdun btap bo//

pa

rig pa'i rtsal dbang VII.147

NO BACK MATTER

pha

gzims chung ma'i zhal gdams VII.157

bla ma rin po che'i bka' rgya ma/ tshal yang dgon du zhal nas sprod nas/  
bdag gis yi ger bkod pa'o// des rgya rnal 'byor la/ des stong nyid 'od zer  
la/ des nyi ma 'od zer la/ sa ma ya/ rgya rgya rgya//

ba

mon gdong ma'i skor/ phyag rgya chen po lus brda'i gdams ngag gi chings  
VII.167

NO BACK MATTER

ma

rdo rje gsang ba'i bka' rgya ma VII.168

mtshogs 'khor dang chos thun gcig/

tsa

mon gdong ma yi dam lhas brda don gsungs pa'i rtsa ba VII.174

rtsa ba 'di bla ma lo zhig gis yi ger bkod pa yin no// ithi//  
bzang yul 'chad pa stag gi ri la sku gseng ba'i nyi ma la zhal nas yi ger bkod  
pa'o// bla ma'i bka' rgya yod pa yin no// a la la ho/ tshes bco lnga la'o//

tsha

mon gdong ma bka' rang babs kyi 'grel pa VII.178

NO BACK MATTER

dza

mon gdong ma yi dam lhas gsungs pa'i brda'i don 'grel VII.189

'di mkha' 'gro ma gsang ba'i bka' rgya can yin pas/ shin tu sba bar gyis  
shig bu tsho kun/ rgya rgya rgya/ zhal gdams dri ma med pa/ bka' rgya  
lan gsum yod do// rgya rgya rgya/

wa

ming rus sems gsum 'tshol ba'i khrid VII.200

NO BACK MATTER

zha

mon gdong ma gsang ba ngo sprod kyi gdams pa VII.202

nga la chos sku ye shes kyi DA kis g.ya' lung 'brong bur ngo sprod 'di byas  
nas/ gsang ba ngo sprod kyi gdams pa 'di yin pas/ las can rnams la ngo  
sprod 'di ltar gyis/ gsang ba ngo sprod kyi gdams pa bka' rgya lde mig  
yin no/



za

mon gdong ma lus brda'i bsre ba VII.205

'gro ba'i mgon pos chos spyil du chu pho 'brug gi lo'i dbyar zla ra ba'i  
tshes bcu la thugs la btags so// rgya rgya rgya//

'a

mon gdong ma bla ma spyi'i dbang bskur VII.208

ye shes mkha' 'gros dngos su gnang ba 'gro ba'i mgon po g.yu brag pa'i  
bla ma spyi'i dbang bskur ba zhes bya ba rdzogs so// rgya rgya rgya/ zab  
rgya/ gsang rgya/

ya

mon gdong ma zhal gdams bi dza ha ra bla ma sgrub pa'i dbang VII.214

NO BACK MATTER

ra

chos sku ye shes kyi DA ki'i mngon rtogs VII.221

NO BACK MATTER

la

'khor lo bzhir bla ma sgrub pa VII.223

bla ma'i zhal nas gsungs pa/ dge sbyong 'dul ba 'od kyis yi ger bkod de bris/  
rang 'chi 'chi 'dra na dpe 'di me la sregs/ bla ma'i bka' rgya yod pa'o/

sha

mon gdong ma bla ma sgrub pa'i phyag rgya bzhi'i don VII.230

nor 'khrul med par gsungs bzhin bris/ zhal gdams lde mig bka' rgya  
ma'o//

sa

'khor lo bzhi'i lde mig zhal gdams VII.232

zhal gdams lde mig 'di ni/ sngar yi ge med pa yin/ bka' rgya ma rnams kyi  
nying khu/ lus mgo mjug la gces pa'i snying lta bu'am/ dbang po'i spyangs  
ma mig lta bu yin pas su la yang ye nas bstan du mi rung ngo// snyan  
brgyud yi ger bris pa la// dpa' bo mkha' 'gro ma mnyes na// bzod par gsol  
lo bka' srung rnams// 'di bris dge bas mkha' mnyam gyi// sems can thams  
cad theg chen gyi// snod gyur dam chos 'di nyid kyis/ smin cing grol nas  
he ru ka'i// go 'phang sku bzhi rab rtogs shog/ nang rtso 'khor lo bzhir  
mchog sgrub pa'i man ngag gsal ba'i sgron me rin chen phreng ba zhes  
bya ba rdzogs so// ithi/ zab zab rgya rgya//

ha

tshal sgong chos spyil ma'i skor las lam zab bla ma'i lam gtsang ston rnal 'byor gyi zin bris tshogs 'khor dang chos thun bzhi VII.248

gnas su stob pa mchod pa tshar bcad pa dang/ gza' srung dang/ rba rlab dbang gi ngo sprod/ phyag rgya chen po'i lus brda rnams zhal las sbas pa'o// zhal shes lnga tshogs 'khor dang chos thun nyi shu rtisa gcig yod do// bka' rgya yod do/

a

chos spyil ma phrin las bzhis mchog sgrub pa bsdus pa rtisa ba VII.257

tshal gyi chos spyil du zhal nas sprad/ 'dul ba 'od kyis bris/ u dum wa ra'i me tog dper byas/ phrin las bzhi la brten nas mchog sgrub pa'o// bka' rgya nyams len 'di la sogs pa nga'i gdams ngag bka' rgya ma rnams dam du gyis shig/ gsang la nyams su longs shig/

ki

chos spyil ma phrin las bzhis mchog sgrub pa VII.267

tshal gyi chos spyil du zhal nas sprod/ 'dul ba 'od kyis bris/ 'di u dum wa ra'i me tog dper byas phrin las bzhi la brten nas mchog sgrub pa'o// bka' rgya nyams len 'di la sogs pa nga'i gdams ngag bka' rgya ma 'di rnams la dam du gyis shig/ gsang la nyams su longs shig/ rgya rgya rgya/

ku

chos spyil ma bye brag tu sgrub pa phyag rgya bzhi'i tshul sgrub pa VII.285

'khor lo bzhi yi bstan bcas 'di// nor 'khrul med par yi ger bris// zhal gdams lde mig bka' rgya ma'o// yang phyag rgya bzhi las lte bar las kyi phyag rgya/ snying gar chos kyi phyag rgya/ mgrin par dam tshig gi phyag rgya/ spyi bor phyag rgya chen po yin gsung/ nang 'khor lo bzhi'i bstan bcas so//

ke

chos spyil ma DA ki ma'i mngon rtogs gsang ba don ldan ma VII.293

chos sku ye shes kyi DA ki'i mngon rtogs gsang ba don ldan ma zhes bya ba 'di sgrags g.yu brag lha yi spyil po ru/ chu mo glang gi lo'i ston zla 'bring po'i tshes bcu bdun gyi nyin par smyon pa lo zhig dang/ 'dul ba 'od gnyis kyis zhu ba yang nas yang du phul/ tshogs 'khor nyi shu rtisa gcig phul nas zhus so// 'gro mgon gyi zhal nas/ da yi ger thob gsungs nas/ dgyes pa chen po dang bcas nas gnang ngo// ye shes DA ki'i mngon rtogs gsang ba don ldan zhes bya ba/ bka' rgya ma 'di la dam du gyis shig gsungs nas/ bka' rgya lan bdun btab bo//

ko

chos spyil ma he ru ka'i gnas lugs bstan pa VII.299

'di rnams kyis badz+ra he ru ka dang/ rdo rje rigs kyi mgon pos gnas lugs  
bstab pa'i don 'dis bstan pa'o/

khi

chos spyil ma he ru ka zhi ba'i gnas lugs bstan pa VII.305

zhi bas gnas lugs bstan pa'o// rgya rgya/

khu

chos spyil ma he ru ka rgyas pas gnas lugs bstan pa VII.307

rgyas pas gnas lugs bstan pa'o/

khe

chos spyil ma he ru ka dbang gi gnas lugs bstan pa VII.309

dbang gi sgo nas gnas lugs bstan pa'o// ithi/ rgya rgya rgya/ dam du gyis  
shig ngas bka' rgya ma byin yang lde mig 'di 'dul ba 'od las byin pa med  
do/

kho

chos spyil ma karma he ru ka drag po mngon spyod kyi gnas lugs bstab pa VII.311

'dis drag po mngon spyod kyi sgo nas/ gnas lugs bstab par bstan pa'i bka'  
rgya lde mig go rdzogs so/

gi

rgyal po chen po bzhis gnas lugs bstab pa VII.314

gnas lugs bstab bstan lde mig 'di// skyi shod tshal sgang chos spyil du//  
dar ma gzhon nus mnga' gsol dang// skye ba bdun gyi dpon slob bzhi//  
mar sgom 'dul ba 'od dang gsum// nga dang khyed gsum dgongs pa gcig/ a  
re skyid de a re skyid// sho li lo ma li lo li/ skyag pa ngas/ de kun yang ma  
mo chen mo'i rang skad du gda' yis/ zhi rgyas dbang drag phrin las 'di'i/  
gnas lugs bstan la bstab pa yi/ gdams pa'i gnad mchog dgu po 'di/ chu mo  
yos kyi lo'i dgun zla tha chung gi nyi shu lnga'i nyin par/ mar sgom dang/  
dar ma gzhon nu dang/ 'dul ba 'od gsum la/ gnas lugs bstan bstab bka'  
rgya lde mig gtad do// ithi/ rgya rgya rgya//

gu

chos spyil ma gnas lugs bstab bstan gyi rtas ba VII.321

de gsum byin rlabs drang srong srung ba gnas lugs bstab bstan gyi bka'  
rang babs so/

ge

chos spyil ma drang srong bsrung ba'i bka' rang bab VII.322

sngags yig 'bru dgu po 'di/ khrims kyi drang srong brgyad rA hu la dang  
dgu'i srog gi snying po yi ge 'bru re re phul te/ de dus nas chos skyong gi  
'khor byas nas bstan pa bsrung bar khas blangs/ gtor ma sbyin par dam  
bcas pa yin no//

go

drang srong srung ba lde mig VII.324

nga yi bka' rgya 'di rnams la dam par gyis shig/ klad pa ma chung zhig/  
dam med la bstan na bka' srung 'di rnams kyis chad pa chod cig/ rgya  
rgya rgya/

ngi

chos spyil ma 'pho ba'i gdams pa VII.331

DA kis gsungs pa/ yi ger bkod pa rdzogs so/

ngu

spyi khungs ma skor las hU~M nyi shu rtسا gcig gi rtسا ba VII.335

hU~M gis 'pho ba'i gdams pa 'di nyid thun mong ma yin pas ngas sngon  
byung ji ltar byas pa bzhin gyis/ chos 'di'i lugs kyis bar do med par sangs  
rgya ba yin gsungs/ hU~M gi gdams pa nyi shu rtسا gcig/ bka' rgya lde  
mig/ DA ki'i zhal gdams/ nga la 'brong bu spyi khungs su dngos su gsungs/  
dam par gyis la nyams su longs/ brgyud pa ni/ mi bskyod rdo rje/ zhe  
sdang rdo rje/ rol pa'i rdo rje'o// rdzogs so//

nge

spyi khungs ma hU~M nyi shu rtسا gcig gi gdams ngag dang dmigs pa VII.338

hU~M nyi shu rtسا gcig gi gdams pa bka' rgya lde mig ma'o// nga la DA kis  
gnang/ 'dul ba 'od dang/ rgya ston gnyis la tshal yang dgon gyi chos spyil  
du chu mo glang gi lo'i ston zla ra ba'i tshes bdun nas nyi shu brgyad kyi  
bar du gnang ba'o// bka' rgya nyi shu rtسا gcig yang btab bo// ithi/ sems  
kyi dran rtog ci skyes pa thams cad skye med spros bral du bsgom mo//  
DA ki'i snyan brgyud bka' rgya ma'o//

ngo

spyi khungs ma hU~M gi gdams pa bka' rgya can VII.374

man ngag gnad kyis gdams pa'o// sa ma ya/

ci

spyi khungs ma hU~M nyer gcig gi lhan thabs VII.382

bka' rgya yod do//

cu

spyi khungs ma'i byin rlabs dbab pa VII.384

rje btsun ma'i gsang bsgrub/ bka' rgya yod do/

ce

dbang bzhi don rdzogs spyi khungs ma VII.386

sems can gyi don 'ba' zhiḡ min pa gzhan gang yang thugs la mi shong  
gsungs/ bum dbang dang 'brel ba mon pa gdong du bkod/ gsang dbang gi  
de rnams mkha' la sgrol ma'i sgra grags shing lkugs par bkod/ gsum pa'i  
don de sgyu lus su gyur te spyi khungs su bkod/ bzhi pa la sogs pa yon tan  
gyi rtsal thams cad spyi khungs su rdzogs so// 'dul ba 'od nga'i bka' rgya  
ma thams cad khyod la gtad do/

co

spyi khungs ma'i bka' rang babs VII.390

'di dag dbang bzhi pa tshig dbang gi zhal gdams su gsungs so/

chi

spyi khungs ma'i zhal gdams VII.392

dag byed bzhi'i gdams pa mdor bstan pa'o/

chu

khrus bzhi'i gdams pa VII.394

NO BACK MATTER

che

dbang bzhi'i don rdzogs spyi khungs ma dag byed bzhi'i rgyas bshad VII.396

1. dang por rtsa'i dag byed VII.397

gnad 'di bum pa'i dbang gi 'bras bu bstan no// rtsa'i dag byed kyi  
bka' rgya lde mig gi rgyas bshad do/

2. gnyis pa gsang dbang gi 'bras bu ngag gi dag byed VII.400

ngag gi khrus so// gsang dbang gi bka' rgya lde mig go/

3. gsum pa bde ba'i dag byed VII.403

bde ba'i dag byed bka' rgya lde mig 'di dbang gsum pa'i 'bras bu'o/

4. bzhi pa rnam par shes pa'i dag byed VII.405

'di rnams kyis rnam par shes pa'i dag byed kyi 'bras bu ston no/

spyi khungs ma'i gdams ngag bka' rgya ma 'di dbang bzhi don rdzogs kyi bka' rgya zhal gdams kyi lde mig go// dbang bzhi don rdzogs kyi zhal gdams bka' rgya ma 'di/ shing pho byi ba'i lo la tshal yang dgon gyi chos spyil du lug gi zla ba'i nyi shu gnyis kyi nyin par/ 'dul ba 'od dang mar sgom gnyis la gsungs so// tshogs 'khor yang yang phul nas zhus so// da yi ge thob gsungs nas gnang ngo// dam par gyur pa bla ma'i gsungs/ sgro skur med par yi ger bris so// bka' rgya dam par yang yang btab bo/

cho

spyi khungs ma'i dag byed bzhi yi gdams pa VII.409

bka' rgya btab bo/

ji

spyi khungs ma'i man ngag VII.414

NO BACK MATTER

ju

tshogs mchod dang lag mchod bka' rgya ma VII.416

ngas 'brong bu spyi khungs su bsdad pa'i dus su/ chu pho 'brug gi lo'i ston zla 'bring po'i tshes bcu'i snga dro zhig tshogs 'khor zhig byed pa'i dus su/

1. 'brong bu spyi khungs su ye shes kyi DA kis mkha' 'gro ma dus 'byung gi rgyud kyi dgongs pa 'di nga la dngos su byin pa yin/ lag mchod 'di chos sku ye shes kyi DA ki mas tshogs dang bcas nas bka' rgya ma'i gnad du gsungs pa 'di 'dul ba 'od la ngar phug tu byin pa'o// bka' rgya yang yang btab bo/

2. zhes pas tshogs sbyangs bar bya'o//

des na ma puN+ye kirti 'bar la zhal nas zhal/ snyan nas snyan/ thugs nas thugs su brgyud pa'i bka' rgya ma'o// tshogs kyi lde mig go/

je

gtor ma bka' rgya ma VII.430

NO BACK MATTER

jo

spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i lo rgyus VII.440

dgos 'dod re skong ma'i 'don thabs sgrub thabs zhal las shes par bya'o// rgya rgya rgya//

nyi

spyi khungs ma/ dgos 'dod re skong ma'i sgrub thabs VII.446

'gro ba'i mgon po zhang rin po che'i bstod pa yid bzhin gyi rin po che  
'di/ mkhyen pa'i bdag nyid ye shes kyi mkha' 'gro ma rnams kyis 'gro ba'i  
mgon po de nyid la bstod cing bstan te/ rjes gngang dang bcas pa 'di/ ye  
shes kyi mkha' 'gro ma rnams kyis 'brong bu spyi khungs su bstod pa'o//  
ye shes DA kis zhang rin po che la gngang ba'o/

nyu

g.yu brag 'khrul 'khor VII.447

shing mo bya'i lo'i ston zla ra ba'i tshes bcu gsum la g.yu brag lha'i spyil  
por bris so// thabs lam 'khrul 'khor zhes bya ba bka' rgya yod do//

nye

g.yu brag 'khrul 'khor ma'i rtsa ba VII.455

khro bo khro mo'i rnam 'gyur la brten nas brtul zhugs kyi man ngag go//

nyo

g.yu brag bka' rgya gsang bdun ma VII.456

de'i dus su nye gnas lce sgom shes rab seng ge dang/ 'dul ba 'od dang/  
sgom shag gsum la rgyus yod/ shes rab seng ge dang 'dul ba 'od gnyis kyis  
yang yang zhus nas 'dul ba 'od kyis yi ger btab/ 'di bka' rgya gsang bdun  
ma bya ba yin/ 'di gsang nas nyams su blangs na rab tshe 'dir sangs rgya/  
'bring bar dor/ tha ma yang skye ba phyi ma la sangs rgya nges so// nga'i  
bka' rgya ma 'di rnams log lta can rnams kyi lag tu ma shor bar gyis shig/  
ithi/ rgya rgya rgya//

ti

g.yu brag ma/ nad lam khyer gyi gdams pa VII.465

NO BACK MATTER

tu

rnam thar bsam yas ma bka' rang babs VII.468

nga'i rnam thar bka' rgyas btab pa rnams gzhan su la'ang ma 'chugs pa  
gal che'o/

te

bsam yas ma/ sgyu lus lde mig VII.474

bsam yas ma'i bka' rgya lde mig/ rmi lam sgyu lus 'di/ dge sbyong 'dul ba  
'od kyis bla ma'i zhal nas sprod pa bris/ bka' rgya nan tan cher mdzad  
do// lo sgom dang 'dul ba 'od/ gtsang sgom hral mo rnams la gngang ngo/

to

zhang rin po che'i rnam thar bsam yas ma VII.482

**bdag rang zhang du thag 'dis chod/**

thi

'jam dpal khong snying VII.488

**NO BACK MATTER**

thu

rnam thar bka' rgya ma bsam yas mchims phu ma lha btsun la gdams pa VII.499

**bka' rgya lan gsum gdams/ me pho 'brug gi lo'i spre'u'i zla ba'i tshes gsum  
la ngar phug tu bris/ rnam thar bka' rgya ma bsam yas mchims phu ma  
lha btsun la gdams pa'o/**

the

mchims phu ma'i dbang VII.501

**bka' rgya bsam yas mchims phu ma/ ngar phug tu bris shing lha btsun la  
gdams pa'o// 'di'i brgyud pa gzhan du shes/**

tho

spyir gnad gdams pa VII.504

**spyi [sic] gnad gdams pa'o/**

di

mchims phu ma'i zhal gdams VII.506

**lha btsun la gdams pa'o/**

du

g.ya' lung 'brong bu ma rdo la zhabs rjes byung ba'i lo rgyus VII.511

**gzhan du gsungs pa ye ma thos/ ban de gzhan nu dpal gyis gzim chung  
dkon gnyer gyi ngag ma chog na bris pa'o/**

de

g.ya' lung ma/ spyod pa bogs 'don g.ya' lung lha sa VII.519

**bka' rgya lan bdun yod do//**

do

g.ya' lung ma/ sdom pa rgya mtsho'i rgyud tshig VII.523

**zhes dra ba sdom pa'i tshig des ngo sprad pa'o//**



ni

'di yang rgyud tshig yin VII.525

zhes don bstan pa mngon du gyur pa'o//

nu

g.ya' lung 'brong bu ma'i zhal gdams VII.526

1. zhes pas/ rgyal po chen po in+d+ra b+hU tis gsang ba chen po'i dbang nyams/ ngo sprad pa'i gdams pa/ gnad kyi zhal gdams kyi lde mig go/
2. shing pho byi ba'i lo la sgrags g.yu brag lha'i spyil po ru/ 'dul ba 'od/ jo sras gzhon nu dpal/ rgya ston gsum la gnang/ rgya ston gyis ye [sic] ger bkod pa'o// bka' rgya yang yang btab bo/

ne

lha sa ma'i bka' rang bab rnam thar sbas pa mig 'byed VII.532

dpal rgwa lo'i gsung sgros kyi/ rjes su 'breng [sic] ba'i lung bstan gdams ngag 'di/ phyi ma'i dus su phan srid snyam/ yi ger bkod pa mkha' 'gro la/ bzod par gsol lo byin gyis rlobs/ 'dul ba 'od la sprod nas bris pa yin no// rang 'chi ba 'dra na dpe 'di mer sregs/ chos 'di la the tshom ma za zhig/ ngas khyed rnams mi bsul ba yin/ ma 'ongs pa'i 'gro ba la srid mtha' 'gags pa yin no// phyis mon pa gdong ma de nas tshes lnga'i lcags pho 'brug gi lo'i zla ba la/ rin po che zhang tshal pa'i phyi nang gsang ba rnam thar bsdu pa'o/

no

lha sa ma'i dbang VII.549

dbang bzhi breng chags su bskur ba/ g.yu brag rol pa'i rdo rje yis// mar sgom ri sgom 'dul ba 'od// skal ldan gsum la dbang bka' bzhang/ lde mig bka' rgya gsang spyod 'di// sa pho 'brug gi lo gsar gyi// tshes bcu'i dus su mar sgom gyis// tshogs 'khor nyi shu rtsa gcig phul// skyi shod gung thang gzims chung du// lha sa ma yi dbang bris so// gsang spyod lha sa ma'i bka' rgya dbang gi lde mig ces bya ba/ ithi/ rgya rgya rgya/ klad pa ma chung zhig/

pi

bka' rang babs ma gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i rnam thar bzhi VII.557  
gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa sbas ma VII.557

NO BACK MATTER

pu

lha sa ma'i gdams ngag VII.572

bka' rgya lan bdun btab bo//

pe

lha sa ma'i sa bcad VII.575

sa gcod do/

po

mthong snang sna tshogs ma VII.576

bka' rgya yod do//

phi

g.ya' lung ma'i zhal gdams VII.580

sprang ban la cag cag tig tig med/ grub thob kyi man ngag snying gtam 'di  
mi la ma bstan nyams su longs gsung/ dge sbyong 'dul ba 'od kyis bla ma'i  
zhal nas sprad nas bris/ bka' rgya nan tan chen po mdzad do// lo sgom  
dang/ 'dul ba 'od dang/ gtsang sgom hral mo gsum la gnang ngo/

phu

lha sa ma'i sa bcad spyi chings VII.589

lha sa ma'i lde mig go/

phe

lha sa ma'i nyams len VII.595

NO BACK MATTER

pho

lha sa ma'i man ngag VII.601

las la sbyar ba'i gdams ngag 'di/ mi la ma ston/ rang 'chi 'chi 'dra na dpe  
'di me la phul cig/ ithi// zab rgya/ gsang rgya//

bi

lha sa ma/ nyon mongs lam du slong ba sgrub pa'i blo rdeg VII.608

NO BACK MATTER

bu

lha sa ma sbyor thabs bzhi VII.611

lha sa ma'i dum bu/

be

lha sa ma rdo rje chu 'thung zhes bya ba'i gdams ngag VII.613

lha sa ma'i dum bu/

bo

nyon mongs pa lam du slong ba'i gnad kyi man ngag VII.616

gzhan lus phyag rgya'i man ngag snod min dag la gsang du bya/ sna nam  
zhang gi gdams ngag yin// ngam shod rgya ras snying la 'chongs// bka'  
rgya gdab bo// rgya rgya rgya/ rgya rgya rgya/

mi

'bring po lo zhig gi lugs VII.624

rdo rje rba rlabs zhal gyi thigs pa'o/

mu

'bring po lo zhig gi gdams ngag bka' rgya ma VII.629

mtsho skyes rdo rje'i zhal gyi thigs pa 'di// kun la yod na ngo mtshar ci  
la che// sbas pa'i mig gis khams gsum kun la khyab// yi ge mi la ma ston  
bshes gnyen pa// sa ma ya/ rgya rgya rgya/

me

gtsang ston rnal 'byor lugs gdams ngag VII.636

bla ma'i sgrub thabs zhes kyang bya/ gsang sngags sngon 'gro zhes kyang  
bya/ shab bya ru'i rnal 'byor ston pa ngas/ bla ma zhang gi ji skad gsungs  
pa bzhin bris// grogs po lo zhig bka' drin che// gzhan la ma ston bka' rgya  
yod// mkha' 'gro chos skyong bzod par bzhes/ nged gnyis po la gngang  
ba'o// gtsang ston rnal 'byor gyi zin bris so/

mo

bka' rgya ma bsdu pa'i zhal gdams VII.644

sa ma ya tha/ 'gro ba'i mgon po'i rnam thar gyi gdams ngag bka' rgya mar  
grags pa la/ rgyas bsdu gsum du yod pa la/ rgyas pa 'dul ba 'od kyi lugs/  
'bring po lo zhig gi lugs/ bsdu pa gtsang ston rnal 'byor gyi lugs gsum yod  
pa las/ lo zhig gis bris pa'i zin bris lo rgyus/ de'i gdams ngag gtsang ston  
rnal 'byor nyid kyis bris pa'i lam zab bla ma/ de'i gdams ngag zhal shes  
lga po 'di lags so//

tsi

zhal dris gnad kyi lde mig sa bcu rgyun gyi tha ma'i chos la sogs pa'i man ngag  
VII.650

NO BACK MATTER

tsu

gnas lugs bstab bstan gyi dkar chag VII.660

gnas lugs bstab bstan dkar chag go//

tse

sgyu lus kyi gdams pa bsam yas ma VII.666

bla ma 'gro ba'i mgon po zhang g.yu brag pa'i chos bka' rgya ma chen mo  
ma lus par rdzogs so//

tso

dkar chag chen mo VII.672

NO BACK MATTER

tshal dgon rmang bru ba'i dus su mdzad pa'i bkra shis gnyis VII.701

shAkya'i dge slong brtson 'grus grags pas lug gi lo la tshal dgon du rmang  
bru ba'i dus su bkod pa/

ja kha

bka' rgya ma'i chos sgo 'byed pa'i dbang gi rim pa (5 folios) VII.707–716

bla ma rin po che rnam gnyis kyi bkas gnang nas kirti d+h+wa dzas  
bsgrigs pa'o//

ja ga

bka' rgya ma'i dbang byin rlabs lag len bcas pa (36 folios) 717–787

## LAMA ZHANG'S ROOT LAMAS AND THEIR PRINCIPAL TEACHERS\*



### APPENDIX THREE

#### LISTING OF LAMA ZHANG'S 44 TEACHERS, ALONG WITH 141 TEACHINGS RECEIVED, FROM *VARIOUS ROOT LAMAS (RTSA BA'I BLA MA SNA TSHOGS KYIS 'THOB BYANG)*, SHEDUP I.307–16\*

##### TEACHERS AND TEACHINGS RECEIVED

Dpal chen po Rgwa lo

- bde mchog lu hi pa
- lhan skyes
- sbyor ba yan lag drug
- chos skyong bya rog can
- ba su ki'i klu chog
- skyabs 'gro sems bskyed
- bya ba'i rim pa
- yi ge drug pa
- dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga la sogs pa'i phrin las sna tshogs
- mi g.yo ba'i skor

Rje btsun rin po che Yer pa ba

- lam cig char ba la sogs pa nA ro pa'i man ngag sna tshogs
- thog babs la sogs pa ma tri pa'i gdams ngag sna tshogs
- jo bo gha ya dha ri'i lam skor
- dpyal lo tsA ba'i thabs kyi khyad par sna tshogs
- 'khor ba 'jug ldog
- snyan brgyud 'phags skor gyi gdams ngag thun mong ba
- gzhung pa'i ma hA mA yA la sogs pa gdams ngag sna tshogs

Byang chub sems dpa' 'Ol ka ba

- bde mchog dpa' bo gcig pa
- du gsum mnyam pa nyid
- gtor ma'i skor rnams

Dwag po ba

- jo bo dI paM ka ra nas brgyud pa'i rten rab tu gnas pa mdo lugs
- dpal nA ro pa'i gtum mo dang/ rmi lam sgyu lus/ 'od gsal/ grong 'jug/ bar do/ skyes sbyor chos bzhi
- gzhan yang sgrub skor gdams ngag rnams

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\* Discussed in Chapter Two.

- spyir skyes bu dam pa 'dis tshig la ma brten pa'i byin rlabs 'ba' zhig gis kho bo'i rgyud la gnyug ma lhan cig skyes pa lhag gis shar bas chos thams cad la rang byan tshud pa 'di kho na drin che

Rngog Stod lung pa chen po

- mdo sde rgyan
- spyod 'jug
- sngags yo ga'i stod 'grel
- gtsug dgu
- mtshan brjod 'grel ba bar ma
- gsang ldan ma
- a ro ka ra
- ro sreg rgyal po'i sgrub thabs la sogs pa sgrub thabs che chung
- sgron gsal
- gur brtag gnyis
- mtsho skyes
- dpa' bo gcig pa
- rdo rje nam 'joms
- phyag na rdo rje
- 'gro bzang ma la sogs pa sgrub thabs che chung
- dmigs pa skor gsum

SaM b+hu lo tsA ba chen po

- mngon pa mdzod
- theg pa chen po mdo sde'i rgyan
- tshad ma nam nges
- bam lnga
- rigs thig
- rgya bod kyi sgra 'grel chang chung rnam

Ngam shod smad pa

- lam 'bras kyi dbang gi chu bo
- lam skor dgu ka'i rjes gnang zhus

ShrI Bai ro tsa na badz+ra

- dbang dang gdams ngag gnyis ka
- dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa
- bde mchog lhan skyes
- gtum mo
- shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i yi ge gcig ma
- yi ge drug pa'i sgrub thabs
- sa ra ha'i do ha chen mo
- ka kha'i do ha
- nag po spyod pa'i do ha
- bir wa pa'i do ha rnam

Mchims Jo sras

- mdo sde skyes rabs
- grub mtha' ya bdun
- shes rab snying po
- dbyangs can ma'i sgrub thabs lung blang ba
- dbang blang ba
- skyabs 'gro
- sems bskyed
- bsngo ba

Slob dpon Ston yes

- brtag gnyis
- mtsho skyes
- gsang ldan

Slob dpon Jo sras grag se

- yo ga'i stangs stabs
- gsang ldan

Slob dpon Ston pa rdo rje grags

- 'jig rten bstan pa

Slob dpon Ston pa so ston chos grags

- do ha'i gzhung gsum

Slob dpon Gshen

- rdo rje rnam 'joms
- mtshan brjod
- rtsod brtag nyi shu pa
- chu gtor 'jam dpal ma
- zhi byed

Slob dpon Pad+ma

- sems kyi sgrib sbyong

Slob dpon Sgom par rnam grags

- gshin rje dmar po rwa sgrol ma
- phur pa'i phrin las

Slob dpon Bal po Lo ha

- rlung gi gdams ngag

Slob dpon Dge bshes G.yor dga'

- gshin rje dmar nag



Slob dpon Sgros snyon mi zan

- phur pa gshin rje kha thun las tig nyi ma bzhi pa
- dmar po rwa sgrol
- rgyal po'i sgrub chung
- lha mo shan ma nag mo la sogs pa 'jig rten pa'i sgrub thabs dpag tu med pa

Slob dpon Tshul khrims rgyal mtshan

- chu gtor nar ma
- dmigs pa skor gsum

Slob dpon Sgom nag skyid de dpal

- lha mo dpon g.yog gsum pa

Lung bstan pa'i bla ma Ma Jo Dar ma

- sprul pa yin pas chos tham cad rang brdol du yong bar lung bstan

Ma jo Sgron ne

- ngo sprod ke'u tshang ma

Slob dpon Thang pa

- gcod

Slob dpon Ru ston

- gzungs grwa lnga'i sgrub thabs
- yi dam blang ba la sogs spyod phyogs phran bu
- spyod 'jug
- 'jig rten bstan pa

Yongs kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po Bka' gdams pa Glang ston pa

- bsnyen gnas gtan khrims lnga pa'i sdom pa mnos nas dge shes dgon pa ba nas brgyud pa'i sems bskyed
- bsngo ba yan lag bdun pa
- rtogs pa'i gegs sel
- kha 'bar ma'i gtor ma rnam

Mkhan po Yongs kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen Mkhar 'go ba

- bslab pa chig rdzogs bgyis

Slob dpon Dge ba'i bshes gnyen Grab mkhar ba

- las kyi slob dpon dang so so thar pa la sogs pa 'dul ba rnam

Slob dpon Dge ba'i bshes gnyen Gzu ljang mdo ba

- gsang ste ston pa

Bka' gdams kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po Slob dpon Sgom chos

- bka' gdams lugs kyi sems bskyed

Slob dpon 'Od mchog

- bka' gdams kha yar
- pra ka ra

Slob dpon Blo ldan

- lu hi pa'i zhib tshags
- kri ya'i dbang
- rnal 'byor gyi dbang
- rnal 'byor gyi rab ngas
- dmigs pa skor gsum
- khyung gi sgrub chung
- dpal rgwa lo'i nram thar

Slob dpon Shes rab dpal

- brgyad stong pa
- sdod pa
- shes rab snying po
- pha rol tu phyin pa'i sgom

Slob dpon Rgyas ston

- spyod 'jug
- 'od ldan
- bka' gdams kyi yan lag bdun pa

Slob dpon Rgyal 'byung

- 'od ldan
- sum brgya pa sdom tshig

Slob dpon Dzi ston

- rin spungs

Slob dpon Lcog ro Jo sras

- bka' gdams kyi bsngo ba
- tsha tsha la sogs pa

Slob dpon Sbas chos kyi 'od zer

- bsnyen gnas blangs

Slob dpon Sgom chen 'ching sgom

- za gtor la sogs pa kha 'bar ma nyan

Slob dpon 'Phags pa jo ston

- shes rab snying po
- srung ba
- chos kyi 'grel ba
- srung ba'i 'grel ba

- mngon rtogs rgyan che chung
- 'bum gyi Ti ka
- byang chub ltung bshags
- mtshan brjod
- pha rol tu phyin pa'i lung

Slob dpon Nyang bran chos yes

- bslab bsduṣ thun gcig

Slob dpon Dkar chung ring mo

- 'grel chung ri thung lnga

Slob dpon Tshul shes

- spyod 'jug thun gcig

Slob dpon Rang 'dral lo tsA ba

- phyin ci log bzhi spong ba'i gdam

#### LAMAS LISTED, 44 TOTAL

1. Dpal chen po Rgwa lo
2. Rje btsun rin po che Yer pa ba
3. Byang chub sems dpa' 'Ol ka ba, Ba ri lo tsA ba, Dam pa rgya gar na chung
4. Dwag po ba
5. Rngog Stod lung pa chen po
6. SaM b+hu lo tsA ba chen po
7. Ngam shod smad pa
8. Shrl Bai ro tsa na badz+ra
9. Mchims Jo sras
10. Slob dpon Ston yes
11. Slob dpon Jo sras grag se
12. Slob dpon Ston pa rdo rje grags
13. Slob dpon Ston pa so ston chos grags
14. Slob dpon Gshen
15. Slob dpon Pad+ma
16. Slob dpon Sgom par rnam grags
17. Slob dpon Bal po Lo ha
18. Slob dpon Dge bshes G.yor dga'
19. Slob dpon Sgros snyon mi zan
20. Slob dpon Tshul khrims rgyal mtshan
21. Slob dpon Sgom nag skyid de dpal
22. Lung bstan pa'i bla ma Ma Jo Dar ma
23. Ma jo Sgron ne
24. Slob dpon Thang pa
25. Slob dpon Ru ston
26. Yongs kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po Bka' gdams pa Glang ston pa

27. Mkhan po Yongs kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen Mkhar 'go ba
28. Slob dpon Dge ba'i bshes gnyen Grab mkhar ba
29. Slob dpon Dge ba'i bshes gnyen Gzu ljang mdo ba
30. Bka' gdams kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen chen po Slob dpon Sgom chos
31. Slob dpon 'Od mchog
32. Slob dpon Blo ldan
33. Slob dpon Shes rab dpal
34. Slob dpon Rgyas ston
35. Slob dpon Rgyal 'byung
36. Slob dpon Dzi ston
37. Slob dpon Lcog ro Jo sras
38. Slob dpon Sbas chos kyi 'od zer
39. Slob dpon Sgom chen 'ching sgom
40. Slob dpon 'Phags pa jo ston
41. Slob dpon Nyang bran chos yes
42. Slob dpon Dkar chung ring mo
43. Slob dpon Tshul shes
44. Slob dpon Rang 'dral lo tsA ba

## APPENDIX FOUR

### LIST OF 15 LINEAGES OF TEACHINGS RECEIVED BY ZHANG, FROM VARIOUS LINEAGES (*BRGYUD PA SNA TSHOGS*), SHEDUP I.293–307\*

#### BY TEACHING

1. sbyor ba yan lag drug gi gdams ngag—Instructions on the 6 Limbs of Practice (*Kālacakra*)
  - bcom ldan ‘das dpal ‘jigs byed chen po
  - byang chub sems dpa’ sems dpa’ chen po ‘phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug
  - rgyal po pad+ma dkar po
  - slob dpon tsi lu pa zhes bya ba mkha’ ‘gro ma’i sras su gyur pa zhig
  - pi to a tsar+ya zhes bya ba mkha’ spyod kyi dngos grub brnyes pa zhig
  - rje btsun dus ‘khor zhabs zhes bya ba mngon par shes pa dang ldan pa zhig
  - bsod snyoms pa sangs rgyas grags pa zhes bya ba tshe’i dngos grub brnyes pa rig pa’i gnas lnga la mkhas pa zhig
  - dpal chen po rgwa lo
2. lhan cig skyes pa—Coemergence (*mahāmudrā* teaching)
  - bcom ldan ‘das dpal ‘khor lo bde mchog gi yum ye shes kyi mkha’ ‘gro ma
  - slob dpon rdo rje dril bu pa
  - a wa d+hU ti pa
  - spyod mdzad chos kyi rdo rje
  - byang chub bzang po
  - bla ma rdo rje gdan pa
  - bla ma pan+da i ta a b+h+ya ka ra gup+ta
  - dpal chen po rgwa lo
3. lam cig char ba / rim gyis pa / kha ‘thor ba—The Simultaneous, the Gradual, and the Random Paths
  - bcom ldan ‘das dpal dgyes pa rdo rje
  - sa bcu pa’i byang chub sems dpa’ dpal rdo rje snying po
  - sprul pa’i sku tai lo pa
  - dpal nA ro pa
  - rje btsun mar pa lho brag pa
  - rje btsun rngog ri bo
  - rje btsun mi la ras pa
  - rje btsun gling ka ba ‘bri sgom ras pa chen po

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\* Discussed in Chapter Two.

- rnal 'byor chen po mal yer pa ba
4. phyag rgya chen po thog babs—"Lightning Strike" or "Thunderbolt" Mahāmudrā
    - bcom ldan 'das mi g.yo mgon po
    - byang chub sems dpa' blo gros rin po che
    - dpal ri khrod pa
    - rje btsun gnyis med rdo rje
    - rje btsun phyag na rdo rje
    - rje btsun lha rje gtsang shod pa
    - rje btsun lha khang pa me ston dar ma
    - rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug rje btsun mal yer pa ba
  5. dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i 'phags skor sgrub brgyud—The Practice Lineage of the Cycle of the Noble Śrī Guhyasamāja
    - bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'chang chen po
    - sdud pa po phyag na rdo rje
    - klu las gyur pa'i mkha' 'gro ma
    - rgyal po bi su ka pa
    - slob dpon klu sgrub
    - zla ba grags pa
    - rig pa'i khu byug
    - a wa d+hU ti pa
    - jo bo rje lha cig pa
    - lha btsun byang chub 'od
    - mchod gnas phya ru ba
    - pu rangs lo chung pa
    - rje btsun ka brag pa
    - rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po mal yer pa ba
  6. snyan brgyud—Aural Transmission
    - yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das shAkya thub pa'i sprul pa
    - slob ma rab tu byung ba zhig
    - slob dpon mai tri pa
    - shrI sing ha
    - ba gor bai ro tsa
    - slob dpon chen po dgongs pa gsal ba
    - a ro ye shes 'byung gnas
    - bla ma rgya kha ba
    - lce sgom byang chub rdo rje
    - rje btsun ka brag pa
    - rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje btsun mal yer pa ba
  7. lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa—The Path with Its Fruit
    - ye shes kyi mkha' 'gro ma bdag med ma
    - slob dpon bir wa pa
    - d+harmā pA [sic]
    - ka na pa

- a wa d+hU ti pa
  - g+ha ya d+ha ra
  - 'brog mi lo tsA ba
  - se ston kun rig
  - jo mo zha chung ma [ma gcig zha ma]
  - rje btsun gling ka ba
  - mal yer pa ba
8. jo mo rnal 'byor ma—The Revered Lady Yoginī (Vajravārāhī/Vajrayoginī practice?)
- jo mo rnal 'byor ma
  - dpal u rgyan pa chen po
  - b+ha ro phyag ldum
  - bla ma snye nam pa
  - bla ma la stod pa [mi la ras pa?]
  - rje btsun gling ka ba
  - rje btsun yer pa ba
9. phyag rgya chen po dang nA ro'i chos drug—Mahāmudrā and the Six Dhar-mas of Nāropa
- bcom ldan 'das rdo rje 'chang
  - tai lo pa
  - nA ro pa
  - mar pa lo tsA ba / rngog
  - rje btsun mi la ras pa
  - dwags po snyi sgom chen po
  - bla ma dwags po sgom tshul
10. dus gsum mnyam pa nyid dang/ bde mchog dpa' bo gcig pa la sogs pa dang/ gtor ma'i de nyid la sogs pa—The Equality of the 3 Times, the Cakrasaṃvara Single-Yidam, etc., and the Gtor ma Itself, etc.
- ta thA ga tA rak+Shi ta
  - bai ro tsa na rak+Shi ta
  - dus 'khor zhabs
  - phyag na rdo rje
  - rdo rje gdan pa
  - ba ri lo tsA ba
  - 'ol ka ba
11. bir wa pa'i lam rgyas pa—The Extensive Path of Virūpa
- sprul pa'i sku ye shes kyi mkha' 'gro ma bco lnga
  - rnal 'byor dbang phyug bir wa pa
  - rgya gar shar phyogs kyi slob dpon nag po pa
  - yul dbus kyi rnal 'byor chen po d+harmā pA/DA ma pa la
  - slob dpon chen po a wa d+hU ti pa
  - rgya gar shar phyogs kyi rgyal po rgya mtsho'i lha'i rigs ka ya ta pa
  - khong rang gi sras ka ya ta pa chung ngu g+ha ya d+ha ra
  - gsang mtshan mi bskyod rdo rje zhes bya ba bla ma chen po myu gu lung pa

- gsang mtshan zhe sdang rdo rje zhes bya ba dge ba'i bshes gnyen se stong kun rig
  - gsang mtshan rol pa'i rdo rje zhes bya ba dge ba'i bshes gnyen zhang dgon pa
  - gsang mtshan mi bskyod rdo rje zhes bya ba rtsod pa'i dus kyi skye bo'i nang na gtsug gi nor bur gyur pa rje sa skya pa
  - rgyud sde thams cad la mnga' mdzad pa gsang mtshan dpa' bo rdo rje zhes bya ba gsang sngags mtha' dag gi sdong po rje btsun rin po che gshen pa
12. do ha'i 'brel [*sic*—read as 'grel] ba—Commentaries on *Dohā*
- bcom ldan 'das dang rdo rje 'chang chen po
  - bram ze sa ra ha
  - ri khrod dbang phyug sa ra ha
  - slob dpon mai tri pa
  - sgra mkhan zhabs
  - su ra pa la
  - rgya gar lho phyogs yul ko sa la'i grong khyer so na tha pu ri zhes bya bar sku 'khrungs pa'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa shrI bai ro tsa na badz+ra
13. lhan cig skyes pa dang gtum mo—Coemergence and *Gtum mo*
- bcom ldan 'das ma rdo rje phag mo
  - rje btsun ko'u dzi pa
  - bi na pa
  - nag po spyod pa
  - tai lo pa
  - nA ro pa
  - pradz+nyA ra kri ta
  - su ra pa
  - rgya gar lho phyogs kyi yul ko sa la'i grong khyer so na tha pu rir sku 'khrungs pa'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa shrI bai ro tsa na badz+ra
14. rdo rje phag mo—Vajravārāhī
- bcom ldan 'das rdo rje phag mo
  - rje btsun dza lan d+ha ra
  - nag po spyod pa
  - tai lo pa
  - nA ro pa
  - ka na tha pa
  - bla ma dz+nyA
  - rgya gar lho phyogs kyi grong khyer so na tha pu rir sku 'khrungs pa'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa ba shrI bai ro tsa na badz+ra
15. dpal dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa—Śrī Hevajra Coemergence
- bcom ldan 'das dpal he ru ka
  - sdud pa po phyag na rdo rje
  - byang chub sems dpa' blo gros rin po che



- bram ze sa ra ha
- rdo rje dril bu pa
- yan lag med pa'i rdo rje
- dga' ba'i rdo rje
- rdo rje gdan pa
- a b+h+ya ka ra
- des rgya gar lho phyogs kyi grong khyer so na tha pu rir sku 'khrungs pa'i rnal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po brtul zhugs kyi spyod pa ba shrI bai ro tsa na badz+ra

## BY ROOT LAMA

Mal Yer pa ba:

3. lam cig char ba / rim gyis pa / kha 'thor ba—The Simultaneous, the Gradual, and the Random Paths
4. phyag rgya chen po thog babs—"Lightning Strike" or "Thunderbolt" Mahāmudrā
5. dpal gsang ba 'dus pa'i 'phags skor sgrub brgyud—The Practice Lineage of the Cycle of the Noble Śrī Guhyasamāja
6. snyan brgyud—Aural Transmission
7. lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa—The Path with Its Fruit
8. jo mo rnal 'byor ma—The Revered Lady Yoginī (Vajravārāhi/Vajrayoginī practice?)

'Ol ka ba:

10. dus gsum mnyam pa nyid dang/ bde mchog dpa' bo gcig pa la sogs pa dang/ gtor ma'i de nyid la sogs pa—The Equality of the 3 Times, the Cakrasaṃvara Single-Yidam, etc., and the Gtor ma Itself, etc.

Vairocana vajra:

12. do ha'i 'brel [sic—read as 'grel] ba—Commentaries on Dohā
13. lhan cig skyes pa dang gtum mo—Coemergence and Gtum mo
14. rdo rje phag mo—Vajravārāhi
15. dpal dgyes pa rdo rje lhan cig skyes pa—Śrī Hevajra Coemergence

Rwga lo tsā ba:

1. sbyor ba yan lag drug gi gdams ngag—Instructions on the 6 Limbs of Practice (Kālacakra)
2. lhan cig skyes pa—Coemergence (mahāmudrā teaching)

Sgom tshul:

9. phyag rgya chen po dang nA ro'i chos drug—Mahāmudrā and the Six Dharmas of Nāropa

Gshen pa:

11. bir wa pa'i lam rgyas pa—The Extensive Path of Virūpa

APPENDIX FIVE

OCCURRENCES OF THE TERM *BKA' BRGYUD*  
IN THE SHEDUP-NAMGYAL 2004 *COLLECTED WORKS*\*

VOLUME 1

*Bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs gnyis*, Shedup I.56–59:

56:

*bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs dang po bzhugs/*

58:

*sprang ban zhang gis bka' brgyud la gsol ba btab pa'o/*

58:

*bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs gnyis pa bzhugs/*

59:

*bka' brgyud kyi gsol 'debs zhang gis bkod pa'o//*

*Dwags po pa la b stod pa*, Shedup I.67–68:

68:

*khyed kyi bka' brgyud 'di dang ma phrad pas/ don chung rtsol bas ngal ba a re phangs/*

*Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.170–181:

180:

*khyod kyi bka' brgyud 'di dang ma phrad cing / don chung rtsol bas ngal ba a re 'phangs/*

*Nyid kyi rnam thar shes rab grub pa ma*, Shedup I.316–66:

351:

*slob dpon gyi zhal nas 'o de tsug 'ong ba yin/ yu 'u la bka' brgyud kyi byin rlabs de tsug yod pa yin/*

*Spyan 'dren chen mo*, Shedup I.490–507:

504:

*bde stong ngang du bzhes su gsol/ bka' brgyud dam pa'i maN+Dal la/ rnal 'byor pho mo'i me tog bkram/ dpal ldan mkha' 'gro'i tshogs la 'bul/*

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\* Discussed in Chapter Two.

*Gnas brtan mgon po'i don du mdzad pa'i zas kyi rnal 'byor*, Shedup I.641–47.

643:

bla ma rdo rje gdan pa'i bka' srol bla ma ba ri lo tsA ba dang/ pan+di ta a b+h+ya  
ka ra'i bka' brgyud thams cad kyi phyag len 'di ru 'dug pas kho bos kyang lag len  
'di gcig pu byas/

## VOLUME 2

*Bden gnyis zung 'brel sa bcad dang bcas pa*, Shedup II.101–296:

237–38:

bka' brgyud bla ma'i thugs mdzod lags/ sprang ban zhang gi snying gtam yin/

*Dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa'i nying phugs chen mo zab pa  
dang rgya che ba'i don gtan la 'bebs par byed pa phan byed nyi ma'i snying po*,  
Shedup II.297–650:

422:

nga la yon tan med do byin gyis rlobs/ de la sogs te nA ro paN chen gyi/ bka'  
brgyud 'dzin pa mi las 'das pa yi/ yon tan du ma mnga' ba'i grub thob sogs/ rgya  
gar yul dang bod la mang po bzhugs/

## VOLUME 3

*'Phrang mgo btsad po la gsungs pa'i gdams pa dgos pa kun tshang*, Shedup III.39–174:

54:

spyan sngar mchis te 'di tsug gda' zhus pas/ rin po che mnyes lan du 'di skad  
gsungs/ 'o de tsug yin no de tsug 'ong ba yin/ 'u yi bka' brgyud 'di la de lta bu'i/  
ngo mtshar gzhan las khyad 'phags yod pa yin/ gsungs nas shin tu mnyes te dgyes  
zhal mdzad/

*Slob dpon shAka yes la gsungs pa'i khrid yig bsdus pa*, Shedup III.368–72:

368–69:

'o skol gyi sgom 'di byin rlabs 'ba' zhig gi lam yin pas/ bla ma la mos gus dang gsol  
ba 'debs pa 'di gtso bo lags/ mdun du maN+Dala bshams/ lag tu me tog thogs la  
mdun gyi nam mkha' la gdan seng+ge'i khri pad+ma dmar po'i gdan steng na/ ngo  
cag gi rtsa ba'i bla ma yin pas/ 'od dang gzi brjid dang bcas te bzhugs par bsam/  
ngo cag gi dbu thog na yar la bka' brgyud kyi bla ma rnams dang/ sangs rgyas  
dang byang chub sems dpa' thams cad 'od dang gzi brjid dang bcas te bzhugs  
par bsam/

*Zhal gdams gsum*, Shedup III.495:

496:

thun mtshams dang/ dus dang nram pa thams cad du ngan bu dang/ bka' brgyud  
kyi bla ma la gsol ba thob cig/

*Chos drug*, Shedup III.663–744:

[bar do:]

709:

de nas rang gi yi dam gyi lha gang yin du bsgom pa dang/ rtsa ba'i bla ma bsgoms  
pa'i tha ma na yar bka' brgyud kyi bla ma nmams yid kyi mos pa bya'o/

#### VOLUME 4

*Yid ches pa'i gnad bcu gsum bstan pa*, Shedup IV.162–67:

162–63:

rtsa ba'i bla ma mdun na bzhugs par sgom pa de de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad  
kyi thugs dam gyi bcud bsdus pa'i sku bdag gi ngo gang la bla mar byon pas/ de  
dran pas nyams dga' ba dang byin rlabs 'jug pa dang bar do'i 'jigs pa med de blo  
bde ba'i gnad du 'dug/ bsam rgyu brgyud ldan gyi bla ma gcig pus chog pa 'di ngo  
mtshar re che/ bka' brgyud la sogs pa sangs rgyas thams cad bzhugs pa de byon  
pa dang bzhud pa mi mnga' bar khyab par bzhugs pa dang/ rang snang ba dag  
nas snang ba thams cad de kho na ltar 'char ba'i gnad du 'dug/

*Sgrub brgyud lam mchog phreng ba*, Shedup IV.350–77:

362:

snyan par grags pa de la ni/ bir wa pa nas brgyud pa yi/ mi nub dbang gi chu bo  
thob/ lam skor dgu ru grags pa yi/ gdams ngag zhib par ma thob ste/ rjes su gnang  
ba tshim par zhu/ bdag rang de la gdon mi za/ gdams pa'i longs spyod bgyis pas  
mchi/ nA ro pas ni mar pa la/ mar pas mi la ras pa brgyud/ mi las lha rje rin po  
che/ dwags po sku mched de yi sras/ dl paM ka ras mnga' ris pa/ de yis bla ma  
lcags ri pa/ de yis lha rje rin po cher/ de yis dbon po sku mched la'o/ brgyud pa  
gnyis dang ldan pa yi/ skar tshogs dbus na zla ba bzhin/ mang po'i nang na mdzes  
pa'i sku/ rgyal mtshan lta bur khyad du 'phags/ 'gro ba yongs la bka' drin che/ bka'  
brgyud nmams kyi don re bsgrubs/ byin rlabs rgyud la mnga' mdzad cing/ skal ldan  
ye shes ngo sprod pas/ rtang tu 'od gsal ngang la bzhugs

*'Od gsal nor bu'i phreng ba*, Shedup IV.382–90:

388:

de rjes bla ma rin chen de/ rang gi spyi bo'i nang du bstim/ spyod lam rnam bzhi'i  
dus su yang/ dran tsam nyid na mos gus bya/ de ltar byas na yon tan nmams/ nges  
pa kho nar 'byung bar 'gyur/ bka' brgyud gdams ngag mthun pa yis/ bla ma rnam  
gsum dgongs pa gcig/ 'khor 'das thams cad sems su bzhed/ sems nyid 'od gsal  
chos skur ston/ gdams ngag gnad 'di ngo mtshar che/ gsang chen po yi lugs yin  
te/ yongs grags pa yi blor mi shong/ de phyir gzhan la gsang bar bya/

*Snying rje'i gtam blo brdeg*, Shedup IV.423–40:

430:

rang yi dam gyi lhar mig cer re bsgoms nas gzhan la gtor ma dang byin rlabs la  
sogs pas phan 'dogs pa yin mod/ snying rje spyi tsam yom me ba zhig las mi skye

ba 'di/ yi dam gyi lha mngon sum na mig cer re bzhugs pa 'di la ngo mi tsha'am/ de bas kyang bka' brgyud kyi bla ma rang gi spyi bor 'dzum mol le mngon sum na rgyun chad med par bzhugs pa 'di yi dam gyi lha bas kyang lhag mod

## VOLUME 5

*Gsung sgros rin chen rgya mtsho*, Shedup V.297–384:

302:

tai lo pas nA ro pa la gsungs pa de ngas bshad kyang bshad de phyi nas shar/ tshig ci zin/ gsung bgros ci mkhas des mi phan/ gtam phreng dang 'dra bar 'dug gsungs/ byin rlabs kyi lam pa yin pa de bla ma nA ro pas mngon sum du gtan la phab/ bla ma ci mnyes kho na byas pa/ byin rlabs zhugs pa 'di lta bu'i bka' brgyud dang phrad pa re 'tshengs gsungs/

*Bsam yas brag sngon du gsungs pa'i mgur bco lnga*, Shedup V.482–516:

[dgu pa] 496–97:

bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnam la phyag 'tshal lo/ rtogs ldan gyi bla ma byin rlabs can/ sprang ban zhang gis mnyes par bgyis/ zang zing gi bsnyen bkur ma 'byor te/ sgrub pa zhe mnong med par bgyis/ gdams ngag bdud rtsi chud ma gsan/ bka' brgyud kyi bla ma thugs mnyes pas/ thugs mdzod nam mkha' lta bu las/ byin rlabs mkha' la nyi shar bzhin/ sprang ban blo yi mun sel nas/ mar me rlung gis ma bskyod bzhin/ gsal la mi rtog gi zhi gnas shar/

*Byang phyi 'brong du gsungs pa'i ku re bzhi*, Shedup V.609–39:

[dang po] 609–10:

bla ma rje btsun pa dang dpal rdo rje mkha' 'gro ma rnam la phyag 'tshal lo/ bdag rang zhang gi sprang ban 'dis/ bka' brgyud kyi bla ma sna tshogs bsten/ sgro 'dogs rang gi sems la chod/

*Gegs sel brgyad pa*, Shedup V.649–51:

650:

na mo/ gnas mi med khyi med kyi lung stong du/ lus srog lto gos blos btang nas/ sgrub pa snying por len tsa na/ skyid sdug thams cad ro snyoms byas/ sems skyo zhing rig pa 'phro ba dang/ snying mi dga' khrag tu 'thib pa na/ gnas lugs kyi sgro 'dogs nang du bcad/ bka' brgyud mgur gyis nyams myong spar/ 'jigs shing nyam nga bag tsha dang/ cho 'phrul bar chad ci byung yang/ rang gi gces 'dzin blos thong la/ khres se skyur la lhod kyi klod/

*G.yu brag yi ched ma*, Shedup V.671–72:

671–72:

dam tshig gis 'brel ba'i mched grogs kyang/ brtse gdung gi blo gso mi mdzad par/ nyes skyon brtags nas phyogs bcur sgrog/ nga yi nyams rtogs 'di su la sdur/ bka' brgyud kyi 'brel ba'i slob ma yang/ bla ma'i bka' rjes mi skyong bar/ spyod pa ci rtsing gi rjes su skyong/ nga yi gdams ngag 'di su la bshad/

## VOLUME 6

*Ma la jo mo*, Shedup VI.326:

326:

ma la jo mo'i rnal 'byor ma/ zhabs g.yas pa theg la g.yon pa rgyob/ brgyud pa gang yin zer tsa na/ brgyud pa dwags po bka' brgyud yin/ yi dam jo mo lhan skyes yin/ chos skyong mgon po nag po yin/

*'Bras bu phyag rgya chen po sgom pa'i man ngag*, Shedup VI.528–30:

530:

gnad ka de bas na/ bka' brgyud 'di rang la gsol ba 'debs cing/ man ngag gi gnad 'di rang la gsol ba btab pa 'di gcig pus chog pa lags so//

*Bla ma zhang gi tshogs chos dang gsung sgros 'thor bu*, Shedup VI.567–591:

578:

'o cag gi bka' brgyud 'di byin rlabs 'ba' zhig gi brgyud pa yin pas/ bla ma la mos gus dungs dungs pa byas nas/ man+d+hala phul zhing gsol ba btab na/ de la byang chub yong ba yin gsungs pa de yang bdag gi snying la gzer/

584:

bka' brgyud kyi byin rlabs thams cad nga'i rtsom chos la bzhugs nas 'dug gsung/

*Zhang 'gro ba'i mgon po'i bka' rgya gsang bdun mar grags pa'i chos sku ye shes kyi DA ki'i bdag mdun gnyis kyi cho ga chu 'babs su bkod pa phan bde'i lam bzang*, Shedup VI.637–696:

656:

bka' drin mnyam med rtsa ba'i bla ma la/ gsol= thugs rjes= brgyud pa kun ldan bka' brgyud bla ma dang/ dag snang mthar phyin mched grogs chos mdzad la/ gsol ba= thugs rjes=

*Gsang ba'i rnam thar bka' rgya ma'i sgo nas tshogs kyi cho ga gzims chung ma*, Shedup VI.697–708:

705:

bka' brgyud bla ma'i tshogs rnams la/ tshogs mchod bdud rtsi rgya mtsho 'bul/

*Kha skong du bkra shis*, Shedup VI.746–47:

747:

rgyal ba'i bstan pa kun nas gsal mdzad pa'i/ bka' brgyud rin po che yi bkra shis shog/

## VOLUME 7

*Gdams ngag bka' babs lo rgyus*, Shedup VII.97–101:

100:

btsan thabs su sangs rgya ba'i lam mngon sum pa byin rlabs kyi lam 'di la gzigs/  
khyad par chen po 'di tsam pa sangs rgyas lag bcangs/ rje nA ro pa'i bka' brgyud  
kyi lam/ phyin ci ma log pa 'di mar sgom dang/ rgya ston 'dul ba 'od la bka'  
babs so/

*Bka' rang babs ma gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i nam thar bzhi*, VII.557–72:

572:

sangs rgyas lag bcangs/ rje nA ro pa'i bka' brgyud/ lam phyin ci ma log pa/ thig  
le skor zlog gsang ba'i lam mo/

*Lha sa ma'i nyams len*, Shedup VII.595–601:

600:

sangs rgyas lag bcangs/ rje nA ro pa'i bka' brgyud kyi lam phyin ci ma log pa'i zhal  
gyi bdud rtsi/ thig le'i skor zlog gsang ba'i lam 'di/

APPENDIX SIX

OCCURRENCES OF THE TERM *LHA SA SDE BZHI*  
IN LAMA ZHANG'S WRITINGS\*

11 occurrences (all of which appear to refer to a *place* rather than to a *group of people*):

(1)

*Bla ma dwags po sgom pa'i rnam thar*, Shedup I.177:

gtsug lag khang rim gyis gso/ yul shor ba thams cad tshang du lhan gyis bcug la/  
lha sa sde bzhi rgyal khirms kad kad 'cha' ba zhiḡ bya yis khyod rang nyon cig  
gsung/

(2)

*Dpal 'dus nya ga chung ba*, Shedup I.490:

sprang ban zhang gi lag len ma mo dpal 'dus nya ga zhes bya ba byin gyis rlabs  
pa'i sa phyogs lha sa sde bzhi'i yul/ dog bde sgo phu'i mchor nag tu slob ma skal  
ldan gyi don du bkod pa//

(3)

*'Khor 'das kyi rtsa ba gcod pa'i man ngag*, Shedup IV.300–01:

rtsa ba gcod pa zhes bya ba sprang ban zhang gis lha sa sde bzhi'i nang/ dog bde  
phu'i mchor nag tu yon bdag phyug po rje btsun snang bas bteg pa'i dus su sems  
la shar nas bkod pa/

(4)

*Chos nyams len du dril ba nges don kho na gtso bor ston pa'i skor las/ dum bu gsum  
pa zhi gnas mtha' yas*, Shedup V.60:

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas mtha' yas zhes bya ba/ lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo  
phur bkod pa'o//

(5)

*Dum bu bzhi pa 'chol gtam 'thor bu*, Shedup V.62:

sprang ban zhang gi 'chol gtam 'thor bu lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phur bkod  
pa'o//

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\* Discussed in Chapter Five.



(6)

*Dum bu bdun pa zhi gnas nyams myong*, Shedup V.66:

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas nyams su myong ba zhes bya ba/ byin gyis brlabs pa'i sa phyogs lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phur bkod pa'o//

(7)

*Dum bu brgyad pa zhi gnas thams cad kyi rgyal po kun tshang nam mkha'*, Shedup, V.79:

sprang ban zhang gi zhi gnas thams cad kyi rgyal po kun tshang nam mkha' zhes bya ba lha sa sde bzhi'i dor te sgo phu'i 'chor nag tu bkod pa'o//

(8)

*Rdo rje gdan drug*, Shedup VI.332:

ban chung nga lha sa sde bzhi dang 'dra ste/ sems mi 'gyur ba jo shAka mched gnyis lags so/ khyed skor ba zhig byed na nga rang la bskor dang/ zhun mar zhig 'bul na nga rang la phul.../

(9)

*Dpon dar ma gzhon nu'i zhus lan*, Shedup, VII.58:

kha sang zla ba snga ma'i tshes bcu la lha sa 'phrul snang du/ mchod pa byas pa'i dus su/ bdag gi snang ba la jo bo'i thugs ka na rin po che bzhus nas/ lha sa sde bzhi'i mi thams cad la bla ma rin po ches byin rlabs byed pa mthong/

(10) (11)

*Bla ma zhang rnam thar zin bris*, 57a:

yang skabs gcig du lha sa 'phrul snang du thugs rjes chen po'i gdan spos pa de ru/ rab gnas mdzad pa dang gsol ba btab pa'i dus su/ slob dpon gyi zhal nas 'di skad gsungs/ jo bo la rab gnas phar la byas pas byin brlabs tshur la byung gsung/ de nas lo gsum du char pa bab lha sa sde bzhi'i zhing gi sa dran nas la lo legs skad/ lha sa sde bzhi bde bskyid la bkod/ de nas lha sa lo re bas lo re bsod nams cher song pa lags skad/

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