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The All-Encompassing Lamp of Awareness: A Forgotten Treasure of the Great Perfection, its Authorship and Historical Significance

Matthew Kapstein

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UNEARTHING HIMALAYAN TREASURES

INDICA ET TIBETICA

MONOGRAPHIEN ZU DEN SPRACHEN UND LITERATUREN
DES INDO-TIBETISCHEN KULTURRAUMES

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Michael Hahn

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Jürgen Hanneder, Jens-Uwe Hartmann,
Konrad Klaus und Roland Steiner

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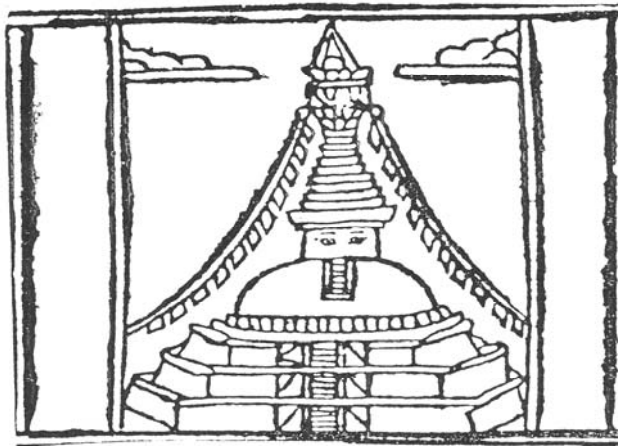
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Unearthing Himalayan Treasures

Festschrift for Franz-Karl Ehrhard

Edited by

Volker Caumanns, Marta Sernesi
and Nikolai Solmsdorf



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༡༡། ཨོྲོ་སྤྲི། མངས་རྒྱས་དང་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའ་དགོ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉེན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

གནའ་དེང་རིག་པའི་གནས་ལ་སྤྱན་ཡངས་རིས་མེད་སློབ་ཚོགས་རྒྱ་སྐྱར་བཟ།
|ཐུན་མིན་བོད་ཀྱི་རིག་གཞུང་ལ་དབྱེས་ལྷག་བསམ་ཉ་གང་རྒྱུ་འོད་འཚོར།
|ཡོན་ཏན་ཁྱུང་གི་ལོ་འབྲས་སྤྱི་ཡང་ཁེངས་བེགས་དར་ལྷོ་ལ་རི་བོ་བསྐྱེལ།
|རྒྱལ་ལྷན་ཉམ་རྒྱུང་པལ་བའི་རྣམ་ཐར་བདག་གིར་བཞེས་མཛད་ཁྱེད་ཉིད་ཅམ།

འཛམ་གླིང་འདི་ན་སྤྲོན་གྲགས་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་བའི་རྣམ་གྲོ་ཆེ་མཐོའི་སློབ་མཐར་ཕྱིན།
|མྱེད་བྱུང་དགའ་བཅུ་རབ་འབྲམས་ཞེས་བྱའི་མཚན་གྱི་ཚོད་པན་བདག་གིར་བཞེས།
|བལ་ཡུལ་ཞིབ་འཇུག་ལྟེ་གནས་དབུ་མེད་གནང་བཞིན་ཀ་སྐྱེམ་ཉ་བྱུ་
|ནང་བསྟན་ལོ་རྒྱུས་རིག་གཞུང་དང་བཅས་སྤྱི་མང་དཔེ་ཆར་ཞིབ་འཇུག་བྱས།

རུབ་སྤྲོགས་ལྗེར་མན་སྤྲོ་སྤྲོགས་སྤུན་ཞིག་མཐོ་རིམ་སློབ་གླིང་ཆེན་མོ་རུ།
|ཕུལ་བྱུང་དགའ་བཅུ་རབ་འབྲམས་པ་ཁྱོད་ཉིས་སློང་གསུམ་ནས་ད་ལྟའི་བར།
|མཐོ་སློབ་ཆེན་མོའི་དགོ་ཆུན་གནང་ཞིང་སློབ་ཕྱག་གང་མང་སྤྱིད་སྲིང་མཛད།
|དེ་དག་གིས་ཀྱང་འཛམ་གླིང་འདི་ན་སྤྲི་ཕན་བསྐྱབས་སྲིད་ཉིད་དང་མཚུངས།

འདས་མོང་བསྐང་བྱ་སུམ་ཅུ་ལྷག་བརྒྱལ་ཇོ་མོ་གླང་མའི་རི་རྒྱུད་ནས།
|ཆོས་དང་རིག་གཞུང་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཡོངས་ལ་དཔུད་ཞིབ་གནང་བཞིན་འཚོལ་སྤྱད་བྱས།
|གྲོང་དང་གྲོང་ཁྱེད་དགོན་སྡེ་མང་པོའི་རིན་བྲལ་དཔེ་རྙིང་དུ་མ་ཞིག།
|བརྒྱ་ཕྱག་དལ་བས་སྤྱད་སློབ་བྱས་ཤིང་པར་སྐྱེན་བྱས་གངས་རྩུང་རྩུང་མིན།

དེ་སྤྱིར་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་མཛད་བཟང་དོ་མཚར་རི་བོ་གངས་དགའ་ཏེ་སའི་སློབ།
|བོད་བརྒྱུད་ནང་བསྟན་ཁབ་བབ་རྣམ་བཞི་གཅིག་ཏུ་འབྲེལ་བམ་ཕམ་མཚོར།
|རུབ་སྤྲོགས་མཁས་དབང་རྣམས་གཉིས་ལོ་རྒྱུ་རྣམ་དཔྱོད་རིག་པས་རུབ་ཀྱིས་བརྱུངས།
|ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་མཛད་བཟང་དམ་པར་བསྟོད་བསྟགས་མེ་ཏོག་འཕྲིང་བ་ཡང་ཡང་ཕུལ།།

༧ དགོ་ཆུན་ཆེན་མོ་ཨོ་ཏར་མཚོག་གི་མཚམས་སློབ་མདོ་ཅམ་བཞེད་པ་ཇོ་མོ་གླང་མའི་གངས་འོད། ཅམ་བྱ་བ་འདི་ཉིད་
|ཁོང་གི་སློབ་མ་མི་རྣུང་བཞིག་གིས་བསྐྱལ་བ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ ༧ དགོ་ཆུན་མཚོག་ལུ་མ་གྲི་ཞི་ཞིབ་འཇུག་ལས་རོགས་པ་
|ཆེ་རིང་རྒྱམ་ནས་བྲིས་པ་དགོ་ཞིང་བཟུ་ཤིས་པར་གྱུར་ཅིག །།

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Introduction

Franz-Karl Ehrhard was born on 15 August 1953 in the historic city of Heidelberg, the former centre of Romanticism in south-west Germany. His mother worked as a nurse, his father was a civil servant employed by the German Railways. After completing school, in lieu of military service, he worked at a local hospital. After civilian service, together with a friend, he undertook a trip to Asia which was to shape his academic future: the two travelled widely, visiting also Nepal and India, and it was in Bodhgaya that Franz-Karl Ehrhard was deeply impressed by Tibetans and their culture. The love for Nepal and its rich tradition was also ignited, and would lead him to return to the country regularly throughout his subsequent career.¹

The decision was made and, after his return from Asia, Franz-Karl Ehrhard moved to the northern part of Germany, to the “Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg,” where he enrolled at the university and began to study Indology, Tibetology, and Social Anthropology. His teachers at the local “Seminar für Kultur und Geschichte Indiens” were distinguished scholars such as the venerable Geshe Gendün Lodrö, Prof. Albrecht Wezler and Prof. Lambert Schmithausen—the former a luminary of traditional Tibetan learning who left a lasting imprint on his Western students, the latter two exceptional *mahāpaṇḍitas* who inherited the imposing academic tradition of German Indology and Buddhism.

Franz-Karl Ehrhard continued his postgraduate studies at the same institution, completing his doctoral dissertation in 1987 under the supervision of Prof. Lambert Schmithausen: this work, published in 1990 with the title *Flügelschläge des Garuda* is devoted to a topic that will run like a thread (among many others) through Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s Tibetological career, namely the doctrinal system and the history of the rNying ma school. In particular, it consists of an edition and German translation of the spiritual songs (*mgur*) of Zhabs dkar Thogs drug rang grol (1781–1851): it has to be noted that at the time only the songs of Mi la ras pa had been translated and studied, together with the *dohās* and *caryāgītis*, but the English translation of the *Ocean of Kagyu Songs* and other poetical collections were yet to come. The volume is opened by an introduction to rDzogs

¹ We wish to thank Christoph Cüppers for his help in piecing together the information on the early years of Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s career. We are also grateful to Oliver von Criegern for realising the lay-out of this book. The printing of the volume was generously sponsored by the Tara Foundation.

chen—especially the sNying thig tradition—with a discussion of Khregs chod and Thod rgal.

In 1988 Franz-Karl Ehrhard, now in his mid-thirties, succeeded Christoph Cüppers in the Nepal Research Centre in Kathmandu, coordinating the activities of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP). He held this position in Nepal for five years (1988–1993), during which he took part in the expeditions aimed at microfilming the textual heritage preserved in private and monastic libraries across the Himalayas: for this purpose, he travelled to Jumla, Jomoson, Junbesi, Helambu, Kutang, Nubri, and Dolpo. This experience awoke his keen interest in regional history and sacred geography, as well as his sensibility for archival research and book history. The wealth of documents filmed during the expeditions were partly of local origin, partly originating in south-western Tibet and precipitously carried across the border after 1959, via ancient trade routes and reactivating long-lasting institutional and personal networks. To the latter typology of books belong the Collected Works (*gSung 'bum*) of Brag dkar ba Chos kyi dbang phyug (1775–1837) and of dKar brgyud bstan 'dzin nor bu (1899–1959), as well as 16th century printed books from Mang yul Gung thang, that constituted part of the library of Brag dkar rta so hermitage in sKyid grong, and that had been brought to safety to Lobpon Gyurmed in Nubri. These findings, shared with friends and colleagues, were the source material of Franz-Karl Ehrhard's subsequent major publications.

He also contributed to the publication of the recovered literature, in typeset reproduction or facsimile. The earliest was the publication in Tibetan script of *Snowlight of Everest: A History of the Sherpas of Nepal*, a series of texts compiled by Bla ma Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin (1923–1990) from Junbesi. Earlier writings by the same author—including the *Sher pa'i chos 'byung*—had already been published in 1971 in Paris by Alexander Macdonald; the supplement was edited together with this scholar in 1987, and then published shortly after the death of the Sherpa Bla ma (Stuttgart, 1992). It remained a fundamental source for the study of the region, and was translated into Nepali two years later (Kathmandu, 1994). The works of dKar brgyud bstan 'dzin nor bu, filmed in Nubri in 1992, were published in 1996 with a short introduction by their “treasure discoverer.”

Franz-Karl Ehrhard thus acquired a direct knowledge of the land, the people, and the history of south-western Tibet and the Himalayas, which led him to participate in the DFG-funded project “Nation Building and Processes of Human Settlements in the Tibetan Himalayas” (“Staatenbildung und Siedlungsprozesse im tibetischen Himalaya”), developed between 1993 and 1998 by the German Archaeological Institute (Bonn) and the Department of Archaeology in Nepal. His individual research project, titled “Religious Geography as Space-structuring Element”

(“Religiöse Geographie als raumstrukturierendes Element”), focused on the sacred sites and pilgrimage routes in the region of Mang yul Gung thang in south-western Tibet, which he could visit for fieldwork in 1997. The research project was hosted by the Institute of Indology of the University of Münster and was overseen by Prof. Adelheid Mette. The main results of this enquiry were presented in the dissertation for his Habilitation, which he submitted at Hamburg University in 1998. The manuscript was published in 2004 as *Die Statue und der Tempel des Ārya Va-ti bzang-po: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Geographie des Tibetischen Buddhismus*, which, as pointed out in the title, is a work devoted to local history and religious geography. Indeed, it is dedicated to the narratives relating to the temple of Ārya wa ti bzang po in sKyid grong: centred on a composition by Brag dkar ba Chos kyid dbang phyug—edited and translated—it presents in detail the life and works of this master and it explores a wealth of related materials on the self-arising image of Avalokiteśvara hosted in the temple, its “brothers,” and the sacred sites of sKyid grong. Another work by the same Tibetan master that had also been filmed by the NGMPP is the genealogy (*gdung rabs*) of the Gur family, which for centuries headed the mDo chen bKa’ brgyud tradition in the region: it is edited, translated, and studied in Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s 2008 monograph *A Rosary of Rubies*. These publications represent breakthroughs into the history and the narrative lore of the south-western Tibetan borderlands and are now essential reference works for scholars furthering these studies.

This project was the inception of Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s rich research output tracing the diffusion of Buddhist lineages and teachings (especially rNying ma treasure traditions) and the foundation of temples and monasteries throughout the Himalayas. He investigated the history of the regions that he had journeyed in Nepal on the basis of hagiographies (*rnam thar*), lists of teachings received (*gsan yig*), genealogies (*gdung rabs*), guidebooks (*dkar chag*), and travel accounts (*gnas yig*) that for the great part had been filmed by NGMPP expeditions.² During this period, Franz-Karl Ehrhard begun to compose a picture of the religious history of the Tibetan-Himalayan borderlands, piecing together biographical information, travel accounts, and his own observations in the field. This *opus* is still ongoing, and may be followed up and expanded upon by others thanks to the extensive and

² These contributions include, *inter alia*, a follow up to Snellgrove’s classical study on the “Lamas of Dolpo” (“Two Further Lamas of Dolpo,” 1996), “Tibetan Sources on Muktiñāth: Individual Reports and Normative Guides” (1993), “Sa’dul dgon-pa: A Temple at the Crossroads of Jumla, Dolpo and Mustang” (1998), “Religious Geography and Literary Traditions: The Foundation of the Monastery Brag-dkar bsam-gling” (2001), “The Enlightenment Stūpa in Junbesi” (2004), and “Concepts of Religious Space in Southern Mustāñ: The Foundation of the Monastery sKu-tshab gter-Inga” (2001). “The Lands are like a Wiped Golden Basin” (1997) provides an overview of the Sixth Zhwa dmar pa’s travelogue of the 1629/30 journey to Nepal, a rare source that was later the topic of a PhD Dissertation supervised by Franz-Karl Ehrhard at the University of Munich (Navina Lamminger 2012/13).

detailed bibliographical references to the primary sources that constitute the backbone of his studies. His contributions allow identifying the individual trajectories of influential Buddhist teachers, dating the foundation of specific sites, and tracing the origins of lama lineages in the Himalayan valleys. For example, two articles shed light on the origins of the main temples and lama lineages of Yol mo (Helambu), supplementing and offering substantial correctives to earlier contributions by Graham Clarke: “The Story of How *bla-ma* Karma Chos-bzang Came to Yol-mo’: A Family Document from Nepal” (2004), and “A Forgotten Incarnation Lineage: The Yol-mo-ba Sprul-skus (16th to 18th Centuries)” (2007). The latter follows for five generations the reincarnation lineage of sNgags ’chang Shākya bzang po (16th c.), the “discoverer,” renovator, and first caretaker of the Bodhnāth *stūpa* in Kathmandu: Franz-Karl Ehrhard returns thus to one of his favourite early topics of study, namely the history of the two main sacred Buddhist monuments in the Kathmandu valley: the *stūpa* of Bodhnāth and the Svayambhūcaitya. His articles on the Tibetan sources for investigating the successive renovations of the sites (1989, 1990, 1991) were supplemented in 2007 by another survey of “Old and New Tibetan Sources Concerning Svayambhūnāth.” He also published a study of the register (*dkar chag*) of the small reliquary of the *yogin* Rang rig ras pa (17th c.) that flanks to the East the main *stūpa* of Bodhnāth (2002). Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s love for the Kathmandu valley, where he has lived for so long and regularly returns to with joy, transpires from a booklet collecting images of Bodhnāth and verse compositions dedicated to the site, published in Kathmandu in 1991 with the title *Views of the Bodhnāth-stūpa*, and a contribution to *The Changing Town-scapes of the Kathmandu Valley* (1995).

Remaining in the field of sacred geography, we may emphasise Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s important contribution to the study of “hidden lands” (*sbas yul*), a phenomenon that brings together his interest in the masters and teachings of the rNying ma tradition and his work on local Himalayan history. Alongside his well-known articles on “The Role of ‘Treasure Discoverers’ and their Writings in the Search for Himalayan Sacred Lands” (1994) and “Political and Ritual Aspects of the Search for Himalayan Sacred Lands” (1996), which discuss the tradition and its ideology, he published case-studies of specific sites such as “A ‘Hidden Land’ in the Tibetan-Nepalese Borderlands” (1997), and “A ‘Hidden Land’ at the Border of ’Ol-kha and Dvags-po” (2009–2010). He also wrote about the “opening” of hidden lands in Bhutan (“Addressing Tibetan Rulers from the South” 2008), and Sikkim (“The mNga’ bdag family and the tradition of Rig ’dzin Zhig po gling pa [1524–1583] in Sikkim” 2005), two other Himalayan regions that attracted his scholarly attention.

In 1998 Franz-Karl Ehrhard became Research Fellow at the Lumbini International Research Institute (LIRI), where in the following years he pursued his own project, inspired, once more, by textual materials filmed by the NGMPP. In particular, it was the inception of a twenty-year-long fascination with the beautifully produced, and richly illustrated, 16th century printed editions from Mang yul Gung thang. His *Early Buddhist Block Prints from Mang-yul Gung-thang* (2000) is a contribution to the study of Tibetan xylographic printing: in describing the life and works of Chos dbang rgyal mtshan (1484–1549) and Nam mkha' rdo rje (1486–1553) it brings together for the first time accounts of book production from biographical sources and exemplars of the mentioned editions. The transcriptions of the full printing colophons of the books, and the study of the artisans that worked in various capacities (scribes, carvers, illustrators, etc.) at their production, complete the monograph, which remains a reference work, in both method and contents, for the study of xylography in Tibet. This study was accompanied by the facsimile reproduction from NGMPP microfilms of two volumes printed in Mang yul Gung thang in the early 16th century, namely the 1533 *editio princeps* of Klong chen pa's *Theg mchog mdzod*, and a collection of works on the Great Seal by the influential master of the Bo dong pa school bTsun pa chos legs (1437–1521). Franz-Karl Ehrhard continued to pursue this avenue of research in a series of articles devoted to early Tibetan printing projects;³ in particular, he investigated the transmission history and the editorial history of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, and he also recently co-edited a volume on *Tibetan Printing: Comparisons, Continuities and Change* (2016). This substantial output has greatly advanced our knowledge of early Tibetan xylographic printing, and has confirmed him as the leading expert in this field of enquiry.

Franz-Karl Ehrhard's interest in history and cultural history led him to study narratives, teaching lineages, cloth paintings (*thang kas*), law and administration, and donation inscriptions. In particular, he has investigated the relationship between secular and religious authority, and patterns of patronage, in 15th and 16th century Tibet, focusing on the individual trajectories of influential masters such as Kaḥ tog pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan (1466–1540), Vanaratna (1384–1468), mChog ldan mgon po (1497–1531), dBus smyon Kun dga' bzang po (1458–1532), or Chos

³ See “The Transmission of the *dMar-khrid Tshem-bu lugs* and the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*” (2000), “The Royal Print of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*” (2013), “Editing and Publishing the Master's Writings” (2010), “Gnas Rab 'byams pa Byams pa phun tshogs (1503–1581) and His Contribution to Buddhist Block Printing in Tibet” (2012), “Buddhist Hagiographies from the Borderlands” (2016), “Collected Writings as Xylographs” (2016), “Printing a Treasure Text” (2018), and “Apropos a Recent Contribution of Tibetan Xylographs from the 15th to the 17th Centuries” (in press).

dpal bzang po (1371–1439);⁴ *The Life and Travels of Lo-chen bSod-nams rgya-mtsho* (1424–1482) is introduced by a synopsis of the life of the 4th Zhwa dmar pa Chos kyi grags pa (1453–1524), and is accompanied by the facsimile publication of the Great Translator’s “Buddhist Correspondence” (2002). As may be seen, Franz-Karl Ehrhard’s contributions to Tibetan and Himalayan studies are highly significant in different fields of research, reflecting the impressive range and depth of his expertise.

In 2003 Franz-Karl Ehrhard became Professor for Tibetology and Buddhist Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. In the years leading up to this appointment he had been visiting Professor at the University of Vienna (2000), and at Harvard University (2001). In Munich, he has been a passionate and inspiring teacher, and has greatly worked to foster the discipline: he acted as Faculty Students’ Dean for many years, he oversaw about twenty Magister, Master and Bachelor theses, and he supervised eight PhD Dissertations and four Habilitation Dissertations.⁵ Between 2009 and 2015, he supported and directed five

⁴ See “Kaḥ thog pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan (1466–1540) and his Activities in Sikkim and Bhutan” (2003), and “Kaḥ thog pa Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1466–1540) and the Foundation of O rgyan rtse mo in Spa gro” (2007), “Spiritual Relationships between Rulers and Preceptors: The Three Journeys of Vanaratna (1384–1468) to Tibet” (2004), “Addressing Tibetan Rulers from the South: mChog-ldan mgon-po (1497–1531) in the Hidden Valleys of Bhutan” (2008), “The Holy Madman of dBus and His Relationships with Tibetan Rulers in the 15th and 16th Centuries” (2010), “Chos dpal bzang po (1371–1439): The ‘Great Teacher’ (*bla chen*) of rDzong dkar and his Biography” (2017).

⁵ PhD Dissertations: Frank Müller-Witte, “Die Kategorien *bdag* und *gzhan* bei dPa’-ris sangs-rgyas und Dor-zhi gdong-drug und ihre Relevanz für das Verständnis tibetischer Texte” (ss 2009); Volker Caumanns, “Leben und Werk des Sa-skya-Gelehrten gSer-mdog Paṅ-chen Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507)” (ss 2012); Navina Lamminger, “Der Reisebericht des Sechsten Zhwa dmar pa nach Nepal. Textkritische Edition, Übersetzung und Studie” (ws 2012/13); Nikolai Solmsdorf, “Rig’dzin Gar-dbang rdo-rje snying-po (1640–1685). A Treasure-Discoverer of the rNying-ma-pa School from mNga’-ris Gung-thang” (ss 2013); Marlene Erschbamer, “Die Lehrtradition der ’Ba’-ra-ba bKa’-brgyud-pa. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und zur gegenwärtigen Verbreitung einer Schule des tibetischen Buddhismus” (ss 2016); Christoph Burghart, “Leben und Werk des 17. Thronhalters der ’Bri-gung bka’-brgyud-Tradition Rin-chen phun-tshogs (1509–1557) unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seines Schatzzyklus *Dam chos dgongs pa yang zab*” (ss 2017); Marco Walter, “Leben und Lehren des Gling-ras-pa Padma rdo-rje (1128–1188), Gründer der ’Brug-pa bKa’-brgyud-pa” (ss 2017); Yüan Zhong, “Lives and Works of Karma nor-bu bzang-po (1906–1984) and Karma stobs-rgyal (1944–2014)” (ws 2017/18). Habilitation Dissertations: Petra Maurer, “Die Grundlagen der tibetischen Geomantie dargestellt anhand des 32. Kapitels des *Vaidūrya dkar po* von sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705). Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Kultur- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte Tibets zur Zeit des 5. Dalai Lama Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682)” (ss 2006); Ulrike Roesler, “Der *dPe chos rin chen spungs pa* des Po-to-ba Rin-chen-gsal. Die Verschmelzung indischer und tibetischer Traditionen in einem frühen ‘Stufenweg zur Erleuchtung’ (*lam rim*)” (ws 2006/07); Brandon Dotson, “The Victory Banquet: The Old Tibetan Chronicle and the Rise of Tibetan Historical Narrative” (ss 2013); Marta Sernesi, “Early Tibetan Printed Books: History and Xylography in South-Western Tibet” (ws 2018/19).

externally-funded research projects spanning a wide range of topics, from bKa' brgyud contemplative traditions, to Sa skya hagiographical sources, to Old Tibetan lexicography, and ideals and practices of kingship during the Tibetan Empire.⁶ He served as series-editor of *Collectanea Himalayica: Studies on the History and Culture of the Himalayas and Tibet* (Indus Verlag, München), which published five volumes, and, since 2008, of *Contributions to Tibetan Studies* (Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden), which published seven volumes (nos. 6–12). All these endeavours ensured that the small Department of Indology and Tibetology of Munich University developed into a major centre of Tibetan studies, where students and young scholars could learn and work in a stimulating and supportive environment.

Franz-Karl Ehrhard is deeply passionate for his subject and generous with his sources and knowledge, sharing widely the many Tibetan texts of his library, together with his carefully handwritten summaries and notes. His knowledge of academic scholarship published in English, French, and German is impressive, as is his learning in history, anthropology, history of religions, cultural history, book history—just to name a few disciplines. He takes a real pleasure in studying, discussing, sharing, and exploring Tibetan and Himalayan history, culture, and literature. Because of this, alongside his institutional and didactic duties, he always continued to dedicate time and energy to research, producing a wealth of scholarly output throughout his career. Hence, this short sketch cannot make justice to the breadth of Franz-Karl Ehrhard's research interests and the impact of his contribution to the field of Tibetan and Himalayan studies. He is an inspiring role model for his mentees, and a knowledgeable and amiable colleague, and this volume wishes to be but a modest token of our appreciation.

Marta Sernesi

⁶ “Re-Enacting the Past. The Heritage of the Early bKa' brgyud pa in the Life and Works of gTsang smyon Heruka (1452-1507) and His Disciple rGod tshang ras pa sNa tshogs rang grol (1482-1559),” funded by the DAAD (2009–2010) and the Gerda Henkel Stiftung (2010–2012), realised by Marta Sernesi; “Die Hagiographie des tibetischen Gelehrten Shākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507): Quellen und historischer Kontext,” funded by the DFG (2010–2012), realised by Volker Caumanns; “Kingship and Religion in Tibet,” funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung (2010–2015), realised by Brandon Dotson; “Lexikologische Analyse des alttibetischen Wortschatzes unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Komposita,” funded by the DFG (2013–2015), realised by Joanna Bialek; “bKa' brgyud History and Xylography in South-Western Tibet. The Legacy of Yang dgon pa rGyal mtshan dpal bzang po (1213-1258),” funded by the DFG (2012–2018), realised by Marta Sernesi.

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The All-Encompassing Lamp of Awareness:
A Forgotten Treasure of the Great Perfection,
its Authorship and Historical Significance*

MATTHEW T. KAPSTEIN

(École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL Research University, Paris)

Dedication

It is a happy opportunity to present this small effort to Franz-Karl Ehrhard, my *mched grogs* through the late mKhan po Sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin of Serlo Monastery, Junbesi, Nepal. The history and traditions of the early rNying ma pa lineages are abiding interests that link us with our departed *guru* and I may hope that this essay will be received as one pebble added to the *lha tho* of learning we and others have sought to build in his honour.

I.

In 2001, the London rare book dealer Sam Fogg included as item no. 4 in his catalogue, *Tibetan Manuscripts*, an exceptional *poti* listed as the “Commentary on the Light from the Lamp of Awareness.” It was described as a work of 201 + 2 folios with four miniature illustrations, two of which, on folio 1b, could be seen in the reproduction on the facing page (fig. 1). The complete catalogue entry read:

* I thank Karma Phuntsho for having first brought the manuscript and text studied here to my attention. The Sam Fogg Gallery, London, graciously forwarded my requests to examine the manuscript directly to its present owner, who generously made it possible for me to study it. Thanks, too, to Carleton Rochell in New York, who kindly arranged for his office to be used on two occasions for this purpose. I am grateful to Dorji Wangchuk for his welcome invitation to deliver an earlier version of this paper as the Khyentse Lecture at the University of Hamburg in April 2016, to the Harvard Buddhist Studies forum, where I presented it in November of the same year, and to Marta Sernesi, who invited me to read it at soas University of London that December. The revised version published here benefitted from the discussions with participants during those pleasant occasions. Unless otherwise noted, all photographic images reproduced in the present article were taken by the author with the permission of the private collection in which the manuscript of *The All-Encompassing Lamp of Awareness* is conserved and appear here by courtesy of the latter. I am also indebted to Howell Perkins, Manager of Photographic Resources at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, for his assistance in obtaining the remarkable image of Vajrasattva reproduced in figure 10.

This non-canonical instruction text concerns the philosophy of the Great Perfection, a system followed in Tibet both by some Buddhist schools and by the Bon pos. It is copied in a beautiful cursive calligraphy (*ume, dbu med*) in black and red on cream paper. The illuminations on the first page represent the primordial Buddha Samantabhadra and Vajrasattva, in a heavily shaded and brilliantly coloured style that show its indebtedness to East-Indian Pala paintings and points to a date of production in the thirteenth century. The two miniatures in the last page represent two lamas who transmitted the teachings and, although not inscribed, could be the two authors of the text, mentioned as Shag kya dge' sbyong and the monk Shag kya rdo rje in the colophon. The radiocarbon (C^{14}) dating of the covers of this manuscript to 965–1163 CE. seems a bit too early if compared to the style of the illustrations. This however could be explained considering the preciousness of wood in Central Tibet: since it had to be imported from Eastern Tibet or from the South, it is possible that some earlier wood was used at a later stage to produce these covers.¹

Not long after this appeared, I was sent a scanned photocopy of the entire manuscript. Busy with other obligations at the time, however, I put it aside, an addition to the ever-swelling pile of things-to-look-into-should-I-ever-find-a-moment.

That moment arrived in autumn 2015, when I decided to devote my seminar in Paris to the extant works on the system of the Nine Sequential Vehicles (*theg pa rim pa dgu*) of the rNying ma pa school as developed in the early tradition of Kaḥ thog Monastery in Khams (founded 1159).² The main surviving text by Kaḥ thog's founder, Dam pa bde gshegs (1122–1192), was his treatise on the Nine Vehicles³ and his system, as I have shown elsewhere, was greatly elaborated in the writings of the famous thirteenth-century Kaḥ thog pa—though he is not generally known as such—Karma Pakshi (1206–1283).⁴ Some centuries later, a rigorous and comprehensive treatment of the entire scheme was presented in the writings of Mon Kaḥ thog pa bSod nams rgyal mtshan (1466–1540).⁵ Recalling that one of the titles of the aforementioned manuscript was *Theg pa spyi 'grel*, “A General Commentary on the Vehicles,” it occurred to me that it might be related to the same tradition and so I included it among the materials to be considered in my seminar. A connection with Kaḥ thog was soon confirmed on finding that versions of the same text were included in the recent editions of the *rNying ma bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa* published by mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs (1999) and other disciples of the late mKhan po Mun sel (2009). An additional edition, clearly derived from

¹ Mignucci 2001: 10, item no. 4.

² On the early history of Kaḥ thog monastery, see Eimer and Tsering 1979; 1981; Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 688–699.

³ *Theg pa spyi bcings rtsa 'grel*.

⁴ Kapstein 2000: 97–106; 2011.

⁵ On this interesting figure, refer to Ehrhard 2007.

these, has also appeared in the 2013 dPal yul publication of the *rNying ma bka'* *ma*.⁶ The supposed relation to Kaḥ thog, however, proved to be not what it seemed at first. But before turning to this, let us consider the manuscript itself in greater detail, for this is our most original source for the work in question.

The manuscript is a work of rare beauty. Besides the four carefully executed miniatures that adorn it, it is remarkable for the perfect consistency of the calligraphy, in what may be classed as an early form of the 'bru tsha style of headless (*dbu med*) script, which is characterized by a distinct angularity in the execution of many of the strokes, lending it an aspect suggestive of the Gothic scripts in the West (fig. 2).⁷ Besides the principal text, which occupies 231 folios, thirty more than the 201 announced in the book dealer's catalogue, the volume also includes two folios with diagrams drawn on paper that is similar to that which was used for the main work (fig. 3). One of these folios illustrates the four types of *maṅḍalas* serving as bases for the *homa* offerings connected respectively with the four types of ritual action—pacification (*zhi*), enrichment (*rgyas*), coercion (*dbang*), and sorcery (*drag*)—while the second sheet shows sketches of altars for the *sādhana*s of Vajrayoginī. It is not clear what relation, if any, these have with the content of the primary text.

As was noted in the original entry in Sam Fogg's catalogue, the covers of the volume were fabricated from wood that was probably cut a century or more before the manuscript itself was produced (fig. 4), though the story given there about the availability of wood in Central Tibet should not be accorded much weight in assessing the possible reasons for this.⁸ It is unlikely that these covers were actually manufactured for this very manuscript; they were probably made sometime earlier and only much later found to be of suitable dimensions for this particular work. A major point of interest is a series of inscriptions contained in their interiors (fig. 5). With the help of Near Infra Red (NIR) imagery, it has been possible to transcribe these with the readings of only a small number of syllables remaining

⁶ For the bibliographical details of these three editions, see *Kun 'dus rig pa* 1999, 2009, and 2013 in the accompanying list of references.

⁷ In Tibetan calligraphy manuals the angular stroke that characterizes 'bru tsha script is called *zur*. The *na ro* also retains a form similar to its shape in *dbu can* and is not simplified as it is in most *dbu med* styles. See, for instance, *Bod yig 'bri tshul mthong ba kun smon* 89–93.

⁸ The quantities of wood we see regularly used for pillars, book cabinets, and furnishings in Central Tibetan temples, monasteries and homes suggest that scarcity could not have been a key factor here. The river systems of Tibet were employed to float logs from forested regions to areas where tree cover was rare and where this was not feasible wood was carried or dragged. Old wood was certainly sometimes recuperated as well, but this is not plausible in the present case.

doubtful, although the much damaged line D in small hand at the bottom of the rear cover is still mostly undecipherable (fig. 6).⁹

These inscriptions may be divided into five sections, designated here as A through E, and transcribed in full in Appendix 1 below. The longest and no doubt the oldest of these are A and B, written in the front and back cover respectively. The script used here has a distinctly archaic appearance and one would not be surprised to find a similar hand in documents from 10th-century Dunhuang (fig. 7). The preparation of the covers and the earliest of the inscriptions contained in them thus probably do fall within the period corresponding to the C¹⁴ dating of the wood (965–1163 CE).

Although I have not been able to interpret texts A and B in full detail, they are clearly records of donations made over two years, a tiger year and the following rabbit year. If my understanding of them is correct, the donations were made by a certain rich man named sTag rtse at the conclusion of the harvest season.¹⁰ The beneficiaries—some of whom had distinctly religious names such as Yang dag dpal, Jo 'jam (perhaps for Jo bo 'Jam dbyangs or 'Jam dpal) and rNal 'byor 'bum—were probably members of a monastic community of some sort, and some of the names are repeated in both years. As each list includes mention of a quantity of the donation given “to me,” we may assume the scribe to have been among the recipients. The quantities specified are to be interpreted as referring to loads of grain, as is made explicit towards the end of inscription B.

The inscription on the upper section of the rear cover, labeled C, is written in a similar hand to A and B, but the characters are smaller and considerably fainter. However, it was possible to identify this as a transcription—albeit in somewhat garbled and clipped form—of a *mantra* in Sanskrit, in fact the *mantra* of the divinity Amṛtakunḍalin as given in the fourteenth chapter of the *Guhyasamājantra*.¹¹ Within the rites of Guhyasamāja, this *mantra* typically serves to dispel undesirable influences at the close of a ritual stage, such as the construction of the *maṇḍala*, and thereby to prepare for its auspicious implementation in what follows.¹² Its exact purpose in the present case is of course unknown, but, assuming that it was added by the same scribe who wrote parts A and B, it may have analogously

⁹ In the future it may be possible to use more refined photographic techniques than I have been able to realize thus far in order to produce a more adequate image.

¹⁰ Both inscriptions read *g.yu bcug pa la*, “when the *g.yu* was undertaken / impelled.” As *g.yu*, “turquoise,” makes little sense here, I believe that we should probably read *g.yul*, which may refer either to military activities, or, more rarely (and archaically), the activities concluding the harvest (Cf. *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* 2625, def. 2 sub *g.yul: lo tog dang ston thog tshar ma'i las*). Given the clear context of the offering of grain, this latter meaning seems appropriate here.

¹¹ The full *mantra* as given in the *Guhyasamājantra* is transcribed in Appendix 1.

¹² An example is its use in Atiśa's version of the *Guhyasamājamaṇḍalavidhi*; refer to *gSang ba 'dus pa'i dkyil 'khor gyi cho ga* 1028.

served to clear away malefic forces thought to have been hovering about sTag rtse's donations.

Some of the irregularities of the *mantra* as we find it here are no doubt the products of the peculiar ways in which Sanskrit passed into Tibetan oral usage, as I have discussed elsewhere.¹³ But some are also in evidence in old literary transcriptions, such as the use of the Tibetan syllable *nan* for the Sanskrit genitive plural ending *-ānām*, as we see in the transcription of the same *mantra* in the Dunhuang *Guhyasamājatantra* manuscript IOL Tib J 438.¹⁴ This usage sometimes came to be misunderstood in later times as relating to the Tibetan verb *gnon*, “to suppress.”

Inscription D, as mentioned above, is the most poorly preserved and I have been only able to make out a few syllables, which perhaps read *sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnam la phyag 'tshal skyabsu [= skyabs su] gsol*, “salutations to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, whom we beseech for refuge,” though the first words, *sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnam*, are quite uncertain but for the syllables *byang chub*. The short phrase that follows this has entirely eluded me so far. The line appears to be in a different hand than those we have considered in passages A–C, and so may be a later addition.

Finally, inscription E, which is in the middle of the rear board just following the *mantra*, seems definitely to have been a late insertion. It reads: *theg pa spyi 'i/ glegs shing* “cover boards of the *Vehicles in General*.” This, of course, does confirm that the boards at some point came to be thought of as belonging together with the specific manuscript we are considering. But when? Although no precise date can be adduced, one intriguing element may be noted. If we turn to examine the title page of the manuscript—which reads *theg pa spyi 'igrel [= spyi 'i 'grel]/ gzhi lam 'bru 'i [= 'bras bu 'i] rnam bzhag gsal bar byed pa chos kyi gter mdzod cheno [= chen po] kun 'dus rig pa 'i sgron ma 'o*—we see that it is not at all in the same hand as the main text (fig. 8). Moreover, it makes conspicuous use of contractions—*bsdus yig*—which are quite rare in the manuscript overall. (Although this hypothesis remains to be confirmed, my impression is that the use of such abbreviations increases rapidly beginning only from about the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century on.) Comparing the handwriting of the title page with the label added to the cover boards (fig. 9), the similarity between them seems remarkable. It is possible, therefore, that they were the work of the same individual. It appears, then, that the manuscript title and the label in the cover were both added by the same person, who had perhaps stumbled upon an old pair of attractively painted boards

¹³ Kapstein 2006.

¹⁴ The *mantra* occurs on folio 50a, lines 1–2. The manuscript IOL Tib J 438 may be accessed in the database of the International Dunhuang Project (<http://idp.bl.uk/>).

that conveniently fit with the book. To judge from the style of the calligraphy and the use of abbreviations, this occurred, I believe, perhaps as much as a century after the manuscript itself was produced.

II.

With these points in the background, we may turn to the work itself. In the span of its twenty-three chapters (see Appendix II), the *All-Encompassing Lamp* offers a thorough-going synthesis of the system and path of what came to be known as the “trio of *Māyā*, the *Sūtra*, and Mind” (*mdo sgyu sems gsum*),¹⁵ basing itself primarily on citations of numerous works belonging to what are now classed as the *rNying ma bka’ ma* and *rNying ma rgyud ’bum* collections,¹⁶ without any reference, so far as I can tell, to *gter ma*. It refers, too, to a number of mainstream canonical works, above all to well-known *sūtras* such as the *Laṅkāvatāra* and *śāstras* such as the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*. While summarizing all nine vehicles of the *rNying ma pa*, its sustained emphasis throughout is on the teaching of rDzogs chen, the Great Perfection. Given the probable 13th-century dating of the manuscript, it demonstrates an exceptional refinement not only in the standard of its painting and calligraphy, but in its adherence to strict conventions of classical orthography, with relatively few corrections. I shall return to some aspects of the text’s contents below, but first we must attempt to situate it in a general way within *rNying ma* history.

The first issue that requires sorting out in this regard is of course the question of authorship. The interpretation, in Sam Fogg’s catalogue, of the colophon’s phrase “Shāg kya’i dge sbyong ban dhe Shāg kya rdo rje” as referring to two persons seems far-fetched to me; there is no grammatical basis for taking the phrase as anything other than a designation for a single individual using his titles (Shāg kya’i dge sbyong ban dhe) and proper name (Shāg kya rdo rje). The Kaḥ thog versions of the text, which give this as “Shāg kya’i *dge slong* ban dhe Shāg kya rdo

¹⁵ In this abbreviated list, *sgyu* refers to the *Māyājāla* (*sgyu ’phrul drwa ba*) cycle of tantras, the main works of the Mahāyoga; *mdo* refers to the *mDo dgongs pa ’dus pa*, the “Sūtra of the Gathering of Intentions,” the foremost text of the Anuyoga; and *sems* is the *rdzogs chen sems phyogs*, the “Great Perfection in the Area of Mind,” which was the major Atiyoga tradition of the Zur. The order *mdo sgyu sems* reflects euphonic considerations only and not the sequential order of the teachings concerned.

¹⁶ A preliminary estimation is that the *Kun ’dus rig pa* contains at least 800 citations from canonical texts, the vast majority being works of the *rNying ma* tantric canon. It therefore provides an unparalleled source of data concerning the *rNying ma* tantric literature of the early second millennium and in this respect merits careful comparison with currently available versions of the many scriptures it cites.

rje” are not of much help.¹⁷ It seems best to follow the manuscript and to read this as naming the “Buddhist *śrāmaṇera* venerable Shākya rdo rje,” taking the Kaḥ thog variant as suggesting just that the copyist responsible for this version was no longer familiar or comfortable with the use of *dge sbyong* as a personal title. In either case, there is no credible reason to split the ordination title from the personal name as if two persons are mentioned. But just who was this Shākya rdo rje? The name is unknown to the major histories. Could it be that the rNying ma tradition had completely forgotten the author of a more than two-hundred-folio treatise synthesizing some of its most treasured teachings?

As the *All-Encompassing Lamp* is found in the recent Kaḥ thog editions of the *rNying ma bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, the promise of clarification came from the fact that the editor of one of these collections, mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs, does offer brief accounts of Shākya rdo rje in two of his publications. The first, from his 1996 *Abridged History of Kaḥ thog* (*rGyal ba kaḥ thog pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdu*), reads as follows:

The great Paṇḍita Hor po Shākya rdo rje was one whose discernment in study and reflection blazed like fire with respect to all of the departments of learning and who gazed with the eye of unobstructed knowledge over the oceanic ways of the doctrines of *sūtra* and *tantra*, so that his renown as a *paṇḍita* embraced the whole surface of the earth. In particular, he especially promulgated the commentarial explanations, empowerments, guidance and intimate advice of the three inner sections of the esoteric *tantras* in accord with the transmitted traditions of the omniscient [Kaḥ thog] Dam pa [bDe gshegs], father and sons, whereby he became master of the entire teaching of the ancient translations. The many *śāstras* he composed, including the explanation of the vehicles in general entitled *The All-Encompassing Lamp of Awareness*, established the exegetical tradition of the fortunate party of the Zur lineage without decline as a self-standing system, in accord with scripture and sharp reasons. Many such among his peerless, amazing works remain, so that he has been scattered with flowers of praise from the great scholar-saints. mNga' ris Paṇḍita Padma dbang rgyal has offered this praise: “Here in the snowy land of Tibet, many scholar-saints have arrived to reveal profoundly the exposition of the path of the nine sequential vehicles and of Atiyoga, in particular. But those who are without rival are the emanation Klong chen rab 'byams and Kaḥ thog Shākya rdo rje; they are renowned like sun and moon.” And the All-knowing 'Jigs med gling pa, Ze chen Paṇḍita Padma rnam rgyal and others among the great scholar-saints have eulogized the “omniscient Rong, Klong and Shāk,” so that, without contest, he was a holy scholar-saint.¹⁸

¹⁷ The readings in *Kun 'dus rig pa* 1999, 2009, and 2013 are identical.

¹⁸ *Kaḥ thog pa'i lo rgyus* 55: *m khas pa chen po hor po shā kya rdo rje ni/ rig pa'i gnas kun la thos bsam kyi shes rab me ltar 'bar zhing mdo sngags kyi chos tshul rgya mtsho lta bu la thogs med mkhyen pa'i spyen gyis gzigs pas mkhas pa'i grags pa sa steng kun tu khyab/ khyad par gsang sngags nang rgyud sde gsum gyi 'grel bshad dbang khrid man ngag dang bcas pa kun mkhyen dam pa yab sras kyi bka' srol ltar 'chad rtsod rtsom gsum gyi sgo nas lhag par dar bar mdzad pas snga 'gyur bstan pa*

One will notice, perhaps, a certain absence of circumstance in this account: the author furnishes us with no information whatsoever regarding Hor po Shākya rdo rje's place and date of birth, his parents, teachers or students. I have had no luck at all so far in tracing the references to mNga' ris Paṅ chen (1487–1542), to 'Jigs med gling pa (1729–1798), or to Zhe che rgyal tshab (1871–1926). And if “Rong, Klong and Shāk” form a well-known triad in rNying ma pa sources, this is news to me. Moreover, as Hor po Shākya rdo rje is classed in mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs's book among the “intermediary lineage of preceptors” (*bar gyi mkhan rabs*),¹⁹ it is implied that he belonged to the fifteenth century or even later, which means that he could not possibly have authored the work in our thirteenth-century manuscript. Nevertheless, as we shall see, the learned mKhan po had good reason to insist that the author of the work preserved the “traditions of Zur without decline.”

Ten years after the publication of his *Abridged History of Kaḥ thog*, the same author provided a second account of Shākya rdo rje in his Catalogue to the *rNying ma bka' ma shin tu rgyas pa*, in these words:

During the period of the three named “Bum pa,” the teaching and study of the *Māyājāla*, the Mind Section [of the Great Perfection] and so forth were greatly promulgated so that it was at that time that so-called “Kaḥ thog monasteries” arose in Mon, Kong po and other places. At about the same time there emerged the great *paṅḍita* renowned as Hor po Shākya rdo rje. He wrote peerless treatises on the *sPyi mdo* [the *mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa*] and in the area of the Mind Section amounting to more than ten volumes, but from early times even the titles of most of them were lost. mNga' ris Paṅḍita, the all-knowing 'Jigs med gling pa, Zhe chen Padma rnam rgyal and others have praised him as with one voice, saying that, with respect to treatises that certainly establish the ancient translation school of the rNying ma as an independent system, all besides the texts of the “trio of Rong, Klong and Shāk” are void.²⁰

yongs kyi mnga' bdag tu gyur/ theg pa spyi'i rnam bshad kun 'dus rig pa'i sgron me sogs bstan bcos mang du mdzad pa rnam ni skal sde zur pa yab sras kyi bshad srol ma nyams pa rang rkang gi grub mtha' gtan tshigs dang lung rigs rnon pos gtan ta phabs pa 'gran zla med pa'i gsung ngo mtshar can mang po bzhugs pas mkhas grub chen po rnam kyis bsngags pa'i me tog 'thor ba ste/ mnga' ris paṅḍi ta padma dbang gi rgyal po'i zhal nas/ bod yul kha ba can ljongs 'dir/ theg pa rim dgu'i rnam bshad dang/ khyad par a ti yo ga yi/ lam srol zab khyad 'byed pa la/ mkhas grub mang du byon gyur kyang/ 'gran zla kun dang bral ba yi/ sprul sku klong chen rab 'byams dang/ kaḥ thog shākya rdo rje zhes/ nyi zla lta bur grags pa yin/ zhes sogs bsngags pa dang/ kun mkhyen rig 'dzin 'jigs med gling pa dang/ ze chen paṅḍi ta padma rnam rgyal sogs mkhas grub chen po rnam kyis snga 'gyur gyi mkhas pa chen po kun mkhyen rong klong shāk zhes che brjod mdzad pa lta rtsod bral gyi mkhas grub dam pa'o//

¹⁹ *Kaḥ thog pa'i lo rgyus* 55–64.

²⁰ *sNga 'gyur bka' ma'i bzhugs byang* 148: 'bum pa gsum gyi skabs sgyu 'phrul dang sems sde sogs kyi 'chad nyan lhag par dar rgya che bas mon dang kong po sogs su kaḥ thog dgon zer ba rnam kyang de dus byung/ dus de tsam na mkhas pa chen po hor po shā kya rdo rje zhes yongs su grags pa de'ang de skabs byon/ khong gis mdzad pa'i spyi mdo dang/ sems sde'i phyogs la bstan bcos 'gran zla med pa pu ti bcu lhag yod kyang dus tshig snga bas phal cher ming tsam yang dben/ snga 'gyur rnying ma'i grub mtha' rang rkang tshugs nges kyi bstan bcos la rong klong shāk gsum gyi yig cha rnam

Now, the earliest of the three figures known as the 'Bum pa gsum—Bsod nam s 'bum pa, Ye shes 'bum pa, and Byang chub 'bum pa—was active during the mid-thirteenth century.²¹ This is certainly an improvement, from our point of view, over the late period proposed earlier. But as our manuscript probably dates to some generations after the composition of the work—the scribal colophon seems to suggest this²²—and as Hor po Shākya rdo rje could not have preceded bSod nam s 'bum pa without being included among the founding figures of Kaḥ thog (!), this revised suggestion also leads to contradiction.²³

There are other factors, too, that render mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs's account implausible. Once again, he gives us no precise information regarding Hor po Shākya rdo rje's relation to the lineage; he is but vaguely associated with the century or so during which the 'Bum pa gsum were active. None of the earlier accounts of the Kaḥ thog tradition known to us mention him, nor does he appear to be known to other contemporary records. While the Kaḥ thog versions of the *rNying ma bka' ma rgyas pa* do include additional works attributed to a Shākya rdo rje, who may be identical to our author, no other evidence of collected writings that are supposed to exceed ten volumes can be found.²⁴

In view of the uncertainties of mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs's account, one might uncharitably conclude that he is making things up in order to find a place within his tradition for an otherwise unexplained, but evidently significant author. More generously—and for reasons that will be clearer below, more plausibly—one might find in “Hor po Shākya rdo rje” an invention of relatively modern oral tradition at Kaḥ thog, which mKhan po 'Jam dbyangs has attempted to work into his historical

las gzhan na dben pas mnga' ris paṅdi ta dang/ kun mkhyen 'jigs med gling pa zhe chen padma rnam rgyal sogs kyis mgrin dbyangs gcig gis ched du bsngags... On p. 147 of the same work, the “'Bum pa gsum” are listed as bSod nam s 'bum pa, Ye shes 'bum pa, and Byang chub 'bum pa.

²¹ Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 694–695, gives bSod nam s 'bum pa's dates as 1223–1283 and places Ye shes 'bum pa's birth in 1254.

²² The scribal colophon (231a8) consists of a single phrase: *'dan ma da re'i lugsu [= lugs su] dPal gzhan bdag gis bris*, “Written by me, dPal gzhan, in the tradition of 'Dan ma da re.” Neither of the two persons mentioned is known to me. The copyist, dPal gzhan, hints not at all at there being a proximate connection of some sort with the author or his disciples (unless perhaps 'Dan ma da re was one), which argues for placing him some generations later.

²³ The near absence of abbreviation throughout the text strongly argues, in my view, against pushing the date of the production of the manuscript any later than the mid-thirteenth century, in which case the author of the work must certainly be assigned to an earlier period than that of the 'Bum pa gsum.

²⁴ In vol. 86 (*lu*) of the 1999 *rNying ma bka' ma rgyas pa* we find two works belonging to the *sgyu 'phrul* cycle ascribed to a “Shākya badzra,” who is possibly to be identified with our author. The titles in question are a commentary on the *gSang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i man ngag lam gyi rim pa rin po che nam par bkod pa* by Buddhaghya (Sangs rgyas gsang ba) and a topical outline (*bsdus don*) of the same text entitled *sGyu 'phrul drwa ba stong phrag brgya ba'i rgyud las bcud bsdus man ngag lam rim don 'byed*.

account. Given that the title “Hor po” is found in none of the colophons of the writings attributed to Shākya rdo rje, we may posit that, in the effort to identify this unknown writer, he was likely confounded with Hor po Shākya rgyal mtshan, assuredly a figure of importance within the “intermediary lineage of preceptors” during the 15th century, who was noted for his promotion of the Byang gter rDzogs chen teachings of the *Kun bzang dgongs pa zang thal* within the Kaḥ thog lineage.²⁵ But at some point or another, mKhan po ’Jam dbyangs must have realized that assigning Shākya rdo rje to that period was not possible and so, in his *Catalogue*, pushed him back to the age of the ’Bum pa gsum. In so doing, he came temporally closer to the source, but he failed to recognize that Shākya rdo rje was not part of the Kaḥ thog lineage at all. Just who he was, and how his work came to Kaḥ thog, are the two questions we must now attempt to resolve.

III.

On examining the contents of the *All-Encompassing Lamp*, one is struck by its apparent neglect of *gter ma* traditions. In this respect, it is consistent with other relatively early rNying ma works, including the writings of Rong zom pa, much of the work of Klong chen pa, and, to be sure, surviving writings stemming from the early Kaḥ thog tradition, such as those of Dam pa bDe gshegs and the rNying ma writings of Karma Pakshi. At the same time, tantras of the *Māyājāla* cycle and the *rDzogs chen sems phyogs* are particularly well represented among our text’s numerous citations. This suggests to me that it is possible that it may be related to the Zur lineage, as mKhan po ’Jam dbyangs indeed hinted, though perhaps without fully appreciating the implications of his insight.

The Zur present us with a number of interesting problems that have not, so far, been very well explored.²⁶ The rNying ma historiographical tradition universally affirms the prominence of the Zur in the elaboration of the body of ritual and contemplative tradition that came to form the basis for the *rNying ma bka’ ma*.²⁷ Kaḥ thog, indeed, claimed the Zur among its foremost antecedents.²⁸ And

²⁵ *Gu bkra’i chos ’byung* 751–752.

²⁶ See, however, Dalton 2016: 48–52. As he laments (p. 52), “Unfortunately, almost no writings by the early Zurs are currently available, so our knowledge of their activities must be deduced from other materials—later commentaries and hagiographies.” Cf. Kapstein 2008.

²⁷ It is not clear to me when this designation first came to be used. That the teachings of the Zur tradition were foundational, however, is indicated by the assertion of Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 396, that “[t]he distant lineage of the transmitted precepts (*ring-brgyud bka’-ma*) has synthesized the major texts and teaching cycles of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga under the heading *Trio of the Sūtra, Magical Net and Mental Class* (*mdo-sgyu-sems gsum*).”

²⁸ Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 688.

rNying ma historiography, moreover, insists on the considerable success of the early Zur in winning both disciples and patrons, the latter including, by the beginning of the 14th century, a personage no less exalted than the Yuan Mongol emperor Buyantu.²⁹ Despite this, however, Zur traditions are primarily known through later writings and genuine early works of the Zur are quite rare. Could this be one?

Combing the available lists of the early Zur masters and their disciples, Shākya rdo rje, of course, is nowhere to be found, but one epithet occurs that I think merits further investigation: dBus pa ston shāk, the “teacher from dBus [whose proper name begins with] Shāk,” who is also called dBus pa Shakya bla ma. His place in the Zur lineage is established both by traditions of rNying ma pa historiography and an early list located in the so-called *Bai ro rgyud ’bum*, which I repeat here beginning from the first patriarch among the Zur, Zur chen Shā kya ’byung gnas, who is listed as number thirty-three following the divine promulgators of the rDzogs chen beginning with Buddha Samantabhadra and the earlier Indian and Tibetan masters of the lineage. (Because this is a list of generations, it sometimes groups together several individuals, who were disciples of a single teacher.)

33. Zur Sha kya ’byung gnas
34. Zhang ’Gos chung, Me myag ’Byung grags [= Khyung ’dra], gZad Shes rab rgyal po, Tsag Bla ma, and Zur chung Shes rab grags pa
35. sKyo ston Shakya ye shes, Yang kher [Yang kheng] bla ma, Rlan Shakya bzang po, and mDa’ dig Chos shag [mDa’ tig Jo shāk])
36. lHa rje mDa’ tsha hor po (= Zur sGro phug pa)
37. lCe ston rGya nag
38. dBus pa Shakya bla ma and Yon tan zung
39. dBus pa Zhig pa, Zhig po bDud rtsi and others.³⁰

A brief and not very informative hagiography of dBus pa ston shāk has been repeated over the centuries in the various histories of the rNying ma pa. For convenience, I quote here the version cited in the work of Dūdjom Rinpoche:

Now, Tön-śāk of Central Tibet, who was also known as Tampa Sedrakpa, was a descendant of Cerpa Wangtung of Ze. Having gone to learn to write at the college of Dropukpa, he acquired faith and pursued his studies. Then, he became a follower of Lharje Gyanak after the latter had become a monk to avert death and he received from him all the tantras and instructions in their entirety.

²⁹ Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 669. Traditional claims regarding Buyantu’s sponsorship of the Zur are partially confirmed by the discovery of a 1317 Beijing print of the *Lam nam par bkod pa*. Refer to Sherab Sangpo 2009: 48.

³⁰ Kapstein 2008: 8.

Then, Tön-śāk thought that he should practice meditation exclusively. He went in search of a solitary place in the northern mountains, and at Yöla Rock he met one Tampa Yölcungwa, who was carving away at the rock.

“Are you building a hermitage here?” he asked.

“Yes, I am.”

“Is there no place else to do so?”

To this he received the response, “There is a place over there where there is a forked rosebush. But I shall build here, because this site is more secure.”

Then, when Tampa Tön-śāk approached the rock where the forked rosebush was growing, he found some morsels of food beside a spring, and he took this to be a good omen. He stayed there and practised meditation until he had developed extraordinary realisation. Gods and demons obeyed his command. He acquired the ability to benefit many who required instruction and became known as Tampa Sedrakpa, the “Holy Man of the Forked Rose.”³¹

Elsewhere, however, his real importance within the lineage does emerge: he was the tutor of his nephew, Zhig po bDud rtsi, and passed away when the latter, who is reported to have been born in 1143 or 1149, was about fifteen or sixteen years of age, i. e. in about 1158 or 1164.³² He was also one of the major teachers of his own teacher lCe ston rGya nag’s nephew Yon tan zung, who was born in 1126 and who became Zhig po bDud rtsi’s tutor after sTon shāk’s death.³³ sTon shāk, therefore, appears to have been active during the early and mid 12th century. The historical traditions, moreover, attribute to this group of teachers a special interest in the practice and transmission of the *rDzogs chen sems phyogs*, together with the *Māyājāla* cycle of tantras and the Anuyoga system of the *mDo dgongs pa ’dus pa*,³⁴ orientations that comport well with the leanings of the *All-Encompassing Lamp*.

With this context in mind, a confirming piece of evidence may be gleaned from the text itself: in the introductory verses, the author aligns himself with the tradition of “lHa rje” (2b.4: *bla ma ’gro ba’i mgon po lha rje la...*). Though this title is now most commonly associated with sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen, i. e. Dwags

³¹ Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 651–652; cf. Roerich 1976 [1949]: 129–130.

³² Roerich 1976 [1949]: 133 gives *sa mo sbrul* year = 1149 for Zhig po bDud rtsi’s year of birth, Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 653, gives *shing pho byi* = 1143. The dating of the Zur masters of this period has not been carefully studied and may, in my view, require correction. See n. 42 below.

³³ Roerich 1976 [1949]: 129 and Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 651, concur in regard to the dating of Yon tan zung.

³⁴ Thus, for example, Roerich 1976 [1949]: 143 and Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 659, relate that Yon tan zung transmitted to his disciple rTa ston Jo bsod “the complete trilogy of the *Sūtra which Gathers all Intentions*, the *Magical Net*, and the *Mental Class*.”

po lha rje (1079–1153), it was also employed within the early Zur lineage.³⁵ And lest there be any ambiguity remaining, our author refers at one point (48a.8) to the teachings of “lHa rje chen po Shak,” who seems certainly to be Zur sGro phug pa Shākya seng ge. Turning now to the illustrations adorning the final folio, we find that one is indeed a layman, as was Zur sGro phug pa (fig. 1, lower left). The figure on the right, a monk, therefore may be either his disciple lCe ston rGya nag, or the latter’s disciple and the author of the treatise, Shākya rdo rje, that is, dBus pa sTon shāk (fig. 1, lower right). If these suppositions are correct, the *All-Encompassing Lamp* may be seen as a unique, contemporary witness to the structure and content of the teaching tradition of the early Zur lineage. It offers us a notably comprehensive vision of the system of the *rNying ma bka’ ma*—or, more exactly, the *mDo sgyu sems gsum*—as this had come to take form during the century or so preceding the text’s creation towards the middle of the 12th century.

The iconography of the manuscript comports with this hypothesis very well. The figures illustrated on the first folio are the original Buddha Samantabhadra, in a form adorned with ornaments, and Vajrasattva, both depicted in a deep and radiant blue (fig. 1, upper register). The significance of the blue Vajrasattva for the early Zur tradition is a topic I have introduced briefly in an earlier paper on the *Na rak dong sprug* rites of the *rNying ma bka’ ma* tradition.³⁶ A number of very fine, early *thang kas* survive in which this form of Vajrasattva is depicted, and one in particular, now conserved at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, is definitely to be attributed to the Zur (fig. 10).³⁷ It dates to the late 11th century and was apparently commissioned by Rlan Shākya byang chub, illustrated in the lower right-hand corner, who is numbered among the successors of Zur chung Shes rab grags who served as tutors to the latter’s son Zur sGro phug pa.³⁸ The figure of Samantabhadra portrayed in the same *thang ka*, unlike the naked and unadorned figure now usually seen in rDzogs chen contexts, wears ornaments, simpler but nevertheless suggestive of those we find in our manuscript.

The space available here will not permit me to discuss the content of the *All-Encompassing Lamp* in much detail. Nevertheless, it will be useful to quickly review a few points of particular interest. As mentioned earlier, the text is divided into twenty-three chapters, presenting a thorough survey of doctrine and path

³⁵ In particular, the title *lha rje* is regularly applied to Zur po che Shākya ’byung gnas and to Zur Sgro phug pa, though one sometimes finds it attached to the names of others in the Zur lineage as well, e. g., lCe ston rGya nag, who is referred to as lHa rje rGya nag (Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 650, 652).

³⁶ Kapstein 2010.

³⁷ The *thang ka* was collected by Giuseppe Tucci, who first published it in Tucci 1949, vol. 3: plate 1, with description in vol. 2: 331–332. The establishment of the *thang ka*’s Zur-lineage provenance is due to Huntington and Huntington 1990: 309–313.

³⁸ Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 642, 647.

(See Appendix II). The first chapter, on the general structure of the teaching, occupies forty folios and may be taken as a complete treatise in its own right, so that I will restrict my comments here to this chapter alone. Its major sections treat the fundamental nature of reality, the “ground” (*gzhi shes bya gshis kyi gnas lugs*); the manner in which beings fall into error with reference to that ground (*de ma rtogs te 'khrul tshul*); the gratuitous suffering due to that error (*'khrul gyis mi mdo' ste sdug bsngal ba*); the vision of the omniscient buddhas with respect to that (*de la thams cad mkhyen pa'i spyang gyis gzigs pa*); the manner in which this vision gives rise to compassion (*gzigs nas thugs rje skye tshul*); and the enlightened activity that then flows from compassion (*'gro ba'i don mdzad pa*). The chapter concludes with remarks on the historical framework of the doctrine (*rgyud dang man ngag gi khog dbub pa*) and the way in which it is to be imparted (*'chad thabs*).

The lengthy section on the reality of the ground seeks to establish this through both scriptural citations and reasoned arguments. In its treatment of the latter, the *All-Encompassing Lamp* interestingly structures its discussion according to the “four principles of reason,” the *yukticatustaya*, derived ultimately from the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*, that formed the basis for the *bKa' yang dag pa'i tshad ma* of Khri Srong lde btsan.³⁹ During the 11th century, the *sNang ba lhar sgrub pa* of Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po was based upon the same system.⁴⁰ However, as in certain later treatments of the four principles, the third principle, that of “established proof” (*upapatti-sādhana-yukti*), is presented here in terms that clearly reflect the influence of the Dignāga-Dharmakīrti school of *pramāṇa*, as mediated, perhaps, by the tradition of gSang phu monastery.⁴¹ This connection seems confirmed by an explicit reference later in the text to two of the notable masters associated with gSang phu, gTsang nag pa brTson 'grus seng ge and rMa bya Byang chub brtson 'grus, who must have been close contemporaries of our author.⁴² Perhaps Shākya

³⁹ Kapstein 2001: ch. 13; Schaeffer et al. 2013: 119–123.

⁴⁰ Rong zom pa's work is translated in Köppl 2013.

⁴¹ The influence of gSang phu and other centers of *pramāṇa* studies during the 12th century appears to have been virtually ubiquitous. For an example from the Bon tradition roughly contemporaneous with the work studied here, see Kapstein 2009.

⁴² I shall reserve for consideration in future work the very interesting comments on Madhyamaka thought given in our text in connection with its references to these figures. The context at any rate shows that the author probably had their connection with Candrakīrti's translator Pa tshab Nyi ma grags in mind rather than their earlier association with Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (1109–1169) (Refer to Vose 2016 on gTsang nag pa's and rMa bya's roles in 12th-century Madhyamaka transmission). What is immediately problematic for us, however, is the question of dating. For gTsang nag pa and rMa bya were active until the early 1190s and mid 1180s, respectively, and this is difficult to reconcile with the dates of dBus pa sTon shāk, if, as Dudjom implies, he passed away in about 1158, or 1164 according to the dating in the *Blue Annals*. Although gTsang nag pa and rMa bya may have been born in the 1120s and thus were possibly coming into their own as teachers in the 1150s or 60s, it does not seem likely that they would have achieved such prominence while Phya pa was still alive

rdo rje even studied at gSang phu at some point, as almost all aspiring scholars did at the time.

The historical remarks in the *All-Encompassing Lamp* are not much developed, but nevertheless include a number of interesting departures from what came to be the standard accounts. The “three religious kings” of early Tibet, for instance, include Srong btsan sgam po and Khri Srong lde’u btsan, as we would expect, but not Ral pa can. Instead, the royal embodiment of bodhisattva Vajrapāni is said to have been the legendary ruler in whose time Buddhism made its first, tentative appearance in Tibet, lHa Tho tho ri sNyan shal (39a.1). The system of temples edified to tame the Tibetan land are indeed present, but here are mentioned in groups explicitly made to correspond to principles of acupuncture and moxabustion (39a.3: *gtar kha bzhi, me btsa’ bzhi*).

A particular point of interest may be found in Shākya rdo rje’s remarks on the traditions of rDzogs chen teaching known to him. These are of considerable importance for our understanding of the evolution of the rDzogs chen systems during the early *phyi dar* period and merit more detailed analysis than can be presented here. Suffice it to note, as a single example, the author’s reference to the authority of lCe btsun Seng ge dbang phyug (39a.4), the sole near-contemporaneous mention of this master, who would later be famed as the revealer of the Seventeen Tantras (*rgyud bcu bdun*) of the *rDzogs chen snying thig* teaching, and thus a probable confirmation of his historicity.⁴³ Nevertheless, the characteristic distinctions of the *sNying thig* systems, emphasizing *khregs chod*, *thod rgal* and the luminous visions associated with the latter, are entirely absent here and, indeed, the various broad divisions of the Great Perfection teaching outlined by Shākya rdo rje

so as to be cited already as authorities. I believe, rather, that the dates of the teachers of the Zur lineage, as ’Gos lo calculated them, may need to be reconsidered and advanced by one twelve-year cycle. In this case, dBus pa sTon shāk would have lived ’til the mid 1170s, by which time there can be no doubt that gTsang nag pa and rMa bya were renowned. However, the issue is a complicated one and merits fuller discussion than is afforded by the space available here. The alternative, to hold that Shākya rdo rje was not dBus pa sTon shāk, but some slightly later and otherwise unknown figure, I find to be distinctly unpalatable, though it cannot be altogether ruled out. [*Deb ther sngon po* vol. 1, 400, tells us that rMa bya died in the seventeenth year after Phya pa’s passing, i. e. in 1185 (Roerich 1976 [1949]: 329 misinterprets this). Kuijp 1989, basing himself on gTsang nag pa’s interventions as a teacher of Khro phu lo tsā ba (b. 1172/3), shows that the former must have still been active into the mid-1190s (The arguments about this are summarized in Schwabland 1995: 794, n. 3 and Hugon 2008, vol. 1: 54, n. 145)].

⁴³ One of the great difficulties for the historiography of early Tibetan religious lineages is that we often find that legendary masters are not at all mentioned in contemporary sources outside of the specific lineage in which they achieved fame. In such cases, it is sometimes difficult to judge whether the figures in question should be taken as historical persons or not. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first early notice of lCe btsun found outside of *sNying thig* lineage texts, or later works derived from them (such as Dudjom 1991, vol. 1: 557–559).

only partially overlap with the categories that became widespread in rNying ma pa teaching following the promulgation of the Seventeen Tantras.⁴⁴

IV.

There remains one additional problem that I promised to address: how did the *All-Encompassing Lamp* find its way into the tradition of Kaḥ thog? In the colophons of the recent Kaḥ thog editions and the new dPal yul version, we find just one line that sheds some light here: *slar yang lung spel bgyid pa po ni kaḥ thog si tu chos kyi rgya mtsho'o*, “the one who has furthermore increased the oral transmission is Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho.”⁴⁵

The Third Kaḥ thog Si tu Rin po che (1880–1925, fig. 11) is best known thanks to the extensive records he left of his travels in Central Tibet and in Yunnan.⁴⁶ He was an ardent bibliophile, who was particularly interested in works of old rNying ma pa traditions that had fallen out of circulation. Most famous, in this respect, was his recovery of the great commentary on the chief Anuyoga tantra, the *mDo dgongs pa 'dus pa*, the *Mun pa'i go cha* attributed to the legendary bsNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes. He is said to have reestablished the oral transmission, the *lung*, for this work based on his own visionary reception of it. As we know from both oral traditions and the colophons to mKhan po Nus ldan's extensive sub-commentary to the *Mun pa'i go cha*, Kaḥ thog Si tu retrieved one manuscript of bsNubs chen's text from gTsang, in fact from bKra shis lhun po.⁴⁷ This in fact makes good sense; for, as we know from the testimony of both Si tu and 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po before him, the old Zur centers of gTsang had long fallen into ruins.⁴⁸ As they were closely proximate to, and perhaps within, the estates of bKra shis lhun po, it would not be surprising if whatever had survived of their libraries would have been absorbed into the great dGe lugs pa center's holdings. Although we lack positive evidence on this point, it is therefore at least plausible that it was Kaḥ thog Si tu who found the *All-Encompassing Lamp* during his travels and then sought to reestablish the study of the text once back at Kaḥ thog. There is no hint, in any case, that the work was known at Kaḥ thog before his time. Kaḥ thog Si tu Rin po che's promotion of the text, however, may have helped to created the impression that the *All-Encompassing Lamp* was itself a product of Kaḥ thog, thus

⁴⁴ On the complex and highly interesting classification of rDzogs chen traditions that we find in the *All-Encompassing Lamp*, see now Kapstein 2018.

⁴⁵ *Kun 'dus rig pa* 1999: 653.

⁴⁶ *dBus gtsang gnas yig*.

⁴⁷ Dalton 2016: 124–128.

⁴⁸ Kapstein 2010: 160, n. 3; Akester 2016: 522–524.

giving rise, in 20th century oral tradition, to “Kaḥ thog Hor po Shākya rdo rje,” a figure who, it seems, never existed.

Finally, we make speculate that the manuscript sold by Sam Fogg in the early 2000s, and now owned by a European private collection, is one of the old rNying ma manuscripts that Kaḥ thog Si tu Rin po che found when in gTsang at the beginning of the 20th century, the very one that he brought back to Khams.⁴⁹ On the other hand, it is also possible that he merely had it copied, or that this is not in fact the manuscript on which the Kaḥ thog versions of the text are based; one or more others were perhaps in existence.⁵⁰ But however the *All-Encompassing Lamp* may have traveled, it is now to be counted among the Tibetan treasures that have come West. Let us hope that this unique manuscript and its remarkable contents will be henceforth continue to enrich our knowledge of the evolution of Tibetan Buddhist thought and practice during the crucial period of its creation.

Appendix I: Inscriptions Contained within the Cover Boards of the *All-Encompassing Lamp*

A question mark immediately attached to a syllable (e. g., on?) indicates that the reading is uncertain. In square brackets alone [?], it indicates a syllable that is illegible. Round brackets with the equivalence sign (=) are used to propose a corrected reading, adding a question mark where the proposed correction is particularly uncertain.

A

1. @// stag lo la/ stag rtsa (= rtse) la g.yu (= g.yul) bcug pa la/ d[r]ug bca (= bcu) tsa? phyed dang grug/ kyin po drug on? na (= yon no? compare B.1a)/
2. de? la lugs? to la lnga/ rgyal nag cig/ snya pa cung cig/ 'gon po sbyad (= brgyad) yang dag dpal bzhi/ stog gye gsuM/

⁴⁹ A confirmation of this hypothesis might be had if we could trace the route whereby the manuscript entered the Western antiquities market, as one member of the Kaḥ thog hierarchy is known to have been instrumental in supplying foreign dealers with a variety of valuable art objects from monasteries in far eastern Tibet during the 1980s and 90s.

⁵⁰ It may be noted that one finds many small variants between the Kaḥ thog versions of the work and the manuscript. It is not yet clear to me, however, whether these suggest the existence of a second manuscript tradition, or merely “editorial” changes that may have been introduced when the text began to be copied at Kaḥ thog in the 20th century.

3. [?] leg? (= ra degs, see below) pa gsuM/ jo 'jam gsuM/ dar lo gsuM/ gnyan cung gsuM/ 'gon po dpal phyed dang gsuM/ lcam me sh? (perhaps zh?, hence bzhi?)
 4. nyag po gnyis/ lha phrug? (perhaps shug?) sgres gnyis/ pus? tsha phyed dang gnyis/ rnal 'byor 'bum phyed/ nga rang la nyi shu/
1. In the tiger year, when the harvest activities were concluded for Stag rtse, the yield was sixty-five and a half [lit. sixty-six with a half], six [of which was to redeem] a loan [reading *skyin po* for *kyin po*].
 2. Of that, five for Lugs to, one [for] rGyal nag, one [for] sNya pa cung, eight for 'Gon po, four for Yang dag dpal, three for sTog gye,
 3. three [for] Leg pa [reading uncertain; perhaps = Ra degs as in B.3], three [for] Jo 'jam, three [for] Dar lo, three [for] gNyan cung, two and a half [lit. with a half, three] [for] 'Gon po, four? [for] lCam me,
 4. two [for] Nyag po, an even two [for] lHa phrug, one and a half [for] Pus tsha, half [for] rNal 'byor 'bum, twenty for me.

B

1. @// //yos lo la/ phyug po stag rtse la g.yu (= g.yul) bcug pa la/ brgya bcu thaM pa/ de la lcags bro? la brgyad
 - 1a. [this appears to be an insertion] lnga bcu? yon no/
 2. yang dag la grug/ stog ge la bzhi/ nyen? cung? (= gnyan cung?) la gnyis/ jo 'jam la gsuM/ dar lo la gnyis/ na bag?
 3. la gnyis/ ra degs la gnyis/ to re(?) la gnyis/ nga rang la nyi shu rtse? dang cig/ pa pa? nyi shu rtse? brgyad/
 4. skyi? to la gnyis/ [?] khal gnyis bre phyed dang bca' gsuM/ @ phyug rtse'i bca' lnga/ drug ste yin no
1. In the hare year, when the harvest activities were concluded for the rich man sTag rtse, [the yield was] an even one-hundred-ten [or eighty, correcting *brgya bcu* to read *brgyad bcu*]. Of that, eight for lCags bro,
 - 1a. The yield was fifty. [It is not clear just where this apparent insertion fits in.]
 2. six for Yang dag, four for sTog ge, two for Nyen cung (gNyan cung in A.3?), three for Jo 'jam, two for Dar lo, for Na bag
 3. two, two for Ra degs, two for To re, twenty-one for me, twenty-eight for Pa pa?,
 4. two for sKyī to. Two loads, three with the addition of a half-bushel; and there are Phyug rtse's five [or] six. [The meaning of these last phrases is unclear; perhaps Phyug rtse = Phyug po sTag rtse.]

C

This is based on the Amṛtakunḍali *mantra* from the *Guhyasamājatantra*. Following each line of the transcription, I give a reconstruction of the underlying Sanskrit, which may be compared with the form of the *mantra* as we have it preserved in the Tantra, as reproduced below.

1. @@/ pat na ma [sa ma]n ta pu ta nan/ ka ya ba[g] tsi ta ba dzra nan/ ma ha dang kro ta a si mu sa la ya pa ra shu pa sha ta ya/
Skt. *phaṭ namaḥ samantabuddhānām/ kāyavākcittavajrānām/ mahādaṃṣṭro[tkā]-ṭa-asimusalāya paraśupāśa[has]tāya*
2. o'M a smri ta kun da' li/ khwa khwa khwa hi khwa hi/ sti ta sti ta/ ban dha' ban dha'/ ta na ha na/ da ha da ha/ ^{gar rdza} ^{gar rdza} pa tsa pa tsa/ so da so ta/
Skt. *om amṛtakunḍali/ kha kha khāhi khāhi/ tiṣṭha tiṣṭha/ bandha bandha/ hana hana/ daha daha/ garja garja/ paca paca/ śodha śodha/*
3. bi bo ta ya/ bi bo da ya/ sa rwa big nan bi na sha ka ra ya huM phaT/
Skt. *visphoṭaya visphoṭaya sarvavighnān vināśakārāya hūṃ phaṭ/*

In the *Guhyasamājatantra*, ed. Bagchi 1965, p. 66, the *mantra* reads:

*Namaḥ samantakāyavākcittavajrānām | namo vajrakrodhāya mahādaṃṣṭrotkaṭa-
bhairavāya asimusalaparaśupāśagrhitahastāya om amṛtakunḍali kha kha khāhi
khāhi tiṣṭha tiṣṭha bandha bandha hana hana daha daha garja garja visphoṭaya
visphoṭaya sarvavighnavināyakān mahāgaṇapatijīvitāntakarāya svāhā |*

D (conjectural)

sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnam la phyag 'tshal skyabsu gsol
Salutations to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, [whom] we beseech for refuge!

E

theg pa spyi 'i/ glegs shing

Cover-boards of the *Vehicles in General*.

Appendix II:
Contents of the *Kun 'dus rig pa'i sgron me*

Foliation is given according to the manuscript studied here.

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 1b1–4a.3 | Introductory salutations, etc. |
| 1. -40a.4 | gzhi lam 'bras bu'i don mtshon pa kun 'dus rig pa'i sgron me zhes bya ba chos spyi'i rnam bzhag |
| 2. -42a.7 | snang pa bzhi bstan pa'i le'u |
| 3. -60a.3 | gnas lugs ngo bo nyid kyi gzhi bstan pa'i le'u |
| 4. -61b.8 | ma rtogs 'khrul tshul bstan pa'i le'u |
| 5. -66b.8 | snod bcud kyi khyad par bstan pa'i le'u |
| 6. -69a.5 | rigs so so'i dbye ba bstan pa'i le'u |
| 7. -70a.5 | 'jig rten dang 'jig rten las 'das pa'i khyad par bstan pa'i le'u |
| 8. -70b.3 | grub mthas blo bsgyur ma bsgyur gyi khyad par bstan pa'i le'u |
| 9. -73a.4 | las dang lam gyi khyad par las las bstan pa'i le'u |
| 10. -90b.6 | lam log pa mu stegs kyi lam bstan pa'i le'u |
| 11. -98b.2 | theg cung nyan rang bstan pa'i le'u |
| 12. -128b.3 | byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa bstan pa'i le'u |
| 13. -133a.2 | kri yog sde gsum bstan pa'i le'u |
| 14. -136a.3 | gsang sngags kyi nges tshig dang khyad par bstan pa'i le'u |
| 15. -145a.6 | lam gyi gol sgrib bstan pa'i le'u |
| 16. -148b.1 | lam gyi cha rkyen bstan pa'i le'u |
| 17. -150a.3 | lam gyi ngo bo bstan pa'i le'u |
| 18. -151b.8 | lam bgrod tshul dang thabs lam bstan pa'i le'u |
| 19. -159a.3 | ma ha yo ga'i 'dod pa bstan pa'i le'u |
| 20. -164a.4 | a nu yo ga'i 'dod pa bstan pa'i le'u |
| 21. -208a.3 | a ti yo ga'i 'dod pa bstan pa'i le'u |
| 22. -226b.7 | mthar thug gi 'bras bu bstan pa'i le'u |
| 23. -230b.5–6 | mjug smon dang bcas pa'i le'u |
| -231a.8 | Colophons |

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Fig. 1. Folios 1b and 231a: Samantabhadra (upper left), Vajrasattva (upper right), a lay teacher (lower left) and monk (lower right).

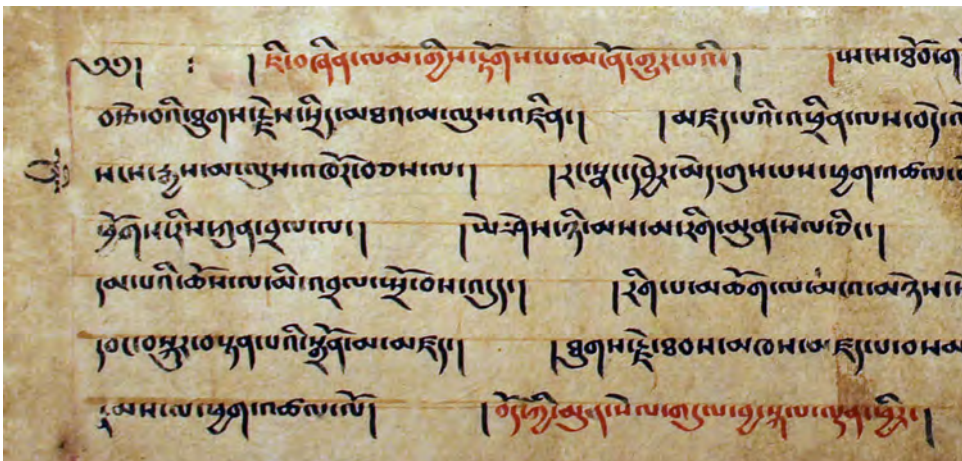


Fig. 2. Detail of folio 2a, text in 'bru-tsha' script with rubrication in the first and sixth lines.

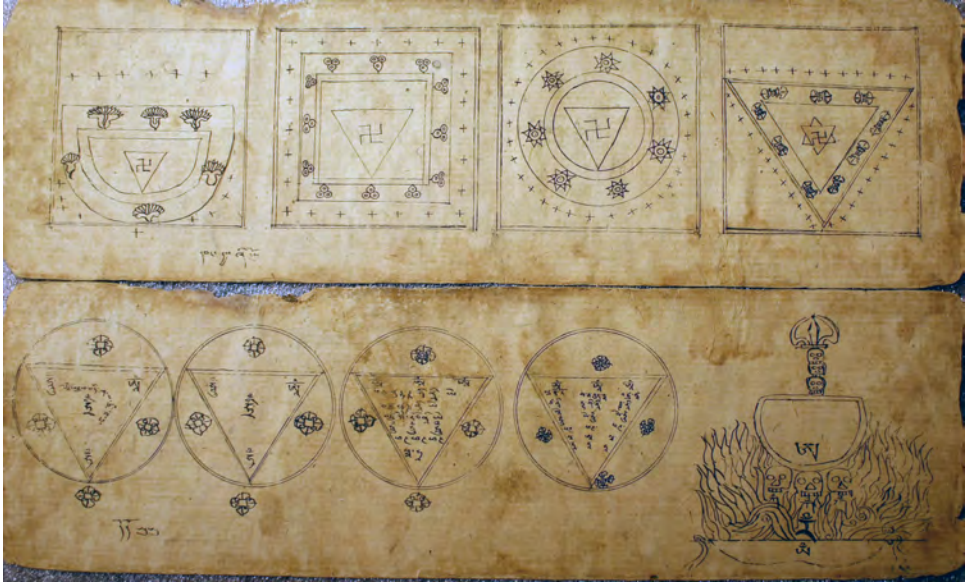


Fig. 3. Supplementary pages illustrating altars for the performance of *homa* rites (above) and for the worship of Vajrayoginī.



Fig. 4. The complete manuscript with its covers.

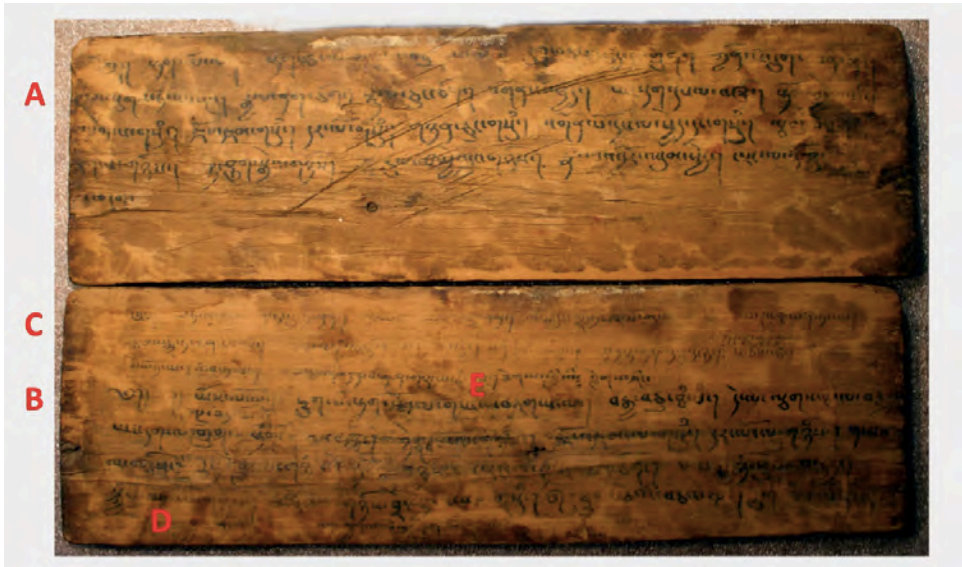


Fig. 5. Interior inscriptions in the front and back covers.

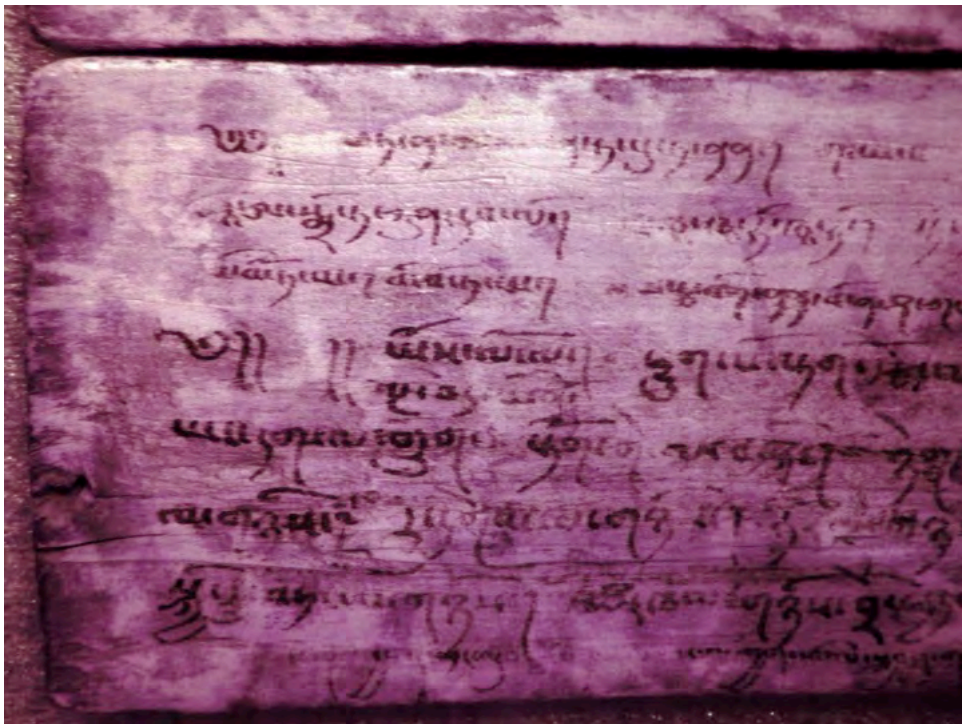


Fig. 6. Near Infra Red (NIR) detail of the interior of the back cover.

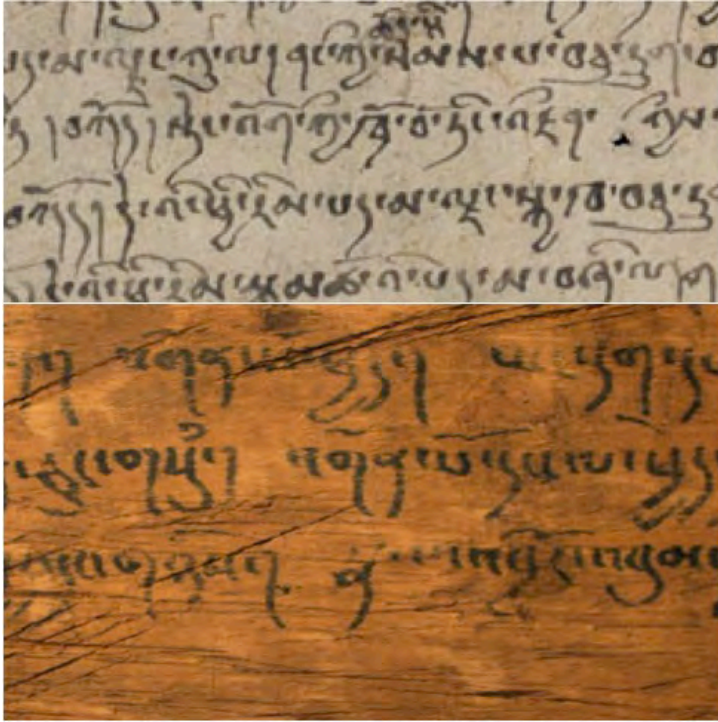


Fig. 7. A section of the tenth-century Dunhuang manuscript IOL J Tib 318 (above) compared with a portion of inscription A in the upper cover.

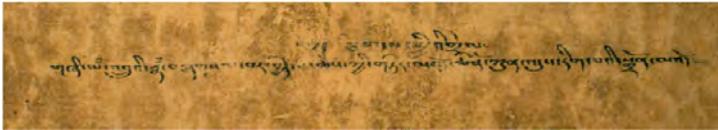


Fig. 8. Folio 1a, the title.

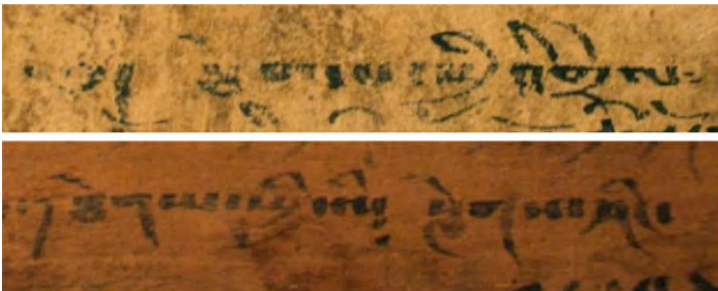


Fig. 9. The first line of the title (folio 1a) compared with inscription E in the back cover.



Fig. 10. *Vajrasattva and Consort with Gods and Teachers*, ca. 1075. Obj. No. 68.8.115. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond. Nasli and Alice Heermaneck Collection, Gift of Paul Mellon. Photo: Travis Fullerton. © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



Fig. 11. Kaḥ thog Si tu Chos kyi rgya mtsho. Photographer unknown.