

Who is Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul?
Tibetan and non-Tibetan Commentaries
on the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* -
A survey of the literature.*

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I.

The considerable and, until now, seemingly unnoticed import of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* and the commentaries written on it - particularly in connection with its tenth chapter - for those Indian and Tibetan scholars who took part in the translation, interpretation and propagation of Buddhism and its scriptures in Tibet towards the end of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century forced itself upon me during my study of the methods of proof applied in Prajñāśena's '*Jig rten pha rol sgrub pa*, a treatise from the treasures of Tun-huang.¹ In the light of this impression a first inspection of the commentaries actually extant in the Tanjur is somewhat disappointing: four works have come down to us, two of them rather small, bearing the title of commentaries on the Sūtra, and one work may be added to this group because it is in fact a commentary on a section of the Sūtra's tenth chapter: the *bKa' yan dag pa'i tshad ma* - attributed to the king Khri Sroṅ lde btsan.

The Sūtra itself is considered as one of the fundamental texts of the Yogācāra tradition and is therefore often referred to and has also attracted the attention of modern, especially Japanese, scholarship. The commentaries, except for the shorter ones, have, however, hardly been studied and analysed.

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¹ Cf. STEINKELLNER 1988, II, pp. 14-19.

The whole complex of the later dogmatics of this school is still more or less neglected especially in as far as it is related to the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*. A survey of this literature is therefore not only a useful undertaking towards a history of the Yogācāra school but can also provide us - as we shall see - with some surprising facts that can only be understood as indications of the considerable rôle it played during the crucial period of the formation of the new Tibetan Buddhist culture with its conceptual and exegetical systems and well-ordered terminology.

The specific rôle played by the Sūtra in this period seems to be founded on its tenth chapter which deals with the Buddha and his activities², i.e. the teaching, and which presents a complete exegetical system that must have been a major model and source of methodological categories for the interpretation and explanation of the Buddha's teaching. And this enterprise of interpretation can be considered as one of the main practical goals not only of the Buddhist monk as such, from the very beginning of Buddhism, but of the Buddhist monk in particular who is engaged in spreading the Buddha's word in a new cultural environment, i.e. who is not only preaching but preaching in a missionary context.³ The following survey is an attempt to put in order and understand historically the information that can be collected on extant and lost commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* with a view to reconstructing its literary presence at an important period of Buddhist religious history.

We shall begin this survey with the works still extant. The information from the Tanjur editions⁴ will be collated with information from earlier sources, namely the catalogues of *lHan kar*⁵ with LALOU's numbering (LALOU 1953) and of *'Phaṅ thaṅ*, the latter as quoted in Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* with NISHIOKA's numbering (ChK III 114-116); finally Bu ston's *bsTan bsgyur dkar chag* (TK[Bu]) as well as sGra tshad pa's (TK[sGra]).

² Cf. LAMOTTE 1935, p. 24.

³ Cf. STEINKELLNER 1988, II, pp. 8-10.

⁴ The editions of Derge (D) with the numbers of its catalogue (published Sendai 1934), and of Peking (P) with the numbers of its catalogue (published Tokyo 1962).

⁵ This is - against my statements of 1985, note 7 - the spelling to be preferred to the spelling *dkar* which - according to GÉZA URAY - must be assessed as an etymologizing spelling.

II.

The following four commentaries are extant in the Tanjur: Asaṅga's *Saṃdhinirmocanabhāṣya*, Ye śes sñiṅ po's *Bhāṣya* on the Maitreya chapter, Yüan-ts'ê's extended commentary which fills one volume of the Japanese reprint of the Peking edition, and the *Vyākhyāna* attributed to Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul in the version of Derge. To these the *bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma'i mdo* must be added, for it is a commentary on a part of the tenth chapter.

1. *Saṃdhinirmocanabhāṣya* attributed to Asaṅga (P 5481, D 3891),

a very short text that was translated around 800 by the paṇḍits Jinamitra and Śilendrabodhi with Ye śes sde. It is already listed in the *lHan kar* catalogue (LALOU 534) and also occurs in Bu ston's catalogues (NISHIOKA 653; TK[Bu] 596,7f.). Its size in *lHan kar* is 220 śloka.

It was used by LAMOTTE and partially edited in appendices to the Sūtra-chapters.⁶ The tenth chapter has only a short note (P 13a4-7).

The authenticity of Asaṅga's authorship of this *Bhāṣya* was questioned by WAYMAN on the basis of a relevant observation of Tsoṅ kha pa.⁷

2. *Āryamaitreyakevalaparivartabhāṣya* of Ye śes sñiṅ po (= Jñānagarbha) (P 5535, D 4033).

This text is also mentioned already in the catalogue of *lHan kar* (LALOU 532), its size being noted down as 670 śloka or 2 bam po and 70 śloka. It was edited by NOZAWA JŌSHŌ and translated into Japanese⁸ and comments only on the eighth chapter of the Sūtra in its Tibetan version.

⁶ SNSū 53f., 58, 65.

⁷ WAYMAN 1961, p. 34f.

⁸ NOZAWA JŌSHŌ, *Āryamaitreya-kevala-parivarta-bhāṣyam Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtre*. Tibetan Text, Edited and Collated, Based upon the Peking and Derge Editions. In: *Daijō Bukkyō Yūgagyo no Kenkyū*, Kyōto 1957, pp. 1-108. I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to WATANABE SHIGEAKI for providing a copy of this publication.

The most interesting question with regard to this text is that of the identity of its author.⁹ DAVID SEYFORT RUEGG has shown¹⁰ that we know of at least three persons of that name: the disciple of Śrīgupta and teacher of Śāntarakṣita from the first part of the eighth century; the translator from the early ninth century; and the teacher and collaborator of Mar pa from the eleventh century.

The translator Jñānagarbha or Ye śes sñiñ po was quite prolific and worked together with different Indian paṇḍits and Tibetan lotsāvas.¹¹ Since in the great majority of cases he works together with a Tibetan or a Tibetan and an Indian colleague but only in a few cases with a possibly Indian colleague only¹² we would naturally tend to assume that he was an Indian paṇḍit. We do not however really know whether it must be considered an iron rule that the translation team always consisted of Indian and Tibetan members and whether a team of Indians or especially Tibetans only was not also possible.

In the light of the following observations we may even consider the possibility that the translator Jñānagarbha and the translator Ye śes sñiñ po are not one and the same person but rather two persons, the first being an Indian, the latter a Tibetan. We find for instance that the translation of the *Ratnajālīparipṛcchāsūtra* (P 830) was made by Jñānagarbha, Ye śes sñiñ po and dPal brtsegs according to the Peking edition, while the Derge edition (D 163) has Jñānagarbha and Ye śes sñiñ po as the translators and dPal brtsegs as the reviser.

Another indication to support the possibility of his being Tibetan would consist in the fact that it is evidently the *Āryamaitreyakevalaparivartabhāṣya* which under the number NISHIOKA 2926 and with the title *dGoñs pa ñes 'gral gyi byams pa'i le'u'i brjed byañ* appears in the first part of the *'Phañ than cat-*

⁹ According to NAKAMURA H., *Indian Buddhism. A Survey with Bibliographical Notes*, Tokyo 1980, p. 256, n. 15 there is an article by NAGASAWA JITSUDŌ in *Tai-shō Daigaku Kenkyū Kiyō* 43, 1-50, where "he says that Jñānagarbha lived in c. 8th century." This paper is not available to me.

¹⁰ SEYFORT RUEGG 1981: cf. index of names and particularly note 224, where he refers to our text too.

¹¹ The Tibetan translators Klu'i rgyal mtshan, dPal brtsegs, Nam mkha' and Ye śes sde appear most often as his collaborators.

¹² Cf. P 788, 952, 986, 5232, 5730.

atalogue quoted in Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*, that part which lists works of Tibetan authors (*bod kyi sdud pa po*).¹³ The name of the author given there is not Ye śes sñiṅ po but Śes rab sñiṅ po.¹⁴ Although I previously thought that a confusion in the usage of the terms *ye śes* and *śes rab* in their difference as translations for the terms *jñāna* and *prajñā* respectively is hardly conceivable, I have meanwhile come across more than one case where this is the case, especially with names.¹⁵ It must have been possible to refer to a Tibetan lotsāva under his Sanskrit monk's name Jñānagarbha as well as under the two Tibetan translations of this Sanskrit name, the more regular one, Ye śes sñiṅ po, and the unusual one, Śes rab sñiṅ po. Thus I would evaluate the different name of the 'Phaṅ thaṅ catalogue as a corroboration of the Tibetan origin of the author, rather than as an argument for his being yet another totally different person.

Finally it is to be noted that in none of the catalogues listing this work a translator is mentioned.

Of interest for the later fate of this text is that Bu ston mentions it in his *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (NISHIOKA 660) among the titles to be looked for, his "search-list" (*de rnam btsal bar bya'o*). And in his Tanjur catalogue it is indeed missing at the appropriate place (TK[Bu] 602,3). When the sGra tshad pa however composed his list of the Tanjur it must have already been found again (cf. TK [sGra] 534,3).

3. **Āryagambhīrasaṃdhinirmocanasūtraṭīkā* of Wen tshig (P 5517, D 4016).

Wen tshig (P) or Wen tshegs (D) is Chinese Yüan-ts'ê (圓測), a pupil of Hsüan-tsang, whose dates are 613-696 (cf. jap. Enjiki in the Hōbōgirin).¹⁶ The

¹³ ChK III 114ff.

¹⁴ This form also appears in dPa' bo gtsug lag's list which evidently derives from the 'Phaṅ thaṅ catalogue (cf. KhGT, Ja, 124b7f.).

¹⁵ Cf. JPhG II, introduction, n. 19.

¹⁶ Some notes on Yüan-ts'ê's life and work can be found in a recent study (in Chinese) by KIM DONG JU: *A Study of Yüan-Tsé's Point of View in the Vijñānamātra theory - With the "Commentary on the Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra" as the central text*, Taipei: Hui Wen Tang Publ. Comp., 1987.

Chinese original of this text is extant to a large part.¹⁷ It was translated by the famous ('Gos) Chos grub, i.e. the bilingual Chinese monk Fa-tch'eng (法成) who worked in Tun-huang during the first half of the ninth century.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that from among the 20 works Chos grub translated from Chinese into Tibetan¹⁹ only two (P 776, a *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* commentary, and our P 5839, a *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* commentary) record in their colophons²⁰ that this work of translation had been undertaken "by order of the glorious and divine king" (*dpal lha btsan po'i bka' luṅ gis*).

Among the extant commentaries this work is by far the largest and was already translated at the time of the compilation of the *lHan kar* catalogue, namely 824 A.D. according to the most recent analysis of the tradition.²¹

It can be safely identified with the commentary (*ṭikā chen po*) listed in the *lHan kar* catalogue (LALOU 565) on the basis of these two pieces of information: that it was translated from the Chinese, and that its size is 74 *bam po*. The author and the translator are not mentioned in this catalogue. But both are to be found in Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (NISHIOKA 655) and in his Tanjur catalogue the commentary already received the fitting name *rGya cher 'grel pa* (TK[Bu] 599,7f.).

¹⁷ According to the bibliography of YŪKI REIMON (*Yuishikigaku tensekishi*, Tōkyō 1962, 174bf.) a large part of this commentary is extant in its original. It was published in the supplement of the *Manjizōkyō*, the *Dainihon zokuzōkyō* (1,34:4 - 5,35:1). However, the beginning of the 8th and the complete 10th chapter are lacking. A retranslation from the complete Tibetan version into Chinese was published, according to YŪKI, by INABA SHŌJU Kyōto 1949 (*Enjiki Gejimmikkyō-sho no san-itsu bubun no kenkyū*; DE JONG mentions an edition "Kyōto 1972" in his note 2 of IJ 30, 1987, p. 157). Neither the original nor this work of INABA are available to me (cf. also Bibl. Buddh. XXIV - XXVIII, 556). I owe to L. SCHMITHAUSEN and A. WAYMAN the reference to this original text. I am also very grateful to ONADA SHUNZŌ for a reference to the retranslation published by INABA recently and for a copy of the same: *Enjiki Gejimmikkyō-sho no san-itsu bubun no kambun-yaku* (*Ōtani Daigaku Kenkyū Nenpō* 24, 1971, pp. 1-132).

¹⁸ UHEYAMA 1967, 1968 (cf. the summary in DEMIÉVILLE 1970, pp. 47ff.).

¹⁹ UHEYAMA 1967, pp. 143-145.

²⁰ UHEYAMA 1967, pp. 159 (163), 168f.

²¹ Cf. YAMAGUCHI 1985. The fact that it is already mentioned in the *lHan kar* catalogue whose latest date would be A.D. 824 provides an interesting early date for the activities of Fa-tch'eng (Chos grub).

This commentary of Yüan-ts'ê displays a feature of methodological interest that merits a short digression. Everybody who reads Tibetan commentaries is fascinated by the ingenious analytical system applied by the Tibetan scholars of all epochs in order to structuralise the texts they are explaining. It is usually referred to as the technique using "divisions" or "sections" (*sa bcad*). To my knowledge however nobody so far has a clear idea of where this most successful and influential technique of literary analysis originated. In texts from the early period of the second spread of the religion it is already present and the question is still unanswered as to whether it is a Tibetan invention or a heritage. I myself have always looked for possible Indian models, but in vain. Of course there are a lot of analytical elements in the Indian scholarly literature that have been taken over by the Tibetans, and the systematic presentation of the various subjects themselves forced its structure upon every explanation within the same traditions. But nothing like a clear model of the *sa bcad*-technique has ever been found in an Indian text.

But in Yüan-ts'ê's text from the 7th century, translated in the early 9th century, it is in use, fully developed, just as we know it from the much later Tibetan texts, and throughout the whole text.²² So this technique is neither a Tibetan invention nor of Indian but of Chinese origin, and any future research into its early development will have to go to the Chinese scholarly techniques and traditions of textual analysis.

²² One example at random may suffice to show my point: (Vol. Di, 113b2-8):

'di yañ nam pa bzis bstan te: (1) zu ba gsol ba dañ (2) lan du gsuñs pa dañ (3) brtag pa dañ (4) nam par bsad pa'o.

(1) 'di ni dañ po zu ba gsol ba ste:

(2) zes bya ba ni gñis pa de bzin gsegs pas yañ dag par lan du gsuñs pa ste.

(3) zes bya ba ni gsum pa bstan pa'o.

(4) zes bya ba la sogs pas ni de bzin gsegs pas yañ dag par bsad pa ston to.

'di yañ nam pa gñis ste: (a) nam par dgrol ba'i mtshan ñid mdor bstan pa dañ (b) bye brag gi mtshan ñid bstan pa'o.

(a) 'di ni dañ po mdor bstan pa ste:

(b) zes bya ba la sogs pas ni gñis pa sku gñis kyi bye brag gi mtshan ñid bstan to.

'di yañ nam pa gñis te: (α) ..., (β) ... etc. etc.

The same analytic technique is to be found in the Tibetan translation of Sa'i rtsa lag's (Pṛthivībandhu) *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtravṛtti* (P 5518), which was translated from the Chinese commentary of K'uei-chi (632-682 A.D.) (T 1723).

3a. *dGoñs 'grel gyi 'grel chen* of the Chinese teacher rDzogs gsal (NISHIOKA 676).

In his "search-list" Bu ston presents this additional Chinese commentary by an author with the translated Tibetan name rDzogs gsal. This commentary is said to be 75 *bam po* long and Bu ston, evidently because of the strikingly similar size, considers it as possibly identical with the commentary of Wen tshig that he had listed above (NISHIOKA 655).²³ That means that Bu ston did not recognize the name rDzogs gsal as a Tibetan translation of Yüan-ts'ê²⁴, and that this commentary was also known under the Tibetan name of its author. Bu ston's commentary NISHIOKA 676 is therefore no other than NISHIOKA 655.

4. *Āryasaṃdhinirmocanasūtrasya vyākhyāna* of Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul (P 5845, D 4358).

The author Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul is only mentioned in the Derge edition and the work is transmitted within those volumes of the Tanjur that contain works composed by Tibetan authors of the late eighth and early ninth century.²⁵ The text is an extensive commentary on the whole Sūtra, but above all on its tenth chapter, to which approximately one third of the text is devoted. Several questions have to be answered in connection with this text. We shall start with the question I put at the beginning of this paper and which may serve as its leitmotif: who is Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul?

This question has in fact already been answered by DAVID SEYFORTH RUEGG who refers to essentially the same sources we shall adduce in identifying this person with the king Khri Sroñ lde btsan.²⁶ In order to substantiate this identification some elaboration is nevertheless useful.

²³ ... 'di Wen tshig gis mdzad pa dañ gcig mi gcig dpyad '

²⁴ Yüan (圓) means "round, complete" and is translated by *rdzogs*, while *ts'ê* (魏) seems only to be represented phonetically by Tibetan *gsal*.

²⁵ Peking: "Ńo tshar bstan bcos", Vols. Ńo, Co, Cho; Derge: "sNa tshogs", Vols. Co, Cho, Jo.

²⁶ SEYFORTH RUEGG 1981, n. 57.

In several recent semantical studies, especially by MACDONALD and STEIN, it has been shown that both parts of this name, *byañ chub* and *rdzu 'phrul*, refer to essential aspects of the nature of the Tibetan king.²⁷ They evoke his nature as Bodhisattva and his magical, supernatural powers respectively and served in this function as a part of the king's title. While the compound with the term *'phrul* would evoke very old associations²⁸ (suffice it to mention the title *'phrul gyi lha btsan po*²⁹) the first compound seems to have only a Buddhist meaning. And for a combination of these two compounds in the king's titles we have only one inscriptional piece of evidence, namely the title *'phrul gyi lha byañ chub chen po* in an inscription of Khri Sroñ lde btsan.³⁰ This is of course not the same as the combination *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul*, but the difference seems to be only gradual: the original title appositions to the king's name may have developed into a veritable name of the king. But in this case we would assume that both compounds were already meant with their full Buddhist connotations, i.e. "enlightenment" (*bodhi*) and "supernatural yogic powers" (*ṛddhi*), to designate a Buddhist king by showing that he has gained the crown of insight and is in control of the necessary means to act and rule accordingly.

That *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul* may really be considered as a name for the king Khri Sroñ lde btsan is corroborated by Bu ston. In his Tanjur catalogue in a note on our *Vyākhyāna* we find the *lha btsan po Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul* as the author of the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma* (TK[Bu] 633,7) a few lines after this work itself has been listed as composed (*mdzad pa*) by the king (*rgyal po*) Khri Sroñ lde btsan (TK[Bu] 633,3f.).³¹ And in Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*, within the quotation from the *'Phañ than* list of Tibetan works, the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma* is listed among the works of the btsan po Khri Sroñ lde btsan (NISHIOKA 2900), while in the discussion on the authorship of our

27 MACDONALD 1971, pp. 335ff., 348; STEIN 1973, pp. 417-422; STEIN 1981, *passim*, particularly pp. 260ff., 269, 273f.; STEIN 1983, pp. 167 (n. 32), 186f.; RICHARDSON 1985, p. 39 (n. 2).

28 TUCCI 1950, n. 38; MACDONALD 1971, pp. 335ff.

29 Cf. the studies mentioned above (n. 24, 25) and, e.g. RICHARDSON 1985, p. 38, 1.16.

30 RICHARDSON 1985, p. 40, 11.33f.

31 This is repeated in sGra tshad pa's catalogue; cf. TK(sGra) 564,2 and 563,6.

Vyākhyāna the author of this work is called *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul* and bears the long title *dbaṅ phyug dam pa'i mña' bdag lha btsan po* (ChK II 55,9f.).

In other words it is clear that *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul* was a well known name for the king *Khri Sroṅ lde btsan* at the time of *Bu ston*. And in the *Derge* edition of the *Tanjur* the **Samdhinirmocanasūtravyākhyāna* is attributed to this king. But this is the only case where the king is said to be the author of this commentary. The commentary moreover does not occur among the various known or more or less enigmatic titles in the two old inventories we have of the king's works: the catalogues of *lHan kar*³² and of *'Phaṅ thaṅ*.³³ And *Bu ston*, who devotes a relatively long note to the question of the authorship of our *Vyākhyāna*, says nothing about *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul*, the king, as its possible author.

The following information however can be gathered from his *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*³⁴: Some predecessor was of the opinion that its author was *Asaṅga*

32 LALOU 1953, p. 336 (LALOU 723-729).

33 ChK III 115,2ff. (NISHIOKA 2899-2908 or 2909); cf. also the list as copied from this older information by *dPa' bo gtsug lag in KhGT*, Ja, 126a7f.

34 ChK II 55,7-15 (NISHIOKA 654): *dGoṅs 'grel gyi 'grel pa chen po 40 bam po tsam yod pa 'di Thogs med kyi mdzad zer te mi bden te / de'i 'thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa'i skabs nas de dag gi mtshan ṅid rab tu dbye ba ni dbaṅ phyug (: phyugs) dam pa'i mña' bdag dpal lha btsan po Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul gyis mdzad pa'i bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma las byuṅ ba bžin du blta bar bya'o śes bod kyi bstan bcos la kha 'phaṅs byas śin Kun las btus daṅ Tshad ma rnam ṅes la sogs pa'i luṅ draṅs pa'i phyir ro // des na bod kyi mkhas pa chen po śig gis byas pa śes par bya'o // Klu'i rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad par yaṅ sems so //*

[*"dGoṅs 'grel gyi 'grel pa chen po*: this (commentary) which contains 40 *bam po* is said to be composed by *Asaṅga*, but (this) is incorrect. For (firstly) a Tibetan treatise is referred to (where it is said) in its chapter on the method that consists of a proof by means of possible (valid cognitions) (*'thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa*)*: 'the different definitions of these are to be seen as coming from the *bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma* that was composed by the overlord of the supreme lords (*dbaṅ phyug dam pa'i mña' bdag*, **parameśvarādhīpati*), the royal divinity (*dpal lha*, **śrīdeva*), the king (*btsan po*) *Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul***], and (secondly) the (*Abhi-dharma*-)*Samuccaya* (of *Asaṅga*) (see n. 35) and the *Pramāṇavinīścaya* (of *Dharmakīrti*) and other (texts) are quoted (in this commentary). (It) must be acknowledged therefore as having been composed by a great Tibetan scholar. I think that it was even composed by *Klu'i rgyal mtshan*."]]

* This localisation of the quotation by *Bu ston* seems to be wrong; at least I could not find it in this section which begins only with *SNSūV* 164a5. It occurs in the chapter on the method that consists in a consideration (of the causes and conditions and of the linguistic items in case of the origin and of the denomination of

(Thogs med) which is denied by Bu ston on two grounds: that in the tenth chapter it refers to a Tibetan treatise, namely the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma*, and that the (Abhidharma-)Samuccaya of Asaṅga³⁵ and the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* of the much later Dharmakīrti are quoted in it. Bu ston rather thinks that the commentary was composed by a great Tibetan scholar (*bod kyi mkhas pa chen po śig gis byas pa*) and that it may well have been composed by Klu'i rgyal mtshan. And in his Tanjur catalogue he actually proposes to identify it with the commentary by Klu'i rgyal mtshan in 40 *bam po* as listed in the catalogue of *lHan kar* or '*Phaṅ thaṅ* (*sñon gyi dkar chag*).³⁶

Bu ston's identification of the commentary that he calls '*grel pa chen po* 40 *bam po* (ChK II 55,7f.) or '*grel chen* (TK[Bu] 633,6) with Klu'i rgyal mtshan's commentary in 40 *bam po* called *rgya cher 'grel pa* in the *lHan kar* catalogue (LALOU 531) and the '*Phaṅ thaṅ* catalogue (NISHIOKA 2920) seems to be based on the identity of size. And this very size of "40 *bam po*" as indicated in the old catalogues can also serve as a reason for identifying our *Vyākhyāna* with this work of Klu'i rgyal mtshan.

all factors of existence) (*bltos pa'i rigs pa, apekṣāyukti*) which begins with SNSūV. 158b2.

** SNSūV 159a1f.

³⁵ NISHIOKA thinks that *Kun las btus* may be Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*Tshad ma'i mdo kun las btus*, NISHIOKA 996), evidently because a text of Dharmakīrti is also referred to, but would the argument not be much more convincing if it meant in connection with Dharmakīrti's work the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*mñon pa kun las btus pa* in NISHIOKA 708 and *Chos mñon pa kun las btus pa* in TK[Bu] 603,4f.) of Asaṅga?

³⁶ TK(Bu) 633,6 - 634,1: '*di 'phags pa Thogs med kyis mdzad zer ba mi bden te / 'di'i 'thad pa sgrub pa'i gtan tshigs kyi skabs nas / lha btsan po Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul gyis mdzad pa'i bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma las blta bar bya'o // źes bod kyis byas pa'i bstan bcos la kha 'phañs yod pa'i phyir ro // sñon gyi dkar chag las / lotsā ba Klu'i rgyal mtshan gyis mdzad pa'i mDo sde dgoñs 'grel gyi 'grel pa bam bo bži bcu źes 'byuñ ba de yin par sems so //*

["The contention that this (commentary) was composed by the noble Asaṅga is incorrect. For in the chapter on the evidence that consists in a proof by means of possible (valid cognitions) (*'thad pa sgrub pa'i gtan tshigs kyi skabs*) of this (commentary) there occurs a reference to a treatise composed by a Tibetan (author) (when it is said): '... are to be seen in the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma* composed by the divine king Byañ chub rdzu 'phrul.' I think that (this commentary) is that (work) which is found in the early catalogue as 'the *mDo sde dgoñs 'grel gyi 'grel pa* in 40 *bam po* composed by the lotsāva Klu'i rgyal mtshan'."]

This information is repeated by the sGra tshad pa in TK(sGra) 564,2-3. Klu'i rgyal mtshan's text is LALOU 531 in the catalogue of *lHan kar*, and NISHIOKA 2920 in the catalogue of '*Phaṅ thaṅ*.

Whatever a *bam po* in the old lists may mean³⁷ it is obvious that the *Vyākhyāna* with its ca. 568 folios in the Peking edition where normally 12-13 folios make 1 *bam po* has a size of ca. 43-47 *bam po* of this kind.³⁸ Whether this is the same size as 40 *bam po* in the *lHan kar* list cannot be said for sure, but it is possible.

All doubts as to Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul's authorship of the *Vyākhyāna* and also with regard to his identity are finally removed of course by the passage in the *Vyākhyāna* itself that was adduced by Bu ston in his reasoning where the *Vyākhyāna* refers to the *bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma* composed by the *dbaṅ phyug dam pa'i mña' bdag dpal lha btsan*³⁹ Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul as a source for definitions from the section on *bltos pa'i rigs pa* which definitions it does not deal with therefore.⁴⁰

But if we then follow Bu ston in assuming that the author of the present *Vyākhyāna* was Klu'i rgyal mtshan, the attribution to Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul, the king, in the Derge edition would ask for an explanation. Yet for lack of further material only two hypothetical answers may be offered to show our limits in this respect: some parallel texts⁴¹ in parts of the tenth chapter with the king's *bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma* may have caused the identification of the authors with each other. Or it may have been based on a simple misunderstanding of Bu ston's notes.

³⁷ For some remarks cf. STEINKELLNER 1985, n. 8. A widely diverging size of the single *bam po* can be found in the commentary of Wen tshig (P 5517) described above. There we find the third *bam po* for instance with ca. 10.5 folios as against the tenth *bam po* with 19 folios. And it is of great import that the number of *bam po* in the Peking edition (75) corresponds to the number given in the *lHan kar* catalogue (74).

³⁸ If we base our estimate on the Derge edition with approximately 12 folios for 1 *bam po* and ca. 476 folios of the present text its size will be ca. 40 *bam po*.

³⁹ This is the title that recurs in Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag* (cf. above n. 34).

⁴⁰ SNSūV 159a1f.: *de dag gi mtshan ñid rab tu dbye ba ni dbaṅ phyug dam pa'i mña' bdag dpal lha btsan Byaṅ chub rdzu 'phrul gyis mdzad pa bKa' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad (: mtshan) ma las 'byuṅ ba bzin du blta bar bya'o //*; this passage must be the one that is referred to in SEYFORTH RUEGG 1981, n. 51.

⁴¹ For instance: SNSūV 158a6-b1 and KTsh 65b7-66a3, SNSūV 163b2-7 and KTsh 70a5-b2, SNSūV 163b7-164a4 and KTsh 70b2-7.

One fact must be finally stressed: the *Vyākhyāna* is a commentary of great scholarly achievement and by no means simple. And TUCCI's words on the improbability of the king's authorship of the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma*⁴² would hold good even more so in the case of the *Vyākhyāna*. But the authorship of the expert and experienced Tibetan translator that Klu'i rgyal mtshan must have been need not be doubted in the same way.

5. *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma las mdo btus pa* of Khri Sroñ lde btsan (P 5839, D 4352).

The author again is only mentioned in the Derge edition and the work is also transmitted within the group of Tibetan works in the Tanjur.²⁵ It is already listed in the *lHan kar* catalogue (LALOU 723) and also appears in the *'Phaṅ than* catalogue (NISHIOKA 2900) both of which contain lists of works attributed to king Khri Sroñ lde btsan.⁴³ The latter catalogue even adds a smaller version of the work in 1 *bam po* (*bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma mdor bstan pa*, NISHIOKA 2909) to a work (NISHIOKA 2908 = LALOU 729) that it declares as "commissioned by the divine king" (*lha btsan pos bkas bcad pa*).⁴⁴

⁴² TUCCI 1958, p. 151.

⁴³ LALOU 723-729 under the title: *btsan po Khri Sroñ lde btsan gyi mdzad pa'i gtsug lag*, and NISHIOKA 2899-2908 or 2909 with the same title but different names for some of the works (cf. also KhGT, Ja, 124a7f.).

⁴⁴ *bkas bcad pa* literally "determined, decided by order (of the king)". For this term cf. SIMONSSON 1957, pp. 226ff. Where the term refers to a particular work as in the case of NISHIOKA 2908 and possibly 2909 we may understand the term in two, if not both ways: the king gave order to compose or compile that work, or the king gave order to accept that work as authoritative.

According to general scholarly opinion⁴⁵, this work has not been actually composed by the king. A first survey by TUCCI⁴⁶ already revealed its highly technical character and that it is in fact a commentary on a section of the tenth chapter of the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra* which deals with the "four methods" (*rigs pa bži, catasro yuktayah*).⁴⁷ This term refers to one of the exegetical methods for treating the contents of Buddhist revelation which were developed or rather incorporated during the early Yogācāra-tradition and transmitted in the prominent position of the Sūtra's last chapter. The "four methods" must have been a most influential instrument for structurizing and organizing the practical life of the preaching and transmitting Buddhist missionary especially in the crucial period of the religion's official establishment in Tibet, and it seems fully justified that the king added his authority to a text of this kind.

That the king was interested at all in commissioning this text is due to this particular character as a summarizing survey of the methods of investigating and explaining the *dharma*. It is not of course, what it is usually taken

45. LALOU 1953, p. 318 translates the title of this list (cf. n. 41 above) as "Ouvrages exécutés [par ordre] du roi Khri-sroṅ-lde-bcan", TUCCI 1958, p. 151 simply denies the attribution to the king on several grounds, and MACDONALD 1971, pp. 367-373 refers to it as a "tradition d'un ouvrage de logique" (367) but sees the meaning in the attribution to the king in the introduction which contains a declaration of king (367f.). This introduction has again been studied in STEIN 1980, pp. 331-333 who follows LALOU in assessing the authorship of the king; cf. also STEIN 1979, p. 551 where he states that the work was "inspiré (et sans doute écrit en majeure partie) par son ami et conseiller, le moine bouddhiste indien Ćāntarakṣita".

It seems that so far only URAY is of the opinion that the king actually had a greater share in creating this work than only giving the orders to write it, when he says: "The treatise was written ... by King Khri Sroṅ lde btsan under the guidance of his *kalyāṇamitra* Dar ma Śāntighoṣa, i.e. Śāntarakṣita ..." (URAY 1983, p. 407).

A final judgement will not be possible however, I think, without more detailed study of this text and its parallel texts.

46. TUCCI 1958, pp. 122-125; some additional observations on the character of the work in STEIN 1980, p. 333.

47. For this "exegetical methodology" of the early Yogācāra-tradition cf. my introduction in JPhG II, p. 15ff. (particularly nn. 32, 33).

for, a logical text;⁴⁸ as a text of logic the official interest in it would be quite incomprehensible.

If the king had any part in the creation of this text it is confined to a possibly direct authorship of the intention behind the introduction, the first part of which has been studied already by MACDONALD and STEIN.⁴⁹ This introduction runs from P 64a4 - 65b7, but the last folio has not been taken into consideration so far although it is there where the reasons for composing this particular work and especially for presenting the "four methods" (*rigs pa bži*) as found in the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* are stated.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ LAMOTTE calls that part of the Sūtra's tenth chapter which is explained here an "exposé de logique bouddhique" (SNSū 262, n. 22) or "un petit traité de logique" (SNSū 24). TUCCI 1958, p. 151 goes so far as to denounce the contents of the *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma* as "merely logical". Mme MACDONALD follows and calls it a "traduction d'un ouvrage de logique" (MACDONALD 1971, p. 367). Only STEIN does not follow this misleading and falsely simplifying characterization in his introduction (STEIN 1980, p. 333).

⁴⁹ P 64b8-65a6 is translated in MACDONALD 1971, pp. 367f.; and P 64a5-64b8 is summarized and P 64b8-65a8 translated in STEIN 1980, pp. 331-333.

⁵⁰ P 65a8-65b7, compared with the version of Derge (D) (in the *Nying ma Edition of the sDe-dge bKa'-gyur and bsTan'-gyur*, Oakland 1980, Vol. 104, No. 4352, p. 384/3/1-5 [sNa-tshogs, Vol. Co, 74b1-5] and of Cone (C) (in the microfiche edition of the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York, Vol. 125 [Co], 74b5-75a2):

so so'i bsam pa rdzogs par 'gyur bas na gañ 'jig rten las 'das pa'i phun sum tshogs pa 'dod kyañ ruñ / 'jig rten gyi phun sum tshogs pa 'dod kyañ ruñ / sgra dañ yi ge'i 'bru la mkhas pa 'dod kyañ ruñ / chos thams cad kyi mtshan ñid tshad ma dañ sbyar ziñ rtogs par bya ba la sogs te gañ 'dod kyañ ruñ / de bzin gsegs pa'i bstan pa la mñan pa dañ bsam pa dañ goms par bya ba las 'da' ba med do //

sañs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi gsuñ rab lta bu zab ciñ rgya che ste / zad mi ses pa la bdag 'dra ba'i ses pa rgya chuñ ziñ rmoñs pas dgoñs pa'i don go ba lob tu bśad pa ni rgya mtsho chen po la bya gag gi rtsal gyis gcod (DC: gtsod P) par rtsol ba dañ 'dra ste mi nus par mñon pa la bdag gi tshod mi 'dzin par ci'i phyir bśad ce na / 'jig rten na tshad mar byed pa rnams dañ / 'phags pa dGoñs pa ñes par (DC: pa P) 'grel pa'i mdo las rigs (DC: rig P) pa bži 'byuñ ba mthoñ na bśad pa 'di dag 'bri (: 'dri PDC) bar yañ mi sems pa žig ste / 'jig rten dag bka' (om.P.) yañ dag pa'i tshad'ma rin po che 'di lta bu mi spyod par sañs rgyas la sogs pa mu stegs can rnams bdag bdag gi rañ bzos (/ / P) 'jig rten slu ziñ tshad mar ston pa'i lugs mthoñ nas gsuñ rab kyi tshad ma bcabs na dkon mchog gsum la sñiñ riñ ba dañ / sems can la 'khus (C: 'khrus PD) par 'gyur te </> de'i phyir mi bzod pa ni mig tu gra ma'i dum bu soñ ba dañ 'dra bar rtag tu ñams (: ñam PDC) ña nas mkhas pa dag la bskul ba'i rkyen tsam du 'di bris so //

The following translation is only an attempt to show the general intentions of the king. STEIN remarked that "la langage du roi est alambiqué" (STEIN 1980,

III.

In addition to these still extant commentaries we come across a number of titles of works evidently lost. They all come from the old catalogues of *lHan kar* and *'Phaṅ thaṅ* and they share the fate of having been lost by the time Bu ston was compiling his lists. A survey is nevertheless useful, not only for clarity's sake but also because their very existence increases once more our suspicions with regard to the importance of this particular Sūtra's tradition for the period of our interest.

n. 9) and it is indeed hard to evaluate the syntactical peculiarities in this passage.

I would like to acknowledge my sincere gratitude to PER KVÆRNE who took the trouble to read my draft translation in Sopron, and to HELGA UEBACH and JAMPA PANGLUNG who proposed valuable changes and alternative interpretations even later (letter of Sept. 15th 1987). Some of their advice I did not follow, thus the mistakes in the proposed translation remain my own.

"Whoever, in fulfilling his individual intentions, aims at transcendental completion, whoever aims at worldly success, whoever aims at being an expert in words (*sgra*) and writing (*yi ge'i 'bru*), (and) whoever aims at knowing in accordance with valid cognitions the characteristics of all factors of existence (*chos*) and (aims) at other (achievements ?), (for such persons) there is no way beyond hearing, considering and meditating on the teaching of the Tathāgata.

(Someone may say:) "The cognition of (people) like me is limited and obscured with regard to (a teaching which is) deep and vast, and endless as the holy words of the Buddha, the Venerable one. While to declare, therefore, that (I should) learn to understand the intended meaning (of these holy words) appears to be impossible since [my attempt to understand would be] like the endeavour to cross the great ocean with the skill of a grey-duck (*bya gag*), why do (you) say that (I should) overrate myself?"

(Answer:) When we see the valid cognitions (*tshad mar byed pa*) [as instances of authority] in everyday life and the four methods (*rigs pa bži*) to be found [as such instances] in the noble *dGoṅs pa ñes par 'grel pa'i mdo*, even writing down (*'bri bar yaṅ*)* these (following) explanations is something inconceivable. Since I became aware of the manner in which Saṅs rgyas (!??) and others, the upholders of wrong beliefs (*mu stegs can*), deceive the people with their respective self-fabrications and teach (them ?) as valid (*tshad ma*) while the worldly people do not believe in accordance with the precious valid cognitions of a correct revelation (*bka' yaṅ dag pa'i tshad ma*), would I conceal the valid cognition for the holy words (*gsuṅ rab*) I would turn away from the three jewels and offend (*'khus par*)* the living beings. Therefore, when I became continuously anxious with regard to (this prospect) intolerable like a piece of awn that has entered the eye, I wrote this (treatise) only as a case of exhortation for the learned."

* These emendations and readings were proposed by UEBACH and PANGLUNG.

The following three works had been listed in the *lHan kar* catalogue and from there they were included in the "search-list"⁵¹ of Bu ston's *Chos bsgyur dkar chag*; the next work, again attributed to a king, is only known from the *'Phaṅ thaṅ* catalogue as quoted by Bu ston.

6. *dGoṅs pa nes par 'grel pa'i tīkā chen po* (LALOU 530, NISHIOKA 659).

This was a very extensive commentary in 60 *bam po*. Nothing else is known.

7. *dGoṅs pa nes par 'grel (: 'brel) pa'i (: ba'i) bsdus 'grel* (LALOU 533, NISHIOKA 661).

A summarizing commentary in 1 *bam po*. Nothing else is known.

8. *dGoṅs pa nes par 'grel pa'i tīkā* (LALOU 566, NISHIOKA 671).

This commentary in 9 *bam po* was also translated from the Chinese, as was the work of Yüan-ts'ê.

9. *dGoṅs pa nes par 'grel pa'i mdo'i bsad pa of Mu tig btsan* (NISHIOKA 2925).

This is one of the titles quoted with others from the *'Phaṅ thaṅ* catalogue.⁵² No note on the size is given, but the name of the author would fit in well with the previous attributions of commentaries from this tradition. For Mu tig btsan (po)⁵³ is the son of Khri Sroṅ lde btsan and the second ruler after him (ca. 799? - 815/16 A.D.), and it is quite possible that another one of these commentaries or summaries was commissioned by the royal house at the very height of the first great period of translating

51 For the work of the Chinese teacher rDzogs gsal (NISHIOKA 676) cf. above, p. 236. The knowledge of this work in Bu ston must be based on some other source than the *lHan kar* catalogue.

52 From there it has been added also to his survey by dPa' bo gtsug lag phreṅ ba (KhGT, Ja, 124b4).

53 Or Khri lDe sroṅ btsan or Sad na legs.

and interpreting. This is however the only place where Mu tig's work is mentioned and nothing else is known of it.

10. *bKa' yañ dag pa'i tshad ma mdor bstan pa* (NISHIOKA 2909).

This is a summary in 1 *bam po* of the work attributed to king Khri Sroñ lde btsan. TUCCI refers to the two works with the same title as "two redactions".⁵⁴ It is listed immediately after the list of works "commissioned" (*bkas bcad pa*) by the king.⁵⁵ Nothing else is known.

IV.

In concluding this survey I would like to point out some aspects of significance of this material for the history of early Tibetan Buddhism.

Of the ten works to be found either in the Tanjur or in various catalogues⁵⁶ nine had already been dealt with in the oldest lists of Tibetan litera-

⁵⁴ TUCCI 1958, p. 148. In this he follows dPa' bo gtsug lag phreñ ba who starts his list of the king's works with these two works, one in 7, the other in 1 *bam po* (KhGT, Ja, 124a7).

⁵⁵ But the following notice that "it was given to the king by the ācārya Vairocana-rakṣita" does not refer to it (TUCCI 1958, p. 151, n. 1) but to the following title (NISHIOKA 2910).

⁵⁶ The *lHan kar* catalogue has another work that is a separate extract from a "Saṃdhinirmocana-chapter" from the *Yogācārabhūmi* (LALOU 623: *rNal sbyor spyod pa'i sa las dGoñs pa ñes par 'grel pa'i le'u ñi tshe bśad pas logs su phyuñ ba*, 365 śloka). L. SCHMITHAUSEN, Hamburg, referred me to a quotation of the complete text (except for the introduction) of the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra* in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. The text of the Sūtra to be found there (P 5539, Hi, 47b7 - 108b8) corresponds almost literally to the text as transmitted in the Kanjur (P 774). The fact that LALOU 623 is in 365 śloka, while the Sūtra's translation listed under LALOU 117 is in 1.120 śloka, clearly shows - what is already indicated by the very title of the work - that LALOU 623 cannot refer to the whole Sūtra as incorporated into the *Yogācārabhūmi* but only to one of its chapters.

SCHMITHAUSEN suggested (letter of 6.9.1987) that this extract from the Sūtra in the *Yogācārabhūmi* might have been part of that text that served as the basis of the version which is actually transmitted in the Kanjur in addition to the version from Tun-huang (cf. HAKAMAYA NORIAKI, The Old and New Tibetan Trans-

ture, eight in the *lHan kar* (Nos. 1 - 8) and one in the *'Phaṅ thaṅ* catalogue (No. 9). By the time of Bu ston only five of these texts were still available (Nos. 1-5). That means that during a certain period (and we can limit this period to the late years of king Khri Sroṅ lde btsan, the last two decades of the eighth century) a large body of commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* was extant, a considerable part of which was lost during the following centuries.

It is further of significance that a great part of these works, six in fact, are either attributed to Tibetan authors, whatever their actual share in the creation of these works may have really been, or are said to have been written or commissioned by a Tibetan king: No. 2 may have a Tibetan author (Ye śes sñiṅ po); No. 4 was written by Klu'i rgyal mtshan; Nos. 5 and 10 were written or commissioned by Khri Sroṅ lde btsan who also gave orders to Chos grub to translate No. 3; No. 9 was written (or commissioned ?) by Khri lDe sroṅ btsan.

Finally it can be said that except for No. 1, the only real translation of an Indian original among the extant works, and Nr. 2, which comments only upon the eighth chapter of the Sūtra, a heavy emphasis of the commentators on the tenth chapter cannot escape our notice.

This tenth chapter of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* is devoted to the Buddha in his different forms, above all in that form which realized his teaching for us. In other words Buddhism as such and in its totality is the chapter's subject. It provides us with most detailed categories of textual exegesis and of the various possible approaches towards the contents of the teaching. It tells what the Buddhist religion consists of and how it can be scrutinized by oneself but also - and in our context most importantly - how other people can be told about it in a strictly ordered argumentative way. It is in short a great *summa* of Buddhist hermeneutics. The textual body of the religion and the

lations of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*: Some Notes on the History of Early Tibetan Translation. *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgakubu Kenkyū Kiyō* 42, 1984, pp. 192-176; A Comparative Edition of the Old and New Tibetan Translations of the *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* (I). *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgakubu Ronshū* 17, 1986, pp. 616-600; (II). *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgakubu Kenkyū Kiyō* 45, 1987, pp. 354-320; (III). *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyōgakubu Ronshū* 18, 1987, pp. 606-572.

tools for studying it and demonstrating it as true and authoritative are thus provided with a detailed and elaborate terminology along with the definitions of the terms whose translation and interpretation would seem to be a major task for those monks and scholars who worked under royal orders to create the appropriate religious idiom.

This is the achievement that may seem to be the necessary preparation for that work that can be considered as the conclusion of these scholarly efforts: the compilation of dictionaries and related working tools. When these more handy and useful works had been compiled, their sources were no longer as important as before and this may have been one of the causes for the eventual loss of some of them. Of course this is only a hypothetical after-thought and the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra*-literature will almost certainly turn out to be a source among others, but an important one nevertheless. Thus in order to advance the study of the development of the early Tibetan Buddhist vocabularies and semantics a study of these commentaries on the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* that can be connected with Khri Sroṅ lde btsan's historical decision to establish Buddhism in the country seems to be unavoidable.

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