



ISSN 0970-5368

Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 & 4, Autumn-Winter 2013

# THE TIBET JOURNAL



a publication for the study of Tibet

# The Tibet Journal

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Geshe Lhakdor, Tashi Tsering, Toni Huber, Lobsang Shastri, Roberto Vitali, Erberto Lo Bue, Geoff Childs, Christian Luczanits, Agata Bareja-Starzynska

## POLICIES

*The Tibet Journal* is a quarterly publication of the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives (LTWA) dedicated to the presentation of scholarly and general interest articles on Tibetan culture and civilization by Tibetans and non-Tibetans. Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Editorial Board of *The Tibet Journal* or the LTWA. Responsibility for views expressed and the accuracy of articles rests entirely with the authors.

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

*The Tibet Journal* welcomes submission of articles and research papers in English, adequately substantiated or otherwise documented, with Wylie romanisation system. Article should be typed and double-spaced. We request that all contributions sent to the journal have both the print and CD copy (in MS Word). Contributors will receive a copy of the *Journal*, and up to 20 offprints of their article. Unaccepted articles will be returned upon request. The *Journal* encourages readers' comments on articles published in recent issues. Address articles, rejoinders, notes, reviews and general enquiries to:

**Managing Editor, The Tibet Journal, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamsala 176 215, H.P., INDIA Tel: +91 9218422467 (Main Office), 9882255047 (Reception), email: tjeditor@ltwa.net, <www.tibetanlibrary.org>**

## PRINT SUBSCRIPTION/DISTRIBUTION

We have appointed M/S Biblia Impex Pvt. Ltd. as the sole distributing and selling agent of *The Tibet Journal* in print form w.e.f. Vol.XII, 1987. Please send all enquiries relating to subscriptions to: **Biblia Impex Pvt. Ltd., 2/18, Ansari Road, New Delhi 110 002, INDIA, email: contact@bibliaimpex.com, Website: <www.bibliaimpex.com>**

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Inland	Rs. 350 Single copy Rs. 100
Overseas	US \$ 45 (Air Mail) Single copy US \$ 12 (Air Mail)

## ELECTRONIC SUBSCRIPTION

Following an agreement, we have appointed EBSCO Publishing, USA, our sole distributing and selling agent for electronic publication w.e.f. Vol.XXVII, 2002. For subscription contact **EBSCO Publishing, 10 Estes Street, Ipswich, Massachusetts 01938-0682, USA, email: ep@epnet.com, <www.epnet.com>**

## COPYRIGHT

Except where otherwise declared, the entire contents of *The Tibet Journal* are under the protection of the Indian Copyright Act of 1957, the Berne Convention of 1956, and the Universal Copyright of 1952. In case of reprint usage, the Managing Editor should be informed and source credit given to the authors of the individual articles, as well as to *The Tibet Journal*.

# The Tibet Journal

*A publication for the study of Tibet*

Geshe Lhakdor  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Yeshe Dhondup  
MANAGING EDITOR

**AUTUMN-WINTER VOL. 38, No. 3 & 4 2013**

## ARTICLES

- The Life and Activities of Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan ...3-20  
pa'i sgron me, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Tibeto-Mon Monk from Tawang  
**Lobsang Tenpa**
- Iconographic Representations of the Five Elements ...21-34  
**Lan Zhang**
- Tulku* by Dhondup Gyal ...35-55  
**(Trans.) Catherine Hartmann and Sangye Tendar Naga**
- The Sociology Lens of Pilgrimage Tourism in Kashmir Valley: ...57-85  
A Case of Holy Amarnath Pilgrimage  
**Adfer Rashid Shah**
- Religion Under Fire: A Report and Policy Paper ...87-113  
on Religious Freedom in Tibet  
**Peter Dzedzic**

Educatin in India ...115-119  
**Swaleha Sindhi**

Choronology of Sino-Tibetan Contacts (1978-2013) ...121-159  
**Yeshi Dhondup**

### **Review Article**

Mustang Review ...161-167  
**Christian Luczanits**

### **Book Reviews**

The Story of Golden Corpse ..169-170  
**D. R. Chaudhry**

Death and Beyond in Ancient Tibet: Archaic Concepts and ...170-171  
Practices in a Thousand-Year-Old Illustrated Funerary  
Manuscript and Old Tibetan Funerary Documents of  
Gathang Bumpa and Dunhuang  
**Alex McKay**

### **Contributors**

# *The Life and Activities of Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Tibeto-Mon Monk from Tawang<sup>1</sup>*

**Lobsang Tenpa**

## **Abstract**

The paper discusses the life and activities of *Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* and his contribution to the development of Tibetan Buddhism in Monyul region, a geographic zone encompassing the Tawang and West Kameng districts in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The paper also observes the activities of the Lama in the cross-border contacts. The study is based on textual sources and the fieldwork results.

**Key words:** *Tibetan Buddhism, Bhutan, Mon, Eastern Mon, Monyul, Tawang, West Kameng, the Dalai Lamas, monastery, Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me*

## **Introduction**

During the “Later Dissemination of Buddhism” (*bstan pa phyi dar*) in the Tibetan plateau, a number of Tibetan and Indian Buddhist scholars had visited the Himalayan region. The region was a vibrant place for interaction, and many scholars travelled to the Indian subcontinent to learn and receive Buddhist teachings. It was a custom for the Tibetan masters to trace their teachings back to Indian masters coming from ancient Buddhist universities. These Lotsawas (*lo tswa ba*) or the pundits—the Tibetan scholars during the period were instrumental in the formal interaction between the regions. With the establishment of teaching centres, lineage based schools developed in Tibet, and as a result, a number of schools flourished during the so-called Hegemonial Period<sup>2</sup> (13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> C.).

In this period a number of masters were active in the region. Among them was *Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* (1475-1542?),<sup>3</sup> a native of Ber mkhar house in Tawang, who was influential in cross-contact relationships in the eastern Himalaya. In the *Rgal rigs* (1668) text, the region in particular has been known as “Eastern Mon” (Shar Mon), comprising the present-day, eastern Bhutan and the Monyul region: Tawang and West Kameng districts in the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh. He also helped the development and establishment of Dge lugs pa's School of the Tibetan Buddhism in the region. He was succeeded by at least three other prominent Lamas in the region, beside a number of other Tibetan

and local Buddhist masters.<sup>4</sup> His childhood name as (G)sum pa(bha)- (the third [son]) is mentioned in *Rgyal rigs*,<sup>5</sup> and *Me rag mdzad rnam*,<sup>6</sup> and *Rgyal sras Bstan pa'i sgron me* or *Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* is mentioned in the said two texts as well as also recorded in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster*.<sup>7</sup> However, he was more famously known as *Rgyal sras Bstan pa'i sgron me* or *Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me*. The autobiography of the second Dalai Lama mentions of his name *Mtha' khob Bstan pa'i sgron me* is instrumental in the affirmation of his dating. The paper discusses the life and activities of *Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* and his contribution to the development of Tibetan Buddhism, in particular to the Dge lugs pa's School in the region will be illustrated and discussed in light of the available sources. The paper will also attempt to illustrate the history of the region.

### Notes on the sources

Among the sources stated above, the text *Rgyal rigs*<sup>8</sup> was first published by Michael Aris (1986) with an annotated translation and reprinted in 2009 with a supplementary “historical introduction” by John Ardussi.<sup>9</sup> The text was likely to be written in 1668 according to Ardussi (2009: ix-xii), whereas Aris (1979: 94; 1986: 5) considered, that it was in 1728. Its author is Wagindra (Ngag dbang) from the clan of *Byar*.<sup>10</sup> The other texts, *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* and *Me rag mdzad rnam* are extensively quoted in some of the secondary sources. The texts are written on *Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* and other three Lamas, but the latter text, *Me rag mdzam rnam* is primarily focusing on the life and works of the concerned subject. These texts are most likely to be written after the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century by local authors.

So, in regards of *Me rag mdzad rnam* text, it is likely to be compiled after the 17<sup>th</sup> century, because it contains some information of the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Even then, it could be the source for the *Rgyal rigs*, because the text is a supplementary note or a petition forwarded to the Potala Palace and much details information on *Btsan pa'i sgron me* than *Rgyal rigs*. The petition is written to justify the historical background of some of the monasteries and their privileges, which were to be remained intact with the succession of the Lamas. Though, it is difficult to date the text, the petition is likely to be written after the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but the context of the text, particularly the details on *Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me* and his activities in the region seem to be copied from an another, unavailable text. The information contains in the *Me rag mdzad rnam* is among the oldest sources on the history of the region, going back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

The other text, *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* gives extensive details on the *Me rag Lama Blo gros rgya mtsho* (?-1681) and the social and political issues of his time, which makes us assume that the text was written in the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. *Rgyal sras sprul sku* (2009 [1991]) noted the text in short, *Dga' ba'i*

*dpal ster*, where Aris (1988) translated the text name as “History of the establishment of the Gelukpa School in Monyul,” but the whole text is not translated. It is abbreviated as MPHDX in Aris (1988). The text outlines the development of the Dge lugs pa’s school of Tibetan Buddhism in the region. Both of these short texts, *Me rag mdzad rnam* and *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* are yet to be published.

There are two further sources dealing with similar sources. These are the works of Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009 [1991]) and Bstan ’dzin nor bu (2002). Both the works focus on the history of the Tawang Monastery and the activities of local secular and religious rulers. These authors are highly dependent on the same primary texts, which I already mentioned. However, their studies didn’t include the data from the biographies and autobiographies of the Dalai Lamas and some of the documents presented here.

In non-Tibetan language, Sarkar (2006 [1980]; 1981) was the first to comment on the life of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me in his writings. The author had outlined the activities of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me as they were narrated in *Me rag mdzad rnam* and *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster*. His writing on the subject is based on the above sources, either through translation or oral traditions, but he has not acknowledged it in his writing. Even Aris’s (1980) study of the 1680-edict issued by the Fifth Dalai Lama, which is a pioneer source for a review of the historical information on the region, relied on Sarkar’s information on Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me.

### **On Rgyal sras Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me in Tibetan sources<sup>11</sup>**

According to the texts, *Rgyal rigs* and *Me rag mdzam rnam*, (G)sum pa was a boy prophesied by Thang stong rgyal po (1361?-1485). Accordingly, both texts mention that (G)sum pa was born to *Jo bo* Dar rgyas, the chieftain of *Ber mkhar* house in the Shar tsho valley (present-day Kitpi Circle area of the Tawang district). *Rgyal rigs* had illustrated the meeting between *Jo bo* Dar rgyas and Thang stong rgyal po in the following way:

He [*Jo bo* Dar rgyas] invited to his home the Mahasiddha Thang stong rgyal po, who was going around begging alms and performed him excellent works of veneration. After he had consumed some rice-ale which had been served him to his full satisfaction, he filled a skull-cup with some rice-ale and the Mahasiddha threw it into the sky. He gave to *Jo bo* Dar rgyas the ale which fell into his hands without spilling and said: “drink as much ale as you can and a special sign of the omens will come forth.” *Jo bo* Dar rgyas completely drank up six skull-cups of ale.

When half remained from a [further] cupful the Mahasiddha declared: “it seems that you will have seven sons but one will be of no use. Of the six [remaining] sons one will be a Bodhisattva of the tenth stage who will uphold the teachings pertaining to explanations of the doctrines and their realization, and who will be of infinite benefit to sentient beings.” Filling the skull-cup with ale, he said: “oh, Great *Jo bo*! Since this skull-cup is the cranium of the Dakini ’Gro ba bzang mo, it is extremely valuable. I leave it with you as the support of your faith,” and he gave it to him (Aris, 1986: 45).<sup>12</sup>

However, this particular story is not mentioned in the biographies of Thang stong rgyal po, which are translated into English by Stearns (2007).<sup>13</sup> What could be the source for the *Rgyal rigs* to this particular story? Is it in the text *Me rag mdzad rnam*? Maybe. As *Rgyal rigs* notes that in regard to “the ancestral origins of the *Jo bo* [clans] who are the royal families of La’ og yul gsum” he “will speak briefly”:

[..since] a more extended version containing a full account of how the successive *Jo bo*, having gained power over the officers and subjects and taken control of a royal site, came to enjoy great strength and dominion due to their far-ranging endeavors has been clarified in the personal documentary records of the *Jo bo* descendants (Aris, 1986: 43).<sup>14</sup>

This particular story quoted from the *Rgyal rigs* is mentioned in much greater details in *Me rag mdzad rnam*. Yet, *Me rag mdzad rnam* is not likely to be the “more extended version containing a full account of the succession of *Jo bos*” of the Monyul region. Because the *Me rag mdzad rnam* recounts only the activities of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me and his other related activities. Similarly, the *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* is also not likely to be the “more extended version.” Prior to Thang stong rgyal po’s meeting with *Jo bo* Dar rgyas, the *Me rag mdzad rnam* mentions that Thang stong rgyal po met the *Jo bo* of Rus po mkhar, but the name of the *Jo bo* is not given. The only possibility of the *Sgrub thob* meeting a *Jo bo* was *Jo bo* Rgyal po dar and his son(s). Because *Jo bo* Rgyal po dar was a sibling of *Jo bo* Sangs rgyas rdo rje, the father of *Jo bo* Dar rgyas (*Rgyal rigs*, 1986: 30a). however, the meeting between the *Jo bo* of Rus po mkhar and Thang stong rgyal po is not recorded in the *Rgyal rigs*. The *Me rag mdzad rnam* recorded the meeting between Thang stong rgyal po and *Jo bo* of Rus po mkhar as following:

He [Thang stong rgyal po] arrived at [Eastern Mon] contemplating on his hope, who could be a patron to his doctrine. At the time, the *Jo bo* of



Rus po mkhar was the largest, so, the *Jo bo* and his subjects (leaders and serfs) were having an eating and drinking (gathering) session. *Sgrub thob*, in order to check any auspicious sign [to find a patron], he went among the gathering and said, “I, the Yogi need a cup of chang and held out a skull [-cup].” They replied, “you, unknown beggar, Yogi carrying a human skull, don’t come here, go away” and, he was ousted. As the omen was not a good one there, then [he] arrived at Ber mkhar. (*Me rag mdzad rnam*, 2012: 2b-3b)<sup>15</sup>

Although, in *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 2b) it is noted that Thang stong rgyal po reached Ber mkhar house during “the welcoming and drinking ceremony of the bride of *Jo bo* Dar rgyas,” the bride’s name is not mentioned.<sup>16</sup> While coming back to Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me, only a short paragraph is mentioned about him after that in the *Rgyal rigs*:

*Jo bo* Gsum pa received his ordination from the Omniscient Dge ’dun rgya mtsho Dpal bzang and as he pursued the study of the sutras and tantras and attained perfection therein he received the name of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me. Upholding the teachings of explanation and realization, and in behavior like a Mahasiddha, he founded many monasteries at Shar Stag lung, Me rag sag stengs, Ar rgya gdung and so on, accomplishing extensive benefit to beings. (Aris, 1986: 45)<sup>17</sup>

This short paragraph describing biography of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me in *Rgyal rigs* seems to be the summary of the 15 folios- *Me rag mdzad rnam* text. Particularly, a summary of the first 8 folios, where the rest of the folios describe Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me’s other activities. The other activities, like meeting a *Jo bo* called Sprang po dar and his collection of taxes from trade markets at the border region and subduing an ogre/demon in the modern Kalakteng (Kha lag steng) area in the West Kameng district.

In the text *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* the meeting of Thang stong rgyal po and the *Jo bo(s)* is not mentioned at all. The text (2012: 8) says that *Rgyal sras* Bstan pa’i sgron me (and *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun?) had first taken novice vow from *Gtsang ston* Rol pa’i rdo rje, prior to their journey to central Tibet. However, this information is neither in the *Me rag mdzad rnam* nor in the *Rgyal rigs*. But all the texts mention that while in central Tibet, *Rgyal sras* Bstan pa’i sgron me received ordination (*Dge slong/* Bhikshu) from the second Dalai Lama, Dge ’dun rgya mtsho (1475-1542) and was named Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me.<sup>18</sup> But the naming is not recorded in *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* (2012: 8). The autobiography of the second Dalai Lama merely mentions the meeting: “while I

was in E region after being invited by the Lha rgyal ri's family,<sup>19</sup> I was persistently invited to come to the direction of Dwags po by *Mtha' khob* (frontier) Bstan pa'i sgron me and *Slob dpon* Chos dpal ba, and all the teacher and disciples [of the Dwags po monastery]. I reached a place called Gon sde bgyad at first in Dwags po after crossing over from Spur ldang la (pass)."<sup>20</sup> Although as one of the prominent actors regarding the invitation of the second Dalai Lama to Dwags po, he was not able to persuade him coming down to the southern part of Dwags po, which is the present-day Monyul region.

Even though, as the text mentions, the second Dalai Lama visited Dwags po several times after that, it seems that he and *Mtha' khob* Bstan pa'i sgron me never have met. In the later part of the autobiography, a "religious teacher" (*chos rje*) at the Bkra shis lhun po monastery known as *Lha btsun* Blo bzang bstan pa ba is mentioned being unanimously appointed to be a "religious preceptor" or "spiritual master" (*slob dpon*) of Bkra shis lhun po monastery?<sup>21</sup> What makes us to assume that *Lha btsun* Blo bzang bstan pa ba is the same person as Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me. Therefore, we can assume that after his studies in central Tibet at Bkra shis lhun po, later on Dwags po monastery was one of the places where Bstan pa'i sgron me was active. His meeting with the second Dalai Lama at E region let him to become one of his trusted disciples and later become a "religious preceptor" at the Bkra shis lhun po monastery. His return journey to the "Eastern Mon" (Shar Mon)<sup>22</sup> region, including the present Monyul happened later in his life. This session will be discussed in the next section.

### Activities in "Eastern Mon" (Shar Mon) region

In *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 5a), it is noted that after his initial studies at Se ra byes monastic college of the Se ra monastic university,<sup>23</sup> Bstan pa'i sgron me was asked by the second Dalai Lama to go to Monyul.<sup>24</sup> However, his initial study was more likely to have taken place in Bkra shis lhun po monasteries rather than Se ra monastery. It says in the *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 11) that "until the [*Me rag Lama*] Ngag dbang Blo gros rgya mtsho, the main doctrine lineage was primarily the tradition of Gtsang [Bkra shis lhun po]."<sup>25</sup> This led to observe that his visit to the Monyul region is likely to be after he became the "religious preceptor" of Bkra shis lhun po monastery. After being a "religious preceptor" at the Bkra shis lhun po, his return journey to native region was successful and full of activities also. As he was accompanied by *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun in his visit to the region,<sup>26</sup> the visit was more likely to be taken place later part of his life, where he was able to establish a number of religious institutions within a short period, in spite of his old age. However, the person, who was mentioned as a mere colleague in *Me rag mdzad rnam*, is identified as the seventh son of

*Jo bo* Dar rgyas or the youngest sibling of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8). The same text (2012: 8) further notes that Blo bzang stan pa'i sgron me along with *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun had taken novice vow from *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje and later both, Bstan pa'i sgron me and Blo bzang mkhas btsun went together to central Tibet. The same is quoted same in Sarkar (2006 [1980]; 1981) also.

So, who was *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun and *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje? It is not very likely that *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun was the seventh son of *Jo bo* Dar rgyas as mentioned in the *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8), because in all versions of the *Rgyal rigs*, the seventh child passed away in young age. Although, in *Rgyal rigs* I (1986 [1668]: 44), the child was nameless, whereas in *Rgyal rigs* II (1988 [1668]: 116), *Rgyal rigs* V (2012 [1668]: 35a), and Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 59) *Tha chung* was the name of the seventh child. So, if we agree with Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 97), he was either from a region called Gtsang or a distant relative of *Jo bo* Dar rgyas. Nevertheless, *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8) attributed *Gtsang pa* Blo bzang mkhas btsun with the foundation of *Rta gdung dgon pa* in upper Mthong leng and *Zhur chung* or *Khur cung dgon pa* in upper Rlung la. These monasteries are also acknowledged in Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 101) but the source is not mentioned. In *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 7a-b) all these monasteries are mentioned as being founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me. While in regards of *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje, according to *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 7), he was a disciple of the first Dalai Lama. The text further notes that based on an omen he founded the *Ar yag gdung* monastery while residing at the *Brag dkar* site of *O rgyan*, the *Padmasambhava's* cave in upper *Lha'u* village. The present *Brag dkar* monastery was founded by *Thugs dam pad dkar*<sup>27</sup> in a later period. Although, Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 96) doesn't reveal his sources, *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje is accredited to be the founder of the *Ar yag gdung* monastery. However, neither *Ye shes rtse mo* (2013 [1433-1510])<sup>28</sup> nor *Kun dga' rgyal mtshan* (2013 [1432-1506]),<sup>29</sup> the two biographers on the first Dalai Lama, mention *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje. His name is also not recorded in the *Rgyal rigs*. But in *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 5b), he was the teacher and colleague of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me and the disciple of the first Dalai Lama also. If any written texts on the founder of the *Mon drab* monastery at *Tsona*; *Sha'u Di khung* monastery at *Sha'u*; and *Che mchog* temple at *Dom tshang* pilgrim site become available in the near future, it is likely that more information on *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje can be recovered. These monasteries are mentioned in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 7) and were/are regarded to be founded by *Gtsang ston* Rol pa'i rdo rje, prior to his visits to the *Monyul* region.

While coming back to Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 5a) noted that he met *Gtsang ston Rol pa'i rdo rje* at Brag dkar. In consultation with *Gtsang ston Rol pa'i rdo rje*, who was elder than him as well as a teacher, they jointly established the Ar yag gdung monastery. The foundation of Ar yag gdung monastery by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me is also mentioned in all the versions of the *Rgyal rigs*, but has it spelled Ar rgya gdung. As mentioned above, in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 7) the monastery, Ar yag gdung is regarded to be built by *Gtsang ston Rol pa'i rdo rje*. The text further explains that it is rather Ar yag gdung, and not Ar rgya gdung. Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 96) has given the same account of *Dga' ba'i dpal ster*, whereas Sarkar (2006 [1980]: 6; 1981: 4) has not given any reference to his information, yet he too mentions Ariakdun [= Ar brgya gdung] being founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me. After that, *Me rag mdzad rnam* chronologically lists: Sla nga steng, Stag gdung, Mthong legs, Zhur chung, and Stag lung monasteries in the Monyul region and a monastery in Sakteng region, Trashigang district of eastern Bhutan were being founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me.<sup>30</sup> While in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8) only Sla nga steng, Gsang lam 'phel, Stag gdung, Stag lung and also a monastery called Ding sam were mentioned being founded in the "Eastern Mon" and says they are all founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me. Another monastery also being attributed to Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, which is identified only with the name of place, Sakteng in *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 6b), is recorded Bkra shis chos gling monastery in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8).<sup>31</sup> However, the latter text mentions that it was jointly founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me and *Gtsang pa Blo bzang mkhas mtsun*. Their relationship is described as teacher and disciple. However, both texts note the founder of Mthong legs and Zhur chung monasteries differently. As mentioned before, in *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 7) both the monasteries were credited to *Gtsang pa Blo bzang mkhas mtsun*, instead of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me as it is attributed in *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 6a). As quoted above, in *Rgyal rigs* (Shar) Stag lung, Me rag sag steng and Ar rgya gdung and other monasteries designated only by their location were mentioned as being founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me.

Thus, as discussed above, most information given in Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 96-101) come either from *Rgyal rigs*, *Me rag mdzad rnam* or *Dga' ba'i dpal ster*. But Nam shu'i monastery being founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me is not mentioned at all in any of the above sources. Moreover, Sarkar (2006 [1980]: 6) further stated that a monastery called Dga' ldan rtse gling in Me rag region of Trashigang district, Bhutan was also founded by Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me. But he didn't give any reference. In his *Tawang monastery* book, Sarkar (1981: 4) mentions that the monasteries of Gdung bsam (Dung sham) in Me rag and

Bkra shis brtse gling (Tashi Tselling) in Sakteng region of Trashigang district, Bhutan were established by *Rgyal sras* Bstan pa'i sgron me. This is a contradiction in Sarkar's own writing. However, it could be possible that Bstan pa'i sgron me did establish all these monasteries. Therefore, a better account of these monasteries can be narrated only, if a "manual book" (*ma deb*) of these above listed monasteries comes to light. And even then, further sources will be necessary to build the outline of the historical process and will provide information for unanswered part of this paper. Nevertheless, (G)sum pa, who was more famously known as Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me or *Rgyal sras* Bstan pa'i sgron me was well received by local people upon his perfection of Buddhist studies and realization in spirituality.

### **His late life and successor**

Based on Sarkar (2006 [1980]: 6), Aris (1986: 82) stated: "Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me is said to have died in the latter [Me rag] place at the age of ninety-nine." However, the *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 9b) mentions that "he passed at the age of ninety-seven," but the place is not recorded. While in regard of the lifetime of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, Aris (1988: 113) has given 1475-1542, which is exactly the same as of the second Dalai Lama's. Therefore, Aris's dating requires verification, because in 1986(: 82) he says he lived for 99 years and in 1988(: 113) that only for 67 years. The latter 67 years of lifespan given by Aris (1988: 113) is what corresponding to the life of the second the Dalai Lama. Beside that Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, as *Mtha' khob* Bstan pa'i sgron me or *Lha btsun* Blo bzang bstan pa ba is mentioned in the autobiography of the second Dalai Lama. This could mean that he might have passed away earlier or later than the second Dalai Lama. Not only that in the available biography, *Me rag mdzad rnam*, it notes he died at the age of 97, or 99 in Sarkar (2006 [1980]; 1981). However, Aris's dating of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me is followed by Huber (2008).

Although his activities were continued by his immediate disciple Blo bzang bstan pa'i 'od zer, Sarkar (2006 [1980]: 6-13) also mentions a sequence of reincarnations, where a present Lama is recorded as the ninth in the lineage. This differs from the available written sources, like the *Dga' ba'i dpal ster*, the *Me rag mdzad rnam* and some others. In one of the document, which was issued in 1679, the succession of Lamas (*bla rabs*) is noted; however, the successive Lamas are not necessarily always reincarnates.<sup>32</sup> Not only the *Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8) and *Rgyal sras sprul sku* (2009: 101-103) mentioned "nephew" (*dbon po*) or teacher-disciple relationship between the successive Lamas, this argument is reestablished in another document issued in the 1680, which was authorized by the fifth Dalai Lama, Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617-1682). This

document recorded “the successive uncle and nephews” (*khu dbon na rim*) and not of “reincarnations” (*sprul sku/sku skyes*). Moreover, the successive disciples of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me, like Blo bzang bstan pa’i ’od zer and his disciple Blo bzang bstan pa’i rgyal mtshan are solely mentioned in the *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* (2012: 7-12). There is not any information provided on the two immediate successors in the *Me rag mdzad rnam* and the *Rgyal rigs* texts. Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 101-103), Bstan ’dzin nor bu (2002: 242-250) and Sarkar (2006 [1980]; 1981) information are solely from the *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* or from oral tradition.

Though the 1680 edict illustrates that “the successive uncles and nephews of the *Dpa’ bo gdung pa chos rje*”<sup>33</sup> lamas had “upheld the Dge lugs teaching in the eastern region of Mon,” the title *Me rag Lama* is not applied to all the other Lamas or *Me rag Lama* was not used at all. Although, the *Me rag Lama* title is formally written only to the *Me rag Lama* Blo gros rgya mtsho, in *Me rag mdzam rnam* it is also applied to Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me, which means he was posthumously called *Me rag Lama*. But further studies on the title *Me rag Lama* will be the topic of another paper.

In local oral traditions, all the successive lamas are thought to belong to the *Dpa’ bo gdung pa* lineage. However, we know from the *Rgyal rigs* (1668), *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* (2012) and *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012), that Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me was from the *Ber mkhar* house, while the rest of the lamas were from *Dpa’ bo gdung pa* family, as mentioned in the 1680 and 1692 documents. This was reconfirmed by the *Dga’ ba’i dpal ster* (2012: 9-11) and the 1692 document. The document stated that “*Me rag [Lama]* Blo gros rgya mtsho [and] traced back his family lineage (*skya rtsa*) to *Dpa’ bo gdung pa*.”<sup>34</sup> In regards of the *Dpa’ bo gdung (ldpa’u gdung)* house, it is traced back to Bsod bzang, the second brother of Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me (*Rgyal rigs*, 1986: 31a), where the rest of his siblings, the eldest brother, Bkra shis dar rgyas continued the *Ber mkhar* house, and Byams mkhar house by Rgyal po dar; Shar nub house by Sangs rdo rje; and Sgreng mkhar house by Dgos cung in the Shar tsho valley, respectively.<sup>35</sup> This makes one notice how the spiritual leader of the region is connected to the secular rulers of the period, and how the secular rulers trace their descendants back to the Tibetan imperial period. Therefore, the uncle Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me was followed by his nephew-disciple, Blo bzang bstan pa’i ’od zer, who was likely to be the son of Bsod bzang, the first *Dpa’ bo gdung pa*. The present *Sde pa sku zhang pa* of *Ber mkhar* house and *Dpa’ bo gdung pa* Tashi Khando of *Dpa’ bo gdung pa* house in Kitpi village is the successive descendant. In *Rgyal rigs*, all of them were titled *Jo bo*. Blo bzang bstan pa’i sgron me first journey to the borderland of Assam and the subjugation of demons and demonesses, and his relation with a *Jo bo*



Sprang po dar and the other Sprang po dar, and his other activities will be discussed in an another paper.

### Conclusion

After a brief examination of the available sources on the life and activities of *Rgyal sras* Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me, we can establish that he made a great contribution to the development of Tibetan Buddhism, in particular the Dge lugs's discipline. We can also observe that a number of monasteries were established first in the "Eastern Mon" (Shar Mon) region, where present-day Tawang and West Kameng districts are located. However, it is difficult to identify in some case who was the main founder and the date when these monasteries were established. Yet it is confirmed from the autobiography of the second Dalai Lama and the *Rgyal rigs* texts that Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me was a historical person, who was a contemporary of the second Dalai Lama. The available sources let us to produce a somehow complete picture of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me and his activities, yet any further information in the future is highly welcome.

Several sources - like the *Rgyal rigs*, *Me rag mdzad rnam* and *Dga' ba'i dpal ster-* mention his pivotal role in founding numerous monasteries, there is not any indication, where he was scholarly active during this period. This makes one to contemplate on his background. Maybe he really was the "religious teacher/preceptor" of the Bkra shis lhun po monastery. It is difficult to rule out shortcomings or mistakes in his life, merely because there aren't enough sources. Hopefully in the future with the help of new sources we will be able to learn more on the life and activities of Bstan pa'i sgron me.

### Notes

1. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Per K. Soerensen, Kerstin Grothmann and Zsoka Gelle for suggestion and critical editing of this paper.
2. Cuevas (2006) uses this term in his article titled "Some reflections on the periodization of Tibetan history," which is well received in the Tibetan studies discipline against the common usage of ancient, medieval and modern period categorization.
3. See the last sub-section "*His late life and successor*" of this paper.
4. Blo bzang bstan pa'i 'od zer, Blo bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan and Blo gros rgya mtsho - Me rag bla ma were recorded being the successive Lamas after Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me.
5. The text's full title is *Rje 'bangs kyi rigs rus 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me bzhugs so*.

6. The text's full title is *Me rag bla ma bstan pa'i sgron me yi mdzad rnam dang dgon gnas chags tshugs/ a sam rgyal po nas khral dang sa cha dbang ba'i 'dzin yig mdor bsodus bzhugs so*.
7. The text's full name is *Mon phyogs 'dzin ma'i char zhwa ser gyi ring lugs kyi bstan pa ji ltar dar ba'i lo rgyus dga' ba'i dpal ster ma bzhugs so*.
8. There are a number of different publications of the *Rgyal rigs* text. The five different publications including Aris's (1986) and Beijing's (1988), which I have quoted here, are slightly different to each other in context or information. Out of this five, I have used the one provided by Aris (1986) and the 1988 Beijing edition.
9. See Ardussi's (2007) preliminary studies on Lha sras Gtsang ma, the source of trace to the *Jo bo* or *Rje* lineage in the Monyul region and the text *Rgyal rigs*.
10. See Aris (1979: 94) short information on the author Ngag dbang: "nothing is known about the author beyond the meagre information provided in the colophons to his two works, but reading between the lines it is apparent that he was born a member of the Byar clan descending from Gtsang-ma's grandson, Gong-dkar-rgyal. He was probably admitted as 'monk-levy' (btsun-khral) to the state monastery housed in Bkra-shis-sgang rdzong." Read further from 94-97. On *Byar* clan in *Rgyal rigs* (1668: 24a-25b).
11. Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 96-101) has literally copied same biography of Blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me from *Me rag mdzad rnam*. Therefore, his work is not quoted exclusively here.
12. In Tibetan, grub thob thang stong rgyal po bsod snyoms la byon pa nang du gdan drangs nas bsnyen bkur phun sum tshogs par mdzad cing/ 'bras chang tshim par drangs pa gsol ba'i rjes la 'bras chang gis ka' pa li bkang nas grub thob kyi nam mkha' la 'phangs pas/ chang ma 'bor bar grub thob kyi phyag la babs pa jo bo dar rgyas la gnang ste/ chang 'thung gang thub gyis dang rten 'brel gyi rtags khyad par can yong gsungs pas/ jo bo dar rgyas kyis chang ka' pa li drung rdzogs par 'thung/ gcig las phye kha lus pa dang grub thob kyi zhal nas/ khyod la bu bdun yong ba 'dug ste gcig gis phan mi thog/ bu drug pa las gcig sa bcu' i byang chub sems dpa' bshad grub kyi bstan pa 'dzin zhing sems can gyi 'gro don dpag tu med pa zhid 'ong ba 'dug gsungs nas/ ka' pa li chang gi bkang nas/ 'o jo bo chen po ka' pa li 'di ni mkha' 'gro ma 'gro ba bzang mo' i dbu thod yin pas/ shin tu 'gangs che khyod la dad pa' i rten du bzhag go gsungs nas gnang (*Rgyal rigs*, 1986: 29ba-31b). The English translation is rendered from Aris (1986: 45).
13. Stearns's (2007) work on Thang stong rgyal po included all the available biographies on Thang stong rgyal po. There were at least three biographers,



who were direct-disciples of Thang stong rgyal po. Among them, Streams regards Dkon mchog dpal bzang as the first biographer and his work was later on, enlarged by Bde ba bzang po. Dkon mchog dpal bzang work is likely to be “written after 1485, but before 1517.” Bde ba bzang po was considered to be a disciple of Thang stong rgyal po in his late age. Shes rab dpal ldan was the third biographer. His work is considered to be extended and rewritten by Kun dga' bsod nams grags pa dpal bzang, the son of Shes rab dpal ldan. Lastly, it was 'Gyur med bde chen (1540-1615), who had compiled all the biographies and published a coherent story in 1609. For details, refer Stearns (2007: 2-11).

14. In Tibetan, 'dir yang 'phros las/ la 'og yul gsum rgyal rigs jo bo rnams kyi brgyud khungs kyang cung zad brjod par bya'o/ de las yang rgyas pa ni jo bo na rim gyis blon 'bangs la dbang sgyur zhing rgyal sa bzung nas mdzad khyon rlabs chen gyis stobs mgna' thang che bar byung ba'i gleng gтам rgyas pa ni/ jo bo sras brgyud mkhyen dpyod che ba rnams kyi phyag gi deb ther yig cha la gsal bas 'dir ma bkod/ (*Rgyal rigs*, 1986: 28b).
15. In Tibetan, 'di phyogs su yang dge lugs kyi bstan pa dar tshul/ dgong ba'i sbyin bdag sus byas yong snyam thugs dam brtags pa mdzad gin 'byon pas/ de dus jo bo rus pa mkhar pa gra rgyas che dus kho pa rje 'bangs dpon g.yog 'khor bcas lto za chang 'thung byed pa'i gral du sgrub thob kyi 'byon nas rten 'brel gyi chos nyid rtags phyir du/ rnal 'byor pa bdag la chang gcig dgos zhes ka pa li bzed pas kho pa rnams kyi sprang po rnal 'byor pa ga nas yin mi shes pa'i mi thod 'khyer ba de tshur ma yong phar song zer nas phyir 'bud byas [de ru] rten 'brel ma 'grig par/ de nas ber mkhar du 'byon pas (*Me rag mdzad rnam*, 2012: 2b-3b)
16. *Rgyal rigs* (1986: 30a) noted queen U sen from Ram geng ra, however, we don't know who this queen U sen was and yet to be identified the place, Ram geng ra.
17. In Tibetan, jo bo gsum pas thams cad mkhyen pa dge 'dun rgya mtsho dpal bzang pol as/ rab tu byung zhing mdo sngags la sbyangs pa mdzad cing phul du phyin pas/ mtshan yang blo bzang bstan pa'i sgron me gsol nas bshad sgrub kyi bstan pa 'dzin zhing/ grub thob kyi spyod pa lta bus/ shar stag lung/ me rag sag stengs/ ar rgya gdung la sogs par dgon gnas mang po btab cing 'gro don rgyas par byung ba/ (*Rgyal rigs*, 1986: 30b)
18. See details in *Rgyal rigs* (1986: 30b), *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 4a), and *Dga'i ba'i dpal ster* (2012: 8).
19. Read further on Lha rgyal ri in Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1993 [1617-1682]: V. 19) and the translation of the 5th Dalai Lama's *A History of Tibet* by Ahmad (2008: 147-8). For present generation of the Lha rgyal ri, see Rnam

rgyal rgya mtsho (1999) Bod rje chos rgyal gyi gdung rgyud sde dpon lha rgya rig dung rabs rin chen phreng ba

20. In Tibetan, lha rgya ri bas gdan drangs ae phyogs su sleb pa la mtha' 'khob bstan pa'i sgron me slob dpon chos dpal ba dpon slob rnam kyis dwags po phyogs su dgos pa'i gdan 'dren nan chen byung ba la brten spur ltang la la byas thog mar dwags po la gong sde brgyad du grags par slebs (Dge 'dun rgya mtsho, 1979 [1474-1542]: 36a).
21. In Tibetan, chos rje lha btsun blo bzang bstan pa ba mthun grub kyis (slob dpon) bsko bzhag byas (Dge 'dun rgya mtsho, 1979 [1474-1542]: 55a). Read further in English about the second Dalai Lama in Mullin, G. (2005).
22. The term is often used in the *Rgyal rigs* text, and it extended from eastern Bhutan to the present day - Monyul region: the district of Tawang and West Kameng districts in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.
23. See further on Se ra monastery by Cabezon (2008), <http://www.thlib.org/places/monasteries/sera>
24. Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009: 97) followed the *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 5a).
25. In Tibetan, ngag dbang blo gros rgya mtsho'i bar chos rgyun gtsang lugs gtso bor mdzad pa yin/ (*Dga' ba'i dpal ster*, 2012: 11).
26. See *Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012: 5a).
27. He was son of Bstan pa'i nyi ma (1567-1619), a 'Brug pa bka' brgyud practitioner in the late 16th century. The son of Thugs dam pad dkar was Lama Chos skyong, the step- brother of Lama Rab rgyas, who joined the Bhutanese to fight against Tibetan forces in the 1660s-70s. The sons of Lama Chos skyong were 'Brug Phun tshogs and Dpon Rdo rje. They were born at Brag dkar; however, they moved to eastern Bhutan during or after the war. See Aris (2009: 117) for details.
28. Refer the link for further details on Ye shes rtse mo (TBRC P48).
29. Refer the link for further details on Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (TBRC P4271).
30. Only Stag lung rdzong dgon pa, i.e. Taklung [dzong] Gonpa, which is once the resident of Rtag lung rdzong dpon, one of the two Rdzong dpon appointed jointly by the Mtsho sna rdzong dpon and the "Council of Six" (drug sbel) at the Tawang monastery is detailed in "an account of the Taklung Gonpa" written by Dondrup (1988).
31. Sarkar (2006 [1980]: 7) noted Tashi Tselling monastery.
32. Email discussion with Prof. Dr. Samten Karmay on 4th of January 2013.
33. In Tibetan, dpa' bo gdung pa chos rje khu dbon na rim bzhin (Aris, 1980: 13).
34. In Tibetan, me rag blo gros rgya mtsho'i skya rtsa dpa' bo gdung pa/.

35. See the detail family descendants in Rgyal rigs (1668: 31a).

## References

- Ahmad, Zahiruddin (2008). *“The Song of the Queen of Spring or A Histor of Tibet by Ngag dbang blo bzung rgya mtsho, fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet,”* revised translation by Zahiruddin Ahmed, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture & Aditya Prakashan [1643]
- . (2007). “A Preliminary Investigation of Bhutanese Castle Ruins and Caves Associated with Lha sras gtsang ma,” in: John A. Ardussi & F. Pommaret (eds), *Bhutan: Traditions and Changes, PIATS 2003: Tibetan Studies: Proceeding of the Tenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies*, Oxford, 2003 (5), Leiden, Boston: Brill: 5-26
- . (2007a). “Notes on the Rgyal rigs of Ngawang and the Clan History of Eastern Bhutan and Shar Mon,” in: Ramon Prats (ed), *The Pandita and the Siddha- Tibetan Studies in Honour of E. Gene Smith*. Dharamshala: Amnye Machen Institute
- . (2009). “Historical Introduction” to the *Sources for the History of Bhutan, Arbeitskreis fur Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien: Wien* (Vienna). Reprinted by Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publication
- Ardussi, John (2004). “Formation of the State of Bhutan (’Brug gzhung) in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and its Tibetan Antecedents,” in: the *Journal of Bhutan Studies*, 11: 10-32
- Aris, Michael (1980). “Notes on the History of the Mon-yul Corridor,” in: M. Aris & A. S. Sue kyi (eds) *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*, Westminster: Aris Phillips
- . (1986). *Sources for the History of Bhutan, Arbeitskreis fur Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien: Wien* (Vienna). Republished in 2009, with a “Historical Introduction” by John Ardussi, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publication
- . (1988). *Hidden Treasures and Secret Lives: A Study of Pemalingpa (1450-1521) the Sixth Dalai Lama (1683-1706)*, Indian Institute of Advance Study (Shimla), Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas
- Blo bzung rgya mtsho (the 5<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama) (1980). “Rgyal mchog lnga pa chen pos bstsal ba’i she bam gyi zhal zhu she med dge” (the 5<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama’s Edict of 1680), in: Michael Aris (1980) “Notes on the History of the Mon-yul Corridor,” in: *Tibetan Studies in Honour of Hugh Richardson*, Michael Aris & Sue kyi AS (eds.), Westminster: Aris Phillips [1680]

- (1993 [1617-1682]). *Gangs can yul gyi sa la spyod pa'i mtho ris kyi rgyal blon gtso bor brjod pa'i deb ther rdzogs ldan gzhon nu'i dga' ston dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*, V. 19: ff. 56 (the Collected Works (gsung 'bum) of V Dalai Lama, Vols. 25), Gangtok: Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology. See English translation by Zahiruddin Ahmad (2008), "*the Song of the Queen of Spring or A Histor of Tibet by Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet*," revised translation by Zahiruddin Ahmed, New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture & Aditya Prakashan [1643]
- Bstan 'dzin chos rgyal (1759). *Lho'i chos 'byung bstan pa rin po che'i 'phro mthud 'jam mgon smon mtha'i 'phreng ba zhes by aba/ gtso bor skyabs mgon rin po che rgyal sras ngag dbang rnam rgyal gyi rnam thar kun gyi go bde gsal bar bkod pa* (A religious history of Bhutan [Southern]), Blockprint 151 ff. [1731-59] (1701-67)
- Bstan 'dzin nor bu (2002). *Sbas yul skyid mo ljongs kyi chos 'byung bzhugs so*, Bomdila: Buddhist Culture Preservation Society
- Cuevas, Bryan (2006). "Some Reflections on the Periodization of Tibetan History," in: *Revue d'Etudes Tibetaines*, 10 (April): 44-55. Accessed: 07.01.2013 [http://www.dspace.cam.ac.uk/bitstream/1810/229243/2/ret\\_10\\_02.pdf](http://www.dspace.cam.ac.uk/bitstream/1810/229243/2/ret_10_02.pdf)
- Dga' ba'i dpal ster* (2012). *Mon phyogs 'dzin ma'i char zhwa ser gyi ring lugs kyi [x] bstan pa ji ltar [(di) 'di ltar] dar ba'i lo rgyus dga' ba'i dpal ster ma bzhugs so*, ff. 15. Recopied handwritten
- Dge 'dun rgya mtsho (1979 [1475-1542]). *Rje btsun thams cad mkhyen pa'i gsung 'bum thor bu las rje nyid kyi rnam thar bzhugs so*, V. 1 ff. (pp. 133), TBRC: W26075
- Dge dun rin chen (1972). *Dpal ldan 'brug pa'i gdul zhing lho phyogs nags mo'i ljongs kyi chos 'byung blo gsar rna ba'i rgyan* (Religious History of Bhutan), Bhutan
- Dondrup, Richen (1988). "An Account of the Taklung Gonpa," in: *RESARUN* 14: 1-2 (Spring & Winter): 71-74
- Gtsang mkhan chen*, 'Jam dbyangs rgya mtsho (1610-1684). *Dpal 'brug pa rin po che ngag dbang bstan 'dzin rnam rgyal gyi rnam par thar pa rgyas pa chos kyi sprin chen po'i dbyangs* (extended biography of Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal (1594-1651), 6 vols. (last vol. cha is a biography of Tshe dbang bstan 'dzin, alias Rta mgrin rgyal mtshan 1574-1643)

- 'Gyur med bde chen (2007 [1609]). *Dpal grub pa'i dbang phyug chen pol cags zam pa thang stong rgyal po'i rnam par thar pa ngo tshar kun gsal me long gsar pa*. Translated in English by Cyrus Stearns (2007), *King of the Empty Plain: the Tibetan Iron-bridge builder Thangtong Gyalpo*, Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications
- Huber, Toni (2008). *The Holy Land Reborn: Pilgrimage & the Tibetan Reinvention of Buddhist India*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Karmay, Samten (1998). *The Arrow and the Spindle. Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*, Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point
- Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (2013 [1432-1506]). *Bla ma thams cad mkhyen pa paN chen dge 'dun grub pa'i rnam thar ngo mtshar mdzad pa bcu gnyis pa*, V. 6, 25 ff. (pp. 129-178), TBRC: W24769
- Lama, Tashi (1999). *The Monpas of Tawang: A Profile*, Itanagar: Himalayan Publishers
- Me rag mdzad rnam* (2012). *Me rag bla ma bstan pa'i sgron me yi mdzad rnam* [rnam] *dang dgon gnas chags tshul/ a sam rgyal po nas khral dang sa cha dbang ba'i 'dzin yig dor 'dus* [mdor bsdu] *bzhugs so* [the biography of the first Me rag Lama], ff. 35. Recopied handwritten
- Mullin, G. (2005). *Second Dalai Lama, His Life and Teachings*, Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publ.
- Norbu, Tsewang (2008). *The Monpas of Tawang: Arunachal Pradesh*, Itanagar: Department of Cultural Affairs, Directorate of Research, Government of Arunachal Pradesh
- Rgyal rigs I* (1986 [1668]). *Sa skyong rgyal po'i gdung khungs dang 'bangs kyi mi rabs chad tshul nges par gsal ba'i sgron me* (*Rgyal rigs 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me*, author: Ngag dbang [byar bande Wagindra]) [The Lamp which Illuminates with Certainty the Origins of Generations of 'Earth-Protecting' Kings and the Manner in which Generations of Subjects Came into Being is contained], in: Michael Aris (ed), *Sources for the History of Bhutan*, Wien: Arbeitskreis fur Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien: 11-85
- Rgyal rigs II* (1988 [1668]). "Rje 'bangs rnam kyi rigs rus kyi 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me (mon chos 'byung) zhes bya ba bzhugs so," in: Nga phod Ngag dbang 'jigs med (ed) *Bod kyi lo rgyus rig gnas dpyad gzhi'i rgyu cha bdams bsgrigs* (Selected Research Materials for Tibetan History and Culture: 10), Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang: 87-130
- Rgyal rigs III* (2011 [1668]). "Rje 'bangs rnam kyi rigs rus kyi 'byung khungs gsal ba'i sgron me zhes bya ba bzhugs so," recopied handwritten of Aou tsa, Dirang, West Kameng, 85 ff.

- Rgyal rigs* IV (2011a [1668]). “*Rgyal rigs byung khungs gsal ba’i sgron me bzugs so*,” recopied handwritten of Pema Tashi Trangpodar, Murshing, West Kameng: 95 ff.
- Rgyal rigs* V (2012 [1668]). “*Gangs can bod du rje rgyal gnya’ khri btsan, srong btsan sgam po khri srong lde’u btsan dang, lho phyogs mon du lha sras gtsang ma zhes, rnam par sprul pa’i skyes mchog de rnams kyi, gong ma rje yi gdung rabs ’byung khungs dang, ’og ma ’bangs kyi mi rabs mched tsul sogs, nges par gsal ba’i sgron me bzugs so*,” recopied handwritten copy of Rgyal sras sprul sku, Tawang: 50 ff.
- Rgyal sras sprul sku (2009). *Rta wang dgon pa’i lo rgyus mon yul gsal ba’i me long (The Clear Mirror of Monyul (Arunachal Pradesh); A History of Tawang Monastery* [1991]), A myes rma chen bod kyi rig gzhung zhib ’jug khang nas spar skrun zhus pa’o, Dharamshala: Amnye Machen Institute
- Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1989 [1653-1705]). *Thams cad mkhyen pa blo bzang rin chen tshang dbyangs rgya mtsho’i thun mong phyi rnam par thar pa du ku la’i phro mthud rab gsal gser gyi snye ma (du ka la’i kha skong/ gser gyi snye ma)*, Lhasa: Bod ljong mi rigs dpe sprun khang
- . (2005). *Bai ’d’ur dkar po las dris lan ’khrul snang g’ya’ sel ’zes bya ba’i glegs bam*, Beijing: Khrung go’i bod rig pa dge skrun khang
- Sarkar, Niranjana (2006 [1980]). *Buddhism among the Monpas & the Sherdukpens*, Directorate of Research, Itanagar: Government of Arunachal Pradesh
- . (1981). *Tawang Monastery*, Director of Information and Public Relations, Shillong: Government of Arunachal Pradesh
- Shakabpa, W. (1967). *Political History of Tibet*, Yale: Yale University Press
- . (1976). *Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*, Vols. 2, Kalimpong: Shakabpa House
- . (2010). *One Hundred Thousand Moons, an Advanced Political History of Tibet*, (trans) D. F. Maher, Vols. 2, Leiden/ Boston: Brill
- Stearns, Cyrus (2007). *King of the Empty Plain: the Tibetan Iron-bridge builder Thangtong Gyalpo*, New York: Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications
- Ye shes rtse mo (2013 [1433-1510]). *Rje thams cad mkhyen pa dge ’dun grub pa dpal bzang po’i rnam thar ngo mtshar rmad byung nor bu’i ’phreng ba*, V. 6, 64 ff. (pp. 1-128), TBRC: W24769