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## gSang phu ne' u thog : Its Contribution to the Re-establishment and Development of Tibetan Buddhism in the Later Diffusion (phyi dar) Period

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# gSang phu ne'u thog

— Its Contribution to the Re-establishment and Development  
of Tibetan Buddhism in the Later Diffusion (*phyi dar*) Period —<sup>1</sup>

Fumihito Nishizawa

University of Tokyo

## Introduction

gSang phu ne'u thog, established in 1073<sup>2</sup> by rNgog legs pa'i shes rab (11c.), one of the three main disciples of Atiśa (982–1054), was one of the most influential scholastic monasteries in Tibet and played a leading role in re-establishing and developing the Buddhist tradition in the Later Diffusion (*phyi dar*) period. After King Glang dar ma (?–842) was assassinated in 842, the Tibetan Buddhist saṃgha lost its royal donors, who had been supporting them socially and economically for about a century, and was dissolved to a drastic extent in Central Tibet. Thereafter the Buddhist tradition went into decline for nearly one century. In the late 11th century<sup>3</sup> a new movement for restoring the Buddhist tradition started almost simultaneously in eastern and western Tibet (Khams and mNga' ris) through a movement to restore the Buddhist ordination system. In response to this movement, Byang chub 'od (11c.), the king of mNga' ris, invited the great Indian scholar Atiśa from Vikramaśīla monastery. It was 1042 when Atiśa arrived in Tibet. The Tibetan Buddhist saṃgha was gradually re-established through the great efforts of Atiśa and his Tibetan followers during his 13-year stay in Tibet. The bKa' gdam pa school was founded by 'Brom ston rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas (1004/5–1064), one of Atiśa's three main disciples, under the spiritual influence of his master Atiśa. Rwa sgreng dgon pa, established by 'Brom ston pa in 1057, was the first monastery of the

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is an updated English version of Nishizawa 2012c (Japanese), which was further based on a part of my doctoral dissertation (Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 94–317).

<sup>2</sup> Three different interpretations of the construction date of gSang phu ne'u thog are traditionally known: the years *sa phag* (1059), *lcags phag* (1071), and *chu glang* (1073). L. van der Kuijp introduced these interpretations based on the *Tshe tan bstan rtsis* (Kuijp 1987: 106). Among these, the year *chu glang* (1073), which is given in the *Deb sngon* (p. 490.6) and *mKhas pa'i dga'ston* (p. 724.10), seems to be predominant, although it is not definitive. The construction of this monastery seems to have been carried out in two stages. Initially it was constructed in Brag nag as a small temple, and later it was reconstructed in Ne'u thog/ Ne tho. Cf. *Yar lung jo bo chos 'byung*, p. 126.5-11; *Deb sngon*, p. 392.17-19; *mKhas pa'i dga'ston*, p. 724.9. This may have led to the different interpretations regarding the date of its construction. For further details regarding this issue, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 119f.

<sup>3</sup> There are many different interpretations about when the Later Diffusion commenced. For details, see Kawagoe 2004: 144–149.

bKa' gdams pa. However, it was gSang phu ne'u thog<sup>4</sup> that became the most important and influential center of Buddhist studies.

At this monastery, the person who laid the firm foundations of non-tantric Buddhist studies by introducing new Buddhist lineages such as the “Five Treatises of Maitreya” (Byams chos sde lnga), the Madhyamaka philosophy of the Svātantrika (dBu ma rang rgyud pa) line, Buddhist logic (*pramāṇa*), and so forth from India and Nepal was rNgog lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), a nephew of the founder of gSang phu ne'u thog. Thanks to his energetic activities in translation, lecturing and writing, gSang phu ne'u thog was qualified to become the most important center of Buddhist studies in Tibet, with its doors open to different sects, not just the bKa' gdams pa. We refer to the entire scholastic tradition, the foundations of which were laid by rNgog lo tsā ba and which was transmitted not only at gSang phu ne'u thog but also in all its branches, as “gSang phu scholasticism.”

The detailed content of gSang phu scholasticism and its historical development were hidden for a long time owing to a lack of relevant documents. Fortunately this situation was dramatically improved by the recent publication of the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum* (part 1, 2006; part 2, 2007; part 3, 2009), which contains many rare and precious texts by gSang phu scholars such as rNgog lo tsā ba, Phya pa chos kyi seng ge, and so on. This paper aims to provide a brief survey of the historical development of gSang phu scholasticism and to shed light on the great contribution of gSang phu ne'u thog to the re-establishment and development of Buddhist studies in the Later Diffusion period.

### Historical documents of gSang phu ne'u thog

The following historical documents are important for the study of the history of gSang phu ne'u thog and its scholasticism<sup>5</sup>:

1. *Deb ther dmar po* [D. 1346-1363; A. Tshal pa kun dga' rdo rje (1309–1364)]

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<sup>4</sup> In general, gSang phu ne'u thog and its scholars are considered to belong to the bKa' gdams pa by modern scholars. Cf. Yamaguchi 1982: 72; Kuijp 1987: 103; Everding 2009: 143, etc. Judging from the fact that the *bKa' gdams gsum 'bum* contains many works of the gSang phu ba such as rNgog lo tsā ba, Phya pa chos kyi seng ge, and so forth, its editors seem to have held the same view. Nevertheless, strictly speaking, there is no definitive evidence to support this view. As far as I know, Hadano Hakuyū was the only person to explicitly state that gSang phu ne'u thog does not belong to the bKa' gdams pa. Cf. Hadano 1965: 296. I too am of the same view, although for different reasons. According to my interpretation, gSang phu ne'u thog did not belong to any sect, at least not in the early period, although it was closely related to the bKa' gdams pa. For details, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 95–104; 2013a.

<sup>5</sup> For detailed information on the following documents, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 104–119.

2. *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung* [D. 1376; A. Yar lung jo bo Shākya rin chen sde]
  3. *rGya bod yig tshang* [D. 1434; A. sTag tshang rdzong pa dPal 'byor rgyal mtsho]
  4. *Deb ther sngon po* [D. 1476; A. 'Gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481)]
  5. *rNgog rnam thar* [D. 1479; A. Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507)]
  6. *bKa'gdams rin po che'i chos 'byung* [D. 1484; A. bSod nams lha'i dbang po (1423–1496)]
  7. *bKa'gdams gsal sgron* [D. 1494; A. Las chen Kun dga' rgyal mtshan]
  8. *Tshad ma'i byung tshul* [D. 1501; A. Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507)]
  9. *dBu ma'i byung tshul* [D. ?; A. Shākya mchog ldan (1428–1507)]
  10. *bKa'gdams gsar rnying* [D. 1529; A. Paṅ chen bsod nams grags pa (1478–1554)]
  11. *mKhas pa'i dga'ston* [D. 1564; A. dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566)]
  12. *Mang thos bstan rtsis* [D. 1566; A. Mang thos klu sgrub rgya mtsho (1523–1594–?)]
  13. *gSang phu gsal ba'i me long* [D. ca. 1600; A. Rin chen 'byor ldan (ca. 1550–1630), supplemented by Byams pa kun dga' 'byung gnas]
  14. *bKa'gdams ngo mtshar rgya mtsho* [D. 1634; A. A mes Ngag dbang kun dga' bsod nams grags pa rgya mtsho (1597–1641)]
  15. *Vaiḍūrya ser po* [D. 1698; A. sDe srid sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705)]
- Abbr.: D. = Date of composition; A. = Author.

Among these, the *Deb ther dmar po* and *Deb ther sngon po* should be the most highly regarded, for the former contains one of the oldest documents on the history of gSang phu ne'u thog (cf. *Deb dmar*: 66.13-73.6), while the latter contains more detailed information on its history and especially its scholasticism (cf. *Deb sngon*: 391.19-415.13). More noteworthy is that, according to my investigations, these two documents give different explanations of the process of the split of the monastery into Gling stod and Gling smad, and this results in gaps of two generations in the following abbatial lines of succession of these two colleges.<sup>6</sup> From this point of view, the above historical documents can be classified into two groups<sup>7</sup>:

<sup>6</sup> On the abbatial succession of gSang phu ne'u thog, see Kuijper 1987 and Onoda 1989a. However, these two studies give no insights into this significant point in the chronology of gSang phu ne'u thog. On the different explanations in the *Deb dmar* and *Deb sngon* regarding the process of the split of gSang phu ne'u thog, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 228–232.

<sup>7</sup> Onoda 1983a provides the abbatial list of gSang phu ne'u thog, including that of Gling stod and Gling

1. *Deb dmar* line: *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung, bKa' gdams rin po che'i chos 'byung, mKhas pa'i dga'ston*
2. *Deb sngon* line: *gSang phu gsal ba'i me long, Vaiḍūrya ser po*

The *Deb dmar* and *Deb sngon* seem to be the source documents of the other historical documents about gSang phu ne'u thog.

The *gSang phu gsal ba'i me long* is the only document among the above documents that deals in particular with the history of gSang phu ne'u thog. In general, chronicles specifically about gSang phu ne'u thog are very rare.<sup>8</sup> In this sense, this work is also valuable.

### Related studies by modern scholars

As for related studies by modern scholars on the history of gSang phu ne'u thog and its scholasticism, Leonard van der Kuijp (1987) and Onoda Shunzō (1989a, 1990) have presented lists of abbots of gSang phu ne'u thog with brief surveys of this monastery. Karl-Heinz Everding (2009) has discussed its historical development with a special focus on the thirteen *grwa tshang* (“Grwa (sic) tshang bcu gsum”). A series of pioneering studies on the bKa' gdams pa, including gSang phu scholasticism, by Hadano Hakuyū (1954ab, 1955, 1956, 1965, 1966, 1968), although published during the 1950s-1960s, has still not lost its academic value and needs to be re-evaluated.

As for studies on specific gSang phu scholars such as rNgog lo tsā ba, Phya pa chos kyi seng ge, and their followers, an increasing number of studies are gradually being published, especially since the publication of the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum*, by, for example, Helmut Tauscher (1999, 2010), Pascale Hugon (2008, 2009, 2011), Kanō Kazuo (2007, 2008, 2010) and so on.<sup>9</sup>

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smad, mainly on the basis of the *gSang phu gsal ba'i me long* with reference to several other sources. For a more comprehensive abbatial list based on the *Deb dmar*, *Deb sngon*, *Yar lung jo bo'i chos 'byung*, *bKa' gdams rin po che'i chos 'byung*, *mKhas pa'i dga'ston*, *gSang phu gsal sgron*, and *Vaiḍūrya ser po* with reference to other relevant sources, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 232–238.

<sup>8</sup> In bSod nams don grub, *Bod kyi lo rgyus dpe tho* (Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe skrun khang, 2000): 398, the following two historical documents of gSang phu ne'u thog are recorded:

1. no. 2017: Ngag dbang gzhon nu bstan pa'i nyi ma (Nyi thang sprul sku), *gSang phu'i gdan rabs dang skyes chen dam pa'i rnam thar brjod pa pad dkar chen po*.
2. no. 2018: Nyi thang sman rgyal pa (alias Ngag dbang gzhon nu bstan pa'i nyi ma?), *gSang phu gdan rabs*.

According to the editor, these two texts may be identical. The former is referred to in the *Dung dkar tshig mdzod*: 2094, and seems to be extant, although I unfortunately have no access to it. Kuijp 1987: 110, and Onoda 1989: 204, also mention this text.

<sup>9</sup> At present, the most comprehensive and detailed study of the history of gSang phu ne'u thog, including its branches and its scholasticism, is probably my doctoral dissertation (Nishizawa 2011b), vol. 1: 94–317. *Ibid.*, vol. 3: 1–212 contains a critical edition of Phya pa's *Tshad ma yid kyi mun sel* (only chaps. I, II (latter

These studies, however, seem to lack a comprehensive perspective on the historical development of gSang phu scholasticism. Therefore, what we first need to do is to establish a framework for its historical development, even if it is only tentative.

### Brief survey of the history of gSang phu scholasticism

First, I propose to posit the following four stages in the historical development of gSang phu scholasticism.<sup>10</sup>

- I. The period of the formation of gSang phu scholasticism [end of 11c. to first half of 12c.]
- II. The period of its development [middle of 12c. to 13c.]
- III. The period of its diffusion [13c. to 15c.]
- IV. The period of its decline [16c. and later]

The characteristics of these four stages are as follows.

**Stage I: The period of the formation of gSang phu scholasticism [end of 11c. to first half of 12c.]**

The period of the formation of gSang phu scholasticism was the period in which the foundations of gSang phu scholasticism were established by rNgog lo tsā ba and his direct disciples, especially the so-called “four main disciples (*sras kyi thu bo bzhi*)” — (1) Zhang tshes spong ba chos kyi bla ma, (2) Gro lung pa blo gros ’byung gnas, (3) ’Bre shes rab ’bar, and (4) Khyung rin chen grags — around the end of the 11th century to the first half of the 12th century.

After a sojourn of 17 years in India, rNgog lo tsā ba returned to Tibet in 1092 and laid the foundations of gSang phu scholasticism by introducing many lineages of non-tantric Buddhism to gSang phu monastery. As for the lineages introduced by rNgog lo tsā ba, Shākya mchog ldan gives the following explanation in his biography of rNgog lo tsā ba:

In brief, there are no other scholastic lineages (*bshad brgyud*) of the “Five Treatises of Maitreya” (Byams chos sde lnga), the three treatises of the

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part), and III of 5 chapters) and an annotated translation of the latter part of chap. II, whose main subject is the *pramāṇa* theory. A series of my studies on Phya pa have been published; see Nishizawa 2010, 2011ab, 2012ab, 2013b.

<sup>10</sup> This proposal was presented in Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 120–122.

Svātantrika-madhyamaka School (dBU ma rang rgyud pa) and *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*Tshad ma rnam par nges pa*) that were not based on the lineages of the Great Translator (Lo chen, i.e., rNgog lo tsā ba). Although the studies of the Vinaya and Abhidharma had spread before the Great Translator appeared, no one knew how to explain the presentation of the refutation [of other’s doctrine] and the establishment [of one’s own doctrine] (*dgag sgrub kyi rnam par bzhag pa*) [on the subject of the Vinaya and Abhidharma] derived from the logical way in accordance with Dharmakīrti’s texts.<sup>11</sup>

Here Shākya mchog ldan enumerates the three above-mentioned lineages as having been newly introduced from India by rNgog lo tsā ba. In addition, rNgog lo tsā ba introduced the lineages of the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and so on, called “sPyod phyogs” in Tibetan. These four lineages are regarded as the main subjects of gSang phu scholasticism.<sup>12</sup>

1. Five Treatises of Maitreya (Byams chos sde lnga) [including Prajñāpāramitā treatises (Phar phyin) based on the *Abhisamayālamkāra*].
2. Three treatises of the Svātantrika-madhyamaka school (dBU ma rang rgyud pa), namely, (1) *Satyadvayavibhaṅga* by Jñānagarbha, (2) *Madhyamakālamkāra* by Śāntarakṣita, and (3) *Madhyamakāloka* by Kamalaśīla (dBU ma shar gsum / Rang rgyud shar gsum).
3. *Pramāṇaviniścaya* [or more widely Dharmakīrti’s seven treatises on logic (Tshad ma sde bdun)].
4. *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣāsamuccaya* of Śāntideva.

By translating these treatises into Tibetan if not yet translated, revising them if necessary, composing commentaries on them, and expounding them at gSang phu

<sup>11</sup> *rNgog rnam thar*: 455.1f./7a1f: mdoṅ na Lo chen gyi bshad srol la rag ma las pa’i Byams chos lnga dang/ Rang [b]rgyud shar pa’i bstan bcos gsum dang/ *Tshad ma rnam par nges pa* rnam kyi bshad srol gzhan nas brgyud pa med cing/ Lo chen ma byong pa’i gong na/ ’dul ba dang/ chos mngon pa’i bshad nyan dar po yod kyang/ rigs pa’i lam nas drang pa’i dgag sgrub kyi mam par bzhag pa/ Chos kyi grags pa’i gzhung dang ’thun par ’chad shes pa ma byung ngo//

<sup>12</sup> As for the lineages introduced by rNgog lo tsā ba to gSang phu ne’u thog, Bu ston, for example, enumerates the following texts: “*Alamkāra* (i.e., *Pramāṇavārttikālamkāra* by Prajñākaragupta), Dharmottara[’s logical treatises such as *Pramāṇaviniścayaṭīkā*], Prajñāpāramitā, *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, and so forth (rGyan Chos mchog Phar phyin sPyod ’jug la sogs pa)” (cf. *Bu ston chos ’byung*: 203.3-5), while ’Gos lo tsā ba mentions “Pramāṇa, Five Treatises of Maitreya, Madhyamaka, and so forth (Tshad ma dang/ Byams chos dang/ dBU ma la sogs pa)” in his *Deb sngon*: 394.13f.

monastery, rNgog lo tsā ba made a great contribution to re-establishing Buddhist studies, which had been devastated and gone into decline in Central Tibet after the assassination of King Glang dar ma.

Since these lineages introduced by rNgog lo tsā ba were enormous and it was not easy to master all of them completely, his disciples needed to specialize in particular subjects. On this point, Shākya mchog ldan writes as follows:

He (i.e., rNgog lo tsā ba) had the following four main disciples: (1) Zhang tshe spong ba chos kyi bla ma, who took over his seat [as the abbot of gSang phu ne'u thog], (2) Gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas, who mastered [all] his oral teachings, (3) 'Bre chen po shes rab 'bar, who received his scholastic lineage of Prajñāparamitā, and (4) Khyung rin chen grags, who received his scholastic lineages of Madhyamaka and Pramāṇa.<sup>13</sup>

As is clearly stated here, among the four main disciples, 'Bre shes rab 'bar and Khyung rin chen grags specialized in Prajñāpāramitā (Phar phyin) and in Madyamaka (dBu ma) and Pramāṇa (Tshad ma) respectively. Zhang tshe spong ba took over the position of 3rd abbot of gSang phu ne'u thog and occupied it for 32 years. He and his disciple Nyang bran chos kyi ye shes were famous for their contributions to the study of the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra* (cf. *Deb sngon*: 296.4-5; *bKa' gdams gsal sgron*: 154.2-4). Gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas, meanwhile, who was called the most loyal of rNgog lo tsā ba disciples, composed many commentaries on these four subjects. Nevertheless, his lineages are said to have been not so widespread and finally disappeared (cf. *rNgog rnam thar*: 455.2f./7a2f.).

In addition, rNgog lo tsā ba is well-known not only for having translated many Indian texts, but also for having composed many commentaries on what he translated. His commentaries consist of two types, called “brief commentary/ topical outline” (*bsdus don* or *don bsdus*, \**piṅḍārtha*, lit. ‘summarized meaning’) and “expansive commentary” (*rnam bshad*, \**vyākhyā*).<sup>14</sup> He made the step from the more passive stage

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<sup>13</sup> *rNgog rnam thar*: 450.2f./4b2f.: de la sras kyi thu bo byung ba ni bzhi ste/ sku'i gdan sa 'dzin pa Zhang tshe spong ba chos kyi bla ma/ gsung gi bstan pa rdzogs par 'dzin pa Gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas/ Yum shes rab kyi pha rol du phyin pa'i bshad srol 'dzin pa/ 'Bre chen po shes rab 'bar/ dbu tshad kyi bshad srol 'dzin pa/ Khyung rin chen grags nmams so//

<sup>14</sup> The first modern scholar to have thoroughly examined these two types of commentaries, especially the more problematic term *bsdus don*, was David P. Jackson. Based on Sa paṅ's works, he first suggested the following two different meanings of *bsdus don*: (1) a brief summary of the general contents of a work, and (2) a topical outline (\**sa bcad*). Cf. Jackson 1987: 147, n. 4. In Jackson 1987, he took rNgog's *bdus don* in



of “translation” to the more active stage of “commentary.” Basically following rNgog’s interpretations, his disciples further refined them on the subjects in which they specialized. This was the stage just before Phya pa chos kyi seng ge appeared.

Stage II: The period of the development of gSang phu scholasticism [middle of 12c. to 13c.]

gSang phu scholasticism moved to the next stage, the period of its development, with the appearance of Phya/Phywa/Cha pa chos kyi seng nge (1109–1169; hereafter, Phya pa). It is quite symbolic that Phya pa was born in the same year as rNgog lo tsā ba died. Although basically taking over the traditions of gSang phu scholasticism established by rNgog lo tsā ba and his disciples, Phya pa critically reconsidered them and eventually established a new doctrine that contained many original interpretations and theories different from those of rNgog lo tsā ba. For example, Shākya mchog ldan puts it this way:

Although the main doctrine [of Phya pa] corresponds to that of the Great Translator (i.e., rNgog lo tsā ba), [Phya pa] sometimes makes many refutations regarding more delicate issues.<sup>15</sup>

In my view, the main target of Phya pa’s refutations is rNgog lo tsā ba. In fact, I have confirmed several cases of Phya pa’s criticism of rNgog lo tsā ba in his *Tshad ma yid kyi mun sel*.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, Phya pa, unlike rNgog’s disciples, composed commentaries on all four above-mentioned subjects, and these had widespread and long-term influence in later periods. In particular, it is noteworthy that Phya pa created a quite innovative style

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the second meaning (Jackson 1987: 127). This interpretation was, however, retracted in Jackson 1993 on the basis of rNgog’s newly published *bsdus don* of the *Ratnagotravibhāga* and *Abhisamayālamkāra* (Jackson 1993: 5). There he took these two *bsdus don* in the first meaning. As for the origin of this *bdus don*, he suggested the possibility that *bsdus don* in the first meaning could be traced back to the *piṇḍārtha* of Indian commentaries and that this *piṇḍārtha* derived from “Vasubandhu’s five main commentarial functions from the *Vyākhyāyukti*” (Jackson 1993: 4).

His interpretation has been so influential that later scholars, basically following his interpretation, have provided additional information based on newly available documents. For example, Kanō Kazuo confirmed the existence of the *sa bcad* type of *bsdus don* in rNgog’s works such as the *rGyud bla ma’i bsdus don* newly discovered at Khara Khoto (Kanō 2010: esp. 136ff.). Pascale Hugon, on the other hand, analyzed the *bsdus don* of the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by Phya pa (Hugon 2009: esp. 51ff.). Also see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 145-147.

<sup>15</sup> *rNgog rnam thar*: 451.4/5a4: grub mtha’i dbyings Lo chen dang ’thun kyang/ gnas skabs phren tshegs la dgag pa mang du mdzad/

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Nishizawa 2010: 66f., 2011a.

of composition called *bsdus pa* (\**samgraha*, lit. ‘summary’). *bsdus pa*, unlike *bsdus don*, is not a kind of commentary. It is an original work that is free from the constraints of the traditional framework or the chapters of the original Indian texts.<sup>17</sup> He composed this *bsdus pa* on the Pramāṇa and Madhyamaka, that is, the *Tshad ma yid kyi mun sel* and *dBu ma shar gsum gyi ston thun* respectively. This means that Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism took one step further from the stages of “translation” and “commentary” to the stage of “*bsdus pa*.”

(1) translation → (2) commentary → (3) *bsdus pa* (original composition)

Stage I

Stage II

After this innovation by Phya pa, an increasing number of *bsdus pa* or its equivalent<sup>18</sup> were composed by many scholars not limited to the gSang phu ba. In this sense too we need to identify Phya pa’s period as a new stage in gSang phu scholasticism.

We also need to take note of the fact that so-called *grub mtha’* literature appeared in the same period as the *bsdus pa*. It is true that some scholars of the Former Diffusion (*snga dar*) period had already composed very pioneering works of this genre such as the *lTa ba’i khyad par* by Ye shes sde. However, Phya pa was one of the first people to compose a *grub mtha’* in the Later Diffusion period.<sup>19</sup> His *grub mtha’*, entitled *bDe bar gshegs pa dang phyi rol pa’i gzhung rnam par ’byed pa* (*bKa’ gdams gsung ’bum* 9: 7–72 (1–33b7)), seems to have been the prototype for the *grub mtha’* literature of later periods such as the *Blo gsal grub mtha’* and so on. These *bsdus pa* and *grub mtha’* were the product of a creative spirit expressing his own interpretation or understanding

<sup>17</sup> In this sense, “summary” is not an exact translation of *bsdus pa*, although it may be suitable as its literal meaning. I have already discussed this term in Nishizawa 2010: 63 and 2011b: 191f. together with earlier interpretations by modern scholars.

<sup>18</sup> The term *bsdus pa* was not so frequently used in documents of later periods. In the dGe lugs pa school, the term *spyi don* is used more frequently as the equivalent of *bsdus pa*. For example, the *Tshad ma rigs rgyan*, the original logical text of dGe ’dun grub, is sometimes called *sPyi don rigs rgyan*. Here *spyi don* (lit. ‘general meaning’) means *tshad ma’i spyi don*, which is equivalent to *tshad ma’i bsdus pa*.

<sup>19</sup> There is no evidence that rNgog lo tsā ba and his disciples composed any *grub mtha’*. According to the rare book catalogue of A chu Rinpoche, the oldest *grub mtha’* is that by Phya pa. Cf. MHTL 11910: Phya pa chos kyi seng ge gi phyi nang gi grub mtha’i rnam bzhag bsdus pa. This probably corresponds to the following text: *bDe bar gshegs pa dang phyi rol pa’i gzhung rnam par ’byed pa*, in *bK’a gdams gsung ’bum* 9: 7–72 (dbu med Ms., 1–33b7). I have prepared a *sa bcad* of this text and a brief analysis of its content (Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 4: 17–20; 2013b). I plan to edit and translate this text. Unfortunately, however, this manuscript is not so good and contains many problematic readings. It is to be hoped that better manuscripts of this text will be discovered.

of Buddhist doctrines in a freer style designed by himself. This means that Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism entered a more creative stage.

Phya pa was a quite influential figure in gSang phu ne'u thog, and many important scholars were his disciples. For example, Dus gsum mkhyen pa (1110–1193), one of his disciples, was a founder of the Karma bka' brgyud pa, while Phag mo gru pa (1110–1170) was a founder of the Phag gru bka' brgyud pa. rJe btsun bsod nams rtse mo (1142–1182), the second Sa skya gong ma lnga, was also his disciple. In brief, the period of the development of gSang phu scholasticism was the period of Phya pa and his followers. Thereafter gSang phu scholasticism seems to have divided into two main lines, rNgog's line and Phya pa's line.

### Stage III: The period of the diffusion of gSang phu scholasticism [13c. to 15c.]

The period of the diffusion of gSang phu scholasticism was the period in which, after gSang phu ne'u thog had divided into upper and lower sections named Gling stod (Upper College) and Gling smad (Lower College) around the end of the 12th century, gSang phu scholasticism spread throughout Central Tibet (dBus gtsang) through many branches of gSang phu ne'u thog, which were called *bshad grwa* (school for studying non-tantric Buddhism / non-tantric school) and were founded around the 13th century in various places in Central Tibet. This period had two aspects.

(1) One aspect is the outer one. gNyal zhig 'jam dpal rdo rje (ca. 1150–1230<sup>20</sup>), the 3rd abbot of Gling stod,<sup>21</sup> his nine main disciples called “gNyal zhig gi bu dgu,” and 'Jam dbyangs shākya gzhon nu, the 7th abbot of Gling smad,<sup>22</sup> founded many *bshad grwa* outside gSang phu ne'u thog. Through these *bshad grwa*, gSang phu scholasticism, which had basically been transmitted inside gSang phu ne'u thog, was widely propagated outside the monastery.

(2) Meanwhile, many *bshad grwa* of the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa were founded inside gSang phu ne'u thog, probably after the split into Gling stod/smād. Through these *bshad grwa*, gSang phu scholasticism was transmitted to these two sects. This diffusion could be described as the inner aspect of the diffusion of gSang phu scholasticism.

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<sup>20</sup> For this dating, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 240.

<sup>21</sup> This is based on the abbatial list of *Deb sngon* line. Based on that of *Deb dmar* line, it corresponds to the 5th abbot of Gling stod. For the detailed lists of these two lines of Gling stod, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 236-238.

<sup>22</sup> This is based on the abbatial list of *Deb sngon* line. Based on that of *Deb dmar* line, it corresponds to the 5th abbot of Gling smad. For the detailed lists of these two lines of Gling smad, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 233-235.

These two kinds of *bshad grwa* became the main doorway through which gSang phu scholasticism passed into the outside world. At the same time, the *bshad grwa* inside the monastery became an entrance through which many different doctrines of the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa entered gSang phu ne'u thog. In this way, the movement to found *bshad grwa* outside and inside gSang phu ne'u thog started around the 13th century. We call this movement “the movement to found *bshad grwa*”. Especially the former movement should be called “the movement to found *bshad grwa* of gSang phu ne'u thog”. According to my interpretation, this movement played an essential role in re-establishing and developing the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of the Later Diffusion period, which had been devastated after King Glang dar ma's assassination. On account of their importance, I shall give a more detailed explanation of these two movements.

#### 1. The movement to found *bshad grwa* of gSang phu ne'u thog commenced by gNyal zhig's nine disciples.

gNyal zhig's nine disciples (*gNyal zhig gi bu dgu*), the key persons in this movement, can be divided into three groups according to the periods in which they were active.

1. The three [disciples] of the earlier periods (*snga tshar gsum*)
  1. bZad/bZang ring dar ma tshul khirms
  2. Phu thang pa dar dkon
  3. gTsang pa gru gu / gTsang drug
2. The three [disciples] of the middle periods (*bar tshar gsum*)
  1. 'U yug pa bsod nams seng ge (alias 'U yug pa rigs pa'i seng ge!)<sup>23</sup>
  2. Bo dong/stong rin chen rtse mo
  3. Jo bo nam mkha' dpal (abbr. Jo nam)
3. The three [disciples] of the later periods (*phyi tshar gsum*)
  1. rGya 'ching ru ba / rGya stong phyng ru pa
  2. 'Jam dbyangs gsar ma shes rab 'od zer
  3. sKyel nag grags pa seng ge

These disciples founded many *bshad grwa* not only in bKa' gdams pa monasteries,

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<sup>23</sup> As suggested by L. van der Kuijp (Kuijp 1993: 294) without any corroborating evidence, 'U yug pa bsod nams seng ge seems to be another name for 'U yug pa rigs pa'i seng ge, one of Sa pañ's main disciples and a scholar famous for his large commentary on the *Pramānavārttika*. For more detailed information on the identification of these two figures, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 370–372. If this identification is correct, 'U yug pa bsod nams seng ge was one of the earliest examples of a genuine gSang phu scholar converting to the Sa skya pa.

but also in monasteries of other sects such as the bKa' brgyud pa. A list of their *bshad grwa* referred to in historical documents is as follows:<sup>24</sup>

Location [Sect]	Founder	Date of Foundation
Khro phu [Khro phu bka' brgyud pa]	bZad/bZang ring dar ma tshul khirms	ca. early 13c. [period of Khro phu lo tsā ba (1173–1225), 3rd abbot of Khro phu]
Yar klungs; sTod lungs mtsho smad lha khang, etc. [?]	Phu thang dar dkon	ca. early 13c.?
Zhwa lu [Zhwa lu pa]	gTsang pa gru gu (ca. 1160–1240 <sup>25</sup> )	ca. middle 13 c. [period of Zhwa lu pa gzhon nu brtson 'grus, 6th abbot of Zhwa lu]
Brag ram [?]	Bo dong rin chen rtse mo	ca. middle 13c.?
bDe ba can [?]	rGya 'ching ru ba	1205 [= construction date of bDe ba can]
rKyang 'dur [?]	'Jam dbyangs gsar ma shes rab 'od zer	ca. middle 13c.
sNar thang [bKa' gdams gzhung pa]	sKyel nag grags pa seng ge (ca. 1180–1260 <sup>26</sup> )	ca. 1250.
Tshal gung thang [Tshal pa bka' brgyud pa]	'Jam dbyangs shākya gzhon nu	1308 ( <i>sa sprel</i> ) or 1320 ( <i>lcags sprel</i> )

This movement occurred intensively from around the beginning of the 13th century to the beginning of the 14th century. Among the above-mentioned monasteries, Khro phu and Tshal gung thang monasteries belong to the bKa' brgyud pa. sNar thang monastery, established by sTum ston blo gros grags pa (1106–1166) in 1153, belongs to the bKa' gdams gzhung pa. Zhwa lu monastery, having been established in 1003 before the bKa' gdams pa appeared, seems to have kept its independent state without belonging to any sect, at least in its early period.

The Influence of this movement on the “Golden Age of Tibetan Buddhism” in 14-15c.

gSang phu ne'u thog and its many *bshad grwa* made a great contribution to the re-establishment and development of Tibetan Buddhist studies in Central Tibet. These *bshad grwa* founded throughout Central Tibet fulfilled the role of branches of gSang phu ne'u thog.<sup>27</sup> I refer to all of the scholars whose academic activities were based at gSang phu ne'u thog and its branches and who propagated gSang phu scholasticism as

<sup>24</sup> For a detailed analysis of the foundation of these monasteries, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 241–297.

<sup>25</sup> For its dating, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 244.

<sup>26</sup> For its dating, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 255f.

<sup>27</sup> Since gNyal zhig and his disciples belonged to Gling stod of gSang phu ne'u thog, the *bshad grwa* founded by them are called “branches of Gling stod” (*Gling stod pa'i lag*; cf. *Deb sngon*: 415.2).

the “gSang phu school” (gSang phu ba).

Almost all the leading scholars of each sect were involved in these monasteries of the gSang phu school. For example, Sa paṅ (1182–1251) of the Sa skya pa spent several years at rKyang ’dur monastery to study under rKyang ’dur ba mTshur ston gzhon nu seng ge (ca. 1150–1210), a disciple of gTsang nag pa brtson ’grus seng ge, although later Sa paṅ adopted a critical stance towards gSang phu scholasticism.<sup>28</sup> ’U yug pa rigs pa’i seng ge, one of the most important disciples of Sa paṅ and well-known for his detailed commentary on the *Pramāṇavārttika*, was just one of the nine disciples of gNyal zhig. Bu ston rin chen grub (1290–1364) entered Khro phu monastery in his youth and started his studies under Tshad ma’i skyes bu bsod nams mgon. He later moved to Zhwa lu monastery.

In addition, Tsong kha pa, the founder of the dGe lugs pa, and his disciples visited not only gSang phu ne’u thog, but also its branches such as bDe ba can, sNar thang, Tshal gung thang, and so on in their youth for the purpose of studying. As a result of their studies at these monasteries, Tsong kha pa and his followers founded their sect, the dGe lugs pa. In this sense, it may be no exaggeration to say that gSang phu ne’u thog and its branches became the parent body of the dGe lugs pa.

In this way, “the movement to found *bshad grwa*” played an essential role not only in propagating gSang phu scholasticism outside gSang phu ne’u thog throughout Central Tibet, but also in increasing the academic level of Tibetan Buddhist scholars in general. In Tibet, a large wave of Buddhist studies rose up in the 14th to 15th centuries. This age could be called the “Golden Age of Tibetan Buddhism” during which many great Tibetan scholars appeared and formulated their brilliant doctrines. For example, we can enumerate the following eminent scholars: Bu ston rin chen grub (1290–1364) of the Zhwa lu ba; Dor po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361) of the Jo nang pa; Klong chen rab ’byams pa (1308–1364) of the rNying ma pa; Bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan (1312–1375), Nya dbon kun dga’ dpal (1345–1439), Red mda’ ba gzhon nu blo gros (1349–1412), g-Yag phrug sangs rgyas dpal (1350–1414), and Rong ston shākya rgyal mtshan (1367–1449) of the Sa skya pa; Tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa (1357–1419), Dar ma rin chen (1364–1432), mKhas grub dge legs dpal bzang (1385–1438), and dGe ’dun grub (1391–1474) of the dGe lugs pa; Bo dong phyogs las rnam rgyal (1376–1451) of the Bo dong pa, and so forth.

In fact, it is no coincidence that these great thinkers appeared almost in the same

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<sup>28</sup> For Sa paṅ’s studies under rKyang ’dur ba mTshur ston gzhon nu seng ge, see Jackson 1987: 105–107, and also Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 330–332.

period. We need to understand that behind this phenomenon lay the re-establishment of Tibetan Buddhist studies brought about by the movement to found *bshad grwa* of gSang phu ne'u thog, and the “Golden Age of Tibetan Buddhism” of the 14-15c. was the outcome of this movement. The foundation of the dGe lugs pa belonged to the same wave. In this sense, it is not too much to say that this period of the diffusion of gSang phu scholasticism was one of the most important periods in the history of Tibetan Buddhism.

## 2. The movement to found *bshad grwa* in gSang phu ne'u thog by the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa

As mentioned above, gSang phu ne'u thog was divided into Gling stod and Gling smad around the end of the 12th century. Probably some time thereafter, although the exact date is unclear, several *bshad grwa* of other sects such as the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa were founded inside gSang phu ne'u thog. For example, the *Vaiḍūrya ser po* composed in 1698 reports that the following eleven *grwa tshang* or *bshad grwa* were established in gSang phu ne'u thog:<sup>29</sup>

### 1. Gling stod

1. sBe/sBel ser (G)
2. Nyi ma thang (G)
3. Dwags po (S)
4. rNam rgyal gser khang pa (S)
5. Khu spe ba (S)

### 2. Gling smad

1. sGros rmying pa (S)
2. gZhi ba (S)
3. Nyang rong (G)
4. gNas sgo ba (S)
5. sGros gsar pa (S)
6. Rwa ba stod smad (G/S)

Abbr.: G = dGe lugs pa; S = Sa skya pa.

<sup>29</sup> *Vaiḍūrya ser po*: 148.23–149.2.: de ltar gSang phur dGa' ldan pa'i grwa tshang bzhi dang/ Sa skya pa'i grwa tshang bdun yod pa las [1] Gling stod pa la grwa tshang (1) sBel ser/ (2) Nyi ma thang/ (3) Dwags po grwa tshang/ (4) rNam rgyal gser khang pa/ (5) Khu spe ba mams so// [2] Gling smad du grwa tshang ni/ (1) sGros rmying pa/ (2) gZhi ba/ (3) Nyang rong grwa tshang/ (4) gNas sgo ba gsum/ (5) sGros gsar pa/ (6) Ra ba stod smad gnyis te bcu gcig gam/ gNas sgo ba la gsum du phye na grwa tshang bcu gsum yod do//. On these eleven *grwa tshang*, cf. Onoda 1989a: 257–362; Onoda 1990; Everding 2009: 146ff.

Because of a lack of related documents, we know hardly anything about when, why or how these *bshad grwa* were established in gSang phu ne'u thog. In the case of the dGe lugs pa's *bshad grwa*, however, relevant documents are comparatively abundant, especially for Rwa stod grwa tshang. According to my investigations,<sup>30</sup> Rwa stod grwa tshang, as well as the other three *grwa tshang* of the dGe lugs pa, was established after Tsong kha pa's *bka' bzhi'i grwa skor* (visiting monasteries for debate on four [Indian main] texts) in gSang phu, held around 1380 (when he was 24 years old). At least, Rwa stod grwa tshang no doubt derived from the Sa skya pa's *bshad grwa* inside gSang phu ne'u thog, which means that the Sa skya pa's *bshad grwa* existed before the foundation of Rwa stod grwa tshang. On the other hand, it is not clear whether *bshad grwa* of other sects such as the rNying ma pa were established in gSang phu ne'u thog. Further investigation is needed to determine details of these *bshad grwa*.

These *bshad grwa* of the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa established inside gSang phu ne'u thog caused a split in the monastery and led to the gradual decline of gSang phu scholasticism. This was the next stage, as explained below.

#### Stage IV: The period of the decline of gSang phu scholasticism [16c. and later]

The last stage is the period in which gSang phu ne'u thog split into many *bshad grwa* or *grwa tshang* of the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa, and it became hollowed out through the relocation of these *bshad grwa* outside the monastery. As was mentioned above, these *bshad grwa* established in gSang phu ne'u thog had the function of transmitting gSang phu scholasticism to these two sects. However, these *bshad grwa* gradually gained power and influence in various aspects, eroding the monastery from within and eventually bringing about its decline. It is likely that gSang phu ne'u thog gradually became hollowed out around the 16th century through the relocation of these *bshad grwa*. In fact, it is a historical fact that many bKa' gdams pa monasteries were divided into the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa or converted to either of these sects. Therefore, we should regard this decline of gSang phu ne'u thog as being linked to the decline of the bKa' gdams pa itself.

Although the exact date and reasons for this relocation of the *bshad grwa* are unclear because of a lack of relevant documents, it seems to have occurred around the time of the 5th Dalai Lama, when the power and influence of the dGe lugs pa increased

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<sup>30</sup> On the process of the formation of Rwa stod grwa tshang, see Nishizawa 2011b, vol. 1: 302–308, and on the other three dGe lugs pa'i grwa tshang, see *ibid.*: 308–310.



the most.<sup>31</sup> Some historical documents report that all the *bshad grwa* of gSang phu ne'u thog were finally relocated outside, and gSang phu ne'u thog declined drastically. For example, 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820–1892) reports in his guidebook of holy places (*gnas yig*) on the pitiful state of gSang phu ne'u thog at this time.<sup>32</sup> At present, it is said that only a few housekeepers reside in the monastery and its academic activities have completely ceased. However, the tradition of gSang phu scholasticism has not completely disappeared. It was absorbed by other sects such as the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa and still exists as an undercurrent of their scholastic spirit. For example, dPa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566) makes the following statement in his *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*:

Although we do not see any holder of the [philosophical] views and tenets (*lta grub*) of the bKa' gdams [pa] recently, all of this (i.e., those of the Sa skya pa and dGe lugs pa) derived from the bKa' gdams pa.<sup>33</sup>

Today, the gSang phu dbyar chos,<sup>34</sup> at which once a year in the fourth month of the Tibetan calendar monks of every *bshad grwa* / *grwa tshang* of gSang phu ne'u thog assemble together in gSang phu ne'u thog and hold a debate on Buddhist logic (*pramāṇa* / *tshad ma*), is the only occasion that reminds us of the past glory of gSang phu ne'u thog.

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<sup>31</sup> On the relocation of the *bshad grwa* / *grwa tshang* of gSang phu ne'u thog, see Nishizawa, vol. 1: 312f.; on that of Rwa stod grwa tshang in particular, see *ibid.*: 306f.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Kuijp 1987: 103, and Nishizawa 2011b, vol., 1: 314f.

<sup>33</sup> *mKhas pa'i dga' ston*: 735.14f.: bKa' gdams kyi lta grub 'dzin pa deng sang mi snang yang 'di thams cad bKa' gdams pa las 'phros pa ni yin la/...

<sup>34</sup> Cf. bSod nams rgyal mtshan 2002: 18; *Drung dkar tshig mdzod*: 2094; Everding 2009: 146f. Although Karl-Heinz Everding uses the term “gSang phu dbyar kha (lit. summer of gSang phu!),” I have never personally heard such a term being used in Tibetan monasteries, including Rwa stod grwa tshang, one branch of gSang phu Gling smad. It is generally called “gSang phu dbyar chos.” See the above-mentioned bSod nams rgyal mtshan 2002 and *Drung dkar tshig mdzod*.

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