

# *Sūtra*-style Consecration in Tibet and its Importance for Understanding the Historical Development of the Indo-Tibetan Consecration Ritual for *Stūpas* and Images\*

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## Introduction

Rituals constitute an important part of every religion. Yet, even though the study of the Buddhist religion is well established in the West as well as in Japan, investigations of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist rituals appeared, for the most part, only very recently<sup>1</sup>). The situation is different among scholars within the tradition. Tibet's esteemed lamas and scholars not only performed rituals such as consecration, they were also actively engaged in investigating them.

This paper will discuss certain aspects of the historical development of the Indo-Tibetan consecration ritual for *stūpas* and images. I use the term 'consecration ritual' for the Tibetan *rab-gnas cho-ga* (Sanskrit: *pratisthā-vidhi*). Some confusion has been created by the use of the English term 'consecration' to translate both *rab-gnas* and *dbang-bskur*. But the Tibetan language makes a clear distinction between the two terms. *Dbang-bskur*, for which I prefer the translation 'initiation', is conferred on people, while *rab-gnas* is conferred on receptacles of the Buddha's Body, Speech, and Mind; meaning mainly images, books, *stūpas*, and temples<sup>2</sup>). The Tibetan term *rab-gnas*, which translates the Sanskrit term *pratisthā*, can be literally rendered in English as 'firmly establish' or 'stably reside'. While the Sanskrit term *pratisthā* originally meant the 'establishment' of an image or *stūpa*, it later (in India) developed the meaning of firmly establishing the 'holy' or 'sacred' within the image or *stūpa*<sup>3</sup>). The latter is also the meaning of the Tibetan term *rab-gnas*. It corresponds to the English term 'consecration', the etymology of which is 'together with the sacred'. In Vajrayāna Buddhism, the 'holy' is the Enlightened Awareness Being (Sanskrit: *Jñānasattva* / Tibetan: *Ye-shes-sems-dpa*) which, by the means of consecration ritual, is invited to

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1) Among the most important earlier works on Tibetan rituals are Ferdinand D. Lessing, *Ritual and Symbol: Collected Essays on Lamaism and Chinese Symbolism* (The Chinese Association for Folklore: Taipei, 1976) and Stephan Beyer, *The Cult of Tārā: Magic and Ritual in Tibet* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1973). Among the recent collections of articles on this subject are Alexander W. Macdonald, ed., *l'Ethnographie* vol. 83 (nos. 100–101, 1987) and Anne-Marie Blondeau and Kristofer Schipper, eds., *Essais sur le rituel* (Peeters: Louvain-Paris, 1988). For recent works on Newari Buddhist rituals see Todd T. Lewis, "Mahāyāna Vratas in Newar Buddhism" *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 12, no. 1 (1989) 109–138; David N. Gellner, "Monastic Initiation in Newar Buddhism" *Indian Ritual and its Exegesis* ed. by Richard F. Gombrich (Oxford University Press: Delhi, 1988) pp. 42–112 and references given there.

2) There are some exceptions to this even within the consecration ritual itself, when initiation is conferred on the deity which was invited to the object being consecrated. During the conference at Narita, Dr. Brigitte Steinmann pointed out that the Tamang in Nepal perform a ritual called *so-raṃne* for people. This ritual, however, is not the Tamang consecration proper. See also Brigitte Steinmann, "La ceremonie funeraire chez les Tamang de l'est" *BEFEO* 76(1987) 217–280, on p. 253.

3) See Jan Gonda, "Pratisthā" *Samjñāvyākaranam, Studia Indologica Internationalia* (Center for International Indological Research, Poona/Paris, 1954) vol. I, pp. 1–37. Reprinted in Gonda, *Selected Studies* (E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1975) vol. II, pp. 338–374.

reside within the sacred object (*rten*), making it suitable for worship. The Enlightened Awareness Being is invited in the form of one's own deity (*yi-dam*), in Tibetan rituals at present usually Rdo-rje-'jigs-byed (Vajrabhairava), Rdo-rje-sems-dpa' (Vajrasattva), Kye-rdo-rje (Hevajra), Bde-mchog (Cakrasamvara), etc. Part of the role of high lamas is the performance of consecrations for newly constructed images, *stūpas* and temples, or for already established objects of veneration upon the lama's visit during his pilgrimages and travels<sup>4</sup>).

### Is there *Sūtra*-style Consecration?

In this article I will discuss *sūtra*-style consecration as a key to one part of the historical development of the ritual. While there is a certain amount of discussion among Indian and Tibetan writers under which of the four *tantra* sections consecration ritual should be classified<sup>5</sup>, there is unanimous agreement that consecration, in its present form, falls within the *tantra* and not the *sūtra* class. The consecration ritual contains such characteristic tantric elements as the invitation of one's own deity (*yi-dam*), construction of *mandalas*, etc. A number of consecration works make a point of emphasizing that *sūtra*-style consecration do not exist<sup>6</sup>. The most probable origin for these statements is in Sa-skya Pandita's *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye*<sup>7</sup>, where he maintains that "consecrations are not taught in the *sūtras*" and "the so-called *sūtra*-style consecration expounded in [his] days is not the teaching of the Buddha" (see below).

### The *Gandī-Sūtra*

Contrary to Sa-skya Pandita's claim that consecrations are not taught in the *sūtras*, the *sūtra* section of the Tibetan Kanjur contains the *Gandī-Sūtra* translated into Tibetan at the time of

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- 4) For the Tibetan consecration ritual see: Panchen Ötrul Rinpoche, "The Consecration Ritual" *Chö Yang* vol. 1, No. 2. (1987) 53–64. Sharpa Tulku and Michael Perrott, "The Ritual of Consecration" *The Tibet Journal* 10 (1985) 35–49. Loden Sherap Daggyab, *Tibetan Religious Art* (Otto Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden, 1977) vol. 1, pp. 32–3. Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (La libreria dello stato: Rome, 1949) vol. 1, pp. 308–16. *Idem*, "Mc'od rten" e "ts'a ts'a" nel Tibet indiano ed occidentale, *Indo-Tibetica I* (Rome: Reale Accademia d'Italia, 1932) pp. 34–8 and pp. 57–60; [reprinted: *Stupa: Art, Architectonics and Symbolism* translated into English by Uma Marina Vesci. Śata-pitaka Series vol. 347 (New Delhi, 1988)]. Losang Paldhen Gyalzur and Anthony H. N. Verwey, "Spells on the Life-wood: An Introduction to the Tibetan Buddhist Ceremony of Consecration" in *Selected Studies on Ritual in the Indian Religion: Essays to D. J. Hoens* ed., Ria Kloppenborg (E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1983) pp. 169–196. Kurt J. Schwalbe, *The Construction and Religious Meaning of the Buddhist Stūpa in Solo Khumbu, Nepal* (Ph. D. Dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, 1979). The present author is also currently preparing a Ph. D. dissertation on this subject.
- 5) The Consecration Tantra is classified in the Tibetan Kanjur as Yoga Tantra. ("Rab-tu gnas-pa mdor-bsdus-pa'i Rgyud" *The Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking Edition*, ed., D. T. Suzuki, Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute: Tokyo-Kyoto, 1955-61 [hereafter *P*], #118, vol. 5, pp. 122.1.1–123.4.7 [*Tōhoku* #486]). Indians *paṇḍits* and Tibetan scholars following them mostly categorize the consecration ritual as either Anuttara-Yoga Tantra or Yoga Tantra. In a small number of cases the consecration is classified as Kriyā Tantra. For a summary of these different opinions see, for example, Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (1635–1705) "Rab-tu gnas-pa'i skor brjod-pa'i sgra" chapter nine of the *Mchod-sdong 'Jam-gling-rgyan-gcig Rten Gtsug-lag-khang dang bcas-pa'i Dkar-chag Thar-gling Rgya-mtshor Bgrod-pa'i Gru-rdzing Byin-rlabs-kyi Bang-mdzod* (New Delhi, 1973) vol. 2, pp. 151–356, on pp. 151–2; and Rdo-rje-brag Rig-'dzin Padma-'phrin-las (1641–1717) "Rab-tu gnas-pa'i rnam-par nges-pa rgyud don rgya-mtsho gsal-bar byed-pa nor-bu'i snying-po" *Rituals of Rdo-rje-brag* (Leh, 1973) vol. 1, pp. 1–285, on pp. 9–13, which discusses both Rnying-ma and Gsar-ma classifications.
- 6) For example Dge-bshes Brag-phug Dge-'dun-rin-chen (1926-) [Bka'-brgyud-pa sect]. "Bde-mchog bcu-gsum-ma dang sbyar-ba'i rab-gnas shin-tu rgyas-pa rgyud lung man-ngag-gi bang-mdzod" *Rituals of the Thirteen Deity Mandala of Cakrasamvara of the Bhutanese Tradition* (Thimphu, 1978) vol. 1, pp. 187–361; on p. 193–4 [Also in his *Collected Works* (Zigar Drukpa Kargyud Institute: Rewalsar, 1985) vol. 5, pp. 453–627]. Gung-thang-pa, Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i-sgron-me (1762–1823) [Dge-lugs-pa sect] "Rab-gnas-kyi lo-rgyus gtsob-bor gyur-pa'i bshad-pa" *Collected Works* (New Delhi, 1975) vol. 8, pp. 95–109; on p. 102.3. Rmor-chen Kun-dga'-lhun-grub, (1654?–1726?) [Sa-skya-pa sect] "Rab-gnas-kyi yon-bsgo'i bshad-pa legs-bshad 'od-kyi snye-ma" *Sgrub-thabs Kun-btus* (Dehradun, U. P., 1970) vol. 13, pp. 535–545, on p. 542–3.
- 7) [Sa-skya] Pandita Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) "Sdom-pa gsum-gyi rab-tu dbye-ba" *The Complete Works of the Great Masters of the Sa Skya Sect of the Tibetan Buddhism* [hereafter *Sa-skya Bka'-'bum*] (The Tōyō Bunko: Tokyo, 1968) vol. 5, pp. 297.1.1–320.4.5 (also published separately).

Rin-chen-bzang-po<sup>8)</sup>. This *sūtra* explains the construction and consecration of the *gandī*<sup>9)</sup>, a wooden bell used to call the monks to assemblies such as the bimonthly *gso-sbyong* (Sanskrit: *posadha*)<sup>10)</sup>. *Gandī* consecration consists in the recitation of three lines of verse identifying the *gandī* with the *Dharmakāya*<sup>11)</sup>. Due to the absence of tantric elements, this is quite different from the consecrations now in use for *stūpas* and images. Still, not finding other clear references to consecrations in the *sūtras*, the *gandī* consecration is considered by certain Rnying-ma and Bka'-brgyud writers as a source or origin of consecration<sup>12)</sup>. Yet, although we have seen that consecration is briefly mentioned in the *sūtras*, I would agree with Sa-skya Pandita to the extent of saying that there is no systematic exposition on consecration in the *sūtra* texts.

### Some Indian Stūpa Cult Practices

Let us examine now some early Buddhist modes for sanctifying *stūpas* in India. There can be no doubt that what originally rendered the Indian *stūpa* sacred was the presence of the physical relics of the Buddha or another Buddhist saint. Schopen has shown "that the *Mahācetiya* at Nāgārjunikonda was not conceived as 'un reliquaire,' but as a structure housing the living presence of the Buddha – any worship of 'it' would actually be of *him*"<sup>13)</sup>. Since at least the seventh century A. D. there is evidence for *stūpas* with a written form of the *ye dharmā... gāthā* forming their nuclei. The *ye dharmā... gāthā* or the 'verse of interdependent origination' is considered to subsume the essence of the Buddha's teachings<sup>14)</sup>. Similiar to *stūpas* with relics as their nuclei (*dhātugarbha*), these *stūpas* contain in addition to, or instead of relics, the 'verse of interdependent origination'. This verse, as will be more fully discussed below, is called *Dharmadhātu*, which in this

8) P #964, vol. 38, pp. 300.3.1–301.3.1 [Tōhoku #298].

9) See Mireille Helffer, "Le gandī: un simandre tibétain d'origine indienne" *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 15 (1983) 112–125; Ivan Vandor, "The Gandī: Musical Instrument of Buddhist India Recently Identified in a Tibetan Monastery" *The World of Music* 17 (1975) 24–27 [French version: *ibid.* pp. 49–50]. Terry J. Ellingson, *The Mandala of Sound: Concepts and Sound Structures in Tibetan Ritual Music* (Ph. D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1979) pp. 577–8. *Deb-ther Dmar-po-rnams-kyi Dang-po Hu-lan Deb-ther* [= *Deb-ther Dmar-po*] by Tshal-pa Kun-dga'-rdo-rje with commentary by Dung-dkar Blo-bzang-phrin-las (Mi-rigs Dpe-skrun-khang: Peoples Republic of China, 1981) pp. 260–1, note no. 117

10) Or *uposadha*. The basic text for this ritual is contained in the second chapter of the *Vinaya-vastu* (P #1030, vol. 41 [Tōhoku #1]).

11) P vol. 38, p. 301.1.4–5. "[*Gandī*] *de'i rab-gnas bya-ba ni shin-tu brtan-pa'i chos-kyi sku' skyed-pa ma yin 'jig-byed min!* *gdod-nas ma skyes-pa dge-bal de-lar rab-gnas byas-nas ni*". This verse refers to the *Dharmakāya* in its meaning as contrasted with the *Rūpakāya* (the 'form body') or as part of the triad *Dharmakāya*, *Sambhogakāya*, *Nirmāṇakāya*. *Dharmakāya* carries, however, additional meaning of 'the corpus of the Buddhist teachings' (see below). The teachings (*Dharma*) are often symbolized by sounds such as lion-roar, conch or great drum. Hence the association of the *Dharmakāya* with a sound producing instrument such as the *gandī*. The *Gandī Sūtra* has: "The Mother [of all the Buddhas] *Prajñāpāramitā* is the form of the *gandī*". ("Yum shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa *gandī*'i gzugs-so".) (*ibid.* p. 300.5.3). The *Prajñāpāramitā* here means the Mahāyāna teachings in general.

12) For example, Rdo-rje-brag Rig-'dzin Padma-phrin-las, (see note 5 above) on pp. 4–5. Dil-dmar Dge-bshes Bstan-'dzin-phun-tshogs, "Rab-gnas-kyi rgyas-bshad 'jam-mgon dgyes-pa'i bzhad-gad phun-tshogs bkra-shis cha-brgyad" *Rab-gnas Rgyas-bshad* (Tashijong, Palampur, 1970) pp. 1–62 on p. 40–41. Phrin-las-rgya-mtsho, Sgrub-sde Sprul-sku (19th century), "Rab-gnas yon-bsgo'i skabs-kyi stong-thun 'jug-bde phun-tshogs bkra-shis cha-brgyad" *ibid.* pp. 63–88, on p. 78.

13) Gregory Schopen, "On the Buddha and his Bones: The Conception of a Relic in the Inscriptions from Nāgārjunikonda" *JAOS* 108 (1988) 527–537; on p. 536; see also *idem.*, "Burial 'Ad Sanctos' and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism: A Study in the Archeology of Religion" *Religion* 17 (1987) 193–225; Yael Bentor, "The Redactions of the *Adbhutadharmaparyāya* from Gilgit" *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 11/2 (1988) 21–52.

14) "*Ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetum tesāṃ tathāgato hy avadat tesāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃ vādī mahāśramaṇaḥ.*" The 'verse of interdependent origination' is very well known in both its Pāli and Sanskrit forms. For the Pāli see *Vinaya* I, p. 40 (*Mahāvagga* I, 23, 5 and 10). For the Sanskrit see É. Senart, *Le Mahāvastu* (Paris, 1897) vol. 3, p. 62 [reprinted by Meicho-Fukyū-Kai: Japan, 1977]; and Ernst Waldschmidt, "Das Catuspariśatsūtra, eine kanonische Lehrschrift über die Begründung der buddhistischen Gemeinde" *Abhandlungen der deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst* (Jahrgang 1960, Nr. 1, Berlin, 1962) trans. into English by Ria Kloppenborg, *The Sūtra on the Foundation of the Buddhist Order* (E. J. Brill: Leiden, 1973) ch. 28b, 10 and ch. 28c, 6.

context can be translated as *dharmarelic*<sup>15</sup>). Miniature clay tables on which the 'verse of interdependent origination' had been stamped were found inside *stūpas* in numerous archaeological excavations in the Indian cultural sphere dating from the seventh century onward<sup>16</sup>). The Chinese travellers to India in the seventh century, I Ching<sup>17</sup>) and Hsüan Tsang<sup>18</sup>), observed this custom of placing the 'verse of interdependent origination' in a written form inside *stūpas* as well. The scriptural authority for this practice, which may have either predated or followed it, is provided by the *Pratīyasamutpāda Sūtra*<sup>19</sup>). The 'verse of interdependent origination' is still deposited at present time inside Tibetan *stūpas* and images, however, the concept of *Dharma-relic* grew significantly to include the scriptures, large number of *dhāraṇīs*, works by Tibetan authors, etc<sup>20</sup>).

Thus, since at least the seventh century, in addition to the enshrinement of physical relics therein, the *stūpa* received sanctification through the insertion of the 'verse of interdependent origination', which functions in a similar way to the former – it infuses the *stūpa* with the presence of the Buddha<sup>21</sup>). As the physical relic, the *Dharma-relic* is, from then on, fundamental to *stūpa* worship. At the same period, according to the testimony of Hsüan Tsang, once completed, a certain ritual was performed for the *stūpa*<sup>22</sup>). The ritual of inviting the Enlightened Awareness Being into the *stūpa* is a further tantric development which, without supplanting the earlier customs of inserting either physical or *Dharma-relic*, is performed for the completed *stūpa*. The invitation of the Enlightened Awareness Being which represents both physical and *Dharma-relics* is a part of a general tantric process of the ritualization of earlier Buddhist ideas<sup>23</sup>).

### Atiśa's *Sūtra*-style Consecration Ritual

What was then the *sūtra*-style consecration being expounded at the time of Sa-skya Pandita, to which he strongly objected in his *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye?* Zhang G.yu-brag-pa (1123–1193)<sup>24</sup>,

- 15) For the translation of this word as '*Dharma-relic*' see also Richard Salomon and Gregory Schopen, "The Indravarma (Avaca) Casket Inscription Reconsidered: Further Evidence for Canonical Passages in Buddhist Inscriptions" *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 7 (1984) 107–123, on p. 117. See also Gregory Schopen, "On the Buddha and his Bones: The Conception of a Relic in the Inscriptions from Nāgārjunikonda" (see note 13 above).
- 16) See Maurizio Taddei, "Inscribed Clay Tablets and Miniature Stūpas from Ġaznī" *East and West* 20 (1970) 70–86 and references there.
- 17) I Tsing (I Ching), *A Record of the Buddhist Religion* trans., J. Takakusu (Oxford, 1896) [reprinted by Ch'eng Wen Publishing Company, Taipei, 1970] p. 150–1.
- 18) Hsüan Tsang, *Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World* trans., Samuel Beal (Boston, 1885) [reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1981] vol. 2 pp. 146–7. Stanislas Julien, *Memoires sur les contrées occidentales* (Paris, 1858) vol. 2, p. 12.
- 19) P #221 vol. 7 and #878 vol. 34 [Tōhoku #212, #520, #980]. This *sūtra* is known only in translation, however, N. A. Śāstri in *Ārya Śālistamba-Sūtra, Pratīyasamutpāda-vibhaṅganirdeśa-Sūtra and Pratīyasamutpādagāthā-Sūtra* (Adyar Library, 1950) reconstructs the Sanskrit. See also the *Tathāgatabimbakārāpana-Sūtra* from Gilgit which instructs one to make an image of the Buddha with either a relic or with the *Pratīyasamutpāda* verse, in Adelheid Mette, "Zwei kleine Fragmente aus Gilgit" *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 7 (1981) 133–152, on p. 136.
- 20) See Gyalzang (note 4 above). There is a class of Tibetan composition called *gzungs-'bul* or *gzungs-gzhug* which instructs on the physical and *Dharma-relics* deposited in *stūpas* and images. For example, Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas, "Rten la nang-gzhug 'bul-ba'i lag-len lugs-srol kun-gsal dri-bral nor-bu chu-shel-gyi me-long" *Collected Works* vol. 12, pp. 97–148.
- 21) The Buddha has been perceived to be located not only in his relics but also in his teachings. Gregory Schopen, "The Phrase 'sa prthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet' in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna" *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17 (1975) 147–181. Yael Bentor, *Miniature Stūpas, Images and Relics: The Sanskrit Manuscripts of the Adbhutadharmaparyāya from Gilgit and its Tibetan translation* (unpublished Masters' thesis, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1987); Daniel Boucher, *Pratīyasamutpādagāthā: A Study and Contribution of Two Tang Translations* (unpublished Masters' thesis, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1989).
- 22) See note 19 above. I would like to thank here Prof. Takeuchi Tsuguhito for clarifying the meaning of this passage to me by consulting the original Chinese version.
- 23) See J. W. de Jong, "A new History of Tantric Literature in India" [Précis of Matsunaga Yūkei, *Mikkyōkyōten seirisushi-ron* (Kyoto, 1980)] *Indo Kōten Kenkyū* [Acta Indologica] vol. 6 (1984) 91–113 *passim*.
- 24) Zhang G.yu-brag-pa who was the founder of the Tshal-pa sub-sect mentions a *sūtra*-style consecration (*rab-tu gnas-pa mdo-lugs*) which was transmitted from Atiśa. "Dkar-rgyud Rnam-thar". *Writings (Bka' Thor-bu) of Zhang G.yu-brag-pa Brtson-grus-grags-pa* (Tashijong, Palampur, 1972) p. 428.2–3.

Padma-dkar-po (1527–1592)<sup>25</sup> and Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813–1899)<sup>26</sup> among others remarked that Atiśa (982–1054) composed *sūtra*-style consecration(s). Also some of the commentaries to the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* trace the teaching of *sūtra*-style consecrations to Atiśa<sup>27</sup>. Atiśa's consecration text found in the Tibetan Tanjur<sup>28</sup> describes a typical *tantra*-style consecration. However, Atiśa composed also the *Pha-rol-tu phyin-pa'i theg-pa'i sã-tstsha gdab-pa'i cho-ga*<sup>29</sup> "The *pāramitā-yāna* ritual of making *sã-tstsha*"<sup>30</sup>. This appears to be the *locus classicus* of the *sūtra*-style consecration ritual. The *pāramitā-yāna* here is complementary to *tantra* (*gsang-sngags*)-style<sup>31</sup>. According to this work, after completing the *sã-tstsha* "one recites the mantra of interdependent origination three or seven times onto grain or flowers and offers them [to the *sã-tstsha*]"<sup>32</sup>. Here, the 'verse of interdependent origination' is not only a holy relic which impregnates the *stūpa* with the presence of the Buddha, but also a powerful mantra capable of consecrating the *sã-tstsha*<sup>33</sup>.

This scattering on the object being consecrated of grain/flowers, onto which the 'verse of interdependent origination' – the essence of the Buddhist teachings – has been recited, occurs in almost every Tibetan consecration ritual<sup>34</sup>. Moreover, in the concise consecrations performed at present this ritual action plays a major role. Additional sources on the consecration of *caityas* are

- 25) "Bla-med lugs-kyi rab-gnas-kyi cho-ga yan-lag bzhi-pa" *Collected Works* vol. 16, pp. 607–630; on p. 609.
- 26) "Rten-gsum rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga Kun-mkhyen Rang-byung yab-sras-kyi bzhed-pa'i snying-po bsdus-pa rnam-dgongs-gsal" *Bka'-bryud Sngags-mdzod* (Tashijong, Palampur, H.P., 1974) vol. 6, pp. 379–399, on p. 381.3 and (Paro, Bhutan, 1982) vol. 5, pp. 369–389, on p. 371.3.
- 27) Go-rams-pa Bsod-nams-seng-ge (1429–1489), "Sdom gsum rab-dbye'i rnam-bshad rgyal-ba'i gsungs-rab-kyi dgongs-pa gsal-ba" *Sa-skya Bka'-bum* vol. 4, p. 178.3.5. Ngag-dbang-chos-grags (1572–1641) "Sdom-pa gsum-gyi rab-tu dbye-ba'i rnam-bshad legs-bshad zla-'od nor-bu" [the first work in a volume by that same title] (New Delhi, 1978) p. 325.6.5. Sangs-rgyas-bstan-'dzin (20th century) *Sdom-pa Gsum-gyi Rab-tu Dbye-ba'i Mchan-'grel* (New Delhi, 1979) p. 169.2–3.
- 28) "Sku dang gsung dang thugs rab-tu gnas-pa zhes-bya-ba" *P* #3322, vol. 70, pp. 29.3.1–31.5.2; [*Tōhoku* #2496].
- 29) *P* #5373=#5041, vol. 103 [*Tōhoku* #3976=#4488]. Note that while most texts on *tsha-tsha* are found in the *tantra* section of the Tanjur, this text, apparently because of its name, is found in the Dbu-ma section. The subject-matter, however, is similar.
- 30) Giuseppe Tucci, "Mc'od rten" e "ts'a ts'a" nel Tibet indiano ed occidentale. *Indo Tibetica I* (Reale Accademia d'Italia: Rome, 1932) [*Stupa: Art, Architectonics and Symbolism* translated into English by Uma Marina Vesci. Śata-pitaka Series vol. 347 (New Delhi, 1988)]. Toni Huber, "Some 11th-Century Indian Buddhist Clay Tablets (*tsha-tsha*) from Central Tibet" in this volume. All the following readings could be the Sanskrit equivalent of the Tibetan *sãtstsha* (also written *tsha-tsha*) *Ādikarmapradīpa* Louis de la Vallée Poussin ed., in *Bouddhisme: Etudes et matériaux* (Luzac & Co.: London, 1898) where it has: '*sarvakataḍanavidhir*' (p. 193) '*sarvaka (sajjaka?) taḍanavidhi*' (p. 218). Seiren Matsunami, *A Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Tokyo University Library* (Suzuki Research Foundation: Tokyo, 1965) #407 where it has: '*saccaka-tāḍanāvādāna*' (?), or *sarccaka-*, *sacaka-*). [Dialogue between the Buddha and Sucetana-sthavira, about Caitya. A kind of Caitya-puṅgava (?).] (p. 145). Jean Filliozat, *Catalogue du fonds sanscrit* [Bibliothèque nationale] (Paris, 1941). #135 '*saccakatāvādāna*' (p. 82) #136 '*saccakatāvādāna*' (p. 83) #137 '*saccakratāvādāna*' (p. 83). *Kudrṣṭimrghātana* in *Advayavajrasamgraha* ed., Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri, Gaekwad's Oriental Series no. 40 (Oriental Institute: Baroda, 1927) where it has: '*sarvakataḍanavidhir*' (p. 7) and the Tibetan has '*tsha-tsha'i cho-ga*', *P* #3073 p. 273.1.4. See also G. Tucci, *ibid.* p. 57. I would appreciate if someone with access to these manuscripts could check their readings. Tibetan *sãtstsha* should correspond to Sanskrit *sãccha*.
- 31) As it stands also in the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* (*Sa-skya Bka'-bum* vol. 5) p. 311.1.4; and in the works of Phag-mo-gru-pa (see note 43 below).
- 32) "De-nas 'bru 'am me-tog-la rten-brel-gyi sngags lan gsum mam bdun bzlas-la dbul-lo" *P* #5373 p. 179.1.2; #5041 p. 203.5.2–3.
- 33) The word consecration (*rab-gnas*), however, does not appear in this text. *Rab-gnas* does appear in another work by Atiśa on *sã-tstsha* as well as in his consecration text. ["*Tsha-tsha'i cho-ga*" *P* #4868, vol. 86, p. 123.3.7. For the consecration text see note 28 above.]
- 34) Sa-skya Paṇḍita also mentions the scattering of flowers blessed by a mantra. He does not specify, however, the mantra. It seems that in the early Sa-skya-pa consecration texts it was not the 'verse of interdependent origination'. See for example the consecration work by Sa-skya Paṇḍita's uncle, Rje-btsun Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1147–1216), "Arga'i cho ga dang rab-tu gnas-pa don gsal-ba" *Sa-skya Bka'-bum* vol. 4, pp. 237–252. According to this manual the consecration mantra which is recited before scattering the flowers is as follows: "*De-la rab-tu gnas-pa'i sngags nil Om supratisthāvājre Svāhā! Om Hūm Hrīh Bhū Kham vajrībhaḥval dr̥ḥatistha Bhū Kham Svāhā!*" *ibid.* p. 249.3.6. (See also Kun-dga'-snying-po, "Rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga" *P* #3345, vol. 74 [*Tōhoku* #2523] on p. 63. 2.1–2.) It should be noted that Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan's consecration work was the source of numerous later consecration compilations by both Sa-skya and non-Sa-skya masters. However, these later works almost always inserted the ritual action of scattering grain/flower blessed by the 'verse of interdependent origination'.

the *Kudrṣṭinirghātana* by Advayavajra<sup>35)</sup> and the *Ādikarmaṣradīpa*<sup>36)</sup> both preserved in Sanskrit and both mentioned by G. Tucci<sup>37)</sup>. These two works have close parallels with Atiśa's *sā-tstsha* text. However, they differ from him in one respect. That is, while they do employ the recitation of the 'verse of interdependent origination' in their consecrations, they do this without mentioning grain or flowers<sup>38)</sup>.

Since the manufacturing of *sā-tstsha* is a much simpler process than the construction of a *stūpa* or image it is not surprising that it is accompanied by an uncomplicated consecration ritual. Further, the making of *sā-tstsha* was a ritual open to everyone and did not require *vajrācārya* qualifications<sup>39)</sup>. Moreover, this sort of consecration did not necessitate elaborate offerings. Phag-mo-gru-pa says about the *tantra*-style consecration that in contrast to *sūtra*-style consecration, "Unless the patron possesses riches like those of a king, he will not complete it"<sup>40)</sup>. The application of this short consecration, which is simple and requires neither tantric qualifications nor wealth seems to have been extended to the consecration of *stūpas* and images as well. The so-called *sūtra*-style consecration, in spite of Sa-skya Paṇḍita's criticism, never died out.

### Bka'-gdams-pa Consecration Rituals and Phag-mo-gru-pa's Consecration Works

Let us turn now to Tibetan sources of consecration in the first centuries of this millennium. At present, consecration rituals composed before the mid-seventeenth century are very rarely used. Only a few consecrations written by Tibetans have survived from the 11th to 13th centuries and even fewer treat the subject of *sūtra*-style consecration<sup>41)</sup>. Yet, the available writings of Phag-mo-gru-pa (1110–1170) include four works on consecration ritual<sup>42)</sup>. These works discuss three types of consecrations – *sūtra*-style, *tantra*-style and mixture of *sūtra* and *tantra* style<sup>43)</sup>.

Phag-mo-gru-pa studied with, among others, Bka'-gdams-pa teachers. Shes-rab-'byung-gnas (1187–1241) gives the lineage leading from Atiśa to Phag-mo-gru-pa for various teachings including consecrations<sup>44)</sup>. Among them are the Bka'-gdams-pa Dge-bshes Bya-yul-pa, 'Brom-ston-pa<sup>45)</sup> and Spyan-snga<sup>46)</sup>, on whom Phag-mo-gru-pa relied for his mixed-style consecration ritual<sup>47)</sup>. Thus, Phag-mo-gru-pa continued the *sūtra*-style consecration of Atiśa. The early Bka'-gdams-pa who followed Atiśa's precepts were condemned for their practice of *sūtra*-style

35) (See note 30 above) pp. 7–8.

36) (See note 30 above) pp. 192–4.

37) See note 30 above.

38) The Tibetan Tanjur contains additional works on *stūpas* and *sā-tstshas* which mention consecration by the means of the recitation of the 'verse of interdependent origination'. For example, "Mchod-rten-gyi cho-ga zhes-bya-ba" by Nag-po P #2388, vol. 56 [Tōhoku #1259]; "Sā-tsha bya-ba'i rim-pa" *ibid.* #2401, vol. 56. "Tsha-tsha'i cho-ga" by Atiśa. P#4868, vol. 86 (see note 33 above). See also Haribhadra, "Abhisamayālaṅkāraloka Prajñāpāramitāvākyā" in *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* ed., P. L. Vaidya. Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, no. 4 (Darbhanga, 1960) p. 361.

39) See Sa-skya Paṇḍita, note 7 above. Phag-mo-gru-pa, work no. 3 (in note 42 below) p. 688. Atiśa, (see note 28 above) P #3322 vol. 70, p. 29.3.3–4.

40) "Yon-bdag yang rgyal-po la-sogs-ps 'byor-pa dang-ldan-pa ma yin-pas mi 'grub gsung," work no. 3 (in note 42 below) p. 688.

41) According to the Fifth Dalai Lama, the collected works of Zhang G.yu-brag-pa Brtson-'grus-grags-pa (1123–1193) contained a work entitled "Rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga mdo-lugs bsdu-pa" see *Record of Teachings Received, the Gsan-yig of the Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho* (Delhi, 1971) vol. 2, p. 181.6.

42) 1. "Rab-gnas dpe-mdzod-ma" *Collected Works* (Gangtok, 1976) vol. 1, pp. 645–672. 2. "Khro-phu-ba'i Dge-bshes Rgyal-tshas zhus-pa rab-gnas tshig don bsdu-pa" *ibid.* pp. 673–686. 3. "Rab-gnas gsang-sngags-lugs dang mdo-lugs-ma" *ibid.* pp. 687–700. 4. "Rab-gnas sa-bcu-ma Jo-bo Rje-la bstod-pa" *ibid.* pp. 701–722.

43) (1) "Pha-rol-tu phyin-pa'i lugs" in work 3 *ibid.* p. 688.2 and 'mdo-lugs' or 'mdo-sde'i lugs' in work 4 *ibid.* p. 710.4–5. (2) "Gsang-sngags-kyi lugs" in work 3 *ibid.* p. 688.2. (3) "Mdo sngags bsre-ba" in work 4 *ibid.* p. 710.

44) *Dgongs-gcig Yig-cha* (Bir, 1975) vol. 2, p. 371.4. See also, George N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals* (Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal: Calcutta, 1949–53) reprinted: Motilal Banarsidass (Delhi, 1976) pp. 555–560 and p. 453.

45) In Phag-mo-gru-pa's work cited in note 47 below he is called Ston-pa. According to *Bod-rgya Tshig-mdzod Chen-mo* (Mi-rigs Dpe-skrun-khang: Peoples Republic of China, 1985–6) p. 455a, Ston-pa is 'Brom-ston-pa (1005–1064).

46) (1033 or 1038–1103). Mkhan-chen Bsod-nams grags-pa (1273–1345) also studied a consecration work by Spyan-snga. See Khetsun Sangpo, *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism* (Dharamsala, 1973) vol. 5, p. 457.

47) Work no. 4 (in note 42 above) 710.5.

consecration in some of the commentaries on the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye*<sup>48)</sup>, as well as by Sa-skyia Paṇḍita himself in his answers to questions posed by the Bka'-gdams-pa Dge-bshes Do-kor-ba<sup>49)</sup>.

Phag-mo-gru-pa explains a little further the *sūtra*-style ritual such as the one mentioned by Atiśa in his *pāramitā-yāna sā-tstsha* text: "Then, having recited the 'verse of interdependent origination' 108 times onto grain or flower, they (the grain/flowers) turn into the nature of *Dharmadhātu*. Having scattered them (on the object being consecrated) it is made to be as the *Dharmakāya*<sup>50)</sup>". I have not translated the words *Dharmadhātu* and *Dharmakāya* since they carry multiple meanings. Taking *Dharma* in its meaning of 'teaching', *Dharmakāya* can be rendered as 'the corpus of the teachings'. Later the term *Dharmakāya* was contrasted with *Rūpakāya* – form body, and thereafter became a part of the triad *Dharmakāya*, *Sambhogakāya* and *Nirmānakāya*<sup>51)</sup>. Similarly the word *dhātu* can mean relic or realm<sup>52)</sup>. Thus, *Dharmadhātu* can be translated as either 'Dharma-relic' or 'Dharma-realm'. The second "is further identified with that of *dharmatā* or *tathatā* (suchness) or even *sūnyatā* (emptiness)<sup>53)</sup>". Thus, when the *Pratītyasamutpāda Sūtra*<sup>54)</sup> which instructs one to deposit the 'verse of interdependent origination' inside *stūpas* calls this verse '*chos-kyi-dbyings*' – *Dharmadhātu*<sup>55)</sup>, and '*de-bzhin-gshegs-pa-rnams-kyi chos-kyi-sku*' – the *Dharmakāya* of the Tathāgata, it is difficult to determine whether the *Pratītyasamutpāda Sūtra* simply calls the 'verse of interdependent origination' a 'Dharma-relic' and 'the corpus of the teachings of the Tathāgata' or whether it plays on the ambivalence of the these two terms.

Phag-mo-gru-pa's interpretation of consecration by means of the 'verse of interdependent origination', the *Gaṇḍī-Sūtra* (mentioned above), is based on taking the term *Dharmakāya* in its abstract meaning. This interpretation, as we shall see below, was a subject for disagreement<sup>56)</sup>. Yet, the ritual action itself, which is very similar to the one described by Atiśa, continued to live.

### Sa-skyia Paṇḍita

Sa-skyia Paṇḍita (1182–1251) did not approve of the *sūtra*-style consecration. In his *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* he makes three basic assertions<sup>57)</sup>:

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- 48) Go-rams-pa (see note 27 above) p. 178.3.5. Ngag-dbang-chos-grags (see note 27 above) p. 325.2. Sangs-rgyas-bstan-'dzin (see note 27 above) p. 167.6. Spos-khang-pa Rin-chen-rgyal-mtshan (15th century), *Sdom-pa Gsum-gyi Rab-tu Dbye-ba'i Gzhung-lugs Legs-par Bshad-pa* (Thimphu, Bhutan, 1979) vol. 2, p. 420.3.
- 49) Sa-skyia Paṇḍita Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan, "Bka'-gdams Do-kor-ba'i zhu-ba" *Sa-skyia Bka'-bum* vol. 5, pp. 402.4.3–403.1.6 on p. 403.1.2; and "Bka'-gdams Do-kor-ba'i zhu-lan" *ibid.* pp. 403.1.6–404.2.3 on p. 403.4.1–2.
- 50) "*De-nas 'brū 'am me-tog-la rten-'brel brgya-rtsa-brgyad bzlas-te chos-kyi-dbyings-kyi rang-bzhin-du gyur-pa de-la mthor-bas chos-kyi-skur byas*" work no. 1 (in note 42 above) p. 649.1 and again in p. 654.1; work no. 3 *ibid.* p. 690.3–4. and p. 694.3–4; work no. 4 *ibid.* p. 718.6. See also work no. 3 *ibid.* p. 688.5 where Phag-mo-gru-pa states that *sūtra*-style consecration basically means establishing the consecrated object as the *Dharmakāya*. ("*Pha-rol-tu phyin-pa'i lugs-kyi gtsō-bor chos-kyi skur rab-tu gnas-pa yin-te.*") In another work (no. 4 *ibid.* p. 710.4) he says that the *sūtra*-style consecration is 'the verse of interdependent origination alone.' ("*mdo-lugs ni rten-'brel brkyang-pa*").
- 51) Nagao Gajin, "On the Theory of Buddha-body (*Buddha-kāya*)" *The Eastern Buddhist* 611 (1973) 25–53, esp. pp. 26–7; Lewis R. Lancaster, "Literary Sources for a Study of Barabudūr" *Barabudūr: History and Significance of a Buddhist Monument* (Berkeley, 1981) eds, Luis O. Gómez and Hiram W. Woodward, Jr., pp. 195–205; esp. p. 199.
- 52) See Schopen, "On The Buddha and his Bones" (see note 13); Nagao, *ibid.*; Gösta Libbert, *Iconographic Dictionary of the Indian Religions* (E.J. Brill: Leiden, 1976) p. 76.
- 53) Nagao, *ibid.* p. 27.
- 54) See note 20 above, P #878 p. 307.3.5–7.
- 55) See note 15 above. See also John M. Cooper, "Two Sutras on Dependent Origination" *Buddhist Studies Review* 1 (1983–4) 31–4 on p. 34.
- 56) As we shall see, Sa-skyia Paṇḍita, Spos-khang-ba and Gung-thang-ba did not accept this kind of consecration. However, Bka'-brgyud-pa masters and especially 'Brug-pa such as the Third Khams-sprul adapted it. See the Third Khams-sprul Ngag-dbang Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin (1680–1728), "Rab-gnas me-tog bsgrub-pa'i cho-ga spyi mdor bkod-pa byin-rlabs phung-po" *Collected Works* (Tashijong, Palampur, 1978) vol. 3. pp. 89–93 [published also separately].
- 57) P.311.1.1–2.5 (see note 7 above). The following is the passage on consecration from which the citations below were taken. "*De-bzhin rab-gnas mdo-lugs dang! Phrag-na-rdo-rje mdo-lugs dang! ltung-bshags dang ni Sher-snying sogsl sngags-lugs yin zhes 'chad-pa thos! 'di-yang brtags-par bya-bas nyom! mdo-nas rab-gnas bshad-pa med! 'on-kyang mchod-bstod bkra-shis sogsl rgyal-po'i mnga'-dbul lta-bu-lal rab-gnas yin zhes smra-na smros! lha bsgom-pa dang sngags-bzlas dang! bum-pa lha-yi sta-gon*"

(1) *Mdo-nas rab-gnas bshad-pa med!* “Consecrations are not taught in the *sūtras*.”<sup>58</sup>) Sa-skyā Paṇḍita adds here, “however, if one says that rituals such as offerings, praises, recitations of verses for auspiciousness, royal enthronement are consecrations, then one may say that consecrations are taught in the *sūtras*.”<sup>59</sup>) Sa-skyā Paṇḍita then lists the steps of a proper consecration. These include generation of the Commitment Being (Sanskrit: *Samayasattva* / Tibetan: *Dam-tshig-sems-dpa*), invitation of the Enlightened Awareness Being, etc.

(2) *Deng-sang rab-gnas mdo-lugs zhes! chad-pa sangs-rgyas bstan-pa min!* “The so-called *sūtra*-style consecration being expounded these days is not the teaching of the Buddha.”<sup>60</sup>)

(3) *Mdo dang rgyud-kyi khyad-par nil cho-ga'i bya-ba yod med yin!* “The distinction between *sūtras* and *tantras* depends on the presence or absence of ritual action.”<sup>61</sup>) In this last statement Sa-skyā Paṇḍita is saying that all rituals are tantric by definition. No ritual, the consecration ritual included, can possibly belong to the *sūtras*. This statement has further implications for the definition of ritual in general, and of tantric ritual in particular. It should be examined in light of the numerous examples of rituals in both *sūtras* and *dhāraṇī-sūtras*. However, here I will set aside this complex and important issue and instead will concentrate on the question of *sūtra*-style consecration.

As was mentioned above, in both the *Gandī-Sūtra* and in Phag-mo-gru-pa's explanation of consecration by means of the ‘verse of interdependent origination’ the consecrated object is conceived as *Dharmakāya* in its abstract meaning. In his answers to Do-kor-ba's question on the difference between the blessings of consecrations performed by 1. blessing as *Dharmakāya* and 2. summoning (*dgug-pa*) of the Enlightened Awareness Being (i.e. *tantra*-style consecration), Sa-skyā Paṇḍita disapproves any consecration by blessing as *Dharmakāya*. He says “At the time of performing consecration the *Dharmakāya* remains in its own natural state, its condition is without elaborations for it [*Dharmakāya*] no consecration was taught.”<sup>62</sup>) Also Spos-khang-pa Rin-chen-

*dang! dngos-gzhi'i dam-tshig sems-dpa' dang! ye-shes-'khor-lo dgug gzhus dang! spyang-dbye brtan-par bzhus-pa dang! sngags-kyi byin-gyis-brlabs-pa-yil me-tog dor-nas legs-mchod-del bkra-shis rgyas-par byed-pa yil cho-ga gsang-sngags rgyud-sde-las! gsungs-kyi pha-rol-phyin-las min! la-la gdams-ngag yin zhes smral 'o-na mdo-sde gang-dag-lal brten-pa yin-pa smra dgos-sol! deng-sang gsang-ba 'dus-pa'i lhal bsgoms-nas mdo-lugs yin zhes smral gsang-'dus la-sogs cho-ga-lal mdo-lugs cho-ga 'byung-ba mtshar! seng-ge'i phru-gu glang-chen-las! byung-na sngon-med srog-chags yin! mkhas-pa-rnams-kyis 'di-'dra-yil cho-ga slan-chad ma byed-cig! lha-la rab-tu gnas-pa dang! mi-la dbang-bskur bya-ba sogs! rdo-rje slob-ma'i dbang-bskur-bal thob-kyang bya-bar ma gsungs-nal dbang-bskur gtan-nas ma thob-pa'il gang-zag-rnams-kyis smos-ci-dgos! rdo-rje slob-ma'i dbang-bskur tsam! thob-nas lha-bsgom tsam dang nil bzlas-brjod dang ni sbyin-sreg dang! las-tshogs la-sogs bsgrub-pa-yil dngos-grub dang ni phyag-rgya-yil ye-shes sgrub-pa'i cho-ga dang! gsang-sngags 'ga'-zhig nyan-pa-lal dbang-ba yin-gyi rgyud-'chad dang! dbang-bskur dang ni rab-gnas sogs! slob-dpon phrin-las byar mi rung! rdo-rje slob-dpon dbang thob-nas! 'khor-lo lha-yi de-nyid sogs! mam-dag dkyil-'khor bsgom-pa dang! dbang-bskur dang ni rab-gnas sogs! slob-dpon-gyi ni phrin-las dang! sangs-rgyas kun-gyi dam-tshig dang! bla-na med-pa'i sdom-pa sogs! rdo-rje slob-dpon kho-na'i las! nyid yin gzhan-kyis byar mi rung! deng-sang rab-gnas mdo-lugs zhes! 'chad-pa sangs-rgyas bstan-pa min! khyim-pas mkhan-slob byed-pa dang! rdo-rje slob-dpon ma yin-pas! dbang-bskur rab-gnas byed-pa nil gnyis-ka bstan-pa min-par mtshung! Phyag-na-rdo-rje'i bsgom-bzlas kyang! mdo-sde-rnams-nas bshad-pa med! gzungs-nas bshad-pa de-dag nil bya-ba'i rgyud-kyi cho-ga yin! ltung-bshags sangs-rgyas phyag-mtshan-lal phub dang ral-gri sogs 'dzin-pa'il sgrub-thabs sangs-rgyas-kyis ma gsungs! mdo dang rgyud-kyi khyad-par nil cho-ga'i bya-ba yod med yin! de-ltar shes-nas mdo-sde dang! sngags-kyi lugs-rnams dpyod-de smros.”*

58) *Ibid.*, p. 311.1–2.

59) “‘On-kyang mchod-bstod bkra-shis sogs! rgyal-po'i mnga'-dbul lta-bu-lal rab-gnas yin zhes smra-na smros!” *ibid.* p. 311.1–2. This passage was quoted by Bco-brgyad Khri-chen Thub-bstan-legs-bshad-rgya-mtsho and translated into English in Thubten Legshay Gyatsho, *Gateway to the Temple*, translated by David Paul Jackson (Ratna Pustak Bhandar: Kathmandu, 1979) pp. 73–4. Here, however, *mchod-bstod* of the *Sa-skyā Bka'-'bum* is replaced with *mchod-rten*.

60) *Sa-skyā Bka'-'bum* vol. 5, p. 311.2–3. It seems that part of Sa-skyā Paṇḍita's reasons for objecting to *sūtra*-style consecration may have been reaction to a situation where *tantra*-style consecrations were being performed by unqualified masters. The performers of such consecrations, not being qualified *vajracāryas*, might have claimed that they were performing *sūtra*-style consecrations (see *Sa-skyā Bka'-'bum* vol. 5, p. 311.1.5–2.4). However, as we have seen above, there is more to the argument than that. *Sūtra*-style consecration did indeed exist.

61) *Sa-skyā Bka'-'bum* vol. 5, p. 311.2–5.

62) The Dge-bshes Do-kor ba asks: “*Thub-pa'i ye-shes ji-lta-bul rten-la rab-gnas byed-pa'i tshel chos-skur byin-gyis-brlabs-pa dang! ye-shes sems-dpa' dgug-pa gnyis! byin-rlabs khyad-par yod lags sam!*” Sa-skyā Paṇḍita answers: “*Rab-tu gnas-pa byed dus-sul chos-sku rang-bzhin gzhir gzhang-stel gnas-lugs spros-pa dang bral-basl de la rab-gnas bshad-pa med!*” and continues: “*Dam-tshig sems-dpa' bskyed-pa-la lye-shes sems-dpa' spyang-drang nas! mchod-cing bstod-nas bstim-pa-lal rab-gnas dngos-gzhir rgyud-las bshad!*” *Sa-skyā Bka'-'bum* (see note 49 above) p. 403.1.1–2 and p. 403.4.1–2.

rgyal-mtshan (15th century) in his commentary on the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* rejects any consecration higher than the *tantra*-style consecration. He states that this *tantra*-style consecration operates within the relative truth. “Since the ultimate truth is without elaborations the term *sūtra*-style cannot be applied to it.”<sup>63</sup>) Thus, these two Sa-skyapa masters do not agree with the interpretation of *sūtra*-style consecration as a transformation of the consecrated object into something conceived as *Dharmakāya*, which both interpret here as *Dharma*-realm. This, however, had very little consequence for the actual practice. In performing the *Dpal’byor Rgya-mtsho*, currently the most popular Sa-skyapa consecration, the ritual master does scatter grain or flower on the *stūpa* or image being consecrated while reciting the ‘verse of interdependent origination’<sup>64</sup>).

### Rang-byung-rdo-rje and the Bka’-brgyud-pas

Another Tibetan writer known for his *sūtra*-style consecration work is the Third Karma-pa Rang-byung-rdo-rje (1284–1339)<sup>65</sup>). Unfortunately this work, which is mentioned by Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha’-yas<sup>66</sup>) and Gung-thang-pa<sup>67</sup>) among others, is presently unavailable. The following is extracted from Kong-sprul’s description. Rang-byung-rdo-rje’s consecration work called *Bum-gnyis-ma* seems to have been the very root text of the Karma-pa consecrations. It explained both *sūtra*- and *tantra*-style consecrations. The *sūtra*-style consecration followed the practice of Atiśa and the Bka’-gdams-pa. Because in this consecration the *maṇḍala* ritual is unnecessary, and the consecrated object is visualized as Śākyamuni Buddha, and not as one of the tantric deities, it is designated as *sūtra*-style consecration. However, Kong-sprul continues: “In actual fact it is the common tradition connected mainly with the lower *tantras*.”<sup>68</sup>) This type of visualization of Śākyamuni Buddha appears also in Phag-mo-gru-pa’s work thus supporting Kong-sprul’s assertion that such a ritual existed<sup>69</sup>). These types of consecrations may rely also on Sumatikīrti’s consecration text found in the Tanjur<sup>70</sup>). Kong-sprul’s consecration itself is likewise divided into *sūtra*- and *tantra*-styles; the former occupying most of the work. This consecration is performed, as is the one in Phag-mo-gru-pa’s work, through the invitation of Śākyamuni Buddha as a *yi-dam* into the object being consecrated.

63) Spos-khang-pa (see note 48 above) pp. 432.4–433.3. “*Rab-tu gnas-bya’i rten-la rgyal-ba sras bcas-kyi byin-rlabs ’jug-pa’i dmigs-pa tsam dang/ mchod bstod dang/ bkra-shis brjod-nas brtan-par bzhugs-pa’i gsol-ba gdab-pa-lal mdo-lugs-kyi ming ’dogs-nas gal-ba med-kyang/ gsang-sngags-kyi lugs mi byed-par khyad-du bsad-nas rab-gnas khyad-’phags-su rlom-pa nil don-gyi rab-gnas ma yin-tel kun-rdzob-tu rab-gnas-kyi rten dam-’ishig-pa-la ye-shes-pa spyan-drangs-nas brtan-par bzhugs-te dbang-bskur-nas spyan-dbye-ba’i cho-ga med-pas rab-gnas ma yin-cing/ don-dam-par spros-pa dang bral-ba’i phyir mdo-lugs-kyi tha-snyad mi ’jug-go.*”

64) Ngag-dbang-blo-gros-snying-po-gzhan-phan-mtha’-yas-pa’i-od-zer (1874–1952), “Dpal Kye-rdo-rje’i rnal’byor brten-pa’i rab-gnas mdor-bsdus-pa Dpal’byor Rgya-mtsho sруб-skyes lha’i bcud-len” *Lam’bras Tshogs-bshad* (Dehra Dun, H.P., 1985) vol. 6, pp. 484–521, on pp. 506.4–507.2. This ritual action is not considered to be *sūtra*-style here. See also Śākya-mchog-ldan (1428–1507), “Le’u gsum-pa rig-’dzin sdom-pa’i skabs-kyi ’bel-gtam rnam-par nges-pa” *Collected Works* (Thimphu, Bhutan, 1975) vol. 7, pp. 1–229, where he says that the verse of interdependent origination belongs to the tantra (“*Rten’brel snying-po’i sha-lo-ṣa [śloka] gcig-po sngags-lugs yin-pa dang*”) p. 105.1.

65) The Third Karma-pa also consecrated the Kanjur and Tanjur at ’Chims-phu near Bsam-yas. See *The Blue Annals* (see note 44 above) p. 492.

66) In *Bka’-brgyud Sngags-mdzod* (see note 26 above) p. 381.2–4 (1974) and p. 371.2–4 (1982). “Sgrub-brgyud Kam-tshang-gi phyogs-su Thams-cad Mkhayen-pa Rang-byung Zhabs-kyis mdzad-pa’i rab-gnas Bum-gnyis-ma kho-na rtsa-bar snang-bas gzhung-der mdo-lugs dang sngags-lungs gnyis-su gsungs-pa’i dang-po nil Rgyal-tsab Byams-pa dang Thogs-med Sku-mched-nas brgyud-pa Dpal-ldan A-ti-sha’i gdams-ngag Jo-bo Bka’-gdams-pa-rnams-kyi phyag-bzhes-tel dkyil-’khor sgrub-mchod mi dgos-shing rten-rnams Thub-pa’i Dbang-por bskyed-pa-la mdo-lugs zhes tha-snyad-du mdzad-pa-las/ bdag-bum-rten-gyi bskyed-chog yan-lag-bzhi tshan-bar dgos-pas don-la rgyud-sde ’og-ma dang gtso-bor ’brel-pa thun-mong-ba’i lugs-so”.

67) See note 6 above (on p. 102.2).

68) See note 66 above.

69) Work no. 1 (in note 42) pp. 660–1.

70) “Rab-tu gnas-pa’i cho-ga” P #3960 vol. 80 [*Tōhoku* #3139], where the colophon title of this work is “*Rab-tu gnas-pa’i cho-ga thun-mong-ba*”. Rig-’dzin Padma-’phrin-las reads this as: “*Gsang-sngags dang pha-rol-tu phyin-pa thun-mong-gi cho-ga*”. ‘A ritual common to [both] *tantra* and *sūtra* (literally *pāramitā*)’ *Rituals of Rdo-rje-brag* (see note 12 above) p. 5.5–6 and p. 8.3.

This form of *sūtra*-style consecration is different from Atiśa's *sūtra*-style consecration. While the latter is performed by the recitation of the 'verse of interdependent origination' onto grain/flowers, the former consecration employs certain tantric means such as the invitation of the Enlightened Awareness Being. However, the *yi-dam* here is Śākyamuni Buddha and not, as in most present-day consecrations, one of the higher *tantra* deities. The important point here is that this consecration may represent a ritual tradition pertaining to both *sūtra* and the lower *tantra*. This form of consecration also did not die out. Kong-sprul's consecration text, as mentioned above, relies on it. His text is perhaps the most common consecration manual currently in use within the Karma-pa sect. Another interesting example is the consecration text of the Third Khams-sprul which combines both the visualization of Śākyamuni Buddha and the recitation of the 'verse of interdependent origination' for the permeation of the grain/flowers<sup>71</sup>).

### The Fifth Dalai Lama

The Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (1617–1682), maintains that instructions for consecration rituals were orally transmitted<sup>72</sup>). In the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye*, Sa-skya Paṇḍita had already answered such arguments by saying: "Some maintain that it (*sūtra*-style consecration) is a transmission of precepts (*gdams-ngag*). But they must state on which part of the *sūtra* section they based themselves."<sup>73</sup>) Sa-skya Paṇḍita holds here a strictly textual approach. As we have seen above and elsewhere<sup>74</sup>), extra-canonical sources such as archaeology and testimonies of travellers to India provide us with richer material on *stūpa* cults than the *sūtras* themselves. Thus we might accept the Fifth Dalai Lama's opinion that there were various oral traditions concerning *stūpas* and images which were not included in the *sūtras*. Whether these traditions were all taught by the Buddha as the Fifth Dalai Lama claims is an entirely different question.

### Later Tibetan Sources

Another source for the application of the 'verse of interdependent origination' in *sūtra*-style consecrations performed by the Bka'-gdams-pa is found in one of the explanatory writings on consecration, a new genre of consecration works which developed in the 17th century. This work was written by Rig-'dzin Padma-'phrin-las (1641–1717), abbot of Rdo-rje-brag monastery<sup>75</sup>). He describes what certain people, including the Bka'-gdams-pas, considered to be *sūtra*-style consecration as follows: A mirror on which the 'verse of interdependent origination' is written with saffron, is placed on a heap of grain or flowers. The reflection of this *gāthā* is absorbed in the grain or flowers. Then the monks circumambulate the object being consecrated and scatter on it the grain or flowers, which were 'empowered' (*sgrub*) with the 'verse of interdependent origination'. Padma-'phrin-las maintains that such *sūtra*-style consecrations seem to be acceptable. Yet, the remainder of his two hundred and eighty-five page work on consecration deals with *tantra*-style consecration. The brief description in this rather late text resembles the *sūtra*-style

71) See note 56 above.

72) "Gzhan-yang man-ngag-tu byas-te zhal dang snyan-nas brgyud dgos-pa-mams." Even though this type of argument is common in attempting to account for a religious practice not found in scriptures, the Fifth Dalai Lama definitely has a point here. The Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (1617–1682) "Gzu-gnas blo-ldan ngo-mtshar skyed-byed gzungs-bul-gyi lag-len 'khrul spong nyin-mor byed-pa" *Rituals of Rdo-rje-brag* (Leh, 1973) pp. 389–437 on p. 402.2, but more generally on pp. 400–3. This work is missing one folio and some part folios. A complete copy is located at The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala; access no. pa 1053.

73) "La-la gdams-ngag yin zhes smral 'o-na mdo-sde gang-dag-lal brten-pa yin-pa smra dgos-sol" *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* (see note 7 above) p. 311.1.4. According to some commentaries on the *Sdom Gsum Rab-dbye* (see note 27 and note 48 above) it was Atiśa's precepts.

74) Gregory Schopen (see note 13 above) and references there. Yael Bentor, see note 16 above.

75) In *Rituals of Rdo-rje-brag* (see note 12 above) p. 5. "Gzhan-yang Bka'-gdams sogs nang-bar rab-tu gnas-pa'i sngon rol-tu 'bru'i phung-po spungs-pa'i steng-du me-long-la dri-bzang-gis rten-'brel snying-po bris-pa bzhag-ste dge-slong-rnams-kyis bskor-te rten-'brel snying-po'i gzungs-sgrub byas-pa'i me-tog-gis rten-la gtor-pa-la rab-gnas-kyi sgras biags-pa sogs mdo-lugs-kyi rab-gnas-su bzhag-kyang chog-par snang-ngo."

consecration depicted by Atiśa. The main difference is in the use of the mirror to permeate the grain/flowers with the 'verse of interdependent origination'. According to Atiśa this was performed through the recitation of that verse. The consecration ritual as it is performed today incorporates both these practices. As was mentioned above, the present-day consecrations are characteristically tantric rituals. However they did not entirely supplant the several earlier forms of consecrations.

Another later writer, Gung-thang-pa (1762–1828) in writing on the history of the consecration ritual supports Sa-skya Paṇḍita. He asserts that both the *gandī* consecration and the consecration by means of scattering flowers blessed by the 'verse of interdependent origination' are merely designated as consecrations; however they do not possess the essential characteristics of consecration<sup>76</sup>).

### Contemporary Tibetan Practices

I recently observed the annual three-day re-consecration of Bodhanath *stūpa* performed in the assembly hall of the Dge-lugs-pa monastery Dga'-ldan-chos-'phel-gling<sup>77</sup>). During the preparatory steps of the ritual the 'verse of interdependent origination', together with the seed-syllables of the five *Tathāgatas*, was written with saffron powder on a brass mirror. During the ritual the letters of the *mantras* were washed with water from the action-vase (*las-bum-pa*) onto a pile of grain mixed with *tsam-pa-ka* 'flowers'<sup>78</sup>) while reciting the 'verse of interdependent origination'. Through this ritual action the *mantras* pervade the grain/flowers<sup>79</sup>). In the central part of the consecration (the only part which was performed publicly in front of the *stūpa*), after circumambulating the *stūpa*, two ritual steps were performed:

- (1) Requesting the tantric deity to firmly abide in the *stūpa*.
- (2) Scattering of the grain and 'flowers' into which the 'verse of interdependent origination' and the seed-syllables had been dissolved<sup>80</sup>).

Thus, in this ritual the blessing of the 'verse of interdependent origination' stands side by side with the core of the tantric component of the consecration. Furthermore, as was mentioned above, the short forms of consecration consist mainly of those two ritual actions. In other consecration rituals which I observed recently in Tibetan monasteries in Kathmandu Valley a mirror was not used. Instead the scattering of grain/flowers onto which the 'verse of interdependent origination' was recited was performed within the *mnga'-dbul* (enthronement offering) section<sup>81</sup>). Nevertheless, the *sūtra*-style consecration is always included in the present tantric consecration ritual.

76) Gung-thang-pa Dkon-mchog-bstan-pa'i-sgron-me (see note 6) p. 102. 1–4. "De-lta-bu'i rab-gnas-kyi mnam-gzhag-'di mdo dang rgyud-sde gang-las gsungs-pa yin snyam-nal Karma Rang-byung-rdo-rjes mdo-lugs-la brten-pa'i rab-gnas-kyi cho-ga Bum-gnyis-mar grags-pa mdzad-cing/ Karma-phrin-las-pas de-la lhan-thabs sogs sbyar 'dug-na'ang/ 'Jam-mgon Sa-pan-gyis/ mdo-las rab-gnas bshad-pa med/ 'on-kyang mchog bstod bkra-shis sogs/ rgyal-po'i mnga'-dbul lta-bu-lal rab-gnas yin zhes smra-na smros/ gsungs-pa-ltar/ chos-rnams thams-cad rgyu-las byung/ zhes sogs [rten-'brel snying-po]-kyis bsnags-pa'i me-tog 'thor-te shis-pa brjod-pa tsam dang/ gandī'i rab-gnas zhes-pa lta-bu'i tha-snyad tsam re yod-kyang rab-gnas mshan-nyid-pa-zhiig ma bshad!"

77) The ritual manual used at that occasion was written by Khri-byang Blo-bzang-ye-shes-bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho (1901–1981), "Dgon-gnas Stag-brag Bsam-gtan-gling-du rab-tu gnas-pa'i cho-ga dge-legs rgya-mtsho'i char-'bebs [dang rab-gnas rta-thog-ma argha'i cho-ga bcas] dpal-ldan Smad-rgyud-pa'i phyag-bzhes ltar mdzad-rgyu [rgyun] nag-'gros-su bkod-pa" *Dgon-gnas Stag-Brag Bsam-gtan-gling-gi Phyag-bzhes Mdo-sngangs Chos-spyod* (New Delhi, 1975) vol. 3, pp. 355–469 [hereafter *Rab-gnas*]; also found in his *Collected Works* (New Delhi, 1978) vol. 2, pp. 439–494. The references below will be to the first text.

78) For Sanskrit *campaka*, see *Mahāvīryupatti* #6151. These are seeds, which grow in a large pod, and look like white dry flowers. They are widely used in Tibetan rituals as a substitute for flowers.

79) *Rab-gnas* p. 361.3–5. This ritual action was preceded by 1. the invitation of the blessing of the Victorious Ones and their sons together with all the qualities of existence and peace to the 'flowers' and grain and 2. by the recitation of the 'verse of interdependent origination' one hundred times. On pp. 360.6–361.3.

80) *Rab-gnas* pp.440.6–442.5. This ritual action is mentioned also by Losang Paldhen Gyalzur and Anthony H. N. Verwey, (see note 4) on p. 179.

81) In most cases the ritual master while reciting the 'verse of interdependent origination' holds a *dhāraṇī* thread (*gzungs-thag*) in his hand. The other end is tied to the object being consecrated. The recited *gāthā* is assumed to coil around the *dhāraṇī* thread, reach the *stūpa* or image and permeate it with its presence.

## Conclusions

To conclude, present-day Tibetan consecration rituals, as is the case with many other Tibetan rituals, are composite. Their main part, as mentioned above, is the invitation of the Enlightened Awareness Being and the request for it to remain in the consecrated object (*brtan-bzhugs*). However, the ritual incorporates various early forms of consecration such as the *sūtra*-style consecration, eye opening ritual (*spyan-dbye*), bathing (*khros-gsol*), and enthronement offerings (*mnga'-dbul*)<sup>82</sup>.

Thus, the *sūtra*-style consecration ritual provides us with another example for the preservation of ritual actions sanctified by previous masters. Sometimes earlier forms of ritual were modified to better accord with developments in the theoretical level of the religion, but they were not supplanted<sup>83</sup>. Various historical strata are still preserved at the core of the present-day consecration ritual.

In conclusion, even though some of Tibet's most renowned scholars expressed their opinions about *sūtra*-style consecration, this controversy is primarily a matter of designations and classifications. It proves its importance to us mainly for the light it sheds on the historical development of the consecration ritual.

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82) Additional examples for Tibetan rituals whose histories follow theoretical developments in the religion are burnt offering ritual *sbyin-sreg* (Sanskrit: *homa*) and the bathing ritual *khros-gsol* (Sanskrit usually: *snāna*). The Tibetan *sbyin-sreg* includes various elements rooted in the Vedic burnt offering. Agni is invited, offerings are made to him, etc. The main part of the ritual, however, centers around the tantric deity. The Tibetan *khros-gsol* ritual sometimes consists of two phases, the ordinary bath (*phal-khros*) and the supreme bath (*mchog-khros*). The ordinary bath relies heavily on pre-tantric rituals common also to other traditions in the Indian subcontinent, while the supreme bath is actually conferred by the tantric deities.

83) For example, in this case the blessing by the seed-syllables (Sanskrit: *bija*) of the five *Tathāgatas* is added to the blessing by the 'verse of interdependent origination'.