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Whence the Five Fingers?
**A philological investigation of *Laghukālacakratantra* 5.171–173ab
as quoted in sMan bla don grub's *Yid bzhin nor bu***

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Abstract

The disagreement regarding the correct size of a Buddha image between the Kālacakra tradition (Dus 'khor lugs) and the Saṃvarodaya tradition (sDom 'byung lugs) is a significant and

¹ I dedicate this article to my tutor Prof. Bangwei Wang on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. The first draft of this article was a paper presented in 2012 at the Fifth International Conference on Tibetan Archaeology & Arts held in Beijing. It was revised and presented a second time at the Asien-Afrika-Institut, Hamburg, in 2014. First of all, I would like to thank all the *kalyāṇamitras* met in Phun tshogs gling in August 2012; my communication with them sparked my interests in this topic. To all colleagues who supported my research on this subject and commented on my earlier drafts, I also own many thanks. Special thanks go to Prof. John Newman, who read my earlier drafts and offered very valuable comments. I would also like to thank Prof. George Cardona and Prof. Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp for reading and commenting on my most recent draft. Moreover, my appreciation goes to Ms. Cynthia Peck-Kubaczek, who corrected my English and made valuable suggestions. Needless to say, any imperfections and errors that remain are entirely my own. The final phase of my study on this topic was funded by Sichuan University (project number 2018hhs-61) and Sichuan University Research Cluster for Regional History and Frontier Studies (project number xkqzd2018-06).

recurring theme in the history of Tibetan Thangka painting. While the latter specifies 120 fingers as the correct height of a Buddha image, the former claims that it should be 5 fingers more. Taking as a departure point two and a half verses from the *Laghukālacakratantra* that are quoted by sMan bla don grub (15th century), arguably one of the most prominent trailblazers of Tibetan styles of Thangka painting, we observe: firstly, that in his *De gshegs yid nor* (a revised and more developed version of *bDe gshegs yid nor*) sMan bla don grub quotes verses 5.171–173ab of the *Laghukālacakratantra*; secondly, *Laghukālacakratantra* 5.172a as attested in *De gshegs yid nor* may have been quoted from the new Jo nang translation of the *Laghukālacakratantra*, although this particular *pāda* offers the philologically insupportable and hermeneutically inconsistent reading of 125 fingers; and thirdly, in India, the divergent iconometric systems found in the *Laghukālacakratantra* and the *Samvarodayatantra* had already reached a compromise, and so the discrepancy between the Kālacakra tradition and the Samvarodaya tradition as reflected in the Tibetan materials may in fact have been introduced by the new Jo nang translation of LKCT 5.172a, presumably, in much the same way as the *gzhan stong* versus *rang stong* controversy was motivated by the new religious term (*chos skad*) *gzhan stong*.

Keywords: Buddhist Iconometry, sMan bla don grub, Dus 'khor lugs, sDom 'byung lugs, The *Laghukālacakratantra*, The *Vimalaprabhā*, The *Samvarodayatantra*.

The figure of sMan bla don grub (15th century, henceforth, sMan bla)² marks the emergence of the Tibetan style of Thangka painting. The treatise *Yid bzhin nor bu*³ attributed to him, with its well-balanced treatment of both theoretical and practical issues, is arguably the first systematic work on iconometry in Tibetan. Among many other things, the work examines a significant and recurring theme in the history of Tibetan Thangka painting, namely, the divergent views of the Kālacakra tradition (Dus 'khor lugs) and the Samvarodaya tradition

² Jackson 1996: 43, 82–83. Cf. 'Dar dbon nyi shar 2012, which reexamines the date and epithet of sMan bla, his later namesake, and the place where the *Yid bzhin nor bu* was finalized.

³ The common part shared by the two texts, i.e., the *bDe gshegs yid nor* and the *De gshegs yid nor* mentioned below.

(sDom 'byung lugs) regarding the correct size of Buddha image.⁴ While the latter asserts that the height of a Buddha image should be 120 fingers, the former claims that it should be 5 fingers more. The fourth chapter of the *Yid bzhin nor bu* deals exclusively with this topic. Given sMan bla's dates and his significance, we may safely say that this particular chapter represents an early phase of Tibetan scholars' reflecting on the divergent iconometric systems as given in the *Laghukālacakratantra* (henceforth, LKCT) and the *Samvarodayatantra* (henceforth, SUT). It seems that the sources of this disagreement can be traced back to Indian scriptures, but it is not yet fully clear – or rather, it has not yet been fully investigated – what caused this disagreement and how it moved from India to Tibet. As a first attempt to deal with this issue, taking as our departure point two and a half verses from the LKCT quoted by sMan bla, we shall demonstrate that finding a compromise for this disagreement was probably long a concern of the exegetes north of the Himalayas. The arguments and the unspecified yet apparent counter-arguments attested in the treatises of sMan bla as well as those of later Tibetan scholars feature indigenous peculiarities that are well worth a first investigation, one that can be deepened in the future. The following three questions will be examined:

1. Was sMan bla quoting LKCT 5.171–173ab in his *Yid bzhin nor bu*?
2. What is the source of LKCT 5.172a as quoted in *Yid bzhin nor bu*?
3. How and where did the divergence and conflict between the Kālacakra and Samvarodaya traditions arise?

1. Was sMan bla quoting LKCT 5.171–173ab in his *Yid bzhin nor bu*?

In the *De bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rim pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i gzhung lugs yid bzhin gyi nor bu* (henceforth, *De gshegs yid nor*)⁵ based upon the Zhol blocks carved in 1927,⁶ verses 171–

⁴ There seems to be no Sanskrit equivalent of Dus 'khor lugs, nor of sDom 'byung lugs. It remains to be investigated when and where these terms first came into use.

⁵ The title appears towards the end of the statement which clarifies the aim of the treatise is *De bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rim pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i gzhung lugs yid bzhin gyi nor bu* (*De gshegs yid nor*: 3r5–6), it differs from the title on the cover page: *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid*

173ab from the fifth chapter (Jñānapāṭala) of the LKCT⁷ are quoted by sMan bla as a witness of the Kālacakra tradition. However, in the *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu* (henceforth *bDe gshegs yid nor*), which is also attributed to sMan bla, published in 1983 by Bla ma Zlaba and Shesrab gyaltzen in Gangtok, Sikkim,⁸ these verses are not cited, nor are the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions mentioned.

The wild discrepancies between these two texts,⁹ including their different titles and other substantial differences regarding contents and structure,¹⁰ would at first glance lead us to believe that they are two different works, works that may or may not be by the same author. It has also been recorded that sMan bla wrote “a brief manual intended for novice painters” entitled *bsTan bcos legs bshad nor bu'i 'phreng ba* (henceforth, *Nor 'phreng*).¹¹ Is it possible that one of these two texts is a misidentified version of *Nor 'phreng*? Probably not: the

bzhin nor bu. We have chosen to follow the former for two reasons: first, to differentiate it from *bDe gshegs yid nor*, which differs substantially; secondly, the title on the cover page is more likely to have been modified, and consequently it is less reliable.

⁶ TBRC W19727-I1KG10541-1-62-any. The description on the information page identifies it wrongly with the Zhol edition engraved in 1944. TBRC W29575-5519-1-88-any is an impression of the blocks cut in 1944. For a brief account of the pros and cons of Zhol edition, see Jackson 1996: 135, n. 272. There are other modern editions, to list a few: Blo bzang phun tshogs 1993, Luo 2005, Karma bde legs 2010, all of them seem to have been based upon the 1927 Zhol edition. We shall for the time being stay with W19727-I1KG10541-1-62-any when quoting *De gshegs yid nor*. A critical edition of the text is still a desideratum.

⁷ Zhol 7v6–8r4.

⁸ TBRC W24041-3652-1-126. According to Jackson (1996: 423), this was reproduced from a manuscript in the collection of Bla-ma Senge of Yol-mo. There is yet another manuscript bearing the same title in Tucci's collection; see Filibeck 2003: 415. Tucci's collection has been transferred from the library of IsMEO to the Italian National Library and currently inaccessible.

⁹ The discrepancies, it seems, have largely escaped the notice of scholars. Tucci (1949: 293–94) was not aware of the Gangtok edition, which was published only in 1983. David Jackson's (1996: 423) identification of the Gangtok edition is inaccurate. When referring to sMan bla's *Yid bzhin nor bu*, Cüppers et al. (2012: 5, n. 37) list only *bDe gshegs yid nor*.

¹⁰ For instance, most of the text up to 15v3 in *bDe gshegs yid nor* does not exist in *De gshegs yid nor*, and the outline at the beginning of *De gshegs yid nor* (3r5–3v2) is not found in *bDe gshegs yid nor*.

¹¹ Jackson 1996: 104, 113, 423.

structure of *Nor 'phreng*¹² does not match either of the two *Yid bzhin nor bus*. And a comparison of the beginning of *Nor 'phreng* with those of *bDe gshegs yid nor* and *De gshegs yid nor* also shows that it is a different treatise.¹³

On the other hand, despite the textual discrepancies between *bDe gshegs yid nor* and *De gshegs yid nor*, their almost identical colophons suggest that there is a close textual relationship between them.¹⁴ Both are believed to have been composed by sMan bla. One might imagine that sMan bla composed the two texts over the course of time and thus, that the many divergences bear witness to the development of his thoughts on the same topics. Another possibility is that one or the other is a later redaction of the original text, be it *bDe gshegs yid nor* or *De gshegs yid nor*.

Tucci was probably the first who noticed the problems in the text corpus attributed to sMan bla and his successors. When listing the texts cited by Klong rdol bla ma (1719–1805), Tucci remarked on the discrepancies between the *rDzogs pa'i sangs rgyas mchog gi sprul pa'i sku'i phyag tshad*, which he considered a fragment of the *Legs bshad 'od zer brgya phrag* written by sMan bla,¹⁵ and a book entitled *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin gyi nor bu*, which, though ascribed to dPal blo bzang po, he took to be a later revised version of sMan bla's *Yid bzhin nor bu*. As Tucci writes:¹⁶

The book was printed in dGa's ldan p'un ts'ogs gliñ; the author is dPal blo bzañ po, who re-edited the works of sMan t'añ pa, whose incarnation he considered himself to be. He is quoted by the Fifth Dalai Lama (*ibid.*, p. 8); when we compare this treatise with the fragment of his predecessor, a verbal correspondence is noticeable,

¹² Jackson 1996: 113.

¹³ The published edition mentioned by Jackson (1996: 423) is not available to me. The comparison is based upon the quotation of *Nor 'phreng* in Jackson 1996: 134, n. 255.

¹⁴ Jackson (1996: 135, n. 273) reproduced the colophon published in Blo bzang phun tshogs (1993: 32). Moreover, the colophon of *Nor 'phreng* is nearly identical; see Jackson 1996: 133–134, n. 253.

¹⁵ Tucci 1949: 293. A lingering doubt remains about Tucci's identification of the title, which is taken literally from the colophon of the fragment. This phrase sounds more likely to be a tacit reference to the *Legs bshad nor bu'i 'phreng ba* attributed to sMan bla.

¹⁶ Tucci 1949: 294.

but as I do not possess sMan t'an pa'i complete work, I cannot tell what Blo gros bzañ po's original contribution, if any, amounts to.

While there may be other ways to explain the textual correspondence, what is important here is that Tucci named a redactor: dPal blo bzang po, who may be identified with 'Phreng kha ba/Ri mkhar ba dPal ldan blo gros bzang po (16th century), a celebrated figure in the later sMan ris tradition.¹⁷

But the fact that the first xylographic edition of *Yid bzhin nor bu* was carved in dGa' ldan phun tshogs gling in 1675, almost two centuries after its composition, further suggests that 'Phreng kha ba may not have been the last person who did some work on the *Yid bzhin nor bu*. The Fifth Dalai Lama Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho (1617–1682) wrote the colophon for the 1675 edition of *De gshegs yid nor*.¹⁸ Two records of this event are also found in the *Za hor gyi bande ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul pa'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa dukūla'i gos bzang* (henceforth, *Gos bzang*), the autobiography of the Fifth Dalai Lama.¹⁹

It is unlikely that the Fifth Dalai Lama was personally involved in the process of reproducing and redacting the text, but as the chief patron de nom, his opinion or penchant may in all likelihood have been the reason for the new edition of *Yid bzhin nor bu*.²⁰ This may be particularly true in the case of the variant reading of the LKCT 172a we shall discuss in the next section.

As for the direction of the revising, since in *De gshegs yid nor*²¹ the materials appear better arranged and the discussion on theoretical matters of iconometry is more in-depth, it would seem more

¹⁷ Jackson 1996: 181.

¹⁸ Zhol 29v3–6. Appendix I of Jackson 1996 (399–400) provides a transcription of three colophons attached to the 1927 Zhol edition of *De gshegs yid nor* and 'Phreng kha ba's *Cha tshad kyi yi ge*. His transcription of the first colophon, that by the Fifth Dalai Lama, is incomplete; it leaves out a large portion of versified text covering a little more than one folio (Zhol 28v2–29v3).

¹⁹ *Gos bzang*: 379, 433–34. Only the second account is mentioned by Jackson (1996: 135, n. 272).

²⁰ Cüppers et al. (2012: 5) suggest that sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho might have also been involved in this project.

²¹ In the Gangtok edition of *bDe gshegs yid nor*, the sentences that serve as structure indicators are incomplete. 'Dar dbon nyi shar (in a personal communication) considers the Gangtok edition a misarranged edition of two iconometric texts, but he did not specify which ones.

reasonable to assume that *De gshegs yid nor* is the result of a later revision of *bDe gshegs yid nor*.

Thus, there are unresolved problems with regard to the authorship and identification of these two texts. Nonetheless, we accept tentatively as a working hypothesis that both *bDe gshegs yid nor* and *De gshegs yid nor* were written by sMan bla, and that the latter is a more developed version of the former, that is, *bDe gshegs yid nor* underwent quite heavy revisions during its transmission and become what we now see as *De gshegs yid nor*. If asking whether sMan bla quoted LKCT 5.171–173ab in *Yid bzhin nor bu* or not, we thus would say: sMan bla, to whom the two texts are attributed, quoted the verses in *De gshegs yid nor*, which is a more developed version of his *bDe gshegs yid nor*.

2. What is the source of LKCT 5.172a as quoted in *Yid bzhin nor bu*?

2.1 Textual divergence regarding LKCT 5.172a

The quote of LKCT 5.172a (henceforth, 172a) in *De gshegs yid nor* differs from the published Sanskrit editions, indeed, it is a major divergence that has not received the attention it deserves.²² There is no variant of 172a in the Sanskrit editions. The Tibetan translations as attested by a few Kanjur editions from the two transmission groups, i.e., the eastern group represented by the *Tshad pa* manuscript and the western group represented by the *Thems spangs ma* manuscript, however, show differences:

*viṃśatyekādhikam yac chatam ṛtunavabhir[1] lokamānaṃ narāṇām*²³

1. *ṛtunavabhir* BD-B: *ṛtunavatir* V-C

nyi shu 'ga' zhig lhag pa 'i[1] brgya phrag gang zhig dus dang dgu yis mi rnam kyī ni 'jig rten tshad ||²⁴

²² Peterson 1980 (248, n. 5) located the Tibetan text, but did not compare it to the Sanskrit edition in Vira; Chandra 1966. In the same article Peterson points out the ambiguity of the Tibetan translation of 172a, but does not mention the quotation in sMan bla's work. Peterson's discussion of the Tibetan translation of 172a, though insufficient, is intriguing, and we shall reexamine her remarks below.

²³ [B242][D-B121][V-C374] B represents the edition in Banerjee 1985, V-C, that in Vira; Chandra 1966, and D-B, the *pratīkas* of LKCT in the *Vimalaprabhā* edition in Dwivedi; Bahulkar 1994.

1. *nyi shu 'ga' zhid lhad pa'i DFHLNT: nyi shu rtsa lnga lhad pa'i U, om. P*

A hundred plus twenty, [i.e., a hundred and twenty fingers,] [is the size of the body of Bodhisattvas,] the mundane measurement of human beings [is] the [six] seasons and nine, [i.e., of ninety-six fingers.]²⁵

What is puzzling is that while there is no variant reading in Sanskrit, the Ulaanbaatar edition (henceforth, U) contains the peculiar reading of 125, differing from other witnesses except for the Peking edition (henceforth, P), where it is omitted, as will be separately addressed below in sections 2.2 and 3. What is still more puzzling is that this peculiar reading is also found in *De gshegs yid nor*:

*nyi shu rtsa lnga lhad pa'i brgya phrag gang zhid dus dang dgu yi mi mams kyi ni 'jig rten tshad ||*²⁶

A hundred plus twenty-five, [is the size of the body of the Buddha,] the mundane measurement of human beings [is] the [six] seasons and nine.

We shall ignore the variant reading *dus dang dgu yi*, which is clearly a transmission corruption of *dus dang dgu yis/rtunavabhiḥ*. Here the focus will be on *nyi shu rtsa lnga lhad pa'i brgya phrag*. There is a technical and quite reliable way to determine whether this phrase, which is attested both in U and *De gshegs yid nor*, might be based upon another yet unknown Sanskrit variant of the root text. The LKCT is composed exclusively in Sragdharā metre. It is a versified text with a fixed rhythm scheme, twenty-one syllables per *pāda*, with a cæsura after every seventh syllable: - - - - ∪ - - * ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ - * - ∪ - - ∪ - -. ²⁷ It would hardly be possible to fit *pañcaviṃśatyadhika*, as attested in the *Vimalaprabhā* (henceforth, VP), or any other ways of expressing the number 125 in related literature, as for instance, in 1b

²⁴ [D119r1][F53r3][H172v2][L131v3][N171v5][Pom.][T207v4][U131v1] D represents sDe dge, F, Phug brag, H, Lha sa, L, Shel dkar, N, Narthang, P, Peking, T, sTog palace, U, Ulaanbaatar.

²⁵ The words in brackets is supplied from the VP.

²⁶ Zhol 8r2.

²⁷ The accented syllables are represented by “-”, the unaccented ones with “∪”; “*” represents cæsura (*yati*).

of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* (henceforth, PL): *pañcaviṃśati-uttaram*,²⁸ into the metrical template required at this particular juncture. The rhythm here, as suggested by *viṃśatyekādhikam yac chatam*, is: - - - ∪ - - ∪. If adopted, however, *pañcaviṃśatyadhikaśatam yac chatam*, would yield - ∪ - - ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ -. We can also rule out the possibility of alternative epithets (*abhidhāna*, *mngon brjod*) having been used, since the extremely literal Tibetan translation reflects all the alternative epithets in the rest of this verse, and it shows no trace of such a usage in the first half of this *pāda*.²⁹

Peterson (1980: 241) has questioned the accuracy of the reading *nyi shu 'ga zhig lhag pa'i brgya phrag*:

Similarly, while the tantra itself does not define an exact total for the combined *sor* measures, saying only that the buddha figure measures a few more than 120 *sor* (*nyi shu 'ga zhig lhag pa'i brgya phrag gang zhig*), the commentaries consistently interpret the buddha figure of the *kālacakra* system as measuring 125 *sor*.

Obviously, and understandably, Peterson read *'ga' zhig* in the sense of “a few.” But in light of the Sanskrit, a more relevant question would be: Why is *eka* not translated as *'ba' zhig*, a well-attested equivalent of *eka* and *kevala*?³⁰ And one might further wonder whether there was a textual corruption from *'ba' zhig* to *'ga' zhig* due to the scribal similarity between these two words in certain scripts, or whether this was simply due to a poor engraving of the xylographic edition. But the fact is, *'ga' zhig* can indeed be an equivalent of *eka*,³¹ though, it seems, this translation is used only extremely rarely. From this perspective, the possibility of a textual corruption from *'ba' zhig* to *'ga' zhig* remains. But, even if this is the case, why, in the western

²⁸ Sakaki 1918: 256. Willems (2006: 63) reads *pañcaviṃśatyuttaram*, which is equally impossible.

²⁹ But, given the linguistic irregularity of LKCT as described in Newman 1988, *viṃśatpañcādhikam yac chatam*, a literal retranslation of *nyi shu rtsa lnga lhag pa'i brgya phrag*, may not be totally impossible. Indeed, a less wild yet orthographically equally abnormal expression is found in LKCT 4.129b: *pañcaviṃśātmakādye*, which later finds its way into Abhayākara Gupta's *Niṣpannayogāvālī*.

³⁰ Negi 4032.

³¹ Negi 685. There is yet another faint possibility that the translators read *eke*, which could naturally be translated as *'ga' zhig*. But this would presuppose that the translators either blundered when deciphering the manuscript or the reading before them was entirely different from what has been transmitted to us. We are not aware of any variant reading at this point.

group, does only U give *nyi shu rtsa lnga lhag pa'i brgya phrag*, when other textual witnesses belonging to the same faction read *nyi shu 'ga' zhig lhag pa'i brgya phrag*? Transmission corruption cannot convincingly account for such an exceptional difference.

Moreover, it is striking to observe that in P, the verso of folio 131, where one would expect the verses 5.171d–173ab, has been entirely replaced by *mantras*, the first being *sambaram hūṃ hūṃ phaṭ svāhā*,³² that of the deity Cakrasaṃvara. Apparently, the problem confronting us goes beyond the purview of textual criticism. It is a dramatic event that bespeaks certain sectarian hostility, with the intention of an appeal to magic for subduing the opposite camp being more than obvious. For the most part, we shall postpone the task of contextualization and further discussion of this unusual event to section 3, below. Here, we shall first trace the source of the 172a quotation in *De gshegs yid nor* and then explain the exceptional reading that occurs in U, since these two matters are related to each other.

2.2 Possible source of LKCT 172a quoted in *De gshegs yid nor*

There is one passage in *De gshegs yid nor* that is indicative of the possible source of the peculiar quotation of 172a it transmits:

*'di la 'thad pa dang bral zhing mi mdzes pa'i cha du ma zhig snang ste | dus 'khor lugs kyi cha tshad rags rim tsam mthong ba'i bod snying phod can rang bzo la mngon par dga' ba zhig gis mdo yin pa'i lugs su brdzus pa zhig go |*³³

Here, many an incorrect and aesthetically unacceptable proliferation appears; they have been made up by those audacious Tibetans who have only poor knowledge of the iconometry taught in the *Kālacakratantra* yet are fond of fabrication and pretend that it is the teaching of the scriptures.

Some of the proliferations of those “audacious Tibetans” seem unbelievable exaggerations, and both the source and the reliability of this description remain problems to be investigated. But what is not ambiguous is that sMan bla holds the LKCT to be the most authoritative scripture for Buddhist iconometry. He also seems to bear

³² P131v1.

³³ Zhol 5r1–2.

sympathy with (a) certain sect or personage(s), who, according to him, understand(s) correctly and thoroughly the relevant teachings in the LKCT.

Who may this authority of sMan bla have been?³⁴

It is known that in 1334 Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1361) asked his disciples Sa bzang ma ti pan chen 'Jam dbyangs blo 'gros rgyal mtshan (1294–1376) and Blo gros dpal (1300–1355) to revise Shong ston rDo rje rgyal mtshan's (13th century) Tibetan translation of the LKCT and VP. The new Jo nang translation (*Jo nang gсар 'gyur*) of the LKCT is available in P.³⁵ As mentioned above, in P, 172a has been removed and replaced by *mantras*. It is now clear that the reading destroyed in P is the new Jo nang translation. But was the destroyed reading of 172a exactly the same as that quoted by sMan bla in *De gshegs yin nor*?

Though no longer in P, the new Jo nang translation of 172a survives in at least two texts: Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal's (1306–1386) *Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal gyis mchan gyis gsal bar mdzad pa'i bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo* (henceforth, *Jo rGyud mchan*) and *bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyas 'grel rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od* (henceforth, *Jo Dri med mchan*). Dol po pa also wrote a topical outline (*sa bcad*) of the new translation of the VP as well as annotations (*mchan bu*) on it. The former has been published twice;³⁶ the annotations, unfortunately, remain elusive and probably have become conflated with Phyogs las rnam rgyal's annotations.³⁷ *Jo rGyud mchan* is a witness for the text with 125 fingers:

³⁴ The Fifth Dalai Lama believed that sMan bla transmitted the system of iconometry formulated by Bu ston; see Jackson 1996: 114. In our case, however, it is unlikely that sMan bla was quoting 172a from Bu ston's work, because Bu ston did not change the text of 172a, though he did reinterpret it; see below section 2.3.

³⁵ Stearns 2010: 326, n. 92.

³⁶ *Dus 'khor rgyud mchan*, Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal, Jo nang dpe tshogs, sPyi'i deb bcu bdun pa, Pe cin, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2008, pp. 227–83.

Jo nang kun mkhyen Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan gyi gsung 'bum dpe bsdur ma bzugs so, Mes po'i shul bzhag dpe tshogs (208, 13/13), dPal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang nas bsgrigs, Pe cin, Krung go'i bod rig pa dpe skrun khang, 2011, pp. 189–264.

³⁷ Stearns 2010: 25, 324–25, n. 91.

(*de ltar thams cad du*) *nyi shu rtsa lnga lhag pa'i brgya phrag gang zbig (ni sangs rgyas kyi sku la'o) dus (drug) dang dgu yis mi rnams kyi ni (rgyar) 'jig rten tshad (dang mthun pa khru bzhi ste dpangs su ni brgyad cu rtsa bzhi'o) ||*³⁸

(Thus, in every case) that which is 125 fingers ([applies to] the Buddha's image). (Horizontally,) the (six) seasons and nine, [i.e., ninety-six fingers,] are (in consonance with) the worldly size of human beings, (i.e., four *khru*s; vertically, [the worldly size of human beings is] 84 fingers).

Thus, in all likelihood, the removed version of 172a in P also read 125, the same as that quoted by sMan bla in *De gshegs yid nor*.

The new Jo nang translation of the LKCT was prepared in the Jo nang hermitage of bDe ba can;³⁹ sMan bla wrote his *Yid bzhin nor bu* in gTsang rong 'bras yul rdzong dkar. Given the geographical proximity of these two places and the popularity of the new translation,⁴⁰ it is presumable that sMan bla knew it and made a well-informed decision to quote the new Jo nang version of 172a.⁴¹ Nonetheless, it is also interesting to note that in *bDe gshegs yid nor*, which is supposedly earlier than *De gshegs yid nor*, sMan bla, while referring very often to the SUT and its commentary, does not quote the LKCT. Still more interesting is that he quotes the VP's interpretation of 172a, but not the root text.⁴² Did he perhaps initially feel insecure to argue on the basis of the new Jo nang translation of this particular *pāda*, but later had a change of mind?

As discussed above, it might also be possible that this was done by the redactor(s) of *Yid bzhin nor bu*, perhaps influenced by the Fifth Dalai Lama's preference for the new Jo nang translation.⁴³ In other

³⁸ Jo rGyud mchan: 204.

³⁹ Stearns 2010: 24.

⁴⁰ The new translation was very popular, but it also created quite a bit of controversy; see Stearns 2010: 326: n. 94; 329, n. 108.

⁴¹ It is not totally impossible that sMan bla had heard of or even accepted the Jo nang teaching of other-emptiness. Jackson (1996: 121) informs us that sMan bla "painted at gSer-mdog-can in the year 1491 on a large cloth an image of the Buddha surrounded by the Sixteen Elders." We may wonder what sMan bla discussed with his patron Śākya mchog ldan (1428–1507), who then acknowledged the Jo nang doctrine as the ultimate teaching. Śākya mchog ldan became a gZhan stong pa in his late 50s; see Burchardi 2007: 12.

⁴² Gangtok 57b4–58a2.

⁴³ Stearns 2010: 326, n. 94.

words, his penchant for 125 possibly led to the textual change, although strictly speaking, it was a change that had no basis.

2.3 Why the baseless revision?

As has been shown above, in Sanskrit the original reading of 172a can only be 120. The ambiguity at first glance of *nyi shu 'ga' zhig* – arguably, either a rare usage of *'ga' zhig* in the sense of one or a result of textual corruption from *'ba' zhig* – actually supports 120. The purge of 125 from P also points obliquely to the same number. And so, where did the reviser get the extra five fingers? The expressions in *Jo rGyud mchan* gives us the impression that it might have been influenced by the VP, where the phrase *pañcaviṃśatyadhikam* is attested twice.⁴⁴

But, why did the revisers change the root text at this point despite there being no variant readings in the Sanskrit? Wouldn't the interpretation in the VP, which gives, in sequence and respectively, 125, 120 and 84, as the height of a Buddha, a Bodhisattva, and an ordinary beings, make them have a few second thoughts? Unfortunately, the very short explanation in the VP, which does not follow the verses it expounds very closely, does create an opportunity for letting in 125:⁴⁵

evam sārhdadvāṣaṣṭyaṅgulaḥ | yathā vāme tathā dakṣiṇe 'pi | sarvatra pañcaviṃśatyadhikaśataṃ kāyamānaṃ caturasram | tad eva sattvānāṃ caturhastam | narāṇāṃ ṣaṇṇavatyāṅguly ūrdhvādho caturaśtīḥ | tathā narā na lakṣaṇayuktā iti siddham ||⁴⁶

In such a way, the measurement [of the horizontal half of the Buddha's body] is 62.5 fingers. Just as the left half, so is the right half. In every case (*sarvatra*), [i.e., vertically and horizontally,] the measurement of [the Buddha's] body is 125 [fingers] and symmetrical (*caturasram*). For the [Bodhi]sattvas (*sattvānām*), [the body is] exactly so, [i.e., symmetrical,] [and it is of] four hastas. For human beings, [horizontally, the measurement of the body is] 96 fingers, vertically, [it is] 84 fingers. It is well established that men are, in such a way, not endowed with the characteristics [of the great beings].

⁴⁴ VP: 122.

⁴⁵ The text is quoted from Dwivedi; Bahulkar 1994; the punctuation has been adjusted according to my understanding.

⁴⁶ VP: 122.

It is noteworthy that instead of 120 attested in 172a, 125, which is understood yet unspecified in the root text,⁴⁷ is clarified in the VP. This may have become the main reason for the mishandling of 125 in 172a.⁴⁸ There is yet another text which may have been responsible for the divergence. In his *mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyungs pa rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi go sla'i mchan* (henceforth, *Bu rgyud mchan*) Bu ston glossed this as follows:

nyi shu 'ga' zhig lhag pa'i brgya phrag gang zhig (ste rtsa lnga) dus dang dgu (ste sor dgu bcu go drug gi) yis mi rnams kyi ni 'jig rten tshad ||⁴⁹

A hundred and a few more than twenty, (i.e., twenty-five fingers,) and the size of ordinary beings is of the [six] seasons and nine, (i.e., ninety-six fingers.)

Bu ston did not change the root text, nor did he take 'ga' zhig in the sense of *eka*. He understood 'ga' zhig in its most oft-used sense, but further supplied a concrete number: – twenty-five – most likely on the basis of the VP.⁵⁰ The new Jo nang translation was influenced by Bu ston's criticism of Shong ston lo tsā ba's translation.⁵¹ In this case, his interlinear gloss probably also had an impact.

Briefly, the seemingly vague phrase *nyi shu 'ga' zhig lhag pa'i brgya phrag* in Shong ston's earlier translation of 172a, the concise explanation in the VP, the interlinear gloss in Bu ston's *rGyud mchan*, and finally, the need for an unambiguous support of the superiority of the Kālacakra tradition⁵² may have contributed collectively to the revision, a revision that strictly speaking is baseless.

The benefit of this revision, from the point of view of the revisers, is only one: to challenge the number 120 proclaimed in the SUT with a clear-cut 125. The detriments, as we have seen, are

⁴⁷ See below section 3.1.

⁴⁸ It is noteworthy that even Dwivedi and Bahulkal (1994: 122) take *paṃcaviṃśatyadhikaśātam* as a *pratīka* and set it in boldface.

⁴⁹ *Bu rgyud mchan*: 136v4–5.

⁵⁰ Bu ston repeats the VP in his *Ye shes le'u'i 'grel bshad dri ma med pa'i 'od kyi mchan* (*Bu Ye le'u mchan*: 124v5–124v7).

⁵¹ Stearns 2010: 26; 327, n. 100.

⁵² For a brief discussion of the sociopolitical background of the discrepancy and conflicts between the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions, see below, section 3.6 and Conclusion 3.

several: first, it is philologically unsound as it is not supported by the reading of the root text, and secondly, it is hermeneutically problematic. By substituting 125 for 120, the size of the body of Bodhisattvas, a significant category within the iconometric hierarchy, gets lost. And thirdly, the revision becomes itself a target and fuels further conflicts, as we can see in P. Thus we have gradually moved to the next topic: the divergence and conflict between the Kālacakra tradition and the Saṃvarodaya tradition.

3. How and where did the divergence and conflict between the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions arise?

At this point it becomes necessary to clarify our use of the word tradition. On the Indian side, so far we have no textual evidence of any socio-religious conflicts regarding the iconometric disagreement in question; the discrepancy seems to have been purely intellectual. On the Tibetan side, as shown below, the disagreement occurs on both an intellectual and a material level, or rather, it becomes more a matter of sectarian competition than academic exchange. The word tradition is broad enough to cover both cases, but at the same time, it also shows a link between the disagreements on the Indian side as well as the Tibetan. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that what the Tibetans inherited from the Indian disagreement and the Indian manner of reconciliation was selective.

3.1 Textual evidence for the Kālacakra tradition

The divergence between the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions has solely to do with the size of the Buddha's body: 125 fingers according to the Kālacakra tradition and 120 fingers in the Saṃvarodaya tradition. Since we have demonstrated that 172a actually reads 120 fingers, the conclusion as drawn so far seems to suggest that the two traditions agree with each other; the divergence and conflict regarding the size of the Buddha have simply to do with a misplaced and misleading misunderstanding. But 172a is only a small part, albeit a crucial one, of the full picture of the Kālacakra tradition. To assure a correct understanding of this complicated issue, we need to put 172a back into its original context, LKCT 5.171–173ab. These

verses are quoted, as textual evidence for the Kālacakra tradition, in *De gshegs yid nor*:

*uṣṇīśād ūrṇamadhyam bhavati jinapateḥ sārdhasūryāṅgulaṃ tu
tasmāt kaṅṭhābjam evaṃ hṛdayam api tato nābhiguhyābjam evam |
pādādho jānur ūruḥ sphikam api manubhis tattvatattvaiś ca vedair
ardhoraḥ sārdhasūryaiḥ svabhujabhujakarāḥ khākṣirājārkamātraiḥ ||
5.171*

Lord of Conquerors! From the diadem to the middle of the Ūrṇā hair is of the sun and a half, [i.e., twelve and a half fingers.] Downwards to the neck lotus, exactly the same, [further] to the chest, also [the same,] further to the navel lotus, to the secret lotus, exactly the same. The soles of the feet are of Manu, [i.e., fourteen fingers.] The shanks are of the principles, [i.e., twenty-five fingers,] the thighs are also of the principles, the hips are of the Vedas, [i.e., four fingers.] Half of the breast is of the sun and a half, [i.e., twelve and a half fingers.] The upper arms, the forearms, and the hands, are [respectively] of the sky-eye, the king, and the sun, [i.e., twenty fingers, sixteen fingers, and twelve fingers].

*viṃśatyekādhiḥ yac chatam rtunavabhir lokamānaṃ narānāṃ
vedaiḥ sārdhaiś caturbhir jaladhijaladhibhiḥ sārdhavedaiś ca vedaiḥ |
uṣṇīśaṃ mastakādho bhavati jinapateḥ śrīlalāṭaṃ ca nāsā
cibvantaṃ nāsikādho galakam api tataḥ kaṅṭhamūlābjamadhyāt ||
5.172*

A hundred plus twenty [fingers] [is the size of the body of Bodhisattvas.] For ordinary beings, [the size of the body is,] [horizontally,] of the [six] seasons and nine, [i.e., ninety-six fingers]. [Vertically,] Lord of Conquerors! The measurement of the diadem is of the Vedas, [i.e., four fingers,] the height of the head is of four and a half [fingers,] the auspicious forehead is of the oceans, [i.e., four fingers,] and the nose is of the oceans, from the end of the nose till the lower jaw is of the Vedas and a half, [i.e., four and a half fingers,] the neck, till the middle of the root-lotus of the neck, is of the Vedas, [i.e., four fingers.]

*tasmād dhṛnnābhiguhyam bhavati narapate sārdhasūryaiḥ krameṇa
guhyābjam nābhimūle kulīśam api muner ūrdhva uṣṇīśa eva | 5.173ab*

The lord of human beings! From the [neck downward,] in sequence, to the chest, to the navel, to the privates, is of the sun and a half [i.e., twelve and a half fingers]. The secret lotus [lies] in the root of the

navel, also, the vajra of the sage is exactly the diadem on the top of [his] head.

Verse 171 provides a sketch of the size of the Buddha's body; the first three *pādas* illustrate the vertical measurements, from the diadem to the soles of the feet, *pāda* d concerns the horizontal measurements, which consist of two symmetrical halves. Thus the main information of the Buddha's image is already complete in this verse, in other words, verse 171 is a semantically self-sufficient unit. The end of 171 is the end of the sketch of the Buddha's image, which is, both vertically and horizontally, 125 fingers, an absolutely perfect model of beauty. The first half of 172a, as discussed above, refers to a different number: 120 fingers, which is the size of the body of a Bodhisattva, the second half of 172a deals with the size of ordinary human beings, which is horizontally 96 fingers, vertically, 84 fingers. The remaining three *pādas* of 172 supplement the iconometric details of the facial portion of a Buddha's image. The first *pāda* of 5.173 repeats the measurements of the upper part of the Buddha's body, but the concern has shifted from the pure iconometric domain to the mystical sphere.⁵³

The synoptic structure of these verses, as shown above, is transparent: three kinds of measurements for three kinds of beings on different spiritual levels, in descending sequence – the Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and ordinary beings.

We have shown that the number 125 is a baseless revision that entered the new Jo nang translation of 172a. This could have only happened if the synoptic structure of 5.171–173ab was understood differently than above. Tāranātha's *rGyal ba'i sku gzugs kyi cha tshad bstan pa bde skyid 'byung gnas* (henceforth, *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*) quotes and expounds on 5.171–173a; he follows, unsurprisingly, the new Jo nang translation of 172a, and also follows, presumably, the revisers' interpretation of the synoptic structure.⁵⁴ For Tāranātha, the description of the size of the Buddha's body continues from the beginning of 5.171 to the first half of 172a. The number 125 that appears in the new Jo nang translation is taken as the total sum of all the figures given one by one in 5.171, of the length and breadth of the

⁵³ We will not elaborate on 5.173bcd, which are more concerned with the mystical cultivation of *yogins* and *yoginīs*. Further explanation is also avoided by Tāranātha, who even leaves out 173b in his *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*.

⁵⁴ *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*: 477–78.

limbs and trunk of the Buddha. Tāranātha's detailed interpretation, uncritical though it is, is helpful for getting a better insight into the revisers' intention when introducing the extra five fingers in 172a.

3.2 Textual evidence for the Saṃvarodaya tradition

In iconometric treatises, the thirtieth chapter, *Citrādirūpalakṣaṇanirdeśapaṭala* of the SUT is taken as the source of the Saṃvarodaya tradition. Three *pādas* from this chapter are most relevant to our investigation.

mukha<*m*> *dvādaśabhāgam tu* 30.3a⁵⁵

As for “face (*mukha*, *zhal*),” [which is one-tenth of an image,] it consists of twelve portions.

This is a definition of the unit face, an image has ten faces, and further, 120 portions, i.e., 120 fingers.

dvādaśatālakrāntasya devatārūpacitritam || 30.8cd⁵⁶

To draw image of a deity, the size is of twelve tālas.

This is a description of the size of a deity's image, any deity. A *tāla* is synonymous with face as defined in 30.3a. The discrepancy between the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions is clear: in the SUT, 120 fingers seem to be a universally applicable criterion for images of the deities, the Buddha included.

So far it has been verified that a divergence, at least a literal one, does exist between these two traditions. Our observation is corroborated by Tāranātha.⁵⁷ This, however, leaves us with two unresolved puzzles: Why are 120 fingers universally defined in the Saṃvarodaya tradition as the size of any deity? And why are 125 fingers preferred to 120 fingers for Buddha images in the Kālacakra tradition?

⁵⁵ Cicuzza 2001: 217.

⁵⁶ Cicuzza 2001: 219.

⁵⁷ *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*: 472.

3.3 Why are 120 fingers universally defined in the *Samvarodaya* tradition as the size of any deity?

Ratnarakṣita's (ca. 1150-1250) explanation of the second half of verse 10 of the thirtieth chapter of the SUT supplies an answer to our question:

gambhīro vajradevasya dvādaśa tālalakṣaṇam // 30.10cd⁵⁸

The twelve [fingers], the characteristic of *tāla*, of the Vajra deity, are profound.

The profundity of “twelve *tālas*” is explained by Ratnarakṣita in his *Padminī*:⁵⁹

*dvādaśa tālalakṣaṇam iti*⁶⁰ *dvādaśabhāgās tālasya lakṣaṇam iti*
pūrvakam evārtham upasaṃharati yad vāsānāntāj jaṅtāṃ
*dvādaśatālaṃ bhagavanlakṣaṇam gambhīraṃ*⁶¹
dvādaśabhūmivīsuddhyā |⁶²

“Twelve [fingers], the characteristic of *tāla*” is to summarize the content presented above: the twelve portions are the characteristic of *tāla*. Alternatively, the twelve *tālas* form the basis of the seat to the diadem; the characteristic of the Reverend One, is profound, [this is] due to the purification of the twelve *bhūmis*.

As this shows, there is an alternative way to read the couplet: *gambhīro vajradevasya dvādaśatālalakṣaṇam*, namely: “The characteristic of the Vajra deity, i.e., twelve *tālas*, is profound.” In the latter case, the number twelve is significant in that it symbolizes the accomplishment of the purification in the twelve *bhūmis*. This, probably, is also applicable in the former case. Furthermore, though neither mentioned nor indicated in the *Padminī*, ten faces, each consisting of twelve fingers, could also suggest a fine blend of the

⁵⁸ Cicuzza 2001: 219.

⁵⁹ So far we are aware of two commentaries on the SUT: Ratnarakṣita's *Padminī* and the *Sadāmnāyānusārīṇī* by an anonymous exegete. The latter is an “abridgement” of the *Padminī*; see Kuranishi 2012: 149. Until now there is no critical edition of chapter 30 of the *Padminī*. I have tentatively edited the related passages on the basis of two manuscripts: Baroda No. 78 and Takaoka CA17. There are altogether five manuscripts of the *Padminī*, see Tanemura; Kano; Kuranishi 2014: 167–68. The quotations from the *Padminī* are from my own unpublished draft.

⁶⁰ *dvādaśa tālalakṣaṇam iti* Takaoka: missing in Baroda

⁶¹ *gambhīraṃ* Takaoka: *gambhiraṃ* Baroda

⁶² Baroda 81r7, Takaoka 44r3.

twelve *bhūmis* proclaimed in esoteric scriptures with its alternative in exoteric teachings, the ten *bhūmis*.

3.4 Why are 125 fingers preferred to 120 fingers for Buddha images in the Kālacakra tradition?

There seem to be two reasons: first, doctrinally, the extra five fingers are a sign of the Buddha's spiritual superiority over all other beings; secondly, the number 125 seems to be metaphysically significant for the Kālacakra cosmology.⁶³

A passage in sMan bla's *Yid bzhin nor bu* is relevant for the first aspect:

de gnyis kyi bar byang sems gzhan la yod par gsungs pa cung zad zhib tu sbyar na | so skye tha mal pa'i las rlung stong brgyad brgya ba phrag gcig 'gags pa na las rlung 'gags rim gyi ye shes kyi rlung rgyas pas | sor kyi cha shas 'phel bar gsungs pas | sa dang po thob nas sor brgya dang brgyad | de nas brgyad po re re la sor gnyis gnyis 'phel te | brgya nyi shu rtsa bzhi | bcu gcig pa dang bcu gnyis pa sor gcig 'phel pas brgya nyer lngar gsal lo ||⁶⁴

It is well known that there are other Bodhisattvas between these two; to elaborate: it is taught that with the stoppage of the 8,100 karmic winds of an ordinary being, the wisdom-winds gradually increase, thus, when reaching the first *bhūmi*, the height of the Bodhisattva becomes 108 fingers, on each of the following eight *bhūmis*, two fingers are to be added, till 124 fingers, on the last two *bhūmis*, only one finger is added, and the height [of the Bodhisattva] becomes 125 fingers.

Similar to the description in the *Padminī*, the size of the Buddha's body is associated with spiritual cultivation.⁶⁵ But the *Padminī* does not assign the twelve *bhūmis* to the ten *tālas*; it simply says that the twelve parts of the *tāla* represent the purification of the twelve *bhūmis*; while a connection is established, it is rather loose. The above explanation is much more advanced: the last seventeen fingers⁶⁶ are

⁶³ This probably also has to do with the liturgical practices in the Kālacakra system. We refrain from further discussion here however due to the prematurity of our investigations in this direction.

⁶⁴ Zhol 6b2–6b3.

⁶⁵ On this matter, see Wallace 2001: 80.

66 It is noteworthy that the *Yogācārabhūmi* teaches seventeen *bhūmis*.

allotted to the twelve *bhūmis*, with an uneven progress mapped out in detail. The correspondence is quite clear and it is convincing.

This passage finds a literal parallel in sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen's (1405–1477, henceforth, sTag Lo) *rTen gsum bzhugs gnas dang bcas pa'i sgrub tshul dpal 'byor rgya mtsho* (henceforth, *dPal 'byor rgya mtsho*) and his *rTen gsum bzhengs tshul dpal 'byor rgya mtsho las sku'i phyag tshad kyi skabs zur du phyung ba* (henceforth, *Phyag tshad zur phyung*), the second containing extracts of the first.⁶⁷ Most likely, sMan bla borrowed the above passage from sTag Lo and further corrected the original text.⁶⁸

The second reason why 125 fingers are set as both the height and the width of the Buddha's body may be related to the cosmology laid out in the Kālacakra system, as suggested by Phyogs las rnam rgyal's interlinear annotations (*mchan bu*) of LKCT 5.172:

*(de ltar dpangs dang rgya) thams cad du nyi shu rtsa lnga lhag pa'i
brgya phrag gcig (sangs rgyas nyid kyi khru lnga lnga) ni (sku'i kho
lag yangs shing bzang zhes pa) sku'i tshad de (shing nya⁶⁹ gro dha
ltar chu zheng⁷⁰ gab pas) gru bzhi'o ('dir sangs rgyas kyi khru ni gru
mo'i tshigs nas sor mo'i gung mo'i rtse mo'i bar la mi bya ste | de la
sangs rgyas kyi sor sum cu yod la sangs rgyas kyi khru la ni sor nyer
lnga las med pas so || de'ang gang las shes na sangs rgyas kyi khru
bzhi dang 'jig rten khams kyi dpag tshad 'bum phrag bzhi dag par
sbyar zhing sangs rgyas kyi sor phyed dang 'jig rten gyi khams kyi
dpag tshad stong phrag gnyis dag pa sbyar ba 'og nas 'byung zhing
de sangs rgyas kyi khru la sor nyer lngar byas pa dang 'grig pa'i
phyir ro) || (rgya'i tshad) de nyid sems can rnams kyis ni khru bzhi ste
mi rnams kyi sor dgu bcu rtsa drug go | steng dang 'og du ni (sor mo)
brgyad cu rtsa bzhi ste de ltar mi rnams ni (chu zheng⁷¹ gab pa med
cing) mtshan nyid dang mi ldan pa'o zhes grub bo ||⁷²*

(Thus the height and the width) in every case, twenty-five above a hundred [fingers,] (i.e., the Buddha as precisely five *khru*s both vertically and horizontally,) (a grand and well-built body size,) are the measurements of the body, (resembling the well-proportioned

⁶⁷ *dPal 'byor rgya mtsho*: 354, *Phyag tshad zur phyung*: 304.

⁶⁸ Further analysis, though needed, is beyond the scope of this article. A similar case is mentioned by Tāranātha; see *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*: 475.

⁶⁹ The edition reads *ne*.

⁷⁰ The edition reads *zhing*.

⁷¹ The edition reads *zhing*.

⁷² *Jo Dri med mchan*: 407.

Nyagrodha tree,) and it is symmetrical (*gru bzhi, caturasra*). (Here,⁷³ the *khru* of the Buddha is not to be defined as the distance from the elbow to the very tip of the middle finger, because, in such a case, one *khru* of the Buddha would become thirty [fingers],⁷⁴ yet the *khru* of the Buddha cannot be anything other than twenty-five [fingers.] Besides, if asked: How do you know that? Because, as to be seen below, four *khru*s of the Buddha can be added correctly to the four hundred thousand *yojanas* of the world, and half a *khru* of the Buddha can be added correctly to the two thousand *yojanas* of the world, [and] in those cases, it is appropriate to define the *khru* of the Buddha as twenty-five fingers). (As for the horizontal measurement,) the same is for the beings, i.e., four *khru*s; for human beings, ninety-six fingers, and vertically, eighty-four fingers, thus it is established that human beings, (being not well proportioned,) are not endowed with auspicious marks.

The above passage establishes a mystical correspondence between the Buddha's body and the outside world. If, as claimed by Phyogs las rnam rgyal, this requires a *khru* to be twenty-five fingers, it becomes unavoidable that the Buddha's body be 125 fingers, both vertically and horizontally.

We need a digression here, since in Zhang zhong Chos dbang grags pa's (1404–1469/1471) *Dus 'khor Ṭīkā chen las ye shes le'u'i ṭīkā zhang zhung chos dbang grags pas mdzad pa mdo bsdus gsum pa man chad* we find a remark targeted at Phyogs las rnam rgyal's definition of *hasta*:

*'dir kha cig (phyogs stag) sangs rgyas kyi khru ni gru mo'i tshigs nas gung mo'i rtse mo'i bar la mi bya ste | de la sor sum cu yod la sangs rgyas kyi khru sor nyer lnga'i sor pyed dang 'jig rten gyi khams dpag tshad stong phrag gnyis sbyar te sgrig dgos pas so zhes zer to || lus tshad nges pa med pa'i mi phal ba la mdo rtsa las kyang khru lus kyi bdun cha gnyis su gsungs shing de dang a ma ra ko sha sogs kyang khru tshad mi 'dra yang gru mo'i tshigs nas gung rtse bar la sor sum cu 'jog pa ji ltar yin smra dgos so ||*⁷⁵

As regards this, some (Phyogs las rnam rgyal and sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen) assert that the Buddha's *hasta* should not be

⁷³ The interlinear gloss seems to be misplaced; the words in question are *gru bzhi/caturasram*, but the gloss deals with *khru bzhi/caturhastam*.

⁷⁴ Sixteen fingers for the forearm, twelve fingers for the hand, one finger for the elbow, and one for the wrist.

⁷⁵ mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang gi gsum 'bum vol. Tha, 149v6-150r2.

defined as the distance from the elbow joint to the tip of the middle finger, because the Buddha's *hasta* is just 25 fingers and it should be conducive to the [cosmological] connection to the two thousand *yojanas* of the world. In the case of a human being, whose body size is flexible, two-sevenths of the body measurements are defined as a *hasta* in the *Vinayasūtra*, although that differs from the *hasta* as defined in the *Amarakośa*, etc., [thus] it is to be asserted that a *hasta* is the thirty fingers from the elbow joint to the tip of the middle finger.

Zhang zhong Chos dbang grags pa contends that different definitions of *hasta/khru* are allowable. To support this, he appeals to the *Vinayasūtra*, one of the *Five Major Treatises* of the dGe lugs pas, and the *Amarakośa*. The intention of Phyogs las rnam rgyal is to standardize the definition of *hasta*, and he has good reason to do so. If one *hasta* is defined as thirty fingers, four *hastas* would lead to 120 fingers. This is, however, the number that has been removed and replaced by 125 in the new Jo nang translation of LKCT. Zhang zhong Chos dbang grags pa's disagreement with Phyogs las rnam rgyal is probably the first open confrontation on an intellectual level between the Jo nang and dGe lugs regarding Buddhist iconometry.

3.5 Theoretical reconciliation between the *Kālacakra* and the *Samvarodaya* traditions in Indian materials

De gshegs yid nor takes both the LKCT and the SUT as authoritative sources. How it defines the two traditions and arranges their teachings is remarkable. Chapter 4, "Establishment of the correct method by resorting to the authoritative sūtric and tantric texts" (*mDo rgyud kyi gzhung lugs chen po rnams kyi lung drangs te tshad ldan kyi lugs dgod pa*) begins as follows:

*bzhi pa la gtsug tor dang bcas pa la sor brgya nyer lnga pa'i phyogs
dus kyi 'khor lo'i lugs dang | sor brgya nyi shu pa sdom pa 'byung ba
rtsa 'grel gyi lugs dgod pa'o ||*

The fourth chapter establishes the *Kālacakra* tradition, which claims, including the diadem, 125 fingers, and the tradition of the *Samvarodaya* root text and its commentary, which claims 120 fingers.

It is noteworthy that not only the SUT but also the commentary on the SUT are deemed as the textual basis of the *Samvarodaya* tradition. To include the commentarial literature of the SUT is a significant step, it opens the path to reaching a compromise between the two traditions.

sMan bla continues his text by quoting LKCT 5.171–173ab and offering a very short interpretation. In contrast to the brevity of the account of the Kālacakra tradition, sMan bla's narrative of the Saṃvarodaya tradition is quite lavish. It starts with an explanation of the size applicable to all (*spyi 'gro'i tshad bshad pa*), then shifts to a multilayered and detailed description of various measurements of different beings (*bye brag gi tshad bshad pa*). The universally applicable size is 120 fingers, which is literally given in the verses of the SUT. The first and foremost among the various size is 125 fingers, that of the *nirmānakāya* and *sambhogakāya* of the Buddha. The textual supports for 125 fingers are mainly prose interpretation from an unnamed commentary on the SUT. For example, when describing the size of the supreme *nirmānakāya* of the Buddha, sMan bla writes:

*dang po ni | de bzhin gshegs pa la ni zhal re re la sor phyed re bsnan
par bzhed de | 'grel par |*

*bcom ldan 'das kyi ni | sangs rgyas kyi gzi brjid kyis | phyed dang
bcas pa'i sor bcu gnyis pa'i zhal bya'o ||*

*zhes so ||*⁷⁶

As for the first [subject, i.e., to describe the measurement of the supreme *nirmānakāya* of the Buddha], it is accepted that in the case of Tathāgata, half a finger is added to each face, as taught in the commentary: as for the Reverend One, because of the splendor of the Buddha, a face should be defined as twelve and a half fingers.

The quotation differs from the relevant passage in the *Padminī*, moreover, it does not make the point as clear as the explanation of SUT 30.3a in the *Padminī*:

*bhagavatas tu buddharūpatvāt sārhadvādaśabhāgamukhaṃ
kartavyam iti pratimālakṣaṇādyukter*⁷⁷ *jñeyam | dvādaśabhāgaṃ iti tu
buddhād anyatra sarvasādhāraṇatayoktam* ⁷⁸

It should be known that according to the teaching in the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, etc., for the Reverend One, a face should be twelve

⁷⁶ Zhol 9r4–9r5.

⁷⁷ This is the reading in the Takaoka manuscript (22v2), and it is supported by the Tibetan translation: *sku gzugs kyi mtshan nyid la sogs pa gsungs pa*. The reading in the Baroda manuscript (80r7–8) is *pratimālakṣaṇadyuter*, which, presumably and interestingly, refers to a treatise entitled *Pratimālakṣaṇadyuti*.

⁷⁸ Baroda 80r5, Takaoka 43v1.

and a half portions, because the Reverend One is an embodiment of the Buddha. ‘Of twelve portions’, however, is defined as applicable to all cases other than the Buddha.

When defining the unit of measurement, we are informed that the Buddha is an exceptional case, because the Buddha is perfect in all aspects. The Buddha’s perfectness crystallizes in his superior body measurements. He is taller than all other beings, to whom a common criterion in the sense of ordinary, is applied. Moreover, Ratnarākṣita mentions the source of his explanation, the PL, which dates back to tenth century.⁷⁹ At least one Tibetan translation of the PL was in circulation⁸⁰ before Ratnarākṣita’s sojourn in Nepal and possibly also in Tibet.⁸¹ The reference to this particular scripture at this point makes Ratnarākṣita’s explanation seem to be targeting something specific. Did he have a conflict in mind that he considered potentially harmful, one that needed to be reconciled? And if this is the case, where was that conflict actually occurring? In Nepal, in Tibet, or in Vikramaśīla? Unanswerable though these puzzles are due to the scantiness of the information available today, there can be no doubt that Ratnarākṣita’s reconciliatory approach, which is simple, yet effective, found its way into sMan bla’s *De gshegs yid nor*.

Is such a tactic also found in the Kālacakra corpus? Yes. More accurately, the system which is later than that in the SUT, successfully incorporates the 120 fingers as laid out in the SUT, but further developed the privileged 125 fingers for the Buddha in support of the cosmology in the LKCT. While the SUT was self-sufficient, retrospectively it became incomplete; this incompleteness was addressed and resolved in its commentarial literature.

Paradoxically, we can also answer the above question negatively, since what has been incorporated has become part of the new system and is no longer subject to the *śabda* reconciliation. And yet, incorporation should not be, and is not, the only hermeneutic approach to deal with the inconsistencies among the different texts. There is one principle in the Kālacakra corpus: one *tantra* is to be interpreted in light of another *tantra* (*tantram tantrāntareṇa*

⁷⁹ Willemen 2006: 12.

⁸⁰ Tucci (1949: 292) identified four versions of the PL; this was later questioned by Willemen (2006: 13, 24, n. 33).

⁸¹ Kuranishi 2016: 50–51.

bodhavyam), which legitimates and ensures the interpretation of important tantric works from the perspective of the Kālacakra corpus.⁸²

Each of the two traditions has its own way to create a harmony between the figures 125 and 120. The LKCT does this by assimilating the later into a system culminating in the former, through the extensive interpretations in its commentarial literature, the SUT achieves the same goal. The drama departure and reunion was purely Indian, and it was accomplished the first time when the LKCT was introduced, and worked out a second time, at the latest, when the *Padminī* was written.

Normally, we expect that the Tibetans not only inherited texts from their Indian predecessors, but also the inconsistencies therein, as well as the hermeneutic approaches to repair these inconsistencies. Yet this does not seem to be the case here. If the disagreement was already settled in India, why was 172a removed from P seven hundred years later in Peking?

3.6 Divergences and Conflicts reflected in Tibetan materials

To illustrate the disagreement we will draw materials from treatises by three authors – sMan bla, Tāranātha, and 'Ju Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho (1846–1912, henceforth, Mi pham). We shall progress in chronological sequence and discuss a few passages, most of them from *De gshegs yid nor* and Tāranātha's *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*. Tangentially, we shall present information gathered from Mi pham's *sKu gzugs kyi thig rtsa rab gsal nyi ma* (henceforth, *Nyi ma*). Since it is far beyond the scope of this paper to examine the huge amount of literature that has been produced on this topic over the centuries, this section simply aims to sketch the general tendencies. In other words, we shall attempt to simplify the complicated situation by hammering out a few palpable hypotheses, which need either to be confirmed, improved, or rejected through further exploration.

The second chapter of *De gshegs yid nor* refutes incorrect approaches in iconographic practices. It is interesting to see that sMan bla points out the imperfection in one Indian text and sets, as the ultimate authority, another Indian text. The Indian text being subjected to question is the PL. In fact, four of the six wrong positions listed by

⁸² Sferra 2005: 262.

sMan bla are from the PL, which, according to sMan bla, is held among the *Three Scriptures and One Exegesis* by those Tibetans whose knowledge of iconometry is poor. The authoritative Indian text mentioned is the LKCT, which, together with the SUT, is the subject of the fourth chapter of *De gshegs yid nor*. sMan bla's criticism extends to other related Indian texts.⁸³ He also targets Tibetans whom he considers to bear wrong views, thus, “the dull-witted Tibetan (*bod blun po zhig*)”⁸⁴ who took notes (of Indian teachings?) and misled others. In another case, “most of the present craftsmen renowned for their erudition (*da ltar gyi mkhas par grags pa'i bzo bo phal che ba dag*)”, who apply the body measurement of 108 fingers indistinctively to almost all beings, probably, also refers to Tibetans. The summary of his criticism of the incorrect views is informative:

*dus 'khor nas brgya nyer lnga pa dang | sdom 'byung nas brgya nyi
shu par gsungs pa rnams rang gar 'jug pa dgag ba'i drang don du
'dod pa dag gis ni tshul dang mthun pa rnams khong du ma chud pas
nongs sor || des na tshad gzhung gi khungs dang mi mthun pa rnams
la dgag pa cung zad tsam byas pa la kha na ma tho ba ci yang med
par sems so ||*⁸⁵

Because those who take the teaching of 125 fingers in the *Kālacakra* tradition and that of 120 fingers in the *Cakrasaṃvarodaya* tradition as alternatives [and consequently] provisional views to be refuted do not understand the correct views properly; they are wrong. Thus I consider it is not even a small fault to refute the views that contradict the sources of iconometric treatises, [i.e., the *Kālacakratantra* and the *Cakrasaṃvarodayatantra*].

The way sMan bla records how the opponent defines the two traditions is very remarkable. The opponent borrows the pair of concepts – *drang don/neyārtha* and *nges don/nītārtha*, that in the history of Buddhist philosophy have been used by different thinkers and schools to assimilate other doctrinal systems and claim the superiority of their own. The teachings that can be taken literally have a definitive meaning, those which need further interpretation have a provisional meaning. A definitive teaching is appropriate only for advanced or selected audiences and it overrules provisional teachings.

⁸³ Zhol 5v1–5v6.

⁸⁴ Zhol 6r5.

⁸⁵ Zhol 6v6–7r2.

For the opponent, the Buddha's body size as taught in the LKCT and the SUT is provisional, because it is flexible – can be either 125 or 120. For sMan bla, the teachings in the two scriptures are definitive and to be followed, and those who take them as being provisional are overly self-assured and absolutely wrong.

Tāranātha, similar to sMan bla, takes both traditions as authoritative, but in different ways. While sMan bla presents the Kālacakra tradition first, Tāranātha mentions the Saṃvarodaya tradition first. Further textual investigations are needed to determine whether sMan bla was the first in the history of Tibetan iconometry to hold the LKCT as the highest authority, in contrast to the slightly secondary yet equally supportive role of the SUT, which, while literally different from the former, is nonetheless hermeneutically reconcilable with it.⁸⁶ There is another remarkable common feature shared by Tāranātha and sMan bla: both rely on reasoning instead of proclaiming to have determined the value of a particular teaching. They criticize not only Tibetans but also Indian predecessors whom they deem mistaken about these iconometric issues. As has been shown above, sMan bla questions the descriptions in the PL and other Indian texts. Tāranātha's criticism is more targeted and precise. He enumerates twelve cases where he disagrees with Ratnarakṣita's interpretation in the *Padminī*.⁸⁷ Tāranātha does not accept Ratnarakṣita's position, not because he considers Ratnarakṣita to have been incompetent, but because he assumes that the interpretations in the *Padminī* were distorted by the practice that was in vogue when it was written.

Nonetheless, it seems that Tāranātha is not always in line with sMan bla. In sharp contrast to sMan bla's basically critical attitude toward the *Three Scriptures and One Exegesis*, Tāranātha fully embraces them.⁸⁸ Tāranātha's eclecticism seems to be soundly supported, and it is admirably courageous. For him, the difference between the Kālacakra tradition and the Saṃvarodaya tradition, as has been shown above, is reconcilable, and the difference between them and the tradition in the *Three Scriptures and One Exegesis* is trivial and can be ignored. Not only that, as long as the different practices

⁸⁶ Bu ston's related works might be a good starting point; cf. Jackson 1996: 114.

⁸⁷ A detailed study of these cases will be presented in Luo *forthcoming*.

⁸⁸ *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*: 478–79.

and different views are doctrinally justifiable, practically effectual, and soteriologically effective, they will be deemed as having been legitimated by the Buddha, no matter where and by whom they are introduced and transmitted.

To summarize our observations regarding the discrepancy and conflicts between the Tibetan materials, we quote the beginning portion of the first sentence in Mi pham's *Nyi ma*, which reads as follows:

*de yang dus 'khor dang sdom 'byung dang shā ri'i bus zhus pa sogs bka' dang | de'i dgongs 'grel bstan bcos du ma rnams kyis legs par bshad pa bzhin sku gzugs kyi cha tshad la ...*⁸⁹

Now, as for the size of the images, according to such scriptures as the *Kālacakratantra*, the *Samvarodayatantra*, and the *Śāriputrapariṣcchā*, and what has been well illustrated in their commentarial literature ...

On the one hand, we see that Mi pham, as sMan bla did in *De gshegs yid nor*, held the LKCT to be the first and foremost authoritative treatise on iconometry. In this case, he seems to distance himself from Tāranātha, who, in *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*, presented the SUT first and treated it in much more detail than the LKCT. On the other hand, we observe that Mi pham seems to be indebted to Tāranātha's *bDe skyi 'byung gnas* when he upgraded the PL to the same level as the two tantric scriptures, the principal textual sources in later iconometric treatises. Against the background we have reconstructed in this section so far, the half sentence written by Mi pham seems to give us, however small, a handle to help us draw a hypothetical sketch of what took place from the fourteenth to nineteenth century in the history of Tibetan iconometry.

4. Conclusions

The three questions raised at the beginning have now been answered. Some are more or less certain, others are more hypothetical than conclusive. To recapitulate:

⁸⁹ *Nyi ma*: 2.

1. There are two versions of *Yid bzhin nor bu*: *bDe gshegs yid nor*, a largely versified text more apt to have been intended as a manual for craftsmen, and *De gshegs yid nor*, a revised and developed version of *bDe gshegs yid nor*, which is more concerned with theoretical issues. sMan bla, 'Phreng kha ba, the Fifth Dalai Lama, and, possibly, other obscure figures seem to have contributed in their own way to the significant changes found in the texts, among which the quotation of LKCT 5.171–173ab was the starting point of our exploration.

2. 172a as attested in *De gshegs yid nor* may have been quoted from the new Jo nang translation of the LKCT. The new translation, with the reading of 125 fingers, however, is philologically insupportable and hermeneutically inconsistent. The only justification of this revision is found in the VP, which, due to its conciseness on this point, may have been misinterpreted.

3. We further assume, and this is our main observation concerning the discrepancy and conflict between the Kālacakra and Saṃvarodaya traditions, that the disagreement between these two traditions in Tibet may have been originated from the new Jo nang translation of 172a, much in the same way as the *gzhan stong* versus *rang stong* controversy was motivated by the new religious term (*chos skad*) of *gzhan stong*. Zhang zhong Chos dbang grags pa's refutation of Phyogs las rnam rgyal's definition of *hasta* is perhaps only the tip of the iceberg.

The LKCT, as the last and most encyclopedic tantric scripture, had already incorporated and digested the different views regarding the body measurements of different beings. At the same time, the SUT, though literally lacking the category of 125 fingers, was later reinterpreted and made complete in its commentarial literature. In essence, it is an older scripture's self-adjustment to a more comprehensive and consequently more competitive teaching in a younger one. Moreover, the successful reconciliation of the textual disagreement took place in India before the old Tibetan translation of the PL was produced by Atiśa (ca. 982–1054) and rMa dGe ba'i blo gros (?–1089?). It is thus out of the question that the Tibetans could have directly inherited this dispute from their Indian predecessors: the PL was not aware of such a dispute.

In Tibet, theoretically, only the incorrect assertion that the LKCT teaches only 125 fingers as the body size of the Buddha while the SUT gives 120 fingers would have given rise to a serious dispute. But who would have made such an assertion? Possibly, those “audacious Tibetans” collectively addressed but unnamed by sMan bla. Yet, are sMan bla and, by extension, Tāranātha fully justified in how they argue for a compromise between the LKCT and SUT?

sMan bla quotes the Jo nang version of 172a, and so does Tāranātha: both assert that 125 fingers is the sole teaching in the LKCT, and both consider this reconcilable with the teaching in SUT. How could they reach such a conclusion? Because both acknowledged the commentarial literature of the SUT, which had already solved this problem by adopting an extensive interpretation of the SUT.⁹⁰ Yet the compromise achieved in the works of sMan bla and Tāranātha is far from satisfactory, because both share a defect: neither question the missing link of 120 fingers in the Tibetan translation of the LKCT, and both avoid discussing this lack, for which the baseless new version of 172a is responsible. It is fair to say that they arrived at the right conclusion the wrong way.

Whether or not the flaw in sMan bla and Tāranātha’s works had been addressed academically in the past is currently unknown to us, but it is clear that the dispute reopened in Tibet did not stop at the intellectual sphere, it went on to the material world. On the one hand, the defacement of the Peking *par ma* showcases a textual divergence, but, more importantly, the vehemence of the act betrays a real conflict in the real world. The conflict in the iconometric field between the numbers 125 and 120 is presumably also tangled up with the sectarian confrontation between the Jo nang and dGe lugs sects. We know that the Peking *par ma* was under the supervision of dGe lugs luminaries, and we know that Cakrasaṃvara is one of the three principle chosen deities in the dGe lugs tradition. Kālacakra, though accepted in the dGe lugs tradition from its beginning, is not among them.

Parenthetically, sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho’s (1653–1705, henceforth, sDe srid) compromise that the size of 125 fingers is applicable to sculpted images while 120 fingers is for painted images

⁹⁰ ’Brug-chen Padma-dkar-po (1526–1592) has warned his readers of the tendency to take the SUT at face value, cf. Jackson; Jackson 1984: 145. Peterson (1980: 242) also recorded another similar view regarding the interpretation of the SUT.

is barely defensible. The medium of a deity's images is irrelevant to its size, as sMan bla asserted.⁹¹ sDe srid's compromise took place in the overall context of the dGe lugs sect's search for political and cultural dominance in Tibet, which foreshadows the suppression of the Jo nang pas. At the same time, it also took place in the specific context of the Fifth Dalai Lama, sDe srid's guru, acknowledging the new Jo nang translation of the LKCT. The predicament faced by sDe srid was not whether or not to find a compromise, but how to find one that did not openly contradict his guru's choice while nonetheless keeping a safe distance from the Jo nang teachings. His solution was to introduce a new parameter serving to neutralize the status of 125. The 125-category is conditionally accepted since it was accepted by his master, but it is also tacitly rejected because its earlier broader application has been partially disabled. sDe srid's reconciliation is thus more diplomatic than academic.⁹²

It is true that our above assumptions presuppose that no treatise dated before the new Jo nang translation of the LKCT concerned itself with this dispute. This, however, remains to be tested.

4. A few words on sMan bla, Tāranātha and Mi pham, and their works on iconometry: In *De gshegs yid nor*, a number of different views, views held in both India and Tibet, and practices, certainly from Tibet and probably also from India, are presented and evaluated. sMan bla seems to be a critical thinker; nonetheless, we are not in a position to judge how independently he authored this iconometric treatise. What is currently certain is that he was intellectually indebted to two scholars from the Sa skya school: There are literal parallels between *De gshegs yid nor* and sTag Lo's *dPal 'byor rgya mtsho*. And Tsha ba rong pa bSod nam 'od zer's (*fl.* the second half of the 1200s) *rTen gsum bzhugs gnas dang bcas pa'i bzheng tshul yon tan 'byung gnas* is named and quoted in *bDe gshegs yid nor*.⁹³ In Tāranātha's works, *bDe skyid 'byung gnas*, for instance, we see a deep interest in Sanskrit literature and a marvelous mastery over the lingua franca; in the case of Mi pham, in contrast, such inspiration has declined and the shift of

⁹¹ bDe gshegs yid nor: 34v2–35r2.

⁹² sDe srid's reconciliation was criticized by Zhu chen Tshul khirms rin chen (1697–1769); see Jackson; Jackson 1984: 144–46.

⁹³ Cüppers et al. 2012: 5.

emphasis from theoretical concerns to more practical issues can clearly be felt.

Finally, it would be of great interest as well as definite significance to record and contextualize the disagreements in the development of Buddhist iconometry. A history of Buddhist iconometry structured on these fors and againsts would surely be a remarkable advancement as well as a great help for drawing a more complete and vivid picture of the field.⁹⁴

That is enough for our philological proliferation. It is time now to clear the way for professional painters, devoted practitioners, and, last but not least, for our art historian colleagues.

Abbreviations

Bu rGyud mchan: Bu ston Rin chen grub's *mChog gi dang po'i sangs rgyas las phyungs pa rgyud kyi rgyal po chen po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i bsdus pa'i rgyud kyi go sla'i mchan*; W1934-0734-eBook 1–150r2

Bu Ye le'u mchan: Bu ston Rin chen grub's *Ye shes le'u'i 'grel bshad dri ma med pa'i 'od kyi mchan*; W1934-0736-eBook 1–147v3

bDe skyid 'byung gnas: Tāranātha's *rGyal ba'i sku gzugs kyi cha tshad bstan pa bde skyid 'byung gnas*; Tāranātha 2008 467–500

bDe gshegs yid nor: sMan bla don grub's *bDe bar gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rab tu byed pa yid bzhin nor bu*; TBRC W24041-3652-1-126

De gshegs yid nor: sMan bla don grub's *De bzhin gshegs pa'i sku gzugs kyi tshad kyi rim pa'i don gsal bar byed pa'i gzhung lugs yid bzhin gyi nor bu*; TBRC W19727-11KG10541-1-62-any

Gangtok: The xylographic edition of *bDe gshegs yid nor* published in Gangtok in 1983; TBRC W24041-3652-1-126

Gos bzang: rGyal dbang lnga pa Ngag dbang Blo bzang rgya mtsho's *Za hor gyi bande ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho'i 'di snang 'khrul pa'i rol rtsed rtogs brjod kyi tshul du bkod pa dukūla'i gos bzang*;

⁹⁴ So far, it seems, Appendix A of Jackson; Jackson 1984 remains the sole source dealing specifically with the controversies in iconometry.

rGyal dbang lnga pa Blo bzang rgya mtsho & sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho 2013

Jo Dri med mchan: Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal's *bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dus kyi 'khor lo'i rgyas 'grel rtsa ba'i rgyud kyi rjes su 'jug pa stong phrag bcu gnyis pa dri ma med pa'i 'od*; Phyogs las rnam rgyal 2008b

Jo rGyud mchan: Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal's *Jo nang Phyogs las rnam rgyal gyis mchan gyis gsal bar mdzad pa'i bsDus pa'i rgyud kyi rgyal po dpal dus kyi 'khor lo*; Phyogs las rnam rgyal 2008a

LKCT: The *Laghukālacakratantra*; Banerjee 1985, Vira; Chandra 1966

Negi: Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary, Negi 1993–2005

Nyi ma: 'Ju Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho's *sKu gzugs kyi thig rtsa rab gsal nyi ma*; 'Ju Mi pham 'Jam dbyangs rnam rgyal rgya mtsho 2011

om.: omitted in

PL: The *Pratimālakṣaṇa*; Sakaki 1918

dPal 'byor rgya mtsho: sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen's *rTen gsum bzhugs gnas dang bcas pa'i sgrub tshul dpal 'byor rgya mtsho*; Shes rab rin chen 2007b

Phyag tshad zur phyung: sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen's *rTen gsum bzhengs tshul dpal 'byor rgya mtsho las sku'i phyag tshad kyi skabs zur du phyung ba*; Shes rab rin chen 2007a

Yid bzhin nor bu: See *De gshegs yid nor* and *bDe gshegs yid nor*.

VP: Puṇḍarīka's *Vimalaprabhā*; Dwivedi; Bahulkar 1994

Zhol: The xylographic edition of *De gshegs yid nor* engraved by the Zhol printery in 1927; TBRC W19727-11KG10541-1-62-any

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