sTeng lo tsä ba Tshul khrims ’byung gnas:
Tibetan Translator of the Vinayasūtramḥty-abhidhāna-svavyākhyaṇa

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1. Preamble

The Vinayasūtra (VS), attributed to Guṇaprabha, consists sometimes rewritten rules and other materials from the Mūlasarvāstivāda monastic codes. This well-known textbook in the Tibetan monastic curriculum was already translated into Tibetan in the sNga dar period. However, the Vinayasūtramḥty-abhidhāna-svavyākhyaṇa (VSS), the auto-commentary on VS, was translated by Añākārādeva and sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims ’byung gnas only in the 12th century CE. In examining its historical background, including the question why VSS became known in Tibet only during the Phyi dar period, the biographical information regarding the Tibetan translator would no doubt be beneficial. The present paper, summarizing his activities as well as providing bibliographical information on VSS, is intended to highlight the pan-Tibetan cultural area in the 12th century CE as the background to the translator’s activities.

2. Bibliographical Information on VS and Its Commentaries

VS and its commentaries in the Tibetan Canon are as follows: 'Dul ba'i mdo (VS) of Guṇaprabha (D no. 4117; P no. 5619), trans. Jinamitra and Klu'i rgyal mtshan; 'Dul ba'i mdo'i 'grel pa mngon par brjod pa rang gi rnam par bshad pa (VSS) of Guṇaprabha (D no. 4119; P no. 5621), trans. Añākārādeva and sTeng Tshul khrims ’byung gnas; 'Dul ba'i mdo'i rgya cher 'grel pa (Vinayasūtraṭīkā, VSṬ) of Dharmamitra (D no. 4120; P no. 5622), trans. Jinamitra and Klu'i rgyal mtshan; 'Dul ba' mdo rnam par bshad pa (Vinayasūtravākyākhyaṇa) of Prajñākara (D no. 4121; P no. 5623); 'Dul ba'i mdo'i 'grel pa (Vinayasūtramḥty) of Guṇaprabha (D no. 4122; P no. 5624). We know VS and VSṬ were already available in the sNga dar period, because they are listed in the lHan kar ma catalogue, where they are listed as 491 and 504, respectively. 2)
The Sanskrit texts are available for VS and VSS. Luo 2011a reports four Sanskrit MSS of VS as follows: 

**VS
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**MSA** A complete 120-folio palm-leaf manuscript of VS from the Potala (Lhasa). Written in Nepalese hook-topped script and dated 1270 CE.

**MSS** A complete 66-folio palm-leaf manuscript of VS from Zha lu Monastery (Tibet). Written in Tibetan *dbu med* script and copied perhaps around the beginning of the 12th century.

**MSC** An incomplete 35-folio Nepali paper manuscript of VS. Written in old Nepalese script and dated 1793.

**MSD** A fragment of VS from Central Asia. Written in Proto-Śāradā script.

**MSB** was known first in modern scholarship and used for Sāṅkrtyāyana’s *editio princeps* (Sāṅkṛtyāyana 1981). This posthumous edition was until recently the only primary source for study of the VS in Sanskrit. However, the newly found MSS cited above changed the situation. Photos of **MSB** in *dbu med* MSS reveal the problems of Sāṅkṛtyāyana 1981. The newly found primary sources, as well as VS commentaries in both Sanskrit and Tibetan, definitely serve as the basis for more accurate text-critical studies of VS. Careful examinations of *Pravrajyāvastu*, the first chapter of VS, are presented by Luo Hong in a series of papers.

According to Luo 2011a, the source materials for the partial Sanskrit MSS of VSS are as follows: 

**SS
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**MSSA** An incomplete 72-folio palm-leaf manuscript of VSS from Sa skya Monastery (Tibet). Written in Proto-Bengali script and undated.

**MSSB** An incomplete 36-folio palm-leaf manuscript of VSS from Zha lu Monastery. Written in Tibetan *dbu med* script by the same scribe as **MSB**.

A close look at photos of the **MSSA** taken by Sāṅkṛtyāyana reveals that it seems actually to be comprised of 38 leaves. In this MS, commentaries on the *Pravrajyāvastu* and the initial part of the *Śūtravibhaṅga* of VS are included. The former was edited in Bapat and Gokhale 1982, while the latter was included in a series of publications by Nakagawa Masanori. **MSSB** is an “extract version” in which, although several parts are omitted, the texts from the *Pravrajyāvastu* to the initial part of the *Poṣadāvastu* are covered. A series of Ritsukyō Shukkeji Kenkyūkai publications is based on this MS.

Besides the MSS mentioned above, we can retrieve the Sanskrit text of VSS from
interlinear notes of VS\textsubscript{MSA}. Although some of the notes are illegible, it may also be an important source for VS as well as VSS. \textsuperscript{8}

2.1. The Title of VSS

Here, it is worthwhile to identify the title of VSS. In the colophon of the Tibetan VSS, we find 'dul ba mdo'i grel pa bcom brlag ma as the title. \textsuperscript{9} The original Sanskrit behind bcom brlag (ma) can be confirmed by the description in the chapter colophon of VSS\textsubscript{MSA}. \textsuperscript{10}

\begin{quote}
\textit{māthuryāṃ} vinayavṛttau pravrajyāvastu samāptaḥ | (IV-b-6-4).
\end{quote}

[Here] ends the Pravrajyāvastu of the Vinaya Commentary of Mathurā.

This note indicates that VSS was circulated at Mathurā in Magadha. This reference to Mathurā and Magadha is supported by internal evidence, namely the occurrence of the terms “ārṣagrantha-” and “mathurāpāṭha-” in the commentary ad VS I-32. \textsuperscript{11}

3. Tibetan Translators of VSS

As is mentioned above, VSS was translated into Tibetan by Alānkaradeva and stEng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas. In the Tibetan canon, the Indian pañḍit is also called Alaṅkakalaśa and is known to have always collaborated with the Tibetan stEng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas.

3.1. Translations Other than VSS

Apart from VSS, this translation team worked on the following treatises: rNal 'byor chen po'i rgyud dpal rdo rje phreng ba'i rgya cher 'grel pa zab mo'i don gyi 'grel pa (Śrī-vajramālāmahāyogatantraṭīkā-gambhirārthadiṇī) of Alaṅkakalaśa (D no. 1795; P no. 2660); rMugs 'dzin 'chol ba'i sgrub thabs (Ucchusma-jambhala-sādhana) of Abhayākaragupta, revised by Mahā-Vibhūticandra, Chos rje dpal (D no. 3743; P no. 4565); bCom ldan 'das ma'i man ngag gi rjes su 'brang ba (Bhagavaty-Āmnāyānusārini) of dpal ldan rgyal po Jagattar gnas pa (Śrī-rāja-Jagaddalaniṃśin) (D no. 3811; P no. 5209); Seng ge zhaps 'bring pa'i skyes pa rabs kyi phreng ba (Haribhaṭṭa-Jātakamāla) of Rgyal po'i sras Seng ge zhaps 'bring pa (Rājaputrācārya-Haribhaṭṭa) (D no. 4152; P no. 5652).

As is shown above, Alaṅkāradeva/Alaṅkakalaśa composed his own treatise in the genre of Esoteric Buddhism and his knowledge extended to kāvyā literature as well. All information about this Indian pañḍit, of Kashmiri origin, can be found in the
biographical data of sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas. 12)

3.2. Activities of sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas

According to BA, he lived 1107–1190 CE. His main activities,13) in addition to translation, may be summarized as follows:

He travelled to India three times. He raised the necessary funds to pay the expenses of the first and second trips by copying the Prajñāparamitā. On his first visit, he met Tsami Sangs rgyas grags pa and spent ten years in Magadha. On his second visit, he studied many Tantras and Sūtras under thirteen scholars: Saṅgatavīra, Daśabalaśrī, Candrakirti, Sudhanagupta, Śilacandra, Vimalarakṣita, Jayagupta, Śimhahara, Bhāskara, Śilaśrī, Vasantatilaka, Ānandadeva, and (Newar) Nayaśrī. Furthermore, he succeeded in inviting Alanākārādeva of Kashmiri origin. In his third visit to India, he, together with Alanākārādeva, studied the Mahāvibhāṣā (Bye brag bshad pa chen po) for three years and brought a Sanskrit MS back with them to Tibet. After their return to Tibet, they began to translate the text into Tibetan. However, one third remained untranslated due to the death of the Indian paṇḍit.14)

Among his activities, it is remarkable that he was not only a skillful scribe but also a transporter of Sanskrit MSS.

3.3. Notes on the Cover Folio of VS\textsubscript{MSB}

The description of sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas as a scribe and a transporter of Sanskrit MSS can be confirmed by the notes on the cover folio of VS\textsubscript{MSB}. Although some of the notes are illegible, we find the following notes:

Shi la a ka ras bris | ([This was] written by Śilākara.)

Śilākara is no other than sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas, as assumed by dGe 'dun chos 'phel and Śaṅkṛtyāyana, both of whom saw the original dBu med MSS.15) Incidentally, G. N. Roerich integrated information from dGe 'dun chos 'phel into his translation of BA.16)

It is reasonable to presume that sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas was responsible for bringing the original dBu med MSS with him from India to Tibet. In the colophon of VS\textsubscript{MSB}, however, a Tibetan called Dharmakirti or Dharma grags is indicated as the scribe.17) Accordingly, we can infer from the notes on the cover of VS\textsubscript{MSB} that the interlinear notes of VS\textsubscript{MSB} might have been written by Tshul khrims 'byung gnas.
3.4. (Jo) Tsa mi (Sangs rgyas grags pa)
In the dBu med MSS, furthermore, we find the name of (Jo) tsa mi (Sangs rgyas grags pa) who was a supervisor of sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas on his first visit to India. In the colophon of the Vigrahavyāvartanī MS, just below the Sanskrit colophon (7b4: likhitam idarp śridharmakirtinā sarvasatvahetoh yathālabdham iti), we read:

7b5: gnur dharma kirtis brisl [This was written by gnur Dharmakirti.]
7b6: Jo tsa myi'i mkhan bu yinl [He was a disciple of Jo tsa myi.]

The script of these Tibetan notes looks different from that of the main text and judging thereby the Tibetan colophon seems to have been a later addition. Nonetheless, it might be possible to hypothesize that sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas was also called Dharmakirti or Dharma grags.

Notably (Jo) tsa mi (Sangs rgyas grags pa) was originally from the Tangut kingdom, and later became an abbot of the main temple at Bodhgaya. Based on the personal relationship between (Jo) tsa mi (Sangs rgyas grags pa) and sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas, we can imagine that the pan-Tibetan cultural area in the 12th century extended to Tangut or Xixia as well.

4. Conclusion

The newly found source materials enable us to advance our textual studies of VS and VSS. VSS was translated into Tibetan by sTeng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas together with Alaṅkāradeva, of Kashmiri origin. It is to be noted that VSS was circulated at Mathurā in the Magadha region. This Tibetan scholar was active not only as lo tsā ba (translator) but also as a transporter of Sanskrit MSS. From his personal connections with scholars he met in India, we can imagine a pan-Tibetan cultural area including India, Tibet, and Tangut, as a background to his activities. As far as VSS is concerned, it is to be noted that the text preserved in Magadha was translated into Tibetan in collaboration with a Kashmiri scholar.

Notes
1) Besides the editions of the Tibetan canon, one more xylographic edition is reported. See Luo 2011a: 174.
(110) stEng lo tsā ba Tshul khrims 'byung gnas (Yonezawa)

3) See Luo 2011a: 181. In detail, see Luo 2011a: 171–73. NB The Wylie transliteration scheme is adopted in this paper.
4) See also Study Group of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibetan dBU med Script 2001: 17.
6) In detail, see Nakagawa 1999, Ritsukyō Shukkeji Kenkyūkai 2012.
9) See D no. 4119, zu 273b5–6; P no. 5621, yu 341b3–4; Sasaki 1957; Study Group of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibetan dBU med Script 2001: 12, fn. 5.
10) See also Ritsukyō Shukkeji Kenkyūkai 2012: (37). The text is emended (māthuryāṃ) for māthuryā-. This chapter colophon is not reproduced in Bapat and Gokhale 1982.
11) Ritsukyō Shukkeji Kenkyūkai 2004: (64), (65); 2005: (76). See also Luo 2011b: 175.
12) See also Naudou 1980: 240–42.
13) BA: 933–935 (21a5–22a6); Roerich 1949: 1052–54.
14) References to stEng lo tsā ba in Tibetan works including BA are found in Martin 2014.
16) Roerich adds the following comments: “many of his books are still preserved in the monastery of Ngor. The words ‘books of Śīlākara.’ / Tshul-khrims ‘byung-gnas/ are inscribed on the manuscripts. Verbal communication by Rev. dGe-'dun-chos-'phel.” Roerich 1949: 1053.
18) Yonezawa 2014: 1237.

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