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The *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and the Fifth Dalai Lama's 'Khrung rab

Tomoko Makidono*

Introduction

The Jātaka tales are a series of texts which narrate former birth stories of the Buddha Śākyamuni handed down to us from the scriptures of Theravāda Buddhism. The *Vessantara Jātaka* is one such story, well known because of its featured figure, the prince Vessantara, whose great generosity extended to even offering up his children and wife. The story is preserved both in Pāli literature and other old literatures widely spread over Asia. My interest in this topic goes back to a query posted by Prof. Steven Collins on H-Buddhism in 2010 as to whether there were any Tibetan versions relating to the *Vessantara Jātaka*. Later he published a book called *Readings of the Vessantara Jātaka* (Collins 2016). My article, in part, is a response to this earlier query.¹ In this article, I wish to take a look at the *Vessantara Jātaka* as it figures in the Tibetan indigenous Buddhist scripture called the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. The *Maṇi bka' 'bum* narrates that Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug, a former birth of Srong btsan sgam po, was born to his father Sgra

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I thank Philip Pierce for correcting my English and suggestions that improved this article.

¹ See H-Buddhism:

<https://lists.h-net.org/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-buddhism&month=1010&week=b&msg=lpHI/IOgXK/FB/R/tyE65A&user=&pw=> (accessed August 15, 2020).

dbyang rnga sgra ('[He Whose] Voice [Is Like] a Euphonious Drum') at the time of the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog ('[He Who Is] the Acme of Illuminating Wisdom') in the country named Sgra can. The prince is devoted to giving. He has two wives, Nyi zla sgron ma ('[She Who Is Like] the Light of the Sun and the Moon'), and Nam mkha' sgron ma ('[She Who Is Like] the Light of the Sky'), who are identified as former births of Srong btsan sgam po's two wives, the Nepalese princess Khri btsun and the Chinese princess Kong jo, respectively. In particular, this article aims to investigate the versions of the *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* as a source of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *'Khrungs rabs*, and also to identify what I believe is the likeliest source for the versions of the *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, namely, a Tibetan canonical scripture of the Bka' 'gyur titled *'Phags pa Rgyal bu don grub gyi mdo* (Q, 1020; Toh. 351; 太子須大拏經, T, 171), or 'The Sūtra of a Noble Bodhisattva Who Attained His Aim'.²

There are a number of scholars who have worked on the *Vessantara Jātaka* (among others, Étienne Lamotte 1981: 713–714; Jampa Losang Panglung 1981, esp. 108–110; Hubert Durt 1999 and 2000; Bhikku Anālayo 2016). The above-mentioned work by Collins points out two Tibetan versions of the story that have been translated into Western languages: one is from a canonical scripture translated into English by W.R.S. Ralston from F. Anton von Schiefner's German translation (1906), and another an indigenous Tibetan drama translated by Jacques Bacot (1914). Von Schiefner's translation is of a portion of the *Vinayavastu/Bhaiṣajyavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya (Tib. *'Dul ba gzhi*, Toh. 1, nga, fols.192a6–200b5).³ In the Tibetan, the prince's city is rendered as *thams cad kyi grong rdal* ('Everyone's Town'); the prince's father's name is *thams cad kyi bshes gnyen* ('[He Who Is] the Friend of All'), and the prince's name is *thams cad sgröl* ('[He Who] Liberates All' or 'The Saviour of All').⁴ The rendering of the prince's name suggests that the Tibetan translators may have translated from the Chinese,

² The being alluded to is Śākyamuni Buddha, Don grub being the Tibetan translation of Siddhārtha (Mvp. nos.49, 3603).

³ Ch. 根本說一切有部毘奈耶藥事, T. 1448, 64c26–68b17.

⁴ *Vinayavastu* (fols. 192a6, 192b4). The underlying Sanskrit names appear in the English translation as Viśvanāgara, Viśvāmitra and Viśvaṅtara (sic), respectively (Ralston 1906: 257).

which has 尾施縛多羅⁵, and understood that his name was Viśvatāra rather than Viśvantara⁶, as paralleled, for instance, in the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara's consort, Tārā, a female equivalent for the word 'saviour.' As pointed out in turn by Hikita Hiromichi, the Chinese translation (T, 1450) of the *Sanḅhabhedavastu* has the prince's name as 自在,⁷ ('almighty') which would correspond to *īśvara* in Sanskrit, and *dbang phyug* in Tibetan. Hubert Durt (1999: 167–173, 246–240; 2000:150–154) has delved into the Chinese sources of “the Viśvaṃtara/Sudāna Jātaka” within the “Northern tradition,” and in particular a sūtra titled 太子須大拏經 (T. 171). A Tibetan translation of it, the *'Phags pa Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* (Durt 1999: 167, 232n34; Q, 1020; Toh. 351), was found in Dunhuang (van Schaik 2011: 42–43). Durt (2000: 151), followed by Anālayo (2016: 13n7), points out that this sūtra sets forth the path of the Mahāyāna. It is likely that this text entered Tibet via Central Asia and became the source of the versions of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. In the Tibetan translation of it, the prince meets a sage who dwells in a mountain where the prince took up exile, and says to him, “I want [to follow] the path of the Mahāyāna.”⁸ Bacot's French translation (1914) was rendered into English by H.I. Woolf (1924: 11–116) and Marion H. Duncan (1967: 65–123), as noted by Christoph Emmerich (2012: 542n5). Timewise, the versions in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* are situated between the Tibetan canonical scriptures and the *Dri med kun ldan*, and distinguished from both in that the versions in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, while generally retaining the general outline of the story, modified it so as to give the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and the Tibetan king Srong bstan sgam po a role in the story. In this article, I will compare three Tibetan texts, the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, the *Rgyal bu don grub ki mdo*, and the Fifth Dalai Lama's *'Khrung rabs*. I will point out some notable parallel features among them. I will demonstrate in particular that the Fifth Dalai Lama took some features of his *'Khrung rabs* from the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. I will also point out similarities between the Newari version studied by Emmerich (2012; 2016) and the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, both of which have

⁵ T. 1448, 65a6; Hikita 2014: 112.

⁶ The prince's name in the *Sanḅhabhedavastu* (Gnoli 1978: 119.24); also see Speyer 2007: 124.13.

⁷ T. 1450, p. 181a29; Hikita 2013: 112.

⁸ *Rgyal bu don grub gyi mdo* (fol. 62a7): *bdag ni theg pa chen po'i lam 'dod do zhes smras so ||*.

the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara as the main deity. In sum, I am hoping to add to the parallels already documented by former scholarship on the *Vessantara Jātaka*.

The *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and the Fifth Dalai Lama

The *Maṇi bka' 'bum* is what in more specific terms is called “revealed scripture” (*gter ma*), that is, scripture that was once hidden but later rediscovered. It claims to be the testament of the ancient Tibetan king Srong tsan sgam po (d. 650), who is identified in it as an emanation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the tutelary deity of Tibet. As pointed out by Kapstein, the actual authors are three revealers of scripture (*gter ston*), one of whom was Nyang ral nyi ma'i 'od zer (1124–1136); further, “the great majority of texts presently included in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* were in existence by 1250” (Kapstein 1992: 81–82). The texts detail the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara’s beneficial activities towards rescuing the six classes of transmigrating beings, who are led to devote themselves to reciting the Bodhisattva’s quintessential mantra, *oṃ ma ṇi pad me hūṃ*, as an effective means of purifying themselves from their sins so as to be reborn in the Blissful Land (Sukhāvātī) of the Buddha Amitābha.

Although the *gter mas* were destined to be accused of not being of Indian origin, the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* distinguishes itself from other *gter mas* in its popularity among the Tibetan Buddhist schools. Block prints of it have been produced by several of them including the Dge lugs pas and the Sa skya pas (Macdonald 1968/1969). Matthew Kapstein has shown that the Fifth Dalai Lama was engaged in compiling the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* (Kapstein 1992: 80–81). A.L. Waddell even thought that the Fifth Dalai Lama was the author of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and used it as a scriptural authority to prove that he himself was an emanation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Waddell 1894: 61–62). Since modern scholarship, as Kapstein has pointed out, has convincingly ascribed authorship of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* to its three revealers, Waddell’s attribution of it to the Fifth Dalai Lama must be judged incorrect. However, his view regarding the reasons why the Fifth Dalai Lama pushed his claim to being an emanation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara in connection with the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* cannot entirely be rejected.

The *Maṇi bka' 'bum* borrows extensively from Indian scriptures, including the early esoteric Indian Buddhist text

Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra. Some passages of this latter are taken, without the source being identified, as elements of the account of the Bodhisattva's activities on behalf of the six classes of beings. The *Vessantara Jātaka* is another such text introduced into the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* without the source being identified. My contribution will consist in identifying additional Tibetan versions of the story to those uncovered by former scholarship on the *Vessantara Jātaka*. Inspection of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* reveals that there are two stories similar to the *Vessantara Jātaka*, both featuring the prince Rgyal bu 'Jig rten dbang phyug as a former birth of King Srong bstan sgam po (d. 650), the ancient Tibetan king regarded as a manifestation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the tutelary deity of Tibet. My objective will be to look at these two adaptations of the story in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, namely, *The Shorter Biography of King Srong btsan sgam po* (hereafter *The Shorter*) and the *Jātaka of Prince Lokeśvara* (hereafter *The Longer*) in comparison with a similar story among the Fifth Dalai Lama's former births in "The Mirror of Clarity: Avadānas together with Notes for Delineating the Layout of Birth Narratives" (*'Khrungs rabs kyi zhing bkod 'bri tshul gyi rtogs brjod kha byang dang bcas pa gsal ba'i me long*), following Dr. Sangseraima Ujeed's study on it (hereafter the *'Khrungs rabs*) (Ujeed 2017; also see Lin 2017)⁹, and to argue that the Fifth Dalai Lama used them when formulating his own birth story. My philological observations below will show that his *'Khrung rabs* incorporates major elements of the two adaptations of the *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*.

A Synopsis of *The Shorter*¹⁰ and *The Longer*¹¹ versions in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*

I first provide a synopsis of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*'s two adaptations of the story, which I divide into three parts: preface, main part and ending:

⁹ I thank Philip Pierce for the reference to both Ujeed's and Lin's works.

¹⁰ MKB, Punakha (fols. 140a4–145a2, pp. 279.4–289.1); for an English translation, see Trizin Tsering Rinpoche 2007: 467–474.

¹¹ MKB, Punakha (fols. 167b5–fol. 183b5, pp. 334.5–366.5); for an English translation, see Trizin Tsering Rinpoche 2007: 523–547.

(1) Preface

The Shorter recounts that on the full moon day of the seventh month King Srong btsan sgam po smiled while making an offering to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara at 'Phrul snang Temple in Lhasa. The minister Thonmi Sambhoṭa¹² asked the king what he was smiling at. The king replies that he was not smiling at the *buddhas* of the past, the present and the future. *The Longer* starts with the king paying homage to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and his mantra *om ma ni pad me hūm*. On the eighth day of the month of autumn of the female wood-rabbit year (*shing mo yos kyi ston zla ra ba'i tshes brgyad*), King Srong btsan sgam po smiled during the New Year's ceremony (*lo gsar mchod pa*). Mgar stong [btsan]¹³ and Thonmi Sambhoṭa asked the king the reason for his smile, since they have not seen the king smile during the past thirty years of their service to him. In *The Shorter*, Thonmi Sambhoṭa enumerates the king's great accomplishments; *The Longer* does not contain such an enumeration. In *The Shorter*, the king reveals that his smile was due to his past austerities; in *The Longer*, that recollecting his past lives, he was rejoicing in his past deeds that occasioned pleasure and in the pains caused by giving at the time of the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog 991 cons earlier.

(2) The Main Part

The Shorter tells how 91 cons earlier, at the time of the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog, Srong bstan sgam po is reborn as the crown prince Rgyal bu 'Jig rten dbang phyug (Lokeśvara) in the country of Sgra gcan, to Sgra dbyangs rnga¹⁴ (his father) and Dri med (his mother). *The Longer* has Sgra dbyangs rnga sgra as

¹² The Tibetan grammarian who invented Tibetan script.

¹³ Mgar stong btsan, or Mgar, a minister, is described in the *Mani bka' 'bum* in connection with his being sent to China to bring Princess Kong jo back for her marriage to Srong btsan sgam po; MKB, "Rgya mo kong jo bod du spyang drangs pa dang blon pos 'phrul 'gran pa'i mdzad pa ('The invitation to the Chinese princess Kong jo to [come to] Tibet and the acts [performed by] the minister during a magical contest'): S, fols. 118a6– 132a3, pp. 235.6–263.3; see Bacot 1935; Cotterel 2011: 251.

¹⁴ MKB (fol. 141a1–2, p. 281.1–2): *yab sgra dbyangs rnga'i rgyal po la btsun mo lnga brgya yod pa'i btsun mo tha chung dri med ma'i sras 'jig rten dbang phyug ces bya bar skyes so ||*.

the name of his father¹⁵, and gives the king's wife's name as Dri med pa, and states that the prince is attended by four nannies. At the age of sixteen, Prince Lokeśvara pays a visit to the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog, and happens to meet two women, Nyi zla sgron ma and Nam mkha' sgron ma. *Bodhicitta* is generated in the presence of the Buddha. The prince asks the two women not to obstruct his giving even if he should give away wife and children. The two women agree not to. *The Longer* shows the prince making a resolution that he will not attain emptiness (*stong pa nyid*) until he attains the root of virtue. The prince's father arranges marriages between the prince and both Nyi zla'i sgron ma and Nam mkha' sgron ma. Nyi zla sgron ma gives birth to a son named 'Od zer tog ('[He Who Is] the Acme of Light Rays'). *The Longer* gives the name of Nyi zla sgron ma's father as Grags pa'i 'byung gnas ('[He Who Is] a Source of Fame'), and has an explanation for the difference between the marriage gifts sent to the two wives.¹⁶ The prince settles down to a life of giving, and the fame of his giving spreads widely. The king named Shing khri can ('[He Who] Has A Wooden Throne') of the bordering country Bye ma shing drung ('[Country Where One Is] in the Presence of Sand and Woods') having devised a plan to acquire the wealth of the prince's country, sends three Brahmins to it. The prince gives as much wealth as the three Brahmins ask him for, thereby draining his country of its resources. The prince's father decides to exile the prince for 25 years to a mountain called Bdud ri nag po ('Black Demon Mountain'). Nam mkha' sgron ma gives birth to a baby girl, whereat the prince asks for a seven-day extension to going into exile and permission to further give. The father agrees. The prince tries unsuccessfully to persuade his two queens to stay in the country, so the three of them set off for Black Demon Mountain, and along the way part with gifts. Upon the arrival of the three, the mountain is transformed into an idyllic setting, where all animals welcome them. In *The Longer*, they ask an old woman where a good place would be to dwell. She replies that the prince, the incarnation of a Buddha, could live anywhere. The prince encounters two monks who predict that he will soon become

¹⁵ MKB (fol. 169b5, p. 338.5): *yul sgra gcan gyi rgyal po sgra dbyangs mnga sgra'i sras | rgyal bu 'jig rten dbang phyug la.*

¹⁶ In the Maṇi bka' 'bum, contrary to the Indian custom of dowry, it is brides who are offered wealth at marriage.

enlightened. A Brahmin, who had been commanded by his wife to do so, comes up to the prince and asks him to give him his two children. The prince parts with his children while his two wives are away. A demoness (*rākṣasī*) blocks the path, on which the wives are heading back to the prince. When they do finally return to him, they lose consciousness upon learning that their children have been given away. When the two wives come to, the prince reminds them of the promise they made not to obstruct his giving. The prince and his two wives, *buddhas* of the ten directions, gods and *nāgas* all shed tears, which collect to form a big lake. Lotus flowers bloom on the lake, and from them spring *buddhas*. The earth quakes, and rainbows and flowers rain down from the sky. The prince and his two wives pay homage to the thousands of *buddhas* who are in the retinue of the Buddha Amitābha, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and Indra. The Bodhisattva's six syllables lead the six realms of beings. Indra and a *yakṣa* test the prince and ask him for his wives. The prince consents. Indra and the *yakṣa*, though, quickly give the wives back to him, since they now know that the prince's gift was genuine. The Brahmin who had been given the children travels to the prince's country, where the prince's father buys them back. The prince's father asks the prince to come back. Along the way King Shing khri can asks the prince for forgiveness, gives jewels to him and becomes the prince's subject. Upon the prince's return, all people rejoice. Ministers distribute wealth to the poor. The prince arranges a marriage for his son 'Od zer tog to a princess named Mandara ('Celestial Tree') and enthroned him as a regent. The prince sends his daughter Utpala ('Blue Lotus') to a Brahmin named Bde byed ('[He Who] Produces Pleasure'). In *The Longer*, the prince attains perfect enlightenment (*mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas*) and becomes Kun nas dpal brtsegs rgyal po ('A King Thoroughly Heaped with Glory').

(3) The Ending

In *The Shorter*, the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog predicts that the prince will be reborn as a celestial female named Nam mkha'i bu mo Shes rab brgyan ('Daughter of the Sky Adorned with Wisdom') during the time of the Buddha Gar gyi dbang phyug in a place called Gar yas. *The Longer* identifies the characters of the story with historical figures; for instance, Prince Lokeshvara with King Srong bstan sgam po, and his two wives with the king's Nepalese and Chinese wives.

A Comparison between the Fifth Dalai Lama's 'Khrungs rabs and the Two Adaptations in the Maṇi bka' 'bum

The settings in the story and the names of characters are similar in the 'Khrungs rabs and in the two adaptations of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. The 'Khrungs rabs identifies the Fifth Dalai Lama's lineage as starting from the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, followed by Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug, while the fourth emanation was King Srong btsan sgam po (Ujeed 2017: 199). The passage studied by Ujeed below depicts Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug's encounter with his future wives:

At the age of sixteen, when [he] was born as 'Jig rten dbang phyug, the son of King Sgra dbyang rnga sgra, in the country of Sgra can, both Nyi zla'i sgron ma and Nam mkha'i sgron ma asked to be [his] queens while [he] was on the way to the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog. [All three] offered the Buddha blue lotuses and copper coins, and generated *bodhicitta*.¹⁷

Although, as noted by Per Sørensen (1994), there are several other Avalokiteśvara cycles of texts relating to Srong btsan sgam po besides those in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, still, if I am not mistaken, a Jātaka-like biography of him is contained only in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. If that is the case, the passage just quoted must have been taken from the adaptations of the *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. "The son" referred to above is Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug. The corresponding passages in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* are as follows:

In *The Longer*:

Then the prince grew up, and when he had become sixteen years old ... [and was] on his way to see and worship the Buddha Ye shes 'od mdzad tog under a Bodhi tree, the prince met two beautiful women. The two women said, "O Prince, where are you going?" The prince went on to the Buddha Ye shes 'od mdzad tog can together with the two women. The prince offered [the Buddha] nine golden coins; one of the

¹⁷ 'Khrung rabs (p. 830.2–7): *yul sgra can na rgyal po sgra dbyang rnga sgra'i sras su 'jig rten dbang phyug 'khrungs pa'i tshe | lo bcu drug lon pa na | sangs rgyas 'od mdzad ye shes tog gi drung du byon pa'i lam khar nyi zla'i sgron ma dang nam mkha'i sgron ma gnyis kyis btsun mo bya bar gsol zhing | sangs rgyas la utpa la dang dong rtse phul te sems bskyed do ||*; cf. Ujeed 2017: 201, n. 227.

women [offered] seven *uḍumbara* flowers, and the other, five lotus flowers. Then *bodhicitta* was generated.¹⁸

In *The Shorter*:

When [I] became sixteen years old, [I] went before the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog. As an outcome of that [I] met two women, Nyi zla'i sgron ma and Nam mkha'i sgron ma. The two wanted (lit. rejoiced) to be my queens.¹⁹

If one compares these three texts, the Fifth Dalai Lama's *'Khrung rab* is seen to be something of a mixture of both *The Shorter* and *The Longer*. In the passage below taken from the *'Khrung rabs* and depicting the expulsion of Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug, the giving of his wives, the prince's return to the kingdom, and the enthronement of his son, all of the proper nouns employed in it are in accord with those in the adaptations found in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. The *'Khrungs rabs*:

[Sgra dbyang rnga sgra] set [his] son, 'Jig rten dbang phyug, [as the ruler] in the kingdom, and [the son] distributed generous gifts. King Shing khri can, who was envious, asked for the wish-fulfilling jewel, so ['Jig rten dbang phyug] gave [it] to him. The son ['Jig rten dbang phyug] and his wives (lit. the father [and] mother[s]) were thus expelled to the demons' black mountain, called Bya rog sgra gcan ('Raven[-headed] Rāhu[la]'). Then, on the way [to the mountain,] too, the vehicle, ornaments, and clothes were given to a female beggar. On the road [to the mountain], a god magically created a sky-mansion and offered [it to them]. Although the two wives wished to dwell there, the father (i.e. the prince) proceeded on in order not to disobey his father's command. There [at the mountain], [the prince] also gave [his children,]

¹⁸ MKB (fols. 168b2–169a5, pp. 336.2–337): *de nas rgyal bu de cher skyes te lo bcu drug lon tsa na |... [fol. 168b6] rgyal bu de byang chub kyi shing drung du sangs rgyas ye shes 'od mdzad tog la mchod pa la phyin pa'i lam khar | bu mo lta na sdug pa gnyis dang phrad pas | bu mo gnyis na re | rgyal bu gar gshegs zer |... rgyal bus bu mo gnyis dang 'grogs nas | sangs rgyas ye shes 'od mdzad tog can du phyin te | rgyal bus gser gyi dong tse dgu phul | bu mo gcig gis me tog u dumwaara bdun phul | gcig gis padma lnga phul nas byang chub kyi mchog tu sems bskyed do ||.*

¹⁹ MKB (fol. 141a2–3, p. 281.2–3): *lo bcu drug lon pa na sangs rgyas 'od mdzad ye shes tog gi spyang sngar 'gro ba'i lan du | bu mo nyi zla'i sgron ma dang | nam mkha'i sgron ma gnyis dang phrad de | de gnyis ka nga'i btsun mo la rab tu dga' ba la |.*

a sister and a brother, to a Brahmin who came from [the country named] Bye ma shing drung. As a result, the father and the [two] mothers, territorial gods, *nāgas* and local spirits paid homage, and tears shed by the *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* of the ten directions gathered in one [place] and became a lake. In the middle of it were lotus flowers, in each of which dwelt a *buddha*. A sign [in the form] of the radiant light of a rainbow appeared miraculously. The god Indra tried to test [the prince's generosity and asked him for his wives, and] the latter gave [him] the queens, but was offered them back again. Not long afterwards [the prince] was called [back] to his own country, [where] he held celebrations for, among other things, his son 'Od zer tog being enthroned within the kingdom.²⁰

The Shorter of the Mañi bka' 'bum goes as follows:

[My father] enthroned me [as ruler] in the kingdom.... Afterwards I engaged in [acts] of giving; to many who lacked wealth I gave whatever wealth they wished. The fame of my giving spread far and wide. At that time [there was] a base king named Shing khri can in the bordering country of Bye ma shing drung, which was considered to be hostile to the people of the country of Sgra gcan. He thought, "If that king gives whatever [others] want, he must have the wish-fulfilling jewel. If I got it, I would be wealthier than him." He then sent three Brahmins [to my palace.] [They] came up to me and bowed, saying, "Your Highness! The fame of your giving has spread far and wide. We, too, are impoverished and have come to beg. Give us your jewel. Then your giving will be complete." If I did not give it, my giving would be

²⁰ 'Khrungs rabs (p. 831, 7–21): *sras 'jig rten dbang phyug rgyal sar bskos te sbyin pa rgya chen po btang pas | phrag dog dang ldan pa'i rgyal po shing khri can gyis | nor bu dgos 'dod 'byung ba slong bar btang ba bzhin byin pas | sras yab yum rnams bdud ri nag po bya rog sgra gcan zhes bya bar spyugs | de'i tshe lam du yang bzhon pa | rgyan gos rnams kyang slong mo la byin | shul lam zhig tu lhas gzhal yas khang sprul nas mchod pas | btsun mo gnyis der bzhugs par 'dod kyang yab kyi bka' mi bcag pa'i slad du byon | der bye ma shing drung nas 'ongs pa'i bram ze la sras ming sring yang byin | de las brten nas yab yum rnams dang | yul de'i lha klu gzhi bdag rnams kyis 'dud shing | phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyis spyan chab bton pa gcig tu 'khyil ba mtshor gyur pa'i dbus su pad sdong gi me tog rnams la sangs rgyas re re bzhugs pa dang | 'ja' 'od 'khyil ba'i ltas ya mtshan du byung | brgya byin gyis nyams tshod sad par btsun mo byin kyang slar phul | mi ring bar rang yul du spyan drangs te sras 'od zer tog rgyal sar bsko ba sogs dga' ston byas so ||.*

incomplete, so I took the jewel and gave it [to them]—gave without second thought... When [my father] heard that the jewel had been given to his enemy ... [he] said that this prince needed to be put on the demons' black mountain [called] *Bya rog sgra gcan* for 25 years. Then the king and two queens each mounted a horse, took their children (a brother and a sister) onto their laps, loaded provisions on elephants, and set out. All the townspeople cried.²¹

Further along the way [I] encountered five female beggars. [They] said, "Give [us] five [sets of] clothes and ornaments," and [I] did so without regret... [Our party] went on further, and gods magically created and offered a heavenly mansion [for us]. The two queens said, "It will be nice to stay in this [mansion]," but I said, "We won't stay [there], since doing so would be to disobey my father's command, and [so we] went on."²²

A hideous Brahmin appeared. He was an indigent who had come from *Bye ma shing drung*... [He] said, "Please give [me] your son and daughter." If I did not give them to him, my giving would be incomplete, so I gave them to him

²¹ MKB (fols. 141a5–142a6, pp. 281.5–283.6) *yab kyis bdag rgyal srid la dbang bskur nas ... de nas bdag gis sbyin pa la zhugs te | nor gyis phongs pa'i skye po du ma la nor gang dang gang 'dod pa la de dang de dag sbyin pas | bdag gi sbyin pa'i grags pas thams cad du khyab par gyur to || de'i tshe mtha' 'khob bye ma shing drung gi yul na | log pa'i rgyal po shing khri can zhes bya ba | yul sgra gcan pa'i 'thab ya cig yod pa'i bsam pa la | rgyal po de ci 'dod ster na | nor bu dgos 'dod thams cad 'byung ba zhig yod pa 'dug || de ngas thob na khong bas nga lhag par 'gyur snyam nas | bram ze gsum 'dong du btang bas | bdag gi drung du 'ongs te rgyal po khyod kyi sbyin pa'i grags pas kun tu khyab nas | nged kyang phongs te slong du 'ongs pas khyed kyi nor bu de bdag cag la byin cig dang | sbyin pa yongs su rdzogs par 'gyur ro zhes smras te phyag byas so || ma byin na sbyin pa mi rdzogs pas rin po che blangs te | the tshom med par byin nas | ... nor bu dgra la byin pa de yab kyis thos nas | ... rgyal po 'di lo nyi shu rtsa lnga'i bar du bdud ri nag po bya rog sgra gcan du bcug dgos zer | ... de nas rgyal po dang btsun mo gnyis rta re re la chibs te | sras ming sring gnyis pang du khyer | 'phral chas rnams glang po che la bkal te 'ongs pas | grong khyer pa thams cad kyis ngus so ||.*

²² MKB (fol. 142b2–4, p. 284.2–4): *yang lam du slong mo ba lnga dang phrad pas | khyed lnga'i gos dang rgyan rnams byin cig zer ba dang byin te 'gyod pa med do || ... yang phyin pa dang lhas gzhal yas Khang zhig sprul te mchod pa dang | btsun mo gnyis na re 'dir bzhus na 'thad do zer yang | bdag gis yab kyi bka' bcag par 'gro bas mi sdod do zhes smras te phyin no ||.*

without second thought. The Brahmin took away my two children, [both the] brother and sister.²³

I cried, and the two queens cried too. Further, all the gods and *nāgas* dwelling in that region also wept. Likewise, the *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* in the ten directions, too, shed a downpour of tears, whence a big lake formed in the region. The stem of a lotus emerged on the lake. In each of its flowers arose a magically created *buddha*. Many signs appeared: an earth tremor, a radiant rainbow, a shower of flowers, and so forth.²⁴

Further, in order to test me, the lord of gods Indra and the *yakṣa* Grub pa'i blo gros both disguised themselves as Brahmins, and asked [me] for the two queens, so I gave [both] to them without second thought. Recognizing [that I] had no regrets, they led [the queens] off seven steps and offered [them] back to me.²⁵

Then [my] father sent a messenger [to me telling me] not to stay there but to come quickly [back] to the country of Sgra gcan.... I myself together with the queens then set off [to] go [back] in accordance with my father's command.... [We] arrived in Sgra gcan, met my father and mother, rejoicing greatly.... [I had] [my] son, 'Od zer tog, take a princess, Mandara, as a consort and enthroned in the kingdom. [My]

²³ MKB (fols. 143b6–144a2, pp. 285.1–286.2): *bram ze mi sdug pa zhig mdun du byung ste / bye ma shing drung nas 'ongs pa'i dbul po'o || ... khyed kyi sras pho mo gnyis bdag la gnang bar zhu zhes zer ro || ma byin na bdag gi sbyin pa mi rdzogs the tshom med par byin no || bram zes sras ming sring gnyis po khrid pa |*.

²⁴ MKB (fols. 143b5–144a1, pp. 286.5–287.1): *... bdag gis ngus pa dang / btsun mo gnyis kyi kyang ngus so || gzhan yang yul de na gnas pa'i lha klu thams cad kyi kyang bshums / de bzhin du phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' thams cad kyi kyang spyang chab byung ba'i mchi ma char ltar babs pas / yul der mtsho chen po zhig byung ngo || mtsho de'i steng du padma'i sdong po skyes pa'i me tog re re la / sprul pa'i sangs rgyas re re 'khrungs te / sa g.yo ba dang / 'ja' 'od 'khyil ba dang / me tog gi char 'bab pa la sogs pa'i ltas mang po byung ngo ||*.

²⁵ MKB (fol. 144a2–3, p. 287.2–3): *yang lha'i dbang po brgya byin dang / gnod sbyin grub pa'i blo gros gnyis kyi nga la nyams sad pa'i phyir / bram ze re rer sprul nas btsun mo gnyis po bslangs pas / bdag gis the tshom med par byin te 'gyod sems med par shes nas / gom pa bdun bdun khrid de slar yang nga nyid la phul lo ||*.

daughter, Utpalamaṇi ('[She Who Is Like] a Jewel [in] a Blue Lotus'), married the son of a Brahmin, Bde byed.²⁶

The Longer of the Maṇi bka' 'bum goes as follows:

Then [the prince's] father built a beautiful palace for the prince that was pleasant to look upon, and made plans to install the prince [in it] as his seat [of power]. The prince said, "Until I perfect the root of virtue, I won't attain true emptiness," and he [continued to] rejoice in giving.²⁷ At that time, in [the country] called Bye ma shing drung in the borderland, there was a base king called Shing khri can, who was an enemy. He was not happy with the prince's fame, which had spread in all directions. [He] consulted [his] wise ministers, and said [to them], "The wish-fulfilling jewel belongs to the prince ['Jig rten dbang phyug] of the country [called] Sgra gcan. He should be asked to give it up. He is fond of giving, and since he promises that he will give whatever [one] wishes for, he will give [it to us]. If we get the jewel, we will be fit to be king." [...] The three Brahmins said, "We are poor men who have come from Bye ma shing drung. We have come to ask, [O] Prince, for the wish-fulfilling jewel. If you give it [to us], [that will be] the ultimate merit; your giving will thereby be perfected. Your fame will spread everywhere and be unequalled. Therefore, you are bound to give [us] the jewel." The prince, taken aback, thought: If [I] give it, I'll disobey my father's command, and I'll be expelled to the border[land], but unless [I] give [it], my virtue will not be perfected. Thus I'm bound to give [it to them]. [He] said, "Wrap the precious jewel up in brocade, put it inside an offering box, attach [the box] to the top of a victory banner, and [then] bring it [to me]." A minister took it, and [later] the prince washed the Brahmins' hands with water from a golden vase, and gave the jewel [to them]. The

²⁶ MKB (fols. 144b3–145a1, pp.288.3–289.1): *de nas yab kyis pho nya btang ste / der ma 'dug par yul sgra gcan du myur du shog shig par bsgo'o || ... de nas bdag nyid btsun mo dang bcas pa yab kyi bka' bzhin du 'gro bar chas pa dang / ... sgra gcan du phyin pa dang yab yum dang mjal te rab tu dges so || ... sras 'od zer tog la lha gcig man da ra btsun mor bsus nas rgyal srid la dbang bskur ro || sras mo utpala ma ni bram ze bde byed kyi bu la rdzongs so ||.*

²⁷ MKB (fol.168b3–5, p. 336.3–5) *der yab kyis rgyal bu'i pho brang mdzes pa lta na sdug pa brtsigs nas / rgyal bu gdan sar 'don snyam pa la / rgyal bu na re / ji srid dge ba'i rtsa ba ma rdzogs par || de srid stong nyid dam pa thob mi byed || gsungs nas sbyin pa la dga' |.*

Brahmins bowed to the prince and left, expressing their good wishes.²⁸

[The] father called [his] son and said, “That you gave my wealth to an enemy is an extraordinary presumptuous act of giving. The kingdom will come under the control of an enemy. No jewel more [precious] than this [one] exists in the world. This was the one that was previously given by the Amitābha Buddha as a reward for having ransomed a blue female serpent from a demon on the island of demonesses in the ocean.²⁹ You need to be banished forthwith to an uninhabited region of demons, the black mountain of the demon [called] *Bya rog sgra gcan*, for 25 years. So go there!” “[I] shall not disobey [my] father's command,”³⁰ [he replied].

The father and mothers (i.e. the prince and his two wives), [all] three, set off. Five persons appeared and said that they

²⁸ MKB (fols. 170b6–171b4, pp. 340.6–342.4): *de'i tshe mtha' 'khob bye ma shing drung bya ba na / log pa'i rgyal po shing khri can bya ba dgra po cig yod pa des / rgyal po'i snyan pas phyogs kun du khyab pas de ma dga' nas / blon po mkhas pa dang gros byas te / yul sgra gcan gyi rgyal po la yid bzhin gyi nor bu rin po che ci 'dod pa 'byung ba yod pa de slong du btang dgos / kho sbyin pa gtong ba la dga' bas ci 'dod sbyin par dam bcas pas ster 'ong / rin po che thob na 'u cag rgyal po byas pas chog zer / ... bram ze gsum gyis nged bye ma shing drung nas 'ongs pa'i dbul po yin / rgyal bu la yid bzhin gyi nor bu slong du 'ongs / de byin na bsod nams mthar thug // des khyod kyi sbyin pa rdzogs par 'gyur ro // snyan pas kun khyab 'gron zla med par 'gyur // de yi phyir na rin chen nges par byin // byas pas rgyal bu'i bsam pa la ya mtshan che ste / 'di byin na yab kyi bka' bcag pas bdag mtha' ru spyug tu 'ong ste / ma byin na bdag gi dge ba mi rdzogs pas nges par byin no snyam ste / nor bu rin po che dar zab kyi dril nas / mchod gi ga'u'i nang du bcug pa rgyal mtshan gyi rise mo la 'dogs pa de khyer shog byas pas / blon po zhig gis khyer byung ste / rgyal bus gser gyi bum pa'i chus bram ze'i lag pa bskurs te nor bu byin nas / bram zes rgyal bu la phyag byas te smon lam btab nas song ngo ||.*

²⁹ The “island of demonesses” is a recurrent theme in the Maṇi bka' 'bum. For the origins and the development of the story, see Lienhardt 1985; Iwamoto 1978: 299–318.

³⁰ MKB (fol. 172b1–3, p. 344.1–3): *yab kyi sras po bos te / khyod kyi nga'i nor bu rin po che dgra sbyin pa de ha cang sbyin pa thal ches / rgyal srid dgra'i dbang du 'gro / 'di pas lhag pa'i nor bu 'jig rten na med / 'di sngon sangs rgyas 'od dpag med kyi / rgya mtsho'i srin mo'i gling du klu mo sngon mo bdud las blus pa'i rngan pa la byin pa yin / da khyod mi med 'dre'i yul bdud ri nag po bya rog sgra gcan du lo nyi shu rtsa lnga spyugs kyi der song zhig byas so // yab kyi bka' mi gcog go (for gcogs so).||.*

had come to beg from the prince. [The latter] said, “[I] have nothing. What do you want?” [They] said, “You [can] give [us] five sets of clothing.” The prince said, “Fine,” and gave [them] five sets of precious clothing belonging to [his] family. Thus [he] gave [everything] up to and including his clothes and had absolutely nothing. However, he rejoiced over the fact that he had no regrets.³¹

Then, when the prince put [his] son on a deer, the deer jumped away from the bank, so that the son’s head was broken, and much blood came forth. The sister called her parents and wept. A monkey sitting on the trunk of a sandalwood tree ran swiftly to the son, led him to the bank, washed off the blood, and put a spell upon a leaf of a *gla-ba* tree and covered [the injury with it]. The prince saw [all of this] from afar. [Thus] distracted, [he] did not see a Brahmin appear. [The latter said,] “I’ve come from the country of Bye ma gser gling.” [...] Then the prince gave food to [the Brahmin and] [his] children, a brother and sister, without second thought.³²

At that time there occurred signs such as the earth quaking, sunrays streaming forth, the sky being filled with rainbows and a shower of flowers falling.³³

Their (i.e. the prince and his two wives’) tears fell [like rainfall,] so that a large region changed into a big lake. Then the two queens regained consciousness, which [they] had lost. The prince shed tears, his mind was calmed, and [they]

³¹ MKB (fol. 175a3–4, p. 349.3–4): *yab yum gsum gyis zhabs kyis phyin pa dang / mi lnga byung ste rgyal bu la slong du ’ongs zer / ci yang med ci slong byas pas / khyed lnga’i gos slong zer / rgyal bus legs so byas te bza’ mi lnga po’i gos rin po che rnams byin no || de ltar gos tshun chad byin te bre gang yang med kyang ’gyod pa med pa’i steng du dga’ bar gyur to ||.*

³² MKB (fol. 177a5–b3, pp. 353.4–354.3): *de’i tshe sras rgyal bu des sha ba cig la zhon pas / sha bas sgangs nas mchongs pas / sras kyi mgo bo chag nas khrag mang po byung bas / sring mos pha ma ’bod cing ngus spre’u cig tshandan gyi sdong po’i kha na yod pa rgyugs te sras chu ’gram du khrid nas khrag bkus te / shing gla ba’i lo ma cig la sngags btab nas glon pa rgyal pos rgyang nas mthong ngo || yengs pa’i bar la bram ze cig byung ba ma mthong / ... yul bye ma gser gling bya ba nas ’ongs / ... der rgyal bus zas drang te sras ming sring gnyis the tshom med par byin no ||.*

³³ MKB (fol. 178a1–2, p. 355.1–2): *de’i dus su sa g.yo ba dang / ’od ’byin pa dang / nam mkha’ ’ja’ yis gang ba dang / me tog gi char ’bab pa la sogs pa’i ltas byung ngo ||.*

admired [his] giving. Then, after seven days, a lotus arose, its stem made of gold, its leaves of turquoise, [and] its roots of conch shell. One thousand flowers arose on it, on each of which came into being, magically created, one thousand *buddhas*. The three—the husband [and his two] wives—prostrated to them. The king made praise: “One thousand *cakravartins* with one thousand arms [and] one thousand *buddhas* of the good *kalpa* with one thousand eyes pay homage to the revered teacher Avalokiteśvara, who tames beings according to their needs.” Thus [the prince] offered praise. Furthermore, in his heart [he] made an offering of jewels from the gods’ realm, jewels from the human realm, jewels in the sphere of the world perceived [only] by *buddhas*’ eyes, jewelled mountains, forests, eight-branched rivers, oceans, clothes, all types of ornaments, and whatever wealth he had, and uttered a prayer: “May [what] I teach be the same as the teachings of the one thousand *buddhas*! May all tenets that were taught at [the time of] the teaching of the one thousand *buddhas* spread to my teaching! May all sentient beings of the three incalculable *kalpas* be liberated by my teaching! May a teaching that shakes *samsāra* to its depths be established!” At that the earth shook, a rainbow appeared, a shower of flowers fell. Music resounded, its sound emerging from the stem of the lotus. The buddhas shed tears of *amṛta*, whence a pure, cool, unsullied lake; a water palace, the supreme dwelling place of a *nāga* king; the lotus, the generative mother of an amazing miracle; the one thousand *buddhas* born from the lotus; [and] the one thousand *buddhas* in the retinue of the Amitābha Buddha appeared in the sky on a golden lotus. The [Amitābha] Buddha’s words resounded in the ten directions, and then Avalokiteśvara’s six syllables, the quintessential mantra, led forth the six forms of cyclic existence. There appeared three suns in the sky. Flowers rained from it. Incense gathered in the air like a cloud. All ten directions were beautiful for their rows of lamps. Water mixed with nectar circulated in the lake. [There was] a cloud of umbrellas, victory banners, flags, and music. [It was] a condition of abundance: clothing, ornaments, and sacrificial cakes. All the gods made extensive offerings to [the prince]. The prince generated the long-prophesied *bodhicitta*.³⁴

³⁴ MKB (fols. 178b6–180b3, pp. 356.6–358.5): *de rnams kyi spyan chab char du babs pas yul ljongs chen po de mtsho chen po cig tu gyur to || der btsun mo gnyis kvis sems stor ba rnyed de | rgyal bu'i mchi ma phyis nas rgyal bu'i sems gso zhing sbyin pa la rjes su yi rang dbul lo || de nas zhag bdun nas*

Then the lord of gods and the *yakṣa* Dpal 'bar blo gros, astonished [at what they had witnessed], disguised themselves as two Brahmins and approached the prince. [They] said, "We have come to beg." The prince said, "What would [you] like? I will give [you] whatever I have." "Well, give [us] the two queens." The prince said, "Fine," and gave the two queens to the Brahmins as if glad to. The two wives said, "Who'll serve you?" [The prince] said, "Unless I give you two to them, my giving will not be perfected. Go and serve the Brahmins!" [He] washed the Brahmins' hands and offered them his two wives. At that the Brahmins became certain that the prince had no regrets, and the two Brahmins

*padma'i sdong po gser las byas pa | lo ma g.yu las byas pa | rtsa ba dung
las byas pa cig skyes te | de la me tog padma stong rtsa gcig skyes | me tog
re re la sprul pa'i sangs rgyas re re ste stong rtsa gcig 'khrungs so || de
rnams la rgyal bu yab yum gsum gyis phyag byas so || rgyal pos bstod pa
mdzad pa | phyag stong 'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po stong | sbyan stong
bskal pa bzang po'i sangs rgyas stong || gang la gang 'dul de la der ston
pa'i bisun pa spyen ras gzigs la phyag 'tshal lo || zhes bstod pa phul lo || de
yang lha'i yul gyi rin po che dang | mi'i yul gyi rin po che dang | sangs
rgyas kyi spyen gyis gzigs pa'i 'jig rten gyi kham na yod pa'i rin po che
dang | rin po che'i ri dang | tshal dang | chu bo yan lag brgyad dang ldan
pa dang | rgya mtsho dang | gos dang | rgyan gyi rnams pa yod tshad dang |
longs spyod ci yod blos blangs te phul nas smon lam btab pa | bdag gi ston
pa sangs rgyas stong rtsa gcig gi bstan pa dang mnyam par shog cig ||
sangs rgyas stong rtsa gcig gi bstan pa la gsungs tshad kyi chos thams cad
bdag gi bstan pa la dar bar shog cig || bskal pa grangs med gsum gyi sems
can thams cad bdag gi bstan pa la sgrol bar shog cig || 'khor ba dong
sprugs kyi bstan pa 'grub par gyur cig byas pas | sa g.yo ba dang | 'ja' zug
(for 'dzug) pa dang | me tog gi char 'bab pa dang | rol mo'i sgra 'khrol
zhing padma'i sdong po la sgra byung ba | sangs rgyas spyen chab bdud
rtsi'i char babs pas | dang ba bsil la rnyog pa med pa'i mtsho || klu rgyal
gnas mchog chu yi gzhal yas khang || ngo mtshar rmad byung padma skyed
pa'i yum || padmo las 'khrungs sprul pa'i sangs rgyas stong || 'od dpag med
kyi 'khor tshogs sangs rgyas stong || nam mkha' la ni gser gyi padmar
snang || sangs rgyas gsungs sgra phyogs bcur snyan par grags || 'bru drug
'gro ba drug gi lam sna 'dren || mkha' la nyi ma gsum gyi snang ba shar ||
nam mkha' la ni me tog char du 'bab || bar snang la ni bdug spos sprin
bzhin 'khrigs || phyogs bcu kun nas mar me'i phreng bas mdzes || bdud rtsir
ldan pa'i chu ni mtsho mor 'khril || gdugs dang rgyal mtshan ba dang rol
mo'i sprin || na bza' rgyan dang zhal zas longs spyod rkyen || lha rnams
kun gyis mchod pa rgya cher 'bul || rgyal bu de ring lung bstan sems bskyed
do ||.*

walked seven steps with the two queens, returned to the prince, and gave him back the two queens.³⁵

Then the king sent [an emissary] to bring back the exiled prince and delivered provisions to him. When the minister could not cross a big river, he imagined the prince in his mind; the water was sundered and he passed through it. He prostrated to the prince and said, “[Your] father the king sent me to invite you [back].” The son, the prince, said, “Twenty-five years have not passed yet. As soon as they pass, next year, I will come back,” and sent the emissary back to [his] country. The emissary said to the father, the king, “[Your] son the prince will come next year.” Again his father, the king, entrusted a letter to the minister, [which read]: “[My] son! You delight in giving, so you will engage in giving gifts as before. Once [the end of] the 25-year promise arrives—it will pass—come back immediately without any anger.” Once again the minister delivered a letter to the prince, so [he] consented. [...] When the prince arrived at the palace, he prostrated to [his] father and mother, the two, and asked them if they were well. [His] mother said, “Who are you?” The prince said, “It’s me.” She clutched the prince’s hands and rejoiced. [His] father entrusted the prince with the [country’s] whole treasury and wealth. Afterwards the prince gave away whatever he wished to, more wealth than before. [He] accepted Mandara, the daughter of King Dga’ ba’i tog, as [the wife of his son,] Prince ’Od zer tog, and raised the latter to the throne. [He] sent his daughter Utpalamāṇi to the son of the Brahmin Bde byed, who excelled all Brahmins. The king meditated on the meaning of ultimate reality, whereupon the prince became completely and perfectly enlightened. The latter’s titles were Tathāgata, Arhat, Samyaksambuddha, and Kun nas dpal brtsegs rgyal po. He established all places in his world as [bearers of] fruit, namely, [of] stream-enterers,

³⁵ MKB (fols. 179b5–180a2, pp. 358.5–359.2): *de nas lha'i dbang po dang / gnod sbyin dpal 'bar blo gros ya mtshan che te / bram ze gnyis su sprul nas / rgyal bu'i drung du 'ongs nas / nged gnyis slong du 'ongs byas so // rgyal bus ci slong bdag la ci 'dug ster gsungs / 'o na btsun mo gnyis slong byas so // rgyal bus legs so byas te / btsun mo gnyis bram ze la dga' bzhin du sbyin no // btsun mo gnyis na re rgyal bu'i g.yog sus byed zer / khyed gnyis ma byin na sbyin pa rdzogs par mi 'gyur ro // song la bram ze'i g.yog gyis zer te / bram ze'i lag par chu blugs bkrus te btsun mo gnyis bram ze gnyis po la phul lo // der bram zes rgyal bu la 'gyod pa med par thag chod nas / bram ze gnyis kyis btsun mo gnyis gom pa bdun bdun khrid nas star log nas rgyal bu nyid la phul lo ||.*

once-returners, non-returners, Arhats, and Pratyekabuddhas; some of them generated *bodhicitta* towards enlightenment. Even those whose sense faculties and sense organs were weakest were [re]born as *cakravartins*, gods, or [normal] human beings, and were led to the entrance of the Mahāyāna's teaching.³⁶

Some Features of the Two Adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*

Lastly, I will point out some noteworthy features of the two adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. There are differences between *The Shorter* and *The Longer* in terms of literary style, organization, and content. *The Shorter* is half as long as *The Longer*. It is similar to an abstract, in that it offers a synopsis of the story without ancillary details, whereas *The Longer* provides such details. *The Shorter* is composed in prose, while *The Longer* is a mixture of verse and prose. *The Shorter* is largely divided into two parts, a prologue and the main story, which latter contains a prophecy of

³⁶ MKB (fols. 182a2–183a5, pp. 363.2–365.5): *de nas rgyal pos rgyal bu spyugs pa de gdan 'dren du btang ste rgyags bskur ro || blon pos chu chen po de la ma thar bar rgyal bu yid la byas pas chu chad de thar nas phyin no || rgyal bu la phyag byas te | yab rgyal pos spyan 'dren du btang ba yin byas so || sras rgyal bu na re ngas lo nyi shu rtsa lnga ma song lo kha ma thim | sang phod 'ong byas nas pho nya yul du ldog btang ngo || pho nyas yab rgyal po la sras rgyal bu sang phod 'ong byas so || yang yab rgyal pos blon po la phrin yig bskur te | sras khyod sbyin pa la dga' ba yin pas khyod snga ma bzhin du sbyin pa gtong du gzhug go || lo nyi shu rtsa lnga'i dam bca' yang 'dir sleb pa dang thim 'gro da ma khro bar shog gsung ngo || yang blon pos phrin yig rgyal po la phul bas rgyal bus zhal gyis bzhes so || ... rgyal bu pho brang du byon nas yab yum gnyis la phyag byas te | yab yum bde'am zhus pas | yum na re su yin zer | rgyal bus nga yin byas pas rgyal bu'i phyag la 'jus te dga' bar gyur to || yab kyis rin po che'i bang mdzod dang nor thams cad rgyal bu la gtad do || rgyal bus de nas yang sbyin pa ci 'dod pa sngar bas lhag pa sbyin no || rgyal bu 'od zer tog la | rgyal po dga' ba'i tog gi bu mo mandha ra blangs nas rgyal sar bton | bu mo utpala ma ni bram ze bde byed kyi bu bram ze rnams kyi nang na de bas lhag pa med pa zhid la brdzangs so || rgyal pos chos nyid kyi don bsgoms pas der rgyal bu mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas te | mtshan yang de bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kun nas dpal brtsegs rgyal por gyur to || de'i 'jig rten gyi khams de na gnas pa thams cad 'bras bu la bkod de | rgyun du zhugs pa dang | lan cig phyir 'ong ba dang | phyir mi 'ong ba dang | dgra bcom pa dang | rang sangs rgyas dang | la la byang chub tu sems bskyed | dbang po dang sgo zhan shos rnams kyang 'khor los sgur ba'i rgyal po'am | lha dang mir skyes nas theg pa chen po'i chos sgor bitsud do ||.*

the future rebirth of Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug. *The Longer* has three parts: a prologue, the main story and an epilogue that identifies the characters on the basis of their contemporary rebirths. Regarding the contents of the main story, there are a number of differences between them, of which I only point out some.

Both adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* set the stories during the time of the Buddha named 'Od mdzad ye shes tog, but *The Shorter* places the main story 91 eons in the past, while *The Longer* puts the figure at 991 eons. A remarkable feature of *The Shorter* is the prologue, which enumerates the great deeds of Srong btsan sgam po, something *The Longer* does not. In both, though, the prologue starts with a description of a rite of worship for the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, during which Srong btsan sgam po smiles, prompting his ministers to ask him the reason for the smile. In *The Shorter*, Thonmi Sambhoṭa poses the question against the background of the king's deeds, the enumeration of which is obviously meant as praise. He asks whether the king smiled at the thought of (1) the Buddhas of the three times; (2) the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet; (3) his having taken wives from India and China (*rgya dkar nag*); (4) his construction of temples after taming the gods and demons; (5) having liberated Tibet from the suffering caused by poverty by having fields cultivated. However, the king denies any of these as the reason. Rather, he says, he smiled because he was reminded of his practice of Buddhist austerities over the course of eons. The story that follows this is about one of the austerities he performed in his past lives. In *The Longer*, there is no mention of any of the king's deeds. Also, it is both Thonmi Sambhoṭa and Mgar stong btsan who ask the king the reason for his smiling.

Among the various recensions of the Vessantara Jātaka earlier scholars have investigated, one peculiarity of the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* is indeed the questions and answers at the beginning of the sūtra regarding the meaning of the Buddha's smiling—whether he was thinking of the past, present and future *buddhas*—which resembles the versions in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*:

Thus I have heard: At one time the Bhagavān dwelled in the park of Anāthapindika in Jeta's forest in Śrāvastī together with uncountable monks, nuns, male devotees and female devotees. During this time the Bhagavān smiled. Five kinds of coloured light radiated from his face. Āyusmān Ānanda

stood from his seat, adjusted his clothing, joined his palms and asked the Bhagavān, as follows: “I have not seen the Bhagavān smile like that in the twenty years since I have been serving the Bhagavān. Was the Bhagavān thinking of the *buddhas* who were of the past, the future or the present? If not, what were you thinking of? Please explain the meaning [of the smile]!” The Bhagavān said to Ānanda, “I was not thinking of any of the *buddhas* of the past, the future or the present; rather, I was thinking of things I gave as offerings in the past uncountable eons. At that time there was a king named The Virtuous One who ruled a country called Yawa by means of just laws...”³⁷

The end of the story also differs in the two versions. In *The Shorter*, the Buddha 'Od mdzad ye shes tog prophesies that the prince will be reborn as a sky-woman named Shes rab brgyan ('[She Who Is] Adorned by Wisdom').³⁸ In *The Longer*, as mentioned above, the prince becomes enlightened as a Buddha named Dpal brtsegs rgyal po. His Sangha includes exemplars of the four stages of attainment among the Śrāvakas and the fifth stage (that of the Pratyekabuddhas, some of whom have generated

³⁷ *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* (fol. ah, 55b7–59a): 'di skad bdag gis thos pa dus gcig na | bcom ldan 'das mnyan du yod pa na dze ta'i tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga' ra ba na | dge slong dang dge slong ma dang dge bsnyen pha dang dge bsnyen ma grangs med pa dang thabs cig tu bzhugs so || de'i tsho bcom ldan 'das 'dzum pa mdzad nas | zhal gyi sgo nas 'od zer kha dog sna lnga dang ldan pa bkye ba dang | tsho dang ldan pa kun dga' bo stan las langs te gos tshags bcos nas thal mo sbyar te bcom ldan 'das la 'di skad ces gsol to || bdag gis sangs rgyas kyi zhabs'bring lo nyi shu bgyis kyi bar du de 'dra bar bzhad pa ma mthong na | bcom ldan 'das kyi sangs rgyas sngon 'das pa'am ma byon pa'am da ltar bzhugs pa'i sangs rgyas la dgongs sam | de ma lags pa ci la dgongs pa don bstan du gsol | bcom ldan 'das kyi kun dga' bo la bka' stsal pa | sangs rgyas 'das pa'am ma 'ongs pa 'am da ltar bzhugs pa la dgongs pa ma yin gyi | mngon par 'dran pa nga sngon bskal pa grangs med par 'das pa'i pha rol na sbyin pa sbyin pa'i dngos po la dgongs te | de'i tsho de'i dus na yul ya ba zhes bya bar rgyal po dge ba zhes bya ba drang po'i chos kyi yul gyi srid 'dzin te |...

Cf. <https://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/ekanjur/verif3.php?id=H359&coll=lhasa>

³⁸ MKB (fol. 145a1–2, p. 289.1–2): de'i tsho sangs rgyas 'od mdzad ye shes tog gis bdag lung bstan pa | khyod skye ba 'di'i 'og rol du 'jig rten gyi khams gar yas zhes bya bar | sangs rgyas gar gyi dbang phyug gi bstan pa la | nam mkha'i bu mo shes rab brgyan zhes bya bar skye bar 'gyur ro zhes gsungs so || rgyal po 'jig rten dbang phyug tu skyes pa'i skabs kyi mdzad pa'o ||.

bodhicitta). Even those of lower faculties are reborn as universal kings, gods or other humans, and the prince leads them to Mahāyāna Buddhism. Unlike in *The Shorter*, the epilogue, as mentioned above, matches each character with their rebirth, namely, as members of Srong btsan sgam po's family, or else as Hindu gods and goddesses. In *The Longer*, again, the father is identified as a previous birth of Gnam ri srong btsan (b. 570), the father of King Srong btsan sgam po, while the mother of the prince is a previous birth of Padma tshe yongs bza' 'bri za thod dkar ma, King Srong btsan sgam po's mother.³⁹ The prince himself is identified as a previous birth of King Srong btsan sgam po. Of his two wives, Nyi zla'i sgron ma and Nam mkha'i sgron ma, the former is identified as a previous birth of Srong btsan sgam po's Nepalese wife, Khri btsun, and the latter as a previous birth of his Chinese wife, Kong jo. Further, there are two practitioners on the mountain, called 'Od ('[He Who Is Like] Light') and Shes rab 'od ('[He Who Is Like] the Light of Wisdom'); the former is identified as a previous birth of Thonmi Sambhoṭa, and the latter as a previous birth of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. In *The Longer*, too, a *rākṣasī* blocks the path the prince's two wives follow when their children are taken away to the mountain. She is identified as a previous birth of Vajrapāṇi; the son of the prince is identified as a previous birth of one Nor bu 'dzin pa.⁴⁰ The daughter of the prince, Utpalamaṇi, is identified there as a previous birth of Sarasvatī. The name Utpalamaṇi may be a slight renaming of Uppalavaṇṇā (Fausbøll 1896L 481.15), the daughter of the prince in the Pāli version. The god Indra, who watches and protects the prince throughout the story, is identified as a previous existence of Mgar stong btsan, the prominent minister of Srong btsan sgam po. The Brahmin to whom the prince gave his children is in *The Longer* identified as an incarnation of Thar pa nag po ('Black Liberation') who, according to Evans-Wentz, is Rudra before being transformed into Mahākāla,⁴¹ and his wife is identified as an incarnation of a *yakṣasī*.

³⁹ MKB (fol.183a5, p. 365.5). Haarh (1969: 42) gives the mother's name as Tshe spong bza' 'Bri za Thod dkar.

⁴⁰ I have not identified this figure among Srong btsan sgam po's contemporaries.

⁴¹ Evans-Wentz 2000: 180, n. 1.

Features of Buddhist Thought in the Adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*

The two adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* are both intended to convey Mahāyāna views, especially ones centring on the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. *The Shorter* states that Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug spends time on the demons' black mountain meditating upon the meaning of the Mahāyāna.⁴² In *The Longer*, the prince encounters two Buddhist practitioners on the mountain who ask him what he wants. The prince replies by asking them for the Mahāyāna doctrine. The monks promise him that they will be his first disciples when he attains enlightenment after obtaining Mahāyāna teachings through his accumulation of merit. As we have seen above, *The Longer* describes the extraordinary things that occur when the prince gives his children to a Brahmin: the demon-infested black mountain changes its appearance, a lotus flower emerges from a sea formed from the tears of the children's two mothers, a thousand *buddhas* are born, and the prince and his two wives worship the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Music resounds from the lotus. In the sky, the retinue of the Amitābha Buddha appears on golden lotuses. The Buddha's voice resounds in the ten directions, and then the six syllables of Avalokiteśvara, his quintessential mantra, lead forth the six forms of cyclic existence. After he returns from the black mountain, he becomes enlightened as a *buddha* named Dpal brtsegs rgyal po.

Another similarity between *The Longer* of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* lies in the prince's aspiration to follow the Mahāyāna upon encountering sage(s) in the mountain. As mentioned earlier, in the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo*, the prince aspired to do so when he met a sage named Atsuta, which echoes the Pāli, Accuta⁴³ (Skt. Aśita). The episode involving the sage differs from the one in Pāli, where the Brāhmin Jūjaka comes to the sage to ask the prince's whereabouts. In the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo*, the prince asks where a good dwelling place would be, and the monk replies that the prince could stay anywhere:

At that time was dwelling on the mountain a monk named
Aśita who had attained the age of five hundred years. He was

⁴² MKB (fol. 143a5, p. 285.5): *bdag ni theg pa chen po'i don yid la byed cing nang du yang dag 'jog la gnas par byed* |.

⁴³ *Vessantara Jātaka* (532.11); Cone and Gombrich 1977: 50.

endowed with supreme virtues, so that the prince went up to him, paid homage, sat down to one side and asked, “On which parts of this mountain are there places suitable for dwelling, with fruits and good water?” Aśita said, “In all places on this mountain there is soil endowed with [much] merit, so any place is suitable for dwelling. This mountain is a very solitary, pure abode. Did you, Prince, come with your wife and children to practise dharma?”⁴⁴

As mentioned earlier in the synopsis, the parallel passage in *The Longer* has the monk being replaced with an old woman.

[They] arrived in place devoid of humans [and] occupied by demons, and encountered an old woman. [They] said to her, “Show [us] the way and lend [us] a place to stay in.” The old woman said, “You are the incarnation of a *buddha*. You can stay anywhere. Other than the fact that here there is no way down. That [down there] is a region [full] of demons. Turn away to up higher.”⁴⁵

This obvious modification made in the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* is followed in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*'s adaptations. The concerned passage in the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* goes as follows:

Then the prince said to the monk, “Revered One, have you heard of the prince and regent of the country Yawa named Arthasiddhi?” The monk said, “I have heard of [him] frequently, but have not seen [him].” The prince said, “I am the prince and regent called Arthasiddhi.” The monk asked [him], “Prince, where are going? What do you want [to do]?” The prince said, “I want [to go] on the path of the Mahāyāna.” The monk said, “The path of the Mahāyāna will be attained

⁴⁴ *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* (fol. 62a2–3): *de'i tshe ri de la sgom pa'i dge slong a tsu ta zhes bya ba lo lnga brgya lon pa / yon tan mchog dang ldan pa zhig gnas te / rgyal bu de'i drung du song nas / phyag byas te phyogs gcig tu 'dug nas 'di skad ces smras so || ri 'di la gang phyogs na 'bras bu dang chu mig bzang por ldan pa gnas su rung ba cig yod ces dris pa dang / a tsu tas smras pa / ri 'di gnas thams cad du bsod nams dang ldan pa'i sa gzhi yin pas gang du gnas kyang rung ste / ri di ni shin tu dben pa'i gnas gtsang ma yin pas ci rgyal bu khyod chung ma dang bu smad du bcas te chos slob tu 'ongs sam |.*

⁴⁵ MKB (fol. p. 350.4–5): *de nas mi med 'dre yul du slebs pa dang / rgan mo cig dang phrad de de la lam cig kyang ston / sdod sa cig g.yor byas so || rgan mo na re khyed sangs rgyas kyi sprul pa cig gar bsdad kyang chog / de min 'di na mar lam med de 'dre'i yul yin yar la log zer |.*

soon if the prince applies himself to virtuous activity. When the prince is awakened into fully unsurpassable buddhahood, let me be the best of [his] miraculous disciples.” Then [the monk] led the prince and showed [him] a place to dwell in.⁴⁶

The story teaches the merit of generosity, two aspects of which are characterized: unstintingness and an absence of regret. First, the prince’s generosity extends to his giving up his own children and wives. The story conveys a scale of values extending from human life (both others’ and one’s own) down to such material wealth as jewels. At the beginning of the story, the father of the prince expels his son for his zeal in giving away wealth, but at the end of it the same person recovers his grandchildren by paying for their restitution. This teaches that human life is more valuable than material wealth. The notion of bodily offering is already in the original story in Pāli, where Prince Vessantara is ready to offer his own body including heart, eyes, flesh and blood.⁴⁷ In *The Longer*, the two wives of the prince declare their support for his giving, even if it means sacrificing their own life.⁴⁸ Neither the Pāli nor *The Longer*, however, contains an actual instance of bodily offering. As is well known, in the *Dri med kun ldan* story, another Tibetan adaptation of the *Vessantara Jātaka*, the prince gives his own eyes to a Brahmin.⁴⁹ It also has an allusion

⁴⁶ *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* (fol. 62a6–b1): *de nas rgyal bus dge slong la smras pa / btsun pa yul ya ba’i rgyal bu rgyal tshab don grub ces bya ba thos sam / dge slong gis smras pa / bdag gis rgyun du thos kyi mthong ba ni ma yin no || rgyal bus smras pa / bdag ni rgyal bu rgyal tshab don grub ces bya ba yin no || dge slong gis rgyal bu khyod gar ’gro ci ’dod dris pa dang / rgyal bus smras pa / bdag ni theg pa chen po’i lam ’dod do zhes smras so || dge slong gis smras pa / rgyal bu’i yon tan dang sbyar na / ring por mi thogs par theg pa chen po’i lam thob par ’gyur te / rgyal bu bla na med pa’i byang chub mngon par sangs rgyas pa na / bdag ni nye gnas rdzu ’phyul gyi mchog tu gyur cig ces smras nas / rgyal bu khrid de’ dug pa’i gnas bstan to ||.*

⁴⁷ *Vessantara Jātaka* (486.21–22, verse 1702): *hadayaṃ dadeyyaṃ cakkhum pi maṃsaṃ pi ruddhiram pi ca dadeyyaṃ kāyaṃ sāvetvā yadi koci yācaye mamaṃ.*

⁴⁸ MKB (fol. 170a4, p. 337.4): *srog la bab kyang rgyal bu’i sbyin pa la gegs mi bya bar bka’ mi bcag.*

⁴⁹ Bacot 1914: 282–283. For English translations, see Woolf 1924: 88– 89; Duncan 1967: 111–112.

to a Good practitioner with a trumpet made from a thigh bone and a drum made from a skull.⁵⁰

Second, the prince's giving is defined by his lack of regret. In the Pāli, having given his children, the prince has no sense of guilt about it.⁵¹ This attitude carries over to the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*. Both *The Longer* and *The Shorter* state that in giving as much as he was asked for on the way to the black mountain, the prince never felt regret.⁵² After the prince offered his children to the Brahmin, the god Indra and a *yakṣa* visited him in the disguise of Brahmins and asked him for his two wives in order to test him. The prince gave both to them without hesitation. At that, Indra and the *yakṣa* returned them.⁵³

Conclusion

This article has looked at the two adaptations of the *Vessantara Jātaka* in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, *The Shorter* version and *The Longer* version of the *Jātaka of Prince Lokeśvara*, and compared them with the Fifth Dalai Lama's birth story, in which the main deity is the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, and the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* from the Tibetan Canon. On the basis of a close textual study, the article investigated the parallels among the *Rgyal bu don grub kyi mdo* or 太子須大掣經, a Sino-Tibetan canonical scripture, and *The Shorter* and *The Longer* of the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, which modified and reshaped the story as the birth story of the ancient Tibetan king Srong bstan Sgam po, an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. Both *The Shorter* and *The Longer*

⁵⁰ Bacot 1914: 273: “Quand ils rencontrèrent un ermite dont les cheveux étaient liés au sommet de la tête, dont la barbe et les sourcils étaient bruns, et qui brandissait un tambourin en crânes et une trompette en fémur, il leur dit....” For English translations, see Woolf 1924: 77; Duncan 1967:105.

⁵¹ *Vessantara Jātaka* (552.25, 31): *dānaṃ datvā anuttapaṇaṃ nāma satamaṃ dahmā na hoti ... ko datvā anutappaṇi....*

⁵² MKB (fol. 142b2, p. 284.2): *yang lam du slong mo ba lnga dang phrad pas | khyed lnga'i gos dang rgyan rnams byin cig zer ba dang byin te 'gyod pa med do ||*. “Furthermore, on the way [to the black mountain,] the prince [and his two wives and children] encountered five beggars. [They] said, ‘Give [us] five articles of clothing and ornaments.’ These [he] gave [to them] and did not regret [doing so].”

⁵³ MKB (fol. 144a2–3, p. 287.2–3): *bram ze re rer sprul nas btsun mo gnyis po bslangs pas | bdag gis the tshom med par byin te'gyod sems med par shes nas | gom pa bdun bdun khrid de slar yang nga nyid la phul lo ||*.

versions served in turn as the basis of the Fifth Dalai Lama's *'Khrung rab*, who is portrayed as a rebirth of Srong bstan sgam po and an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara as well. Both the king and the Dalai Lama had generated *bodhicitta* and practised giving in their past lives, their giving including persons who would become the king's two wives from Nepal and China and their two children.

A particular point of interest concerning the adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* is their being among the Srong bstan sgam po–Avalokiteśvara cycle of texts. Doctrinally, these adaptations teach familiar aspects of Mahāyāna thought, such as *bodhicitta* and faith in the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and in his quintessential six-syllable mantra, *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*. The stories in the adaptations begin with the rite associated with the Bodhisattva and the king's smiling during it. One of the adaptations uses the smile to digress into implicit praise of King Srong bstan sgam po's deeds. *The Longer's* account in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* identifies each character as former births of family members or associates of King Srong bstan sgam po. The prince, 'Jig rten dbang phyug, is a former birth of Srong bstan sgam po himself, while of his two queens, one is identified as the Nepalese princess, and the other as his Chinese wife.

Striking similarities between the three texts, the two adaptations in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum* and the one in the Fifth Dalai Lama's *Khrung rabs*, prove that the Fifth Dalai Lama reshaped his own reincarnation story on the basis of the two texts in the *Maṇi bka' 'bum*, which in turn were adapted from the *Vessantara Jātaka* narrative, without the source being mentioned in either of them. The theme of the story is generosity in the tradition of the Mahāyāna, that is, generosity so extraordinary that it leads to actualizing *bodhicitta*, which leads in turn to enlightenment. Both King Srong bstan sgam po and the Fifth Dalai Lama are depicted as persons who had practised such generosity in their past life as Prince 'Jig rten dbang phyug.

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