

A rare dGe lugs pa work kept in O rgyan chos gling (Central Bhutan)

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The Library of O rgyan chos gling has a rich collection of Buddhist writings. One manuscript volume contains the short works of dBen sa rGyal ba Blo bzang don grub (1505–1566). There are about 89 pieces tightly written in small *dbu med* script with 9 lines on each folio. It has 523 folios.

The teaching contained in the manuscript later became what is known as dBen sa snyan brgyud or dGe ldan bka' brgyud. The volume of texts containing the teaching is often called sPrul ba'i glegs bam and is shrouded in total secrecy. In Tibet itself the texts of this tradition were therefore very rare. Yet the tradition itself is reputed to be an “oral transmission” going back to Tsong kha pa himself. Consequently, it remained till this day totally unknown to the Western specialists in Tibetan Buddhism. It was in fact not integrated into the mainstream of the dGe lugs pa tradition. Moreover, it became a controversial doctrine among later masters of the school. The Fifth Dalai Lama was very critical of this tradition.

It was a surprise for me to find this work in the milieu of rNying ma pa and bKa' brgyud pa texts in such a place as O rgyan chos gling. Its presence there is very significant in that it gives a new perspective to the history of O rgyan chos gling and its religious tradition.