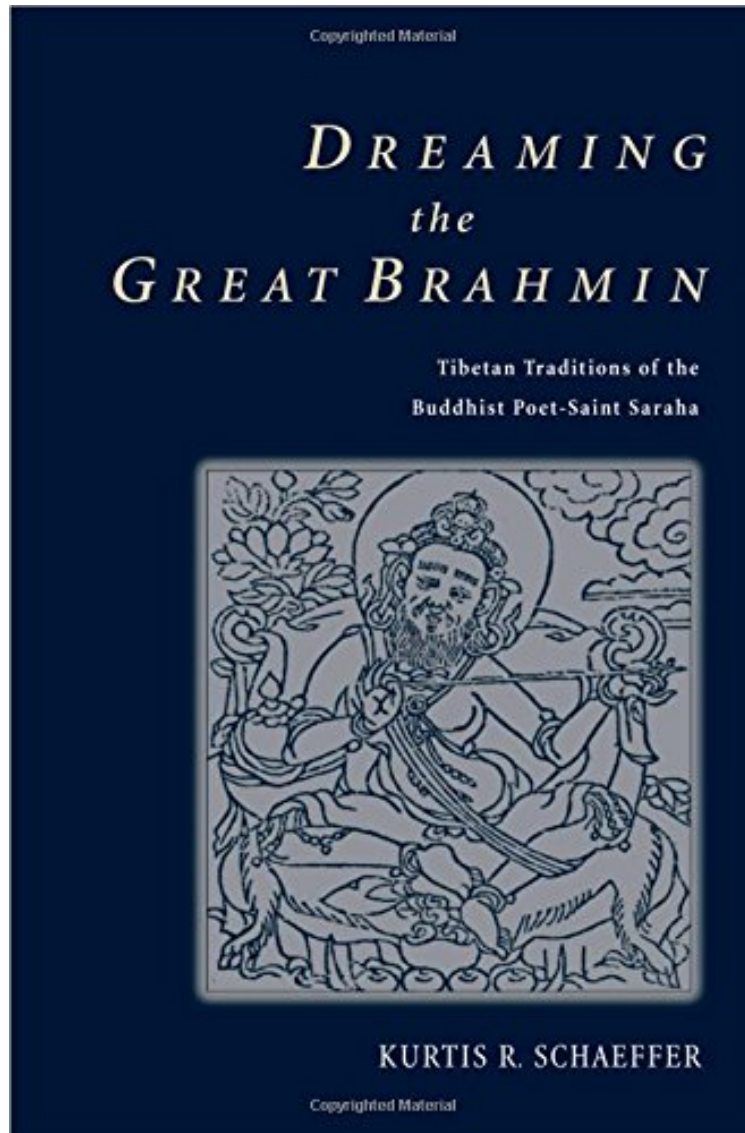


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# Dreaming the Great Brahmin: Tibetan Traditions of the Buddhist Poet-Saint Saraha

*Kurtis R. Schaeffer*

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**Kurtis R. Schaeffer : Dreaming the Great Brahmin: Tibetan Traditions of the Buddhist Poet-Saint Saraha** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dreaming the Great Brahmin: Tibetan Traditions of the Buddhist Poet-Saint Saraha:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. You're By Kiliya Typically I don't review something I haven't read or

purchased, however my point here is that no one is going to tell me an e-book is worth 87.00. Seriously, unless the author can promise a direct visit from Saraha himself, or something of equal value this is pure greed. There are any number of books that offer true Dharma in all its glory for much less money and much greater value. Subjective you say? Well unless the 4 (I'm guessing, probably an overestimate) of you can explain the exorbitant price (good luck) you need a reality check. Please excuse the sarcasm, I'm only behind 100% of what I've said here..... I will acquiesce in that I'm sure the author has spent valuable time compiling this obscure material and that it's probably a print on demand item for die hard Buddhist historical scholars, but for the rest of us a binary copy is just fine . Say 21.95 (?) and I'm really reaching... Think about it, if it's about the money, i think you can do much better with the e-book or are you hoping to discourage all but the most discriminating individuals.....5 of 8 people found the following review helpful. "History" notwithstanding  
By mike dickman  
I'm not at all convinced of Kurtis Schaeffer's argument as regards the growth of the Saraha corpus... As Sahara has been presented to me by several teachers who hold lineages descending from either him, himself, or whatever his school of thought was originally, Sahara, himself, is a fairly monolithic character for all that the stories concerning him vary in both tone and content. Surely, for someone as pivotal in several traditions, anecdotes of many different kinds - 'true', projected and totally imaginary - are bound to crop up. For all the fact that the research is probably impeccable, the Sahara of this book is \*not\* the Sahara of the 'Three Songs of Realisation', but another, somewhat less authentic eponymous being with similar, but less exceptional, achievements.

*Dreaming the Great Brahmin* explores the creation and recreation of Buddhist saints through narratives, poetry, art, ritual, and even dream visions. The first comprehensive cultural and literary history of the well-known Indian Buddhist poet saint Saraha, known as the Great Brahmin, this book argues that we should view Saraha not as the founder of a tradition, but rather as its product. Kurtis Schaeffer shows how images, tales, and teachings of Saraha were transmitted, transformed, and created by members of diverse Buddhist traditions in Tibet, India, Nepal, and Mongolia. The result is that there is not one Great Brahmin, but many. More broadly, Schaeffer argues that the immense importance of saints for Buddhism is best understood by looking at the creative adaptations of such figures that perpetuated their fame, for it is there that these saints come to life.

"This is a splendid contribution to the growing body of materials about Saraha and his famed treasury of tantric songs with a special focus on the Tibetan creation, and recreation, of both over the centuries. Schaeffer examines both in the larger contexts of Tibetan literature, history and aesthetics, tracing the development of the figure of Saraha and his esoteric poetry in Tibetan narratives, ritual cycles, visions, iconography, and polemical debate. He reveals Saraha's famous anthology, *The Treasury of Doha*, to be a rich, creative and fluid communal tradition that had an organic life in Tibet, rather than a static composition with origins lost in an Indian past. This wonderful blend of the social analysis, aesthetics, and translation is an important work for Tibetan, Buddhist, and Tantric studies."--David Germano, University of Virginia  
"The Indian mystical poet Saraha is one of the most influential, compelling, and elusive figures in the history of tantric Buddhism, and Kurtis Schaeffer's *Dreaming the Great Brahmin* takes scholarship on the great adept a quantum leap past anything published before. Resisting yet another futile search for the historical Saraha, Schaeffer draws on a wide range of little-studied texts to show that, whatever the Indian origins of Saraha's legend and songs, most of what we know of him actually emerged from medieval Tibet, in response to uniquely Tibetan religious, social, and literary concerns. Erudite, well written, and intellectually challenging, *Dreaming the Great Brahmin* will be required reading for serious students of Indian and Tibetan tantric Buddhism for many years to come." --Roger R. Jackson, translator of *Tantric Treasures: Three Collections of Mystical Verse from Buddhist India*  
"Kurtis Schaeffer has set before us a feast of Saraha lore, demonstrating the Tibetans' continued fascination with the person and the songs of the Great Brahmin. In this excellent book, Schaeffer details the polysemic stature of Saraha in Tibetan literature: as the source of religious inspiration, as the vehicle for art, as the field of contested symbols, and as the basis for elaborate hermeneutics. His critical treatment of the Saraha literature shows how Tibetans continued to redefine Saraha, so that he became a saint for all seasons."--Ronald M. Davidson, author of *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*  
About the Author  
Kurtis R. Schaeffer is Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Alabama. He is the author of *Himalayan Hermitess: The Life of a Tibetan Buddhist Nun* (OUP, 2003).