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Wonders *in margine* – Mapping the Madhyamaka Network of Gyamarwa Jangchupdrak

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Abstract

The twelfth-century Tibetan scholar Gyamarwa Jangchupdrak (*rgya dmar ba byang chub grags*) is an important link in the Madhyamaka tradition that stemmed from Ngok Loden Shérab (*rngog blo ldan shes rab*, 1059–1109). His recently recovered *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka* offers significant insight into the diverse positions of numerous scholars who took part in the discussion before and around his time, but who are only identified in interlinear notes. In this paper I discuss the identity of these thinkers and the contribution of this text-cum-marginalia to the mapping of early Tibetan Madhyamaka scholars and ideas.

Keywords

rGya dmar ba Byang chub grags, Tibet, Buddhism, Madhyamaka, marginalia

Introduction

Our access in recent years to an expanding pool of manuscript reproductions of Tibetan philosophical works places us in a better position to shed light on the developments of Tibetan scholasticism, and in

particular on the rich intellectual environment of the 11th to 13th centuries. However, in spite of this sudden abundance of textual goods, the corpus of research remains far from exhaustive. The material available today is just the tip of an iceberg of texts that may still be extant, and that iceberg is just a fragment of the ice floe of Tibetan compositions.¹ Thus the issue of “missing links” remains actual. The scholastic treatises from the early period that have surfaced directly contribute to the mapping of the authors concerned and of their particular views. They are, in addition, a rich source of information about other scholars and other views on account of the high degree of intertextuality they display: Scholars engage in their works with their peers, and they discuss alternative positions, which are subject to refutation or further refinement. This offers us the opportunity of corroborating as well as enhancing the networks of texts and authors that are already known. However, intertextuality in these treatises is often concomitant with anonymization. That is, the other scholars and texts are left unidentified. Silent re-use of previous material represents an extreme case, where other scholars’ ideas, and even their very words, are not even marked as such, but simply integrated within a later text. Such loans, along with the identity of the scholars in anonymous debates, cannot be checked against primary sources in the case of missing links. There are, nonetheless, palliatives to anonymization. Fresh information about the identity of interconnected scholars and their views can be found in marginal notes on manuscripts, in commentaries, in other works discussing the same positions, or in the works of later Tibetan scholars who had access to nowadays no longer extant texts or relayed orally transmitted information. This paper offers a case-study that illustrates the benefits of a certain set of marginal notes for the study of Tibetan Madhyamaka views in the twelfth century and of the

¹ This fact is well illustrated in the catalogue of the collection of texts preserved in the Néchu temple (*gnas bcu lha khang*) of Drepung (*'bras spungs*) monastery (which is said to have been the Fifth Dalai Lama’s private collection), which is the most extensive source of new materials for the study of early Tibetan scholasticism. The Néchu temple collection contains, altogether, 24,295 texts.* In the category of texts brought to the collection from outside the monastery (bearing the mark “*phyi*” in the signature on the cover page), 23,135 texts from 1833 bundles were on location at the time of cataloging in 2002, but the bundle numbers found in the signatures suggest that the original library counted at least 4417 bundles. See *Drepung catalogue* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2004), vol. 1, 14–15 and Ducher 2020: 127–129. *The catalogue numbers of the texts from outside run from 1 to 22,694, but numbers 10,000 to 11,600 are used twice (this mistake, first pointed out by Jörg Heimbel, is reported in Ducher 2020: 127).

intellectual networks in which their partisans participated. I attempt in the conclusion to unveil the identity of the person who wrote the notes, and to address the overarching question of the value one can ascribe to information from such a source in making up for missing links and thereby uncovering the intellectual relation between scholars that were instrumental in the development of Tibetan scholasticism.

1. Gyamarwa and the *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*

1.1 The *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*

The 31-folio manuscript under consideration (*codex unicus*) contains an independent Madhyamaka work authored by the twelfth-century scholar Gyamarwa Jangchupdrak (*rgya dmar ba byang chub grags*), entitled *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka* (*dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par spyod pa*, hereafter referred to as the *Analysis*).² The manuscript was part of the Néchu temple collection in Drepung monastery (*Drepung catalogue*, No. 015397).³ It was published in 2007 in the *Collected Works of the Kadampas* (*bka' gdams gsung 'bum*).⁴ Two other works by Gyamarwa have also become available: a commentary on Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, and a commentary on Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayavibhaṅga*.⁵

² In the colophon, the title of the text is given as “*dbu ma de kho na nyid rnam par spyod* [for *dpyod*] *pa*,” that is: *The Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*. On the cover page, it is reported as “*dbu ma'i de kho na nyid gtan la dbab pa*,” *The Establishment of the Essence of Madhyamaka*.

³ On this collection, see n. 1.

⁴ *Collected Works of the Kadampas* (Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang), vol. 31, 7–67. This text is the object of a joint project carried out by Kevin Vose and myself. More information on the manuscript and the text of the *Analysis*, as well as the latest version of our edition and translation in progress, can be found on the project's website, currently hosted at: <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikga/forschung/tibetologie/materialien/the-dbu-ma-de-kho-na-nyid-of-rgya-dmar-ba-byang-chub-grags-12th-c/> (accessed 13.1.2021).

⁵ See respectively *Collected Works*, vol. 6, 11–174 and vol. 19, 247–316.

1.2 Gyamarwa in context

Limited information pertaining to Gyamarwa's life and works is available.⁶ He seems to have been a quite popular teacher in the twelfth century: In the *Blue Annals* (*deb ther sngon po*) of Gö Lotsawa Zhönnupel ('gos lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal, 1392–1481) alone, fifteen scholars that were his students are named, among them the famous Chapa Chökyi Senggé (*phyā pa chos kyi seng ge*, 1109–1169), Düsümkyen (*dus gsum mkhyen*, 1110–1193), and Pakmodrupa Dorjé Gyelpo (*phag mo gru pa rdo rje rgyal po*, 1110–1170).⁷ A number of them studied with Gyamarwa in Tölung (*stod lung*) – Gyamarwa is often also referred to as Tölung Gyamarwa – in the fields of Madhyamaka (*dbu ma*), logic and epistemology (*tshad ma*), and Perfection of Wisdom (*sher phyin*). Gyamarwa's teachers included Könchokpel (*dkon mchog dpal*) of Lho for the study of mental training (*sems byong*) and, for the study of Madhyamaka, Gangpa Sheu Lodrö Jangchup (*gangs pa she'u blo gros byang chub*) and Khyung Rinchendrak (*khyung rin chen grags*).⁸ These latter two were disciples of Ngok Lotsawa Loden Shéráp (*rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab*, 1059–1109), the renowned abbot of Sangpu Neutok (*gsang*

⁶ A compilation of information on Gyamarwa in Tibetan sources is found in Per K. Sørensen and Guntram Hazod, in cooperation with Tsering Gyalbo, *Rulers on the Celestial Plain: Ecclesiastic and Secular Hegemony in Medieval Tibet. A Study of Tshal Gung-thang* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), 420, n. 25. See also Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, "Phya-pa Chos-kyi Seng-ge's Impact on Tibetan Epistemological Theory," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5 (1978), 355, Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, *Contributions to the Development of Tibetan Buddhist Epistemology* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1983), 60, David Seyfort Ruegg, *Studies in Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka Thought, Part 1 — Three Studies in the History of Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka Philosophy* (Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, 2000): 36 and n. 63, and Ritsu Akahane, "Three Tibetan Commentaries on *dBu ma bden gnyis*," *Report of the Japanese Association for Tibetan Studies* 56 (2010), 78.

⁷ See notably *Blue Annals* 283, 290, 404, 527, 528, 655, 1077, 1177.

⁸ See in this regard especially Serdok Penchen Shakya Chokden (*gser mdog pañ chen shākya mchog ldan*, 1428–1507), *History of Ngok's Teachings* (*rngog lo tstsha ba chen pos bstan pa ji ltar bskyangs pa'i tshul mdo tsam du bya ba ngo mtshar gtam gyi rol mo*) 4b5 ('dis [=Phya pa] dang po khyung gi slob ma / rgya dmar ba byang chub grags la dbu tshad gsan) and *Origin of Madhyamaka* (*dbu ma'i byung tshul rnam par bshad pa'i gtam yid bzhin lhun po*) 12b4–5 (*de [=rNgog Blo ldan shes rab]'i bshad srol 'dzin pa mang po dag las gtso bo ni khyung rin chen grags / de'i slob ma rgya dmar byang chub grags pa dang / gangs pa she'u sogs su grags pa*). See also the passage of the religious history by Padma Karpo (*padma dkar po*, b. 1527) cited in van der Kuijp, "Phya-pa Chos-kyi Seng-ge's Impact," 366, n. 4 (*khyad par gangs pa she'u dang khyung gnyis ka'i dngos slob stod lungs rgya dmar pa byang chub grags / dbu tshad la de'i slob ma mang yang phywa pa chos kyi seng ge gtso bo*).

phu ne'u thog) monastery, translator and pioneer exegete in many areas of Buddhist learning, including Madhyamaka.⁹

In view of his learning and teaching activities, Gyamarwa belonged to (at least) two overlapping networks: Madhyamaka and epistemology. In particular, according to Butön Rinchendrup (*bu ston rin chen grub*, 1290–1364), Gyamarwa figures in the transmission lineage of Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, whose Tibetan transmission starts with Ngok Lotsawa and then goes on to Khyung → Gyamarwa → Chapa.¹⁰ Gyamarwa is himself credited with a lost commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya*.¹¹ He is also the link between Ngok Lotsawa and Chapa in the Ngok Madhyamaka lineage, in which Gyamarwa again follows Khyung, who is presented as the main (among many) lineage holder after Ngok Lotsawa.¹² As no works of Madhyamaka by Ngok Lotsawa or Khyung have survived, Gyamarwa's *Analysis* is an important piece of direct evidence for the early phase of the Ngok tradition. The only other extensive evidence pre-dating Chapa's independent work on Madhyamaka (his *Heart Essence of Madhyamaka* [*dbu ma de kho na nyid kyi snying po*]) in the Ngok tradition is the excursus on the Two Truths in the monumental *Stages of the Teachings* (*bstan rim chen mo*) by Ngok Lotsawa's devoted student Drolungpa Lodrö Jungné (*gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas*, ca. 1040–ca. 1120).¹³

⁹ On this figure see van der Kuijp, *Contributions*, Chap. 1, Ralf Kramer, *The Great Tibetan Translator: Life and Works of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab* (1059–1109) (München: Indus Verlag, 2007), and Kazuo Kano, *Buddha-Nature and Emptiness: rNgog Blo-ldan-shes-rab and the Transmission of the Ratnagoṭravibhāga from India to Tibet* (Wien: Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, 2016).

¹⁰ See Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, "Fourteenth Century Tibetan Cultural History VI: The transmission of Indian Buddhist *pramāṇavāda* according to early Tibetan *gsan yig-s*," *Etudes Asiatiques* 49, no. 4 (1995), 928 and 939.

¹¹ See van der Kuijp, *Contributions*, 60.

¹² See Serdok Penchen, *Origin of Madhyamaka* 12b4–6, translated in Iaroslav Komarovski, *Three Texts on Madhyamaka by Shakya Chokden* (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, 2000).

¹³ On the latter see José I. Cabezón, "The Madhyamaka in Gro lung pa's *Bstan Rim chen mo*," in *Studies in the Philosophy and History of Tibet*, ed. by Maret Kark and Horst Lasic (Bonn: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, 2010), 11–58.

2. The “others” in the *Analysis of the Essence of Madhyamaka*

2.1 Input from the main text

The *Analysis* not only provides direct access to Gyamarwa’s ideas, it also offers us significant insight into the diverse views of a number of Tibetan scholars who took part in the discussion before and around the author’s time. But this aspect of the text would be greatly overlooked were it not for the abundant notes that appear on the manuscript.

2.1.1 Markers

Various syntactic markers in the main text indicate when Gyamarwa is introducing the view of another scholar:

- Markers of an actual view: *zhes brjod do, zhes bya ba bshad do, zhes bzhed do, zhes brjod pa, zhes ’chad do, zhes ’dod pa ni, zer na ni, zer ba ni, zhes bya’o*
- Markers of an actual view that is not accepted by the author: *’chad pa ni mi bzang ste, zhes bya ba legs par mi sems so, zhes bzhed pa’i phyogs kyang gzhag par shing du dka’ ste, mi ’dod do, ’di la brtsad pa ni*
- Markers of an actual view that is accepted by the author: *’chad pa ni legs so*
- Markers of an actual view (or presentation of some point), usually of some length, which is subjected to analysis (and often partially refuted):¹⁴ *’di snyam du, ’di snyam du dpyad pa/de/te, ’di snyam du bshad*
- Markers of a position statement, question, suggestion, or argument, which may be that of a hypothetical opponent or an actual opponent: *zhe na, rtog na*

¹⁴The analysis that follows this marker is not necessarily that of Gyamarwa; it may be by yet another scholar. In such a case, the transition to the author’s own view is sometimes indicated by the expression *des na*, but the latter is also often used for other purposes.

2.1.2 Anonymous references

The main text also contains 46 explicit references to other scholars (often in connection with the above markers), but these references all employ anonymous phrases: “someone” (*kha cig*, 15 times); “others” (*gzhan dag*, 5 times); “the teacher” (*slob dpon*, once); “the teachers” (*slob dpon dag*, 10 times); “other teachers” (*slob dpon gzhan*, once; *slob dpon gzhan dag*, 3 times); “teachers and spiritual friends” (*slob dpon dge bshes dag*, once); “former (scholars)” (*snga rabs pa dag*, once; *snga rabs dag*, once); “the learned ones” (*mkhas pa dag*, 3 times; *mkhas*, once); “the venerable excellent learned ones” (*rje btsun dam pa mkhas rnams*, once); “the reverend ones” (*rje btsun dag*, once); “the reverend lamas” (*rje btsun bla ma dag*, once); “the reverend learned one” (*rje btsun mkhas pa*, once).

2.1.3 Identification by name

While Indian scholars are often referred to by name in the main text,¹⁵ the only identification of another Tibetan scholar by name is found in the verse invocation at the beginning of the treatise (f. 1b1), though even here it lies somewhat hidden (in an artifice that gets lost in translation):¹⁶

yon tan dpag myed rin cen dang lhan 'gro na nyi bzhin gsal byed rab grags pa //
rnam 'byed blo gros dri myed byang chub sems dpa' rje btsun dag la rab tu 'dud //

I salute the reverend,¹⁷ the **bodhisattva** of stainless discriminative **intellect**, who has the treasure of boundless virtues, known in the world to be like the sun, an illuminator.

¹⁵ Gyamarwa names in the *Analysis Asaṅga* (*thogs med*, f. 4a2), Atiśa (*ti pang ka ra*, f. 15a3), Candrakīrti (*zla ba'i grags pa*, f. 15a3), Dharmakīrti (*chos kyi grags pa*, f. 15a3, 25a1), Dharmottara (*chos mchog*, f. 18a8), Dignāga (*phyogs kyi glang po*, f. 2a2, 3b5, 4a4), Jñānagarbha (*ye shes snying po*, f. 5a8, 10b5, 12a5, 15a3), Sthiramati (*blo brtan*, f. 9b6), Śāṅkaranandana (*bram ze shag ka ra*, f. 16a4, 29a3), Śāntideva (*shan ta de ba*, f. 5a8), Śrīgupta (*dpal sbas*, f. 29a3), Vasubandhu (*dbyig gnyen*, f. 4a2, 15a2, 15a6), and Vinītadeva (*dul lha*, f. 10b3).

¹⁶ Gyamarwa also mentions his own name (Jangchupdrak) in a hidden way in a “signed verse” at the end of the treatise, in the line reading “*bla med byang chub grags pa thog par shog*” (“May they obtain the famous [grags], supreme enlightenment [byang chub]”). As demonstrated by Akahane (“Three Tibetan Commentaries,” 78), this verse is parallel to the closing verse of Jñānagarbha’s *Satyadvayavibhāṅga*, in which the author wishes for all beings to “generate the ‘embryo of wisdom’ (Tib. *ye shes snying po*, which translates the Sanskrit *jñānagarbha*).”

¹⁷ I take the indication of the plural (*dag*) to represent the honorific.

The combination of the expressions *blo gros* (“intellect”) and *byang chub* (“enlightenment” – in the verse, part of the expression *byang chub sems dpa’* [Skt. *bodhisattva*], which refers to a being aspiring to enlightenment) spells out Gangpa Sheu’s religious name: Lodrö Jangchup (*blo gros byang chub*). The identification of the addressee of the invocation is confirmed by an interlinear note that reads: *gangs pa blo gros byang chub*. As indicated above, Gangpa is reported to have been one of Gyamarwa’s teachers of Madhyamaka. From this verse we can determine that he was probably his most important Madhyamaka teacher. Given that the expression Jangchup (*byang chub*) in Gangpa’s name is also part of Gyamarwa’s religious name, Jangchupdrak (*byang chub grags*), it is also possible that Gangpa had been involved in Gyamarwa’s ordination.

Given the way that Gyamarwa presents the views of his Tibetan peers, if one attempts to read the *Analysis* without the notes on the manuscript, not only do the multiple voices remain unidentified, it is also difficult to ascertain which view or argument belongs to whom, and where someone’s view stops and another’s begins. It is also not always obvious which position Gyamarwa himself subscribes to within the constellation of entangled arguments and counterarguments, and which part of the text represents his original contribution rather than being a mere repetition of a previous position.¹⁸

2.2 Identifications in the notes

There is no commentary on the *Analysis* that could clarify these matters, but the marginal and interlinear notes on the extant manuscript are especially useful for sorting out the relationships between the scholars involved: the notes provide the names of the thinkers whose views are mentioned in the main text and they make clear the structure and divisions of the discussion. Further, they help us to understand the many individual positions via the addition of words and particles, paraphrases, and additional explanations, all of which make the often sibylline reading of the main text more accessible.

¹⁸The kind of complex interaction between several scholars that is found in this text and is only understandable with the help of the notes is well illustrated by the discussion concerning the divisions of Madhyamaka, which I deal with in another article (Pascale Hugon, “Vaibhāṣika-Madhyamaka: A Fleeting Episode in the History of Tibetan Madhyamaka,” in *Archaeologies of the Written: Indian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies in Honour of Cristina Scherrer-Schaub*, ed. by Vincent Tournier, Vincent Eltschinger, and Marta Sernesi (Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale, 2020).

The most “hotly debated” topics of these days can also be identified by the number of protagonists referred to in the notes. Notably, a range of opposing views are attested regarding the nature of the distinction between the Two Truths; the identification of the object of negation when proving emptiness; the object of a reasoning consciousness; and the divisions of Madhyamaka pertaining to the conventional level.¹⁹ Other topics only involve one or two other scholars. The debates do not concern only Madhyamaka. Disputes on subtle points of logic are also found.

The following identifications of the proponents of these views appear in the interlinear and marginal notes:

(a)	<i>gangs pa</i> (58) <i>gangs pa she'u</i> (2) <i>gangs pa blo gros byang chub</i> (1) <i>she'u</i> (1) <i>dge bshes gangs pa</i> (2)	} 64 (unmarked: 36)
(b)	<i>jo btsun</i> (38) <i>jo btsun pa</i> (3) <i>jo btsun pa dag</i> (1) <i>zangs pa jo btsun</i> (1)	} 43 (unmarked: 34)
(c)	<i>lo tsa</i> (26) <i>lo tsa ba</i> (14)	} 40 (unmarked: 27)
(d)	<i>dge bshes</i> (1) <i>dge bshes pa</i> (6)	} 7 (unmarked: 2)
(e)	<i>me tig pa</i> (1) <i>me tig</i> (1) <i>me</i> (1) <i>me st[o]n?</i> (1)	} 4 (unmarked: 1)
(f)	<i>khyung</i> (2) <i>rin grags</i> (1)	} 3 (unmarked: 2)
(g)	<i>stag pa</i>	} 1
(h)	<i>'phur ston</i>	} 1
		Total
		163 (unmarked: 102)

The number referred to as “unmarked” in the parentheses in the right column is the number of times a given scholar is identified in a note without the main text using a syntactic marker indicating that the author presents someone else’s view (cf. §2.1.1) and also without making explicit (but anonymous) reference to another scholar (§2.1.2). In all of these cases – more than half of the total – the fact that

¹⁹ See Kevin Vose’s article in the present volume on the debated question of whether emptiness constitutes an elimination and its realization would amount to the positive determination of the absence of nature.

the view of another scholar is involved would have simply gone unnoticed were one to read the main text without access to the notes.

Among the nominal references found in the notes, the identification is unproblematic for (a), (c), and (f). “*Lo tsa*” (“the translator”) (c) refers to Ngok Lotsawa. The expressions in (a) and (f) refer, respectively, to Gangpa and Khyung, who were, as mentioned above (§1.2), students of Ngok Lotsawa and Gyamarwa’s teachers.

The references (e) denote the lesser known Métikpa (*me tig pa*, also spelled elsewhere *me dig pa* or *me dik pa*).²⁰ This scholar is reported by Martön Chökyi Gyelpo (*dmars ton chos kyi rgyal po*, ca. 1197–ca. 1258) to have been an assistant teacher (*zur chos*) of Khyung in Nyangtö (*nyang stod*) at the time that Sachen Künga Nyingpo (*sa chen kun dga’ snying po*, 1092–1158) was studying logic and epistemology.²¹ According to a note to Sachen’s biography, this Métikpa was from Tsang (*rtsang*). It is in question whether he is the same person as Shampo Métikpa (*sham po me dig pa*), whose name is listed in the *Blue Annals* (395) among the teachers who follow Ngok’s “four principal sons,”²² along with Gangpa, Gongbu Rachen/Gongburchen (*gong bu ra can/gong bur can*), Mélhangtser (*me/mes lhang tsher*) and others.

The referent of (g) can be identified as Takpa Khachewa (*stag pa [/rtag pa] kha che ba*). This scholar is mentioned alongside Gyamarwa in several sources.²³ He was a student of Ra Lotsawa

²⁰ Van der Kuijp notes that he is frequently mentioned in the manuscript of a commentary on the *Pramāṇaviniścaya* by the early-thirteenth-century scholar Darma Könchok (*dar ma dkon mchog*). See Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, “A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic Attributed to Klong chen Rab ’byams pa (1308-1364) and Its Place in Indo-Tibetan Intellectual History,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 31 (2003), 417. Métikpa’s name also appears at least six times in interlinear notes identifying the proponents in Darma Könchok’s Summary of Epistemology (Buddhist Digital Resource Center, Work W26453).

²¹ See Cyrus Stearns, *Luminous Lives: The Story of the Early Masters of the Lam ’bras Tradition in Tibet* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001), 134–137.

²² The four “principal sons” of Ngok Lotsawa are Khyung, Drolungpa, Zhang Tsépong Chökyi Lama (*zhang tshes spong chos kyi bla ma*), and Dré Shérápbar (*’bre shes rab ’bar*). Cf. *Blue Annals* 394–395 and van der Kuijp, *Contribution*, 47.

²³ The mention of “the pair, rGya and sTag” (*rgya stag gnyis*) is found for instance in the *Blue Annals* (163), and the sources mentioned in Roberto Vitali, “The Book of Names of Nyang stod bla ma-s: Masters and Events of the Years 997–1354,” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 31 (2015), 543 and n. 56.

Dorjédrak (*rwa lo tsā ba rdo rje grags*) and one of the most important disciples of Khyung, and taught epistemology and Madhyamaka in Nyangtö, as did Métikpa.²⁴ Among his students one finds Lharjé Gyanak (*lha rje rgya nag*) and Meugongdzö Ritrochenpo (*rme'u dgongs mdzod ri khrod chen po*) (1038–1096).²⁵

The reading of the note for (h) is uncertain and I am unable at this point to offer any hypothesis as to the identity of this “Teacher from Phur (*'phur* [?]).”²⁶

The identifications (b) and (d) are not strictly speaking names, but rather honorific expressions: “the Venerable” (*jo btsun*) and “the Spiritual Friend” (*dge bshes pa*). The “Venerable,” Jotsün (*jo btsun*), in particular stands out here as an important figure of Gyamarwa’s Madhyamaka background, as he is identified 43 times (more often than Ngok Lotsawa) as the proponent of views discussed in the *Analysis*.²⁷ A relative chronology emerges from the discussions in which he is involved: In them Jotsün criticizes Ngok Lotsawa, and is in turn criticized by Gangpa.

Along with the prominence of this mysterious Jotsün, we note that an important member of the scholarly network that external sources allow us to reconstruct (see §1.2) is close to missing from the picture: Khyung Rinchendrak is only identified three times in the notes. Besides being one of Gyamarwa’s teachers of Madhyamaka – even if, in view of the invocation verse (see §2.1.3) Gyamarwa seems to have been more attached to Gangpa – Khyung is known as one of the “four principal sons” of Ngok (see n. 22) and was also for a long time Ngok Lotsawa’s assistant teacher.²⁸

²⁴ See Gianpaolo Vetturini, *The bKa' gdams pa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/rarebooks/downloads/Gianpaolo_Vetturini_PhD.pdf (accessed August 1, 2019), 333, Bryan J. Cuevas, “Rva lo tsā ba and His Biographers,” in *The Illuminating Mirror: Tibetan Studies in Honour of Per K. Sørensen on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. by Olaf Czaja and Guntram Hazod (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2015), 61, n. 25, and the *Blue Annals* 456.

²⁵ See Per Kværne, “Bonpo Studies: The A Khrid System of Meditation,” *Kailash* 1 (1973), 31 and the *Blue Annals* 163.

²⁶ While the note in the *Analysis* reads *'phur ston* (the reading itself is somewhat unclear), one can note a reference in Butön’s religious chronicle to a specialist in monastic discipline named sTon phur. See van der Kuijp, “The Lives of Bu ston Rin chen grub,” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 35 (2016), 271.

²⁷ On one occasion, the note reads “*zangs pa jo btsun*” (f. 15b6). I take *zangs pa* (“Zangpa”) to be an addition – most likely referring to Jotsün’s place of origin – rather than a reference to another thinker.

²⁸ Serdok Penchen, *History of Ngok’s Teachings* 6b7: *lo chen gyi zur chos yun ring du mdzad*.

As seen above, Khyung directly follows Ngok Lotsawa in the epistemological and the Madhyamaka lineages, and taught these two topics to Gangpa. Thus Khyung’s quasi-absence from the discussion in the *Analysis* is odd.

2.2.1. Evidence supporting the equation of Jotsün (b) and Khyung (f)

Internal evidence

Internal evidence, however, supports the hypothesis that the scholar identified as Jotsün, “the Venerable,” is none other than Khyung himself. This evidence is provided by the passages containing the three identifications that clearly refer to Khyung Rinchendrak (f). Indeed, in each of these passages, the view ascribed to Khyung is also ascribed (directly or indirectly) to Jotsün:

(a)

In *Analysis* 18b5ff., Gyamarwa discusses the nature of the logical reason in the neither-one-nor-many argument, and in particular the question of the means of establishing the characteristics of the logical reason, namely, its qualification of the subject of the inference and entailment of the property to be proven. The first section of the discussion (f. 18b6–19a8) is introduced by a note identifying the view under discussion as that of Khyung (f. 18b6), while in the concluding summarizing section (f. 19a8) this view is said to have been that of Jotsün.²⁹ Jotsün is further identified twice in the course of the discussion (f. 18b7, 19a5), where his view is opposed to that of Gangpa.

(b)

In *Analysis* 8b4–9b3 (*slob dpon dag gi bzhed pa nam par bshad pa*), Gyamarwa discusses the definition of the Two Truths according to other scholars. This section is structured as follows:

- (1) presentation and refutation of a first definition (identified in a note as that of Gangpa),
- (2) statement of the position of scholars referred to as “the teacher(s), spiritual friend(s)” (*slob dpon dge bshes dag*),
- (3) rejection of objections against this position,
- (4) analysis of the rejection of objections (in which the objections presented in (3) are refuted).

²⁹ The note “Khyung” is written in a larger script than the other interlinear notes, which might indicate that it was added by another hand to clarify the identity of the proponent of that view.

In (2) (f. 8b7), a first note reading “*khyung lo tsa*” identifies the “teachers, spiritual friends” as Khyung and Ngok Lotsawa, while a second note at the beginning of the statement of the position proper reads “setting forth Jotsün’s system” (*jo btsun pa’i lugs dgod pa*).

(γ)

In *Analysis* 16a3–17b2, Gyamarwa deals with the identification of the object of negation (*dgag bya*) in the proof of emptiness via the following points:

- (1) presentation of the position that the object of negation is imputed (*brtags pa*),
- (2) rejection of objections against this view,
- (3) analysis refuting by seven arguments the view that the object of negation is imputed.

The proponent of the view presented in (1) is identified as Khyung Rinchendrak in a note reading “*rin grags*” (f. 16a3), while (2) is introduced in a note as the “rejection of objections against Jotsün himself” (f. 16a5: *jo btsun nyid la brtsad pa spang ba*). (3) is introduced in a note as the “refutation of Jotsün” (*jo btsun kyi dgag pa*).

External evidence

The extent of Madhyamaka views ascribed to Khyung in Madhyamaka works of the classical period is limited.³⁰ Nonetheless, one can note that the view presented in γ(1) is also reported by Serdok Penchen Shakya Chokden (*gser mdog pañ chen shākya mchog ldan*, 1428–1507) in his *Ascertainment of Madhyamaka* (*theg pa chen po dbu ma rnam par nges pa’i bang mdzod lung rigs rgya mtsho*), where he ascribes it to Ngok Lotsawa and Khyung.³¹ Further, a definition of the Two Truths that Gorampa Sönam Senggé (*go rams pa bsod nams seng ge*, 1429–1489) ascribes to Khyung in his *Clarification of the Definite Meaning* (*nges don rab gsal*) corresponds to the definition identified as that of Jotsün in a

³⁰ The two passages mentioned below were already pointed out in Seyfort Ruegg, *Studies*, 35–36, n. 61. Earlier works published in the *Collected Works of the Kadampas*, which remain to be explored, might offer additional insights into Khyung’s views.

³¹ *Ascertainment of Madhyamaka* 36b5: *rngog lo chen po dang khyung rin chen grags ni / don dam bden pa’i mtshan nyid / blo’i yul du bya rung ba ma yin pa dang / cig shos kyi mtshan nyid der rung ba’o zhes ’chad /*. Compare with *Analysis* 8b7–8: *slob dpon dge bshes dag [khyung lo tsa] ’di ltar bzhed de / [jo btsun pa’i lugs dgod pa] don dam pa’i bden pa’i mtshan nyid ni / shes bya tsaM las kyang ’das pas stong pa dang mi stong ba lasogs pa ci ltar yang blo’i yul ma yin bas na / don dam blo’i spyod yul min zhes [8b8] gsungs pa yin no //*

note in the *Analysis* (β[2]).³² The value of this external evidence, however, should be subject to caution. Indeed, we do not know what the sources for Serdok Penchen and Gorampa’s identifications were. These fifteenth-century scholars might not have had access to a written work by Khyung. Their awareness of the position they mention might be based on works reporting earlier views or on oral teachings. These indirect sources might not even have identified the proponent of these views as Khyung. In other words, Gorampa and Serdok Penchen might have found themselves in a situation not so different from our own.

The name of Khyung comes up more often in later sources in connection with issues of logic and epistemology, and in particular with the theory of definition.³³ The positions in the *Analysis* ascribed to Jotsün are, however, not concerned with technical issues of logic, thus providing no occasion for comparison. Interestingly, the identification “Jotsün” figures prominently in an early epistemological work (probably late twelfth/early thirteenth c.), the *Summary of the Essence of Epistemology* (*tshad ma’i de kho na nyid bsdus pa*), whose colophon wrongly ascribes it to Longchen Rapjampa (*klong chen rabs ’byams pa*, 1308–1364).³⁴ This text includes a large panorama of views by

³² *Clarification of the Definite Meaning* 73b1–2: *khyung rin chen grags* kyis / *kun rdzob bden pa’i mtshan nyid / shes bya’am / gzhal bya’am / brjod bya tsam yin la / don dam bden pa’i mtshan nyid shes brjod gzhal bya thams cad las ’das pa’o // zhes bzhed la /*. Compare with *Analysis* 8a7: [*shes bya tsaM kun rdzob kyi mtshan nyid du byas na*] *blo’i yul te shes bya tsaM yang* [*jo btsun bzhed pa*] *kun rdzob las* [*shes bya*] *chos* [*don ldog*] *tha dad pa’i phyir dang /* [*zhes bya ba ’aM*] *don dam pa la khyab ches pas* [*shes bya tsaM kun rdzob kyi*] *mtshan nyid du mi ’dod do //*

³³ His name appears for instance in the interlinear notes of the manuscript of the *Lamp of Wisdom* (*tshad ma shes rab sgron ma*) by Tsurton Zhönnu Senggé (*mtshur ston gzhon nu seng ge*, ca. 1150–1210), and in the epistemological works of Serdok Penchen (see van der Kuijp, *Contributions*, 59 and n. 202 and 203). He is also frequently mentioned (as *khyung* or as *khyung rin chen grags*) by Yaktön Sanggyépel (*g.yag ston sangs rgyal dpal*), Rongtön Mawé Senggé (*rong ston smra ba’i seng ge*) and Lowo Khenchen Sönam Lhündrup (*glo bo mkhan chen bsod nams lhun grub*) in their commentaries on the *Treasure of Reasoning* (*rigs gter*) of Sakya Pandita Künga Gyeltsen (*sa skya paṇḍita kun dga’ rgyal mtshan*, 1182–1251).

³⁴ The title given in the colophon is: *tshad ma’i de kho na nyid bsdus pa*. In the introduction, the work is described as a “memorandum that summarizes the essence of epistemology contained in the faultless works of the authors of the Sūtra (i.e., Dignāga) and of the Vārttika (i.e., Dharmakīrti)” (*Summary* 1,2–3: *mdo’ dang rnam ’grel mdzad pa’i dri med gzhung rnams las // tshad ma’i de nyid rab tu bsdus pa’i brjed byang bri*). The ascription of the text to Longchen Rapjampa is contested in van der Kuijp, “A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic.” A viable hypothesis for its authorship has been proposed in Jonathan Stoltz, “On the Authorship of the *Tshad ma’i de kho na nyid bsdus pa*,” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 56 (2020), namely that the

Tibetan scholars of the twelfth century and earlier, who are identified in the body of the text and in interlinear notes.³⁵ There is an impressive overlap between the names found in the *Summary* and the names found in the notes of Gyamarwa’s *Analysis*.

		<i>Analysis</i>	<i>Summary</i>
(a)	<i>gangs pa she’u</i>	64	19
(b)	<i>jo btsun</i>	43	34
(c)	<i>lo tsa ba</i>	40	49
(d)	<i>dge bshes pa</i>	7	-
(e)	<i>me tig pa / me dig pa</i>	4	6
(f)	<i>khyung rin chen grags</i>	3	-
(g)	<i>stag pa</i>	1	4
(h)	<i>’phur ston</i>	1	-

The *Summary* is obviously a composition of later date than the *Analysis*, as it contains the names of scholars intellectually post-dating Gyamarwa (such as Chapa and Jangchupkyab). Its author and the person who wrote the identifications were quite familiar with the views of Gyamarwa, who is identified a total of 70 times. Moreover, a three-line verse from Gyamarwa’s *Analysis* is added in the margin in the *Summary* (11,2–3) to the presentation of an answer ascribed to Gyamarwa (referred to as “*rgya*”).³⁶ The *Summary* includes the views of yet additional scholars not identified in the *Analysis*: Patsap Nyimadrak (*pa tshab nyi ma grags*), Zhang Tsépong (one of Ngok Lotsawa’s spiritual sons),

author was Jépa Zhönnu Jangchup (*’jad pa gzhon nu byang chub*, c. 1150–1210), a student of Jangchupkyap (*byang chub skyabs*), himself a direct student of Chapa.

³⁵ The manuscript of this text is not accessible and in the printed edition the identifications by name appear in the body of the text. Some could have been part of the main text (in particular those where the scholar’s name is followed by the particle “*ni*”), but I surmise that most of them were written as interlinear notes. These identifications were listed in the introduction to this work by van der Kuijp (van der Kuijp, “A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic,” 415–416).

³⁶ This adds to the evidence I have presented elsewhere that the person referred to as “*rgya*” in the *Summary* is Gyamarwa and not Gyadrak Sönam (*rgya grags bsod nams*), as van der Kuijp has suggested (“A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic,” 417). Gyadrak Sönam is only referred to once in the *Summary* as “*rgya grags bsod*” (166,14).

Gongbu,³⁷ Yoknyen (*g.yog gnyan*, a teaching assistant of Gyamarwa), Nyak (*gnyags*), and Nachung Tönpa (*sna chung ston pa*).

The *Summary* includes the views of someone identified as “Jotsün” 34 times, but never refers to a “Khyung” or a “Rin(chen)grak.” The overlap of the scholars whose views are involved in both texts supports the hypothesis that this Jotsün is the same Jotsün as the one identified in the notes of the *Analysis*. Here too there is some external supportive evidence in that one view regarding the theory of definition ascribed to Jotsün in the *Summary* (65,5–8) corresponds to a view ascribed to Khyung by Serdok Penchen.³⁸ There are certainly more such cases. Note that Serdok Penchen also uses the appellation “Jotsün” (and not Khyung) for another position ascribed to Jotsün in the *Summary of the Essence of Epistemology*.³⁹

Let us recall finally that, as noted by Apple, the *Blue Annals* speak of “Jotsün Khyung” (“the Venerable Khyung,” *jo btsun khyung*) (459), and that Léchen Künga Gyeltsen (*las chen kun dga’ rgyal mtshan*, 1432–1506) uses the appellation “Khenpo Jotsün Khyung” (“the Preceptor, the Venerable Khyung,” *mkhan po jo btsun khyung rin chen grags*).⁴⁰

³⁷ See above for the occurrence of his name in the *Blue Annals* (395) in the list of teachers following Ngok Lotsawa’s “four principal sons” (these are listed in n. 22). Serdok Penchen similarly mentions his name in his *History of Ngok’s Teachings* (6b7) among the principal students of Khyung in Nyangtö Möndro (*nyang stod smon gro*) and Taktse (*stag tshal*), etc., along with Gangpa, Mélhangtser, Ngok Kyao (*rngog skya’o*) and others. Serdok Penchen adds that it is reported that these had studied with Ngok Lotsawa in their youth (*’di dag gis gzun nu ma’i dus su lo chen la thug ces kyang zer ro //*).

³⁸ See van der Kuijp, *Contributions*, 59 and 85, and James Apple, “Khu lo tsā ba’s Treatise: Distinguishing the Svātantrika/*Prāsaṅgika Difference in Early Twelfth Century Tibet,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 46, no. 5 (2018), 940. The same view pertaining to the theory of definition is ascribed to a certain “*slang pa*” in a Madhyamaka work that may have been authored by Khu lo tsā ba. Apple takes *slang pa* to be a regionalism for *glang pa/glang pha ba*, thus referring to the place where Khyung was born and the monastery where he resided (*glang pa ’phang thang*).

³⁹ See the reference to “*lo tsa ba dang jo btsun rgya*” in *Summary* 231,20 and compare with Serdok Penchen, *Defeater*, vol. 9, 250 (f. 125b6): *lo tsā ba chen po dang jo btsun la sogs pa ni / rtags yang dag yin pa la tshul gsum nges rung tsam gyis chog pa yin no zhes gsung*). Another instance of Serdok Penchen’s mentioning Jotsün is in *Defeater*, vol. 9, 266 (f. 133b1): *jo btsun na re / sgrub ngag yang dag mams ni tshad ma skyed pa’i gzhan don rjes dpag yin la / thal ’gyur yang dag mams ni log rtog sel ba’i gzhan don rjes dpag yin pas khyad par yod do zhes gsung la /*

⁴⁰ See Apple, “Khu lo tsā ba’s Treatise,” 940–1.

Considering the three passages of the *Analysis* presented above and applying the principle of Occam’s Razor, one can consider Jotsün to be the same person as Khyung, and not an otherwise unknown scholar who would have held the same views as Khyung, but would have been more active than him in the Madhyamaka and epistemological networks of the twelfth century. Counting “Jotsün” as an alternative way of referring to Khyung, one arrives at 46 references to his views in the *Analysis*, which better reflects his importance in the Madhyamaka lineage of which Gyamarwa is a part. Interestingly, in spite of Gangpa’s seemingly primary status for Gyamarwa (cf. §2.1.3), the expression “the teacher(s)” (*slob dpon dag*) in the main text most often refers to Khyung,⁴¹ whereas the three occurrences of the expression “other teachers” (*slob dpon gzhan dag*) are said to refer to Gangpa. But too, Gyamarwa’s choice of expression might simply be a matter of chronology rather than predominance.

2.2.2 Who is Géshépa (*dge bshes pa*)?

There are seven references to Géshépa (*dge bshes [pa]*) in the notes.⁴² Two of these are found in the passages discussed in §2.2.1: In both (β) and (γ), the author of the rejection of the objections against the position under discussion (i.e., β.4 and γ.2) – that of Jotsün/(Khyung) – is said to be Géshépa (see f. 9a2 and 16a6). One possibility is that the person rejecting the objections against Jotsün’s view is himself the proponent of the view under discussion. But one may also want to argue that Géshépa is not Jotsün himself, but a faithful disciple of Jotsün taking up his defense against subsequent arguments

⁴¹ It also refers once to Ngok Lotsawa (f. 13b7).

⁴² I take *dge bshes gangs pa* in the note on f. 15b6 to refer to Gangpa, rather than to two persons, *dge bshes* and *gangs pa*. The expression “Géshé(pa)” itself does not help in the identification of this scholar, as it is a title often attached to religious scholars. Van der Kuijp (“A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic,” 417) mentions for instance a Géshé Tagétong (*dge bshes mtha’ dge mthong*) who was a senior contemporary of Ngok Lotsawa, active at the time Atiśa was staying in Ü (*dbus*) province. The title is also attached to the name of Gangpa in *Summary of the Essence of Epistemology* 128 (*dge bshes gangs pa*). Gyamarwa’s teaching assistant Yornyen is also sometimes referred to as Géshé Yornyen (*dge bshes g.yor gnyan*) (ibid., 417).

The first option (Géshé Tagétong) can be excluded, as the arguments in the *Analysis* put Géshépa at the same time as or after Jotsün, and hence after Ngok Lotsawa. I also think it unlikely that a junior contemporary of Gyamarwa would be involved in discussions reporting the positions of previous teachers. As for Gangpa, he is seen in the *Analysis* to frequently oppose Jotsün, including in (β), where Géshépa defends Jotsün’s view.

– faithful because there is no evidence in the other passages involving the reference to “Géshépa” that this scholar holds a position different from that of Jotsün/Khyung.⁴³

Arguing against this second option would be the consideration that at least one of the passages identifying “Géshépa” hints at this scholar’s being an important participant in the Madhyamaka network rather than one of a lower standing. Indeed, Géshépa is identified as the proponent of the position that the Two Truths are distinct properties of a unique nature (f. 2b2–2b7),⁴⁴ a position that will be adopted by Chapa (and many Tibetan scholars after him), but is refuted by Gyamarwa. I thus provisionally consider “Géshé(pa)” to be an alternative way of referring to Khyung. This would then bring the references to Khyung in the *Analysis* to a total of 53.

Gyamarwa himself is named 19 times in the notes.⁴⁵ Also found in the notes are the anonymous references to “previous (scholars)” (*snga rabs pa dag*) and to “previous Tibetan (scholars)” (*bod snga rabs pa dag*) (once each), and to a number of “someone[s]” (*kha cig*). Not all of the other thinkers referred to anonymously in the main text are identified in the notes. Out of the 46 references in the main text (see §2.1.2), 29 are left unidentified.⁴⁶

3. Gyamarwa’s intellectual network

The information from external sources (§1.2) allows us to sketch a group of scholars around Gyamarwa that constitutes a personal network in which the links between them express a teacher-student relationship. Ideally, each of these links should be characterized according to the topic taught, the place and time where the teaching took place, and like matters. But such information is often missing. From the *Analysis*, and with the help of the marginalia, we can map another type of network, one that I will call the “intellectual network.” In such a network, the link between two scholars – A

⁴³ The position ascribed to Géshépa on f. 4a7 corresponds to that of Jotsün. Another reference to “*dge bshes pa*” (f. 26a5) in the discussion as to whether the subject of inference appears (supported by Jotsün) or does not appear (supported by Gangpa) is linked, in my present understanding, to an argument also made earlier by Jotsün (f. 25b7).

⁴⁴ He supports this position indirectly, in that he argues that the faults listed in the *Sandhinirmocanasūtra* do not apply to it, but that they apply to the view that the Two Truths are distinct natures.

⁴⁵ His name appears in the forms *rgya* (15 times), *rgya dmar* (2), *rgya dmar ba* (1), *rgya pa* (1).

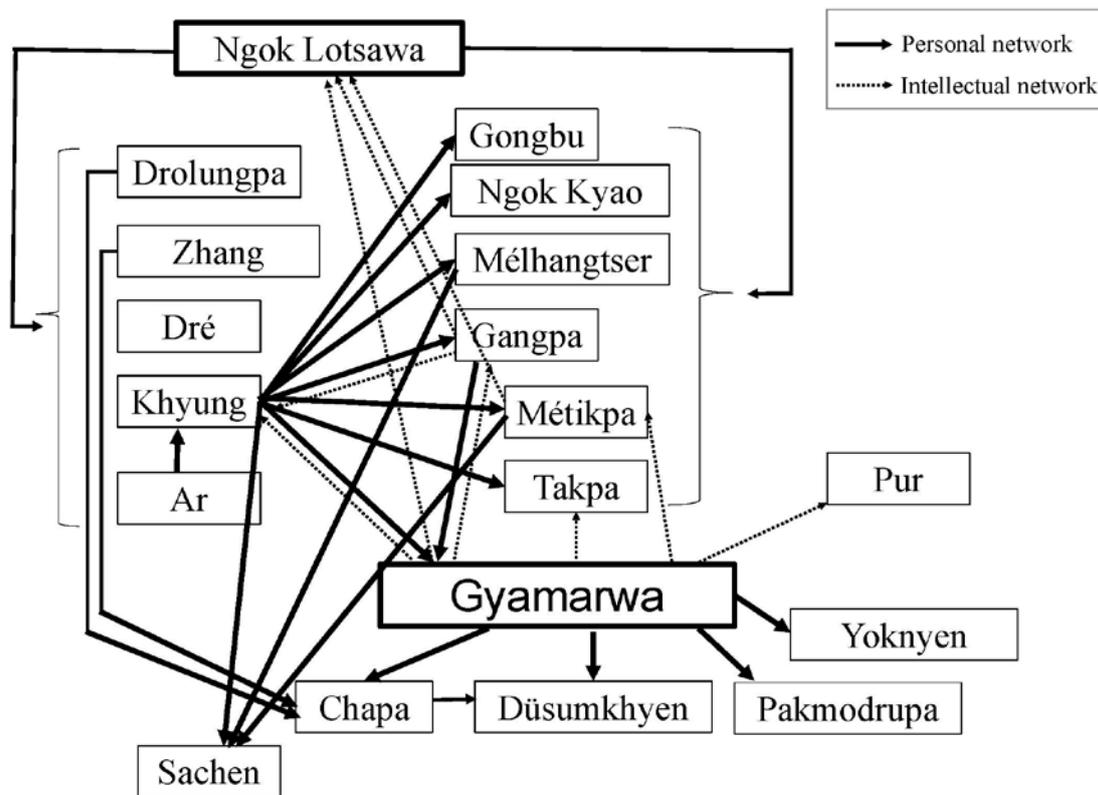
⁴⁶ See f. 8b2, 16b6, 17a2, 17a4, 17b4, 20b1, 20b6, 22a7, 23b5, 25a3, 25a8, 26a2, 26b1, 26b3, 29a1, 29b7.

and B, let's say – represents A's awareness of a view held by B. The intellectual network goes beyond the connections of a personal network. Indeed, the link between A and B does not presuppose chronological overlapping or any personal acquaintance between the two scholars. Since B may not have authored any written text – but still have held views known to A – such a network is better established between scholars than between texts, even though it is attested through the phenomenon I referred to in the introduction as “intertextuality.” The source of A's awareness of B's view may be textual (a text by B, or a text referring to B's view) or oral (teaching by B, or account of B's view by some other teacher) and can accommodate a number of intermediates.⁴⁷ An intellectual link does not entail that A's knowledge of B's views is profound, exhaustive, or even accurate. Ideally, each link should be characterized by indications such as which is the specific view held by B that A is aware of, its mode of presentation (literal citation, paraphrase), and A's attitude toward this view (neutral mention, endorsement, refutation). With such specifications, one could discern, within the “global intellectual background” of the scholars involved, the actual path taken by individual ideas in their diffusion and development. The mapping of known scholars and missing links in such intellectual networks would thus not end up with a static map of related nodes, but contribute to the understanding

⁴⁷ In the notes of the *Analysis*, all identifications to Tibetan views refer to persons, with the exception of three mentions of a work by Ngok Lotsawa: the *Small Commentary on the Two Truths* (*bden 2 tig chung*). Ngok Lotsawa's biographers ascribe to him two commentaries on Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayavibhaṅga* – referred to as *bDen gnyis kyi don bsdu*s and *bDen gnyis kyi rnam bshad* (Serdok Penchen calls the second *Ye shes snying po'i bden gnyis kyi bsdu*s don) – and a commentary on Atiśa's *Satyadvayāvātāra*, referred to as the *bDen chung* (*gi*) *bsdu*s don (Serdok Penchen calls it the *Jo bo'i bden gnyis kyi bsdu*s don). See Kano, *Buddha-Nature and Emptiness*, 204. Note in connection to the commentary on Atiśa's work the existence of a Tangut text entitled *The Exposition of the Two Truths According to Ngok Lotsawa* (see Kirill Solonin, “Local Literatures: Tangut/Xixia,” in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Vol. I: Literature and Languages*, ed. by Jonathan Silk, Oskar Von Hinüber, and Vincent Eltschinger [Leiden: Brill, 2015], 854). The *bden gnyis tig chung* referred to in the note is more likely to be a commentary on the *Satyadvayavibhaṅga*. The author of the *Summary* also refers to a view, this time on logic, “written by Ngok Lotsawa in the *Small Commentary*” (*lo tsa bas... zhes tig chung bris*) (see van der Kuijp, “A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic,” 418). Five other statements of Ngok Lotsawa are reported in this work with the verb “written” (*bris*), three of which are attested to in his *Commentary on the Difficult Points of the Pramāṇaviniścaya* (*tshad ma rnam nges kyi dka' ba'i gnas rnam par bshad pa*).

of the dynamics at play in the circulation of ideas in the obviously active intellectual environment of the 11th through 13th centuries.

TABLE: PERSONAL AND INTELLECTUAL NETWORKS AROUND GYAMARWA⁴⁸



Epilogue – Who can we trust?

Reading the *Analysis* without the marginalia is a challenge – an insurmountable one in some portions of the text – for a twenty-first-century reader, even one well acquainted with the topic as well as with the language and the form of twelfth-century debates. One may deplore the lack of a systematic structure and the often abstruse phrasing, but at the core of the problem is our lack of background knowledge due to the absence of extant works by the very scholars Gyamarwa involves in his discussion – while we are confronted with a work which presupposes it, at least to some degree. Indeed, unless the author did not intend his work to be read independently, its very style of composition only makes sense if its target was a readership who had in mind a panorama (or at least a

⁴⁸ This table is limited to the personal network of teacher-student relationships discussed in this paper and the intellectual network revealed in the *Analysis*.

sketch) of the most famous views held on these matters, and could be expected to recognize, from the first lines of a section, that the view being reported was not that of Gyamarwa himself but that, let us say, of Gangpa. It is difficult to say whether readers outside of Gyamarwa's circle and readers in subsequent centuries would have had such competence, and would have been able to make sense of the text without extra guidance. As modern readers, we can greatly benefit from the input provided by the annotations in the manuscript of the *Analysis*. I have not so far expressed any doubt about the accuracy of the information provided in these notes. But what supports putting one's trust in information from such a source? Regarding the identification of the scholars involved in the discussion, not to speak of the views ascribed to them, there is indeed no possibility of directly assessing whether these are correct, because the works of these scholars are not extant. The amount of contributing evidence from other texts citing the same views is at this point limited, and subject to the same question of reliability as the notes on the manuscript.

Listed below are characteristics which, taken together, lead me to consider these notes as accurate:

- i. In terms of the explanations of the contents of the text, they are abundant, detailed, and coherent overall.
- ii. In terms of identifying the scholars involved, there is a variety and degree of precision that suggest that the identifications are well informed rather than random or approximate.
- iii. Information is not limited to the first degree (i.e., "X said..."), but also includes second-degree references (i.e., "X said that Y said...").
- iv. Information includes the name of at least one written source.
- v. There is no evidence of the informant pushing forward his own views against that of the author or of other scholars represented in the text. In other words, there is no evidence of a "personal agenda" that might entail a bias.

I surmise that the informant lived in personal and/or chronological proximity with the author and his milieu at a time when there was vivid familiarity with the scholars involved in the discussion and with

their views.⁴⁹ This situation would support an awareness of Gyamarwa’s intellectual background that is direct, precise, and accurate. I do not want to imply that proximity is either a sufficient or necessary condition for reliability. For instance, scholars living centuries after a text was composed but having access to written sources might be better informed than some contemporaries of an author who are merely aware of his views through hearsay. However, in the case of the notes contained in the *Analysis*, I doubt that a scholar of a later generation would still have been privy to such an extent of detailed information, be it by way of oral transmission or based on written sources. A few centuries after Gyamarwa, the names of the thinkers involved are mainly mentioned by “historians” who recall the role of these thinkers in teaching or in the transmission of texts, as, for instance, Serdok Penchen does in his *History of Ngok’s Teachings* and his *Origin of Madhyamaka*. Awareness of these named individuals as proponents of specific views seems to have faded away rather quickly after the twelfth century. The widespread and majoritarian adoption of the *prāsaṅgika* interpretation of Madhyamaka (and the connected classification, in retrospect, of the Ngok tradition as *svātantrika*) that took place one or two generations after Gyamarwa probably contributed to this process.

One may refer here, in comparison, to the fate of the early thinkers involved in epistemological discussions. These, as previously mentioned, involved in Gyamarwa’s time a large portion of the very same scholars who were active in the domain of Madhyamaka. In strong contrast to the panorama of views attested to in the *Summary of the Essence of Epistemology*, epistemological literature from the end of the twelfth century already testifies to the clear predominance of “next-generation scholars.” For instance, in a work by Tsangdrukpa Dorjé Özer (*gtsang drug pa rdo rje ’od zer*) published in the *Collected Works of the Kadampas* (vol. 47, pp. 11–165), aside from Chapa (mentioned 15 times), the only Tibetan scholar of previous generations who is still frequently identified is Ngok Lotsawa (13 times). Gyamarwa (mentioned 70 times in the *Summary*) is mentioned

⁴⁹ The notes are all by the same hand, with a few likely exceptions (notes in bigger cursive script), such as sentences added on top of f. 3a, f. 11b (repeated in *dbu can*, with the addition of interlinear notes, on the last folio) and f. 19b – the last two are corrections for passages omitted by the copyist due to eye-skip – as well as at the bottom of f. 9a, and possibly the identification referred to in n. 29 and the identifications “*rgya*” on f. 20a8 and “*rgya dmar ba*” on f. 31a2 and “*rgya dmar bas...mdzad pa*” on f. 31a3.

here only four times, Gangpa and Khyung twice, and Métikpa once. The most frequent references are now to the views of Chapa's students.⁵⁰

Going back to the notes in the *Analysis* and their author, a number of notes also consist of the addition of particles or the identification of the referents of pronouns, which help the reader understand sentences and their connections. I am consequently inclined to think that the person writing the notes was recording information received at the occasion of a teaching session of the text, by Gyamarwa himself, one of his teaching assistants, or some other knowledgeable instructor who was part of Gyamarwa's intellectual environment.

Why it is that about two-thirds of the "others" introduced by the author remain unidentified is an open question. It is not likely due to an occasional lack of attentiveness by the student taking the notes. Could it be an indication of ignorance of his informant, or simply of a voluntary withholding of information (for whatever reason)? It may be of significance here that a number of those unidentified references are found in arguments against Gangpa's position.⁵¹

At this stage of my investigation of the manuscript, I have found no additional elements that would contribute to identifying the author of the notes, except that he uses the expressions "*bu ta*" and "*bu ta pa*" to refer to Buddhists and "*tir ti ka*" to gloss the Tibetan *pha rol* (f. 16a1) – these are loan

⁵⁰ My thanks to Jonathan Stoltz for kindly sharing with me a list of the names mentioned in the notes to this text.

⁵¹ In connection to this lack of identification, one should mention that while the number of notes is consistent throughout the whole text, there is a surprising complete lack of notes (except for those indicating subsection-breaks) in the section pertaining to the refutation of the *prāsaṅgika* model of argumentation – by this expression, I refer to the espousal of refutation by means of consequence only (f. 27b5–28a7) – whereas they are still abundant in the section that precedes and that which follows.

I doubt that the lack of identification of other positions can be explained by the fact that their identity would have been obvious to Gyamarwa's readers at the time the notes were written. Indeed, there are many other places in the text that would qualify as "obvious" but are nevertheless glossed (see for instances, the notes "*ye shes snying po*" [Skt. Jñānagarbha]) appended to passages of the *Satyadvayavibhaṅga*, or the identification of the first person pronoun as referring to Gyamarwa). Similarly, the lack of notes in the section on *prāsaṅgika* argumentation almost certainly does not indicate that this passage was so easy to understand that it did not require any additional input. On the lack of identification of opposing viewpoints and lack of notes in the abovementioned section, see also Kevin Vose's discussion in the concluding section of his paper in the present volume.

words from the Sanskrit (*bauddha, tīrthika*), a phenomenon that is frequent in twelfth-century works, and thus speaks in favor of the antiquity of the notes. The person who wrote the notes employs a reasonable amount of contractions and abbreviations (more than are found in the main text). Unsurprisingly, the notes contain expressions more current in colloquial Tibetan than in the language of treatises, such as the verb *'dug pa*.

The informant probably was the owner of the manuscript copy. Because producing a copy required time and money, it is unlikely that every student of Gyamarwa (or of Gyamarwa's ideas) would have owned a personal exemplar of the text, and also unlikely that someone would annotate a manuscript that they did not own personally to the extent that we witness in the available copy of the *Analysis*.

The industrious scribbler may remain anonymous at this stage, but his diligence and assiduousness make it possible to access Gyamarwa's thought – presumably in a way analogous to how a twelfth-century student would have received oral teaching on this text in Tölung – and to uncover a broad panorama of missing links in the early Madhyamaka tradition.

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