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## Dissemination of Buddhist Logical Studies in Sangphu Neuthog Monastery (Estb. 1073) of Tibetan Buddhist School

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The Buddhist logic that introduced in Tibet is none other than Indian Buddhist logic system that began to translate in the eighth century AD for the first time in the history of dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet. Initially, the contents of Buddhist logic are found scattered in the Buddhist canonical texts prior to the appearance of the great Buddhist logician Ācārya Dignāga (Tib. sLob dpon phyogs glang, c. 480-c.540 CE). Ācārya Dignāga was responsible for systematical arrangement and collection of scattered contents of logic. From the very early age, Ācārya Dignāga was ordained in the Buddhist sangha and became well versed in all the field of “five sciences of knowledge” (five major sciences). He was especially well versed in the field of logic, and was popularly known during his time, one of the best and finest logicians among both Buddhist and non-Buddhist logicians. Before working on *Pramāṇasammuccaya* (Wylie: Tshad ma kun btus, Compendium of Valid Cognition) he initially wrote the commentaries on *Abhidharmakośakārika* of Ācārya Vasubandhu (Tib. sLob dpon dbyig gnyen, 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century CE), *Guṇāparyanta stotra* (Tib. Yon tan mtha' yas par bstod pa of Ācārya Nāgārjuna (Tib. sLob dpon klu sgrub, c. 150- c. 250 CE) and minor logic text such as *Ālambanaparīkṣā* (Tib. dMigs pa brtag pa) and so forth. His monographs on Buddhist logic text runs into more than hundreds. As the contents of these monographs of Ācārya Dignāga on logic appears to be scattered and incomplete in single text, he then compiled all these monographs into one whole complete Buddhist logic text. As a result, the primary source of Buddhist logical treatise popularly known as *Pramāṇasammuccaya* (Tib. Tshad ma kun btus) came into existence. Ācārya Dharmakīrti (Tib. sLob dpon chos kyi grags pa, fl. c. 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century,) the another great Buddhist logician after Ācārya Dignāga appeared in the later century who thoroughly studied the entire logical works composed by his predecessor Ācārya Dignāga. As a result of this, he eventually wrote the commentary to *Pramāṇasammuccaya* called *Pramāṇavārttika kārika* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byas pa, Commentary on Dignāga's 'Compendium of Valid Cognition') and its auto-commentary *Pramāṇavārttikasvavrtti* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rang 'grel, *Auto-commentary of Pramāṇavārttika*) as a primary source and other minor complementary texts namely *Pramāṇaviniścaya* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam nges, Ascertainment of Valid Cognition), *Nyāyabindu prakaraṇa* (Tib. Rigs pa'i thigs pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa, Drop of Logic), *Hetubindu nāma prakaraṇa* (Tib. gTan tshigs kyi thigs pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu

byed pa, Drop of Reason), *Samabandha parīkṣā prakaraṇa* (Tib. 'brel ba brtag pa'i rab tu byed pa, Analysis of Relations), *Samabandha parīkṣā vrtti* (Tib. 'brel ba brtag pa'i 'grel pa, Commentary to Analysis of Relations), *Samtānāntarasiddhi nāma prakaraṇa* (Tib. rGyud gzhan grub pa, Proof of Other's Mindstreams), *Vādanyāya nāma prakaraṇa* (Tib. rTsoḍ pa'i rigs pa zhes bya ba'i rab tu byed pa, Reasoning for Debate). There are several commentaries to Ācārya Dharmakīrti's major and minor works by later Indian masters namely Devendrabuddhi (Tib. Lha dbang blo, ca. 675 CE), Sakyabuddhi (Tib. Shakya blo, ca. 700 CE), Prajñākāragupta (Tib. Shes rab 'byung gnas sbas pa), Ācārya Dharmottara (Tib. sLob dpon chos mchog), Brahmin Śāṅkarānanda (Tib. Bram ze bde byed dga' ba, fl. C. 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century) etc.

Out of above mentioned logical texts, *Pramāṇasammuccaya* and *Pramāṇavārttika* are the two primary sources that are still thoroughly taught in the Tibetan monastic institutions.

Apart from the logical works of Ācārya Dignāga and Ācārya Dharmakīrti, there are about fifty works on logic by Indian masters, the Tibetan translations of which is incorporated in *Tangyur* canonical text. The lineage of oral instruction of Buddhist logical teaching in Tibetan traditions come down to us continuously without broken till now. During the Early Spread of Buddhism in Tibet (Tib. bsTan pa snga dar), Ācārya Śāntarakṣita (Wylie: mKhan chen zhi ba 'tsho) visited Tibet at the royal invitation of King Trisong Detsen (Wylie: Khri srong lde btsan, date 742-797 AD). He is not only known for his establishment of Sangha tradition based on *Mūlasarvāstivādin vinaya* tradition in Tibet but he is also very well known for his depth insight in the field of logic which is well proved by his master piece entitled *Tattva Saṅgraha kārika* (Tib. De kho na nyid bsduṣ pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa, Compendium on Reality). It is said that there is neither a Tibetan commentary to *Tattvasaṅgraha kārika* nor there is a lineage of oral instruction within the Tibetan tradition.<sup>1</sup>

His disciple Ācārya Kamalaśīla wrote a critical commentary to it entitled *Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā* (Tib. De kho na nyid bsduṣ pa'i dka' 'grel). It was jointly translated into Tibetan by Indian Pandita Devendra Bhadra and Lotsawa Drag-jor Sherab (Wylie: Grags sbyor shes rab).

### **Dissemination of Logic in the Early Spread of Buddhism in Tibet:**

The eminent Lotsawa of the Early Spread of Buddhism in Tibet Lotsawa Zhang Yeshe De translated *Nyayabindutika* (Tib. Rigs pa'i thigs pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa) of Ācārya Vinitadeva (sLob dpon dul ba lha) and Lotsawa Kawa Paltseg translated *Hetu bindu ṭīka* (Tib. gTan tshigs thigs pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa) of Ācārya Vinitadeva (Tib. sLob dpon dul ba lha). Though the three eminent Lotsawas appeared during the

<sup>1</sup> Kelsang, Ācārya Khangkar Tsultrim. *Tsha ma'i lo rgyus dar ṭīka mdzes rgyan*, (A History of Logical Studies in Tibet) New Delhi (no publisher's name), p. 12, 1986. *Tattvasaṅgraha* is one of the important primary sources of logical studies which contains over 3,600 verses with 26 chapters. His Holiness the Dalai Lama often used to mention during his public teaching that this text is extremely difficult to understand. In this text, the author mentioned the philosophical standpoints of various Indian philosophical schools exist during his period in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Dr. G. Bühler discovered the Sanskrit version of this text in 1873 in one the Jain temple at Pārśva in Jaisalmer (Rajasthan, India). It was translated into Tibetan by Indian Paṇḍit Guṇākaraśrībhadrā and Tibetan Lo tsa ba dPal lha bstan pa zhi ba 'od.

Early Spread of Buddhism in Tibet who are collectively known as Ka-cog-zhang-sum (Wylie: sKa lco g zhang gsum)<sup>2</sup> made a profound contribution in the dissemination of logical studies by translating many logical texts into Tibetan and establishing the academic centres of logical studies but due to certain reasons, the academic interest in learning logic became disappeared temporarily. But it was revived again during the Later Spread of Buddhism in Tibet (Tib. bsTan pa phyi dar) when great Lotsawa Rinchen Sangpo (Tib. Lo tsa' ba rin chen bzang po, 958-1055)<sup>3</sup> translated the multitude of Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan.

Many of the scholars seem unaware of the logical work authored by the King Trisong Detsan entitled *bKa' yang dag pa'i tshad ma las mdo btus pa* (Sanskrit; Samyag vāk pramāṇoddhṛta sūtra which is incorporated in *Tangyur* Ngo-mtshar section, vol. 144. This text contains 15 chapters in total. Therefore it is safe here to conclude that this text is the first indigenous Tibetan text on Buddhist logic that is attributed to King Trisong Detsen.

### **Dissemination of Buddhist logic in Sangphu (Wylie: gSang phu) monastic institution:**

Ngog Legpay Sherab (Wylie: rNog legs pa'i shes rab), the direct disciple of Atiśa Dīpankara was the contemporary of Lotsawa Rinchen Sangpo who established the monastic institution in Sang-phu (Wylie: gSang phu) in 1073 and since then the academic pursuit of logical study was once again flourished in Tibet. The student strength was then increased up to more than one thousand five hundred in the monastic institute of Sangphu. According to Khangkar Tsultrim Kelsang, Ngog Lotsawa Loden Sherab (Wylie: rNog Lo tsa ba blo ldan shes rab, 1059-1109) the nephew cum disciple of Ngog Legpay Sherab was responsible for the dissemination of academic learning of logical text in Tibet for the first time<sup>4</sup>. He was ordained in Sangphu monastery at the early age. Guided by his paternal uncle Ngog Legpay Sherab, he extensively travelled to central India (here refer to ancient Magadha) and Kashmir (Tib. Kha che'i yul) in pursuit of learning Buddhist philosophy and logic & epistemology for seventeen long years. At the age of 35 in the year 1092, he returned back to his homeland Tibet. He then began his translation project of Buddhist *sūtra* and *tantra*, Buddhist logic & epistemology etc. It is evident from the writing of his direct disciple Dro-lung-pa (Tib. Gro lung pa) that during his lifetime, he had translated more than one hundred *ślokas* (verses).<sup>5</sup> With a financial support by the Lord Ngadag Ce-de (Wylie: mNga' bdag ce lde) for his Sanskrit-Tibetan translation project, he translated numerous Buddhist texts namely *Pramāṇavārttikāṅkāra* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam 'grel rgyan)<sup>6</sup>, *Pramāṇaviniścaya ṭīka* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam par nges pa'i 'grel bshad, Commentary to the Ascertainment of Valid Cognition), and *Nyāyabindu ṭīka* (Tib. Rigs pa'i thigs pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa) of Ācārya Dharmottara (Tib. sLob dpon chos mchog) and so forth. He was very grateful for his great

<sup>2</sup> sKa stands for sKa ba dpal brtsegs, lCog stands for lCog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan and Zhang stands for Zhang ye shes sde.

<sup>3</sup> Roerich, George N. (Translate with the assistant of Gedun Chopel), *The Blue Annals*, Delhi: MLBD, 1996, P. 328

<sup>4</sup> Kelsang, Ācārya Khangkar Tsultrim. *Tsha ma'i lo rgyus dar ṭīka mdzes rgyan*, (A History of Logical Studies in Tibet) New Delhi (no publisher's name), 1986, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> *Pramāṇavārttikāṅkāra* (Tib. Tshad ma rnam 'grel rgyan) is the commentary to only 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> chapters of *Pramāṇavārttika* and *Sahavāḷamba nirṇaya siddhi nāma* (Tib. Lhan cig dmigs pa nges par grub pa zhes bya ba) of Ācārya Prajñākāragupta (Tib. sLob dpon shes rab 'byung gnas sbas pa),

contributions in establishing and popularizing the tradition of logical studies in Sangphu. He wrote a commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* called *Tshad ma rnam nges ṭīk chen*. It is said that by the virtue of his fame spread far and wide and scholarship in the field of Buddhist philosophy especially in the logic and epistemology, the strength of his disciples amounted to more than ten thousands.

Dro-lung-pa Lo-doe Jung-nae (Wylie: Gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas) the direct disciple of Ngog Lotsawa Loden Sherab has composed the commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* entitled *Tshad ma rnam nges ṭī ka*.<sup>7</sup>

Among the large number of disciples of Ngog Lotsawa Loden Sherab, Geshe Chapa Choekyi Senge (1109-1169) one of the Eight Mighty Logicians known as Ma-wae Sengchen Gyae (Wylie: sMra ba'i seng chen brgyad)<sup>8</sup> were the most noted logicians. With great effort, he studied the logic texts under the tutorship of Dro-lung-pa and eventually wrote the commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* of Ācārya Dharmakīrti, *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa yid kyi mun sel* and its auto-commentary in the form of verses and *Yid kyi mun sel rkyang pa* is credited to Master Chapa Choekyi senge (Wylie: Phya pa chos kyi senge, 1109-1169/1182-1251). Unfortunately, these logical texts of master Chapa is not extant to this day. There exist several well-known texts bearing the same title written by various scholars.

The unique Tibetan tradition of systematical debate was initially introduced by Chapa Choeseng who was very well known for his writing a "Manual of Debate" called Due-dra (Wylie: bsDus grva, lit. Collected Topics of Prime Cognition) by basing on the *Seven Treatises of Valid Cognition* of Ācārya Dharmakīrti. The manual of debate composed by Chapa Choekyi Senge contains eighteen chapters or topics (Tib. bsDus tshan bco brgyad). Based on Chapa's Due-dra, Ra-toe-pa Jam-yang Chog-lha Hoe-ser (Tib. Rva stod pa 'jams dbyangs phyogs lha 'od zer) wrote the manual of debate called *Ra-toe Due-dra* (Tib. Rva stod bsdus grva) which subsequently serves as the primary source material for the beginner who undergo training in the debate till date.

Followed by this, another fundamental text of Due-dra known as Tsan-po Due-dra (Tib. bTsan po bsdus grva) which contains twenty one chapters or topic (Tib. bsDus tshan nyer gcig) of Ser-khang-pa Dam-choe Namgyal (the fourteenth in the line of Ratoe abbot) was came into existence. The identification of eighteen and twenty one topics of the above mentioned Due-dra is categorically mentioned in the writing of Longdol Lama Ngawang Lobsang (Tib. Klong rdol bla ma ngag dbang blo bzang)<sup>9</sup>

Later on there appeared a several versions of Due-dra literature written by Gelugpa scholars namely Se Ngawang Tashi (Wylie: bSe ngag dbang bkra shis), Ra Sonam Wangyal (Wylie: Ra bsod nams dbang), Yongzin Phur-cog Jampa (Wylie: Yongs 'dzin phur cog byams pa), Khenchen Gedun Gyatso (Wylie: mKhan chen dge 'dun rgya mtsho) and so forth.

<sup>7</sup> Kelsang, Ācārya Khangkar Tsultrim. *Tsha ma'i lo rgyus dar ṭīka mdzes rgyan*, (A History of Logical Studies in Tibet) New Delhi (no publisher's name), 1986, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup> The Eight Mighty Lions are as follows: i) Tsang-nag-pa Tson-due Senge, ii) Dan-bag-pa Ma-wae Senge, iii) Dru-sha Sonam Senge, iv) Ma-ja Tsoe-pae Senge, v) Tsag Wangchug Senge, vi) Nyang-dran Choe-kyi Senge, vii) Dan-ma Konchok Senge, viii) Nyal-pa Yonten Senge

<sup>9</sup> Lobsang, Longdol Lama Ngawang, *Klong rdol bla ma ngag dbang blo bzang gi gsung 'bum*, Gangs can rig mdzod, 20, Vol. I, Xinhua: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, p. 609, 1991.

The Sangphu tradition of learning Due-dra extant till today in great monastic institutions of Gelugpa school. Due-dra became the integral part of monastic curricula of Gelugpa school where novice are taught prior to venture into the thorough study of major Buddhist philosophy and logic, especially in the field of Buddhist logic texts such as *Pramāṇvārttika*, *Pramāṇasamuccaya* and their commentaries.

Prior to Chapa Choeseng, the Tibetan students used to learn the logic and epistemology through the Indian root texts and their commentaries as there were no logic text in Tibetan language written by Tibetan scholar.<sup>10</sup> In brief, Chapa Choeseng was responsible for introducing a unique dialectical method of debate in Tibet.

He became the inspiration for his disciples especially the Ma-wae Seng-chen Gyay (the Eight Mighty Lions) who were the famous eight Tibetan logicians metaphorically known as eight mighty or great lion. Out of these eight lions, the Tsang Nag-pa Tson-due Senge (Wylie: gTsang nag pa brtson 'grus senge) wrote the critical commentaries to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* known as *rNam nges ṭik chen legs bshad bsdus pa* (Great Critical Commentary of *Pramāṇaviniścaya*, the Collection of Elegant Sayings) which represents the logical tradition and lineage of Ngog Lotsawa. This commentary has become rare in Tibet itself. Fortunately, a copy of this commentary is preserved in Otani University in Japan. This copy preserved in Otani University was written in the form of beautiful U-mey writing which contains 210 pages.<sup>11</sup>

Various other Tibetan logicians of Sangphu maonastery namely Dan-bag Ma-wae Sen-ge (Wylie: Dan 'bag smra ba'i seng ge) wrote the logical text entitled *Tshad ma'i bsdus pa* (Abridgment of Valid Cognition), Zhang-ye-wa Monlam Tsultrim (Wylie: Zhang ye ba smon lam tshul khrims) wrote the commentary on *Pramāṇaviniścaya* known as *rNam nges ṭi ka*, Toe-lung Gya-mar-wa Jangchub Drag (Wylie: sTod lung rgya dmar ba byang chub grags) who was the master of Chapa, wrote a commentary on *Pramāṇaviniścaya* called *rNam nges 'grel pa*, another commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* called *rNam nges ṭi ka* was written by Jamsar (Wylie: 'Jam gsar), Nyoe Gyalwa Lha-nang-pa Sangye Rechen (Wylie: gNyos rgyal ba lha nang pa sangs rgyas ras chen) has also written a commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* called *rNam nges ṭi ka* and so forth.<sup>12</sup>

The great luminary figure of Nyingmapa school, Longchen Ramjampa (Wylie: Klong chen rab 'byams pa, 1308-1363) was enrolled in the Sangphu Ne'u Thog monastery where he studied the *Seven Treatises of Vaid Cognition* (Tib. Tshad ma sde bdun) of Ācārya Dharmakīrti under the tutorship of Lupon Tsan-gon-pa (Wylie: sLob dpon btsan dgon pa) and La-drang-pa Choe-pel Gyaltshan (Wylie: bLa brang pa chos dpal rgyal mtshan).<sup>13</sup>

The great scholar of Sakyapa school known as Rongton Sheja Kunrig (Wylie: Rong ston shes bya kun rig, 1367-1451) has also visited Sagphu Ne'u Thog monastery where he with the help of Ling-toe-pa Rinchen Namgyal, composed a commentary to *Pramāṇaviniścaya* entitled *rNam nges ṭi ka*. Gyal-tshab Je, one of the two chief disciples of Lama Tsongkhapa has also participated in debate and academic interaction at

<sup>10</sup> Genpa, Tenzin, (ed.). *Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi dpyad rtsom 'dems bsgrigs*, Beijing: Krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, 1996, p. 306.

<sup>11</sup> Kelsang, Ācārya Khangkar Tsultrim. *Tsha ma'i lo rgyus dar ṭika mdzes rgyan*, (A History of Logical Studies in Tibet) New Delhi (no publisher's name), 1986, Pp. 15-16.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

Sangphu. It is evident from the Tibetan historical sources that Sangphu Neuthog monastery used to be a great centre of Buddhist logic & epistemological learning where all the scholars and students of Tibetan Buddhist schools enrolled for learning Buddhist logic.

In brief, Sangphu Neuthog plays a very significant role in the dissemination of academic knowledge in the field of Buddhist logic and epistemological studies even in the later period of time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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